

DUNGEON VAULT MAGAZINE

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No. 40

HIGH RESOLUTION MAPS
VTT - ROLL20 MAPS

Designed for use with

Shadowdark RPG





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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Credits	2	Great Hall of Containment28
Table of Contents	3	<i>Level 5 Dungeoncrawl</i>	
Cracking the Vault	5	A wager for Might . . . . .	.31
<i>Level-3 Adventure</i>		<i>One-Page Dungeon</i>	
Dream of Molten Rocks	8	Agdaine's Tarot . . . . .	.32
<i>Level-5 Adventure</i>		<i>By: Nathan Britto</i>	
Cursed Gems of Ramlaat . . . . .	.11	The Flooded Halls of Cerberus . . . . .	.34
<i>Level-2 Adventure</i>		<i>Level-6 Adventure</i>	
Abode of the Dying Sun . . . . .	.14	The Goblin Gate . . . . .	.37
<i>Level-2 Adventure</i>		<i>Level-6 Adventure</i>	
The Rat King . . . . .	.17	Guest Contributions . . . . .	.40
<i>By: Ian Brooks</i>		Thank You . . . . .	.41
The Dishonor of Thieves19	Licensing42
<i>Level-3 Stand-Alone Adventure</i>			



600 + Maps

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DUNGEON MAP PACK VOL. 2

WEBS OF HATRED
LEVEL 3 ADVENTURE

ELVEN TOWER ADVENTURES



Delve Into the Dark

Grab a Torch

Drop your Fears

Draw your Blade

Test your Will

Darkness Gathers

Taste the Fear

Kill your Foes

For all that Matters

Is Glory and Gold!



CRACKING THE VAULT

I bequeath my wealth no to one. It was hard to amass it in life and none shall benefit from my hard work. Let this gold stay with me perpetually in death.

From Lord Sasktell's Will and Testament

The inequalities of life become a struggle, an obstacle that can be surpassed when people understand that a better life can be arranged for one's children through hard work and perseverance. Social mobility during townsfolk's lifespans is hardly an attainable goal but children can be set up for better opportunities through inheritance. As such, hard-working families grow richer after generations. Alas, a minute group of individuals suffers such greed that they cannot ever part with their earthly belongings.

LORD SASKTELL'S ESTATE

A MAN WHO came from money, Lord Bruno Sasktell enjoyed a lavish life and never wanted for anything. He inherited a considerable estate comprised of mining sites and jewelry shops. Throughout his life, he amassed even more wealth but grew paranoid of ever being parted with his monetary possessions. He had four children but his psychotic thoughts led him to believe that they too plotted his demise. He saw assassination and poisoning attempts in mundane gestures and conversations.

Despite his offspring's reassurances, Lord Sasktell was determined to keep his material possessions safe, even from them. He hired the best architects, masons, and mages to create the most secure vault his money could buy, but it was all done in secrecy. When Lord Sasktell eventually perished from natural causes, his heirs found the mansion's vault empty. All of the Sasktell's fortune had been moved to a new vault under the tycoon's home. The four Sasktell heirs, without access to the family gold, eventually squandered properties, lost their station, and were reduced to poverty after two generations.

ADVENTURE HOOKS

► **Lost Grandeur.** The characters are summoned by Amanda Sasktell, a descendant of Lord Bruno Sasktell. She wants to break into the King's Library, formerly the Sasktell mansion, to access Lord Sasktell's vault and retrieve the treasure that is hers by blood-right. She offers the party a reward for escorting her but she intends to keep all other valuables found therein (1,200 gp, 10 XP).

► **For Wealth.** The characters learn of Lord Sasktell's treasure hidden in what is now the King's Library. There are rumors of dauntless warriors who lost their lives trying to recover this treasure; none succeeded. The party can break into the library to access the dungeon illegally. Or request a *Letter of Marque* from the crown and later pay a tithe of 15% of anything they retrieve (0 XP).

Level 3 Adventure

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

► **Light.** Some areas have large braziers; the rest are in pitch darkness. The denizens are **dark-adapted**.

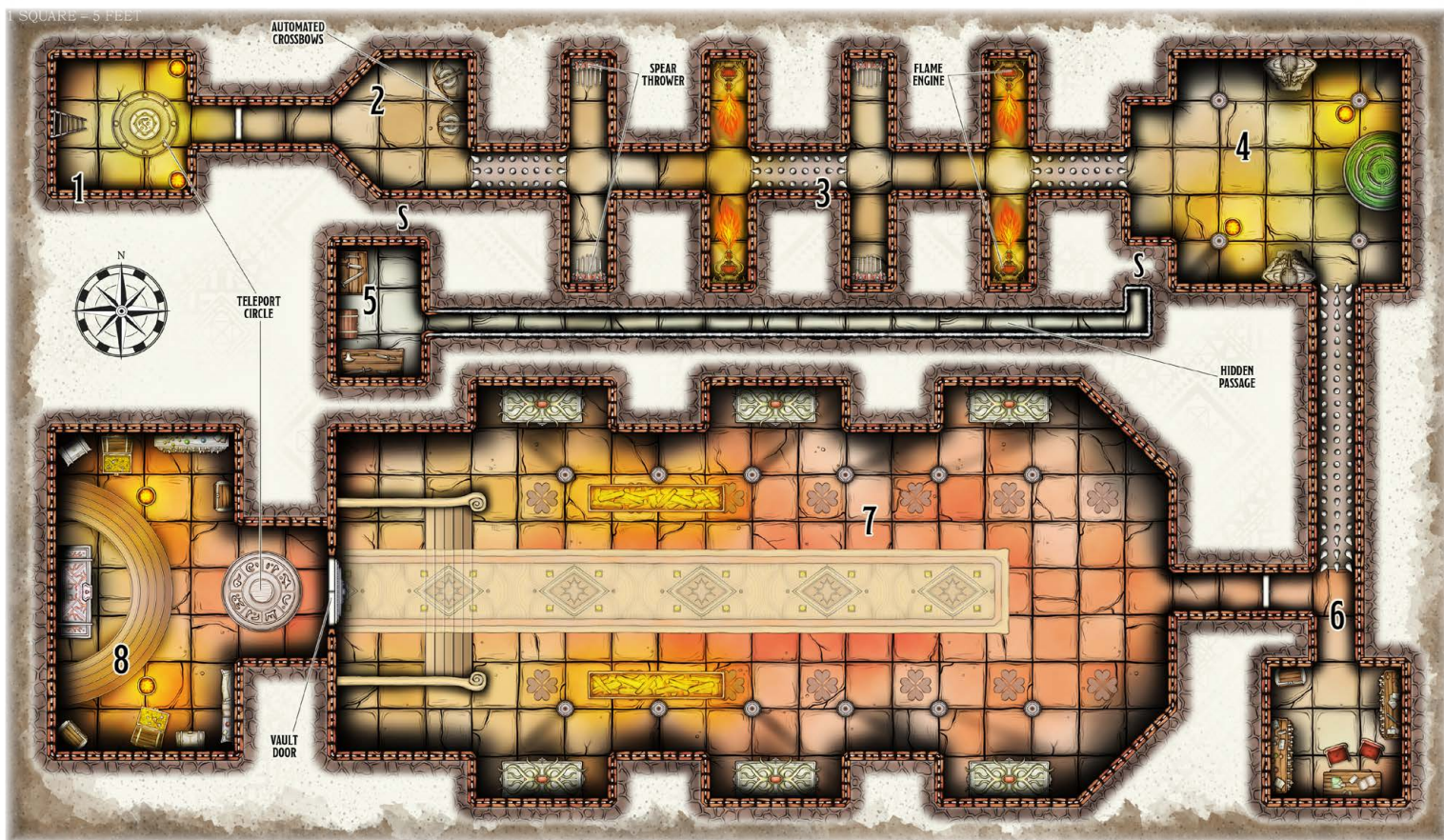
► **Secret Doors.** Pulling hidden bricks on the walls causes sections of the wall to slide inward and reveal pathways to hidden areas. (DC 14 WIS to find).

► **Traps.** All devices are maintained by spells. All traps reset after 3 **crawling rounds** once triggered. Disabled or destroyed traps magically reset and reform at dawn.

► **Stasis Field.** Spells that cause instantaneous movement or teleportation fail unless they are cast on any of the two teleportation circles in the vault (see map).

RANDOM EVENTS

d6	Details
1	The presence of life attracts the attention of a cave creeper in a nearby cave. The monster bursts through a wall and attacks.
2	The characters witness a ball of necrotic energy turn a near-sized area dangerously cold. Creatures in the area may jump out of the way to avoid taking 2d6 damage as skin and blood freeze in contact with the cold area (DC 13 DEX check).
3	A wight leads a shambling patrol of 2d12 skeletons . The undead are branded with the mage's sigil.
4	An unnatural gust of air traverses the entire dungeon. This noxious gas causes food to rot unless it is protected.
5	A tripwire lies ahead (DC 14 WIS to spot). If a creature walks through it and triggers it, several mounted axes swing from the ceiling, potentially striking up to three creatures and dealing 2d6 damage (DC 13 DEX to duck out of their reach).
6	The party experiences a vision of Lord Sasktell insanely guarding his wealth from his friends and relatives.



1. ENTRANCE HALL

The entrance to Lord Sasktell's vault is hidden under a lavish, embroidered rug; in a storage room filled with ancient scrolls. The trapdoor under the rug leads here.

► **The Circle.** A wizard can transcribe the runes of the teleportation circle for later use. Careful study reveals that his magic circle has never been used (DC 14 INT).

► **Inscriptions.** The door to area 2 bears an engraved inscription that reads: *"Turn back with your lives. Attempting to retrieve my treasure shall cost you everything. It is not worthwhile for the likes of you."* A scratched reply in Elvish underneath reads: *"Aerendil was here, the treasure is no more."* Alas, the famous elf explorer perished in area 3 before reaching the vault (DC 16 INT).

2. AUTOMATED CROSSBOWS

Two magical, clockwork shooting devices stand by the east wall, next to the first spiked pit of area 3.

► **The Crossbows.** Each device is a repeating crossbow capable of shooting five bolts before reloading. When a creature crosses the door's threshold, both crossbows start shooting once per round (ATK +3, 1d6). Reloading takes 1 round. The devices can be disabled with fine tools (DC 13 DEX) or destroyed (10 HP).

► **The Bypass.** The secret passage to area 5 (see *Dungeon Features*) provides the means to bypass area 3 entirely, arguably the most dangerous, and reach area 4.

3. TRIAL OF PAIN

This section encompasses a 70-foot-long hallway dotted with deadly traps. There are three 20-foot-deep pits, spear-throwing traps, and flame-generating machines.

► **Spiked Pits.** Jumping across the pits requires a DC 14 STR check. Failure by 5 or more causes the creature to fall and be impaled. They take 2d6 damage. The corpse of Aerendil lies impaled in the easternmost pit.

► **Spear Throwers.** Creatures that stand in between the clockwork devices in the alcoves (see map) are targeted by volleys of sharp spears (ATK +2, 1d8).

► **Flame Engines.** When a creature stands in between the engines (see map), jets of fire emerge from the apparatuses. They deal 2d6 damage (DC 12 DEX).

4. ROOM OF MEDITATION

Two statues of masked blood-letters stand proud, flanking a multi-leveled pond of brackish water.

► **The Effigies.** They are portrayals of a forgotten healer saint. Characters that meditate for 1 **crawling round** before them gain 1 **luck token** or recover one lost spell.

► **The Pond.** It was once holy water (DC 12 WIS). Now the water is poisonous and causes retching if drunk.

► **The Pit.** The 60-foot-long corridor has a 20-foot-deep spiked pit. It cannot be jumped across. Falling creatures become impaled on the spikes and take 2d6 damage.

5. HIDDEN PASSAGE

If the secret door is found in area 2, the characters can use this passage to bypass the multiple traps in area 3.

► **Treasure (5 XP).** There are three shortswords, three daggers, and one greataxe on the wooden tables. The chest contains 650 gp and a *potion of healing*.

6. LORD SASKTELL'S ARCHIVE

A glimmering aura surrounds all scrolls and tomes in this chamber. All surfaces are uncannily pristine.

► **Aura of Conservation.** An abjuration enchantment guards all documents from the passage of time.

► **The Documents.** The archive contains Lord Sasktell's literary collection of classics and some journals of his authoring. Perusing the archive for 1 **crawling round** unearths a journal that enumerates 484 alleged assassination attempts on Lord Bruno Sasktell. All of them were thwarted due to Lord Sasktell's great insight, precautions, and sometimes, as per him, sheer luck.

7. THE GREAT HALL OF GUARDIANS

Rows of tall pillars and ornate sarcophagi flank the central path to an intricate clockwork device by the far wall. The vault door is polished and pristine.

► **Depictions of Greatness.** The domed ceiling features detailed fresco paintings that portray Lord Bruno Sasktell as a person of power who commands the respect of those beneath him. In some paintings, he fights dragons with a longsword; an artistic depiction of him.

► **The Guardians.** When living creatures come within 30 feet of the vault door, the sarcophagi open and spit out five **ghouls** and one **ghast**. If defeated, these guardians reform at dawn, after the vault door is closed again.

► **The Vault Door.** This type of door requires a command word to open (DC 15 INT). Lord Sasktell never shared it in life so it is unknowable. A character must use fine tools to breach the door (DC 18 DEX). It takes an hour to crack the vault. Each failed attempt decreases the DC by 1 but increases 4 hours to the cracking time, potentially allowing the guardians to reform. After the door is bypassed, a wizard can designate a new command word for the vault with the use of the *alarm* spell.

8. THE VAULT

This chamber contains several chests, a stone bookshelf, a large stone coffer, and a rune-scribed circle.

► **The Circle.** This teleportation circle features a different rune sequence than the one in area 1.

► **Treasure (8 XP).** The chamber contains 4,600 gp, 14,600 sp, a set of plate armor, a set of mithral chain mail, two *potions of healing*, and a collection of fifteen random, wizard spell scrolls of tier 1 and tier 2.



DREAM OF MOLTEN ROCKS

Those deemed unworthy shall be cleansed by fire and removed from this world. Their souls will be reduced to fiery whispers, embers from a forgotten ritual.

Eroded Inscription in Elvish

Dt does not occur often, but sometimes, in a dramatic turn of events, the common folk witness legendary events or artifacts from up close. This can be the result of mere luck, bad fortune, or simply by being at the right place, at the right time. Or the wrong of both, for all that matters...

THE MOLTEN ROCKS

HAROLD BRUYNE IS an example of this. His home is located on the outskirts of Garrington, close to several smaller settlements and thorps. Harold is a writer. He makes a living writing messages, letters, and scrolls for the many illiterate folk that live around him. He also teaches how to read and write to those who wish to learn.

Two weeks ago, Harold had the strangest of dreams. He saw a flaming sword, floating before him. The blade swung left and right, cutting through massive rocks like a hot knife through butter. The molten rocks fell next to Harold, and he woke up sweating, feeling the heat.

The next day, the water from his well was warm to the touch, and it held a faint crimson hue, undrinkable. The dreams became more vivid with each subsequent night.

FLYING TOO CLOSE TO THE SUN

HAROLD ALWAYS DREAMED of writing novels but lacked the talent to create a good story. In his mind, the dreams are a call of destiny. He ignores what the sword, the fire, or the water means. The only thing the growing-mad writer knows for certain is that he *wants* to know. His curiosity is killing him. He must climb down the well.

ADVENTURE HOOKS

► **The Crazy Writer.** The heroes traverse the country's land looking for employment or simply make the trip from one place to another when they stumble upon a crazy-looking man. In this case, the deranged writer accompanies the heroes into the dungeon from area (0 XP).

► **The Dream.** One of the characters has the same dreams as Harold. After too many nights of the same visions, an unseen force draws the heroes to Harold's home. In this case, the writer has already gone down the well alone. The heroes may find him in area 7 (0 XP).

FLAMING TONGUE

A powerful artifact from the ancient elvish-demonic wars. These territories were about to be lost to the enemy. The elves knew they were all going to be killed or captured. And so, the elves used all their remaining magic to create an impossible-to-break dungeon before their imminent demise. They surrounded their fabled sword with lava, traps, and immortal guardians, hoping that it would be enough to keep the blade from enemy hands. They succeeded for hundreds of years. But the sword yearns for a new owner, and so it calls one forth.

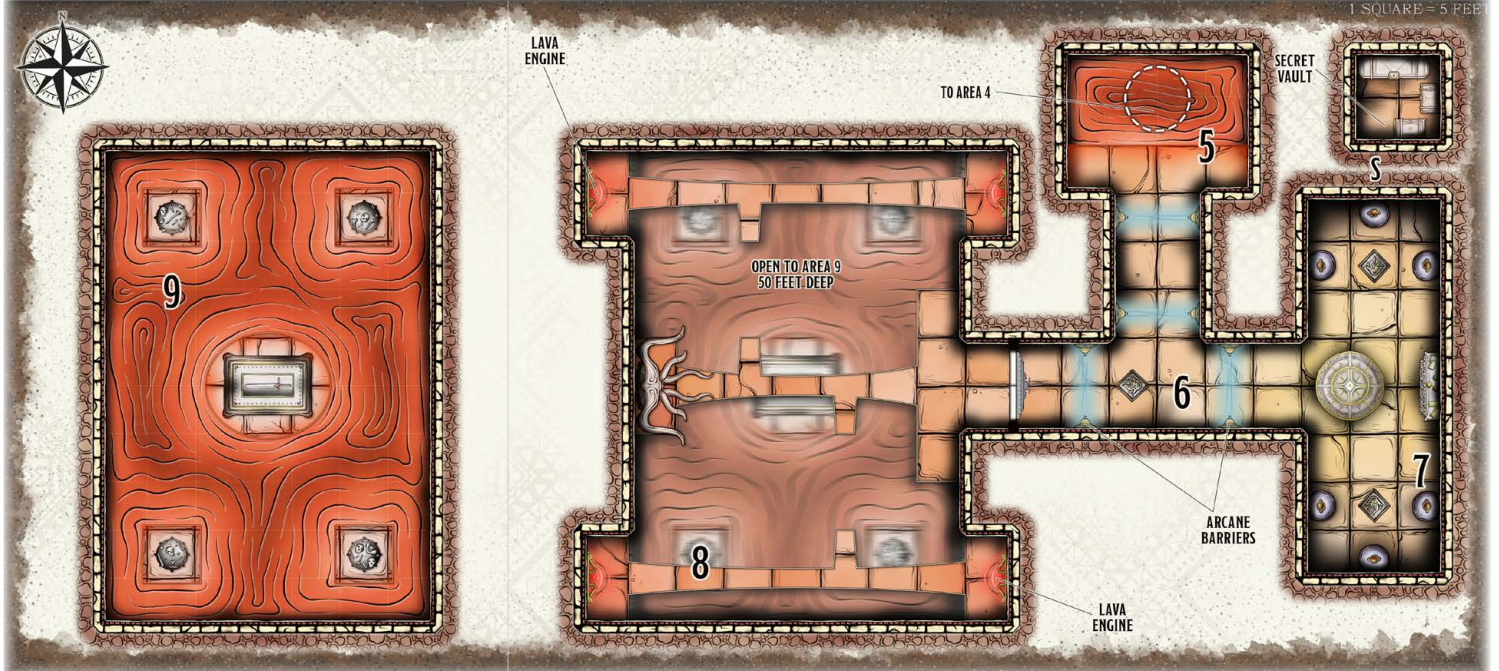
Level 5 Adventure

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

► **Light.** The lava glows a little but not enough to illuminate. All areas are dark. The denizens are **dark-adapted**.

RANDOM ENCOUNTERS

d6	Details
1	(Outside the dungeon) The characters were followed. A group of four bandits wants to rob them of their valuable possessions.
2	(Outside the dungeon) A squad of six elves come to this area following the tales and legends of the sword created by their ancestors. They are unsure about the messy writer, if present, and about the heroes as well (Reaction check).
3	(Inside the dungeon) The heroes see a chest before them. Any interaction with it reveals it is a mimic!
4	(Inside the dungeon) The characters' presence disturbs a swarm of spiders in the chamber. The insects flee at half their HP.
5	(Inside the dungeon) Two animated armors adorn the walls of a room. They attack the nearest intruder when they approach.
6	(Inside the dungeon) The characters see the ghost of an elf appear before them. The spirit speaks with a sad voice: " <i>Leave, the power of the Flaming Tongue is not worth the enemies you'll make or the dangers you'll face</i> ". It disappears after speaking thus.



1. COUNTRY ROAD

The characters may meet Harold Bruyne here (see **Adventure Hooks**). The writer looks like he has not slept in days: his hair is messy, and he seems paranoid. In case he is not present, the heroes find the home empty.

► **Harold.** Despite his looks, the man remains lucid. He tells the characters about his dream and asks them to accompany him down the well. They are free to believe him or not. Harold shall make the descent alone if they ignore his request. Similarly, he follows them if they accept to go down there but refuse his company.

2. HAROLD'S HOME

Half-finished documents, torn papers, dried pots of ink, and smelly leftovers lie all around. The place is a strange combination of lived-in furniture with forgotten objects and stuff. If the heroes search the place, they find 10 gp and one silver dagger. The characters can explore this area unimpeded only if Harold is not present, though.

3. HAROLD'S ROOM

Quills and parchments adorn a weathered wooden desk, illuminated by the flickering glow of a solitary candle. The air carries the scent of aging manuscripts. Harold asks the heroes to leave his belongings alone, if present.

► **Treasure (3 XP).** If the characters search the area, they find a leather bag with 30 gp, and a plethora of blank scrolls, parchments, and good quality inks (20 gp for all).

4. THE WELL

A yawning well, its stone walls moss-covered and worn. The circular opening spans seven feet across, its echoing abyss veiled in shadows. The party takes 1 **crawling round** to make the descent and reach area 5.

5. DUNGEON'S LANDING

This pond of magical water replenishes itself at dawn. This used to be Harold's water supply but the liquid is warm and it smells of sulfur. If someone takes a sip, it tastes bad and drinkers take 1 damage (DC 13 CON).



5. DUNGEON'S LANDING

Dim torchlight reveals rough, hewn stone walls draped in shadows. At its center, a pool of warm fluid shimmers, its surface reflecting a subtle, ethereal glow. The air is heavy with an ancient magic, enticing and unsettling.

6. ARCANE BARRIERS

Magic glyphs dance on the walls, weaving an invisible tapestry of protection. The arcane barriers hum softly. Standing on the gray diamond-shaped button on the floor deactivates the barriers between areas 5 and 6.

► **Barriers.** A *dispel magic* spell removes one of the invisible walls for 1 hour. This allows for any number of creatures to go through. Two barriers must be dispelled for the first diamond button to be reached (see map).

► **The Chosen One.** The person having dreams about the sword (see **Adventure Hooks**) is immune. They can walk through the barriers as if they were not there. Harold Bruyne happily volunteers if he is present.

7. ELVISH RELICS

The central magic circle, the vases, and the runes on the walls are all evidence of Elvish culture. The heroes can spend 1 **crawling round** reading the documents here to learn the story of this place and the *Flaming Tongue*.

The two diamond-shaped buttons in this area cause the other two arcane barriers in area 6 to disappear. Harold's corpse is here if he entered the dungeon alone.

► **Treasure (6 XP).** Each vase is worth 15 gp but touching any of them summons the anger of six **shadows**.

► **Treasure (8 XP).** Observant heroes spot the secret corridor behind the northern vase (DC 15 WIS). The vault contains 385 gp, 2,541 sp, and a silver longsword.

8. LAVA ENGINES

Only the most skilled of thieves could break into this area (DC 19 DEX). On a fail, the heroes take three **crawling rounds** to either open or disable the door.

► **Lava.** A *dispel magic* spell makes the engines stop for 1 **crawling round**, causing the lava below to become solid and tempered. They deal 1d8 damage if destroyed (10 HP). Their magic restores them in 1 **crawling round**.

9. THE SWORD'S CHAMBER

► **Flaming Tongue.** Four **flaming wights** protect the magic sword when intruders approach. Do the characters have what it takes to retrieve it? Or will they burn in lava? Do they have the power to wield the sword? Or will they become puppets of this Elvish artifact? The answers to these questions are adventures for another day...

CURSED GEMS OF RAMLAAT

The bane of mages, they call them. The seven gemstones contain a figment of the Pillager's rage. They promise power but at an unattainable, ruinous cost...

Eroded Inscription

In the ancient, whispered annals of the Shadowdark, the Cursed Gems of Ramlaat hold a notorious place. Legend tells that Ramlaat, a deity shrouded in mystery and darkness, once walked the realms of mortals. Displeased with the burgeoning arrogance of human sorcerers, Ramlaat sought to teach them a lesson in humility and fear. The deity forged seven gems, each imbued with a fragment of Ramlaat's shadowy essence. These gems were gifts to the sorcerers, veiled in benevolence but cursed with insidious, corrupting power. Over time, the sorcerers were driven mad, their realms collapsing into chaos and ruin.

RESTING PLACE

BENEATH THE MURKY waters of the Fevemist Swamp lies the final resting place of these accursed relics. It was once a grand temple dedicated to Ramlaat but now stands dilapidated, its glory lost to time and neglect. It is a twisted labyrinth, its chambers connected by narrow, treacherous passages. What makes it uniquely perilous are the lava canals that snake through its chambers. These molten rivers emit a hellish, eerie glow.

At the heart of the dungeon lies the Sanctum of Fire, a vast chamber dominated by a deep lava pond. In a stone pedestal among the lava rests a gilded goblet, eternally wreathed in ghostly flames. The cursed goblet is said to be as old as Ramlaat itself. It cradles the seven gems, their malevolent aura palpable even from a distance. Many have sought Ramlaat's favor in the past by attempting to wield the gem's power. Alas, they lost their sanity and identity and became slaves of the dark deity.

ADVENTURE HOOKS

► **Seeking the Artifacts.** The characters hear of great treasures hidden in the depths of Fevemist Swamp. Adventurers brave or foolish enough to seek the Cursed Gems of Ramlaat must not only navigate the dungeon and its fiery hazards but also contend with the curse itself. There are rumors of a ritual to purify the gems, involving an ancient incantation. Successfully lifting the curse could yield immense power, or perhaps, an audience with the shadowy deity Ramlaat (0 XP).

RAMLAAT'S CURSE

The curse of the gems is multifaceted. Those who gaze upon them feel an overwhelming sense of dread and despair. Touching a gem directly results in a soul-binding curse, linking the victim to Ramlaat's shadowy realm. This connection drains the life force of the afflicted, slowly transforming them into wraith-like beings, forever bound to guard the Sanctum of Fire.

Level 2 Adventure

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

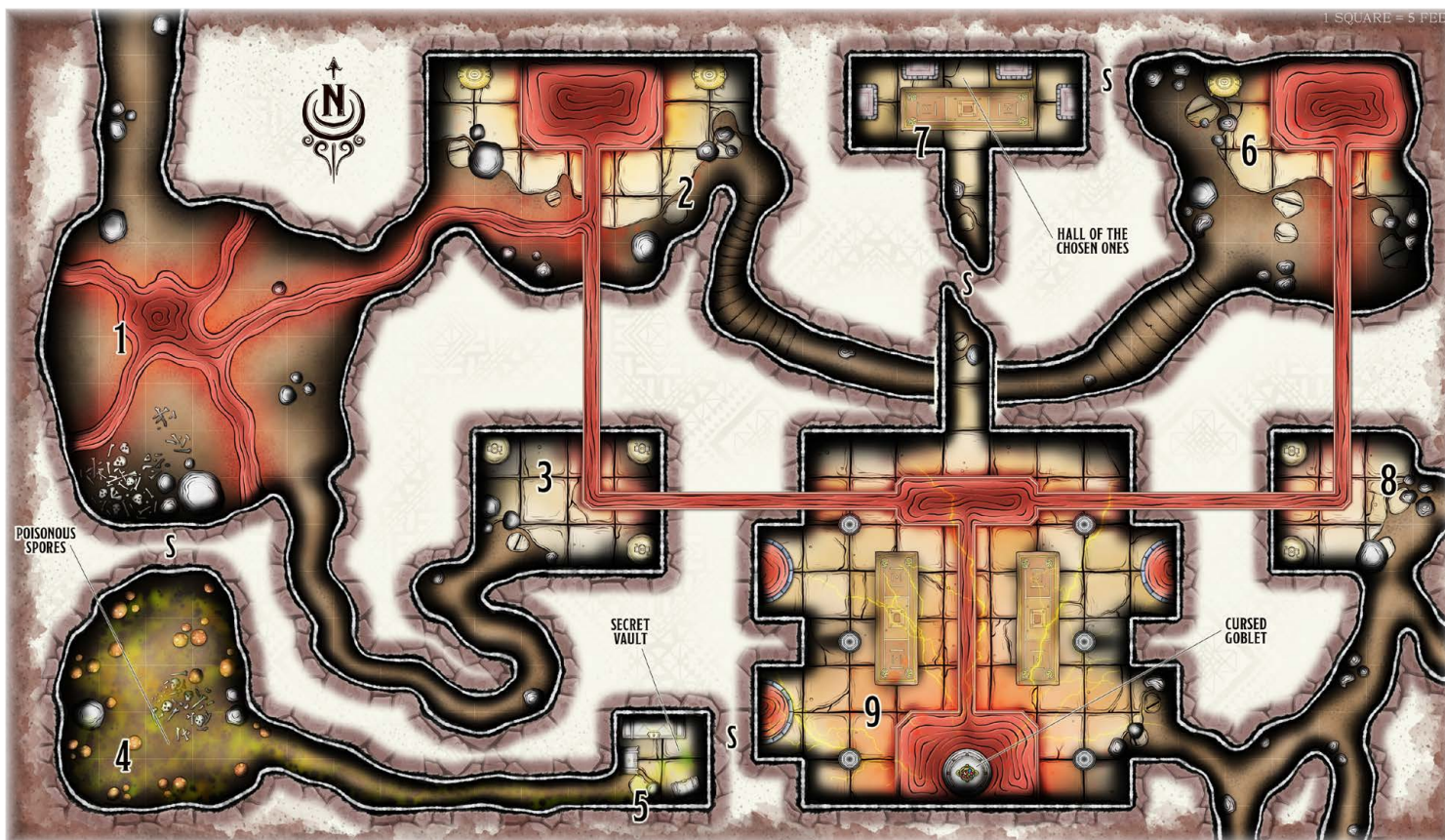
► **Light.** Areas with lava are dimly lit; the rest are in pitch darkness. The denizens are **dark-adapted**.

► **Lava.** The 10-foot-deep ponds and canals deal 3d6 damage upon direct contact. It is too thick to sink in it.

► **Hidden Paths.** Observant characters notice debris hiding broken paths between chambers (DC 14 WIS).

RANDOM EVENTS

d6	Details
1	A sudden collapse in the dungeon corridor reveals a hidden chamber filled with ancient, cryptic murals portraying Ramlaat.
2	The party encounters two shadows , tormented souls bound to protect the gems. They utter cryptic warnings.
3	Lava from the canals unexpectedly erupts. It floods the nearest chamber for 3 crawling rounds . This forces the adventurers to find an alternate path across or to find a way to walk or cross over the dense lava and hope for the best.
4	In the dim light, the adventurers find a weathered tome, its pages containing forbidden knowledge about the elusive Ramlaat.
5	A ghostly melody echoes through the halls, luring the characters towards four skeletons readying an ambush.
6	The adventurers stumble upon an ancient ritual circle, pulsing with dark energy and remnants of a forgotten ceremony. A wizard knows that it has the power to summon the rage and raw power of the orcish deity Ramlaat but the incantation is unknown.



1. CAVE UNDER THE SWAMP

The dungeon entrance is found under the ominous trunks of two leafless elms. The opening slants down into a slithering tunnel that leads to area 1.

The cavern walls, awash in an ominous glow, cradle rivers of molten lava that snake across the floor. The bleached bones of unknown creatures lie scattered throughout, a stark foreshadowing of perilous fauna.

► **The Arachnid.** A **giant spider** inhabits the dark ceiling of this chamber. It has killed many creatures; their bones litter the southern end of this chamber.

► **The Bones (1 XP).** A healer who inspects the remains learns that half of them belonged to humanoids and finds an intricately-carved gold bracelet (20 gp).

2. THE DILAPIDATED CHAMBER

Time and neglect have left their mark on the crumbling, fractured walls. By the north wall lies a foreboding lava pond fed by the flow of a fiery canal.

► **The Vases.** The two gilded containers that flank the pond are filled with treated coal dust. If it comes in contact with a spark, it ignites and causes a fiery explosion that deals 4d6 damage within 20 feet (DC 15 DEX).

► **Vermin.** A **swarm of scarabs** emerges from countless cracks and orifices on the walls. The ravenous insects disband and flee when attacked with fire.

3. COLUMBARIUM OF PRIESTS

In the shadowed recesses of the columbarium, three ancient clay urns stand solemnly on aged stone pedestals. A faint, ethereal whisper seems to emanate from them, as if the spirits yearned for deliverance.

► **The Urns.** Each clay urn contains the ashen remains of countless priests and acolytes of Ramlaat. Ramlaat's sigil is etched on them. If perturbed, three **shadows** emerge from within and attack living creatures nearby.

4. NOXIOUS FUNGI

A pungent stench pervades this cavern where clusters of noxious fungi thrive in the damp crevices. The bio-luminescent caps emit a sickly green glow.

► **The Spores.** Breathing the poisonous spores causes creatures to retch, vomit, and take 1d6 damage (DC 13 CON). Breathing them for over 1 hour causes death.

► **The Farmer.** One **mushroomfolk** farmer sits by a corner. He cares for the fungal growth. His demeanor toward the characters may vary (**Reaction** check).

5. THE SECRET VAULT

The once-secret vault is now connected to the spore-filled tunnel to area 4. It contains three stone coffers.

► **Treasure (3 XP).** The coffers contain 250 gp, 1,700 sp, two *potions of healing*, one *potion of vitality*, a set of three ornate daggers (10 gp), and a silver ring (5 gp).



6. THE EASTERN POND

When the characters arrive at this chamber, they experience a vivid vision of the elusive deity Ramlaat:

In the flickering torchlight, the air shimmers, giving way to a vision of Ramlaat, the Pillager. Ramlaat stands amidst a battlefield, his hands dripping with the blood of his enemies. The vision fades swiftly, leaving an aura of raw power lingering in the air.

► **The Mosaic.** A dust-ridden mural by the north wall can be cleaned to reveal the faded image of Ramlaat. The spell *detect magic* reveals an aura of illusion on it.

7. HALL OF THE CHOSEN ONES

Four standing sarcophagi adorned with ornate, myth-laden carvings, dominate this chamber. Each a silent sentinel, they exude an air of ancient valor and forgotten deeds, their secrets sealed in time.

The remains of four champions of Ramlaat are interred here. In life, they enacted despicable deeds and caused countless deaths. A scholar knows that through their actions, they earned Ramlaat's favor and stand by his side.

► **Treasure (4 XP).** Within the easternmost enclosure, lies one of the chosen ones' weapon, a *+1 javelin*.

8. THE BROKEN COLUMBARIUM

A caved-in, collapsing chamber opens abruptly into a network of natural, winding tunnels, the rough walls echoing with the distant drips of unseen water.

The network of slithering tunnels slants downward and connects to the greater Shadowdark below; uncharted and dangerous. One of the nearest paths meets the southeast corner of area 9 and can be used to enter it.

9. SANCTUM OF FIRE

The vast sanctum houses the cursed goblet on a dark pedestal floating over a menacing lava pond. Overhead, a fresco of the deity Ramlaat looms, infusing the air with a palpable sense of ancient, divine power.

► **The Cursed Gems.** Touching the gems causes the person to die immediately and become a **shadow** in the service of Ramlaat (DC 17 CON). Hirelings or commoners within 20 feet feel a terrible urge to touch the gems (DC 17 CHA). Handling or moving the cursed goblet is safe. The characters can remove the gems but they remain a constant threat to the commonfolk in towns.

► **Cleansing.** Accessing the raw power of the seven *Gems of Ramlaat* requires the characters to exorcise the deity's presence from them. It can be done in the temple of a fair deity by a level-8 priest. Or the cursed gems can be bathed in the tears of a unicorn. Cleansing the gemstones shall incur the wrath of the followers of Ramlaat. Alas, doing so is an adventure for another day.

ABODE OF THE DYING SUN

Thus, the Abode of the Dying Sun is a place of ancient mysteries and dark rituals, a desert beacon for those brave or foolish enough to seek its secrets.

Elvish Adage

In the heart of the Shimmering Sands, where the sun's relentless gaze scorches the earth and the mirages dance with the winds, lies the Abode of the Dying Sun. The temple is a mere shadow of its once glorious self. It stands as a testament to the ever-shifting sands of time and faith.

Eons ago, when the desert was a blooming oasis, the Abode of the Dying Sun was erected in veneration of ethereal beings believed to be the guardians of the sands and the givers of life. They are axolotl spirits. These small gods, as whimsical as the desert breeze, were revered by the Sand Whisperers, a now-forgotten civilization. The temple, crafted from sun-baked bricks and adorned with intricate glass mosaics, served as a conduit between the mortal realm and the axolotl's ethereal plane. In art form, these spirits are depicted as luminescent axolotls, each a custodian of an element of the desert ecosystem. They were worshiped through rituals that celebrate the harmony of life, water, and sand.

CHILDREN OF THE SCORCHING RAY

IN RECENT TIMES, the temple found new inhabitants. A mysterious, sun-worshipping cult in its most brutal form, took residence within the abandoned halls. They are known as the Children of the Scorching Ray, a group that venerates the harshness of the desert and the relentless sun above. They believe the sun is dying, its light a symbol of fleeting life and impending doom. The cult has sealed many sections of the temple, but rumors speak of ancient chambers beneath the sands, where the axolotl spirits still linger, awaiting the return of true believers.

ADVENTURE HOOKS

► **Dark Rituals.** Legends speak of ancient scrolls hidden within the temple, containing the wisdom of the Children of the Scorching Ray. Baaz Raddi, a scholar, offers a reward for such documents. (30 gp, 0 XP).

► **The Ritual.** A priest of Gede warns the characters that the Children of the Scorching Ray prepare for a rare celestial event. He sends the characters to the Shimmering Sands to find out what dark purpose this ritual serves. If necessary, the characters are charged with stopping it and arresting the cultists (20 gp, 0 XP).

► **Help Plea.** A mysterious voice has been calling to travelers near the temple, pleading for help. Some have approached but are driven off or robbed by the Children of the Scorching Ray. The elusive voice belongs to Artulig, one of the axolotl spirits trapped in the depths of the temple. The axolotls yearn for freedom and issue a mental plea for just hearts. One of the characters hears this message in a vivid dream. They know the direction to the Abode of the Dying Sun instinctively (0 XP).

Level 2 Adventure

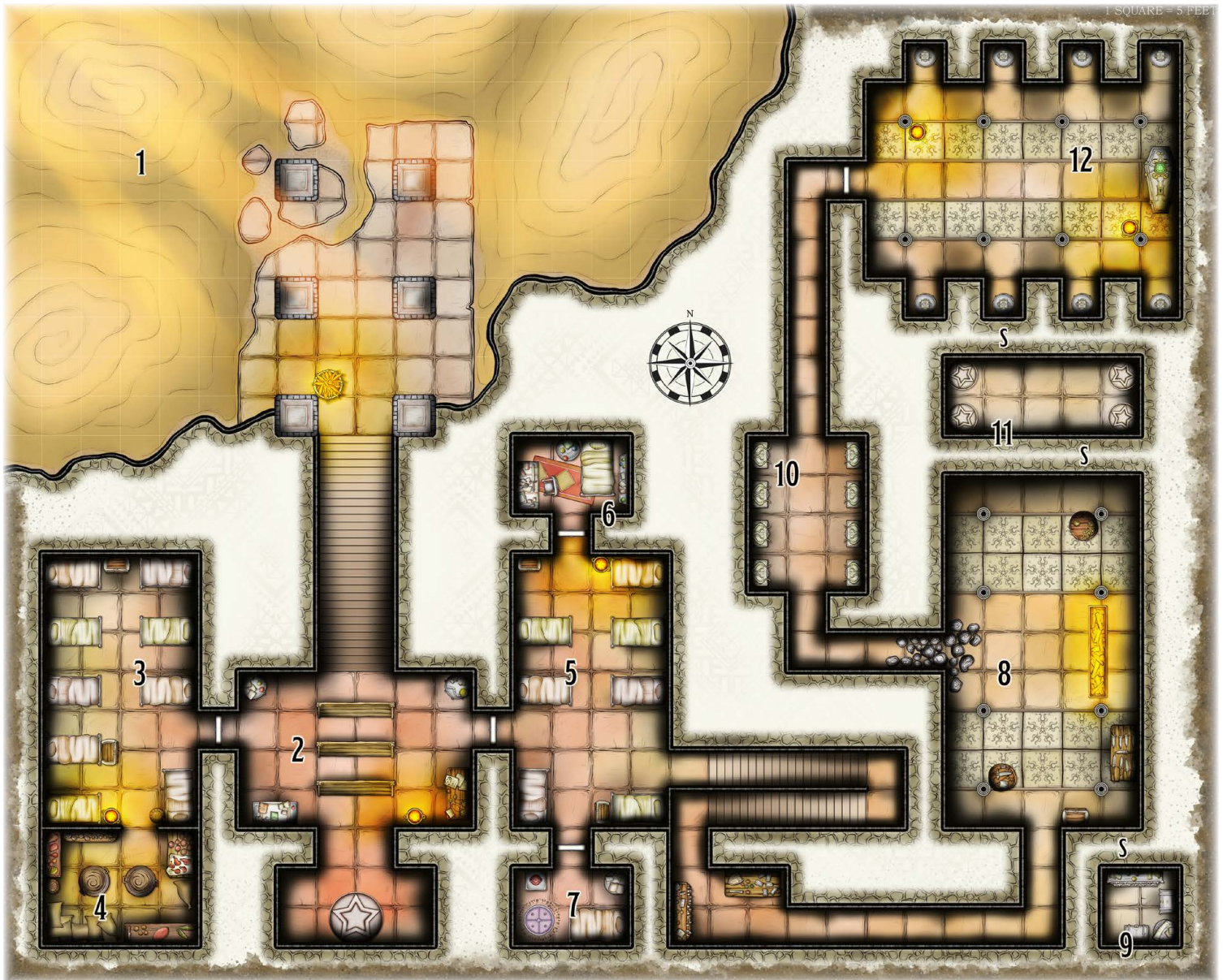
► **Danger.** Risky. Check for a **Random Event** every 2 crawling rounds and after loud noises (3-in-6 chance).

► **Light.** Some areas have large braziers; the rest are in pitch darkness. The denizens are **dark-adapted**.

► **Arcane Sands.** Water-based spells have their DC increased by 1. On a fail by 5 or more, the spell is cast but its target is randomly changed. On the other hand, all fire-based spells have their DCs reduced by 1.

RANDOM EVENTS

d6	Details
1	A sudden sandstorm traps the adventurers inside the temple. None can traverse the desert for 1d4 days.
2	As the moon reaches its zenith, the temple walls emit a faint glow, revealing cryptic inscriptions that speak of a forgotten prophecy related to the axolotl spirits. A spellcaster learns of these spirits and their secluding in area 12.
3	A mysterious traveler (thief), claiming to be the last descendant of the Sand Whisperers, arrives at the temple. She seeks assistance to restore the ancient balance and pacify the agitated axolotl spirits. She is unsure of the characters (Reaction).
4	The spectral figures of the axolotl spirits appear from the ether, guiding or misleading travelers through the temple's corridors.
5	A section of the floor collapses, plunging adventurers into a spiked pit. It deals 3d6 damage (DC 14 DEX for half).
6	The cult performs a sun-worshipping ritual in area 8. It awakes a dormant lesser fire elemental bound to the temple.



1. ENTRANCE IN THE DESERT

Crumbling, sun-bleached stone pillars rise from the sands, half-buried under dunes. A stairway descends into the cool depths under the Shimmering Sands.

► **The Journey.** From the nearest settlement, it takes the characters 5 days to traverse the Shimmering Sands and reach this place. Without desert clothing and supplies, they fail horribly and die in the merciless desert.

2. HALL OF THE DYING SUN

In the subterranean chapel, a defaced marble statue stands solemnly, its features scarred. Flickering brazier light casts eerie shadows over the wooden pews.

► **Believers.** Four cultists (**peasants**) pray here. The deluded people attack trespassers with zealous ferocity.

► **The Effigy.** What once was a statue of the axolotl deities was re-sculpted into the shape of the sun, broken and decrepit; testament to the new faith that lives here.

3. WEST BARRACKS

New, low-ranking members of the Children of the Scorching Ray gather here to sleep. The room contains nine double bunk beds and smells of sweat and stagnation.

► **Cultists.** At any given time, there are 2d3 **peasants** and 1d2 **cultists** here. If the characters are stealthy, they may catch them unaware and perhaps sleeping.

► **Treasure (2 XP).** The wooden chests in the room contain 25 gp, 58 sp, and one *potion of healing*.

4. KITCHEN AND LARDER

The kitchen is well stocked and contains enough food and supplies to feed the cult for two weeks. Low-ranking members do supply runs every couple of days.

► **The Cooks.** There are four **peasants** here working all day long. Two of the cooks, Janna and Arael, have come to regret their association with the Children of the Scorching Ray and may join the characters (**Reaction**).

5. EAST BARRACKS

This area is similar to the western barracks (area 3) but it contains seven double bunk beds. And the locked, wooden doorways to the cult leaders' quarters.

► **Cultists.** At any given time, there are 2d2 **peasants** and 1d2 **cultists** here. If the characters are stealthy, they may catch them unaware. There is a 2-in-6 chance that the high priestess (Lv-2 priest) is present.

► **Treasure (1 XP).** The wooden chests in the room contain 15 gp, 28 sp, and two flasks of oil.

6. HIGH PRIEST'S QUARTERS

Shadowed by flickering torches, the chamber harbors sinister tomes and a cursed altar. Eerie whispers linger in the air, as if the priest were speaking nearby.

The high priest is not present. The barely audible whispers are an arcane echo of the many spells studied here.

► **The Tomes.** Reviewing the tomes on the desk for 1 **crawling round** reveals the history of the Children of the Scorching Ray and of their belief that the sun is dying. It is also revealed that the cult blocked passage to some chambers to keep beleaguered spirits away.

► **Treasure (3 XP).** The stone shelf contains eight random priest scrolls of tiers one and two.

7. HIGH PRIESTESS'S QUARTERS

In the priestess's lair, a magic circle etches the stone floor, encircled by arcane symbols. Dark tapestries and flickering candles cast an unsettling ambiance.

The priestess's quarters are rather humble compared to her male counterpart. The high priestess (Lv-2 priest) is here unless she was encountered in area 5.

► **The Circle.** The runes spell a binding incantation. Though the work is amateurish and rough (DC 14 INT).

8. HALL OF RITUALS

The high priest (Lv-4 priest) celebrates a ritual in the company of one **cultist** and three **peasants**. Their objective is to drain the axolotl spirit's life force to bring forth the consumption and eventual death of the sun.

► **The Blockade.** The hallway to area 10 is obstructed with debris and boulders. It takes a group of three people 2 **crawling rounds** to clear the hallway. Failure by 5 or more causes a random creature to take 1d6 damage.

9. THE SECRET VAULT

Pulling a switch in area 8 causes the wall to swing inward and reveal a narrow path to this vault (DC 14 WIS).

► **Treasure (8 XP).** The vault contains 350 gp, 1840 sp, two *potions of healing*, a set of chain mail armor, a crowbar, two jade bracelets (10 gp each), and four torches.

10. TOMB OF AXOLOTL WARRIORS

The silent chamber holds eight upright sarcophagi adorned with intricately engraved axolotls. Each enclosure a timeless sentinel of past transgressions.

► **The Enclosures.** The remains of ancient Sand Whisperer warriors devoted to the axolotl spirits are interred here. From the scripts, it appears they were amphibious.

11. FORLORN EFFIGIES

Pulling a switch in areas 8 or 12 causes the wall to swing inward and reveal a narrow path here (DC 14 WIS).

► **The Effigies.** This room was never found by the cultists. The four statues here remain pristine; they depict strange amphibian creatures with wing-like gills and reptilian features. A priest knows recognizes them as the axolotl spirits, a kind of small, not well known deities.

12. SHRINE OF THE AXOLOTL SPIRITS

This mystical shrine is adorned with gilded vases, an ornate sarcophagus, and vivid axolotl mosaics. They radiate ancient magic that speaks of elusive secrets.

The nine axolotl spirits inhabit this chamber. They keep the cultists out of this place, their last refuge. The magical axolotls appear and beg the characters to drive off the Children of the Scorching Ray so that they can once again roam freely in the temple. If antagonized, the nine axolotls fuse and attack (**lesser water elemental**).

If the characters help remove the cultists, the axolotls are in their debt. The spirits are powerful allies that may one day intercede in the characters' affairs to aid them. Alas, that is an adventure for another day..



THE RAT KING

A GM supplement about an insidious rodent abomination by Ian Brooks



Your search for the missing people around town has led you to the sewers. Trudging through the filth and darkness you end up in a cistern. In the center is a single rat, with glowing red eyes and a sinister grin it speaks to you telepathically. “Leave now, or die!” Turning back is not an option, and so the rat cackles as the ground shakes. Thousands of rats burst into the room from tunnels surrounding the cistern, falling onto the lone rat. They combine into a writhing mass of teeth and tails, coalescing into The Rat King.

NATURE AND BEHAVIOR



Rat kings are created when swarms of rats entangle their tails, causing them to thrash and die. This Rat King is created similarly, but instead of scrambling to escape from the knot, the rats work together. They form a bond; they survive and thrive. Eventually, this gets the attention of a higher being. This can be a patron of rats, a witch, or some other magical being. Either way, the Rat King is born. Granted high intelligence and telepathy, each rat now makes up this one being. While the rats can be sent off to work independently, they are still a piece of the Rat King and they are its eyes and ears as long as they live. While powerful, it can take years for a Rat King to feel safe and they never willingly put themselves in danger or risk losing what they have gained. This means that Rat Kings are very secretive, sending their rats as scouts to find food or gather intel. The first years of their life are spent trying to find a safe place to gather resources and garnering more rats to join them. Rat Kings are ambitious vermin and try to use subterfuge to take over villages or entire cities if possible. Sewers are prime locations for Rat Kings because of the number of rats, and the proximity of food and political influence that a city offers.



FEARSOME FOES

RAT KINGS HAVE many otherworldly abilities, both physical and magical. Being a mass of rats, they can crawl through just about any space, allowing a quick retreat. They can also break down into swarms of rats, but this diminishes the power of the Rat King and is only done strategically. As previously mentioned, they have the power to speak telepathically with any creature nearby. This range applies to any of its rats, no matter where their location is. This means that a Rat King could have agents all over a town, city, or land. Speaking telepathically to anyone, anywhere. They can also use these agents to possess an unwilling creature. If one of their rats is consumed by a creature, most likely forcibly, then the Rat King will have full control of them as long as the rat is alive. The victims can retain their features, but after they outlive their usefulness the Rat King can choose to change them into Rat Guards instead. Their hair and teeth fall out and are replaced, their snouts are elongated, their fingernails turn into claws, and their spine is twisted and pulled to form a tail. They are strong, vicious, and loyal to their creator. Myths say that defeating a Rat King turns Rat Guards back to normal.

The overall format for playing a Rat King should be one of subterfuge, reconnaissance, and deception. Rat Kings are elusive and try to keep their existence a secret. They amass as much power as possible, both in the number of rats they can gather, and also in political power.

For instance, a Rat King may start its monstrous life in a small village. They may notice that the local chief has a daughter, who in turn owns a pet. The Rat King may want to possess the pet to get closer to the chief, before possessing them and using the village's resources to benefit the Rat King. This is just one example, but it can be scaled to a village, a city, or an entire empire.

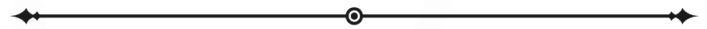


THE RAT'S BANE

DEFEATING A RAT King may seem simple: just kill all of the rats, right? However, while that approach is possible with younger Rat Kings, there may be a million rats to kill in older ones and any party of heroes would die before they make a dent in its sheer numbers. The real weakness of a Rat King is the knot in its tail. The knot is at the very bottom center of the creature. They protect this knot above everything else, so getting to it is hard.

This encounter should be less about health, and more about strategy. The characters may come up with traps that, when triggered, open a hole in their defenses. They may also quest for a magical item or ability to help them succeed. Or they can build an environment that can be used to their advantage. Rat Kings are evil creatures, and using holy magic or items may weaken them.

Whatever you decide, remember that this is a fight of attrition. The adventurers must weaken the Rat King by reducing its numbers in large swaths, and dealing damage to its core knot whenever possible. When sufficient hits to the core have been made, the Rat King is defeated.



The Rat King

A massive mound of rat tails and fur that moves. A screeching tidal wave of clawing and biting rats.

AC: 11

HP: 36 **LV** 7

ATK: 5 bite +0 (1 + disease)

MV: Near

S: -2 **D:** +0 **C:** +1 **I:** +2 **W:** +1 **Ch:** -1



Disease. 1d4 CON damage (DC 9 CON). Repeat check 1/day; ends on success. Die at 0 CON.

Split. The Rat King splits into two halves when reduced to half its Hit Points. Each half has 9 HP but retains all five attacks.

THE DISHONOR OF THIEVES



By Elven Tower and Chibbin Grove

Designed for use with

ShadowDark RPG



LEVEL-3 ADVENTURE

A SHADOWDARK ADVENTURE ABOUT BREAKING INTO THE THIEVES GUILD TO ROB THEM

THE ENOCHIAN HARBOR

“Welcome to our little hell on earth. You’d better keep a low profile, scoundrel. You don’t wanna get caught between The Phantom and The Viper’s affairs”.

Random peasant

In the shadowed realm of the Central Coast lies the Enochian Harbor, a bastion of nefarious deeds and clandestine exchanges. Enshrouded in a perpetual mist that clings to the cobbled stones like a malevolent spirit, the harbor presents an ominous facade to any who dare to tread its quays. This is a place whispered about in hushed tones across taverns and dark alleys; a haven for the scoundrel, the rogue, and the unscrupulous, where the law of the land is dictated not by justice, but by power and coin.

Here, within the labyrinth of narrow, winding streets and decrepit buildings, the guilds of thieves hold their sinister sway. Cloaked figures move with a serpentine grace through the shadows, their eyes glinting with secrets and schemes. The air is heavy with the scent of brine and the unsavory odor of deceit. The harbor’s infamous marketplace, known as the Serpent’s Embrace, teems with black market trades and illicit goods, ranging from stolen relics to forbidden tomes, all guarded by the steely gaze of cutthroats and smugglers.

OLD ENEMIES

WITHIN THE ENOCHIAN Harbor, two figures stand out as the embodiment of its perilous allure: Maris ‘The Viper’ Blackwater and Valtor ‘The Phantom’ Thorn.

Maris. She is a thief whose reputation precedes her like a chilling whisper in the night. With brown hair that cascades over her shoulders, dozens of tattoos, and piercing emerald eyes, Maris moves with an elegance that belies her deadly nature. She is the mastermind behind the most audacious heists the harbor has ever seen, her schemes as intricate as the web of a spider.

Valtor. In stark contrast, Valtor Thorn is a shadow in the night, a ghost whose presence is felt but seldom seen. Clad in a cloak of midnight blue, his face forever marked by combat, Valtor is the silent blade, the unseen threat that haunts the nightmares of the corrupt and the powerful. A master of stealth and acrobatics, capable of infiltrating the most secure of strongholds without leaving a trace. Valtor’s motives are enigmatic, his actions unpredictable, yet always precise and calculated. There are rumors that he seeks vengeance, a personal vendetta that drives his every move, though none can say for sure. What is certain is that his allegiance is to himself alone, and his loyalty cannot be bought with gold or threats.

Together, Maris ‘The Viper’ Blackwater and Valtor ‘The Phantom’ Thorn are the twin terrors of the Central Coast. Allies one moment and adversaries the next, their complex relationship adds yet another layer of intrigue and danger to this haven of thieves. While they lurk in the shadows, no secret is safe, and no treasure is secure in the treacherous waters of The Enochian Harbor.

ADVENTURE HOOK

Level 3 Adventure

THE GAME OF CAT AND MOUSE

Drawn by tales of corruption, heroes venture into the Enochian Harbor, only to be ensnared in the schemes of Maris and Valtor. In this den of deceit, they face a dilemma: forge a tenuous alliance with them or oppose them outright. Navigating a web of intrigue and danger, the heroes’ journey challenges their morals and mettle, as they confront the grim dark essence of the harbor.

RUMORS

d6	Details
1	Maris ‘The Viper’ once stole the Crown of the Moonlit King from a heavily guarded fortress, vanishing without a trace.
2	Whispers circulate that Maris and Valtor were once lovers, their split marked by a legendary duel atop the Harbor’s lighthouse during a tempest. However, everyone has a different version of this encounter. Only the part about being lovers remains true.
3	Rumor has it that Valtor ‘The Phantom’ can pass through walls, a skill he allegedly used to infiltrate the Royal Archives.
4	Some believe Valtor possesses an enchanted dagger that controls shadows, a gift from a witch he saved from execution.
5	Tavern tales describe that Maris charmed a dragon to guard her most precious loot, hidden in a cavern beneath the harbor.
6	There is a persistent legend that Valtor was once a noble from a distant land, turned rogue after being betrayed by his own family, vowing to dismantle their corrupt empire. If he was ever a noble, he has forsaken his long-gone past and his vow.



Harbor Features

► **Events.** Check for a **Random Event** every time the heroes visit a new area in the harbor (4-in-6 chance).

► **Atmosphere.** A palpable sense of danger and intrigue pervades the air. As shadowy figures flit through the fog, their whispers meld with the distant crash of waves.

SETUP

The characters come to the Central Coast and arrive in the Enochian Harbor by boat. They have come to rid the city of their two main criminal figures, or perhaps to help one of them destroy the other (see **Adventure Hooks**).

1. POINT OF ARRIVAL

The heroes are greeted by the eerie sight of fog-en-shrouded small vessels, buildings, and dim, flickering lanterns. The creak of old wood and the salty tang of the sea air mingle with a sense of foreboding, hinting at the hidden dangers that lurk in the shadow-ridden harbor.

2. MAIN DOCKS

A group of five **bandits** confronts the heroes when they descend from their boat. “*Look, we must give our new friends a proper welcome, courtesy of the Viper and the Phantom*”. The men wield their weapons menacingly and try to rob the heroes but flee if the battle goes south.

3. FELDON’S WARES AND GEAR

The cramped store brims with an eclectic array of wares and gear. Shelves are laden with curiously crafted weapons, and gleaming armors bear unknown sigils. Feldon, a grizzled, old sailor with a knowing glint in his eye, haggles over prices in hushed tones. The characters can purchase commonplace items and traveling gear here.

4. BAEOR’S BOATS

A small, weather-beaten shop stands on the corner; its sign reads “*Baelor’s Boats: Rentals & Repairs.*” Inside, Baelor, a seasoned sailor, offers not just boats, but invaluable advice on navigating the treacherous local waters.

RANDOM EVENTS

d6

Details

- 1 One of the heroes, at random, realizes that somehow, a cryptic note ended up in their pocket. The paper hints at a hidden treasure within the thieves' guild. The ugly handwriting describes one of the kegs behind the bar stores silver coins instead of mead.
- 2 A street urchin, skilled in pickpocketing, attempts to steal from the party (DC 13 WIS). On a fail, a random hero loses 3d6 gp.
- 3 The heroes witness a high-stakes duel between rival pirates (**thugs**) over disputed loot (100 gp), with an unexpected invitation to join the winning side. "20% of the gold if you help me knock down this bastard!". Then, the losing side offers 30%.
- 4 A fortune teller offers to reveal the heroes' future. Her prophecies are disturbingly intertwined with the history of the harbor.
- 5 A raid by the city guard turns a routine stroll into a chaotic brawl. The aftermath: two men arrested, and one injured guard.
- 6 A charismatic gambler challenges the heroes to a game of wits and chance. Entry: 250 gp. A map to a shipwreck is the price.

Waltor the Phantom

A thief who blends a theatrical flair with a stealthy, mysterious demeanor akin to a legendary rock star.

AC: 14 (leather)

HP: 18 **LV:** 4

ATK: 2 dagger (close/near) +3 (1d4)

MV: Near

S:+1 **D:**+2 **C:**+1 **I:**+1 **W:**+0 **Ch:**+3

Stealthy. ADV on checks to sneak and hide.

Misty Step. A magic stone with runes. It allows the user to cast this spell twice a day.

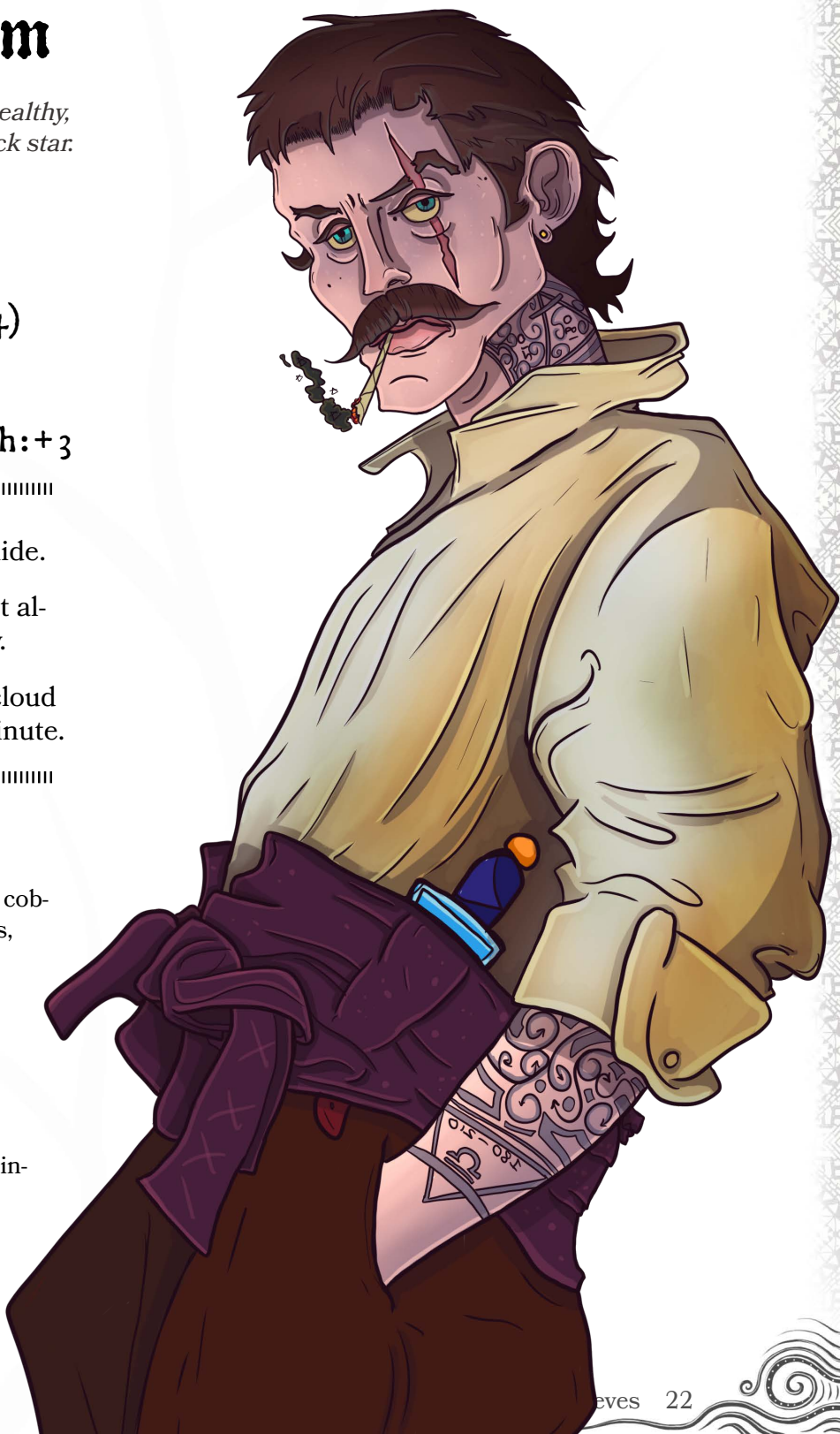
Shadow Dagger. Once a day, create a cloud of dense black smoke in near. It lasts 1 minute.

5. THE HARBOR STREETS

The Enochian Harbor's streets, a labyrinth of cobblestones, are alive with a bustling mix of sailors, merchants, and rogues by day, transforming into shadowy, secretive corridors under the cloak of night. Each turn blends the vibrant hum of commerce with an air of danger and mystery, echoing the harbor's dual nature.

6. THE SERPENT'S EMBRACE

At the heart of this underworld bazaar, Maris's influence delicately weaves through every transaction and whispered conversation. Maris ensures that the balance of power remains in favor of thieves and rogues.



THE THIEVES GUILD

“Trust is elusive. Remember, in the grim game of thieves and shadows, it is not about whom you decide to trust, but rather how long you can trust them.”

Valtor, the Phantom Thorn



during their time in the harbor, the characters learn facts that may further boost their determination or their reasons to seek Maris or Valtor. Consider the following:

▶ **Great Treasure.** The heroes learn of the large amount of gold and artifacts that Maris has stolen and amassed within the guild. This gold not only belongs to the people, it is crucial for the city's growth and prosperity.

▶ **Uncover a Larger Conspiracy.** The party discovers that Valtor Thorn holds key information about a sprawling conspiracy that threatens the region. They need his location and cooperation to unravel this plot. But the party has no way to know if The Phantom shall aid them.

▶ **Quest for Justice.** One of the heroes has a personal vendetta or a moral obligation to bring these criminals to justice. No room for negotiation. No compromises are to be considered. Both Maris and Valtor are to be brought to the light of the law and punished for their crimes.

▶ **An Unlikely Alliance.** The heroes require the specific skills or knowledge possessed by Maris, Valtor, or both. These two criminals are needed to achieve a goal that aligns with the greater good, forcing the heroes to negotiate and collaborate with these notorious figures.

THE GREAT DILEMMA

THE HEROES NOW have a reason to seek Maris and Valtor. They must explore the harbor to learn more about the thieves and their lair (see **Getting There**). If the heroes do not need gold, do not seek justice, or are neutral to the idea of teaming up with the thieves, the larger conspiracy may still direct their efforts (see area 11).

THE GUILD TODAY

MARIS AND VALTOR currently have a tenuous truce. Their partnership forged out of mutual benefit in a landscape rife with danger and deceit. However, the air between them is charged with tension, as each is well aware of the other's cunning and capacity for betrayal. This alliance, though potent, is as fragile as a spider web, liable to unravel at the slightest push or provocation.

GETTING THERE

THE HEROES MUST visit at least five areas in the Enochian Harbor to learn about one of the thieves' guild's entry points. They must spot the guild's clues and marks on the streets to spot one of them (DC 13 WIS). On a fail, the heroes stumble upon two **thugs** and three **thieves** who have discovered their intentions. Roll 1d3 to determine which of the entrances they find (E1, E2, or E3).

E1. SOUTH SEWER ENTRANCE

The heroes infiltrate the criminals' lair through the sewers. To reach this area though, they must defeat two **giant rats** and three **rats** that stand in their way.

1. LEADER'S OFFICE

A large, sturdy desk cluttered with maps and daggers. The room bears the marks of the two leaders' distinct personalities: Maris's elegant, deadly artifacts interspersed with Valtor's mysterious, shadowy tools.

▶ **Treasure.** The heroes may spend a **crawling round** to search the room. 213 gp and a **+1 dagger** are the heroes' reward for their curiosity. However, they also draw the attention of a **berserker** and two **bandits**. (5 XP).

RANDOM EVENTS

d6	Details
1	As the heroes explore a seemingly normal room, a volley of bolts rains over them (DC 11 DEX). Creatures that were not fast enough to jump away take 1d6 damage. The clever machinery on the ceiling reloads after 1 crawling round .
2	The heroes overhear a conversation. The leader of the Central Coast, Lord Elric, is said to be involved in dark dealings.
3	A valiant knight wishes to help, but only if the heroes' goal is to stop Maris and Valtor. Otherwise, the man tries to stop them too.
4	An expert bandit (20 HP, 14 AC, +3 <i>shortsword</i>) attacks the heroes using stealth and agility to strike from the shadows (DC 13 WIS to spot the enemy). This elite warrior does not fight to the death and attempts to flee if greatly injured.
5	The heroes stumble upon a party of guild members. A berserker , a thug , and an apprentice hesitate for a second (Reaction).
6	Two mastiffs smell the heroes. They start barking when they see them. The hounds are goofy. Any food buys their friendship.



1 Leader's Office

2 Alchemy Lab

3a Tavern Patron Room

3b Tavern Bar

4 Keg Cellar

5 Rat Familiar Pen

6 Vault

7 Secret Cave Vault

8 Main Lobby

9 Training Room

10 Interrogation Room

11 Library of Stolen Tomes

12 Room of Scholarly Pursuits

13 Armoury

14 Dorm

15 Shrine to Cats Eyes

16 Blackcat Market

E1 South Sewer Entrance

E2 Harbour Manhole Entrance

E3 East Cave Hidden Exit

A MORAL DILEMMA

The heroes face a profound moral quandary. The guild's operations, though illicit, provide a lifeline to the destitute, the forgotten, and the poor. The guild offers food, shelter, and a sense of belonging, things that the city never cared or bothered to provide. Not to them. The heroes can act freely, but their decision to take down the guild could mean destabilizing the fragile ecosystem of the harbor, potentially plunging countless lives into further despair. This dilemma challenges the heroes to seek a solution that balances their pursuit of justice with the need to protect the weak and the innocent.

7. SECRET CAVE VAULT

This cave's entrance is concealed (DC 14 WIS). The characters have advantage if any of them thought the treasure in area 6 could not be all of it (see above). On a success, the heroes notice the edges of the slidable section of the north wall and spot a button brick.

Counting the amount of gold within this cave requires an entire day and at least three people (12,000 gp). This is what Maris and Valtor have amassed through the years and one of the main reasons their relationship is so volatile. Most of this hoard belongs to the good people of Central Coast, though. And Maris and Valtor would die before surrendering even a single coin from it.

E2. HARBOR MANHOLE ENTRANCE

If the characters enter through this area, they stumble across six **peasants** and one **bandit**. The party is allowed to pass unless they act suspiciously (**Reaction**).

8. MAIN LOBBY

There are a dozen **peasants**, four **thieves**, two **bandits**, and one **thug** here at any given time. One of the peasants is a musician, a satyr bard who uses his magic tricks to play the violin while holding it backward. His merry voice and music fill the hall with beautiful melodies that describe Maris and Valtor's feats. The rest play cards, smoke, chat, or mind their business. The characters may stay unnoticed if they keep their faces down.

9. TRAINING ROOM

The guild teacher (**thief**) gives some fencing lessons to eight young men and women: guild prospects and future members (**peasants**). Their faces and features betray them; some cannot be older than 13 or 14 at most.

10. INTERROGATION ROOM

Valtor 'The Phantom' Thorn interrogates a man chained to a table. Before the characters can say or do anything, Valtor yells: "*Confess!*". The lord of thieves smiles and stares at the intruders. "*You won't fight me. If you have a brain, you'll hear what he has to say*".

► **Plot Twist.** The man on the table is none other than Lord Elric's right hand, Lord Saskel. The man is broken and he spills everything he knows. Lord Elric, the maximum authority in the Central Coast is secretly corrupted to the core. With half the city guard under his payroll, along with paramount members of the court, the megalomaniac controls all. Ironically, the Guild of Thieves, combined with Maris and Valtor's feats, is the only thing that stands between Lord Elric and his evil goals.

► **Choices.** The characters are free to decide what to do. All things are possible (see **Epigraph**).

11. LIBRARY OF STOLEN TOMES

Maris's library, a hidden sanctum within the labyrinthine confines of the thieves' guild, is a testament to her passion for rare and ancient knowledge. Each book and scroll in this collection has been meticulously acquired by Maris during her numerous heists. This is not just a hoard of stolen items; it is a carefully curated archive of forbidden lore reflecting Maris's deep-seated reverence for knowledge and the lengths she will go to obtain it.

Maris 'The Viper' Blackwater is here. She studies and plans, surrounded by the secrets of a thousand worlds. Three **thieves** hide from enemy eyes (DC 13 WIS). They jump to defend their leader if the need arises.

► **Plot Twist.** The guild feeds a lot of mouths, creates jobs, and has become a home for many. The library teaches many people how to read and write.

12. ROOM OF SCHOLARLY PURSUITS

Some members of the guild are magic adepts. Their advances are slow and without a proper teacher, their skills are limited. Three **apprentices** study here. They are unsure and afraid to fight intruders, though.

13. ARMOURY

Two **thugs** oversee two young men (**peasants**) organizing the items, cleaning, or honing the blades. They are unsure about any unexpected visitors (**Reaction**).

14. DORM

Bunk beds aligned to the walls and the central section of the room allow for members of the guild to sleep or rest. Six **peasants** and four **bandits** sleep at any given time. The characters must be stealthy (DC 11 DEX) or a thief hears them and yells to warn the rest.

► **Secret Passage.** One of the armoires at the end of the room hides a passageway to a tunnel (DC 13 WIS).

15. SHRINE TO CATS' EYES

In a secluded chamber lies a shrine to Cat's Eyes, the revered lord of thieves. This spot serves as a place of quiet contemplation for the guild members, who seek guidance and blessings before their clandestine endeavors.

E3. EAST CAVE HIDDEN EXIT

The characters find the least used entrance to the guild. They automatically spot the armoire with the fake bottom when they reach the end of the corridor. The people at the dorm (area 14) wake up when the characters enter if they do not conceal their presence in any way.

16. BLACKCAT MARKET

The Blackcat Market is a bustling hub of commerce exclusively for guild members, from expertly forged documents to stealth-enhancing gear. Here, amidst the low murmur of haggling and the clink of coins, members find rare and specialized tools essential for their covert operations, all under the watchful eyes of trusted vendors.

ADVENTURE CONCLUSION

THE CHARACTERS REACH the end of this adventure and face the consequences of their deeds.

THE GREATER GOOD

Despite the complex web of morality surrounding Maris and Valtor's operations, allowing them to continue unchecked poses great danger. Resolute in their duty to uphold justice, the heroes steel themselves for the inevitable confrontation, prepared to arrest the infamous duo or, if met with resistance, to take more drastic measures.

The decision weighs heavily upon them, a sobering reminder of the harsh realities of their quest to root out corruption and crime. One thing is certain, after getting rid of the two people who meant hope for many, the heroes become enemy number one of the little folk, the poor, and the destitute; all former guild members.

A BIGGER FISH

In a twist of fate, the heroes forge a temporary truce with Maris and Valtor, recognizing a greater threat in the deceptive schemes of Lord Elric Davenwell. United by a common goal, they agree to collaborate, using their combined strengths and resources to expose and confront the corrupt lord. This uneasy alliance marks a pivotal moment in their quest, blurring the lines between friend and foe in the pursuit of higher justice. How the heroes reveal that Lord Elric Davenwell is a despicable person of terrible reputation is an adventure for another day...

UNEXPECTED DEVELOPMENT

What if the heroes defeat the two crime lords and take over the guild? What if they believe in Maris and Valtor's cause and wish to become guild members even after the defeat of Lord Elric? Or, on the other hand, will the heroes become Lord Elric's protégés after they defeat the guild? Perhaps Lord Elric shall end up being a greater danger, once he gets his hands on the guild's treasures. All these are marvelous tales for another day...



GREAT HALL OF CONTAINMENT

Deep beneath the earth, where the roots of mountains intertwine with the fabric of forgotten ages, lies the Great Hall of Containment. Shrouded in enigma and accessible only through the art of teleportation, the vault is a testament to ancient magics long gone.

THE DUNGEON REMAINS hidden from the mundane world. Its location is a closely guarded secret, known only to a select few who have mastered the intricate patterns of teleportation magic. This method of access ensures that the vault remains untouched by trespassers.

The entrance to the Great Hall is sealed by a massive door, crafted from an alloy of mithral and obsidian. This door is locked by an elaborate mechanism that involves four arcane devices, each embodying a unique aspect of the elemental planes. These intricate clockwork constructs require semi-simultaneous operation. Beyond this gate lies a remarkable feature - a serene pond filled with a shimmering, iridescent, alchemical oil. This mystical liquid, a rare concoction of alchemists and spellweavers from a bygone era, possesses the extraordinary ability to contain sentient souls and living-spells within its depths. The oil's surface mirrors the cosmos.

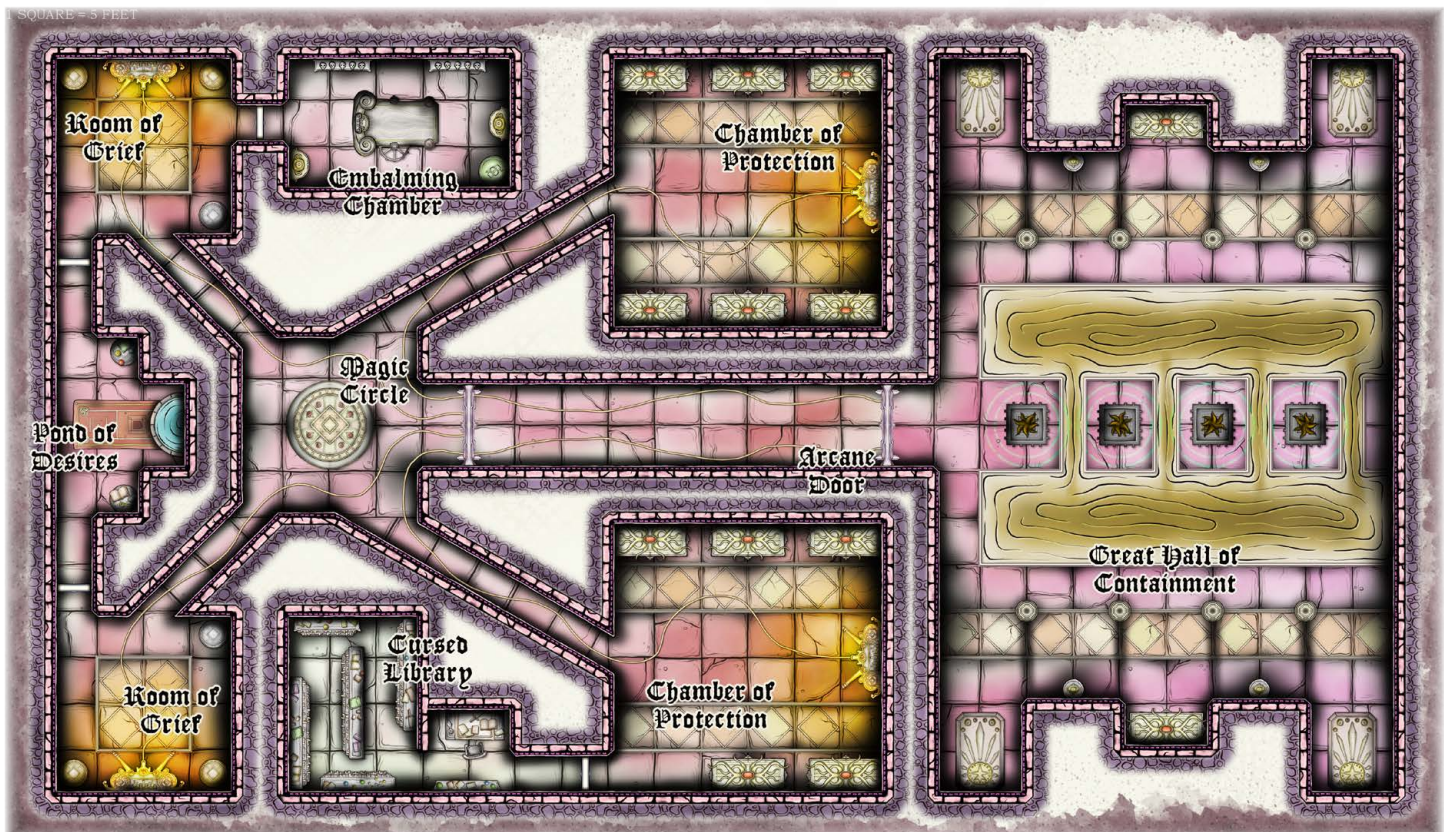
Many legends surround the Great Hall of Containment, tales of ambitious mages and daring adventurers who sought the hall's secrets, only to be lost in its depths or overcome by the fearsome guardians that guard it.

ADVENTURE HOOK

Preventing Disaster. Magister Elarion, a respected figure in the arcane community, has been troubled by recurring prophetic dreams. These visions depict the Great Hall of Containment, a legendary and nearly forgotten vault said to house a pond of alchemical oil. The oil has been used as a prison for souls and out-of-control living-spells. In his dreams, a build-up of arcane energy looms imminent, threatening to unleash the pond's contained horrors upon the world. The magister hires the characters due to their reputation. They must teleport to the dungeon at once; the magister procures the rune sequence for this spell. The characters must investigate the source of this build-up, neutralize it, and re-seal the Great Hall of Containment so that it lies dormant again. If possible, it should be stable forever (3 XP, 1,400 gp).

Level 5 Adventure

- **Danger.** Unsafe. Check for a **Random Event** every 3 crawling rounds and after loud noises (4-in-6 chance).
- **Light.** Some areas have braziers with permanent **light** spells. The undead denizens are **dark-adapted**.
- **Architecture.** The stone walls are decorated with swirling patterns that mimic flowing water. The ceilings are 40 feet tall, domed, and untouched by light.



RANDOM EVENTS

d6	Details
1	Ethereal whispers distract and disorient up to two random characters as per the spell <i>confusion</i> .
2	A stone golem suddenly activates and detaches from a wall. It guards the area with unyielding force.
3	Glowing runes on the floor pulse ominously. Stepping on them triggers a jet of fire to erupt from the walls. The trap deals 3d6 damage (DC 14 DEX for half).
4	A magical current of wind traverses the entire dungeon. All light sources are immediately extinguished.
5	The confused spirit of a former guardian roams the place (shadow), offering cryptic warnings or unexpected aid. Its intentions are unclear and shifting (Reaction).
6	An oil overflow causes a lesser air elemental to appear nearby. The being is disoriented (Reaction).

MAGIC CIRCLE

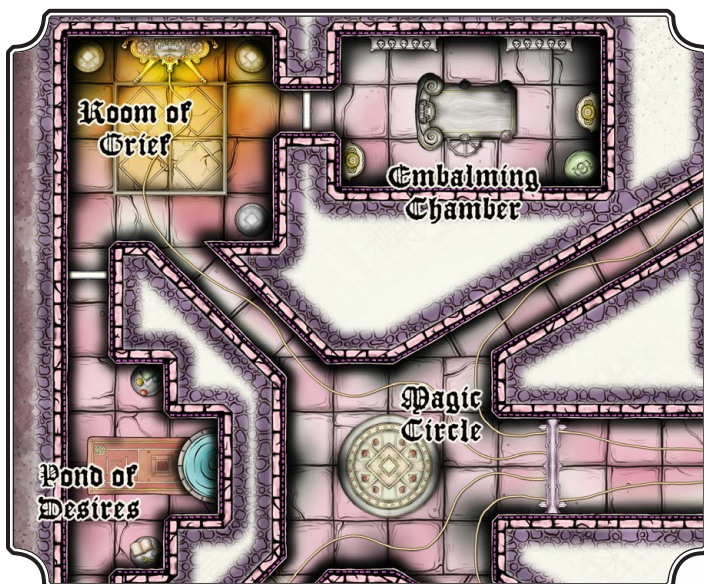
A chamber dimly lit by an intricate runic circle, pulsating softly. Across, a massive gate connected to four humming cables exudes an ominous energy.

► **Cables.** Each is crafted with obsidian and mithral. They are fixed in place. Each cable leads away to its respective arcane device. If a cable is cut, the vault gates cannot be opened anymore until it is repaired.

ROOM OF GRIEF

A complex clockwork device whirs ceaselessly, its gears turning as it works. Around it, three ancient stone plinths stand, inscribed with forgotten runes.

► **The Device.** Whoever operates the device by pulling the lever causes the apparatus to distill the person's grief into a quasi-physical form. The embodied sentiment is recognizable to them. It (**wraith**) attacks all living creatures without mercy. Operating the devices in both chambers labeled Room of Grief causes the first arcane gate to the Great Hall of Containment to open.



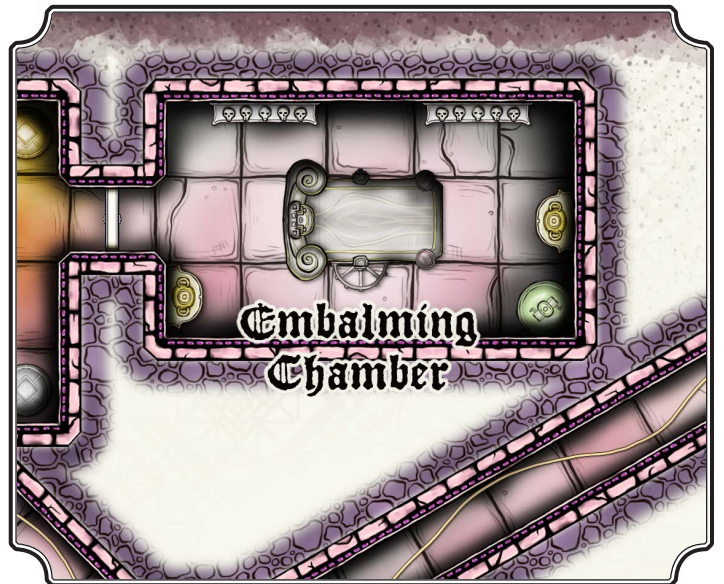
POND OF DESIRES

This serene chamber holds a circular pond, its crystal-clear waters reflecting the darkness above. An embroidered red rug extends from it, flanked by two plinths littered with an array of varied trinkets.

► **Ambiance.** The chamber is calm and carries a feeling of safety and warmth, unlike the rest of the dungeon. This is the only chamber where the party can rest safely.

► **The Pond.** Eight silver coins lie at the bottom. Stealing them incurs a curse (Disadvantage on all checks for 1d4 days, no save). Throwing a coin into the pond and meditating for 1 **crawling round** awards **luck token**.

► **The Journal.** A tome lies open on one of the plinths, its author unknown. Its entries describe the oil pond in the vault and how it contains countless souls and spells. It can be used to acquire arcane knowledge, a dangerous affair. It also explains its imperfection, arcane forces accumulate over time, rendering it a dangerous place.



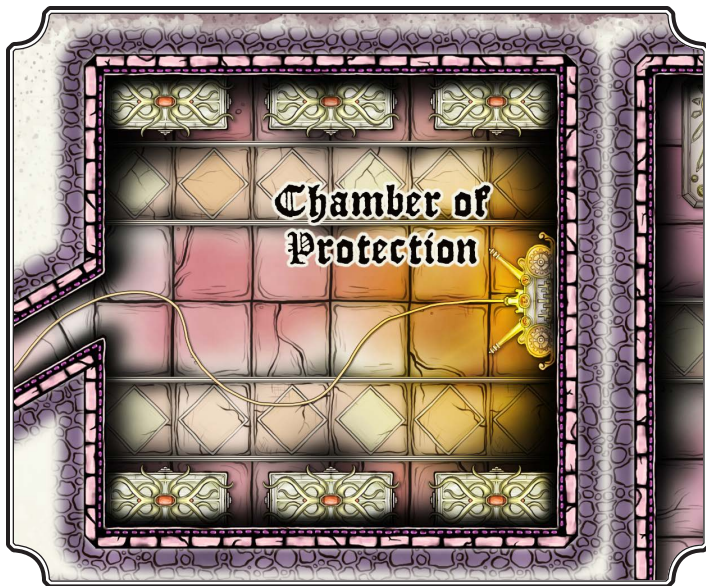
EMBALMING CHAMBER

The walls of this room are lined with shelves bearing rusted tools, skulls, and bottled substances. The air is heavy with the scent of inorganic preservers.

► **The Table.** The bloodstained metal surface is lined with metal straps, cogs, and levers that reveal a secondary purpose of arduous torture. It can be inferred that some subjects were embalmed alive (DC 12 INT).

► **The Skulls.** There are ten skulls across two shelves. They turn around and gaze at newcomers. Each answers a question posed to it. The information revealed by them is false, treacherous, and ill-intended (DC 13 WIS).

► **Treasure (3 XP).** The two gilded vases by the walls contain 18 pounds of finely powdered silver (3 gear slots each). Each of the lots can be sold for 300 gp.



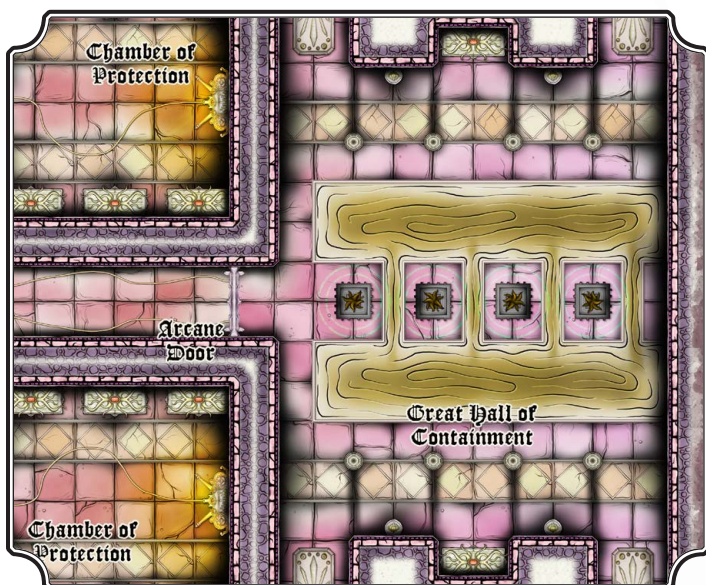
CHAMBER OF PROTECTION

A complex clockwork device whirs ceaselessly, its gears turning as it works. Sarcophagi with heavy, lavishly-decorated lids flank line the tall stone walls.

► **The Device.** Pulling a lever causes the machine to increase its speed and erupt thick smoke. Then, the guardians appear (see below). Operating the devices in both chambers labeled Chamber of Protection causes the second gate to the Great Hall of Containment to open.

► **The Guardians.** Six ravenous **ghasts** emerge stumbling from the enclosures when the arcane machine is activated. They are merciless and fight until slain. From the scarring, cuts, and stitches on their bodies, a healer discovers that they were the hapless victims of ritualistic embalming ceremonies (DC 16 WIS check).

► **Treasure (3 XP).** Inside the sarcophagi, there are 250 gp, 1,780 sp, two *potions of healing*, two flasks of oil, and four random tier-2 wizard *spell scrolls*.

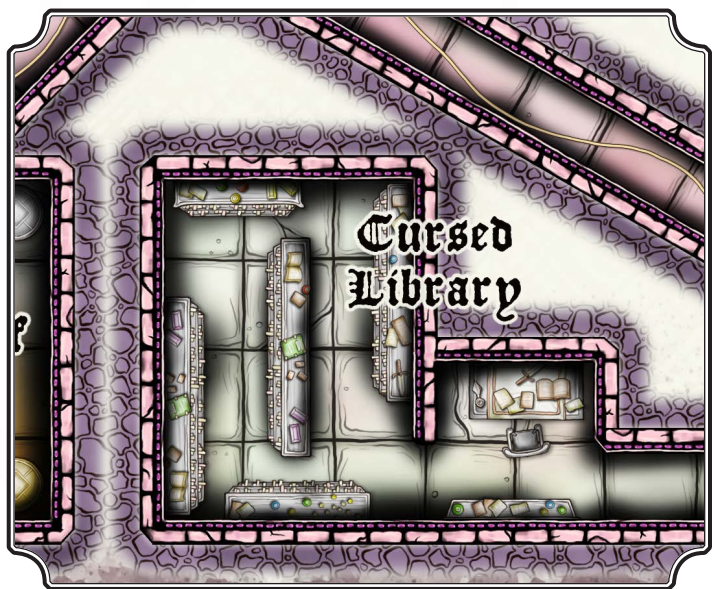


CURSED LIBRARY

The collection of tomes, parchments, and books contains an accurate record of all the people whose souls are imprisoned in the Great Hall of Containment. Many can be recognized as terrible wizards, warlords, and immortal beings from several centuries ago (DC 14 INT). Two books go into in-depth descriptions of the living-spells captured therein but the arcane ramblings were written by an apprentice and make little sense to a wizard.

ARCANE DOOR

Each of the two gates is made from an alloy of mithral and obsidian and cannot be breached by means available to mortal beings. Operating the devices in the Chambers of Grief and the Chambers of Protection is required to access to Great Hall of Containment beyond.



GREAT HALL OF CONTAINMENT

Beneath tall stone arches, the chamber lies shrouded in mystery, its walls etched with arcane symbols. At its heart, a serene pond of shimmering alchemical oil bubbles; its essence swirling in the iridescent depths.

The oil pond is unstable; souls threaten to leave at any moment and strange spells lurk beneath. The four obsidian idols that keep the pond in check do not work.

► **Maelstrom.** When the characters enter this grandiose chamber, the oil pond becomes unstable; eight **shadows** emerge from it to attack. In addition, twice per round, a random wizard spell of up to tier 3 is cast from the pond. The target of this spell is chosen by the GM but it should disadvantage the characters, if possible. After the fight, the pond settles down for 24 hours.

► **Repair.** After the fight, a spellcaster can inspect the obsidian idols and imbue them with new arcane energy. This process takes 1d6 hours and restores the Great Hall of Containment so that it functions properly again.

A Wager for Might

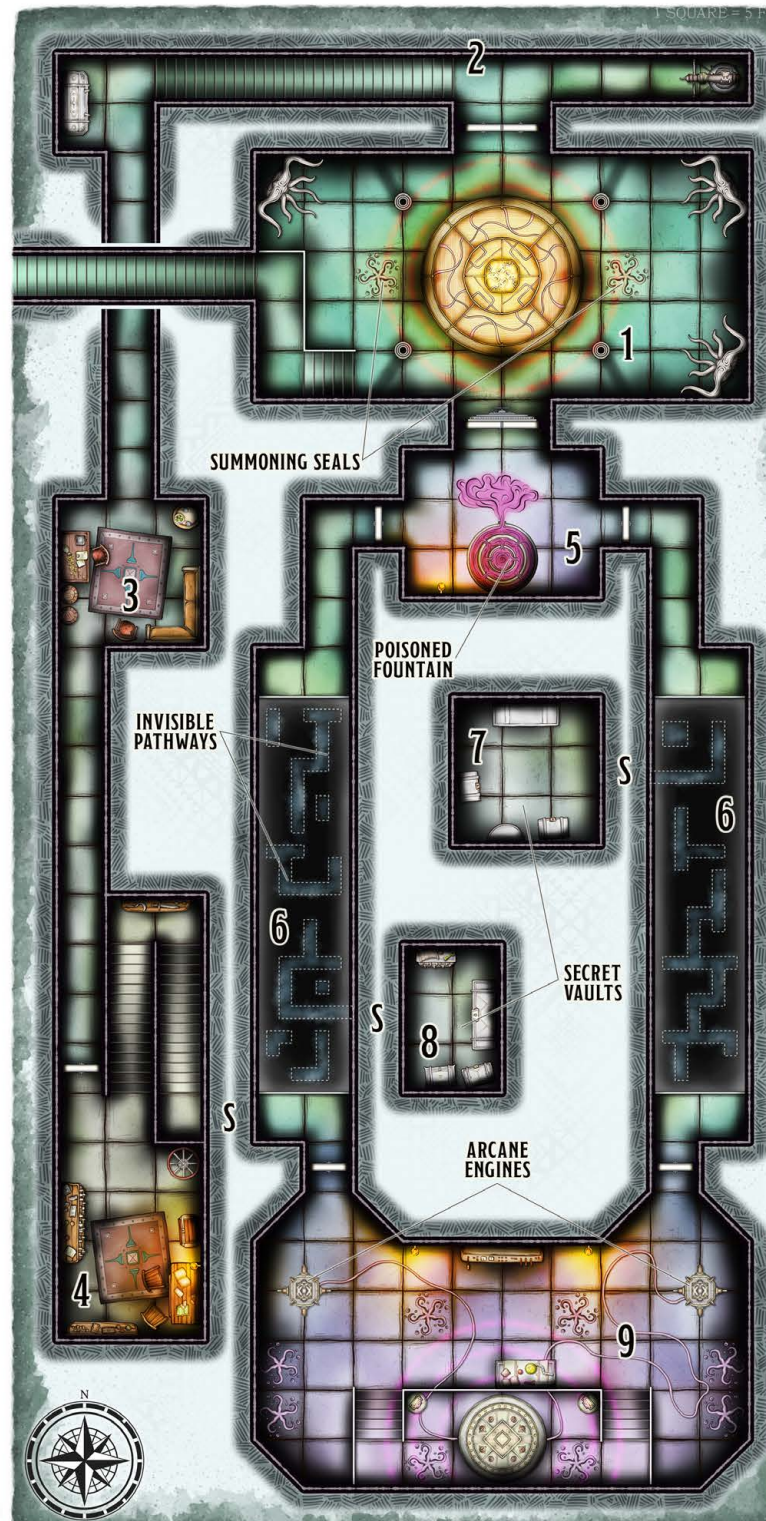
In the veiled depths of the Eldritch Vale, shrouded by perpetual mists lies the ancient dungeon known as the “Vault of the Arcane Crucible.” Legends whisper of an arcane device, the Crucible itself, nestled in the heart of this labyrinthine sanctum. Crafted by the forgotten archmage Itharion in an age where boundaries between worlds were perilously thin, the Crucible was designed to harness the raw, volatile essences of extraplanar entities. This place is buried deep in the world’s crust, accessible only to those capable of casting teleportation spells.

Adventurers who seek out the Crucible are driven by the allure of a perilous gambit: to bind their flesh with the essence of beings from other realms. Success promises unfathomable power, a transcendent fusion granting abilities beyond mortal kin. Yet, failure leads to a dire fate, transforming the aspirant into an aberration, a grotesque mockery of their former self, forever tormented by an alien consciousness embedded in their minds.

The path to the Crucible is fraught with cunning traps and enigmas, each a testament to Itharion’s mastery over arcane and clockwork arts. These mechanisms, infused with magic and cunning, are not merely obstacles but protectors of the archmage’s greatest creation, designed to test the wits and resolve of any who dare to tread these forbidden halls. Adding to the peril are the immortal guardians, spectral echoes of Itharion’s disciples, bound to the dungeon for eternity. These ethereal wardens, wielding magic and blade, relentlessly pursue intruders, driven by a duty that transcends death.

Within the innermost chamber, the Crucible awaits, pulsating with eldritch energy, a beacon to those who wish to put their soul on the stakes. Here, in the heart of darkness, adventurers face their ultimate challenge: to be resilient to the temerous quest before them and emerge as beings of heightened power or succumb to the monstrous fate that the Crucible imposes on the weak.

1. A dimly lit chamber, its center dominated by a glowing teleportation circle. Flanking it, three statues of otherworldly aberrations stand guard, their forms twist reality’s fabric. Stepping on the summoning seals causes the **aberrant statues** to awaken and attack trespassers without mercy. The west passage leads to a collapsed chamber that once was a storage room. The south door is airtight and features a steel wheel valve to open it.
2. A lengthy corridor stretches ahead, leading to a stairway descending into shadow. At its peak, an automated clockwork crossbow lies in wait. Coming within 5 feet of the stairs causes the device to activate and shoot poisoned bolts. It shoots five times. The device resets after 1 hour unless destroyed. At the bottom, a solitary stone sarcophagus rests ominously.
3. In the wizard’s study, a cluttered desk overflows with scattered papers and arcane texts. Flickering ever-burning candles cast erratic shadows, illuminating walls lined with shelves of mysterious artifacts and ancient tomes. There are four random wizard spell scrolls in one of the drawers.
4. A personal library, walls adorned with shelves packed with ancient scrolls and mystical books. By the corner, a large desk holds various magical instruments, surrounded by glowing orbs and celestial maps. Reviewing the documents for 1 hour reveals the presence of the two secret vaults and information about operating the Crucible. Operating the valve here makes the invisible pathways in area 6 visible in dim light.
5. This chamber holds a multi-tiered fountain, its basins filled with a dense, menacing, poisoned mist. The toxic vapors swirl and ebb away as far as 15 feet. Breathing this gas causes coughing and death after 10 minutes of exposure. Characters must find a way to cross without breathing it.
6. A vast, elongated chamber unveils a deep chasm, its depths shrouded in darkness. Faintly visible pathways weave through the void, offering precarious passage to the other side. Operating the valve in area 4 causes the pathways to be visible in dim light. Otherwise, the adventurers must feel their way through and risk falling to their deaths below. Hidden paths to the vaults can be revealed by pulling cleverly hidden levers along the way. Four **shadows** guard this chamber and attack crossing characters.
7. Accessible from area 6 (east), this vault contains three stone coffers. No one has stepped foot on this chamber in centuries. The coffers contain 1,200 gp, 17,640 sp, two *potions of healing*, and a sentient *flaming sword*.
8. Accessible from area 6 (west), this vault contains three stone coffers and a bookshelf. The chamber contains 2,400 gp, 4,210 sp, a *canteen of endless water*, an ornate ceremonial dagger, and Itharion’s spell book.
9. The largest chamber unfolds: a vast room bathed in eerie light. The Crucible, a towering, rune-etched machine, hums with arcane energy, its core glowing ominously, promising power and peril in equal measure. It is connected to two clockwork devices of maddening complexity. A thunder cracks through the stale air and causes the arcane energies to coalesce into an **air and thunder elemental**. It is necessary to defeat it before operating the Crucible. The Crucible can be operated once per year. A person must step into the large machine. The process is a gruesome test of will. An adventurer with a strong mind can withstand the invasive extraplanar energies. After this process, they reemerge fundamentally changed. Their flesh infused with the energy of other worlds.



AGDAINE'S TAROT

A GM supplement about a deck-based fortune reading by Nathan Britto



lose to a small group of trees sits a lonely, mysterious cart. Oversized, and made in dark brown wood, it serves as a house and a traveling fortress. Its owner, Agdaine, belongs to a group of mystics and shopkeepers known as the Nomads of Sonne Lach. Displaying dark blue skin, pitch-black eyes, and wearing white and gold clothes, these people travel realities making business, changing destinies, and acquiring all of the gold they can find. No one knows what is their purpose or why they seek so much gold, since they never part with any of it, preferring to exchange purchased goods for silver or other items. They are known to be immortal, feeding and drinking only for the pleasure of it, so there might be a nefarious purpose to all of that accumulation after all.

Nevertheless, while this dreaded destiny does not happen, some of the Nomads of Sonne Lach are willing to depart from the group, still using their talents to shape lives through tales and goods as a means of earning their coin. This is the case for Agdaine. Her focus is that of fortune telling, or rather, fortune shaping; asking for reading is the same as hoping for reality to bend in favor of what the symbols mean. Still, while her boons often come with hidden, sharp fangs, somehow more and more travelers and adventurers seem eager to try their hand at fate-changing.

Behind a low table sits Agdaine, shuffling a deck so smoothly that it seems she is the only thing keeping the cards from flying by themselves. Her darker-than-the-dead-of-night eyes flicker in the visitors' direction, with small but pronounced reflections, a pair of stars looking back at people's minds. She smiles coyly as if understanding your discomfort, but then gestures to the low bench in front of you. And for some reason, this seems like the right thing to do.

She places the deck of cards on top of the table in front of her without making any noise. The surface is decorated with an unassuming white cloth, which somehow helps to ease your feelings about the situation. Agdaine allows you a few moments to breathe, close your eyes, and calm your heart, her head a bit low, as if staring at the table. When the calming sigh comes, she looks up. You can feel her look before her head goes up properly, a tinge of doubt washing over your mind; how deep can those calm and dark lakes reach? Before you start to fret, she says:

You needn't fear me nor the cards, traveler. Destinies are shaped at every moment and both the images and I only nudge at them. Answer this instead: why are you here? Running out of luck? Having too much of it? Is it all boredom or something else that tugs from within? Come what may, the cards can help the flow of your reality, but your choices are still your own.

Roll a d10 for a card. The positives and negatives happen on a specific trigger and for a specific period.

The standard fee is well known: 20 gold pieces or something yellow with a good story (Agdaine is the judge of it) for each card she draws. After the cost is paid, she flips one up and sets it at the center of the table.

1. THE SLEEPER

- The next time you sleep, you dream about an event that will occur on the next day. It can be a positive event and this insight shall help you greatly.
- The next time you face death, instead of dying or stabilizing, you enter a dream dungeon alone. If you overcome this obstacle, you return with a reward from the oneiric landscape.

2. MAGUS

- All your attacks become magical for the next 2 days. Add 1d6 lightning damage to all damage rolls.
- When you take damage of any kind for the next 4 days, you give off a bolt of lightning to the closest thing to you, dealing 1d4 damage. You take half of this damage, rounded up.

3. HANGING JUDGE

- The next person you try to convince about something believes you. This effect lasts until the next day.
- If you use this opportunity to take advantage of anyone, fool someone, or trick anybody, they shall come back for revenge when you least expect it.

4. TRAVELER OF THE UNKNOWN

- For 1 day, the next time you roll an odd number on any attack or check, you can choose to roll again. The new result can be used in place of the original roll, or it can be kept and used on another occasion.
- For 1 day, when you fail an attack or a check with an even number, the negative result or outcome is distributed with or shared by your traveling party.

5. LADY BY THE LAKE

- In the next 3 days, you shall meet someone who points you to a lake. In there, you shall receive a quest of importance and myth, but which offers great rewards.
- If you fail, you must spend 7 days running from fish people. They are deadly despite their precious scales.

6. THE FIEND

- A smelly creature, walking on all fours, carrying a dirty duffle bag, shall follow you trying to sell his small collection of cheap wares (5 pieces), for 5 days.
- After the creature disappears, you will be framed for a big robbery he committed.

7. STAR BEING

- The next time you find yourself in a troubled situation beyond your capabilities, a creature made of light shall appear and help you overcome this obstacle.
- After the being's visit, you permanently lose vision in one of your eyes, but at the same time, it also becomes a permanent source of light like a torch.

8. OFFERINGS OF BLOOD AND BONE

- For 1 day, all damage done to you in combat becomes part of the damage you deal on the next hit.
- If you fall in battle and survive, lose your non-dominant arm up to the elbow.

9. AS-IT-WALKS-WITH-WEIGHTS

- You find a leather bag. Any item you put inside it loses its weight forever. The bag vanishes after 1 month.
- For 1 month, you float toward the moon when asleep.

10. THE METAMORPH

- Once a week, you can turn into anything human-sized. However, it takes 3 days to turn back and it hurts a lot.
- If anyone learns of this card result, you shall be hunted every once in a while, as a lycan.



THE FLOODED HALLS OF CERBERUS

In the silent depths where ancient forgotten secrets slumber, the whispered echoes of the past ripple across time's endless currents and tide...

Elvish Adage



In the shadowed depths of the Azure Sea lies a submerged place of ancient and mysterious origin, known as the Flooded Halls of Cerberus. This underwater dungeon, a labyrinth of caverns and dilapidated chambers, has borne witness to the relentless passage of time, its walls worn and smoothed by the ceaseless caress of seawater.

Within, the Flooded Halls unravel like a serpentine maze, a network of caverns and corridors, where the boundaries between natural formation and crafted architecture blur. The walls of these chambers are encrusted with barnacles and coral, and luminescent algae cast an eerie, undulating glow, revealing faded murals and inscriptions of a lost civilization. These scenes depict a society that once harmonized with the sea, worshiping deities of the deep and mastering forgotten aquatic magics.

SPECTRAL SENTINELS

THE ECHOING VAULTS hold the remains of those who served this temple. They are lined with stone sarcophagi, each bearing the effigy of its occupant. The guardians of this sacred necropolis are the Spectral Sentinels, ethereal apparitions that drift through the water, their eyes aglow with a ghostly light, eternally vigilant.

The dangers within the Flooded Halls of Cerberus are as numerous as its mysteries. From the treacherous currents that swirl through its passageways to the ancient traps and arcane wards still active after centuries. But it is said that hidden within its confines are treasures and secrets of the old sea magic, waiting to be rediscovered by those daring enough to plunge into its depths.

ADVENTURE HOOKS

► **Dark Rituals.** In the bustling tavern of Port Marrow, a grizzled sea captain shares whispers of the Flooded Halls of Cerberus, an ancient, sunken temple where treasures of a lost civilization lie hidden beneath the waves. A mysterious, sea-weathered scroll, half-eaten by time and salt, speaks of a powerful artifact, the *Heart of Tides*, capable of controlling the very seas, said to be enshrined within its deepest chamber. A local sage named Otto Platter offers a substantial reward for any relics or knowledge recovered from this crypt. However, a foreboding warning accompanies these tales - eerie disappearances of sailors near the site suggest that the temple's guardians may still lurk in the shadowy depths, protecting their sunken secrets. (600 gp, 5 XP).

Level 6 Adventure

► **Danger.** Risky. Check for a **Random Event** every 3 **crawling rounds** and after loud noises (4-in-6 chance).

► **Luminous Bio-luminescence.** Throughout the dungeon, bio-luminescent organisms cast a haunting yet beautiful glow. This natural light source varies from the soft, eerie luminescence of algae on the walls to vibrant, colorful displays from schools of luminescent fish and jellyfish. These living lights create an otherworldly aura, illuminating ancient frescoes and forgotten inscriptions, and guiding visitors through the submerged corridors.

► **Wards and Traps.** These range from glyphs that trigger tidal surges in narrow passages to more complex spells that summon guardians. All traps described below reset after 2 hours after being triggered.

RANDOM EVENTS

d6	Details
1	A sudden underwater tremor dislodges an ancient statue, revealing a hidden compartment with a pearl (300 gp, 3 XP).
2	The ghost of a drowned priestess appears. She means no harm and if the characters do not react aggressively, the specter offers cryptic guidance before vanishing into the watery shadows. This means two random characters earn a luck token .
3	An ancient mechanism is accidentally triggered, causing the water in area 10 to filter out and remain at waist level for 1 day.
4	A swarm of electric eels , disturbed from their slumber, forms a living barrier in a narrow corridor. The characters can attack them to scare them away (HP 26, AC 11). Otherwise, they take 1d6 damage if they swim through the eel school.
5	The characters disturb a solitary shark . The beast fights until slain if one of the intruders bleeds, otherwise, it flees at half HP.
6	The <i>Heart of Tides</i> (area 4) pulses, causing the water to shift. The heroes are transported to another area (GM's choice).



AN UNDERWATER QUEST

Consider the following: Adventurers must equip themselves with magical means to breathe underwater, visibility is reduced, and heroes must devise alternative ways to communicate effectively underwater, as normal speech is impossible. Additionally, movement through water is slower and more cumbersome than on land. Heroes must deal with buoyancy and resistance (slashing or bludgeoning attacks are made with disadvantage).

1. THE SHORE

The heroes follow Otto Platter's instructions and walk the length of the shore until they find a grotto with a mysterious pool within. Unfortunately, they are not the only ones looking for the *Heart of Tides* or ancient treasure. Six **pirates** and their leader (**orc chieftain**) arrive at the same time. They are not sure about sharing the submerged treasure within the dungeon (**Reaction**).

► **If Life Gives You Lemons.** The pirates carry a box with several *Amulets of the Depths*. They are delicate, aquamarine pendants, encased in a spiraling shell of silver. When worn, it envelops the bearer in a thin, shimmering bubble of air, granting the miraculous ability to breathe freely while submerged in the deepest of waters. The characters can use the amulets if they work together with the pirates or if they get rid of them.

2. WET DESCENT

The dungeon's entrance is nestled among the rugged cliffs that flank the windswept beach. This shadowed grotto, half-hidden by cascading sea vines and weathered by the salt and spray of the ocean, whispers of untold secrets and tales from bygone eras.

3. CAVERN

A **swarm of piranhas** inhabits this cavern. The carnivore fish recklessly attack and fight until slain if any intruder bleeds. Otherwise, they flee at half their HP.

4. THE HEART OF TIDES

Suspended in the water like a celestial body floats the Heart of Tides. This enigmatic orb, pulsating with a deep blue luminescence, is encircled by sinuous tendrils that emanate from the surrounding walls, resembling the arms of a giant octopus.

These living tendrils, covered in suckers and shimmering with a bio-luminescent sheen, undulate gently, creating an eerie dance. They react with swift, coordinated strikes to ward off any who dare approach.

► **Tendrils.** Eight arms protect the *Heart of Tides* (HP 8, AC 12 each). They sense all living creatures within 15 feet and can attack anyone within that range. Slam + 3 (1d6). A target hit by two or more tendrils is grappled and restrained (DC 14 STR to break free).

► **Treasure (6 XP).** The *Heart of Tides* has the incredible power to control any body of water in a specific way once a week. The user ages 10 years after each use.

5. NAUTILUS ENGINES

Colossal nautilus shells, ancient and encrusted with layers of coral and barnacles, are strategically positioned. They work as the dungeon's living engines, rhythmically expelling jets of water, maintaining a constant flow through the labyrinthine passages. The harmonious coordination of these nautilus engines is a marvel of both natural design and ancient engineering, integral to the life and breath of the dungeon's mysterious ecosystem.

► **Deactivation.** The characters can use a *dispel magic* spell to cause the five engines in here to stop working. This causes the water level to drop to chest level. Four **zombie sahuagin** emerge from a hole in the wall.

6. SOUTH CAVERN

A **swarm of piranhas** inhabits this cavern. The carnivore fish recklessly attack and fight until slain if any intruder is bleeding. Otherwise, they flee at half their HP.

7. ANTECHAMBER

This area is half-hidden behind a curtain of luminescent kelp. Within this grotto rest two chests, their wood swollen with moisture and banded with rusting iron.

► **Treasure (2 XP).** There are hundreds of silver coins from a forgotten era (300 gp), a *+1 dagger*, and three small vials filled with red fluid (*potions of healing*).

8. CENTRAL CAVERN

A vast cavern opens up, its walls scarred by the passage of time and the marks of countless battles. Here prowls an adult, scarred **shark**, the undisputed ruler of this underwater domain. The large marine carnivore fights until slain if any of the characters bleed. Otherwise, the shark attempts to flee when reduced to half its HP.

9. SECONDARY ENGINES

► **Deactivation.** A *dispel magic* spell shuts down these engines. This causes the water level to drop to chest level (waist level if the engines in area 5 were deactivated). Four **zombie sahuagin** come out from a hole in the wall.

10. THE HALLS OF CERBERUS

The Hall of Cerberus stands as a grand testament to the lost artistry of its creators, the central statue features three heads snarling menacingly toward different paths. Intricate mosaics depicting scenes of popular myths and legends adorn the eroded walls.

A three-headed beast made of dark water is Cerberus's manifestation (**greater water elemental**). Three **zombie sahuagin** come to its aid. Once defeated, the characters can freely explore the area and retrieve the treasure.

11. SECRET VAULT

A slithering dark tunnel stands between the characters and their well-earned loot. There are four stone chests.

► **Treasure (6 XP).** A great hoard is found. There are 3,540 gp and 2,893 sp in leather bags. There is a pearl (40 gp), a suit of dwarf-made chainmail (60 gp), an ivory tusk carved with angels fighting demons (80 gp), and stored in a beautiful container, a *Kytherian Cog*.



THE GOBLIN GATE

Through the Goblin Gate, past shadows of time and stone, lies the echo of a forgotten goblinoid world and culture, waiting to be rediscovered.

Eroded Inscription

Within the shadowed depths of the Eldergrove Forest lies a mysterious cave. The home to the Goblin Gate. This arcane relic, as old as the hills that cradle it, stands as a testament to a time long forgotten, where magic flowed as freely as the rivers of the world. Its structure is a marvel of intricate craftsmanship, wrought in a time when goblins were not mere scavengers but master artisans and cunning sorcerers. The stone, dark and impossibly smooth, seems to absorb all light, creating an aura of palpable mystique. According to legend, the gate serves as a threshold to twin chambers that hold arcane secrets and dangers.

THE TWIN CHAMBERS

WHILE IDENTICAL in their design, the energies that stir within both chambers are as different as night and day.

► **The Mirror of Ages.** In the east chamber, time flows like a malleable stream, allowing glimpses into the past and potential futures. Heroes shall experience visions of ancient goblin ceremonies, forgotten wars, or even their fates. The air in this chamber is charged with a sense of timelessness, and the stone underfoot feels unnaturally cold, as if absorbing the chill of the ages.

► **Crucible of Elements.** Goblins harnessed the raw forces of nature here. The very elements seem to dance at the whim of those with the knowledge to command them. The atmosphere is alive with a palpable energy.

Together, these twin chambers beyond the Goblin Gate stand as a monument to the goblins' mastery over time and the elements, their secrets guarded by the passage of centuries and the wiles of their ancient magic.

ADVENTURE HOOKS

► **Heroes of Time.** The village of Eldenwood, within Eldergrove Forest, is plagued by unexplained temporal disturbances. Legends whisper of a timepiece hidden within the cavern where the Goblin Gate lies, capable of stabilizing the flow of time. Heroes are called to navigate the shifting realities of the Goblin Gate and retrieve this artifact, as it is the only hope to save Eldenwood from being lost in time's capricious tides (800 gp, 7 XP).

► **The Codex.** An alchemist, obsessed with the lore of the Crucible of Elements, has vanished while seeking the legendary *Elemental Codex*, rumored to be within the chamber's elemental walls. The codex contains the secrets of elemental mastery. Adventurers are tasked with braving the unpredictable magic of the Goblin Gate, to either rescue the alchemist or secure the codex for themselves, promising fame and fortune (700 gp, 6 XP).

Level 6 Adventure

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

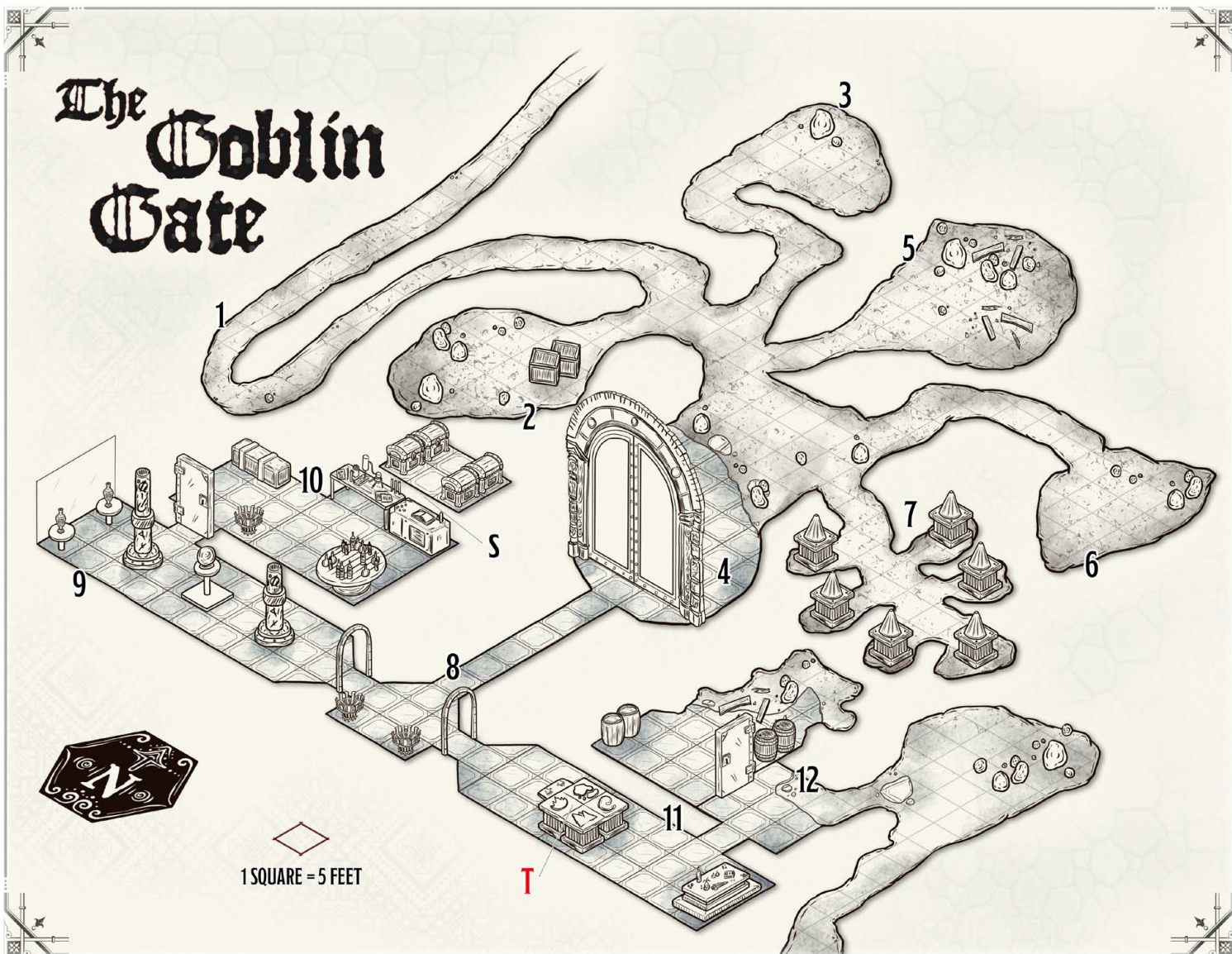
► **Light.** Some areas feature steel braziers; the rest are in pitch darkness. The denizens of the caverns and the monsters within the dungeon are **dark-adapted**.

► **Time Phenomena.** The magic here transcends the physical barriers of the gate. Every 3 **crawling rounds**, one of these two occurs: a random character "travels in time", vanishing from view and reappearing 20 feet away. Or a wall becomes liquid and the ceiling turns into fire, all while a great wind current traverses the dungeon. These effects are not harmful, just flavorful.

RANDOM EVENTS

d6	Details
1	The heroes' footsteps begin to echo strangely, forming coherent sentences in ancient Goblin. These echoes seem to warn them. Paying attention for 1 crawling round helps discern this phrase: " <i>Leave, the mastery of time and the elements are beyond you.</i> "
2	Amidst the shadows, the ghostly figure of a goblin artisan appears. It gives a disapproving look to the visitors and disappears.
3	A section of the wall animates into a stone golem , a protector of the Goblin Gate. It demands a tribute of knowledge or magic, seeking to test the intruders' worthiness (GM's choice). The guardian fights until slain if the heroes offer nothing or fall short.
4	Time warps, and the heroes momentarily witness the goblins forging the Goblin Gate. True masters of their art and craft.
5	For 1 crawling round , all energy spells (fire, water, air, etc.) are cast with advantage and deal double damage.
6	The characters stumble upon six giant centipedes . The mindless insects are hungry and attack the heroes until slain.

The Goblin Gate



1. DUNGEON'S ENTRANCE

This tunnel is a winding path carved through ancient bedrock. Moisture drips from the stony ceiling, creating a symphony of soft patterns that echo through the claustrophobic passage. The slightly slanted passage seems to become a little darker the deeper it gets.

2. TRACES OF GREATNESS

Remnants of the goblins' bygone era are strewn amidst the shadows: ornate carvings etched into the walls depicting their forgotten lore, and shattered artifacts, once symbols of their unrivaled craftsmanship, now lie forgotten in the dust. The air hums with the residual magic of their ancient glory, a silent testament to a civilization that mastered the arcane in ways now lost to time.

► **Treasure (4 XP).** If the heroes take a **crawling round** searching this area they find 250 gp worth of gold, silver, and arcane components. However, the ancient traces of chaos magic coalesce into an **invisible stalker**. The heroes may retrieve the treasure after the fight.

3. SPIDERS' NEST

The cavern unfurls into a sinister, shadow-draped chamber, its ceiling lost to darkness, from which countless silken threads drape like a macabre tapestry. Three **giant spiders** and one **spider swarm** inhabit this area. A *dagger of the goblin hero* is the hidden reward for anyone brave enough to fight the spiders off (3 XP).

4. THE GOBLIN GATE

A formidable, ancient archway. The gate's surface portrays the goblins of yore, wearing incredible armor and wielding legendary weapons. The majestic gate exudes an air of power and inscrutable purpose.

To unlock the Goblin Gate, adventurers must align the cryptic runes on its surface, each emitting a distinct tone when touched, to compose an ancient melody known only in goblin lore (DC 14 INT). On a failure, the heroes must try a trial-and-error approach. This way, they take 1 hour to find the right sequence, which is long enough for the stone golem to appear (see **Random Events**).

5. REMAINS

Crumbled columns and fractured statues are strewn about. Faded frescoes on the walls hint at lost stories, while the remnants of pottery and rusted weapons mingle with the bones of those who once walked these halls.

6. EMPTY CAVERN

This cavern contains nothing of value. Only rocks, dust, and thin spider webs rest on its cold surfaces.

7. ANCIENT ENGINES

Nestled in a series of alcoves, complex goblin engines of cogs, runes, and crystalline conduits hum with arcane energy that fuels the Goblin Gate.

The six engines are each protected by potent magical barriers and it is impossible to interact with them. Even today, their magical wards remain as strong as ever.

8. CENTRAL CORRIDOR

Beyond the Goblin Gate, the corridor unfurls into a dimly lit passage, its walls adorned with fading goblin frescoes. This pathway soon divides into a fork, each branch leading to one of the twin chambers, beckoning adventurers with their unique aura of magic and mystery. The archways are obscured by a magical black veil. The characters can only see what lies beyond them by crossing.

9. THE MIRROR OF AGES

The chamber's long, stark walls are lined with polished, reflective surfaces that shimmer with spectral light, casting back not just the images of those who gaze into them, but also glimpses of past events and shadowy visions of the future that lie dormant.

At the room's center stands an ancient pedestal, upon which rests a crystalline orb, pulsating with a soft, rhythmic light that synchronizes with the ebb and flow of the temporal energies swirling through the room. This space, steeped in the essence of ages, whispers past secrets and murmurs possibilities of what is yet to come.

► **Lost in Time.** If the heroes gaze too deeply into the walls of this room, they find themselves lost in hundreds of visions of the past or their future (DC 14 WIS). Victims remain trapped in this temporal snare, their bodies motionless as their minds wander through the endless corridors of what was and what might have been.

10. GOBLIN ARCHIVE

This repository of knowledge, preserved from the zenith of goblin civilization, holds the secrets of their magic, history, and inventions. A treasure trove of wisdom waiting to be unearthed by curious eyes and hands.

► **Treasure (7 XP).** The heroes find the following if they locate the hidden vault (DC 13 WIS). A stone tablet with silver runes. This is the timepiece that the heroes need to save Eldenwood. They also find a mahogany chess board (40 gp), a wyvern hatching encased in amber (110 gp), two *immovable rods* (300 gp each), and a *+1 dagger*.

11. THE CRUCIBLE OF ELEMENTS

An ancient altar where elements dance stands at the center of the chamber. The elements converge in an overwhelming whirlwind of beautiful chaos.

The altar's intricate runes respond to the touch of those versed in arcane knowledge. By placing their hands on the altar and focusing their will, adepts can coax the elemental energies around them, bending these raw forces to achieve feats of magical prowess and manipulation.

► **Trap.** Only goblins can use this device. Any attempt by non-goblins summons the anger of a **chaos elemental** (stats of a fire elemental but it changes to air, earth, and water each combat round). Defeating the monster grants the heroes access to the *Elemental Codex*.

12. DILAPIDATED ARCHIVES

Little remains of these chambers. An injured man hides behind the locked door. It is Farphan, the alchemist. He was no match for the elemental monster and had to hide. What the characters decide to do with the timepiece, the codex, or Farphan, are adventures for another day...





IAN BROOKS

Ian Brooks started playing Rolemaster with his dad as a young boy, and has been playing TTRPGs ever since. He has been DM for a 5e campaign for almost two years now, and will probably be running this campaign for some time still.



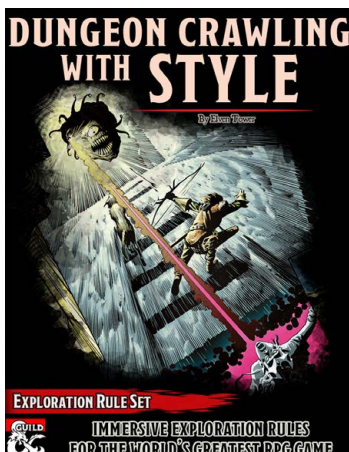
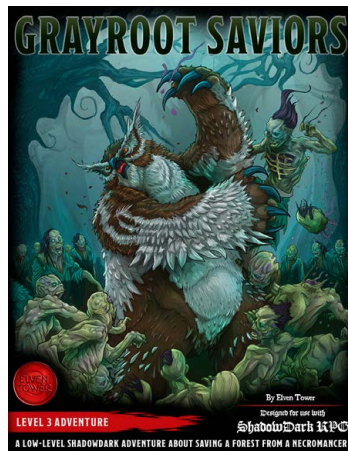
NATHAN BRITTO

Nathan Britto is an artist that has been drawing since he learned how pencils work. As a teen he discovered RPGs and it has been his main thing since. Now he is set out to share his creations with the world. Contact him at nrs_britto@hotmail.com

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