

P R I M E V A L

# THE JOURNAL

## THE LOST TOWER OF VIONDOR

*by Jason Nelson*



## THE LOST TOWER OF VIONDOR

An Adventure for 6th-Level Characters

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*A ghostly ship on the Sea of Mists, a frozen wreck in the Thousand Teeth, and the long-lost legacy of an arrogant archmage who stared the doom of Nimoth in the face and did not blink; these are the stepping stones to finding the forgotten Tower of Viondor. An Atlantean wizard of unparalleled inventiveness, the legendary Viondor would not flee with his kin when the glaciers approached. Hidden in the far glacial rifts of Nimoth his tower remains, with the wisdom of the ancients perhaps unguarded after his inevitable demise.*

## INTRODUCTION

The Tower of Viondor is one of the legendary ruins of ancient Thule. Here are found lost Atlantean sorceries, alongside bleak and forbidding frozen wastelands and subtle power groups striving to glean any advantage in their quest for dominance.

*The Lost Tower of Viondor* is a wilderness-based adventure spanning land and sea, designed for a party of 6th-level characters. As the journey itself is part of the adventure, allowing PCs to circumvent that by way of long-distance teleportation or similar abilities is not recommended. The adventure begins amidst the crowded seas of the Thousand Teeth but brings adventurers after a long sea voyage to the frozen coasts of Nimoth.

**Adversaries and Treasure:** Statistics for monsters and new items presented in *The Lost Tower of Viondor* can be found in the Adversaries and Treasure appendix, at the end of the adventure. References to the *Primeval Thule Campaign Setting* are abbreviated PTCS. This adventure makes use of the *13th Age Bestiary*, but if you don't have it, don't worry. One of the great things about 13th Age is that it's easy to reskin and adapt monsters on the fly.

## BACKGROUND

Long considered a tavern tale in the coastlands of the Sea of Mists, the *Golden Ghost* has been sighted from time to time for well over a century. A Nimothan warship with ragged yellow sails and shields of gold along its gunwales, it is often seen as a glint on the horizon in the setting sun. Those who have managed to overtake it have been dismayed to see a flying ship, sailing on a clinging mist many fathoms above the waves, glowing with a curious light. Ships that draw too close have their hulls torn apart from under them as though

running aground in the middle of the sea, leaving only shipwrecked castaways to spread their dubious tales.

The ship's tattered ensign bears the mark of the corsair Bruneval, who plundered his way across the seas long ago. He was a scourge to Nimothan refugees fleeing their land during the coming of the great glaciers that entombed Nimoth. Many tales claim that the holds of the *Golden Ghost* are filled with the loot of Bruneval's many victims, or that maps and charts holding clues to secret caches ashore might be found on board. The lure of Bruneval's gold has drawn many to seek the ghost ship, but none have brought her home.

Little known in modern Thule is that Bruneval was less a corsair than a smuggler, and his fell reputation was first spread by people he refused to help escape. He was branded a traitor to the Nimothan people, and hundreds of deaths were blamed on his refusal to carry refugees to safety unless they paid exorbitant sums. Embittered by the hatred of his own people, Bruneval became a scavenger as well, picking over the bones of the shipwrecked and frozen dead to take from them treasures they no longer needed.

During his scavenging, he encountered a handful of survivors from an Atlantean colony in a mountain valley not far from the coast. These refugees had abandoned their former master, a wizard they called Viondor, who claimed his mastery of magic could hold the glaciers at bay. When his servants rebelled and refused to stay in this frozen land alone, he laughed and said he had already planned to replace them with magical automata. Cast out, they straggled to the coast with faint hope of rescue or escape, but faint was better than none. Bruneval was intrigued by the mysterious wizard and bartered passage from Nimoth for detailed directions on how to get to Viondor's tower. He resolved to return some years later when the mad wizard had died and he could have his pick of the spoils. While his crew was ignorant to his deal with the Atlanteans, he became worried that the Atlanteans would tell their tale to others and betrayed them, cutting their throats and casting their bodies into the depths so the secret would be his and his alone.

Bruneval made good on his plans a decade later. He anchored in the rocky bay where the Dauthur River flows into the Strait of Nimora and led a hand-picked crew of treasure hunters upriver. They found the forgotten tower, but discovered to their dismay that the automata of the Atlan-

tean wizard were very much still in operation. Bruneval found strange domes of iron and glass below the ground and gardens of strange flowers with gardeners that seemed human but weren't. Escaping the gardeners, Bruneval pressed on into the tower and snatched a few Atlantean relics, but he fled when his instincts screamed he was being watched. He and his crew raced downriver, pursued by the howling winds of a gathering blizzard.

When they arrived back at the ship, the bay froze around them. Captain Bruneval hurled most of the Atlantean artifacts overboard, thinking their curse had brought the storm. One of the artifacts exploded, breaking their icebound ship free from the bay—but the ice continued to grow instead of melting away as they drifted. The crew mutinied and slew Bruneval, but on casting him overboard the sea itself refused to take him to her bosom. Instead, it vomited him back up onto the deck, deathless and accursed, to slay his faithless crew.

Bruneval and his crew are now cursed to continue to circle the Sea of Mists endlessly, never able to reach port. They fall upon the foolish and the greedy that chance across their path. The fact that he still carries the secrets to finding the Tower of Viondor gnaws at Bruneval, since he knows he will never enjoy the fortune or the fame of discovering the fabled location and its treasures.

## ADVENTURE HOOKS

The best method for introducing Bruneval's *Golden Ghost* depends on the player characters in your campaign. If the PCs are already inclined to sail the Sea of Mists, they can encounter it purely by chance. Characters knowledgeable in lore may recall the tale of the ship with appropriate skill checks. Successfully approaching the ship and uncovering its mysteries reveals Bruneval's journal, along with several Atlantean artifacts that provide confirmation of his tale of having found a lost trove of great wealth.

**The Priest of Droum:** If the characters in your campaign are not predisposed towards nautical adventuring, you can have them be contacted by a sponsor—Drengol Phar, a wealthy priest of Tarhun from the city of Droum. Drengol Phar wants to win the fame and glory of capturing the *Golden Ghost*, and is willing to pay the PCs to hunt it down for him. Drengol can provide the PCs with a ship and crew based in the city of Nim, along with navigational headings and observations about

patterns in the *Golden Ghost's* appearances which suggest a pattern of drift with the prevailing currents in the Sea of Mists. Given their sponsor's directions, the PCs can track down the *Golden Ghost* after 3d6 days spent at sea.

**Tales of the Icy Dead:** If your party is strongly disinclined towards adventuring at sea, they encounter the *Golden Ghost* near the shore. The iceberg on which it floats is lodged on a shoal near the barbarian village of Mursuth in the Thousand Teeth. Tales are spreading up and down the coast of icy dead warriors from the sea who are terrorizing the lands nearby. When the PCs track down the rumors to their source in Mursuth, they find that the iceberg is stuck in a shallow bay a couple of miles from the village, and lies only 500 yards offshore. A few brave and hardy locals ventured out to investigate before the PCs arrive in the area, but they failed to return. The villagers beg the heroes to investigate.

## THE ICONS AND VIONDOR

The following Primeval Thule icons are particularly interested in the fate of Viondor or the *Golden Ghost*. That doesn't mean the others aren't interested of course; the promise of Viondor's power wouldn't escape devotees of any of the icons described in the Heroes of Thule chapter on the *Primeval Thule Campaign Setting*.

The PCs' relationships with the icons can be a mercurial thing, but we've provided examples below for ways you can have the icons influence the ongoing adventure based on the relationship dice results. Use them as a springboard for your own improvisation and the direction of your ongoing campaign.

If you're using the traditional icons detailed in the *13th Age Roleplaying Game* rather than the Thule-specific icons, then use the Emperor instead of the Emperor of Katagia, the Crusader instead of the Reaver King, the Archmage instead of the Sage of Atlantis, and the Three instead of Kang, the White Death. The parallels aren't perfect, but they're close enough for the purposes of the adventure.

**Emperor of Katagia:** The emperor has heard rumors of Viondor's power but has long despaired of ever finding any of Viondor's work. Ideally, he'd like the entire tower preserved so his sages and craftsmen can swarm over it, measuring and studying every aspect. It's not every day that

they have a largely intact example of Atlantean wizardry to dismantle. And if the wax servants could be mass produced...well, that's almost as good as a true Atlantean army, isn't it?

*Icon Roll 5:* A ghostly apparition of an Atlantean knight appears periodically, encouraging the PCs when they're fighting interlopers within the tower, but scolding them if they damage any of the tower's "proper" contents (including the wax servants). The apparition can't influence events beyond cryptic imprecations and its one salient ability: it can bestow a +2 or -2 penalty on attacks, saves, or skill checks once per battle. It uses this ability to express its pleasure or disdain for how the PCs are conducting themselves.

*Icon Roll 6:* One of the books in the tower (you decide which room) uses an alchemical notation system familiar to the Emperor of Katagia's sages—including the PC. The PC can easily read what would otherwise be an impenetrable cipher and learn the truth behind the wax servants (that they're actually constructs, not living creatures).

**Reaver King:** The Reaver King always wondered what Bruneval was up to and is still troubled by the "loose end" of the reaver captain's disappearance. Most agents of the Reaver King know Bruneval's story, though they don't know how it ended. Proof of Bruneval's demise—and an accounting of his treasure—would be welcome news to the Reaver King.

*Icon Roll 5:* In death, Bruneval wields short swords, but in life Bruneval had a magic greataxe that he dropped when he fled the Tower of Viondor. A PC with a Reaver King relationship can recover the bloodthirsty axe (you decide which room it's in), but both the undead Bruneval and his living relatives will have a vendetta to get it back into family hands.

*Icon Roll 6:* If the PCs are struggling with the aquatic foes early in the adventure, a PC with a connection to the Reaver King can call in a favor and obtain a sturdy longboat and a loyal crew of oarsmen. The crew won't fight on the iceberg or within the tower, but they're hardbitten reavers who won't flee in the face of orca or sea-drake attacks, either. They can handle routine navigation in and around the icebergs with minimal difficulty as well.

**Sage of Atlantis:** Like the Emperor of Katagia, the Sage of Atlantis is well aware of the legends surrounding Viondor. But unlike the emperor, the Sage sees Viondor's legacy as something to be buried, not reclaimed. Viondor's weather magic

## BOATING AMID THE ICE

The first part of this adventure includes the real possibility of aquatic combat. Here's the thing: fights in the water are rarely fun in traditional RPGs. The underwater combat rules affect the PCs unequally, often crippling the unprepared wizard, putting the heavily armored fighter into immediate risk of drowning, yet leaving the rogues and monks almost completely unfettered. Fights take longer, yet there's often less tension and more frustration.

To avoid all that, we're keeping combat in the water intentionally simple—even if that means straining credulity a little. PCs can swim around without the weight of their armor dragging them to a watery doom, and they can cast spells without difficulty. The aquatic foes they face can swim rings around them, of course, and can quickly dive deep underwater beyond the PCs' reach. But you needn't make skill checks just to see whether the PCs can stay afloat.

That doesn't mean we want the PCs to actually be *comfortable* in the water, however; we just don't want the discomfort to come from cumbersome aquatic rules. Here's the simple way to get the PCs to scurry back up onto that iceberg: the cold waters in this adventure deal 5 cold damage at the start of each creature's turn.

in particular was risky and difficult to control, the sage believes.

*Icon Roll 5:* When a PC with a Sage of Atlantis relationship encounters Shilpatel for the first time, the PC hears a stern voice say, "The true Atlanteans lie beneath the waves." No one else seems to hear the voice.

*Icon Roll 6:* A homunculus appears in a puff of smoke to cast a beneficial spell (anything on the wizard list of up to 7th level). After casting the spell, the homunculus warns the PCs not to tamper with magic they don't understand, then departs whence it came.

**Kang, the White Death:** Kang has also heard of Viondor's proclivity for weather magic; it didn't take long for a claim of being able to hold the glaciers at bay to draw the White Death's attention. For years, Kang believed that Viondor was merely boasting, but if there's any truth to the claim, Kang wants it expunged utterly.

*Icon Roll 5:* In one of the tower's rooms (you decide which one) is an hourglass of the ceaseless sands, a wondrous item that grants resist cold 12+ but makes its owner vulnerable to fire. The hourglass feels warm to the touch but otherwise gives no indication about its flaw until the PC gets hit with a fiery crit. Kang's agents would very much like to get their hands on the hourglass, which might provide clues about Viondor's weather-manipulation magic.

*Icon Roll 6:* The PCs have uncommonly fortunate weather—even effects that would otherwise be im-

possible. A PC pushed off the iceberg, for example, might find a gentle snowbank rather than an icy cliff with frigid water beneath. Even within the Tower of Viondor, patches of ice spread across the floor at advantageous moments...accompanied by low, thundering laughter.

## PART ONE: THE GOLDEN GHOST

The initial episode of the adventure requires navigating to the iceberg in which the *Golden Ghost* is lodged, moving near enough to the berg to scale



it, and clambering up into the wreck. Once there, the PCs must breach the hull and find a way inside, braving the undead remains of Bruneval and his crew and locating the clues that lead them north to Nimoth and the Tower of Viondor. The adventure assumes that the PCs have found the ice-bound ship and have decided to approach it. PCs possessing a ship can try to maneuver close to the iceberg carrying the Golden Ghost (in which

case skip to the "Scaling the Ghostberg" encounter), but are more likely to approach in a small boat.

## ICY WATERS

*The waters here are dark and chill, as are the mists that cling to the water's surface. The glinting shields of the longship float in the mists above, but its ragged sails do not stir in the sea breezes. Small ice floes bob in the churning surf and swell below the ship. As you approach closer, you can see dimly through the mists a hulking monolith of ice rising from the waves and bearing the longship upon its frozen shoulders. The ship is lodged in the upper portion of an iceberg, and is easily 50 feet above sea level.*

The *Golden Ghost* floats mostly encased in an iceberg above, but below the waterline the iceberg's jagged and pocked surface creates treacherous currents, and the unstable ice itself is prone to shift and crack periodically with tortured groans.

**Approaching the Iceberg:** The churning surf around the iceberg is rough water for 100 feet in all directions. A creature piloting a boat or ship through this area must succeed at two DC 20 skill checks to do so smoothly; one failure means the vessel almost founders several times before reaching the iceberg. Two failures means the vessel capsizes, throwing everyone in the water. It takes eight standard actions (by one or more PCs) to get the boat flipped back over.

**Creatures:** A pod of orca whales have been following the iceberg as it floats southward, partly from curiosity and partly because they have noticed ships sometimes crash against it, providing tasty morsels. Each round characters are in the water nearby the iceberg, there is a chance the orcas notice them and surface to attack.

| Characters are... | Chance of Attack (per round) |
|-------------------|------------------------------|
| In a boat         | 10%                          |
| Swimming          | 20%                          |

If characters are in a boat, the orcas first attack the boat itself in an effort to sink it and plunge the passengers into the water. It takes eight standard actions from the orcas to accomplish this, and 1d4 orcas will make "pushes" as their standard actions per round. The first four actions are felt as sharp thumps against the bottom of the boat, and final four involve the orcas pushing from sides of the boat, with water splashing over the gunwales and the boat heeling over dangerously. After the eighth "push" from an orca, the boat capsizes and the PCs are in the drink.

4 **orcas** (reskinned version of the green bulette, with Into the Water replacing Into the Earth; 13th Age Bestiary); hp 92 each

## SCALING THE GHOSTBERG

When the characters reach the iceberg, read the following:

*The portion of the iceberg above the water forms a roughly circular, flat-topped island about 300 feet in diameter. Its sides rise sheer from the water like icy cliffs 60 feet tall at the eastern edge, but sloping steeply to the western edge, which is only about 10 feet above the water. The old longship sits on a relatively level shelf near the middle of the iceberg, its bow facing to the west, and its mast towering 40 feet over the iceberg's crest. Frost-covered corpses dressed in furs and leather lie embedded here and there beneath the surface of the ice.*

PCs able to fly can circumvent the climb from the waterline up to the wreck of the *Golden Ghost*. The embedded corpses are frozen in various states of decay, but all seem wracked with agony. However, the presence of living creatures on the iceberg begins to call them to life.

**Climbing Atop the Iceberg:** Mooring a boat to the ice is challenging, requiring a DC 20 skill check. On a failure, the PCs get the boat tied off, but the mooring isn't good and the boat might drift off. (It won't, but it'll give the PCs something to worry about.)

Climbing the ice cliff is very difficult, requiring three consecutive DC 20 skill checks, each a standard action. Failure means the PC slides all the way back down into the water (meaning they'll take at least 5 damage from the cold water).

A handaxe or similar weapon can be used to create handholds, requiring 45 minutes and making the climb automatic. Pitons can be used for the same purpose and require only 10 minutes.

**Combat on the Iceberg:** Instead of extra damage, combatants atop the glacier can push their target off the iceberg with a critical hit (still dealing normal damage). The unfortunate target winds up in the frigid water, taking 5 cold damage at the beginning of each turn. Climbing back up to the top of the iceberg requires the same three DC 20 skill checks as described in Climbing Atop the Iceberg, above. The ghosts don't need to make skill checks, but it still takes them three rounds to clamber back atop the iceberg if they get knocked off.

**Creatures:** The frozen dead are a unique type

of **ghost** adapted for climbing on icy surfaces or even squeezing their undead bodies through the ice. Every 5 minutes that living creatures spend on the iceberg, there is a 25% chance that 1d4 ghosts awaken and begin gliding up out of their icy tombs and clambering after the PCs. Each ghost takes 1d4 rounds to escape the ice and comes to the surface nearby the PCs. If the PCs use a fire effect, the chance for ghosts to appear is increased to 50% during the next 5 minutes.

You can adjust the rate at which ghosts appear if necessary, depending on whether PCs are having difficulty navigating the iceberg. While the potential for overwhelming numbers of enemies exists, their gradual appearance allows PCs to deal with them sequentially rather than en masse. Once the PCs defeat three waves of ghosts, no more appear from the ice.

**Ghosts** (13th Age Bestiary); hp 74 each

## THE GOLDEN GHOST

*Hanging high above the icy waters below, the weathered timbers of a great longship lie half-buried in the icy cliff. Gilded shields glint tantalizingly along the ship's rail, while its tattered, half-frozen sail flaps in ragged ribbons where the fickle winds scour the ship's port quarter. A low-slung cabin sits in the ship's stern, below a tiller mounted above.*

The legendary *Golden Ghost* is a longship that is fused with the upper portions of the iceberg, leaving it suspended 50 feet above the waterline. Over half of the ship is embedded within the solid mass of the iceberg, but most of its port side is exposed to the open air, including the gilded shields mounted along its gunwales. PCs able to fly can approach it without great difficulty. A flying ally can also attach a rope to the ship, allowing allies to climb the ice cliff. Lacking a flying ally, PCs likely need to anchor their boat to the western part of the iceberg and navigate the slopes there.

**Breaking Through the Ice:** If the PCs want to recover the 12 gilded shields along the starboard rail, or to get into the cabin, they must hack or melt their way through the ice.

**Creatures:** The ghosts are closer to the surface of the ice in the vicinity of the *Golden Ghost*, and 1d4 ghosts automatically awaken each minute that PCs spend on board the ship. They take only 1 round to escape the ice and appear nearby the PCs. There is also a 10% chance every round that

Captain Bruneval awakens within the captain's cabin and emerges to face the PCs.

**Ghasts** (*13th Age Bestiary*); hp 74 each

**Treasure:** The 12 gilded shields along the port rail of the *Golden Ghost* are worth 50 gp each based solely on the value of the metal; to a collector in a major Thulean city, they can be sold as a set for 1,200 gp as a set. The gilded shields on the starboard rail are worth the same if recovered from within the ice.

## THE CAPTAIN'S CABIN

*Most longships are open-hulled craft, but the Golden Ghost has a low aft cabin. A golden spiral is embossed on the cabin door, which hangs ajar as though forced open by the encroaching ice.*

This is the lair of the accursed Captain Bruneval. When characters enter the cabin, add:

*Several steps lead down from the deck to this cabin, and the floor is sheathed in ice. Two built-in bunks and a table are attached to the bulkheads, hinged to fold up when not in use, and several cabinets and shelves are built into the wall. Small hangings of barbarian-worked furs decorate the cabin, alongside miniature tapestries of intricate brocade and embroidered silk. Two dark lanterns hang from the overhead.*

**Creatures:** Captain Bruneval and two of his accursed crew are lurking in the gloom, and attempt to ambush any living creature that enters.

**Captain Bruneval** (see *Adversaries*); hp 180  
**2 Ghasts** (*13th Age Bestiary*); hp 74 each

Bruneval and his minions hope to overcome the PCs as quickly as possible, slaying them to provide fresh recruits for the ship's undead crew. The undead captain fights with a pair of fine Atlantean shortswords.

**Treasure:** The artifacts decorating the captain's cabin have been collected from ports and islands in every part of Thule, and the full collection could be sold for 500 gp. In addition, Bruneval's extensive collection of maps and navigational charts could grant a +2 bonus on future skill checks made within the Sea of Mists. A thorough search reveals a hidden strongbox built into the hull, containing a collection of Nimothan scrimshaw ivory worth 800 gp, as well as several sacks of coinage from across Thule with a total value of 1,013 gp.

More importantly, it contains Captain Bruneval's personal journal. To protect his secrets, Bruneval transcribed much of his recollections in a pidgin of Atlantean and assorted words and phrases from other languages to form a personal cipher. Interpreting his journals and learning their secrets requires a total of five successful DC 20 skill checks, each requiring 1d6 hours. Multiple characters can work together to unravel the narrative.

Once deciphered, the journal includes maps of what Bruneval called "The Dragon's Maw," a series of sea stacks and natural arches that marked the bay where the Dauthur River flows into the Sea of Mists. It relates his trek upriver, including signs that frost giants inhabited the area (though he and his crew did not meet them), his encounter with the icy sentinels that guarded the river approaches to the Tower of Viondor, the subterranean caverns, and domes with their floral gardens. This journal includes the location of the Dragon's Maw and the Tower of Viondor.

In addition to Captain Bruneval's written accounts, the journal contains a half-dozen strange dried blossoms pressed between its pages. The journal makes it clear they were taken from the mysterious gardens beneath Viondor. A DC 20 skill check can identify these as herbs known to have originated in Atlantis and now almost unheard of in Thule. Each has alchemical properties

## BRUNEVAL'S BLOSSOMS

| Blossom                | Effect   |
|------------------------|--|
| White neverwinter      | grants immunity to cold environmental effects (not monster attacks) for 1 hour.              |
| Violet feverfew        | grants immunity to disease for a day, but is poisonous if taken more than once a week.       |
| Blue star lily         | reputed to aid in divination magic rituals.  |
| White snowdrop         | adds +1 to the next cold attack the drinker makes within the next hour.                      |
| Yellow vibrid plumeria | adds +1 to the next psychic attack the drinker makes within the next hour.                   |
| Red winerose           | grants resist poison 12+ for 1 hour and nullifies the effects of ordinary alcohol and drugs. |



when brewed into a tea and steeped for at least 1 minute and then drunk.

There is also a small silken bag containing 1d4 black-shelled ukurne nuts, which function identically to adventurer-tier healing potions. The flowers can be sold to a Thulean botanist or herbalist for 100 gp each, the nuts for 50 gp each.

Finally, there is a strange metallic device like a flattened disk with a crystalline sphere containing seven spheres of violet glass. This is an *Atlantean hydrostat* (see *Adversaries and Treasures*).

**Development:** If Captain Bruneval is destroyed, his curse may not be ended. A successful magic ritual performed by a cleric can lay his spirit to rest, and he can also be destroyed by taking his remains back to land and burning or burying them. A DC 20 skill check can indicate this course of action to lay him to rest, as can appropriate divination magic. If Bruneval's body is dumped in the sea or left to drift on the iceberg, his spirit reanimates his bones after 2d6 days. He returns to unlife with a burning hatred for the PCs and a thirst for vengeance.

## PART TWO: THE COASTS OF NIMOTH

The PCs are not obliged to follow up immediately on Bruneval's journal, though if they are on a sponsored expedition their patron definitely encourages them to seek out this trove of Atlantean riches. The journey across the Sea of Mists can occur at whatever pace best suits your campaign style. It can be played out in detail with storms at sea and random encounters, or it can be expedited in narrative form to bring the PCs closer to their eventual destination. This adventure functions assumes only that the PCs eventually follow up on the leads in Bruneval's journal and charts and find themselves in the chill waters off the coast of Nimoth, its glacial palisade a daunting barrier running all the way down to the coast in many places. After resupplying as needed, they make their way along the coast to the rocky stacks of the Dragon's Maw.

## THE DRAGON'S MAW

When the PCs reach the bay marked in Bruneval's journal, read the following.

*Your ship stands just outside a half-moon bay studded with rows of rocky islets, almost like the broken teeth of some titanic*

*primordial sea monster. Here and there stand tall sea stacks and soaring rocky arches teeming with arctic terns nesting in narrow clefts and wind-blown scrub. The glacial walls of Nimoth draw back from the shore in this area, and are just visible amid barren mountains many miles inland. Closer at hand, at the head of the bay, you can see angular basalt cliffs broken by patches of rocky shingle, and the outflow of a shallow river course.*

The PCs may choose to bring their ship all the way into shore and beach it there, bringing their crew ashore with them, or they may keep the ship out at sea while they venture under their own power. They can use boats, swimming, or magical movement to traverse the bay, or they can use the *Atlantean hydrostat* to allow them to traverse the water's surface. The ship can safely anchor 1,200 feet from the shoreline.

**Creatures:** While Captain Bruneval named the area the Dragon's Maw for the rock formations he found here, his words proved prophetic. Three sea drakes have made the sea arches their lair and consider the seas around the bay their personal hunting grounds.

**3 sea drakes** (reskinned frost wurm remorhazes with a submerge ability instead of burrow; *13th Age Bestiary*); hp 180 each

The sea drakes prefer to attack smaller vessels—if the characters arrive in a good-sized ship, the monsters observe from a distance, and wait to see if any potential meals take to boats small enough for them to capsize. If there are multiple boats, each sea drake attempts to capsize one. As with the orcas in the previous section, it takes eight standard actions to capsize a boat, and the sea drakes will make 1d3 such attempts per round.

If no one looks like they're going to leave a larger ship any time soon, the sea drakes grow impatient and attack the ship anyway. A drake retreats when it's brought below 20 hit points. If the drakes are pursued back to their lair (a sea cave below the largest arch), they fight to the death.

**Treasure:** The sea drakes' lair contains 8 giant walrus tusks (20 gp each) and 13 Nimothan braided bracelets of gold worth 10 gp each. They also collected the metallic shards and wreckage of the Atlantean artifacts destroyed during Captain Bruneval's escape long ago. Though non-functional, they are worth 200 gp to a collector of Atlantean goods for their materials and curiosity value.

## UP THE RIVER

The journey from the coast to the Tower of Viondor takes five days in clear weather, though this journey may be extended if the weather turns unfavorable.

*A chill wind blows down the river's course, though the scrub grass near the shore quickly gives way to windswept hillsides covered in tundra, dotted with stands of small evergreens in sheltered spots. The river meanders between humped-up moraine boulders and pebbled banks. In places the valley is no more than a hundred yards across as it passes through stony gates, though it often widens to a mile or more across. Small game is relatively plentiful here, taking shelter from the ice-capped hills beyond.*

Bruneval's notes indicate that there are numerous areas of rapids along the river, so PCs wishing to use boats to travel upriver must portage them often around these obstacles.

On the second day upriver, the party encounters a significant obstacle:

*You round a sharp bend in the river, and spot the bony carcass of a mastodon a hundred yards ahead of you on the riverbank near the foot of a cliff. Its tusks have been snapped off and its skull seems to have been split by a powerful blow. Several big, long-legged bears gnaw at the corpse.*

**Creatures:** The bears become hostile if PCs approach within 60 feet, attacking if they come within 30 feet.

**3 short-faced bears** (*PTCS*, page 212); hp 90 each

If the characters provoke the bears, the animals charge. Each bear attacks a different creature, attempting to drive it away—the bears are protecting the kill, and quickly lose interest once any intruders retreat (or fall down and stop fighting back). Each bear retreats when brought below 15 hit points. If attacked with an effect dealing electricity, fire, or sonic damage, a bear must succeed at a saving throw or retreat.

**Development:** If the PCs carefully examine the ground around the slain mammoth (DC 20 skill check), they discover massive footprints mostly obliterated by the bears' paws but still visible to the trained eye.—the prints of an immense giant, likely standing more than 20 feet tall. It seems to have departed northward, following the course of the river.

## THE GIANT'S STAIR

One day farther along the river, the PCs' path is blocked by a sheer bluff over which the river flows in a cascading veil.

*The way ahead is blocked by a steep cliff. Here the river cascades down a rocky cataract 40 feet high, throwing up billows of chill mist as the veil of waters bounces between great boulders. From the waterfall's foot, you can see that river flows around a heaped-up cairn of stones piled atop three massive boulders at the top of the falls.*

Bruneval's diary indicates that he portaged around these falls by a game path along the valley's eastern edge, but a quick investigation reveals a massive landslide has destroyed the path he took. A DC 20 skill check around the waterfall reveals that the rocks of the waterfall are not entirely natural, having been shaped with tools to form a crude staircase of great size, with each tread rising 3 to 5 feet.

**Climbing the Stairs:** The swift-moving water and frost-rimed rocks are difficult to traverse, requiring a DC 15 skill check to ascend at normal pace. PCs without a relevant skill must take great care not to slip and fall, cutting their movement speed in half.

**Creatures:** The falls are the home of Verrga, a frost giant of immense size, and his winter wolf ally, Maugg. Maugg keeps watch over the waterfall and the valley below, always looking for prey he and Verrga can take down and devour. He lurks along the frosted hillside above the falls. Allow PCs that take a moment to look around to attempt a DC 25 skill check to spot Maugg from ground level around the base of the falls, or DC 20 from the top of the falls.

When Maugg spots PCs approaching, he informs Verrga of their approach. The giant arrives at the top of the falls 1d4 rounds later.

**Verrga, frost giant** (*13th Age Roleplaying Game*); hp 210

**Maugg, winter wolf** ("winter beast" in *13th Age Bestiary*); hp 170

Verrga hurls iceballs down at creatures along the waterfall or the cliff, trying to knock them back down the falls. After his first attack, he bellows out in brutish Common that if one of their number volunteers to be his dinner he will let the rest flee back downriver; if they wish to proceed upriver, he requires two of their number, as payment in advance for their return journey.



If enemies are highly skilled at ranged combat in return, he takes cover and tries to approach within melee range. He uses his war axe if opponents are adjacent, focusing on targets who are already hampered by his frost touch. Maugg follows Verrga down the stairs. It attacks opponents engaged with Verrga.

Verrga retreats if reduced below 50 hit points, climbing back up the stairs and then fleeing up the hillside beyond to the snowfields rimming the upper reaches of the river valley. Maugg flees if Verrga retreats, if it is brought below 20 hit points, or if it takes more than 30 points of fire damage.

**Treasure:** Verrga has a large polished lump of amber (5 pounds, worth 100 gp), a small bucket of gold pebbles and dust (7 pounds, worth 50 gp), and 8 huge mastodon tusks (40 pounds each, worth 30 gp each) arranged on top of a flat slab of rock in his lodge.

**Development:** At the top of the falls, Verrga has constructed a crude stockade of rough-hewn logs and bones, with a one-room lodge of logs surmounted by a pitched roof of massive cedar planks and shakes. The stockade is strewn with

bones and slabs of half-frozen meat and poorly tanned hides. Enormous woodworking tools are strewn around carelessly, along with several barrels of reeking giant-brewed beer.

The higher hillsides above the river valley are covered with ice and snow. From the crests of the hills, the great glaciers and ice-covered mountains of Nimoth sprawl as far as the eye can see.

## THE VALE OF ICE AND STEAM

The Dauthur River continues above the Giant's Stair for another twenty miles or so—a little more than two days' travel given the rocky terrain and difficult going.

*As the river valley ascends into the interior of Nimoth, the snowfields which once dusted the shoulders of the hillsides slowly creep lower and lower until they reach the valley floor. Dark peaks streaked with snowfields and hanging walls of ice loom close by, peeking over the hills on either side of the Dauthur's valley. The vegetation that was plentiful in the lower valley has dwindled to dwarf pines, lichen, and clumps of scrub grass clinging to crevices in the rock. Crusted snow lingers in every shadowed eave, and the backwaters of the river are now iced*

*over in places. Even amid the rapids a rime of ice lingers.*

*Ahead of you, the river passes through a narrow canyon between 100-foot cliffs. The canyon is only about 30 feet wide at its floor, and the river fills it with a swift, strong stream.*

According to Bruneval's landmarks, the PCs are now quite close to the Tower of Viondor. First, they must get past the canyon. They can either climb to the top of the 100-foot cliffs, walk along the top for a quarter-mile, and then climb down on the far side, or they can push up the river from below. If they still have any of their boats, they can row through the canyon (requiring three DC 15 Profession (sailor) checks, with failed checks damaging the boat as in the Icy Waters section above. If they still have the *Atlantean hydrostat*, they can also use that to traverse the chill waters, taking 3 minutes.

On the far side of the canyon, the PCs get their first glimpse of the Tower.

*Beyond the canyon lies a small, steep-sided vale. To the west, the Drauthur descends down from a great snowfield on the flanks of a mountain—this is the source of the river. To your east, on the shoulder of the mountain, stands a battered stone tower of ancient workmanship, proud and lonely amid the snows. Directly ahead of you on the valley floor lie the snowy ruins of several stone buildings, clustered around a large cave mouth in the wall of the vale underneath the looming tower. Wisps of steam escape from the cave.*

The old buildings were formerly dormitories and workshops for Viondor's living servants. They were abandoned long ago, and heavy snows have collapsed their roofs, leaving them as rubble-and-snow-filled shells. The cave mouth is described at length in Bruneval's journal (he calls it "the Steaming Cave," and writes that it leads to passages and chambers beneath the tower).

**Creature:** The vale is home to a particularly wicked and foul-tempered chimera, Nhiol the Old. The creature was drawn to the warmth of the Steaming Cave and makes its lair in one of the ruined buildings nearby. Large game is becoming hard to find in the upper reaches of the Dauthur valley, and as a consequence Nhiol is very hungry. The creature is well-hidden in the ruins; it automatically notices any intruders openly approaching the entrance to the Steaming Cave, and attacks with a sudden rush from its place of concealment.

**Nhiol the Old, iconic chimera** (starts with wings, one other random benefit, and one random flaw, *13th Age Bestiary*); hp 320

Nhiol attempts to pick off an isolated character, overwhelming him or her with a sudden attack. It makes good use of its flight, withdrawing from combat to lure the PCs apart, then repositioning to swoop down on characters who have become separated from their friends in the course of the fighting. The chimera is very hungry, but it is sly—when reduced to 40 hit points it makes a show of retreating in anger, flying off only to return once it observes the party enter the Steaming Cave. It then returns to its lair and prepares to ambush the PCs when they exit the Steaming Cave later.

If you're using the icons described in the *Primeval Thule Campaign Setting*, don't worry that the chimera's changes reference the by-the-book icons of the base game rather than the Thule icons. Instead of having the players roll relationship dice, randomly choose one benefit (wings are the other benefit) and one flaw at the start of the battle, then reroll when the escalation die reaches 3 and again at 5. The important thing is to have the monster visibly and dramatically change a few times during the battle—it is chimeric, after all.

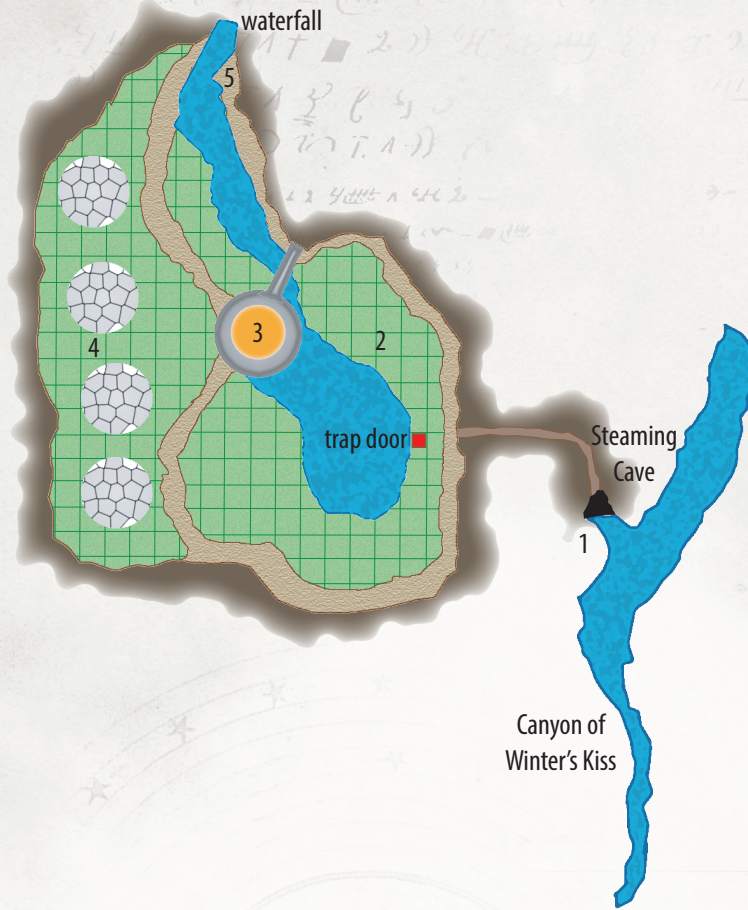
## PART THREE: THE TOWER OF VIONDOR

Once the PCs enter the cave mouth, they are entering the bowels of the Tower of Viondor. He intended for it to be a permanent paradise where he and his chosen retainers could endure as long as they wished amidst the glacial advance of Nimoth. However, most of Viondor's retainers abandoned him. Some were picked up by Bruneval on the coast, while others slipped away and struck out for cities such as Akal-Amo or Orech. One of the latter bands attracted the attention of Shilpatel, a cunning rakshasa. She uncovered their secrets by persuasion and divination, and when she had learned all she needed to know, she and her hag bodyguard Lakshmireda slaughtered them and stole their identities. Then the rakshasa returned to Viondor, where she plied the old wizard with false devotion and gifts.

Delighted that some of his own had returned to him when the other Atlanteans had already fled, Viondor welcomed Shilpatel and Lakshmireda. Shilpatel spent months dotting upon Viondor and inveigling herself into his confidence (and his bed). When she had mastered his secrets, she slew Viondor and took his place. Having learned

## SUMMER CAVERN

□ 30 ft.



his pass phrases, she found it easy to take control of the constructs made by Viondor, who accepted her as their true master. Shilpatel has passed the years since combing through Viondor's libraries and schooling herself in the ancient arts of Atlantis, experimenting with Viondor's magical machines for construct creation, and meditating upon the glory she will earn from her rakshasa kin when she one day returns with an army of automations at her back.

Characters following in Bruneval's footsteps first enter the tower through the Drainage Pipe (area 1). However, there is also a ground-level entrance from the mountainside in area 9. The entrance is not visible from the Vale of Ice and Steam below. To get to the tower exterior from the valley below, the party must climb 400 feet up a steep, icy mountainside (skill DC 20) before reaching the level ledge on which the tower proper stands.

### I. THE DRAINAGE PIPE

*The cave plunges more than 100 feet into the side of the crag. A small rivulet of hot water trickles down the passage from the interior. About halfway along its length, the passage transitions from a natural fissure to a large, circular tunnel 15 feet in diameter bored out of the rock. At the end of the tunnel, you find a mass of iron pipes and valves, dripping with scalding water. In the middle of the pipes sits a 6-foot-tall round metal hatch with a round hand-wheel in its center. The hatch evidently leads deeper into the mountain, but it isn't clear what the purpose of the pipes around it might be. There is also a rough, human-sized figure carved from ice that stands in front of the piping and the hatch. It regards you in silence.*

The piping and the hatch are part of an apparatus designed to regulate the inflow and outflow of water from the Summer Cavern, further inside the mountain. Minor leaks from the aged pipes feed the rivulet of warm water that flows out of

## DRAINAGE APPRATUS TRAP

DC 20 skill check to notice, +10 vs. PD (all nearby creatures)—2d10 fire damage and target is pushed back 1d6 x 5 feet and knocked prone. Multiple use.

the passage and creates the steam clouds visible outside.

**Creatures:** The creature made from ice is a single ice golem that stands guard over the apparatus, but it takes no action unless intruders damage the drainage system controls or try to force the hatch. It defends itself if attacked (including being “attacked” by being caught in the effect of a failed attempt to operate the mechanism; see below).

**Ice golem** (reskinned stone golem with fire vulnerability and the nastier special of the ogre mage’s *cone of cold*, 13th Age Roleplaying Game); hp 280

**The Hatch:** The hatch is locked by the drainage apparatus; the drain passage beyond is filled with hot water. When the water is drained from the passage by proper operation of the apparatus, the hatch can be opened, revealing a 6-foot diameter pipe that leads 200 feet to the Summer Cavern (area 2).

The hatch can be forced or pried open with crowbars (or similar tools) and a successful DC 20 Strength check, or destroyed (100 hit points and resist damage 12+). The ice golem immediately attacks anyone trying to force the hatch or damage it. If the hatch is forced open or destroyed without first operating the mechanism (see below), a great flood of hot water bursts out as the drain passage beyond suddenly empties into this area.

**Hazards:** The drain apparatus regulates and recovers heat and water from the interior. Operated properly, the apparatus flushes the pipes and opens the access hatch, allowing creatures to walk through the drain pipe into the Summer Cavern. Operating the apparatus requires a DC 20 skill check. Whether the check succeeds or fails, read:

*The pipes creak and rumble. You hear the sound of rushing water somewhere behind the wall, and several small jets of steam burst from valves hidden in the pipework.*

If the check fails by 5 or more, the drainage apparatus blasts out dangerous jets of hot water (see the trap description below).

To complete the flush cycle and open the hatch,

the operator must succeed on two consecutive DC 20 skill checks within the next 10 rounds, checking once per round. If a skill check is failed by 5 or more, or if two consecutive checks are failed, the trap is activated, and the system then resets. If the operator gets to ten rounds without solving the apparatus or triggering it, the system resets, and the characters will have to start over.

Once the apparatus has been successfully operated, the hatch can be opened simply by operating the handwheel (no skill check needed).

**Development:** Once the apparatus is flushed and the hatch opened, PCs can enter the 6-foot-wide metallic pipe behind it. The pipe runs 200 feet into the Summer Cavern. The interior end of the pipe is closed by a sluice gate that holds back the water in the lake in the Summer Cavern, but there is a metal ladder near the end that leads to a hatch in the ceiling of the pipe. This hatch opens in the floor of area 2, near the east shore of the lake.

## 2. THE SUMMER CAVERN

*The air of this cavern is redolent with the scent of flowers and filled with a clinging humidity and warmth that seeps into your very bones. A strange machine of metal and glass dominates the chamber, rising from a placid lake in the middle of the cavern to the ceiling. It sheds a comforting golden radiance. The walls are covered with hanging mosses and shelved terraces teeming with trailing vines heavy with blossom and berry. A manicured orchard surrounds the lake, while at the north end of the chamber, a tinkling waterfall cascades down the cavern wall. On the cavern’s west side, a large ledge supports a series of glass and metal domes and chambered mounds.*

The Summer Cavern was created by Viondor as a self-contained ecosystem, watered with melted ice and infused with Atlantean tinctures to help fertilize and maintain the environment. It is cared for by a staff of wax servants that roam the cavern, pruning and tending as needed. A terrace surrounds the lower cavern at a height of approximately 20 feet, and it can be reached by climbing the greenery or by finding the camouflaged pathways (DC 15 skill check or an extensive search).

The wax servants are sentient and appear to be Atlantean humans (see the sidebar). They speak High Atlantean and are initially unfriendly, but if the PCs impress them, they can answer general questions about the Summer Cavern and their master, the great wizard Viondor. He lives high in the tower above but visits the Summer Cavern

when he is not busy with his studies or to tend the Solarion (area 3). They “live” in the lower levels of the tower when not tending the gardens.

**Creatures:** At the moment, there are five wax servants in the Summer Cavern. These servants are skilled gardeners, working independently in the lower gardens.

**5 wax servants** (see Adversaries); hp 90 each

If a wax servant is attacked, it shouts for help. All but one servant rushes to aid it against intruders, while the remaining wax servant heads for area 4 to get help from the wax servants there. It returns in six rounds with four additional wax servants from that area. Each wax servant fights until destroyed.

## 3. THE SOLARION

*A massive column of stone and steel stands in the center of the cavern. It is embedded with long panes of glowing amber crystal that emit a warm, golden radiance. A balcony surrounds the column's base about 20 feet above the level of the lake and lower gardens. A footbridge leads from the eastern terrace to the balcony by the golden column. The balcony also leads to the terrace on the western side of the cavern.*

The Solarion was devised by Viondor to simulate the cycles of day and night for the benefit of the plants here. It is powered by eldritch energy drawn from convergent lines power in the earth. This energy also charges an arcane forge that manufactures a new wax servant every 1d6 years, distilling the wax delivered from the hives in area 4 and incubating them within a chamber hidden within the massive column.

Characters who closely examine the device discover the funnel opening for pouring in; the funnel has beeswax drippings. The manufacturing chambers are accessed by secret doors (skill check DC 20) located on the column's south, east, and north sides; the south chamber holds a half-complete wax servant that won't be finished for many months.

Shilpatel has learned the means of maintaining the device, but has thus far been unsuccessful in duplicating its effects with other types of constructs. The Solarion once possessed three incubating manufactories, but she has damaged two of them beyond her ability to repair in the course of her experiments with construct creation. She has left the third manufactory undisturbed while she continues her research.

**Development:** PCs wishing to manipulate the controls of the Solarion can cause it to shift from simulated cool dawn to midday heat, evening cool, multicolored sunset, pale starlight or moonlight, or even total darkness with a DC 20 skill check. The device can be effectively destroyed by smashing the amber panels; there are six of them (30 hp).

## PEOPLE OR CONSTRUCTS?

The wax servants in the Tower are very good likenesses of living humans, and in fact are sentient and believe themselves to be real people. Allow characters interacting with the wax servants to attempt a skill check (DC 25) to recognize that they are artificial. (The skin has a very slight sheen, the eyes don't blink, and movement is not quite natural.) Likewise, the wax servants think they have free will, but they are actually programmed to act like people who do. A character who tries to gain an insight into their behavior may attempt a skill check (DC 20) to recognize that the “people” he is interacting with are under some strange form of compulsion that makes them act the way they do.

Because they think they're real, the wax servants see themselves as loyal to Viondor. They think they are Atlanteans who benefit from “immortality magic” that keeps them perpetually young and tireless. They regard strangers as potential thieves or vandals, and challenge the PCs on first meeting. Initially the wax servants demand that the party leave, and seek to detain them if the party refuses. Because they are programmed to defend the Tower, the servants attack without regard to their own safety if the PCs ignore them and press on. However, clever PCs may be able to persuade the servants that they are messengers or allies, and win their friendship.

In combat, the wax servants are tougher and more resilient than ordinary people would be. Allow the PCs another skill check (DC 20) to identify the servants as artificial when any servant they are fighting is reduced to half hit points or shrugs off a critical hit. If a wax servant is destroyed, it is clear to anyone nearby that it is a construct, not a living creature. Any sentient wax servant that is within 30 feet of another wax servant that is destroyed (revealing it to be not be human at all) becomes dazed (save ends). It thinks that someone it has known for all its life has just been revealed to be a machine, not realizing that it is likewise not truly alive.

## 4. THE CRYSTAL DOMES

*Four large domes made from transparent crystal panes set in iron frames stand on the ledge at the western edge of the cavern. Inside the domes, you can see row after row of hanging plants, along with a cluster of large beehives in the center of each dome. The air on this high ledge hums with the buzzing of insects; the air is thick with pollen and the heady bouquet of thousands of flowers.*

These domes contain Atlantean hanging gardens, fed by misting water channels and focusing

the light of the Solarion to best nourish the plants within. This upper shelf teems with pollinating insects; while these bees fly throughout the orchards below and the gardens that cover nearly every surface of the cavern, they are most concentrated around the growing domes and hives in this area.

**Creatures:** Each dome is tended by a wax servant and a swarm of mutated giant bees, each with a wingspan of a foot or more. These bees carry baskets of produce to the secret door at area 5. They periodically harvest wax from the endless hives and deposit it in the manufactory embedded in the Solarion (area 3). If the wax servant or drone harvesters are attacked, the thousands of ordinary bees inside the dome become agitated, and eight warrior bees emerge, forming an angry swarm that attacks all creatures other than the wax servant and pursuing those creatures throughout the Summer Cavern until destroyed. The drones don't fight, but they do buzz around menacingly.

**Wax servant** (see Adversaries); hp 90 each

**8 giant bees** (reskinned harpies with "disconcerting buzz" replacing the mechanically identical Fiendish Song ability, *13th Age Roleplaying Game*); hp 44 each

If the wax servants in the domes were summoned to help defend area 2, then any that the PCs encountered there are not present here.

## 5. THE SPIRAL RAMP

The entrance to the tower itself is hidden behind a secret door located at the northern end of the terrace. Finding the secret door requires an extensive search or a successful DC 20 skill check, although PCs can learn about the entrance by questioning wax servants in areas 2 or 4, or observing the cavern for a little while—new wax servants from the upper levels eventually come down to the Summer Cavern to attend their duties here, and pass through the door.

When the PCs discover the secret door, read:

*The secret passage opens into the bottom of an open well-like space, 50 feet across and perhaps 200 feet high. A 10-foot-wide ramp spirals up around the wall of the chamber. A warm updraft from hidden vents carries the verdant smells of the garden cavern into this chamber, and a large golden globe hanging at the apex of the chamber fills the space with warm light. The ramp passes a dozen or so doors as it spirals upwards, and eventually ends at a door just below the ceiling.*

This portion of the Tower is a subterranean chamber carved from the mountain between the Summer Cavern (area 2) and the basement level of the Tower proper (area 6).

**Doors:** The doors leading off the shaft are not locked. Each leads a storeroom or workroom about 20 feet by 20 feet. These chambers are "living" quarters for the wax servant that inhabit the tower, and each holds two sleeping mats, along with small looms, worktables, or other crafting tools.

**Upper Door:** The door at the top of the ramp leads into a plain stone passage 10 feet wide, illuminated by small paraffin lamps in wall sconces. The passage ascends two more spirals, and climbs up through an open arch that leads to the floor of area 6.

**Creatures:** The 3rd, 5th, and 10th doors from the bottom lead to rooms where wax servants are currently "resting" or working quietly at crafts such as weaving or woodwork.

**2 wax servants** (see Adversaries); hp 90 each

Wax servants interrupted in their quarters object to their rest or activity being disturbed and demand (in High Atlantean) that the intruders leave. If the PCs answer in any language other than High Atlantean, the wax servants shout an alarm. There is a 25% chance that the occupants of one of the other two occupied rooms in this area hear the call for help and respond.

## 6. TOWER BASEMENT

The passage at top of the spiral ramp chamber (area 5) leads to the basement level of the Tower.

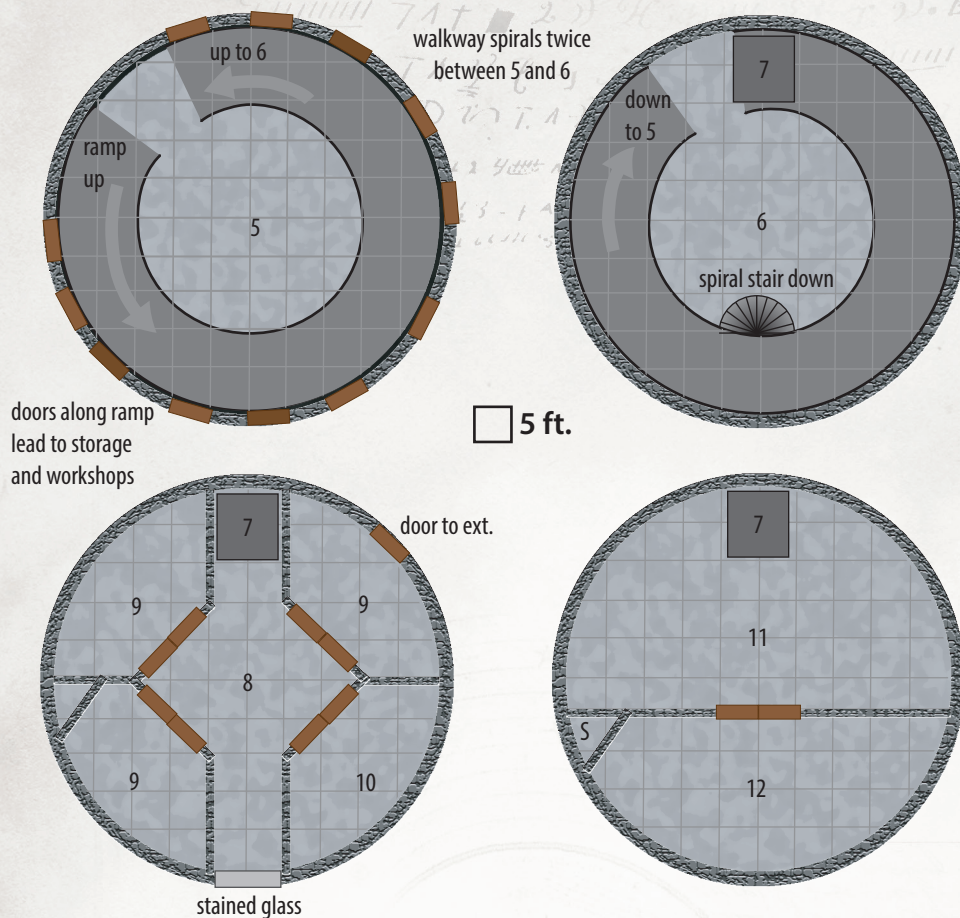
*This large round chamber is filled with uncountable fragments of junk and wreckage. Some look like the remnants of alien devices of unfathomable complexity, while others seem like the rusted debris of any salvage yard, cobbled into crude mechanisms and tools. A 10-foot wide metallic catwalk runs around the circumference of the room 20 feet above the floor level; the catwalk is piled with yet more junk.*

*On the south side of the room, a spiral staircase of metal leads from the chamber floor to the catwalk level. At the north end of the room, part of the catwalk is connected by gears and chains to rails that go up to the ceiling, where a 10-foot wide panel sits in a shallow recess. There is also a stone doorway below the catwalk, leading to a ramp that spirals down.*

*A handful of aproned workers roam through the piles, sorting through components and pursuing various projects.*



## TOWER OF VIONDOR



The components here are the shattered remnants of dozens of abortive golem creation projects by Shilpatel, though they were not wholly ineffective. In addition to the wax servants that are in sight, there is a hidden threat in the piles of junk. After so many cycles of creation and destruction, the loose components have gained a sort of residual animus, allowing them to animate as an unusually large junk golem. If a character takes a careful look at the junk, the PC realizes that one of the piles forms a creature that is currently quiescent.

**Creatures:** Four wax servants are working in this area—three on the floor, and one on the catwalk. When PCs enter this chamber, the wax servants are unfriendly. They attempt to chivy the party out of the room and back the way they came, telling them in High Atlantean that “No visitors are allowed to see the great works! You must wait until you are summoned!” If befriended and convinced that the PCs have been summoned by the Maker—“the great Viondor!”—the

wax servants escort the party to the lift (area 7). One wax servant accompanies the party, operating the lift and taking them up to area II.

If PCs attack any of the wax servants, or if they attempt to ascend the stairs or otherwise continue up the tower without convincing the wax servants that they have been summoned, the servants attack. In addition, the junk golem animates and attacks as well.

**4 wax servants** (see Adversaries); hp 90 each  
**Junk golem** (reskinned version of a bronze golem, *13th Age Bestiary*); hp 190

If a fight breaks out on the floor, the wax servant on the catwalk hurries to the lift. It activates the platform, which takes 3 rounds to ascend to area II. The alchemical golem there gets on the lift, and the two golems ride the lift back down to this level, returning at the end of round 7; they can act normally on their turns in round 8. The alchemical golem remains on the catwalk

level and throws bombs until the PCs confront it directly or until it's staggered from bomb-making damage.

**Alchemical golem** (see Adversaries); hp 144

**Treasure:** Each 10 minutes spent sifting through the junk in this room allows a character to salvage 1d10 x 10 gp work of Atlantean metalwork and other potentially useful debris, to a maximum of 1,000 gp.

## 7. THE LIFT

*A 10-foot wide metal catwalk circles a large, junk-filled room 20 feet below. More piles of junk are strewn around the catwalk. However, a 10-foot by 10-foot section of the catwalk on the northern side of the room appears to be free of any debris. It is attached by gears and chains to a pair of rails that run 15 feet up to the ceiling, where there is a recessed panel about the same size as the catwalk section. A mechanism of gears and handles stands on the side of the catwalk section by the rails.*

The 10-foot section of the catwalk is a mechanical elevator. It ascends to area 8, and above that area II (the top). The recessed panel in the ceiling divides this area from the floor of area 8; it slides aside when the lift comes within 10 feet from below, and closes again when the lift rises above it.

The lift is cleverly counterweighted by hidden weights. To move it up or down, all that an operator need do is crank one of the handles mounted on the platform—clockwise lowers the platform, counterclockwise raises it. (The crank does not turn clockwise when the platform is sitting at the catwalk level, since that is its lowest point.) As a standard action, anyone with a can move the platform up or down 10 feet by turning the crank. An operator can attempt to move faster by turning the crank more vigorously; this requires a successful DC 15 Strength check and increases the speed to 20 feet. If the lift is not here, the platform can be brought down to this level simply by hauling on a chain by the rails (this is the same as using the winch handle on the platform).

Figuring out how to operate the device requires extensive experimentation or a successful DC 15 skill check, although if the characters observe the wax servant mentioned in the area 6 description operating the device, they automatically figure it out.

## 8. THE ATRIUM

*This chamber is a grand atrium tiled in polished black stone. Four large sets of doors flank a hexagonal central chamber, which bears an intricate inlaid tile map of some island archipelago worked into the floor in shades of blue and tan. To the south, a stained-glass window depicting a vibrant seascape is illuminated brightly by the low rays of the cold arctic sun. A young Atlantean woman in servant's garb stands gazing out through transparent panes in the window.*

*To the north, there is a recessed panel about 10 feet square in the floor. Two iron rails bolted to the wall just behind the panel lead up to the ceiling 20 feet above, where there is a matching recess and panel. Several chains run parallel to the rails.*

This chamber was built by Viondor to remind him of his fallen Atlantean home. The window has a handful of clear panels, which provide a view for miles down the Vale of Ice and Steam and the valley of the Dauthur River beyond it, as well as the glaciers that bracket the valley. Sharp-eyed characters can make out the Giant's Stair, almost twenty miles down the valley.

The recessed panels and the rails are part of the lift installation (see area 7 for details). If the PCs enter from the exterior door in area 9, the lift is not here—it is one floor down, in area 7.

**Creatures:** A single wax servant keeps watch here to ensure no one disturbs the experiments in areas 9 and 10, and also keeps watch on the surrounding landscape.

**Wax servant** (see Adversaries); hp 90

The wax servant is unfriendly. She insists that the party must return the way they came, and attacks if they try to push on past her. If the PCs can mollify her, she answers questions about what is in each room to the best of her understanding. She can report that the PCs were observed coming upriver and that Master Viondor was interested to see what they would do if they came into the tower, so he has allowed them to explore. She is here to see if more visitors are coming after them. She says that Master Viondor and his assistant are upstairs in the observatory, and tells the PCs to wait while she goes to inform Viondor of their arrival.

If the PCs allow her to leave, the wax servant takes the lift up to area II. She returns in just a minute or two, and informs the party that Viondor would like to meet them in the observatory. She then uses the lift to take the characters up to area II.

## 9. WORKSHOPS

The northeast workshop has a little-used metal door leading to the mountainside on which the tower stands. The door is half-buried in snow drifts, but characters who climb (or fly) up the mountainside and make an effort to circle the tower in search of an entrance find it easily enough. The door is locked from the inside (DC 25 skill check to get through, one way or another); Shilpatel carries the key. The doors leading into these rooms from area 8 are unlocked.

*This semicircular chamber features a large stone worktable. Shelves along the walls hold a variety of materials and tools: squares of raw leather, bleached bone, rough pieces of wood in various sizes and shapes, metal cogs and shafts, hammers, tongs, heavy needles, and more. Lying on top of the stone table is a humanoid form crudely fashioned from the materials present in the room.*

Each workroom holds one slab with an incomplete wood golem, although the lack of suitable wood nearby has forced the creator to substitute alternate materials such as mammoth bone and scrap metal in various places. A character trained in Arcana who studies the work in progress or the materials can identify the creature on the slab with a successful DC 21 Knowledge (arcana) check.

The stone worktables themselves are imbued with the power to enable construct creation. A creature performing the appropriate rituals can create constructs with greater efficiency and chance of success. (Shilpatel knows the ritual, having learned it from Viondor.)

**Northeast Workshop:** This workshop also has a door in the outer wall, leading to the tower exterior. The tower sits on a level shelf on the mountainside that is about 200 feet across (from north to south) and 600 feet wide (east to west). This ledge is covered in deep snowdrifts.

**Northwest Workshop:** The wood golem in this workshop is almost complete. If tampered with by any creature other than Shilpatel, it animates and attacks. The golem does not pursue if intruders retreat out of the room, and returns to the slab one minute later.

**Wood golem** (reskinned version of a clay golem, *13th Age Roleplaying Game*); hp 120

**Southwest Workshop:** This room is smaller than the others, with what appears to be a solid stone wall filling in one corner at area S. This is

actually the location of a secret stairwell mechanism (found after an extensive search or a DC 25 skill check). When triggered, a sliding door opens up into a collapsing stairwell that extends to the catwalk below (area 6) and upwards into the Master's Chamber (area 12).

**Treasure:** Each room holds useful materials—good leather, well-preserved mammoth bone, and so on. The value in any given room is 1d4 100 gp, but the materials are bulky. Their weight in pounds is equal to half their gp value.

## 10. ABATTOIR

*The door to this chamber is locked from the outside with three heavy bars. A putrid stench wafts from within.*

Shilpatel has relatively little living flesh on which to experiment, but while working to construct an oversized flesh golem from assorted creature parts harvested from the valley the experimental tissue putrefied. The resulting defective construct came apart shortly after animating. Shilpatel fled the chamber as the two golems came to life, locking the two golems within as she considers how best to salvage the experiment. When the PCs enter the room, read:

*The chamber is filthy with bloodstains and a wicked assortment of saws, drills, trocars, clamps, and basins. A bloodstained stone platform sits in the room's center. A charnel colossus stands on each side of the operating theater, one comprised of malformed and mismatched flesh and limbs and the other of a tangled mass of fused bone.*

**Creatures:** When Shilpatel's construct came apart, the animate flesh sloughed off the bony structure before coming into existence as two golems instead of one, both uncontrolled: a flesh golem and a bone golem. The golems stand silently within, unmoving, but if the door is opened they burst forth to attack all creatures nearby.

**Bone golem** (reskinned version of a stone golem, *13th Age Roleplaying Game*); hp 280

**Flesh golem** (*13th Age Roleplaying Game*); hp 100

Each golem attacks the nearest creature (other than another golem) every round. They pursue any retreating foes relentlessly, although they don't have the ability to operate the lift in area 8. They fight until destroyed.

## II. OBSERVATORY

*A great domed chamber takes up most of the top floor of the tower. Numerous inlaid tables are strewn with scrolls, books, inkpots and quills, and strange diagrams and frameworks of crystal and wire. Several large tubes stand upright within metallic frameworks and geared mechanisms. One set of shelves holds a collection of burnished mirrors and lenses, while another holds row after row of bottles and beakers containing varicolored fluids and pickled viscera.*

*On the north side of the room, a set of iron rails leads to a recessed panel in the floor about 10 feet square—a lift of some kind. By the lift opening stands a large, misshapen construct of wood, metal, and glass tubing. Its head is a glass dome in which float a brain and a pair of eyes.*

*To the south stands a large pair of doors. An alchemical laboratory is set up along several tables near the doors. A stern old man with a short white beard and scarlet robes patters about by the alchemical laboratory, while a young woman in a warrior's cuirass assists him.*

If Shilpatel is warned that intruders are near—for example, by the arrival of wax servants from area 6 or area 8—she is ready to greet the party disguised as an elderly male Atlantean, Viondor. Add:

*The old man in robes looks up as the lift comes to a stop. "Oh, hello there," he says. "How exciting! We don't have many visitors these days. I am Viondor, master of this tower. This is Taala, my assistant. Who might you be?"*

### A FINE MEAL

Shilpatel wants to get the PCs to eat, but she is clever enough to realize that insisting may look suspicious. You'll need to be careful about how you present this choice to the players. The best thing to do is simply ask the players, "Do you join Viondor or decline?" If the players agree to sit down with Viondor, you can assume the PCs partake of the various courses and are exposed to the poisoned mushrooms when they are served. If the PCs initially decline refreshments, "Viondor" looks a little hurt, but shrugs and says that "he" will have something while they talk. Ask the players again after they've conversed with their host for a few minutes.

If the players don't suspect anything and the PCs eat the mushrooms, don't give it away by asking for saving throws right away. Ask for the first saving throw at the end of the onset period; the saves for the second and third doses follow 2 and 4 rounds later. Characters may mistake the poison's effect for exceptionally strong wine at first.

Shilpatel ("Viondor") and her bodyguard Lakshmireda ("Taala") spend most of their time in this chamber, although they occasionally visit the Summer Cavern (area 2) and spend long hours in the Workshops (area 9). Shilpatel is working on deciphering Viondor's research and

trying to replicate his mastery of construct creation. She has had some successes, most notably the creation of an alchemical golem (the construct by the lift). More often, she has had partial successes, like the junk golems in area 6 and the abortive golems in the abattoir (area 10). Still, Shilpatel is content to continue her work, adored by the gullible wax servants that believe her to be their undying master.

**Creatures:** Shilpatel is intrigued by the PCs and curious as to their business here. Her initial attitude toward the PCs is hostile, though she covers it well with friendly blandishments and a genially doddering demeanor. She is interested in the PCs' tales and news of the outside world. If the PCs are properly deferential, she answers truthfully questions about Captain Bruneval (she does not know him by name, but she dimly recalls an intruder matching his description who stole a few things many years ago and fled).

While conversing, Shilpatel seeks to put the PCs off their guard in case she decides to dispose of them. She invites the party to dine with her, summoning wax servants from area 12 to serve food and wine (see Roleplaying "Viondor," below).

**Alchemical golem** (see Adversaries); hp 144

**Lakshmireda, hag** (13th Age Bestiary); hp 108

**Shilpatel, rakshasa** (13th Age Roleplaying Game); hp 280

**Tactics:** If a fight breaks out, the alchemical golem uses its bombs if PCs are clustered together. It is careful not to place bombs where Shilpatel could be harmed. The golem responds to verbal commands from Shilpatel during combat, attacking as she directs; if she is incapacitated, it moves toward her and attacks any creature attacking her. Lakshmireda remains adjacent to Shilpatel at all times, using her iron claws to vomit up pseudo-flesh on enemies and steal recoveries. She fights to death to protect Shilpatel, or to avenge her if she is killed.

Shilpatel has no interest in fighting to the death. If sorely pressed, she calls for all remaining wax servants in area 12 to come and defend her as she retreats to area 12.

For her part, Lakshmireda has the annis skin (appears as a beautiful woman and can cough up a glob of liquid flesh) and breath stealing (10 temporary hit points and can steal a recovery to heal 20 hp) hag abilities triggered by good rolls with her iron claws. Her death curse: "Just as 'wicked'

starts with 'wick,' like a candle your skin is sick." The cursed PC has skin like a wax servant (though the PC is still alive) and no longer blinks.

**Roleplaying "Viondor":** Shilpatel, in the guise of Viondor, speaks both High and Low Atlantean. She relates some of Viondor's story as her own, but most is entirely fabricated as she paints the picture of a harmless researcher into the mystical arts both magical and mechanical. She has studied Atlantean history and geography, but is not truly expert. A PC can attempt a DC 15 skill check to recognize errors in her recollection, which Shilpatel tries to play off as encroaching senility and gradual memory loss in "his" old age.

**The Feast:** While talking with the party, Shilpatel offers to serve food and wine. A pair of wax servants from area 12 is summoned to lay out a tempting spread and set chairs around the table. The first course is a vegetable broth, and the second is smoked fish; both are fine. As the feasting continues, a third course is brought out of pies made with striped toadstool. Characters eating them are exposed to three doses of the poison (11+ save). Each failed save applies a cumulative -1 penalty on Intelligence and Wisdom checks, and unlucky PCs who fail all three saves fall unconscious until someone gives them a vigorous shaking (a standard action).

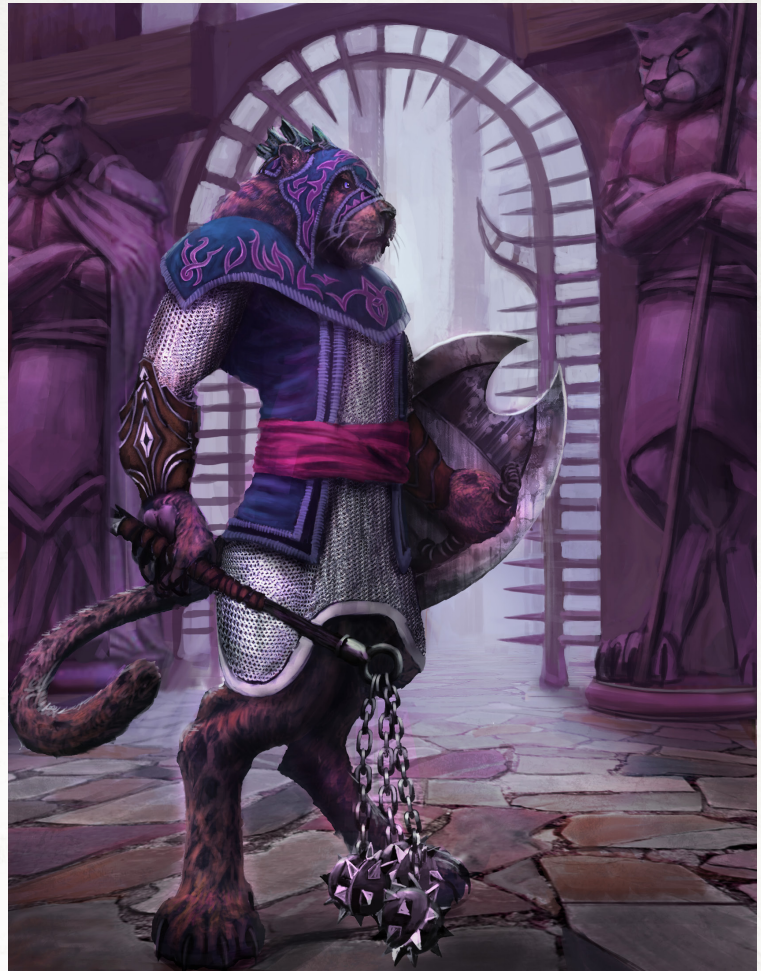
Shilpatel and Lakshmireda have developed an immunity to these toxic mushrooms and eat them with impunity and relish.

If the poison is detected and she is confronted about it, Shilpatel feigns ignorance of their poisonous qualities. She points out that she ate them as well, and suggests that perhaps as an Atlantean she has a tolerance to their effects. Otherwise, Shilpatel waits to see if the poison disables her guests, hoping to take them prisoner when they become helpless (although she is happy to spring her trap whenever she sees that a fight is inevitable).

**After the Feast:** If the PCs don't succumb to the mushrooms and the feast concludes peacefully, Shilpatel offers them quarters in "his" tower and Atlantean consorts (actually wax servants from area 12) to attend to them. These quarters are in some of the unused small rooms off the Spiral Ramp (area 5).

If PCs ask to leave the tower, Shilpatel urges them to stay and assist in "his" research, or at the very least rest and provision themselves before setting out again. She also suggests that she holds the secret to "immortality," and will share eternal

life with any who choose to join her. Shilpatel acts as though she believes that the wax servants are truly alive and are the deathless scions of Old Atlantis. If confronted with evidence that they are not, "Viondor" becomes despondent and weepy and excuses himself to his bedchamber, declaring to them, "No, this is not right. I will show you! I will bring you proof that these ARE the true children of Atlantis. You will see!" In truth, she is just waiting for the poison to have its effect on the PCs while she retreats to prepare for combat.



**Development:** If PCs agree to remain in the tower—either because they believe "Viondor" knows something about immortality, they are persuaded to rest, or they feigning agreement—Shilpatel has wax servants from areas 12 escort them below. Once PCs are safely ensconced in their bedchambers (hopefully isolated individually or in smaller groups) she intends a stealthy night attack to capture them for later experiments if possible, or simply to slay and devour them if capture proves difficult. It has been long since Shilpatel and Lakshmireda feasted on flesh and blood.

Regardless of whether the PCs agree to her overtures or politely decline, Shilpatel has no intention of allowing them to take any of her treasures, or to carry stories about her tower to the outside world. The characters must come to serve her, or die and become fodder for her experiments.

**Treasure:** The alchemical supplies, books, scrolls, lenses, and furnishings here are of considerable worth. Fourteen bottles of rare alchemical reagents are worth 20 gp and weigh 3 pounds each; a set of finely made lenses in a copper frame weighs 30 pounds, but is worth 200 gp; and among the dusty old scrolls stuffed into the bookshelves is a rare map by a famous cartographer worth 100 gp.

## 12. MASTER'S CHAMBER

*This grand bedchamber is dominated by massive crystal-paned windows that look out to the south. In the far distance, a low bank of clouds may mark the distant Sea of Mists. Scroll niches line several of the walls, and silken pillows and sumptuous divans are arrayed around the room. Four scantily clad servants stand at the ready along the walls in motionless poses of supplication.*

This luxurious chamber is Shilpatel and Laksh-mireda's bedchamber and treasury.

**Creatures:** The four attendants here are wax servants made in the images of beautiful young men and women. They do not fight unless directly attacked or ordered to join combat by their maker.

4 wax servants (see Adversaries); hp 90 each

**Secret Stair:** At area S is a secret trapdoor (extensive search or DC 25 skill check to find). When triggered, it causes a collapsing stairwell to extend downwards past area 9 to area 6 below. If Shilpatel is forced to flee combat in area 12, she uses this secret stairwell to flee back down to the tower's lower levels.

**Treasure:** The library grants a +2 circumstance bonus on all skill checks to a creature able to read High Atlantean; this bonus is increased to +5 for checks related to constructs. The library consists of twenty-five rare Atlantean tomes collectively worth 500 gp to collectors of Atlantean lore, and weigh 5 pounds each. In addition, a box of carved ivory and amber on a shelf near the trapdoor contains 225 gp in Atlantean coinage, as well as



a dozen polished garnets worth 10 gp each. The box itself is worth 200 gp. Shilpatel takes this box with her if she flees.

## EPILOGUE

If Shilpatel cannot defeat the player characters or drive them out of her tower, she does not hesitate to abandon her allies, including the faithful Laksh-mireda. In Shilpatel's mind, a bodyguard's purpose is to give its life in service, and she has no remorse for asking Laksh-mireda to do so. If able to retreat to the lower levels, Shilpatel orders all surviving constructs on the lower levels to

ascend the lift and attack the PCs. Characters may be stranded under siege at the top of the tower until they are able to eliminate the golems below, or at least sabotage the lift to keep the creatures from getting to them.

After setting the golems to attack the intruders, Shilpatel retreats to the Solarion and takes 20 minutes to sabotage it. Once it has been sabotaged, its cycles and energy balance become unstable and it begins operating erratically for 1d20 hours, after which it ceases functioning entirely. The ecosystem within the Summer Cavern begins to decay rapidly without its light, and within a matter of weeks the entire area goes to rot. Without the Solarion's radiance, the bees become erratic and behave as if confused, eventually dying within a week.

Meanwhile, Shilpatel takes what wealth she can with her and flees downriver, hoping to find the PCs' ship. Arriving at the river mouth, she assumes the guise of one of the characters and signals for rescue, spinning a tale of death and disaster with herself as sole survivor. She urges the crew to sail away, using magical persuasion if necessary. If PCs do not immediately pursue Shilpatel downriver, they might find themselves stranded on the icy shores of Nimoth. Carrying large quantities of Atlantean salvage may be a tricky endeavor as the party makes its way overland through forbidding terrain to reach civilization again.

Shilpatel always keeps an eye out for the PCs or goods brought back from her erstwhile home. She can become a recurring adversary plotting a dire revenge against the characters for destroying her plans at the Lost Tower of Viondor.

## ADVERSARIES AND TREASURES

Here are monsters and treasures specific to *Lost Tower of Viondor*.

### BRUNEVAL

9th-level Spoiler [undead]

Initiative +5

**Twin Atlantean short swords +13 vs. AC (2 attacks)**—10 damage, and the target is vulnerable (save ends)

**Whirlwind of blades +13 vs. AC (each nearby enemy)**—10 damage

**C: Haunting Mists +13 vs MD (each nearby living creature)**—the target must choose one: 30 psychic damage; OR stunned until end of Bruneval's next turn

Limited use: 1/battle.

AC 25

PD 23

MD 19

HP 180

### WAX SERVANT

6th-level troop [construct]

Initiative -2

**Resist Magic 16+**: When a magic attack targets this creature, the attacker must roll a natural 16+ on the attack roll or it deals only half damage. Magic that deals fire damage bypasses this resistance, and see below for magic that deals cold damage.

Vulnerability: fire

**Waxy fists +11 vs. AC**—21 damage

**Waxen immunity**: Wax servants are immune to effects. They can't be dazed, weakened, confused, made vulnerable, or touched by ongoing damage. They can be slowed by cold damage however (see below).

**Cold Healing**: Wax servants are automatically slowed (save ends) if they would take cold damage, but instead of taking damage, the wax servant heals 1 hit point for every 2 damage it would have taken. If this takes the wax servant above its maximum hit points, it gains the excess as temporary hit points.

AC 22

PD 16

MD 20

HP 90

### ALCHEMICAL GOLEM

5th-level archer [construct]

Initiative -1

**Clockwork fists +10 vs. AC**—30 damage

**R: Alchemical bomb +10 vs. PD (1d3 nearby enemies)**—20 acid, fire or poison damage (determine which randomly). If it's acid, then it's also an adhesive, leaving the target stuck (save ends). If it's fire, then it also deals 10 ongoing fire damage (save ends). If it's poison, then the target is also weakened (save ends). The golem uses its internal store of fluid to fill each bomb it throws, so it takes 20 damage each time it throws a bomb.

[special trigger] **C: Lab accident +12 vs. PD (all nearby creatures)**—When an alchemical golem reaches 0 hit points, it falls apart, but the remaining chemicals within

its torso mix dangerously. All nearby creatures take 15 acid damage, 15 fire damage, and 15 poison damage, plus an additional 10 ongoing fire damage (save ends), and they're stuck and weakened (separate save ends each).

*Golem immunity:* Non-organic golems are immune to effects. They can't be dazed, weakened, confused, made vulnerable, or touched by ongoing damage. You can damage a golem, but that's *about it*.

**AC 21**

PD 19

MD 14

HP 144

## NEW ITEMS

The Tower of Viondor is an excellent location for any unusual magical treasures you wish to award the PCs. In addition, Bruneval possesses one rare Atlantean item.

*Atlantean Hydrostat:* This crystal and metal disk has the power to halt the motion of liquids and make them firm and stable enough to traverse as if they were solid ground. The surface of the water takes

on the appearance of pale violet crystal six inches thick. This solidity persists in a 20-foot-radius spread and moves with the *Atlantean hydrostat*. The crystal floats on top of flowing or moving water but calms and absorbs the motion of water beneath it and does not move with it, so that the solid surface remains smooth and stable even if the water around it is churning and rough. The solid water does not move with the current or wave action, and waves or current moving into the area of the hydrostat's effect are suppressed and frozen in place. If the hydrostat moves, water no longer within 20 feet returns to its normal course.

An *Atlantean hydrostat* can be used for up to 7 minutes per day, though this duration need not be consecutive. Creatures underneath the crystal can break through it (60 hp). If the crystalline surface breaks, the feedback surge renders the *Atlantean hydrostat* inoperable for 1 minute and there is a 10% chance that the feedback destroys the *Atlantean hydrostat* entirely. *Quirk:* Frequently tells others to "calm down," even if they aren't agitated.





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