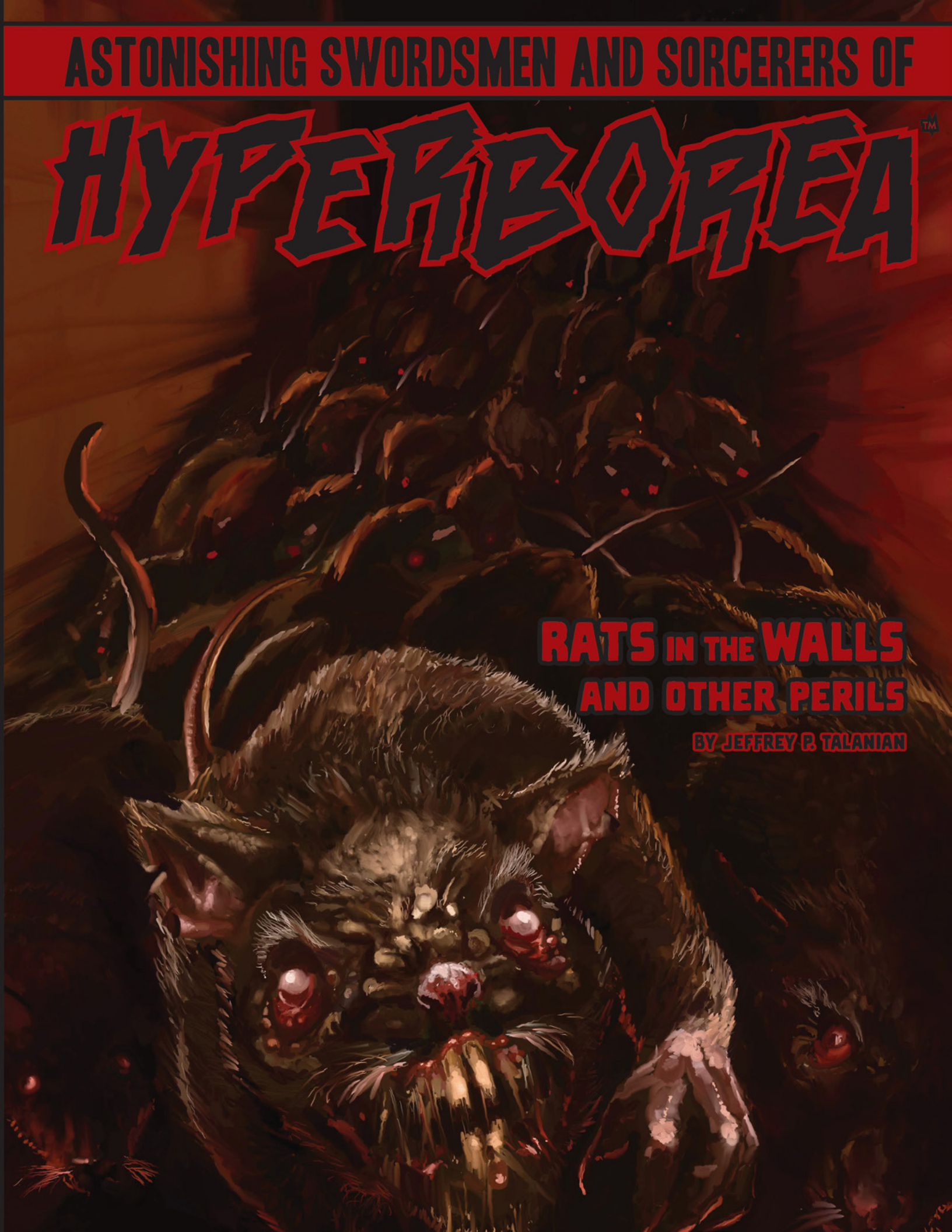


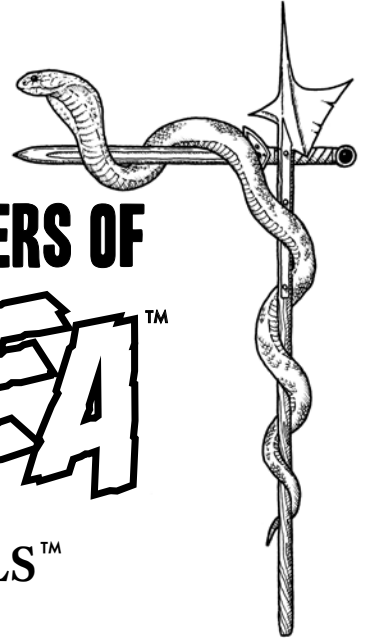
**ASTONISHING SWORDSMEN AND SORCERERS OF**

# **HYPERBOREA**

**RATS IN THE WALLS  
AND OTHER PERILS**

**BY JEFFREY P. TALANIAN**





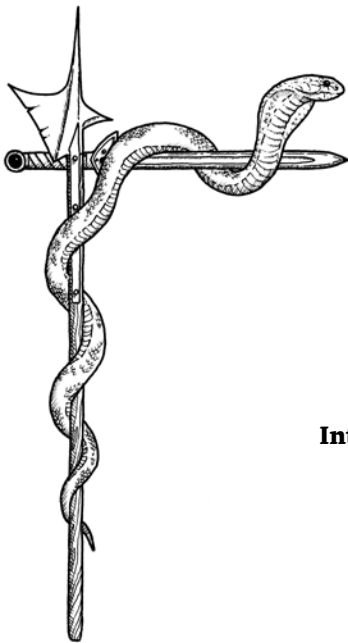
# ASTONISHING SWORDSMEN AND SORCERERS OF **HYPARBOREA**™

**RATS IN THE WALLS AND OTHER PERILS**™

*Three adventures in Hyperborea  
designed for from four to six characters of 1<sup>st</sup> or 2<sup>nd</sup> level*

by Jeffrey P. Talanian





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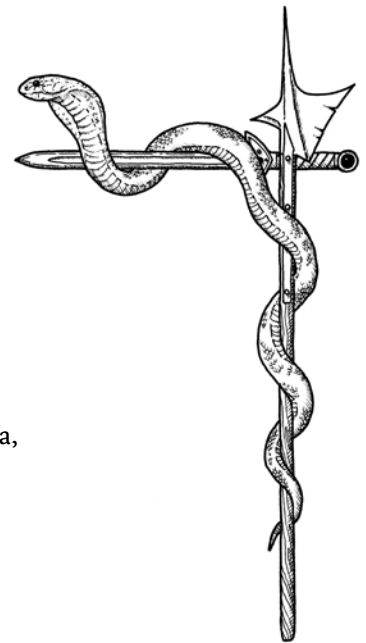
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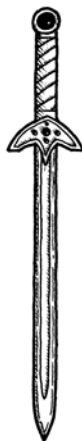
**Play-Testing:** Knights of Next Tuesday and other ne'er-do-wells



*Special thanks to Matt Finch and Matthew Stanham  
for advice on the original presentation of "Rats in the Walls".*

*Rats in the Walls and Other Perils™* takes players into an action-packed realm of adventure: the mythical world of Hyperborea, a sword-and-sorcery campaign setting inspired by the fantastic fiction of Robert E. Howard, H.P. Lovecraft, Clark Ashton Smith, and others. The titular adventure is inspired by H.P. Lovecraft's "The Rats in the Walls" and by various short tales of Robert E. Howard and Clark Ashton Smith. It is designed for *Astonishing Swordsmen & Sorcerers of Hyperborea™* (AS&SH™), a role-playing game descended from the original 1974 fantasy wargame and miniatures campaign rules as conceived by E. Gary Gygax and Dave Arneson. Therefore, AS&SH is compatible with most traditional fantasy role-playing games (c. 1974–1999) and their modern simulacra, such as OSRIC™ and *Swords & Wizardry™*.

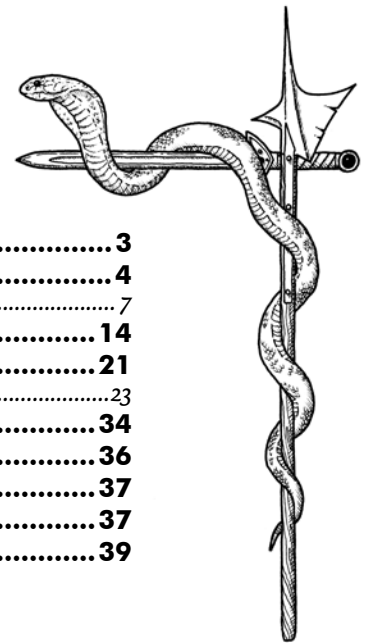
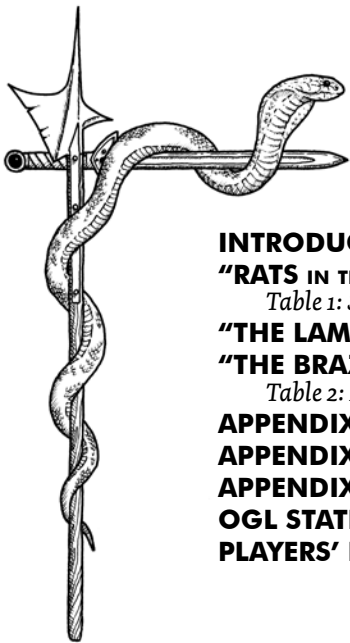
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*They must know it was the rats; the slithering, scurrying rats whose scampering will never let me sleep; the demon rats that race behind the padding in this room and beckon me down to greater horrors than I have ever known; the rats they can never hear; the rats, the rats in the walls.*

—H.P. Lovecraft, "The Rats in the Walls"



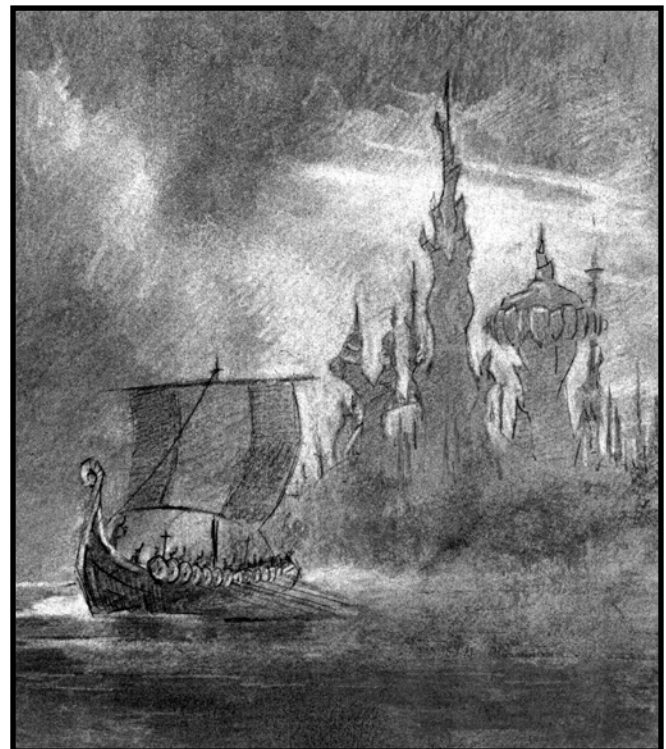
## INTRODUCTION

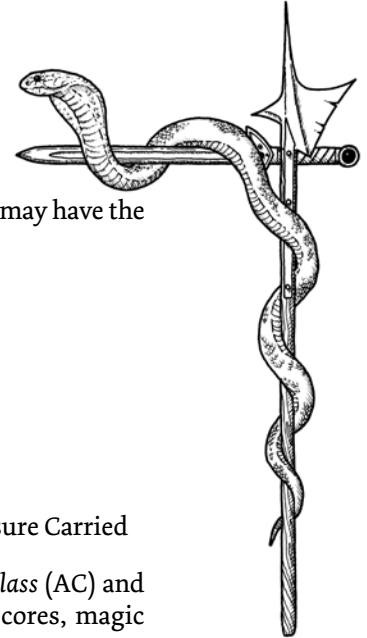
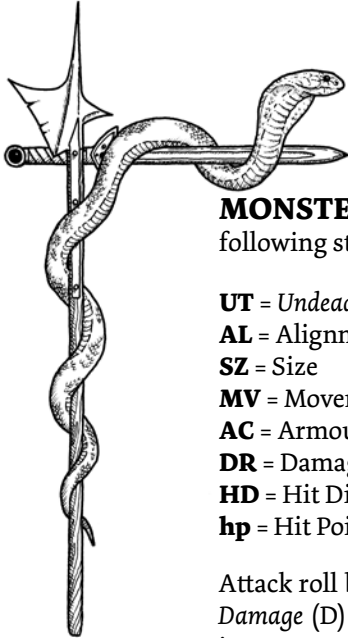


This trio of short adventures is set in the City-State of Khromarium. Each adventure has a different theme and diverse circumstances; in sooth, they need not involve the same player characters. Of course, nothing should preclude the enterprising referee from stringing these adventures together as a series of related or unrelated vignettes. Do what you feel best enriches your own Hyperborea campaign, fellow referee!

**KHROMARIUM:** A major port city, its harbour the largest known in Hyperborea, the City-State of Khromarium is a dismal, seedy place, choked by the smoke of its factories. Poverty and homelessness account for the largest segment of the city's population. Many of the destitute take sanctuary in the northern district called the "Old City". Here once dwelt the most affluent of autochthonic Hyperborean families—before the Green Death decimated the city's population a thousand years ago. Centuries later foreign barbarians reclaimed the lifeless city and its favourably located port, though much of the city remains a place of mystery and death.

Khromarium is governed by a Lord Mayor, selected by a ruling oligarchy comprising the city's most powerful knights, nobles, and guild masters. At present, Gill Sampatose [GIHL SAM-puh-tohs], Master of the Mariners' Guild, serves as Lord Mayor. Khromarium's populace is largely Neutral in alignment, though it leans toward the tenets of Chaos. Although the city is not without the influence of Law, justice seldom is served with any semblance of equality. Many Khromari worship Xathoqua, but fanes and shrines to other deities can be found throughout the city.





**MONSTER AND NPC STATISTICS:** Monsters and non-player characters (NPCs) may have the following statistics, abbreviated as noted:

**UT** = Undead Type

**AL** = Alignment

**SZ** = Size

**MV** = Movement

**AC** = Armour Class

**DR** = Damage Reduction

**HD** = Hit Dice

**hp** = Hit Points

**FA** = Fighting Ability

**TA** = Turning Ability

**CA** = Casting Ability

**#A** = Attack Rate

**D** = Damage

**SV** = Saving Throw

**ML** = Morale

**XP** = Experience Points

**ST** = Strength

**DX** = Dexterity

**CN** = Constitution

**IN** = Intelligence

**WS** = Wisdom

**CH** = Charisma

*Special* = Special Abilities

*Gear* = Equipment and Treasure Carried

Attack roll bonuses are noted for each weapon in the *Attack Rate* (#A) entry. *Armour Class* (AC) and *Damage* (D) figures are calculated to include all pertinent modifiers from attribute scores, magic items, *weapon mastery*, and the like.

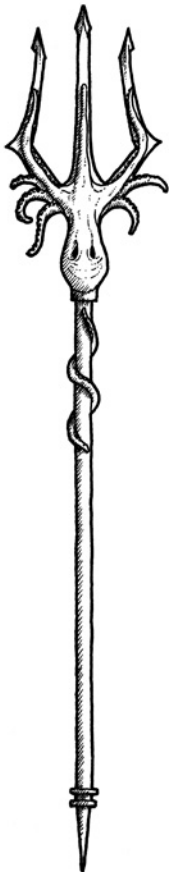


## “RATS in the WALLS”



### INFORMATION FOR THE PLAYERS

Read aloud or paraphrase the following boxed text to the players:



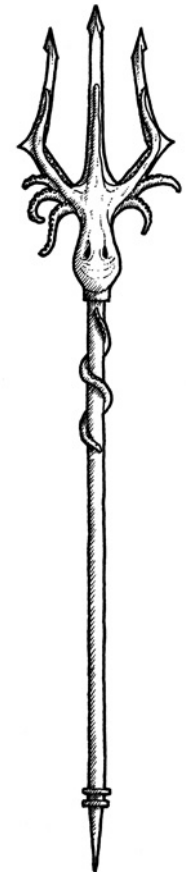
Renowned is the City-State of Khromarium, the most culturally disparate city in all of Hyperborea. In Khromarium, one can enter almost any watering hole and expect to encounter Vikings, Kelts, Esquimaux, Picts, Amazons, and Kimmerians drinking and mingling. Occasionally seen is a gaunt Hyperborean garbed in mail, or a dusky-skinned Ixian caped in tattered velvet. Local fishermen and sailors of mixed ancestry also flock to Khromarium’s dockside taverns. They drink before launch and upon return: bitter ale, rancid whisky, and sometimes an expensive bottle of pomegranate wine, if the sea proves bountiful.

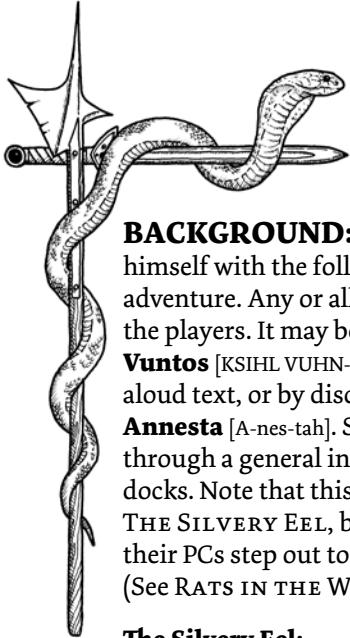
Notwithstanding, the tavern called “Silvery Eel” appears vacant this evening. As your party drop your gear to the floor and seat yourselves at a battered table of pine, something seems amiss. A middle-aged barkeep stokes the fire and then approaches your table.

You notice that he darts nervous glances at the walls and ceiling. His hands tremble, and his brow glistens. “How can I help you?” he queries, forcing a smile. Meantime, a door behind the bar creaks open for a moment, affording you a glimpse of a scrawny young woman observing your group. Her eyes are hung with dark circles as she regards you with a haunted expression.

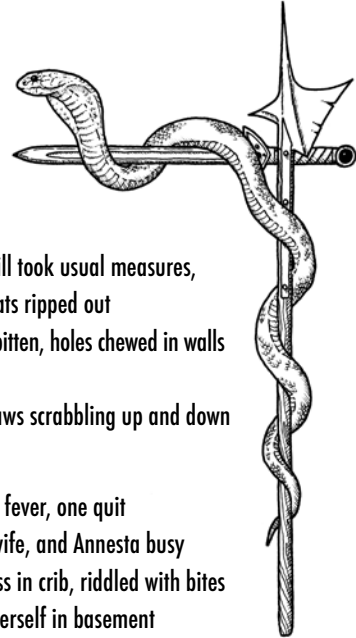
If anyone questions the barkeep, he may respond as follows:

“Everything is perfectly fine here,” he says with a taut smile. But then he sighs, slumps his shoulders, and continues, “Alas, I cannot lie. I’m afraid something is dreadfully wrong here at the Silvery Eel...”





## INFORMATION FOR THE REFEREE



**BACKGROUND:** The referee should familiarize himself with the following notes before running this adventure. Any or all of this history can be revealed to the players. It may be explained by the barkeep, **Xill Vuntos** [KSIHL VUHN-tohs], after the preceding read-aloud text, or by discreet questioning of his daughter, **Annesta** [A-nes-tah]. Some information may be gleaned through a general investigation conducted around the docks. Note that this adventure begins at location #1 of **THE SILVERY EEL**, but some players may wish to have their PCs step out to investigate the adjacent **DOCKS**. (See **RATS IN THE WALLS MAP** on inside cover.)

### The Silvery Eel:

- ✦ Last year Xill Vuntos purchased building from city and refurbished it
- ✦ Previous owner, a spice importer, hanged himself in basement
- ✦ Xill, his wife, and two daughters occupied upstairs apartment
- ✦ Annesta (elder daughter, aged 17) and three bar wenches served
- ✦ Tavern became local favourite, serving fine ale, lobster, and chowder

### Infestation:

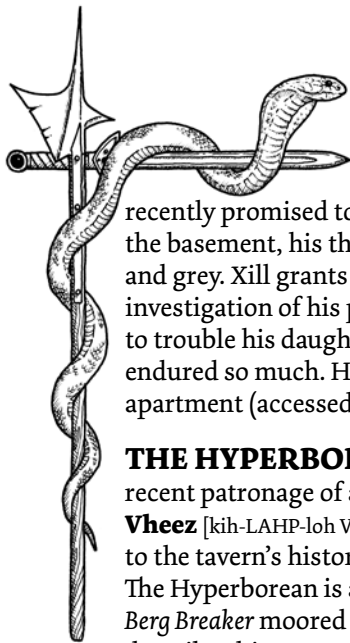
- ✦ Rat problem began three months ago; Xill took usual measures,
- ✦ Traps found broken, cats dead with throats ripped out
- ✦ Rats of unseemly size were seen; ankles bitten, holes chewed in walls
- ✦ Xill would plug holes after hours
- ✦ At night, dreadful scratching in walls: claws scrabbling up and down

### Tragedy Strikes:

- ✦ All three bar wenches bitten; two died of fever, one quit
- ✦ One night, rowdy seamen kept Xill, his wife, and Annesta busy
- ✦ Nallesta [NA-les-tah] (aged 3) found listless in crib, riddled with bites
- ✦ When Nallesta died, Xill's wife hanged herself in basement
- ✦ Word spread that the Silvery Eel was cursed; business dried up

**XILL'S PROPOSAL:** Xill offers a **pearl necklace** (2,000-gp value) if the party can eliminate his rat problem; it belonged to his late wife, Mordag [MAWR-dak]. He also presents a **+1 small shield** (which sheds light in a five-foot radius when gripped), proffering this item upfront. He says it belonged to a thief who





recently promised to help; Xill found the man dead in the basement, his throat torn out and his skin withered and grey. Xill grants complete access for an exhaustive investigation of his property, but he asks the party not to trouble his daughter, Annesta (#2), because she has endured so much. He provides a **key** to the upstairs apartment (accessed via #3).

**THE HYPERBOREAN:** Xill may mention the recent patronage of an arrogant Hyperborean, **Kiloplo Vheez** [kih-LAHP-loh VEEZ], who made strange allusions to the tavern's history but did not deign to elaborate. The Hyperborean is amongst the crew of a galley called *Berg Breaker* moored at the DOCKS just outside. Xill describes him as seven feet tall, with golden hair, blue scale armour, and a polished battle axe.

## DOCKS

- ✦ Bustling with activity, day and night
- ✦ Ships loaded and unloaded; fishermen haul in bounty of the sea
- ✦ Smoke billows from factories; taverns loud and raucous
- ✦ Prostitutes, drunkards, and solicitors mill about
- ✦ Guard patrols selectively address issues, ignoring others

**GARROS IMPORTS:** This **locked** warehouse is owned by **Goll Garros**<sup>1</sup>, a wealthy Khromari merchant. The interior is stacked with several crates of rare woods used by boatwrights, bowyers, carpenters, coopers, and so forth. Sometimes rare herbs and spices are stored here, too. Garros keeps **2 guards** on duty at all times; when he imports lotus leaves, he triples his guards.

**Guards (x2)** (1<sup>ST</sup>-LEVEL FIGHTERS): AL N; SZ M; MV 40; AC 8 (7 with shield); HD 1 (hp 10); FA 1; #A 3/2 (short sword [+1]) or 1/1 (light crossbow [+1, +2 *point-blank*] or dagger); D 1d6+1 (short sword) or 1d6+2 (light crossbow) or 1d4 (dagger); SV 16 [*death +2, transformation +2*]; ML 9; XP 20; ST 11, DX 11, CN 11, IN 9, WS 10, CH 9.

*Special:* **Heroic fighting** (double normal melee attacks vs. opponents of 1 HD or less). **Weapon mastery** (short sword, light crossbow).

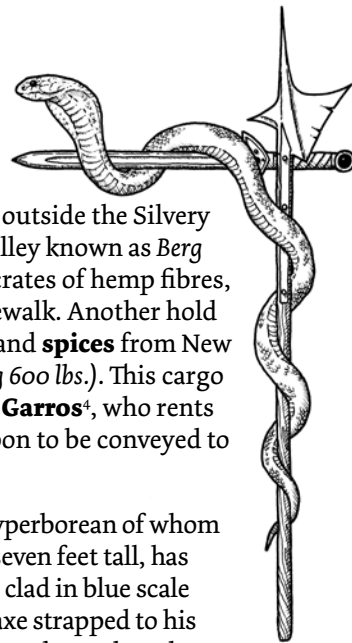
*Gear:* padded armour, small shield, dagger, short sword, light crossbow, bolt case, light bolts x20, **2d4 cp, 2d4 sp**.

### TULL'S BOAT STORAGE AND SUPPLY:

This large, L-shaped warehouse is the property of **Tull Kamtose**<sup>2</sup>, an affluent man said to hail from Port Zangerios. Tull is regarded as a master thief, a collector of rare artefacts, and a hallowed ecclesiastic of Xathoquua and Rel. This location includes a variety of stored boats and boat supplies. On Saturn Day nights, a bare-knuckled fight club convenes in the yard of this operation, drawing crowds that spill out to the docks.

<sup>1</sup> See "THE LAMIA'S HEART": GARROS MANSION, #11.

<sup>2</sup> See "THE LAMIA'S HEART": INFORMATION FOR THE REFEREE, background.



**BERG BREAKER:** Moored just outside the Silvery Eel is the bronze-reinforced war galley known as *Berg Breaker*<sup>3</sup>. Stevedores unload heavy crates of hemp fibres, which are consigned to a local ropewalk. Another hold in the galley contains **rare woods** and **spices** from New Amazonia (3,000-gp value, weighing 600 lbs.). This cargo is owned by a local merchant, **Goll Garros**<sup>4</sup>, who rents a hold on the vessel. The cargo is soon to be conveyed to GARROS IMPORTS.

**Meeting the Hyperborean:** The Hyperborean of whom Xill spoke is **Kiloplo Vheez**<sup>5</sup>. He is seven feet tall, has a square-cut mane of golden hair, is clad in blue scale armour, and is armed with a battle axe strapped to his back. Vheez is the first mate of *Berg Breaker* and can be found nearby, overseeing the conveyance of goods to and from the war galley. He will entertain questions, though he proves apathetic and condescending. If accorded proper deference, the gaunt Hyperborean may reveal a tale that his father, a sorcerer of no little repute, told him.



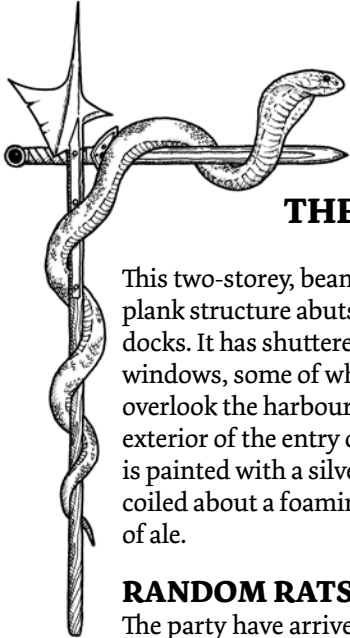
In the olden days, when the true Hyperboreans ruled Khromarium, and the "sub-men" knew their station, there stood at that locale a sorcerer's tower overlooking the harbour. It was burnt to its foundation in the aftermath of the Green Death; the current structure, he presumes, was built atop the ruin. Kiloplo Vheez advises the seekers to search for an underbuilding of red sandstone blocks intended to support a much larger structure. If the party begs his assistance, Vheez might acquiesce (referee's judgment), though only for a substantial reward: a 50% share of any monetary treasure discovered and first choice of any magic item won.



<sup>3</sup> See APPENDIX A.

<sup>4</sup> See "THE LAMIA'S HEART": GARROS MANSION, #11.

<sup>5</sup> See APPENDIX A.



## THE SILVERY EEL

This two-storey, beam-and-plank structure abuts the docks. It has shuttered windows, some of which overlook the harbour. The exterior of the entry door is painted with a silver eel coiled about a foaming mug of ale.

### RANDOM RATS:

The party have arrived just as the situation is transitioning from bad to worse. About every 6 turns (1 hour), they have a 1-in-6 chance to encounter **1d4+2 giant rats**.

**Rat, Giant:** Rodent 2½ to 3 feet long and weighing as much as 60 lbs., scavenging and predating for food; has a taste for human flesh and a thirst for human blood. AL N; SZ S; MV 40 (swim 20); DX 8; AC 7; HD ½ (hp 2); #A 1/1 (bite); D 1d4; SV 17; ML 12; XP 9.

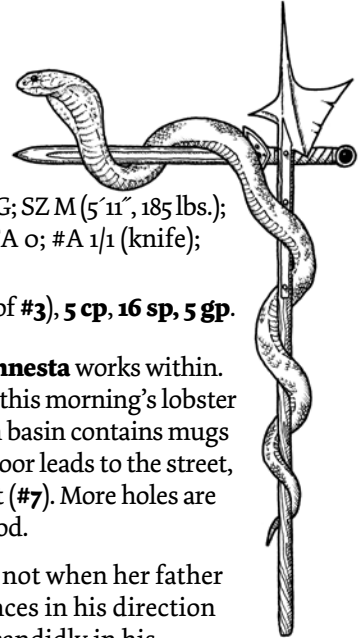
*Special:* 1-in-6 chance of disease upon successful hit, unless *death* (poison) save made. If save fails, victim either dies in 1d6 days, or is bedridden for a month. Roll a d6: On a 1–3, disease is terminal.

**1. COMMON ROOM:** Typical tavern room with fireplace, tables, benches, and bar. Behind the bar is a door to the backroom (#2). Riddled, whitewashed walls are patched with planks or stuffed with straw, corking holes where the rats have chewed through. **Xill** serves the patrons; **Annesta**, his daughter, works in the kitchen (#2).

**Table 1: Silvery Eel Services**

Service	Price
Pint of ale	1 sp
Gill of red wine	1 sp
Gill of whisky	5 sp
Fish chowder (includes hot roll with butter and mug of ale)	3 sp
Full dinner (boiled lobster, sweet potato, goblet of red wine or mug of ale)	1 gp

If the PCs investigate, then they will find the chewed holes are unusually wide, chiselled by large teeth; too, rat droppings the size of what a dog or cat might deposit can be found. Some droppings shew deep crimson colouration, like blood. When all is quiet, the rats can be heard scabbling up and down within the walls.



**Xill Vuntos** (COMMON MALE): AL CG; SZ M (5'11", 185 lbs.); MV 40; DX 10; AC 9; HD ½ (hp 3); FA 0; #A 1/1 (knife); D 1d4; SV 17; ML 5; XP 5.

*Gear:* knife, **iron key** (to door at top of #3), **5 cp, 16 sp, 5 gp**.

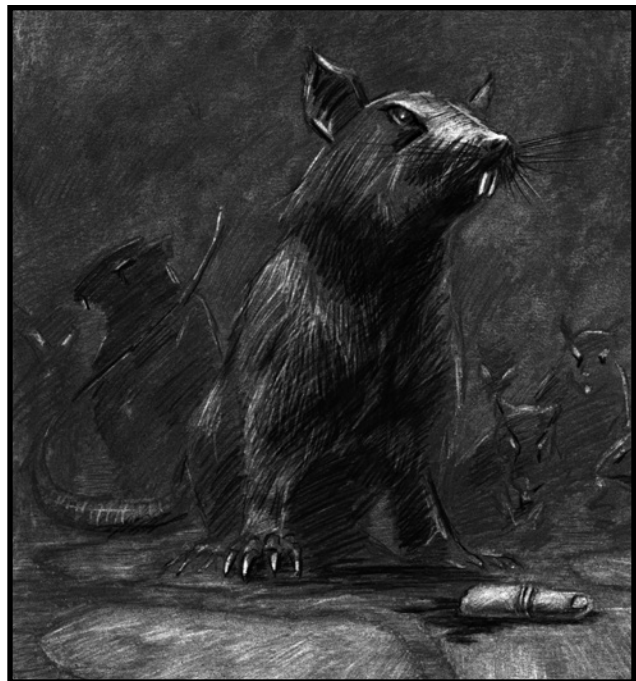
**2. KITCHEN:** Typical kitchen. **Annesta** works within. Casks and crates are here, including this morning's lobster purchase, wine, and ale taps. A wash basin contains mugs and plates. A **locked** (barred) back door leads to the street, and a stair descends to the basement (#7). More holes are present here, covered with scrap wood.

Annesta may be engaged here, but not when her father is near; several uncomfortable glances in his direction may betray her reticence to speak candidly in his presence. Annesta is tall and somewhat homely. She has straw-like yellow hair and sunken features. She is a taciturn sort, but if prompted discreetly she may speak.

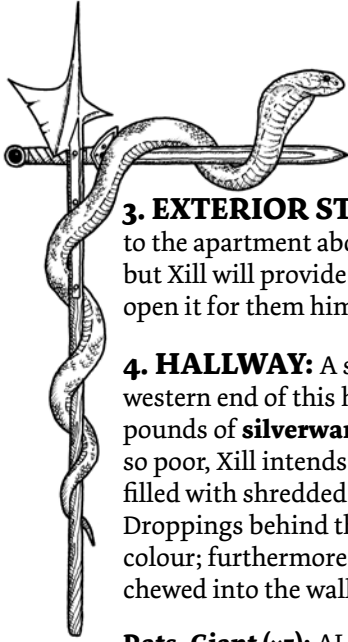
Unbeknownst to her father, she has been bitten five or more times—always at night—on her stomach, behind her neck, and at her ankles. In each instance she is in her bedroom. She recalls a pinch of pain but has been unable to wake from her nightmare-plagued slumbers, featuring a terrible, pig-faced woman with massive, bat-like wings. She does not wish to reveal any of this to her father, because she feels he has endured enough pain with the loss of his wife and Annesta's young sibling, Nallesta.

**Annesta Vuntos** (COMMON FEMALE): AL CG; SZ M (5'8", 110 lbs.); MV 40; DX 10; AC 9; HD ½ (hp 3); FA 0; #A 1/1 (knife); D 1d4–1; SV 17; ML 6; XP 5.

*Gear:* knife, **5 cp, 2 sp**.







**3. EXTERIOR STAIR:** Rickety wooden steps ascend to the apartment above. The door typically is **locked**, but Xill will provide the party with his **key** (or he can open it for them himself).

**4. HALLWAY:** A stack of wooden crates sits at the western end of this hallway. One crate contains five pounds of **silverware** (100-gp value); with business so poor, Xill intends to sell the lot. The largest crate, filled with shredded linens, is a nest for **5 giant rats**. Droppings behind the crates are of deep crimson colour; furthermore, an eight-inch-diameter hole is chewed into the wall behind the crates.

**Rats, Giant (×5):** AL N; SZ S; MV 40 (swim 20); DX 8; AC 7; HD ½ (hp 2); #A 1/1 (bite); D 1d4; SV 17; ML 12; XP 9. *Special:* 1-in-6 chance of disease upon successful hit, unless *death* (poison) save made. If save fails, victim either dies in 1d6 days, or is bedridden for a month. Roll a d6: On a 1–3, disease is terminal.

**5. XILL'S BEDROOM:** This chamber has a window overlooking the DOCKS, a door, a bed, and a dresser. A small, crudely carved idol of the toad god, Xathoqqua sits on the windowsill, but Xill is not overly religious. A **journal** by the bed reveals the following:

By the midnight hour, the rats begin scratching at the walls and continue throughout the earliest hours, slowly driving me mad. Sometimes I find myself caught in a deep slumber from which I waken only by the sound of my own screams. Whatever horrors have assailed me, however, are lost to the fallibility of my strained memory.

**6. ANNESTA'S BEDROOM:** This chamber has two windows, a door, a bed, a dresser, and a mirror of polished steel. The crib for Annesta's deceased little sister (Nallesta) also is here. Holes are chewed through the wall behind the dresser. Under the dresser are large droppings of crimson colouration. The linens in Annesta's bed are spotted with blood.

A **secret compartment** under a loose floorboard contains the **diary** of the previous owner. Early pages are dedicated to his mundane thoughts regarding his work as a spice merchant and his admiration for a young woman in the employ of a local seamstress. Further entries complain of the incessant rats.

Later, he writes of his nightmares involving a dæmon woman with the visage of a swine. His rat problem worsened, so he brought in cats; they howled and ran amok before they were slaughtered. His writings

eventually give way to mad ravings, a conviction that he has fallen victim to an inescapable curse—no doubt levied by the dæmoness of his nightmares.

**7. BASEMENT:** The basement is one large chamber cluttered with crates, boxes, and casks of various sizes. The foundation walls are composed of massive sandstone blocks fitted together, though slightly separated and eroded from age and shifting. One easily could see how the rats might enter the walls of the tavern proper above. With patient observation, the party might hear a rat deep inside the blocks scabbling up or down. The ones that scabble down continue scratching downward until no longer heard, betraying hidden depths.

The casks hold ale, wine, pickled eels, and pickled fish. The crates and boxes hold various tools and supplies, including aprons, blankets, candles, canvas, cloth, cooking herbs, knives, lamps, mugs, nails, rope, sacks of lentils and rice (ripped open and nearly emptied), salt, spoons, twine, and the like. Several crates are empty and smashed, Xill having used the wood to plug rat holes in the common room above.

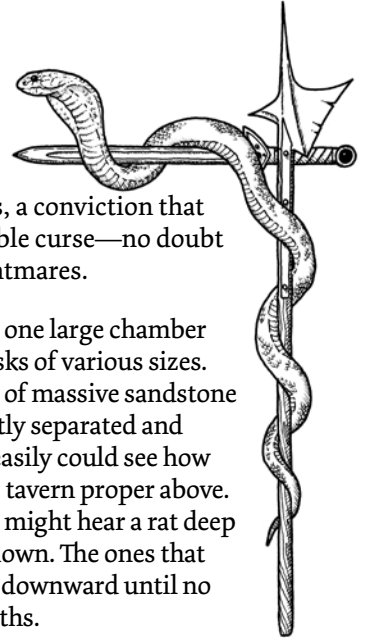
Several large rat droppings are here. Amongst the debris of the southwestern corner are **5 giant rats**. They will emerge to attack if the crates are disturbed. These rats have a penchant for collecting shiny coins: **336 sp** and **133 ep**.

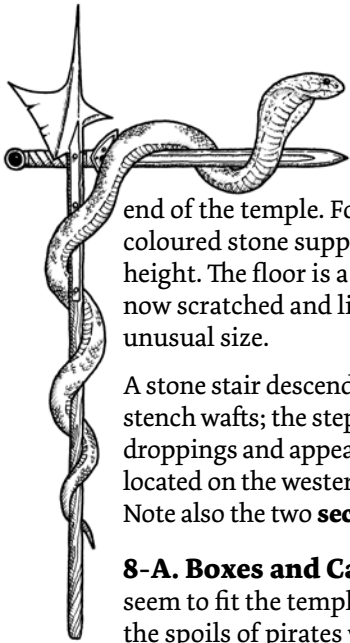
**Rats, Giant (×5):** AL N; SZ S; MV 40 (swim 20); DX 8; AC 7; HD ½ (hp 3); #A 1/1 (bite); D 1d4; SV 17; ML 12; XP 9. *Special:* 1-in-6 chance of disease upon successful hit, unless *death* (poison) save made. If save fails, victim either dies in 1d6 days, or is bedridden for a month. Roll a d6: On a 1–3, disease is terminal.

In the centre of the room, a discoloured flagstone conceals a **secret trapdoor**, of which Xill is ignorant. The flag must be pried up, revealing an iron trapdoor with pull ring. The door is rusted shut. It can be jerked open with an *extraordinary feat of strength*; because the ring is so large, three characters can work together, combining their percentile scores for one big pull.

A sandstone-enclosed spiral stair with old, dusty cobwebs is revealed below, quite dark. The stair descends 50 feet. It shows signs of giant rodents having ascended and descended, but they never penetrated the iron trapdoor at the top. Rather, they found more success crawling through the gaps betwixt foundation blocks.

**8. TEMPLE OF AURORUS:** This large temple area was where the ancient Hyperboreans worshipped one of their favoured deities: Aurorus, "The Shining One". A massive statue rises from a low dais at the northern





end of the temple. Four stone pillars of pearly, rose-coloured stone support an arched ceiling of 36-foot height. The floor is a mosaic of yellow-tinged stone, now scratched and littered with rodent droppings of unusual size.

A stone stair descends to the south, whence a nauseating stench wafts; the steps are littered with hundreds of droppings and appear sticky with urine. An iron door is located on the western wall, and an open archway east. Note also the two **secret doors** in this room.

**8-A. Boxes and Casks:** These boxes and casks do not seem to fit the temple environment. Indeed, they are the spoils of pirates who hid here during the Dark Age that followed the Green Death. Centuries have passed and the once-valuable scented woods (cinnamon) they stored have not only rotted but have become a nest for **6 giant rats**. They will attack if the crates are disturbed, followed by more rats from **#8-B** within 1d4 rounds.

**Rats, Giant (×6):** AL N; SZ S; MV 40 (swim 20); DX 8; AC 7; HD 1/2 (hp 3); #A 1/1 (bite); D 1d4; SV 17; ML 12; XP 9. *Special:* 1-in-6 chance of disease upon successful hit, unless *death* (poison) save made. If save fails, victim either dies in 1d6 days, or is bedridden for a month. Roll a d6: On a 1–3, disease is terminal.

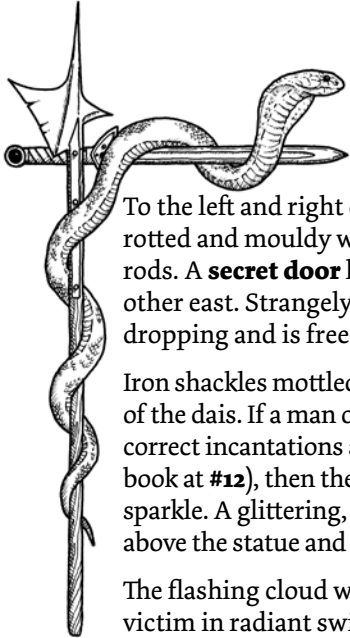
A **gold statuette of Kthulhu** (500-gp value) is wrapped in a tattered cloth in one of the crates. If it is destroyed, then the perpetrator will be plagued by nightmares until at length he submits his soul to Kthulhu or goes mad (within a year); only a *remove curse* spell can help. In another crate is a pile of **96 sp** and **246 ep**.

**8-B. More Boxes and Casks:** Several of the casks shew that they once held wine vinted in Port Greely but which since has turned to vinegar. One crate contains **264 sp** and **97 ep**. Nothing else is salvageable. Nesting in one broken cask are **4 giant rats**. If this pile is disturbed, then they will attack, joined by the rats of **#8-A** within 1d4 rounds.

**Rats, Giant (×4):** AL N; SZ S; MV 40 (swim 20); DX 8; AC 7; HD 1/2 (hp 3); #A 1/1 (bite); D 1d4; SV 17; ML 12; XP 9. *Special:* 1-in-6 chance of disease upon successful hit, unless *death* (poison) save made. If save fails, victim either dies in 1d6 days, or is bedridden for a month. Roll a d6: On a 1–3, disease is terminal.

**8-C. Altar of Aurorus:** Upon a low-rising dais of pearly, rose-coloured stone stands a 14-foot statue of Aurorus, carved of green soapstone. Its indistinct lower body is sculpted to portray swirling robes; its head and upper body are that of a three-faced woman. One face gazes to the south, the other two east and west.





To the left and right of the dais, old velvet curtains, rotted and mouldy with age, depend from bent iron rods. A **secret door** lies behind each one; one north, the other east. Strangely, the dais itself contains not one rat dropping and is free of dust and debris.

Iron shackles mottled with rust are bolted into the foot of the dais. If a man or woman is chained here, and the correct incantations are spoken (found in the prayer book at #12), then the eyes of the tripartite faces will sparkle. A glittering, sentient cloud of light will manifest above the statue and then descend on the victim.

The flashing cloud will whirl through and around the victim in radiant swirls, shimmering tentacles, and luminescent, coruscating spirals. Presently the victim's body will pulse with blinding radiance and then metamorphose to seven tiny globes of sparkling light, like seven little stars. The victim will be taken, body and soul, blinking away to join the firmament.

**9. CISTERN:** The iron door is not locked but is rusted shut (**stuck**), requiring a *test of strength* to tug open. This ancient sandstone-block cistern dried up centuries ago; in fact, where it once collected rainwater is now constructed over by GARROS IMPORTS. It descends 20 feet into darkness. At the bottom, cracks and fissures are coated in yellow-brown mucous film. A **ring of feather walking** can be plucked from the secretion.

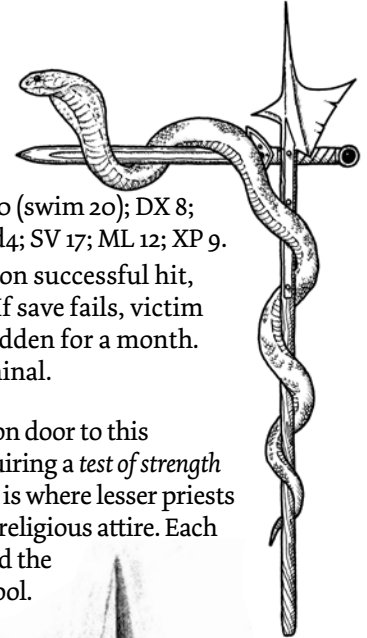


On a 4-in-6 chance, **4 class i lesser dæmons** lurk here. These disgusting creatures have wriggled up from the Stygian depths of Underborea. They oft crawl up the cistern walls to a breach 30 feet above the iron access door, through which they access the old Khromarium sewers, where more of their kind congregate.

**Dæmons, Lesser, Class i (x4):** UT 13; AL CE; SZ S; MV 30; DX 8; AC 6; HD 1 (hp 5); #A 1/1 (bite); D 1d4; SV 16; ML 7; XP 46.

*Special:* 1-in-20 *spell resistance* vs. CA 12 casters. Cold, electricity, fire, and gas inflict 1/2 damage, or 1/4 damage if save made. Because of slippery hide, cannot be grappled, lassoed, or netted; likewise unaffected by ensnaring spells such as *entangle* or *web*.

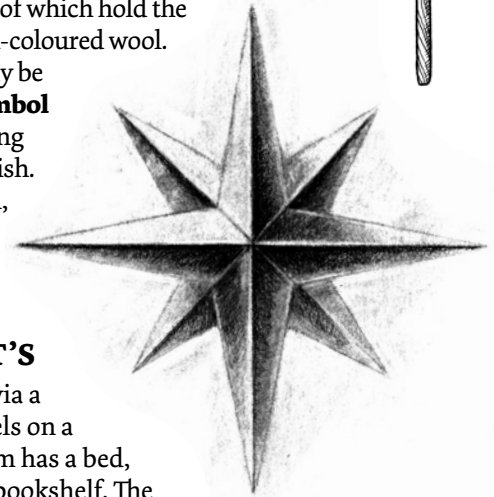
**10. REVELRY HALL:** In immemorial times, the indigenous Hyperborean priests of Aurorus would engage in lotus-fuelled, wine-soaked debauches in this hall. Now, shredded divans and decayed vhuurmis pelts lie in urine-stained heaps. A collection of **6 pewter goblets** (35-gp value each) can be plucked from the debris. Huddled under a rancid vhuurmis pelt are **4 giant rats**.



**Rats, Giant (x4):** AL N; SZ S; MV 40 (swim 20); DX 8; AC 7; HD 1/2 (hp 3); #A 1/1 (bite); D 1d4; SV 17; ML 12; XP 9.  
*Special:* 1-in-6 chance of disease upon successful hit, unless *death* (poison) save made. If save fails, victim either dies in 1d6 days, or is bedridden for a month. Roll a d6: On a 1-3, disease is terminal.

**11. COMMON VESTRY:** The iron door to this chamber is rusted shut (**stuck**), requiring a *test of strength* to force open. This room of six stalls is where lesser priests of Aurorus would change into their religious attire. Each stall has a bench, some of which hold the rotted remnants of dun-coloured wool.

In three of the stalls may be found a **silver holy symbol** of Aurorus, each shewing slight to moderate tarnish. In the easternmost stall, a bronze scroll case contains a **cleric scroll** (*light, sanctuary*).



**12. ARCH-PRIEST'S**

**VESTRY:** Accessed via a **secret door** that swivels on a central pivot, this room has a bed, a dresser, and a small bookshelf. The room appears undisturbed, yet in fine shape despite the passage of centuries. Velvet curtains dyed maroon hang on the eastern and western walls.

Behind the curtains stand **5 skeleton halberdiers**. They wear black homespun cloaks in curiously fine condition and great helmets with plumes of red-dyed horsehair. Each skeleton is about seven feet tall and wields a halberd. These arms are mottled with rust, save one that retains a silvery-sheened blade.

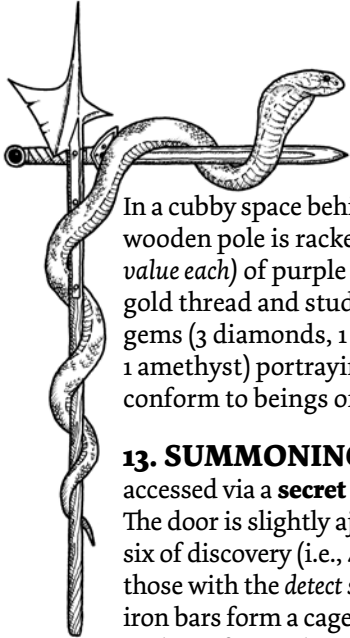
**Skeleton Halberdiers (x5):** UT 1; AL CE; SZ M; MV 30; DX 11; AC 7; HD 1 (hp 5); #A 1/1 (claw or halberd [*one is at +1*]); D 1d6 (claw) or 1d10 (halberd) or 1d10+1 (**+1 halberd**); SV 16; ML 12; XP 16.

*Special:* Immune to poison, paralysis, fear, and cold.

Edged and piercing weapons cause 1/2 damage.

*Gear:* halberd x4. One wields a **+1 halberd**.

The bookshelf holds a leather-bound volume of prayers and rituals devoted to Aurorus, "The Shining One". Written in Hyperborean Esoteric, these rites include the one described at #8-C, in which a human sacrifice is sent to Aurorus in the firmament. Beside the prayer book is a velvet-lined cedar box holding three glass phials. They contain a light blue **potion of healing**, a pulpy green **potion of cure disease**, and a clear, oily **potion of invisibility**.



In a cubby space behind the eastern curtain, a suspended wooden pole is racked with **5 cowled gowns** (250-gp value each) of purple velvet. Each is embroidered with gold thread and studded at the breast with seven tiny gems (3 diamonds, 1 sapphire, 1 emerald, 1 ruby, and 1 amethyst) portraying a constellation. The gowns conform to beings of roughly seven-foot height.

**13. SUMMONING CHAMBER:** This room is accessed via a **secret door** that swivels on a central pivot. The door is slightly ajar, increasing by +2 the chance-in-six of discovery (i.e., 4-in-6 chance for most, 5-in-6 for those with the *detect secret doors* ability). Inside, rusted iron bars form a cage extending from the flagstone floor to the 12-foot ceiling. The cage has no door.

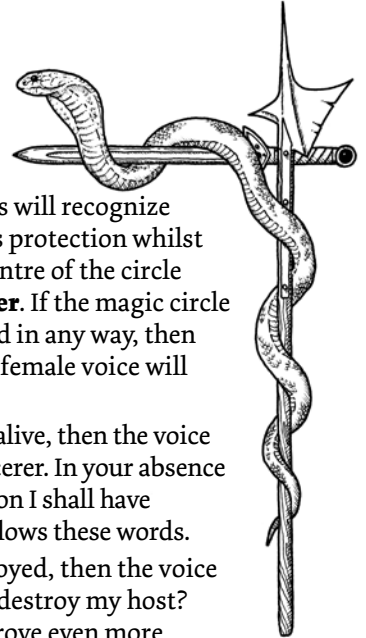
The skeleton of what only can be described as a *dæmon* is within the cage. It has a vaguely humanoid, 10-foot-tall shape. Its skull is porcine, with ram-like horns and pointed tusks. Its shoulder blades extend, suggesting great, membranous wings. The creature appears to have died whilst gripping the bars of its cage.

At the eastern side of the room, engraved on the floor of an alcove, a magic circle encloses a pentagram. Globes of melted wax are set at each point of the pentagram.

Any magician or magician subclass will recognize this circumscription as a sorcerer's protection whilst summoning *dæmonkind*. In the centre of the circle rests a conspicuous **+1 silver dagger**. If the magic circle is entered or if the cage is disturbed in any way, then the skeleton's eyes will glow, and a female voice will emanate from the horned skull:

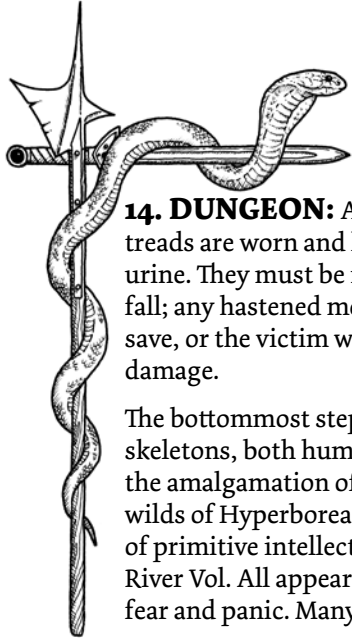
- ★ If the **gnagana** at #14 remains alive, then the voice will purr, "You have failed, sorcerer. In your absence I have taken a new host, and soon I shall have another." Mocking laughter follows these words.
- ★ If the **gnagana** has been destroyed, then the voice will cry, "Fools! How dare you destroy my host? No matter, my new host will prove even more powerful! I shall be free!"

N.B.: If the PCs commit an act that the referee feels worthy to effect the resurrection and/or escape of the *dæmoness*, then she should be treated as a **class IV greater dæmon**. Simply pilfering the **+1 silver dagger** is insufficient to this referee's mind. In my home campaign, however, one hare-brained player intentionally dripped fresh blood on the caged skeleton, so what choice did I have?





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**14. DUNGEON:** A stone stair descends 20 feet. The treads are worn and littered with rat droppings and urine. They must be negotiated carefully, or one might fall; any hastened movement requires an *avoidance* save, or the victim will crash down the stair for 1d6 hp damage.

The bottommost steps are littered with skulls and skeletons, both human and semi-human. They suggest the amalgamation of man and simian as seen in the wilds of Hyperborea: the dreaded **ape-men**, creatures of primitive intellect said to congregate beyond the River Vol. All appear to have perished in attitudes of fear and panic. Many bones have been gnawed by rats.

The dungeon features eight cells. All save one are secured by **barred** iron doors, though each door is corroded with rust and rot. The seven intact cells contain the skeletal remains of men and ape-men.

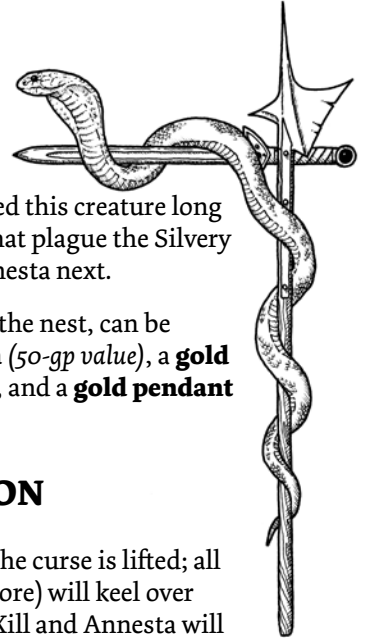
The southwestern corner is dominated by a nest of debris: chewed wood and rope, shredded cloth, straw, mud, and bones. Presently **6 giant rats** emerge from the nest. The spine-chilling laughter of a woman emanates from behind them.

**Rats, Giant (×6):** AL N; SZ S; MV 40 (swim 20); DX 8; AC 7; HD 1/2 (hp 3); #A 1/1 (bite); D 1d4; SV 17; ML 12; XP 9. *Special:* 1-in-6 chance of disease upon successful hit, unless *death* (poison) save made. If save fails, victim either dies in 1d6 days, or is bedridden for a month. Roll a d6: On a 1–3, disease is terminal.

After 1 round, a bloated, eight-foot-long dæmon rat (**gnagana**) will emerge from the southwestern corner. From its swollen nipples hang **8 pups** (non-combatant), each ruddy pink and of one-foot length. The enormous rat will laugh and then speak in a mocking female voice (the same as heard at #13). It says, “Oh, how divine. Never do my children bring enough blood to keep me sated. Now I shall drink of your crimson nectar, mortal pigs.”

**Dæmon, Sublunary, Gnagana**<sup>6</sup>: UT 13; AL CE; SZ M; MV 20; DX 6; AC 4; HD 5 (hp 30); #A 1/1 (bite); D 2d4; SV 14; ML 11; XP 575.

*Special:* 5-in-20 *spell resistance* vs. CA 12 casters. Cold, electricity, fire, and gas inflict 1/2 damage, or 1/4 damage if save made. Bite victim must make *death* (poison) save or die in 1d6 days. Can cast *ventriloquism* at will. Once per day, can *summon* **1d6 giant rats**, arriving 1d4 rounds later. If killed, explodes in shower of blood and bile, soaking all within 30-foot radius; also results in deaths of all *summoned* rats.



N.B.: The dæmoness at #13 possessed this creature long ago and now controls all the rats that plague the Silvery Eel; she endeavours to possess Annesta next.

In the southwestern corner, under the nest, can be found **304 sp**, **524 ep**, a **gold chain** (50-gp value), a **gold ring** set with a pearl (500-gp value), and a **gold pendant** (a *peript of health*).

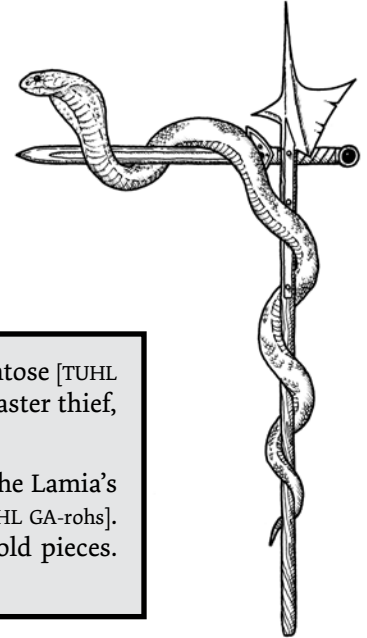
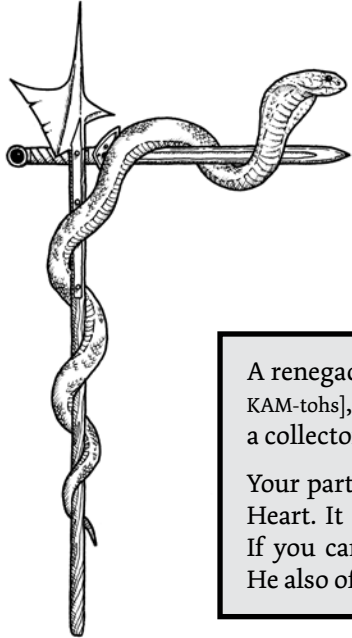
## CONCLUSION

If the **gnagana** is destroyed, then the curse is lifted; all remaining **giant rats** (a score or more) will keel over and die, hæmorrhaging violently. Xill and Annesta will be immensely relieved. Xill will provide the promised reward, a **pearl necklace** (2,000-gp value). Once word gets out that the rats are gone, and the place has been properly cleaned and repaired, then business may return to what it once was.

Still, there can be a last “bite” for the players, should the referee choose to further develop the situation. Annesta has sustained enough bites to suffer a curse, which could manifest as *lycanthropy*; i.e., she may become a **wererat** in the future, with a taste for blood. She might haunt the PCs at some later date, reaching a point of madness in which she too becomes possessed by the spirit of the dæmoness.



<sup>6</sup> See APPENDIX B.



## “THE LAMIA’S HEART”

### INFORMATION FOR THE PLAYERS

Read aloud or paraphrase the following boxed text to the players:

A renegade thieves’ guild has emerged in Khromarium. It was founded by Tull Kamtose [TUHL KAM-tohs], an affluent man said to hail from Port Zangerios. Tull is regarded as a master thief, a collector of rare artefacts, and a hallowed priest of Xathoqua and Rel.

Your party have been chosen by Tull to “acquire” a heart-shaped topaz known as the Lamia’s Heart. It is located somewhere in the home of a merchant called Goll Garros [GOHL GA-rohs]. If you can procure the gem, Tull promises to pay a reward of twelve hundred gold pieces. He also offers the gratitude of his burgeoning organization.

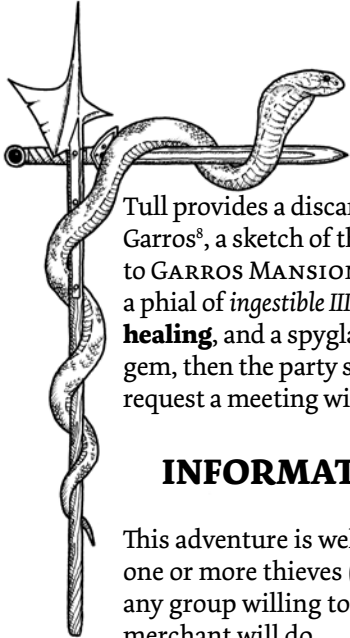
**Tull Kamtose** is a tall, lean man, corded with muscle, with long curly hair (a wig) and piercing grey eyes. He has a cocksure smile and presents as both charismatic and arrogant. Tull keeps **2 Amazon bodyguards** with him at all times; these women taste his food and manage many of his personal affairs. At a booth in a crowded dockside tavern<sup>7</sup>, he orders a round of drinks for the party, whilst providing the following information, which also may be read aloud or paraphrased:

“The Lamia’s Heart is a large, heart-shaped topaz set in a gold pendant. Its current owner, Goll Garros, is a short, portly man in his mid-fifties. He has a wispy beard, beady eyes, and fleshy jowls.

“By contrast, his wife, the Lady Garros, is tall and shapely, with long black hair and elegant features. She is perhaps in her mid-thirties and is well admired for her comeliness and genteel affectations. Lord and Lady Garros have two young children (a boy and a girl), a small servant staff, and at least two guards. Their fenced-in property also is roamed by some attack dogs.”



<sup>7</sup> Perhaps the Silvery Eel, if its rodent infestation has been cleared; see “RATS IN THE WALLS”: INFORMATION FOR THE REFEREE, *background*.

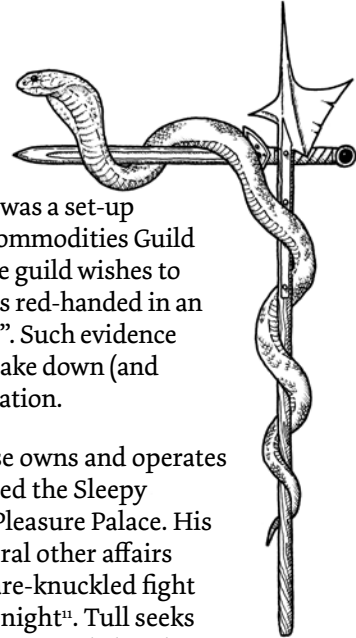


Tull provides a discarded portrait of the Lord and Lady Garros<sup>8</sup>, a sketch of the **Lamia's Heart**<sup>9</sup>, and directions to GARROS MANSION. He also supplies the party with a phial of *ingestible III* poison, a fœtid pink **potion of healing**, and a spyglass. If they successfully thief the gem, then the party should return to this tavern and request a meeting with Tull through the barkeep.

### INFORMATION FOR THE REFEREE

This adventure is well-suited to a party that includes one or more thieves (or subclasses thereof), though any group willing to commit larceny against a corrupt merchant will do.

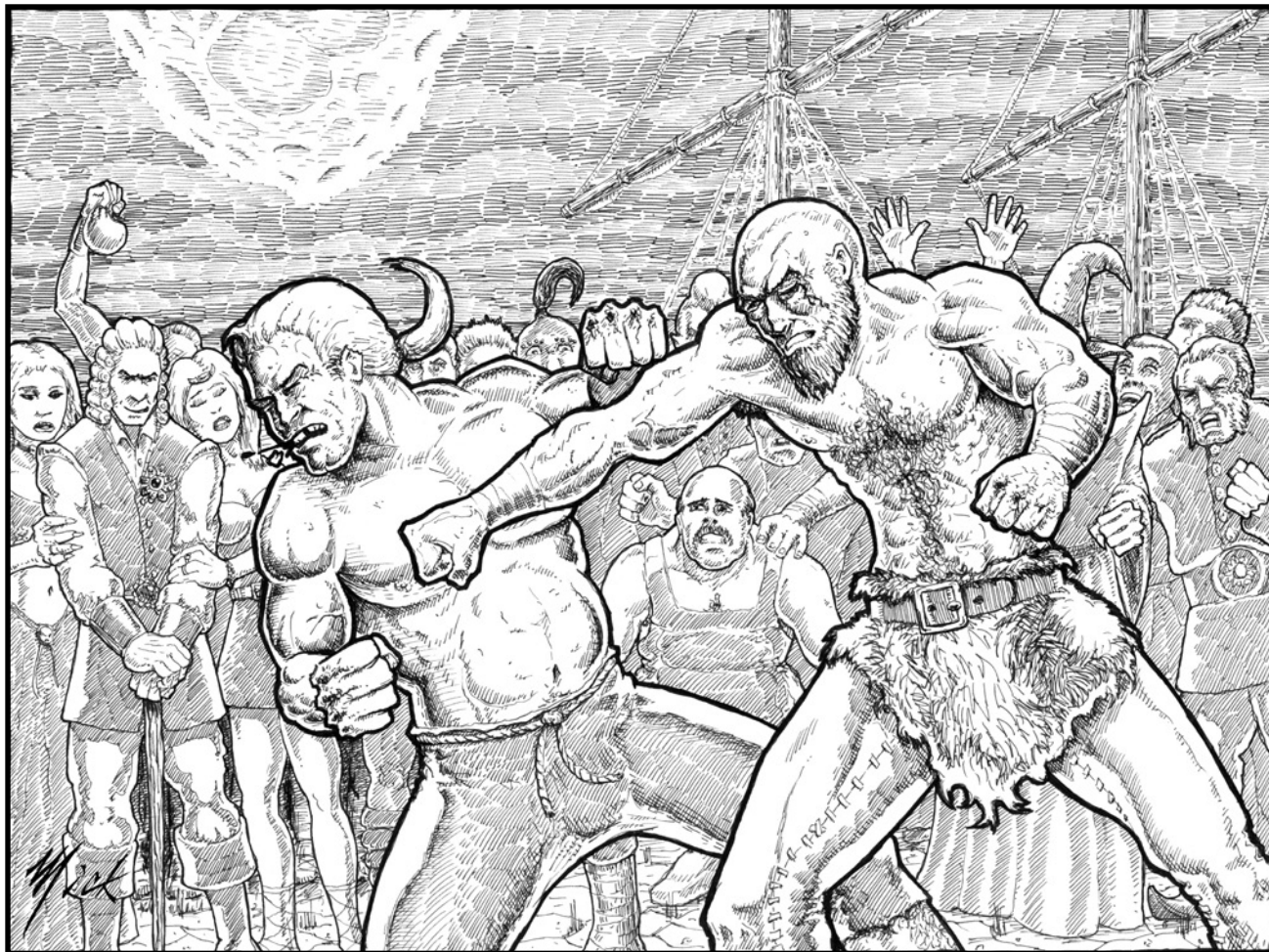
**BACKGROUND:** At a recent auction, a renegade thief of no small success, Tull Kamtose, prized a heart-shaped topaz known as the **Lamia's Heart**. But he lost the bidding war when the rotund merchant, **Goll Garros**, abruptly was declared the auction's winner following a bid of 1,000 gp. The auctioneer claimed that Tull did not submit his next bid promptly enough.



In truth, this prearranged outcome was a set-up orchestrated by the Khromarium Commodities Guild (i.e., the "official" thieves' guild). The guild wishes to catch Tull or one of his subordinates red-handed in an "unsanctioned commodity transfer". Such evidence would be the final proof needed to take down (and possibly absorb) Tull's upstart operation.

**TULL KAMTOSE:** Tull Kamtose owns and operates a storage warehouse<sup>10</sup>, a tavern called the Sleepy Toad, and a doxy house called the Pleasure Palace. His operatives have their hands in several other affairs throughout the city, including a bare-knuckled fight club at the docks every Saturn Day night<sup>11</sup>. Tull seeks to expand his interests in Khromarium and elsewhere, hiring mercenaries and training new thieves in his renegade guild. Amongst the latter, he seeks personal apprentices: young men and women of distinction willing to train as *purloiners*, hallowed thieves who command the sorcery of clerics.

Tull suspects he is being set up, but he still craves the gem; hence, he is sending the PC party (an unknown



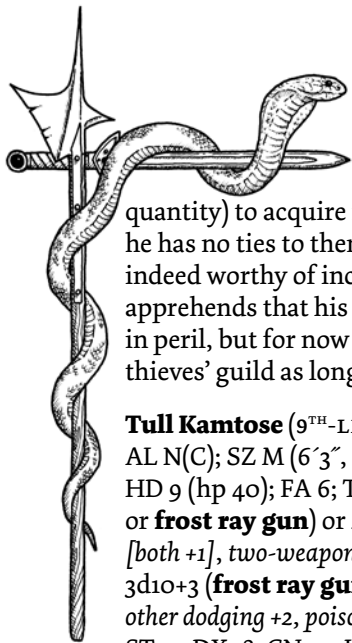
<sup>8</sup> See PLAYERS' HANDOUT #1.

<sup>9</sup> See PLAYERS' HANDOUT #2.

<sup>10</sup> See "RATS IN THE WALLS": DOCKS, Tull's Boat Storage and Supply.

<sup>11</sup> *ibid.*





quantity) to acquire it for him. If they are caught, he has no ties to them, but if they succeed, they are indeed worthy of inclusion in his fledgling guild. Tull apprehends that his operations in Khromarium are in peril, but for now he enjoys thwarting the official thieves' guild as long as he can.

**Tull Kamtose** (9<sup>TH</sup>-LEVEL COMMON MALE PURLOINER): AL N(C); SZ M (6'3", 195 lbs.); MV 40; AC -1; DR 2; HD 9 (hp 40); FA 6; TA 7; CA 9; #A 1/1 (short sword [+3] or **frost ray gun**) or 2/1 (short sword and short sword [both +1], *two-weapon fighting*); D 1d6+3 (short sword) or 3d10+3 (**frost ray gun**); SV 11 [*avoidance +4, sorcery +2, other dodging +2, poison +3, willpower +1*]; ML 11; XP 1,500; ST 15, DX 18, CN 10, IN 16, WS 17, CH 18.

*Special:* Cleric spells (*detect magic, perceive disguise, sanctuary; cure moderate wounds, hold person, silence; cause paralysis, cure disease, dispel magic*). *Backstab* (×4 damage). *Detect secret doors* 3-in-6. *Magic item use* (cleric or thief). *Read scrolls. Scribe scrolls. Turn undead. Climb* 11-in-12. *Decipher script* 5-in-12. *Discern noise* 9-in-12. *Hide* 10-in-12. *Manipulate traps* 8-in-12. *Move silently* 10-in-12. *Open locks* 8-in-12. *Pick pockets* 9-in-12.

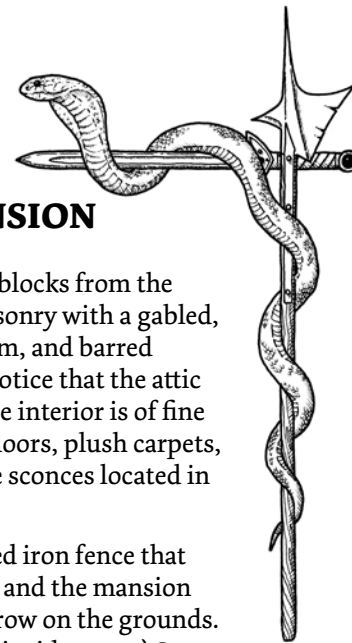
*Gear:* **ring of protection, helm of teleportation, periapt of proof against poison, +2 short swords** ×2, **frost ray gun** (30 charges), gold holy symbol of Xathoqqua, silver holy symbol of Rel, **300 gp, 300 pp, ruby ring** (2,000-gp value).

N.B.: Tull Kamtose is listed with the spells that he ofttest prepares, but he knows at least 18 spells. The referee may add three or more level 1, 2, and 3 spells, as deemed appropriate.

**Bodyguards (x2)** (6<sup>TH</sup>-LEVEL AMAZON FEMALE FIGHTERS): AL N; SZ M; MV 30; AC 6 (5 with shield); DR 1; HD 6 (hp 40); FA 6; #A 3/2 (short spear or broad sword [both +3]) or 1/1 (dagger [+1]); D 1d6+3 (short spear, one-handed) or 1d8+3 (short spear, two-handed) or 1d8+2 (broad sword, one-handed) or 1d10+2 (broad sword, two-handed) or 1d4+1 (dagger); SV 14 [*death +2, transformation +2*]; ML 9; XP 400; ST 16, DX 10, CN 13, IN 12, WS 12, CH 14.

*Special:* *Heroic fighting* (double normal melee attacks vs. opponents of 1 HD or less). *Weapon mastery* (broad sword). *Grand mastery* (short spear).

*Gear:* scale armour, small shield, dagger, broad sword, short spear, **3d10 cp, 3d10 sp, 2d10 gp**.



## GARROS MANSION

This large, two-storey affair is five blocks from the harbour. The edifice is of brick masonry with a gabled, slate-tiled roof, ornately carved trim, and barred windows. (Astute observers may notice that the attic windows are not barred.) The house interior is of fine workmanship, with marble-tiled floors, plush carpets, cedar mouldings, and brass candle sconces located in each chamber and passage.

The property is enclosed by a spiked iron fence that contains a stable, a shed, a kennel, and the mansion proper; too, several large shrubs grow on the grounds. (See THE LAMIA'S HEART MAP on inside cover.) Streets of about 20-foot width surround the property, meeting the fence. They carry decent foot, horse, and cart traffic during the day, but at night are quiet.

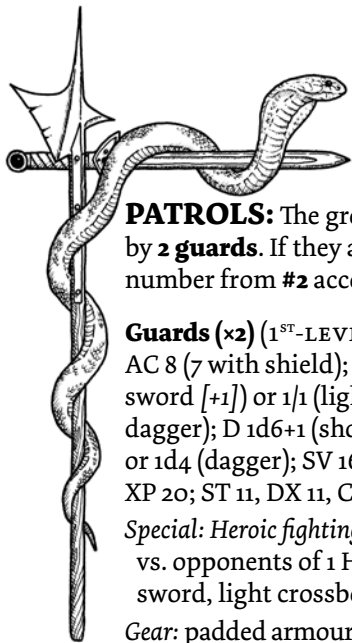
**SPYING ON GARROS MANSION:** If the players express a desire to observe Garros Mansion from a neighbouring structure, then the referee is at liberty to create some. A few other similar mansions may be in the area, but most are commercial enterprises and possibly a storage yard. A vacant building might be found, likely occupied by a dozen or so beggars.

Patient observation will reveal **2 guards** who check the perimeter every hour, emerging from and returning to the stable (#2). Some of these guards shew trepidation when the **3 war dogs** (from #1) approach them. Long hours of surveillance establish three distinct guard pairings who alternate shifts.

**Goll Garros** (see #11) oft leaves during morning hours, returning in the afternoon or early evening. He always is accompanied by his personal bodyguard, **Corc** (see #13), who drives his horse and cart. Other staff (stable master, cook, and housekeeper) also can be observed. The stable master (see #2) cares for the Lord's steed, the dogs, and the grounds, whereas the cook and housekeeper (see #8) mostly stay indoors, attending domestic duties.

Keen observers (e.g., using a spyglass) may notice that the lady of the house does not appear to match the description of Lady Garros. This woman appears younger, thinner, shorter, and more toned. She wears a large, heart-shaped pendant, revealed by her low-necked blouse. (This is a fake of the **Lamia's Heart**, red-stained glass set in a heart-shaped piece of copper.) There is no sign of the children, for they and the real Lady Garros have been sequestered elsewhere in Khromarium. The husband and "wife" dine together<sup>12</sup>, but sharp-eyed spies also may note that the Lord does not sleep in his own bedroom.

<sup>12</sup> See PLAYERS' HANDOUT #3.



**PATROLS:** The grounds are patrolled every hour by **2 guards**. If they are dispatched, then reduce their number from **#2** accordingly.

**Guards (x2)** (1<sup>ST</sup>-LEVEL FIGHTERS): AL N; SZ M; MV 40; AC 8 (7 with shield); HD 1 (hp 10); FA 1; #A 3/2 (short sword [+1]) or 1/1 (light crossbow [+1, +2 point-blank] or dagger); D 1d6+1 (short sword) or 1d6+2 (light crossbow) or 1d4 (dagger); SV 16 [death +2, transformation +2]; ML 9; XP 20; ST 11, DX 11, CN 11, IN 9, WS 10, CH 9.

*Special:* *Heroic fighting* (double normal melee attacks vs. opponents of 1 HD or less). *Weapon mastery* (short sword, light crossbow).

*Gear:* padded armour, small shield, dagger, short sword, light crossbow, bolt case, light bolts x20, **2d4 cp, 2d4 sp**.

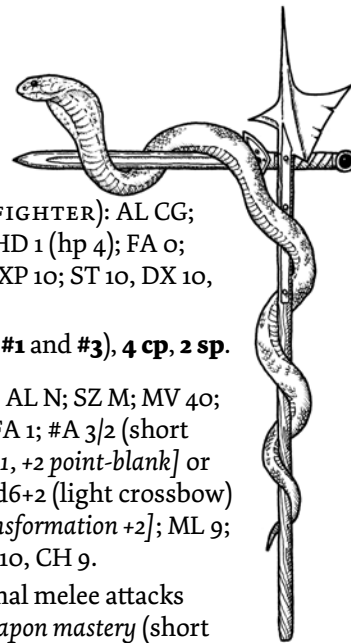
**1. FENCE AND GATES:** The fence is iron-wrought, eight feet tall and spiked at the top, with six-inch gaps betwixt the bars. The gates are of iron-reinforced pine with sturdy **locks**. Each gate has a brass bell hanging nearby. If one of the bells is rung, **3 war dogs** promptly will arrive, growling, their eyes narrowed and ears pinned. These short-haired beasts stand three feet at the shoulder, weigh about 150 pounds, and are fitted in leather harness.

The dogs soon will be followed by **Killian**, the stable master (see **#2**). When not working, this old Kelt dwells in his loft apartment over the stable. He will ask what business the visitors have. If unfamiliar or unsure, he will call over some **guards** from the stable (**#2**).

**Dogs, War (x3):** AL N; SZ M; MV 40; DX 13; AC 6; HD 2 (hp 9); #A 1/1 (bite); D 1d6; SV 16; ML 9; XP 24.  
*Special:* Perspicacious to otherworldly horrors and undead; may bark or howl in their presence, even if unseen.

**2. STABLE:** This tall wooden structure neighbours the mansion. Here lie the horse and cart of the lord of the house; other livestock include goats, sheep, and chickens. The stable is equipped with extra saddles and harness, various tools and grooming equipment, sacks of feed, sacks of smoked horsemeat (for the dogs), a trough, and a few barrels of water.

A stair ascends to a loft apartment. This is where **Killian**, the stable master and groundskeeper, dwells with his wife and his ancient, overbearing mother-in-law—and (temporarily) **6 guards**. Killian is a cantankerous sort: He does not get on well with the other staff, he does not approve of his master's proclivities, and he resents his wife and mother-in-law. Most of all, he does not appreciate accommodating the recently bolstered guards; although he has been told not to speak of them, he is likely to complain to anyone who listens.



**Killian** (0<sup>TH</sup>-LEVEL KELTIC MALE FIGHTER): AL CG; SZ M (5'8", 180 lbs.); MV 40; AC 9; HD 1 (hp 4); FA 0; #A 1/1 (dagger); D 1d4; SV 17; ML 8; XP 10; ST 10, DX 10, CN 10, IN 9, WS 9, CH 9.

*Gear:* dagger, **large iron keys** x2 (to **#1** and **#3**), **4 cp, 2 sp**.

**Guards (x6)** (1<sup>ST</sup>-LEVEL FIGHTERS): AL N; SZ M; MV 40; AC 8 (7 with shield); HD 1 (hp 10); FA 1; #A 3/2 (short sword [+1]) or 1/1 (light crossbow [+1, +2 point-blank] or dagger); D 1d6+1 (short sword) or 1d6+2 (light crossbow) or 1d4 (dagger); SV 16 [death +2, transformation +2]; ML 9; XP 20; ST 11, DX 11, CN 11, IN 9, WS 10, CH 9.

*Special:* *Heroic fighting* (double normal melee attacks vs. opponents of 1 HD or less). *Weapon mastery* (short sword, light crossbow).

*Gear:* padded armour, small shield, dagger, short sword, light crossbow, bolt case, light bolts x20, **2d4 cp, 2d4 sp**.

**3. SHED:** Simple wooden structure with **locked** door. It contains various tools and implements, as well as feed, grain, peat, and firewood. Additional firewood, recently chopped, is piled outside.

**4. KENNEL:** Simple shelter for the **3 war dogs** (see **#1**).

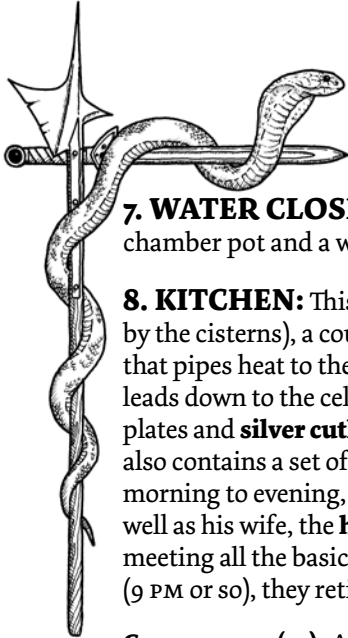
**5. ENTRANCES:** Each entrance is of bronze-bound hardwood with an inset **iron lock**. The front entrance is double doors, the rear a single portal; the same key unlocks both. The front entrance has a bronze knocker portraying the bat-toad, Xathoqua.

**6. BUTTERY:** This room is stacked with blocks of peat and firewood, cleaning supplies (e.g., brooms, brushes, mops), and casks and bottles of wine. A small, battered table with two low stools is set by the barred windows. Here lurk **2 guards**, whom Goll Garros has hired to bolster home defence. However, they have been lax in their duties: sleeping on the job, drinking, and card playing, especially when the lord of the mansion is out (usually during the day). At night they sleep in shifts on bedrolls that they store under the table, out of the way of the cook and housekeeper.

**Guards (x2)** (1<sup>ST</sup>-LEVEL FIGHTERS): AL N; SZ M; MV 40; AC 8 (7 with shield); HD 1 (hp 10); FA 1; #A 3/2 (short sword [+1]) or 1/1 (light crossbow [+1, +2 point-blank] or dagger); D 1d6+1 (short sword) or 1d6+2 (light crossbow) or 1d4 (dagger); SV 16 [death +2, transformation +2]; ML 9; XP 20; ST 11, DX 11, CN 11, IN 9, WS 10, CH 9.

*Special:* *Heroic fighting* (double normal melee attacks vs. opponents of 1 HD or less). *Weapon mastery* (short sword, light crossbow).

*Gear:* padded armour, small shield, dagger, short sword, light crossbow, bolt case, light bolts x20, **2d4 cp, 2d4 sp**.



**7. WATER CLOSET:** This chamber has a fancy chamber pot and a water basin fed by rooftop cisterns.

**8. KITCHEN:** This room has a large water basin (fed by the cisterns), a counter, a cabinet, and an iron stove that pipes heat to the bedrooms above. A wooden stair leads down to the cellar (#16). The cabinet is filled with plates and **silver cutlery** (25-gp value); a cedar box therein also contains a set of **gold cutlery** (200-gp value). From morning to evening, the elderly **cook** works in here, as well as his wife, the **housekeeper** (both **commoners**), meeting all the basic needs of the Garros family. By night (9 PM or so), they retire to their bedroom (#14).

**Commoners (x2):** AL N; SZ M; MV 40; DX 10; AC 9; HD 1/2 (hp 2); FA 0; #A 1/1 (knife); D 1d4; SV 17; ML 8; XP 5.  
**Gear:** knife, **1d6 cp**, **1d6 sp**.

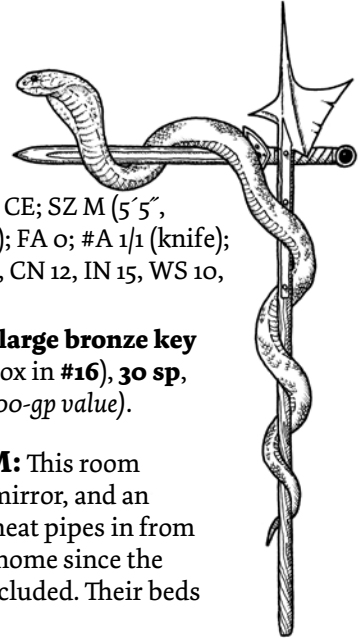
**9. DINING ROOM:** This is where Lord and Lady Garros take their dinner when just the family are present (Lord, Lady, and two children). The room has a table, finely carved chairs, and **4 pewter candlesticks** (15-gp value each). Of late, **Goll Garros** (see #11) and **Kallistrate** (the assassin posing as his wife; see #15) have dined here, going through the motions to bait would-be thieves. At such times, **Corc** (see #13) lurks close by. The Lord and “Lady” might be espied through the windows by diligent observers with a spyglass<sup>13</sup>.



**10. GREAT HALL:** This large chamber with bowed windows and fireplace is where the family entertains dinner guests, holds parties, and conducts other important functions. A large, ornate table with overhanging brass chandelier is centred in the room. Arrayed about the walls are **3 trophy heads**: sabretooth, dire wolf, and brown bear (100-gp value each). Furthermore, a 6 × 6-foot **gold-threaded tapestry** (500-gp value), portraying the twisting towers of Khromarium’s “Old City”, hangs on the northern wall.

**11. GUEST BEDROOM:** This room contains a bed, a dresser with mirror, and an armoire. Heat pipes in from the stove below. This is where **Goll Garros** has been sleeping of late, because Kallistrate the assassin will not allow the plump merchant with his wandering hands into the master bedroom. (Indeed, she has half a mind to kill the man if he makes one more inappropriate advance—an outcome that could make for an entertaining turn of events, should the referee wish.)

<sup>13</sup> See PLAYERS’ HANDOUT #3.



**Goll Garros** (COMMON MALE): AL CE; SZ M (5’5”, 260 lbs.); MV 40; AC 9; HD 1/2 (hp 2); FA 0; #A 1/1 (knife); D 1d4; SV 17; ML 8; XP 5; ST 9, DX 9, CN 12, IN 15, WS 10, CH 14.

**Gear:** knife, **large iron key** (to #5), **large bronze key** (to #15), **small iron key** (to iron box in #16), **30 sp**, **50 gp**, assorted **gold jewellery** (500-gp value).

**12. CHILDREN’S BEDROOM:** This room contains two beds, a dresser with mirror, and an armoire. Like the guest bedroom, heat pipes in from below. The children have not been home since the auction for the **Lamia’s Heart** concluded. Their beds are neatly made.

**13. BODYGUARD’S BEDROOM:** This room contains a bed, a dresser with mirror, and an armoire. It is the chamber of **Corc** the bodyguard, a broad-shouldered Kelt who protects Goll Garros and functions as his personal assistant. Corc goes wherever Goll goes. He is a surly man with drooping moustaches and bloodshot eyes. He keeps his money (**305 sp**, **32 gp**) in a small sack in his dresser, as well as a flask of whisky.

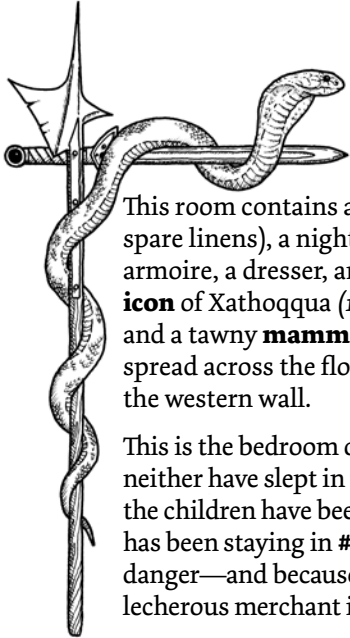
**Corc** [KAWRK] (3<sup>RD</sup>-LEVEL KELTIC MALE FIGHTER): AL N; SZ M (6’1”, 235 lbs.); MV 40; AC 6; HD 3 (hp 23); FA 3; #A 3/2 (broad sword or dagger [both +1]); D 1d10+2 (broad sword, two-handed) or 1d4+2 (dagger); SV 15 [death +2, transformation +2]; ML 9; XP 50; ST 13, DX 12, CN 13, IN 9, WS 10, CH 12.

**Special:** *Heroic fighting* (double normal melee attacks vs. opponents of 1 HD or less). *Weapon mastery* (dagger, broad sword).

**Gear:** studded armour, dagger, broad sword, **large iron keys** ×2 (to #1 and #5).

**14. DOMESTICS’ BEDROOM:** This is the bedroom of the **cook** and his wife, the **housekeeper** (see #8), both elderly but hard-working. The couple oft bicker and typically go to bed by about 9 PM, both snoring loudly. They send most of their wages to their grandchildren elsewhere. The room contains separate beds, two dressers, and a freestanding, four-foot, **pewter-framed mirror** (50-gp value). The old woman keeps a **large bronze key** (to #15) in her dresser, under her nightgowns.

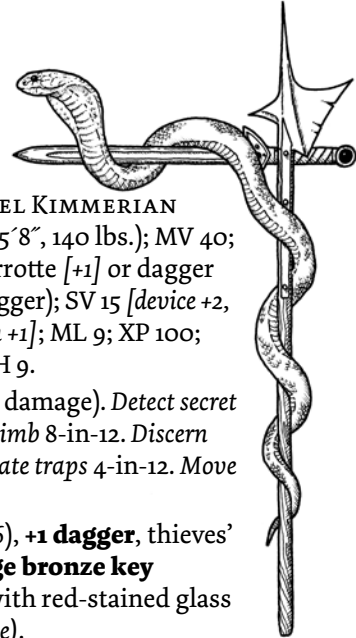
**15. MASTER BEDROOM:** The bronze-reinforced cedar door to this room is **locked** and **trapped**. The door has a six-inch-square, slide-open window, plated in brass. Opening the window releases a **sleep gas**. All creatures within 10 feet must make *death* (poison) saving throws or slumber as per the *sleep* spell; those who save become sluggish, as though affected by a CA 9 *slow* spell.



This room contains a large bed, a footlocker (holding spare linens), a nightstand with candleholder, an armoire, a dresser, and a writing desk. A large **bronze icon** of Xathoqua (100-gp value) hangs over the dresser, and a tawny **mammoth shag rug** (100-gp value) is spread across the floor. Heat is provided by a hearth in the western wall.

This is the bedroom of Lord and Lady Garros, though neither have slept in it of late. The lady of the house and the children have been staying with relatives. The Lord has been staying in #11, to keep him away from potential danger—and because **Kallistrate** will not permit the lecherous merchant in the same bedchamber.

Kallistrate, a Kimmerian assassin, wears the false “Lamia’s Heart”. She lurks about the house waiting for someone to try to steal the gem, which she openly wears on a pendant around her neck. She intends to execute deadly force on any would-be thief. The real gem is hidden at #16.



**Kallistrate** [ka-lee-STRAHT] (4<sup>TH</sup>-LEVEL KIMMERIAN FEMALE ASSASSIN): AL CE; SZ M (5’8”, 140 lbs.); MV 40; AC 4; HD 4 (hp 22); FA 3; #A 1/1 (garrotte [+1] or dagger [+2]); D 1d3+1 (garrotte) or 1d4+2 (dagger); SV 15 [device +2, avoidance +3, other dodging +1, poison +1]; ML 9; XP 100; ST 15, DX 15, CN 10, IN 12, WS 12, CH 9.

*Special:* Assassinate (kill target or ×2 damage). Detect secret doors 3-in-6. Disguise. Poison use. Climb 8-in-12. Discern noise 5-in-12. Hide 6-in-12. Manipulate traps 4-in-12. Move silently 6-in-12. Open locks 4-in-12.

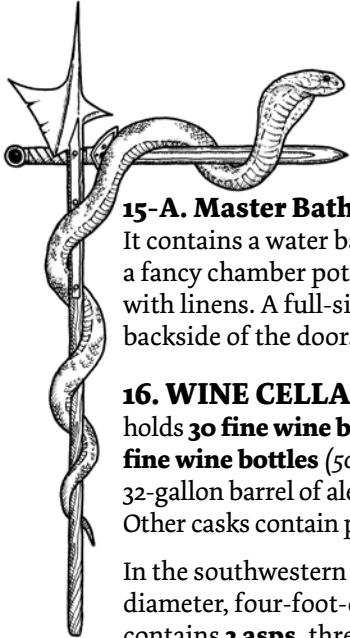
*Gear:* gold **defensive bracers** (AC 6), **+1 dagger**, thieves’ tools, disguise (Lady Garros), **large bronze key** (to #15), **12 pp**, **copper pendant** with red-stained glass (false “Lamia’s Heart”) (20-gp value).

A piece of parchment, a quill, and a bottle of ink rest on the desk. Writ in the common tongue, the parchment enumerates the manifest of *Berg Breaker*<sup>14</sup>. The ship’s “Garros hold” is noted to contain rare woods and spices from New Amazonia, valued at **3,000 gp**<sup>15</sup>.



<sup>14</sup> See APPENDIX A.

<sup>15</sup> See “RATS IN THE WALLS”: DOCKS, *Berg Breaker*.



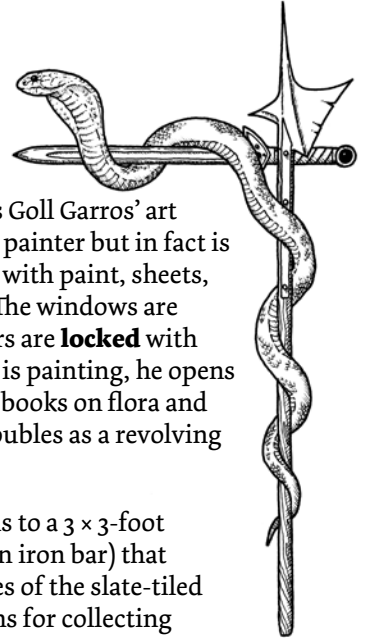
**15-A. Master Bath:** This is a large water closet. It contains a water basin fed by the rooftop cisterns, a fancy chamber pot, a bathtub, and a shelf stacked with linens. A full-sized mirror is mounted on the backside of the door.

**16. WINE CELLAR:** The cellar has a wine rack that holds **30 fine wine bottles** (5-gp value each) and **12 very fine wine bottles** (50-gp value each). Also here are a 32-gallon barrel of ale and two four-gallon pins of mead. Other casks contain pickled beef, fish, and vegetables.

In the southwestern corner of the cellar, a six-foot-diameter, four-foot-deep pit is sunk into the floor. It contains **2 asps**, three-foot-long, dusky, hooded snakes, slinking over each other and lifting their heads to greet visitors. Goll Garros has a knack for understanding and training these deadly creatures, handling them with expert ease. Under one stone in the bed of the pit lies a small, **locked** iron box. This contains the real **Lamia's Heart**, a heart-shaped topaz set in a gold pendant (3,000-gp value), wrapped in a silk kerchief.

**Snakes, Asps (x2):** AL N; SZ S; MV 40; DX 10; AC 7; HD 2 (hp 9); #A 1/1 (bite); D 1; SV 16; ML 7; XP 60.

*Special:* Bite injects venom thrice per day. Victim must make *death* (poison) save or die at once; if save successful, 3d6 hp damage sustained. Site of wound purple and swollen; may become septic if victim survives (*cure disease* heals).



**17. ATTIC:** This attic functions as Goll Garros' art studio. He considers himself a fine painter but in fact is quite terrible. The attic is cluttered with paint, sheets, canvasses, and painting supplies. The windows are not barred, but the wooden shutters are **locked** with interior latches; when Lord Garros is painting, he opens the shutters. A bookshelf (holding books on flora and fauna, gardening, and painting) doubles as a revolving **secret door** to #17-B.

**17-A. Roof Access:** A ladder leads to a 3 x 3-foot trapdoor (**locked** from within by an iron bar) that accesses the roof. Betwixt the gables of the slate-tiled roof rests a pair of 25-gallon cisterns for collecting rainwater. No one goes up there unless there is a problem with the cistern system.

**17-B. Secret Attic Space:** This is where Goll Garros keeps **14 stolen paintings** of nature scenes (*from 70- to 100-gp value each*) and **5 lewd marble sculptures** of Xathoqua, each a foot tall (50-gp value each).



## CONCLUSION

If the party acquire the **Lamia's Heart** for Tull Kamtose, then he will invite them to join his operation, impressed by their skills and nerve. (He might even take on a purloiner as his personal apprentice.) He admits that his renegade outfit soon may be overrun by the official thieves' guild of Khromarium, but for now he relishes being a thorn in their side. He promises further work for his new "partners" in both Khromarium and Port Zangerios.

# “THE BRAZEN BULL”

## INFORMATION FOR THE PLAYERS

Read aloud or paraphrase the following boxed text to the players:

Whilst traversing one of the seedier neighbourhoods just beyond Khromarium’s docks, your party are solicited by a greasy-haired Pict whose head tilts severely to one side. He stands under the arched entrance of a partially ruined tenement and is garbed as a merchant, though his ill-fitted shirt shews wine stains and various small burn holes. A plume of heavy, white smoke with a slight fruity odour wafts from his pipe as he calls to you.

“Greetings, good masters,” he lisps. “Can I interest you in purchasing a sheaf of magical lotus leaves? I, Venutios [we-NUH-tee-ohs], have a surplus of the enchanted plant, and I have some unfortunate debts to settle, so I am willing to part with it at a bargain rate. With this lotus, one can see the future, or brew a potion that enchants the drinker with the power of sorcery—or, if none of that is of interest, surely one could double or triple his money elsewhere.”

Venutios beckons the party to follow him into the dilapidated building....

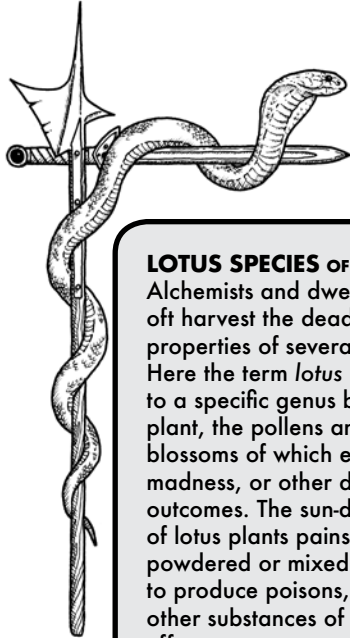
## INFORMATION FOR THE REFEREE

**BACKGROUND:** A few months ago, a degenerate Hyperborean lotus-fiend named **Zilzoon Qaan**, lost in fevered madness, staggered into one of Khromarium’s rundown buildings. He fell through the rotted floor into a cave and chanced upon a forgotten temple of Thaumagorga. The deity’s wicked hand guided him to the temple’s **brazen bull**. Wild hallucinations inspired Zilzoon to light a fire beneath the bronze torture device and then crawl through its door. Miraculously, the addict emerged alive, yet horribly scarred and imprinted with a singular devotion to the Dæmon Lord.

Since that fateful night, Zilzoon has been abducting travellers near the docks and sacrificing them in the **brazen bull**. He believes that these offerings will secure even greater favour from Thaumagorga. A few of the victims have survived, only to become similarly devoted to the Dæmon Lord; these disfigured acolytes inhabit the temple with Zilzoon.



A few desperate addicts, hungry for more lotus, help Zilzoon to lure fresh sacrifices to their fiery fates. The tilt-headed Pict, **Venutios**, is one such man. He has been convincing newcomers to sample some russet lotus, the soporific effects of which soon lull them into submission.



### LOTUS SPECIES OF HYPERBOREA:

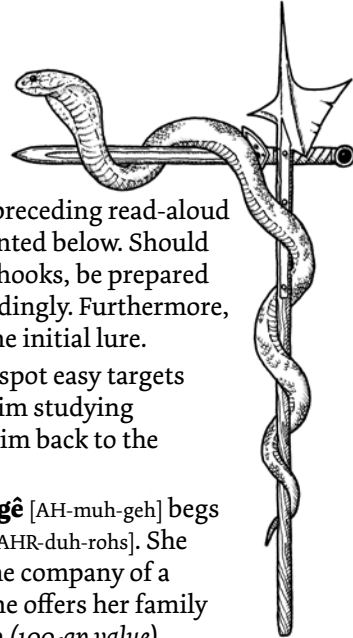
Alchemists and dweomercrafters oft harvest the deadly and magical properties of several lotus species. Here the term *lotus* does not refer to a specific genus but rather any plant, the pollens and/or powdered blossoms of which effect death, madness, or other deleterious outcomes. The sun-dried blossoms of lotus plants painstakingly are powdered or mixed with other toxins to produce poisons, potions, and other substances of preternatural effect.

When chewed, raw lotus leaves (not the blossoms) oft produce mild hallucinogenic effects that are highly addictive. Some sages propose that the Hyperborean race stagnated at the same time lotus chewing became fashionable; indeed, for a time outsiders referred to the city of Khromarium as "Lotusland". Others suggest that Viking and certain non-Viking berserkers chew lotus leaves to effect a state of fearlessness, unbridled rage, and unflagging will.

Here follows a brief overview of the effects of several lotus species<sup>16</sup>. Note that chewing or smoking lotus leaves produces a 2-in-6 chance of addiction, requiring the victim to ingest at least one per day or suffer craving sickness.

- \* *Black Lotus*: Chewing or smoking leaves (5-gp value each) induces intense euphoria; powdered blossoms (250-gp value per pinch) are used in creating **dust of death**.
- \* *Russet Lotus*: Chewing or smoking leaves (5-gp value each) induces hallucinations and lethargy; powdered blossoms (150-gp value per pinch) are used in creating **dust of sleepiness**.
- \* *Smoky Lotus*: Chewing or smoking leaves (5-gp value each) induces wild aggression; powdered blossoms (200-gp value per pinch) are used in creating **dust of madness**.

<sup>16</sup> For further information, see *AS&SH* VOL. VI, p. 511: FLORA AND FAUNA OF HYPERBOREA, *lotus species of Hyperborea*.



**OTHER ADVENTURE HOOKS:** In lieu of the preceding read-aloud text, a few other means of involving the PCs are presented below. Should you elect to utilize one of these alternative adventure hooks, be prepared to adjust the INFORMATION FOR THE PLAYERS accordingly. Furthermore, one of the below hooks could be used in addition to the initial lure.

- \* **Venutios** meanders around the docks, hoping to spot easy targets amongst the new arrivals. The party may notice him studying them, which scrutiny could lead them to follow him back to the CRUMBLING TENEMENT.
- \* A one-toothed, elderly Ixian woman named **Amagé** [AH-muh-geh] begs the party to find her missing grandson **Ardaros** [AHR-duh-rohs]. She last saw the black-maned boy near the docks in the company of a man with a listing head. She has no money, but she offers her family heirloom, a **diamond-studded electrum brooch** (100-gp value).
- \* A shifty-eyed Pict named **Motios** [MOH-tee-ohs] approaches the party, scratching at imaginary insects on his neck and asking the party if they want to get rich. He claims to have escaped from a cult where he saw plenty of gold and gems. He says he will lead them there if they will buy him more lotus.

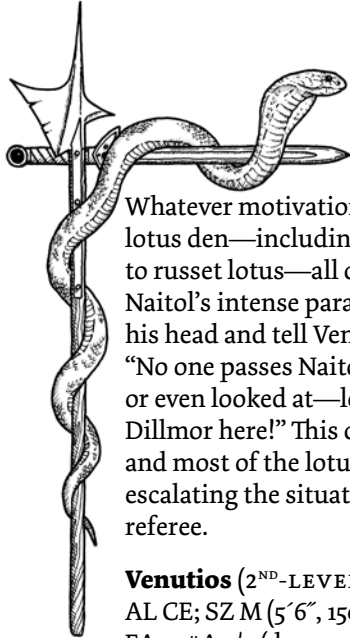
## CRUMBLING TENEMENT

Not too far from the docks, Zilzoon Qaan's crumbling, three-storey tenement sits squeezed betwixt two other dilapidated structures. (See THE BRAZEN BULL MAP on inside cover.) Day and night, light from a small fire inside flickers through cracks in its crooked, ill-fitting door and crudely boarded windows. This is where Venutios will convey his targets. Bringing a group of adventurers is ambitious, but he seeks to gain favour with Zilzoon, fancying himself as his right-hand man.

If the party are reluctant to follow Venutios into the building, then he will offer them a glimpse of his "friends" through a poorly boarded window. The PCs will see four figures huddled around a fire (see #1). They do not appear to be armed or armoured, save one half-naked man demonstratively waving a dagger over his head to his seemingly unimpressed audience.

**1. LOTUS DEN:** Debris from the tenement's collapsed upper storeys litters the open ground floor of this building, blocking the back door. A rickety roof 30 feet above does little to shield the interior from the elements. Dim light from a smouldering fire in the northeastern corner reveals four figures within.

- \* **Naitol** [NI-tawl], who perches on a 4 × 4-foot crate, waving a bloody dagger whilst repeatedly rasping, "I told him." He wears only a loincloth and is heavily muscled and scarred.
- \* **Rai** [RI-ee], a squirrely, thin-faced man, who huddles close to the fire, gently rocking whilst smoking lotus in a pipe. He is completely lost in himself.
- \* **Gillpar** [GIHL-pahr], a fleshy man with ulcerous skin, who lies face down on the floor, comatose.
- \* **Dillmor** [DIHL-mawr], a square-jawed man, who lies slumped against a mouldy, discoloured wall. Blood oozes from a deep, wide gash under his left eye. He is recently deceased.



Whatever motivation compels the PCs to enter this lotus den—including Venutios’ plan to introduce them to russet lotus—all quickly goes to ruin, owing to Naitol’s intense paranoia. He will wave his dagger over his head and tell Venutios, the PCs, or anyone else, “No one passes Naitol! This crate is not to be budged—or even looked at—lest you suffer the same fate as old Dillmor here!” This development (Dillmor murdered and most of the lotus smoked) will infuriate Venutios, escalating the situation as best determined by the referee.

**Venutios** (2<sup>ND</sup>-LEVEL COMMON MALE FIGHTER): AL CE; SZ M (5’6”, 150 lbs.); MV 40; AC 9; HD 2 (hp 13); FA 2; #A 3/2 (dagger [+1]); D 1d4+1; SV 16 [death +2, transformation +2]; ML 7; XP 30; ST 12, DX 12, CN 8, IN 13, WS 10, CH 11.

*Special:* Heroic fighting (double normal melee attacks vs. opponents of 1 HD or less). *Weapon mastery* (dagger, short sword).

*Gear:* dagger.

**Naitol** (4<sup>TH</sup>-LEVEL COMMON MALE FIGHTER): AL N(E); SZ M (6’, 175 lbs.); MV 40; AC 8; HD 4 (hp 21); FA 4; #A 3/2 (dagger [+2]); D 1d4+2; SV 15 [death +2, transformation +2, dodging +1, poison +1, willpower -1]; ML 12; XP 100; ST 15, DX 15, CN 15, IN 8, WS 6, CH 11.

*Special:* Heroic fighting (double normal melee attacks vs. opponents of 1 HD or less). *Weapon mastery* (dagger, short sword).

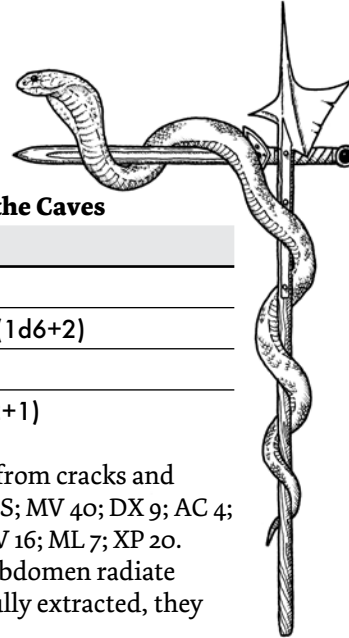
*Gear:* dagger.

Note that **Rai** (completely intoxicated) and **Gillpar** (passed out and snoring) are incapable of defending themselves. Rai has a soft leather pouch containing **2 russet lotus leaves**. Naitol’s crate **conceals** a three-foot-diameter hole in the floor. An old wooden ladder descends 40 feet to **THE CAVES (#2)**.

## THE CAVES

These tubular limestone tunnels range from 8 to 12 feet in diameter, unless otherwise noted. A thin layer of moisture collects on the walls and ceiling, sometimes dripping down to puddle on the floor. Occasional stalactites and stalagmites protrude; too, flowstone forms lumpy irregularities about the walls.

**RANDOM ENCOUNTERS:** To check for wandering monster encounters within **THE CAVES (#2-#10)**, roll 1d6 for every hour of exploration. On a roll of 1, the party will encounter something on the table hereafter.



**Table 2: Random Encounters in the Caves**

d4 Roll	Encounter
1	Beetle, Giant Fire (1d6)
2	Centipede, Giant Black (1d6+2)
3	Man, Bandit (1d4+1)
4	Spider, Giant Crab (1d2+1)

**Beetle, Giant Fire:** Will crawl out from cracks and fissures in the limestone. AL N; SZ S; MV 40; DX 9; AC 4; HD 1+1 (hp 6); #A 1/1 (bite); D 2d4; SV 16; ML 7; XP 20. *Special:* Glands above eyes and by abdomen radiate red light in 10-foot radius; if carefully extracted, they continue to glow for 1d6 days.

**Centipede, Giant Black:** Will crawl out from cracks and fissures in the limestone. AL N; SZ S; MV 20; DX 13; AC 9; HD 1/2 (hp 3); #A 1/1 (bite); D 1d2; SV 17; ML 7; XP 25.

*Special:* Bite delivers venom; make *death* (poison) save or suffer additional 2d6 hp damage.

**Man, Bandit:** These ruffians skulk about and lurk in the shadows, waiting to kill trespassers and strip them of their possessions. They also seek to impress Zilzoon Qaan with captives, if possible. AL CE; SZ M; MV 40; DX 9; AC 9; HD 1 (hp 5); #A 1/1 (short spear); D 1d6 (short spear, one-handed) or 1d8 (short spear, two-handed); SV 16; ML 6; XP 10.

*Gear:* short spear, **3d4 ep**, 1% chance of a magic item.

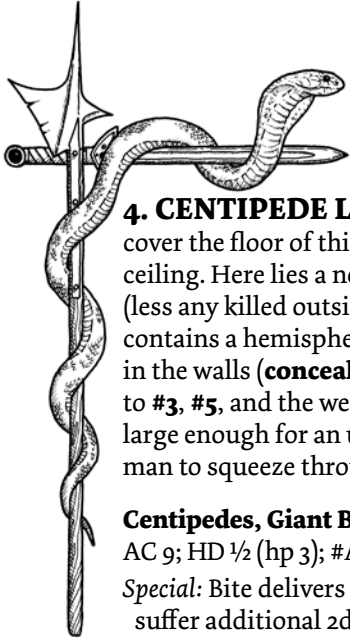
**Spider, Giant Crab:** Flat, five-foot-long arachnids will cram into nooks and folds in the rock. They blend with the surrounding colours and textures, waiting to pounce on easy prey. AL N; SZ M; MV 40; DX 12; AC 7; HD 2 (hp 9); #A 1/1 (bite); D 1d8; SV 16; ML 7; XP 32.

*Special:* Chameleonic ability increases chance to surprize by 2-in-6. Can move across walls and ceilings at normal MV. Bite victim must make *death* (poison) save or suffer 1d8 hp damage.

**2. ENTRY CAVE:** Forty feet down the old wooden ladder lies a cave lumpy with limestone deposits. A pair of long spears lean against the wall to the right of the northernmost tunnel.

**3. SCATTERED BONES:** Human and animal bones lie strewn about the floor of this cave. Noise from rummaging through them may attract **1d6+2 giant black centipedes** from #4, which will approach through a narrow, angled crack in the wall. This crack is large enough for an unarmoured or lightly armoured man to squeeze through sideways.





**4. CENTIPEDE LAIR:** Bones, rags, and bits of fur cover the floor of this warm, lumpy cave with five-foot ceiling. Here lies a nest of **15 giant black centipedes** (less any killed outside the nest). The rubbish also contains a hemispherical **bloodstone**<sup>17</sup>. Narrow cracks in the walls (**concealed** by their angle) grant passage to **#3**, **#5**, and the western hallway. These passages are large enough for an unarmoured or lightly armoured man to squeeze through sideways.

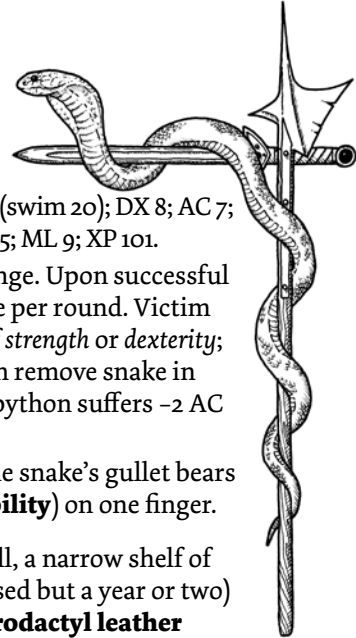
**Centipedes, Giant Black (×15):** AL N; SZ S; MV 20; DX 13; AC 9; HD ½ (hp 3); #A 1/1 (bite); D 1d2; SV 17; ML 7; XP 25.  
*Special:* Bite delivers venom; make *death* (poison) save or suffer additional 2d6 hp damage.



**5. BROKEN FOUNTAIN:** The undulating floors of this natural cave system slope down gently here. A vandalized wall fountain, sculpted in high relief to the likeness of Apollo's face, juts from the eastern wall. No water pours from the fountain's mouth, but a thin film of liquid seeps from its left eye.

This enchanted ultramarine fluid endows Lawful or Neutral drinkers with a one-time, 24-hour benediction equivalent to the *bless* spell; Chaotic drinkers suffer a similar *blight*. In days of yore, when the indigenous Hyperboreans of Old Earth worshipped Apollo and Artemis, this liquid was referred to as the **tears of Apollo**. Alas, the font was abused and then forgotten by the Hyperboreans, who succumbed to decadence, black sorcery, and the revelations obtained from Xathoqua's antemundane secrets.

**6. COLLAPSED CAVE:** The floor of this limestone cavern has eroded and subsided, creating a cliff at each of its three openings. The ceiling is toothy with stalactites that drip. Faint cries for help echo periodically from the southwest. The cliff drops 50 feet, the nethermost four feet of which are filled with filthy water and home to a deadly **python**.



**Snake, Python:** AL N; SZ M; MV 30 (swim 20); DX 8; AC 7; HD 3 (hp 19); #A 1/1 (bite); D 1d4; SV 15; ML 9; XP 101.

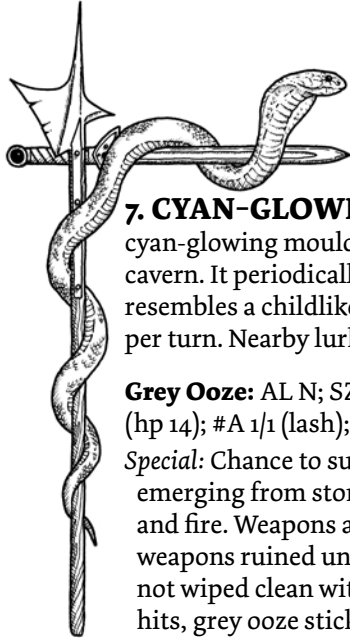
*Special:* *Infrared vision* to 30-foot range. Upon successful bite, constricts for 2d4 hp damage per round. Victim can escape via *extraordinary feat of strength* or *dexterity*; allies whose strength totals 60 can remove snake in 1d4 rounds. Whilst constricting, python suffers -2 AC penalty (AC 9).

*Gear:* A partially digested arm in the snake's gullet bears a plain gold band (**ring of invisibility**) on one finger.

Near the cavern's northwestern wall, a narrow shelf of rock holds a skeletal corpse (deceased but a year or two) wrapped in a blanket. It has **+1 pterodactyl leather armour**, a short sword, thieves' tools, a soft leather pouch containing **46 gp** and **3 pearls** (50-gp value each), and a hard leather pouch containing several egg-shaped metal cylinders (**5 radiation grenades**). Each cylinder is topped by a stem through which a small lynchpin has been inserted. The cylinders' exteriors read, in Hellenic (Atlantean), "DANGER! RELEASE IMMEDIATELY!"



<sup>17</sup> **Thaumagorga's bloodstone;** see APPENDIX C.



**7. CYAN-GLOWING CAVE:** A patch of spongy, cyan-glowing mould covers the southern side of this cavern. It periodically quivers, emanating a sound that resembles a childlike voice crying, “Help!” about once per turn. Nearby lurks a **grey ooze**.

**Grey Ooze:** AL N; SZ M; MV 10; DX 11; AC 8; HD 3+4 (hp 14); #A 1/1 (lash); D 2d8; SV 15; ML 12; XP 195.

*Special:* Chance to surprize increased by 1-in-6 when emerging from stone surroundings. Immune to cold and fire. Weapons and lightning harm as normal, but weapons ruined unless magical; if magical weapons not wiped clean within 1 turn, will be ruined. Once it hits, grey ooze sticks to victim, delivering additional 2d8 hp damage per round; destroys mundane armour in 1 round, but magical armour lasts 1 turn (unless wiped clean).

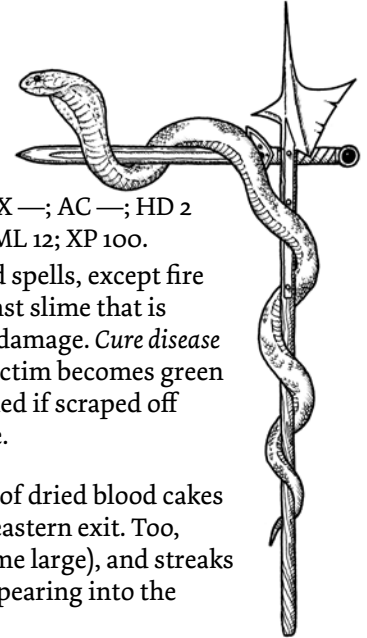
The northern side of the cavern is raised about five feet and features slender limestone columns. Behind the columns a narrow tunnel (#8) lies **concealed**. More cyan-glowing mould thrives here; too, it periodically trembles, producing a more quizzical, childlike, “Help?” about once per turn.

**8. TUNNELS:** This network of narrow tunnels was once the lair of a large colony of **fire beetles** that mostly have been consumed by the **grey ooze** of #7. The tunnels vary from four to eight feet in height and slope up and down, ultimately descending 35 feet from the northern side of #7 to #22.

**8-A. Fire Beetle Nest:** Flickering red light is observable from the point where the tunnel forks in this direction. Here dwell **7 fire beetles**, the last of the once-large colony; subtract any killed as random encounters.

**Beetles, Giant Fire (x7):** AL N; SZ S; MV 40; DX 9; AC 4; HD 1+1 (hp 6); #A 1/1 (bite); D 2d4; SV 16; ML 7; XP 20.  
*Special:* Glands above eyes and by abdomen radiate red light in 10-foot radius; if carefully extracted, they continue to glow for 1d6 days.

**9. ALGAL CAVE:** Pools of algal water collect about the floor of this cavern. Stalactites hang over lumpy flowstone at the cavern’s northern wall. If stepped on like a pedal, a small, flat stone embedded in the rear wall will open a **secret door**. This action, however, will cause a colony of **green slime** to fall out from betwixt the stalactites. Behind the secret door, a three-foot-diameter tunnel extends, accessing #21. A large dresser has been moved in front of the opening at that end, effectively **concealing** the portal.



**Green Slime:** AL N; SZ S; MV 0; DX —; AC —; HD 2 (hp 9); #A 1/1 (touch); D —; SV 16; ML 12; XP 100.

*Special:* Unharmd by weapons and spells, except fire and cold; if fire or cold used against slime that is affixed to victim, both suffer full damage. *Cure disease* destroys. Once flesh contacted, victim becomes green slime in 1d4 rounds. Effects avoided if scraped off within 1 round and tool cast aside.

**10. BLOODY CAVE:** A spatter of dried blood cakes the walls around this cave’s northeastern exit. Too, bloody handprints, footprints (some large), and streaks paint the surrounding floor, disappearing into the darkness east and then north.

## THAUMAGORGA’S TEMPLE

Large flagstones form the interior walls, floors, and ceilings of the temple. The walls are 12 feet high, ceilings arch from 16 to 18 feet, and doors are composed of bronze (with pull rings and keyholes). No light sources are evident unless otherwise stated, but empty, pole-hung cressets are numerous.

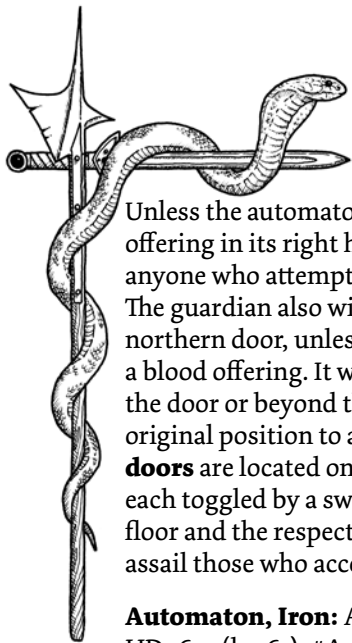
No random encounters need be rolled here. The default circumstance has **Zilzoon Qaan** and **3 cultists** conducting the **brazen bull** ritual as the PCs enter (unless distracted by noise, such as a **radiation grenade**). The referee is at liberty to alter the cultists’ activities as desired.

**11. PRONAOS:** Access to this columned vestibule is through a collapse on the western side of the southern wall. The original entrance is caved in and calcified over; crumbled steps and toppled Doric columns lead to nowhere, sealed by the beetling glaciers of another age. A 12-foot iron statue stands atop a broad, three-foot-high plinth of black marble in the centre of the chamber.

The statue—an **iron automaton**—depicts a sneering Hyperborean woman gripping a scythe in her left hand, with the blade resting upon her left shoulder. The statue’s right hand reaches forwards, palm up, with fingers cupped together. This statue is stylized to the likeness of **Shaziromir Vheez**, a Hyperborean witch (see #24).

The statue’s marble base is etched with Hyperborean Esoteric pictographs. If the PCs have the means to decipher this archaic language, then they can translate the symbols as follows: “I GUARD THE TEMPLE OF THAUMAGORGA, THE INIMITABLE MASTER OF BELLICOSITY, DÆMON LORD OF HYPERBOREA. NAUGHT BUT SANGUINE RICHES SHALL SERVE AS A PASSKEY.” Flecks of blood (some fresh, some not) spatter the flagstone floor.





Unless the automaton has been given a fresh blood offering in its right hand, it will animate to attack anyone who attempts to pass the brazen door north. The guardian also will attack anyone entering from the northern door, unless they previously have provided a blood offering. It will not pursue intruders through the door or beyond this room, instead returning to its original position to await new visitors. Revolving **secret doors** are located on the eastern and western walls, each toggled by a switch hidden in the seam betwixt the floor and the respective wall. The automaton will not assail those who access these portals.

**Automaton, Iron:** AL N; SZ L; MV 20; DX 5; AC 3; HD 16+2 (hp 65); #A 1/1 (weapon); D 4d10; SV 9; ML 12; XP 6,000.

*Special:* +1 or better weapon to hit. Immune to sorcery, except lightning, which functions as *slow* spell for 3 rounds. Fire attacks heal it. Every 7 rounds, can breathe poison gas cloud of 10-cubic-foot volume, as *cloudkill*.

## 12. THAUMAGORGA'S CONSIGNMENT:

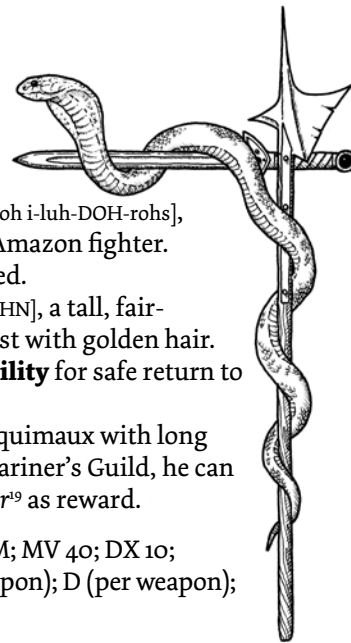
In the entry hall to this chamber, small, flat stones embedded high in the eastern and western walls trigger revolving **secret doors** to open. Ahead, the floor is engraved to portray a baleful horned helmet set within a 10-foot-diameter magic circle. The engraving pulses with a deep crimson hue, dimly illuming the chamber. Observing this pulsing glow for more than 1 round will cause slight nausea in those who never have paid obeisance to Thaumagorga.

Anyone entering the glowing circle fully (i.e., stepping in with both feet) will vanish, *teleported* to #14. His arms, armour, clothing, and equipment will collapse to the floor in a pile. A scent of ozone will waft briefly from the heaped possessions.

**13. PRISON:** The barred cell door to this prison chamber is **locked**. The cult's **5 abductees** lethargically mill about, eyes heavy-lidded, mumbling incoherently and occasionally stumbling into one another and the walls. Zilzoon Qaan has sedated them with soporifics. Save **Kallisto** the Amazon, the abductees are **commoners** with no practical combat experience.

- ★ **Ambrosia Nereos** [NEH-ree-ohs], a grey-skinned Atlantean fishmonger with webbed fingers. She offers a lifetime of fish at her dinner table in Khromarium if rescued.
- ★ **Ardaros**, a dusky-skinned young Ixian (aged 14) with long black hair. He begs for safe return to his grandmother, Amagê, in Khromarium above<sup>18</sup>. She is poor but will provide a **diamond-studded electrum brooch** (100-gp value) to her grandson's rescuers.

18 See INFORMATION FOR THE REFEREE, other adventure hooks.



- ★ **Kallisto Ælladoros** [kuh-LIHS-toh i-luh-DOH-rohs], a well-defined, olive-skinned Amazon fighter. She will join the party if rescued.
- ★ **Miraxin Xon** [mih-RAK-sihn KSOHN], a tall, fair-skinned Hyperborean alchemist with golden hair. He offers **4 potions of invisibility** for safe return to his home in the "Old City".
- ★ **Suka** [SOO-kuh], a jaundiced Esquimaux with long black hair. A member of the Mariner's Guild, he can arrange passage on *Berg Breaker*<sup>19</sup> as reward.

**Commoners (x4):** AL CG or N; SZ M; MV 40; DX 10; AC 9; HD 1/2 (hp 2); FA 0; #A 1/1 (weapon); D (per weapon); SV 17; ML 8; XP 5.

**Kallisto Ælladoros** (2<sup>ND</sup>-LEVEL AMAZON FEMALE FIGHTER): AL LG; SZ M (6', 170 lbs.); MV 40; AC 7; HD 2 (hp 14); FA 2; #A 2/1 (short bow [+4]) or 3/2 (long sword [+2]); D 1d6+1 (short bow) or 1d8+2 (long sword, one-handed) or 1d10+2 (long sword, two-handed); SV 10 [death +2, transformation +2, dodging +2]; ML 10; XP 30; ST 15, DX 18, CN 12, IN 11, WS 13, CH 14.

*Special:* *Heroic fighting* (double normal melee attacks vs. opponents of 1 HD or less). *Weapon mastery* (long sword, short bow).

*Gear:* none.

N.B.: At the referee's discretion, if the PCs dally (perhaps returning to the surface to rest), then one or more of these prisoners may be moved to #14 (d6: 1-5) or #15 (6).

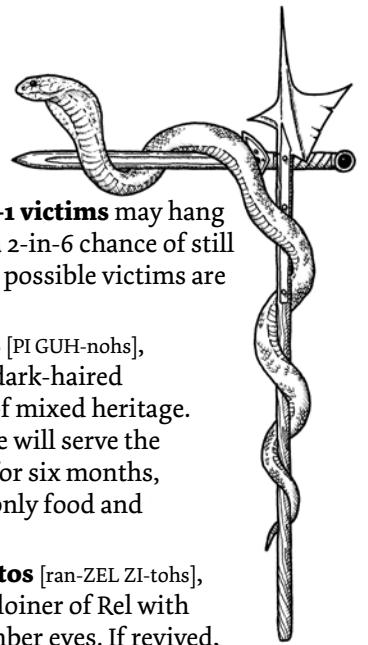
**14. MEAT HOOKS:** Both doors to this chamber are **locked**; a **secret door** on the eastern wall opens into #15. At the western end of the room, hooked chains dangle from each of the five triangular alcoves. Underneath each hook, a sluice slopes down into a central floor engraving of a malefic horned helmet set inside a 10-foot-diameter magic circle.

A naked victim *teleported* from #12 is skewered through the skin of his back onto one of the empty meat hooks, causing 1d4 hp damage and hanging him five feet from the floor. He can attempt to lift himself off with a successful *test of strength*, though each failure will cause 1 hp damage. Each attempt (success or failure) requires a *trauma survival* check or the victim will pass out for 1d6 turns.

When five victims (dead or alive) hang from the hooks, the horned helmet symbol will glow bright red for 3 rounds, bathing the five in ruddy light. Living victims must make *death* saving throws each round; failure results in liquefaction. (Corpses liquefy as well, without benefit of saving throws.) The crimson fluid will drain toward the horned helmet symbol, filling the grooves. After 1 turn, the fluid will glow and then coalesce into a single, hemispherical **bloodstone**<sup>20</sup> positioned in the forehead of the helmet.

19 See APPENDIX A.

20 **Thaumagorga's bloodstone**; see APPENDIX C.



At any time **1d4-1 victims** may hang here, each with a 2-in-6 chance of still breathing. Three possible victims are listed below:

- ★ **Pai Gunnos** [PI GUH-nohs], a youthful, dark-haired mercenary of mixed heritage. If he lives, he will serve the PCs loyally for six months, requesting only food and lodging.
- ★ **Ranzell Zaitos** [ran-ZEL ZI-tohs], a young purloiner of Rel with haunting amber eyes. If revived, he will seek to escape, but may put in a good word for the party with his master, **Tull Kamtose**<sup>21</sup>.
- ★ **Sit' Gooch** [SIH-tuh GOOCH], a half-blood Pictish tanner (a **commoner**; see #13) with greying black hair. If rescued, he will reward each PC with an appropriate leather good (e.g., saddle, armour, backpack, boots).

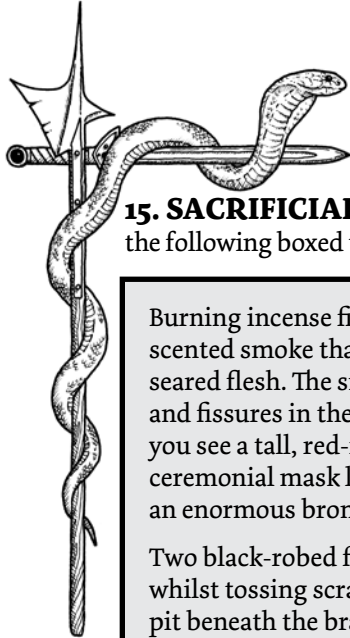
**Pai Gunnos** (0<sup>TH</sup>-LEVEL COMMON MALE FIGHTER): AL CG; SZ M (6', 170 lbs.); MV 40; AC 9; HD 1 (hp 0 [4]); FA 0; #A 1/1 (weapon); D (per weapon); SV 17; ML 9; XP 10; ST 12, DX 11, CN 8, IN 8, WS 9, CH 11.

**Ranzell Zaitos** (1<sup>ST</sup>-LEVEL COMMON MALE PURLOINER): AL N; SZ M (5'10", 160 lbs.); MV 40; AC 8; HD 1 (hp 0 [6]); FA 1; CA 1; #A 1/1 (weapon [+1 with missiles]); D (per weapon); SV 16 [avoidance +2, sorcery +2, willpower +1]; ML 7; XP 20; ST 10, DX 13, CN 10, IN 9, WS 15, CH 10.

*Special:* Cleric spells (none prepared; knows *command*, *detect magic*). *Backstab* (×2 damage). *Detect secret doors* 3-in-6. *Magic item use* (as cleric or thief). *Read scrolls*. *Scribe scrolls*. *Climb* 8-in-12. *Discern noise* 4-in-12. *Hide* 5-in-12. *Manipulate traps* 3-in-12. *Move silently* 5-in-12. *Open locks* 3-in-12. *Pick pockets* 4-in-12.

*Gear:* none.

<sup>21</sup> See "THE LAMIA'S HEART": INFORMATION FOR THE REFEREE, *background*.



**15. SACRIFICIAL CHAMBER:** Read or paraphrase the following boxed text to the players:

Burning incense fills this chamber with cinnamon-scented smoke that mingles with the stench of seared flesh. The smoke wafts up through cracks and fissures in the ceiling. Through the haze you see a tall, red-robed figure in a goat-horned ceremonial mask leading a lethargic old woman to an enormous bronze sculpture of an aurochs bull.

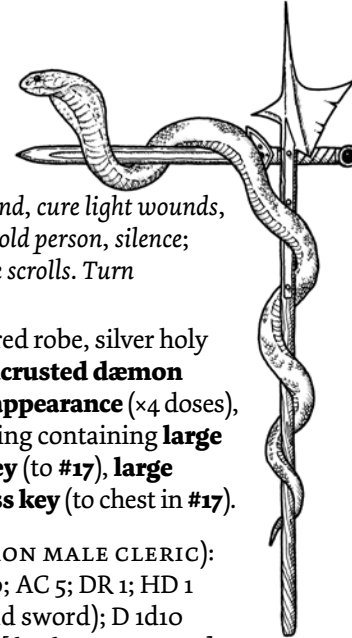
Two black-robed figures chant in low monotones whilst tossing scrap wood into a smouldering fire pit beneath the brazen bull. The fire pit is ringed with charred skulls. Meantime a third figure, who bears a scimitar, opens a door set in the side of the sculpture, revealing a hollow interior large enough to fit a person.

Two bronze sconces filled with incense burn within this chamber, and soot cakes the 20-foot domed ceiling. The **brazen bull** is positioned at the rounded northern end. Revolving **secret doors** provide access to **#14** and **#16**.

Faded and chipped murals decorate the upper walls. These depict the Dæmon Lord overlooking scenes of warfare: men fighting men, men fighting **ape-men**, and men fighting with and against winged dæmons. In some instances, Thaumagorga has entered the fray, wielding an axe, a spear, or a flaming scimitar and carving a path of death and destruction.

This chamber is where **Zilzoon Qaan** and his despicable associates sacrifice abductees to Thaumagorga—or mutilate and convert them into zealous Thaumagorgan cultists. Their present offering is **Ch'eet Yeil** [chih-EET YAYL], an elderly half-blood Pict (a **commoner**; see **#13**). If rescued, the sickly old crone will not cognize her salvation, desiring naught but more of her cherished russet lotus.

**Zilzoon Qaan** [zihl-ZOON KWAHN] (5<sup>TH</sup>-LEVEL HYPERBOREAN MALE CLERIC): AL CE; SZ M (6' 8", 205 lbs.); MV 20; AC 3; DR 2; HD 5 (hp 20); FA 3; TA 5; CA 5; #A 1/1 (broad sword); D 1d10 (broad sword, two-handed); SV 14 [*death +2, sorcery +2, willpower +1*]; ML 9; XP 200; ST 12, DX 12, CN 9, IN 11, WS 15, CH 12.



*Special:* Cleric spells (*blight, command, cure light wounds, sanctuary, cure moderate wounds, hold person, silence, inflict blindness*). *Read scrolls. Scribe scrolls. Turn (or command) undead.*

*Gear:* plate mail, broad sword, fine red robe, silver holy symbol of Thaumagorga, **ruby-encrusted dæmon mask** (2,500-gp value), **dust of disappearance** (×4 doses), **dust of madness** (×2 doses), key ring containing **large bronze key** (to **#14**), **large iron key** (to **#17**), **large brass key** (to **#19**), and **small brass key** (to chest in **#17**).

**Edoon** [ee-DOON] (1<sup>ST</sup>-LEVEL COMMON MALE CLERIC): AL CE; SZ M (5' 10", 185 lbs.); MV 30; AC 5; DR 1; HD 1 (hp 9); FA 1; TA 1; CA 1; #A 1/1 (broad sword); D 1d10 (broad sword, two-handed); SV 16 [*death +2, sorcery +2*]; ML 12; XP 20; ST 12, DX 9, CN 14, IN 13, WS 13, CH 9.

*Special:* Cleric spells (*bleed, command*). *Read scrolls. Scribe scrolls. Turn (or command) undead.*

*Gear:* chain mail, broad sword, black cloth robe, wooden holy symbol of Thaumagorga, **large iron key** (to **#20**), **12 cp, 19 sp, 10 gp**.

**Rawg** [RAWG] (1<sup>ST</sup>-LEVEL COMMON MALE CLERIC): AL CE; SZ M (5' 7", 165 lbs.); MV 30; AC 5; DR 1; HD 1 (hp 8); FA 1; TA 1; CA 1; #A 1/1 (broad sword); D 1d10-1 (broad sword, two-handed); SV 16 [*death +2, sorcery +2*]; ML 12; XP 20; ST 8, DX 8, CN 12, IN 12, WS 13, CH 11.

*Special:* Cleric spells (*command, sanctuary*). *Read scrolls. Scribe scrolls. Turn (or command) undead.*

*Gear:* chain mail, broad sword, black cloth robe, wooden holy symbol of Thaumagorga, **large iron key** (to **#21**), **19 cp, 34 sp, 4 ep, 5 gp**.

**Ados** [AY-dohs] (1<sup>ST</sup>-LEVEL KIMMERIAN MALE FIGHTER): AL CE; SZ M (6', 200 lbs.); MV 40; AC 6; HD 1 (hp 10); FA 1; #A 3/2 (scimitar or dagger [*both +2*]); D 1d10+2 (scimitar, two-handed) or 1d4+2 (dagger); SV 16 [*death +2, transformation +2*]; ML 12; XP 20; ST 15, DX 13, CN 10, IN 8, WS 12, CH 11.

*Special:* *Heroic fighting* (double normal melee attacks vs. opponents of 1 HD or less). *Weapon mastery* (scimitar, dagger).

*Gear:* studded armour, dagger, scimitar, wooden holy symbol of Thaumagorga, **large iron keys** ×2 (to **#13** and **#18**), **2 smoky lotus leaves, 10 sp, 15 ep**.

**COMBAT TACTICS:** To aid the referee in adjudicating a PC-NPC battle, the following tactical notes are suggested:

**Zilzoon Qaan:**

- \* Will cast *hold person* against as many as four PCs.
- \* *Silence* to negate opposing sorcery.
- \* *Blight* on PCs.
- \* *Command* ("Fall!") on any fighter who approaches.
- \* *Sanctuary* on self after casting offensive spells.
- \* *Inflict blindness* if engaged in melee.
- \* *Cure light wounds* (on allies), and/or *cure moderate wounds* (on self), as needed.
- \* Melee with broad sword, if unavoidable.

**Edoon:**

- \* *Bless* on allies.
- \* *Command* ("Sleep!") on a fighter.
- \* Close to melee with broad sword.

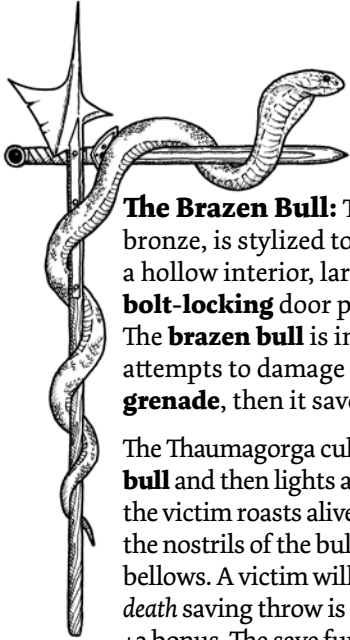
**Rawg:**

- \* *Command* ("Die!") on a fighter.
- \* *Sanctuary* on self.
- \* Melee with broad sword to defend Zilzoon.

**Ados:**

- \* Will defend Zilzoon from melee attackers. If the optional *advanced combat actions* are used, then Ados will fight *recklessly* (i.e., +1 attack bonus, -2 AC penalty).





**The Brazen Bull:** This massive sculpture, moulded in bronze, is stylized to depict a powerful aurochs. It has a hollow interior, large enough to hold a person, with a **bolt-locking** door positioned at the rib cage. The **brazen bull** is impervious to most mundane attempts to damage it; if subjected to, say, a **radiation grenade**, then it saves as *metal, hard* with a +2 bonus.

The Thaumagorga cult places a victim inside the **brazen bull** and then lights a fire underneath. As the fire grows, the victim roasts alive whilst his screams trumpet through the nostrils of the bull, producing horrific, resonating bellows. A victim will burn to death in 1d6 rounds unless a *death saving throw* is made; an Evil victim receives a +2 bonus. The save further is modified by the inverse of the character's *willpower adjustment* (i.e., a bonus becomes a penalty, and vice versa). Most do not survive.

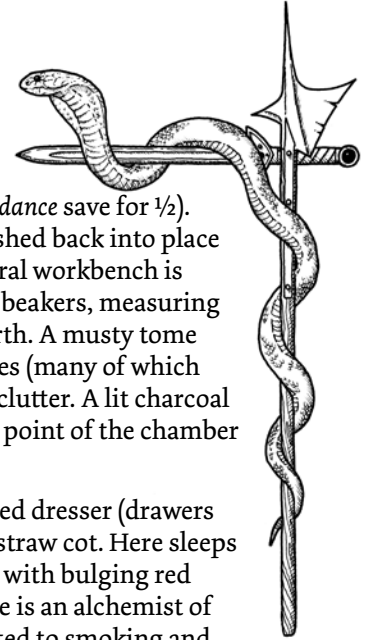
Those who make their saving throws receive the blessing of Thaumagorga. They emerge from the **brazen bull** badly scarred and burnt (1 hp remaining; permanent -1 CH), devoted to Thaumagorga, and loyal to Zilzoon Qaan (as if *charmed*). A *remove curse* spell can negate inculcation, but the physical scars will remain.

**16. SECRET PASSAGE:** This dusty corridor is accessed via a pair of revolving **secret doors**. Zilzoon Qaan and his associates (Ados, Edoon, and Rawg) are the only personnel aware of it.

**17. ZILZOON'S BEDROOM:** The door to this room is **locked**. The decrepit furnishings include a small bed, a dresser, an empty table, and a chair. **Concealed** under a flagstone at the foot of the bed is a small wooden chest. It is **locked** and **trapped** with a **poisoned needle** (*penetrative 1*; make *death* [poison] save at +2 bonus or suffer 2d6 hp damage). The chest holds **249 gp**, **3 Thaumagorga's bloodstones**<sup>22</sup>, a **cleric scroll** (*dispel magic*; CA 5), a glass phial of green mist (**potion of gaseous form**), and Zilzoon's **prayer book** (*bless, command, cure light wounds, omen, remove fear, sanctuary; cure moderate wounds, darkness, distinguish alignment, hold person, silence, weird war hammer; animate dead, cure blindness, dispel magic, speak with dead*).

**18. ADOS' BEDROOM:** The door to this room is **locked**. A vulgar image has been scrawled in blood on the northern wall. The bed, dresser, and table lie in a broken heap in the southwestern corner (smashed after Ados erupted in lotus-fuelled fury). Underneath the heap, Ados has hidden a soft leather pouch containing **10 smoky lotus leaves**.

**19. ALCHEMIST'S LABORATORY:** The door to this room is **locked** and **trapped** with a pair of **scything blades** that spring low and high from the



door, causing 2d6 hp damage (*avoidance* save for 1/2). To be reset, the blades must be pushed back into place manually. Within the room, a central workbench is cluttered with alembics, balances, beakers, measuring cups, mortar and pestle, and so forth. A musty tome full of rambling alchemical treatises (many of which are scribbled over) lies amidst the clutter. A lit charcoal brazier set at the tapered northern point of the chamber provides flickering light.

Along the eastern wall lies a battered dresser (drawers open, clothing bulging out) and a straw cot. Here sleeps **Paikell Darr**, a sunken-faced man with bulging red eyes and long, greasy black hair. He is an alchemist of moderate skill, though he is addicted to smoking and chewing russet lotus leaves; thus he sleeps gratuitously. Paikell is not a true follower of Thaumagorga, but Zilzoon has been reluctant to put his alchemist through the **brazen bull** ritual, for fear of killing him.

**Paikell Darr** [pi-KEL DAHR] (COMMON MALE): AL N; SZ M (5'6", 135 lbs.); MV 40; AC 9; HD 1/2 (hp 4); FA 0; #A 1/1 (dagger); D 1d4; SV 17 [*poison* +3]; ML 7; XP 5; ST 9, DX 11, CN 10, IN 16, WS 7, CH 6.

**Gear:** **periapt of proof against poison**, dagger, **russet lotus leaves** ×8, **18 cp**.

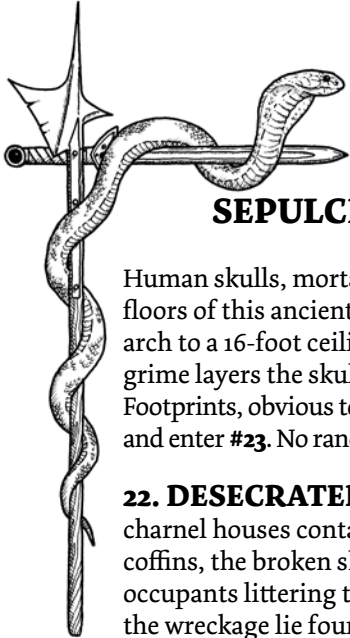
Crooked, rotting shelves along the western wall contain cracked potion bottles, empty boxes, old shoes, and the like. Amidst this detritus can be found a **cedar box** and **6 small reed baskets**. The cedar box holds three small pouches, respectively containing **dust of death** (×1 dose), **dust of madness** (×2 doses), and **dust of sleepiness** (×2 doses). The reed-woven baskets respectively contain **10 black lotus leaves**, **powdered black lotus blossoms** (×2 pinches), **20 russet lotus leaves**, **powdered russet lotus blossoms** (×3 pinches), **5 smoky lotus leaves**, and **powdered smoky lotus blossoms** (×2 pinches).

**20. EDOON'S BEDROOM:** The door to this room is **locked**. Sagging bunk-beds line the northern and southern walls of this musty chamber. Nestled betwixt the sheets of one bunk lies a metal phial of red liquid (**love potion**). A small sack with **585 cp** rests in the bottom drawer of an old dresser.

**21. RAWG'S BEDROOM:** The door to this room is **locked**. A cot rests along the northern wall. Over the cot hangs a three-foot-square **tapestry** (20-gp value) depicting a grotesque scene of dæmons committing unspeakable acts against their human captives. A large dresser leaning against the eastern wall **conceals** a three-foot-diameter tunnel leading to #9. Rawg is aware of the peril at the other end of the tunnel, so he no longer utilizes this passage.

<sup>22</sup> See APPENDIX C.





## SEPULCHRE OF THE WITCH

Human skulls, mortared together, form the cobbled floors of this ancient crypt, where 12-foot stone walls arch to a 16-foot ceiling. A thick coating of dust and grime layers the skull-cobbles of this Hadean ossuary. Footprints, obvious to even the untrained eye, pass #22 and enter #23. No random encounters need be rolled here.

**22. DESECRATED TOMBS:** Each of these charnel houses contains four smashed and desecrated coffins, the broken skulls and shattered bones of their occupants littering the skull-cobbled floor. Amidst the wreckage lie four scimitars coated in rust and four dented, corroded shields. If the sarcophagus in #24 is disturbed, then the broken bones will reform in 1 round, animating to **8 skeletons** that will proceed north to attack. Proactively removing the skulls from the mortared bone halls of the sepulchre, or thoroughly pulverizing them, will forestall their animation.

**Skeletons (x8):** UT 1; AL CE; SZ M; MV 30; DX 11; AC 6; HD 1 (hp 5); #A 1/1 (claw or scimitar); D 1d6 (claw) or 1d8 (scimitar, one-handed); SV 16; ML 12; XP 16.

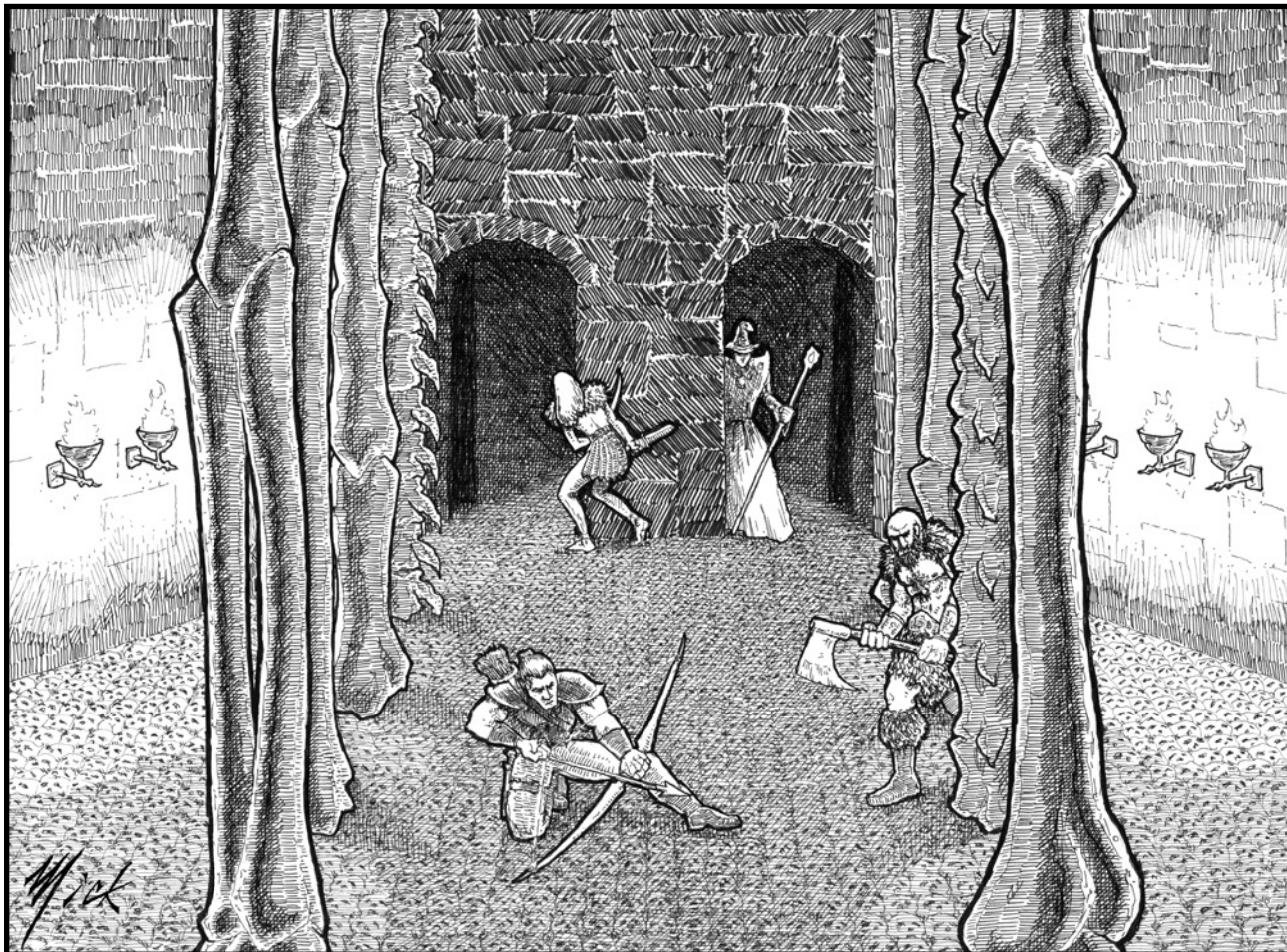
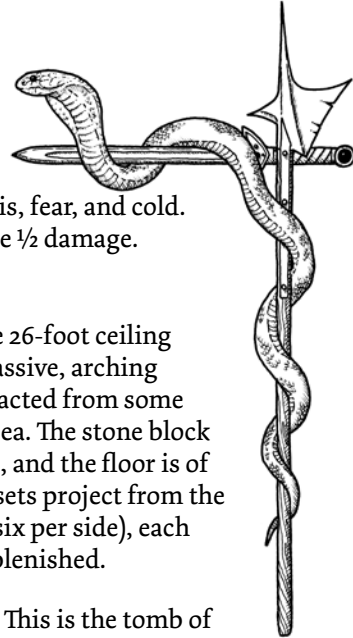
*Special:* Immune to poison, paralysis, fear, and cold.

Edged and piercing weapons cause ½ damage.

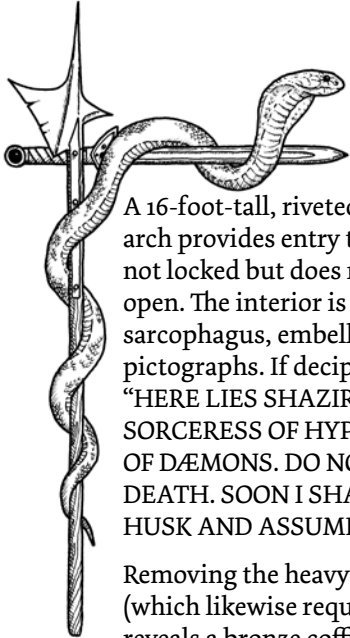
*Gear:* small shield, scimitar.

**23. SEPULCHRAL HALL:** The 26-foot ceiling of this cold hall is supported by massive, arching bones, black as pitch, perhaps extracted from some fell leviathan of the Hyperborean Sea. The stone block walls are composed of black gneiss, and the floor is of cobbled skulls. A dozen poled cressets project from the angled eastern and western walls (six per side), each containing oil reserves recently replenished.

**24. SHAZIROMIR'S TOMB:** This is the tomb of **Shaziromir Vheez**, a Hyperborean witch from the æra preceding the Green Death, when Khromarium still was populated by her autochthonous people. Shaziromir was a devout follower of Thaumagorga; too, she treated and copulated with dæmons, forever cursing her. Per her instructions, her servants extracted her heart when she died, to be placed in a vessel beside her. But greed overcame diligence when one of the servants discovered that the witch's heart had transformed to a singular topaz (later termed the **Lamia's Heart**<sup>23</sup>).

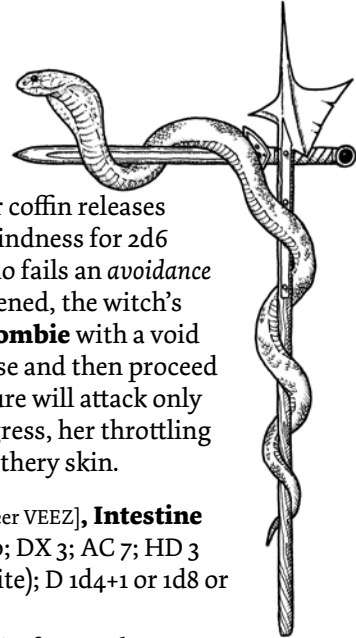


<sup>23</sup> See "THE LAMIA'S HEART": INFORMATION FOR THE REFEREE, background.



A 16-foot-tall, riveted bronze door set within a gothic arch provides entry to the tomb. The heavy door is not locked but does require a *test of strength* to force open. The interior is dominated by a large, rectangular sarcophagus, embellished with Hyperborean Esoteric pictographs. If deciphered, the glyphs read, “HERE LIES SHAZIROMIR VHEEZ THE HEARTLESS, SORCERESS OF HYPERBOREA, BELLUINE MISTRESS OF DÆMONS. DO NOT MISTAKE MY INERTIA FOR DEATH. SOON I SHALL SLOUGH OFF THIS MORTAL HUSK AND ASSUME MY TRUE FORM.”

Removing the heavy stone lid of the sarcophagus (which likewise requires an *extraordinary feat of strength*) reveals a bronze coffin of dæmonic semblance nested inside. The recumbent effigy depicts a curvaceous dæmon woman with vampiric fangs and reticulated skin, holding curved daggers across her bosom. By the coffin’s head rests a ceramic canopic jar (empty), with the lid stylized as the horned helm of Thaumagorga. A **secret compartment** below the inner coffin hides the following treasures: **984 gp**, **2 emeralds** (100-gp value each), **2 opals** (100-gp value each), **3 star sapphires** (200-gp value each), an aromatic blue **potion of delusion** in a ceramic flask, an odourless white **potion of diminutiveness** in a ceramic flask, and a sapphire-tipped, yellow ivory **wand of freezing** (6 charges).

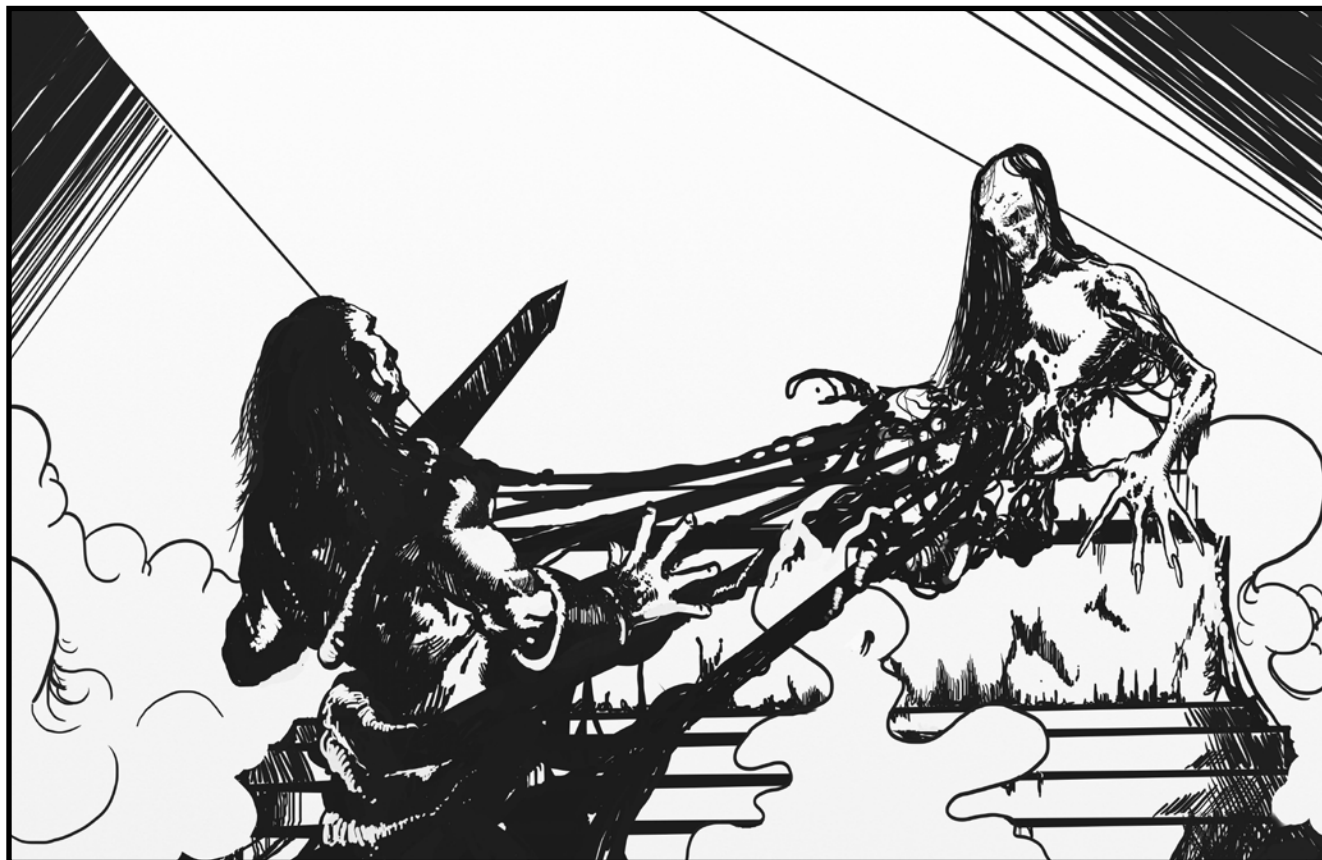


Lifting the **trapped** lid of the inner coffin releases a puff of **poison gas** that causes blindness for 2d6 rounds in anyone within 15 feet who fails an *avoidance* saving throw. Once the coffin is opened, the witch’s mummified form—an **intestine zombie** with a void where her heart should be—will rise and then proceed to the **brazen bull** (#15). The creature will attack only those who seek to impede her progress, her throttling intestine bursting out from her leathery skin.

**Shaziromir Vheez** [shuh-ZEE-roh-meer VEEZ], **Intestine Zombie**: UT 3; AL CE; SZ M; MV 30; DX 3; AC 7; HD 3 (hp 21); #A 1/1 (whip, pummel, or bite); D 1d4+1 or 1d8 or 1d3; SV 15; ML 12; XP 53.

*Special*: Immune to poison, paralysis, fear, and cold. Arrows and bolts inflict 1 hp damage (plus bonuses); other piercing / thrusting weapons cause ½ damage. Always engages enemies from distance with intestines’ 20-foot reach, ofttest gaining *first strike*. Following successful attack, intestine curls around throat of victim; after 3 rounds, victim may asphyxiate. Intestines struck for 10 hp damage rendered useless; damage does not detract from overall hp total. Alternatively, intestines can be broken with *extraordinary feat of strength*.

*Gear*: ceramic ornamental daggers ×2.



## CONCLUSION

If **Shaziromir Vheez** achieves the **brazen bull**, then she methodically will prepare a fire, enter the bull, and be reborn as a sadistic **proto-lamia**. Her blackened skin gradually will flake off, revealing patches of fine ophidian scales beneath. The void in her bosom will remain, and her movements will betray seeming frailty as she shambles through the secret passage (#16) to the pronaos (#11).

If opposed by the PCs, Shaziromir will attempt to charm them to assist her<sup>24</sup> (perhaps casually exsanguinating a thewy warrior to slake her thirst). She will direct the

**iron automaton** at #11 to begin clearing the stair to the surface, terrifying the poor butcher whose shop now occupies the space above. Then this horror will seek the twisting towers of Khromarium's "Old City", where she will machinate her foul deeds—foremost reclaiming her lost heart to achieve apotheosis....

**Shaziromir Vheez, Proto-Lamia:** UT 8; AL CE; SZ M; MV 30; DX 8; AC 5; HD 6 (hp 30); #A 3/1 (dagger/dagger/bite); D 1d4/1d4/1d3; SV 14; ML 9; XP 420.

*Special:* Voice charms all within 30 feet who hear it, unless *sorcery* saves made. Bite victim must make *death* (poison) save or sustain 3d6 hp damage.

*Gear:* hardened glass daggers x2.

## APPENDIX A: BERG BREAKER

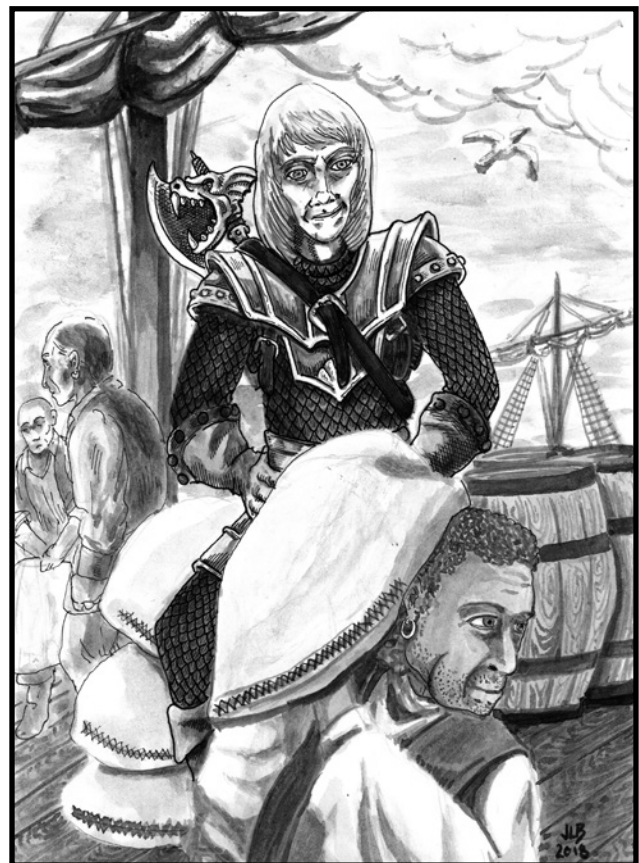
*Berg Breaker* is a **war galley** (MV 60/120 feet per round, 12/48 miles per day, rowed/sailed; AC 6; 30 hull points) that plies the long coasts of Hyperborea. Sometimes trading, sometimes raiding, the vessel is not affiliated with any nation, though most of her men call Khromarium home. Her crew comprises **130 rowers**, **60 sailors**, and **10 officers**.

When *Berg Breaker* is berthed in Khromarium, **Captain Agathon**, a surly man with a litany of health problems, ventures off to see his mistress. (His wife resides in Gal City.) The **sailors** scatter to their respective homes, or to drink, fight, gamble, or whore. Most **rowers** wander off with the sailors, but a good third of them double as stevedores, so they remain to lade and unlade the vessel. **Kiloplo Vheez**, the first mate, oversees the process, accompanied by **1d4 officers**. The seven-foot Hyperborean strikes an impressive figure, girded in scale armour with a battle axe strapped to his back.

**Captain Agathon** [A-guh-thahn] (5<sup>TH</sup>-LEVEL COMMON MALE FIGHTER): AL N; SZ M (6', 187 lbs.); MV 30; AC 6 (5 with shield); DR 1; HD 5 (hp 18); FA 5; #A 3/2 (short spear [+2] or long sword [+3]) or 1/1 (dagger [+1]); D 1d6+2 (short spear, one-handed) or 1d8+2 (short spear, two-handed) or 1d8+3 (long sword, one-handed) or 1d10+3 (long sword, two-handed) or 1d4+1 (dagger); SV 14 [death +2, transformation +2, poison -1]; ML 8; XP 200; ST 16, DX 10, CN 5, IN 10, WS 12, CH 13.

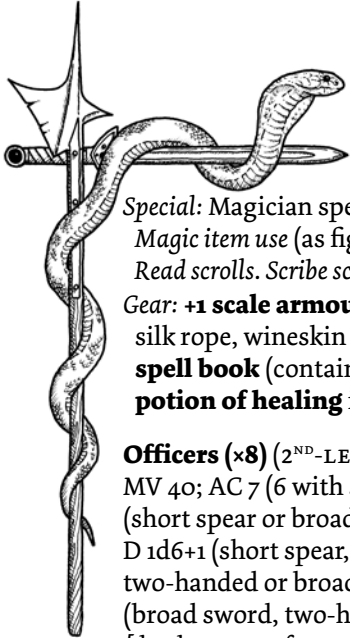
*Special:* *Heroic fighting* (double normal melee attacks vs. opponents of 1 HD or less). *Weapon mastery* (short spear). *Grand mastery* (long sword).

*Gear:* scale armour, small shield, dagger, long sword, short spear, **key to #5, 30 cp, 18 sp, 19 gp**.



**First Mate Kiloplo Vheez** (3<sup>RD</sup>-LEVEL HYPERBOREAN MALE WARLOCK): AL N; SZ M (7', 225 lbs.); MV 30; AC 4; DR 1; HD 3 (hp 23); FA 3; CA 3; #A 3/2 (battle axe [+3]) or 1/1 (dagger [+1]); D 1d10+3 (battle axe, two-handed) or 1d4+1 (dagger); SV 15 [transformation +2, sorcery +2, dodging +1]; ML 10; XP 50; ST 16, DX 16, CN 10, IN 16, WS 10, CH 8.

<sup>24</sup> If desired by the referee, Shaziromir could direct charmed PCs to recover the **Lamia's Heart**; see "THE LAMIA'S HEART": INFORMATION FOR THE REFEREE, *background*.



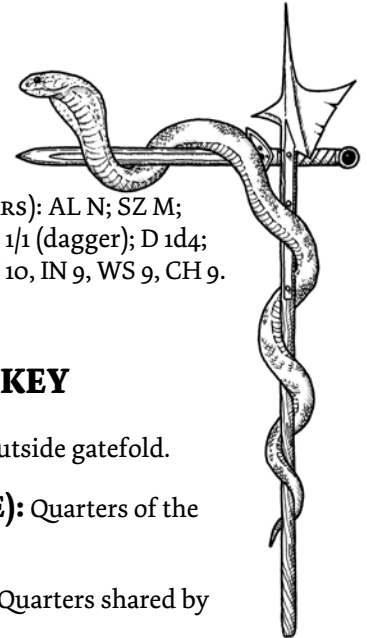
**Special:** Magician spells (*burning hands*, *sleep*; *web* ×2). *Magic item use* (as fighter or magician). *Read magic*. *Read scrolls*. *Scribe scrolls*. *Weapon mastery* (battle axe).  
**Gear:** +1 **scale armour**, +1 **battle axe**, dagger, backpack, silk rope, wineskin (full), iron rations, **key to #5**, **spell book** (contains all prepared spells), thick brown **potion of healing** in ceramic flask, **12 cp**, **14 sp**, **16 gp**.

**Officers (×8)** (2<sup>ND</sup>-LEVEL FIGHTERS): AL N; SZ M; MV 40; AC 7 (6 with shield); HD 2 (hp 17); FA 2; #A 3/2 (short spear or broad sword [*both +1*]) or 1/1 (dagger); D 1d6+1 (short spear, one-handed) or 1d8+1 (short spear, two-handed or broad sword, one-handed) or 1d10+1 (broad sword, two-handed) or 1d4 (dagger); SV 16 [*death +2*, *transformation +2*]; ML 9; XP 30; ST 12, DX 12, CN 13, IN 9, WS 10, CH 12.

**Special:** *Heroic fighting* (double normal melee attacks vs. opponents of 1 HD or less). *Weapon mastery* (short spear, broad sword).

**Gear:** leather armour, small shield, dagger, broad sword, short spear, **1d12 cp**, **1d12 sp**, **1d12 gp**.

**Sailors (Marines) (×60)** (0<sup>TH</sup>-LEVEL FIGHTERS): AL N; SZ M; MV 40; AC 8 (7 with shield); HD 1 (hp 7); FA 0; #A 1/1 (light crossbow, short sword, or dagger); D 1d6+1 (light crossbow) or 1d6 (short sword) or 1d4 (dagger); SV 17; ML 9; XP 10; ST 11, DX 11, CN 11, IN 9, WS 10, CH 9.  
**Gear:** padded armour, small shield, dagger, short sword, light crossbow, bolt case, light bolts ×20, **2d4 cp**, **2d4 sp**.



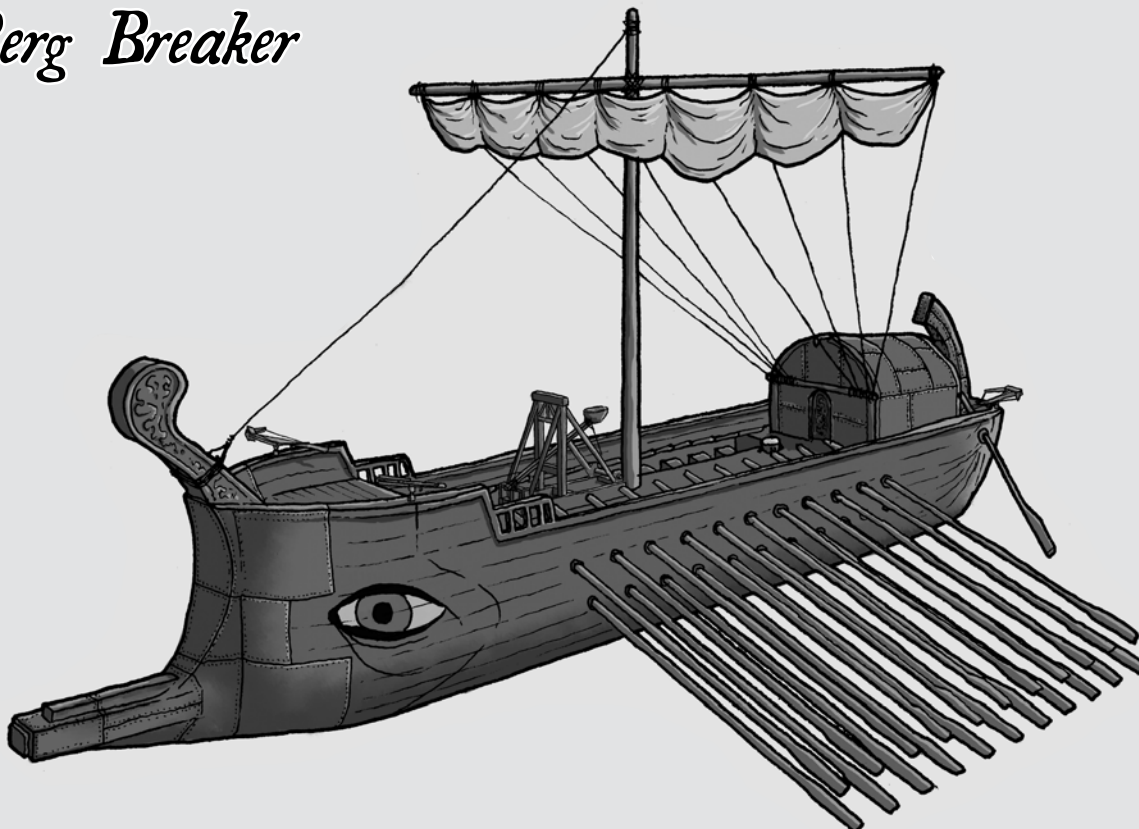
**Rowers (×130)** (0<sup>TH</sup>-LEVEL FIGHTERS): AL N; SZ M; MV 40; AC 9; HD 1 (hp 4); FA 0; #A 1/1 (dagger); D 1d4; SV 17; ML 8; XP 10; ST 10, DX 10, CN 10, IN 9, WS 9, CH 9.  
**Gear:** dagger, **1d4 cp**, **1d4 sp**.

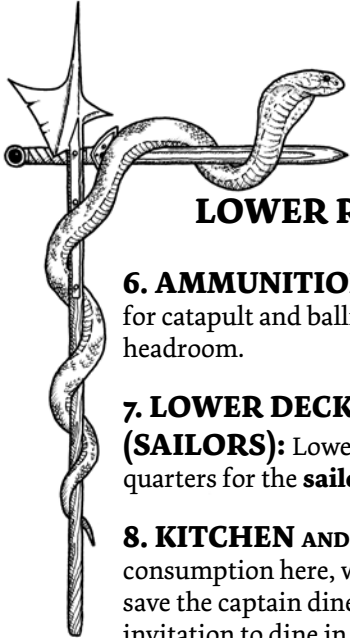
## MAIN DECK KEY

Refer to BERG BREAKER MAP on outside gatefold.

- 1. AFT CABIN (FIRST MATE):** Quarters of the first mate, **Kiloplo Vheez**.
- 2. AFT CABIN (OFFICERS):** Quarters shared by **4 officers**.
- 3. AFT CABIN (SELECT MARINES):** Quarters shared by **6 sailors (marines)** selected by the first mate.
- 4. AFT CABIN (OFFICERS):** Quarters shared by **4 officers**.
- 5. AFT CABIN (CAPTAIN):** Quarters of **Captain Agathon**. The door is **locked** but has two keys: one held by the captain, the other by the first mate. The interior includes divans, an extensive wet bar, a curtained four-poster, and a dining area for officers to eat, hold meetings, and discuss plans. Star charts and manifests are stored here, too.

## Berg Breaker



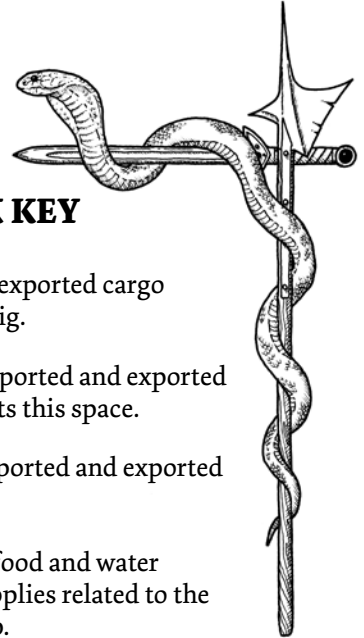


## LOWER ROWING DECK KEY

**6. AMMUNITION STORES:** Ammunition for catapult and ballistæ stored here, with standing headroom.

**7. LOWER DECK / SLEEPING QUARTERS (SAILORS):** Lower rowing deck doubles as sleeping quarters for the **sailors (marines)** and **rowers**.

**8. KITCHEN AND MESS:** Food preparation and consumption here, with standing headroom. All save the captain dine here, unless the captain issues invitation to dine in his quarters (typically to his first mate and/or officers).



## CARGO DECK KEY

**9. FORE HOLD:** Imported and exported cargo stored here. A cage serves as the brig.

**10. MIDSHIP HOLD "A":** Imported and exported cargo stored here. **Goll Garros** rents this space.

**11. MIDSHIP HOLD "B":** Imported and exported cargo stored here.

**12. AFT HOLD:** *Berg Breaker's* food and water stores are here, as well as other supplies related to the maintenance and repair of the ship.



## APPENDIX B: NEW MONSTER



### DÆMON, SUBLUNARY, GNAGANA (Dæmon Rat) (Undead Type 13)

No. Encountered:	1d2
Alignment:	Chaotic Evil
Size:	M
Movement:	20
Dexterity:	6
Armour Class:	4
Hit Dice:	5
Attack Rate:	1/1 (bite)
Damage:	2d4
Saving Throw:	14
Morale:	11
Experience Points:	575
Treasure Class:	C, Q

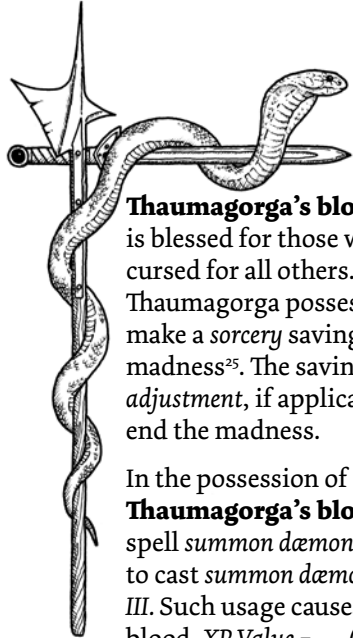
These vile creatures take shape when the malevolent, disembodied eidolon of a dæmon enters the corporeal form of a **giant rat**. The Evil spirit impregnates the rodent vessel with its persona and then begins assembling a colony of *summoned* giant rats that serve it unwaveringly. Furthermore, the possessed rat begins to distend, engorged with the blood of its victims and the horrific bile its glands produce. Most gnagana are reputed to swell up to eight feet in length.

#### Special:

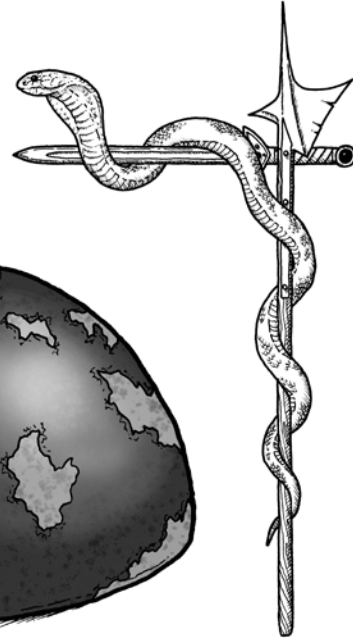
- ★ 5-in-20 *spell resistance* versus CA 12 casters. For every CA level less than 12, the chance-in-twenty increases by one (+1).
- ★ Cold, electricity, fire, and gas attacks inflict ½ damage, or ¼ damage if save is made.
- ★ Bite victim must make *death* (poison) save or die of fever and delirium in 1d6 days.

- ★ Can cast *ventriloquism* at will.
- ★ Once per day, can *summon 1d6 giant rats*, arriving 1d4 rounds later.
- ★ If killed, the gnagana explodes in a high-pressure shower of blood and bile, soaking all within a 30-foot radius. Its demise also results in the deaths of all previously *summoned* giant rats.



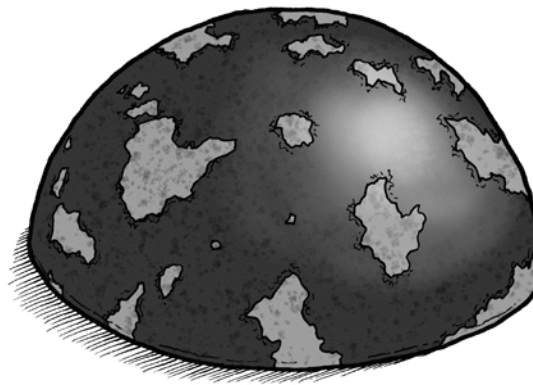


## APPENDIX C: NEW MAGIC ITEM



**Thaumagorga's bloodstone:** This hemispherical stone is blessed for those who worship Thaumagorga, but cursed for all others. For each day that a non-follower of Thaumagorga possesses the stone, the character must make a *spellcasting* saving throw or suffer a random form of madness<sup>25</sup>. The saving throw is modified by *willpower adjustment*, if applicable, and a *remove curse* spell will end the madness.

In the possession of a Thaumagorga disciple, a **Thaumagorga's bloodstone** can be used to invoke the spell *summon daemon I*. Three such stones can be used to cast *summon daemon II*, and five for *summon daemon III*. Such usage causes the stone(s) to melt to thick, oily blood. *XP Value* = — (300 for Thaumagorga followers); *GP Value* = 500.



<sup>25</sup> See *AS&SH* VOL. III, p. 264: *SPECIAL DAMAGE*, *madness*.



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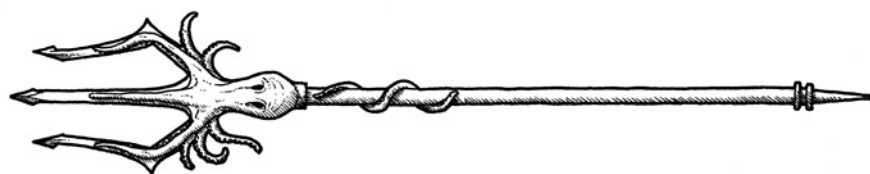
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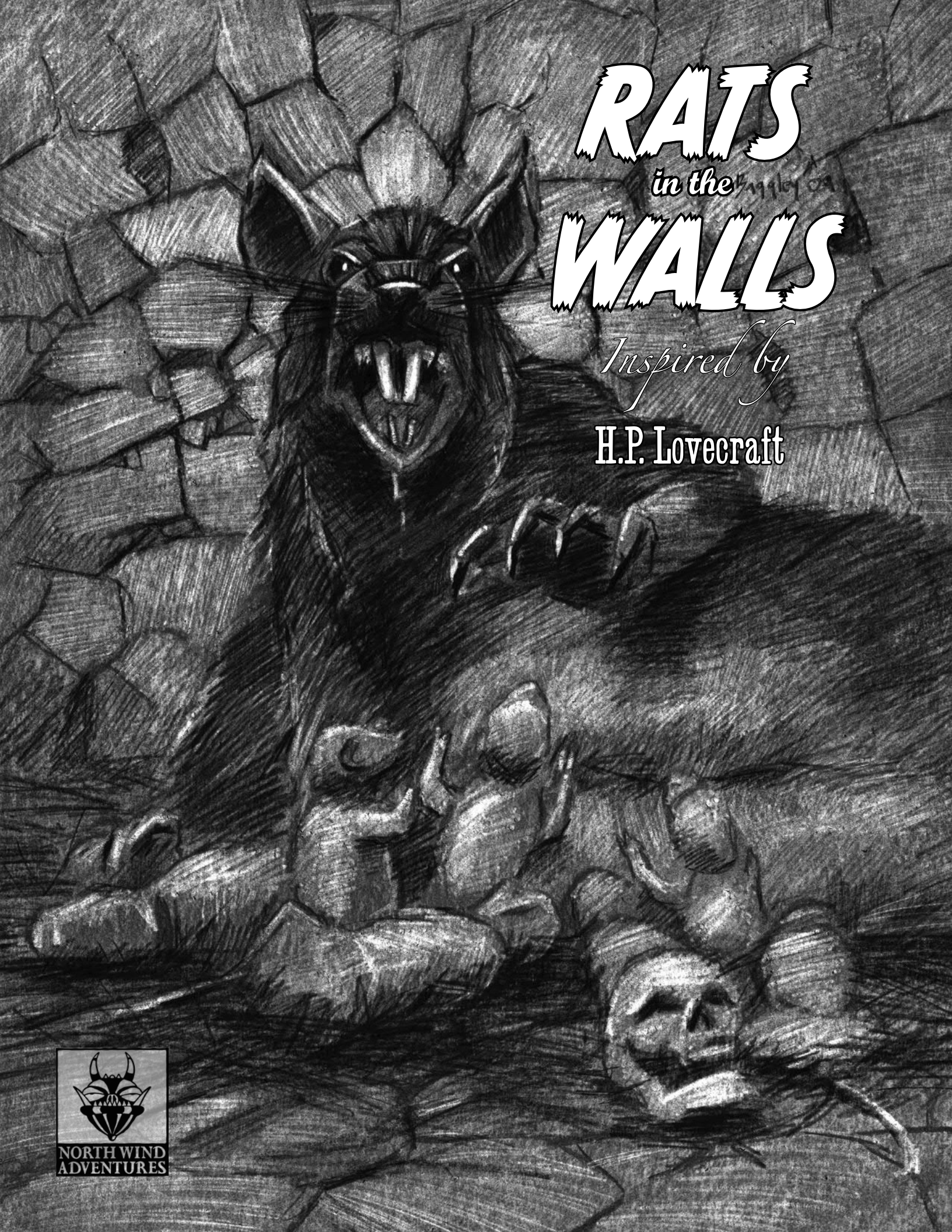
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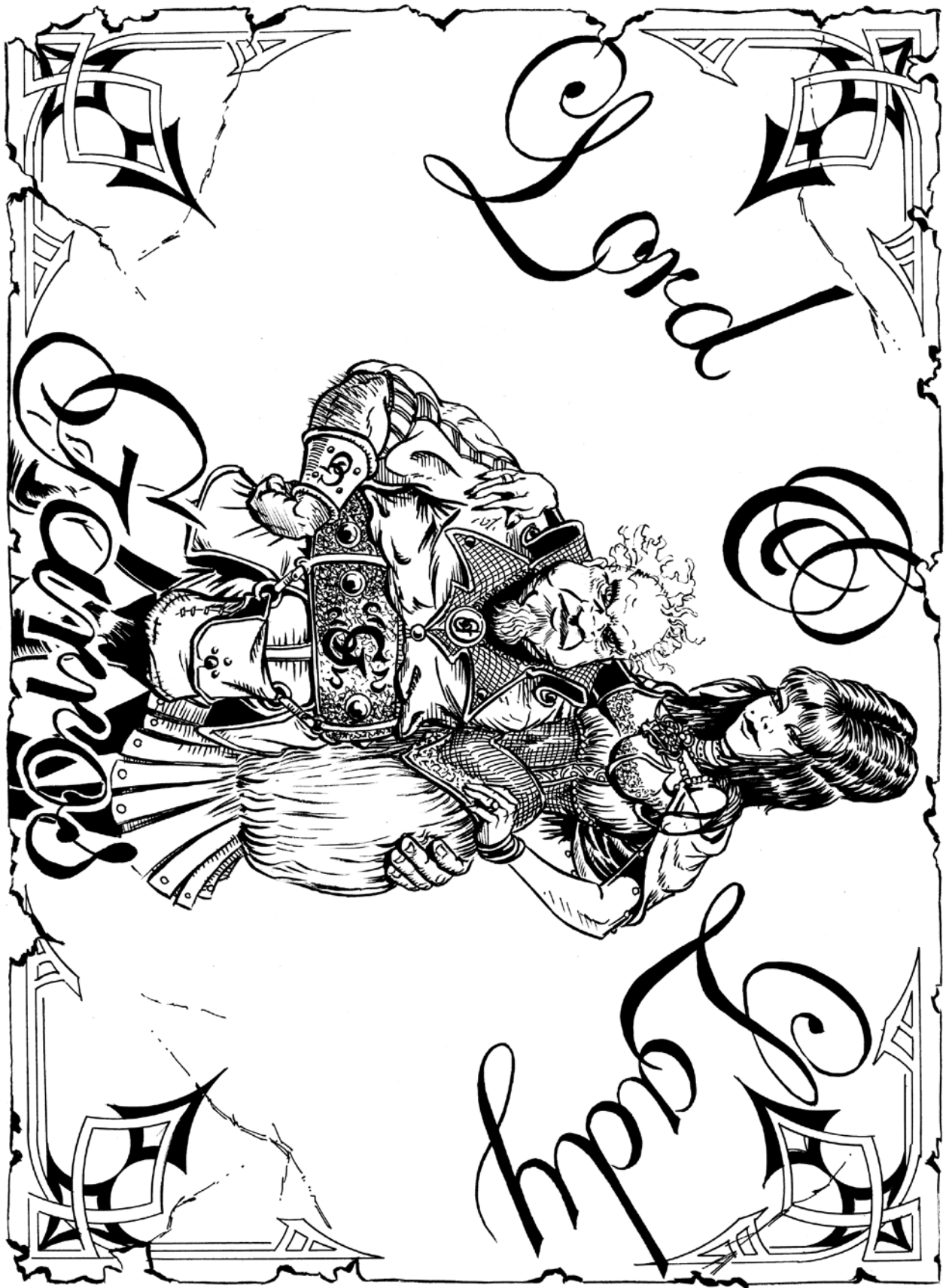




**RATS**  
*in the*  
**WALLS**

*Inspired by*  
**H.P. Lovecraft**







PLAYERS' HANDOUTS

2



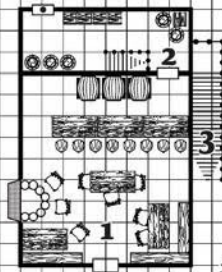
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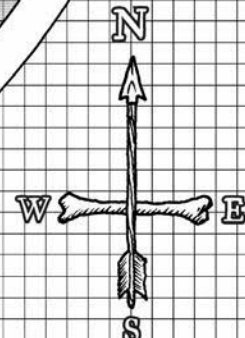
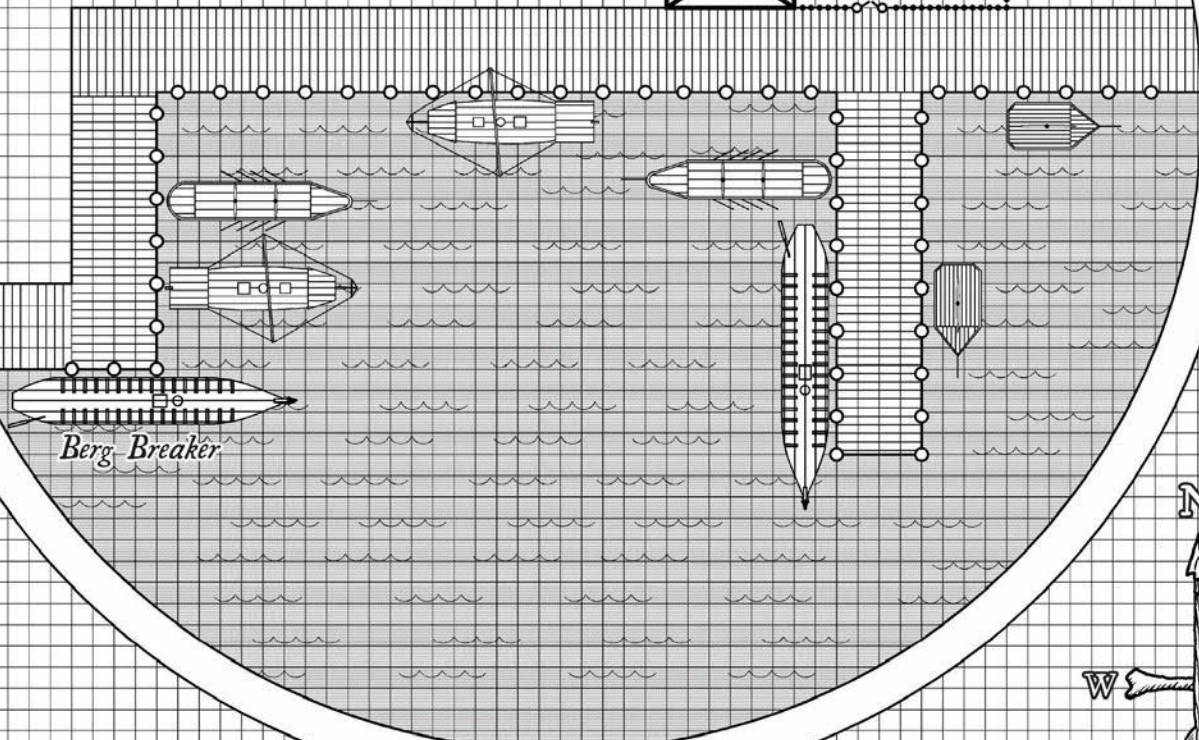
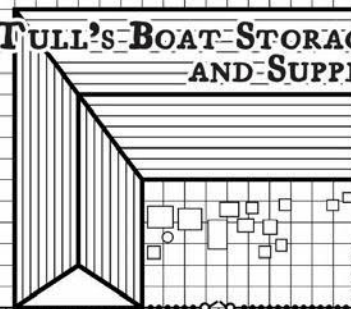
# RATS IN THE WALLS

## THE SILVERY EEL

Ground Floor



TULL'S BOAT STORAGE AND SUPPLY

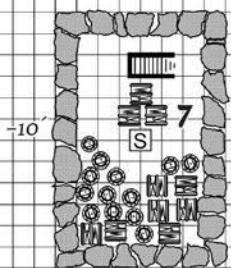


1 square = 5 feet

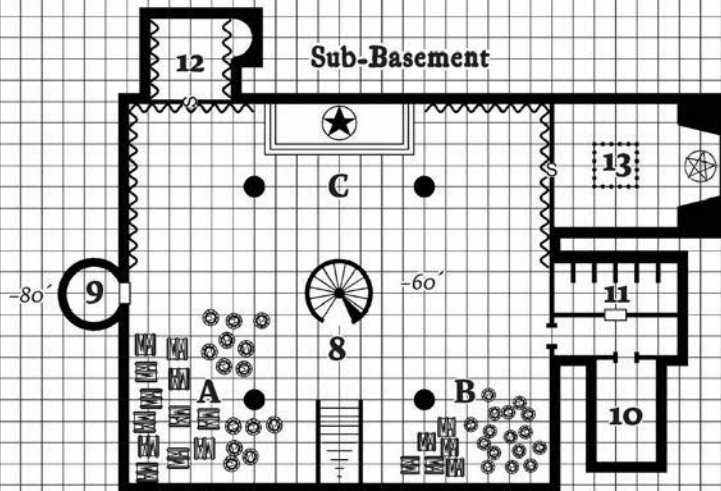
First Floor



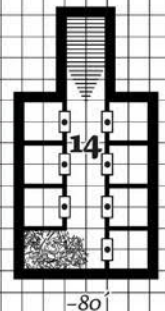
Basement



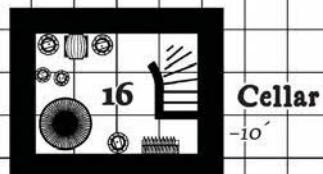
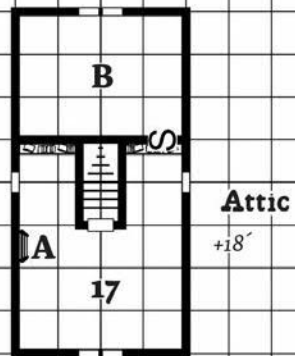
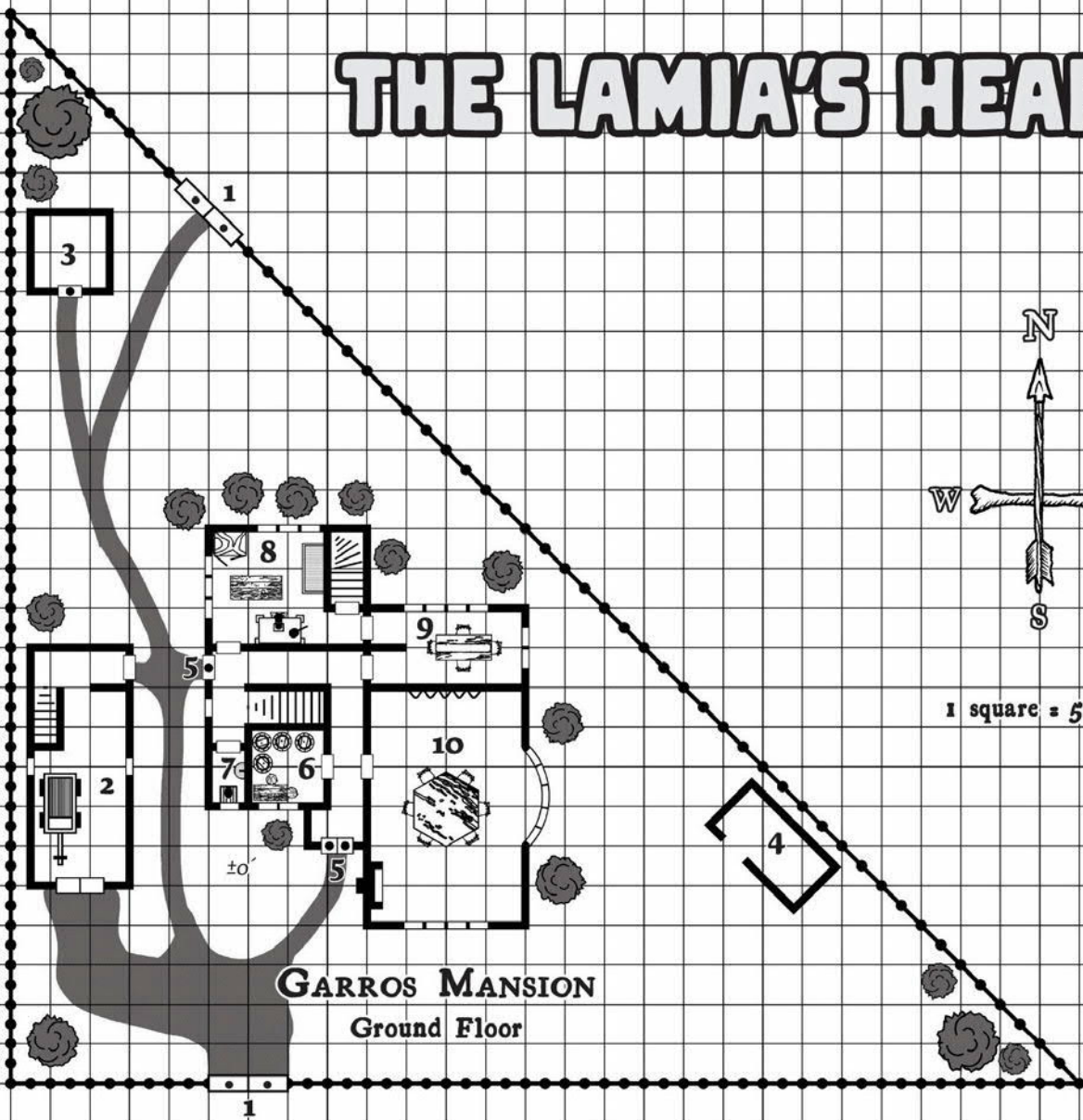
Sub-Basement



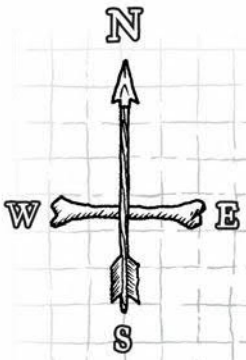
Dungeon



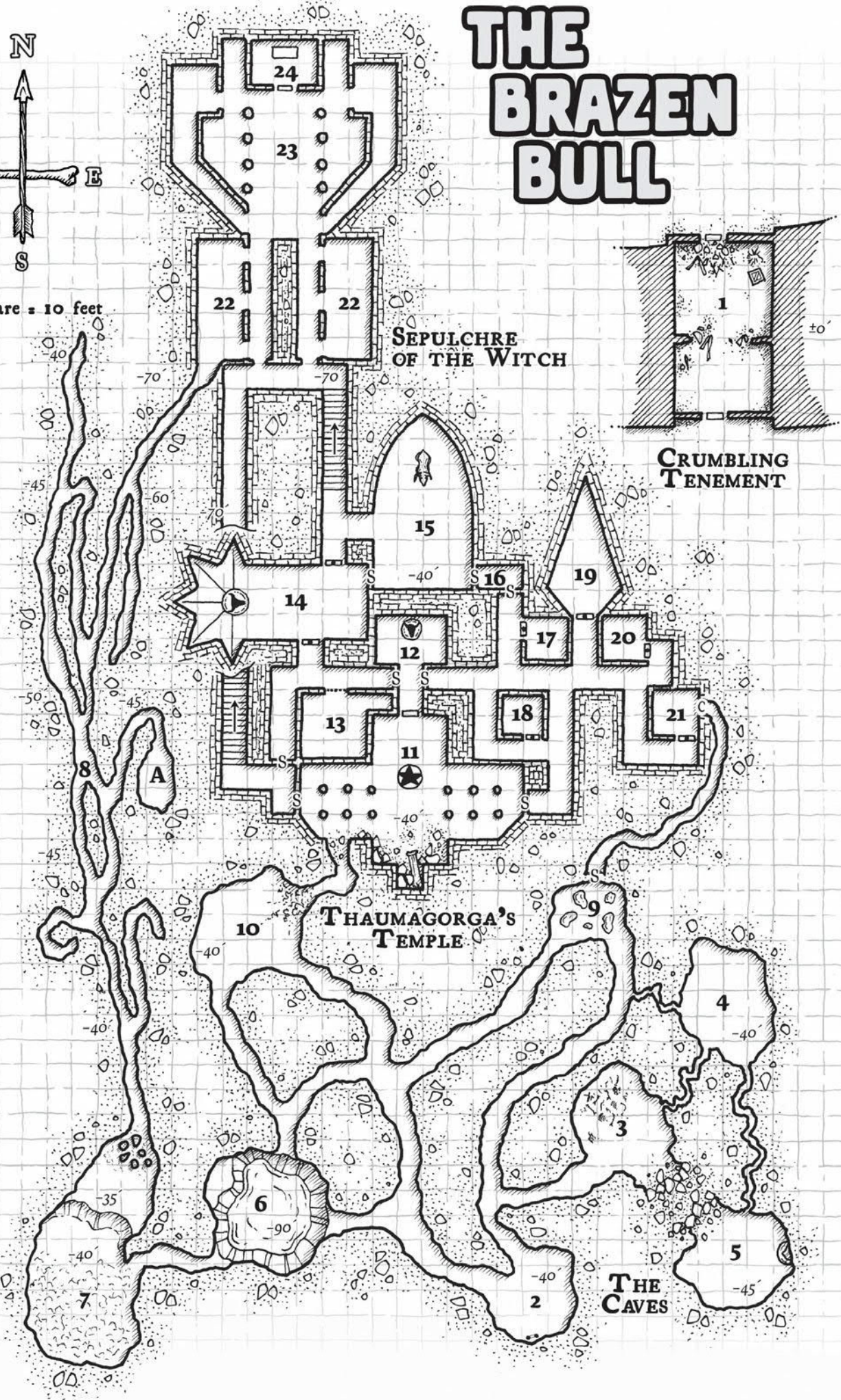
# THE LAMIA'S HEART



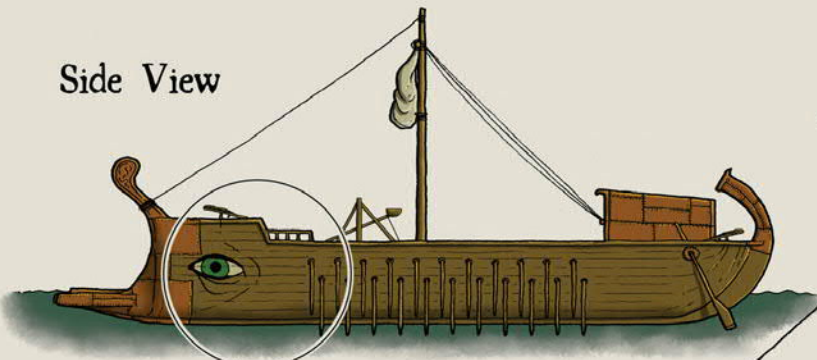
# THE BRAZEN BULL



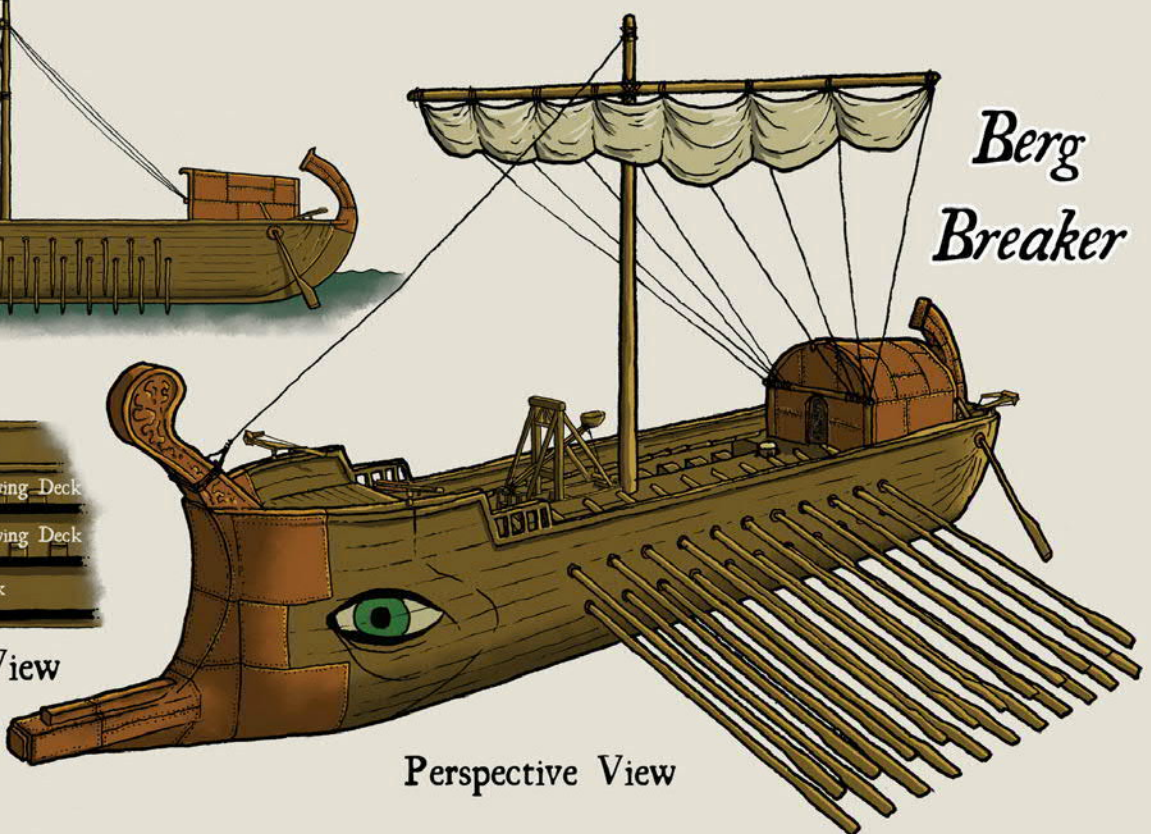
1 square = 10 feet



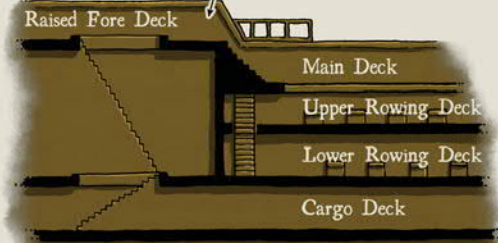
Side View



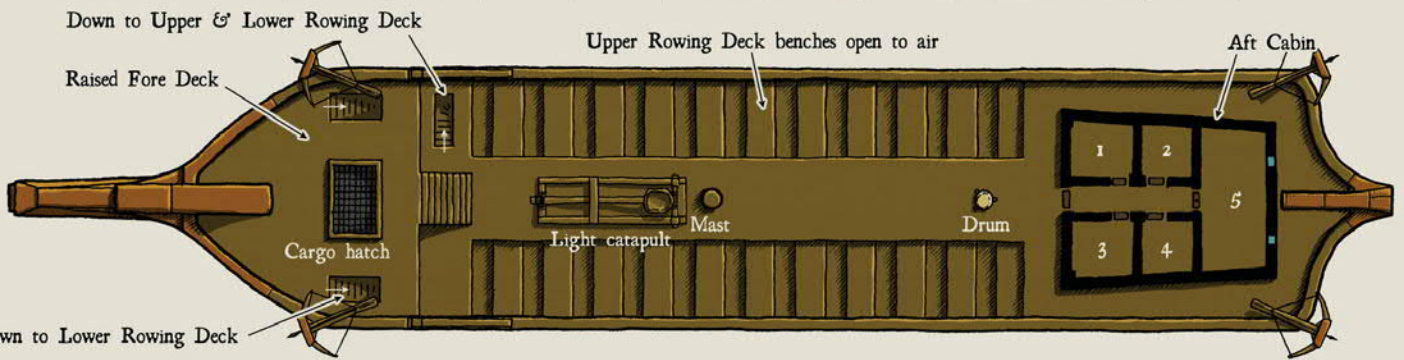
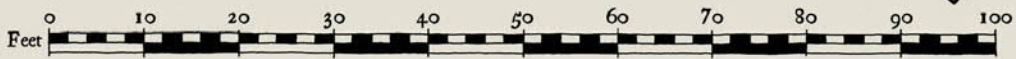
*Berg Breaker*



Perspective View

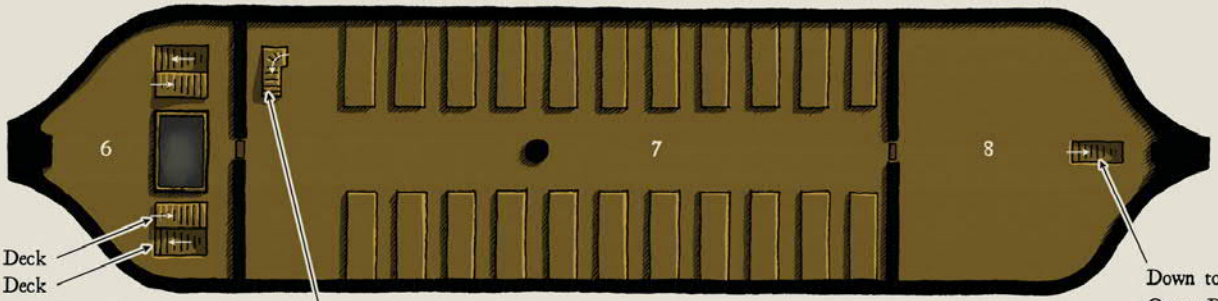


Section through Side View

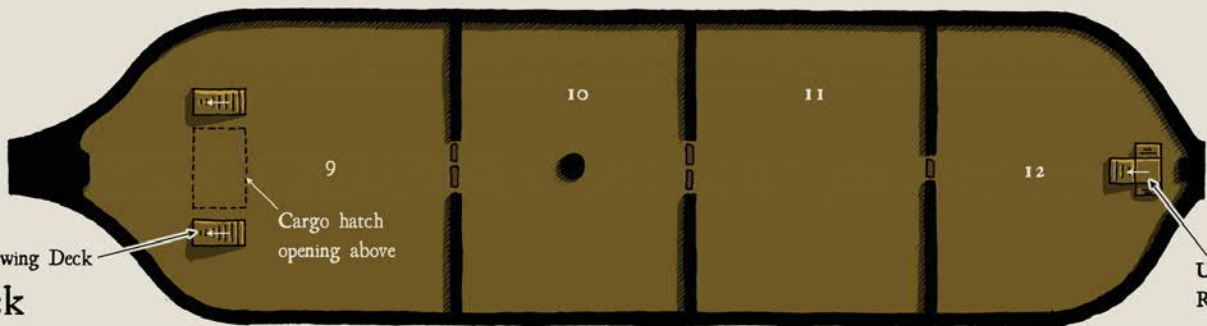


Main Deck (showing benches of Upper Rowing Deck)

Four ballistæ



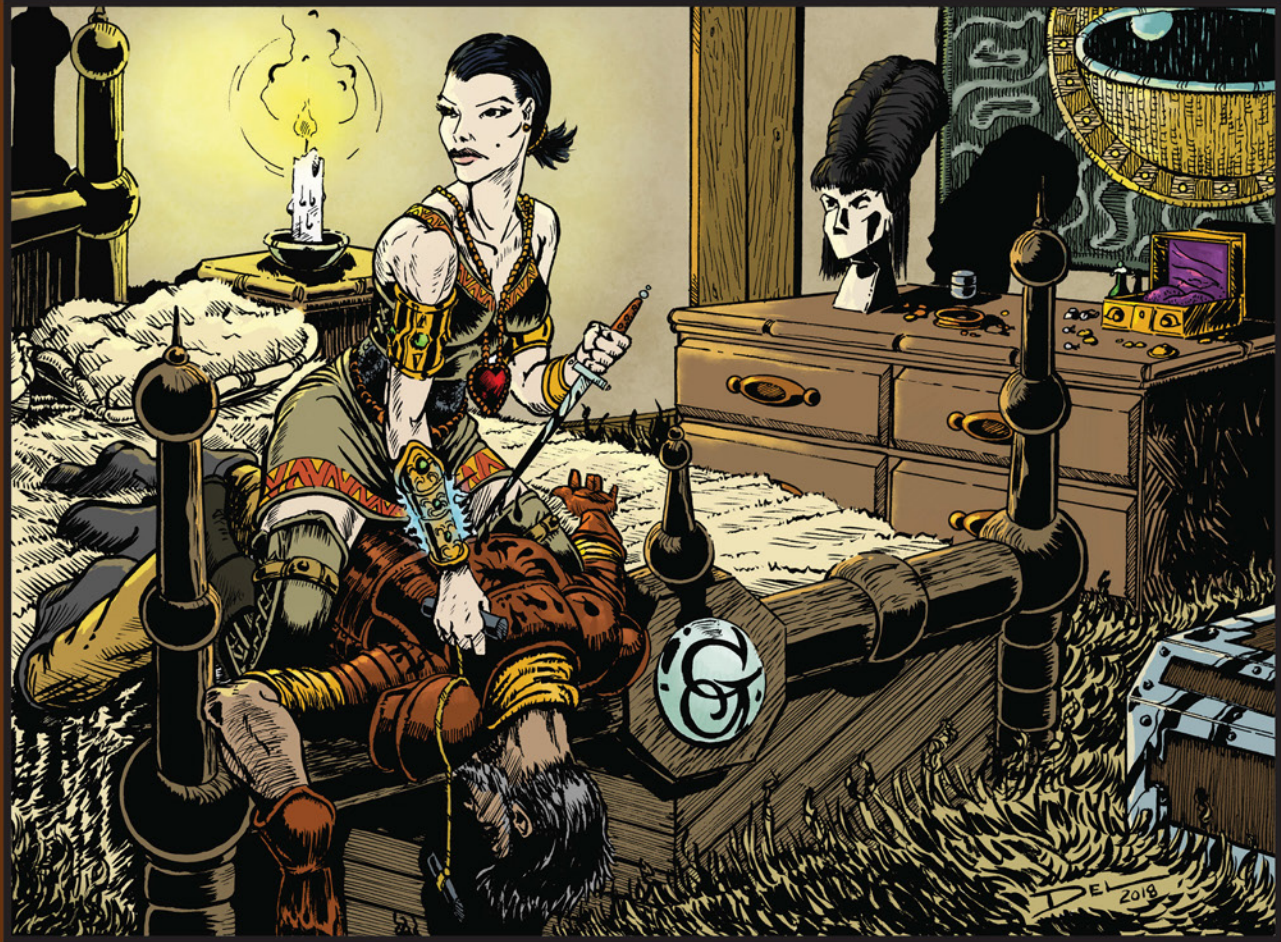
Lower Rowing Deck



Cargo Deck

# RATS IN THE WALLS AND OTHER PERILS™

*Three adventures in Hyperborea designed for from four to six characters of 1<sup>st</sup> or 2<sup>nd</sup> level*



In “Rats in the Walls”, a dockside tavern in Khromarium is plagued by rats of a most unusual breed. These abominable rodents have ruined the tavern keeper’s business and his life. The man is desperate, and he offers a substantial reward for the elimination of his horrific problem.

In “The Lamia’s Heart”, your party are contracted by the nascent master of an unsanctioned thieves’ guild. To earn his favour, you must steal a singular gem from the mansion of a prominent merchant. Purloining this gem, however, may raise the ire of the city’s official thieves’ guild; notwithstanding, the reward is significant.

In “The Brazen Bull”, whilst traversing one of the seedier neighbourhoods of Khromarium, your party are solicited by a greasy-haired Pict. He offers to sell you a sheaf of magical lotus that allows one to see the future or to brew potions that empower the imbiber with sorcery. He beckons you to follow him into a dilapidated building....

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## ASTONISHING SWORDSMEN AND SORCERERS OF HYPERBOREA™



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