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Dungeon Crawl Classics #52

Chronicle of the Fiend

Gen Con 2007 Tournament Module
THREE LINKED ADVENTURES FOR LEVELS 0-10



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This special tournament module was used for the Third Annual Dungeon Crawl Classics Open Tournament at Gen Con Indy 2006. It includes the official tournament scoring system, pregenerated characters, and illustrated player handouts. In the barren badlands deep within the forbidding Achsfel Wastes, a ruined palace lies half-buried in the shimmering sands. Far from civilization, it is but a legend occasionally glimpsed by far-trading caravans – until now. A band of intrepid adventurers has set out to breach this strange place and uncover the secrets that legends claim lie buried within...

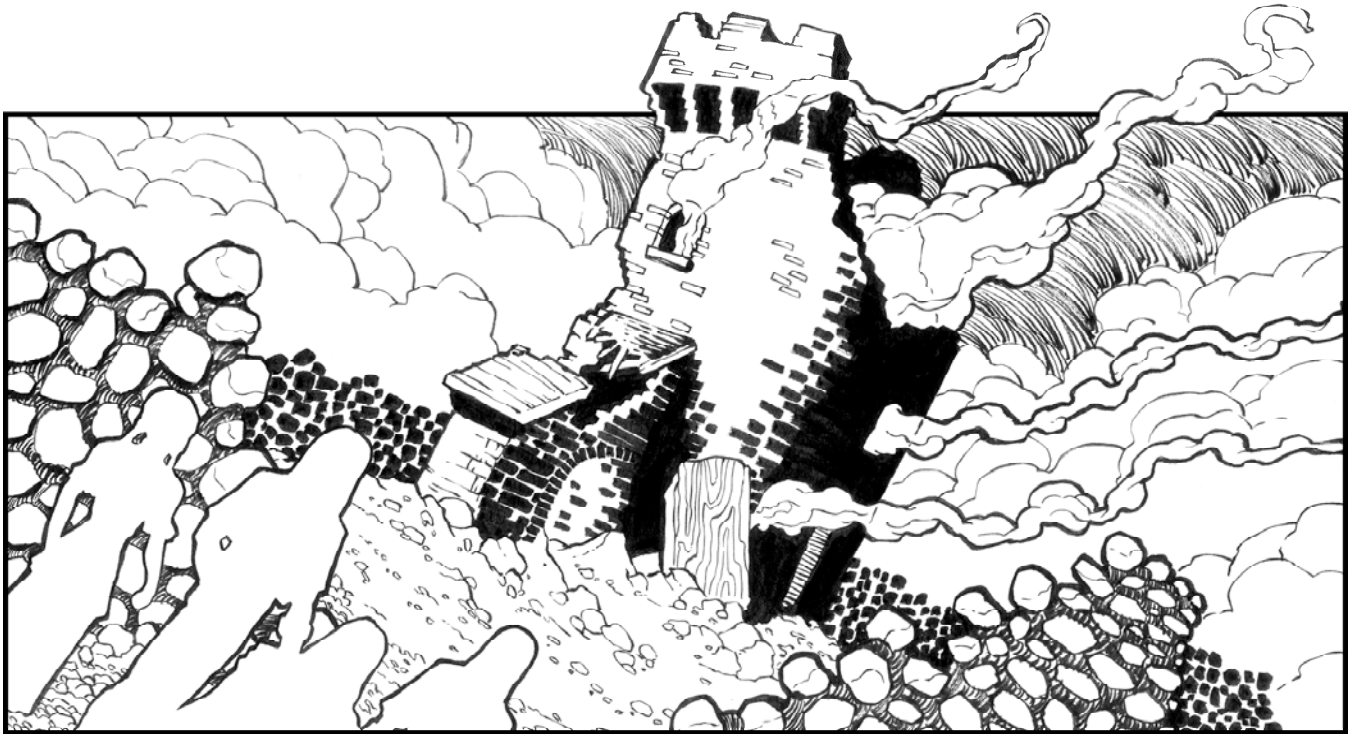
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Dungeon Crawl Classics #52

Chronicle of the Fiend

THREE LINKED ADVENTURES LEVELS 0-10



Official Tournament Module

Dungeon Crawl Classics Fourth Annual Open Tournament

Gen Con Indy 2007



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For several years now, Dungeon Crawl Classics fans have supported their favorite modules by creating beautifully rendered battle maps. Goodman Games now provides a place to share these battle maps with other fans at Prester’s Maps and Charts Emporium, a section of our web site.

You can download maps for dozens of modules at Prester’s, including Ben “Superfan” Waxman’s Chronicle of the Fiend battle maps, the ones used at our Gen Con tournament. Visit Prester’s Maps and Charts Emporium online at:

www.goodman-games.com/presters.php



Dungeon Crawl Classics

GOODMAN GAMES
GENCON 2007

4TH ANNUAL

OPEN TOURNAMENT

Goodman Games is the leading publisher of tournament dungeon crawls. Every year at Gen Con, we host the official Dungeon Crawl Classics Open Tournament. Chronicle of the Fiend was the adventure used at the Gen Con 2007 tournament. On the following pages, before the start of the adventure itself, is a recap of the tournament results, including photographs of the winners and judges.

Dungeon Crawl Classics Fourth Annual Open Tournament

Official Results

FIRST ROUND

Rank	Team Name	Judge	Score	PCs Killed	Player Names
1	The Bastard Sons of Lee Van Cleef	Oppedisano	3300	0	Greg Ragland, Mike Lundin, Mike Maenza, Joe Marchiafava
2	Cunning Runts	McBride	3100	1	Glen Shackleton, Tyler Bjornson, Neil Shackleton, Andy Owen
3	Simple Weapons	King	2850	0	David Hazlett, Douglas Ayers, Michael Frey, C. Aaron Kreder
4	Masters of the Puniverse	McBride	2675	1	Erik Roach, Jeremy Thies, Andy Barnett, Keith Schooler
5	Random Gamers #36	Wilder	2550	0	Lion Godchaux, Chris Mable, Jonathon Cruz, Rebecca Smith
6	Clan Yeoman	Seymour	2475	1	Dan Adams, Leah Adams, Nicol Buckley, Tim Buckley
7	The Gang of Four	Doyle	2350	1	Matt Filla, Monte Cook, Sue Cook, Mark Karau
8	Blood Kings	Seymour	2200	0	Todd Kath, Jeff Dean, Sean Tragesser, Andrew Frielink
9	Glen Eagles	Seymour	1700	3	Terri Frenia, Joe Frenia, David Shea, Jim Miller
10	Jank Daddy	Seymour	1450	3	Matt Lucas, James Grummell, Todd Hughson, Andrew Cooke
11	Smoked	McSpadden	1450	3	Glen Ausse, Charles Wade, Steve Heitke, Dustin Pietzolv
12	Chicago	Oppedisano	1275	4	Tim Kelley, Francis Moret, Roland Karsh, Mike Smith
13	Brotherhood of the Angry Dragon	Rooks	1150	3	Tony Adler, Kevin Bopp, Bob Hoff, Franz Schmelzer
14	Rabid Mongoose	King	900	0	Allen Eblin, Jeremy Chisenhall, Susan Conarroe, Greg Lett
15	Here for Beer	Glicker	900	2	Pascal Giverin, Paul Luri, Chris Smith, Dan Yacono
16	The Rule of Four	McCutcheon	725	4	Shawn Guy, David Hall, Robert Rhoades, Shawn Rhoades
17	Team Generic	Wilder	650	0	Steve Morgan, Tony Morgan, Ron Shook, Thomas Swartz
18	We Flunked Flank	Anderson	600	1	Andy Brogan, Mat Cappel, Chris Foley, Matt Flint

Continued on next page

(First round, continued)

Rank	Team Name	Judge	Score	PCs Killed	Players
19	Team Gyax	McSpadden	100	0	Ryan ?, Tim Jukiewicz, Ian Welsh, Troy Wilhelmson
20	Bad Company	Wilder	-200	4	Todd Chaney, Travis LaManna, Barry Lovseth, Michael McCrory
21	Fish in a Barrel	Sipla	-375	4	Thomas Ginter, Stephen Moeller, Jim Lamanna, Thomas Paci-Funk
22	Birmingham's Most Wanted	Sipla	-775	4	Sam Guss, Larry Lovoy, Arthur Marie, Richard Tinsman
23	What Plan?	Sipla	-950	3	Tim Thomas, Marion Nalepa, Nick Richardson, Mark Schutze
24	The Guys from Iowa	Rooks	-1500	4	Todd Dighton, Oscar Jenison, Chris Miller, Kevin Thomson
Total				46	= 48% kill rate

SECOND ROUND

Rank	Team Name	Judge	Score	PCs Killed	Players
1	Simple Weapons	McCutcheon	2660	0	David Hazlett, Douglas Ayers, Michael Frey, C. Aaron Kreder
2	Clan Yeoman	McSpadden	1925	0	Dan Adams, Leah Adams, Nicol Buckley, Tim Buckley
3	Blood Kings	McCutcheon	1665	1	Todd Kath, Jeff Dean, Sean Tragesser, Andrew Frielink
4	Cunning Runts	Sipla	1260	0	Glen Shackleton, Tyler Bjornson, Neil Shackleton, Andy Owen
5	The Bastard Sons of Lee Van Cleef	Sipla	1200	0	Greg Ragland, Mike Lundin, Mike Maenza, Joe Marchiafava
6	Glen Eagles	King	1150	0	Terri Frenia, Joe Frenia, David Shea, Jim Miller
7	Masters of the Puniverse	Rooks	270	2	Erik Roach, Jeremy Thies, Andy Barnett, Keith Schooler
8	Random Gamers #36	Anderson	-1800	5	Lion Godchaux, Chris Mable, Jonathon Cruz, Rebecca Smith
Total				8	= 25% kill rate



FINAL ROUND

Rank	Team Name	Judge	Score	PCs Killed	Player Names
1	Blood Kings	King	2745	0	Todd Kath, Jeff Dean, Sean Tragesser, Andrew Frielink
2	Clan Yeoman	Pommier	2575	1	Dan Adams, Leah Adams, Nicol Buckley, Tim Buckley
3	Simple Weapons	McSpadden	2070	0	David Hazlett, Douglas Ayers, Michael Frey, C. Aaron Kreder
Total				1	= 8% kill rate

KILLS BY JUDGE

Judge	Round 1	Round 2	Round 3	Total Kills	Total Rounds	Total PCs	Kill %
Anderson	1	5	0	6	2	8	75%
Doyle	1	0	0	1	1	4	25%
Glicker	2	0	0	2	1	4	50%
King	0	0	0	0	4	16	0%
McBride	2	0	0	2	2	8	25%
McCutcheon	4	1	0	5	3	12	42%
McSpadden	3	0	0	3	4	16	19%
Oppedisano	4	0	0	4	2	8	50%
Pommier	0	0	1	1	1	4	25%
Rooks	7	2	0	9	3	12	75%
Seymour	7	0	0	7	4	16	44%
Sipla	11	0	0	11	5	20	55%
Wilder	4	0	0	4	3	12	33%



Tournament judges Greg Oppedisano, Jeff McSpadden, Patrick Seymour, Erica King, Ken McCutcheon, Chris Doyle, Adrian Pommier, and Jason Little.



Harley Stroh, Jeff LaSala, and Jeremy Simmons.



Adrian announces the official tournament results.



First place team, The Blood Kings: Andrew Frielink, Jeff Dean, Sean Tragesser, Todd Kath.



Second place team, Clan Yeoman: Tim Buckley, Nicol Buckley, Leah Adams, Dan Adams. Clan Yeoman has placed in the finals 3 of the last 4 years.



Erol Otus, Joseph Goodman, Ken McCutcheon.



Third place team, Simple Weapons: David Hazlett, Douglas Ayers, Michael Frey, C. Aaron Kreder

Introduction

Chronicle of the Fiend is designed for four to six characters of variable level. The first round is designed for 0-level characters; that is, adventurers with a single level in an NPC class. The second round is designed for 8th to 9th level characters, and the third and final round is for 10th to 11th level characters. While the characters can be of any class, a well-balanced party with access to ranged combat, a variety of Knowledge skills, and a solid grasp of teamwork will have the best chance of surviving the challenges of Chronicle of the Fiend. See the "Scaling Information" sections at the beginning of each round for ways to tailor this adventure to your group's unique style of play.

Adventure Summary

In round 1, the PCs – apprentices, servants, and foundlings of the graying hedge mage, Teomon of the Ocek – return from running errands to discover that their master's tower has been burned to the ground! Tracking a trail of blood through the woods, the PCs discover that the culprits have sought shelter in a crumbling, old keep just inside the darksome woods.

All is not as it seems, however. The goblin raiders are actually part of a sinister plot to free a demonic cambion trapped in a vault beneath the keep. The PCs, pursuing their master's abductors, risk freeing the cambion themselves, and setting into motion a series of events that threaten to engulf the Northlands in the fires of war.

In round 2, four years have passed since the heroes saved their master, Teomon of the Ocek, from the clutches of Gazihmon's fiendish goblins...four years since they set Gazihmon free. The heroes, now full-fledged adventurers, are called to Ander's Farm to investigate strange atmospheric disturbances. Their examination leads them to Ironwood Tower, an ancient, druidic observatory, and sets them on the path to a reunion with an old enemy.

In round 3, with the *torque of recall* taken from Nazradelk and knowledge learned from Ironwood Tower, the heroes return to the original site of Sezrakan's keep, anticipating its return. As foretold in the Ironwood observatory, the stars fall into alignment and the fiend's citadel returns to the Prime Material Plane, ushered in by an army of demons and fiendish creatures. Unable to defeat an army of this magnitude with a frontal assault, it falls to the heroes to infiltrate the citadel and defeat Gazihmon by sheer cunning, arcane might, unbreakable faith, and strength of arms.

Game Master's Section

Encounter Table

To help the GM prepare, we have included a quick reference table showing all encounters at a glance. **Loc** – the location number keyed to the map for the encounter. **Pg** – the module page number that the encounter can be found on. **Type** – this indicates if the encounter is a trap (T), puzzle (P), hazard (H), or combat (C). **Encounter** – the key monsters, traps, or NPCs that can be found in the encounter. Names in italics are classed NPCs. **EL** – the encounter level.

Loc	Pg	Type	Encounter	EL
A-2	13	T	Searing wax trap	2
A-3	15	C	<i>Narldog</i> , fiendish goblin War3	1
B-2	16	C	<i>Vulgin</i> , fiendish goblin War3	1
B-3	17	H	Chokedust	2
C-2	19	C	<i>Tezagoz</i> , fiendish goblin War3	1
C-3	20	T	Binding circle trap	2
1-4	21	C	Alchemost	2
		H	Falling rubble	
1-5	23	T	<i>Ray of frost</i> trap	3
		C	<i>Agig</i> , fiendish goblin Drd2	
		C	Dire rat animal companion	
1-5a	26	P	Globes of Death puzzle	2
		T	Exploding globe trap	
1-5b	28	P	Riddle of the Spheres	2
1-5c	30	C	<i>Gazihmon</i> , cambion-form	3
2-1	35	C	Advanced young mist dragon 3 gasbags	8
2-2	39	C	Olanth mezzalith 2 summoned shambling mounds	11
2-3A	42	T	<i>Sunbeam</i> trap	8
			or <i>Lunar ray</i> trap	8
2-3B	44	T	<i>Baleful polymorph</i> trap <i>Insect plague</i> trap	8
2-4	45	C	<i>Nazradelk</i> , fiendish goblin Clr2/Ftr2/Blk6 <i>Edreth</i> , tiefling Exp9 Advanced krenshar Fiendish raven servant	12

Loc	Pg	Type	Encounter	EL
2-5	48	C	Savage advanced elite praying mantis	8
2-6	50	C, H	<i>Illtreus</i> , satyr Eagle animal companion <i>Vrshoom's</i> vortex	13
3-2	59	C	Greater shadow Shadowbloom 3 shadows	10
3-3	61	C T	Fiendish purple worm <i>True seeing</i> trap	14/7
3-4	63	C H	Fiendish purple worm Collapsing landing hazard	0/14
3-5	65	C	Fiendish spinning top Spectre	11
3-6	66	C	<i>Gazihmon</i> , unique demon prince (weakened)*	10
3-7	68	T	3 <i>implosion</i> traps	13
3-8b	69	C	4 dretches	6
3-8d	71	C	<i>Gazihmon</i> , unique demon prince (weakened) <i>Veetch</i> , elite vrook	12

*Only appears after being defeated in area 3-8d.

Between the Rounds

For a home campaign, the party may not be content to idly adventure after their first encounter with *Gazihmon*. They may seek to learn the lore of this strange creature, or possibly even the history of *Sezrakan*. The GM should feel free to crib material from all three rounds of the tournament to keep the party on the path of *Gazihmon's* followers.

In addition to the history, the party could learn such things as the actual name of *Gazihmon's* home plane (not provided in this adventure so as to fit in a home game), his true appearance (see area 3-8d), the presence of his unusual "second soul," or even find the arcane foundry where the demon prince gets his fantastic toys, like the *Confining Bell* and the *Misery Engine* (ideally only after completing round 2, however).

This kind of attention will not go unnoticed, however, and the demon prince may see fit to hound the party with fanatical cultists, tasked demons, or relentless assassins.

Items in Brackets

Throughout the dungeon, there are several phrases or numbers set in brackets, like this: [3]. These items refer to conditions or values used during the Fourth Annual DCC Open Tournament as it was played at Gen Con Indy 2007. In the case of phrases, they are instructions to the tournament Judges. In the case of numbers, they reflect a predetermined result that applied to all teams equally.

If a single number is presented, that number was always the one used. If it refers to damage and a critical hit was confirmed, the attack's crit modifier was applied to the given number. If a series of numbers was presented, that indicated a sequence to follow (and repeat, if necessary).

For falling damage, instead of calculating every possible height from which a PC could fall, it was assumed they took 1d6 [4] points of damage per 10 feet fallen.

To download complete rules for playing this adventure as a tournament the way it was played at Gen Con, visit the Tournaments section at www.goodman-games.com.

Getting the Players Involved

Round 1 begins with the party having arrived at one of three entrances to a crumbling keep. For an ongoing campaign, the GM should devise an appropriate plot hook to lure the PCs to the citadel, or adapt one of the following to get the characters started:

- The PCs are all apprentices, servants, bondsmen and foundlings of an aging hedge mage. Returning from an errand into the nearby town of *Axebury*, the PCs discover that their master has been kidnapped and their home, burnt to the ground. The PCs follow the villains' trail back to an ancient, crumbling keep.
- The PCs, aspiring young men and women hoping to become heroes and make their mark upon the world, venture into an old citadel, hoping to make their fortune recovering lost treasures hidden inside the aging ruins.
- The town of *Axebury* is sacked by a band of vicious humanoids, who capture the town's children for some vile end. The PCs are sent after the band, in the hopes of rescuing the kidnapped villagers.

Background Story

Long ago, when the world was still young and the nations of man had not yet left their stamp upon the world, magic was strong. Wicked human mages, coveting the powers that the elves had cultivated over the eons, turned to infernal powers, trading souls in exchange for arcane might. These dealings stirred the interest of many demons and devils, not the least of which was the lesser fiend Gazihmon, who duped corrupt spellcasters into summoning him to the Prime Material Plane.

Unlike most of his ilk, Gazihmon's goals stretched far beyond the corruption of a handful of spellcasters. The demon quickly put into place rites and rituals necessary to prevent his dismissal or banishment, created a permanent portal between his home plane and Aereeth, and set about raising a terrible empire that would stretch across the length and breadth of the North. Before his wicked dream could be realized, a band of young heroes, headed by the young mage Sezrakan, rose up against the mighty Gazihmon. Unable to banish the demon, and knowing that the demon's "death" would only be a short-term solution, the heroes instead sacrificed one of their own. They bound the demon into the body of a mortal paladin, a half-elf named Ebryllisain, creating a half-mortal, half-demon cambion. Trapped in physical form and magically held in stasis, the demon slept for untold eons beneath Sezrakan's citadel.

Sezrakan enjoyed his triumph for only a few short decades. Gazihmon was able to influence and corrupt the dreams of the weak-willed mercenaries employed by Sezrakan, and in short order (in demonic time), engineered a revolt at the keep. His would-be guards slaughtered each other. In the fighting, Sezrakan was defeated and his guard captain, Alferic Huntingblade, was slain, but so were the traitors, leaving the cambion as trapped as before. After the battle, the aged Sezrakan retreated to a hidden tower to recuperate his powers (see **Tower of the Black Pearl, DCC #29**), and the tales of his exploits were slowly forgotten by skalds and scholars alike.

The Present

After centuries of scouring the Northlands, a small cadre of Gazihmon's servants, led by the druid Feez, have finally found the cambion's prison. The fiendish goblins have been sent with one goal: set Gazihmon free of his mortal prison by slaying it, so he may return to his plane of origin and be reborn anew.

From beyond the grave, however, Sezrakan outwitted Feez. He had set up three puzzle-traps that were beyond the ability of the fiendish goblins to bypass or solve. Sezrakan had intended to return with the means

to slay the demon permanently, and didn't want his charge freed by lackeys. Unfortunately, the wizard died before he learned what he sought.

Feez, denied, told his minions they needed someone to solve the puzzles for them. He died leaving Sezrakan's study, slain by the alchemost, and the surviving goblins have tried to carry on the mission. To that end, they attacked Teomon's tower and kidnapped him, having heard tales of his wisdom.

The goblins coerced Teomon into solving the puzzles, but without Feez's leadership, when it came time to open the final door, they decided that the awakening Gazihmon might be upset at being imprisoned. The goblins knifed Teomon with a poisoned dagger before shoving him through the door and slamming it shut...a "sacrifice" to appease their demon-lord.

The cowardice of the goblins was almost their undoing. Teomon succumbed to the poisoned blade and collapsed just inside the doorway...too far from Gazihmon's crypt to trigger his awakening. Also, when the door was closed, the keys teleported to their original positions, re-setting the puzzles.

In failure, though, the goblins may have accidentally succeeded, as a band of young firebrands have come to the keep to save their master. Although the goblins are clueless, the headstrong PCs may set Gazihmon free in the process, condemning the North to his clutches!

Interrogation

If any goblins are captured, they will confess that they kidnapped "the old human," and confess that he solved "the puzzles" for them. No goblin can give any details about the puzzles because Feez, who is dead, kept all the info to himself.

If asked what they're trying to accomplish, the goblins will claim that only Feez knew, but they had to get past a bronze door and they needed three keys.

Using Knowledge Checks

The players may think to use Knowledge checks to gain information about the keep, Sezrakan, or the symbol of Gazihmon tattooed on the left palms of the goblins. Below are some guidelines for handling these checks; some information is synergistic, meaning that the party cannot roll that check without first determining if they know a previous piece of information.

About the Keep:

Knowledge (architecture) or Knowledge (engineering) DC 20 - the style of the architecture is several hundred years old, and shows no signs of having been updated or remodeled.

Knowledge (history) DC 20 - there were no major battles fought near here, and the keep does not factor into any significant tales of the past.

Knowledge (local) DC 13 - the keep has stood abandoned for as long as anyone can remember, and the locals believe there's a lot of treasure inside guarded by ghosts.

Knowledge (local) DC 18 - the local legends claim that the entire garrison killed each other one night, driven mad by a sorcerer's power.

About Sezrakan:

Knowledge (arcana) or (history) DC 20 - Sezrakan was a wizard, reportedly quite powerful. His final fate is uncertain, but he disappeared hundreds of years ago. His name is associated with several heroes of the distant past. This is **clue A**.

Knowledge (local) DC 20 - Sezrakan is an apocryphal boogeyman; in some tales he's kind, and in others he's cruel. He was said to wield powerful magic.

About the Symbol of Gazihmon:

Knowledge (the planes) or (religion) DC 15 - that symbol is a demon-mark, the personal badge of some fiend. It could belong to any of the countless potentates of the lower planes, however.

Knowledge (history) or (religion) DC 20 - that symbol was used by an ancient demon-cult who followed a monster known as "Gazihmon." This is **clue B**.

If the party knows clue B:

Knowledge (local) or (history) DC 15 - "Gazihmon" is the name of creature that ravaged the north in long-ago times. Depending on the source, he is alternately described as a titan, a demon, or as some unnatural "thing."

If the party knows clue A and clue B:

Knowledge (history), (religion), or (the planes) DC 15 - Gazihmon was defeated centuries ago by a band of heroes. It is believed he was utterly destroyed, and his followers either put to the sword or scattered.

Race Against Time

Teomon is at -5 hp, but is stable. Additionally, he has had his Intelligence and Wisdom scores reduced to 0 by Agig's poisoned dagger, leaving him unconscious. Alone, without spells or supplies and unable to regain consciousness, he'll die in 5 hours (he loses 1 hp every hour for being stable, at negative hp, unconscious, and unattended).

The party has no way of knowing their master's state, of course, but the prodigious amount of blood that makes up the trail they are following should be enough to hint to them that he's in dire trouble.

Even if the party heals him, he will not be able to help them in their final battle. In addition to being unconscious (and likely to remain that way), he has no equipment or prepared spells.

Dungeon Design Credits

This adventure was a collaborative effort. A team of dungeon designers devised the rooms, and project manager Harley Stroh orchestrated the final arrangement. Here are the credits for the individual room designs and other contributions:

Michael Ferguson: areas C-3 and 3-1.

Ken Hart: area 1-5, the Tarot puzzles.

Andrew Hind: areas A-2 and 3-3.

Phillip Larwood: areas B-2, 1-5b, and 3-5.

Rick Maffei: areas A-3, C-2, 1-5a, 3-2, 3-3, 3-4; alchemost.

Ross Payton: areas B-3 and 3-6.

Adrian M. Pommier: round 2, area 3-7, areas 3-8a-d; gasbag, shadowbloom; *lunar ray*; *torque of recall*.

Harley Stroh: areas A-1, B-1, C-1, 1-5c.

Round 1: Sezrakan's Keep

Scaling Information

"Sezrakan's Keep" is the first round of the 2007 DCC Open Tournament module, *Chronicle of the Fiend*. It is designed to be a challenge for four 0-level characters, or, in 3.5 terminology, characters with but 1 level in an NPC class. In a non-tournament setting, you can adapt the scenario for stronger parties by using the following modifications.

Weaker parties (3 or fewer characters): This tournament scenario is a dire challenge for even the most capable players. A party of fewer than four 0-level characters can compensate for their lack of numbers with superior equipment, such as masterwork weapons, the heaviest armor with which they are proficient, and a pair of potions of *cure light wounds* (all possibly recovered from Teomon's tower). Weaker parties will need to rest more often, so the GM should rule that Teomon is unconscious, but not dying (ignoring the **Race against Time** section, above).

Stronger parties (7 or more characters, or higher than 1st level): As written, round 1 is intentionally a lethal scenario for a full party of four 0-level characters. To maintain the severity of challenge for larger parties, or parties with PC class levels, the GM can make the following changes:

Add two warrior levels to Narldog, Vulgin, and Tezagoz. Similarly, add one druid level to Agig, which also increases the abilities of his dire rat companion. The alchemist should gain +4 HD. Do not change the traps or Gazihmon.

Different Paths

For the tournament there are 3 distinct paths through the dungeon, beginning at areas A-1, B-1, and C-1 respectively, to stymie players from gathering information about the tournament prior to playing. The paths were balanced so that one was not significantly easier than the other, and during the tournament, teams were randomly assigned to an entrance.

The potential paths are:

A-1, Gatehouse Entrance; A-2, Hall of Wax; A-3, The Long Climb.

B-1, Ruined Wall Entrance; B-2, Captain's Chamber; B-3, Armory.

C-1, Cistern Entrance; C-2, Puddles and Webs; C-3, Devil in the Details.

Non-tournament GMs should apply whichever introduc-

tion suits their circumstances. Note that each path involves a different saving throw and Knowledge check in regards to its trap.

Blood Trail and the Locked Box

Two aspects of the dungeon are written into all three paths: the blood trail and the locked box. During play, however, they are only encountered along the party's initial path.

In the case of the blood trail, it starts at whichever entrance the party uses, continues through areas 1 through 3 of the path, passes through areas 1-4 and 1-5, eventually leading to 1-5a, 1-5b, and 1-5c. In area 1-4, the blood trail does not appear to lead to the other paths; it goes straight toward area 1-5 from whichever direction the party came.

The same occurs with the locked box. No matter which way the party enters Sezrakan's keep, this box will be along their path. If the party subsequently somehow manages to venture down the one or both of the other paths, the locked box does not appear.

The blood trails and locked box do not "magically" switch locations; rather, they only exist for any given party along the particular path they choose through Sezrakan's keep.

Player Beginning

Read or paraphrase the following to the players:

The four of you, apprentices, servants, and foundlings of the venerable hedge mage, Teomon of the Ocek, have returned from running errands to discover that your master's tower has been burned to the ground! There was no sign of your master's body, so you can only conclude he was abducted. Arming yourselves with the meager equipment undamaged in the fire, you have followed a trail of blood through the woods. The track leads to a crumbling keep you never knew existed in a darksome forest.

Teomon is an old, old man...if he's gravely wounded, odds are he won't last long. Your master always said you had great promise, and today is the day you prove him right or die trying.

Areas of the Map

The interior walls of the ruined keep are built of fitted stone blocks (Climb DC 20). Except where noted, the vaulted stone ceilings are 12 feet in height. Similarly, except where noted, the level is unlit and dark. While the keep is certainly ancient, the ceilings and roofs are still intact, preventing PCs from bypassing areas via the roof. Unless otherwise noted, all doors are made of iron and unmarked.

Stone Wall: hardness 8, hp 180 per foot; Break DC 35; thickness 5 feet or more.

Iron Door: hardness 10, 60 hp; Break DC 28; 2 inches thick.

Area A-1 – Gatehouse Entrance: As the party begins the adventure, read or paraphrase the following:

The trail of blood leads directly to the gatehouse of the ruined keep. An aging drawbridge, the mighty planks rotten in places, crosses the shallow moat, and a rusty portcullis stands half raised. Peering past the gatehouse you can make out a darkened hall.

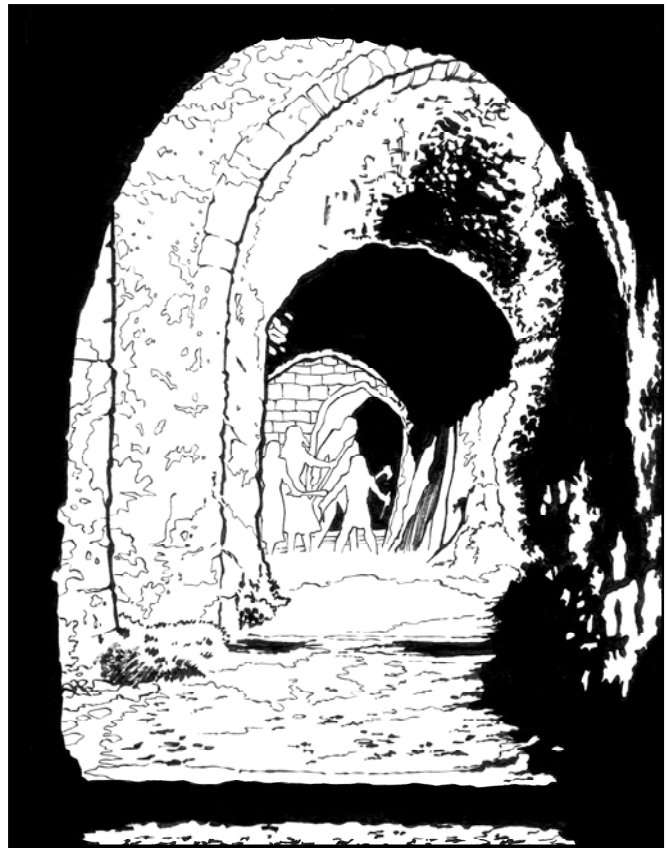
The gatehouse presents no threat to the heroes. The portcullis is rusted in place and the drawbridge is sufficiently strong to support the weight of the PCs. The interior ceiling of the gatehouse is riddled with murder-holes, but a cursory inspection (Search DC 10) shows that all have been covered with fallen rubble. Tracks and bloodstains are similarly easy to find (Search DC 10). A successful DC 15 Survival check allows PCs to judge that at least two Small creatures passed this way.

The moat is 10 feet deep, and is less than a quarter-filled with murky water. The water and mud in the moat softens falls (effectively reducing falling distance by 10 feet). This means anyone falling from the height of the path or drawbridge takes no falling damage, but a character falling while attempting to scale the keep walls could end up injuring himself. All squares in the moat are considered difficult terrain.

Area A-2 – Hall of Wax (EL 2): The ceiling in this area is 30 feet high and masked in deep shadows. Read or paraphrase the following:

The hall is covered in what seems to be a sheet of solidified wax, draping over a well, an upturned cart, and massive anvil-like, dull icicles. Four humanoid figures are similarly covered in wax and frozen in grotesque poses that convey the horror of their final moments.

Directly opposite you a pair of curved, sweeping staircases rise up into the heart of the



ruined keep. No light shows from the ancient building.

Development: This area was the outer bailey of Sezrakan's keep. In its day, men-at-arms hired by the wizard defended this area, but that was long, long ago.

Still-Life: The figures trapped in wax are all peasants from nearby villages that were trapped hoping to find treasure in the ancient keep. Anyone who spends 2 minutes excavating the corpses can discover that each carried a single weapon: a shortspear, a light mace, a sickle, and a dagger.

Death from Above: Lining the ceiling are stone gargoyles (Spot DC 15), the source of the wax that covers the room. Though many of the gargoyles are inactive, heroes weighing at least 20 lbs. (counting all gear) who step into a shaded square trigger a pressure plate, sending hot liquid wax pouring from the mouths of those gargoyles still functioning, covering anyone in the shaded areas unless they succeed on a DC 12 Reflex save. The trigger mechanism for the trap is based on the stone tiles of the floor, so creatures with stonecunning are granted their bonus to detect the trap. Once activated, the trap requires 1d4 [2] rounds to reset. The trap can be activated a total of three times before it must be manually refilled.

The Disable Device check required to deactivate this trap is beyond the abilities of 0-level heroes, but that does not mean all hope is lost. A clever party could bypass the trap by jumping over the trapped squares or triggering the pressure plates with at least 20 lbs. of rubble and then running through while it resets. Characters could also think to hold an item over their head to defend against the wax; while a normal shield would be insufficient, something large, like a table or tower shield (if one could be found) would be enough to grant a hero cover (and the resultant +2 bonus to Reflex saves) from the wax.

Stacks of Wax: The molten wax trap has three effects. First, any character struck by the trap suffers 1d3 [2] points of fire damage immediately and for two rounds thereafter. Second, the semisolid substance renders its victims immobile. Third, the wax covers the unfortunate character entirely, sealing even their mouth and nostrils, and they begin to suffocate.

The searing pain of the wax makes it difficult for an adventurer to hold his breath. The character must make a DC 10 Constitution check every round to hold her breath. Each round, the DC increases by one. When the hero finally fails her Constitution check, she falls unconscious (0 hp). In the following round she drops to -1 hit points and is dying. In the third round, she dies.

Each round, on his turn, a PC may attempt a DC 20 Strength check to break free of the wax. Normally, one would just be able to “take 20” and have a good chance of breaking free, but the Constitution checks required each round mean a 0-level character will probably fall unconscious and die before the two minutes required for a “take 20” attempt elapse.

Helping Out: Rescuing an encased person is difficult. Breaking away the wax by hand is the safest means, but this requires a total of 6 full-round actions of work per trapped individual. Thus, 3 heroes could free a trapped party member in 2 rounds, 2 could do it in 3 rounds, and 1 would require the full 6 rounds.

Using a bladed weapon is faster, requiring just 2 rounds to free a trapped adventurer, but runs the risk of injuring the trapped individual. The rescuer must successfully hit AC 15; if they ‘miss’, the trapped character suffers damage normal for the weapon being used. Fire will free the trapped individual as fast as a bladed weapon, but the victim is automatically burned by the re-heated wax and suffers damage according to the nature of the fire being employed.

Alternately, up to two heroes not trapped in wax can use aid another actions (each requiring a DC 10 Strength check) to help their trapped companion break free.

Searing Wax Trap: CR 2; mechanical; location trigger; automatic reset (1d4 [2] rounds) for three triggers, then manual reset; DC 12 Reflex save avoids; searing wax (1d3 [2] fire for 3 rounds) plus suffocation; Search DC 15, Disable Device 30.

The Locked Box: In the square marked “X” on the map is a small iron box with a crude padlock (Open Lock DC 20) – the paychest for Sezrakan’s keep. Inside are 2d12 [13] cp, 3d4 [7] sp, 1d4 [3] gp, and a note (never delivered) written by Aelfric Huntingblade, Sezrakan’s old captain of guards. Give the party **Handout A**. The note reads (in an old dialect of Common):

Master,

Some of the men have expressed concern at the nature of our “guest.” We understand the paladin was once a comrade of yours, but surely there is a more appropriate place where the...remains...can be kept?

Also, several have complained of bad dreams lately and are acting erratically. I’m not a superstitious sort, but that sounds like what you described happening before the paladin was sacrificed.

*Your loyal servant,
- Aelfric*

The Alchemy of Playtest

At the Goodman Games “How to Write Adventures That Don’t Suck” seminar at Gen Con Indy ’07 (where this tournament was played), we brought up playtesting and how important it is to the modules Goodman Games publishes, especially the tournament modules.

We decided to go into a bit more depth on this topic with this module. Scattered throughout these pages are a few select insights and glimpses “behind-the-scenes” of how this module evolved during playtest.

To paraphrase a certain movie, “Many playtest characters died to bring us this module.” These sidebars are in memoriam to them.

Iron Box: hardness 10, 30 hp; Break DC 20; 1 inch thick; 5 lbs.

Area A-3 – The Long Climb (EL 1): Read or paraphrase the following as the PCs approach the stairs from the south:

Twin staircases wrap around a massive, curved wall. The outer banisters of both stairs have been carved with a plethora of sinister bas-relief images – demons, gargoyles, trolls, giants, and many unidentifiable forms cavort and writhe across every surface. The inner stairway walls are also carved in sharp bas-relief. In places fingers, chins, horns, elbows, hooves, and tentacles jut from the carved surface and almost seem ready to grasp any unaware passersby.

When the party can see Narldog, read or paraphrase the following:

This creature is belike a goblin, but he has blood-red pupils set in black eyes, a pair of tiny horns, and grubby fingers bearing short claws. He grunts and shifts position, waving a short sword and hoisting a javelin.

Development: The carvings are ornate, but impart little information. Heroes making a successful DC 14 Knowledge (the planes) check will recognize the more common demon types, such as dretches, quasits, cambions, and vrocks mingled amid the other forms.

Standing on the upper balcony is Narldog, a goblin sentry whose duty is to prevent intruders from reaching the top of the steps. Native to Gazihmon's home plane, Narldog is a fiendish creature. As a follower of Gazihmon, he bears a small tattoo in the palm of his left hand: a four-clawed hand with an abhorrent rune inscribed in the palm set against a black sun (give the party **Handout B**).

Narldog will be alerted by the party making noise in the Hall of Wax (area A-2), such as setting off the

wax trap. He then observes their progress while hiding [Hide result: 16] and makes ready to attack. If the party makes Spot checks in area A-2, remember to subtract -1 per 10 feet between the adventurer and Narldog.

The doors to area 1-4 are heavy, but not locked or trapped. It requires a DC 17 Strength check to push the doors.

The goblin's *goodberries* can be identified with a DC 21 Spellcraft check. They are found in a small sack that has "*Better!*" written on it in Goblin.

Tactics: The goblin hides behind a mound of debris located at the top of the stairs [indicated on the map by small circles in a line]. The rubble counts as a low wall and grants the goblin cover (+4 to AC and +2 to Reflex saves) from a distance, but anyone equidistant from the cover as he is (such as someone in melee) can ignore the cover. Narldog also has a +1 bonus on attack rolls for being on higher ground, as long as the party isn't on top of the stairs. It costs two squares of movement to cross the low wall.

Narldog will hurl javelins at any intruder ascending the stairs. If pressed to melee, or if he runs out of javelins, he will draw his short sword and put his back against a wall, ideally one of the corners near the top of the stairs.

The fiendish goblin will use his smite attack in his first round of melee.

Narldog's starting position is indicated on the map with a "G."

Narldog, male fiendish goblin War3: CR 1; Small humanoid (extraplanar, goblin); HD 3d8; hp 15; Init +6; Spd 30 ft.; AC 17, touch 13, flat-footed 15; Base Atk +3; Grp -1; Atk/Full Atk cold iron short sword +4 melee (1d4 [3]/19-20) or javelin +6 ranged (1d4 [2]); SA Smite good; SQ Darkvision 60 ft., resistance to cold 5 and fire 5, spell resistance 8; AL NE; SV Fort +3, Ref +3, Will +0; Str 11, Dex 14, Con 11, Int 10,

Meanwhile, at the Tournament: Best Laid Plans

Sometimes even the best efforts at preparation avail you naught. One player showed up to the tournament with detailed notes on his character (even catching a mistake we had made in the Player's Pack!), a plan of action, and confidence to spare.

It is an old aphorism that "*a plan rarely survives contact with the enemy.*" This was true in the case of this particular tournament-goer, playing the rogue Thoromir. Faced with the immense staircases and "statues" of waxed peasants standing at their base, Thoromir bravely and immediately moved to ascend the stairs...

...right into the pouring wax trap. As it had for the unfortunate peasants, it spelled molten doom for Thoromir. As Robert Burns wrote, "*the best laid schemes of mice and men gang aft agley (go often awry)...especially in the DCC tournament!*"



Wis 9, Cha 6.

Skills and Feats: Hide +4, Listen +2, Move Silently +4, Ride +8, Spot +2, Tumble +2; Alertness, Improved Initiative.

SA – Smite Good (Su): Once per day, Narldog can make a standard melee attack to deal 3 additional points of damage against a good-aligned foe.

Possessions: Studded leather armor, light wooden shield, 3 javelins, cold iron short sword, 2d4 [5] goodberries (CL 2).

Area B-1 – Ruined Wall Entrance: As the party begins the adventure, read or paraphrase the following:

The trail of blood leads up the hill to a break in the keep wall. Fallen blocks of rubble, once part of the mighty keep, lie scattered about. The source of the fallen blocks is a small hole, perhaps 6 feet high and wide, in the side of the keep. Peering through the hole you can see a chamber cluttered with fallen debris.

This entrance presents no threat to the heroes. All of the loosened blocks have fallen, and the remaining blocks are reasonably secure. A cursory inspection (Search DC 10) turns up tracks and bloodstains. A successful DC 15 Survival check allows PCs to judge that at least one Small creature passed this way.

Area B-2 – Captain’s Chamber (EL 1): When the party passes through the gap in the wall from area B-1, read or paraphrase the following.

This dreary chamber was once gloriously appointed, but now lies in shambles. Shattered blocks of masonry fill the room to a depth of several feet, fallen from the roof above to reveal portions of the sky through the holes. Poking out from beneath the rubble are the chamber’s furnishings, including a splintered wardrobe. Several weapons and pieces of armor also litter the floor. Arrow slits pierce the walls of the chamber in several places.

Over 20 feet above your heads is a stone landing, once part of a spiral staircase accessing the upper floors of the tower. The upper levels of the tower have fallen into ruin, but the staircase remains. The landing is covered with debris and juts out some 5 feet from the walls of the tower.

To the east double doors of bronze, now covered with verdigris, block passage further into the keep. Beneath the greenish patina you can see that the doors are carved with embossed images of a powerfully built warrior protecting a robed figure from several rampaging fiends. The warrior is dressed in a suit of full plate and wields a wicked-looking bastard sword in one hand.

When the party can see Vulgin, read or paraphrase the following:

This creature is belike a goblin, but he has blood-red pupils set in black eyes, a pair of tiny horns, and grubby fingers bearing short claws. He grunts and shifts position, waving a short sword and hoisting a javelin.

Development: This room once belonged to the captain of Sezrakan’s guard, a fighter named Aelfric Huntingblade, who fought by the wizard’s side in many encounters and died in battle defending his master. Anyone who spends 2 minutes digging through the rubble can unearth a few of Aelfric’s old weapons (all Medium): a morningstar, a dagger, a spiked gauntlet, and a light mace. Each weapon was once masterwork, but time and rust have reduced them to being merely mundane. All the armor is shattered. The party may also find two very well-sealed, steel flasks of fine dwarven brandy, which could prove useful in the next area.

Lurking in this chamber is one of the cambion’s servants. Native to Gazihmon’s home plane, Vulgin is a fiendish goblin. As a follower of Gazihmon, he

bears a small tattoo in the palm of his left hand: a four-clawed hand with an abhorrent rune inscribed in the palm set against a black sun (give the party **Handout B**).

Vulgin has spent the last few hours stationed in this chamber and has set up an ambush for any intruders coming from area B-1. The goblin waits atop the landing, hidden from sight amidst the debris, and keeps watch over the room. If the party makes no attempt at stealth, or if they begin searching for weapons, Vulgin will hear them and attack.

The doors to area 1-4 are heavy, but not locked or trapped. It requires a DC 17 Strength check to push the doors.

The goblin's *goodberries* can be identified with a DC 21 Spellcraft check. They are found in a small sack that has "*Better!*" written on it in Goblin.

Tactics: Vulgin hides behind a mound of debris [indicated on the map by small circles in a line] located atop the landing [Hide result: 16]. The rubble counts as a low wall and grants the goblin cover (+4 to AC and +2 to Reflex saves) from a distance, but anyone equidistant from the cover as he is (such as someone in melee) can ignore the cover. Vulgin also has a +1 bonus on attack rolls for being on higher ground as long as the party isn't on his landing. It costs two squares of movement to cross the low wall.

As soon as the PCs begin moving through the chamber Vulgin begins combat by hurling javelins down through the darkness. He continues to throw javelins until he runs out or the PCs close to melee range.

The fiendish goblin will use his smite attack in his first round of melee. Vulgin fights to death, willing to lay down his life to defend its master's tomb.

Vulgin's starting position is indicated on the map with a "G."

Vulgin, male fiendish goblin War3: CR 1; Small humanoid (extraplanar, goblin); HD 3d8; hp 15; Init +6; Spd 30 ft.; AC 17, touch 13, flat-footed 15; Base Atk +3; Grp -1; Atk/Full Atk cold iron short sword +4 melee (1d4 [3]/19-20) or javelin +6 ranged (1d4 [2]); SA Smite good; SQ Darkvision 60 ft., resistance to cold 5 and fire 5, spell resistance 8; AL NE; SV Fort +3, Ref +3, Will +0; Str 11, Dex 14, Con 11, Int 10, Wis 9, Cha 6.

Skills and Feats: Hide +4, Listen +2, Move Silently +4, Ride +8, Spot +2, Tumble +2; Alertness, Improved Initiative.

SA – *Smite Good (Su)*: Once per day, Narldog can make a standard melee attack to deal 3 addi-

tional points of damage against a good-aligned foe.

Possessions: Studded leather armor, light wooden shield, 3 javelins, cold iron short sword, 2d4 [5] *goodberries* (CL 2).

Area B-3 – Armory (EL 2): Read or paraphrase the following:

This room must have been the armory of the tower, as everything is designed for military use. Four long weapon racks are still filled with swords, pole arms and crossbows, along with a number of stands holding various styles of plate mail – enough equipment to outfit a company of soldiers! Dark, moldy stains cover the walls and equipment, and the stench of rotted wood and rusted metal fills the armory.

Development: Centuries of disuse combined with the cool, damp air has led to the infestation of a deadly black mold called chokedust throughout the room. Simply passing through the armory causes little harm, but disturbing the arms or armor kicks up a cloud of deadly spores (see below). All of the weapons and armor are unusable; in addition to being caked in chokedust, all wood and leather (such as the straps that hold the armor together) has rotted through, and the weapons are impossibly dulled. [Referring to the map, the box shapes are weapon racks, and the circles with "x" marks in them are armor dummies.]

Look Don't Touch: The black mold, called "choke-dust," bursts into clouds of poisonous spores that spread in a 5 to 10-foot radius when touched, brushed against, or stepped on. The mold tends to settle on and destroy wood and leather, and can even blunt steel weapons given enough time. Exposed creatures must flush their noses and throats with alcohol or risk choking to death.

A DC 15 Knowledge (nature) check will reveal all the information in the previous paragraph. Heroes do not get to roll this check automatically; they must declare they are using a Knowledge skill to see if they know something about the mold.

If a character searches or moves any of the equipment in the room, he releases a 5-foot burst of spores. Violent action, such as knocking over a weapon rack, triggers a 10-foot burst of poisonous spores. Anyone in the affected area may make a DC 12 Fortitude save to avoid the affects of the spores. Characters must make a new saving throw for each round they begin their turn in an area covered with spores.

Note that some creatures, like dwarves, have bonuses to saves vs. poison.

Each shaded square on the map contains chokedust. Each square can only be triggered once, but as indicated above, a single square can affect up to a 10-foot burst.

The spores are not a trap, and cannot be detected or disarmed as such. Just because it can't be disarmed, however, doesn't mean all is lost. Clever parties will trigger the spore clouds remotely, by using a pole or throwing a rock at the affected items. Alternately, they could wet some cloth and make crude gasmasks; this would grant them a +2 bonus to their Fortitude saves.

A Little Dusting: Chokedust spores have three effects on a failed save. First, they burrow into the hero's mucus glands and swell, damaging the nose and mouth. Any character caught in a cloud of spores suffers 1d3 [2] points of damage immediately and for two rounds thereafter. Second, the spores act as a mild paralytic toxin. An adventurer in the cloud is immobilized, unable to easily move on her own out of the cloud as long as it persists; a chokedust spore cloud lingers for 1d4 [3] minutes unless dispersed by a moderate or stronger wind. Finally, the cloud chokes the victim, and they begin to suffocate.

The searing pain of the swollen tissues makes it difficult for a victim to hold his breath. The character must make a DC 10 Constitution check every round to continue holding his breath. Each round, the DC increases by one. When the hero finally fails his Constitution check, he falls unconscious (0 hp). In the following round he drops to -1 hit points and is dying. In the third round, he dies.

Each round, on their turn, a chokedust victim may attempt a DC 20 Strength check to force their unresponsive limbs to move. Success indicates the adventurer may take a single move action (ideally heading out of the cloud). Normally, one would just be able to "take 20" and have a good chance of moving. However, the Constitution checks required each round means a 0-level character will probably fall unconscious and die before the two minutes required for a "take 20" attempt elapse. Exiting the cloud ends the suffocation.

Helping Out: Afflicted heroes could be dragged out of the cloud by an ally adjacent to them [refer to the PC's weight plus the weight of their gear, compare against the dragging PC's drag weight, indicated on the character sheet].

Rescuing a choking PC is difficult. A *cure* spell heals the damage but does not negate the poison; a *neutralize poison* spell would be ideal, but 0-level adventurers don't have access to it. Instead, the

mouth, nostrils, and throat must be flushed with alcohol (like that found in a healer's kit or the dwarven brandy in area B-2). This requires a total of 6 full-round actions of work per affected character. Thus 3 PCs could clear the spores of a companion in 2 rounds, 2 could do it in 3 rounds, and 1 would require the full 6 rounds.

Chokedust Hazard: CR 2; hazard; event trigger (touching the weapons or armor); no reset; DC 12 Fortitude save resists; burrowing spores (1d3 [2] for 3 rounds) plus suffocation; Search DC n/a, Disable Device n/a.

The Locked Box: In the square marked "X" on the map is a small iron box with a crude padlock (Open Lock DC 20) – the paychest for Sezrakan's keep. Inside are 2d12 [13] cp, 3d4 [7] sp, 1d4 [3] gp, and a note (never delivered) written by Alferic Huntingblade, Sezrakan's old captain of guards. Give the party **Handout A**. The note reads (in an old dialect of Common):

Master,

Some of the men have expressed concern at the nature of our "guest." We understand the paladin was once a comrade of yours, but surely there is a more appropriate place where the...remains...can be kept?

Also, several have complained of bad dreams lately and are acting erratically. I'm not a superstitious sort, but that sounds like what you described happening before the paladin was sacrificed.

*Your loyal servant,
- Aelfric*

Iron Box: hardness 10, 30 hp; Break DC 20; 1 inch thick; 5 lbs.

Area C-1 – Drain Entrance: As the party begins the adventure, read or paraphrase the following:

The trail of blood leads to an ancient stone storm drain that emerges from a rock wall. It looks like you could enter, but it would be a tight fit.

The iron grate is set on a hinge that, while difficult to lift, can be pushed aside with a DC 10 Strength check. Tracks and bloodstains are similarly easy to find (Search DC 10). A successful DC 15 Survival check allows PCs to judge that at least two Small creatures passed this way. This drain is barely large enough to allow Medium creatures to enter without squeezing.

Area C-2 – Puddles and Webs (EL 1): Read or paraphrase the following:

After walking about 60 feet through the filth-encrusted tunnel, you find another grate, this set into the wall before you. Through the rusted ironwork, you see that the grate is at the foot of a steep ramp leading to a larger chamber. You can see rubble strewn at the head of the ramp.

Once the PCs have entered the chamber, read or paraphrase the following:

The ramp rises into a small, octagonal room with walls of tightly fitted stone blocks. Only a puddle of stagnant water at the ramp's base would seem to indicate that any water was ever here. Four thick columns surround the cistern area and numerous flying buttresses support a domed rib-vault about 15 feet overhead.

When the party can see Tezagoz, read or paraphrase the following:

This creature is belike a goblin, but he has blood-red pupils set in black eyes, a pair of tiny horns, and grubby fingers bearing short claws. He grunts and shifts position, waving a short sword and hoisting a javelin.

Development: Excess water from the cistern would drain into this room and be deposited outside. Apart from the goblin and its gear, there is nothing of worth in the chamber. Referring to the map, the black circles are the four pillars and the jumbled circles are rubble.

Watcher Above: Tezagoz lurks at the ramp's head on guard duty. He normally is hiding behind the rubble [Hide result: 16], but when/if he hears the party approaching, he prepares to attack.

Native to Gazihmon's home plane, Tezagoz is a fiendish creature. As a follower of Gazihmon, he bears a small tattoo in the palm of his left hand: a four-clawed hand with an abhorrent rune inscribed in the palm set against a black sun (give the party **Handout B**).

Anyone who spends 2 minutes digging through the rubble can discover Tezagoz's weapon stash (all sized for a Small creature): a punching dagger, a quarterstaff, a longspear, and a dagger.

The goblin's *goodberries* can be identified with a DC 21 Spellcraft check. They are found in a small sack that has "*Better!*" written on it in Goblin.

Tactics: As soon as the adventurers open the grate, Tezagoz initiates combat by hurling javelins down at them. He continues to throw javelins until he runs out or the heroes close to melee range. The rubble counts as a low wall and grants the goblin cover (+4 to AC and +2 to Reflex saves) from a distance, but anyone equidistant from the cover as he is (such as someone in melee) can ignore the cover. Tezagoz also has a +1 bonus on attack rolls for being on higher ground. It costs two squares of movement to cross the low wall.

The fiendish goblin will use his smite attack in his first round of melee.

Tezagoz fights to death, buying time for Agig to figure out the riddles in area 1-5.

Tezagoz, male fiendish goblin War3: CR 1; Small humanoid (extraplanar, goblin); HD 3d8; hp 15; Init +6; Spd 30 ft.; AC 17, touch 13, flat-footed 15; Base Atk +3; Grp -1; Atk/Full Atk cold iron short sword +4 melee (1d4 [3]/19-20) or javelin +6 ranged (1d4 [2]); SA Smite good; SQ Darkvision 60 ft., resistance to cold 5 and fire 5, spell resistance 8; AL NE; SV Fort +3, Ref +3, Will +0; Str 11, Dex 14, Con 11, Int 10, Wis 9, Cha 6.

Skills and Feats: Hide +4, Listen +2, Move Silently +4, Ride +8, Spot +2, Tumble +2; Alertness, Improved Initiative.

SA – Smite Good (Su): Once per day, Narldog can make a standard melee attack to deal 3 additional points of damage against a good-aligned foe.

Possessions: Studded leather armor, light wooden shield, 3 javelins, cold iron short sword, 2d4 [5] *goodberries* (CL 2).

Before the Playtest: The Toughest Goblin

Looking at their stats and tactics, Narldog, Vulgin, and Tezagog are identical. Each one has an advantage of cover and height over the party. Yet one of these goblins originally was doing his own thing. *C'mon, can you tell me which one?*

Well, clearly Tezagog, because this sidebar is in his room. In the playtest draft of this area, the grate was in the floor, and the tunnel that ends in a ramp here ran underneath the room. In order to enter Sezrakan's keep, parties had to climb a ladder one at a time and pass through the grate...all the while fighting Tezagog. After a few poor playtest PCs got slaughtered, we figured out the environment was way, way too tough. Thus, the ramp.

Area C-3 – Devil in the Details (EL 2): Read or paraphrase the following:

This round chamber measures 50 feet in diameter, and its domed ceiling reaches 30 feet at its center. A crystal-clear glass tank, faintly coated in blue dust, hangs from the ceiling in the center of the room, 10 feet from the floor. The tank, which hangs from a thick but rusted iron chain, is cylindrical in shape, and measures 5 feet in diameter and 10 feet high. A glowing, viscous purple liquid completely fills the tank, and lights the room with an ugly glow.

The blue dust covers most of the room. The main exception to this is a cleared section of the stone floor in the center of the room, roughly circular in shape and measuring approximately 10 feet in diameter. A mystic symbol, intricately painted in ugly, crimson hues, fills this clear and dust-free circle. The tank hangs directly above it.

The rest of the room is cluttered with various objects of arcane or alchemical research, which is scattered on top of dozens of rickety, wooden tables that line the walls. The items share table space with numerous tomes and glass vials. A set of double doors, located along the western wall, presumably leads to other parts of the citadel.

Development: The symbol in the middle of the floor [indicated on the map by the dotted circle] is a red herring – it actually is a protection circle, designed to protect arcane spellcasters from devils (moderate aura; Spellcraft DC 20 identifies conjuration). A DC 15 Knowledge (arcana) or (the planes) check would identify the symbol as harmless and reveal its purpose. Sezrakan used this room as a laboratory where he would summon devils from dark dimensions, hoping to learn how to ultimately destroy Gazihmon.

Sezrakan summoned the creatures into a binding circle carved into the floor in front of the double doors leading to area 4 [indicated on the map by the smooth circle]. The circle, which measures 10 feet in diameter, is covered in blue dust, but can be detected with a successful DC 15 Search check.

The binding circle is augmented with teleportation magic (moderate aura; Spellcraft DC 20 identifies conjuration). Sezrakan linked the binding circle with the tank suspended from the ceiling of the chamber. That way, he was able to safely summon devils for his studies using the binding circle, and then instantly teleport them into the tank, which was filled with an enchanted liquid capable of incapacitating

such vile hellspawn. He then lowered the tank from the ceiling, removed his trapped victims, and dissected them at his leisure.

If the party asks for descriptions of items on the tables [indicated on the map by shaded rectangles], some of them include a lantern carved to look like it's made from dragon scales, the dried claw of a manticores, and a broken warrior's horn made from ivory and covered in runes...implements of arcane and alchemical research the party would recognize from their time spent with Teomon of the Ocek. None of it is particularly useful or valuable unless the binding circle trap is sprung.

The doors to area 1-4 are heavy, but not locked or trapped. It requires a DC 15 Strength check to push the doors.

The Trap is Sprung: Anyone who physically steps in the binding circle near the doors must make a DC 12 Will save or be instantly teleported to the liquid-filled, glass tank, where they either drown or are crushed by the pressure of the fluid.

The glass tank has two special effects. First, the pressure of the displaced fluid deals 1d3 [2] damage to the trapped creature immediately and for two rounds thereafter; the seals on the tank have weakened so much that after three rounds, enough fluid will leak out that the pressure is no longer an issue (but drowning still is). Second, the tank's magic inflicts such pain on the victim that it is difficult to hold one's breath; there is no save against this effect. The character must make a DC 10 Constitution check every round to continue holding his breath. Each round, the DC increases by one. When a character finally fails a Constitution check, he falls unconscious (0 hp). In the following round he drops to -1 hit points and is dying. In the third round, he dies.

As long as there is a body in the tank, the binding circle is inactive.

The purple fluid deactivates the powers of devils and renders them unconscious, but it has no special effect (other than what is mentioned above) on non-devils and is rendered inert as soon as it leaves the glass tank. Each round, a (non-devil) trapped creature may attempt a DC 20 Strength check on its turn to burst out of the tank. Normally, one would just be able to "take 20" and have a good chance of breaking the tank. However, the Constitution checks required each round mean a 0-level character will probably fall unconscious and die before the two minutes required for a "take 20" attempt elapse.

The Disable Device check required to deactivate

this trap is beyond the abilities of 0-level heroes, but that does not mean all hope is lost. A clever party could bypass the circle by jumping over it or lay down one of the many tables to make a “bridge.” Characters who identify that the circle is augmented with teleportation magic gain a +2 bonus on their Will saves to resist being teleported by it.

Helping Out: Heroes outside the tank may think to break it, but unless the characters are Large or larger, or their weapons have reach, they need to find some way to reach it. Tables gathered from the edges of the room can be used for this purpose, but moving a table in position requires a full round. Alternately, the party could use ranged weapons (divide ranged damage by half, then apply hardness).

The chain suspending the tank in the air is far more difficult to destroy. If the party manages to sever it, the tank shatters upon hitting the floor, freeing anyone inside, but inflicting 1d6 [4] falling damage and 2d4 [5] damage from the exploding glass.

Anyone looking around may notice one of the many books scattered on the tables has opened itself to a particular page and is glowing with a blue light (Spot DC 13). This book is open to a page that contains a diagram showing a strange device made from various pieces scattered on the tables (give the party **Handout C**). Blowing in the horn section of the device can instantly shatter the glass tank. Gathering and assembling the pieces requires a total of 6 rounds of work. Thus, 3 heroes could gather the pieces and assemble the device in 2 rounds, 2 could do it in 3 rounds, and 1 would require the full 6 rounds.

The book opens itself thusly and glows as part of a failsafe Sezrakan built into the device after his captain of guards, Aelfric, once got trapped inside the tank. Finding the book and the proper page without the glowing assistance requires a DC 30 Search check made on the east wall. Heroes examining any given part of the device would need a DC 30 Knowledge (arcana) check to recognize that the piece is part of a larger device.

Once used, the device falls back to its component pieces. It has no other use.

Glass Tank: hardness 2, 15 hp; Break DC 22.

Iron Chain: hardness 10, 30 hp; Break DC 26.

Binding Circle Trap: CR 2; magic device, location trigger; automatic reset (but inactive while body is in tank); DC 12 Will save resists; *burning flames* (1d3 [2] for 3 rounds) plus drowning; single target; Search DC 15, Disable Device 30.

The Locked Box: In the square marked “X” on the map is a small iron box with a crude padlock (Open Lock DC 20) – the paychest for Sezrakan’s keep. Inside are 2d12 [13] cp, 3d4 [7] sp, 1d4 [3] gp, and a note (never delivered) written by Alferic Huntingblade, Sezrakan’s old captain of guards. Give the party **Handout A**. The note reads (in an old dialect of Common):

Master,

Some of the men have expressed concern at the nature of our “guest.” We understand the paladin was once a comrade of yours, but surely there is a more appropriate place where the...remains...can be kept?

Also, several have complained of bad dreams lately and are acting erratically. I’m not a superstitious sort, but that sounds like what you described happening before the paladin was sacrificed.

*Your loyal servant,
- Aelfric*

Iron Box: hardness 10, 30 hp; Break DC 20; 1 inch thick; 5 lbs.

Area 1-4 – Bridge Over Troubled Water (EL 2): The bronze door in this room has identical stats to that of an iron door. The ceiling in here is 20 feet high. Read or paraphrase the following:

The door creaks open to reveal a short, stone bridge that arches over a foul pool. Blue smoke wafts over the top of the water, rising to the ceiling 20 feet above the bridge, which meets three other similar spans in the center of the chamber, each originating from a different cardinal direction and a set of double doors. The doors to the north are bronze, and those to the other directions are covered in rust.

Resting at the apex of the bridge are the bodies of 3 bloodied goblins. They seem to bear deformities similar to the one you faced before.

When the alchemost is detected, read or paraphrase the following:

Your eyes catch the viscid surface of a small mound of goo...it is clear like water, but impurities within reflect light like a prismatic, oily sheen. Bulging from the center of the pool is a near-transparent face that appears to have its mouth open in a silent scream.

Development: Long ago, the mage Sezrakan used the pool in his magical experiments. Though the waters themselves pose no threat to the heroes



(unless they jump in), the remnants of a thousand different enchantments have tainted the pools and given life to an alchemost. The ooze slew a trio of goblins and Feez, hindering the plot to set Gazihmon free. Although most of the gear was damaged, lost, or looted, the goblins still carry a Small cold iron morningstar, 2 Small shortspears, a suit of Small padded armor, a Small light wooden shield, and 4 intact *goodberries* (CL 2nd).

The goblin's *goodberries* can be identified with a DC 21 Spellcraft check. They are found in a small sack that has "*Better!*" written on it in Goblin.

The goblins were followers of Gazihmon, and each bears a small tattoo in the palm of his left hand: a four-clawed hand with an abhorrent rune inscribed in the palm set against a black sun (give the party **Handout B**).

A DC 10 Heal check made on the bodies would be able to determine that one was beat to death, while another was seared by flame, and still another was scoured by acid.

Getting Around: The pool is 20 feet deep and opaque. It is considered calm water, requiring only a DC 10 Swim check to stay afloat in. At the doors, the bridges are 5 feet above the water level, and in the center of the room they are about 10 feet above water level. Indicated on the map [by black dots] are six columns that support the bridges. They are slick

with slime, requiring a DC 17 Climb check to scale.

The bronze doors to area 1-5 are heavy, but not locked or trapped. It requires a DC 17 Strength check to push open the doors.

Down Under: One of the goblins, a personal body-guard to Feez, was a hulking brute (grown to Medium through a *permanent enlarge person*). Unfortunately for him, he fell in, and the weight of his gear pulled him under.

Just under the midpoint of the bridge, at the bottom of the water, is his body. His corpse still carries a suit of scale mail, a masterwork cold iron morningstar, and 2d6 [7] gp.

Paths not Taken: The three possible entrances to Sezrakan's keep all lead here. For the purposes of tournament play, sets of doors leading to whichever paths the party did not take are rusted shut, and the ceiling above them is obviously damaged (Search DC 5). Chopping or bursting through the rusted doors will trigger a cave-in, burying the doorway, the next room, and anyone standing nearby. Because this is such an obvious hazard, the falling rubble's CR is not calculated into this area's EL. This hazard counts as unusual stonework for purposes of creatures with stonecunning. [This is intended to keep tournament teams from exploring other routes.]

Rubble from Ceiling (2): CR 2; mechanical; event trigger (damaging or bursting open door); no reset, Atk +12 melee (4d6 [14], rubble); multiple targets (all within 5 feet of door); Search DC 5; Disable Device n/a.

Tactics: The alchemost attacks the party as they proceed north from the center of the bridge. It is lurking on the bridge [location marked "A" on the map].

The ooze is non-intelligent, so it always concentrates its attacks against the closest living target, attacking until its target dies or retreats beyond the range of its tremorsense or blindsense. If multiple opponents are equidistant from the alchemost when it begins attacking, it chooses the "lightest" foe (as determined by its tremorsense).

[For the tournament, use this sequence for the alchemost's alchemical essence special attack: 2, 11, 8, 11, 5, 3, 6, 4, 1, 4]

Note, the alchemost does not gain its fast healing ability unless it is in the pool; it loses the ability while it fights on the bridge.

The alchemost attacks until all intruders are slain, have retreated, or it is killed.

Alchemist: CR 2; Small ooze (aquatic); HD 3d10+3; hp 19; Init +2; Spd 10 ft., climb 10 ft., swim 10 ft.; AC 13, touch 13, flat-footed 11; Base Atk +2; Grp -2; Atk/Full Atk slam +3 melee (1d4 [2] plus special); Space/Reach 5 ft./10 ft.; SA Alchemical essence; SQ Amphibious, damage reduction 2/bludgeoning, blindsight 60 ft., fast healing 5, tremorsense 60 ft., immunity to electricity, ooze traits, transparent; AL N; SV Fort +2, Ref +3, Will -4; Str 10, Dex 14, Con 13, Int -, Wis 1, Cha 1.

Skills and Feats: Climb +10, Swim +10.

SA – Alchemical Essence (Su): Each time the alchemist is physically struck (whether or not it takes damage), roll 1d12 and apply the following. The effects listed below are not cumulative; the creature's alchemical essence changes each time. The ooze is immune to all these effects:

- 1-2: No special effect
- 3-4: Acid – the alchemist's slam attack also inflicts 1d6 [3] acid damage
- 5-6: Alchemist's fire – the alchemist's slam attack also inflicts 1d6 [3] fire damage
- 7-8: Smokestick – smoke billows from the alchemist's body, filling its square for 1 round; it gains concealment; note that creatures with blindsight (like the alchemist) are unaffected by concealment.
- 9-10: Sunrod – the alchemist illuminates a 30-foot radius spread for 1 round.
- 11-12: Thunderstone – the alchemist's slam attack creates a deafening bang; creatures in a 10-foot radius spread must make a DC 15 Fortitude save or be deafened (-4 to initiative rolls and 20% miscast spells with verbal components) for 1 round.

SQ – Fast Healing (Ex): An alchemist heals 5 points of damage per round, but only if it is submerged in the alchemical bath that spawned it.

Transparent (Ex): It requires a DC 15 Spot check to notice the semitransparent alchemist. Creatures who fail to notice an alchemist and walk or swim into it are automatically hit with a slam attack (plus its alchemical essence).

Area 1-5 – The Eldritch Library (EL 3): Read or paraphrase the following:

The doors open into a large library. Eight ancient, rickety-looking bookcases line the walls. Each is 12 feet high by 6 feet wide. Together, they look like they could have held hundreds of books, but only a few dozen tomes lie scattered on their dark, wooden shelves.

At the far end of the room is a trio of staircases. The stairs on the far left and right rise to glowing, blue portals. The center stairs rise to a heavy, bronze door with some kind of spiky writing on it.

At the base of the steps is an ornate, wooden table, 6 feet long. One high-backed chair faces the bronze door. A deck of cards rests on the table. Several of the cards are displayed face up in front of the empty chair.

If the party investigates the table, read or paraphrase the following:

The wooden table is plain but well made. It is also strangely free of dust or random debris. A deck of cards rests face down to the right of the empty chair, and six cards have been laid out face-up in a line, left to right. Below each card, a small, decorative numeral, from 1-6, has been engraved in the table's surface. At the opposite end of the table, a key has been skillfully carved into the surface. Its point faces the stairs.

When Agig is spotted, read or paraphrase the following:

This goblin, deformed like the others, lurks by the right-most portal of blue light. He is heavily armored, and hefts a stout staff at your intrusion.

Development: This was Sezrakan's library, but many of his tomes disappeared along with him. If the party asks, most of the remaining books are boring treatises on magic (without actually containing any spells), ancient elven tales, and several mundane books on divination. The latter could be important in solving the Tarot puzzle (see below). Also, a DC 10 Search check by anyone examining the bookcases [indicated on the map by a rectangle] will see that they are freestanding shelves. Any player that states they are looking at the ceiling can make a DC 13 Spot check to notice that several sections of the ceiling seem weakened and could collapse at any time; with a DC 10 Intelligence check they will be able to determine the exact squares where the ceiling might collapse (the shaded squares on the map). Creatures with stonemasonry gain +2 to both of these checks.

A DC 17 Search check on the bookcase square marked X reveals a concealed panel. Within the panel is an arcane scroll containing the spells *grease* and *protection from evil* (CL 1) and a strange map; give the players **Handout D**, the map to area 1-5a.

Unexpected Company: Agig, a fiendish goblin

druid, is loitering here trying to work up the courage to enter one of the puzzle-trap rooms. He is hiding by the portal (he has cover from the doorway sufficient to hide due to the elevation of the stairs and angles involved) [Hide: 13]. His dire rat animal companion is hiding under the table [Hide: 18].

Agig is frustrated that his master, Feez, is dead, and thinks this mission is a failure. He wants to return home, but he figures if he shows up with some would-be hero heads on his belt, he has a better chance of not getting killed for failing. Like the other goblins, Agig is a follower of Gazihmon and bears a small tattoo in the palm of his left hand: a four-clawed hand with an abhorrent rune inscribed in the palm set against a black sun (give the party **Handout B**).

Buckle that Swash: By the time the party reaches this point, they may be beat down pretty badly. Clever heroes can even the odds with some cinematic moves:

If the fight takes place near a bookcase, they can bring one down on the fiendish goblin or his rat with a DC 15 Strength check (2d6 [rolled by players] damage; DC 14 Reflex save avoids). If Agig is struck, he is pinned by the bookcase. To get out, he needs a DC 15 Strength check.

Any item launched or thrown at the ceiling, or an attack made on the wall of this area, will shake loose some rubble, causing it to fall in the shaded squares on the map. Creatures in the shaded squares must make a DC 14 Reflex save or take 2d6 [7] damage from falling masonry.

The party could trigger the *ray of frost* effect (see below) if Agig is standing near the table. His touch AC is much worse than his normal AC.

Three Portals: Stepping through the left portal *teleports* PCs to area 1-5a. Stepping through the right portal *teleports* PCs to area 1-5b.

The bronze door has three keyholes and is enchanted with an *arcane lock* spell (faint aura; Spellcraft DC 17 identifies abjuration). Two keys are concealed in areas 1-5a and 1-5b, respectively. The third key can only be discovered by solving the Tarot puzzle. Once all three keys are obtained, the door can be unlocked and opened, revealing a short flight of stairs that leads to the third, and last, portal. Stepping through this portal takes PCs to area 1-5c.

Written in Draconic on the door are the words: *“Three keys unlock my companion’s room; three keys unseal my friend’s tomb; three keys herald the world’s doom.”*

Arcane Locked Bronze Door: hardness 8, hp 60; Break DC 38; Open Lock DC 30.

The Tarot Puzzle: A *detect magic* spell reveals that the table is magical (faint aura; Spellcraft DC 15 identifies evocation), as is the key carving (faint aura; DC 19 Spellcraft DC 19 identifies conjuration).

If you have a deck of Tarot cards, distribute the cards below for the players’ examination. If not, read or paraphrase the following:

The artwork on the first card depicts a robed man with a wand in his hand. He is calmly tapping into the power of the elements and nature around him. At the bottom of the card are the words, “The Magician.”

The second card is upside down. It shows a young woman peacefully yet forcefully opening the jaws of powerful lion. The upside-down word is “Strength.”

You feel a wave of revulsion as you stare at the third card. A massive, bat-winged fiend sits dominant on an obsidian throne, flanked by the newly damned. The card reads, “The Devil.”

In the fourth card, a celestial hand reaches out of the clouds holding a majestic longsword. At the sword’s very tip rests a crown. The card says, “Ace of Swords.”

The fifth card shows a young man stealthily leaving an encampment, holding a number of swords and looking behind to confirm that he wasn’t spotted. The card reads, “Seven of Swords.”

The sixth and final card causes you to shiver. A skeletal figure in armor guides his horse slowly across a bloodstained battlefield. The sole word underneath is “Death.”

Frustrated players may eventually decide to just chop both the table and the bronze door to bits rather than deal with the traps. The table’s stats are provided below. Keep in mind that the table continues to function until it is completely destroyed.

Wooden Tarot Table: hardness 5, 40 hp, Break DC 28; axes bypass the hardness of wooden objects.

Reading the Cards: Anyone examining the cards can make a Knowledge (arcana) check, with the results depending on the success of the check, as below. If none of the PCs have the Knowledge (arcana) skill, one of the shelves has a book on divination, which includes a diagram of the proper six-card layout. It is up to the party to make the connection between the book on divination and the

cards, however; this should not be spelled out for them. Also, the book is for beginners, and does not go into esoterica (meaning reading it automatically conveys the DC 5 and DC 10 tidbits, but not DC 12).

DC 5: These are standard fortune-telling or meditative cards.

DC 10: The proper arrangement for the reading:

- The first card in the center
- The second card laid sideways across the first
- The third card placed under the first
- The fourth card to the left of the first
- The fifth card above the first
- And the sixth card to the right of the first

DC 12: The meaning of the spread (see below)

The Meaning of the Spread: If an adventurer succeeds on a DC 12 Knowledge (arcana) check, he can actually perform a reading of the cards. Describe the italicized information below to the players:

Representing the questioner: the Magician; the person who originally laid out the cards was a powerful being capable of turning energy into form.

Representing the forces opposing the questioner: Strength, reversed; the questioner was letting fear and doubt get to him; he resorted to desperate measures.

Representing the origin of the problem: the Devil; a dark, persuasive force was threatening to corrupt all those around.

Representing the recent past: the Ace of Swords; the questioner achieved victory over his foe.

Representing the energy around the questioner at this time: the 7 of Swords; something isn't quite right. Some deception has occurred.

Representing what's to come: Death; this may not represent mortality as much as it does the end of a stage, and possibly new beginnings

In the above context, Sezrakan was the questioner, and "recent past" is relative to when the cards were laid out. The victory wasn't what Sezrakan had hoped for because he didn't want to have to sacrifice his friend, the paladin, and he fears the cambion will somehow escape. The last card, Death, is

a very subtle clue that killing the cambion won't end things, but since this card happens so early in the adventure, the players likely won't remember this.

Right and Wrong: If the cards are arranged in the aforementioned position on the table, the key carving emits a brilliant, momentary white glow, and a silver key appears.

If the heroes arrange the cards in a different fashion, make any attempt to open the door without all 3 keys, or damage the table, the table flashes momentarily and a *ray of frost* strikes the creature closest to the table (ideally the one sitting in the chair) within 25 feet; this is a ranged touch attack, and creatures are flat-footed against trap the first time it goes off.

The goblin's *goodberries* can be identified with a DC 21 Spellcraft check. They are found in a small sack that has "*Better!*" written on it in Goblin.

Tactics: Agig casts *shillelagh* as soon as battle begins, and tries to attack the physically weakest or least-armored targets. He orders his rat to attack the same target.

If a blow does more than 5 points of damage to him, or if he is reduced to 2 hp or less, Agig casts *cure light wounds* on himself. In combat, he casts defensively.

Agig's location is marked "G" on the map; his rat begins under the table.

Agig and his rat fight to the death, but will not pursue fleeing characters. If left alone, he'll leave.

Ray of Frost Trap: CR 1; magic device; event trigger (if cards are placed incorrectly, or door or table are tampered with); automatic reset; correct layout bypass; spell effect (*ray of frost*, 1st-level wizard, Atk +0 ranged touch, 1d3 [2] cold damage); Search n/a; Disable Device n/a.

Agig, male fiendish goblin Drd2: CR 2; Small humanoid (extraplanar, goblin); HD 2d8+5; hp 15; Init +2; Spd 20 ft.; AC 16, touch 13, flat-footed 14; Base Atk +1; Grp -2; Atk/Full Atk masterwork quarterstaff +4 melee (1d4+1 [5]) or *shillelagh* quarterstaff +5 melee (1d8+2 [7]) or javelin +4 ranged (1d4+1 [3]); SA -; SQ Animal companion, darkvision 60 ft., link with companion, nature sense, resistance to cold 5 and fire 5, share spells, spell resistance 7, wild empathy +1, woodland stride; AL NE; SV Fort +4, Ref +2, Will +5; Str 12, Dex 14, Con 13, Int 10, Wis 15, Cha 6.

Skills and Feats: Concentration +6, Handle Animal +3, Hide +3, Move Silently +3, Knowledge (nature) +7, Ride +8, Survival +9 (+11 in above-

ground natural environments); Toughness.

Spells Prepared (4/3 save DC 12 + spell level): 0 – know direction, mending, purify food and drink, resistance; 1st – cure light wounds, ~~goodberry~~ (cast), shillelagh.

Possessions: Hide armor, 3 javelins, masterwork quarterstaff, dagger, healer's kit (4 uses left), 2d4 [5] goodberries (CL 2nd), empty poison vial.

Dire rat animal companion: Small animal; HD 1d8+1; 5 hp; Init +3; Spd 40 ft., climb 20 ft.; AC 15, touch 14, flat-footed 12; Base Atk +0; Grp -4; Atk/Full Atk bite +4 melee (1d4 plus disease); SA Disease; SQ Bonus trick, low-light vision, scent; AL N; SV Fort +3, Ref +5, Will +3; Str 10, Dex 17, Con 12, Int 1, Wis 12, Cha 4.

Skills and Feats: Climb +11, Hide +8, Listen +4, Move Silently +4, Spot +4, Swim +11; Alertness, Weapon Finesse.

Tricks Known: Attack, come, down, stay.

SA – Disease (Ex): Filth fever-bite, Fortitude DC 11, incubation period 1d3 days, damage 1d3 Dex and 1d3 Con.

Area 1-5a – Globes of Death (EL 2): Read or paraphrase the following:

The room seen through the archway ahead is illuminated in a peculiar fashion – the light source there seems to bob and move about, casting long shadows. The floor is constructed of checkered marble; most of the square tiles are white, but infrequently there are tiles of black marble as well. The floor is littered with dust and dirt. Visible near the center of the room is a low pedestal of some sort, upon which rests a glowing emerald key.

With an audible “whumph,” the portal through which you entered winks out.

An odd, whispering breeze whirls through the room, stirring up spiral eddies of dust.

If the PCs step through the doorway for a closer look, read or paraphrase the following description:

Hovering about in the air are small glowing spheres of a glass-like substance, most give off

radiance like that of a torch, some even less. At least two only flicker, barely giving off any light at all. The fist-sized spheres bob and flit about overhead, seemingly at random, never clustering together or staying in one location for long. Their weird luminosity causes long, harsh shadows to draw away from the walls and then retreat.

Development: As described above, the portal disappears after the party enters; creatures can still come into the room, but none can leave until they have the key, at which point the portal re-appears. The small spheres are constructed of a glass-like substance, and most give off radiance equal to a quarter-intensity *light* spell. A few give off only a feeble or flickering light – possibly the result of failing magic.

The whispering wind is magical. Every 1d4 [3] minutes a strong gust will blow through the room, automatically extinguishing all exposed, non-magical light sources, such as torches or candles.

Written on the soffit, or underside, of the entry arch is a bit of doggerel that may serve as a clue about the dangerous floor here. Any PC that specifically states he is looking up at the arch, or any PC that declares he is using the Search skill on the arch finds the script automatically; otherwise it requires a DC 18 Spot check. The writing is:

positive and negative, light and dark

to reach the prize must follow the mark

one is a sermon, the other a lie

choose with care or surely die

Tiles A-Plenty: The floor tiles are each inscribed with a sigil, visible under the dust on close observation (DC 10 Spot check notices the first sigil, afterward success is automatic). The graven symbols point to a walking path through the room to reach the key and exit the far side. If the PCs can decipher the tiles and choose their path correctly, the key can be obtained easily enough and they may safely exit. If the PCs merely waltz through the

Meanwhile, at the Tournament: Last Man Standing

Agig, the fiendish goblin druid, wreaked bloody ruin among tournament teams with his *shillelagh*-enhanced quarterstaff. In many cases, by the time he was downed, there remained only one hero...the last man standing.

Two teams managed to make the most out of their circumstance. In both cases, their sole survivor managed to escape the library and solve each of the puzzle rooms (the maze and the spheres), scoring the team much-needed points. They decided to carry the standard forward despite the odds.

This is how heroes are made.

room and disregard the tile marks, however, they will almost certainly trigger a number of magically trapped tiles spaced about the chamber.

Many safe tiles bear a symbol that instructs the PC to walk forward (in the direction indicated) either one, two, or three tiles distance. A single “arrow” directs the reader to move one square in the direction indicated; a double arrow directs the reader to step ahead two squares, etc. However, as suggested by the cryptic rhyme, the black marble tiles indicate an opposite, misleading path – so a PC landing on a black tile that directs the reader to “go west 2 tiles” should actually walk east for two tiles, etc.

Tiles A-Deadly: If more than 50 lbs. of weight moves over the center of a trapped tile, a nearby hovering sphere will burst, spraying part of the room with razor-sharp shards of crystal. Note that the weight need only pass over a trapped square to trigger it, so jumping, tumbling, or flying PCs are also subject to this insidious trap.

If a trapped square is triggered, the GM should roll a d6 twice and consult the following figure to determine which 5-foot squares are hit by shrapnel shards [1,5 / 3,4 / 5,6 / 1,3 / 1,4 / 1,2 / 1,5 / 3,5 / 4,6 / 2,4]; heroes in the affected squares take 1d4 [3] damage, and may make a DC 14 Reflex save for half damage.

Complicating matters are two thin, invisible *walls of force* (marked by bars on the map). They do not prevent anyone from following the correct path, but do prevent anyone from simply walking directly up to the key and taking it. Remember that the *walls* block shards from bursting globes.

Darkness Falls: As globes burst, the room becomes darker and the floor tiles will be difficult to read unless the adventurers have low-light vision, darkvision, or a source of light immune to the magical wind effect. This could make the going even more dangerous for the heroes. If three globes have burst, adventurers unaided by additional light (remember the magical wind!) must make a DC 8 Spot check to successfully read a marked tile (the player should not know if the check was successful or not, as unsuccessful checks yield a false result as the tile is read). If more than five globes have burst, increase the DC to 12. Heroes using their hands to feel the engraved surface of a tile gain a +2 bonus to their skill check.

[Use the following sequence for false reads: one east, two south, three north, one north, one west, two east, one south, two north, three west, one north.]

Reaching the Prize: The pedestal, which is attached to the floor, is carved of unornamented, white marble, now covered with a fine layer of dust. The alcove is solidly built and carved with simple but pleasing line designs. Sitting atop the octagonal pedestal is an emerald key. A successful DC 17 Search check of the pedestal locates a hidden catch; when triggered, a hidden compartment opens to reveal a narrow hollow that contains a finely made dagger...actually a *cold iron +1 demon-bane dagger*. Note that the secret compartment counts as unusual stonework for creatures with stonecunning. Sezrakan placed the dagger here for use in his final bid to destroy Gazihmon.

Assuming the PCs reach the opposite side of the room, they may exit via the far teleportation doorway, and they will find themselves instantly back at area 1-5. The PCs may not exit the room the same way they entered; these arches are one-way gateways.

Exploding Globe Trap: CR 1; magic device; location trigger; no reset; exploding globe (1d4 [3], shards, DC 14 Reflex half); multiple targets (two 5-ft.-by-5-ft. squares); Search DC 15; Disable Device DC 18.

Area 1-5b – The Riddle of the Spheres (EL 2): As soon as the heroes pass through the magical portal from area 1-5, give them **Handout E** and read the following.

Passing through the magical portal you arrive in a long rectangular chamber dominated by a pillar of glowing white lights that extends from the floor to the ceiling 30-feet above your heads. Within the pillar hovers a tiny object that winks with a crystalline glow.

With an audible “whumph,” the portal through which you entered winks out.

To either side of this column are two pedestals, each 4 feet in height. The left pedestal appears to be fashioned from black basalt shot through with veins of gold, while the right appears to be constructed of white marble shot through with veins of silver. The pair are cylindrical in shape and have flat tops covered with hemispherical indentations.

Scattered throughout the chamber are several spheres of different colors: red, blue, green, yellow, and black. All of the spheres appear identical aside from their color.

A large, steel plaque is set into the floor at your feet. Its surface is scratched by chisel marks and dulled by age and grime. Its words are written in the common tongue.

“To seize the key you must fill the pedestals with spheres equaling seven and twenty talents...one for each year spent constructing my keep. You will be punished if you fill them incorrectly. If you need help, implore ‘Sezrakan’ for guidance...be sure to say ‘please.’”

Development: A DC 10 Knowledge (history) check will determine that “talents” is an archaic term that means “pounds.” As described above, the portal disappears after the party enters; creatures can still come in the room, but none can leave until they have the key, at which point the portal re-appears.

The Pillar and the Key: The pillar is a cylinder of magical light that illuminates the entire chamber with a pale, white glow. Completely insubstantial, the explorers can walk through it without effect. While certain powerful spells (such as a *greater dispel magic* or *wish*) might affect the pillar, nothing the 0-level characters can do disrupts it.

Floating within the pillar, about 15 feet from the floor, is a slender, flat key of transparent, white crystal. The key is incorporeal while suspended within the light and can only be recovered once the pillar vanishes (see **Solving the Riddle**, below).

The Pedestals: The two stone pedestals are unremarkable save for the precious metals flowing through them and the 3 neatly carved indentations where the spheres go. As the *magic mouths* cast on the plaque hint to the players, the pedestals are studded with magical sensors that record the weight of any spheres placed in the indentations. Once these sensors record that 27 pounds worth of spheres have been placed in the indentations, the pillar of light is disabled.

While the riddle of the spheres is difficult enough already, the pedestals sensors are configured to only react to 27 pounds of weight (divided between the pedestals), no more and no less. They also don't register if two spheres of the same color are placed on a single pedestal. Therefore, if two red spheres are placed on the black pedestal, the sensors only record the weight of one of them (though this still takes up an indentation). Luckily, any spheres placed in an indentation can be just as easily removed.

Destroying a pedestal ruins any chances the PCs have of solving the riddle and acquiring the key.

Pedestal: hardness 8, 160 hp; Break DC 45.

The Spheres: There are 15 metal spheres lying about the smooth tiled floor of this chamber, each with a diameter of 6 inches. Three of the spheres are painted bright red, 3 are bright blue, 3 are bright

green, 3 are bright yellow, and 3 are jet black. While the metal spheres are all of the same size, their weight varies depending on color. Each sphere weighs a number of pounds corresponding to the number of letters in their color. Thus, the red spheres weigh 3 pounds each, the blue spheres 4 pounds each, the green and black spheres 5 pounds each, and the yellow spheres 6 pounds each.

Sphere: hardness 10, 50 hp; Break DC 30.

Solving the Riddle: To solve the riddle the PCs need to place 3 spheres on each pedestal, adding up to 27 pounds (13 pounds of spheres on one pedestal and 14 pounds of spheres on another).

Any hero attempting to weigh the spheres by hand can make a DC 12 Intelligence or Appraise check to find out that the red spheres weigh less than the others, that the green and black spheres weigh the same, and that the yellow spheres seem to weigh the most.

Once the spheres are in place, the column of light flares and disappears, and the key drops to the floor. Adventurers standing adjacent to the pillar can catch the key with a DC 15 Reflex save. If no one is close enough (or if they fail the save), it clatters to the floor, breaking a fake stone tile to reveal a hidden recess (see **Treasure** below). Once this occurs, the *magic mouths* cease functioning and the pedestals lose their magic. If the door to area 1-5c is opened and closed, however, everything reactivates and the spheres are ejected from their current positions.

Getting It Wrong: When the party has placed the sixth sphere in the pedestal, if the weight is incorrect, the central column of light will turn the color of the last sphere placed, and one of the following will happen (depending on color). Each effect is instantaneous:

Red: Waves of flame wash out of the pillar; everyone in the room must make a DC 11 Reflex save or take 1d3 [2] points of damage.

Blue: A Small water elemental emerges from the blue pillar. Note that it suffers from its water mastery (already calculated in its stat block) and cannot use its vortex special attack. It targets the closest PC and fights to the death; it will not use Power Attack.

Green: Poisonous green fog issues out of the pillar; everyone in the room must make a DC 11 Fortitude save or take 1 point of Strength damage.

Yellow: Nothing happens, but the column turns bright yellow and fizzles for a second. The device is broken.

Black: A black fog issues out of the pillar; everyone in the room must make a DC 11 Will save or take 1d3 [2] points of negative energy damage.

Asking for Help: The plaque responds to a request for assistance via a series of *magic mouth* spells if the request includes both the words “Sezrakan” and “please.” When it “hears” such a request, it responds with one of the clues listed below. It will only speak each clue once. To hear a clue a second time, the room must be re-activated [for the tournament, just read them in the order presented].

Red and yellow are the same as blue and black.

What is the value of a name?

No two alike on each pedestal.

Yellow and blue are the same as green and black.

Yellow is twice red.

Red and black is twice blue.

Yellow and blue is twice green.

The problem with counting is knowing what to count.

Blue weighs four talents.

Red weighs three talents.

In a non-tournament game, the GM should feel free to reward parties with bonus XP for figuring out the puzzle without resorting to asking for help. These rewards should decrease as the PCs ask more questions. For the tournament, points are deducted for asking for help more than once.

Treasure: A DC 15 Search check made in the square covered by the column of light discovers a small recess hidden in the floor under a fake section of stone. Note that this counts as unusual stonework for the purpose of creatures with stone-cunning. The niche contains a +1 *chain shirt* for a Medium creature and a Medium masterwork heavy steel shield emblazoned with the name of the half-elf paladin who sacrificed himself to imprison Gazihmon (Ebryllisain). Every round the shield is presented to the cambion, it must succeed on a DC 20 Will save or be shaken and unable to attack the shield's bearer.

Water Elemental, Small: CR 1; Small elemental (water, extraplanar); HD 2d8+2; hp 11; Init +0; Spd 20 ft., swim 90 ft.; AC 17, touch 11, flat-footed 17; Base Atk +1; Grp -1; Atk/Full Atk slam +0 melee (1d6-1[3]); SA Water mastery, drench; SQ Darkvision 60 ft., elemental traits; AL N; SV Fort +4, Ref +0, Will +0; Str 14, Dex 10, Con 13, Int 4, Wis

11, Cha 11.

Skills and Feats: Listen +2, Spot +3; Power Attack.

SA – Water Mastery (Ex): If the opponent or the elemental is touching the ground, the elemental takes a -4 penalty on attack and damage rolls (already included in the statistics block).

Drench (Ex): The elemental's touch puts out torches, campfires, exposed lanterns, and other open flames of nonmagical origin if these are of Large size or smaller. The creature can dispel magical fire it touches as *dispel magic* (CL 2).

Area 1-5c – The Crypt of Gazihmon (EL 3): As soon as the PCs have passed through the magical portal from area 1-5, read or paraphrase the following.

You arrive in a dusty, dark crypt. Judging from the spiraling dust that pollutes your breath, it's clear that no living creature has walked through this room in eons. Every inch of the walls, floor, and ceiling are etched with a flowing script unfamiliar to your eyes. Resting atop a stone platform in the center of the chamber is a shriv-eled, dust covered body.

In the entry passage, right before you, is the crumpled body of your master, Teomon of the Ocek! He seems to be breathing shallowly, but does not move. Behind you, the portal that brought you to this chamber winks out.

When Gazihmon awakes, read or paraphrase the following:

The withered body suddenly sits upright with alarming speed; thick clouds of dust cascade from its form. You see that it was once a child of elf and man, but what it is now you cannot guess. The noble features of the half-elf twist in malice as it speaks.

“Offal! Chattle! Trash! Pule and weep at the return of Gazihmon! Shed tears and blood for my delight! Arkaa! Hol’ftalkan’ignoth’f’tur!”

Development: The writing is Celestial; it reads as petitions for deliverance from imprisonment, forgiveness for offenses, and the downfall of a great evil. The half-elf paladin wrote these prayers before he offered himself to be Gazihmon's prison.

Teomon is unconscious and dying. If left alone, he will perish (see **Race Against Time**, page 11).

The shriveled form is the demon Gazihmon, trapped in the body of Ebryllisain, a half-elf paladin. His skin has blackened by time and corruption, and his hands bear terrible claws. Simply entering the vault breaks the spells that bind Gazihmon, who

takes a moment to recover his wits. As soon as a creature draws within 15 feet of his crypt, he regains full alertness and attacks (see below).

His last bit of dialog is in *Abyssal*; he says, "*Fools! Slay me and be done with this charade!*"

No Way Out: As described above, the magic portal has disappeared. New players can enter, but it's a one-way trip, at least for now. If the bronze door is ever shut, the keys return to their locations and the puzzles reset.

The Weakened Demon: Centuries of long slumber have left the cambion terribly weakened. Though he retains his Strength, the demon's Dexterity and Constitution have been reduced to 5 (already reflected in the stat block; the normal values are indicated parenthetically). And while in its specially crafted vault, the cambion cannot use any special attacks, nor does he benefit from spell resistance.

Gazihmon awakens if anyone approaches within 15 feet of his tomb, or if any damage is done to his chamber. His long imprisonment has made him strangely attuned to the environment. Any damage done to the room (post hardness of the wall) is also inflicted on the demon's form. If the party "damages" the walls or doors in an unusual way, such as driving iron spikes or pitons into the wall, then assume it does 1d4 points of damage, plus the character's Strength modifier, to the fiend. Objects like spikes and pitons (but not piercing weapons) driven into the wall with a hammer ignore the wall's hardness.

Conflicting Urges: Gazihmon's goal is to be slain so that he can shed the mortal shackles forced upon him by Sezrakan and return to his conquest of the North. The cambion originally intended for his goblin servitors to perform the task, but the heroes will make an admirable substitute.

Despite this ulterior goal, the cambion has no qualms about slaying his unwitting rescuers and feasting upon their bodies. After all, there are many more cultists that will aid in sloughing off the cambion's mortal coil, and the ignominy of dying to *servants* is too much for Gazihmon to stomach. Plus, he's a demon who's been trapped for centuries... he's not exactly in the mood to think things out. If he did, he might figure out that freeing him also frees Ebryllisain (see **Wrapping Up**, below).

Tactics: The cambion fights with abandon in melee. He targets the closest adventurer, or if presented with multiple targets, he selects the one in the heaviest armor. He hopes that by angering an obvious fighter, he can goad the brute into killing him.



Gazihmon ignores animals and non-humanoid creatures.

The demon is chaotic in his nature, however, and can only keep up such tactics so long. In particular, if any adventurer starts speaking about goodly gods or curses him for being a demon, he'll instead target that character, opting at that time to use his Power Attack feat for 3 points.

As is mentioned above, his special attacks do not function in this tomb. He fights to the death and pursues fleeing characters...he likes it when they run.

Gazihmon, Unique Cambion (Demon): CR 3; Medium outsider (chaotic, evil, extraplanar); HD 6d8-18; hp 21; Init -3; Spd 30 ft.; AC 16, touch 7, flat-footed 16; Base Atk +6; Grp +10; Atk claw +10 melee (1d6+4[7]); Full Atk 2 claws +10 melee (1d6+4[7]); SA -; SQ Damage reduction 10/cold iron or good, darkvision 60 ft., immunity to electricity and poison, one with the room, resistance to acid 10, cold 10, and fire 10; AL CE; SV Fort +2, Ref +2, Will +7; Str 18, Dex 5(23), Con 5 (20), Int 16, Wis 14, Cha 20.

Skill and Feats: Bluff +14, Concentration +6, Diplomacy +11, Disguise +12 (+14 acting), Escape Artist +6, Hide +6, Intimidate +16, Knowledge (the planes) +12, Listen +11, Move Silently +6, Search +10, Spot +11, Survival +2 (+4 following tracks, +4

on other planes), Use Rope -3 (-1 with bindings); Dodge, Mobility, Power Attack.

SQ – *One with the Room (Su)*: Gazihmon has been in this room so long, he's somehow attuned to it. Any damage done to anything in the room, such as the walls or the door, also damages him (visibly). This damage bypasses his damage reduction and resistances (but not the hardness of the objects damaged).

Wrapping Up

If the party defeats Gazihmon, read or paraphrase the following:

The creature falls to the ground, clutching its grievous wounds...and begins laughing. With each sneering guffaw, a black mist is expelled from the monster's mouth, forming a dark cloud that rises to the ceiling. In a terrifying voice, it speaks:

"Free...you have done it. Come, fools, join me in the Abyss...I have special rewards set aside for you..."

A mighty tremor shakes the tomb, and great cracks appear in the floor, walls, and ceiling. Through them you have glimpses of a horrific place, all jagged rocks and black flames. A never-ending wail of misery floods your ears.

"You will enjoy my hospitality for eternity..." the black cloud whispers in your mind.

Suddenly, from behind you shines a warm, white glow. Turning, you spy a form outlined in the light...it looks like the half-elf body you just slew, but its features are gentle. It waves you toward it urgently.

If the party enters the light, read or paraphrase the following:

The white light fills your vision, and for a moment you see nothing, but you have a sensation of falling. When you can see again, you are on firm, familiar ground, standing at the very spot where you first entered the crumbling keep in the woods, and your master, Teomon, lies at your feet, breathing steadily.

Where the keep stood is a great hole in the ground, filled only by the fading echo of demonic laughter.

The adventure assumes the heroes will flee the Abyss. Some headstrong players, however, aren't willing to ever flee combat. If a GM has such a player, rather than railroading them, tell them heat starts to enter the crumbling keep, and they take 1d4 [3] fire damage, +1d4 [3] additional fire damage for every round they delay. If they remain still for three rounds (and are still alive), the entire keep shatters.

Party members who jump through the cracks, or who remain in the crumbling edifice, burst into flame and are shredded by countless demonic talons. They can shriek regret for their foolhardiness for all time as they are subjected to mockery and unrelenting torment by the denizens of the Abyss.

There is no optimal solution for the PCs. If they succeed in slaying the cambion, it sets Gazihmon free, permitting the demon to be reborn on its home plane. If the cambion destroys the PCs, he exits the vault, regains his strength, then summons agents to finish what the goblins and PCs were unable to complete.

Thus are the twisted plots of fiends. The PCs are likely not to learn this for some time – or at least, until round two!

Before the Playtest: Rescuing Teomon

In the original draft of Chronicle, Teomon (then named "Temon") was slain at his tower, and the module was a mission of vengeance. Later on, he had been kidnapped by the goblins, but was dead by the time the party sets off to save him. One of the earliest playtest comments we got pointed out that it was a kind of buzzkill that Teomon could not actually be saved.

Also, back in those days, you could just walk out of Gazihmon's prison-crypt, so the question was asked, "*If we find him dead, why would we approach the slab?*"

As it turned out, that was a good question.

Round 2: Ironwood Tower

Scaling Information

“Ironwood Tower” is the second round of the 2007 DCC Open Tournament module, *Chronicle of the Fiend*. It is designed to be a grave challenge for 4 characters of 8th level. In a non-tournament setting, you can adapt the scenario for stronger or weaker parties with a few simple modifications.

Weaker parties (3 or fewer characters): If the party is few in number, they should consider contracting hirelings. The GM could make some available in Ander’s Farm or on the road prior to reaching the thorp.

In area 2-1, remove two gasbags. In area 2-2, replace the olanth mezzalith with an advanced (12 HD) shambling mound, and remove the summoned shambling mounds. In area 2-4, remove three blackguard levels from Nazradelk. In area 2-5, remove four vermin HD from the savage advanced elite praying mantis, which reduces its size to Large. Finally, in area 2-6, remove four druid levels from Iltreus, but do not alter Vrshoom’s vortex.

Stronger parties (7 or more characters, or higher than 9th level): This adventure could be run as is for a higher-level party, or for a party with more than four members. If the GM wishes to preserve the challenge for a more powerful party, however, follow these steps:

Add one gasbag to area 2-1, and increase the mist dragon’s HD by 2. In area 2-2, add one additional summoned shambling mound. Add 1 class level to Nazradelk and Iltreus, and 2 expert levels to Edreth. Give the savage advanced praying mantis 24 more hit points (its maximum). Finally, increase the Search and Disable Device DCs of all traps by +2.

Getting the Players Involved

For the tournament, this adventure begins with the party having arrived at the entrance to Ironwood Tower. For campaign use, the GM should devise an appropriate plot hook to get them there, or adapt one of the following to get the characters started:

- The villagers of Ander’s Farm have petitioned their feudal lord to investigate the source of the strange winds, which they believe to be the old druidic ruin, Ironwood Tower. The lord, in return, has asked or commanded the party to venture there to see what they can learn.
- A historian of some renown has contracted the party to venture to Ironwood Tower and bring back any strange artifacts they find. He is trying to finish

his research into ancient druidic orders and needs these items to fill in some gaps.

- If one of the PCs is a druid, he could have been trained in the tradition of the Hazen Circle by the descendants of one who left when Iltreus took power. Visiting Ironwood Tower would be a sort of pilgrimage for that character.
- While traveling, the heroes have heard rumors of a party of black-skinned goblins heading for the forest. The last time they encountered such creatures was long ago, back in the dawn of their careers, and they know full well that malicious humanoids intend no good. The party has followed rumor and trail to Ironwood Tower.

Background Story

In the distant past, as mankind emerged from barbarism, there was a schism among the druids as how to react to this progression. Some believed that with the coming of cities, mankind would turn away from the druids, who had served as protectors, guardians, and – at times – tyrants. Others believed it was natural for mankind to follow this path, but that the race would always need the advice of the wise. One such group was the Hazen Circle.

Although the high walls and crowded streets of the city were always strange to them, the druids of the Hazen Circle intuited that the cities, large and fearsome as they are, depended utterly on the outlying farms that provided their sustenance. Just as a wolf cannot survive without rabbits upon which to feed, the cities would wither without the farms. It was there that the Hazen Circle saw their opportunity to be of service.

Among the settlements aided by the Hazen Circle was the small thorp of Ander’s Farm. For long years, Ander’s Farm prospered in its quiet way, guided by the druids who blessed their crops, eased their weather, and cast auguries for them.

The Hazen Circle grew Ironwood Tower to assist them with the latter. Made from a great tree in the heart of the forest near Ander’s Farm, Ironwood Tower was hardened by natural magic to be as resilient as iron. From its summit, the kindly druids noted the passage of celestial bodies to aid in their divinations. They failed, however, to foresee their own downfall.

One member of the circle, the satyr Iltreus, served as an emissary to the moneyed urban lords and city fathers. Although wise, he was young and bull-headed, and no match for the wiles of nobility. After signing a disastrous

treaty with one particular lord that lead to massive deforestation, Iltreus was removed from his post in disgrace. His shame quickly turned to hatred, and finally to malice. The satyr learned the lessons of diplomacy, lies, and subterfuge, plying it against his peers. Slowly he turned the purpose of the Hazen Circle to one befitting his dark soul.

No longer would the druids increase a field's bounty or cast auguries. Instead, each settlement could only grow as much as it needed for itself. Those who violated this edict saw their fields devoured by locusts and their animals grow barren. Wild beasts attacked provision caravans bound for the cities as trading outposts burned.

Famine gripped the isolated cities. First the poor starved, but eventually even the feast tables of the nobles were empty. Diplomatic envoys sent to the druids never returned, and eventually the cities had to marshal their starving military forces to break the power of the Hazen Circle.

As Iltreus had anticipated, the city-folk marched against his followers. The satyr, however, had underestimated the ability of mankind to organize. He had expected each petty noble to send their own men to protect their own interests; what happened instead was that all the nobles rallied together and marched *en masse*.

The druids were outnumbered and outmatched, even in their home forests. Iltreus and his scant surviving followers fled deep into the wood, where the armies could not follow, and have not been seen in over 180 years, but the locals still tell tales of the "dark druids."

Just over a year ago, the aged Iltreus was discovered; not by an adventuring hero or a woodland explorer, but by a tiefling named Edreth, son of the fiendish goblin blackguard Nazradelk, a servant of Gazihmon.

It was explained to the satyr that Gazihmon, presently gathering strength in his home plane, will return when "the stars fly his banner" to plunge the bloodstained dagger of War into the heart of the North. It was explained that Gazihmon's lieutenants are engaged in a deadly competition amongst themselves to prepare for the master's return, and whichever pleases the master most will stand at his side on That Day; the rest will be cast aside and left to suffer.

Nazradelk, Edreth, and Iltreus struck upon a plan to harness elemental wind to lift and propel Sezrakan's Keep, which was sucked into Gazihmon's home plane after he was freed and now serves as the fiend's base of operations. Nazradelk, following the druid's instructions, procured slaves to construct the Confinement Bell, a magical summoning device, and Iltreus used it to call forth one of the most powerful of air elementals: Vrshoom the Skygod.

Taming Vrshoom with the Confinement Bell is a very protracted process, however, and even now Iltreus rests at the center of a massive vortex, asserting his will over the elemental lord. The atmospheric disturbance has been noted in nearby Ander's Farm. Remembering the old tales of the wicked druids, the inhabitants of the thorp have sent for help from their feudal lord.

The heroes are about to face an evil they thought defeated long ago, one whose fate is intertwined with their own.

Ironwood and the Tower

The old druids of the Hazen Circle permanently transmuted the substance of the great tree into ironwood long ago. This unusual material has several unique qualities.

While remaining natural wood in almost every way, ironwood is as strong and heavy as steel, and like steel, only takes half damage from fire. Spells that affect metal or iron do not function on ironwood. Spells that affect wood affect ironwood normally, although ironwood does not burn.

Ironwood Tower is a unique tree; there are no others like it (at least in the vicinity), so spells such as *transport via plants* and *tree stride* (which require the caster to enter and leave a tree of the same type) are useless to gain entry. Similarly, the tower is impervious to *animate plants*, *diminish plants*, *passwall*, *plant growth*, and *warp wood*. The *phase door* and *disintegrate* spells, however, function normally. The "strange magic" used by the druids (as referenced by the herbalist in the Player Beginning) was to cast *animal shapes*, or to wild shape, into a flying creature and enter through area 2-5.

Plant Season! Construct Season!

Several creatures on this level are either plants or constructs. Specifics of these types are summarized below for convenience.

Construct Traits: Constructs have no Constitution score. They are immune to all mind-affecting effects, poison, sleep effects, paralysis, stunning, disease, death effects, and necromancy effects, as well as any effect that requires a Fortitude save (unless the effect also works on objects, or is harmless). They are not subject to critical hits, nonlethal damage, ability damage, ability drain, fatigue, exhaustion, or energy drain. Constructs do not eat, sleep, or breathe.

Plant Traits: Plants are immune to mind-affecting effects, poison, sleep effects, paralysis, polymorph, and stunning. They are also not subject to critical hits. Plants eat and breathe, but do not sleep.

Creatures not subject to critical hits, like plants and con-

structs, are also not subject to precision-based damage, such as sneak attacks.

Tracking

Any hero can make a Survival check in conjunction with the Track feat to try to gather information about who has been in this area recently. Each area discusses specific information, which can be learned through this feat and lists the appropriate DCs.

Nazradelk's party (the six lackeys, Edreth, the Large krenshar, and Nazradelk himself) passed into Ironwood Tower through the Grove of Roots three days ago.

Player Beginning

For the tournament, read the following to the party. Non-tournament GMs are free to paraphrase as they see fit to match the circumstances:

Four years have elapsed since the events at Sezrakan's Keep, where you saved your master Teomon of the Ocek from a troop of fiendish goblins. Teomon never fully recovered from his abduction, and passed into the beyond a few months later. Since then, the four of you have wandered together, seeking adventure and earning renown as stalwart champions.

Most recently, a minor baron has hired you and your fellows to journey to Ander's Farm, an insignificant thorp on the border of his domain. The villagers have been complaining of "strange winds," and the superstitious peasants fear that the "dark druids," who once warred against the local city-states, have returned to their old haunt, a great tree in the heart of the nearby forest.

Even before arriving in Ander's Farm, you could see the ancient tree looming over its lesser brethren like a wizard's tower. As you approached, the sky grew darker by degrees, and you noticed a slow rotation in the clouds above the forest.

At the village, the peasants were beside themselves with fear. They begged you to go to the tree, which they call Ironwood Tower, and stop whatever was causing the unnatural weather. One of them, an old healer, took you aside. She explained that the druids used strange magic to enter the tree, but there was another way. A nearby cave eventually led under Ironwood Tower, passing through its root system. There, she claimed, was the way "normal folk" could enter.

You rested that night, and when you set out the next morning, the rotation of clouds had turned into a full-grown tornado centered on Ironwood Tower. Making haste, you found the cave the old herbalist spoke of, and set off to seek the cause of the strangeness plaguing Ander's Farm.

Areas of the Map

There is no uniformity to the height of the ceilings in Ironwood Tower; each area lists the ceiling height. There are no doors anywhere in Ironwood Tower. Inside the great tree, all walls, ceilings, and floors have the following statistics unless otherwise noted:

Ironwood: hardness 10, 360 hit points per foot of thickness.

Unless otherwise stated, this level is unlit. When a staircase is drawn on the map, the arrow always indicates which direction is "down."

Several areas of the map have their elevations marked, almost all of them as a negative or positive integer. This refers to the depth below or height above ground level outside Ironwood Tower.

Area 2-1 – The Grove of Roots (EL 8): The ceiling in this area is 8 feet higher than the elevation marked "-40" on the map (where the players start), and there is no light source. As the party begins the adventure, read or paraphrase the following:

Entering the cave mouth, you travel for about a half-hour without incident, but the longer you walk, the more damp the air feels, and the packed dirt surfaces turn to mud. Tiny, misdirected roots dangle from the tunnel's walls and ceiling.

In short order, however, you come across an enormous root, about 3 feet thick, that pierces the right wall before plunging into the floor, almost blocking the tunnel like a short wall. Beyond the root, the path opens into a hollow.

The cavern smells strongly of wet earth, and you can see by your lights that the ground is broken in several places by depressions and more thick roots like the one before you. They crawl along the floor, emerging from walls and burying themselves like so many worms. A thin mist swirls in the chamber before you, stirred by wind creeping in from the storm outside, which you can hear howling even now.

When the mist dragon appears, read or paraphrase the following:

Before your eyes, the misty haze begins to take on a more solid aspect, coalescing into a long, snake-like body with prominent horns jutting from its eye ridges. The muscular, sleek creature shimmers in grayish-white scales, and semi-translucent wings sprout from its horned back.

When the party spots one of the gasbags, read or



paraphrase the following:

A miniature creature, no bigger than a common housecat, trundles out from behind a root. It seems to be a greenish-black, mobile squash that stumbles about on four or five vine-like appendages. You see no sensory organs of any kind on the ambulatory gourd.

Development: In times past, a tribe of halflings who lived in the forest made a pact with the Hazen Circle. In return for agricultural prosperity and protection from the beasts of the wood, the little folk would send their best warriors to defend Ironwood Tower and other sites sacred to the circle. The circle's corruption by Iltreus broke that agreement, however, and Ironwood Tower was undefended.

This led to Iltreus ordering some of his underlings construct the gasbags, which did a decent job of protecting the Grove of Roots for a time. A few years ago, though, a very young mist dragon took shelter in the Grove, hiding from some treasure-hunters who had sacked its previous lair. Iltreus, recognizing the worth of a draconic defender, even one as generally passive as a mist dragon, offered it sanctuary. This proved to be a wise choice, as this mist dragon, now a bit older, is determined to defend its new nest better than its last.

Iltreus escorted Nazradelk and his followers

through here (he left no tracks) when they arrived to oversee the final stages of the subjugation of Vrshoom the Skygod.

Hiding and Visibility: The gasbags start the encounter hiding behind roots as noted on the map; the mist dragon starts in solid form. The stirring mist is insufficient to grant concealment or grant the dragon a bonus to hide in mist form (defeating the dragon's normal tactics). When it uses its fog cloud ability, however, it gains a +8 circumstance bonus to Hide checks when in mist form.

Note that creatures that use nonvisual senses to detect their enemies, such as tremorsense (the gasbags), are not subject to the concealment granted by the fog cloud if their targets are within range of their extraordinary senses.

[Hide check results: gasbag 1, 26; gasbag 2, 24; gasbag 3, 27]

Roots and Mud: The roots, like the rest of the tree, are composed of ironwood, and very resilient. They count as low walls, and require 15 feet of movement to cross.

Medium creatures behind a root gain cover (+4 to AC, +2 to most Reflex saves) relative to attackers within 30 feet. Small or smaller creatures gain total cover. Defenders cannot claim cover from a root if their attacker is closer to it than they are.

There are two depressions in this area, one close to the exit to area 2-2 and one close to the entrance. Both are filled with foot-deep mud; it costs two squares of movement to enter a square in this depression, and the DC of Tumble checks increases by +2. Even creatures with the woodland stride class feature suffer these penalties.

Ironwood Root: hardness 10, 1,080 hit points, Break DC 34; 3 feet thick.

Blocked Exit: The exit to the compost pits (area 2-2) is blocked by a thick mass of smaller roots. They are completely harmless, but they block vision, and it costs 2 squares of movement to enter a square blocked by these roots.

Creatures with the woodland stride class feature or under the effect of a *freedom of movement* spell can pass through the roots without penalty.

A DC 23 Spot check made at this exit will notice an old stone archway half-buried by roots and earth. If four rounds are spent uncovering it, read or paraphrase the following:

Your efforts have revealed a cracked stone archway. It is decorated by a carved repeating

pattern: the lunar cycle alternating with sun - bursts. The keystone of the arch has a symbol that looks like a unified sun/moon.

Tracking: The information below can be learned with Survival checks made at the listed DCs. Scoring a high check result learns all information with a lower DC. Note that in shadowy light the DCs increase by +3, and that tracking DCs are at -5 if the check is made in the depressions.

The mist dragon spends almost all its time in mist form, and does not leave tracks:

DC 10 – A party, more than six in number, passed through here some days ago. They had with them a very large cat-like creature. Most of them were goblins, but one was man-sized and hard to identify. They were traveling deeper into the cave.

DC 12 – A pair of very small, cat-sized creatures recently passed through here. The tracks crisscross in no particular direction and are very hard to identify...the tracks look like tentacles or plant vines.

The Hoard: The mist dragon keeps its hoard in the far northwest corner of this area, on the small

plateau (the squares marked X). The treasure consists of 900 gp, 9,000 sp, 3 aquamarines (700 gp each), a silver toothpick studded with ruby flakes (90 gp). There is also a *potion of cure moderate wounds* (CL 3), a Medium +1 *plantbane handaxe*, and a *lens of detection*. Finally, there is a blueprint in a scroll case (dropped by Edreth as he passed through here); this is **Handout F**. It provides a subtle hint about how to destroy Vrshoom.

[Starting Locations: gasbags = G1-G3, mist dragon = MD]

Tactics: The gasbags lurk in their starting positions, hiding behind the larger roots. As soon as they are able to act, they each delay (not ready) until an intruder stops within a move action of their position (as detected by tremorsense); then they march toward the intruder and detonate, relying on their improved mobility to stay intact on the (short) journey.

If a gasbag is in the fog cloud when it attacks (and emerges from total cover), a hero may make a reactive Spot check to notice it; if he succeeds, he may take an attack of opportunity when it enters his space; if he fails, he may not because he's unaware

5 Rounds with the Mist Dragon

Round 1: assume mist form and withdraw 35 feet southeast to the center of the pit

Round 2: silently cast *shield*

Round 3: hold an action to use *fog cloud* as soon as the party reaches the mid-point of the Grove (10 feet west of gasbag 2's starting position), targeting that square for the *cloud*

Round 4: after the *fog cloud* is in place, reposition 35 feet due west (atop the plateau) or 30 feet northwest (atop the plateau) – whichever better sets up a breath attack next round and avoids melee – and assume normal form

Round 5: use breath weapon on the party if it catches 2 or more PCs; if not, use move action to position for breath attack

Moving in the Mist

Heroes aren't able to see more than 5 feet in front of themselves in a *fog cloud*. If a hero tries to move more than 5 feet in a single move, his movement is hampered.

When movement is hampered, each square moved into usually counts as two squares, effectively halving the distance that a character can cover in a move.

If more than one condition applies (such as being in mud and unable to see), multiply together all additional costs that apply (a specific exception to the normal rule for doubling).

In some situations, a hero's movement may be so hampered that he doesn't have sufficient speed even to move 5 feet. In such a case, he may use a full-round action to move 5 feet in any direction, even diagonally. Even though this looks like a 5-foot step, it's not, and thus it provokes attacks of opportunity normally. Heroes can't take advantage of this rule to move through impassable terrain or to move when all movement is otherwise prohibited (such as being stunned).

Heroes can't run or charge through any square that would hamper their movement.

of the attack. If the gasbag is not in the fog cloud to begin with, the hero need not make a Spot check to get his normal attack of opportunity.

Note that a gasbag suffers no penalty to Hide for moving half-speed, and suffers a -5 penalty to hide when moving less than full speed. Also note that a hero battling the mist dragon when the gasbag emerges is distracted, and suffers a -5 to his Spot roll.

The mist dragon will likely be aware of the party as soon as the round begins, thanks to his high Spot score and 120-foot darkvision. He will begin his attack as soon as the party enters the Grove of Roots (see the sidebar for his opening tactics).

In general, the mist dragon tries to avoid melee with anyone in heavy armor, attempts to keep the *fog cloud* up (recasting it if necessary), and keep the party away from his treasure.

He works around the periphery of the *fog cloud* for as long as he can. When he assumes material form, he's atop a plateau on in the mud – always away from the party; when he assumes mist form he relocates and prepares to set up another breath attack. The mist dragon experienced abjuration magic firsthand when he lost his original hoard, however, so he won't continue to breathe on heroes that are particularly resistant or immune to fire.

The dragon normally avoids melee at all costs as long as he is outnumbered, but if his hoard is threatened, he'll target the most heavily armored hero with *ray of enfeeblement*, and then materialize to savage the adventurer with the lightest armor. He uses Power Attack for 5 points on such a foe, attempting to drive the PC away from his hoard. If fighting in the mist, the dragon relies on his Blind-Fight feat to give him an edge.

The mist dragon does not fight to destruction. When reduced to 10 or fewer hit points, the dragon flees through the entrance. If he can get there without making more than a 45-degree (diagonal) turn (limited by his poor maneuverability), he'll fly out in material form; if he can't, he uses mist form. If the

party flees, he does not pursue, but readies another fog cloud (if possible) for when they return.

Gasbags (3): CR 2; Tiny construct; HD 1d10; hp 5 each; Init +1; Spd 15 ft.; AC 16, touch 13, flat-footed 15; Base Atk +0; Grp -10; Atk/Full Attack slam +0 melee (1d3-2 [1]); Space/Reach 2-1/2 ft./0 ft.; SA Detonate; SQ Construct traits, darkvision 60 ft., improved mobility, low-light vision, tremorsense 60 ft.; AL N; SV Fort +0, Ref +1, Will +0; Str 6, Dex 12, Con –, Int –, Wis 10, Cha 1.

Skills and Feats: Hide +13 (+17 in marshy or forested areas, or areas of heavy undergrowth).

SA – Detonate (Ex): This creature may take a move action to detonate itself, releasing its gas into its square. The detonation itself does no damage. When this creature is killed, the gas is automatically released, requiring no action on the gasbag's part.

The gas obscures all sight, including darkvision. A creature in the square has concealment relative to creatures within 5 feet, and total concealment relative to creatures farther away. Similarly, creatures inside and outside the square have concealment relative to creatures inside the square. The gas settles in 1 round and is thenceforth harmless.

These gasbags are loaded with a modified version of burnt othur fumes (it skips directly to its secondary effect but has a lower save DC and does no Constitution drain). Any creature that breathes, who is in the same square as a gasbag when it detonates, or who enters a square filled by a gasbag's poisonous cloud, must make a DC 10 Fortitude save. Creatures making the save are sickened while in the cloud and 1 round after leaving it. Creatures failing the save take 3d6 [10] Constitution damage. Saving successfully against one gasbag does not grant immunity to the gas of another gasbag. No second save is necessary against the poison of a single gasbag.

SQ – Improved Mobility (Ex): A gasbag gains a +6 dodge bonus to AC against attacks of opportunity caused by moving out of or into a threatened area. Conditions that cause it to lose its Dex bonus also cause it to lose its dodge bonus.

Before the Playtest: Bring Out Your Dead, Part I

Way back when this area was first rolled out for playtest groups, there were **six** gasbags (whose poison was Fort save or die) and a plant-infused halfling ranger who accidentally was a complete clone of Aminfalost (down to the halberd and the frost bow). This fight took place in a mist-shrouded Grove of Roots, feeding into the dragon's natural abilities.

The first group to test this room was TPKed almost immediately. So was the second. So yeah, this area was too tough. Bad Adrian, no pie.

Advanced young mist dragon: CR 7; Medium dragon (water); HD 14d12+28; hp 119; Init +0; Spd 40 ft., fly 200 ft. (poor), swim 60 ft.; AC 21, touch 10, flat-footed 21; Base Atk +14; Grp +17; Atk bite +17 melee (1d8+3 [7]); Full Atk bite +17 melee (1d8+3 [7]) and 2 claws +15 melee (1d6+1 [3]) and 2 wings +15 melee (1d4+1 [4]); SA Breath weapon, fog cloud; SQ Blindsight 60 ft., darkvision 120 ft., immunity to fire, sleep, and paralysis, low-light vision, mist form, water breathing; AL N; SV Fort +11, Ref +9, Will +12; Str 17, Dex 10, Con 15, Int 16, Wis 17, Cha 16.

Skills and Feats: Concentration +19, Diplomacy +5, Hide +17, Intimidate +20, Knowledge (history) +20, Knowledge (nature) +20, Listen +22, Sense Motive +20, Spot +22, Survival +3 (+5 in above-ground natural environments), Swim +28; Ability Focus (breath weapon), Alertness, Blind-Fight, Multiattack, Power Attack.

SA – Breath Weapon (Su): 30-foot cone of scalding vapor, once every 1d4 rounds, 6d6 [27] fire damage, DC 21 Reflex half. In still air, the scalding mist lingers and forms a blinding cloud, but the wind from Vrshoom's vortex is interfering with this ability.

Fog Cloud (Sp): Usable twice per day (CL 3). A bank of fog billows out from the point designated by the dragon. The fog obscures all sight, including darkvision, beyond 5 feet. A creature within 5 feet has concealment (attacks have a 20% miss chance). Creatures farther away have total concealment (50% miss chance, and the attacker can't use sight to locate the target).

SQ – Mist Form (Su): As a standard action, a mist dragon can assume mist form at will. This is similar to the spell *gaseous form* (CL 1), but the dragon can remain in this form indefinitely, has a fly speed of 50 feet with perfect maneuverability, and can cast spells in mist form. While in mist form, it has damage reduction 10/magic, and is immune to poison and critical hits. The dragon loses its natural armor, but if it has cast *shield*, the spell (a force effect) remains in place when it is in mist form.

When in mist form, the dragon's AC is 10 (including flat-footed and touch); if it has cast *shield*, its AC is 14 (touch 10*, flatfooted 14). *14 against incorporeal touch attacks.

Spells Known (5/4 save DC 13 + spell level; CL 1) 0 – *acid splash, detect magic, ghost sound, read magic*; 1st – *shield, ray of enfeeblement* [3].

Area 2-2 – The Compost Pits (EL 11): This area is unlit, and its bowed ceiling is about 12 feet high. As the party enters this area, read or paraphrase the following:

Passing through the curtain of roots, you find yourself in a kidney bean-shaped cave that

bends to the left before arcing back out of sight. A thick network of roots carpets the earthen floor, nurtured by foul smelling compost pits in the corners. The reek is almost enough to water your eyes.

Mixed among the roots are small, clay discs, most broken but some intact. Each has a few words in the common tongue inscribed on it.

When the party can see the olanth mezzalith, read or paraphrase the following:

One great root, at least 12 feet high, emerges from the wall at the end of this cave. A passageway has been carved into it, and you can see that it slopes steeply upward.

A plant creature of some kind, shaped like a potbellied dwarf, but sized like an ogre, stands before the passage. Its head is a mere lump atop broad shoulders, and a low keening sound emerges from its toothless, gaping mouth. The beast sports a pair of horns and wicked talons made of a strange, black material. It looks like a third arm is starting to grow from its belly.

Lurking behind it is a pair of similar, but more familiar plant monsters, lacking the horns, talons, and extra limb.

Development: The olanth mezzalith tends the compost pits for Ironwood Tower, and in general is the tree's custodian when a druid of the Hazen Circle is not present. It regards any intrusion as sacrilege, even that of a non-Hazen Circle druid (much as bees will attack other bees from a different hive). It can cast *shambler* once a month, but it prefers to do so once every seven months or when they are all destroyed. The two summoned shambling mounds in this area are all that's left of a quartet the mezzalith called forth a few weeks ago; the others were destroyed by an invading band of hill giants.

Compost Pits: The several pits scattered through this area are filled with rotting organic matter of questionable origin. They are, effectively, patches of quicksand. A character approaching a patch of quicksand at a normal pace is entitled to a DC 8 Survival check to spot the danger before stepping in, but charging or running characters don't have a chance to detect a patch before blundering in. The momentum of a charging or running character carries him or her 1d2x5 feet into the quicksand.

Characters in quicksand must make a DC 10 Swim check every round to simply tread water in place, or a DC 15 Swim check to move 5 feet in whatever direction is desired. If a trapped character fails this check by 5 or more, he sinks below the surface and

begins to drown whenever he can no longer hold his breath. Note that creatures who are dying or unconscious auto-fail Swim checks and cannot hold their breath (see Tactics, below).

Characters below the surface of quicksand may swim back to the surface with a successful Swim check (DC 15, +1 per consecutive round of being under the surface).

Pulling out a character trapped in quicksand can be difficult. A rescuer needs a branch, spear haft, rope, or similar tool that enables him to reach the victim with one end of it. Then he must make a DC 15 Strength check to successfully pull the victim, and the victim must make a DC 10 Strength check to hold onto the branch, pole, or rope. If the victim fails to hold on, he must make a DC 15 Swim check immediately to stay above the surface. If both checks succeed, the victim is pulled 5 feet closer to safety.

Offerings: The words in Common are short petitions for bountiful crops, cooperative weather, or healthy children; some examples are below:

“Please bless our crops ‘cause we need food.”

“May Mirta deliver her child safely.”

“Just one good rain is all we need.”

“Hembel’s son has the palsy, please make him better.”

“Thank you for the yield of wheat.”

Each disc has imbedded in it one gold coin and one silver coin. In old times, the villagers left such offerings for the druids of the Hazen Circle. There are 516 archaic gp and 516 archaic sp between the free coins and the clay discs. The duality of gold and silver (sun and moon) is an oblique reference to the pedestal puzzle in area 2-3A.

A DC 14 Appraise or Knowledge (history) check would reveal that these coins were minted several

hundred years ago; each is actually worth five times its normal value to a collector. Neither the Appraise nor the Knowledge (history) check is passive, so a player must state they are making them. Anyone making a check (or being told about the rarity of the coins) is entitled to an automatic DC 30 Knowledge (arcana) or, if they are a ranger or druid, a DC 20 Knowledge (nature) check to know that the gold and silver refer to the sun and moon as part of an ancient druidic symbol of balance.

Tracking: The information below can be learned with Survival checks made at the listed DCs. Note that in shadowy light the DCs increase by +3:

DC 15 – A party, more than six in number, passed through here some days ago. They had with them a very large cat-like creature. Most of them were goblins, but one was man-sized and hard to identify. They were traveling deeper into the cave.

DC 17 – (near entrance) A large creature, bipedal but with very strange footprints, almost like roots, moved through here 3 days ago. It seems to have paced a circle through this area.

[Starting Positions: olanth mezzalith = O, shambling mound 1 = S1, shambling mound 2 = S2]

Tactics: If it has a higher initiative than the shamblers, the olanth delays until after they go. On its first action, the olanth casts *spike growth*.

The summoned shamblers attack in melee, striking at whichever hero is closest to them. If multiple opponents are equidistant from a given shambler, randomly determine which it targets; it stays with that target until it drops or the target moves beyond its ability to reach. The shambling mounds always Power Attack for 4 points (reflected in stats below).

The shamblers only use their improved grab ability to make room on the battlefield. A shambler will grab a stubborn hero and pull him into its square, thereby making room for the other shambler to move into the vacated spot.

Spike Growth

The olanth mezzalith casts *spike growth* at the beginning of the battle.

Any creature moving on foot into or through the spell’s area takes 1d4 [3] points of piercing damage for each 5 feet of movement through the spiked area. Any creature that takes damage from this spell must also succeed on a DC 16 Reflex save or suffer injuries to its feet and legs that slow its land speed by one-half. This speed penalty lasts for 24 hours or until the injured creature receives a *cure* spell (which also restores lost hit points). Another character can remove the penalty by taking 10 minutes to dress the injuries and succeeding on a Heal check against the spell’s save DC.

Spike growth can’t be disabled with the Disable Device skill.

The olanth does not willingly move from its starting position...it waits for the party to come to it. In melee, if it doesn't have sufficient light to attack its opponent without incurring a miss chance, it uses its faerie fire spell-like ability on that foe. If faced with multiple opponents, it attacks first any that have slashing weapons, then those in the heaviest armor.

The olanth can be lured from its starting position if the shamblers have been destroyed and the party begins targeting it with missile fire. In this case, it relies on its damage reduction to protect it from the *spike growth* as it closes for melee.

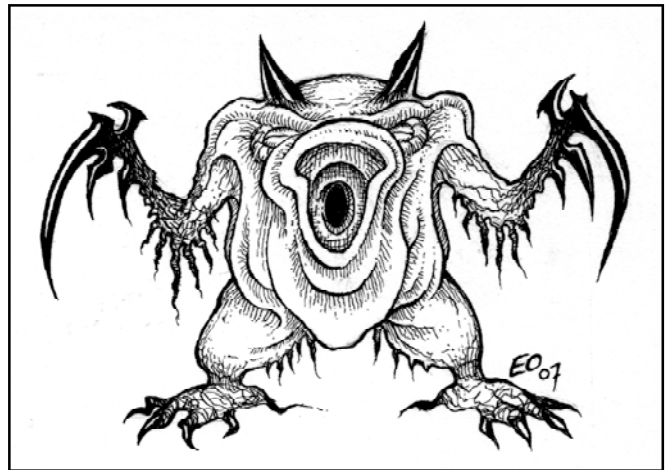
If a hero is dropped in combat (either by falling unconscious, falling beneath 0 hit points, or dying), one of the shamblers will break off fighting long enough to deposit the hero's body in the closest compost pit.

Note that the shamblers are not immune to the *spike growth* effect, but will attack as ordered by the mezzalith. All creatures fight to their destruction. The olanth mezzalith will not pursue fleeing characters, but it will order one or both shambling mounds to do so (although the party can likely outpace such slow monsters, who cannot stray more than 210 feet from their starting positions due to the ability that called them).

Olanth Mezzalith: CR 10; Large plant; HD 12d8+39; hp 93; Init +1; Spd 20 ft.; AC 22, touch 10, flat-footed 21; Base Atk +9; Grp +20; Atk slam +15 melee (2d6+7 [16]); Full Atk 2 slams +15 melee (2d6+7 [16]); Space/Reach 10 ft./10 ft.; SA Spell-like abilities; SQ Damage reduction 10/slashing, fire resistance 30, low-light vision, plant traits; AL NE; SV Fort +13, Ref +7, Will +9; Str 25, Dex 12, Con 17, Int 12, Wis 16, Cha 14.

Skills and Feats: Concentration +18, Hide +11 (+19 in forested areas), Listen +19, Move Silently +15, Spot +5; Alertness, Great Fortitude, Iron Will, Lightning Reflexes, Toughness.

Spell-Like Abilities: 1/day – *faerie fire*, *obscur -*



ing mist, spike growth (DC 15), *pass without trace*; 1/week – *control plants* (DC 20), *plant growth*, *speak with animals*; 1/month – *commune with nature*, *shambler* (cast).

Summoned advanced shambling mounds (2): Large plant; HD 11d8+33; hp 82 each; Init +0; Spd 20 ft., swim 20 ft.; AC 20, touch 9, flat-footed 20; Base Atk +8; Grp +17; Atk slam +9 melee (2d6+9 [16]); Full Atk 2 slams +9 melee (2d6+9 [16]); Space/Reach 10 ft./10 ft.; SA Improved grab, constrict 2d6+7; SQ Darkvision 60 ft., immunity to electricity, low-light vision, plant traits, resistance to fire 10; AL N; SV Fort +10, Ref +3, Will +5; Str 21, Dex 10, Con 17, Int 7, Wis 10, Cha 9.

Skills and Feats: Hide +3 (+11 in swampy or forested areas), Listen +13, Move Silently +8, Spot +2; Alertness, Iron Will, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (slam).

SA – Constrict (Ex): A shambler deals 2d6+7 [14] points of damage with a successful grapple check.

Improved Grab (Ex): To use this ability, a shambler must hit with both slam attacks. It can then attempt to start a grapple as a free action without provoking an attack of opportunity. If it wins the grapple check, it establishes a hold and can constrict.

Before the Playtest: Bring Out Your Dead, Part II

The compost pits were just as hard on playtest groups as the Grove of Roots, unfortunately. The first brave souls to enter this room were swiftly overwhelmed by tougher-than-normal shambling mounds summoned by the olanth mezzalith.

Originally, you see, the mezzalith had not yet used his once-monthly spell-like ability *shambler*. As the party entered this area, it would call forth **four** shambling mounds right on top of the party (instead of across the room). At that point, it was all over but the screaming.

Although in theory the room functioned in terms of EL, the actual lethality of the encounter was far, far greater in practice. *This is why we playtest.*

SQ – Immunity to Electricity (Ex): Shamblers take no damage from electricity. Instead, any electricity attack used against a shambler temporarily grants it 1d4 [3] points of Constitution. The shamblers lose these points at the rate of 1 per hour.

Area 2-3A – Trunk (Pedestal) (EL 8): As the party enters this area, read or paraphrase the following according to what they can actually see:

As you make your way up the winding tunnel carved inside the immense root, you begin to notice a brightening from up ahead...a steady light.

If the party continues, read on:

After a short climb, the passage ends in an oval chamber, about 60-70 feet across. Near the northern edge of the well-like chamber is a small, granite dais with a 6-foot, triangular pillar of smooth wood in the center. Embedded in the top of the pillar is a golden half-sphere, probably about the size of a human's head. The hemisphere emits a warm, golden light 60 feet in all directions; you can see the walls, but the ceiling is so far overhead it is lost in darkness.

The walls of this large area are covered in thick vines studded with nasty, curved thorns. They climb from the floor to the ceiling, which is beyond the range of your vision. The floor is old wood worn smooth and glossy by countless feet.

A wooden staircase lazily spirals upward, eventually disappearing into darkness overhead.

The source of the smoke smell was a small campfire, around which are spread six crude pallets made of poorly cured wolf hide. The occupants of the pallets are conspicuously absent.

Near the far wall is a pile of refuse: broken crockery, a pair of halfling-sized boots with the heel missing, splintered armor, and other such junk.

When the party can see the pillar clearly, read or paraphrase the following, and give the party **Handout G**.

Each of the pillar's three sides has a series of four small tiles embedded into its surface.

Development: The ceiling is 120 feet above the floor. The campfire, scattered trash, and pallets belonged to the six fiendish goblins that accompanied Nazradelk to Ironwood Tower three days ago. A DC 10 Search check of the pile of refuse finds six

black opals (1,100 gp each) and a wand of *summon monster III* (CL 5, 4 charges, see sidebar); the goblins were paid but never lived to spend it. The ruined armor is a suit of Small chainmail, and a DC 10 Search check of it will notice dozens of locusts embedded in the links; one goblin set off the trap and was attacked by the swarm, but Iltreus defeated it before the swarm killed the goblin.

As Nazradelk's Journal states, his followers were wiped out by the mantis in area 2-5.

Thorny Walls: The thorny vines that line the walls are similar to a wall of thorns spell with one significant difference: they are natural, not magical, and are affected by spells that affect plants. The wall of vines is 3 feet thick.

Any creature attempting to move through the thorns (such as forcing a way into area 2-4) takes slashing damage per round of movement equal to 25 minus the creature's AC. Dexterity and dodge bonuses to AC do not count for this calculation.

Creatures can force their way slowly through the vines by making a Strength check as a full-round action. For every 5 points by which the check exceeds 20, a creature moves 5 feet (up to a maximum distance equal to its normal land speed). Moving or attempting to move through the thorny vines incurs damage as described above. A creature trapped in the vines can choose to remain motionless in order to avoid taking any more damage.

Creatures with the ability to pass through overgrown areas unhindered can pass through these vines at normal speed without taking damage.

The wall of vines can be breached by slow work with edged weapons. Chopping away creates a safe passage 1 foot deep for every 10 minutes of work. Normal fire burns away the barrier in 10 minutes if it is coated in oil or some other accelerant, and magical fire burns it away in 1 minute.

Sun-Moon Puzzle: The Hazen Circle saw the duality of the sun and moon in the sky as a representation of their ideal of Balance, and frequently used this imagery. The triangular column was an affirmation of this belief because when one celestial body was dominant (as represented by the color of the sphere atop the column), the proper action is to press the tiles corresponding to the opposite sphere.

When it is gold (as it is now), it signifies the sun, and the proper tiles are those corresponding to the moon (top to bottom, 2-4-1). When it is silver, it signifies the moon, and the proper tiles are those cor-

Wand of Summon Monster III

For the tournament, this wand can only be used to summon the following creatures:

Earth elemental: Small elemental (earth, extraplanar); HD 2d8+2; hp 11; Init -1; Spd 20 ft.; AC 17, touch 10, flat-footed 17; Base Atk +1; Grp +0; Atk/Full Atk slam +5 melee (1d6+4); SA Earth mastery, push; SQ Darkvision 60 ft., earth glide, elemental traits; AL N; SV Fort +4, Ref -1, Will +0; Str 17, Dex 8, Con 13, Int 4, Wis 11, Cha 11.

Skills and Feats: Listen +3, Spot +2; Power Attack.

SA – Earth Mastery (Ex): An earth elemental gains a +1 bonus on attack and damage rolls if both it and its foe are touching the ground. If an opponent is airborne or waterborne, the elemental takes a -4 penalty on attack and damage rolls. (These modifiers are not included in the statistics block.)

Push (Ex): An earth elemental can start a bull rush maneuver without provoking an attack of opportunity. The combat modifiers given in Earth Mastery, above, also apply to the elemental's opposed Strength checks.

SQ – Earth Glide (Ex): An earth elemental can glide through stone, dirt, or almost any other sort of earth except metal as easily as a fish swims through water. Its burrowing leaves behind no tunnel or hole, nor does it create any ripple or other signs of its presence. A *move earth* spell cast on an area containing a burrowing earth elemental flings the elemental back 30 feet, stunning the creature for 1 round unless it succeeds on a DC 15 Fortitude save.

Celestial giant bombardier beetle (1d3): Medium magical beast (extraplanar); HD 2d8+4; hp 13 each; Init +0; Spd 30 ft.; AC 16, touch 10, flat-footed 16; Base Atk +1; Grp +2; Atk/Full Atk bite +2 melee (1d4+1); SA Acid spray, smite evil; SQ Darkvision 60 ft., resistance to acid 5, cold 5, and electricity 5, spell resistance 7; AL NG; SV Fort +5, Ref +0, Will +0; Str 13, Dex 10, Con 14, Int 3, Wis 10, Cha 9.

Skills and Feats: Listen +5, Spot +4; Alertness.

SA – Acid (Ex): When attacked or disturbed, the creature can release a 10-foot cone of acidic vapor once per round. Those within the cone must succeed on a DC 13 Fortitude save or take 1d4+2 points of acid damage.

Smite Evil (Su): Once per day, this creature may make a normal attack roll against an evil opponent and inflict +2 points of damage.

Celestial giant fire beetle (1d4+1): Small magical beast (extraplanar); HD 1d8; hp 4 each; Init +0; Spd 30 ft.; AC 16, touch 11, flat-footed 16; Base Atk +0; Grp -4; Atk/Full Atk bite +1 melee (2d4); SA Smite evil; SQ Darkvision 60 ft., resistance to acid 5, cold 5, and electricity 5, spell resistance 6; AL N; SV Fort +2, Ref +0, Will +0; Str 10, Dex 11, Con 11, Int 3, Wis 10, Cha 7.

Skills and Feats: Listen +4, Spot +4; Alertness.

SA – Smite Evil (Su): Once per day, this creature may make a normal attack roll against an evil opponent and inflict +1 point of damage.

responding to the sun (top to bottom, 1-3-2). All other tiles are distractions.

The tiles can be pressed in any order. When one is pressed, it remains depressed until another on that same face is pushed (so only one per face can be depressed) or until one on each face has been depressed. Each tile makes a “click” when it is depressed; there is no difference in sound between a correct and incorrect tile.

Getting It Wrong: If the wrong three tiles are pressed, it activates either a *sunbeam* trap (gold hemisphere) or a *lunar ray* trap (silver hemisphere, see Appendix 3).

For this confusion effect, treat a result of 01-10 (“attack caster”) as a result of 11-20 (“act normally”).

Disarming the trap deactivates the pillar's functions, thus disabling the silver hemisphere's column of light and the golden hemisphere's 60-foot radius of light. If a disabling rogue beats the Disable Device DC by 10 or more, he is able to deactivate the *sunbeam/lunar ray* trap but maintain the functionality of the pillar.

Sunbeam/lunar ray trap: CR 8; magic device; event trigger (solve puzzle incorrectly); automatic reset; spell effect (*sunbeam* or *lunar ray*, 13th-level druid, 4 rays (+9 ranged touch attack), 4d6 [12] plus blindness (*sunbeam*) or confusion 1d4+1 [3] rounds (*lunar ray*), DC 20 Reflex negates blindness or confusion and halves damage); Search DC 30; Disable Device DC 30.

Getting It Right: If the proper three tiles are depressed, the golden sphere rotates in position, revealing that half of it is silver. The golden light shuts down, and the area of the dais is bathed in a silvery light that extends all the way to the ceiling like a column. It remains this way until the “sun sequence” of tiles is pressed. Anyone within the column of light may use *levitate* (CL 13) at will. Standing in the lit area grants no special knowledge of this fact, but a DC 22 Spellcraft check will identify the effect as similar to a *levitate* spell.

Activating the silver light removes the *antilife shell* from the opening in the floor of area 2-5. The light is faint, creating shadowy (low-light) conditions in a 60-foot radius from the column, beyond that is only darkness.

Tracking: The information below can be learned with Survival checks made at the listed DCs. Scoring a high check result learns all information with a lower DC. Note that in shadowy light (such as that from the pillar when the silver sphere is in

place) the DCs increase by +3:

DC 20 – A party, more than six in number, passed through here some days ago. They had with them a large cat-like creature. Most of them were goblins, but one was man-sized and hard to identify. The footsteps crisscross in all directions.

DC 25 – (at the pallets) The pallets were last used two days ago.

Area 2-3B – Trunk (Stairs) (EL 8): The staircase, as might be expected, is trapped in two locations. A *baleful polymorph* trap is set into the staircase at +40 feet elevation (or 30 feet from the floor of area 2-3a), and an *insect plague* trap is set into the staircase at +120 feet elevation (or 110 feet from the floor of area 2-3a).

If the party is marching two abreast up the stairs as they enter the *baleful polymorph* trap, have the two lead characters make an initiative check; whichever rolls higher moves first (however minutely) and sets off the trap. If that adventurer fails his save, the other one can pull up short and stop. If the first hero makes his save, the other one has no immediate warning (even a shout is too late) and also enters the trap and must make a save.

Note that the locust swarms can fly, making them particularly dangerous on the stairs. They attack as many living creatures as they can fit in their spaces, targeting the largest creatures first.

Baleful polymorph trap: CR 6; magic device; proximity trigger (*alarm*); automatic reset; spell effect (*baleful polymorph*, 9th-level druid, see sidebar, DC 17 Fortitude save negates); Search DC 30; Disable Device DC 30.

Dog (polymorphed PC): Small animal; HD (as PC) (has same current and max hit points as PC); Init +3; Spd 40 ft.; AC 15, touch 14, flat-footed 12; Base Atk +0; Grp -3; Atk/Full Atk bite +2 melee (1d4+1); SA –; SQ low-light vision, scent; AL (as PC); SV Fort +4, Ref +5, Will +1; Str 13, Dex 15, Con 15, Int 2, Wis 12, Cha 6.

Skills and Feats: Jump +7, Listen +5, Spot +5, Survival +1 (+5 when tracking by scent); Alertness, Track.

Insect plague trap: CR 6; magic device; proximity trigger (*alarm*); automatic reset; spell effect (*insect plague*, 9th-level druid, summons 3 locust swarms); Search DC 30; Disable Device DC 30.

Locust swarms (3): Diminutive vermin (swarm); HD 6d8-6; hp 21 each; Init +4; Spd 10 ft., fly 30 ft. (poor); AC 18, touch 18, flat-footed 14; Base Atk +4; Grp –; Atk/Full Atk swarm (2d6 [6]); Space/Reach 10 ft./0 ft.; SA Distraction; SQ Darkvision 60 ft., immune to weapon damage, swarm traits, vermin traits; AL N; SV Fort +4, Ref +6, Will +2; Str 1, Dex 19, Con 8, Int –, Wis 10, Cha 2.

Skills and Feats: Listen +4, Spot +4.

SA – *Distraction (Ex):* Any living creature that

Meanwhile, at the Tournament: The Blind Cleric...

Being struck blind by a focused beam of *sunlight* fired from a magic pillar isn't fun for anyone. Having it happen to your cleric in the middle of round 2 of the DCC tournament, though, is especially frustrating.

One team found this out the hard way, leading to the strange situation where Tanlew had to deliver (touch) healing spells to a dying companion she couldn't see. After a few precious rounds of grope-and-peek as their companion's hp sunk deeper into the negative, they struck on the idea of having one of the other team members guide Tanlew to her dying comrade.

Their quick thinking under pressure saved their teammate.

...and Swarms of Swarms

Magic traps that auto-reset are not your friends. Just ask the round 2 teams.

Several teams had one of their fellows turn into a daschund. One team, however, marched two abreast up the staircase and didn't locate the trap. The second hero failed to react in time to his companion's encanidization (yes, I made up that word) and they became a pack of two. With only one *oil of resurrection* on hand, the option to kill one fellow and bring him back in his normal form still left the group with one daschund too many.

Then there's the team that had problems with the *insect plague* trap. They set off the trap, and in the process of slaying the initial swarms triggered the trap twice more for a total of **nine** locust swarms buzzing about and in general making their life a little unpleasant.

When in doubt, disarm.



begins its turn with a locust swarm in its space must succeed on a DC 12 Fortitude save or be nauseated for 1 round.

Concealed Entrance: The dense network of thorny vines obscures the entrance to area 2-4, the Planetarium, at +100 feet elevation (or 90 feet above the floor of area 2-3a). A DC 20 Search check is required to notice this door. This entrance is not stonework, so dwarves do not passively Search for it, but it is concealed, so elves do. Since the door is concealed, not secret, the synergy bonus to Search provided by Knowledge (architecture and engineering) does not apply.

Chopping or burning down the vines will alert Nazradelk and his allies to the presence of the heroes. The fiendish goblin's party was escorted into this chamber by Iltreus, who used a *speak with plants* spell to get the vines to part for his companions.

Area 2-4 – Planetarium (EL 12): This area is in shadowy light from the flower-stars of the Planetarium; the ceiling is 20 feet high. If the party has made a lot of noise and alerted the occupants of this area, a DC 25 Listen check made in the hall hears a faint growling purr; otherwise, a DC 10 Listen check hears a voice muttering in Goblin, “*Stupid warrior-slave might be good for something.*” As the party

Baleful Polymorph Revisited

If the subject fails his or her save, give them **Handout H**; they are changed into a dog. The subject takes on all the statistics and special abilities of an average member of the new form in place of their own, except as follows:

- The target retains its own alignment (and personality, within the limits of the new form's ability scores).
- The target retains its own hit points. The target is not healed by this change.
- The target is treated as having its normal Hit Dice for purpose of adjudicating effects based on HD, such as the *sleep* spell, though it uses the new form's base attack bonus, base save bonuses, and all other statistics derived from Hit Dice.
- The target also retains the ability to understand (but not to speak) the languages it understood in its original form. It can write in the languages it understands, but only if the form is capable of writing in some manner.

With these exceptions, the target's normal game statistics are replaced by those of the new form. The target loses all the special abilities it had in its normal form, including its class features.

All items worn or carried by the subject fall to the ground at its feet, even if they could be worn or carried by the new form.

ascends to this chamber, read or paraphrase the following:

The domed chamber at the end of the short hallway has innumerable black-petaled flowers along its walls and ceiling. Some of the flowers are open, revealing that the underside of the petals emits light like a candle. Directly across from you is a wooden shelf, placed on which are a several long-stemmed, glass vials with multicolored liquids in them. Each vial is labeled.

You emerge from the tunnel in the middle of the domed room; the last 10 feet or so of the tunnel protrude into the room and form a kind of observation platform.

If the party managed to get the drop on the blackguard and his followers, read or paraphrase the paragraph below, in addition to the above text:

Standing against the east wall is a large, catlike creature. It resembles a white cheetah with a boar's bristle-like crest and a tiger's musculature. The beast is being fed the severed leg of a black-skinned goblin by another such goblin, this one in ornate half-plate armor, with a crossed trident and greatsword on its back. They both look at you in surprise, and the flesh ripples across the cat-beast's face!

Development: This was the planetarium, where the druids would recreate past celestial configurations and project future ones. Rather than have a technology-based, orrery-like device, the Hazen Circle used the luminescent properties of these flowers to create a night sky and starfield.

Their process was to create an elixir that would stimulate some flowers to open their petals while forcing others to close theirs. Anyone looking at the walls or ceiling can make a DC 10 Knowledge (nature) or Knowledge (arcana) check to recognize what the points of light represent: the current night sky as seen from this latitude and longitude.

The elixirs were made in another location and brought here for use and storage. Atop the tunnel-platform is a large funnel. A few drops of one of the labeled elixirs poured into the funnel is spread to

the entire flowerbed by capillary action, triggering changes in the "starfield" to reflect the heavens at the approximate time labeled on the bottle.

The shelf across from the entrance has five long-stemmed glass vials. They are labeled (in Common): Early Spring – 3040; Mid-Summer – 3300; Mid-Summer – 2197; Late Fall – 3109; Late Winter – 3219.

Sign of the Time: If the orange liquid found in area 2-5 is poured in the Planetarium's control spout, the configuration changes dramatically; the symbol of Gazihmon appears in the "sky" (give the party **Handout I**). A hero can examine the other "constellations" and, with a DC 25 Knowledge (nature) or Knowledge (arcana) check, learn that this event occurs in two years' time, in the middle of autumn.

Hidden within one of the plants (that only opens when the planetarium is in this particular configuration) is a scroll with three Empowered and Enlarged *shatter* spells (CL 10). Noticing it requires a DC 15 Spot check. Nazradelk had it created as a contingency in case the Confinement Bell fell into the hands of one of his rivals; this scroll could easily destroy the device.

Nazradelk's "Journal": The fiendish blackguard's "worthless son," Edreth, goaded him into starting a journal four days ago. The entries are **Handout J**, and they allude to the Confinement Bell, the return of Gazihmon, and the existence of the orange liquid, as well as the location of the blueprints to Sezrakan's Keep.

Nazradelk's Torque: The blackguard, a loyal servant of Gazihmon, bears a special item: a *torque of recall*. With this device, Nazradelk can transport himself and up to three companions to the reception area of Gazihmon's fortress, as long as both he and it are on the same plane.

The torque is keyed to that specific location. The party will use it in round 3 to gain entrance to the demon prince's keep.

[Starting Positions: Nazradelk (unaware) = N; advanced krenshar (unaware) = K; Nazradelk mounted on advanced krenshar (aware) = M; Edreth = E; fiendish raven servant = R]

A Word on Dates

For simplicity, this adventure – specifically the labeled vials used in this area – refers to dates and annual events taken from **DCC #35: Gazetteer of the Known Realms**, which makes mention of the "current" year being 3200.

This should in no way deter a GM from modifying the dates to fit his or her own campaign, or changing the holidays from "Swordsfall" to whatever they choose.

Tactics: The tactics used in this encounter differ depending on whether or not Nazradelk and his minions heard the party passing through the thorny vines in area 2-3B.

If they did, then Nazradelk is mounted on the krenshar atop the plateau, waiting for the party to emerge so he can attack them. If not, then the blackguard is feeding his mount as described above. Edreth and the raven both start where they are indicated regardless.

The raven observes but does not fight. If Nazradelk is slain, it caws out Gazihmon's name and tries to flee. If it escapes, it eventually reports back to the fiend.

If Nazradelk is not mounted at the beginning of combat, he mounts the krenshar (he can't attempt a fast-mount because it's too big) and draws his greatsword. He then looks for an opportunity to cast these spells/use these spell-like abilities in this order: *corrupt weapon*, *bull's strength*, and *detect good*. Nazradelk will not attempt to cast while threatened.

If the goblin was forewarned of heroes' presence, then he should already be mounted and have cast *corrupt weapon* and *bull's strength* on himself.

In melee, Nazradelk and the krenshar both attack the same target, always using all attacks on that one foe. The goblin automatically makes Ride checks to guide his mount with his knees (freeing both hands for his greatsword) and to fight with his war-trained krenshar (allowing them both to fight normally). While ridden, the krenshar does not use its scare ability unless commanded to do so by Nazradelk (he only uses it against goblins). The beast accepts no other rider.

The goblin always attempts to claim cover from the first melee attack to target him in a round with a (free action) DC 15 Ride check, and always tries to prevent the first successful attack to his mount each round with his Mounted Combat feat.

The goblin prefers to target other physical combatants, and he saves his smite for any divine spellcasters or any bigmouth spouting off about how their god will smite him!

Edreth relies on his scrolls or wand as offensive weaponry, depending on the situation. He won't use a *fireball* if it means catching himself or his father in the blast. In order to use a scroll, Edreth needs to make a DC 25 Use Magic Device check (note that he has an additional bonus for scrolls), and he needs to make a DC 20 Use Magic Device check to use a wand. Edreth usually keeps one hand free to

make use of his *gloves of arrow snaring*; he only draws his mace in the most desperate of circumstances.

Nazradelk, the krenshar, and Edreth all fight to the death; the humanoids fear Gazihmon more than anything the party can come up with. The krenshar and Nazradelk always pursue fleeing adventurers, but Edreth never does.

Nazradelk, fiendish goblin Clr2/Ftr2/Blk6: CR 12; Small humanoid (extraplanar, goblinoid); HD 2d8+2 plus 2d10+2 plus 6d10+6; hp 89; Init +0; Spd 20 ft.; AC 22, touch 13, flat-footed 22; Base Atk +9; Grp +7; Atk +1 *flaming greatsword* +13 melee (1d10+4 [12] plus 1d6 fire [3]/17-20) or masterwork trident +13 melee (1d6+3 [8]); Full Atk +1 *flaming greatsword* +13/+8 melee (1d10+4 [12] plus 1d6 fire [3]/17-20) or masterwork trident +13/+8 melee (1d6+3 [8]); SA Aura of despair, command undead (+1, 2d6+5), smite good, sneak attack +1d6 [3]; SQ Damage reduction 5/magic, dark blessing, darkvision 60 ft., *detect good*, fiendish servant, light fortification, link with servant, resistance to cold 10 and fire 10, share spells, spell resistance 15; AL NE; SV Fort +15, Ref +5, Will +12; Str 14, Dex 10, Con 12, Int 10, Wis 14, Cha 12.

Skills and Feats: Concentration +10, Diplomacy +4, Hide +3, Knowledge (religion) +2, Ride (krenshar) +11; Cleave, Improved Critical (greatsword), Improved Sunder, Iron Will, Mounted Combat, Power Attack.

SA – Aura of Despair (Su): Foes within 10 feet of Nazradelk suffer a -2 penalty to all saves.

Smite Good (Su): Twice per day, Nazradelk may make a normal melee attack against a good foe with +1 bonus on the attack roll that inflicts +6 damage. Once per day, he may make a normal attack roll against a good opponent and inflict +10 points of damage.

SQ – Light Fortification: As long as he wears his armor, Nazradelk has a 25% chance of being immune to critical hits and sneak attacks.

Blackguard Spells Prepared: (2/2/1 save DC 12 + spell level; CL 6) 1st – *corrupt weapon*, *cure light wounds* [11]; 2nd – *cure moderate wounds* [18], *bull's strength*; 3rd – *cure serious wounds*.

Cleric Spells Prepared: (4/3+1 save DC 12 + spell level; Domains: Evil, Trickery) 0 – *detect magic*, *detect poison*, *mending*, *read magic*; 1st – *comprehend languages*, *divine favor*, *entropic shield*, *protection from good* (CL 3)*.

*Domain spell

Possessions: +2 *light fortification half plate*, +1 *flaming greatsword*, masterwork trident, *ring of protection* +2, *cloak of resistance* +2, *torque of recall*, his "journal."

Fiendish raven servant: Tiny magical beast (extraplanar); HD 3d8 (13 hp); Init +2; Spd 10 ft., fly 40 ft. (average); AC 14, touch 14, flat-footed 12; Base Atk +2; Grp -11; Atk/Full Atk claws +6 melee (1d2-4 [1]); Space/Reach 2-1/2 ft./0 ft.; SA Smite good; SQ Darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision, resistance to cold 5 and fire 5, spell resistance 8, empathic link, improved evasion, shared save; AL LE; SV Fort +11, Ref +5, Will +7; Str 2, Dex 15, Con 10, Int 6, Wis 14, Cha 6.

Skills and Feats: Listen +5, Spot +11; Alertness, Skill Focus (Spot), Weapon Finesse.

SA – *Smite Good (Su):* Once per day a fiendish raven can make a normal melee attack to deal 3 extra points of damage to a good foe.

Edreth, tiefling Exp9: CR 9; Medium outsider (native); HD 9d6+30; hp 69; Init +6; Spd 30 ft.; AC 18, touch 12, flat-footed 16; Base Atk +6; Grp +8; Atk masterwork heavy mace +9 melee (1d8+2 [4]); Full Atk masterwork heavy mace +9/+4 melee (1d8+2 [4]); SA *Darkness*; SQ Darkvision 60 ft., resistance to cold 5, electricity 5, and fire 5; AL NE; SV Fort +6, Ref +5, Will +6; Str 14, Dex 14, Con 16, Int 16, Wis 10, Cha 6.

Skills and Feats: Bluff +0, Decipher Script +15, Diplomacy +0, Forgery +15, Gather Information +10, Hide +14, Knowledge (arcana) +15, Knowledge (the planes) +15, Sense Motive +10, Sleight of Hand +12, Speak Language (Abyssal, Sylvan, Undercommon), Survival +0 (+2 on other planes), Use Magic Device +12 (+14 for scrolls); Combat Expertise, Improved Initiative, Magical Aptitude, Toughness.

SA – *Darkness (Sp):* Edreth can use *darkness* once per day (CL 9).

Possessions: +2 *chain shirt*, masterwork heavy mace, three scrolls of *fireball* (CL 5) [17 fire damage each; DC 14 Reflex half], *gloves of arrow snaring*, wand of *magic missile* (25 charges; CL 3) [two missiles per charge; 4 per missile], wand of *detect magic* (29 charges, CL 1), potion of *cure moderate wounds* (CL 3) [7], 13 gp.

Advanced krenshar: CR 4; Large magical beast; HD 8d10+24; hp 68; Init +5; Spd 40 ft.; AC 15, touch 10, flat-footed 14; Base Atk +8; Grp +17; Atk bite +12 melee (1d8+5 [10]); Full Atk bite +12 melee (1d8+5 [10]) and 2 claws +10 melee (1d6+2 [5]); Space/Reach 10 ft./5 ft.; SA Scare; SQ Darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision, scent; AL N; SV Fort +11, Ref +7, Will +3; Str 20, Dex 12, Con 16, Int 6, Wis 12, Cha 13.

Skills and Feats: Hide +7, Jump +13, Listen +5, Move Silently +5; Great Fortitude, Improved Initiative, Multiattack, Track.

Tricks Known: attack, come, defend, down,

guard, heel, stay.

SA – *Scare (Ex or Su):* As a standard action, a krenshar can pull the skin back from its head, revealing the musculature and bony structures of its skull. This alone is usually sufficient to scare away foes (treat as a Bluff check with a +3 bonus).

Combining this scare ability with a loud screech produces an unsettling effect that works like a *scare* spell from a 3rd-level caster (Will DC 15 partial). A creature that successfully saves cannot be affected again by the same krenshar's scare ability for 24 hours. The shriek does not affect other krenshars. This is a supernatural, sonic mind-affecting fear effect.

Area 2-5 – Storage (EL 8): Anyone making a DC 5 Listen check as they approach this area will hear the wind howling; a DC 25 Listen check will detect a faint chittering sound above the storm. This area is unlit and the ceiling is 20 feet high. When the party enters this area, read or paraphrase the following:

This irregular chamber is carved from the heart - wood of the great tree. Shelves line the 20-foot walls, most of them containing ceramic jars or implements of unknown utility. A knothole, large enough to ride a horse through, yawns open on the south wall, through which the wind howls maddeningly. The tempest outside has increased in strength since you entered the root system.

Across from the knothole is a hole in the floor, and in the southwest corner is a wooden staircase that leads back down to the large shaft.

Standing over a pile of black-skinned goblin corpses is a praying mantis of nightmarish proportion. Scythe-like foreclaws slash the air, and you note with some surprise that they are naturally serrated. The beast's carapace is dark green, and it overlaps strangely, even in the normally vulnerable joints. Its mandibles slaver mindlessly, leaking spittle on the wooden floor.

Development: The druids used this area to store goods. Among the treasures here are a sextant, a spyglass, two *elixirs of vision*, an *elixir of fire breath*, an *elixir of sneaking*, and two *elixirs of swimming*. The mantis destroyed the rest of the magical potables as it searched for food. There are also two long-stemmed glass vials. One is filled with clear liquid and is labeled in Common "Swordfall, 3270." The other is labeled (in Goblin) THAT DAY. These vials are used to operate the Planetarium (area 2-4).

A DC 20 Search check made on the west wall will

find a sheaf of paper. This is the satyr's contract with Nazradelk as negotiated by Edreth, **Handout K**.

When the wind got irregular, the mantis took shelter in this knothole. It is waiting for the wind to subside before venturing out again. Nazradelk was kind enough to supply it with a snack two days ago, but it's ravenous now...a perfect time for the heroes to arrive!

Dead Goblins: Nazradelk heard the ruckus created by the arrival of the mantis two days ago, and sent his minions to check it out. It slaughtered them easily. Each of the six died equipped with a chain shirt, a battleaxe, a shortspear (all sized for Small creatures), and a sack bulging with 200 gp.

Entrances and Exits: The secret door indicated on the map pulls open and leads to a staircase that ascends to the summit.

The staircase is the terminus of the one that begins in area 2-3A and moves through area 2-3B.

The knothole leads to the exterior of Ironwood Tower. There is no branch beyond the hole. Players, being the contrary things that they are, may attempt to venture outside from this point. The GM should remind them that the wind outside is ferocious and may make climbing, or even flying, hazardous; the wind outside is severe in strength (see sidebar, area 2-6).

The hole in the floor normally has a thin *antilife shell* (CL 13) covering its opening, but this effect goes away if the silver light is active in area 2-3A. This is

how the druids would ascend to the observatory. If the silver light goes away for any reason, the *antilife shell* springs back into being instantly.

Ironwood Secret Door: hardness 10, 60 hit points, Break DC 28, 2 inches thick, DC 20 Search DC.

[Starting Positions: savage advanced elite praying mantis = M]

Tactics: This mantis is a rare specimen. Nonetheless, it is essentially mindless, and fights accordingly. It always attacks whoever is closest; if facing more than one opponent, it claws an opponent further away and bites the closest. If it faces only one melee opponent, it will use its improved grab ability to start eating an unfortunate hero! The vermin doesn't recognize non-melee opponents as threats, and can't make the connection between a gesticulating food-hero and a *magic missile* spell.

Since it is hungry, the mantis ignores some threats in favor of attacking substantive "food," namely summoned locust swarms (from the trap in 2-3b), because each individual locust is too small, and summoned earth elementals (from the wand in area 2-3a), because it doesn't eat earth.

This vermin fights to its destruction, and will pursue fleeing characters; it will even squeeze down the stairs or through the hole in the floor (if the *antilife shell* is down) in pursuit of the party. The mantis will follow them through whichever path the PCs took; it doesn't realize they both lead to the same place. If it is prevented from following the party (through clever use of the *antimagic shell* or some other

Climbing Fools

Climbing the remaining 50 feet to the summit of Ironwood Tower requires a DC 15 Climb check. Climbing creatures without a climb speed are not as stable as those standing on solid ground (evidenced by their lack of Dexterity bonus to AC while climbing). Although they are not treated as one size category smaller for determining the severity of wind effect, they are treated as flying creatures for purposes of determining the specific effects of being checked, knocked down, or blown away. Creatures with a climb speed are considered "on the ground" for purpose of determining specific effect of being checked, knocked down, or blown away.

Any climbing creature that is "rolled" or "blown back" a distance by being checked, knocked down, or blown away, moves that distance laterally and begins to fall. Creatures fall at terrific speed, and will reach the ground from any point on Ironwood Tower in 1 round.

The GM should feel free to grant one opportunity for a falling character to catch himself (DC 35 Climb check, assuming there is a suitable surface handy). Also, if the path of the fall takes the unfortunate adventurer past any of his or her allies, they may attempt to catch the falling character. This requires both a melee touch attack and a DC 25 Climb check, and the falling hero may elect to not apply their Dexterity bonus to AC.

This move is not without risk, however. If the catch succeeds but the total weight of the falling character and the weight of the catching character's equipment is greater than the heavy load limit of the catching character, both start to fall. If the check fails by 4 or less, the catching character failed to stop their ally's fall, and if it fails by 5 or more, they failed to stop their ally's fall and begin falling themselves.

effect), it will remain in this area and wait...a praying mantis is patient. Note that activating the antilife shell while the mantis is squeezing through the hole in the floor counts as using it offensively, which cancels out the abjuration. The mantis is too large to pursue adventurers through the secret door.

Savage advanced elite giant praying mantis: CR 8; Huge vermin; HD 12d8+84; hp 138; Init +2; Spd 30 ft., fly 50 ft. (poor); AC 20, touch 10, flat-footed 18; Base Atk +9; Grp +28; Atk claws +18 melee (3d6+11 [21]); Full Atk claws +18 melee (3d6+11 [21]) and bite +13 melee (2d6+5 [12]); Space/Reach 15 ft./10 ft.; SA Improved grab; SQ Darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision, scent, vermin traits; AL N; SV Fort +15, Ref +6, Will +8; Str 32, Dex 14, Con 24, Int –, Wis 18, Cha 8.

Skills and Feats: Hide -2 (+6 when surrounded by foliage), Listen +6, Spot +10; Alertness.

SA – Improved Grab (Ex): To use this ability, a giant praying mantis must hit with its claws attack. If it wins the ensuing grapple check, it establishes a hold and makes a bite attack as a primary attack (at its full attack bonus).

Area 2-6 – Summit (EL 13): The winds here are severe in strength (see above); the lighting will be appropriate for the time of day during a severe storm [consider it to be noon, so the light, although dim, is sufficient to deny concealment to any creatures]. As the party ascends to the sky, read or paraphrase the following:

At last you emerge from the tree to find yourself high in the sky, almost 200 feet by your best estimation. The top of the great tree is divided into three platforms made of stunted branches, each at about the same height. The three platforms are connected by ornate, sturdy bridges made of the same glossy wood as the rest of the tree. Combined, they create a “u”-shape.

The wind whips and howls, catching at your clothing and even threatening to lift the smaller members of your group. On the largest of the platforms, to the east, you see a spinning funnel cloud reaching 50 feet into the sky in a perilous vortex.

In the epicenter of the tornado, apparently undisturbed by the wind, is a sizeable golden bell, every inch of its surface covered in arcane runes illegible at this distance. Sitting atop the instrument is an old man clad in white robes. He has a pair of curling ram horns on his head, and you can see that his feet end in hooves. An eagle rests on his shoulder, unruffled by the bizarre weather. The man’s arms are raised and his teeth clenched, as if in tremendous effort.

If the party slays Vrshoom for the “poor” ending of the final encounter, read or paraphrase the following:

Concentrating, you conjure a being of elemental earth forth into the whirling gyre. As stone meets wind, as the inimical substances are brought together, the tornado and the earth elemental both scream, one a thunderous shout, and the other a deep rumble. Suddenly, the wind is simply no more, still and dead. There is no sign of the creature you summoned.

The old man howls at you from his position on the bell. “What have you done? WHAT HAVE YOU DONE?! I was to tame Vrshoom! I was to return in POWER!” He seems incensed beyond all reason.

Development: The Hazen Circle used to bring optical instruments up here to stargaze and note changes in celestial bodies.

Iltreus had the Confining Bell delivered here to achieve maximum distance between Vrshoom and anyone who could exploit his weakness...elemental earth (see below).

If left to his own devices for another six hours, Iltreus will complete his ritual and bind Vrshoom into the Confining Bell. If Nazradelk is already slain, the satyr will consider his contract void, and use the elemental demigod for his own purposes.

Vrshoom’s Vortex (CR 10): The vortex involves several wind conditions that increase in strength the closer one gets to Iltreus. The satyr and his eagle animal companion are in the eye of the vortex, and are unaffected by the wind.

The wind can have several effects on creatures that fail Fortitude saves; the exact effect is determined by their size. These saves must be made every round the creature is exposed to the wind. Flying creatures are considered to be one size smaller when determining how the wind affects them (for example, in strong wind, a Small flying creature is treated as being Tiny, and so would be blown back 1d6x5 feet).

Checked: The creature is unable to move forward against the wind. Flying creatures are blown back 1d6x5 [15] feet.

Knocked Down: The creature is knocked prone. Flying creatures are blown back 1d6x10 [30] feet.

Blown Away: Creatures are knocked prone and rolled 1d4x10 [20] feet, taking 1d4 [2] nonlethal damage per 10 feet. Flying creatures are blown back 2d6x10 [70] feet and take 2d6 [7] points of



nonlethal damage due to battering and buffeting.

Severe Wind Zone – Gusts automatically extinguish unprotected flames (candles, torches, and the like) and have a 50% chance of extinguishing protected flames, like a lantern. Such gusts impose a -4 penalty on ranged attack rolls and on Listen checks.

Tiny creatures are blown away, Small creatures are knocked down, and Medium creatures are checked; Fortitude DC 15 negates.

Windstorm Zone – Windstorms automatically extinguish unprotected flames and have a 75% chance of blowing out protected flames, such as those of lanterns. Ranged weapon attacks are impossible, and even siege weapons have a -4 penalty on attack rolls. Listen checks are at a -8 penalty due to the howling of the wind.

Huge or Large creatures are checked, Medium creatures are knocked down, and Small or smaller creatures are blown away; Fortitude DC 18 negates.

Tornado Zone – Within the tornado's area of effect, all nonmagical flames (open or shielded, such as in a lantern) are extinguished, all ranged attacks are impossible (even with siege weapons), and Listen checks auto-fail.

Gargantuan or Colossal creatures are checked,

Huge creatures are knocked down*, and Large or smaller creatures are blown away*; DC 30 Fortitude negates.

*Creatures close enough to be affected by the tornado-force winds are sucked toward the funnel cloud by the amount they would be pushed back. Those who enter the squares occupied by the funnel cloud are picked up and whirled around for 1d10 [5] rounds, taking 6d6 [21] points of damage per round, before being violently expelled out the top of the funnel 2d6x10 [70] feet in a random direction [5,6,2,6,8,5,4,1,7,3], measured from the center of funnel cloud. The funnel is 50 feet tall. The creature then takes falling damage appropriate to the distance fallen [4 points per full 10 feet fallen]. Those who fall beneath the tree level indicated on the map have a 20% [89, 53, 59, 78, 61, 62, 16, 79] chance per 20 feet fallen to be lucky enough to land on a branch. Creatures unfortunate enough to miss all branches take 20d6 [80] falling damage, and end up at the base of Ironwood Tower.

Hazard, not Creature: Although Vrshoom is referred to as a creature that can be killed, due to its mishandling by Itreus, it is essentially a hazard and not a creature...it exists only as a tornado now. It can only be targeted or affected by spells that affect weather (such as *control weather* or *control winds*). If any such spells are cast on Vrshoom, it

gets a special Will save (with a +24 bonus) unless the caster knows Vrshoom's true name (as does Illtreus). The true name does not appear anywhere in the adventure except in Illtreus' head, and he would rather die than give it up (although enchantments like *charm monster* or *dominate monster* could retrieve the information).

Dispelling the Vortex: By exploring Ironwood Tower, the party may have learned of two methods to overcome Vrshoom: either destroy it by summoning an earth elemental into its mass or free the legendary elemental by shattering the Confinement Bell.

The elemental can be of any size and summoned by any means: the spells *summon monster V*, *summon nature's ally IV*, and *lesser planar ally* all suffice, as does the *wand of summon monster III* taken from the junk pile in area 2-3a...if it has any charges left!

The Confinement Bell can be shattered either through physical effort or by using the *shatter* spell, such as with the Empowered and Enlarged *scroll of shatter* found in area 2-4. Similarly, a clever hero could use a *telekinesis* spell or effect to topple the bell off the top of Ironwood Tower. The bell is not yet magical; it won't be until Illtreus binds Vrshoom inside it.

The Confinement Bell: hardness 5, 135 hit points, Break DC 22, vulnerable to sonic attacks, has spell resistance 20 (or SR 0 vs. sonic spells), 100 lbs.

[Starting Locations: Illtreus and eagle companion =]

Tactics: Illtreus is disgusted by the interruption of his ritual, but he can break off occasionally to cast a spell to slow down the party. As long as the vortex is intact, Illtreus must spend a full-round action (that provokes an attack of opportunity, if it matters) at least once every three rounds to concentrate on the vortex.

The satyr summons defenders before switching to offensive spells. He begins by trading *wall of thorns* to cast *summon nature's ally V* for a giant constrictor

snake. If the snake is still alive one round later, he casts *call lightning storm*; if not, he'll trade *ice storm* to summon dire wolves.

In subsequent rounds, as long as the vortex is intact, Illtreus targets heroes with lightning bolts from the *lightning storm* and continues summoning creatures to hedge out the party. Illtreus saves *rusting grasp* to trade for *summon nature's ally IV* for a Huge viper if the party reaches his platform (reasoning that a Huge creature won't be as affected by the winds as the smaller heroes). The first hero to close with Illtreus gets the *ironwood bands of binding* thrown at them.

If a particular hero is consistently disrupting his *summon nature's ally* spells, Illtreus targets that hero with his offensive spells.

If Vrshoom is slain, the druid uses *wild shape* to assume dire ape form; he and his eagle animal companion both attack any surviving party members. Illtreus alternates between physical attacks and casting *flame strike*, *poison*, and *chill metal* (in that order).

The druid does not fight to his death; if reduced to 15 or fewer hit points he releases Vrshoom (if applicable) and *wild shapes* into eagle form in order to escape.

Illtreus, venerable satyr Drd10: CR 12; Medium fey; HD 5d6 plus 10d8; 74; Init +4; Spd 40 ft.; AC 16, touch 10, flat-footed 16; Base Atk +9; Grp +8; Atk/Full Atk head butt +6 melee (1d6-3 [2]); SA *Ironwood bands of binding*; SQ Animal companion, damage reduction 5/cold iron, link with companion, low-light vision, resist nature's lure, share spells, trackless step, venom immunity, wild empathy +17, wild shape (4/day; Small-Large), woodland stride; AL NE; SV Fort +10, Ref +7, Will +16; Str 4, Dex 10, Con 10, Int 13, Wis 20, Cha 20.

Skills and Feats: Climb +2, Concentration +18, Diplomacy +21, Hide +11, Handle Animal +23, Knowledge (nature) +21, Knowledge (the planes) +10, Listen +19, Move Silently +4, Perform (woodwinds) +9, Ride +2, Speak Language (Common),

Summon Nature's Ally

Illtreus will summon the following creatures by spontaneously casting the following *summon nature's ally* spells (in no particular order). He will not cast a *summon nature's ally II* or weaker spell, believing it to be a waste of his time [if he decides to summon creatures from a lesser spell, he summons 2 (for 1d3) or 3 (for 1d4+1)]:

V: giant constrictor snake

IV: dire wolverine, giant viper snake

III: dire wolf, thogqua

Spot +19, Survival +7 (+9 in aboveground natural environments, +9 on other planes); Alertness, Augment Summoning, Great Fortitude, Improved Initiative, Leadership, Natural Spell, Spell Focus (Conjuration).

SA – Ironwood Bands of Binding: These function like *iron bands of binding*, but they are made of ironwood.

When the proper command word is spoken and this spherical ironwood device is hurled at an opponent, the bands expand and then contract to bind the target creature on a successful ranged touch attack. A single Large or smaller creature can be captured thus and held immobile until the command word is spoken to bring the *bands* into spherical form again. The creature can break (and ruin) the bands with a DC 30 Strength check or escape them with a DC 30 Escape Artist check. This item is usable once per day.

Spells Prepared (6/6/5/4/4/3 save DC 15 + spell level) 0 – *create water, detect magic, detect poison, light, purify food and drink, read magic*; 1st – *charm animal, cure light wounds* (2) [9], *detect animals or plants, produce flame* [8], *speak with animals*; 2nd – *animal messenger, barkskin, chill metal* [3 per d4], *spider climb, warp wood*; 3rd – *call lightning* [19], *cure moderate wounds* (2) [15], *poison* [6]; 4th – *flame strike* [34], *freedom of movement, ice storm* [15 bludgeoning, 8 cold], *rusting grasp*; 5th – *call lightning storm* [25], *cure critical wounds* [24], *wall of thorns*.

Possessions: *ring of force shield, ring of climbing, ironwood bands of binding, brooch of shielding* (38 points left), *scroll of cure light wounds* [5], *shillelagh, endure elements* (CL 1), necklace of moonstones (500 gp), gold bracelet (100 gp).

Iltreus, dire ape form: Large fey; HD 5d6+10 plus 10d8+20; hp 104; Init +6; Spd 30 ft., climb 15 ft.; AC 15, touch 11, flat-footed 14; Base Atk +9; Grp +19; Atk claw +14 melee (1d6+6 [9]); Full Atk 2 claws +14 melee (1d6+9 [6]) and bite +9 melee (1d8+3 [5]); Space/Reach 10 ft./10 ft.; SA Rend; SQ Animal companion, damage reduction 5/cold iron, link with companion, low-light vision, resist nature's lure, share spells, trackless step, venom immunity, wild empathy +17, wild shape (4/day; Small-Large), woodland stride; AL NE; SV Fort +12, Ref +9, Will +16; Str 22, Dex 15, Con 14, Int 12, Wis 20, Cha 20.

Skills and Feats: Climb +11, Concentration +20, Diplomacy +21, Hide +13, Handle Animal +23, Knowledge (nature) +21, Knowledge (the planes) +10, Listen +19, Move Silently +6, Perform (woodwinds) +9, Ride +4, Speak Language (Common), Spot +19, Survival +7 (+9 in aboveground natural environments, +9 on other planes), Spot +19; Alertness, Augment Summoning, Great Fortitude,

Improved Initiative, Leadership, Natural Spell, Spell Focus (Conjuration).

SA – Rend (Ex): When Iltreus hits with both claw attacks, he latches onto the opponent's body and tears the flesh. This attack automatically deals an extra 2d6+9 [16] points of damage.

Iltreus, eagle form: Small fey; HD 5d6+5 plus 10d8+10; hp 89; Init +6; Spd 10 ft., fly 80 ft. (average); AC 14, touch 13, flat-footed 12; Base Atk +9; Grp +8; Atk talons +12 melee (1d4 [2]); Full Atk 2 talons +12 melee (1d4 [2]) and bite +7 melee (1d4 [2]); SA –; SQ Animal companion, damage reduction 5/cold iron, link with companion, low-light vision, resist nature's lure, share spells, trackless step, venom immunity, wild empathy +17, wild shape (4/day; Small-Large), woodland stride; AL NE; SV Fort +11, Ref +9, Will +16; Str 10, Dex 15, Con 12, Int 13, Wis 20, Cha 20.

Skills and Feats: Climb +5, Concentration +18, Diplomacy +21, Hide +13, Handle Animal +23, Knowledge (nature) +21, Knowledge (the planes) +10, Listen +19, Move Silently +6, Perform (woodwinds) +9, Ride +4, Speak Language (Common), Spot +19, Survival +7 (+9 in aboveground natural environments, +9 on other planes); Alertness, Augment Summoning, Great Fortitude, Improved Initiative, Leadership, Natural Spell, Spell Focus (Conjuration).

Eagle animal companion: Small magical beast; HD 7d8+7; hp 38; Init +4; Spd 10 ft., fly 80 ft. (average); AC 22, touch 16, flat-footed 18; Base Atk +5; Grp +2; Atk talons +10 melee (1d6+1 [4]); Full Atk 2 talons +10 melee (1d6+1 [4]) and bite +8 melee (1d4 [3]); SA –; SQ Bonus tricks, devotion, evasion, low-light vision; AL N; SV Fort +6, Ref +9, Will +4; Str 13, Dex 18, Con 13, Int 2, Wis 14, Cha 6.

Skills and Feats: Listen +7, Spot +19; Alertness, Improved Natural Attack (talons), Multiattack, Weapon Finesse.

Tricks Known: Attack, defend, come, down, fetch, guard, heel, perform, seek, stay.

Summoned giant constrictor snake: CR n/a; Huge animal; HD 11d8+36; hp 85; Init +3; Spd 20 ft., climb 20 ft., swim 20 ft.; AC 15, touch 11, flat-footed 12; Base Atk +8; Grp +25; Atk/Full Atk bite +15 melee (1d8+13); Space/Reach 15 ft./10 ft.; SA Constrict 1d8+13, improved grab; SQ Scent; AL N; SV Fort +10, Ref +10, Will +4; Str 29, Dex 17, Con 17, Int 1, Wis 12, Cha 2.

Skills and Feats: Balance +11, Climb +19, Hide +10, Listen +9, Spot +9, Swim +18; Alertness, Endurance, Skill Focus (Hide), Toughness.

SA – Constrict (Ex): On a successful grapple check, a constrictor snake deals the indicated damage.

Improved Grab (Ex): To use this ability, a constrictor snake must hit with its bite attack. It can then attempt to start a grapple as a free action without provoking an attack of opportunity. If it wins the grapple check, it establishes a hold and can constrict.

Summoned dire wolverine: CR n/a; Large Animal; HD 5d8+33; hp 55; Init +3; Spd 30 ft., climb 10 ft.; AC 16, touch 12, flat-footed 13; Base Atk +3; Grp +15; Atk claw +10 melee (1d6+8 [13]); Full Atk 2 claws +10 melee (1d6+8 [13]) and bite +5 melee (1d8+4 [8]); Space/Reach 10 ft./5 ft.; SA Rage; SQ Low-light vision, scent; AL N; SV Fort +10, Ref +7, Will +5; Str 26, Dex 17, Con 23, Int 2, Wis 12, Cha 10.

Skills and Feats: Climb +16, Listen +7, Spot +7; Alertness, Toughness, Track.

SA – Rage (Ex): A dire wolverine that takes damage in combat flies into a berserk rage on its next turn, clawing and biting madly until either it or its opponent is dead. An enraged dire wolverine gains +4 Strength, +4 Constitution, and -2 AC. The creature cannot end its rage voluntarily.

Summoned Huge viper: CR n/a; Huge animal; HD 6d8+18; hp 45; Init +6; Spd 20 ft., climb 20 ft., swim 20 ft.; AC 15, touch 10, flat-footed 15; Base Atk +4; Grp +17; Atk/Full Atk bite +8 melee (1d6+7 plus poison); Space/Reach 15 ft./10 ft.; SA Poison; SQ Scent; AL N; SV Fort +8, Ref +7, Will +3; Str 20, Dex 15, Con 17, Int 1, Wis 12, Cha 2.

Skills and Feats: Balance +10, Climb +13, Hide +3, Listen +7, Spot +7, Swim +13; Improved Initiative, Run, Weapon Focus (bite).

SA – Poison (Ex): A viper snake has a poisonous bite that deals initial and secondary damage of 1d6 Con, Fort DC 16.

Summoned thoqqua: CR n/a; Medium elemental (earth, extraplanar, fire); HD 3d8+9; hp 22; Init +1; Spd 30 ft., burrow 20 ft.; AC 18, touch 11, flat-footed 17; Base Atk +2; Grp +6; Atk/Full Atk slam +6 melee (1d6+6 [8] plus 2d6 [7] fire); SA Heat, burn; SQ Darkvision 60 ft., elemental traits, immunity to fire, tremorsense 60 ft., vulnerability to cold; AL N; SV Fort +6, Ref +2, Will +2; Str 19, Dex 13, Con 17, Int 6, Wis 12, Cha 10.

Skills and Feats: Listen +5, Move Silently +3, Survival +3; Alertness, Track.

SA – Burn (Ex): When a thoqqua hits with its slam attack, the opponent must succeed on a DC 14 Reflex save or catch fire, taking 1d6 [5] fire damage per round. The flame burns for 1d4 [2] rounds if not extinguished sooner. A burning creature can use a full-round action to put out the flame.

Heat (Ex): Merely touching or being touched by a thoqqua automatically deals 2d6 [7] fire damage.

Summoned dire wolf: CR n/a; Large animal; HD 6d8+30; hp 57; Init +2; Spd 50 ft.; AC 14, touch 11, flat-footed 12; Base Atk +4; Grp +17; Atk bite +13 melee (1d8+13 [18]); Space/Reach 10 ft./5 ft.; SA Trip; SQ Low-light vision, scent; AL N; SV Fort +10, Ref +7, Will +6; Str 29, Dex 15, Con 21, Int 2, Wis 12, Cha 10.

Skills and Feats: Hide +0, Listen +7, Move Silently +4, Spot +7, Survival +2 (+6 when tracking by scent); Alertness, Run, Track, Weapon Focus (bite).

SA – Trip (Ex): A dire wolf that hits with a bite attack can attempt to trip its opponent as a free action without making a touch attack or provoking an attack of opportunity. If the attempt fails, the opponent cannot react to trip the dire wolf.

Wrapping Up

If the party achieves the “best” ending of the final encounter by shattering the Confining Bell, read or paraphrase the following:

With a great, discordant gong, the bell fractures and splinters into thousands of razor-sharp pieces. The wind roars, as if in delight, and then lifts up the shards of the bell as the vortex tightens on the elderly satyr. He screams in terror as he is bodily lifted into the air, but is quickly silenced as the tornado flays the skin from his bones with the shards of the bell. The slaughter takes but a moment, and then the storm is suddenly gone. With a wet, clacking thud, the reeking bones of the old man land in a heap atop the tree. Freed, the funnel cloud dances crazily into the sky, eventually disappearing from sight.

THUS ARE FOILED THE SCHEMES OF NAZRADELK AND ILTREUS!

Further Adventures

By defeating Nazradelk's scheme to use Illtreus, the heroes have prevented Gazihmon from having access to a terrible weapon, Vrshoom's vortex. This is by no means an end to their adventures, however.

Gazihmon has many servants, however, and eventually he will return, as is hinted at in area 2-4 and will be revealed in Round 3 of the tournament.

For the purposes of the tournament, the area count of this dungeon was kept low. For a home game, the GM should feel free to add other encounter areas to Ironwood Tower, perhaps hidden behind the thorny vines and housed in an immense branch (like area 2-4) or either above area 2-5 or below area 2-3A. Possible areas could include an alchemical herbalists lab, a library filled with auguries witnessed by the druids in the heavens and written down, an elemental conjuring chamber, a divining pool, or a graveyard filled with the bones of druids honored enough to be buried here.

If the mist dragon escaped, it could return to plague the

"heroes" who chased it from its second home, eventually becoming neutral evil in the process.

Nazradelk's journal can contain reports from his spies on the progress of other minions of Gazihmon, and the party can take it upon themselves to foil several other schemes of the fiend's lieutenants.

Illtreus was not the last of the Hazen Circle; in fact, given how he led them to defeat, it's possible he was no longer their leader. When word spreads that Illtreus was alive, it may spark an official investigation into the whereabouts of the rest of the circle. Alternately, members of the circle who fled Illtreus' reign (or their descendants) may approach the party looking for help clearing out other sites sacred to the circle (or maybe just clearing their name).

If Illtreus manages to escape, the indignity of his second defeat will spur him to new depths of wickedness, and the heroes will have made a powerful enemy. The satyr is physically weak, but unsurpassed in guile, and would make a passable arch-villain for an ongoing game (until, of course, Gazihmon returns).

Round 3: Citadel of the Fiend

Scaling Information

“Citadel of the Fiend” is the third round of the 2007 DCC Open Tournament module, *Chronicle of the Fiend*. It is designed to be a grave challenge for 4 characters of 10th level. In a non-tournament setting, you can adapt the scenario for stronger or weaker parties with a few simple modifications.

Weaker parties (3 or fewer characters, or lower than 10th level): If the party is significantly underpowered, the GM can make the following changes to the scenario:

Replace both the greater shadow and the shadow-bloom in area 3-2 with normal shadows, and remove the *true seeing* trap from area 3-3. Downgrade the purple worm in area 3-4 by removing its fiendish template. This means the normal purple worm will attack the party only as they cross the landing in area 3-4. If the party is truly outclassed by the purple worm, have it remain trapped for four rounds (gaining additional reach after every other action spent wriggling free) and leave the landing intact. In area 3-5, remove the spectre and halve the cable’s AC and hit points. In area 3-7, change the *implosion* traps to *disintegrate* traps (with an attendant -3 to Search and Disable DCs). Finally, in area 3-8, remove all but one dretch, and have Gazihmon summon 2d4 additional dretches instead of Veetch.

Stronger parties (7 or more characters, or higher than 12th level): If the party is significantly more powerful than 10th level, the GM can ramp up the difficulty in the following ways:

If the party does not disable the magic circle in area 3-1, a babau wearing another *torque of recall* can appear in Gazihmon’s fortress at any time the GM wishes and attack the party from the rear (likely gaining use of its sneak attack). In area 3-2, replace two shadows with another greater shadow, and give the fiendish purple worm +3 HD. Additionally, in area 3-4, have it burst completely free after 1 round of struggling. In area 3-5, double the hit points and hardness of the cable and add an additional spectre. In area 3-7, increase the save DC of the *implosion* traps by +2. Finally, in area 3-8, give Veetch a barbarian level and give Gazihmon +2 HD.

Getting the Players Involved

For the tournament, this adventure begins with the party waiting in the forest around the gaping hole where the citadel once stood. For campaign use, the GM should devise an appropriate plot hook to get them there, or adapt one of the following to get the characters started:

- The heroes are now rulers and leaders of the kingdom, and the return of the cambion is a direct threat to themselves and their nation. Banding together with nearby kingdoms, the PCs set about making plans to defeat the cambion upon his return.
- The heroes are contacted by a desperate lord. A ruined keep, long regarded as haunted, has vanished, and left in its place is a gaping hole in the earth and a strange bronze torque. Knowing that no good can come of such ill, the lord has marshaled his forces, and asks the heroes to augment his army.

Background Story

A year has passed since the heroes thwarted Iltreus and Nazradelk at Ironwood Tower, preventing the demon prince Gazihmon from acquiring Vrshoom’s vortex as a weapon.

Since his apparent defeat at the hands of the PCs, the demon-kith Gazihmon has not been idle. Quite the contrary, he is now stronger than ever and ready to return to the Prime Material Plane with an army of demons and fiendish monsters.

Creating a portal of the size necessary to *gate* both his citadel and his armies is no mean feat, even for a demon prince using the power of unjustly tormented souls trapped in a Misery Engine, and in the hours after his invasion, Gazihmon will be greatly weakened, and indeed, vulnerable. Anticipating this, Gazihmon has sealed the interior of his citadel with a variety of runes and fiendish dweomers (notably, *greater warded walls*, see Appendix 3). Once his army has passed into the Prime Material Plane, Gazihmon will regain his strength, and then fly his citadel and permanent *gate* to the largest city to begin his reign of fear.

Additionally, the demon performed a bizarre ritual to remove his vital essence, his “second soul,” from his body. So long as that soul remains intact, he cannot be slain, and while he is manifested on the Prime Material Plane, the shards of his being resemble ivory tarot cards (unconsciously chosen by Gazihmon, perhaps in mockery of his former keeper, Sezrakan, who was obsessed with divination). With his “second soul” kept safe, Gazihmon will be nigh invulnerable when he leads his demonic armies on the field of battle against the allied nations of the North.

The sole weakness in the demon prince’s plan are the PCs. Gazihmon created the *torque of recall* specifically to summon his minions to him upon his return, and the *torque* is keyed to bypass the citadel’s *greater warded*

walls. Armed with the *torque*, the PCs have a narrow window of opportunity during which to take the fight to the demon prince, and slay him before his army of demonic minions swarm the Northlands.

Carving Through Walls

Sometimes “heroes” like to do things the hard way, believing it’s actually the easy way. Any player worth his salt will remember the layout of Sezrakan’s keep from round 1, and may come up with the “bright” idea of carving through the wall in areas 3-1 or 3-4 to get to area 3-7, bypassing most of the round.

While this behavior is annoying (to say the very least), do not discourage the players, simply point out that it will take them a great deal of time to carve through the wall, and each 2-minute increment of time will count as a “take 20”. The walls have hardness 8 and 900 hp (standard for 5-foot-thick stone walls). Assuming a total of 10 points of damage gets through the wall each round, that’s 90 rounds, or 9 minutes to chop the wall down (rounding down to 4 “take 20” penalties).

While that penalty is less than that for dying, the party is also losing exploration points and not recovering the tarot cards they need to defeat Gazihmon, so they don’t really gain much by short-cutting to the end except a shorter round 3.

Teomon’s Last Gifts

The mentor of the party, Teomon of the Ocek, died of natural causes years ago, but he retains an interest in the activities of his students.

A quick check of the party’s list of tournament equipment for round three reveals that they lack the *oil of resurrection* commonly found in the tournament; this is intentional. After a party member dies, he is visited by Teomon, who delivers a message and restores that hero to life (as if by a *resurrection* spell, but in the tournament the PC gains a negative level instead of losing a level).

Teomon does this for each PC once and once only, but not if they willingly sacrifice themselves in area 3-6 to defeat Gazihmon.

The read-aloud text always begins the same:

You feel yourself falling, falling...you do not know how long this has been going on, perhaps seconds, perhaps years. Suddenly, you feel strong arms around you, and a familiar voice echoes in your head as you are lifted.

The four passages by Teomon are as follows; they are read in order.

“You always were hasty, student, but do not rush to join me yet...there is more to be done. Remember: deceit is

another word for demon!”

“Not so mighty that you don’t need a hand from your old mentor, are you? Gather the cards, young one, one per spike.”

“That’s about enough slacking off, don’t you think? There’s a demon prince to slay, student, no sacrifice, even your life, is too great!”

“I have helped you all I can, my child. This battle is now truly your own.”

Party members can choose not to return to life, but if they do, they are out of the round – there are no other means by which they can be returned from the dead. Similarly, Teomon cannot alter the environment in any way, so heroes are brought back exactly where they were...such as in the fiendish purple worm’s gullet in area 3-3 or 3-4.

Player Beginning

For the tournament, read the following to the players. Non-tournament GMs are free to paraphrase as they see fit to match the circumstances:

After many years, you and your companions have returned the site of your first adventure, where you saved your old master, Teomon of the Ocek, now long-deceased.

It looks much the same as you left it: the ruined keep is absent, torn from the very earth, leaving a gaping hole like a quarry dug by the hands of gods. If the auguries of Ironwood Tower were correct, tonight the stars will be right, and the keep, along with dread Gazihmon, will return, no doubt bringing with him a horde of demonic minions.

No matter. You have not been idle all these years. Nearly every nation in the North is in your debt, and some of you are rulers in your own right. Surrounding the chasm is an army the likes of which has not been seen in ages. Rank upon rank of elven archers are protected by a steadfast legion of dwarven warriors. Doughty spearmen, girded in bright chain stand ready to do battle, while the last of the siege towers, catapults, and ballistae are wheeled into place. At the head of the united armies, you and your companions exchange confident, knowing smiles.

Tonight, one demon prince is in for a surprise.

Lightning crackles across the clear night sky, and a hot wind stinking of sulfur washes over you, yet the chasm remains empty. Shielding your eyes, you look to the skies. High above you, lit by a crackling portal, hovers the citadel! Dripping with hellfire, circled by flights of fiendish dragons and legions of flitting demons, the citadel is suspended in the air! Somehow the fiend was



able to make his keep fly even without the vortex of Vrshoom!

Shouts and cries go up as the assembled armies reposition to defend against the flying keep. You and your companions gather and produce the bronze torque taken from the fiend's blackguard servant, which you have learned will transport the bearer and up to three others into the keep. Unless Gazihmon is stopped – NOW – the armies will rout, and he will have free rein to ravage the North. There is but one solution – take the battle to him!

You draw your weapons and ready your spells. One of you puts on the torque and, with a crack, its magic shatters the night and you reappear within the demonic citadel.

Areas of the Map

While the floor plan of Sezrakan's old keep has remained much the same, Gazihmon has made some changes to suit his gruesome tastes. The interior walls of the keep are built of fitted stone blocks (Climb DC 20). Except where noted, the vaulted stone ceilings are now 20 feet in height. Similarly, except where noted, the level is unlit and dark. The entire keep has been roofed over with hardened, magical brimstone, preventing PCs from bypassing areas via the roof. Unless otherwise noted, all doors are made of iron and unmarked.

Stone Wall: hardness 8, hp 180 per foot; Break DC 35; thickness 5 feet or more.

Iron Door: hardness 10, 60 hp; Break DC 28; 2 inches thick.

Area 3-1 – Beginning of the End: Read or paraphrase the following:

There is a blinding flash of light...and suddenly, you find yourselves inside a large chamber measuring 50 feet in diameter. A domed, arching ceiling reaches 30 feet overhead, and a mystic symbol, painted in dried blood, fills the center of the floor; you are standing in that symbol. An open doorway yawns wide to the south...other than those two features, the room is bare.

Development: This area was Sezrakan's old laboratory and summoning room, now converted to Gazihmon's reception point for his minions using their *torques of recall*.

A DC 25 Knowledge (arcana) check will reveal that the symbol is keyed to the *torque*, possibly to more than one.

Although it doesn't actually matter for tournament play, wise adventurers will deface the symbol so none of Gazihmon's other servants can arrive. The *torque of recall* does not work in reverse, but this is not necessarily a one-way trip (as the party can discover later).

Before the Playtest: On Finishing

When we schedule playtests, we often ask groups to time their progress through the round as if they were in the tournament. This allows us to get a grasp of how much ground we can expect a team to cover. For Chronicle, we made it a priority that teams had to have a reasonable chance to reach the end of each round. Unfortunately, this led to cuts of really good rooms.

Area 3-1 used to contain a diabolic trap featuring misaligned levers, a trap-door pit, a shadow demon, and a ton of darkness. On top of this, one hero – the one wearing Nazradelk's torque – would have ended up in the tank suspended from the ceiling in a deadly homage to round 1 and a nod to Gazihmon's cleverness. It would have been glorious!

Sadly, the teams couldn't reach the adventure's conclusion, and this area was one that got cut...not an easy decision, especially since the trap was so clever.

Area 3-2 – Shadowplay (EL 10): As the PCs enter this area, read or paraphrase the following:

You have entered a small, octagonal room with walls of rectangular stone blocks. Your breath issues forth in white clouds – there is a definite chill to the air here. This dank chamber also reeks of evil: a cloying, bitter stench that seems to creep along your flesh and pervade your nostrils. The very air reeks of despair and death.

Spaced evenly around the edge of this area are crumbling ledges of stone that hold statues of bestial, humanlike shapes, each in a pose of straining upward to support the domed rib-vault 15 feet overhead. A few small piles of yellowed bones and bits of armor are scattered about the floor. A steep ramp runs downward from the center of the room to the eastern wall, ending in a dark tunnel entrance from which issues a black mist that flows up the ramp and across the floor. At the southwestern wall, the mist flows upward, shrouding that section of wall.

Development: The crumbling stone statues, old gargoyles, are harmless. The shadows beneath each are not, however – these are undead shadows, and they will allow intruders to fully enter the room before assuming their true form and attacking.

The wall of mist to the southeast should be treated as a *permanent solid fog* (CL 18; see sidebar on next page) tied to the shadowbloom in the cistern. Destruction of the shadowbloom in the tunnel destroys the mist wall, revealing the gap.

The tunnel, once part of a drain system for Sezrakan's keep, is now blocked off; it only runs for about 20 feet before ending.

Shadowbloom: The tunnel is now partially filled with a semi-sentient shadowbloom plant native to Gazihmon's home plane. The creature grants all undead in this room the following bonuses:

- They gain +4 turn resistance.
- They gain fast healing 3.

If the shadowbloom is destroyed, the above benefits are instantly lost.

The Demon Slayer: Beneath the shadowbloom is a small pile composed of bones and scraps of rusted armor, the remains of a would-be demon slayer.

Among the bones are a tarot card (see below), a *pearl of power* (2nd-level spell), a *wand of daylight* (CL 5; 2 charges), and a journal, **Handout L**. The wand is made of ash (wood), capped with ivory tips

and decorated with a single small sunburst design. The journal is titled, "*Personal History of...*" and then the name of one of the pre-generated characters the tournament team **didn't** take, in this order:

Thoromir, Rootli the Imp, Tanlew, Lyewyn o' the Downs, Aminfalost

Following the Tunnel: The tunnel containing the shadowbloom ends after 20 feet and opens into the night sky. From that vantage point, the party can see the battle unfold below them (see area 3-4 for a description).

The Fool: The plaque depicts the Fool. Read or paraphrase the following:

You see a man dressed in brightly colored garments. He seems quite happy and content, finding pleasure in everything around him – but quite oblivious to the precipice in his path. The card reads, "The Fool."

Anyone making a DC 10 Knowledge (arcana) to learn the meaning of the card knows:

"One who moves forward without seeing what is in front of them is the fool for those who laid the path."

This plaque contains a small shard of Gazihmon's soul, and is part of the key to defeating him permanently. The plaque radiates overwhelming abjuration magic (CL 21).

This is an oblique warning about the *implosion* traps in area 3-7.

[Starting Locations: greater shadow, "GS;" shadow 1, "S1;" shadow 2, "S2;" shadow 3, "S3;" shadowbloom, "SB"]

Tactics: The shadows hide inside the wall [Hide results: 16, 18, 20, 22] until two creatures enter the area, then attack. The greater shadow lurks in the tunnel entrance [Hide result: 26], and only attacks if a hero starts down the tunnel. The shadowbloom is also in the tunnel, and does not emerge, although it sends its tendrils out to attack the adventurers.

The lesser shadows each try to attack one party member, only ganging up if they outnumber the heroes. They try to slay their chosen target so as to turn them into spawn under their control, and always elect to Dodge their current target. The greater shadow uses hit-and-run tactics, always attacking the hero closest to the shadowbloom (and Dodging that same hero).

If a hero is reduced to 0 Strength by a shadow and becomes one himself, he leaves behind all his gear and equipment. Teomon's last gift (see previous)

cannot prevent a hero from becoming a shadow.

The shadowbloom always attacks whichever hero has the fewest hit points (as determined by its life-sense ability) that it can reach. With its long reach and incorporeality, it often targets creatures through walls or the floor; such targets do not gain cover against the shadowbloom's attacks.

Note that the fast healing granted by the shadowbloom counteracts the damage the undead would take from being within its aura of cold.

All creatures fight to their destruction, and any lesser shadows (those originally in the area or any created by the shadowbloom) will pursue fleeing heroes.

Shadowbloom: CR 8; Medium plant (extraplanar, incorporeal); HD 10d8+30; hp 74; Init +2; Spd 0 ft.; AC 16, touch 16, flat-footed 14; Base Atk +7; Grp –; Atk incorporeal touch +9 melee (1d8 [5] cold plus stun); Full Atk 2 incorporeal touches +9 melee (1d8 [5] cold plus stun); Space/Reach 5 ft./5 ft. (15 ft. with tendrils); SA Aura of cold, create shadows, shadow tendrils, stunning; SQ Darkvision 60 ft., immune to cold, immunity to magic, incorporeal traits, lifesense 60 ft., natural deflection, undead boost; AL N; SV Fort +10, Ref +5, Will +2; Str –, Dex 14, Con 17, Int –, Wis 8, Cha 14.

Skills and Feats: None.

SA – Aura of Cold (Su): A shadowbloom radiates a constant aura of soul-freezing cold in a 10 foot radius. Any creature that begins its turn within the aura takes 1d6 cold damage.

Create Shadows (Su): For every 20 hp of damage caused by a shadowbloom's incorporeal touch attack to any number of targets within a 24 hour period, the shadowbloom spawns a new shadow. This occurs at the beginning of the shadowbloom's turn, and the shadow can act immediately. It is independent of the shadowbloom.

Shadow Tendrils (Ex): A shadowbloom delivers its incorporeal touch with two long, shadowy tendrils. Each time a shadowbloom's tendril deals cold damage to a living creature, that tendril dissipates (whether or not the creature was stunned). A shadowbloom can generate new tendrils (up to two) as a free action.

Stunning (Ex): A shadowbloom's incorporeal touch attack stuns living creatures for 1 round unless they make a DC 18 Fortitude save.

SQ – Immunity to Magic (Ex): A shadowbloom is immune to any spell or spell-like ability that allows spell resistance. In addition, certain spells and effects function differently against the creature, as noted below.

A *light* spell targeted on a shadowbloom inflicts 1d4 points of damage per caster level.

A *daylight* spell targeted on a shadowbloom inflicts 1d6 points of damage per caster level.

A *searing light* targeted on a shadowbloom inflicts 1d8 points of damage per caster level.

A *sunbeam* or *sunburst* targeted on a shadowbloom destroys the creatures (no save).

Lifesense (Su): Like a dread wraith, a shadowbloom notices and locates living creatures within 60 feet, just as if it possessed the blindsight ability. It also senses the strength of their life force automatically, as if it had cast *deathwatch*.

Natural Deflection (Su): A shadowbloom has a deflection bonus to AC equal to its Charisma bonus (if positive) +2.

Undead Boost (Su): Undead within 60 feet of shadowbloom gain +4 turn resistance and fast healing 3.

Shadows (3): CR 3; Medium undead (incorporeal); HD 3d12; hp 22, 20, 18; Init +2; Spd fly 40 ft. (good); AC 13, touch 13, flat-footed 11; Base Atk +1; Grp –; Atk/Full Atk incorporeal touch +3 melee (1d6 [3] strength damage); SA Create spawn, strength damage; SQ Darkvision 60 ft., fast healing

Solid Fog

Solid fog is so thick that any corporeal creature attempting to move through it progresses at a speed of 5 feet, regardless of its normal speed, and it takes a -2 penalty on all melee attack and melee damage rolls. The vapors prevent effective ranged weapon attacks (except for magic rays and the like). A creature can't take a 5-foot step while in solid fog.

The fog obscures all sight, including darkvision, beyond 5 feet. A creature within 5 feet has concealment (attacks have a 20% miss chance). Creatures farther away have total concealment (50% miss chance, and the attacker can't use sight to locate the target). Note that creatures with unusual senses, such as the shadowbloom, can ignore concealment.

A severe wind (31+ mph) disperses these vapors, and it does so in 1 round. A *permanent solid fog* dispersed by wind reforms in 10 minutes.

3*, incorporeal traits, +6 turn resistance**, undead traits; AL CE; SV Fort +1, Ref +3, Will +4; Str –, Dex 14, Con –, Int 6, Wis 12, Cha 13.

Skills and Feats: Hide +8, Listen +7, Search +4, Spot +7; Alertness, Dodge.

SA – Create Spawn: Humanoids reduced to Strength 0 by a shadow become shadows under the control of the attacking shadow in 1d4 [3] rounds.

Strength Damage (Su): The touch of a shadow deals 1d6 points of Strength damage to a living foe. A creature reduced to Strength 0 by a shadow dies. This is a negative energy effect.

Greater shadow: CR 8; Medium undead (incorporeal); HD 9d12; hp 58; Init +2; Spd fly 40 ft. (good); AC 14, touch 14, flat-footed 12; Base Atk +4; Grp –; Atk/Full Atk incorporeal touch +6 melee (1d8 [4] strength damage); SA Create spawn, strength damage; SQ Darkvision 60 ft., fast healing 3*, incorporeal traits, +6 turn resistance**, undead traits; AL CE; SV Fort +3, Ref +5, Will +7; Str –, Dex 15, Con –, Int 6, Wis 12, Cha 14.

Skills and Feats: Hide +14, Listen +9, Search +6, Spot +9; Alertness, Dodge, Mobility, Spring Attack.

SA – Create Spawn: Humanoids reduced to Strength 0 by a shadow become shadows under the control of the attacking shadow in 1d4 [3] rounds. Use the stats provided for the three shadows above.

Strength Damage (Su): The touch of a greater shadow deals 1d8 points of Strength damage to a living foe. A creature reduced to Strength 0 by a shadow dies. This is a negative energy effect.

*While remaining in this room and while the shadowbloom is alive.

**While remaining in this room and while the shadowbloom is alive, otherwise turn resistance is +2.

Area 3-3 –Yard of Effigies (EL 14 or 7): Read or paraphrase the following:

This courtyard stinks of burning wax. Several pools of bubbling, molten wax spit and pop amid the rough cobblestones of the floor, and wafting heat buffets flayed skins adorning the walls like grisly tapestries.

When the party can see the staircase, read or paraphrase the following:

To your north, identical staircases lead upwards to either side of a huge demonic face carved from grey stone. The leering, fanged face is menacing but worn; it is chipped and deeply scarred from the passage of time. What might have once been long horns have been chipped away, and the tip of the demon's nose was sheared away long ago. Beyond the face, the



western stair appears to be completely blocked by tons of fallen rubble.

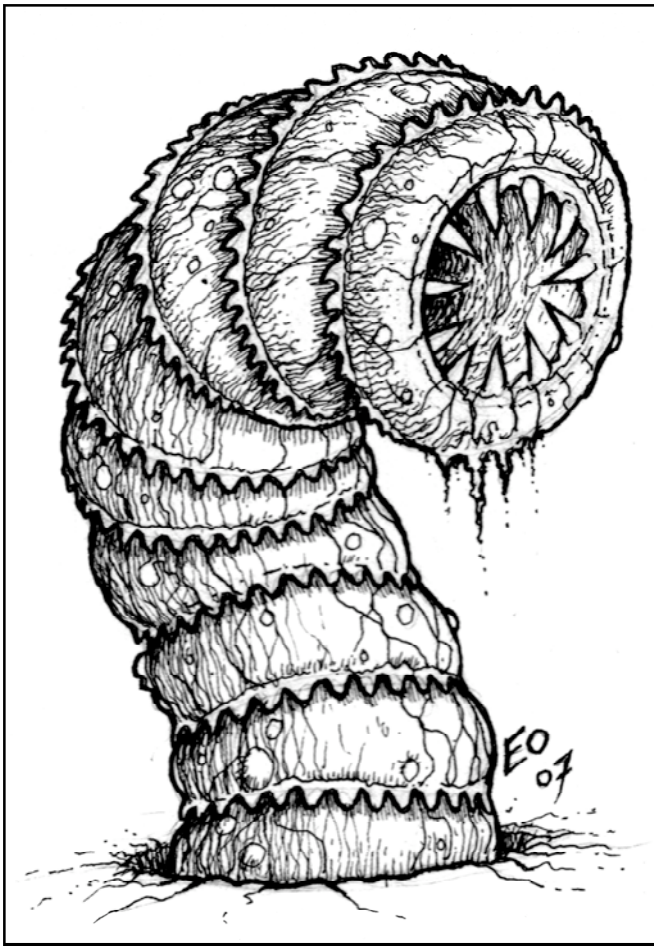
To the south is a great drawbridge gate carved from a reddish stone flecked by coal and obsidian. The mineral is unfamiliar to you, but the great symbol carved into its face is something you have seen twice before...an abhorrent rune carved into a four-clawed hand, set against a sun...the symbol of Gazihmon.

If the party bothers to bypass the gate, read or paraphrase the following:

A foul wind, whipped by the flailing wings of hundreds of demons, tugs and seizes at you. Far below, you see your armies, your allies, steadfastly holding ground against the hellhordes. They have suffered terrible losses, but it looks like they've brought down a pair of the great dragons and countless fiends. The demons, however, are plentiful as lies in a marketplace, and somehow the fiend has kept the rift to his home plane open, allowing his armies to replenish themselves. The day will be lost unless you strike now.

If the fiendish purple worm appears while the party is in this area, read or paraphrase the following:

From behind the demonic, stone face comes a



low, rumbling sound. A moment later the wall bursts open explosively, sending large, stone shards flying and raising a cloud of dust. An enormous, segmented head appears, wriggling from inside a hollowed-out area inside the wall. The beast is a hideously mottled purple-red color and its head is adorned with a spiked frill. Endless rows of needle-teeth ring its colossal maw, easily large enough to swallow a giant.

Development: There is no obvious device to raise or lower the drawbridge gate; Gazihmon does so by his will alone. The players can hack at it should they choose, or use magic to bypass it. The unusual mineral is harder than normal stone but has the same toughness. A DC 20 Knowledge (the planes) check will identify the mineral as common to the lower planes, but having no special properties other than being unusually hard.

Hell-Stone: hardness 10, 900 hp, Break DC n/a; 5 feet thick.

Two of Swords: At the square marked X on the map (DC 15 Search check), an ivory plaque tarot card is hidden among the flesh banners. This plaque depicts the 2 of Swords. Read or paraphrase the following:

The card depicts a kneeling, blindfolded woman. Her arms are crossed in front of her, each hand holding a longsword, creating a scissor-like appearance. The card read, "2 of Swords."

A DC 10 Knowledge (arcana) check to learn the card's meaning reveals the following:

"Beware of indecision. He who hesitates is lost."

This is an oblique warning about Gazihmon's return from death.

Guard Worm: The demon's face carved into the wall near the stairs is the focus of a *true seeing* trap. It only functions in a 20-foot by 35-foot rectangle directly in front of the stairs (indicated on the map by dotted lines). The *true seeing* spell is set to react to the descriptions of the party (Gazihmon knows what his main adversaries look like). Its only purpose is to awaken a guard creature – a fiendish purple worm!

Beneath the top landing (area 3-4), in a hollow within the stone, a purple worm from Gazihmon's home plane is being held in stasis. If the *true seeing* trap awakens it, it bursts through the demon-faced wall and attacks the party (using its starting location as identified in area 3-4); roll initiative as normal.

If the party eludes the worm here, they will likely encounter it again in area 3-4, although there they will have a distinct advantage.

True Seeing Trap: CR 7; magic device; visual trigger (*true seeing*); automatic reset; free the fiendish purple worm; Search DC 31; Disable Device DC 31.

[Starting Position: fiendish purple worm, "W"]

Tactics: In combat, the worm bites whoever dealt it the most damage last round (or whoever is closest if undamaged). Unlike its terrestrial counterparts, this fiendish worm is intelligent enough to identify sources of indirect damage, such as archers and spellcasters.

When stinging, the worm always attacks the same target as its bite, or against the closest foe if that target is unavailable (such as being swallowed whole or dead). If multiple foes are equidistant from the worm, it stings randomly.

If the worm ever takes more than 30 points of damage from a single source, it will use its smite attack on that target (or one that inflicts more damage that same round, per its tactics as described above).

It only uses Awesome Blow if it is in melee with three or more combatants. In that case, it will try to

throw a hero into a wall to inflict additional damage.

The worm fights to its destruction. If the party flees, it continues to struggle to get free (if necessary, see area 3-4) and chases them.

Fiendish purple worm: CR 14; Gargantuan magical beast (extraplanar); HD 16d10+112; hp 200; Init -2; Spd 20 ft., burrow 20 ft., swim 20 ft.; AC 19, touch 4, flat-footed 19; Base Atk +16; Grp +40; Atk bite +25 melee (2d8+12 [21]); Full Atk bite +25 melee (2d8+12 [21]) and sting +20 melee (2d6+6 [13] plus poison); Space/Reach 20 ft./15 ft.; SA Awesome blow, improved grab, poison, smite good, swallow whole; SQ Damage reduction 10/magic, darkvision 60 ft., resistance to cold 10 and fire 10, spell resistance 21, tremorsense 60 ft.; AL NE; SV Fort +17, Ref +8, Will +4; Str 35, Dex 6, Con 25, Int 3, Wis 8, Cha 8.

Skills and Feats: Listen +18, Swim +20; Awesome Blow, Cleave, Improved Bull Rush, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (bite), Weapon Focus (sting).

SA – Awesome Blow (Ex): As a standard action, the worm may subtract 4 from its melee attack roll and deliver an awesome blow. If it hits a Huge or smaller corporeal foe with an awesome blow, the foe must succeed on a Reflex save (DC = damage dealt) or be knocked flying 10 feet in a direction of the worm's choice and fall prone. The worm can only push the victim in a straight line, and the victim can't move closer to the worm than the square it started in. If an obstacle prevents the completion of the victim's move, he and the obstacle each take 1d6 [3] points of damage, and the victim stops in the space adjacent to the obstacle.

Improved Grab (Ex): If a fiendish purple worm hits with its bite attack, it can attempt to start a grapple as a free action without provoking an attack of opportunity. If the grapple check succeeds, it establishes a hold and can attempt to swallow the foe whole the next round.

Poison (Ex): Injury, Fort DC 25, initial damage 1d6 [3] Str, secondary damage 2d6 [6] Str.

Smite Good (Su): Once per day, the fiendish purple worm can make a standard melee attack to deal 16 additional points of damage against a good-aligned foe.

Swallow Whole (Su): A fiendish purple worm can try to swallow a grabbed opponent of Huge or smaller size with a successful grapple check. Swallowed opponents take 2d8+15 [24] points of crushing damage, plus 8 points of acid damage per round. Swallowed creatures can cut free by using a light slashing or piercing weapon to deal 25 points of damage (AC 17). The worm's interior can hold 2 Large, 8 Medium, or 32 Small opponents.

Area 3-4 – Staircase (EL 0 or 14): When the PCs approach within 10 feet of the stairs, read or paraphrase the following:

The twin stairways are constructed from a weird, veined marble, scarred and pitted. Both are littered with debris, but the western set seems completely impassable.

The lower supports of the great twin stairs are topped by twisting volutes carved to resemble sneering, horned serpent heads, and the banisters are carved with a variety of odd, intertwined forms. Likewise the center walls between the staircases are carved with a profusion of demonic beings, monsters, tentacles, and screaming forms – a disgusting conglomeration that could only have been envisioned by a deeply disturbed artist.

When an adventurer makes it to the top of the stairs, read or paraphrase the following:

Above the stairs stands a short hall that has also seen the passage of time, and many of the supporting balusters are chipped or broken. A length of thick chain dangles from the ceiling, the last link snapped. Below the chain, a chandelier bristling with spikes and sharp points lies askew on the floor. A solitary iron door stands along the west wall, which is heavily cracked and weakened.

If the fiendish purple worm appears in this area, read or paraphrase the following:

From under the balcony comes a thunderous, grinding sound. A moment later the upper landing bursts open explosively, sending large, stone shards flying and raising a cloud of dust. An enormous, segmented head appears, wriggling from beneath the shattered stone and writhing in the air. The beast is a hideously mottled purple-red color and its head is adorned with a spiked frill. Endless rows of needle-teeth ring its colossal maw, easily large enough to swallow a giant.

Development: The stone face and ruined chandelier are ugly but pose no threat.

PCs making a successful DC 14 Knowledge (the planes) check will recognize the more common demon types, such as cambions, dretches, quasits, and vrocks mingled amid the other forms.

The stairs are considered difficult terrain, and the top third of the western stair is impassable terrain due to the amount of rubble present (marked on the map by circles).

Worm Below: If the party avoids or disables the true seeing trap in area 3-3, they may still encounter the fiendish purple worm here. Gazihmon was sloppy about putting the creature in “stasis,” and it remains half-aware. If it detects a Medium-size or smaller creature on or within 10 feet of the landing on the stairs, its hunting instincts take over, and it shrugs off the “stasis” and bursts free.

Collapse! If encountered here, the worm has to burst the ceiling of its hollow to get at the party (its burrow speed only helps it travel through dirt, not worked stone) rather than through the pre-prepared wall in area 3-3. In so doing, it traps itself in some rubble, leaving its rear half still in the hollow. It takes the purple worm two rounds to wrest itself free from the keep’s stonework, freeing its tail but also causing the entire landing to collapse in a heap of rubble (see the hazard, below). This leaves only a foot-wide ledge remaining near the western exit point. After the collapse, the PCs must climb the rough walls (Climb DC 16) to reach the landing, or gain the landing via other means.

If the purple worm does not burst free (either because it is encountered in area 3-3 or because it is slain before breaking free), this hazard does not come into play.

Collapsing Landing Hazard: CR 4; mechanical device; event trigger (purple worm freeing itself); no reset; 6d6 [21] damage, Reflex DC 25 negates; multiple targets (all on the landing); Search DC n/a; Disable Device DC n/a.

Eight of Swords: At the location marked X on the map is a small tarot card. If the purple worm never collapses the landing, it can be noticed with a DC 10 Spot check. If, however, the worm breaks free of the landing and destroys it, it would require a DC 20 Search check of the rubble in that area to locate the card. Alternately, since it radiates overwhelming abju-

ration, a *detect magic* spell cast in this area would detect it (it’s not buried too deep). When the party discovers the card, read or paraphrase the following:

A woman stands, bound and blindfolded. A makeshift “fence” of eight swords partially surrounds her. She could easily escape, but she seems afraid to move. The card reads, “8 of Swords.”

A DC 10 Knowledge (arcana) check to learn the meaning of the card reveals:

“Fear can render you helpless. Do not fear to make the difficult choice.”

This is an oblique reference that the players can sacrifice themselves to slay Gazihmon.

[Starting Position: fiendish purple worm, “W”]

Tactics: Although a mighty beast, the purple worm begins this battle at something of a disadvantage: most of its bulk (and stinger) is still trapped inside the keep’s stonework. This hampers the creature’s tactics and reach; at the start of this fight, the worm’s reach is only 5 feet.

At the start of each of its rounds, the worm spends a move action (that does not provoke an attack of opportunity) to wriggle itself free. At the end of each such move action, its reach increases by 5 feet until it gains its full reach of 15 feet. Finally, after wriggling free for two rounds, the worm is finally free and can use its poisonous sting. This also causes the landing to collapse (see above).

Until the worm is completely free, it cannot move from its starting position.

The worm won’t spend two move actions in a single round to try to get free if it has a target to bite. If it can only take a single action (if it were *slowed*, for example), it will choose to try to get free.

Meanwhile, at the Tournament: Detonating the Worm

The appearance of the fiendish purple worm was a sobering moment for all three final-round teams. For Clan Yeoman, it was especially grim after their fighter got swallowed. With their best physical combatant out of action (and unable to wield a bastard sword from inside the creature’s gizzard), it looked like the worm would get the best of the returning champions. Then they noticed that Corebrin was wearing the *necklace of fireballs*...although they were aware the worm was resistant in some measure to fire, would even it be able to survive a point-blank detonation of the entire *necklace*? With no *oil of resurrection* supplied in the third round, what would become of Corebrin?

In the end, Clan Yeoman decided to hold off a round before sacrificing the fighter. In that round, Rootli blasted at it and Thoromir got swallowed. From his unique position, Thoromir was able to sneak attack the fiendish worm, delivering a deathblow. The party was saved!

Still...the worm blowing up from the inside would have been pretty cool...

Otherwise, the purple worm uses identical tactics to those presented in area 3-3.

Area 3-5 – Damned Armory (EL 11): A DC 10 Listen check made at this door will hear a sound like metal grinding on stone, punctuated by a crackling, like lightning. A DC 10 Spot check will notice flashes of crimson light flaring from underneath the door. The ceiling is 60 feet high. When the party enters, read or paraphrase the following:

Riotous splashes of blood decorate the walls of this heptagonal chamber, and the gore collects in glistening pools as it runs down the stonework. The flayed wreckage of several creatures is strewn throughout this chamber, likely dismembered by the gruesome machine spinning violently about the floor.

Resembling a child's spinning top, the object is close to 30 feet high. It skitters and dances across the floor on a spike that sends up sparks as it twirls about. The device is forged of a pale, reddish-gold metal, and is covered with long needles and wicked sword blades. A black cable attaches to the top of the machine; every few seconds a jolt of crimson energy snakes down from the ceiling along the cable and passes into the device.

The only other exit from the chamber is a door of blood-drenched iron covered with spikes and images of grotesque carnage.

Development: Once the chambers of Aelfric, Sezrakan's faithful guardsman, this area now houses a marriage of misguided science and fiendish magic, a demonic top that chops up intruders and slaves for which Gazihmon has no further use.

While this chamber does not have regular illumination, the crimson flashes of energy provide ample enough light to see by until the spinning top is destroyed.

The iron door out of this room is quite nasty looking, but is not trapped. It is, however, locked (Open Lock DC 35), and the mechanism is cleverly hidden in one of the spikes (Search DC 20 to locate).

Waiting within the walls of this chamber is a spectre, a former victim of the spinning top returned to plague the living. The undead appears as a badly mutilated human female.

Some of the gobbets of mutilated flesh still wear the tatters of their clothing. A pretty repulsive DC 10 Search check made on the door discovers two iron flasks still inside a belt pouch; each one is essentially a *potion of spider climb* (CL 3).

Disabling the Spinning Top: Although the top is treated like a monster rather than a trap, it can be disabled. If a rogue or similar character with the trapfinding ability can reach the cable at the top of the machine, he or she can disable it. The various blades, spikes, and other protrusions can serve as foot- and handholds easily enough, but the device moves about, and using a sword-blade as a handhold isn't usually a wise idea.

Climbing the 30-foot-tall device takes a DC 10 Climb check. The DC increases by +5 if the device is moving. Climbing in this way inflicts 1d8 [5] damage per round as the hero is slashed and skewered by the protrusions. If the hero voluntarily increases the DC by an additional +5, they can choose a safer route and avoid the damage.

Remaining atop the device while it is moving requires a DC 20 Balance check each round. Failing this check by 4 or less means that the player can do no more than hang on for the round (cannot attack, break, or disable the cable), while failing by 5 or more results in the player falling 30 feet to the floor, taking 3d6 [12] falling damage. If the device is not moving, this check does not need to be made. Heroes climbing the spinning top do not need to make Balance checks; it's only necessary while atop it.

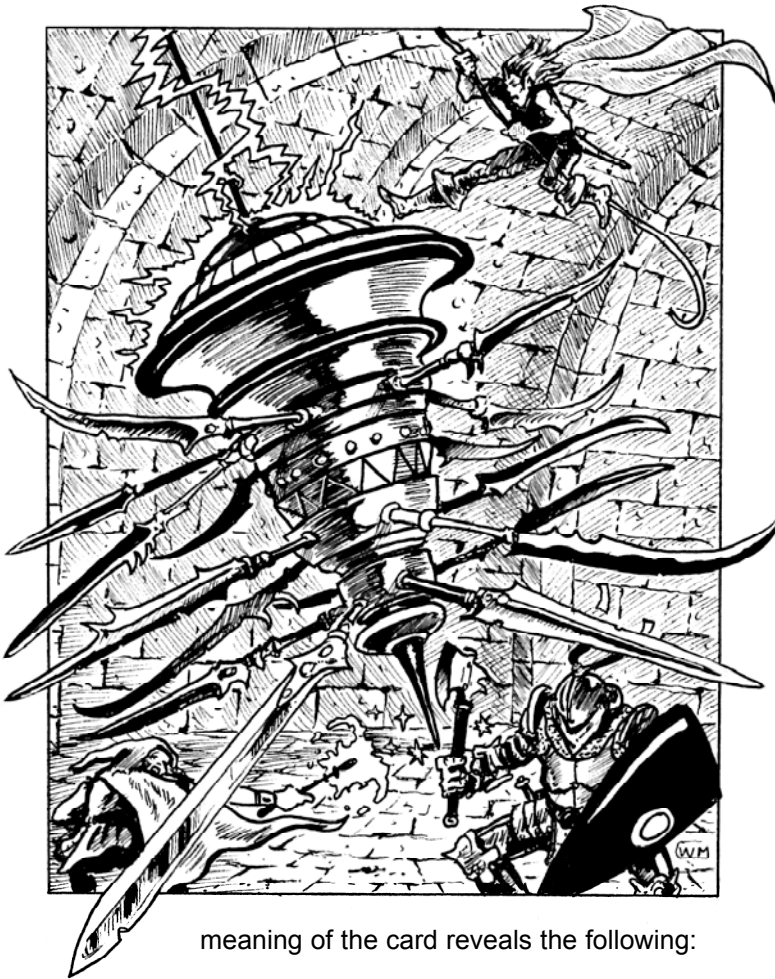
The complex nature of the top means that it requires 1d4 [2] full-round actions to use the Disable Device skill on it. In this case, they need not be taken consecutively. At the end of the time, the hero must make a DC 35 Disable Device check. Success indicates the device has been shut down, and the cable goes inert.

Alternatively, the cable can be broken (Break DC 30) or destroyed (AC 20, hp 20, hardness 5). Breaking or destroying the cable releases a charge of magical energy in a 10-foot radius spread that causes 4d6 [14] damage (DC 15 Reflex half). The cable itself is an object, not part of the top, so it is not evil for purposes of weapons that deal holy damage or smiting evil.

Nine of Swords: Wedged between some wires atop the deadly construct is an ivory plaque, a tarot card. This plaque depicts the 9 of Swords. Read or paraphrase the following:

The picture before you is one of abject despair. A woman sits hunched over in bed, apparently inconsolable. Her face is hidden, buried in her hands. Nine swords are on the wall behind her. Appropriately, the card reads, "9 of Swords."

A DC 10 Knowledge (arcana) check to learn the



meaning of the card reveals the following:

“This card portrays the folly of despair when the answer is actually at hand.”

This plaque contains a small shard of Gazihmon’s soul, and is part of the key to defeating him permanently. The plaque radiates overwhelming abjuration magic (CL 21).

This is an oblique hint that the tarot cards are the key to defeating Gazihmon.

[Starting Positions: spectre, “S;” fiendish spinning top, “T”]

Tactics: Initially, the spectre rushes forward and attacks heavily armored PCs or those that appear to be avoiding the spinning top. It ignores adventurers climbing the top; it figures they’ll die anyway...that’s how it died. It is immune to the spinning top’s attacks due to its incorporeal nature, and uses the construct for cover or flanks those being attacked by it. PCs who attempt to destroy the spinning top from a distance with ranged attacks or spells (such as from area 3-4) invariably draw the spectre’s attention.

The top moves clockwise around the room, remaining as close to the walls as it can. If its path is barred, it focuses all attacks against the barrier; oth-

erwise it will randomly attack all available targets (roll once for swords, once for spikes, and once for the slam). The top does not know how to bull rush, and will not use this tactic.

Both creatures fight to their destruction (or disabling), and only the spectre will pursue fleeing heroes.

Fiendish spinning top: CR 10; Huge construct; HD 22d10+40; hp 161; Init +9; Spd 20 ft.; AC 23, touch 13, flat-footed 17; Base Atk +16; Grp +29; Atk/Full Atk slam +19 melee (3d6+5 [15]) and 1d6 [3] blades +14 melee (3d6+2 [12]/19–20) and 2d4 [3] spikes +14 melee (1d8+2 [6]); Space/Reach 15 ft./10 ft.; SA Moving attack; SQ Blindsight 30 ft., construct traits, hardness 10, uncanny dodge; AL NE; SV Fort +7, Ref +12, Will +2; Str 20, Dex 20, Con –, Int –, Wis 1, Cha 1.

Skill and Feats: Improved Initiative.

SA – Moving Attack (Ex): The spinning top’s normal attack resembles the full attack of other creatures, but there are some limitations to its abilities. First, it cannot use the full attack option to make two such attacks in a round, nor can it use a move equivalent action for anything other than to move about the chamber at its normal speed. Second, if the top is prevented from moving for a full round, it loses its spike attacks until it is able to move again. Third, if it is prevented from moving for two consecutive full rounds, it loses its blades attack until it is able to move again. If for some reason it is only able to take one action per round (such as being slowed), it must first try to move; if it can’t move, it can attack.

Spectre: CR 7; Medium undead (incorporeal); HD 7d12; hp 45; Init +7; Spd 40 ft., fly 80 ft. (perfect); AC 15, touch 15, flat-footed 12; Base Atk +3; Grp –; Atk/Full Atk incorporeal touch +6 melee (1d8 plus energy drain); SA Energy drain, create spawn; SQ Darkvision 60 ft., incorporeal traits, +2 turn resistance, sunlight powerlessness, undead traits, unnatural aura; AL LE; SV Fort +2, Ref +5, Will +7; Str –, Dex 16, Con –, Int 14, Wis 14, Cha 15.

Skills and Feats: Hide +13, Intimidate +12, Knowledge (religion) +12, Listen +14, Search +12, Spot +14, Survival +2 (+4 following tracks). Alertness, Blind-Fight, Improved Initiative.

SA – Energy Drain (Su): Living creatures struck by a spectre’s incorporeal touch attack gain two negative levels. The DC is 15 for the Fortitude save to remove a negative level. For each negative level bestowed, the spectre gains 5 temporary hit points.

Create Spawn (Su): Any humanoid slain by a spectre becomes a spectre 1d4 rounds later. Spawn are under the command of the spectre that created them and remain enslaved until its death.

They do not possess any of the abilities they had in life.

SQ – Unnatural Aura (Su): Animals, whether wild or domesticated, can sense the unnatural presence of a spectre at a distance of 30 feet. They do not willingly approach nearer than that and panic if forced to do so; they remain panicked as long as they are within range.

Sunlight Powerlessness (Ex): Spectres are powerless in natural sunlight (not merely a *daylight* spell) and flee from it. A spectre caught in sunlight cannot attack and can take only a single move or attack action in a round.

Area 3-6 – Hall of Rebirth (EL 10): Read or paraphrase the following:

In the center of the room, you see five metal spires, each about 4 feet high, arranged in a pentagram around a 3-foot high, rune-encrusted stone pedestal. The rest of the room is barren, with metal walls and floors.

Development: The spires and pedestal are harmless. Four of the five spires have a tiny image of a tarot card hidden somewhere on their surfaces (DC 25 Search). They are each in a different place, so finding one grants no special knowledge of how to find the others. Clockwise from the north, they are the 2 of Swords, the 9 of Swords, (blank), the 8 of Swords, and the 3 of Wands.

Normally, the soul of any outsider (such as demons) is bound inextricably to its flesh. Sezrakan discovered long ago that Gazihmon was an exception, and had a kind of “second soul” that could be removed. He used this knowledge to imprison the fiend in the body of his paladin friend.

Gazihmon has also exploited his uniqueness. Knowing that he cannot truly die unless his “second soul” is destroyed, he used this area to separate it into five pieces. When he is present on this plane, they are disguised as tarot cards (owing, perhaps, to his centuries of imprisonment in Sezrakan’s custody); when he’s not present, they are in their true form: soul-grubs. The soul-grubs have free rein of Gazihmon’s keep, and wander into many different places. Since the demon is present, however, they are in card-form and cannot move about.

Knowledge is Power: Heroes can examine the contents of this room to gain clues about the final encounter with Gazihmon.

A DC 25 Knowledge (religion) check would know that each of the spires serves a sacrificial purpose in that items or victims are to be impaled on them. A DC 30 Knowledge (religion) check would also

know that the pedestal is tied to a rebirth ritual.

A DC 25 Knowledge (the planes) check would know that the runes on the pedestal correlate to one of the lower planes, also that the stone is actually mined from one of the hell-realms. A DC 30 Knowledge (the planes) check would realize that the runes are designed to draw spiritual energy from that specific lower plane, but can also receive energy drawn from the spires.

A DC 25 Knowledge (arcana) check would recognize the spires as being foci for a ritual that can be repeated or undone. A DC 30 Knowledge (arcana) check would additionally realize that the ritual either transforms or destroys a creature’s soul.

Wanton Destruction: The first instinct of most adventurers is to destroy the spires and pedestal. They should be reminded that their army is currently facing a horde of fiends, and that time may be a factor, but if they persist, have them damage the items to their heart’s content before they regenerate themselves. The spires and pedestal represent demon-prince-level magic (radiating overwhelming conjuration), and are not to be undone by mere mortals, although their purpose can be subverted...

Slaying Gazihmon: Once the fiend’s corporeal body is destroyed, he is not yet truly slain. After the fiend has been “slain,” rather than returning to his home plane, he reforms 5 rounds later in this area, prostrate on the stone pedestal. The demon prince is free to renew his assault on the party at this point.

As was explained earlier, while Gazihmon is “gone,” the five tarot cards revert to soul-grubs (see stats in area 3-8). While in tarot card form, the spires will not pierce them (they are effectively incorporeal only in regards to the spires). While in their true form, however, they can be impaled on the spire that bears the image of the card that correlates to them (so the Fool soul-grub can be sacrificed on the blank one, the 9 of Swords soul-grub can be sacrificed on the one bearing the 9 of Swords design, and so on)...but only on that particular spire, since they are similarly effectively incorporeal in regards to the other four spires. Note that the soul-grubs do not have distinctive markings and players will have to keep track of which is which.

Impaling a soul-grub truly kills part of Gazihmon’s “second soul”, and it turns the corresponding spire black. Attempting to impale a soul-grub on the wrong spire simply turns it back into a tarot card, where it remains until Gazihmon is slain again. Impaling a soul-grub is essentially a coup-de-grace, using the spire as a weapon. The soul-grub automatically fails its Fortitude save to not be slain.

For every soul-grub slain on a spire, it weakens Gazihmon, and he returns with fewer abilities each time, as noted below:

- 1 – loses damage reduction, spell resistance drops to 18, loses spell-like abilities
- 2 – loses spell resistance, energy resistance drops to 5
- 3 – loses all resistances
- 4 – loses immunity to poison and electricity
- 5 – utterly destroyed

Gazihmon will recover these abilities in time (as his soul “re-grows”) if left alone.

Whenever Gazihmon dies, his belongings explode into a black, powdery cloud. He always returns with identical equipment. He always returns with full hp and never carries over any kind of ability damage, drain, curse, or other effect. His smite ability and spell-like abilities, however, do not “reset” every time he comes back; he only gets the indicated use of each ability per 24-hour period.

The Ultimate Sacrifice: If the party lacks all five tarot cards, they technically cannot defeat Gazihmon... technically. They can, however, make the ultimate sacrifice to destroy this threat once and for all.

A hero can throw himself on a spire, essentially committing a coup-de-grace on himself (assuming he voluntarily fails his Fortitude save). Doing this is no different than sacrificing the proper soul-grub, although in truth, it is the selfless nobility of the hero that destroys part of the demon’s contemptible soul.

This must be a willing choice; a mind-controlled creature that performs this act does not kill part of Gazihmon’s soul.

Note that there are four heroes in this scenario, and five soul-grubs; this means that if the party has collected none of the tarot cards from this level they cannot defeat Gazihmon without back-tracking through the dungeon and finding at least one.

Tactics: Gazihmon is furious that the party managed to slay him at least once, and he knows that he’s lost serious face among demon-kind. His only mission now is to slaughter the party, and then possibly find some way to raise them so he can continue slaughtering them.

As much as possible, he uses tactics as described in area 3-8.

Gazihmon fights to his destruction each time, and will pursue fleeing characters. If there are no PCs

present when he reforms, he goes hunting for them.

Area 3-7 – Where Fools Tread (EL 13): When the party enters this room, read or paraphrase the following:

Two bridges intersect over an inky black pool, forming a cross shape. To your left, the bridge widens to form a small chamber. An odd smell – brimstone and fresh grass – confuses your senses. The chamber’s sole feature is a trio of 3 stairways on the north wall and 20 foot high ceilings.

A rasping voice, familiar and terrible, suddenly speaks. “Fools. Worms. You think to battle me? I am restored, grander than your gods, more terrible than death.”

There is the sound of rustling scales, and 3 portals appear, one atop each set of stairs. These are no doors per se – just archways, each surrounding a swirling barrier. The left portal is a bottomless, black emptiness. Your stomach lurches as you look at it – you can almost feel yourself falling into the terrifying void. The middle glows a forest green color, and a cool breeze blows against your face, carrying the scent of fresh lilies. The right portal is dark with sudden flashes of bright light, like sparks from a forge-fire. Waves of heat and a foul, sulfuric stench radiate from the red entrance.

“All three portals lead to your death, but through one you’ll have the honor of facing me first.” The voice ceases, echoing slightly in the cavernous room, empty room.

Development: Demons lie. Demon princes tell *big* lies. All three portals are deadly, and entering a portal triggers an *implosion* that only affects that one creature (giving ample warning to characters following the unfortunate, so it’s unlikely any given portal would affect more than one adventurer). The *implosion* targets corporeal creatures, so it has no reaction to a 10-foot pole (for example).

Each portal can be disabled, and doing so deactivates it entirely (leading a gullible party member to perhaps believe their “portal” has been destroyed). Since the *implosion* effect is stored in the portal and is not active, a Spellcraft check cannot identify it, and it requires a DC 28 caster level check to *dispel*. Once it is triggered, *dispel magic* cannot reverse the effect. Note that a Search check cannot identify the trap or how it works. That requires a DC 44 Disable Device check (in this case).

There is nothing of use in the room, and the “inky pools” are just muddied water.

Gazihmon's taunt arrives via his crystal slave in area 3-8d. He can hear the party's responses, but it doesn't change his text. A DC 25 Spellcraft check will identify the speech as being akin to a *sending* spell.

Getting Around: The pool is 20 feet deep and opaque. There is nothing of interest at the bottom. It is considered calm water, requiring only a DC 10 Swim check to stay afloat in. At the west, south, and east terminals of the bridge, it is 5 feet above the water level, and in the center of the room it is about 10 feet above water level. Indicated on the map [by black dots] are six support columns that run from the floor to the bridge (and not above). They are slick with slime, requiring a DC 17 Climb check to scale.

The Proper Exit: At the location marked "X" on the map is a secret door (Search DC 20) in the ceiling. Since the ceiling is 20 feet above the floor, the door cannot be discovered by anyone searching from the floor (you can only Search things a maximum of 10 feet away). In order to discover the secret door, one has to be within 10 feet of the ceiling or on it. The secret door opens on a hinge, pulling into this room.

Implosion traps (3): CR 10; magic device; proximity trigger (entering portal); automatic reset; spell effect (*implosion*, 17th-level cleric, DC 23 Fort or die); Search DC 34; Disable Device DC 34.

Area 3-8a – A Moment's Pause: As the party enters this area, read or paraphrase the following:

The secret door in the ceiling leads you to a narrow chamber. From the opening (now in the floor) this 5-foot-wide hallway leads west for 10 feet before turning to the north.

All surfaces in this hallway are covered by tiny carvings of squirming, nude humans, elves, dwarves, gnomes, and halflings...thousands times thousands of them, and each figure is unique. Their faces are contorted by pain and misery, their bodies torn and broken. There can be no doubt this is what Gazihmon intends should you fail.

The air is strangely charged, as if lightning is imminent, and you hear a steady, low hum broken by an irregular, cacophonous wailing.

Development: Gazihmon and his most trusted lieutenants can either fit through the small secret panel or use their spell-like ability to teleport into this area.

There is no threat in this area. The next several areas present a variety of possibilities and threats to the party, however. Unless stated otherwise, all surfaces are covered in this same grotesque artwork. Similarly, in this and all following areas, all Listen checks are made with a -5 penalty due to the noise made by the Misery Engine (area 3-8c).

Area 3-8b – Procession of Severed Heads (EL 6): As the party enters this area, read or paraphrase the following:

This chamber is a strange mixture of cross-roads and throne chamber. To the north, across from where you are, is a lowered portcullis. Beyond it is a bizarre apparatus that resembles two clawed hands extending from the wall. In the 10 feet between them dances a reddish cloud of smoke, with occasional flashes of green light. This cloud is the source of steady humming and piercing shrieks.

To the west, at the far end of the hall, is an immense throne carved from the thighbone of a great creature. At the throne's right hand is a thick column, and starting at its feet is a trail of severed heads, several smashed and most partially decomposed. This carpet of gore extends from the throne's dais and curves to a second portal in the north, ending at some stairs.

A pair of wretched-looking, hump-backed creatures pick at the severed heads, snatching odd bits of flesh and meat to snack on. The unfortunate beasts have spindly limbs with oversize hands and floppy ears.

Development: The severed heads belong to the mortal hirelings and fiendish goblins that failed Gazihmon.

Meanwhile, at the Tournament: Decisions, Decisions

Perseverance and thoroughness can carry you far in the tournament. Sometimes, however, it can work against you. Take, for example, three portals, all identically trapped, and a lying demon prince.

All three round 3 teams fell for this at least once. The Blood of Kings set off two *implosions* before they caught on, and Clan Yeoman triggered all three (losing Thoromir in the process...the only kill from round 3). In each case, the reasoning was, "Well, we have to try them all. One of them **must** be the answer."

All three teams eventually found the secret door in the ceiling, but by that time their fates had more-or-less been decided, and there was no time to engage Gazihmon in the final conflict.



Referring to the map, the floor is slick in the indicated squares; entering such a square requires a DC 10 Balance check to avoid falling prone.

Gazihmon's throne is an obstacle; it requires two squares of movement to enter a square occupied by the throne. A creature can occupy the same space as the column next to the throne and gain half cover (+2 to AC, +1 to Reflex saves) as if it were a tree.

The portcullis can be bent, lifted, battered, or simply opened. On Gazihmon's throne is a small panel cleverly hidden where his left elbow would rest (Search DC 30). Pressing the panel raises or lowers the portcullis to area 3-8c. A successful break (bend) check makes a space large enough for the creature that performed the check to pass through.

Portcullis: hardness 10, 120 hp; Break (bend) DC 24, Lift DC 25; 4 inches thick.

Three of Wands: Resting on the throne is a small, ivory plaque that depicts the 3 of Wands. When a hero examines it, read or paraphrase the following:

A man stands with his back to you, looking toward the horizon. In the water far below, you see what appear to be the masts of ships. The man leans on one of three staffs planted in the ground near him. The card reads, "3 of Wands."

Anyone making a DC 10 Knowledge (arcana) check to learn the meaning of the card knows:

"Success comes through persistence. If one staff is wrong, another will be right."

This plaque contains a small shard of Gazihmon's soul, and is part of the key to defeating him permanently. The plaque radiates overwhelming abjuration magic (CL 21).

This is an oblique clue that each soul-grub can only be sacrificed on a particular spire.

[Starting Positions: dretches 1-4, "D1-4"]

Tactics: The dretches are hardly a threat to the party, but they may cause enough commotion to get Gazihmon's attention, or one of them may flee to warn him of the party's invasion.

The demons are distracted by the food or arguing amongst themselves, so any Move Silently checks gain a +5 bonus (effectively +10 due to the noise of the Misery Engine) and the Spot checks of the dretches suffer a -5 penalty (not reflected in stats).

At the start of combat, the stupid creatures charge (or otherwise move to attack) the party, quite possibly slipping on the procession of severed heads. If one is prevented from reaching the party in the first round of combat, it will use its stinking cloud ability.

After a dretch has taken any damage, it will try to summon another dretch. [Every third dretch will succeed, so if only two try it, no additional dretches are summoned.]

When each dretch is reduced to 2 hp or less, it will try to telepathically warn Gazihmon of the invasion, first moving to within 100 feet of his position if it is somehow out of range. If the party strikes swiftly and silently, they may avoid raising an alarm.

The dretches otherwise fight to their destruction, and will pursue fleeing heroes. The abysmally stupid creatures may even charge into the open trapdoor and fall to their death if the party is clever enough to bait them. They do not use their scare ability.

Dretches (4): CR 2; Small outsider (chaotic, extraplanar, evil); HD 2d8+4; hp 13 each; Init +0; Spd 20 ft.; AC 16, touch 11, flat-footed 16; Base Atk +2; Grp -1; Atk claw +4 melee (1d6+1 [4]); Full Atk 2 claws +4 melee (1d6+1 [4]) and bite +2 melee (1d4 [2]); SA Spell-like abilities, *summon demon*; SQ Damage reduction 5/cold iron or good, darkvision 60 ft., immunity to electricity and poison, resistance to acid 10, cold 10, and fire 10, telepathy 100 ft.; AL CE; SV Fort +5, Ref +3, Will +3; Str 12, Dex 10,

Con 14, Int 5, Wis 11, Cha 11.

Skills and Feats: Hide +9, Listen +5, Move Silently +5, Spot +5, Search +2, Survival +0 (+2 following tracks); Multiattack.

SA – Spell-Like Abilities: 1/day-scare (DC 12), *stinking cloud* (DC 13) [3 rounds afterward]. Caster level 2nd.

Summon Demon (Sp): Once per day a dretch can attempt to summon another dretch with a 35% chance of success. This ability is the equivalent of a 1st-level spell.

SQ – Telepathy (Su): Dretches can communicate telepathically with creatures within 100 feet that speak Abyssal.

Area 3-8c – The Misery Engine: As the party examines this area from up close, or enters it after bypassing the portcullis, read or paraphrase the following:

The great metal, clawed hands you noticed earlier are covered in black cables crackling with multihued energy, much like the one on the giant top earlier. The piercing shrieks are punctuated by green flashes, and up close you can see that with each flash a screaming face appears in the reddish cloud.

Development: After the party defeated Nazradelk's plot to use Vrshoom's vortex as a lift/propulsion device for Gazihmon's flying citadel, the fiend was forced to explore other avenues. He eventually struck upon the idea of harnessing the powerful energy caused by suffering, especially that of innocents. Using terrible rites, he bound the souls of several dozen pure and pious beings into the Misery Engine, and found it was potent enough to not only power his fortress, but to hold open a semi-permanent rift to his home realm, allowing for a massive deployment of his army.

Suffice it to say, this device is the linchpin of his entire battle plan.

Knowledge is Power, part II: Heroes can make Knowledge checks to learn something about the device.

Knowledge (arcana) DC 25; this device is being used to power something, certainly the construct below, but also probably this fortress' flight.

Knowledge (the planes) DC 25; some of the runes along the "hands" indicate that the device is connected to the rift outside.

Knowledge (religion) DC 25; this device is powered by the suffering of innocents unjustly tormented. A powerful holy man might be able to disrupt its working using the strength of his faith (a turning

attempt) to free the poor souls.

Deactivating the Engine: There are three options to deactivate the Misery Engine, listed here in ascending order. First, it can be physically or magically battered to pieces (use the stats below, it has no break DC). Second, a character can spend 1d4+1 [3] rounds trying to disable it, succeeding with a DC 30 Disable Device check. Third, a hero can channel positive energy into it using a turning check, disrupting the flow of negative emotions that powers the device. The turning check must be powerful enough to affect a 13 HD creature. Spells like *dispel magic* and *break enchantment* have no effect on the machine, but *disintegrate* would damage it normally.

Smashing or using Disable Device successfully deactivates the Misery Engine. Using a turn check "reverses" it. Breaking or otherwise violently destroying the Misery Engine releases a charge of magical energy in a 20-foot radius spread that causes 6d6 [21] damage (DC 19 Reflex half).

Misery Engine: hardness 10, 150 hp; Disable Device DC 30.

Deactivated or Reversed: Gazihmon anticipated his keep might lose flight, so he created a failsafe that allowed for a controlled descent. If the party succeeds at destroying or disabling the Misery Engine, read or paraphrase the following (especially if Gazihmon is not present):

You feel the floor drop out from under you for a second, but then you steady yourselves. You have the distinct impression that you are descending at a brisk clip, not freefalling.

From the west you hear an inarticulate howl of rage.

If Gazihmon has not noticed the party yet, he is aware of their presence now.

If the party successfully used a turning check to deactivate the Misery Engine, they have "reversed" the rift. All the weaker demons and fiendish creatures of Gazihmon's army are being pulled back through it; this does not include Veetch, if he hasn't appeared yet.

Area 3-8d – Reckoning (EL 12): As the party enters this area, read or paraphrase the following:

This chamber is shaped like a ram, or perhaps a boat...narrow and long, tapered at the west end and squared off at the east. At the top of the stairs, the floor is free of the writhing carvings, but an immense symbol of Gazihmon is carved into the floor.

Near the tapered end of the hall is a horrid sight...a mongrel dog that somehow has an immense shard of crystal either growing from its back or skewered through it, but without slaying the animal. Images flicker in the depths of the rose-tinted mineral, and the dog whines in pain.

When the party can see Gazihmon, read or paraphrase the following:

Before you is the demon prince, the architect of your master's long-ago abduction, the force behind the vortex at Ironwood Tower, and the fiend threatening the North...Gazihmon!

The monster is clad in regalia befitting a foreign prince, with a broad, long vest of green and cloth-of-gold tucked into a broad belt cinched at the waist by a buckle fashioned from the skull of an angel. The demon's legs are the rear legs of a great wolf, shaggy with black hair and splashed by blood and gore from the gruesome path from his throne. Gazihmon's flesh is regal purple, and a trio of ivory, back-sweeping horns sprouts from his skull, one in the forehead, and one over each pointed ear. His eyes protrude from their sockets like those of a crab, and end in milky white orbs.

Your nemesis grips a greatsword of dull, black metal in his massive fists. All told, Gazihmon is approximately 13 feet tall.

When Veetch appears, read or paraphrase the following:

With an explosion of rancid smoke, a terrible vulture-demon appears. This specimen, however, is the most physically impressive you've ever seen, with sleek musculature and inhuman grace. It wields a guisarme as if it were born bearing it. Branded into its forehead is the foul symbol of Gazihmon.

When the tarot cards revert to their soul-grub form, read or paraphrase the following:

To your surprise, the tarot card begins squirming of its own volition, and then bulges start appearing. Before your eyes, its texture and shape changes to that of a greasy, gray maggot with large antennae and crab-like eyes ending in milky white orbs. The grub mindlessly flails about, emitting a disturbing, rattling moan. The loathsome thing weighs about a quarter-pound and is a total of 8 inches long.

Development: The demon uses the crystal slave to monitor his far-flung minions, taunt the heroes, and

direct the battle raging outside. He's understandably distracted, meaning Move Silently checks have a +5 (effectively +10 due to the noise of the Misery Engine) bonus against him and his Spot checks are at -5.

Anyone eavesdropping on the fiend can hear him directing battle:

"Akumat, crush that phalanx of shield bearers defending the priest."

"If you can't destroy that trebuchet, Xirgu, I'll send someone who can."

"Yes! Another of their knights falls! Blood for you, Szall!"

Not the End: Slaying Gazihmon here does not defeat him permanently. The demon prince has taken precautions to prevent his accidental death, as explained further in area 3-6. If "destroyed," he reforms in 5 rounds, fully healed. Gazihmon uses *greater teleport* to return to this area.

If Gazihmon is slain here, read or paraphrase the following:

"Bah! I...am...eternal...soon...soooon..."

The demon's form then blackens and turns to soot, collapsing into a greasy mound. You have an uneasy feeling your ordeal is not yet over.

As has been noted earlier, "slaying" Gazihmon reverts all tarot cards to their true form, that of a soul-grub. These are Diminutive creatures, so twenty-five of them could occupy a single square, and they can move through or share a space with a Medium or larger creature. Also, as explained earlier, the tarot cards do not revert (and therefore cannot be pinned to the spires in area 3-6) while Gazihmon is on this plane.

He'll be Back!: If a hero successfully casts *dismissal* on Gazihmon, or if he succumbs to a *dispel evil* spell, he will return in 1d3 [2] rounds unless the Misery Engine is also disabled or reversed...the fiend merely has to cross back through the rift and *greater teleport* back into the fight! If, however, the unholy device has been shut off or turned for the good of the heroes, then Gazihmon is defeated...for the moment. The party has failed to defeat the demon prince for good, and have only delayed the inevitable.

Tactics: Gazihmon begins the battle by calling aloud into the crystal shard, "Veetch, now!" as a free action. He then joins combat.

He begins by using an area-*greater dispel magic* (DC 21 Concentration) on the party to strip their

defenses. He will not use this again until Veetch is dead (knowing that he will appear with *heroism* cast).

When Veetch appears, Gazihmon will use *unholy aura* (DC 23 Concentration) as soon as he can catch both himself and Veetch in the effect. Good heroes successfully attacking Gazihmon or Veetch in melee will take 1d6 [3] Strength damage (DC 23 Fort negates). If Veetch is destroyed, Gazihmon will use *unholy aura* in the first round instead of *greater dispel magic*.

When not doing the above, Gazihmon attacks the party in melee, wielding his greatsword in both hands. He uses all attacks against the hero that appears to be physically strongest, relishing the challenge (even if they are prone from being tripped). If the hero is in heavy armor, Gazihmon Power Attacks for 2 points, with his Power Attack increasing by +2 for every armor category lighter. Since the greatsword is used two-handed, he inflicts twice as much damage as he subtracts from his attack roll. He saves his smite for when he gets to attack a divine spellcaster (identified through his Spellcraft skill).

Similarly, Gazihmon saves his *cone of cold* for when he can catch two or more heroes and none of his underlings, and after he has been reduced to 20 hp or less. He can only use it twice a day, and he plans on fighting the party a great deal.

Veetch receives his master's command and takes a round to cast *heroism* on himself (already included in the stat block) before using *greater teleport* to arrive in area 3-8b. He will not use *telekinesis* in the battle, preferring instead to use his guisarme to trip foes in melee with Gazihmon. Note that although a prone hero getting up provokes attacks of opportunity, he cannot be re-tripped because he's already prone when he begins his action. Note also that Combat Reflexes allows the vrock to make an attack of opportunity even if flat-footed.

Veetch tries to keep at least the hero closest to Gazihmon tripped at all times, and uses the remainder of his attacks to weaken the other adventurers, concentrating on any obvious healers first, then any obvious arcane casters (his Spellcraft automatically identifies 3rd level or lower spells).

If Gazihmon is destroyed, Veetch knows his master will return, so he tries [and fails] to summon dretches to his aid. He then (and only then) uses his stunning screech ability, and in subsequent rounds uses Combat Expertise for 5 points, and makes all of his attacks trip attacks, buying time for his master to return.



Both creatures fight to their destruction. The crystal slave does not fight unless the party tries to use it...it has learned not to attack Gazihmon, but it won't hesitate to attack the party. It won't, however, fight back if they try to kill it.

Veetch, elite vrock: CR 10; Large outsider (chaotic, extraplanar, evil); HD 10d8+90; hp 150; Init +4; Spd 30 ft., fly 50 ft. (average); AC 24, touch 13, flat-footed 20; Base Atk +10; Grp +21; Atk +2 *guisarme* +20 melee (2d6+12 [19]/x3) or claw +18 melee (2d6+7 [14]); Full Atk +2 *guisarme* +20/+15 melee (2d6+12 [19]/x3) or 2 claws +18 melee (2d6+7 [14]) and bite +16 melee (1d8+3 [7]) and 2 talons +16 melee (1d6+3 [6]); Space/Reach 10 ft./10 ft.; SA Dance of ruin, improved trip, spell-like abilities, spores, stunning screech, *summon demon*; SQ Damage reduction 10/good, darkvision 60 ft., immunity to electricity and poison, resistance to acid 10, cold 10, and fire 10, spell resistance 17, telepathy 100 ft.; AL CE; SV Fort +18, Ref +13, Will +11; Str 25, Dex 18, Con 29, Int 14, Wis 14, Cha 18.

Skills and Feats*: Concentration +24, Diplomacy +8, Hide +15, Intimidate +19, Knowledge (the planes) +17, Listen +24, Move Silently +19, Search +17, Sense Motive +17, Spellcraft +17, Spot +24, Survival +4 (+6 following tracks); Combat Expertise, Combat Reflexes, Improved Trip, Multiattack.

SA – Dance of Ruin (Su): Veetch has no other

rocks handy to use this ability.

Improved Trip (Ex): Veetch can use his guisarme to make trip attacks. To do so, he must use it to make a melee touch attack against his target (that does not provoke an attack of opportunity). If he succeeds, he makes a Strength check (total bonus +15) opposed by the target's Strength or Dexterity check (using whichever has the higher modifier). If he succeeds, the target falls prone and Veetch may immediately make an attack against that foe as if he had not used an action to trip them; if Veetch fails, he may drop the guisarme to avoid being counter-tripped.

Spell-Like Abilities: At will – *mirror image* [2 images], *telekinesis* (DC 19), *greater teleport* (self plus 50 pounds of objects only); 1/day – ~~*heroism*~~ (used). Caster level 12th.

Spores (Ex): Veetch can release masses of spores from his body once every 3 rounds as a free action. The spores automatically deal 1d8 [4] points of damage to all creatures adjacent to him. They then penetrate the skin and grow, dealing an additional 1d4 [2] points of damage each round for 10 rounds. At the end of this time, the victim is covered with a tangle of viny growths. (The vines are harmless and wither away in 1d4 [2] days.) A *delay poison* spell stops the spores' growth for its duration. *Bless*, *neutralize poison*, or *remove disease* kills the spores, as does sprinkling the victim with a vial of holy water.

Stunning Screech (Su): Once per hour Veetch can emit a piercing screech. All creatures except for demons within a 30-foot radius must succeed on a DC 24 Fortitude save or be stunned for 1 round.

Summon (Sp): Once per day, Veetch will attempt to summon 2d10 [6] dretches with a 35% chance of success. This ability is the equivalent of a 3rd-level spell.

Possessions: +2 *guisarme*.

*Veetch has a +2 morale bonus on all skill checks.

Gazihmon, unique demon prince (weakened):

CR 10; Large outsider; HD 14d8+56; hp 66 (148); Init +6; Spd 30 ft.; AC 30, touch 12, flat-footed 27; Base Atk +14; Grp +25; Atk +2 *greatsword* +23 melee (3d6+12 [26]/17-20); Full Atk +2 *greatsword* +23/+18/+13 melee (3d6+12 [26]/17-20); Space/Reach 15 ft./15 ft.; SA *Smite*, spell-like abilities; SQ Damage reduction 10/good, darkvision 60 ft., immunity to electricity and poison, resistance to acid 10, cold 10, and fire 10, spell resistance 22, telepathy 100 ft., *true seeing*; AL CE; SV Fort +13, Ref +15, Will +11; Str 24, Dex 23, Con 18, Int 16, Wis 14, Cha 20.

Skills and Feats: Bluff +22, Concentration +19, Diplomacy +24, Disguise +5 (+7 acting), Hide +18,

Intimidate +7, Knowledge (arcana) +18, Knowledge (the planes) +18, Listen +17, Move Silently +18, Search +18, Sense Motive +17, Spellcraft +20, Spot +18, Survival +2 (+4 following tracks, +4 on other planes); Cleave, Great Cleave, Improved Critical (greatsword), Power Attack, Weapon Focus (greatsword).

SA – *Smite Good (Su):* Once per day, Gazihmon can make a normal melee attack that inflicts 14 points of extra damage to a good-aligned creature.

Spell-Like Abilities: At will – *feeblemind* (DC 20), *greater dispel magic*, *slow* (DC 18), *greater teleport* (self plus 50 pounds of objects only), *unholy aura* (DC 23) [3]; 2/day – *cone of cold* (DC 20)[42]. Caster level 12th.

SQ – *True Seeing (Su):* Gazihmon continuously uses *true seeing*, as the spell (CL 14).

Possessions: +2 *greatsword*, +4 *glamered scale mail*.

Crystal slave (dog): CR 1/3; unique Small animal; HD 1d8+2; hp 6; Init +3; Spd 20 ft.; AC 15, touch 14, flat-footed 12; Base Atk +0; Grp -3; Atk/Full Atk bite +2 melee (1d4+1); SA –; SQ Low-light vision, scent, viewing crystal; AL N; SV Fort +4, Ref +5, Will +1; Str 13, Dex 17, Con 15, Int 2, Wis 12, Cha 6.

Skills and Feats: Jump -5, Listen +5, Spot +5, Survival +1 (+5 when tracking by scent); Alertness, Track.

SQ – *Viewing Crystal (Su):* This poor creature has a large crystal piercing its body, yet it somehow lives. The crystal halves its movement, and acts as a *crystal ball* with *true seeing*. However, using the device inflicts pain on the animal, and therefore is an evil act. Additionally, Gazihmon can use this crystal once/round to communicate verbally with his sworn lieutenants (those that have his symbol branded on their foreheads) as a *sending* spell, but requiring no action other than to speak.

Soul-Grub: CR 0; unique Diminutive vermin (chaotic, extraplanar, evil); HD 1/2d8; hp 2; Init +0; Spd 5 ft.; AC 15, touch 15, flat-footed 14; Base Atk +0; Grp -16; Atk/Full Atk –; Space/Reach 1 ft./0 ft.; SA –; SQ Blindsight 5 ft., sacrificial victim, vermin traits; AL CE; SV Fort +2, Ref +1, Will +0; Str 2, Dex 12, Con 10, Int –, Wis 10, Cha 10.

Skills and Feats: Hide +13.

SQ – *Sacrificial Victim (Su):* A soul-grub can be slain, but doing so only returns it to its other form. If that other form is destroyed, it re-grows, regenerates, or otherwise spontaneously appears (much like a destroyed lich reappearing near its phylactery). A soul-grub automatically fails any saving throw. It can only be destroyed via a specific method, decided when it is created.

Wrapping Up

If the heroes succeed in truly defeating Gazihmon, the PCs have achieved a Herculean task against truly formidable odds! Congratulations are in order! Their triumph has earned them the notice Áereth's deities, and those gods of a beneficent turn are quick to reward their champions with both divine and mundane blessings. Such rewards should be specific to the each hero and his back-story; this is the GM's chance to begin the final, epic story arc that will conclude each hero's career. Eldritch mysteries are solved, final quests are undertaken, and the locations of ancient foes are revealed.

Following are a few suggested rewards that can serve as guidelines:

- The PC is magically shown the location of a coveted magic item (either a minor artifact or a collection of lesser items). Of course, the recovery of such a trove from its draconic guardians is an adventure in itself!
- The PC is awarded a barony, replete with a keep located on the borderlands of the empire. Though the barony is rich with resources, clearing out the ancient, haunted keep, and restoring order to the barony is a challenge truly worthy of a noble host!
- The PC is chosen as the Champion of his deity, receiving a +1 bonus level and +2 to the attribute of his choice. With such power comes great responsibility, for the deity has many foes that would stymie his works.

Finally, though the heroes have won great accolades, they have also earned the enmity of wicked powers. No longer can they hope to avoid the notice of wicked warlocks or fiendish powers. For better or worse, the PCs have been cast onto center stage of the world of Áereth, and – if evil has its way – the heroes will pay for their audacity.

If the heroes fail to fully defeat Gazihmon, the GM's work is even easier. You now have a returning villain with an undying enmity for the PCs. Gazihmon is patient, as befits his immortality, and is content to bide his time until he can exact cold revenge on the PCs. GMs are encouraged to take their time in plotting this episode of the heroes' lives, for when Gazihmon strikes, it should be with the wrath worthy of a demon prince. The PCs' friends and family will turn against them, their henchmen will perish, and their holdings will be struck low by plague, pestilence, and fire – all in preparation of Gazihmon's *actual* plot.

If the heroes are quick and astute, they might be able to discern the wicked mind guiding the string of seemingly

unconnected attacks, but the demon prince works feints within feints, through several ranks of villains, any one of which would make a worthy foe. Thwarting Gazihmon's ire will require expert play, dauntless courage, and no small bit of luck.

Such are the lives of heroes!

Appendix 1: Tournament Scoring

These are the scoring sheets as used by the tournament Judges at Gen Con Indy 2007.

Round 1 – Sezrakan’s Keep

Part 1: Goals

Room	Activity	Points	Positive	Negative
Any (400)	Use Knowledge skill to get clue A	50	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	Use Knowledge skill to get clue B	50	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	Using clue A and clue B to learn Gazihmon’s fate	150	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	Identify <i>goodberries</i> carried by goblins	100	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	Locate the tattoo on a goblin’s left palm	50	<input type="checkbox"/>	
A-2 (550)	Notice the gargoyles at the ceiling before triggering trap	50	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	Use an item to grant cover against the searing wax trap	100	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	Trigger the searing wax trap	-100		<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
	Use rubble or something else to harmlessly trigger trap	100	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	Recovering at least one weapon from the peasant bodies	50	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	Aiding a PC trapped in wax	50	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	Open the iron box and recover the note	200	<input type="checkbox"/>	
A-3 (150)	Allow the goblin to attack with surprise	-50		<input type="checkbox"/>
	Recover the goblin’s cold iron short sword	50	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	Defeat Narldog	100	<input type="checkbox"/>	
B-2 (250)	Locate the weapons and the brandy	100	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	Allow the goblin to attack with surprise	-50		<input type="checkbox"/>
	Recover the goblin’s cold iron short sword	50	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	Defeat Vulgin	100	<input type="checkbox"/>	
B-3 (450)	Use Knowledge skill to gain information on the mold	50	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	Release the spore cloud	-100		<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
	Use a wet cloth to gain a bonus on spore saving throw	50	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	Trigger spore release from a safe distance	100	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	Open iron box and recover the note	200	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	Using the brandy to aid a PC afflicted by the mold	50	<input type="checkbox"/>	
C-2 (200)	Allow the goblin to attack with surprise	-50		<input type="checkbox"/>
	Recover the goblin’s cold iron short sword	50	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	Defeat Tezagoz	100	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	Locate the weapons stash	50	<input type="checkbox"/>	
C-3 (500)	Trigger the binding circle trap	-100		<input type="checkbox"/>
	Avoid the trap by jumping or using the table to climb over	50	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	Finding binding circle before setting off the trap	50	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	Aid a PC by using the items on the table to break the glass	100	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	Noticing glowing book after trap is sprung	50	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	Identify the purpose of the central symbol on the floor	50	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	Open the iron box and recover the note	200	<input type="checkbox"/>	
1-4 (550)	Find the goblin’s equipment on the bridge	50	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	Use a Heal check to determine different causes of death	100	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	Find the enlarged goblin’s body underwater and his gear	100	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	Cause a cave-in by trying to open locked doors	-100		<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
	Blunder into the alchemist (fail Spot check)	-50		<input type="checkbox"/>
	Switch to bludgeoning weapons to overcome the alchemist’s damage reduction	100	<input type="checkbox"/>	
			<input type="checkbox"/>	
	Defeat the alchemist	200	<input type="checkbox"/>	

1-5	Locate the concealed door, the scroll and the map	100	<input type="checkbox"/>	
(550)	Use the bookcase to topple onto foe	50	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	Cause the ceiling to collapse on a foe	50	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	Use the <i>ray of frost</i> trap to attack a foe	50	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	Arrange the cards in the proper spread	50	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	Decipher the meaning of the spread	50	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	Trigger the <i>ray of frost</i> trap, but not on purpose against a foe in the room (maximum 6 times)	-50		<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
	Defeat Agig	150	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	Defeat the dire rat companion	50	<input type="checkbox"/>	
1-5a	Locate the clue on the soffit of the archway	100	<input type="checkbox"/>	
(500)	Locate the sigils under the dust on the floor tiles	50	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	Use hands (to trace) to gain a bonus to decipher the sigils	50	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	Per globe trap triggered	-100		<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
	Locate the compartment and recover the magic dagger	200	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	Recover the emerald key	100	<input type="checkbox"/>	
1-5b	Use Knowledge skill to gain "talents" clue	100	<input type="checkbox"/>	
(800)	Use Int or Appraise skill to estimate weights	100	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	Asking for clues "properly" on the first chance	100	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	Solve the puzzle with no clues	400	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	Solve the puzzle with 1-4 clues	300	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	Solve the puzzle with 5-9 clues	200	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	Solve the puzzle with all 10 clues	100	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	Each time the trap is triggered	-100		<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
	Locate the secret door and the chain shirt and shield	100	<input type="checkbox"/>	
1-5c	Rescue Teomon	200	<input type="checkbox"/>	
(700)	Attack the room in order to damage Gazihmon	100	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	Use cold iron weapons to overcome Gazihmon's DR	100	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	Defeat Gazihmon	300	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	Per PC that does not flee the crumbling keep (in addition to the penalty for dying)	-100		<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>

Part 2: Areas Explored

The team is awarded a base number of points depending on how many encounter areas are completed. Consult the chart to determine how many points the team earns each round. **Note:** *These are not cumulative.*

# of Rooms Completed	Points Awarded
1-2	0
3	200
4-5	400
6	600
7	800
8	1000

Part 3: Deductions

Per PC reduced to 0 hit points (-100)	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
Per PC killed (> -9 hit points) (-250)	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
Per potion, scroll, or alchemical item used (-25)	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
Per "take 20" on a skill check (-25)	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>

Final Score Calculation

Total points for Part 1 – Goals		Total points for Part 2 – Areas Explored		Total points for Part 3 – Deductions		Total Points
<input style="width: 100px; height: 20px;" type="text"/>	+	<input style="width: 100px; height: 20px;" type="text"/>	-	<input style="width: 100px; height: 20px;" type="text"/>	=	<input style="width: 100px; height: 20px;" type="text"/>

Round 2 – Ironwood Tower

Part 1: Goals

Room	Activity	Points	Positive	Negative
2-1 (550)	The PCs use the roots as cover during combat	50	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	Use Track to gain information	50	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	Recover the dragon's treasure (and the axe)	50	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	Examine the blueprint (Handout F)	50	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	Notice the gasbags	50	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	Detonate gasbags from a distance to avoid effects	100	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	Per gasbag that detonates in a PCs square	-50		<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
	Finding the stone arch and sun/moon symbols	50	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	Defeat the Mist Dragon	150	<input type="checkbox"/>	
2-2 (600)	Per PC that falls into a compost pit	-50		<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
	Use Track to gain information	50	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	Prevent Olanth from casting <i>spike growth</i> , or somehow nullify its effects	100	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	Use slashing weapons to overcome Olanth's DR	50	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	Defeat Olanth Mezzalith	200	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	Per Shambling Mound defeated	100	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	
Using electricity against a shambling mound	-100		<input type="checkbox"/>	
2-3a (550)	Use Search skill on armor to discover locust bodies	100	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	Locate the <i>wand of summon monster III</i>	150	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	Determine the thorny walls are not magical	50	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	Use Track to gain information	50	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	Each time the trap is triggered	-100		<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
	Solve the sun/moon puzzle, activating pillar of silver light	200	<input type="checkbox"/>	
2-3b (400)	Detect/avoid both traps	200	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	Each time the <i>baleful polymorph</i> trap is triggered	-100		<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
	Each time the <i>insect plague</i> trap is triggered	-100		<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
	Locate the entrance to area 2-4	100	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	Chop/burn the vines to alert the occupants of area 2-4	-50		<input type="checkbox"/>
2-4 (850)	Use Knowledge skill to comprehend the ceiling's function	50	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	The party keeps the <i>torque of recall</i>	50	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	Use proper liquid (from area 2-5) to generate Handout G	150	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	Recover the <i>scroll of shatter</i> spells	150	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	Examine the journal	50	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	Defeat Nazradelk	200	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	Defeat Edreth	100	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	Defeat the advanced krenshar	100	<input type="checkbox"/>	
2-5 (750)	Recover the magic elixirs	50	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	Recover the liquids used in area 2-4	100	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	Recover the contract	100	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	Recover the goblin's loot	50	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	Locate the secret door	50	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	Per PC that dies by exiting the knothole and becoming subjected to the winds (in addition to penalty for dying)	-100		<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
	Re-activating the <i>antilife shell</i> to escape the praying mantis	200	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	Defeat the savage advanced praying mantis	200	<input type="checkbox"/>	
2-6 (900)	Use <i>freedom of movement</i> to move through the vortex	100	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	Destroy Vrshoom with an earth elemental (any method)	200	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	Destroy Confining Bell with <i>shatter</i> scroll from area 2-4	300	<input type="checkbox"/>	

Destroy Confining Bell by physical means	100	<input type="checkbox"/>
Defeat Iltreus after he only summons 0 to 1 allies	500	<input type="checkbox"/>
Defeat Iltreus after he summons 2-3 allies	400	<input type="checkbox"/>
Defeat Iltreus after he summons 4-5 allies	300	<input type="checkbox"/>
Defeat Iltreus after he summons 6 or more allies	200	<input type="checkbox"/>

Part 2: Areas Explored

The team is awarded a base number of points depending on how many encounter areas are completed. Consult the chart to determine how many points the team earns each round. **Note:** *These are not cumulative.*

# of Rooms Completed	Points Awarded
1	0
2	200
3-4	400
5	650
6	1000

Part 3: Deductions

Per PC reduced to 0 hit points (-100)	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
Per PC killed (> -9 hit points) (-250)	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
Per item charge used (-10)	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
Per potion or scroll used (-25)	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
Per "take 20" on a skill check (-25)	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>

Final Score Calculation

Total points for Part 1 – Goals		Total points for Part 2 – Areas Explored		Total points for Part 3 – Deductions		Total Points
<input type="text"/>	+	<input type="text"/>	-	<input type="text"/>	=	<input type="text"/>

Round 3 – Citadel of the Fiend

Part 1: Goals

Room	Activity	Points	Positive	Negative
3-1 (200)	Use Knowledge skill to deduce the circle is tied to the <i>torque</i>	50	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	Destroy the circle	150	<input type="checkbox"/>	
3-2 (800)	Recover the Tarot card	100	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	Discover the pearl, wand, and journal (Handout L)	50	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	Use Knowledge skill to deduce meaning of the card	50	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	Use Knowledge (nature) skill to gain information on the shadowbloom (specifically, its vulnerabilities) and exploit	100	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	Defeat the shadowbloom	150	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	Penalty for each additional shadow created by the shadowbloom (per 20 hp of incorporeal damage)	-50		<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
	Defeat the greater shadow	100	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
	Per shadow defeated (only the original three)	50	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	
3-3 (500)	Recover the Tarot card	100	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	Use Knowledge skill to deduce meaning of the card	50	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	Bypassing the <i>true seeing</i> trap	100	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	Use magic or chop down gate to view battle	50	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	Defeat the fiendish purple worm	200	<input type="checkbox"/>	
3-4 (700)	Recover the Tarot card	200	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	Use Knowledge skill to deduce meaning of the card	50	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	Use ranged attacks against the “stuck” worm, or use methods to avoid the difficult terrain on the steps	100	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	Defeat the fiendish purple worm	200	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	Bonus for defeating the worm before it gets free (at the end of three rounds)	100	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	Per PC swallowed	-50		<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
	If a swallowed PC uses a slashing weapon to cut itself free	50	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	
3-5 (800)	Make a successful Listen or Spot check at the door	50	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	Locate the door lock, and open it	50	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	Recover the <i>potions of spider climb</i>	100	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	Disable the spinning top golem (Disable Device)	200	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	Use a safe route to climb the spinning top while disabling	100	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	Disable the spinning top golem by cutting the cable	100	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	Recover the Tarot card	100	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	Use Knowledge skill to deduce the meaning of the card	50	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	Defeat the spectre (in combat; not by turning it)	100	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	Turn the spectre (saving resources)	150	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	Penalty for every two negative levels bestowed by spectre	-50		<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
	Defeat the spinning top golem in combat	100	<input type="checkbox"/>	
3-6 (1200)	Waste time trying to destroy the pedestal	-100		<input type="checkbox"/>
	Per tiny Tarot symbol discovered on the spires	50	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	
	Per bit of information gained by making successful knowledge skill checks (max 6)	50	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	
	Per soul grub sacrificed on its appropriate spire	100	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	
	Defeat one of Gazihmon’s rebirths (max 4)	50	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	
3-7 (150)	Per <i>implosion</i> trap triggered	-100		<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
	Identify the source of Gazihmon’s taunt as a <i>sending</i> spell	50	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	Locate the secret door	100	<input type="checkbox"/>	

Appendix 2: New Monsters

ALCHEMOST

Small Ooze (Aquatic)

Hit Dice:	3d10+3 (19 hp)
Initiative:	+2
Speed:	10 ft. (2 squares), climb 10 ft., swim 10 ft.
Armor Class:	13 (+1 size, +2 Dex), touch 13, flat-footed 11
BAB/Grapple:	+2/-2
Attack:	Slam +3 melee (1d4 plus special)
Full Attack:	Slam +3 melee (1d4 plus special)
Space/Reach:	5 ft. /10 ft.
Special Attacks:	Alchemical essence
Special Qualities:	Amphibious, blindsight 60 ft., damage reduction 2/bludgeoning, fast healing 5, immunity to electricity, ooze traits, transparent, tremorsense 60 ft.
Saves:	Fort +2, Ref +3, Will -4
Abilities:	Str 10, Dex 14, Con 13, Int -, Wis 1, Cha 1
Skills:	Climb +10, Swim +10
Feats:	-
Environment:	Any
Organization:	Solitary, pair, or mass (3-4)
Challenge Rating:	2
Treasure:	None
Alignment:	Always neutral
Advancement:	4-6 HD (Small); 7-10 HD (Medium); 11-12 HD (Large)
Level Adjustment:	-

This creature resembles a rippling pool of cloudy water. Bulging from the center of the pool is a near-transparent face that appears to have its mouth open in a silent scream.

Alchemosts are created when pools of stagnant water or chemicals are exposed to magical energies for long periods of time, animating the pool of liquid into a vague semblance of life. As such, alchemosts are often found in old ruins or places where great magic holds sway, making them very rare.

Alchemosts, despite their appearance, are not intelligent. They have no culture, do not eat or breathe, and do not communicate. Driven by a vague subconscious, they lash out at all living things within range of their blindsight, until all intruders are dead or have retreated. They never move far away from the area in which they were created.

A reliable process for intentionally creating alchemosts has not been discovered, but there have been

instances of previously created alchemosts being used as unknowing guardians by intelligent creatures.

An alchemost can grow to a diameter of up to 10 feet and a thickness of about 3 inches. A typical specimen weighs about 100 pounds, heavier than its Small size would indicate.

Combat

An alchemost quickly extends long, transparent pseudopods with which to strike its foes. Once engaged in combat, it mindlessly attacks until dead, always striking at the closest target within range first. While interacting with living creatures, an alchemost's "face" soundlessly contorts and forms various, horrid expressions.

Tales have been told of large alchemists or alchemists created from chemical spills that have extra, unusual abilities.

Alchemical Essence (Su): Each time the alchemost is physically struck (whether or not it takes damage), roll 1d12 and apply the following. The effects listed below are not cumulative; the creature's alchemical essence changes each time. The ooze is immune to all these effects:

- 1-2: No special effect
- 3-4: Acid – the alchemost's slam attack also inflicts 1d6 [3] acid damage for 1 round.
- 5-6: Alchemist's fire – the alchemost's slam attack also inflicts 1d6 [3] fire damage for 1 round. Underwater, this turns into a veil of steam surrounding the alchemost, but otherwise works identically.
- 7-8: Smokestick – smoke billows from the alchemost's body, filling its square for 1 round; it gains concealment; note that creatures with blindsight (like the alchemost) are unaffected by concealment. Underwater, this turns into a cloud of smoky bubbles instead, but is otherwise identical.
- 9-10: Sunrod – the alchemost illuminates a 30-foot radius spread for 1 round.
- 11-12: Thunderstone – the alchemost's slam attack creates a deafening bang for 1 round; creatures in a 10-foot radius spread must make a DC 15 Fortitude save or be deafened (-4 to initiative rolls and 20% miscast spells with verbal components) for 1 round. This does not work underwater.

Fast Healing (Ex): An alchemost heals 5 points of damage per round, but only if it is submerged in the alchemical bath that spawned it.

Transparent (Ex): It requires a DC 15 Spot check to notice the semitransparent alchemost. Creatures who fail to notice an alchemost and walk or swim into it are automatically hit with a melee slam attack (plus its alchemical essence).

Skills: An alchemost receives a +8 racial bonus to Swim checks to perform a special action or to avoid a hazard. They may always take 10 on a Swim check even if threatened or distracted. An alchemost receives a +8 racial bonus on Climb checks. They may always take 10 on a Climb check even if threatened or distracted, and do not lose their Dexterity bonus to AC when climbing. Alchemosts use their Dexterity modifier for Climb or Swim checks.

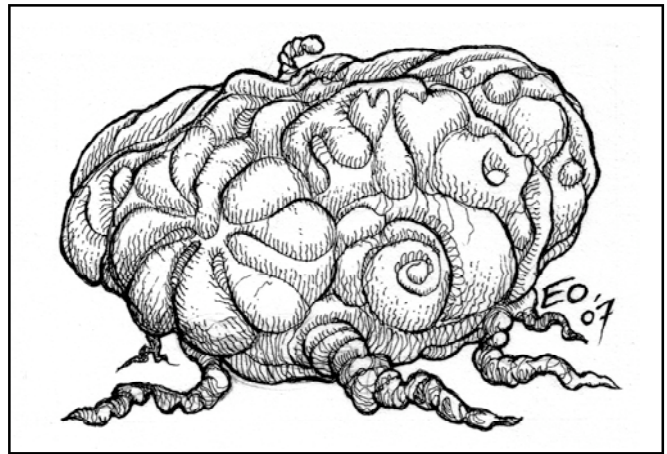
GASBAG

Tiny Construct

Hit Dice:	1d10 (5 hp)
Initiative:	+1
Speed:	15 ft. (3 squares)
Armor Class:	16 (+2 size, +1 Dex, +2 natural), touch 13, flat-footed 15
BAB/Grapple:	+0/-10
Attack:	Slam +0 melee (1d3-2)
Full Attack:	Slam +0 melee (1d3-2)
Space/Reach:	2-1/2 ft./0 ft.
Special Attacks:	Detonate
Special Qualities:	Construct traits, darkvision 60 ft., improved mobility, low-light vision, tremorsense 60 ft.
Saves:	Fort +0, Ref +1, Will +0
Abilities:	Str 6, Dex 12, Con -, Int -, Wis 10, Cha 1
Skills:	Hide +13*
Feats:	None
Environment:	Any
Organization:	Solitary, pair, or pod (3-6)
Challenge Rating:	2
Treasure:	None
Alignment:	Always neutral
Advancement:	2-4 HD (Tiny)
Level Adjustment:	-

This odd creature appears as an ovoid lump of ambulatory plant matter. It creeps about on a number of vine-like "legs" and appears oddly taut, as if its outer covering is somehow stretched too tight.

Gasbags are deadly constructs that strongly resemble plant creatures. They are typically constructed by druids or wizards with strongholds in forested or marshy terrain. Although rather cheap to construct, gasbags are single-use creatures, and the poison they carry is expensive to obtain.



Construction

A gasbag's body must be constructed from high-quality vegetable matter containing a gourd of some kind, like a squash, pumpkin, or melon. This body must be treated with rare plant oils worth 250 gp. Creating the body requires a DC 15 Craft (cooking) or (farming) check. Additionally, a gasbag requires burnt othur fume poison, a dose of which costs 2,100 gp. Gasbags carrying other types of poisons are rare.

CL 13th; Craft Construct, *animate plants*, *cat's grace*, *shatter*, caster must be at least 13th level; Price 6,100; Cost 4,100 + 244 XP.

Combat

A gasbag's purpose in battle is to enter a target's square and blow up. It typically hides under cover, delaying its initiative until a target gets close enough for it to reach with a move action so that it may detonate on the same turn.

A gasbag only uses its slam attack for attacks of opportunity.

Detonate (Ex): This creature may take a move action to detonate itself, releasing its gas into its square. The detonation itself does no damage. When this creature is killed, the gas is automatically released, requiring no action on the gasbag's part.

The gas obscures all sight, including darkvision. A creature in the square has concealment relative to creatures within 5 feet, and total concealment relative to creatures farther away. Similarly, creatures inside and outside the square have concealment relative to creatures inside the square. The gas settles in 1 round and is thenceforth harmless.

Gasbags are typically loaded with a modified version of burnt othur fumes (it skips directly to its secondary effect but has a lower save DC and does no Constitution drain). Any creature that breathes, who is in the same square as a gasbag when it detonates, or

who enters a square filled by a gasbag's poisonous cloud, must make a DC 10 Fortitude save. Creatures making the save are sickened while in the cloud and 1 round after leaving it. Creatures failing the save take 3d6 [10] Constitution damage. Saving successfully against one gasbag does not grant immunity to the gas of another gasbag. No second save is necessary against the poison of a single gasbag.

Improved Mobility (Ex): A gasbag gains a +6 dodge bonus to AC against attacks of opportunity caused by moving out of or into a threatened area. Conditions that cause it to lose its Dex bonus also cause it to lose its dodge bonus.

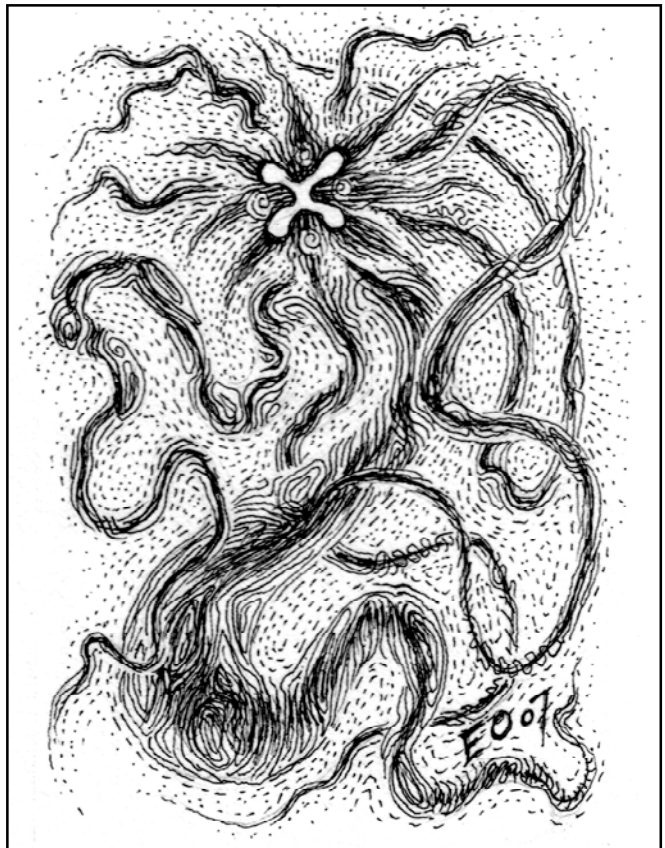
Skills: *A gasbag receives a +4 racial bonus to Hide checks. When hiding in undergrowth or in a forested or marshy area, this bonus increases to +8.

SHADOWBLOOM

Medium Plant (Extraplanar, Incorporeal)

Hit Dice: 10d8+30 (74 hp)
Initiative: +2
Speed: 0 ft. (0 squares)
Armor Class: 16 (+2 Dex, +4 deflection), touch
 16, flat-footed 14
BAB/Grapple: +7/-
Attack: Incorporeal touch +9 melee (1d8 cold plus stun)
Full Attack: 2 incorporeal touches +9 melee (1d8 cold plus stun)
Space/Reach: 5 ft./5 ft. (15 ft. with tendrils)
Special Attacks: Aura of cold, create shadows, shadow tendrils, stunning
Special Qualities: Darkvision 60 ft., immune to cold, immunity to magic, incorporeal traits, lifesense 60 ft., natural deflection, undead boost
Saves: Fort +10, Ref +5, Will +2
Abilities: Str -, Dex 14, Con 17, Int -, Wis 8, Cha 14
Skills: -
Feats: -
Environment: Any cold plane
Organization: Solitary
Challenge Rating: 8
Treasure: None
Alignment: Always neutral
Advancement: 11-20 HD (Medium)
Level Adjustment: -

This indistinct and immaterial form is about man-size. You get a vague impression of a trunk of thick stalks surmounted by a warty, bulbous mass with strange, ridged depressions. Thick tendrils wave in the air behind the strange plant, passing through walls as if it were not there.



Shadowblooms are plants commonly found on other planes, typically those that are predominantly cold. Although mindless (and therefore incapable of evil), shadowblooms are known to produce shadows as offspring.

The life cycle of this plant is not well understood by researchers. No seeds or organs of sexual or asexual reproduction have been found on specimens, which only remain cohesive for a few moments after being slain.

It is generally understood that shadowblooms feed off the body heat of living creatures. Even if supplied with ample living body heat, however, they never seem to grow larger than man-sized.

It has been surmised that shadowblooms somehow spread across the myriad planes through the shadows they spawn, although in truth, they seem to be identical to those shadows created by the restless dead.

Unlike other plants, shadowblooms are unaffected by the abilities of some undead to passively destroy plantlife (such as a violated brother's negative energy aura from *DCC #51: Castle Whiterock*).

Combat

Shadowblooms are not adept at defending themselves, relying entirely on their stunning, heat-draining incorporeal touch, and aura of cold. They have evolved an aura of undead boost that often attracts the walking dead, which usually remain nearby to fight for them. In addi-

tion, older shadowblooms usually have a force of shadows, created by their heat draining ability, that support and protect them.

Shadowblooms are often positioned in unusual places, and have no compunction about using their incorporeal tendrils and extended reach to attack heroes who have little or no chance of reaching them (such as through a floor, ceiling, or thick wall).

Aura of Cold (Su): A shadowbloom radiates a constant aura of soul-freezing cold in a 10-foot radius. Any creature that begins its turn within the aura takes 1d6 cold damage.

Create Shadows (Su): For every 20 hp of damage caused by a shadowbloom's incorporeal touch attack to any number of targets within a 24 hour period, the shadowbloom spawns a new shadow. This occurs at the beginning of the shadowbloom's turn, and the shadow can act immediately. It is independent of the shadowbloom.

Immunity to Magic (Ex): A shadowbloom is immune to any spell or spell-like ability that allows spell resistance. In addition, certain spells and effects function differently against the creature, as noted below.

A *light* spell targeted on a shadowbloom inflicts 1d4 points of damage per caster level.

A *daylight* spell targeted on a shadowbloom inflicts 1d6 points of damage per caster level.

A *searing light* targeted on a shadowbloom inflicts 1d8 points of damage per caster level.

A *sunbeam* or *sunburst* targeted on a shadowbloom destroys the creatures (no save).

Lifesense (Su): Like a dread wraith, a shadowbloom notices and locates living creatures within 60 feet, just as if it possessed the blindsight ability. It also senses the strength of their life force automatically, as if it had cast *deathwatch*.

Natural Deflection (Su): A shadowbloom has a deflection bonus to AC equal to its Charisma bonus (if positive) +2.

Shadow Tendrils (Ex): A shadowbloom delivers its incorporeal touch with two long, shadowy tendrils. Each time a shadowbloom's tendril deals cold damage to a living creature, that tendril dissipates (whether or not the creature was stunned). A shadowbloom can generate new tendrils (up to two) as a free action.

Stunning (Ex): A shadowbloom's incorporeal touch attack stuns living creatures for 1 round unless they make a DC 18 Fortitude save. The save DC is Constitution-based.

Undead Boost (Su): Undead within 60 feet of shadowbloom gain +4 turn resistance and fast healing 3.

Appendix 3: New Rules

New Spells

Lunar Ray

Evocation [Light]

Level: Drd 7
Components: V, S, DF
Casting Time: 1 standard action
Range: 60 ft.
Area: Line from your hand
Duration: 1 round/level or until all beams are exhausted
Saving Throw: Reflex negates and Reflex half; see text
Spell Resistance: Yes

For the duration of this spell, you can use a standard action to evoke a beam of pale, silver light each round. You can call forth one beam per three caster levels (maximum six beams at 18th level). The spell ends when its duration runs out or your allotment of beams is exhausted.

Each creature in the beam is *confused* for 1d4+1 rounds and takes 4d6 points of damage. Any shapechangers (such as lycanthropes or doppelgangers) take double damage. A successful Reflex save negates the *confusion* and reduces the damage by half.

A construct caught within the beam takes 1d6 points of damage per caster level (maximum 20d6), or half damage if a Reflex save is successful.

The unnatural light generated by the spell deals damage to fungi, mold, oozes, and slimes just as if they were constructs.

Warded Walls, Greater

Abjuration
Level: Sor/Wiz 9
Components: V, S, M, F
Casting Time: 8 hours
Range: Anywhere within the area to be warded
Area: Up to 400 sq. ft./level (S)
Duration: Permanent
Saving Throw: See text
Spell Resistance: See text

This powerful spell is primarily used to defend a stronghold. The ward protects 400 square feet per caster level. The warded area can be shaped as you desire. You can ward several stories of a stronghold by dividing the area among them.

The following spells cannot penetrate walls, floors, windows, or ceilings protected by this spell: *clairaudience/clairvoyance*, *disintegrate*, *dispel magic*, *locate object*, *passwall*, *scrying*, and *teleport*.

Focus: A small silver key

New Wondrous Items

Torque of Recall

This simple bronze torque normally lacks identifying marks or emblems of any kind. It is commonly given to important emissaries or valued minions by a liege or other potentate. By uttering a command word, once per day the bearer can use the spell *word of recall* with a one major difference: the item's creator (or a creature designated by the creator during the creation process), not the bearer, fixes the exact point of "sanctuary," and can change it as a full-round action if necessary. The bearer does not know where the *torque* takes them when it is used; evil leaders have often used this loophole to dispose of unwanted or incompetent lackeys.

Moderate conjuration; CL 11th; Craft Wondrous Item, *word of recall*; Price 118,800 gp; Cost 59,400 + 4,752 XP.

New Feats

Lore Master [Metamagic]

Benefit: When altering a spell with a metamagic feat, the spell slot requirement of the feat is reduced by 1. This reduction stacks with that of the Seer feat, for a total adjustment of -2. A spell slot requirement cannot be reduced below the spell's original level.

Source: DCC #35 *Gazetteer of the Known World*

Seer [Metamagic]

Benefit: When altering a spell with a metamagic feat, the spell slot requirement of the feat is reduced by 1. A spell slot requirement cannot be reduced below the spell's original level.

Source: DCC #35 *Gazetteer of the Known World*

Tower Shield Mastery [General]

Benefit: You do not suffer the penalty to attack rolls associated with using a tower shield. Additionally, this feat reduces the armor check penalty for tower shields by 1 point.

Source: DCC #51 *Castle Whiterock*

Appendix 4: Player Handouts

Players' Handout A

Master,

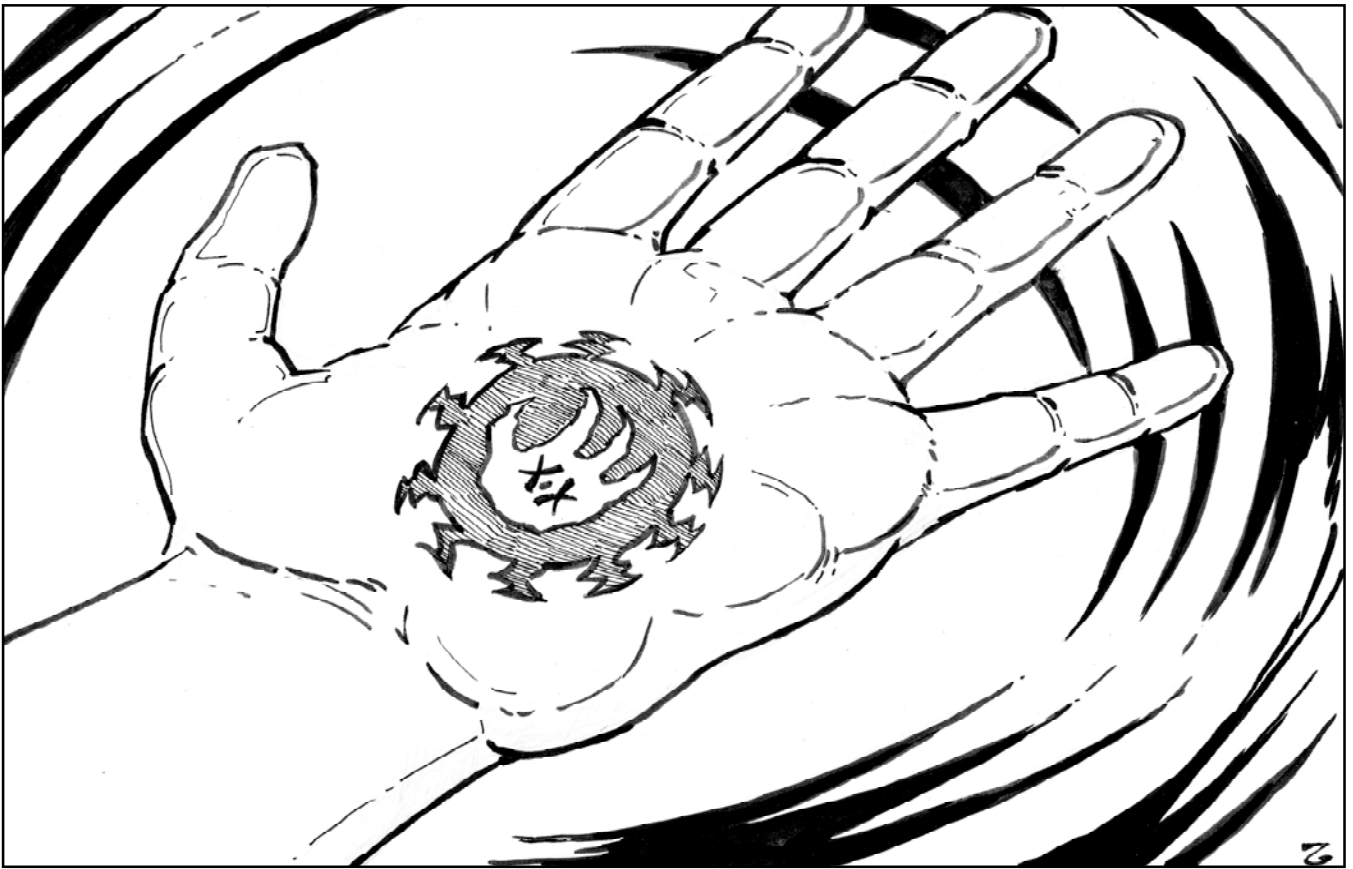
Some of the men have expressed concern at the nature of our "guest." We understand the paladin was once a comrade of yours, but surely there is a more appropriate place where the "remains" can be kept?

Also, several have complained of bad dreams lately and are acting erratically.

I'm not a superstitious sort, but that sounds like what you described happening before the paladin was sacrificed.

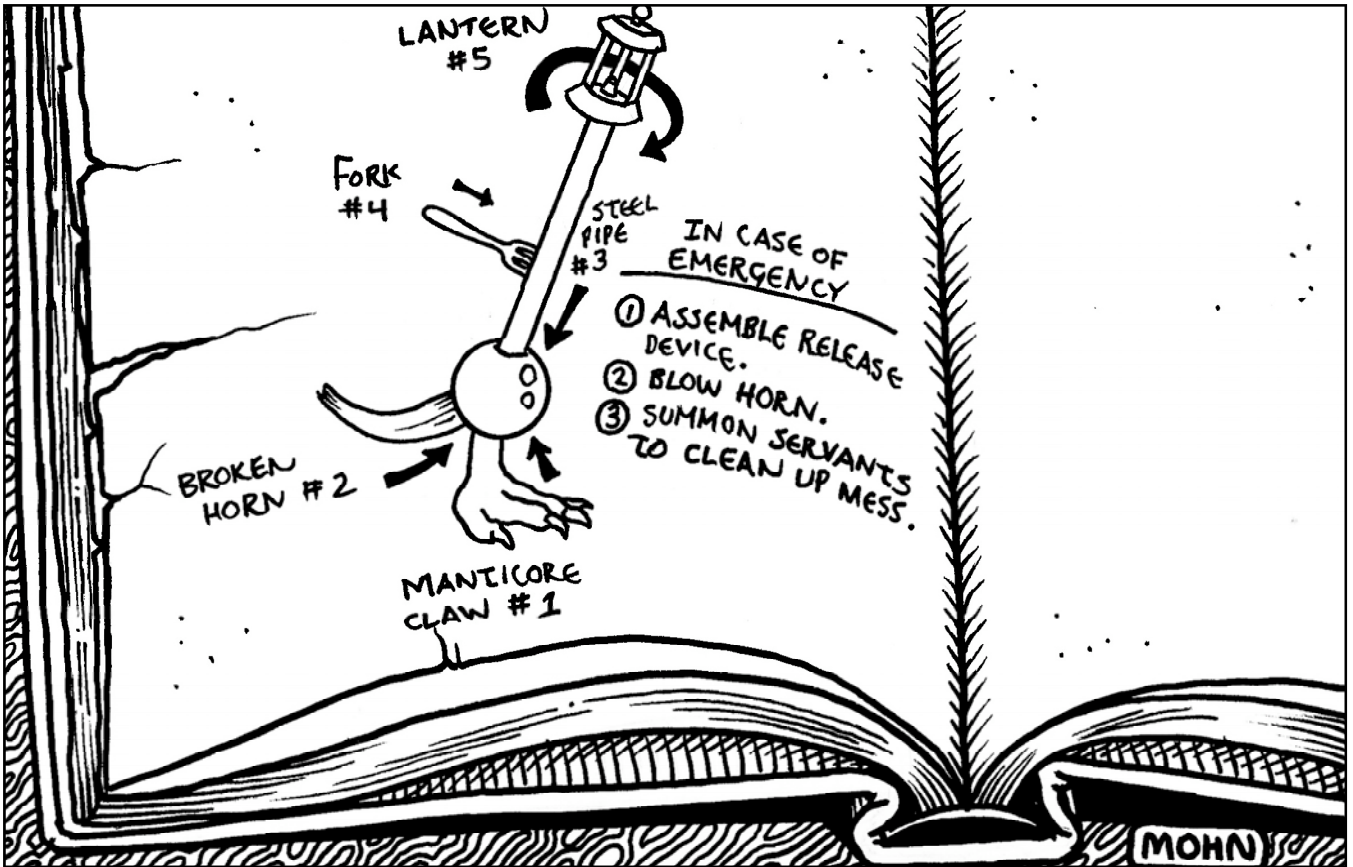
Your loyal servant,

- Aelfric

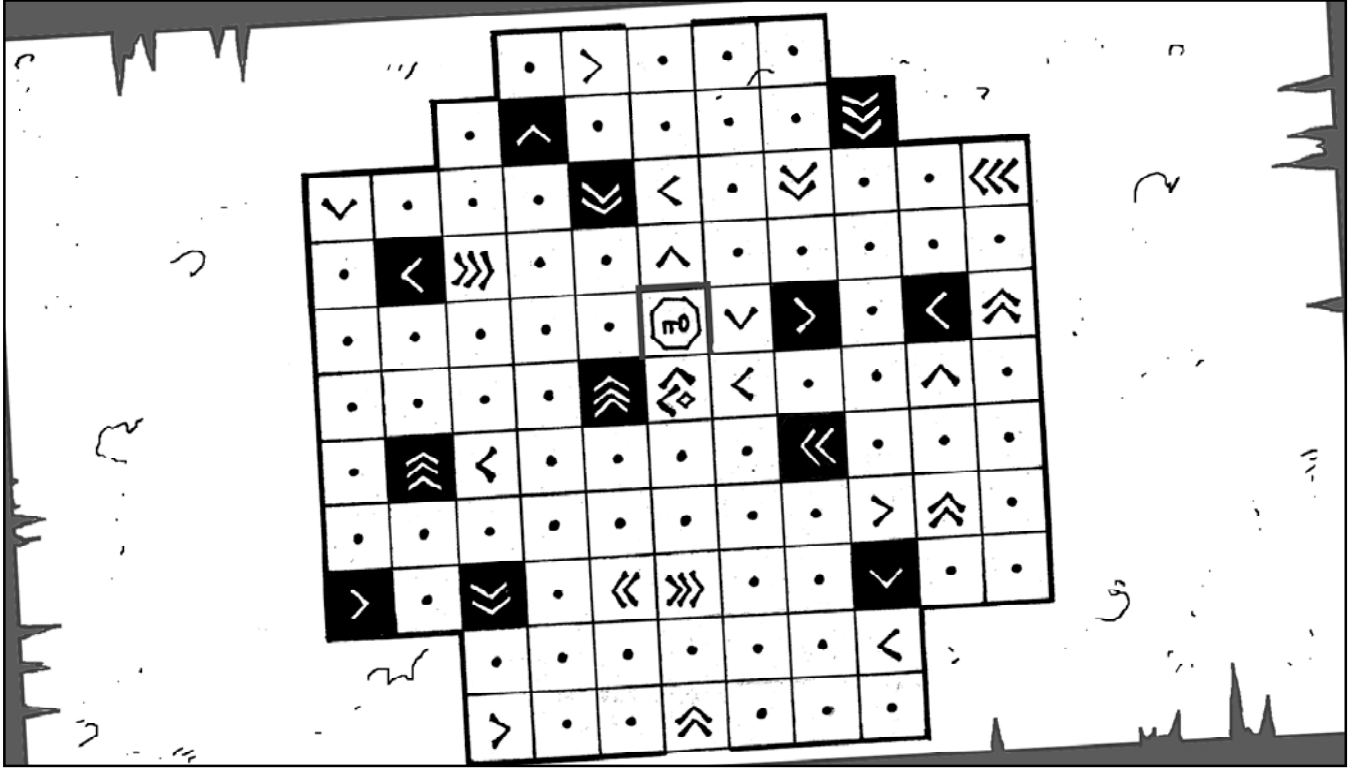


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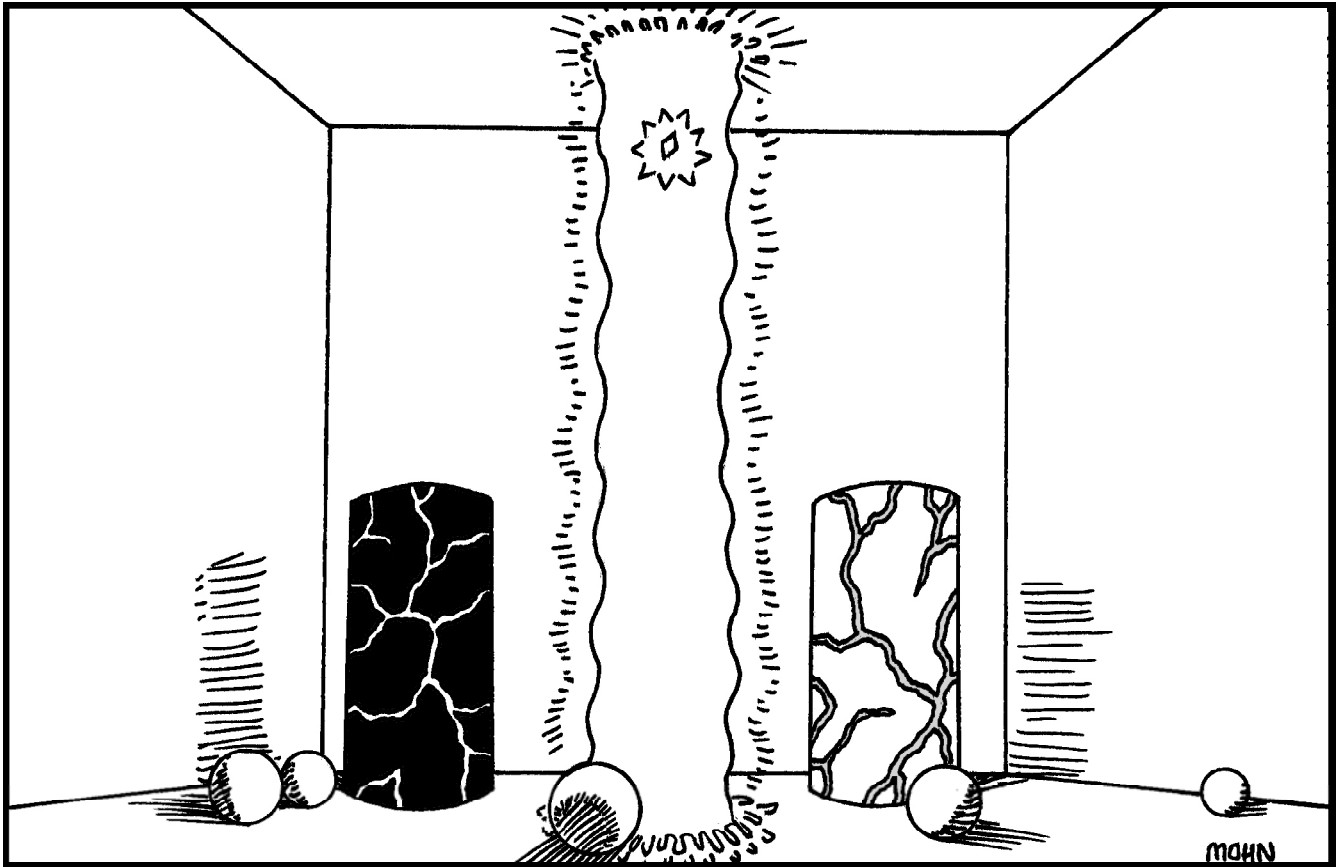
Players' Handout D

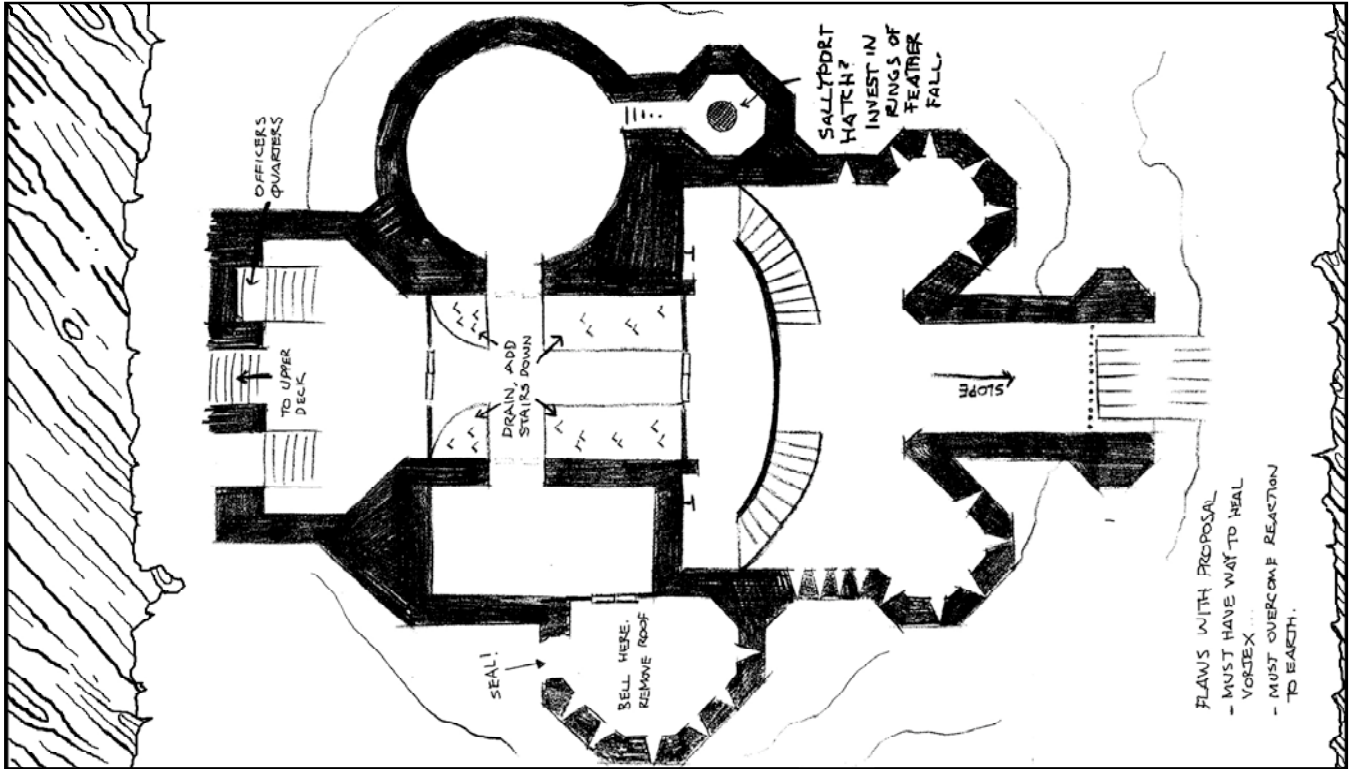


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Players' Handout E

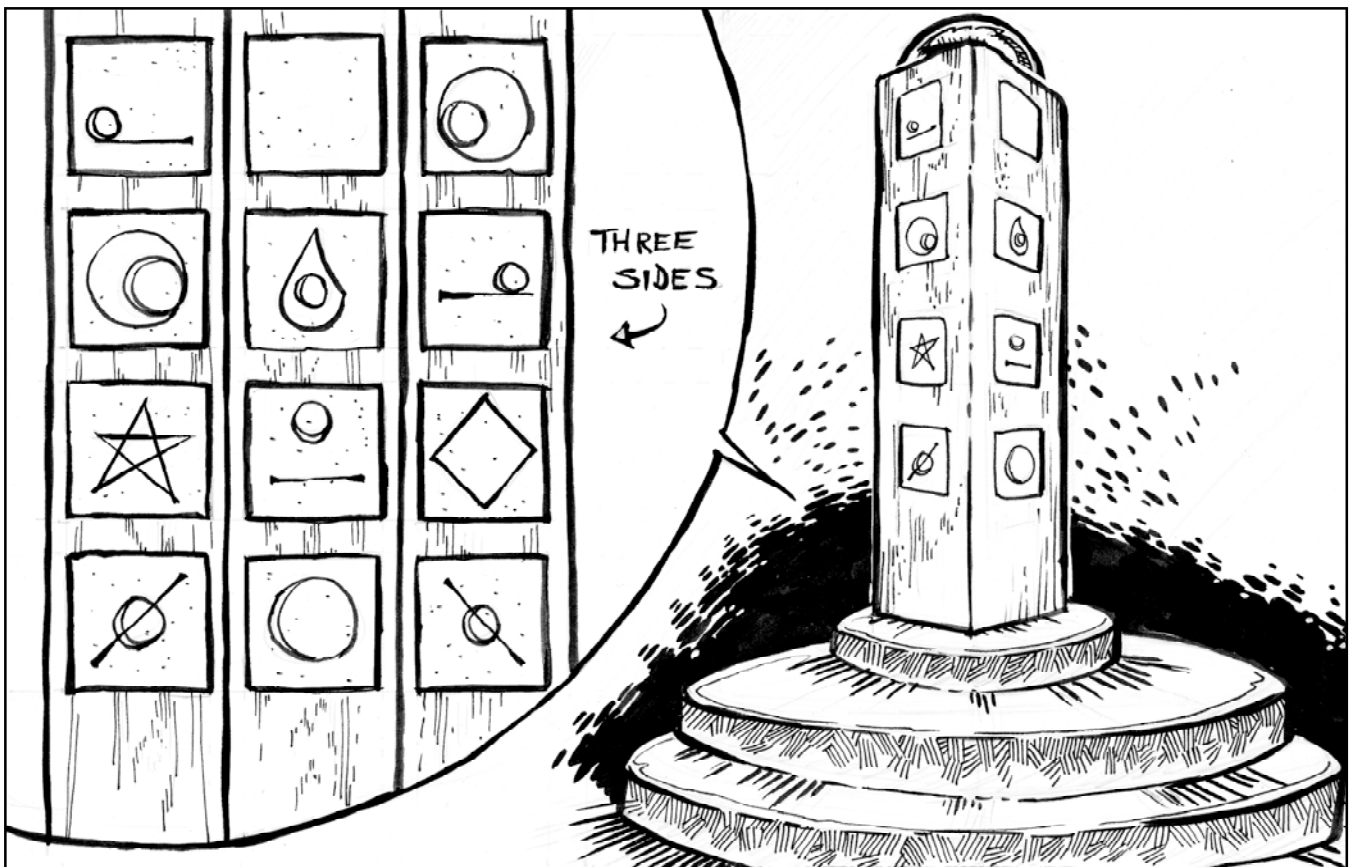




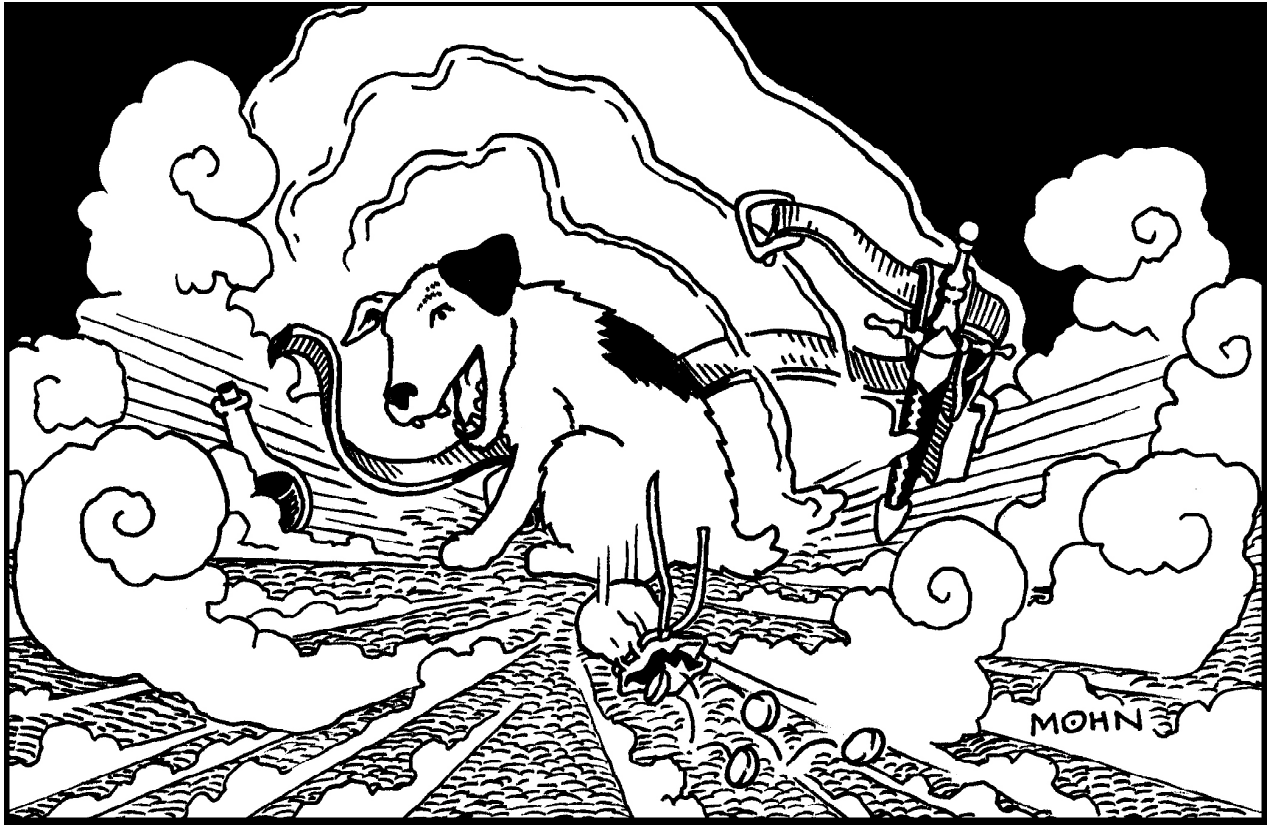
Players' Handout F

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Players' Handout G



Your Exciting New Life as a Dog Begins Now!

Baleful Polymorph Revisited

You have failed your save, and are now holding **Handout H**.

You now take on all the statistics and special abilities of an average member of your new form (in this case, a Daschund, or “wiener dog”) in place of your own except as follows:

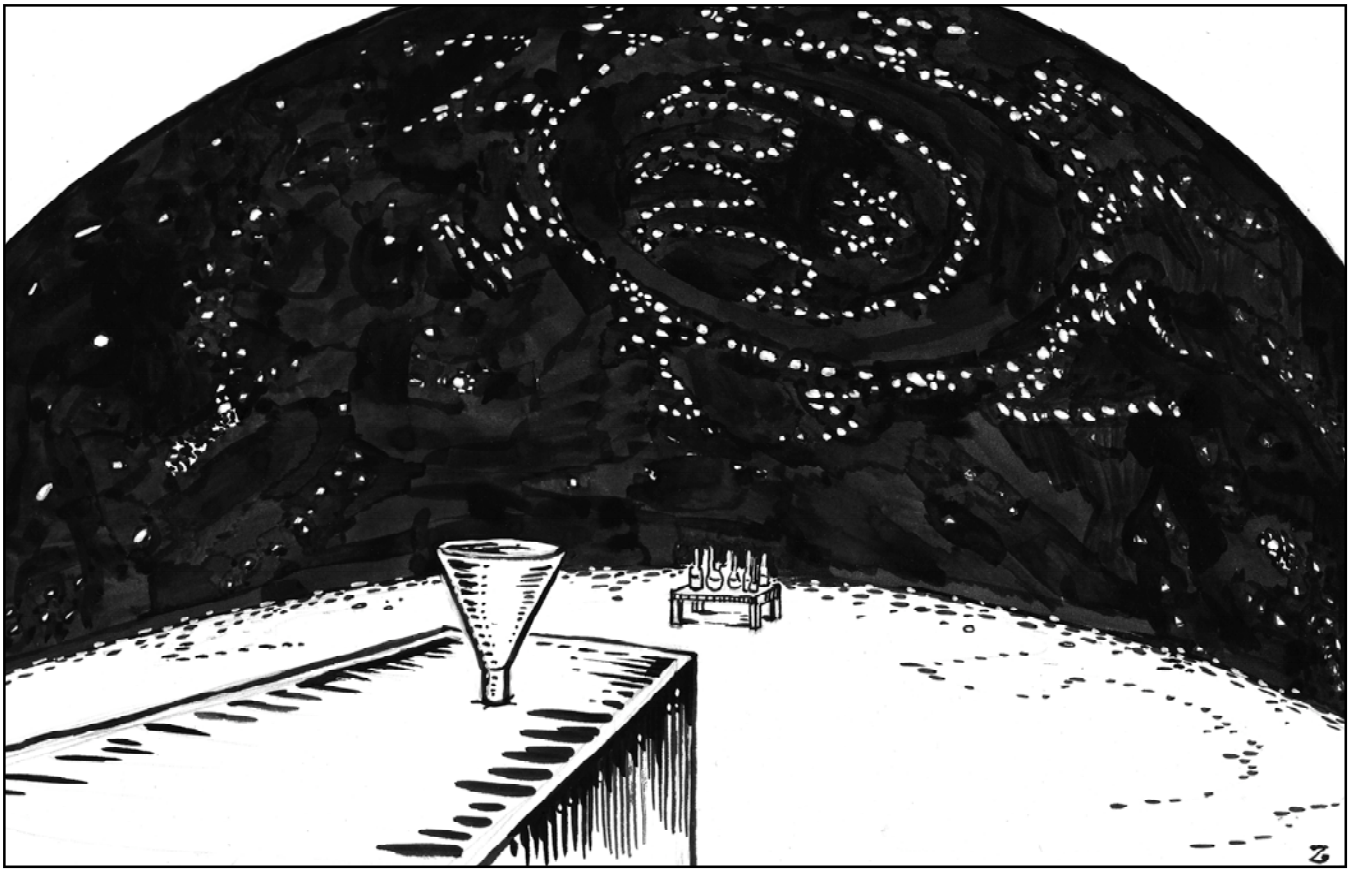
- You retain your own alignment (and personality, within the limits of the new form’s ability scores).
- You retain your own hit points. You are not healed by this change.
- You are treated as having your normal Hit Dice for purpose of adjudicating effects based on HD, such as the *sleep* spell, though you uses the Daschund’s base attack bonus, base save bonuses, and all other statistics derived from Hit Dice.
- You also retain the ability to understand (but not to speak) the languages you understood in your original form. You can’t write in the languages you understand because a dog is incapable of writing. You can, however, bark or tail-wag to communicate (keeping in mind you now have an Intelligence of 2).

With these exceptions, your normal game statistics are replaced by those of the Daschund. You lose all the special abilities you had in your normal form, including class features.

All items worn or carried fall to the ground at your (four) feet even if they could be worn or carried by a dog.

Daschund (dog) (polymorphed hero): Small animal; HD (*as hero*) (*has same current and max hit points as hero*); Init +3; Spd 40 ft.; AC 15, touch 14, flat-footed 12; Base Atk +0; Grp -3; Atk/Full Atk bite +2 melee (1d4+1); SA – ; SQ low-light vision, scent; AL (*as PC*); SV Fort +4, Ref +5, Will +1; Str 13, Dex 15, Con 15, Int 2, Wis 12, Cha 6.

Skills and Feats: Jump +7, Listen +5, Spot +5, Survival +1 (+5 when tracking by scent); Alertness, Track.



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(translated from Goblin)

IN WOODS - Leaving to go to big wood tower with seven slave-warriors, my worthless son, my best mount, and big bell. Goat-foot has promised to call the wind for me. I will chain wind to my lord's castle with the bell!

So pleased with myself I killed a slave-warrior. He was tough and didn't scream for long time. Will miss him. Bird won't shut up.

AT BIG TREE - Beat worthless son for losing future-map of master's wind-castle!

Goat-foot walked us through sticker-plants and past talking-bear-plant. He has bell, will start calling wind-god today. Nothing to eat here.

Goat-foot gave me bottle of orange water, said only a little would make flower-picture of when master returns. Threw away dumb label and gave it better one.

Goat-foot talks too much to worthless son, thinks he can trick him. But I have special paper that worthless son will use to break bell if goat-foot stabs my back. Hidden!

STILL AT BIG TREE - Damn scythe-bug flew in hole up stairs, killed all six slave-warriors! Goat-foot too busy taming wind to make it go away. Bird won't shut up.

STILL AT BIG TREE - Tried to make white light work but is broken! Worthless son said something about "moon," but he's stupid. Hate bird.

HATE BIG TREE - Wind getting loud. Goat-foot must be taming wind-god. Won't be long now until I have bell!

LET IT BE HEAR FORSWORN:

That the bynding agreement entered forthwith by Istreus of the Hazen Circle (henceforth Party A) and Nazradelk (here signed by Edreth, henceforth Party B) shall be honored in all its termes, on pain of torture Most Egregious.

WHEREIN:

Party B shall provide Party A with necessary labor and materials with which to construct a Confyning Bell of his Design and Specifications.

WHEREUPON:

Party A shall retire to Ironwood Tower (henceforth Site A) thence to summon forth the aforementioned agent of elemental wind, Orshoom the Skygod (henceforth Party C), for purpose of binding Party C into said Confyning Bell.

ADDENDUM: Party B shall be present at Site A, escorted and safety guarrantored by Party A, when the act of binding is completed, for purposes of supervsion.

WHEREUPON:

Party A shall surrender to Party B said Confyning Bell, receiving in return aforementioned funds.

ADDITIONALLY:

Party A shall travel to the Keep (henceforth Site B), escorted and safety guarrantored by Party B, there to see installation of said Confyning Bell into apparatus of Site B for purpose of harnessing Party C as lift and propulsion, also as weapons systemme.

IN CONCLUSION:

Party A shall be considered for service by Gazihmon the Master (henceforth Party D), under such terms as Party D sees fit, as recommended by Party B.

ADDENDUM: Party A shall be given leave to pursue aforementioned private agenda of retribution against city-states of previous enmity, as granted by Party D.

SO IT IS AGREED:

here signed Istreus of the Hazen Circle:

X

here signed Edreth (for Nazradelk):

Edreth

(from the journal found at the body, last entry)

...as mad as it seems, this demon prince Gazihmon has TWO souls...one of his flesh and another. Must destroy both to kill the fiend...he must have hidden the "second soul" somehow...he's been killed before and it didn't "take." He'll just keep coming back...ah, Teomon, I could use your wisdom now...

The others will see...I will succeed where they failed...

Appendix 5: Pregenerated Characters

This adventure is designed for play with characters of non-contiguous levels. As such, the tournament pregens were a different level in each round. They are presented in their original tournament format in the entries that follow. In tournament play, it was not revealed to players that the pregens would change level until the start of the next round.

There are six pregens, but each party had only four members. Players chose the four of the six PCs to be their characters.

Starting Equipment

Regardless of characters chosen, certain starting equipment was available to the players at the beginning of each round.

Round 1 Starting Equipment

Regardless of which four characters the players decide to use, these are the items each party will have and their weight: 10 torches (1 lb. each), 2 sets of flint and tinder (no weight), a smokestick (1/2 lb.), a 10-foot pole (8 lbs.), 2 backpacks (2 lbs. each), a hammer (2 lbs.), and 10 iron spikes (1/2 lb. each).

Round 2 Starting Equipment

Regardless of which four characters the players decide to use, each party will have a wand of *identify* (CL 5) and an *oil of resurrection*.

The wand will cast the spell as a standard action with immediate results (allowing characters to use what they find in the dungeon). This circumvents normal rules for wands. It has five (5) charges at the beginning of round two.

The oil acts like the spell *resurrection*, but it differs in the following manner: instead of the resurrected PC losing two points of Constitution or losing a level, the PC instead gains a negative level. This level cannot be regained through a *restoration* spell or the like.

When a spellcaster gains a negative level, he loses a spell or slot of his highest level; this spell or slot must be from those currently available to the spellcaster (you can't "lose" a spell or slot you already cast for the day).

Round 3 Starting Equipment

Regardless of which four characters the players decide to use, each party will have a wand of *identify* (CL 5).

The wand will cast the spell as a standard action with immediate results (allowing characters to use what they

find in the dungeon). This circumvents normal rules for wands. It has five (5) charges at the beginning of round two.

Round 1 Characters

Thoromir

Born a slave in the mines of the Mountain King, Thoromir spent his childhood slaving beneath the watchful eyes of cruel orc taskmasters far beneath the halls of forbidden Risinox. Forced to steal for his survival, Thoromir developed a sharp eye and fast hands, quickly learning to distrust anyone – be they dwarf or orc.

On the eve of his fortieth year, Thoromir was caught stealing mutton from an overseer; for his punishment, Thoromir's right hand was branded, and the dwarf was assigned to scout particularly unstable fissures. When a cave-in opened a series of hitherto undiscovered natural caves, young Thoromir seized his chance and escaped into the wilds of the Underdeep.

Sustaining himself on pools of stagnant water and the occasional cave lizard or blind fish, Thoromir slowly worked his way towards the surface. He emerged, 3 weeks later, half starved and dying of thirst. His body was discovered by Teomon of the Ocek, who ordered his apprentices to carry the dwarf back to his tower. There, the aging hedge mage nursed the dwarf back to health.

Since that time, Thoromir has served Teomon loyally. He tolerates the presence of the mage's other servants, though oftentimes he can still slip into his old distrustful ways. Like a back alley dog that has been kicked once too often, the façade of the young, stoic dwarf conceals a feral creature, accustomed to solving his problems with a shiv.

Description: A quiet, sullen dwarf, with a dark beard woven into a complex series of knots used by dwarves to signify having sworn off any clan allegiance. His quick, nimble hands seldom stop moving. Thoromir has the distasteful nervous habit of playing with his daggers, sliding them in and out of their sheaths, rolling them over in his hands, and testing their edges.

Comments: "Ngh."

Thoromir, male dwarf Exp1: CR 1/2; Medium humanoid (dwarf); HD 1d6+2; hp 8; Init +6; Spd 20 ft.; AC 15, touch 12, flat-footed 13; Base Atk +0; Grp +0; Atk/Full Atk dagger +0 melee (1d4/19-20); SA –; SQ Darkvision 60 ft., dwarf traits; AL N; SV Fort +2, Ref +2,

Will +1; Str 10, Dex 14, Con 15, Int 16, Wis 8, Cha 8.

Skills and Feats: Appraise +3 (+5 metal or stone items), Decipher Script +7, Disable Device +7, Hide +5, Move Silently +5, Open Lock +6, Search +7 (+9 to detect unusual stonework), Sleight of Hand +2, Spot +3, Tumble +4, Use Magic Device +3; Improved Initiative.

Possessions: Studded leather armor, 2 daggers, explorer's outfit.

Corebrin

Known affectionately as "Brin" to his peers, Corebrin was born a weak and sickly child, the son of a humble woodsman. Fearing for his child's life, Corebrin's father brought his infant to Teomon of the Ocek, and asked the mage to bless his son, ensuring good health and a prosperous life.

The mage agreed, on the condition that Corebrin serve him for a decade. The woodsman father agreed, assuming that the ancient mage would either forget his promise or die before Corebrin was old enough to become an indentured servant.

As the years passed, the sickly child grew strong. On the boy's eighth birthday, Teomon of the Ocek appeared at the family's door, demanding the child that was his due. Sadly, the woodsman agreed, pressing the frightened boy into the withered mage's tattered robes.

Under the mage's tutelage, the boy bore witness to dweomers and mysteries beyond the ken of most common folk. He has seen matter transformed by sheer will alone, has met speaking animals and beasts of myth, and even once held the arm of an elven princess as he escorted her through the darksome woods on the winter solstice. Now, with his 18th year fast approaching, the day is drawing nigh when Corebrin's duty to his master will be discharged, and he will enter the greater world, a free man and wiser for his service.

Description: A light-hearted, affable young man, Corebrin can be painfully cheery at times. Though not particularly bright or insightful, Corebrin seems incapable of bearing any shame for his shortcomings, laughing away his mistakes as quickly as he dismisses his talents. Unusually strong for his age, with the broad shoulders and quick reflexes of a natural fighter, Corebrin seems destined to grow into a fine warrior. Perhaps not surprisingly, he takes little pride in his accomplishments, preferring instead to let his actions speak for him.

Comments: "I've got another idea we can try..."

Corebrin, male human War1: CR 1/2; Medium humanoid (human); HD 1d8+2; hp 10; Init +1; Spd 30 ft.; AC 15, touch 12, flat-footed 13; Base Atk +1; Grp +4; Atk/Full Atk handaxe +4 melee (1d6+3/x3) or shortspear

+2 ranged (1d6+3); SA —; SQ —; AL CG; SV Fort +4, Ref +3, Will -1; Str 16, Dex 13, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 8, Cha 10.

Skills and Feats: Climb +4, Intimidate +4, Jump +4; Blind-Fight, Lightning Reflexes.

Possessions: Studded leather armor, heavy wooden shield, handaxe, shortspear, peasant's outfit.

Rootli

Rootli's family of scribes has served Teomon of the Ocek for several generations, a curious fact that is not lost on the long-lived gnomes. The original impetus for their service has been lost to the ages, but it is whispered that the family agreed to serve the wizard for his lifetime – a contract that has proven far longer than any gnome might expect. For her part, Rootli is happy to serve out her family's debt, in both letter and spirit, and Teomon in turn has rewarded the young gnome by teaching her a magic trick or two.

Strongly principled, Rootli has a highly developed sense of right and wrong, a trait that has gotten her into trouble on more than one occasion. No crime can go unpunished, even if she has to take matters into her own diminutive hands.

Rootli's morality does not discourage her from enjoying practical jokes, and indeed the gnome seems to enjoy playing against type. She particularly enjoys teasing those who deem themselves too noble or serious to enjoy a good joke. This is never done in malice, but rather with the sincere belief that all anyone needs to enjoy life is to be shocked out of complacency. To the young gnome, life is to be enjoyed and defended – preferably with boon companions at one's side.

Description: An attractive, young gnome with dancing, blonde hair that falls to the small of her back and flashing, dark eyes, Rootli has a dainty frame, even for a gnome. Any weakness in muscle is more than made up by her hearty spirit, which enlivens her whole being with health and vibrancy. Her eyes seem to drink in every detail, and she is always poised, moving without any wasted or excess motion.

Comments: "Turn around, I think there's something on your armor..."

Rootli the Imp, female gnome App1: CR 1/2; Small humanoid (gnome); HD 1d6+5; hp 11; Init +2; Spd 20 ft.; AC 13, touch 13, flat-footed 11; Base Atk +0; Grp -5; Atk/Full Atk club +0 melee (1d4-1) or light crossbow +3 ranged (1d6/19-20); SA Spell-like abilities; SQ Gnome traits, low-light vision; AL LG; SV Fort +2, Ref +2, Will +1; Str 8, Dex 14, Con 15, Int 16, Wis 8, Cha 10.

Skills and Feats: Concentration +6, Craft (alchemy) +5, Handle Animal +2, Knowledge (arcana) +7, Knowledge (dungeoneering) +5, Knowledge (history)

+5, Listen +1, Spellcraft +7, Survival +1; Toughness.

Spell-Like Abilities: 1/day – *dancing lights, ghost sound* (DC 11), *prestidigitation, speak with animals*. Caster level 1st.

Spells Prepared (3/2; save DC 13 + spell level, 14 + spell level for illusion spells): 0 – *acid splash, light, resistance*; 1st – *burning hands, color spray*.

Possessions: Club, light crossbow, 10 bolts and quiver, scholar's outfit.

Lyewyn O' the Downs

The bastard daughter of an elven prince and a human maid, Lyewyn is nonetheless the heiress to an ancient elvish line. She was delivered as a swaddled babe to Teomon's tower, so that the mage could raise the child independent of the scorn and shame that drove her father and mother to exile themselves into the wilds of the North.

Lyewyn has been aware of her ancestry for as long as she can recall, and works tirelessly for the day she can return to her father's people and assume her rightful place. Until that day comes, she will continue to hone her skills and knowledge. Regretfully, her single-minded dedication has robbed Lyewyn of the carefree grace so characteristic of her elven ancestors. Teomon has tried to cure Lyewyn of her frantic obsession, even going so far as to pair her with Rootli the Imp, but this only served to get the gnome nearly skewered on the young aristocrat's blade. Since that ill-fated encounter, Teomon has resigned himself to letting the hardheaded Lyewyn have her way, even though it will likely lead her to heartbreak in the end.

Lyewyn finds some small comfort in fencing with Corebrin; though the human warrior is far too cheerful for her tastes, he makes a fine opponent, something Lyewyn admires. Of all Teomon's ragtag servants and foundlings, Lyewyn spends the bulk of her time in Thoromir's company – the sullen dwarf and impassioned half-elf each enjoying the silence of the other's company.

Description: With her dark hair, complexion, and eyes, and her half-elven features, Lyewyn might be considered attractive, but her fierce single mindedness mars her otherwise exotic beauty. Light on her feet and quick with a blade, Lyewyn relies on her speed and agility to carry her in battle. She is wiser and more intuitive than she cares to admit, preferring to rest in obsession rather than rationally consider the likely outcome of her quest – and its bitter fruits.

Comments: “Must you insist on speaking?”

Lyewyn O' the Downs, female half-elf Ari1: CR 1/2; Medium humanoid (half-elf); HD 1d8+1; hp 9; Init +2; Spd 30 ft.; AC 18, touch 12, flat-footed 16; Base Atk +0; Grp +0; Atk/Full Atk rapier +2 melee (1d6/18-20) or dag-

ger +2 ranged (1d4/19-20); SA –; SQ Half-elf traits, low-light vision; AL LN; SV Fort +1, Ref +2, Will +5; Str 11, Dex 14, Con 12, Int 8, Wis 16, Cha 10.

Skills and Feats: Diplomacy +2, Gather Information +2, Knowledge (arcana) +3, Knowledge (nobility & royalty) +3, Listen +4, Search +0, Spot +4; Weapon Finesse.

Possessions: Chain shirt, heavy wooden shield, rapier, dagger, traveler's outfit.

Aminfalost

When Lyewyn was but an infant, her parents had her sent to Teomon of the Ocek. Aminfalost and a troop of elven royal guards were sent in pursuit of the half-elf bastard, with orders of retrieving the child upon pain of death. When the ancient mage refused to give up the child, the elves attempted to take the child by force; the troop was destroyed to a single elf. When Aminfalost awoke, he was bound and gagged in the prison beneath Teomon's tower. When approached by the wizened mage, Aminfalost swore that he would rather die than fail in his sworn duty. Teomon agreed to let the elf free if he would serve the mage; in return, Teomon would let the elf slay him – in fifty years' time. To honor his side of the bargain, Aminfalost only had to protect Teomon that long.

Over the years, Aminfalost has come to respect and admire the old mage. His devil's bargain with Teomon still stands, though it has become little more than a joke between old friends. Aminfalost has taken it upon himself to train both Lyewyn and Corebrin in swordplay, and enjoys the carefree camaraderie of Rootli and the endless curiosity of Tanlew. To date, the sole companion Aminfalost has been unable to accept is the dour Thoromir – the dwarf is far too grim for the elf's tastes, and his violent nature seems a liability to the steadfast Aminfalost.

Description: With an exceptionally strong build for an elf, Aminfalost carries himself with the grace and power of a sylvan cat. Though light-hearted and quick to laugh, he has little use for conversation, preferring instead to observe social encounters from a distance. When he has a need to speak, it is typically direct and to the point, which can often times be perceived as brusque or abrupt. Aminfalost feels most at home in the forest, slipping softly through sun-glades, with the wind whispering overhead. When in communion with the beauty and majesty of the natural world, what use is mere conversation?

Comments: “Shhh....listen.”

Note: Aminfalost's base class is the Guard, as presented in *DCC #51: Castle Whiterock*.

Aminfalost, male elf Grd1: CR 1/2; Medium humanoid (elf); HD 1d6+1; hp 7; Init +3; Spd 30 ft.; AC 16, touch 13, flat-footed 13; Base Atk +1; Grp +3; Atk/Full Atk

short sword +3 melee (1d6+2/19-20) or longbow +4 ranged (1d8/x3); SA –; SQ Elf traits, low-light vision; AL CG; SV Fort +3, Ref +3, Will +1; Str 14, Dex 16, Con 12, Int 12, Wis 13, Cha 8.

Skills and Feats: Knowledge (local) +5, Listen +7, Search +7, Sense Motive +5, Spot +7, Use Rope +5; Weapon Finesse.

Possessions: Studded leather armor, short sword, longbow, 20 arrows and quiver, traveler's outfit.

Tanlew

A foundling raised by a witch, Tanlew was sent to become an apprentice to Teomon when she was six years of age. To his surprise, the young girl showed no fear of him. Quite the opposite, she immediately seemed at home, treating the crotchety, old mage with the familiarity due an old companion. Where others would fear Teomon's shadow, Tanlew ignored the mage's grandstanding antics. She would even refuse to sleep in her own bed, going so far as to curl up and sleep in the mage's favorite chair – indifferent to whether it was occupied by said old mage at the time.

Tanlew has always displayed a confidence and wisdom beyond her years. What others perceive as a naiveté is actually an unshakeable faith in ultimate goodness of the universe. While cruelty, evil, and wickedness exist, so too do the weapons necessary to exorcise them. All that is necessary, in Tanlew's admittedly limited view, is the courage to take up arms against the darkness and drive it from battlefield.

Of all Teomon's wards, Tanlew is certainly his favorite, and the one he frets about the most. Whether or not her beliefs are unfounded, the mage cannot say, but experience has taught him that the world has little care for right or wrong, good or evil. Still, Tanlew has always managed to surprise him, and a small part of Teomon holds out in hope that he might be surprised once again.

Description: An otherwise plain young girl with sandy hair and freckles, it is Tanlew's all-knowing smile that tends to have an unnerving effect on adults. She exudes a confidence and faith far beyond her years. She seems slightly removed, as if she can't be troubled by the physical world, wearing tattered and stained dresses and only combing her hair when Teomon demands it. She spends much of her time toiling in Teomon's herbal gardens, so her hands often smell of earth, and she always has dark soil buried beneath her fingernails.

Comments: "Are you sure that's the decision you want to make?"

Tanlew, female human Adp1: CR 1/2; Medium humanoid (human); HD 1d6+2; hp 8; Init +0; Spd 30 ft.; AC 10, touch 10, flat-footed 10; Base Atk +0; Grp +1;

Atk/Full Atk spear +1 melee (1d8+1/x3) or dagger +0 ranged (1d4+1/19-20); SA –; SQ –; AL NG; SV Fort +2, Ref +0, Will +5; Str 13, Dex 10, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 16, Cha 8.

Skills and Feats: Concentration +6, Heal +5, Knowledge (arcana) +2, Knowledge (religion) +2, Knowledge (the planes) +2; Combat Casting, Spell Penetration

Spells Prepared (3/2; save DC 13 + spell level): 0 – cure minor wounds, guidance, touch of fatigue; 1st – bless, cure light wounds.

Possessions: Spear, dagger, scholar's outfit.

Round 2 Characters

Thoromir, male dwarf Exp1/Bbn1/Rog7: CR 8; Medium humanoid (dwarf); HD 1d6+2 plus 1d12+2 plus 7d6+14; hp 64; Init +8; Spd 30 ft.; AC 22, touch 14, flat-footed 22; Base Atk +6; Grp +6; Atk +1 *handaxe* +11 melee (1d6+1/x3) or masterwork heavy crossbow +11 ranged (1d10/19-20); Full Atk +1 *handaxe* +9/+4 melee (1d6+1/x3) and +1 *handaxe* +9 melee (1d6/x3) or masterwork heavy crossbow +11 ranged (1d10/19-20); SA Rage 1/day, sneak attack +4d6; SQ Darkvision 60 ft., evasion, dwarf traits, fast movement, trapfinding, trap sense +2, uncanny dodge; AL N; SV Fort +6, Ref +9, Will +3; Str 10, Dex 18, Con 15, Int 16, Wis 8, Cha 8.

Skills and Feats: Appraise +3 (+5 metal or stone items), Balance +11, Climb +5, Decipher Script +7, Disable Device +15, Escape Artist +9, Hide +16, Jump +7, Move Silently +16, Open Lock +16, Search +15 (+17 to detect unusual stonework), Sleight of Hand +7, Spot +3, Survival –1 (+1 following tracks), Swim +5, Tumble +18, Use Magic Device +11, Use Rope +4 (+6 with bindings); Improved Initiative, Two-Weapon Fighting, Weapon Finesse.

SA – *Rage (Ex):* Once per day, Thoromir can enter a state of fierce rage that last for 7 rounds. The following changes are in effect as long as he rages: AC 20, touch 12, flat-footed 20; hp 82; +1 *handaxe* +11 melee (1d6+3/x3); Full Atk +1 *handaxe* +9/+4 melee (1d6+3/x3) and +1 *handaxe* +9 melee (1d6+1/x3); SV Fort +8, Will +5; Str 14, Con 19; Climb +7, Jump +9, Swim +7. At the end of his rage, Thoromir is fatigued for the duration of the encounter.

Possessions: +3 *mithral breastplate*, 2 +1 *handaxes*, alchemical silver dagger, masterwork heavy crossbow, 5 +1 *undead bane bolts*, 2 +1 *adamantine construct bane bolts*, 2 +1 *plant bane bolts*, 11 masterwork bolts, *gloves of Dexterity* +2, *handy haversack*, *potion of invisibility* (CL 2), *potion of enlarge person* (CL 2), *elixir of vision*, masterwork thieves' tools, climber's kit, silk rope (50 ft.), grappling hook, explorer's outfit, 2 flasks of alchemist's fire, vial of antitoxin.

Corebrin, male human War1/Ftr8: CR 8; Medium humanoid (human); HD 1d8+2 plus 8d10+16; hp 83; Init

+1; Spd 20 ft.; AC 23, touch 11, flat-footed 22; Base Atk +9; Grp +15; Atk +1 *bastard sword* +18 melee (1d10+9/17-20) or masterwork shortspear +11 ranged (1d6+6); Full Atk +1 *bastard sword* +18/+13 melee (1d10+9/17-20) or masterwork shortspear +11 ranged (1d6+6); SA –; SQ –; AL CG; SV Fort +10, Ref +5, Will +1; Str 22, Dex 13, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 8, Cha 10.

Skills and Feats: Climb +12, Intimidate +12, Jump +12; Blind-Fight, Cleave, Dodge, Exotic Weapon Proficiency (bastard sword), Greater Weapon Focus (bastard sword), Improved Critical (bastard sword), Lightning Reflexes, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (bastard sword), Weapon Specialization (bastard sword).

Possessions: +1 *full plate*, +1 *heavy steel shield*, +1 *bastard sword*, 2 *javelins of lightning*, masterwork shortspear, *belt of giant strength* +4, *potion of haste* (CL 5), *potion of cure serious wounds* (CL 5), climber's kit, crowbar, silk rope (50 ft.), backpack, belt pouch, explorer's outfit.

Rootli the Imp, female gnome App1/Wiz8: CR 8; Small humanoid (gnome); HD 1d6+5 plus 8d4+16; hp 48; Init +6; Spd 30 ft.; AC 13, touch 13, flat-footed 11; Base Atk +4; Grp -1; Atk/Full Atk dagger +4 melee (1d4-1/19-20) or masterwork light crossbow +8 ranged (1d6/19-20); SA Spell-like abilities; SQ Empathic link, gnome traits, low-light vision, share spells, weasel familiar; AL LG; SV Fort +4, Ref +4, Will +7; Str 8, Dex 14, Con 15, Int 18, Wis 8, Cha 10.

Skills and Feats: Concentration +14, Craft (alchemy) +6, Decipher Script +9, Handle Animal +1, Jump +4, Knowledge (arcana) +16, Knowledge (dungeoneering) +16, Knowledge (history) +9, Listen +1, Spellcraft +18, Survival +1 (+3 underground); Empower Spell, Improved Initiative, Loremaster, Seer, Scribe Scroll, Toughness.

Spell-Like Abilities: 1/day – *dancing lights*, *ghost sound* (DC 11), *prestidigitation*, *speak with animals*. Caster level 1st.

Apprentice Spell Prepared (3/2; save DC 14 + spell level, 15 + spell level for illusion spells): 0 – *detect magic*, *light*, *ray of frost* (empowered); 1st – *expeditious retreat*, *feather fall*.

Wizard Spell Prepared (4/5/4/4/3; save DC 14 + spell level, 15 + spell level for illusion spells): 0 – *detect magic*, *mage hand*, *read magic*, *touch of fatigue*; 1st – *enlarge person*, *magic missile* (empowered) (2), *shield*, *shocking grasp* (empowered); 2nd – *acid arrow* (empowered), *false life*, *mirror image*, *scorching ray* (empowered); 3rd – *dispel magic*, *displacement*, *fireball* (empowered), *vampiric touch* (empowered); 4th – *ice storm* (empowered), *shout* (empowered), *wall of ice*.

Possessions: Dagger, masterwork light crossbow, 20 bolts and quiver, *boots of striding and springing*, *ring of minor spell storing*, *brooch of shielding* (48 charges), *wand of bear's endurance* (CL 3), *wand of cat's grace* (CL 3), *wand of mage armor* (CL 1), *wand of ray of*

enfeeblement (CL 1), *scroll of ice storm* (empowered, CL 7), backpack, spellbook, everburning torch, scrollcase, spell component pouch, traveler's outfit.

Weasel familiar: CR n/a; Tiny magical beast; HD 8d4; hp 24; Init +2; Spd 30 ft.; AC 18, touch 14, flat-footed 14; Base Attack +4; Grp -8; Atk/Full Atk bite +8 melee (1d3-4); SA Attach; SQ Deliver touch spells, improved evasion, low-light vision, scent, speak with master, speak with weasels; AL NG; SV Fort +2, Ref +4, Will +9; Str 3, Dex 15, Con 10, Int 9, Wis 12, Cha 5.

Skills and Feats: Balance +10, Climb +10, Concentration +12, Decipher Script +4, Handle Animal -1, Hide +11, Knowledge (arcana) +11, Knowledge (dungeoneering) +11, Knowledge (history) +4, Move Silently +8, Spellcraft +13, Spot +3, Survival +3 (+5 underground); Weapon Finesse.

SA – Attach (Ex): If a weasel hits with a bite attack, it uses its powerful jaws to latch onto the opponent's body and automatically deals bite damage each round it remains attached. An attached weasel loses its Dexterity bonus to Armor Class and has an AC of 14. An attached weasel can be struck with a weapon or grappled itself. To remove an attached weasel through grappling, the opponent must achieve a pin against the creature.

Lyewyn O' the Downs, female half-elf

Ari1/Ftr2/Mnk6: CR 8; Medium humanoid (half-elf); HD 1d8+1 plus 2d10+2 plus 6d8+8; hp 65; Init +4; Spd 50 ft.; AC 22, touch 20, flat-footed 18; Base Atk +6; Grp +8; Atk masterwork rapier +11 melee (1d6+2/18-20) or unarmed strike +10 melee (1d8+2) or masterwork composite longbow [+1 Str] +11 ranged (1d8+1/x3); Full Atk masterwork rapier +11/+6 melee (1d6+2/18-20) or unarmed strike +9/+9/+4 melee (1d8+2) or masterwork composite longbow [+1 Str] +11/+6 ranged (1d8+1/x3); SA Flurry of blows, *ki strike* (magic), stunning fist 6/day (DC 18); SQ Evasion, half-elf traits, low-light vision, purity of body, slow fall (30 ft.), still mind; AL LN; SV Fort +9, Ref +9, Will +11; Str 14, Dex 18, Con 12, Int 8, Wis 19, Cha 10.

Skills and Feats: Appraise +3, Balance +6, Climb +5, Diplomacy +2, Gather Information +2, Jump +17, Knowledge (arcana) +3, Knowledge (nobility & royalty) +3, Listen +5, Search +0, Spot +5, Tumble +18; Dodge, Combat Reflexes, Improved Trip, Improved Unarmed Strike, Mobility, Spring Attack, Stunning Fist, Weapon Finesse.

Possessions: Masterwork rapier, masterwork composite longbow [+1 Str], 20 arrows and quiver, *gloves of Dexterity* +4, *periapt of Wisdom* +2, *bracers of armor* +2, *ring of protection* +1, *pale blue rhomboid ioun stone*, 2 *potions of cure moderate wounds* (CL 3), climber's kit, sunrod, traveler's outfit.

Aminfalost, male elf Grd1/Rgr8: CR 8; Medium humanoid (elf); HD 1d6+1 plus 8d8+8; hp 65; Init +4;

Spd 30 ft.; AC 19, touch 14, flat-footed 15; Base Atk +9; Grp +11; Atk +1 *darkwood halberd* +12 melee (1d10+4/x3) or javelin +13 ranged (1d6+2) or +1 *holy composite longbow* [+2 Str] +14 ranged (1d8+3 plus 2d6 to evil creatures/x3) or +1 *holy composite longbow* [+2 Str] +10 ranged (2d8+6 plus 2d6 to evil creatures/x3); Full Atk +1 *darkwood halberd* +12/+7 melee (1d10+4/x3) or javelin +13 ranged (1d6+2) or +1 *holy composite longbow* [+2 Str] +14/+9 ranged (1d8+3 plus 2d6 to evil creatures/x3) or +1 *holy composite longbow* [+2 Str] +12/+12/+7 ranged (1d8+3 plus 2d6 to evil creatures/x3) or +1 *holy composite longbow* [+2 Str] +10 ranged (2d8+6 plus 2d6 to evil creatures/x3); SA Favored enemy goblinoids +2, favored enemy evil outsiders +4; SQ Animal companion, combat style (archery), elf traits, improved combat style (archery), link with companion, low-light vision, share spells, swift tracker, wild empathy +7, woodland stride; AL CG; SV Fort +9, Ref +10, Will +3; Str 14, Dex 18, Con 12, Int 12, Wis 13, Cha 8.

Skills and Feats: Climb +7, Concentration +3, Jump +7, Knowledge (dungeoneering) +6, Knowledge (local) +3, Knowledge (nature) +6, Listen +12, Search +12, Speak Language (Draconic), Spot +12, Survival +15 (+17 in aboveground natural environments, +17 following tracks, +17 underground); Diehard, Endurance, Many Shot, Point Blank Shot, Precise Shot, Rapid Shot, Track, Weapon Finesse.

Spells Prepared (2; save DC 11 + spell level): 1st – *longstrider*, *resist energy*.

Possessions: +1 *mithral chain shirt*, +1 *darkwood halberd*, +1 *holy composite longbow* [+2 Str], 60 arrows, 18 javelins, *efficient quiver*, *potion of cure light wounds* (CL 1), *potion of lesser restoration* (CL 3), *potion of protection from evil* (CL 1), everburning torch, backpack, 2 belt pouches, climber's kit, traveler's outfit.

Inch, Medium viper animal companion: CR n/a; Medium animal; HD 4d8; hp 4; Init +3; Spd 20 ft., climb 20 ft., swim 20 ft.; AC 19, touch 14, flat-footed 15; Base Atk +3; Grp +3; Atk/Full Atk bite +8 melee (1d4 plus poison); SA Poison; SQ Bonus trick, evasion, scent; AL N; SV Fort +3, Ref +7, Will +2; Str 10, Dex 18, Con 11, Int 1, Wis 12, Cha 2.

Skills and Feats: Balance +12, Climb +12, Hide +14, Listen +5, Spot +5, Swim +8; Weapon Finesse, Weapon Focus (bite).

Tricks Known: Attack, come, down, fetch, seek.

SA – Poison (Ex): Injury, Fortitude DC 12, initial and secondary damage 1d6 Con.

Tanlew, female human Adp1/Clr8: CR 8; Medium humanoid (human); HD 1d6+2 plus 8d8+16; hp 68; Init +0; Spd 30 ft.; AC 22, touch 10, flat-footed 22; Base Atk +6; Grp +7; Atk +1 *ghost touch heavy mace* +9 melee (1d6+2); Full Atk +1 *ghost touch heavy mace* +9/+4 melee (1d6+2); SA Turn undead 2/day (+1, 2d6+7); SQ

Spontaneous casting (*cure* spells); AL NG; SV Fort +8, Ref +2, Will +12; Str 13, Dex 10, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 18, Cha 8.

Skills and Feats: Concentration +14, Heal +6, Knowledge (arcana) +5, Knowledge (religion) +5, Knowledge (the planes) +12, Survival +4 (+6 on other planes); Combat Casting, Greater Spell Penetration, Spell Penetration, Tower Shield Proficiency, Tower Shield Mastery, Weapon Focus (heavy mace).

Adept Spells Prepared (3/2; save DC 14 + spell level): 0 – *cure minor wounds*, *detect magic*, *light*; 1st – *bless*, *protection from evil*.

Cleric Spells Prepared (6/5+1/4+1/4+1/3+1; save DC 14 + spell level; Domains: Protection, War): 0 – *create water*, *detect poison*, *guidance*, *mending* (2), *virtue*; 1st – *divine favor* (2), *doom*, *sanctuary**, *shield of faith* (2); 2nd – *align weapon*, *bull's strength*, *lesser restoration* (2), *shield other**; 3rd – *bestow curse*, *magic circle against evil*, *prayer*, *protection from energy**, *searing light*; 4th – *divine power**, *freedom of movement*, *restoration*, *spell immunity*.

*Domain spell.

Possessions: Mithral breastplate, +3 *darkwood tower shield*, +1 *ghost touch heavy mace*, *wand of cure moderate wounds* (CL 3), *scroll of remove curse* (CL 5), *scroll of remove disease* (CL 5), *potion of barkskin* (CL 3), wooden holy symbol, flask of holy water, scrollcase, belt pouch, traveler's outfit.

Round 3 Characters

Thoromir, male dwarf Exp1/Bbn3/Rog7: CR 10; Medium humanoid (dwarf); HD 1d6+3 plus 3d12+9 plus 7d6+21; hp 80; Init +9; Spd 30 ft.; AC 22, touch 14, flat-footed 22; Base Atk +8; Grp +10; Atk +1 *handaxe* +14 melee (1d6+1/x3) or masterwork heavy crossbow +14 ranged (1d10/19-20); Full Atk +1 *handaxe* +12/+7 melee (1d6+1/x3) and +1 *handaxe* +12 melee (1d6/x3) or masterwork heavy crossbow +11 ranged (1d10/19-20); SA Rage 1/day, sneak attack +4d6; SQ Darkvision 60 ft., evasion, dwarf traits, fast movement, improved uncanny dodge, trapfinding, trap sense +3, uncanny dodge; AL N; SV Fort +8, Ref +11, Will +4; Str 10, Dex 20, Con 16, Int 16, Wis 8, Cha 8.

Skills and Feats: Appraise +3 (+5 metal or stone items), Balance +14, Climb +10, Decipher Script +8, Disable Device +15, Escape Artist +16, Hide +17, Jump +7, Listen +0, Move Silently +17, Open Lock +21, Search +15 (+17 to detect unusual stonework), Sleight of Hand +3, Spot +3, Survival –1 (+1 following tracks), Swim +10, Tumble +19, Use Magic Device +14, Use Rope +5 (+7 with bindings); Improved Initiative, Skill Focus (Use Magical Device), Two-Weapon Fighting, Weapon Finesse.

SA – Rage (Ex): Once per day, Thoromir can enter a state of fierce rage that last for 8 rounds. The following changes are in effect as long as he rages: AC 20,

touch 12, flat-footed 20; hp 102; +1 *handaxe* +14 melee (1d6+3/x3); Full Atk +1 *handaxe* +12/+7 melee (1d6+3/x3) and +1 *handaxe* +12 melee (1d6+1/x3); SV Fort +10, Will +6; Str 14, Con 19; Climb +12, Jump +9, Swim +12. At the end of his rage, Thoromir is fatigued for the duration of the encounter.

Possessions: +3 *mithral breastplate*, 2 +1 *handaxes*, alchemical silver dagger, masterwork heavy crossbow, 5 +1 *undead bane bolts*, 5 +1 *adamantine construct bane bolts*, 5 +1 *plant bane bolts*, 25 masterwork bolts, *gloves of Dexterity* +4, *handy haversack*, *vest of escape*, *potion of bless weapon* (CL 4), *potion of shield of faith* (CL 1), *wand of burning hands* (CL 1), *wand of cure moderate wounds* (CL 3), *wand of invisibility* (CL 3), *wand of enlarge person* (CL 1), *elixir of vision*, masterwork thieves' tools, climber's kit, silk rope (50 ft.), grappling hook, explorer's outfit, 2 flasks of alchemist's fire, vial of antitoxin.

Corebrin, male human War1/Ftr10: CR 10; Medium humanoid (human); HD 1d8+2 plus 10d10+20; hp 99; Init +1; Spd 20 ft.; AC 25, touch 11, flat-footed 24; Base Atk +11; Grp +17; Atk +2 *bastard sword* +21 melee (1d10+10/17-20) or masterwork shortspear +13 ranged (1d6+6); Full Atk +2 *bastard sword* +21/+16/+11 melee (1d10+9/17-20) or masterwork shortspear +13 ranged (1d6+6); SA –; SQ –; AL CG; SV Fort +11, Ref +6, Will +2; Str 22, Dex 13, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 8, Cha 10.

Skills and Feats: Climb +14, Intimidate +14, Jump +14; Blind-Fight, Cleave, Dodge, Exotic Weapon Proficiency (bastard sword), Greater Weapon Focus (bastard sword), Improved Critical (bastard sword), Improved Sunder, Lightning Reflexes, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (bastard sword), Weapon Specialization (bastard sword).

Possessions: +1 *full plate*, +2 *heavy steel shield*, +2 *bastard sword*, masterwork shortspear, *belt of giant strength* +4, *boots of speed*, *amulet of natural armor* +1, *necklace of fireballs* (type II), *potion of displacement* (CL 5), *potion of cure critical wounds* (CL 7), climber's kit, crowbar, silk rope (50 ft.), backpack, belt pouch, explorer's outfit.

Rootli the Imp, female gnome App1/Wiz10: CR 10; Small humanoid (gnome); HD 1d6+5 plus 10d4+20; hp 57; Init +6; Spd 30 ft.; AC 13, touch 13, flat-footed 11; Base Atk +5; Grp +0; Atk/Full Atk dagger +5 melee (1d4-1/19-20) or masterwork light crossbow +9 ranged (1d6/19-20); SA Spell-like abilities; SQ Empathic link, gnome traits, low-light vision, share spells, weasel familiar; AL LG; SV Fort +5, Ref +5, Will +8; Str 8, Dex 14, Con 15, Int 18, Wis 8, Cha 10.

Skills and Feats: Concentration +16, Craft (alchemy) +6, Decipher Script +13, Handle Animal +1, Jump +4, Knowledge (arcana) +18, Knowledge (dungeoneering) +18, Knowledge (history) +9, Listen +1, Spellcraft +20, Survival +1 (+3 underground); Empower Spell,

Improved Initiative, Loremaster, Quicken Spell, Seer, Scribe Scroll, Toughness.

Spell-Like Abilities: 1/day – *dancing lights*, *ghost sound* (DC 11), *prestidigitation*, *speak with animals*. Caster level 1st.

Apprentice Spell Prepared (3/2; save DC 14 + spell level, 15 + spell level for illusion spells): 0 – *detect magic*, *light*, *ray of frost* (empowered); 1st – *comprehend languages*, *expeditious retreat*.

Wizard Spell Prepared (4/10/5/4/4/2; save DC 14 + spell level, 15 + spell level for illusion spells): 0 – *detect magic*, *mage hand*, *read magic*, *touch of fatigue*; 1st – *magic missile* (empowered) (6), *ray of enfeeblement* (empowered) (2), *shield*, *shocking grasp* (empowered); 2nd – *false life*, *mirror image*, *scorching ray* (empowered); *spider climb*, *touch of idiocy* (empowered); 3rd – *displacement*, *flame arrow* (empowered), *magic missile* (empowered, quickened) (2); 4th – *enervation* (empowered), *greater invisibility*, *ice storm* (empowered), *shout* (empowered); 5th – *dispel magic* (quickened), *fireball* (empowered, quickened)

Possessions: Dagger, masterwork light crossbow, 20 bolts and quiver, *boots of striding and springing*, *ring of minor spell storing*, *ring of wizardry* (I), *wand of bear's endurance* (CL 3), *wand of cat's grace* (CL 3), *scroll of ice storm* (empowered, CL 7), backpack, spellbook, everburning torch, scrollcase, spell component pouch, traveler's outfit.

Weasel familiar: CR n/a; Tiny magical beast; HD 10d4; hp 28; Init +2; Spd 30 ft.; AC 19, touch 14, flat-footed 15; Base Attack +5; Grp -7; Atk/Full Atk bite +9 melee (1d3-4); SA Attach; SQ Deliver touch spells, improved evasion, low-light vision, scent, speak with master, speak with weasels; AL NG; SV Fort +3, Ref +5, Will +10; Str 3, Dex 15, Con 10, Int 9, Wis 12, Cha 5.

Skills and Feats: Balance +10, Climb +10, Concentration +14, Decipher Script +9, Handle Animal -1, Hide +11, Knowledge (arcana) +14, Knowledge (dungeoneering) +15, Knowledge (history) +5, Move Silently +8, Spellcraft +16, Spot +3, Survival +3 (+5 underground); Weapon Finesse.

SA – Attach (Ex): If a weasel hits with a bite attack, it uses its powerful jaws to latch onto the opponent's body and automatically deals bite damage each round it remains attached. An attached weasel loses its Dexterity bonus to Armor Class and has an AC of 15. An attached weasel can be struck with a weapon or grappled itself. To remove an attached weasel through grappling, the opponent must achieve a pin against the creature.

Lyewyn O' the Downs, female half-elf Ari1/Ftr4/Mnk6: CR 10; Medium humanoid (half-elf); HD 1d8+1 plus 4d10+4 plus 6d8+8; hp 82; Init +4; Spd 50 ft.; AC 25, touch 23, flat-footed 21; Base Atk +8; Grp +9; Atk masterwork cold iron rapier +13 melee

(1d6+2/18-20) or unarmed strike +13 melee (1d10+1) or masterwork composite longbow [+1 Str] +13 ranged (1d8+1/x3); Full Atk masterwork cold iron rapier +13/+8 melee (1d6+2/18-20) or unarmed strike +12/+12/+7 melee (1d10+2) or masterwork composite longbow [+1 Str] +13/+8 ranged (1d8+1/x3); SA Flurry of blows, *ki* strike (magic), stunning fist 8/day (DC 20); SQ Evasion, half-elf traits, low-light vision, purity of body, slow fall (30 ft.), still mind; AL LN; SV Fort +9, Ref +9, Will +11; Str 12, Dex 18, Con 12, Int 8, Wis 21, Cha 10.

Skills and Feats: Appraise +3, Balance +6, Climb +4, Diplomacy +2, Gather Information +2, Jump +18, Knowledge (arcana) +3, Knowledge (nobility & royalty) +3, Listen +5, Search +0, Spot +5, Tumble +18; Dodge, Combat Reflexes, Improved Trip, Improved Unarmed Strike, Mobility, Spring Attack, Stunning Fist, Weapon Finesse, Weapon Focus (unarmed strike).

Possessions: Masterwork cold iron rapier, masterwork composite longbow [+1 Str], 20 arrows and quiver, *gloves of Dexterity* +4, *periapt of Wisdom* +4, *bracers of armor* +2, *ring of protection* +1, *dusky rose prism ioun stone*, *monk's belt*, *bead of force*, 2 *potions of cure moderate wounds* (CL 3), climber's kit, sunrod, traveler's outfit.

Aminfalost, male elf Grd1/Rgr10: CR 10; Medium humanoid (elf); HD 1d6+1 plus 10d8+10; hp 77; Init +4; Spd 30 ft.; AC 20, touch 15, flat-footed 15; Base Atk +11; Grp +13; Atk +1 *darkwood halberd* +14 melee (1d10+4/x3) or javelin +16 ranged (1d6+2) or +1 *holy composite longbow* [+2 Str] +17 ranged (1d8+3 plus 2d6 to evil creatures/19-20/x3) or +1 *holy composite longbow* [+2 Str] +13 ranged (3d8+9 plus 2d6 to evil creatures/19-20/x3); Full Atk +1 *darkwood halberd* +14/+9/+4 melee (1d10+4/x3) or javelin +16 ranged (1d6+2) or +1 *holy composite longbow* [+2 Str] +17/+12/+7 ranged (1d8+3 plus 2d6 to evil creatures/19-20/x3) or +1 *holy composite longbow* [+2 Str] +15/+15/+10/+5 ranged (1d8+3 plus 2d6 to evil creatures/19-20/x3) or +1 *holy composite longbow* [+2 Str] +13 ranged (3d8+9 plus 2d6 to evil creatures/19-20/x3); SA Favored enemy goblinoids +2, favored enemy constructs +2, favored enemy evil outsiders +6; SQ Animal companion, combat style (archery), elf traits, evasion, improved combat style (archery), link with companion, low-light vision, share spells, swift tracker, wild empathy +7, woodland stride; AL CG; SV Fort +11, Ref +13, Will +5; Str 14, Dex 20, Con 12, Int 12, Wis 13, Cha 8.

Skills and Feats: Climb +10, Concentration +4, Jump +10, Knowledge (dungeoneering) +7, Knowledge (local) +4, Knowledge (nature) +9, Listen +15, Search +13, Speak Language (Draconic), Spot +15, Survival +18 (+20 in aboveground natural environments, +20 following tracks +20 underground); Diehard, Endurance, Improved Critical (composite longbow), Many Shot, Point Blank Shot, Precise Shot, Rapid Shot, Track, Weapon Finesse.

Spells Prepared (2/1; save DC 11 + spell level): 1st – *longstrider*, *resist energy*; 2nd – *bear's endurance*.

Possessions: +1 *mithral chain shirt*, +1 *darkwood halberd*, +1 *holy composite longbow* [+2 Str], 60 arrows, 18 javelins, *efficient quiver*, *gloves of Dexterity* +2, *stone of good luck*, everburning torch, backpack, 2 belt pouches, climber's kit, traveler's outfit.

Inch, Medium viper animal companion: CR n/a; Medium animal; HD 4d8; hp 4; Init +3; Spd 20 ft., climb 20 ft., swim 20 ft.; AC 19, touch 14, flat-footed 15; Base Atk +3; Grp +3; Atk/Full Atk bite +8 melee (1d4 plus poison); SA Poison; SQ Bonus trick, evasion, scent; AL N; SV Fort +3, Ref +7, Will +2; Str 10, Dex 18, Con 11, Int 1, Wis 12, Cha 2.

Skills and Feats: Balance +12, Climb +12, Hide +14, Listen +5, Spot +5, Swim +8; Weapon Finesse, Weapon Focus (bite).

Tricks Known: Attack, come, down, fetch, seek.

SA – Poison (Ex): Injury, Fortitude DC 12, initial and secondary damage 1d6 Con.

Tanlew, female human Adp1/Clr10: CR 10; Medium humanoid (human); HD 1d6+2 plus 10d8+20; hp 84; Init +0; Spd 30 ft.; AC 26, touch 10, flat-footed 26; Base Atk +7; Grp +8; Atk +1 *ghost touch heavy mace* +10 melee (1d6+2); Full Atk +1 *ghost touch heavy mace* +10/+5 melee (1d6+2); SA Turn undead 2/day (+1, 2d6+9); SQ Spontaneous casting (*cure* spells); AL NG; SV Fort +9, Ref +3, Will +13; Str 13, Dex 10, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 18, Cha 8.

Skills and Feats: Concentration +16, Heal +6, Knowledge (arcana) +7, Knowledge (religion) +5, Knowledge (the planes) +14, Survival +4 (+6 on other planes); Combat Casting, Greater Spell Penetration, Spell Penetration, Tower Shield Proficiency, Tower Shield Mastery, Weapon Focus (heavy mace).

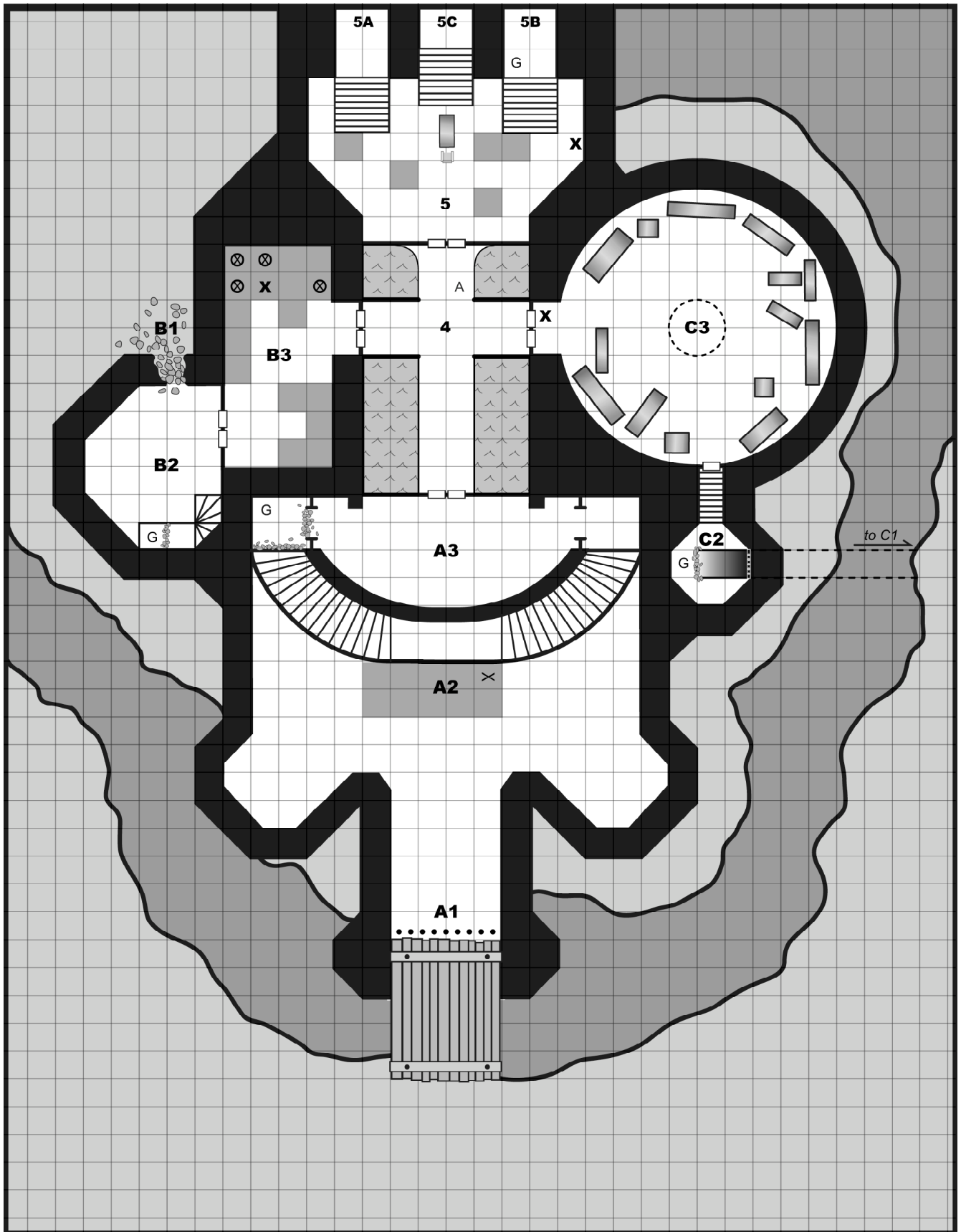
Adept Spells Prepared (3/2; save DC 14 + spell level): 0 – *detect magic*, *guidance*, *light*; 1st – *Bless*, *protection from evil*.

Cleric Spells Prepared (6/5+1/5+1/4+1/4+1/2+1; save DC 14 + spell level; Domains: Protection, War): 0 – *create water*, *detect poison*, *guidance*, *mending* (2), *virtue*; 1st – *Bless*, *divine favor*, *doom*, *sanctuary**, *shield of faith* (2); 2nd – *aid*, *align weapon*, *bull's strength*, *lesser restoration* (2), *shield other**; 3rd – *bestow curse*, *magic circle against evil*, *prayer*, *protection from energy**, *searing light*; 4th – *dismissal*, *divine power**, *freedom of movement*, *restoration*, *spell immunity*; 5th – *dispel evil*, *flame strike**, *righteous might*.

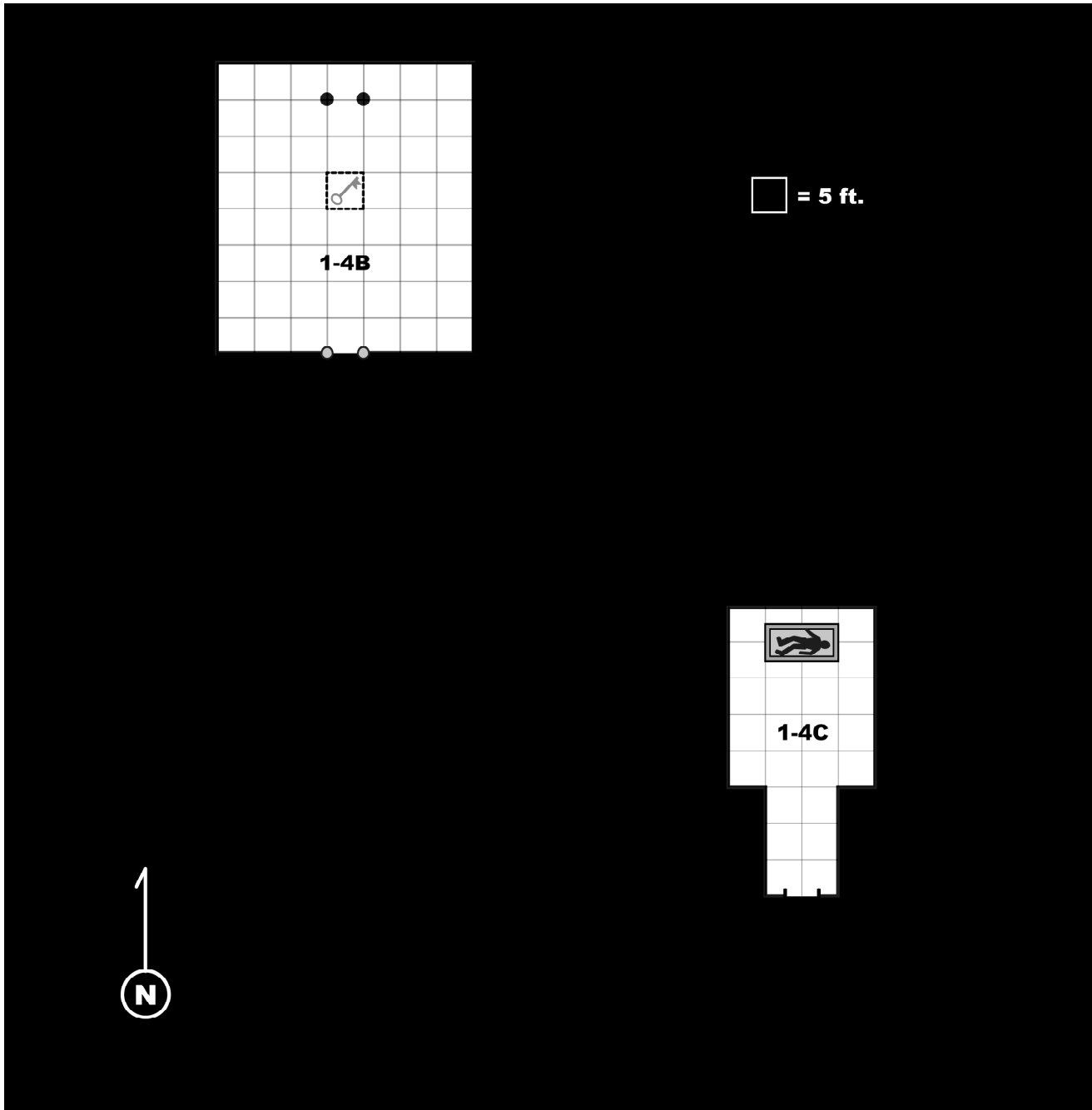
*Domain spell.

Possessions: +4 *mithral breastplate*, +3 *darkwood tower shield*, +1 *ghost touch heavy mace*, *staff of healing*, *potion of cure moderate wounds* (CL 3), *scroll of remove curse* (CL 5), *scroll of neutralize poison* (CL 7), *potion of barkskin* (CL 3), wooden holy symbol, flask of holy water, scrollcase, belt pouch, traveler's outfit

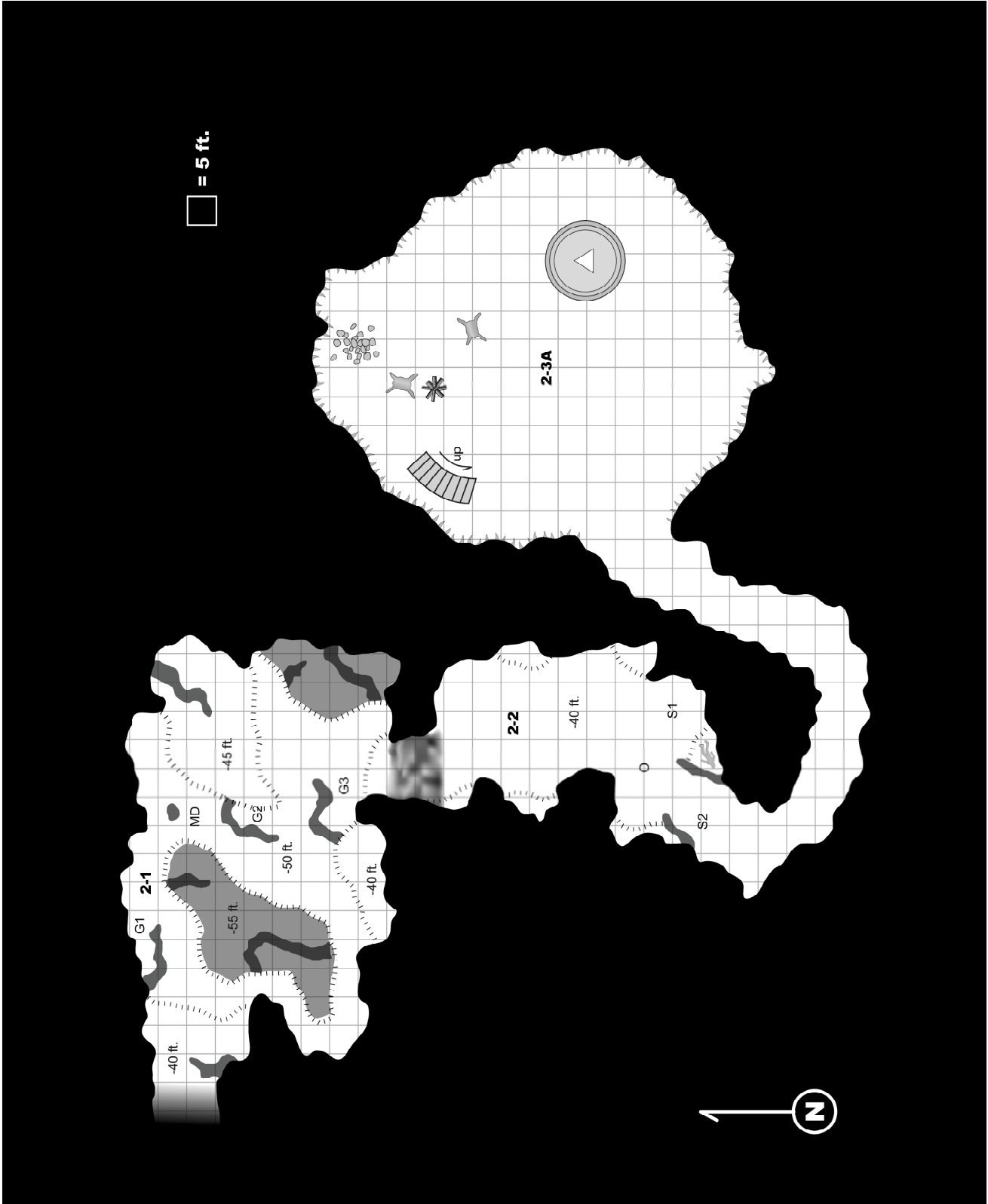
Round 1, Map A



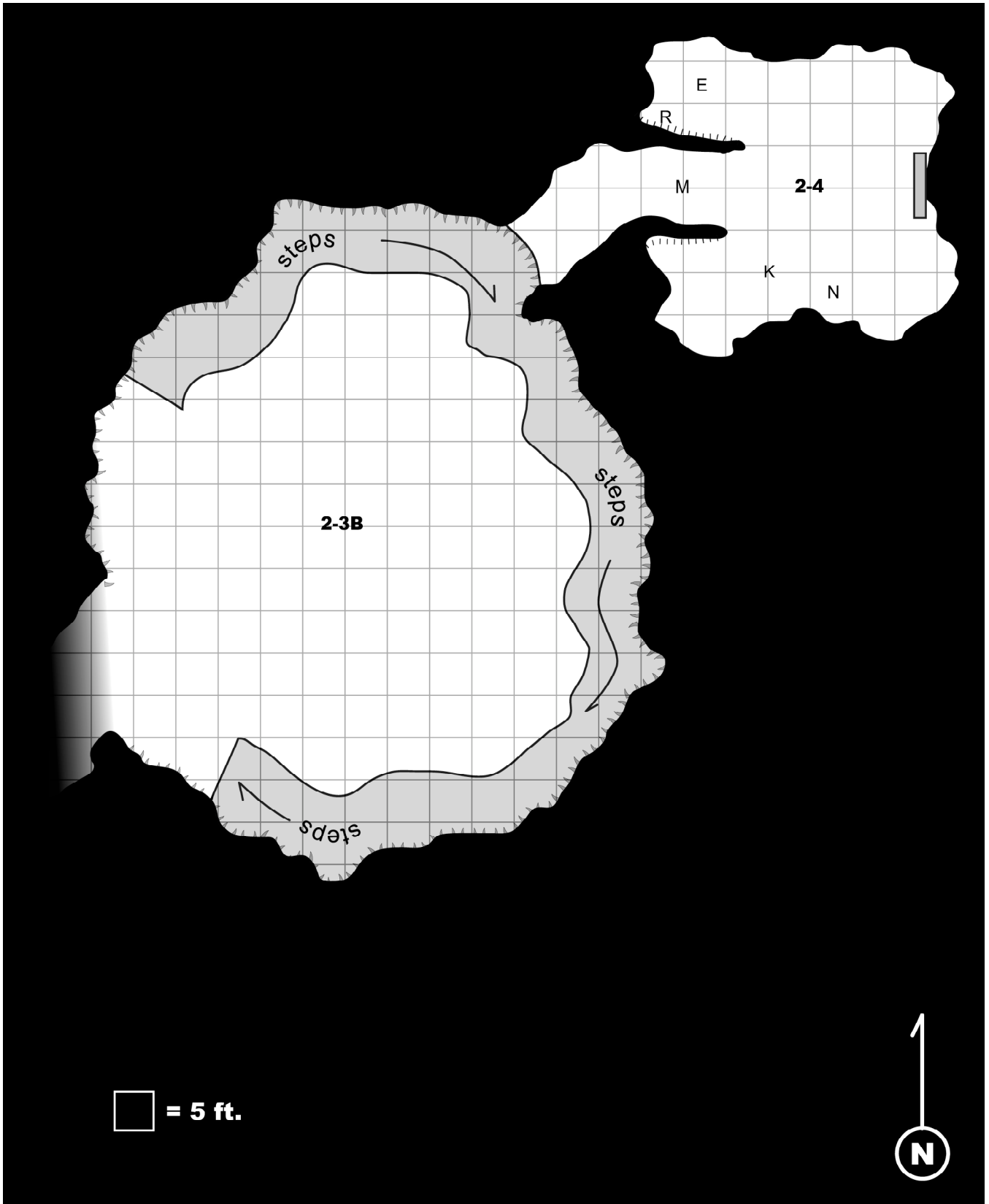
Round 1, Map B (areas 1-4B and 1-4C)



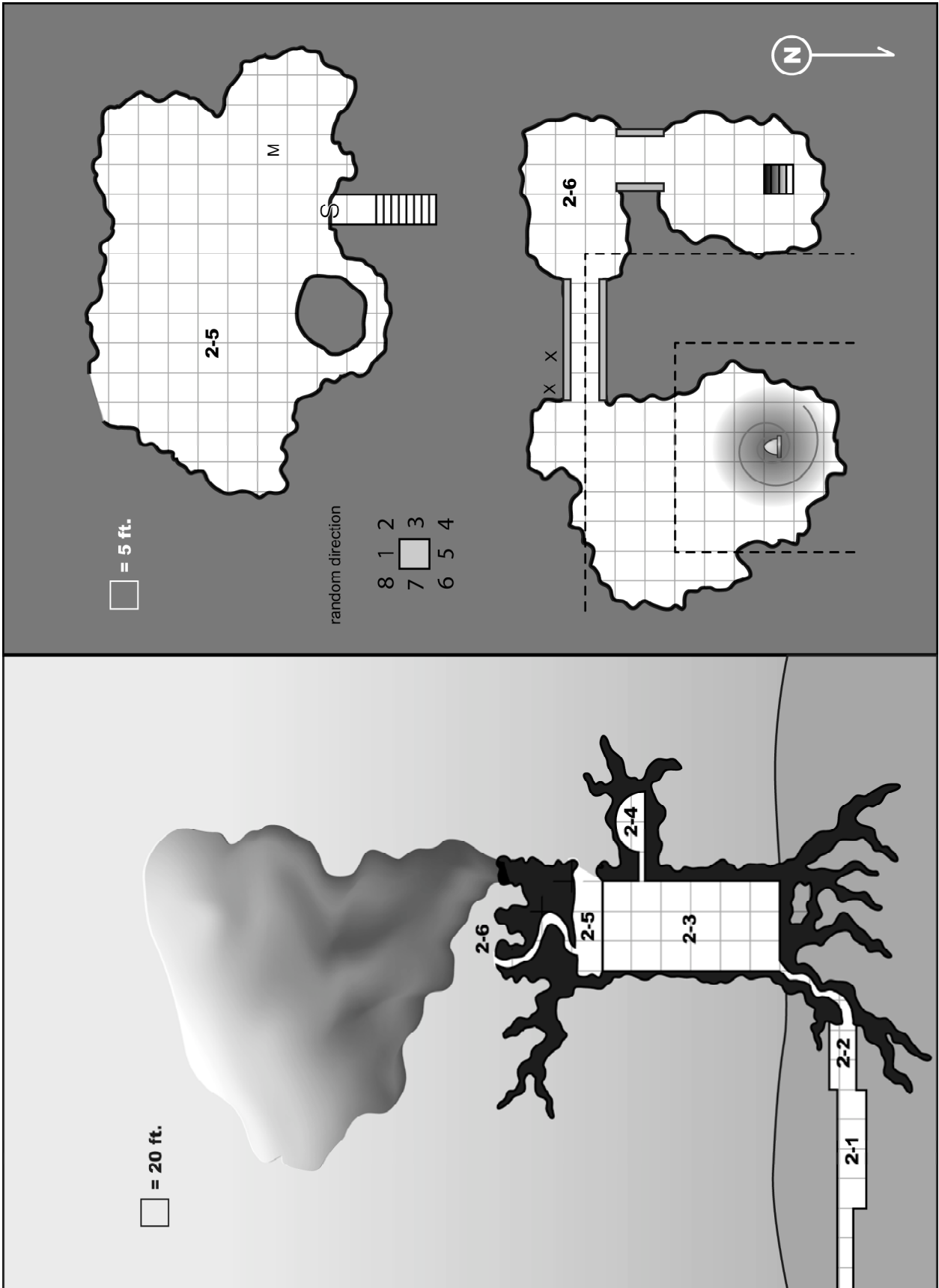
Round 2, Map A



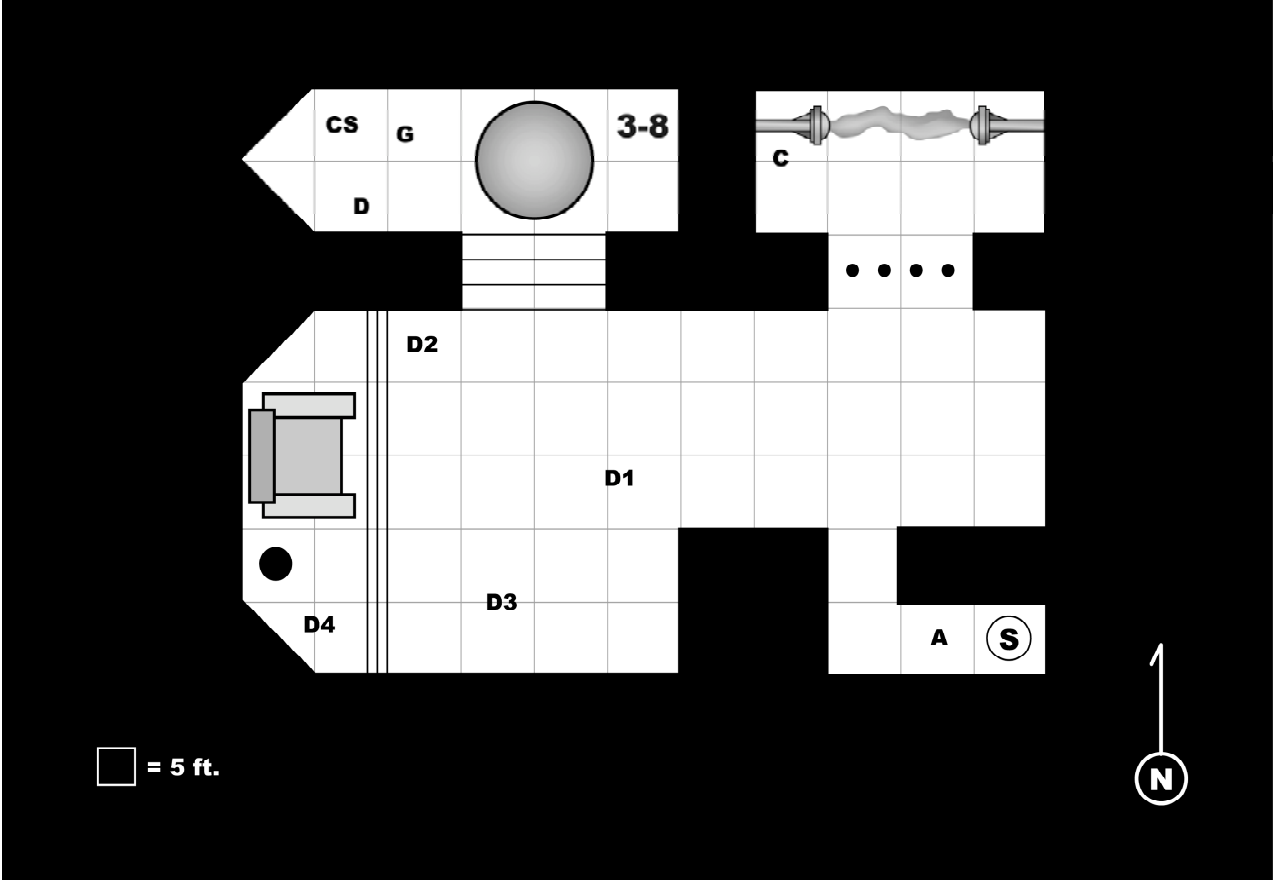
Round 2, Map B



Round 2, Map C



Round 3, Map B (area 3-8)



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Notes

Notes

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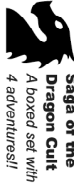
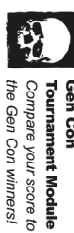
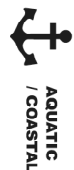
LEVEL	#	ADVENTURE								
Varies 0	DCC #46	Book of Treasure Maps	✓							
	DCC #0	Legends are Made, not Born						✓		
	DCC #35A	Halls of the Minotaur						✓		
1	DCC #2	Lost Vault of Tsathzar Rho								✓
	DCC #29	The Adventure Begins	✓	✓	✓	✓				
	DCC #39	Ruins of Castle Churo								
1-3	DCC #51	Castle Whiterock								
	WFF #0	Temple of Blood					✓			
	WFF #1	Rumble in the Wizard's Tower					✓			
2	DCC #1	Idylls of the Rat King						✓		
	DCC #24	Legend of the Ripper					✓	✓		
	DCC #28	Into the Wilds								
2-3	DCC #41	Lost Arrows of Aristemis						✓		
	DCC #44	Dreaming Caverns of the Duergar						✓		
	DCC #45	Malice of the Medusa			✓					
3-5	DCC #51.5	Sinister Secret of Whiterock								
	DCC #14	Dungeon Interludes								
	DCC #11	The Dragonfiend Pact						✓		
4-6	DCC #31	The Transmuter's Last Touch								
	WFF #2	Against the Iron Giant					✓			
	DCC #42	Secret of the Stonearm					✓			
6-8	DCC #3	The Mysterious Tower								
	DCC #36	Talons of the Horned King		✓						
	DCC #43	Curse of the Barrens		✓						
7-9	DCC #17	Legacy of the Savage Kings						✓		✓
	DCC #26	The Scaly God						✓		
	DCC #27	Revenge of the Rat King					✓			
8-10	DCC #35B	Thief Lord's Vault					✓			
	DCC #37	The Slithering Overlord								
	DCC #48	The Adventure Continues	✓		✓	✓				
10-12	DCC #7	Secret of Smuggler's Cove	✓							
	DCC #23	The Sunken Ziggurat								
	DCC #49	Palace in the Wastes				✓		✓		✓
11-13	DCC #10	The Sunless Garden								✓
	DCC #16	Curse of the Emerald Cobra						✓		
	DCC #20	Shadows in Freeport					✓	✓	✓	
14-15	DCC #34	Cage of Delirium					✓			
	DCC #47	The Genie's Tears			✓		✓	✓	✓	
	DCC #5	Aerie of the Crow God							✓	
15	DCC #8	Mysteries of the Drow						✓		
	DCC #19	The Volcano Caves						✓		
	DCC #38	Escape from the Forest of Lanterns						✓		
15	DCC #40	Devil in the Mists	✓					✓		
	DCC #50	Vault of the Iron Overlord					✓			
	DCC #6	Temple of the Dragon Cult								✓
15	JG #3	The Dark Tower								
	DCC #12	The Blackguard's Revenge		✓						
	DCC #25	Dread Crypt of Srihoz								
15	DCC #30	Vault of the Dragon Kings		✓				✓		✓
	DCC #4	Bloody Jack's Gold	✓							
	JG #1	Thieves of Fortress Badabaskor								
15	DCC #12.5	The Iron Crypt of the Heretics		✓				✓		
	DCC #18	Citadel of the Demon Prince								
	DCC #21	Assault on Stormbringer Castle						✓		
15	JG #2	Citadel of Fire								
	DCC #15	Lost Tomb of the Sphinx Queen					✓	✓		
	DCC #22	The Stormbringer Juggernaut	✓					✓		
15	DCC #32	Golden Palace of Zahadran					✓	✓		
	DCC #13	Crypt of the Devil Lich						✓	✓	✓
	DCC #33	Belly of the Great Beast						✓		

Current as of September 2007, up through DCC #51.5

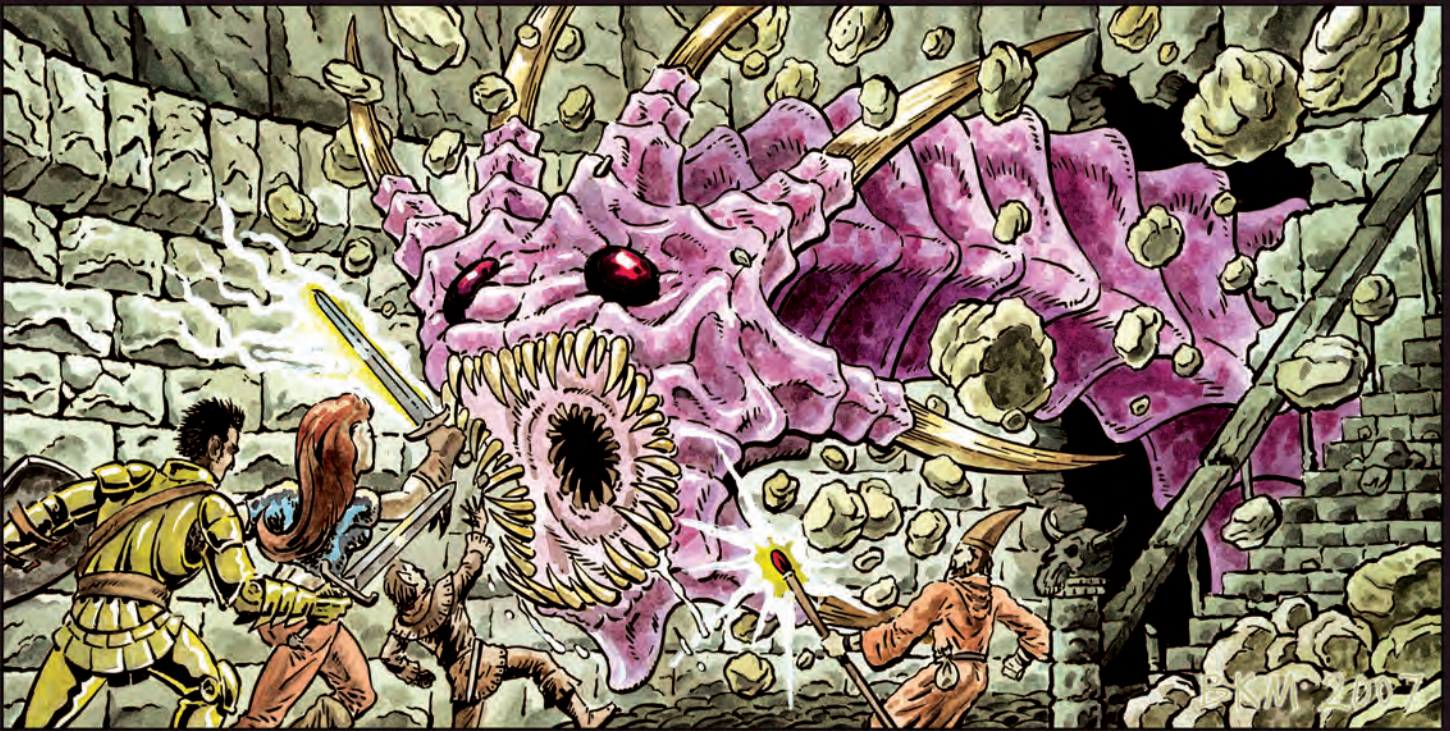


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This world-neutral adventure is easy to set in the world of *Æreth*, as described in *Dungeon Crawl Classics #35: Gazetteer of the Known Realms*. See inside for full details.



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