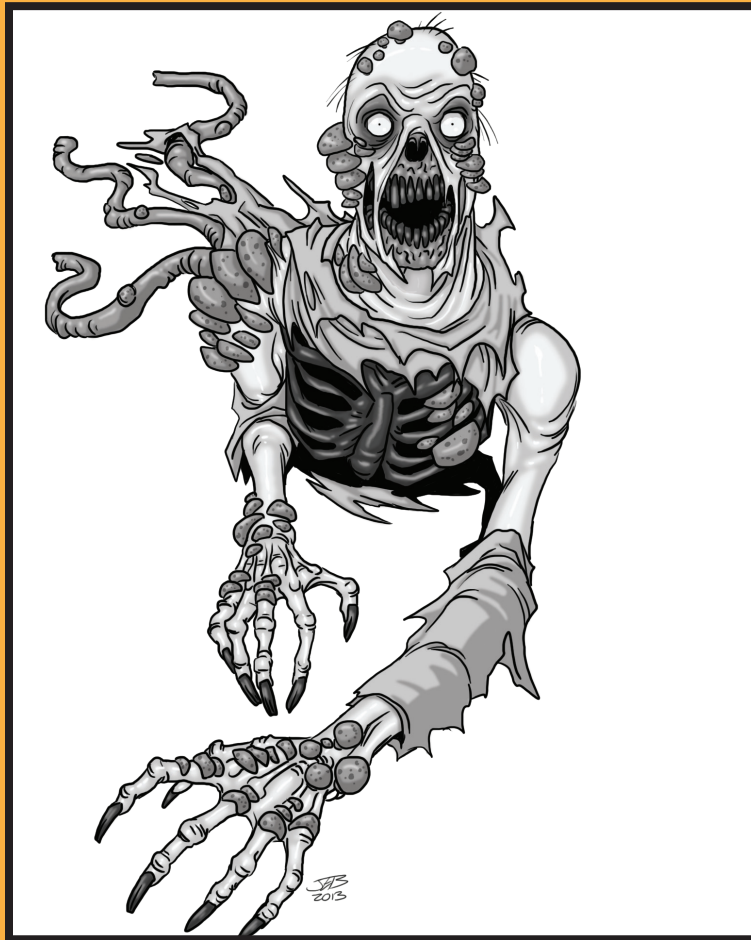


# Silent Nightfall



Daniel J. Bishop



COMPATIBLE WITH  
**DCC  
RPG**

# Silent Nightfall

An adventure for *Dungeon Crawl Classics* characters for 2nd level or above. The judge can adjust it if desired, or use higher level characters.

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## Introduction

Any role-playing game session can take a left turn at Albuquerque, leaving the poor Game Master wondering what to do next. This is even truer for the dedicated *Dungeon Crawl Classics* judge, who discovers that patron quests, divine disapproval, and the requests of gods to pay back divine favor can make the game take incredible new turns with the roll of a few dice. Add to this the advice urging players to “Quest For It” when they want something unusual for their characters, and you have a potent stew for gaming, but also a situation in which the judge may want a short adventure location with strong DCC elements and a minimum of preparation required.

In addition, for various reasons sometimes only a few players were available for a night’s gaming. Each of these areas is short enough to be played through by most groups in only a single session. That doesn’t mean that the value of the area is limited to a single session – each adventure includes notes on “squeezing it dry”... effectively getting the maximum re-use from your investment.

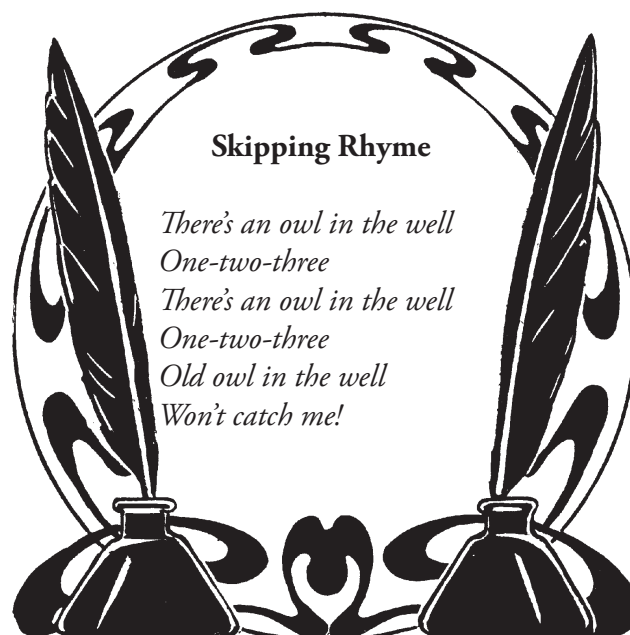
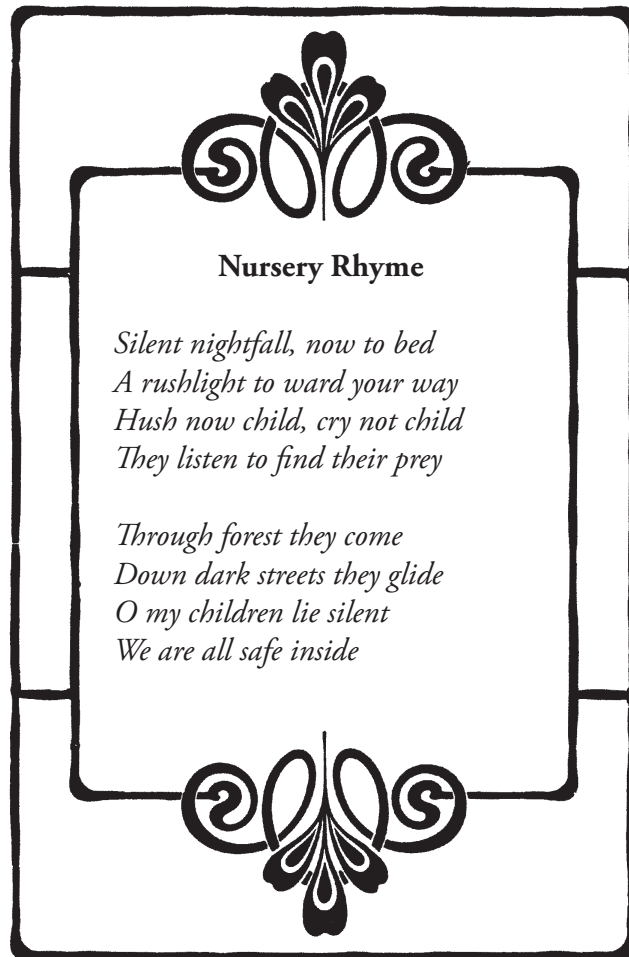
## Silent Nightfall

Civilizations rise and fall.

Many of the works of Appendix N assume that previous civilizations existed upon the earth (or whatever world they are set on), and several of these works take place in the future of our own world. This adventure assumes that there has been an advanced civilization in the

campaign world long ago, and that remnants of it can still be found in out-of-the-way places.

If this is not the case in your campaign world, and you wish to use this location, you can choose to have the location placed on another plane of existence, the



work of extra-planar or alien beings, or the work of pre-human creatures in the style of H.P. Lovecraft's *At the Mountains of Madness*.

## Background

There are often periods of greater or lesser magical influence in the world. Millennia ago, during a period of reduced magical activity, there was a nuclear power station at this location. When magical influences began to spread once more, the nuclear core became unstable, and began to develop a form of malevolent sentience. The ancients placed the core in a shaft three miles deep, the last 500 feet of which were filled with heavy water. This shaft, and its attendant control center, were given the codename "Silent Nightfall".

In the ages since, much of the complex has collapsed or ceased to function, but the main shaft still remains, going three miles deep into the ground. The rooms that remain have undergone great changes, having been used for many different purposes and by many different creatures over the centuries. As a result, the original purpose of the shaft, rooms, and corridors has become obscured.

One of those who used the area was the wizard Mortmallion the Pale, who stole the *Whispering Stone* from Elfland. He hid himself and the stone in the Silent Nightfall complex, but the weird energies coming up from below changed him. Mortmallion can still be found, deep below, as the **shaft crawler** (see below). Over time, the *Whispering Stone* became confused with the area where it is now found, and some texts refer to it as "Silent Nightfall" without making it clear why the stone has this name.

Currently, they are used as the nesting ground of owl-like humanoids that call themselves the grallistrix. Incubating their eggs in the Silent Nightfall complex has changed them, and they have become dangerous nocturnal predators in the region. The grallistrix hunt in triads, and locate prey by an extraordinary sense of hearing. As a result, communities nearby observe unexpected quiet at night – there are no late night gatherings. Inns and taverns close their doors with the fall of night. See *The Grallistrix*, below, for more details.

Finally, the nuclear core itself has gained sentience and

a malevolent, demonic intelligence. Imprisoned at the bottom of the shaft, it knows no other name than Silent Nightfall. So long as the demon remains bound, it is no great threat to the PCs or their world. In fact, they may be able to deal with it in order to gain magical aid. In this way, the term "Silent Nightfall" has come to mean the following within the context of this location – the remains of the nuclear complex, the practice of avoiding loud noises after dark, the *Whispering Stone*, and the great demon imprisoned at the bottom of the shaft. This gives the judge many ways to lead the PCs into this material. It also allows the judge to make finding information difficult, as the many uses of "Silent Nightfall" spill into each other.

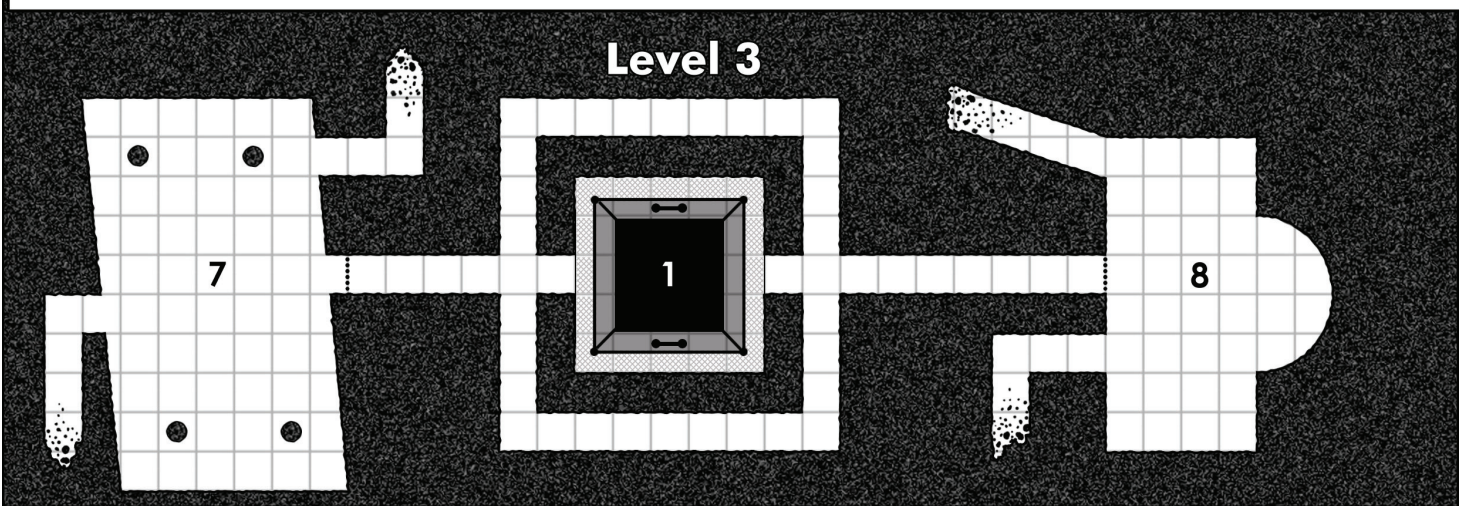
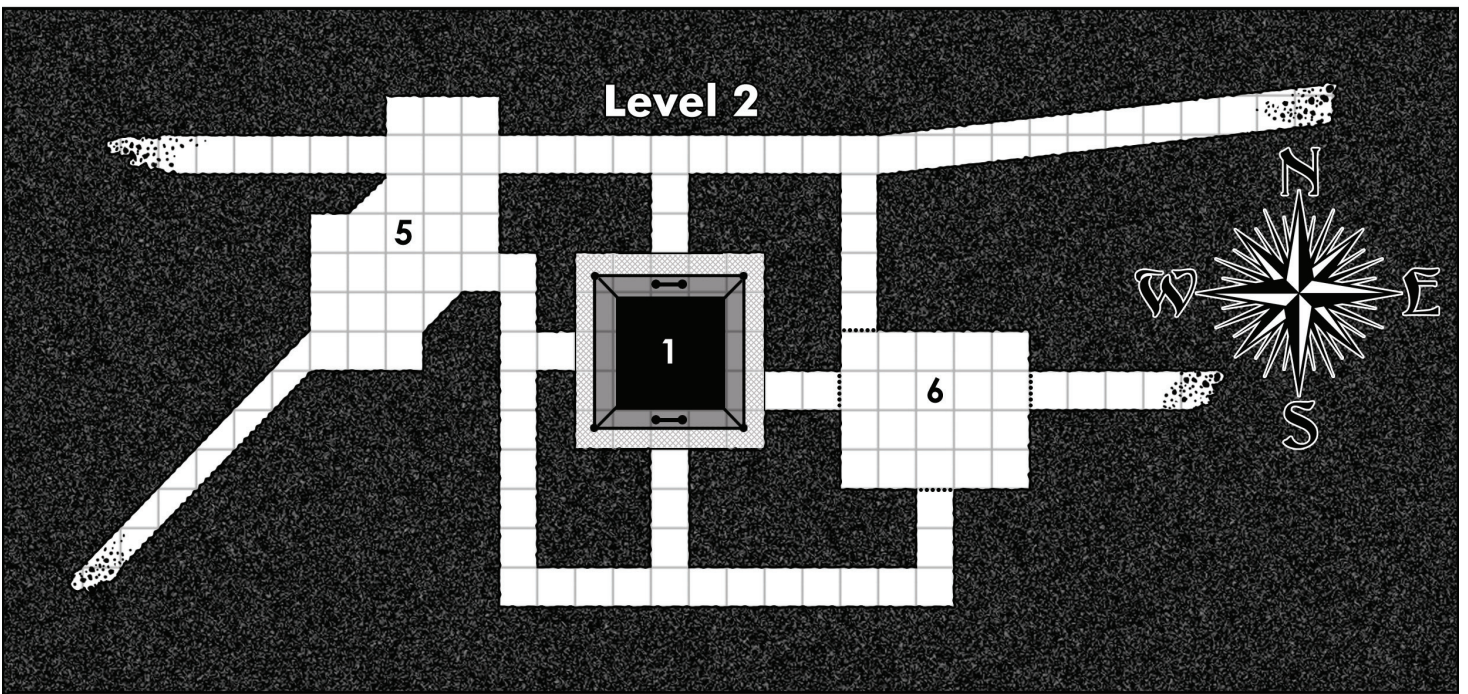
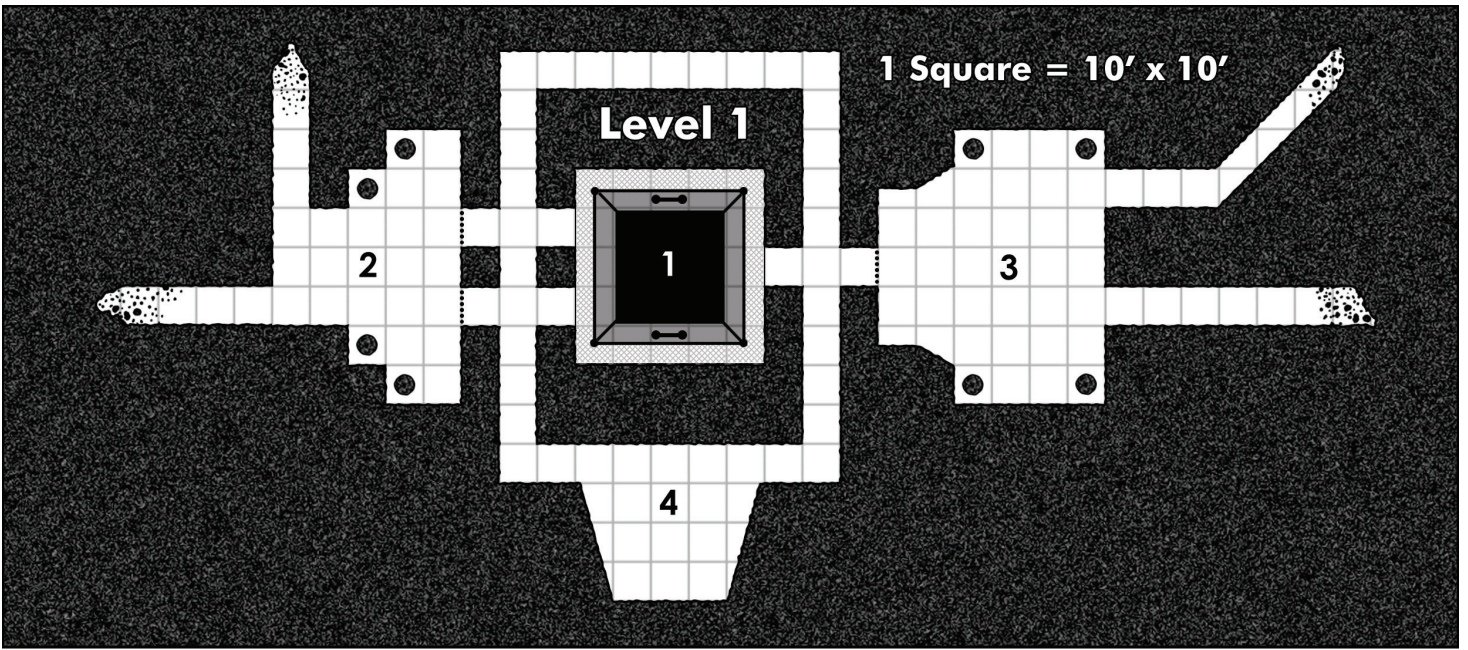
## The Shaft Crawler

What remains of the wizard Mortmallion is located in **Area 1**, and spends its time mindlessly crawling up and down the central shaft. Because the shaft is three miles long, the chances of the crawler being in the upper 100 feet of the shaft (where the party is most likely to encounter it) are minimal. However, if characters continue down the shaft, or if they spend long enough in Silent Nightfall, sooner or later they will encounter the crawler.

The shaft crawler looks like a vaguely humanoid shag carpet, roughly 16 feet long and 8 across, whose nauseating bright orange, green-splotched fur is actually the rhizomatic growths of the enormous fungus that has all but consumed Mortmallion. If the crawler is defeated, and its body somehow retained, the bones of the wizard can be found, spread throughout this mass. It can climb perfectly, never having to make a check to avoid falling – even if injured or somehow pushed away from the wall it always maintains a tenuous grip. The mass of its body is a mere 2 feet thick.

Unless provoked, the shaft crawler is completely harmless. It can be provoked in two ways – by attacking it, or by manifesting spell energy within 60' of it. Manifesting spell energy includes the effects of ongoing spells.

The shaft crawler has no discernable anatomy, and is thus immune to critical hits and backstabs, but this may not immediately be apparent. The judge is encouraged to describe how the creature shrugs off the most hideous blows, either mending itself almost instantly or simply



ignoring the effect.

In combat, the crawler smothers foes it successfully attacks, who must make a DC 15 Strength or Agility check each round to break free. Smothered characters take automatic damage each round. A smothered character gains one free attempt each round, but an opponent who does nothing else during the round gains a +1d bonus to the attempt. Finally, each round a victim is smothered, the victim must succeed in a DC 10 Fort save, or rhizomes are forced into the victim's nose and throat.

If this save is failed, the rhizomes cause 1d3–1 points of damage to a random ability score (except Luck) each day, unless the victim succeeds in a DC 15 Fort save. This damage continues until three or more ability scores are reduced to 0, after which the victim rapidly becomes something akin to the shaft crawler (but one adapted for his current location). The condition is defeated by 3 HD of magical healing via Lay on Hands, a *neutralize poison or disease* spell with a spell check of 22+, or three sequential days where the character successfully avoids taking damage from the growths. The ability damage heals normally.

If targeted by a successful spell (or spell effect), the shaft crawler completely consumes the magic, gaining hit points equal to the spell check result. No other effects of the spell occur.

If the shaft crawler does damage to a creature with one or more ongoing spell effects, the creature can siphon off 2d10 points of *each* spell, which it then gains as hit points. Reduce the efficacy of the spell as though it had just been rolled with the siphoned points taken off the spell check. A spell cannot be lost, nor can corruption, misfire, patron taint, or disapproval occur as a result, but a spell that passes below the threshold of successfully being cast collapses and is dispelled. Note that any damage resistance from *magic shield* (or similar magics) applies against this effect – on a roll of 32+, the creature can only effectively siphon off 2d10–2 points from ongoing spells placed on the shielded target.

**Shaft crawler (1):** Init –6; Atk slam +4 melee (1d6 plus smother); AC 6; HD 20d6+40; hp 111; MV 20' or climb 10'; Act 1d20; SP infravision 60', smother, rhizomes, siphon magic; SV Fort +12, Ref –10, Will +0; AL N.



## The Demon

The demon which calls itself “Silent Nightfall” began its existence as an unstable nuclear core. It was prevented from melting down by using cadmium control rods and pumping the last 500 feet of the three-mile shaft with heavy water (to act as coolant). Anyone it communicates with gains a mental image of a great power trapped within a submerged silvery metal cage. This is more or less accurate – Silent Nightfall is a free-willed nuclear meltdown waiting to happen.

Until released, Silent Nightfall can only act as a demipatron (see **Appendix D**). It speaks telepathically to human characters only, particularly wizards, in a voice that buzzes and cracks with barely restrained power. It can offer to grant wizards spellburn so long as they are within the complex, and any wizard who takes the demon up on this rolls on the chart below. The demon offers far greater power if it is released...this is not exactly a lie, but the power is delivered in a way few would desire. It cannot communicate with non-human creatures.

Given the chance, the demon will explode, causing 20d6 damage to everything within 1 mile. For each mile away

from this area, damage is reduced by 1d6, until creatures 20 miles away take only 1d6 damage. This will destroy the demon (or at least send it adrift between planes), but it will also probably destroy the party as well. The demon will do anything in its power to make this occur, attempting to get character to use the controls in **Area 5** and **Area 8** to drain the heavy water and retract the cadmium rods. Any creature that survives this explosion must succeed in a Fort save (DC equal to 10 + damage taken) or develop 1d8 major corruptions (*core rulebook*, page 118) over the course of the next 1d3 months.

### Demonic Radiation

Quasi-magical radiation seeps out of the Silent Nightfall facility, mutating creatures and plants within the immediate vicinity. It is unlikely that the PCs will spend enough time in Silent Nightfall to trigger mutations within themselves, but the judge may wish it.

**Appendix A** offers a quick table to modify creatures based on the demonic radiation, as well as a few creatures that the judge may place in the area around Silent Nightfall.

### Silent Nightfall Spellburn Chart

D4	Spellburn result
1	The wizard develops sores and lesions that ooze a vile-smelling pus. This manifests in game terms as Strength, Agility, or Stamina damage. Regardless of how many points the wizard spellburns, the character gains an addition +2 bonus to his spell check. However, the vile odor of the sores prevents the wizard from surprising keen-nosed creatures until his wounds have healed.
2	The wizard experiences a flash of power as the spell is completed, resulting in sunburn over his entire body (exposed or not), and his shadow is burned into the nearest wall. Spellburn must take the form of Agility damage, but the character gains a +2 bonus to his spell check for each point of spellburn. <i>Unknown to the character, if he enters Area 5, he must make a DC 10 Will save or press the green button as soon as he is able. If he has gained this result more than once, he must make multiple saves.</i>
3	If the red lever in <b>Area 8</b> has been pulled, the caster gains up to 5 points of spellburn for free. If the red lever in <b>Area 8</b> has not been pulled, the demon takes 5 points of spellburn from the caster but refuses to grant any bonus whatsoever (randomly determine each point from Strength, Agility, and Stamina). If the character pulls the lever, though, and leaves it pulled, he will gain a +2 bonus to all spells cast in the complex for 24 hours....
4	The wizard feels a wave of weariness sweep over him, expressed in Strength, Agility, or Stamina damage. In addition, he glows softly in the darkness with an eerie pale green illumination (about ¼ the power of candlelight). The first time this is rolled, glowing lasts 1 day. If it is rolled again while the glowing persists, it is 1d3 days. Then 1 week, 1d3 weeks, 1 month, 1d3 months, 1 year, 1d3 years, and thereafter permanent. If this condition becomes permanent, one point of spellburn is also permanent and the character becomes mildly radioactive.

## The Whispering Stone

The *Whispering Stone* is a sphere of onyx, three feet in diameter, found in **Area 7** of the complex. Originally from Elfland, it whispers in the minds of those it senses – elves and wizards. An elf will become aware of its susurrations as soon as he sets foot on Level 1. A wizard will begin to hear the stone on Level 2. It is impossible to make out the actual phrases that are being whispered, but there is a sense of yearning, and of loss, in the whispering voice.

The judge is encouraged to allow the odd word to be heard clearly at times which are appropriate for spooking the characters. For example, the word “fall” might be heard when climbing the shaft as part of a larger phrase whose full meaning is unknown. Likewise, the occasional “doom”, “ceiling”, or “floor” is bound to set the characters on edge.

The *Whispering Stone* can bond with only one character at a time, and any human or elf character who sees the stone will know that he can bond with it if he lays his hands upon the stone and concentrates for a full round. If the bonding is contested, each character makes a Personality check, and the stone bonds with the character whose check is the highest. Once a character is bonded, he need not touch the stone to contest another’s bonding with it, although he must be conscious when the attempt is made. A character who is rejected, or whose bond is broken, cannot bond with the *Whispering Stone* for a full year. Once a character is bonded to the stone, only that character continues to hear it whispering, and can hear the whispered words from any distance – even upon other planes of existence.

Being bonded to the *Whispering Stone* grants access to several wizard spells, but slowly drives the caster insane. A wizard or elf casts these spells normally, a thief uses the same die as he does when casting spells from scrolls, and all others use 1d10. Intelligence modifiers apply. The judge may allow a wizard’s apprentice, astrologer, sage, or character with a similar occupation, to make the roll with 1d14, 1d16, or even 1d20, depending upon the way in which the character has been role-played following her 0-level funnel adventure.

Whenever the bonded character rolls a natural “1” on *any* spell check, in addition to whatever other effects occur, the character loses 1d3 points of Personality. This loss is permanent, so long as the character remains

bonded to the stone, and the bond can only be broken by the character’s death, or by another becoming bonded instead. This loss of Personality represents incipient madness caused by the stone’s whispering. An elf has some resistance to this, and only loses Personality if he fails a DC 15 Will save. A character bonded to the King of Elfland as a patron, or some other powerful Faerie patron, is completely immune to this effect. Breaking the bond with the stone allows this damage to heal normally.

The stone provides access to the following spells:

<b>Level 1</b>	<i>Comprehend languages</i> (136), <i>ventriloquism</i> (158)
<b>Level 2</b>	<i>ESP</i> (166), <i>locate object</i> (178)
<b>Level 3</b>	<i>Runic alphabet</i> , <i>fey</i> (227)

The manifestations for the level 1 and 2 spells are always whispering voices.

The *Whispering Stone* weighs approximately 2,340 pounds, which makes it more than a little difficult to transport, especially up the shaft. Moreover, it was once the property of a High Lord of Elfland, and if a character is known to be bonded to it, she may discover that the fey want it back. Finally, the constant whispering interferes with hearing other noises, and may increase the chance of surprise in some cases.

## The Grallistrix

The grallistrix are owl-headed humanoids with bodies so emaciated that they verge on the skeletal. Their hands and feet both resemble the talons of owls. A grallistrix has distinctive colored bands distinguishing individuals. They move via levitation, and manipulate objects (including weapons) using natural telekinesis. The range for this is no greater than if the weapon was wielded by hand, but the effect is far creepier. A grallistrix can also attack using a claw or bite, if it so wishes. Their clothing consists of nothing more than belts and straps needed to retain their gear.

Like owls, grallistrix have exceptional hearing, and can target even invisible characters with no increased chance of missing unless they are also silent. While they find loud noises and bright lights disconcerting (and may, at the judge’s discretion, be forced to make morale checks in some cases), they are not harmed by them.

As nocturnal predators, grallistrix use their hearing to home in on potential prey animals – including other humanoids. This is the reason that folk near Silent Nightfall are quiet when night approaches.

Because of their levitation, the grallistrix are able to move in absolute silence, potentially increasing their chance of surprise to as high as 5 in 6. Adjust this chance based upon how much the party relies on eyes over ears – a party watching in all directions should be surprised far less often than a less cautious group. If you use a DC to determine surprise, it should be 15 if the characters rely predominantly on sight, and 20 if on hearing. Within the Silent Nightfall complex, the scent of the grallistrix is strong enough that a good sense of smell (such as that of a dog) is of little avail.

Grallistrix have a natural affinity for psychic powers, and one in three can use a psychic blast once every three rounds, which causes 1d8 damage to any target within 160' (Will DC 15 half). Grallistrix typically hunt in triads, with a single advanced grallistrix leading two normal ones.

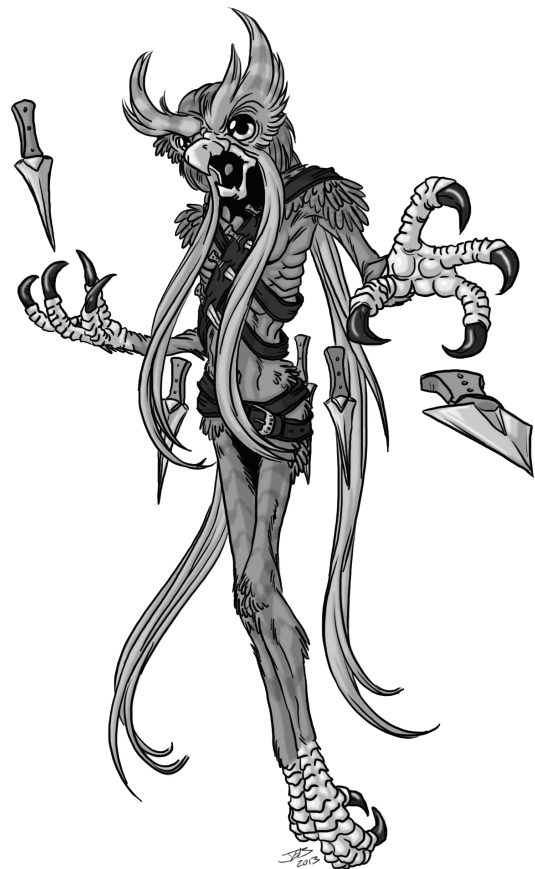
Although Chaotic, the grallistrix will not necessarily hunt creatures that approach them boldly and without aggression. They communicate with telepathy, although they also make various hooting and screeching noises, and have a language. See **Appendix L** for ideas about incorporating additional languages in your campaign.

**Grallistrix hunter:** Init +0; Atk bite –1 melee (1d5) or claw +0 melee (1d3) or weapon +2 melee; AC 12; HD 2d6; MV fly 30'; Act 1d20; SP infravision 60', levitation, telepathy, telekinesis, exceptional hearing, silence; SV Fort +3, Ref +3, Will +6; AL C.

**Psychic grallistrix hunter:** Init +0; Atk bite –1 melee (1d5) or claw +0 melee (1d3) or weapon +2 melee or psychic blast (1d8; Will DC 15 half); AC 12; HD 2d6; MV fly 30'; Act 1d20; SP infravision 60', levitation, telepathy, telekinesis, psychic blast, exceptional hearing, silence; SV Fort +3, Ref +3, Will +6; AL C.

## Using this Location

At its most basic, this location can be used as a place where adventurers kill things and take their stuff. The grallistrix are difficult and creepy foes, and the basic



layout of Silent Nightfall plays to their strengths. Incautious or inexperienced adventurers can easily suffer a TPK at the talons of these owl-like humanoids. More prepared adventurers will certainly discover worthwhile treasures.

The judge is urged to allow the adventurers to discover a nearby village prior to exploring the Silent Nightfall complex, so that the party has a chance to hear at least one of the children's rhymes supplied, and to experience the preternatural post-twilight quiet in the village. If the characters insist on making noise, a visit from a triad of grallistrix hunters should occur.

A wizard or elf may have uncovered a reference to the *Whispering Stone* – a wizard by the name *Silent Nightfall*, but an elf by its true name. A character with the King of Elfland (or similar) as a patron may be tasked with recovering the stone. Likewise, PCs might be engaged by the Radiant Brotherhood (see Appendix R) to explore the complex and report back. If the judge so desires, a rival group (from the Radiant Brotherhood or on behalf of the King of Elfland) may enter the complex during the PCs' explorations, further complicating matters. Finally, a "treasure map" might indicate the location of the Silent Nightfall complex. Agents of the Radiant Brotherhood (see Appendix R) or the King of Elfland may be the ultimate source of such a map.



## General Conditions

The walls, floors, and ceilings of Silent Nightfall were once layered in a non-rusting steel, but the passage of time and the return of magic altered the molecular structure of the material so that it oxidized, albeit much more slowly than normal steel. As a result, many surfaces are still coated in metal, with shards of rusted steel forming dangerously sharp edges where they are pulled back from the stone. Unless otherwise described, a character knocked into a wall must make a DC 10 Reflex save or suffer 1d6 damage from the sharp rusted metal.

Elves are also troubled by the excessive amounts of iron in the walls, floor, and ceiling. On Level 1, elves suffer a -1d penalty to all rolls. On level 2, this penalty is -2d, and on level 3, it is -3d. The farther an elf goes down the central shaft (see **Area 1**) beyond Level 3, the more she weakens, until at last she falls from the rungs to her death.

On the other hand, there is something about the very air of Silent Nightfall that dwarves find invigorating. On Level 1, dwarves gain a +1 bonus to attack rolls and saves. On Level 2, dwarves gain a +2 bonus to attack rolls and saves, and take 1 less point of damage from any successful attack. On Level 3, dwarves gain a +3 bonus to attack rolls and saves, and take 2 fewer points of damage from any successful attack. Climbing down the shaft past Level 3 invigorates dwarves even further – see **Area 1** for details.

The entire complex smells, to various degrees, of musty, wet feathers, bird droppings, and rusted iron. The air is somewhat moist. Where a dead end is indicated on the map, the steel walls have given way, allowing stone to fall into the corridor amid sharp bits of rusted metal, twisted from the wall by the shredding force of the falling stone. Any attempting to clear these areas must make a DC 15 Reflex save for every 10 minutes of work, or cut himself for 1d3 damage. These areas may prove to be impassable, or may allow the judge to add material of his own to the Silent Nightfall complex.

Access to many rooms are controlled by rusted steel portcullises. Unless otherwise noted, a Strength check of DC 10 bends the bars enough for a single character to slip through (requiring a full minute to do so) and a Strength check of DC 20 can lift and hold a portcullis. Lifting and holding a portcullis takes a full minute

of work, and the character can do nothing else while holding the portcullis aloft. If the characters have the means to prop up the portcullis (and a wooden pole or staff will only hold one for 1d5 rounds before cracking), they may do so.

Ceilings are 12 feet high, unless otherwise noted.

## Tetanus

If the judge desires, taking damage from the rusted bits of sharp metal may cause tetanus. At the time of injury, the character can attempt a Fort save (DC 15) or spend a point of Luck to avoid the disease.

Tetanus takes 2d4+4 days to manifest, and begins with facial tics. Each day thereafter, the character suffers painful muscular spasms that cause 1d3 points of Strength, Agility, and Stamina damage. The character may experience fever, sweating, and a racing heart. A character who has taken 3 points of Agility damage must make a DC 10 Will save to cast a spell requiring verbal components – the judge may modify this DC for characters whose Mercurial Magic effects require especially loud or quiet casting.

Each day after the character has taken initial damage, he gains a DC 15 Fort save to avoid further damage. If the character makes three of these saves (they do not need to be sequential), the disease passes and the ability score damage heals as normal.

## Releasing the Demon

To release the demon that calls itself “Silent Nightfall”, characters must accomplish the following:

- Go to **Area 4** and open the portcullis to **Area 8**, or open the portcullis to Area 8 through magic or sheer brute force.
- Go to **Area 5** and pull the red lever that allows the heavy water to drain from the bottom of the shaft.
- Go to **Area 8** and push the green button that retracts the cadmium rods.

## Encounter Areas

**Area 1 - Central Shaft:** *This part of the forest gives way to a great square shaft, some 50 feet to a side, going down into darkness. Twisted trees grow in some places right up to the edge of the shaft, which seems to be lined with rusted and pitted steel. To the north and south, a series of ancient iron rungs are set into the walls of the pit, allowing access to the depths below. An odor of rusting iron and wet feathers wafts up from below.*

Examination of the shaft, even from above, shows that there were once iron rungs set in the east and west walls as well, but these have rusted away. How far the characters can see into the shaft depends upon the time of day – they should be able to see the entrances to Level 1, 30 feet below, at noon. Characters can use the trees to secure ropes in order to descend to the tunnel entrances to east and west. Level 1 is 30 feet below the surface, with each subsequent level 20 feet below the previous.

The entire shaft is three miles deep, with the last 500 feet filled with water. This was originally heavy water, but it has become diluted over the ages due to rainfall and runoff entering the shaft. Every 10 feet down the shaft, ancient letters a meter high read “SILENT NIGHTFALL” on all four faces, in a language long lost to the rest of the world.

Should a character get to the bottom of the shaft, she will discover that almost half of the water-filled section

is clotted with bones and other debris. It should take an incredible amount of effort to actually reach the trapped demon physically.

There are several factors to keep in mind about the shaft:

- Characters using a ladder can move down at 15’ per round, or upwards at 10’ per round. A character can move at twice this speed if he is not cautious, but must make a DC 10 Luck check for each 10’ moved to avoid pulling a loose rung off the wall (or a similar mishap). Kind judges may allow a PC who slips to make a Reflex save (DC 15) after falling 1d3 x 10 feet. Success means that the character catches a rung, taking only 1d6 damage due to jarring and striking the wall.
- The sharpened metal of the shaft can sever a rope. Whenever a rope is used in the shaft, have the entire party make a Luck check (1d20 equal to or below current Luck). If *everyone* fails, the rope is severed.
- The shaft crawler (see page 3) may be encountered at some point while within the shaft. This is also the first point at which the demon (see page 6) can make contact with suitable PCs. The *Whispering Stone* makes contact as soon as the first PC sets foot on Level 1 (see page 7).
- At night, loud noises will attract a trio of hunting grallistrix (see page 7).
- An elf who climbs below Level 3 must make a Fort save every 10 feet that he climbs, as an indication of his growing weakness. This begins at DC 5, and the DC increases by +2 for every 10 feet climbed (i.e., DC 5 when 10’ below Level 3, DC 7 at 20’, DC 9 at 30’, etc.). The first time this save is failed, the elf is unable to make any progress, and can only cling to rope or rails. Another save must be made to move again, and if this is failed, the elf can hold on no longer, and falls down the shaft to certain death. As an elf must make this save climbing back up the shaft (at a declining DC, as the progression is reversed), climbing down too far may make it impossible to climb back up. An elf that uses some manner of flight begins to take damage 100 feet below Level 3 – 1d6 per 30’ travelled (i.e., 1d6 from 100’ to 130’, 2d6 from 130’ to 160’, 3d6 from 160’ to 190’, and so on).

- A dwarf who climbs farther down the shaft, on the other hand, feels invigorated. Thirty feet below Level 3, a dwarf discovers that he does not tire and can, in fact, continue climbing so long as he wishes. A dwarf 100' below Level 3 begins to regenerate at a rate of 1 hp per minute, although this will not restore him from the dead. At 200', this increases to 1 hp per round, but the character begins to crave the atmosphere of the shaft. At 300', the character gains 1d6 hit points, but must make a DC 10 Will save or he cannot willingly climb back up the shaft. For every additional 100' down the dwarf climbs thereafter, he gains an additional 1d3 hit points, but must succeed in an ever-increasing Will save to climb back up – DC 15 at 400', DC 20 at 500', DC 25 at 600', and so on. Only one save is allowed, after which the dwarf can only climb down or remain where he is – unless others come down the shaft to rescue him.

**Grallistrix hunters (2):** Init +0; Atk bite –1 melee (1d5) or claw +0 melee (1d3) or weapon +2 melee; AC 12; HD 2d6; hp 9, 9; MV fly 30'; Act 1d20; SP infravision 60', levitation, telepathy, telekinesis, exceptional hearing, silence; SV Fort +3, Ref +3, Will +6; AL C.

**Psychic grallistrix hunter (1):** Init +0; Atk bite –1 melee (1d5) or claw +0 melee (1d3) or weapon +2 melee or psychic blast (1d8; Will DC 15 half); AC 12; HD 2d6; hp 8; MV fly 30'; Act 1d20; SP infravision 60', levitation, telepathy, telekinesis, psychic blast, exceptional hearing, silence; SV Fort +3, Ref +3, Will +6; AL C.

**Shaft crawler (1):** Init –6; Atk slam +4 melee (1d6 plus smother); AC 6; HD 20d6+40; hp 111; MV 20' or climb 10'; Act 1d20; SP infravision 60', smother, rhizomes, siphon magic; SV Fort +12, Ref –10, Will +0; AL N.

**Area 2 - The Radiant Temple:** The eastern entrances to this area are blocked by rusted steel portcullises (Strength DC 15 bends the bars enough for a character to slip through; DC 25 to lift and hold a portcullis). These are in bad shape, and have not been opened recently, so lifting one will produce a horrible screech that alerts every grallistrix in the complex. It is possible to peer through the bars into the area beyond. The controls that

open these portcullises can be found in **Area 4**.

*Beyond the portcullis is an irregularly shaped room that appears to be a temple. It is lit with a soft green radiance that appears to be emitted by patches of mold and fungi growing on the walls, floors, and ceiling. An altar stone can still be seen in the center of the room, although it too has been covered by odd growths. Four pillars hold the ceiling aloft. At the far side of the room, a passage heads west, and another passage heads north.*

This area is not used by the grallistrix, and has not been entered in a very long time. Ironically, the wizard Mortmallion worshiped Ulibex, the Neutral fungous Lord of Mushrooms, Molds, Mildews, and Yeasts, before he mutated into the shaft crawler, and he had converted this area to Ulibex's worship. Close examination of the walls shows crude murals were once painted on the corroded metal walls, showing the towering column of slime and corruption that is Ulibex lording over what first appears to be a wasted landscape, but, if examined more closely, exhibits a form of mycological splendor. Much of this has been lost, and some details require scraping away the mold and fungi to make out clearly.

The altar is a misshapen stone block that appears to be a rather squat toadstool, although it is so heavily encrusted with mold and fungi that this cannot easily be discerned. If a character so much as touches this fungus, however, the attention of Ulibex immediately becomes fixed on the altar. Faster than a mortal creature can react, a cloud of spores surrounds the character, and rhizomes grow from the point of contact upward, into his brain, causing 1d3 damage to a random ability score (except Luck; roll for each point) in so doing (no save). The character is instantly in mental communion with Ulibex on its distant plane, and hears a calm gender-neutral voice questioning him telepathically:

- Why are you afraid?
- Who are you?
- What has become of Mortmallion?
- Will you perform an act of worship at my altar?

Ulibex is in telepathic contact with the character(s) so affected, and can immediately discern whether or not they are lying. This does not anger the Fungal Lord, but provokes a calmly asked, "Why do you attempt to deceive me?" Ulibex does not mind answering PC questions, so long as its own questions are answered,

and is quite willing to admit to being a godling on the distant fungoid plane, Bayal Mycosis.

If the character agrees to perform an act of worship, he is instructed to “Place meat upon my altar, upon which my children will feed.” In exchange for the character’s agreement, the spores and rhizomes connecting him to the altar release him (these otherwise take a DC 16 Strength check to break, and do an additional 1d3 damage to random ability scores as a result). The character gains a permanent fungal infection of some kind, through which the desires of Ulibex may be known. So long as this infection remains, the character can cast *monster summoning* once each day, although the creature(s) summoned must always be fungi or slimes from Bayal Mycosis, and each time this spell is used, the character owes Ulibex a favor. The infection can be removed by a cleric’s ability to lay on hands, equal to 5 Dice of healing, but this ends the demi-patron relationship (see **Appendix D**).

Any meat placed on the altar after such an agreement is rapidly consumed by the growths on the altar. This state of affairs lasts a full week, and woe betide the character who seeks to contact Ulibex during this time! A non-bonded who touches the altar during this period is mistaken for an offering, and immediately suffers 1d3 damage *each* to Strength, Agility, and Stamina as fungi begin to consume his body. If he does not immediately break contact with the altar, he takes this same damage each round. Otherwise, unless cured with 3 Dice of healing or magic, he takes 1 point of damage to each of Strength, Agility, and Stamina each hour until he dies.

Down the eastern corridor, the letters LIVIN are etched into the southern wall in an ancient language, with the remainder of the words lost in the tunnel’s collapse. If the PCs excavate enough, this is seen to spell out LIVING QUARTERS (although a *comprehend languages* spell will probably be needed to determine this).

**Area 3 - The Room of Tables:** The portcullis at the doorway to this room is up, unless it has been lowered in **Area 4**. The description assumes torchlight, which does not show all of the area or the two exits on the eastern wall.

*Beyond the portcullis is an area which widens out after an initial 40 feet width. You can see make out metal tables and benches in orderly rows, starting about 20 feet away. There is a smattering of dust-covered paraphernalia upon*

*the tables, but much of the glassware is broken, where it lies glinting on the floor. Old molted feathers the size of goose quills litter the room, but these are the banded feathers of owls. The air is damp, and the room stinks of wet feathers and mold.*

In ancient times, this room was a messhall, and the tables and benches are bolted to the floor. Mortmallion used the room as a laboratory. Now the grallistrix use it as a nesting site, and there are three large nests along the eastern end of the room – each of which contains a brood of 1d5 noncombatant young grallistrix watched over by their mothers (as avian-based humanoids, there is no way to determine the gender of a grallistrix without performing an anatomical study).

Examining the tables shows many areas where they have been discolored or pitted by acid. Broken beakers, bottles, and glass tubes litter the entire area, creating hazardous footing for those without good boots (Luck DC 15 or suffer a -5’ penalty to movement speed for 1d4 hours). The levitating grallistrix do not even notice. Searching through the area uncovers a few lead weights, a mangled brass balance, three brass candlesticks, and a leather funnel that is still usable.

**Grallistrix mothers (3):** Init +3; Atk bite +1 melee (1d5) or claw +2 melee (1d3); AC 12; HD 2d6; hp 8, 9, 10; MV fly 30’; Act 1d20; SP infravision 60’, levitation, telepathy, telekinesis, exceptional hearing, silence; SV Fort +3, Ref +3, Will +6; AL C.

The grallistrix young can easily be killed if their mothers are unable to protect them – a character can kill one per Action Die. However, so long as they live, they screech while in jeopardy, drawing a trio of grallistrix hunters into this area every 1d5 rounds until their screeching is silenced or three trios have arrived.

**Grallistrix hunters (up to 6):** Init +0; Atk bite –1 melee (1d5) or claw +0 melee (1d3) or handaxe +2 melee (1d6); AC 12; HD 2d6; hp 9 each; MV fly 30’; Act 1d20; SP infravision 60’, levitation, telepathy, telekinesis, exceptional hearing, silence; SV Fort +3, Ref +3, Will +6; AL C.

**Psychic grallistrix hunters (up to 3):** Init +0; Atk bite –1 melee (1d5) or claw +0 melee (1d3) or short sword +2 melee (1d6) or psychic blast (1d8; Will DC 15 half); AC 12; HD 2d6; hp 7 each; MV fly 30’;

Act 1d20; SP infravision 60', levitation, telepathy, telekinesis, psychic blast, exceptional hearing, silence; SV Fort +3, Ref +3, Will +6; AL C.

Down the eastern corridor to the north, the letters TRAINI are etched into the north wall in an ancient language, with the remainder of the words lost in the tunnel's collapse. Down the eastern corridor to the south, the letters ICES can be made out on the southern wall. If the PCs excavate enough, these can be seen to spell out TRAINING AREA and OFFICES, respectively, although a *comprehend languages* spell will probably be needed to determine this.

**Area 4 - Room of Levers:** *The passage here opens up on the right, into a trapezoidal area, narrowing to the south. A bank of four levers can dimly be seen, set into an iron box on the southern wall. The remains of two padded chairs, now colonized by pale yellow mushrooms, flanks a fallen one-legged table made of dark grey wood.*

This was the upper control room for the Silent Nightfall Complex, which Mortmation used as a reading room. Facing the levers, they control (from right to left) the portcullises in **Area 2**, **Area 3**, **Area 7**, and **Area 8**. If a portcullis is up, the lever is in the "up" position (this is true of the second and third lever). Lifting a portcullis by force doesn't change the lever's position.

The levers to **Area 2** are stuck; they require a Strength check to lift. If the check is 15+, the portcullises to **Area 2** are raised with a great deal of noise. If the check is 10+ but below 15, the lever breaks off instead. (A grallistrix can attempt this telekinetically by making a Will save instead of a Strength check.)

The characters will certainly hear any portcullis in the complex drop (even if only as a faint echo from below). The portcullis to **Area 3** can also be heard if it rises. Otherwise, a DC 20 Luck check hears the portcullises to **Area 7** or **8** rise from here.

The mushroom growths on the chair are harmless, although any bonded to Ulibex (see **Area 2**) can hear them faintly singing in joyous voices, although he cannot make out the words. Searching this area uncovers a tarnished silver candle holder in the southeast corner of the room (5 gp value). There is still a stub of a candle in it.

**Area 5 - The Red Lever:** This area is the nesting ground of six grallistrix females (each with 1d5 young or eggs; 50% chance of each). Characters entering with light sources are immediately attacked; three nests are in the northeast section of the room, and three in the southwest.

**Grallistrix mothers (6):** Init +3; Atk bite +1 melee (1d5) or claw +2 melee (1d3); AC 12; HD 2d6; hp 11, 6, 7, 7, 10, 6; MV fly 30'; Act 1d20; SP infravision 60', levitation, telepathy, telekinesis, exceptional hearing, silence; SV Fort +3, Ref +3, Will +6; AL C.

The grallistrix young can easily be killed if their mothers are unable to protect them – a character can kill one per Action Die. However, so long as they live, they screech while in jeopardy, drawing a trio of grallistrix hunters into this area every 1d5 rounds until their screeching is silenced or six trios have arrived.

**Grallistrix hunters (up to 12):** Init +0; Atk bite –1 melee (1d5) or claw +0 melee (1d3) or spear +2 melee (1d8); AC 12; HD 2d6; hp 9 each; MV fly 30'; Act 1d20; SP infravision 60', levitation, telepathy, telekinesis, exceptional hearing, silence; SV Fort +3, Ref +3, Will +6; AL C.

**Psychic grallistrix hunters (up to 3):** Init +0; Atk bite –1 melee (1d5) or claw +0 melee (1d3) or longsword +2 melee (1d8) or psychic blast (1d8; Will DC 15 half); AC 12; HD 2d6; hp 7 each; MV fly 30'; Act 1d20; SP infravision 60', levitation, telepathy, telekinesis, psychic blast, exceptional hearing, silence; SV Fort +3, Ref +3, Will +6; AL C.

*This room is a tangle of large nests, molted feathers, and pieces of twisted and corroded metal. Ribbed vines of metal thrust from the wall here and there, but they have neither leaves nor apparent purpose. The ceiling bulges ominously in places – you can see sections where the stone has fallen away to reveal a grid-like network of the rusted iron vines – and water drips to pool in the odd puddle upon the floor.*

Searching through the grallistrix nests can turn up a cracked leather funnel, the cover of a book (*First Principles of the Unfathomable Symbiosis*; author unknown); a working bellows, three human skulls, a glass mixing rod, four silver spoons (2 sp each), and a pair of iron scissors that is rusted open.

Along the southmost wall is an ancient control panel with many switches, dials, and indicators that no longer function properly. There is also one large red lever. Throwing this lever will begin draining the lower part of the shaft of heavy water, at a rate of about 10 feet each minute. It takes just over a day (26½ hours) for the water to drain; enough water has drained after 20 hours to allow the demon “Silent Nightfall” to escape if the cadmium rods are also withdrawn (see **Area 8**).

Down the western corridor to the north, the letters ATORS are etched into the south wall in an ancient language, with the remainder of the words lost in the tunnel’s collapse. Far down the eastern corridor to the north, the letters SUBW can be made out on the north wall. If the PCs excavate enough, these can be seen to spell out ELEVATORS and SUBWAY, respectively, although a *comprehend languages* spell will probably be needed to determine this.

**Area 6 - Mortmation’s Bedchamber:** The portcullises giving access to this room are all down, except for the portcullis to the south. This is controlled from **Area 8**.

*This chamber is some 40 feet north to south and 50 feet from east to west, lit by a softly glowing violet light emanating from tumescent mushrooms growing from the mattress of a brass bed near the center of the room. A wardrobe and a side table are set along the eastern wall, with the wardrobe close to the southeast corner. The floors are strewn with what must have once been luxurious mats and rugs, including the pelts of several beasts. Four braziers on tripods, one of which still stands, surround the bed. A wooden bin stands near the southeast corner along the south wall. There are four ways into this room, but each is protected by a portcullis, and only the south way is open.*

When the PCs enter this area, several chittering vermin (which look like eight-legged cockroaches, each the size of a mouse, with lobster-like claws and rat-like tails ending in stingers) hide beneath the bed or flee out through the bars of the portcullises. These vermin survive by eating the fungus on the bed, and sometimes manage to consume grallistrix eggs if they are left untended. They are not dangerous – even their stings are merely painful to humans – but there is no reason to tell the players this! Each has an AC of 18 and is slain with any successful attack. If it becomes important, assume 4d6 lurk within the room and eastern corridor at any given time.

The quilt, mattress, and bedclothes are all infested with a single violet bioluminescent fungus. The mass of fungus is a single connected being, and the visible mushrooms are its sporing bodies. This fungus is dangerous, and if approached by intelligent beings, it will assume that they are hostile. The fungus uses its Action Dice to cause intelligent beings to **attack themselves**. When targeted by the fungus, a victim must succeed in a DC 10 Will save or use its next Action Die available to make an attack against itself. The victim needs to roll to hit, and a warrior or dwarf may use his Deed Die to **reduce** (rather than increase) the attack roll. This ability has a range of 60’, although the fungus only uses it if attacked or approached within 10’. It can only make characters attack themselves with weapons; it cannot make them cast spells or use item charges. Any character that has bonded with Ulibex (see **Area 2**) is completely immune to this effect, and will not be targeted.

The fungus itself is immune to mind-affecting attacks or spells, critical hits, and any other effect that relies on discernable anatomy. If the fungus is slain, it erupts in a great cloud of spores. All within this chamber must make a DC 15 Fort save or be infected. Infected characters suffer 1d3-1 points of Stamina damage every day, starting 1d5 days from the point of infection. If they reach 0 Stamina, they die, arising 1d4 turns later as a violet fungus zombie. Setting the bed afire may prevent sporing (50% chance), but it also destroys the treasure therein.

A violet fungus zombie has luminescent violet skin, and mushrooms begin to grow through his flesh. When slain, it also spores, and any within 10’ must make a DC 10 Fort save or be similarly affected. A violet fungus zombie infects those it bites, unless they make a DC 10 Fort save. They are not true un-dead, however, and are not affected as such. Their driving desire is to spread the infection.

Awareness of the fungus keeps the grallistrix from this place.

**Glowing violet fungus:** Init +4; Atk control attacks (Will DC 10); AC 8; HD 5d12; hp 33 MV 0<sup>3</sup>; Act 4d20; SP sense beings within 60’, control attacks, immune to mind-affecting and critical hits, sporing; SV Fort +4, Ref –8, Will +0; AL N.

**Violet fungus zombie:** Init -4; Atk slam +0 melee (1d3) or bite -1 melee (1 plus infection); AC 8; HD 2d12; MV 20'; Act 1d20; SP immune to mind-affecting and critical hits; SV Fort +2, Ref -4, Will +0; AL N.



Stuffed within the bed's mattress are three scrolls penned by Mortmallion the Pale, which are destroyed if the bed is set aflame. They have been compromised by the glowing violet fungus' growths, obscuring or eating through some characters and words, so that any attempting to use them must make a DC 10 Intelligence check or *automatically* be treated as if a natural "1" had been rolled. In any event, each of these scrolls can only be used once before they crumble into dust. They are:

- Scroll of *enlarge* and *ropework* (caster rolls spell check normally if he succeeds in his Intelligence check).
- Scroll of *invisible companion* (caster rolls spell check at +2 if he succeeds in his Intelligence check).
- Scroll of *Nythuul's porcupine coat* (manifestation is fungal quills, result as a roll of 16-19 if the caster succeeds in his Intelligence check).

Within the wardrobe, characters can find the moldering remains of ancient robes, several of which have silver buttons tarnished black with age. There are 32 such buttons, and each is worth 2 sp. A hidden compartment on the bottom of the wardrobe's interior (Intelligence DC 15 locates) is protected by a hidden poisoned needle (DC 10 to locate and disarm; poison causes 1d3 Strength, Fort DC 15 or 1 point is permanent). Within can be found two volumes of Mortmallion's journals, which can be studied to learn 1d3 spells of the judge's choice, as well as granting general information on the *Whispering Stone* and the Radiant Brotherhood (see Appendix R). Mortmallion has had several clashes with the Brotherhood in the past. That the King of Elfland seeks the *Whispering Stone* can be learned from these journals.

Upon the side table can be found a basin and ewer, a brass candleholder with a stub of a candle in it, and a chalice of beaten gold studded with gems, worth 550 gp. A drawer in the side table holds a dozen beeswax candles (each will burn for three hours) and a small pine box containing 42 wooden "strike anywhere" matches.

The bin, which is the size of a large chest, is about ¼ full of charcoal for the braziers. If the charcoal is searched, a leather bag under the charcoal holds 883 cp and 470 sp.

The rugs and braziers are unremarkable, but if the characters manage to explore the eastern corridor, they might find another of Mortmallion's journals, now coverless, moldy, and ruined by the persistent damp – but containing a sheet of vellum which is a partial scroll of *Hepsoj's fecund fungus* folded within it. This scroll was obtained by Mortmallion, but was penned by the necromancer Ulthaa Duhr the Undying before he passed into lichdom. A DC 15 Intelligence check shows that it is incomplete before it is used. The scroll will grant a +5 bonus to checks to learn *Hepsoj's fecund fungus*, or will allow the spell to be cast with a -10 penalty to the spell check (any failure is treated as though a natural "1" was rolled; on a natural "1", in addition to any other effects, the scroll is destroyed; the scroll may otherwise be used any number of times each day). A high-level elf or wizard might be very interested

in the partial scroll for her own research, but such beings are not easy to deal with, and may choose to simply take the scroll rather than bargain or pay.

Down the eastern corridor the letters RED ZO are etched into the north wall in an ancient language, with the remainder of the words lost in the tunnel's collapse. If the PCs excavate enough, these can be seen to spell out RED ZONE, although a *comprehend languages* spell will probably be needed to determine this.

## Enough Treasure

In playtesting, some players noted that the majority of treasures to be found in Silent Nightfall are of particular interest to wizards and elves. If the judge desires, the bin can hold gold and silver, instead of silver and copper. In campaign play, future victims of the grallistrix may be found with additional equipment or treasures still upon their persons.

**Area 7 - The Parliament of Owls:** The portcullis leading into this room is up, unless altered in **Area 4**.

*Beyond the rusted steel portcullis is a vast chamber, lit by the glowing green figures of a dozen emaciated owl-like humanoids, whose vast eyes glow orange and yellow in their skulls. Behind them looms a large, dark bulk, like an owl made of stone, but whose eyes glow with an eerie blue-green light, and which blink slowly, indicating that it is a living thing. The green owl-men float in the air, while the huge owl-thing squats upon the ground. The large figure is easily 10 feet in diameter and 12 feet tall. All are, at the moment, unmoving. The high ceiling is held aloft by four pillars. To the northeast, you can see a large sphere of dark stone.*

These thirteen creatures together form the parliament of owls, the eldest of the grallistrix, and those which have bathed in the demonic radiation for the longest.

Twelve are elder grallistrix, which spend much of their time in the astral plane, seeking far and wide for knowledge, or walking psychically through the dusty

halls of the Akashic record, wherein every event that ever occurred is stored for all eternity. They glow with the power of the demonic radiation that has permeated their every cell, and hang in midair through their innate powers of levitation. The thirteenth, and largest, is the firstborn grallistrix, who is now centuries old, and has long ago retired from her astral travels to contemplate all that she has learned.

If approached with confidence, but without aggression, the firstborn grallistrix may consent to speak with characters, and there is much that she can tell them – small pieces of gossip, magical lore, history, and anything else the judge desires. Interviewing the firstborn grallistrix may be a requirement for finding spell knowledge, as per pages 314-315 of the *core rulebook*. What the firstborn is likely to desire in return is the souls of intelligent beings, for it is the only thing she now consumes. The firstborn grallistrix is fully aware of the nature of the demon which calls itself “Silent Nightfall”.

When this chamber is first entered, the firstborn grallistrix begins to recall the elders from their astral travels. It takes 1d16 rounds for each to return (determine separately). While travelling astrally, an elder grallistrix is not aware, and any attack can be made with a +1d shift on the dice chain for both attack roll and damage. Further, the grallistrix must make a Will save (DC equal to damage done), or the astral cord is severed and the elder is lost in the astral plane.

Once his spirit is reunited with his body, an elder grallistrix attacks with powerful psychic blasts, each doing 3d8 damage (Will DC 15 for half). If a reunited elder grallistrix is slain, it can attempt to survive by possessing the body of its killer, who must succeed in a DC 10 Will save or have his body taken over. Spells such as *banish* and *exorcise* can potentially restore the character, as can a successful Turn check by a Lawful cleric. While possessing a body, the elder grallistrix can use its psychic blast, levitation, and telekinesis normally. Worse, if the new body dies, it can attempt to jump into its slayer (Recovering the Body applies to the evacuated “slain” character normally).

The telekinesis of elder grallistrix is better than that of other grallistrix, and can be used to manipulate objects or weapons as though wielded by the creature up to 30' away. They have no weapons, however, and can only control those dropped by others, or the weapons of the



fallen. The weird green radiation that bathes its cells allows it to regenerate 1 hp each round, so long as it lives. When an elder grallistrix is slain, its body falls to the ground and the phosphorescent glow dims and goes out.

**Elder grallistrix (12):** Init +0; Atk weapon +4 melee (by weapon) or psychic blast (3d8; Will DC 15 half); AC 14; HD 3d6; hp 12, 12, 11, 11, 7, 9, 14, 7, 7, 13, 10, 9; MV fly 30'; Act 2d20; SP infravision 60', astral travel, levitation, telepathy, telekinesis, psychic blast, exceptional hearing, silence, regeneration, possession upon death; SV Fort +5, Ref +5, Will +12; AL C.

The firstborn grallistrix has stone-like skin that reduces the damage from any non-magical weapon by 5 points. Spell effects that target her directly have a chance of failing equal to 100% minus 10% per Caster Level. Thus, a 3<sup>rd</sup> level caster has his spells fail against the firstborn grallistrix 70% of the time. Note that a spell affecting multiple targets still affects all other targets – only the firstborn is immune.

The firstborn feeds upon souls. Once per round, without using an Action Die, she may select a target and attempt to draw a part of its soul into her. The target must make a DC 15 Will save or take 1d5 points of Personality damage and 1d3 points of Intelligence damage. If either Intelligence or Personality reaches 0, the character is unable to take any further actions. If both reach 0, the character's soul is consumed by the firstborn grallistrix, and she gains 3d6 hit points.

When the firstborn grallistrix dies, her body collapses in upon itself, folding up and diminishing until nothing is left. A great sigh goes shuddering through the remaining elder grallistrix, and one of them (at random) becomes the new firstborn. Initially, this does not change his statistics except to allow him to feed on souls (Will DC 10).

**Firstborn grallistrix:** Init +2; Atk bite +6 melee (1d3); AC 17; HD 6d6; hp 13; MV fly 10'; Act 1d20; SP infravision 60', levitation, telepathy, telekinesis, exceptional hearing, silence, damage resistance 5 against non-magical weapons, spell resistance, feed upon souls; SV Fort +10, Ref –5, Will +20; AL C.

The large dark orb is the *Whispering Stone*, as described on page 6.

## Using the Elder and Firstborn Grallistrix

There are many ways to die in the Silent Nightfall complex, most of which are easily enough avoided if simply left alone. **Area 7** is probably the most likely to result in a TPK if the PCs go in guns a-blazing.

The firstborn and elder grallistrix have reached a point in their psychic evolution where they no longer care about their kin in the levels above. Moreover, they may know of other grallistrix enclaves in the surrounding area (or elsewhere). They are motivated now primarily by curiosity, and will not pursue characters who flee, except when obviously facing “hit and run” tactics.

The judge may decide to have the firstborn initiate telepathic contact with the PCs. By making this a role-playing encounter, a potentially disastrous combat may be avoided. However, the judge should keep in mind that all of the elder grallistrix will have returned from the astral plane within less than 3 minutes of conversation, making any later combat that much more deadly. If a fight occurs, the PC's best tactics would be to eliminate the elders before they “awaken”.

Speaking to the grallistrix allows the judge to offer campaign hooks, background information, and anything else the judge desires to become known to the PCs. The firstborn may, of course, require souls to feed upon in exchange for information, as the judge desires.

**Area 8 - Lower Control Room:** The portcullis to this room is down, unless opened in **Area 4**. The description assumes torchlight, or something similar.

*Beyond the portcullis is a wide, empty chamber whose initial function is no longer clear. In the far distance, you can see a pinpoint of bright green light.*

This area is all but empty, containing only a control panel in the alcove to the east. This is a wide range of dim buttons, screens, and levers. One button – the green button that allows the cadmium rods restraining the demon to be removed – is still powered by the demon’s will. In another section, it is clear that a series of four levers has been used more recently than anything else here – these control the portcullises leading to **Area 6**. They are currently down, down, down, and up, and correspond to west, north, east, and south respectively.

## Squeezing it Dry

It can be hoped that at least one PC will be intrigued by the *Whispering Stone*. Although this is a useful magical artifact, it is not easily carried around, and the PC bonded to it may be involved in multiple attempts to wrest the Stone from his possession. If a method is found to remove it from the Silent Nightfall complex, its location becomes known to the King of Elfland, which increases potential difficulties.

The Radiant Brotherhood, described in Appendix R, can be used to complicate any interaction with this module. In addition, the Radiant Brotherhood are interested in other ancient (or alien/extraplanar, depending upon the judge) sites, and may appear as frequent rivals. The judge might even consider allowing the PCs to *join* the Radiant Brotherhood. This would give them access to information and support, but would require them to follow orders and work toward the Brotherhood’s goals.

If not destroyed, the parliament of owls may be able to provide the PCs with many future adventure hooks, as well as supplying other information, if the PCs are able and willing to pay the grallistrix’s price.

At very high levels, a wizard or elf may need to seek out the shaft crawler and swallow part of it (risking infection as though smothered) in order to learn *Hepsoj’s fecund fungi*.

Finally, with so many collapsed tunnels, the judge may wish to open one or more up for further exploration into Silent Nightfall, or into the areas it was once connected to. For inspiration in designing such an underground living complex, the judge is pointed to Margaret St. Clair’s *Sign of the Labrys*.



## Appendix A: Aberrations

Creatures dwelling in close proximity to the Silent Nightfall complex may have developed strange aberrations as a result of the demonic radiation it emits. This appendix includes both a table of minor aberrations and a few dangerous creatures affected by Silent Nightfall. The judge is encouraged to make use of minor aberrations in his descriptions of creatures around the area – small creatures such as larks and chipmunks, larger creatures like deer, and even nearby domesticated animals...possibly even a few people. Most of these minor aberrations are descriptive only; if a game effect occurs, it is noted below.

**Table of minor aberrations**

D30	Minor aberration
1	If the creature is clawed, it is instead hooved. If hooved, it is instead clawed. If this creature is normally limbless, it has stubby legs terminating in weak claws. No game effect.
2	Legs abnormally short. Reduce speed by 5'.
3	Legs abnormally long. Increase speed by 5'.
4	Vestigial wings hang and flap along the creature's flanks. No game effect.
5	Fur or skin has strange tint. Roll 1d7: (1) reddish, (2) orange, (3) yellowish, (4) greenish, (5) bluish, (6) purplish, or (7) indigo. No game effect.
6	Creature is abnormally sluggish. It has a -10' penalty to speed and a -4 penalty to Initiative.
7	Creature is abnormally fast. It has a +10' bonus to speed and a +4 bonus to Initiative.
8	Creature has tiny vestigial limbs. No game effect.
9	Creature has tiny vestigial limbs that allow it to cling or hold onto another creature. A Strength check (DC 10 + creature's Hit Dice) is required to pull it off while it still lives.
10	Creature has extra limbs. This only has a game effect if the judge desires. Game effects must be determined by the judge in accordance with the limbs added.
11	The creature has 1d3 more tails than normal. No game effect.
12	Creature glows faintly in the dark. No game effect, except that the creature is easier to spot at night.
13	Creature's eyes glow brightly in the dark. The creature gains +60' infravision.
14	If the creature is normally herbivorous, it becomes carnivorous. If normally carnivorous, it becomes herbivorous. If the creature becomes herbivorous, reduce its bite attack damage by -2d on the dice chain. If the creature becomes carnivorous, give it a bite attack (1d6) or increase its bite attack damage by +2d on the dice chain (whichever is higher).
15	The creature has a large, strangely-shaped head. It has an effective 1d3+2 Intelligence.
16	The creature's natural calls sound strangely like a single, repeated word, chosen by the judge. This may be in the common tongue, or in another language, such as elvish tongue or demonic tongue.
17	The creature has horns, which can deliver a butt attack for 1d3 damage. If the creature already had horns, they are larger, and gain a +1d3 dice increase in damage up the die chain. Extremely small creatures do no damage.
18	The creature gains working (but clumsy) wings, and gains a fly speed equal to half its normal land speed.
19	Minor Anti-magic: The creature generates a field that causes a penalty of -2d10 to any spell check within 30' of it. Roll 1d3: (1) this affects cleric magic, (2) this affects wizard magic, (3) this affects all magic.
20	Anti-magic: The creature generates a field that causes a -2d20 penalty to all spell checks within 30' of it. Roll 1d5: (1) this affects cleric magic, (2) this affects wizard magic, (3-5) this affects all magic.
21	Greater Anti-magic: The creature generates a field that causes all spell checks and all magic to fail within 30'. No effect occurs, regardless of the spell check rolled. Magic items fail within the field, but function again normally 1d7 rounds after leaving the field. There is a 50% chance that the field remains intact 1d7 days after the creature dies, centered on its remains.

22	The creature's spine is enlarged, raising like a crest along its back. No game effect.
23	The creature's skin is toughened, giving it a +1d5 bonus to AC.
24	The creature's skin gains a camouflaged pattern, granting it a +1d12 bonus to Hide checks.
25	The creature is sickly looking, pale, and weak. It has -1d3 hp per Hit Die (minimum 1 hp per Hit Die) and a -1d5 penalty to Fort saves.
26	The creature's skin is patchy and sloughs off leaving horrid sores. The creature has a -1d5 penalty to AC.
27	Abnormally large, gaining +1d5 Hit Dice. The number of Hit Dice gained is an indication of the new size.
28	Abnormally small, losing -1d3 Hit Dice, to a minimum of 1 hit point if the result would indicate 0 Hit Dice or less. The number of Hit Dice lost is an indication of the new size.
29	The creature gives off a rancid odor that betrays its presence. If eaten, it is horrible to taste, and the being eating it must make a DC 18 Fort save or take 1d3 points of Strength and Stamina damage due to poisoning.
30	Roll twice. If this is rolled again, roll twice again. A creature can have as many strange mutations as the judge is willing to allow.

## Specific Creatures

The following creatures can be used in the area surrounding Silent Nightfall, or in similar areas awash with strange mutating energies.

The **Bogey Bear** is a black bear which has grown smaller and cleverer through exposure to demonic radiation. It lurks high up among thick trees, ready to drop onto lone travellers, or stragglers, and make a quick meal of them. It gains a +10 bonus to Stealth checks, and thus often attacks by surprise. Its fur is coal black, and its build has become more koala-like than that of a true black bear. Its eyes, when it is spotted before it drops, glow with a dim greenish-white radiance. If the bogey bear hits with a claw attack, it may immediately make a bite attack without using an action die. The bogey bear is thought to be a unique individual.

**Bogey Bear:** Init -2; Atk claw +1 melee (1d3) or bite +0 melee (1d6); AC 13; HD 4d6+4; hp 14; MV 30' or climb 20'; Act 1d20; SP stealth, low-light vision; SV Fort +3, Ref +2, Will +2; AL C.

The **Grandfather of the Forest** is a majestic stag standing fully eight feet at the shoulder, with antlers spreading to a full 14 feet. Despite its size, it is utterly silent, and has the ability to pass through the most entangling vegetation – even if magical – as if it were not there. The stag is bearded and maned with a golden ruff, and the rest of it is white dappled with grey. Magic of all sorts appears to slide off the Grandfather of the Forest; it rolls saves vs. spells and magic using 1d30 instead of 1d20. Any who eat of its meat within 3 days of its death gain a permanent bonus of +2d6 to their maximum hit points.

There is enough to feed up to 20 human characters. The Grandfather of the Forest is a unique individual.

**Grandfather of the Forest:** Init +7; Atk gore +10 melee (2d8) or hoof +8 melee (2d6); AC 17; HD 10d8+30; hp 88; MV 70'; Act 2d20; SP low-light vision, pass through plants, save vs. magic with d30; SV Fort +10, Ref +8, Will +12; AL N.

The **nutkins** are red squirrels that have gained a level of intelligence comparable to that of humans. They make treetop villages, with vines strung between their nests in order to facilitate travel. A full 75% of the nutkins understand the common tongue, but they themselves speak with a high and fast chatter of their own. Great gossips, they know much of what is happening within a 25-mile radius, if communication can be established (see Appendix L). A nutkin could conceivably decide to travel with a group, but they do not willingly go inside or underground, and they avoid combat whenever possible. Nutkins do not like dogs or cats, and will seek to poison or trap them when possible. They are not very keen on snakes, hawks, foxes, or owls either.

**Nutkin:** Init +2; Atk bite -4 melee (1); AC 14; HD 1 hp; MV 30' or climb 30'; Act 1d16; SV Fort -4, Ref +6, Will +0; AL N.

Even the tiniest and most inoffensive creatures are affected by the demonic radiation, as the **blooderfly** clouds show. These are clouds of pure white to pinkish butterflies which can surround a creature in order to feed upon its blood, flushing their wings to a bright red. These creatures attack victims in swarms, occupying a 20' x 20' area, and each creature within the space must

make a DC 15 Fort or Ref save to avoid taking 1 point of Stamina damage due to blood loss. When the swarm has taken 10 points of Stamina, it disperses to digest. Swarms take half damage from any attack that is not an area effect.

**Blooderfly cloud:** Init +3; Atk special; AC 10; HD 4d6; MV fly 30'; Act 1d20; SP blood drain, swarm; SV Fort -4, Ref +6, Will +0; AL N.

Finally, in some nearby villages, herdsmen have discovered that some of their sheep have become strange, unchancy things. Most of these are slaughtered as lambs, but a few escape to live in the wild, or succeed at hiding themselves among the flocks until adulthood. These **goblin sheep** are carnivorous as adults, and can fascinate creatures with their gaze, so that an intended victim must succeed in a DC 10 Will save at the beginning of each round to take any action in that round. A goblin sheep gains a +4 bonus to hit any fascinated creature, and automatically scores a critical hit (1d8 on Table M). A goblin sheep cannot fascinate more than one individual at a time, but it need not use an Action Die to do so.

**Goblin sheep:** Init -1; Atk bite -1 melee (1d3); AC 12; HD 2d6; MV 30'; Act 1d20; SP fascinate; SV Fort +3, Ref +0, Will +2; AL C.

## Appendix D: Demi-Patrons

The *Dungeon Crawl Classics* core rulebook describes patrons on pages 320-321. Not all supernatural beings willing to lend the PCs aid need be as powerful as this, though. A demi-patron is a supernatural being that is able to lend some assistance to the beings it sponsors, but is less powerful than a full patron. It may, or may not, require a *patron bond* spell in order to enter into a relationship with a caster. Likewise, it may, or may not, cause patron taint.

The demon, “Silent Nightfall”, in this product is an example of a demi-patron. Other demi-patrons might be able to provide a single spell, or be invoked (generally with lower-powered results than with a full patron), or might even provide some benefit which is not usual for patrons (a spell check bonus to a particular group of spells, a unique mercurial magic effect, or anything else the enterprising judge can imagine).

Ulibex (see **Area 2**) is another demi-patron. By comparing the nature of these two demi-patrons, the

judge can see how each makes use of some aspects of the patron system, while not having a powerful enough connection to the linked mortal spellcasters involved to be considered true patrons.

## Appendix L: Languages

The *Dungeon Crawl Classics* game offers a simple method to allow characters to have diverse, and sometimes surprising, language choices when they reach 1<sup>st</sup> level. However, many heroes in Appendix N literature are extreme polyglots, and no character using only the language rules in the *core rulebook* can hope to rival them. In addition to the languages they begin a story knowing, several such characters pick up new languages with ease. In addition, the selection of languages presented does not take into account the expectation that the enterprising DCC judge will include many new creatures and few standard ones. Strange languages may therefore abound.

It is recommended that characters can know a maximum number of languages equal to their Intelligence score, plus or minus any modifier from the “birdsong” birth augur. A character so unlucky as to begin the game with a 3 Intelligence and a 3 Luck, coupled with the “birdsong” augur, might therefore know no more language than his name well enough to speak it, and understand only simple commands.

When a character encounters a new language, if she still has additional language “slots” available, the player may roll 1d20 for each week of exposure to the language. If the result is equal to, or under, the character’s Intelligence score, the character has grasped the basics of the language. If the character receives actual instruction, roll this check on 1d16 (or 1d14 if the instruction is somehow superior, such as by a professor of language, or a creature which can speak both the language to be learned and a language that the character already knows). The character may proceed thereafter to learn it more fully at whatever pace the judge deems appropriate.

It is recommended that the judge only allow “natural” languages to be learned in this way – the ability to speak the languages of angels and demons, or of animals, thus remains a perk of class and random roll. Simply because the wizard can understand spiders, it does not follow that all the PCs should be able to do the same!

## Appendix R: Radiant Brotherhood

The Radiant Brotherhood is a Lawful organization dedicated to the recovery and exploitation of lost technologies. In campaigns where past ages have no such civilizations, they seek out extraplanar and alien technologies. The goal of the Radiant Brotherhood is the domination of humans over all other species, the recreation of a lost Golden Age wherein Reason rules supreme. In so doing, they would overthrow all gods and magic, save those which function for the Radiant Brotherhood alone.

Although the quest for technology is not inherently evil, the Radiant Brotherhood is completely given over to technology as a means of subjugation. In addition, while the Radiant Brotherhood seeks to raise humans above all other species, they are not hesitant to bend other creatures to their will, through fear, torture, or selective breeding. Thus, the Radiant Brotherhood has a host of strange and monstrous creatures it can call upon. The most common are described below.

The Radiant Brotherhood is organized in Pyramids, each with an Apex Brother and three subordinate Head Brothers. Beneath these are Captains, Sergeants, and Corporals, and beneath these the rank-and-file. While one can rise to the rank of Captain through sheer ability, none becomes a Head Brother save by displacing a current Head Brother in combat, and the Apex Brother is chosen by the Head Brothers from among their number.

Each Pyramid is named by color – there are known to exist at least four of these – the Red Pyramid, Yellow Pyramid, Blue Pyramid, and Grey Pyramid. The Apex Brothers of all the Pyramids form a General Council, and from among their number is chosen the Brother Most High. If these names indicate a gender bias, the reader is not mistaken – most of the highest ranking members of the Brotherhood are, indeed, male.

When a character joins the Radiant Brotherhood, or when he gains a level once therein, he gains the following advantages. These do not necessarily come automatically; in some cases, a representative of the Brotherhood must first locate the character and supply

whatever is granted. In other cases, the character must undergo special training. Judges can use this information to help build special agents of the Radiant Brotherhood. Standard agents are described below. In addition to receiving these benefits, characters who join the Brotherhood are expected to undertake any mission they are given immediately, and with no questions asked.

Note that a 5<sup>th</sup> level PC does not automatically become a Head Brother by joining the Radiant Brotherhood – all new recruits start at 0-level, and each time they gain a level they are promoted through the hierarchy. Thus, the 5<sup>th</sup> level PC would be eligible for Head Brotherhood at 10<sup>th</sup> level. If performance is particularly poor, promotion should be withheld. Likewise, particularly stellar performance leads to faster promotion rates.

Even so, the Radiant Brotherhood is canny, and knows that some may join in order to infiltrate the organization. They do not make promotion easy.



**0-level (Recruit):** This is the rank-and-file of the Brotherhood. This includes soldiers, spies, and merchants who carry news from one cell of the Brotherhood to another. They are expected to do as they are told, and to make regular reports to their superiors. A recruit who interacts regularly with non-members is expected to keep tabs on them, reporting on their activities and capabilities. It is not unknown to have two members unknowingly reporting on each other, to test their loyalty to the Brotherhood. Failure is punished severely. At this level, a recruit can call upon material aid from the Brotherhood if he can convince his superiors that it is in the Brotherhood's interests, but there is always a high price for such aid.

**+1 level (Corporal):** The member is given a communications device, with which the Radiant Brotherhood can contact him. This device also allows the Brotherhood to track the member's location. A squad of 10 recruits is placed under the corporal, which can be used to assist the member's own interest as well as the Brotherhood's, although the Brotherhood will not look favorable upon squandering its resources if the member allows his recruits to be slain in pursuit of his own ambitions. Unbeknownst to the member, the device he is given can be electrified from a distance,

causing 2d6 damage to its bearer (as well as burning the device out) if the Brotherhood feels it is betrayed.

**+2 levels (Sergeant):** The member is given control over a group of six corporals (and, by extension, their attendant recruits) to direct as needed. His communications device is adjusted so that he can initiate communication with his corporals over a maximum distance of 25 miles.

**+3 levels (Captain):** The member is given control over a group of four sergeants (and, by extension, those they control) to direct as needed. The member's communication device allows him to initiate communication with any of his sergeants within 25 miles. The shocking property of this device is explained to the member and disabled, being replaced with an explosive charge that does 10d6 damage in a 5' radius, and 5d6 damage to any within 5' to 15'. In this extended range, a Ref save (DC 12) applies for half damage. The member is made aware of this charge, and can trigger it to explode immediately, or after any period up to 5 minutes, if need be. In addition, the member is given a control console weighing 40 lbs., which allows the captain not only to initiate communication with any sergeant or corporal under his command, within a range of 50 miles. This device can trigger the electrical charge in any underling's communication device remotely, within the same range.

**+4 levels (Captain):** The member now undergoes mental training for a period of 1d6+4 months, gaining a +4 bonus to Will saves to resist charms, mind control, mind reading, and any form of mental domination. The member is also given an ancient weapon into his keeping – a metal rod that functions as a club. The user can trigger a 2d6 electrical shock (Fort DC 15 for half) once every 5 minutes using the device. The device must hit to deliver this shock, and the user can choose to deliver it on any successful hit.

**+5 levels (Head Brother):** At this level, a member goes through additional psychic training, gaining another +4 bonus to Will saves resisting mind-affecting effects (for a total bonus of +8). He is given control over 2d10+4 captains (and their subordinates). His communications device may initiate contact with any other within 25 miles. He may call upon the Radiant Brotherhood for technological assistance, and so may have any manner of strange device upon his person. His control

console can initiate communication or trigger any communicator's electrical charge within 100 miles, and can track the location and recorded identity of any such communicator.

**+6 levels (Apex Brother):** At this level, a member has a +12 bonus to Will saves against mental domination. In addition, an Apex Brother can cast *charm person* as a purely mental (psychic) effect. This is cast using 1d12 + Personality modifier +6. A natural "1" is always treated as a misfire, unless the Apex Brother is also a spell caster (in which case, treat as normal). By this level, a member of the Radiant Brotherhood may have any technological device the judge desires (and is willing to devise).

## Statistics

The following statistics may be used to represent members of the Radiant Brotherhood that the PCs encounter or control. Note that these characters use the "NPCs are different" directive rather than having explicit character classes.

**Average recruit:** Init +0; Atk by weapon +0 melee (by weapon); AC 10; HD 1d4; MV 30'; Act 1d20; SV Fort +0, Ref +0, Will +0; AL L. Typically armed with club (1d4) or spear (1d8).

**Average corporal:** Init +0; Atk short sword +0 melee (1d6); AC 11; HD 2d4; MV 30'; Act 1d20; SV Fort +1, Ref +0, Will +1; AL L. Short sword and shield.

**Average sergeant:** Init +1; Atk short sword +2 melee (1d6+1); AC 13; HD 3d6+3; MV 30'; Act 1d20; SV Fort +2, Ref +0, Will +1; AL L. Short sword, leather armor, and shield.

**Average captain:** Init +3; Atk short sword +3 melee (1d6+1) or shock rod +3 melee (1d4+1); AC 13; HD 4d6+4; MV 30'; Act 1d20; SP shock rod (+2d6 damage 1/5 minutes); SV Fort +2, Ref +1, Will +3; AL L. Short sword, shock rod, leather armor, and shield.

**Advanced captain:** Init +4; Atk longsword +4 melee (1d8+1) or shock rod +4 melee (1d4+1); AC 16; HD 4d6+4; MV 30'; Act 1d20; SP shock rod (+2d6 damage 1/5 minutes), +4 vs. mind-affecting; SV Fort +2, Ref +2, Will +5; AL L. Short sword, shock rod, chainmail, and shield.

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