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Dungeon Crawl Classics #25

The Dread Crypt of Srihoz

by Jeremy Simmons

AN ADVENTURE FOR CHARACTER LEVELS 9-11



Remember the good old days, when adventures were underground, NPCs were there to be killed, and the finale of every dungeon was the dragon on the 20th level? Those days are back. Dungeon Crawl Classics adventures don't waste your time with long-winded speeches, weird campaign settings, or NPCs who aren't meant to be killed. Each adventure is 100% good, solid dungeon crawl, with the monsters you know, the traps you remember, and the secret doors you know are there somewhere.

For leagues uncounted, a path has followed the tortured contours of a cliff which hangs over the storm-battered shore of the icy northern seas. The eternally damp rock is covered in places by a sickly film of grey mosses and lichens, which is the sum total of all the life forms able to scratch out an existence in this gods-forsaken hell. For atop the cliff stands the entrance to the dread crypt of Srihoz, a vampire of ancient name and deadly reputation. Only the bravest adventurers dare enter this place...

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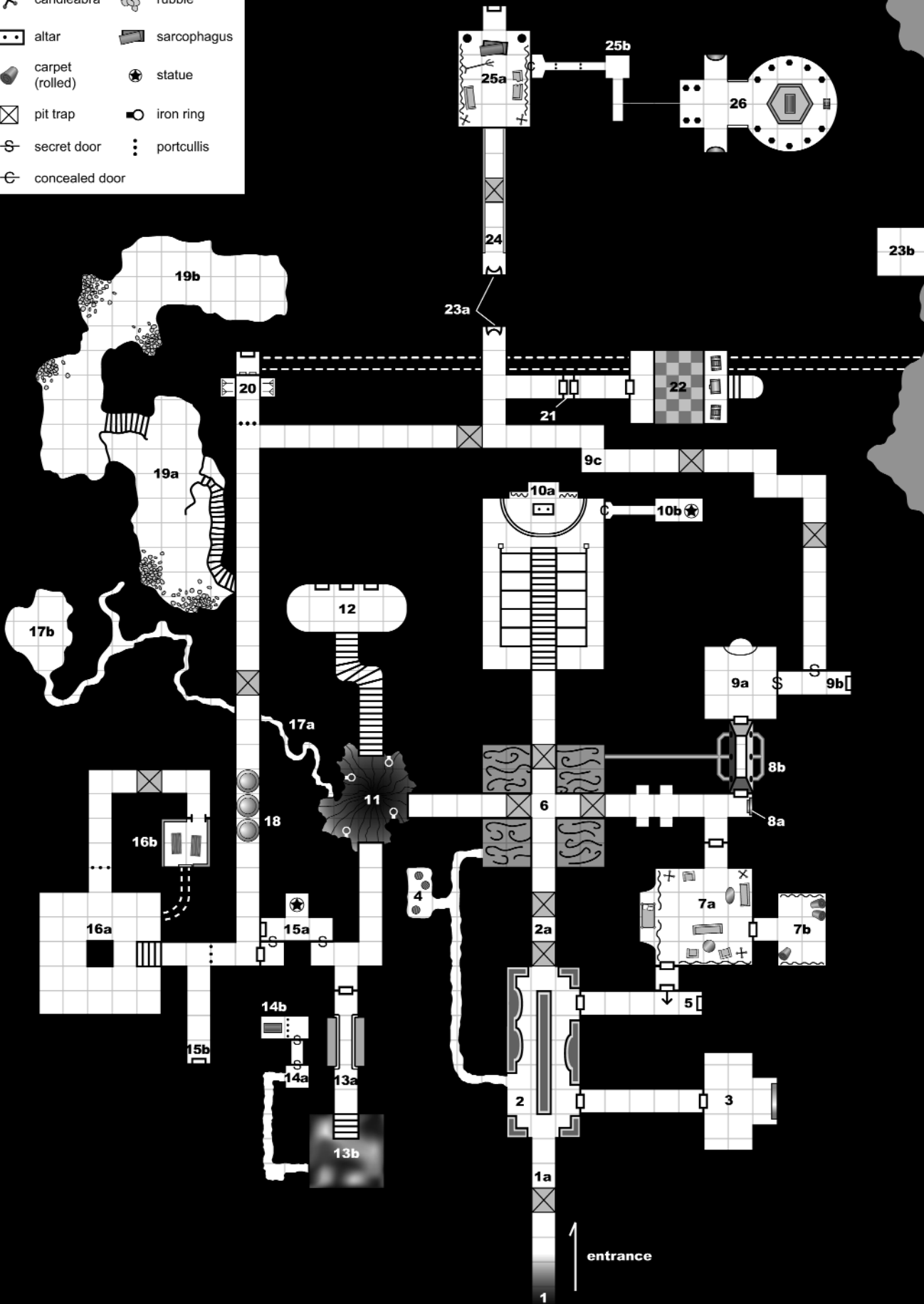
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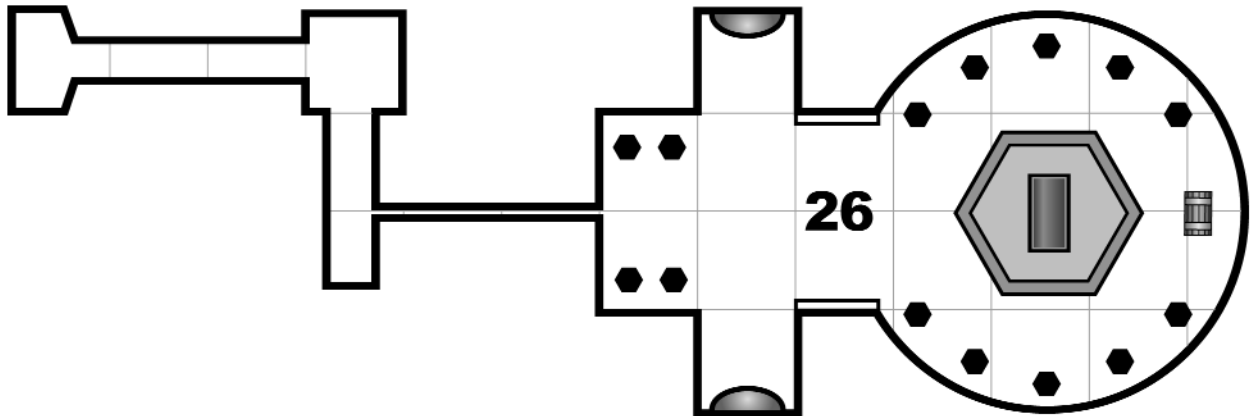
The Dread Crypt of Srihoz

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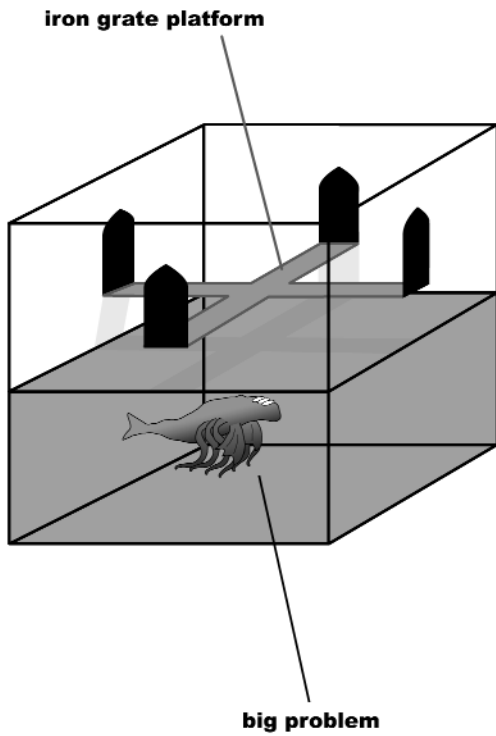
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|--|-----------------|---|-------------|
|  | teleport |  | tapestry |
|  | candleabra |  | rubble |
|  | altar |  | sarcophagus |
|  | carpet (rolled) |  | statue |
|  | pit trap |  | iron ring |
|  | secret door |  | portcullis |
|  | concealed door | | |



Close-Up of Area 26

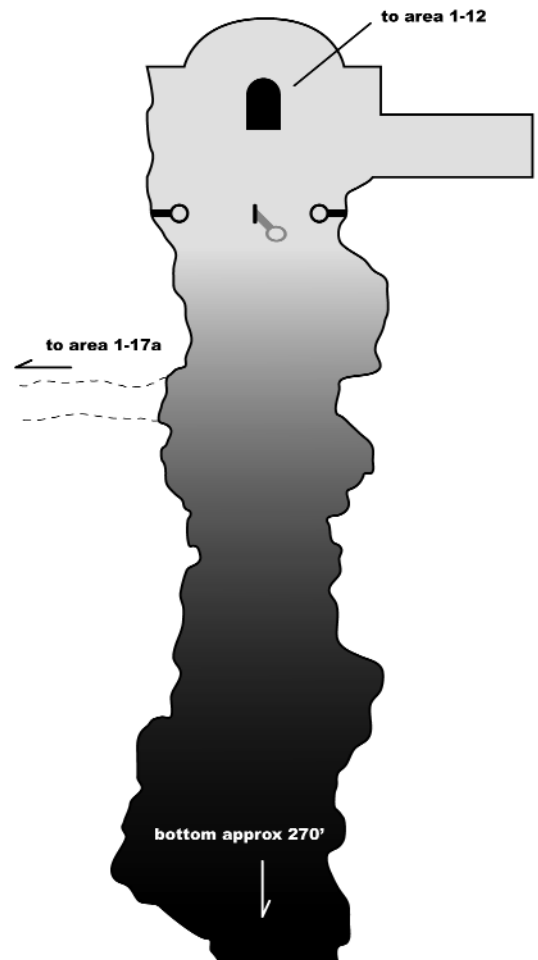


Close-up of Area 6



not to scale

Close-up of Area 11



not to scale

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By **Jeremy Simmons**
AN ADVENTURE FOR CHARACTER LEVELS 9-11



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Table of Contents

Introduction.....	2
Game Master's Section	2
Background Story	4
Map Key	5
The Dread Crypt of Srihoz	5
Appendix 1: New Magic	33
Appendix 2: New Monsters	36
Maps.....	40



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Introduction

Remember the good old days, when adventures were underground, NPCs were there to be killed, and the finale of every dungeon was the dragon on the 20th level? Those days are back. Dungeon Crawl Classics don't waste your time with long-winded speeches, weird campaign settings, or NPCs who aren't meant to be killed. Each adventure is 100% good, solid dungeon crawl, with the monsters you know, the traps you fear, and the secret doors you know are there somewhere.

The Dread Crypt of Srihoz is designed for four to six player characters of 9th through 11th level. While the composition of the player character group is not dictated by the adventure, a rogue, a good-aligned cleric, a druid, and a wizard may be especially useful. As always, a good blend of classes is ideal. Refer to the Scaling Information section for suggestions on ways to tailor the adventure to your party's particular strengths, interests, and styles of play. The setting is appropriate to any wilderness area adjacent to a sea or large lake, and can easily be added to an existing campaign.

Adventure Summary

The characters are lured to the archaic crypt of Srihoz, a vampire king of ancient lineage, and a master of exotic sorceries from mysterious kingdoms beyond the knowledge of most men. Using his vast fortune to gleefully lure the characters through the traps and minions he has set out for them, Srihoz hopes to weaken them enough where he can easily feed on those powerful or clever enough to penetrate his magnificent crypt.

Srihoz has spared no energy to ensure that only those who endure long enough to face him at the end are worthy of his attention. His crypt uses the promise of treasure to tempt adventurers into taking risks, forcing them to consume resources, lose party members, and otherwise wear them down so he can easily overcome the survivors and feed. This way he need not emerge from his remote crypt to find prey.

The adventurers can turn the tables on him, however. If they understand the purpose of the crypt, they can avoid risking themselves for the relatively worthless rewards the ancient vampire has laid out as bait. There is, however, the opportunity to recover the secret weapon he has so carefully protected, defeat his dreadful guardians, and find his carefully hidden central crypt to earn the chance to defeat Srihoz and claim the vast fortune he has hoarded for centuries.

Game Master's Section

Encounter Table

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

Loc	Pg	Type	Encounter	EL
1-1A	6	T	Pit trap with scythes	5
1-2	7	C	Assassin vines (2) Phantom fungus Vampiric blooms (2)	8
1-2A	8	T	Pit trap with scythes	5
1-3	8	T	Freezing trap	5
1-4	9	T	Spoiled chum trap	3
1-5	10	T	Amber stasis field trap Ungol dust trap	7
1-6	10	C	Vampire aboleth	11
1-7A	13	C	Mimic	4
1-8A	13	T	<i>Scorching ray</i> trap <i>Suggestion</i> traps (5)	9
1-8B	14	T	Wretched water trap	3
1-9A	15	C	Vrock	9
1-9B	16	T	Amber stasis field trap Ungol dust trap	7
1-9C	16	T	Pit trap with scythes (3)	5
1-10A	16	T	<i>Vampiric touch</i> trap <i>Shocking grasp</i> trap	6
1-11	17	T	Windy abyss	3
1-12	18	T	<i>Grease</i> trap Falling ceiling trap	9
1-13A	19	T	<i>Black tentacles</i> trap (2)	9
1-13B	19	C	Ash guardian	10
1-15A	20	C	<i>The Champion</i> , ghost Ftr5	8
1-15B	21	T	Amber stasis field trap Ungol dust trap	7
1-16A	22	T	Pit trap with scythes	5
1-16B	22	T	Pit trap with scythes	5
1-17A	22	C	Spectres (3)	11
1-18	24	T	Seal traps (3)	10
1-19B	25	C	Skeletal guards War1 (25)	9

Loc	Pg	Type	Encounter	EL
1-20	25	T	Basic arrow trap Pit trap	5
1-21	26	T	Crushing ceiling/floor trap	10
1-22	26	T	Pit trap Poison needle trap (3)	9
1-23A	27	T	Teleportation trap	3
1-24	28	T	<i>Chain lightning</i> trap <i>Dimensional anchor</i> trap Pit trap with scythes	8
1-25A	28	T	Amber stasis field trap Ungol dust trap	7
1-26	29	C	Amber golem <i>Srihoz</i> , vampire Wiz11 <i>Ghoul touch</i> trap	14

Scaling Information

The Dread Crypt of Srihoz is intended for four to six characters of 9th to 11th level, but it can be modified for parties of different sizes or levels. The adventure is more suitable when scaled up than down, since lower level parties are unlikely to have the resources to escape some of the most vicious traps in the crypt. Consider adapting the adventure as follows:

Weaker Parties (level 8 or lower, or three or fewer PCs): Remove the vampire blooms from area 1-2. Reduce the amount of preparation allowed for the vampire aboleth and Srihoz. Make Srihoz a lower-level wizard (perhaps 8th or 9th level). Remove three of the pit traps with scythe blades throughout the halls. Remove one spectre from area 1-17A, and remove the amber stasis field traps from the false doors.

Stronger Parties (level 12 or higher, or seven or more PCs): Place three phantom fungus in area 1-2. Double the number of spectres in area 1-17A, and give the skeletons in area 1-19B three additional levels in the warrior class. Make the false door traps *prismatic spray* traps (caster level 13, Will save) instead of ungol dust traps. The water in areas 1-4, 1-6, and 1-8B applies *bestow curse* (caster level 13, randomly roll for ability which receives -6, Will save DC 19) in addition to the diseases when touched to bare skin – no injury required. Add two wizard levels to Srihoz.

Getting the Players Involved

Srihoz was a well-known tyrant in his day, so it is possible for his name and current location to come up in any history of the area, which may help tie this adventure into the rest of your campaign. However, the most likely way for the characters to discover Srihoz is from his active network of recruiters.

Srihoz has many servants among civilized lands with whom he communicates when he returns from his astral travels eager to feed. These agents spread the word of Srihoz's wealth and lure adventurers to try their luck in the crypt. Successful recruiters are rewarded for their efforts with magic, treasure, and the favor of their powerful master.

Recruiters try to blend into the society in which they live, and most of the time they are normal citizens of their town, city, or village. However, any attempt to discern their alignment will show them to be evil. If they are captured and forced to speak, they will admit that Srihoz communicates with them and tells them to spread the word of his riches and glory so that others will know his power. This is, in fact, how Srihoz explains the work to the recruiters. They will insist that the crypt is exactly where they claim it is, and they may even have supporting evidence such as ancient but vague texts about Srihoz which they view as a sort of scripture.

Here are examples of cover stories Srihoz's recruiters might use:

- **Balti the Sage:** Balti is a historian who has done extensive research about the history of the region. The characters may need to consult a historian to help with an adventure, and in the process of supplying them with the information they need he might drop a few obvious hints about Srihoz's crypt and the wealth it contains.
- **Diann the Bard:** Diann sings dirges and ballads from the time of Srihoz's rule at pubs adventurers are known to frequent. During her act she mentions the crypt and that many have tried, but no one has yet taken the treasure. If she sees someone take interest, she approaches them after her act, ostensibly to ask them about their travels, but in reality she hopes to convince them to pillage the tomb for themselves.
- **Ger the Fighter:** He will find the characters while working on another job, perhaps as a bodyguard or as part of a military organization. He gets into a session of sharing a laugh over war stories with the characters, but toward the end of the night he gets very serious and tells of a crypt full of treasure that he and his party were unable to plunder. He was the only one to escape alive, but he talks about the wealth inside with awe, and wishes he could have taken just a small part of it with him. After seeing all his friends killed, however, he has abandoned the adventuring lifestyle and taken more stable work, and refuses to travel with the characters. However, he will tell them how to get to the crypt.
- **The Last Villain:** When the characters approach the main villain in the adventure just prior to this

one, that villain may be a recruiter for Srihoz. He can attempt to bargain with the characters, telling them of a crypt full of riches. He offers to trade them the location of the crypt in exchange for his life.

Remember, most of the time these recruiters are working at normal jobs, so in a way their cover is real. However, because of their evil natures, it may be possible for the characters to use Gather Information or magic to determine that something is not quite right with these people.

Background Story

Srihoz is a vampire, and for seven centuries he has plagued the earth with his undeath. He was not always so. Born Heironeous Uliran Theophal, he stood as the scion of an ancient family with a long, noble lineage but a dwindling fortune. Traveling in distant, wild lands seeking a new source of wealth for his family, the young and impetuous Heironeous became obsessed with the study of arcane magics unknown or forgotten in his homeland. Inevitably wanderlust struck again, and he traveled even further afield to dark and unknown lands. For over ten years his family had no news of him, fearing the worst.

Then, as fall died into another bleak winter, a massive horde erupted without warning from the northern steppes – and leading the western army “pincer” was Heironeous. He was now possessed of a ferocious magic power of his own, and wielding a terrible sword with a black blade that had already carved out many dark legends in the north. Some said it once belonged to a cruel demigod who died eons ago in the last of the great wars between the gods. The sword was supposed to have disappeared, to the relief of the civilized world – but now here it was, in the hands of another conqueror possessing power beyond that of mortals, wielding the black blade of destruction.

The barbarians swept through the north like a terrible scythe, laying low armies revered for their prowess in battle, and kingdoms proud were now scattered like leaves in the winter wind. Lord Theophal’s army seemed to be driven by a madness and fear that turned them into slaving beasts on the battlefield, and none could withstand them. When his thirst for battle and conquest had finally been slaked, Heironeous, now in



his sixties yet still hale and young-looking, returned to his family estates. His reception was chilly, however, for the Lord had embarrassed the family when his barbarian army crushed kingdoms and principalities belonging to distant family members and friends. There was also the question of his seeming perpetual youth – it wasn’t right, it seemed “unholy.” *It wasn’t natural.* Other men were born, grew old and died, while Heironeous seemed to age slower than the earth itself. Whispers spoke of the living dead and nosferatu. Where had the fellow actually gone during his thirty years’ absence? What sort of ghastly magics had he learned? What traps had been laid to ensnare his soul?

Soon, Lord Theophal found life in his homeland untenable, and he made a long-prepared retreat to his castle in the wastes to the north, where he openly revealed his status as a vampire of terrible power. He took the name Srihoz, which had some nefarious meaning in the now forgotten guttural languages of his barbarian soldiers. He kept servants in great numbers, including a small army to protect his lands, in a dreary landscape of death and emptiness.

After six centuries Srihoz had tired of this world. He made preparations for the secure interment of his corporeal form, while ordering his servants to craft a great underground crypt in the cliffs that hung over the pounding surf of the icy northern seas. Word was kept quiet as to its exact location, which Srihoz ensured by slaughtering all his servants. The mountain of corpses was buried in a vast catacomb which had already been carved out of the earth centuries ago, part of a series of underground dwellings from a long-vanished civilization. This black crime sealed his pact with the powers of darkness, and the last shreds of his humanity vanished. Then he sealed his doors and lay down into a long sleep, traveling in ethereal form through many planes while his body slept in the utter blackness and silence of his crypt. At times he returned, sending out his undead servants to fetch victims to feed his foul appetites. Srihoz filled the halls and chambers of his complex with his evil and hideousness, and devised cruel traps to slay the inevitable adventurers who would, in time, learn of the crypt and come seeking to rob him of his treasure. He made a hideous game of watching the ghastly suffering of the intruders, adding them to his army of the undead.

In a withered and weakened world, whose greatest warriors now lie in corruption in the earth or beneath the waves, whose magic is diluted by bickering and the experiments of fools, who can now stand against the horrid blackness of Srihoz? Who dares match himself against the awesome power of the vampire, whose magic is culled from the archaic bones of a mysterious culture long steeped in death and slaughter?

Who indeed.

Player Beginning

The trail emerged from the forest miles ago and now traces through the rocky tundra that borders the sea-side cliffs in this region. A lacework of frost covers the sparse vegetation. The ground is only visible where it rises into ridges, as the gullies and flat areas are covered by a current of blowing ice crystals, a kind of low, frozen fog that rises to your ankles, like snow driven on the ceaseless wind.

The path dips over the edge of the cliff and takes you along a ledge over the storm-battered shore of the icy sea. The eternally damp rock is covered in places by a sickly film of grey moss and lichen. The wet, frigid wind

cuts through your clothes and the waves below crash with seeming hostility into the sharp rocks that line the base of the cliff. It is a thoroughly inhospitable and miserable place.

Exactly as described to you, the path ends in a ten-foot-wide ledge that stands before a large stone door inset into the cliff. With the wind, frost, and sea spray it is impossible to say how long it has been since this door was opened last, but clearly it could not have been within the last few weeks. The door is covered with moss and ice, and there is some kind of worn carving partially visible.

The Dread Crypt of Srihoz

Srihoz's workers widened existing passages and cracks where they could, but the bulk of this complex was carved out of the solid rock of the cliff. It extends well under the surface tundra. Although the passages slope slightly downhill as they move away from the entrance, it would take a skilled surveyor or a bag of marbles to discern the subtle grade.

For all practical purposes, the crypt occupies a single level. From the entrance to the farthest point of the dungeon is 265 feet. Although there is a great deal of variation throughout, the crypt is a compact resting place for someone of Srihoz's magical abilities and historic political power.

The air is still and damp, and the smell of rot, fungus, and disease is everywhere, though most intense right around the lair of the aboleth in area 1-6. No daylight enters the crypt when the door is shut, and there are no potential light sources in the dungeon (such as lanterns or torches) except where noted.

The passages are straight and were clearly designed and built with great care, though tiny stalactites and stalagmites are already forming on the ceiling and floors. The ceiling of the passages is arched, coming to a gothic point some ten feet above the floor. The walls are hewn stone covered in a layer of crumbling plaster which once held frescos telling the story of Srihoz's glory. The characters can tell what the intent of the plaster must have been, but the colors have faded and much of the plaster has flaked onto the floors, making the details of these images illegible except where noted. Attentive characters will notice (Spot DC 10) that wherever any real color is visible, a reddish amber hue is the predominant theme.

Note from the map that there are not many places where chambers are actually adjacent to each other –

most often solid stone extends for five to ten feet between chambers. Walls around doors or those built to separate two areas are masonry covered in the same style of frescos, but the plaster is so badly damaged it is obvious to anyone that the material underneath is different. The crumbling plaster also makes Climb checks more difficult, as pieces of it will come off the wall with the slightest pressure.

Masonry Wall with Crumbling Plaster Around Doors and Between Adjacent Chambers: 1 ft. thick; hardness 8; hp 90; Break DC 35; Climb DC 25.

Hewn Stone Wall: 5 ft. thick (at least); hardness 8; hp 900 (per 5 ft. thickness); Break DC 65; Climb DC 30.

Black Alder and Oak Door Braced with Decorative Metals: 2 in. thick; hardness 5; hp 20; break DC 23 (stuck), 25 (locked).

Areas of the Map

Area 1-1 – Entrance to Srihoz's Crypt: Read or paraphrase the following:

Beneath an outcropping in a moss-filled crevice, a massive stone door can be seen. Little has been done to hide it. It is eight feet across and ten feet high, with a single worn symbol in its center. There is an inch-wide hole in the door half-filled with ice, clearly meant for some kind of key.

A successful DC 12 Survival or Knowledge (nature) check will determine that there should be numerous seabirds nesting in cliffs like these, but the entire cliff face is unnaturally still. Once this information is revealed, a DC 15 Knowledge (religion) or Knowledge (nature) check will determine that a lack of healthy animal life is a sign of a deep-rooted evil,

a taint that takes centuries to infect an area.

If the characters clear away the encrustation from the door, they find two clearly distinct sets of writing. One is in an ancient and obscure northern tongue that requires a DC 20 Decipher Script check. The other is much more recent, and requires only a DC 5 check to read.

The oldest writing says:

Herein rests Srihoz, the ancient and terrible king. He mastered the ancient magic of the wild East, and thus he conquered our world, and now his conquests continue in other worlds beyond imagining. Any who would interrupt his rest, beware! He will conquer you in turn.

The more recent carving says:

Srihoz the Bloody is a murderer, a blasphemer, and a liar. His treasure merely lures you here so he might feed. Leave this place and do not offer yourself to his dark, unquenchable thirst!

The image is Srihoz's symbol, which characters will see repeated throughout the crypt: an open hand extending from right to left, palm facing the viewer. When it is in color it is amber-hued and threaded in blood, but here it is simply the image of a hand.

The door is locked and half-frozen in place by rime and encrustation that has built up around its edges. Opening the door by means of the lock mechanism requires a DC 35 Open Locks check. It is a standard, non-magical device that trips a series of weights that pull open the door, but when the characters investigate they will find the lock sealed with layers of ice. If they melt the ice before making the attempt, the DC lowers to 25, but the mechanism is deep in the rock and it would require a bonfire burning on the ledge for a couple of hours (itself quite a feat under the conditions!) or something equivalent to melt the ice.

If the mechanism is used, the door swings open across the ledge. Anyone standing in its path must make a DC 10 Reflex save to avoid being pushed off the ledge. A second Reflex save at the same DC determines whether the character can grab hold of the side of the ledge before plummeting to the rocks below.

A DC 35 Strength check is required to force it open without using the mechanism, and even then the door only opens in fits: each success opens the door five or six inches, grinding against the ground and its own ancient, rusty hinges. The door is six inches thick, has 80 hit points, and has a hardness of 8.

The tomb has not been penetrated in hundreds of years. The moment it is opened, a great blast of fetid, poisonous air escapes, and anyone within five feet of the door must succeed at a DC 10 Fortitude save or become nauseated for 2d6 rounds. Nauseated characters are unable to attack, cast spells, concentrate on spells, or do anything else requiring focus. The only action such a character can take is a single move action per turn. Anyone who was in the path of the door and makes their Reflex save avoids this blast of air as they dodge the door or get swept off the ledge.

Area 1-1A – The Entrance Hall (EL 5): Read or paraphrase the following:

The passage leading into the tomb is tall and narrow – about five feet across and ten feet high, coming to a point at the top in a finely worked gothic arch. Near the walls, the floor is covered in dust that crunches when you walk on it. The walls are comprised of excellent masonry, covered in places by plaster that has been flaking away for centuries to create the sediment along the bottom of the walls. The plaster has some pigment left in it, but not enough to make out the images once painted there. Between the fading and chipping of these frescos, you can't be certain what the subject was, but the overall impression is of a great pictographic history.

The characters may search this area. If they do, there are two items to find: the first is the pit trap directly in front of them with a DC 20 Search check, and the second is the portcullis over their heads with a DC 25 Search check. The trigger for the portcullis is nowhere to be found, as Srihoz has the triggers for this and several other doors in his crypt.

Development: Once all the PCs have moved past the portcullis it shuts behind them. A character within five feet of the falling door can attempt to dive to the other side of the portcullis with a DC 15 Tumble or Dexterity check. Missing the check by more than 5 means the spiked bottom of the gate falls on the character, who receives 2d4+3 piercing damage and becomes pinned beneath the portcullis. The door does not rise again – anyone who made it through to the other side must now find a way to rejoin the group or give up and go home.

The pit trap five feet in front of the portcullis is masterfully designed and built: The trapdoor rests on a center axis hinge, which swings downward after a full second when any weight over 20 pounds has been placed on it, dumping the victim 40 feet down. At the bottom of the pit is pressure plate which, when struck, activates four scything blades which

fill the entire bottom of the pit, from the plate and eight feet upwards.

Scrying Stone: When anyone passes through this area it activates a scrying stone, which is a small amber stone embedded in the masonry, hidden in the remains of the plaster. A DC 20 Search check is required to find the stone. It has a hardness of 5 and 10 hit points, so it is fairly easy to destroy. So long as it remains, Srihoz has the option of observing those moving through this area as per the spell *scrying*, but he needs no material components and can do this from any location as a free action. While using the scrying stone, Srihoz is unaware of his immediate surroundings. Identifying the purpose of the stone requires a DC 20 Spellcraft check.

Portcullis, Iron: 2 in. thick; hardness 10; hp 60; break DC 28 (stuck), 28 (locked); lift DC 25.

Pit Trap: CR 2; mechanical, location trigger; manual reset; DC 20 Reflex save avoids; 40 ft. deep (4d6, fall); Search DC 20; Disable Device DC 20.

Pit Scythe Trap: CR 4; mechanical; location trigger; automatic reset; Atk +20 melee (2d4+8/x4, scythe); Search DC 21; Disable Device DC 18.

Area 1-2 – The Garden of Vileness (EL 8): Read or paraphrase the following:

This unpleasant chamber is clearly a garden of some kind, but the almost complete lack of light begs the question: a garden of what? Bathed in the hideous glow of a blackish-purple unlight, a ghastly tangle of withered plants runs along the walls and down the center of the room in stone plant boxes a few feet off the floor. Greasy-looking tentacles and vines hang from the edges and broad-leafed plants hang like fat strips of dead flesh above. Flowers the purple-pink color of a bruise act as ground cover in the central planter, though the area between the center and wall planters is covered in paving stones like the entrance passage. There is a sickly-sweet smell like rotting flesh in the air, and a palpable feeling of being watched.

As the characters enter the room, the stench of these plants combined with the foul air in this crypt requires another Fortitude check (DC 15). Characters that fail are nauseated for 2d4 rounds.

The source of the unlight is uncertain; it's just a gloom cast by Srihoz for the sake of his dear little garden.

Development: Once the characters are in the room, the plants are capable of noticing their movements. The plants on the walls are harmless, if dis-

gusting and bizarre. The center planter, however, contains two assassin vines plus a cover of vampire blooms and a place for a phantom fungus. These creatures live in a symbiotic relationship. The vampiric blooms are a variety of Srihoz' design, and live on blood rather than water. The assassin vines prefer soil nourished by decaying flesh, and the phantom fungus also feeds on flesh. These creatures are not consciously working together, but due to their arrangement they form an effective combination.

In the middle of the central planter, concealed by foliage (Search DC 10), is a lever. There is nothing to indicate its purpose, but it will open the door that seals the characters inside area 1-3. If it is used before the trap is sprung it will have no effect. There is also a crack about two inches wide and five inches long that extends through the eastern wall into area 1-3, but it is also covered by foliage and a Search (DC 30) is required to notice that it is anything more than a defect in the masonry.

Tactics: The phantom fungus moves invisibly around the room. It charges the character closest to it and attempts to bull rush her into the central planter. If the fungus has surprised the victim, there is no attack of opportunity by the defender. After this, the other plants are made aware of the characters. The two assassin vines attempt to grapple the PCs, and any PCs that are dropped are then tripped or grappled by the vampire blooms.

Assassin Vines (2): CR 3; Large plant; HD 4d8+12; hp 30 each; Init +0; Spd 5 ft.; AC 15, touch 9, flat-footed 15; Base Atk +3; Grp +12; Atk/Full Atk Slam +7 melee (1d6+7); Space/Reach 10 ft./10 ft.; SA Constrict 1d6+7, entangle, improved grab; SQ Blindsight 30 ft., camouflage, immunity to electricity, low-light vision, plant traits, resistance to cold 10 and fire 10; AL N; SV Fort +7, Ref +1, Will +2; Str 20, Dex 10, Con 16, Int –, Wis 13, Cha 9.

Constrict: With a successful grapple check, the assassin vine does 1d6+7 damage.

Entangle: Animate plants within 30 feet as free action as the spell *entangle*.

Camouflage: To notice the vine before it attacks requires a DC 20 Spot check, Survival, Knowledge (Nature), or Dwarven stonecunning can be used instead of Spot.

Phantom Fungus: CR 3; Medium plant; HD 2d8+6; hp 20; Init +0; Spd. 20 ft.; AC 14, touch 10, flat-footed 14; Base Atk +1; Grp +3; Atk/Full Atk Bite +3 melee (1d6+3); SQ Low-light vision, plant traits, greater invisibility; AL N; SV Fort +6, Ref +0, Will +0; Str 14, Dex 10, Con 16, Int 2, Wis 11, Cha 9.

Skills and Feats: Listen +4, Move Silently +6,



Spot +4; Alertness.

Greater Invisibility: Invisible even when attacking as the spell *greater invisibility* cast by a 12th level caster; not subject to *invisibility purge*; visible again 1 minute after death.

Vampiric Blooms (2): CR 2; Large plant swarm; HD 3d8+6; hp 19 each; Init +2; Spd. –; AC 12, touch 11, flat-footed 10; Base Atk +2; Grp +11; Atk/Full Atk Swarm +4 melee (1d6+2, half against standing targets) or barbs +4 ranged (1d4 plus poison); SA Improved grab, lacerate, SQ Blindsight 20 ft., camouflage, low-light vision, low reach, plant traits, swarm traits; AL N; SV Fort +6, Ref +0, Will +0; Str 14, Dex 14, Con 14, Int –, Wis 11, Cha 9.

Improved Trip: After a hit with swarm attack the vampiric blooms can start a trip attack as a free action without provoking an attack of opportunity and gets +4 in trip check (against medium targets +10 total bonus).

Lacerate: With a successful grapple check on a sitting or prone character, vampiric blooms use thorny branches to cause bleeding (Fort DC 12, 1d4 Con damage).

Poison: Injury, Fort DC 12, initial damage 1d4 Str, secondary damage sleep.

Low Reach: Since they can reach only a foot higher than the ground, while their target is standing among them the vampiric blooms only do half melee damage, but gain the full amount against a target which is sitting or prone in their midst.

Area 1-2A – The Damp Passage (EL 5): Read or paraphrase the following:

This 20-foot passage is damp, and the sound of tiny waves lapping at stone can be heard from the opposite side.

Two of the same traps that were found in area 1-1A have been placed in this passage.

Pit Trap: CR 2; mechanical, location trigger; manual reset; DC 20 Reflex save avoids; 40 ft. deep (4d6, fall); Search DC 20; Disable Device DC 20.

Pit Scythe Trap: CR 4; mechanical; location trigger; automatic reset; Atk +20 melee (2d4+8/x4, scythe); Search DC 21; Disable Device DC 18.

Area 1-3 – Frozen Stiffs (EL 5): Read or paraphrase the following:

Upon entering this T-shaped chamber the first and only thing to notice is the massive round seal mounted on the opposite wall, set in a wide recess. The seal is burnished bronze and quite intricate and beautiful, with several lines of graceful writing running in opposing directions around it. The letters are painted in a rich amber color. In its center is the open-hand symbol found on the door outside. Many of the stones in the walls and floors are cracked and in some places split wide open.

The seal would not be worth much except perhaps 300 gp to a historian or collector.

There is a 2x5 inch hole in the western wall that leads to the wall crack area 1-2; this can be discovered with a DC 30 Search check. This space, and others like it, are used by Srihoz to navigate his crypt in gaseous form.

Ten feet before the door to this room, the presence of a door that can slide down to block the entrance passage can be discovered with a DC 17 Search check. It is held open by *hold portal* cast by an 11th level wizard.

Reading the lettering on the seal requires a DC 20 Decipher Script check. It says:

He who would take power must be cold, dispassionate, and merciless.

Something about the way it is written suggests it is a passage from scripture, and it is – Srihoz's life story that he distributes to his recruiters mentions this and other advice to those who would be tyrants.

Development: As soon as at least 4 medium-sized warm-blooded creatures are inside the room (not the passage, but inside the room itself), a careful

spell crafted by Srihoz detects the rise in room temperature and instantly sets in motion the following chain of events:

- *Hold portal* on the sliding door is terminated. The 10-inch-thick stone door crashes shut in the corridor ten feet back from the entrance to the room. Anyone within 10 feet of the door can attempt a DC 25 Tumble or Dex check to get outside, but if they miss by more than 5 they receive 9d6 damage and are pinned beneath the huge stone door. The door weighs about 1,800 pounds and requires a DC 35 Str check to lift. Once the door has hit the floor, there is no way to get fingers beneath the door, and its weight bends swords or any thin metal improvised prying tools. A crowbar or similarly appropriate tool with a DC 30 Str check can get enough room to get fingers beneath the door, but if the result misses by 10 or more then those making the attempt get their fingers crushed as the crowbar slips out. They take 2d6 damage and have a -6 penalty to any attacks or checks involving their hands for 2d6 rounds.
- Shortly after the door closes, the seal begins to glow with a dim, blue-white light and the temperature begins to drop. Every 2 rounds the temperature drops 10°, from a starting point of 60° Fahrenheit. Within 2 minutes, the temperature has dropped to -40°, and it continues to drop until it has reached -120° just before the fourth minute. When the temperature reaches 0°, the characters must make a DC 16 Fort save or take 1d6 points of nonlethal damage. Once the temperature drops below -20° the characters take 1d6 lethal cold damage with no save and must make a DC 17 Fort save to avoid 1d4 nonlethal damage. Each minute the check must be made again and the DC increases by 1 point each time. This spell is a modification of *freezing sphere*, and the seal contains a sixth level evocation spell cast by an 11th level wizard.
- Any magical or mundane fires are immediately extinguished once the spell begins, and they cannot be rekindled. Any spells, spell-like abilities, mundane alchemical tricks, or magic items which directly create warmth of any kind fail for the duration of the spell, with no save.

Anyone who receives nonlethal damage is experiencing hypothermia and can be considered fatigued. A DC 15 Survival check can be used to give a +2 bonus to the Fort save, and for each point over 15 on the result the character can extend this bonus to one additional character – so a result of 20 would give a +2 to the character and five other characters.

Thick Granite Door: 10 in. thick; hardness 8; hp 150; break DC 35 (locked).

Area 1-4 – The Pet’s Larder (EL 3): Read or paraphrase the following:

A roughly-hewn passage slopes gently downward. By the time you reach a small, crude chamber, you are standing in a foot of greasy, stagnant water that smells rather like raw sewage. It is also icy cold. Three barrels stand in the corner on a platform that has kept them dry, their lids still securely fastened by the look of it.

This area holds the remains of food that once fed the undead aboleth in area 1-6.

The water is filled with disease. A DC 14 Heal, Survival, or Knowledge (nature) check can determine that the water is unsafe, not only to drink, but would probably also cause infection if a wounded body part comes in contact with it. The water contains filth fever, blinding sickness, and red ache. Any character who takes a wound on part of their body that is in contact with the water, and has not treated their wounds with the Heal skill or healing magic, must save against all three diseases. Drinking the water requires a Fort save against only blinding sickness.

Development: Should the PCs open a barrel, the powdered remnants of the vile food will immediately be released into the air. This area is so full of disease that the spoiling food has taken on unexpectedly poisonous qualities. Everyone within 15 feet of any barrel when it is opened is exposed to the poison. Aside from this strange toxin, there is nothing in the barrels or the room of interest. If the characters have Craft (alchemy) or Craft (cooking) they can attempt a DC 15 check to see what this substance is. If someone wants to collect the toxin, there are approximately 20 doses per barrel.

Spoiled Food Poison: Inhaled; Fort DC 15; 2d6 initial damage; 1d6 Con secondary damage; 300 gp.

Blinding Sickness: Ingested; Fort DC 16; 1d3 days incubation; 1d4 Str damage; every time character receives 2 or more points of damage from the disease he must make another Fort save or be permanently blinded.

Filth Fever: Injury; Fort DC 12; 1d3 days incubation; 1d3 Dex, 1d3 Con damage.

Red Ache: Injury; Fort DC 15; 1d3 days incubation; 1d6 Str damage.

Area 1-5 – False Door (EL 7): The east door is, except where otherwise noted, identical to all other doors in the crypt, but there is a surprise: the door opens to a small niche about two feet in depth, which is meant to deceive anyone peeking beneath the door. When opened a trap is sprung. The person opening the door is stuck within an amber stasis field, which allows him to be stored for later consumption by Srihoz. Anyone else is affected by the dust trap which is also triggered by the door opening. The traps are distinct and must be discovered and disabled separately.

Additionally, when the dust trap is triggered the first seal in area 1-18 is activated. With a DC 15 Listen check characters can tell that there is some activity in another part of the dungeon after the trap was sprung. If the ungol dust trap is disabled, this secondary effect is also nullified.

The door to the north is locked from the opposite side, but can be opened from area 1-7A.

Amber Stasis Field Trap: CR 4; spell; spell trigger; automatic reset; spell effect (amber stasis field as per *sepia snake sigil*, 5th-level wizard, DC 14 Reflex save negates); Search DC 32, Disable Device DC 28.

Ungol Dust Trap: CR 5; mechanical; location trigger; manual reset; gas; multiple targets (all targets in a 20-ft.-by-5-ft. corridor); never miss; poison (ungol dust, DC 15 Fortitude save resists, 1 Cha temporary/1d6 Cha temporary plus 1 Cha permanent drain); Search DC 24; Disable Device DC 16.

Area 1-6 – The Pool of the Aboleth (EL 11): Read or paraphrase the following:

This massive room has a vaulted ceiling, running up in graceful arches from each corner. Ornately carved ribs extend to every wall. A hypnotic pattern of glittering light dances over the ceiling, reflecting from the water below. The water fills the entire room to about five feet below the four main doors that occupy the cardinal positions. The water smells fetid but not stagnant, an almost refreshing odor considering the sickening poison in the “garden room” and the passages. The water is an impenetrable inky black. There is no sound other than the slight gurgling of the waters.

This pool was made for Srihoz’s dear pet, an aboleth. The beast has long since departed from the mortal world, and is now an undead aboleth, a fearsome guardian. The constant presence of this unnatural beast has polluted the water, filling it with disease. The water contains filth fever, blinding

sickness, and red ache. It is the same water that fills areas 1-4 and 1-8B. Any wound taken inside the water, or any wounds that have been exposed to the water before treatment with magic or the Heal skill, require a save against all three, while drinking or breathing the water requires only a save against the blinding sickness. A DC 14 Heal, Survival, or Knowledge (nature) check can determine that the water is unsafe.

Development: The aboleth lies in wait for the characters, probably having heard them making an entrance from the previous rooms. With a +25 to its Listen check, the vampire aboleth can hear an unarmored person walking 150 feet away with a roll of 1. If the PCs set off a trap or battled the plants in area 1-2, the aboleth has warning they are coming. The only way to avoid warning the aboleth is for the characters to successfully use Move Silently in a contested roll against the aboleth’s Listen skill from the moment they enter the dungeon.

If the aboleth is surprised, the water is merely murky and an iron bridge is visible. You can read or paraphrase the following:

An iron bridge in the shape of a cross extends to a door in the midst of each wall. It is somewhat rusty, but looks sound enough. The bridge has no railings and the water can be seen through the gratings five feet below.

The sections of the cross-shaped bridge marked with an X on the map are missing and the aboleth is floating near the surface, obscured a bit by the murky water but visible with a DC 10 Spot check.

If, as is more likely, the aboleth has warning and time to prepare, it performs the following actions each round until its preparations are interrupted by the characters, or until it finishes this series of actions:

Round 1: Use *illusory wall* to mask the missing sections of the bridge so they appear to be solid. If a character who moves onto this area fails a DC 20 Will save then they fall into the water and automatically fail their Swim check this round. A character who makes the Will save will be able to make a DC 12 Reflex save to avoid falling in.

Round 2: Summon 1d6 large squid. The squids will immediately use their ink to cloud the water and hide the aboleth. Hiding the aboleth takes four uses of the ink ability, which can be done by four squids or one squid over four rounds. The squids then take positions under the bridge, sinking into the water. The water is pitch black and nothing can be seen inside the inky water for one hour.

Round 3: The aboleth sinks to the bottom of the pool about 30 feet down, letting the squids make the first attack while it sits in relative safety.

Round 4: The aboleth uses *mirage arcane* to make the bridge entirely invisible. The description at the beginning of this entry assumes that the aboleth has had four rounds to prepare – which will almost always be the case. The idea is the characters will first attempt to see through the invisibility of the bridge; once they've overcome this, they will not think to look for the missing section of bridge. Anyone attempting to jump into the water in the area where the bridge is hidden gets the DC 20 Will save against the illusion, and if he succeeds he stands on the bridge. If he fails, he stumbles and must make a DC 15 Reflex save to avoid falling into the water. If he falls, he automatically fails his Swim check.

Tactics: If possible, the squid are the first attackers. If they succeed in a grapple check they can damage the character with their beaks and force any grappled character to make the Fort saves for all three diseases. They use the cover of the bridge to prevent any ranged attacks. They are intended to be distractions and were most useful to the aboleth for their ink – any other damage they are able to do or spells they are able to draw away from the aboleth is merely a bonus.

While the characters are engaged with the squid, the aboleth uses *project image* to send a version of itself to the surface. The image sits just at the surface and tries to enslave whoever appears to be the strongest character. It takes a DC 15 Spot check to see the image of the aboleth while in battle, or DC 10 if not in battle or otherwise distracted. If the char-

Aquatic Combat

You will want to remember the following important factors about this aquatic combat.

- A DC 10 swim check is sufficient to stay on the surface – every round the character fails this check they are drowning, and if they stay underwater for as many rounds as their Con they are drowning.
- This murky water allows only 20 ft. of visibility without the squid ink, so the aboleth cannot be seen 30 ft. below on the bottom of the pool unless someone moves within 20 feet of it. The squid ink extends to about 10 ft. below the surface.
- Any creature swimming at the surface of the water gets a +8 AC bonus and +4 bonus to Reflex saves from attacks from opponents not in the water. Thrown weapons are useless against creatures underwater, and other ranged attacks take a -2 penalty for every 5 ft. of water they must pass through.
- While underwater all creatures, even those with a swim speed, have a -2 to attacks and half damage with slashing or bludgeoning attacks. This includes the aboleth's slam attack and the squids' attack to begin grapple, but not the damage from the squids' mouths or any supernatural effects of the aboleth's attack.
- Anyone with firm footing in water at least chest deep, as in the passage from area 1-4 or at the bottom of the pool, moves at half speed and has the same attack penalties mentioned above for slashing or bludgeoning attacks.
- A creature without a swim speed that does not have firm footing, as in any area in the pool itself, must make a DC 10 Swim check. Success means the penalties listed above, plus the ability to move one quarter of its move as a move action or one half of its move as a full round action. Failure means the character cannot move and loses her Dex bonus to AC, and opponents get an additional +2 on attacks against her.
- Getting out of this water can be tricky. The passage to area 1-4 is easy to get into and requires merely the ability to move into it. The aboleth cannot follow the character easily in its normal form, although it can chase them as a bat. Climbing back onto the bridge is trickier. Getting up the five feet requires a DC 20 Jump or Swim check, and having over 5 ranks in one gives a +2 synergy bonus to the other. Success allows the characters to hang from the bridge. Pulling themselves up onto the bridge requires a DC 10 Climb check. The entire process is a full round action. If the character moves to the bridge first, they do not have time to pull themselves up, so as usual when climbing the characters lose their Dex bonus to AC.
- Any characters who attempt to climb onto an area of the bridge that is merely an illusion gets a Will save. If they fail they fall back into the water and if they do not have a swim speed, they automatically fail their Swim check for that round. If they succeed, they can make their Swim check normally because they discover the bridge is false before they commit their weight to it.

acter is enslaved, she attempts to push the other characters off the bridge.

The aboleth's goal is to get everyone into the water. It ignores those who are engaged by the squid, but if anyone falls in the water and is not engaged it leaves the image idle and rises up to attack the character from below. If the squid ink was used the water is clear 10 feet below the surface, but no light passes through the ink. The aboleth attempts to grapple the character, pulling him underwater and keeping the grapple in place until the combination of drowning, energy drain, and blood loss kills the character. It has four tentacles and is willing to use them all – once it has begun its attack it tries to place itself in a position where it won't have to move should a second character become available to grab.

The aboleth may also sow confusion by using *veil* to disguise all the characters as evil creatures and then using *project image* to create the illusion of other attackers. *Hypnotic pattern* would also be useful for reducing the number of opponents actively engaged in the battle if the aboleth decides to emerge.

Once the aboleth feels it has the upper hand, or once all the squid have been killed and the party looks like they may move on, it rises partially out of the water to press the attack. If the party appears interested in fleeing it creates the illusion of doors slamming shut with *mirage arcane*. It then attempts to win the situation by brute force, occasionally trying to create more distractions with its psionics or enslave abilities.

If it is down to 0 hit points the aboleth dives into the water, assumes slime form, and sinks to the bottom of the pool where it settles in the muck in solid form. If the characters can find it and stake it, they can kill it forever. The image duplicate disappears. If left alone the aboleth returns to full strength after one hour and one minute.

Vampire Aboleth: CR 11; Huge undead aberration (aquatic); HD 8d12; hp 52; Init +7; Spd. 20 ft., swim 60 ft.; AC 18, touch 11, flat-footed 15; Base Atk +6; Grp +25; Atk Tentacle +15 melee (2d6+11 plus slime); Full Atk 4 tentacles +15 melee (2d6+11 plus slime); Space/Reach 15 ft./10 ft.; SA Blood drain, children of the aquatic endless night, create spawn, dominate, enslave, energy drain, psionics, slime; SQ Alternate form, aquatic subtype, damage reduction 10/silver, darkvision 60 ft., fast healing 5, slime form, mucus cloud, resistance to cold 10 and electricity 10, spry tentacles, turn resistance +4, undead traits, vampire traits; AL LE; SV Fort +7, Ref +5, Will +11; Str 32, Dex 16, Con –, Int 17, Wis 19, Cha 21.

Skills and Feats: Bluff +14, Concentration +11, Hide +11, Knowledge (arcana) +14, Listen +25, Move Silently +8, Search +11, Sense Motive +9, Spot +25, Swim +11; Alertness, Combat Casting, Combat Reflexes, Dodge, Improved Initiative, Iron Will, Lightning Reflexes.

Drain Blood: Any time the aboleth vampire successfully grapples with a tentacle it deals 1d4 points of Con drain each round the pin is maintained and gains 5 hit points for itself.

Children of the Aquatic Endless Night: Once per day the vampire aboleth can summon 1d4 bat swarms, 1d6 large squid, or 1d6 medium sharks as a standard action.

Create Spawn: Any aquatic creature killed by the vampire aboleth will rise again 1d4 days after death as a vampire spawn controlled by the vampire aboleth.

Energy Drain: Once per round, anyone hit by the vampire aboleth's tentacle attack gains two negative levels, giving the vampire aboleth 5 extra hit points (the tentacle attack is considered magical for the purpose of overcoming damage resistance).

Enslave: As a standard action, enslave one creature within 30 feet, Will save DC 19 (Cha-based DC) to avoid, same as *dominate person* at caster level 16.

Psionics: Cast the following spell-like abilities at will as level 16 Cha-based caster: *hypnotic pattern* (DC 17), *mirage arcane* (DC 20), *persistent image* (DC 20), *programmed image* (DC 21), *project image* (DC 21), *veil* (DC 22).

Slime: Targets must make a DC 14 Fort (Con-based) or transform in 1d4+1 minutes to require water; every 10 minutes must be moistened or take 1d12 points of damage; reduced natural armor bonus by 1 (not below 0).

Alternate Form: The vampire aboleth may take the form of a bat, dire bat, shark, or dire shark as a standard action, losing the tentacle attack, enslave, and psionic powers (though any activated before the change remain active for their duration) but gaining the natural attacks of that form.

Fast Healing: The vampire aboleth heals 5 damage each round so long as it has at least 1 hit point. If reduced to 0 it assumes slime form and descends to its burial muck underwater.

Mucus Cloud: Any creature breathing water within 1 foot of the aboleth must make a DC 19 Fort save or lose ability to breath air for 3 hours. Affected creature suffocates in 2d6 minutes if removed from the water.

Slime Form: As a standard action, the vampire aboleth can transform its body to become entirely composed of the slime that normally surrounds it, and although it cannot leave the water in this form in other regards it is treated as a creature in

gaseous form.

Spry Tentacles: A vampire aboleth can support itself with its tentacles on land much better than a living aboleth, giving it +10 movement, although it loses two tentacle attacks in a full round attack while those tentacles support it.

Summoned Large Squid (1d6): CR 2; Large animal (aquatic); HD 7d8; hp 24 each; Init +3; Spd. Swim 60 ft.; AC 18, touch 13, flat-footed 15; Base Atk +5; Grp +15; Atk arms +8 melee (0); Full Atk arms +8 melee (0) and bite +2 melee (1d8+5); Space/Reach 10 ft./10 ft.; SA Improved grab; SQ Ink cloud, jet, low-light vision; AL N; SV Fort +7, Ref +7, Will +3; Str 22, Dex 15, Con 15, Int 1, Wis 12, Cha 2.

Skills and Feats: Listen +7, Spot +7, Swim +14; Alertness, Endurance.

Ink cloud: A squid can emit a 10 ft. cube of ink in the water as a free action which provides total concealment.

Jet: Once per round as a full-round action a squid can jet backward in a straight line at a speed of 240 feet and avoids attacks of opportunity while doing so.

Blinding Sickness: Ingested; Fort DC 16; 1d3 days incubation; 1d4 Str damage; every time character receives 2 or more points of damage from the disease make another Fort save or be permanently blinded.

Filth Fever: Injury; Fort DC 12; 1d3 days incubation; 1d3 Dex, 1d3 Con damage.

Red Ache: Injury; Fort DC 15; 1d3 days incubation; 1d6 Str damage.

Area 1-7A – The Green Room (EL 4): Read or paraphrase the following:

You see what must have once been an impressive, comfortable room, at least if one were comfortable with such dreary colors and spectacularly evil, contorted furnishings. The grotesque remains of several chairs, couches and tables sit in various poses of decay, underneath rotting amber tapestries and several disintegrated rugs. A niche on the west wall contains a large bed behind more moldering curtains.

There is little of value or interest in this room, but there is no shortage of danger. The curtains that cover the bed niche are actually one entity: a mimic, which attacks the moment the curtains are touched. Spot checks are opposed by the mimic's Disguise check. If the characters move into area 1-7B then the mimic moves a bit closer and becomes a rolled-

up rug trying to get the characters' attention. If they leave without approaching it, the mimic resumes its place on the bed.

Mimic: CR 4; Large aberration (shapechanger); HD 7d8+21; hp 52; Init +1; Spd. 10 ft.; AC 15, touch 10, flat-footed 15; Base Atk +5; Grp +13; Atk slam +9 melee (1d8+4); Full Atk 2 slams +9 melee (1d8+4); Space/Reach 10 ft./10 ft.; SA Adhesive, crush; SQ Darkvision 60 ft., immunity to acid, mimic shape; AL N; SV Fort +5, Ref +5, Will +6; Str 19, Dex 12, Con 17, Int 10, Wis 13, Cha 10.

Skills and Feats: Climb +9, Disguise +13, Listen +8, Spot +8; Alertness, Lightning Reflexes, Weapon Focus (slam).

Adhesive: Successful slam attack results in automatic grapple; weapon striking mimic requires DC 16 Reflex save or becomes stuck, requiring DC 16 Strength check to remove. Strong alcohol dissolves the adhesive or it breaks down 5 rounds after the mimic's death.

Crush: 1d8+4 damage with successful grapple check.

Mimic shape: Mimic can take the shape of any object roughly 150 cubic feet. Spot check opposed by Disguise check to discern.

Area 1-7B – Storage Room: Read or paraphrase the following:

A ten-foot-long passage leads into this unadorned storage area. Three large rugs are rolled up and lean against the walls, and two exquisite tapestries hang from the north and south walls. Everything is, as far as you can tell, in nearly perfect condition, though it's no surprise since the air in here, while stuffy, is nowhere near as poisonous and dank as everywhere else you've been in this dungeon.

The door leading to this room forms a snug seal, and thus the room's contents were kept almost completely intact from the ravages of time and damp air that have so nearly destroyed the rest of the rugs and tapestries in Srihoz crypt. The tapestries are of excellent quality, and worth upwards of 300 gp each, but the rugs are the real prize. Supposing that they can be carried out of the dungeon at 500 pounds apiece, and the party lives to enjoy their haul, these rugs should fetch at least 1000 gp each in any fair market, and a large city market or a private collector might offer double that or more for each rug.

Area 1-8A – A Very Warm Welcome (EL 9): Read or paraphrase the following:

On the eastern end of this passage, barely visible in the torchlight, you can see a large sculp-



ture relief of a face. It is human and almost comical – its mouth is barely open in a half-grin and its two beady yellow eyes seem to gleam with a beckoning glow; jewels, perhaps. Two pairs of empty alcoves are placed along the sides of the corridor before the sculpture.

Thirty feet from the face is a magical trap, which triggers *mass suggestion* to indicate that the gems are even more valuable than they truly are. Once anyone is within 15 feet of the face, the lower jaw, which is hinged, clanks open and a huge maw belches forth three powerful rays of fire. Unlike the normal spell, these rays are not auto-targeting, but allow a Reflex save. Anyone examining any part of the corridor will notice the blackened lines that show something very hot was traced along the walls (Search DC 10).

Making the Reflex save means diving into an alcove, but these alcoves are also rigged with *suggestion* traps. Each trap is specialized to a certain type of character, though they trigger for anyone entering the alcove. For various reasons as described below, a character that fails a Will save for the suggestion will step out into the blast and not take a Reflex save.

The first alcove on the left is for clerics or paladins, and it causes characters that fail their Will save to place their faith in their deity – and thus step out into the fiery rays without taking a Reflex save. The second alcove is for wizards and sorcerers, who

step out into the fire to prove that it is not real. The third alcove, or the first on the right, is targeted to fighters and barbarians and encourages them to walk backward through the corridor. The fourth alcove is targeted toward rogues and bards, and encourages them to place their face right before the mouth to see how the trap works, which also negates their Reflex save.

Treasure: Two amber sculpted eyes worth 500 gp apiece.

Scorching Ray Trap: CR 7; spell; spell trigger; automatic reset (1 round delay); spell effect (*scorching ray*, 11th-level wizard, Reflex DC 15, 3 rays for 4d6 fire damage each); Search DC 28, Disable Device DC 24.

Suggestion Trap #1: CR 4; spell; spell trigger; automatic reset; spell effect (*suggestion*, 11th-level wizard, Will DC 17, -5 to Will save for characters who can cast divine spells, “My god will protect me.”); Search DC 24, Disable Device DC 24.

Suggestion Trap #2: CR 4; spell; spell trigger; automatic reset; spell effect (*suggestion*, 11th-level wizard, Will DC 17, -5 to Will save for characters who can cast arcane spells, “The fire is just an illusion.”); Search DC 24, Disable Device DC 24.

Suggestion Trap #3: CR 4; spell; spell trigger; automatic reset; spell effect (*suggestion*, 11th-level wizard, Will DC 17, -5 to Will save for characters with Int 10 or lower, “If I walk backward the fire won’t hurt me.”); Search DC 24, Disable Device DC 24.

Suggestion Trap #4: CR 4; spell; spell trigger; automatic reset; spell effect (*suggestion*, 11th-level wizard, Will DC 17, -5 to Will save for characters who got more than 8 skill points last level, “I should see how this trap works.”); Search DC 24, Disable Device DC 24.

Mass Suggestion Trap: CR 5; spell; spell trigger; automatic reset; spell effect (*suggestion*, 11th-level wizard, Will DC 21, “Those gems are priceless.”); Search DC 14, Disable Device DC 14.

Area 1-8B – Great Black Pit (EL 3): The door leading into this area is stuck and requires a DC 23 strength check to push open. Anyone participating in the effort must make a DC 12 Reflex save to avoid falling into the pit that comprises the room. The fall causes 2d6 damage. Once the door is open, read or paraphrase the following:

The moment you open the door you feel an emptiness ahead. A vast, deep pit stretches from the very threshold of this door to the threshold of another door at least 30 feet away.

It is approximately twenty feet deep, covered in uninterrupted masonry.

The bottom of the pit is not stone. It is steel, laid over with a sheet of stone tiles and mortar, so that even expert eyes could not detect that it is only a thin panel of stone with metal beneath. The steel panel, when struck, triggers four spouts (hidden behind stone covers that easily flip open) to belch forth the rank, poisonous water from area 1-6, filling the pit in 18 feet of water within 8 rounds. A few tiny drains and a siphon system empty it again and pipe the water back to area 1-6 within three days.

Anyone caught in the water finds it very difficult to stay above water while the pit fills up. A DC 20 Swim check is required to stay above water, and DC 25 is required to get back to the surface if the character gets pulled down. Any characters in the water with untreated wounds or who receives an injury in the water must make all three diseases Fort saves against infection.

Wretched Water Trap: CR 3; mechanical; location trigger; automatic reset; water; multiple targets (all targets in a 10-ft.-by-5-ft. pit); never miss; disease (see below); Search DC 20; Disable Device DC 20.

Blinding Sickness: Ingested; Fort DC 16; 1d3 days incubation; 1d4 Str damage; every time character receives 2 or more points of damage from the disease make another Fort save or be permanently blinded.

Filth Fever: Injury; Fort DC 12; 1d3 days incubation; 1d3 Dex, 1d3 Con damage.

Red Ache: Injury; Fort DC 15; 1d3 days incubation; 1d6 Str damage.

Area 1-9A – Chamber of Summoning (EL 9): Read or paraphrase the following:

This room is barren, but not unmarked. The stones of the walls and floors are chipped and scored, and black, sooty blast-marks can be seen everywhere as though some great battle had been fought within. The walls bear no devices, paintings, tapestries or writing, and there is no furniture or ornament. The floor is littered with weapon shards and a few scraps of armor beneath the same blanket of dust that covers the floor itself. The only feature of note otherwise is a crescent-shaped niche in the north wall, with a single curved step curving out from it. The niche is ten feet high and, like the ceiling, ends in a graceful curved vault. Like the rest of the crypt, the stonework is exceptional, smooth and perfectly-fitted, with subtle gothic details evident in friezes that run across the

tops of the walls, and the intricate ribbing in the vaulted ceilings. There is a faint whiff of brimstone in the air.

There is a secret door in the east wall which is visible after a DC 25 Search check.

Srihoz had at one time used this chamber for his planar traveling, but as the ages slipped by he tired of this. Instead he tweaked the magics that controlled his portal, leaving it as a delightful “welcoming party” for any guests in his crypt.

Development: The moment anyone enters the room through the door in the south wall (opening the secret door in the east wall has no effect), the summoning begins. A *summon* spell is automatically triggered and, in the niche, a vrock demon appears in 1d4 rounds, quite angry and not at all pleased at being summoned. It attacks the first creature it sets its eyes on with incredible ferocity.

Tactics: The vrock starts out by attempting to summon dretches to aid it during round 1. It will scarcely wait to engage the characters beyond round 2, pouncing as soon as it has finished the summoning. Its screech and spore attacks work best when it has closed on the group, and a full attack is truly frightening. It can hurl up to twelve creatures standing within ten feet of one another into a wall for 1d6 damage with *telekinesis*, and will often focus on shoving the defenders of a good cleric or companions of a paladin into the pit room behind them so it can attack others without distraction. If the demon falls to 10 or fewer hit points it uses *mirror image* and eventually *teleport* to escape from the area. If the demon escapes it leaves the party alone and tries to find a way back to its own plane.

Vrock: CR 9; Large Outsider (Chaotic, Extraplanar, Evil); HD 10d8+70; hp 115; Init +2; Spd. 30 ft, fly 50 ft. (average); AC 22, touch 11, flat-footed 20; Base Atk +10; Grp +20; Atk claw +15 melee (2d6+6); Full Atk 2 claws +15 melee (2d6+6) and bite +13 melee (1d8+3) and 2 talons +13 melee (1d6+3); Space/Reach 10 ft./10 ft.; SA 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 +14, Ref +9, Will +10; Str 23, Dex 15, Con 25, Int 14, Wis 16, Cha 16.

Skills and Feats: Concentration +20, Diplomacy +5, Hide +11, Intimidate +16, Knowledge (religion) +15, Listen +24, Move Silently +15, Search +15, Sense Motive +16, Spellcraft +15, Spot +24, Survival +3 (+5 following tracks); Cleave, Combat Reflexes, Multiattack, Power Attack.

Spell-like Abilities: Caster level 12th. At will –

mirror image, telekinesis (DC 18), *greater teleport* (self + 50 pounds of objects). 1/day – *heroism*.

Spores: Once every three rounds as a free action; deals 1d8 damage to all adjacent creatures; continues to cause 1d4 damage each round for 10 rounds.

Stunning Screech: Once per hour, uses a piercing scream on non-demons to force a DC 22 Fort save (Con-based) or they are stunned for one round.

Summon Demon: Once per day a vrock can summon 2d10 dretches with 35% chance of success, like a third level spell.

Summoned Dretch (2d10): 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); Full Atk 2 claws +4 melee (1d6+1) and bite +2 melee (1d4); 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, Search +2, Spot +5, Survival +0 (+2 following tracks); Multiattack.

Spell-like Abilities: Caster level 2nd. 1/day – *scare* (DC 12), *stinking cloud* (DC 13).

Summon Demon: Once per day a dretch can summon another dretch with 35% chance of success, like a first level spell.

Area 1-9B – False Door (EL 7): This door opens to a small niche about two feet in depth, which is meant to deceive anyone peeking beneath the door. When it is opened, a trap is sprung. The person opening the door is struck within an amber stasis field, which allows him to be stored for later consumption by Srihoz. Anyone else is affected by the dust trap which is also triggered by the door opening. The traps are distinct and must be discovered and disabled separately.

Additionally, when the gas trap is triggered the second seal in area 1-18 is activated. With a DC 15 Listen check characters can tell that there is some activity in another part of the dungeon after the trap was sprung. If the gas trap is disabled, this secondary effect is also nullified.

Once Srihoz sees the characters move through the passage to the north of this area, a solid sandstone door falls shut behind them. Anyone within 5 feet of the door may attempt a DC 15 Tumble check to get back under the door, but failure by more than 5 means the character receives 5d6 damage and is

stuck under the door.

2" Sandstone Door: 2 in. thick; hardness 8; hp 30; break DC 28 (struck); lift DC 28

Scrying Stone: When anyone passes through this area it activates a scrying stone, which is a small amber stone embedded in the masonry, hidden in the remains of the plaster. A DC 20 Search check is required to find the stone. It has a hardness of 5 and 10 hit points, so it is fairly easy to destroy. So long as it remains, Srihoz has the option of observing those moving through this area as per the spell *scrying*, but he needs no material components and can do this from any location as a free action. While using the scrying stone Srihoz is unaware of his immediate surroundings. Identifying the purpose of the stone requires a DC 20 Spellcraft check.

Amber Stasis Field Trap: CR 4; spell; spell trigger; automatic reset; spell effect (amber stasis field as per *sepia snake sigil*, 5th-level wizard, DC 14 Reflex save negates); Search DC 32, Disable Device DC 28.

Ungol Dust Trap: CR 5; mechanical; location trigger; manual reset; gas; multiple targets (all targets in a 20-ft.-by-5-ft. corridor); never miss; poison (ungol dust, DC 15 Fortitude save resists, 1 Cha temporary/1d6 Cha temporary plus 1 Cha permanent drain); Search DC 24; Disable Device DC 16. Market Price: 9,000 gp.

Area 1-9C – Pit Traps (EL 5): Three of the same traps that were found in area 1-1A have been placed in this passage.

Pit Trap: CR 2; mechanical, location trigger; manual reset; DC 20 Reflex save avoids; 40 ft. deep (4d6, fall); Search DC 20; Disable Device DC 20.

Pit Scythe Trap: CR 4; mechanical; location trigger; automatic reset; Atk +20 melee (2d4+8/x4, scythe); Search DC 21; Disable Device DC 18.

Area 1-10A – The Black Chapel (EL 6): Read or paraphrase the following:

A long staircase descends down the sloping floor, between two rows of massive granite seats hewn into the living rock. The walls are painted with mock marble veins, in various shades of red, brown, and amber. As the staircase goes down, so does the floor of the room, the seating tiered like a small theatre. Scraps of tapestries hang in cobwebs of rotting strands from the rectangular pillars that frame this dreary chamber. A half-circle dais rises at the far end of the room, providing a bit of a stage, flanked left and right by two more disintegrating

tapestries, black with grime and rot. A gleaming altar sits in the midst of the dais, utterly black. Its surface is smooth and featureless. Everything in this room is coated with dust that is nearly an inch thick.

The altar is the central item of interest in this room, and the most dangerous. Anyone approaching it will immediately notice two large ruts in the floor behind it, in an arc. The ruts are caused by the altar being swung backwards across the floor on an axis hinge, which should be obvious to anyone who notices the ruts. Touching the altar with one hand triggers the *vampiric touch* trap, and touching it with both hands triggers the *shocking grasp* trap.

On top of the altar is a circle made of what appears to be magical symbols. A DC 27 Spellcraft check determines that there is a permanent *teleport object* spell in effect on this area. Any inanimate object placed on the altar disappears; living or undead beings are not moved this way. The object appears in Srihoz's inner crypt. Characters can try to send an explosive through the spell. If they are successful, they destroy the effect and cannot try again. The objects appear in the chest to the east of area 1-26. If an item teleports, he investigates after 4 rounds to see what has appeared. An explosive which goes off in round 5 to 10 after it arrives will do damage to him.

The secret door can be located with a DC 15 Search check.

Treasure: Any who successfully move the altar back at least three feet (DC 22 Strength check to move it 1 foot) will not find their efforts unrewarded. A cubbyhole under the altar reveals 3 *potions of gaseous form*, 2 amber and gold jewels (1,000 gp), and a history of the kingdom of Srihoz written at the end of his reign, worth 300 gp to a historian or collector. Players can make a DC 10 Decipher Script check to skim the book, which reveals most of the information contained in the background section of this module. In fact, if the GM and players are interested the back story, the GM can just be read the background section to the players as the synopsis of the book. Skimming the book takes about 10 minutes.

Scrying Stone: When anyone passes through this area it activates a scrying stone, which is a small amber stone embedded in the masonry, hidden in the remains of the plaster. A DC 20 Search check is required to find the stone. It has a hardness of 5 and 10 hit points, so it is fairly easy to destroy. So long as it remains, Srihoz has the option of observing those moving through this area as per the spell *scrying*, but he needs no material components and

can do this from any location as a free action. While using the scrying stone Srihoz is unaware of his immediate surroundings. Identifying the purpose of the stone requires a DC 20 Spellcraft check.

Vampiric Touch Trap: CR 4; spell; spell trigger; automatic reset; spell effect (*vampiric touch*, 5th-level wizard, 2d6 damage, DC 14 Reflex save negates); Search DC 30, Disable Device DC 30.

Shocking Grasp Trap: CR 4; spell; spell trigger; automatic reset; spell effect (*shocking grasp*, 5th-level wizard, 5d6 electricity damage, DC 14 Reflex save negates); Search DC 32, Disable Device DC 28.

Area 1-10B – Spitting Image: Read or paraphrase the following:

A tight passage leads back to a narrow rectangular room. More deep ruts are gouged in the stone floor all along the length of the passage and the room. They lead to a tall figure standing upright in the corner, hands outspread in a gesture of attack.

The tight passage allows only one small or medium-sized creature to pass at a time. This room holds Srihoz, or at least an excellent facsimile thereof: it's a statue, obviously created in such a way as to not be merely symbolic but a perfect copy of Srihoz. In times when the living still served him, Srihoz's servants would push the statue out onto the dais in the chapel to be worshipped. If the statue is carefully inspected (Search DC 18), a removable ring will be found. It's a *ring of protection +2*, easily removed with a bit of a tug.

Area 1-11 – The Abyss (EL 3): Read or paraphrase the following:

The passage ends in a steel-capped platform which extends a few feet over the edge of a seemingly bottomless natural abyss, roughly circular and about forty feet across. A powerful wind swirls around, seeming to blow mostly upwards, carrying an odor of dampness. Four large iron rings are driven into the stone around the walls of the abyss, one each in the north, east, south, and west walls. None is within easy reach. Two other corridor openings can be seen in the north and south walls, and a natural passage is visible some thirty feet down, in the west wall. The northern corridor opening is about fifteen feet higher than the passage where you currently stand.

This abyss falls down approximately 270 feet to the waters of the sea, which are at the same level as the sea that pounds against the cliffs to the east. By

an unknown system of fissures and underground rivers, some of which are even deeper than the surface, the water reaches this far into the rock – though how much deeper the abyss continues under the water even Srihoz does not know.

PCs who attempt to climb the walls of the abyss suffer from the effects of the powerful winds. Any character attempting the Climb check (DC 15) suffers a -4 circumstance penalty due to the wind. Characters move at one-quarter their normal movement, or half if they are willing to accept the -5 penalty to the Climb check. Every 1d8 rounds a particularly vicious gust of wind pulls at any characters on the platform or the walls, requiring a check to avoid falling (DC 20 Climb if on the walls; DC 20 Reflex in on the platform).

Anyone falling into the chasm takes 20d6 damage, unless they can fly or *feather fall*, but managing such gymnastics will be tricky. The constant swirling winds in this chasm – a product of yet more natural passages and openings in the rock much further down – can easily dash a flying creature to paste against the razor-edged rocks that make up the walls of the abyss. When the stronger gust that pummels those on the platform hits anyone who is flying, they must make a DC 25 Reflex save or get pushed 1d4x10 feet in a random direction. Roll 1d6 to determine the direction: 1 = up, 2 = down, 3 = east, 4 = north, 5 = west, 6 = south. If this pushes them into a wall they take 2d6 damage from slamming into the sharp rocks. Anyone who cannot direct their flight, as with feather fall, automatically fails the Reflex save.

The iron rings in the walls are firmly driven into the rock. They can take up to 800 lbs of sudden weight, and hold indefinitely.

Area 1-12 – Crush or Slide, You Decide (EL 9):

Characters immediately encounter the grease trap listed below. If the stairs are greased the characters must make a DC 10 Balance check or be unable to move. A result of 5 or less means the character has slipped, and must make a DC 22 Reflex save (with a circumstance bonus of +2 to the check per 5 feet of stairs climbed) to catch herself before falling down the chasm. The stairs are 25 feet long altogether, so a character who slips at the bottom of the stairs must make a DC 22 Reflex save or fall, while someone at the top of the stairs gets a +10 bonus.

Once the party has made it past the stairs, read or paraphrase the following:

An intricately designed iron staircase, red with rivers of rust, climbs in a winding way. At the top, a large, oval room greets you, arresting

your interest immediately. The walls are busily painted with detailed scenes of six awe-inspiring mansions and keeps. They stand like imperious lords over wide swathes of fields filled with chattel servants and slaves. Several of the mansions appear different than anything you've ever seen in this part of the world, and the people too appear strange – both remind you, perhaps, of the architecture and customs of those mythical eastern kingdoms the sages speak of, usually to disinterested ears in pubs after closing time. There are also three identical wooden doors, each bound with brass in the same beautiful and complex pattern, along the north wall.

The door handles are somewhat worn, like a normal, well-used door might be. Of course, this is all part of the ruse. A DC 5 Search check discovers writing written in an inward spiral in the center of the room, covered by dust. The text is in the older dialect, requiring a DC 5 Decipher Script check. It reads:

The wise weigh numbers like the heavenly wheel,

And fools guess by tricks or feel.

The reward is great for choosing well.

For choosing poorly, your reward is hell.

Typical Srihoz: there is no correct guess. Opening any of the doors starts a staccato clacking sound, which is the sound of the stairs collapsing into a 45 degree ramp. It takes two rounds for the last stair to collapse, and the change in the stairs is immediately obvious to anyone who looks after one round. At the end of the second round, the stairs are now entirely a ramp and the ceiling collapses. Bits of the ceiling rain down through the passage. Due to the falling debris, a DC 15 Balance check is required to keep footing on the ramp, and the Reflex save on failure, to catch oneself before plunging into the chasm, is 30 minus 2 per 5 feet of ramp. If the grease effect is dispelled, instead use a DC 12 Balance check and a straight DC 15 Reflex save. In either case, failing the Reflex save means 1d6 points of falling damage and a plunge into the chasm below.

Grease Trap: CR 2; magic device; proximity trigger; automatic reset; spell effect (*grease*, 8th-level wizard, DC 10 Balance check for footing, 5 or less and fall); Search DC 26; Disable Device DC 26.

Dropping Ceiling: CR 9; mechanical; location trigger; repair reset; ceiling moves down (12d6, crush); multiple targets (all targets in a 20-ft.-by-50-ft.

room); never miss; onset delay (2 rounds); Search DC 20; Disable Device DC 16.

Area 1-13A – Tentacle Two-Step (EL 9): Read or paraphrase the following:

You see two long pools inset into each passage wall. Each pool is carved in identical but mirror-image decoration to the other. The marble lip of the pool is fashioned into a series of anonymous, leering faces and snake-like appendages. The liquid in each pool is still and clear. There is a damp smell of stagnant water in the air.

As soon as at least two characters enter the center of the room, a magical trap springs into motion.

Black Tentacles Trap (2): CR 7; magic device; proximity trigger (*alarm*); no reset; spell effect (*black tentacles*, 7th-level wizard, 1d4+7 tentacles, Atk +7 melee [1d6+4, tentacle]); multiple targets (up to six tentacles per target in each of two adjacent 5-ft. squares); Search DC 29; Disable Device DC 29.

Area 1-13B – Srihoz's Precious Earth (EL 10): Read or paraphrase the following:

A staircase of black and grey marble disappears into a large chamber filled with heaps of blasted, ugly earth. The walls are stained with dreary black water stains running down from the vaulted ceiling, yet the walls are flat and featureless. The room smells powerfully of damp earth and rot.

This is the earth Srihoz uses to revivify himself. It is precious to him, and it is guarded. The more observant or sensitive among the party immediately sense the penetrating aura of evil and hatred that fills the air like a poison. It is the blind insanity of all the angry spirits who have been absorbed into the ash guardian, Srihoz's way of guaranteeing that his earth will not be threatened. After the characters take a few steps, flakes of blackened soil like ash rise from the ground and form a cloud of hatred. The creature has few tactics, and focuses entirely on attacking living beings that come near it.

Ash Guardian: CR 10; Large Undead (Incorporeal); HD 11d12 + 11; hp 82; Init +7; Spd. 30 ft., fly 60 ft. (good); AC 14, touch 12, flat-footed 11; Base Atk +5; Grp –; Atk incorporeal touch +7 melee (2d6); Full Atk 4 incorporeal touches +7 melee (2d6); Space/Reach 10 ft./10 ft.; SA Spell-like abilities, steal essence; SQ Incorporeal traits, unnatural aura, vulnerable to sunlight; AL CE; SV Fort +3, Ref +6, Will +9; Str –, Dex 16, Con –, Int 14, Wis 14, Cha 15.

Skills and Feats: Hide +9, Intimidate +12,

Knowledge (arcana) +12, Listen +14, Spellcraft +12, Search +12, Sense Motive +12, Spot +14; Blind-Fight, Combat Reflexes, Improved Initiative, Weapon Finesse.

Spell-like abilities: At will – *death knell*, *doom*, *enervation*, *ray of enfeeblement*; 3/day – *fear*, *slay living*, *waves of fatigue*; 1/day – *circle of death*. As a 7th level sorcerer.

Steal Essence: A living, intelligent creature killed by the ash guardian is drawn into the creature, giving it 12 temporary hit points.

Unnatural Aura: Any animal within 30 ft. of an ash guardian must make a DC 17 Will save or become panicked.

Vulnerable to Sunlight: An ash guardian in natural sunlight (not merely a *daylight* spell) cannot attack and can only take a single move action or a standard action, but not both.

Area 1-14A – Srihoz's Secret Sarcophagus, Outer Chamber: Read or paraphrase the following:

This small square room is painted floor to ceiling with strange, abstract visions of a disturbingly lurid and grotesque nature. Victims are sacrificed in a variety of hideous fates, and their blood runs in rivers into a giant, devilish maw below, taking a different form in the paintings on each wall. The floor is caked in at least an inch of dust, which appears not to have been disturbed in centuries.

The paintings, as much as Srihoz enjoys such depictions of his own unholy lust and evil, are meant to be a distraction to any seeking the secret door in the north wall, which is particularly well-hidden (DC 30 Search). It has not been opened by anyone in over five hundred years – in fact, not since the dungeon's construction was completed. The next secret door also requires a DC 30 Search check.

Area 1-14B – Srihoz's Secret Sarcophagus, Inner Chamber: Read or paraphrase the following:

These walls are bare, indicating a more perfunctory purpose, and a set of thick iron bars stands between you and a simple, black granite sarcophagus on the other side.

This sarcophagus is filled with some of the earth from the outer room, and it is this which is most precious to the vampire lord. This is where he repairs his strength, and it is to here that he retreats if somehow he is bested in battle. The iron bars are three inches thick and extremely well anchored into the stone floor and ceiling. The sarcophagus is sealed with *arcane lock* and the granite is lined with steel on the inside and capped at each corner, mak-

ing it very difficult to damage with even the most powerful blow. It is also completely fireproof (magical or natural).

Development: If Srihoz has been reduced to zero hit points, he will be inside this sarcophagus regaining his power. Until an hour passes from the moment he reached zero hit points, he is unconscious and unable to respond to the characters' attempts to penetrate his final retreat. However, once an hour has passed, he begins regenerating hit points again at a rate of 5 per round, so it will only take a few minutes for him to regain his full strength. He is no fool, however, and will ensure that when he emerges he has spells ready and a plan to finish off these foolish intruders. That plan will depend largely on what resources he has left and what strengths he has observed in those who are still alive, but hiding and picking off a few people with *dominate* is his preferred method.

Iron Bars: 2 in. thick, hardness 10; hp 60; Break DC 25.

Reinforced Granite Sarcophagus: 1 ft. thick; hardness 8; hp 180; Break DC 45.

Area 1-15A – Silent Guardian (EL 8): Read or paraphrase the following:

Ten feet along this corridor, in a wide niche, stands a statue of a fearsome demon warrior. It looks to be carved from a solid block of marble, except for the cruel steel glaive in its stone hands.

Attempting to pass the statue will summon the spirit of the Champion, Srihoz's personal bodyguard who rose to become his closest advisor, now bound to his service in the afterlife as well. Characters get a DC 25 Spot check to notice a shadow or ripple descending over the statue; those who fail are surprised. The Champion will inhabit the statue and fight to the death, or at least until the PCs go back the way they came.

The secret door can be detected with a DC 20 Search check.

Tactics: A powerful undead creature powers the possessed statue, so it will tend to punish good clerics or paladins more severely than other characters. Ultimately, however, its goal is to push back the group. It will not pursue them if they retreat back the way they came. It will pursue them if they move deeper into the crypt.

For the most part, the Champion is most comfortable using the "body" of the stone mount to attack, avoiding doing anything to call attention to its true

nature as an undead servant. If its mount is destroyed or rendered unusable (see below) the Champion will shift to the more standard ghost attacks.

Stone Mount: The statue is a special wondrous item crafted to allow a specific ghost to "ride" it using its malevolence ability. While mounting the statue, the Champion is unable to fly and has a movement rate of 20 ft. The statue has hardness 8 and 85 hit points, and any attacks at the ghost while it rides the statue hits the rock rather than the ghost unless the attack is from the ethereal realm. With a successful DC 20 Knowledge (religion) or Knowledge (undead) check, a character can recognize the statue as a magic device usable by a specific ghost. If someone passes one of these checks with a roll over 30, she recognizes that a piece of the ghost's body must be in the statue near the heart; if this small bundle of bones, hair, and dried skin is destroyed or removed, the statue is no longer usable.

So long as the mount has 1 or more hit points and the bundle is in its compartment in the mount's chest, the Champion can use the mount to wield his old sword, *Nightwatch*, which Srihoz brought back with him from the East. Srihoz gave it to the Champion for saving his life from a paladin.

False Door: The false door in the west wall contains an amber stasis field trap, just like the one at area 1-15B (see that area for details).

Treasure: *Nightwatch*, +2 *unholy greatsword* (any character of good alignment carrying the sword gains 1 negative level so long as they wield the sword)

The Champion (Ghost Ftr5): CR 7; Medium Undead (Incorporeal); HD 5d12; hp 32 (plus statue: hardness 8, hp 85); Init +6; Spd. fly 30 ft. (perfect); AC 12, touch 12, flat-footed 10; Base Atk +5; Grp +8; Atk/Full Atk incorporeal touch +7 melee (1d6 plus 1d4 ability) or +2 *unholy greatsword* +11 (2d6+8, additional 2d6 versus good alignment); Space/Reach 5 ft./5 ft.; SA Corrupting gaze, corrupting touch, draining touch, frightful moan, horrific appearance, malevolence, manifestation, telekinesis; SQ Rejuvenation, turn resistance +4; AL CE; SV Fort +4, Ref +3, Will +1; Str 16, Dex 14, Con –, Int 12, Wis 10, Cha 8.

Skills and Feats: Climb +7, Hide +12, Jump +7, Knowledge (History) +5, Listen +10, Search +11, Spot +10; Combat Reflexes, Dodge, Improved Initiative, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (greatsword), Weapon Specialization (greatsword).

Corrupting Gaze: gaze attack, range 30 ft., Fort save DC 11 to avoid, 2d10 damage.



Draining Touch: A successful attack with incorporeal touch deals 1d4 damage to an ability of the Champion's choice and the Champion regains 5 hit points.

Frightful Moan: 30 ft. sonic necromantic cone attack, Will save DC 11 or become panicked for 2d4 rounds, cannot be used on same target within 24 hours.

Horrid Appearance: On viewing the Champion characters must succeed on a DC 11 Fort save or take 1d4 Str, 1d4 Dex, and 1d4 Con damage; cannot be used on same target within 24 hours.

Malevolence: The Champion moves into target's area; DC 14 Will save or target is under control of the Champion as *magic jar* cast by 10th level wizard; cannot be used on same target within 24 hours.

Telekinesis: As the spell as a standard action, caster level 12, 1d4 rounds between uses.

Rejuvenation: After being brought to zero hit points, the Champion disappears for 2d4 days. It can then make a level check (1d20 + 5) against DC 16 to reappear. It can make another check every 2d4 days until it is released by Srihoz's death.

Area 1-15B – False Door (EL 7): When the characters encounter the portcullis at the bend in the corridor, read or paraphrase the following:

A large iron portcullis bars your way forward. You can see steps down into a dark open area ahead of you and a passage to a door to your left.

The portcullis is not trapped, but must be forced open in order for the PCs to pass.

Portcullis, Iron: 2 in. thick; hardness 10; hp 60; break DC 28 (stuck), 28 (locked); lift DC 25.

The false door at the end of the corridor is, except where otherwise noted, identical to all other doors in the crypt, but there is a surprise: the door opens to a small niche about two feet in depth, which is meant to deceive anyone peering beneath the door. When opened a trap is sprung. The person opening the door is stuck within an amber stasis field, which allows him to be stored for later consumption by Srihoz. Anyone else is affected by the dust trap which is also triggered by the door opening. The traps are distinct and must be discovered and disabled separately.

Additionally, when the dust trap is triggered the third seal in area 1-18 is activated. With a DC 15 Listen check characters can tell that there is some activity in another part of the dungeon after the trap was sprung. If the ungol dust trap is disabled, this secondary effect is also nullified.

Amber Stasis Field Trap: CR 4; spell; spell trigger; automatic reset; spell effect (amber stasis field as per *sepia snake sigil*, 5th-level wizard, DC 14 Reflex save negates); Search DC 32, Disable Device DC 28.

Ungol Dust Trap: CR 5; mechanical; location trigger; manual reset; gas; multiple targets (all targets

in a 20-ft.-by-5-ft. corridor); never miss; poison (ungol dust, DC 15 Fortitude save resists, 1 Cha temporary/1d6 Cha temporary plus 1 Cha permanent drain); Search DC 24; Disable Device DC 16.

Area 1-16A – Prison of Suffering (EL 5): Read or paraphrase the following:

This gargantuan chamber is truly a hideous and piteous sight. Nearly the entire floor is carpeted with dozens, perhaps hundreds of the withered husks of Srihoz's many victims, some of them recent enough to still have most of their skin intact, taut across the twisted skeletons. In some places the bodies are stacked three and four deep, and all are chained to the walls, the floor, or the single massive square pillar in the midst of this charnel nightmare. A slight odor of corruption completes the sickening experience.

There is a square hole in the northeast wall, about four feet off the floor. It is the dumping end of the chute from area 1-16B. There is an empty, locked cage in the center of the room with manacles hanging from chains inside.

This is indeed the last resting place of those servants, laborers or captured victims whom Srihoz has consumed over the centuries. When captured, "fresh" victims are chained up here until he gets to them. If carefully searched, the collection of corpses might yield a few handfuls of gp, sp and cp, and perhaps a piece of jewelry or two of minor value, but nothing else, with one exception: One of these victims, one of the more recent corpses, was a wizard, consumed in such haste that his robes were not fully searched. They still contain two *potions of gaseous form* in a leather pouch, along with a few material components and oddments: feathers, clay, two copper coins and a bird talon, perhaps a shrike's.

The passage to 1-16B includes a pit trap much like those elsewhere in the dungeon.

Pit Trap: CR 2; mechanical, location trigger; manual reset; DC 20 Reflex save avoids; 40 ft. deep (4d6, fall); Search DC 20; Disable Device DC 20.

Pit Scythe Trap: CR 4; mechanical; location trigger; automatic reset; Atk +20 melee (2d4+8/x4, scythe); Search DC 21; Disable Device DC 18.

Area 1-16B – Grisly Torture Chamber (EL 5): When the PCs come to the portcullis in the hall, read or paraphrase the following:

A large iron portcullis bars your way forward. You can see the passage continue for about twenty feet beyond, then turn out of sight to the right.

The portcullis is not trapped, but must be forced open in order for the PCs to pass.

Portcullis, Iron: 2 in. thick; hardness 10; hp 60; break DC 28 (stuck), 28 (locked); lift DC 25.

When it is passed the PCs must get past the pit trap, which has another scythe trap at its bottom. Once the PCs reach the room beyond, read or paraphrase the following:

After the corpse-filled prison, this room hardly comes as a surprise. Wicked instruments of torture hang by the dozen from a forest of hooks lining the walls. Two thick wooden tables, their tops stained almost black, are in the midst of the room. One is quite plain with two pairs of cuffs mounted into it, but the other appears to be some sort of stretching device. There is a small opening in the south wall, only three feet high.

The door is the opening of a chute where the mangled remains of torture victims were dumped back down into the prison (area 1-16A) for the further shock and horror of those few victims who still lived. If the PCs closely inspect tools they will immediately notice that they've never seen torture instruments like these before: evil hooks and barbs, strange multi-bladed knives with amber handles... they are works of art, at least works of a perverted, cruel art. Those still somewhat clean with the pearl handles can be sold to collectors or on the market. The adventurers have seen torture chambers before, perhaps, but never one like this: Yet more color Srihoz picked up during his time in the East.

Treasure: Four elaborate eastern torture knives (350 gp).

Pit Trap: CR 2; mechanical, location trigger; manual reset; DC 20 Reflex save avoids; 40 ft. deep (4d6, fall); Search DC 20; Disable Device DC 20.

Pit Scythe Trap: CR 4; mechanical; location trigger; automatic reset; Atk +20 melee (2d4+8/x4, scythe); Search DC 21; Disable Device DC 18.

Area 1-17A – The Ancient Way (EL 11): Read or paraphrase the following:

This crude passage is frightfully cramped. Only one person at a time may make their way along it. There is a stink of filth emanating from the stuffy, hot interior.

This area is different than the rest of the crypt, in that the stonework is very rough and not up to the standards Srihoz has shown in the rest of his tomb. In fact, this route predates his crypt by several hundred years.

Development: Three spectres have been placed as guardians of this path, to prevent people from entering area 1-17B. They attack once PCs have moved far enough along the passage to be stuck in a difficult spot. They move through the walls, attacking and settling halfway into the walls. Consider spectres on the left and right of the path to have partial cover, or +2 to AC and +1 to Reflex saves from attacks that would be interrupted by stone. The spectres attempt to flank characters as often as possible.

Spectres (3): CR 7; Medium Undead (Incorporeal); HD 7d12; hp 45 each; Init +7; Spd. 40 ft., fly 80 ft. (perfect); AC 15, touch 15, flat-footed 13; Base Atk +3; Grp –; Atk/Full Atk incorporeal touch +6 melee (1d8 plus energy drain); SA Create spawn, energy drain; SQ Darkvision 60 ft., incorporeal traits, sunlight powerlessness, turn resistance +4, 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.

Create Spawn: Humanoids slain by a spectre become a spectre in 1d4 rounds, under the command of the spectre that created them.

Energy Drain: Successful incorporeal touch attack gives two negative levels to target; DC 15 Fort save to remove one level; for each level drained the spectre gains 5 temporary hit points.

Sunlight Powerlessness: A spectre in natural sunlight (not merely a *daylight* spell) cannot attack and can take only a single more or attack-equivalent action in a round.

Unnatural Aura: Animals of any kind sense spectres at 30 ft. and will panic so long as they are inside that range.

Area 1-17B – Resting Place of the Heathen King:

Read or paraphrase the following:

The passage finally opens up into a large chamber, probably a natural cave formation, like the passage itself. The walls are plastered and painted. Although the images are better preserved, the style is quite different from other areas you've seen, and the story being told is impossible to understand from the doorway.

In the center of the room is a massive iron dish sitting atop four fat iron legs. The dish is at least three feet across and appears to be filled with ash or dust. Its legs are ornately carved in a series of pictographs and various animal leg-ends. Beneath the dish is a 4 foot square stone

box; the stone is white and quite lovely. Near that is a 2-foot square stone slab with pictures in the more typical style of the crypt. An assortment of strange weapons, probably ceremonial, are leaning against the walls in what appears to be a deliberate arrangement. A large iron shield with a bas relief image of a sun shining over rolling hills has been placed prominently in the center of the weapons. It is a source of light, illuminating the room as though it were a warm, sunny day.

The characters quickly find that they cannot enter this tomb, though they can push objects into the area. A DC 20 Knowledge (religion) or Spellcraft check reveals that this area has been warded. A successful channeling check by a good cleric or paladin (essentially a turning check against a zero hit dice creature) allows the party to enter. Once they enter, read or paraphrase the following:

The frescos here are a clear pictorial history. They show a paladin who entered a land controlled by a savage clan of vampires and began to destroy them one after another. His symbol is a shield, which appears to represent the protection he offered the people of this kingdom and the magical shield he carried into battle with him. After the last vampire is destroyed, the people beg him to become their king, and after deep prayer the paladin sets aside the path of the holy warrior, takes a wife from among the people, and rules them with great wisdom. The last images show him being buried with great honor by his many sons, with all the people mourning.

A large stone slab covered in painted plaster has been pushed into the room. In a mockery of the style of this room, its frescos show Srihoz entering the kingdom in front of a horde of barbarians, killing all the sons of the paladin, and sending the land back into ruin.

This is the tomb of a king who ruled so long ago that none remember him. All the pictures – both the tomb's and Srihoz's extra footnote – are correct, and a DC 25 Knowledge (history) or bardic knowledge check can verify that. The dish is indeed filled with ash, the ashes of the king's burnt remains, now mingled with a considerable amount of dust and particle matter from the crumbling walls and ceiling of this cave. If it can be removed (which is unlikely), the dish and pedestal would be worth at least 2,000 gp to any museum in a large city or perhaps twice that to a private collector. The dish weighs 650 pounds. The box is made of alabaster, and has an intrinsic value of over 800 gp, but the piece, again,

would be worth twice that or more to any well-funded museum.

The shield, called Dawnfast, is the most interesting piece in the room (see sidebar). It is the source of the ward that guards the entrance, and it also places the effects of the spell *hallow* so long as it remains in place. If it is moved from its current location, the ward and the *hallow* effect disappear and cannot be re-created. Though powered by the magical shield, these effects are not the normal powers of Dawnfast, but merely protections placed on the tomb by clerics years before to protect it from tomb robbers who would be so impertinent as to violate the repose of this great king.

Treasure: Jewelry in alabaster box: 3 gold necklaces, 1 golden torc, 16 golden bracelets, 11 golden rings and 39 silver rings. Total worth: 3,700 gp. Other items in alabaster box: 3 solid gold plates, 1 steel mirror, 5 pearl-inlaid ebony boxes each containing one massive pearl (900 gp value), 2 ceremonial golden daggers (blunt), 1 tiny sculpture in solid gold of a human warrior figure. Total worth: 7,500 gp. Plus 279 gp (loose).

Area 1-18 – Corridor of Draining (EL 10): The three traps in this hall are opened by the trick doors in areas 1-5, 1-9B, and 1-15B. If all three of these doors were opened, read or paraphrase the following:

In front of you are three round bronze seals, set into the floor of the passage and reaching all the way across from wall to wall. Each features a large, strange symbol inscribed in its center, and a series of runes around the outside edge. They all appear to be exquisitely wrought, and the burnished metal gleams dully in the torchlight, unaffected by the poisonous air of the dungeon.

If any of these doors have not been opened, the unopened seals are hidden by a sheet of stone and inactive, so modify the text above as is appropriate. These three “seals” are in fact three traps. Each is set with a large rune in its midst. They are also inscribed around the edge in a script devised by Srihoz himself based on scripts he learned while

away in the distant East; this script describes what will happen, in riddling language, should anyone step, run, jump or fly over them. A DC 25 Decipher Script check or Spellcraft check can identify the effects of the seals.

The seals fill the floor of the entire corridor, so it is impossible to pass through this area without passing over them. Walking, jumping, crawling, even flying over them will not help one to avoid their effect in any way. Only in gaseous form can one successfully avoid their dreadful power. Using the eastern corridor past room 1-9B is the other way to avoid them.

Once Srihoz sees the characters pass through the seals, a marble door slams shut just south of the seals. Anyone within 5 ft. of the door may attempt a DC 15 Tumble check to get back under the door, but missing this check by more than 5 means the character receives 6d6 points of damage and is trapped beneath the door.

Scrying Stone: When anyone passes through this area, a scrying stone is activated. It's a small amber stone embedded in the masonry, hidden in the remains of the plaster. It takes a DC 20 Spot check to find the stone, but it has a hardness of 5 and 10 hit points, so it is fairly easy to destroy. So long as it remains, Srihoz has the option of observing those moving through this area as per the spell *scrying*, but he needs no material components and can do this from any location as a free action. While using the scrying stone Srihoz is unaware of his immediate surroundings. Identifying the purpose of the stone requires a DC 20 Spellcraft check.

2” Blood-Red Marble Door: 2 in. thick; hardness 9; hp 40; break DC 30 (stuck); lift DC 29.

Seal Trap 1 (Southern): CR 7; spell; spell trigger; automatic reset; spell effect (*enervation*, 11th-level wizard, no save, 1d4 negative levels for 11 hours); Search DC 12, Disable Device DC 35.

Seal Trap 2 (Center): CR 7; spell; spell trigger; automatic reset; spell effect (*bestow curse*, 11th-level wizard, DC 18 Will save negates, 6 Wis damage); Search DC 12, Disable Device DC 35.

Dawnfast

Dawnfast is a +2 heavy steel shield specialized to protect those who fight vampires. The wielder has immunity to *dominate* effects. It also gives its wielder the ability to cast *daylight* at will as a 9th level cleric, but undead are not affected by this as they are affected by natural daylight. Finally, the wielder can ignore all affects of negative levels, though she will accumulate them and must make a Fortitude check after 24 hours as normal. If she fails this check, the wielder loses levels as normal, which can result in a warrior who is fighting at full strength suddenly weakening or dying after a day passes. Value: 64,170 gp.

Seal Trap 3 (Northern): CR 7; spell; spell trigger; automatic reset; spell effect (*bestow curse*, 11th-level wizard, DC 18 Will save negates, 6 Int damage); Search DC 12, Disable Device DC 35.

Area 1-19A – The Catacombs: The west side of the passage above 1-18A is collapsed. Read or paraphrase the following:

The collapsed wall opening leads down a long staircase hewn into the living rock, along the wall of a gigantic chamber that, while crudely hewn, was clearly excavated by humans... or, at least, dug by something or someone other than nature. The walls, in some places rising forty or fifty feet to the ceiling, are pockmarked with hundreds of long, horizontal cubbyholes. Most of the floor is clear except for several heaps of rubble here and there.

When he slew all his servants, Srihoz had to put their corpses somewhere. The prison in area 1-16A holds just a few. Once his dungeon had been completed, Srihoz devoured all those who had worked for him, and then filled this catacomb with their bodies, to be interred forever or until he might feel compelled to wake a small army of undead for his hideous purposes.

A search of all the tombs would take about 2 hours. There are only two items worth noting among the dead here. A DC 10 Search check in any area will result in a 5% chance that one of the items is found in that area. If the entire area is successfully searched both objects will be found.

Treasure: Two perfect black pearls the size of grapes (750 gp each) pocketed by a worker during the construction, though he never got a chance to sell them, and the foreman's whip, a *whip of wounding* +1 (18,301 gp).

Area 1-19B – Danse Macabre (EL 9): Read or paraphrase the following:

Yet another chamber opens up wide and gloomy. Its walls are also lined with hundreds of dark slots where, presumably, more skeletons lie in eternal sleep. There is something gleaming slightly, dully, in the far corner of the cavern.

The gleaming is a tall polished bronze mirror, seven feet tall and standing upright against the eastern wall. It is placed in part as a ruse, to get the PCs over at least into the middle of the room before the skeletons attack. This room holds the guards who worked in the crypt during its construction, who have been recruited to continue their task after death.

Once the PCs have moved far into the room, five skeletons climb out of their cubbyholes near the entrance to the cavern and slowly move in for the attack. Noticing this requires a DC 14 Spot check (DC 19 while in combat). The mirror creates a *mirror image* effect on all undead within 30 feet, creating 4 false images of each real creature, so the adventurers see twenty-five skeletons climb out and approach them. Notwithstanding the spell, there are in fact 20 more *real* skeletons that attack during the course of the melee. Every round, five more skeletons emerge from various areas of the walls, so after five rounds there are 25 skeletons appearing to be 125 skeletons.

Characters can make a DC 15 Wisdom check to realize that groups of the skeletons appear to be moving in exactly the same ways. Characters with Spellcraft can make a DC 22 check to determine that the mirror is creating the *mirror image* effects. If the mirror is shattered, the spell ends.

Skeletal Human Guards (War1) (25): CR 1/3; Medium Undead; HD 1d12; hp 6 each; Init +5; Spd. 30 ft.; AC 15, touch 11, flat-footed 14; Base Atk +0; Grp +1; Atk scimitar +1 melee (1d6+1/18-20) or claw +1 melee (1d4+1); Full Atk scimitar +1 melee (1d6+1/18-20) or 2 claws +1 melee (1d4+1); SQ Damage reduction 5/bludgeoning, Darkvision 60 ft., immunity to cold, undead traits; AL NE; SV Fort +0, Ref +1, Will +2; Str 13, Dex 13, Con –, Int –, Wis 10, Cha 1.

Feats: Improved Initiative.

Mirror Images (100): AC 12, SV Fort +0, Ref +1, Will –; if struck the image disappears. 20% of the visible skeletons are real, and 80% are these images. Any specific attack should trigger a percentile check to determine which was targeted. Any area effects hit a distribution of the creatures in the area based on this breakdown – so if 10 visible skeletons are in the area then there are 2 real skeletons and 8 images that are affected. When one real skeleton is destroyed, 4 of the remaining images fade away.

Area 1-20 – Watch That Last Step (EL 5): Read or paraphrase the following:

An iron portcullis bars your way forward here. The iron bars look solid. You can see that beyond the portcullis, the patterns of the stonework on the walls is different, more complex and decorative. The ceiling is flat, not vaulted. At the end of the hallway beyond is a door.

The portcullis bars are quite brittle with age (a cheap iron to begin with). Further on is a pressure



plate that triggers 4 repeating crossbows (2 in each wall). The pressure plate is easily found, but not easily disabled. Since it's only six feet across, it looks easy to jump over. Unfortunately for anyone who tries this, the floor just past the pressure plate is a trap door that dumps the victim down an eighty-foot pit directly into "the chute." So anyone surviving the fall must make a DC 17 Reflex save at the bottom or slide down to be dumped, eventually, out of the side of the cliff onto the rocks 200+ feet below.

The door beyond is false, opening only to blank stone.

Portcullis, Iron: 2 in. thick; hardness 8; hp 45; break DC 25 (stuck), 25 (locked); lift DC 25.

Basic Arrow Trap: CR 1; mechanical; proximity trigger; manual reset; Atk +10 ranged (1d6/x3, arrow); Search DC 14; Disable Device DC 28.

Pit Trap: CR 4; mechanical, location trigger; manual reset; DC 20 Reflex save avoids; 80 ft. drop (8d6, fall) plus 200 ft. chute (DC 17 Reflex save or 20d6, fall); Search DC 20; Disable Device DC 20.

Area 1-21 – One at a Time Please (EL 10): Read or paraphrase the following:

The door opens inward to a narrow passage which extends five feet and then ends in another door. There is room for one person to move about comfortably inside.

This pair of doors present what appears to be a

minor annoyance to the adventurers: They cannot both be opened at once. With a successful DC 12 Search check a character can realize that the opposite door is not simply locked, but is in fact mechanically stuck closed until the first door is closed.

When the western door is shut the trap begins to move. The floor and the ceiling are actually two large blocks 10 feet apart that immediately begin to rise (and fall) at the rate of 1 foot per round. This means they meet in the middle after 5 rounds. Since both doors open inwards, escape is only possible if the wooden doors can be broken through in less than half a minute (see stats at beginning of the adventure, on page 5).

The trap resets after 2 minutes, after which time the eastern or western door can be opened. Once one door is open the other is locked, but there is a chance to open both simultaneously; a simultaneous opening avoids either one getting latched by the other. The character must succeed on a DC 25 Dex check to accomplish this. Shutting either door re-starts the trap.

The alternative is to be squashed into paste, since bracing this trap will prove virtually impossible as the stones are driven not only by mechanical force but also by their own incredible weight. A DC 48 Strength check can hold them apart.

Every small- or medium-sized creature or character in the area past the first gives all skill checks, ability checks, attacks, and Reflex saves a -2 distraction penalty. Use discretion on how many can fit into the space, taking into consideration armor and other equipment.

Crushing Ceiling and Floor Trap: CR 10; mechanical; location trigger; automatic reset; no attack roll required (18d6, crush); Search DC 20; Disable Device DC 25.

Area 1-22 – Tip-Toe (EL 9): Read or paraphrase the following:

This wide room, its ceiling soaring in a beautiful web of arches, immediately presents a tantalizing puzzle: Four rows of alternating amber and cinnabar tiles, each two and a half feet square, run wall to wall across the middle of the room. Each tile, it can easily be seen, has a number carved into it in the upper left corner, starting at 1 with the nearest, leftmost tile and increasing by 1 from left to right. The numbers begin again with the next row at the left side, so the farthest, rightmost tile is 24. On the opposite side of the chamber lie three chests. Just beyond the chests is a curved alcove at the top of three white marble steps.

A strange phrase is carved into the northern wall just before the tiles.

At this point the PCs must make a DC 25 Decipher Script check to read the text, written in an obscure ancient northern tongue. If deciphered, it reads:

2-9-11-17-21-20-22

Add the feet or boots that tread

Or the stones will glisten red, red, red.

Of course, the PCs can riddle all they like, but this is still Srihoz they're dealing with. He has no sense of honor or fairness; he only takes pleasure in the suffering of others. Thus, no matter what path they choose, once they've stepped past the first row, any tile will dump them straight down into a pit that leads to "the chute." After landing at the bottom, the PC must make a DC 17 Reflex save to avoid sliding down the frosty chute out into the waters of the sea.

The three chests are all trapped with poison needles, each containing three needles hidden in different places in the lock and hinges. The references below list them from southernmost at 1 to northernmost at 3.

Development: The alcove is empty, but its walls are painted in a series of banded murals that run right to left, top to bottom. They depict the history of Srihoz's travels and victories in battle amongst the "barbarian" kingdoms of the East, and where he learned his magic. With a successful DC 30 Spellcraft or Knowledge (religion) check, a character can gain the ability to recognize certain sanguimantic spells when Srihoz casts them later. Read or paraphrase the following to anyone who succeeds at this check:

As you stare at the pictures, you begin to recognize bits and pieces from rumors and legends. A school of magic formed as an offshoot of necromancy, considered perverse and sadistic even by those who reanimate the dead. Called sanguimancy, it is the art of manipulating blood. It was forbidden in these lands millennia ago, but there have long been rumors that a few of the school's masters escaped to the East. You can make out a few of the spells Srihoz learned from these drawings. It appears one of his most notable accomplishments was transforming a peasant into a vampire, who was then allowed to kill him. His servants killed the peasant, so when Srihoz rose as one of the undead he was beholden to no one, immortal, and had the abilities to delve even deeper into his research.

Treasure: Chest 1: *potion of gaseous form*, 3 *potions of cure moderate wounds*. Chest 2: 8 bottles of fine wine in excellent condition (100 gp each). Chest 3: *cursed short sword of haste* (-2 to attack and damage rolls, *haste* while wielded, once wielded cannot be put down for 2d4 rounds), 2 bags of gold nuggets (1000 gp each), 1 bottle of *terinav* root poison (750 gp).

Pit Trap: CR 4; mechanical, location trigger; manual reset; DC 20 Reflex save avoids; 80 ft. drop (8d6, fall) plus 200 ft. chute (DC 17 Reflex save or 20d6, fall); Search DC 20; Disable Device DC 20.

Chest 1 Poison Needle Trap: CR 2; mechanical; touch trigger; repair reset; lock bypass (Open Lock DC 30); Atk +17 melee (1 plus poison, needle); poison (blue whinnis, DC 14 Fortitude save resists, 1 Con/unconsciousness); Search DC 22; Disable Device DC 17.

Chest 2 Poison Needle Trap: CR 2; mechanical; touch trigger; repair reset; lock bypass (Open Lock DC 30); Atk +17 melee (1 plus poison, needle); poison (bloodroot, DC 12 Fortitude save resists, —/1d4Con + 1d3 Wis); Search DC 22; Disable Device DC 17.

Chest 3 Advanced Poison Needle Trap: CR 7; mechanical; touch trigger; repair reset; lock bypass (Open Lock DC 35); Atk +17 melee (1 plus poison, needle); poison (wyvern poison, DC 17 Fortitude save resists, 2d6 Con/2d6 Con); Search DC 27; Disable Device DC 22.

Area 1-23A – Into the Jaws of the Enemy (EL 3):
Read or paraphrase the following:

A tall oval door is set into the wall at the end of the passage. It is clearly magical. The door is filled with a silvery grey mist, gleaming and swirling. Gossamer purple beams thread the mist in a dreamlike way, flickering like silent lightning.

This door, like its twin in the opposite northern passage, is a teleportal, and each leads to the other. Unsurprisingly, there is a wrinkle: Every third object, whether living or not, will be teleported to area 1-23B. The following riddle is intoned by a *magic mouth* spell as soon as anyone comes within teen feet of the portal:

This portal you must bravely pass

To seek my home and resting place

But if rest you need, and time, and space,

Then be the third and see where you're cast.

Anyone smart enough can just toss a coin or a hat or some such object through the teleportal as the third object. The mist in the teleportals thoroughly saturates any who travel through them, thus providing an even more shocking experience in area 1-24.

Scrying Stone: When anyone passes through this area it activates a scrying stone. Like those in earlier areas, it gives Srihoz the ability to spy on the area.

Area 1-23B – Exile: Read or paraphrase the following:

You find yourself in a small cave overlooking the sea. You're not sure where you are, except you can tell from the terrain of the seashore that you are no longer near the crypt. As you try to get your bearings, you realize you have no idea where this cave is or what might be the road back to the crypt or civilization. But a more immediate problem presents itself: how to get out of the cave 200 feet above the sea below.

Place the location of the destination cave in a suitably remote area of your campaign setting. As a note to the GM, it may prove difficult to adjudicate a party separation where one party member is off on his own in unknown lands, attempting to make his way back. It is suggested that the affected PC be treated as deceased for the purposes of the rest of this module. If other characters use magic to contact him, he may have a limited role in the rest of the adventure. But for all intents and purposes, he is out of the game – not just for now, but until the rest of the party finds a way to contact him, or until he makes the 500+ mile trek back to civilization. If the GM prefers not to separate the party at all, there's an easy alternative: the affected PC is teleported only 500 feet away to a completely enclosed space, where he is encased in amber and rendered completely immobile. It is up to the other players to find a way to free him.

Area 1-24 – Corridor of Lightning (EL 8): Read or paraphrase the following:

The teleportal dumps you out into a long, busily painted corridor. The ceiling in here is barrel-vaulted, as opposed to the gothic pointed arch you've seen so far in the other passages, and it, like the walls, is painted in great detail. The air seems drier in here, and the paintings are in far better condition for it, hardly chipped or faded at all. They depict scenes of stormy skies, starlight over restless oceans, and fog-shrouded hills under gloomy banks of cloud. The artwork runs in a continuous scene from wall to wall and across the ceiling.

The walls in this corridor are solid plates of steel with a thin veneer of painted plaster to hide their nature. The plaster, however, is thin enough to allow the conductivity of lightning. The trap goes off when anyone enters the area between the plates, approximately 10 feet from the teleportation entrance. The first person to walk between the plates is the primary target, but anyone inside the corridor or in the entrance to area 1-25A is a secondary target.

Once Srihoz sees all the characters enter the lightning trap a granite door slams shut just in front of the teleportation portal. Finding this door before it shuts requires a DC 30 Search check, and jumping through before it closes is possible for anyone within 5 feet of the door with a DC 15 Tumble check. Missing this check by more than 5 means the character takes 10d6 damage and is caught beneath the door. Anyone within 15 feet of the door after it has shut will trigger the *dimensional anchor* trap, which re-triggers every other round, choosing the closest target first.

The pit is yet another trap with scythe blades at its bottom.

Granite Door: 3 in. thick; hardness 8; hp 50; break DC 30 (stuck); lift DC 31.

Dimensional Anchor Trap: CR 5; magic device; proximity trigger (*alarm*); automatic reset; spell effect (*dimensional anchor*, 11th-level wizard, ranged touch attack +11); Search DC 31; Disable Device DC 31. Cost: 33,000 gp, 2,640 XP.

Chain Lightning Trap: CR 7; magic device; proximity trigger (*alarm*); automatic reset; spell effect (modified *chain lightning*, 11th-level wizard, 11d6 electricity to target nearest center of trigger area plus 5d6 electricity to each of up to eleven secondary targets, additional 1d6 electricity to any wet character (such as those passing through moisture at area 1-23A), DC 19 Reflex save half damage); Search DC 31; Disable Device DC 31. Cost: 33,000 gp, 2,640 XP.

Pit Trap: CR 2; mechanical, location trigger; manual reset; DC 20 Reflex save avoids; 40 ft. deep (4d6, fall); Search DC 20; Disable Device DC 20.

Pit Scythe Trap: CR 4; mechanical; location trigger; automatic reset; Atk +20 melee (2d4+8/x4, scythe); Search DC 21; Disable Device DC 18.

Area 1-25A – False Crypt (EL 7): Read or paraphrase the following:

This once-sumptuous chamber is now a complete shambles. Tapestries run down the walls, torn to shreds, and several candelabras lie bent and ruined across the exquisitely tiled floor. A large sarcophagus stands open, its stone lid yanked halfway off, and several pieces of shattered furniture are scattered about.

This is a false crypt, and the mess is staged, to keep any intruders interested for a bit while Srihoz gets a good look at them. Srihoz now knows that he must take his guests seriously; since they have survived his deadly dungeon, they must be made of sterner stuff than most of the scum that come seeking to steal his treasure. As to this chamber, there is nothing of any particular value, unless they can manage to get the alabaster sarcophagus out of the dungeon somehow; it's worth 2000 gp.

The door to the north is another trapped false door as in areas 1-5, 1-9B, 1-15B. The person opening the door is stuck within an amber stasis field, which allows him to be stored for later consumption by Srihoz.

The concealed eastern door is covered by furniture and tattered tapestries, and can be found with a successful DC 10 Search check – it's not a secret door so much as a door obscured by the clutter in the room. Magic to find secret doors will reveal its presence.

Scrying Stone: When anyone passes through this area it activates a scrying stone, like the others in the dungeon. Srihoz will spy upon the party here, trying to learn more about them.

Amber Stasis Field Trap: CR 4; spell; spell trigger; automatic reset; spell effect (amber stasis field as per *sepia snake sigil*, 5th-level wizard, DC 14 Reflex save negates); Search DC 32, Disable Device DC 28.

Ungol Dust Trap: CR 5; mechanical; location trigger; manual reset; gas; multiple targets (all targets in a 20-ft.-by-5-ft. corridor); never miss; poison (ungol dust, DC 15 Fortitude save resists, 1 Cha temporary/1d6 Cha temporary plus 1 Cha permanent drain); Search DC 24; Disable Device DC 16. Market Price: 9,000 gp.

Area 1-25B – Tiny Passage: Read or paraphrase the following:

The passage is fairly narrow, though the masonry is as high quality as any in the crypt. After a slightly wider area, the passage turns

south and dead-ends in a small hall. There is nothing of note to grab your eye, other than several dozen small holes in the walls on your right and left.

The orifice through which the PCs must travel is a tiny pipeline, only two inches wide and ten feet long, that leads to Srihoz's crypt. A careful search of the walls must be made to find it, for there are dozens of similar holes leading into the rock, and only one leads to the crypt. Standard searching will not work to reveal the shaft unless the character searching has darkvision or another ability to see that through the darkness of one hole is a chamber. With this ability the character can use a DC 18 Search check to find the correct hole. Otherwise, the characters will have to use something more creative, such as a pebble with *light* cast on it, a ten foot pole, or some other similar technique.

Srihoz can navigate the pipeline in gaseous form. When the characters reach this point, Srihoz will begin preparing for battle by casting spells on himself and his golem. The group can make a DC 15 Listen check to hear him speaking. If any character succeeds at this by 10 or more, he can make a follow-up Spellcraft check (DC 15 + spell level) to assess the spells being cast.

Area 1-26 – The Black Crypt of Srihoz (EL 14): Read or paraphrase the following:

Simply entering this massive, gloomy chamber is awe-inspiring, and you cannot shake the feeling that you are in fact stepping back in time – centuries, or millennia perhaps. A cross-shaped antechamber leads through to a huge, circular cenotaph, where a massive black coffin sits upon a black marble dais. It is surrounded by tall black candelabras, which ignite seconds after you enter. The entire crypt is filled with a red and amber-hued dusk. A vaulted ceiling soars fifty feet above the floor, the red light picking out the ribs of stone like bones in a gruesome panoply of death, an inescapable impression in this crypt. Flanking the entrance are two pairs of octagonal columns covered in panels of amber; eight more circle the cenotaph. The walls glow in the gloom, covered in wide ribbons of cinnabar and stamped brass panels.

The two niches ten feet past the entrance are each hung with a gigantic brass seal. These two seals create a 5 foot wide antimagic field through which the PCs must pass to reach the sarcophagus. This field functions as the spell *antimagic field* cast by an 11th level wizard.

At the southern point of this field is a locked chest.

The chest is the target point of the *teleport object* spell from area 1-10A.

Chest: hardness 5; 15 hit points; break DC 18; Open Locks DC 25.

There are two small treasure compartments hidden beneath floor tiles just north and south of the dais, each found with a DC 17 Search check.

The dais step – but not the dais itself – has a pressure plate that activates a *ghoul touch* trap. Anyone who knows it is there can skip that step, and characters can make a DC 15 Spot check (DC 20 if they are in combat) to notice that Srihoz always avoids this step.

The controls for the doors in areas 1-1A, 1-9B, 1-18, and 1-24 that have shut the PCs inside throughout the crypt are in the coffin itself.

The amber golem hides in the amber columns to the north of the entrance, using its material to blend into this scene. It takes a DC 12 Spot check to notice the golem there.

Development: The golem attacks when it is attacked, but otherwise gives no indication that it is active. Srihoz emerges from his coffin quickly once the group is in the antimagic field. At that point you can read or paraphrase the following:

The black coffin lid slides to the side, exposing a satin lining. A man is lying inside, a man whose face you recognize from the frescoes that fill the crypt. He rises stiffly from the coffin, pivoting up on his heels without bending his legs or moving the arms that cross his chest. Before you can completely take in the image, he has turned and opened his arms to you. "Welcome, my friends," he says. "I am glad you could make it for dinner."

He wears purple and crimson silk robes that flow elegantly around him, arranged and embroidered in a striking fashion. Night flowers twist in gorgeous patterns around stylized, glittering dragons. The robes would add an exotic majesty to a farmer, but Srihoz stands before you in imperial grandeur, the likes of which you've never seen among the flaccid kings of the living. His triangular beard lies close and black against his grayish-purple skin, matching the style of his hair, close-cut against the scalp. Srihoz is incredibly handsome. A cruelly beautiful smile curls his mouth, affording you a quick sight of his long teeth. Gleaming, ice-blue eyes stare at you with unflinching strength, and unfathomable wisdom and intelligence. His expression speaks more of genuine amuse-

ment than aggression, and is truly unsettling.

Tactics: The golem then moves to get everyone within its *amber prison* cone in preparation for attack. The vampire will remain where he is, hoping to draw a few spells into the antimagic field. Area spells cast in the antimagic field still work in the area of effect not covered by the field, but ranged touch attacks are blocked by the invisible field.

Srihoz begins preparing once the characters have uncovered the secret door in area 1-25A. If he manages to get enough time to prepare, the encounter is even more deadly. He continues to prepare until he has completed his routine, and if the characters have still not entered his crypt by then he begins casting spells through the tiny passage – the best one to use in the narrow passage is *fireball*. Another option is to cast *dispel magic* on a character who has been magically altered to fit through the passage. (In such circumstances, the character should be treated as though they had been crushed by a full-sized passage shrinking to 2 inches, taking 14d6 crushing damage.) If the characters interrupt Srihoz, he stops preparing and moves into battle tactics.

Here are Srihoz's preparations by round:

Round 1: Casts *mind fog* (-10 on Wisdom checks and Will saves)

Round 2: Rubs on *potion of magic vestment* +5 (+5 armor bonus)

Round 3: Drinks *potion of greater magic fang* +5 (+5 attack and damage bonus with slam attack)

Round 4: Drinks *potion of protection from arrows* 15/magic (damage reduction 15/magic from arrows)

Round 5: Drinks *potion of magic circle against good* (no good summoned creatures can enter the circular domed area around Srihoz's coffin, +2 AC against attacks by good characters, +2 on saves against attacks by good characters, blocks possession and mental control by good characters)

Round 6: Drinks *potion of heroism* (+2 on attacks, saves, and skill checks)

Round 7: Casts *lesser globe of invulnerability* on himself (no spells of 3rd level or lower affect Srihoz while he stays in the circular area around his coffin)

Round 8: Casts *stinking cloud* (entire area except anti-magic field forces character to make a DC 18 Fort save each round or be nauseated for time in the cloud and 1d4+1 rounds after)

Round 9: Casts *resistance* on amber golem (+1



bonus on all saves)

All these effects are nullified while the characters are in the antimagic field. Srihoz's benefits are also missing in this area, as are his supernatural attacks and the golem's *amber prison* ability. At the same time, the group's casters will be not useful inside the antimagic field, nor will any magical weapons, though ranged weapons will regain their magical effect once they leave the antimagic field.

Srihoz's strategy is fairly straightforward. While in the antimagic field or just before it, the amber golem attempts to capture or smash the characters. The golem retains its immense strength and natural damage reduction in the field while the characters may find themselves lacking many of their most critical items.

Any who step outside of the antimagic field to engage Srihoz directly will be targeted with his *dominate* ability (at the extreme penalty) or hit with *bloodlust*. If the character appears to be a good cleric or paladin, Srihoz uses *create vampire spawn* or *create vampire* on them to change their alignment to evil, robbing them of their divine abilities – in particular their ability to turn undead (though they will still be able to rebuke undead). With luck, he may also control the new undead creature.

If Srihoz is successful in getting the characters to attack one another, he casts *blood elemental* to capture the damage into another tool for his use.

Meanwhile his familiar Laza the imp will be moving about invisibly, attacking occasionally.

If Srihoz feels threatened, he climbs the walls to the ceiling 50 feet above. Anyone using magic to follow is struck with *dispel magic*. Meanwhile, he uses ranged attacks and gives his familiar some touch attacks to deliver on his behalf. *Touch of idiocy* is especially useful as it allows Srihoz to attempt his domination again on the weakened target. Without the golem the antimagic field is actually the safest place for the party, so if the group manages to destroy the golem and refuses to leave the antimagic field, he summons bat swarms to attempt to get them to leave the field.

Ultimately, Srihoz doesn't want to close until the situation seems in his favor. If pressed, he engages the characters with his slam attack, but he would rather strike from a distance with spells and servants to weaken the party first. He has a special hatred of good clerics or anyone who can turn undead, and goes out of his way to attempt to drain them so they he can enjoy the irony as they rise to serve him later.

As with all vampires, once Srihoz has been reduced to 0 hit points, he transforms into a mist and flees. He heads for area 1-14B via a small 2-inch passage at the very top of the ceiling which emerges into area 1-13B. If the characters do not find and destroy him within one hour, he rises again, healed back to full power within two minutes after that,

finds the characters, and attacks them. Srihoz is not an idiot, however – if he is obviously outmatched, he makes every effort to escape. However, he will not flee unless it is clear there is no chance of victory; his vanity will not suffer fleeing until absolutely necessary.

Treasure: Amber columns: 336 amber panels 10 feet tall worth 200 gp each; appropriate Craft skill or straight DC 15 Dex check to remove them without breaking; broken panels worth half (for speed, do 5 checks, for each check a number of panels is broken equal to 5 + difference between DC and result). North dais compartment: 2 leather bags containing 980 gp each, 3 emeralds (100 gp each), 2 tourmalines (100 gp each), 1 silver dagger w/ 3 pearls in handle (580 gp), 1 solid amber disk (5 inches wide) with Srihoz's seal (300 gp in value as gem, 900 gp to museum, scholar, or school for added historical value). South compartment: 1 leather pouch containing 371 pp, 1 ornately carved ebony box (30 gp) containing 66 pp, 1 silver necklace with 22 amber beads (250 gp), 1 masterwork bronze figurine of museum quality (250 gp).

In addition, if the characters move Srihoz's coffin they find an old spell book which identifies all the spells Srihoz has learned in the school of sanguimancy. If the characters destroy this book, they have destroyed this school of magic in the west – something a paladin's or good cleric's god would certainly want. If the characters retain this book or copy the spells into their spell books, any sorcerers, wizards, or other arcane casting classes may draw upon these spells for regular use if they can learn spells from a spell book. The characters could also sell this book; while worthless in normal markets, the book would sell for 15,000 gp to a museum, scholar, or private collector for its historical value or up to 40,000 gp to an evil wizard or sorcerer for the magical value. See page 33 for some of the new spells in the spell book.

Dais Step Ghoul Touch Trap: CR 3; magic device; touch trigger; automatic reset; spell effect (*ghoul touch*, 3rd-level wizard, DC 13 Fortitude save negates); Search DC 27; Disable Device DC 27.

Amber Golem: CR 11; Large Construct; HD 14d10+30; hp 107; Init -1; Spd. 20 ft.; AC 26, touch 8, flat-footed 26; Base Atk +10; Grp +21; Atk slam +16 melee (2d10+7); Full Atk 2 slams +16 melee (2d10+7); Space/Reach 10 ft./10 ft.; SA *Amber prison*; SQ Construct traits, damage reduction 10/adamantine, darkvision 60 ft., immunity to magic, low-light vision; AL N; SV Fort +4, Ref +3, Will +4; Str 26, Dex 9, Con –, Int –, Wis 11, Cha 4.

Amber Prison (Sp): As a standard action the

amber golem can emit a 10 ft. cone of amber-colored energy. Anyone in the range of the spell must make a DC 17 Reflex save or else they are trapped as with *sepia snake sigil* cast by an 11th level caster.

Srihoz, vampire human Wiz11: CR 13; Medium undead; HD 11d12; hp 77; Init +6; Spd. 30 ft.; AC 19, touch 13, flat-footed 17; Base Atk +5; Grp +9; Atk/Full Atk slam +9 melee (1d6+3); SA Blood drain, children of the night, create spawn, dominate, energy drain, imp familiar (Laza); SQ Alternate form, damage reduction 10/silver and magic, fast healing 5, gaseous form, resistance cold and electricity 10, spider climb, turn resistance +4; AL LE; SV Fort +4, Ref +8, Will +10; Str 18, Dex 14, Con –, Int 19, Wis 15, Cha 18.

Skills and Feats: Bluff +15, Concentration +14 (+18 while defensive, grappling, or pinned), Decipher Script +19, Hide +13, Intimidate +5, Knowledge (arcana) +19, Knowledge (history) +15, Listen +19, Move Silently +24, Search +13, Sense Motive +10, Spellcraft +19, Spot +12; Alertness, Combat Casting, Combat Reflexes, Dodge, Greater Spell Focus (sanguimancy), Improved Familiar, Improved Initiative, Lightning Reflexes, Mobility, Spell Focus (sanguimancy), Spell Penetration, Spring Attack.

Blood Drain: After pinning, drain 1d4 Con and gain 5 temporary hit points.

Children of the Night: Call forth 1d6+1 rat swarms, 1d4+1 bat swarms, 3d6 wolves as standard action once per day; arrive in 2d6 rounds and serve for 1 hour.

Dominate: As the spell, as a standard action target any person in 30 ft., DC 17 Will save or dominated for 12 days.

Create Spawn: Any humanoid or monstrous humanoid killed by Srihoz's energy drain rises as a vampire spawn in 1d4 days; any victim with Con drained to 0 or lower returns as vampire spawn if 4 HD or lower, or a vampire if 5 HD or higher; Srihoz retains control of risen spawn.

Energy Drain: Once per round on successful slam attack victim also receives 2 negative levels and Srihoz gains 5 temporary hit points.

Alternate Form: Srihoz can take the form of a bat, dire bat, wolf, or dire wolf.

Fast Healing: Srihoz regains 5 points per round so long as he stays above 0 hit points; once dropped to 0 reverts to gaseous form and is immune to damage, but must return to coffin within 2 hours or be destroyed; regains 1 hit point after 1 hour in coffin then resumes fast healing.

Gaseous Form: As a standard action can assume gaseous form as the spell; caster level 5th, fly speed 20 (perfect).

Spider Climb: At will as the spell.

Spells (4/5/5/5/4/2/1, save DC 15 + spell level): 0-level – *acid blood**, *resistance*, *touch of fatigue* (x2); 1st-level – *boil blood** (x2), *magic missile*, *ray of enfeeblement*, *true strike*; 2nd-level – *bloodlust** (x2), *levitate*, *touch of idiocy* (x2); 3rd-level – *dispel magic* (x2), *fireball*, *flesh to blood**, *stinking cloud*; 4th-level – *blood elemental**, *fear*, *ice storm*, *lesser globe of invulnerability*; 5th-level – *create vampire spawn**, *mind fog*; 6th-level – *create vampire**. *Sanguiomantic spells; see page 33 for details; no Spellcraft check succeeds unless character studied alcove in area 1-22. DC for saves is +2 because of Spell Focus.

Possessions: *Cloak of resistance* +1, *hand of the mage*, *headband of intellect* +2, *pearl of power* (2nd level spell), *potion of greater magic fang* +5, *potion of magic vestment* +5, *potion of heroism*, *potion of magic circle against good*, *potion of protection from arrows* 15/magic, *ring of protection* +1.

Laza, Imp Familiar: CR 2; Tiny Outsider (Evil, Extraplanar, Lawful); HD 3d8; hp 13; Init +3; Spd. 20 ft., fly 50 ft. (perfect); AC 20, touch 15, flat-footed 17; Base Atk +3; Grp -5; Atk/Full Atk sting +8 melee (1d4 plus poison); Space/Reach 2-1/2ft./0 ft.; SA Poison, spell-like abilities; SQ Alternate form, damage reduction 5/good or silver, darkvision 60 ft., fast healing 2, immunity to poison, resistance fire 5, spell resistance 16; AL LE; SV Fort +3, Ref +6, Will +4; Str 10, Dex 17, Con 10, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 14.

Skills and Feats: Diplomacy +8, Hide +17, Knowledge (arcana) +6, Listen +7, Move Silently +9, Search +6, Spellcraft +6, Spot +7, Survival +1 (+3 following tracks); Dodge, Weapon Finesse.

Poison: Injury, Fort DC 13, 1d4 Dex/2d4 Dex.

Spell-like abilities: At will – *detect good*, *detect magic*, *invisibility* (self only). 1/day – *suggestion* (DC 15). 1/week – *commune*. As caster level 6th, Cha-based save DC.

Alternate form: Laza can assume the form of a bat or raven as a standard action, like *polymorph* cast by an 11th level caster except no regained hit points.

Wrapping Up

The characters still have to make it back out of the crypt. Any traps that were not disabled remain as deadly as ever. The creatures are still there, too, except for the demon in area 1-9A, which will not be summoned while Srihoz is unconscious. Once the group makes their way outside of the crypt, if they have destroyed Srihoz then read or paraphrase the following:

Even as you made your way back through the crypt there was a feeling that the air was lighter, even cleaner. As you emerge into the fresh air, even the frigid sea

tang feels invigorating. Perhaps purely by coincidence, you can already see a few birds riding the wind along the cliff. While this once-poisoned land will never be lovely, it has already begun to become healthy once more.

If they did not destroy Srihoz, read or paraphrase the following when they make their way outside of the crypt:

You have escaped with your lives, but a feeling of dread still hangs over you. The sky and the sea are both a dreary gray, and in the east a large, black storm approaches. You will have a long trek back to civilization, but you will not be sorry to leave this blighted area behind you. You only hope that when you make it back, you can shed the chill that seems to cling to your bones, though part of you worries that it's not the cold wind that makes you shiver. No fire will ever be warm enough to set your mind at ease.

If Srihoz survives, he hunts the characters as a matter of pride. He can become a recurring enemy, dominating their friends and destroying those they love in order to torment and weaken them.

Rewards

If the characters overcome but do not destroy Srihoz, they receive only half the reward for the encounter, as they have now enraged the vampire and subjected the world to his wrath once again. Destroying the spell book earns the party an XP reward equivalent to an encounter with EL 7 – but if Srihoz is alive it also ensures his undying wrath.

Appendix 1: New Magic

Sanguiomancy

This school of magic found its origins as a specialization of necromancy. Many of its practices retain the use of negative energy, but over time the mages who first studied blood and its intrinsic power realized that there were specific qualities of blood that transcended its applications among the undead. Indeed, many sanguiomancers began to theorize that vampires were not simply undead, but rather a hybrid between undead and another sort of creature altogether.

Their work made both good clerics and necromancers nervous as the sanguiomancers pushed into strange and uncharted areas of dark magic. This peculiar political alliance made it possible for western kingdoms to force these mages to end their works and recant or flee to more remote regions. The priests and necromancers succeeded in ending the perceived threat to their own power, but in the process they created another community in the East that could continue to study this field unchecked.

Srihoz learned a great deal from these sanguiomancers, but it would be a mistake to call him the greatest sanguiomancer alive. If you are interested in continuing to explore the exiled sanguiomancers in your campaign, Srihoz's spell book could contain references to those who are greater mages than himself, who have mastered some of the higher levels of the school, and even reference to a great plan for conquest of which his invasion was only a test.

For sanguiomancy to work it requires blood, and only certain creature types are available. Fresh blood that has not dried is also a valid target for most sanguiomantic spells, although the results of the spell may change – for example, casting *create vampire spawn* on blood splattered on a creature will not transform that creature into a vampire spawn, but changes the blood into vampire spawn blood. A valid sanguiomantic target must be the following type of creature: animal, aberration, dragon, fey, giant, humanoid, magical beast, monstrous humanoid, outsider, or vermin. Most undead are not valid targets, but vampires and vampire spawn are a notable exception. Most elementals are not valid targets, but a blood elemental is a valid target for sanguiomancy.

Listed here are the spells that Srihoz has mastered and written into his spell book:

Acid Blood

Sanguiomancy
Level: Sor/Wiz 0
Components: V, S
Casting Time: 1 standard action
Range: Touch
Target: Any valid sanguiomantic target
Duration: 1 min.
Saving Throw: Fort (harmless)
Spell Resistance: Yes

This changes the target's blood to an acid. This blood is harmless to the target, but any time the target creature receives bludgeoning, piercing, or slashing damage everyone adjacent to this character receives 1 point of acid damage from blood spatter. The weapon that did the damage also receives 1 point of acid damage. If the damage was caused by a natural weapon then the attacker receives the damage. The target is not immune to acid damage, only damage from his own blood. Two targets standing next to each other while affected by this spell will both receive damage from one another's blood.

Boil Blood

Sanguiomancy
Level: Sor/Wiz 1
Components: V, S, M
Casting Time: 1 standard action

Range: Close (25 ft. + 5 ft./2 levels)
Target: 1 valid sanguiomantic target per three levels, no two of which can be more than 30 ft. apart.
Duration: Instantaneous
Saving Throw: Fort to avoid Con damage
Spell Resistance: Yes

The target receives 2d4 fire damage as her blood literally boils in her veins. If the target fails the Fort save then she also receives 1 Con damage. For every three levels, another target can be added, so at sixth level 2 targets are affected, and at ninth level 3 targets are affected. So long as the spell can be cast, at least one target can be affected by it.

Material component: blood and a flame

Bloodlust

Sanguiomancy
Level: Sor/Wiz 2
Components: V, S, M
Casting Time: 1 standard action
Range: Medium (100 ft. + 10 ft./level)
Target: Any valid sanguiomantic target
Duration: 1 round/level (D)
Saving Throw: Will
Spell Resistance: Yes

The target enters a condition exactly like barbarian rage (+4 Str, +4 Con, +2 to Will save, -2 AC). During this time, they must attack the nearest valid sanguiomantic target, and they will perform whatever attack is most likely to cause blood loss – energy attacks, for example, will not be used but a dagger is fine. If no bloodletting attacks are available, the target attacks the nearest person with his bare hands. A successful save avoids the ability modifiers and the mental effect. A raging barbarian is at a -4 to the Will save to avoid this affect, but he does not receive additional attribute and Will save adjustments. After the spell ends (either by being dismissed or through its duration expiring) the target is fatigued for the same number of rounds as he was affected by the spell.

Material Component: bloodroot

Blood Elemental

Sanguiomancy
Level: Sor/Wiz 4
Components: V, S, M
Casting Time: 1 standard action
Range: Medium (100 ft. + 10 ft./level)
Target: Any valid sanguiomantic target can be the source of blood elemental hit points (see below)
Duration: 2d4 rounds (D)
Saving Throw: None
Spell Resistance: No

This spell gathers all the hit points lost from valid san-

guiomantic targets in the area of effect in the form of a large collection of blood that hovers in mid-air, about three feet from the ground. "Hit points lost" includes any damage done to a valid sanguiomantic target, by any friends or foes to any friends or foes. The damage can be inflicted by melee, magic, or ranged attack – traps and poisons also count. The damage must occur within the range of the spell.

Once the duration of the spell is ended, the collection of blood becomes a blood elemental with that number of hit points which follows the caster's mental instructions. The blood elemental cannot leave the range of the spell. Its power depends on how many hit points it collected during the duration of the spell before it formed, as indicated on the table below.

The caster can choose to end the spell as a free action to stop the elemental from gathering more hit points and immediately have the elemental become active. It moves on the caster's initiative regardless of whether the full duration of hit point gathering is used. The blood elemental has all elemental traits, is considered type elemental subtype blood, and uses a slam attack. The elemental dissipates in the same number of rounds as it gathered hit points – so an elemental that gathered hit points for six rounds will fight for six rounds, and an elemental that gathered hit points for one round will fight for only one round.

Additional HP: Every 20 HP over 110 is an additional +1 attack, +1 damage, and +1 grapple check for envelop ability.

Blood leech: A supernatural ability to draw blood through the skin after a successful slam attack; DC 15 Fort save by target or 1d4 Con damage.

Improved blood leech: A more forceful pull on the tar-

get's blood after a successful slam attack, DC 17 For save by target or 1d6 Con damage.

Envelop: After a successful slam attack, the blood elemental can automatically make a grapple attempt at +16. If successful, the target suffers improved blood leech every round and begins drowning in a number of rounds equal to her current Con.

Material component: Glass vial of blood, broken at casting.

Create Vampire Spawn

Sanguiomanc

Level: Wiz 5

Components: V, S

Casting Time: 1 standard action

Range: Close (25 ft. + 5 ft./2 levels)

Target: Any valid sanguiomantic target

Duration: 1 round/level (D)

Saving Throw: Will

Spell Resistance: Yes

The target becomes a vampire spawn for the duration of the spell. If the target fails the Will save, they are under the control of the caster as with *dominate person*. The following changes take place to the character, regardless of the success or failure of the Will save:

- Alignment is now evil.
- No constitution score, +4 Str, +2 Dex.
- Type is undead.
- Gain special attacks: blood drain, domination, energy drain.
- Gain special qualities: fast healing 2, gaseous form, spider climb.

Blood Elemental Stats by Blood HP Collected

HP	HD	Size	Attack/Grapple	AC/T/FF	Fort	Ref	Will	Special
1-8	1d8	Sm.	+2 slam melee (1d4)/-2	12/11/12	+0	+0	+2	Damage reduction 5/magic
9-20	3d8	Sm.	+3 slam melee (1d4+1)/-1	12/11/12	+0	+0	+3	–
21-35	5d8	Med.	+3 slam melee (1d6+2)/+3	13/11/13	+1	+1	+3	Blood leech
36-45	7d8	Med	+4 slam melee (1d6+3)/+4	13/11/13	+1	+1	+4	–
46-60	9d8	Lrg.	+4 slam melee (1d8+4)/+8	13/10/13	+1	+1	+4	Improved blood leech
61-70	11d8	Lrg.	+5 slam melee (1d8+5)/+9	13/10/13	+2	+2	+5	–
71-80	13d8	Lrg.	+6 slam melee (1d8+6)/+10	14/11/14	+2	+2	+5	Damage reduction 10/magic
81-90	15d8	Lrg.	+7 slam melee (1d8+7)/+11	14/11/14	+2	+2	+6	–
91-100	17d8	Huge	+7 slam melee (2d6+8)/+15	14/10/14	+3	+3	+7	–
101-110	19d8	Huge	+8 slam melee (2d6+9)/+16	14/10/14	+3	+3	+7	<i>Envelop</i>

Because the character is technically dead for the duration of the spell, any defense against death magic applies to this spell.

Dispel magic, *limited wish*, *wish* and *remove curse* spells will remove the effects of this spell prematurely.

Create Vampire

Sanguiomancy

Level: Wiz 6

Components: V, S

Casting Time: 1 standard action

Range: Close (25 ft. + 5 ft./2 levels)

Target: Any valid sanguiomantic target

Duration: 1 min./level (D)

Saving Throw: Will

Spell Resistance: Yes

The target becomes a vampire for the duration of the spell. If the target fails the Will save, they are under the control of the caster as with *dominate person*. The following changes take place to the character regardless of the success or failure of the Will save.

- Alignment is now evil.
- No constitution score, +6 Str, +4 Dex, +2 Int, +2 Wis, +4 Cha.
- Type is undead.
- Gain special attacks: blood drain, domination, and energy drain.
- Gain special qualities: alternate form, damage reduction 10/silver and magic, fast healing 5, gaseous form, resistance to cold 10 and electricity 10, spider climb, turn resistance +4.

Because the character is technically dead for the duration of the spell, any defense against death magic applies to this spell.

Flesh to Blood

Sanguiomancy

Level: Sor/Wiz 3

Components: V, S, M

Casting Time: 1 standard action

Range: Touch

Target: Any valid sanguiomantic target

Duration: Instantaneous

Saving Throw: Fort

Spell Resistance: Yes

At the caster's touch, the skin and muscle of the target turn to blood. The target receives 1d6 damage plus 1 point of Str and Con damage for every three levels of the caster due to blood and muscle loss.

Material component: Leather dyed in blood.

Appendix 2: New Monsters

AMBER GOLEM

Large Construct

Hit Dice: 14d10+30 (107 hp)

Initiative: -1

Speed: 20 ft. (4 squares)

Armor Class: 26 (-1 size, -1 Dex, +18 natural), touch 8, flat-footed 26

Base Attack/Grp: +10/+21

Attack: Slam +16 melee (2d10+7)

Full Attack: 2 slams +16 melee (2d10+7)

Space/Reach: 10 ft./10 ft.

Special Attacks: Amber prison

Special Qualities: Construct traits, damage reduction 10/adamantine, darkvision 60 ft., immunity to magic, low-light vision
Saves: Fort +4, Ref +3, Will +4
Abilities: Str 26, Dex 9, Con —, Int —, Wis 11, Cha 4

Skills: —

Feats: —

Environment: Any

Organization: Solitary or gang (2-4)

Challenge Rating: 10

Treasure: Standard (the amber the golem is composed of)

Alignment: Always neutral

Advancement: 15-21 HD (Large); 22-42 (Huge)

Level Adjustment: —



An amber golem is a variant on the standard stone golem using the semi-precious material amber as a replacement for the standard granite or marble. Amber is not as heavy as stone, so the golem does not need to be as strong, but it is even more resistant to magic. *Stone to mud* and *stone to flesh* have no effect on the amber golem, as it is not made of stone. They are more pleasant to look at than most stone golems, and are often considered as much a work of art as a useful magical guardian or tool. As such, they are usually not kept in areas where there is an expectation of a great deal of combat – although they are powerful, they are most often symbolic rather than practical as most wizards would not risk damaging this valuable golem.

COMBAT

The amber golem closes on its targets to use both the slam attack and its amber prison attack. If possible, it traps its target in a corner. Though not as strong as the stone golem, it is still quite capable of crushing any target not trapped in the amber prison.

Amber Prison (Sp): As a standard action the amber golem can emit a 10 ft. cone of amber-colored energy. Anyone in the range of the spell must make a DC 17 Reflex save or else they are trapped as with *sepia snake sigil* cast by an 11th level caster.

Immunity to Magic (Ex): An amber golem is immune to any spell or spell-like ability that allows spell resistance.



ASH GUARDIAN

Large Undead (Incorporeal)

Hit Dice: 11d12 (82 hp)
Initiative: +7
Speed: Fly 60 ft. (good) (10 squares)
Armor Class: 14 (-1 size, +3 Dex, +2 natural), touch 12, flat-footed 11
Base Attack/Grp: +5/–
Attack: Incorporeal touch +7 melee (2d6)
Full Attack: 4 incorporeal touches +7 melee (2d6)
Space/Reach: 10 ft./10 ft.
Special Attacks: Spell-like abilities, steal essence
Special Qualities: Incorporeal traits, unnatural aura, vulnerable to sunlight
Saves: Fort +3, Ref +6, Will +9
Abilities: Str —, Dex 16, Con —, Int 14, Wis 14, Cha 15
Skills: Hide +9, Intimidate +12, Knowledge (arcane) +12, Listen +14, Spellcraft +12, Search +12, Sense Motive +12, Spot +14
Feats: Blind-Fight, Combat Reflexes, Improved Initiative, Weapon Finesse
Environment: Underground
Organization: Solitary
Challenge Rating: 10
Treasure: Standard
Alignment: Always chaotic evil
Advancement: None
Level Adjustment: –

The ash guardian is a creature of dust, earth and ash created when soil is fouled with the remains of innocent victims burned en masse; their angry spirits infest the earth itself with an unimaginable thirst for revenge. Ultimately the wrath of these spirits congeals into a single entity capable only of hate and evil. The ash guardian is usually found in the “special” earth belonging to a vampire. Most vampires find the ash guardian to be as good or better a protector for their precious earth than anything they could engineer, so it is left to its own devices as a de facto guardian of their sacred earth.

COMBAT

The ash guardian attacks ferociously and has little regard for its own safety. It acts purely out of anger, trying to inflict as much suffering as possible. Its magic is an extension of its dark will, so the ash guardian uses spell-like abilities as easily as its incorporeal touch attack.

Spell-like abilities: Caster level 7th. At will – *death knell*, *doom*, *enervation*, *ray of enfeeblement*. 3/day –

fear, slay living, waves of fatigue. 1/day – circle of death.

Steal Essence (Su): A living, intelligent creature killed by the ash guardian can be drawn into the creature, giving it 12 temporary hit points.

Incorporeal Traits: Ash guardians can only be harmed by other incorporeal creatures, magic weapons, spells, spell-like abilities, and supernatural abilities, and have a 50% chance to ignore damage from a corporeal source except force effects and ghost touch weapons

Unnatural Aura (Su): Any animal within 30 ft. of an ash guardian must make a DC 17 Will save or become panicked

Vulnerable to Sunlight (Su): An ash guardian in natural sunlight (not merely a *daylight* spell) cannot attack and can only take a single move action or a standard action but not both.

VAMPIRIC BLOOM

Large Plant (Swarm)

Hit Dice: 3d8+6 (19 hp)

Initiative: +2

Speed: –

Armor Class: 12 (-1 size, +2 Dex, +1 Natural), touch 11, flat-footed 10

Base Attack/Grp: +2/+11

Attack: Swarm +4 melee (1d6+2, half against standing) or barbs +4 ranged (1d4, poison)

Full Attack: Swarm +4 melee (1d6+2, half against standing) or barbs +4 ranged (1d4, poison)

Space/Reach: 10 ft./0 ft.

Special Attacks: Barbs, improved trip, lacerate, swarm

Special Qualities: Blindsight 20 ft., camouflage, low-light vision, low reach, plant traits, swarm traits

Saves: Fort +6, Ref +0, Will +0

Abilities: Str 14, Dex 14, Con 14, Int –, Wis 11, Cha 9

Environment: Underground

Organization: Solitary or field (2-8 swarms)

Challenge Rating: 2

Treasure: One quarter standard

Alignment: Always neutral

Advancement: 5-7 HD (Huge)

Level Adjustment: –

Vampiric blooms are purplish-pink flowers with moving thorny branches that grow to about one foot high. A typical group of these plants is about ten feet across. They thrive on blood rather than water, and because they are a created plant they are not found in nature except



where they have overgrown their original planting. Many necromancers or sanguimancers keep them for their morbid beauty and their value as guards.

COMBAT

Vampiric blooms attempt to poison anyone who comes near them in the hope they will collapse inside the swarm. Any prone creature inside the swarm will be lacerated so that the blood can feed the swarm.

Improved Trip (Ex): After a hit with swarm attack, vampiric blooms can start a trip attack as a free action without provoking an attack of opportunity. They receive an extra +4 on the trip check (with their size bonus, this adds up to a total trip attack bonus of +10 against Medium targets).

Lacerate (Ex): With a successful grapple check on a sitting or prone character, vampiric blooms use thorny branches to cause bleeding. The target gets a DC 12 Fortitude save or receives 1d4 Con damage.

Poison (Ex): Injury, Fort DC 12, initial damage 1d4 Str, secondary damage sleep.

Blindsight (Ex): Vampiric blooms perceive all foes within 20 feet using sound, scent, and vibration.

Camouflage (Ex): Noticing the bloom before it attacks requires a DC 25 Spot check. Survival, Knowledge (nature), or Dwarven stonemasonry can be used instead of Spot.

Low Reach (Ex): Since they can reach only a foot higher than the ground, while their target is standing among them the vampiric blooms only do half melee damage. A target must be sitting, crouching, or prone to receive the full damage of the attack.

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* Urban

** Desert

† Aquatic/Coastal

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