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# DUNGEON CRAWL CLASSICS

PART 1. ON THE PURPLE PLANET

#84: A LEVEL 4 ADVENTURE  
BY HARLEY STROH



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2014





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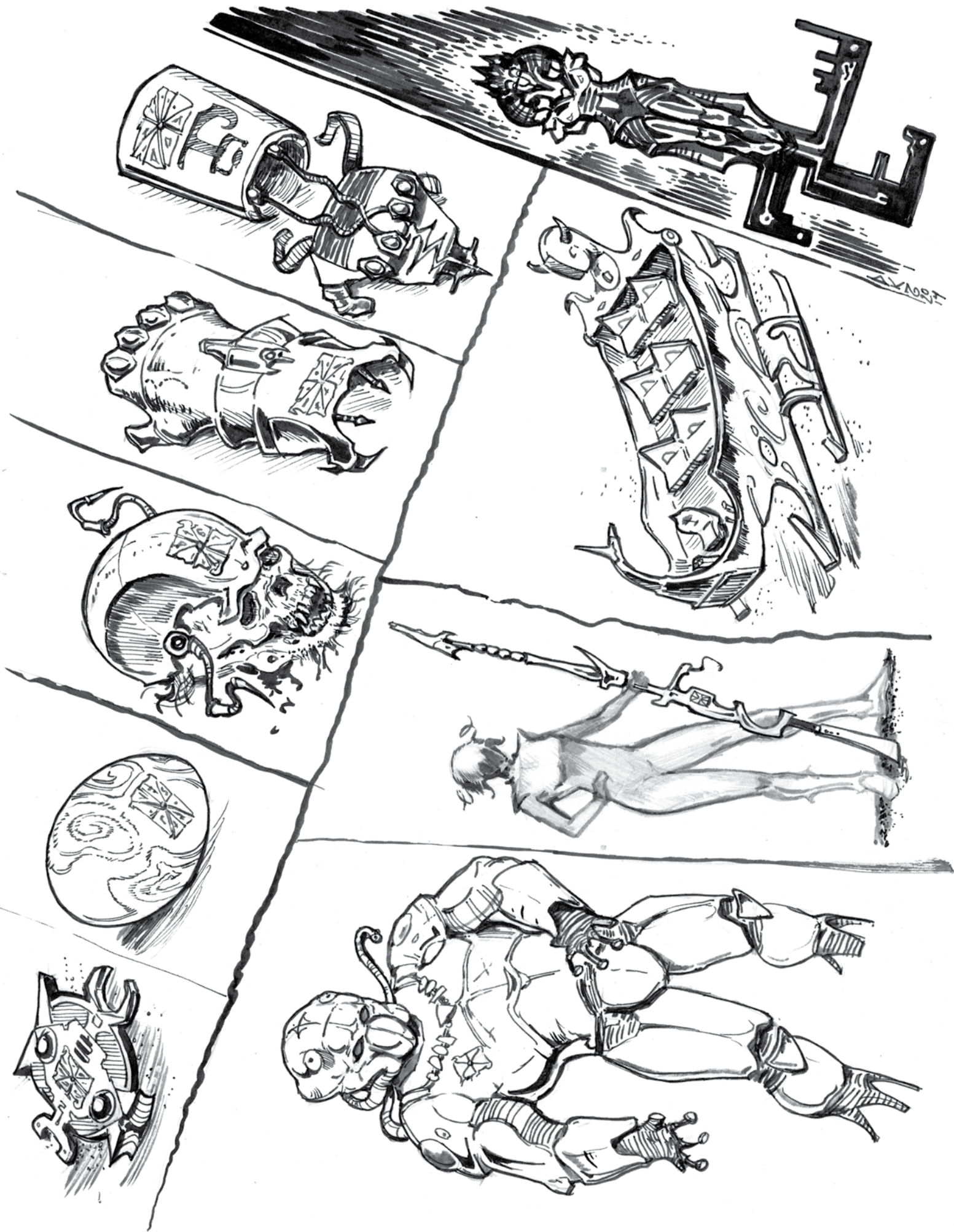
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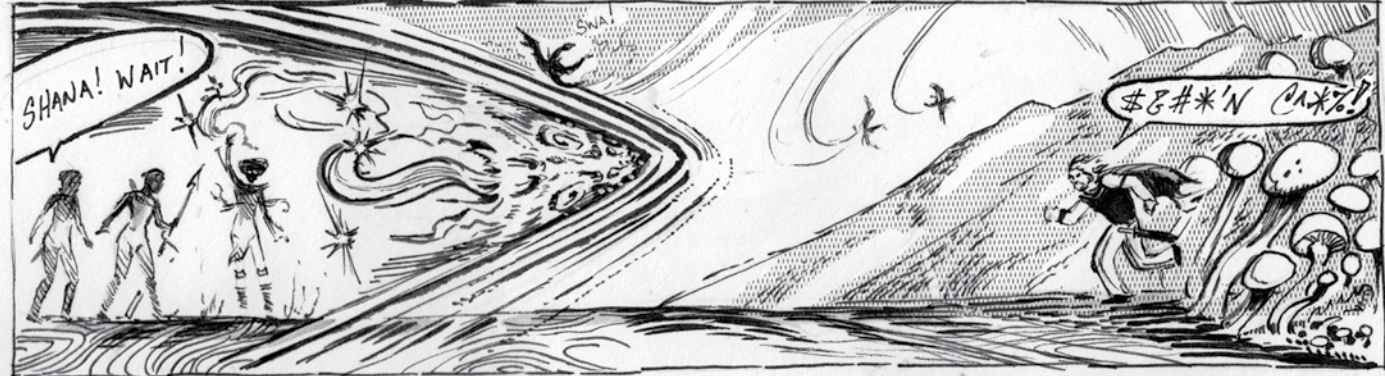
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THE BAND'S ADVENTURES CONTINUE IN DCC#85!



Numbered key to mushroom forest appears on page 9.



# PERIL ON THE PURPLE PLANET

## A LEVEL 4 ADVENTURE

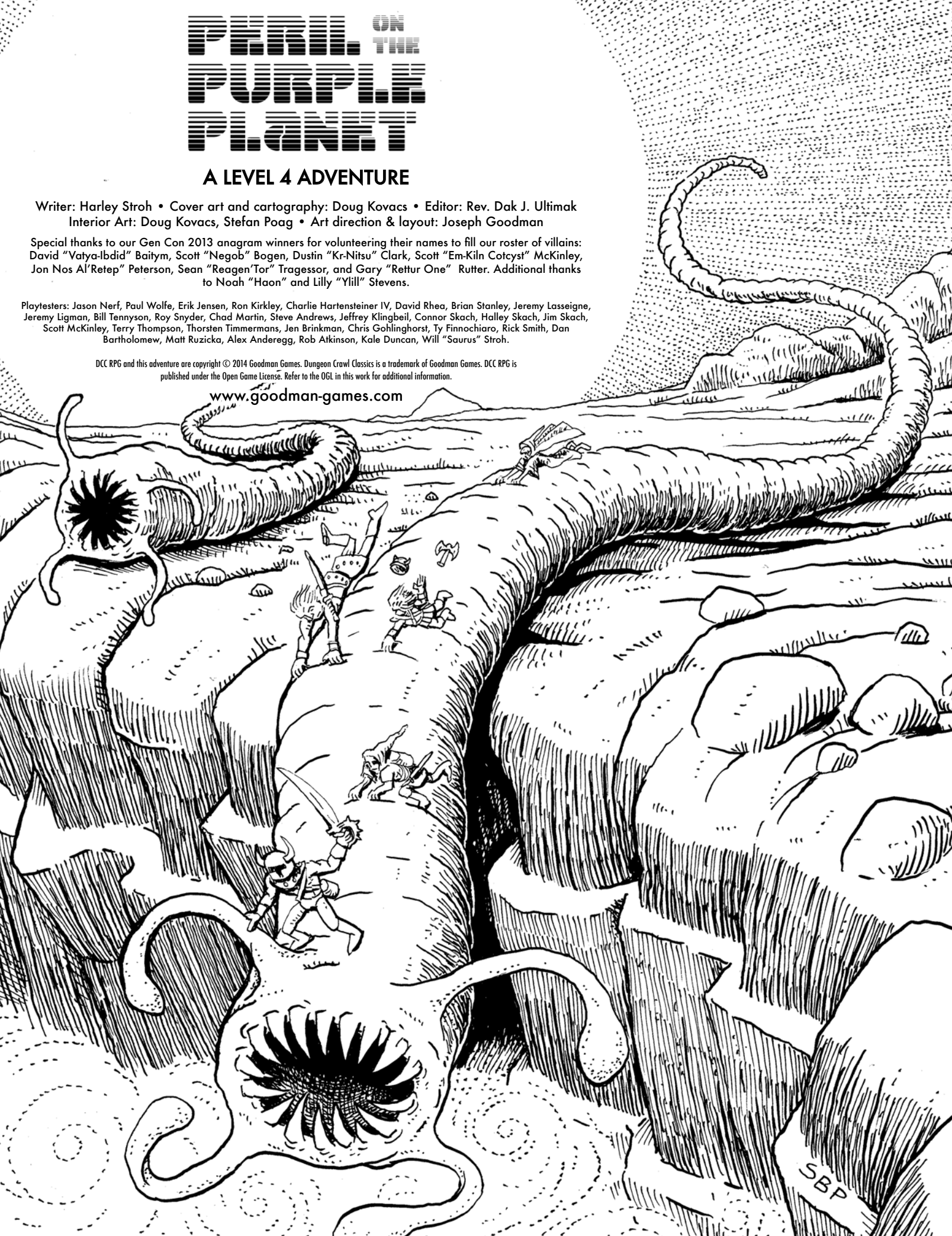
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Special thanks to our Gen Con 2013 anagram winners for volunteering their names to fill our roster of villains: David "Vatya-Ibdid" Baitym, Scott "Negob" Bogen, Dustin "Kr-Nitsu" Clark, Scott "Em-Kiln Cotcyst" McKinley, Jon Nos Al'Retep" Peterson, Sean "Reagen'Tor" Tragessor, and Gary "Rettur One" Rutter. Additional thanks to Noah "Haon" and Lilly "Ylill" Stevens.

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# INTRODUCTION

**R**emember 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.

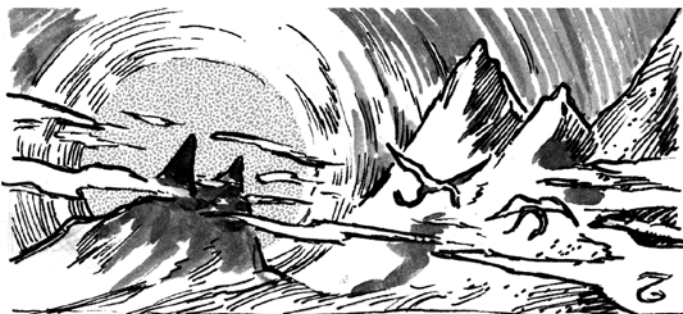
In *Peril on the Purple Planet*, the characters are cast across the cosmos to a foreign world. Left to die beneath a weirdling sun, the PCs' survival depends as much upon their quick wit as a quick blade, as even the finest chain hauberk must fail beneath the crush of an alien horde.

*Peril* is a hexcrawl spanning scores of leagues, populated by ferocious beasts and punctuated by keyed encounters. Judges should anticipate allowing at least two sessions for PCs to solve the riddles of the Purple Planet. At the judge's discretion, the adventure can be expanded into an entire campaign setting, where the PCs can return, time and again.

But first, securing the PCs' escape: In order to return home, the PCs must obtain one of the three remaining greenstones, and activate the portal back through time and space. Standing in their way are hundreds of miles of alien wasteland, the predatory creatures of the Purple Planet, deadly mushroom jungles, and thousands of savage man-beasts, hell-bent on the PCs' slaughter.

The first challenge facing the party is survival on a deadly foreign planet. Judges can expect the PCs to employ any number of clever solutions to meet the planet's threats. In playtests, PCs have become warlords of the man-beast hordes (even waging war against one another), while others have tried (and failed) to cut their way to victory.

Second, the PCs must locate and acquire one of the fabled greenstones. The gems are necessary to activate the portal in the pyramid of the ancients, permitting safe passage back home. While *shards* of the greenstones abound, unshattered stones are extremely rare. Presently only three remain on the plateau: the first, defended by the fortress encampment of House Cotcyst; the second, secreted inside the flying, ever-shifting soot citadel of House Reagen'Tor; the last, embedded in the brow of the mother death orm, Vatya-Ibdid.



## SUMMARY OF KEY PLOT ELEMENTS

*Peril on the Purple Planet* is set on a planet with its own defining traits. These are the key plot elements to remember as the PCs explore.

- The PCs can return home only by bringing a complete greenstone *or* 25 greenstone shards to the pyramid of the ancients (area A-1 on page 7).
- There are only three *complete* greenstones: one at the fortress of House Cotcyst (area B-5g on page 25), one in the soot citadel of House Reagen'Tor (area C-3 on page 29), and one embedded in the brow of the mother death orm, Vatya-Ibdid (area D on page 30).
- *Shards* of greenstones (as opposed to the three remaining *intact* gems) are used to power many ancient relics. A greenstone shard can also be used to spellburn (see page 6). Greenstone shards can be found in gribb nests (area 1-1 on page 18), the strong house of House Cotcyst (area B-4, page 23), in the cairns of kith heroes in the Ancestor Peaks, or carried by powerful warlords and their champions.
- Characters who recover a complete greenstone will be pursued by waste worms who sense its power (see page 6).
- The ancient relics include items such as plasma torches, rayguns, and hover skiffs (see page 12).
- Once powered, a relic can only be activated by pressing the correct sequence of runes (see Appendix A, on page 31).
- The Purple Planet is inhabited by the barbaric, warlike race known as kith (see page 3). Their champions and warlords fight in service to the ascended masters. There are two kith clans: House Cotcyst and House Reagen'Tor (see page 5).
- Common monstrous inhabitants of the Purple Planet are the quill-covered lion-like strekleon (page 18), reptilian flying gribbs (page 14), and enormous waste worms known as death orms (page 13).
- The weird dying sun of the Purple Planet drains 1d3 points of Stamina per day of exertion (see page 6).
- Mushroom forests populate the plateau. The mushrooms have strange and varied effects. Some cure damage from the weirdling sun (see page 9).

## ADVENTURE HOOKS



Transporting PCs to other worlds is fraught with challenges for any judge. And when a game relies on a character agency for player interest, simply kicking PCs through a portal can be a jarring experience.

However, the Appendix N provenance is clear: characters are regularly thrown into a myriad of worlds, and arrive eager to take on a new world of adventure. If this describes your players, then congratulations are in order! The next time a wizardly spell goes awry, an unholy idol detonates in the hands of the luckless thief, or a bottomless pit opens up beneath the first rank of warriors, skip directly to Player Start and adventure away.

For those of us needing a more coherent path from here-to-there, consider adapting the following adventure hook to your ongoing campaign:

- The greenstones offer a tremendous source of power to wizards, elves and their ilk. (See below.) Whether through their own hard-won research, or at the bidding of a wizard-king, the PCs elect to quest after the fabled greenstones. A variant of this hook is a patron offering to tutor the PC wizard in a lost spell, and demanding a greenstone in return.

## THE KITH



Since kin to humans, eons of inbreeding and weird experimentation beneath the dying sun has laid the kith low. While over 6' in height, their broad shoulders and round bellies lend the appearance of squat, brutish forms. Pale-skinned, their eyes range from ice blue to bone, while their hair is most often white or a sickly yellow. Ursine in appearance, the kith are unexpectedly quick and far stronger than most humans. They decorate their pale bodies with colorful dyes distilled from the plateau's strange mushrooms; the tattoos serve as a record of a kith's life and protection against evil spirits.

The kith dress in the scraped hides of their foemen, hung with laces of rotting ears and fingers – grisly trophies cut from their enemies. Most wield stone-tipped spears and clubs in battle, but some champions and warlords wield sacred relics gleaned from the battlefields of the high plateau.

The activation of the relics are sacred rites known only to select initiates of the kith, and never shared with outsiders. If a kith is compelled by *charm* or similar enchantments to reveal their secrets, the PCs are shown a sequence of the panels, as recorded in Appendix A, along with obtuse, needless acts, unique and specific to each item. *Face the mountains and place your forehead against the ground until the dusk-star rises. Sanctify your hands in the blood of your foemen and then touch the first holy rune.*

The kith are split into two rival clans. While physically indistinguishable, each faction regards the other as subhuman animals, fit only for slaughter. Both clans are engaged in an ageless war, vying for diminishing resources beneath

the light of the dying sun. None can recall a time before the war, and the kith derive all sense of worth and value from the conflict. Despite all evidence to the contrary, every warrior believes that by distinguishing himself in battle they will ascend into the circle of Master.

Attempts to communicate with the kith is most easily accomplished with the casting of *comprehend languages*. Failing that, wizards and thieves may attempt to discern patterns amongst the guttural growls and rasping barks. With a successful DC 20 Intelligence check (wizards) or a Read Languages check (thieves) the PC is able to communicate simple ideas to the kith; the judge should allow the character's player to "speak" using no more than single syllable words. While other characters (and their players) are welcome to offer suggestions to their party's speaker, only the speaker can be understood by, or understand, the kith.

If all these strategies fail, the PCs must communicate solely by gesture. The judge is encouraged to make the players act out their attempts.

The characters are so otherworldly to the kith as to exist outside of any cultural frame of reference; initially the PCs are perceived as neither friends nor foes. So long as the PCs do not attack the clan, and refrain from breaking their taboos, the clan has no need or desire to interact with the party. If the PCs fight alongside (or against) the clan in battle, they enter into the clan's cultural reference, either as allies ("kith"), or as subhuman beasts ("non-kith").

Kith raiders, champions and warlords appear throughout the adventure. Judges are encouraged to duplicate the following information for easy reference. Ancient relics are detailed in Appendix A.

Champions and warlords are distinct from the common kith raider, in both their appearance and equipment. Roll once on each column of the Kith Features table (see page 4) any time a champion or warlord is encountered.

**Raiders:** Init +0; Atk stone club +2 melee (1d3+2) or stone spear +0 ranged (1d7+2); AC 11; HD 1d12+2; hp 8; MV 30'; Act 1d20; SV Fort +2, Ref +0, Will -1; AL Var.

**Champion:** Init +2; Atk iron club +4 melee (1d4+4) or spear +0 ranged (1d8+4); AC 13; HD 3d12+6; hp 24; MV 30'; Act 1d20; SP 25% chance of plasma torch (+4 melee, 1d12 dmg) with 1d5 charges; SV Fort +3, Ref +2, Will +0; AL Var.

**Warlord:** Init +1; Atk sword +4 melee (1d8+4) or spear +0 ranged (1d8+4); AC 15; HD 4d12+6; hp 30; MV 25'; Act 2d20; SP 25% chance of death ray (+2 ranged, 1d5 dmg + DC 10 Fort save to avoid disintegration) with 1d10 charges; SV Fort +3, Ref +0, Will +3; AL Var.



## KITH FEATURES

### 1d20 Distinguishing Features

- 1 Covered from head to toe in ritual scars.
- 2 Ancient bionic arm (+2 to melee damage).
- 3 Giant. +1d12 hp and +2 to damage.
- 4 Blind in one eye.
- 5 Vestigial second head hangs from shoulder. Cannot speak but eyes track PCs.
- 6 Extra long arms hang to ground.
- 7 Blade worn in place of forearm.
- 8 Hair worn in a blue mohawk.
- 9 Flayed skin along back stretched into flesh "wings" supported by sharpened bone.
- 10 Copper stump worn in place of lower leg. -5' speed.
- 11 Accompanied by a trained hunting gribb.
- 12 Albino.
- 13 Hair worn in tight braids hung with gribb bones.
- 14 Mass of scar tissue in place of nose.
- 15 Enormous and obese. -10' speed, +3 damage.
- 16 Wild eyed and gaunt. -1d5 hp, +2 AC.
- 17 Eyelids, lips, ears and nose removed.
- 18 Completely hairless.
- 19 Accompanied by a pair of trained strekleons.
- 20 Roll twice.

### Gear

- 1d3 greenstone shards.
- Ritual flint dagger.
- Gribb-skin cape.
- Belt of shrunken kith heads.
- Whetstone.
- 1d4 greenstone shards.
- Armored cingulum woven of spearheads.
- Lacquered helm fashioned from a small death orm skull.
- Death orm hide shield.
- 2 skins of mushroom milk.
- 1d5 greenstone shards.
- 3 dried este mushrooms.
- Necklace of gribb skulls.
- Death orm plackart.
- 1d6 greenstone shards.
- Ancient copper bracers.
- Horn carved from death orm bone.
- 1d7 greenstone shards.
- 1 dried ythoth mushroom.
- Roll twice.



## KITH TABOOS & BELIEFS

Non-kith are mindless beasts animated by evil spirits.

By distinguishing yourself in battle, you will ascend into the circle of Masters.

Slain enemies may only be looted or harvested by the slayer.

Eating the flesh of your kills ensures that their evil spirits cannot return.

Non-kith must not be allowed to enter the Ancestor Peaks.

Non-kith must not be allowed to ascend the Emperor's Peak (player start and areas A-1 and A-2).

Slain kith must be offered to the gribb atop cairns in the Ancestor Peaks so they can be reborn.

Breaking a taboo must be punished by death.



## THE ASCENDED MASTERS

**A**s the tribes of kith were ushered into barbarity beneath the dying sun, their sorcerer-kings and queens desperately fought to escape the same fate. Through secret techniques and strange experiments, the undying regents slipped their mortal coils and the effects of the weirdling sun, retaining their intelligence and high culture.

Unlike the beast-like kith, the ascended masters were once visually indistinguishable from attractive humans. The men are tall and handsome, with chiseled features and broad shoulders. The women are graceful, lithe and given to an unsettling, otherworldly beauty. Both sexes carry themselves with the ancient, predatory air of serpents; even their best attempts at gaiety and kindness are forced and transparent.

Each of the royal lines escaped death using a different technique, which in turn has informed their family's goals and their overall physical appearances. Each line has also succumbed to a degree of madness, as seen in their encounter areas.

Each of the ascended masters is a unique creature; specific statistics are listed in their own encounter areas. However there is a chance that the PCs encounter a band of kith refugees led by a rogue master. If encountered, use the following stat block as a starting point:

**Generic Ascended Master:** Init +0; Atk plasma torch +0 melee (1d12) or death ray +2 ranged (1d5 + DC 10 Fort save to avoid disintegration); AC 15; HD 5d10; hp 25; MV 30'; Act 2d20; SV Fort -1, Ref +2, Will +5; AL Var.

## THE KITH CLANS

**House Cotcyst:** Militaristic House Cotcyst escaped from the effects of the dying sun by transferring their brains into stasis jars, and placing the jars atop the bodies of androids. The stasis fields and the android bodies are powered by greenstone shards; their dependence on the stones drives their campaign for conquest.

Of the two clans, Cotcyst is the better organized. The masters demand abject obedience from their kith, dispensing corporal punishment daily. The ritual mortifications are dramatic affairs, with all the raiders gathering to watch the bloodletting. Individual thought or the refusal to follow orders - even to the betterment of the House - results in punishment. As result, the kith serve with a dogged, single-minded vision, refusing to act except under orders from their superiors.

The constant warring has winnowed the ranks of the House's raiders, causing them to rely on their ancient weapons to carry them in their battles against superior numbers. These victories are won at great cost, shrinking their reserves of the precious greenstone shards, and driving the warlords on to ever more audacious attempts to conquer the plateau.



**House Reagen'Tor:** House Reagen'Tor achieved immortality by capturing their thoughts (if not their minds) in carbon-memory cells. For all intents they exist now solely as billowing black clouds of soot. The scions are able to assume any variety of physical forms - including mimicking their former selves - but only at great mental effort.

Their city is ruled by two ascended masters: Haon and his daughter Ylill. While Haon hopes to derive some entertainment from toying with the PCs, Ylill longs to escape. She lures the PCs into the city, hoping they can end Haon's reign of tyranny.

Her father, of course, will do everything in his power to keep the PCs from his daughter. Unknown to Ylill (or her father), neither can exist outside of the city.

The House commands their dedicated warbands from an ever-smoking ziggurat carried on the backs of an army of raiders. When they need to take physical form, the cloud personalities assume the form of an oily black castle in the billowing smoke above the ziggurat, while the chosen speaker takes the form of an ebony-skinned human.

Though the clan masters have escaped their people's slide into barbarity, it came at a great cost. The Reagen'Tor are "frozen" in time, unable to learn or adapt to changing situations. They exist solely as memories, and all new experiences are lost with each coming day. To PCs, the scions seem dreamy, and quietly distracted, disinterested in the present day.

Unable to respond to their enemies' evolving strategies, they march their ziggurat about the plateau, surprised anew by the dying sun rising each dawn.



## GREENSTONES



he greenstones are the heart of the adventure, and a source of tremendous arcane power. They are found in two forms: shards and gems.

Greenstone shards are thin slivers, ranging from 3 to 6 inches in length, and are used to power the ancient relics. A single shard imparts 1d10 charges to any of the lesser relics. A shard can also power a single spellburn, adding 1d10 to the spell check. Either use exhausts a shard, reducing it to ash.

The true greenstones resemble quartz-like crystals the size of large melons. A single greenstone can be broken into 1d100+50 shards. Attempting to spellburn from a greenstone exposes a caster to overwhelming arcane power; instead of a spell check, the caster must attempt a DC 20 Will save, or suffer 1d3 major corruptions. If the save is successful, the caster casts the spell at the highest possible result.

Using a greenstone in this way exhausts the gem. The greenstone's faces break into spiderwebbed fractures, the internal emerald light slowly fading and dying.

Casting *mending* upon a fractured greenstone creates a dangerous situation: an arcane vessel, devoid of magic. Successfully cast with a DC 20 spell check, the fractures vanish, rendering the crystal whole. On the first round, any magic items within 25' are forcibly drawn towards the crystal (DC 10 Strength check to resist). Any item that comes into contact with the crystal is instantly drained of any magic.

On the second round, any spell casters – cleric, wizard or elf – are physically drawn to the crystal (DC 10 Strength check to resist). A caster coming into contact with the crystal loses one memorized spell per round, determined at random, and 1d5 hp. A trapped caster can be torn free of *mended* greenstone with a DC 20 Strength check.

Transporting a full greenstone into the wastelands immediately draws the attention of the waste worms. For every hex traveled, make a Luck check against the PC with the worst Luck score. On a failed check (a d20 roll higher than the PC's Luck), a waste worm discovers the PCs and gives chase, with the aim of devouring the PC bearing the greenstone. If more than one worm falls into pursuit of the PCs, there is a 50% chance that the worms battle one another to the death, before the triumphant worm turns its attentions to the party.

## SURVIVAL ON THE PURPLE PLANET



he weird rays of the dying sun combine with the thin air of the high plateau to sap the strength of the living. While the planet's natives have grown accustomed to its effects (after a fashion), the effects are far more pronounced on the PCs. Non-native characters take 1d3 points of temporary Stamina damage for each day of exertion under the dying sun.

This damage can be avoided by complete rest during any 24-hour period, and can also be healed by normal rest or clerical magic.

Drinking one pint of moon-milk (found in the stalks of the tiger mushroom) heals all Stamina lost to the weirdling sun, and grants the PC a temporary +1d3 bonus to Strength and Agility. Both effects are lost after 24 hours unless the PC consumes another draught.

Partaking of multiple draughts in the same 24-hours grants multiple bonuses, but risks toxicity: PCs drinking two or more pints in the same day must make a DC 10 Fort save or take 1d12 points of damage and be rendered unconscious for 1d5 hours. The save DC increases by +5 for every additional draught.

The meat of the various mushrooms also offer varying effects, as noted under Mushroom Jungle, below.

## ADVENTURE SUMMARY

A sandbox open to the PCs' actions, the adventure typically proceeds through the following stages:

- **Arrival:** The PCs are transported to the Purple Planet, puzzle out the means of returning home (area A-1) and then emerge from the pyramid of the ancients (area A-2).
- **Exploration of the Plateau:** The PCs explore the Overland map, risking encounters with the plateau's inhabitants, and gleaning additional clues regarding the kith's masters.
- **Hunt for the Greenstones:** The PCs determine the locations of one or more greenstones, the relics necessary to return the PCs to their home world.
- **Flight from the Purple Planet:** Whether by guile, stealth or slaughter, the PCs acquire a greenstone gem. Returning to the pyramid (area A-1) the PCs activate the portal and return to their homeworld. Note that the two houses are bent on either the acquisition or destruction of the greenstone gems. Once the PCs procure their own, agents of both House Cotcyst and House Reagen'Tor give chase, hoping to acquire the stone for their own use.



# PLAYER START



*You and your companions are suffused in dancing flames, eclipsing sight and sound. Just as quickly, the emerald flames recede, revealing that the world around you has been transformed.*

*You are standing in a darkened room atop a low dais. In the dying light you can see lead-gray ceilings and floor, and a pair of exits – stairs rising from the chamber to your left, and descending from the chamber to your right. The air is stale and thin, leaving you breathless and stinging your lungs.*

The chamber has been sealed for thousands of years. The air – already thin from the planet's weak atmosphere – has been rendered toxic by the astral projections in the chamber below. Natural flames are limned blue and violet in the foul air, and shrink as the oxygen is slowly consumed. The air is worse the lower the PCs go; flames lowered to floor level are extinguished.

Each round a PC spends within the tomb he must attempt a DC 5 Fort save; on a failed check the PC temporarily loses 1d3 points of Stamina. If a PC's Stamina reaches 0, he falls unconscious and begins taking 1d3 damage per round. On a successful check, the PC is nauseous, but otherwise suffers no ill effects.

Opening the upper portal counteracts the effect, permitting fresh air to pour in from above.

Characters investigating the lower staircase see flashes of emerald light timed with an intermittent buzzing. As they descend the stairs their hair stands on end, and the very air seems electrified.

Those investigating the ascending steps encounter an abrupt panel composed of the same lead-gray material as the chamber's walls, ceiling and floors. Like all the artifacts of the planet, the panel is set with the 8 alien runes (see Appendix A, page 31); the door is activated by pressing rune number 8 and deactivated by number 3. Rune number 4 opens the door, other runes have no effect. Exiting through the panel leaves PCs atop the pyramid, area A-2.

**Area A-1 – The Dreaming Regent:** *The metal stairs open into a circular, domed chamber dominated by an ornate golden throne. A gaunt, withered man sits atop the throne, little more than a skeleton with its flesh stretched tight. His head is thrown back, frozen mid-scream; hundreds of bright silver threads stretch from his gaping maw, waving slowly in the gloom, before fading through the ceiling.*

*A short gray pedestal hovers before the throne. Atop the pedestal is a crystal shard limned with dying emerald light.*

If the PCs descend this far without opening the tomb to the fresh air (via area A-2), the air here will be completely fouled. Natural flames are immediately extinguished, and PCs must attempt DC 10 Fort saves every round they spend in the chamber. Failing the check, a PC temporarily loses 1d5 points of Stamina. If a PC's Stamina reaches 0, he falls unconscious and begins taking 1d3 damage per round. On

a successful check, the PC is nauseous, but otherwise suffers no ill effects.

This body is the last in a line of great sorcerer-kings. When the planet's civilizations began their slow decline, the regent dedicated his life (and un-life) to seeking aid from without. In the hope of saving his people, he cast silver astral threads across the universe – the same threads that have drawn the PCs to this accursed place.

The king's spirit continued to power the astral streams long after his death. The portal was powered by the dying gemstone. Two steps are required for the PCs to return to their homeworld: First, the PCs must place one greenstone, or 25 shards, atop the pedestal, activating the portal and causing emerald flames to leap up atop the dais in the *Player Start*.

Once the portal is powered, it must be directed by a character ascending the throne and succeeding on a DC 15 spell check. On a successful check, a silver astral thread erupts from the PC's core and he opens a portal to a world of his choosing. On a failed check, the portal goes wild and astral threads to a million different worlds explode from the PC's body. The caster is pinned to the throne, unable to free himself as his essence is cast across an infinity of universes. Even if a caster successfully focuses a portal, the effort leaves him exhausted and unable to take any action other than call out weakly for his allies.

Once activated and directed, a portal is stable for 1d5+2 rounds. In order to escape the planet, characters must pass through the green flames atop the dais in *Player Start*. Activating the portal exhausts the greenstone.

**Area A-2 – Atop the Pyramid:** *The leaden doors grind to either side, opening onto a platform. You take deep, heaving breaths of the fresh air until the stinging in your lungs begins to subside.*

*The platform stands atop the face of a large pyramid. The steep face is pitted and worn, and runs down to violet dunes, hundreds of feet below, where a ragged war banner stands, planted atop a cairn of weathered stones.*

*A crimson sun hangs weakly in the sky, casting a bloody pallor over the wastes. To the far north – or what you assume to be north – rough hills rise to craggy peaks. To the west you see what appears to be a garishly-colored forest. To the distant east, you spy faint trails of smoke curling into the air.*

*A cry goes up below, and two mobs of humanoids wielding crude axes and spears thunder down the dunes, all sprinting towards the flag at the base of the pyramid.*

Characters atop the platform are free to take actions or remain hidden as they see fit. One round after the raiders charge, a second band of raiders leaps from pits, hidden in the sand. The two bands clash in a maelstrom of violence. The sides are evenly matched, with roughly 35 members to a side.



# OVERLAND MAP OF THE PLATEAU



he adventure is contained atop a mighty plateau rising thousands of feet above the surrounding lands. Over three hundred miles across, the rocky highland is home to four ecosystems: the **Wasteland**, **Broken Hills**, **Mushroom Jungle**, and the **Ancestor Peaks**, each detailed below.

## TRAVEL AND ENCOUNTERS ON THE PLATEAU

The warbands are fighting for control of the cairn lodged at the base of the pyramid. The Reagen'Tor are striving to tear down the war banner and replace it with their own, while the Cotcyst aim to defend the banner and its place of honor. Both banners are composed of 8' steel lances, with bone cross-beams hung with the skulls and inked hides of their foemen. The "lances" are rayrifles; each still holds 1d7 charges. The rifles are set with panels and activated as per Appendix A. Neither warband fires their rifle, not realizing their true potential.

The PCs are free to intercede on the behalf of either band, or none. Each round 1d7 members of each band is cut down; when either band is reduced to 12 members, the remaining warriors' morale breaks and the survivors retreat back into the dunes, bearing their war banner. The victors do not deign to give chase, but instead ritually mutilate the corpses, taking ears as trophies while dining on strips of raw flesh.

If the PCs make their presence known, without clearly siding with either band, both warbands turn their fury on the intruders standing atop their holy site. Both bands of sub-humans scurry up the sides of the pyramid, howling like feral beasts.

The sides of the pyramid are steep, but the metal faces are sufficiently pitted to allow relatively easy descent (DC 5 Agility or climb check). Characters failing the check slip free of their holds and pitch down the slope, coming to a rest in the rough dunes, taking 3d5 damage. The raiders can readily scale the side of the pyramid. Any character struck while climbing the pyramid must succeed on a DC 10 Agility or Climb check; those failing the save pitch to the base of the pyramid, taking damage as above.

If the PCs come to the aid of one band, track the battle and the losses. Each PC is set upon by 1d5 (modified by Luck) opposing sub-humans. If the PCs and their allies carry the day, the PCs are free to loot the corpses of their kills. If a PC loots the bodies of others' kills (attempting to claim the war banner, for instance) he is challenged by the rightful owner (use the champion's stats). The remainder of the band forms a circle around the combatants, only interceding if the other PCs join in the duel.

The hex map shows only keyed locations; many other encounters can take place during travel and are not keyed to specific locations. It is up to the PCs to decide if and how they will interact with the plateau's inhabitants, though in some instances, the characters might not know a threat exists.

It is assumed that characters can walk 3 miles (one half of a hex) per hour. See the Overland Speed table in the DCC RPG core rulebook (pg. 308) for specifics on forced marches and other travel speeds.

In general, while traveling the wastes characters are able to see to the horizon line (roughly 3 miles, to the edge of a hex). This distance varies based upon terrain types of the PCs' hex and on the relative elevation of the features. Mountains can be seen up to 60 miles (10 hexes) away; broken hills and the mushroom jungle can be spotted from 18 miles (3 hexes) away. Other terrain features – river beds, ravines and the like – can be spotted from only 3 miles (1/2 hex) away.

## WASTELAND

Covered in shifting dunes worn down from the surrounding hills, punctuated with tufts of defiant grasses, the wastelands have served as the battlefields for the warring tribes since time immemorial. The wastes are littered with decaying bodies and skeletons, shattered weapons, and ever-present flocks of the vulture-like gribbs. Dust storms are common, scouring the landscape with burning sand and eclipsing the waning sun.

In the wastes, characters are able to accurately see the abutting terrain of all adjacent hexes (i.e., 3 miles in every direction).

## BROKEN HILLS

The broken hills encompass both the rocky hills and the craggy ridges that crouch at the feet of the mighty peaks and rise like fins from the sandy wastes. The raiders make their camps among the defensible crags and narrow washes, though the rocky outcroppings are given to flash flooding during the periodic storms. The hills are also home to the strekleons that prowl the night in search of lone or injured travelers.



## MUSHROOMS ON THE PURPLE PLANET

The back flap of this module is a player handout of the various mushrooms, keyed to the numbers indicated below.

Name	Descriptor	Effect
Garnidi ①	Tiger-stripes, spongy stalk	Poisonous; DC 10 Fort save or 1d12 temporary Stamina damage for 1d24 hours. Characters reduced to zero Stamina die within one hour of ingestion unless healed.
Resta ②	Tan-white, puffball	When crushed, the puffballs release a cloud of spores that blinds all creatures within a 10' diameter for 1d5 rounds (DC 10 Ref save to avoid).
Viscuson ③	Tiger-stripes, woody stalk	One pint of the mushroom milk collected in the hollow stalks heals all Stamina lost to the weirdling sun and grants the PC a +1d3 bonus to Strength and Agility. Both effects are lost after 24 hours. PCs drinking two or more pints in the same day must make a DC 15 Fort save or take 1d12 points of damage and be incapacitated (and unable to take any actions save rest) for 1d5 hours. The DC increases by +5 for every additional draught.
Husani ④	Thin, blue, tall	The meat of the spongy stalks is a mild poison (DC 5 Fort save or 1d3 hp damage). Consuming the meat of the mushroom produces no ill effects. The woody stalks are inedible but are used by raiders in the construction of palisades.
Este ⑤	Tiny, death's-head	Consuming the skull-shaped cap grants the PC +3 to hit and damage, +1d14 hps, and +1 to all Fort and Ref saves for the next 8 hours. Any Recover the Body checks made during that time automatically fail.
Meniart ⑥	Giant toadstool, red dots	The meat of the toadstool is mildly poisonous (DC 5 Fort save or 1d3 hp damage).
Upra ⑦	Midnight blue, towering	These enormous mushrooms stand between 100 and 250 ft. in height. The meat of the stalks and caps are both edible, but there is a 25% chance that the mushroom cap is home to a flock of 1d16 gribb that doggedly defend their lair.
Yicae ⑧	Sickly yellow, medium	Human-sized, both the meat and the caps of the mushroom are infested with parasitic eggs. The eggs hatch in 1d5 days, releasing millions of parasites into the character's body. Over the next 1d3 days the victim undergoes a painful transformation into a sickly, yellow, human-sized mushroom. The transformation can be stopped (but not reversed) by a DC 10 Lay on Hands check.
Lyiart ⑨	Black, puffball	If disturbed, the puffball explodes, throwing spores in a 20' diameter. All characters within the spore-cloud must make DC 10 Will saves or succumb to a violent madness for 1d5 rounds, unable to differentiate friend from foe.
Oneit ⑩	Ochre, short	The meat of this small mushroom is highly poisonous (DC 15 Fort save or 3d5 damage). The mushrooms can be boiled down to create a thick paste, suitable for blades. A blade coated with ochre poison inflicts an additional 1d5 points of damage (DC 10 Fort save to avoid), but must be re-coated after every third attack.
Ybolich ⑪	Violet, medium	Both the stalks and caps of the mushrooms are edible and nutritious.
Tsyche ⑫	Small toadstool, dark dots	Wizards, elves and clerics consuming these small toadstools are overtaken by a mental haze. For the next 1d5 hours, they must succeed on a DC 10 Will save to summon the focus to cast any spell. However, attuned to the mysteries of the universe, their spells cast under the haze benefit from a +3 bonus to spell checks.
Ythoth ⑬	Translucent, short, thin	Found in small patches of 1d5 mushrooms, this exceedingly rare fungi can only be found once during the adventure. Upon consuming one of the small mushrooms a PC must attempt a DC 10 Fort and Will save. If both saves are successful, the PC falls into a natural sleep. Upon awakening the PC reports having dreamed of entire lives on foreign worlds, and has gained enough XP to gain one level. If either save is failed, the PC experiences no effect. Consuming more than one mushroom risks poisoning; the PC immediately falls into a coma and must make a Recover the Body check to survive. If the check is failed, the PC's corpse sprouts mushrooms of a randomly determined variety.
Ha'aven ⑭	Brown, man-height, covered in dark nodules	Characters consuming the stalk must attempt DC 15 Will saves or be reduced to the mental state of a 3-year old child for 1d4 hours. Regardless of check success or failure, PCs eating the stalk are also effectively invisible to creatures of the Purple Planet for the same period of time (PCs can be seen, but are ignored); attacking or casting a spell ends the effect. Those eating the cap's weeping blisters are overcome by memories of all the children lost on the Purple Planet; Will save DC 20 or become insensate for 1d20 hours. On a successful check, the PC gains 1 point of Luck. Each subsequent use of either the cap or the stalk increases the Will save DCs by +5.
Retid ⑮	Slimy, brown, small and leafy	These small mushrooms are covered in a slime and deadly to the touch (DC 10 Fort save or death). However once the caps are dried or cooked over a fire, consuming a cap heals one class die of hit points. The caps lose their effectiveness if more than 3 are consumed in any day.



Characters traveling the spiny ridges can see up to 12 miles away (two hexes in every direction) by taking two hours to ascend the spiny ridges. Otherwise, characters can only see to the next bend in the sandstone ravine.

Travel speeds in the broken hills are reduced by half. There is a 15% chance per day spent in the broken hills that the PCs become lost.

## MUSHROOM JUNGLE

Home to towering fungi with woody stalks, mammoth toadstools, squat buttons, great bulbous puffballs, and wet, jelly fungi, the mushroom jungle supports most life on the plateau. The raiders dine on the spongy fungi and drink lustily of the moon-milk. Characters traveling the plateau without the benefit of rations will be forced to raid the tribes for stores, or harvest their own meat and drink from the dense, wet jungle.

Travelers in the mushroom jungle can see to adjacent hexes only by taking 2 hours to ascend and then descend the jungle canopy (DC 10 climb check, and risking an encounter). Travel speeds in the jungle are reduced by half. There is a 30% chance per day that the PCs become lost in the dense jungle.

The species of mushrooms are entirely foreign to the PCs, but characters with appropriate backgrounds can hazard guesses (DC 15 Intelligence check) as to which variants are

poisonous. Any further details must be learned through experimentation, or gleaned from the planet's natives.

Brave PCs opting to consume the fungi should select from the illustrations on the back cover flap. The inside back cover flap is keyed to the effects table listed on page 9. Judges are welcome to make their own additions, populating the jungles with dozens of different species. Assume the PCs hunting for a specific mushroom can find it with a Luck check, or an hour of searching.

## ANCESTOR PEAKS

The sharp peaks rise thousands of feet from the plains. Perpetually wreathed in clouds, the highest peaks are laden with snow and ice. The raiders entomb their dead atop crude stone cairns among the Ancestor Peaks; the lands are sacred to their people, and defended against outsiders. War parties encountered in the peaks are transporting their dead for ritual offering atop the high slopes.

The high peaks are home to flocks of gibbs. The flying lizards feast upon the sanctified dead, transporting the souls of the dead to the next world.

Characters in the mountains can see 60 miles (10 hexes) in every direction. Travel speeds in the mountains are reduced to 1 mile per hour (1 hex per three hours traveled).

# LOST ON THE PURPLE PLANET



Characters traveling without the benefit of landmarks risk becoming lost. While on the plains, or orienteering within sight of the planet's enormous peaks, the chance is slim, but parties traveling the chaotic hills or dense mushroom jungles face considerable risk. When traveling in such areas, there is a chance of becoming lost each day as indicated in the terrain descriptions above. The percentage chance of becoming lost can be reduced by 5% for each PC with a suitable background. (For instance, a woodcutter would enjoy a 25% chance of becoming lost in the mushroom jungle. A party blessed with three woodcutters, would have only a 15% chance of becoming lost in the same.)

Once per day the judge should roll to see if the PCs become lost. If the party loses its way, all additional travel should be rolled for randomly. The party believes they are moving in their intended direction (and can map as such), but the judge should secretly record their actual movements on the overland map, reporting sights accordingly. Roll 1d7 on the following "graphic table" where the roll indicates the actual direction of travel on a hex map. A result of 7 indicates the party went in circles and never actually left their current hex.

A party may or may not realize they are lost - that is left up to the players to recognize and correct. Lost PCs remain lost until they sight familiar landmarks and set a new course.

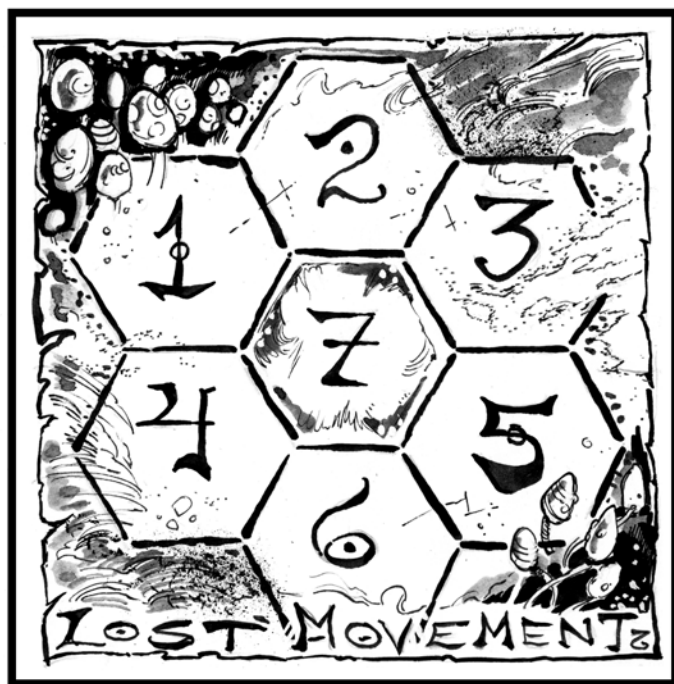
## RANDOM ENCOUNTERS

Overland travel on the Purple Planet is rife with danger, risk and reward. For every hex traveled, roll 3d5 on the appropriate terrain table, modified by the party's averaged Luck bonus (or penalty) and the following modifiers:

Moving at Forced March	-2
Exploring hex (1/2 speed)	+2
Flying	+1

In general, parties moving quickly risk stumbling into encounters, while those moving cautiously stand a greater chance of discovering ruins and spotting encounters before they happen.

Results for encounters are listed alphabetically, following the encounter tables.



## RANDOM ENCOUNTERS BY TERRAIN TYPE

Roll 3d5	Wastes	Broken Hills	Mushroom Jungle	Ancestor Peaks
3 or less	Storm (dust)	Storm (flood)	Strekleon	Storm (lightning)
4	Ambush!	Trap	Gribb	Strekleon
5	Scouts	Scouts	Gribb	Trap
6	Raiders (near)	Raiders (near)	Raiders (near)	Trap
7	Death Orm	Strekleon	Raiders (near)	Raiders (near)
8	Gribb	No encounter	No encounter	No encounter
9-10	No encounter	Abandoned camp	No encounter	No encounter
11	Raiders (distant)	Abandoned camp	Trap	Raiders (distant)
12	Carrion	Carrion	Abandoned camp	Raiders (distant)
13	Battle!	Carrion	Abandoned camp	Cairn
14+	Roll on Relics table	Roll on Relics table	Roll on Relics table	Cairn

## RELICS OF THE ANCIENTS

When Relics are indicated, the PCs have stumbled across remnants of the planet's forgotten past. Nearly all are remnants of the Last War, buried in loam or sand, fused into the bedrock, or unearthed by the sooty rains. Roll 1d12, modified by the party's averaged Luck bonus (or penalty). See Appendix A for details on activating and using relics.

1d12	Relic
1 or less	Mine
2-6	Greenstone cache
7	Field kit
8	Skiff
9	Skullcap
10	Plasma torch
11	Raygun
12	Rayrifle
13+	Silver armor

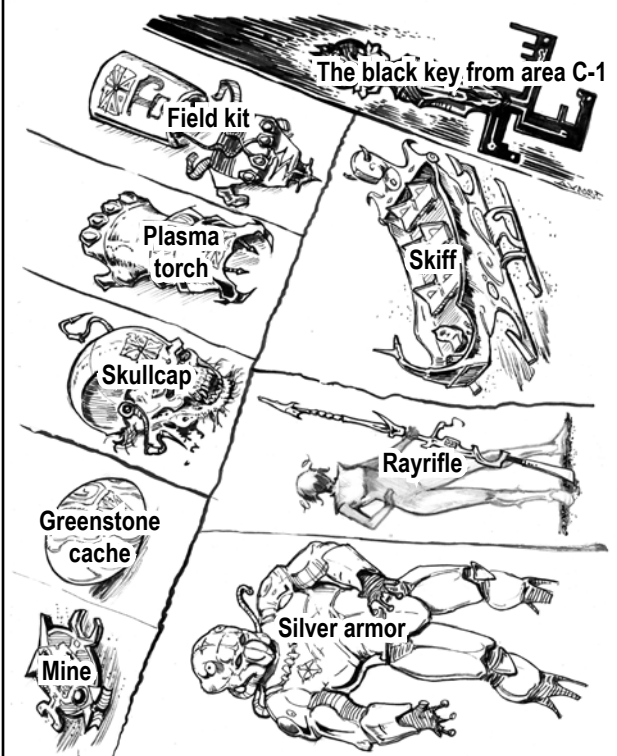


After thousands of years, no two relics are alike. Judges are encouraged to add their own individual touches to discovered relics, or roll on the following table for inspiration:

### 1d16 Relic Characteristics

- Every time the relic is activated, there is a non-cumulative 15% chance that it ceases to function.
- The specific item is especially sacred to the kith, who refuse to allow an outsider to possess the relic. Nothing will stop them in their efforts to regain the sacred item.
- The relic aligns with a certain PC; thereafter no other character can activate the relic. While activated, a shimmering shield surrounds the PC, granting a +1 bonus to saving throws.
- The relic receives only one half the usual number of charges from greenstone shards.
- Generations of kith have adorned the relic with beads, polished stones, pleated hair and swatches of dried skin. The first PC to claim the relic receives a +1 bonus to Luck.
- There is a cumulative 3% chance that the relic self-destructs when activated, inflicting 3d6 damage to all characters within a 30' radius. The possessor is safe from any harm.
- The relic appears as if it was just forged, with nary a sign of wear.
- After five rounds of use, the relic overheats and shuts down for a day.
- When in physical contact with the activated relic, the possessor can determine the direction to the nearest greenstone shard.
- The relic receives twice the number of charges from a single greenstone shard.
- The relic was once used by a legendary kith champion. Any PC possessing the relic commands the respect (if not envy) of every kith.
- The relic leaks power. There is a 5% cumulative chance per day that the possessor develops a minor corruption.
- There is a 50% chance per activation that the relic simply does not work. The effect is non-cumulative, and a malfunctioning relic may very well work the next time it is activated.
- If a weapon, the relic inflicts an additional 1d5 damage per attack. If not a weapon, the relic is adorned with bloodied spikes.
- The relic shuts down when it comes within 5' of wizards or elves.
- The relic can be powered by arcane spells. The possessor intuitively knows that he can expend a spell to imbue the relic with 1 charge per spell level. Spells spent this way are lost for the day, but may be regained as per normal.

The inside front cover is a player handout illustrating the relics.



# RANDOM ENCOUNTER RESULTS

Results from all tables are listed alphabetically.

**Abandoned camp:** The PCs discover a recently abandoned campsite – the remnants of raiders of the march. Half a dozen fire pits, pit toilets and swaths of matted grass are surrounded by a crude palisade of sharpened mushroom stalks. A careful search of the site turns up 1d5 hollow stalks filled with moon-milk and several hunks of roast gribb.

A successful DC 10 Intelligence check permits the PCs to track the band of raiders, catching up to them within 1d3 days. Hunters and those with a background in tracking receive a +5 bonus to the check. Roll 1d3 to determine the band's allegiance: (1) Cotcyst; (2) Reagen'Tor; (3) refugees led by an ascended master and 3 champions.

**Ambush!** Either by traveling too quickly or due to poor luck, the PCs are ambushed by 1d20+10 raiders. Each PC is afforded a DC 15 Ref save; on a failed check, the PC is surprised and receives no actions the first round.

The raiders vary their tactics depending on terrain, but surround PCs in every instance. They lunge from shallow pits (plains), charge down the steep slopes (broken hills, mountains), or conceal themselves behind enormous stalks (mushroom jungle). The raiders begin combat by hurling axes and stones, then close for melee with their crude spears and blades.

If more than one half of the raiders are slain, the remainder retreat. If the PCs surrender, they are bound, stripped naked and borne overland to the raiders' masters.

In addition to their crude arms and armor, raiders carry 1d4 pints of moon-milk, 1d3 death's-head mushroom caps, 1d3 greenstone shards, and rough-spun sacks containing 1d10 days' worth of mushroom-meat rations.

Roll 1d3 to determine the band's allegiance: (1) Cotcyst; (2) Reagen'Tor; (3) refugees led by ascended master and 3 champions.

**Battle!** The PCs witness a titanic battle between two opposing warbands. In the fevered clash, there is no chance of either side spotting the PCs, unless the characters make themselves known.

Each side numbers 1d100+50 raiders per side, led by a warlord and 1d5 champions. In the ensuing battle, each side loses 3d8 troops per hour; if one band is reduced to half its number, their morale breaks and the troops rout.

Characters opting to aid one band instantly win the trust of the band's raiders and champions. (The warlords, though seemingly friendly, are far less gullible, and perceive the PCs as a threat to their own power.) If the PCs prevail in battle, they are welcomed as heroes and invited to an audience with the warband's masters. Characters are welcome (and encouraged) to loot the bodies of their kills and take trophies from the corpses, but looting another's kill instant-

ly draws the murderous ire of the slayer.

**Warlord (1 per side):** See page 3.

**Champion (1d5 per side):** See page 3.

**Raiders (1d100+50 per side):** See page 3.

**Cairn:** The PCs discover an ancient cairn hidden among the rocky boulder fields. See area 1-4 for details.

**Carrion:** The PCs come across the corpse of an enormous death orm. Some 45 feet in length, the rotting corpse is distended and bloated beneath the red sun. There is a 30% chance that a pack of 1d5+3 strekleon lie in wait, hoping to ambush scavengers foolish enough to investigate the corpse.



**Death Orm:** The PCs are set upon by an enormous death orm. Over 30 feet in length and 8 feet in diameter, with a chitinous red hide, a grasping, serrated maw, and four strange, paddle-like antennae, the orm's sole motivation is its ceaseless hunger.

The orm has five attacks per round: one with each of the paddles, and then the maw. If more than two of the paddle strike the same target, the target is shoveled into the thing's maw and swallowed whole. Thereafter that target takes 1d5 points of damage per round, until it escapes the orm or dies.

The victim can be freed by inflicting 15 points of damage with a bladed weapon (cutting his way free), by a Mighty Deed of Arms (from either inside or outside the gullet), or by his companions slaying the beast, and then cutting the monstrosity open.

There is a 2-in-6 chance of discovering a relic in the worm's gullet. Roll 1d4: (1) field kit; (2) skullcap; (3) plasma torch; (4) raygun.

**Death Orm:** Init -5; Atk 4 paddles +3 melee (1d4) and maw +3 melee (1d12+5); AC 15; HD 8d12; hp 48; MV 45'; Act 5d20; SP swallow whole; SV Fort +3, Ref -4, Will +3; AL C.

**Field kit:** The PCs discover a translucent egg, the size of a skull, set with rune-panels. Activated per Appendix A, the egg opens whenever it comes into contact with a wounded PC. A dozen mechanical arms extend from within the egg, and begin to treat the character, healing 1d12 hp, 1d5 points of stat damage or alleviating poisoning. When found, the kit has 1d7 charges remaining.

**Greenstone cache:** The PCs discover a cache of 1d5 greenstone shards. Roll 1d4; the shards are: (1) hidden in a shallow hole; (2) hidden in an ancient, rusted locker; (3) on the body of dead kith; (4) arranged in a pattern resembling the first rune.

**Gribb:** The PCs are set upon by a flock of 1d12 vulture-like reptiles. Hoping for an easy meal, the gribbs target a wounded character, or failing that, the smallest of the PCs. If more than half their number are killed or incapacitated, the remainder retreat to the skies. The flock can also be distracted by offerings of flesh, but return for easier pickings in 1d5 hours.

**Gribb:** Init +2; Atk beak +3 melee (1d4) or talon +0 melee (1d6+2); AC 13; HD 1d10; hp 5; MV 50' (fly); Act 1d20; SV Fort -1, Ref +2, Will +0; AL C.

**Mine:** The PCs trigger a mine, a remnant from the war. The lead PC in the marching order is permitted to make a Luck check to hear the telltale click beneath his boot. Removing weight triggers the mine: the disk springs 3' into the air and detonates, hurling webs of black nether-strands, disintegrating anything within 30' (DC 10 Ref save to avoid). Characters in chain or plate mail receive a +5 bonus to the save. Non-living objects (including androids) are unaffected by the ray.



Noticed prior to detonation, the mine can be locked back in place by a nimble thief succeeding on a DC 20 disable traps check. On a failed check, the mine detonates per normal, and the thief has no chance to avoid damage.

**Plasma torch:** The PCs discover a silver gauntlet set with runes. Activated per Appendix A, the gauntlet manifests a bright blue flame extending from the fist: a plasma cutting torch. At the wielder's willing, the blue flame can extend up to 3' in length. With focus, the torch can cut any material, short of magical items. Wielded in battle, the torch inflicts 1d12 damage and ignores any non-magical armor bonuses to AC.

The torch is found with 1d4 charges remaining. Activated torches burn one charge per round.

**Raiders (near/distant):** The PCs encounter a party of 1d20+10 kith raiders, either 100 yards distant or one mile distant. The raiders are led by one warlord, who is aided by one champion for every ten raiders.

Encountered "near," the raiders immediately close for battle, giving chase if the PCs retreat. If the PCs surrender, they

are bound, stripped naked and borne overland to the raiders' masters.

Encountered "distant," the raiders watch the PCs warily, but pick a slow withdrawal, attempting to put distance between themselves and the party.

If more than half the raiders are slain, the remainder rout. In addition to their crude arms and armor, bands of raiders carry the following: 1d12 pints of moon-milk, 1d5 death's-head mushroom caps, 1d4 greenstone shards, and rough-spun sacks containing 1d20 days' worth of mushroom-meat rations.

**Raygun:** The characters discover a deathray gun, resembling a black gauntlet inscribed with the alien runes common to relics on the Purple Planet. Activated, the gauntlet discharges a black ray with a range of 100' and attacks on living creatures ignore any armor bonuses to AC, and targets hit are instantly disintegrated (DC 10 Fort save for 1d10 damage).

Non-living objects (including androids) are unaffected by the ray. Living targets wearing chain or plate mail receive a +5 bonus to the Fort save. (A death orms' armor is treated as plate mail.)

Firing the raygun spends one charge. The ray gun is discovered with 1d4 charges remaining.

**Rayrifle:** This weapon resembles an 8' long silver lance. As the raygun, attacks on living creatures ignore any armor bonuses to AC and non-living objects are unaffected. The rifle has a range of 200', and living targets must make a DC 15 Fort save to avoid disintegration. On a successful save the target takes a mere 1d16 damage. Living targets wearing chain or plate mail receive a +5 bonus to the Fort save.

Firing the rayrifle expends one charge. The rayrifle is discovered with 1d4 charges remaining.

**Scouts:** The PCs are spotted by a party of 1d12+3 raider scouts, one mile distant. The scouts close to investigate the PCs, then split into two groups. The first tracks the party, always staying one to two miles distant from the PCs, while the other returns to their warband. The scouts stay in contact with each other via whistles and drums. Unless the trackers are lost or slain by the PCs, the second band of scouts returns with a war party (as raiders, above) within 1d3 days.

## DROWNING

There are several points in this adventure where a character can drown. On the Purple Planet, the risk of drowning is not always water: drowning (or asphyxiation) can occur in poisonous gas, airtight armor, and choking clouds of dust.

Drowning creatures take 1d4 points of Stamina damage per round. They die when their Stamina reaches 0. The drowning effect is halted if the character is exposed to air or otherwise removed from the cause of the drowning. (In some cases within this adventure, the cause is choking clouds of dust or poisonous gasses, and a save against drowning is allowed. Specific areas provide more detail.) Stamina lost during drowning is not restored until a character spends time in clean, pure air.

In addition to their crude arms and armor, the band of scouts carries: 1d3 pints of moon-milk, 1d3 greenstone shards, and 1d14 days' worth of mushroom-meat rations.

Roll 1d3 to determine the band's allegiance: (1) Cotcyst; (2) Reagen'Tor; (3) refugees.

**Scouts:** Init +1; Atk stone club +2 melee (1d3) or stone javelin +0 ranged (1d4); AC 13; HD 1d7+1; hp 5; MV 30'; Act 1d20; SV Fort +1, Ref +1, Will -1; AL Var.

**Silver armor:** The characters discover a suit of silver armor. A desiccated corpse - its maw thrown wide in terror - has found its final resting place within the environmentally-sealed suit.

The suit has zero charges remaining. If activated, the suit cracks open, permitting the PCs to extract the corpse. The suit can accommodate humans and tall elves.



The suit grants a +10 bonus to AC, with a -3 armor check penalty and no movement penalty. The wearer is immune to airborne poisons or gasses, and receives a +3 bonus to Fort saves.

A single shard powers the suit for 1d4+20 hours. When the shard is exhausted, the limbs lock in place and the seal freezes closed. Any characters inside the airtight suit begin to asphyxiate in 1d5 rounds (see drowning sidebar).

**Skiff:** The silver-ribbed skiff is flat-bottomed, outfitted with three thwarts and a low railing. The skiff can seat seven passengers and carry up to thirteen with extremely cramped quarters.

Activated, the skiff rises 5' into the air. The skiff is steered by controls at the bow, and can skim across the wastes at a rate of 3 hexes (18 miles) per hour. The skiff travels at the rate of only 1 hex per hour in the broken hills, and cannot navigate the mushroom jungle or ancestor peaks (though it can be towed by PCs).

An abandoned skiff has power remaining for a mere 1d5 hours of travel. Each new shard can power the skiff for an additional 1d10+5 hours. However, the motive power and hovering are two distinct systems; even once the skiff no longer has power, it can still hover. Enterprising PCs with the proper background (sailors and their ilk) can outfit the skiffs with sails. This reduces the skiff's movement to 2 hexes per hour.

The skiff provides no innate protection from the planet's storms. Attempting to pilot a skiff through a storm requires the pilot to make a DC 20 Fort and Will save each hour spent in the storm. If either check fails, the skiff is upended and lost, scattering the PCs miles apart in the wake of the driving storm.

**Skullcap:** The PCs discover the skeleton of a kith, half buried in the sand. Time and sand have stripped the skel-

eton of all belongings, save for a scoured silver cap that remains attached to the kith's skull by a dozen bone screws and long, slender prongs that extend into the ear.

The skullcap has sufficient charge for 1d3 days. Activating the skullcap causes the screws and prongs to withdraw. The brave PC donning the skullcap hears a loud drilling as the screws bore into his skull and the prongs are inserted into his ear canals. New shards power the skullcaps for an additional 1d5 days.

The skullcap grants the wearer the ability to understand any spoken language. With a DC 20 Intelligence check, the PC is able to speak a language he hears; a character is permitted one check, per language, per day. After a successful check, the PC can speak the specific language as long as the skullcap is worn.

**Storm (dust):** Midnight-black storm clouds build on the horizon, overtaking the PCs in 1d5 hours. Lightning arcs within the roiling darkness and day quickly turns to night. The PCs risk death unless they are able to find shelter before the storm's onset.

The storm batters the PCs for 1d5 hours with stinging, choking sand. Each hour spent exposed to the storm, each PC must attempt a DC 15 Fort save. On a successful check the PC temporarily loses 1 point of Stamina. On a failed check, the PC loses 1d3 points of Stamina and takes 1d5 points of damage.

Characters caught in the storm are effectively blind and deaf. Attempts to move (marching through the storm) have a 75% chance of rendering the PCs lost, and if the PCs become separated by more than a few yards it is nearly impossible to find their way back (Luck check at -5 penalty).

Characters can avoid the effects of the storm by burrowing into the dunes, but there is a 13% chance (modified by Luck) that the PCs are buried by the shifting sands and suffocates beneath the dunes.

**Storm (flood):** A light rain builds to a torrent, then a deluge, roaring down ravines, scouring the river bottoms, and carrying away anything caught in its path. The flood builds unexpectedly; characters have a short 5+1d5 rounds to seek higher ground (DC 10 Climb check, or as adjudicated by the judge).

Failing to do so, they are overtaken by the flood-wave. Characters must make DC 20 Strength checks to escape the churning waters; the check may be attempted once each round, but for every failed check the PC is considered to have sustained one round of drowning (see page 14).

Characters caught in the flood are stranded for 1d8+3 hours, until the water levels subside.

**Storm (lightning):** Midnight-black storm clouds build on the horizon, overtaking the PCs in 1d5 hours. Lightning arcs within the roiling darkness and day quickly turns to night. The party must seek shelter or tempt the storm's wrath.





ONE HEX  
= 6  
MILES



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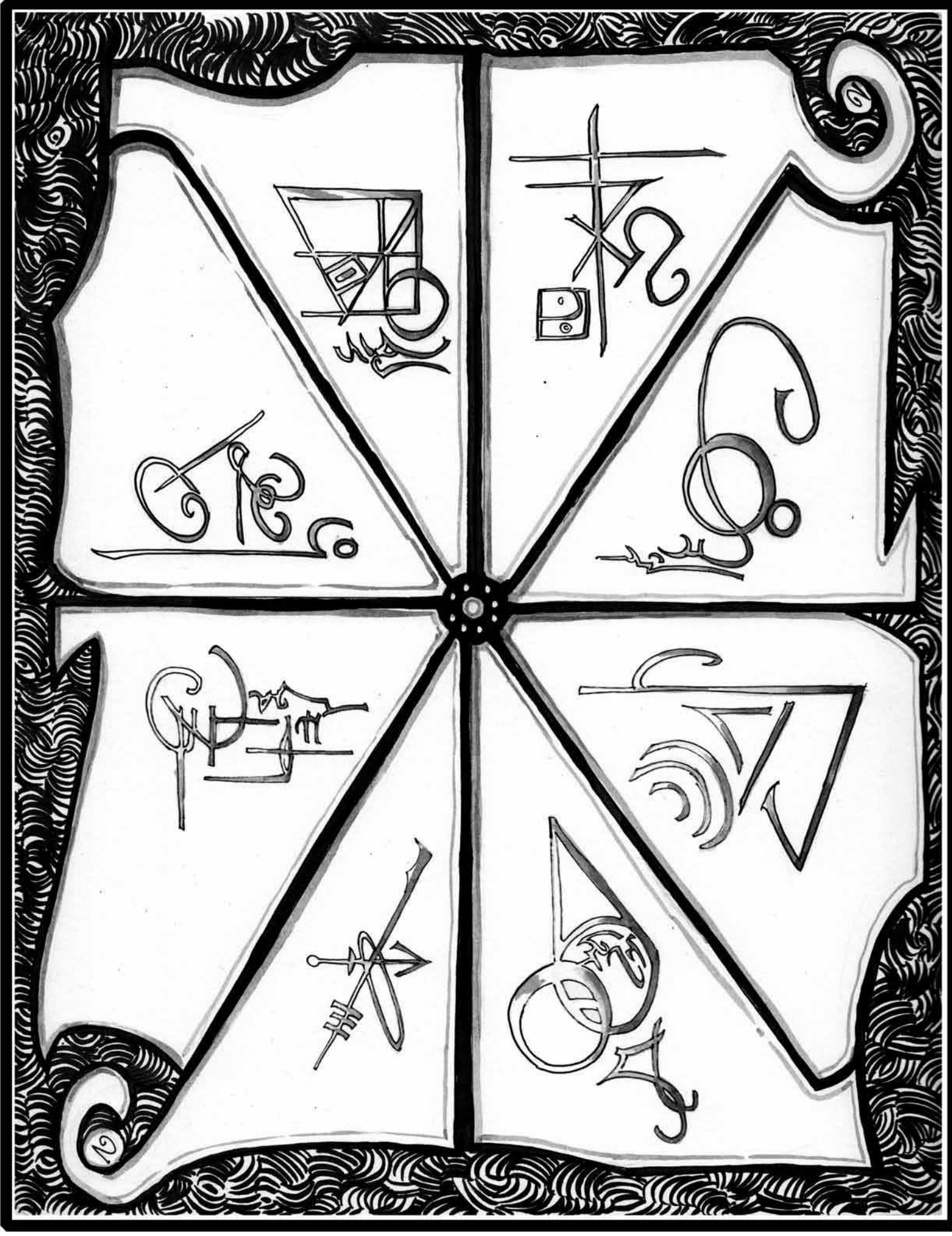
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# AREAS OF THE PURPLE PLANET

Following are location-specific encounters, keyed to the overland map.

**Area 1-1 - Gribb Nest:** A gray, putty like mound rises 40' from the ground. Some 20' wide at the base, it narrows to a mere 6' at the peak.

A compound of bone fragments and spittle, the nest is home to d30+10 of the reptilian flyers. The gribbs are most active at dusk and dawn, when PCs observe the vulture-like creatures departing and returning to the nest. At all other times the mound can be mistaken as abandoned.

Close inspection of the mound reveals larger fragments and some complete bones and skulls glued into the walls. The mound is easily scaled (DC 10 Strength or climb checks).

Disturbing the nest angers the flock, bringing the gribbs winging from the nest. The gribbs fight to the death in defense of their home. Characters investigating the top of the mound discover a 3' diameter hole descending 15' into the heart of the nest, to a small pile of bones and debris.

The walls of the chimney are plastered with soft, leathery gribb eggs. Descending the chimney is easy (DC 10 Strength or climb checks), but doing so without disturbing the eggs is a challenge (DC 20 climb check). If one of the eggs is disturbed, the nest comes alive, the flightless young pecking at the intruder in their midst. There are 15 gribb young, all eager for their next meal.

Characters investigating the pile of debris at the base of the mound have a 15% chance of finding some ancient relic. If treasure is indicated roll on the table below:

Roll 1d7+Luck	Result
1 or less	Stone knife
2	Stone club
3	Stone spear
4-5	Greenstone shard
6	Plasma torch
7	Raygun
8+	Roll twice, ignoring all 8s



**Gribb (d30+10):** Init +2; Atk beak +3 melee (1d4) or talon +0 melee (1d6+2); AC 13; HD 1d10; hp 5; MV 50' (fly); Act 1d20; SV Fort -1, Ref +2, Will +0; AL C.

**Flightless Gribb (15):** Init -2; Atk beak +0 melee (1d3); AC 13; HD 1d5; hp 2; MV 10'; Act 1d20; SV Fort -1, Ref -2, Will +0; AL C.

**Area 1-2 - Orm Pit:** The endless dunes and ridges part before a sunken depression, like the sandy bed of a dried pool.

Sand has drifted over the pit, hiding the closed maw of a gargantuan mother orm. The depression is 40' in diameter; stepping into the area causes the mother orm to open her maw. The sandy covering and any characters vanish down

As the storm passes over the party, lightning crashes all around. If the PCs find shelter, the storm passes without incident in 1d4 hours. Those unable to find shelter are not as fortunate:

Make a contested Luck check against the PC with the worst Luck stat. If the judge's d20 beats the PC's d20 + Luck modifier, the PC is struck by a bolt, arcing from the sky, taking 6d6 damage (DC 10 Fort save for half). The PC is left confused and deafened for as many rounds.

If one character is struck, check for chain lightning: make another Luck check for the PC with the next worst Luck, and so on through the PC ranks, until one PC escapes the storm's wrath.

**Strekleon:** A pride of 3d4 monstrous strekleons stalk the PCs. Over 15' in length, and covered in long, piercing quills, the lion-like beasts spring upon the party from hiding. They target the stragglers in the party, attempting to make off with an easy meal.

If the PCs put up a strong defense, injuring over half the pride, all of the strekleons retreat looking for weaker prey. If the strekleons succeed in killing a character, they cease their attacks, hauling the corpse away.

The strekleons stand 6' high at the shoulder, and can spring 45' in a movement action. Their long spines act as a defense: characters making melee attacks with longswords or shorter weapons must make DC 10 Ref saves or be speared by the quills, taking 1d3 damage. Characters in plate mail armor or silver suits are immune to the quills.

**Strekleon:** Init +3; Atk claw +3 melee (1d6) or bite +0 melee (1d10); AC 15; HD 3d12; hp 18; MV 60' or spring 45'; Act 1d20; SP quills; SV Fort +2, Ref +3, Will -1; AL Var.

**Trap:** The PCs trigger a trap laid by the kith. The lead PC is granted a Luck check to notice the crude tripwire before triggering the trap. If the PC fails the check, a deadfall of rocks and logs comes crashing down on the party for 3d6 damage (DC 10 Ref save to avoid).

the beast's gullet (DC 10 Ref save to cling to the lip of the pit).

The following round the orm attacks, extending up to 60'. Unlike her – relatively – smaller offspring, the mother orm cannot move from her lair.

The orm mother has two attacks per round: smashing the ground with its massive bulk, and biting with its terrible maw. Characters struck by the maw attack are swallowed whole. Thereafter that target takes 1d5 points of damage per round, until it escapes the worm or dies.

The victim can be freed by inflicting 25 points of damage with a bladed weapon (cutting his way free), by a Mighty Deed of Arms (from either inside or outside the gullet), or by his companions slaying the beast and then cutting the monstrosity open.

There is a 50% chance of discovering a relic in the worm's gullet. Roll 1d4: (1) field kit; (2) skullcap; (3) plasma torch; (4) raygun.

Characters thoroughly searching the sandy pit discover 1d5 greenstone shards.

**Orm Mother:** Init -10; Atk crush +5 melee (1d12) and maw +0 melee (1d16+5 plus swallow whole); AC 15; HD 15d12; hp 90; MV 0'; Act 2d24; SP swallow whole; SV Fort +8, Ref -6, Will +5; AL C.

**Area 1-3 – Lake of Death:** *The strange lake is perfectly still. No vegetation lines its shores, and greyish waters are entirely devoid of algae. A strong acrid scent hangs in the air.*

The lake is poisonous, ruined by the strange chemistries of the dying planet. A character drinking the brackish waters must attempt a DC 20 Fort save or take 1d12 damage as the insides of his mouth, esophagus, and stomach break into blisters. Anyone foolish enough to wade into the waters takes 1d8 points of damage per round, as the same searing blisters erupt on his skin.

The lake exhales gasses with changes in barometric pressure. Heavier than air, they present little threat to the party except in certain conditions. If the PCs are on the shoreline when the random tables indicate a storm, they witness bubbles rise from the brackish depths, polluting the air. A short 1d5+3 rounds later, invisible gasses overtake any creature within 100' of the shoreline. Characters must make DC 10 Fort saves or succumb to gasses, falling unconscious and then proceeding to "drown" (see page 14).

The first time the PCs encounter the lake they spy a skiff (per the ancient relics table) submerged 20' beneath the waters. If the PCs are somehow able to retrieve the skiff, the relic possesses sufficient power to operate for 1d12 hours. At the judge's pleasure, additional relics can be hidden beneath the still, grey waters.

**Area 1-4 – Cairn:** Area 1-4 isn't keyed to a specific location on the overland map, but discovered by searching the Ancestor Peaks. There are hundreds of cairns littering the high ridges, wind-swept boulder fields and steep ravines, but nearly all adhere to three traditional forms: chamber

tombs, housing entire troops of warriors; trap cairns, designed to kill would-be tomb robbers; and the long cairns, dedicated to the mightiest of warlords.

When a cairn is discovered, determine the type by rolling 1d3: (1) chamber tomb; (2) trap cairn; (3) long cairn. Keyed locations are similar in all three cairns, but not every cairn has all of the locations listed below. See page 21 for maps of all three standard types. Judges are encouraged to design their own cairn maps and additional areas, as they see fit.

**Area 1-4a – Entrance:** *A massive round stone nearly 6' in height stands against the slope. The stone face is scored with runes, and covered in a sheen of frost. A thick bundle of dried mushroom stalks, bound with fibrous twine rests at the base of the stone.*

The runes are identical to the runes marking the relics of the Ancients, but are non-magical and bear only ritual significance to the kith.

The cairn can be opened by rolling the stone aside, requiring a DC 20 Strength check if attempted by a single PC (the check is reduced to DC 15 if the frost and ice is melted away from the base of the stone). Two or more PCs working in unison can automatically roll back the stone.

The bundle of mushroom stalks is tied with two 6' fiber ropes. PCs examining the bundles discover they contain severed kith hands – offerings honoring the warriors interred within.

Except where noted, the interior of the cairn is dominated by the low ceiling, rising no more than 4' off the floor, forcing taller characters to stoop or crawl and limiting the use of two-handed weapons. The floor is packed earth and gravel, and the air chill.

**Area 1-4b – False Door:** *A low stone door is set in the wall. The door is scored with runes.*

The runes match those on the portal at the head of the cairn, and serve no purpose other than decoration. The door appears real under casual inspection, but dwarves, miners, stone masons, and the like thinking to check the structural integrity of the chamber immediately note that the door supports a portion of the ceiling. Thieves succeeding on a DC 10 find traps check note the same.

Attempting to open the false door causes the passageway to collapse. Characters within 10' of the door must attempt DC 10 Ref saves or be crushed for 1d12+3 damage. Barring extraordinary precautions, characters adjacent to the door are not permitted a save to escape the trap, taking 1d12+3 damage and becoming trapped beneath the rubble. Trapped characters begin to asphyxiate after 1d10 rounds (see drowning rules on page 14).

Reaching a trapped character in the small confines of the partially collapsed passage is fraught with danger. There is a 13%, non-cumulative, chance per round that the portion of the cairn above the rescuers collapses, as the trap above. The rescuers must succeed on five DC 15 Strength checks to reach their trapped allies; a PC may make one check per

round. The risk of collapse can be removed entirely by the attentions of a dwarf, miner or stonemason finding ways to support the ceiling, but these PCs are not permitted to aid in the digging.

**Area 1-4c – Pit:** There is nothing out of the ordinary to indicate the pit trap. Extremely cautious thieves note the trap on a DC 10 find traps check, and explorers insisting on tapping the floor as they proceed are permitted a DC 10 Luck check to note the sound of a hollow floor.

Weighting the floor with 20 lbs. or more causes the thin, dirt-covered flagstone to break, pitching characters into the pit below. The first PC in the marching (crawling) order must make a DC 15 Ref save to avoid the trap; the DC is reduced to 10 for the second PC and 5 for the third. If any of the PCs succeed on the Ref save, subsequent PCs are saved.

The pit is 25' deep and narrows to a diameter of a mere 2'. Characters pitching into the pit take 2d6 falling damage and are wedged in place (DC 10 Ref save to work free). Second and third PCs falling atop the first inflict an additional 1d3 crushing damage.

**Area 1-4d – Chamber Cairn:** *The low passageway opens to a sunken circular chamber. In the center of the chamber is a tall stone monolith; the top of the monolith glows with a strange, emerald light.*

*The pedestal is surrounded by bodies wrapped in skins. The bodies are laid out like spokes radiating from the center of the chamber.*

There are 2d12 bodies interred in the chamber. The kith are mummified in the skins of slain foemen; applied wet and packed with salt, the skins are sewn around the corpse and then shrunk into place. The high elevation, dry air and chill temperatures of the cairns ensure that the mummified bodies don't succumb to decay.

All of the warriors were slain in battle. Removing the skins reveals grievous injuries, amputations and decapitations. All are buried with their weapons, the simple clubs and spears common to the kith. None of the mummified kith possesses any treasure worth looting.

The monolith in the center of the chamber is carved from stone, and rises 6' from the floor, coming just one foot short of the ceiling. Atop the stone are 1d5 greenstone shards, the source of the emerald light. The shards are set into the stone and held in place with hardened clay. In order to remove the shards they must be chipped or pried free of their settings, requiring a DC 15 Agility or disable traps check.

On a failed check, the PC breaks one of the stones triggering a chain reaction, causing the other shards to explode. The would-be thief takes 1d5 damage for every shard atop the monolith (DC 10 Ref save for half), and is hurled to the chamber floor. The chamber flares with searing emerald light, blinding all within for 1d3 rounds (DC 10 Ref save to avoid).

The blinding rays of emerald light animate the mummies; they burst free of their dried skins and lumber after the tomb robbers. The mummies are only animated for a brief

while; the power of the greenstone shards is exhausted after 1d5+1 rounds causing the mummies to collapse back to the ground. The kith mummies possess un-dead traits and may be turned as the same.

**Kith Mummies (2d12):** Init -1; Atk unarmed strike +2 melee (1d4+2); AC 9; HD 2d8+1; hp 9; MV 25'; Act 1d20; SP un-dead traits; SV Fort +1, Ref -1, Will Immune; AL C.

**Area 1-4e – Long Cairn:** *The passage ends before a ledge dropping 10' into the darkened, circular chamber beyond. In the center of the chamber a bier of stacked stones rises to the ceiling.*

*The floor of the chamber is entirely covered in the skin of an enormous orm. Shrunk gribbs, their wings outstretched as if in flight, overlook the chamber. All is silent and still.*

The chamber is the final resting place of a champion or warlord of the Purple Planet. The warrior's corpse – and his powerful relics – lie buried beneath the stone blocks. The shrunk gribbs and the orm skin are offerings marking the prowess of the fallen hero.

Experienced tomb-robbers are right to be wary. The stacked pillar of stones serves two roles: concealing the body of the kith hero, and supporting the ceiling. Removing the stones risks collapsing the chamber, a danger readily recognized by thieves, dwarves and stone masons.

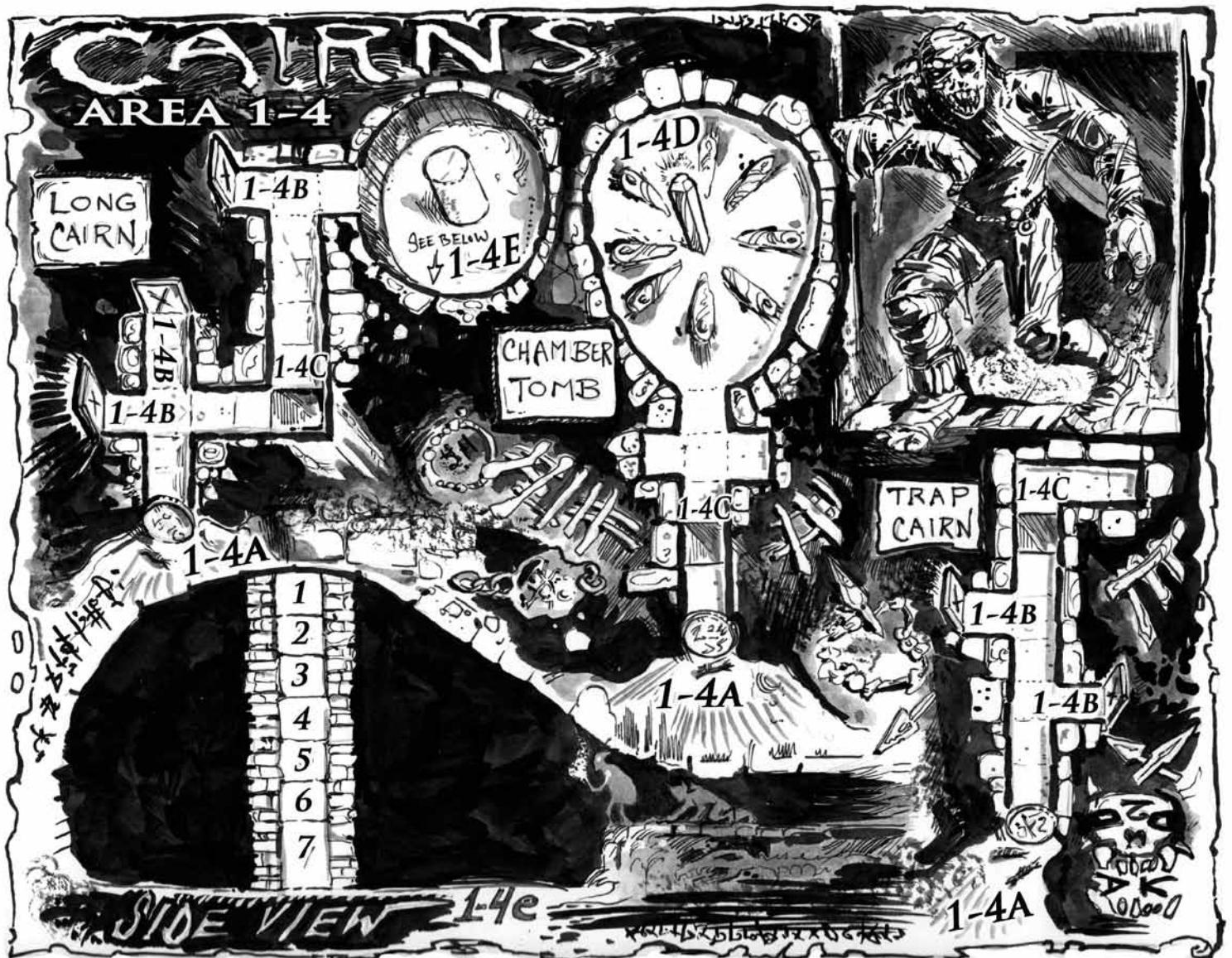
The kith hero is concealed beneath the stones in the column, but the precise height varies in each cairn. In order to unearth the corpse and its riches, the PCs must find a way to safely remove the stones necessary to reach the mummy without causing a cave-in.

Choose, or randomly select, a section of the column on the tracker adjacent to the cairn map to locate the mummy. Removing a stone requires three PCs succeeding on DC 10 Strength checks, or two PCs succeeding on DC 15 Strength checks. A single, herculean PC, can remove a stone with a DC 20 Strength check. By removing a stone, a PC is able to examine the column above and below the stone.

For every stone removed, there is a cumulative 7% chance that the pillar collapses, dropping the ceiling down on the PCs. Call for initiative; every PC beating the judge's roll must make a DC 10 Ref save to escape the chamber. Those failing to beat the judge's roll must make a DC 15 Ref save to escape. Any PC caught within the chamber takes 4d12 damage and begins suffocating beneath several tons of stone and earth.

The PCs' survival depends on luck, or puzzling out a means of circumventing the column trap; a thief is **not** able to "disable" the trap with a disable trap check. It can only be done by clever actions on the part of the players.

**Looting the Corpse:** If the PCs successfully locate the corpse without collapsing the chamber, they can haul the body of the kith hero from the interior of the column. The mummy spills free, followed by a trail of salted earth, along with its treasure. Roll 1d100 for each of the three treasure types on the table shown in the sidebar.



## LOOTING THE CORPSE IN AREA 1-4E

1d100	Adornments	Arms and Armor	Relics
1-30	1d5 Copper necklaces (2 gp each)	None	None
31-55	1d5 Silver necklaces (5 sp each)	1d3 Spearheads	None
56-75	1d5 Gold necklaces (10 gp each), 2 copper bracers (5 gp each)	1d5 Spearheads and an orm-skin shield	1d3 Greenstone shards
76-90	1d10 Gold necklaces, 2 copper bracers, 1 silver torc (20 gp)	1d5 Spearheads, an orm-skin shield, and a two-handed sword	1d4 Greenstone shards
91-95	1d10 Gold necklaces, 2 copper bracers, 1 silver torc, and a bronze cirlet (5 gp)	1d5 Spearheads, an orm-skin shield, two-handed sword, and hide armor	1d6 Greenstone shards and a plasma torch
96-99	Roll twice	As 91, and a second roll on Adornments	1d8 Greenstone shards and a raygun
00	As 91, and an additional roll on Relics	As 91, and an additional roll on Relics	1d12 Greenstone shards, rayrifle and a skullcap

## AREA B: CASTELLUM COTCYST

*A military fort stands atop a ridge, surrounded on all sides by a shallow ditch and a palisade of woody stalks. Behind the palisade, you see the tops of tents and a tall wooden tower, emerging from a haze of smoke.*

*Armed sentries, war banners billowing from their spears, stand silhouetted along the wall.*

The castellum serves as the base for the 750 kith of House Cotcyst; at any time there are 500+1d100 kith present. Highly regimented under the watchful eyes of their masters, the kith fight to the death in the defense of the fort.

Pairs of sentries are spaced 50' apart along the top of the wall. There are an additional 10 sentries watching the walls from atop the tower. The banners on the spears serve as two means to the same end: if the sentries spy enemies (any non-kith), the flags go up, alerting the fort; additionally, if ever the sentries atop the tower see a fellow's banner drop (for instance, if a wall-sentry is stealthily murdered), they give out a cry, rousing the entire camp to action.

Three rounds after the alarm is raised, and every round thereafter, 3d20 armed kith arrive, directed by the sentries atop the walls and tower. This continues until all the kith in camp are accounted for. Warriors in the tower remain with their warlords and ascended masters, unless directed otherwise.

The castellum walls are 15' high and easily scaled with DC 10 climb checks. The mushroom stalks offer cover to sentries (+2 to AC), and are not readily flammable, instead smoldering and emitting a foul, green smoke.

See map B for the following encounter areas:

**Area B-1 - Gates:** The castellum has two main gates and a single smaller, auxiliary gate. During the day, the main gates are left open, as war parties depart and return from raids. At dusk, the gates are closed and barred; war parties returning between dusk and dawn use the auxiliary gate. (Parties approaching the main gate after dusk are immediately recognized as strangers; hails and attempts to parlay are answered with violence.)

The walls and gates are unguarded for one hour a day - at noon - when the entire camp gathers at area B-3 to take part in the public whippings.

The main gates are simply short sections of wall, locked in place with horizontal beams. Even if the bars are removed, the walls must be physically moved by brute force (a combined DC 30 Strength check; up to 10 characters may add their check totals). If the bars are not removed, the gates can be battered down with a single DC 40 Strength check, or smashed by inflicting more than 100 points of damage with blunt weapons or axes.

The auxiliary gate is 6' wide, hung on leather hinges, and barred from within. If the bars are not removed the smaller gate must be battered down with a DC 25 Strength check,

or destroyed by inflicting more than 50 points of damage with blunt weapons or axes. If the bars are removed, the gate easily swings open.

**Area B-2 - Tent Barracks:** Each tent houses ten kith, their bedding, weapons and gear. There is a 25% chance that a tent's occupants are present, unless the alarm has been raised by the sentries.

The tents are made of tightly woven canvas supported by a single pole cut from a mushroom stalk. The tents are readily collapsed by cutting or knocking down the pole (AC 5, hp 3).

In the center of each tent is a brazier of hot coals, used for both warmth and cooking. Collapsed tents catch fire in 1d5 rounds.

These fires quickly grow into conflagrations, jumping to the next tent every 1d3 rounds. The ensuing smoke and flames provide sufficient chaos to permit PCs to move undetected through the camp (Luck check at +5 bonus or be spotted). It takes the kith 5d8 rounds to contain the fires.

**Area B-3 - Bleeding Yard:** *The tents open to a small field set with scores of tall posts. Kith are bound to roughly one-third of the posts. Some bodies slump forward, supported by their bonds, others stand defiantly, and others are bloated and dead. All the kith bear vicious wounds on their faces, bellies and backs.*

*In the center of the field is a low platform, rising some 3' off the ground. The platform is stained with pools of dried blood.*

There are 23 kith prisoners, and another 9 corpses, bound to the whipping posts. All were once warriors in the service of House Cotcyst, but now they stand as abject examples to those that would refuse the masters' orders. Their hands and feet are bound with thick cords (AC 5, hp 2); the cords can be torn free with DC 15 Strength checks.

At noon, the prisoners are untied, marched to the platform and tortured. The whippings are dramatic, ritual affairs, attended by the entire camp. This is the one time of day when the walls and gates are unguarded.

The prisoners are guarded by 10 warriors, hand selected by the Lord of Cats, the torturer responsible for the ritual whippings. A towering, bare-chested kith, the Lord is never without his barbed cat o' nine tails. The Lord also carries a plasma torch (5 charges remaining) and can use both the torch and whip in tandem.

Freed, the prisoners attack their former brothers with brutal ferocity. If the PCs aid the prisoners, they ask to join the party.

**Lord of Cats:** Init +2; Atk cat o' nine tails +4 melee (1d7+4) and plasma torch +4 melee (1d12); AC 15; HD 3d12+6; hp 30; MV 30'; Act 2d20; SV Fort +3, Ref +2, Will +0; AL L.

**Guards (10):** Init +0; Atk spear +3 melee (1d8+3) or javelin +0 ranged (1d6+3); AC 12; HD 1d12+2; hp 8; MV 30'; Act 1d20; SV Fort +2, Ref +0, Will -1; AL L.





**Kith Prisoner (23):** Init +0; Atk fist (1d3-1); AC 8; HD 1d12+2; hp 1 (8); MV 15' (30'); Act 1d16; SV Fort -3, Ref -3, Will -5; AL L.

**Area B-4 – Strong House:** *The squat stone building stands alone. Devoid of windows, the building sports a single door. A lone kith stands before the door, spear in hand.*

House Cotcyst uses the building as its depot for greenstone shards and relics. The strong house lives up to its name – apart from the door, there is no other way in or out. The door is barred from within, and guarded by five kith stationed inside. The guards only remove the bars if the kith outside gives a specific knock and speaks a password through the door: “Solin-to.” Only warlords or ascended masters are permitted to access the strong house.

The reinforced door can be battered down (DC 25 Strength check) or destroyed (40 hp) by blunt weapons or axes. If attacked, the outside guard shouts for aid, then retreats to raise reinforcements. Inside the strong house, the guards ready their energy weapons, retaliating as soon as the door is breached.

Hard pressed, the guards would rather destroy the depot than allow it to fall into enemy hands. If more than two guards are laid low, one of the remaining guards activates a grenade. If the kith is killed or knocked unconscious, the grenade tumbles from his hands, detonating in the enclosed space and triggering the other weapons. The ensuing explosion inflicts 20d10 damage to all characters within 50' (DC 15 Ref save to avoid), destroying the strong house, the relics, and all the greenstone shards.

The strong house is a trove of relics, held in ornately carved mushroom-stalk cases:

- 3 rayguns
- 2 rayrifles
- 2 plasma torches
- 6 mines
- 25 greenstone shards



**Depot Guards (6):** Init +2; Atk iron club +4 melee (1d4+4) or rayrifle +0 ranged (1d16, DC 15 Fort save to avoid disintegration); AC 13; HD 3d12+6; hp 24; MV 30'; Act 1d20; SP grenade (1 per guard; 20d10 damage within 50' if detonated within the depot; DC 15 Ref save to avoid); SV Fort +3, Ref +2, Will +0; AL L.

**Area B-5 – Tower:** *The wooden tower rises some 30' in height, topped with an overhanging bretasche and a low, sloping roof. Tattooed skins hang from spikes set in the walls of the tower, and shift in the breeze.*

*The base of the tower is protected by a decagonal wooden hall. A pair of kith guards flank the pair of wide, double doors opening into the tower-keep.*

The tower is the home to the masters of House Cotcyst. The guards stop any characters (kith or otherwise) approaching the tower, calling for reinforcements from within (area B-5a).

The kith skins (wetted daily from above) are intended to protect the tower from flaming missiles and rays. They do protect the tower against mundane missiles, but do little to avert magical attacks like *fireball* or *lightning bolt*.

Set alight, the tower collapses in 1d7+10 rounds, crushing anyone in the outer hold (area B-5a) for 3d12 damage (DC 15 Fort save for half). The collapsing tower reveals the silvery, egg-shaped hull of the jump shuttle (area B-5g).

**Tower Guards (2):** Init +0; Atk iron spear +2 melee or ranged (1d6+2); AC 11; HD 1d12+2; hp 8; MV 30'; Act 1d20; SV Fort +2, Ref +0, Will -1; AL Var.

**Area B-5a – Outer Hold:** *A somber air pervades the darkened hall. The air is thick with the scent of moist earth and wood smoke. The timber walls are black with soot, and hung with grisly trophies: severed heads, hands and ears.*

*In the center of the chamber is a fire pit, aglow with crimson embers. Across the pit is a set of double doors. To your left and right are low, wooden archways opening to the chambers surrounding the tower proper.*

Four additional tower guards and their commander quarter here. They respond to any alarms raised outside the tower in 1d5 rounds. The commander is an enormous kith covered in scars from a lifetime of battle; he calls out opposing warriors for single combat. If he is bested by a single combatant, his troops' morale breaks and they flee into the tower.

The warriors sleep on thatched mats. During the day the mats are rolled and stowed in the corner, along with stores of smoked kith flesh and 1d5 pints of moon-milk.

The entrance can be barred with three pitted metal rods (scavenged from the wastes). Once barred, the doors can withstand up to a DC 25 Strength check, or up to 50 points of damage (dealt by blunt weapons or axes).

A wooden ladder stands in the northeast corner of the room. It climbs through a hatch in the ceiling and up the outside of the tower to the bretasche (area B-5f).

**Champion:** Init +2; Atk iron staff +5 melee (1d6+5); AC 15; HD 5d12+6; hp 36; MV 30'; Act 2d20; SP crit on 19-20; SV Fort +4, Ref +3, Will +1; AL L.

**Guards (4):** Init +0; Atk stone club +2 melee (1d3+2) or stone spear +0 ranged (1d7+2); AC 11; HD 1d12+2; hp 8; MV 30'; Act 1d20; SV Fort +2, Ref +0, Will -1; AL L.

**Area B-5b through B-5e – Seats of Power:** The outer hold is partitioned into four smaller chambers, separated by open archways. The contents of each are nearly identical:

*In the dim light you can make out a sarcophagus and a throne, crafted of polished stone or metal. The headless figure of a towering, muscular kith sits motionless atop the throne.*

While the trophies adorning the walls are largely the same (severed body parts staked to the walls), all are in different stages of decomposition. The trophies in area B-5b are "fresh," having been harvested in the last month, whereas those in area B-5e are dried bits of cartilage and bone, covered in dust and cobwebs.

The "sarcophagi" contain four of the five ascended masters

of House Cotcyst. The masters are kept alive and ageless via stasis fields powered by greenstone shards, and take turns awakening to serve as master of House Cotcyst.

The headless figures atop the thrones are androids, used as bodies when the masters awaken from their slumber.

The sarcophagi bear the familiar runes of the ancients (see Appendix A), and can be opened by the activation of rune 8, then 5, but otherwise they have no visible seams or means of opening. Failing the use of the runes, the sarcophagi can be cracked open with any single blow dealing 10 or more points of damage. Lesser blows simply skitter off the space sarcophagi, inflicting no harm.

Inside each sarcophagus is the withered body of an ancient human-like being and its severed head, encased in a translucent globe. The body remains motionless, but the head is clearly awake, communicating terror through its wide, darting eyes and silent screams.

Opening a sarcophagus releases a blinding cloud of cryogenic gas and simultaneously activates the android. The chamber is obscured by the mist for 1d4+1 rounds until the cloud dissipates; characters in the chamber are treated as if they were blinded. At the same time, the android moves to the sarcophagus, attempting to don the head. If any PCs obstruct its path, the android blindly attacks at -4 to hit.

Once android is able to reach the head, it takes one action to attach the globe to its neck. Once attached, the head can speak, and the android no longer suffers the -4 to hit penalty.

Attacked, the sleeping masters defend themselves and attempt to withdraw to the sanctum (area B-5g). However, if a parlay is reached, each of the four has its own personality and aims, reflected below:

**Negob (B-5b):** Arrogant, dismissive. Demands that the PCs ("worms") submit to its will. His aim is use the PCs as weapons against the Reagen'Tor, and brooks no refusal. If pressed for a reward, Negob offers the PCs the opposing house's greenstone as a reward for laying the house low.

**Rettur One (B-5c):** The master has succumbed to utter madness, and is convinced the PCs have been sent to kill it by other masters of the house. Awakened, it lashes out, attempting to slay the PCs before seizing the inner tower. If the PCs put up a strong defense, reducing the android to half its hit points or more, Rettur flees into the wilderness.

**Kr-Nitsu (B-5d):** The master thanks the PCs profusely for awakening it from its sleep, pledging its eternal gratitude and aid (all of which – of course – are lies). The insidious master believes it can trick the PCs into doing its bidding. Offering the PCs the house greenstone as a reward, Kr-Nitsu bids the PCs to attack the guards atop the tower. Meanwhile, Kr-Nitsu murders Em-Kiln and initiates the launch sequence in area B-5g.

**Nos Al'Retep (B-5e):** Of the 4 masters, Al'Retep is the most sane. He attempts to establish a parlay, trying to better un-

derstand the PCs' goals. Recognizing that the PCs seek the greenstone, Al'Retep offers two locations: the stone powering House Reagen'Tor and the one lodged in the brow of the Varya-Ibdid.

Al'Retep pledges up to 100 of his own kith to their cause, if the PCs agree to take up arms against House Reagen'Tor. If the PCs opt instead to test their fate against the Varya-Ibdid, Al'Retep offers guides but nothing else, certain that the PCs are doomed.

If at any point in either endeavor the PCs are substantially weakened, Al'Retep's kith turn on the party, aiming to kill them and return to Nos Al'Retep with the spoils of the slaughter.

Each of the master's androids is identical, with the following stats:

**Android (4):** Init +0; Atk fist +2 melee (1d8+2); AC 18; HD 3d8+12; hp 24; MV 40'; Act 2d20; SP infravision 60', immune to poison and mind-altering spells, heals 2 hp per round; SV Fort +5, Ref +0, Will +6; AL L.

**Area B-5f – Bretasche:** Ten kith stand watch atop the tower, quickly noting any distress amongst the sentries along the wall-walks.

They rain down spears and rocks on PCs assaulting the tower-keep. Characters below must succeed on DC 10 Ref saves each round they spend within 15' of the base of the tower keep, or take 1d6 damage from the falling debris. Characters sheltering under shields receive a +5 bonus to the check, so long as they don't take any actions other than movement.

In order to enter the bretasche, via the ladder from area B-5a, the PCs must pass through a barred trapdoor. Twenty-five feet off the ground, forcing the trap door is difficult and dangerous. The trapdoor can be smashed open with a DC 15 Strength check, or destroyed by dealing 15 hp with a blunt weapon or axe.

Failing to open the trapdoor on the first attempt alerts the guards above. The guards lift the trapdoor free and attack the PCs on the ladder. Characters trapped on the ladder receive no AC benefit from high Agility scores, and must succeed on DC 10 Strength checks each time they are hit from above, or be knocked from the ladder.

Ascending into the bretasche, characters discover ten sets of sleeping mats and weapons, along with three braziers of glowing coals suspended from chains. The chamber is outfitted with three sheaves of crude spears (a total of 60 spears) and three piles of rounded, fist-sized rocks, hurled at attackers through the murder holes set along the bretasche's circumference.

**Tower Guards (10):** Init +0; Atk stone club +2 melee (1d3+2) or stone spear +0 ranged (1d7+2) or hurled rock +0 ranged (1d6+2); AC 10; HD 1d12+2; hp 8; MV 30'; Act 1d20; SV Fort +2, Ref +0, Will -1; AL L.

**Area B-5g – Sanctum:** *The low, dark halls give way to a bright, egg-shaped chamber, lit by blue orbs, high above. In the center of the chamber is a giant, seated atop a throne of silver.*

*A short gray pedestal hovers before the throne, topped with a green crystal, blazing with inner light.*

The chamber is a sub-orbital jump shuttle, concealed by the shell of a mushroom timber tower. A remnant of the ancient's war, the shuttle is still viable, powered by the greenstone.

The giant atop the throne is an android, like the bodies in the areas B-5b-e. Its head is Em-Kiln Cotcyst, current master of House Cotcyst. The master does its best to assume the role of a gentle giant, asking questions of the PCs, feigning interest in their homeworld and their efforts to return home, giving time for reinforcements to arrive.

If the PCs attack, or attempt to seize the greenstone, Em-Kiln responds in kind. The head detaches from the android body, hovering in the air and firing deathrays at the PCs. Living targets lose any armor bonuses to AC, and if hit are instantly disintegrated (DC 10 Fort save for 1d10 damage).

Non-living objects (including androids) are unaffected by the ray. Living targets wearing chain or plate mail receive a +5 bonus to the Fort save.

The head hovers out of the reach of melee weapons, while mentally initiating the launch sequence (see below). Treat the head as AC 20 with 8 hp if PCs target it separately.

At the same time the (now headless) android attempts to drive the PCs from the chamber. On a successful attack, the android may opt to not inflict damage, but instead seize the target, hoisting it into the air. A character can escape the android's grasp with a DC 15 Strength check. On its next action the android hurls the character from the chamber, inflicting 2d6 points of damage. If another character is blocking the doorway, both are knocked outside the chamber, but neither takes damage.

**Launch Sequence:** Three rounds after combat begins, the chamber begins to flash red and the deafening klaxons fill the air. Screens above the PCs flash with enormous runes. Eight pedestals, each marked with a single red rune (per Appendix A) rise from the floor. Initiated by the master, the launch can only be aborted by rune 3.

On the fourth round, the entrance to the chamber slides close. Any characters left standing within the doorway at the end of the round are crushed for 1d30 damage.

On the start of the fifth round, the floor within the chamber begins to shake and tremble. All characters, save the android, must attempt DC 10 Ref saves or fall to their knees. Outside the chamber, gouts of flame and smoke blast from the base of the tower, creating a blinding cloud 50' in radius.

On the start of the sixth round the jump shuttle blasts into the air, tearing through the tower and incinerating anything within a 100' radius of the tower. Anything caught within the blast area takes 5d10 damage unless they can find cover (DC 10 Ref save to avoid).

## AREA C: CITY OF SMOKE

The jump shuttle is airborne for 6 rounds – three ascending, and three descending. Rocket thrusters easing the descent, the shuttle jolts back to the Purple Planet in a random hex 2d16 hexes distant from area B. (Use the Lost table on the overland map to determine direction, re-rolling any result that places the shuttle off the plateau.)

**Capturing the Greenstone:** The greenstone powers the ship's launch and descent. Wrenching it from the pedestal aborts the launch, but is no mean task, requiring a DC 20 Strength check. Both Master Em-Kiln and his android do their best to prevent the PCs from stealing the stone.

The greenstone can also be shattered by dealing 10 or more hit points of damage (AC 5); this releases a blast of arcane energy, dealing 3d10 damage to anyone inside (DC 10 Fort save for half) and bursting the shuttle walls.

If the stone is removed *after* launch, descent becomes far more perilous. Without thrusters to slow the descent, the shuttle crashes to the planet's surface. The crash tears a gash in the side of the shuttle, filling the air with debris and choking dust. Characters take 1d20 damage (DC 10 Fort save for half) and are disoriented, unable to take actions for 1d5 rounds. Characters climbing from the shuttle emerge at the base of a 30' crater, in a random hex 2d16 hexes distant from area B.

If, Gygax forbid, the PCs *destroy* the greenstone while the shuttle is still airborne, the resulting blast yields horrific results. Characters within the jump shuttle take 3d10 damage (DC 10 Fort save for half) and the shuttle is reduced to blast debris, ejecting the PCs into the stratosphere. Without divine or arcane assistance, the PCs almost certainly die during planetfall; generous judges may allow Luck checks at a -10 penalty to survive.

### ROUND TRACKER FOR JUMP SHUTTLE

Round	Event
1	Combat begins
2	None
3	Chamber flashes red, klaxons blare, screens flash with runes, pedestals rise
4	Entrance to chamber closes
5	Floor shakes and trembles
6	Jump shuttle blasts into air
7	Shuttle ascends
8	Shuttle ascends
9	Shuttle reaches its apex
10	Shuttle descends
11	Shuttle descends
12	Shuttle lands

*A massive stone ziggurat sits on a wooden platform, borne on the backs of hundreds of sub-humans. The man-beasts grunt and groan with every step, some crushed to their hands and knees, others fighting to stand.*

*The peak of the ziggurat is shrouded in billowing black smoke. The sooty cloud hangs like an oily shroud cast over the sky. A horde of man-beasts trail behind, fighting for a place beneath the ziggurat, trampling their fallen kith underfoot.*

Fifty feet in height, on a 70' base, the ziggurat is composed entirely of loose stones. It is supported by 700 man-beasts; another 1500 trail in the horde behind. The peak of the ziggurat is set with a shallow brazier, 6' across and 3' deep, brimming with burning fat. The brazier is refilled every three hours, ensuring the smoke isn't diminished.

Characters pausing to inspect the clouds of black smoke spy alien minarets hidden amongst the rolling clouds of smoke. Solitary figures and the occasional couple watch from atop the towers; sharp-eyed PCs see the figures' black skin glint like polished stone.

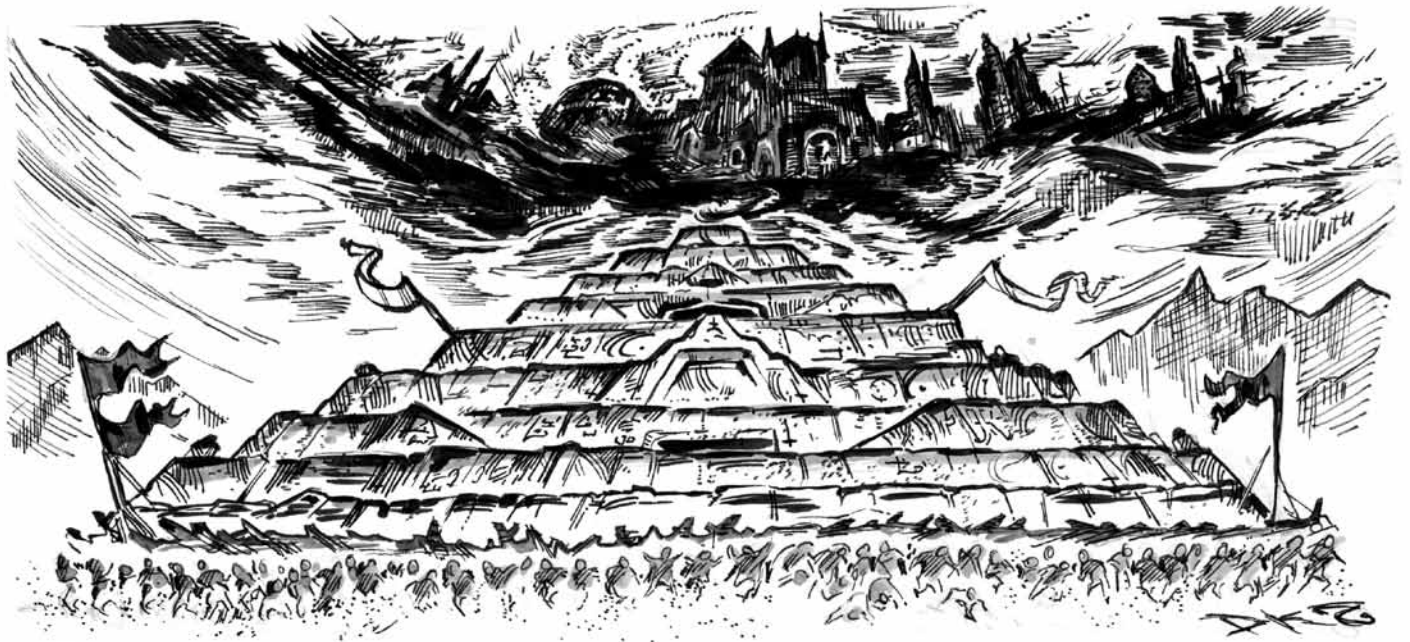
The horde of kith defend the ziggurat to the death. The champions and warlords refuse to permit the PCs to approach; while the PCs may use brute force to cut a bloody swath to the ziggurat, guile or stealth is the easiest path.

If the fire is extinguished, the smoke slowly dissipates, leaving a cloud-core of roiling black dust in its wake – the carbon memory-cells of House Reagen'Tor.

**Ascending to the City:** The physical form of the city, with its sooty minarets and alien, impossible architecture exists only insofar as its inhabitants will it into physical form. The inhabitants' native form is billowing carbon dust; they take form, as towers, halls, or inhabitants, through the House's collective force of will. Characters flying towards the towers find they billow away like mist as they approach, only to reform, complete with occupants, elsewhere in the smoke. The core of the city, and the housing place of its greenstone, is a cube, a mere 6' across, and impossible to locate amid the clouds of swirling soot and carbon. (See area C-2 for details on forcing the masters of the House to reveal the vault.)

In order to reach the city, the PCs must gain the attention of its masters. Clever PCs are sure to come up with any number of wild schemes, but the following tactics are presented for the judge's reference:

- **Captured!** PCs captured by the man-beasts are stripped of belongings, bound hand and foot, and borne to the top of the ziggurat, where they are offered up to the masters as a burnt offering. Before the PCs can be sacrificed, voices from on-high command that they be offered to the sky masters.
- **The Red Path:** If the PCs somehow manage to fight their way to the top of the ziggurat, they successfully have gained the House's attention.



- **Offering to the Sky Gods:** If the PCs make an offering of ancient relics (powered or un-powered) to the House, there is a chance that the masters take notice. Allow a 7% chance per relic offered, plus the chief petitioner's Personality score (as opposed to Personality modifier). If the offering is deemed unworthy, the horde of man-beasts set upon the PCs, tearing them limb from limb, to feed the sacrificial flames.

In each instance the clouds swirl above and a black staircase descends down from the sky, the steps forming from the black soot, like grains of sand aggregating into a structure. The steps are solid to the touch, and for all purposes, pass as stone.

As the PCs ascend the steps, the steps dissolve back into the smoky soot, returning to "build" the citadel above. This a key detail; any PCs noticing the strange transfer (and any players asking intelligent questions) can confirm that mass leaves the castle to form the steps, and returns to the castle once the steps are no longer needed.

See the **City of Smoke** map for the encounter areas listed below.

**Raiders (2,200):** See page 3.

**Champions (300):** See page 3.

**Warlords (25):** See page 3.

**Area C-1 – Gate to the City of Smoke:** *Twin minarets rise before you, like spears stabbing at the sky. A somber gate, framed in black worms, bars your way. Above rises tower upon tower in the shifting smoke, obscured for a moment and then gone. The air is thick with smoke, stinging the eyes and lungs.*

As on the steps, all the materials appear formed of black, sooty stone.

As the PCs approach, the massive portals part to reveal a robed woman in a towering crown. Ylill hurriedly beckons



the PCs to enter, then collapses into black granules that are immediately absorbed into the floors and walls. A black key clatters to the cobblestones.

The black key appears cast from the same black stone as the citadel and the woman. The head and blade of the key is decorated as a stylized queen; the key has three sets of millings extended from the blade. (An illustration of the key appears on the inside cover.)

The doors swing closed after the PCs pass, then melt together, blocking the party's retreat. Mundane attempts to break through the former gates are doomed to failure, the wall being 10' thick.

Ylill's key offers a solution; pressing the key into any of the surfaces and then turning clockwise causes the material to melt away, creating a void, roughly 10' to a side. Turning the key counterclockwise causes the material to return.

This works on any surface in the citadel; it can create a pit in the floor, a hole in the ceiling or part the walls. It can only close an area that it has opened. The key can work in a total of three different sites; each time it is used in a site, one of the three millings vanishes. If the PCs succeed in reaching the donjon, the key resumes the form of the Ylill. See area C-3 below for more details.

**Area C-2 – City Without End:** *The narrow hall opens to a covered courtyard lit by black torches set into the obsidian walls. Seven archways exit the courtyard, rising into darkness.*

Ascending through any one of the seven archways leads the PCs into a mind-bending maze of vaulted halls, long corridors, and grand chambers. Worse, as soon as the PCs attempt to retrace their steps, they find a solid wall where once there was a path. The party can literally explore forever, and never reach an end to the corridors.

The puzzle is born of Haon's ability to will "himself" – sooty grains of carbon – into material form. Haon is the

citadel, the citadel is Haon. As the party explores the expansive sky castle, he forms, destroys and then reforms the citadel around them.

The judge is free to describe the random chambers and galleries, or roll on the following table. As in the rest of the city, all of the areas and their contents appear to be made from the same black stone. Haon's aim is to toy with the PCs, stretching out their frustration and agony for as long as possible.

### 1d20 Area

- 1 A vaulted gallery, 70' long, with three sets of double doors to each side. The walls are decorated with carvings of birds frozen in strange positions.
- 2 A small chapel, with a dozen pews set before a simple altar. A set of worm breeding prongs rests on the altar. Secret doors are hidden beneath the altar and in the ceiling directly above.
- 3 A curved hall ending in a door. The door is decorated with a leering devil.
- 4 A bedchamber, with a double door, and a servant's entry. The walls are decorated with sharp, spiny barbs that undulate like a living thing.
- 5 A circular room with exits in each of the cardinal directions. All the doors are either 6" too high or too low, and shaped like the silhouettes of devils.
- 6 A corridor branching left and right. From the left comes the sound of screams; the right path is slick with ooze.
- 7 A 50' hall set with barred cells on either side. The cells are locked (DC 10 open lock check to open), and each cell has a secret door opening into a corridor. The floors of all the cells are covered in black stone bones.
- 8 A pentagonal room, with a central chimney leading up 30' before opening into another location. The ceiling of the room, and the interior of the chimney drips black worms that vanish as they hit the floor.
- 9 Spiral steps leading down. Every tenth step is an archway covered in a flowing curtain of snakes that part at a touch.
- 10 A former barracks, 30' long and 15' wide, now empty, save for cots and empty coffers. A set of doors stand on the far side.
- 11 A circular room with a well set in the center of the chamber. Two doors exit the chamber. Descending into the well opens to another chamber.
- 12 A pit descending 30'. At the base of the pit are three tunnels, each no more than 3' in diameter.
- 13 A short set of stairs descending to a trio of doors. A single black candle, with a black flame, sits in the center of the floor.
- 14 A 30' corridor ending in a chimney. A stone ladder ascends to the chamber above.

- 15 A trophy hall, 30' wide and 100' long. Three sets of double doors are set to either side. Stone heads of the PCs are hung on the walls.
- 16 An octagonal chamber with a dry fountain. Seven stone skulls rest in the basin's fountain. Archways are set into each of the eight walls.
- 17 A short hallway opening into a new chamber.
- 18 A grand staircase rises several floors. Every thirty steps is a landing with an archway to the left and right. The steps are cut with meaningless runes.
- 19 A narrow set of servant's stairs, ending in a set of double doors.
- 20 A circular vaulted chamber, 50' across. Opposite the entrance is a pair of double doors. The ceiling is decorated in bas-relief of splayed bodies.

Each time the PCs enter a new area, roll 1d5, modified by the party's collective Luck modifier:

### 1d5 Features

- 1 or less Two shades rise from the floor ahead of the party, and two behind.
- 2 1d3 shades spring from the floor before the party.
- 3 A shade demands single combat before permitting the PCs to pass.
- 4 - 5 The chamber is empty of shades.
- 6+ A shade in the shape of a small child. An agent of Ylill, she whispers clues to the PCs before vanishing into dust. Roll 1d5 or pick from the following: (1) He is watching. Even now he is watching. (2) Walking will get you nowhere. (3) You cannot leave the city until the city is no more. (4) One of you can't escape his sight, but you both can. And all three of you can escape. (5) Take us with you.

Haon creates towering humanoid champions - shades formed from the carbon clouds - to challenge the PCs. The master does this for his own enjoyment, with no attachment to his creations; the "slain" champions are simply absorbed back into the substance of the citadel, to be reconstituted as architecture or additional champions as needed.

Haon delights in watching the PCs struggle. He walls off sections that the PCs have already passed through, forcing the PCs on to "new" challenges.

**Guardian Shade:** Init +0; Atk stone longsword +2 melee (1d8+2) or stone polearm +2 melee (1d10+2); AC 15; HD var (see below); hp var (see below); MV 30'; Act 1d20; SP regeneration (see below), immune to mind control powers; SV Fort +3, Ref -1, Will +3; AL L.

**Defeating the City:** While Haon has ability to form and reform the citadel at will, he is limited by total mass - he has a finite amount of carbon memory-cells to use creating the citadel. So long as the PCs stay together, there is sufficient material mass to form grand vistas and his champions.

But if the party splits – with PCs going two, three or more directions at once – they force Haon to maintain multiple portions of the citadel at once. The effects are subtle at first: the walls, floors and ceiling seem to grow thin. If the PCs hold to a plan (or simply scatter like crazed lemmings) the citadel's weakness quickly becomes dramatic, as the surroundings weaken and then give way altogether. Haon is unable to anticipate this weakness, or take action preventing the PCs from separating. He is caught totally unawares when his citadel melts away, revealing the baseplate (area C-3).

Use the following guidelines to determine the diminishing substance of the city-citadel and its inhabitants:

**Party in a single location:** The surroundings (walls, ceilings, floor) are entirely solid, testing to a thickness of 10'. The details of the citadel are highly accurate, and indistinguishable from normal materials. Shades encountered have 3d10 HD, 15 hp and regenerate 3 hp per round.

**Party split into two groups, maintaining line of sight:** Astute PCs note granules of black sand seeming to shift between the two locations. As PCs focus on details in a specific chamber, the other location becomes less distinct. The accuracy of details shifts with the PCs' focus; a black, stone torch sconce might be sharply defined in one chamber, then softens in focus when the other group is inspecting a set of flagstone stairs. Shades encountered have 2d10 HD, 10 hp and regenerate 2 hp per round.

**Party split into two groups, out of sight:** There is a lack of fine detail in both locations. Objects have rounded corners and edges. Shades encountered have 2d10 HD and 10 hp and regenerate 2 hp per round.

**Party split into three groups:** The reality of the citadel begins to wear thin. Swirling black clouds of dust anxiously shift locations in an effort to maintain the semblance of reality. There is little or no detail on objects, only roughed out shapes. Shades encountered have 1d10 HD and 5 hp, and regenerate 1 hp per round.

**Party split into four or more distinct locations:** The city and all its denizens blow away, revealing an inverted zigurat 250' by 250', hovering 500' in the air: the Donjon. See area C-3, below, for the conclusion to the City of Smoke.

**Area C-3 – The Donjon:** *The dark city dissolves into roiling clouds of black soot before your eyes. In moments, everything – the high towers, dark walls, and vaulted chambers – is blown away, like ashes in the wind.*

*You and your companions are standing atop a great disc, floating hundreds of feet in the air. In the center of the disc stand sooty figures: an imposing man and a slender woman, watched over by eight towering shades.*

*Between the man and the woman floats a brilliant green gem, aflame with emerald light.*

If the PCs defeated the city by separating the party, the groups stand equally spaced about the circumference of the disc.

The masters of the citadel, Haon and Ylill stand in the center of the disc, defended by the remaining champions. Ylill desperately wants to escape her home; Haon, realizing that she cannot exist outside of the carbon construct that is their home, does everything in his power prevent her leaving.

Haon does not bear the PCs any ill-will, however he cannot surrender the greenstone without condemning his daughter (and himself) to death. If the PCs insist on trying to claim the greenstone, Haon does his best to destroy them in defense of his family. In deep, sonorous monotone, he declares that any battle for the greenstones can only end with the death of the PCs or the death of his family; the last Master of the House then commands his shades to attack.

**The End of Smoke:** With every shade slain, Haon's powers ebb, causing the disc to shrink. The map has 8 rings; with the death of each shade, the outermost ring of the disc breaks into dead shards and falls away. Any PCs on the ring when it falls away must succeed on a DC 10 Ref save or plummet to their doom. Adjacent PCs can catch their falling comrades by succeeding on DC 10 Strength or Agility checks.

The shrinking surface area causes the disc to drop sharply in altitude and list dangerously from side to side. Every character on the disc when a shade is slain must succeed on DC 10 Ref save or fall prone. Haon, Ylill and the shades are immune to the listing, being a part of the disc. When the last shade is slain, the disc sinks to the ground.

Battling the shades is not the only way to lay low the city:

- If a PC reaches the center of the disc and seizes the greenstone, the city immediately plummets to earth; if the disc is permitted to crash, every character aboard must succeed on a DC 20 Ref save or take 3d20 damage.
- If Haon is slain, all 8 portions break away in turn, and the shades dissolve into smoke. The city slowly settles to the earth.

If Haon, Ylill or the shades are ever moved off the disc (for instance, hurled over the edge by a Mighty Deed of Arms) they dissolve into smoke, never to return. This includes Ylill, once the disc comes to earth; eager for her freedom, the princess runs from the disc only to melt into dust and ash.

**Champion Shades (8):** Init +0; Atk stone longsword +2 melee (1d8+2) or stone polearm +2 melee (1d10+2); AC 15; HD 4d8; hp 16; MV 30'; Act 1d20; SP Immune to mind control powers; SV Fort +3, Ref -1, Will +3; AL L.

**Haon:** Init +2; Atk longsword +2 melee (1d8) or black ray +2 ranged (1d6, 30' range); AC 13; HD 8d8; hp 32; MV 30'; Act 2d20; SP Immune to mind control powers; SV Fort +3, Ref +1, Will +3; AL L.

**Ylill:** Init +0; Atk dagger +2 melee (1d4+2); AC 10; HD 3d8; hp 12; MV 30'; Act 1d20; SP Immune to mind control powers; SV Fort +1, Ref +2, Will +3; AL L.

## AREA D: PIT OF THE MOTHER ORM, VATYA-IBDID

A dark cloud of churned dust and sand hovers over the location and is visible from 3 hexes in every direction. As the PCs draw within 2 hexes they are able to discern a cacophonous drumming punctuated by terrible shrieks. At 1 hex, they feel reverberations from the ground beneath their feet, and the shrieks are loud enough to drown out all verbal communication short of shouting.

When the PCs reach the edge of the hex, read or paraphrase the following:

*The pit stretches as far as the eye can see, a maelstrom of crushed boulders, billowing sand and black dust. Great orms squirm along the circumference, like tremendous serpents, lazing in the hot sun. All are strangely docile, until one dives into the rocky whirlpool.*

*Moments later a gargantuan orm, hundreds of feet across, breaks from the heart of the pit, seizing the lesser orm in its impossibly large maw. The smaller worm is shredded in an instant, shrieking with agony. A brilliant green flame flares on the brow of the massive worm before vanishing back into the seething maelstrom.*

The pit occupies the entire hex, and is home to the Vatya-Ibdid, largest of the plateau's death orms. Over a mile in length, the hell-beast bears a great greenstone wedged in its brow; the greenstone draws the smaller orms, which the Vatya-Ibdid devours in an endless cycle of bloody violence.

There are several dozen orms circling the pit. Intent on the greenstone, they pay no regard to the PCs – so long as they are undisturbed. Cautious characters can even climb onto the torpid beasts (DC 5 move silently or successful Luck check).

Every 1d24 rounds, one of the orms rouses itself and hurls itself into the pit to die at the maw of the Vatya-Ibdid. It dies 1d3 rounds later.

Of the three known greenstones on the plateau, the one embedded in the brow of the Vatya-Ibdid is the most accessible while presenting the greatest danger. The six-mile wide pit is over two miles deep. The steep scree slopes are composed of sand and boulders. The lower pit is shrouded in choking clouds of black dust. Finally the thrashing Vatya-Ibdid can come crashing down on any part of the pit, at almost any moment.

**Stealing the Emerald Flame:** In order to seize the greenstone the PCs must reach the beast, and then cleave the stone from its brow.

The pit is divided into the upper and lower layers, each one mile in elevation. The lower level is entirely obscured by the roiling clouds of dust; PCs descending into the darkness have their sight reduced to a mere 30', and must make DC 5 Fort saves each round or begin "drowning" in the choking clouds (see sidebar on page 14; lost Stamina is not restored until the PC spends an hour outside of the pit).

Climbing the slope requires a DC 10 climb or Strength check, and failing the check sends the PCs spilling down into the heart of the maelstrom (DC 15 Ref save to arrest slide). The PCs must succeed on 5 checks to descend the

upper pit, and another 7 to descend to the pit's base.

Each round the PCs spend in the upper pit, roll 1d30. If the roll is equal or less than the number of characters in the pit, each PC must make a Luck check. The worm comes crashing down on the PC with the worst roll, crushing that PC and any other character within 300' in either direction for 10d30 damage (DC 20 Ref save to avoid).

Each round the PCs spend in the lower pit, roll 1d20. If the roll is equal or less than the number of characters in the pit, the PC with the lowest Luck check is targeted.

If the PCs should somehow make it to the base of the pit, the roll drops to 1d12.

The Vatya-Ibdid moves too quickly for ground-based PCs to chase, but any character avoiding the crush attack by a Ref save can opt to make a second DC 10 Ref save to leap atop the great orm.

Astride the Vatya-Ibdid, the PCs have the opportunity to strike free the greenstone. At the top of each round, any PC riding the orm must make a DC 10 Ref save or be cast from his perch, taking 1d12 damage and sliding to the base of the pit. A PC that maintains his place can attempt to seize the greenstone with either a DC 25 Strength check; a Mighty Deed struck against the beast's AC; or a single blow inflicting more than 20 points of damage.

If, by some miracle of fates, the PCs deal more than 150 hp to the Vatya-Ibdid, it dives into the earth, burrowing out of sight.

Finally, even if the PCs succeed in seizing the greenstone, their escape is far from assured. They must escape the pit, pursued by the Vatya-Ibdid and the lesser orms. The Vatya-Ibdid does not follow the PCs outside the pit, but the lesser orms give chase until they are outpaced by 6 miles.

**Orm Riders of the Purple Planet:** Only the most audacious PCs would dare ride a death orm into the maelstrom, but it is the surest, quickest means of reaching the Vatya-Ibdid.

First PCs must climb aboard the orm (DC 5 move silently, or successful Luck check), and then ride it down to the base of the pit (three DC 15 Strength checks). Then, as the Vatya-Ibdid attacks, the PC must make a DC 20 Agility check to leap from the death orm to the mighty Vatya-Ibdid.

Failing either the Strength or Agility check sends the PC pitching into the churning darkness at the base of the pit.

The hide of the Vatya-Ibid renders it immune to death rays (an even stronger protection than that of its lesser kin).

**Death Orm (4d20):** Init -5; Atk 4 paddles +3 melee (1d4) and maw +3 melee (1d12+5); AC 15; HD 8d12; hp 48; MV 45'; Act 5d20; SP swallow whole; SV Fort +3, Ref -4, Will +3; AL C.

**Vatya-Ibdid:** Init -20; Atk see text; AC 22; HD 40d16; hp 320; MV 250'; Act see text; SV Fort +30, Ref -20, Will +25; AL C.



# APPENDIX A: RELICS AND RUNES

**R**emnants of the kith's fallen empire, relics of the ancients can be found throughout the plateau. Their means of activation are kept alive in esoteric rituals practiced by the kith. With some experimentation, PCs can discern the proper means of activating the artifacts, using them as tools and weapons against the creatures of the Purple Planet.

Each of the relics is powered by greenstone shards. Simply holding a shard near a relic causes the greenstone to flare with inner light. Pressed to one of the relics, the light fades and dies, transferring 1d5 charges to the relic and emptying the shard of power.

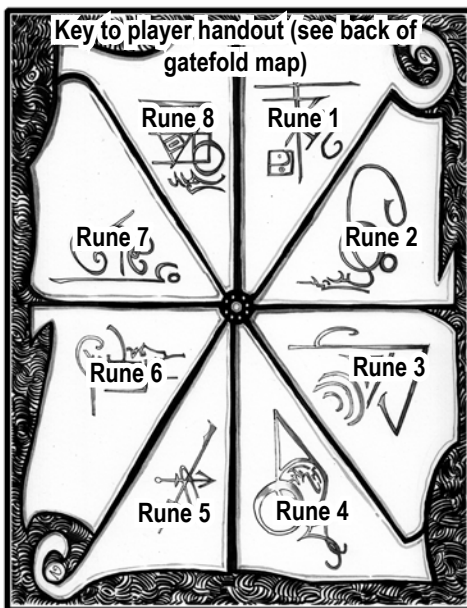
A relic can carry up to 25 charges. Once a relic is fully charged, additional shards have no effect and do not lose their charge if pressed to the relic.

Relics are activated according to their type: tools, weapons and vehicles each have their own activation sequence. Unfortunately, after eons spent under the weirdling sun, many of the artifacts have become unstable and dangerous.

All relics bear all eight runes. When PCs experiment with relics, place the rune handout (see back page of gatefold map) before the players, and note specifically which runes are touched, and in which sequence. Only three runes still perform their original functions. Until the activation rune is depressed, none of the other runes perform any function. However, once a relic is activated, depressing other runes can lead to disastrous effects, as noted below.

If a relic begins to self-destruct, the countdown can be made aloud or silently, as it pleases the judge. In playtests, hurried attempts to shut off the runes resulted in players depressing several runes at once. In at least one case the relic was deactivated, then re-activated, and then caused to self-destruct *again*, after players hit dozens of runes in sequence. Incaution on the Purple Planet (as on most planets) is its own punishment.

Finally, casting *comprehend languages* on a relic can offer important insights into the specific relic. Since the runic language evolved without any influ-



ence from the PCs' homeworld, treat it as a non-terrestrial language (spell check DC 20+). However, insight into one relic type does not immediately translate to other relic types. While the activation and deactivation runes are the same for all types, the function runes are not. Assuming that they can lead to dire results.

## **Lock Activation Sequence (doors, sarcophagi)**

Activate: Rune 8  
Function: Rune 4 for doors, Rune 5 for sarcophagi  
Deactivate: Rune 3

If a rune other than 4, 5 or 3 is triggered once the lock is activated, there is a 10% cumulative chance that the lock electrifies. It begins to arc bolts of lightning; anyone within 5 feet takes 1d7 points of damage per round, until rune 3 is touched, deactivating the lock.

The lock automatically deactivates within 1d16 seconds.

## **Tool Activation Sequence (field kit, plasma torch, silver armor, skullcap)**

Field kits, silver armor and skullcaps function simply by virtue of being activated. Plasma torches must be activated and then triggered with the function rune, as noted below:

Activate: Rune 8  
Function: Rune 1  
Deactivate: Rune 3

If a rune other than 1 or 3 is triggered once the relic is activated, there is a 10% cumulative chance that the relic malfunctions. It begins to radiate searing heat; anyone holding the relic takes 1d5 points of damage per round, until rune 3 is touched, deactivating the relic.

If the relic isn't deactivated by the end of 1d20 seconds. It detonates, hurling shards of molten metal 30' in every direction, inflicting 1d12 points of damage to any character caught in the blast (DC 10 Ref save to avoid).

## **Weapon Activation Sequence (raygun, rayrifle)**

Activate: Rune 8  
Function: Rune 6  
Deactivate: Rune 3

Rayguns and rifles are fired by triggering rune 6. If a rune other than 6 or 3 is triggered once the relic is activated, there is a 25% cumulative chance that the relic malfunctions. Green flames wash down the weapon; anyone holding the relic takes 1d7 points of damage per round, until rune 3 is touched, deactivating the relic. If the relic isn't deactivated by the end of 1d12 seconds, it dissolves into silver liquid, searing anyone carrying the relic for 1d12 damage and setting flammable materials alight.

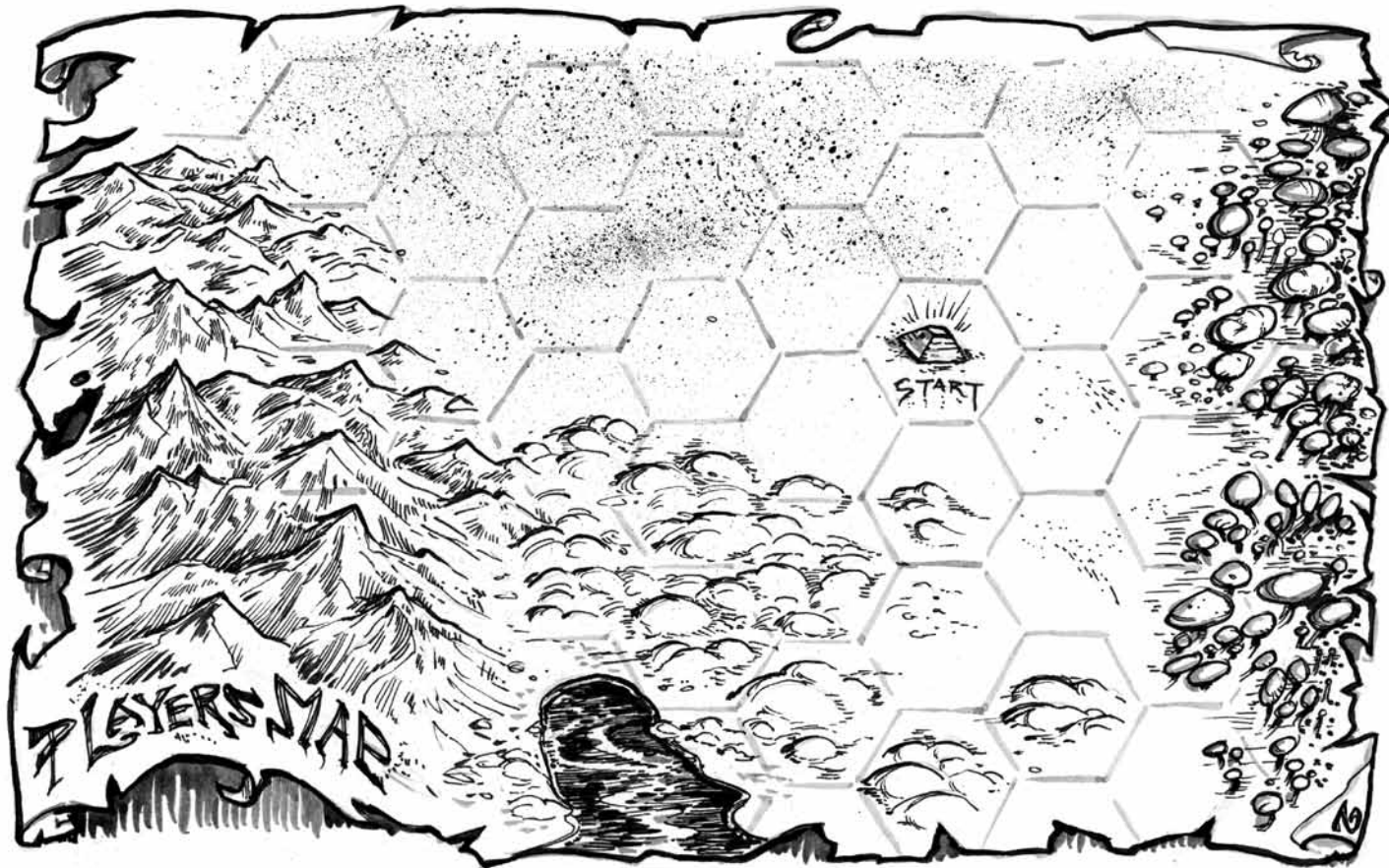
## **Vehicle Activation Sequence (skiff)**

Activate: Rune 8  
Function: Rune 2  
Deactivate: Rune 3

Once rune 8 and 2 are depressed, the skiff is easily directed by the pilot.

If a rune other than 2 or 3 is triggered once the skiff is activated, there is a 25% non-cumulative chance that the skiff slews out of control. All characters aboard must make DC 10 Ref saves or be thrown from the skiff. The skiff continues to careen wildly - forcing Ref saves each round - until runes 2 or 3 are triggered.

If the pilot is hurled from the skiff, the vehicle wrecks after 1d4 rounds. Any characters remaining aboard take 1d12 damage in the crash (DC 15 Ref saves to avoid).



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