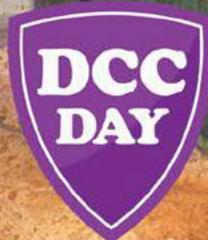


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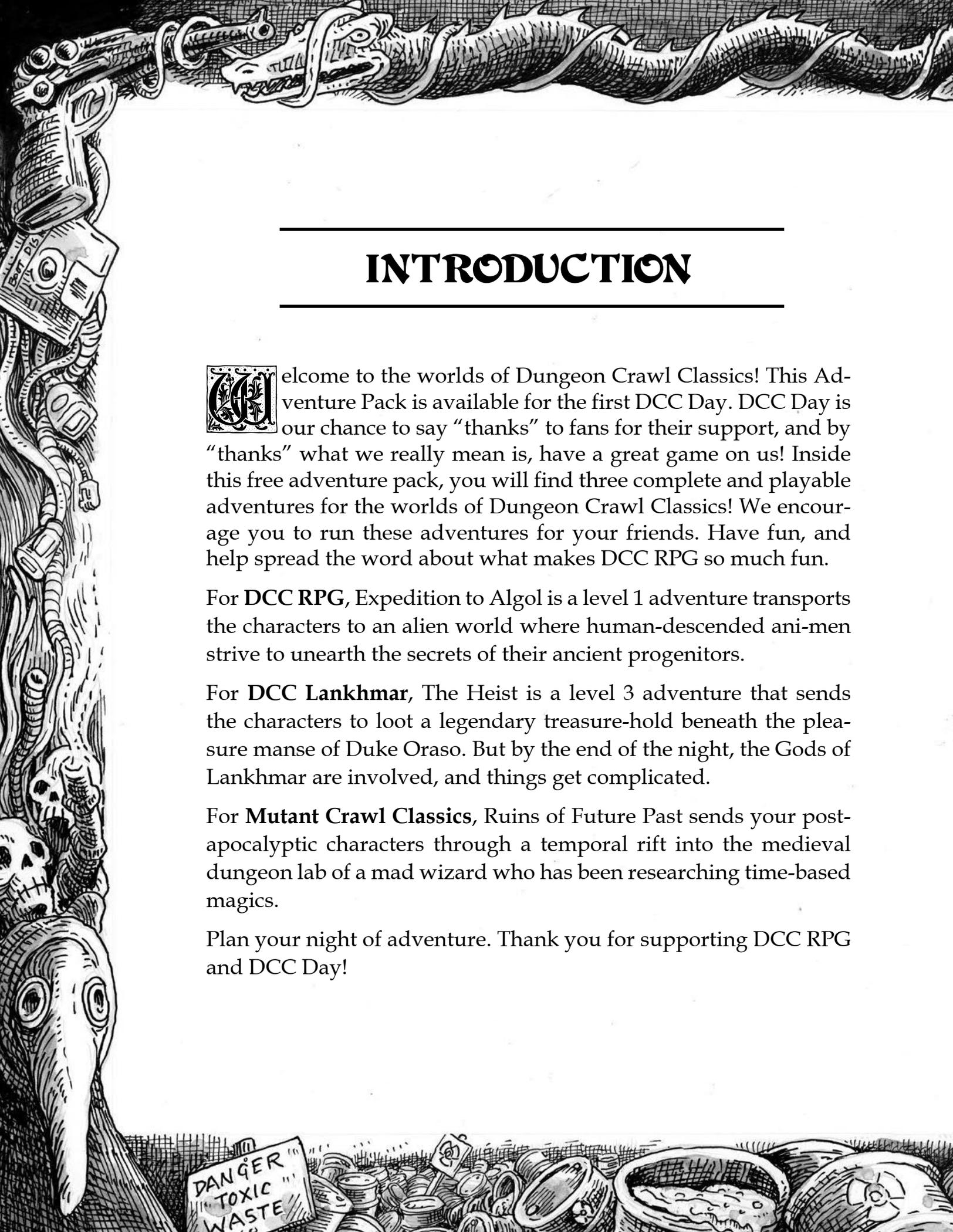
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INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the worlds of Dungeon Crawl Classics! This Adventure Pack is available for the first DCC Day. DCC Day is our chance to say “thanks” to fans for their support, and by “thanks” what we really mean is, have a great game on us! Inside this free adventure pack, you will find three complete and playable adventures for the worlds of Dungeon Crawl Classics! We encourage you to run these adventures for your friends. Have fun, and help spread the word about what makes DCC RPG so much fun.

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For **DCC Lankmar**, The Heist is a level 3 adventure that sends the characters to loot a legendary treasure-hold beneath the pleasure manse of Duke Oraso. But by the end of the night, the Gods of Lankmar are involved, and things get complicated.

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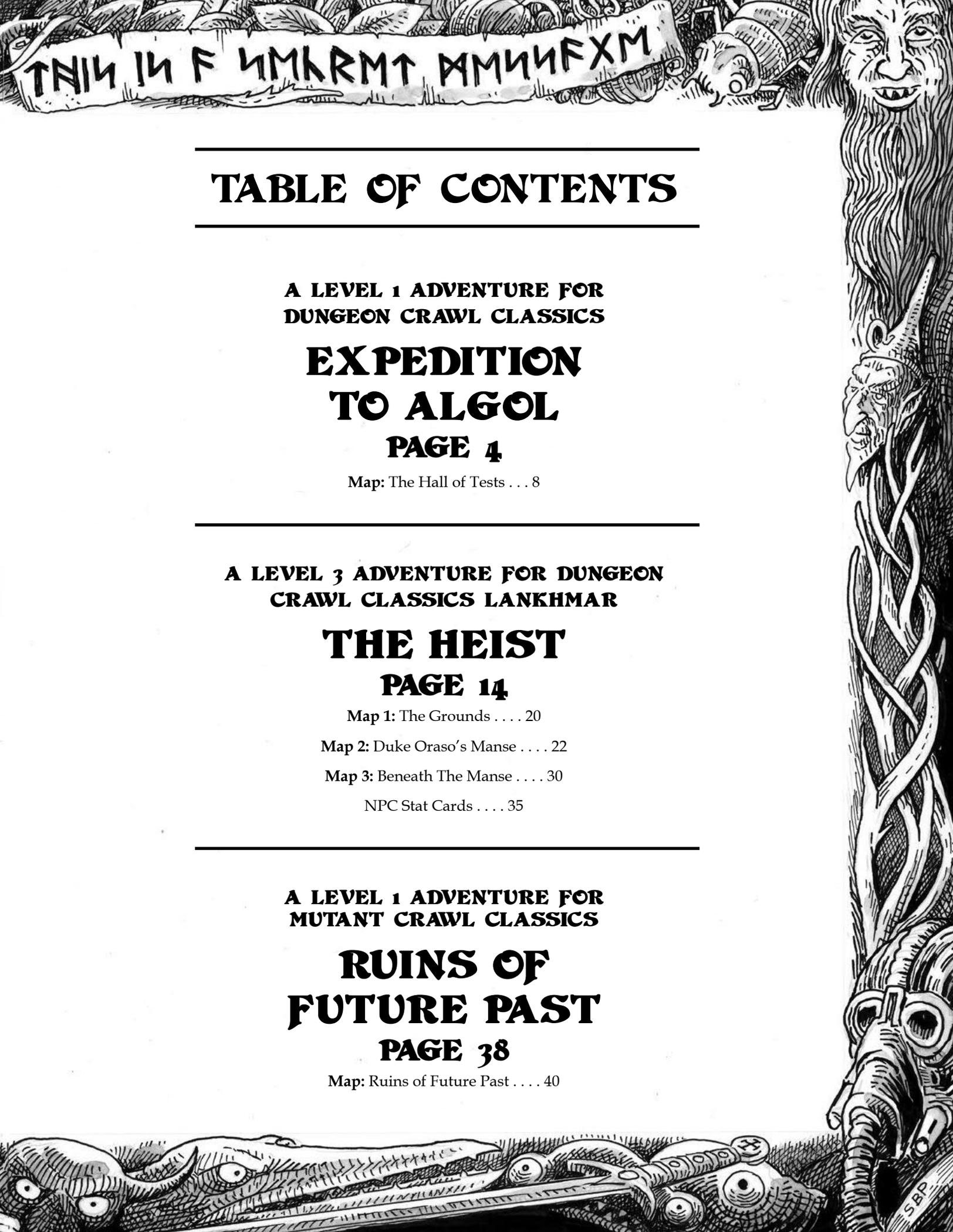


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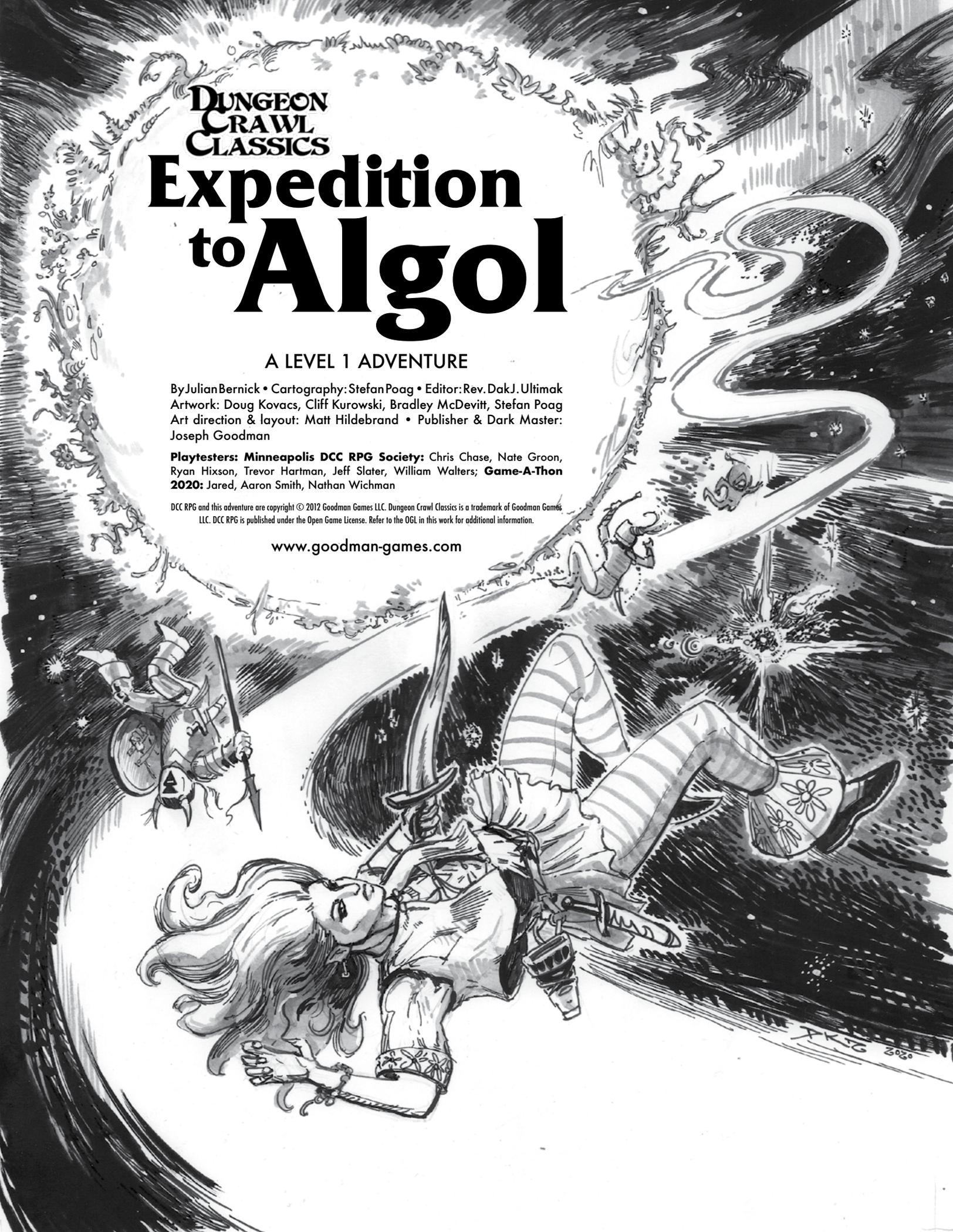
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DUNGEON
CRAWL
CLASSICS

Expedition to Algol

A LEVEL 1 ADVENTURE

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INTRODUCTION



Remember the good old days, when adventurers were running scared, NPCs were there to murder you, and the finale of every dungeon was the chaos lord on the 666th level? These are the good old days! *Dungeon Crawl Classics RPG* adventures don't waste your time with humdrum scenarios, boilerplate campaign settings, or NPCs who want you to kill ten shadow cats. Each adventure is 100% good, solid *Dungeon Crawl Classics* with monsters you have never seen before, traps that spare the flesh but destroy the soul, and the secret portals that lead to a thousand insane worlds.

This adventure, for 5-8 1st-level characters, transports the characters from their home world to a hothouse planet where warring factions of human-descended ani-men strive to unearth the secrets of their ancient progenitors. Surviving PCs will have a campaign-bending choice: Strike out to conquer this strange planet with the advantages of their heritage—or travel back to their home-place with the unproven devices of the ancients.

BACKGROUND



From his youth, the wizard Bartakus-Thrum was tormented by dreams of the distant planet Algol. After a lifetime of study, the wizard built a glass and metal apparatus to distill, transport and physically reinstate the essences of mortals upon that distant world. Thrum hired the party to accompany him and promised them equal shares of any treasure they should find. However, as their souls are transported, the four patrons to whom Thrum has committed his eternal service pull his essence four ways and the apparatus is destroyed, Thrum along with it.

Nonetheless, the characters are transported to Algol. This planet was founded by advanced human agents of the 331 Space Wasps (the Orax). Their human agents experimented

on the planet's fauna and flora to breed races of ani-men to spread their civilization and to supply souls for their rapacious masters. But these ancient humans, who possessed a third eye above the two borne by the humans of Aereth, were ultimately overthrown by their resentful offspring. Now their descendants live in rival tribes upon the planet, striving for supremacy and seeking to learn the secrets of their long-dead masters. The Hall of Tests in Ssazzex, the City of Scales, is said to hold such secrets.

THE SIX RODS



These strange techno-occult cylinders are needed to access various features in the Hall of Tests. Each is about a foot long, two inches in diameter and made of a clear, tough glass, filled with a specific liquid. For characteristics of each of the six rods, see the table below.

Sealed: There is no means to open a sealed rod without breaking it. (Breaking requires a DC 10 Strength check against a hard surface.)

Capped: There is a cap on the hollow rod that can be removed in order to consume or pour out the liquid. Capped vessels can be re-used. Consult Table 1 below for the rods' functions and effects. **Note: Unless specified, the rods' contents are not consumed when used.**

ENVIRONMENTAL CONDITIONS ON THE WORLD OF ALGOL

The heat is intense and the light is alien. Most humanoids wear visors to keep the direct light out of their eyes.

Algol is extremely hot and humid. After one turn wearing metal armor outdoors, PCs are at -1d to all physical actions. Indoors, this is 1 hour. Underground, as in most of the Hall of Tests, this penalty does not apply.

Table 1: Rod Functions and Effects.

Color	Format	Function	If Consumed
Ulfire	Sealed	Mechanical: Activates the Space Wasp devices.	Skin, hair turns silver. PC leaves silver slime everywhere.
Purple	Capped	Facilitates communication with the Space Wasps and their technology.	(Default is consumption)
Black	Sealed	Breaking summons the dronestroyer (See Appendix A)	Dronestroyer explodes out of unhappy PC.
Cerulean (light blue)	Capped	Fuels flying things.	Consuming this liquid allows user to levitate for 2d4 turns.
Argent	Sealed	Souls – made into the material of Space Wasp nests and fuels their devices.	DC 15 Will save or go mad from the rush personalities into PC's mind.
Green	Sealed	Distilled pain. If broken, ignites on contact with air for 3d6 points of damage in 5' area.	Agonizing death!

PLAYER START

Carefully secured in your steel chairs and thick leather harnesses, you see Bartakus-Thrum pull the lever that lets the quicksilver and the demon blood merge into the bubbling crucible that contains just a finger's width of pure phlogiston. The glass tubes surrounding you are suddenly filled with colors you have never seen before and you hear what can only be the pleas of Bartakus-Thrum. "NO!- SEZREKAN – BOBUGBEBILZZHH – AZAT-THTHHOTHH- I BEG YOU--" followed by the explosion of glass and copper. Shortly thereafter you find yourselves alone in a clearing, surrounded by shards of glass, copper wires and the bloodstained purple cap of Bartakus-Thrum.

As you blink and get your bearings in the alien light, you see three suns, two yellow and one green, blasting down upon you. The air is alive with the constant hum and call of insects. The dense, blue foliage is dripping with moisture. Not more than a few thousand feet away, you can see an 100' tall human-shaped statue. Low buildings of wood and mud-brick surround you, overgrown by vines and rainbow colored blossoms. Chattering amongst this cacophony of color are small dog-faced monkey-creatures, watching you from high branches and rooftops.

Most concerning is the fact that 10 purple-scaled reptilian warriors wearing odd visors surround your party, holding their staves menacingly above you.

The characters have arrived in Ssazzex, the City of Scales, which houses the Hall of Tests, a site of the ancient humans. Outside its walls, Ssazzex has been laid siege by thousands of cat-man warriors who seek to overrun the lizard-men and force their way into the sacred Hall of Tests, which the lizard-men consider taboo.

In one round, the mighty chieftain Tom-Vaszz arrives to try to calm the situation. If the PCs go on a rampage, the hundreds of lizard-men at the chieftain's command will fiercely resist them and try to herd them to the Hall of Tests, considering that their ultimate destiny. Otherwise, the PCs will face leaving the city and emerging into the ranks of the several thousand cat-men besieging the city.

Lizard Warriors (10): Init +2; Atk staff +1 melee (1d6) or javelins +1 missile fire (1d5, 20/50/60' range); AC 12; HD 1d5; hp 4 each; MV 35' on land or 20' by climbing; Act 1d20; SP May climb all trees and wooden or vine-covered surfaces; SV Fort +1, Ref +2, Will -1; AL C.

A tall, powerful reptilian biped covered with feathers and bones steps out of the crowd. Holding up his scaly hand, he commands his forces to halt. He sweeps his yellow eyes over you and darts his forked tongue a few times before rasping, "It is as foretold. These are the ones who come in the likeness of the ancestors. They lack only the topmost eye," he says pointing to his forehead. "We have guarded the Hall of Tests for more generations than there are vines on the Father Tree. They will be allowed to venture the Hall of Tests." With this, he brings you to a large wooden hall and treats you to a meal of squirming grubs, bland fruits and brightly-colored tubers.

The PCs are well-fed, treated respectfully and given basic

information about Ssazzex and Algol. They are equipped with whatever pitch-tipped torches, vine-woven ropes, water and grub-based rations they request. Then they are led to the Hall of Tests.

Area A-1—Entrance to the Hall of Tests: The Hall of Tests is a 20' high featureless building of gray brick, protected by three motionless black insect-things. Four feet tall, the five-legged things are spread out amongst scattered bones and shattered weapons. "These are the black guardians," says Tom-Vaszz. "There is no destroying them; they simply heal in an hour's time, stronger than before. And even when they are bested, we may not open the great door. Only the chosen ones may defeat them. It is forbidden for us to help." He bows his head respectfully and backs away.

Behind the insectoids is a large 10' wide metal door in the middle of the nearest wall. To the right of that door, a human arm seems to grow right out of the brick wall, palm upraised.

Above, a tower rises 80 feet from the roof of the building. On the top of the tower, each of its four sides bears an identical triple-eyed human face.

Dronesects (3): Init +4; Atk piercing strike +3 melee (2d4) or javelins + 2 missile fire (1d7, 30/60/90' range); AC 15; HD 3d8; hp 25 each; MV 40', 30' climb, 20' leap; Act 2d20; SP may climb all surfaces, including ceilings; SV Fort +5, Ref +5, Will +5; AL C.

The dronesects are creatures of Space Wasp magic, occult constructs with no mechanical parts. They are fierce guardians that can't be destroyed, only hacked part long enough to allow access to the hand that actually allows entrance.

There is no need to the defeat the dronesects. If any **human** PC touches their (bare) hand to the upright hand on the wall, the door slides aside with a cloud of dust and stale air. The dronesects stop moving for 1 turn. If a non-human touches the hand, a sickly green light flashes, doing 2d6 damage to the unwise interloper, (DC 10 Fortitude save for half).

Scrawled in faded glyphs on the wall beside the door is this quatrain in the script of the ancient Orax. (DC 14 Intelligence or *Read Languages* check to decipher.)

THE MASTERS SENT THEIR MEN TO RULE
ONE THOUSAND PLANETS BENT THEIR KNEES
WIELD THE GIFTS WE GIVE TO YOU
TO MASTER ALL ETERNITIES

Area A-2—Monkey-Dog Roof-Entrance: Read only if the PCs venture up to the roof: The roof of the building is featureless save for thousands of bulky blue-leafed vines and the accompanying chaos of cream, teal and mango-colored blossoms. A closer inspection reveals an apparent seam in the roof. Could the superstitious lizard-men have overlooked an entrance for all this time?

On the roof of the Hall, is an opening that was found by the semi-intelligent monkey-dog pests who also inhabit Ssazzex. Shunned by the lizard-men, the Hall of Tests is a

perfect refuge for them. The opening is about 3' by 2' wide, 20' over the shaft. A vine leads down into darkness (actually descending to the South ledge of the pit, and thence to their lair at area B-2A.)

The monkey-dogs are very cautious. Hidden under a dense clump of foliage near the opening, they will spring out to attack single intruders or scouts. If confronted with bigger numbers, they will flee to notify their tribe.

Monkey-dogs Warriors (2): Init +2; Atk bite +1 melee (1d5); AC 12; HD 1d6; hp 4 each; MV 40', 30' climb, 20' leap; Act 1d20; SP climb vertical surfaces; SV Fort +1, Ref +2, Will +0; AL N.

General Features: The Hall of Tests' lower levels are formed out of gray stone, seamlessly hewn by a technique far beyond the characters' understanding. The circular portals are 10' wide.

Area B-1—The Top of the Shaft: *Within the hall, the floor opens into a large pit, some 60' in diameter. Beneath is impenetrable darkness. Facing you from across the pit is the huge statue of a naked human man. It towers up the whole height of the pit so that the top of its head is level with the ledge on which you stand. As you enter, its three eyes light up: the left eye is a shiny argent color, the right eye is a dark purple, the top eye is a wild, painful nightmare color you have never seen before.*

Above you, a ray of light shines down from a gap in the ceiling. A sturdy looking vine-rope hangs down from above and then meanders down the near side of the pit.

The vine rope hangs down from the entrance at area A-2. This rope continues down the near side of the pit. The climb downward has plenty of handholds and without rope is only a DC 8 Strength check. With the aid of a rope, it is only DC 3 (remember to factor in armor check penalties). Each 20' of wall takes 1 round to scale and requires one check.

When the PCs enter the shaft area, the statue's ocular drones are activated. These will hover like giant floating eyeballs up and down the shaft, harmlessly observing unless the PCs try to access area B-4 or the spaceship hatch at the bottom of the shaft (area B-5). The strange color is ulfire, a color that only is possible in the alien light and air of Algol.

Ocular Drones (3): Init +3; Atk eyebolt +2 missile fire (1d5, 10/20/30' range); AC 15; HD 3d7; hp 12 each; MV 30' fly; Act 1d20; SP flight; SV Fort +3, Ref +4, Will +3; AL C.

Each ocular drone blasts with an ecto-matter bolt of its own color; within is a rod of its own color. Characters climbing while blasted will have to make a DC 10 Fortitude save to maintain their grip. All fighting attempted while climbing is -2d.

If the PCs have not encountered the monkey-dogs at area A-2, the monkey-dog guardians there will protect themselves from any ascending invaders by chewing through the rope!

Area B-2A—Monkey-Dog Lair: An open 10' wide circular portal is filled with a cluster of ten short white-furred dog-faced monkeys, standing 3' tall upright and menacing with their claws and sharp-looking teeth. The room beyond

has shattered furniture, two doors, and a heavy animal smell. The guards growl and stand their ground in a defensive line.

These rooms had two functions for the human inhabitants. The first was a Spartan dormitory with eating and sleeping space. All of that furniture is long since gone, replaced with matted vines, leaves and furs. Beyond a rickety steel door on the left, is an alcove where the monkey-dog caretakers keep their young. This savage band of smaller but fiercer monkey-dogs will fight to the death to protect their pups.

Monkey-dog Warriors (10): Init +2; Atk bite +1 melee (1d5); AC 12; HD 1d6; hp 3 each; MV 40', 30' climb, 20' leap; Act 1d20; SP climb vertical surfaces; SV Fort +1, Ref +2, Will +0; AL N.

Monkey-dog Caretakers (8): Init +2; Atk bite +1 melee (1d4); AC 12; HD 1d6; hp 2 each; MV 40', 30' climb, 20' leap; Act 1d24 (or 2d24); SP climb vertical surfaces, double attacks if young are threatened; SV Fort +1, Ref +2, Will +0; AL N.

Special: The caretakers don't attack unless the young are threatened, in which case they get 2 attacks/round.

In the alcove are 20 unbearably cute white and silver-furred monkey-pups that do not fight and can not yet fend for themselves.

The monkey-dogs are semi-intelligent and can be pacified and even befriended with an offering of food. Grubs will do, but more than 1 pound of meat confers +2d on a Personality check (DC 10 to stop them from attacking, DC 15 to win their trust.) They won't be much help as they barely speak and have little knowledge per se, but they can communicate a few basic ideas through grunts and gestures: Bad/Death, Down or Up, Good/Food. They know to avoid areas B-3 and B-4, but have no idea of the spaceship hatch. They fear the purple arm down in area B-5.

The right-hand steel door leads to area B-2B.

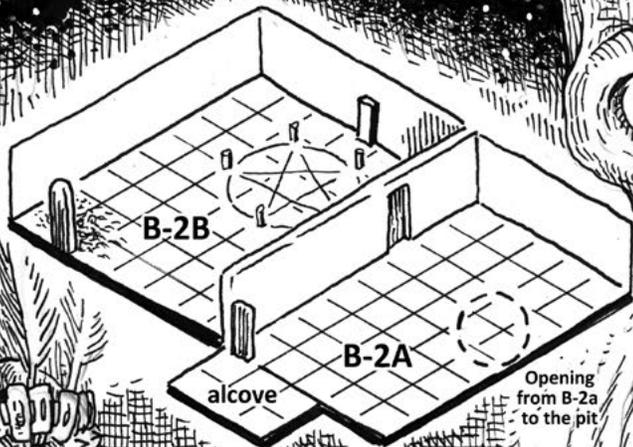
Area B-2B—Warp-Room: *This silent room carries a strange pall, quite unlike the large space the monkey-dogs inhabit. In the center of the room, there is a pentagram on the floor with a short two-foot tall pillar at each point, graven with runes. Heaped on the other side of the room against the far left wall is a huge pile of bones, some looking human, some recognizably animal-ish. All appear very old. There is a rickety metal cabinet against the right wall.*

In the time of the Humans, this circle was used to translate victims into pure soul-fuel, used to construct ever-vaster and infinite cosmic nests for the Space Wasps. The humans delivered the fuel to their masters via the warp-door behind the bone-pile.

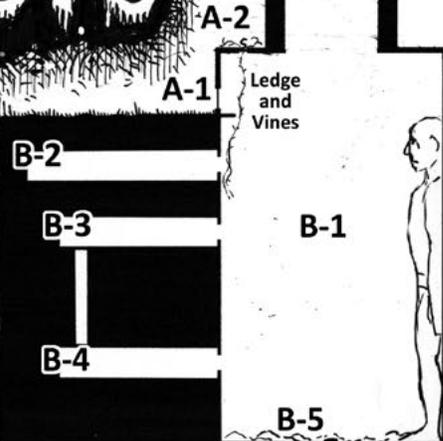
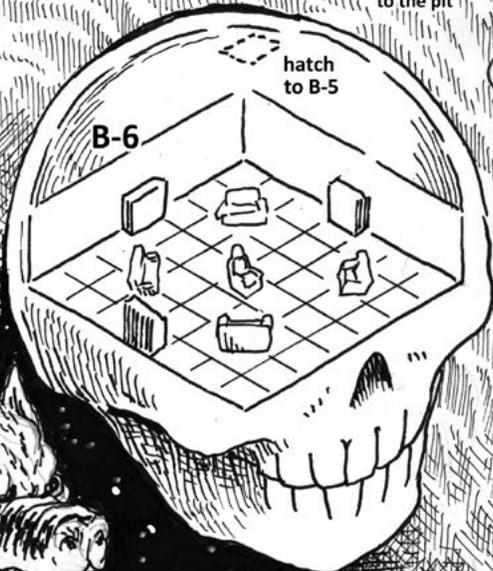
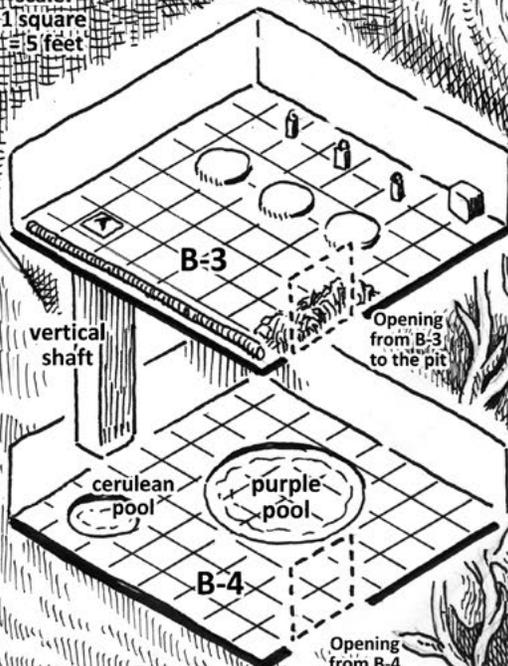
If the formulae on all the glyphs are read simultaneously (DC 15 Intelligence check to translate this ancient human script) and empty rods are placed in the circle, the victims in the circle have their souls torn out; each sacrifice will fill one green rod (with their pain) and one argent rod (with their soul).

THE HALL OF TESTS

up to B-7



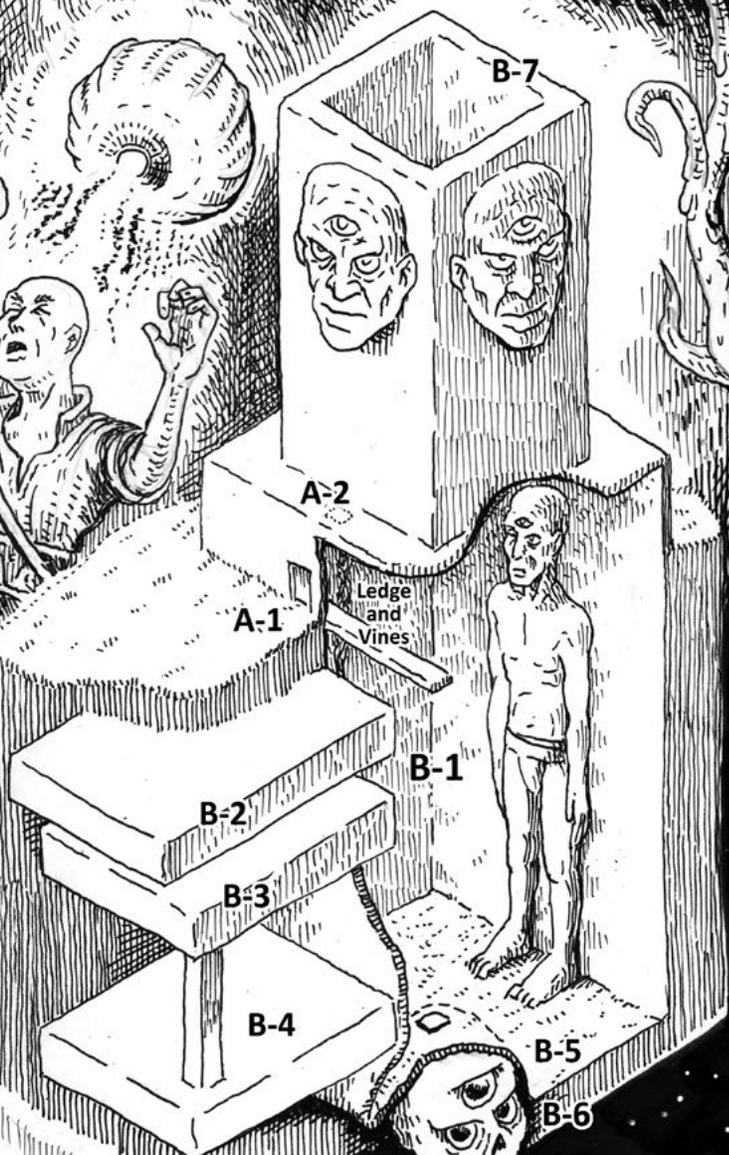
scale: 1 square = 5 feet



SIDE VIEW



B-6



Skull ship hidden under floor

SBP

The monkey-dogs do not use the circle; they venerate the existing 5 argent potion bottles tucked into the cabinet, perhaps feeling the power of the souls within. Buried in the bone-pile in the far corner are 5 green rods, which the monkey-dogs consider taboo.

Behind the heap of bones is a door to the space-webs. A hollow-eyed skull is set into the face of the door. When the skull's eye-slots are filled by purple, ulfire and green rods, the door simply fades away.

Through this open doorway, the PCs see a twisting dark corridor with gray, papery walls. Those who enter find the way leads on for 2d4 rounds before coming to a fork, then another. After three such forks, there is a distant, horrible buzzing and 1d3 rounds later, a dronestroyer (see Appendix A) will appear ahead of them and attack. PCs seeking to return may make a Luck check to find their way back. Otherwise the Space Wasps (and the judge) have them at their mercy.

Area B-3—Transform Lab: *A line of stones, bones and other detritus forms an ad hoc barrier across the entrance of this room. There is a rubbery black tube along the floor on the left side. In the middle of this room are three daises, each one about 8' in diameter with runes running along the stone's edge. 5' from each dais is a three foot high pedestal on which sits a skull, each appearing to be of a different species.*

The line of detritus placed at the entrance is the monkey-dogs warning against entering.

This room was used by the humans to generate the ani-men that now populate Algol. The black cord on the floor is a tentacle machine that grabs any unfortunate entering the room and places them on the occult dais. If a skull sits on the corresponding pedestal, there is a flash of ulfire light, and the subject is allowed a DC 14 Fortitude save. If failed, the subject is transformed into a bipedal animal hybrid matching that of the skull on the pedestal.

Refer to Table 2 for skulls and the effects of the transformation. The skulls currently on the pedestal are: 1 (feline), 3 (giraffe), and 14 (mosquito). The rest of the "templates" are in the crate nearby.

In the corner of the room is hidden trap door (DC 12 Intelligence check or Luck check to locate), which can be opened by sliding a floor panel back. Beneath is a 40' drop to the Communications Room (area B-4), currently in darkness except for the bright cerulean pool far beneath. PCs directly above this open door will feel cool air gusting up noticeably from below. Any creature standing in that open space may levitate up or down along the shaft directly above the pool, simply by concentrating.

TentacleHelper: Init +4; Atk grab +4 melee (none); AC 14; HD 3d6; hp 14; MV none (may attack anywhere in room); Act 1d20; SP grapple and imprison; SV Fort +4, Ref +3, Will N/A; AL N.

This sorcerous beast has no brain and no purpose other than to do the function noted above. If destroyed, it will regenerate in 1d6 hours.



Table 2: Skulls and Effects

Result	Animal Template	Result of Change
1	Feline	+1 Luck, +2 Agility, tail, cute ears
2	Reptilian	+2 AC from scales, tail
3	Giraffe	+2 to all perception checks, neck grows 2 feet
4	Platypus	Duckbill, flippers, fur, eggs
5	Ant	Antennae, pincer-mouth
6	Armadillo	Body armor +2 AC, -5 MV
7	Fish	Underwater breathing (will drown in number of rounds equal to Stamina if not immersed in water.), Swim 40'
8	Centipede	Grow 8 more arms, can run on all legs at 50' round, +2 Initiative
9	Mushroom	Immobile fungus, slowly lose all sentience and humanity and movement in 2d3 days.
10	Chameleon	Climb walls +10', color blending (treat as Hide in Shadows +6)
11	Cobra	Spit poison, Atk +3 missile fire (2d4, DC 14 Fort save for half, range 20')
12	Gloria (unknown on Aereth)	Large teeth, blue skin, shrieks loudly (1d4, DC 12 Fort save to avoid, range 60')
13	Skunk	Black fur, white stripe, shoots cloud of stinking vapor (-2d on all checks and saves, DC 14 Fort save to avoid, range 40')
14	Mosquito	Long proboscis sucks blood, Atk +2 melee (1d5, blood drain), insect wings (MV 20' fly).
15	Rat	Big teeth, Atk +2 melee (1d4 + 10% chance of inflicting disease, DC 12 Fort save or die of plague in 2d6 days.)
16	Human	As per normal human, but with a third eye.



Area B-4—The Communication Room: If approaching from the pit-shaft, read the following. *This portal is blocked by a screen of gray filmy liquid. Unholy symbols scroll by and a low blasphemous muttering is heard, though there is no evident speaker. A skull with three open eye-sockets is set into the wall to the right of this portal.*

Touching this barrier results in a shock of 1d4 points of damage and requires a DC 14 Fortitude save or the PC will be dropped off his ropes, hand grips, etc.

Opening the portal requires three rods in the eye-sockets: Green, ulfire and argent. A thief can open the door with a DC 15 Open Locks check, DC 12 if two of the rods are present and inserted.

On the inside of the room's wall, to the left of the portal is the text of the *ward portal* spell in glowing yellow runes. This text can be copied down by a wizard, elf or thief to learn later. A successful spell check (DC 12 or higher) will reactivate the door.

Within the room, read the following:

A large open pool of liquid indigo sits in the center of the room, about 20' across. In the back of the room is a 5' diameter circular pool of bright cerulean liquid apparently under glass.

Standing before the pool is a naked human male with purple skin and yellow eyes. His right arm is covered in silver runes and his left arm is bare. When he speaks, his tongue also flashes with silver runes. "Welcome, degenerates. I see you have lost your master eyes, but perhaps the great Yx-Orax will still commune with you." He holds out a glass rod of purple liquid, removes the top and offers it to you.

Those who choose to drink the purple liquid may commune with the Space Wasp Yx-Orax, whose presence will appear within the purple liquid of the pool, a shadowy wasp-like outline.

Yx-Orax is intensely evil; Lawful clerics who commune with it will gain five points of Disapproval.

Yx-Orax will inquire where the characters are from, the name of their planet and nearby stars, and if satisfied with their responses, answer basic questions about its servants and rods. After learning all it cares to, it will order the Sunset Man to attack the PCs. If it senses a kindred spirit of cosmic chaos, it may offer a Patron Bond in order to have new agents spread its horrific soul-fueled entropy across Algol. Even in this case, it will order the Sunset Man to summon the dronestroyer and attack the PCs—as an initiation rite. Should they survive it will tell them all needed information to control the giant in area B-7.

Note: There is enough purple liquid to fill 20 rods.

The Sunset Man, named for the color of the three-starred twilight of Algol, is an ancient bogeyman that the lizard-people use to frighten their hatchlings.

Sunset Man: Init +4; Atk slam +4 melee (1d5+2); AC 15; HD 4d6; hp 28; MV 35'; Act 2d20; SP spell-like effects on tongue (buzz-stun) and right arm (ranged strike in 100 feet), regen-

eration 1 hp/round; SV Fort +4, Ref +3, Will +5; AL C.

The Sunset Man's tongue-glyphs generate a buzz that targets one PC, who must make a DC 14 Fortitude save or be stunned for 1d4 rounds. He can also use his right arm's glyphs to strike up to 100' with his normal slam attack and he regenerates 1hp/round, even after death.

The only article of clothing the purple man wears is a belt, in which is tucked a black rod. If the battle is going against him, he will break the black tube and summon a dronestroyer (see Appendix A).

Hidden within the flesh of his torso are two rods each of green, argent, ulfire. The glyphs on his arm are the text for the spell *chill touch* while his tongue may be used to stun creatures—a touch of the severed tongue forces the target to roll a DC 14 Fortitude save or be stunned for 1d4 rounds.

On a small table, there are also four empty rod cases here with caps (could be used to store either the cerulean liquid or the purple liquid.) Also in a strange membranous pouch-sac are seven small eyeball-sized baubles of perfect jewel-like clarity that glow with a mild internal light. There is one bauble for each color of the spectrum.

The cerulean pool levitates any creature standing above it up and down according to the user's will into the vertical shaft leading to Area B-3. The crystal casing can be shattered with a DC 16 Strength check and a blunt metal tool. There's enough cerulean liquid to fill 6 rods.

Area B-5—Bottom of the Pit: *The bottom of the pit is filled with bone shards, stones, scraps of unrecognizable cloth, offal and dried scat. This detritus is almost a foot deep. Sticking out of the mess is a severed purple arm, covered with silver glyphs.*

This left arm is a remnant of the Sunset Man from a battle centuries ago. The Sunset Man himself has forgotten that it exists down here. Its regeneration magic is so powerful that in the intervening time, it has even grown a rudimentary brain and mouth (the latter located in the palm of its hand.) As with his right arm and tongue, the left arm had also been graven with a spell: *scorching ray*.

The arm can't see and can only "hear" via the vibrations of the speaker who is touching it. The arm is extremely bored and was never programmed to serve the blasphemous Space Wasps. He can tell the PCs the basic functions of the rods and about the dronestroyers ("Great black wasp shadows that are as close as they can come to manifesting in this world").

The arm is aware of the chamber beneath, but not what it contains nor how to enter it. The guileless arm has an ulfire rod in its forearm and is willing to tell the PCs this, even though removing the rod will erase its sentience forever.

There are two rods amidst the trash on the floor: One cerulean, one black.

Beneath the pile of old bones and refuse, two other items are easily found on an active search or Luck check to notice:

One is a dented gray metal 20' square platform. Attached to the base of the platform is a pedestal that folds upright with



a skull at its top and one open eye-socket. If a cerulean rod is inserted, the platform can be mentally levitated up or down for 3d4 rounds.

The other is the hatch to the space-ship. A skull with three eye-slots is set into the floor above a shiny 10' wide portal of metal. To open the portal, rods of ulfire, argent and cerulean must be placed in the slots. This powers the space-ship in area B-6. If only two of the rods are available, a thief can also try to use an empty, spent rod or broken rod to open the hatch (DC 15 Open Locks check).

Opening the hatch summons the dronestroyer, who will appear at the top of the pit 1d4 rounds later. All portals made by the servitors of Yx-Orax (the hatch, the screen to the Communication room, etc.) open automatically for the dronestroyers.

Area B-6—The Space-Ship: *Beneath the hatch is a small domed room, about 35' across, entered from above. A ladder drops down about 15' into a comfortable space with four couches, four cabinets and three large oddly angled circular glass panels set in one wall. In the center of the room rests a chair, and attached to the back is a helmet shaped like a human head. There is one slot along its scalp; the rest of the helmet appears to fit snugly over a human head but has no eye-sockets.*

Shortly after entering the space-ship, the dronestroyer will appear and try to prevent the PCs from leaving in the ship (whether they intend to or not).

This room is the top half of a skull-shaped space-ship. If a purple rod is inserted into the socket on the helmet and the helmet is fully put on, the wearer can communicate their desired destination to the occult engines of the cranium-ship. The user's vision dims and they gaze out of the skull ship's eyes. To determine the result, the players should roll 1d20 on Table 3 below, modified by Willpower save or spell check modifier.

Table 3: Skull-ship Control

Roll	Result
Natural 1	Contradictory thought impulses collide! The space-ship explodes and argent-ulfire plasma cascades upward incinerating all denizens of the pit and most of Ssazzex.
2-5	Failure. User may try again, but requires another purple rod to be loaded. Burns a third eye into the user's head.
6-10	Failure. User may try again.
11-13	Success! However, user ends up in a different destination than expected (Purple Planet, Shudder Mountains, Lankhmar, et al.)
14-16	Success! The user ends up in a different era, but will safely return to home planet.
17-19	Success! The user will end up on the right planet and time, but not in the desired destination thereupon.
20 or higher	Success! The user is landed precisely where and when they wish and the helmet and space-ship are perfectly understood and obedient for all future journeys—as long as fuel is available: Rods of ulfire, argent, cerulean and purple.

Area B-7—Lookout-Crow's Nest: *An 80' long vertical shaft with no handholds or vines gives way to a chamber 30' across with a 20' space in the floor. Each of the four sides is shaped as a human face staring outward, and each has light pouring in through its three gem-like eyes (green, ulfire and argent). Through these colored gems, you can see a refracted view of the city, including the large 100' tall human statue standing outside the city.*

While in line of sight, the statue may be controlled by means of consuming a rod's worth of the purple liquid.

Once this is done, the PC's world goes dark and his mind is thrust toward the towering giant human statue in the distance. Roll 1d20+ Personality modifier to determine the effect.

Human Statue: Init +0; Atk slam +10 melee (3d20); AC 22; HD 20d20; hp 200; MV 120'; Act 1d20; SV Fort +20, Ref +2, Will N/A; AL N.

Table 4: Human Statue Control

Roll	Result
Natural 1	The invader's mind is rejected. The giant is animated by rage and starts marching toward the tower to destroy it. It will arrive in 3d4 rounds.
2-6	The PC can look out from the statue's eyes on the tableau beneath him, but may not move the statue.
7-11	The PC controls the statue for 1d4 rounds. This will awe both the cat-man troops outside Ssazzex and the lizard-men within.
12 or higher	The PC controls the statue for 1d4 turns.
Natural 20	The PC is bonded to the statue for life and can control it mentally as long as within a mile.

ENDING THE ADVENTURE

Whether the PCs choose to return home in the space-ship or try to dominate Algol with this new technology and the advantages of their human heritage, there should be no shortage of adventures! The judge who is called upon to explore Algol with his players can draw upon *Mutant Crawl Classics*, *Peril on the Purple Planet* and other *DCC RPG* resources to provide more cosmic adventures, monsters and treasures!

APPENDIX A: THE DRONESTROYER

Dronestroyer: Init +4; Atk stinger +4 melee (2d5 + poison), Atk larvipositor +4 melee (1d5 + larval injection); AC 16; HD 8d10; hp 50; MV 35 land or flight; Act 2d20; SP spell-like effects, poison stinger (DC 10 Fort save or additional 2d6 damage), larval injection (see below); SV Fort +6, Ref +5, Will +10; AL C

These pitch-black supernatural avatars of the Space Wasps are evil automatons sent to do the bidding of their masters; they have no other desires or knowledge.

Instead of hands, the dronestroyer has one poison stinger and a transparent "larvipositor." The stinger holds 8 doses of a deadly poison (DC 10 Fortitude save or 2d6 organ damage). The larvipositor injects tiny squirming larvae into a victim, which hatch and explode from the PC's body in 1d3 rounds, doing 3d6 damage—DC 14 Fortitude save for half damage.

All portals made by the servitors of Yx-Orax (the hatch to the space-ship, the screen to the Communication room, etc.) open automatically for the dronestroyers.

When destroyed, dronestroyers shatter into steaming black shards of space-metal, which slowly hiss and disappear in 2d4 rounds.



We're with the band.



The band of adventurers, that is. Join us in the pages of Dungeon Crawl Classics adventure modules. Stand-alone, world-neutral, all new, and inspired by Appendix N. Learn more at www.goodman-games.com.



DCC RPG

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Special thanks to our Drawmij's Fame winners for loaning their names to our roster of nobility. If we somehow missed you, let us know at the booth and we will flog Harley until he writes you into a DCC product.

Robert "Duke Sennard" Andersen, Only "Lord Yolon" Barber, Logan "Count Bogan" Brown, Curtis "Margrave Istruc" Carey, Drew "Baron Drewven" Davenport, Ezekiel "Viscount Kleczka" Dodd, Michael "Duke Tsuchida" Steele Dschida, Jim "Lord Ratzloff" Gitzlaff, Paul "Grand Duke Paolu" Hobbs, Lazaro "Lord Izagaro" Izaguiurre, Craig "Grailluc the Old" McCullough, Dylan "Grailluc the Younger" McCullough, Nicholas "Duke Nonnocin" McKinnon, Lindsay "Lady Dalsing" McRae, Jason "Baron Minard" Menard, Robert "Earl Meerdoon" Moorhead, Michael "Count Mihalcea" Mullins, Monte "High Prince Etnom" Musselman, Brandon "Lord Arandon" Nutt, Olsen "Father Oblenis", Nicole "Baroness Lenoch" Pate, Nicolas "Sklenicka" Pedersen, John "High Prince Ihsus" Rawley, Carl "Lord Loccas" Sacco, Haley "High Queen Yelha" Skach, Ian "Lord Nai" Smith, Nicholas "Grand Duke Salohcin" Stephens, Marc "Duke Maraist" Stephenson, Max "Grand Duke Wansor" Swanson, Tobe "Count Yebot" Tennyson, Adam "Lord Ztet" Tetz, Ryan "Nayr the Black Prince" Thomas, and David "Margrave Divad" York.

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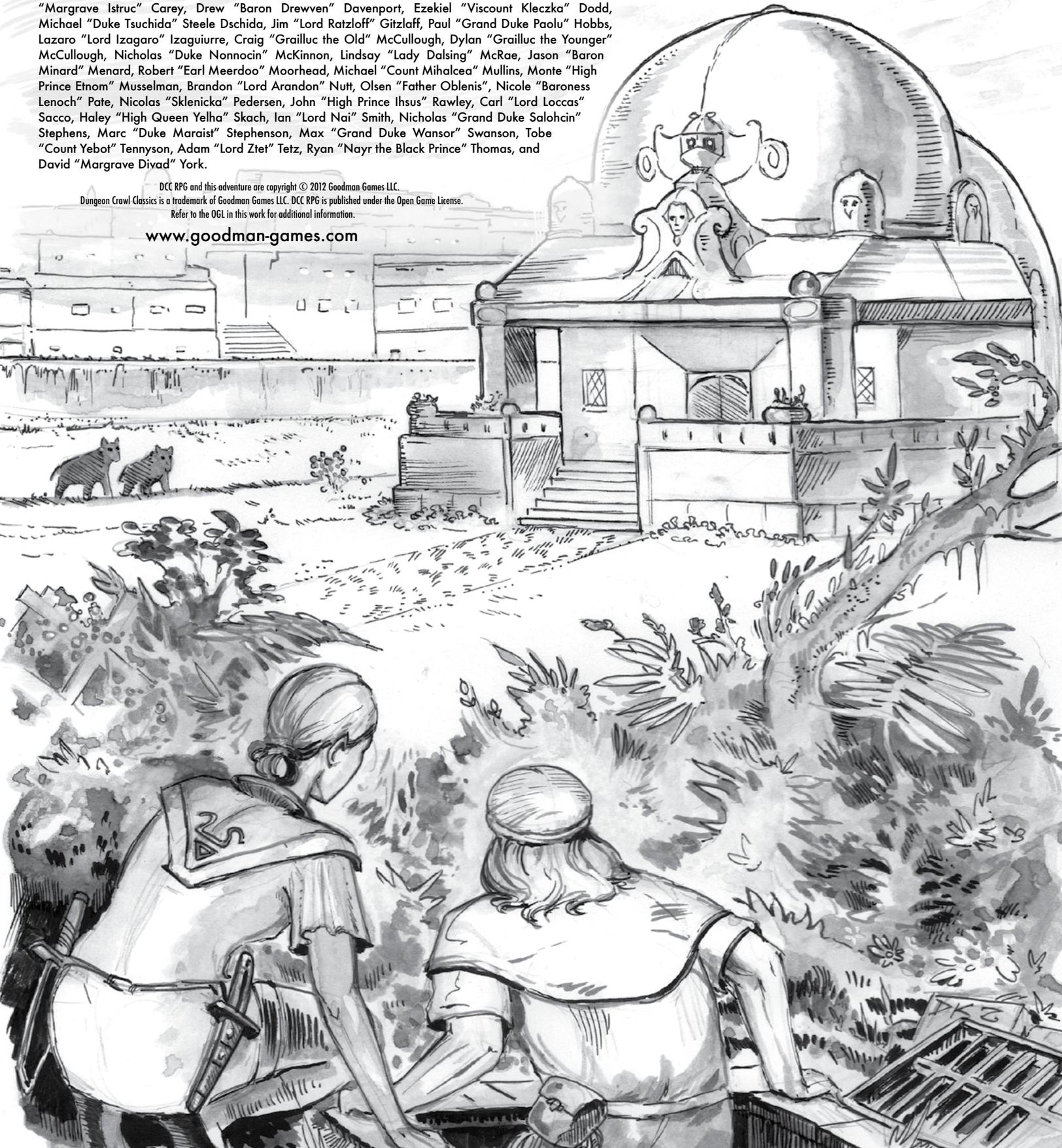
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DUNGEON
CRAWL
CLASSICS
LANKHMAR

THE
HEIST

A LEVEL 3 ADVENTURE



INTRODUCTION



Welcome to the fantastic world of Nehwon, home to the crime-ridden metropolis of Lankhmar, the City of the Black Toga, and residence of its questionable heroes, Fafhrd and the Gray Mouser! Based on the legendary works of Fritz Leiber, DCC Lankhmar allows judges and players to experience their own adventures in Nehwon, ones to rival the tales of Fafhrd and Gray Mouser. If you've ever dreamed of dueling in the foggy alleys behind Cheap Street, negotiating with supernatural mentors for scraps of forgotten lore, or merely trying to survive one more night in the criminal underworld, DCC Lankhmar is for you!

The Heist takes place over the course of a single night in Lankhmar. The party's goal is a simple one: to loot a legendary treasure-hold, secreted somewhere beneath the pleasure manse of Duke Oraso. Specifically, the PCs are in pursuit of three fabled gems. However, the vainglorious Duke has taken to taunting the city's own patron deities, the Gods of Lankhmar, and before the end of the night there shall be an accounting that sets things aright.

The initial challenge lies in planning and executing the PCs' raid on the manse. This favors creative and clever players over powerful PCs, and judges may find that a cunning group of low-level PCs can succeed where a more powerful, less thoughtful, group fails. The adventure allows for any multitude of stratagems; it falls to the PCs (or rather, their clever players) to formulate a plan and – when those plans go awry – cut a bloody path to freedom.

The Heist is designed for play by 4 to 8 3rd-level characters, but can be easily scaled to larger, more powerful parties by increasing the hit dice and the number of house guards. (Interestingly, larger parties often have a more difficult time with the adventure, as the players almost always coordinate less with one another, causing complications for the balance of the party.)

The adventure spotlights thieves, but warriors and wizards will also find ample opportunity to ply their deadly skills. Warriors especially will need to be creative when it comes to infiltrating the manse, possibly trading favored arms and heavy armor for more subtle, creative means.

Smaller parties of 2 to 3 characters will need to resort to clever, cautious play in order to triumph. That said, a party composed of a talented thief, warrior, and wizard – each played cunningly – may have the best chance of success.

Parties composed of 1st- and 2nd-level PCs will be the hardest-pressed of all, hampered by low thief skills and a shortage of flashing swords and blazing spells. These desperate souls must resort to audacity and daring, and pray that fleeting Luck carries the day.

Finally, when it comes to ill-conceived disguises, haphazard attempts at infiltration, and how even the Twain's plans might go awry (to great amusement), players and judges need look no further than Leiber's "Ill Met in Lankhmar" for inspiration.

ADVENTURE BACKGROUND



A merchant-lord's treasure horde is a prize worthy of any rogue, but the horde secreted beneath the manor house of Duke Oraso is legendary, even in the City of the Black Toga. Three gems of inestimable worth are rumored to rest in the vault beneath his pleasure manse, offerings made in honor of the fearsome Gods of Lankhmar. Each of the gems is priceless on its own, but taken together they might ransom all the souls in Lankhmar.

Just as legendary as the gems are the vault's defenses. In a city of thieves, the treasure-hold has never been breached, though not for lack of ambition – and the iron gibbets hanging from the city walls bear testimony to the manse's defenses.

However, the thieves have seized upon a possible weakness: just this morning, Duke Oraso has announced a grand fête-taboo, a mystery play dedicated to the Gods of Lankhmar, the city's own storied powers.

While foreign travelers might not appreciate the significance of such a celebration, its audacity is not lost on Lankhmarts. The Gods of Lankhmar are first and foremost to be feared and respected: any worship is best done from a distance, with sacrifices cast fearfully through the temple door. To celebrate the Gods with wine, laughter, and carousing is to court disaster.

Which, of course, is why every noble scion in Lankhmar will be in attendance. Whatever Duke Oraso has in store in his forbidden pleasure manse, it is not to be missed.

The expected crush of tittering, gawking nobles offers would-be thieves a window, a crack in the vault that is the otherwise impenetrable manor house.

Time is pressing. Invitations were delivered to the nobles' houses this morning. And, rightly fearing censure by common Lankhmarts, the fête-taboo will be held this very night.

At the start of the adventure, the PCs have 12 short hours before the celebration begins.

RUNNING THE ADVENTURE



The Heist is designed to be run in a single 4-hour session. However, this depends on the players focusing on their goal. But this too, is a test of sorts: woe to the thief that becomes distracted in the midst of a heist.

In typical convention games, the first hour is spent with the PCs gathering information and resources, and formulating a plan. Judges should feel free to adjudicate the PCs' failures and successes using common sense and perhaps an occasional Luck check. As accomplished adventurers (and perhaps members of the Thieves' Guild), the PCs have a wide variety of resources to draw upon.

This first chapter of the adventure is open-ended. It is left to the PCs to decide if they want to scout the layout of the manse during the daylight hours, whether or not they care to "acquire" copies of the invitations, and what gear they

LANKHMAR QUICK SHEET

Welcome to Lankhmar the Imperishable, the grandest and oldest metropolis in the world of Nehwon and home to the greatest swordsmen (and women!) any universe has ever seen!

While the City of the Black Toga is rife with secrets, all you need to run this adventure is the Dungeon Crawl Classics core rulebook and this one-page rules summary. For full details on these rules and more, see the Dungeon Crawl Classics Lankhmar box set.

FLEETING LUCK

Lankhmar is a capricious city where fortunes are won and lost in a single night. To represent the ebb and flow of fate, DCC Lankhmar uses fleeting Luck in addition to the normal Luck stat. Fleeting Luck is easily acquired and should be quickly spent – lest it risk being lost with the cast of a die.

Fleeting Luck is spent the same as normal Luck. Similarly, when making Luck checks, the PC treats his total current Luck score as the sum of both his normal Luck score plus any fleeting Luck possessed at the time of the check. Finally, any number of PCs can spend fleeting Luck to aid a fellow character. Each point of fleeting Luck spent to help an ally adds +1 to the assisted PC's die roll.

Gaining Fleeting Luck

Each PC begins the session with 1 point of fleeting Luck. A PC gains a point of fleeting Luck for any of the following actions with the judge's approval:

- Rolling a natural 20 on any attack roll, saving throw, ability or skill check, or spell check.
- Succeeding in a critical success or hit with a roll other than a natural 20 (such as an attack by a warrior with increased crit range).
- Pulling off a daring feat.
- Performing an action or role-playing in a manner that reinforces the unique atmosphere and themes of Fritz Leiber's *Fafhrd* and the *Gray Mouser* tales.
- General good role-playing or entertaining one's judge and fellow players.

Losing Fleeting Luck

Any time any PC in the party rolls a natural 1 that results in a failure, every PC loses all of their fleeting Luck. The natural 1 must be from the roll of an action die, spell check, saving throw, ability or skill check, or similar roll. Rolling a 1 when determining initiative or making a Luck check (when rolling over a body, for example) does not cause fleeting Luck to be lost.

All remaining fleeting Luck is lost at the end of the session. The PCs begin with 1 point of fleeting Luck at the start of the next game.

HEALING WITHOUT MAGIC

Violence is no less common in Nehwon than any other world. But – bereft of the divine healing so common elsewhere – combat is a deadly proposition and never entered

into lightly. Thankfully, there are a handful of opportunities for PCs to regain lost hit points during play.

Once per combat, PC can spend a point of Luck to roll their class hit die plus Stamina modifier and regain that number of lost hit points (a warrior would roll 1d12 + Sta modifier, whereas a wizard would roll 1d4 + Sta modifier).

The hero is in effect taking a quick break from battle to catch a breath and rally his strength before plunging back into combat. The PC can perform no other action than move that round, as it takes all his concentration to deal with his wounds. An unconscious or dying PC cannot regain hit points in this manner, but can be treated by an ally (see below).

PCs can spend additional Luck to improve the result. For example, a warrior spends 1 Luck to recover 1d12 hit points. The hit die is rolled with a "2" result. Caught in the midst of a fight that's going poorly, the warrior decides to spend 4 additional Luck and increase the total to 6.

Rousing Dying Characters

When a PC is reduced to zero or less hit points by any means, he is incapacitated and begins dying. A bleeding-out character can be saved from death by either applying a magical unguent or by staunching the PC's wounds.

Characters remain incapacitated and are considered to be at zero hit points and unconscious. An unconscious PC with zero hit points is utterly defenseless and can be killed by an enemy administering a *coup de grâce*.

Once the battle is ended, the incapacitated character can spend 1 Luck to regain a single hit point and become conscious. The character can regain further hit points by recuperating as normal. If the PC has already utilized his recuperation for the day, he can only regain hit points by natural rest or via magical or alchemical healing unguents until the following day.

Recuperating

Once per day, a PC can rest outside of combat to bind his wounds, restore his spirit, and recover from the stress of battle. Recuperating takes 1d3 turns, after which the PC can spend 1 point of Luck and regain hit points equal to a roll of his class hit die + Stamina modifier + level.

Restoratives

Gritted teeth and clean bandages can go a long way to restoring a PC's vitality, but a draught of potent potable goes even further!

Most of these restoratives can only be consumed while recuperating as it takes time for the beverage to rouse the PC's vitality.

When a PC consumes a draught of restorative drink while recuperating, the PC receives a bonus to his hit die roll at the end of the recuperating period. The bonus depends on the type of liquor consumed, as noted in area 2-4.

Now loosen your blade and sharpen your wits – the City of Sevenscore Thousand Smokes awaits!

might choose to purchase in preparation for the night.

Ideally, the players recognize the necessity of these questions without prompting from the judge. However, this sort of open-world role-playing can also be daunting to some, and judges should not hesitate to ask: Just what is the party's plan? Do they need to pick up any extra gear before night-fall? Are they in consensus as to how this will all go down?

Once the players have agreed upon a plan, and their PCs have acquired the gear they can afford, the adventure is ready to begin in earnest.

And—for PCs (or their players!) that dally—judges may wish to call out the passage of the hours, forcing the question of the heist upon the PCs.

Hours 2-4 of the game are typically spent executing the heist. If, at the 3:45 mark, it looks as if the PCs will fail in their objective, there is no reason the Gods of Lankhmar cannot make their appearance within the manse, sparking terror and panic amongst the revelers, and bringing the adventure to a dramatic close. See **Conclusion** at the end of the adventure for details on the Gods and their intent.

Given the adventure's open nature, judges shouldn't expect parties to encounter the whole of the manse. The design intent is to get the players thinking like thieves, and let the adventure spill out as DCC games so often do.

PRE-GEN CHARACTERS

Pre-generated PCs can be found on the Goodman Games website at www.goodman-games.com.

THIEVES IN THE HOUSE

Throughout the adventure, characters of all classes may be called upon to sneak silently and hide in shadows. And simply because one is not a thief by trade does not mean that a warrior cannot hide in the shadows of a dimly-lit room.

Per the DCC RPG core book, characters lacking thief skills may roll 1d10 (modified by armor penalties!) when attempting these checks. The exceptions are backstab and cast spell from scroll, which cannot be attempted by non-thieves or characters without the Skilled in the Criminal Arts benison.

Following are additional suggestions for judges adjudicating thieving in the course of the adventure:

Sneak silently: In general, characters must succeed on DC 13 Sneak Silently checks to pass noiselessly. Loud areas grant +1d to the rolls. Silent rooms and still chambers impart a -2 penalty to stealth checks.

Hide in shadows: Except where otherwise noted, characters must succeed on DC 13 Hide in Shadows checks to escape notice. Well-lit locations impart a -2 penalty to these checks. Dimly-lit areas do not affect stealth checks, but dark locations grant a +1d bonus.

Forge document: Duke Oraso's invitations are elaborate, illuminated scrolls, emblazoned with gold-ink, befitting the duke. Each is tailored to a specific noble family. Would-be



forgers must have an example and succeed on a DC 20 Forge Document check to create a passable imitation.

Disguise self: Roll once when each character is first disguised. Record the roll but keep the result secret, and apply the result as the PCs interact with the various groups within the manse. Disguise check DCs are called out in each area's text, and can vary with the PC's disguise. A noble furtively dashing through a kitchen will arouse suspicions, where as a servant might pass virtually unnoticed.

In general, only test the result if PCs are having direct interaction with an NPC. (Example: A character walking into a crowded ballroom doesn't need to attempt checks for the entire crowd, but if that same character addresses the Vizier, a check is warranted.)

PLAYER START

Legendary among sellswords, cutpurses, and winesops, the treasure horde of Duke Oraso is second to none – save perhaps that of the Overlord himself. Most infamous of all are the Stars of Lankhmar – three enormous jewels, pledged to the Gods of Lankhmar, yet never delivered. Many a drunk and boasting thief has sworn an oath to claim the gems, only to be found hanging from the gibbets come the next morn.

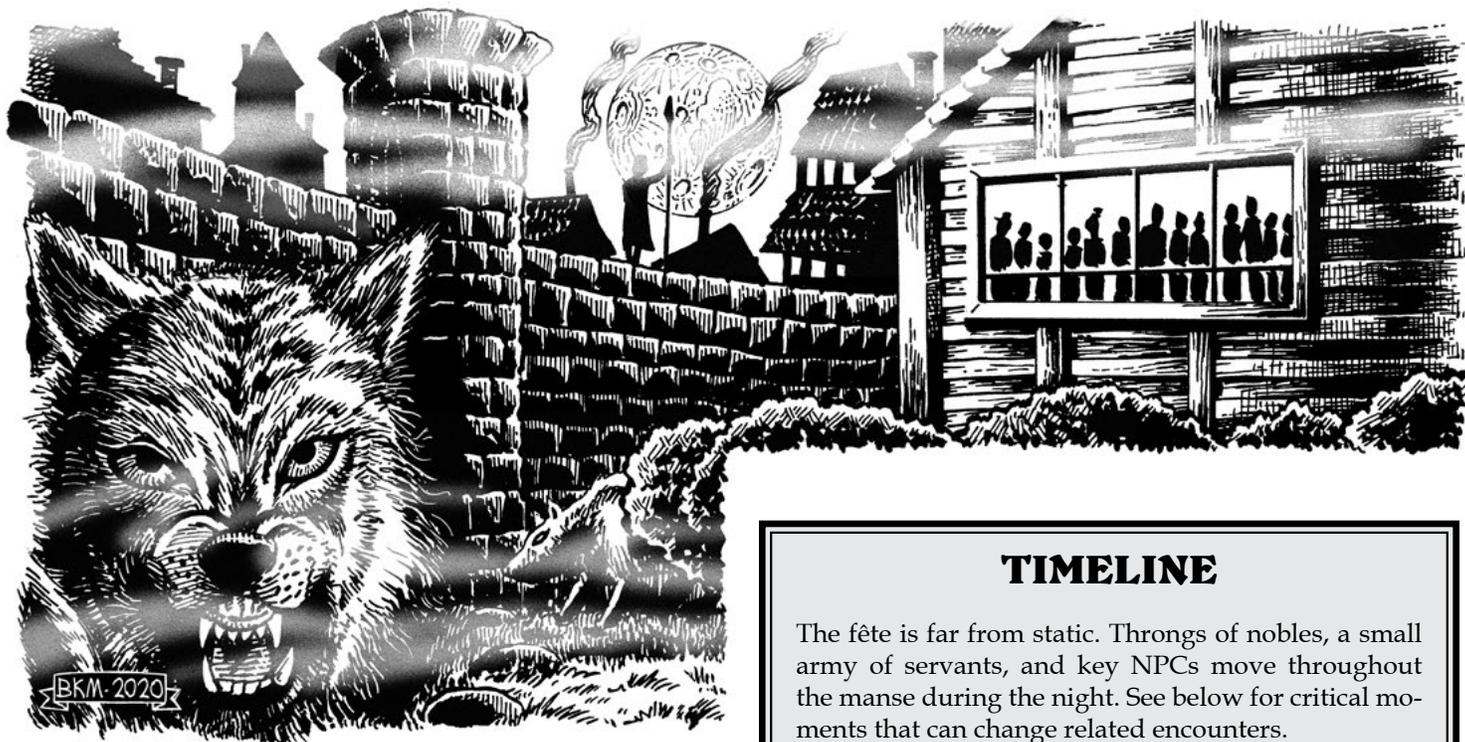
For all its promise of riches, the unassailable manse might as well be atop Stardock or at the bottom of the Outer Sea...a mark best left to braggarts, thieflings not yet a'bearded, and aged coves who have grown tired of living.

You are shaken from your sleep at a godless hour, your companions grinning with nefarious delight. Breathless, they choke out the news: word on the street is that Old Duke Oraso has thrown wide the manse gates, and that – tonight – he will host a fête.

Grinning, you reach for dirk, a drink, and your tools. Invited or not, tonight you and your canting crew will be in attendance.

This much is commonly known: the fête is said to begin at dusk, and noble families across the city have been invited. Duke Oraso's formerly impenetrable manse will be open to Lankhmar's finest—which doubles as an invitation to Lankhmar's worst.

Characters can (and should!) also use this planning time to acquire tools and gear for the night ahead. Rather than role-play the haggling, judges are free to assume that the PCs can acquire any mundane gear they can afford. Herbal healing unctions can be acquired, but at great cost – no less than 15 g.r. per treatment. Barring patron intervention, no other magical or quasi-magical equipment is available.



RUMORS & GOSSIP

Every sellsword or knave has heard of Duke Oraso's treasure hoard and the Stars of Lankhmar, the jewels of inestimable value. Odds are good that the PCs have heard snippets of other tales, shared over a jack of wine or a game of Rat-Snake.

If the judge is running *The Heist* as a campaign game, PCs can learn rumors by seeking out information and leads from their contacts and informants.

However, judges running the adventure as a one-shot can allow each player to roll once on the following table. Thieves and PCs with a similarly nefarious background should roll twice.

Roll 1d7 Rumors

- 1 Duke Oraso's vault is secreted somewhere beneath the manse.
- 2 The iron grates found on Acolyte Alley and in Penance Court both lead to sewers that run beneath the manse.
- 3 The vault is secured by three locks, which need to be opened at precisely the same time.
- 4 The grounds are prowled by Duke Oraso's enormous wolves after dark.
- 5 Duke Oraso dedicated the three jewels, the Stars of Lankhmar, to the Gods of Lankhmar over a year ago, but has refused to cast the priceless gems into the gods' temple.
- 6 Duke Oraso employs a sorcerer to oversee his house guards. The black wizard can read minds.
- 7 Hidden servants' passages run both within and beneath the manse.

TIMELINE

The fête is far from static. Throngs of nobles, a small army of servants, and key NPCs move throughout the manse during the night. See below for critical moments that can change related encounters.

Dawn to Noon: Servants stream into the manse via area 1-2, to begin preparations. At noon, the gate is locked and barred and no more servants are permitted to enter.

Dusk: Nobles begin to arrive at area 1-1. Their personal servants, litters, and carriages wait outside the gates, and only the nobles are permitted to enter.

10 Bells: Duke Oraso arrives at the fête, wearing a brilliant crown. Characters present realize the three Stars of Lankhmar are not in the manse vault, but are being worn by the duke himself!

11 Bells: Duke Oraso announces the Release of the Beasts. A desperate slave is slathered in pig's blood and congealed fat, and offered his freedom if he can escape the compound. The child flees only to be chased down and devoured by the steppe hyenas (area 1-3).

Having shredded the carcass, the hyenas begin to prowl the grounds. For the safety of the guests, the fête retires to area 2-5. The great doors to 2-5 are bolted from the outside, and from now until dawn, hyenas stalk the grounds. All visitors, no matter their status, are turned away.

Midnight: The nobles are herded into area 2-7, where Duke Oraso announces the beginning of the mystery play in honor of the Gods of Lankhmar.

1 Bell: The attendees emerge from beneath the manse, and return to area 2-5 to witness the sacrifice of those nobles (or PCs) who were weighed in the balance and found wanting.

2 Bells to Dawn: The drunken fête continues until the hyenas are returned to their pens at dawn.

LEVEL 1: THE GROUNDS

The Wall: The pleasure palace is surrounded by a short stone wall, a mere 12' in height. Surmounting the wall is a simple task for thieves and their ilk (DC 10 Climb Sheer Surfaces check) and the flickering light makes for ideal sneaking conditions. There is no chance of the PCs being spotted during their climb; however, those descending into area 1-3 may very well encounter the Pack Master and his ferocious wards.

Sharp bits of glass, metal, and stone have been cemented along the top of the wall (a fact readily apprehended by climbers). Those mantling the wall without preparation (e.g., taking a round to secure a cloak or hide atop the wall) must succeed on DC 15 Ref saves or suffer 1d6+1 damage during the climb.

The Grounds: The sward is poorly lit by the lanterns and candlelight cast off by the festivities. So long the alarm hasn't been raised, crossing the lawn unnoticed is a simple task (DC 5 Hide in Shadows check). However, once the guards are alerted to thieves, the difficulty increases to DC 20.

After midnight, the Pack Master patrols the grounds with eight enormous steppe hyenas. Characters attempting to cross the grounds without detection must take pains to disguise their scent, in addition to succeeding on the Hide in Shadows checks. Those failing to take precautions must make Luck checks (roll under) to escape notice. If PCs have the stink of blood on them (or other powerful smells, such as from crawling through sewers), increase the die to 1d24 or 1d30 as warranted.

Area 1-1—The Grand Gate: *An imposing iron gate topped with spikes wards the entrance to the manse. A trio of men-at-arms, led by a captain in a high crest, greets the steady line of pageantry approaching the gate.*

The gilded carriages and gaudy litters disgorge baronets, counts, and various minor princelings and their consorts. The captain inspects each in turn before welcoming them to the fête.

The captain and his men are respectful but solemn, ensuring that each party arriving bears the proper invitation. Characters hoping to pass with forged invitations must have succeeded on DC 20 Forge Document checks.

All nobles, regardless of rank, are expected to come in their finest. Attempts to pass wearing armor automatically fail. Light weapons are permitted as ornaments but anything larger than a longsword draws the captain's sharp eye.

Characters disguised as nobles must succeed on DC 10 Disguise Self checks to pass. Characters foolish enough to attempt passing through the gates disguised as servants or house guards are automatically turned away.

The captain and his men have no tolerance for mealy-mouthed knaves and pretenders claiming to high station. These rogues are immediately thrown out, using violence as needed. If any of the guards are incapacitated, the survivors instantly sound their horns, summoning reinforcements from the house.

The Captain: Init +1; Atk longsword +3 melee (1d8) or shortbow +3 ranged (1d6); AC 16; HD 2d8; hp 12; MV 20'; Act 1d20; SV Fort +2, Ref +1, Will +1; AL varies.

House Guards (3): Init +0; Atk poleaxe +1 melee (1d10); AC 13; HD 1d8; hp 4; MV 30'; Act 1d20; SP none; SV Fort +1, Ref +0, Will +0; AL L.

Area 1-2—Servants' Entrance: *A short wooden door, rising no more than 4 feet in height, is set into the stone wall. The door is barred in rusted iron, set with a square peephole, and secured with a large black keyhole, cast in the shape of a rampant lion.*

Three guards are asleep within; their loud snores can be heard even through the stout door. Empty jacks of wine litter the floor, alongside discarded platters of roasts and hocks. Each of the guards is armed with a massive tulwar.

Any attempt to break down the door, or failing a DC 10 Sneak Silently check once the PCs are inside the guardroom, awakens the trio. Brazen PCs can filch a guard's sword without awakening its owner on a successful DC 15 Pick Pocket check.

The guards refuse to open the door to PCs disguised as nobles (rightly fearing the wrath of the Vizier) but will let servants and guards pass in exchange for a bribe of 1 g.r. or a bottle of strong grog. The guards are so drunk that all attempts at disguise succeed.

However, PCs offering *too* great a bribe (i.e., 10 g.r. or more) overplay their hand. The guards sober up, becoming immediately suspicious of the faux servants and sellswords with so much wealth to burn. If the PCs hold to their stories, they must succeed on DC 20 Disguise Self checks to pass.

The Door: The locked door can be opened with a DC 15 Pick Lock check, or battered down with a DC 20 Strength check or 5 rounds of labor.

Treasure: The guards have spent all their earnings on alcohol, leaving little for cutpurses. A single bottle of Lankhmar sour wine — opened but not consumed — remains. (The bottle contains 4 draughts; each adds +1 to hit die recovery rolls.)

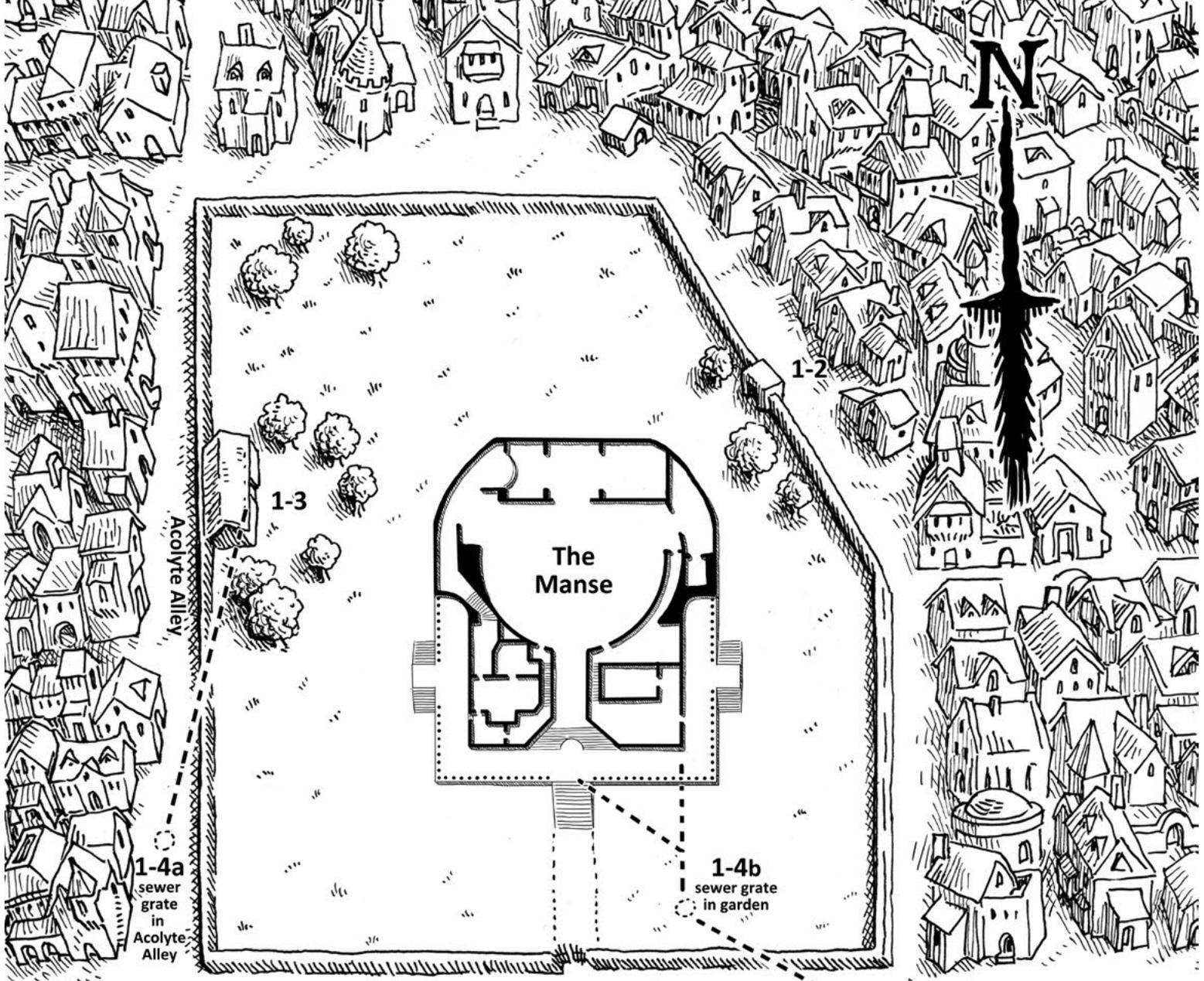
Drunken Guards (3): Init -1; Atk tulwar -2 melee (1d8); AC 8; HD 1d8; hp 6 each; MV 30'; Act 1d16; SP none; SV Fort +1, Ref +0, Will +0; AL L.

Area 1-3—Hyena House: *The low, squat building seems out of place amid the luxurious gardens. Narrow windows secured by thick bars are set along the tops of the walls, and a single squat door, banded in iron, seems the sole means of ingress.*

The door is secured by a simple lock (DC 10 Pick Lock to open). Alternatively, the door can be broken down with a DC 25 Strength check or 10 rounds of smashing.

Inside, the building is revealed to be a single simple chamber with eight iron cages; the cages are secured by simple locks (DC 10 Pick Lock check). A rude straw pallet and a raised brazier sit near the center of the chamber.

MAP 1: THE GROUNDS



The floor slopes towards a sewer grate. The sewer runs to area 1-4a (see Map 1).

During the day, each of the cages houses one of the enormous steppe hyenas. The Pack Master rests here along with the beasts. A grizzled hunter and trapper, he wields a stout war club in combat and cares only for his wards.

After midnight, the Pack Master releases the hyenas onto the grounds and patrols alongside them until dawn.

Treasure: A simple wooden box is hidden inside the Pack Master's straw mattress. Inside the box is a carved jade idol, a reminder of the master's former life on the high Steppes. The idol fetches 15 g.r. if sold to a collector or sage.

Pack Master: Init +2; Atk war club +3 melee (1d8+3); AC 14; HD 2d12; hp 20; MV 30'; Act 1d20; SP command hyenas; SV Fort +3, Ref +2, Will +0; AL C.

Steppe Hyenas (up to 8): Init +5; Atk bite +6 melee (1d6+2); AC 14; HD 2d10; hp 15 each; MV 50'; Act 1d20; SV Fort +4, Ref +4, Will +3; AL N.

Areas 1-4a, 1-4b, 1-4c—Sewer Grates: *An iron grate, crusted with rust, wards over the sewer hole. The stench of waste and filth wafts up from below.*

Multiple sewer grates can be found about the manse and the nearby streets. Characters are right to think that these can offer access to the manse, but doing so creates an obvious complication: any PC passing through the sewers reeks of offal, piss, and night soil, and has literally no chance of passing at the ball. (Clever PCs, planning ahead, might think to wrap ball gowns and formal wear in oiled leather or the like, to use as disguises once they reach at the manse.)

Each grate is secured with a simple lock, now caked with rust and grime. A DC 15 Pick Lock check, a DC 17 Strength check, or 3 rounds of loud hammering is sufficient to open the grate.

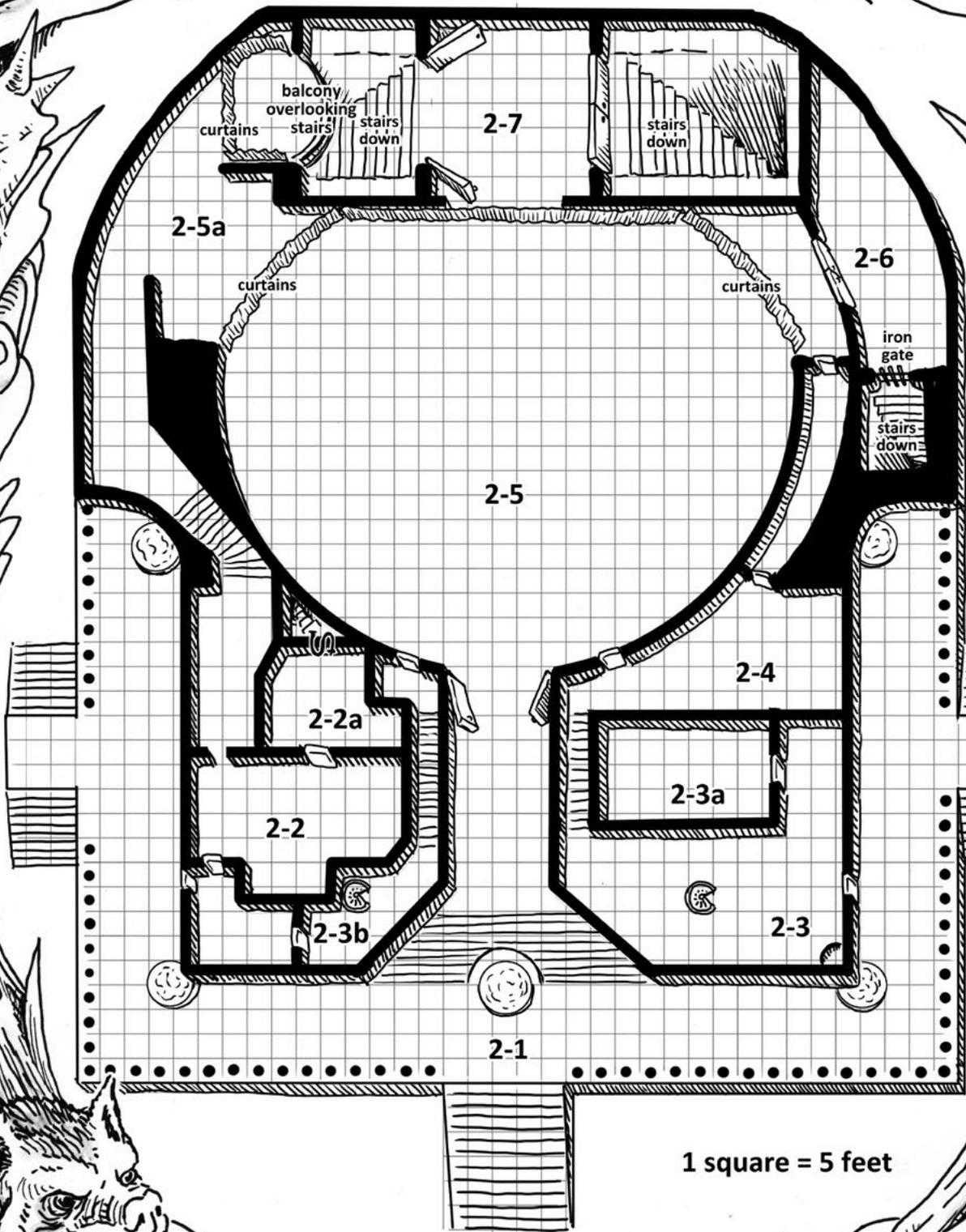
It is a short 8' drop to the floor of the tunnel. The waste canal is 4' across, with catwalks running along either side, but every surface—the ledges, walls, and ceiling—is coated in filth.

Note that not all the sewer tunnels connect beneath the manse:

- 1-4a runs to area 1-3 only.
- 1-4b is found inside the compound, running between 1-4c and offering access to areas 3-1 and 3-3.



MAP 2: DUKE ORASO'S MANSE



1 square = 5 feet

SBP

LEVEL 2: THE PLEASURE MANSE

Lit by scintillating candelabra and flickering braziers, the duke's pleasure dome is a marvel of bright marble, stained glass, and hammered gold. The manse is itself an intricate work of art. Even the most mundane features, from doorknobs to curtain pulls, are crafted from rare ivory and exotic woods, and no corner of the manse is devoid of ornamentation.

The pleasure dome is not a functioning manor, in the usual sense. There are no bed-chambers or servants' quarters. The manse's sole purpose is hosting fêtes and the duke's curious rites. As such, the layout hews to aesthetics rather than banal practicalities.

Except where noted, the arched ceilings are 20' high. Marble tile mosaics make up the floors, and the walls are hung with rich tapestries.

The exterior walls of the manse can be scaled with DC 15 Climb checks, and the host of obscene gargoyles offer ample opportunity to secure ropes from above. 30' high, the roof is flat, save for the great golden dome rising above area 2-5.

FILCHING AT THE FÊTE

Lower-class thieves and rogues are rightly bedazzled by the immense wealth present at the fête. Very little of this is found by way of coins, however—everything is provided for Lankhmar's elite and there is no need to buy anything. Few of the nobles in attendance even deign to carry belt pouches or coin purses, as these are sure hallmarks of the merchant class.

For rogues who can't help but try to pilfer a little something on the sly (and what thief worthy of the title could resist?), we offer the following. Roll on the tables below or use them for inspiration as needed. In most instances, a DC 15 Pick Pocket check is needed to liberate an item, though the judge should adjust the DC up or down to account for specific circumstances.

Roll 1d10 to determine the type of item: (1) ring; (2) pendant; (3) brooch; (4) earring; (5) amulet; (6) diadem; (7) armlet; (8) circlet; (9) bracer; (10) crown.

Roll 1d7 + Luck modifier

0 or less	The item is protected by an arcane hex. Roll again to determine item's value; the owner immediately knows the item is stolen and sees the thief as if wreathed in blue flames.
1	The item is tin, plated in silver and adorned with paste gems (15 s.s. but appearing to be worth 100 g.r.).
2	25 g.r.
3-4	50 g.r.
5-6	100 g.r.
7	250 g.r. but the piece is so iconic that it will be nearly impossible to fence (a fact that might only occur to wily, aged coves).

8+

The item appears to be worth 250 g.r. but is, in fact, far more valuable. Roll 1d5: (1) it is a family heirloom, and they will pay any price to recover it; (2) a gem on the piece holds the imprisoned soul of an ancient wizard; (3) the item can detect poison at will and all attempts to backstab the wearer automatically fail; (4) the decorative works conceal a map leading to an ancient treasure; (5) the cat-themed item grants its wearer nine lives.

Area 2-1—Grand Ascent: *A great marble arch marks the entrance to the manse. Above, the polished golden dome glows softly in the dark night. Below, Lankhmar's finest filter into the manse. Each personage is announced in turn by the booming herald. The endless series of appellations and epithets mix with the sharp clink of glasses raised in toast, the splash of fountains, and the lilting strands of music drifting out of the pleasure manse.*

An ominous figure in black robes watches over the crowd, flanked by a pair of bare-chested eunuchs. With curt nods and subtle gestures of his hands, the robed figure silently directs the house guards like a grim puppeteer.

Scores of nobles mill about the arch and atop the veranda. A small army of servants buzz around the celebrants, keeping the nobility flush with wine and sweetmeats. The herald announces the names and titles of each noble as they enter; this is of great interest to socialites and would-be sycophants who watch for personages of note. (If the judge is running a Lankhmar campaign, this is a chance to introduce powerful NPCs to the players.)

Meanwhile, the Vizier maintains a close watch on the celebrants. As previously noted, a DC 15 Disguise Self check is sufficient to pass the house guards and nobility, but PCs must succeed on a DC 25 Disguise Self check to fool the Vizier. If the Vizier sees through the PCs' ruse, he doesn't raise the alarm, but instead marks them for selection later in the night.

In addition to the Vizier and his pair of eunuchs, 10 house guards are stationed about the veranda and at the entrance to the manse. They obey the Vizier's silent commands without a word.

At midnight, all exterior doors are locked and barred (including the southern double doors at the entrance to 2-5), as the fearsome steppe hyenas are released onto the grounds. The nobles are then summoned into the ballroom (area 2-5) for the beginning of the mystery play.

For stats on the Vizier and his paired eunuchs, see sidebar on page 25.

Herald: Init +0; Atk short sword +1 melee (1d6); AC 11; HD 1d8; hp 4; MV 30'; Act 1d20; SP none; SV Fort +1, Ref +0, Will +0; AL L.

Nobles (1d30+10): Init +0; Atk longsword +2 melee (1d8) or dagger +2 melee (1d4); AC 10; HD 1d8; hp 3; MV 30'; Act 1d20; SV Fort +0, Ref +0, Will +2; AL varies.

NOBLES & THEIR PROCLIVITIES

Consult the following table to generate nobles as needed. Roll 1d30 twice; once for the NPC's name and a second time for their proclivities. Alter the noble's gender and attitudes as best suits the game.

Roll d30	Nobility	Trait
1	Duke Sennard	Quick to anger; takes offense at the smallest slight
2	Lord Yolon	Fawns on attractive PCs
3	Margrave Istruc	Arrogant towards all below his or her station
4	Baron Drewven	Freelance thief in disguise; willing to ally with PCs (and then betray them once the treasure is won)
5	Viscount Kleczka	Braggart; always one-upping every tale told with grander feats of derring-do
6	Duke Tsuchida	Kindly and oblivious (-5 to Disguise Self DCs)
7	Lord Ratzloff	Boorish; repeats tales of youth throughout the night
8	Grand Duke Paolu	Senile; mistakes PC for relative
9	Grailluc the Old	Nervous; laughs incessantly
10	Grailluc the Younger	Drunk; mistakes PC for rival
11	Lady Dalsing	Loves to gossip; plies the PCs for juicy rumors
12	Baron Minard	Sickly and taken with the ague; coughs spittle over PCs and leans on them for support
13	Earl Meerdoo	Mocking and insulting; delights in noting others' flaws
14	Count Mihalcea	Given to lewd and vile jokes at the expense of the servitors and musicians
15	Count Bogan	Talkative; cannot abide lulls in conversation
16	Lord Arandon	Inane; consumed by trivialities
17	Father Oblenis	Gullible; easily lured into the PCs' schemes
18	Baroness Lenoeh	Drunk; attempts to seduce PC (thus angering his or her partner)
19	Baron Sklenicka	Suspicious (+5 to Disguise Self DCs)
20	Lord Loccas	Exiled emperor or empress, disguised as lower-ranking noble; looking to recruit a general to lead coup
21	Duke Nonnocin	Freelance thief in disguise; mistakes the PCs for marks and attempts to pick their pockets
22	Lord Nai	Aged; insists on PCs' aid at every turn
23	Grand Duke Salohcin	Flirtatious; delights in inciting jealousy in multiple paramours
24	Duke Maraist	Jealous and spiteful towards attractive PCs
25	Grand Duke Wansor	Drunk; mistakes PC for confidante or ally
26	Count Yebot	Self-conscious; looks to PCs for affirmation
27	Lord Ztet	Vain and narcissistic (-10 to Disguise Self DCs)
28	Nayr the Black Prince	Moonstruck; will do anything for PC
29	Margrave Divad	Manipulative; tries to enlist the PCs in schemes
30	Roll again on the High Nobility table, doubling the value of any baubles worn	Delights in making others uncomfortable and inflicting emotional pain
Roll d4	High Nobility	
1	High Lord Izagaro	
2	High Prince Ihsus	
3	High Queen Yelha	
4	High Prince Etnom	

THE VIZIER & THE DUKE

The fête is overseen by Duke Oraso's personal attendant, a gaunt sorcerer known as the Vizier. Standing over 7' in height and unnaturally slender, the Vizier is a grim figure in his ink-black robes. Emotionless and dour, the sorcerer tolerates no fools, and the noble folk give him a wide berth. Initially encountered in area 2-1, the Vizier wanders the fête throughout the night.

If PCs insist on taunting the wizard, he smiles thinly and welcomes them to the celebration. While the Vizier betrays no immediate action, the characters are struck by the uncanny feeling that the sorcerer sees through every disguise and apprehends every stray thought. The PCs' fears are not entirely unfounded: the Vizier's black magic includes the ability to cast *ESP*.

The solemn Vizier marks well each and every guest with his serpentine eyes. Any would-be rogue must succeed on a DC 25 Disguise Self check to fool the Vizier. If their disguises fail, the Vizier doesn't summon the house guards—he instead chooses the PCs for selection later in the night.

The Vizier disdains personal combat, relying on cunning, spells, and his pair of towering eunuchs to dispatch foes. The eunuchs are utterly loyal to the Vizier and need never check morale. For his part, the Vizier has no interest in dying for Lord Oraso, but is too prideful to tolerate PCs getting the best of him for long.

Treasure: The Vizier carries a simple silver dagger with a large bloodstone set in the pommel. The dirk bears an enchantment that permits the blade to ignore all armor, magical or otherwise.

In addition, the Vizier possesses the blue key, one-third of the trio that unlocks the vault in area 3-8.

Vizier: Init +1; Atk dagger -2 melee (1d4-1) or spell; AC 9; HD 5d4; hp 11; MV 30'; Act 1d20; SP spellcaster (+8 to spell check: *charm person, magic shield, ESP, scare, scorch-*

ing ray); SV Fort +4, Ref +0, Will +8; AL C.

Eunuchs (2): Init +1; Atk tulwar +3 melee (1d8+3); AC 11; HD 2d12; hp 12 each; MV 30'; Act 1d20; SV Fort +2, Ref +1, Will +1; AL L.

Duke Oraso arrives later in the evening, at 10 bells. A tall man, his once-mighty frame has been rendered round and soft by decades of indulgence in wine, women, and sweetmeats. He arrives at the fête drunk, and proceeds to down whole jacks of wine throughout the night (seemingly to no effect).

The duke has no shortage of baubles, adorning himself with golden rings, bejeweled amulets and pendants, but the most audacious of all is his golden crown, set with the Stars of Lankhmar—the trio of gems promised to the Gods of Lankhmar.

The duke is never found without his four dedicated shield-slaves. The four have served the duke since they were young boys, and are unflinchingly loyal. This changes the moment the duke is struck down; realizing that freedom is finally within their grasp, the warriors break and flee the manse.

In battle, a shield-slave can spend an action to step into the line of attack and take a blow that would otherwise strike the duke.

Treasure: In addition to the crown, the duke also wears a green glass key around his neck, one-third of the keys needed to open his legendary treasure vault (area 3-8).

Duke Oraso: Init +0; Atk longsword +4 melee (1d8+3); AC 11; HD 4d8; hp 23; MV 25'; Act 1d20; SV Fort +1, Ref +2, Will +4; AL L.

Shield-Slaves (4): Init +2; Atk axe +3 melee (1d8+2); AC 14; HD 3d12; hp 18 each; MV 30'; Act 1d20; SP sacrifice action to take attack meant for Duke Oraso; SV Fort +3, Ref +2, Will +0; AL L.

House Guards (10): Init +0; Atk poleaxe +1 melee (1d10); AC 13; HD 1d8; hp 4; MV 30'; Act 1d20; SP none; SV Fort +1, Ref +0, Will +0; AL L.

Area 2-2—Guard Quarters: *The incessant tittering and saccharine laughter of the party are quieted here. Inside the spartan chamber are several cots around a large bronze brazier. Weapon and armor racks stand against the far wall, and the smell of blade oil hangs heavily in the air. Several men-at-arms lounge around the brazier, throwing dice and passing around a bottle.*

This chamber houses the men-at-arms in between watches. At any time during the night, 1d10+3 guards can be found here, passing the hours.

Pressed in combat, one of the guards kicks the brazier over, trying to douse the PCs in flaming oil. Any targets within 10' must make a DC 15 Ref save or be caught in the wash of

flaming oil, taking 1d16 damage.

Treasure: The gamblers are dicing for bits and trifles. Small-minded PCs can leave with 1d100+20 b.a., 1d100+5 c.p., 3d20 s.p., and 1d5 bottles of watered-down sour wine (no healing benefit).

However, for PCs looking to disguise themselves as house guards, the chamber is a treasure trove. Characters could outfit themselves in the high-crested helms, studded leather armor, and poleaxes and pass as men-at-arms.

House Guards (1d10+3): Init +0; Atk poleaxe +1 melee (1d10); AC 10; HD 1d8; hp 4; MV 30'; Act 1d20; SP none; SV Fort +1, Ref +0, Will +0; AL L. (Note that if the guards have the opportunity to don their studded leather armor, their AC improves by +3.)

Area 2-2a—Leech's Chamber: *The small chamber is furnished with a wooden table and a simple straw pallet. In the dim light of the standing brazier, you can discern cleavers, bone saws, and strange implements on the table, and crimson-brown stains on the bed. The stink of blood hangs heavy in the air.*

The men-at-arms' leech uses this chamber to treat his patients. A short, squat man with grime-stained hands and a broken-toothed, leering smile, the leech's chief delights are strong wine and inflicting pain on his patients.

The leech is lurking behind the concealed door in the north wall of the chamber when the PCs enter. Overconfident in his own cleverness, the leech cannot resist the opportunity to harm the PCs.

Given the opportunity, he backstabs the last PC to exit the chamber, then retreats back through the concealed door, throwing closed the bolt before fleeing towards area 3-5. Guided by his knowledge of anatomy and viscera, the leech backstabs as a 2nd-level thief.

Once the concealed door is bolted, it can be picked with a DC 20 Pick Lock check, broken through with a DC 20 Strength check, or battered down with 5 rounds of effort.

Leech: Init +1; Atk dagger +1 melee (1d4/1d10); AC 11; HD 1d8; hp 6; MV 30'; Act 1d20; SP backstab +5 (if successful, 1d10 damage and roll 1d12 on crit table II); SV Fort +0, Ref +1, Will -1; AL C.

Treasure: A simple teak box sits amid the bloodied saws and cleavers. Inside are a roll of cotton bandages and a clay pot of healing salve.

Characters using the salve on their wounds regain 1d4 hit points. If the salve is applied by a PC with the Healer benison, the salve restores 1d6 hp. The healing salve can be used to restore health above and beyond the hit points a PC receives from recuperating and restoratives (without spending Luck). There is sufficient salve for 7 applications.

Secret Corridor: The concealed doors open to a narrow dusty staircase descending to area 3-6. A small, iron-bound coffer rests on a shelf at the top of the stairs. Secured by a lock (DC 15 Pick Lock check), the coffer is also trapped. On a failed attempt to pick the lock, the lock *appears* to open, but a panel slides open inside the box as well, releasing a deadly asp that attacks the unfortunate soul that opens the coffer. The sliding door can be detected and disabled with DC 20 Find/Disable Trap checks. However, any attempt to open the coffer by brute force releases the asp.

The coffer contains 1d100+20 s.p., 1d20 g.r., and a small velvet pouch secured with a silver drawstring. Inside the pouch is a red glass key, one-third of the trio needed to open the vault in area 3-8.

Asp: Init +3; Atk bite +3 melee (1d3 plus poison); AC 12; HD 1d8; hp 5; MV 15'; SP poison (DC 12 Fort save or lose 1d5 Stamina); Act 1d20; SV Fort +0, Ref +2, Will -2; AL N.

Area 2-3—Kitchens: *A small army scurries about the kitchens, preparing a host of dishes, each arranged in bizarre and artful ways to tease the senses and tempt the palate of the most stoic*

ascetic. Streams of servitors exit the kitchen bearing the dishes, returning scant moments later for more. The constant clash of crockery, shouts of the cooks, smell of pungent spices, and heat from the fires are overwhelming.

At any point of the night there are between 10 and 30 servants in the kitchens, hurriedly preparing and plating dishes. They pointedly ignore any PCs disguised as men-at-arms (Disguise Self attempts succeed without chance of failure) but confront any obvious rogues, calling for the house guards. Characters disguised as nobles raise suspicions, and must succeed on DC 15 Disguise Self checks to pass. Those disguised as servants pass with DC 10 Disguise Self checks.

The spiral staircase descends to area 3-3, a servants' passage, allowing servers to carry plated food to the opposite side of the manse without disturbing the noble guests.

A trap door is set into the floor for disposing of scraps and discarded food. The vertical shaft descends 20' to a waste pit (area 3-2) that empties into the sewers.

If combat erupts in the kitchens, the cooks and servers flee in a jumbled, panicked mob. Characters inadvertently caught in the flight must make DC 10 Ref saves to keep their footing. Those that fail their check are trampled underfoot by the mob for 1d12 damage.

Servitors (1d20+9): Init +1; Atk fist -1 melee (1d3-1); AC 9; HD 1d4; hp 2; MV 30'; Act 1d20; SV Fort -1, Ref -2, Will -1; AL varies.

Area 2-3a—Larder: *Exotic fruits, vegetables, and meats from every beast imaginable are stacked and hung in the small larder. Massive blocks of ice, cut into slabs and covered in sawdust, line the floor, chilling the larder.*

The larder holds nearly any perishable food imaginable. While a steady stream of cooks pass in and out through the thick stone doors, the massive slabs of hanging meat and absence of lighting offer concealment for stealthy PCs. Characters can hide in the larder without fear of being discovered.

Area 2-3b—Staging: *A steady stream of servants rushes in and out of the chamber, bearing trays of wine and artfully-plated dishes.*

The staging area is used for serving guests on the west side of the manse without disturbing the attendees. A spiral staircase descends to a service passage (area 3-3) connecting to the kitchen on the east side of the manse (area 2-3).

At any point of the night there are 1d10+5 servants present, rushing up and down the stairs. The servants pointedly ignore any PCs disguised as men-at-arms or servants (Disguise Self attempts succeed without chance of failure). Characters disguised as nobles raise suspicions, and must succeed on DC 15 Disguise Self checks to pass.

Servitors (1d10+5): Init +1; Atk fist -1 melee (1d3-1); AC 9; HD 1d4; hp 2; MV 30'; Act 1d20; SV Fort -1, Ref -2, Will -1; AL varies.

Area 2-4—The Racks: *A seemingly endless supply of casks fills the racks on the wall, alongside massive wine barrels and kegs.*

GARÇON, A GLASS OF YOUR FINEST RESTORATIVE!

Clever PCs, disguised as nobles, can forgo the desperate search of the wine racks and simply order their favorite restorative from a servant. The audacious ploy is nearly guaranteed success—so long as the PCs' disguises hold up.

Singling out a servant and ordering a specific drink triggers a DC 15 Disguise Self check. If the PC succeeds, the servant returns shortly with the beverage. If the check fails, and the PC is discovered, the servant retreats—ostensibly to procure the spirit—but instead alerts the Vizier.

If the judge has the *Judge's Guide to Nehwon*, the servant can provide any beverage listed on pp. 13-15. Otherwise, estimate the potency of the beverage using the Restorative table shown.

A steady stream of servants pass through the hall, filling decanters and glasses before returning to the fête.

On any given round there is a 1-in-6 chance of 1d3 servants hurriedly entering the chamber in search of a bottle for the guests. Characters disguised as nobility immediately raise suspicions and must succeed on DC 15 Disguise Self checks to pass. Those disguised as servants or house guards are ignored.

Nearly any variety of average alcohol can be found here. Sharp-eyed and lucky PCs can also spot rarer restoratives. A PC can make a single Luck check once during the evening. Characters may spend a point of Luck to make additional searches.

On a successful check, the PC spots an exotic-looking jug or cask, covered in dust. The container is unmarked; roll 1d16 and add the PC's Luck modifier to determine the restorative.

Roll	Restorative
0 or less	Spoiled Quarmall Mushroom Wine, ruined by cork taint and worthless. Imbibers must make a DC 15 Fort save or suffer stomach cramps and 1d5 temporary Stamina damage (regained at the rate of 1 point per day).
1-6	Ool Hruspian Old Wine (+1 to hit die recovery roll)
7-11	Amber Wine of Quarmall (+2 to hit die recovery roll)
12-15	Tovilyis Strong Wine (+3 to hit die recovery roll)
16+	Horborixen Date Wine (roll hit die twice and take the better result, adding +4 to the total)

Servitors (1d3): Init +1; Atk fist -1 melee (1d3-1); AC 9; HD 1d4; hp 2; MV 30'; Act 1d20; SV Fort -1, Ref -2, Will -1; AL varies.

Area 2-5—Ballroom: A pair of towering bronze doors open before a grand dance floor beneath a vast golden dome. Music and laughter fill the air, and the scent of a thousand night blossoms drowns out the city's accursed night smogs. Servants flit like serene butterflies amidst the thronging nobility, offering up an endless river of wine and spirits.

The suffering and misery of Lankhmar's streets seem a world away beneath the golden light.

Suspicious characters pausing to inspect the double doors on the south wall of the chamber note that they are battle-worthy. And, strangely, the great bronze doors can be barred from the outside. (At midnight, these doors are indeed drawn closed and barred, trapping the celebrants inside the manse until dawn.)

The dance floor is the heart of the mystery play celebration. Prior to midnight, the floor is packed with nobles, musicians, and servitors. At any point there are 1d100+50 celebrants here, drinking, dancing, and laughing. They are watched over by 20 house guards stationed around the periphery of the dance floor; additional reinforcements await orders in area 2-5a.

Characters reaching the ballroom find it is easy to maintain their disguises. The chaos of the floor plays in their favor: PCs disguised as servitors, nobles, or house guards need only make DC 5 Disguise Self checks to avoid detection, and even then only when they directly interact with nobles or the house guard. The constant stream of servitors bearing wines and sweetmeats keep their eyes averted from the nobility and pose no threat.

Heavy black curtains ring the walls of the dance floor, offering ample opportunity for PCs to hide. Any character can slip behind the curtain with a DC 5 Hide in Shadows check. Judges should require players to be explicit where the PCs are hiding, as some of the curtains conceal other chambers and servants' passages.

At midnight, the great curtains on the north side of the ballroom are drawn open and the mystery play begins in earnest. The nobility are herded into area 2-7, and the ballroom's south doors are closed and barred. Meanwhile, the panels on the floor are removed, revealing a steep-sided pit filled with sand, 20' deep and 50' across the center of the room.

The sandy pit is used in the conclusion of the mystery play re-enacting the Ascension of the Gods of Lankhmar. See area 3-7 for additional details on the completion of the rite.

The Dome: Characters atop the roof can observe the proceedings through the stained glass panels that pierce the dome. Sneaking into the manse through the dome is no easy task. A single stained glass panel is 16' in length and poorly suited to cutting. Descending the 30' from the dome to the ballroom floor unnoticed is nearly impossible while the fête is taking place—but no PC was ever deterred by the impossible.

As a baseline for judges adjudicating thieves entering from above, characters attempting to descend the pendentive to the floor must succeed on both a DC 25 Hide in Shadows check and a DC 15 Climb Sheer Surfaces check.

There is a moment, just after midnight—when the nobles

are ushered out of the hall and before the servants arrive to remove the floor panels—that the hall is empty. Characters have just 1d5+3 rounds to descend the 60' from the dome to the floor of the ballroom, and conceal themselves before the servants arrive to remove the floor panels, revealing the sandy pit below.

Noble (1d100+50): Init +0; Atk longsword +2 melee (1d8) or dagger +2 melee (1d4); AC 10; HD 1d8; hp 3; MV 30'; Act 1d20; SV Fort +0, Ref +0, Will +2; AL varies.

House Guards (10): Init +0; Atk poleaxe +1 melee (1d10); AC 13; HD 1d8; hp 4; MV 30'; Act 1d20; SP none; SV Fort +1, Ref +0, Will +0; AL L.

Area 2-5a—Guard Chamber: *A heavy black curtain conceals the entrance to the small chamber. Austere wooden benches line the walls. Muffled sounds of the fête filter in through the curtains and the smell of blade oil hangs in the air.*

Unless they have been summoned by the Vizier, there are 1d16+10 house guards here, awaiting orders. They are instantly suspicious of any nobles that attempt to pass through the chamber (DC 25 Disguise Self checks). Characters disguised as servants or men-at-arms also face scrutiny (DC 15 Disguise Self checks to evade detection).

House Guards (1d16+10): Init +0; Atk poleaxe +1 melee (1d10); AC 13; HD 1d8; hp 4; MV 30'; Act 1d20; SP none; SV Fort +1, Ref +0, Will +0; AL L.

Area 2-6—Vizier's Study: *The small, dark chamber is devoid of the gaudy ornamentation prevalent throughout the rest of the manse. The acrid smell of strange spices and tendrils of foreign incense hang in the air. Dusty scrolls and thick clay tablets are stacked on the floor, and the walls are hung with obscene tapestries depicting the movements of the heavens.*

At the center of the chamber is a low stone pedestal draped in velvet. Resting atop the pedestal is a translucent stone globe, glowing softly in the darkness.

A magical ward has been placed over the study. The Vizier is immediately alerted if anyone enters the chamber. The ward can be noted and circumvented with DC 25 Find/Disable Trap checks, or a *dispel magic* spell result of 25+.

Wizards and their ilk recognize the library as a trove of forbidden knowledge. Those spending a week or more studying its contents may attempt a DC 20 spell check. On a suc-

cessful check, the caster learns 1d3 spells. On a failed check, the caster suffers 1d5 points of permanent Personality loss, as the caster's mind is tortured by knowledge that no mortal should possess.

The globe is a magical crystal that allows characters to scry any known location within 500' on a successful DC 15 spell check. 2' across and weighing over 200 lbs., the crystal is cumbersome and difficult to transport. If dropped or otherwise dealt more than 5 points of damage, the globe explodes in a cloud of shards, inflicting 1d16+5 points of damage to any character within 15' (DC 15 Fort save for half damage).

The Gate: On the south side of the chamber, half hidden behind an overlaid bookshelf, is an iron gate secured with a large lock (DC 20 Pick Lock check to open). Smashing the gate open is a deafening process that takes no less than 1d20+10 rounds, but the bars can be bent aside with a DC 20 Strength check.

Through the bars, PCs can see a narrow stone staircase descending into darkness beneath the manse. The smell of moisture and mold waft up from below.

Area 2-7—The Descent: *The wide chamber overlooks a broad staircase descending beneath the manse. Heavy, black curtains cover the walls, interspersed with wide stone braziers filled with oil.*

Marble statues line both sides of the stairs: attractive Lankhmarts, dressed in ancient fashion, beckoning the viewer into the underworld.

Above the staircase, looking down from above, is a high balcony, draped in black.

At midnight, the curtains in area 2-5 are drawn aside, and the nobles in attendance are herded into area 2-7, and onto the west stairs. Duke Oraso ascends to the balcony and speaks to the assembled, signaling the beginning of his mystery play:

"Lords and ladies of Lankhmar: We, your humble hosts and masters of the House of Oraso, bid you welcome to our holiest of days.

"Tonight we gather in celebration of the greatest mysteries of our fair city, the Ascension of the Gods of Lankhmar.

"Tonight we prove our right to follow in their steps: If we are courageous, we may live eternal! But woe to those among us who are found wanting in the balance!

"Join me, if you dare, as we aspire to join the ranks of the Gods of Lankhmar!"

A nervous titter passes through the crowd, and the nobles begin their descent into darkness, one by one.

The west stairs descend into the cellars beneath the manse, where the strange mystery play unfolds. Once all the nobles have passed from area 2-7 down the west steps, the doors are closed, sealing off the stairway. Then the west doors are barred, and the double doors on the east side of the platform are unlocked and draw open, permitting those completing the rite to ascend back to area 2-7, and return to area 2-5, transformed.



LEVEL 3: BENEATH THE MANSE

The cellars beneath the manse are a maze of sewers, servants' passages, and the unnatural grottos where the Duke Oraso's strange mystery play unfolds.

The cellars are carved in solid stone, reinforced in places with bricks and plaster. While the rite aspires to religious ecstasy, the reality is far less grandiose: the corridors are narrow, roughly hewn and damp. The smell of mildew and rot mingles with cloying incense.

The sewer passages are even worse. There is no escaping the crusted grime and filth. Characters forced to pass through the narrow chutes emerge with an overpowering stink palatable only to gongfarmers.

Area 3-1—Waste Pit: *A steady rain of vegetable peels, bones, congealed fats, and soups collect in a great mound in the center of the ancient cistern. Above, you can hear a steady barrage of insults shouted by cooks and the harried scramble of servitors.*

Once used to store water in case of a siege, the cistern became a waste pit when the manse fell out of regular use.

Climbing the concave, slime-covered walls to area 2-3 is no easy task (DC 20 Climb Sheer Surfaces check). Characters falling off in the climb pitch into the waste mound in the center of the chamber.

The top of the mound comes within 7' of the lip of the cistern, an easy jump for most PCs. However, hungry sewer rats have burrowed holes and tunnels throughout the mound. Any PC climbing (or falling onto) the mound must make a DC 20 Ref save or be trapped as the hollow mound gives way. A furred, toothy wave of rats instantly swarms over PCs daring to disturb their warrens, gaining +4 to attacks so long as the PCs are trapped in the filth. A DC 20 Fort save is sufficient to pull free and roll down to the base of the mound. However, the taste of flesh excites the rats, leading them to pursue the fleeing PCs until either the characters are 50' distant or they manage to drive the rats off with flame.

Once angered, the rats attack anything coming within 5' of the mound. Treat the rat swarm as a single creature, centered on the mound and able to attack anyone (or anything) that comes within reach. Fire deters the rats, forcing them away in a 5' radius or more, depending on the size of the flames. Otherwise, the rats disperse once the swarm has been dealt 40 or more damage.

Rat Swarm: Init +2; Atk bite +2 melee (1d4); AC 12; HD 5d8; hp 40; MV 30'; Act 1d24; attack any target in contact with the mound each round; SV Fort +1, Ref +2, Will -1; AL C.

Area 3-2—Servants' Passage: *A narrow stone passage runs beneath the manse. You and your companions can hear the clack of crockery and the curse of harried servants from either end of the passage.*

The corridor runs beneath the kitchens (area 2-3) and the staging area (area 2-3b), with spiral stairs leading up to each. At any point during the night there is a 1-in-3 chance of encountering 1d5+2 servants rushing back and forth through

the crowded passage, bearing food and wine.

Characters disguised as nobles immediately draw concern from the servants (DC 20 Disguise Self to pass). Those disguised as servants or house guards automatically pass in the dim light.

A narrow tunnel is set at the lowest point of the passage, midway between both sets of stairs. A mere 3' in height, the chute serves as a drain to the sewers.

Servants (1d5+2): Init +1; Atk fist -1 melee (1d3-1); AC 9; HD 1d4; hp 2; MV 30'; Act 1d20; SV Fort -1, Ref -2, Will -1; AL varies.

Area 3-3—Sewer Grate: *The side tunnel narrows to a sewer grate, befouled and sticky to the touch.*

This grate—while crusted with filth—is unlocked. It descends via a short 6' chute, then runs southeast to connect with the sewers and the grate at 1-4b.

Area 3-4—The Mysteries: *The steep steps descend to a low stone grotto. Flickering candles are set into scores of rough recesses, melted wax spilling down the raw stone and pooling on the floor.*

A pair of skeletons, swathed in black togas, emerges from the darkness, beckoning you forward.

In the dim light, the grotto appears natural. Upon closer inspection (or simply, with stronger light) the grotto is clearly man-made, hewn and plastered over to give the impression of a limestone cavern.

The skeletal attendants are emaciated actors. Like the faux grotto, their appearance is only convincing in the dim light. During the ritual, they escort the nobles forward, one by one, to area 3-4a. Like the headsman in area 3-4a and Death in area 3-4b, the "skeletons" flee if combat breaks out.

"Skeleton" Actors (2): Init +1; Atk fist -1 melee (1d3-1); AC 9; HD 1d4; hp 3; MV 30'; Act 1d20; SV Fort -1, Ref +1, Will -1; AL C.

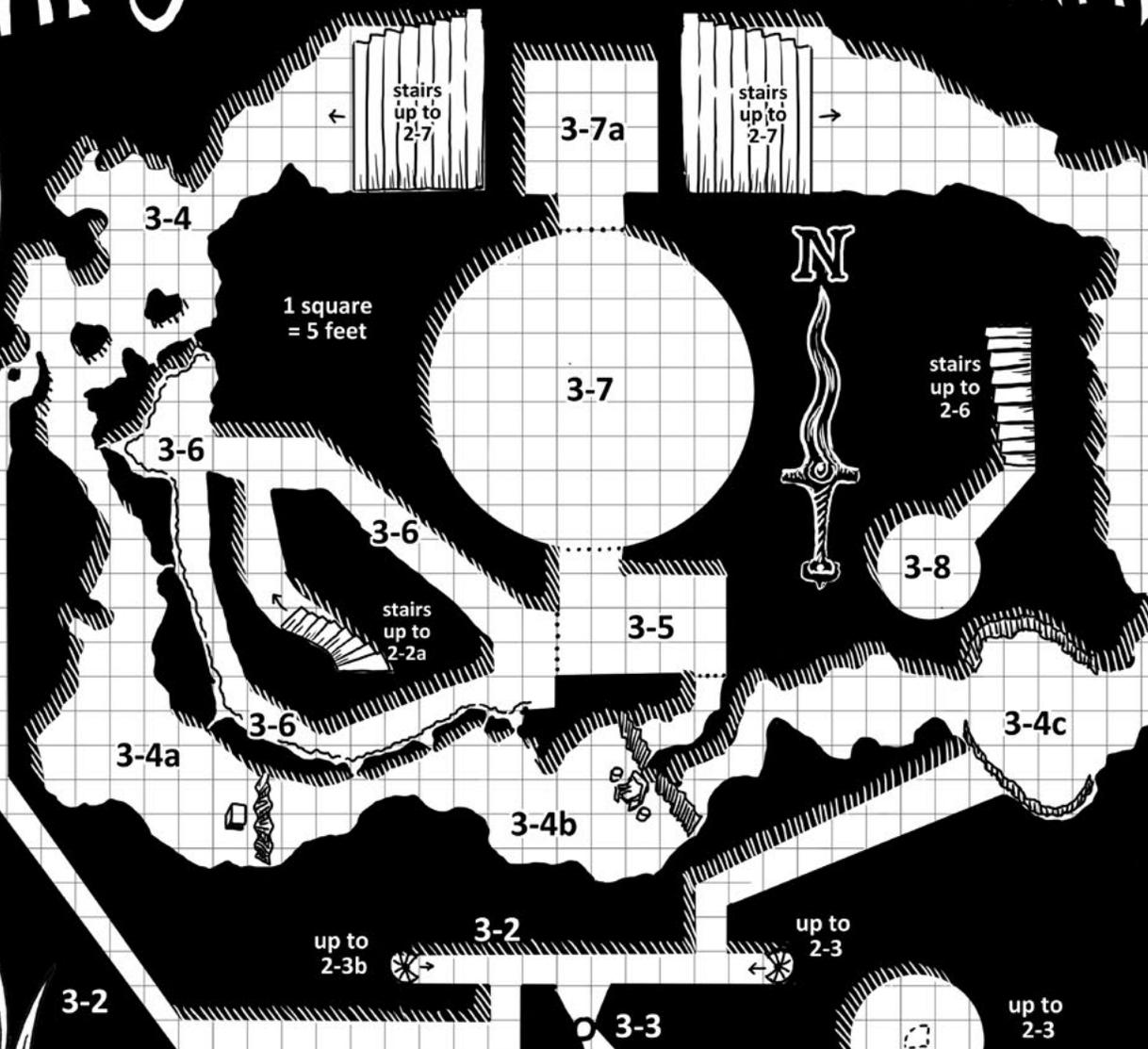
Area 3-4a—The Headsman: *A path has been worn through the stone caverns, winding down to a natural stone altar set before an ominous portal of inky darkness.*

An enormous headsman stands before the altar. Wrapped in a black toga, his face concealed by a hood, the headsman wields an enormous silver axe in the gloom.

Like the skeletal attendants before him, the headsman is an actor hired to play a role in Duke Oraso's mystery play. The headsman is a giant of a man, towering over most Lankhmarts with the build of a northern bear. The "portal" is a black velvet curtain hung across the grotto.

One by one, the nobles are led forward by the skeleton attendants, who then beckon to the altar. If anyone refuses to place their head on the altar, the skeletal attendees force them down. (The nobles, deep in their cups and delighting

MAP 3: BENEATH THE MANSE



in the play, put up little resistance, though the same is likely not true of the PCs.)

Then, partially screened by the skeletal attendees, the headsman brings his terrible axe down, striking the altar. The skeletal attendees quickly usher the “slain” noble through the curtains to area 3-4b, while the headsman holds a fake severed head aloft.

The act could only be convincing in the gloom of the fake caverns, and even then is revealed if the PCs come close enough to see around the skeletal attendees. For those led in just as the act commences, it appears as if nobles really are being executed by the giant, and that insensate bodies really are being cast into a pool of darkness.

Characters participating in the act are led by the skeletal attendees to area 3-4b.

Like the other actors before him, the headsman is only here to earn a few coins, and tries to flee the moment violence breaks out.

“Headsman” Actor: Init +1; Atk fist -1 melee (1d3-1); AC 9; HD 3d6; hp 12; MV 30'; Act 1d20; SV Fort -1, Ref +1, Will -1; AL C.

Area 3-4b—The Throne of Death: *The narrow stone passage rises to a grand throne, carved in stone and decorated with grim skulls. Winding tendrils of incense hang in the gloom, and a pair of massive braziers flanking the throne offers the only light.*

A towering, hooded form—easily 12 feet or taller—sits atop the throne, its skeletal hands tapping impatiently on its great black sword.

The figure of Death is a cunningly-crafted puppet. A puppeteer crouches within the rib cage of Death, operating both of the enormous skeletal hands. As in previous areas, any close scrutiny dispels the illusion of Death on its throne.

As the nobles approach the throne, Death renders judgment, gesturing to either right or left. The skeletal attendants march the characters forward, through the curtains, as directed.

If the PCs have been spotted and noted by the Vizier, Death bids them to its right (the north passage). All others are bid left, to continue in their “ascension” back to the realms of the living.

(If the PCs have avoided notice, or escaped participating altogether, Death selects 5 nobles—Duke Oraso’s rivals—to send down the north passage to serve as offerings in the completion of the rite.)

If combat breaks out in Duke Oraso’s underworld, the puppeteer remains motionless, hoping no one investigates the puppet. If the PCs press, the puppeteer kicks Death forward and flees. The towering puppet teeters forward, pitching on top of any PCs (DC 10 Ref save to avoid). Characters caught in the falling puppet and its voluminous robes are entangled for 1d3 rounds.

“Death” Puppeteer: Init +1; Atk fist -1 melee (1d3-1); AC 9; HD 1d4; hp 3; MV 30'; Act 1d20; SV Fort -1, Ref +1, Will -1; AL C.

Area 3-4c—Absolution of the Chosen: *A dozen skeletons garbed in black robes wait on your arrival, offering wine in gleaming chalices, black togas, and ceramic half masks cast in the shape of skulls.*

The actors garb the nobles (and any PCs) as “Gods of Lankhmar,” in black togas and the skull masks, proffering wine all the while. Thus deified, the nobles return to their drunken fête—the transformed area 2-5.

The skeletal attendants who escorted the characters through death, judgment, and resurrection break away here and return to area 3-4 via the servants’ passage (winding through area 3-2).

As elsewhere, if combat breaks out, the actors flee.

“Gods of Lankhmar” Actors (12): Init +1; Atk fist -1 melee (1d3-1); AC 9; HD 1d4; hp 3; MV 30'; Act 1d20; SV Fort -1, Ref +1, Will -1; AL C.

Area 3-5—Holding Cell: *Thick iron bars run from floor to ceiling, demarking the cell. You spy three gates, each secured with a lock. Foul black water drips from the ceiling to collect in pools on the floor, and a chill hangs in the still air.*

A short, portly man with a greasy beard and a bald pate watches from behind the bars, flanked by a trio of men-at-arms. A heavy ring of keys hangs from his belt, alongside a brutally-spiked mace.

The cell is used for holding characters before they are offered up as sacrifices to the new “Gods of Lankhmar” in area 3-7. A gaoler and his men-at-arms keep close watch, opening the south gate for PCs escorted here after Death’s judgment. If ever violence breaks out in the cells, the gaoler and his men summon reinforcements from area 3-6.

The bars of the cell are stout and well-maintained; attempts to bend the bars or break down the gates are fated to failure (DC 30 Strength check, or smashing the gates for 1d20+10 minutes). The locks, though strong, are not terribly complex (DC 20 Pick Lock checks to open).

Once the last of the nobles has been ushered back into area 2-5, the gaoler and his men force their prisoners forward into area 3-7, encouraging them with pikes if need be.

Gaoler: Init -1; Atk morning star +3 melee (1d6+3); AC 13; HD 3d12; hp 27; MV 30'; Act 1d20; SV Fort +4, Ref -1, Will +4; AL L.

House Guards (3): Init +0; Atk poleaxe +1 melee (1d10); AC 13; HD 1d8; hp 4; MV 30'; Act 1d20; SP none; SV Fort +1, Ref +0, Will +0; AL L.

Area 3-6—Spy Holes: *The long corridor is dark and unlit. In the faint light, you can make out what appears to be a black velvet curtain hanging along one wall. Several guards move up and down the corridor, ducking briefly beneath the fabric, only to emerge moments later.*

There are a total of 12 house guards in the winding corridor, keeping watch on the proceedings as the nobles progress through the stations of the mystery play. Tiny spy holes are bored into the south wall; the curtain hung along the wall ensures that the hint of light betrays the spy holes.

House Guards (12): Init +0; Atk poleaxe +1 melee (1d10); AC 13; HD 1d8; hp 4; MV 30'; Act 1d20; SP none; SV Fort +1, Ref +0, Will +0; AL L.

Area 3-7—The Pit: *A sandy arena opens before you, perhaps 30 paces across and encircled by a 20-foot-high stone wall. Scores of ghoulish figures peer down from above – all are dressed in black togas and wearing skull masks.*

A roar goes up from the crowd as a gate is opened on the far side of the arena. A massive wolf-like beast, with a short neck and spiked mane, emerges from the darkness. Its shoulders rise as high as your chest, and its spotted coat is matted in blood and gore.

The beast gives a hungry snarl and begins to cautiously lope across the arena floor.

The description assumes the PCs are entering the arena after midnight, after the ceiling covering the pit has been removed, opening the chamber up to area 2-5 above.

The “wolf beast” is the mother hyena, matriarch of the pack that prowls the grounds. She is enormous, even for the large steppe hyenas, with a bite capable of crushing skulls.

Half-starved in anticipation of the rite, the mother is driven by hunger. She is a cautious, calculating hunter; if she succeeds in downing a character, she drags the body back to her cell (3-7a) and chokes down the corpse.

Note that the mother has no enmity for the PCs, per se – they are simply the easiest prey. If, by chance or intent, some of the nobles are hauled into the pit, the focus of the mother’s attacks change accordingly.

Escaping the Pit: A DC 15 Climb Sheer Surfaces check is needed to scale the pit wall. If the PCs escape the pit, the nobles flee in panic. The resulting chaos delays the house guards’ efforts to reach the PCs by 1d15+3 rounds.

Hyena Mother: Init +5; Atk bite +6 melee (1d10+3); AC 14; HD 5d12; hp 35; MV 50'; Act 1d24; SP crit on 19+; SV Fort +6, Ref +3, Will +5; AL C.

Area 3-7a—Mother’s Den: *The dark chamber stinks of rotten meat and sweat. Matted hay and shattered bones, stained with blood, line the floor.*

A thorough search of the cell and a successful Luck check reveals a cache of jewels – the sole remnants of a former victim. There are 1d5 jewels, each worth 1d24 g.r.

Area 3-8—The Treasure Hoard: *The sounds of revelry grow faint as you leave the fête behind. The corridor descends to a polished stone door – surely the fabled vault you seek!*

And the tales are true: the massive circular portal is secured by no less than three locks, each set within an ominous gemstone skull: one ruby, the second sapphire, and the third emerald.

The vault is indeed secured by three locks. The glass keys to the locks are carried by the Vizier, Duke Oraso, and hidden in area 2-2a. Each key is paired to the skull of the matching gemstone: green glass key - emerald skull; red glass key - ruby skull; blue glass key - sapphire skull.

Each lock is of exceeding complexity (DC 20 Pick Lock checks to open). Worse, all three locks need to be turned simultaneously in order for the tumblers to move. Failing to do so causes the glass keys to shatter, releasing a powerful sleep gas (DC 25 Fort save to resist). Characters who succumb to the gas fall unconscious, suffering 1d24 points of temporary Stamina damage.

The following round, the walls of the passageway begin to grind closed. Anything left in the 10' space before the door is crushed at the end of 5 rounds. (This trap is readily detected with a DC 10 Find Trap check, but is too massive to be disarmed. Attempts to wedge spikes beneath the wall panels or place staves across the corridor fail, and the trigger mechanism – hidden inside the door – can’t be accessed from the hallway.)

Characters that survive the Stamina damage can be awoken by their companions. However, if the entire party succumbs to the poison gas, their insensate bodies are crushed.

Characters that escape the crushing walls can hear muffled ticking – like that of a metronome – inside the walls. Clever PCs might correctly assume this to be a timer; after 1d30 rounds, the trap grinds back open.

THE ALTOID TIN TEST

The challenge of opening all three locks simultaneously can be accomplished simply by asking the players to attempt three DC 20 Pick Lock checks (or some combination of picking locks and using keys). On a failed check, one of the thieves failed to pick the lock at the same time as his peers, resulting in triggering the trap.

However, there is another alternative that we’ve used to great success at con games and one-shots. You’ll need three empty Altoid tins (or similar, lightweight props). Ask the players of the three thieves to stand at the table, holding the tins at roughly chest level. Then instruct the players to drop the tins onto the table, with the goal of all three striking the table at the same time – simulating three thieves picking the locks or turning the keys at the same time. The resounding simultaneous CLANG—or, more often, CLANG-CLANG-CLANG—offers the drama and immediate visceral evidence of whether the thieves succeed or fail.

This can prove surprisingly difficult for some groups (“Is it go on three, or three and go?!” “Wait, Doug is shorter than Keith. He needs to stand on a chair!”) and provides a great deal of tension at the table. Some groups will want to practice; others will try to cheat by holding the tin very close to the table’s surface. Don’t allow any of this!

Judges who opt to go with the Altoid tin drop test are free to do away with the Pick Lock rolls, assuming success for the thieves (and their daring players).



Opening the Vault: If all three locks are opened (or picked) simultaneously, the PCs hear massive tumblers give way inside the portal, permitting the massive door to open at a touch.

Within the vault, spanning from wall to wall, is the legendary treasure hoard of House Oraso: coffers and chests spilling over with thousands of coins, golden statuary, towering silver candlesticks, and tapestries stitched with gold and silver thread.

In the center of the chamber is a stone pedestal topped by a basin—where the fabled gemstones once rested. Now the basin stands empty, Duke Oraso having taken them to create his ostentatious crown.

The PCs are free to take as much as they can carry. For the sake of simplicity, assume that a character can carry up to 300 coins, or objects worth 300 g.r., without penalty. For each point of Strength modifier, increase or decrease this limit by 100 coins, so that a warrior with 18 Strength and a modifier of +3 can carry up to 600 coins without difficulty.

Those highly motivated by greed can carry up to twice this weight, but their movement rates are cut to 1/2 and the characters suffer -5 check penalties.

Alas, even this mighty horde possesses no diamond-in-amber glulditches.

CONCLUSION: THE GODS OF LANKHMAR

As the PCs exit the compound (with or without the gemstones), read or paraphrase the following. Correct the text for the PCs' means of escape and any of the named NPCs they might have slain.

You round the corner at a sprint and collapse against the alley wall, your chests heaving. You strain to hear any sounds of pursuit over the pounding in your chests, but there is only the chill silence of the soot-black night.

Exertion gives way to elation: You are alive! The stink of night smog never smelled so good. With a grin and a swagger you step out into the street—then freeze.

A dozen perfectly-still forms in black funerary shrouds stand in the pre-dawn street. The only sound is the choked gurgling of the Vizier and Duke Oraso, their twitching bodies held aloft like fleshy bouquets.

Skeletal fists tighten around the pair's necks. The twitching slows and stops.

The true Gods of Lankhmar have emerged from their temple to reclaim what is rightfully theirs. If the PCs turn to run, they discover another dozen behind them, perfectly still.

If the PCs possess even a single coin taken from the vault (area 3-8), or any of the gemstones used to adorn the crown of Duke Oraso, each God extends a single hand in a silent demand. So long as the PCs give up the Gods' loot—or if they stole nothing over the course of the night—the Gods permit the PCs to pass, escaping with their lives.

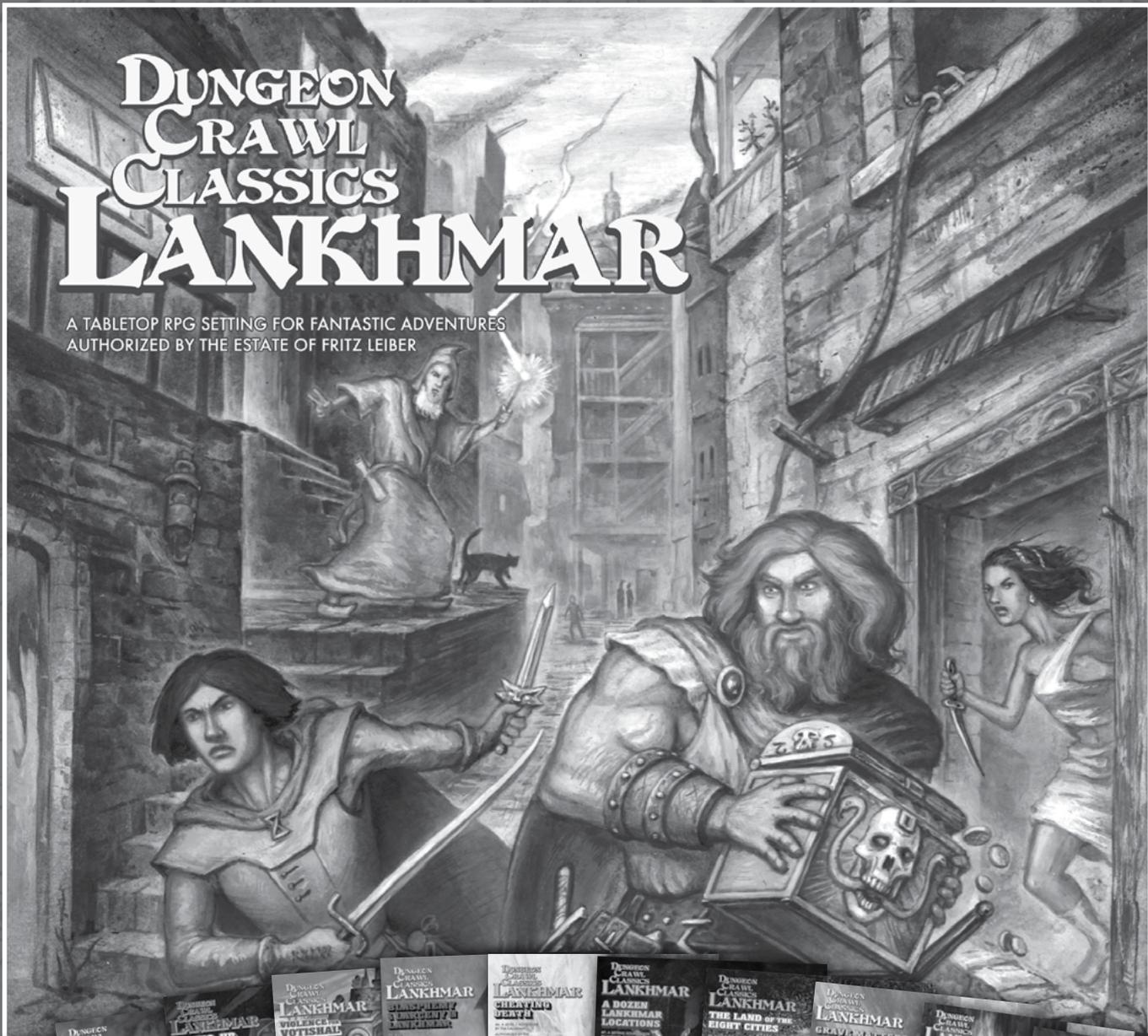
Characters that attempt to flee, or are foolish enough to fight, are the engineers of their own doom. The Gods are implacable in their seething hatred; they cannot be outrun and there is nowhere in Nehwon that the PCs can hide.

Offering stats for the Gods is foolish exercise. However, if the PCs do insist on pitting mortal blades and spells against the patron gods of Lankhmar, use the following as a stand-in, with the caveat that they are impossible to model accurately. In a city of a thousand gods, the Gods of Lankhmar are the mightiest.

Gods of Lankhmar (24 or more): Init -1; Atk touch +13 melee (1d5 + 1d7 Stamina); AC 9; HD 16d12; hp 192 each; MV 120'; Act 2d20; SP immune to weapons of less than +3 enchantment or natural attacks from creatures of 7 HD or less, immune to fire/cold/electricity/gas, half damage from acid, cannot be turned while within the walls of Lankhmar; SV Fort +10, Ref +11, Will Immune; AL C.

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APPENDIX A: STAT CARDS



PHOTOCOPY AND CLIP ALONG DASHED LINES TO USE THESE STAT CARDS IN PLAY!





APPENDIX A: STAT CARDS

PHOTOCOPY AND CLIP ALONG DASHED LINES TO USE THESE STAT CARDS IN PLAY!

HOUSE GUARD



Initiative +0;
Attack poleaxe +1 melee (1d10);
AC 13; **HD** 1d8; **hp** 4;
Move 30'; **Action** 1d20;
Saves Fort +1, Ref +0, Will +0;
Alignment L.



VARIOUS ACTORS AND PUPPETEERS



Initiative +1;
Attack fist -1 melee (1d3-1);
AC 9; **HD** 1d4; **hp** 3;
Move 30'; **Action** 1d20;
Saves Fort -1, Ref +1, Will -1;
Alignment C.



SERVANTS/SERVITORS



Initiative +1;
Attack fist -1 melee (1d3-1);
AC 9; **HD** 1d4; **hp** 2;
Move 30'; **Action** 1d20;
Saves Fort -1, Ref -2, Will -1;
Alignment varies.

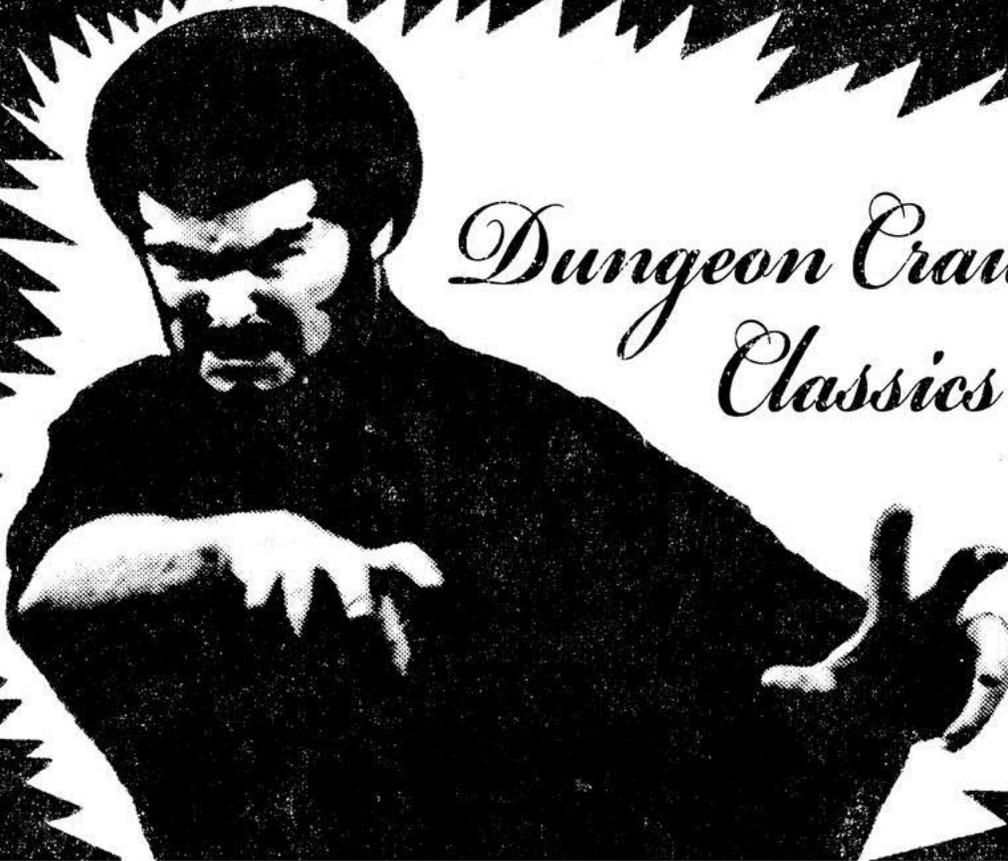


NOBLE



Initiative +0; **Attack** longsword +2 melee (1d8) or dagger +2 melee (1d4); **AC** 10; **HD** 1d8; **hp** 3;
Move 30'; **Action** 1d20;
Saves Fort +0, Ref +0, Will +2;
Alignment varies.





Dungeon Crawl Classics

DEADLIEST GAME ALIVE

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**MUTANT
CRAWL
CLASSICS**

RUINS OF FUTURE PAST

A LEVEL 1 ADVENTURE FOR MCC RPG

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INTRODUCTION

Remember the good old days, when post-apocalyptic adventures were full of super-science, robots that were there to be mastered, and the finale of every underground adventure was setting the fusion power plant to overload? Those days are back. Mutant Crawl Classics adventures take place in an ambiguous time period after a great disaster has ravaged the world, and it's up to your neolithic mutant tribesmen to go out into the hot house jungles and radioactive deserts of Terra A.D. (After Disaster) and collect the artifacts of the Ancient Ones in order to attain great personal power and savage glory.

This adventure is designed for 6 to 8 1st-level Mutant Crawl Classics characters, but it is equally suitable for equivalent-level Dungeon Crawl Classics characters. Whether the party includes a hyper-intelligent cactus or an elf with *flaming hands*, they will still face deadly challenges in their pursuit of gold, glory, and survival. The adventure begins with the PCs having stumbled into a temporal rift and being deposited in the medieval dungeon lab of a mad wizard who has been researching time-based magics.

If running this adventure from a fresh start, simply have the party discover a strange artifact key that pulses and glows slightly. Any artifact check performed on this lost key triggers a defense program that throws the entire party into the time vortex and lands them unceremoniously in this adventure.

The PCs soon find themselves in a deathtrap dungeon of yore. This underground lair is the partially-neglected but ever-dangerous remnant of the wizard Ram'Gan's workshop. The party must navigate the lethal passageways, confront the wizard, and hijack his time tunnel to return to their own era and home.

BACKGROUND

The archmage Ram'Gan specializes in the magic of time and fancies himself a "chronoartist." He is a madman who sees time as the medium through which he can express himself and comment upon the vile nature of his hideous reality. He has dabbled in other arts, but he now isolates himself from everyone and everything that does not share his singular obsession. He is an unloved and unregarded individual.

The "ruins" of the title of this adventure are the abandoned sections of a workshop constructed within an underground temple, but also refer to remnants of Ram'Gan's failure as an artist. He has uncovered ancient technology allowing him to access the time stream, but he has not yet mastered its operation and he grows increasingly frustrated.

In recent weeks, he has spent only a few hours in the passageways outside his inner sanctum, barking at the razor-tooth soldiers who guard the complex, while he obsessively writes in tattered tomes. His creations roam free through the rooms or enact performances by rote for audiences that never arrive.

JUDGE'S NOTES

A former temple of a minor pharaoh who declared himself a sun god, the rooms and passageways of Ram'Gan's converted workshop are decorated with ancient iconography: concentric circles, ankhs, scarabs, obelisks, and crude figure etchings depicting slaves bowing before a floating divine figure that resembles a strangely-helmeted wizard with a pipe. These images repeat throughout the passageways and rooms, covered periodically by canvases nailed into the stone, upon which spiral shapes are painted, sometimes in vibrant colors, other times in thick black paint speckled with diamond dust.

Because Ram'Gan still occasionally accesses the storeroom, and because the razor-tooth soldiers who guard the workshop cannot see in the dark, the passageways and rooms are lit with wall sconces. Light sources should not be a problem for the PCs unless there's a reason for the torches to blow out in an area (and area 1-1 is a dark storeroom). Many doorways provide open access to rooms, but if there is a door, consider it locked (DC 12 to open via Strength or Pick Lock checks).

If the PCs linger for more than a turn in any area, they face one of the three random encounters below. (Re-roll if a duplicate result is rolled during the adventure.)

1. *A floating scimitar slashes through the air, flying toward you.*

This is Karrzo, one of Ram'Gan's former assistants, now in deranged, invisible form after a magico-chrono-temporal curse. He will attack first and ask questions later, but if the PCs are able to reason with him, he will join them if they promise to help kill Ram'Gan. His scimitar is enchanted, and its glimmering reflective blade can be used to provide +2 AC vs. light-based attacks or to redirect beams of light back at a target (DC 15 Agility check).

Karrzo the Ghost: Init +4; Atk scimitar +3 melee (1d8); AC 14; HD 2d8; hp 10; MV 30'; Act 1d20; SP invisible; SV Fort -2, Ref +4, Will -1; AL C.

2. *Two mangy-furred cat-faced warriors growl at you, bearing their sharp teeth.*

These razor-tooth soldiers guard the workshop for Ram'Gan and think they are elite soldiers who can defeat any adversary.

Razor-tooth Soldiers (2): Init +2; Atk short sword +1 melee (1d6); AC 12; HD 1d8; hp 7 each; MV 35'; Act 1d20; SP bite attack if unarmed (+2 attack, 1d4 damage); SV Fort +1, Ref +3, Will +0; AL C.

3. *You hear crackling behind you. Flakes of stone fall to the ground as dozens of small purple mushrooms sprout from the wall.*

These sentient mushrooms seek human warmth. They will scream if removed from the wall, but then will coo like small birds if touched by human hands. If ingested, one will deal 1d4 damage and then heal 1d12 hit points. Eating a second mushroom will provide a permanent +1

Intelligence. Eating a third mushroom will cause the victim's skin to become rubbery purple, and the victim must make a DC 14 Fort save or permanently lose 1d6 Agility points. The purple skin provides a permanent +2 AC bonus. Eating four or more mushrooms results in instant death (DC 20 Fort save to fall into a coma for 1d6 weeks instead).

PLAYER START

Area 1-1 - Collapsing Storeroom: *One moment you were tumbling head over heels through a swirling vortex of pulsating polychromatic lights, able to see each other but little else, when on a final spin you landed with a thud on a hard stone floor. You immediately find it difficult to breathe without choking on the rancid odors wafting through the air. As your eyes adjust to the darkness, you begin to make out shapes that look like hulking, draped figures. They begin to move toward you as jagged beams of light burst through to your right. You hear a thundering crash to your left.*

The temporal disturbance that has deposited the party in this storeroom has affected the decaying walls of this area of the underground workshop enough to cause collapse. The smell comes from several decomposing human bodies heaped in the far corners of this room. The hulking figures are unfinished puppeteer armatures, light wooden frames in vaguely-humanoid shape, 12' tall each, covered in rough blankets, and wobbling as the ground shakes. The crash to the left is a shelf of art supplies smashing to the ground. The light bursting through to the right comes from torches wielded by razortooth soldiers outside a cracked door, investigating the sounds in this area.

The PCs must act immediately in this moment (give one action to each character). Depending on where they end up, the PCs have access to different resources:

- *Toward the shapes:* Attacks against the shapes leave PCs vulnerable to falling stone—1d4 damage per round until they climb under the thick blankets and inside the wooden humanoid structures where they are immune to further damage as the room collapses. Anyone inside these shapes gains +1d bonuses to all checks (combat or otherwise) vs. the hollow puppeteers in area 2-2 due to a recognition of the fragile points of their wooden skeletal frames. The blankets can be cut into cloaks that provide +1 AC, and there are hundreds of feet of rope and various woodworking supplies in this corner of the room (saws, hammers, nails, etc.).
- *Toward the crash:* Take an additional 1d4 damage, unless specifically using a shield or other defensive implement to protect from falling stone. Find mundane art supplies scattered on floor: cracked jars of paint, brushes, rags, wooden dowels, palette knives, jagged shards of mirror, dried clumps of clay. The rags can be wrapped around the mirror shards to create daggers (and the mirror shards can be used to disable the trap in area 5-1). Further exploration of this section of the room reveals bloated, decomposing humanoid remains covered in patches of black fur and stab wounds.

- *Toward the light:* The shattered door sends splinters in this direction. One razortooth soldier in area 1-2 pokes a short sword through the destroyed doorway, as one free attack against anyone in this area. Sections of the broken door can be fashioned into crude wooden shields (+1 AC, destroyed if dealt 6+ damage on a single attack) using other supplies in the room.
- *Remain in place:* This is the safest area. As the stones and pillars collapse and additional shelves fall, this is the eye of the storm. From this vantage point, the room becomes increasingly visible each round, and anyone who waits here at least three rounds can explore any other section of the area, and gains a +4 bonus to sneak or hide checks if attempting to avoid the razortooth soldiers.

The storeroom will continue to crumble until the temporal instability fades away in 1d3 rounds. The razortooth guards from area 1-2 smash through the remnants of the door at that point, calling out to the PCs to emerge and surrender.

Area 1-2 - Old Temple Passageway: *Aggressively waving a torch, a stocky feline-faced, mangy-furred humanoid with sharp bloody teeth thrusts its sword toward you as if signaling to drop your weapons. Three identical creatures stand a few paces behind in the stone passageway, swords drawn, spears at the ready, waiting for your decision.*

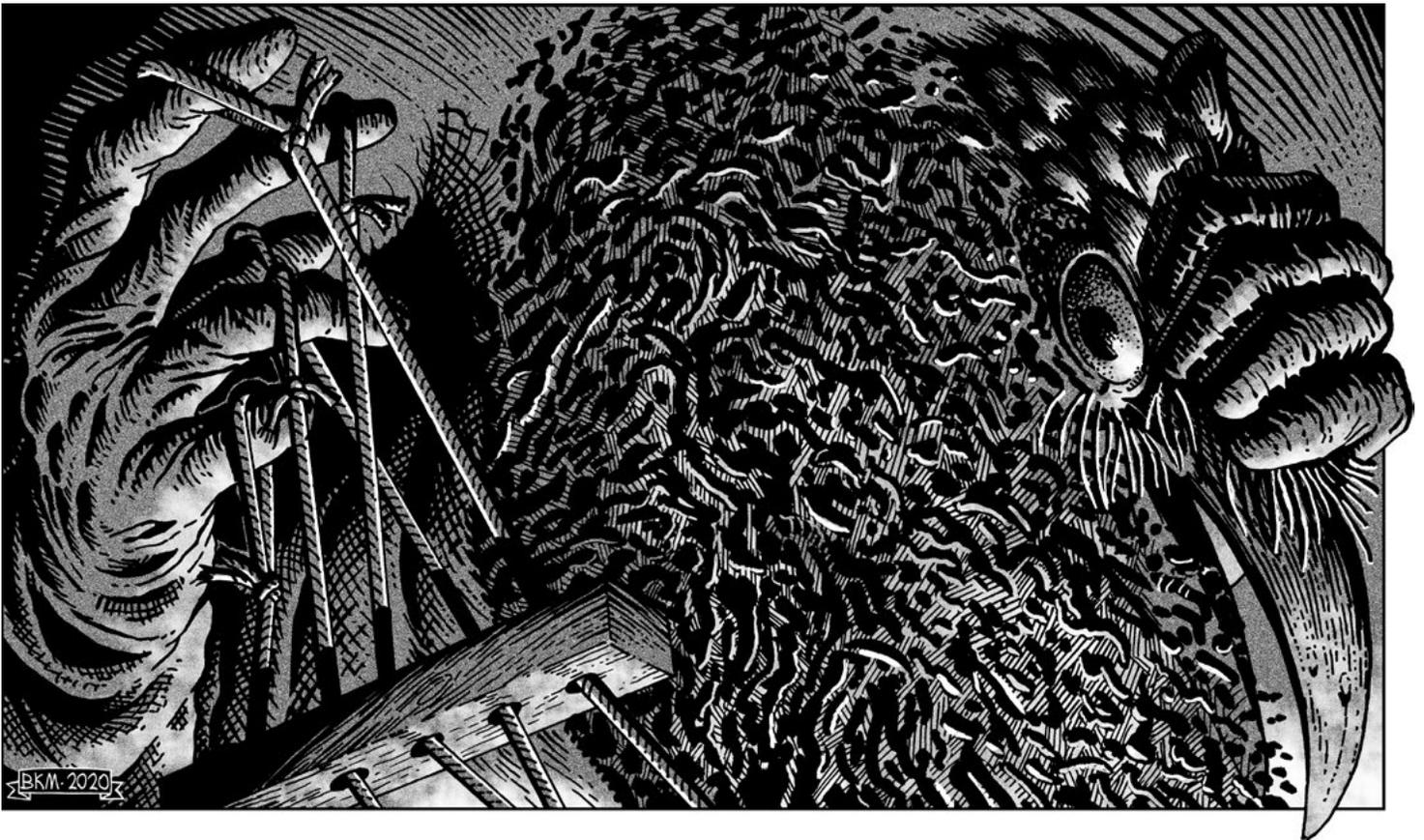
The razortooth soldiers—evolved cat-men once part of a larger military force from days when Ram'Gan dabbled in conquest instead of artistry—wear battle-scarred leather military armor and helmets. They can no longer see in the dark, so at least one of them carries a torch taken from a wall sconce. If the party surrenders, the razortooths will escort the PCs to the prison of the waxmaker in area 4-1, cutting through the membrane and leaving the party to the creature within. If the party does not immediately surrender, they fight and attempt to kill the PCs.

If a soldier falls, the remaining squad will perform a tactical retreat, waiting to surprise the PCs around the next corner.

Razortooth Soldiers (4): Init +2; Atk short sword +1 melee (1d6) or short throwing spear +1 missile fire (1d6); AC 12; HD 1d8; hp 7 each; MV 35'; Act 1d20; SP bite attack if unarmed (+2 attack, 1d4 damage); SV Fort +1, Ref +3, Will +0; AL C.

Area 2-1 - Alchemical Theater: *Dozens of neatly arranged, ornate chairs form an arc in front of a black, floor-to-ceiling curtain. Music emerges from a small clavichord along the far wall, yet no musician is present. The curtain begins to open, slowly. The melody speeds up and your heart thumps faster. Your head starts to spin.*

Everyone in the party must make a DC 10 Will save or become disoriented and sit in a chair to regain their composure for 1d3 rounds or fall to the ground for 1d6 rounds. On a successful Will save, or after becoming acclimated to the haunting sounds, a PC can move about the room as normal, but all checks are at a -2 penalty while the music continues to play. When the tempo of the music increases, disorientation occurs, and when the music slows down, time seems to creep.



The clavichord plays via enchantment powered by alchemy. The keys move by themselves, but an investigation of the instrument will reveal alchemical glassware slowly releasing drops of a rainbow-colored fluid on the strings. A barrel holding a larger reservoir of the fluid is attached to the wall behind the clavichord, with thin glass tubes projecting toward the rounded glass globes with long stems, dripping the fluid in time with the music.

The rainbow-colored fluid is chronoflux slime, and if the glassware or barrel is damaged, the music will stop and the slime begins to creep along the surfaces of the room, looking for a new host. It responds to music, it can be controlled and contained via sonic effects and melodies, and portions of the slime can be held in wineskins or stoppered jugs. Contained and used to the party's advantage, it is one of the few ways to destroy the waxmaker in area 4-1. If it is set free, or uncontained, it will seek the closest living creature and attempt to enter it through any opening.

Chronoflux Slime: Init -2; Atk -2 melee (special); AC 15; HD 3d8; hp 18; MV 10'; Act 1d20; SP immune to mind-control effects, vulnerable to sonic effects, can be controlled by music, on attack the victim must make a Reflex save (DC equal to the attack roll) or the slime enters through an orifice; SV Fort +4, Ref -3, Will -2; AL C.

Once the chronoflux slime has entered a host, it deals 1 damage per turn, and the host's perception of time is altered—sometimes creating sluggishness, other times heightening perception and reflexes. At every initiative check, the host rolls 1d6: (1-4) the host suffers a -1d penalty to all rolls for the rest of the encounter; (5-6) the host gains a +1d bonus to

all rolls for the duration of the encounter.

The chronoflux slime may be expelled from a host by induced vomiting (caused by eating rancid meat, or drinking the water in area 3-1, etc.) or by a sonic or musical effect at a DC 15 check or higher.

Area 2-2 – Ossified Stage: *The thick curtain opens to reveal a shattered altar. What was once a place of prayer has been converted into a stage made of wood and bone. Two twelve-foot-tall hooded figures with crow masks loom above the fragments of the altar. They hold marionette strings, their skeletal puppets dangling to the stage.*

If the music has stopped, the puppeteers will wait for 5 rounds for the music to resume, crow-faces following the actions of the PCs. If the music continues (or if the PCs are able to play the clavichord with a DC 15 check or higher), the marionettes begin their dance in 1d6 rounds.

The puppeteers gesture vigorously, pulling the strings as the marionettes dance in mockery of life. The looming puppeteers reach above the broken altar, guiding each of the four skeletal marionettes in rhythm to the music. Under the control of the puppeteers, the marionettes reach down and begin to rebuild the altar, holding what seem to be pieces of marble with inarticulate hands. One puppeteer reaches forward, thrusting a marionette toward the edge of a stage. The marionette opens its arms to you, gesturing for you to join them on stage.

If at least one member of the party joins the dance on stage, mimicking the movements of the marionettes by picking up pieces of marble (real marble—heavier than should be possible for the marionettes to pick up) and stacking them

to rebuild the altar in rhythm to the music, the ritual will continue until the altar collapses (in 2d6+2 rounds) to end the show. The puppeteers will await applause and then the curtain will magically close and the puppeteers and marionettes will remain inert behind the curtain.

If anything disrupts the proceedings, no one joins them on stage, no one claps, or the music ceases, the puppeteers and the marionettes will turn and face the party with menacing stillness, and then attack the PCs with violent fury after 5 rounds (or immediately if attacked by the PCs).

Hollow Puppeteers (2): Init +1; Atk swarm attack +3 missile fire (1d12) or claw +3 melee (1d6); AC 12; HD 2d8; hp 16 each; MV 10'; Act 1d20; SP vulnerable to fire (double damage), immune to mind-control effects; SV Fort +2, Ref -2, Will +2; AL C.

The hollow puppeteers are wooden-framed automatons filled with carrion crows, flies, mosquitoes, and maggots beneath layers of rough-hewn fabric. To perform the swarm attack, a hollow puppeteer pulls off its mask and projects forth a seemingly impossible wave of flying vermin, targeting a victim within 50' before returning to the puppeteer. While the swarm is released, its AC and hit points are reduced by half. If a puppeteer is destroyed, the enchanted creatures inside will spread out through the passageways of the workshops like small clouds of harmless buzzing, crawling things.

Skeletal Marionettes (4): Init +3; Atk tangle +1 melee (special) or bite -1 melee (1d6); AC 8; HD 1d8; hp 2 each; MV 40'; Act 1d20; SP tangle attack is an opposed check vs. target's Reflex save (if entangled, victim takes automatic bite attack the following round and must make a DC 15 Strength check to break free), immune to mind-control effects; SV Fort +2, Ref +4, Will +2; AL C.

The skeletal marionettes are child-sized with adult-sized skulls. Three of the four skulls are clearly human, while one resembles the skull of a blunt-faced lizard-person. The marionettes move under their own control. When they attack, they pull their own strings and control sticks out from the hands of the puppeteers and swing the strings to perform a tangle attack at up to 10'. The enchanted strings can only be cut by magic items or with 12+ damage from a single strike. The marionettes will entangle a target then bite ferociously at the victim's chest, attempting to eat through to the internal organs.

Area 3-1 – The Spiral Library: *Stacks of tattered books, eight to ten feet high, spiral toward the center of the room in neat stacks. You cannot see beyond the piled books, but you can hear bubbling and gurgling sounds in the center.*

The books in this room are mostly useless tomes of agricultural history, mundane memoirs, and animal husbandry. They will topple over easily, so anyone attempting to inspect the books by touching them must make a DC 12 Agility check or the nearest stack crashes down, dealing 1d4 damage to anyone adjacent. The books throughout the room are filled with Ram'Gan's scrawled notes – often obscuring the text – where he writes in a variety of unfamiliar languages

(from different eras). If the PCs search the books intently, allow them each one Luck check; if successful, they find the following useful information (in this order): (1) Ram'Gan is the name of the wizard who scrawled the notes; (2) Ram'Gan is a wizard obsessed with time; (3) Karrzo is untrustworthy; (4) a single, concentrated source of light is needed to enter; (5) Ram'Gan can no longer control the waxmaker; (6) art is the most important human pursuit.

A PC scouring for spells or incantations in the books must make a successful DC 15 Intelligence check. They may check each hour, and will be able to discover the following spells on scrolls (roll 1d3): (1) *charm person*; (2) *chill touch*; (3) *magic shield*. Note: The only MCC characters able to decipher the magical instructions upon a scroll are shamans, who will interpret them as one-use wetware programs. On a DC 18+ Intelligence check, the shaman may permanently memorize a spell for later use, burning the scroll in the process.

In the center of the room, a small pool of water bubbles. The gurgling comes from within – the sound of drowned human voices. These are temporal echoes of the PCs. If they look within the bubbling pool, they will see themselves from 10 minutes before. Anyone touching the water with more than just a fingertip must make a DC 12 Will save or take 2d6 damage and age that number of years.

If the pool of water is stirred, using a spear or a book, for example, it can rewind (counter-clockwise) and fast-forward (clockwise) the glimpse of the PC's timeline. The faster the pool is stirred, the further back or forward the image. The image will always center on the actions of the PCs looking into the pool, and the further the glimpse into the future, the less accurate. Judges are encouraged to ensure that all glimpses into the future involve a terrible death for the entire party, as the PCs are seeing the original future timeline before they alter any decisions that cause it to branch off into the actual future as it transpires in the current game session.

If the water from the pool is ingested, it will cause terrible vomiting for 1d3 rounds and age the character 2d20 years.

Area 4-1 – Prison of the Waxmaker: *A slimy membrane covers any opening to the passageway ahead. Throbbing, luminescent, it slowly drips trails of thick, yellow-white fluid onto the floor. The fluid seems to harden as it touches the stone.*

The membrane that covers all entrances (and exits) to this area is the stretched surface of the waxmaker, another of Ram'Gan's failed experiments with the chronoflux. The creature has the consistency of waxy flesh, warm to the touch. Anyone directly making physical contact with the membrane must make a DC 10 Will save or immediately fall asleep for 1d6 turns, dreaming of a past life, generations ago. The membrane can be severed with any edged weapon; blunt weapons will merely stretch it out. A successful mighty deed of arms could be used to stretch it to a snapping point to provide entry, and cold-based attacks will harden the membranous barrier and cause it to shatter, dealing 1d8 damage to the waxmaker itself. Heat or fire causes the membrane to melt and reform almost immediately.

Once the chamber within is revealed, the PCs can see the full form of the waxmaker, hanging from wall-to-wall and pillar-to-pillar:

Shattered pillars reach up toward a vaulted ceiling in this large chamber, dotted with vertical iron bars. The yellow-white membrane of the entrance stretches throughout the room, like webbing made of aging flesh. Thicker portions of the membrane hang between the pillars, moving with spasms as angular shapes seem to slide within, attempting to push through to the surface. You hear cries in several languages echoing from the far end of the chamber.

The screams come from the waxmaker's prisoners, an assortment of cast-offs from Ram'Gan's experiments with the time tunnel. Though Ram'Gan neglects maintenance in most areas of his former workshop, he still feeds the waxmaker now and then, because he worries about what it might do if it ever grows too hungry.

The waxmaker, stretched across pillars and walls, will not respond to the presence of the PCs immediately. Even if they damage its fleshy membrane as they enter the area, the waxmaker will wait until three or more living creatures are inside the chamber before it takes action, unless they try to escape from another exit. (It will also act if any significant rescue attempts are made for any of the prisoners in the oubliettes in the north end of the chamber, or if it is dealt 8+ damage while it waits to strike.)

When the waxmaker attacks, its bizarre skeletal structure—manifesting as slithering angular shapes of bone and deformed skulls—stretches the surface of its skin in concentrated areas, as if bursting to emerge. Grotesque mouths open in the stretched waxy flesh.

Once it decides to strike, the waxmaker acts first in the initiative order each round, attempting to suffocate the character with the lowest Luck in the area. The following round, it will continue to attempt to suffocate that character and the character with the second-lowest Luck. The cycle continues, with the waxmaker stretching and suffocating an additional character each round.

Waxmaker: Init first; Atk suffocate +4 melee (special); AC 8; HD 8d8; hp 49+special; MV 10'; Act 1d20; SP suffocate attack (DC 10 Will save of sleep for 1d6 turns; while asleep in contact with waxmaker, the victim takes 3 damage per round), vulnerable to cold (double damage), immunities (mind-control effects, heat-based attacks, and blunt weapons), gains hit points equal to victims killed by suffocating, regenerates 2d10 hp per turn; SV Fort +4, Ref -2, Will +8; AL C.

The waxmaker cannot be permanently destroyed except through cold-based attacks or from damage caused by the chronoflux slime (found in area 2-1, the slime will prevent regeneration).

The waxmaker can also be slowed by increased contact with the stone surfaces of the room, as its skin temporarily hardens when on contact with the walls, pillars, and floors. If the party can find a way to push or pull a significant portion of the stretching waxmaker to the floor (or collapse a pillar or wall on top of it, etc.) the waxmaker will become effectively

paralyzed for 2d8 rounds until it can regain its waxy flow.

The vertical iron bars of the chamber are half-opened cages with some evidence of skeletal remains of previous victims. The three grates in the floor of the east end of the chamber open to oubliettes, requiring a descent of 20' by rope or other means. The oubliettes contain the following prisoners who have been personally deposited by Ram'Gan for later study (consider all prisoners to have a Luck score of 3 for purposes of waxmaker targeting, if they are brought to ground level). In a pinch, any of these can also serve as replacement characters, should the party have suffered deaths earlier in the adventure.

- a. **Urta, tribal female goblin hunter:** AC 10, HD 1d6, 2 hp. Will fight anyone who attempts to help her, using a +2 bone knife attack (1d4 damage). Speaks goblin only. Items: bone knife, 1 empty sack, 1 sack with herbs (two doses of healing, 1d4 hp each), 3 arrows, broken short-bow.
- b. **Toothless male Neanderthal:** AC 12; HD 1d6, 1 hp. Will follow anyone who rescues him. Will flee any area if threatened. Will not attack—ever. Speaks in grunts and gestures. Items: wooden totem with bat designs.
- c. **Lord Kodlak, well-dressed albino male noble:** AC 9; HD 3d6, 12 hp. Will make grand promises and generous gestures. Cursed. (Roll 1d6 check for transformation every hour: transforms on a roll of 1-4, growing white patches of fur, claws, and teeth. AC increases to 14 in this state, and he may attack three times each round with his claws and bite at +2 each [1d3/1d3/1d4 damage].) Speaks common, elvish, and goblin, and comes from a more sophisticated, enlightened age. Wishes to assist the party so he can survive, but he will betray them if it will help his chances of survival—and will attack them violently if he transforms. Attempts to divine the future through his cards. Items: fine tailored suit, deck of fortune-telling cards, ruby brooch (worth 500 gp – may be used to reflect the light in area 5-1).

Area 5-1 - Rays of the Forgotten Sun: *This wide, long stone-walled room has several striking features. Ten feet ahead of you, three carved, chisel-shaped ivory figurines sit upon sandstone pedestals, like small obelisks guarding the room. Two beams of light shine from dazzling white gems on the side walls, illuminating the small obelisks with uncanny brightness. The walls beyond the obelisks are wooden-paneled at the bottom, with stairs leading to another room in the far left corner of the room. Some of the square flagstones beyond the obelisk seem to have fallen away, revealing square pits in the floor.*

A close inspection of the floor between the door and the obelisks shows a notably scuffed section where Ram'Gan would stand and use magical light to deactivate the traps. The obelisks on the pedestals are essentially sundials, and the circular bases show 24 equidistant pie-shaped segments. The shadows from the obelisks currently rest on segments 18 and 6, due to the beams of light coming from both side walls. The traps are deactivated when a bright light shines directly from the scuffed area near the door toward the obelisks, essentially changing, with a single bright light

source—brighter than a torch—the left obelisk shadow to 22, the center one to 24, and the right shadow to 2.

The white gems in the walls of this room can be pried loose and they each emit a strong beam of light, 100' long—however, any movement within 5' of the gems, or anyone entering the zone past the obelisks will trigger the first wave of traps. Two mirrors, or similarly reflective surfaces, can also deflect one of the rays of light from the gem toward the door and then back toward the obelisks, disabling the traps in zones 1 and 3 (but not 2 – the zone 2 traps are always active) if an appropriate angle is used to fix the obelisk shadows at positions 22, 24, and 2.

If the traps are not disabled, they operate as follows:

- **Zone 1:** The wooden panels slide open and a series of darts fire from tubes in the stone. Everyone in the zone must make a DC 10 Reflex save or take 1d3 hits from the poison darts. Each dart deals 1 point of damage, and for each hit the PC must make a DC 10 Fort save or become poisoned, dying in 1d8 turns unless another PC makes a successful Luck check while sucking out the poison, or unless the poison is cured.
- **Zone 2:** Flagstones collapse. For every 5' of movement, the player must call even or odd and roll a d20. If the player guesses correctly, the PC moves to a stable stone. An incorrect guess causes the stone to crumble into a spiked pit 10' below, and a DC 12 Reflex save is needed to jump to another zone or the PC takes 1d6+2 damage and must be rescued from the pit.
- **Zone 3:** Mechanisms behind the wall triggered by sensors in the floor push anyone in this zone back toward a previous trap. A DC 12 Reflex save is needed to dive for the stairway leading to the room on the left. Failure results in being pushed back to zone 2. Failure with a 5 or less on the Reflex save results in being pushed all the way back to zone 1.

Area 5-2 – Portal to the Inner Sanctum: *Atop the stairs, two metal doors contour around the far corner of this passageway, jutting away from you. You can see your reflection in the warped metal. In the center of each door is a fist-sized hole.*

There are three ways to open these doors: (1) DC 20 Strength check, but this will alert Ram'Gan; (2) shining a bright light into both openings simultaneously – this is Ram'Gan's method. The gems in area 5-1 may be used for this if necessary, though Ram'Gan casts a light spell from each hand to enter; or (3) a mechanical failsafe device within each opening – this requires placing a hand inside each and succeeding in two simultaneous DC 15 Intelligence or Pick Lock checks.

Area 5-3 – The Studio of Lost Time: *This vast workshop space is filled with metal shelves, tables, and strange artifacts. A wooden ladder leaning against tall staging platforms reaches up nearly to the 30'-high ceiling. Manically-painted spiral shapes adorn every surface. A purple and green cloaked figure tinkers with an artifact at the other end of the room. He pauses. You hear an inhuman wail and a great grinding sound as he staggers from the force of some unknown energy.*

Ram'Gan works on the newest modifications to the time

tunnel, and unless the PCs loudly bashed through the door, they will be able to observe his actions for two rounds before he senses their presence. (Karrzo will attack Ram'Gan immediately.)

Round One: Ram'Gan shields himself from the blast from the time tunnel and one of his temporal echoes emerges (roll 1d6 on Table 1-1). There is a 30% chance that Ram'Gan will argue with this echo of himself. If not, he works with the echo to continue working on the time tunnel controls.

Round Two: A second temporal echo emerges from the tunnel (result 2 on Table 1-1). There is a 70% chance that this one will argue with the other two incarnations of Ram'Gan.

Round Three: Roll for initiative. One of the Ram'Gan incarnations notices the PCs and alerts the others. They stop arguing, if needed, and move to eliminate the PCs. Ram'Gan Prime – the Ram'Gan of this time – directs the others to feed the PCs to the waxmaker and declares himself to be a supreme artist of the time stream.

Each round after that, roll 1d3. On a 1, a new temporal echo emerges (roll 1d6 on Table 1-1) and joins the battle, unless the time tunnel controls are damaged by at least 20 points of damage (vs. AC 12) or the PCs disable it mechanically (DC 18 Intelligence check). If four Ram'Gan's are present and the PCs are not yet defeated, Ram'Gan Prime will rush to one of the metal workshop shelves to grab the most powerful weapon still available.

The workshop contains weapons, equipment, and artifacts from throughout time. PCs who have time to check the shelves can make a Luck check to find any mundane low-tech weapon they request, along with the following high-tech items (all of which require successful artifact checks or DC 15 Intelligence checks to use):

- **Particle cannon with backpack:** TL 6, CM 5; +3 missile fire attack; 2d12 damage; activates if doubles are rolled for damage.
- **Stickydisk:** TL 4, CM 2; plate-shaped grenade; anyone within 10' of impact must make a Ref save (DC equal to the attack roll) or become trapped in sticky toxic goo for 1d6 rounds, taking 1 damage per round.
- **Cybernetic mask:** TL 6, CM 5; provides a force field of +4 AC and adds +2 to attack with missile fire weapons
- **Barbed lash:** TL 4, CM 3; electrical-infused metal whip; 1d10 damage at a range of up to 10'; target must make a DC 12 Fort save or lose -1d on their next attack or check.

Ram'Gan Prime: Init +1; Atk rapier +3 melee (1d8) or proton rocket pistol +2 missile fire (1d10+special) or spell; AC 16/10; HD 4d8; hp 29; MV 20'; Act 1d20; SP spellcaster (+4 spell check: *color spray, feather fall, levitate, shatter*), force field belt provides armor class bonus – may be disabled by a critical hit (optional effect instead of rolling on the crit table), proton rockets explode for an additional 1d10 damage to anything within 10' of impact (may be avoided with DC 10 Ref save); SV Fort +0, Ref +1, Will +4; AL C.



Table 1-1: Temporal Echoes of Ram'Gan

Roll 1d6. If a duplicate result is rolled, consider it a 2 (unless a 2 has already been rolled, in which case no echo appears this round).

Roll Result

- 1 **Primordial Ram'Gan the Vicious:** Init -1; Atk stone-tipped toothed club +3 melee (1d8+3); AC 12; HD 1d8; hp 7; MV 30'; Act 1d20; SV Fort +4, Ref +1, Will -2; AL C.
- 2 **Ancient Ram'Gan the Pharaoh:** Init +1; Atk ornate ankh-tipped rod +2 melee (1d8) or jeweled scarab (special); AC 10; HD 2d8; hp 10; MV 30'; Act 1d20; SP jeweled scarab projects rays of brilliant light (DC 15 Fort save or blind for 2d6 turns); SV Fort +1, Ref +1, Will +1; AL C.
- 3 **Dark Age Ram'Gan the Mad Wizard:** Init +1; Atk dagger +1 melee (1d4) or spell; AC 10; HD 2d8; hp 12; MV 30'; Act 1d20; SP spells (+2 spell check: *spider climb, choking cloud*); SV Fort -1, Ref +0, Will +2; AL C.
- 4 **Black Powder Ram'Gan the Leadslinger:** Init +2; Atk six-shooter +4 missile fire (1d6+special); AC 12; HD 2d8; hp 12; MV 30'; Act 2d20; SP roll 1d8 on crit table II on successful hit with six-shooter; SV Fort +1, Ref +1, Will +1; AL C.
- 5 **Future Ram'Gan the Technoseer:** Init +2; Atk floating orb +2 missile fire (1d8 or special); AC 12; HD 2d8; hp 14; MV fly 20'; Act 1d20; SP flying ability via anti-grav disks in boots, floating orb facilitates telepathy between all sentient creatures in area, hit by floating orb reduces Strength by 1d6 for 24 hours; SV Fort +0, Ref +1, Will +4; AL C.
- 6 **Hyperstream Ram'Gan the Chronopriest:** Init +3; Atk coiled serpent scepter +3 melee (1d6+3) or eye beams +3 missile fire (special); AC 18/8; HD 3d8; hp 18; MV 30'; Act 1d20; SP eye beams cause a random mutation or greater corruption, Fort save (DC equal to attack roll) required or victim of eye beam attack takes an additional 2d10 damage and ages that number of years, variable AC (higher vs. physical attacks, weaker vs. energy attacks or fire); SV Fort +0, Ref +1, Will +4; AL C.

ENDING THE ADVENTURE

The time tunnel is a rounded, ebony stone passageway painted with white stripes to create a spiral effect. The pulsating spiral rings keep the tunnel well-lit from the inside, and it seems to stretch off into infinity. Even if you can master the controls, it looks like a long walk home.

So far in his experiments, Ram'Gan Prime has only been able to use it to travel temporarily to the future and to pull beings out of the time stream from the past. But if the PCs want to return home, it's their only option. If ever there was a time to burn Luck, this is it.

Because Ram'Gan was just using the device, the controls are already activated, but locked. On a successful artifact check of 14+ the PCs will notice that is an improvised bundle of multi-colored wires that runs from the control panels around to the side of the tunnel. A quick check will reveal that the wires are jammed into a scarab-shaped receptacle in the side of the tunnel entrance. Wise players may think to search the body of the Pharaoh version of Ram'Gan; if they do so, they will find a matching ebony scarab that fits the slot exactly. Yanking out the wires and placing the scarab in the slot will fully activate the time tunnel, which then hums to life with a deep pulsating throb. Artifact checks performed on the control panel will now have visible results. For purposes of any artifact checks, the activated controls are Tech Level 5 and Complexity Modifier 5 (PC must roll d20 + artifact bonus minus the complexity modifier).

TUNNEL OF TIME ARTIFACT CHECK RESULTS

Artifact Check Result

- 1 A klaxon begins to wail as the tunnel suffers a catastrophic failure and explodes. Imagine all life as you know it stopping instantaneously and every molecule of your body exploding at the speed of light.
- 2-8 Control panel shocks the user for 1d3 points of electrical damage.

9-11 Control panel places a see-through oval holographic screen at the mouth of the tunnel, but the screen is filled with static. When the static clears, a water-going craft larger than anything you have ever seen in your life begins to tip over and sink, as the air is filled with hundreds of screams. Tunnel cannot be entered.

12-13 Control panel places a see-through oval holographic screen at the mouth of the tunnel. On it, the PCs can see a quickly rotating montage of scenes from a multitude of various historical periods. Entering the tunnel now will result in a time jump to a random location in space and time (judge's discretion).

14-16 Control panel places a see-through oval holographic screen at the mouth of the tunnel, and the scene depicted looks like your hothouse jungle home, but it's hard to tell because the picture wavers and distorts. Entering the tunnel now results in the PCs returning to their own time period, 1d100 kilometers from home.

17-19 Control panel places a see-through oval holographic screen at the mouth of the tunnel, and the scene depicted looks like it's just outside your village. Entering the tunnel now results in the PCs appearing from nowhere right in front of their home tribe.

20-23 Control panel places a see-through oval holographic screen at the mouth of the tunnel, and the scene depicted looks like the interior of your hut. Entering the tunnel now will result in the PCs appearing inside one of their dwellings.

24+ Control panel places a see-through oval holographic screen at the mouth of the tunnel, and the scene depicted shows the party standing around just prior to this adventure. Entering the tunnel now results in the PCs appearing seconds after they left on this adventure in the exact same spot.

When the PCs step into the tunnel, loud bangs and showers of sparks signal the beginning of their journey, as they tumble and fall through the time vortex to their next adventure.

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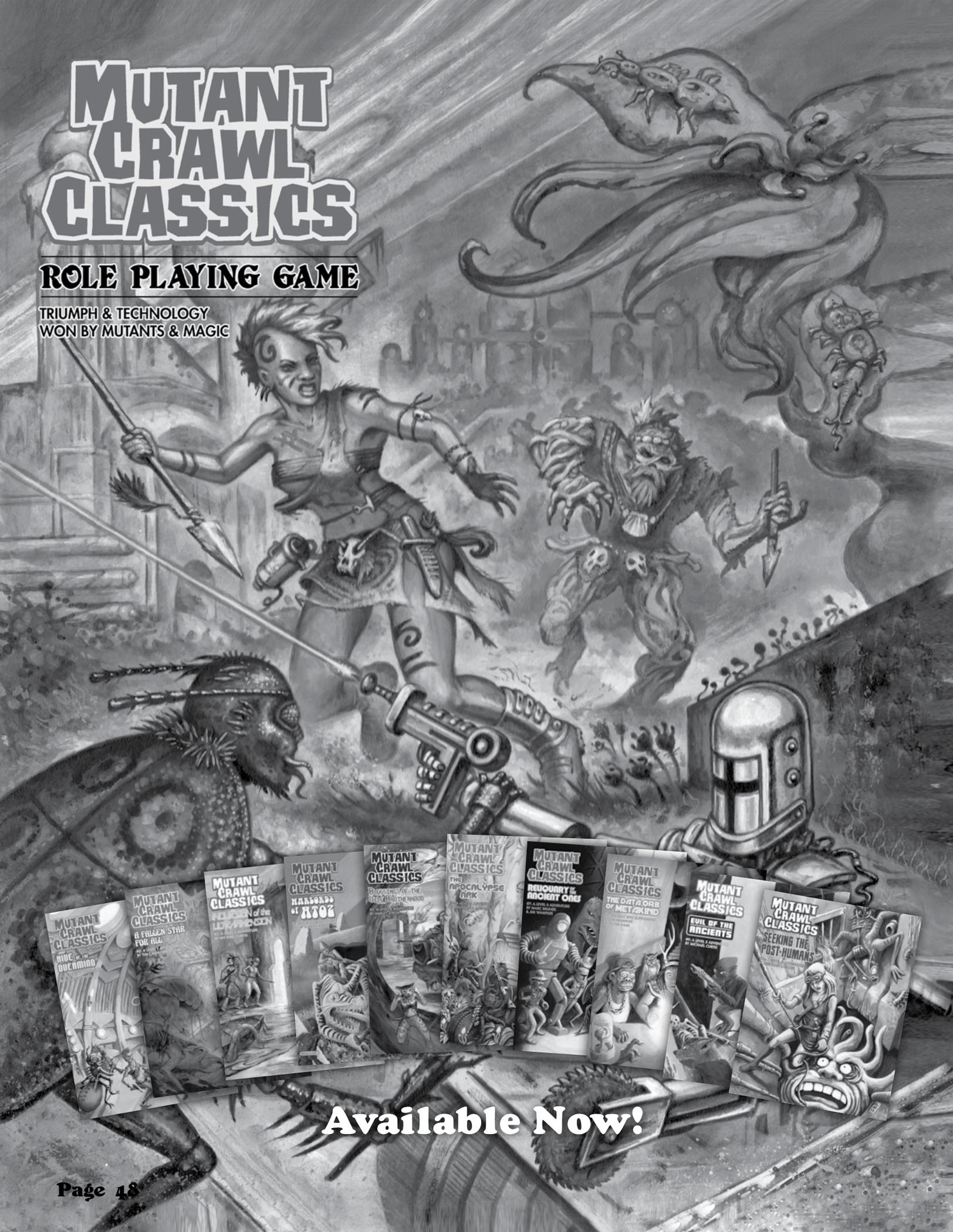
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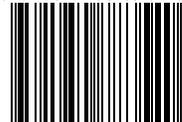
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