

THE TEMPLE OF DIANCECHT

By

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Introduction

Long ago, the temple community of the clerics of Diancecht flourished. Well liked by the town and city folk of the region, the Diancecht clerics were known for their special healing and curative powers. Some of these powers, it is now said, were derived from the honey of a certain variety of bee common to the area which the clerics kept and bred. Indeed, pilgrimages were made to the temple annually in order to barter for and obtain this golden-colored elixir.

But upon the eventual death of the elder patriarch "Phane" the life and power of the temple began to wane. Still the pilgrims came and the younger clerics did their best to uphold the temple community's reputation. Their efforts were, alas, to no avail for there appeared a variety of bird in the area, red in color and swift. As the number of birds grew rapidly, the supply of honey producing bees dwindled, and the clerics could not control the birds whatever they tried.

In modern times, most folk have forgotten the sect of Diancecht and few alive can recall the details of what happened there or why. But the local town clerics keep records and can still remember the "old" days when the supply of golden honey was plentiful. When the opportunity arose, two bold adventurers (the fighter Ejia and the monk Baleron) were sent on the two week journey to the Temple Diancecht to explore and to return with any cache of honey or other clerical items they could find. It is now months since they left the town and the elders are worried about them.

The group of player characters are now enjoined to journey to the box canyon where the temple is nestled. Their mission: to find out the fate of the two explorers and to complete the goals they had set out to accomplish.

General instructions for the Dungeon Master

1. The temple of Diancecht and the catacombs below it have been taken over and now form the lair of the chaotic illusionist "Duneen", and his wife the Medusa "Cacona". Duneen's powerful magic has entrapped Ejia and Baleron; they are now his controlled servants. Duneen particularly delights in controlling non-chaotics and forcing them to do his will. He is particularly well equipped to do so. Full details are given in the room descriptions below.

2. Throughout, we use the following abbreviations:

DMG: Dungeon Masters Guide

MM: Monster Manual I

HTK: Hits to Kill (hit points)

AC: Armour class

3. We list the characters' stats as follows:

15/12/10/18/14/12 means Str/Int/Wis/Con/Dex/Cha in that order.

4. Regarding illusions. The authors believe that illusions created by an illusionist (especially an experienced one like Duneen) are particularly well made and believable. The player characters should be required to indicate disbelief in any illusion seen by his *actions* not his words. For example, a character doesn't believe a wall is there. He must try to indicate this belief by, say, thrusting a sword or arm through the wall; just saying "I don't think that wall is really there" is not enough. Again, if the PC doesn't believe a charging rhinoceros is real, he should stand there and ignore it, not run away or swing at it with the sword! To summarize: if a character tries to chop off the head of an illusion/phantasm or runs like mad away from it, he *believes* in the illusion by his actions. Thus, it is the degree of disbelief indication by the *actions* of the character which gains a saving throw for disbelief and not just what the character says. The DM should award pluses or minuses for such saves based upon circumstances.

Outer Areas of the Temple

Wandering Monsters: roll of 1 on d6, roll each 1/2 hour:

1-3: rust birds (see below)

4,5: 3 hill giants (HTK 50,45,41)

6: programmed illusion: green dragon flies out of clouds and into cave high in the mountain side

Rust Birds: No. appearing 2-7, AC 6, Fly 36", HD 1-3 hp, % in lair: nil, treasure: nil, No. attacks: 1 for 1-2 hp + special, magic resistance: standard, Int. low, alignment: true Neutral, size: small, Psionics: nil.

These small birds may be found in nearly any terrain type. Although they normally eat insects and other bird-type food, they consider metal (except platinum) a delicacy. Their beaks emit a corrosive acid dissolving any such metal. They will be attracted by and attack any metal carried/worn. Use the following guidelines for armor class of the item:

small item (ring, etc.) : AC 0

sword, shield (not wielded, not presented) : AC 4

sword or dagger (wielded): AC 2 + dexterity bonus of wielder if negative

shield (presented), armor: AC 6 +dexterity bonus of wearer if negative

Any hit upon a metal item will render it useless in 1-4 rounds.

Set Encounters Outside

E: Treant (HD 12, HTK 54)

Once a guardian for the clerics of Diancecht, this Treant is now controlled by Duneen. It was long ago empowered to turn "sticks to snakes" (as per the spell at the 10th level of effect). For this purpose, the Treant will cause nearby trees to shake down their dead branches. Note: the Ent should not be easy to spot amidst the trees of the heavy forest.

I: An illusionist henchman (level 3, HTK 6) of Duneen who recently got very unlucky testing out a wand of wonder. He is now about 2 feet in height and looks very much like a bush; indeed, he blends well with the rows of hedges near the entrance to the temple. His wand of wonder has 10 remaining charges and looks like one of his "branches". While he no longer knows any spells, he will open up with the wand on anyone approaching the doorway.

UPPER LEVEL OF THE TEMPLE

There are no wandering monsters anywhere within the temple (upper level).

1. A long alcoved room of worship. The alcove contains an alter, its covering worn with age. A few broken candles lie about the alter area. The small southwest connecting room was used for storage. It contains some boxes of rotting cloth and a few candles. At "G" is a **Clay Golem**. Tricked by Duneen into remaining totally motionless (by using a change self spell to impersonate the patriarch, "Phane"), the golem will do absolutely nothing even if struck. There is nothing else of value.

2. Sleeping quarters for the clerics. Rows of Spartan beds (mostly in bad shape) and occasional night stands. One bed is freshly rebuilt and a backpack lies upon it. Though the pack is mostly empty, it does contain a letter addressed to "Ejia". A pair of traveling boots also lies at the foot of this bed.

3. Kitchen and food storage. A wood burning stove is still warm from use; ceremonial silver plates (value 1000 sp) have recently been used. There is nothing of value in the cupboards or boxes therein.

4. Patriarch's (Phane) old quarters. Large ornate bed and a rack containing female clothes. On the north wall is a full length painting of the old patriarch. Two persons occupy this room. One appears to be a tall, beautiful female with very curly blonde hair. She is "Cacona" who has been given a permanent illusion of beauty by Duneen. She is really a **Medusa** (HTK 48); if stuck by any weapon or spell the illusion is dispelled and her true nature is revealed. Her body guard/consort, "Herbert", is a **human fighter** of 8th level, 18(00)/10/6/12/13/12. He is AC 3, HTK 50, and fights with a +1 two-handed sword: align LN, IQ 15, Ego 12, detects gems, metal and what kind, telekinesis 250 lb., read languages/maps, speaks common LN, sprite and xorn. Cacona will order Herbert to remove anyone from the temple who is not her or Duneen's servants. The portrait of "Phane" is exquisitely done and is worth 10,000 gp to a collector of art if one can be found. Cacona wears ornate rings (nonmagical) worth 1,250 gp.

5. Dining room. Two long tables with wooden benches. There are two places set for dinner. Four large candles provide lighting. Nothing of value may be found here.

6. Library. most of the eastern, western, and northern walls are lined with bookcases: the books are generally in poor shape and there is but a one in one hundred chance that any of them is magical. The south wall has a large rectangular bare spot where the portrait of Phane once hung. Behind a 10 foot section of the bookcase on the west wall is a secret panel leading to room 8.

7. Storage for grain, honey and other foods. A rat-sized hole has been chewed through the north wall. There are currently hundreds of small rats feasting here. Anyone listening at this door hears much chattering and squeaking. If a door is opened, a wave of these small rats will come leaping out; roll d4 per each round the door is open. Each exposed character will get that many rats to contend with per round! Damage taken from the rats per round equals the number of rats in hit points (one per rat) plus any armor class bonus (if negative). If the door is again shut (make an open door roll but for closing instead), the tide of rats is stemmed and only those rats which got out need be contended with. It should be assumed that each character can kill one or two rats per round by stomping or daggering.

8. Bee preparation and work room. Many broken bottles, gloves, empty hives, etc., litter the room. A large workbench having many small items (all worthless) stands near the north wall. Near the southwest corner of the room is a visible trap door on the floor. There is a permanent illusion of a large hive resting on this trap door; many bees are seen swarming about, and they will go into a frenzy as the door to this room is opened. There is nothing of real value here. The trapdoor leads to a staircase going down to the catacombs beneath the temple.

9 a,b,c. Empty confessionals

10. (outside) Empty beehives.

LEVEL II - CATACOMBS

Notes to DM: Roll wandering monsters normally (1 on d6 indicates one); it will either be the lamia from room 2 (40% chance) or the ogres from room 6 (60% chance).

Many of the creatures on this level are illusion casters. The DM should give considerable thought ahead of time to what illusions will be thrown by these creatures under various circumstances.

Lining the stair well walls are several large candles in holders. If one is lit, there is a 1/6 chance of the fumes affecting each character in the following way: due to weak poison in the fumes, the character will have 1-4 rounds of incapacitating nausea the next time that character engages in heavy or concentrated activity, ie., combat or spell casting.

1. Recent heavy mountain rains have flooded this room to a depth of 3-4 feet. The rapidly narrowing opening in the north wall feeds what used to be water storage wells near the north wall. The result of this flooding was to coat the walls of this room with a thick slimy mud, including all of the eastern door that lies above the water line; the mud must be scraped away to see the door which is of the "push to open" variety (the handle is missing). Occupying this room are six **Lizard Men** (marked 'x'): three (HTK 10,8,12) are walking northward in the corridor south, two (HTK 14,15) are in the water mid room. The sixth (HTK 17) lurks well above in the shadows; he has two weighted nets he will attempt to drop upon intruders (roll to hit per lizard man) who enter the water to melee

(at -2 to hit due to the waters depth). The DM must judge the drowning chances of a netted character based upon circumstances. The lizard men have no treasure. Like all of the servants of Duneen and Cacona on this level, the lizard men will *never* reveal any of the levels secrets. 2. A **Lamia** (HTK 62) has stored treasure here. Piled in a corner is 3600 electrum, and 12 gems worth a total of 1550 gp. The lamia is now present and is a good friend of Duneen.

3. a,b,c,d Unoccupied crypts. Except for dust and some harmless spiders there is nothing here.

4. Entombment preparation room. A seven foot long table. Upon it are several rolls of rotting linen. Underneath are two clay pots filled with a sweet, golden liquid (honey) and sealed with beeswax. The honey is actually "sweet water" (see description in the DMG), each pot containing five potion bottles worth of liquid. Healing potions made from the honey will cure *double* the usual hit points of damage (2d8).

5. A crypt containing a clear glass sarcophagus. No body occupies the sarcophagus but the characters will see that it contains an ornate staff (a staff of curing with 10 remaining charges). Afraid to destroy or even touch this staff, Duneen has trapped the coffin with a *phantasmal killer*: a minor death angel (see the DMG, "deck of many things") ac -4, HTK 33, attacks once for 2d8 and always swings first. [note that during Duneen's apprenticeship, he learned how to use the phantasmal killer spell in this unusual and nonstandard way] The killer will appear to the first character touching the sarcophagus as though rising up out of it.

6. Six **Ogre** servants (HTK 30,26,26,25,20,17) have fixed up this room for themselves. They carry 1-10 gp each.

7-8. Empty

9. A pile of inert rotting mummies lie opposite the door to this room. They will do nothing whatever; however, anyone touching one of them will contract a *double strength* rotting disease (see MMI) requiring twice the number of cure diseases (do not tell the players this).

10. a,b The bulk of room 10a contains large racks of wine bottles, a total of 300 of them. Only 6 of these have good wine valued at from 20-200 gp per bottle, but it will take a long time to find these six. The door to room 10b is well hidden from view as the players enter. It contains a **mummy** (HTK 25). When the mummy hears the clank of bottles it will enter room 10a and seeing the intruders will attack. If however the cleric succeeds in *turning* the mummy (in the normal way), it will cease its attack and say, " I did not recognize you, master. What is your will? " Thereafter, the mummy will carry out all of the orders of the cleric (and *only* the cleric) to the best of its ability.

11-12. Empty

13a. The entrance door to room 13b. This heavy very thick wooden door will be very tough to open. After 2 or 3 tries it will crack and finally give way with much splintering. A chime of opening or a knock spell will *not* open this door. If examined carefully, faint and worn writing may be discerned on the door's outer surface. This writing is *magical* and serves to keep the creature in 13b from escaping.

13b. A **Bone Devil** (HTK 54) is trapped here. While it remains in this room it *cannot summon* another devil. It's illusions are particularly strong and will last a full turn without concentration. Suggestion to DM: When the devil hears a pounding on the door it should throw an illusion of a room full of inert, non-moving skeletons, thus disguising itself. As the party approaches the devil might first throw a wall of ice trapping the party within, next "animate" the skeletons, next throw fear spells on the clerics and mages, and lastly take a personal hand it attacking the remaining party members.

14. Empty

15. (see also 16) This is a 40 ft. section of corridor north of (opposite to) the secret door to room 16. This corridor has a *mass maze spell* placed on it: the party will all be lost in this maze for 1 turn (10 rounds).

16. A **Minotaur** (HTK 40) guards the mazed section of the corridor outside of this room (see 15). Immune to the maze spell (as per MMI) it will attack by *complete surprise* each round without the characters being able to react! After delivering its attacks (roll to hit at +2), the minotaur will "disappear into a wall" coming out again to attack from a different spot the next round. This condition of complete surprise exists until somewhat realizes they are in a maze after which the characters can react normally to the attacks of the creature. When the spell duration expires the party will find itself in the corridor with the minotaur in their midst.

17. Duneen's treasure room and living quarters. **Duneen: 8th level illusionist**, HTK 24, AC 3, stats 8/18/12/14/18/15. Items (all being worn or used): displacer cloak, +1 ring of protection, ring of human control (17 charges), +1 dagger, eyes of charming.

Spells: 1st- change self, color spray, phantasmal force, audible glamor

2nd- mirror image, hypnotic pattern, blindness

3rd- invisibility 10', fear, spectral force

4th- phantasmal killer, confusion

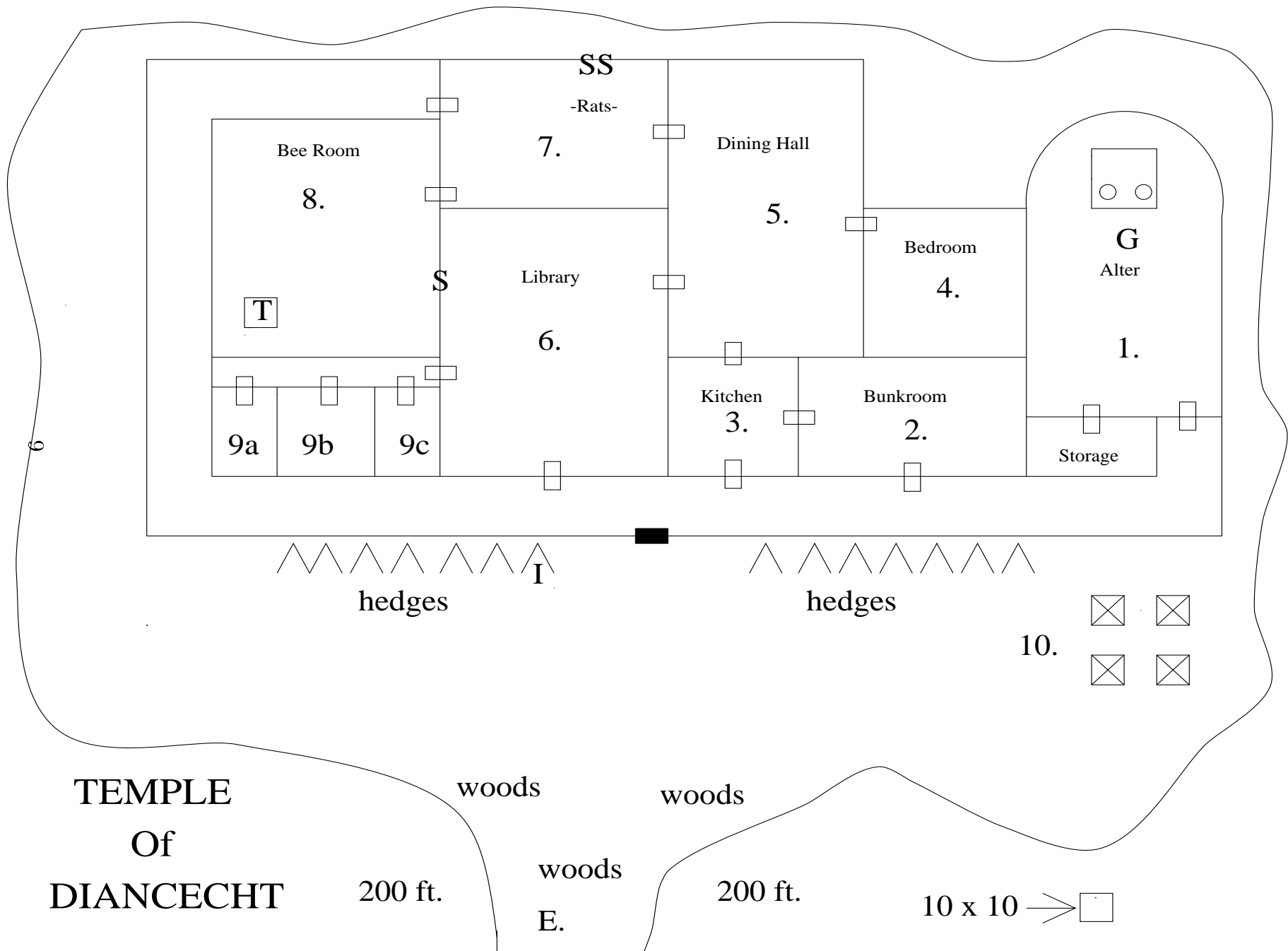
His room is lavishly furnished with tables, chairs, rugs, tapestries, and so on taken from the temple above. Located in the very north east corner of the room is a treasure chest containing various valuable items (chalices, linen, jewelry) worth a total of 83,000 gp. Surrounding this chest completely, however, are 10' sections of *illusory floor* (marked 'f' on the room map). Characters falling through will take 3d6 of falling damage. In addition to the secret entrance to this room on the west wall, there are various hidden panels through which Duneen may peer into room 18 in order to cast spells therein.

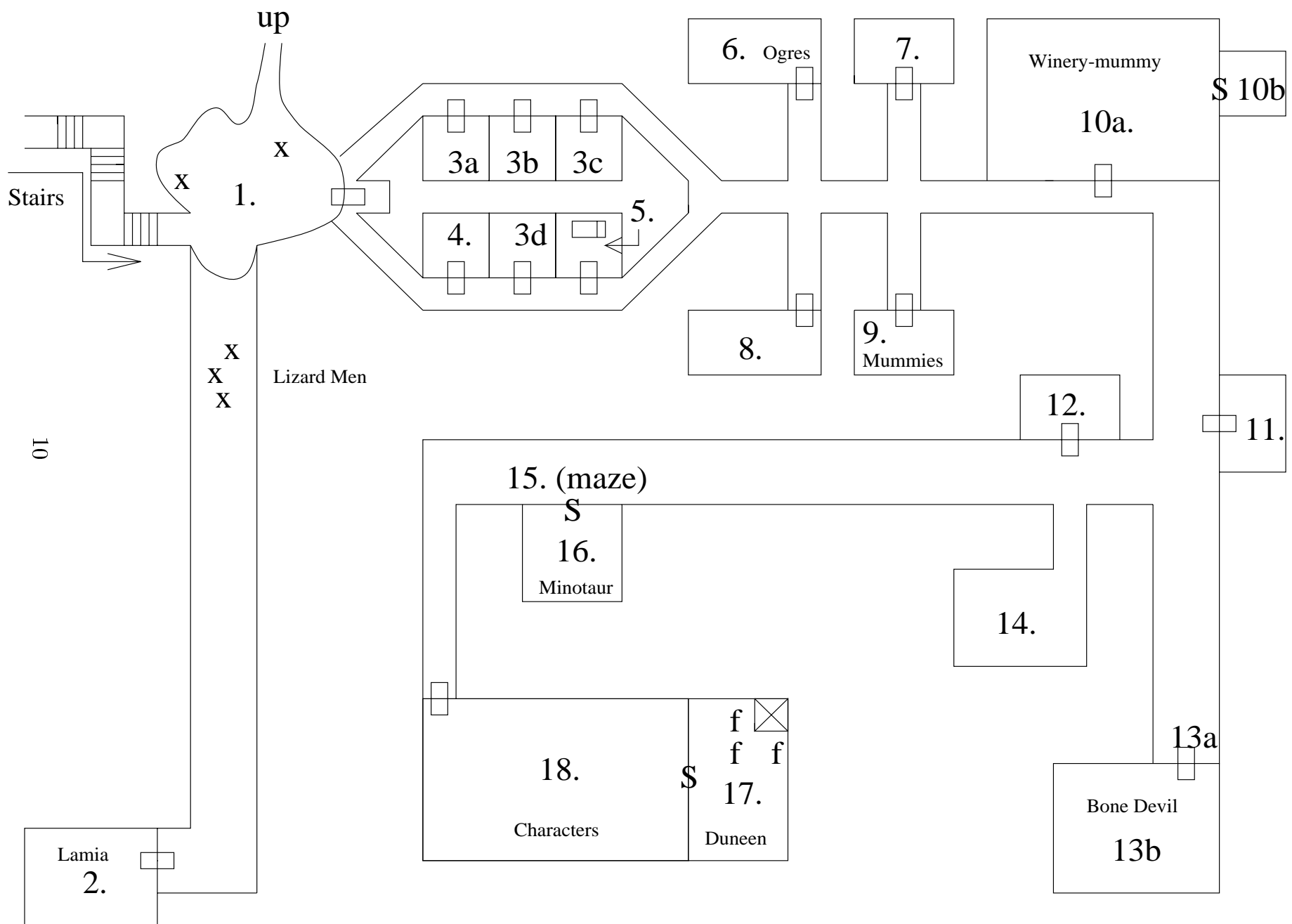
Suggestions to the DM: If the characters have the mummy with them (see 10a,b) Duneen might "phantasm" a secret door opening in the north wall of room 18 out of which comes the image of Phane pointing at one of the characters. The mummy will recognize its highest ruler and turn to attack that character.

18. (see room 17 after this is read) This large room is paneled with a dark wood of some sort and is sparsely furnished with old, valueless furniture. The rooms occupants are:

Ejia: human fighter 7th level, 14/8/10/12/13/15, HTK 47, AC 2. Fights with a non-magical long sword at +1 to hit and +3 to damage due to wearing a ring upon which is placed the spell *emotion*; the emotion is rage vs. anyone not following Duneen, of course.

Baleron: human monk 7th level, 15/13/16/12/17/16, HTK 25, AC 5. Fights with a *staff of defending +3* for two attacks at d6 +1 - +3 depending on the use, and +3 for monk weapon damage bonus.





CATACOMBS