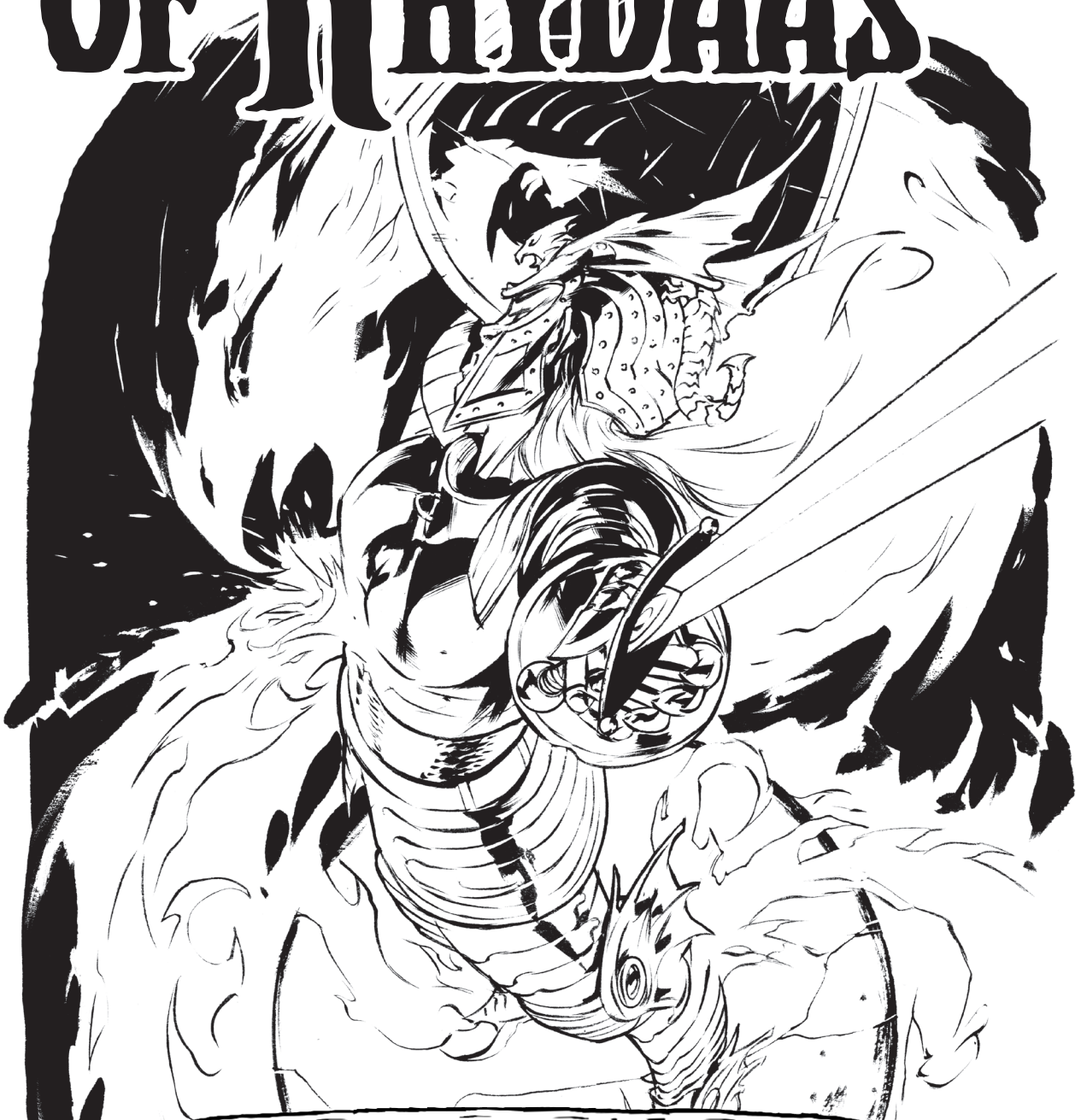


THE SEAL OF RHYDAAAS

FOR 4 PCS
OF 16TH LEVEL



A SE WARLOCK MIDGARD ADVENTURE
BY JAMES J. HAECK

THE SEAL OF RHYDAAS

“By the blessings of Bhaal, King of Dragons, I call upon thee! Rhydaas the Sealed Nightmare, Flame of the Eastern Sands, answer my call. The Children of Mharot seek your fury. Grant us your power, and we will spread your purifying flames across this unclean world. Make me, Sevarra Elu, your champion! Let me carry your flame!”

Background and Adventure Hook

A commander of the Dragon Empire’s armies, an archmage named Sevarra Elu, seeks to win glory by making a pact with the spirit of a flame dragon. This dragon, Rhydaas the Sealed Nightmare, is bound to a mountain in the deserts east of Midgard. Word has spread to the military leaders of the Crossroads of Sevarra’s upcoming ritual, and they call upon renowned adventurers to fly across enemy territory on griffons or wyverns and stop Sevarra from forming a pact with Rhydaas.

The generals of the Crossroads offer the PCs a generous sum of gold and treasure, perhaps including a peerage or an estate, if they complete the mission.

Approaching Dragonheart Peak

The entrance to the temple is shaped like the snarling head of a dragon carved from the stone of the mountain. Fire blazes in its eyes and smoke billows from its mouth, obscuring everything within.

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Flying from the edge of friendly territory to Dragonheart Peak involves a day’s flight across enemy territory. Fortunately, the PCs’ force is too small for the military-minded imperial army to notice. The PCs are noticed, however, by Dragonheart Peak’s defenses when 300 feet away from the “mouth” of the temple (Area 1). A group of five **wyvern knights**, each mounted on a **war wyvern** (*Terrors of the Dragon Empire*), fly from the mouth to attack. Once only two wyvern knights remain, they both flee towards the temple to warn those inside.

If the wyvern knights reach the temple, the PCs cannot surprise anyone inside the temple.

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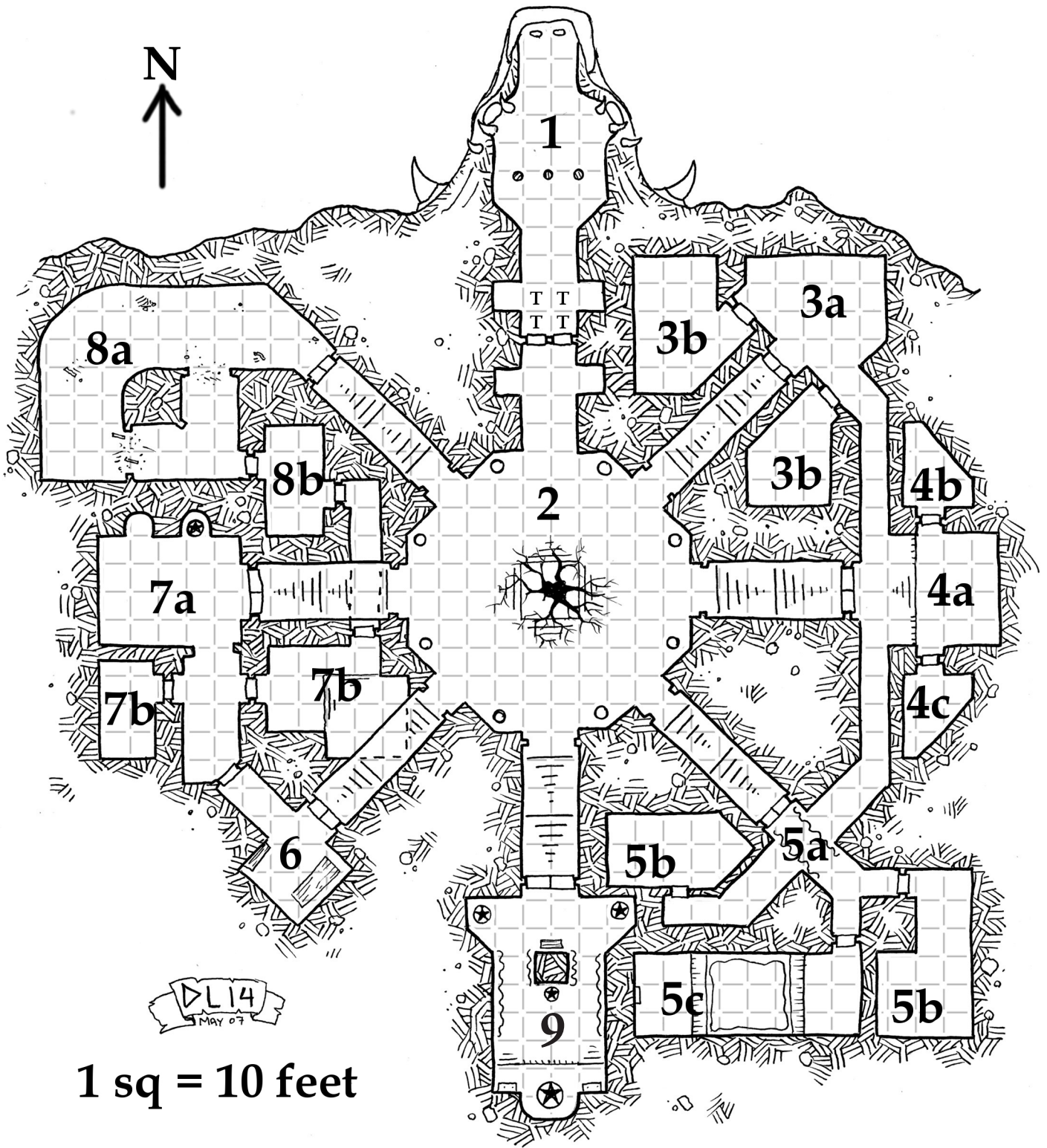
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1. DRAGON'S MAW

Smoke pours from three smoldering pyres deep in the dragon's mouth, blown outward by a mysterious wind. Bronze double doors, each ten feet wide and emblazoned with the image of a dragon spewing flame, are set in the throat.

Opening the doors requires a creature to succeed on a DC 25 Strength check as an action or to say the password "Rhydaas."

Trap. If 400 pounds are placed on the 20-foot square in front of the door, jets of flame erupt from the ceiling. Each creature in spaces marked with T must make a DC 18 Dexterity saving throw, taking 55 (10d10) fire damage on a failed save or half as much damage on a successful one.

2. SEAL OF RHYDAAS

A stone altar in the center of this room rhythmically bubbles molten lava, like the beating of a heart, from its cracked surface. Seven sets of stairs radiate from this room. The southernmost door is made of gleaming adamantium and shimmers with magic.

Two red dragonborn **wyvern knights**, part of Sevarra's honor guard, stand at the mouth of the southern passage. They have fire resistance and a breath weapon (2d6 fire damage in a 15-foot cone, DC 14 Dexterity saving throw for half, 1/short rest).

Altar. The altar is the seal placed on Rhydaas's spirit. Sevarra Elu is performing a ritual in Area 9 that is weakening this seal. A DC 15 Intelligence (Arcana) check on the altar reveals that the altar is the seal on a powerful force of elemental flame, and something is wearing away the seal. It will be unbound in 2 hours.

Any creature within 10 feet of the altar takes 5 (1d10) fire damage at the start of its turn. This damage increases to 11 (2d10) after 1 hour, and 16 (3d10) after 2 hours.

Sealed Door. The door to Area 9 is impenetrable, and its protective *wall of force* cannot be dispelled. Killing the three mages focusing on this *wall of force* will open it. They are in Areas 4c, 5c, and 6.

3A. HATCHERY GUARDHOUSE

Steam hisses from the walls of this chamber, and the ambient heat grows to almost unbearable levels. Three armored soldiers stand guard behind waves of heat.

Three red dragonborn **veterans** from Sevarra's force stand guard here. They have fire resistance and a breath weapon (2d6 fire damage in a 15-foot cone, DC 12 Dexterity saving throw for half, 1/short rest). Any creature in this room that is not resistant to fire takes 5 (1d10) fire damage at the start of each of its turns.

3B. DRAGON INCUBATORS

These rooms are incredibly hot. Three dragon eggs incubate in shallow pools of magma in each room. Any creature in either room takes 11 (2d10) fire damage at the start of each of its turns.

4A. THEATER

Lavish red curtains hang around this stone theater's proscenium, seemingly immune to the flames and heat of this temple. A set of stairs leads onstage with two doors in the wings.

The priests perform simple morality plays here. Two flaming **helmed horrors** stand near the stage and attack any creature that ventures onstage, except for priests of Rhydaas. When a helmed horror dies, 1d6 **magmins** spill out.

4B. PROPS

Dozens of false weapons and costumes fill this chamber.

4C. SCENE SHOP

Tall, wooden scenic backdrops and construction tools fill this chamber. A red dragonborn **mage** is here, concentrating on the *wall of force* in Area 2. He has fire resistance and a breath weapon (2d6 fire damage in a 15-foot cone, DC 11 Dexterity saving throw for half, 1/short rest).

5A. STEAM RIVER

A natural river bubbles out of the stone floor of this room. It travels for a few feet, then completely evaporates, filling the room with obscuring steam.

Visibility in Areas 5a, 5b, and 5c is limited to 20 feet.

5B. MEDITATION CHAMBERS

The priests of Rhydaas meditate in these chambers. Each contains 10 **steam mephits** that attack any creature that is not a priest of Rhydaas. These mephits blend in with the steam and are effectively invisible.

Each meditation chamber has a 50% chance of containing a *bowl of commanding water elementals*.

5C. BATH

Natural hot springs bubble up into a depression in this chamber, creating a communal bath. A blue dragonborn **mage** sits cross-legged atop the water, concentrating on the *wall of force* in Area 2. He has lightning resistance and a breath weapon (2d6 lightning damage in a 30-foot line, DC 11 Dexterity saving throw for half, 1/short rest).

6. GRAND WARDEN QUARTERS

Ashanna, Grand Warden of Rhydaas, lives here in luxury. She has a fine bed, a wardrobe of gorgeous vestments, and a chest filled with 500 gp. A *candle of invocation (Baal, lawful evil)* burns on a small altar in her room. Ashanna is a black dragonborn **mage** concentrating on the *wall of force* in Area 2. She has acid resistance and a breath weapon (2d6 acid damage in a 30-foot line, DC 11 Dexterity saving throw for half, 1/short rest).

7A. SPARRING GROUNDS

A statue of Baal, in humanoid form, watches sternly over this martial chamber. Two armored humans spar in the middle, oblivious to all else.

Two **wyvern knights** duel here.

7B. PRIESTS' CHAMBERS

These spacious chambers are filled with bunks, chests of clothes, and assorted possessions of the priests of Rhydaas. Each room contains 1d6 silver icons of Baal worth 50 gp each.

8A. DRAGON PADDOCK

Beds of hot coals and torn-up sleeping mats are strewn about this ring-shaped room. Four tiny flame dragons run about, and a man in red robes keeps a stern watch over them.

Four **flame dragon wyrmlings** hatched in Area 3b were brought here by the priests of Rhydaas to fight, play, and socialize. A **priest** of Rhydaas commands them to attack any intruders. Once the priest is killed, the wyrmlings attempt to flee the temple.

8B. DRAGON TAMER'S QUARTERS

The priest of Rhydaas that looks over the wyrmlings lives here. He has a small bed, a bookshelf, and a small chamberpot. He possesses a jewel-encrusted wyvern saddle worth 1,500 gp.

9. ALTAR OF BAAL

An armored woman stands atop an altar of stone as a massive fire rages around her. She chants a draconic prayer in a feverish, unhinged voice. Her eyes open, red and blazing, and a smile passes over her face.

If the PCs reach this room before 2 hours pass, they force Sevarra to temporarily halt

the ritual. Two **fire elementals** appear beside Sevarra and fight alongside her. Sevarra is a **half-red dragon archmage**. Use **archmage** statistics with the following changes; these changes do not affect her challenge rating:

- She gains 10 feet of blindsight and 60 feet of darkvision.
- She gains fire resistance and a breath weapon (7d6 fire damage in a 15-foot cone, DC 13 Dexterity saving throw for half, recharges 5–6).



If the PCs reach this room after 2 hours pass, the ritual completes as they enter. Sevarra is consumed by flame—then a tremor shakes the temple. It begins to collapse as Sevarra, merged with Rhydaas’s consciousness and reborn as an **adult flame dragon**, emerges from the altar in Area 2. “Rhysevarra” fights until reduced to half hit points, then flees.

While the temple is collapsing, each creature must make a DC 16 Dexterity saving throw to avoid falling debris, taking 22 (4d10) bludgeoning damage on a failed save.

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