

Little Shrine of Horrors

M.T. Black



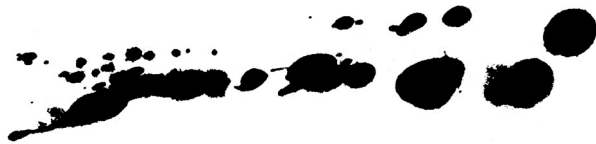
INTRODUCTION

Little Shrine of Horrors is a Dungeons & Dragons adventure designed for a single session of about 6-8 hours play. The combat encounters have been calculated to present a tough challenge to four 4th level characters. They will present a less difficult, though still enjoyable, challenge to 5th level characters or larger parties.

Before running this adventure, you should at least skim through the encounters and look up the relevant monsters in the **Monster Manual**. The statistics for any *new* monsters may be found at the end of this document. You will need to print the “handout” pages at the end of the document before play begins.

Not every loose end is tied up in the following text, nor every possible reaction accounted for. Be ready to improvise, and do so with confidence!

Unless stated otherwise, assume all NPCs have the stats of a **commoner**.



TOMB RAIDERS!

The party are drinking and gaming at the *Gambling Golem* in Longsaddle, when someone spots the following message pinned to the notice board -

Wanted: Tomb raiders!

Those seeking high adventure and a fabulous fortune should apply to -

Gunther Grimm, Esq.

Room 12 at the Gilded Horseshoe

If the PCs ask around the village about Gunther, they will discover that a few people know of him. He rides into Longsaddle every few months on a little pony, and is often accompanied by his niece. No-one seems to know much about his business, but everyone agrees he is a pleasant man. The proprietor of the *Gambling Golem* will recall that Gunther has posted his notice up several times over the last few years.

If the PCs go to the *Gilded Horseshoe* and ask for Gunther, the innkeeper will take them to Room 12 and knock politely. After a few moments a deep voice will say “Enter!”

The room is large rather lavishly decorated, with a plush purple carpet, several tapestries and paintings, a divan and so forth.

Gunther sits behind a large oak desk full of papers and ledgers, and he smiles as the PCs enter. He is quite old, with a perfectly bald head, a neat gray beard and laughing eyes. He is very rotund, and when he gets up the PCs will see that he uses a walking stick to hobble around.

After they exchange pleasantries, Gunther will share the following story. You can read the text below aloud or paraphrase it -

Gunther's Story

As a young man I was a very successful fur trader operating on the Long Road, and I became very wealthy. Now, it so happened that I loved a beautiful young woman in Waterdeep, but I was so distracted by my business dealings that I lost her heart and she married another.

As the years rolled by I took less and less pleasure in gold, and my regret at losing the beloved of my youth increased. It seemed to me that I would never find happiness.

Gunther will pause and look around to see how his tale is being received. He will then continue -

In my 50th year I heard a story that rekindled hope in my breast. I take it you have heard of Lucien Harpell? No? He was a great wizard, perhaps the greatest of his age. It is said that he created a remarkable artifact called *the amulet of lost dreams*, and I believe this magical device will give me my heart's desire.

Lucien died many years ago, and his remains were said to lie within a wondrous Shrine of his own creation, full of deadly traps and strange creatures. I became convinced that the amulet lies within this Shrine.

I spent many years and a small fortune searching for Lucien Harpell's Shrine. Then, two years ago, my niece and I finally discovered it deep in the Starmetal Hills. Before we could explore very far, a strange creature came at us out of the darkness, and we were forced to flee.

Since that day I have been looking for a party of intrepid, resourceful and skilled adventurers to explore the Shrine and recover the amulet for me. Friends, today is a joyful day for me - for I believe I have found just such a group!

Gunther is a very experienced negotiator from his years in business. A successful **DC 25 Wisdom (Insight)** check will determine that his story is mostly true, but that he is leaving something out. Anyone detecting his thoughts magically will find nothing beyond the story he is relating.

The Offer

Gunther asks the party to explore the Shrine and retrieve the amulet for him. In return, he will give them **1,000gp**, and also let them keep any treasure they find *apart* from the amulet. If the party want to negotiate, he is willing to go a little higher. If they ask for a deposit, he will grudgingly agree to give them **100gp** upfront. His niece, **Daisy Grimm**, will take them to the secret location of the Shrine, and

they can start as soon as tomorrow. It will take nearly a full day to travel to the Shrine.

Questions

The PCs will probably have some questions –

- *How did he know it was Lucien's Shrine?* There was an engraved statue of Lucien near the entryway.
- *What was the creature that attacked him?* He did not see it clearly – it was dark and they ran when attacked.
- *How did he find the Shrine?* There were hints as to the general location in old manuscripts. He then spent several years simply exploring the area.
- *Will his niece, Daisy Grimm, enter the Shrine?* Definitely not. She is a guide only.
- *Will he, Gunther, come with them to the Shrine?* Gunther will laugh and tell them that old age and the gout mean his wilderness days are over.
- *Has any other party tried to raid the Shrine?* At this question, the laughter will leave his eyes. He will pause and then admit that he has sent three other parties to the Shrine over the last two years. No-one has ever returned.

The Journey

Gunther and his niece will meet the party outside the *Gilded Horseshoe* on the agreed morning of departure. **Daisy Grimm** has a sinewy build, greasy black hair and a scowling face. In contrast to her uncle, she is very unfriendly.

Gunther will wave them off as Daisy leads the party north-west out of Longsaddle and into the Starmetal Hills. The land is marked by poor soil, scrubby grass, and thickets of dry, scraggy trees.

About mid-day, anyone with **Wisdom (Survival)** will realise that Daisy has led them in a big loop, and they are now heading south. If she is challenged about this, she will admit

that she has taken them “the long way” in order to make it harder for them to locate the Shrine on their own.

They will arrive at the entrance to the Shrine about mid-afternoon. It is part-way up the north face of a hill covered with brown grass and a few thorny bushes. From the outside, the Shrine entrance simply looks like a natural cave, about 10’ wide and high. See the **Little Shrine of Horrors Map** on page 15.



THE UPPER LEVEL

Features

Unless otherwise noted, the interior walls are made of dressed fieldstone, and form a beautiful mosaic of colors – cream, beige, smoky gray, honeycomb and more. The ceiling is hewn rock and the floors consist of closely fitted flagstones. The workmanship is superior in all respects.

The ceiling is usually 8’ high in the corridors, and 10’ high in the rooms. The squares on the map are 5’.

Light

Unless noted otherwise, the Shrine is pitch dark and the PCs will either need darkvision or their own light source.

Resting

The monsters and traps in the Shrine do not move, so the PCs can take short and long rests as needed. If you believe the party are resting too much, send along a pair of **Specters** to interrupt their breaks.

Trap Advice for DMs

Finding and disarming traps will be an important part of this adventure. Following are some *suggestions* on handling this aspect of the game –

- The following text assumes traps are searched for using Wisdom (Perception). However, you may wish to let your PCs use Intelligence (Investigation) as well.
- If a PC successfully finds a trap, instead of saying “you find a trap”, try describing the physical features that indicate the trap is there. The adventure text will suggest some features to use.
- Assume it takes one minute to properly search two squares on the map. For convenience, permit a single roll to check both squares.
- Having searched an area and rolled a skill check, a player may not make another roll for that area until they complete a short or long rest.
- Players will sometimes say they want to take extra care when looking for a trap. In these instances, ask them to describe exactly what they are looking for. If they are on the right track, you can elect to give them *inspiration*, so they have advantage on their roll.
- Disarming a trap requires a Dexterity check and thieves tool proficiency. Ask the player how they propose to disarm the trap, and decide if their plan is feasible. If so, assume the **DC is 25**.

1. ENTRY FOYER

The ceiling in this room is eight sided and draws to a point 20’ above the floor. The flagstones radiate out from the center, where a 6’ copper statue stands on a pedestal. There is a 2” high strip of copper embedded in the wall 4’ off the ground, and circling the entire room.

The statue depicts a robed man with long hair, an aquiline nose and a strong chin. He is holding his right hand out palm up, with a 3" **copper cube** resting on it.

A plaque on the pedestal has the following inscription –

Yonder lies the Shrine of Lucien Harpell, greatest mage of this or any other age. In the arts of golemancy, artificery and necromancy, his equal has never been known, nor will be again.

Cursed are those who enter this tomb.

Cursed are those who look upon this statue.

Cursed are those who seek his riches. Know that your demise is certain – your lives will be short, and your deaths slow.

Read this, fools, and despair!

There is a foul stench coming from the western passageway. A quick inspection of the floors will locate several dark stains all around the room.

Anyone examining the statue and making a **DC 15 Wisdom (Perception)** check will discover that the right arm is actually jointed at the shoulder and can presumably move up and down. In fact, the arm is attached to a spring and the cube of copper is holding it down.

Trap. If the PCs take the cube, the arm will spring up a few inches and the trap will be triggered. A massive sheet of lightning will arc out from the statue to the copper strip in the walls, inflicting **3d6 lightning** damage on everyone in the room. Make a **DC 15 Constitution** saving throw for half damage. At the same time, massive stone doors will crash down and cover the northern entrance. The players are now trapped.

Secret door. Anyone examining the eastern wall and making a **DC 10 Wisdom (Perception)** check will find a 3" inch cubic indentation on the wall. Placing the copper cube in this indentation will cause the secret door in that wall to open.

2. FALSE SHRINE

A stone sarcophagus sits atop a circular dais in the middle of this room. The sarcophagus is covered in white plaster, and is carved in bas-relief with scrolls, sphinxes, snakes, skulls and various demonic figures. Highlights have been painted with carmine and jet. The whole room smells very strongly of rotting flesh. A copper plaque on the side is engraved with the name "Lucien Harpell".

Inside the sarcophagus is a **mummy**. If the lid is opened (make a **DC 15 Strength check**), the mummy will emerge and attack immediately.

Puzzle Advice for DMs

Puzzles can be tricky to run in an RPG. It is difficult to know how hard a party will find a particular puzzle. Following are some tips –

- Don't be concerned if the PCs solve some of the puzzles very easily. Even solving a simple puzzle is an enjoyable experience.
- Conversely, don't be afraid to let them struggle with a puzzle for a while.
- Walking away from a puzzle for a while can be a good option. By the time they return, they may have a fresh idea.
- Don't be concerned if the PCs come up with a way to circumvent the puzzle – that is also a fun and creative experience.
- If the PCs are really stuck and the game is getting dull, ask them all to make a Wisdom or Intelligence check, and then give a clue to the PC with the highest result.

3. GALLERY OF CRUELTY

The walls of this long hall are covered in a pale pink stucco and carved in dramatic high relief. Anyone examining the carvings will see that they depict numerous scenes of ghastly torture.

Nausea. Anyone examining these scenes in detail must make a **DC 10 Constitution** check or be *nauseated* for 2d10 rounds. While nauseated they suffer the same penalties as apply to the *poisoned* condition. If the PC permits themselves to vomit, the nausea will clear a few moments later.







If a PC continues to examine the carvings after fighting off the nausea, they will be in for an unpleasant surprise. They will discover a scene that depicts a group that looks very similar to the party. In the scene, the characters are being cruelly tormented by grinning torturers.

Puzzle Box. At the end of the corridor is a 3' high marble pedestal with a 1' square box on it. The box is made of obsidian and has a brass plate embedded on each face, with a rune carved in each plate.

Give the players the **Mysterious Box Handout** from **page 17**. Give them a few moments to puzzle over the sheet, and then announce that they recognise them as *draconic runes*. Anyone speaking draconic will be able to interpret the runes, as will any arcane spellcaster (even if they don't speak the language – it's a bit like mathematicians in our world knowing Greek letters). You can then give them the **Draconic Runes Handout** from **page 16**.

When a bronze plate is pressed, there is a slight hiss as the plate depresses by about half an inch, and then a click as it stays depressed. Pressing the plate again sees it return to the flat position.

The PCs need to depress the plates in the right order in order to open the box. The correct sequence is as follows –

O	P	E	N	M	E
					

Inside the box they will find a copper sheet – give the players the **Copper Sheet Handout** from **page 18**, and read the following inscription –

Black does not look up to Red.

White rests not on the right.

Red lies not on the left.

Red and Blue reside higher than Green.

Black resides near, but not at the top.

Secret door. Anyone examining the area around the pedestal and making a **DC 15 Wisdom (Perception)** check will discover the secret door in the south wall, which is opened by pressing part of the carved relief.

4. CHECKERED CHAMBER

This room consists of alternating white and blue ceramic floor tiles, each 5'x5' in size. Aside from the secret door in the northern wall, there is no obvious exit from this room.

Trap. Each of the blue tiles is actually a *pit trap*. The lid is cleverly counterweighted so that it only triggers when there is 30lbs of pressure on it. At that point the lid flips down and the PC must make a **DC 20 Dexterity** saving throw or fall 20' to the bottom of the pit, taking **2d6 bludgeoning** damage. The lid will then immediately flip back up, and the PC will be caught at the bottom of the pit in the dark. Hopefully someone remembered to bring rope!

If a PC checks the square for traps, on a successful **DC 15 Wisdom (Perception)** check they will notice the seams around the pit lid.

Listening. Anyone listening and making a **DC 20 Wisdom (Perception)** check will hear, very faintly, a rapid clicking noise coming from under the tiles near the southern end. It sounds like many sticks being tapped together, and the volume undulates up and down.

Exit. At the *bottom* of the pit trap in the southwest corner of the room is a 3x3' copper door with a fixed handle in the middle. It may be opened with a **DC 15 Strength** check. The clicking noise mentioned above is coming from behind the door.

There is an iron ladder attached to one side of this pit trap, enabling anyone to easily scramble back to the top.

5. PASSAGE OF BONES

This is a dirt tunnel 3' wide and high. Characters of medium size or larger will need to crawl on their hands and knees to pass through.

Protruding from all sides of the dirt passage are hundreds upon hundreds of bones, old and yellowing. The PCs will quickly realise the bones are *moving*, swaying back and forth slowly gently like tall grass in the wind. The clicking noise is very loud here, and comes from the bones striking each other as they sway.

Sudden Fear. When the PCs are about midway through the tunnel they will be afflicted by a magical fear effect. Everyone must make a **DC 15 Wisdom** saving throw or be *frightened* for 1 minute. While in this state they will desperately try to go back the way they have come, even if that means pushing past their comrades, or even using force to get them out of the way. A *frightened* PC may repeat their saving throw roll at the end of

each of round, and the effect will disappear on success.

a. Slamming Door

The door in the northern wall is made of dark iron and looks very heavy, with a large iron door handle. It is in fact a trapped, fake door, with hinges at the base rather than the side. If anyone turns the handle, heavy springs cause the door to swing down violently. Those in front of the door must make a **DC 13 Dexterity** saving throw or take **2d6 bludgeoning** damage and end the round prone. If the save is successful, they take half damage and remain on their feet.

Anyone examining the door and making a successful **DC 15 Wisdom (Perception)** check will notice that the hinges on the side look fake, and that there are heavy hinges beneath the door jam.

If the party trigger the trap, they will hear a booming laughter echo through the corridor.

6. HALL OF THE GODS

The doors to this room are made of reinforced oak, with copper door handles. They are unlocked.

The walls and roof of this room are covered in in a glistening blue-gray marble. The floor tiles are 5x5' and are made of white ceramic. Each one has a large black symbol painted on it. Give the players the **Symbol Room Handout** from **page 18**.

Each symbol represents one of the gods. Stepping on the plate with a *good* god symbol is safe. Stepping on the plate of a *neutral* god will inflict **2d6 radiant** damage on the PC. For *evil* gods, the damage is **3d6 radiant**. Making a **DC 15 Wisdom** saving throw will result in half damage. Refer to the **Symbol Room Key** on **page 20** for the name and alignment of each god.

A PC can identify the name of a god from their symbol with a **DC 15 Intelligence (Religion)** check. Having established the god's name, a PC can identify their alignment with a further **DC 15 Intelligence (Religion)** check.

b. Dart Volley

When at least 30 pounds of weight are applied to the hidden pressure plate on the marked square, a volley of darts is released from small holes in the northern wall. The volley makes a *ranged attack* with a +5 bonus against anyone standing on the marked square. If the volley hits, it inflicts **2d6 piercing** damage.

Anyone examining this area and making a successful **DC 15 Wisdom (Perception)** check will notice the edge of the pressure plate and also the dart holes in the northern wall.

The sound of running water can be heard clearly from the western passage.

If the party trigger the trap, they will hear a booming laughter echo through the corridor.

7. EMERALD GROTTO

A curtain of water falls from the ceiling into a narrow drain at the entrance to this small room. Beyond the curtain, the room has been plastered and carved to resemble a natural grotto. The light reflected from the water has a distinctly greenish hue, and shadows play all around the carved rocks.

In the middle of the artificial grotto is a 2' high statue of a beautiful nymph. The statue is made from a strange, very shiny, silvery substance. As the PCs approach, a fretful voice will emit from the statue saying, "Please help me!"

If the PCs talk to the statue, it will tell them the following –

- Her name is Xanthe and she is a Naiad
- She used to live in a nearby river
- Long ago, Lucien Harpell was fording her river and slipped, causing his robe to get

wet. Xanthe laughed at him, and for revenge her transformed her into a statue and placed her in his Shrine

- She has been there for many, many years
- She is terribly thirsty, and is tormented by the waterfall just a few feet in front of her
- Lucien told her that she would transform back into her natural form if she was held under the waterfall
- She will promise the PCs anything if they will free her

Trap. The statue is lying. It is actually an evil spirit that Lucien bound to the statue, made from a special alloy that he crafted himself. If the statue is immersed in water it will burst into a very hot white fire. Any creature within 5' must make a **DC 15 Dexterity** saving throw or take **4d6 fire** damage. On a successful save, this damage is halved.

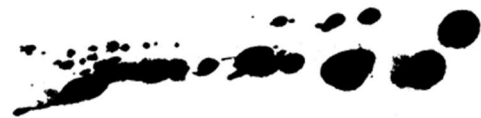
After the statue explodes, the PCs will find that a beautiful **emerald** has been left behind, about 1" in diameter.

c. Collapsing Stairs

This is a very steep set of stone stairs, descending 20'. Midway down is a false step – when at least 30 pounds of weight are placed on it, all of the steps collapse flat, turning the stair case into a slide. Each PC will take **1d4 bludgeoning** damage when they hit the bottom. They must then make a **DC 10 Dexterity** saving throw, or take another **1d4 bludgeoning** damage from being hit by the person behind them.

Anyone examining this area and making a successful **DC 15 Wisdom (Perception)** check will detect that the false step sounds hollow.

If the party trigger the trap, they will hear a booming laughter echo through the corridors, and a low, malicious voice will say, "You fools!"



THE LOWER LEVEL

d. Acid Rain

When at least 30 pounds of weight are applied to the hidden pressure plate on the marked square, a shower of acid pours down from countless small holes in the roof. Anyone on the marked square will suffer **2d6 acid** damage. A successful **DC 15 Dexterity** saving throw will halve the damage.

Anyone examining this area and making a successful **DC 15 Wisdom (Perception)** check will notice the edge of the pressure plate and also the small holes in the ceiling.

If the party trigger the trap, they will hear a booming laughter echo through the corridors.

There is a strong smell of paraffin coming from the eastern corridor. Anyone listening and making a successful **DC 15 Wisdom (Perception)** check will hear the sound of faint bubbling from that direction too.

8. DIAMOND CORRIDOR

The door is made of solid white ash which has been carved neatly with hundreds of draconic runes. The runes are in a meaningless pattern. The door handle is copper, and shaped like a dire wolf head.

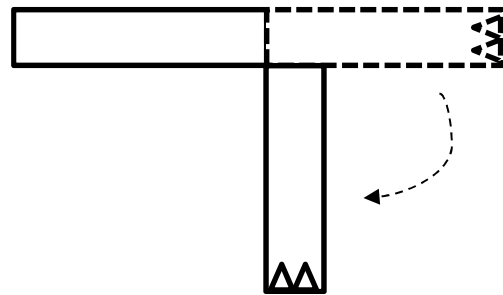
The door is locked, but can be picked with *Thieves Tools* and a **DC 15 Dexterity** check. It can also be beaten down with a **DC 15 Strength** check.

The corridor beyond has a white-washed ceiling and walls, and pale flagstones on the floor. At the end of the corridor are rows upon rows of polished steel spikes, embedded in the wall and facing out. The PCs can see something white glinting amongst the spikes.

Trap. When at least 30' pounds of weight are applied to the square behind the door, the entire shaded part of the corridor pivots down,

forming a drop-shaft (see below). Any PCs in this area will plummet down and be impaled on the spikes for **3d6 piercing** damage. Make a **DC 15 Dexterity** saving throw to avoid the spikes for half damage.

Anyone examining the area immediately behind the door and making a successful **DC 15 Wisdom (Perception)** check will detect the cleverly hidden hinges, visible through some cracks in the flagstones.



Amongst the spikes the PCs will find a **white diamond**, about 1" across.

9. SAPPHIRE CHAMBER

The door is made of reinforced blue pine with a copper handle shaped like a serpent. The room beyond has cerulean-colored stucco walls carved in a geometric pattern, and a floor of small, square azure-colored tiles.

The tiles are interspersed with embedded disks of cloudy white crystal. The disks are about 1' wide, and are connected to each other by narrow lines of the same material. Give the players the **Blue Room Handout** on **page 21**.

There is a disk of copper embedded in northern part of the wall, about 4' off the ground and 1' in diameter. It cannot be opened by any might or magic possessed by the party.

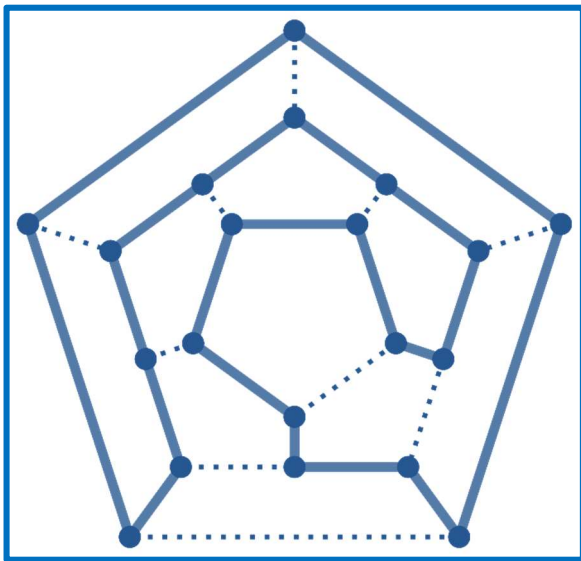
Puzzle. If a PC steps on one of the crystal disks, it will be "activated" – that is, it will glow with a pale blue light and a low humming will begin. If they step on another disk that is *connected to the most recently activated disk* by a crystal line, it will also light up, even brighter this time, and the humming will

increase in pitch. They cannot activate a disk by putting a heavy object on it - the only way is to step on it.

If they step on a disk that is NOT connected to the most recent disk, then the entire room explodes with a burning blue light - everyone in the room will take 2x the number of activated disks in **radiant** damage. Make a **DC 15 Constitution** saving throw for half damage. After the explosion, all of the disks will be deactivated.

Use the handout and some markers to track which disks have been activated. When the PCs manage to activate every disk, the bronze plate in the northern section of the wall will slide back, revealing a small alcove. Inside the alcove is a **sapphire**, about 1" in diameter.

There are a number of possible solutions to the puzzle; here is one of them -



10. WAX POOL

The door to this room is made of gray stone with a plain copper handle. The air smells strongly of paraffin, and the PCs will clearly hear bubbling from behind the door.

The room beyond has a sunken floor filled with liquid wax. The corners of the room glow orange, and the wax there is bubbling. The air

is hot and stifling, and the smell of paraffin is almost overpowering.

There is a narrow bridge of stone leading from one door to the other, and standing on the end of it is a **flint golem**. As the PCs cross the bridge, the golem will move forward and attack. Each time they strike the golem with a metal weapon, the sparks will cause the air about them to burst into flame doing **1d6** damage to anyone standing within 5'. Make a **DC 15 Dexterity** saving throw in order to take half damage.

If anyone falls or jumps into the boiling wax near the bridge they will find it is about 3' deep - they will take **2d6** damage per round they while in it. The bridge is only about a foot above the surface of the wax, so they can easily climb back out. The wax in the corners is boiling and will inflict **5d6** damage per round. If the PCs retreat from the room, the golem will pursue them to the end of the bridge, where it will close the door.

e. Thunder Struck

When at least 30 pounds of weight are applied to the hidden pressure plate on the marked square, a massive explosion of noise erupts from the eastern wall. All creatures within 15' of the wall will suffer **2d6 thunder** damage. A successful **DC 15 Constitution** saving throw will halve the damage.

If the party trigger the trap, they will hear a booming laughter echo through the corridors.

Anyone examining this area and making a successful **DC 15 Wisdom (Perception)** check will notice the edge of the pressure plate.

11. OPAL ROOM

The door to this room is made of obsidian, with a copper door handle shaped like an owl head.

The walls of the small room beyond have been plastered and painted black, and the large tiles

on the floor are charcoal colored. On a small pedestal in the middle of the room is a statue of a human, about 6' tall. The statue is made of onyx. It is naked and sexless, has a blindfold carved around its bald head, and is holding a short staff in each hand. The mouth is open as if crying out.

Beyond the statue, on the northern wall, is a small copper lever with a plaque below it. The plaque says "Push Me",

Trap. If the lever is pushed up, then seven blades will slice up suddenly from the floor and then retract. Anyone standing there will take **3d6 piercing** damage, though making a **DC 20 Dexterity** saving throw will mean half damage. If the lever is pushed down, seven blades will descend from the roof before retracting, also doing **3d6 piercing** damage. Making a **DC 15 Dexterity** saving throw will mean half damage.

Anyone examining this area and making a successful **DC 15 Wisdom (Perception)** check will detect the blade slots in the floor and ceiling.

Puzzle. Pushing the *plaque itself* will cause it to spring open on hinges at the bottom, revealing a small alcove behind it. Inside the alcove is a **black opal**, about an inch wide.

The statue has no function.

12. FLOWER HALL

The door to this room is made of reinforced oak with a plain copper handle. The floor is laid with flagstones of varying shades of green and blue. The walls are covered in white plaster and have been decorated with a brightly colored fresco.

At a casual glance the fresco seems to depict flowers of orange, green and purple. Closer examination shows that the "flowers" are actually depictions of thousands of tiny warriors wearing shirts of the same color, locked in grisly combat with one another. The

paintings are exquisitely executed, but depicts some ghastly scenes.

Most of the southern wall is taken up by a leering gargoyle's head, carved in high relief on the gray stucco. Give the players the **Gargoyle Head Handout** on **page 22**. There is no obvious door other than the one in the northern wall.

Trap. As soon as the party have all entered the room, the northern door slams shut and is magically sealed. Dozens of small hatches in the ceiling will open, and water will begin flooding the room.

The ceiling is 10' high and the room will fill at the rate of 1' every 3 rounds. The water will keep pouring out for 30 rounds. Keep track of the water depth carefully.

Breaking down the door

The door cannot be opened, but the party can batter it to pieces. Treat it as having **AC 19, 20 HP**, and damage immunity to piercing, cold, psychic, necrotic and poison attacks.

The key to escape is to reach into the mouth of the gargoyle head and push *down* on the tongue. The entire lower jaw will depress and reveal a large grated drain, which drains the water at the rate of 1' every 2 rounds.

Once all of the water has been drained away the gargoyle head will swing open, revealing the southern passageway. The northern door will also unlock.

f. Bad Air

When at least 30 pounds of weight are applied to the hidden pressure plate on the marked square, gas will pour from tiny vents in the ceiling and all creatures on the square will suffer **2d6 poison** damage. They must also make a successful **DC 15 Constitution** saving throw or be poisoned for an hour.

If the party trigger the trap, they will hear a booming laughter echo through the corridors.

Anyone examining this area and making a successful **DC 15 Wisdom (Perception)** check will notice the edge of the pressure plate and also the small holes in the ceiling.

The PCs will feel a chill breeze coming from the west corridor.

13. RUBY CLOSET

This small room has a floor laid with reddish field stone, and plastered, crimson-colored walls.

The only furnishing is a 6' tall mirror with a plain copper frame leaning against the east wall. If the mirror is taken and placed against the west wall, it's reflection will show a 1' square alcove about 4 feet above the ground on east wall - the alcove is not visible to the naked eye, only in the mirror. A PC reaching into the alcove (using the mirror for guidance) will find a **ruby** of 1" diameter.

14. CORRIDOR OF COLD

The air in this corridor is very chilly. The ceiling, 10' high, is made of faintly glowing blue crystal, with a tiny amount of mist clinging to it.

As soon as anyone steps on the marked square, gravity will *double* and *reverse*, crushing the PCs against the ceiling. To move, they will have to crawl. Trying to stand will require a **DC 15 Strength (Athletics)** check, and they will only be able to move at half speed anyway.

Each round the PC is touching the blue crystal they will take **1d6 cold** damage. Make a **DC 15 Constitution** saving throw in order to take half damage.

The gravity effect stops at the end of the marked corridor. The pressure plate on the marked square is magical in nature, and may be detected with a **DC 25 Intelligence (Arcana)** check. Gravity returns to normal 5 minutes after the trap is triggered.

15. DRAGON DOOR

The walls, ceiling and floor of this small room are all different colours. The east wall is red, the north wall is green, the west wall is black and the ceiling is white. The floor consists of large blue tiles.

The south wall is gray and has a door of multi-hued marble set in it. The door is held fast, and cannot be opened by any might or magic of the party.

Around the door are painted five dragons in silhouette – two on the left, two on the right and one above the door. Each dragon has a single empty eye socket, about 1" in diameter.

Puzzle. The PCs must place the gems in the eye sockets using the clues supplied on the copper sheet found in location **#3 Gallery of Cruelty**. Here is the correct placement of the gems –

- The topmost dragon takes the Sapphire
- The upper left dragon takes the Black Opal
- The upper right dragon takes the Ruby
- The lower left dragon takes the Diamond
- The lower right dragon takes the Emerald

If someone places a gem in the wrong eye-socket, the socket will exhale a breath weapon attack against them. The attack will do **3d6** damage, which can be halved if the PC makes a **DC 15 Dexterity** saving throw. The form of the attack is as follows –

- The topmost dragon exhales lightning
- The upper left dragon exhales acid
- The upper right dragon exhales fire
- The lower left dragon exhales cold
- The lower right dragon exhales poison gas

Once all gems are placed in the correct position, the door will open with a loud "click".



THE SHRINE

16. REAL FALSE SHRINE

The floor of this chamber is tiled with black marble, while the walls are covered in bone white stucco, carved in bas-relief with a frightening array of undead creatures. The ceiling is 8-sided, and rises to a point 20' above the floor.

In the center of the room is a rectangular dais made of black onyx and about a foot high. Atop it sits a sarcophagus constructed of a dark, smokey quartz with a charcoal colored skull on each corner of the lid. It is flanked by six pillars, each seemingly made from a collection of bones.

There is a sable colored curtain across the back of the chamber, with necromantic symbols embroidered on it in silver thread.

The Voice. As the PCs enter the chamber, a booming voice will say, "I am Lucian Harpell, undead lord of this Shrine. Tremble at my terrible power! You have violated my sanctuary and your lives are forfeit.

"Nevertheless, you have done well to defeat my artifices, so I will grant you this boon. The doors to the Shrine have re-opened - turn and leave now and I will spare your lives. Else you will face me in my lich form, and your lives will be short, and your deaths slow. Choose now!"

If they leave...

If the PCs leave at this point, they will indeed find the Shrine doors open. When they return to Longsaddle, the innkeeper will tell them that Gunther has gone to bed with a bad case of the gout. They will see him the next morning in bed, looking pale and unwell. He will appear sympathetic though disappointed with their failure, and will give them 100gp for their trouble.

If the PCs remain, the booming voice will keep threatening them, though the longer the conversation goes on, the less certain it will sound.

Combat. If the PCs approach within 5' of the sarcophagus, the lid will flip open and a **lesser bone golem**, roughly humanoid-shaped and dressed in a dark robe, will rise and attack. At the same time, the pillars in the room will collapse and reassemble themselves as **two ogre skeletons**. It will take one round for the re-assembly to complete, with the bones dancing across the floor and building the creatures from the feet up. The ogre skeletons will attack as soon as they are ready.

If any player approaches the curtain, the booming voice will say, rather frantically, "Do not approach the curtain! If you touch the curtain you will be damned forever!"

17. CONTROL CHAMBER

This small, circular chamber has a smooth and clean flagstone floor and a white plaster wall. In the center of the chamber is a 3' tall marble pillar, with a glowing quartz sheet on the top face. There are a red and green jewel below the quartz screen - the red jewel is glowing. A metallic hose emerges from the side of the pillar, with a funnel attached to the end.

Behind the pillar is comfortable, padded chair, and sitting on the chair is a very frightened looking **Gunther Grimm!**

The Pillar. If anyone hits the green jewel, the red jewel will go dark and the green jewel will light up. In addition, every trap in the Shrine will be deactivated, the undead creatures will enter a magical suspension and the golems will become inert.

The quartz screen is a magical *scrying glass*, which can show what is happening in any part of the Shrine. Pressing the edge of the screen causes the picture to scroll in the direction pressed. The glass cannot look beyond the

Shrine, and ceases to function completely if prized off the control pillar.

Speaking into the funnel causes your voice to be amplified and transmitted throughout the Shrine.

Gunther's Real Story

Most of the story that Gunther told the PCs was actually true. What he didn't tell them was that when he found the Shrine, it was deactivated and completely bereft of treasure. After cautiously exploring the place, he discovered the control pillar and figured out how it worked.

He was very disappointed that his quest for the *amulet of lost dreams* had come to naught. He soon devised a way to turn the Shrine to profit, however. He began luring inexperienced parties into the Shrine with the same story he told the PCs. Once these parties set out (taking the long way around), he would hop on his donkey and go to the Shrine directly (he is actually much more mobile than he pretended to be, and doesn't need a crutch).

Upon arriving at the Shrine, he would go to the control room, activate the traps and creatures, then sit back and watch the party's progress. Once they were destroyed, he would strip the bodies of their goods and sell them at market. Even a low level party was usually worth at least 500gp once armor, weapons, spell books and treasure was taken into account. No previous party had ever made it beyond the Hall of the Gods.

It was an appallingly cold-blooded venture – but Gunther was always a very cold-blooded businessman, despite his warm exterior. By the time the PCs came along he had lured no

less than **eleven** adventuring parties to their doom, finding his victims in places as far away as Waterdeep.

As far as Gunther can tell, Lucien built the Shrine solely for his own sadistic entertainment. Gunther does not believe Lucien was ever buried in the Shrine.

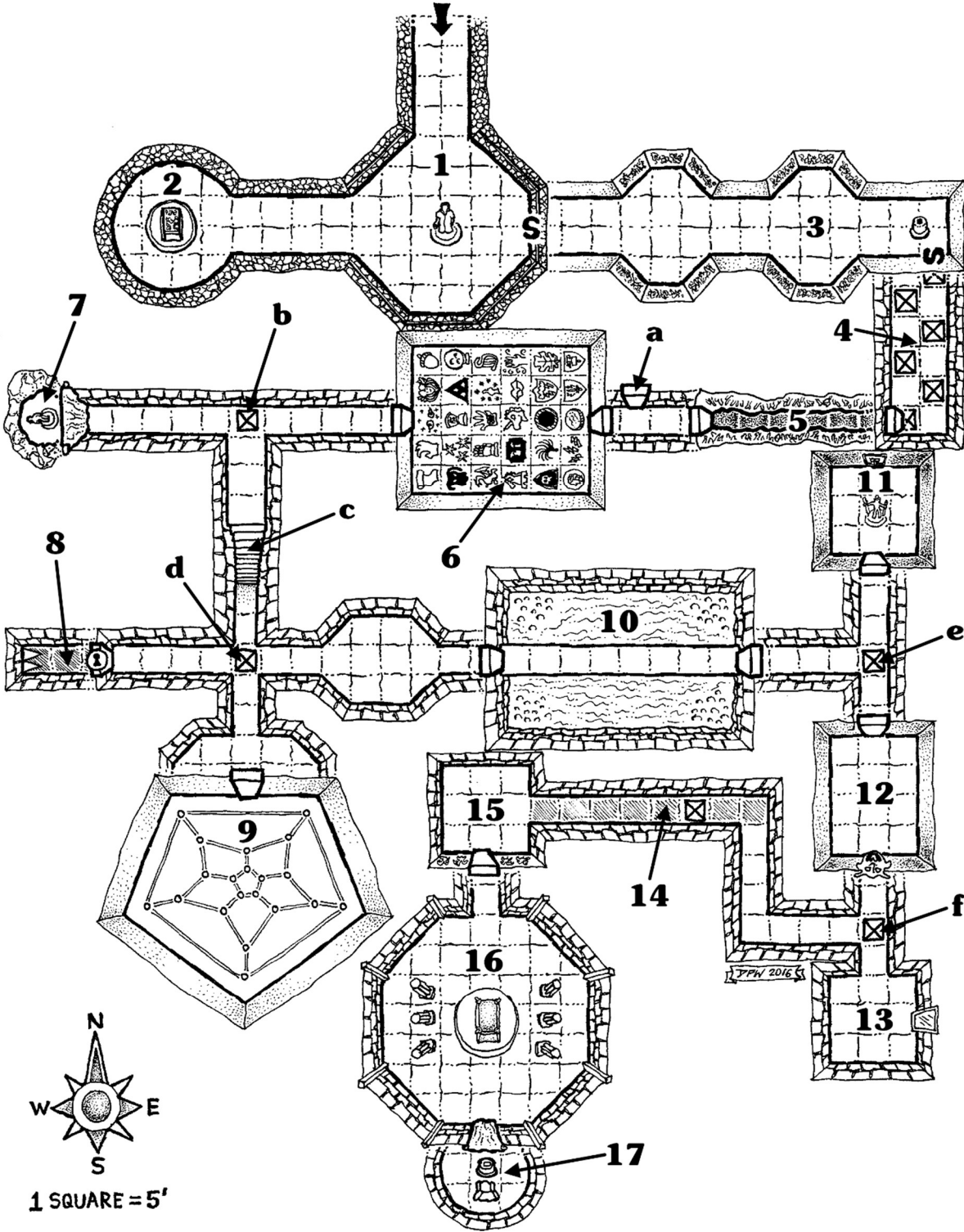
CONCLUSION

The PCs may well decide to kill Gunther on the spot. Gunther is utterly terrified of them, and will desperately try to talk his way out of trouble, even as the real story tumbles from his lips. He will say some unhelpful things along the way, such as, "I only did this for money – I never took any pleasure in anyone's death, not like Lucien did" or "Almost all of the adventurers died quickly without much suffering. I was always glad when that happened."

If the PCs take Gunther back to Longsaddle, he will willingly give them all of the money he has in his room – **2000gp**. If the PCs interrogate him thoroughly, he will admit that he has another **5000gp** in a vault in Waterdeep. He will not easily divulge this information, however.

The PCs will also need to decide what to do with the Shrine itself. It is a marvel of magic and engineering, even though it was the product of a diseased and perverted imagination. The safest plan would be to render it harmless, perhaps by collapsing the entrance tunnel. But the PCs may decide to leave it intact, as an unambiguous reminder that remarkable talent is no guarantee of good character or a sound mind.

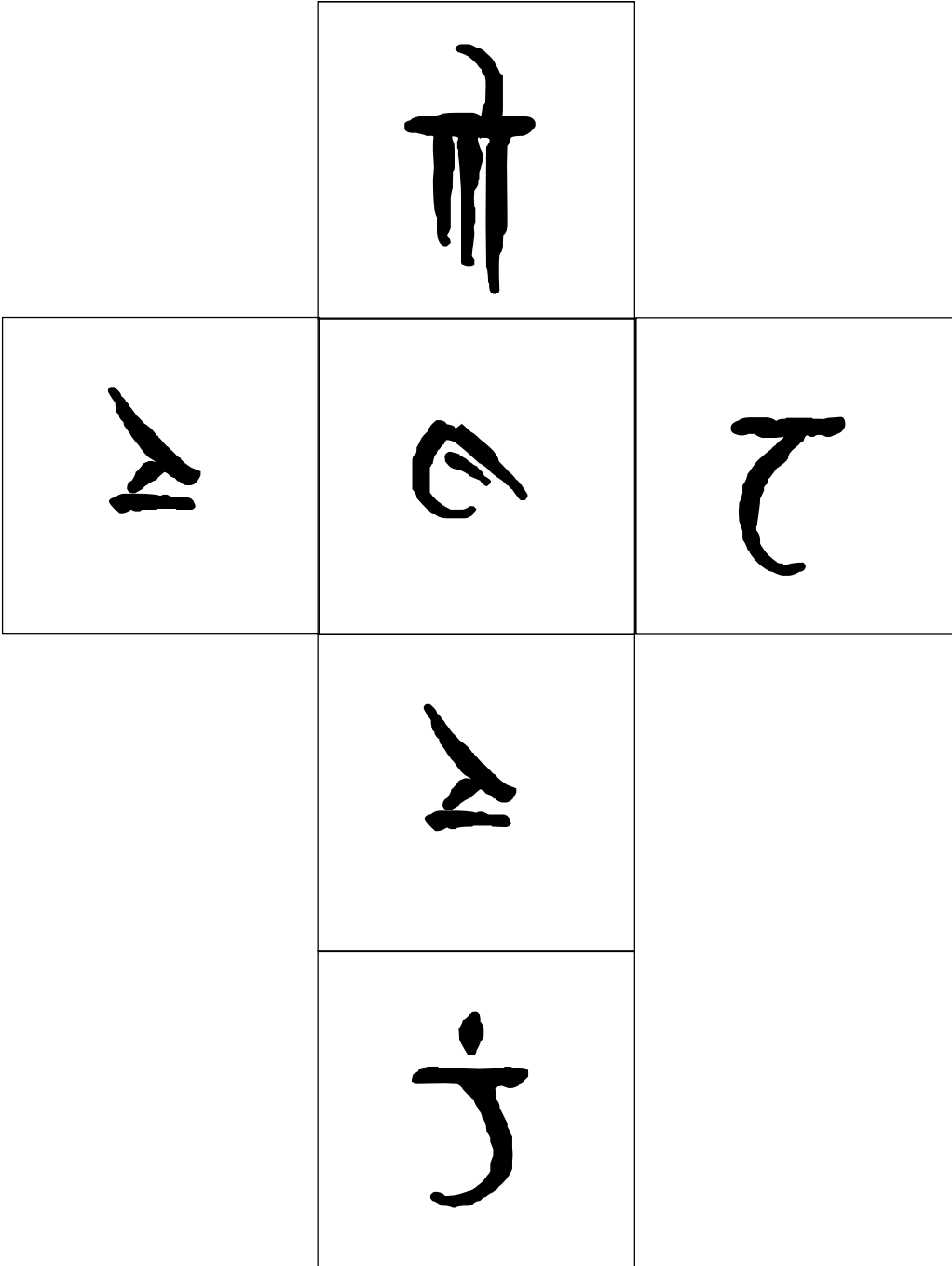
LITTLE SHRINE OF HORRORS MAP



DRACONIC RUNES HANDOUT

A	≡	N	Ɱ
B	Ɱ	O	Ɱ
C	Ɱ	P	Ɱ
D	Ɱ	Q	Ɱ
E	Ɱ	R	Ɱ
F	Ɱ	S	Ɱ
G	Ɱ	T	Ɱ
H	Ɱ	U	Ɱ
I	Ɱ	V	Ɱ
J	Ɱ	W	Ɱ
K	Ɱ	X	Ɱ
L	Ɱ	Y	Ɱ
M	Ɱ	Z	Ɱ

MYSTERIOUS BOX HANDOUT



COPPER SHEET HANDOUT

Black does not look up to Red.

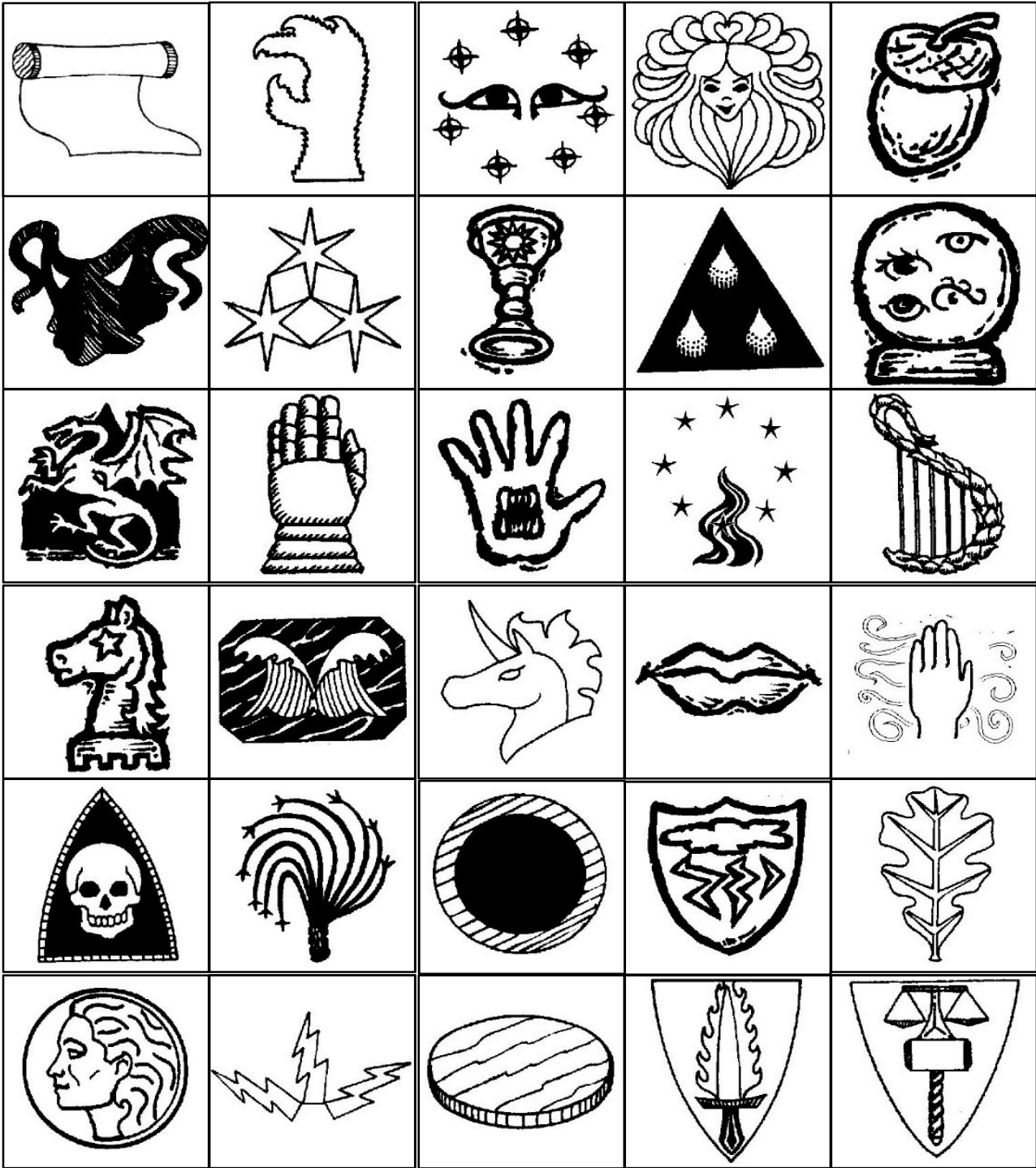
White rests not on the right.

Red lies not on the left.

Red and Blue reside higher than Green.

Black resides near, but not at the top.

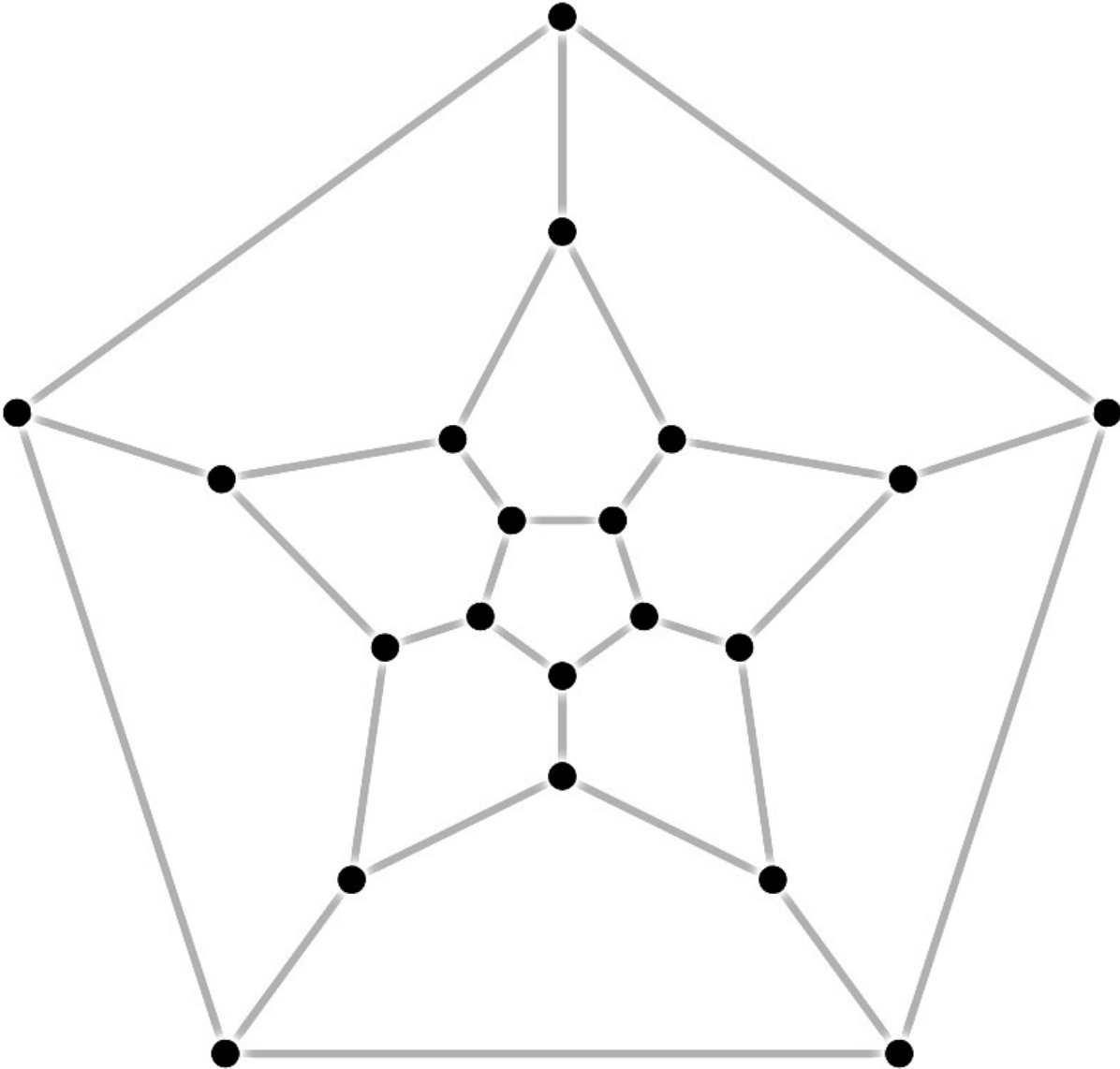
SYMBOL ROOM HANDOUT



SYMBOL ROOM KEY

 Oghma N	 Malar CE	 Selune CG	 Sune CG	 Shiallia NG
 Mask CN	 Lliira CG	 Siamorphe LN	 Talona CE	 Savras LN
 Tchazzar CE	 Torm LG	 Moander CE	 Mystra LN	 Milil NG
 Red Knight LG	 Umberlee CE	 Mielikki NG	 Sharess CG	 Shaundakul CN
 Myrkul NE	 Loviatar LE	 Shar NE	 Valkur CG	 Silvanus N
 Waukeen N	 Talos CE	 Tymora CG	 Tempus CN	 Tyr LG

BLUE ROOM HANDOUT



GARGOYLE HEAD HANDOUT



MONSTER STATS

Flint Golem

Medium construct, neutral

Armour Class 14 (natural armor)

Hit Points 58 (9d8+18)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
17 (+3)	9 (-1)	15 (+2)	6 (-2)	10 (+0)	5 (-3)

Damage Immunities lightning, fire, cold, poison, psychic

Damage Resistance slashing and piercing from non-magical attacks

Condition Immunities charmed, exhaustion, frightened, paralyzed, petrified, poisoned

Senses darkvision 60 ft.

Languages understands the languages of its creator but can't speak

Challenge 3 (700 XP)

Magic Weapons. The golem's weapon attacks are magical.

Actions

Slam. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 12 (2d8 + 3) bludgeoning damage.

Lesser Bone Golem

Medium construct, neutral

Armour Class 15 (natural armor)

Hit Points 64 (9d10+18)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
17 (+3)	10 (+0)	15 (+2)	6 (-2)	10 (+0)	5 (-3)

Damage Immunities cold, poison, psychic

Damage Resistance slashing and piercing from non-magical attacks

Condition Immunities charmed, exhaustion, frightened, paralyzed, petrified, poisoned

Senses darkvision 60 ft.

Languages understands the languages of its creator but can't speak

Challenge 3 (700 XP)

Magic Weapons. The golem's weapon attacks are magical.

Actions

Slam. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 12 (2d8 + 3) bludgeoning damage.

Ogre Skeleton

Large undead, lawful evil

Armour Class 12 (natural armor)

Hit Points 27 (5d8+5)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
17 (+3)	11 (+0)	12 (+1)	6 (-2)	8 (-1)	5 (-3)

Damage Immunities poison

Damage Resistance slashing and piercing from non-magical attacks

Condition Immunities exhaustion, poisoned

Senses darkvision 60 ft.

Languages understands Giant and Common but can't speak

Challenge 1 (200 XP)

Actions

Bone club. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 12 (2d8 + 3) bludgeoning damage.

CREDITS & LEGALS

Design: M.T. Black

Acknowledgement: This adventure was inspired, of course, by the **Tomb of Horrors** by **Gary Gygax**. I've tried to pay tribute to this legendary adventure with a couple of easter eggs in the text – some obvious, some less so. I also made great use of various trap compilations, especially those by **Grimtooth** and **5MW**.

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