

# Wizard in a Bottle

M.T. Black



# INTRODUCTION

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*Wizard in a Bottle* is a Dungeons & Dragons adventure designed for a single session of about 4-6 hours play. The combat encounters have been calculated to present a tough challenge to four 2<sup>nd</sup> level characters. They will present a less difficult, though still enjoyable, challenge to 3<sup>rd</sup> level characters or larger parties.

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**.



## OLD COMRADES

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The party are in Neverwinter looking for adventure and fortune. Through an acquaintance, they have arranged to meet a man named **Ulfgar Longwood** at the *Bridgeside Coffee House*. They've been told he has a proposal for them.

Ulfgar turns out to be a round, graying man with a missing leg. He greets the PCs with an enormous grin. Read the following boxed text aloud -

“Friends, thank you for coming to meet me today. If we were to do this the traditional way, I suppose we would be meeting in a tavern! But I can't abide alcohol myself. Would you like a coffee, by the way?”

After the waiter takes their orders, Ulfgar continues -

“I want to get straight to the point, but first I'll need to tell you a little about myself. Twenty years ago I was part of a famous group of adventurers known as the “Crimson Company”. Perhaps you've heard of us? No - that's a pity.

We were based out of Westbridge and operated on the Long Road, and we certainly got up to some adventures! Are you *sure* you haven't heard of us? Never mind.

Our wizard was a very talented young lady named **Amilya Grayheart**. She had a way with a wand, let me tell you! I was always very fond of young Amilya...

Ulfgar catches himself, realizing that he is rambling.

“Anyhow, to cut a long story short, the party split up and we each went our own way. I retired from adventuring after losing my leg in a stupid accident - I'll tell you about that another time. I became an iron merchant in Waterdeep, got married, had seven children and so on. The last I heard of Amilya she had moved to Neverwinter and was adventuring with a new party.

I've done very well out of the iron trade and last year I retired. We decided to move to Neverwinter - my wife likes quality clocks and hot springs, you see. I thought to myself I could look up Amilya again.

He pauses as his eyes grow a little damp. He takes out a handkerchief, dabs his eyes, then blows his nose loudly. He then continues -

Anyhow, to cut a long story short, and to get to the point, it seems that poor Amilya has passed away. She set out to explore the ruins of a Sorcerer's tower with her new party, nearly twenty years ago, and never returned. Such a waste! Such a waste!

I've managed to determine the location of the tower – it took some doing, believe me! I'll tell you about it sometime.

To get right to the point, I need someone to explore the ruins and, perhaps, bring back the poor girl's remains. It's a longshot, I know, but one I have to take.

I've heard good things about your party. I'm offering **200gp** - will you take the job?

Assuming the party accept, Ulfgar is able to give them a very accurate map to the Sorcerer's ruined tower – the map was, in fact, prepared by a cartographer using magic. The ruins lie near the coast, about **two days'** journey (on foot) north of Neverwinter. Despite considerable research, Ulfgar was unable to determine any more information about the ruins. The PCs can try and do their own research, but will also hit a dead end.

In terms of Amilya herself, Ulfgar is frustratingly vague. He can tell the PCs that she was in her 20s, was slender, had dark hair and used a wand as her arcane focus. But nothing more.



## SORCEROUS RUINS

Most of the journey north takes place on the High Road, with a **2-mile** wilderness trek to the coast as the final leg. At your discretion, the players could have 1 or 2 wilderness encounters on this stage – use the *Grassland Monsters* list in the **Dungeon Masters Guide**.

The tower is an ancient looking stone edifice, with most of the upper parts eroded away. It sits on a lonely dirt hill overlooking the sea, with some scrubby grass and a few withered trees the only vegetation.

There is a dark looking entrance near the base. As the players arrive, black storm clouds are coming in from the ocean, and a fierce, cold wind is blowing.

Please see the **Sorcerous Ruins Map** on **page 10**. One square = 5'.

### 1. GROUND FLOOR

Inside, the tower is just a shell, with a few scraps of wood all that remains of the original floors. The PCs are able to look directly up to the open sky.

The ground floor is laid with old flagstones, but these are almost completely covered with crumbling stone, rotting timber, dirt, ashes and other debris. An old tapestry covers a tall object toward the back of the room, and the place smells strongly of dung.

An **ogre** has recently made this room into her lair. As the PCs approach, she is munching on the remains of a wild-cat she caught that morning. The party look much more appetizing to her, however, and she will attack them on sight.

*Treasure.* In an old box under a bit fraying carpet, the party will find the ogre's treasure. It consists of **12gp**, **15sp**, **38cp** and, her prize, a goblin skull dipped in copper (worth **5gp**).



### a. Statue

If the party throw back the rug they will see that it covers an iron statue. The statue depicts a figure in a long cloak with its face hidden beneath a cowl. In its hands it holds a small, rusty iron tablet with the following words engraved on it –

**PATRON ORE POD**

If someone presses a letter, it begins glowing faintly. Press it again and it stops. The letters must be pressed in the following order –

**OPEN TRAP DOOR**

Once this happens, the entire statue will magically pivot around on one corner, revealing a stone, spiral staircase heading down.

### b. Treacherous Steps

The spiral staircase descends 50', and the steps are narrow and steep. Every now and again a step will magically lower itself by a few inches as someone is putting their weight on it. Three times on the descent, randomly pick a character, and have them make a **DC 15 Dexterity** saving throw. If they fail, they tumble down several steps for **1d4-1 bludgeoning** damage, and finish prone. A PC with **Dexterity (Acrobatics)** proficiency may reduce the damage by 1 point, and finish their tumble still standing.

If anyone is within 5' in front of a tumbling PC, they also must make the same saving throw, with the same consequences – and so on down the line.

The steps lead down to **location #2**.

## UNDERGROUND LAB

### Features

Unless noted otherwise, the underground passages have worn brick walls and dirt covered flagstones on the floor. The ceilings are hewn rock and are 10' high throughout. The area smells primarily of mold and dust.

### Light

**Location #2** receives some dim light from the trap door entrance, but otherwise the lab is dark and the party will need either darkvision or their own light source.

## 2. COBWEB CORRIDOR

Cobwebs fill this corridor, hanging thickly from the walls. Small black spiders – dozens of them – are scurrying across the webbing. In the midst of it all the party can see a still human shape, sitting against the wall.

There are **two swarms of spiders** amongst the cobwebs – they will attack if the party advance down the corridor. If the party attempt to burn out the cobwebs (using an oil bomb, for example) the swarms will rush toward them and attack.

The sitting figure is the corpse of a young female half-elf, dressed in rotting leather armor and a cloak, with a pair of rusty short swords and some lock picks. In a purse on her belt she carries **32gp** and **50sp**. The corpse looks very old, and it's not possible to tell how she died.

## 3. SITTING ROOM

There are a pair of dusty old divans near the middle of this small chamber. The walls are covered with gray stucco; carved into the stucco, in high relief, are hundreds and hundreds of eyeballs. The eyeballs all pivot and look at the party as they enter, then follow them as they wander around the room.

If someone touches an eyeball it will explode doing **1d6 piercing** damage from the shrapnel. A **DC 15 Dexterity** saving throw will halve the damage.

If anyone examines the east wall and makes a **DC 20 Wisdom (Perception)** check, they will notice that one of the eyeballs is slightly discolored. Touching *this* eyeball will cause the secret door to swing open.

A noxious odor comes from the west corridor.

## 4. SCRYING ROOM

There is 3' high circular stone pool in this room, filled with putrid water. The PCs can see a dark shape at the bottom of the pool. The smell is nauseating.

The pool contains a **lesser water weird** (see **page 11**), which the Sorcerer bound to the pool in order to aid with his eldritch divination. The weird will attack anyone who goes near the pool.

The shape in the pool is a highly decomposed male halfling wearing rusty chainmail and armed with a sword. In his purse he has **30sp**, **53cp** and a moonstone worth **10gp**.

## 5. VAULT

A closed and locked rusty iron gate prevents access to this small room, which contains a stone chest. The gate lock may be picked by anyone making a **DC 15 Dexterity** check using thieves' tools.

As soon as the gate is opened a very loud siren-like sound starts. The PCs have one round to take an action as the volume increases. After that, the following effect occurs.

Anyone in the corridor or vault must make a **DC 15 Constitution** saving throw or enter a frenzy of self-harm. They will start belting their heads against the stone walls and floor, for **1d4 bludgeoning** damage per round. The PCs must make a new saving throw at the start of each round.

If a PC covers their ears with their hands, they have advantage on the saving throw. Deaf PCs, or those with their ears completely blocked (by candle wax, for example) are unaffected.

The maddening sound will continue so long as the gate is open. People will be unaffected by the siren if they retreat back to **location #3**.

The chest is unlocked. It contains –

- 2200cp
- 700sp
- 50gp
- 3 x obsidian stones (10gp each)
- 2 x turquoise stones (10gp each)
- 3 x spell scrolls (Dancing Lights, Mage Armor, Misty Step)
- A driftglobe
- A potion of healing



## 6. CABINET OF CURIOSITIES

The floor of this room is extremely dusty, and the PCs kick up thick clouds of it as they enter. Have everyone in the room make a **DC 10 Constitution** saving throw, or spend 1d4 rounds coughing. While coughing they have disadvantage on all ability rolls.

In the middle of the room is the decomposed body of a human male. He is wearing rusty chainmail armor, carries a mace and has a silver holy symbol around his neck, depicting a rose and a sheath of wheat. Make a **DC 10 Intelligence (Religion)** check to identify the symbol as that of Chauntea. The human has just **14sp** in his purse.

In the southeast corner of this room are two barrels of fetid water, a small barrel of very stale beer and an unlocked wooden chest

containing some old robes and travelling clothes.

The entire western wall is dominated by a cabinet, full of various curiosities. The collection includes –

- shells
- fossils
- skulls and bones
- minerals
- insects and beetles
- preserved organs
- rodent and reptile skins
- primitive tools and weapons

Nothing in the cabinet is especially valuable on its own, although an antiquarian in Neverwinter might pay **100gp** for the entire collection.

**Two dust mephits** inhabit this room, and will attack 1d4 rounds after the PCs enter.

## 7. HALL OF MURALS

There are six enormous murals painted on the walls of this hall, each taking up a full 10x10' section. They depict –

- A barren wasteland dotted by dark pits, and dominated by a vile river
- A parched desert
- A vast bottomless pit encircled by enormous cliffs, with many narrow stone bridges crisscrossing it
- An immense swamp full of giant reptiles
- An endless series of decrepit courtyards and withered fields, each full of demonic figures
- A blasted wasteland punctuated by volcanos

Anyone making a **DC 15 Intelligence (Religion)** check will be able to determine that each mural depicts a layer of the Abyss.

As the party approach the entry to the laboratory, **two quasits** will step *out* of the murals, one in front of them and one behind

them. These creatures served the Sorcerer while he was alive.

They will slowly approach the party, muttering in *supernal*, "Intruders are here to steal from the Master. Intruders must die." and so on. They will attack the party immediately once in range.

## 8. LABORATORY

Several shelves run all around the walls of this untidy room, and there are a pair of strong wooden benches on the floor. All of the available shelf and bench space is crammed full of typical alchemical equipment, such as –

- bowls, funnels and flasks
- spouts and vents
- alembics
- cucurbits
- mortars and pestles
- small furnaces
- many, many containers of ingredients (most now perished)

The air smells strongly of sulfur and dust.

### **The Sorcerer Strikes**

If the party examine the room carefully, on a **DC 15 Wisdom (Perception)** check they will notice that an alembic on one of the shelves contains a green mist that is glowing very faintly. This is all that remains of the Sorcerer who, in a questionable attempt to achieve immortality, managed to distill the *very spirit* out of his aged and decrepit body.

The Sorcerer is conscious, intelligent and malevolent, but the only power remaining to him is the ability to move small objects around the lab by telekinesis. **1d4 rounds** after the party enters the room, the Sorcerer will begin attacking by hurling flasks of noxious liquids at them.

Select a member of the party for his attack. That PC must make a **DC 15 Dexterity** saving throw or be struck by the flask, which will shatter on contact. If the PC makes the save they are unharmed.

The Sorcerer has 9 flasks in total -

- *3 flasks of poison gas.* If struck, the PC takes **2d4 poison** damage and must make a **DC 15 Constitution** saving throw or be *poisoned* for 10 rounds. Any PC within 5' of the PC must make a **DC 15 Constitution** saving throw or be *poisoned* for 1 round
- *3 flasks of everburning oil.* If struck, the PC takes **2d4 fire damage** on the first round, then an additional **1d4 fire damage** for **1d4 rounds** afterwards
- *3 flasks of acid.* If struck, the PC takes **3d4 acid** damage

Once the Sorcerer has thrown all **9 flasks** (1 per round), he can do nothing else to harm the party.

If the alembic the Sorcerer is inhabiting is destroyed, so is the Sorcerer. Treat the alembic as having an **AC 10**, and **4 hp**. On the killing blow, the PCs will see the faint outline of a face in the green gas, looking anguished.

### **Amilya Grayheart**

On one of the wooden benches, the PCs will notice 5 flasks containing various colored liquids. They are -

- 2 potions of healing (yellow)
- a potion of climbing (green)
- a potion of strength (red)

The final flask is filled with a translucent blue liquid, and suspended within it is a 3" tall human figure. She is female, with raven hair and a lithe build. She is dressed in dark green travelling clothes with a black cloak, and is holding a wand in her right hand.

The flask has a cork stopper. If the PCs take out the stopper or shatter the glass, the woman in the bottle will rapidly expand back to normal size. She will be dry, though there will be some minor traces of a thick blue liquid on her clothing.

After a moment she will open her eyes, look around in confusion, then spring back, waving

her wand saying, "Get away from me, evil quasits! I'm warning you!" She may even let off 1 or 2 poorly aimed fire bolt cantrips.

Once she has settled down, she will identify herself as **Amilya Grayheart**. She is extremely relieved to see the party, and she will share her story with them.

### **Amilya's Adventure**

Amilya and her companions heard about the tower from a teamster they met in Neverwinter. Although most of the party were quite inexperienced, they decided to investigate the ruins.

They quickly figured out how to open the trapdoor to the underground level, but things went badly after that. **Kithri Silverhill**, a rogue, was stung to death by the swarm of spiders. **Derrin Flintmoor**, a halfling fighter, was dragged underwater and drowned by the water weird. Their cleric, **Thoradin Dawnfist**, was torn apart by the dust mephits.

Unable to retreat, Amilya pressed forward and was soon being pursued into the laboratory by the quasits. Her powerful magic was exhausted and her cantrips were proving ineffective, so she desperately grabbed one of the potions on the wooden bench - one filled with a blue liquid. Her last memory was of flipping off the cork stopper...

From Amilya's perspective, it was only a few moments ago that she was battling the quasits after having seen her companions gruesomely killed. She will find it very, very hard to believe that twenty years has passed since she entered the ruins.

### **A Funeral**

Amilya will insist on burying her poor companions under stone cairns, and will try and do this on her own if the party won't help. She is shaken and confused when she sees how decomposed the corpses are.

(If the party did not enter location #4, she will advise against it, even though it means leaving

behind one of her companions. Amilya herself is too exhausted to fight.)

If there is a cleric in the party Amilya will ask them to perform a funeral service. Otherwise Amilya will give a short obituary, mostly of the “they tried hard” variety. She will be visibly upset during the funeral.

After that she is ready to head back to Neverwinter. She tells the party, “I need to see my fiancé – he will be very worried about me.” She dismisses any concerns the party may raise about this plan.



## GOING HOME AGAIN

*Note – the final chapter of this adventure is roleplaying focused, and will require some flexibility. The encounter called “The Lockup” should be played first - after that you can play the encounters in any order, or improvise your own.*

Any doubts Amilya had about the PCs story will be dispelled when she sees Ulfgar Longwood back in Neverwinter. She stares in astonishment at his aged face, then bursts into tears as they hug. Over and over again she will repeat, “I need to see Jex. I need to see Jex.”

Ulfgar, tears also streaming down his face, will thank the party profusely for her return, and will have his servant give them the agreed reward.

The PCs return to their inn knowing they have done a good job. Unless you have other ideas, assume the party are staying at *The Golden Apple* inn, in the Docks district.

### **The Lockup**

About midnight, the party receive an urgent message from Ulfgar asking them to come to his home (in the Blacklake district) at once.

When they arrive he is looking very distressed. It turns out that Amilya went to see her fiancé, **Jex Goldford**. A huge argument ensued, and the Watch threw her into the lockup.

Ulfgar begs the party to help. He wants them to go to the lockup and pay her bail (10gp, which he gives them), and then ensure she comes back to his house.

If the PCs do not wish to get involved any further, then *the adventure is over*. If they agree to help, read on.

At the lockup, the bailiff not only wants the bail money, but he also wants assurances from the PCs that Amilya won't cause any more trouble. The PCs will need to provide a reasonably convincing argument that they have the situation in hand.

After Amilya is released, she is quiet and withdrawn, and goes back to Ulfgar's house without any fuss. She goes to bed almost straight away and won't talk to anyone. Ulfgar asks the party to return the next day.

### **Jex Goldford**

Jex Goldford is an earnest and hardworking clockmaker, roughly 50 years old. He and his wife Biss have five children, two of whom are adults. It is a happy marriage.

His whirlwind romance with Amilya 20 years ago was quite out of character. He admired her energy and passion, while she was drawn to his stability. He was devastated when she failed to return from her adventure, but overcame his grief after a few months.

He is utterly stunned that she has seemingly returned from the grave, looking to continue their relationship. He may come looking for the PCs and explain his situation, and demand they “fix the problem they created”.

### **A Fresh Start**

When the PCs return to Ulfgar's house the next morning, Amilya is out of bed, and is energetically plotting how to win back Jex. Ulfgar takes the PCs aside and suggests they



need to help Amilya find a new purpose in life. He asks the PCs for ideas - feel free to run with any suggestions they come up with. Otherwise, Ulfgar has a few ideas of his own...

### **The Bachelor**

Ulfgar will suggest they help find Amilya a new boyfriend. He recommends the **Blacklake Bar and Grill**, an upmarket establishment, as a likely place to find quality bachelors. If the PCs go there and ask around, they will find three possibilities -

- Jaysun Nighthead, a proud barrister with a withered face
- Zak Gladwood, a sympathetic goldsmith with a balding head
- Niall Hornmoor, a loud-mouthed grain merchant with a hooked nose

The PCs will need to convince one of them to go on a blind date. After that, they need to get Amilya ready - she is quite uncooperative. Regardless, the morning after the date she will tell the party "It didn't work out".

If PCs find her date, he is quite angry. He tells them that Amilya spent the first half of the night talking incessantly about Jex, and later dragged him over to Jex's house to spend several hours spying through his window.

### **Getting Religion**

Ulfgar next suggests that Amilya might find consolation in religion. He knows that the High Priest of Eldath is taking on some new acolytes. He will pay the rather hefty enrollment fee if the PCs can help get her application approved.

The High Priest wants to interview her, but she refuses to cooperate. The High Priest agrees to interview the PCs as her proxy, and they need to convince him of Amilya's dedication to Eldath and all round general piety.

Amilya will reluctantly agree to enter the seminary. A few days later she is back at Ulfgar's door, looking rather sheepish, with an angry looking High Priest at her shoulder.

Eldath is a goddess of quietness and a pacifist. Amilya got into a fist fight with one of the other acolytes on her first morning there. Two days later she spoke during the "Hour of Silence", a sacred ritual that has been practiced for three centuries in the seminary and never before profaned. It turns out she was asking the acolyte next to her if she had a spare ribbon for her hair.

Needless to say, the High Priest elected to expel her on the spot.

### **A New Party**

Ulfgar's final suggestion is that they find Amilya a new adventuring party to join. As it happens, there is a company in town called Raghar's Roughnecks who are looking for a wizard. The PC's will need to provide them with references about Amilya's character and abilities. ("What's her fireball like - has she got a good fireball? Good personal hygiene? Does she snore?")

This final suggestion could possibly work, as Amilya is an adventurer at heart. But it's possible she will insult the new crew by comparing them unfavorably to the Crimson Company. She is also still a bit traumatized by the loss of her last party.

It's also possible for Amilya to join the PCs, either as an NPC or a new PC for an existing or new player. If she does so, create her stats as a second level wizard.

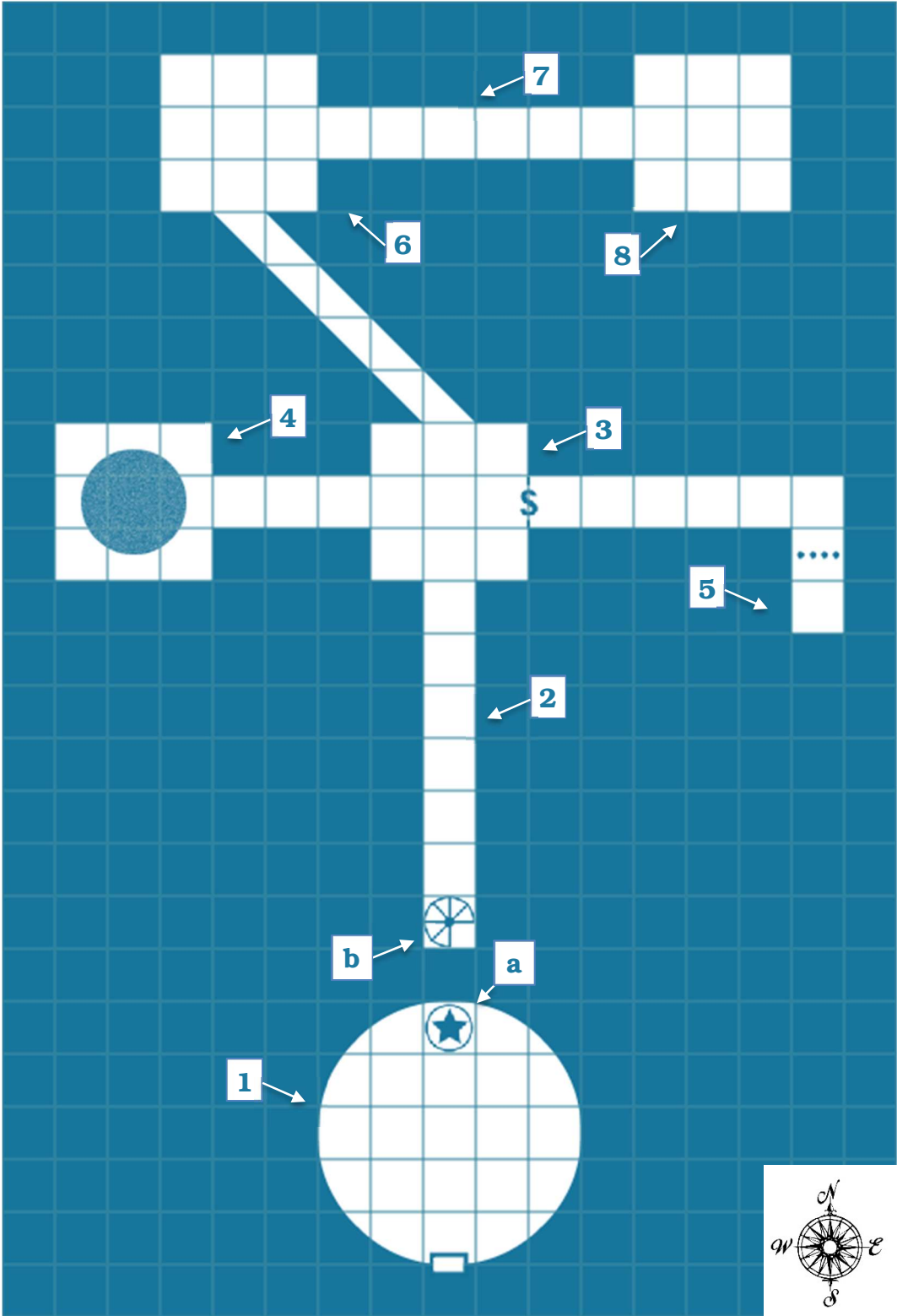
## **CONCLUSION**

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Ultimately, Amilya just needs time to get over Jex. The PCs may not be able to find her a new purpose in life, but they will provide a useful distraction while she grieves. After a couple of tendays, she will be speaking about Jex less, and will seem to have accepted he is not coming back.

The heartache will continue for quite a few months more, of course. But, as the sage wisely said, time heals all wounds...

# SORCEROUS RUINS MAP



# MONSTER STATS

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## Lesser Water Weird

*Medium Elemental, Neutral*

**Armour Class** 13

**Hit Points** 30 (6d10)

**Speed** 0 ft. swim 60 ft.

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STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
13 (+1)	13 (+1)	11 (+0)	11 (+0)	10 (+0)	10 (+0)

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**Damage Immunities** poison

**Damage Resistance** fire; bludgeoning, slashing and piercing from non-magical attacks

**Condition Immunities** exhaustion, grappled, paralyzed, restrained, prone, unconscious, poisoned

**Senses** blindsight 30 ft., passive Perception 10

**Languages** understands Aquan but can't speak

**Challenge** 2 (450 XP)

**Invisible in Water.** The water weird is invisible while fully immersed in water.

**Water Bound.** The water weird dies if it leaves the water to which it has been bound.

### Actions

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**Constrict.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 8 (2d6 + 1) bludgeoning damage. If the target is Medium or smaller, it is grappled (escape DC 13) and pulled 5 feet toward the water weird. Until this grapple ends, the target is restrained, the water weird tries to drown it, and the water weird can't constrict another target.

# CREDITS & LEGALS

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**Design:** M.T. Black

**Cover:** Thomas Cole

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