

# MORTZENGERSTURM, THE MAD MANTICORE OF THE PRISMATIC PEAK



THE CHALLENGE—  
SURVIVE THE MAGIC MANSION OF A  
MAD MANTICORE WIZARD!

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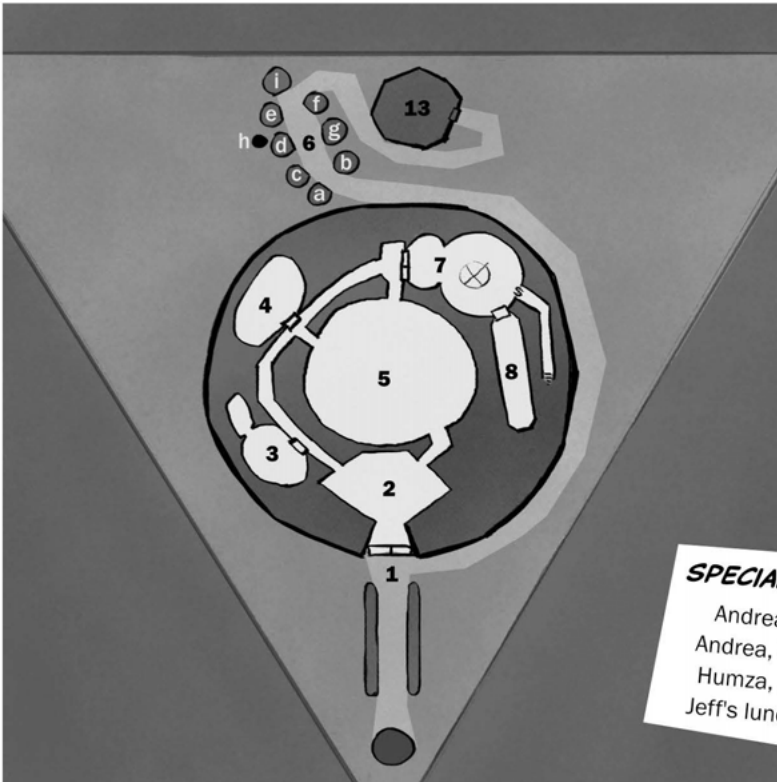
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**M**ortzengersturm's Mansion and its grounds sit high atop the **Prismatic Peak**, an oblique triangular prism the size of a mountain! Each side of the triangle top is over **1,000 feet long**. What wizard or god created the peak? And why? *No one knows.*



## **Mortzengersturm's Mansion** (further details inside!)

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## **SPECIAL THANKS TO OUR PLAYTESTERS**

Andrea, Bob, Eric, Gina, Jim & Tug; the other Andrea, Dean, Gavin, Jake & Nick; Billy, Dennis, Humza, Justin & Kreg; the G+ crew with Jason, Jeff's lunch crowd, and both groups with Robert!

## SOME BACKGROUND, PERHAPS OF USE TO THE REFEREE

### MORTZENERSTURM: THE MAN, THE MANTICORE

Sometimes called “the Great” (mostly by himself), Mortzengersturm is a wizard of some renown as an expert in so-called wild magic.\* It has been the position of more than one ruler of the Country of Yanth that wild magic is a threat, and so its use must be suppressed. That Mortzengersturm fancied himself an artist and wanted to exploit wild magic only to create portman-teau beasts, in the main, did not save him from exile by Princess Viola, the Clockwork Princess of the Country of Yanth. (His self-transformation into a manticore in one of his earliest creative efforts may have played some part in her decree.) Mortzengersturm went to dwell on the Prismatic Peak of Mount Geegaw (see below) with a herd of hippogriffs and other improbable animals, there to continue his experiments free of governmental intrusion.

Beyond exile, Mortzengersturm paid another price for his recklessness. Over time, he developed the hungers and appetites of a manticore. He began to crave, perhaps even require, periodic consumption of human flesh. Horrified, the wizard attempted to restore his human form, but even his arts proved insufficient. Over time, while not exactly relishing anthropophagy, he has more or less made peace with his condition. His victims are mostly those unfortunates he finds alone in the wilds, but of late he has begun to take some measure of sadistic pleasure in luring potential dinner guests to his mansion on the Prismatic Peak.

### THE WHIM-WHAM STONE

The Whim-Wham Stone is a cluster of vibrant green, hexagonal crystals imbued with (or perhaps crystallized *from*) wild magic of the sort used by the Elder Fae. Mortzengersturm relies on this artifact for his most powerful transformational magic. For the purposes of this adventure, it can serve as a MacGuffin. It is understood to be both powerful and valuable — though its exact powers are left vague. Should the party acquire the stone, you, the referee, may define the full nature of its abilities as you see fit. The sidebar on page 13 has suggested powers for the Stone.

### SETTING THE HOOK, AS IT WERE

You may of course dispense with this Whim-Wham Stone nonsense and have the party come upon Mortzengersturm and his mountain completely by accident as a random wilderness encounter. Here are a few possible ways (with and without the stone) of how to bring the player characters into the adventure:

### The Adventure

This is an adventure intended for a party of 5-6 adventurers of third or fourth level. Like many “old school” adventures, the potential encounters are not necessarily tailored to the party’s level. However, few of these encounters are unavoidable, and quick-thinking players will find ways to overcome them without combat.

### The Setting

This introductory section makes a lot of references to the Land of Azurth and its denizens. For more information on the setting, see the Appendix.

*\*Wild magic is the harnessing of residual eldritch energies not tamed or tempered to the ordered Land of Azurth when it was fashioned by the crystalline, giant gnome Gob and the faerie queen Azulina. It is more akin to the forces wielded by Azulina’s outlaw fey relatives. — The Editor*

### **Why A Tour?**

Having the PCs take a tour from Mortzengersturm (whatever the reason) has the advantage of having them gain information about the layout and contents of the mansion before Mortzengersturm's sudden but inevitable betrayal. This is by no means necessary, of course, but it allows for maximum player ingenuity when things begin to go wrong.

### **Quotations**

Throughout the adventure there are quotations from Mortzengersturm and others. These are not necessarily intended to be read aloud by the DM, but they are presented to give some guidance as to the sorts of things Mortzengersturm is given to say.

**Operation: Re-Seal.** *Crisis at Castle Machina!* A crack has developed in the containment sphere holding Goo-ee-blex, Demon King of Oozes. Princess Viola charges the party with acquiring forty-five seconds of wild magic radiation from the Whim-Wham Stone with a magical hand mirror so she can repair the sphere. Should containment fail, Goo-ee-blex will escape and retake the throne of the subterranean realm of Oozurth from her ally, Princess Jellia — then raise a slime army to conquer the surface world! If the pregenerated characters are used, the mirror is the one in Zabra's possession. If not, the Princess will provide it.

**Entourage.** The magic gemologists Gemma and Jewelee Gaudy have been granted the privilege of examining the Whim-Wham Stone by Mortzengersturm, and they never travel anywhere unaccompanied. They hire the party as bodyguards and entourage for the trip to the Prismatic Peak.

**An Invitation.** The party is more than a little surprised when a hippogriff swoops down into their camp. Mortzengersturm introduces himself via the crystal on the creature's harness and offers an invitation: an evening of fine food and wonderment on Mount Geegaw and a respite from the deprivations of the wilderness.

**Wizard War!** The Thaumaturgists of Troglropolis will not be outdone in either eccentricity or pretension, so they've turned their ire upon Mortzengersturm. A mysterious cloaked figure with strange movements (actually a magical marionette) approaches the party in a tavern and offers them a substantial sum to make a trip to Mortzengersturm's abode and laboratory to report back what they observe.

**Cursed.** The party is summoned to the castle of a local lord and presented with a giant, sobbing princess and her shrunken bridegroom to be. Perhaps Mortzengersturm can undo the witch's foul curse, and the alliance by marriage between two long-squabbling neighbors can proceed? Both fathers will pay well.

## **THE PRISMATIC PEAK**

Mount Geegaw is located loosely in the Dragon Spines, but it is like no other mountain in that range. The lower third of the mountain is the usual sort of rock and soil, but the upper two-thirds (roughly 5500 ft. of it) is a gigantic, oblique triangular prism. The vertex of the triangle faces in an easterly direction. The prism is translucent but has a slight bluish tinge. Beyond a distance of a few feet, no details of anything within it can

be made out, though it is evident upon looking at the mountain from the outside that there *are* structures of some sort inside it. From a distance, the mountain's surface looks as smooth as glass; up close, scratches, gouges, and blemishes can be seen, but those would be of little help to someone attempting to scale it. Even with the appropriate gear, Mount Geegaw would be a very difficult climb (DC 25 Strength (Athletics) check).

The crystal that composes the Prismatic Peak is immune to spells of 6th level or lower. It can be damaged with sufficient physical force on the magnitude required to harm a block of solid stone of equivalent size.

### Reaching the Peak

Short of flight, the best way to ascend to the Prismatic Peak is on the back of the **snailevator**. The **snailevator** is a giant snail that dwells on a screw-shaped, crystal ramp filling a 37 foot wide shaft running the length of the crystalline portion of the mountain. A plaque affixed to the opening of the screw-shaft hints at this with the legend: "TAKE THE SNAIL" with an upward pointing arrow. The snailevator is quite docile, and will allow a party of up to five medium-sized creatures to ride on its back. Should anyone do so, they will find the screw (or maybe the whole world) seems to turn, and the snail slides up the screw with the creature barely seeming to move under its own power, if at all. This perception is entirely correct. The snail's wondrous transport is effected by its magical slime trail. The trip takes just under an hour.

Upon reaching the flat summit of the peak near the eastern point, the snail tarries long enough to eat from a trough of greens. Mortzengersturm has his goblins fill weekly. This allows ample time for any travelers to disembark, though they may have to crawl down the snail's neck to do so.

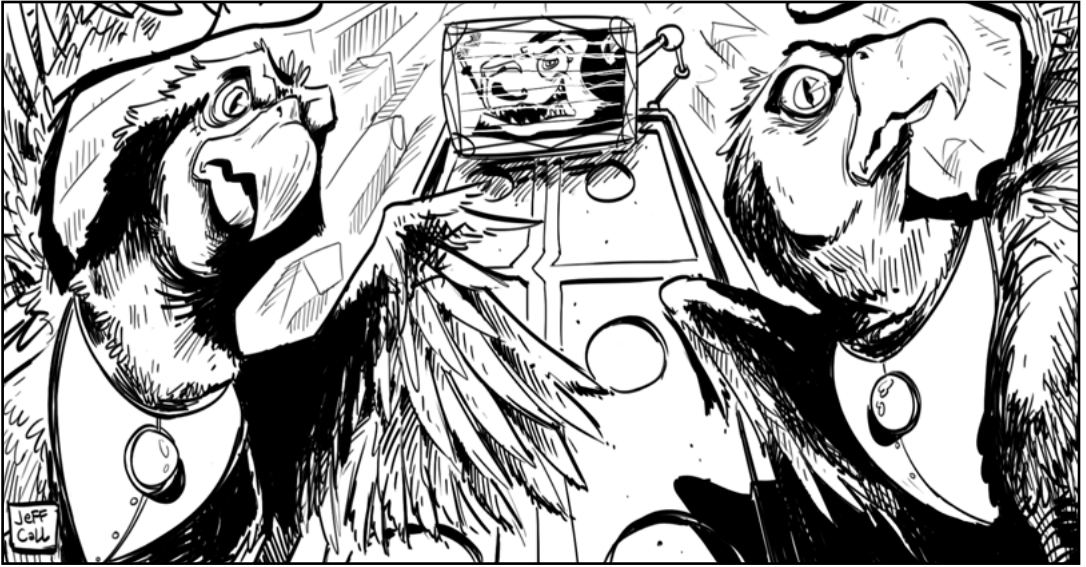
Characters who wish to walk up the screw themselves will, alas, experience no such magical transport. The hike is an arduous one and will take about 4 hours at normal speeds. The resourceful character may want to try some magic snailevator slime for herself. When applied to the soles of feet or footwear, it works for anyone as well as it does for the snailevator, but the disorienting nature of the travel makes a slip or fall far more likely (DC 18 Dexterity (Acrobatics) check) — and with magic world-moving slime on one's feet that could be deadly! The slime degrades quickly after excretion and will become normal slime in 2-4 hours, even if bottled.

### The Prismatic Peak

**Crystal Properties.** Immune to spells of 6th level or less; can otherwise be damaged as per normal stone.

**Climbing the Peak with gear.** DC 25 Strength (Athletics) check.

**Snail Slime.** Applied to the feet or footwear, allows travel at double movement rate, Dexterity (Acrobatics) check DC 18 to avoid falling! Slime loses its magical properties in 2-4 hrs., even if bottled.



### No. 1, At A Glance

A walkway through planters with strange plants to an ornate door guarded by hippogriffs. Mortzengersturm speaks via a crystal above the door.

**Hippogriffs (2)** will fight if attacked or in case of attempted forced entry and will summon support; **AC** 11; **HP** 22; **Spd** 40ft, fly 60ft; **Melee** Multiattack: 1 beak (+5, 1d10+3 piercing), 1 claws (+5, 2d6+3 slashing); **S** +3 **D** +1 **C** +1 **I** -4 **W** +1 **Ch** -1; **Traits** keen sight (advantage on sight-based Perception checks); **XP** 200.

## THE KEY TO MORTZENGERSTURM'S MANSION, ITS GROUNDS & WHAT LIES BENEATH

### 1. ENTRANCE

Mortzengersturm's mansion is like a splintering eruption on the otherwise smooth, crystalline surface of the peak. It's made of immense, crisscrossing, blue-white crystal shards, something like the Fortress of Solitude in *Superman: The Movie*. The walkway to the mansion's entrance is lined with planter beds of tall sunflowers whose yellow petals encircle large human eyes: Mortzengersturm's "**eye-rises**." Their unblinking gaze follows visitors as they pass.

The tall, double outer doors are flanked by handsome **twin hippogriffs** whose breastcollars are adorned with triangular-cut blue gems. Over the doors is a short brass strut holding a similar **blue crystal**, this one lozenge-shaped, larger (a little less than a foot across), and mounted so that it's angled down for viewing by anyone standing before the doors.

If the party is expected, the hippogriffs will step forward in a ceremonious, mostly nonthreatening manner, and their blue jewels will blink in unison as a tinny voice emanates from them:

**OH, HELLO! PLEASE, IF YOU WOULD, DIRECT YOUR GAZE TO THE CRYSTAL VIEWER ABOVE.**

The crystal above the door glows, and a static-y, blue-tinted image of Mortzengersturm's leonine face appears there, monocle over his left eye. He continues in his somewhat monotone, German-esque accented voice:

I AM MORTZENGERSTURM. PERHAPS YOU HAVE HEARD OF ME? I AM WIDELY RENOWNED AS A MASTER OF THE MAGICAL ARTS OF TRANSFORMATION AND HYBRIDIZATION. WELCOME TO MY MOUNTAIN OF WONDERS! ENTER, PLEASE, AND PREPARE YOURSELF TO EXPERIENCE DELIGHT AND AMAZEMENT.

The doors open of their own accord, and the hippogriffs step aside with what must be a slight bow and flourish transposed to their quadrupedal forms. The crystal buzzes and goes dark.

If the players' approach is forceful, the guards' screeches will summon most of the hippogriffs and Morzengersturm.

## 2. AUDIENCE CHAMBER

When the characters enter, **two goblins** in livery of second-rate design and make, depicting a manticore passant guardant with a cigarette holder in his mouth, sound a trumpet fanfare. **Twelve more goblins** shuffle in wearing forced smiles to line up on either side of the blue carpet leading up to a dais upon which sits a throne. A golden-frilled banner slowly drops behind the throne, emblazoned with an oversized image of Mortzengersturm's head, his gaze locked on some distant horizon.

When as soon as all the characters are admitted and the goblins are in place, **two hippogriffs** (outfitted similarly to the exterior guards) emerge from behind the banner and take positions on the dias, flanking the throne. Again, the trumpets blare. Then, a taller-than-average goblin dressed more formally than his fellows in tailed coat and ruff collar emerges from the behind the banner. Clearing his throat, he reads a speech from a scroll in a stilted voice:

WELCOME. WILKOMMEN\*. BIEVENUE\*. PREPARE TO BE ENTERTAINED AND ASTONISHED BY THE GENIUS OF MORTZENGERSTURM! IN MERE MOMENTS, THE GREAT MAN-TICORE — WILL BE WITH US, AND YOUR TOUR WILL BEGIN IN EARNEST. THANK YOU IN ADVANCE FOR YOUR PATIENCE.

It will be five minutes or so of waiting before Mortzengersturm makes his entrance. When he does, he behaves much more informally than the ceremony so far would suggest, brushing past the goblins to greet the characters directly.

He will again welcome them and thank them for coming. He will likely ask how they liked his "eyerises" in the garden — giving a chuckle at his pun. Then, he launches into a superlative-laden description of his

## No. 2, At A Glance

A throne room. Shabby pomp and circumstance by liveried goblins while waiting for Mortzengersturm to appear.

**Hippogriff honor guards (2)** will fight if they or the goblins are threatened and will summon support; **AC** 11; **HP** 25; **Spd** 40ft, fly 60ft; **Melee** Multiattack: 1 beak (+5, 1d10+3 piercing), 1 claws (+5, 2d6+3 slashing); **S** +3, **D** +1, **C** +1, **I** -4, **W** +1, **Ch** -1; **Traits** keen sight (advantage on sight-based Perception checks); **XP** 200.

**Goblin retinue (14)** will flee rather than fight; **AC** 13; **HP** 6; **Spd** 30ft; **Melee** improvised weapon or bite (+4, 1 piercing); **S** -1, **D** +2, **C** +0, **I** +0, **W** -1, **Ch** -1; **Traits** nimble escape (disengage or hide as a bonus action each round); **XP** 10.

*\*Dwarfish and Elvish, respectively. – The Editor*

### No. 3, At A Glance

Rooms not on the tour. A typical kitchen with goblin cooks that will only fight if directly attacked and even then will prefer to flee. In addition to the usual food stuffs, the larder has exotic magical ingredients, human meat, and an imp in a bottle.

**Goblin Cooks (4)** won't fight unless attacked; **AC** 13; **HP** 6; **Spd** 30ft; **Melee** cleaver or knife (+4, 1d4+2 slashing); **S** -1, **D** +2, **C** +0, **I** +0, **W** -1. **Ch** -1; **Traits** nimble escape (disengage or hide as a bonus action each round); **XP** 20.

**Human carcasses.** DC 10 Intelligence (Investigate) or Wisdom (Perception) check to recognize.

**Exotic spices.** see main text for effects.

**Bottled Imp** Will trade 3 questions about Mortzengersturm to whoever frees him; **AC** 14; **HP** 10; **Spd** 20ft, fly 40ft; **Melee** sting (+5, 1d4+3 piercing, poison 3d6 damage, DC 11 Con save for half); **Resistant** cold, nonmagical bludgeoning, piercing, slashing weapons; **Immune** fire, poison; **S** -2, **D** +3, **C** +1, **I** +0, **W** -1, **Ch** +2; **Traits** shapechange (use an action to polymorph to a rat or spider), Devil's Sight (darkvision 120' unaffected by magical darkness), magic resistance (advantage on saving throws against spells/magical effects), invisibility (while he concentrates or until he attacks); **XP** 200.



works and his genius, pausing for some short asides criticizing the Princess Viola, the wizard community in general, and various others lacking in imagination. In the midst of these introductory remarks, he'll offer a tour so the characters can experience the wonders of his vision themselves.

### 3. THE KITCHEN & LARDER

This room will not be shown to visitors, but a quick glimpse inside reveals a well-stocked kitchen where **four goblin cooks** are at work boiling broth on a cast-iron stove or cutting slabs of meat on a heavy table. Various utensils hang from hooks above the table. The door to the larder can be seen on the far end of the kitchen, but it will be closed.

Should characters investigate further, the goblins will raise no alarm. In fact, they will strive to act as if the intruders aren't there at all, though the longer the characters are present, the more visibly nervous they will become.

The larder door has only a simple latch. Inside, the temperature is noticeably cooler, and it has the subtle but definite smell of a butcher's shop. Several skinned carcasses hang from the ceiling on hooks. Close investigation will reveal at least one to be human — with the rest being various game animals. Behind the carcasses, in the back end of the room are three casks of wine in a stack. Shelves to the left are stocked with sundry spices and seasonings. Most are mundane, but a few are more exotic:

- **Demonlander ground hellpepper** in a smoked glass, stoppered vial. The hottest pepper in the known realms. It has a burnt smell, and even sniffing it will slightly irritate the nose.
- **Luminiferous ethers** in a long-necked, purple glass perfume vial, decorated with a crescent moon. When brushed lightly onto food (or anything), they generate a faint, warm glow.
- **Slow thyme sprigs** in a lidded wooden vial. It briefly *slows* the person who consumes it to enhance the pleasure of a meal. In high doses (like, for example, all the sprigs in the container) it can keep a dying person from passing from the mortal plane for 2-12 additional rounds.
- **Troglopolitan memory bulbs (4)** in a wooden box. Pale yellow fungal bulbs from Subazurth. For most, they have a light flavor of nostalgia and evoke a memory of home; for a few, they have the slight, hops-like bitterness of mild regret and bring to mind a thing left long undone.



Behind the spices and other ingredients, there is a glass jug, stoppered and wax-sealed. Cramped inside is an angry-looking, crimson-skinned **imp**. Once a servant of Mortzengersturm's, the imp's alternating peevishness and prankster ways grated on the wizard, so he imprisoned the devil in the jug. The imp will trade three questions about Mortzengersturm and his mansion for his release. (He will not know much about recent months, nor has he ever taken an inventory, so he can't provide Mortzengersturm's current location, the details of his recent work in his laboratory, or a by-item listing of his treasure.) If that proposal fails to secure his freedom, he will proffer servitude for a year and a day. Unless particularly impressed with a party member, he will attempt to wriggle out of the deal at the first opportunity. He hates Mortzengersturm, so his answers will be truthful to the extent of his knowledge, but he will show no gratitude to those who release him, and the harder the bargain they strike, the more likely he is to make mischief in subtle or secretive ways that do not *implicate* him.

#### No. 4, At A Glance

Weird sounds and smells and a tub of blue slime generating goblin young, tended by oppressed adult goblins.

**Goblins (9)** with no fight in them; **AC** 13; **HP** 4; **Spd** 30ft; **Melee** bite (+4, 1 piercing); **S** -1, **D** +2, **C** +0, **I** +0, **W** -1, **Ch** -1; **Traits** Nimble Escape (disengage or hide as a bonus action each round); **XP** 10.

**Goblinic Slime.** Removed from Mortzengersturm's special alchemical treatments, the slime will revert over a period of days to its "natural" green and become the same old noxious substance from which all goblins in Azurth are generated.

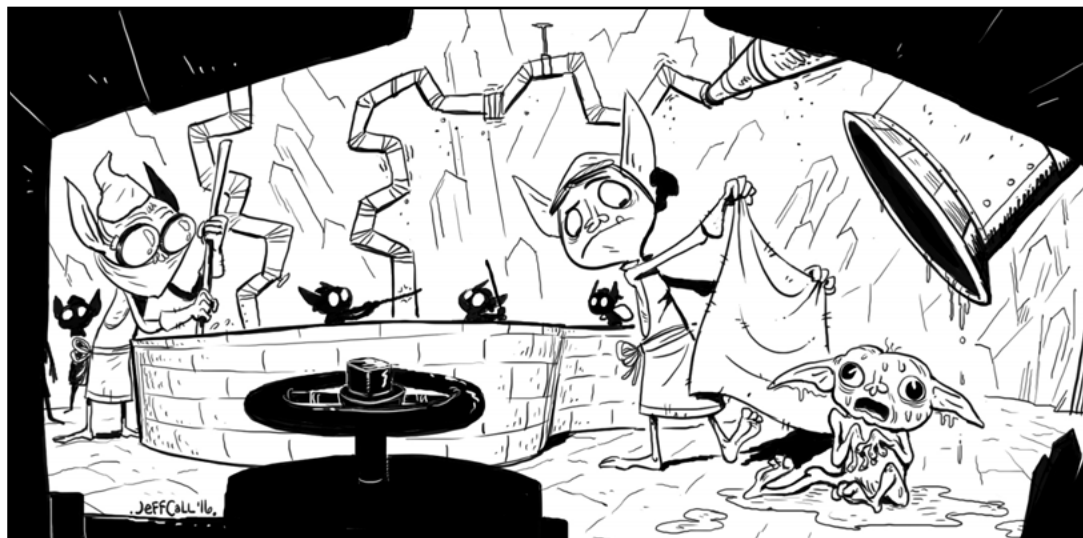
#### 4. GOBLINIC SLIME VATS



THIS IS ONE OF MY MOST IMPORTANT DISCOVERIES. YOU ARE ALL FAMILIAR WITH THE THREAT OF GOBLINIC SLIME, YES? BY CHEMICALLY MODIFYING THIS SLIME VIA A PROPRIETARY PROCESS (NO SAMPLES, SORRY), I HAVE DOMESTICATED GOBLINS! GONE, GONE ARE THEIR LIVES OF SO MUCH MISCHIEF. INSTEAD OF MENACES AND NUISANCES, THEY CAN NOW BE ASSETS TO SOCIETY!

First, the sound: the phlegmatic wheeze of a bellows, the sluggish gurgle of bubbles rising through something viscous. Then closer, the smell: not overpowering but insistent, like the complex odoriferousness of rare orchids overlain with notes of aged cheese. These presage arrival at the living quarters and birthing slime vat of the goblin servants.

The vat itself is stone, roughly kidney-shaped, and around a foot and a half deep. The pale blue liquid inside glows faintly. Jointed tin pipes, big enough for a decently-fed child to squeeze through with some effort, go into and out of the vat at opposite ends. One end pumps slime into the vat from hidden depths through use of a bellows. The other rises from the glop and turns downward to deposit slimy neonates onto the floor as they emerge.



#### No. 4 (continued)

##### Goblin Activities (1d6 9 times):

1. Jump up and down to work the giant bellows to pump goblinic slime from hidden recesses
2. Stir the bubbling slime with tall wooden paddles, occasionally beating back overeager larva
3. Beat, kick, curse the aging, segmented tin pipes to dislodge a clogged neonate
4. Snatch up the neonates emerging from the pipe and prodding, stretching, squashing or otherwise testing yowling neonates for quality and readiness.
5. Stick steaming spoonfuls of Mortzengersturm's goblin provender into the open mouths of whining young, sometimes substituting a finger fresh from exploration of a nostril.
6. Nap on a scrap of blanket in a recess. Occasionally shaking and mewling in the throes of a bad dream.

**Nine adult goblins**, all strangely blue, mostly at work at various parts of goblin maturation. What do they do? Consult the sidebar.

If PCs arrive unescorted, the goblins will ignore them and continue their work, but if attacked, they will flee or cower in the slime vat. If *Morzengersturm* is present, they will make an effort to sing (off-key and only loosely in unison):

♪ *O, GREAT MORTZENGERSTURM, YOU GUIDE OUR HANDS--OUR CHEERFUL SERVICE HELPS YOUR MASTER PLAN!* ♪  
*WE WORK ALL DAY FOR YOU, FROM TOIL WE'LL NE'ER SHRINK--TELL US, O MORTZENGERSTURM, WHAT DO YOU THINK?* ♪

*Mortzengersturm* brags that he has domesticated goblins by making certain alchemical alterations to goblinic slime, which has the side effect of changing it from its natural luminescent green to blue. Whether the listlessness and gloom pervading *Mortzengersturm's* goblin ranks is also due to his chemical tinkering or the oppression they suffer in his service is unclear.

#### 5. HIPPOGRIFFARY



NOW PLEASE TURN YOUR ATTENTIONS TO MY PRIDE AND JOY. THESE NOBLE CREATURES HAVE LONG BEEN CONSIDERED 'IMPOSSIBLE ANIMALS' DUE TO THE NATURAL PROCLIVITY OF GRIFFINS TO EAT HORSES! THE IMPOSSIBLE, I CONSIDER MERELY A CHALLENGE. BEHOLD WHAT MY GENIUS AND HARD WORK HAVE WROUGHT!

A cacophony of playful screeches and beating wings fills the cavernous, domed space that serves as a rookery for Mortzengersturm's beloved **hippogriff flock** (12+2d6 adults, 7 juveniles/hatchlings, 6 eggs). A roughly octagonal opening in the roof allows for hippogriff aerial entry and exit. Directly beneath it is a circular bathing and drinking pool. Several straw-bedded alcoves along the wall provided semi-secluded places for rutting adults or sleeping youngsters. The bones of various animals, the leavings from previous meals, are strewn about and used as toys by the young.

If visitors arrive accompanied by Mortzengersturm, the hippogriffs will pay rude homage to their creator with cries and snorts, snapping of wings and clacking of talons. Unaccompanied, visitors will be received more severely.

A **frightened horse** skulks in the shadowed recesses of the room near the door, wearing a blanket haphazardly coated in hippogriff feathers by means of disguise (fooling no one but the hippogriffs, and only them due to their short attention spans). The horse will try to get the attention of any visitors, though only surreptitiously as long as Mortzengersturm is around. He's incapable of clear speech, but he can write if allowed to hold an implement in his mouth or draw in the dirt with a hoof. If some means of communication is available, he gives his name as **Manzfert**. Manzfert's tale (an utter lie) is that he is a former wizardly rival of Mortzengersturm's, transformed into a horse in the final rejoinder of an arcane duel. He promises any potential rescuers generous access to his treasure trove — still safe, he will assure, in his remote tower sanctum.

### **Manzfert the Horse**

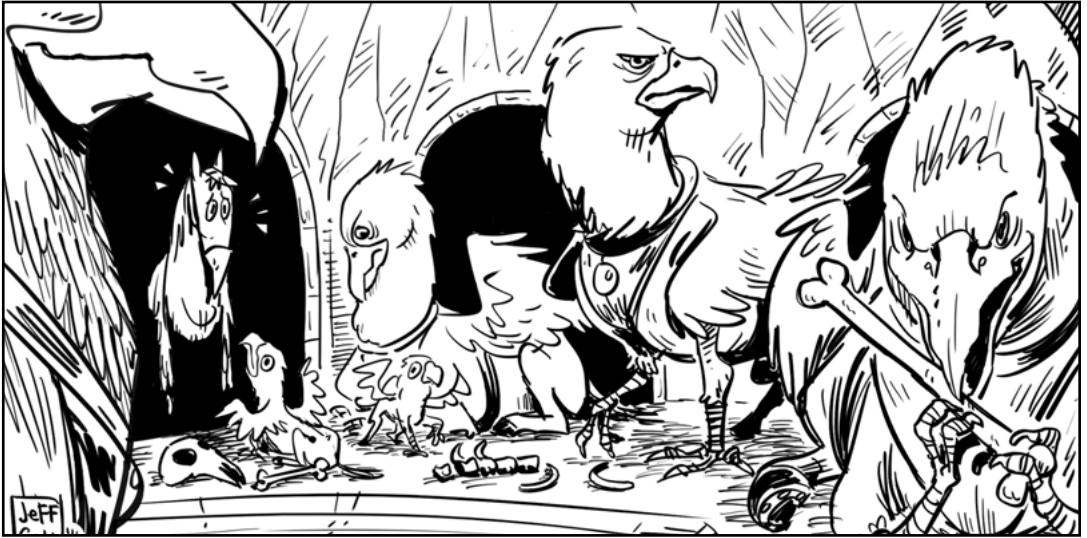
The truth is Manzfert is a former dwarf thief and swindler who crossed (in several ways) the witch Urzaba. Few witches are known for their forgiveness and Urzaba is not counted among that small number. She polymorphed Manzfert into a horse and forced him to pull her cart for many years. Eventually she tired of whipping the truculence from him daily, and it pleased her to "lose" him to Mortzengersturm in a game of Loathly Whidders (a matching card game favored by witches of a certain age). Polymorphed horses are, as it happens, wholly unsuitable for sorcerous admixturing with griffins to create hippogriffs. Never one to give up easily and hating wastefulness, Mortzengersturm keeps Manzfert around as he considers an arcane portman-teau that might work.

### **No. 5, At A Glance**

A large room where hippogriffs nest, rut, and play. There's also a cowering horse, Manzfert. There is a 6 foot wide opening in the 25 foot ceiling above a shallow pool.

**Hippogriff flock adults (14–24)** will fight if they are threatened or irritated; **AC** 11; **HP** 19 (3d10+3); **Spd** 40ft, fly 60ft; **Melee** Multiattack: 1 beak (+5, 1d10+3 piercing), 1 claws (+5, 2d6+3 slashing); **S** +3, **D** +1, **C** +1, **I** -4, **W** +1, **Ch** -1; **Traits** keen sight (advantage on sight-based Perception checks); **XP** 200; **MM** 184.

**Hippogriff juveniles (7)** only have half **HP** and damage; **XP** 100.



**No. 5 (continued)**

**Manzfert** is a dwarf polymorphed into a typical horse. He will reveal what he knows about Mortzengersturm or make up something if that gets him rescued; **AC 10; HP 13; Spd 40ft.**

In manner and moral fiber, Manzfert resembles Dr. Smith from *Lost in Space* and can be counted upon to be as fawning and dishonest as necessary to escape his current predicament. He *does* know where Mortzengersturm's treasure room is and is aware that it is guarded. He has also noticed that visitors to the mansion do not always leave, though he doesn't know their exact fate. Finally, he has picked up a few other dubious tidbits of knowledge, being privy to the gossip of magical practitioners as he has.

**6. THE MENAGERIE**



PREPARE TO BE AMAZED! SUCH A COLLECTION OF EXOTIC CREATURES I AM QUITE SURE YOU HAVE NEVER BEFORE SEEN. WONDERS LIKE THESE WERE FROWNED UPON BY THE NARROW-MINDED, SO-CALLED WIZARD ESTABLISHMENT. THEY REJECT ME, AND I, SERVING MY OWN GENIUS, MUST REJECT THEM. MORTZENGERSTURM'S IMAGINATION WILL NOT BE FETTERED, AS YOU SHALL SEE.

The menagerie is only a few feet down a path outside the mansion proper. Each cage is a crystal extrusion like the mansion in miniature, with with some sort of habitat inside and fronts open save for octagonal crystal bars. Besides brute force, the cages can only be opened through use of Morzengersturm's talisman (see page 13). The cages' sizes vary based on the size of the animal, but none of them are particularly spacious (no more than a roughly 20 foot diameter). Each has a plaque with the name of the creature it houses:

- a. **Parrotbear:** A bear covered in downy, green feathers with parrot's head. It mimics short phrases spoken to it. A stout, wooden perch is suspended from the ceiling, but the beast is more likely to be found lying in the hay that lines the enclosure.
- b. **Iron Shrike:** An eagle-sized bird of prey made of gray-blue metal. His crest and wings are sharp as knives. It perches on the twisted limb of an angular, metal tree.
- c. **Ink Dog:** A sepia dog, technically, but Mortzengersturm has never been one for pedantry so far as his art is concerned. The creature resembles a messy, living sketch of a large fox made entirely of brown ink. As it moves, running amid the unfurled scrolls of parchment that fall from the back of the cage and undulate across the floor, it throws off squiggles and errant marks in the air behind it to fall to the ground in drips. Its bite leaves tattoos.
- d. **Ant-lion:** An ant the size of a lion with a lion's maned head. It cannot roar, and that frustrates it to no end. As it paces, it encircles a gargantuan but still too small ant-mound.
- e. **Bumblebear:** The cage contains a hive as tall as a man, humming with a half dozen fuzzy bees the size of smallish legs of mutton, with the heads, legs, and claws of grizzlies. They buzz and growl and buzz and growl, and they are always irritable.
- f. **Fey Ray:** A phlox-purple manta ray with fuzzy, moth antennae, and membranous fins like Monarch butterfly wings on its tail. It hovers with a languid undulation of its large fins, as if it were underwater. The cage is empty, but passing through the interior feels like moving through water.
- g. **Tigerpillar:** This giant hybrid looks like a tiger with a flattened face and an elongated, segmented body with six pairs of legs. It may be the most dangerous of the lot, because it is always hungry. Its organs are all mixed up — in one place more like a tiger's, and in another like an inchworm's — and so it can never get satiated. There is a chance (Mortzengersturm tells visitors) that the creature may one day metamorphize into an adult form — a tiger moth or a slaughterfly, perhaps — but this is probably just nonsense. The tigerpillar's cage is carpeted with the bones of its previous meals and others Mortzengersturm has added for effect.
- h. **Hatch:** Behind the cage that houses the ant-lion is a hole the size of a manhole with a wooden cover that opens into the feeding shaft of the Oubliette of Mistakes (see below).

## No. 6, At A Glance

Outside the mansion. A group of 8 crystalline, igloo-shaped structures of varying sizes, 7 of which are cages for exotic animals. Behind the cages, there is a shaft with a wooden cover, leading to the Oubliette of Mistakes.

**Various beasts in cages.** See the section **Mortzengersturm's Monsters** section (page 29) for statistics. Unless they are freed or someone enters their cages, they have no opportunity to attack.

**Feeding equipment.** 3 sacks of fodder, a harness that fits a small creature comfortable and tightly on a medium creature. 50 ft. of rope on a hand-operated winch and pulley. The fodder is nutritious enough for humans but hardly tasty.

## No. 7, At A Glance

The spacious room of Mortzengersturm, with a round bed, table with a site model of future plans, and assorted treasures, including the Whim-Wham Stone under glass. The domed ceiling is 20 feet high.

**Drugged wine and food.** DC 15 Constitution saving throw or fall unconscious for 5d10 minutes.

**Pit trap.** DC 15 Dexterity save to avoid falling in; 20 feet deep with crystalline walls. Damage 2d6 bludgeoning for the fall. DC 25 Strength (Athletics) check or Dexterity (Acrobatics) check to escape without aid or equipment.

**Mortzengersturm** Wizard and manticore. He will tend to favor manticore-ish abilities over spells—a symptom of his animalistic change; **AC** 14; **HP** 69; **Spd** 30ft, fly 50ft; **Melee** Multiattack: 1 bite (+5, 1d8 + 3 piercing), 2 claws (+5, 1d6 + 3 slashing each) or Ranged 3 tail spikes (+5, 1d8 + 3 piercing each, 24 spikes); **S** +3, **D** +3, **C** +3, **I** +3, **W** +1, **Ch** +0; **Traits** spellcasting (Int-based, see below), tail spike regrowth (after a long rest); **XP** 2,900.

**Spells** (+6 to hit, DC 14): **cantrips** (at will) — *fire bolt, light, mage hand, prestidigitation*; **1st lvl** (4 slots) — *detect magic, mage armor, magic missile, shield*; **2nd lvl** (3 slots) — *misty step, suggestion*; **3rd lvl** (3 slots) — *counterspell, lightning bolt, fly*; **4th lvl** (3 slots) — *greater invisibility, banishment*; **5th lvl** (1 slot) — *cloudkill*.

- i. **Shed:** A short distance behind the circle of cages between the bumblebear and the fey ray is a construct much like the cages, but with an open doorway. This is a shed that holds sacks of all-purpose animal fodder (purchased from the victualist wizard, Gro of the Magic Mill), implements for cleaning, and 50 feet of rope ending in a harness attached to a winch and pulley on a frame. This is used by the goblins in feeding the beasts in the oubliette through the hatch.

## 7. MORTZENGERSTURM'S CHAMBERS

A large banquet table is located in an alcove to the left of the double doors when entering. The centerpiece of the table is a site model of a park — *an imagination experience* — Mortzengersturm plans to build on Mount Geegaw to better showcase his work to the masses. The coating of dust on the model suggests these dreams have long lain fallow. Here Mortzengersturm's tour will end, and he will offer refreshments to the party: magically created viands of impossible flavor combinations and fey rosé wine with spinning, golden flecks from the oldest vineyards in Virid. Both of these items will be **drugged with a soporific** (ingested, DC 15 Constitution saving throw or fall unconscious for 5d10 minutes).

Just in front of the double doors there is a **hidden pit trap**. More on this below.

In the center of the room is a large, round cushion piled with pillows that serves as Mortzengersturm's bed. On the wall opposite the alcove there is a narrow table where the **Whim-Wham Stone** sits under a glass dome. It glows dimly. If anyone attempts to approach it, Mortzengersturm will intercede, explaining the stone's energies are dangerous and it is best not to approach too closely. This is true, though exposure only becomes a concern over a period of days.

To the right of the table is an **aperture** the size of a full-length mirror that curls and fades at its corners like an old poster. Within the aperture is a misty vision of another world: Chicago, 1893, during the World's Fair. It is a door or rather it is a page from a *book* of doors (see page 21). Anyone stepping through it will be transported to that time and place.

The ceiling of the chamber is vaulted and almost as high as the Hippogriffary's, allowing flight for a manticore or hippogriff, though with limited maneuverability.

## Mortzengersturm's Treachery

If the party consumes the food and drink, Mortzengersturm waits for them to become sleepy, then throws them into his pit trap for later consumption. If they decline and cannot be quickly convinced to change their minds, or if the majority of the party isn't put to sleep for whatever reason, Mortzengersturm's demeanor changes, and he becomes brusque and formal. He will ask the party to await a hippogriff escort in the place he indicates: a location that allows him to magically trigger the pit trap. The floor will disappear and any adventurers unfortunate enough to have been standing on it will fall 20 feet into a roughly hexagonal, smooth-walled pit and take 2d6 bludgeoning damage.

As he dispatches the survivors in the pit with a breathblast of *cloudkill*, or chases down those in his chamber that might have escaped, he will apologize and plead with them to understand his actions: He doesn't *want* this. They cannot understand his *hunger*. How he has suffered, he a sensitive artist, in this wretched existence!

Mortzengersturm is a high level wizard and a manticore. His need to justify his actions distracts him, so he does not always focus on the most effective tactics for murder, though by and by, he gets job done.

The manticore wizard still feels some shame over his behavior. He hides his consumption of visitors from the eyes of his goblins and hippogriffs. Should his plans go awry, this will make him unlikely to call for aid until it is obvious things are going against him.

## Treasure

**Mortzengersturm's talisman.** A medallion with a green crystal (the same color as the Whim-Wham Stone) allowing him to broadcast his voice through the crystal viewer and the crystals on the guard hippogriffs' harnesses. It can also be used to command the cages in the Menagerie to open or to activate his pit trap. Finally, it allows him to cast *mage hand* so that he may manipulate small objects — like his cigarette. This item requires attunement.

**Mortzengersturm's monocle.** An oversized (for a human), gold-framed lens allowing him to *detect magic* and *see invisible*, but doing the latter without closing his unaided eye tends to cause headaches. It requires attunement.

## No. 7 (continued)

**Hippogriff Reinforcements.** At the end every round of combat starting with the second, the hippogriffs get a collective DC 15 Wisdom (Perception) check to hear a disturbance. The DM may adjust the difficult class downward for particularly noisy events. If they hear something, 1d4 hippogriffs will come to investigate. If they engage in combat, their screeches will summon more.

**Whim-Wham Stone.** An artifact that produces magical energy: 10 levels/month. These levels can be used to cast spells of the transmutation school, but once they are expended they won't be available again until the next full moon. A spellcaster can convert the levels into spell slots. Additionally, the stone has 1 minor beneficial property and 2 minor detrimental properties. The magical radiation of the Stone is also dangerous; every 24 hrs. spent in close proximity to the naked Stone (within 10 ft. or less) causes 1d6 necrotic damage and the possessor must make a DC 14 Constitution save or have his maximum hit points reduced by that amount. It takes 24 hours away from the Stone per each day of reduction for the possessor's hit point maximum to be fully restore.

## No. 8, Treasure Room

**Treasure Room Door.** *Glyph of warding*, DC 14 Intelligence (Investigate) check to detect, explosive runes triggered by attempts to open the door (20 ft. radius, DC 14 Dexterity save or 5d8 lightning damage). The lock is DC 11.

**Skelepedes (2)** AC 13; HP 18; Spd 50ft; **Melee** Multiattack: 2x scimitar (+4, 1d6+2 slashing); **Immune** poison, psychic, blinded, charmed, deafened, exhaustion, frightened, paralyzed, petrified; **S** +0, **D** +1, **C** +2, **I** -2, **W** -1, **Ch** -3; **XP** 50.

**Biter Bombers (2)** AC 13; HP 14; Spd 25ft; **Ranged** thrown skulls (5) (+4, 1d4+2 piercing, holds target inflicting 2 piercing/round and target is grappled, escape DC 11); **Immune** as above; **S** +0, **D** +1, **C** +2, **I** -2, **W** -1, **Ch** -3; **XP** 50.

**Whiplashers (3)** AC 13; HP 16; Spd 30ft; **Melee** Multiattack: 2x spine whip (+5, 1d6+1 slashing, 10 ft. reach); **Immune** as above; **S** +0, **D** +1, **C** +2, **I** -2, **W** -1, **Ch** -3; **XP** 50.

**Scrolls (3).** 1: *gaseous form* (3rd level); 2: *polymorph* (4th level); 3: *fly* (3rd level).

**An Index of Denizens of the Infernal Realms and Their Moods.** Spend 48 hours studying the work over a period of 6 days or less to gain proficiency in skill checks related to infernal creatures and their abilities and habits. A reader already possessed of a relevant skill gets double proficiency bonus.

**Wizardry.** It will take at least 60 cumulative hours to get through them all, but the reader will be rewarded with advantage on Intelligence (Arcana) checks to identify a famous or infamous Yanth Country magical practitioners or their work. Gleaning tidbits of rumor to stimulate future adventures is also likely. A spellcaster is additionally able to halve the cost and time needed to add any new 1st or 2nd level spell she acquires to her spellbook.

## 8. TREASURE ROOM

Mortzengersturm's treasury has a thick, octagonal, iron door, protected by a *glyph of warding*. The wide shaft behind it (likewise octagonal) holds **three large chests** full of loot but they are guarded by more of Mortzengersturm's creations: animated bone constructs. These are not true undead and have none of the associated traits.

**Two Skelepedes:** Clacking, sinuous things with eight sets of skeletal arms on a series of spines connected end to end. They can attack wielding scimitars with two sets of arms and can crawl across the walls and ceiling, their phalanges making an unpleasant scratching sound on the crystal.

**Two Biter Bombers:** Skeletons rebuilt with giant ribcages, holding 4-5 chattering skulls. They waddle forward, and taking one skull at a time from the bottom of their ribcage, toss it at intruders. The skulls bite on a successful hit and hold on, continuing to cause damage until destroyed or removed.

**Three Whiplashers:** Skeletons whose spines have been elongated with extra vertebrae, so that they sway like cobras as they stalk forward. They wield whips made from spines in both bony fists.

### The Loot

**Chest One:** 12,000 gold pieces value in mixed coinage and gems. Curiously, this includes 20 Columbian half dollars (mostly silver, minted for the 1893 World's Fair Exposition).

**Chest Two:** A cobra-skin leather scroll case and 3 scrolls and a first edition of *An Index of Denizens of the Infernal Realms and Their Moods* by Maudrey.

**Chest Three:** Three years of *Wizardry*, a quarterly, medium quarto pamphlet for the magical practitioner featuring reports on spell research, pertinent astronomical forecasts, and gossip disguised as news. Eleven small, hinged tins of Djinn cigarettes ("Your Wish for Flavor is Granted!") and a small cedar box, lined in velvet, holding a collection of original sketches from the infamous *Polymorphamorous*.

## 9. SECRET PASSAGE

A roughhewn opening, like a stretched octagon, some two and a half feet wide and five and a half feet tall, is set in an angled portion of the wall, so that it is not immediately visible at a cursory glance. It opens into a shaft of similar shape that slopes down at a 20 degree angle for about 10 feet before flattening out and widening a bit into a passageway.





Mortzengersturm (shrinking himself with his magic for a proper fit) uses this passage to visit Thedabara in her chambers for evenings of pleasant conversation and drink.

## 10. THEDABARA'S CHAMBER

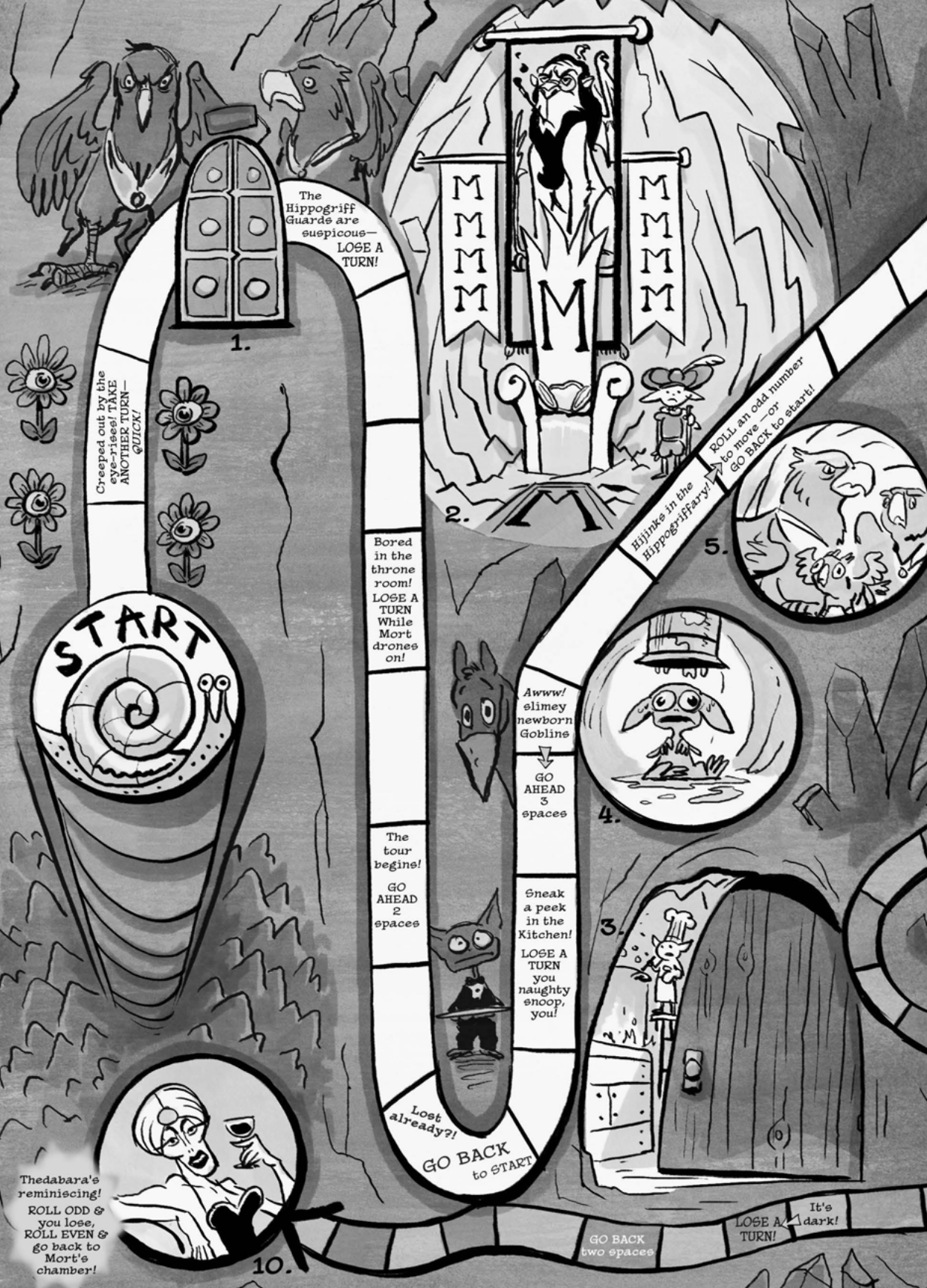
A thick, black velvet curtain serves as the chamber's door. Inside, it is likely to be completely dark, though the chamber's resident might light an oil lamp as a courtesy to visitors. Even with that, the room is wrapped in darkness: deep crimson, heavy silken curtains line the walls, and a thick, brocaded rug covers the floor. The only break in the artificial night is an ornately framed oil portrait of a woman, the room's sole inhabitant, painted some time ago. A mahogany bookcase with a skull on its crest stands against one wall. The red velvet upholstered chaise lounge has a matching ornamentation. Between the two is a small table that holds a wax cylinder phonograph with a flaring brass and ebony horn ribbed like a bat's wing. A funeral black pillar candle sits atop a tall stand behind it. Near the head of the chaise is another table with an oil lamp, a decanter, and glasses. A red upholstered chair and a standing brass and amber ashtray are nearby.

**Thedabara**, former chanteuse, actress, and member of the undead, is most often found here reclined on her chaise, reading a book of decadent poetry, with a glass of brandy mixed with blood (her preferred way of taking nourishment, these days) in her pale hand. She has grown old in the way of vampires who do not fight back against the dwindling of unlife with ever-increasing wickedness, and so she spends most of her time in repose and reminiscence. Her wickedness is more the kind of self-absorption seen in fading celebrities, made only a little less tolerable by her tendency to violence and blood-drinking if she is not indulged or accorded the deference she feels is her due.

## No. 10, Thedabara's Chamber

**Thedabara** is an old and arrogant vamp looking for conversation and maybe blood; **AC** 15; **HP** 90; **Spd** 30ft; **Melee** Multiattack: 2 but only 1 bite, claws (+6, 2d4+3 slashing, may use to grapple instead of damage, escape DC 13), bite (+6, 1d6+3 piercing+2d6 necrotic on grappled, restrained, incapacitated or willing target; target hp max reduced by necrotic damage, and vampire regains hp equally); **Special** charm (visible target in 30ft, DC 17 Wisdom save, duration 24hrs); **Legendary** 3 total, 1 at the end of another's turn, regenerate on her turn: bite (costs 2 actions), move (full speed, no opportunity attacks), unarmed strike; **Save** Dex +6, Wis +3; **Resist** necrotic, nonmagical bludgeoning, piercing, slashing; **S** +3, **D** +3, **C** +3, **I** +2, **W** +2, **Ch** +3; **Senses** darkvision 60ft; **Traits** regeneration (10 hp each turn if she has 1 hp and isn't in sunlight or running water), spider climb (climb difficult surfaces without check), vampire weakness (20 acid damage every turn in running water; killed by stake in the heart when resting; 20 radiant damage and disadvantage on rolls each turn in sunlight). **XP** 5,900.

# The RACE TO THE WHIM-WHAM STONE!



Creeped out by the eyes—TAKE ANOTHER TURN—QUICK!

The Hippogriff Guards are suspicious—LOSE A TURN!

Bored in the throne room! LOSE A TURN While Mort drones on!

Awww! slimy newborn Goblins  
GO AHEAD 3 spaces

The tour begins!  
GO AHEAD 2 spaces

Sneak a peek in the Kitchen!  
LOSE A TURN you naughty enoop, you!

Lost already?!  
GO BACK to START

Hijinks in the Hippogriffary!  
ROLL an odd number to move—or GO BACK to start!

The dabara's reminiscing!  
ROLL ODD & you lose, ROLL EVEN & go back to Mort's chamber!

It's dark!  
LOSE A TURN!

GO BACK two spaces

**A NOTE TO DMs:**

This isn't just a whimsical board game. It can also be used as a "tour map" of much of the adventure. The numbers beside the illustrations correspond to sections in the text.

**B**e the first to get to the **WHIM-WHAM STONE!** To play, you'll need some dice. Maybe you have some of those handy? You'll also need a counter for each player. A coin is great, but if you have a miniature figure, well that's good, too! The object is to move your counter from "START" at the Snailevator along the route of the tour to Mortzengersturm's chambers where the Whim-Wham Stone is on display. Watch out! There are setbacks and surprises along the way.

Marvel at Mortzengersturm's Menagerie!

LOSE A TURN



**INK DOG BITE!**

GO BACK 1 space



Waiting for the **ANT-LION** to roar...

LOSE A TURN



**BUMBLEBEAR LOOSE!**

GO AHEAD 2 spaces



**TIGERPILLAR**

**TERROR!**

ROLL AGAIN

RUN AHEAD 2 spaces

Stalked by a Spider from Nowhere

LOSE A TURN



Treasure Room Skeletons!

GO BACK 3 spaces



**THE END**

ENTER THE SECRET DOOR

What's in the WINE?

LOSE A TURN

## No. 10 (continued)

**Yama Yama Man.** He cannot be seriously injured or killed, though *banishment*, *wish*, or a casting a pinch of salt over his head will send him back whence he came. The price he levies for teaching necromantic spells is left to the DM's discretion, but suitable fees might include a point of an ability score, a few years of life, or even one's soul depending on the level of the spell taught.

She drinks blood only once every few weeks and finds hunting a bother. She entertains visitors beyond Mortzengersturm (and he is a less than ideal conversational partner, as he is as much an egotist as she), much less often. She will greet any party cordially, perhaps offering them a drink (not caring that she has no more than 4 glasses). Then, with exaggerated gestures and dramatic diction, she will regale them with stories of her past exploits on the stage — so long as they will sit and listen.

It is certainly *possible* for a party to take their leave of her, without provoking her to petulant violence, but it will take a great deal of care.

### Treasure

A **hinged box** on the bookshelf holds a bruise-purple, silken bag containing three dark rubies worth 200 gp each and a diamond brooch worth 1000 gp.

Besides the one on the phonograph, there is another wax cylinder in a thick paper box labelled "YAMA YAMA MAN – DO NOT PLAY." When the admonition is ignored and the eerie novelty song about a bogeyman played, the **Yama Yama Man** himself will emerge, climbing out of the phonograph's horn. He is 10 inches tall and dressed in an ink-black clown outfit with a white frill collar, pom-poms on the front, and oversized white clown shoes. His conical hat is black with white stars. His always widely-grinning face is as black as his costume. His eyes are large, round, and white, and empty as holes cut from the universe to show the nothingness beneath. He can teach any necromantic spell, for a price.

## 11. THEDABARA'S PORTAL

The wind whistles softly as it passes an oval shaped opening in the side of the mountain about a foot above the passage floor and the size of a large window. It is used by Thedabara in her nocturnal excursions and for sending the occasional correspondence to friends by way of messenger bat. A thick, black velvet curtain hangs in the passage about a foot in front of it. The opening is some 40 feet below the summit of the mountain.

A short passage, sloping slightly downward, extends beyond the portal about 50 feet. It appears to be a dead end, but a successful DC 12 Wisdom (Perception) check will reveal that there is a magical opening there, leading into the bottom of the Oubliette.



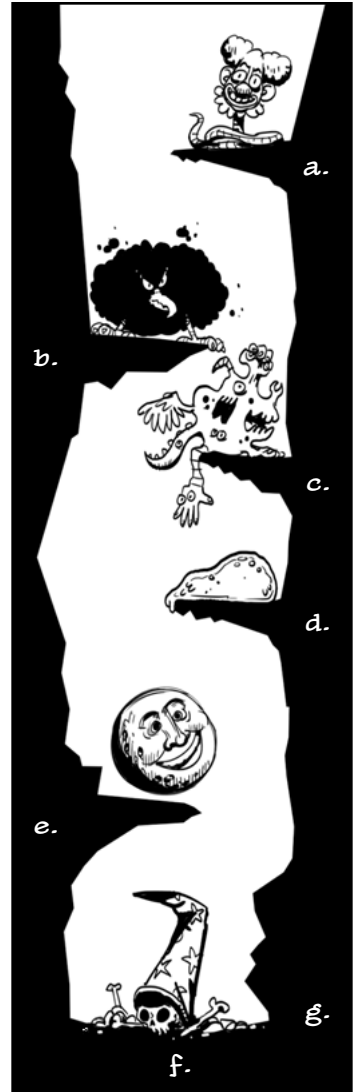
## 12. THE OUBLIETTE OF THE MISTAKES

This roughhewn, vertical shaft is where Mortzengersturm puts what he deems to be his failures: creatures that ultimately were displeasing to his aesthetic sense. At points along the shaft's length there are recesses where the hapless creatures dwell in darkness, or at least twilight. (Blue-tinged light leaks through the crystalline peak and the Moonster generates its own wan glow.) All the creatures are fitted with blue jewels in some fashion that magically prevent them from leaving their shelf. Their treatment has not improved their disposition.

The job of feeding the monsters (and occasionally cleaning their spaces) goes to a luckless goblin lowered in a rope harness. The recesses are vertically no closer than 10 feet apart, and sometimes farther. Most are roughly half-circles with a radius of about 15 feet.

The entire shaft is some seventy feet deep. At its bottom are the jumbled bones of goblins who died in the feeding process, monster excrement, and the moldering remains of at least one wizard, **Miszm Throppe**, whom Mortzengersturm found overly critical. Throppe's wizard's hat still has a semblance of life (see below).

- a. **Mocka:** This attempt to cross a naga with a clown triggered even Mortzengersturm's coulrophobia in the end. It giggles and mugs and sways and bounces like a jack-in-the-box unboxed, eager to bring laughter and joy.
- b. **Gruebird:** This spiteful creature hides in total darkness that only a magical light source can penetrate. It will attack anything that comes close enough for it to peck or snatch with its talons.
- c. **Chimerical Chimera:** A swirling, churning cloud of protoplasm that never looks like the same thing twice.
- d. **Jam:** A sweet-tasting, edible variant of the deadly slimes or jellies of Subazurth was not to be. It is sweet, but no less deadly. Those entrapped by it may die in a euphoric sugar-sleep.
- e. **Moonster:** A glowing spherical creature resembling the moon with a face: a bemused smile under half-lidded eyes. The Moonster is a narrator — and an annoying one. It will narrate the actions of anyone that enters the shaft in a somewhat florid diction, but with an ironic distance. It knows the past of the subject of its narration with certainty; its predictions for the future are only speculation, no matter how assured their delivery.



### No. 12, At A Glance

A 70 ft. deep shaft with semicircular shelves of roughly 15 ft. radius where monsters dwell. The shelves are no closer than 10 ft.



## No. 12 (continued)

**The Mistakes.** See the **Mortzengersturm's Monsters** section (page 29) for stats. All the monsters but the Moonster will attack anyone entering their respective recess that they detect, but generally will not attack anyone beyond that point, even if they could reach them.

**The blue jewels.** Are close to valueless if removed, except that they will detect as faintly magical. A creature will not voluntarily leave their shelf, but if forced to do so, they will become immobile as if paralyzed.

**Throppe's capotain;** AC 10; HP 18; Spd 5ft, leap 5ft; **Melee** brain munching (on a target's head, it grapples, escape DC 15, and does 10d8 piercing; if reduced to 0 hp, target's brain is eaten); **Immune** blinded, deafened, paralyzed, poisoned; **S** +0, **D** +1, **C** +0, **I** -2, **W** -3, **Ch** -5; **Senses** blindsight 30ft (blind beyond that); **XP** 50.



f. Mismz Throppe's **wizardly capotain**, indigo and silver and arrayed with mystical symbols, crouches atop his decaying skull and waits. It was never a particularly virtuous piece of headwear, and somehow it has gained a degree of life and with it an even greater measure of malevolence. It sucked out the brain of Throppe (while the Moonster narrated) and now wants other brains to consume, though it will wait until it is taken out of this dungeon before consuming its rescuer.

g. On the wall of the pit facing toward the mansion there is an opening, another page from the **Book of Doors** (see page 21), stolen by Throppe and plastered against the wall by his fall. It leads to the end of the tunnel near Thedabara's exit.

## 13. MORTZENGERSTURM'S IMAGINARIUM

This building is similar in construction to the others, though its shape is more of a giant, crystalline stalagmite than the usual dome. The large, metal-bound wooden door has an *arcane lock* on it. Within is the laboratory of Mortzengersturm; a long table is covered with glass and copper alchemical equipment of various sorts: an alembic, assorted flasks, beakers, and corkscrew tubing. These were mostly for show when Mortzengersturm was more devoted to his magical research and are even more decorative now. Along the right-hand wall is a bookshelf with the bound journals of Mortzengersturm's experimentation. Most of the formulae and procedures therein are interrupted by exuberantly scrawled notations on meals he has enjoyed since becoming a manticores in first dispassionately clinical, then gory detail as time has gone on.

Hidden (and trapped) by a journal binding is the *Book of Doors*. If a page taken from the book is affixed to a wall it becomes a portal that opens in some other place but only one specific place. The sharp-eared might detect the book by the gentle, white noise it makes: the whispering of all the places its pages go. The only way to divine where a page leads is by magic or by trying it.

In the center of the room atop a high, metal stool is a device that looks like a bullseye lantern the size of a rundlet. It is pointed at a metal wall or screen installed in the back of the laboratory. Though partially obscured by dust, twin arcane circles are evident, drawn onto the floor a foot or so in front of the wall.

The lantern has a hinged door on the back, but nothing inside at the moment. It is heavier than it appears,

being lead-lined. This is the device *Mortzengersturm* uses to focus the energies of the Whim-Wham Stone. Some of the Stone's energies linger inside it and will be detectable.

Hiding 'round some sort of corner that intersects the laboratory in a place that is not quite Nowhere and certainly not here, but not anywhere most people are likely to be familiar with is a **Spider from Nowhere**. "Spider" we will call him, because he appears to have eight legs when he is standing completely still (if only he ever stood completely still) and not moving in a stuttering, blurring way like a flip book illustration; "from Nowhere," we say, though he would actually call his home *Zrgztl* if he was asked, but you might as well call it Nowhere because it's here and not here all at the same time. His head is human enough; his bulging eyes and irritated countenance make him look like a near-apoplectic schoolmaster.

### The Spider from Nowhere

This Spider is on a mission. A mission he must complete, if he does not wish to be dismembered and eaten, and (for the most part) he does not. He has only the dimmest notion of this mission now; his brain doesn't quite fit our world any more than you can fit a whole tomato in a sheet of paper without flattening it, and that is a reasonable approximation of what has happened, making the Spider very stupid. He can talk only by S-P-E-L-L-I-N-G — *spelling* — his words out, so he will never make it through a long sentence or complex thought.

His mission is for the Queen in Nowhere. She is always hungry and angry and amorous at the same time. She does not merely *feel* this way, but is a superposition of these traits — which only serves to make her angrier. And hungrier, et cetera. So she mates with any spiders of Nowhere she can catch, and then she kills and eats them. This Spider avoided that fate by making the dread Queen something else: impressed. Perhaps even a bit envious.

To the human eye, the spiders are void black and moon silvery like a pool of gelid mercury in a shadowed crater on a transuranian world, but eyes from Nowhere see more. This particular Spider had such an anti-color glimmering as the ether susurrated through his bristles, and such fine quality in the quaver of his hyperglomes that strange feelings decohered the Queen.

### No. 13, At A Glance

A laboratory with various alchemical and magical equipment. The magical *Book of Doors* is hidden on a shelf, and a Spider from Nowhere lurks ethereally.

**Laboratory door.** It has an *arcane lock* on it, making it a DC 25 to pick the lock or a DC 30 Strength check to force.

**Book of Doors.** (Legendary wondrous item); It can be found by a thorough search of the bookshelf or by DC 15 Wisdom (Perception) check by a sharp-eared person passing nearby. If a page from the book (it currently has 157) is removed and affixed to a relatively flat surface like a wall or door it becomes a permanent standard door-sized portal to one location and only one, somewhere in the multiverse. Destroying a page (like say ripping it off the wall) destroys the portal.



### No. 13 (continued)

**Spider from Nowhere** out to find the Whim-Wham Stone or its radiation; attacks on a thorough search of the lab, 60% it will follow if the party leaves; large monstrosity; **AC** 13; **HP** 31; **Spd** 30ft, climb 30ft; **Melee** bite (+4, 1d10+2 piercing, 4d8 poison, Con save DC 11 for half); **S** +2, **D** +2, **C** +1, **I** -2, **W** +0, **Ch** -2; **Skills** Stealth +6; **Traits** extradimensional jaunt (shift to ethereal plane and back as a bonus action), spider climb (no ability check need climbing difficult surfaces); **CR** 3; **XP** 700.

### Need More Hippogriffs?

This adventure would not have come to be without the inspiration of Jason Sholtis' *Zogorion: Lord of the Hippogriffs* mini-adventure. It is out of print at present, but surely a massive letter-writing campaign to Mr. Sholtis can right that injustice.

She wished such an appearance for herself and enquired where the Spider had come by it. He replied that he had chanced to bask in the radiations of a certain crystal — and he knew where he could find more of the same. The Queen dispatched him to bring those rays to her at once, lest he suffer the fate — well, that he was likely to suffer anyway, but with anger in greater proportion than would have previously been expected.

If the party has the Whim-Wham Stone or has been in its close proximity in the past 15 minutes, the Spider will pounce, thinking he can get what he needs. An aggressive search of the room will also provoke him to action. Otherwise, there is a 60% chance that the party will pique the Spider's curiosity and he will follow them when they leave the Imaginarium. If they mention the Stone while in his presence, he will definitely follow them.

## THE END ... BUT WHAT HAPPENS AFTER?

If the players get away with the Whim-Wham Stone, they still have to deliver it (or its light) to whoever they are working for, and that could prove challenging. The Stone is likely to be a beacon to powerful magic-wielding types. In the original Land of Azurth campaign, the party was waylaid on the return trip by the giant wizard Zykkoon, the Tornado Tyrant. That villain will be further detailed in the forthcoming adventure, *The Cloud Castle of Azurth*.

With Mortzengersturm dead, the hippogriff flock will eventually abandon the mansion and become something of a nuisance to the farms and villages in surrounding area, likely leading to call for the assistance of adventurers. Thedabara will seek lodging elsewhere, perhaps in some abandoned castle closer to a city. Some of Mortzengersturm's monstrosities will stay on the Prismatic Peak, even if they escape. Others will roam the countryside potentially causing trouble.

Surely someone will try to claim mansion as their own wants its current occupants have vacated it. Whoever is the first to do so will certainly have challengers.



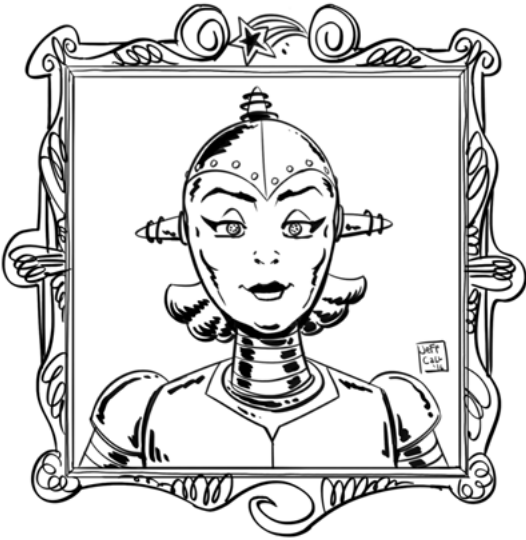


## Player Character

# ASTRA

3rd level Asterian Monk

Stranded in Azurth by a mishap, Astra, the youngest daughter of the Tear of Shooting Stars, transformed into earthly matter and took up adventuring to pass the time until her family's orbit brings them back around to rescue her.



## Player Character

# BROTHER MUDWORT

3rd level Frogling Cleric

A devout follower of Iolanthe, Lady of Learning, Mudwort walks the Land of Azurth seeking knowledge through experience. The hardships of travel and rough accommodations seldom phase him, but he is always on the lookout for a good meal!



## Player Character

# SIR CLANGOR

3rd level Human Fighter

A knight of the old & renowned Order of the Pennon Or, Clangor wanders the Country of Yanth, as he has for decades, with his plucky squire Whist and his stalwart charger Tumult in search of wrongs to right and injustice to smite!



**Alignment:** Neutral **Prof. Bonus:** +2

**Background:** Cosmic Traveler **Initiative:** +3

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
+3	+3	+2	-1	+2	+2



**Attacks:**

**Bo Staff** +5, (1d6/1d8)+1 **Unarmed** +5, 1d4+3

**Short Sword** +5, 1d6+3 **Darts** +5, 1d4+3

**Skills.** Acrobatics +5, Athletics +5, Insight +1, Perception +4

**Asterian (Shooting Star Folk) Traits.** Composite

**Plate Skin** +1 AC; **Living Construct** immune to disease, doesn't need to eat or drink; doesn't sleep, 4 hrs. in inactive state gives full rest.

**Monk Abilities:**

**Ki points:** 2 **Save DC:** 14

**Abilities** (ea. 1 Ki): **Distracting Strike**, **Patient Defense**, **Step of the Wind**

**Deflect Missiles.** If hit, can use reaction to catch/deflect missiles. Dmg. reduced 1d10+6. At 0, missile caught.

**Martial Arts.** If unarmed, unarmed or with monk weapons; d4 unarmed strike; unarmed strike as a bonus action if unarmed or using monk weapon.

**Unarmored Movement.** +10 ft. Spd unarmored.

**Unarmored Defense.** Unarmored AC=10+Dex mod.+Wis mod.

**Monastic Tradition.** Player's choice.

**Special Equipment/Possessions.** Tinker's tools, Etherphone (*astro-theremin*), crudely drawn solar system map of galacto-silk (slightly singed from atmospheric entry)

**Alignment:** Neutral Good **Prof. Bonus:** +2

**Background:** Traveler **Initiative:** +2

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
+1	+2	+3	+1	+4	+1



**Attacks:**

**Staff** +3, (1d6/1d8)+1 **Sling** +4, 1d4+2

**Skills.** Arcana +5, Insight +6, Medicine +6, Nature +8, Perception +6, Religion +3

**Frox (Frogling) Traits.** **Jump:** long standing/running 13/26 ft, standing/running high 4/6 ft; **Swim** at full speed with 1/2 rough waters penalty, Con mod double for **breath-holding**; Advantage **against poison** and resistance against poison damage.

**Deity:** Iolanthe, Lady of Knowledge

**Spell Atk Bonus:** +6 **Spell Save DC:** 14

**Spells.** Cantrips: *Light*, *Mending*, *Spare the Dying*; 1st [4 slots]: *Cure Wounds*, *Bless*, *Detect Magic*, *Shield of Faith*; 2nd lvl [2 slots]: *Prayer of Healing*, *Silence*, *Cone of Truth*; Domain Spells: *Augury*, *Command*, *Identify*, *Suggestion*

**Special Equipment/Possessions.** holy symbol of Iolanthe (lamp of learning medallion), hide map of Yanth Country with many hand-scrawled additions & notations, turquoise ring

**Alignment:** Neutral Good **Prof. Bonus:** +2

**Background:** Knight **Initiative:** +2

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
+4	+2	+3	+1	+1	+2



**Attacks:**

**Longsword** +6, (1d8/1d10)+4

**Lt Crossbow** +4, 1d8+2

**Skills.** Animal Handling +3, History +3, Perception +3, Persuasion +4

**Fighter Abilities:**

**Action Surge.** One additional action and one bonus action a turn, but must regenerate with a short or long rest.

**Protection Fighting Style.** Can use reaction to disadvantage attacker against target in 5 ft.

**Second Wind.** As bonus action regain 1d10+3 hp.

**Martial Archetype.** Player's choice.

**Special Equipment/Possessions.** horse head magic talismans (allows wearer to *Speak with Horses*), half plate armor, shield emblazoned *Or*, a *chess knight of sable*, signet ring

## Player Character

### INA QUICK

3rd level Human Thief

Growing up an urchin on the streets of Rivertown in the Country of Yanth, Ina has been an accomplished thief since childhood. When her pet mouse Tuppenny brought her pilfered fragments of arcane lore, she began a haphazard study of the magical arts!



## Player Character

### MINMAXIMUS THE MIGHTY!

3rd level Dwarf Fighter

Minlo was a wastrel youth until he took a drunken tumble into a cave where metal dwarfs from another world slept! The alien dwarfs used their super-science to transform him into MINMAXIMUS, Hero of the Dwarfs of Yanth Country!



## Player Character

### MOONFLOWER

3rd level Elf Ranger

Though Moonflower can be gruff, (she is rumored to have once cowed an ogre with attitude alone!) she is also known as a fierce protector of the people and animals inhabiting of the Aldwode Forest.



**Alignment:** Neutral **Prof. Bonus:** +2

**Background:** Street Urchin **Initiative:** +3

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
+1	+3	+1	+3	+1	+2



**Attacks:**

**Rapier** +5, 1d8+3 **Dagger** +5, 1d6+3  
**Short Bow** +5, 1d6+3

**Skills.** Acrobatics +5, Deception +4, Investigation +5, Perception +3, Performance +4, Sleight of Hand +5, Stealth +7

**Thief Abilities:**

**Expertise.** +Double proficiency bonus with Stealth and thieves' tools.

**Cunning Action.** Bonus action to Dash, Disengage, or Hide each turn.

**Sneak Attack.** Once a turn, extra 1d6 dmg on attack roll with an advantage or target in 5ft of an ally and no disadvantage.

**Roguish Archetype.** Player's choice, but Ina has been learning magic, so choose one with spells!

**Spell Atk Bonus:** +5 **Spell Save DC:** 13

**Spellcasting.** Intelligence based. Cantrips: *Mage Hands, Minor Illusion, Message*; 1st (2 slots): *Color Spray, Silent Image, Sleep*

**Special Equipment/Possessions.** Thieves' tools, Tuppeny (a pet mouse of unusual intelligence)

**Alignment:** Chaotic Good **Prof. Bonus:** +2

**Background:** Hero to the People **Initiative:** +2

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
+4	+2	+4	+1	+1	+1



**Attacks:**

**Max-Axe!** +7, 1d12+5 **Lt Crossbow** +4, 1d8+2

**Skills.** Animal Handling +3, Athletics +6, Intimidation +3, Survival +3

**Dwarven Traits.** Darkvision 60 ft; **Resilience** Advantage on saves vs. poison, resistance to poison damage.

**Hero to the Dwarfs of Azurth.** Dwarf commoners will shelter and aid him.

**Fighter Abilities:**

**Action Surge.** One additional action and one bonus action a turn, but must regenerate with a short or long rest.

**Great Weapon Fighting Style.** With two-handed weapon, reroll 1 or 2 on damage die, but must keep second roll.

**Second Wind.** As bonus action regain 1d10+3 hp.

**Martial Archetype.** Champion:

**Improved Critical.** On a 19 or 20

**Special Equipment/Possessions.** Max-Axe (+1 magic axe that transform him from a weakling Azurthite Dwarf to a strapping SRD Dwarf, Advantage on Persuasion checks with Dwarfs), goat-drawn chariot

**Alignment:** Neutral Good **Prof. Bonus:** +2

**Background:** Wilderness Guide **Initiative:** +5

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
+1	+5	+1	+1	+3	+1



**Attacks:**

**Spear or Staff** +3, (1d6/1d8)+1  
**Longbow** +9, 1d8+7

**Skills.** Athletics +3, Investigation +3, Nature +5, Perception +5, Stealth +7, Survival +3

**Elf Traits.** Darkvision 60 ft, **Fey Ancestry** advantage on save vs. charm, immune to sleep, **Keen Senses** advantage to Perception checks **Trance** for 4 hrs=rest, doesn't sleep.

**Ranger Abilities:**

**Spell Atk Bonus:** +5 **Spell Save DC:** 13

**Spellcasting.** 1st (3 slots): *Cure Wounds, Hail of Thorns, Hunter's Mark*

**Favored Enemy.** Monstrosities, advantage on checks to detect or recall information.

**Natural Explorer.** Forest.

**Primeval Awareness**

**Archery Fighting Style.** +2 to hit.

**Ranger Archetype.** Hunter:

**Horde Breaker.** Per turn, make a second attack with the same weapon against a different creature in 5 ft.

**Special Equipment/Possessions.** tiger tooth (saber fang trophy commands respect among fellow hunters)



## Player Character

### WULF HOWLEN

3rd level Human Barbarian

Raised by wolves and best friends with a wampus cat, Wulf Howlen boasts he can out track and out hunt anybody. His vest is from the hide of an ornery bear he wrestled, and his hat is made from the skin of the williest raccoon in all Yanth Country!



## Player Character

### ZABRA KADABRA

3rd level Human Wizard

The daughter of the Veiled Wizard of the Wastes, Zabra rebelled against her father's urging toward the family tradition of reclusive, evil wizardry, choosing instead the self-indulgence and thrill-seeking of an adventurer's life.

# MORTZENGERSTURM, THE MAD MANTICORE OF THE PRISMATIC PEAK

**Alignment:** Chaotic Neutral    **Prof. Bonus:** +2

**Background:** Wilderness Trapper    **Initiative:** +3

**Barbarian Abilities:**

**Danger Sense.** Advantage on Dexterity saves against visible threats

**Reckless Attack.** Can take advantage on Strength-based attacks, but attacks against him also have an advantage.

**Rage!** Advantage on all Str checks/saves, +2 dmg for Str-related attacks. Resistance to bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing damage (bonus action, duration 1 min., twice before a long rest)

**Unarmored Defense.** Unarmored AC=10+Dex mod.+lvl.

**Primal Path.** Player's choice.

**Special Equipment/Possessions.** coonskin cap.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
+4	+3	+3	+1	+1	+2



**Attacks:**

**Great Axe** +6, 1d12+4    **Javelins** +6, 1d6+4

**Staff** +6, (1d6/1d8)+4

**Skills.** Athletics +6, Nature +3, Perception +3, Survival +3

**Alignment:** Chaotic Neutral    **Prof. Bonus:** +2

**Background:** Heiress    **Initiative:** +3

**Wizardry:**

**Spell Atk Bonus:** +6    **Spell Save DC:** 14

**Spells.** Cantrips: *Light, Mage Hands, Ray of Frost*; 1st (4 slots): *Alarm, Comprehend Languages, Detect Magic, Mage Armor, Magic Missile*; 2nd (2 slots): *Detect Thoughts, Scorching Ray*

**Arcane Recovery.** Once/day, recover lvl/2 spell slots after a short rest.

**Arcane Tradition.** Zabra is a real charmer, at least when it comes to her magical expertise.

**Special Equipment/Possessions.** Deck of cards, *The Encyclopedia of the Land of Azurth, Abridged for Travelers*, head circlet (arcane focus), spellbook, Magic Hand Mirror (stolen, inherited from her father's collection)

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
+0	+3	+4	+4	+2	+2



**Attacks:**

**Staff** +2, 1d6/1d8    **Dagger** +5, 1d6+3

**Skills.** Arcana +6, History +6, Insight +4, Survival +4



# MORTZENERSTURM'S MONSTERS

## ANT-LION

*Large monstrosity, unaligned*

**Armor Class** 12

**Hit Points** 26 (4d10 + 4)

**Speed** 30 ft.

**STR** 17 (+3) **DEX** 15 (+2) **CON** 13 (+1) **INT** 3 (-4)

**WIS** 10 (+0) **CHA** 4 (-3)

**Senses** passive Perception 10

**Challenge** 1 (200 XP)

**Keen Smell.** The ant-lion has advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on smell.

### Actions:

**Bite.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (1d8 + 3) piercing damage, and the target must make a DC 11 Constitution saving throw, taking 7 (2d6) damage on a failed save, or half as much on a successful one. If the damage reduces the target to 0 hit points the target is stable but poisoned and paralyzed for 1 hour, even after regaining hit points.

## BUMBLEBEAR

*Tiny monstrosity, unaligned*

**Armor Class** 10

**Hit Points** 3 (1d4+1)

**Speed** 10 ft., fly 40 ft.

**STR** 4 (-3) **DEX** 11 (+0) **CON** 12 (+1) **INT** 2 (-4)

**WIS** 10 (+0) **CHA** 3 (-4)

**Senses** Perception 10

**Challenge** 0 (10 XP)

### Actions:

**Bite.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +2 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 1 piercing damage.

## CHIMERICAL CHIMERA

*Medium monstrosity (shapechanger), unaligned*

**Armor Class** 13

**Hit Points** 52 (8d8+16)

**Speed** 30 ft.

**STR** 17 (+3) **DEX** 13 (+1) **CON** 14 (+2) **INT** 11 (+0)

**WIS** 12 (+1) **CHA** 4 (-3)

**Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; passive Perception 11

**Challenge** 3 (700 XP)

**Protean entity.** The chimerical chimera can use a bonus action to polymorph into the form of another creature or part of its substance into parts of another creature's form. In fact, the chimerical chimera's protoplasmic form constantly boils and churns, and it requires concentration for it to maintain a certain shape (or a combination of several shapes). All of these forms are replicated in no larger than Medium size. It gains any physical nonmagical properties associated with the form it has taken for as long as it retains it, though its hit points and ability scores will also remain the same. The chimerical chimera may substitute a melee attack form for its slam attack, using its own base attack bonus and damage, but with properties or effects appropriate to the attack type.

### Actions:

**Multiattack.** The chimerical chimera can make slam (or other melee, see above) attacks.

**Slam.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (1d6+4) bludgeoning damage.

## FEY RAY

*Medium monstrosity, neutral*

The fey ray is a gentle, contemplative creature and will take no aggressive action. If attacked, it will attempt to flee. If the players insist on destroying the harmless affront to nature, it has **AC 12; HP 22; Spd** fly 40 ft.

## GRUEBIRD

*Large monstrosity, chaotic evil*

**AC** 15 (natural armor)

**Hit Points** 83 (11d10+22)

**Speed** 50 ft.

**STR** 18 (+4) **DEX** 12 (+1) **CON** 15 (+2) **INT** 8 (-1)

**WIS** 12 (+1) **CHA** 11 (+0)

**Skills** Stealth +3

**Senses** darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 14

**Challenge** 5 (1,800 XP)

**Magic Resistance.** The gruebird has an advantage on saving throws against spells and other magical effects.

### Actions:

**Multiattack.** The gruebird releases its dark cloud if able, then makes three attacks: two with its talons and one with its beak.

**Beak.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 11 (2d6+4) piercing damage.

**Talons.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 8 (1d8+4) slashing damage.

**Dark Cloud.** (recharge 5–6). The gruebird exudes a cloud of inky black, toxic darkness in a 10-foot radius. Each creature entering the cloud must DC 13 Constitution saving throw, or be poisoned and suffer *confusion* (as per the spell) for 1 minute. The creature may repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns, and the effect ends on a success.

## INK DOG

*Medium monstrosity, unaligned*

**Armor Class** 13 (natural armor)

**Hit Points** 22 (4d8 + 4)

**Speed** 40 ft.

**Skills** Perception +3, Stealth +5

**Damage Resistances** bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical attacks

**Damage Immunities** poison

**Condition Immunities** grappled, paralyzed, poisoned, restrained

**Senses** passive Perception 13

**Challenge** 1/4 (50 XP)

**STR** 12 (+1) **DEX** 17 (+3) **CON** 12 (+1) **INT** 3 (-4)

**WIS** 13 (+1) **CHA** 9 (-1)

**Semiliquid Form.** The ink dog can enter a hostile creature's space and stop there. It can move through a space as narrow as 1 inch wide without squeezing.

**Actions:**

**Bite.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 4 (1d6 + 1) piercing damage, leaves a weird, possibly artistic design.

### IRON SHRIKE

*Medium monstrosity, neutral evil*

**Armor Class** 18 (natural armor)

**Hit Points** 32 (5d8+10)

**Speed** 10 ft., fly 40 ft.

**Skills** Perception +4

**Damage Resistances** fire, bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical weapons.

**Senses** passive Perception 14

**Challenge** 1 (200 XP)

**STR** 16 (+3) **DEX** 11 (+0) **CON** 14 (+2) **INT** 6 (-2)

**WIS** 12 (+1) **CHA** 6 (-2)

**Keen Sight.** The iron shrike advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on sight.

**Actions:**

**Multiattack.** The iron shrike makes two attacks: one with its beak and one with its claws.

**Beak.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 6 (1d6+3) piercing damage.

**Talons.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 10 (2d6+3) slashing damage.

### JAM

*Large ooze, unaligned*

**Armor Class** 8

**Hit Points** 45 (6d10 + 12)

**Speed** 10 ft., climb 10 ft.

**STR** 15 (+2) **DEX** 6 (-2) **CON** 14 (+2) **INT** 2 (-4)

**WIS** 6 (-2) **CHA** 2 (-4)

**Damage Immunities** lightning, slashing

**Condition Immunities** blinded, charmed, deafened, exhaustion, frightened, prone

**Senses** blindsight 40 ft. (blind beyond this radius), passive Perception 8

**Challenge** 2 (450 XP)

**Amorphous.** The jelly can move through a space as narrow as 1 inch wide without squeezing.

**Actions:**

**Multiattack.** The jam makes two pseudopod attacks. If both hit a Medium or smaller target, the target is grappled (DC 12) and the jam uses its Engulf attack on it.

**Pseudopod.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 9 (2d6 + 2) bludgeoning damage.

**Engulf.** The jam engulfs a Medium or smaller creature grappled by it. The engulfed target is blinded, restrained, and unable to breath, smothered in intoxicating sweetness. The target must succeed on a DC 12 Constitution saving throw at the start of each of the jam's turns or take 5 (1d6 + 2) bludgeoning damage. If the jam moves, the engulfed target moves with it. Should a target escape, it is poisoned in sugar shock until the end its next turn.

### MOCKA

*Large monstrosity, neutral evil*

**Armor Class** 12

**Hit Points** 19 (3d10 + 3)

**Speed** 30 ft.

**STR** 15 (+2) **DEX** 15 (+2) **CON** 12 (+1) **INT** 8 (-1)

**WIS** 10 (+0) **CHA** 3 (-4)

**Senses** passive Perception 10

**Challenge** 1/4 (50 XP)

**Creepy Countenance.** Any creature that starts its turn within 10 feet of bouncing and leering Mocka must make a DC 18 Wisdom saving throw. On a failed save, the creature is frightened until the start of its next turn. If the creature's saving throw is successful, the creature is immune to the Mocka's creepiness for the next 24 hours. **Note:** In playtesting this adventure, we have discovered that generally describing the Mocka's appearance and behavior in sufficient detail is enough to scare the *players*, and they usually treat the Mocka as much more fearsome than its stats indicate without the need to resort to mechanical manipulations of their characters.

**Actions:**

**Bite.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 5 (1d6 + 2) piercing damage.

### MOONSTER

*Large monstrosity, unaligned*

The Moonster is meant to be a humorous irritant to a party, not a combat encounter. The DM is encouraged to give the players snippets of his narration in a judgmental British voice like John Houseman or a more condescending David Attenborough where the character's antics are the nature documentary. He might opine something like "And so *Ina Quick* climbed. Her performance in recent challenges had been less than stellar, but here was finally a task in which she excelled. But could she overcome what she would face on that left shelf? That was another question entirely," or "Maximus had never been called 'the Intellectual,' and certainly not 'the Handsome.' No, he was 'the Mighty.' That might — his only redeeming quality — would be sorely tested and soon." Such comments may well make players wish to attack him. Unfortunately, the Moonster is fairly unkillable by means likely available (he is immune to spells below 6th level, and to nonmagical weapons), a fact he will remind any would-be attackers of. He has **AC** 12; **HP** 180; and regenerates 20 hp at the start of his turn on any turn he has 1 hp.

### PARROTBEAR

*Large monstrosity, unaligned*

**Armor Class** 13 (natural armor)

**Hit Points** 59 (7d10 + 21)

**Speed** 40 ft.

**STR** 20 (+5) **DEX** 12 (+1) **CON** 17 (+3) **INT** 3 (-4)

**WIS** 12 (+1) **CHA** 8 (-1)

**Skills** Perception +3

**Senses** darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 13

**Challenge** 3 (700 XP)



**Mimicry.** The parrotbear can mimic simple sounds it has heard, such as a person speaking, a baby crying, or even mechanical sounds. In particular, it will often repeat snippets of phrases it has heard people say. A creature that hears these vocalizations can tell they are imitations with a successful DC 10 Wisdom (Insight) check.

**Actions:**

**Multiattack.** The parrotbear makes two attacks: one with its beak and one with its claws.

**Beak.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 10 (1d10 + 5) piercing damage.

**Claws.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 14 (2d8 + 5) slashing damage.

**TIGERPILLAR**

*Large monstrosity, unaligned*

**Armor Class** 13 (natural armor)

**Hit Points** 51 (6d10+18)

**Speed** 30 ft.

**STR** 17 (+3) **DEX** 13 (+1) **CON** 16 (+3) **INT** 3 (-4)

**WIS** 12 (+1) **CHA** 8 (-1)

**Skills** Perception +3, Stealth +3

**Senses** darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 13

**Challenge** 2 (450 XP)

**Keen Smell.** The tigerpillar has an advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks relying on smell.

**Pounce.** If the tigerpillar moves at least 20 ft. straight toward a creature and then hits it with a claw on the same turn, that target must succeed on a DC 13 Strength saving throw or be knocked prone. If the target is prone, the tigerpillar can make one bite attack it as a bonus action.

**Actions:**

**Multiattack.** The tigerpillar makes two attacks: one with its claws and one with its bite.

**Bite.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 8 (1d10+3) piercing damage.

**Claws.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (1d8+3) slashing damage.

## APPENDIX A : AN INTRODUCTION TO THE LAND OF AZURTH

Beyond the lands we know (but perhaps not too far) lies the Land of Azurth. There are four countries in Azurth and four princesses or queens, but the land is ruled by one Wizard from a Sapphire City at its center. The Wizard's powers are officially presumed to be vast and impressive, but he seldom wastes his magic on ostentatious displays. The more cynical among Azurth's citizenry speculate his primary art is something other than magic. All agree he is a man of cunning.

The country north of the Sapphire City is Noxia; its colors are the black and gray of its blighted and gloomy landscape, perpetually darkened by the Shadow Moon. Its Queen, Morthalia, cares little for the living and is obsessed with death and undeath, and has been so since her witch lover fell into an eternal sleep.

The country in the West is Virid, and green is its color. It is the most magical of Azurth's countries, and many of its people are part faerie. Its Queen, Desira, is called an Enchantress by folk of other countries, either for her beauty, her sorcery, or perhaps both. Certainly, she has ensnared the hearts of her people, though they speak of her compassion and fairness, and the brave deeds she performed in her youth.

Sang, the southern country, is a barbaric land, separated from more civilized Azurth by a rim of mountains that scholars say are the remnant of an ancient encounter with a fallen star. Crimson is its color. Its tiny principalities and nomadic tribes are given to strange customs and prone to violence. Sang's Princess of Battles, Bellona, widely-famed as a great heroine of the age, is said to have hatched from an egg in a dragon's brood.

Finally, in the East is Yanth, and its colors are violet and yellow. Its ruler is Viola the Clockwork Princess, at once a wondrous artifact and a great artificer, renowned across the land. Yanth Country is the location of most adventures chronicled in Azurth so far, including this one.

# THE LAND OF AZURTH

For more about the Land of Azurth, visit the From the Sorcerer's Skull (sorcerersskull.blogspot.com) blog.

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HERE'S A *SNEAK PEEK* AT THE NEXT *LAND OF AZURTH* ADVENTURE...

A MINI-SANDBOX SET ON A *CLOUD ISLAND* RULED BY A *EVIL GIANT WIZARD* AND INHABITED BY *WEIRD CHARACTERS*...

CREATURES LIKE...

## The COSMIC CAT



# THE CLOUD CASTLE OF AZURTH

by TREY CAUSEY and JOEL PRIDDY

*A cosmic cat is seated or curled upon a small meteorite half-buried in cloudstuff. Peaceful visitors will be favored with a look that suggests the cat's opinions regarding the drollness of terrestrial existence. The cat will converse telepathically (its mind-voice has a reverse echo; its laugh has a touch of flange) and answer questions, though its responses will tend toward the enigmatic.*

*The meteorite it lounges upon is of iron as cold as the void. Its cosmic inertness is such that it is profoundly anti-magical. In a ten foot radius, all spells and magical effects dissipate. Non-artifact magic items kept within a five foot radius of the stone for an extended period will be drained to mundanity at the rate of a +1 or spell level every 12 hours.*

### **d6 Random Things the Cosmic Cat Might Say:**

**1** - Oh, it's you. I thought perhaps I had dreamed you, but you seem material enough. Unless that's part of the dream, or my dreams are more powerful than I imagined?

**2** - They once came here for amusement, you know. I suppose it's all still very amusing, really, just in a different direction. By the time I arrived they had mostly abandoned this place, except the crazy ones. For a while at night, if I looked out over the cloud's edge, I could see the blue glow of their ruins. That all faded away in a few centuries.

**3** - I wouldn't go that way [island anterior]. You will likely either die by a fall from a great height or suffer a tiresome tea service with a chatty dragon.

**4** - How do you suppose all this stays up here on wisps of water vapor, anyway? Doesn't seem safe. And it's an affront to the dignity of other clouds. Don't think they haven't noticed.

**5** - There's a giant under that castle. He's vaster than this world, perhaps--just folded up and stuffed into something tiny. I wonder how long that mellow cage of light and colored wax will hold him? Lamps flicker, after all.

**6** - The Sun is just a dwarf, you know, made of countless little dwarfs. I met one, once. It made my eyes hurt to look at it. It was incandescent with tedious purpose, but its voice was warm on my skin and gave me the urge to nap.

## PLACES OF NOTE IN YANTH COUNTRY

### **Aldwode**

A dense and ancient forest inhabited by wild Wood Elf tribes and dotted with the fey, hidden demesnes of the High Elf folk.

### **Apiaria**

The Hive City of the Bee Folk and the center of the domain of their Queen, who is always named Melitta. Relations between the Bee Folk and the humans of Yanth have been pleasant but rather formal for some time. Wealthy Yanth folk benefit from trade in the Bee Folk royal jelly from which an anti-aging tonic is made.

### **Castle Machina**

Just outside of Rivertown, the unmoving remnant of the legendary Walking Castle of Mirabilis Lum is now the workshop-palace of the Clockwork Princess, Viola I of Yanth. The barracks, sheds, and small laboratories around it are known as "Mechanicstown" and accommodate the Princess' gnomish assistants.

### **Enchanted Wood**

A virgin forest renowned for its plant and animal life, all of which are capable of speech. (Though admittedly, most remain silent as they have little to say.) This eldritch peculiarity owes to the waters of the Babbling Brook that runs through the forest and enhances the linguistic capabilities of all who drink from it. For adult animals, this effect is temporary, but creatures raised on it retain these characteristics indefinitely. The brook itself (as the name suggests) is vocal, and even at its susurrating volume, it can at times impair the concentration of spellcasters and unnerve those around it for long periods. The Spouting Spring that is its source is even worse. Its ceaseless chorus of nonsensical orations is taken as oracular glossolalia by some and tormenting, demonic cacophony by others.

### **The Great Standing Stone Sages**

A circle of eight monolithic stone heads in which reside the intellects of great sages of a past age. Their names and their scholarly specialties are: Whindbog the Historian, Blathrur the Astronomer, Pomphus the Philologist, Laangvynd the Geographer, Eggedd the Scientist, Baombast the Physician, Drohninon the Mathematician, and Nowhitaul the Theologian. These learned minds may be consulted by touching their respective stone, allowing telepathic communication as long as the contact is maintained. They will answer questions put to them, though they tend to do so with a degree of irritation and condescension.

### **Horologopolis**

A subkingdom wherein many aspects of the lives of its citizenry are predetermined at birth by extensive application of the astrological and numerologic sciences. Horoscopes are prepared and zealously tracked and rechecked through

a citizen's lifetime by the great tabulating engines controlled by the Master Time Keeper, a giant, many-armed construct with a head like a clock face. Those who stray from their appointed role or seek to alter their fate in significant ways are corrected by his agents, the more humanoid, but likewise clockfaced, Watchmen.

### **Lardafa**

The Beggar City; A shanty subkingdom situated in the bottomland swamp along the Yellow River. Its epithets are mostly accurate in their characterizations of the city's architecture and the vocation of its people. Lardafa apes the political structures of other municipalities, but this is mainly for propriety's sake; Lardafans rely on family and personal relationships to maintain order and mediate disagreements.

### **Mount Brawl**

A butte where the Monastery-Gymnasium of the Golden Wrestlers is located. The monks periodically hold a fighting competition. The winner is honored by initiation into the Muscle Mysteries.

### **Motley Isles**

These islands are known as the havens of pirates who value their freedom above all else— except perhaps the plunder they take from hapless ships. Such is the aversion of the pirates to anything that smacks of governmental control that the Isle's capital of Polychrome relies on press gangs to force citizens into service when some civil dispute or state function must be addressed. Vessels that call the Motley Isles their home often fly a distinctive flag: a skull and crossbones emblazoned on a crazy-quilt pattern.

### **Rivertown**

The largest city in Yanth Country, it's a center for trade and home of an infamous, waterborne, red-light district called (appropriately) "The Floating World." It also serves as the base of operations for the Raccoon Thieves' Guild—or it would, if such an organization existed.

### **Squirming Shoals**

Where the toxic Waste spills into it, the Boundless Sea is coated by a thick, quivering and throbbing gray scum that spawns bizarre creatures.

### **Yellow Marsh**

This wetland delta of the Yellow River is home to tribes of friendly Froglings, hostile Gator Folk, and more than one witch.

### **Warrens of the Rabbit Folk**

The subkingdom of the Hara (Rabbit Folk) is divided into commots, where the peace is kept by knights led by a reeve. All the warrens are ruled by a king, currently one Lapin XXII, who spends his days at leisure in the opulent burrow he shares with his harem.

# A MAP of YANTH COUNTRY



This map is attributed to a "Gus L," a likely pseudonym. This Mr. L has faithfully reproduced the style of Mundus Blundur, Royal Cartographer to King Cyan of Azurth. As is customary following the Bichromatic Compromise, the Country of Yanth is colored yellow.

Blundur was a practitioner of artistic cartography, favoring an aesthetically pleasing arrangement of features over accurate representation. The geography of Azurth has never been quite

as settled as it is in other lands, so this is perhaps not as great a failing as it might seem.

Blundur is rumored to have disappeared into an unusual street in the Sapphire City, coincidentally bearing the name of a trap street he inserted into a map of that city just the week before.



ARMCHAIR PLANET PRESENTS:

# MORTZENGERSTURM, THE MAD MANTICORE OF THE PRISMATIC PEAK

THE FIRST ADVENTURE IN **THE LAND  
OF AZURTH**



After turning himself into a manticore, the self-styled wizard-artiste, Mortzengersturm, moved to the crystalline peak of Mount Geegaw to practice his transformation magic without interference. You've been hired to snatch his most prized artifact, the Whim-Wham Stone—or at least some of its eldritch light. A menagerie of magical hybrids, a self-absorbed vampire, more than a few hippogriffs—and, of course, the mad manticore himself, await!

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