

For Characters Level 4-6

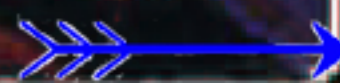
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Advanced Dungeons & Dragons[®]
2nd Edition

Ravenloft[®]

Official Game Adventure

When Black Roses Bloom



WHEN BLACK ROSES BLOOM

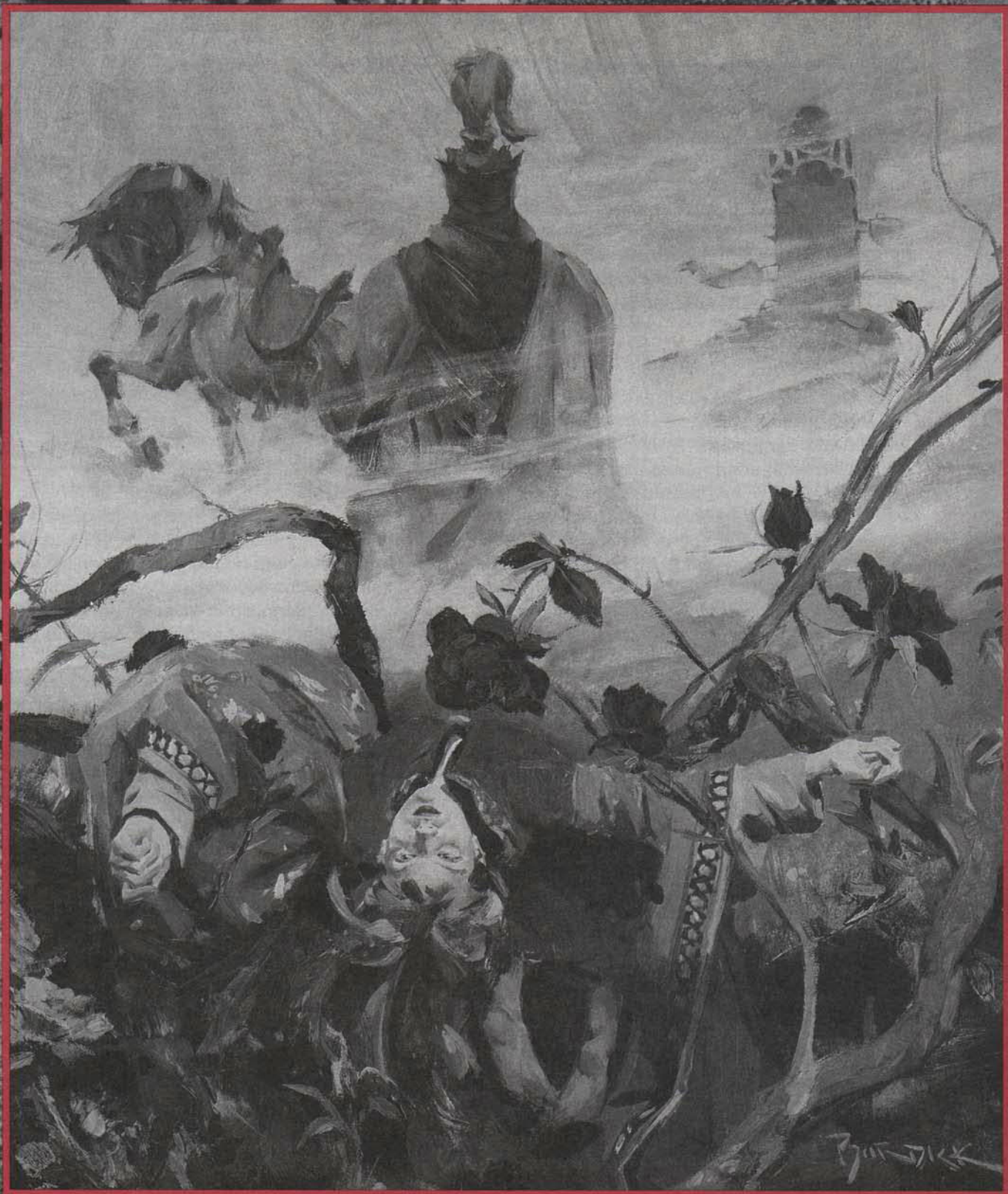


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INTRODUCTION



*How strangely are
our love and
hate misplaced!
Freedom we seek,
and yet from
freedom flee;
Courting those
tyrant sins that
chain us fast,
And shunning
Death, that
only sets us
free.*

—William
Walsh
(1663–1708),
“Death”

Honor. Devotion to duty. Chivalry. Love. Military law. Discipline.

As a Knight of Solamnia on the world of Krynn, the Lord Soth held these concepts dear. He followed the Measure of his order, paying tribute to the gods, holding to the letter of his Oath, and fighting for good on behalf of Paladine, the father of all good and the patron god of all valiant warriors. In time, he was awarded the order’s highest honor and became a Knight of the Rose.

“*Est Sularus oth Mithas. My honor is my life.*”
Soth’s dishonor became his death.

Cruelty. Jealousy and greed. Falsehood.
Unbridled lust. Infidelity. Murder.

Through these acts, Soth became what he is today—a death knight, a fire-blackened, undead travesty of all he once stood for. Once, all of Krynn might have called him hero. But when he changed, only the mists of Ravenloft welcomed him into their deadly embrace. They forged for him a new land, one he was cursed never to leave. Yet Soth still holds a bitter hope that he can one day escape the Demiplane of Dread and return to Krynn—return to the woman whose crooked smile and unflagging spirit claimed his heart: the dragon highlord Kitiara Uth Matar.

When Black Roses Bloom begins as the player

characters (PCs) enter the RAVENLOFT® domain of Sithicus. It quickly becomes apparent that something is terribly wrong with the domain, and that the heroes are trapped there and will share the fate of its inhabitants. The only way to save themselves (and the domain) is to find out what is wrong with its ruler, the evil Lord Soth. By entering his dark keep of Nedragaard and confronting the death knight, they may even find a route out of Sithicus. But will their escape also allow this evil lord to return to Krynn?

Preparing for the Adventure

This adventure is set in Sithicus, one of the domains at the core of the RAVENLOFT® campaign world. The adventure works best with a party of four to six characters of levels 4 to 6 (about 24 total levels).

Background information on the domain of Sithicus and its evil ruler, Lord Soth, appears on pages 30-31 and 84 of the *Realm of Terror* sourcebook from the RAVENLOFT boxed set. This adventure’s information augments that material.

Additional background on Lord Soth appears in the RAVENLOFT novel *Knight of the Black Rose* by James Lowder. It is not necessary, however, to have read the novel to play this adventure, because much of the information presented in the novel is summarized in this module. Even if the players have read this novel, there are surprises in this adventure to keep them guessing.

Other useful sources include the *MONSTROUS MANUAL* and the RAVENLOFT and DRAGONLANCE® *MONSTROUS COMPENDIUM*® appendices, which provide important information about the monsters encountered in this module.

Although this adventure has ties to the DRAGONLANCE saga, you need not have played in that campaign world to understand the events of *When Black Roses Bloom*. Players already familiar with Soth’s background and character may have a slight advantage in their dealings with this evil lord, but even those who have never heard of the death knight will find enough clues in this adventure to understand his motivations and use them to their advantage.

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Running the Adventure

Running an adventure set in the Demiplane of Dread requires the DUNGEON MASTER® (DM™) to create and maintain an atmosphere of suspense and dread. The *Realm of Terror* sourcebook in the RAVENLOFT boxed set offers useful tips for creating this mood in the “Techniques of Terror” chapter. Feel free to add chilling details and unfortunate circumstances when describing locations and encounters, and customize the ill effects that heroes suffer to make these assaults all the more keenly felt.

During the course of this adventure, remember that, even though Lord Soth may seem to be losing control of his domain, he is nevertheless much more powerful than the heroes and can easily dominate and intimidate them. Take every opportunity to make the heroes feel that they are at the mercy of the nonplayer characters (NPCs) who inhabit Sithicus. The players should be uncomfortably aware that they are “outsiders” who are unwelcome in this domain. Both the domain’s native elves and the Vistani look on the heroes with doubt and mistrust, and extend a helping hand only reluctantly. Constantly remind the players of the culture shock that results from travelling among a people with different and seemingly inexplicable customs.

Finally, emphasize the feelings of entrapment. At the beginning of this adventure, the heroes find themselves trapped in Sithicus. As the events unfold, the physical boundaries of this trap narrow, slowly yet inexorably hemming them in—preferably as the result of the heroes’ own actions. Strive for a claustrophobic atmosphere, offering a faint glimmer of hope of escape only when the players have all but given up—and dashing that hope, at just the right moment, to plunge them into despair once more.

Fear and Horror Checks

At various points, this module calls for a fear or horror check. These rules are intended to

encourage better role-playing and generate an appropriate response to a horrific or terrifying situation.

If the players are doing a good job of acting and are already role-playing appropriate responses for their characters, omit these checks. Reward especially dramatic responses with additional experience points. Fear and horror checks are intended only to guide the players and give the game an authentic feel of Gothic horror.

Story Background

Lord Soth’s early history is summarized in this module in the section “A Dark Knight’s Tale.” As this adventure begins, Soth has been trapped in Sithicus for more than twenty years. He is starting to lose hope that he will ever find his way back to Krynn, and has become bored with a domain that offers no military challenges and no worthy opponents. He is little more than a conqueror in a cage.

Some time ago, Soth captured a powerful illusionist who wandered into his domain. To earn his freedom, the illusionist, Tindafalus, constructed for Soth a series of six magical *memory mirrors*. By entering these mirrors, Soth can relive his greatest victories and reshape his worst defeats, subtly changing events until they occur exactly as he would have desired.

In recent months, Soth has spent so much time inside the *memory mirrors* that he is becoming unable to distinguish between his memory of the events as they originally happened and the “memories” created by the mirrors. Because his history is the key to the creation of Sithicus, and because the domain is dependent on the death knight for its continued existence, the changes in Soth’s memory are unhinging the domain. Sithicus is literally coming apart at the seams. Its land is dissolving into mist and the elves that populate it are starting to lose their memories and their sense of self.

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The heroes can prevent the domain from disappearing completely into the mists only by venturing into Soth's stronghold of Nedragaard Keep, entering each *memory mirror* in turn, and altering the event it contains so that Soth's fantasy is spoiled. This returns Soth's mind to Sithicus. Then the heroes must convince Soth to restore his land. The key to success lies in Soth's unquenchable desire for the dragon highlord, Kitiara.

The Black Sapphire Medallion

As told in "A Dark Knight's Tale," Soth's seneschal (steward) on Krynn, Caradoc the ghost, entered the Outer Plane of Baator to capture Kitiara's spirit in a medallion. (Even as he travelled that plane, Caradoc thought it was actually the Abyss. Natives of Krynn mistakenly believe that Kitiara's goddess, Takhisis, resides in the Abyss. For details of both planes, consult the PLANESCAPE™ boxed set.)

Caradoc never delivered the medallion to Soth, and for years the death knight has sought it feverishly.

Recently the elves of Sithicus have seen Kitiara's spirit roaming the wilds. Soth has ordered his new seneschal, the dwarf Azrael, to find this apparition. So far Azrael has failed.

What has happened? Just what Caradoc did with the mystic medallion remains a mystery. The powers of the mists of Ravenloft recreated Caradoc and the missing medallion to torment the death knight. The false amulet lay with the ghostly Caradoc's "mortal remains" when Soth destroyed the traitorous seneschal's ghostly form, and so it was lost to him. Starving wolves found the grisly corpse and devoured the bones, rawhide flesh and all. One even wolfed down the small false medallion—and then, for unknown reasons followed Lord Soth into the new realm of Sithicus.

Over the years, the black sapphire at the center of the false medallion (the part of the medallion that held Kitiara's spirit) became cracked. Through this crack, from time to time,

this spirit tried to emerge, seen as a ghostly image of Kitiara. This is the "dark-haired woman with the crooked smile" whom the elves sighted. The apparition wandered the domain because the wolf carrying the medallion roamed freely.

Recently, the false gem in the medallion worked itself free. It passed through the wolf, and now lies in its lair—a small cave near Kendralind.

Kendralind is a village of vampiric kender (a halfling-like race native to Krynn). Born of Sithicus, the kender vampires will die with the fading domain. Thus, one month ago the villagers chose one of their own, Tickelmop Toothfang, to travel to Nedragaard and urge Lord Soth to heal Sithicus. They did not realize that the *memory mirrors* were the root of the problem, and Tickelmop was at a loss when she encountered the ghostly image of Soth on his throne. Returning to her village, she reported defeat.

A few days ago, Tickelmop made a strange discovery while out hunting. Cutting open the corpse of a wolf she had killed, she discovered a medallion inside its stomach. One face of the medallion bore the emblem of a rose. Familiar with the story of how Soth's first seneschal Caradoc had been sent to trap Kitiara's spirit inside a medallion, Tickelmop concluded that this must be it. Having returned to Nedragaard, she plans to use the false medallion to get the attention of Soth.

Her plan will fail, because she lacks the sapphire that holds Kitiara's "spirit." However, the heroes meet Tickelmop, investigate, and can locate the sapphire in the wolf's lair. Yet, the lair is lost amid the chaos in Sithicus. The heroes must first rouse Lord Soth and have him quiet the land. Once the death knight returns to awareness, the heroes who find the false sapphire also find that events have overtaken them. They are trapped between Soth, his forces, the false spirit of Kitiara, and the mysterious powers whom she serves.

INTRODUCTION

Starting the Adventure

If the heroes start this adventure from a world that lies outside the Demiplane of Dread, use the following scenario to lure them to Sithicus:

The heroes see the ghostly image of a former companion who died some time ago. Ideally, this should be a trusted friend whom they miss dearly. The ghost is incapable of speech, and simply gestures to the heroes to follow.

If they follow, an icy darkness, unpenetrable by light or infravision envelopes them. Soon, the ghost is lost in the dark. When the icy blackness melts, the heroes are in Sithicus's dark forests, several miles from the nearest town.

The "ghost" is in fact an illusion, created by the powers that govern Ravenloft. It is true in every detail to the dead companion. Any characters who attempt to disbelieve what they see and who make a successful save vs. spells with a -4 penalty do not see the ghost. The DM should make these saving throws.

This scenario works best if the ghost appears at a time when the heroes are highly motivated to follow it. If the heroes are searching for an exit from a dungeon, the ghost beckons them through a secret door. If they seek treasure, the ghost leads them to it. If they are lost in the wilderness, the ghost points them toward a path. Ideally, the ghost should appear once or twice in a previous adventure to help the heroes. In this way, the powers ensnare their trust before using the ghost to lead them to Ravenloft.

If the heroes are already adventuring in Ravenloft, they enter Sithicus simply by

crossing the border from Valachan, Invidia, Verbrek, or Kartakass. Use either of the story hooks following to lure them to this domain:

❖ If the heroes are struggling with a particularly powerful foe, they are told by a trusted NPC or a wandering Vistana of a poison that can be used to kill their enemy. The venom comes from a snake found only in Sithicus. The two-foot-long snake, commonly called the "skull-headed serpent," is jet black with a white head, and is common in Sithicus. (See "Snake" in the *MONSTROUS COMPENDIUM*.)

At the DM's discretion, this snake venom (Type E poison) may actually work against their enemy.

❖ A Ravenloft wizard, Tandon the Abjurer, is looking for an extremely rare spell component: a rose whose buds are initially pure white but that turn a solid black when the flower blooms. Tandon does not know its name or its abilities. In the past he simply purchased its flowers from a Sithicus elf, a woman named Krellantha. Krellantha owns a flower shop in the city of Har-Thelen. In recent weeks Tandon has been unable to establish contact with Krellantha.

Because the wizard is conducting a time-sensitive magical experiment, he cannot travel to Sithicus to locate the roses. He hires the heroes to undertake this task, offering 200 gp for each rosebud in good condition. Tandon loans the heroes a *bag of holding* in which to store the roses so that they will remain fresh until they can deliver the rosebuds to him.

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*ather ye rosebuds
while ye may,
Old Time is still a-
flying;
And this same
flower that
smiles today,
Tomorrow will be
dying.*

—Robert Herrick
(1591–1674),
“To the Virgins,
to Make Much
of Time”

Once they have entered Sithicus, the PCs cannot leave the domain until they complete this adventure. Although Soth himself currently spends all of his time inside the *memory mirrors*, a ghostly image of him sits on the throne in his keep and sings constantly. This dismal ballad keeps the borders of Sithicus closed, preventing anyone in the domain from escaping.

Any who try to leave Sithicus hear a ghastly keening that grows louder as they approach the border, producing feelings of unease that build into a great panic. To press on, the characters must make a fear check with a –9 penalty or flee back into Sithicus. If the fear check succeeds and the characters persist in crossing the border they automatically fail a madness check.

Those driven mad are permanently afflicted with a condition that manifests itself whenever they hear music—especially singing. These effects can be drawn from the “Madness Checks” section of the *Realm of Terror* sourcebook.

Heroes who cross the border cannot participate in this adventure—unless the DM can think of a ruse to lure them back to Sithicus (a cure for their madness, perhaps?).

The Domain of Sithicus

The domain is thickly forested. Massive trees crowd out the sun, plunging the forest floor below into darkness. A tangle of mottled ivies and greyish ferns hides the earth from sight, providing perfect cover for snakes, rodents, and insects.

Most travellers stick to the main roads that lead to the domain’s principal cities, but a number of muddy wagon trails cut through the thick undergrowth. These wind their way through narrow valleys or hug the edge of crumbling cliffs. Occasionally, they cross a deep chasm via a creaking wooden bridge of questionable construction.

Sithicus is populated almost entirely by elves. Characters of other racial backgrounds are very rare, and are usually stragglers who have wandered into the domain. Due to the cold reception they get from the elves, these travellers usually leave quickly. The only humans who lived in Sithicus were the members of a Vistani tribe who call themselves, The Wanderers. (The history of this tribe appears in Magda the Wanderer’s entry in the appendix.)

The elves of Sithicus are similar to the Silvanesti elves of Krynn. They most closely resemble the grey elves—their hair is a dull silver and their eyes are a murky amber color. The Demiplane of Dread has made them a dispirited and dreary folk, and they have lost much of their elven pride.

The major cities of Sithicus (Mal-Erek, Hroth, and Har-Thelen) are mediocre and have none of the beauty of elven cities elsewhere. There are large gaps in the stonework of buildings, potholes dot the streets, and statues and other works of art have a rushed, half-finished look. The concentric walls that separate the various elven castes are crumbling, books in the city libraries are worm-eaten and moldy, and the enchantments that normally hide the entrance to a grey elf city have been allowed to wane.

The elves themselves have a general air of apathy. Their clothing is drab and their armor dented and unpolished. Instead of riding

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proudly into battle on the backs of griffons or hippogriffs, their warriors use horned stag beetles as mounts.

Sithican elves find neither joy nor beauty in the tangled forests and boulder-choked streams. Their songs are mournful dirges, accompanied by low-pitched, droning instruments that evoke a sense of loss.

Despite these failings, they still look down on other races, and, to a lesser degree, at elves not belonging to the grey elf sub-race. In many subtle ways, they make non-elven characters feel unwelcome in Sithicus. Characters are overcharged for supplies, are told that there is no room at an inn even though there are obvious vacancies, and always get served last at taverns—or may even be told that a tavern is “closed,” even though patrons are obviously still drinking and eating there. Everywhere they go, the heroes receive rude stares. Small children throw mud at them, and residents coincidentally choose to empty slop buckets into the street just as they pass by. The rare elf who actually smiles at the heroes or extends them a helping hand seems a godsend beside the rest.

This attitude reflects the treatment elves of Sithicus get when they leave their own domain; elsewhere in Ravenloft, demi-humans are treated with contempt.

Although each of the cities of Sithicus has its own caste of elven nobles, all acknowledge the rulership of a high king—Lord Soth. They see him only rarely, but all fear his wrath and cringe at the mention of his name. An invitation to visit the “High Lord” at Nedragaard Keep is generally considered a death sentence. Because Soth can literally raise the remains of the dead out of their graves to do his bidding, no corner of Sithicus is safe.

Soth’s seneschal, Azrael the dwarf, receives careful respect even though he is not an elf. Discourtesy to this servant of the High Lord is sure to have dire consequences.

Sithicus is also home to a small band of vampire kender. Their village, Kendralind, is described in the final chapter of this adventure.

The Black Moon

Sithicus at night is apparently a moonless domain, its sky filled with cold pinpoints of light. Natives of Krynn note that the constellations are similar to those of their home world, but with a few important differences. The “platinum dragon” constellation representing the god Paladine has been torn asunder, its stars scattered. The stars in the “five-headed dragon” constellation representing the goddess Takhisis shine brighter than before. Constellations that represent the other gods of Krynn have dimmed sharply.

Sithicus does have a moon, named Nuitari, but it is black and can only be seen by characters of evil alignment. These characters can see by the dark light it casts about as well as humans can in normal moonlight. Characters of non-evil alignment can “see” the black moon only by observing which stars wink out in the sky. Nuitari becomes full every eight days.

When the characters enter Sithicus, roll 1d8 to determine the phase of the moon. Nuitari remains in each phase for 24 hours—one day and one night.

Roll	Phase
1	New moon
2	Waxing crescent moon
3	Waxing half moon
4	Waxing three-quarter (gibbous) moon
5	Full moon
6	Waning gibbous moon
7	Waning half moon
8	Waning crescent moon

Nuitari’s phases affect wizardly magic in Sithicus. When the black moon is half full to full, wizards of non-evil alignment suffer penalties to their spellcasting, but evil wizards receive bonuses. These effects are similar to the “sinkhole of evil” effects experienced by priests in Ravenloft.

Waxing/waning half or gibbous moon: Non-evil wizards suffer a –1 penalty to saving throws vs. spells. Evil wizards receive a +1 bonus to saves vs. spells.

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Full moon: Non-evil wizards suffer a -2 penalty to saving throws vs. spells and cast non-evil spells as if they are one lower than normal. Evil wizards receive a +2 bonus to saves vs. spells and cast non-evil spells as if the caster is one level higher than normal.

In addition to these modifications, special conditions apply whenever an evil wizard spell (any that requires a Ravenloft powers check) is cast during a full moon. Regardless of the caster's alignment, these spells work at two levels higher than normal. Player characters who cast an evil spell incur a powers check increased by 2%.

Only wizards are affected by these changes. Because Lord Soth is not a wizard, his spells are not affected.

A Land Torn Asunder

As Soth spends increasing amounts of time inside the *memory mirrors*, his memories change and his domain becomes less coherent. These changes manifest themselves both on the land and on its people. The very ground on which the heroes walk slowly tears itself apart, and the elves of Sithicus are literally losing their minds as their memories seep away.

As soon as the heroes enter Sithicus (either through the mists or from an adjoining domain) they observe the effects of a land destroying itself. Near the borders of the domain they witness only minor disturbances. The closer they get to Nedragaard Keep, the more pronounced are the effects on the land and its population.

As the heroes enter Sithicus, read the following to the players:

A dark forest of gigantic, mossy gray firs and pines hems you in on either side. The ground seems solid enough, and yet you experience a moment of vertigo, as if it shifted underfoot. At the same time you hear a deep groan—a monstrous sound, as though some great thing lay dying, just inside the forest.

A short time later the ground begins to tremble. Just ahead, a rift opens in the earth,

about two feet wide and ten feet long. It is filled with a swirling grey mist that is tainted with the chill of the grave.

All is silent for a moment, and then a tree whose roots have been exposed by the rift tears free of the soil and topples in your direction. The massive trunk, heavy enough to crush a house, is falling on you!

The heroes must move quickly to avoid the falling tree. Play this as a close call, having each character make a Dexterity check to leap out of the way. Those who fail are not crushed—instead, the heavy branches knock them to the ground, inflicting 1d2 points of damage.

The rift in the ground is a crack in the fabric of the domain of Sithicus. Like Ravenloft's Shadow Rift, it is a bottomless pit. Any character foolish enough to jump in it falls eternally through the mists and is lost forever. Kindly DMs—or those with overly impulsive heroes—may rule that anyone jumping or falling into the rift winds up in a random location inside Sithicus.

Otherwise, the rift offers no danger. If the heroes lower equipment or rappel into it, the equipment or character suffers no ill effects and can be pulled out safely.

This is but the first of many rifts the heroes observe in Sithicus. Numerous chasms have opened in the ground in many locations, and still more tear open within sight of the heroes. Each hour, they witness 1d4 rifts tearing open. These vary from 10–100 (1d10×10) feet in length and are 1–10 (1d10) feet wide. Some cause trees to fall, others undermine buildings and cause walls to collapse. Although none occur directly under the heroes' feet, a few come uncomfortably close—perhaps swallowing a carriage a hero was just about to step into or even an NPC that the characters were talking to.

The closer the heroes get to Nedragaard Keep, the more previously-formed rifts they see. None of the rifts, however, undermine the keep itself, which remains solid throughout the adventure.

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A Cry in the Wilderness

A short time later, the heroes encounter Quallan, a Sithican elf. Quallan was part of a group who tried to flee the domain when the rifts first started to appear two months ago. His companions were driven back at the borders when they heard the madness-inducing singing. Quallan pressed on, only to fall victim to the madness. He escaped into Valachan, but his paranoia eventually caused him to flee back to this domain.

Quallan believes that Sithicus is being invaded by an army of evil treants, commanded by Baron Urik von Kharkov of Valachan. He is convinced that treants have invaded the forests of Sithicus and is fleeing from this advancing army, toward Kartakass, as fast as he can. Even the slightest movement of a tree branch makes him scream. If a tree falls, he bolts in panic.

The heroes may encounter Quallan either on the road or in the forest. Read the following:

A shrill scream of terror pierces the air. A short distance away, in the woods to your right, something moves quickly toward you, plunging wildly through the branches.

A man bursts out into the open. His hair is a dull silver color and there is a crazed light in his amber eyes. By his pointed ears, you know he is an elf. His shirt is torn, and he's covered with mud. Gasping, he races past you, screaming, "Run!

"Run! The treants are coming! They'll crush us all! Flee for your very lives!"

If the heroes try to stop Quallan from running past them, they have a struggle on their hands. Quallan is unarmed (he lost his sword in the forest) but fights with his fists. He is weak from exhaustion and lack of food, and thus should be easy to overcome.

Quallan (2nd-level fighter): THAC0 19; #AT 1; Dmg 1d4 (fist); AC 10; HD 1+1; hp 7; MV 12; SA +1 to hit with bow or sword; SD nil (too

frightened to move silently or blend in with forest); MR 90% resistance to *sleep* and all *charm*-related spells; SZ M (5' tall); Int high (14); AL CG; ML unreliable (4); XP 420.

If the heroes instead let Quallan run past, he runs no more than a few dozen feet before his shirt catches on a protruding branch. Screaming about treants, he struggles, then collapses in a dead faint. This odd behavior should be enough to lure the heroes to investigate. As soon as they reach Quallan, he starts to revive.

Once the heroes have either subdued Quallan or watched him regain consciousness, add the following.

"Aha!" the elf cries. "I see it now! You're agents of Baron Kharkov!"

Throwing back his head, he shouts for help. "Lord Soth! Your enemies have entered your lands! Come out of your keep and fight! Send forth your warriors to protect the people of your domain!"

With a bit of persuasion, the heroes can convince Quallan they are not Baron Kharkov's agents. If they point out that no treants have actually emerged from the forest, Quallan calms down a little—but he remains on his guard, watching every tree for the slightest sign of "sentient" movement.

Talking with Quallan: Quallan is a rarity in Sithicus because he is not prejudiced against non-elven characters. Whereas, he spent the last few weeks outside Sithicus, he is also the only elf with intact memory. If questioned, he may reveal several pieces of information (some false):

- ✦ The High Lord of this domain is Lord Soth, a giant of a man completely encased in black plate mail. He rules Sithicus from Nedragard Keep, located in a deep chasm that lies between the elven cities of Har-Thelen and Hroth.

- ✦ Soth has not ventured out of Nedragard Keep for some time. He was last seen two months ago—about the same time that the rifts began opening in the ground. Quallan believes

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that “something must be wrong” with the High Lord. Otherwise, he adds, this great warrior would have emerged from his keep to deal with the invasion by Baron Kharkov.

❖ Soth’s warriors are dead things that rise up out of the ground to fight his battles. These creatures are also loyal to Azrael, Soth’s dwarven seneschal.

❖ Those who try to flee Sithicus hear a “terrible singing” that drives them back. Even plugging your ears does not help. Quallan believes that the invading treants are singing, in an effort to drive the elves out of Sithicus so that Baron Kharkov can claim this domain.

❖ Quallan thinks the rifts in the earth are caused by the treants, who open the chasms with their roots.

Now that he has returned to Sithicus, Quallan is starting to lose his memory. If questioned about his background, he is vague on details. He has trouble remembering events that occurred more than a few months ago.

Quallan can guide the heroes, but only if they are travelling in a direction that leads away from Valachan. He looks to them for protection from his imagined army of treants. He can be of great use to the heroes in dealing with other, more xenophobic elves—but his wild stories of invasion are likely to alarm these folk.

If the heroes have journeyed to Sithicus to search for skull-headed serpents, Quallan tells them that these serpents nest inside hollows in trees. The heroes have a 20% chance per hour spent searching (cumulative) of finding one snake. But Quallan utterly refuses to approach any trees, and does not help them capture the serpent.

Poisonous snake, normal: THAC0 19; #AT 1; Dmg 1; AC 6; HD 2+1; hp 9; MV 15; SA poison (Type A; Dmg 15/0); SD nil; MR nil; SZ S (2' long); Int animal (1); AL N; ML avg (8); XP 175.

If the heroes are trying to locate Krellantha, the supplier of the color-changing rose petals, Quallan directs them to her flower shop in Har-

Thelen. When the heroes reach the shop, however, the trail runs cold. Two weeks ago, Krellantha made one of her regular wildflower-gathering expeditions to an area near Nedragaard Keep. Quallan has not heard from her since. The staff at the shop assume she has fallen into a rift and disappeared. The heroes may find Krellantha (or what’s left of her) in the next chapter.

The Ghost Patrol

After their encounter with Quallan, the heroes encounter a group of Soth’s minions who have pressed three elves into service. The minions force the elves to search for the ghostly figure of a dark-haired woman who roams Sithicus by night. Soth believes this is Kitiara, and thinks that her spirit may have been drawn into his domain by his passionate desire for her. (For more details on this apparition, see this adventure’s introduction.)

Soth’s seneschal, a dwarven werebadger named Azrael, is leading a group of eight skeletons. Azrael and the skeletons are herding the elves at swordpoint. Because he knows that no elf would dare challenge the seneschal of Lord Soth, Azrael doesn’t care how much noise he makes. The heroes hear his group long before they see it. Read the following aloud:

Just ahead, you hear a loud cursing. A man is shouting over the sound of whimpers and pleas for mercy. You also hear a strange rattling noise.

“What do you mean, you don’t remember seeing the ghost with the crooked smile? When I spoke to you a week ago, you seemed certain enough that you could remember the spot where you saw her. Now suddenly you’ve forgotten. Well, maybe this will help jog your memory!”

Suddenly you hear the heavy sound of weapons hitting flesh. At the same moment, a woman begins to scream.

If the heroes approach, add the following:

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Six skeletons are hacking a male elf to death. A female elf is screaming. Another male elf, flanked by two more sword-wielding skeletons, is standing with his fists clenched while blood spatters him.

A dwarf with bone-white sideburns and moustache is directing the actions of the skeletons. He steps forward and forces the female elf's head closer to the corpse.

"Do you remember yet, Hethanna?" he says. "Or do I have to kill your brother, as well as your husband? Lord Soth is too busy to tend to these matters himself, but he still wants to find his lady."

"All I remember is the howling," the elven woman moans. "Nothing else. None of us remembers anything any more."

The dwarf gestures to the skeletons, who turn slowly toward the remaining elf and raise their bloody swords.

The cruelty of this scene is cause for the heroes to make a horror check.

If the heroes intervene, Azrael immediately orders the skeletons to attack them. Azrael, a lycanthrope, fights beside them, changing into a dwarf-badger hybrid form so that he can fight either with his axe, or with tooth and nail. If the fight goes badly, he escapes by burrowing into the earth. For Azrael's background, see the appendix.

Skeletons (8): THAC0 19; #AT 1; Dmg 1d6 (sword); AC 7; HD 1; hp 5 each; MV 12; SA nil; SD piercing weapons cause half damage, immune to cold-based attacks; MR immune to *charm, fear, hold, and sleep*; SZ M; Int non (0); AL N; ML special; XP 65 each.

Aftermath: The two surviving elves, Hethanna and her brother Rowhen, suffer from fluctuating memories. After the heroes rescue them, Hethanna turns to Rowhen and asks, "Are you really my brother?"

He shrugs. "I am not certain, lady."

Hethanna insists that Rowhen help her to carry her husband's body back for burial in the

family cairn. But when she looks down at the corpse, a puzzled expression crosses her face. "Who is this man?" she asks.

Rowhen shrugs.

"And who are they?" She indicates the heroes.

Eventually, Hethanna and Rowhen carry the body back to Har-Thelen. Their course wanders, for they keep forgetting the route. If the heroes follow, the elves ignore them.

Working with Azrael: Azrael follows the heroes at a distance, curious to learn who they are. If captured, he explains that he is trying to find the ghost so that he can use it to "lure Soth out of his playground." He does not elaborate. He tries to persuade the heroes to help him, downplaying his earlier brutality.

If they agree to help Azrael, the heroes wind up on a wild goose chase. Any elf who admits having seen the ghost has forgotten where he or she last spotted it. If the heroes aid Azrael in terrorizing these elves, they must make a powers check. Eventually, Azrael slips away from them and returns to Nedragaard Keep.

A City in Chaos

The heroes' next logical destination (especially if they are following one of Sithicus' main roads) is one of the domain's three major cities. Here they can ask about the strange rifts and can meet the Vistani of Sithicus.

Should the heroes instead head directly to Nedragaard Keep, place the encounter with the Vistani along the way when the heroes spot their wagons. The encounter gives Lord Soth's history and an important clue, a prophecy by a Vistana named Magda the Wanderer.

The cities: Mal-Erek, Hroth, and Har-Thelen have been badly damaged by the rifts in the ground. Building and city walls have collapsed, and several people have disappeared into the mist-filled chasms. At first, this caused panic. But as their memories began fluctuating more and more, the elves forgot that the rifts were a recent occurrence. Most of the population now believes that "things have always been this way." Calm acceptance has replaced shock and fear.

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Despite this calm, the city itself is chaotic. The rifts constantly alter the landscape, cutting across roads and forcing lengthy detours. The waning memories of the citizens also take their toll. An elf may suddenly forget what he or she was doing and wander off, leaving a cooking pot untended or a stable door unlocked. Fires break out frequently and the occasional stag beetle rampages through the streets, attacking people with its eight-foot horns.

Stag Beetle: THAC0 13; #AT 3; Dmg 4d4/1d10/1d10; AC 3; HD 7; hp 30; MV 6; SA nil; SD nil; MR nil; SZ L (10' long); Int non (0); AL nil; ML elite (13); XP 975.

Yet somehow the elves still remember their ingrained prejudices. They show the heroes the discourtesies described above.

Each elf the heroes meet has only a 5% chance of remembering, as Quallan does, that the rifts began appearing about the time that

Soth disappeared into his keep. Most elves have forgotten Soth's very name and can no longer remember where his keep lies.

The heroes' only hope of getting information is from the Vistani, who have camped for the night just outside of town. The Vistani are making the most of the situation, flitting into shops whose owners have temporarily wandered off. The gypsies then casually stroll out with armfuls of merchandise, glibly telling the befuddled elves that they were legally purchased. At some point, a Vistana tries stealing from the heroes, assuming that they too suffer from memory loss. One or two pickpocketing attempts may succeed, but eventually one fails and the heroes notice it.

Vistana (2nd-level thief): THAC0 20; #AT 1; Dmg 1d4 (dagger); AC 7 (leather); HD 2; hp 10; MV 12; SA backstab; SD nil; MR nil; SZ M; Int avg (10); AL NG; ML avg (10); XP 35.

PP 30	OL 40	F/RT 15	MS 20
HS 25	DN 15	CW 60	RL 05

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If caught, Vistani thieves drop any stolen goods and run, leaping over a wide rift to get away. Captured Vistani first plead for mercy: "The world is going to end soon enough, when Sithicus at last tears itself apart. Why obey the law, when we're all going to fall into the mists, anyhow?"

As a bargaining ploy, the Vistana offers to introduce the heroes to the leader of his or her tribe—a woman known as Magda the Wanderer. "Magda thinks she knows a way out of Sithicus. If you spare me, she'll reveal how you can escape, too."

Alternatively, the heroes can simply blunder on the Vistani camp. Here, Magda and her hound greet them. She is curious about how they came to Sithicus and why their memories are intact. During their meeting with Magda, her pet rook, Shadow, sits on the wheel of a nearby *Vardo*, occasionally uttering one of the three words it knows: "Through," "Dark," and "Lord." It is important that the presence of Shadow be established now, since it and other rooks play an important role in the climax of the adventure.

For Magda's background, see the appendix.

Meeting the Wanderers: The only rational folk left in Sithicus, The Wanderers are not affected by the memory loss; they are not bound to the domain.

The Vistani discuss the chaos with the heroes. They have noticed that the effects seem to get worse the closer one gets to Nedragaard Keep. Something must be wrong with Lord Soth.

Although Magda told her tribe she knows a way they can escape Sithicus before the domain breaks up entirely, she is not certain that escape is possible. All she knows is a prophecy, handed down orally from *oma* to *oma* since the time of her ancestor, the Vistana hero Kulchek. She repeats the prophecy for the heroes:

Magda's Prophecy:

"In time, the cudgel shall come forth again,
into the light,

"And a new tribe shall rally around it.

"Dirges shall hem them in on every side,

"And sorrowful shall be their song.

"But in the year of destruction, strangers
shall come,

"And they shall lead the way to salvation
through the jaws of the beast.

"Only with their help can the wanderer
escape.

"The strangers, too, shall be freed,

"When the black rose blooms."

Because Soth's emblem is the black rose, Magda has concluded that the escape route must lie within Nedragaard Keep. With a little persuasion she agrees to accompany the heroes into the keep. She explains, however, that she is of no use as a guide, because she has never set foot in the place and does not know its secrets. She does know, however, that it is guarded by thirteen skeletal warriors who are steadfastly loyal to Lord Soth.

A Dark Knight's Tale

When she fled from Lord Soth nearly twenty years ago, Magda realized that she should learn more about the man who had held her hostage. Now that she is trapped in Sithicus, the death knight's domain, she puts her knowledge to good use.

Magda's information came from many sources. Terlarm, a cleric of Gilean who had become trapped in Barovia, provided information on Lord Soth's early history. The secret journals of Lord Gundar (spirited out of Gundarak after that lord met his death) provided additional material. Apparently Count Strahd von Zarovich had shared with Gundar much of what he had learned about Soth from the death knight's first seneschal, Caradoc.

Magda wove this information into a tale. She has taught it to each member of her tribe in the hope that knowledge of Lord Soth might give them an advantage, should Sithicus' lord ever press them into service.

Any member of Magda's tribe can recite "A Dark Knight's Tale" for the heroes if given

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suitable incentive to do so. A handful of gold or silver coins, tossed a few at a time to keep the story going, is the usual payment.

Read the text that follows, pausing whenever the word **COIN** appears and continuing the tale only after the heroes have tossed a coin or two in response.

There once was a mighty warrior whose jealous passions and neglect of duty led him to lose all that was dear to him—his love, his life, his very spirit. His tale is a descent into darkness and evil.

His name is Lord Soth, and this is his story.

Long, long ago, Lord Soth was mortal.

Nearly four centuries ago, he fought on the side of good in the distant land of Solamnia.

In those days, Lord Soth was a Knight of Solamnia. Through deeds of great daring and chivalry, he earned each of that order's honors—crown, sword, and rose. He built the mighty Dargaard Keep of rose-red stone, and married the beautiful Lady Gladria of Kalaman. Proud he was of his wife, though it was duty alone made him wed her. Proud he was of his fortress strong.

Pride. As we Vistani say, "The greater the pride, the farther the fall." And what caused this proud warrior to fall?

COIN

Desire for a woman who was forbidden to him. Possessing her would make a mockery of his wedding vows. Possessing him would contradict her own promise to the gods. But then, as we Vistani say, "The sweetest fruits lie behind the stoutest fence."

Lady Isolde was her name. She was an elf maid of Silvanost, travelling with thirteen other maids to the mighty city of Palanthis. There she would pledge herself to the god Paladine the Valiant Warrior, father of all good, platinum dragon of the evening sky.

The maids were beset by bandits and taken prisoner. There were dozens of the rogues, perhaps even hundreds. Somehow, they had known just where and when to strike.

Lord Soth met their leader, a fearsome ogre, in single combat. He fought the brute in accordance with the rules of fair combat, besting him even though the ogre resorted to trickery and unfair tactics. The bandits fled—and Lady Isolde fell into Lord Soth's arms. An innocent spark of love was kindled. All too soon it became the flame of lust.

The elf maid had vowed to serve her god but had not yet been sworn a priestess, and so had no formal oath to break. Lord Soth, however, was bound to his wife by sacred marriage oath. His vows were binding "until death parts us." There was only one way to break those vows. And so. . . .

COIN

And so Lord Soth committed the ultimate sin. He ordered his seneschal, a vain and evil man named Caradoc, to murder Lady Gladria. What should have been a bed of love was turned into a death bed. Blood on her bedclothes showed that murder had been done, though her body was never found.

With unseemly haste—and without a tear of mourning for his dead wife—Lord Soth took Lady Isolde to live with him in Dargaard Keep. His bloody secret seemed safe, but the elf maids who accompanied Isolde had sharp ears and keen eyes. Somehow, they learned of Lord Soth's crime. Somehow, their gossip reached the ears of the High Knights.

Called before a council of his peers, Lord Soth was found guilty of murder, adultery, and dishonoring the vows of his order. He was dragged through the streets of Palanthis in shame and sentenced to death. The execution would take place the very next day; according to tradition, Soth would die by his own sword.

But that night. . . .

COIN

That night, thirteen knights who had remained loyal to Lord Soth rescued him from his prison. By dark of night they stole away to Dargaard Keep.

The Knights of Solamnia besieged the keep, demanding that Soth emerge to meet

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his fate. They lifted the siege just long enough for Lord Soth to wed Isolde in a joyless, sparsely attended ceremony.

The siege was a long and harsh one, but Dargaard Keep held. Just as things were at their darkest, the god Paladine spoke to Lord Soth. The knight's sins would all be forgiven if he undertook one last, heroic task. Success would mean Soth's death—but also bring about his salvation.

Paladine ordered Lord Soth to journey to the city of Istar, where the Kingpriest of that city was about to demand of the gods the power to eradicate all evil from Krynn. Unless the priest could be stopped, the gods would retaliate by utterly destroying the city. Only Soth could prevent this cataclysm.

Lord Soth set out for Istar. But he never reached the city. What stopped him?

COIN

Soth never reached Istar because the fiery hand of jealousy gripped his heart. One of the elf maids whispered in his ear that Isolde had been unfaithful to him, that the son Isolde had borne was not Soth's own.

Infuriated, Lord Soth rode home to confront his wife with her imagined crimes. At the same moment that he raised his mailed fist to her, the Kingpriest of Istar raised his voice to the heavens. The furious gods hurled a mountain at the city—and hurled holy fire at Dargaard Keep.

Even as she was consumed by the flames, Lady Isolde begged her husband to save the life of Peradur, their newborn son. But Lord Soth turned away. He lost his wife, his son, his life, and his spirit that day. But something evil lived on inside his empty chest. And so Lord Soth was reborn as. . . .

COIN

. . . a death knight. A creature of darkness, a heartless servant of evil. A mockery of a man, with an icy voice and chilling touch. A fiend capable of killing with a mere word, of causing wracking pain with a mere glance. A creature capable of turning the bravest warrior's blood to ice, of burning the holiest priest to cinders with a mere thought. A creature

who bends the shadows to his will and laughs in the face of the gods.

Together with the dragon highlord Kitiara (Ith Matar, Lord Soth served the evil goddess Takhisis, Queen of Darkness, five-headed dragon of the evening sky. Together, they laid low the glorious city of Palanthis. Together, thought Lord Soth, they would always remain.

But Kitiara of the crooked smile died that day, in the Tower of High Sorcery at Palanthis. Her spirit entered the five-headed mirror and was claimed by Takhisis.

They say that Lord Soth smiled as he gathered up Kitiara's corpse, for he had prepared for this. Even as the city fell. . . .

COIN

Even as Palanthis fell, Soth's ghostly seneschal Caradoc entered the wastes of the Void, called the Abyss, then entered the Infernal Realm that was home to the Dark Queen. Reaching the goddess' realm, he raised his medallion of office above his head and called Kitiara's spirit into it. With this prize, Lord Soth could raise the dragon highlord as one of the living dead. With Kitiara beside him, the retinue of his keep would be complete.

But Lord Soth was not to receive Kitiara's spirit. Caradoc hid the medallion and demanded to be restored to mortal life in payment for turning it over to his lord.

Lord Soth responded as he always did to disloyalty—with an inflamed passion that burned away all rational thought. Seeking revenge against his seneschal, he followed Caradoc into the mists not once, but twice. Once into Barovia, domain of Count Strahd Von Zarovich. A second time, into Sithicus, the land Lord Soth now rules.

Lord Soth seeks one thing—and one thing only. It is the key to his every thought, his every action. That one thing is. . . .

COIN

To return once more to his native land. He will stop at nothing, spare no one, in his efforts to achieve this goal.

We, his unwilling servants, pray that one day he will succeed. For that day will see the end of this long, dark night.

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*have made my bed
In charnels and on
coffins, where
black death
Keeps record of the
trophies won
from thee.*

—Percy Bysshe
Shelley
(1792–1822),
“Alastor,
or The Spirit of
Solitude”

At the heart of
Lord Soth’s
domain of Sithicus is
an imperfect copy of the

stronghold Soth occupied on the world of Krynn—a keep carved from a mountain peak whose tapering slopes resemble a rosebud.

Soth soon discovered that the keep was filled with discrepancies that made it subtly different from his original stronghold. Doors were out of place, corridors were shorter or longer than they should be, spiral staircases wound in the wrong direction, and windows gave a slightly different view of the chasm in which the keep was situated. Thus, Soth gave the place the name Nedraggaard—“not Dargaard” in the ancient Solamnic tongue.

The keep is intact but looks as though it has lain empty for decades. The corridors are dark and the furnishings are rotten or moldy. Sooty black marks (Soth’s footsteps) cover the floor, and everything is coated in dust.

Despite its vacant appearance, the keep holds the same retainers that served the death knight on Krynn. Thirteen skeletal warriors in full plate mail roam the halls, searching for trespassers. Thirteen banshees attend Soth in his throne room each night, singing the tale of his life.

Like the keep, these retainers are imperfect. The skeletal warriors do not keep to their posts, but instead wander the keep, refusing to adhere to the strict discipline Soth tries in vain to

impose. The banshees sing Soth’s tale incorrectly each night, forgetting verses or adding events that never occurred.

Keening Spirits

The banshees who were drawn into Sithicus to accompany Lord Soth are trapped within his keep and do not wander from it. Their ability to detect the presence of living creatures is likewise limited to the keep.

Each banshee in Nedraggaard Keep resembles a beautiful elven woman whose face is twisted into a cruel leer. Its ragged dress provocatively reveals shapely limbs, and its unkempt hair gives it a wild, tousled look.

By day, the banshees are nearly invisible, even in the darkened halls of the keep. A party has only a 50% chance to catch a fleeting glimpse of a banshee in a room or corridor it is about to enter. At night the banshees become fully visible, glowing with an unearthly luminosity.

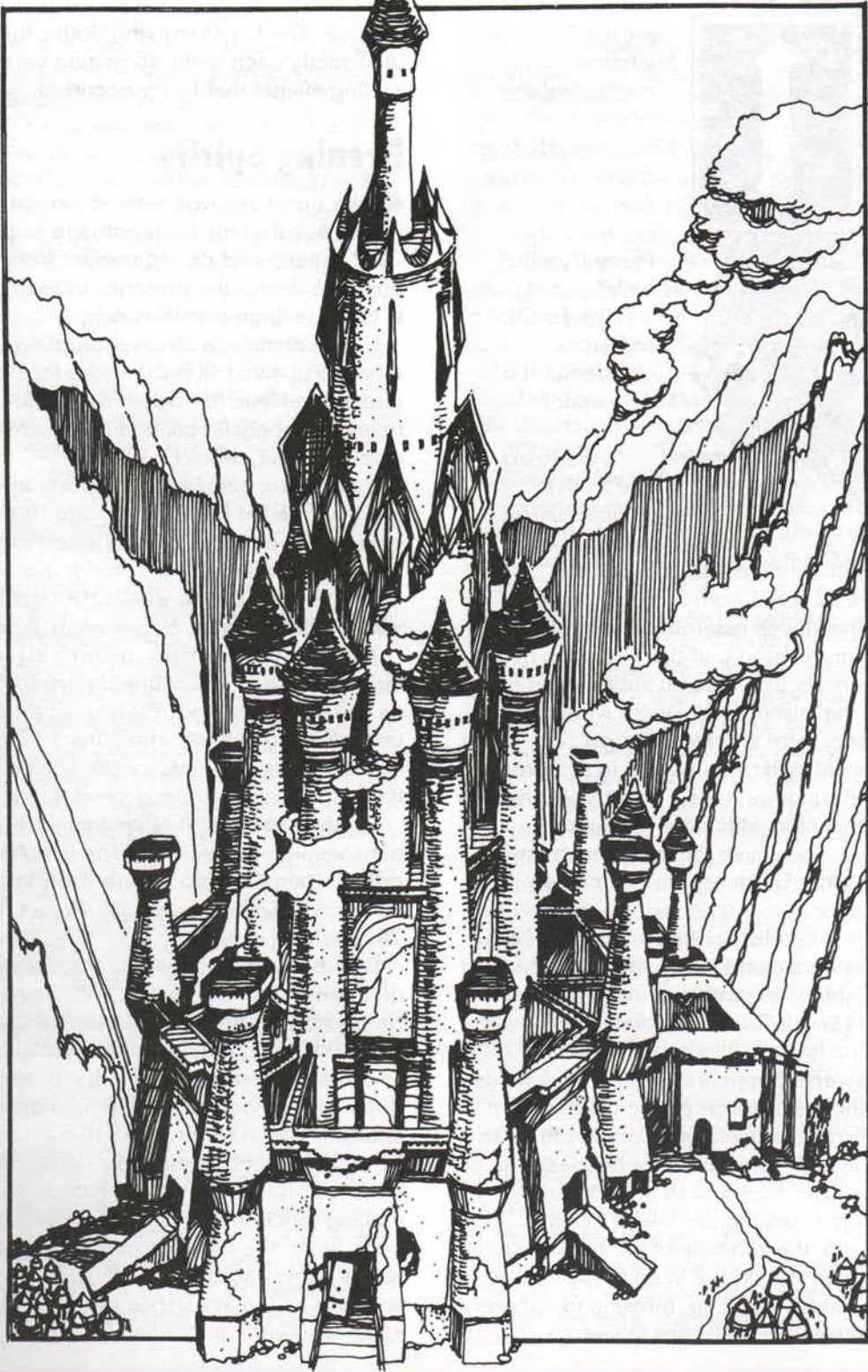
The banshees of Nedraggaard Keep are highly territorial. Each has claimed an area of the keep as its own and spends most of its time there. By unspoken agreement, the other 12 banshees avoid this “lair.” Therefore the heroes usually encounter only one banshee at a time.

On the poster map of Nedraggaard Keep, the banshee lairs are shaded. The banshees’ starting points when the heroes enter their lairs are rooms 6, 15, 19, 31, 36, 39, 46, 50, 58, 63, 74, 79, and 86.

Banshees harbor a deep hatred for all living creatures, whose presence they find painful. Should the heroes enter a banshee lair, the banshee attacks immediately. The banshee first tries to drive intruders away with the magical *fear* that grips all who view her. Each hero must save vs. spells or flee in terror for 1d10 rounds, with a 50% chance of dropping any items carried. The banshee attacks remaining characters with a chilling touch that inflicts 1d8 points of damage.

By night, the banshee can draw on a second attack form—a deadly death wail. This keening sounds like the anguished cry of a human or elven woman. It immediately slays all living

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creatures within 30 feet of the banshee who fail to save vs. death magic. Fortunately, each of these banshee can be kept only once per night.

Each night at the stroke of midnight, the thirteen banshees gather in the throne room of the keep (Area 68) to serenade Lord Soth. They remain here for 2d3 hours; the time varies according to the particular chapter of Lord Soth's life they are singing that evening. Their song echoes throughout the keep, clearly audible to everyone in the stronghold. During this time, their lairs are unprotected and may be entered freely. Afterward they return to their respective lairs.

If any hero is foolish enough to enter the throne room while the banshees are singing, all 13 banshees attack at once. Three of them immediately keep, with the result that the hapless intruder (and anyone else within 30 feet of the banshees) must succeed in three saving throws vs. death magic to survive. Once the intruder has been dealt with, the banshees resume their song. If the intruder flees, they do not pursue.

During the 10 minutes before midnight and the 10 minutes following the end of the banshees' song, the banshees travel between their lairs and the Throne Room. During this time the heroes have a 10% chance to encounter one of the banshees.

Each of the banshees has treasure type D, hidden inside the room marked with a B. Prepare these treasures in advance and decide how they are hidden.

Banshees (13): THAC0 13; #AT 1; Dmg 1d8; AC 0; HD 7; hp 30 each; MV 15; SA death wail; SD +1 or better weapon to hit, *fear*, immune to cold- or electricity-based attacks; MR 50%, completely immune to *charm*, *hold*, and *sleep* spells; SZ M; Int exceptional (15); AL CE; ML elite (13); XP 4,000 each.

Skeletal Guardians

On Krynn, the skeletal warriors who served Lord Soth were extremely powerful creatures, almost equal in stature to their

master. But like the banshees, the skeletal warriors of Sithicus are flawed; their strength and abilities are half what they once were. In an attempt to correct this irritating flaw, Soth at first drilled his skeletal warriors mercilessly. But this proved futile; the undead creatures could not increase in ability.

The thirteen skeletal warriors who patrol Nedragaard Keep are wandering monsters. Each turn there is a 10% chance (non-cumulative) that the heroes encounter a skeletal warrior on patrol. When this happens, read the following:

The clank of armor and the thud of heavy footsteps echo within the halls. You smell a faint odor of rot.

Suddenly you see the source. Striding toward you is a giant of a warrior, clad in rusted armor and tattered clothing. Behind the visor of the warrior's helm, twin pinpoints of red glow with an unearthly light. In skeletal hands, the warrior clutches a terrible sword, its blade streaked with rust—or perhaps with dried blood. Glaring at you, the figure opens its creaking jaws and issues a challenge: "Who goes there?"

The password: The skeletal warriors are under orders to attack any intruders in the keep, but they always check whether strangers have arrived at their lord's behest. If strangers answer the challenge properly, the warrior leaves them alone. If not, the warrior immediately attacks.

The current correct answer to the challenge is: "A servant of the dark lord."

The skeletal warriors do not challenge the banshees, but they do challenge Azrael, who knows all the correct responses. Thus the heroes may have a chance to overhear the appropriate response. Unfortunately, Soth has ordered the password changed daily. It rotates through the following responses:

"A seeker of the rose."

"A squire of the black knight."

"A companion of Lord Soth."

"One who treads the dark path."

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Combat: Each skeletal warrior projects an aura of *fear*. Characters of less than 3rd level who see a skeletal warrior must save vs. spells or flee in terror.

If the heroes enter into battle with a skeletal warrior the chances of meeting other skeletal warriors increases. The undead guardians realize there are strangers in the keep and begin to patrol in groups. After a battle, each turn that the heroes remain inside the keep, the encounter chance increases to 20% (non-cumulative) and the group consists of 1d4+1 skeletal warriors.

The skeletal warriors are utterly loyal to Soth and follow his every command while within 240 feet of him. Otherwise, they wander the keep, never leaving Nedragaard unless with Soth.

When Soth is inside the *memory mirrors* he cannot control the skeletal warriors.

Golden circlets control the skeletal warriors, but Soth left them behind on Krynn. He hid them well inside the real Dargaard Keep. Even if someone on Krynn found the circlets, they could not control the skeletal warriors from that land; the wearer would have to enter Ravenloft to use them. The skeletal warriors also left their treasure behind on Krynn.

Skeletal warriors (13): THAC0 15; #AT 1; Dmg 1d8 (long sword); AC 2; HD 5+6; hp 45 each; MV 6; SA +3 on attack rolls; SD only hit by magical weapons, cannot be turned by priests, *fear*; MR 45%; SZ M (7'); Int high (15); AL NE; ML champion (15); XP 3,000.

Encounters in the Keep

The mountain peak from which Nedragaard Keep was carved rises out of a 1,000-foot-deep chasm with steep sides. If the heroes arrive at the keep in the daylight hours, they see dozens of large black birds wheeling through the air and circling the highest reaches of the structure. At night, they hear the birds cawing; it's as if they never sleep.

The usual approach to the keep is via a draw-bridge (Area 1) that crosses the chasm. Several pieces of wood have fallen away and other

boards are rotten. The rotten portions are not immediately visible to the eye, but Soth and Azrael know how to avoid them and can cross the bridge safely. Anyone else must prod ahead with a staff to test the boards. Heroes stepping on one of the rotten areas fall part-way through the bridge but can avoid plunging into the chasm by throwing out their arms to clutch at solid wood. Taking this action (and thereby avoiding a fatal fall) involves dropping anything carried. Round or oblong objects roll off the bridge and are lost.

A portcullis bars entry to the grounds of the keep. The mechanism to raise it is in the Gate House (Area 2). The skeletal warriors work this mechanism.

Heroes who can *fly* or *levitate* can land either on the balconies of Level 10 or Level 4, or within the walls of the keep on Level 1. They might also land on Stair A, Stair B, or Stair C.

The walls are all stone. The floors of Levels 2-10 are made from sturdy wooden beams and three-inch-thick planks. Ceilings in most rooms are 15 feet high, except in the throne room, which has a 35-foot-high ceiling (it occupies both Level 5 and Level 6). No room in the keep is lighted unless otherwise noted.

In addition to banshee and skeletal warrior encounters, the heroes may encounter the senechal Azrael (who returns to the keep after each unsuccessful search for the ghost of Kitiara) and a kender vampire named Tickelmop Toothfang. These two encounters, described below, may be placed anywhere in the keep. The encounter with Azrael is optional; omit it if Azrael was killed earlier in the adventure. But the heroes must meet Tickelmop before they enter the Throne Room.

The keep also contains several encounters keyed to specific areas. Each time the heroes enter one of these areas, read the boxed text for that room. The majority of the keep is not detailed; improvise descriptions based on the type of room. Remember, when describing furnishings, that everything is dark, ancient, and in ill repair.

Add to some of the rooms' low-level monsters. Generate these randomly by rolling 1d8 or choosing from the following list:

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- 1) Bats, Ravenloft skeletal
- 2) Centipedes, giant or huge
- 3) Fireflies (Insects)
- 4) Mold (brown, russet, or yellow)
- 5) Gray ooze
- 6) Poltergeist
- 7) Skeleton, animal
- 8) Spider, hairy or large

The statistics on these creatures can be found in the *MONSTROUS MANUAL* or the first *RAVENLOFT MONSTROUS COMPENDIUM*.

Specific Encounters

Music Room (Area 11):

This room is furnished with elegant couches, now stained with mold. A large harp at the center of the room is covered with dust, and a lute lies broken in the corner. A broken harpsichord leans drunkenly. Something is making the strings thrum.

The lute is smashed; the strings of the harp are rotten. Two rats have made a nest inside the harpsichord; they begin fighting just as the heroes enter. They have torn each other to bloody pieces by the time the heroes lift the lid of the instrument to look inside.

The harpsichord is a magical instrument that functions as a *harp of discord*. Any hero playing it activates its magic.

Grand Hall (Area 12):

A cold wind whistles into this large, echoing room through a pair of double doors that hang from rusted hinges. The floor is littered with wood that has fallen from the ceiling.

Tapestries on the wall nearest the broken doors have been blackened by fire; little of them remains. Tapestries on the opposite wall are stained and damp, but their subject—a great battle between knights riding dragons—can still be discerned.

One end of this room is dominated by two

staircases that lead up into darkness. Just in front of these sits a massive throne, carved from black-veined marble and studded with blood-red gems.

A flicker of movement overhead catches your eye. Something is moving along the heavy beams of the ceiling, darting from one shadow to the next.

The tapestries depict the War of the Lance, in which chromatic and metallic dragons fought one another. The creatures moving overhead are a pack of 10 normal rats. They pose no danger to the heroes and can easily be killed. Violent attacks directed toward the ceiling have a 25% chance of causing one of the rotten beams overhead to fall. It crashes down, inflicting 1d6 points of damage to anyone beneath it. The rest of the ceiling remains intact.

Rat, Normal (10): THAC0 20; #AT 1; Dmg 1; AC 7; HD ½; hp 1 each; MV 15; SA disease; SD nil; MR nil; SZ T (6' long); Int semi (2); AL N; ML unreliable (3); XP 7 each.

The true danger in this room is the throne—actually a common mimic. (See the *MONSTROUS MANUAL*.) The mimic attacks the first character who touches or sits on it and becomes stuck to its glue-like surface. It then forms a pseudopod and lashes out at the victim, who must make a surprise roll with a -4 penalty or suffer 3d4 points of damage and become stuck fast.

Characters stuck to the throne can break free with an Open Doors roll. Alternatively, alcohol dissolves the glue in three rounds.

The mimic is intelligent. If the attack fails, it apologizes: "Sorry about that. I only tried to eat you because I was hungry. Can't we be friends?" If asked its name, it gives any name it has recently heard, such as a hero's name.

Soth keeps the mimic as a guardian, but his cruel mistreatment has made the mimic somewhat restive. The mimic is desperately hungry and willing to trade information for food—preferably raw meat. This information,

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however, is limited to the layout of Level 1 and the creatures that occupy it. The mimic can tell the heroes which areas are banshee lairs. It knows that Soth's mount is in the stables (Area 13). It describes the animal's burning hooves and glowing eyes, but ignorantly calls it a horse rather than by its true name: "nightmare."

Mimic, Common: THAC0 13; #AT 1; Dmg 3d4; AC 7; HD 7; hp 35; MV 3; SA glue; SD camouflage; MR nil; SZ L; Int avg (10); AL N; ML champion (15); XP 975.

Stables (Area 13):

Mushy straw covers the floor a foot deep. Mangy looking mice and other vermin scurry through it. Here and there the straw is blackened, as if several small fires had burned here. The smell of smoke hangs in the air.

Pegs on the walls hold ropes, bridles, and other riding gear. Along one wall of this room you see a line of nine doors. Judging by their design, they open onto horse stalls.

One stall seems to be occupied. Its door gives off faint thumps, as if a horse were kicking it weakly. Then a high whinny splits the air. It sounds like the horse is in pain.

The "horse" in the third stall from the east wall is in fact a nightmare. The burned patches in the straw on the floor are a clue; they are evenly spaced, like hoof prints. A hero must specifically inspect the burn marks to discover the clue.

The nightmare is Soth's mount. It is angry that Soth has not let it out of its stall for the past four weeks. It wants to be set free.

If the heroes open the door, the nightmare leaps out of the stall. If they don't open the door, the nightmare resumes its kicking, knocking the door down in 1d4 rounds. When the nightmare breaks free, read the following:

A horse leaps from the stable. Its eyes glow brilliant red, and orange flame flickers in its snorting nostrils. In the light of this flame you

can see that the horse's coat is black as a starless night. Wherever it sets its feet, the straw smoulders. The horse paws at the floor in frustration, flicking its black tail. Then its burning eyes fasten on you in an angry glare.

Characters viewing this fearsome creature must make a fear check.

The nightmare's first action is to bolt through the broken double doors. To ensure that no one tries to stop it, the mare breathes a searingly hot cloud of noxious vapor. Those within 10 feet of the nightmare are caught in this smoke and must save vs. paralyzation or suffer a -2 penalty on their attack and damage rolls for 2d6 rounds.

If any of the heroes try to prevent the nightmare from fleeing the stable, it attacks them by kicking with its burning hooves and biting.

Nightmare: THAC0 17; #AT 3; Dmg 1d6+4/1d6+4/2d4 (hoof/hoof/bite); AC -4; HD 6+6; hp 34; MV 15, Fl 36 (C); SA burning hooves; SD paralyzing cloud; MR nil; SZ L; Int very (12); AL NE; ML elite (14); XP 2,000.

Garden (Area 29):

This large open space in the middle of the keep is truly unusual. It is an indoor garden, filled with a wild tangle of plants. The floor is covered in soil, and the ceiling glows with bright light like full sunlight.

The garden is overgrown and obviously has not been tended in weeks. Weeds have spouted everywhere, flowers have dead and mottled blossoms, and clinging vines choke the bushes. The air is heavy with the smell of rotten vegetation and damp.

Still, a few plants seem to have survived. The hardiest are half a dozen rose bushes. Their thorned stems bear white rosebuds.

A flock of birds takes flight from one corner of the garden. There you find a woman lying on the ground. Her pointed ears mark her as an elf; her hair is a dull silver. She has no obvious wounds, but her features look

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a little sunken. The handle of a basket is draped over one of her arms. A knife lies beside her.

The ceiling has been treated with 100 *continual light* spells to make it glow. These can be *dispelled*—one at a time.

The six rose bushes are thornslingers. (See “Plant, Dangerous” in the *MONSTROUS MANUAL*.) The color of their roses turns from white to black as they feed on a victim’s blood. The dead woman lies about a foot away from one bush. Closer observation shows that its flowers are faint gray.

Any warm-blooded creature who approaches to within 10 feet of a bush is immediately attacked by a volley of thorns.

Thornslingers (6): THAC0 Nil; #AT 1 volley; Dmg 2d4; AC 8; HD 4; hp 16 each; MV 0; SA dew; SD nil; MR nil; SZ M; Int non- (0); AL N; ML avg (10); XP 270 each.

The dead woman is Krellantha, an elf who owned a flower shop in Har-Thelen. (See the adventure hook in the Introduction.) She came to the keep to gather roses from this garden. Wizards value them as a spell component, and thus she earned a significant income for her shop. She was cutting flowers with her knife when she died. Inside her basket is a single cut rosebud, withered to a dull brown.

Krellantha knew the dangers posed by the thornslingers and took what she thought were adequate precautions. She brought along a silver flask containing a *potion of plant control*, which she intended to drink before entering the garden. But once she arrived at the keep, her deteriorating memory failed her. She forgot what her flask contained. When she was attacked, it fell out of her basket. It now lies under her body.

Soth permitted Krellantha to enter the keep and cut his roses because she kept him informed of wizards who visit Sithicus. In fact, she introduced the illusionist Tindafalus to Soth.

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Soth taught Krellantha several of the passwords so that she would not be attacked by his skeletal warriors. Because of her failing memory, Krellantha wrote two of these passwords on her left hand so that she could refer to them. They read: "A seeker of the rose," and "A servant of the dark lord."

Temple of Mishakal (Area 38):

This room must once have been beautiful. Now its stained glass windows hang in twisted fragments and its colorful frescoes are crumbling. A dais between the two doors is littered with the remains of a statue carved from white marble veined with gold. The statue has broken into large pieces, but it apparently depicted a beautiful woman holding a torch. Her head lies in a corner, staring sightlessly up at the ceiling.

A short time after the heroes enter this room, one hero (preferably a cleric of non-evil alignment) hears a soft, whispering voice. "Heal me," it pleads. No one else can hear this whisper.

The statue is of the Krynn deity Mishakal, goddess of the healing hand. If its 12 pieces are somehow glued back together, the goddess heals all damage, disease, or insanity in those who did the job, as well as removing curses, curing blindness or deafness, and neutralizing poison, all in a single round. Then it crumbles into dust.

To prevent the statue from being reassembled, Soth has smeared the fragments with a contact poison (Type M; Dmg 20/5).

Temple of Paladine (Area 48):

The wooden floor of this room is gouged and splintered, as if it had been rent by gigantic claws. Long scorch marks have seared the walls and ceiling.

On a dais between the two doors stands a statue of a dragon. From nose to tail it is about 10 feet long. It seems to have been wrought from silver, but the tarnished metal is now a mottle of blacks and purples.

The statue depicts the Krynn deity Paladine, god of good-aligned warriors and wizards, and revered by the Knights of Solamnia. Heat radiates from it; any hero approaching within five feet of the statue can feel this heat. The metal itself is searingly hot; it inflicts 2d6 points of damage to whomever touches it. The heavy platinum-plated statue is worth 10,000 gp.

A short time after the heroes enter this room, one (preferably a paladin or a warrior of non-evil alignment) hears a voice that rings like a gong. "Free me!" it cries. No one else can hear the voice.

Inside the statue is an intelligent sword called *Oathmaker*. It lies on an anvil, its blade glowing red with heat. Anyone touching it suffers 6d6 points of damage. Once the sword has been freed, it cools in six turns. The damage inflicted by touching the sword drops by 1d6 per turn.

To free the sword, the heroes can break the statue by inflicting a total of 30 points of damage.

Oathmaker: This magical *long sword* +2 is of lawful good alignment and was forged for the special purpose of defeating knights who have turned to evil and broken their Solamnic oaths. It was secretly placed here by Paladine to vex Lord Soth. In combat against an evil knight it confers complete immunity to *fear* on its wielder. It has the extraordinary power of *healing* its owner once per day, and of providing its owner with the effects of a *strength* spell once per day. Its ego is 11.

Unfortunately, the sword also bears a curse. Should its wielder retreat in battle while holding *Oathmaker*, a wound opens in the character's side. The wound inflicts 1d8+2 points of damage and can only be cured by a cleric of good alignment.

Library (Area 52):

The walls of this room are lined with books of every size and shape; the air smells of wet paper and mildew. As you enter, several black birds take flight and exit through the empty frames of the three broken windows in a

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flurry of wings and hoarse cries. The carpet beneath each window bears a dark water stain. Some of the books have tumbled from the shelves and lie in an untidy heap on the floor.

The books include treatises on war, biographies of famous knights, and books on military strategy and tactics. Shelved with these are two magical tomes: a *manual of puissant skill at arms* and a *libram of ineffable damnation*. Finding either requires a search that takes 1d4 turns.

The *libram* has a black leather cover embossed with a circle (the moon Nuitari). It is sealed with a lock in the shape of a monstrous head. If its cover is exposed to the light of a full black moon, the following words appear in brilliant silver: "Read on, ye servant of darkness." Inside is a description of how the moon Nuitari affects spellcasting in Sithicus. (See page 7.)

Guard Post (Area 70), Vaults (Areas 71-76):

The following description assumes that the heroes are standing in Area 77 and have just descended the spiral staircase. Should they enter via the windows in the guard post, alter the description.

The stairs lead to a circular room. Positioned evenly around the room are six locked doors. Immediately in front of you is a wide archway leading to an open area. On the far wall of this area, midway between two sets of windows, is a line of wooden pegs. A rusty metal key hangs from each.

The archway is supported by three pillars. Each has been carved in the shape of a vaguely humanoid figure with taloned fingers and toes and a long, barbed tail. Their faces are hideous parodies of a human face, with long, fang-filled snouts, batlike ears, and stubby, curving horns protruding from their brows.

The pillars are gargoyles that have been stripped of their wings. If the heroes inspect the gargoyle's backs they see ragged holes where the wings used to attach.

The gargoyles remain absolutely motionless, no matter what the heroes do, unless the heroes try to remove one of the keys. They let the heroes prod and poke them—even chip off a little stone. But should the heroes mount a serious attack (inflicting more than 4 hp damage), the gargoyles attack. The gargoyles also attack if the heroes open any of the locked doors on this level.

If the gargoyles succeed in surprising the heroes, the heroes must make a fear check.

Gargoyles (3): THAC0 15; #AT 4; Dmg 1d3/1d3/1d6/1d4 (claw/claw/bite/horn; AC 5; HD 4+4; hp 21 each; MV 9; SA nil; SD +1 or better magical weapon to hit; MR nil; SZ M (6' tall); Int low (6); AL CE; ML steady (11); XP 420 each.

The southernmost window has been broken. A body lies in the corner near it—a human thief in leather armor. This adventurer entered the keep through the broken window two years ago, only to be killed by the gargoyles that guard this area. The body is badly decayed; little more than bones remain. Deep gouges are visible on the bones—claw marks.

The thief's equipment is badly damaged; a rope he hauled in after himself lies in one corner, rotten and useless. His daggers are rusty and his leather armor is too rotten to be of service. But he does carry some treasure: a *ring of feather falling* (still on one bony finger). The robe is damp from rain that has come in through the window and is spotted with mold. It smells musty, but is still intact and functional. The gargoyles don't care if the heroes take these items.

There are nine keys on the pegs. Six are quite large; each opens one of the six doors leading to the vaults on this level. The other three are smaller; each opens one of the doors leading to the throne room (Area 68).

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Each of the treasure vaults contains: 200-2,000 cp; 250-750 sp; 50-500 gp; 25-250 pp; 1d4 gems; and one piece of jewelry. There is a 10% chance that a vault also contains 1-2 minor magical items of the DM's choice. Determine the contents in advance, rolling separately for each vault.

One of the vaults is the lair of a banshee; it will attack anyone who enters. Because the banshee is incorporeal it does not use the door to enter or leave its lair.

Bedroom (Area 84):

The windows are open; a cold breeze stirs the rotten curtains. From outside, the hoarse cries of black birds are heard. Below them is a bed, its blankets rumpled. On top of the bedclothes is an empty wicker cage about one foot square. A messy pile of clothing lies in one corner of the room; the clothes are covered in dark stains and dirt. A pair of muddy boots lies beside them.

This is Azrael's bedroom. He has hidden a small treasure in each boot; if the heroes pick up or move the boots, they hear coins clinking. The right boot contains 30 gold pieces and a peridot gem worth 50 gp. The left boot contains 20 platinum pieces. It also contains a small, skull-headed black snake that escaped from the cage on the bed.

The snake is Azrael's pet. Returning to his bedroom, Azrael immediately realizes that the cage is empty, and will be wary of stepping on the venomous snake. The heroes, however, may be surprised by the serpent.

Poisonous Snake, Normal: THAC0 19; #AT 1; Dmg 1; AC 6; HD 2+1; hp 9; MV 15; SA poison (Type A; Dmg 15/0); SD nil; MR nil; SZ S (1' long); Int animal (1); AL N; ML avg (8); XP 175.

Seneschal's Study (Area 88):

The door to the study is locked; Azrael carries the key on a leather thong that he hangs around his neck. The description below assumes that

the heroes have found a way to open this door and are looking through it into the room.

This room is filled with large pieces of furniture, all made of heavy, dark wood that is ornately carved. A massive table stands against the wall next to the door; loose papers are heaped on it. Several papers have been torn or wadded into balls. Nearby stands an iron brazier with several half-burned pieces of paper inside it. The brazier is still warm.

A writing desk stands by the curved wall, just under the middle of the three rotted window curtains. On it is an open book and an inkwell. In front of it is a high-backed chair. Several books lie on the seat of the chair.

The door in the wall to your right is slightly ajar. From the room beyond comes a faint buzzing sound and the smell of rotten meat.

The papers on the table are records kept by Soth's former seneschal, Caradoc. Dating back to before the Cataclysm struck Krynn, they record such mundane matters as the castle's food stocks, payments to household staff and craft workers, disciplinary actions taken against the keep's soldiers, and dates of various ceremonies. All are in the same neat handwriting, and many are signed with the name Caradoc. Unfortunately, most are too badly damaged to read—the ink is smeared by water or the writing is obscured by mold.

Azrael considers these documents worthless and uses them as a source of fuel for his brazier. He gave them only a cursory inspection, and thus does not realize that there is a *scroll of protection from undead* buried in the pile of papers. Searching the entire stack to find it takes 1d4 turns.

The books piled on the chair are from the library of the keep and are all military histories. DMs familiar with the history of Krynn can use the names of various battles and wars as the titles of these books. Azrael is too short for the desk, and therefore he has piled the books here to sit on them.

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The book on the desk is a journal that Azrael recently started writing in a cramped, childish hand. It is blank except for the first page or two. It reads:

12 Deepkolt

Elves report seeing K near headwaters of Krellin River, on Disappearing Mountain.

Found nothing.

3 Yrthgreen

Elf claims to have been attacked by K near southern tip of Great Chasm. Elf lying; wounds more like claw and bite marks, possibly wolf. Elf executed for insolence. Ordered his friend killed, too. Good eating tonight!

14 Yrthgreen

Possible K sighting by Vistani tribe north of Har-Thelen. Reported by elves. Vistani denied sighting. Wanted them disciplined but Lord S refused, said M was too useful.

22 Holmswelt

Kender report K on south slopes Border's Edge Mountain. Most reliable sighting yet, but could not pinpoint location due to earthquake activity. Entered mirror to report to Lord S, but told to get out, stop spoiling his fun. Cut me in half with sword and said he'd do it for real if I ruined his dream. Told not to bother him again until I have a positive sighting.

2 Fierswelt

Messenger from Barovia reports seeing K near border. Description matches. Took messenger to tell Lord S, but something has happened to S. He's turned into a ghost himself. After last time, afraid to go into mirrors to talk.

17 Fierswelt

Barovian messenger unable to return home. Driven back at border by singing. Strange, Lord S hasn't sung in many weeks. Kender report seeing messenger running back from border, falling in crack in ground. Good riddance. Never liked him much.

10 Paleswelt

Worried about the cracks in the ground.

More every day. Elven cities damaged, but no effect on keep yet. Elves acting peculiar. Seem more absent-minded than usual.

2 Reapember

Elf woman from Har-Thelen said to have seen K in woods yesterday. Will take eight skeletal warriors to investigate. Hope this sighting pans out—Lord S has lost all interest in kingdom. If he doesn't come back from the mirrors soon we're all DOOMED.

A map of the domain is folded inside the journal. If the heroes examine it, hand the players Map 1: Domain of Sithicus (see inside cover).

The partially open door leads to a storage room (Area 85). Azrael tosses his garbage here; the grisly remains of several of his "midnight snacks" lie inside. If the heroes examine this area, add the following:

The walls of this room are filthy. Garbage litters the floor and the still air has an overpowering smell of ripe meat. Then you recognize something on the floor—a leg, its flesh gnawed to the bone. Maggots squirm in what little meat remains. With a shock, you recognize the long, slender bones scattered around the room. It seems an elf has been butchered and eaten here.

Discovering the mutilated corpse is cause for a horror check.

Soth's Private Study (Area 89):

This room has been filled with a permanent magical *darkness* that negates normal vision and infravision. Any sources of light that enter it seem to go out; however, torches and lanterns are really still burning. This magical darkness is a powerful illusion that the heroes cannot *dispel*. If the heroes enter the darkened area, read the following:

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As you move through the impenetrable darkness, you feel tiny hands plucking at your sleeves. A wet nose presses against your bare hand. The air is filled with tiny clicking sounds, as if taloned feet were skittering across the floor.

If the heroes lash out, they do not contact anything (except, perhaps, each other). They are experiencing tactile and aural *illusions*, created for Soth by the illusionist Tindafalus. The illusions get progressively more unnerving, but if the heroes search this area carefully (by feel) they bump into a writing desk, the cubby-holes of which contain four magical scrolls: *protection vs. fire*, *protection vs. poison*, a scroll with the spells *blur* and *mirror image* (casting either requires a powers check) and a *curse* scroll that immediately strikes its reader blind for one hour unless the victim can save vs. spells.

Azrael's Plan

Assuming he escaped with his life after his earlier encounter with the heroes, the werbadger Azrael returns to Nedragaard Keep. He is in foul spirits after failing yet again to locate the ghost of Kitiara. The last time he returned with a negative report, he entered one of the *memory mirrors* to report his failure to Soth. The death knight glowered and ordered Azrael not to bother him again until he had good news. Until then, Azrael was to stay out of the mirrors. Soth then "killed" Azrael, expelling him from the mirror.

Azrael lives on Level 9 of the keep. He keeps a wary distance from the banshee that also occupies this level. He has cleaned up one of the bedrooms (Area 84) and uses as his office the nearby study (Area 88).

The heroes do not encounter Azrael in either of these areas, however. Instead they surprise him in one of the corridors of Levels 1, 2, or 3, or on one of the balconies or atop the walls of the keep on Level 4. The location of this encounter with Azrael is left deliberately vague. Use the encounter whenever there is a lull in the

action, preferably when the heroes are walking quietly down a corridor. The area chosen for the encounter should not be part of a banshee lair.

As the heroes round a bend in a corridor or enter an open space (Area 47 or Area 67, for example), read the following:

A dwarf with bone-white, muttonchop sideburns and a white moustache stands a short distance ahead. His back is to you, and as yet he is unaware of your presence.

In one hand, the dwarf holds a stick. From the end of the stick dangle several pieces of wool; the thing looks like a small dust mop. The dwarf shakes it vigorously, and at the same time shouts a word over and over: "Videri! Videri! Videri!"

A ghostly figure materializes in the gloom, just ahead of the dwarf. At first it looks vaguely like a beautiful woman, but then it takes on a hideous appearance. Hands lengthen into talons and then melt away, dripping hissing gobs of liquid onto the floor. The mouth grows fangs and opens wide, expanding until it takes up the entire face. In a voice cold as the grave, the apparition speaks: "My lord! Come away from your throne. Embrace me, my love."

Screeching, the ghostly figure races toward the dwarf. Clearly terrified, he turns to flee.

The ghostly woman is only an illusion. Heroes protected against illusions do not see her and should be read only those portions of the boxed text that refer to Azrael's actions. The other heroes, however, perceive the "ghost" as a real threat and must make a fear check. If they think they are facing one of the banshees, encourage this misconception.

The stick in Azrael's hand is a *wand of illusion*. "Videri" is its command word. The brightly colored strands of wool that decorate one end are a vital part of the wand; if the wool is removed the wand ceases to function.

The wand is capable of casting the spells *phantasmal force* and *audible glamer*

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simultaneously, producing an illusion that can be both seen and heard. Because Azrael is a dwarf, he has trouble using the wand, and its visual component is malfunctioning. In a non-dwarven character's hands, however, the wand works normally, producing an accurate illusion of the wielder's choice. The wand has 20 charges left.

Azrael stole the wand from Tindafalus, the illusionist wizard who built the *memory mirrors* for Soth. Azrael is trying to use it to create an illusion of the ghostly Kitiara. He plans to report that he has captured the ghost at last and use the wand to show "Kitiara" to Soth. He hopes to draw Soth out of the *memory mirrors* with this ruse.

Unfortunately, the plan is doomed to fail. Unless the illusion is cast inside the mirrors, Soth fails to notice it—and Azrael is not willing to enter the mirrors. He may try to persuade the heroes to use the wand inside a mirror, but if they agree, the plan fails. The heroes do not know what Kitiara looks or acts like, thus Soth spots the trick immediately.

Kender Kindred

At some point in their exploration of Nedragaard Keep, the heroes encounter Tickelmop Toothfang, a vampire kender. This encounter must take place before the heroes reach the throne room of the keep, preferably in a shadowy area where the lack of light makes them believe they are dealing with an ordinary kender.

Because Tickelmop holds a vital clue, take care that the heroes don't kill her immediately. They should interact with her first and learn about the medallion she found. (For details, see the introduction and Tickelmop's "Current Sketch" in the appendix.)

Talking with Tickelmop: The kender sees the heroes not only as potential food sources, but (in a way she won't admit to herself) as a link to her happy early days before Lord Soth's experiments transformed her village. She hides her vampirism as long as possible, concealing her "Toothfang" surname and pretending a cheerfulness she can no longer feel. She claims that her hissing voice results from an injury in a wolf attack years ago.

To win over the heroes, Tickelmop volunteers her services as a guide to the keep. She knows little about the stronghold, except the daily passwords, but she bluffs well and tries to endear herself to the heroes. After they discover her nature, she exploits the (genuine) tragedy of her fate to win their sympathy.

Early in their conversation, as a proof of her good will, Tickelmop shows the heroes her medallion and explains how she found it.

The medallion: This iron pendant is about two inches wide and circular in shape; the emblem of a rose embossed on one side. At the center of this rose is a hole where a gem was once mounted. Two loops at the top of the medallion (where a chain would have been attached, allowing the medallion to be worn about the neck) are twisted and broken. Caradoc used a similar medallion to trap the spirit of Kitiara.

Tickelmop knows that the medallion *might* be the one Lord Soth seeks, but she does not realize that the missing black sapphire is the important part, nor does she know that it now lies in a wolf lair. She can report only that she killed the wolf near Kendralind. She could lead the heroes to the spot where she made the kill, but refuses until she has presented the medallion to Lord Soth—and has gotten a reaction from him, something that does not happen until he is forced out of the mirrors.

Even if the heroes force Tickelmop to show them the spot where the wolf was killed, it does not help. Scavengers carried the body off days ago, and recent rains have completely obliterated footprints that lead back to its lair.

The Throne Room

The throne room holds the clue to the malady that has struck Sithicus. Something is indeed "not right" with Lord Soth—as the heroes discover for themselves.

The Throne Room is accessible either via Stair A, Stair B, or the stairway leading up from Level 4. Each of these staircases leads to a locked door. The doors have been treated with a permanent *spell immunity* effect that gives them

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complete immunity to *knock* spells. The effect can be negated by casting *dispel magic* on the door. A *knock* spell then succeeds.

The doors are also locked with some of the finest products of the locksmith's art. Any character attempting to pick one of these locks suffers a -50% penalty to Open Locks roll. (This is intended to delay the heroes from entering the throne room until they have explored more of the keep.) The keys that open these locks are in the guard post (Area 70).

When the heroes succeed in entering the throne room, read the following:

At the back of a large, circular room sits a heavy throne, carved from black-veined marble and studded with blood-red gems. The throne sits on a four-tiered dais. Behind the throne is a balcony; staircases on either side of the room lead up to it.

This room was once lavishly decorated but now shows signs of a severe fire and decay. Its carpets are blackened and mold-spotted. Elaborate carvings on the charred wooden beams overhead are streaked with bat droppings. A huge chandelier has crashed to the floor, scattering shards of crystal and broken candles.

The only objects in the room that seem in good repair are a series of six mirrors, three on either side of the throne, mounted on the walls. The mirrors are oval in shape, and are about six feet high and three feet wide. Each is enclosed in a black iron frame wrought in the shape of intertwined roses, complete with needle-sharp thorns.

Seated on the throne is a knight in dull black plate mail. The knight's hands, resting on the arms of the throne, are little more than burned and blistered skin stretched tight over dry bones. His face, visible under a raised visor, is a ghastly, burned and rotted ruin. His eyes are closed, but a menacing orange light glows under translucent eyelids.

The knight's armor is of ancient make, a style that has not been seen in centuries. Mail

and steel alike are covered with sooty streaks. The scent of smoke clings to both. The breastplate is embossed with the almost indiscernible pattern of a rose. One side of this symbol is melted, as if by a blast of heat.

The figure is utterly still upon the throne, except for its mouth, which forms silent words. The hands are as still as death and make no move toward the long sword lying across his lap.

See the illustration in the pull-out section.

If it is midnight or 2–6 hours after, 13 banshees are seated on the dais, singing a slightly garbled chapter of Lord Soth's life in hideous, wailing voices that echo throughout the keep. To repeat the banshee's song for the players, recite a portion of "A Dark Knight's Tale," garbling names and other significant details.

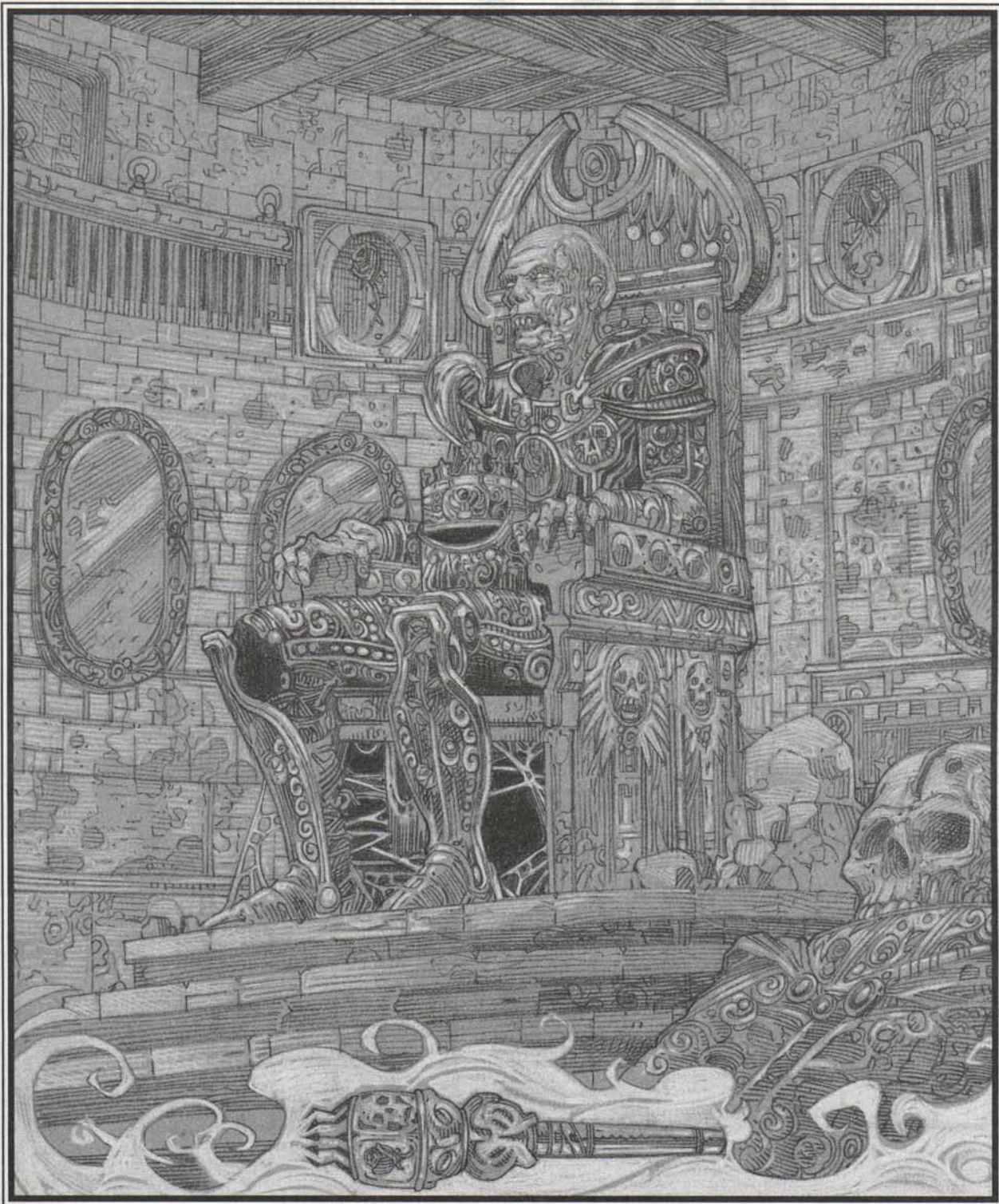
For details on the banshees' reaction to heroes who enter the Throne Room while they are singing, see the "Keening Spirits" section above.

The figure on the throne is Lord Soth. The closer the heroes approach the throne, the more insubstantial Soth appears. In fact, Soth is incorporeal—objects pass through him as through a ghost. The most powerful weapons and magic—even a *wish*—have no effect.

No matter what happens here or elsewhere in his keep, the ghostly image of Lord Soth remains seated on the throne. Soth's mind is deep inside the *memory mirrors*. These are his retreat—his refuge from the frustrations of his warriors' lack of discipline, from the banshee's garbled songs, from the mockery of a keep and kingdom that he has been relegated to. So deeply has he entered the mirrors that he probably would not notice even if Kitiara herself entered the room (although his seneschal, Azrael, would like to test this theory). He mouths the song that closes the borders of Sithicus, though here none can hear it.

If the heroes inspect the *memory mirrors* they find that these reflect normally; they can see themselves within the mirrored glass. The background, however, is not Soth's throne room.

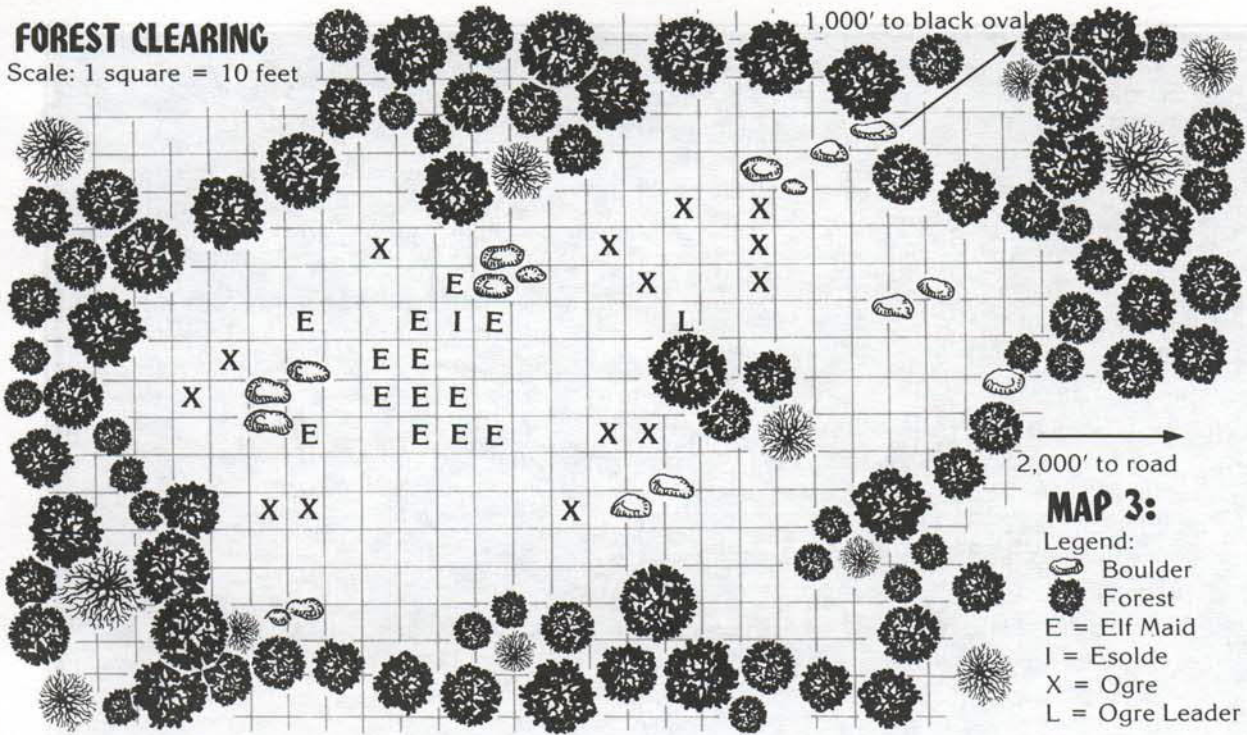
PULL-OUT SECTION



PULL-OUT SECTION

FOREST CLEARING

Scale: 1 square = 10 feet



MAP 3:

Legend:

- Boulder
- Forest
- E** = Elf Maid
- I** = Esolde
- X** = Ogre
- L** = Ogre Leader

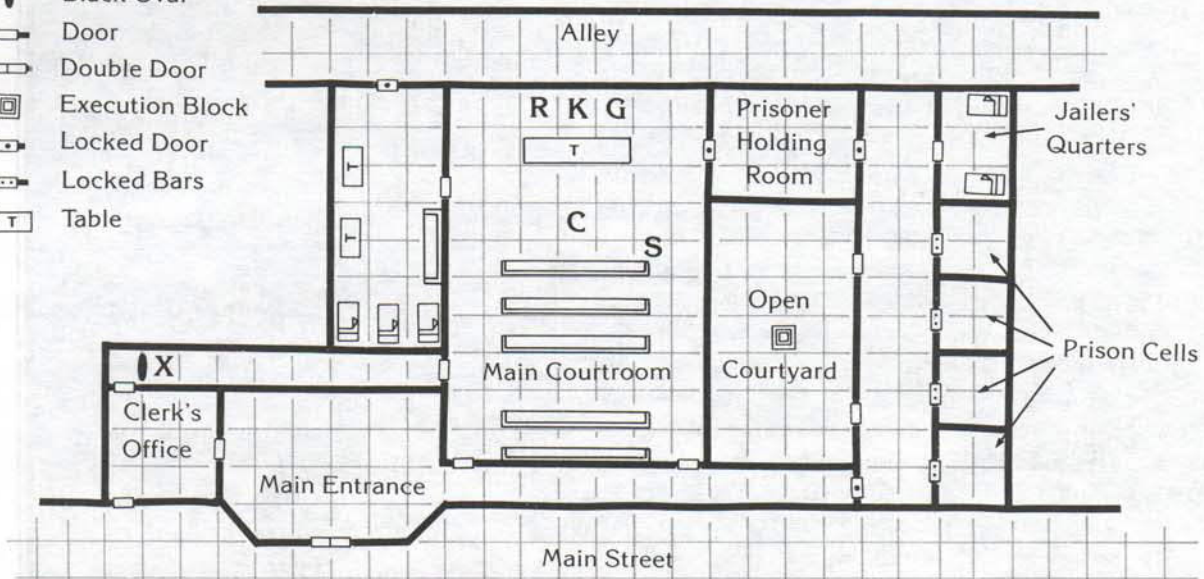
Legend:

- Bed
- Bench
- Black Oval
- Door
- Double Door
- Execution Block
- Locked Door
- Locked Bars
- Table

SOLAMNIC COURTHOUSE

MAP 4: Scale: 1 square = 10'

- X** = PC's Starting Point
- R** = Lord Rafflick
- C** = Caradoc
- G** = Lord Gutriem
- K** = Kitiara
- S** = Lord Soth

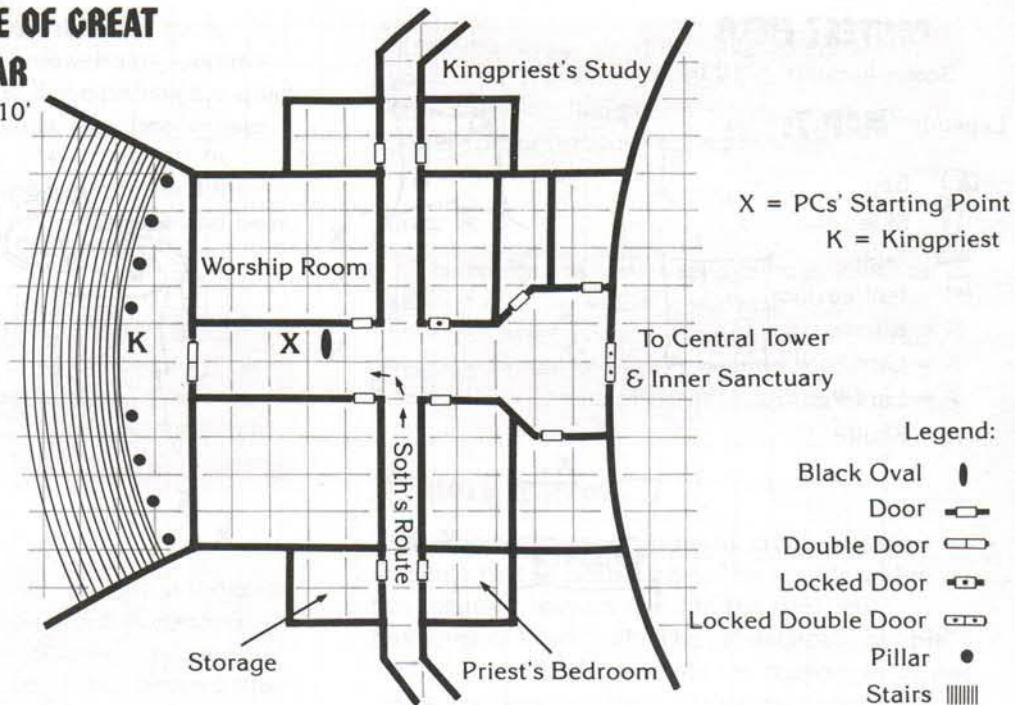


PULL-OUT SECTION

MAIN ENTRANCE OF GREAT TEMPLE OF ISTAR

Scale: 1 square = 10'

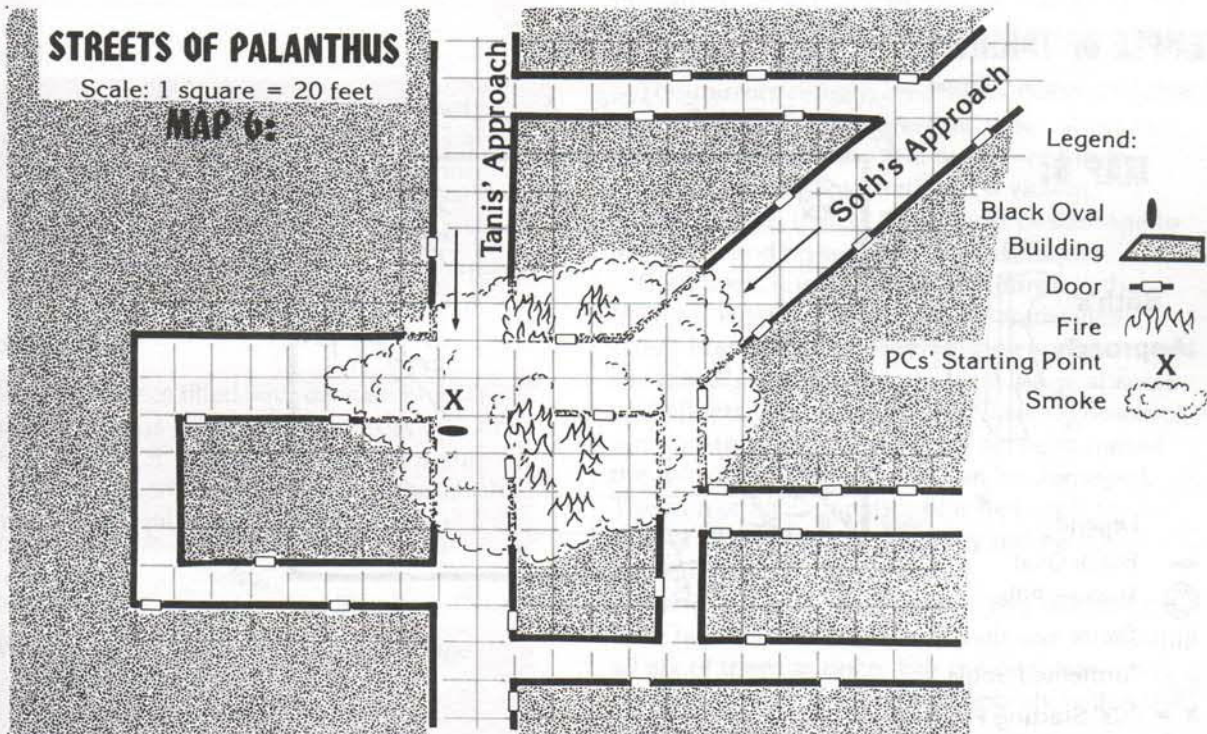
MAP 5:



STREETS OF PALANTHUS

Scale: 1 square = 20 feet

MAP 6:



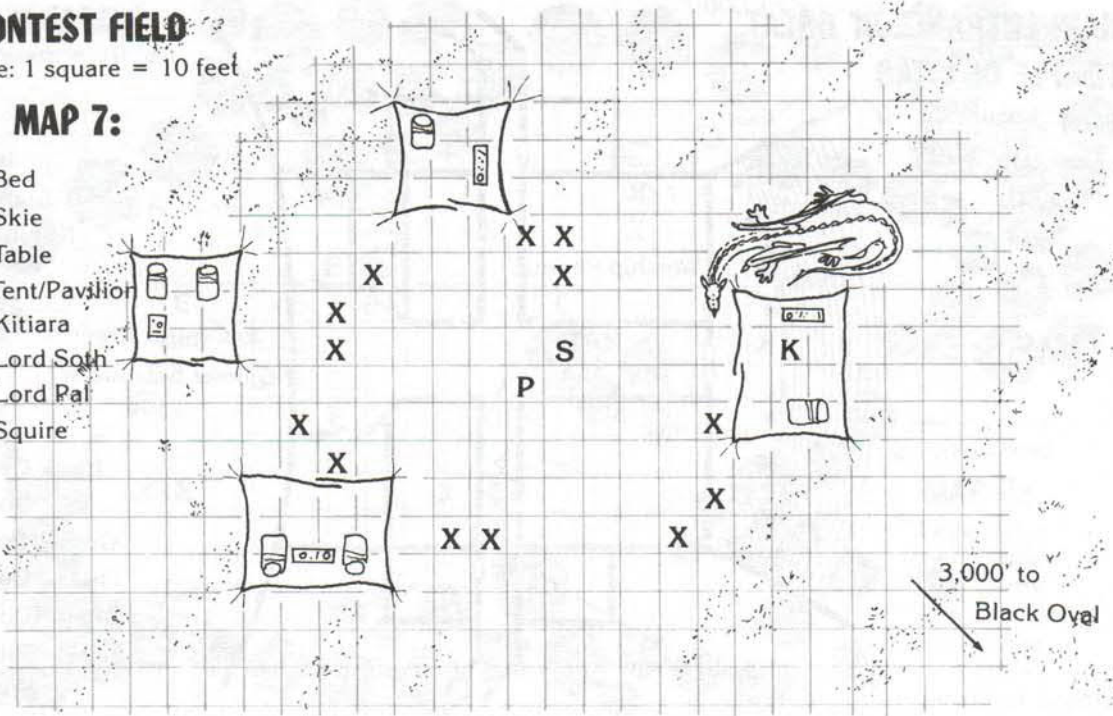
PULL-OUT SECTION

CONTEST FIELD

Scale: 1 square = 10 feet

Legend: MAP 7:

-  Bed
-  Skie
-  Table
-  Tent/Pavilion
- K = Kitiara
- S = Lord Soth
- P = Lord Pal
- X = Squire







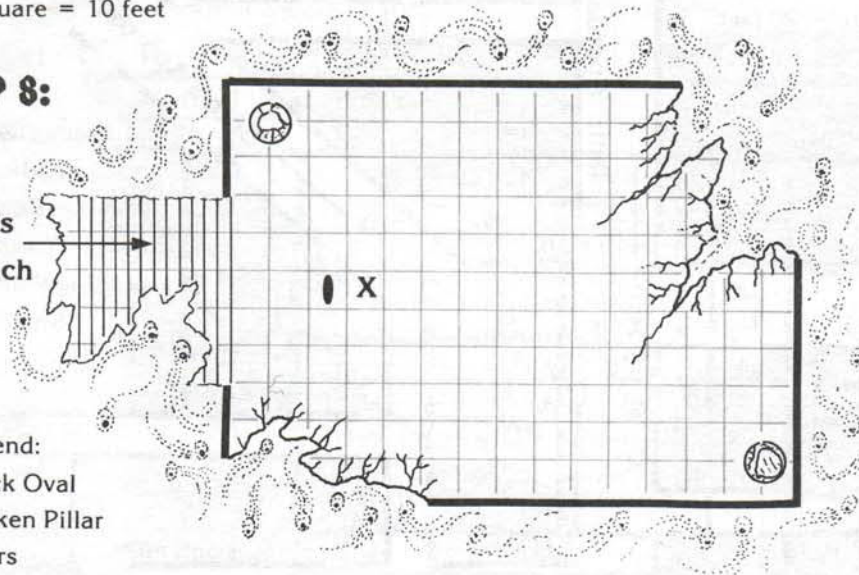
TEMPLE OF TAKHISIS

Scale: 1 square = 10 feet

MAP 8:

Soth's Approach

-  Black Oval
-  Broken Pillar
-  Stairs
-  Tormented Souls
- X = PCs' Starting Point



INTO THE KEEP

Instead each mirror shows a different background scene, described below. Faint sounds emanate from the mirrors. If the heroes are quiet and press an ear to the glass, they hear noises appropriate to the scene.

As the heroes inspect the mirrors, read the following descriptions of what they see and hear:

Mirror 1:

A woodland scene. Sunlight dapples a forest of trees whose pale green leaves suggest that it is spring. In the background you hear the faint sound of women crying and the thud of horses' hooves.

Mirror 2:

A long hallway lined with military standards and banners. A plush red carpet, patterned with swords, crowns, kingfishers, and roses, leads to a partly open door. From beyond the door comes the sound of angry voices. You cannot make out the words.

Mirror 3:

A wide hallway. At the end of the hallway, double doors stand open, revealing the sun shining in blue sky. Near the sun, a second light hangs in the sky—a bright red glow about the size of a star. From beyond the open doors come sounds of joyous chanting.

Mirror 4:

A narrow street filled with dark smoke. Nearby buildings illuminate the street with an eerie red light, and menacing shapes rush through the gloom. You faintly hear the clash of metal on metal and agonized screams.

Mirror 5:

A wide tournament field. At the far edge stand several colorful pavilions. In the open space between the tents, two figures in

gleaming armor struggle while others watch; you can just hear the rattle of swords. Beside one of the pavilions lies a large blue shape, some sort of creature curled in sleep.

Mirror 6:

The rooftop of a shattered temple, its walls stained by soot and its columns jagged stumps. Just beyond the edges of the rooftop, vaguely humanoid spirits swirl in a ghostly dance. You can just hear their agonized cries.

Memory mirrors

These powerful magical items create detailed illusions tied to Soth's past. The worlds within the *memory mirrors* tap into the past and fantasies of Lord Soth. The landscapes, people, and creatures that populate the mirrors recreate scenes and events from Soth's past and allow him to replay these events with different outcomes. Soth believes that by repeating these events and righting what went wrong, he can escape from Sithicus.

The mirrors remain attuned to their owner for the duration of that individual's life. When that character dies (in the real world—not in the mirrors) the mirrors shatter in a violent explosion that inflicts 1d6 points of damage to anyone standing within five feet of them.

Until then, it is impossible to damage the mirrors. Weapons and tools (even magical ones) bounce harmlessly off their surfaces, and the mirrors completely resist all magical spells and effects. The wrought-iron frames, however, are non-magical; they simply serve to mount the mirrors to the wall and can be damaged. The mirror itself consists of a half-inch-thick slab of silvered glass that may not be cut, broken, or scratched.

Using a *memory mirror* is highly addictive. Soth is practiced enough in their use to enter all six of them at once. For the past two months, he has lived almost entirely within the mirrors.

BEYOND THE LOOKING GLASS



*Peace, peace! He is not
dead, he does not sleep.
He hath awakened from
the dream of life.*

—Percy Bysshe Shelley,
“Adonais”

The dramas played out inside each *memory mirror* are generated from a blend of Soth’s imaginings and memories, and presently proceed in a direction pleasing to him. Events are not, however, under his direct, conscious control—otherwise

there would be no challenges or surprises for him. Nevertheless, the dramas will end with Soth triumphing in whatever task he is undertaking—unless another character enters the mirror and starts meddling with the plot.

When they enter the mirrors, the heroes become actors in the illusions that Soth’s mind is generating—albeit actors who do not follow the script. The heroes have the free will to alter events inside the *memory mirror*, thus spoiling the drama for Soth.

Events that can spoil each fantasy appear in the description of each mirror. In each case, killing Soth immediately ends the fantasy—but killing the powerful knight is likely to be more difficult than the other methods described.

Spoiling the outcome of the events inside each of the six mirrors is, in fact, the object of this portion of the adventure. Each time one of his fantasies is spoiled, Soth is forced to exit that mirror. He must then wait 24 hours before re-entering that mirror and creating a new fantasy for himself. During this 24-hour period, the mirror has the appearance of a normal mirror; the landscape inside it disappears, and it reflects only the Throne Room (or whatever else is in front of it).

Each mirror contains a clue to the meaning of Magda’s prophecy (presented on page 14). The

clues unlock the true meaning to the prophecy, which Magda erroneously assumed referred to Lord Soth; the black rose is, in fact, the black gem holding Kitiara’s spirit. Do not dwell on this part of the description; let the players spot these clues by themselves.

Each time Soth is forced from a mirror, the image of him becomes a little more animated. But until he has been forced out of all six he remains incorporeal.

Whenever one of Soth’s fantasies is spoiled, the “new memory” that mirror was planting in Soth’s mind is erased and his memory of that segment of his life returns to normal. Once Soth has been forced out of all six mirrors, Sithicus begins to heal itself. The rents in the earth start to close and the elves begin to regain their memories.

Of course, there are no guarantees that Soth will not re-enter the mirrors at a later time and create new fantasies there, thus beginning the destruction of Sithicus anew. . . .

Entering the Mirrors

Although the *memory mirrors* are attuned to Soth, any character may enter them. The seneschal Azrael, for example, has entered the mirrors on occasion to report to his master.

To enter a mirror, a character must gaze into it and imagine that he or she is walking into it. No physical movement is required. The character is transported in the same round into the landscape shown in the mirror and can then interact with the characters that populate it. The character becomes visible as a part of the landscape and remains visible to those in the throne room until he or she moves “off screen” into a part of the landscape not shown in the mirror.

In the meantime, a ghostly image of the character remains behind in the Throne Room. Like the image of Lord Soth, it cannot be affected or harmed in any way. It remains in whatever pose the character took on entering the mirror.

The mirrors can be entered only in this manner; characters cannot reach into them, nor can they pass equipment in through the mirror’s surface—they must carry it in.

BEYOND THE LOOKING GLASS

It is possible to cover the reflecting surface of the mirror (with paint, for example) but this does not prevent those inside the mirror from exiting. It simply means that the next person who wants to enter must scrape off the paint.

Physical appearance: Characters entering the mirrors retain their spells, abilities, weapons, and equipment. Their appearance and armor may alter to match whichever of Soth's fantasies is being played out inside the memory mirror, but armor class and statistics remain the same, because this is just an illusion. Because the illusion is so convincing, however, encourage the heroes to believe they are suffering penalties—either penalties for a lack of armor, or penalties imposed by armor (for example, to thieving skills and wizard spell casting). After a few rounds, reveal that these penalties do not in fact exist.

Also encourage cases of mistaken identity. Heroes may not recognize each other after stepping through a mirror and should be suspicious of one another.

Those looking into the mirror from the throne room do not see the familiar image of their friend but the altered image that their companion assumes inside the mirror. A "stranger" suddenly appears within the mirror—one who seems to be peering back through the mirror with a puzzled frown. Details of the heroes' physical forms appear with the description of each mirror.

The mirror environment: Those inside the mirror notice other, more subtle changes in both themselves and their environment. Everything is a "mirror image" of itself. Writing is backwards, right-handed characters now are left-handed (and vice versa), and equipment once carried on one side of a character's body now is carried on the other side. Wizards can read spellbooks only by using a mirror.

Time inside the mirrors flows at the same rate as time in Ravenloft; heroes entering a mirror at a later point join events already in progress. The laws of physics and magic are likewise the same as those in Ravenloft.

Characters inside a *memory mirror* cannot observe or affect events in the real world. They are cut off from it until they exit the mirror.

The worlds inside the mirrors are considered to be part of the Ravenloft domain of Sithicus—the penalties and restrictions imposed by the Demiplane of Dread still apply.

Combat in the mirrors: The other characters and creatures in the mirrors seem entirely real (no disbelieving is permitted) but are in fact illusions. They cannot follow the heroes back into the real world; only those who entered a mirror from outside can leave a mirror.

While inside the mirrors, the heroes appear to suffer damage and may even "die." These injuries are, in fact, illusory. Heroes killed inside the mirrors are simply ejected and reappear in the Throne Room. Damage suffered while inside the mirror (including paralysis and magical effects) instantly vanishes. Keep track of the damage suffered while in the mirror so that it can be reversed. Damage is likewise reversed for any character exiting a mirror voluntarily.

Killing the idealized Soth in any of the mirrors does not mean that the real Soth dies. It simply means that he, too, is expelled from the mirror in which his death took place. Like the heroes, any damage he suffered is recovered.

Unlike characters, both magical and mundane objects can be permanently altered or affected by events within the mirror. Charges expended from a magical item are not regained when the item exits the mirror. An item broken or damaged does not repair itself when the heroes leave the mirror. Equipment lost within the mirror remains inside it until carried out by a real-world character, and food consumed there likewise does not reappear.

Similarly, a spellcaster does not automatically regain spells cast inside the mirror upon leaving. These must be re-memorized.

Because the creatures they fight are illusory, the heroes receive no experience points for monsters defeated in the mirrors.

Extent of the mirrorscape: The landscape in each mirror is limited by Soth's imagination and desires. Typically, only enough of the landscape exists to play out Soth's fantasy. The heroes may see a landscape that stretches to the horizon, but the further they move away from

BEYOND THE LOOKING GLASS

the fantasy's action, the more hazy the landscape becomes. Eventually they can proceed no further; the effect is of a person walking in a dream but not moving forward. At any time they can turn and head back to a more "solid" and realistic portion of the landscape.

Ultimately, the extent of the landscape is up to the DM. Those familiar with the world of Krynn or the plane of Baator may extend the landscape within a *memory mirror* to encompass all of Ansalon or all of Baator. However, limiting the landscape to that described in this adventure keeps the players focused on the task at hand.

Failing to Spoil a Fantasy

The heroes may have to enter a mirror more than once before they figure out what they need to do to eject Soth from it. Don't worry about this; the adventure is designed with this in mind.

If the heroes fail to spoil a fantasy, Soth remains inside that mirror, enjoying its illusions. If a fantasy reaches its conclusion, heroes who have not already left are expelled from the mirror and must wait 1d4 hours to re-enter and try again.

The heroes may then try again to spoil the changed history. They re-enter the mirror in the same spot and at the same point in the fantasy as they did the first time.

This time, the heroes know the characters and monsters they will meet. They can use this knowledge to their advantage. Soth, however, has forgotten previous events. He is starting from scratch and does not recall that the heroes are there to spoil the end. Because the heroes' appearances change when they enter a mirror (except in Mirror 1), Soth does not necessarily recognize the spoilers of one fantasy as his enemies in the next mirror. However, he may notice similarities if the heroes use the same methods in each mirror.

Once forced from all six of the *memory mirrors*, Soth remembers the heroes; he can recognize them in the real world, regardless of their appearance in the mirrors.

Exiting the Mirrors

To exit a mirror, the heroes must locate the spot where they entered. Here they find a two-dimensional oval of utter blackness. Only the heroes can see this oval; it is invisible to the illusory creatures and characters who inhabit the mirror. Other characters from the real world can see it, because they entered the mirror at the same point. The oval cannot be *dispelled* or otherwise altered by magic; it is a permanent feature and integral part of the *memory mirror*.

The procedure for exiting is physical. Rather than using their imaginations, characters must step through the oval. They then reappear in the throne room in whatever position they were occupying when they first entered the mirror. Their incorporeal form becomes solid and animated. Damage suffered in the mirror is instantly recovered, as described above.

The heroes can use magical items and equipment they find within a mirror—but only while in that mirror. These items disappear when the bearers leave the mirror, turning into mist in the heroes' hands. Items carried into the mirror are unaffected with the exception of magical charges spent and spell components used.

This rule also applies to Lord Soth's sword, shield, and armor. Soth carried them into the mirror, and so heroes may carry them out—but only if they retrieve the items from each of the six mirrors, because these items exist in all six simultaneously.

Any character who leaves a mirror cannot re-enter that mirror for 1d4 hours. Soth may enter and exit a mirror at will, unless he is killed inside a mirror or the fantasy he is experiencing is spoiled. In this case he may not re-enter that mirror for 24 hours.

The heroes face an unpleasant surprise if they exit a mirror while the banshees are singing their nightly song. The banshees will discover and attack the heroes' incorporeal images if the characters used the mirrors at night; fortunately, all the banshees have already keened, to no effect.

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The Idealized Lord Soth

Knight of Solamnia, "Lawful Good"

Armor Class: 0 (with plate/shield)	Str 18/19
Movement: 12	Dex 14
Level/Hit Dice: 9	Con 17
Hit Points: 60	Int 10
THACO: 12	Wis 13
No. of Attacks: 1	Cha 17
Damage/Attack: 1d8+7 (magical long sword, plus strength bonus)	
Special Attacks: nil	
Special Defenses: immune to <i>fear</i>	
Magic Resistance: 50% (with magical sword)	

Lord Loren Soth exists inside each of the six *memory mirrors* simultaneously. He appears in idealized form, looking much as he did when alive and having many of the same abilities.

The idealized Soth is a warrior in his prime—a solemn looking man with broad shoulders, blonde hair, and a long, neatly trimmed moustache. He wears gleaming plate mail armor, its breastplate embossed with the image of a rose.

Inside the mirrors, Soth imagines himself as he might have been—a loyal knight of Solamnia, uncorrupted by lust or greed, unsullied by sin. He ranks high in the Order of the Rose, the most prestigious fellowship of these honorable knights.

Combat: Soth carries a shield and fights with a +5 *holy avenger* long sword. This sword provides 50% magic resistance, and it dispels magic of up to 9th level within five feet of the sword. Against chaotic evil opponents, the sword's bonus increases to +10 points of damage.

Should the heroes capture this sword, it reverts to its true form and becomes a *sword of wounding*. It is a +5 *holy avenger* only in the idealized Soth's hands.

When his fantasy is progressing as he likes, Soth fights according to the rules laid out by the Measure. He is chivalrous to a fault and never takes advantage of an opponent. Should the heroes start to change his fantasy, however, his chaotic evil alignment reveals itself: He switches to underhanded tactics and dirty fighting tricks in an effort to get things back on track.



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Mirror 1: Ogre Attack

In this mirror, Soth replays the rescue of the elven maiden Isolde and her thirteen companions. The battle against the ogres who kidnapped these women is re-enacted as it originally happened, but the events leading up to it have changed. In this fantasy, Lord Soth and his wife Gladria are on a pilgrimage. Soth's thirteen companions accompany them.

This mirror uses Map 3 in the pull-out section.

Heroes' appearance: In this mirror only, the heroes appear as themselves (albeit in mirror-image).

You stand in sunlight-dappled woods. Pale green leaves and the smell of sap flowing indicate that it is early spring.

Just in front of you, an oval of utter blackness hangs a few inches above the ground. It is six feet tall and about three feet wide but has no depth.

To your right, through the trees, you can just make out a clear space where a road winds through the wood. From this direction comes the caper of horses' hooves and the creak of a carriage.

In the opposite direction you hear women crying. A guttural voice barks out an order, and the crying abruptly stops.

If the heroes approach the road, read this:

A procession of thirteen knights and a carriage is making its way down the road. Each man has a long, drooping moustache and wears a surcoat embroidered in gold.

A broad-shouldered knight with blonde hair and a long, neatly trimmed moustache leads the procession. On his surcoat is the emblem of a red rose. His forearms are bare; one is tattooed.

He holds up a hand, signalling a halt. "The horses are tired," he tells the others. "We will rest here before continuing."

If the heroes head toward the crying, read this:

Fourteen ogres sit in a clearing, gnawing on cuts of meat from a freshly killed deer.

Nearby, fourteen women sit, their hands behind their backs. All but one look dejected, tears streak their cheeks. The fourteenth, a golden-haired beauty, has a proud bearing.

"Fear not," she whispers. "Paladine will save us."

"Keep quiet!" one of the ogres growls. "Talk again, and one of your friends dies."

The captives are Lady Isolde and her thirteen companions, all elf maids. They were captured on their way to Palanthis, where Isolde is to become a priestess of the god Paladine.

The knights on the road are Soth and his thirteen companions. They are on their way to Palanthis on a pilgrimage to pray for the health and happy life of Soth's newborn heir, Peradur.

The tattoo on Soth's arm is a black rose. Underneath it is a name: Kitiara. If asked about his tattoo, Soth replies that Kitiara was the name of his first girlfriend—a young warrior who died years before he married Lady Gladria. Soth, however, throws an affectionate glance toward Gladria, who is gently rocking the infant, and declares that the eternal love of his life is right here with him.

Soth does not yet realize the ogres and their captives are nearby, but will discover this when one of the women screams. This happens two turns (20 minutes) into the fantasy, when the ogres have finished their meal. Rising to begin their journey, one of the brutes manhandles an elf maid, who cracks under the strain.

When Soth hears a woman in distress, he charges into the woods to investigate. Unless the heroes prevent him, he fights singlehandedly, killing several before his companions arrive to help. Eventually, he challenges the ogre leader to single combat, insisting the women be freed if he wins. Naturally, he is victorious.

At the conclusion of the battle, Isolde embraces Soth, kissing him in gratitude for her

BEYOND THE LOOKING GLASS

rescue. Soth turns his head away, saying, "Sweet though your kisses may be, lady, I cannot return them for I am bound through marriage to another."

The elf maids return to the knight's camp with the group, but a terrible sight meets all: a flock of carrion black birds cawing mournfully takes flight from a scene of carnage. Two ogres that had been scouting have slain Soth's wife and servants. Soth flies into a killing rage. The ogres die swiftly. He falls sobbing to his knees beside Gladria.

Isolde looks at him with tears in her eyes.

Peradur is found sleeping under a blanket. The knights wrap Gladria's body and continue sorrowfully onto Palanthis, the pilgrimage transformed into a funeral procession.

Continue the fantasy until the knights and women are on the outskirts of Palanthis, then eject the heroes from the mirror.

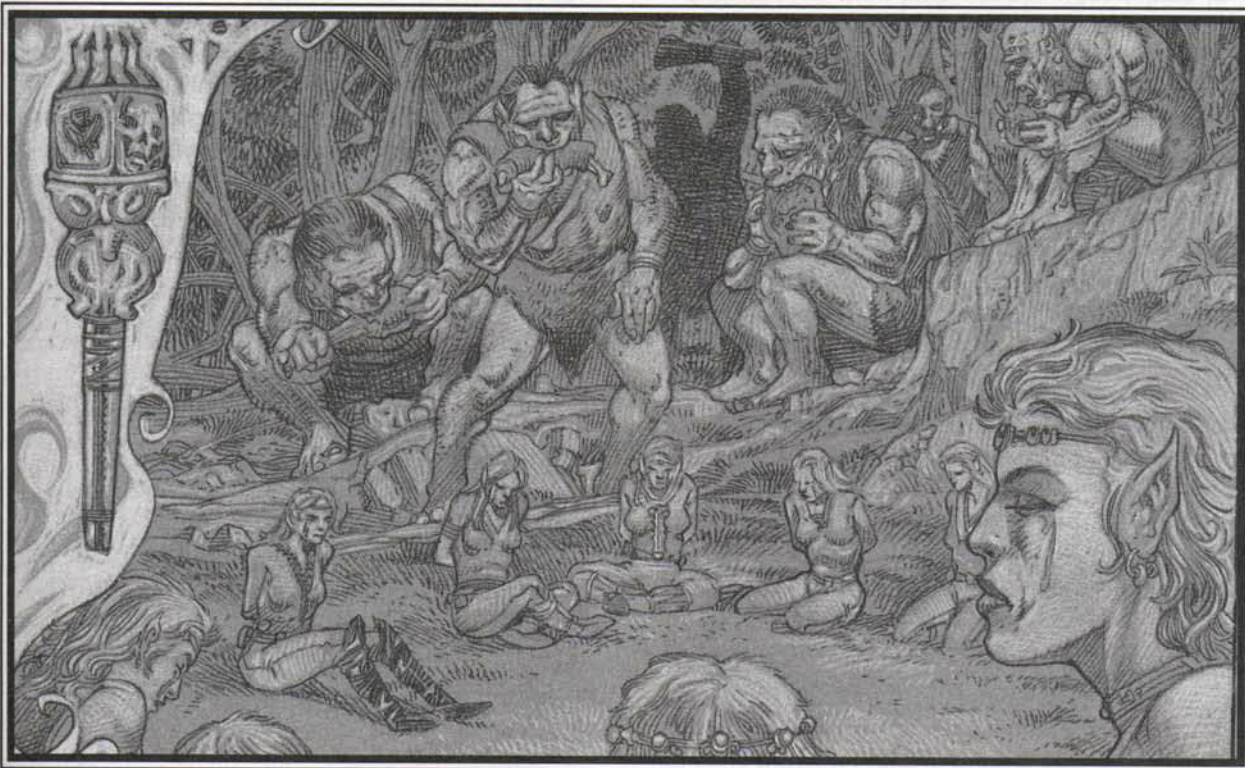
On the trip, Soth and Isolde fall deeply in love. They vow to wed as soon as Soth has observed

a suitable period of mourning.

Spoilers: The fantasy is spoiled if the heroes rescue Isolde themselves, or if Soth can be delayed from reaching the elf maids, who will instead be rescued by his knights. As a result, Isolde falls in love either with one of the heroes or with Sir Mikel, one of Soth's companions. Alternately, the heroes can prevent the death of Gladria. Realizing that something has gone wrong, Soth plots the death of his rival or wife. By this unsavory action, he alienates and disgusts Isolde.

The fantasy will also be spoiled if the elf maids are not rescued at all—although good-aligned heroes are unlikely to want to leave innocent women in the hands of ogres.

Ogres (13): THAC0 17; #AT 1; Dmg 1d10 or 1d6+6 (club); AC 5; HD 4+1; hp 20 each; MV 9; SA +2 to damage; SD nil; MR nil; SZ L (9' tall); Int low (8); AL CE; ML steady (12); XP nil.



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Ogre leader (1): THAC0 13; #AT 1; Dmg 2d6+3 or 1d6+6 (club); AC 3; HD 7; hp 33; MV 9; SA +2 to damage; SD nil; MR nil; SZ L (9' fall); Int low (8); AL CE; ML steady; XP nil.

Solamnic Knights of the Rose (13): THAC0 15; #AT 1; Dmg 1d8 (long sword); AC 3; HD 6; hp 35 each; MV 12; SA nil; SD immune to *fear* spells; MR nil; SZ M (6' tall); Int very (11); AL LG; ML elite (13); XP nil.

Mirror 2: Murder Trial

In this mirror, Soth fantasizes about how he might have shifted the blame for his first wife's murder onto Caradoc, the seneschal who later betrayed him. The scene is similar to the trial at which Soth was stripped of his knighthood and sentenced to die by his own sword. This time, Caradoc is on trial. In this fantasy, Caradoc is not Soth's seneschal but is a young Knight who fell in love with Lady Gladria. Soth learned of their dalliance, killed his wife, then successfully framed his squire for her murder.

This mirror uses Map 4 in the pull-out section.

Heroes' appearance: The heroes appear as Solamnic Knights. Each is a strapping youth in his or her prime, dressed in plate mail embossed with kingfishers. Aside from these changes, they carry all of their usual equipment and weapons. They also carry, at their belts, keys that open any of the locked doors in the court house—although they may not spot these keys at first.

You stand at the middle of a long hallway lined with military standards and banners. Behind you, an oval of utter blackness hangs a few inches above the floor. It is about six feet tall and three feet wide but has no depth, and it is only two-dimensional. The hallway only continues in front of this mirror.

Ahead, a plush red carpet, patterned with swords, crowns, kingfishers, and roses, leads to a partially opened door. From behind the door comes the sound of angry voices.

Give the heroes a moment or two to react before adding the following:

Inside the room, a woman's voice rises above the rest. It crackles with authority.

"Squire Caradoc, you have been found guilty of the murder of Lady Gladria, wife of Lord Soth. Your sentence is death. In accordance with the Measure, the execution shall be carried out tomorrow morning with your own sword."

A man's voice cries out in response. "No! I'm innocent! I wasn't the one who killed her!"

"Then who did?" the woman asks.

"I cannot say," the man replies in a dejected voice. "I am bound by my Oath."

"Very well then," the woman replies. "Guilty as charged. Guards!"

If the heroes have not yet approached the door, it opens fully now. A Solamnic Knight, clad in plate mail and wearing a surcoat embroidered with kingfishers, beckons to the heroes. "You there!" he hisses. "You squires! See to your duties and take the prisoner to his cell."

This knight clearly expects the heroes to enter the room. When they do, add the following:

Inside is a table, behind which three knights in plate mail are seated. Two are male, with drooping moustaches. One wears a surcoat embroidered with a crown, the other a surcoat with the emblem of a sword.

The third knight is a woman with dark curling hair and blue armor. Her surcoat is embroidered with red roses.

In front of the table stands a young knight with handsome features and elegant clothes. The front of his tunic is embroidered with an emblem of a rook. His ankles are encased in shackles.

The female knight picks up a black rose from the table in front of her and hurls it at the shackled man, who hangs his head in shame. "Take him away," the woman says, a

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crooked smile on her lips.

Behind the young knight are a series of benches, set up to face the table. On one of these sits a broad-shouldered man with blonde hair and a long, neatly trimmed moustache. On his surcoat is the emblem of a red rose. His lips are curled in a faint smile. His eyes are hard as stone.

The man on the bench is Lord Loren Soth. The man in shackles is his "squire" Caradoc. The three knights at the table are Kitiara Uth Matar, (who in this fantasy is the high knight of the Order of the Rose), Lord Rateliff, high knight of the Order of the Crown, and Lord Gutriem, high knight of the Order of the Sword. This trio has just found Caradoc guilty of a murder he didn't commit.

The heroes have taken the place of Caradoc's guards and jailers. They are expected to escort him to his cell, guard him throughout the night, then march him to the execution block the next morning. Here, Kitiara orders one of the heroes to cut off Caradoc's head.

At night, the three high knights (and Lord Soth) leave the courthouse for quarters elsewhere in the city. In addition to the heroes—whom everyone thinks are Solamnic knights—two other jailers, veteran knights, remain on overnight duty at the courthouse.

If the heroes talk to Caradoc in private, he reveals the truth of Lord Soth's guilt. But he still refuses to testify against Soth. Caradoc is utterly loyal to Soth and refuses to speak ill of him, even though he saw Soth kill Lady Gladria with his own eyes. The murder weapon was Soth's sword. Caradoc blames himself for Gladria's death. Had he not encouraged Gladria to break her marriage vows, she might be alive today. He shows the hero a ring Gladria gave him as a love token and says he will die with it on his finger.

The fantasy ends with Caradoc's execution. The heroes are then ejected from the mirror.

Spoilers: The fantasy is spoiled if the heroes can persuade Caradoc to testify in his own defense.

Telling Caradoc that he really did murder Gladria, in the world outside the mirror, only makes matters worse. But one technique that works is to convince Caradoc that the lives of others are at stake—and that these lives can only be saved if Soth is convicted of his crime.

If the heroes cannot persuade Caradoc to talk, they can try to persuade the judges of his innocence themselves. The proof that clinches this testimony is the ring on Caradoc's finger. Clearly he was Gladria's lover. It's not enough to convict Soth—but it is enough to raise a reasonable doubt that Caradoc was the murderer. The charge is changed to "inciting infidelity" and his penalty is reduced to imprisonment. Because he is not executed, the fantasy is spoiled.

The fantasy goes off track if the heroes permit Caradoc to escape. He flees, but a few hours later, turns himself in. For their part in his escape, the heroes are put on trial.

If the heroes disrupt Caradoc's trial they are subdued by the high knights—and either captured and tried, or executed on the spot.

If the heroes accuse Soth of murdering his wife, Kitiara firmly reminds them of the Oath and the Measure. Should they persist, they will be put on trial themselves. Soth will demand the right to vindicate his honor by dueling the most vocal accuser to death.

The fantasy is not spoiled if the heroes murder Caradoc. Soth wants to see him dead.

Caradoc: THAC0 17; #AT 1; Dmg 1d4 (fist); AC 8 (unarmored); HD 4; hp 18; MV 12; SA nil; SD immune to *fear* spells; MR nil; SZ M (6' tall); Int avg (10); AL LG; ML unsteady (6); XP nil.

High Knights (3): THAC0 1; #AT 2; Dmg 1d8+1 (*sword of sharpness*); AC 0; HD 20; hp 80 each; MV 12; SA spells (Lord Gutriem); SD immune to *fear* spells (Kitiara); MR nil; SZ M (6' tall); Int high (14); AL LG; ML champion (16); XP nil.

Lord Gutriem has the special abilities of a 20th-level paladin. He can cast the following priestly spells: 1) *bless*, *command*, *remove fear*, 2) *hold person*, *resist fire/cold*, *silence 15'*

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radius, slow poison, 3) dispel magic, negative plane protection, remove curse, 4) cure serious wounds (x2), neutralize poison

Jailers (2): THAC0 17; #AT 1; Dmg 1d8 (long sword); AC 4 (splint mail); HD 4; hp 20 each; MV 12; SA nil; SD nil; MR nil; SZ M (6' tall); Int avg (10); AL LG; ML steady (12); XP nil.

Mirror 3: The Cataclysm

In this mirror, Soth imagines how he might have prevented the cataclysm that struck Krynn when the Kingpriest of Istar demanded from the gods the power to forever banish evil from the world. The scene takes place a few hours before the Kingpriest and his clerics gathered in an inner sanctuary of the Great Temple of Istar. Prior to this, the Kingpriest stood at the main entrance of the temple whipping a chanting crowd of worshippers into a frenzy so that he could channel their emotions into the ritual he was about to perform. As he speaks, the mountain that will strike Istar hangs in the sky beside the sun, a bright red glow.

This mirror uses Map 5 in the pull-out section.

Heroes' appearance: The heroes appear as devotees of the Kingpriest. They wear multi-colored clerical robes, but they have their normal weapons and equipment. Each is a young follower with a fanatical gleam in his or her eye. They are expected to attend and protect the Kingpriest during his speech to the people of Istar.

You stand inside a wide hallway that leads to open double doors. In the opposite direction are closed double doors with sturdy locks. Hallways curve away to the left and right. Chained by its leg to a birdstand in the right hallway is a rook. "Through," it caws. "Through."

Hovering in the air near the middle of the hallway is an oval of utter blackness. It is about six feet tall and three feet wide, but has no depth and appears two-dimensional.

Through the open double doors, you can see blue sky. Just to the right of the sun, a second light hangs in the sky—a bright red star. From somewhere behind the open door comes the sound of joyous chanting. Then the crowd falls silent and you hear a man's voice.

"People of Istar! O ye of the faith! Today we command the gods themselves. Today we banish evil from the face of Krynn. Join with me in solemn prayer as I prepare to conduct the final part of my holy ritual."

As the Kingpriest speaks, Soth is stealing through the temple. He plans, as the holy messenger of Paladine, to confront the Kingpriest on the portico and demand that he turn from his course. The Kingpriest will refuse. Soth will attack to slay him as flaming debris begins to fall from the sky, panicking the crowd. When his deed is done, the fiery rain vanishes. Then he calms the mob and explains that the Kingpriest called down a flaming mountain that would destroy Istar. Because this is Soth's fantasy, his eloquent words sway the people, and they praise him as their savior. Then the fantasy ends and the heroes are ejected from the mirror.

If the heroes look out the open door, add:

A man in an ornate headdress stands on a portico. He wears robes like your own. Below him is a flight of stairs. At the base of the stairs, thousands of people in an open space have raised their hands toward the sky. They are chanting in unison: "Kingpriest, we hear your words. Kingpriest, we do your will."

A commotion breaks out in the crowd as a young dark-haired female knight clad in blue armor tries to climb the stairs. Hands hold her back. In one hand she holds something that looks like a black stick with a knob on one end. "Kingpriest!" she cries. "Heed the warning signs. The gods are displeased. Look! All of the flowers in Istar have turned black!"

An angry growl sweeps the crowd. Hands pull her back and she disappears beneath the

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mob. "Paladine's champion will save us all," she cries. "The black rose is the symbol of your downfall and the sign of our deliverance!"

If the heroes attempt to go out onto the portico other guards move to stop them. Should combat ensue, they interrupt the ritual. The Kingpriest, shocked at the behavior of loyal followers, wants an explanation before throwing them to the mob. They have one turn to speak before Soth bursts through the double doors to attack the Kingpriest. If the heroes try to explore the temple, Soth enters the hallway before the heroes can proceed. His sword is ready to strike. He will cut down any priest (PC) who stands in his way.

The heroes cannot open the double doors.

Spoilers: The fantasy is spoiled if the heroes prevent Soth from assassinating the Kingpriest or if they are eloquent enough to sway him from his mad course. The heroes can prevent the assassination by attacking Soth as he steals through the temple and either kill or subdue him. Or, they can kill the priest, but then they must face the wrath of his followers—thousands who swarm up the stairs in a maddened frenzy to tear the heroes apart with their bare hands. Although this only ejects the heroes from the mirror, it is cause for a fear check.

If the heroes convince the Kingpriest to halt the ceremony by much persuasion, pointing to the new red star, they can eventually convince the Kingpriest that what he is doing is dangerous and misguided.

If the heroes perform Soth's mission, the female knight will burst from the crowd as they turn to address the masses. "Saviors!" she cries, holding out the rose as if offering it to them. At that moment Soth bursts onto the portico with a roar of animal fury and the heroes must battle him.

Kingpriest (20th-level priest): THAC0 8; #AT 1; Dmg 1d6 (staff); AC 8; HD 20; hp 64; MV 12; SA spells; SD spells; MR 30%; SZ M (6' tall); Int genius (17); AL LG; ML fanatic (19); XP nil.

Spells include: 1) *command* (x3), *cure light wounds*, *detect magic*, *protection from good*, *remove fear* (x2), 2) *detect charm*, *enthrall*, *hold person*, *know alignment* (x2), *obscurement*, *produce flame*, *silence 15' radius*, *spiritual hammer* 3) *create food & water*, *cure blindness or deafness*, *cure disease*, *dispel magic* (x3), *hold animal*, *protection from fire*, *remove paralysis* 4) *cure serious wounds* (x3), *detect lie* (x2), *neutralize poison* (x2), *produce fire*, *spell immunity* 5) *air walk*, *control winds*, *cure critical wounds*, *flame strike*, *insect plague*, *magic font*, *wall of fire* 6) *animate object*, *forbiddance*, *stone tell* (x2), *weather summoning* 7) *exaction*, *Holy Word*.

Temple Guards: THAC0 20; #AT 1; Dmg 1d6 (short sword); AC 5 (chain mail); HD 1; hp 6 each; MV 12; SA nil; SD nil; MR nil; SZ M (6' tall); Int avg (10); AL NE; ML avg (10); XP nil.

Mirror 4: Conquest of Palanthis

In this mirror, Soth relives one of his greatest triumphs, the conquest of Palanthis. The scene is the climax of that battle, with draconians running wild in the streets while flying castles and evil dragons fill the skies.

Soth embroiders on what actually happened at Palanthis—in this fantasy he kills Tanis, the half-elf who was a rival for Kitiara's affections. Tanis wears the *crown of power* that Lord Soth coveted but could never acquire. Because Soth never owned the crown, the magical abilities described for it are merely the product of his imagination.

A DM who wishes to re-create the entire battle of Palanthis can add evil dragons and additional draconians to this fantasy. But it is suggested that the DM keep things at street-level, using the shadows of dragons and glimpses of flying castles to create a sense of dread.

This mirror uses Map 6 in the pull-out section.

Heroes' appearance: The heroes appear as defenders of Palanthis. Their faces are altered. The people recognize them as inhabitants of the city. They wear different clothing, but they have their normal armor and equipment.

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You stand in a narrow street filled with dark smoke. The smoke stings your eyes and chokes your lungs. A nearby building is on fire, and menacing shapes rush through the gloom. Overhead you hear the flapping of mighty wings. From closer at hand comes the clash of weapons and agonized screams.

A figure comes stumbling out of the darkness toward you. He is a half-elven knight, wearing plate mail armor embossed with kingfisher designs. A golden crown encircles his brow. He carries a sword in one hand, a black rose in the other. He gently kisses the flower. "Kitiara, my love," he says. "I fight for you this day."

The knight looks up and sees you. "My friends!" he cries. "There you are. Rally to my side and fight well, or Palanthis will surely fall."

The knight is Tanis, one of the heroes of the War of the Lance. The black rose was given to

him by Kitiara. After the heroes have had a few moments to interact with Tanis, add the following:

Suddenly the wind shifts and the smoke parts. You see a broad-shouldered man with blonde hair and a moustache. His surcoat bears the emblem of a red rose.

Raising his fist, the Rose knight challenges the half-elf. "Tanis!" he cries. "Prepare to die. The crown of power and Palanthis both will fall to me this day!"

As he speaks, six winged, dragon men glide down out of the sky. They land behind him in the street and draw jagged swords from their scabbards.

The half-elf knight trembles, but he stands his ground. "I will fight you according to the Measure, Lord Soth."

The other knight smiles wickedly and raises his sword. As he does, a large black bird



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wings its way past him, barely clearing the fair locks on his head.

"Lord," it caws. "Lord!"

And then it is gone in the smoke.

Soth advances. . . .

Once the fight begins, Tanis does not retreat from Soth but instead stands firm, refusing to run and fighting with honor. Although he wears the *crown of power* he refuses to use its special attacks. Soth also fights honorably until the heroes interfere with his fantasy, whereupon he uses dirty tricks. If left unhindered, Soth kills Tanis.

When Tanis is dead, Soth claims the *crown of power* and puts it on his head. He uses its powers to continue the attack against the heroes.

The fantasy ends when the heroes have either been killed or have retreated. If the heroes flee into the streets after Tanis' death (other than toward the oval exit) they are ejected from the mirror. If they head toward the oval, play out Soth's pursuit and let the heroes feel that they have made a narrow escape.

The exit from this mirror is hidden by the swirling smoke. Once the heroes move away from it, finding the oval again involves searching the smoke-filled street for 2d4 rounds.

Kapak draconians (6): THACO 17; #AT 1; Dmg 1d4 (bite) or 1d6 (short sword); AC 4; HD 3; hp 13 each; MV 15, glide 18; SA poison bite; SD nil; MR 20%; SZ M (6' tall); Int 9; AL LE; ML elite (13); XP nil.

Any character bitten by a draconian must save vs. poison or be paralyzed for 2d6 turns. The draconians coat their swords with this venom by licking the blades. This is their first action on landing behind Soth; it takes one combat round. The venom evaporates from the swords after three combat rounds.

When a kapak draconian is slain, its body turns into a 10-foot pool of acid that inflicts 1d8 damage to any character (except another draconian) caught in the pool. Equipment that

lands in the acid is rendered useless. The acid evaporates in 1d6 rounds.

Tanis Half-Elven (10th-level fighter): THACO 12; #AT 1; Dmg 1d8 (long sword); AC 0 (plate mail); HD 10; hp 68; MV 12; SA nil; SD *crown of power*; MR 30% resistance to *charm* and *sleep* spells; SZ M (5'10" tall); Int very (12); AL NG; ML elite (14); XP nil.

Crown of Power: This magical item protects its wearer with the wizard spells *shield 5' radius* and *globe of invulnerability*, making the wearer immune to missile attacks and low-level spells. These protections are constant and automatic.

The crown also provides the wearer with a number of magical attack forms, including *magic missile* (three missiles per attack) and *ray of enfeeblement*, usable on alternating rounds. It also gives its wearer the ability to *shout* once per day. (If the crown is worn by more than one person during a 24-hour period, each can *shout* once.)

As soon as the *crown of power* is donned, it immediately informs its wearer of its powers. The wearer must save vs. spells or be disoriented (-2 penalty to all rolls) for 1d4 rounds. (Soth automatically makes his saving throw, because this is his fantasy.)

Spoilers: The fantasy is spoiled if the heroes can prevent Soth both from killing Tanis and claiming the *crown of power*. Should the heroes capture this magical item, they can use it against Soth and the draconians.

The heroes can prevent Tanis' death either by killing Soth (at which point the draconians flee), or by somehow persuading Tanis not to fight this more powerful (and vicious) foe.

Alternatively, they might kidnap Tanis, restrain him, and hide him somewhere in the city. They must keep him hidden for 6 turns (1 hour) to succeed; for each turn that they remain in the city there is a 50% chance that a patrol of 1d6+1 kapak draconians discovers their hiding place. The draconians immediately attack, sending one of their party to inform Lord Soth that Tanis has been located. If this draconian escapes, Soth appears in 2d6 combat rounds.

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Mirror 5: Kitiara's Contest

In this mirror, Soth has created a scene that is complete fantasy. Kitiara, the woman who on Krynn stole Soth's undead heart, appears here resplendent in her dragonscale armor, with her blue dragon, Skie. She is staging a competition for the warriors of her newly conquered realm; the victor will become her consort and rule beside her. Soth is the only Solamnic Knight in the competition.

This mirror uses Map 7 in the pull-out section.

Heroes' appearance: The heroes appear as warriors, regardless of their true class. Each is a strong and handsome knight, and each is expected to take the field in single combat against one of the other assembled warriors.

You stand on a wide, grassy field. A few hundred yards away, four colorful pavilions stand in an open square. In the space between the tents, two figures in gleaming armor fight with swords while others watch; the clash of swords rings out across the plain. Beside one of the pavilions lies a large blue dragon, curled in sleep.

Behind you, an oval of utter blackness hangs a few inches above the ground. It is about six feet tall and three feet wide but has no depth, and appears two-dimensional.

If the heroes head in any other direction but the tents, they walk across a seemingly infinite and featureless plain. After an hour they reach the edge of Soth's fantasy world and are ejected from the mirror.

When the heroes head for the pavilions, add the following:

The two knights are locked in combat, oblivious to the cheers of the onlookers. One knight wears plate mail and carries a shield; its emblem is a kingfisher with a red rose in its beak. He has straight blonde hair and a long moustache. The other knight wears

chain mail and carries a blue shield embossed with a silver dragon. Both his hair and his drooping moustache are white, and his face is wrinkled with age. But he fights like a man in his prime.

A dozen young squires stand to one side of the fighting field, cheering as the battle progresses. "A cheer for Lord Soth!" shout some. "Fight well, Lord Pal!" shout others.

The pavilion immediately behind the spot where the two men struggle is open on one side. In a carved mahogany chair sits a beautiful young warrior, clad in blue armor. In one of her hands she holds an embroidered scarf, her favor. Raising it slightly, she calls out to the two knights fighting before her. "To the victor goes the spoils! My hand in marriage to the winner of today's contest. For I shall only wed a man of might who can beat all challengers!"

The white-haired man turns his head slightly to look at the woman, acknowledging her with a smile. In that instant, the other knight strikes. His sword pierces the older knight's throat. Blood sprays from the white-haired man's chest. His eyes fly open wide as he sags to the ground. "That . . . was . . . an unfair. . ."

The victorious knight bows before the woman in the pavilion, then turns and drags the body of his foe over to the blue dragon. Opening one eye, the monster licks its lips. Beside it lie a number of bloodied suits of mail, torn open like foil.

The victorious knight turns to the open pavilion. "I have won, Kitiara," he says, wiping his bloody sword. "You are mine."

"Not quite yet," the woman replies, a crooked smile on her lips. "Look there—more competitors have arrived." She points in your direction.

Though the idealized Soth ordinarily fights with complete chivalry (against lesser opponents), he has grown impatient. His sneak attack shows his true nature. He may well give way to impatience again in the upcoming battles with the heroes.

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Each hero is expected to fight Lord Soth in single combat. They may choose the order in which they battle him. If any hero refuses to fight, the squires throw rotten fruit and ridicule the coward.

In this fantasy, Kitiara wants to see Lord Soth win her hand in single combat. If the heroes "cheat" by ganging up on him, she too enters the fray, fighting by Soth's side. The squires also rally to the side of this popular knight. Kitiara's dragon, a blue named Skie, pauses to consume a bite or two of the white-haired knight before joining the battle. Skie's quick snack takes 1d4 rounds.

Skie: In this fantasy Skie is a docile juvenile male, 40 years old (age category 4) and extremely loyal to both Kitiara and Soth. However, the dragon is somewhat spoiled, and during the course of the fantasy it has overfed, making it lazy. Skie prefers to incapacitate a single opponent without killing it, then toy with it as a cat with a wounded mouse.

If the DM is familiar with the DRAGONLANCE® saga, Skie may know a great deal about Kitiara's history on Krynn and about Soth's passion for her. The dragon knows nothing negative about Soth, because in this fantasy world Soth has arranged it so that there is nothing negative to know.

Kitiara (14th-level fighter): THAC0 7; #AT 2/1 rounds; Dmg 1d6+2 (*short sword of quickness*); AC 0 (plate mail); HD 7; hp 42; MV 12; SA nil; SD nil; MR nil; SZ M (5'9" tall); Int high (13); AL LE; ML elite (14); XP nil.

Squires (1st-level fighters) (12): THAC0 20; #AT 1; Dmg 1d6 (short sword); AC 5 (chain mail); HD 1; hp 6 each; MV 12; SA nil; SD nil; MR nil; SZ M (6' tall); Int avg (10); AL NE; ML avg (10); XP nil.

Skie (blue dragon): THAC0 8; #AT 3 + special; Dmg 1d8/1d8/3d8; AC 0; HD 14; hp 78; MV 9, FI 30 (C), Br 4; SA breath weapon (lightning bolt does 8d8+4 hit points of damage), *sound imitation* at will; SD nil; MR nil; SZ G (42' long); Int very (12); AL LE; ML fanatic (16); XP nil.

Spoilers: The fantasy is spoiled if one of the heroes defeats Soth in single combat, thereby knocking him out of the running for Kitiara's hand. It is also spoiled if the heroes kill Kitiara—an equally daunting task.

When the fantasy goes wrong, the heroes and the furious Soth are quickly ejected from the mirror. However, the DM may postpone the ejection long enough for a dramatic conclusion: Soth calls the dragon to his side, and both attack the heroes. This may lead to a frantic run for the black oval, several hundred yards distant.

On subsequent trips into this mirror, the heroes might provide assistance to the white-haired knight, a 6th-level fighter named Lord Pal, by secretly casting spells that help him. Alter the combat description accordingly, allowing the heroes to react before Pal dies.

Lord Pal (6th-level fighter): THAC0 15; #AT 1; Dmg 1d6 (long sword); AC 0 (plate mail); HD 6; hp 36; MV 12; SA nil; SD nil; MR nil; SZ M (5'11" tall); Int avg (10); AL LN; ML elite (14); XP nil.

Mirror 6: Soul Search

In this mirror, Soth re-enacts the recovery of Kitiara's spirit from the domain of the evil goddess Takhisis. Rather than Caradoc, it is Soth who is journeying across the void of the Abyss to the dark queen's realm on the first level of Baator. The heroes enter the fantasy just before its conclusion; unless they intervene, the fantasy plays itself out in less than a minute.

This mirror uses Map 8 in the pull-out section.

Heroes' appearance: The heroes appear as ghosts—lost spirits drawn down into Takhisis's realm. Their bodies and equipment are entirely incorporeal. Their weapons (even magical ones) are useless, but spellcasting is possible, and magical items may still function normally at the DM's discretion. Because the heroes cannot make physical contact with Soth, they must rely on trickery or spellcasting to ruin this fantasy.

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You float above the rooftop of a shattered temple with columns that are jagged stumps. Around the edges of the rooftop, hundreds of vaguely humanoid spirits swirl in a ghostly dance. All are uttering agonized cries and low moans of torment.

Nearby is an oval of utter blackness that has height and breadth but no depth, and appears two-dimensional. Behind it is a flight of stairs that descends into mist and ends in a broken edge.

Up this staircase walks a knight clad in plate mail armor. The knight has long blonde hair and a drooping moustache. In one hand he holds a chain, from which a black medallion hangs. His eyes range over the spirits who swirl around him as he raises the medallion over his head. "Kitiara!" he calls. "Show yourself. Come to me."

The medallion in Soth's hand looks exactly like the one Tickelmop found, except that it is complete—it has a black sapphire gemstone, carved in the shape of an unopened rose bud, mounted at its center. It is an exact (albeit

illusory) replica of the one Caradoc used to trap Kitiara's spirit

The heroes have only moments to interact with Soth. Just 1d4 rounds after Soth calls out, one spirit (Kitiara's) separates itself from the rest. The ghostly figure has no distinguishing features and looks like all the others—vaguely humanoid in shape. It reaches the medallion 2d4 rounds after first appearing and enters the gem at its center. Soth then laughs triumphantly and descends the stairs. As he does, the remaining spirits transform into large black birds. "Dark," they cry, swirling about him. "Dark." When he reaches the broken edge he disappears from sight and the fantasy ends.

Spoilers: The fantasy is spoiled if the heroes can prevent Soth from trapping Kitiara's spirit inside the medallion and carrying it away with him. They can either destroy the medallion or steal it from Soth—either before or after Kitiara is trapped inside it. Stealing it from Soth involves either carrying or hurling it from the temple roof. A *dispel magic* spell cast on the medallion makes it non-functional for 1d4 rounds.

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B

*ut love had, like
the canker-
worm,
Consumed her
early prime;
The rose grew pale,
and left her
cheek,
She died before her
time.*

—David Mallett
(1705-1765),
“William and
Margaret”

Each time the
heroes succeed in
ruining one of Soth's

fantasies and forcing him from a *memory mirror*, the ghostly image of Soth seated on the throne becomes a little bit more animated. Each time the heroes emerge from a mirror back into the Throne Room, read one of the following descriptions of Soth to the players:

After one mirror:

The ghostly knight seated on the throne seems to have moved slightly. His hands now are clenched around the sword in his lap, and his forehead is wrinkled in a frown. His eyes remain closed, but every now and then the eyelids twitch.

After two mirrors:

The knight in blackened armor is leaning forward slightly, as if sensing your presence. His head is turned in your direction, and the fingers of one hand are drumming impatiently on the hilt of the sword that lies across his thighs. Although his eyes remain closed, the knight turns his head as you move through the room, as if watching you.

After three mirrors:

The knight is sitting bolt upright. He shakes his head, as if clearing sleep from it. Suddenly his eyes open to reveal brilliant pinpoints of orange within blackened eye sockets. The knight stares intently at each of you in turn, then slowly looks away.

After four mirrors:

The knight has risen from his throne, and stands just in front of it. One skeletal hand rests on the hilt of his long sword, and his blazing orange eyes sweep the room. As his gaze falls on you, his blackened mouth is still working, and now you hear faint whispers. You cannot understand them.

After five mirrors:

The knight paces around the Throne Room, his blackened armor making clanking noises so faint that they can barely be heard. The knight seems more substantial than before, but then his pacing takes him right through the throne. His sword is in his hand and he shows obvious irritation.

After six mirrors:

As you step out of the mirror, the black knight towers above you. His body is no longer ghostly and indistinct, and his burning eyes locked on yours. A chilling cold emanates from his rotted flesh, turning your blood to ice. His mouth opens, and in a deep voice that echoes like an empty tomb, he speaks.

“So it was you who spoiled my dreams. You had better have good reason, or I will turn your waking hours to nightmares!”

At this point, Soth is fully corporeal and aware. See the appendix for his description.

To avoid immediate punishment for their insolent spoiling of his fantasies, the heroes must alert Soth to conditions outside the keep

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and show him that his extended sojourn inside the *memory mirrors* has made Sithicus tear itself apart. They must also give him a reason to care about the destruction of his domain.

A quick inspection of his keep shows Soth that Nedragaard is unaffected by the rifts. From what he knows about Ravenloft, he concludes (correctly) that his domain will simply shrink to encompass only the keep itself. Thanks to the *memory mirrors*, Soth no longer needs Sithicus and its flaws; the mirrors can generate a perfect domain for him to adventure in whenever he chooses. "Why should I limit my use of the mirrors to save a flawed and boring domain? For your insolence in disturbing my dreams, I shall have you tossed out of the keep. Do not hope for re-entry. You can die with Sithicus."

Winning Soth over: The heroes have two possible bargaining chips, both hinted at by Lord Soth's history. Soth still yearns to return to his native Krynn. He can duplicate it (even improve on it) by using the *memory mirrors*, but after observing how the heroes spoiled his efforts he realizes that this is an imperfect substitute. Further, Soth still yearns to be reunited with the evasive Kitiara's lost spirit.

If the heroes can convince Soth that somewhere within his domain there really is a portal leading back to Krynn, Soth becomes motivated to keep Sithicus intact. Magda's prophecy may help convince Soth that a portal exists. If the heroes take no other approach than this, Soth, in an ill temper, orders the heroes to search for the portal, then dismisses them from his keep. Magda or Tickelmop then encourage the heroes to solve the mystery of the ghost, which may be linked to a passage out of Ravenloft.

Kitiara's ghost, whom Azrael was hunting when the heroes first encountered him, is the second and better motivator when dealing with Soth. Tickelmop or the heroes should show Soth the medallion she found. Read the following to the players:

The death knight's eyes blaze brighter as he sees the medallion. "At last!" he cries,

grabbing it. "At last she is mine!"

But then his face contorts, and his entire body trembles with rage. He turns the medallion over and over in his hands. "The gem! The gem is missing!" he cries. "This is worthless to me without it! Where is the black stone?"

If Tickelmop is still alive, Soth extracts the story of where and when the medallion was found. He then orders the vampire kender to take him to the spot where the wolf was killed. If Tickelmop is not alive, Soth instead asks these questions of the heroes, then mutters, "It must be near Kendralind." Without another thought for the heroes, he sets out for Kendralind, leaving them to their own devices.

The heroes cannot escape from Sithicus; Soth sings to close the borders if they try. They can spend as much time as they like in the keep, but should conclude that the answer to Magda's prophecy does not lie within Nedragaard.

If the heroes need prompting to follow Lord Soth, warn them (through Magda, Tickelmop, or even a guard in the keep) that, if Soth succeeds in escaping from Sithicus, the domain will instantly cease to exist. "That's what they say happened to G'Henna and Markovia. There's nothing left of those kingdoms but a rift filled with mist. We must find that gem before Soth does!"

Magda's conclusion is incorrect—should Soth ever succeed in escaping Sithicus, the domain would likely accept Azrael as its new lord—but this should give the heroes the nudge they need to journey to Kendralind.

Failure: If the heroes don't persuade Soth or show him the medallion, he summons his skeletal guards and banshees to banish them from the keep. "And you need not be gentle about it," he tells the servants. If the heroes survive this dismissal, they must seek an exit from the disintegrating domain. As above, Tickelmop or Magda encourages them to seek the ghost of Kitiara. The trail leads them to the following conclusion of the adventure, but the destruction en route grows ever more perilous.

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On to Kendralind

Kendralind is a tiny village of perhaps a dozen homes, inhabited by the 25 kender whom Soth turned into vampires in his evil experiments. These kender are evil but also sad and tormented, and Soth committed a greater evil in creating them.

When it was first pulled into Ravenloft from Krynn, Kendralind was a typical kender village of half-completed tree houses, quaint huts, and burrows, surrounded by wild fruit trees and vegetable patches. But over the years it has decayed. Burrow homes have caved in, rope ladders and bridges leading to tree houses and decks have rotted away, and the gardens and orchards are overgrown with weeds. Kendralind today is a gloomy mockery of what it once was.

In addition to this natural decay, the village has been devastated by the rifts. Trees lean at an angle, and huts have collapsed into gaping rents in the ground. Worse yet, some of the rifts swallowed coffins belonging to some of the vampire kender, and so they can no longer restore themselves if forced into *spiritual form*.

Once Soth has emerged from the *memory mirrors*, these rifts slowly start to seal themselves. But the village still bears ugly scars.

The vampire kender of Kendralind share Tickelmop's personality traits. Use Tickelmop's statistics and abilities (in the appendix) for these other kender vampires.

Because vampire kender are immune to mind-affecting magic, the inhabitants of Kendralind retain their memories. Unfortunately for the heroes, none of the kender vampires knows of a wolf lair in the vicinity of Kendralind, and none admits finding any gems lately.

The Elf's Clue

At the beginning of this adventure, the heroes encountered Hethanna, an elf from Har-Thelen. In that encounter, Azrael tried to force Hethanna to lead him to the spot where she sighted the "ghost" of Kitiara. At the time,

all Hethanna could remember was that she heard a howling noise in the area. That howling was the call of the wolf that had swallowed the medallion. (See the adventure's introduction for details.)

As soon as Soth exited from the *memory mirrors*, the elves of Sithicus started to regain their memories. Hethanna now remembers the exact location where she spotted the ghost—a patch of shimmerweed located two miles south of the village of Kendralind. She has returned there to confirm what she saw. The heroes meet her in the woods near the village.

Note: If Hethanna was killed earlier, the elf the heroes encounter is Hethanna's brother, Rowhen (or her younger sister, Willanda, if Rowhen was also killed). Hethanna told Rowhen and Willanda what she saw, and now one of them has come here to confirm her sighting.

Read the players the following:

For some time, you have had the feeling that you are not alone in the forest. Here and there, a broken branch or patch of scuffed earth has indicated that someone else has passed this way recently. At one point, all of the birds suddenly stopped cheeping.

Once again, the forest seems unnaturally still. There! Just ahead, you see branches rustling. A humanoid figure is trying to conceal itself in the undergrowth.

If the heroes investigate, add the following:

As you approach, the figure throws up its hands. "Please!" a voice begs. "Do not hurt me! I'm unarmed and mean you no harm!"

An elf emerges from the bushes, trembling with fear. When she sees you, her fear vanishes. She says, "You're the ones who rescued me from Azrael!" It is Hethanna, the elf who saw the ghost of Kitiara. "What luck to find you again. Lord Soth is in the area. If he sees me, he'll kill me. I know too much about the ghost."

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Hethanna spotted Lord Soth a short time ago and is trying to hide from him. She assumes that Azrael has reported her sighting of the “dark lady” to Soth. She knows that the death knight is likely to torture her to ensure that she tells everything about her sighting of the ghostly figure.

Hethanna gladly leads the heroes to the spot where the sighting occurred. The spot is overgrown with shimmerweed, a crystalline plant native to Krynn that was sucked into Sithicus at the same time that Kendralind was. Vampire kender are harmed by shimmerweed, and thus this spot, even though it lies within two miles of their village. They especially avoid it at night, when the light of the black moon (invisible to non-evil characters) causes the shimmerweed to release a prismatic display. This light inflicts 1d4 points of damage to a kender vampire each round that he is within 20 yards of the plants.

Because the kender vampires avoid this area, they do not realize that the shimmerweed conceals a small cave in the hillside. Here the wolf that swallowed the medallion made its lair. Inside is the missing gem—and the rest of the wolf pack, who will attack anyone who venture into their cave.

Wolves (5): THAC0: 19; AT#1; Dmg 1d4+1; AC 7; HD 2+2; hp 12 each; MV 18; SA nil; SD nil; MR nil; SZ S (3' high); Int semi (3); AL N; ML avg (10); XP 65 each.

If the heroes do not talk with Hethanna, lead them to the shimmerweed patch in one of two ways. Hethanna might be clutching a shimmerweed blossom in her hands. Alternatively, the heroes can stumble across wolf prints and track them back to the lair.

Whichever way the heroes arrive at the cave, any nonplayer characters will remain at its mouth, keeping a wary eye out for Soth and his minions.

The Black Rose Blooms

Having defeated or driven off the wolf pack, the heroes can search the cave. Its floor is littered with half-chewed bones and other debris. If

the heroes search carefully they find a black sapphire carved in the shape of a rosebud. The gem is cracked on one side and is just the right size to fit into the hole on Caradoc’s medallion.

Read the following when the gem is examined:

Something seems to be moving in the murky depths of the gem. As you peer into it, you make out the tiny figure of a woman with short, dark hair. Mists swirl around her supple body as she slams her fists against invisible walls.

“You have found her,” a chilling baritone voice comes from deeper inside the cave. A pair of tiny red fires appear, hovering in mid-air in the deepest shadow, and Lord Soth strides into view. “Your service to me this night will be well rewarded.”

Soth, distrustful of the heroes, has been following them ever since they left Nedragaard, using his *shadow walk* ability to subtly watch from a distance. Soth wears the Caradoc’s amulet missing its stone around his neck.

The heroes are faced with three choices: they can attempt to use the gem as a bargaining tool to gain release from Sithicus, they can hand over the gem, or they can attempt to fight Soth.

If the heroes attack Soth, now or later, “Concluding the Adventure” offers suggestions for how to handle such an encounter. If the heroes attempt to bargain with Soth, read the following:

“You would haggle with me, as though I am a sellsword as the likes of you?” His fiery eyes narrow to slits. “Very well. Let us continue our haggling beyond the confines of this animal den.”

Soth strides past you and exits. As you emerge from the cave, you notice your companions are nowhere in sight (if any nonplayer characters are with the party).. Then, as Soth turns to face you from the heart of the wildly shimmering colors of the shimmerweeds, you see movement in the darkness beyond the patch. The kender vampires, wincing in the

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flashing lights, step into view. Behind them, stand the impassive bulks of skeletal warriors, each with his mailed fists clamped around the arms of your struggling companions. You see Magda battling furiously against one's grasp, staring at Soth with naked hatred, as Soth's dwarven scheneshal glances at her with amusement (if Azrael is still alive).

"Final offer," the death knight rumbles. "Give me the gem, and I will give you the lives of your companions and this wretched Vistani."

From a nearby tree, Shadow caws:
"DARK LORD. DARK LORD."

If the heroes offer the gem to Soth in the cave, he will walk outside before accepting it, and the scene will be the same as described above. Once he takes the gem from them, however, read the following:

"Dragon Highlord," Soth says in a voice barely above a whisper, "I have you at last. Come forth and stand by my side – KITIARA."

As he speaks, the gem in his palm begins to change, unfolding much like a rosebud blooming. Then, a flash momentarily blots out the dancing colors of the shimmerweeds. The air is filled with the sound of a thousand windows being smashed. When the spots clear from your eyes, you see the weeds near Soth have been blasted away and that the clear area around his feet is littered with a dozen or more fragments of the rose-like gem. A misty form appears, coalescing into a human woman with a finely muscled body and dark, curling hair. Gradually, another layer of mist forms, solidifying in a suit of blue scale armor. "Highlord Uth Matar," Soth says. "You are mine . . . forever."

An expression of fury flashes across the woman's face. "Yours?! You abandoned me ages past! No man will ever claim me as property. I choose whom I will. I'll never choose a traitorous lump of charred flesh!"

"The gem makes you mine to control," Soth



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replies, his tone startlingly gentle.

"The gem is broken. And until you reassemble it, I am free . . . something you'll never be able to share with me." She glances at you, a crooked smile appearing on her lips. "But at least now you have to offer freedom to my saviors."

"Pah," Soth says. He bends to gather the gem fragments, but as he does, the rustling of innumerable wings is heard from the trees beyond the clearing.

"Dark Lord Through," the hoarse voice of Shadow comes. Suddenly, rooks come sweeping down, cutting through the dancing rays of colored lights like solid shadows. As the flock wheels around Soth, one bird dives to the ground and snatches a fragment of the gem. Before Soth can grab it, the rook is airborne again."

"Dark Lord Through," Shadow caws from its perch. "Dark Lord Through."

The death knight charges through the flashing shimmerweeds as the one rook heads into the dark sky with the gem fragment in its beak, barely escaping Soth's armored grasp. Soth bellows, a cry of terrible anger and boundless frustration that is so powerful that you feel it in your bones. He whirls, his blackened gauntlets almost seizing first one of the black birds, then another as they swarm around him in a flurry of beating wings. Soth whirls and spins, clutching nothing but empty air, as the cawing birds gradually begin to take to the sky with their precious shards.

At the edge of the shimmerweed patch, the kender vampires and Azrael (if still alive) watch, their mouths agape.

"You may keep me here till I die, Lord Soth, but now I know that *you'll* never have what you want the most either!" Magda's voice is heard clearly above beating wings and howling death knight. As Soth continues to flail at the heart of a maelstrom of light and darkness, she laughs shrilly.

"Through Dark Lord," Shadow cries.

"Through Dark Lord

Magda's laughter is cut short. A look of understanding, followed by a smile of triumph appears on her furrowed face. She suddenly wrenches herself free from the skeletal warrior's grasp and lunges toward Soth, her cudgel raised. But then she stops. "My tribe," she wails forlorn, the frustration in her voice equal to that of Soth's. "I can't leave my tribe!"

If the heroes have not gotten involved in the action yet, have them roll Intelligence checks. As Soth whirls among the birds and the lights, any hero who succeeds will notice that the rose on Soth's armor is no longer half-melted; in fact, it is fully detailed and glowing redly.

Soth's armor has become a temporary gate from Sithicus to Krynn. As long as the rooks are snatching up gem fragments and carrying them away, any character brave enough to charge at Soth and dive at his chest, may at last escape the Demiplane of Dread.

Although Magda's interpretation of the prophecy was incorrect, enough clues have now been provided that the characters should realize they have the option to escape. If the DM chooses to be heavy-handed, Tickle mop could rush forward, the rays of lights tearing at her body as she goes, yelling, "Kendermore!" She leaps at Soth, who is too busy trying to recover the precious fragments to care, and seemingly enters the death knight's body with a blinding flash.

This gate remains active for 1d6 rounds, plus one round for each character the DM wishes to allow through the gate. This time is equal to however long it takes for the last gem fragment to be seized by one of the birds plus 1d6 rounds.

As the last fragment is carried off, the flock of rooks swarming around Soth all take flight, vanishing into the black sky. Before Shadow joins them, it cries: "Through! Through!"

Soth roars and the entire shimmerweed patch shatters, plunging the scene into darkness.

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Concluding the Adventure

If the heroes leap through Soth, the last one through hears Soth's cry of anguished rage. With that sound still ringing in his ears, the hero and his companions find themselves in what appears to be the decayed throne room of Soth's keep. However, the heroes are now in Nedragaard's Prime Material plane counterpart, Dargaard Keep on Soth's homeworld of Krynn.

For inclined DMs, this could be the start of a DRAGONLANCE campaign set in the time when the children of the Heroes of the Lance and Kitiara Uth Matar are coming of age. The TALES OF THE LANCE boxed campaign set and the DRAGONLANCE Saga: The Second Generation novel from TSR Books are perfect source material for DMs and players wishing to blaze new trails across this venerable game world.

If the heroes remain in Sithicus, they see Soth fall to his knees in the near-total darkness. The kender vampires and skeletal warriors release any captives and fade into the shadows. Azrael looks from the immobile Soth to the heroes, and decides discretion is the better part of valor and departs as well. All grows perfectly quiet, and unless the heroes flee (something Magda recommends, and does herself) or attack Soth, things will remain thus for six rounds. If the heroes flee with Magda, at the end of six rounds, they hear Soth's wail of torment echo across the woods. The full impact of Kitiara eluding him again has overwhelmed him. Soth will remain in the shattered weed patch, sobbing for the remainder of the night.

If the heroes attack Soth while he is in this shocked stupor, they immediately bring his complete and unbridled fury upon them. Using his full array of powers, Soth will do his utmost to destroy those who have robbed him of the last shreds of hope. As is true of an attack on Soth at any point in this adventure, a violent confrontation with the death knight is likely to be the last in the life of the characters. However, it is a remote possibility that a power and lucky group of characters can defeat Soth, at least temporarily.

Just as the gods of Krynn cursed Soth with eternal undeath, so has the Dark Powers. If Soth is slain, his body turns to mist, only to reform in the throne room of Nedragaard Keep 1d4 hours later. During this time, the heroes can attempt to reach the border and flee into another land of the Mists. It is more likely, however, that they will remain trapped in Sithicus for the rest of their lives.

Soth will hold the heroes in his realm, just like he does with Magda and The Wanderers, forcing them to share his torment. However, while Soth leaves the Vistani be, the heroes will not be so lucky. Soth needs someone to search for the fragments of black rose gem so that he may claim Kitiara's soul. Azrael is but one individual, and there are many locations to be covered . . . why not recruit those who found the gem in the first place? He will personally "draft" them.

The characters serving as the unwilling minions of Soth can form an entire campaign based in Sithicus, as the heroes must explore one hideous dungeon or hide-out of an insane mystic after another; Soth will not only be constantly threatening their lives, but the lives of The Wanderers and perhaps even the populations of the entire cities. Elements the DM can develop in such a campaign include not only the cities of Har-Thelen, Hroth and Mal-Erek, but he can explore the reasons behind Soth's creation of the kender vampires. Further, it is likely that the Dark Powers have chosen to give Kitiara Uth Matar's false spirit a more solid vessel; the Blue Lady might be walking the haunted woods of Sithicus in the flesh now. She might be a friend or a foe to the heroes, Kitiara's heart remains, as ever, unpredictable.

Regardless, the heroes will never be able to gather all the fragments of the gem. The rooks were manifestations of the Dark Powers who, wishing to cut Soth off from his artificial happiness, have seen to it that he will never dare use the *memory mirrors* again: if he does, he runs the risk of dissolving part of Sithicus and losing part of the gem. If the heroes don't escape the domain, their children's children will still be looking for that one last petal of the black rose.

APPENDIX: NONPLAYER CHARACTERS



Lord Soth

Lord of Sithicus
Death Knight, Chaotic Evil

Armor Class: 0 (-3 with armor)	Str 18/99
Movement: 12	Dex 14
Level/Hit Dice: 9	Con 17
Hit Points: 89	Int 10
THACO: 5	Wis 9
No. of Attacks: 3/2 rounds	Cha 17
Damage/Attack: 1d8+6 (magical long sword plus Strength bonus) or 1d6 (touch)	
Special Attacks: Spells	
Special Defenses: Fear aura	
Magic Resistance: 75% plus possible spell reflection	

Lord Soth is a death knight (see the *MONSTROUS MANUAL*), a corrupted Knight of Solamnia who was cursed by the gods for betraying that order's sacred oaths of honor and service to the cause of good.

The blast of magical fire that turned Soth into an undead creature permanently blackened his armor; no amount of polishing can remove the fine layer of soot that covers it. Soth wears a full helm that hides all but his glowing orange eyes and has magical +3 *plate mail*. Both his chest and shield are embossed with the twisted and blackened emblem of his former order—a red rose.

Soth's armor completely hides his body. When he does remove his helm or a gauntlet, the skin underneath is blistered and white. His lips and fingertips have cracked open and his eyes have melted away to leave black hollows in which eerie flames burn.

Background: Soth's history is detailed in the *DRAGONLANCE* saga and in the *RAVENLOFT* novel *Knight of the Black Rose*. It is also summarized in this adventure, in the section "A Dark Knight's Tale."

Current Sketch: Soth has ruled the domain of Sithicus for twenty years, and in all that time has never given up his search for a gateway back to his native Krynn. He has explored every corner of his domain and knows it intimately.

Soth is still driven by his desire to bring the dragon highlord Kitiara Uth Matar back from the dead as his undead consort. For some time he has been plagued by rumors of a ghostly, dark-haired woman who roams Sithicus's hills at night. Neither Soth nor his seneschal Azrael have seen this apparition themselves, but the elves who saw it say

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that the ghost wears armor with a bluish tinge, and that she sports a crooked smile.

At first, Soth decided that Kitiara's spirit must have somehow escaped from the medallion. He was utterly merciless in extracting information from any who saw the apparition. Now the elves of Sithicus are reluctant to admit to having seen the ghostly figure, for fear that Soth might use torture to "help them remember."

Despite Soth's pursuit of every lead, not one shred of hard evidence of Kitiara's presence in Sithicus was ever found. Soth has concluded that Kitiara's "ghost" was nothing more than an illusion created by the dark powers to torment him.

On Krynn, a death knight was compelled to remember his crimes in song on any night that one of the three moons is full. In Sithicus, there is only one moon—the black orb Nuitari. Soth is compelled to sing when it is full—an event that occurs every eight days. He also sings to close his borders.

Combat: Soth carries a shield and fights with a long sword that is a *sword of wounding*. When he feels confident of victory, he fights honorably: issuing a challenge, never striking an opponent who has fallen to the ground or lost a weapon, and always allowing his opponent the choice of "dishonoring" themselves by surrender—or a clean, quick death. When he feels threatened, Soth fights with every foul trick he knows.

Soth can also injure by touch alone. His touch causes 1d6 points of cold damage.

Soth has all of the usual traits of a death knight. He constantly generates *fear* in a five-foot radius and can cast the spells *detect magic*, *detect invisibility*, and *wall of ice* at will. Twice per day he can cast *dispel magic*. Once per day he can use a *power word* of his choice. He can cast a *symbol of fear* or *symbol of pain* once per day, as well as a 20-die *fireball* once per day. He can also *shadow walk* at will to any point in his domain, but he cannot use this ability to leave Sithicus or to enter the Plane of Shadow or any other plane. All of these spells function at the 20th level of ability.

Soth has a magical resistance of 75%. On a percentile roll of 11 or less, he reflects a resisted spell back at the caster. Inside Nedragaard Keep, this effect is doubled; a roll of 22 or less reflects the spell.

Soth can exert complete control over any of the lesser undead in his domain (skeletons and zombies) and can control other undead creatures of up to 8 HD as if a 6th-level evil priest. At will, he can cause any dead warrior to rise from the ground as a zombie completely under his control. These

abilities are unlimited by distance, as long as the undead are within Sithicus.

Although he is undead, Soth cannot be turned.

Though an ordinary death knight can be dispelled by means of a *holy word* spell, Soth is trapped in the Demiplane of Dread and cannot be driven to another plane. Rather than being randomly transported (as suggested in the *Realm of Terror* sourcebook), Soth is *slowed* for 2d4 rounds, and suffers a -4 penalty on any attack rolls made during this time.

If slain, Soth's body turns to mist, only to reform on his throne in Nedragaard.

Azrael

Seneschal to Lord Soth
Werebadger, Chaotic Evil

Armor Class: 4	Str 18/91
Movement: 6, Br 3	Dex 16
Level/Hit Dice: 5	Con 18
Hit Points: 35	Int 10
THACO: 15	Wis 12
No. of Attacks: 3 (2 with axe)	Cha 12
Damage/Attack: 1d6/1d6/1d4 (scratch and bite) or 1d8+3 (magical axe)	
Special Attacks: Berserk frenzy	
Special Defenses: Silver or magical weapons required to hit	
Magic Resistance: Nil	

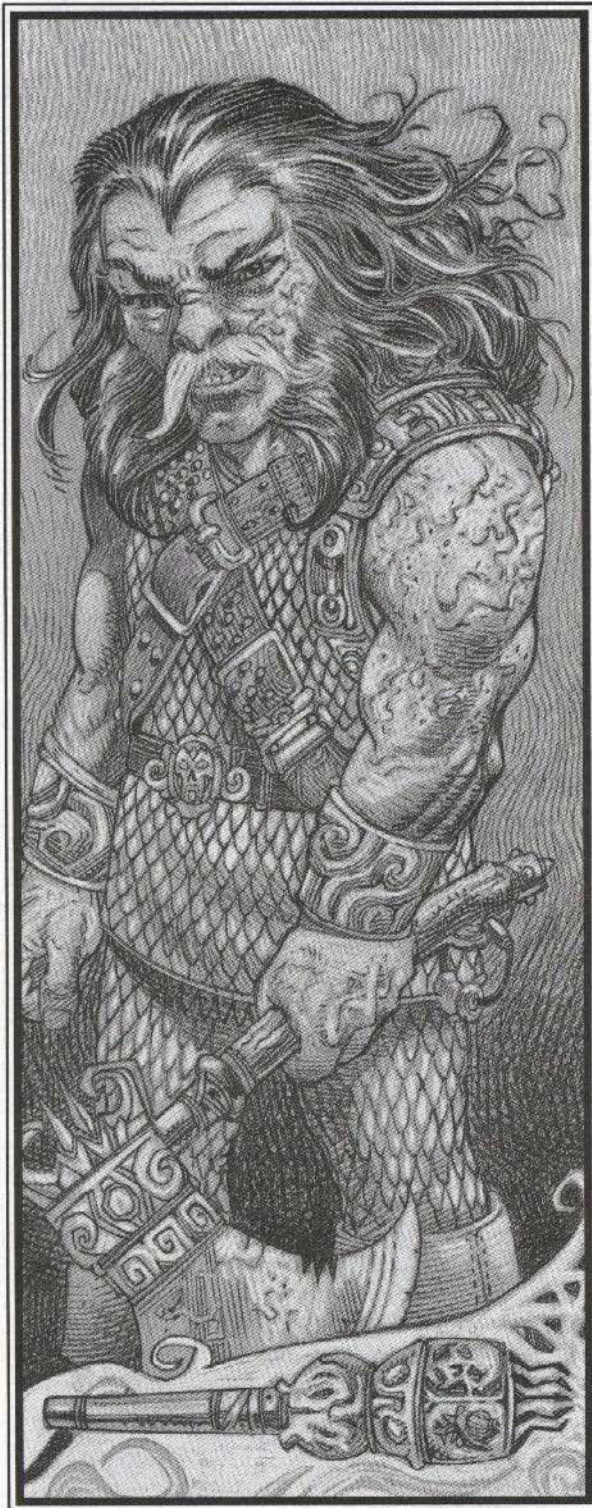
Azrael has three forms he can assume at will: dwarf, giant badger, or dwarf-badger hybrid.

In his dwarven form, Azrael stands about four feet tall. He has dark hair and a bone-white beard formed by a moustache and muttonchop sideburns; his chin is bare. The left side of his face, his left arm, and part of his chest are puckered with scar tissue from an old burn.

Background: Azrael was born in Brigalaure, a dwarven city located deep underground in a world on the Prime Material Plane. He was a lazy fellow who refused to learn either his father's craft of ironworking or his mother's craft of jewelcutting. Cast out of his home, he took revenge by murdering his entire family.

While on the run from the *politskara* of Brigalaure, Azrael heard a voice speaking to him out of the darkness of one of the city's deepest caverns. In return for continued attacks on Brigalaure's citizens, Azrael would gain enormous power. Azrael readily agreed and was transformed into a werebadger.

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Azrael was drawn into Ravenloft when a mist arose about him while he was hunting in one of Brigalaura's caverns. He entered the Demiplane of Dread through the domain of Forlorn. Later he spent some time in Barovia and in Gundarak, a domain that disappeared shortly after the Grand Conjunction failed.

In Barovia, Azrael met Lord Soth and through sheer persistence became the death knight's companion and follower. When Soth walked out of Barovia into the mists, Azrael followed him into the newly created domain of Sithicus.

Current Sketch: Azrael considers killing his "craft" and takes pride in making his craft as gruesome as possible. He is not above making a profit from a bloody night's work and always tears open the pockets of his victims to see if they carried valuables.

To this day, Azrael does not know what dark power turned him into a weredbadger. He is a true lycanthrope and cannot be cured.

Azrael serves as seneschal to Lord Soth, attending him in Nedragaard Keep. His badge of office is the silk doublet he wears, embroidered with the black rose of his master. Like Soth, he can *control undead*—but only skeletons and zombies, and only as if a 3rd-level priest.

Azrael is loyal to Lord Soth and slavishly tries to please him. But he is not stupid, and he might strike out on his own or even switch allegiances if Soth were permanently incapacitated.

Combat: Azrael wears chain mail armor and fights with an *axe of speed* when in dwarven or dwarf-badger hybrid form. This magical axe is a +3 weapon that affects initiative and increases the number of attacks permitted as per a *scimitar of speed*.

Azrael's axe carries a curse; any character of non-evil alignment who touches it must save vs. spells or immediately go into a berserk frenzy and use it to attack the first character(s) that he or she sees. This attack continues until all victims have been killed or have fled out of sight.

When the character afflicted by the curse can no longer see a target to attack, the curse ends and the weapon can be dropped. Picking up the axe again requires a second saving throw, and may cause a return of the curse. Once a character successfully saves, that character can handle the axe safely for a time until he or she lets it go.

When transforming to badger form, Azrael must first remove his armor (this takes one round) and may no longer use his axe.

On each round of combat, Azrael has a 25%

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chance to enter a werebadger's natural berserk frenzy. Once in frenzy, he fights until all of his opponents have died or fled. During frenzy, his claw attacks gain a +1 attack bonus, and his bite attack gains a +3 bonus.

Only Azrael's bite can transmit the curse of lycanthropy. During a frenzy, his bite attacks have twice the normal chance to transmit this disease.

Each time Azrael returns to human form, he heals 10–60% (1d6×10%) of the damage he suffered while in badger or dwarf-badger hybrid form. Only damage inflicted *after his most recent transformation from dwarven form* is healed.

Poppy seeds and poppyseed oil are poisonous to Azrael. Fortunately, his acute sense of smell gives him a 75% chance to detect the seeds in his food or smell the oil on a coated weapon.

Azrael can smell characters up to one mile away—even those who are hidden. Downwind of a character, Azrael has a 75% chance to determine the character's general location by following his or her scent. When the air is still, Azrael has the same chance to detect hidden characters by smell—although the range of this ability is limited to 30 feet. Azrael can also track characters by smell as a ranger with tracking proficiency.

Azrael can see in the dark with his infravision. Because he is of evil alignment, he can see by the light of Sithicus' black moon as well as a human can in normal moonlight. When this moon is full, he can see as well as he does in broad daylight.

Magda the Wanderer

Vistani *Oma* (Leader)
5th Level Fighter, Neutral Good

Armor Class: 4	Str 12
Movement: 12	Dex 18
Level/Hit Dice: 5	Con 13
Hit Points: 30	Int 15
THACO: 16	Wis 17
No. of Attacks: 1	Cha 15
Damage/Attack: 1d6+9 (cudgel)	
Special Attacks: Nil	
Special Defenses: <i>amulet of invisibility to undead</i>	
Magic Resistance: Nil	

Magda is the descendant of an ancient Vistani hero known as Kulchek the Wanderer. She leads a small tribe of 14 Vistani who travel in nine wagons. All have forsaken their surnames and simply call themselves "The Wanderers." They spend no more than one night in any location.

Magda is in her mid-40s and has raven-black hair streaked with white. She retains some of the beauty that she had as a young woman, but her green eyes are hooded with secrets and her face bears the worried creases of someone who has had to overcome great misery and fear. Her right shoulder bears three deep scars—a legacy of a gargoyle's clawed attack.

Background: Magda is the sole survivor of a Vistani tribe that roamed the domain of Barovia. Their *oma* (grandmother and leader), Madame Girani, was burned alive in her *vardo* by Lord Soth, Count Von Zarovich, vampire lord of Barovia, murdered the rest of the tribe in gruesome fashion, including Magda's brother Andari.

Magda became Lord Soth's unwilling companion and was forced to guide him as he searched for an exit from Barovia. She at last escaped him in Gundarak. There she formed a new tribe from Vistani who had survived Lord Gundar's depredations. This new tribe inadvertently wandered into the newly formed domain of Sithicus and now is trapped there. In vengeance for her betrayal, Lord Soth refuses to let Magda cross the border and leave his domain. When she tries, he sings a barrier to stop her.

Current Sketch: Although Soth has not yet harmed her tribe, Magda searches for a way out of Sithicus. She questions all newcomers and pursues any lead. Perhaps for this reason, Soth has permitted her to roam freely; if she finds a way out, he certainly will use it to return to Krynn.

Like many Vistani women, Magda can foresee the future through the psionic wild talent of precognition. She can use this power no more than once every two hours if she sleeps between readings; once every four hours if resting; or once every eight hours if active. She sometimes uses a *crystal ball* to aid her.

Magda's constant companions are a hound that she has named Sabak, after Kulchek's mythical bloodhound and a large rook she calls Shadow. The hound is a normal dog, but it has keen intelligence and responds to a large number of simple commands in the Vistani language. The rook, unbeknownst to Magda, is actually a manifestation of the Dark Powers. It knows three words: "Through . . . Dark . . . Lord."

Combat: Magda wears leather armor and carries Gard, the cudgel of the hero Kulchek. In the hands of a Vistani, it is a *staff of striking* (1d6+9 damage) with unlimited charges. Wielded by a non-Vistani, it is simply a +3 weapon (1d6+3 damage).

In her left boot Magda carries a silver dagger

APPENDIX: NONPLAYER CHARACTERS



enchanted to duplicate the effects of a *gem of brightness* when the command words are spoken. The dagger has 25 charges left and cannot be recharged.

Around her neck Magda wears an *amulet of invisibility to undead*. The teardrop-shaped amulet is made of silver and is engraved with the symbol of an eye. Its wearer is invisible to mindless undead such as skeletons and zombies. This invisibility continues even when the wearer is attacking.

Tickelmop Toothfang

Kender Vampire, Lawful Evil

Armor Class: 2	Str 14
Movement: 9	Dex 8
Level/Hit Dice: 4+3	Con 12
Hit Points: 23	Int 10
THACO: 15	Wis 13
No. of Attacks: 1	Cha 15
Damage/Attack: 1d6 (claws) or 1d4 (hoopak as staff) or 1d4+1 (hoopak as sling)	
Special Attacks: spirit rending, <i>cackle</i>	
Special Defenses: +1 or better magical weapon to hit, regeneration, immune to poison and disease, half-damage from cold- or heat-based attacks	
Magic Resistance: immune to <i>charm</i> , <i>hold</i> , <i>sleep</i> spells and to mind-influencing magic	

Tickelmop Toothfang's pointed ears, long ponytail, and wide eyes give her an impish, elven look. She stands four feet tall and is slightly built, but is as muscular as a gymnast. Closer inspection in good light reveals that her skin is very pale, almost withered. She is quite gaunt, and her bones are visible beneath her skin. Her rare smiles reveal long, pointed teeth. When she talks, it is in a hissing whisper.

Background: Tickelmop is one of 50 kender whose village was drawn into Sithicus from Krynn some 15 years ago. Lord Soth killed half of them in hideous experiments, and the other half were turned into vampires. From their village of Kendralind they unwillingly serve Soth. (Vampire kender appear in the first *RAVENLOFT® MONSTROUS COMPENDIUM*.)

Tickelmop feeds on blood—she must drink 4 hp of blood (animal or human) daily. Each day that she fails to consume her quota, she loses one point of Strength. If reduced to Strength 0 she assumes *spiritual form* and must retreat to her coffin to restore herself.

If the heroes allow her to accompany them, Tickelmop feeds on them—secretly, in the dead of night

APPENDIX: NONPLAYER CHARACTERS

when they are asleep. Any hero who observes Tickelmop feeding (and who does not already realize that she is a vampire) must make a horror check.

Tickelmop's vampirism is not contagious.

Current Sketch: Tickelmop, like all kender vampires, cannot leave the domain. Should she cross the border she would immediately turn to dust. If the domain is destroyed, the vampires of Kendralind will perish.

Although a vampire, Tickelmop has retained many characteristics that mark her as a kender. She has no appreciation of personal property and quickly appropriates for her own use any items left "lying around." She is fearless, and she enjoys taunting the heroes—but in a harsh, sarcastic fashion at odds with the light-hearted quips of a normal kender.

Whereas a normal kender is playful and carefree, Tickelmop is gloomy and grim. She has no spirit of independence and is completely subservient to Lord Soth. Whenever the black moon is full, she sits down to weep for those parts of herself that are forever lost.

A servant of her master, Tickelmop knows all the passwords needed to get by a skeletal warrior.

However, Tickelmop despises Soth, and only fear guarantees her service. She would gladly betray him if the betrayal did not endanger her. Possibly, if the heroes win her respect, she might even sacrifice herself to save them from great danger.

Combat: As a vampire, Tickelmop has lost the natural dexterity of kenders; she strikes last in any combat round and cannot surprise opponents. She fights with a hoopak—a forked stick that can be used as a staff or a sling.

Alternatively, Tickelmop can fight with her claws, which, on a successful hit, inflict 1d6 damage and, through a painful process known as "spirit rending," reduce the victim's Intelligence and Wisdom scores by one point each per hit. Those struck must also save vs. paralysis or be unable to act on the next round.

Once per hour, Tickelmop can *cackle*. Those within 20 yards must save vs. spells or be affected as by a *symbol of insanity*. Those protected by a *remove fear* spell are immune.

Non-magical wooden weapons that strike Tickelmop immediately rot and are destroyed. Magical wooden weapons can avoid this effect by saving vs. acid.

Tickelmop regenerates 2 hp per combat round. If driven to 0 hp, she must assume *spiritual form*. If forced into this form, she immediately flees to her coffin in Kendralind.



Tickelmop is vulnerable to holy water, holy symbols, and shimmerweed, and she may be turned as a wraith. She is also vulnerable to attacks with her own hoopak, which does not rot if it strikes her. If impaled on the hoopak (a natural roll of 19 or 20) she dies and bursts into flame.

Spiritual form: Tickelmop can assume *spiritual form*—a form identical to that of a poltergeist—at will. She very rarely does so, however, because if slain in this form she is permanently dead. While in this form, she is turned or destroyed as a skeleton.

Like a poltergeist, Tickelmop attacks by throwing objects—heavy or sharp ones, if possible. These do no real damage if they hit (treat dangerous items as near misses), but have a chance of causing *fear*. The victim must save vs. spells or flee for 1d10 rounds, with a 50% chance of dropping anything carried at the time. A successful saving throw means that character is immune to further *fear* attacks by Tickelmop.

Tickelmop (spiritual form): THAC0 15; #AT 1; Dmg nil; AC 10; HD 4+3; hp 3; MV 6; SA *fear*; SD invisibility, silver or magical weapons to hit; MR nil; SZ M (4' tall); Int avg (10); AL LE; ML avg (10); XP 120.

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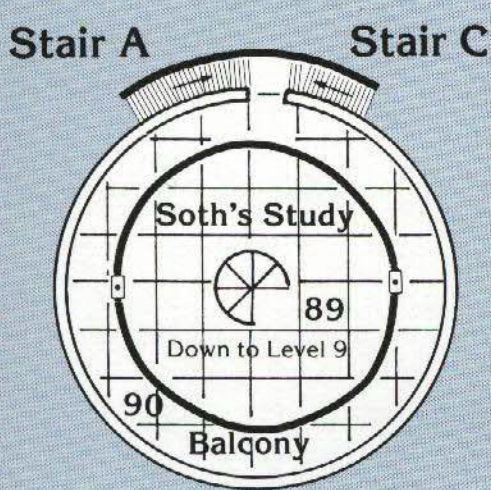
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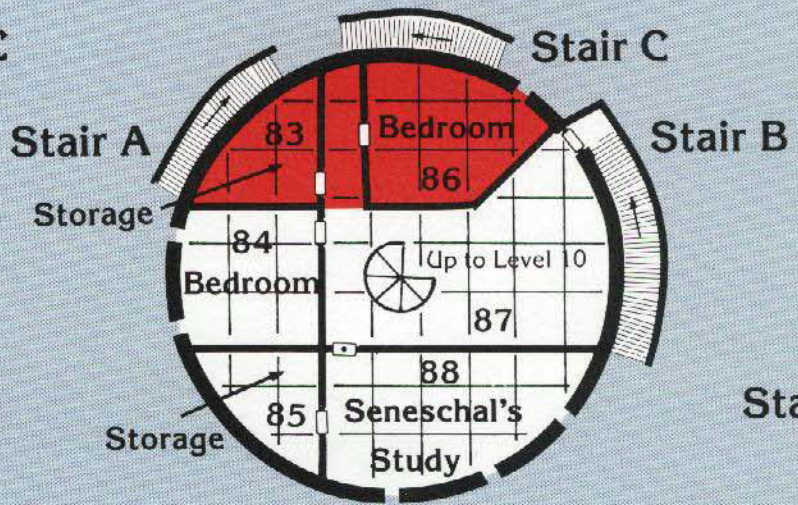
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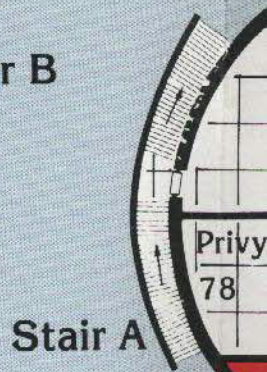
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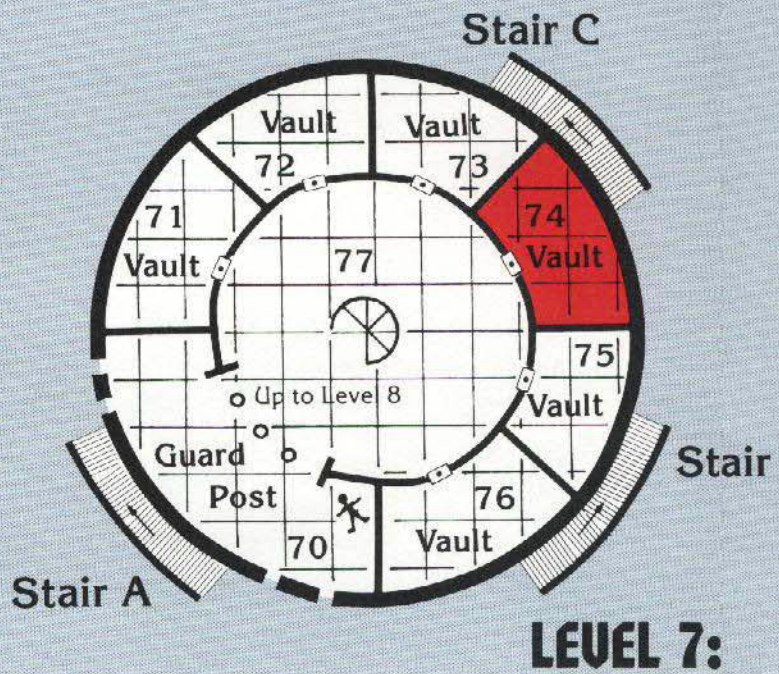
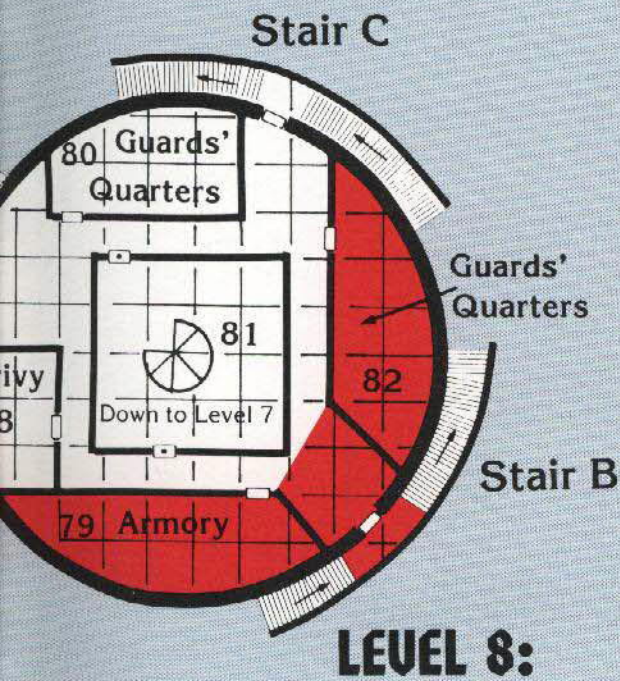


LEVEL 9:



NEDRAGAAR

Scale: 1 square



Legend:

	Archway		Lock
	Banshee Lair		Mirror
	Body		Pillar
	Broken Doors		Portcullis
	Door		Railing
	Double Door		

WARD KEEP

square = 10 feet

Tower Battlement

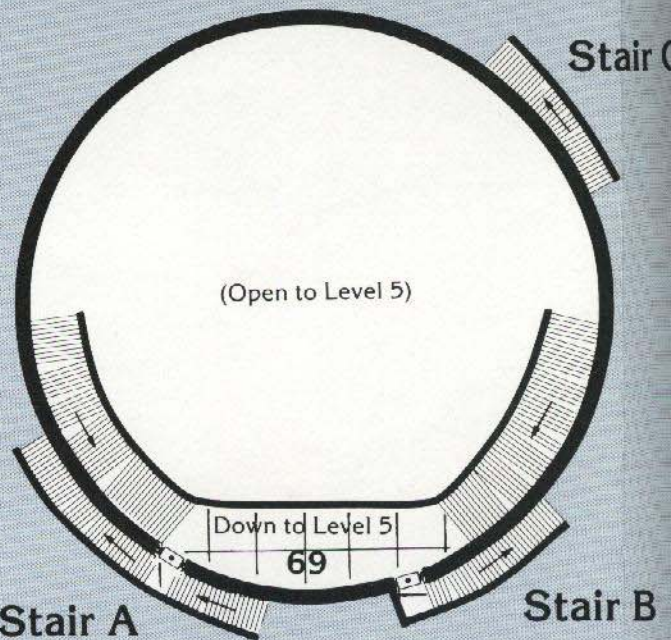
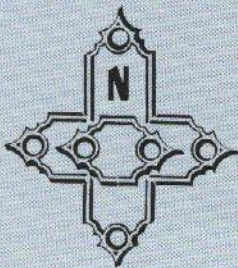


Tower Battlement



Stair B

7:



LEVEL 6:

Locked Door



Spiral Staircase

Mirror



Staircase

Pillar



Statue

Portcullis



Throne

Railing



Thorn Slinger

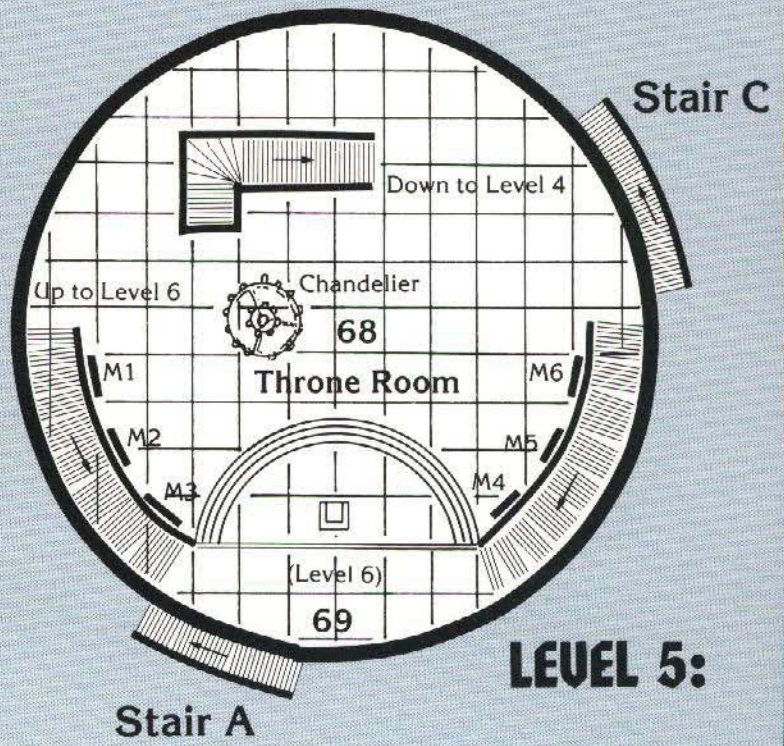
Tower Battlement



Tower Battlement



air C



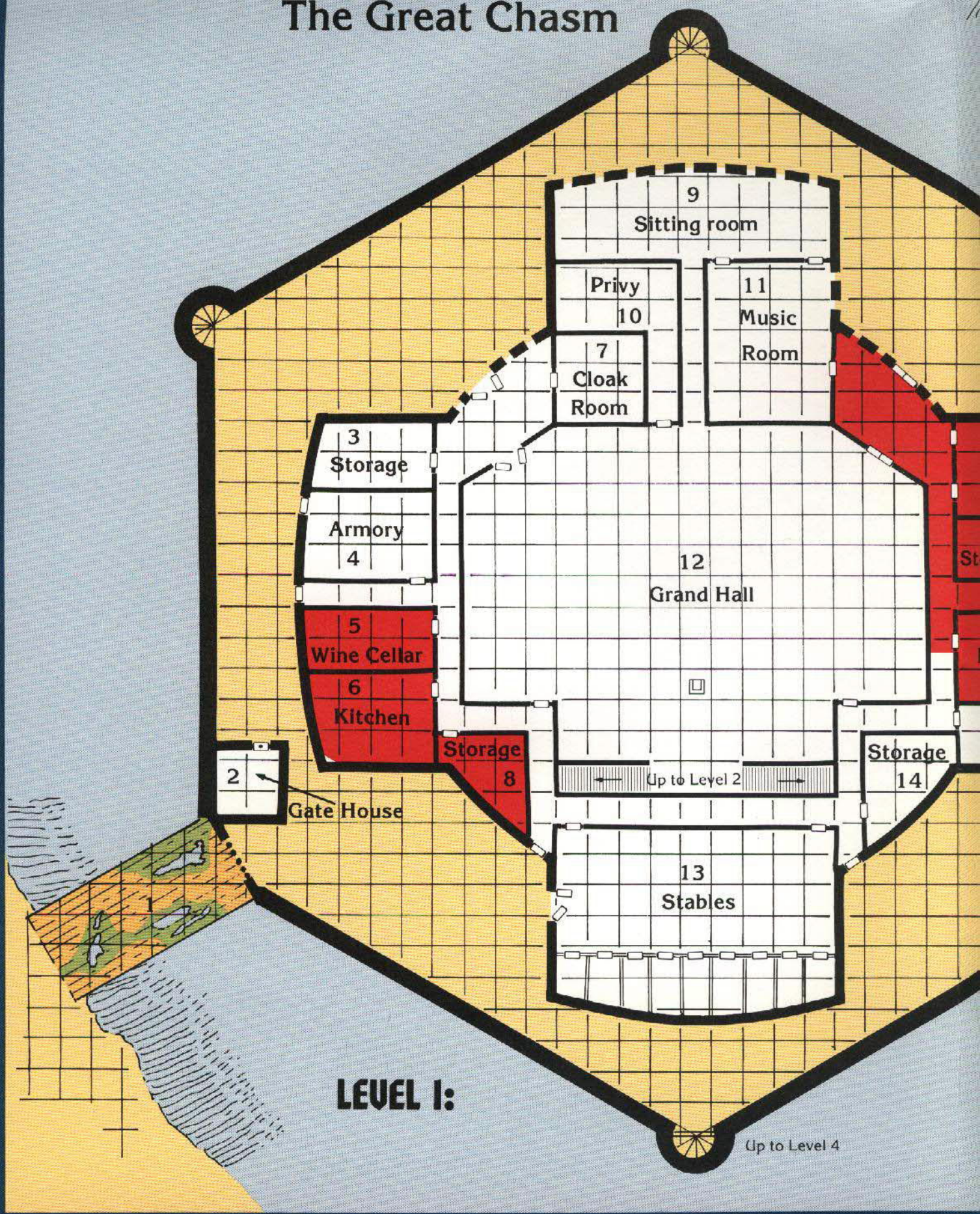
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Tower Battlement



6:

The Great Chasm



LEVEL I:

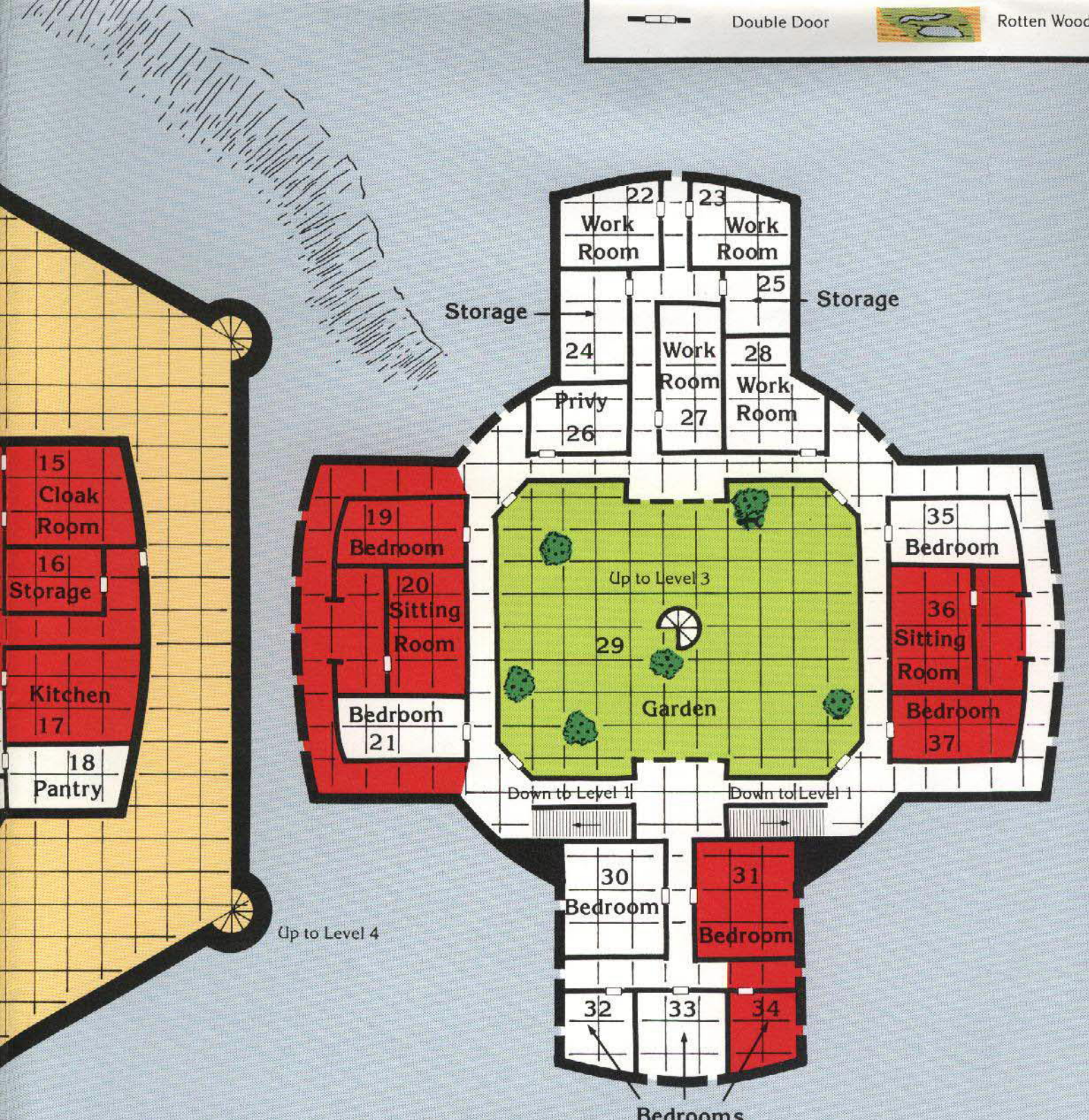
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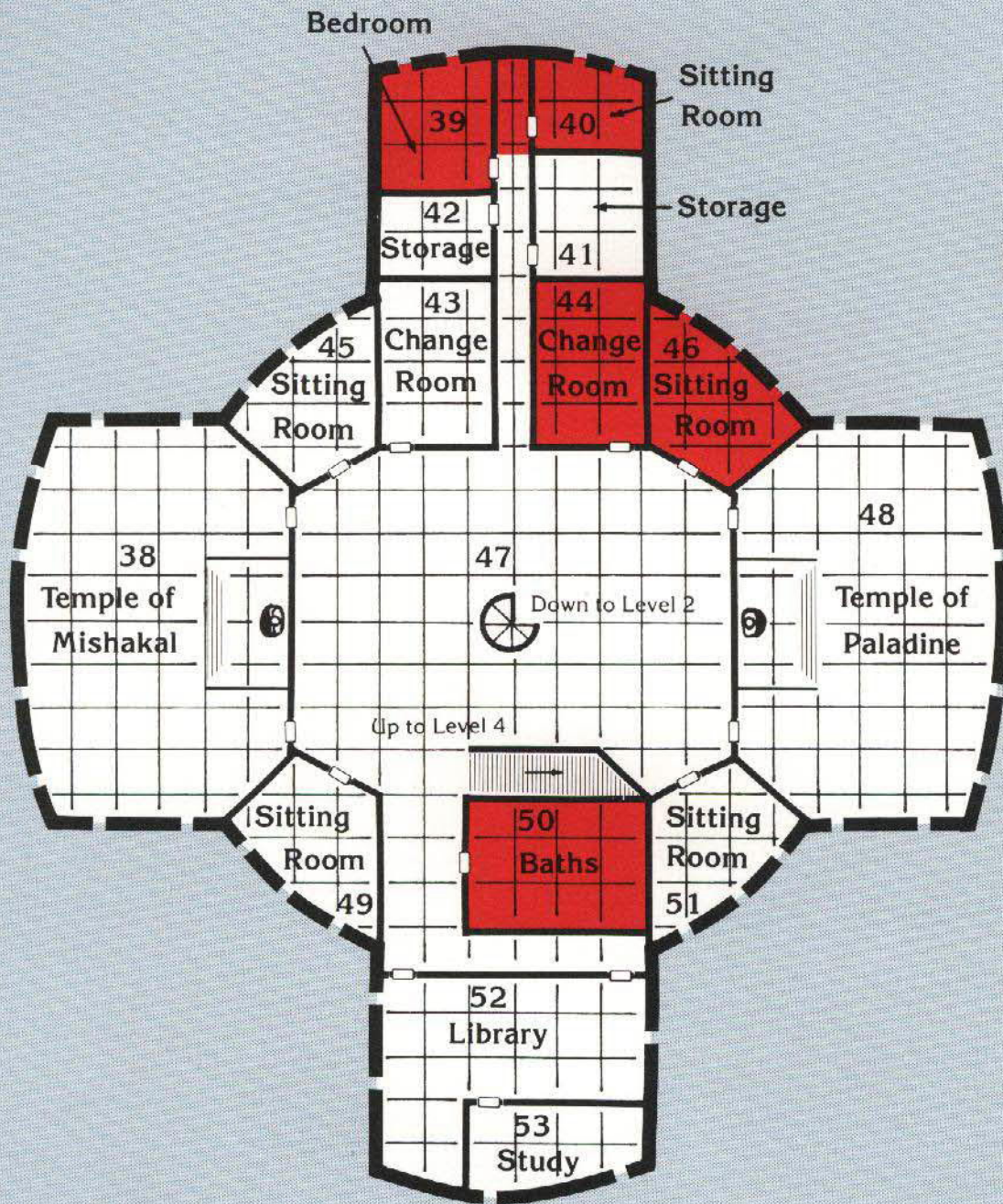
Double Door



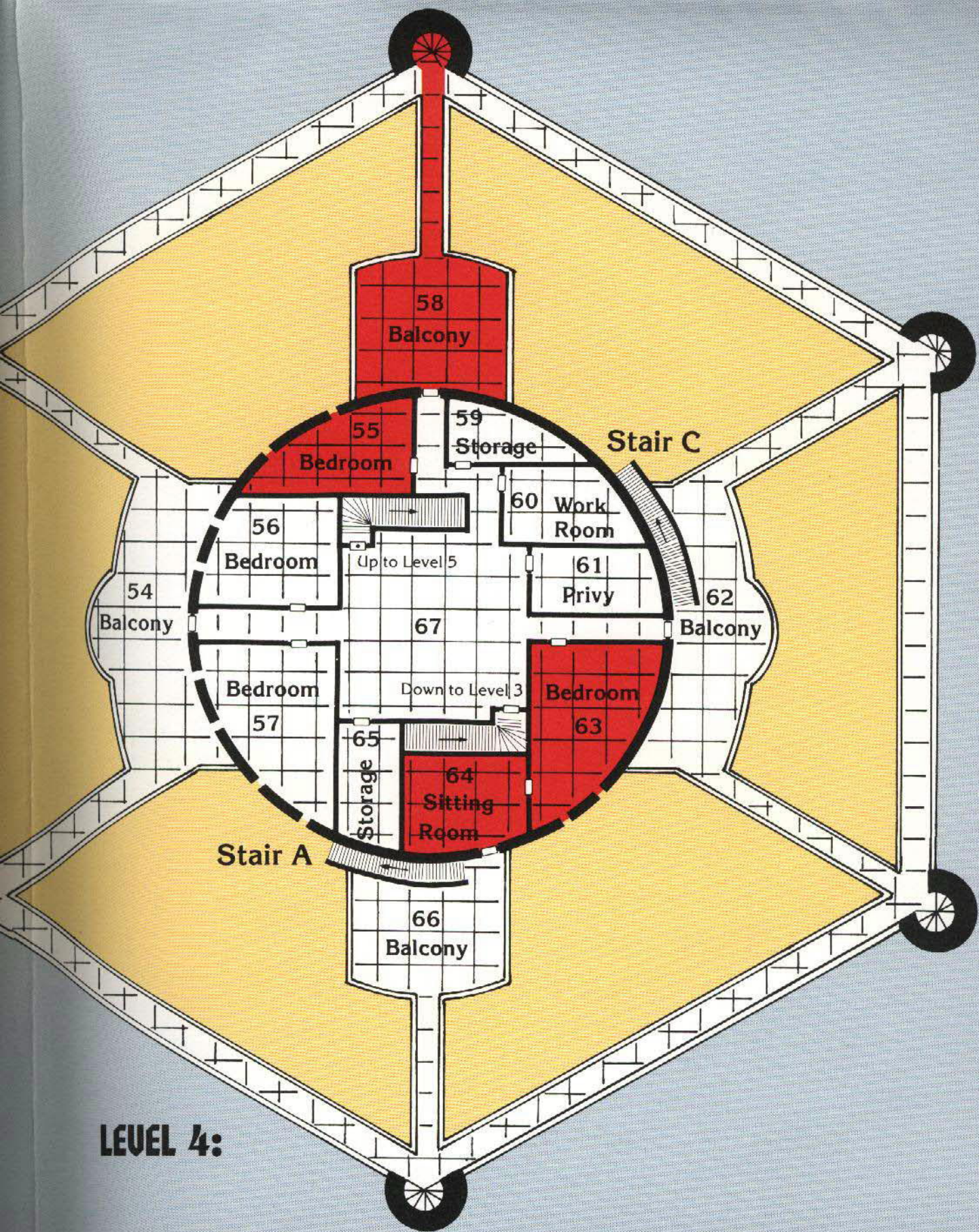
Rotten Wood



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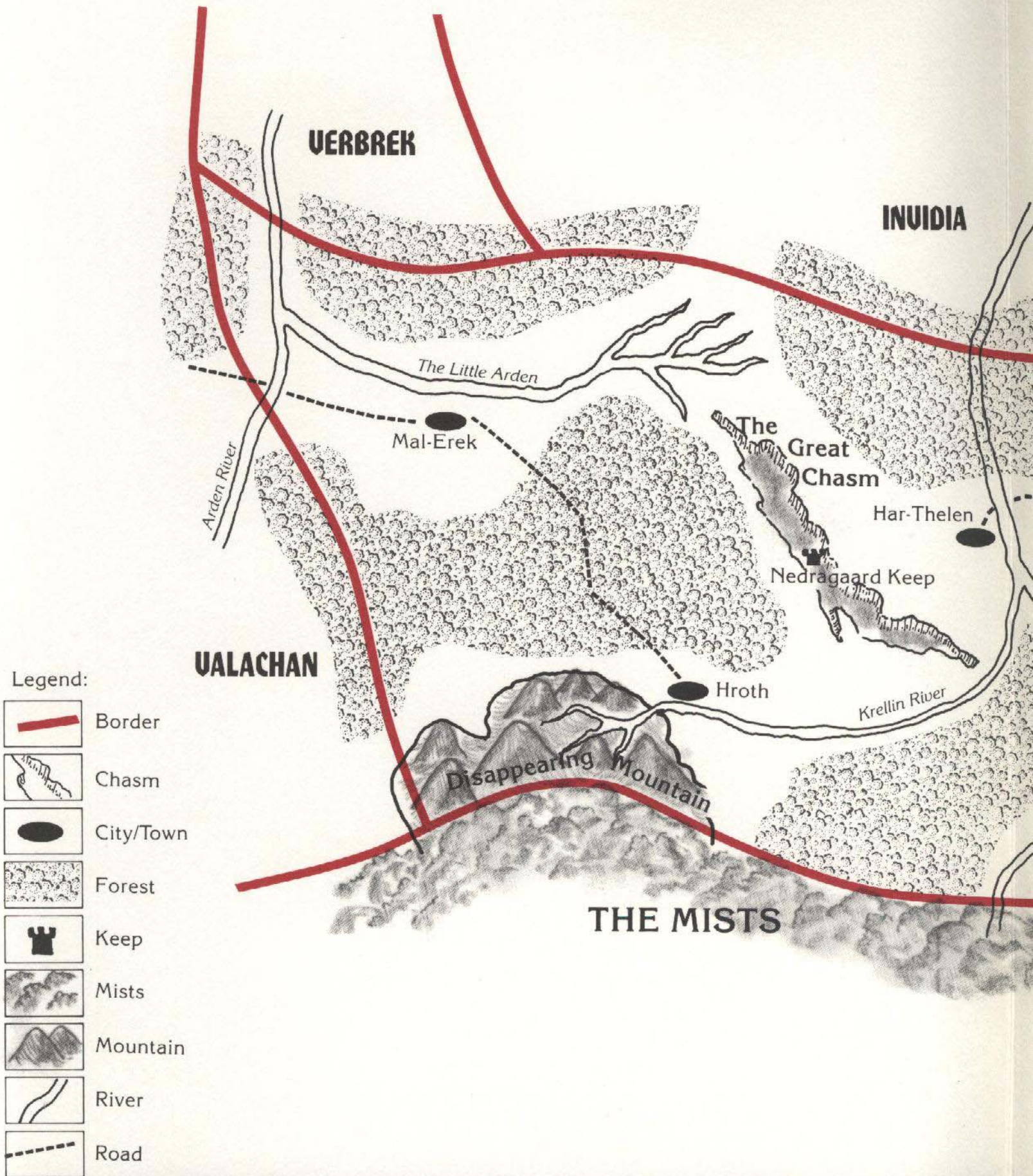


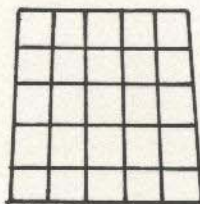
LEVEL 3:



LEVEL 4:

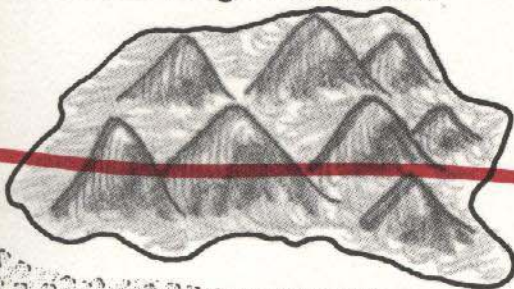
THE DOMAIN OF SITHICUS





25 square miles

Border's Edge Mountain



BAROUIA

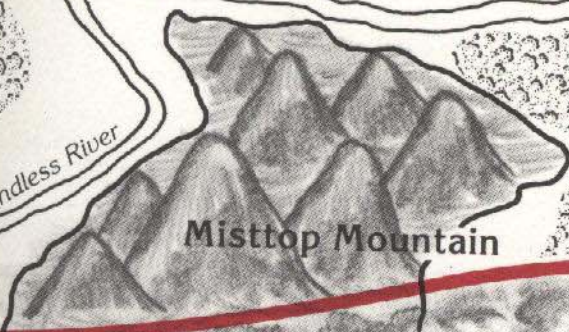
Kendraline

KARTAKASS

Musarde River

Endless River

Misttop Mountain



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ISBN 0-7869-0101-2

