

# •THE• NAMELESS CITY



## SWARDS & WIZARDRY

A Swords & Wizardry Complete or Core Rules Adventure  
Characters level 7-10

by Alphonso Warden



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## A WORD FROM THE DESIGNER

I am greatly pleased that you have purchased this product, which I feel will help fill a void in the role-playing game market. What void you say? Well, I feel that at present there are few adventure modules being written that are set in more exotic locales such as ancient Babylon, Egypt, India, Persia, Greece, or even the imaginary worlds of the late, great pulp writers H.P. Lovecraft, Clark Ashton Smith, and Abraham Merritt.

The adventure you are about to read is quite exotic, indeed, and replicates the general feel of the fabulous desert romances of such pulp and Victorian writers as H.P. Lovecraft, Robert Bloch, Robert E. Howard, Sir Richard Burton, and my personal favorite, H. Rider Haggard. However, considering the strong fantasy element inherent in "old school" role-playing games, the adventure contains a generous helping of eldritch magic and mythical beasts sure to strike terror into the most doughty of players.

For those who may be unfamiliar with the term "old school" as it applies to adventure design, perhaps a bit of explanation is in order. To this designer, "old school" adventures are action-oriented dungeon crawls positively brimming with fell monsters, diabolical traps, and clever riddles. They are designed to tax both the brains and sword arms of the player characters. They are not, and I can't emphasize this enough, burdened with ream upon ream of source material and intricate plots which reduce players to nothing more than scripted actors in the Game Master's "grand saga." Apart from limiting spontaneity on the part of the player characters, these overly story-driven adventures tend to burden the Game Master, forcing him or her to constantly reference the particulars of the

background information in order to maintain the flow of the plot. Such is definitely not the kind of game I would ever want to participate in, and I hope that those reading this feel the same way. In other words, if you came of gaming age in the late seventies and early eighties or merely wish you had, then you will not be disappointed with this product.

The adventure herein, *The Nameless City*, was designed to be run with a minimum of preparation. Furthermore, even though the adventure is set in the imaginary desert milieu of H.P. Lovecraft's classic short story "The Nameless City," it can be integrated into the Game Master's home campaign with little effort. Now with my introduction out of the way, I invite you to read or skim over the adventure and get playing posthaste, for worlds undreamed of lurk beneath the ever-shifting sands of the desert.

## INTRODUCTION

*The Nameless City*\* is an *OSRIC* and *Swords & Wizardry* adventure designed for four to six characters of levels 7 through 10. For *Swords & Wizardry*, this version of the module is designed for the Core or the Complete Rules. There is a separate version for the *Swords & Wizardry: WhiteBox Rules*. At least one +1 weapon should be available to the group, and if the thief character class exists in your campaign, the party should be accompanied by at least one thief due to the number of traps in the adventure.

\*This adventure is loosely based on the weird tale of the same name by the famed early twentieth century author H.P. Lovecraft.

# AND THUS WE BEGIN. . .

# THE NAMELESS CITY

## ADVENTURE BACKGROUND

Well over 50,000 years ago, the vast desert – called the Dunes of Despair by the nomad tribes that now call this place home – was a lush tropical jungle bordered on the west by a small sea. In this distant age, a race of vaguely humanoid ophidian creatures, descended from nothing less than dinosaurs, dominated the primitive hunter/gatherer tribes of humans who shared the jungle with them. The latter were regarded by the former as inferior specimens of life, fit only for use as slaves and food. With time, however, the primitive humans developed a civilization of their own, one almost rivaling that of their ophidian oppressors. They even went so far as to declare formal war on their ancient enemies, oftentimes being quite successful in their efforts. However, the elder magicks in possession of the serpent people always kept such uprisings to a manageable level.

And so the situation stood until around 20,000 years ago, when the planet experienced a dramatic climate change which, virtually overnight in geological time, transformed the once verdant lands of the serpent people and the neighboring humans into barren desert. The bodies of the serpent people were unable to withstand the extreme heat and lack of moisture on the surface, and they were eventually forced to seek out the much cooler natural caverns beneath the earth. Eventually, they abandoned their aboveground city altogether, and focused their efforts on building a vast subterranean metropolis. However, underground life, while preferable to that on the surface, forced the serpent people to sustain themselves on little more than insects and cave fish – such provender being far inferior to that which they were accustomed: human flesh. As a result, their bodies began to decay, becoming skeletal and sickly. This made them much more susceptible to the depredations of the humans living aboveground, whose physiologies were far better adapted to desert life than their own.

The more robust humans enjoyed nothing more than to lash back at their ages-old nemesis, and they led many successful attacks on the underground city of the serpent people. During one such attack, the human forces even penetrated to the great palace of the serpent-men nobles, killing almost all save the non-combatant children and women. However, the puissant magicks of the serpent-men mages allowed the race to partially recover from the loss of almost its entire ruling class of nobles. The mages spent many months carefully carving and polishing a magnificent lump of crystal the size of a large boulder. After it had been shaped into a perfect sphere of unbelievable smoothness, they channeled thereinto great magical energies. Once completed, the sphere was able to generate a field of force manifesting as a ten-foot-thick horizontal sheet of opaque, weirdly glowing mist – that entirely canopied the city's massive hollow in the earth. Being wicked to the core, these mages engineered the layer of mist to act as a poison to the humans above. The mages were even able to bind an elder air elemental to the mist. This elemental was then put under a magical geas to leave the city each and every morning, spilling out of the small opening leading to the surface. During these forays, it was commanded to work a beguiling weird upon the minds of the surface humans, pulling them into the city to later be eaten or sacrificed. The elemental takes the form of a continuous, 20'-wide stream of purplish mist that extends from the city's subterranean entrance well over a mile into the desert. To this very day, the bound air elemental continues to lure in anyone foolish enough to approach the centuries-old demesne of the serpent people.

## FOR THE GAME MASTER

The former above-ground capital of the serpent people, whose name has been lost to mists of time, is now almost a total ruin, with only the occasional sun-bleached stone poking out from the omnipresent sand of the desert. The only buildings still standing are those whose façades dot a low

ridge of cliffs along the eastern edge of the city, which in general resembles those of the ancient city of Petra in our world. They extend upwards for 50' or so, jutting out a mere 10' from the face of the cliff. Of the five buildings originally built into the low cliff, only one remains virtually intact and not buried under a mountain of sand. The interiors of the other four have totally collapsed, and only the upper 15' of their exteriors are exposed.

Due to an increase of inbreeding and the extreme malnutrition brought on from being forced to subsist on the meager sustenance provided them by the flora and fauna of their underground realm, the serpent people today have greatly degraded as a species, both mentally and physically. Most are now at the same stage of development as the very humans they used to prey on during their cultural height. As such, most serpent people currently residing in their ancient city are more often than not covered with unhealthy patches of skin – complete with bleeding boils and other disgusting lesions, possess misshapen limbs and facial features – one eye larger or lower than the other, missing a horn, etc., and are of low intelligence. Apart from the mages and clerics holed up in their massive pyramids in the middle of the city, all of the non-classed serpent people found today have been reduced to little more than pack animals, attacking any living things in sight. Their only concern is the procurement of food, up to and including the various species of dinosaurs roaming about. Such eating habits are most unusual, for dinosaurs were historically revered as sacred creatures by the ancient serpent people, and were never directly harmed – let alone eaten – under any circumstances in the past.

As alluded to above, during the fall of their great civilization most upper-classed serpent people sequestered themselves in their massive pyramids, two of which still stand today almost wholly intact. These buildings are the Academy of Sorcery and the Great Fane, the former being the seat of the magic-users in the city and the latter being the center of the serpent people's religion. The other two pyramids in the center of the city, the Great Library and the Palace of the Nobles, are now mostly in ruin, the latter having fared better than the former. Those residing in the two nearly intact

pyramids, and a scant few in the Palace of the Nobles, still possess the high intelligence of their forebears before the fall, and pose a great threat to any and all surface dwellers making their way down into the city. That being said, the mages and clerics holed up in their ancestral homes have little interaction with the serpent-people commoners living in their hovels along the outer edges of the city. The mages and clerics only venture out onto the streets when a threat to the security of their city arises, or when they need to procure victims for sacrifices or experiments.

The serpent-people residing in the Academy of Sorcery have the primary responsibility for maintaining the enchanted mist that provides a protective ceiling over their subterranean city. Intruders coming in contact with the layer of mist, whether or not they are under the charm\* of the elder air elemental bound into the mist, suffer the loss of 2d6 hit points and 1d4 points of Strength. A successful saving throw against the poison at -3 prevents such. Characters making their saving throws are assumed to be immune, and needn't make any further saves on subsequent trips into the city (creative expedients such as cloth held over the mouth and nose will reduce damage but will not affect the saving throw). A *neutralize poison* spell does not return lost hit points, but if it is cast upon a character up to a day before encountering the mist, it will prevent any damage. Any character still affected by the poison will suffer an attack of nausea 20 turns after exposure, becoming helpless for 2d6 turns.

If the PCs wish to rid the surface world of the threat that the serpent people still pose, they must, at bare minimum, neutralize or destroy the massive gem powering the magical mist and then collapse the surface entrance to the underground city. It would be ideal if they also eliminated most, if not all, of the magic-users and clerics residing in the city. With such removed from the gene pool of the serpent people, the race as a whole will die off in 50 years or so. With the death of the serpent people will also come the demise of their god, which currently resides in a deep pit in the vast, stadium-like structure known as the High Altar. The PCs need not fight the god directly in order to successfully complete the adventure. In fact, it is

smart to avoid such direct engagement, as the deity of the wicked serpent people could make short work of even very high-level characters.

\* The charm manifests as a low whistling sound, having the same effect as a *charm monster* spell with a -3 penalty to the save.

## INTRODUCING THE ADVENTURE

The Game Master can most easily draw the PCs into the adventure by having them follow up on rumors heard at a local oasis-town of a great horde of gold, jewels, and magic items rumored to exist within the ruins of an ancient city far out in the Dunes of Despair. The Nameless City should lie several miles away (or the town would likely not exist). The journey to the adventure site can be as mundane or as perilous as the Game Master desires. Perhaps the PCs could be beset by a few wandering monsters along the way such as giant ant lions, earth elementals, evil dervishes, or even such things as sandstorms and patches of the desert equivalent of quicksand.

The following describes the area marked A on Map 1:

*After having trekked through the inhospitable Dunes of Despair in search of the magnificent ruins said to exist, you finally happen upon the remains of a sizeable settlement, maybe even a city. Stretching for several hundred feet in all directions is a chaotic jumble of cyclopean blocks of basalt and limestone. It is rather obvious that the sun-bleached stones must be ancient indeed, for the carvings visible on some have been weathered to the point of illegibility. Also noteworthy is the fact that not a single building still stands, or so it appears until you spot a low ridge of cliffs to the east of the ruins. The façades of five tall buildings have been built directly into the side of the cliff, jutting out a mere 10' from the surface. It is clear that the interiors of these buildings must extend for several feet directly into the cliff side. Four of the five buildings are almost entirely buried in a mountain of sand, with only the upper 15' of their exteriors exposed to the elements. The building in the middle, however, is totally free of sand and stands a full 50' tall, barely 20' lower than the cliff itself. Four soaring columns, entwrapped by what appear to be*

*massive serpents, support its roof. A low, darkened doorway opens onto the interior of the monument.*

*But what madness is this? From the darkened doorway is now issuing a sinuous ribbon of purplish mist that is heading straight towards you, almost as if it were imbued with sentience. A low moaning is coming from the strange manifestation, which sounds like nothing less the tortured cry of the damned.*

Upon hearing the sound, all of the PCs must make immediate saving throws against the spell, at a -3 penalty, to resist the magic of the elder elemental bound into the purple mist. Those failing their saves are affected as the spell **charm monster**, and find themselves unable to do anything other than follow the mist as it retreats back into the entranceway from whence it came. Any verbal attempt made by the companions of the charmed PC to force him or her to head in another direction is met by a curt refusal. Attempts at physically restraining affected PCs result in them violently attacking their former companions. Affected PCs are allowed a new save every turn to break the enchantment; however, they suffer a cumulative penalty of -1 to do so. The PCs are also granted a new saving throw against the spell, without penalty, as soon as they come in contact with the poisonous sheet of mist obscuring the subterranean city. *Dispel magic* instantly breaks the enchantment.

# MAP KEY

**Special Note:** Undead creatures in the Nameless City have existed there for uncounted centuries, far longer than the undead found in a “normal” dungeon; their age and ancient malevolence grant them a certain resistance to being turned. Any attempt to turn one of these ancient undead has a 10% chance of failure in addition to the normal die roll.

## A. OFFERING TEMPLE

*You find yourselves in a dark, roughly rectangular cavern perhaps 150' by 100'; your torchlight barely revealing the roof that lies a good 50' overhead. While generally rough, the walls show evidence of artificial smoothing in places. Moreover, they contain traces of pictorial art, heavily faded and flaking streaks of curling crimson paint. In the center of the chamber stand two squat altars rising no more than 2' off the ground. Carved onto their surfaces are a series of curvilinear, mazelike designs. It is readily apparent that whomever or whatever worshipped here was of extremely short stature, for the height of the altars would be unsuitable even for dwarfs. Barely visible along the opposite wall is a low, darkened opening that has been cut into the natural rock.*

When the aboveground capital of the serpent people was at its zenith, this cavern served as one of several shrines where worshippers could come to pay homage to their god. If the characters use some sort of magic to learn about the chamber, they might learn that the serpent-people did this by first sacrificing a human or small animal on one of the altars herein. Afterwards, they would partake of vast quantities of hallucinogenic drugs whilst peering at the spiral patterns on the altars and walls, thereby entering into the trance-like state required for full communion with their dark god. When the upper city was abandoned, this particular shrine was converted into an entranceway to their new home beneath the desert floor.

The opening along the far wall gives to a set of low, steeply descending steps that have been carved out

of the natural rock. The arched roof lies only 5' overhead: negotiating the stairs for will be extremely uncomfortable. The steps burrow into the rock for well over 2000' feet before terminating at area B.

## B. GRAND MUSEUM

*The stairs finally terminate in a 10'-wide corbelled hallway that stretches for well over 200'. The area is bathed in a murky purple light, which emanates from a much brighter source at its far end. Staggered along both walls every 10' or so are oblong, coffin-shaped cases of age-blackened cedar with glass fronts. Within lie the mummified forms of what can only be described as a disgusting cross between a serpent and a man. They are rearing upright like a cobra poised to strike, their bottom halves supported by clawed feet attached to stubby legs. From the midsection of the hybrids sprout long arms ending in clawed, five-fingered hands. What unnerves you most about the creatures are their horrid visages, which are elongated like that of a crocodile. From their protuberant foreheads sprout a set of short horns. It is obvious that such creatures were greatly revered in life, for even in death they are enrobed in costly silken robes and wear bracelets and necklaces generously laden with gold, lapis lazuli, and rubies. The robes are festooned with images of the same curvilinear script seen in the room above. Between each of the glass cases are murals depicting the weird serpent people performing various daily activities.*

The hallway continues for 200' before terminating in a massive bronze door engraved with the curvilinear script of the serpent people. The door is ajar and leads to area C. There are 40 of the glass cases in total, 20 per wall, and an equal number of murals on the walls.

The cases hold the mummified remains of the first 40 kings of the serpent people, the oldest being well over 50,000 years old! Each mummy wears between 400-800gp worth of gold and jewels. Unfortunately for the PCs, however, accessing such treasure is no mean feat; the glass of the cases is enchanted to be unbreakable, and the wood has the hardness of plate mail (100 hp). Furthermore, each case is secured with an intricate lock with magical runes etched into it. If a lock is opened, the area directly in front of the case is shot through with intense



heat, dealing 36 points of fire damage. (A saving throw is permitted against this spell for half damage). Worst of all, even should the lock be successfully picked and the runes magically deactivated, the mere opening of each case immediately imbues the mummified remains inside with unholy, undead life. These particular mummies pose a far greater threat than usual, for they are extremely quick, entirely resistant to both normal and magical fire, and bear enchanted gems on their foreheads. The gems can issue a single blast of fire into a ten-foot area, which the awakened mummy immediately activates to deal with the interlopers. Any character in the area takes 4d6 points of damage, half if a successful saving throw is made against the spell. Most likely, their first encounter with these abnormally strong mummies will convince the PCs that the rich baubles in the remaining 39 cases are not worth the effort.

The murals portray scenes from the entire history of the serpent people. Those on the south end depict the earliest glimpses of serpent person life while those at the north end are the most recent. The first few murals vividly show the land above before it was claimed by the desert. Such is portrayed as a verdant paradise, with a large body of water nearby, a small ocean or perhaps a massive lake. Here the serpent people are shown happily engaging in various tasks such as erecting massive monumental buildings, riding on the backs of their dinosaur mounts, and rearing children. As the PCs make their way down the hall, the murals become more disturbing, vividly portraying the serpent people engaging in numerous bloody battles with their primitive-looking human enemies as the water begins to retreat and the land becomes increasingly more fallow, with their sacred poppy crops withering in the fields. The last few murals along the hall show the serpent people burrowing into the natural rock beneath their once-beautiful lands. Their tunneling is shown to open onto a large natural cavern deep beneath the ground, which seems to stretch for miles in all directions. Here the serpent people do not possess as noble a bearing, many of whom are shown sporting various deformities such as misshapen limbs and eyes as they busily construct their underground city. It is readily apparent that their civilization is on the decline. Their human enemies, on the other hand,

are now wearing rich clothing, also having shed their crude weapons of stone and bone. It is quite obvious that the humans are becoming the dominant race of the surface lands. The last couple of murals show what is evidently a serpent person priest tearing a human priest apart with his bare hands. Afterwards, the serpent person priest is shown making his way towards one of four massive subterranean pyramids. Such a scene is a symbolic representation of the serpent people's final retreat from the lands of man into the bowels of the earth.

**40 Sacred King-Mummies:** HD 6+4; AC 3[16]; Atk 1 fist (1d12); Move 6; Save 11; AL C; CL/XP 8/800; **Special:** Rot, fire-gem, immune to fire, hit only by magic weapons, 10% resistance to turning.

Possessions: Each mummy wears 400-800 gp worth of assorted jewelry.



## C. SUBTERRANEAN CITY OF THE SERPENT PEOPLE (CEILING LEVEL)

Beyond the bronze door in area B is a steep set of low stone steps. They descend for 1000' feet or so before opening into a massive natural cavern in the earth that extends for thousands of feet in all directions, the floor lying 250' beneath the feet of the PCs. The stairs end in a dense, 10'-thick layer of purplish mist that fills the entire length and breadth of the cavern, effectively concealing the city below.

Should the PCs follow the steps into the mist, immediately have them make their saving throws against the poison mist at a -3 penalty, as described in the "For the Game Master" section of the module. The steps continue straight down to the floor of the cavern.

## D. SUBTERRANEAN CITY OF THE SERPENT PEOPLE (FLOOR LEVEL)

Beneath the 10'-thick layer of mist, the steps become perfectly smooth and regular. In fact, such steps are part of a massive staircase that is supported by several Romanesque arches with unbelievably tall columns leading off from them all the way down to the floor below.

Unbeknownst to the PCs, the moment they penetrated the defensive layer of mist at area C, they set off magical alarms in the pyramid of the Academy of Sorcery (area J), thereby putting the inhabitants therein on full alert (c.f.).

Read or paraphrase the following to the players after their characters pass below the mist:

*The wonders you have experienced thus far pale in comparison to that which lies below the weird glowing mist – you see the ruins of a massive metropolis in the bowels of the earth, murkily lit by large patches of phosphorescent fungi growing all along the walls. The most prominent sight is of four pyramids fashioned of the blackest basalt, soaring well over 200' towards the ceiling of mist, itself only 50' higher than the apex of the pyramids. Each is surrounded by a 30'-wide moat, some of the moats filled with still, black water, others with rubble. The massive structures lie at the four corners of a plaza that is easily 600' square. Two of the pyramids – the ones at the northeast and southeast corners of the plaza – are largely in ruin, their cyclopean stones collapsed. In the middle of the plaza is a 100'-tall, 300'-diameter cylindrical building with twin sets of stairs that begin at its southern tip and spiral along the west and east walls towards the open roof. From your vantage point, you can barely make out several levels of seats that*

*ring the interior of the structure, terminating in a circular arena at its bottom. It is rather obvious that the building functions as some manner of amphitheater. Another cylindrical structure lies along the far wall of the cavern some 1000' to the north. 50'-wide roads, paved with gleaming limestone, connect the four pyramids, and similar roads link the two amphitheaters together. Along the western and eastern walls of the cavern can be seen blocks of short stone houses, lying mostly in ruin.*

The rocky floor of the subterranean city of the serpent people is slightly irregular but poses no falling danger to running PCs. As the PCs explore areas E-N of the city, the GM should check for wandering monsters once every three turns. There is a 4 in 10 chance per check that a random encounter occurs. When an encounter is called for, consult the following table:

### WANDERING MONSTERS

#### 1). 2-4 Serpent People (1d3+1)

**Serpent People:** HD 4; AC 3[16]; Atk 2 weapons (see note below) or 1 bite (1d6 + poison); Move 12; Save 13; AL C; CL/XP 6/400; **Special:** Charm, poison, stench.

50% are armed with two stone cudgels that inflict 1-6 hp of damage. The rest wield two rusty scimitars that inflict 1-8 hp of damage apiece (10% chance of breakage per hit).

These creatures have left their homes in area G to search for food. They attack the PCs on sight, wishing to add them to their larders.

#### 2). 1 Otyugh

**Otyugh:** HD 7; AC 3[16]; Atk 2 tentacles (1d8), bite (1d4+1); Move 6; Save 9; AL N; CL/XP 8/800; **Special:** Disease.

The serpent people allow these noisome creatures to roam their city, as they are quite adept at ridding the streets of carrion, offal, and, of course, the occasional adventurer, which they attack on sight.

### 3). 1 Giant Spider

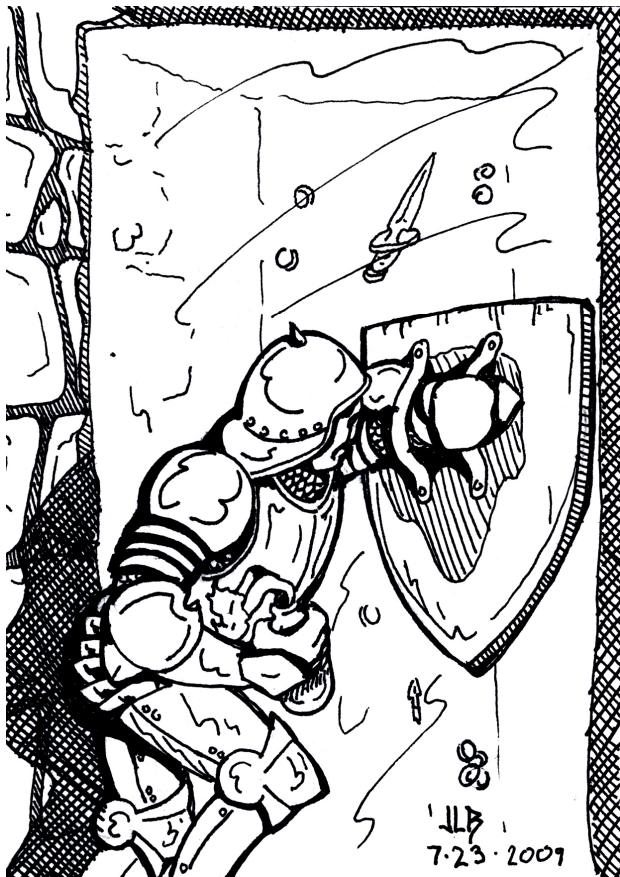
**Giant Spider (6ft diameter):** HD 4+2; AC 4[15]; Atk 1 bite (1d6+2 + poison); Move 4; Save 13; CL/XP 7/600; Special: lethal poison, webs.

These monstrously overgrown arachnids are especially prevalent in area G, preying on the serpent people commoners that make their home there. A PC passing by one of the hovels in area G may be caught unawares when one these horrors leaps from hiding to attack. On occasion they can be found roaming other areas of the city.

### 4). 1 Gelatinous Cube

**Gelatinous Cube:** HD 4; AC 8[11]; Atk 1 (2d4); Move 6; Save 13; CL/XP 5/240; Special: Paralysis, immune to lightning and cold.

The magic-users in area J set these creatures loose to clean refuse from the streets.



**Gelatinous Cube**

### 5). 1 Grey Ooze

**Grey Ooze:** HD 3; AC 8[11]; Atk 1 strike (2d6); Move 1; Save 14; CL/XP 5/240; Special: Acid, immune to spells, heat, cold, and blunt weapons.

These amorphous blobs spend the better part of their days oozing about the rocky floor of the city, and attack any PCs who happen to cross their path.

### 6). 1-2 Iguanodons

**Iguanodon:** HD 6; AC 4[15]; Atk 2 claws (1d3) 1 bite (2d4); Move 15; Save 11; AL N; CL/XP 6/400; Special: None.

Iguanodons are bipedal, herbivorous dinosaurs weighing about 3 tons. Small packs of them roam the city in search of subterranean fungi. They attempt to flee when encountered by the PCs, but will fight if cornered.

### 7). 1 Monoclonius

**Monoclonius:** HD 8; AC 3[16]; Atk 1 horn (2d8); Move 6; Save 8; AL N; CL/XP 8/800; Special: None.

These rhinoceros-like dinosaurs, while herbivores, are rather aggressive and will attack small groups wandering the city.

### 8). 1 Ankylosaurus

**Ankylosaurus:** HD 9; AC 0[19]; Atk 1 tail (3d6); Move 6; Save 6; AL N; CL/XP 9/1100; Special: None.

These massive armor-plated dinosaurs are generally peaceful but have been known to mow down those who get in their way. When the civilization of the serpent people was at its height, warriors would often ride into battle atop these mighty beasts.

### 9). 1-3 Giant Lizards

**Giant Lizards:** HD 6; AC 5[14]; Atk 1 bite (2d6); Move 12; Save 11; CL/XP 6/400; Special: None.

These large lizards are extremely aggressive and attack the PCs on sight. At their height, the serpent people bred these creatures for use as mounts and pack animals. They now roam the city free, as their former masters live out their solitary existence in the massive pyramids at areas J, K and L.

## 10. Ghosts\* (1d2) leading a pack of ghouls\* (1d2+2)

**Ghosts:** HD 4; AC 4[15]; Atk 2 claws (1d3), 1 bite (1d6); Move 14; Save 13; CL/XP 5/240; **Special:** Stench, paralyzing touch, 10% resistance to turning.

**Ghouls:** HD 2; AC 6[13]; Atk 2 claws (1d3), 1 bite (1d4); Move 9; Save 16; CL/XP 3/60; **Special:** Immunities, paralyzing touch, 10% resistance to turning.

These creatures are the former human slaves of the serpent people who, due to eating the flesh of their fellows, arose as ghouls upon death. They roam the city to this very day and attack anything in sight, especially their former masters.

\*Remember to take into account the 10% resistance to turning the ancient undead creatures of the city.

## E. PAVED ROADS

These roads are comprised of cyclopean blocks of polished limestone, joined together with massive steel clamps sunk deep into the bedrock. They rise about 2' from the surrounding rocky floor, and link together the major public works of the subterranean city. The main road begins at the bottom of the tall staircase that leads into the city from area C, and then branches off to the east and west to meet up with the two pyramids (areas I and J) that ring the southwest and southeast corners of the great plaza. The road also continues due north to meet up with the amphitheater-like building (area F).

## F. THE HIGH ALTAR

This cylindrical building rises a full 100' from the floor of the cavern, and is nearly 300' in diameter. Twin staircases branch off from the paved road leading into the building from the south, and spiral up towards the open roof, along the west and east walls. The stairs end at the lip opening onto the upper seating area, which rings the entire circumference of the building. Twenty additional levels of seats, each 5' below the other, go down

toward the bottom of the building, terminating in a 100'-diameter sunken plaza. A massive locked bronze door stands along the north wall of the building. The door is protected with a magical glyph that, if the door is touched, electrocutes the victim for 25 points of damage (saving throw for half damage). This door opens onto a 10'-wide corridor with a 15'-high vaulted roof that cuts through the masonry of the building and ends in a set of portcullises. When raised, the portcullises open directly onto the sunken plaza. In the past, sacrificial victims, usually captured humans from the surface, would be marched through this hallway by the head priest and his retinue towards the plaza. The entire population of the city by this time would have filled the seats to view the coming sacrifice. This building is still used on occasion, though human slaves are becoming increasingly hard to come by, forcing the priests to sacrifice their own people to appease their god. When the PCs arrive on the scene, the portcullis is in the lowered position and can be raised in the usual manner.

The 100'-diameter sacrificial plaza at the bottom of the building lies 15' below the bottommost ring of seats. At its center is found a 30'-diameter opening into the earth, with a short altar block of basalt immediately south of it. A chute leads off from the altar directly into the pit. When victims are sacrificed at the altar, their blood is allowed to run down the chute and straight into the hungry maw of the serpent people's god. The smooth-walled pit burrows through the solid rock for a full 100', terminating in a globular natural cavern roughly 400' in diameter and 50' high. The god of the serpent people resides in the cavern to this very day, and can still be summoned forth by foolish PCs if they so choose.

The god of the serpent people is really no god at all but rather an extremely long-lived, highly intelligent species of snake that can grow up to 200' in length, with an average body thickness of 20'. The serpent in the pit is the last of its kind, the rest of its species having died off several thousand years ago. The one herein is well over 100,000 years old, has reached a length of 150', and is around 18' wide. It attacks by either squeezing the life out of its victims or biting them with its colossal, poison-filled fangs.

Worst of all, the snake possesses the spell-casting ability of a 20th level cleric and a 14th level magic-user. Thankfully for the PCs, it is usually summoned from its lair by reciting the magical formula inscribed on the altar before the pit opening, for it spends most of its time in hibernation. That being said, its preternatural senses alert it to the presence of anyone coming within 100' of its body, meaning that PCs lowering themselves into the serpent's lair are in for a rude awakening, literally. Hopefully, they realize their peril and immediately retreat when they see the colossal serpent rousing itself awake. If such is not incentive enough, the serpent generates an almost overwhelming aura of **fear**, as the spell, in a 100'-radius, even while asleep. PCs reaching the midpoint of the 100'-deep shaft leading to the lair of the serpent must immediately save vs. spells at a -7 penalty. Those failing this save race/fly back to the surface at their full movement rate. Should the PCs somehow be granted the opportunity to search the serpent's lair, they are rewarded with nothing more than the desiccated remains of several normal insects, for its inhabitant values one thing above any amount of gold, jewels, or even magic: the blood of freshly sacrificed victims, preferably that of humans.

Even though not a god, the massive serpent does possess the ability to grant its worshippers spells. It does so by acting as a conduit between the serpent people clerics and its own deity, which is an elder god of tremendous power long forgotten by all save

the scholars and its last remaining follower. In the unlikely event that the PCs engage the massive serpent in battle, here are its statistics:

**Serpent "God:"** HD 20; HP 90; AC 0[19]; Atk 1 bite (4d6 + poison) or constrict (3d6); Move 12; Save 3; AL C; CL/XP 21/4700; Special: Fear aura, poison bite (-4 save), constriction, spells, magic weapon required to hit.

The snake's constriction attack is the attempt to lash a coil around an opponent. If the attack succeeds, the opponent is constricted and will continue to take damage automatically thereafter. The snake is so huge that it can be constricting several people at once.

#### **Cleric Spells (3/3/3/3/3):**

Level 1: Cure Light Wounds, Detect Magic x2, Protection from Law; Level 2: Hold Person x2, Silence 15ft Radius; Level 3: Cause Disease x2, Speak with Dead; Level 4: Cure Serious Wounds x3; Level 5: Insect Plague

#### **Magic-User Spells (4/4/4/4/1):**

Level 1: Charm Person x2, Detect Magic, Read Languages; Level 2: Detect Invisibility, Detect Thoughts, Phantasmal Force, Web; Level 3: Dispel Magic x2, Protection From Normal Missiles; Slow; Level 4: Charm Monster x2, Confusion, Wall of Ice; Level 5: Cloudkill, Feeblemind, Telekinesis, Transmute Rock to Mud; Level 6: Disintegrate



## G. COMMONERS' RESIDENCES

Read or paraphrase the following to the players as the characters approach this area:

*Nestled against the inwardly-sloping western wall of this massive cavern is a village of some sort covering 125,000 square feet of area. The residences therein are rather crude affairs, being nothing more than beehive-shaped piles of both natural and worked blocks of basalt. The latter blocks indicate that perhaps in the distant past, these residences would have been far more sophisticated, for lying haphazardly on the ground you see the remains of intricately carved pediments, arches, and columns. Slithering along the narrow lanes between the houses you see several horrific creatures that can best be described as a gross cross between a snake and a man, for long arms and stubby legs sprout from their serpentine bodies.*

When this city was at its height, this section of the cavern was where the serpent people commoners made their home. As alluded to above, the residences were once much grander affairs, the architectural style being a combination of that seen in ancient Greece and Egypt. Their sorry state today can be attributed to the serpent people having reverted to savagery over the centuries. Roughly 200 individual serpent people occupy this area today. There are about 40 occupied residences in the city that support families of 1-2 adults and 3-4 non-combatant young. The residents of any given house are away on one their hunts 60% of the time when the PCs first arrive. Serpent people never leave their young behind when they go hunting for fear of them being attacked by roving dinosaurs or, even more likely, members of their own race. (Young are carried on the backs of their parents, being secured via crude ropes made of interwoven dried fungus fibers). At any given time 10-30 adults can be found roving the narrow lanes between their homes performing such tasks as looking out for rampaging dinosaurs and gathering up the multitude of nutritious insects that crawl along the cavern floor. Whether encountered inside or outside of their homes, the serpent people attack the PCs on sight, emitting a series of loud hisses to

alert any of their fellows on the streets. However, those currently in their residences do not respond to the alert unless the battle with the PCs rages for more than 5 rounds. In any case, immobilized or slain PCs are promptly collected and then quickly eaten at the conclusion of the battle.

**Serpent People:** HD 4; AC 3[16]; Atk 2 weapons (see note below) or 1 bite (1d6 + poison); Move 12; Save 13; AL C; CL/XP 6/400; Special: Charm, poison, stench.

50% are armed with two stone cudgels that inflict 1-6 hp of damage. The rest wield two rusty scimitars that inflict 1-8 hp of damage apiece (10% chance of breakage per hit).

**Serpent People (young):** HD 1; AC 6[13]; Atk none; Move 12; Save 18; AL C; CL/XP A/5; Special: weak stench (+4 bonus to save).

**Treasure:** There is a 20% chance that any given residence searched contains 100-300 gp worth of assorted jewelry and coinage, such having been plundered from the few humans that have wandered into the city over the years. Such treasure, if present, is always hidden somewhere in the residence. (A successful search for secret doors reveals).

## H. UPPER CLASS RESIDENCES

Read or paraphrase the following to the players as their characters approach this area:

*Situated along the eastern wall of the cavern are a series of 20 or more queer pyramidal structures constructed of basalt. They are arranged in neat rows, with the lanes between them chiseled to a uniform smoothness. The buildings average around 15' in height and width, and are entered via low, short corridors that jut out from their southern faces. They are in various states of disrepair, most with their capstones lying on the floor nearby. The once smooth surfaces of the buildings show evidence of attack, for they are riddled with cracks and gouges.*

This section of the cavern was where the upper classed serpent people made their homes. In their last major battle with the humans living above, they were almost totally slaughtered. Unfortunately for the PCs, many of those slain in battle here still haunt their old homes as various forms of the undead.

Even though all of the pyramidal residences here show evidence of battle, they are still relatively intact. Unfortunately, the rich baubles once stored inside were plundered by the ravaging humans in antiquity. There is a 40% chance that any residence entered by the PCs contains one of the undead from the table below. Moreover, at any given time there is a 60% chance that between 3-6 such undead are encountered wandering about in the lanes between the residences when the PCs arrive.

1) **Wight:** HD 3; AC 5[14]; Atk 1 claw (1hp + level drain); Move 9; Save 14; CL/XP 5/240; **Special:** Drain 1 level with hit, hit only by magic or silver weapons, 10% resistance to turning.

2) **Wraith:** HD 4; AC 3[16]; Atk 1 touch (1d6+ level drain); Move 9 (Fly 24); Save 13; CL/XP 6/400; **Special:** drain 1 level with hit, 10% resistance to turning.

3) **Spectre:** HD 7; AC 2[17]; Atk 1 spectral weapon or touch (1d8 + level drain); Move 15 (Fly 30); Save 9; CL/XP 9/1100; **Special:** Drain 2 levels with hit, immune to non-magical weapons, 10% resistance to turning.

4) **Ghast:** HD 4; AC 4[15]; Atk 2 claws (1d3), 1 bite (1d6); Move 14; Save 13; CL/XP 5/240; **Special:** Stench, paralyzing touch, 10% resistance to turning.

**Note:** Remember to take into account the 10% turning resistance that these undead have against a cleric's attempt to turn them.

## I. THE GREAT LIBRARY

*The size of the pyramid before you, even in its ruined state, staggers the imagination. It measures a full 200' per side, its apex a mere 50' below the ceiling of mist 250' overhead. Most of the polished casing stones that once covered this impressive structure almost entirely fill the 30'-wide surrounding moat. As such, the walls of the pyramid are extremely rough, their angular surfaces exposed. Polished limestone roads lead into the pyramid from the north and west. No entrance to the monument is apparent from your vantage point.*

This pyramid once functioned as a many-chambered library housing thousands of scrolls and tomes dealing with a variety of subjects. Unfortunately for the PCs, this pyramid, not bearing much of the enchantments of the neighboring pyramids, was unable to withstand the attacks of the invading humans from the surface. As such, all of the chambers inside of the pyramid have collapsed and their contents are destroyed. Even the main entrance to the structure collapsed. The encircling moat has long since dried out, but the PCs can attempt to walk across the tumbled blocks therein to reach the pyramid 30' away. It is possible to slip and fall to the floor of the moat 30' below, suffering 3-18 points of damage from being bashed by the blocks on the way down.

Should the PCs cross the moat, they immediately encounter the sole resident haunting the pyramid, the ghost of the former head librarian, who died when the walls collapsed on him (see "Arcana"). He flits straight through the walls of the pyramid and attacks the PCs on sight, fighting to the "death" to protect what remains of his beloved library.

**The Librarian Ghost:** HD 10; AC 0[19] (until materializing, then 8[11]); Atk 1 touch (magical effects); Move 9; Save 5; CL/XP 12/2000; **Special:** Touch, fear, possession, hit only by magic or silver weapons.

# J. ACADEMY OF SORCERY

*Before you stands a virtually intact pyramid that soars into the air for a full 200', most of its highly polished casing-stones still in place, which is in stark contrast to its eastern neighbor. Capping the colossal structure is a massive globe of gleaming crystal, from which emanate streamers of pulsating, purplish mist that combine overhead to make up a massive cloud totally obscuring the roof of the cavern. From the north and east, polished limestone roads lead into the 30'- wide moat surrounding the monument. From your vantage point, you can see the outline of a 20'-wide by 30'-tall door of polished bronze that lies flush with the slanting face of the pyramid. It is quite evident that this door, if lowered, would provide a convenient means of crossing over the moat. The massive portal stands directly opposite the nearest road leading into the monument. You can only assume that a like portal will be found opposite the other road leading into the pyramid.*

At the height of the city, this massive edifice functioned as an academy where serpent people wishing to study the art of sorcery would come to study. It serves this function to this very day, still housing a sizeable collection of both students and instructors. It was the masters at the academy that devised the purplish mist enclosing the city, which is powered by the lump of crystal\* atop the pyramid and controlled by the crystal ball in one of the lower rooms. Due to the mighty abjorative magicks cast onto the walls of the pyramid, it, along with its inhabitants, was relatively unharmed when the humans from the surface led their last attack on the city. All of the inner and outer walls of the pyramid are magically warded against any form of extra-dimensional travel such as that afforded by the spells *teleport* and *passwall*. These wards do not operate within the confines of an individual

corridor or room, just in the spaces between them.

\*This 20'-diameter sphere has an effective armor class of -6 [25], has 400 hp, can only be affected by magic weapons, and is 90% resistant to spells. Further, each time a physical blow is delivered to the sphere, a surge of electricity races up the weapon used and into the body of the victim, dealing 25 points of damage! (Save for half damage). Destroying the massive sphere directly, or the crystal ball in area 10 that controls it, has two effects: the protective mist is dispelled and the elder elemental bound thereto is returned to the Elemental Plane of Air.

**MOAT:** The 30'-wide and deep moat encircling the pyramid contains still water that is home to 5 giant crocodiles. Any PC falling into or purposely swimming in the moat is immediately attacked by 1-2 of the reptilian horrors. The remaining crocodiles swim over to join in the fun 1-3 rounds later.

**Giant Crocodiles:** HD 6; AC 3[16]; Atk 1 bite (3d6), 1 tail (1d6); Move 9 (Swim 12); Save 11; CL/XP 6/400; Special: None.

**DRAWBRIDGES:** The towering portals of bronze along the middle of the north and east faces of the pyramid can be lowered to span the moat, and are controlled with massive windlasses to the immediate right of their respective entry halls. Each windlass bears enchantments that greatly multiply the torque applied to them by their operator, meaning that a single humanoid can easily raise or lower the drawbridge it controls by himself.

Each drawbridge can withstand up to 200 hp of damage, and has an effective armor class of 3 [16] owing to the enchantments cast thereon. Of course, the ban on extra-dimensional travel indicated above also applies to the doors.





## AREA J: KEY TO LEVEL 1 (AREAS 1-7)

This level of the academy is where the students and their masters conduct day-to-day activities such as eating, sleeping, and practicing their craft.

**Dungeon Features for Levels 1 and 2:** All of the rooms and corridors in the pyramid are extremely austere, being merely polished blocks of cyclopean basalt devoid of virtually any decoration. Except where noted otherwise, they all feature 15'-high vaulted ceilings. All doors are constructed of bronze and sealed with the spells *wizard lock* and *hold portal*. The only means of opening these doors, short of breaking them down with brute force, is to cast either two *knock* spells, two *dispel magic* spells, or one of each on them. Secret doors are hidden on both sides. Unless noted otherwise, secret doors pivot about their centers when the correct wall stone is depressed. They must be pushed inward to open. Affixed to the ceiling of each and every corridor and chamber in the pyramid is a 1'-diameter globe of crystal with a *continual light* spell cast thereon, which bathes its space in a warm green glow.

**1. ENTRANCE CORRIDORS:** Standing at the intersection of the two 20'-wide corridors leading into the pyramid is an 8'-tall clay golem carved into the shape of demonic Baalroch. To all appearances, the golem is virtually indistinguishable from a true Baalroch, for it has been coated in a magical pigment that creates the illusion of muscles flexing, chest heaving, etc. Furthermore, its body has been coated in a magical oil that, once lit, never goes out, effectively replicating the appearance of a true Baalroch's flaming body. Last but not least, it possesses a flaming whip that functions exactly like that possessed by its infernal model. All who look upon the golem must make a saving throw or flee in *fear*, as if affected by a *wand of fear*, at their full movement rate.

The golem has been ordered to attack anyone entering the pyramid, save for the mages of the serpent-people in residence. The sounds of battle are automatically heard by the residents of areas 2 and 3, who remain in their rooms and prepare themselves for the intruders by casting an assortment of spells on themselves (c.f.).

**Baalroch Clay Golem:** HD 12 (50hp); AC 7[12]; Atk 1 fist (3d10) and flaming whip (draws in to fire); Move 8; Save 5; AL N; CL/XP; 14/2700; Special: Immune to slashing and piercing weapons, Immune to most spells, magic weapon needed to hit, flaming oil coating (3d6).

**1A. MAGICAL ELEVATOR:** The clay golem stands directly in front of a 5'-wide floor-to-ceiling column situated at the point marked "a" on the map. Several serpent designs wrap around the stone column. A secret door is located on the north side of the column, which opens onto its hollow interior. If the PCs place their hands inside, they feel a cool current of wind blowing upwards from several holes drilled into the floor of the column. Those stepping into the column gently rise 20' up to Level 2.

**2. STUDENTS' BARRACKS:** This massive room, easily 40' square, serves as the sleeping quarters for the four serpent people magic-users currently studying at the academy. The walls of the room are bare save for the *symbol of fear* drawn on the wall opposite the entrance. Victims of the *symbol* flee the room at their full movement rate. Strewn about the floor are several plush throw pillows with curvilinear, mazelike designs sewn onto them. They serve as beds for the magic-users in residence here. Bolted to the floor along the west wall is a large chest that all of the students use to hold their valuables. It is *wizard locked* and warded with a *fireball* spell. If triggered, the victim is engulfed in a ball of flame, suffering 3-18 points of damage in the process. (Making a saving throw against the spell halves the resulting damage).

Should the PCs engage the clay golem at area 1, the four magic-users herein immediately start casting spells to prepare themselves. They fight the PCs until losing a quarter of their hit points, at which time they attempt to flee the pyramid, screaming "intruders" as they pass the door leading to area 3. Those in area 3 calmly await the PCs in their room, their supreme confidence in their abilities overriding common sense. Unless circumstances dictate otherwise, they will most likely prepare themselves by casting the spells marked with an asterisk.

**Serpent-People Mage #1 (MU5):** HD 5; HP 30; AC 2[17]; Atk 1 weapon (+1 dagger) and wand, or 1 bite (1d6 + poison); Move 12; Save 11 (+2 vs spells); AL C; CL/XP 7/600; Special: Charm, poison, stench, spells.

**Spells (4/2/1):**

Level 1: *charm person, light, magic missile, sleep*

Level 2: *phantasmal force, mirror image\**

Level 3: *protection from normal missiles*

**Possessions:** *dagger +1, ring of protection +2, wand of polymorph* (10 charges), *scroll of web*.

**Serpent-People Mage #2 (MU5):** HD 5; HP 24; AC 3[16]; Atk 1 weapon (+1 dagger) and wand, or 1 bite (1d6 + poison); Move 12; Save 11 (+2 vs spells); AL C; CL/XP 7/600; Special: Charm, poison, stench, spells.

**Spells (4/2/1):**

Level 1: *detect magic, magic missile x2, shield\**

Level 2: *phantasmal force, web*

Level 3: *dispel magic*

**Possessions:** *dagger +1, wand of phantasmal force* (10 charges), *necklace of fireballs* (one 5-dice, two 3-dice).

**Serpent-People Mage #3 (MU6):** HD 6; HP 26; AC 3[16]; Atk 1 weapon (+2 dagger) and wand, or 1 bite (1d6 + poison); Move 12; Save 10 (+2 vs spells); AL C; CL/XP 8/800; Special: Charm, poison, stench, spells.

**Spells (4/2/2):**

Level 1: *charm person, detect magic, shield\*, sleep*

Level 2: *strength, web*

Level 3: *dispel magic, fireball*

**Possessions:** *dagger +2, wand of magic missiles* (15 charges), *scroll of confusion, potion of gaseous form*.

**Serpent-People Mage #4 (MU6):** HD 6; HP 24; AC 3[16]; Atk 1 weapon (+2 dagger) and wand, or 1 bite (1d6 + poison); Move 12; Save 10 (+2 vs spells); AL C; CL/XP 8/800; Special: Charm, poison, stench, spells.

**Spells (4/2/2):**

First (4): *charm person, detect magic, magic missile, shield\**

Second (2): *phantasmal force, web*

Third (2): *dispel magic, haste\**

**Possessions:** *dagger +2, necklace of magic missiles* (one 5-dice, two 3-dice), *wand of lightning* (35 charges).

Example tactics: One possible approach the serpent-mages might take is for each to cast the starred protective spell in the first round, then for mage #4 and mage #3 to cast *haste* and *strength* upon mage #1. Mage #1, with *mirror image, haste*, and *strength*, will serve as the front line, attacking into melee. In the first round of combat, mage #2 would cast a *fireball* from his necklace, mage #3 would cast *confusion* from his scroll, and mage #4 would cast a *lightning bolt*.

**Treasure:** The chest holds 1,000 gp in loose coins of ancient vintage and 900 gp worth of assorted jewelry and gems. The magic items usually stored in the chest are being worn/used by the inhabitants of this room *unless the PCs were somehow able to evade the clay golem at area 1*. If such applies, then it takes the magic-users a full round to retrieve all of their magic items from the chest.

**3. INSTRUCTORS' BARRACKS:** This 40'-square room serves as the sleeping quarters for the head instructor at the academy and his two assistants. Like area 2, this room is decorated with a series of sleeping pillows, and a *wizard locked* and *fireball*-trapped chest is bolted to the floor along the east wall. If the trap on the chest is triggered, the victim is engulfed in a ball of flame, suffering 3d6 points of damage in the process. (A saving throw against this spell cuts the damage in half). Those entering the room without voicing a special password activate a trap which reverses gravity in the 10'-square area directly behind the door, and they will "fall" onto 1-4 of the great multitude of spikes protruding from the roof. Victims suffer 1-4 points of damage per spike and are injected with a lethal poison (make a saving throw or die).

Should the PCs engage the clay golem at area 1 or the four magic-user students at area 2, the three magic-user instructors herein immediately start preparing themselves by casting any desired spells. Regardless of what happens in the corridor outside, the four instructors wait patiently for the intruders to come to them. They fight to the death anyone

who enters their chambers, neither expecting nor giving any quarter.

**Serpent-People Instructor-Mage #1 (MU7):** HD 7; HP 27; AC 0[19]; Atk 1 weapon (+1 staff of striking 2d6), or 1 bite (1d6 + poison); Move 12; Save 9 (+2 vs spells); AL C; CL/XP 9/1100; **Special:** Charm, poison, stench, spells.

**Spells (4/3/2/1):**

Level 1: *detect magic, light, magic missile (x2)*

Level 2: *invisibility, detect invisibility, mirror image*

Level 3: *fireball, protection from normal missiles*

Level 4: *fear*

**Possessions:** *ring of protection +3, +1 staff of striking, scrolls of levitate, lightning bolt, strength, potion of healing.*

**Serpent-People Instructor-Mage #2 (MU7):** HD 7; HP 30; AC 0[19]; Atk 1 weapon (+1 staff of striking 2d6), or 1 bite (1d6 + poison); Move 12; Save 9 (addl. +2 from ring, addl. +2 vs spells); AL C; CL/XP 9/1100; **Special:** Charm, poison, stench, spells.

**Spells (4/3/2/1):**

Level 1: *charm person x2, light, sleep*

Level 2: *darkness 15' radius, levitate, web*

Level 3: *fireball, lightning bolt*

Level 4: *polymorph other*

**Possessions:** *ring of protection +2, +1 staff of striking, scroll of mirror image, potion of healing.*

**Serpent-People Instructor-Mage #3 (MU8):** HD 8; HP 33; AC 1[18]; Atk 1 weapon (+2 staff of striking 2d6), or 1 bite (1d6 + poison); Move 12; Save 8 (+2 vs spells); AL C; CL/XP 10/1400; **Special:** Charm, poison, stench, spells.

**Spells (4/3/3/2):**

Level 1: *charm person x2, light, sleep*

Level 2: *darkness 15' radius, levitate, web*

Level 3: *fireball, fly, lightning bolt*

Level 4: *wall of ice, polymorph self*

**Possessions:** *ring of protection +2, +2 staff of striking, scroll of confusion, potion of gaseous form, potion of healing.*

**Treasure:** 3,000 gp in assorted coins, 2000 gp worth of assorted jewelry, and two rubies. The latter are valued at 1,000 gp apiece and are needed to deactivate the trap in area 11 (c.f.).

**4. DINING HALL:** This 50' by 40' chamber is where all the residents of the academy take their meals. In the center of the room is a long stone table that is a mere 3' off the ground, flanked on either side by soft floor pillows. Six 2"-tall brass buttons protrude from the edges of the table, three per side. Depressing any of the buttons magically creates a full day's serving of food and water to magically appear on the table. The buttons only function once per day, and there is a 50% chance that any given button has already been used.

Along the west wall is an unlocked bronze door that is extremely cold to the touch, which opens onto area 5, the larder. A flesh golem stands directly before the door, instructed to wait on the students and instructors but to attack any others who should enter. The moment the PCs enter the room, the formerly-inert golem turns to face them and then rushes to attack. It does not, however, pursue PCs fleeing into the hall outside.

**Flesh Golem:** HD 10 (45hp); AC 9[10]; Atk 2 fists (2d8); Move 8; Save 5; CL/XP 12/2000; **Special:** Healed by lightning, hit only by magic weapons, slowed by fire and cold, immune to most spells.

**5. LARDER:** Recently-obtained corpses are stored herein, which are chilled by a permanent spell of extreme cold, the area of which fills the entire chamber. PCs entering here suffer 4d6 points of damage (save vs. spells for half damage). The room currently contains the body of a magic-user student who was caught trying to break into the treasury below the day before the PCs arrived. The head instructor had the dishonest student first held in place via magic and then bashed to death with repeated blows of his *staff of striking*. As such, every bone in the student's body has been broken and his skin bears a great multitude of gaping wounds and bruises.

**6. PRACTICE ROOM:** This 60'-square room is where students at the academy come to practice their spell casting abilities. Each wall is covered by a tapestry featuring the life-like depiction of a monster angrily staring into the room. The west wall features a medusa, the east wall a lemure-demon, the north wall a salamander, and the south wall an earth elemental. One of the four creatures

(determined randomly) magically steps out of the wall for each PC that enters the room. Each creature focuses its attacks on a single opponent. When the hit point total of any given monster is reduced by 75% or more, it is instantly **teleported** back into its tapestry to recover, and the PC in question receives full experience points for its defeat. The magic in the tapestry heals the wounded creature of 10 hit points of damage per day. The tapestries bear various enchantments that not only make them impervious to harm but also prevent their removal from the wall. After being forced back into its tapestry, the creature will not step therefrom until all of its lost hit points have been recovered. It should also be noted that the four creatures are magically bound to this room and can never leave it.

The tapestries were created by the greatest sorcerer the serpent people race ever spawned. He created these marvelous devices almost 20,000 years ago, and they function perfectly to this very day, having trained several generations of serpent people sorcerers.

**Medusa:** HD 6; AC 5[14]; Atk 1 weapon (1d4); Move 9; Save 11; CL/XP 8/800; **Special:** Gaze turns to stone, poison.

**Lemure Demon:** HD 3; AC 7[12]; Atk 1 claw (1d3); Move 3; Save 14; CL/XP 4/120; **Special:** Regenerate (1hp/round).

**Salamander:** HD 7; AC 5 [14] (torso); 3[16] (serpent body); Atk Touch and constrict (2d8 + 1d6 heat), 1 weapon (1d6); Move 9; Save 9; CL/XP 8/800; **Special:** Heat, constrict.

**Earth Elemental (8HD):** HD 8; AC 2[17]; Atk 1 strike (3d6); Move 6; Save 8; CL/XP 9/1100; **Special:** Tear down stonework.

**7. PRIVY:** This 10' by 20' room features a series of 1'-wide holes in the floor used by the serpent people magic-users for waste disposal. A black pudding residing in the equal-sized room below the floor consumes whatever bodily wastes and, on occasion, food scraps that are deposited through the holes. Owing to the laziness of the magic-users in residence, the black pudding has been allowed to

grow out of control and the enchantments on the wall that formerly prevented the creature from crawling thereon have failed. As such, the deadly ooze is now big enough to be able to extend one of its pseudopods out of the privy holes, and employs such to attack the next creature to enter its lair. Afterwards, it oozes its entire body out of one of the privy holes and then pursues the PCs all throughout the pyramid unless they bar the door. It surprises the first person to enter the privy 5 times in 6.

**Black Pudding:** HD 10; HP 39; AC 6[13]; Atk 1 attack (3d8); Move 6; Save 5; CL/XP 11/1700; **Special:** Acidic surface, immune to cold, divides when hit with lightning.

## AREA J: KEY TO LEVEL 2 (AREAS 8-11)

This level contains the more dangerous areas of the academy, where students, under close supervision, are instructed how to summon fell extra-planar creatures, engage in dangerous alchemical experiments, and learn the esoteric formulae needed to compose magical scrolls. It is also on this level that the academy's collection of rare and powerful magic items is stored.

The hollow column on Level 1 burrows straight through the basalt masonry of the floor of this level and ends in a 20'-diameter circular chamber. On this level, the opening onto the interior of the column is exposed. Ten feet away along the northwest and northeast bends of the surrounding room are the doors leading into areas 8 and 9, with another door along the southwest bend.

### 8. SCRIPTORIUM

*This 40'-square room contains two long tables in the middle of floor that run from north to south. Each is made of stone and rises a mere 3' off the floor. A tall cedar shelf projects from the west wall, its face covered by an ornately-woven, obviously costly rug. An equally tall glass-paneled wooden cabinet stands along the north wall.*

This area functions as a scriptorium where students practice penning magical scrolls. The shelf along the west wall contains rolls of vellum, pots of rare inks, quills, and magical reference material. The whole lot could easily fetch 4,000 gp in any big city where magic is practiced. (The seven volumes of reference material do not allow the magical devotee to learn any new spells unless intensely studied for several years, and are not magical in any way). As a prank, one of the students has hung a cursed rug over the face of this shelf, which instantly wraps itself around anyone who so much as touches it (smothering the victim within 1d3+3 rounds if it is not prevented from doing so). The entire surface of the wooden cabinet along the north wall is magical glass as hard as steel. (Treat such as having 80 hit points for bashing attempts). It also bears a complicated lock and a magical glyph that, if activated, electrocutes the victim for 25 points of damage (save for half damage). Once the cabinet is opened, the PCs find the following completed scrolls inside: *mirror image*, *protection from magic*, *dispel magic*, *confusion*, *levitate*, *ice storm*, and *lightning bolt*.

**9. SUMMONING CHAMBER:** Inked onto the floor of this massive room are three magical summoning circles. Burning candles bearing powerful enchantments to bind extra-planar creatures are currently burning along the perimeter of the middle circle. Trapped within this circle is an angry demon that the head instructor summoned several weeks ago for matters best left unmentioned. The magical circle has been rigged as a trap to keep out intruders. Unless a special password is spoken just before entering this room, as soon as the opener sets foot inside, the door slams shut and locks. A powerful, magically-summoned gust of wind instantly blows out all of the candles of the summoning circle, thereby releasing the furious demon. Once it is released, it flies into a rage and attacks the PCs mercilessly, fighting to the death.

**Demon:** HD 8; HP 35; AC 1[18]; Atk 1 beak (1d6), 2 foreclaws (1d4), 2 rear claws (1d6); Move 12 (Fly 18); Save 8; CL/XP 9/1100; **Special:** Magic resistance (50%), cause darkness, immune to fire, once per day attempt to summon an identical demon (50% chance to succeed).



## Demon of the Summoning Chamber

**10. LABORATORY:** Along the north wall of this 40'-square chamber is a tall shelf containing a wide assortment of alchemical apparatuses such as empty potion bottles, jars of reagents, and various spell components—pickled monster parts, powdered semi-precious gems, etc. Along the south wall stands a glass-fronted cedar cabinet that has the same protections as the northernmost shelf in area 8. Two long tables in the middle of the floor contain further alchemical appurtenances such as alembics, crucibles, tongs, etc. As can be guessed, the various items in this room are used to brew magical potions, oils, and ointments by the students at the academy.

A tapestry is affixed to the west wall of the laboratory. The right half of the tapestry depicts several serpent people cavorting in a massive body of water bordered by lush jungle. The left half of the tapestry shows these same serpent people leading several bound humans towards a darkened sea cave. The tapestry is magical, and functions as a

portal system. Those touching the left half of the tapestry are instantly *teleported* to a 10' by 10' by 10' cubicle bounded on all sides by several hundred feet of rock. It lies one mile directly below the pyramid. One round after the victim(s) arrive at the small room, it starts flooding with water. The chamber becomes completely filled with water a mere 3 rounds later. (If the Referee desires a specific rule to handle this, use the following: PCs can hold their breath for the number of rounds equal to their Constitution scores divided by 3. Beyond this period, they must make saving throws at a -2 penalty for each subsequent round. Those failing any such saving throw will drown.) Those coming in contact with the right half of the tapestry are instantly *teleported* to area 11, and such is the only way to gain access thereto.

A globe of highly polished crystal rests on a short pedestal before the east wall. By placing one's hands on the crystal orb and then peering within, one is offered a bird's eye view of the entire cavern. The viewer can further command the orb to zoom down towards the very floor of the city. It does not allow the viewer to see through the walls of buildings, however. It basically functions like a **crystal ball** except that the view is limited to the city below. The globe's other function is to power the magical mist veiling the city. Destroying the globe herein or the massive lump of crystal atop the pyramid instantly dispels the magical mist and banishes the elder air elemental bound inside back to its home on the Elemental Plane of Air. The globe in this room can be destroyed by delivering a total of 100 hp of damage to its surface with any kind of bashing weapon. Unfortunately, its hardness gives it an armor class of -2. Last but not least, each time a blow is delivered to the globe, a surge of electricity races up the weapon used and into the body of the victim, dealing 14 points of damage. (Save for half damage).

**Treasure:** The cabinet along the south wall holds the following: *potions of poison, gaseous form, heroism, ethereality, slipperiness, and fire resistance.*

**11. TREASURY:** PCs teleported here from area 10 arrive on a raised pedestal directly before the south wall. (PCs stepping off and then stepping back on the pedestal are instantly teleported to area 10). The only noteworthy features of this 20'-square room are a massive chest resting along the east wall and a 5'-tall iron column along the north wall in the shape of a rearing cobra. The chest is both *wizard locked* and warded with a *symbol of death*. The only safe way of opening the chest is to insert the two rubies carried by the head instructor of the academy (see area 3) into the hollow eye sockets on the face of the iron column. Doing so instantly deactivates both wards on the chest, and causes it to open with an audible click.

**Treasure:** The following items are housed in the chest: a **Manual of Efficacious Conjunction\***, a **Libram of Fell Magics\*\***, and a **Manual of Golems**, along with 5,000 gp worth of assorted jewelry and coins.

\*The *Manual of Efficacious Conjunction* contains theories and formulae of ancient lore and power; if it is studied by a magic-user of non-Chaotic alignment for a full week, the character will gain one level of experience. Chaotic magic-users perusing the book even casually must make a saving throw or lose 1000xp. Characters that are not magic-users must make a saving throw or become insane (as per a curse).

\*\*The *Libram of Fell Magics*, like the *Manual of Efficacious Conjunction*, contains various theorems and formulae pertaining to the craft of the magic-user. However, the information in this tome is distasteful and necromantic; only a magic-user of Chaotic alignment can benefit from studying it. If such a magic-user pores over the book's contents for a full week, the character will gain a level of experience. Non-Chaotic magic-users reading through the book will lose one level.

## K. GREAT FANE

*Before you stands a partially-ruined pyramid that soars into the air for a full 200', many of its highly-polished casing stones having fallen away, exposing the more roughly hewn interior blocks. Capping the colossal structure is a massive pyramidion of what appears to be solid gold. Polished limestone roads lead into the 30'-wide moat surrounding the monument from the south and east. Several of the pyramid's casing stones have tumbled into the moat, the southern branch being almost wholly choked with the massive basalt blocks. From your vantage point, you can see the outlines of two 20'-wide by 30'-tall doors of polished bronze that lie flush with the slanting southern and eastern faces of the pyramid. It is quite evident that these doors, if lowered, would provide a convenient means of crossing over the surrounding moat. The massive portals stand directly opposite the limestone roads leading into the pyramid.*

At the height of the city, this massive edifice functioned as the main religious center of the priesthood entrusted with the "divine" secrets of the serpent "god." Even though the priesthood suffered great losses in its decisive battle with the surface humans, it has mostly recovered. However, the pyramid housing the priests fared rather badly in the onslaught, and as a result lost almost all of the casing stones from its southern face, which bore the brunt of the surface humans' attacks. These stones now entirely fill the southern stretch of the moat, jutting out in several places from the still, dark waters. The bronze drawbridge serving as the southern entrance to the pyramid was so damaged in the assault that it had to be replaced. The interior walls of the temple are still structurally sound, though they are fire-blackened in places and riddled with a series of small cracks.

**MOAT:** As with the moat encircling the Academy of Sorcery, the 30'-wide and deep moat encircling this pyramid is home to 5 giant crocodiles. Any PC falling into or purposely swimming in the moat is immediately attacked by 1-2 of these, and the remaining crocodiles swim over attack within 1-3 rounds.

**Giant Crocodiles:** HD 6; AC 3[16]; Atk 1 bite (3d6), 1 tail (1d6); Move 9 (Swim 12); Save 11; CL/XP 6/400; **Special:** None.

**DRAWBRIDGES:** The towering portals of bronze along the middle of the north and east faces of the pyramid can be lowered to span the moat, and are controlled with windlasses to the immediate right of their respective entry halls. (Each windlass bears enchantments that greatly multiply the torque applied to them by their operator, meaning that a single humanoid can easily raise or lower the drawbridge it controls by himself). Both drawbridges can withstand up to 100 hp of damage, and have an effective armor class of 5 [14].

### AREA K: KEY TO LEVEL 1 (AREAS 1-9)

This level of the fane houses the sleeping quarters, dining room, and worship hall of the serpent people clerics.

**Dungeon Features for Levels 1 and 2:** All of the rooms and corridors in the pyramid are extremely austere, being merely polished blocks of cyclopean basalt devoid of virtually any decoration. Except where noted otherwise, they all feature 15'-high corbelled ceilings. All doors, unless stated otherwise, are constructed of bronze, locked, and have magical glyphs cast upon them which will electrocute intruders for 25 points of damage (save for half damage). Secret doors are hidden on both sides. Unless noted otherwise, secret doors pivot about their centers when the correct wall stone is depressed. They must be pushed inward to open. Affixed to the ceiling of each and every corridor and chamber in the pyramid is a 1'-diameter globe of crystal with a **continual light** spell cast thereon, which bathes its space in a warm green glow.

**1. ENTRANCE CORRIDOR:** A 10'-square offering pool of still water lies 10' into the eastern and southern entrance corridors. If either of the two drawbridges are bashed or blasted open, then the water weird (See "Arcana") residing in each pool cannot be surprised. As soon as an intruder comes within 5' of its pool, the water weird lairing therein rises up and attacks, surprising 5 times in 6.

**Water Weirds:** HD 3+3; AC 4[15]; Atk 1 “grab”; Move 0 (Swim 12); Save 14; CL/XP 4/120; **Special:** Drowns victims

**2. PRIVY:** A series of 1'-diameter privy holes dot the floor of this room. The holes all open over a 20'-diameter shaft that drops several hundred feet to meet up with a swift-flowing underground river that exits at the massive lake at area N. Because the underground river runs flush with the rough ceiling 10' overhead, PCs somehow making their way down thereinto will eventually drown unless they have access to water breathing magic, for area N lies several hundred feet away.

**3. INITIATES' ROBING ROOM:** Hanging from several pegs along the walls of this largish room are up to 10 crimson robes made of a silk-like material with several curvilinear, mazelike patterns woven thereinto with silver thread. The robes are donned by members of the lower priesthood, the initiates, before going to worship at area 8, the High Temple, or at area F, the High Altar of the Serpent God. The robes' primary function is that they render their wearers immune to magical *fear*, especially that emanating from the Serpent God when it makes its appearance at area F. Unfortunately for the PCs, the vestments act as *cloaks of poisonousness* (make a saving throw or die) for any human or demi-human who so much as touches them. Should the initiates be present in area 8 when the PCs first arrive at the pyramid, then 4 of the 10 crimson robes are absent from this room, having been donned by their owners.

**4. DINING HALL:** This 40'-square chamber is where all of the clerics in residence take their meals. The magic herein is essentially identical to that employed in the Academy of Sorcery: in the center of the room is a long stone table that is a mere 3' off the ground, flanked on either side by soft floor pillows. Six 2"-tall brass buttons protrude from the edges of the table, three per side. Depressing any of the buttons magically creates a full day's serving of food and water to magically appear on the table. The buttons only function once per day, and there is a 50% chance that any given button has already been used.

Along the west wall is an unlocked bronze door that is extremely cold to the touch. Such opens onto area 4a, the Larder. Directly before the entrance to area 5 along the north wall is a small bowl resting atop a short pedestal. Placed beside it is a wickedly-sharp obsidian dagger. The only way to open the door to area 5 is to employ the dagger to pierce one's wrist, allowing 1-2 hp worth of blood to drip into the bowl. Once the required level of fresh blood accumulates in the bowl, a stopper opens along the bottom of the bowl, allowing the precious liquid to drain into the base of pedestal. When the 3'-high by 1'-wide pedestal becomes filled with blood, it is the head priest's duty to push the cleverly concealed button along its western face. Such action causes the 1"-diameter stone plug above the button to swing open, which allows the blood to drain out of the pedestal and into an appropriate vessel. The collecting vessel is then carried under great panoply over to area F where it is offered to the Serpent God. The offering of one's blood to the bowl serves as the greatest expression of a serpent person cleric's devotion to his god, and the initiates, in particular, are forcibly reminded of such each and every time they retire to their quarters in area 5.

**4A. LARDER:** The larder of the Great Fane is similar to that contained in the Academy of Sorcery. Recently-obtained corpses are stored herein, which are chilled by a permanent spell of extreme cold, the area of which fills the entire chamber. PCs entering here suffer 4d6 points of damage (save vs. spells for half damage). This room currently contains the corpses of four serpent people commoners that were hunted down and then carried back to the temple to serve as grim provender for the resident clerics.

**5. INITIATES' RECTORY:** This area serves as the sleeping quarters for the serpent people under-clerics, the initiates, currently stationed in the fane. Painted on all of the walls in fading black ink is a series of curvilinear, mazelike lines that form a pattern that is hypnotic to humans and demi-humans looking upon them. All such must make a saving throw or be transfixed (up to a maximum of 20HD may be affected at one time). Strewn about the floor of the room are several plush throw pillows with more of the strange designs sewn onto



them. However, they do not affect the viewer as those on the wall. The pillows serve as beds for the clerics in residence here. Bolted to the floor along the west wall is a large chest that the clerics share to hold their valuables. It is locked and warded with a magical glyph that, if triggered, electrocutes for 25 points of damage (a successful saving throw against the spell reduces damage by 50%).

There is a 50% chance that four serpent people initiates are relaxing in this room when the PCs first arrive. Should they be absent when the PCs arrive, then they can be found worshipping in area 8, the High Temple. Should their presence in this room be indicated, they do not respond to the sounds of battle raging in any of the surrounding rooms or corridors, instead choosing to cower on their pillows out of self-preservation. They do, however, fight any PCs breaking into their room, calling out for aid from the head priest and his two assistants in area 7 all the while. There is a 60% chance that the residents of area 7 hear the cries of their fellows, arriving 1 round later.

**Serpent-People Initiate #1 (Clr5):** HD 5; HP 20; AC 3[16]; Atk +1 mace (1d8+1), or 1 bite (1d6 + poison); Move 12; Save 11 (+2 vs paralysis or poison); AL C; CL/XP 6/400; Special: Charm, poison, stench, summon snakes, spells.

**Spells (2/2/1):**

Level 1: *cause light wounds, cure light wounds*

Level 2: *hold person, silence 15ft radius*

Level 3: *continual darkness*

**Possessions:** *mace +1, rod of curing light wounds* (18 charges, usable by clerics only), *scrolls of remove curse* and *cure disease*, unholy symbol, possibly a robe from area 3

**Serpent-People Initiate #2 (Clr5):** HD 5; HP 19; AC 3[16]; Atk +1 mace (1d8+1), or 1 bite (1d6 + poison); Move 12; Save 11 (+2 vs paralysis or poison); AL C; CL/XP 6/400; Special: Charm, poison, stench, summon snakes, spells.

**Spells (2/2/1):**

Level 1: *cure light wounds x2*

Level 2: *hold person x2*

Level 3: *continual darkness*

**Possessions:** *mace +1, rod of fear* (22 charges, usable by clerics or magic-users), *scroll of insect plague*, holy symbol, possibly a robe from area 3.

**Serpent-People Initiate #3 (Clr6):** HD 6; HP 23; AC 3[16]; Atk +2 staff of striking (2d6), or 1 bite (1d6 + poison); Move 12; Save 10 (+2 vs paralysis or poison); AL C; CL/XP 7/600; Special: Charm, poison, stench, summon snakes, spells.

**Spells (2/2/1/1):**

Level 1: *cure light wounds x2*

Level 2: *hold person x2*

Level 3: *continual darkness*

Level 4: *sticks to snakes*

**Possessions:** +2 *staff of striking, scrolls of cure disease* and *dispel magic*, holy symbol, possibly wearing robe from area 3

**Serpent-People Initiate #4 (Clr6):** HD 6; HP 26; AC 3[16]; Atk +2 mace (1d8+2), or 1 bite (1d6 + poison); Move 12; Save 10 (+2 vs paralysis or poison); AL C; CL/XP 7/600; Special: Charm, poison, stench, summon snakes, spells.

**Spells (2/2/1/1):**

Level 1: *cure light wounds x2*

Level 2: *hold person x2*

Level 3: *continual darkness*

Level 4: *cure serious wounds*

**Possessions:** *mace +2, scroll of cure serious wounds* and *speak with dead*, holy symbol, possibly wearing robe from area 3

**Treasure:** The chest holds 2,000 gp in loose coins of ancient vintage and 1,000 gp worth of assorted jewelry and gems. The magic items usually stored in the chest are being worn/used by the inhabitants of this room unless the PCs were somehow able to approach silently. If such applies, then it takes the clerics a full round to retrieve all of their magic items from the chest.



**6. SENIOR CLERICS' ROBING ROOM:** This room is identical to area 3 in both function and appearance except that there are only four hooks on the wall, three of the four robes usually depending therefrom being worn by the high cleric and his two assistants should they be encountered in area 8, the High Temple. These robes not only afford their wearers total immunity to magical *fear* but also improve AC by 2. Their benefits can only be utilized by serpent people clerics of 7th level or higher. The robes act as *cloaks of poisonousness* (saving throw or die) to humans and demi-humans. This room is protected by a will-o-(the)-wisp that is hovering just below the ceiling, appearing as one of the many *continual light* globes that illuminate the corridors and rooms of this pyramid. It has been instructed to attack any who enter here other than the high cleric and his two assistants, surprising its opponents 5 times in 6.

**Will-o-the-wisp:** HD 9; HP 36; AC -8[27]; Atk 1 shock (2d6); Move 18; Save 6; CL/XP 10/1400; Special: None.

**7. SENIOR CLERICS' RECTORY:** This area serves as the sleeping quarters for the high cleric and his two assistants. Immediately past the door is a small pile of twigs. Should any other than the high cleric and his assistants enter here, the twigs transform into snakes and attack, as the spell *sticks to snakes*. As in area 5, painted on all of the walls in fading black ink is a series of curvilinear, mazelike designs that form a pattern that is hypnotic to humans and demi-humans looking upon them. All such must make a saving throw or be transfixed (up to a maximum of 20HD may be affected at one time). Strewn about the floor of the room are five plush throw pillows with more of the queer designs sewn onto them. (The designs on the pillows do not affect the viewer as those on the wall). The pillows are made of the finest silk, and could easily fetch 200 gp apiece on the open market, possibly more if the buyer is informed of their provenance. Bolted to the floor along the west wall are two large chests that the clerics use to store their valuables. Chest #1 is both locked and trapped with a *flesh to stone* spell that affects the opener accordingly. Chest #2 is also locked but warded with a *polymorph other* spell. Victims setting off the trap are transformed into normal, non-poisonous snakes. As the high cleric is

much less trusting of his fellow serpent people than is the norm, he has insisted that his belongings in chest #1 be stored apart from that of his two assistants.

There is a 50% chance that the high cleric and his assistants are relaxing in this room when the PCs first arrive. If the clerics are absent when the PCs make their appearance herein, then they can be found worshipping in area 8, the High Temple. Should their presence in this room be indicated, then they respond to the sounds of battle raging in any of the surrounding rooms or corridors, arriving on the scene 1 round later. However, should a fight break out in one of the rooms on the west wing of the fane, then they hear and thereby respond to the commotion only 60% of the time, arriving on the scene a mere 1 round later.

**Serpent-People High Cleric (Clr8):** HD 8; HP 40; AC 1[18]; Atk +2 mace (1d8+2), or 1 bite (1d6 + poison); Move 12; Save 8 (addl. +2 from ring, addl. +2 vs paralysis or poison); AL C; CL/XP 9/1100; Special: Charm, poison, stench, summon snakes, spells.

**Spells (2/2/2/2/2):**

Level 1: *cure light wounds* x2

Level 2: *hold person* x2

Level 3: *continual darkness*, *prayer*

Level 4: *cure serious wounds*, *sticks to snakes*

Level 5: *insect plague*

**Possessions:** mace +2, scroll of raise dead, potion of heroism, ring of protection +2, platinum holy symbol (figurine of the Serpent "God" valued at 1,000 gp), possibly wearing robe from area 6.

**Serpent-People Assistant Cleric #1 (Clr7):** HD 7; HP 28; AC 2[17]; Atk +2 mace (1d8+2+poison), or 1 bite (1d6 + poison); Move 12; Save 9 (addl. +1 from ring, +2 vs paralysis or poison); AL C; CL/XP 8/800; Special: Charm, poison, stench, summon snakes, spells.

**Spells (2/2/2/1/1):**

Level 1: *cure light wounds* x2

Level 2: *hold person*, *silence 15ft radius*

Level 3: *continual darkness* x2

Level 4: *cure serious wounds*

Level 5: *insect plague*

**Possessions:** poisoned +2 mace, rod of hold person (22 charges), ring of protection +1, scroll of insect

*plague*, holy symbol, possibly wearing robe from area 6.

**Serpent-People Assistant Cleric #2 (Clr7):** HD 7; HP 30; AC 2[17]; Atk +1 staff of striking (2d6), or 1 bite (1d6 + poison); Move 12; Save 9 (addl. +1 from ring, +2 vs paralysis or poison); AL C; CL/XP 8/800; **Special:** Charm, poison, stench, summon snakes, spells.

**Spells (2/2/2/1/1):**

Level 1: *cure light wounds* x2

Level 2: *hold person* x2

Level 3: *continual darkness* x2

Level 4: *cause serious wounds*

Level 5: *finger of death*

**Possessions:** +1 staff of striking, ring of protection +1, scrolls of protection from magic and cure serious wounds, holy symbol, possibly wearing robe from area 6.

**Treasure:** Chest #1 holds 2 rubies valued at 1,500 gp apiece (used in area 12, c.f.), 2,000 gp in loose coins of ancient vintage, and 1,500 gp worth of assorted jewelry. Chest #2 holds 1,000 gp worth of ancient coins and 1,000 gp worth of assorted jewelry. The magic items usually stored in both chests are being worn/used by the inhabitants of this room unless the PCs were somehow able to approach silently. If such applies, then it takes the clerics a full round to retrieve all of their magic items from the chests.

**8. HIGH TEMPLE:** This diamond-shaped room is flanked on both sections of the west and east walls by two rows of 1'-deep depressions that function as pews for the serpent people who come to worship here. Where the angled walls to the north meet rests a triangular altar with a hand-shaped depression thereon. An obsidian dagger whose blade is filigreed with a series of rune-like characters rests beside the depression. The runes (which must be translated) read as follows: *Those worthy of our god's grace must sacrifice that which offends him.* Of course, being a massive serpent, the god of the serpent people feels that such things as hands and feet are unsightly. If one of the PCs does as bidden, meaning that he uses the obsidian dagger to sever that which offends the Serpent God, his own hand, such action causes the entire altar block to sink into the floor, thereby allowing access to area 9 to the north. (The wound cauterizes instantly, and only

causes 1-4 hp of damage to the PC). After the offering is made, acids gurgle up from the interior of the altar and bathe the member, instantly dissolving it. The moment the PC in question leaves and then returns to the High Temple, a vile flesh-colored fluid rises up from the interior of the altar and reforms itself into the sacrificed hand. The PC in question can reattach his lost member by simply touching the stump of his arm to the severed hand. At the same time, the altar again rises up from floor, blocking off the entrance to area 9.

As indicated in areas 5 and 7, there is a 50% chance that the inhabitants thereof\* are present in this room when the PCs first arrive. If such is the case, one or both parties are weaving their heads back and forth while emitting high-pitched hissing sounds. There is a further 25% chance that the PCs interrupt one of their weekly sacrificial ceremonies. (All of the clerics in the temple are forced to attend such). The PCs then witness the high cleric slitting the throat of a bound serpent person commoner on the altar while the worshippers in the pews look happily on. Afterwards, the worshippers make their way to the altar and imbibe the precious fluid before it spills to the floor. Any serpent people present in this chamber respond to intruders with extreme prejudice.

\*Any initiate or senior clerics present are wearing their ceremonial robes from areas 3 and 6, respectively.

**9. TREASURY ENTRANCE:** This triangular area features a floor-to-ceiling column along the far wall. Entwined around the column are representations of two wide-bodied serpents. In the middle of the floor is found a 5'-square trapdoor fashioned of gleaming bronze, which is both locked and trapped. Those failing to find and disarm the trap thereon cause the two serpents on the column to animate, which drop to the floor and immediately attack the interlopers. The 12'-long, 2'-thick serpents attack as 8 HD monsters, have 30 hit points each, and have an armor class of 2 [17]. A bite from the serpents causes 2d6 points of damage plus injects poison into the victim's bloodstream. (Save vs. poison or die).

Beneath the trapdoor is a steep flight of low stone steps that descends a full 100' beneath the base of the pyramid, terminating at area 10.

## AREA K: KEY TO LEVEL 2 (AREAS 10-15)

This level contains a gauntlet of trapped areas that must be bypassed in order to access the three chambers comprising the treasury of the fane. The temple clerics went to such troubles to safeguard the treasuries because they contain almost 60,000 years worth of wisdom pertaining to their deity, the Serpent God. They further house a collection of highly powerful and dangerous magical relics.

**10. TRAPPED HALLWAY:** The stairs from area 9 terminate in a 10'-square landing. There are bronze doors on the north, west, and east walls. Should the PCs look to the floor, they find the following message (**read languages** spell or other method required to translate) engraved thereon: *You can't go forward in life always dwelling on what you did wrong or right in the past. What's left of your life is all that matters.* The riddle, if read correctly, should clue the PCs in to the fact that they should only open the left door, for it is "all that matters." Said locked but not trapped door opens onto the hallway leading to area 11. The door on the right opens onto a 10'-square cubicle. An illusion makes it appear as though a tunnel extends from it to the east for 40' and then turns south. Should the PCs fail to disbelieve the illusion and then step into the cubicle, they trigger a hinged trapdoor on the floor that opens onto a 30'- deep pit whose last 10' is filled with acid. The acid causes 1d4 x10 hp of damage per round! Immediately after depositing its victim in the pool of acid, the trapdoor swings shut and remains locked for a full hour, after which time it can be triggered to open again. Lastly, the locked door to the north opens onto a blank wall. Those failing to find and disarm the trap on the lock are pricked by a poison needle. (Save vs. poison or die).

**11. SPINNING HALLWAY:** The archway along the south wall opens onto a 10'-wide hallway that curves to the west and east, completely encircling a 30'-diameter ceiling-to-floor column. Depressing the hidden panel (treat as secret door) along the inner wall of the western branch of the hallway causes the archway along the south wall to rotate a full 180 degrees to the north, thereby giving the PCs access to the corridor leading to area 12. Once the archway has been rotated a full 180 degrees to the

north, it can be returned to its original position by depressing another hidden panel along the opposite inner wall of the hallway. The rotation of the circular hallway is accompanied by a loud rumble from the mechanism below.

**12. THE FACE OF THE SERPENT:** The northern end of this hallway is blocked by the slightly protruding stone face of a serpent that stretches from wall to wall and ceiling to floor. The massive rubies that serve as the stone effigy's eyes are missing. Should the PCs insert the two rubies from chest #1 in area 12 into the empty sockets, the entire wall section containing the snake head sinks into the floor, allowing them access to the T-shaped hallway beyond.

**13. SACRED BOOKS:** The door to this room is blocked off by the rearing statue of a robed serpent person. Its arms are outstretched with palms up. Should the PCs closely examine the statue, they find that the hands can be rotated a full 180 degrees. PCs simultaneously rotating the two palms to the downward position cause the entire statue to sink into the floor. Nothing happens if only one of the hands is rotated.

The 20' x 30' room behind the statue-door contains the life-sized eidolon of a rearing snake with a human head, the face bearing a malevolent expression, which stands between two massive chests along the far wall. The chests are both mechanically locked and also "trapped" with a mechanical snake-head device, the tongue of which can be pulled out. Should the PCs fail to find and pull out the moving tongue on either chest before opening it, the statue animates into an actual spirit naga and attacks.

**Spirit Naga:** HD 9; HP 45; AC 4[15]; Atk 1 bite (1d3 + poison); Move 12; Save 6; CL/XP 13/2300; **Special:** Poison, charm gaze, spells.

### **Magic-user spells**

Level 1: *Charm Person* x2, *Magic Missile*, *Sleep*

Level 2: *Mirror Image*, *Web*

Level 3: *Protection from Normal Missiles*

### **Cleric spells**

Level 1: *Cure Light Wounds* x2

Level 2: *Silence 15ft Radius*.

**Treasure:** Chest #1 contains a massive tome written in the ancient rune-like script of the serpent people detailing their entire history. PCs reading therefrom can learn everything contained in the new monster write-up of the serpent people (see "Arcana") not to mention everything contained in the "Adventure Background" and "For the Game Master" sections of the module. Deciphering the script requires translation (or a *read languages* spell, of course). Chest #2 contains a *tome of higher elucidation*\* and a *grimoire of pain*\*\*.

\**The Tome of Higher Elucidation* grants one level of experience if it is studied for a week by a non-Chaotic cleric.

\*\**The Grimoire of Pain* grants one level of experience to a Chaotic character of any character class if it is studied for a week. Characters of Lawful or Neutral alignments will lose 2000 XP if they peruse the book even casually (a successful saving throw reduces the XP loss to 1d10 x100).

**14. SACRED WEAPONS:** This 20'-square room is bare save for the massive chest along the middle of the far wall. The chest is both locked and trapped. Should the PCs fail to find and remove the trap on the chest, a deluge of normal-sized spitting snakes starts raining down on their heads from several 2'-diameter holes in the ceiling. (The holes are well-concealed but can be seen if the ceiling is checked with care). At the same time, the entrance door slams shut and locks.

**Normal Spitting Snakes (20):** HD 1+1; HP 5 each; AC 5[14]; Atk 1 bite (1d2 + poison) or spit (poison); Move 12; Save 17; AL N; CL/XP 3/60; Special: **Poison.**

**Treasure:** The chest contains a *staff of curing*\* (15 charges), a *mace of smiting undead*\*\*, and 3,000 gp in assorted jewelry and coins.

\*The staff fully heals all damage and cures disease when a charge is expended

\*\*The mace is +1, +2 vs undead, and inflicts double damage against undead

**15. SACRED ICONS:** Along the far wall of this 20'-square chamber rests a massive chest that is bolted to the floor. Blocking access thereto is a 20'-deep and 10'-long wall-to-wall pit filled to the brim with massive bones. PCs either walking across or flying over the pit cause the bones to instantly knit themselves together into the undead skeleton of a 30'-long gorgosaurus dinosaur that fights to the death. Its massive size prevents it from leaving the room, as it is too wide to fit through the entrance door, though it can reach anywhere in the room with its claws and mouth.

**Gorgosaurus Skeleton:** HD 13; HP 60; AC 5[14]; Atk 2 claws (1d3) and 1 bite (5d6); Move 9; Save 3; AL N; CL/XP 13/2300; Special: 10% resistance to turning, turned as vampire.

**Treasure:** The chest contains a *pearl of wisdom*\*, blocks of both *incense of meditation*\*\* and *theological ineptitude*\*\*\*, and a *necklace of prayer beads*\*\*\*\*. The special beads on the latter item are of curing, blessing, and atonement.

\*Adds 1 to a cleric's Wisdom

\*\*When burned as a cleric is praying for spells, the spells, when cast, will achieve the maximum possible effect.

\*\*\*When burned as a cleric is praying for spells, the cleric will fail to gain the spells, but be convinced that they have been acquired and will even try to cast them.

\*\*\*\*The special beads may be used once per day (determining what each one is requires the use of a commune spell or other direct divine communication). The curing bead may be used to cure blindness, cure disease, or to cast cure serious wounds. The bead of blessing allows the casting of bless. The bead of atonement may be used to allow casting of reverse versions of a clerical spell without divine disapproval.

## L ROYAL PALACE

*Before you stands a partially-ruined pyramid that soars into the air for a full 180', many of its highly-polished casing stones having fallen away, exposing the more roughly hewn interior blocks. The pyramidion that should be capping the pyramid is absent, reducing the total height of the massive structure by over 20'. (It lies a hundred feet away to the east). From the south and west, polished limestone roads lead into the 30'-wide moat surrounding the monument. Several of the pyramid's casing stones have tumbled into the moat, completely filling it. From your vantage point, you can see the outlines of two 20'- wide by 30'-tall doors of polished bronze that lie flush with the slanting southern and western faces of the pyramid. It is quite evident that these doors, if lowered, would provide a convenient means of safely crossing over the rubble-filled moat. The massive portals stand directly opposite the limestone roads leading into the pyramid.*

This pyramid once functioned as the three-level palace of the serpent people royal family and its retainers, and contained dozens of chambers. Not bearing the enchantments of the Academy of Sorcery (area J), almost all of this pyramid's outer casing stones were blasted away during the last major invasion by the surface humans several centuries back, and they now completely fill the surrounding moat. The last two upper levels of the palace, which housed the main administrative offices of the royal government, also fell to the invaders. As such, only the first upper level and the dungeon level still stand. All of the chambers and corridors on the first level, though still relatively sound, bear long cracks and deep gouges on all of the walls, floors, and ceilings. Being as the dungeon level lies concealed via a secret staircase and was never discovered by the raiding surface humans, it has remained totally intact.

The last king of the serpent people, his immediate family, and most of his retainers were also slain by the marauding humans. That being said, the king still rules his subjects even from the grave, for he along with his vizier and closest retainer haunt this pyramid as undead horrors. A few members of the royal family survived the attack by the humans,

and their distant descendents live in the palace to this very day.

**MOAT:** The encircling moat has long since dried out, but the PCs can attempt to walk across the tumbled blocks therein to reach the pyramid 30' away, a somewhat difficult task that could involve falling 30'.

**DRAWBRIDGES:** The towering portals of bronze along the middle of the south and west faces of the pyramid can be lowered to span the rubble-choked moat, and are controlled with massive windlasses to the immediate right of their respective entry halls. (Each windlass bears enchantments that greatly multiply the torque applied to them by their operator, meaning that a single humanoid can easily raise or lower the drawbridge it controls by himself). Both drawbridges can withstand up to 100 hp of damage.

### AREA L: KEY TO LEVEL 1 (AREAS 1-11)

This level of the palace contains the living quarters of the king and his closest associates.

**Features of Level 1 and Dungeon Level:** All of the rooms and corridors in the pyramid are extremely austere, being merely polished blocks of cyclopean basalt devoid of virtually any decoration. Except where noted otherwise, they all feature 15'- high vaulted ceilings. All doors are constructed of bronze and are locked and protected with poison needle traps. (Save vs. poison or die). Unless noted otherwise, secret doors pivot about their centers when the correct wall stone is depressed. They must be pushed inward to open. Affixed to the ceiling of each and every corridor and chamber in the pyramid is a 1'-diameter globe of crystal with a **continual light** spell cast onto its surface, which bathes its space in a warm green glow.

**1. GUARD STATIONS:** Standing at these two locations behind lowered portcullises are three serpent person guards armed with 10'-long halberds that allow them to reach anywhere in the 10'-square areas behind the drawbridge gates. They cannot be surprised by the PCs if they were alerted by the magical mist alarm at area C. In the event

that intruders burst the drawbridge gates open via magic and then attack from afar, the guards have also been equipped with longbows and 10 poison-tipped arrows apiece. They attack any non-serpent people on sight. Any sounds of battle with the PCs alert those at the other guard station and the reserve guards relaxing in the barracks (area 5). The former arrive in 1-2 rounds and the latter in 2-3 rounds. The magic-users stationed in area 7 and the king and his retainers in area 2 hear the sounds of fighting 50% of the time but remain in their rooms, silently preparing themselves for the eventual arrival of the PCs.

**Note:** The 10'-square areas immediately behind the drawbridge gates were originally outfitted with murder holes in the ceiling from which guards on the now-collapsed second level would pour flaming oil on the heads of intruders.

#### **Serpent People Guards (3 at each station)**

**Guards (Ftr7):** HD 7; AC 3[16]; Atk 1 halberd (1d10) or 1 bite (1d6 + poison) or longbow (1d6+poison); Move 12; Save 8; AL C; CL/XP 8/800; **Special:** Charm, poison, stench.

**Possessions:** 10'-long halberd and longbow with 10 poison-tipped arrows apiece. (Save vs. poison on a successful hit or die).

**2. THRONE ROOM:** The west and east walls of this massive lozenge-shaped chamber are lined with 5 towering statues of menacing serpent people in a variety of poses. Leading up to the massive throne along the far wall is a frayed carpet of deepest purple decorated with a series of curvilinear, mazelike designs. The throne is nothing more than a shallow 5'-wide gem-encrusted, gold-plated stone bowl atop a raised dais. Seated thereon is the ghost of the last king of the serpent people. Standing to either side of him are his vizier and his most loyal retainer, both of whom now live on as wraiths. They attack any non-serpent people entering here on sight, all the while emitting ghostly moans that summon any remaining guards in the temple in 2-4 rounds. As its first action, the king's ghost attempts to possess the body of the most powerful magic-user in the party, and then uses such to attack the remaining PCs. (The king has a preference for magic using PCs because he was a magic-user in his former life).

PCs examining the far wall of the chamber note the short door of beaten bronze that lies to the immediate left of the throne. Such leads to area 3, the king's bedchamber; it is locked and bears a magical glyph. If the glyph is activated, the victim is electrocuted for 25 points of damage. (Save for half damage).

**Ghost of the Last King:** HD 10; HP 45; AC 0[19] (until materializing, then 8[11]); Atk 1 touch (magical effects); Move 9; Save 5; CL/XP 12/2000; **Special:** Touch, fear, possession, hit only by magic or silver weapons.

**Wraiths (2):** HD 4; HP 20, 16; AC 3[16]; Atk 1 touch (1d6+ level drain); Move 9 (Fly 24); Save 13; CL/XP 6/400; **Special:** drain 1 level with hit, 10% resistance to turning.

**Treasure:** The various precious gems studding the throne are worth a total of 4,000 gp.

**3. KING'S BEDCHAMBER:** All of the walls of this massive room are decorated with decaying tapestries depicting the last king of the serpent people engaging in various activities such as coupling with his concubines, leading armies on the battlefield against his human enemies, watching the gladiatorial games at area M, and practicing the magical arts at the Academy of Sorcery. Along the far wall stands a formerly supple but now decayed floor pillow that served as the king's bed on those rare occasions when he chose not to entertain himself with one of his many concubines in area 3a, the Harem, which lies behind the tall bronze door in the middle of the east wall. Rearing upright a few feet aft of the royal bed is what at first appears to be a statue of a serpent person with a haughty bearing. This is, in actuality, a clay golem that animates and attacks anyone entering here other than the king and his concubines in the adjoining room.

**Clay Golem:** HD 12 (50hp); AC 7[12]; Atk 1 fist (3d10); Move 8; Save 5; AL N; CL/XP; 14/2700; **Special:** Immune to slashing and piercing weapons, Immune to most spells.

**3A. HAREM:** This 40' by 20' area serves as the residence of the king's many concubines that he enjoyed while alive. Three of them live on to this very day as mummies that look as fresh as the day they died, and are found reclining on the various decayed pillows strewn about the floor. When it became clear that the fall of his city was close at hand, the king had his most favored concubines slain and then reanimated shortly thereafter as mummies to preserve their beauty forevermore. He further had his court wizards cast permanent *invisibility* spells on their wrappings, thereby making their gorgeous (to a serpent person) physical forms exposed at all times.

As soon as they catch sight of the PCs, the mummies rise from their pillows and attack *en masse*.

**Mummies (3):** HD 6+4; HP 30 each; AC 3[16]; Atk 1 fist (1d12); Move 6; Save 11; CL/XP 7/600; **Special:** Rot, hit only by magic weapons.

**Possessions:** Each mummy wears 500gp worth of assorted jewelry, some pieces of which have been inserted between their wrappings.

**4. COMMONERS' WAITING ROOM:** As this pyramid has remained closed off to the general public for several centuries, the formerly costly floor pillows in this room reserved for those awaiting an audience with the king are now much decayed. However, the short stone fountain along the west wall still magically provides visitors with a ready supply of fresh water. Alongside the fountain sits a short stone table that once provided visitors with a sumptuous buffet consisting of an assortment of limbs, eyes, tongues, and sweet breads cut from the bodies of captured humans from the surface. In times of famine, the grim provender was provided by slain serpent people commoners. Standing in the center of this room is the rearing statue of a beautiful serpent person female. The statue has 1,000 gp-value rubies for eyes, which, if removed, petrify the thief, as the spell *flesh to stone*.

**5. GUARD BARRACKS:** This massive room, easily 40' square, serves as the sleeping quarters for the all of the guards stationed at the temple. Strewn about the floor are several shabby, round pillows that

serve as beds. Bolted to the floor along the north wall is a large chest that the guards use to hold their valuables. It is locked and trapped with a poison needle. (Save vs. poison or die). Lastly, racks along the west and east walls hold 6 spare halberds, long swords, and long bows, not to mention the **long sword +2** belonging to the commander of the guards and the **long sword +1** belonging to his lieutenant. Wooden baskets at the far end of each rack hold 30 additional arrows, which are customarily envenomed by the guards before going on duty by dripping some ichor from their fangs onto the serrated heads attached thereto.

Unless called by their fellows in area 1, there are 4 guards relaxing in this room when the PCs first arrive. Should the PCs burst into the room when the guards are present, the guards will all grab long swords from the wall and attack. During the battle, the guards shout to attract any surviving guards at area 1, which arrive 1-2 rounds later.

**Commander (Ftr8):** HD 8; HP 35; AC 3[16]; Atk +2 longsword (1d8+2) or 1 bite (1d6 + poison); Move 12; Save 7; AL C; CL/XP 9/1100; **Special:** Charm, poison, stench.  
**Possessions:** +2 longsword

**Lieutenant (Ftr7):** HD 7; HP 30; AC 3[16]; Atk +1 longsword (1d8+1) or 1 bite (1d6 + poison); Move 12; Save 8; AL C; CL/XP 8/800; **Special:** Charm, poison, stench.  
**Possessions:** +1 longsword

**Guards (Ftr6):** HD 6; HP 25; AC 3[16]; Atk 1 longsword (1d8) or 1 bite (1d6 + poison); Move 12; Save 9; AL C; CL/XP 7/600; **Special:** Charm, poison, stench.  
**Possessions:** longsword

**Treasure:** 2,000 gp worth of assorted ancient coins lie at the bottom of the chest along with *potions of heroism* (4), *healing* (4), and *fire resistance* (2). Each serpent-person quaffs a *potion of heroism* if forewarned of the PCs' arrival, either because the guards are responding to the cries of their fellows at area 1 or if the PCs take overlong in bursting through the door to this room.



**6. UPPER CLASSES' WAITING ROOM:** This area resembles area 4 except that the cushions on the floor are fashioned from richer material and the statue of the beautiful serpent person female in the center of the room bears a different trap. Any PC attempting to remove one or both of the 1,500 gp-value rubies from the eye sockets of the statue are instantly drained of 2 experience levels (saving throw permitted), and are shocked for 18 points of damage. (A successful save vs. spells halves the latter damage).

**7. BEDROOM OF THE ROYAL FAMILY:** This area serves as the sleeping quarters for some distant relatives of the last king of the serpent people. Like their ancestor, those herein are all devotees of the *ars magica*. Along the north wall is a large locked chest that is bolted to the floor. The two squares on the map directly in front of the chest demarcate a 40'-deep pit. The top of the pit is concealed by an **illusion**, making it appear as a normal part of the floor. PCs falling into the pit suffer 4d6 points of falling damage and are automatically surprised by the ochre jelly lying at the bottom. When the owners want to access the chest, they depress a secret pressure plate on the east wall that causes a stone panel to slide into place over the pit.

The four magic-users in this room do not respond to any cries of help from either the guards at areas 1 and 5 or the king at area 2. They patiently prepare themselves for the PCs' arrival by casting any desired spells on themselves.

**Ochre Jelly:** HD 6; HP 25; AC 8[11]; Atk 1 acid-laden strike (3d4); Move 3; Save 11; CL/XP 6/400; **Special:** Lightning divides creature.

**Serpent-People Mage #1 (MU8):** HD 8; HP 30; AC 1[18]; Atk 1 weapon (+1 staff of striking 2d6), or 1 bite (1d6 + poison); Move 12; Save 8 (addl. +2 from ring, addl. +2 vs spells); AL C; CL/XP 10/1400; **Special:** Charm, poison, stench, spells.

**Spells (4/3/3/2):**

Level 1: *charm person* x2, *light*, *sleep*

Level 2: *darkness* 15' radius, *phantasmal force*, *web*

Level 3: *fireball*, *fly*, *lightning bolt*

Level 4: *wall of ice*, *polymorph self*

**Possessions:** *ring of protection* +2, +1 staff of striking.

**Serpent-People Mage #2 (MU7):** HD 7; HP 26; AC 2[17]; Atk 1 staff (1d6), or 1 bite (1d6 + poison); Move 12; Save 9 (addl. +1 from ring, addl. +2 vs spells); AL C; CL/XP 9/1100; **Special:** Charm, poison, stench, spells.

**Spells (4/3/2/1):**

Level 1: *detect magic*, *light*, *magic missile* x2

Level 2: *invisibility*, *detect invisibility*, *phantasmal force*

Level 3: *lightning bolt* x2

Level 4: *polymorph other*

**Possessions:** *ring of protection* +1, *scroll of fly*, *potion of healing*.

**Serpent-People Mage #3 (MU6):** HD 6; HP 24; AC 3[16]; Atk 1 dagger (1d4) and wand, or 1 bite (1d6 + poison); Move 12; Save 10 (+2 vs spells); AL C; CL/XP 8/800; **Special:** Charm, poison, stench, spells.

**Spells (4/2/2):**

First (4): *charm person*, *detect magic*, *magic missile*, *shield*

Second (2): *phantasmal force*, *web*

Third (2): *dispel magic*, *fireball*

**Possessions:** *wand of magic missiles* (13 charges), *scroll of confusion*, *potion of gaseous form*.

**Serpent-People Mage #4 (MU6):** HD 6; HP 23; AC 3[16]; Atk 1 dagger (1d4) and wand, or 1 bite (1d6 + poison); Move 12; Save 10 (+2 vs spells); AL C; CL/XP 8/800; **Special:** Charm, poison, stench, spells.

**Spells (4/2/2):**

First (4): *charm person*, *detect magic*, *magic missile* x2

Second (2): *mirror image*, *phantasmal force*

Third (2): *dispel magic*, *fireball*

**Possessions:** *wand of phantasmal force* (20 charges), *necklace of fireballs* (one 5-dice, two 3-dice).

**Treasure:** 4,000 gp in assorted coins and 2000 gp worth of assorted jewelry.

**8. DINING HALL:** This 40'-square chamber is where the royals used to take their meals. Being as most were slain long ago, it is now mostly used by the distant relatives of the king in area 7 and the guards in areas 1 and 5. The magical food supply here is essentially identical to that employed in the other pyramids: in the center of the room is a long stone table that is a mere 3' off the ground, flanked

on either side by soft floor pillows. Six 2"-tall brass buttons protrude from the edges of the table, three per side. Depressing any of the buttons magically creates a full day's serving of food and water to magically appear on the table. The buttons only function once per day, and there is a 50% chance that any given button has already been used. In the middle of the north wall is a bronze door leading to area 8a, the Larder.

**8A. LARDER:** As with the larders of the other pyramids, recently-obtained corpses are stored herein, chilled by a permanent spell of extreme cold, the area of which fills the entire chamber. PCs entering here suffer 4d6 points of damage (save vs. spells for half damage). This room currently contains the corpses of three serpent people commoners that were hunted down and then carried back to the palace to serve as grim provender for its living inhabitants. Also here is the corpse of a dwarf adventurer who wandered into the city and was killed by one of the magic-users in area 7 while on a food gathering expedition. The other members of the dwarf's adventuring troop were slain by the same magic-user, but they have since been eaten.

**9. PRIVY:** A series of 1'-diameter privy holes dot the floor of this room. The holes all open over a 20'-diameter shaft that drops several hundred feet to meet up with a swift-flowing underground river that exits at the massive lake comprising area N. Because the underground river runs flush with the rough ceiling 10' overhead, PCs somehow making their way down thereto eventually drown unless they have access to water breathing magic, as area N lies several hundred feet away.

**10. STAIRCASE TO UPPER LEVELS:** A circular staircase of stone steps winds upwards, ending after only 15' due to the collapse of the two levels above. Without access to high level magic, the PCs will find it impossible to clear away the rubble. Should they do so, their efforts will not be rewarded, as all of the contents of the upper levels are totally destroyed.

**11. SECRET STAIRCASE TO DUNGEON:** Behind the secret door is a circular staircase that spirals

down to the dungeon level. It ends after almost 100' at area 12.

## AREA I: KEY TO DUNGEON LEVEL (AREAS 12-15)

This level of the palace contains a gauntlet of trapped areas that the PCs must pass through if they wish to gain access to the royal treasury.

**12. DUNGEON ENTRANCE:** The stairs from area 11 terminate at a 10'-square landing, which opens onto a 30'-long corridor bearing due north. At the far end of the corridor is a blank wall with a message inscribed thereon in raised letters that reads: *The man without wisdom is but a peon.* (Deciphering the ancient script requires a *read languages* spell or other translation). If the PCs depress the letters "o," "p," "e," and "n" of the last word in the message, "peon," in order, then the entire wall rises up into the ceiling, allowing them access to the corridor beyond. Depressing the required letters out of sequence or any other letters of the message causes a magical rune to form in the air and then explode: the 10' by 10' area directly in front of the wall is shot through with intense heat that deals 25 points of fire damage to all standing thereon. (Save against the spell for half damage).

**13. TRAPPED HALL:** At the end of this 50'-long hall is a trapped false door. If opened, a *transmute rock to mud* spell is activated whose area of effect covers the entire hall. A reversed version of the spell goes into effect 1 round later which traps the victims' feet in place. (The mud is rather loose, meaning that the PCs sink a full 2' into the muck before the spell is reversed). At the same time, a stone panel drops into place at the location indicated on the map, trapping the PCs in the hall. Last, but most definitely not least, several holes along the ceiling then open, releasing a torrent of water down on the PCs. The water fills the 10'-high hallway at a rate of 2' per round, meaning that trapped PCs of average height start drowning on the third round. PCs can hold their breath for the number of rounds equal to their Constitution scores divided by 3. Beyond this period, they must make saving throws each round or perish.

**14. ROYAL TREASURY:** In the exact middle of this 10'-section of wall is a tiny half-inch-square opening that begins at the point where the wall joins the floor. The opening requires a successful search for secret doors to find. The opening leads to a tiny 1" x 1" x 1" chamber. Along the opposite wall therein lies a chest containing the combined treasure horde of generations of serpent people kings. If the PCs remove the treasure from the tiny room, a simple *dispel magic* spell can be used to return the shrunken horde to its normal size. The chest itself is both *wizard locked* and trapped with a *fireball* spell. If triggered, the victim is engulfed in a ball of flame, suffering 3d6 points of damage in the process. (Save vs. spells halves damage). The treasure could be removed by any expedient, from actually shrinking party members down to fetch it, sucking it out with a straw, chipping away enough stone to reach the inch-wide hidden chamber, etc.

**Treasure:** The chest contains 7,000 gp worth of assorted coins, gems, and jewelry. Beneath the more mundane treasure is the following: *dagger +3*, *longsword +2*, *cursed long sword -2*, *wand of metal and mineral detection*, *longbow +2* and a quiver of four *arrows +1*, a *staff of healing* (30 charges), *spear +2*, *ring of regeneration*.

**15. FALSE TREASURY:** The door leading to this room is double locked, and the lock is magical. Its trap may be disabled by using *dispel magic*; those failing to disarm the trap are electrocuted for 25 points of damage when the lock is touched or the door is opened. (Save vs. spells for half damage). The room beyond is cloaked in an **illusion** that makes it appear to contain several tall piles of neatly stacked platinum and gold coins, mounds of precious gems, and a varied assortment of bedizened weaponry, all of which lies along the far wall. PCs failing to disbelieve or otherwise detect the **illusion** will fall into the 60' deep wall-to-wall pit that covers the last 10' by 20' section of the floor, resulting in 6d6 points of damage. At the bottom of the pit lie 6 giant spitting snakes in magical suspended animation. A ring of magical runes spans the midpoint of the pit, and any PCs plummeting past them causes a spring-loaded trapdoor to snap shut over their heads and the poisonous serpents at their feet to awaken.

**Giant Spitting Snakes (6):** HD 4; AC 5[14]; Atk 1 bite (1d3 + poison) or spit poison; Move 12; Save 11; CL/XP 6/400; Special: Spit or bite with lethal poison.

## M. STADIUM OF THE GLADIATORS

This building almost exactly resembles area F. The primary physical differences are that the street level bronze door lies along the south not the north wall, which is immediately flanked by staircases spiraling up the west and east walls, and the circular plaza in the center of the structure is totally covered in fine sand.

At the city's height, gladiatorial games were staged in this stadium on a nightly basis, with captured humans or serpent people criminals doing battle with each other, or even with one or more dinosaurs. The participants would be led into the stadium via the bronze door and then released into the arena to battle to the death. As no games have been staged in the stadium for several centuries, the formerly secure bronze door and portcullis at the end of entry hall stand ajar and raised, respectively. In the intervening millennia, the dinosaurs and giant lizards of the cavern have come to call the arena home, and 1-3 of the terrors are encountered therein at any given time. Any PCs violating the sanctity of their home are attacked on sight. This even applies to the ordinarily docile species. Roll (1d3 times) for such on the following table.

### 1) 1 Iguanodon

**Iguanodon:** HD 6; AC 4[15]; Atk 2 claws (1d3) 1 bite (2d4); Move 15; Save 11; AL N; CL/XP 6/400; Special: None.

### 2) 1 Monoclonius

**Monoclonius:** HD 8; AC 3[16]; Atk 1 horn (2d8); Move 6; Save 8; AL N; CL/XP 8/800; Special: None.

### 3) 1 Ankylosaurus

**Ankylosaurus:** HD 9; AC 0[19]; Atk 1 tail (3d6); Move 6; Save 6; AL N; CL/XP 9/1100; Special: None.

#### 4-5) 1-2 Giant Lizards

**Giant Lizards:** HD 6; AC 5[14]; Atk 1 bite (2d6); Move 12; Save 11; CL/XP 6/400; Special: None.

#### 6) 1 Megalosaurus\*

**Megalosaurus:** HD 12; AC 5[14]; Atk 1 bite (3d6); Move 12; Save 3; AL N; CL/XP 12/2000; Special: None.

\*Can only be encountered alone. Ignore any previous or subsequent rolls.



## N. MARE INTERIUM

This lake stretches for well over 150' in all directions, and averages around 80' in depth. The waters therein are extremely foul-tasting though perfectly potable, serving as the main water supply for the city. Thankfully for the PCs, no aquatic terrors lurk under the calm waters of the lake. In fact, the only inhabitants of the lake are several species of small, blind cave fish.

## CONCLUSION

Disabling the lump of crystal atop the pyramid containing the Academy of Sorcery deactivates the magical mist that has lured itinerant nomads to their death for several centuries. If the PCs also eliminate most of the serpent people residing at the Great Fane and the Royal Palace, the combined result will be the rapid decline of the serpent people; their entire race will either vanish entirely or revert to total savagery within a half century.

*Here ends the descent into the City of the Serpent People. It is my hope that you and your players derived as much enjoyment in participating in this module as I did in designing it. This module is nothing less than the fulfillment of my lifelong dream to pay homage to the legendary pulp writers of the early twentieth century, especially Howard Phillips Lovecraft. Requiescat in pace, civis magnus. I must also make mention of the recent passing of the man who was the primary architect of this beloved pastime of ours, whose unique vision ignited the imaginations of thousands of fantasy role-playing gamers worldwide. In Memoriam Gary Gygax. In ludis, veritas est.*

## ARCANA

### GHOST

Hit Dice: 10 (45hp)

Armor Class: 0 [19] before materializing, then 8[11]

Attacks: 1 touch (see below)

Saving Throw: 5

Special: Touch, fear, possession, hit only by magic or silver weapons

Move: 9

Alignment: Chaos

Challenge Level/XP: 12/2000

Although ghosts tend to be quite individual in nature, the two ghosts of the Nameless City (the Librarian and the King), having been formed under similar circumstances, are quite similar to each other.

Each ghost's appearance is so terrifying that anyone seeing it must make a saving throw or flee for 2d6 turns. Clerics and paladins are immune to the fear.

The ghost is capable of taking possession of a nearby individual, if the victim fails a saving throw at -4. In this case, the ghost controls the possessed body. The victim is allowed a further saving throw each round, and a successful turning attempt will drive out the ghost. Such turning attempts are more of an exorcism than traditional turning; although the ghost has the 10% turning resistance against it, the exorcism will not necessarily follow any normal restrictions on turning attempts. Saving throws attempting to break the possession are made with a progressive penalty: the first is at -5, the second at -6, the third at -7, and so on.

The ghost may only attempt one possession per day, so if it fails it will (semi) materialize to attack physically. Its touch freezes the soul in horror, with three effects: (1) the character is paralyzed for 1d4+3 rounds unless a saving throw is made, (2) the character loses 1 level unless a saving throw is made, (3) the character loses 1d8 hit points plus another 1d3hp per round of paralysis (if applicable).

**Note:** Remember to take into account the 10% turning resistance.

### OTYUGH

Hit Dice: 7

Armor Class: 3 [16]

Attacks: 2 tentacles (1d8), bite (1d4+1)

Saving Throw: 9

Special: Disease.

Move: 6

Alignment: Neutral

Challenge Level/XP: 8/800

Otyughs live underground, hiding in piles of refuse, for they are scavengers. These bizarre creatures are slightly larger than a human, a mass of flesh mounted on three squat, elephant-like legs. The otyugh has a sensory-organ stalk, and two rough, bone-ridged tentacles used for attacking enemies. Anyone bitten by an otyugh's mouth has a 90% chance of contracting a fatal disease (death in 3d6 days unless cured). Although they are relatively stupid, otyughs use rudimentary telepathy to communicate with each other (and other telepathic beings, if they are encountered).

### SERPENT PEOPLE

Hit Dice: 4

Armor Class: 3 [16]

Attacks: 2 weapons (1d8) or 1 bite (1d6 + poison)

Saving Throw: 13

Special: Charm, poison, stench (high level clerics summon snakes)

Move: 12

Alignment: Chaotic

Challenge Level/XP: 6/400

The serpent people are a vile, elder race that once dominated the primitive humans sharing the jungle with them. Several centuries back they were forced to permanently retreat underground when the desert claimed their once-verdant homeland on the surface, reducing their mighty cities to ruins. The creatures resemble wide-bodied, black-banded green serpents of 7-8' in length, possessing a set of humanoid arms and five-fingered hands along the midpoint of their bodies and a set of splayed feet near their tail sections. They move by slithering along their bellies like a traditional serpent. However, when faced with a humanoid enemy, they rear up like a cobra, using their short legged feet to support their bodies in combat. They get two weapon attacks per round, the fighters of their race preferring scimitars. Serpent people magic-users and clerics traditionally arm themselves with staves and maces, respectively. They may also choose to bite their victims if not already engaged in weapon-play. Such bites cause 1d6 points of damage and inject a powerful poison. (Save vs. poison or die). They carry all of their possessions in leathern bags that are securely strapped to their backs, and they never wear armor though they may possess magical protective devices such as bracers, rings, and phylacteries.

The serpent people almost always initially attack by rearing up and then rapidly weaving their bodies back and forth much like a cobra would do. Anyone viewing such a display is affected as by the spell *charm monster* should they fail to save vs. magic at a -2 penalty. Victims proceed toward and follow any non-suicidal commands given by the serpent person. Worse yet, serpent people exude such a foul stench that anyone coming within a 10'-radius of their bodies must save vs. poison or become extremely nauseated, suffering a -2 penalty

“to hit” for the remainder of the battle. About 75% of serpent people hailing from the upper classes have had training as either a magic-user or cleric. In this adventure, all such serpent people encountered have the spell casting ability of either a 5<sup>th</sup>-9<sup>th</sup> level magic-user or cleric (50% chance for either). Clerics of 4<sup>th</sup> level or higher are able to **summon** creatures to aid them in battle. This ability calls 1d4+1 poisonous snakes that arrive in 2-12 melee rounds: **HD 1d6hp; AC 5[14]; Atk 1 bite (1hp + poison); Move 18; Save 18; CL/XP 2/30; Special: Lethal poison (+2 save).**



## WATER WEIRD

Hit Dice: 3+3

Armor Class: 4 [15]

Attacks: 1 touch

Saving Throw: 14

Special: Drowns victims

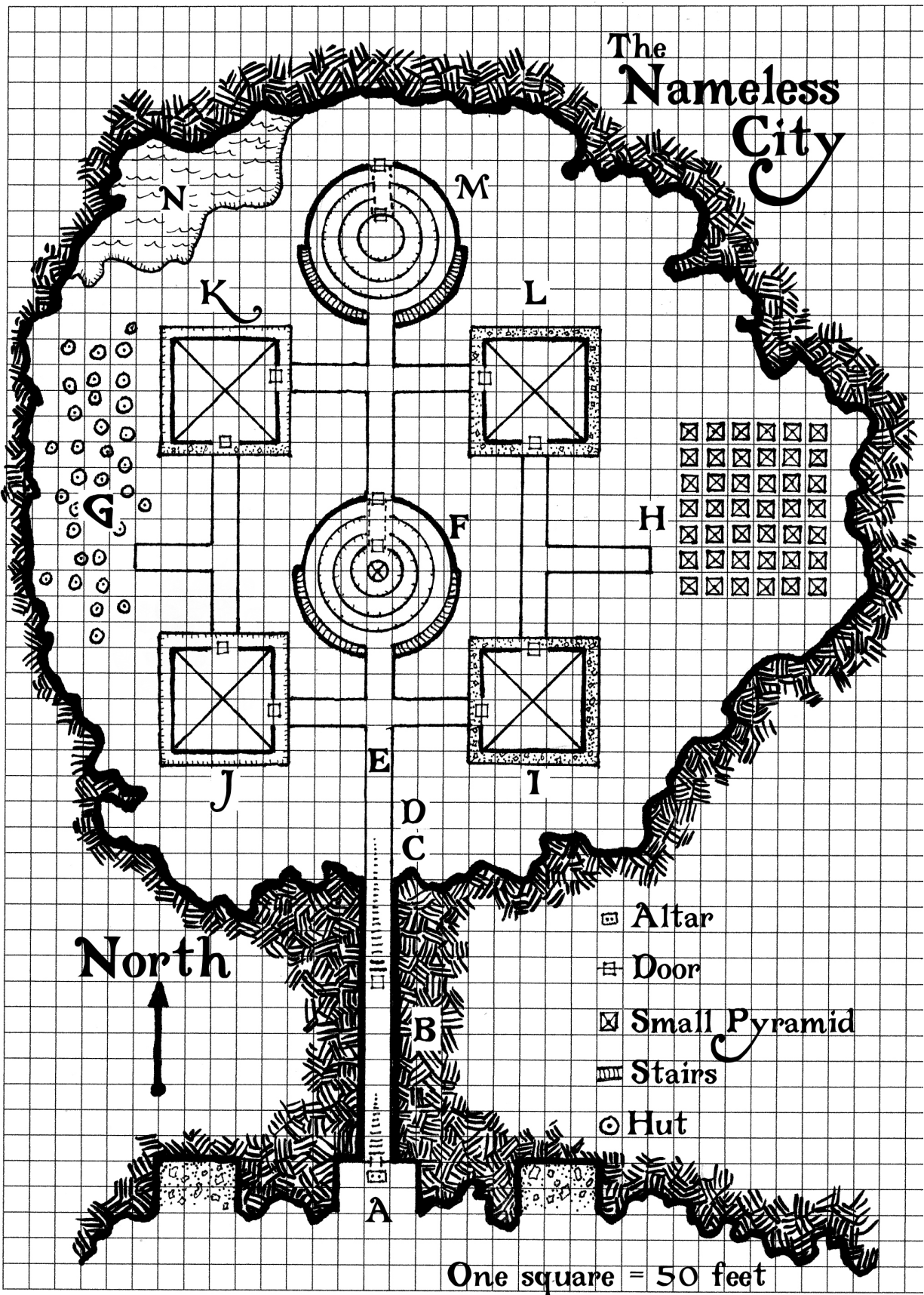
Move: 0 (Swim 12)

Alignment: Chaos

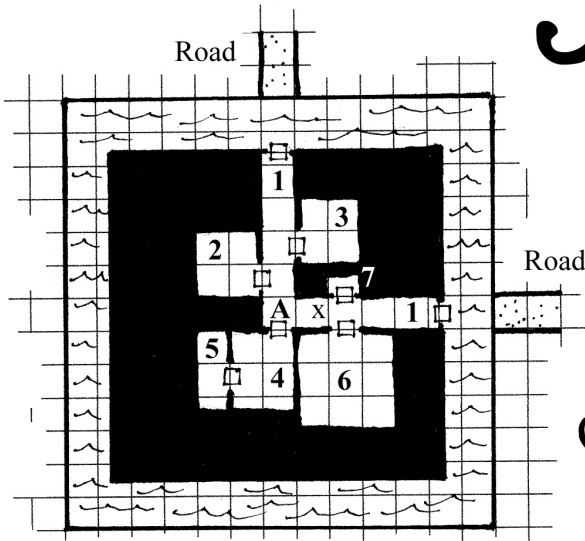
Challenge Level/XP: 4/120

Water weirds are an elemental corruption of water that has formed into a semi-intelligent, feral existence as a creature. These things cannot be killed by normal damage, although their material substance can be temporarily disrupted by attacks, although sharp weapons inflict only 1hp of damage, and fire spells have only half the normal effect. If the weird's hit points are reduced to 0, it has been physically disrupted and the spirit must re-form its physical shape (which takes 1d4+2 melee rounds). A weird may be permanently killed only by magical or ritual purification of its corrupted water (various spells may do this), or by use of a *remove curse* spell.

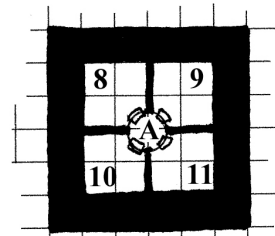
To attack, the weird lashes its waters in serpentine form at the victim, and if it scores a successful hit, the victim is caught and dragged into the waters (a saving throw allows the victim to avoid being pulled in). Victims pulled into the weird-water are drowned.



# Area J

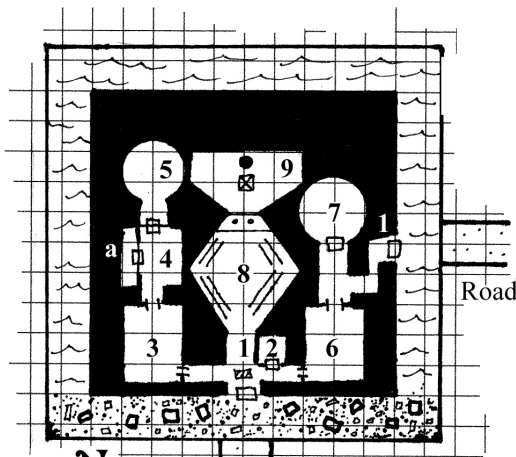


**Pyramid Level One**  
1 Square = 20ft

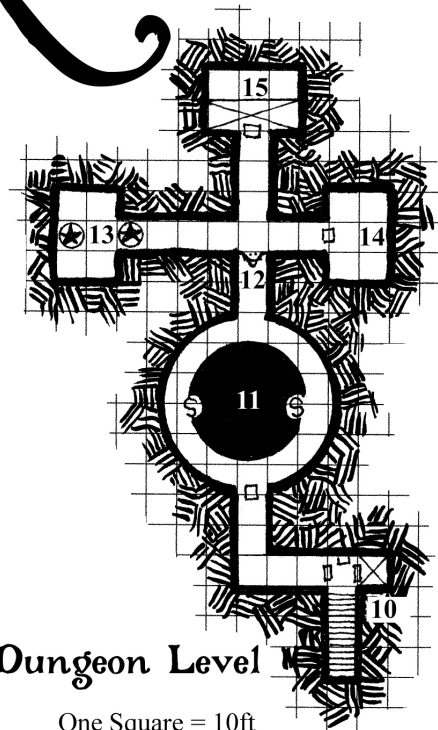


**Pyramid Level Two**  
One Square = 20ft

# Area K



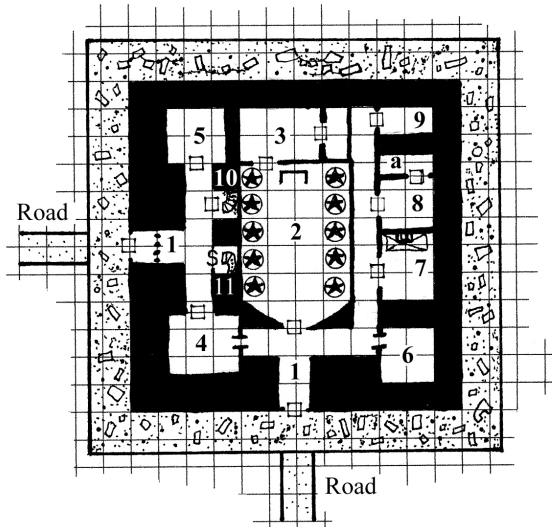
**Pyramid Level One**  
One Square = 20ft



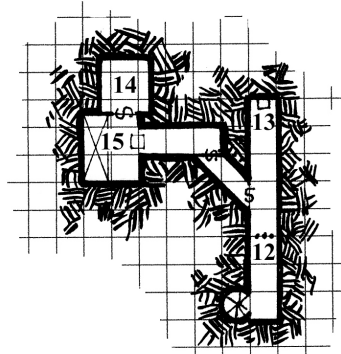
**Dungeon Level One**  
One Square = 10ft



# Area L



**Pyramid Level One**  
One Square = 20ft



**Dungeon Level**  
One Square = 10ft

## Map Key

•	Pillar
⊠	Pit
⊞	Door
▨	Pool
⌒	Archway
⌚	Secret Door
▨	Stairs
⊗	Statue
~	Water
⌒	Throne
⋯	Portcullis
⌒	False Door

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