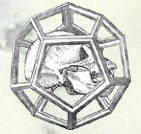


Wheel of Evil

by Jeff "Bighara" Sparks and Joel Sparks

FM002LL



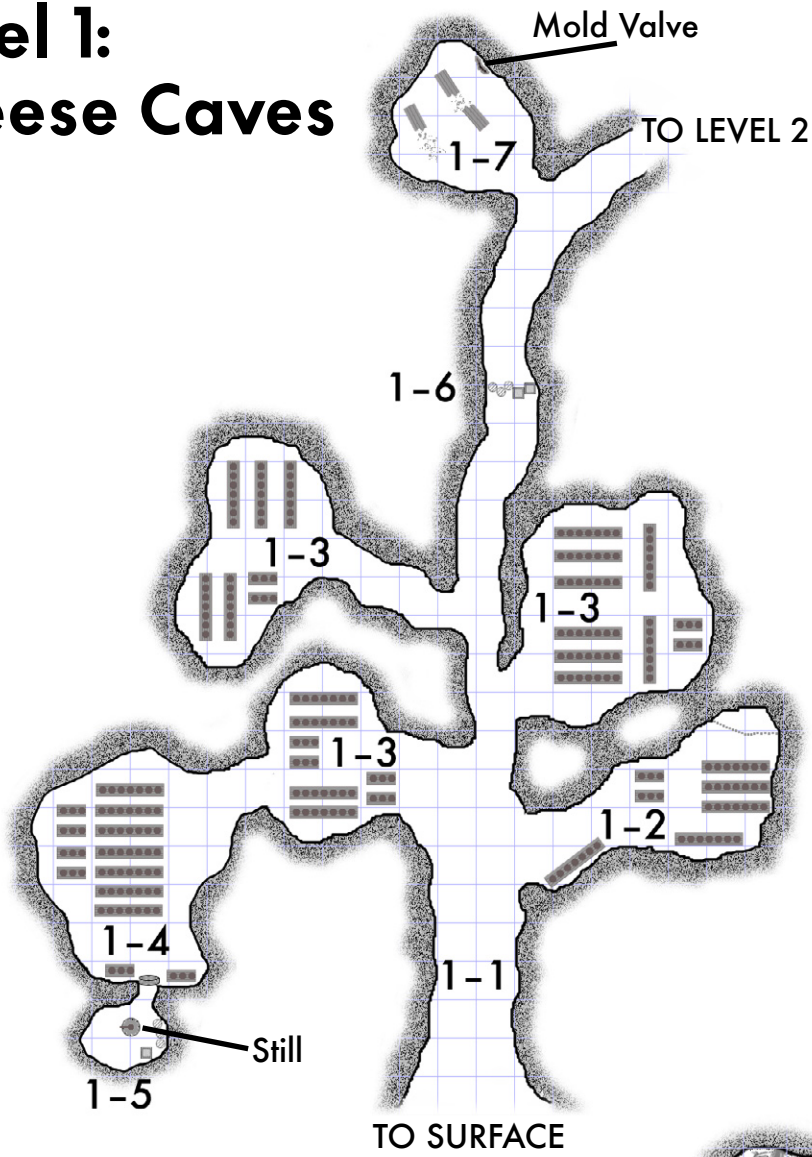
Labyrinth Lord
Compatible Product

A DUNGEON CRAWL ADVENTURE
FOR 4-6 CHARACTERS OF LEVELS 3-5
FOR USE WITH LABYRINTH LORD™ AND SIMILAR GAMES

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Level 1: Cheese Caves



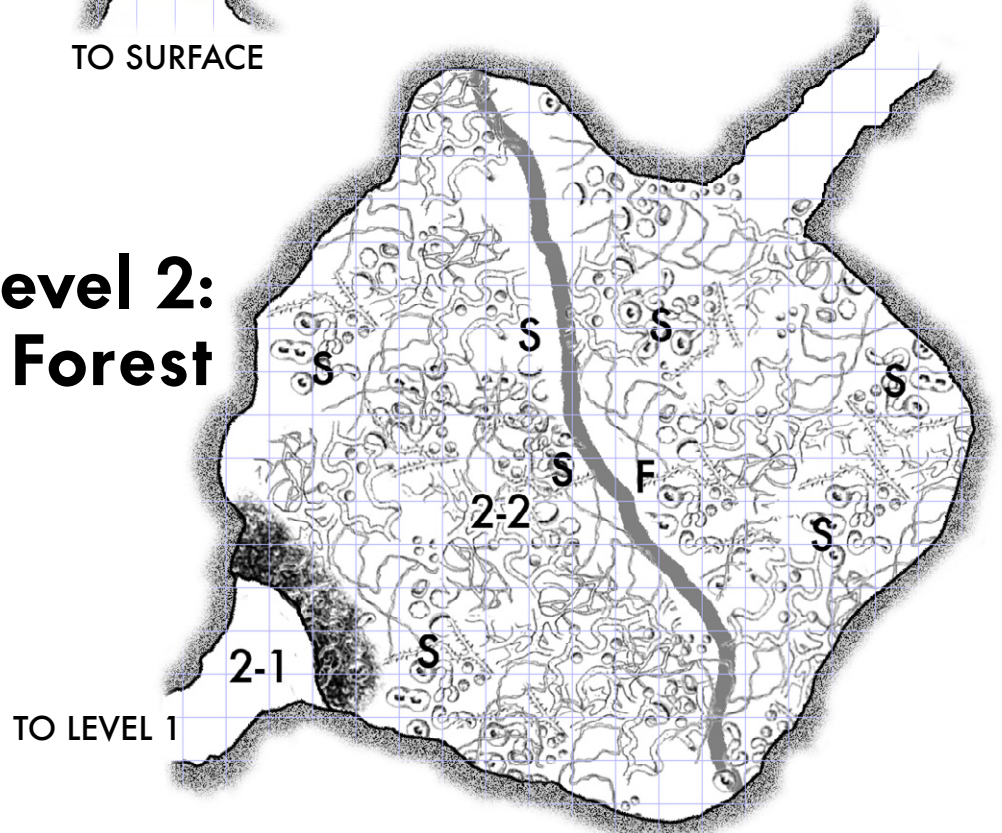
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— Ten feet

TO TWISTING
TUNNELS

Level 2: Fungal Forest



TO LEVEL 1

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Adventure Summary

The human town of Renneton recruits the PCs to drive kobolds out of the town's important cheese-aging caves. They can pay only in shares of the cheese harvest, which means that the more cheese the party saves, the more money they make. Unknown to any, a vile influence from below is corrupting the kobolds' mushroom farms and the cheese alike. A bizarre being known as a Mold Master, giving itself the name Mykolos, has the power to create and command slimes, oozes, and fungi, and to breed special mind-control spores that affect people and infect cheese cultures. The PCs set out after kobolds, but find themselves in the deep, winding tunnels of Mykolos' lair. If they can't stop it, the Mold Master will take over the minds of hundreds or thousands of people, and the characters will never get paid.

Notes to the Labyrinth Lord

This adventure has several potentially nasty encounters. The nature of the fungi, slimes, and oozes involved means that poison and disease are frequent dangers. If the party lacks the means to deal with these threats, or is otherwise underpowered, the LL may wish to scale things back a bit. Likewise if the party is large or of a higher average level, the LL may want to make things more interesting for them. Scaling suggestions:

- ✂ Reduce the number of zymbies in the Planters encounter from six to three.
- ✂ Reduce the chance of surprise for the feral fungus in Area 2–2.
- ✂ Adjust the number of zymbies in Area 3–6.
- ✂ Eliminate the Ochre Jelly in Area 3–7.

In Area 3–9:

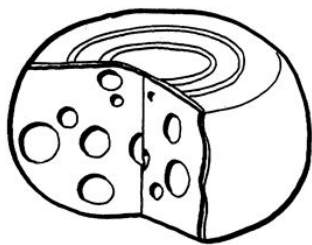
- ✂ Adjust the rate of fire for the pudding hurler.
- ✂ Reduce the number of ultraviolets to one.

WHEEL OF EVIL

Faster Monkey Games™

Editor: Shelley Harlan

*Playtesters: Paul Glenn,
Dean Norman,
Chosh Navar*



Background

Sardo Hills

From a time long before human settlement, the deep caves below Sardo Hills harbor a mysterious influence, an invisible chthonic magic or blessing that encourages the health and growth of everything fungal. Far below ground, as unknown spores and slimes ran riot, a peculiar being evolved, a vast fungal mind known as a Mold Master. The new creature dominated and absorbed every living thing within its reach, then fell dormant. Ages passed.

Men came to the hills, with their crops and animals. They discovered the milk of sheep and cows, aged in the nearby caves, developed into cheese of a quality and flavor hitherto unknown. Over centuries, the peasant village of Renneton grew up, becoming a center of cheese production and the site of a famous annual cheese fest.

The humans did not venture far underground. Otherwise they would have discovered the Green Scale Tribe and the cavern of enormous mushrooms that the kobolds harvested for food. The kobolds were equally oblivious to the humans' cheesemaking above. Neither had the slightest inkling of the Mold Master's existence.

Mykolos Awakes

Less than a year ago, a small temblor in the hills opened cracks in the caves, letting new air into the deep caverns of the Mold Master for the first time in millennia. The ancient being smelled the new smells, inhaled the flavors of cheese and living things, and stirred itself once again to grow, conquer, and absorb.

The Mold Master floated spores into the newly-opened tunnels, infecting the kobolds' great mushroom-farm. When the kobolds investigated, the Mold Master killed and ate them, tasting thinking beings for the first time. It took from them the gift of self-awareness. Now it calls itself Mykolos. It spun fungal flesh onto kobold skeletons and created new, walking servants. These "zymbies" patrol the caves.

Humans vs. Kobolds

Unaware of the events below, the humans of Renneton prepared for the annual cheese festival, when the town auctions off huge amounts of Renneton cheese and wagons load up for trips to every part of the kingdom. The festival was only weeks away when a group of kobolds, investigating the contamination of their mushrooms, stumbled upon the cheese caves of Renneton. The cheese was just more mold to the kobolds and they tried to destroy it. The villagers, of course, fought to protect their inventory. A few kobolds



were captured, and the rest retreated, a handful of villagers chasing them through the tunnels.

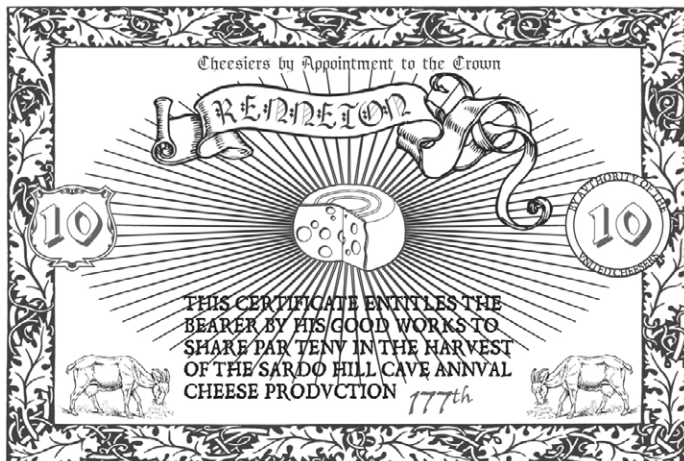
A couple of the pursuing Rennetoners were killed before turning back. Prato, a town watchman, never returned; his remains play a role later in the adventure. Harzer, the foreman, got lost and wandered the tunnels for hours. The zombies caught him and took him to Mykolos. Instead of absorbing Harzer's mind, Mykolos decided it needed a human slave. Mind-controlling spores drilled into Harzer's brain, and he was forced to tell Mykolos all he could about the caves and the surface world. Based on this information, the Mold Master devised a plan.

Harzer was sent back to the surface. He stole several wheels of cheese and delivered them to Mykolos, who is in the process of infecting the cheese with the mind-control fungus. Soon, Harzer is to retrieve the "head cheeses" and send them out around the kingdom, causing hundreds to fall under Mykolos' control.

Now: A Call for Heroes

The town is terrified of more kobold attacks, damage to the cheese stock, and the loss of the sales and reputation upon which their livelihood depends. Father Desmond, the town's chief priest, sends out an appeal for kobold-fighting heroes, and the PCs respond. The United Cheesers offer to reward success with shares in the cheese harvest, a potentially valuable payment—if the harvest survives.

The PCs are given 25 ten-share partenu certificates, for a total of 250 shares in the sales (see Player Handout A). They must present the certificates to the guild after the sales in order to redeem their shares. Characters should be careful not to lose these papers or let them come to harm.



The Town of Renneton

Renneton is a town of about 3,500 people, including outlying farmers. Most locals either help produce cheese or raise dairy livestock. The populace relies on the annual cheese auction to put extra money in their pockets and get them through the winter. There is a festive air as the Rennetoners decorate the town for the upcoming market and the inns begin to fill.

Guildmaster Leyden is the man offering the shares as reward. He runs Renneton's cheesemakers' guild, the "United Cheesers": a collective formed by the farmers and townsfolk. It oversees the sales of the cheeses, and pays out the dividends.

Father Desmond (3rd level lawful cleric) runs the local temple. He moved to Renneton six months ago to take over the temple duties after the old priest passed away. He is a good man, but a trifle rigid and certainly no adventurer.

Mayor Brimsen is the political leader of the town. He is naturally concerned about the cheese and the economic impact a bad year could have. Otherwise, he is not directly involved in the business, unless the players seek him out or cause enough trouble to attract official attention.

Foreman Jasper Harzer is in charge of the cheese caves. He oversees the care of the cheeses and their transport to the sales. Since coming under the control of Mykolos, he has, for the most part, simply gone about his business. When the time is right, he will act on his master's plan. The arrival of the PCs has complicated matters for him. He dares not risk a direct confrontation, but he will try to subtly misdirect the party in order to protect the plan.

Player Introduction

Father Desmond, the kindly priest, escorts you up into the rocky Sardo Hills. A few goats eye you incuriously from their steep pastures. The priest ascends nimbly despite his frail appearance, and turns to speak to you. "Things have been peaceful enough the last few days. I'm afraid it won't last, though. The creatures did considerable damage to one of the storerooms, and several cheeses were stolen. Here's the map I made after the attacks. I hope it helps you."

The PCs receive Desmond's sketchy map (Player Handout B). The map shows only the details that seemed important to the priest; players may or may not find it helpful.

Level 1: The Cheese Caves

Area 1–1: Entrance

You come to a wide cave entrance. As you step into the cool, lamplit gloom, you smell the tang of sour milk and see townsmen working busily among rows of shelves. A portly man with a slate directs them, and Father Desmond introduces you. “Foreman Harzer can help you from here. He oversees all this for the guild. He also led the counterattack against the creatures.” Father Desmond pats the man’s shoulder. “We thought we’d lost him in the tunnels for a bit, but he made through all right. Didn’t you, fellow?” Harzer nods distractedly as Father Desmond pushes on: “Harzer can show you where the lads locked up a few kobold prisoners, too. The sooner this business is concluded the better. The less trouble there is, and the less damage to the stock, the greater your profit! Good luck!” With that, Father Desmond departs.

Harzer’s story jibes with what the PCs already know:

- ✦ The town has aged their cheeses in the caves for generations without any trouble.
- ✦ The kobolds first attacked a few weeks ago.
- ✦ The big annual Cheese Festival is coming up in about a week. Profits from sales at the Festival support the villagers the rest of the year.
- ✦ He chased the kobolds farther than he should’ve, and lost his way. He found a huge cave full of giant glowing mushrooms (Area 2–2). There were kobolds inside, eating some of the fungus, and he thinks they had a good-sized camp. The approximate location is marked on the map Desmond gave the party.

Harzer leads the party to the prisoners (Area 1–2), briefly pointing aspects of the cheese operation on the way. If questioned, Harzer can also provide this information:

- ✦ He can show them the barricade (Area 1–6).
- ✦ He can tell them that the stolen cheeses were of a premium variety, usually reserved for wealthy customers, and thus very valuable.
- ✦ In the past, partenu shares have gone for at least 10 gp. In the best year he recalls, they were closer to 25 gp.

While he knows what to say, Harzer is not his own man, but under the sway of Mykolos. He will try to encourage the party towards the fungal forest entrance (Area 2–1), where he hopes they will be neutralized after killing any kobolds they find along the way.

Area 1–2: The Prisoners

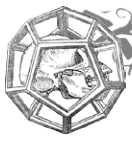
Inside a makeshift cage squat three dispirited kobolds. A burly villager with a spear stands guard. Harzer eyes them and says, “We caught them sneaking about near the barricade. The priest wouldn’t let us just kill ’em, so we locked ’em up here. Some dwarf that was passing through town spoke their lingo and translated for us. All they’d say is we’re to blame for messing up their food.” He shrugs, “Foul critters. Rather steal than work for it, I guess.”

“Crafty devils!” says the guard, Rodoric. “And the rest are still trying to sneak in. One night, some of them snuck past the barricade and stole a dozen flats of our best white! Right under our noses!”

Two of the prisoners (KOBOLDS, LL83) only speak Kobold. One of them, Olomuck, actually knows a few words of Common; but he has hidden this fact from the villagers. If he does speak, it is with a peculiar accent, saying “Z” for S and “V” for W through his reptilian beak.

The prisoners are subdued, but hostile. The party must decide how to get information from them. Players should keep the PCs’ alignments in mind, but—barring magic, threats, or the promise of freedom—the kobolds are not likely to cooperate. If persuaded to talk, they might say any of the following:

- ✦ Ze stinky cow skveezinks are ruining ze caves.
- ✦ Koboldz don’t vant stinky skveezinks.
- ✦ It’z ze big peoplez’ fault ze food vent all funny.
- ✦ Mashroomz are yummy.
- ✦ Koboldz Rule!



Area 1–3: Aging Caves

These normal caves hold only villagers at work and the many tall racks of cheeses set to age.

Busy men work among endless shelves of cheeses, turning them on the racks or loading them into barrows. The smell of the cheese permeates the cool air of the cave.

Area 1–4: The Baron

The characters notice an extremely large cheese, standing alone against the cave wall.

An enormous wheel of cheese leans against the wall. It is over five feet in diameter and at least two feet thick. A large seal of red wax is stamped on its face, showing a fish wearing a four-balled coronet. One of the workers comes over hurriedly.



“Careful, please!” he says, “That there is the Baron. It’s a special for the king himself! He buys one a year.” He gestures you away. “Please good masters, have a care! It weigh a good half ton. It’ll crush ye, if’n it topples. Not to mention his Majesty being more’n a bit miffed about his order gettin’ busted!”

If the PCs examine the area, a successful secret door check discovers a small tunnel behind the Baron, leading to Area 1–5. Rolling the Baron aside is simple enough for two people. A single person attempting to move the cheese has to make an open doors check. On a roll of 6, the Baron falls on the character, dealing 4d6 damage (save vs. petrify for half damage).

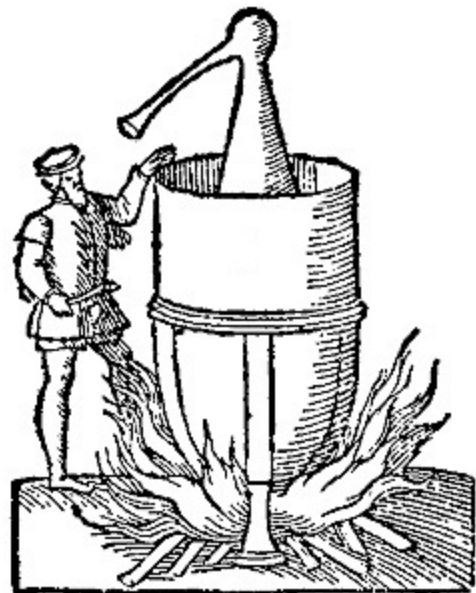
The fall breaks the cheese into worthless chunks. The villagers will be quite upset. The Baron itself carries a price of 1,000 gp, but it is the prestige of being a royal cheese maker that is the real benefit to the town. The guild will have to make a large gift of premium cheeses to the King in recompense, lowering the value of the party’s shares (see Wrapping Up on page 12 for more information).

Area 1–5: The Secret Still

The opening behind the great cheese issues hissing and bubbling sounds, and you see daylight ahead. A short tunnel opens into a chamber, lit from above, dominated by a large, steaming apparatus. It looks like a giant’s tea kettle with various tubes attached. Two cheese workers jump up as you enter and look at you fearfully, wringing their hands. The room is filled with an eye-watering fug of warm, stinging mist.

The local church frowns on hard spirits, but the old priest, as they say, “didn’t see a blind pig” and enjoyed his own bottle now and again. Father Desmond is much less flexible, so the men of Renneton took their still undercover once more. When the PCs find it, they might think to extort more cooperation from the cheesers by their silence, though it’s not a matter to risk one’s life for.

More importantly, the various mold creatures in the caves are highly vulnerable to distilled alcohol. Among some firewood and sacks of grain, there’s a case of 10 bottles of moonshine behind the still. Each acts like a flask of acid against fungus, dealing 1d8 damage to molds, oozes, and their kin on a hit. Mykolos the Mold Master takes double that amount. See *distillate susceptibility* note under New Monsters.



Area 1–6: The Barricade

At the opposite end of the main passage, a makeshift barrier blocks the passage: scrap lumber, barrels, some loose stones, and a couple broken wheelbarrows piled chest high. Two villagers armed with spears peer nervously down the tunnel. A single lantern hangs perhaps fifty feet away, illuminating one section of the tunnel.

One of the guards eyes you and says, “You heading down? Do us a favor? Take this oil and refill the lantern for us. It’s getting low. We light that patch of tunnel so we can see if the critters are a-comin’. Normally one of us has to go down and fill it, but since it on yer way...

“You’ll find the tunnel pretty straight for about a hundred paces. There’s a big chamber on the left. It’s an empty aging room. After that, the going gets harder. I don’t expect there be anyone what knows their way around down there. Luck!”

Not long after the PCs pass out of sight, Harzer distracts the guards and slips away down the tunnel, following the party at a discreet distance with a large mallet. He knows the way and navigates by a faint fungal glow that issues from his skin.

Area 1–7: Empty Room?

Someone once tried to level the floor of this natural chamber by chopping out stalagmites. The walls and ceiling are still rough, with many crevices and outcroppings. Empty, broken shelves clutter the room, presumably smashed by kobolds. Dust lies thick.

The first character who checks for tracks may make an INT roll, +2 for elf or dwarf. Results:

Fail = No discernible tracks found. Looking around the room scuffs them too badly for another PC to check.

Success = Many small bipedal creatures have been in and out of this room.

Succeed by 3–5 = Less than a week ago, a man-sized creature wearing shoes or boots came and went several times.

Succeed by 6+ = The man-sized creature was pushing a cart and stopped more than once in the same spot (by the chimney).

The Mold Valve

Examining the whole floor with a light source reveals a wide crack near the north wall. A dwarf will notice that the stone sides are fresh—the crack has been open for months at the most.

The shaft appears natural, but larger than the other cracks in the floor—a good five feet long and over a yard across. It goes down fairly straight for several yards at least. A musty odor seems to linger in the darkness.

Thirty feet down, the shaft ends in what appears to be lichen-covered rock. It is in fact the top layer of the MOLD VALVE, and touching it is very dangerous (see New Monsters). Anyone captured by the mold valve soon drops into Area 3–8.

The mold valve takes no damage from ordinary weapons, but each hit point of damage from acid, distillates like hard alcohol, magical cold, or spells like *magic missile* makes a foot-deep hole in the mass. Fire damage does the same thing, but the burning mold issues a huge cloud of choking black smoke, filling the cave. Each minute spent breathing the smoke causes 1d4 hp damage (CON check for half). Once out of the smoke, the effect wears off at the rate of 1 hp per hour. If the fire does more than 10 hp, the smoke lingers throughout Level 1 for three days, irreparably tainting the flavor of a great many cheeses and heavily reducing the value of the stock and the party’s shares. See Wrapping Up, p12, for more information.





Level 2: Fungal Forest

Area 2–1: Forest Entrance

You come to a ledge overlooking a bowl-shaped cave full of huge mushrooms, puffballs, and other fungus. A sickly glow comes from some of the molds. Somewhere ahead is the sound of running water.

After an hour's walk, Harzer's directions lead the PCs to this cavern. Markings are etched on the wall near the entrance. The runes say in Kobold, "This place belongs to Green Scale tribe!"

Cautious reconnaissance may reveal that the entrance's ceiling is braced with crude beams. The kobolds reinforced it to keep the way from collapsing after the recent temblors. Harzer, following the PCs, waits for them to get well into the chamber. Then he knocks the supports out with his sledgehammer, bringing down the entrance ceiling. The collapse blocks the entrance thoroughly and alerts the Feral Fungus at Area 2–2.

After collapsing the tunnel, Harzer heads up to Area 1–7. Then he descends via the mold valve, which responds to his silent commands. He intends to retrieve the infected "head cheeses" and, with the aid of a pyramid of zombies, carry the cheeses back *up* the mold valve. He will hide them in Area 1–7, sneaking them back into the inventory late at night. At the auctions, he'll make sure they are sold and shipped to key locations throughout the kingdom. Should the PCs return to Level 1, they find that no one has seen Harzer since the party first went down.

Up to three PCs can dig at the cave-in at once, each making a STR–1 roll every hour. With crowbars, shovels, or other digging tools, the STR roll is at no penalty. Three total successes clears a space large enough for a halfling-sized creature to squeeze through. Four successes allows up to a man-sized creature through.

Area 2–2: The Fungal Forest

Giant mushrooms and other fungi grow in profusion throughout this large cavern. You can squeeze between the growths but it's tight. Some fungi show a riot of brilliant colors; others reflect a waxy corpse-white. Your steps fall muffled on a coat of spongy mold on the floor. Some mushrooms stand taller than you, with caps two yards across. Wrinkled domes glimmer with pinkish light. Puffballs as big as shields nod on impossibly thin stalks. Your passing sets them swaying in a bizarre parody of trees in a breeze. A stream trickles across the chamber among the weird abundance.

A head-sized chunk broken off a phosphorescent fungus, weighing about three pounds, continues to glow for 1d6 hours, dimly illuminating a 20' radius.

In the past month, the hidden influence of Mykolos rendered all these fungi, once a vital crop for the kobolds, tainted and toxic. Unless eaten, however, they pose no threat—except for one. A carnivorous, ambulatory FERAL FUNGUS stands along the stream at the point marked F (see New Monsters). It attacks anything that moves within 30'. At points marked S, there are SHRIEKERS (LL95) lurking among the other caps; if one screams, the feral fungus closes in on that spot.

The Stream

The sound of water is louder and you can see a narrow stream winding through a worn channel in the floor, roughly bisecting this chamber. The stream is only a few yards across. In the pale light the water looks black, making it hard to see the bottom.

The stream is about 10' across and averages a foot deep. The water is cold and perfectly potable, giving the party a good opportunity to refill their waterskins. The stream flows very swiftly with a bottom of loose sand and rounded stones. This makes it easy to lose one's footing when crossing. Standing or wading in the stream, a character suffers –1 to hit and must make a DEX roll each round or fall in, dousing torches and soaking gear. A character can try jumping across with a running start, by making a STR roll, at –1 for encounter movement rate of 30', –2 for 20', or –4 for 10'. Halflings and dwarfs suffer an extra –1 for short legs, and anyone in metal armor takes –1 as well.

The exit tunnel to the north is likewise braced with wood by the kobolds and leads to Area 2–3.



Area 2–3: Twisting Tunnels

From here, the passages become small, winding, and numerous. Players should not bother with detailed mapping; instead, making progress requires a combination of alertness, cleverness, and luck. Father Desmond's map is only of marginal use, as it was cobbled together from multiple accounts by the cheeseworkers.

Making Progress

To find their way through the caves, the party makes a series of rolls on Intelligence (INT). For each roll, a single character, chosen by the party, tries to roll his INT or less on a d20. Modify the character's effective INT for any circumstances that apply:

Circumstance	Modifier
Dwarf	+3
Elf	–1
Using Desmond's map	+1
Clever use of <i>locate object</i> spell	+2 to +4

Succeed or fail, each roll represents one hour of spelunking. Failures mean that the party takes wrong turns, goes in circles, or has to double back from dead ends. This wastes time and resources and increases the chance of a random encounter. (The LL can easily keep track on Faster Monkey's TURNTRACKER game aid, available through fastermonkeygames.com.)

A torch lasts one hour; a full lantern, four hours (see LL44). Parties carrying illumination cannot surprise the cave dwellers. If illumination runs out, further rolls are made at –4 unless the character making the rolls has infravision. Movement rate falls to half unless the entire party has infravision; the Labyrinth Lord might choose to require additional rolls before reaching the end. A Wandering Monster check occurs every hour.

If the party blazes their path with chalk or the like, they can return to Area 2–2 without making rolls, though it still takes time.

As the party goes deeper, observant characters notice more mold on certain tunnel walls. Following these signs will lead them towards Mykolos' realm. LLs could give a +2 bonus on INT rolls to characters who watch for these signs.

Wandering Encounters (Roll 1 per hour. 1 in 6 chance)

d6	Encounter
1	4d4 Kobolds (LL83)
2	Gelatinous Cube (LL76)
3	1d4+1 Zymbies (see New Monsters)
4	Grey Ooze (LL79)
5	Patch of Green Slime (LL80)
6	Patch of Yellow Mold (LL103)

Set Encounter: Prato's Ghost

After the first successful INT check (or three failures), the party encounters "Prato's Ghost."

A shape becomes visible at the edge of the darkness, gliding towards you. A low, almost inaudible hiss seems to follow it as it approaches. Floating just above the floor is a hazy skeletal shape in tattered armor. It floats in your direction, one bony claw reaching forth.

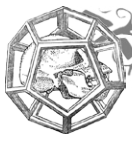
This GELATINOUS CUBE (LL76) contains the remains of Prato, a villager. When the townsfolk chased the kobolds down the tunnels, Constable Prato got separated from the group and panicked. He ran blindly down the tunnels and straight into the transparent cube. His bones now hang suspended in a mockery of his last steps; in the shadowy tunnels, they might easily be mistaken for undead. Incautious PCs who charge to melee find themselves automatically engulfed by the cube.

Set Encounter: The Planters

After the second successful INT roll (or after five rolls total), the party encounters some of Mykolos' ZYMBIES, performing a strange task.

You've come to the intersection of four tunnels when suddenly scratching sounds, like claws on rock, come from one side! Short, shambling figures lurch toward you.

Six zymbies approach from the left-hand tunnel. Observant characters may notice that two of them each carry a small, glassy object, while the others have strange discolorations on parts of their bodies. These creatures bear "starter cultures" of various slimes and molds to different parts of the caves, increasing Mykolos' dominion. If the zymbies spot the party, they will attack.



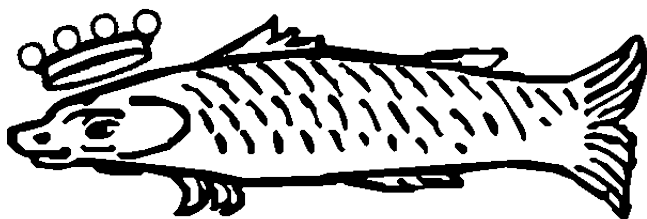
The objects carried by the first two zymbies are immature GELATINOUS CUBES, each 1' on a side. Two of the discolored zymbies each have a small patch of YELLOW MOLD on their bodies. The other two carry similar patches of SNOW MOLD.

Immature Gelatinous Cube: No. Enc.: 1d3; AL: N; Move: 15' (5'); AC: 6; HD: 1d4 hp; Att: 1; Dmg: 1d4 acid (no paralyzing effect); Save: F1; Morale: 12; HC: none; XP: 6; see LL62. The zymbies will hurl these small, quivering cubes at the players if they can (Range 10'/20'/30'), then close to melee. If a hurled cube hits, it inflicts acid damage and sticks, doing damage every round until a full round is taken to tear it away. On a miss, it lands on the ground and crawls toward the nearest moving thing.

Yellow Mold "Starter Culture": Each hit on a zymbie infected with this mold has a 50% chance to cause the spores to blast out. See LL103, but spores only affect those in melee with zymbie, and save vs. poison is at +2. They can only release once.

Snow Mold "Starter Culture": Same as in New Monsters, except that the small patch only deals 1 hp of cold damage per round at its current size. If exposed to fire/heat, then it instantly expands to a full sized patch, covering the zymbie. Any further growth spreads to the tunnel floor and walls. The carrier zymbie seeks to close with any heat sources like torches.

After passing the Planters encounter, one more successful INT roll (or a total of eight attempts) brings the party to Level 3 and the strange scene of Area 3-1.



Level 3: The Mold Caves

Area 3-1: Kobold War Party

Just as the PCs approach, kobolds try to break through into Mykolos' domain, still seeking the cause of the blight on their fungi.

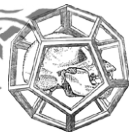
From farther down the tunnel you can hear rhythmic blows against stone. Someone is digging down there! As you approach, you also hear strange yapping voices. Suddenly, there's the sound of falling rock and a screech. Around the bend, you see a group of kobolds, looking down at a pile of fresh rubble with a pair of immobile kobold legs sticking out. Beyond the rubble is a narrow hole in the wall. One kobold wears chain armor and carries a spear. Another stands next to it carrying a staff. The rest carry digging tools and clay flasks.

If the party has any major light source, or moves noisily, the kobolds notice them now. The armored kobold leader, Svonzo, takes up a defensive stance and orders the rest through the new breach behind him. If the party manages to go unseen, the creatures move through the gap cautiously, with Svonzo in front.

The kobolds consider any surface dwellers as likely enemies, but let the PCs make the first move. They know the real foe lies within the Mold Caves. Only Twarog, the shaman, speaks Common, with the heavy Kobold accent.

If the party parleys with the kobolds, Twarog the shaman will speak for the creatures. If the kobolds believe the PCs wish to fight the threat within the mold caves, Twarog will tell them what he knows.

The kobold with the necklace steps forward and speaks in accented but fluent Common; his mouth seems to have trouble forming certain words. "For many years, ve come to ze caves for dere 'mashrumz.' Goot food. Den, not long ago, ze mashrumz go bad. Taste wrong, make us sick. Ve look for reason. Zen ve find ze big-folk up high, folk like you. Zey make slimy tinkz and keep in caves. Ve say 'Zis is vby.' Ve try to stop dem. Den ve find other tunnels; vays full of mold vere no mold grow before. Ve follow to more tunnels dat haf monsters and slimeez. Dat vere de evil iz, dat is dere source. Ve never vould haf found ze tunnels and caves vit dere monsters if ve not follow ze mold vay."



After the taint hit the mushroom farms, some gelatinous cubes and black puddings came into the caves. The kobolds found and collapsed this entrance. Now they are ready to take the fight to the enemy, and returned to dig out the way. Twarog will also explain the use of the distilled urine as a weapon against the molds and slimes (see *distillate susceptibility* note under New Monsters).

Svonzo carries a scrap of hide marked with a crude map and some writing in Kobold (Player Handout C). If any character can read or decipher the writing, they players can see Player Handout D (the translation).

Svonzo (Kobold War Leader): 2 HD, 16 hp.

Possessions: spear, sling, chain armor (AC 4), sealed clay flask (distilled kobold urine fungicide), *breath of life* potion (2 doses; see New Spell), map, and message.

Twarog (Kobold Shaman): 3 HD, 18 hp. Possessions: short staff (club), sling, sealed clay flask (distilled kobold urine fungicide), *breath of life* scroll. Spells: *cure light wounds*, *remove fear*, *bless*.

Kobold Soldiers (6): Possessions: pick or hammer, sling, club, leather armor, and one sealed clay flask (distilled kobold urine fungicide).

Digging up the kobold killed by falling rubble finds one of the flasks of distilled kobold urine. It smells like exactly what it is, and affects fungus-based creatures the same way as the villagers' whisky (see *distillate susceptibility*).

The tunnel that the kobolds came from is lined with new lichen-like growth (the "mold way"). After a hundred feet, it narrows into a crawlspace just big enough for kobolds, or squatting halflings. Beyond that lie deathtraps, alarms, and several hundred kobolds, all of which exceed the scope of this module.

Throughout these caves, thick lichens and molds cling to every surface. Spongy growths cover the floor. The air smells of mildew and decay.

Handwritten Kobold script, likely a translation of the message mentioned in the text. The script is arranged in four lines, with some characters appearing to be stylized or combined.

Area 3-2: Entrance Chamber to Mykolos' Realm

Through the breach made by the kobolds, there is a musty odor and a foreboding chill to the air. A faint glow comes from the within. Beyond, thick fungus and mold crowds a large chamber. Fibrous lichens, puffballs, mushrooms, oozing spores, and sickly glowing molds of every shape and color sprout from walls, floor, and ceiling. Unlike the fairyland effect of the fungal forest you saw before, this room smells foul and repulses you with its slimy aspect. A tunnel, thoroughly lined with growths, winds away opposite the breach.

In addition to the many strange but harmless molds and fungi, a large VIOLET FUNGUS and a patch of SNOW MOLD reside here (see New Monsters). A party with a fire-based light source causes the snow mold to spread out into the corridor.

The violet fungus ignores things like tossed rocks, waiting to strike by surprise (1-4) when someone steps near. If the kobolds came this way before the party, they are in battle with the violet fungus already, and Twarog actually asks the PCs for help. The luminous fungus here works similar to that in Area 2-2, but with a greenish light, and each chunk drips with tendrils and slime.

Area 3-3: Yellow Mold Trap

A standard YELLOW MOLD (LL103) grows here.

A patch of fungus on the tunnel wall quivers as you approach. Suddenly a cloud of yellow dust billows out, filling the corridor!

The spores dissipate after one turn.

Area 3-4: Water Tunnels

Narrow, branching tunnels descend into dark, still water. No fungus grows near its surface.

These tubelike tunnels lie completely underwater and run only 3' in diameter. Each harbors a patch of GREEN SLIME (LL80) midway along. Anyone who enters these sewer-like confines probably dies, barring extreme precautions or a lot of luck.



Area 3–5: Fungus-Covered Pits

The springy floor of the tunnel suddenly rips open under your feet!

Pit Trap: 20' deep (2d6, falling).

In two places, the thick mold growth on the floor covers natural crevices. Any halfling or larger-sized creature stepping onto the fungus breaks through and falls into the pit. The mold itself is harmless.

Treasure: At the bottom of one pit (marked * on map) lie the remains of a long-forgotten hero who died exploring these caves before Mykolos awoke. His bones have nearly crumbled to dust, but he has left behind a full set of plate armor decorated with gold inlay (worth 1,500 gp) and a *great sword* +2.

Area 3–6: Mold Valve Exit

In the middle of this chamber, the ubiquitous fungus lumps up in a thick pile. Above it, a disturbing pink and blue spongy growth nearly fills an irregular hole in the ceiling.

Six ZYMBIES hide here (see New Monsters), their mottled appearance providing camouflage against the rocky walls. They attack characters entering the room normally, surprising on a 1–3. Zymbies have no sense of self-preservation and fight to the death.

The hole in the ceiling is the exit of the MOLD VALVE from Area 1–7. At this end, it lacks sleep spores. Anyone coming down through the mold valve falls 10' onto the thick pile of fungus (no damage). If the victim can't fight back, four zymbies pick him up, carry him to Area 3–9, and toss him into the middle of Mykolos' feeding patch. It takes the zymbies a full turn to reach the feeding patch carrying an "offering."

Under command from Mykolos, the mold valve can also pass things upward, such as Harzer and his cheeses. See Area 1–7 for more details.

Area 3–7: Ochre Jelly Tunnel

A large patch of brownish-orange mold tears off the wall and ripples toward you!

An OCHRE JELLY (LL89) lives in this tunnel and will attack any intruders. Due to Mykolos' influence, the jelly ignores zymbies and Harzer.

Area 3–8: Water Chamber

Unlike the tunnels, the chamber ahead is dark. The floor is a pool, strewn with partially submerged boulders. A faint glow comes from the far side.

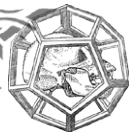
The many rocks and shallow water (1' deep on average) let characters attempt to stay dry, moving at half pace across the slippery stones (DEX roll to cover half normal encounter movement without slipping and at least getting a foot wet). The water is harmless, but a GRAY OOZE (LL79) lives in the pool. It can move through the water to anywhere in the room, surprising on a 1–3. Due to Mykolos' influence, the ooze ignores zymbies and Harzer.

Treasure: A ruby-studded golden cup, worth 7,000 gp, lies between two rocks below the waterline (* on the map). It tumbled down a sinkhole centuries ago and into this cave. The corrosive grey ooze has not (so far) happened to pass over this spot. A thorough, deliberate, and well-lit search, plus a successful secret door roll, finds the cup.

Area 3–9: Mykolos' Chamber

As throughout the area, fungus thickly encrusts this high-domed room. Balls of pink, green, and white cast an eerie illumination. In the center of the chamber sit a dozen large wheels of cheese, arranged neatly in stacks. A man-sized figure stands among smaller bipeds, giving them orders. It's Harzer!

At the far side of the chamber, the fungi are even stranger. A riot of bizarre shapes and colors blooms from the far wall—some of them are even pulsing! Gobbets of slime drip and puddle among the mushroom shapes taller than a man's head. A feeling of revulsion fills you as you view the scene. Deep in your bones, you sense an oozing malevolence about this place.



The mold in the room makes up the body of Mykolos the MOLD MASTER (see New Monsters). Only the feeding patch and the pudding hurler have combat abilities, but two ULTRAVIOLETS (see New Monsters) also guard Mykolos. They attack invisibly to paralyze intruders, then help push victims into the feeding patch.

Harzer hangs back, letting the zymbies and the ultraviolets fight, but if engaged in combat, he fights as a normal man. If Harzer is killed, his skin splits and mold pours out, covering his body. The next round, he rises as a large zymbie: 2 HD, 16 hp, 1d6 claw damage plus 1d6 acid and spore blast (see New Monsters).

The dozen large cheeses are those thought stolen by kobolds. A careful slit in each wax casing allowed Mykolos to inject the “brain mold”. Checking under the wax shows a pattern of purple mold on the surface; checking more than one shows the same pattern on each. If Mykolos survives, anyone eating this cheese becomes a slave of Mykolos.

Treasure: Long-ago victims of the feeding patch left some interesting possessions among its tendrils: a 1,200 gp emerald, a 500 gp blue spinel, a *potion of levitation* (one dose), a *wand of lightning* (18 charges), a *chime of opening* (30 charges), a *wand of detect secret doors* (12 charges), a *ring of protection +1*, and a *potion of heroism* (one dose).

Wrapping Up

With Mykolos destroyed, no new molds or slimes appear in the caves. The kobolds retreat and look for other sources of food. The cheese guild is eager to keep things quiet; rumors of tainted cheese and mind-controlling giant fungi tend to harm business. The guild makes sure to thoroughly destroy those cheeses. The Cheese Festival occurs on schedule; after the orders are tallied, the party gets to cash in their shares.

Total value of all 250 partenu shares paid to the party:

- ✂ Maximum: 5,000 gp
- ✂ If the mold valve burns and taints the cheese with smoke: -1,000 gp
- ✂ If the Baron breaks, requiring a large gift to the King: -1,500 gp
- ✂ If word gets out that the cheeses were dangerously infected: -2,000 gp

Any of these unfortunate events gives the party a proportionately damaged reputation with the people of Renneton.

Further Possible Adventures

- ✂ Is Mykolos really gone?
- ✂ Are there other mold masters out there?
- ✂ The “Baron” has disappeared en route to the palace. Is the incident connected to the events in the caves?

New Spell

Breath of Life

Level: Cleric 2
 Range: Touch (1 living creature touched/level)
 Duration: 2 turns/level

The spell surrounds the affected creature’s nose and mouth with a zone of pure, breathable air, somewhat like a *necklace of adaptation* (LL120). The target is immune to suffocation, inhaled poisons, and other airborne, non-magical hazards like gas, mold spores, etc. The air bubble is not strong enough to allow breathing underwater or in a vacuum, nor does it negate poisoning by ingestion, injury, venom, or contact. Magical and supernatural inhaled hazards, such as the *cloudkill* spell or a poison breath weapon, still affect the target, but he gains a +2 bonus to any saving throw to resist the effects.

New Monsters

Susceptibility to Distillates

Distillates such as hard alcohol, vinegar, or boiled urine act like acid against fungus, dealing 1d8 damage to molds, oozes, and the like on a hit. The Master Patch of Mykolos the Mold Master takes double that amount.



Feral Fungus

No. Enc.:	1–2
Alignment:	Neutral
Movement:	60' (20')
Armor Class:	7
Hit Dice:	7 (45 hp); susceptibility to distillates
Attacks:	Bite
Damage:	1d8 + paralyze, swallow whole
Save:	F4
Morale:	12
Hoard Class:	None
XP:	1,140

A feral fungus is a gigantic (12' tall) mushroom, mobile and omnivorous. It prefers meat. It has a whitish stem, with rust-red gills and an eight-foot umbrella-like cap, purple with white spots. Its stem thickens slightly at the base into a pad like the foot of a snail, allowing the fungus to creep along the ground almost silently. At rest, it is indistinguishable from other giant mushrooms (other than its markings). It senses vibrations in the ground through its foot and its gills can sense air movements and odors, allowing it to track and target its prey. Although not intelligent, the fungus is an effective predator. It is also immune to sleep and fear effects.

In combat, the feral fungus prefers to attack by surprise. Ideally, it will place itself along a likely path through a fungal forest and wait for its target to draw near. Then it will strike. In environments like the fungal forest, where large mushrooms are not unusual, it surprises on a 1–4 on a d6. It attacks by bending its stalk to reach foes on the ground; the cap of the fungus envelops the prey, like an inverted umbrella, and the center of the cap (above the stem) opens into a “mouth.” Though the fungus has no teeth, its maw is very strong and can crush even an armored foe. In addition, on a successful hit by the fungus, the target must make a save vs. paralysis or be paralyzed for 1d4 turns by the toxins on the fungus' skin.

On an attack roll of 20, or with any hit on a paralyzed target, the fungus swallows whole any man-sized or smaller target (LL62). The victim ends up partway down the inside of the stalk (probably head first) and takes 1d6 points of damage per round until the fungus is killed. If the victim has a small (dagger sized) edged weapon in hand when swallowed, he can try to attack the fungus from the inside at a –4 to hit.

Mold Master (Mykolos)

The amorphous, fungal blob of a Mold Master covers a broad stretch of floor, with three different types of fungus patches making up the whole.

Feeding Patch

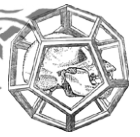
No. Enc.:	1
Alignment:	Neutral
Movement:	0'
Armor Class:	9
Hit Dice:	7; susceptibility to distillates (2d8)
Attacks:	2 (entangle, INT drain)
Damage:	Special (INT drain or acid)
Save:	F7
Morale:	12
Hoard Class:	None
XP:	1,100

Mykolos grew this 20' x 20' area specifically to consume victims' bodies and minds.

Entangle: Mykolos typically feeds on prey rendered insensible by its minions, but it can cause the tentacles of the feeding patch to wrap around any targets within the patch each round. The target must save vs. petrify or become entangled and unable to move. Once per round an entangled creature may attempt a STR–2 check to break free and move up to half his encounter movement rate. Once activated, the feeding patch will continue trying to restrain anyone in it each round, without Mykolos having to concentrate on it.

Intelligence Drain: Any living creature that comes into contact with the feeding patch must immediately save vs. spells or lose 1d6 points of INT. If the victim remains in contact with the patch he must make a new save every round or suffer an additional loss of 1d6 INT. If the victim reaches 0 INT, he dies and Mykolos gains all his knowledge (90% recall). If the target escapes—or the patch is destroyed—before he reaches 0 INT, he regains his INT at 1d6 points per day. A magic-user or elf with his INT reduced to below 9 cannot read spell books to memorize spells (LL7), and any spellcaster with his INT reduced to 3 cannot speak clearly enough to even cast spells.

Acid: Once a victim dies from INT drain, the feeding patch begins dissolving the body with acid. Anything living that touches the patch during this time, even if not entangled, must make a DEX check each round or suffer 1d6 damage. Metal, bone, stones and glass are left behind and quickly covered by fungus.



Pudding Hurler

No. Enc.:	1
Alignment:	Neutral
Movement:	0'
Armor Class:	9
Hit Dice:	7 (50 hp); susceptibility to distillates
Attacks:	1, spit Black Pudding
Damage:	1d6 + pudding's attacks; range 30'/60'/90'
Save:	F6
Morale:	12
Hoard Class:	None
XP:	900

Resembling a slimy, ten-foot volcano, the dreaded black pudding hurler can forcefully spit one **SMALL BLACK PUDDING** per round at any target it can sense within 60'. If the pudding misses, it will travel up to 90' in a straight line before it lands, then behave as a normal black pudding. If the pudding hits, it deals 1d6 damage from the impact plus the pudding's own attacks. The pudding hurler contains 16 puddings when full and can regenerate a new one each day.

Small Black Pudding: As per LL65, but 4 HD (5' diameter) and does 2d8 damage per round; XP: 190 each.

Master Patch

No. Enc.:	1
Alignment:	Neutral
Movement:	0'
Armor Class:	9
Hit Dice:	10 (80 hp); susceptibility to distillates x2
Attacks:	0; Special
Damage:	Special
Save:	C10
Morale:	12
Hoard Class:	XVIII
XP:	1,000

This master patch of Mykolos contains its awareness and spawns various molds, slimes, and spores. Even though this central portion of Mykolos glows, dribbles ooze, and pulses below its surface, it has no overt attacks. If this portion is left alive, Mykolos survives. It will re-grow over time and eventually resumes its schemes. If this part is destroyed, it breaks apart, spattering slimy gobbets everywhere. The glow fades and movement stops.

Slime control: Mykolos can control any unintelligent ooze, fungus, or mold within 500'. If the slime moves out of range, it continues to obey its last orders.

Create Slime: Mykolos can bud any fungus, ooze, or slime from the Master Patch, generating up to 2 HD per day. For example, a new violet fungus would take two days to grow. The new slime is under Mykolos' orders. In addition to those creatures in the LL book, it can create special fungal forms, such as the mold valve, the pudding hurler, the feeding patch, snow mold, ultraviolets, and the zymbies.

Mind Control: Mykolos can generate special spores that will enter the body of a living animal and give it orders. The mind-control effect is too slow to affect combat; it takes a full day of being forced to breathe the spores, as happened to Harzer, or else consuming the spores in several ounces of infected cheese. There is no saving throw. To change the orders requires a new set of spores made for the purpose; anyone who eats the cheese is compelled to make others eat it until it's gone, then report to Renneton for further instructions.

Mold Valve

No. Enc.:	1
Alignment:	Neutral
Movement:	0'
Armor Class:	9
Hit Dice:	8 (60 hp); susceptibility to distillates
Attacks:	Special
Damage:	See below
Save:	F3
Morale:	12
Hoard Class:	None
XP:	1,060

The mold valve is a special immobile colony created by Mykolos to control access to the Mold Caverns. It fills a narrow stone chimney for a great height, open at top and bottom. Once per day, if anything comes into contact with the top surface of the mold, it releases a 10'-tall cloud of spores that acts like a sleep gas. Anyone caught in this cloud must save vs. poison at -2 or fall unconscious for 2d4 turns. The spores dissipate in 1d6 rounds.

In addition to the sleep spores, the valve attempts to draw anyone touching it into itself, like quicksand. A character can break free with a STR-2 check. If a rope secures the character from above, there is no penalty, and



the STR check can be made by someone pulling on the rope instead. It takes one full round for the mold to “swallow” a victim entirely. A swallowed character cannot speak or move his arms and legs. The valve lowers its catch slowly with moldy peristalsis, taking two minutes to transfer him to the mold’s bottom. There is some air, but a waking victim must make a CON check to remain conscious. When spit out the bottom, the victim is covered with a wrapping of slimy tendrils, as if in a *web* spell (LL41).

Snow Mold

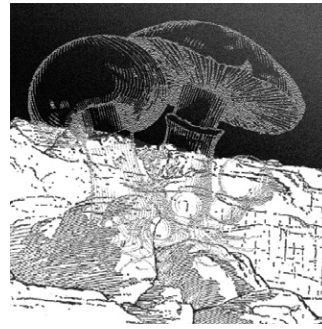
No. Enc.: 1
Alignment: Neutral
Movement: 0'
Armor Class: always hit
Hit Dice: 1
Attacks: cold
Damage: 1d6
Save: F1
Morale: N/A
Hoard Class: None
XP: 38

Snow mold feeds on warmth, drawing heat from anything around it. It grows on rocky walls and floors as a lumpy whitish-blue fungus, in patches about 5 feet in diameter, and the air always feels chilly around it. Living creatures within 5 feet take 1d6 points of cold damage per round, and the cold extinguishes fires such as torches and lanterns. Fire brought within 10 feet causes the mold to instantly grow 5 feet in that direction and put the fire out. Cold damage, such as a *wand of cold*, instantly destroys it.

Violet Fungus / Ultraviolet

No. Enc.: 1d4 (1d4)
Alignment: Neutral
Movement: 10' (3')
Armor Class: 7
Hit Dice: 3
Attacks: 1-4
Damage: 1d4 + paralyze
Save: F3
Morale: 8
Hoard Class: None
XP: 125

These large purple mushrooms (detailed in the *Labyrinth Lord™ Advanced Edition Companion™*) have varying size. The one in Area 3-2 is seven feet tall, with four flailing tentacles each two feet long. It can attack with each tentacle every round if there are enough close targets. A hit requires the victim to save vs. poison or be infected with rot-inducing slime, decaying to a mouldering corpse in one round unless he first receives *cure disease*.



Ultraviolet: Created by Mykolos, this form of violet fungus has only two tentacles, four feet long with paralyzing venom instead of necrotic, and the additional power of innate invisibility. Ultraviolets never appear, even when attacking, until they are killed. Even *dispel magic* won't make them visible,

but *detect invisible* works, as does splashing the fungus with some substance like ink or mud. Invisible, they also move quietly and surprise on a 1-5. A hit with one of their tentacles requires a save vs. paralysis to avoid 1d4 turns of immobility. The ultraviolet and zymbies will attempt to push paralyzed foes into Mykolos' feeding patch. XP: 110 each.

Zymbies

No. Enc.: 1d6 (2d6)
Alignment: Neutral
Movement: 60' (20')
Armor Class: 5
Hit Dice: 1
Attacks: 1 (Fist); Special: Spore Blast, Acid
Damage: 1d4 + 1d6 acid
Save: F1
Morale: 12
Hoard Class: None
XP: 16

Special fungal muscles, spun around the bones of kobolds by Mykolos, form these three-foot-tall mold-zombies. They appear green and shaggy. Zymbies are immune to acid and cold, as well as *sleep* or *charm* magics.

A man-sized skeleton turned into a zymbie has 2 HD and inflicts 1d6 fist damage. XP: 38 each.

Spore Blast: 1/day. The zymbie sprays caustic spores into the face of a melee opponent: save vs. breath weapon or blinded for two rounds.

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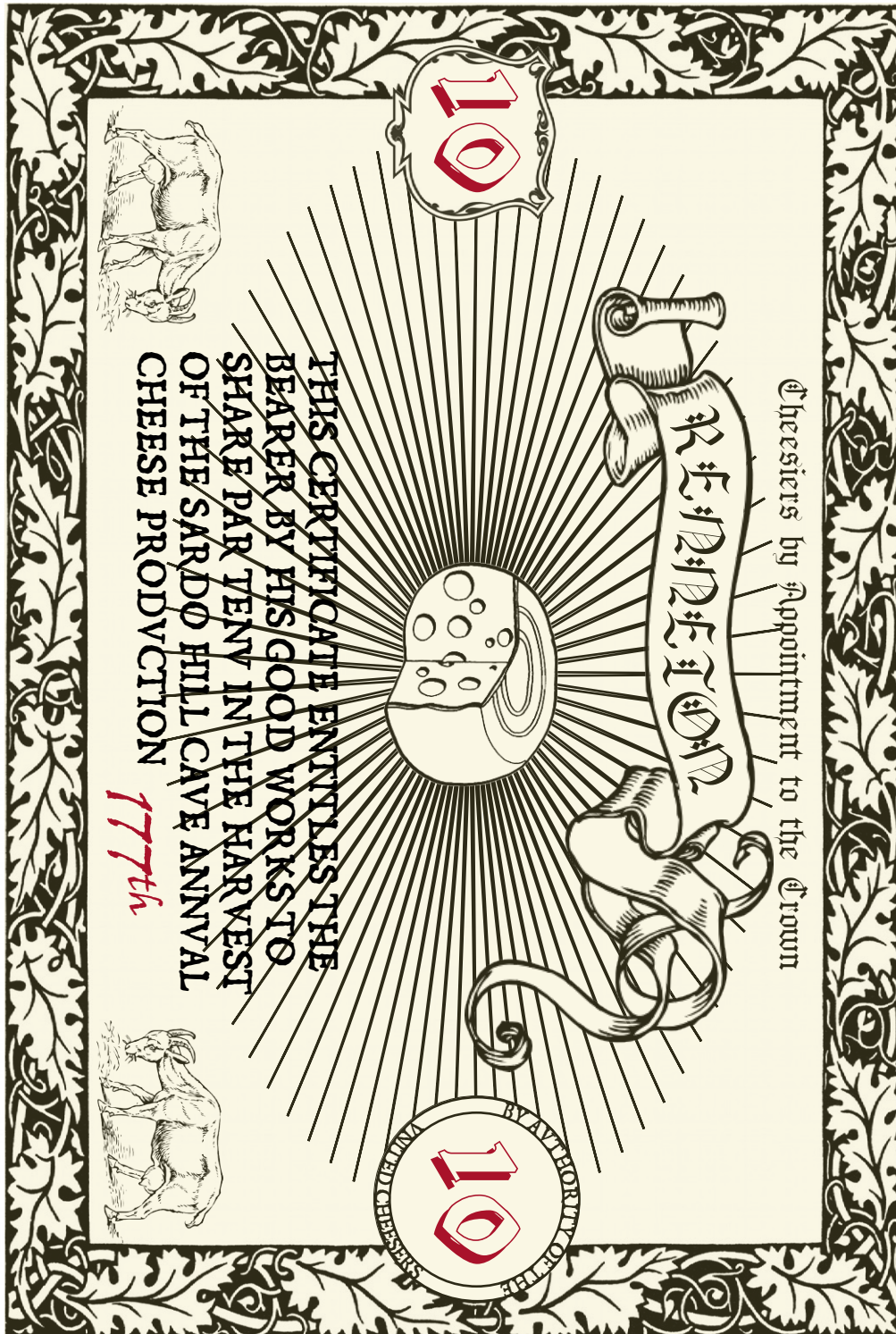
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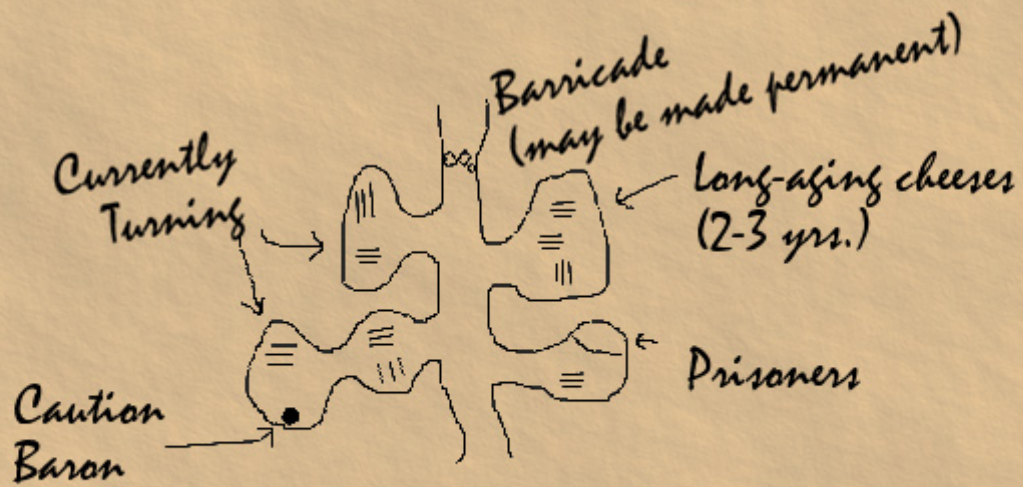
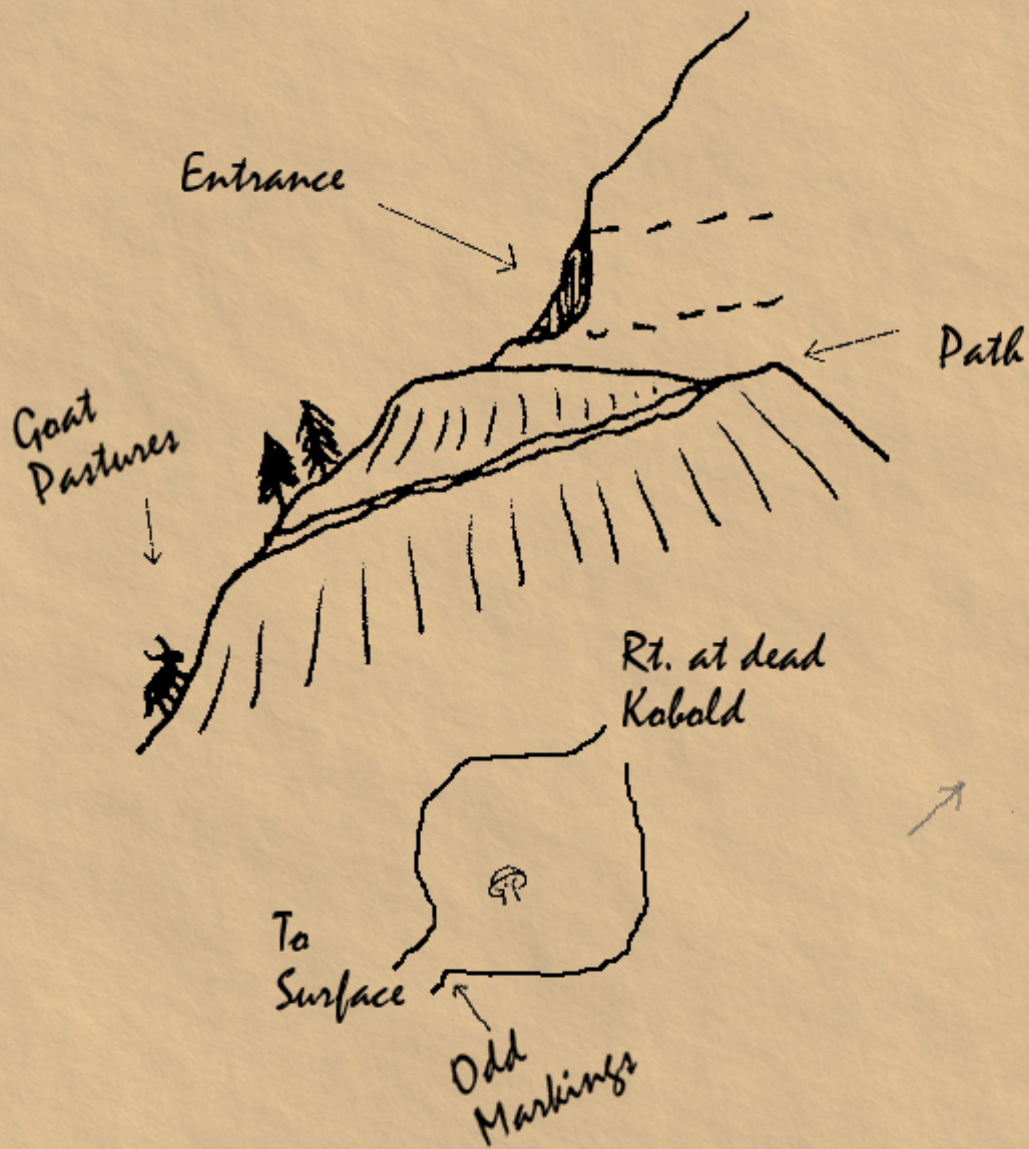
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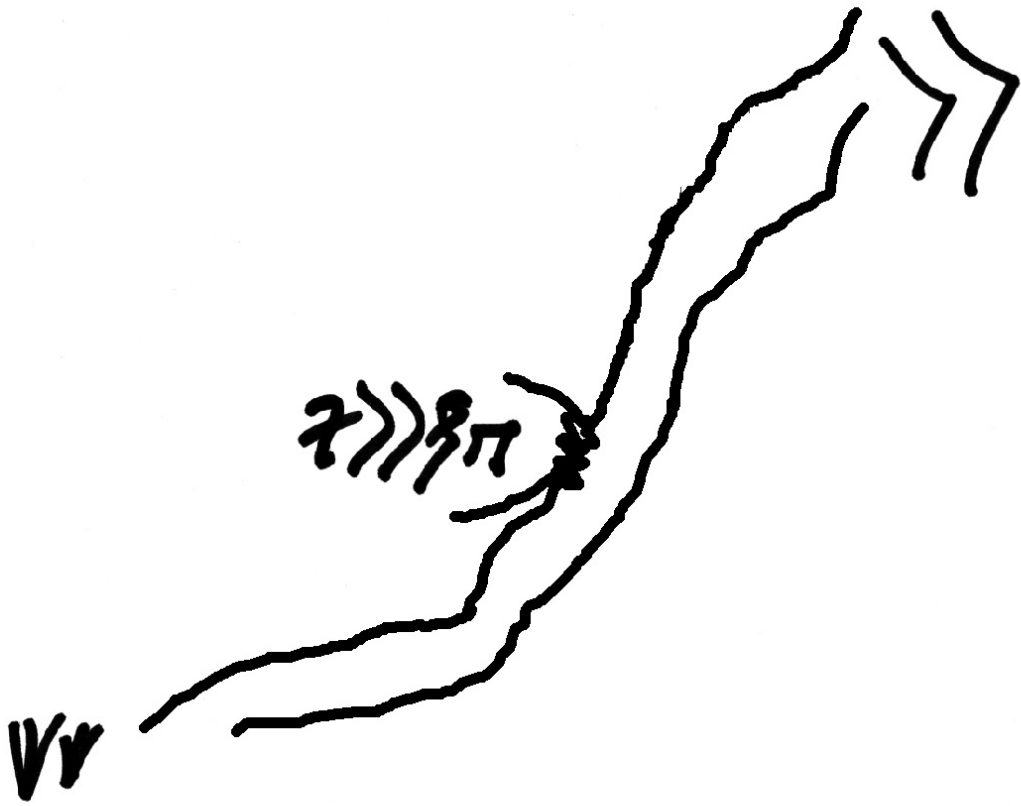
PLAYER HANDOUT A - Partenu Certificate



PLAYER HANDOUT B – Father Desmond's Map



PLAYER HANDOUT C - Map



7 9 4. 6 H 9 5
V O H 9 9 7 4. H A
> π 4. 7 5 7 0
H π * π V 9 4.
7 >>> π V A V H 9

PLAYER HANDOUT D - Translated Map



7 9 4. 6 H 9 5
V O H 9 9 7 4. H A
> 7 4. 7 9 V O
H 7 4 7 V 9 4.
7 >>> 8 π V A V H 9

TAKE YOUR BAND AND REOPEN THE BLOCKED WAY
DESTROY ALL YOU FIND WITHIN
THERE LIES THE SOURCE OF THE FOULNESS

Level 3: The Mold Caves

N



— Ten feet

Pudding
Turret

3-9
MYKOLOS

H: Harzer
z: Zymbie
U: Ultraviolet (invisible)

Feeding
Patch

3-8

TO TWISTING
TUNNELS

3-7

3-4

3-5

3-3

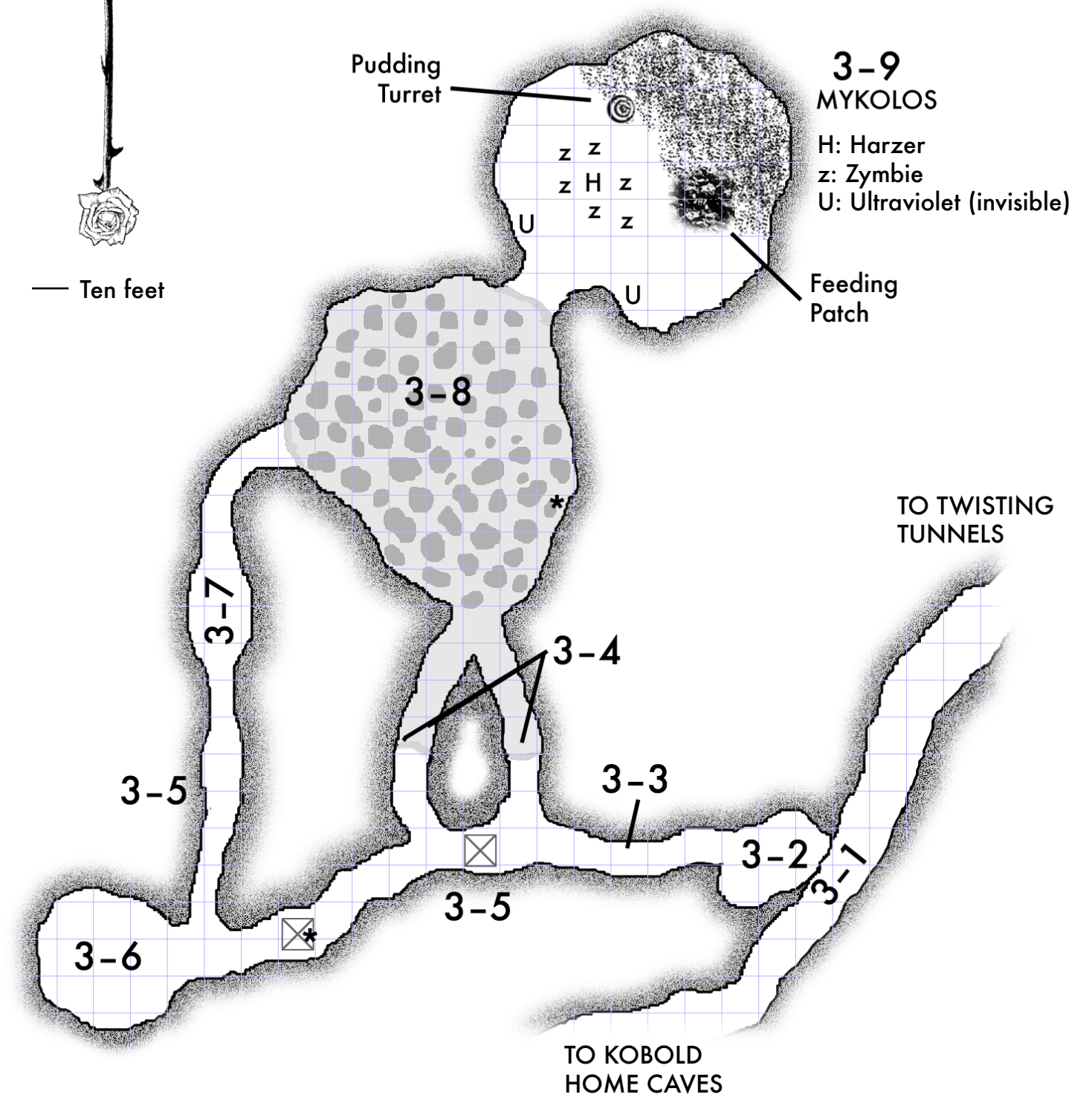
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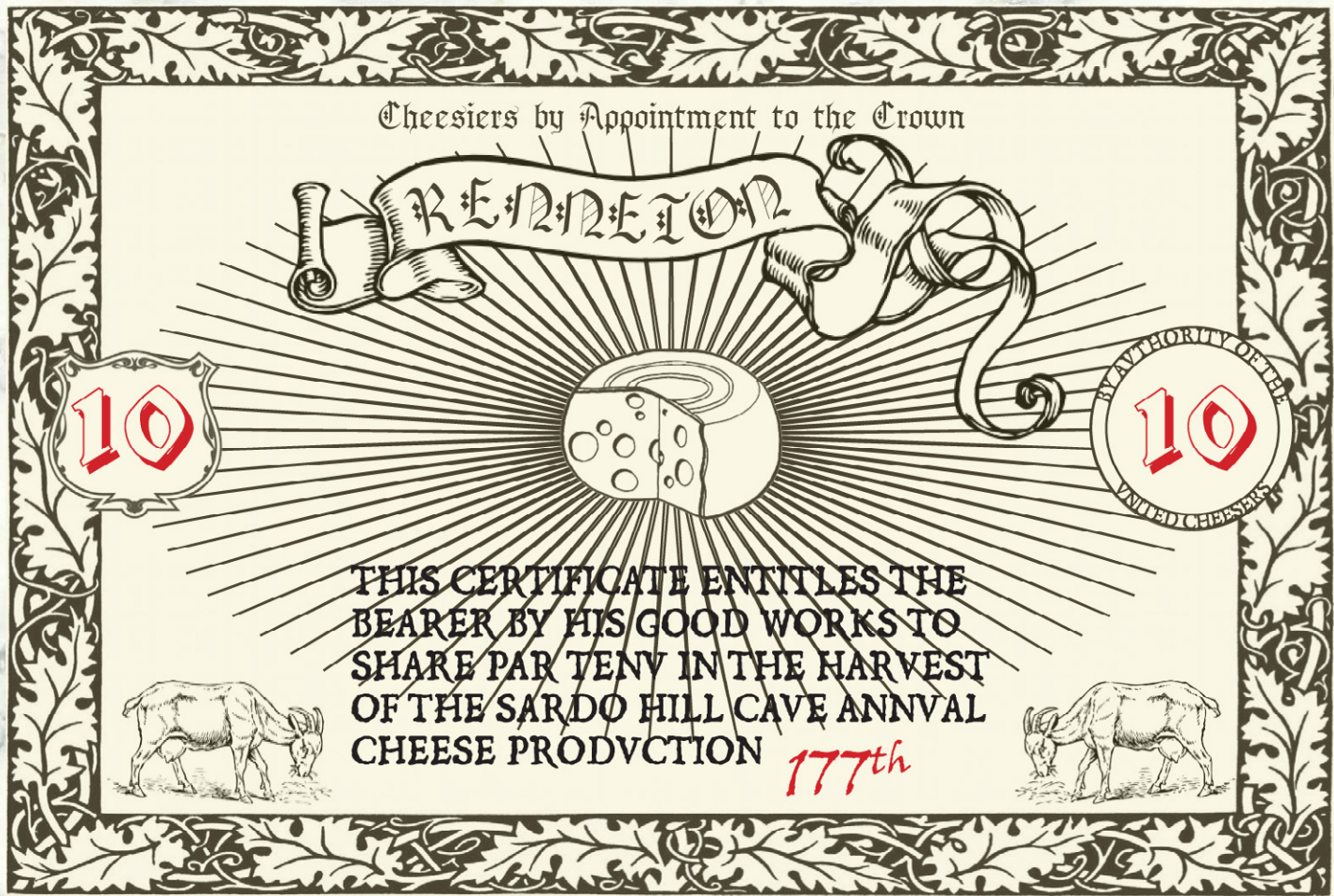
3-1

3-6

3-5

TO KOBOLD
HOME CAVES

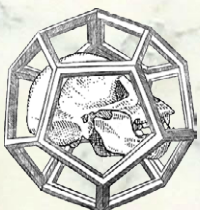




Protecting cheese from kobolds!? What kind of a job is that for adventurous heroes? It's embarrassing, really. A job's a job, though. The cheesemakers' guild is offering shares in the profits from the upcoming annual sales. Some merchant types say that these shares can be worth a lot of coin. Plus, of course, you'll be keeping any loot you happen to find.

Well, you've done more for less in the past. Time to get to the center of...

THE WHEEL OF EVIL.



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