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# SHADOWS & DUST



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# Shadows & Dust

## *Rumours & Hooks*

Raider captain *Drar Fjorg* is seeking hardy adventurers to accompany him into the *Valley of Dust*, in search of a lost fortress of the ancient *Ramorans*.

Ancient texts make reference to the *Altar of Resurrection*, an artefact said to be capable of restoring the dead to life. The altar was last located in a *Ramoran* temple in the *Valley of Dust*.

## **Civil War**

Early in the Second Age, hundreds of years into the dynasty of the *Ramorans* (a powerful human culture that embraced slavery, stargazing, and mummification) came the *Hazr Yucrim* or Great Divide; a fundamental schism between the *Old Ramorans*, who embraced slavery and genocide, and the *Morukzakir*, cultists of *Baalec* (Master of Bones, God of the Dead), espousing blood magic and necromancy as the solution to Ramora's war torn woes.

Relations between the two factions were increasingly strained until the empire lost a third of her lands (their conscript forces decimated by steel wielding dwarves), precipitating a civil war in the eastern provinces.

A bloody and bitter conflict followed, citizen slaughtering citizen across the *Twin Cities* and beyond. In the end, the Old Ramorans prevailed, and the Baalecs were cast out. What meagre lands the cultists managed to retain were excised from the Empire, and left to perish.

## **Ortu Menon**

Perish the cultists did, along with the greater Ramoran Empire several generations later. But before they disappeared, the cultists built *Ortu Menon*; a hidden citadel and temple, somewhere near the *Valley of Dust*.

Of potential interest to PCs, in rare texts it is recorded that the priests fashioned an altar of singular necromantic power; a shrine dark and dangerous, said to be capable of summoning spirits, and perhaps even restoring the dead to life.



As one might anticipate, such power is not simply waiting to be plundered. The treasures of the citadel are bountiful, but protected by all manner of undead servitors, including an ancient undead dragon.

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The PCs might become involved in this adventure because they (i) wish to investigate the ruins of a (dead) magical cult, (ii) hope to raise someone from the dead, (iii) stumble across the ruins in their travels, or (iv) are hired by *Drar Fjorg*, a one eyed Varnori (viking like) raider who wants to investigate bringing his infant son *Borgov* back to life.

If hired by Fjorg, he explains his son was murdered by rivals, and is offering 500 gp for an escort to the Valley of Dust, to find a temple his Rune Seer says still exists. Fjorg is a little unhinged and unable to accept his son's demise, even after reaping bloody vengeance on his foes. He must accompany the party on the expedition, and carries the preserved corpse in a carefully wrapped pack, marked with holy seals of loyalty and protection.



*Drar Fjorg*, AC 15 (chain shirt and shield), HD 4+4, Axe 1d8+2, 19: injury, S15 D13 C14 I10 P12 W13 Ch10, L7, Mv 30 ft. May rage like a Barbarian three times per combat. May use his shield to negate a single directional attack.

## Peaks and Troughs

The Valley of Dust is located on the eastern outskirts of the Ironhull Mountains, requiring a week's navigation of steep slopes from the closest outpost. There is a 40% chance of an encounter every 12 hours. If an encounter occurs, roll 1d8:

1. At the bottom of a narrow gorge, a nest of 3d6 *Argosan Stranglers* (Midlands p.96) are hibernating downstream, submerged within a deep pond. If any injured PCs enter the water, they detect the blood and awaken (similar to sharks).
2. 2d4 *Giant Eagles* (LFG p.106) are hunting overhead, riding the thermals as they survey the lower canyons. There is a 50% chance the eagles are being ridden by bow slung thuels (barbarians) of the *Three Storms* clan; a particularly hostile and xenophobic people.
3. Hundreds of *Skorn* (Beastmen; Midlands p.104, including the *Norgu*, see Area 5) are descending into nearby ravines, drums sounding across the peaks, converging for a once in a generation conclave of intertribal breeding. As with every prior conclave, this one will end in bloodshed and cannibalism, but not until the tribes have mixed gene pools. If the PCs are detected, they will be hunted for days.
4. A steep cliff face has recently crumbled away, revealing a small vein of rare adamantine (Perc (Detection) check to spot). If harvested, there is enough ore to make a suit of armour/two weapons.

5. 3d6 *Cyclopes* lair in a nearby cave system, picking off skorn, thuel and ogres as meals. If killed, 1d4 thuel of the *Yellow Tusks* clan are tied up as captives, along with 2 x Carry Loot and 1 x Valuables (LFG p.136, 147).

6. A swarm of biting insects descends on the party at night, carrying the bloodborne disease *Four Finger Rot* (*Luck* (Con) save or lose 1d4 digits from one hand, as they blacken and die over 1d6 days). An apothecary with the right healing herbs might cure the disease.

7. A solitary *Hill Giant* named *Goff* is sleeping with her back to a tree. The 12 ft matron has a toothy grin, wild hair, and carries a large rock carved with a face (throws for 3d6 damage). She sometimes talks to the rock as if it was her friend. If treated kindly, *Goff* might join the party for a time, protecting them like adopted children.

8. 2d6 *Griffons* (LFG p.113) are perched upon a high ledge, scanning the low lands for easy meals. Characters in metal armour attract their attention with the reflected sun.



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## Valley of Dust

The Valley of Dust is a particularly arid ravine, basalt walls interspersed with pockets of chalk rock spires, flanked by steep 200 ft cliffs. The climate is cool, with chill winds blowing in from the north. Footing is poor, scree and grit riddle the ground, turning to slippery mud when it rains.

### Area 1 – The Harbinger

The most striking aspect of the 90 ft wide valley entrance is the unmissable 200 ft idol of a cowed cultist in a skull mask (reflecting the ceremonial dress of the *Morukzakir*), and the decorative arch spanning the valley's mouth.

Also immediately noticeable is the complete absence of greenery, including the enormous petrified tree to the right hand side. The entire valley is cursed; tainted by potent necromantic forces that still permeate the region, despite the passing of millennia.

Living creatures entering this valley feel increasingly parched, old injuries suddenly ache, and current wounds reopen slightly. A *Luck* (Will) save is required; on a failed save the PC is cursed, recovering only half the usual hp damage from short rests (until the next long rest outside of the valley). Worshipers of Baal are immune to this effect.

### Area 2 – Shrine

This small pyramid mausoleum is 30 ft on each side, made of basalt and quartz, marked with the skull mask icon of ancient *Baalec*. Various religious and warding scripts are etched into the corners in *Old Ramoran*, reciting hymns of devotion, honour and eternal service.

There is no door, but with the right tools and sufficient time the tomb may be ruptured. Defilers must make a *Luck* (Con) save or suffer *Baleful Withering* (magical curse, lose 1d3 Str each day until zero Str, at which point turned into dust. Gain a new save each dawn).

Inside the tomb are various embalming pots containing the innards of the skeletal horseman in Area 3, as well as 1 x 4 HD Lair Treasure (LFG p.140). If the innards are destroyed, the horsemen shatter into fragments of bone.



### Area 3 – Skeletal Horsemen

The main ravine leading to the valley proper is protected by a contingent of 3d6 *Skeletal Horsemen*; poor souls cursed as unthinking undead by long perished necromancers. Any humans or other intelligent living creatures

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entering this area are charged by the mounted warriors, their skeletal horses sending up plumes of dust as they thunder towards the PCs.

*Skeletal Horsemen*, AC 15, HD 3+2, Spear 1d6+3, 19: a defeated skeleton reanimates to aid this one, S15 D7 C18 I- P12 W- Ch- L5, Mv 60 ft. The skeletal horseman cause double damage when they charge, and gain the usual mounted benefits (LFG p.50). They are immune to piercing projectiles such as arrows, and automatically detect living creatures within 60 ft.

If defeated, some of the warriors' armour and horses' barding is studded with precious gemstones (worth 1 x Valuables, LFG p.147). One of the spears is *silvered* (magically preserved and in fine condition).

#### **Area 4 – Scattered Rubble**

This rubble strewn area might at first appear to be as a result of rockslides from the valley walls, but is in fact the result of a pair of mating *Bulettes*. There is a 50% chance the mating is occurring when the PCs arrive (earth shudders are noticeable), otherwise the pair are asleep (if so, careful perusal of the valley walls (Int (Wilderness Lore) check) suggests internal movement caused the rocks to fall, not natural weathering).

*Bulette*, AC 18, HD 9+4, Bite 3d6, 19: the target is dragged underground and begins asphyxiating. A Str check at disadvantage is required to dig free, S22 D13 C19 I2 P13 W14 Ch3, L10, Mv 30 ft inc when burrowing. Detects movement tremors within 120 ft, *Causes Injuries* on critical hits.

#### **Area 5 – Norgu Dumping Ground**

A number of mangled skorn corpses lie in pieces on the ground here (some limbs etc are scattered

about). It is obvious from the blood stains that the beastmen were thrown from the high cliffs, and broke apart when they hit the ground. The nearby *Norgu* tribe (red war paint, file their teeth to sharp points, the leaders are infected with werespider lycanthropy) sometimes throw rivals or outcasts off the cliffs as punishment.

The Norgu are deathly afraid of the valley's magic and will not enter it under any circumstances. There is a 50% chance 3d6 Norgu are in the middle of throwing a victim into the chasm when the party arrive here. If they spot the PCs, they shoot at them with bows, and scamper about the high grounds hooting and roaring at them; beating their drums impotently. At the GM's option, a larger force (3d10+20) might subsequently camp outside the valley entrance, hoping to track/ambush the PCs at a later time.

*Skorn*, AC 11, HD 2, Long bow 1d8 or Club 1d6+1, 19: the target is clubbed in the head, losing its next action (*Luck* (Will) save resists), S15 D10 C13 I7 P12 W8 Ch8, L5, Mv 30 ft. Rudimentary dark vision, advantage when detecting danger or scents.

*Werespider*, AC 15, HD 3+3, Bite 1d6 + 1d3 Dex loss (*Luck* (Con) save negates), 19: a giant spider comes to the lycanthrope's aid, S16 D17 C12 I10 P10 W10 Ch8, L6, Mv 30 ft inc up walls, ceiling etc. Lycanthrope with the usual benefits (LFG p.95). By spending an action, may exert control and issue orders to spiders of all kinds. Rudimentary dark vision, advantage when detecting danger or scents. Skorn lycanthropy cannot be spread to non-skorn.

#### **Area 6 – Rock Pillar**

This high plinth of rock is 80 ft higher than the valley floor (but lower than the 200 ft walls). The

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top is largely unremarkable but for a narrow 10 ft fissure. Lurking within is a hibernating *Ochre Jelly*. The creature will not emerge unless warm blooded creatures approach within 30 ft, and even then only if overcast, raining or night time (otherwise a burbling, popping and sucking noise might be heard, but there is no sign of the predator within. At the GM's option, the monstrosity might attempt to track the party later, following their spoor).



*Ochre Jelly*, AC 11, HD 8, Pseudopod 2d8, 19: the jelly splits in two, S18 D10 C16 I2 P13 W16 Ch1 L9, Mv 30 ft inc walls, ceiling, etc. Jellies absorb any adventurer reduced to zero hit points in one round, making recovery of the body impossible. They are immune to fire and split in two via cold damage (divide hit points in half).

### Area 7 – Rock Spire Watchers

These tall rock pillars are 70 ft higher than the valley walls. Perched atop each are 3d6 *Winged Abominations*; 4 ft tall blasphemous fusions of man, avian and reptile, bound together with dark witchery. This unique flock of monsters has watched over the valley since the Second Age, sustained by the region's magic.

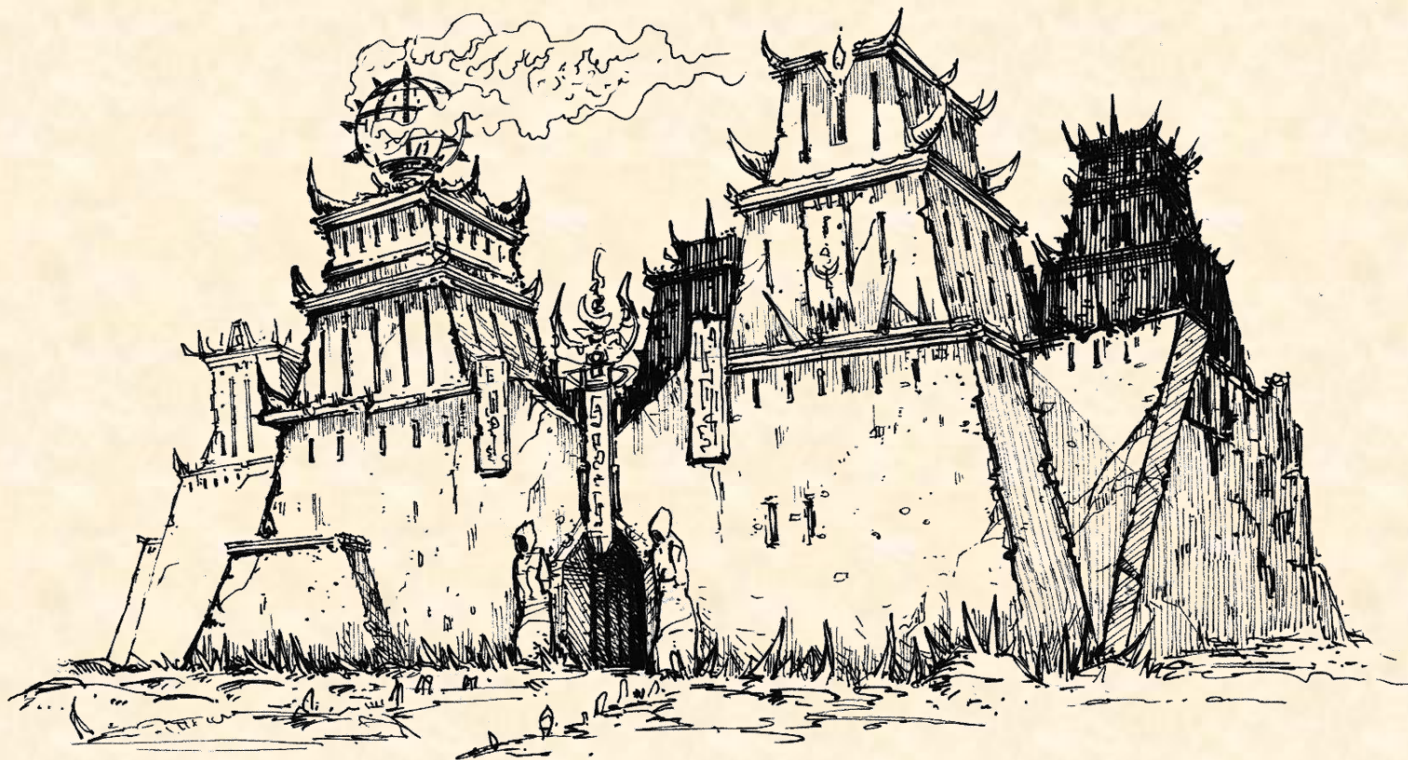
*Winged Abomination*, AC 14, HD 3+3, Claws 1d8+1, 19: special, S6 D10 C18 I- P15 W- Ch-, L6, Mv Fly 90 ft. An abomination may breathe a cone of sickly yellow gas, 30 ft long and 10 ft wide at the base, causing 4d8 poison damage (*Luck* (Con) save for half, recharge 30% at start of turn). On a Nat 19, the monster emits a dreadful wail (30 ft radius, living creatures *Luck* (Will) check or lose 1d2 Will). Sees as well in darkness as in light.

### Area 8 – City Entrance Tunnel

Huge 20 ft wide, 40 ft tall basalt doors, decorated with the skull mask icon of Baalec, are set into the valley wall. The doors are shut and sealed with a *Wizard Lock* spell at 4<sup>th</sup> level (LFG p.80). Devotees of Baalec may open the doors without effort. Alternatively, with sufficient time and right tools, the doors may be breached to allow access.

Beyond the doors is a 20 ft wide corridor, gradually descending for 200 ft before emerging into a hidden valley.

The entire region is concealed by a potent illusion that causes the area to appear as impenetrable rocky badlands. The *Norgu* are well aware of the Badlands' accursed sorcery, and her guardians, and stay well away. Characters approaching the citadel through the entry tunnel are immune to the illusion effect.



### Ortu Menon

Characters entering the hidden section of the valley via Area 8 see through the concealing illusion as a momentary haze. A *Detect Magic* spell radiates illusion and necromantic magic in all directions.

The entry tunnel opens up into a 1,000 ft wide ravine of similar climate to the unhidden valley; the area is dry, littered with scree and absent any plant life. In some places are obvious, very large 7 ft long claw tracks (the undead dragon in Area 7). If the tracks are followed, they quickly disappear (as if the creature had flown away).


In the centre of the valley, approximately 2,000 ft distant, is Ortu Menon. Part stronghold, part temple, the cultists' citadel towers above the valley floor, stone walls decorated with jutting spines. Three large vertical tablets are inscribed with litanies praising the Master of Bones. On a high tower to the west, a gigantic iron brazier emits a gossamer yellow haze, which swiftly

evaporates into nothing (Area 3).

The hidden citadel was destroyed not by the cultists' enemies, but by their own folly. Dark and terrible magic inevitably got the better of the necromancers when a grand ritual went catastrophically awry. Ortu Menon's population was struck dead or worse (transmuted into unholy horrors, trapped in vile demi planes, rendered utterly mad, etc). Now, no living creature remains here, but the keep is far from unoccupied. Its monstrous denizens are bound to the valley, unable to set foot beyond her confines (if forced outside, they crumble to dust).

There are a number of means of entry into the fortress, the most obvious being the southern 15 ft double entry doors, flanked by twin statues of skull masked cultists (Area 1). The shortest walls are approximately 30 ft high, dotted with numerous open windows. A second set of doors may be found on the western face (Area 5).





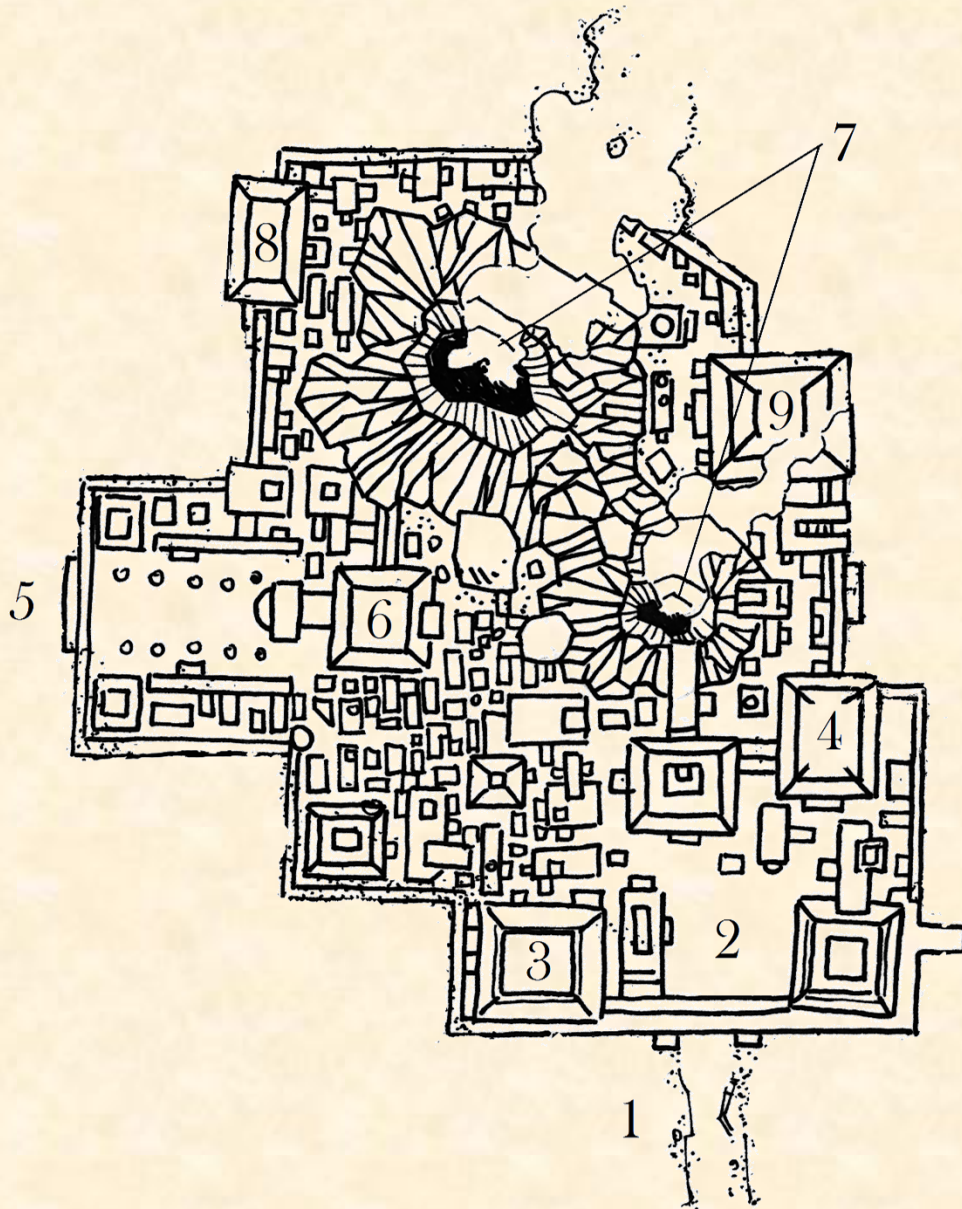
## Citadel Encounters

As the party explores the citadel, there is a 40% chance of an encounter every half hour. The GM might also choose make a check if the party is too flashy or loud. If an encounter occurs, roll 1d10. Add an extra 1 to the result for each prior encounter (eg for the 3<sup>rd</sup> encounter, roll 1d10+2, and so on).

1. 2d6 *Skeletons* (LFG p.124) with spears and chainmail are on eternal patrol, clattering along the street or into a building. They attack anyone not dressed in Baalec cultist robes (or displaying some other icon of Baalec). Destroying the skeletons adds an extra 1 to any future encounter rolls.
2. A mob of 3d8 *Zombies* (LFG p.131) are shuffling along the street, or in a nearby room, moaning awfully. They attack all living creatures.
3. 2d6 *Shades* (LFG p.123) glide into the PCs chamber under a door, from beneath a chest, floating down from the ceiling or nearby rooftops. They crave the PCs' living essence.
4. The pitted remains of an iron wrought flower is somewhere nearby (on a shelf, on the ground covered in grit, sitting in a crumbling drawer). The rose was a lover's gift to a (now) incorporeal *Banshee* (LFG p.99). *Uzerhet* (wild haired, naked, emaciated) appears through a nearby wall etc in 2d6 rounds to throttle any who dare touch it (she ignores others).
5. A *Barrow Wight* (LFG p.129), an ex-Baalec necromancer named *Shupnek*, enters the chamber or is passing nearby. He is quite delusional, whispering and cackling secretively to himself. If *Shupnek* detects humans, he pretends to be a zombie, attempting to gauge their threat level. He will gladly turn the PCs into zombies if given the chance.
6. 1d6 *Wraiths* (LFG p.130) materialize through the wall, or appear from a building down the street, luminous figures wrapped in curling smoke, armed with hooked swords.
7. 2d4 *Will o' Wisps* (LFG p.129) appear in the distance as floating, gaseous lights of pale green and flickering purple. They attempt to lead the party into the open to attract the *Undead Dragon*. If the wisps are defeated, add an extra 1 to any future encounter rolls.
8. 1d4 *Gibbering Terrors* (LFG p.98) are hibernating in a nearby room or building, sustained by the necromantic energies permeating the citadel. They awaken if living creatures approach within 60 ft.
9. The PCs' presence in the undead citadel has triggered the summoning of an *Invisible Stalker* (LFG p.115). The void beast stalks the PCs, locating them within 1d4 hours, and strikes to kill. It will wait till the PCs separate, or some are asleep, before attacking.
10. The *Undead Dragon* from Area 7 has caught the party's scent and is seeking them. If outside, it descends on the PCs from above. If inside, it's terrible shrieking can be heard in the skies overhead.



Citadel Map



### Area 1 – Main Entrance

The great 15 ft double entry doors are not locked but are stuck, requiring a Str (Athletics) check to open. Opening the door makes a very loud creaking noise.

### Area 2 – Southern Square

This plaza is 100 ft wide and flanked by two large towers to the east and west, plus a large welcome hall to the north. Numerous smaller buildings are scattered about the edges.

Standing about the square, in a state of semi stasis, are 3d8+10 *Brain Eating Zombies* (wearing what remains of cultists' robes, travellers' cloaks and guard dress), amidst long rotten carts and stalls. The zombies awaken within 2d4 rounds, or if attacked, and track the party's scent.

*Brain Eating Zombie*, AC 11, HD 2+2, Bite 1d8+1, 19: a defeated zombie reanimates and comes to aid this one, S15 D17 C18 I- P12 W- Ch-, L5, Mv 20 ft. An adventurer reduced to zero hp



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must be recovered in one round or their brains are eaten, turning them into a zombie in 1d4 minutes. Brain eating zombies may put on a brief burst of speed (move 40 ft) for one round up to once per hour (recharge 30%).

### Area 3 – Iron Brazier

This 60 ft tower is filled with crumbling artefacts of the cultists, including broken tables, beds, shelves, etc. Scavenging through the debris returns 1 x Carry Loot and 1 x Curios & Trinkets (LFG p.136, 141). The wooden stairs are dangerously rotted, requiring a Dex (Acrobatics) check to avoid crashing through a particularly damaged section (fall 1d6 x 10 ft).

At the top of the tower is a huge, 15 ft iron brazier, from which twinkling yellow smoke issues, seemingly from the centre, though no source is apparent. Detect Magic indicates potent illusion magic. If any part of the brazier is broken (not easily done, immune to non-magical weapons, but not *cold iron*, requires 100 hp damage to break a section), the Citadel's illusion enchantment is broken forever. Damaging the brazier summons the *Undead Dragon* from Area 7 (arrives in 2d4 rounds) and the *Skeleton Warriors* from Area 4 (arrive in 2d6+10 rounds).

### Area 4 – Barracks

This 60 ft by 80 ft building is decorated with shields bearing the skull icon of Baalec, and was the barracks for the keep's guards. The vast majority of the gear has rotted or rusted over time, but 1d3 suits of metal armour and 1d4 metal weapons (inc one silvered sword) are salvageable.

5d6 *Skeleton Warriors* remain here in a state of semi stasis. If they hear a ruckus in Area 2, or the PCs approach within 60 ft, they awaken within

1d4 rounds. The skeletons seek to disarm and bind the PCs, then drag them to a rusty cell to be kept as prisoners (indefinitely).



*Skeletal Warriors*, AC 15, HD 1, Sword 1d8+1, 19: a defeated skeleton reanimates to aid this one, S15 D7 C18 I- P12 W- Ch- L5, Mv 60 ft. Immune to piercing projectiles such as arrows and automatically detect living creatures within 60 ft.

If defeated, 1 x Carry Loot and 1 x Potion (LFG p.136, 150) may be seized from crumbling chests.

### Area 5 – Western Entry and Prayer Plaza

A single massive 20 ft iron drawbridge decorated with motifs of cultists holding skulls aloft to a

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colossal raven serves as the western entry point. The door is long rusted and effectively encased in the wall and impassable. Scaling the walls is relatively easy with the right gear, or requires a Str (Athletics) check to free climb (else fall 15 ft, causing 1d6 damage).

Beyond is a 100 ft by 200 ft grand plaza, with ornate flagstones and 30 ft prayer pillars (carved with Baalec invocations). Standing to attention along the sides are 5d6 *Skeletal Warriors* (see Area 4), but with tattered capes inlaid with web like silver (worth 2d6 x 10 gp if all collected). Living creatures entering the plaza are attacked. Reciting orisons from the prayer pillars (in *Old Ramoran*, a character fluent in Ramoran may read it with an Int check) keeps the plaza guardians at bay.

If the warriors are defeated, 1 x Carry Loot may be found (LFG p.136).

### **Area 6 – Temple of Baalec**

The 80 ft wide, flat roofed temple of Baalec, consists of a mixture of black basalt and white quartz, framed with decorative pillars of flying ravens. Moving past the entry arch, one enters a short hallway before emerging into the nave proper; a circular chamber with 45 ft ceilings and stone congregation benches, divided by narrow aisles.

An iron altar rests against the far wall, rusted and pitted with age. Whatever ancient prayers once inscribed it are no longer readable. 2d6 fire opals are still relatively untarnished however and may be pried loose (1d4 x 200 gp per opal).

The church is not unguarded. A single 14 ft *Stone Golem* of black basalt (in the likeness of a cowed cultist) stands to one side, keeping perpetual watch over the inner sanctum. Anyone defiling

the area is attacked. The golem cannot leave the confines of the temple.

*Stone Golem*, AC 16, HD 11+3, 2 x Fists 2d8, 19: bear hug, S21 D11 C23 I- P13 W- Ch-, L11, Mv 20 ft. Usual Golem benefits (LFG p.112) as well as 60% Magic Resistance, except against Stone to Flesh, Transmute Rock to Mud, Stoneshape or Move Earth spells which cause 6d8 damage (once only). A golem that hits a target with both attacks crushes the target (*Luck* (Con) save to avoid rolling on the *Injuries & Setbacks* table).

### **Area 7 – Sulphurous Craters**

These huge (150 ft and 100 ft diameter) craters opened long centuries after the temple was abandoned, swallowing many buildings and their undead or monstrous inhabitants. Sulphurous fumes curl upwards from time to time, poisoning the air (50% chance when the PCs arrive, requiring a *Luck* (Con) save or 3d6 damage and lose 1d2 Dex).

By a quirk of fate, a primordial dragon skeleton was unearthed when the craters formed. After generations of exposure to the fortress' necromantic power, the wyrm's skeleton reanimated as undead.

The unholy monstrosity is mindless, and knows only the base instinct of hunger. It seeks to devour any and all living creatures it detects. The dragon's animus is inextricably bound to the citadel; it cannot exit the boundaries of the hidden valley (if forced outside, it permanently deanimates).

*Undead Dragon, Boss Monster*, AC 22, HD 18 (154 hp), 2 Claws 2d10 and Bite 3d10+2, 19: special, S23 D14 C23 I- P18 W- Ch-, L16, Mv 60 ft or 120 ft flying. Boss monster with all the usual benefits (LFG p.95), and Dragon traits (LFG p.105). The skeletal dragon may breathe a 240 ft

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long, 60 ft wide cone of impenetrable life leeching shadow, causing 16d8 damage and 1d6 Str loss (*Luck* (Con) save for half, 30% recharge at start of dragon's turn).

If the undead dragon is defeated, its bones and teeth are worth 2d4 x 1,000 gp to the right collector/chemist/artificer. A handful of scales may also be retrieved, enough to fashion a single weapon, shield or armour piece (special qualities left to GM discretion).

PCs attempting to descend the craters find the edges slippery with scree, requiring a Str (Acrobatics) check to free climb (or slip into the crater holes, which drop > 200 ft). Using ropes etc negates any fall chance. There is no dragon hoard at the bottom of the drop shafts, only the broken corpses of long dead Morukzakir (1 Carry Loot, 1 x Valuables, LFG 136, 141).

### Area 8 – Noble Villa

This building was once a richly appointed villa, but is now a crumbling ruin. Entry is via a broken door or hole in the roof. Inside, various trinkets and treasures may be searched for (1 x Carry Loot, 1 x Trinkets & Curios LFG p.136, 141).

Of most import is a locked trophy room (Dex (Traps & Locks) check to open), trapped with a poison needle (*Luck* (Dex) save or paralysed hand for 1d6 days). Inside are stuffed animals and humanoids, including various humans, a dwarf, and an elf. The elf is wearing a mithril breastplate (worth 1d8 x 1,000 gp to the right buyer).

### Area 9 – Necromancers' Tower

The necromancers' 90 ft tower is fashioned of black basalt, highlighted with capstones of shiny obsidian. The entire structure has been magically preserved throughout the ages and is in excellent

condition. The tower is windowless, with a single stone entry door patterned with white glyphs.

The door is *Wizard Locked* (LFG p.80) at 7<sup>th</sup> level (manifests as skeletal hands holding the door shut), but may be broken apart with sufficient time (albeit noisily, drawing the attention of the dragon in Area 7, and abominations within).

The interior is remarkably well preserved, primarily consisting of a series of bedrooms, laboratories and a grand library, still holding many forbidden tomes (3d6 x 100 gp to the right buyer, as well as 1d3+1 Scrolls LFG p.152).

Of all the denizens of Citadel, the necromancers fared the worst when their grand ritual backfired, transforming 3d6 of them into mewling, fleshy masses of slime ridden blubber. The *Vile Terrors* are pure manifestations of sloth and greed, subsisting on the necromantic energies of the fortress, trapped in unending, torturous starvation. If the terrors detect the party, they lurch into motion, ravenous for their succulent flesh.

*Vile Terror*, AC 15, HD 6, Fleshy Slap 2d6, 19: *Void Channel*: target must roll on the *Dark & Dangerous Magic* table (Mid p.30, LFG p.57), S17 D9 C18 I3 P11 W17 Ch1, L8, Mv 30 ft. The Terrors have the usual aberration benefits (LFG p.98).

The *Altar of Baalec* (composed of human bones) is present at the top of the tower, behind a locked door (Dex (Traps & Locks) check at -2 penalty to open, or the key may be found in one of the cultists' bedrooms). The altar is magical and radiates blinding necromantic and transmutation magic if *Detect Magic* is used. The altar loses its magic if removed from the fortress.

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Forbidden tomes in the library reveal how the altar works. Once every four years, when the stars are properly aligned, a dead human may be placed upon the altar. If a young child of good health is sacrificed, and the proper prayers intoned, the dead human is restored to life in 1d4 days. There is a 50% chance the body is in fact inhabited by a demonic or alien force masquerading as the original identity (it gains some of the original's memories, but not all). If the original soul is restored, it suffers an incurable serious madness. Activating the altar automatically triggers a *Dark & Dangerous* magic effect (rolled at disadvantage).

Looting the tower in its entirety garners 1 x 8 HD Lair Treasure (LFG p.140).

### Other Buildings

For other buildings not numbered on the map, roll 2d6 on the following table to determine the nature of the building. Approx 50% of structures are in ruins:

2: *Necromancer's abode*. 50% chance of a Potion or Scroll (LFG p.150, 152).

3-4: *Rich Villa*. 40% chance of Valuables.

5: *Shop*. 25% chance of Carry Loot (LFG p.136).

6-8: *Domicile*. 20% chance of Trinket or Curio (LFG p.141).

9: *Shop*. 25% chance of Valuables (LFG p.147).

10: *Complete ruin*. Nothing of interest.

11: *Domicile infested with undead* (2d4 skeletons, zombies or shades, equal chance).

12: *Cursed Domicile*. This building is particularly infused with dark magic, requiring a *Luck* (Con) save to avoid 1d2 Will loss.



### Aftermath

If the Citadel's illusion is broken, other forces might begin to investigate and take up residence in the fort, but only if the undead dragon and the other guardians are removed.

Otherwise, the inhabitants are effectively imprisoned within, and will not venture out. If word of the resurrection altar gets around, other powerful (and desperate) folk might possibly risk journeying here to use it (perhaps unwittingly unleashing a demon/alien force on the world, which could also be the outcome if Borgov is restored to life).

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## CREDITS

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