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# TOWER OF BAAL



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# Tower of Baal

## *Rumours & Hooks*

Four hundred years ago, the *Tower of Baal* stood as a sombre monument to the *Battle of the High Plains*, a tomb for hundreds of fallen *Argosan* warriors. Abandoned over the centuries, the *Libram Damogra* suggests the tower's secret altar was once decorated with the *Cloak of Bellaphas*, a relic blessed by the *Lord of Crows* himself. In all the years since, the cloak has never resurfaced.

## **Dead Men Walking**

Four hundred years ago, after a brutal conflict with rival barbarians, the *Argosans* interned hundreds of dead warriors in catacombs beneath a short mountain range known as the *Rock of Gorzat*.

Expanding on the naturally formed tunnels, the *Argosans* excavated alcoves and ossuaries to lay the fallen, carving out an altar sacred to the *Lord of Crows* (*Baal*, god of the dead, decay, suffering and disease). Above ground, alongside the rumbling *Red March Falls*, a tower was erected as an enduring shrine and monument.

Over the centuries, increasing *skorn* (beastmen) numbers eventually lead to the monument being abandoned. In the underground shrine, an enchanted cloak (once the mantle of the shrine's eldest priest) began to malfunction, greedily channelling necromantic forces from beyond the Veil.

In recent months, the necromantic energies reached a tipping point, animating the bones of the dead. Skeletal warriors are lurching to "life", emerging from subterranean graves to resume

their ancient patrols, slaying anyone they encounter.

Although the tower is in a relatively remote location in the *High Plains*, the nearby outpost of *Fronbury* is in danger. More than one sighting of the undead has been reported, the settlement's few rangers are already struggling to fend off barbarian and *skorn* raiders.

*Overseer Venka* (60s, grey haired Fighter 3, wheezing, religious forehead brand) would be glad to have the assistance of some expendable fortune hunters, and is willing to pay handsomely.



The party might become involved in this adventure by (i) accepting *Overseer Venka's* standing offer of 400 gp to eradicate the source of the skeletal warriors, (ii) being attacked by undead while camped, or (iii) finding reference to the *Cloak of Bellaphas* in an old religious tome.

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## Crossing the Plains

Reaching the *Rock of Gorzat* and the tower part way up the cliffs is at least a two day trek from *Fronbury* through the *Great Plains*.

The plains are dominated by verdant grasses that grow up to four feet high. Trees are uncommon and sparsely spaced, with occasional groves of oaks and willows. In some regions, thorny shrubs have taken hold, overwhelming other plant life. Animals are abundant, including small game, horses, bison, panthers and birds of prey (including giant varieties).

Xenophobic thuel (barbarian) clans such as the *Skull Drinkers*, *Burnt Ones* and *Half Crows* ride the plains, taking advantage of their mobility to avoid the skorn horde that controls the region.

There is a 30% chance of an encounter every 8 hours. If an encounter occurs, roll 1d10:

1. 2d4 *Centaurs* (LFG p.102) are dragging 1d4 barbarians of the *Skull Drinker* tribe behind them. The thuels are captured scouts, enroute to a nearby centaur camp for interrogation.
2. An enormous herd of hundreds of bison are wandering through the area, migrating to the next major water hole. There is a 50% chance of 4d6 *Skorn* (Midlands p.104) in the long grass nearby, hoping to ambush any human hunters.
3. 1d4 *Giant Eagles* (LFG p.106) and 1d3 infant birds are riding the thermals high above, on the lookout for a potential meal. They will try to attack and carry

away a moderately sized animal (dog, mule, pony, etc).

4. A single (70%) or pair (30%) of *Giant Serpents* (LFG p.122) are lairing nearby in the long grass, the female laying a clutch of eggs. They will attack and/or drive off trespassers.
5. A band of 4d6 warrior *Skeletons* (p.10) from the tower are patrolling this area, drawn to extinguish the life force of nearby humans.
6. Earth rumbles underfoot for a short period before a *Baby Bulette* (2 ft long) bursts from the soil, chomping at a random PC's boot.

*Baby Bulette*, AC 14, HD 1, Bite 1d8+1, 19: the bulette latches on, automatically causing bite damage on its turn (opposed Str check to shake off), S17 D7 C10 I3 P10 W7 Ch8, L4, Mv 20 ft inc burrowing. +4 to hit and double damage if target surprised. Auto sense ground borne creatures within 90 ft.

There is a 50% chance the baby is within communicating distance of its sleeping mother, a full grown *Bulette* (LFG p.102). Attacking the infant causes a furious parent to arrive in 2d6 rounds.

7. A solitary *Wraith* (LFG p.130) descends on the party's camp during the witching hour. Like all undead, it hungers for the souls of the living, and will not retreat until at least one large sentient creature is dead by its spectral hand (horse, human, etc).



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8. The weather turns foul, inundating the plains with cold, misty rain for the next two days. The relentless wet grinds on the adventurers' spirits; PCs lose 1 point of Will (*Luck* (Will) save resists).

9. Panicked calls can be heard before 1d4 *Half Crow* barbarians (LFG p.114) burst into view through the grasses. They are clearly running away from something (a *Western Panther*, Midlands p.101 or *Tiger* (LFG p.127).

10. A 10d6 *Skorn* (Midlands p.104) war party is on the move, horns blaring and drums beating as they cross the plains. If they notice the PCs, they inevitably attempt to catch and eat them (likely stealth or chase scenario).

### Climbing the Rock

The *Rock of Gorzat* is an abrupt and isolated stretch of sandstone mountains dividing the high and low plains, as if dropped from the sky to neatly divide the grasslands into two.

Reaching the tower is a three day climb up relatively steep slopes (quite taxing; requires a Con check to avoid 1 Str loss). Every 16 hours, there is a 50% chance of a random encounter. If an encounter occurs, roll 1d6:

1. Recent storms have weakened an overhead bluff, creating a 10% chance per PC (cumulative) of collapse. Anyone on the trail below suffers 4d6 damage as part of the mountain suddenly slides away (Int or Perc (Wilderness Lore) check forewarns of danger, otherwise *Luck* (Dex) save for half).

2. A dark cave retreats into nearby mountainside, from which a flickering light may be seen (a solitary *Minotaur* (LFG p.118) named *Komerzu* lives within, revered by a handful of outcast thuels. The monster is sleeping off a drunken binge).



3. A dust covered "pool" gathered at the bottom of a narrow pass turns out to be a *Grey Ooze* (LFG p.112). The ooze is hibernating but will awaken in 2d4 rounds if a human approaches within 120 ft.

4. Odd stalagmites at the base of a small cliff section are marked with what appear to be blood stained runes. An Int (Arcane Lore) check reveals abjuration magic is sealing something *within* the stone spires.

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5. Guttural laughing and snorting can be heard before a 12 ft *Ettin* (LFG p.108) emerges from around a bend, chortling to itself. It is chewing on the charred remains of a human thighbone.

6. 4d6 *Barbarians* (LFG p.114) of the *Burnt Ones* tribe are waiting in ambush for the party at the top of a steep ravine. They have 1d6 large boulders (2d6 hp damage, *Luck* (Dex) save to avoid) to drop on the adventurers, before firing arrows and finally closing for melee.

## The Tower

The *Tower of Baal* is approximately 40 ft tall, made of aging, lichen covered sandstone, with small arched windows and oak doors. The structure appears somewhat sound; the roof has clearly collapsed, and some sections of the upper wall crumbled, depositing rubble on the earth below. No light or sounds emanate from within.

The catacombs beneath the tower are mostly naturally formed, about 7 ft high and 5 ft wide. The tunnels are completely dark (barring Area 17), cold, and largely silent.

The entire complex is tainted with necromantic energy, partly as a result of the original cultist blessings, but mostly due to the malfunctioning cloak in Area 16. Local barbarians and beastmen abhor the site as cursed and stay well away. No living person has set foot in the tower for more than two centuries.

## Interior Encounters

While exploring the tower, the GM may call for a random encounter at any time. Alternatively, there is a 50% chance of an encounter every 20 minutes, or if the party is overly noisy or draws

attention to itself. If an encounter occurs, roll 1d8:

1. 2d6 freshly risen *Skeletons* from Area 14 are gaining their bearings, patrolling the tower and caverns.
2. A *Fungus Zombie* from Area 13 shambles around the corner, wandering the complex in an effort to locate the living, or make its way outside.
3. A faceless, incorporeal spirit emerges from a wall, drawn to the PCs. It has a vaguely female shape, and appears “clothed” in barbarian garb. The spirit wants to guide the party to its bones in Area 17. If they refuse, a supernatural chill comes over them (lose 1 *Luck*), and the ghost vanishes.
4. A flock of bats flutters out of a doorway or winding passage, piercing the darkness with short squeaks and chirps. The bats are harmless, but might draw attention to the area.
5. 1d4 *Giant Centipedes* from Area 15 are crawling along the ceiling, antennae twitching for a fresh, juicy meal.
6. Strange clicks, hisses, skittering and clattering can be heard echoing in nearby tunnels. If the PCs investigate, they find a *Giant Scorpion* (LFG p.121) battling 1d6 *Skeletons* (the scorpion entered via Area 18).
7. An earth tremor releases pockets of vertigo inducing gas from beneath the pool in Area 17. The invisible, lighter than air gas smells acidic, and slowly



# TOWER OF BAAL



Cellar Floor



Ground Floor



Upper Floor  
(partly collapsed)



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floats up the main passage. It passes around the doorframe of Area 8, Area 6, etc until escaping into the atmosphere at Area 2. PCs exposed to the gas must make a *Luck* (Con) check or suffer 1d4 Dex loss.

8. A patch of 1d4 *Green Slime* (LFG p.112) are dormant on the ceiling nearby. They awaken within 1d6 rounds of a living human approaching within 120 ft.

## Interior Areas

### Area 1 – Ground Floor

Entry to the ground floor is via a locked oak door, marked with a silver murder of crows icon (Baal's symbol). A Dex (Traps & Locks) check opens the door, or a Str check forces it open.

The 30 ft diameter chamber has a 20 ft ceiling, much of which has collapsed and is in pieces on the floor. The plaster walls are painted with frescoes of Baal services, including funerals, ancestor worship, tending the suffering, torturing enemy soldiers, and executions.

A large table, fireplace and shelves are the only furnishings (mugs, plates, utensils, a few old books and tied papers that are no longer legible). An Int (General Lore) check suggests one of the books appears to be some kind of pilgrim register, dating back 270 years. A large hole in a rotting trapdoor leads to the cellar (Area 3), or stairs to the upper floor (Area 2).

### Area 2 – Upper Floor

The upper floor is approximately 20 ft off the ground, the ceiling completely collapsed along with small sections of wall, leaving gaps in the stone. Climbing up is possible (Str (Athletics) check or automatic with a rope and grapple).

Whatever furniture once occupied the chamber has eroded in the weather, long rotten pieces of timber the only trace. The floor is heavily damaged with large sections collapsed. Walking here in heavy armour requires a Dex check to avoid plummeting through the rotten beams to the ground floor below (2d6 fall damage).

### Area 3 – Cellar

Access to the 30 ft diameter cellar is via the broken trapdoor in Area 1. Below the 5 ft wide hole is a circular stair that winds around the eastern wall.

Funnelled webs dominate the southern half of the room, making it difficult to see beyond. Beneath the stairs (leading to the ground floor trapdoor) are 1d4+3 *Baby Giant Spiders* (about 2 ft wide).

The spiders sleep in webs during the day, and go out hunting at night with their Broodmother (in Area 4). An attack on the baby spiders draws the attention of the mother.

*Baby Giant Spider*, AC 10, HD 1d4 hp, Bite 1d4 + poison, 19: special, S7 D17 C6 I2 P8 W7 Ch5 L3, Mv 30 ft inc up walls etc. On a Nat 19+ the victim in webbed and helpless (*Luck* (Str) save resists, victim may spend an action to break free, opposed Str check vs Str 10). Poison causes 1d6 damage + 1 Dex loss (*Luck* (Con) save resists). An adventurer has a 25% chance of harvesting 1 dose of poison from a dead spider.

The 30 ft diameter cellar holds a number of barrels of old spirits (75% chance they are spoiled, but if not, a barrel is worth 50 + 5d10 gp).

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#### Area 4 – Pantry

The kitchen and pantry contains various tables and shelves filled with old spoiled food and spices. The entire area is covered with webs, with a central funnel in the middle. A number of dead barbarian and ranger corpses can be seen hanging in the sticky strands.

The *Broodmother* (7 ft long) is concealed in the webs, hiding in the western corner (Perc check spots her darker patch). The giant spider is decades old, and will attempt to flee if severely injured. Lighting the webs on fire, or killing the baby spiders in Area 3 however, sends the Broodmother into a rage.

*Broodmother*, AC 13, HD 4 (29 hp), Bite 1d6+1 + poison, 19: special, S14 D16 C12 I2 P12 W10 Ch4 L5, Mv 40 ft inc up walls etc. *Off Turn Attacks* and *Major Exploit Protection*. On a Nat 19+ the victim in webbed and helpless (*Luck* (Str) save resists, victim may spend an action to break free, opposed Str check vs Str 17). Poison causes 1d6 damage + 1 Dex loss (*Luck* (Con) save resists). An adventurer may harvest 1d3 doses of poison from the dead monstrosity.

If the broodmother is slain, searching the various corpses turns up 1 x Carry Loot.

#### Area 5 – Storage

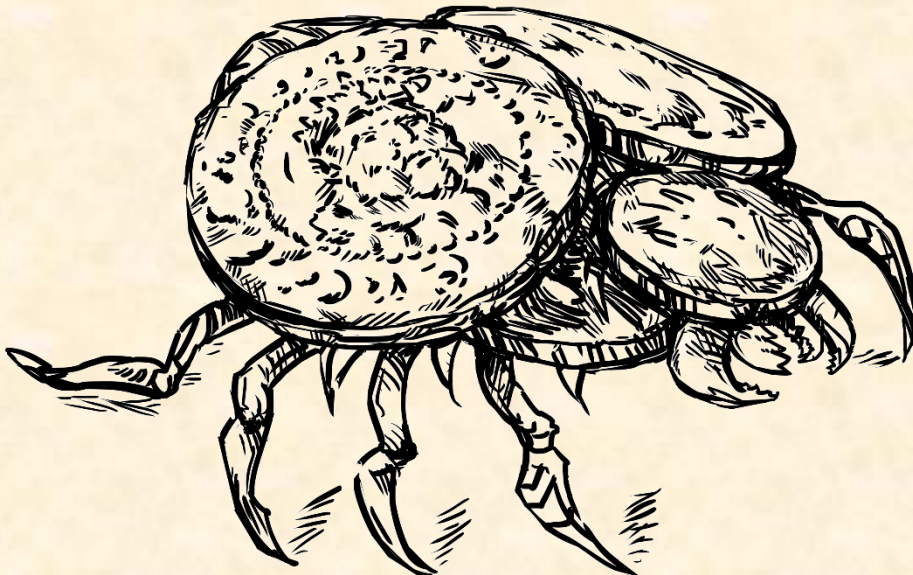
This 20 ft by 15 ft storage room is empty (50%) or contains a large crate holding 2d6 candles, a lantern, and 1d4 flasks of oil.

#### Area 6 – Bedchamber

The door to this 20 x 15 ft bedchamber is locked (Dex (Traps & Locks) check to open, or force with a Str check). The interior includes some shelving (old decaying books and some trinkets, including 1 x Trinkets & Curios) and a mould ridden bed.

Pulling back the threadbare bedsheets reveals a patch of *Orange Mould*. The fungus is in stasis until a warm blooded creature comes within 30 ft, at which point it awakens after 1d6 rounds.

*Orange Mould*, AC 10, HD 3, 5 ft radius choking cloud 1d6, 19: special, S14 D5 C12 I2 P10 W-Ch-L6, Mv 20 ft inc up walls etc. *Orange Mould* moves in a hypnotic, wave like motion, releasing spore motes in its wake, choking its victims before incubating within them. On a Nat 19+ the victim is exposed to a random disease.





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### Area 7 – Strongroom

The 10 ft square strongroom is locked (Dex (Traps & Locks) check at -3 penalty to open, or Str check great success). Inside are three chests containing old tithes (1 x 2 HD Lair Treasure). Hidden within the coins however are 1d4 *Treasure Ticks*.

Treasure ticks are 1 inch parasites drawn to the smell of valuable metal and gems. The bugs have an uncanny chameleonic ability, able to change colour and shape to match surrounding coins, gemstones, etc, where they hibernate until a suitably warm blooded victim becomes available.

If collected in a pouch etc, the bugs burrows out in 1d6 minutes, entering the flesh of their victim to feed on their blood (they secrete an anesthetic effect similar to a leech). Detecting the burrowing tick requires a Perc check at disadvantage. If undetected, the parasite causes blood poisoning (1 Str and Dex loss after 1d4 hours, and a minor madness). Removing the tick requires deep flesh surgery (Int (Apothecary) check, causing 1d4 damage. If improperly performed, the victim suffers an *Injury* (roll 1d6, 1: Arm, 2: Leg, 3: Internal Bleeding, 4: Festering Wound 5: Muscle Tear, 6: System Shock).

### Area 8 – Study

This 15 ft by 25 ft study contains several desks and bookshelves (lined with religious iconography and brittle, sacred tomes; worth 2d6 x 50 gp to the right buyer).

One of the desks has a blessed book (if read, a believer in the gods gains 1 *Reroll Pool* die (temporarily increasing beyond their maximum if applicable, once only), and a ritual knife (*cold iron*).

### Area 9 – Trap

The door from Area 8 has a sliding bar on the study side (not breakable in the absence of a ram). Descending stairs lead to a series of warding prayers part way down the corridor.

The prayers are inscribed into the walls and floor in ruby red, spidery lettering (traditional of *Baal* cultists). The prayers include intonations such as “*All are equal before Baal*”, “*No life without death*”, “*Bones & Dust, Blood & Rust*” etc). Anyone passing by without intoning a prayer to the *Lord of Crows* is subject to a sacred rebuke. Roll 1d4:

1. Suffer a serious madness (*Luck* (Will) save resists).
2. 1d4 Will loss (no save).
3. Weapon shatters on next fumbled attack (if magical, damaged instead, not usable until repaired).
4. *Suggestion* (gift all your coins to the next holy person you meet, lasts 1d4 weeks).

At the far end of the corridor is an iron gate (locked; a Dex (Traps & Locks) check opens it, or it can be broken open with a heavy weapon or tool and 2 x Str (Athletics) great successes). When the gate is opened, roll on the *Interior Encounters* table (p.5).

### Area 10 – Stalagmite Shade

This large cavern includes a number of stalagmites. A single *Shade* lingers here, a long dead warrior with no memory of its original existence. The shade hungers for the life force of living sentients, but can only leave the cavern complex for short periods. It is currently

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absorbing the shrine's necromantic energies, rebuilding its strength.

*Shade*, AC 12, HD 4, Touch 1d6+1 + Str drain 19: the target's weapon or armour (50%) is transformed into shadow (*Luck* save resists), S-D16 C- I10 P13 W10 Ch7, L7, Mv 40 ft inc walls, ceiling, etc. *Incorporeal Undead* with the usual benefits. On a hit, the target loses 1 Str. Targets reduced to zero Str are slain and have a 50% chance of rising as a shade.



### Area 11 – Mould Colony

This small cavern has 1d4 patches of *Yellow Mould* living within. The flesh eating mould is hibernating, but will awaken after 1d4 rounds if humans approach within 30 ft.

*Yellow Mould*, AC 10 (automatic hit in melee), HD 3, Projectile Spore (see below), 19: the spore is extra strong, bursting in a 10 ft radius, S6 D-C16 I2 P14 W- Ch-, L6, Mv immobile. Attacks by

way of projectile spores up to 60 ft that burst in a 10 ft diameter (causing horrible choking death in 1d6 rounds, *Luck* (Con) save resists). An adventurer protecting their nose and mouth with a mask gains advantage on the check.

### Area 12 – Skeleton Camp

This 15 ft diameter cavern has a charcoal fire pit in the centre. 3d6 Skeletons are here at any one time, recently animated from the catacombs.

*Skeleton*, AC 11, HD 1, Spear 1d6+1, 19: another skeleton reanimates or comes to aid this one, S13 D13 C10 I- P13 (special) W- Ch- L4, Mv 30 ft. *Undead*, impervious to piercing attacks. Automatically sense living creatures within 60 ft.

### Area 13 – Fungus Zombies

This 10 x 15 ft chamber contains large swathes of stringy dead brown mould that crumbles at a touch (non-hazardous). 1d6 *Fungus Zombies* are huddled in the southeast corner, motionless, where toxic mould and mushrooms are growing on them. They lurch to “life” if a living creature moves within 10 ft or if they are attacked.

*Fungus Zombie*, AC 11, HD 2, Fist 1d8, 19: another zombie reanimates or comes to aid this one, S15 D7 C18 I- P12 W- Ch- L5, Mv 20 ft. *Undead*. When a fungus zombie is reduced to zero hp, it falls to pieces, releasing a 5 ft diameter cloud of toxic spores (*Luck* (Con) save or 1d4 Str or Dex loss; even chance).

If the zombies are defeated, 1 x Carry Loot (LFG p. 136) may be scavenged from them.

### Area 14 – Catacombs

Beyond this point, the catacombs divide up into a maze of hundreds of alcoves containing the bones of fallen Argosan warriors.



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If the party ventures here, their life force accelerates the animating process, causing 1d8 skeletons to rise every round (up to a maximum of 5d10+500 skeletons). If the party leave this area within 1d4 minutes (back to Area 14), the animating process returns to normal (2d6 skeletons every few days). Each alcove has a 5 - 10% chance of 1 x Carry Loot within.

### Area 15 – Giant Centipede Nest

A nest of 2d12 *Giant Centipedes* lairs in this chamber, clustered around three large rock stalagmites. The undead ignore the insects (not sufficiently sentient to attract them) and the bugs stay out of their way (primarily by crawling along the ceiling out of reach).

*Giant Centipede*, AC 13, HD 2, Bite 1d3 and Stinger (poison), 19: extra strong dose of poison requiring two *Luck* saves instead of one, S14 D14 C10 I- P10 W10 Ch2 L5, Mv 30 ft. Giant centipede poison causes 1 Dex loss (*Luck* (Con) save resists). 25% chance of harvesting one dose of poison from a dead centipede.

### Area 16 – Baal Shrine

This 20 ft by 15 ft cavern has a 20 ft ceiling. A manmade altar to Baal (crow motif) can be seen at the southern end. Behind the altar is a 10 ft stone statue, carved in the likeness of a skull, hovering above a bubbling ooze.

Laying on the altar is the *Cloak of Bellaphas*, one of the tower's most elder priests. The fine, red coloured cloak is enchanted, but malfunctioning, siphoning dark forces from the Veil to animate the dead. Removing the cloak from the site ends the curse.

Unfortunately for all concerned, the cloak has developed a modicum of sentience, and has no

wish to go anywhere. Any PC touching the cloak is attacked.

*Cloak of Bellaphas*, AC 13, HD 5, Choke 2d6, 19: special, S18 D17 C- I- P10 W- Ch- L5, Mv 30 ft flying. On a Nat 19+ the target is wrapped up tight and helpless, automatically suffering 2d6 damage on the cloak's turn (victim may spend their action to make an opposed Str test to break free).

As a magical item, the cloak cannot be destroyed by normal means. If reduced to zero hp however it submits to the party, accepting one of them as its new master if they attune to it.



The cloak has three levels of attunement, as follows:

1. The wearer's skin takes on a pallid tone, and they no longer need to eat or drink.
2. Placing the cloak on a dead body animates it, similar to *Animate Dead*, controlled by the cloak's master.

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3. Once per six months, the cloak animates (use stat block above) for up to 2d6 rounds, obeying the master's commands (no action).

At the GM's option, the cloak might from time to time rally against its master, particularly if their conduct somehow disparages Baal's tenets. In such a case, the PC must make a Will check to resist being possessed by the cloak for 1d6 x 10 minutes. What the cloak does during this time is up to the GM.

### Area 17 – Underground Pool

A 25 ft wide underground river passes through this cavern, forming a deep pool before cascading off the cliff's edge. The bones of a dead barbarian (female) are scattered on the bottom of the pool (see *Interior Encounter 3*, p.5), along with a *silvered* axe inscribed with a flaming brand (*Burnt Ones* tribe).

The pool is tainted with a small number of *Throat Leeches*. Swimming or exploring the pool exposes a random PC to the parasites (*Luck* (Dex) save to avoid swallowing the horrible wrigglers). On a failed save, leeches have entered the victim's throat and latched onto their gullet. Over the next 1d4 hours, and every day afterwards, the leeches feed, causing 1 Str or Con loss (even chance, to a minimum of half the victim's maximum stats).

Removing internal leeches requires surgery and/or special alchemical tinctures that are highly poisonous if not properly administered. An Int (Apothecary) check kills the parasites in 1d3 days. If failed, the victim also suffers 2d4 damage. A desperate victim might drink and regurgitate a flask of acid to kill the creatures in minutes (the drinker suffers 3d6 damage, and cannot use their vocal chords for 1d4 months).

Retrieving the bones, and either (i) granting them a proper burial according to *Burnt Ones* custom, or (ii) returning them or the axe to the tribe, allows the spirit to rest, and permanently increases one PC's maximum *Luck* by 1 point (whoever was most influential in the endeavour).

### Area 18 – Red March Falls

The 150 ft falls descend to a deep pool that runs off down the mountain. Steps cut from the rock form a precarious stairway up to Area 17 above. The steps are slippery with water spray, requiring a Dex check to avoid sliding off if the climbing is done with any kind of speed, or during combat.

A number of skeleton and zombie body parts are scattered about the area (fallen from the descent, and/or picked at by wild animals). A family of 1d2+1 *Giant Eagles* roosts in a high eyrie above. There is a 50% chance the birds are on the wing, looking for a quick meal. If they spot the party, they target the smallest member, attempting to carry them away to their nest to eat in private.

*Giant Eagle*, AC 13, HD 3+3, Bite 2d4 and 2 x Claws 1d6, 19: the target is grabbed and may be carried away, S16 D14 C14 I2 P15 W14 Ch7 L6, Mv 90 ft flying.

If the giant eagles are defeated, and their nest reached, amongst the barbarian and beastmen bones is 1 x Carry Loot.

### Aftermath

If the cloak is removed from the shrine, the undead cease to animate. If not, they emerge in ever increasing numbers, eventually attacking *Fronbury en masse*, slaying everyone within. The outpost is abandoned thereafter.





## CREDITS

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