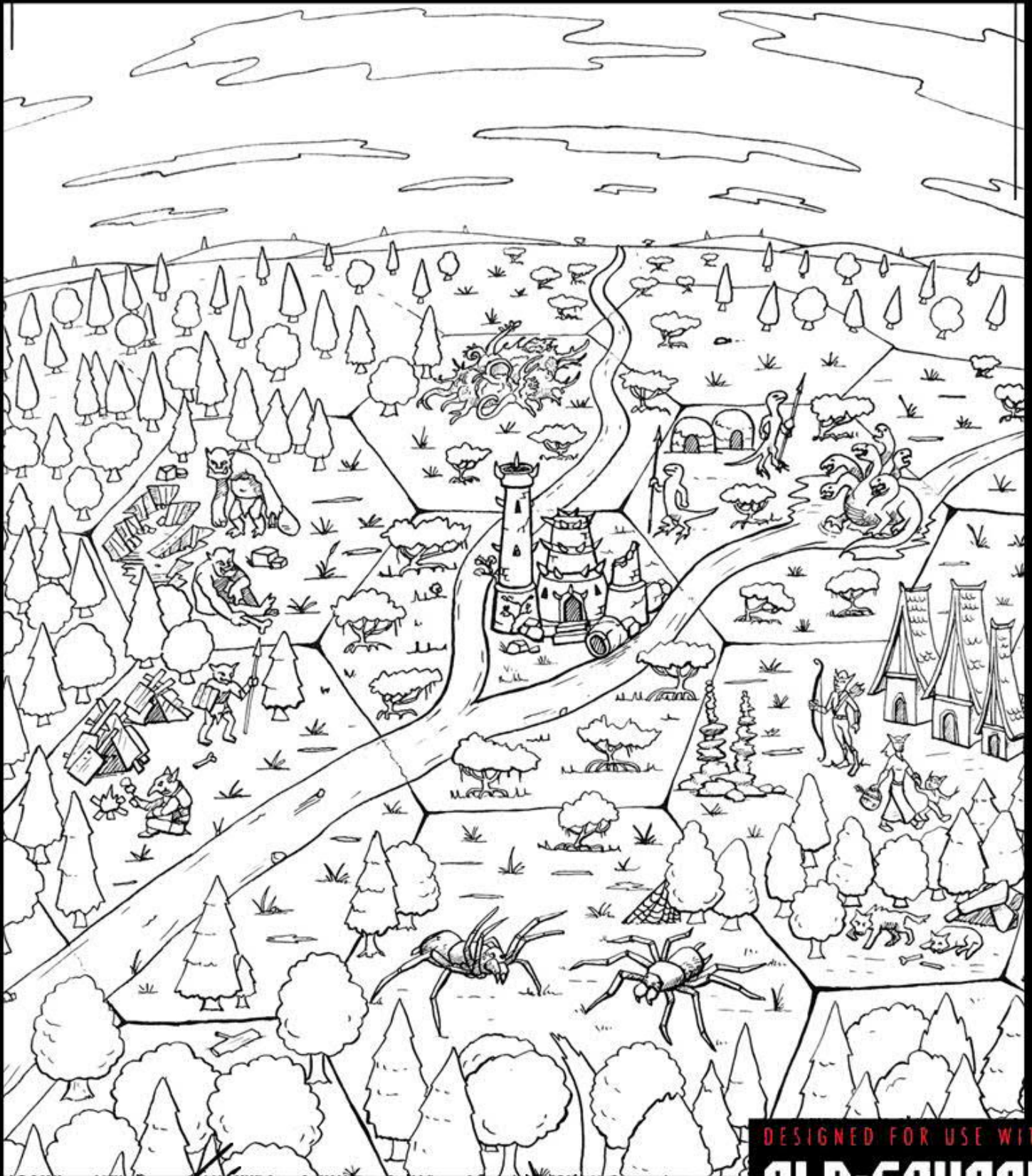


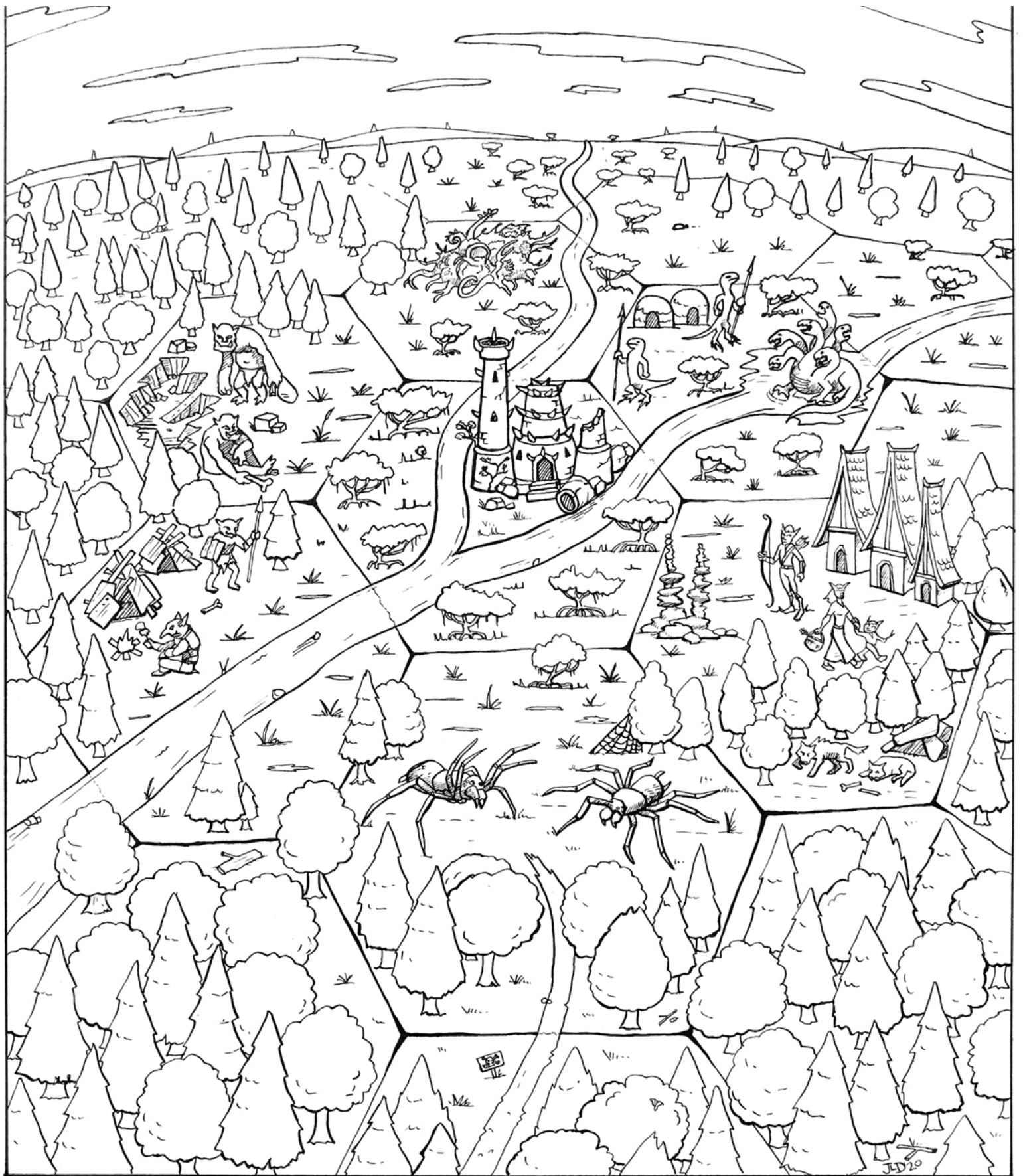
Hex 24.26

The Temple of Bathrymrala



Todd Leback

DESIGNED FOR USE WITH
**OLD-SCHOOL
ESSENTIALS**



Hex 24.26 – The Temple of Bathrymrala

Hex 24.26

The Temple of Bathrymrala

Credits Designer: Todd Leback

Editing: Brian Johnson

Layout: BJ Hensley

Cartography: Todd Leback, Aaron Schmidt

Cover Art: Jen Drummond (jendart.com)

Temple Maps and dam: by Adrian Barber

Swamp Flower Illustration *Flore Pitteresque:* Eduard Müller

Demon Art: Zun Pin

Maps created using Hexographer.

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Table of Contents

| | | | |
|---|----------|---|-----------|
| Introduction to Populated Hexes | 1 | 9.3. Antechamber | 19 |
| Hexcrawling Rules | 1 | 9.4. A Checkerboard and Chasm | 21 |
| Absalom | 1 | 9.5. Empty Coffins? | 21 |
| Campaign Setting | 1 | 9.6. Old Torture Chamber | 21 |
| Using Populated Hexes | 1 | 9.7. Cavern of the Whispering One | 22 |
| 0305 Hellish Helborn | 8 | Area 10. Observatory | 22 |
| 0402 Crawdad Pool | 8 | 10.1. Entrance | 23 |
| 0506 Elm Grove | 8 | 10.2. Aranea Sleeping Quarters | 23 |
| 0604 Temple Complex | 8 | 10.3. Inner Chamber | 24 |
| Area 1. Bandit Lair | 10 | Area 10A | 24 |
| Area 2. Standing Circle | 11 | Area 10B. Basement | 25 |
| Area 3. Beaver Dam | 12 | Area 11. Ruins | 26 |
| Area 4. Ceremonial Chambers | 13 | Area 12. Carcass Crawlers! | 26 |
| 4.1. Entrance | 13 | Area 13. Abandoned Boat | 26 |
| 4.2. Antechamber | 14 | Area 14. Ruins | 26 |
| 4.3. Prayer Room | 14 | Area 15. Piranhas! | 26 |
| 4.4. The Sacrifice of the Many | 14 | 07.02. Mire of the Dead | 26 |
| 4.5. The Waterfall | 14 | 004.005. Mudpit | 27 |
| 4.6. The Needs of the Few | 15 | 005.003. The Source of Chaos | 28 |
| 4.7. Summoning Circle | 15 | 005.005. Dry Hill | 28 |
| 4.8. Main Ceremonial Chamber | 16 | 006.006. Undead Crocodile | 28 |
| 4.9. Divination Pool | 16 | 007.003. Gas Pocket | 28 |
| Area 5. Well | 17 | Random Encounter Tables | 28 |
| Area 6. Statue of Bathrymrala | 18 | Appendix | 29 |
| Area 7. Rubble | 19 | Summoning Circles | 30 |
| Area 8. Ruined Treasury | 19 | New Spells | 31 |
| Area 9. Temple to the Lesser Ones | 19 | New Creatures | 31 |
| 9.1. Oil Beetles | 19 | Old School Essentials OGL | 36 |
| 9.2. Slippery Slope | 19 | | |

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Introduction to Populated Hexes

Welcome to Populated Hexes, the series of 6-mile hexes in the world of Absalom! The goal is to provide a number of individual 6-mile hexes, fully populated with lairs and features, that can either be dropped into an existing campaign as a point of interest, the destination of a treasure map found in the bowels of a dark dungeon, or as a stand-alone mini-sandbox.

These supplements use the Old School Essentials rules published by Necrotic Gnome, but like many OSR products, pretty much any system can be easily adapted.

Maps & Scale

Each hex will be presented with two hex maps: a smaller map with locations and features noted, and a larger map with only major features noted that can be printed and used as a player handout. The scale represented on the maps included in these products are as follows:

- ✿ Large hex = 6 miles, face to face.
- ✿ Subhex = 1.2 miles, face to face.

Hexcrawling Rules

Thirdkingdom Games produces supplements that are used throughout these releases. Two of them – *Domain Rules* and *Hexcrawling Basics* – are free to download and are designed to work in conjunction with this series. You can find out where to pick up these and other supplements in the **Populated Hexes** line at patreon.com/Populatedhexes.

The following books will be useful to have access to throughout the series. Many of them are free!

- ✿ Old School Essentials Classic Fantasy Rules Tome
- ✿ Old School Essentials Advanced Fantasy Genre Rules
- ✿ Labyrinth Lord Basic and Advanced Edition Companion
- ✿ OSRIC
- ✿ A variety of other OSR resources

Absalom

The world of Absalom is one of constant change, where Law and Chaos are more than abstract philosophical ideas but are instead metaphysical realities that shape the very world itself.

Absalom is dominated by Cycles, each lasting between two to four hundred years. Each Cycle is divided into an Apex – when Law holds sway – and a Nadir – when Chaos sweeps over the lands, driving back the light of Civilization.

Cycles are marked in the beginning by the Apex and ascent

of Law, and the end by the Nadir. During each Apex the civilizations of Man do their best to expand their domains and bring law to the land; these civilizations often shrink, or even crumble, during the Nadirs as barbarians, beastmen, and worse fall upon the kingdoms of Man.

Campaign Setting

The following assumptions are made in this setting:

Starting Date

This series is set at the beginning of the Sixteenth Cycle of recorded history. There have been many civilizations that have risen and fallen, some of Men, some of others.

Humanocentric

The adventurers will be human, setting out to explore the new world with the ebbing of the forces of Chaos. Non-human classes are certainly allowed – and indeed, these supplements present rules for many non-human classes – but the base assumption is that most PCs will be human.

Chaos Storms

During Nadirs – and occasionally in an Apex – events called Chaos storms can spontaneously occur, changing the very landscape, distorting distances, and wreaking havoc upon the nature of reality. Maps from the previous Cycle may prove unreliable.

The Gods

Gods are real but are local. They are the Small Gods of Terry Pratchett or the hearth deities of ancient Rome. Belief gives strength and power to spirits of the world.

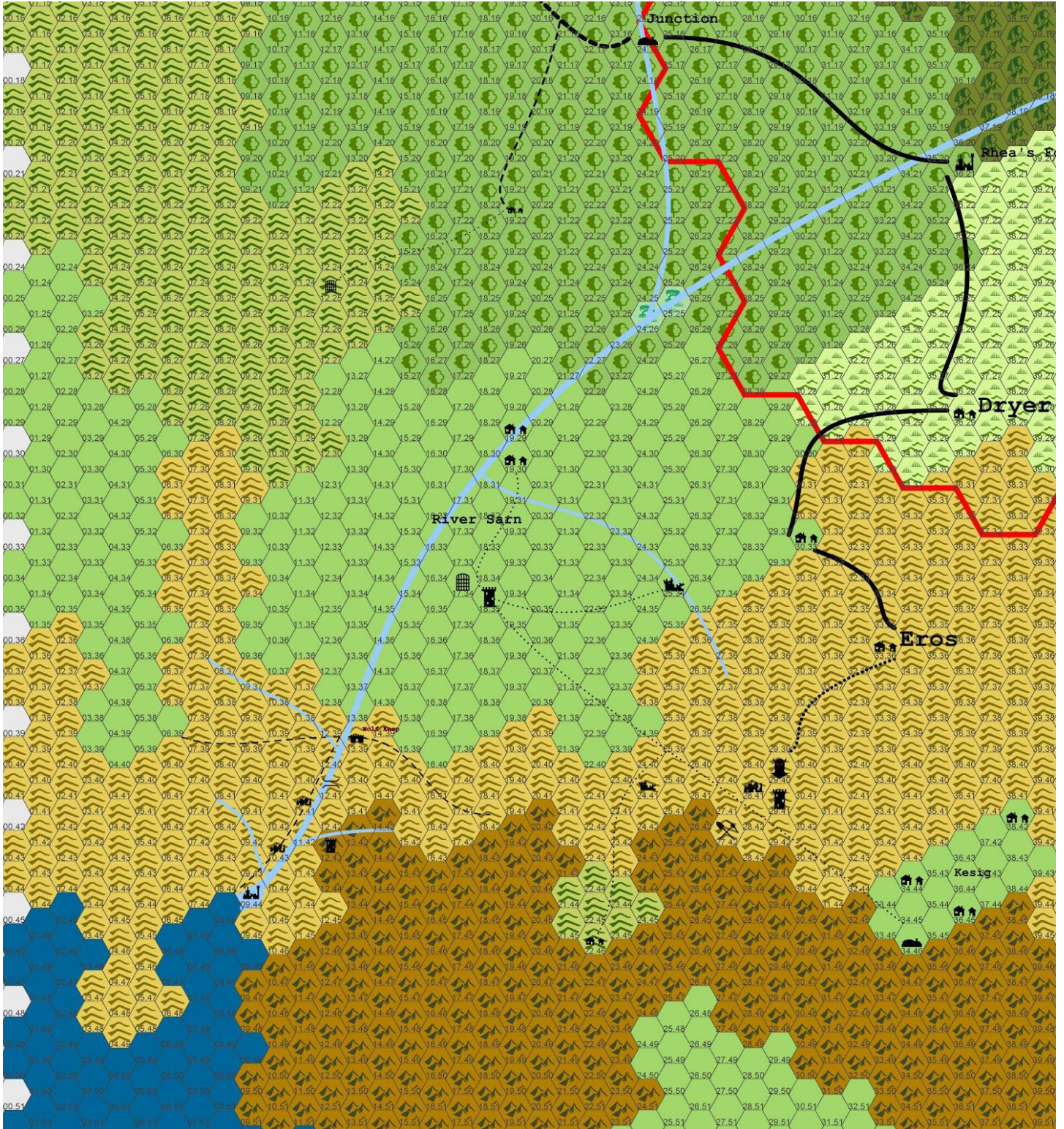
Using Populated Hexes

As stated above, each 6-mile hex can be used as a mini-setting, a drop-in adventure location that is encountered during travel, or as part of a greater hexcrawl. Elements can be added or abandoned as needed, as is true of all supplements.

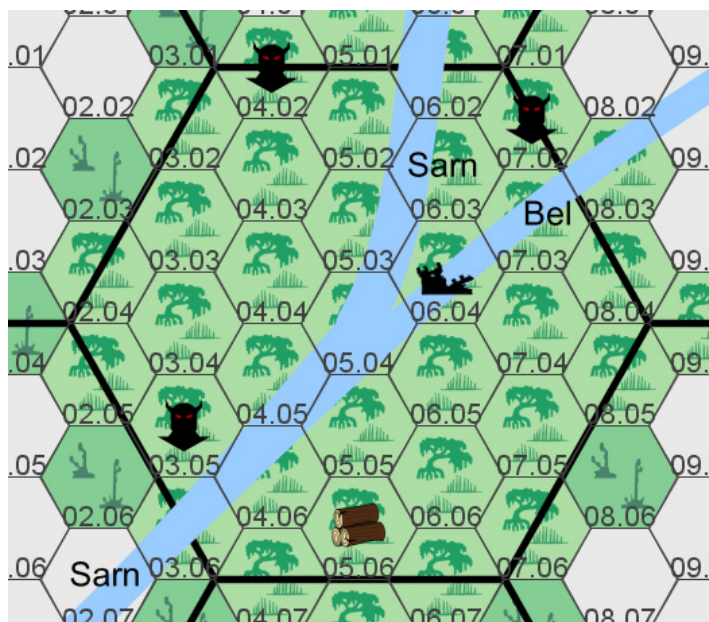
These hexes are released one at a time, seven in a series. Each series is a cluster of seven hexes: a central hex and the six surrounding it.

Each release will be divided into two sections: the hex itself, with keyed encounter locations, and an Appendix, which builds on encounters and concepts in the hex. Populated Hexes offers some expanded alternatives to the basic rules found in Old School Essentials, and these will be introduced as needed in each hex. Broadly speaking, the intention is to introduce character options – to bring some of D&D 5e into B/X. These rules can be used or abandoned, as desired.

Introduction to Populated Hexes



Hex 24.26 – The Temple of Bathrymrala



Resources: Vegetable, industrial (elm, 4)

This hex centers on an area where two of the region's largest rivers converge, creating a small swamp. The light forest surrounding the central hex comprises mostly elms and cypress trees; many of the elm trees have been infected by a parasitic insect that stains the wood a rainbow of colors, making the lumber much sought after by furniture makers and other artisans.

The Bel is a shallow river, fast-flowing with many rapids, while the Sarn is deeper and lazier. The Bel is not navigable by anything larger than a canoe, while the Sarn sees a fair amount of river traffic: mostly long, flat-bottomed river boats that journey from the ore-rich mines of the Hataja Hills north of the settlement of Junction to the plains village of Hob, then onward to the domain of Deepwater further south and finally out into the Silver Sea.

Cycles past, this hex was home to a large temple complex devoted to Chaos, and the two rivers met further downstream. At the height of the Thirteenth Nadir, when the forces of Chaos were at their peak, a mighty earthquake shook the land, sinking and flooding the complex and drowning many of the priests and supplicants. The waters have since subsided somewhat, leaving half-flooded ruins behind, and the taint of Chaos remains.

The river boats that pass through this region make sure to do so in the middle of the day, under full sun, and even then the crews bend their backs to their oars and poles to leave the cursed swamp behind as quickly as possible.

If not traveling by river, movement is slow through this hex. Numerous small creeks, deceptively deep pools, and the lack of any path larger than a game trail reduce movement by half.

This hex, like Hex 25.25, is under the influence of the node of Chaos found in subhex 06.04. Throughout these two large hexes the node has the following effect:

- Sentient creatures killed within these two hexes have a 1-2 in 6 chance of being raised by ambient chaotic magics as undead 1d6+1 days after their death, provided they are not laid to rest by Lawful or Neutral clerics or their bodies burned.

To determine what type of undead they return as, roll 1d10 and add the creature's original Hit Dice to the result, comparing the total to the following:

| d10 | Result |
|-------|------------------------|
| 1-5 | Skeleton |
| 6-10 | Zombie |
| 11-14 | Wight |
| 15-17 | Zombie, mud (see p. 7) |
| 18-19 | Wraith |
| 20 | Mummy, bog (see p. 8) |

Subhex 06.04 is the actual node of Chaos, resulting from the flooding of the original temple complex, the death of hundreds of individuals, and the vagaries of fate. The following effects apply within the boundaries of this subhex:

- The chance of a sentient creature returning as an undead creature (as above) increases to 1-4 in 6, after a period of only 1d4+1 days.

Reversed spells (such as *cause wounds*, *curse*, or *animate dead*) have their numerical variables maximized when cast within the subhex, automatically taking effect with the greatest possible result.

In addition to the above, for every two hours spent traversing Hex 24.26, roll 1d20 for potential hazards, comparing the result to the following list. This roll is in addition to the random encounter roll made daily in wilderness situations (p. 111, **OSE Core**). Note that when a chance to avoid a hazard is given, elves, halflings, and any woodswise characters (such as druids) have their chance of stumbling into the hazard reduced by 1 (from 1-4 in 6 to 1-3 in 6, for instance). If such characters are leading the party, the Referee may decide to allow the entire party to avoid the hazard.

Hex 24.26 The Keep of Bathrymrala

Hazards

| d20 | Result |
|-------|--------------|
| 1-2 | Dry Hummock |
| 3-11 | Nothing |
| 12-14 | Mudpit |
| 15-17 | Deep Pool |
| 18-19 | Insect Swarm |
| 20 | Encounter |

Dry hummock

The adventurers find a raised patch of land that is mercifully dry and suitable to camp on. There's a 1-2 in 6 chance that someone, or something, is already taking advantage of the dry patch of land. Roll on the (1-4) creature or (5-6) plant encounter table, below. Otherwise, the patch of dry land is empty. However, wandering monster checks are made with a frequency of once every six hours, using the standard random encounter table at the end of this hex.

Nothing

The adventurers encounter nothing of interest.

Mudpit

There's a 1-4 in 6 chance the adventurers stumble into this area unsuspectingly. It is filled with thick, grasping mud that reduces the adventurers' speed in combat to zero. Reduce the distance traveled by the adventurers for the remainder of the day by half.

Deep Pool

The adventurers stumble into a pool of water that is deceptively deep. The party's leader has a 1-4 in 6 chance of falling in, with those following behind having consecutively reduced chances (so, the third person in line has a 1-2 in 6 chance of falling in). Reduce the chance appropriately if the adventurers are taking care (such as testing the waters in front of them with a pole). Adventurers falling into the water must roll their Strength or lower on 2d6 to avoid drowning in 3d4 rounds. If the character is wearing light armor (leather) they must roll their Strength or lower on 3d6; if heavy armor (chain or plate) they must roll 4d6. Adventurers that have not fallen in may rescue those that have, each taking 1d4+1 rounds.

Insect Swarm

The swamp in this area is infested with clouds of

small, flying insects that are attracted to unfortunate adventurers. When disturbed they swarm around their victims, flying in ears, noses, mouths, and eyes, delivering a plague of virtually painless bites. However, these particular insects are the carriers of a disease called swamp fever.

Each adventurer caught in a swarm must roll equal to or under their Constitution score on 3d6 to avoid contracting swamp fever. Those that succumb develop a high fever, cold sweats, and a pounding headache 1d6+1 hours after encountering the swarm. The fever is not fatal, but is annoying, imposing a -3 penalty to all attacks, saving throws, and skill checks (if applicable) for 1d4 days. Spellcasters affected by swamp fever must roll equal to or under their Constitution on 4d6 whenever they attempt to cast a spell. Rolling above their score indicates their concentration breaks and the spell is lost, uncast.

Once an individual has contracted swamp fever and let it run its natural course they are forever immune to it. A *cure disease* spell will remove the affliction but not provide immunity.

Encounter

The adventurers have an encounter with a (1-3) creature, (4-5) plant, or (6) undead. Roll on the appropriate table, below, instead of the random encounter table at the end of this hex.

Swamp Encounter Tables

| Creature (1d10) | Result |
|-----------------|---|
| 1-2 | Cottonmouth, giant |
| 3-4 | Crayfish, giant |
| 5-6 | Leech, giant |
| 7 | Pudding, brown* |
| 8 | Scum creeper |
| 9 | Water termite (swamp) |
| 10 | Roll on wandering encounter table (p.) |

*There is only one brown pudding in the swamp. Treat any such result after the first as no encounter.

| Plant (1d10) | Result |
|--------------|----------------------|
| 1-2 | Bladderwort, giant |
| 3-5 | Butterwort, giant |
| 6-7 | Rainbow plant, giant |
| 8-10 | Swordgrass |

Hex 24.26 The Keep of Bathrymrala

| Undead (1d10) | Result |
|---------------|-------------|
| 1-4 | Skeleton |
| 5-7 | Zombie |
| 8-9 | Zombie, mud |
| 10-11 | Wraith |
| 12 | Mummy, bog |

Creatures

Cottonmouth, giant. AC 6 [13], HD 2* (9 hp), Att 1 x bite (1d4 + poison), THAC0 18 [+1], Move 90' (30') on land and swimming, SV D12 W13 P14 B15 S16 (F1), ML 7, AL Neutral, XP 25, NA 1d8 (1d8), TT None

- Infravision to 60'.
- Surprise on a roll of 1-3 in 6 while in a marsh.
- Bite causes death in 1d4 turns on a failed save versus poison.

Crayfish, giant. AC 4 [15], HD 4+4 (20 hp), Att 2 x claw (2d6), THAC0 15 [+4], Move 60' (20') / 120' (40') swimming, SV D12 W13 P14 B15 S16 (F2), ML 9, AL Neutral, XP 125, NA 1d4 (1d4), TT None

- Surprise on a roll of 1-3 in 6.

Leech, giant. AC 7 [12], HD 6 (27 hp), Att 1 x bite (1d6 + blood drain), THAC0 14 [+5], Move 90' (30') on land and swimming, SV D11 W12 P13 B14 S15 (F3), ML 10, AL Neutral, XP 275, NA 0 (1d4), TT None

- Attaches to a victim on a successful hit, doing 1d6 automatic damage per round.
- Must be killed to detach from victim, although if the victim dies the leech detaches and flees to digest.
- Encountered only in the water.

Pudding, brown. AC 4 [15], HD 11* (49 hp), Att 1 x touch (5d4), THAC0 11 [+8], Move 60' (20'), SV D9 W10 P11 B11 S13 (F6), ML 12, AL Neutral, XP 1,900, NA 1 (1d4), TT None

- Lurks in muddy pools and surprises on a roll of 1-3 in 6.
- Only harmed by fire or *magic missile* spells.
- Brown puddings do not dissolve metal but destroy leather and wood in one turn, regardless of magic enchantment.

- Non-fire or *magic missile* attacks cause the pudding to divide, creating a new 2-HD pudding that attacks for 1d6 damage. Each pudding created reduces the original pudding's HD by 2. If a 2-HD pudding is hit (as above) it becomes two 1-HD puddings that attack for 1d4 points of damage.
- Can move across walls and ceilings, and along the surface of water.
- It has a thicker skin than other puddings and cannot squeeze through small openings like they can.

Scum creeper. AC 7 [12], HD 1 (5 hp), Att 1 x bite (see below), THAC0 19 [0], Move 30' (10'), SV D12 W13 P14 B15 S16 (F1), ML 8, AL Neutral, XP 10, NA 2d12 (2d12), TT None

Scum creepers are small, slug-like creatures that feed on organic material. They prefer areas with dim light.

- Scum creepers surprise on a roll of 1-4 in 6. Surprised targets have an effective AC of 9 [10] during the round in which they are surprised.
- Creepers attach themselves to a target on a successful attack roll, doing 1 point of damage per round until they or the target dies.
- Bright light (such as that created by sunlight, or from a *light* spell) causes them to check morale; otherwise they never do.

Water termite (swamp). AC 4 [15], HD 1+1 (5 hp), Att 1 x bite (1d3) or 1 x spray (stun), THAC0 18 [+1], Move 90' (30') swimming, SV D12 W13 P14 B15 S16 (F1), ML 10, AL Neutral, XP 15, NA 0 (1d4), TT None

- Above water, a termite can spray an irritant at a target within 10'. The target must save versus poison or be stunned for 1d4 rounds, suffering a -2 penalty to all actions.
- Underwater, a termite can release an ink spray that gives them advantage (roll twice, taking best result) when attempting to flee (see p. 119, **OSE Core**).
- Termites can attach themselves to a wooden ship, inflicting 1d3 hull damage before dropping off; there's a 1-2 in 6 chance of spotting leaks caused by the termites.
- Encountered only in the water.

Hex 24.26 The Keep of Bathrymrala

Plants

Bladderwort, giant. AC 5 [14], HD 8 (40 hp), Att (see below), THACO 18 [+1], Move 0', SV D11 W12 P13 B14 S15 (F4), ML 12, AL Neutral, XP 650, NA 0 (1d2), TT V (usually found in the water below the plant)

Bladderwort is a free-floating water plant drifting just below the surface of stagnant water. Each plant has 1d6 balloon-like, translucent traps; when a creature brushes up against one the trap opens momentarily, sucking the victim inside, before closing again.

- Surprise on a roll of 1-4 in 6.
- Randomly determine targets from among those that touch the trap; they must make a saving throw versus death to avoid being sucked into the trap.
- Those sucked inside suffocate in a number of rounds equal to their Constitution. At the same time they suffer 1d2 points of damage per round as the plant releases digestive acid into the trap.

- Those trapped can attempt to escape by rolling equal to or under their Strength on 4d6. Alternatively, they may attempt to attack the interior of the trap with bladed or piercing weapons of short-sword size or smaller. These attacks are made with disadvantage. The interior of a bladder has an AC of 6 [13] and 5 hit points.

Butterwort, giant. AC 6 [13], HD 5 (24 hp), Att 1 x *encase* (1d4), THACO 15 [+4], Move 0', SV D12 W13 P14 B15 S16 (F1), ML 7, AL Neutral, XP 175, NA 0 (1d6), TT V

The giant butterwort grows in a rosette of leaves lying flat on the ground, approximately twelve to fourteen feet in diameter. When an unsuspecting victim steps on the rosette the leaves snap shut, vertically, entrapping the target. The butterwort attacks as a monster of equivalent HD but can only make one attack; if the attack misses, the leaves take 1d4+1 rounds to "reset" before they can attack again.



Hex 24.26 The Keep of Bathrymrala

- A man-sized or smaller target hit by the attack is encased in the leaves, unable to move or attack, and takes 1d4 points of damage from the highly acidic digestive juices the plant produces.
- Attacks from outside inflict half damage to the plant and half to the plant's victim.
- Giant butterworts surprise their prey on a roll of 1-4 in 6.

Rainbow plant, giant. AC 6 [13], HD 6* (27 hp), Att (see below), THAC0 13 [+6], Move 0', SV D11 W12 P13 B14 S15 (F3), ML 12, AL Neutral, XP 500, NA 0 (1d4), TT V

The rainbow plant is a tree-like, semi-intelligent plant with woody trunk and 5d4 branch-like leaves, each leaf about ten feet in length.

The plants have a limited awareness and intelligence, and typically ignore prey smaller than 4' in height. Rainbow plants are covered in a thin layer of mucilaginous sap that produces a hypnotic shimmer when exposed to light. Anyone viewing the plant in daylight (or magical light) must save versus paralysis. Those that fail are dazzled and suffer a -2 penalty to attack rolls.

- The plant attacks by lashing out with its leaf-like fronds. Up to 6 fronds will attack a single target within 10'. Each hit inflicts 1d4 damage.
- Dead victims are slowly dissolved via the acidic, iridescent secretion, their nutrients absorbed via tubes in the creature's fronds.

Swordgrass. AC 7 [12], HD see text, Att (see below), THAC0 19 [0], Move 0', SV D12 W13 P14 B15 S16 (F1), ML 7, AL Neutral, XP 10, NA 0 (1d6), TT V

Appearing as a clump of tall (1d6 feet) grass, swordgrass can be found in clusters of 1d6 individual plants. Due to its innocuous appearance it gains surprise on a roll of 1-3 in 6 the first time it is encountered.

Damage is inflicted upon creatures moving through the clump of grass, based on the height of the plant: 1d4 hp at 1' tall, 1d6 hp at 2-3' tall, 1d8 hp at 4-5' tall, and 1d10 hp at 6'.

Clumps of grass have hp equal to their height. They take no damage from blunt or piercing weapons (such as arrows, spears, etc.). Each clump can only be killed by digging up the root mass and destroying it; otherwise the bladed leaves regrow in 1d4 weeks.

Undead

When undead are encountered as a result of the swamp hazard roll, reduce the number encountered by half (minimum of 1).

Skeleton. AC 7 [12], HD 1 (4hp), Att 1 x weapon (1d6 or by weapon), THAC0 19 [0], Move 60' (20'), SV D12 W13 P14 B15 S16 (F1), ML 12, AL Chaotic, XP 10, NA 3d4 (3d10), TT None

- Skeletons make no noise until they attack. They are immune to effects that affect only living creatures, in addition to mind-affecting spells.

Zombie. AC 8 [11], HD 2 (9 hp), Att 1 x weapon (1d8 or by weapon), THAC0 18 [+1], Move 60' (20'), SV D12 W13 P14 B15 S16 (F1), ML 12, AL Chaotic, XP 20, NA 2d4 (4d6), TT None

- Standard undead characteristics.
- Zombies always attack last.

Zombie, mud. AC 7 [12], HD 4* (18 hp), Att 2 x claw (1d6), THAC0 15 [+4], MV 60' (20'), SV D10 W11 P12 B13 S14 (F4), ML 12, AL Chaotic, XP 125, NA 1d8 (2d4), TT None

- Mud zombies are slow and always act last in a round.
- Anyone taking damage from a mud zombie must roll equal to or under their Constitution score on 3d6 or contract zombie fever, losing 1d2 points of Strength each day for 1d6 days. Characters reduced to 0 Strength die; those that survive regain Strength at a rate of 1d2 per day once the fever passes. Humans killed by zombie fever rise as mud zombies after 1d6 days unless given the proper funeral rites (cremated, *blessed*, etc.).
- If both attacks from a mud zombie hit, the target is drawn into a mucky grapple, automatically losing 1d4 hp each subsequent round as they begin to suffocate. Grappled targets can escape by rolling equal to or under their Strength score on 4d6, provided they spend a whole round trying to break the grapple.
- Mud zombies take half damage from edged and piercing weapons.

Wraith. AC 3 [16], HD 4** (18 hp), Att 2 x touch (1d6 + energy drain), THAC0 16 [+3], Move 120' (40'), SV D10 W11 P12 B13 S14 (F4), ML 12, AL Chaotic, XP 175, NA 1d4 (1d6), TT E

Hex 24.26 The Keep of Bathrymrala

- Standard undead characteristics.
- Only harmed by silver or magical weapons, or by fire.
- Suffer only half damage from silver or non-magical fire.
- A target hit by a wraith loses 1 level (as per **OSE Core**, p. 203). A victim drained of all levels becomes a wraith in one day, under the control of the wraith that slew them.

Bog mummy. AC 2 [17], HD 5+1* (22 hp), Att 2 x claw (1d8), THAC0 15 [+4], Move 60' (20'), SV D10 W11 P12 B12 S14 (F5), ML 11, AL Chaotic, XP 125, NA 0 (1d4), TT V

Not true mummies, bog mummies are the animated corpses of individuals that die and are left submerged in alkaline water, where their bodies slowly mummify.

- Take half damage from non-magical weapons and no damage from non-magical fire.
- Take half damage from magical fire.
- Typical undead characteristics.

0305 Hellish Helborn

Dwelling in this subhex is a sentient, carnivorous plant known as a helborn (see Appendix for write-up), rooted atop a dry patch of land in the swamp. Glittering gold and silver can be seen surrounding the tree, tempting the unwary into believing that treasure may await them!

This helborn is old and well-fed, with plenty of unsuspecting prey traveling nearby, on the outskirts of the swamp.

Helborn. AC 2 [17], HD 8+3* (43 hp), Att 4 x tendril (1d4 + poison), THAC0 12 [+7], Move 0', SV D8 W9 P10 B10 S12 (F8), ML 11, AL Chaotic, XP 1200, NA 0 (1), TT D

- A helborn can communicate empathically with any living creature within 60', using feelings to communicate instead of words.
- It can cast *mass suggestion* at will, as per the 6th-level illusionist spell, as a 12th-level caster. The typical suggestion is for a victim(s) to approach the helborn and not resist.
- It can use up to four tendrils per round to attack foes within range that have not fallen victim to its suggestion power. Living creatures hit by a tendril must make a save versus poison. Those failing take an additional 1d4 points of acid damage, plus an additional 1 point in the subsequent round.

0402 Crawdad Pool

A trio of giant crayfish lurk in a shallow pool, just deep and dark enough to provide cover to the creatures, who lunge out at passersby.

Crayfish, giant (3). AC 4 [15], HD 4+4 (19, 24, 30 hp), Att 2 x claw (2d6), THAC0 15 [+4], Move 60' (20') / 120' (40') swimming, SV D12 W13 P14 B15 S16 (F2), ML 9, AL Neutral, XP 125, NA 1d4 (1d4), TT None

- Surprise on a roll of 1-3 in 6.
- If both claws hit, the target is grappled and will be dragged into the water for the crayfish to feast upon. In subsequent rounds grappled creatures automatically take 1d6 points of damage from the crayfish's mandibles and may start drowning, if underwater. Each round a target is grappled it can only attempt to free itself by rolling equal to or under its Strength score on 3d6. Success indicates the target is free.

0506 Elm Grove

There is a grove of especially valuable elm trees growing here. The grove has a base resource value of 606 gp and a Step Value of 3.

0604 Temple Complex

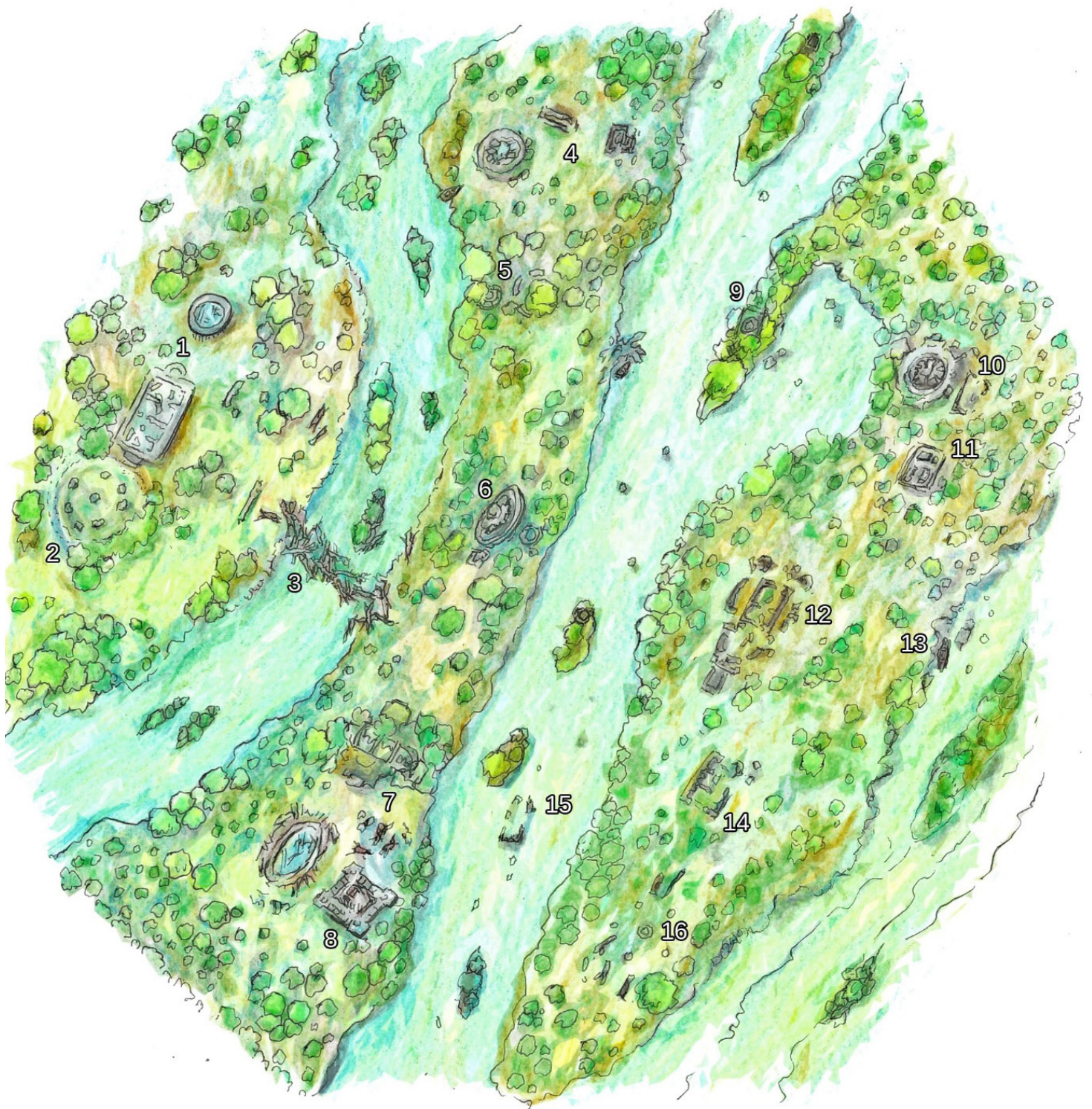
The old temple complex is found in this subhex, right before the Bel joins the larger Sarn. Here the river is broken into a number of smaller channels through the marsh, dividing the ruins into three distinct sections.

Areas 1-3

These three areas comprise the western side of the complex. The chief inhabitants are a gang of bandits that have recently taken up residence here. The bandits spend some time scavenging for treasure that has washed up against the dam in Area 3, but otherwise almost never cross the western branch of the river into the rest of the complex.

The river itself at this point is somewhat difficult to cross. The dam is old and in poor condition, and each creature of man-size or larger has a 1-3 in 6 chance of dislodging and breaking branches if they attempt to walk across the top. If a creature does so they must roll equal to or under their Dexterity on 4d6 (assume a Dexterity of 11 for those without generated ability scores). Those that succeed manage to catch themselves before falling in; those failing fall in the (1-3) upstream side, taking 1d6-1 damage from sharp, unfortunately placed sticks, or (4-6) downstream, where they just get wet.

Hex 24.26 The Keep of Bathrymrala



Hex 24.26 The Keep of Bathrymrala

Otherwise, each individual crossing the river upstream of the dam has a 1 in 20 (1-3 in 20 in the spring or after a heavy – more than 2” of rain – storm) chance of losing their balance and being swept 1d100 yards downstream (or until they reach the dam). For every 25 full yards traveled they take 1d4–1 points of damage.

If a wandering monster check occurs while in this area roll on the following table to determine the encounter.

| d6 | Result |
|-----|--|
| 1-2 | Bandits (1d6 + gangboss) |
| 3 | (1-3) Laf Rahol + 1d6 bandits and 1 gangboss, or (4-6) Drunk Ris and aforementioned bandits. |
| 4 | Roll on animal encounters, p. |
| 5 | Roll on undead encounters, p. |
| 6 | 2d4 lizard-men from Hex 25.25 |

Area 1. Bandit Lair

A gang of bandits has taken up residence in the building on the north bank. Led by Drunk Ris, a cutthroat of no small renown, the gang fled their former lair on the border of the Scarlet Principality after attracting too much attention from the local militias.

Led by Drunk Ris, the gang has taken to robbing the occasional merchant boat passing through on the Sarn, to the north of their lair, in addition to digging for treasure in the beaver dam (see Area 3). So far they have managed to avoid the attention of the other denizens of the ruins who, although aware of the bandits' presence, have yet to trouble themselves to contact them.

There are a total of twenty-six bandits, divided into four gangs, as follows:

- **Gang 1.** Five normal bandits, one gangboss with 1+1 HD.
- **Gang 2.** Four normal bandits, one gangboss with 1+1 HD.
- **Gang 3.** Five normal bandits, one gangboss with 1+1 HD.
- **Gang 4.** Six normal bandits, one gangboss with 1+1 HD.
- Laf Rahol, 2nd-level fighter and Ris's lieutenant.
- Drunk Ris, 4th-level thief.

The following stats can be used for the bandit gang.

Bandit, normal. AC 6 [13], HD 1 (4 hp), Att 1 x weapon (1d6 or by weapon), THAC0 19 [0], MV 120' (40'), SV D13 W14 P13 B16 S15 (T1), ML 8, AL Chaotic, XP 10, NA 1d8 (3d10), TT A

- Each bandit has 1d20 cp.
- Each bandit wears leather armor and is armed with a weapon doing 1d6 points of damage. Each bandit also has (1-3) a sling with 1d20 bullets, (4-5) a short bow with 1d12 arrows, or (6) a crossbow with 1d10 bolts.
- If catching an opponent by surprise a bandit's successful attack deals an additional 1d6 points of damage.

Bandit, gangboss. AC 6 [13], HD 1+1 (6 hp), Att 1 x weapon (1d6 or by weapon), THAC0 19 [0], MV 120' (40'), SV D13 W14 P13 B16 S15 (T1), ML 8, AL Chaotic, XP 10, NA 1d8 (3d10), TT A

- Each gangboss has 1d20 sp.
- Gangbosses are armed as per normal bandits.
- Gangbosses do extra damage against surprised opponents as per normal bandits.

Laf "Chuckles" Rahol (F2). AC 5 [14], HD 2 (13 hp), Att 1 x sword (1d8+1), THAC0 18 [+1], MV 90' (30'), SV D12 W13 P14 B15 S16 (F2), ML 9, AL Chaotic, XP 20, NA unique, TT A

- Laf wears chain armor and wields a sword and longbow with 15 arrows.
- If using the Alternate Rules for fighters (see the Alternate OSR Class document, by Third Kingdom Games) Laf has the Improved Critical Knack, scoring critical hits on rolls of 19 and 20.
- Laf has the single-weapon fighting style, gaining a +1 bonus when attacking with a sword (included above).
- Laf wears *boots of speed*. Usable once per day, the wearer can double their speed for one minute. During this time he gains a +1 bonus to AC and a +1 bonus to attack rolls. None of the bandits know about these boots, and Laf is determined to keep it this way.
- He also has 45 cp, 24 sp, and 15 gp stored in his coinpurse.

Hex 24.26 The Keep of Bathrymrala

Drunk Ris (T4). AC 5 [14], HD 4 (14 hp), Att 1 x weapon (1d8+1 or 1d4+1; see below), THAC0 18 [+1], MV 120' (40'), SV D13 W14 P12 B15 S14 (T4), ML 8, AL Chaotic, XP 75, NA unique, TT A

- If using the Alternate Rules from the Alternate OSR Class document Ris has the Alertness and Lucky Knacks. Alertness grants a +1 bonus to initiative and avoiding surprise, and Lucky allows Ris to reroll three attack rolls or saving throws each day.
- Ris has the dual-weapon fighting style; when attacking with both his magical sword and dagger only the largest weapon die is rolled (although magical bonuses from both are applied to the to-hit and damage rolls). If the attack hits, roll the damage die twice, taking the best result.

Drunk Ris has the following personal treasure:

- *Potion of treasure finding*
- *Ring of invisibility*
- *Leather armor +1*
- *Sword +1, light*
- *Dagger +1*
- 124 cp, 153 sp, 75 gp
- Two gems, one worth 150 gp and the other worth 375 gp

The bandits had to leave their hoard behind in their last hideout to avoid capture, and since arriving at their new lair have accumulated the following treasure. The gems have all been discovered amidst the branches of the beaver's dam (see Area 3).

- 1,100 sp
- 456 gp

- 2 gems worth 25 gp
- 4 gems worth 50 gp
- 3 gems worth 100 gp
- 1 gem worth 500 gp
- A treasure map (see Appendix) with instructions written in code that reads "follow the river north to the cave that overlooks the sandbar. The goods are buried under the flat rock fifteen paces down the dragon's maw". The last line refers to a rock formation within the cave that resembles a dragon's gaping mouth.

Additionally, the bandits have stolen the following goods from merchant boats:

- 6 casks of ale (there are an additional five empty casks scattered around the camp, already consumed) bearing the stamp of Redrock Brewery, located in Junction. Each cask weighs 400 cn and is worth 50 gp.
- 10 bags of grain, each weighing 400 cn and worth 75 sp.
- Four barrels of preserved meat, each weighing 800 cn and worth 20 gp.

Area 2. Standing Circle

Near the bandits' lair can be found a circle of stones atop a slight hill. There are seven stones forming the perimeter, each roughly half again as tall as a man, and one stone in the center of the circle, this one the height of a man, although because the hill slopes upward towards the center of the circle the tops of the stones are all at the same height.

No moss grows upon the stones, and little vegetation grows within the circle, outside of some tough and stunted weeds. Once used as a ritual circle by the



Hex 24.26 The Keep of Bathrymrala

temple, it has been long abandoned and long unused, its power faded.

An examination of the stones (each stone takes one turn for a single person to examine) reveals that the central stone has rusted iron eyehooks set into the western face — eyehooks that were once used to attach manacles that bound a sacrificial victim — and that the surface of this stone is crusted with dried blood.

The circle (thankfully, perhaps) is no longer functional, but it still has some value. The dried blood residue covering the central stone can be scraped off and used as special components in divine magical item creation. 5d6 ounces of the stuff can be scraped off, each ounce having a value of 250 gp. If used for the creation of Chaotically-aligned items (such as a *staff of withering*) the residue is worth 375 gp per ounce. If it is used in the creation of divine items that are not specifically of a Chaotic nature, the chance of creating a cursed item is increased from 95-100 to 90-100 (see Hex 18.23).

Area 3. Beaver Dam

An old beaver dam is found here, stretching across the slow-moving tributary. It doesn't do much anymore to slow down the flow of the water, nor does it provide an easy way to cross, as it is old, falling apart, and treacherous to walk upon.

However, it does act as a sieve, of sorts, catching items of interest that float down the river before getting tangled in its branches. Careful exploration of the upstream side of the dam may uncover something after a day of searching (roll 1d20 and consult the following table). For every day spent searching, subtract one from the roll, resetting after every seven days.

| d20 | Result |
|-------|--|
| 1-10 | Nothing of interest. |
| 11-12 | A small, dead animal. |
| 13-14 | Scrap of brown cloth, washed out from a wardrobe containing the robes the chaotic clerics once wore. There's a 1-2 in 6 chance an intact – yet waterlogged – robe is discovered. |
| 15 | 1d4 random human bones, ancient and brittle. |
| 16 | 1d20 cp. |
| 17 | 1d12 sp. |
| 18 | 1d10 gp. |
| 19 | Gem worth 1d12 × 10 gp. |
| 20 | Roll on Treasure Table (1-4) U or (5-6) V. |

Areas 4-8

These five areas occupy the central portion of the former complex, an island between the two river tributaries. The western branch is more difficult to cross, and as such there is less traffic between Areas 1-3 and the central island.

There are five encounter locations on the central island, one of them a small dungeon, as well as one dangerous inhabitant with no fixed home: Helpohan the Freed. A living statue, once the guardian to the entrance in Area 4, Helpohan did the unthinkable a decade ago and wrenched itself free of the plinth upon which it had been carved, shattering both of its legs at the ankles and leaving spiky stubs.

Careful observers, or those searching the ground on the central island, have a chance (1-2 in 6 for most; 1-3 in 6 for elves, thieves, or woodswise characters) of noticing the ground is pockmarked by dozens of strange holes, each about four inches in diameter and about six deep: the tracks left by Helpohan the Freed in the soft ground of the island.

Once a priest of Bathrymrala, cursed long ago for some unknown blasphemy, Helpohan was turned to stone and placed in the antechamber of the temple complex to act as guard and alarm. In the time since the complex was abandoned, isolation has driven Helpohan insane and the animate statue now stalks the island, still fulfilling its primary purpose of killing all except worshipers of Bathrymrala. The statue will not attack anyone wearing the brown robes of the worshipers, nor anyone accompanying them. Helpohan can be found anywhere on the central island, except for Area 4, which it will not venture within.

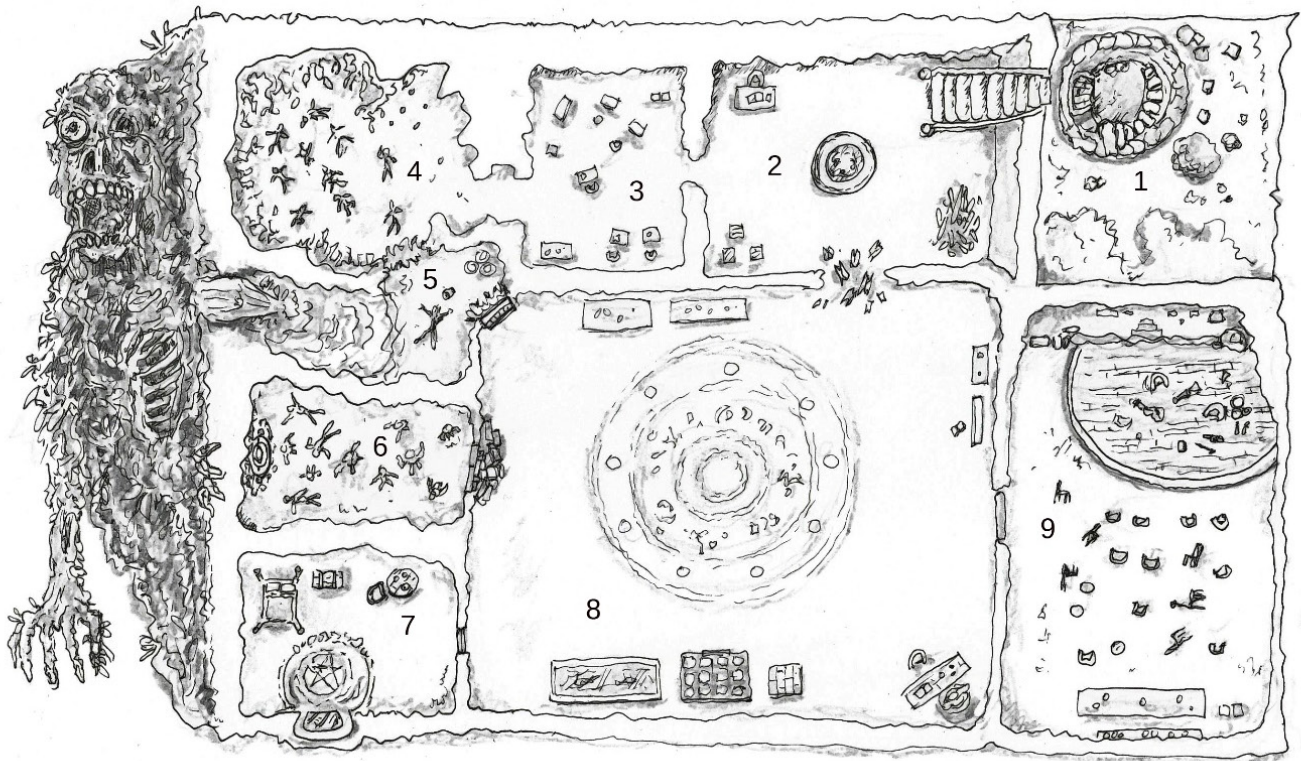
If a random encounter occurs on the central island, roll on the following table:

| 1d6 | Result |
|-----|------------------------------------|
| 1-3 | Helpohan the Freed |
| 4 | Roll on animal encounter table, p. |
| 5 | Roll on undead encounter table, p. |
| 6 | 1d2 aranea from Area 10 |

Helpohan, marble living statue (1). AC 3 [16], HD 4* (19 hp), Att 2 x blow (1d6) THAC0 16 [+3], MV 60' (20'), SV D10 W11 P12 B13 S14 (F4), ML 11, AL Neutral, XP 125, NA 1d4 (1d4), TT None

- Marble living statues are unaffected by sleep, illusion, and charm spells.

Hex 24.26 The Keep of Bathrymrala



- ▶ There's a 1 in 6 chance that a non-area of effect spell cast upon Helpohan will be absorbed without taking effect. In the following round the statue can direct the spell at a target within range while performing its normal actions.
- ▶ Helpohan cannot speak, but it can understand the Common tongue, and can respond via nods or gestures if a high enough reaction roll is achieved to allow for a chance to parley, or if it is fooled by scavenged robes.

Area 4. Ceremonial Chambers

This small underground complex was once used by the priests of the temple to conduct a series of rituals to one of the gods they worshiped.

The interior of this complex is carved from living stone, showing visible signs of being worked by the hands of man. When originally created the complex was relatively dry, but now the walls and ceiling sweat with humidity. All surfaces are slick with water, and wood or organic materials that still remain within are rotting and in poor condition.

The ceilings are approximately 10' high. Door openings are carved stone archways. Unless otherwise indicated, doors are wood, banded in bronze, and are swollen and require force to open (1-2 in 6 chance of opening).

4.1. Entrance

The entrance to the complex is a large, stone-lined well about twenty feet in diameter, with stone stairs hugging the walls' circumference as they curve down some forty feet underground. The stairs were once enclosed within a building, long since gone, although remains of the structure can be found scattered about nearby.

If the area outside the entrance is searched, a small treasure is found: under what was once the entrance door to the building – a slab of wood banded in iron, the oak now rotten and spongy – the adventurers can find a curious ivory statuette depicting a worm-like creature, about the length of one's index finger. The statuette is a *figurine of wondrous power* (see Appendix).

Unfortunately, an enormous centipede lairs under the door as well, and if the door is shifted or moved it will automatically attack, surprising on a roll of 1-4 in 6 unless precautions are taken.

Centipede, enormous (1). AC 8 [11], HD 1* (5 hp), Att 1 x bite (1d4 + poison), THAC0 19 [0], MV 60' (20'), SV D12 W13 P14 B15 S16 (F1), ML 7, AL Neutral, XP 13, NA 1d6 (1d6), TT None

- ▶ Characters bitten by a centipede must Save v. Poison with a +2 bonus. Those failing die in 1d4 turns; those who succeed become ill, suffering -2 to all rolls for 1d8 hours.

Hex 24.26 The Keep of Bathrymrala

4.2. Antechamber.

The stairs lead down into a room with two doors leading out of it, one in the west wall leading to Area 4.3 and one in the south wall leading to Area 4.8. In the center of the room is a plinth that once clearly served as the base of a statue; all that remains atop the plinth are stone feet, with cruelly clawed toes, broken off at the ankles. This was the plinth upon which Helpohan the Freed stood for decades before freeing itself.

There's a small table in one corner, rotten and collapsing, and a pile of leaves and branches in another, detritus blown in from the entrance. The small table is covered in red mold (see below), a relative of both yellow and brown mold. Anyone examining the table causes the mold to release a cloud of spores. Assuming the adventurers are able to overcome this hazard, a search of the table yields a potion in an unmarked bottle of blown yellow glass. This is a potion of *gaseous form*.

Red mold (1). AC No hit roll required, HD 2* (9 hp), Att 1 x spores (see below), THAC0 18 [+1], MV 0', SV D12 W13 P14 B15 S16 (F2), ML 12, AL Neutral, XP 25, NA 1d8 (1d4), TT None

- Each 10 square feet of mold is treated as one "monster".
- Red mold is immune to all attacks except for alcohol, which inflicts 1d6 points of damage per quart (or 1d10 for hard liquor).
- If touched it automatically hits the one touching it with a spore attack; there is an additional 1-3 in 6 chance of setting off a cloud of spores that fills a 10' × 10' × 10' space.
- Anyone touching or breathing in the spores automatically begins to lose 1 hp per round as living material begins to liquefy.
- Creatures reduced to 0 hp by the mold are reduced to an organic soup and cannot be resurrected short of a *wish* or similar magic.
- Targets suffering damage from red mold can wash it off themselves and halt the damage with one quart of alcohol.

The archway leading to Area 8 has partially collapsed and stones litter the ground under it. The first time an adventurer passes under the archway several small rocks will fall upon them, doing no damage. Other than this, the archway is safe and will not collapse unless damaged (a *fireball* that hits the archway would certainly cause a collapse, for instance).

4.3. Prayer Room

This room was once used as a prayer and meditation room by the priests of Bathrymrala. There are a number of decaying reed mats on the floor, half covered in accumulated mud.

Everyone entering the room should make a Hear Noise roll (see p. 108, **OSE Core**). Those succeeding become aware of a low murmuring, as if dozens of people were whispering prayers at an almost inaudible level. The sensation is extremely distracting, and those that are able to hear the whispered prayers make their next roll within the complex at disadvantage, rolling twice and taking the lower of the two results. Upon making this roll they do not hear the whispers again.

4.4. The Sacrifice of the Many

In the final moments of the temple's existence the priests began to sacrifice themselves in an effort to stave off the destruction. The lower-ranked priests went first, and their bodies are found in this chamber, reduced to little more than skeletons encrusted with a thin layer of efflorescence and calcium.

The remains are not animate, but any Lawful characters that enter this room experience an instant dimming of light sources, effectively cutting in half their radius of illumination for those characters. Shadows flicker on the walls without a noticeable source of movement, even with magical illumination. NPCs of Lawful alignment must make morale checks upon entering the room, as they notice their shadows begin moving in ways not congruent with their own movements.

One of the skeletons wears a gold ring set with a single ruby, worth 250 gp. Finding the ring requires a roll as if to discover a secret door.

The entrance to room 4.5 is obscured by an illusion that mimics the natural rock wall. The effect is somewhat spoiled by the sound of running water than can be heard from Area 4.5, making it easier to spot (base 1-3 in 6 chance, 1-4 in 6 chance for elves or dwarves).

4.5. The Waterfall

The wall on the far side of the room has partially collapsed, and swamp water is rushing in through the many gaps and cracks, forming a small pool before draining out through the floor.

A mold-covered skeleton is found spread-eagled on the floor here, in front of the pool of water. The skeleton has been partially calcified by the rushing water. When the adventurers enter the room the skeleton animates and attacks.

Hex 24.26 The Keep of Bathrymrala

There are two entrances into this room: the illusory door leading into Area 4.4 and a closed (and stuck) door leading into Area 4.8.

The floor in this room is slick with moisture; anyone (other than the skeleton) making an attack must roll equal to or under their Dexterity on 3d6. Failure indicates they fall, taking 1d2–1 points of damage, and having to spend half their movement to stand up.

Additionally, the room is small, and if combat ensues only two man-sized creatures can fit in the room without entering the pool.

Calcified Skeleton (1). AC 5 [14], HD 1 (7 hp), Att 1 x claw (1d4 + red mold), THAC0 19 [0], MV 60' (20'), SV D12 W13 P14 B15 S16 (F1), ML 12, AL Chaotic, XP 13, NA 3d4 (3d10), TT None

- ▶ The partial calcification has improved the skeleton's AC, as noted above.
- ▶ The skeleton is coated with the same red mold as found in Area 4.2. There's a 1-4 in 6 chance every time the skeleton is hit that a cloud of spores is released, and a 1-2 in 6 chance every time the skeleton successfully attacks that the target is affected by the red mold.

4.6. The Needs of the Few

The door to this chamber is swollen shut in addition to being blocked by fallen rocks. It takes 4 turns to clear the debris (or two people 2 turns, four people 1 turn, etc.), after which the door must be forced as described at the beginning of this Area.

Each attempt at forcing the door, whether successful or not, carries the risk of dislodging more rocks from the ceiling. There's a 1-2 in 6 chance that this occurs, striking the PC making the attempt, who takes 1d8 points of damage (a successful save versus death halves the damage).

There are more bodies within this room, scattered on the floor before an altar set against one wall. The altar is carved from a reddish, spongy stone unknown in the Mortal world, and atop the altar is a carved jade representation of Bathrymrala, the Bloodletter. Were one to spill blood upon the stone altar the liquid would be absorbed quickly, almost greedily, into the porous surface.

This room was used by some of the higher-ranked priests to sacrifice themselves after they saw to the lesser priests found in Area 4.4. There are the corpses of eight individuals here, in better condition than those found

in Area 4.4, that animate as zombies and attack once the adventurers enter. If it takes more than two attempts for the adventurers to force the door open the zombies will be animate and waiting, gaining surprise on a roll of 1-4 in 6 when the door is finally forced.

Removing the statuette from the altar prevents the zombies from reanimating, but also imparts a powerful curse. Anyone touching the statue must make a saving throw versus spells with a –2 penalty. Those failing are cursed with bleeding wounds; every time they suffer damage they take an additional 1d2 points of damage from blood loss.

The curse can only be removed by a *remove curse* spell cast by a cleric of 11th level or higher, along with the destruction of the statuette. The altar is made of volcanic rock from the Shadowlands. It may be used as a relic to store profane energy (see Hex 14.21). It is worth 1,500 gp and is currently storing four gp of profane energy. This energy carries the same risks as described in Area 2 if used to create non-Chaotic items.

Zombies (8). AC 8 [11], HD 2 (9 hp), Att 1 x fist (1d8), THAC0 18 [+1], MV 60' (20'), SV D12 W13 P14 B15 S16 (F1), ML 12, AL Chaotic, XP 20, NA 2d4 (4d6), TT None

- ▶ As long as the statuette of Bathrymrala remains atop the altar each zombie will reanimate with 1d4 hit points two full rounds after being destroyed. The only way to prevent this from occurring is to take the statuette off the altar.

4.7. Summoning Circle

The door to this room is both locked and swollen shut. If an attempt is made to unlock it the adventurers will still have to force it open; if the door is forced there is no need to unlock it.

This chamber contains a summoning circle (see Appendix) worth 2,500 gp. The circle cannot be removed from the chamber without destroying it. Set into the wall, immediately behind the circle, is a mirror, but instead of reflecting the room and its occupants it shows the reflection of a dimly lit, smoky landscape strewn with porous, volcanic rocks (similar to that forming the altar in Area 4.6). The mirror is a viewing portal showing a particular location in the Shadowlands. Characters can study the mirror and attempt to divine the location by rolling equal to their Intelligence or lower on 5d6. Reading the tome found in this room reduces the number of dice rolled to 4d6.

Also in the chamber is a bed-like contraption with a winch at one end and chains attached to the four corners

Hex 24.26 The Keep of Bathrymrala

— a torture device used to sacrifice victims as a part of summoning ceremonies — and a round table used to hold implements of torture. Amongst the pliers, brands, and knives on the table is a book bound in snakeskin. It is a short book, concerning itself primarily with the summoning of a specific demonic entity: Faugnthlide, the Fleshripper, a servant of Bathrymrala, as well as the spell required to summon Faugnthlide. See the Appendix for information on the Forbidden Folio of Faugnthlide.

Were Faugnthlide to be summoned, the adventurers would find the demon to be both highly annoyed at being bothered after such a long time as well as intrigued by the demise of the cult that had bound it for so long. It would use its innate detect evil ability to determine the alignments of the adventurers; Lawful characters would be the targets of attempted subversion, while Chaotic characters would be offered the chance to serve it and its master, Bathrymrala. Those of Neutral alignment are of little interest to the demon, and it will largely ignore them unless compelled magically to do otherwise.



Faugnthlide, lesser demon (unique). AC 4 [15], HD 5*** (24 hp), Att 2 x claw (1d6 + special), THACO 15 [+4], MV 90' (30'), SV D10 W11 P12 B12 S14 (F5), ML 9, AL Chaotic, XP 550, NA unique, TT See below

Faugnthlide is a man-sized demon, humanoid in form. It speaks the Common tongue with a hissing, metallic accent, and has the following abilities:

- Takes half damage from non-magical weapons or attacks.

- Can only be slain in the Shadowlands; if damaged anywhere else it regenerates 1 hp per turn.
- Immune to charm, sleep, and hold spells as well as mortal poisons and diseases.
- Can use the following abilities: *detect evil* (at will), *glamour* (3/day), *spectral force* (1/day), and *suggestion* (1/day).
- Mortals taking damage from its claw attack must save versus poison or be slowed, automatically acting last in the next round in which they can act.

4.8. Main Ceremonial Chamber

This room was used as the main ceremonial chamber for the complex. Dominating the room are four concentric circles carved into the floor, decorated with blasphemous runes and sigils that, when looked at out of the corner of one's eye, seem to writhe and dance obscenely. Despite the rest of the floor being covered in a thin layer of slick mud, the concentric circles are clean, dust and dirt free. This, while likely causing concern amongst the players, has no in-game effects.

The rest of the room contains a table, the wood rotten and worm-eaten, upon which is laid a spread of petrified food. In one corner of the room is an inanimate statue, carved from stone, of Bathrymrala. A chest nearby contains six sets of cultists' robes, all of them surprisingly well preserved, although one of them conceals a patch of yellow mold and sends spores into the air if disturbed.

Yellow mold (1). AC No hit roll required, HD 2* (9 hp), Att 1 x spores (1d6 + choking), THACO 18 [+], MV 0', SV D12 W13 P14 B15 S16 (F2), ML 12, AL Neutral, XP 25, NA 1d8 (1d4), TT None

- Each 10 square feet of mold is considered to be one creature.
- Only harmed by fire (torches inflict 1d4 points of damage).
- When touched or attacked (unless by fire) releases a cloud of spores into a cube 10' to a side.
- Those within the cloud suffer 1d6 points of damage and must save versus death or choke to death in 6 rounds.

4.9. Divination Pool

The door to this chamber is swollen shut, like all the other wooden doors in the complex, but is even more difficult to open than the others, being forced open only on a roll of 1 in 8.

Hex 24.26 The Keep of Bathrymrala

The chamber beyond was once used as a pool for divination purposes: the clerics would strip naked and immerse themselves in the water, bringing themselves to a state of near drowning to induce ecstatic visions. The corpse of the last diviner can be found at the bottom of the pool, reduced to skeletal remains, while the rest of the room – and the pool itself – is strewn with all manner of debris.

The spirit of the diviner still exists, haunting the room as a tatterdemanimal, a creature of animated trash and detritus. It does not attack automatically, doing so only to defend itself (if the adventurers spend more than a turn searching the debris in the room, or try to remove any of it).

Tatterdemanimal (1). AC 6 [13], HD 4* (18 hp), Att 1 x batter (1d6 + blinding), THAC0 16 [+3], MV 60' (20'), SV D10 W11 P12 B13 S14 (F4), ML 12, AL Chaotic, XP 125, NA 1d4 (1d3), TT U

- Largely incorporeal creatures, tatterdemanimals are only damaged by magical weapons or spells. Magical weapons inflict 1 point of damage, plus whatever bonus they possess.
- As undead, they are turned as 6-HD undead creatures; a successful turning attempt causes them to de-animate for 1d4 turns, rather than flee.

- Tatterdemanimals animate as a swirling cloud of junk and detritus, filling an area roughly 10' to a side. All caught within the radius automatically suffer 1d6 points of damage per round, and each round they're within they must save versus paralysis to avoid being blinded by airborne grit for 1d4 rounds.
- Almost impossible to detect, tatterdemanimals surprise on a roll of 1-7 in 8.

A thorough search of the chamber reveals the following treasure:

- 78 cp.
- A *short sword* +1, capable of generating light (as per the 1st-level cleric spell, centered on the sword) once per day.

Area 5. Well

This area was once used as a well for the temple complex. All that remains is a 10'-diameter circular wall, the height of a man's knee, of laid stone. Due to the saturated ground the water level of the well is right at the top of the casing, and the surface is brackish and thick with green algal growth. A green slime lurks among the algae, and if anyone disturbs the water's surface it will attack, even going so far as to surge up poles or sticks that may be used by cautious adventurers.



Location 6

Hex 24.26 The Keep of Bathrymrala

Curious adventurers will no doubt assume there is treasure to be found at the bottom of the well, some thirty feet under the scum-slicked surface. In this, they will be disappointed, as nothing but a thick mat of decaying leaves and branches is to be found in the depths.

Green slime (1). AC No hit roll required, HD 2* (6 hp), Att 1 x touch (consume flesh), THACO 18 [+1], MV 3' (1'), SV D12 W13 P14 B15 S16 (F1), ML 12, AL Neutral, XP 25, NA 1 (0), TT None

- Gains surprise on a roll of 1-4 in 6.
- Can surge forward 10' in the first round if gaining surprise.
- Adheres to targets, destroying wood and metal in 6 rounds.
- After 6 rounds the victim is killed, turning into green slime in an additional 1d4 rounds.
- Only harmed by cold or fire; when stuck to a victim only harmed by flame. Half damage is inflicted upon victim and half upon slime.

Area 6. Statue of Bathrymrala

An enormous statue of Bathrymrala rears into the tree canopy in this location. It is covered in a thick layer of moss and lichen, and, while fearsome in appearance, possesses no unusual properties.

There is a small crypt behind the statue, however, that contains the remains of the two founding members of the cult. As may be expected, the pair have since risen as fearsome and potent undead foes. The crypt doors are magically locked, and can only be opened by the following means:

- A *knock* spell cast by a spellcaster of 9th level or higher.
- Other, more powerful magics.
- Manipulating the statue's tentacles. A clue to this can be found above the door to the crypt: "Those within are clutched tight in Bathrymrala's embrace". The correct tentacles can be identified as if searching for a secret door, or by a Find Traps roll, and Disarming them as a trap causes the doors of the crypt to swing open.

If the doors are opened the adventurers behold a narrow space within, containing naught but two hewn blocks of stone, mostly submerged in brackish swamp water. Upon each stone lies a skeletal corpse, each clad in chain armor and tattered brown robes.

The two former high priests have risen as Children of Bathrymrala, undead creatures that have retained some of their intelligence and gained some spellcasting abilities. When the doors to their crypt are opened they emerge, attacking any living creatures they see.

Children of Bathrymrala (2). AC 1 [18], HD 6**** (27, 35 hp), Att 1 x touch (2d6 + disadvantage), 1 x cackle (special), THACO 13 [+6], MV 120' (40'), SV D9 W10 P11 B11 S11 (F6), ML 10, AL Chaotic, XP 1,175, NA 1d4 (0), TT E

- Immune to non-magical attacks.
- Make saving throws against all spells at advantage: roll twice and take the best result.
- Those touched by a child of Bathrymrala take damage and automatically roll their next attack at disadvantage: roll twice, taking the worse result.
- In addition to their melee attack a child of Bathrymrala may target a single individual within 30' with their *cackle*, a hideous burst of laughter that functions as an *emotion* spell (p. 29 of *Advanced Fantasy: Druid and Illusionist Spells*) bestowing hopelessness. Only one target per child may be affected at any one time.
- A target cursed by a child of Bathrymrala (see below) bleeds more easily and often, suffering the effects of a critical hit (however the Referee adjudicates such a thing) if an opponent rolls a natural 17 or higher.
- Children of Bathrymrala turn as 7-HD undead.

At the end of each round a child of Bathrymrala has the opportunity to perform one of the following actions:

- Cast *blight* (1/day).
- Cast *curse* (1/day).
- Move 30', even if engaged in melee.
- Heal 1d8 points of damage.

Other than the two undead the crypt is empty. One of the funeral slabs is actually a secret door, however. Discovering this is difficult while water is still in the chamber. If searched while the room is flooded the chance to discover the secret door is rolled on 1d8 instead of 1d6. If found, the following treasure is within:

- *Aamutähti*, a sword +2
- Potion of *heroism*
- Potion of *gaseous form*
- Potion of *poison*

Hex 24.26 The Keep of Bathrymrala

Area 7. Rubble

A large building once stood here, part of the main temple complex. It has fallen, reduced to rubble. There is nothing of interest to find here. However, for every hour spent searching there is a 1 in 6 chance of encountering a creature from the (1-3) animal or (4-6) undead table, found at the beginning of this book.

Area 8. Ruined Treasury

Much like Area 7, this area is filled with the collapsed remains of a former building. Unlike Area 7, there is treasure to be found here. For every person-hour spent searching roll below to determine what is found. However, as above, there is a 1 in 6 chance of encountering a wandering creature.

| 1d20 | Result |
|-------|---|
| 1 | Rubble shifts: 1d4 searchers must save versus death to avoid taking 1d6 points of damage. |
| 2-4 | Nothing of interest. |
| 5-9 | 1d100 cp. |
| 10-13 | 1d100 sp. |
| 14-15 | 1d100 gp. |
| 16-17 | 1 gem. |
| 18-19 | 1 piece of jewelry. |
| 20 | 1 magic item. |

Areas 9-16

The rest of the complex is located beyond the eastern branch of the two tributaries. The branch of the river between it and the central island is sluggish and shallow, easy to cross, although a school of dangerous predatory fish lair in Area 15 and patrol the river in search of prey. If the adventurers linger in the water, or make too much commotion crossing, there is a chance they will attract the attention of the giant piranhas.

There are two more small dungeons on this side of the river.

Area 9. Temple to the Lesser Ones

A spur of land juts into the water here, upon which a half-ruined building can be found: little more than crumbling stone walls with no roof. What is interesting is the wide set of stairs leading under the structure to a small complex that once served as a temple to a minor demon the cult venerated. This complex is partially flooded, both from swamp-water percolating up and rain-water running in through the open entrance.

9.1. Oil Beetles

A colony of oil beetles can be found here, in a small chamber at the bottom of the stairs. They have established a semi-permanent lair, sheltered from the weather and outside predators.

Oil Beetles (7). AC 4 [15], HD 2* (4, 9, 10, 11, 13, 13, 15 hp), Att 1 x bite (1d6), 1 x oil spray (blistering), THAC0 18 [+1], MV 120' (40'), SV D12 W13 P14 B15 S16 (F1), ML 8, AL Neutral, XP 25, NA 1d8 (2d6), TT None

- ▶ Once per round when an oil beetle suffers damage it will release a spray of mildly acidic fluid that hits a single target within 5'. The target must make a saving throw versus poison or suffer painful blisters, incurring a -2 penalty to attack rolls for 24 hours. A *cure light wounds* spell can negate this effect in lieu of healing damage.

9.2. Slippery Slope

Once underground the stairs give way to a winding incline that, in drier times, was no doubt a shallow, easily traveled route. Now the slope, roughly two hundred yards in length, is slick with mud and water. Halfway down the slope, the Referee should have each adventurer roll 3d6. Those rolling above their Dexterity fall and slide the remaining distance down. Those that roll equal to or under their Dexterity are able to traverse the distance without issue.

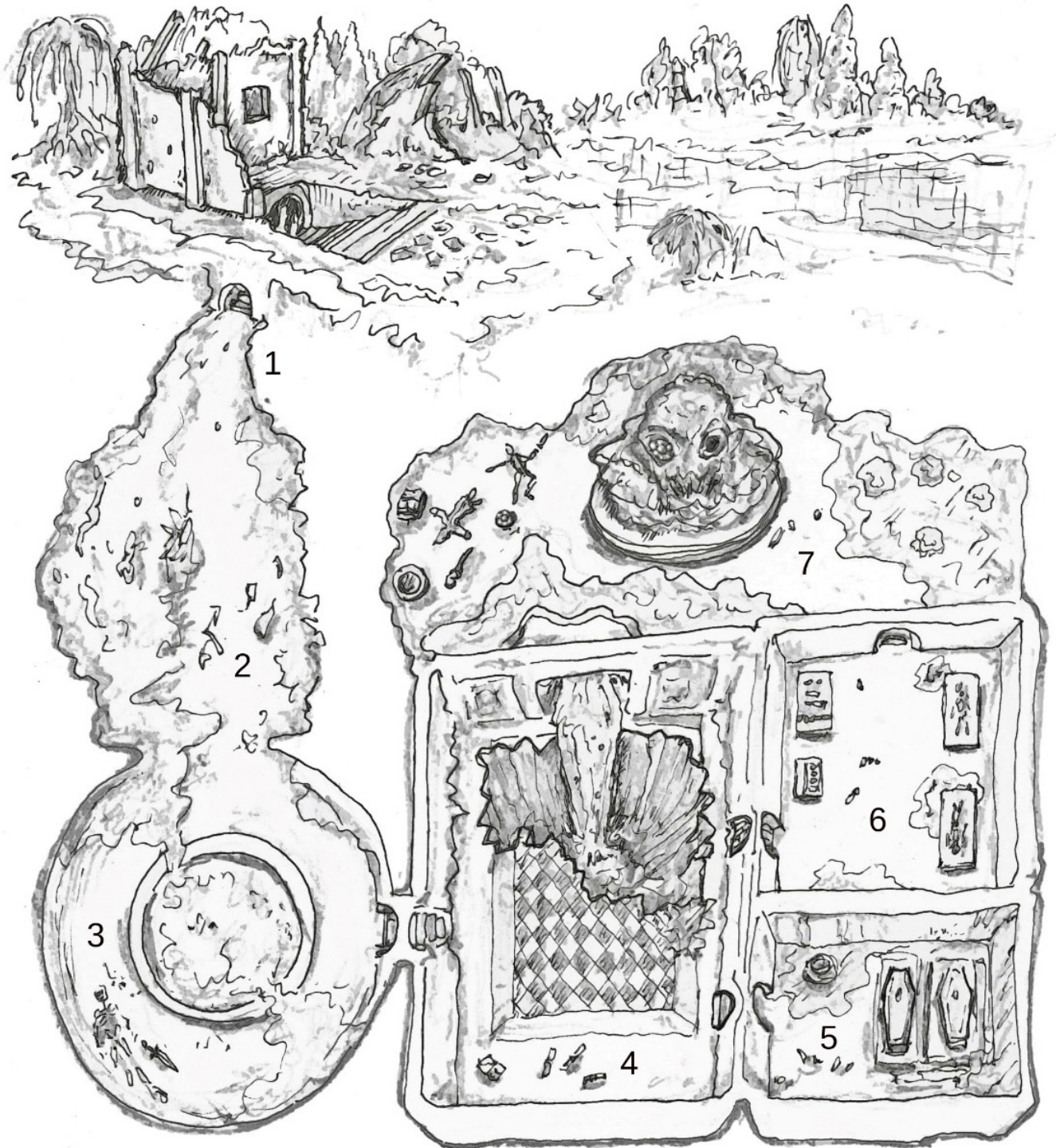
All that fail their check must also make a saving throw versus death. Those failing this saving throw slide into a serrated spur of stone largely hidden in the mud, taking 1d8 points of damage. There's an additional 1 in 6 chance that anyone suffering damage in this manner contracts a waterborne disease, losing 1 point of Dexterity per day over a period of days equal to 1d10 + the amount of damage they took from the sharpened rocks. Lost Dexterity returns at a rate of 1 per day after this period. If a victim's Dexterity is reduced to 0 they:

- ▶ Have their movement reduced to 0 until their Dexterity returns to 1.
- ▶ Have their maximum Dexterity score decreased by 1d4 once they have completely healed.

9.3. Antechamber

The decline terminates in a circular room dominated by a circular fountain in the center of the chamber. The floor is covered in a thick layer of mud, washed down from above; the fountain holds approximately two feet of (relatively) clean water. A closed stone door is set into

Hex 24.26 The Keep of Bathrymrala



Location 9

Hex 24.26 The Keep of Bathrymrala

the eastern wall, carved with a series of cruel geometric shapes that cause mild headaches to anyone examining them too closely or for too long. These shapes are a message written in a demonic tongue, and declare the chambers beyond to be unhallowed in the name of one Shudxoal, the Terror in the Dark.

The door is locked, and the key to open it can be found clutched in the skeletal hand of a semi-calcified corpse that lies mostly submerged in the mud. The body is that of an adventurer, a member of the party that made it as far as Area 9.7. This unfortunate was gravely wounded and managed to stumble this far before expiring, her companions suffering a much more unpleasant fate. A close examination of the bony remains reveals a few scraps of velvet cloth, a rotten leather backpack, the sodden and bloated remains of a book (the former magic-user's now ruined spellbook), and a silver dagger that is slightly tarnished but otherwise totally usable. Additionally, within the backpack is a bronze bar, as long as a man's forearm, with a spherical bulb on one end. This is the missing part needed to complete the Observatory in Area 10 (see p.).

The stone door, once unlocked, pivots reluctantly inwards, the mechanism that once allowed it to open smoothly ruined by grit.

9.4. A Checkerboard and Chasm

This room was once an opulently appointed chamber, with plastered walls and a tile floor set in an intricate checkerboard pattern. However, the entire northern half of the room's floor has collapsed, due to a waterfall cascading through the north wall.

The chasm is two hundred feet deep, with walls slick from spray. It is difficult to descend, requiring a thief to make a Climb check for every fifty feet descended or a non-thief to roll equal to or under their Dexterity on 4d6 at the same distance interval. Failure on any one check means the adventurer slips and falls, taking damage based on the remaining distance (1d6 per 10'). It is beyond the scope of this publication, but the chasm could potentially lead to an underground network of caves and tunnels, inhabited by whatever manner of creature the Referee desires.

Accessing the door leading to Area 9.6 is difficult, requiring an adventurer to carefully skirt the chasm. Thieves may do so automatically; all other characters must roll equal to or lower than their Dexterity on 3d6 to avoid falling into the abyss.

Flanking the portion of collapsed wall and waterfall in the

northern section are two tapestries, each water-logged but in decent condition. They each depict horrifying scenes of the blasphemous worship of Shudxoal; each is worth 250 gp if recovered and dried out. When wet each weighs 2000 cn and requires two individuals to handle; when dried they weight half that amount and can be handled by a single individual.

9.5. Empty Coffins?

The door to this chamber is locked and trapped with magic; anyone touching the door from the outside without using the proper key (see below) must make a saving throw versus spells or be targeted by a *confusion* spell as cast by a 9th-level magic-user. This chamber is mostly empty, save for puddles of stagnant water on the floor and two coffins, fashioned from stout oak, set up off the floor on a wooden table.

The coffins are locked from the inside and can only be opened with an Open Locks check made at disadvantage (roll twice, take the lower result), magic, or through brute force and ignorance. If the latter method is chosen each coffin has an AC of 6 [13] and 20 hp.

Both coffins are empty, save for a couple inches of (undisturbed) dirt at the bottom and a brass key (for the door leading to Area 9.4) attached to the underside of each lid. Any adventurer worth their salt should be able to recognize that these coffins are intended for vampires. Fortunately (perhaps!) for the adventurers, these coffins are backups for a pair of vampires that dwell in Hex 28.24 and have not been used. At the Referee's discretion they may allow a 3% chance that the coffins are currently occupied by 1d2 vampires.

9.6. Old Torture Chamber

When the cult was active the priests of Shudxoal used this chamber to prepare captives for ritual sacrifice. Two stone slabs, at waist height, are in the eastern side of the room, each with dissected human remains atop it. In the western portion of the room are two tables, each holding a variety of wicked-looking instruments: knives, cleavers, scalpels, etc. All of these items are in poor condition, pitted with rust and dried organic material, and clearly not used in years.

The bodies atop the dissecting slabs are distressingly fresh and look as if they were killed within the past day or two. They in fact were, and are the remains of two bandits from Area 1 that strayed across the river and were captured by Shudiasa, the demon that lurks in this complex (see Area 9.7).

Hex 24.26 The Keep of Bathrymrala

9.7. Cavern of the Whispering One

The door from Area 9.6 leads into a natural cavern, dripping with moisture and dominated by an enormous carving of a demonic being: Shudxoal, the Terror in the Dark. The statue once had enormous, multi-faceted gems set into its eye sockets; one has been prized out and is in the grasp of the corpse of a fighter found nearby. They are rubies, but are both flawed, and so worth much less than might initially be thought. The one still set in its socket is worth 500 gp; the one that is currently on the floor is badly chipped and worth only 310 gp.

Lurking within the cavern, whispering incessantly to itself, is the demon Shudiasa, bound to this place by the priests of Shudxoal before the temple fell and unable to return to the Shadowlands from whence it came. Shudiasa is extremely bored and looking for diversion. Thus far the only diversions it has come across are the rare – and foolish – adventurers that have ventured into the complex. Several decades prior to the arrival of the pair of bandits on the dissecting tables in Area 9.6 a band of adventurers stumbled across this complex and met their doom trying to remove the eyes of Shudxoal.



Shudiasa, lesser demon (unique). AC 4 [15], HD 7*** (32 hp), Att 2 x claw (2d4 + special), THACO 12 [+7], MV 90' (30'), SV D8 W9 P10 B10 S12 (F7), ML 9, AL Chaotic, XP 1,660, NA unique, TT See below

Shudiasa speaks the Common tongue with a hissing, metallic accent, and has the following abilities:

- Infravision to 90'.
- Takes half damage from non-magical weapons or attacks.
- Can only be slain in the Shadowlands; if damaged anywhere else it regenerates 1 hp per turn.
- Immune to charm, sleep, and hold spells as well as mortal poisons and diseases.
- Takes half damage from fire and cold attacks.
- Can use the following abilities: *detect evil* (at will), *wall of fog* (3/day), *confusion* (3/day).
- Living creatures hit by one of Shudiasa's claw attacks suffer a bleeding wound, losing an additional 1 hp per cut in the following round. If the attack roll is a natural 20 they bleed for an additional 1d4+1 points of damage rather than 1.

Shudiasa has no treasure, although it is possible to collect ichor from the creature's body worth a total of 1,660 gp that can be used as special components for magical item creation.

Additionally, there is a hollow in the back of the statue's head, cunningly concealed with painted plaster (detect as secret door if an elf or stonework if a dwarf). The following can be found within, left as offerings to Shudxoal:

- 9,000 sp.
- 4,000 gp.
- 1 piece of jewelry worth 600 gp, 2 worth 700 apiece, 1 worth 1,100.

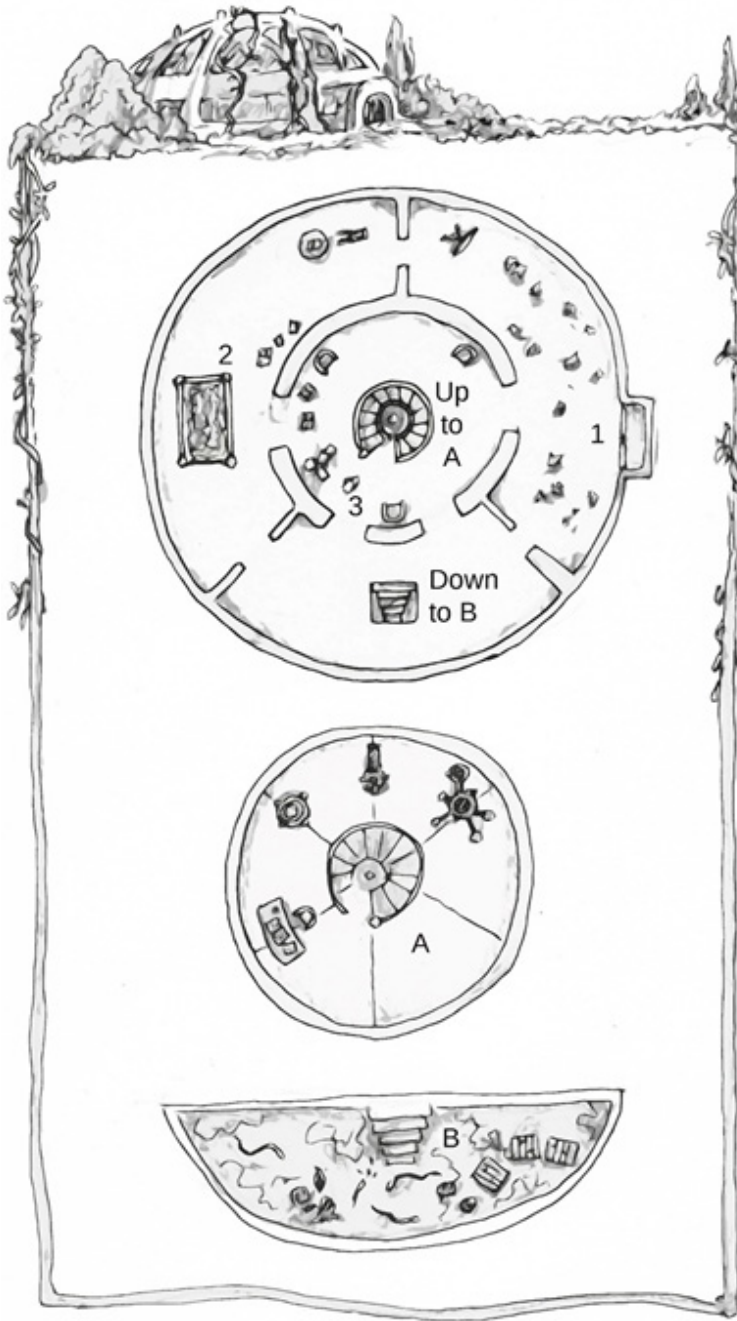
Area 10. Observatory

This structure was once used by the priests of the complex to track the movement of celestial bodies through the skies – those of the Mortal World, and other worlds as well. The Observatory is now inhabited by a family of three aranea (see Appendix) – Thurrath, Arar, and Cthoog – that discovered the Observatory in their travels and are currently using it in their magical research.

The building is a large dome, built from fitted blocks of smooth granite, cunningly curved and shaped to be self-supporting. Unless otherwise stated, the walls curve inwards to form the roof itself. The exterior is covered with vines and vegetation that have been inexorably working their roots into the many mortar joints.

The aranea enter and leave the compound by means of the aperture at the top of the dome. At any given time there will be 1d2+1 aranea within the Observatory

Hex 24.26 The Keep of Bathrymrala



Location 10

conducting research. If one is missing it will be out hunting, returning in 1d100 turns. As creatures of Chaos, these spider-creatures do not keep to a strict schedule. For each aranea within the complex roll 1d6. On a roll of 1-2 in 6 that specific aranea will be asleep in Area 10.2.

The Observatory has two primary purposes, which are discussed in the entry for Area 10A. One of its purposes – the collection and storage of divine energy – is no longer possible, at least not until the storage system is repaired. Parts for this system are scattered throughout the complex,

and all fit into various niches, slots, and receptacles in Area 10.3. See that Area for more information.

Incurious players will no doubt see the components needed to reassemble the Collector as treasure and not important components. If they ask for the values of each item, roll 1d100 and assign a gp value as you see fit. Do not discourage them from selling the items, although kind Referees may allow an Intelligence roll once Area 10.3 is examined. Success indicates the character realizes there is a correlation between the strangely shaped items they have been finding and the niches, alcoves, and divots within this chamber.

10.1. Entrance

Set into the western wall of the Observatory is a large door of beaten brass, once beautifully crafted and embossed with a map of the stars visible over this part of Absalom. It is now tarnished and bent, and hangs off its hinges drunkenly, creating a space large enough for a man to slip through.

The aranea have set a magic mouth at the entrance (as per the spell on p. 24 of *OSE AF:D&IS*) set to be triggered when a humanoid creature not wearing the brown robes of the ancient order enters (see Area 10B). If triggered, a loud male voice proclaims in accented Common: “Announce yourselves before entering”. The voice is audible throughout the complex; any aranea in Area 10A will exit the building through the aperture in the roof in an attempt to sneak up behind intruders; those on the first floor will do their best to conceal themselves to gain a chance at surprise. Any human slaves will act to interpose themselves between the intruders and their masters, acting as a distraction for the creatures.

Scattered around the entrance are the following items, components for the Collector in Area 10.3:

- A copper disc engraved with astrological signs.
- A truncated pyramid of marble, the size of a man’s head.
- Sixteen brass spheres, each the size of a marble. Even though they appear identical they are not, a fact that can be ascertained by weighing each with a set of scales.

10.2. Aranea Sleeping Quarters

When not hunting or conducting magical research the spider-creatures can be found here, sleeping in web-hammocks of their own devising.

Largely concealed by the webbing that crisscrosses the room is a painting that has fallen off the wall and is

Hex 24.26 The Keep of Bathrymrala

currently face down. The painting is of a night sky, one in which the constellations are not recognizable and the sky has an eldritch green glow to it. The painting is in poor condition and worth only one hundred gold to a collector. If the painting is cleaned (takes one day) and examined carefully (roll equal to or lower than Intelligence on 4d6 after an additional day of study) it can be used to gain a -2 bonus to the research roll needed to figure out the Observatory's functions (see Area 10A).

Additionally, strewn throughout the room are the following components for the Collection device in Area 10.3:

- Three rods – one of gold, two of bronze – the diameter of a man's thumb and 5" long.
- A curious square of basalt, 4" to a side.
- A tuning fork made of silver.
- Three large quartz crystals.

10.3. Inner Chamber

The center of the Observatory is partitioned off by a structural wall pierced with openings leading into the other areas of the complex. The walls and circular staircase block lines of sight to other areas in the Observatory. The interior surfaces of the curved walls, the floor, and the underside of the curved staircase in this room are decorated with intricate geometric drawings and pierced by inscrutable niches, holes, and recesses, all of which are empty.

The central chamber also performs a more important function: storage for the divine energy the Observatory was designed to collect. The curved staircase acts as a transmitter and relic, capable of storing 100 gp worth of divine energy (refer to Hex 14.21 for more information). However, it is currently not in working order.

Repairing the relic requires the collection of the missing parts – all of which except for one can be found in the Observatory complex. The last piece is located in Area 9.3. Once all of the pieces are collected they must be returned and placed in their proper locations in this chamber. Doing so requires the following:

- Cleaning the chamber. This takes four total days (so four individuals could accomplish the task in a day) and is necessary to reveal all of the markings, to ensure all of the niches are free of mud and debris, etc.
- A roll as if a magical item were being created (see Hex 18.23). The base chance of success is reduced by 30%.

- If the main character working to repair the relic has read the third section of the Forbidden Folio of Faugnthlide they receive a -5 bonus to the roll.
- It takes a base period of one week to reassemble the Collector.

Once the Collector is reassembled it begins to accumulate the divine energy created through rare, multi-dimensional stellar conjunctions. These happen at nearly unpredictable intervals and naturally generate 1d2-1 gp worth of divine energy per month.

If the Collector has a caretaker spending at least two weeks per month observing the heavens, charting celestial paths, and calculating obscure occurrences, they may make a magical research roll (as if researching a 3rd-level spell). Success indicates they are able to eke extra divine energy out of the Collector, producing 1d3 gp worth of energy that month.

The Collector can safely store 100 gp worth of divine energy. Anything more than that – and it will continue to accumulate more energy – is dangerous, potentially creating an explosive backlash. For every gp worth of divine energy collected above the maximum there's a 5% chance per week that the Collector explodes, doing 6d6 points of fire damage to everything within a 100-yard radius of the building.

The following components can be found in here, strewn across the floor:

- A sheaf of copper sheets, each the size and shape of a beech leaf.
- A rod of electrum the length and breadth of a man's little finger.
- Two large pieces of quartz.

Area 10A

The spiral staircase can only be ascended one person at a time, and if there are any aranea lurking in the upper room of this complex they will no doubt be alert and waiting for the head of an unfortunate adventurer to emerge from below.

A 5'-wide opening pierces the ceiling on the southern side of the chamber, allowing access from outside and viewing of the sky above.

Any aranea not sleeping in Area 10.2 or hunting outside the building will be found in this chamber conducting magical research. The trio have been using the Observatory as a magical laboratory but have not figured out its other uses, although Thurrath suspects they exist.

Hex 24.26 The Keep of Bathrymrala

This low-ceilinged chamber is the heart of the complex, a complicated stellar observatory designed not only to view the visible skies of the mortal world but to pierce planar boundaries and view other heavens. The Observatory, therefore, has two functions:

- As a magical laboratory to aid in the creation of spells and magical items, specifically those that deal with summoning, other dimensions, planar travel, divination, etc.
- As a collection device for ambient divine energy generated when certain celestial conjunctions occur across planar boundaries.

The chief purpose of the Observatory is as a magical laboratory. It has a value of 10,000 gp when used by spellcasters to create magical items. It has specific benefits to the creation of items or spells that have to do with:

- Summoning (such as *conjure elemental*, *invisible stalker*, etc.).
- Divination (such as *commune*, *contact other plane*, etc.).
- Planar or dimensional travel (such as *dimension door*, *teleport*, or other higher-level ritual spells/items that are campaign specific).

Using the Observatory to create such items provides a benefit equal to possessing a library worth 10,000 gp (+3 bonus, see Hex 18.23). However, in order to do so the spellcaster must have a basic understanding of how the Observatory functions. Doing so requires a magical research roll (see Hex 14.21) as if trying to research a 7th-level ritual spell.

The following components for the Collector can be found in this chamber:

- A thin disk, perhaps 4" in diameter, made of an iridescent yet bendable material. There is a hole in the center large enough for a man's little finger.
- Three iron tuning forks, each slightly different in size and weight.
- A bifurcated rod of copper, 16" long and 1" in diameter.

Thurrath, aranea leader. AC 6 [13], HD 5** (26 hp), Att 1 x bite (1d6 + poison) or 1 x spell, THAC0 18 [+1], MV 180' (60') / 120' (40') web, SV D11 W12 P11 B14 S12 (M5 plus ring of protection), ML 7, AL Chaotic, XP 425, NA unique, TT D

- Casts spells as a 5th-level magic-user and typically

has the spells *charm person*, *floating disc*, *esp*, *levitate*, and *dispel magic* memorized.

Arar. AC 7 [12], HD 3** (14 hp), Att 1 x bite (1d6 + poison) or 1 x spell, THAC0 19 [0], MV 180' (60') / 120' (40') web, SV D13 W14 P13 B16 S14 (M3), ML 7, AL Chaotic, XP 65, NA unique, TT D

- 3rd-level magic-user. Typically has the spells *sleep*, *read languages*, and *knock* memorized.

Cthoog. AC 7 [12], HD 3** (14 hp), Att 1 x bite (1d6 + poison) or 1 x spell, THAC0 19 [0], MV 180' (60') / 120' (40') web, SV D13 W14 P13 B16 S14 (M3), ML 7, AL Chaotic, XP 65, NA unique, TT D

- 3rd-level magic-user. Typically has the spells *magic missile*, *sleep*, and *phantasmal force* memorized.

The communal treasure of the aranea is kept in the Observatory. They have:

- 3,000 gp.
- 3,100 gp in special components for magical item creation.
- A *ring of protection +1*, worn by Thurrath.
- A scroll containing the 3rd-level magic-user spell *lightning bolt* (carried by Thurrath).
- A *potion of growth*.
- A spellbook, containing all of the spells the trio have typically memorized plus *light*, *invisibility*, *water breathing*, and *confusion*.

Area 10B. Basement

This damp, dark chamber is home to dozens of snakes – normal sized and harmless, but snakes nonetheless – and any human slaves the aranea have dominated. When the Observatory is first encountered there will be 1d4–1 slaves (mostly taken from among the bandits in Area 1). The slaves are clad in the ancient brown robes of the order – when the aranea first arrived at the Observatory they found a cache of robes within, and decided to clothe their dominated slaves in them so as to mark them as their own. There are three more sets of unworn, mildewed robes in the basement.

Slaves are eaten at a rate of 1d2 each week. The aranea have been able to capture 1d3–1 slaves per week.

Human slave (Variable). AC 9 [10], HD 1 (4 hp), Att 1 x club (1d4), THAC0 17 [+2], MV 120' (40'), SV D12 W13 P14 B15 S16 (F1), ML 11, AL Neutral, XP 10, NA see above, TT None

Hex 24.26 The Keep of Bathrymrala

Within the basement can be found two components for the Collector in Area 10.3:

- ▶ A spiky sphere of burnished silver, 4" in diameter.
- ▶ A 9" bar of copper stamped with a hexagonal hole in the middle.

Area 11. Ruins

Once a rectangular building that was used as housing for the priests of the cult, this structure has collapsed, leaving nothing but the foundation and floor.

Area 12. Carcass Crawlers!

A trio of carcass crawlers can be found here, lairing amongst the collapsed walls and ceiling of another structure.

Carcass Crawlers (3). AC 7 [12], HD 3+1* (13, 21, 24 hp), Att 8 x tentacle (paralysis), THAC0 16 [+3], MV 120' (40'), SV D12 W13 P14 B15 S16 (F2), ML 9, AL Neutral, XP 75, NA 1d3 (1d3), TT B

The following treasure can be found scattered throughout the ruins. It takes a full three turns to find everything. Additionally, the search uncovers the remains of several humans, adventurers who perished at the tentacles of the carcass crawlers.

- ▶ 4,000 sp
- ▶ 2,000 ep

Area 13. Abandoned Boat

A canoe has been tied off here, partially hidden in the bracken and undergrowth at the river's edge. It is in decent shape but nearly foundering from the accumulated rainwater than has partially filled the interior. Two paddles are floating inside. If the canoe is bailed out it can hold a total of three adventurers and their gear.

Area 14. Ruins

This area contains the ruins of another structure, its former use now unclear. A nest of dangerous pit vipers can be found here now, hidden under debris. Any searching of the ruins will uncover the nest; if encountered in the nest the pit vipers make a reaction roll with a -2 penalty.

Pit Viper (7). AC 6 [13], HD 1* (3, 3, 7, 8, 9, 9, 9 hp), Att 1 x bite (1d4 + poison), THAC0 17 [+2], MV 90' (30'), SV D12 W13 P14 B15 S16 (F1), ML 7, AL Neutral, XP 25, NA 1d8 (1d8), TT None

- ▶ Has infravision to 60'
- ▶ Always wins initiative.
- ▶ Poison causes death in 2d6 rounds on a failed saving throw.

Area 15. Piranhas!

The ruined remains of an ancient structure poke out of the water here, concealing a valuable treasure in addition to six giant piranhas. These foul-tempered fish automatically attack any warm-blooded creature that enters the water near this location; crossing the river at a distance of more than one hundred yards still incurs a chance of encountering some (or all) of the piranhas. Each time the adventurers cross this branch of the river there's a 1-2 in 6 chance they are attacked by 1d6 giant piranhas.

Piranha, giant (6). AC 6 [13], HD 3+3 (10, 14, 17, 18, 19, 20 hp), Att 1 x bite (1d8), THAC0 16 [+3], MV 150' (50'), SV D12 W13 P14 B15 S16 (F2), ML 7, AL Neutral, XP 50, NA 0 (2d4), TT None

- ▶ Up to 8 giant piranhas can attack a single individual.
- ▶ When blood is in the water the piranhas do not check morale.

Located ten feet under the surface, at the bottom of the river, is a magical treasure half-buried under the collapsed roof of the ruined structure. It takes one full turn to extract it, provided an individual is able to stay underwater for that long. It is an *efreeti bottle*, created in the last weeks of the temple's existence using the Observatory (see Area 10) and forgotten when the complex fell.

07.02. Mire of the Dead

Hundreds of unfortunate cultists met their end here in a battle against the forces of Law, shortly before the destruction of their temple. The Mire of the Dead is a fetid expanse of water in the swamp, nearly the size of the entire subhex. It is shallow, no more than waist deep on a human-sized adventurer (at most) and contains the animated undead remains of 199 creatures. Luckily for the adventurers, these undead do not arise and attack all at once. For purposes of exploring this subhex, it is further subdivided into another hex map, with each of its subhexes measuring roughly a quarter of a mile, face to face. It takes two turns to thoroughly explore one of these smaller subhexes and one turn to explore a half-subhex (located along the perimeter of the hex).

Hex 24.26 The Keep of Bathrymrala

Every time the adventurers enter a new subhex on this map there is a 1-4 in 6 chance they are attacked by undead lurking within. There is only one chance per day per subhex of encountering undead. This chance is “reset” at the beginning of each day unless one of the conditions to clear the swamp is met (see below).

Every time an encounter occurs roll 1d20 and compare it to the following table to determine the composition of the undead that rise from the brackish bottom.

| d20 | Result |
|-------|--|
| 1-5 | 3d4 skeletons |
| 6-8 | 2d4 zombies |
| 9 | 1d6 wights |
| 10 | 1d6 zombies, mud (see p. 7) |
| 11 | 1d4 wraiths |
| 12 | 1d2 mummies, bog (see p. 8) |
| 13-16 | Roll 1d12 twice. For each result, the number encountered is the minimum possible for that undead type. |
| 17 | Roll 1d12 twice, rolling for the number encountered normally. |
| 18-19 | Roll 1d12 three times. For each result, the number encountered is the minimum possible for that undead type. |
| 20 | Roll 1d12 three times, rolling for the number encountered normally. |

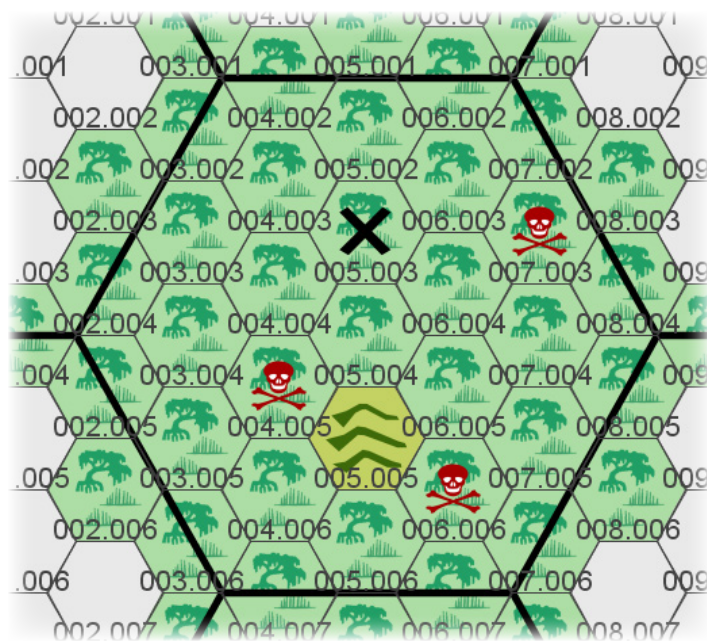
Many sensible adventurers, when it is realized that subhex 07.02 contains a seemingly uncountable number of undead, will shun it for safer sections of the swamp. There are, however, several motivating factors for a thorough exploration of the subhex:

- The undead are not without treasure. Regardless of their type, if the area around each encounter is searched a treasure of Type C is discovered. It takes an additional turn to search each subhex for this treasure. Note that there is only one chance per subhex to encounter treasure, regardless of the number of times the party is attacked by undead in a subhex.
- If the undead are not cleared from subhex 07.02 the entirety of Hex 24.26 is not considered “cleared” for purposes of settling (i.e. there will always remain the threat of random encounters).
- A powerful magical item can be found within this subhex (see map, below).

This hex can only be cleared once one of the following

conditions has been met:

- All 199 of the undead are destroyed.
- The artifact in subhex 005.003 is removed or destroyed.
- Another clever solution is discovered.



004.005. Mudpit

There's a 1-3 in 6 chance that the lead adventurer stumbles into this mudpit and begins to sink. They must roll equal to or under their Strength on 3d6 or go under, “drowning” in mud in 1d6+4 rounds. If the adventurer is wearing metal armor increase the dice rolled for the Strength check to 4d6. Each subsequent adventurer has a chance to fall in, reduced by 1 per place in line (so an adventurer in the third rank has only a 1 in 6 chance of falling in).

Adventurers that do not fall in may spend 1d4+1 rounds each fishing out one of their companions. However, one round after an individual falls in, four mud zombies emerge from the mud and attack. These four zombies are subtracted from the total number of undead found in this hex.

Zombie, mud (4). AC 7 [12], HD 4* (18, 23, 25, 26 hp), Att 2 x claw (1d6), THAC0 15 [+4], MV 60' (20'), SV D10 W11 P12 B13 S14 (F4), ML 12, AL Chaotic, XP 125, NA 1d8 (2d4), TT see below

One of the mud zombies was once a magic-user and upon one bony, mud-slimed finger can be found a *ring of spell storing* capable of holding two arcane spell levels.

Hex 24.26 The Keep of Bathrymrala

005.003. The Source of Chaos

A powerful artifact, the *Cauldron of Dhraudoug*, is located in this subhex, submerged in the muddy mire, abandoned and forgotten when the priests fell. It is a potent magical item that allows for the almost limitless creation of minor undead creatures, as well as limited resurrection of the dead. It is a sentient artifact of Chaos, not to be used lightly by mortal Man.

Removing the *Cauldron* from the swamp is the main way to eliminate the undead scourge that troubles this area; destroying it is the better – although more difficult – of the two options. The *Cauldron* is described in detail in the Appendix.

This subhex is teeming with undead, drawn to the power of the *Cauldron*. When this subhex is first entered, roll 1d20 as described on p., but roll with advantage, taking the higher of the two results. These will be the undead creatures *automatically* encountered within this subhex.

If the *Cauldron* is physically carried out of hex 07.02 roll with advantage for each subhex passed through to determine the number and types of undead that may be encountered. The encounter chance is further increased from 1-4 in 6 to 1-5 in 6. This roll is also made even if the adventurers had previously encountered undead in these subhexes during the same day; the siren call of the *Cauldron* is strong. Undead drawn by the call of the *Cauldron* are subtracted from the total number found in the swamp.

Example. The adventurers find the Cauldron and decide to take it with them. They head southeast, passing through subhex 004.004, 003.004, and 002.005. Rolling for the undead encountered the Referee rolls a 6, 2, and 2. No undead are encountered in subhex 004.004, but there are encounters in the other subhexes. Rolling 2d20 twice for those two subhexes the results are 15 and 7, and 10 and 3. In subhex 003.004 the result of 15 is used (meaning roll 1d12 twice, taking the minimum number appearing for each result), and in subhex 002.005 the result is for 1d6 mud zombies.

005.005. Dry Hill

A slight rise emerges from the mire in this area, providing a dry sanctuary from the rest of the swamp. While dry, it is by no means safer than the rest of the swamp; make the initial encounter roll as normal when this subhex is first entered, then wandering encounter rolls every four hours, with an encounter occurring on a roll of 1-2 in 6. If a wandering encounter occurs roll

on the above table to determine the type and quantity; undead encountered via these checks are subtracted from the total in the swamp.

006.006. Undead Crocodile

In addition to the normal chances of encountering undead in this subhex the adventurers will, upon first entering the subhex, encounter a fearsome foe: a zombie crocodile! This creature is nearly thirty feet long and moves with a liteness that most zombies do not possess.

Zombie, crocodile (1). AC 7 [12], HD 4 (22 hp), Att 1 x bite (2d8), THAC0 15 [+4], MV 90' (30'), SV D12 W13 P14 B15 S16 (F2), ML 12, AL Chaotic, XP 75, NA 1d8 (2d4), TT None

- Rather than attacking last, the zombie crocodile rolls for initiative with a –1 penalty.
- On a successful hit the target is grappled and the crocodile will attempt to drag it back underwater. See the rules for mud zombies, above, except the target must roll equal to or under their Strength on 5d6.

007.003. Gas Pocket

This subhex contains an enormous bubble of fouled air trapped under the water's surface. Searching the subhex disturbs the bubble, releasing it, upon which it hovers above the water's surface for one turn before dissipating.

All living creatures in the subhex must make a saving throw versus death. Those failing take 3d6 points of damage from the poisoned air.

Random Encounter Tables

Random encounters in this hex are divided into four different groups: those occurring north of the River Sarn (Table A), those occurring between the Sarn and the Bel (B), those occurring south of the river Bel/Sarn (C), and those occurring within one of the rivers (D).

Table A.

1. Crawdad, giant (subhex 04.02), 1d3.
2. Animal (roll on Hazard Table).
3. Undead (roll on Hazard Table).
4. Troll (1d4), from Hex 23.25.
5. Bandits (1 gang plus gangboss, plus (1-2) Drunk Ris, (3-4) Laf Rahol, or (6) neither of the two).
6. Bugbears (1 gang, plus gangboss) from Hex 23.26.

Hex 24.26 The Keep of Bathrymrala

Table B.

1. Undead (roll on Hazard Table).
2. Undead (roll on Hazard Table).
3. Animal (roll on Hazard Table).
4. Hydra (1) from Hex 25.25.
5. Ogres (1 gang, plus gangboss) from Hex 25.25.
6. Lizardmen (1 gang, plus gangboss) from Hex 25.25.

Table C.

1. Animal (roll on Hazard Table).
2. Undead (roll on Hazard Table).
3. Bugbear (1 gang plus gangboss) from Hex 23.26.
4. Ogre (1 gang plus gangboss) from Hex 25.25.
5. Elf (1 squad, plus leader) from Hex 25.26.
6. Rhagodessa (1d3) from Hex 24.27.

Table D.

1. Animal (roll on Hazard Table).
2. Animal (roll on Hazard Table).
3. Undead (roll on Hazard Table).
4. Undead (roll on Hazard Table).
5. River boat carrying goods/passengers (1d4).
6. Sturgeon, giant (1).

Appendix

Aamutähti

This ancient blade possesses a +2 enchantment. When wielded by a thief the character gains a +10% bonus to Move Silently and Hide in Shadow rolls.

Cauldron of Dhraudoug

This potent magical item grants the wielder power over life or death. It is a large, iron cauldron, five feet in diameter and height. In order to use it, the spellcaster – it can be used by both arcane and divine casters – must fill it with water, 250 gp worth of special components, and place it on a fire. The standard abilities of the item will not function if the water is not heated.

Once per day the user may place a dead body within the cauldron. Within one minute the corpse emerges, having been granted unlife! It animates as either a (1-4) skeleton or (5-6) zombie. Undead animated in this way are under the control of the user of the cauldron. There are no limits to the number of undead that can be created and controlled by the item, other than the limit of being able to create only one per day.

Once per month a dead body may be placed within the waters of the cauldron and reincarnated, as the magic-

user spell. This usage drains the cauldron of water and special components, and it cannot be used to create undead for one week after reincarnating a creature.

Using the cauldron is not without risks, however. Each time it is used to create an undead creature there is a 1 in 12 chance the user's alignment shifts one degree towards Chaos. This chance is increased to 1-3 in 12 when reincarnating a creature. If the user is already Chaotic they lose 1d2 points of Charisma instead. A creature drained to 0 Charisma by the cauldron becomes a spectre, bound to the cauldron.

The cauldron also attracts nearby undead that have not been animated by it. When making random encounter checks a result of 6 indicates that a number of undead (determine number and type based on location) are attracted by the cauldron. Unfortunately, these undead are not controlled by the owner of the cauldron. This check is only made once per day, typically during the night.

Figurine of Wondrous Power, Worm

Once per week this magical item can be used to summon a caecilian (see p. 147, OSE Core) under the verbal control of the wielder. The worm has 27 hp and each time it is used it remains for 1 hour.

If the worm is killed it reverts to figurine form and cannot be used two weeks.

Forbidden Folio of Faugthlide

This cursed tome is in three parts. Written in the Common tongue, it has a mind-bending effect upon the reader, although those that read it and remain sane are granted great knowledge. Reading each section takes one week and reduces the reader's Wisdom score by 1d8-1; in order to gain the hidden benefits of the book the reader must take no more than four consecutive weeks to complete the tome. The benefits granted from each section are as follows:

Section the First

A treatise on the summoning and binding of extra-planar creatures. Provides guidance on the creation of summoning circles and the following spells:

1. *Circle of confinement, unseen servant* (see Hex 14.23)
2. *Summon lesser servitor* (Hex 14.23)
3. *Phantom steed* (AF:D&IS)
4. *Shadow monsters* (AF:D&IS)
5. *Conjure elementals*

Hex 24.26 The Keep of Bathrymrala

6. *Invisible stalker*

- ▶ **Alternate Rule.** Magic-users can attempt to learn and cast illusionist spells (and vice versa) using this tome, although they must be cast at one level higher than their actual spell level.

Section the Second

Planar geography. This section contains a treatise on the cosmic order of the multiverse and the relationships between the various worlds. In Absalom, the Three Worlds are the Mortal Realm, Faerie, and the Shadowlands. These three worlds are bound together by the Elemental Chaos. Each world also either has its own Dreamlands or connects to a common Dreamlands (sages disagree on this).

When this section is complete the reader is able to subtract 5% from the research roll to understand the Observatory (see p. 22).

Section the Third

The collection and use of profane/divine energy. This section grants insight into how to create and use relics to store divine energy, granting a -3 bonus to such rolls. Additionally, the character gains a -5 bonus on the roll to successfully re-assemble the Collector. The chance of catastrophic failure in doing so is further reduced from 96-100 to 98-100.

When the entire book is read within a one-month period, provided they do not go insane, the reader's Wisdom score is increased by 1 and they gain the ability to cast an additional 1st-level divine spell once per day. If the reader is not a divine caster they still gain the ability to cast a 1st-level divine spell once per day.

Lost Wisdom returns at a rate of 1d8 per week. If a reader's Wisdom is reduced to 0 they are affected as per the *feblemind* spell (p. 91, **OSE Core**). During this time they are susceptible to automatic possession (i.e. no save) by the demon Faugnthlide, should its attention be drawn to the Mortal world. Characters reduced to a Wisdom of 0 cannot regain Wisdom until cured of the *feblemind* effect, at which point it returns at a rate of 1d8 per week. Even after being cured they are still vulnerable to possession, suffering a -2 penalty on any relevant saving throws.

Summoning Circles

Summoning circles allow for the "safe" summoning of extra-planar entities. If successfully performed, the summoned target is bound within the circle until verbally released by the caster or the circle itself is damaged, a feat that only those *outside* the circle are able to accomplish.

There are two types of circles: temporary and permanent. Temporary summoning circles are drawn or created quickly (with chalk, or salt, or perhaps scratched into the ground) in conjunction with the casting of a spell. They are less stable and more dangerous to use – especially with more powerful entities – but quick and easy.

Permanent circles are crafted as minor magical items using the Magical Engineering skill. On a failure result of 86-95 the failure is obvious; on a result of 96-100 it is not, and the magic-user believes the circle to be suitable until it is too late. Refer to Hex 18.23 for rules on magical item creation.

Permanent circles have a minimum cost of 500 gp per HD of creature to be contained, with "plusses" adding 100 gp per "plus". *Ex. A circle capable of restraining a demon with 4+1 HD must have a minimum value of 2,100 gp.*

Successful circles provide the following benefits and caveats.

- ▶ The caster does not need to maintain concentration on the summoning spell as long as the entity is within the circle.
- ▶ As long as the entity is within the circle they cannot physically affect the circle itself, nor anyone outside of the circle.
- ▶ Physical attacks originating from outside the circle break the protection of the circle, allowing the entity to escape.
- ▶ The entity cannot affect the circle or anyone outside the circle with magic.
- ▶ Magic originating outside of the circle can affect those within but can potentially ruin the circle (a *fireball* might destroy it, for instance).
- ▶ Only one entity can be contained within a single circle.
- ▶ The caster can, at will, lower the barrier to allow the entity to leave the circle. Normally entities must be dispelled and then re-summoned to appear back in the circle (once freed an entity cannot be forced back into the circle), unless the summoner knows the creature's true name.

If the summoned entity's HD exceed the capacity of the circle there's a base 1 in 6 chance each round, plus 1 for every additional HD exceeded, that the entity is able to breach the circle. *Ex. A circle can safely contain a 4-HD entity. If a 5-HD creature is summoned there's a 1 in 6 chance per round it can break the barrier. If it has 6 HD*

Hex 24.26 The Keep of Bathrymrala

there's a 1-2 in 6 chance. If the chance is 6 in 6 the creature can automatically break the barrier.

If the caster knows the summoned creature's true name the chance die is increased to a d10: there's a base 1 in 10 chance per round the entity is able to break free of the circle. If the circle is temporary, however, the die is always reduced to a d4. Breaking free of the circle automatically ruins temporary circles and has a 1 in 6 chance of ruining permanent circles.

If the caster knows the true name of the summoned (escaped) entity they may attempt to force the entity back into a functioning circle, under the following conditions:

- The entity and caster are both within 30' of the circle.
- The caster spends one round of unbroken concentration.
- In the subsequent round the entity must save v. spells. On a failed roll they return to the circle.

New Spells

Circle of Confinement (arcane/divine)

Level: 1

Duration: Permanent until dispelled or broken

Range: Touch

The caster creates a temporary circle by drawing or somehow physically representing the barrier on a solid surface. It can have a diameter no larger 5' plus the caster's HD. The maximum HD that can safely be contained within the circle (see summoning circles, above) is equal to the caster's Hit Dice.

The circle lasts for as long as it remains physically unbroken and undisturbed, or until *dispel magic* is cast upon it.

New Creatures

Aranea. AC 7 [12], HD 3** (14 hp), Att 1 x bite (1d6 + poison) or 1 x spell, THAC0 19 [0], MV 180' (60') / 120' (40') web, SV D13 W14 P13 B16 S14 (M3), ML 7, AL Chaotic, XP 65, NA 1d3 (1d6), TT D

Aranea are an intelligent race of giant spiders, the size of a small pony. They have a large hump on their back that contains their brain. Front legs are divided into flexible digits that can manipulate tools and items.

- Cast spells as a 3rd-level magic-user.
- Can spin webs, but slowly, not in enough volume to use offensively.
- The bite of an aranea contains a mind-altering venom. Humanoids bitten by an aranea must save

versus poison with a +2 bonus. Those failing are subjected to a powerful charm spell, similar the gaze of a vampire.

- Each aranea speaks Common plus 1d3 additional languages.
- Can perform spell research as a magic-user two levels higher than their casting level.

Helborn. AC 2 [17], HD 8+3* (43 hp), Att 4 x tendril (1d4 + poison), THAC0 12 [+7], Move 0', SV D8 W9 P10 B10 S12 (F8), ML 11, AL Chaotic, XP 1200, NA 0 (1), TT D

This plant resembles a squat tree, with a trunk perhaps ten feet tall, but instead of a crown of branches and leaves the trunk tapers into two hinged, clamshell-like jaws. Nine whip-like tendrils, each about twenty feet long, grow like branches from the trunk of the creature.

The helborn may attack a living creature within range with a tendril, each of which is AC 5 [14] and has 8 hp. Damage to a tendril does not affect the main plant, and severed tendrils grow back in 1d4 weeks.

The helborn has several magical abilities, which it can use at will:

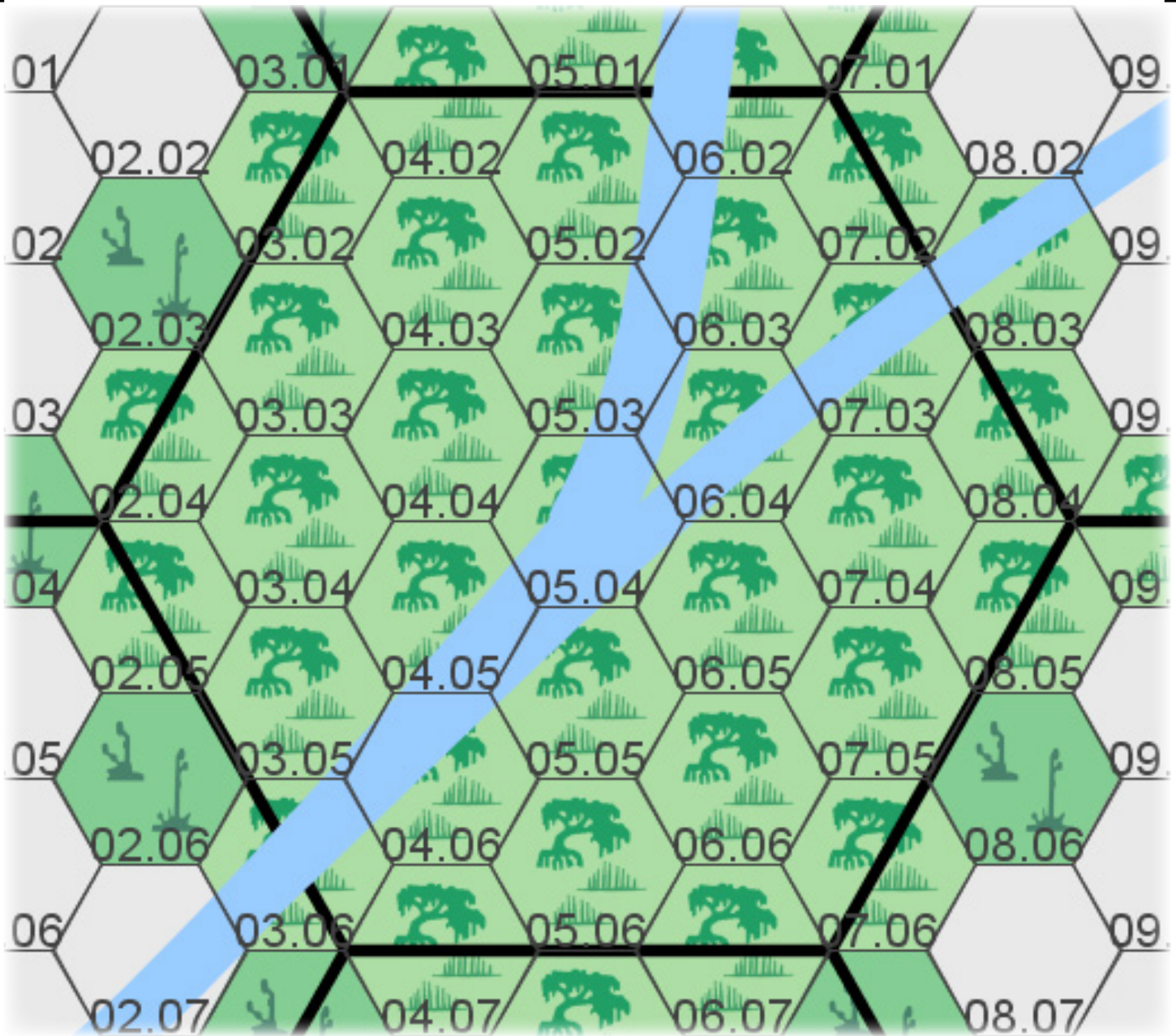
- It can communicate empathically with any living creature within 60', using feelings to communicate instead of words.
- It can cast *mass suggestion* at will, as per the 6th-level illusionist spell, at 12th level of ability. The typical suggestion is for a victim(s) to approach the helborn and not resist.

Dead or unresisting prey are grappled with several tendrils and deposited inside the maw of the creature, where they suffer 1d4 damage per round from the digestive fluid within. Undigestible objects are later regurgitated.

Helborn are intelligent and use the undigested treasure of their prey as bait to lure more victims, and are able to manipulate items (clumsily) with their tendrils. They are capable of slow movement but cannot climb steep hills, nor cross water, so usually remain in the general location where they were sprouted.

Once every 1d6 years a helborn produces 2d4 seeds, each the size and shape of an apple, although they more closely resemble walnuts. When the seeds are ready to be distributed the creature will forgo a meal or two and instruct individuals (via *suggestion*) to take the seeds and plant them some distance away.

Hex 24.26 The Keep of Bathrymrala

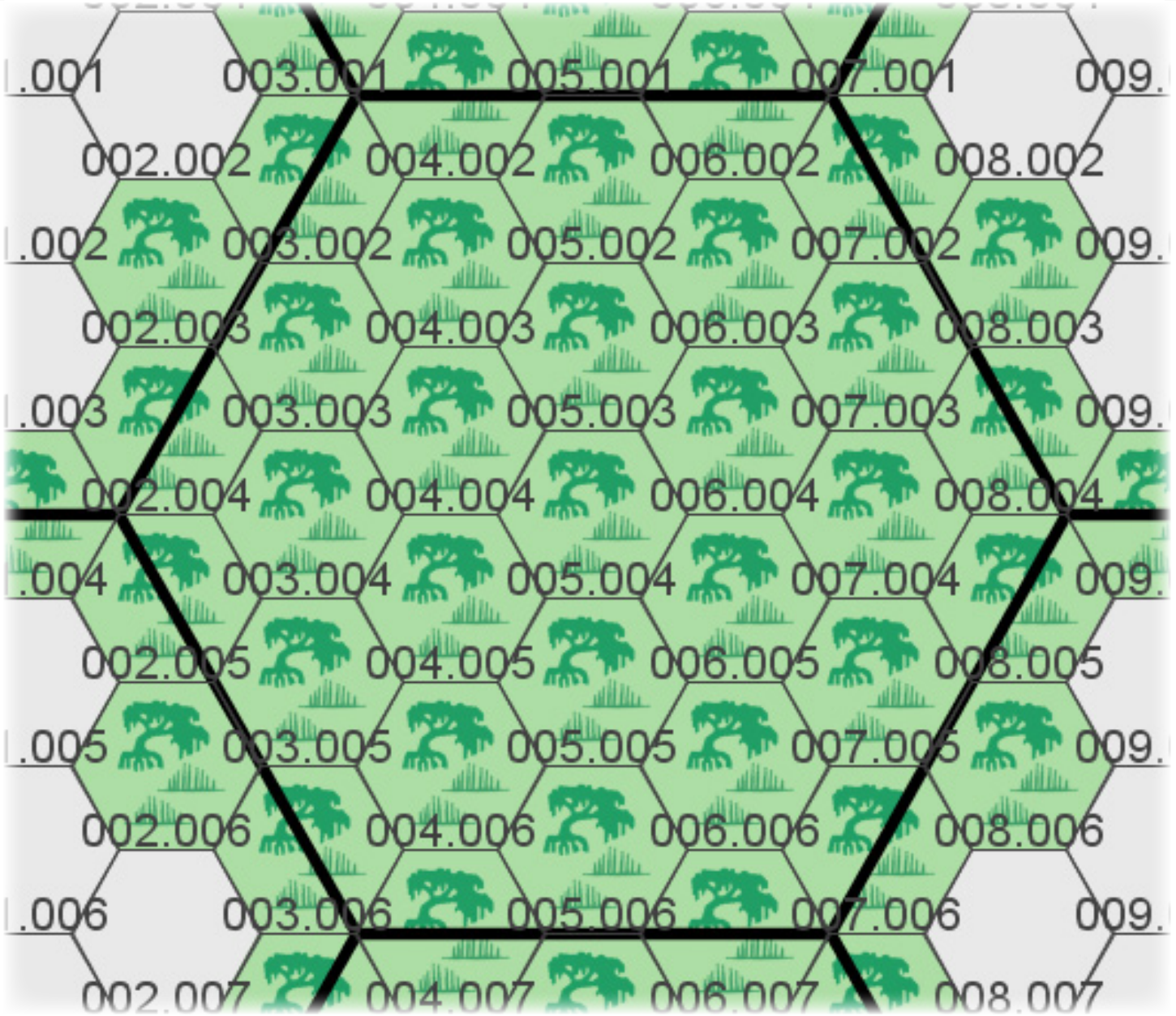


Hex 24.26

Large Hex = 6 miles, face to face

Smaller Hexes = 1.2 miles, face to face

Hex 24.26 The Keep of Bathrymrala

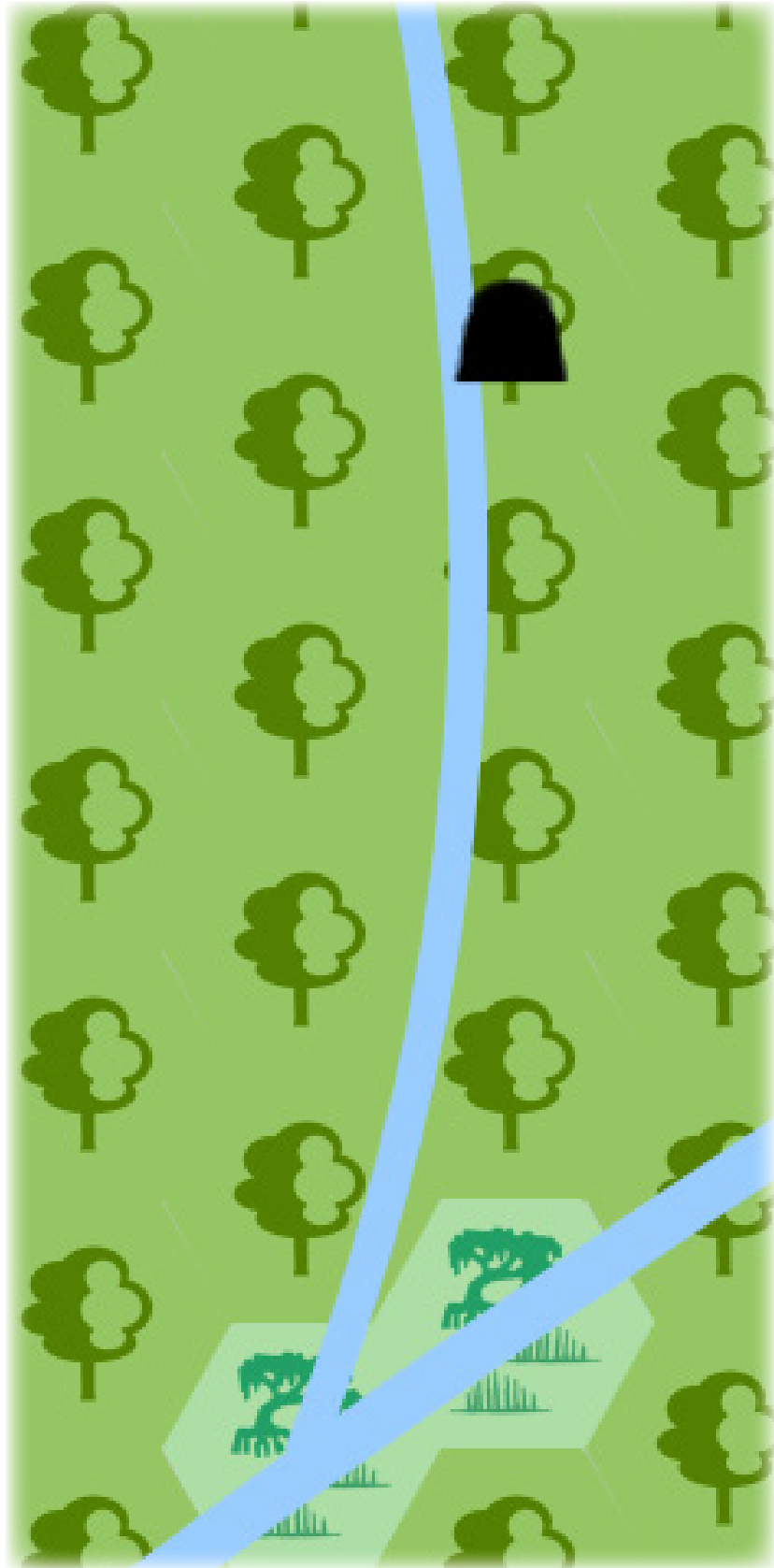


Subhex 07.02

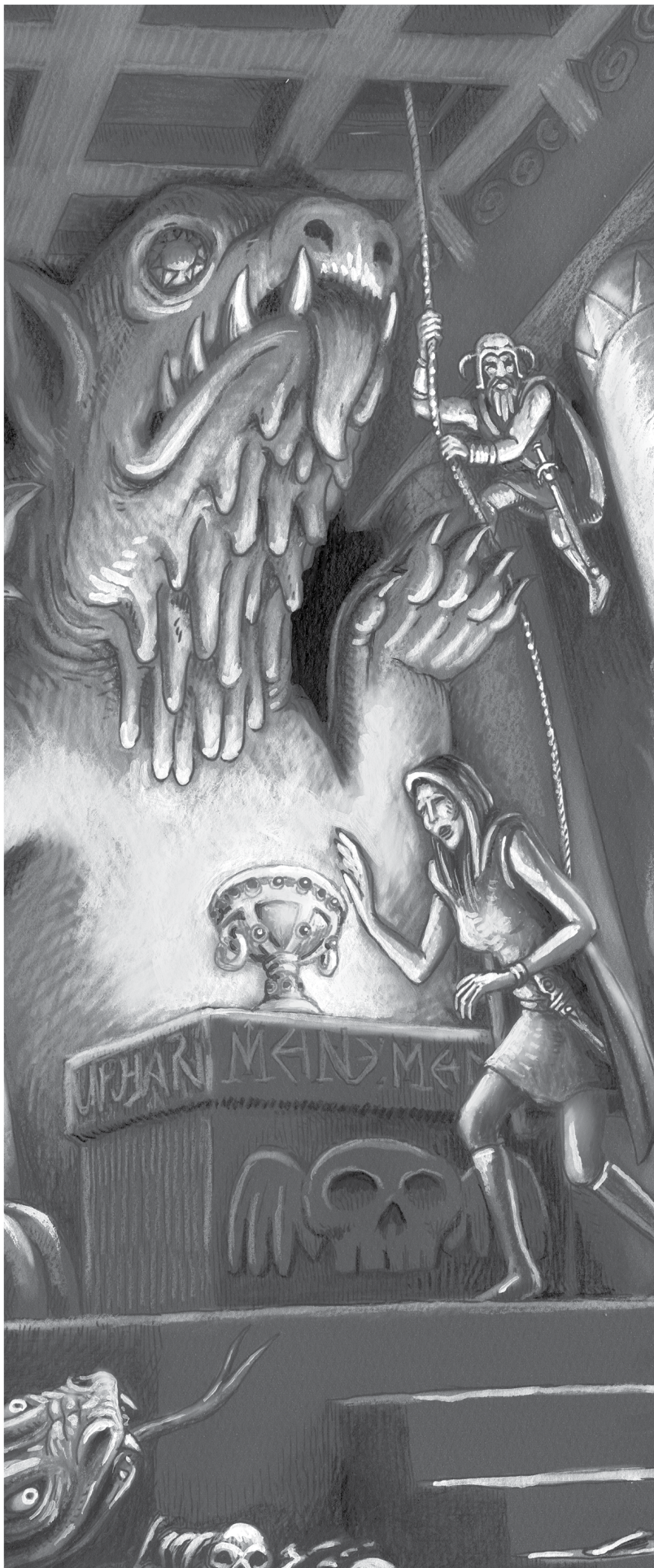
Large Hex = 1.2 miles, face to face

Smaller Hexes = 1,200 feet (400 yards) face to face

Hex 24.26 The Keep of Bathrymrala



Player's map to the bandit's lair. 1 hex = 6 miles.



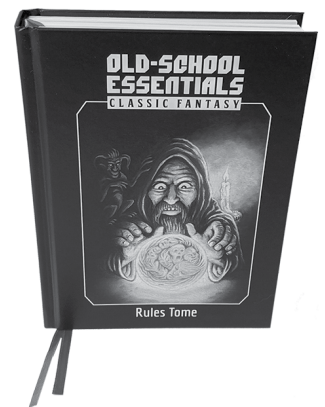
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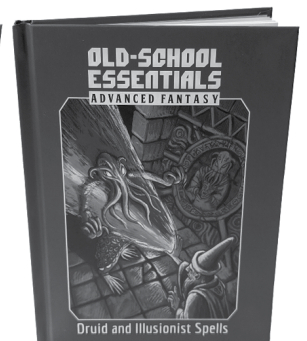
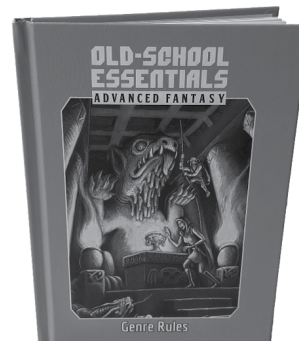


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