



Thunder Maug

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PRESENTS

HIGH SWAMPS OF THUNDER MAUG

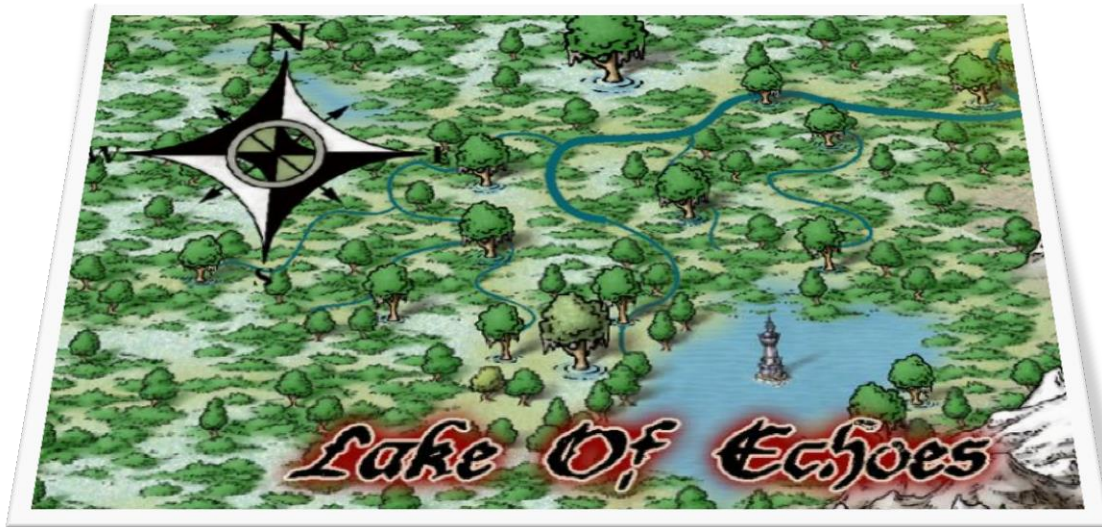
Delirium's Depths

INFINITE WORLDS

WRITTEN BY ALLEN FARR

WBCIW 01

IN THE THUNDER MAUG – DEATH AWAITS THE UNWARY



Fetid swamps, dank ruins, unique creatures and an ancient order of assassins. It is little wonder that in the Thunder Maug, death awaits the unwary.

Infinite Worlds are detailed locations that can be used in almost any fantasy setting. The High Swamps of Thunder Maug includes the following:

- In-character Intro
- Detailed location descriptions
- Unique flora and fauna
- Dungeon maps
- Map of the Thunder Maug
- Adventure hooks
- Short history
- Travel hazards and encounter tables



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Credits:

Writing by Allen Farr

Typo Catching by Ramaroux

Cartography by Allen Farr

Logo by Bob Whitely www.qtgames.com

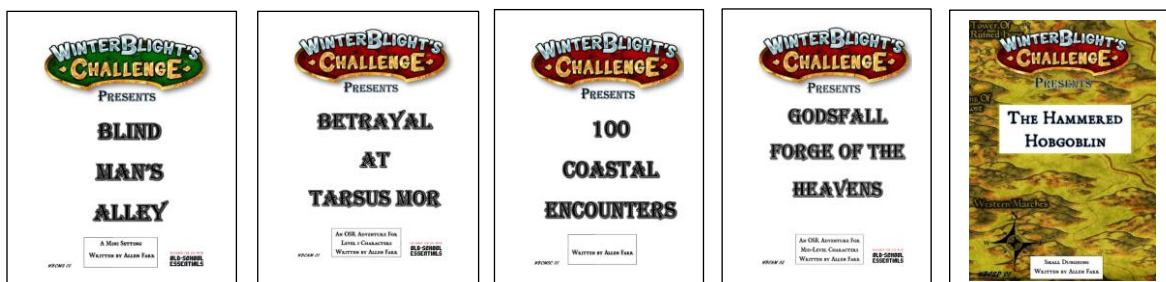
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HIGH SWAMPS OF THUNDER MAUG

A vast area of highland swamp, the Thunder Maug is the source of life-giving rivers whose waters irrigate a swathe of the inhabited lowlands.

It is therefore ironic that the tales of troubadours and bards claim it to be the source of civilization's most terrible plagues. Such tales should not deter the curious for pestilence and disease can be found in any swamp.

Home to strange creatures and exotic plants, the Thunder Maug harbours an ancient secret-scattered throughout its sunken depths are the lost treasures of a ruined city that all believe to be nothing more than an ancient myth.

**~ Beldenfol Esslehoden,
Pathfinder, Explorer,
Bearer of the Delirium
Scourge ~**

DEATH AWAITS THE UNWARY...

The expedition to Thunder Maug started much like any other. A rich patron hoping

their generous funding might lead to a discovery so profound that their association with it would allow them to some measure of immortality, albeit in name only. One can only thank the gods that most patrons do not insist on accompanying such expeditions. Yet the same gods should be cursed, for patrons instead send representatives, in this case, a courtly fop whose wealthy parents had paid for an officer's commission simply to be rid of their braggart son.

Commissioned officers come with baggage, both physical and metaphorical, and each requires an entourage. Lackeys are vital for hauling equipment and to lord over, thus maintaining the illusion of command. Then there are the unannounced retainers, maids and manservants unsuited for such an endeavour that require additional supplies difficult to acquire at such short notice.

With additional burden came the need for pack horses and wagons, which in turn required the hiring of skilled handlers and craftsmen. All in all, the expedition had grown from a handful of lightly burdened individuals, to what appeared to be the baggage train of an invading army.

Of those that set out, only two survived, myself and a scullery maid little lord fop had a passing interest in. What became of the scullery maid, I cannot say. My own discovery has led me to dark places, for I have acquired the Delirium Scourge and the sunlight is all but anathema to me now. If you find this treaty, take heed of its warnings, for, in the Thunder Maug, death awaits the unwary.

Beldenfol Esslehoden

STAINED CLIFFS...

While my measurements can only be described as rudimentary, the calculations showed the Maug to sit at an elevation of around 2,000 feet.

Unfortunately, a sizable proportion of that was to be in the form of the Stained Cliffs. Dominating the landscape for as

far as the eye could see, their sheer height was enough to make one giddy whether looking from the bottom up or the top down. It is fair to say that the greatest and most time-consuming part of the expedition was finding a navigable path to the plateau above.

After several failed attempts to scale the cliffs, it was by chance we crossed paths with a herdsman, the kindly fellow leading us to the beginnings of a hidden path he promised would lead us to the top. Such a meeting was fortuitous and greatly helped the low morale, for the expedition had already seen its first fatality, a cartwright crushed when a wagon rolled back on him while navigating a steep incline.

Beldenfol Esslehoden

The Stained Cliffs are named for the dark staining on their surface caused by the perpetual runoff from the swamps above. Glistening with moisture, there are few places that aren't slick with the cascade of water flowing down the cliff's surface and gathering in the pools along its base. In many places, the water simply pours over the precipice in a series of constantly shifting falls of brown water that throws up a fine mist and bringing with it a foul-smelling odour.

The cliff face is intermittently pocked with caves and fissures, some temporarily hidden behind a waterfall, or permanently concealed by huge fronds of moss that hang from the cliffs many rocky outcroppings. There are a series of hidden trails that can be navigated from the base of the cliffs to the swamps above, all have their unique hazards.

LANDMARKS AND FEATURES OF NOTE...

Reaching the Maug was a bittersweet triumph. By the time we had reached the top, the climb had consumed a third of our rations, half of our equipment and three of our number.

After only the first few hours into the climb, the wagons had to be abandoned, and the larger pack animals turned back. By the end of the third day of the climb two of the fop's retainers had vanished, and while desertion was the likely cause, their disappearance spooked the others and had us all on edge.

Carelessness, as we reached the safety of the plateau, cost the expedition a pack mule and its handler, a cheerful lass whose only mistake was to be on the wrong side of the mule as it lost its footing.

The hidden path delivered us atop a large outcropping of rock. Whatever fate the swamp had in store, it remained concealed by the beauty laid bare before us.

In the distance, a range of snow-laden peaks extended beyond the horizon's edge, and at their base was the Maug resplendent in all manner of colour and hue and stretching beyond the limits of our vision. It was then I realised every map I had ever seen of the Maug had done it an injustice, an injustice it would soon demand compensation for.

Beldenfol Esslehoden

The Maug is a freshwater swamp covering an area of over six thousand square miles. Despite its designation as a freshwater swamp, the water is stagnant, often thick with algae and is only potable close to the base of the mountain range where meltwater from the peaks enters the waterways.

There are many different terrain types to be found in the Maug, from thick tangled forests and constantly shifting mazes of interconnected waterways, to outcroppings of rock, sinkholes and open lakes. It is this wide variety of terrain that makes the navigation of the Maug so difficult.

The Shallows...

Along the periphery of the Maug are the shallows. Despite the name, the shallows can be neck-deep in places, but on average the depth of the water varies only between a few inches to a couple of feet. Dark and filthy, it is often impossible to determine the depth without testing it, for the bottom is rarely visible.

Stagnant and motionless describes most of the water in the Maug, and this is where the shallows are different, and therefore identifiable with a keen eye. There is a slight but perceptible current to the water in the shallows, something that is more easily spotted by dropping small bits of debris on the water's surface.

Little islands of barely dry land called hummocks are also a tell-tale sign, for while they can be found all across the Maug, they are widespread in the shallows. Hummocks range in size from only a few feet across with nothing more than a tussock of grass growing on top, to larger areas dotted with small pieces of scrub. Hummocks can form from a build-up of sediment from fallen trees or even around the skeletal remains of some unfortunate creature. Hummocks are sometimes indistinguishable from floating earth, a mistake that can sometimes be fatal.

Floating Earth...

Drifting through the Maug are patches of reeds and other flora known as floating earth that are indistinguishable from small islands. Only by treading on them does it become clear that they are not solid ground, but floating reed beds. Normally covered with moss and all manner of other plants, these floating islands can be as small as a wagon's wheel, or large enough to carry a regiment of troops. Many are home to small animals such as birds and otters, though occasionally something larger and more dangerous can be found.

Floating earth can be used by the enterprising explorer to navigate open bodies of water or the deep channels of the Maug, however, they can also present a

danger. Smaller pieces can easily capsize or break apart and the larger conglomerations can be riddled with holes created by animals or by the underside having rotted through, the gap then disguised and held open by fresh growth of another plant. Falling through a rotted section of floating earth can be extremely dangerous. The base of the reed bed can close over leaving the unfortunate victim trapped underneath. With no way to reach the surface, drowning is the likely outcome.

The Dragon Spines...

Located in the northeast of the Maug is a curious series of rocky outcroppings known as the dragon spines. These oddly formed protrusions of rock begin in the Misty Dells, an area at the edge of the far reach of the Ice Gnarl, a river delta that feeds the eastern side of the swamp. Over one hundred miles in length, these rocky formations protrude from deep beneath the swamp and can be found as rocky islands in the middle of shallow lakes jutting from the depths of the swamp, or piercing through areas of hard dry ground.

The spines are noted for their uniform, shard-like appearance and abundance of hollows and crevices. Seemingly the result of residual volcanic activity, many have vents, some of them extremely hot. Many of the shards are covered in a sparkling sulphur crust, and tool marks on the rocks suggest it is continually harvested, but by whom there is little evidence.

A number of the shards have caves with hot springs and some periodically exude noxious emissions, something that is evident from the skeletal remains around the entrance. A few of the outcroppings are so hot they are constantly aflame, the hot sulphur burning as it reaches the surface. During the day the burning sulphur is hard to detect, appearing only as a haze of smoke, but come darkness, the sulphurous flames can be seen wreathing the rocks in a hot blue flame, giving the evening mists a haunted glow.

Waterways

The most prominent feature of the Maug is its network of deep winding weed-choked waterways, some of which meander for hundreds of miles before draining into the shallows at the edge of the swamp. Most waterways are lined with tall, overhanging trees that block much of the light. Their depth varies, but averages around twenty feet.

The water levels are not consistent throughout the swamp, and many waterways have muddy shores displaying the tracks of all manner of creature along the water's edge. Such things are not permanent, however, and what is visible one day can be hidden the next. The largest and deepest of the waterways are slow-moving and stagnant, and other than the change in the depth of the water there appears to be little or no current. Thick with algae, carpeted with fallen leaves, and choked with weeds and fallen trees, many of the waterways are all but unnavigable.

One feature that is notable in in some of the deepest parts of the swamps are the stink holes and boiling pits.

Stink holes and Boiling Pits...

While the largest and most dangerous of the boiling pits are limited to the southeast region of the Maug, stink holes can be found throughout.

Boiling pits are scalding hot and should be avoided when possible. Most are a constant feature, easily identified by the roiling clouds of steam. Many have crater-like rims formed by baked mud and rotting vegetation. These are exceptionally dangerous, for boiling water constantly flows over their edge, and the surrounding water can be hot enough to cook flesh. The real danger, however, is that the craters are prone to collapse if they grow too large or are disturbed. While it is very rare, some craters can grow especially large over time and rather than collapse, explode with tremendous force, hurling huge chunks of steaming crud and broiled flora hundreds of feet into the air.

In comparison, stink holes are much less dramatic, but their stench can be overwhelming. Stink holes can often be detected by their vile stench long before they are encountered. The stench is normally accompanied by an upwelling of hot organic matter from the floor of the swamp, and dead fish and animals are often found marking their boundaries. Some stink holes are large enough that their noxious fumes can overcome even the largest of animals.

Lake Of Echoes

The largest body of open water in the Maug, the Lake Of Echoes is perhaps the first hint that the dangers that lurk in the swamp are not all natural. Unlike most lakes, the Lake of Echoes has no discernible shore. Instead, the sodden ground gradually becomes further waterlogged, until it vanishes altogether into the swamp. The swamp gets deeper and deeper until even the tallest trees vanish, leaving only open water.

Once beyond the treeline in the open water, the phenomenon that gives the Lake its name becomes perceptible. Almost any sound, no matter how slight becomes amplified. The closer to the centre of the lake, the louder the amplification until the sound repeats as if bouncing off some unseen object. On most days, fine tendrils of mist slowly drift across the lake's surface and they appear to shudder and recoil in response to the echoes.

Occasionally some sounds are simply swallowed up for no rational reason, something that is very disconcerting. Often loud noises or snippets of conversation can be heard on the lake and judging by their nature, some of these sounds may have been made hundreds of years before. The closer to the centre of the lake, the eerier the atmosphere becomes.

With the exception of the shallower parts of the lake, there is little in the way of wildlife, the eeriness enough to keep them at bay. Some maps show a tower at the

centre of the Lake, but more show the tower as having been crossed out by their owners. Annotations suggest the echoes are the result of sorcerous powers used to scare away intruders or possibly alert the tower's inhabitants that someone is approaching.

Mountain Weather...

Because of its elevation, the Maug is prone to sudden changes in its weather patterns. The sun can be shining brightly one minute, and then dark skies, strong winds and rain the next. The summer brings with it spectacular rates of plant growth, making parts of the swamp unrecognisable, and of course, there is the staple of any swamp, the clouds of biting flies. In the winter, frequent dustings of snow are not uncommon, though lying snow rarely lasts more than a day or two. In the colder weather, the difference in the temperature between the water and the air can give rise to fog so thick that visibility is reduced to only a few feet.

The most stunning of all the weather phenomena are the downslope winds that run off the mountains and the mudspouts, which are as spectacular as they are dangerous. The downslope winds bring with them dense tendrils of cloud that flow through the valleys and across the swamp, often continuing to spill over the edge of the Stained Cliffs into the lowlands below. These tendrils of cloud can be anything from a few hundred yards across to several miles in width. While the clouds themselves are not dangerous, visibility can be significantly reduced, which rarely helps with navigation or when traveling along the edge of the cliffs. On a lake or at sea, mudspouts would be called waterspouts, but in the Maug their funnels suck up all manner of foul decaying matter. While rare, mudspouts have the power to reshape entire areas of the swamp, often by simply stripping all the vegetation from the surface and dumping it elsewhere. Even a small mudspout can form a new lake or open up a new waterway in the few minutes of their existence.

ON THE DENIZENS OF THE MAUG...

During the time spent in the Maug, we encountered a wide variety of flora and fauna, much of it instantly recognisable, some of it not. Often in such expeditions, it is large predatory creatures that "thin out the herd" if you will excuse the expression, and while we encountered many large predators roaming the swamps, most of our losses could not be attributed to the local fauna, but rather the flora.

At this point, it is perhaps best that I offer some clarification. The plant life in the Maug, with a few exceptions, is not dangerous in the traditional sense of being deadly poisonous or carnivorous. Instead, many plants have unusual effects when consumed, including plants that one would consider safe to eat, such as wild garlic, or cattail. Even when cooked, some plants caused problems. The symptoms we put down to various sicknesses and fevers associated with the swamp. It was the blacksmith that realised we were slowly poisoning ourselves. Whilst taking his turn washing up he discovered a pattern on the inside of a cooking pot resembling an acid etch design he used on his blades. By then it was already too late for most of the expedition. Indeed, our patron's official representative was murdered by his men as a result.

In some dreamlike state brought on by poisoning, the fop thought it entertaining to toss his riches into a deep pool, which included the coin set aside to pay his entourage. The soldiers had also been poisoned, and suffering from a delirium that caused confusion and bouts of extreme aggression, they quickly put an end to their commander's antics with cold steel. Later, when they realised what they had done, they fled. In their haste, they not only left behind the treasure they had killed for but what meagre rations they had remaining. It is without a doubt that their rather foolish sacrifice offered the few of us that remained a chance at survival.

Beldenfol Esslehodan

Everyday Critters...

Perhaps unsurprisingly, the Maug is home to several types of poisonous snakes, but like most creatures, they only attack if disturbed or startled. It is, however, the giant constrictors that are among the most dangerous predators in the swamps, for some have grown so large that the average humanoid is the perfect size for a good meal.

Large birds of prey and carrion crows are also common to the area, and some extremely rare birds have made the Maug their home. The eggs of such birds are highly sought after by wizards and alchemists, and many people have died trying to collect them, something that only appears to inflate their price at market.

Fish can be found throughout the Maug, but most are bottom feeders and are difficult to see, let alone catch. It is worth noting that they taste of exactly what they feed on, the bottom! Smaller surface feeding fish can be found in the safety of the shallows feeding on larvae and hatching insects, something there is no shortage of during the summer months.

Unnatural Critters...

There are a number of creatures in the Maug that appear out of place or are just plain unnatural. With the number of ruins scattered throughout the swamps, it is likely that many of these creatures originated there, possibly as experiments that escaped their creator's control.

Slimes And Oozes...

Slimes and oozes are common throughout the Maug. In the swamps, they can be found growing on the underside of tree branches or rotting logs. In some of the warmer caves found in the Dragon's Spine, they can grow extremely large. However, there is enough organic matter throughout the Maug that these unusual creatures rarely go out of their way to attack those passing by, unlike their ravenous cousins found in dank crypts and ancient ruins elsewhere in the realm. Still, it's best to give them a wide berth, for explorers have had the misfortune of setting up camp

right in their midst only to wake up in the middle of the night to discover the formless creatures inside their bedroll or dribbling through the canvas of their tent from the branch of an overhanging tree.

Many slimes and oozes are particularly nutritious and are high in protein. Similar in consistency to egg albumen, small slimes and oozes can be quickly gathered and scrambled for a surprisingly tasty meal. Most of these creatures are not poisonous when cooked, but what they were feeding off when they were collected can determine their toxicity.

Bombard Bees...

Loud and aggressive, these fist-sized bees advertise their presence and as such, it is rare for any creature to accidentally disturb them. Exceptionally territorial, bombard bees buzz anything they consider a threat approaching their hive. These flybys are a one-time warning, and any further transgression is met with a vicious assault by the Queen's chosen. These warrior bees carry a large sac of chemicals that when mixed explode violently.

These suicidal bees attack in groups of three called a brotherhood. The explosions are deafening, though the real danger is not from the explosion itself, but the noxious cloud the detonation creates. No two hives of bombard bees are the same, and the effects of the noxious cloud from bees of different hives always differ. Typically each cloud has some kind of debilitating or physical effect. Some might be corrosive or contain some kind of quick-acting hallucinogen, while others might simply explode in a ball of flame.

Tales suggest that the honey from the hive has significant healing properties, but getting to the honey is probably not worth the pain of trying.

Dead Mink...

These creatures were bred for one purpose and one purpose only, to create the Robes of Undeath, powerful magic items believed to bestow unearthly powers on their wearer. Via guile or circumstance, dead mink escaped their captivity and now lair

in the Maug. Hunting in small groups at night, dead mink pursue small prey, but on occasion are known to attack larger, wounded animals, the scent of blood attracting them in greater numbers. Dead mink are vampiric and must consume blood to survive. Freshly fed, it is all but impossible to differentiate between dead mink and their living counterparts, however, the longer the creatures go without feeding the more like creatures of undeath they become, their fur festering and peeling from their skeletal forms. These creatures are instantly destroyed by exposure to direct sunlight.

Screech Raven...

Larger than normal ravens, screech ravens are instantly recognisable for their large out-of-proportion beaks. Trespassing close to their nesting grounds upsets them greatly, causing them to wheel overhead with an unearthly clamour. The screech raven is too cowardly to attack anything larger than a cat and relies on its exceptionally loud cries to chase off intruders.

While screech ravens aren't dangerous, some large predators have specialised in using the antics of these birds to locate their prey. Screech raven eggs fetch a high price on the open market and in the past wizards and alchemists have funded expeditions to collect these rare specimens.

Dancing Lizard...

A popular tavern name in the lowlands and a spectacle often accompanying carnivals and circuses throughout the realm, the dancing lizard is a native of the Maug. These exceptionally nimble creatures are often found performing along open pathways and animal trails, usually adapting a large rock or the bough of a fallen tree as a stage. As large as four feet in length these lizards perform all manner of acrobatic feats using their tails. Some dances are displays of acrobatic talent, while others are hilarious acts of comedy. It is not the dancing lizard that is dangerous, for it is only the distraction. All dancing lizards are brightly coloured

males. Wherever a dancing lizard is to be found performing in the wild, there are at least two much larger female lizards waiting to spring an ambush. The female lizards are no different than most other giant lizards, but they have a chameleon-like ability that allows them to swiftly adapt their coloration to that of their surroundings making them difficult to spot.

Mimic Otters...

Created as spies, these cute but nefarious little creatures can memorise conversation verbatim, including accents. It is unclear if they understand what it is they are hearing or simply repeat what they have memorised. Now with no masters to report to, mimic otters continue to spy and to memorise all the sounds they have heard until it drives them mad. A crazy otter is a sight to behold. Standing upright facing a rock, tree or another object, they proceed to have what appears to be an argument with the object. Such displays of madness often include rude and threatening gestures. Witnessing such an episode can be entertaining, but occasionally the onlooker might overhear something important or secretive being discussed, or indeed they may be surprised to hear their own voice or the voice of one of their companions betraying them. Mimic otters look no different than any other otter and other than the occasional bout of madness the only difference in behaviour is that they appear to be overly curious.

Sun Frog...

Certainly not a natural creature, the sun frog hunts at night using the searing light generated by its body. This rare creature has been the subject of intense interest by scholars and for many years they have attempted to determine the mechanism by which this bulldog-sized frog generates such dazzling brightness. Almost every scholar that has studied the frog has a theory and they bitterly dispute each other's findings. Indeed, the only common ground most of them have on the subject is that they have all been permanently blinded in the process.

The sun frog uses a diffuse glow to attract large insects, rodents and even fish. When it has attracted enough prey to its vicinity, the frog emits a blinding flash of light that can completely stun small creatures within a ten-yard radius. The flash of light is so intense that it can momentarily light up the sky on a cloudy night. The flash can cause permanent blindness at up to twenty yards and a temporary loss of vision at up to fifty yards. The most commonly accepted theory is that the light is a side effect of the mechanism the creature uses to stun its prey.

Flayer Snake...

Scholars would argue that while this large predatory creature looks and moves like a snake, it is something else entirely. The flayer snake does not have fangs, and therefore no bite. It has no venom, nor is it a constrictor that uses its body to crush its prey. Instead, the flayer snake has three tails, though this is not immediately apparent until it brandishes them. Wielding its tails like bullwhips, the flayer snake knocks its prey senseless and can easily subdue large rodents. While it is rare to encounter a flayer snake, the whip crack of their tails is a constant in the Maug.

There are reports that this snake can grow to over twenty feet in length at which point their tails become deadly even to larger creatures. Often a flayer snake has to strike its victims many times to subdue it and travellers that have interrupted the snake before it could feed have reported discovering the flayed corpses of their victims. Documents discovered in the Maug suggest that the Arena Masters in the great deserts have funded multiple expeditions in an attempt to capture specimens of this elusive creature for breeding. The nature of the discovery of these documents suggests that they have not been successful. Exactly what the origins of this creature are remains a mystery that the Maug has not yet given up.

Maug Troll...

Physically smaller and more rotund than their lowland counterparts, the Muag troll spends much of its time submerged in the deeper parts of the swamps. While these creatures require air to breathe, they can sit idle underwater for several hours. The primary diet of the Maug troll is fish, and they are known to construct complex fish farms. Indeed, the more complex the farm, the greater the chance the troll is likely to entice a mate. It is hardly surprising that Maug trolls are highly territorial regarding their farms, and this is where their reputation for violence is born. Maug trolls are fearless when defending transgressions on their patch, and while much of that violence is directed toward other trolls attempting to steal their fish or sabotaging their farms, it's not unknown for them to attack passing boats or other large creatures.

The Maug Troll may be smaller than others of its kind, but they can be much more dangerous. From a young age, the Maug Troll is fed with organic matter that contains the spores of the various slimes and oozes found in the swamp, and eventually the troll and one or more of the slimes and oozes form a symbiotic relationship. Maug Trolls often attack by vomiting some filthy ooze that they have been harbouring in their gut, and it's not unknown for a troll to be disembowelled only for a killer ooze to spill out and carry on the fight.

Drowning Pool...

These creatures lurk in shallow pools, potholes and slow-moving waterways waiting for their prey to enter, or pass above them. Often described as a cross between a carpet and a manta ray, the drowning pool is sensitive to vibration and instantly knows when their domains have been disturbed. On average, these creatures grow to a few feet in length and pose little threat to anything larger than a fox. However, a few have grown monstrous in size and are capable of sinking a canoe or rowboat.

The drowning pool surprises its prey by silently rearing out of the water, throwing

itself over them. The creature then rolls itself up like a carpet, sinking back into the depths. Not only do its victims have to contend with being crushed by its incredible strength, but they also face the prospect of drowning at the same time.

While these creatures spend most of their lives submerged, some float on the surface. Inevitably, they get covered with leaves and other detritus and appear as any other floating mass of debris, providing a tempting but deadly shortcut.

FIERCE FAUNA...

There is a myriad of strange and unusual plants in the Maug, and to list them all would take a lifetime of study, a dangerous prospect to be sure. As incomplete as it is the below list may be, it should provide warning enough.

Bolden's Tear...

How this peculiar tree gained its name remains unknown, but records found in the swamp and beyond clearly describe this unusual plant in detail. Tall and bulbous, these large gourd-shaped trees can be found individually or in small groves of no more than five trees. Almost always found in the deeper areas of the swamp, these trees stop growing upward when they reach a height of around thirty feet and start growing outward at the base. As they grow outward, they shed most of their branches, leaving only a few elongated twiggy branches with tiny leaves at the top. As they continue to grow, they become hollow inside, making them the perfect choice of a lair for all manner of creature.

Bolden's Tear is a popular choice of lair for the Maug Troll and they often carve an entrance into the tree somewhere below the waterline, building a series of platforms inside. The trees themselves are harmless and provide excellent shelter, but as they are often home to a troll, they are best avoided.

Wyrd Willow...

Wyrd willow is no different from the large weeping willows found in other wetlands but gains its name for being the host of

choice for wyrd moss, which grows exclusively in the Maug. Wyrd moss grows only on ancient willow trees, their dangling branches becoming bedecked and overburdened with its thick fronds. Highly sought after by alchemists, poisoners and magic folk fair and foul, each species of wyrd moss has its own particular properties and toxins, not all of which are detrimental.

Willows draped in wyrd moss are beautiful to behold, but if enough of it comes into contact with the skin, it doesn't take long for the effects of the mosses' toxins to become apparent. Wyrd moss is given a wide berth by almost every creature that lives in the Maug and it is usually careless explorers that run afoul of it. It is not unknown to find the skeletal remains of unwary explorers at the base of a wyrd willow.

Vomiting Pitcher...

Like the Maug Troll, the vomiting pitcher plant has developed a symbiotic relationship with some of the many slimes and oozes in the swamps. This plant gains its name for its ability to spew forth whatever slime or ooze happens to be residing in the plant's large flower. Some varieties of the plant can vomit a fully grown slime or ooze up to twenty feet.

These large and beautiful plants grow to about six feet in height, their pitcher shaped flower often making up the bulk of the plant. The vomiting pitcher comes in many different configurations. Some have an array of flowers shaped like a church organ, others a single large flower. Some flowers are sunken into the ground and others are more like vines and hang from trees. These plants can sense vibrations in the ground, air or water and when their prey comes within range they unleash their contents with surprising accuracy.

Carnivorous Bloom...

Arguably one of the most dangerous forms of life in the Maug, the carnivorous bloom is thankfully short-lived and easy for the traveller

to recognise if they are forewarned. The presence of an algae bloom can cause significant discoloration in the water and occasionally phosphorescence can be observed during the hours of darkness. Other signs include a lack of floating organic matter and occasionally a vigorous effervescence.

However, exactly what this phenomenon is, remains a mystery. Some scholars suggest it is a concentration of tiny organisms other than algae, and some suggest it may be something unnatural.

Anything in contact with a carnivorous bloom suffers damage comparable to being dipped in strong acid. Only organic material is affected, and after a bloom has passed, it leaves behind sparkling clear water that is safe to drink. Blooms last only a few hours at most, though anything that passes through one is only likely to last a few seconds.

Dervish Swamp Giant...

Standing as silent sentinels, these colossal trees can grow over three hundred feet, their verdant canopies often obscured by low cloud. While notable for their height, it's only close up that the impressive girth of their trunks becomes apparent. The dervish swamp giants are only found as singular trees in areas of open ground, and with good reason.

The dervish swamp giant uses wind dispersal to spread its seeds across the swamp, and the nuts it produces can weigh up to ten pounds. Indeed, the taller the tree the heavier the nuts. Each nut produces a wing of incredibly hard material, which spins at great velocity. The seeds of this swamp giant take years to mature, but fall in a series of staged releases called volleys. The first volley clears any plant growth for up to thirty yards around the base of the tree.

Over the next few days, the nuts open producing a rich aroma that attracts all manner of creatures. The nuts are so heavy that most creatures must feast on them in situ, rather than carry them off. This is when the second volley is released, killing most creatures larger than a mouse. It is the blood soaking into the ground that fertilizes the remaining nuts, which are

released in a third volley, their much larger wings allow them to travel much greater distances.

OF THE RUINS IN THE DEPTHS...

Explorers always hope to find ruins; it's an unspoken measure of success, even if they are just the crumbling remains of a lowly shepherd's hut. Discovering ruins in the Maug wasn't unexpected, but their extent was certainly a surprise. If the discovery of ruins is indeed a measure of such things, then the expedition was a success, and if death is a measure, then it excelled, for already whittled down to a handful of people, the ruins would provide a slaughter befitting any arena. It was during my exploration of the sunken ruins that I contracted the Delirium Scourge.

In the northern reaches of the Maug, to the west of the Dragon Spines lies a series of ruins so extensive that they could be mistaken for an ancient city. Yet to look down on them from the mountains or stand in their midst, their existence would remain all but hidden. Half submerged, crumbling and completely overgrown, it is only once aware of their existence that the ability to see past what nature has concealed is granted.

There are small ruins scattered across the Maug, but you will know when you discover the ruins of which I speak, for you will have already seen the faces in the deep.

Beldenfol Esslehodan

Faces In The Deep...

Perhaps the first sign that something ancient lurks beneath the fetid waters of the Maug are the faces in the deep. The water in this part of the swamp is clearer, and in certain conditions, faces can be seen leering up out of the murky darkness. Stained like tea, these faces first appear as nothing more than figments of the

imagination, a trick of the light, however, it is clear that beneath the water is a grand boulevard, the statues lining its extents just tall enough to expose their uplifted faces to what small amount of light filters through.

The waterway doesn't follow the exact path of the boulevard, which by all accounts stretches for two miles, but instead twists and turns like any other. However, the meandering of the waterway isn't as natural as it looks and instead flows around large buildings that rise out of the depths. Hidden by hundreds of years of growth, the only way to discover what lies behind this façade of vine and moss is to moor your boat and hack your way in.

Temple...

The largest building in the ruins, the temple sits at the boulevard's end, or perhaps its beginning. Easily mistaken for a hill covered in thick vegetation, the temple is remarkably intact. While this building appears to be a temple in design it does not appear to be in function. The building isn't dedicated to any gods, only to mortals, perhaps champions of a bygone age. The temple offers an insight into the faces in the deep, for inside this cavernous building are hundreds of similar statues. The lower levels of the temple are flooded, but as the water levels in the Maug ebb and flow, they may occasionally drain, temporarily leaving their secrets uncovered.

The Map Room...

Explorers claim to have discovered this crumbling building not because they were looking for it, but because the current strengthens in its vicinity, its pull enough to nudge small watercraft off course into a concealed inlet. The inlet is unremarkable, but the current continues to strengthen, and what appears to be an impenetrable wall of hanging vines easily parts, revealing a long stonework tunnel. The water in the tunnel is shallower and swift-flowing, though where it runs to is not recorded. A short distance into the tunnel is a set of semi-submerged steps leading to a doorway. Beyond the doorway is a

crumbling set of twisting stairs, at the top of which is the entrance to the map room. Although most of this building is in serious disrepair, the map room by all accounts appears to be the exception. Painted in exquisite detail on the floor of this room is a map depicting ancient kingdoms, kingdoms the names of which few can recall. The exact nature of this room is unknown, but it appears to be the place of choice for the mimic otter to gather as if by some learned behaviour. This, along with the detailed maps suggests the room to have been a hub of an ancient spy network. Scribbled notes indicate a secret door in this room hidden behind a larger than life statue.

Further Exploration...

The ruins are extensive. It at first appears that the Maug was once home to a great city, but after a detailed examination of the ruins, it becomes clear it is not a city in the normal sense. There appear to be no buildings that suggest any significant industry. While there are caves and tunnels to be found, there are no mines that point to a source of wealth. There are no large residential areas, and what evidence of habitation there is appears sparse and spread out. There does appear to be evidence that slavery was practised, yet their numbers do not appear large, and other than a few ornamental walled gardens, there is no sign of agriculture. What is clear is that there is a vast wealth in lost knowledge and riches sunken in the depths and only by uncovering them are the secrets of the ruins in the depths likely to be given up.

Other Places...

Ruins in the Maug are not limited to the sunken city, nor are they all hidden behind thick curtains of undergrowth. Although our expedition didn't explore them, two of the most easily identified ruins are the keep on the heights and the broken bridge and tower. What follows comes from information gleaned from other sources.

The Broken Bridge And Tower...

At the base of the most southerly peak is a ruined tower. Despite the tower's state of disrepair, it still stands tall enough that it can be seen from a distance of several miles. Evidence that the tower was once much taller surrounds it, and by all accounts, a great pile of rubble lies at its base. Texts suggest that explorers found evidence that the tower was inhabited, but by whom there is little mention other than a few vague references to folk referred to as the decrepit ones.

It is not the tower, however, that is noteworthy, but the broken bridge. With most of its single arch missing, the bridge sits in a shallow lake, a feature certainly not there during its construction. Rubble from the collapsed arch forms a series of islands in the water beneath. What is unusual is the sheer size of the bridge, the scale of it certainly something that would appear exceptional, even in the largest known cities. Other than the tower, there are no other ruins to be found in the vicinity, something that simply adds to the mystery.

The Keep On The heights...

On the southwest point of the plateau is the keep on the heights. While its façade is crumbling, this fortification is by all accounts remains a defensible building and offers a commanding view, both across the lowlands and much of the swamps. One source indicates that there is some magical phenomenon associated with the keep, the slopes surrounding it under the influence of illusion magic. Whatever ancient magic is at work confuses up with down and it appears several explorers, having succumbed to the magic, have walked off the cliff edge believing they were climbing up the slope toward the keep.

Burial Chambers...

Perhaps unrelated to any other ruins found in the Maug are the burial chambers. These low domed constructs are scattered throughout the swamps and likely predate even the ruins in the depths. Most of these chambers are completely

submerged, but a few built on higher ground have so far escaped that fate. According to various testimonies of those that have explored them, it was only by witnessing the flights of bats in the early evening that revealed their presence, the bats using these ancient earthworks as a roost.

GAME INFORMATION...

The author is of the school of thought that ancient ruins should not exist in isolation, and dungeons shouldn't be convenient hotels for wandering monsters with no reason to exist other than to challenge the player characters. That's not to say random encounters and wandering monsters don't have their place, but even a dungeon with a little background and ruins with a theme can bring any game to life.

This section contains a short backstory of the Thunder Maug and a series of random tables and adventure ideas. As with all things, the Gamesmaster is encouraged to make changes or expand on the ideas presented to match the needs of their game and style of play.

Backstory...

The story of the Maug is a story of infidelity, injustice and revenge. Many hundreds of years ago, the queen of one of the most powerful realms in the land learned her husband had a mistress. Rather than causing uproar in the Royal Court, the queen contracted a cabal of assassins to arrange for her husband's mistress to be poisoned. To further show her displeasure, she implicated her husband's sister, the royal alchemist, in the murder. The queen wanted to watch her husband squirm trying to prove his sister's innocence while preventing any connection between himself and his mistress from being uncovered. Yet the queen's husband did no such thing and instead ordered his sister thrown in the royal dungeons to await execution. Realising her husband intended to brush everything aside by having his sister executed, the queen stayed the execution

for a year and a day, all the time watching her husband's every move.

As fate would have it, when the day of the execution came, the same cabal of assassins had infiltrated the castle to kill a noble's wife. Learning that the royal alchemist was to be executed, they rescued her from the dungeons, leaving the badly disfigured body of the noble lady in her place. In exchange for her life, the royal alchemist pledged loyalty to the cabal, providing for them all manner of poisons, cures and elixirs. The alchemist was smart, and over time, gaining their trust, she seized leadership of the organisation and bent it to her will.

The alchemist, now known as Harbinger, the title bestowed on the leader, moved the cabal to the location that is now the Thunder Maug and named the cabal Blood Mirage. The Harbinger had a new vision for the organisation. No longer would it hire out its members to kill for those that wished to gain power, but instead it would allow those in power to live as long as they paid a tithe. What would become the Maug, became a training ground, and the Harbinger put her abilities to work creating all manner of experiments to ensure her assassins had every advantage. Blood Mirage issued a demand for a tithe to the leaders of all the known lands. As the Harbinger expected, these demands were at first met with derision. To set an example, the Harbinger had her treacherous brother assassinated. The next set of demands were written in his blood. The murder of the queen's husband gave some pause for thought, but the queen was defiant, and others simply increased their security.

Harbinger and the queen were not unlike, and as the queen had wished her husband suffer, Harbinger wanted to see the queen suffer, and ordered Blood Mirage to kill her son, the heir to the throne. Enraged, the queen marched with her army to the cabal's headquarters, for she knew its location, for there she had acquired their services. The cabal was gone, only the pretence that the headquarters remained active had been

maintained. On the return journey, a terrible sickness overcame the queen's generals. One hanged himself, another driven mad killed his lord, and another deserted. Then the queen was murdered. With the queen and her heir gone, the lords and barons fell on each other squabbling for the throne. When the other kingdoms received a demand for tribute from Blood Mirage written in the queen's blood and sealed with her signet ring, agreements were struck.

Soon Blood Mirage became one of the most powerful organisations in the land. Harbinger's only problem was loyalty, for assassins are fickle creatures. To ensure loyalty, and after years of experiments, Harbinger came up with the Delirium Scourge.

Blood Mirage held sway over the life and death of those of noble birth for centuries, but like all things, even their time came to an end. Nothing is known about the demise of Blood Mirage. Perhaps some natural disaster struck, or one of their experiments went wrong, but scholars believe war to be the likely cause. The realms Blood Mirage held to ransom no longer exist. It is believed they warred on one another leaving only chaos and famine and no one to pay the tribute demanded. Without tribute to maintain what they had, the city of assassins died, its tired old bones slowly succumbing to nature.

Delirium Scourge...

Created by the first Harbinger, the Delirium Scourge was an elixir given to all that served Blood Mirage. The elixir caused those without a constant source of antidote to become fearful of the daylight, which caused extreme delirium should they be exposed to it. It shackled those that consumed it, making slaves of them. Control of the antidote was control of Blood Mirage. There was a cure and only those that discovered it were given the title of Master Assassin.

There was a reason only master assassins discovered the cure, for only a master assassin could kill an archmage or sorcerer. Of those that earned the title,

only a handful had the sagacity to realise what it was that had cured them, a secret most took to their graves. Still, surviving in the darkest, most remote depths of the Maug are the handwritten accounts of the Blood Mirage's Master Assassins waiting to be found.

Today the Delirium Scourge can be found as a resilient bacterial infection in the submerged ruins of the Maug. Vectors for infection are ingestion, injection, normally via a bite or scratch, or contact with contaminated water entering an open wound. The incubation period before symptoms manifest varies. The first stage of the Delirium Scourge is infection. This should be handled by whatever game rules are in play whether it be a save vs poison or some other constitution or toughness based test.

Once infected, assign an incubation period to suit the needs of the game. After the incubation period is complete, roll to determine the progress of the symptoms. The symptoms depend on the strengths of the characters, the greater the character's strengths the longer they can resist the symptoms.

The Delirium Scourge works on a scale of 'Hardly Noticeable' to 'Incapacitated'. The Gamesmaster should determine the number of steps in between, each step imposing an additional penalty. Each day the character should make a check against a physical or mental attribute, whichever is stronger to see if they move to the next step.

The penalty is the effect of the delirium and associated fear of being outside in the daylight. This penalty only applies outside during the hours of daylight, characters indoors or even traveling in a coach are not affected. Hooded cloaks and robes are ineffective in attempting to circumvent this.

Robes Of Undeath...

These magical artefacts were created in an attempt to give the assassins of Blood Mirage supernatural powers and abilities. Resembling nothing more than rotting

mounds of animal fur, few would recognise these items for what they are. Made from the pelts of dead mink, these robes must first be rejuvenated with fresh blood, usually enough to kill the average person. Once enough blood has been spilled on them, their decay is halted, then reversed as they slowly grow into a fashionable (for the time) fur-lined hooded robe. Once donned, these robes imbue on the wearer one or more powers normally associated with the undead. As with any power, the robes exact a price.

While wearing these robes, the wearer is susceptible to powers and artefacts designed to combat the undead. Also, without constantly feeding the robes, they begin to feed on the wearer, something that is not always noticeable until it is too late. Should the wearer die while wearing the robes, they are doomed to become the very thing whose powers they attempted to emulate.

ADVENTURE HOOKS...

Every setting needs some adventure hooks.

The Last harbinger...

After exploring the Maug, one or more of the player characters contracts the Delirium Scourge. With the ability to travel in daylight severely hampered, leaving the swamps proves exceptionally difficult. While looking for shelter from the rising sun, the player characters stumble across a ruin where they encounter a decrepit old man cooking a meal.

The old man recognises their symptoms and tells them they have contracted the scourge. He claims to have lived in the swamps for years and knows where instructions to recreate the cure can be found. Later, when the player characters sleep, they dream of a series of momentous events that cumulate in the land being torn apart by war. The next morning the old man is gone. The only sign of him a small mound of dried wyrd moss that he was burning on his cooking stove.

After some exploring, the player characters discover the instructions for the cure, but it's not what they expect. The instructions are a kill list, the names they recognise from their dreams, the instructions claiming the blood of one of the named is the cure for the scourge. Along with the list is enough antidote to last for six months. If the player characters do nothing, events come to pass as they foresaw. Two of the names on the list are sorcerers, while the others are clerics, kings and queens.

The characters have glimpsed the future, how they stop events unfolding is up to them. Killing everyone on the list creates an alternative future, but for better or for worse is unknown. Those on the list are enemies, and forewarning one against the other may put a stop to events. The sorcerers don't have to be killed, only their blood on the hands of the player characters is required, but the player characters don't know that.

The old man is the last Harbinger. He is looking for a successor to pass on his knowledge in the hopes that the Blood Mirage will rise once again.

Voices In The Dark...

The player characters stumble across a mimic otter during a bout of madness. The otter is reciting several conversations it memorised some time ago to a reflection of itself in a moonlit pool.

What starts as a hilarious conversation between a barkeep and a drunken customer suddenly shifts to a conversation in which the player characters recognise at least one of the voices. That voice is of their last employer or someone else that gave them vital information to complete an important task.

Having already acted on that information the player characters realise they have been duped. Perhaps the player characters decide to take their revenge, or perhaps they still just have time to put right whatever injustice has occurred.

Tea Leaves And Tarot ...

The player characters find themselves at some social event when the host springs a surprise. A local street seer has been employed to read the tarot cards and tea leaves for the guests.

As the seer reads the tea leaves of one of the guests, she suddenly looks toward the player characters and states in a disembodied voice. 'Beware the dancing lizard at the third roll of the dice!'

Everyone present is shocked and the seer claims no memory of the event. The event is a success, and everyone spends the rest of the night discussing what such a prophetic outburst might mean. By the end of the night, the consensus is that the player characters should avoid a tavern called the Dancing Lizard, a known gambling den in the next town over.

Future events, however, take the player characters to the Dancing Lizard, or indeed, the player characters are likely to want to check it out for themselves. The only trouble the tavern holds is what the player characters bring to it. That's the first roll of the dice.

Sometime later, the player characters are in a town or village with a traveling carnival camped nearby. Along the streets are various performers, but the one that stands out is a man with a puppet of a dancing lizard. That is the second roll of the dice.

At some point, the player characters join an expedition to the Maug. While following a small animal trail they are stopped in their tracks by a large lizard dancing on a rock. This is of course an ambush, but if the player characters make the connection that this is the third time they have encountered a dancing lizard they should be given a bonus to avoid the ambush. If not, it's the third roll of the dice and they have to take their chance like everyone else.

RANDOM TABLES...

Stained Cliffs Travel hazards...

D10	Location Encounter	Description
1	Treasonous Path	Slick with slime and moisture, this section of the hidden path is treacherous to navigate. Known as the Treasonous Path, it requires a successful agility or dexterity test to avoid slipping and falling.
2	Shifting Falls	The flow of water through the swamps is constantly changing, causing some waterfalls to shift location, often suddenly, when a natural build-up of water breaks through. Shifting falls may reveal another location, or hide an existing one, or simply become another dangerous obstacle to overcome.
3	Rockfall	A constant danger when navigating the Stained Cliffs, falling rocks have put an end to many expeditions.
4	Overhang	Either a much-needed place of shelter or a place where danger lurks, large overhangs are a prominent feature of the stained cliffs.
5	Phantom Moss	This unusual moss grows on spider silk and covers crevices, gaps on cliff top ledges or even entire sinkholes depending on the size of the spider. Exceptionally difficult to spot, phantom moss has been the end of many a creature that has walked on it and fallen through to their death. Equivalent to a pit trap, often with a much greater fall.
6	Fetid Cave	Caves are often a welcome refuge from the elements, but in the stained cliffs, they are often slimy and wet and stink of stagnant water. Many are hidden behind waterfalls and are home to all manner of plants and animals. Sections of the hidden path pass through such caves and must be navigated with care.
7	Mist Curtain	Water falling from great heights often gives rise to curtains of mist that obscure large sections of the cliff face. These mist curtains often bring with them a vile stench that causes uncontrolled vomiting until a successful constitution save or toughness check has been made.
8	Spout Holes	These natural fissures in the rock have been eroded by water seeping from the swamp above. These fissures often become blocked by organic matter and from time to time a build-up of pressure clears the blockage creating a spout hole, a pressurised blast of water that normally lasts only a few minutes until something blocks the fissure once again.
9	Inclement Weather	Inclement weather can turn dangerous into deadly, water turning to ice, low cloud obscuring vision, or strong winds threatening to tear the traveller from narrow paths.
10	Plunge Pools	Found at the bottom of many waterfalls, plunge pools are often a welcome respite. Some are large enough to contain fish and attract other game animals, and the water is often safer to drink than elsewhere, although it could never be described as fresh this close to the swamps.

Swamp Creatures...

Common Swamp Creatures

D10	Creature
1	Beaver
2	Ermine
3	Fish
4	Lizard
5	Otter
6	Poison Frog
7	River Vole
8	Snake
9	Swamp Lizard
10	Turtle

Unique Swamp Creatures

D10	Creature
1	Blazing Frog
2	Bombard Bees
3	Dancing Lizard
4	Dead Mink
5	Drowning Pool
6	Flayer Snake
7	Maug Troll
8	Mimic Otters
9	Screech Raven
10	Slimes & Oozes

Rumours...

D10	Rumour	TRUE/FALSE
1	The Maug is the source of all plagues.	FALSE
2	No one that enters the Maug ever returns	FALSE
3	I once had a conversation with an otter that lived in the swamps.	TRUE
4	There are extensive ruins in the Maug	TRUE
5	I've seen heroes fear the daylight after returning from the Maug	TRUE
6	There is a secret path cut into the cliff that leads to the Maug	TRUE
7	The faces of the dead can be seen in the deep	FALSE
8	Touch nothing, eat nothing. The plants are more dangerous than the animals	TRUE
9	Swamp Giants can throw their blades for hundreds of yards	TRUE
10	Moss from the Maug can cure some ailments	TRUE

Wyrd Moss Effects Table...

D10	Effects Of Wyrd Moss
1	Anger: The subject becomes agitated and flies into an uncontrollable rage at the smallest slight and violence is always close at hand
2	Apocryphal Visions: The subject is tormented with visions based on events or facts that are untrue
3	Appetite: The subject may lose their appetite or become ravenous. Ravenous characters eat twice as much as normal
4	Debilitation: The subject becomes debilitated in some way such as attribute loss or loss of senses
5	Double Vision: The subject sees double and cannot tell which version is real

D10	Effects Of Wyrd Moss
6	Enhanced Sense: One of the subject's senses becomes enhanced giving them a bonus to an appropriate test
7	Memory Loss: The subject discovers they have important gaps in their memory
8	Night Vision: The subject may discover they can see perfectly at night. If they already have night vision they can see clearer and further
9	Prophetic Visions: The subject is tormented by a series of existential visions. One by one the events of the visions come to pass
10	Uncontrolled Craving: The subject has an uncontrolled craving for something and cannot focus on any other task until the craving is met



Thunder Maw

Dragon's Lair

Sage's Hill

Defirium's Depths

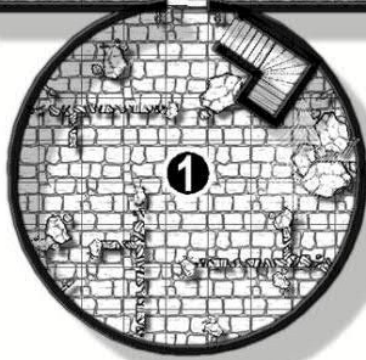
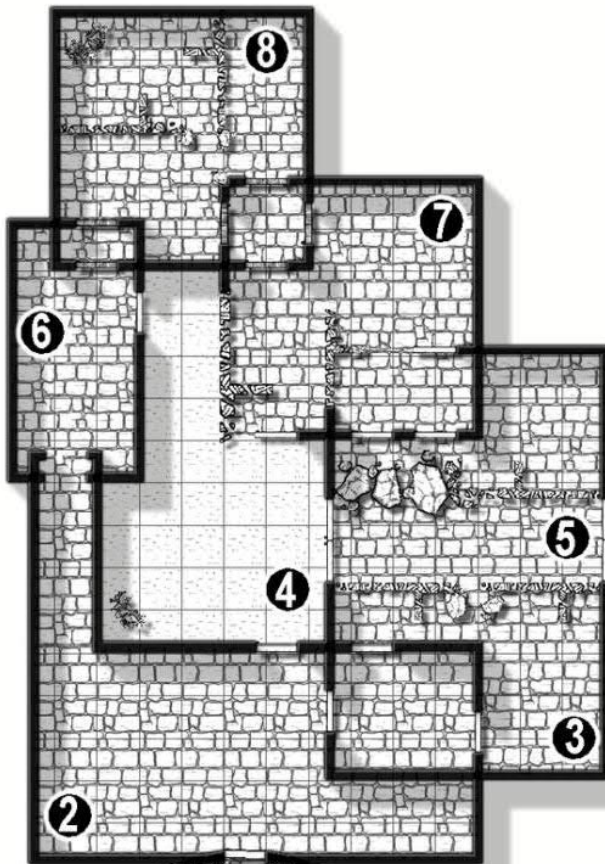
Lake of Echoes

Ruins

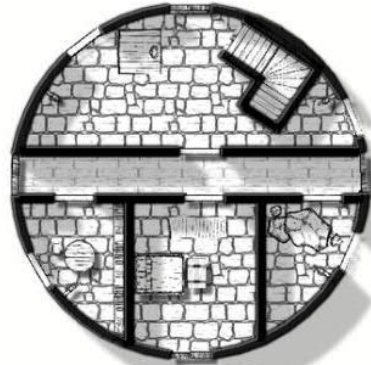
Boiling Pools

Stained Crags

KEEP ON THE HEIGHTS



Level 2



Level 3

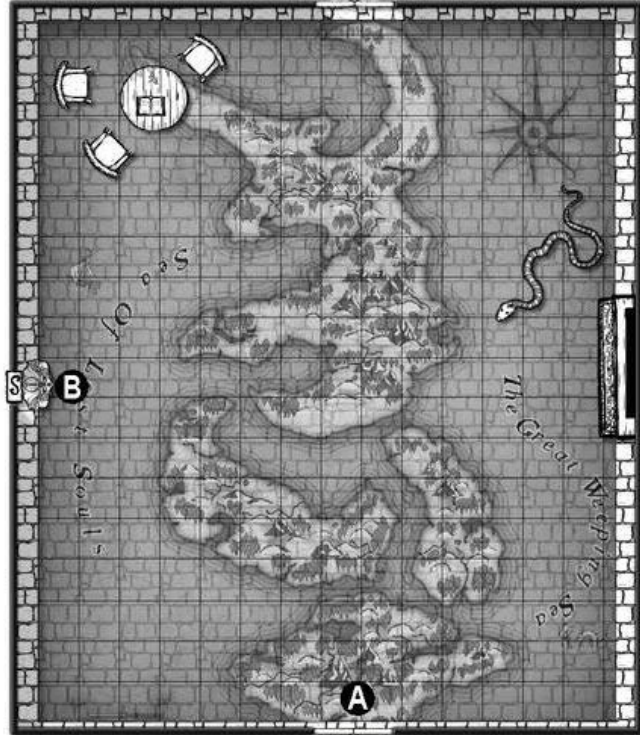
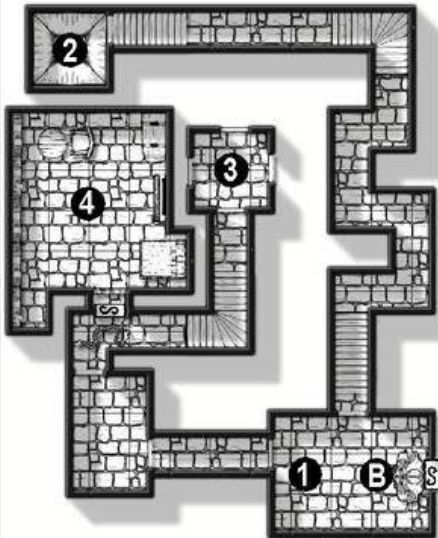


1. High Lord's Tower
2. Kitchens
3. Guard Rooms
4. Court Yard
5. Entrance Hall
6. Dining Hall
7. Guest Rooms
8. Dormitory

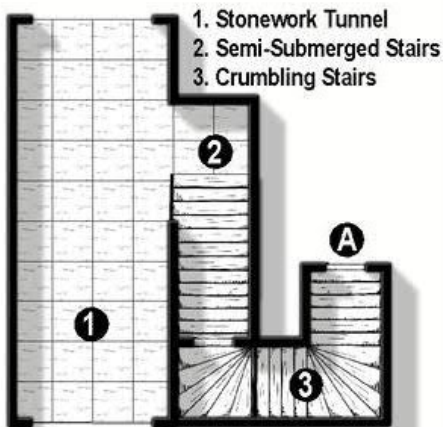
THUNDER MAUG - MAP ROOM

Harbinger's Sanctum

1. Secret Foyer
2. False Observatory
3. Observatory
4. The Harbinger's Sanctum



River Entrance



This Room appears perfectly preserved, only a fine covering of dust concealing the finest details of the beautifully painted map on the floor.

Against the west wall, a statue of an unknown warrior stands larger than life, and on the east wall, a majestic fireplace has become home to a nest of large serpents.

In the north wall, double doors that open into a tangle of jungle vines, the structure behind the door having collapsed into a watery grave below.

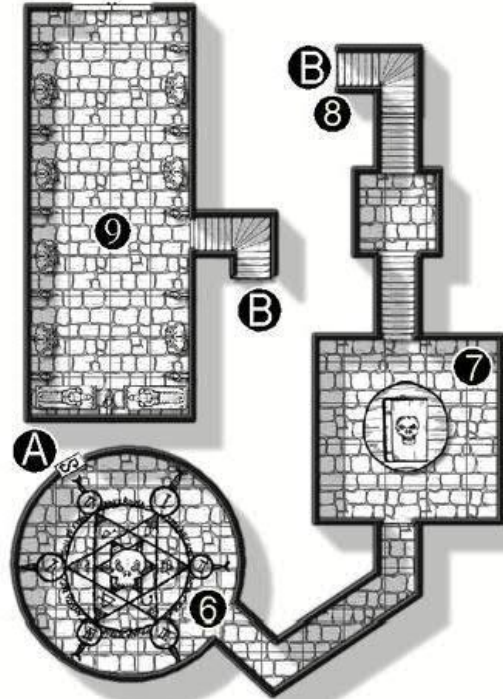
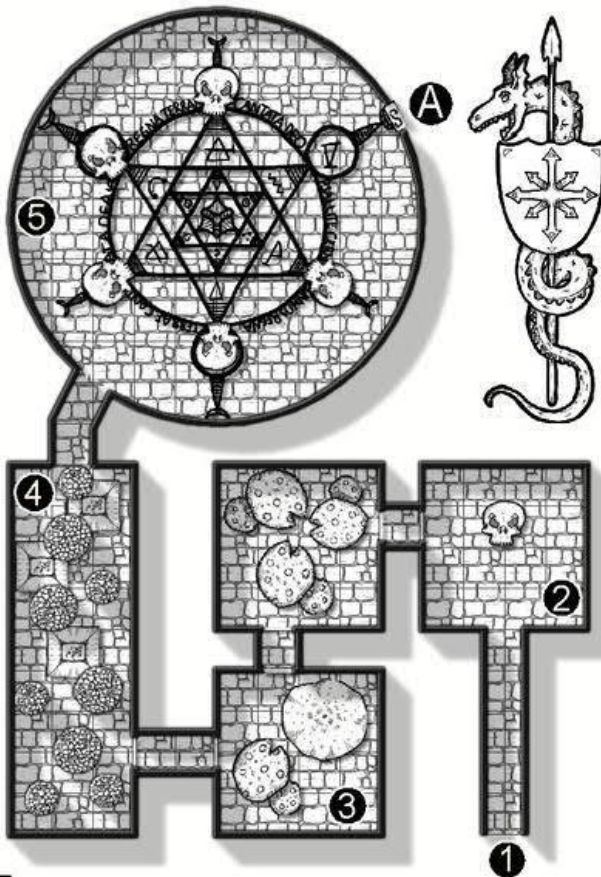


Scale in Feet

THUNDER MAUG - TRAINING HALLS

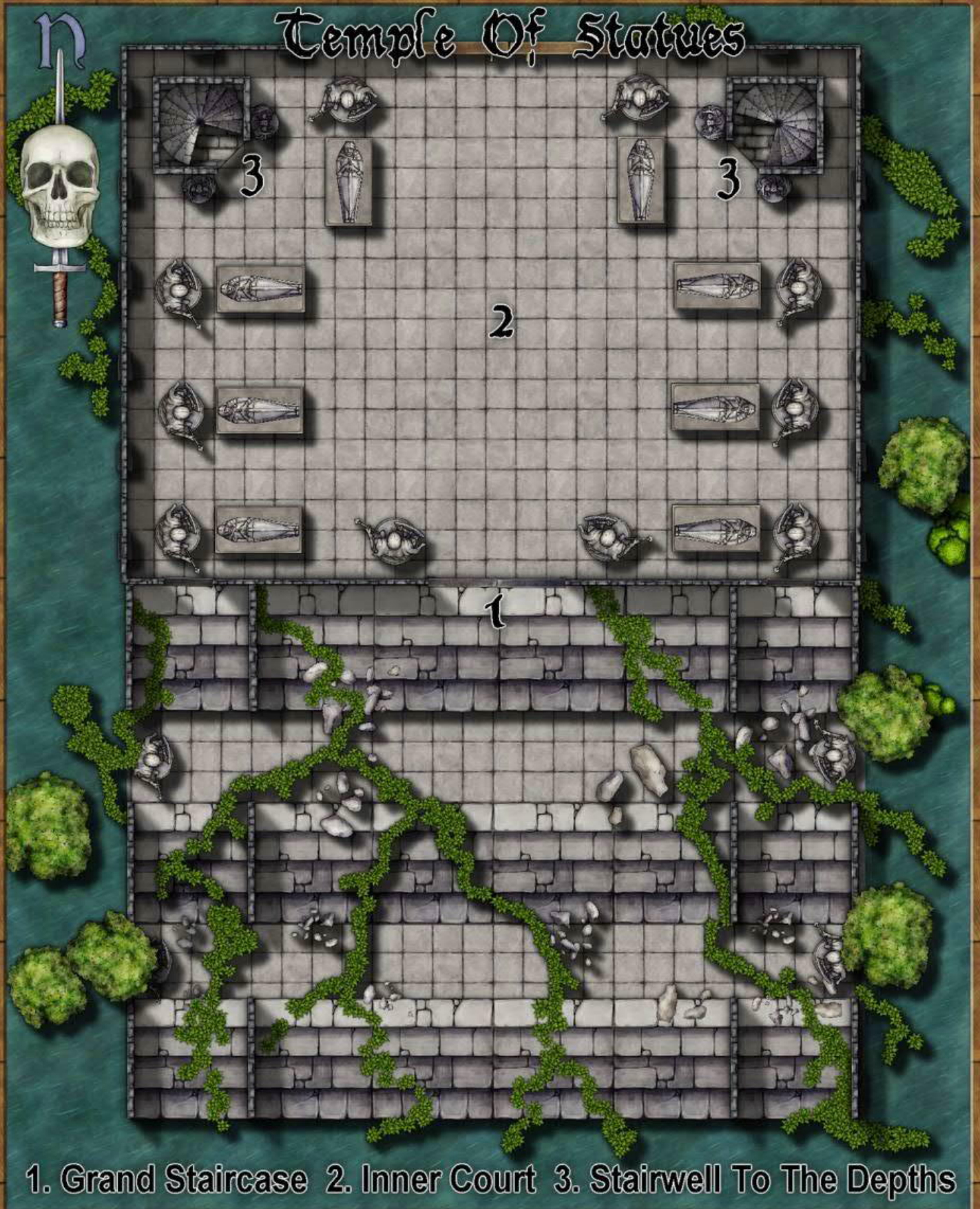
Each room has its own cryptic inscription

1. Volunteer's Entrance: "To enter these hallowed halls is to risk your life. To turn back is to forfeit it."
2. Key Room: "For the Blood Mirage, death is a constant companion." The giant skull is the key to the secret door in the Portal Room.
3. Fungi Farm: "Threat or opportunity?" Knowing the difference between threat and priceless rarity could be the death or making of Blood Mirage acolytes.
4. Death Halls: "Step lightly" This clue warns the floor is fitted with traps, yet hints the floating islands of glowing coral lighting the room from above can be traversed.



5. Portal Room: "Missing persons" The skull from room 2 activates the secret portal to room 6.
6. Destination: "Skulls have eyes" The skull in the circle bestows dark sight if worn. It also holds the portal open. If removed the portal seals, only to be opened from the other side.
7. Tome of Thoughts: "Final thoughts?" The book appears blank. Only by recording meaningful thoughts does a random page reveal the thoughts of another that has completed the trials, offering a boon that can be used later.
8. The Depths: "Only those below can rise above" What lies beneath is unknown.
9. Hall of heroes: "Welcome Brethren" In days gone by, those that bested the trials were met with pomp and ceremony. Now they are met by mimic otters reciting ancient conversations.

Temple Of Statues



1. Grand Staircase 2. Inner Court 3. Stairwell To The Depths