

FROM THE SHROUD

ISSUE 1

FEBRUARY 2017



FOR CRYPTS & THINGS AND OTHER OSR GAMES


2015

FROM THE SHROUD

ISSUE 1

FEB 2017

Newt Newport
with Neil Shaw

Cover and Internal Art (pages 5,7.10.16,17) David M.Wright
Map on page 13 Glynn Seal of MonkeyBlood Design.
All other images public domain.

Proof Readers Paul Mitchener and Antony Lewis

Text Copyright respective Authors and Artists
“Generic Life Events” is Open Gaming Content in its entirety.

Other Crypts and Things Books available through D101 Games
Crypts and Things Remastered
Tombs of the Necromancers

Available Soon in 2017
Life and Death Zarth Edition
Under Dark Spires
Tournaments of Madness and Death

EDITORIAL

Like a mote in a dead god's eye, From the Shroud came floating up from the inky depths. A bit of dark and deadly fun after the main Crypts and Things Remastered rulebook was finally released. This 'zine had its roots in the fact I initially wrote The Secret of Skull Hill intending it to be a release for Halloween. Missing my own deadline I was initially at a loss of what to do with it. Should I just release it as a small and lonesome pdf only release? Then inspiration struck, other OSR publishers occasionally do A5 format zines, so why not me! So harddrives were searched, a call for content was put out to the fans and after a quick spell of keyboard hammering this is the result.

This small tome contains the following fragments of fear to bring your games to life.

Achievements. A short system that sits alongside the experience system to reward characters for things they have done in their adventures, making them memorable events and useful benefits. See page 6.

The Secret of Skull Hill. A short adventure of mystery and otherworldly delights featuring the schemes of an alien parasitic race and their attempts to reunite the body and soul of their host god. See page 7.

By their Master's Dark Command. The sad and short lives of Sorcerer's apprentices revealed, and the useful things they become after death detailed. See page 20.

Exotic Liquid Relief by Neil Shaw. Is your character bored with quaffing bog standard Blackmire's Best whenever they need to regenerate 1d6 Hit Points? Well Neil Shaw provides details of a variety of brews to make your character's life more varied and interesting. See page 28.

Generic Life Events. This table is if you are overwhelmed by the sheer number of Life Event tables in the main rule book or simply after a OGL version you can base your own efforts off. See page 31.

Useful Items of the Kindly Ones. Minor magical items left behind by the gods who used to care about Zarth. See page 32.

Things to Find in Great Pots. A short random table for the harried Crypt Keeper for that inevitable moment when the players ask "so that pot you mentioned just now, what's in it?" See page 33.

The Tea Party of Doom. A short encounter somewhere in the dark dismal woods with a crazy immortal Alchemist who has been playing with the psychoactive toads and their potential to provide tea. See page 34.

USING THIS WITH OTHER OLD SCHOOL CLASS/LEVEL BASED GAMES

The contents of this zine are broadly compatible with all other editions of the World's Favourite Fantasy role-playing game, especially the so called "Old School editions" of the 70s-80s. While specifically designed to be played with Crypts and Things (C&T), From the Shroud is useable with Swords and Wizardry (in fact, C&T is a S&W variant) and other comparable retroclone and original editions up to 2nd with minimal conversion.

The following rules and terms are specific to C&T and referees of other systems may need to be aware of them.

Crypt Keeper is the name of referee or Dungeon Master in C&T

Sanity System. C&T has rules for Sanity loss, but this is very much left open to the Crypt Keeper when to use. For other systems, either ignore it when the adventure calls for Sanity checks or use your own favoured system.

One Magic System. C&T gathers all the spell lists into one, gives them a colour- White (Good magic), Grey (Neutral, mainly illusionary magic) and Black (Evil Magic).

No Saving Throws. Player characters have a Luck score that they Test their Luck against to avoid spell effects, physical harm and other misfortunes that the Saving Throw mechanism protects characters against. Monsters don't get to Test their Luck, spells that the character's fling at them automatically take effect unless the creature has magical resistance that nullifies the effect.

No class based non-player characters. C&T keeps to Swords & Wizardry's (the system it was built on top of) convention that all NPCs are monsters, with Special abilities rather than Classes. So a powerful Necromancer in C&T is a monster with 4 Hit Dice and the Special Abilities of being able to cast Magic Missile, Raise Dead and Curse, rather than a 4 Level Magic User.

SUBMISSIONS

Issue 2 is already on the drawing board and I'm quite happy to receive submissions. Bear in mind this is a publication specifically to celebrate Crypts and Things and that you should follow the style and format given in the main rulebook. So, for example new monsters should follow the format given in the Compendium of Fiends and adventures should present statblocks in the short-condensed form that appears in The Hall of Nizun-Thun and The Haunted Lands. Other than that, be playful and have fun :)

Submissions should be made to newt@d101games.com.



ACHIEVEMENTS

Achievements are handed out by the Crypt Keeper as rewards at the end of the adventure in addition to XP and treasure.

They are partially to reward characters at key points in the Adventure, but also to make up for the fact that unlike regular D&D, with its mass of magic items, there is no mechanism for imparting bonuses and extra abilities.

Achievements can also celebrate events in the scenario as well as being tied to specific locations.

Mostly give to hit, damage, skill or saving throw bonuses, with occasional special abilities or benefits.

MINOR ACHIEVEMENTS (LEVEL 1-4)

+1 bonus to saves/skill rolls/to-hit etc. Small very specific new abilities.

e.g.. From Blood of the Dragon.

- Minor: Ape Killer, +1 to hit Giant Apes (Awarded to the character who killed the most Battle Apes during the adventure).
- Minor: Understanding of Battle Apes – can recognise the signs of Battle Apes (tracks, spore etc.) and have a rough understanding of their culture.
- Minor: Serpent Knowledge – can recognise a creation of the foul serpentine art of Vivimancy. (Awarded to the players who explored the lab and/or read the Serpent Men texts)
- Minor: Navigate dangerous spaces. +1 to any skill rolls or saves when moving through corridors where there is a danger of collapse.
- Minor: Read Serpentine. +25% bonus to Read Language roll
- Freedom of the village of Cragspire.

MAJOR ACHIEVEMENTS (LEVEL 5-8)

+2 bonus to saves/skill rolls/to-hit etc New abilities with broad application.

HEROIC ACHIEVEMENTS (LEVEL 9-15)

The stuff of legends, powers outside of the normal almost magical in nature e.g. maximum damage with a particular weapon, always hits with sword, always acts first in combat.

DEMIGOD ACHIEVEMENTS (LEVEL 15+)

The powers of the gods, eg Immortality, Touch of Death, Create Ice Castle from Water

THE SECRET OF SKULL HILL

CRYPT KEEPER'S INFORMATION

A weird alien god's skeletal body lies buried up to its neck in nearby Skull Hill. The characters are lured to it by tales of treasure spread locally by shape changing alien cultists of the god who wait in ambush when the characters get there, ready to drag them through the mouth of their god into its very soul for sacrifice.

The Dead God Ugsharak

Once upon a time in an alien Other World there was a god called Ugsharak. As a deity that lived outside of time and space, he could be called upon to provide magical knowledge and power. Ugsharak was served by a race known as the Gizoni, who in return for blood sacrifice received potent black magic from the god. When he took form in the world it was as a monstrous thirty foot tall giant skeleton whom the Gizoni called the "God Who Walks in Bone".



Over a span of a thousand years the Gizoni home world weakened and became a desolation because of the constant need for blood for Ugsharak. In response, Ugsharak decided to leave, gathering his priesthood into his mouth and traveling to a new world to start the cycle of pain and suffering again.

Upon reaching the world of Zarth he materialised there in his physical form. However, disaster awaited him. His body materialised in the earth, an element abhorrent to him, and he became trapped in rock up to his neck. His soul escaped to a place in the Shroud helped by a the Gizoni. In time, the Gizoni priests made a bridge via an ancient crystal Black Monolith not far from his body, which had now fossilised, with only the skull above the earth. Thus the legend of Skull Hill was born.

Years later refugees from one of Zarth's devastating wars settled nearby. They were simple farmers and a superstitious lot. When they found the Black Monolith at the edge of their lands, they started leaving some of their crops as an offering at Harvest time. One day the Gizoni came out from behind it, as they had gated over from the Shroud to make sure the Zarth end of the portal was still intact as was their wont from time to time. The locals prostrated themselves before these new gods and soon they were providing human sacrifices to the Gizoni at 'Harvest Time' who would take them to the slumbering Ugsharak in the Shroud. Tragically though, within a couple of generations the nearby human settlements were deserted due to the strain put on their populations from the annual sacrifices demanded by the Gizoni.

Thousands of years passed. Human civilizations came and went all avoiding the Lonely place due to its sinister reputation. Frustratingly for the Gizoni, who increasingly lost track of time on Zarth trapped within the vague timelessness of the Shroud, they remained but a few captured souls away from completing their plans.

That was when Kez the Traveller, a minor sorcerer, fell into their hands. Kez had been wandering the lost places of Zarth after escaping the attention of his tyrannical master, looking for quick and easy sources of magical power. He thought he had hit paydirt as his magical sensitivity detected the entrance to Ugsharak's Soul in the Mouth of the Skull on Skull Hill. But he was quickly overcome by the Gizoni, who were waiting in ambush, and who dragged him into the Skull and then through to the Shroud.

Instead of being impulsive and sacrificing him to Ugsharak immediately, the Gizoni bound the sorcerer to their crystal torture table and asked him where the nearest human settlement was. Kez kept his cool through the haze of pain and did a deal with the Gizoni. He would lead the humans straight into their ambushes, and when they had enough victims (only three more) they would free him. Being a very logical race, the Gizoni agreed. Obviously, they weren't foolish to release Kez from the table, but one of their powers of the table was to recreate the person bound to it as an illusionary form, which to all intents and purposes is real to the viewer. This phantasmal version of Kez now wanders the Lonely place looking for humans to lure into the Gizoni trap at Skull Hill.

THE PLAYERS' INFORMATION

From a barkeeper in a ramshackle inn on the edge of civilisation....

"There be gold in Skull Hill! Yes, I know it's probably a legend without any truth, but a traveller called Kez came through here the other day with a map swearing he was off to make his fortune there. He must be busy because he's not been back since. He owes me 5 gold crowns for grog and grub, will you mind collecting it from him? I'll give you free lodging for a month!"

Further questioning of the innkeeper and regulars by the characters establishes that a man in his late twenties, calling himself Kez the Traveller, arrived at the inn a couple of days ago. He was instantly likeable (since he cast a Charm spell on them) to everyone in the inn, who bought him drinks and food without asking for much in return except his delightful company. He spent a lot of time boasting about how he knew about a hidden treasure hidden in Skull Hill, a local landmark of ill repute. He spent the night at the inn, again without paying, before leaving early in the morning on the dirt path that leads to the Lonely Place.

The inn's regulars say that he must be crazy. The Lonely place is a bad place full of ghosts and undead that everybody's elders warned them about from young childhood. Kez is just one of those people who comes each generation, gets all fired up about riches being buried under Skull Hill, charges off into the Lonely Place and is never seen again. Apart from the innkeeper, who want's payment for the food and lodging, no one else expects to see him again. If asked for details about the treasure the locals say it something to do with Skull Hill being part of a palace of the Emperor who used to rule these parts.

PART 1 THE LONELY PLACE

This weirdland exists at the very edge of the farmlands that sustain the nearest city-state. Where the Crypt Keeper places the Lonely Place is up to them and dependant on where they are running their campaign. If you are using the Continent of Terror setting, suggestions include any of the City States in the Free Territories region, or in Last Stand, north of the City of Water.

There is a very definite boundary of the Lonely Place. Beyond the dry stone wall of the last farmer's field, suddenly there is an eerie silence which indicates a complete absence of animal life. Characters will find it greatly unsettling over time. Apart from the characters and the Gizoni, there is nothing else moving in this area of land which is twenty five miles square.

The main landmark of the Lonely Place, Skull Hill, can be seen from the boundary. The hill rises out of the centre of the plain and dominates the local landscape.



The Features of Skull Hill

Skull Hill is a steep 100 feet high rocky hill. It is the only significant landmark in the otherwise flat and featureless Lonely Place. The north face of the hill is a cliff, atop which is a 25 feet high skull which looks as if it's been carved out the rock. Characters can either climb the rocky cliff face of the hill or go up a path to the summit, which is the crown of the Skull.

1. The Monolith

Standing on a small rise to the side of the main track in the shadow of the Skull is this black crude block of black crystal about ten foot high. It shimmers and occasionally gives a flash of electricity.

Secret

The monolith portal is attuned to the Gizoni who can use it to pass between the Lonely Place and the Soul of Ugsharak (see Part 2 below). There is a 1 in 6 chance that 1d6 Gizoni appear cloaked in Invisibility spells 1d6 rounds after the characters inspect the Monolith. They will stay invisible and pick an opportune moment to ambush the characters, seeking to capture them alive.

2. The Hanging Trees

Twenty three human skeletons hang from the branches of the five trees that make up this close group. When humans lived in the Lonely Land, this is the place where criminals were traditionally hung.

Secret

One of the Gizoni, with an invisibility spell cast on him, has a magic whistle, which he can blow to silently bringing back 1d4 of the hanged men as skeletons per round. Only the dead can hear the whistle. The Gizoni will stay Invisible and will not

attack the party. Characters who say they are looking for hidden adversaries in the area my Test their Luck to spot the tell-tell glimmer of the Gizoni as it moves slightly. If detected, the Gizroni will flee up the path, trying to remain invisible, back into its colleagues inside the skull (see location 4 below) via Kez's Camp (see 3 below)

Skeletons AC 8 [11] HD 1 HP 6 Attacks 1 strike (1d6) Move 12 Special: Immune to sleep and charm spells CL/XP 1/15

Gizoni AC 7 [12] HD 2 HP 10 Attacks 1 Claw (1d8) or 1 Mind Blast (1d6, Range 20 feet) Move 9 Special: Can communicate by thought alone to other Gizoni within 30 feet naturally. Able to go Invisible as per spell twice a day for up to four hours at a time CL/XP 4/120

Note if the characters have decided to climb up the cliff face, the skeletons will jump over to the cliff to attack them. This adds a new hazard to the climb.

3. Kez's Camp

The top of the hill is the grassy crown of the skull. A single very ancient tree grows over the crown, its branches spreading out like an umbrella over the area.

Secrets

Here on the crown of the hill are the signs of Kez's last camp from about a month ago: A long burned out fire, a half-eaten meal and a waterskin dropped on the ground. If looked for there are tracks, which upon close inspection looks like someone was dragged unconscious into the hole by two attackers.

The entrance into the skull is a hole five foot across at the front of the crown. This leads down into the inside of the skull.

4. Inside the Skull

This area is completely pitch dark. No light source, whether mundane or magical, can penetrate it. Logic tells the characters that they should be in a fifty foot by fifty foot chamber under the crown of the hill. But all is dark and all the characters can do is stumble about in it.

Secret

This is another entrance to the Soul of Ugsharak. The inside of the skull is in the Shroud, the strange twilight world that surrounds Zarth and separates it from the alien Other Worlds. Eventually the characters will grope around enough in the darkness and end up at the entrance to Ugsharak's soul (see Part 2 below).

PART 2 WITHIN THE SOUL OF UGSHARAK

1. The Bridge to Zarth

This area is part of the Shroud, and the link between the Soul and Zarth. It takes the form of a ghostly arched bridge, twenty foot long, ten foot across that hangs in the grey twilight of the Shroud. Rolling about on the bridge gibbering nonsense are about ten decapitated human heads.

Secret

The Heads are those of sacrificed victims of the Gizoni. They are easily destroyed and do not have any magical powers or resistance. Their only purpose is to act as watchdogs on the bridge. They are linked to the crystal in the Chamber of the Gizoni (see location 5 below) and their masters can see what they see by touching the power crystal in that room. One or two of the heads will follow the characters when they leave the bridge.

The Bridge is one way and characters seeking to escape the Shroud and return to Zarth via this route will find themselves travelling across a featureless grey twilight plain.

General Features of the Soul of Ugsharak

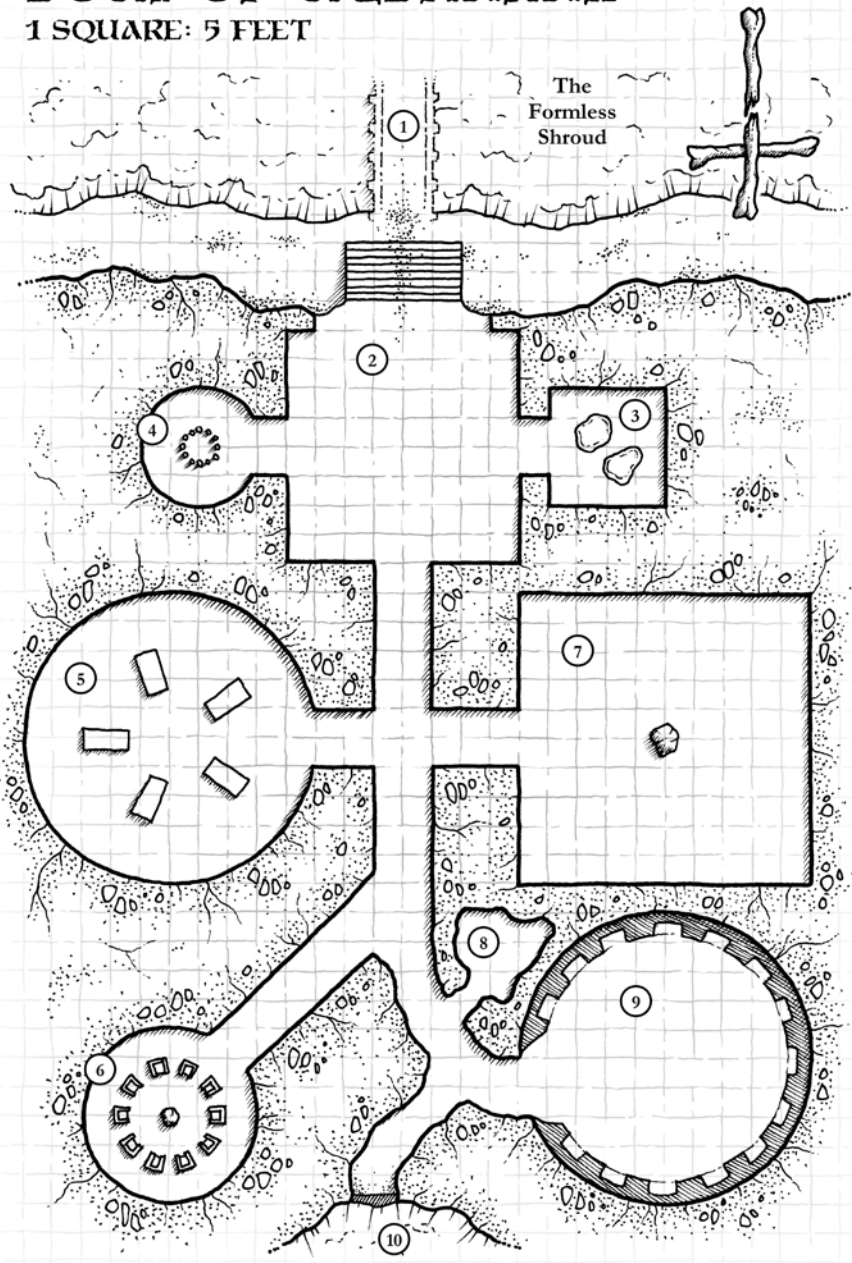
This Crypt is made of green glowing crystal which glows and pulsates. The crystal brightly illuminates all areas as if they are in full daylight. Thieves and other sneaky types trying to hide in shadows and darkness will curse this feature of the Crypt. Magically sensitive characters will feel a living pulse if they touch the walls. The Crypt is a living thing, an expression of the Soul of Ugsharak that is trapped in the Shroud. If the character try to damage it, by bashing walls for example, it will react in pain by glowing red. It will also dispatch the nearest group of Gizoni to investigate. It cannot be truly harmed because it is a Greater Other of god-like status.

Another feature of the Crypt are the alien Gizoni. This parasitic alien race come from the dead Other World known as Gizon (which can be viewed by the characters from location 9 in the crypt). Most of this almost limitless horde are asleep in the Sleeping Chamber (see location 9) in a sort of hyper dimensional vortex. Small numbers (around twenty or so) are active and awake in the Soul. Occasionally they venture out into Zarth under the cover of invisibility spells (see locations 1 and 2 in Part 1 above). The Soul is able to support this small number and awakens replacements from the Sleeping Chamber. Once Ugsharak's Soul is reunited with its Body on Zarth, the entire race will be awakened to serve the God in Bone that Walks and wreak havoc on the lands it strides through.

SOUL OF UGSHARAK

1 SQUARE: 5 FEET

NORTH



2. The Hall of Hands

A small flight of steps, ten foot high and twenty foot across, leads up a large thirty foot wide by ten foot high arch of red glowing crystal. Beyond the arch is a rectangular shaped hall.

Secret

The Hall is alive like the rest of the crypt, and when the characters walk into the Hall, a sea of crystal arms will shoot up and grab at them. Make an attack roll (as a 5 HD monster). Any characters hit are held firmly until the nearest group of Gizoni can reach them. If the Gizoni capture any player characters, they will take them to the Torture Room (see location 5 below) for sacrifice.

Thieves can attempt to climb the sheer walls, but failure leads to falling on to the floor and being held by the crystal arms.

3. Eyes of the Soul

In the floor of this twenty foot square room are two large pools of milky white water about five foot across and six inches deep each.

Secret

When a living creature looks into the pools, they can see the Lonely Place through them, as if they were two large eyes looking down from the sky. With mental concentration and effort, the viewer can zoom in look around. This is how the Gizoni keep tabs on what is going on in Zarth.

4. The Prison

In the centre of this twenty-foot diameter room is a group of crystal shards, ten foot high, which have erupted from the floor around an area five foot across. Trapped in this crystal cage is a human male, who wears a red robe and green tunic. His long blonde hair is dishevelled and his eyes cry out in torment.

Secret

This is the fake Kez the Traveller. This is a phantasm produced and controlled by the Gizoni using the twisted magic of the Torture Table (see location 5 below), to lure victims to the Soul. He will ask the characters to release him by smashing the crystal cage. He claims to know the location of the Gizoni's treasure, and if freed will take them to the rubbish room, where two Gizoni for each character will be waiting in ambush.

5 The Torture Chamber

In the centre of this 50-foot diameter circular room is a circle of five crystal tables. On one of them, a man in a green tunic is held down by living crystal claw-like appendages which have grown from the sides of the table. A crystal skull, which also grows out of the table, is clamped over his head.

Secret

The bound man is Kez the Traveller in bodily form. Any magically aware character, like a Sorcerer, will sense the table slowly sucking the magical energy out of him.

Kez is unconscious but if released will wake up in 1d6 minutes. He will initially be groggy and tired, but will gradually wake up fully. This process can be speeded up if the characters aid him with food and drink.

Kez the Traveller AC 9[10] HD 4 HP 20 Attacks Unarmed (1d3) SR: Casts Magic as a fourth level Sorcerer. Move 12 CL/XP 5/ 240

Kez is a sorcerer, but is currently without his sorcery book and is drained of his magic. He knows that the Gizoni have dumped his magic book in their rubbish room (see location 8 below) but is cautious about rushing off to regain it. He thinks (quite rightly) that they are not above arranging an ambush there. He'd much rather, with the player's help, escape the Soul and return to Zarth.

The four empty crystal tables await captured characters, who will be bound and drained like Kez was.

6 The Command Chamber of the Gizoni

In the centre of this room are ten high-backed crystal chairs. There will be 2d6 Gizoni here when the characters enter the room, with a 2 in 6 chance that they will be asleep. Otherwise they are mentally conversing with one another. Characters who are magically sensitive will sense a gentle murmur of chatter just too quiet to interpret. In the centre of the circle of chairs is a pulsating red crystal about four foot high. Before the Crystal Column is a stone tablet with alien writing on it.

Secret

The Red Crystal is linked into the same energy circuit as the Heart Stone and the crystal tables in location 5 and allows the Gizoni to do the following if touched.

- Heal 2d6 Hit points. This is a desperation move since every time the Gizoni do this it uses up one captive soul in the Heart Stone.
- Take active control of the fake Kez.
- See through the Eyes of the Soul in location 3.
- See directly into any location within the Soul of Usharak.

The Stone Tablet before the Red Crystal, is the sacred prime commandment of the Gizoni that written on stone from their home world many millennia ago. On it is written in the alien tongue of the Gizoni (readable on a successful Read Languages roll):

“We are the Keepers of the God Ugsharak...

We pass into the soul of our god through his mouth.

We gather sweet red blood for his delight.

When he is delighted he gifts us”

Gizoni AC 7 [12] HD 2 HP 10 Attacks 1 Claw (1d8) or 1 Mind Blast (1d6, Range 20 feet)

SR: Can communicate by thought alone to other Gizoni within 30 feet naturally. Able to go Invisible as per spell twice a day for up to four hours at a time CL/XP 4/120



7 The Heart Stone

In the centre of this fifty-foot square room is a ten-foot-high green pulsating crystal which is five foot wide. As it pulsates rays of green energy radiate under the floor visible through the crystal and room gently shakes.

Wrapped around the crystal is a large creature with a bloated abdomen, it has six insectoid legs each with sharp dagger like ends, and a face, with two milky white eyes and a mouth with two sets of sharp teeth, one vertical and one horizontal.

Secret

This is the Heart Stone, the physical manifestation of the power of Ugsharak's soul. It is filled with the stolen power of 664 human souls and only needs two more sacrifices until it has enough power to be reunited with its body on Zarth. These sacrifices must be made

on the table in The Torture Chamber. If the final two sacrifices are made the events described in “What happens if Ugsharak’s Soul is reunited with his Body” below unfold.

Characters who possess the Magic Sensitivity Ability will hear the sacrificed spirits whispering to them via their mind “Free us”, “Let us go”, “Don’t let Ugsharak burn us so he can be back with his body”.

If the characters smash the crystal, which takes 50 hit points of damage, there will be a large explosion which will throw the characters off their feet. The characters will then black out and the events described in “What Happens if the Heart Stone is broken” below play out.

The Beast, a mutated Gizoni who was once the leader of their community until the power of the Heart stone warped and corrupted it, stands guard over it. It will prevent the characters smashing or even touching the crystal. It possesses a paralyzing poison in its leg tips, so will attack with that in an effort to capture the characters. It will only attack to kill those characters who are especially effective in damaging it. It can summon the Gizoni from the Command Chamber (location 6 above) by touching the crystal for one round and activating a sort of alarm to them. Like the other Gizoni it can heal 2d6 hit points by touching the crystal for one round, but is loath to do so since it expends one of the sacrificed souls to do so.

The Beast AC 4 [15] HD 5 HP 40 Attacks 4 Tentacles which end in a singular claw (1d4 each Paralyzing Poison) or one Bite (1d12) Move 9 Levitate Special: Immune to mind control magics, disease and poison. Can regenerate 2d6 Hit points per Round by giving up its attacks and touching the crystal. MV 15 CL/XP 7/600 .



8 The Rubbish Room

Gold, gems, and treasure considered worthless by the Gizoni are to be found carelessly tossed here in a pile.

Secret

The horde comes to 300 Gold Pieces, 500 Silver Pieces and five gems worth 100 gp, 50 gp, 200 gp, 23gp and 50 gp respectively.

Also amongst the 'rubbish' is Kez's spell book, which contains the following spells:

1st Cause Light Wounds, Charm Person, Luck, Read Languages.

2nd Invisibility, Divination, Entangle.

The Gizoni Ambush. If the characters have blundered round the complex and alerted the Gizoni there are at least one Gizoni per character here, hanging from hooks in the ceiling waiting to drop down on them and attack.

9. The Sleeping Chamber of the Gizoni

The size of this room is confusing. On first glance it looks like a fifty foot diameter room, then the viewer's perspective is warped when they realise that it goes up and down into infinity without any end. Around the sides of the room are crystal coffins containing Gizoni in magical suspended animation.

Secret

When the 'awake' Gizoni are slain, replacements are woken up here 1d20 minutes later. The Soul does not have enough energy to support any more than the small number that are currently awake in the complex, but when its Soul and Body are reunited the whole race will be awoken and unleashed upon Zarth! Crypt Keepers may require the characters to make a Sanity Roll if they realise the implications of this.

10. View to the Gizoni Homeworld

Through a transparent crystal wall opposite the chamber's entrance, the characters will be able to view the smoking, deserted ruin that is the Gizoni's dead home world, its dead cities and its toxic landscapes.

RESOLUTION

There are two ways of resolving the adventure and returning to Zarth

What happens if Ugsharak awakens

If the Heart Stone is full with the souls it needs- about four when the characters enter the Soul, the soul and the body are reunited.

There is a bright flash the moment this happens, and the characters are expelled from the Soul and back to Zarth. The characters find themselves back at the Black Monolith, at the moment that Ugsharak frees himself from the rock of the hill (something that takes about 10 minutes). Once free Ugsharak senses the characters, unless they have run away immediately, and comes stomping over to where they are to feed upon their souls.

Ugsharak the Bone Giant AC 2[17] HD 7 HP 50 Attack 2 Crushing fists (1d12 each) or 1 Bite (3d6) Move 18 SR Earth Quaking stomp, Fall Prone taking 1d6 damage, player characters may Test their Luck to Avoid. CL/XP 7/600

If left undefeated, the Bone Giant strides across the land with its Gizoni horde, devouring whole communities at a time.

What happens if the Heart Stone is broken

If the characters smash the Heart Stone, there is an intense bright flash of light as all the thousands of souls trapped within are released.

The characters are sent back to Zarth and appear outside of the Black Monolith. They can hear bird song. If they look around they find the dead bodies of the Gizoni littering the Lonely Place and that Skull Hill has collapsed upon itself.

Ugsharak and the Gizoni have been slain and banished forever from Zarth and the Shroud.

BY THEIR MASTER'S DARK COMMAND

THE ROLE OF THE APPRENTICE IN CRYPTS AND THINGS

Sorcerers' Apprentices are the down-trodden bottom feeders in the magical world of Crypts and Things. They may have great hopes of being a powerful sorcerer one day, but the reality is that they are conned into doing a lot of harsh and unpleasant manual labour for their master, who spends very little time training or even caring for them.

The following tables put flesh upon the bones of these AC 9[10] HD 1 HP 4 Monsters.

THE APPRENTICES THEMSELVES

To find out what the Apprentice is like, roll on the following tables.

You can also use these tables to generate them as magically knowledgeable npcs (Sorcerers very rarely teach their Apprentices any useful magic) that can accompany the characters on adventures, in a similar way to Henchmen (Crypts and Things page xx).

Table 1: Why the person became an Apprentice

| Roll 1d6 | Reason |
|----------|---|
| 1. | To escape poverty; quite simply the Sorcerer feeds, clothes and houses them. |
| 2. | Sold into slavery to the Sorcerer as a child. |
| 3. | Wanted to learn magic from the master. |
| 4. | Parents, who are both dead, were pupils of the master before them. |
| 5. | Wandered into the Sorcerer's tower one day and never left. |
| 6. | Actually an Other from an Otherworld who has stayed in the warmth of the Sorcerer's tower and serves the Master, because the outside world of Zarth looks terrifying. |

Table 2: Skills

*When Apprentices are asked to help with a task where their knowledge may be of help, they provide a +2 Bonus to any relevant Skill test.

| Roll 1d10 | Skills |
|-----------|--|
| 1 | A Thug, +1 to Attack and Damage |
| 2 | A Mule, carries heavy objects without complaint or reduction in movement speed. |
| 3 | An idiot savant, who remembers and can pull from memory spells/rituals taught to them. |
| 4 | Very magically sensitive, as per normal sorcerer abilities but range is one hundred feet and automatically successful. |
| 5 | A Khaos mutant, roll d4 Khaos Features (Crypts and Things page 174) |
| 6 | Innately knows one 1st Level spell which they can cast once per day. |
| 7 | Knows and reads dead languages automatically*. |
| 8 | A story teller, picks up legends and myths of Zarth's ancient past*. |
| 9 | Fascinated by alchemy*. |
| 10 | Naturally resistant to magic, provides a 25% Magic Resistance to anyone within 10 feet of them. |

Table 3: Personality Quirks

| Roll 1d10 | Personality |
|-----------|---|
| 1 | Obsessive about finding out magical knowledge |
| 2 | Unhealthy obsession with the darker side of magic |
| 3 | Insane, mind has already flipped before the practice of magic began. |
| 4 | Naïve, thinks sorcery is for the benefit of humankind. |
| 5 | Power hungry, sees others as a threat or personal servants. |
| 6 | Passive, just like going along with the flow man. |
| 7 | Arrogant, just as long as others recognise them as the best at magic they will get along fine. |
| 8 | Paranoid about the unseen supernatural. |
| 9 | Workmanlike, sees the practice of magic as just another way of making a living. |
| 10 | Happy. The practice and discovery of magic makes the character genuinely happy and full of joy! |

Table 4: Payment (for Apprentices in Adventuring Groups)

How often the Apprentice is paid is arranged between the characters and the apprentice when they hire them. Usually it's at the end of each adventure, but in the mind of the needy and neglected Apprentice, payment may be expected in some form or another almost constantly. This certainly is the case of result 5: Friendship.

| Roll 1d10 | Expected Payment |
|-----------|--|
| 1-2 | In magic items/writings. |
| 3-4 | In Gold/Treasure |
| 5 | They just want to be the party's friend, hang out, be made to feel safe and important, get fed and have a safe place to sleep. |
| 6 | In blood, any corpses that the party makes or comes across the Apprentice expects to be allowed to loot for useful body parts. |
| 7 | As above but only interested in live captives. May not make this clear on first meeting. |
| 8 | Believes that they are on some great magical quest to save Zarth. Will expect the group to live up to this on a regular basis. |
| 9 | Rescue of a friend/relative trapped in their former Master's tower |
| 10 | As above but rescue is from an Hellish Otherworld. |

Table 5: Revenge

If the Apprentice is hired by the characters and not paid, this is the form of revenge that they take.

| Roll 1d10 | Revenge |
|-----------|--|
| 1-2 | Runs away, but bad mouths the character in every settlement they visit. |
| 3-4 | Casts a Hex at the character that they feel did them wrong |
| 5-6 | Goes to the nearest gang boss and hires them to make the character's life difficult |
| 7 | As above but hired to set up an ambush and kill. |
| 8 | Goes after the character's friends and family. |
| 9 | Sets a magical trap for the characters that transports them to an inhospitable part of the Shroud. |
| 10 | Summons an Other of Challenge Level appropriate to the character's Level and unleashes it on them. |

Table 6: Weapon

The apprentice is armed with.

| Roll d10 | Weapon |
|----------|---|
| 1-4 | Nothing |
| 5 | A kitchen knife stolen from the kitchen |
| 6 | A valued dagger that the Master gave them as a reward |
| 7 | A sharp stick (1d4 damage) or another improvised weapon |
| 8 | A staff |
| 9 | A club |
| 10 | A Short Sword. |

Table 7. The Fate of an Apprentice

When the Apprentice becomes too powerful they are going to be:

| Roll 1d10 | Apprentice's End |
|-----------|--|
| 1 | Turned into spare parts for spells/magic items |
| 2 | Transported to hell to appease some demon the sorcerer is in contact with. |
| 3 | Reduced to Sorcerer's Dust (see below). |
| 4 | Trapped in the Shroud behind a magic mirror (see below). |
| 5 | Fed special poisonous potions, that drives the Apprentice insane and turns them into a Thrall (see below). |
| 6 | Ritually slain, their head chopped off and turned into a Head Guardian (see below). |
| 7 | Ritually slain and bound into the sorcerer's residence as a Useful Ghost (see below). |
| 8 | Sold into Slavery |
| 9 | As above but with the added bonus of being cursed/crippled before they go (having tongue removed is a favored one here). |
| 10 | Sent out to spy on free people for the Sorcerer, under the cover of being kicked out. |

If you are dealing with a NPC who has joined the player's adventuring group, this is the gruesome fate that they escaped.

Cultists

Some powerful Sorcerers (9th Level and up) in effect gather a small cult about their being, who are charmed by the mysterious powers. This is the fate of apprentices of such powerful sorcerers, press ganged into the devotional cult away from any serious magical study but forever in the sorcerer's service.

NEW MAGIC ITEMS

Sorcerer's Dust

Common Arcane lore has this to say about this alchemical powder:

"It is said when a sorcerer gains power over the Shroud, that an alchemical change occurs within his body, that certain substances within their body are created. Upon death in ancient times many priest-kings were mummified. Tomb robbers in league with devious sorcerers and treacherous embalmers would steal the mummy and have it transformed into 'Sorcerer's Dust', a magical powder made up of the magical substances present within the Sorcerer's body which when ingested granted expanded lifespan"

Of course, this commonly accepted view amongst present day sorcerers fails to mention that the effects of Sorcerer's Dust is a lot more random than this.

What does sorcerer's dust do?

| Roll d20 | Effect of the dust |
|----------|--|
| 1 | A powerful healing agent. Restores all lost Hit Points and Constitution. |
| 2 | A corrupting agent. Roll once on the Corruption Features Table (C&T page xx) |
| 3 | One time use of a spell 1d6 Level (1 White Magic, 2-3 Grey, 3-6 Black). |
| 4 | Grants the ability to turn insubstantial once per month at the time of the full moon. |
| 5 | The ability to walk between Zarth and the Shroud once per month. |
| 6 | Restores all lost Sanity Points. |
| 7 | Hardens the character's skin, permanently change Armour Class by -2[+2]. |
| 8 | Give the character the ability to turn into a bat once per day for 1d6 hours. |
| 9 | The ability to understand all languages. |
| 10 | The ability to communicate via the mind. |
| 11 | The ability to see Invisible things. |
| 12 | Creates an Evil Twin of the character, 1d100 miles away, who knows of the character's existence and starts immediately plotting their downfall. The Evil Twin has exactly the same abilities and characteristics as the character. |
| 13 | Turns the character's hair green. |
| 14 | Gives the character a power and potent vision of their future |
| 15 | Grants them the ability to see Others cloaked by illusion for what they really are. |
| 16 | Summons up the Spirit of the Sorcerer or Apprentice whose dust it is. The spirit is then eternally linked to the character and gives advice via mental communication. |
| 17 | As above by spirit is malevolent and tries to possess the character. Player characters get to test their Luck to avoid possession. |
| 18 | Ages the character by 3d6 years. |
| 19 | Reduces the character's age by 3d6 years. |
| 20 | Doubles the Character's lifespan. |

Magic Mirror

The apprentice is tricked into walking through a portal to the shroud, then the way back sealed by some magic crystal. The apprentice is then bound to the sorcerer under the promise that eventually after ‘undisclosed’ amount of time they will be freed, the mirror will be broken. Until then the apprentice acts as the sorcerer’s eyes and ears in the world of the Shroud. If course if the characters come into possession of the Magic Mirror they are under no obligation to smash the mirror and free the apprentice.

NEW MONSTERS

Useful Ghosts

“So, there we are in old man Madark’s Mansion, doing a bit of the old breaking and entering for fun and profit, and stupid Tinsa stops dead in her tracks dropping the silverware were making off with.

“What is it?” I hiss.

“G-G-G-G-host!” she says trembling pointing in the direction of the stairs we’ve just come up.

I quickly look towards the open window, which is our way out, and then at the stairs. That’s when I see it, a pale white apparition of a lad of about 17 coming up the stairs. “Now what are you doing with the Master’s best dinnervare? He will be so cross and we can’t have that can we now” says the lad in clear tones, despite having a big open wound right across his neck were someone’s slit his throat.

At this point I admit I froze, despite being a member of the guild for twenty working years. I’d heard stories about these ghostly horrors, apprentices killed and forced to work for their black-hearted masters into eternity. “We can’t have you leaving” he goes, and quick as a flash he’s at the open window and shutting it closed. I heard the click of the lock and at that point I knew that the useful ghost had trapped us in the mansion and his master would have to be faced.”

Murdered by their masters, these apprentices are still bound to them, and wander their master’s residence providing what service the can either after death. Being insubstantial they can walk through walls and other solid barriers, but rely upon their telekinetic powers to interact with the physical world. They can use this power as a deadly attack, flinging hard items at great speed at foes.

Type: Undead

Armour Class: 7 [12]

Hit Dice: 1

Move: 150 Flight

Attacks: Can telekinetically throw objects (1d4-1d6 depending on size)

Special: Only damaged by Magic Spells and Enchanted Items, Immaterial can pass through walls etc Not affected by Charm or Sleep spells.

Challenge Level/XP: 2/30

Head Guardian

“So we made our way to Bartlebew’s crypt. I should have twigged there’d be a Guardian Head at the entrance and sure enough on a plinth right at the door was the head of woman in her mid-twenties with long flowing blonde hair and a grey sunken countenance. “So you be your master’s guardian then?”

“Yes, I guard the master into eternity. Though he has gone beyond the Shroud, I remain to protect his grave” she rasped with a voice like gravel.

“Don’t suppose you be letting me past?” I asked hopefully.

“No” she responded firmly.

“Then you leave me no choice but to cleave ye in twain” I said dramatically, as I pulled out my special head axe I keep for such occasions. It was then the high-pitched screaming started. Fortunately, I had remembered to plug my ears with cotton this time round.”

Head Guardians are created by from the decapitated head of a once faithful apprentice betrayed by their master in a particularly foul Black Magic rite. The head can sense living creatures in a fifty-foot radius around itself. It defends itself by issuing a blood curdling high pitch scream that not only alerts any other creatures within earshot, but paralyses any living creatures for 1d6 minutes. Player characters get to Test their Luck to avoid this effect. It also has the power of flight and is able to attack opponents with its bite.

Type:Undead

Armour Class: 5 [14]

Hit Dice: 1

Move:15 Flight

Attacks: 1 Bite (1d6)

Special: High Pitched Paralyzing Scream, Can Fly, attacks, Not affected by Charm or Sleep spells.

Challenge Level/XP:2/30

Thrall

“Upon reaching the nexus of magical understanding, the apprentice is invited to participate in a Rite of Initiation. The poor apprentice is beaten to an inch of his life by masked assailants (often fellow apprentices or brigands hired for the job from the nearby city) and then ‘saved’ by the Sorcerer, who completes the rite by casting ‘healing magics’. These spells complete the rite and turns the apprentice into an insane, physically powerful monster completely under the control of the Sorcerer with whom they are obsessively emotionally bonded to.”

Thralls are the result of a powerful black magic rite that turns an unsuspecting Apprentice into a humanoid monster under the Sorcerer's control. Thralls are usually used in combat and other situations where physical strength is required. Thralls are chosen from Apprentices that are strong and musclebound, and not too clever. The resulting Thrall is completely loyal to their master and is completely unshakable in combat. They can also berserk against opponents, but are instantly calmed by the command of their master.

Type: Humanoid

Armour Class: 7 [12]

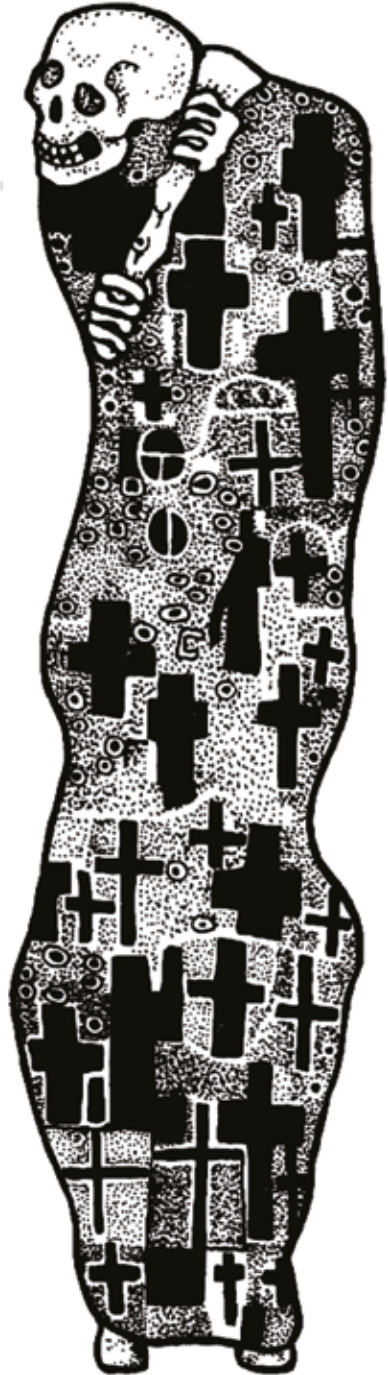
Hit Dice: 3

Move:9

Attacks: 1 fist (1d10)

Special: Very strong, Berserk (+2 to hit and Damage)

Challenge Level/XP:4/120



EXOTIC LIQUID RELIEF

By Neil 'Captain Machine' Shaw

Hit Points in Crypts & Things record a character's ability to avoid a killing blow with only a few bumps and scraps rather than physical wounds. As highlighted on page 82 a character can reinvigorate themselves with a suitable strong drink once a day to recover 1D4 hit points. You can of course hand wave this rule, and assume that so long as a character owns a flask or wineskin devoted to transporting their character's poison of choice they always have on hand enough to recover lost hit points while delving dark and dangerous crypts.

Below is a selection of exotic alcoholic drinks a character can happen across in the innumerable taverns scattered across Zarth or buried in treasure found within the hoard of monsters after their defeat. These drinks could be found in small flasks or bottles but also be found in casks or barrels offering multiple uses. While the original rule for alcoholic recovery is open to hand waving, this author recommends that the amount of exotic drinks the players have access to are recorded and removed when consumed.

Fire Herb Ale

Fire herb is a rare herb that grows wild across the whole of the Continent of Terror and is well known for its fiery hot taste. Botanists have universally failed to cultivate the growth of this herb outside of the wild. To this end, brewers or chefs who use the famous fire herb secretly visit hidden groves in the wild to harvest them. In some extreme cases these herbs are in very dangerous places and the services of adventures are needed to gather the golden orange leaves and its bright red seed pods. Brewers have been known to add the leaves and burst seed pods to fine ale to infuse a fiery taste that is sure to awaken the spirit and the mind when consumed.

Recovery: 1D4+1

Cost: 10gp

Healing Waters of Aladhi

Legend tells of a lost monastery of Aladhi, and only a handful of scholars hold the truth of its location. The reason why adventurers have been known to seek the monastery across Zarth is its famed hot springs. It is rumoured that bathing within the hot springs can cure any ailment, disease or injury. Over the years, people lucky enough to find the monastery and vowed to silence by its monks have left with water taken straight from the

life-giving spring which, while much diluted from its original source, is still refreshing and curative.

Recovery: 4 (no roll required)

Cost: 100gp

Red Raptor Vodka

Deep within the Terror Lizard Run is a small castle owed by the sorcerer Japlin Pred, who is a famed brewer of magical potions. While tyrants battling over territory are a nearly daily occurrence, Japlin Pred has somehow managed to remain neutral and welcoming to any tyrant who comes to his door. While he gathers a hoard of gold and treasure within his vault from the services he provides the local and rotating tyrants, his hobby is making potent vodka which is favoured by the elite warriors of local tribes. These scarred barbarians find the potent drink drives them to greater ferocity in battle.

Recovery: 1D4 (+1 damage to next melee damage roll)

Cost: 75gp

Wild Elk Mead

In the northern shadow of the Wolf End Mountains is a deep valley under the watchful eye of the tyrant Snorri the Last Blood Axe. The people who live here are a folk who enjoy simple pleasures where they can be found. One such display of their passions is wonderful mead infused with local berries made possible by an unusually large number of bee farmers who are able to flourish as the extremes of cold weather doesn't touch the valley often. While Snorri does claim the majority of the mead for himself, occasionally a rare barrel will leave the valley and is enjoyed across Zarth for its overall flavour that fills the drinker with a passion for life itself.

Recovery: 1D4+1 (Next saving throw passes without rolling)

Cost: 350gp

Nettora Spiced Wine

Hailing from the famed Nettora vineyard within the land of Myrindor, this well crafted drink is years in the making. Once bottled, this sweet nectar is locked into an underground vault and left for five years before being uncorked and consumed. The wine is infused with numerous herbs that are the foundation of potent drugs available on the open market in Stinhar. This makes the intoxicating wine a favoured drink of nobles, and unlike other wines it is very hard to find examples sat in the cellars aging to perfection. Hedonist drinkers find the drug-infused wine dims pain and heightened carnal pleasures so it's frequently uncorked for the thinnest of reasons. *Recovery:* 1D4 (Half next damage taken (rounded down))

Cost: 300gp per bottle (enough for 4 drinks)

Black Blood Brew

This potent brew is found almost exclusively in the hands of cultists to the Others who reside in and around the Jagmani Jungles and the smoky peak of Mouth Terror. Its recipe has spread across the whole Continent of Terror, but thankfully it's much rarer as it uses the distilled blood of the Others as its main ingredient. This vile concoction bears a strong almost vomit inducing aroma and flavour, is used as an initiation ritual for new blood within the cult to prove that the neonate has the strong stomach needed for human sacrifice and standing in the shadow of the Others. While regular consumption of this brew can cost the drinker his very soul, it does grant unnatural vitality useful for fighting off the heroes knocking down their door.

Recovery: 1D6+2 (1d3 corruption gained)

Cost: 150gp

Blood Apple Cider

The fields around the City of Earth are enriched with the free-flowing life blood of innumerable sacrifices to the city's elemental lord. This has led to fruit and vegetables grown in the fields and orchards that bear an unusual red hue, which while not affecting the flavour is noticeable by travelling strangers who raise an eyebrow at crimson limes or turnips. However, some plants do bear more significant changes in this environment; the most notable of these are the apples that go into Blood Apple Cider. They are picked as the largest and brightest apples, and are so infused by the earth that they bleed human blood when picked from the tree. Usually served warm, Blood Apple Cider fills its drinker with healthy vigour.

Recovery: 1D4+2

Cost: 25gp

GENERIC LIFE EVENTS

Perhaps you don't want to use the Zarth setting in the main Crypts and Things book?

Perhaps you feel that it's too detailed and constricts player creativity? Or perhaps you are looking for a Generic Life Events table that is Open Gaming Content (unlike the Life Events Tables in the main rule book which are closed content) on which to base your own? Then this table is what you are looking for!

Roll once on the following table

| Roll 1d20 | Life Event |
|-----------|---|
| 1 | The character fought, either willing or unwillingly, in a major war |
| 2 | Worked in a palace as a Guard, Personal Servant, Kitchen Staff etc |
| 3 | A slave working on a tyrant's tomb. |
| 4 | Part of an explorer's expedition. |
| 5 | A gladiator in the death games. |
| 6 | A sailor in on a merchant vessel. |
| 7 | Spent a season working with a travelling entertainers troupe. |
| 8 | The character survived the haunting of the Old Palace. |
| 9 | They were a caravan guard on the great trade route. |
| 10 | Tomb raider of the Great Royal Necropolis. |
| 11 | Spent time in the Village of the Hidden. |
| 12 | Death defier in the Quest for Thrills. |
| 13 | Participant in the Great Pilgrimage to the Holy Mountain. |
| 14 | They were a servant to the Magus. |
| 15 | Spent some time as a monk at the Vanished Temple. |
| 16 | Was a member of the Crimson Fleet |
| 17 | Student of the Blade Masters |
| 18 | A Forest Warden in the Great Wood |
| 19. | Guardian of the Sacred Bull |
| 20 | Spent time with the Animal Riders of the Great Steppe. |

Rather than give every life event a skill or ability, Crypt Keepers should give bonuses, at +2, or allow the character to know or do certain things automatically when the benefits of a life event can be considered to come into play.

Places and people are intentionally given vague but flavoursome names that you can either expand during play or substitute for ones in your campaign setting.

USEFUL ITEMS OF THE KINDLY ONES

Although they may be long gone from the dying world of Zarth, the Kindly Ones left many of these benevolent minor magical items behind as sign of their slightly whimsical affection.

| Roll 1d12 | Useful Item |
|--------------|---|
| 1 | Twine of the Labyrinthine. Never run out of string or lose your way in a maze again. |
| 2 | Fork of Plenty. Somehow your food ration is double the amount when you use this piece of cutlery to eat! |
| 3 | Pot of Precise Cooking. Never spoil a meal by under or overcooking ever again. |
| 4 | Owl of Alarm. A small owl shaped statue that hoots loudly when someone comes within thirty foot of your camp. |
| 5 | Magnification Glass of Valuation. Let's the viewer know what an item is worth in monetary terms. |
| 6 | Cudgel of Giving. Threaten someone with this club and they will give you their money without a fight. |
| 7 | Thick Pastry. Kept in a jar, this never-ending blob of pastry has a myriad of uses beyond making fine pie crusts. |
| 8 | The Eternal Flame. Plucked from the Temple to the Kindly Ones, this flame never goes out, requires no fuel and burns without heat. |
| 9 | Bookcase of Absorption. You can store as many books in the this item of furniture as you want. Other items are mysteriously spat out. |
| 10 | Dentures of Durability. In a world without dentists or clear oral hygiene these are useful indeed! |
| 11 | Pear of Fulfilment. Leaves the eater feeling calm and relaxed. Free of any fears and madness that they may have acquired through recent adventures. |
| 12 | D6 Golden Browns. A revitalising golden biscuit that never goes rotten and when eaten restores all lost Hit Points. |

These items are useful aids for low level characters, and as interesting trinkets for mid or high level ones. They may also reassure the players who are freaked out by Zarth's relentless unpleasantness.

THINGS TO FIND IN GREAT POTS

These human sized giant clay pots are a common sight in the busy streets of Zarth's cities and the deserted corridors and chambers of its Crypts. Most of the time they are empty but 1 in 6 times they contain something of interest to the bored, opportunistic scavenger.

| Roll D20 | What is inside the pot |
|-------------|---|
| 1 | 2d6 gold pieces |
| 2 | A complete human skeleton (roll 1d10 on a 10 it comes to life and attacks!) |
| 3 | A hungry zombie. |
| 4 | 1d4 giant rats who are peacefully resting. |
| 5 | A giant spider! |
| 6 | Rotten food. |
| 7 | A corpse. |
| 8 | A pile of rubbish. |
| 9 | Sour wine. |
| 10 | A dismembered head. |
| 11 | A freshly bloodied dagger. |
| 12 | A mummified cat. |
| 13 | A scroll that disintegrates when opened. |
| 14 | A pile of clay balls. |
| 15 | A pile of coloured glass beads. |
| 16 | Some dried fruit. |
| 17 | A change of clothing. |
| 18 | Brackish water. |
| 19 | A small stone statue. |
| 20 | A Useful Item (roll on table on page opposite). |

THE TEA PARTY OF DOOM

If you go down to the Old Haunted Woods today...

“A large wooden table dominates the clearing. A dirty mess of tablecloth and crockery sits on top of it. Eight wooden chairs of various styles, some very basic, some ornately carved are placed around the table. At the head of the table is a chair made from human bones and skulls. A gnarly bald old man in a black robe sits on this chair, languidly holding a teapot made from a giant skull, with a black spout coming out of the nose hole. His skin has a slightly green tinge to it. Large toads are everywhere, on the table, on the chairs, even perching on the old man’s right shoulder.

With a sly toothless smile the old man asks “Ah guests, anyone for Tea?”

EXPLANATION

The insane Tea Master is old alchemist who travelled to the wood many thousands of years ago, and discovered this clearing and the toads who live here. After much experimentation, he brewed tea from the oily rainbow coloured liquid that oozes from their hindquarters. It gave him immortality and innate powers (see below) at the cost of his sanity. He continues to ‘test out’ brew on visiting guests, using his Hold Person spell to compel them to join in.

The Tea Master AC 7 [12] HD 6 HP 40 Attacks A Large Bread Knife coated with Toad Venom (1d4+1d6 Damage from Blade Venom) Move 12 Special: Casts Hold Person at will, Alchemist able to brew Toad Tea and other CL/XP 9/1,100

The Tea Master was once a sorcerer of great ability but his insanity and form of immortality, forces him to live in the present moment and he has forgotten most of his past life and the magic that he once could cast. He relies upon the last spell that he remembers, Hold Person, and the powers of the Toad Tea. He also retains his magic sensitivity.

Tactics: Uses Hold Person against the characters, targeting the most threatening magic using characters first. Will use magic in favour of physical attacks, but only 30% of the time uses ‘sane’ magic (i.e. known sorcery), most of the time using the powers of the toad potions (roll d100 and consult Toad Tea table below) since he is saturated with the tea which he drinks almost constantly.

TREASURE

A journal which describes how to brew the toad tea, and the effects of d10 'tests' (roll for each), and the fact that boiled Jistra flower (see below) acts as an antidote. The journal is written in an ancient arcane language long dead to the world.

100 silver pieces in an ornate carved wooden tea chest (in itself worth 30 Gp), in the strange hexagonal style of the Tea Master's long dead homeland.

1d10 brews worth of the Toad Tea in powdered form each in small linen bags (which can be dunked in boiling water to brew).

The Skull Tea Pot made from the head of a large humanoid (double the size of a human). Also, if placed upon the head of a sorcerer, the teapot knows 1d4 First Level Spells, 1d4 Second Level Spells and 1d2 Third Level Spells which the long dead spirit of the inhuman creature will teach the sorcerer in return for its release. If the spirit is released, the teapot smashes.



TOAD TEA EFFECTS

| Roll d100 | Effect |
|-----------|--|
| 1-20 | The effect of a beneficial White Magic spell of Level equal to a 1d4 Roll. |
| 21-40 | The effect of a beneficial Grey Magic spell of Level equal to a 1d4 Roll. |
| 41-60 | Gets the effect of a beneficial Black Magic spell of Level equal to a 1d4 Roll. |
| 61 | Vision of the future. |
| 62 | Insight into the past. |
| 64 | Turned into a toad. |
| 65 | A secret of a fellow party member revealed. |
| 66 | Fall in love with fellow party member. |
| 67 | Fall in love with recurring enemy (need not be present). |
| 68 | Forget how to use favourite weapon. |
| 69 | Head magical swells to double its size. |
| 70 | Skin turns purple. |
| 71 | Appears to all others as a vicious enemy. |
| 72 | Falls into a coma appearing dead. |
| 73 | Gains the power of flight. |
| 74 | Can magically see through the eyes of one of the toads. |
| 75 | One of the toads starts talking to the drinker. |
| 76 | Hair stands on end and goes green. |
| 77 | Gains the ability to magically regrow severed body parts. |
| 78 | Entire contents of bowels immediately empty. |
| 79 S | Smells like an open sewer. |
| 80 | Has a cosmic vision where one of the great secrets of their own deity is revealed to them. |
| 81 | As above, but it is an enemy deity. |
| 82 | Everything they touch turns to gold. |
| 83 | Everything they touch turns to excrement. |
| 84 | All food and drink tastes wonderful, the best ever. |
| 85 | Head shrinks to the size of an apple. |
| 86 | Gains an extra head. |
| 87 | Gains an extra set of arms. |
| 88 | Loses an arm. |
| 89 | Loses a leg. |
| 90-99 | Turns into a toad. |
| 100 | Roll twice. |

All the above effects last for 1d6 days and there Saving Throw/Test of Luck to avoid the effects.

THE JISTRA FLOWER

This nondescript small white bloom grows everywhere in the clearing. If its flowers are brewed into a loose-leaf tea, it acts as an immediate antidote to the effects of the toad tea.

Ironically, the toads eat the plants and it's the sap from the stems that give them their poisonous secretions that the Tea Master turns into his Toad Tea.

PSYCHEDELIC TOADS

As noted above they are everywhere. Notable for the rainbow coloured oil that they secrete from their hindquarters. The oil on its own is highly poisonous, causing 2d6 damage when ingested. It can also be used on weapons as a contact poison causing an additional 1d6 on top of the weapons damage, but only lasts for 1d6 hours after application. Each toad secretes enough oil for one application per day.

SOMETHING WICKED THIS WAY COMES.....

In Issue 2

Under a Blood Red Moon - A tale of lost love and tombs by Neil Gow

The Pie Shop An encounter at the city's finest pie emporium. Are you sure you know what you are eating?

A Strange Thing Happened on the Way to the Ruins. Special encounters to spice up even the most boring walk to the local crypt.

And more of the bad things you've come to expect from Crypts & Things.

ETA Quarter 2 2017

OPEN GAME LICENSE VERSION 1.0A

The following text is the property of Wizards of the Coast, Inc. and is Copyright 2000 Wizards of the Coast, Inc (“Wizards”). All Rights Reserved.

1. Definitions: (a) “Contributors” means the copyright and/or trademark owners who have contributed Open Game Content; (b) “Derivative Material” means copyrighted material including derivative works and translations (including into other computer languages), potation, modification, correction, addition, extension, upgrade, improvement, compilation, abridgment or other form in which an existing work may be recast, transformed or adapted; (c) “Distribute” means to reproduce, license, rent, lease, sell, broadcast, publicly display, transmit or otherwise distribute; (d) “Open Game Content” means the game mechanic and includes the methods, procedures, processes and routines to the extent such content does not embody the Product Identity and is an enhancement over the prior art and any additional content clearly identified as Open Game Content by the Contributor, and means any work covered by this License, including translations and derivative works under copyright law, but specifically excludes Product Identity. (e) “Product Identity” means product and product line names, logos and identifying marks including trade dress; artifacts; creatures characters; stories, storylines, plots, thematic elements, dialogue, incidents, language, artwork, symbols, designs, depictions, likenesses, formats, poses, concepts, themes and graphic, photographic and other visual or audio representations; names and descriptions of characters, spells, enchantments, personalities, teams, personas, likenesses and special abilities; places, locations, environments, creatures, equipment, magical or supernatural abilities or effects, logos, symbols, or graphic designs; and any other trademark or registered trademark clearly identified as Product identity by the owner of the Product Identity, and which specifically excludes the Open Game Content; (f) “Trademark” means the logos, names, mark, sign, motto, designs that are used by a Contributor to identify itself or its products or the associated products contributed to the Open Game License by the Contributor (g) “Use”, “Used” or “Using” means to use, Distribute, copy, edit, format, modify, translate and otherwise create Derivative Material of Open Game Content. (h) “You” or “Your” means the licensee in terms of this agreement.
2. The License: This License applies to any Open Game Content that contains a notice indicating that the Open Game Content may only be Used under and in terms of this License. You must affix such a notice to any Open Game Content that you Use. No terms may be added to or subtracted from this License except as described by the License itself. No other terms or conditions may be applied to any Open Game Content distributed using this License.
3. Offer and Acceptance: By Using the Open Game Content You indicate Your acceptance of the terms of this License.
4. Grant and Consideration: In consideration for agreeing to use this License, the Contributors grant You a perpetual, worldwide, royalty-free, non-exclusive license with the exact terms of this License to Use, the Open Game Content.
5. Representation of Authority to Contribute: If You are contributing original material as Open Game Content, You represent that Your Contributions are Your original creation and/or You have sufficient rights to grant the rights conveyed by this License.
6. Notice of License Copyright: You must update the COPYRIGHT NOTICE portion of this License to include the exact text of the COPYRIGHT NOTICE of any Open Game Content You are copying, modifying or distributing, and You must add the title, the copyright date, and the copyright holder’s name to the COPYRIGHT NOTICE of any original Open Game Content you Distribute.
7. Use of Product Identity: You agree not to Use any Product Identity, including as an indication as to compatibility, except as expressly licensed in another, independent Agreement with the owner of each element of that Product Identity. You agree not to indicate compatibility or co-adaptability with any Trademark or Registered Trademark in conjunction with a work containing Open Game Content except as expressly licensed in another, independent Agreement with the owner of such Trademark or Registered Trademark. The use of any Product Identity in Open Game Content does not constitute a challenge to the ownership of that Product Identity. The owner of any Product Identity used in Open Game Content shall retain all rights, title and interest in and to that Product Identity.
8. Identification: If you distribute Open Game Content You must clearly indicate which portions of the work that you are distributing are Open Game Content.

9. Updating the License: Wizards or its designated Agents may publish updated versions of this License. You may use any authorized version of this License to copy, modify and distribute any Open Game Content originally distributed under any version of this License.
10. Copy of this License: You MUST include a copy of this License with every copy of the Open Game Content You Distribute.
11. Use of Contributor Credits: You may not market or advertise the Open Game Content using the name of any Contributor unless You have written permission from the Contributor to do so.
12. Inability to Comply: If it is impossible for You to comply with any of the terms of this License with respect to some or all of the Open Game Content due to statute, judicial order, or governmental regulation then You may not Use any Open Game Material so affected.
13. Termination: This License will terminate automatically if You fail to comply with all terms herein and fail to cure such breach within 30 days of becoming aware of the breach. All sublicenses shall survive the termination of this License.
14. Reformation: If any provision of this License is held to be unenforceable, such provision shall be reformed only to the extent necessary to make it enforceable.
15. COPYRIGHT NOTICE

Open Game License v 1.0a Copyright 2000, Wizards of the Coast, Inc.

System Reference Document Copyright 2000-2003, Wizards of the Coast, Inc.; Authors Jonathan Tweet, Monte Cook, Skip Williams, Rich Baker, Andy Collins, David Noonan, Rich Redman, Bruce R. Cordell, John D. Rateliff, Thomas Reid, James Wyatt, based on original material by E. Gary Gygax and Dave Arneson.

Swords & Wizardry Core Rules, Copyright 2008, Matthew J. Finch

Akrasia's Sword & Sorcery rules Copyright 2009, Blain Neufeld.

Crypts & Things Copyright 2011-2016 Paul Newport.

From the Shroud Copyright 2016. Paul Newport, Authors: Paul Newport, Neil Shaw.

END OF LICENSE