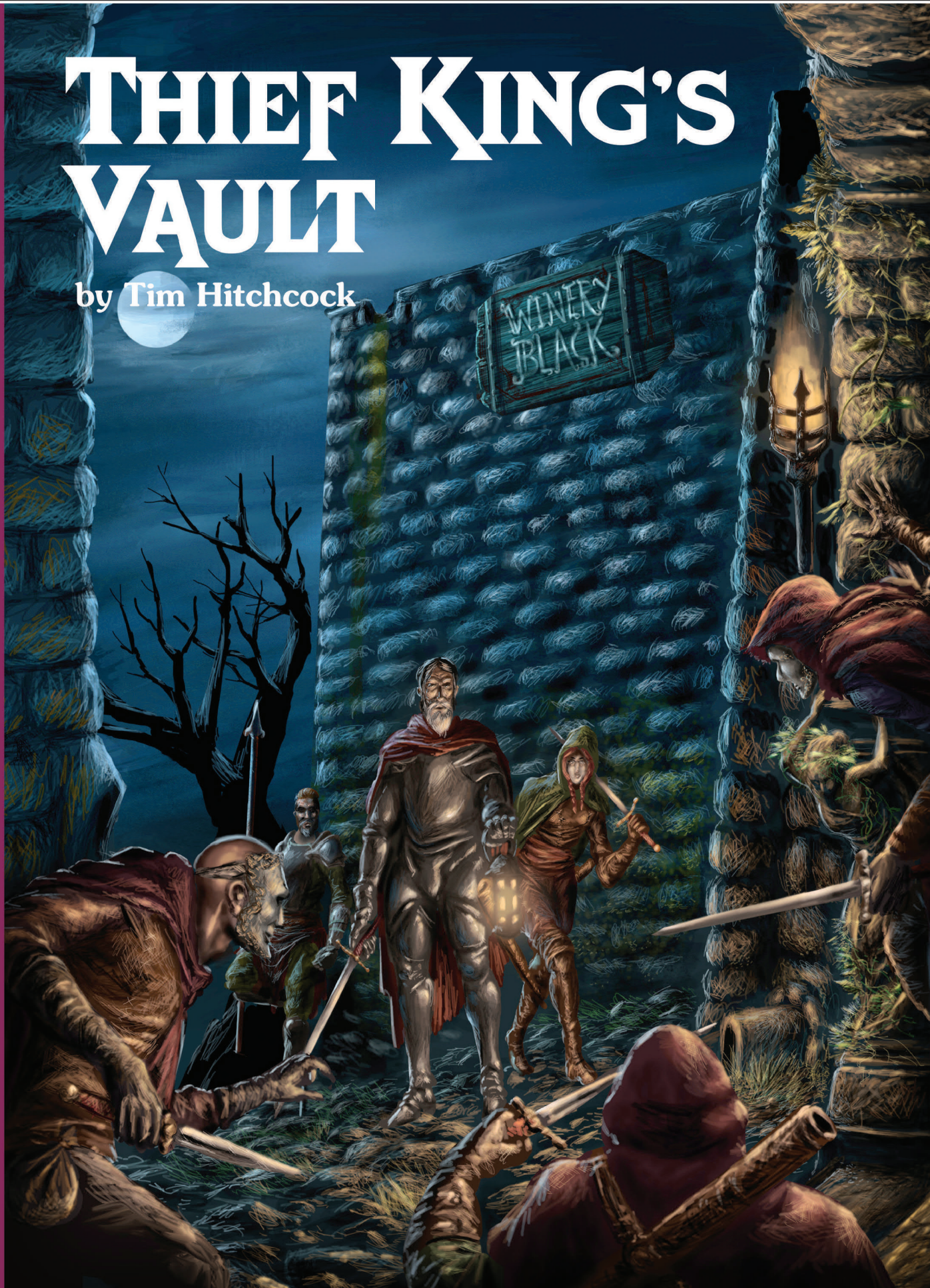




FROG GOD GAMES ADVENTURES

THIEF KING'S VAULT

by Tim Hitchcock



**SWORDS &
WIZARDRY
COMPATIBLE**

THIEF KING'S VAULT

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ADVENTURES
WORTH
WINNING



FROG GOD GAMES

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THIEF KING'S VAULT

By TIM HITCHCOCK

It has long been said there are no thieves in the city of Caltoshar. At night, one can safely walk the streets, and few worry about locking their doors. Yet one would be foolish to believe Caltoshar is without a criminal element, for there are thieves aplenty if one knows where to look. Personally, however, I'd advise you to assuage your curiosity with such matters, and enjoy Caltoshar for what it appears to be.

INTRODUCTION

The Thief King's Vault is a short *Swords & Wizardry* adventure for 4–6 characters of levels 4–5 where the characters must make their way through the Thief King's vault and deal with the horrors found within.

BACKGROUND

The adventure revolves around the city of Caltoshar, a decently sized coastal city whose citizens have grown prosperous off foreign trade. Caltoshar is noted for its seemingly placid temperament, particularly in terms of criminal activities of which it is reputed to have none. This is largely due to the efforts of Governor Dalmont Black who runs several shipping companies and Caltoshar's most popular winery, The Winery Black, which has long served as his base of operations. He is popular with the public and has held his elected position for more than decade. Still, most of Caltoshar's citizens avoid discussing the governor's other title: the Thief King.

The reason no crime seemingly exists in the city is because Dalmont controls all of it and oversees a large network of thieves who operate out of the Caltoshar thieves' guild. Guild operations consist chiefly of smuggling and acts that target victims outside the city limits. These thieves travel up and down the coast, performing elaborate heists and burglaries that specifically target the wealthiest people. All guild members are forbidden to perform acts of thievery within the city limits, especially those that would target any citizen of Caltoshar. As might be expected, punishment for such acts is swift and merciless. Such transgressions receive no trial; only punishment — and all such incidents are kept hidden from the public. This is how Caltoshar earned its reputation as one of the safest cities in the known world, and how it has remained as such until now.

A dubious set of events now threatens the Thief King's rule. For the last three weeks, nobody has seen the normally gregarious Governor Dalmont. His wife Adessia has been holding down the business, but her presence at The Winery Black has also been infrequent. Those who recently saw or spoke to her claim she seemed unusually detached and distant. Instead, the winery's general management now lies in the able hands of Dalmont's longtime business associate Colben Longmire. Dalmont left no official public word about his absence, and no one close to him has mentioned it. Life and business in the city have simply continued as usual. At first people thought the governor was out of town dealing with an extended political or business venture, but more recent rumors infer that something nefarious happened to Dalmont.

ACT I: THE LETTER

The characters receive a letter of invitation to The Winery Black, Caltoshar's finest winery.

It reads:

*My esteemed friend,
It is with great delight that I extend to you my sincere invitation to attend a private meeting at The Winery Black to sample our latest vintage from our highly-acclaimed cellars. We look forward to your arrival within the forthcoming week.*

*Sincerely,
Madame Adessia Black,
Governess of Caltoshar*

Referee's Note: At least one of the characters should have ties to either Adessia, Dalmont, or someone else involved with the governor, his wife, or the thieves' guild of Caltoshar. This individual should already know that Dalmont Black, Caltoshar's governor, owns the winery. Impressively, the invite appears to be from the governor's wife, Adessia. Furthermore, they should also know (or strongly suspect) that Dalmont has close ties to the thieves' guild of Caltoshar.

Upon arriving at the winery, a dark-haired man with a crooked nose and probing green eyes greets the characters with a pleasant smile. He introduces himself as Colben Longmire, Dalmont's longtime business associate. Colben apologizes that Adessia could not attend their meeting, then explains that she is interested in making them a generous offer in exchange for their services. If pressed for reasons why Adessia herself could not be present, Colben verbally plays it off as if she had important business elsewhere, but then slides a paper to the characters that reads, "too dangerous, keep low-key." After his initial offer (and any queries about it), he politely states, "Please, don't answer just yet. First, allow me to give you a showing of The Winery Black."

Colben Longmire, Human Male (Thf3): HP 10; AC 6[13]; Atk +1 dagger (1d4+1), light crossbow (1d4+1); Move 12; Save 12 (+1, ring); AL N; CL/XP 3/60; **Special:** backstab (x2), +2 save bonus vs. traps and magical devices, read languages, thieving skills.

Thieving Skills: Climb 87%, Tasks/Traps 25%, Hear 4 in 6, Hide 20%, Silent 30%, Locks 20%.

Equipment: leather armor, +1 dagger, light crossbow, 10 bolts, ring of protection +1, 2d6gp, 1d6sp.

If characters accept, Colben leads them upon a mundane tour of the upstairs, and then down into the wine cellars. A half-dozen huge barrels, each nearly 15ft tall, line the cellar's walls. Colben looks around quickly, his eyes intently scouring room, then he puts a finger to his lips to request the characters' silence. He gestures for them to follow him through a door cut into the face of one of the large barrels. The huge barrel contains a small and private meeting room with several chairs and a table. Once inside, he closes the door and bids them to sit.

"Apologies again, my friends, but I needed a safe place to talk. I would like to clear up any misconceptions before making Adessia's offer, for I do not want to falsely represent our intent. I am 1st League-Master of the Whispered Coalition."

As evidence, Colben shows the characters a secret tattoo that identifies him as a member of the fabled Caltoshar thieves' guild that covertly rules the city.

“What I request of you is a job I cannot perform, for my guild is forbidden to practice our craft upon our own citizens. I implore you to procure a clay artifact from a local merchant. I cannot take it outright, nor can I simply send someone to purchase it. I absolutely need to keep its whereabouts secret.”

“I assure you, however, that the merchant in question is a disreputable and shiftless foreigner with a gifted tongue for haggling and swindle. I cannot disclose more than this at the moment, but I swear the matter is of grave importance to the stability of this city. At my master’s leave, I am able to offer you considerable recompense for your efforts, say 200 gold pieces each, with half up front? What say you good people?”

To punctuate his last statement, Colben places a sack of gold on the table. If the characters agree, he tells them that the merchant’s name is Poslo Wernhurt. Next, he pulls a small clay statuette from beneath the desk and sets it before the characters so they can examine it. The sculpture is a squatting, half-naked, demon-faced woman. He tells them that the artifact they seek is a precise duplicate of the one before them. What Colben fails to reveal is that the artifact he wants them to recover is in fact a relatively worthless copy of the one he possesses. However, Poslo’s cheap copy holds a great treasure. Within its hollow interior, Dalmont placed a map marking the location of his secret vault, an old mausoleum he converted into a lair to hide and protect his considerable stash of wealth.

If the characters accept Colben’s offer, he gives them Poslo’s address.

If the characters investigate their mark, nearly all rumors concerning Poslo Wernhurt coincide with Colben’s depiction of the merchant as a grifter who targets traveling merchants and greedily swindles those not shrewd enough to see through his wiles.



KEEPING THE TRAIN ON ITS TRACKS

If the characters decline Colben’s offer, a few days later they catch wind of the latest news: Unknown assailants believed to be former members of the Whispered Coalition murdered Colben Longmire. The nature of the altercation remains unknown, though immediately after the incident witnesses spotted the assailants fleeing the city and riding south toward the mountains.

After the characters declined his offer, Colben hired another band of mercenaries to procure the statue. Upon succeeding, they returned to collect their reward only to be ambushed by a band of renegade guild thugs who slew them and Colben before fleeing with the vault map. They are now headed toward the vault. Depending on how long it takes the characters to pursue them, they might catch up with them en route or at the vault.

Renegade Whispered Coalition Guild Thugs (Thf3)

(6): HP 9, 8x2, 7, 5x2; AC 7[12]; Atk short sword (1d6), light crossbow (1d4+1); **Move** 12; **Save** 13; **AL** N; **CL/XP** 3/60; **Special:** backstab (x2), +2 save bonus vs. traps and magical devices, read languages, thieving skills.

Thieving Skills: Climb 87%, Tasks/Traps 25%, Hear 4 in 6, Hide 20%, Silent 30%, Locks 20%.

Equipment: leather armor, short sword, light crossbow, 20 bolts, 2d4sp.

ACT 2: ROBBING POSLO

Poslo Wernhurt lives in a large second-story apartment above his shop, which is called The Emporium Majestico. Allow characters to be as creative as they want in deciding how to approach and solve this challenge. They can attempt to break in from the street level through either the front or back doors, and then sneak up to the second floor. Alternately, they could try their hand as cat burglars. The exterior walls are easy enough to scale, provided the characters don’t draw the attention of the locals bustling along the busy streets. Poslo does keep his windows locked, however. Lastly, they could throw subtly aside and resort to simple thuggery.

While not keen on being robbed, Poslo is a wimp, easily scared, and doesn’t really value the clay artifact. A pair of **dogs** guard the second floor, but they aren’t well trained and can be distracted with food or other tactics. The statue is in plain sight, displayed on his mantel in the sitting room with several other odd sculptures of various origin and construction. If the characters threaten or otherwise interrogate Poslo about its nature, he buckles. He swears the statuette is only a copy (albeit a very good one) of a spirit-god worshipped by the indigenous people to the south. He claims the governor himself gifted the facsimile to him after he complimented the original statue in Dalmont’s office.

Once the characters procure the statue, they are free to examine it or return directly to The Winery Black to make the exchange with Colben Longmire.

Poslo Wernhurt: HP 5; AC 9[10]; Atk club (1d4); **Move** 12; **Save** 18; **AL** N; **CL/XP** B/10;
Special: none.
Equipment: club.

Dogs (2): HD 1; HP 6, 4; AC 7[12]; Atk bite (1d3); **Move** 15; **Save** 17; **CL/XP** 1/15; **Special:** none. (*Monstrosities* 127)



ACT 3: CURIOUS GOINGS ON AT THE WINERY BLACK



When the characters return to the winery, they find the front door hanging slightly ajar.

More curiously, all the windows are shuttered, keeping the interior shrouded in shadow. If the characters enter, the darkened room is dead silent. Propped in the center sits a man bound to a chair, slumped over, and possibly gagged. Anyone within 30ft of the man spots blood pooling beneath the chair. The victim is Colben. He is gagged and bleeding badly from a wound to his throat.

A band of **6 renegade guild thugs** wait in the dark abode to ambush the characters. They tied up Colben as bait and hid. In the wake of the Thief King's prolonged absence, they plan to seize control of his floundering organization. The assassins hide along the suspended walkways surrounding the main floor, each with a loaded crossbow aimed at Colben. If noticed, they threaten to shoot their captive unless the characters hand over the clay statue. If the characters refuse, the thugs immediately shoot Colben but offer to spare the characters in exchange for the statue. If the characters again refuse, the thugs attack.

If the characters fail to notice the ambush, the thugs wait patiently for the characters to enter and assist Colben, although he trembles as they approach. As soon as anyone removes his gag, he urgently forces a dying croak: "It's a trap!" Even as Colben speaks, a crossbow fires from somewhere in the darkness, striking him straight through the head. Soon after, the room erupts with a hail of crossbow bolts as the thugs attack.

Renegade Whispered Coalition Guild Thugs (Thf3) (6): HP 9, 8x2, 7, 5x2; AC 7[12]; Atk short sword (1d6), light crossbow

(1d4+1); **Move** 12; **Save** 13; **AL** N; **CL/XP** 3/60; **Special:** backstab (x2), +2 save bonus vs. traps and magical devices, read languages, thieving skills.

Thieving Skills: Climb 87%, Tasks/Traps 25%, Hear 4 in 6, Hide 20%, Silent 30%, Locks 20%.

Equipment: leather armor, short sword, light crossbow, 20 bolts, 2d4sp.

Developments. If the characters survive the ambush, they can search the bodies of the assailants. All bear the mark of the Whispered Coalition. The thugs are renegade guild members who seek access to the Thief King's secret vault. For the past two weeks, they have been spying on Longmire and know the clay statue has something to do with gaining access to the vault, but they do not know that it is hollow or that it contains a secret map to the location. If the characters interrogate them, the thugs reveal that they knew Colben Longmire hired the characters to get the statue. Regardless, they remain tightlipped about what they wanted the statue for and say nothing about the vault. Weeks earlier, these same men attempted to murder Dalmont before he fled to the safety of the vault. Although he managed to escape them, the thugs struck him several times with poisoned blades, which ultimately helped them succeed in their efforts.

If the characters carefully examine the clay artifact, it appears to be hollow. Anyone shaking the statue hears something small rattling faintly inside it. If the characters break the artifact, they discover a sealed wax tube that contains a map and an old bronze key wrapped in cloth. The map denotes a location in the barren hill country to the south.

ACT 4:

SOUTHBOUND TO GLORY

If the characters follow the map (or the renegade thugs if they escape), they arrive at the Thief King's Vault. The vault lies three days' ride to the south and another two days' climb into the hills. You may either play the journey out, or paraphrase it using the following text.

After a day or so, the paved clay road south out of Caltoshar turns to worn earth. Behind you, the city stands like a black shadow against the cloud-streaked blue northern skies, while ahead the red hills rise slowly before the broad and desolate plain draped in yellow grasses and spotted with only a few stunted trees. The path continues onward, and for the next few days, not much changes, except the city's shadow shrinks and the mass of red hills grows ever taller.

On the third day, you reach the russet, weathered foothills. As you ascend the slope, the sky grows dark as banks of gray, dreary clouds roll in from the west. A light rain falls, the drops almost seeming to sizzle as they strike the sunburned sandstone outcrops that prod from the hardpacked, rocky soil. The ascent consists of short sheer cliffs that lead to rounded outcroppings, their crests cracked and punctuated with tiny scrub plants.

After the fourth day passes, you find shelter in a shallow cave. While the cave is unoccupied, the small fire pit near the entrance shows signs of recent use.

The pit was last used about three weeks ago. Characters searching the area find a message scratched in the ground beneath a rock.

The message reads:

To whoever finds this message, I am betrayed by traitors within my own house. Of my would-be assassins, three I recognized: Argoma, Hedos, and Aeron. But there were others who kept their faces concealed. Though I escaped, I took several wounds that have begun to blacken from poisoned blades. I suspect the traitors seek the vault. If you do not find my corpse elsewhere, I have fled there to safeguard the brooch. Avenge me!

— Dalmont

Near the end of the fifth day, the characters arrive before an arched door cut into the side of a cliff. To either side stand badly weathered statues, though their stone countenances appear familiar enough. Astute characters realize they resemble the hideous clay artifact.

THE PLAINS

General Features: The main path depicted on the map is nothing more than a dirt road marked with milestones. The terrain consists of grassy flatlands with little water. The weather tends to be dry, with daytime temperatures between 85° and 95° Fahrenheit, with temperatures at night dropping into the low 60s.

RANDOM ROADSIDE ATTRACTIONS

1d8	Result
1	Dried flowers cover this small shrine dedicated to a god of healing. If the characters take time to honor or bless the shrine, they receive the god's blessing. The next time they rest, they are healed 1d6 hit points if injured.
2	A crude 20ft-deep well with a rope and wooden bucket is found. The water is safe but has an acrid, sulfuric taste that is most unpleasant.
3	A traveling merchant and 4 mercenaries in a wagon are headed north to the city. Though eager to get to Caltoshar, the merchant can be convinced to stop and haggle. He sells mostly foodstuffs, spice, and silks, but also has a few random low-level potions, though he marks their price up by 5%.
4	A stray dog wanders along the path, half-starved and looking for a new master.
5	A small flock of ravenous vultures greedily feast upon the carcass of a dead horse.
6	A heat wave bakes the land, increasing the temperature by 3d4 degrees.
7	A pack of 1d4 bestial hyenas comes sniffing around looking for an easy meal.
8	A band of 1d6+4 bandits posing as missionaries approach the characters, attempting to get them to lower their guard so they can rob them of their worldly possessions.

Human Bandits (1d6+4): **HD** 1; **AC** 7[12]; **Atk** short sword (1d6) or shortbow x2 (1d6); **Move** 12; **Save** 17; **AL** C; **CL/XP** 1/15; **Special:** none.

Equipment: leather armor, short sword, shortbow, 20 arrows, 1d6sp, 3d6cp, war horse.

Hyenas (1d4): **HD** 3; **AC** 7[12]; **Atk** bite (1d4); **Move** 18; **Save** 14; **AL** N; **CL/XP** 3/60; **Special:** none.

Merchant: **HD** 1d6hp; **AC** 9[10]; **Atk** dagger (1d4); **Move** 12; **Save** 18; **AL** N; **CL/XP** B/10; **Special:** none.
Equipment: dagger.

Mercenaries (4): **HD** 2; **AC** 5[14]; **Atk** longsword (1d8) or spear (1d6); **Move** 12; **Save** 16; **AL** N; **CL/XP** 2/30; **Special:** none.
Equipment: chainmail, wooden shield, longsword, spear.



THE HILLS

General Features: Alternating bands of red sandstone form the weathered hills. Daytime temperatures remain consistent with the surrounding plains, but at night the temperature drops drastically into the 40s.

RANDOM HILLSIDE ATTRACTIONS

1d6	Result
1	A string of ancient petroglyphs line the hillside. If translated, the glyphs warn trespassers they are entering sacred lands and tell them to turn back or be cursed.
2	The first climber triggers a small rockslide. Everyone below must make a successful saving throw or be pelted by rocks and dirt for 1d6 points of damage. On a roll of 1, a character is struck in the face and is temporarily blinded for 1d4 rounds.
3	Grazing on the outcropping are 1d4+1 giant goats . They dislike intruders.
4	On a nearby rock are the remains of scribbled charcoal image that bears several similarities to the symbol of the Whispered Coalition. Unfortunately, the image is too weatherworn to be certain.
5	A cold spell hits, decreasing the temperature by 4d4 degrees.
6	One of the characters surprises a viper sunning itself on a rock. The snake strikes then quickly slithers off.

Giant Goats (1d4+1): HD 3; AC 7[12]; Atk gore (2d6); Move 18; Save 14; AL N; CL/XP 3/60; **Special:** +4 damage on charge. (*Monstrosities* 210)

Viper: HD 1d6hp; HP 5; AC 5[14]; Atk bite (1hp + poison); Move 18; Save 18; AL N; CL/XP 2/30; **Special:** lethal poison (+2 save). (*Monstrosities* 438)

ACT 5: INTO THE VAULT

High in the hills, the characters finally find the secret entrance to the Thief King's Vault. At the location marked on the map is a shallow recess carved into a cliff face that shelters a pair of stone doors. A pair of heavily eroded statues whose familiar countenances again resemble the hideous clay artifact flank entrance. A mural chiseled across the doors portrays indigenous people performing a ritual beneath a sun depicted in 12 positions from sunrise to sunset as it arcs across the sky.

The buds of the flowers blossom beneath the sunrise, but remained closed below the sunset.

The statues' mouths hang open just wide enough to slip in a hand. Within each mouth, set into the back of the throat, is a small keyhole. Dalmont's key from inside the clay artifact fits both holes perfectly.

The flowers and the sun offer clues to successfully opening the door. Inserting the key into the statue facing the sunrise (east) unlocks the door, while inserting the key into the statue facing the sunset (west) locks the door. The door is currently locked. If the key is inserted into the western-facing statue while the door is still locked, a large click is heard and a small black stone tumbles from a secret compartment in the statue's navel and lands at its feet. The stone is a *loadstone*; whoever picks it up suffers its curse. (See **Appendix B: New Magic Items** for details about the *loadstone*.)

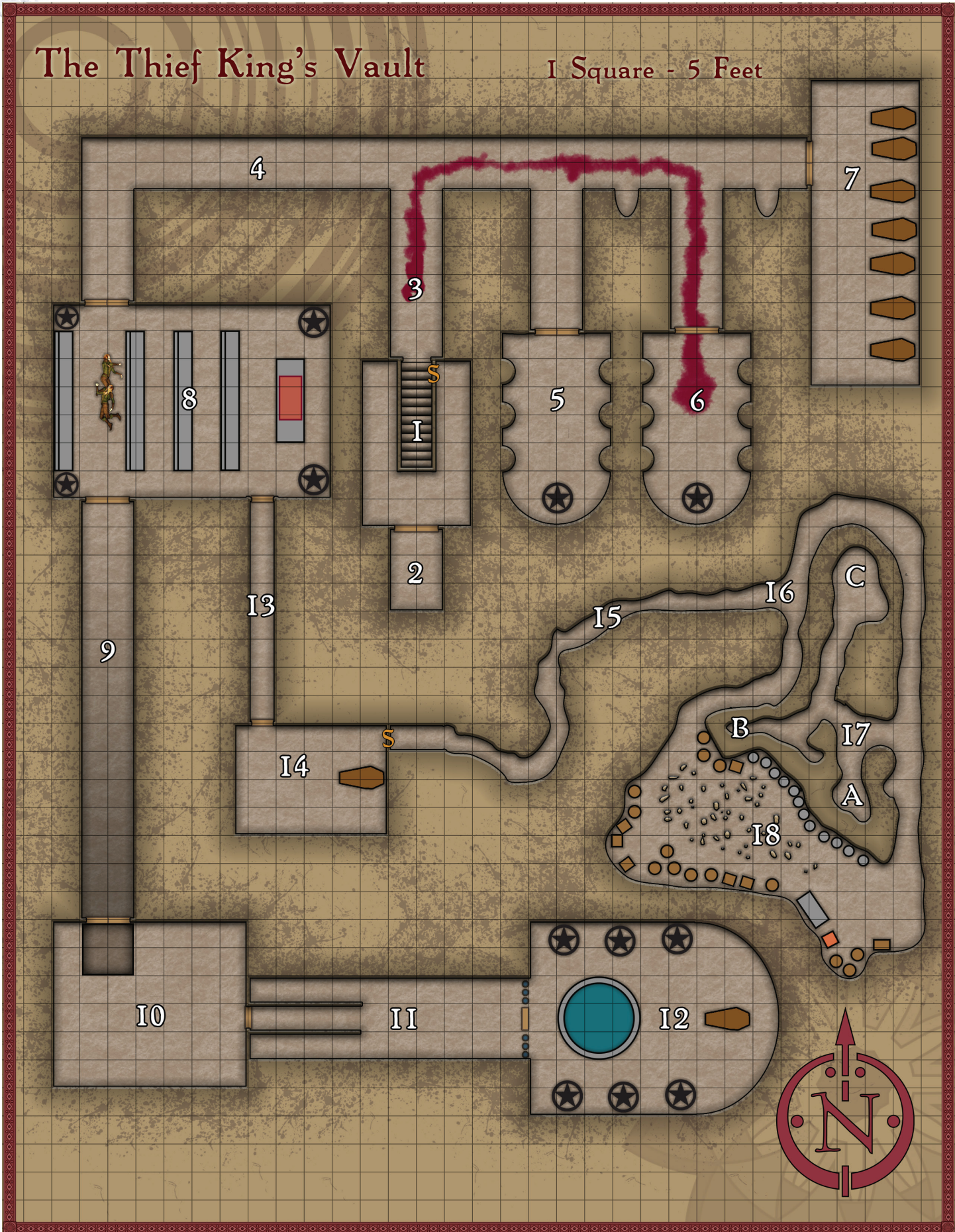
1. THE GRAND FOYER

A flight of stone steps descends into a small chamber facing a pair of huge iron-plated doors. The plates are embossed with stylized faces, one featuring the sun and the other the moon. From the center of each door hangs a large brass pull ring. The doors appear to open inward. The staircase occupies most of the chamber, wrapping around it in a horseshoe shape. Primitive hieroglyphs cover the walls from floor to ceiling, interspersed with etched vignettes of strange anthropomorphic beings engaging with people living in a village of small huts located beside a stream.

Scrapes on the floor confirm that the doors open into the room. The doors are locked, but easily picked. Anyone opening the door triggers a **trap** (see **Area 2** for details).

The Thief King's Vault

1 Square - 5 Feet



THE PICTOGRAPHS:

The pictographs depict blessings and prayers to a spirit or demon goddess who protected the nearby villages. The goddess had a dual nature, with her name translating to something like the Mother of Plagues and Fertility. The villages made frequent ritual sacrifices to her, perhaps even human sacrifices. Warnings abound that heathens or trespassers will be cursed and hunted by the goddess's monstrous children.

The pictographs are well-crafted fakes designed to replicate the pictographs of several different ancient tribes. The ominous spirit-goddess likely never actually existed. Instead, the decorations are a ploy to scare away trespassers.

Developments: Aside from the double doors, the chamber doesn't appear to have any other exits. A secret door is carved into the base of the steps, however, and conceals a passage leading to **Area 3**.

2. THE DOORS OF DEATH

The doors contain a mechanical spring that causes them to burst outward with a fair amount of force as soon as anyone attempts to open them. must saving throw 18points of also **anc** (see below) hidden behind the doors.

If the characters examine the doors before opening them, they have a 1-in-6 chance to spot an odd-looking metal pin attached to a tautly stretched wire (3-in-6 chance for thieves). Disabling the mechanism with thieves' tools is extremely difficult and requires a successful Delicate Tasks check. The check only disables the doors, however, not the **needle cannon trap** hidden behind them (see below). The safest way to avoid the trap is to stand far away from the doors before opening them.

NEEDLE CANNON TRAP

Facing the doors is a device resembling a pushcart holding a dozen small wooden tubes, each aimed at the doorway. Opening the doors triggers the device, causing it to fire a hail of poison needles into the grand foyer (**Area 1**). Any character standing within 15ft of the open door must make a saving throw or be struck by 1d6 needles. The needles are coated with a lethal poison.

Once the characters deal with the needle cannon, read or paraphrase the room's description:

Aside from hiding the needle cannon, this room appears entirely empty. Its sandstone-carved walls are plain, unadorned by design or decoration.

The lack of design seems inconsistent with the elaborate décor of the adjacent chamber. The modern design of the needle cannon and the complex door mechanism should seem similarly incongruent.

3. THE OMINOUS HALLWAY

If the characters pass through the secret passage in the grand foyer (**Area 1**), read or paraphrase the following text:

The secret passage beneath the stairs opens into a 10-foot-wide hallway with vaulted ceilings. The walls are carved from sandstone. The hall continues for about thirty feet and ends at a T-shaped intersection. An ominous swath of blood paints the floor, trailing down the length of the hallway and turning east at the intersection. About halfway down the hall, a crumpled and blood-splattered cloth lies tossed against the wall.

Anyone examining the cloth quickly realizes they are holding a tattered cloak. Closer inspection spots a small metal clasp and a chain dangling from the collar. Several rips in the cloth were created by a knife stabbing through the cloth, but other tears appear to have been torn by brute force. Characters familiar with the Caltoshar thieves' guild recognize the clasp: It is forged in the symbol of the Whispered Coalition.

Treasure: The cloak and clasp belonged to Dalmont Black. The once-fine cloak is now worthless, but the clasp is magic and of considerable value (see the *clasp of the Thief King* in **Appendix B: New Magic Items**).



4. CHARCOAL SCRIBBLES

At this point in the passage, someone used charcoal to scribble an arrow on the floor. It points down the hall to the west. Beneath the arrow are two more scrawls: a pair of rectangles and a single rectangle. The paired rectangles are circled, while the single rectangle contains a skull and crossbones.

The rectangles represent the doors in **Area 8**, and seem to suggest that exiting through the double doors as the best course of action (it isn't). While the scribbles might suggest adventurers left this message, they didn't. Instead, members of Black's guild placed them to dangerously mislead any intruders.

5. THE GARGOYLE'S GRIMACE

Two thick, brass-plated wooden doors block the entrance to this chamber. Carved into the arch above the doors is the grimacing face of a hideous gargoyle, its slender tongue unfurled and beaded with a single drop of drool.

Anyone examining the doors notices they were deliberately spiked shut. They have no obvious handles, but an individual with a prybar or a similar tool can force them open (or a character can pull them open with an Open Doors check).

SNAPPING GARGOYLE TRAP

Anyone inspecting the gargoyle carving observes that it possesses an unusually deep mouth. Much like the statues in the grand foyer (**Area 1**), the orifice is large enough for a creature to insert a hand. The hollow mouth is about 8in deep and stashed within it rests a small bronze key. The key opens the door to **Area 12**. If a living creature reaches into the mouth, however, it immediately snaps shut. The character must roll below her dexterity on 4d6 to avoid having the maw clamp down on her hand. If the character fails, she takes 1d8 points of damage and her hand remains stuck fast in the jaws. Characters can attempt an Open Doors check to force the jaws open again. Alternately, they can bypass the trap using water from the statue's basin as described below.

If the characters manage to get inside the room, read or paraphrase the following description:

Large half exposed sandstone columns line the walls of this chamber, crisscrossing in an intricate pattern across the vaulted ceiling. The far wall falls into a wide curve and is painted with a peeling montage of a burning city set between two mountains. The painting creates a display that centers upon a large demonic-looking statue. The statue holds a spear in one hand and a basin in the other.

As soon as a living creature enters, a *magic mouth* spell activates and the statue speaks in an angry, booming voice: "Violators! How dare you come to my place of solitude?"

Developments: The basin holds about a half-inch of water. If water from the basin is placed on the gargoyle head's tongue, it's safe to reach inside the carving's mouth and remove the key for the next 5 minutes. If characters triggered the gargoyle's mouth and closed it, or if someone got stuck in it, splashing water on the gargoyle's face resets the trap and causes the mouth to open.

6. DALMONT'S DEMISE

The bloody trail leads down this hallway and through a set of open double doors. One of the doors hangs crookedly, knocked from its hinges. From inside the room come the sounds of wild thrashing and thumping and the eerie crack of breaking bone.

Beyond the threshold, the chamber's column-lined walls curve around a large clay statue of another demonic-looking creature with the head of boar. It clutches a staff in one hand and an iron candle lantern in the other. A mural painted behind the statue shows a massive ziggurat with three rivers flowing from it. At the foot of the statue, a broken fleshy mass flops spastically around on the floor, bleeding profusely from its brutally battered face.

Creature: The badly battered creature is all that is left of Dalmont Black, though in his current condition, he's hardly recognizable. A fiendish guardian of his own summoning turned on him and transformed him into a grotesque creature known as an **olithagorian thrall**. As soon as it senses intruders, the creature flies into a rage, charges them, and unrelentingly attacks.

Olithagorian Thrall: HD 5; HP 32; AC 5[14]; Atk 2 claws (1d6), headbutt (1d8); Move 12; Save 12; AL C; CL/XP 6/400; **Special:** fear (60ft), immune to cold. (see **Appendix A: New Monsters**)

The head of the staff can be removed to reveal a hollow inside that holds a rolled piece of parchment. The parchment is some sort of pact between the Thief King and a supernatural being (a pact that dissolved the second Dalmont stepped outside the range of the jurisdiction of his command). The creature's name is scribed in a strange language that makes it entirely impossible to pronounce, but legends speak of a primordial fiend known as an olithagorian.

The candle lantern can be removed and appears functional. The lantern is enchanted to ignite any candle placed inside it, whenever a living creature picks it up. A candle is already inside the housing, so it immediately crackles to life as soon as anyone takes it. However, the candle is **trapped** (see below).

EXPLODING CANDLE

Sealed within the candle is a potent alchemical explosive. After burning for 1d10+5 minutes, the wick ignites the explosive powder and it combusts, dealing 3d6 points of fire damage to all creatures within a 20ft-radius of the lantern. A character can make saving throw for half damage.

Before the detonation occurs, characters within 5ft of the lantern have a 2-in-6 chance to notice a pungent smell emanating from the candle 1d4+2 rounds before it explodes.

7. THE COFFINS

The row of stone coffins lining the back wall of this elongated chamber suggests that it served as a burial hall or mausoleum. The coffins lie in disarray, heavily chipped and cracked by the prybars that tore open their lids. Eerily, dozens of bare footprints trample through the thick layer of gray ash and yellow bone fragments littering the flagstones. The room stinks with the putridness of decomposition.

Characters inspecting the coffins quickly discover that nearly all of them are empty, likely pilfered by looters. Haphazardly stuffed into the sarcophagus at the north end of the room lies the crumpled and now decomposing corpse of what was once most likely a human. Unfortunately, something pounded the victim's face to bloody pulp, making it near impossible confirm anything. The victim died within the last couple of days, likely of blunt force trauma. Unfortunately, since its entire face has been pounded to gore, any attempts to use spells such as *Speak with Dead* prove ineffectual at recovering information

about how and when the victim died. The corpse wears a suit of leather armor and a sheath with a short sword hangs from its girdle. Near the body lies a backpack containing a set thieves' tools, a crowbar, a half-full water canteen, and a small coin pouch with 65gp.

8. THE CHAPEL OF LAST RITES

At first glance, this chamber appears to be some sort of chapel used to worship or perform ceremonies. In each corner stands a medium-sized clay statue, each with the features bearing a similar likeness to Dalmont's statuette. All of them face inward, grimacing menacingly. Near the center of the chamber rest several small rows of stone pews facing an altar dressed with a mold-spotted straw mat. Behind the altar, a large iron bell hangs from the ceiling by a thick chain. On the south wall, directly opposite the entrance, is an archway blocked by another set of double doors. Graffiti scrawled in charcoal across the door's face reads, "SOD OFF OR DIE!" Closer to the altar is another door set in the same wall.

None of the entrances or exits is locked.

In between the third and fourth rows of stone pews lie two crumpled bodies. Both appear to be human, though their faces have been bashed in. The corpses wear torn leather armor soaked with splatters of gore. Anyone checking the inside right wrist of either corpse notes the telltale scar of the brand of the Whispered Coalition. Searching the bodies uncovers nothing of value.

Trying to decipher the mix of religious iconography in the room and its trappings provides nebulous results. Indeed, this temple contains elements of several different ancient demons.

The craftsmanship and construction of the room is inconsistent with the abilities of primitive people thought to have lived in this region. This suggests that the temple, and perhaps even the vault itself, is likely an elaborate hoax constructed by the Thief King (Dalmont's precise intent). During his rule, the Thief King primarily used this room to hold covert conferences with important allies.

Anyone inspecting the altar notes ring stains on the mat that suggest other items were once present. The mat covers a small, unlocked hatch set into the surface of the altar. In the hollow beneath is a small iron key that opens the double doors to the south. However, the key itself and the passages beyond are a red herring placed to deliberately lead any would-be trespassers astray. The hatch's true design is to function as a switch. If opened, it unlocks the adjacent door to the south.

The 4ft-long bell weighs about 300 pounds. If anyone rings it, a low rumbling tone immediately attracts the attention of 4 **olithagorian thralls**. The thralls enter the room 1d4+2 minutes later from the southern double doors and attack.

Olithagorian Thralls (4): HD 5; HP 34, 32, 30, 27; AC 5[14];

Atk 2 claws (1d6), headbutt (1d8); Move 12; Save 12; AL C; CL/XP 6/400; **Special:** fear (60ft), immune to cold. (see **Appendix A: New Monsters**)

9. THE SLOPED PASSAGE

About 10ft down the hall, the floor pitches downward, slowly at first, but increasing to a 45-degree angle by the corridor's midpoint. At this point, the floor is slicked with grease. Any character stepping onto the greased slope must roll below his dexterity on 3d6 to avoid slipping and sliding rapidly down the slope into the door at the end of the hall (see **Area 10**)

Climbing back up the slick slope is also tricky, but characters employing ropes and iron spikes (or similarly thoughtful actions) can easily get back up the slope.

10. DROP IN THE BUCKET

The northern doors to this chamber are unlocked and loosely hinged so they freely swing open at the slightest touch.

LOCKING PIT TRAP

Directly on the other side of the threshold lies a 20ft-deep pit trap. If anyone falls into the pit, the bottom contains a pressure plate that causes the doors to swing closed and lock. An Open Doors check is necessary to pry open the cover, or it can be smashed open. A character in the pit can attempt to disable the mechanism from the inside using thieves' tools or by smashing the lock (requiring 30 points of damage).

Curiously, several dozen small holes line the pit walls. The presence of any living creature in the pit agitates a swarm of poisonous snakes living in the holes. The snake swarm pours from the walls and attacks within 1d4 rounds.

Snake Swarm: HD 5; HP 34; AC 6 [13]; Atk swarm (1d6 plus poison); Move 9; Save 12; AL N; CL/XP 8/800; **Special:** lethal poison (+2 save). (**Tome of Horrors 4** 152)

A series of bas-relief carvings cover the walls. The images depict several deformed creatures with distorted faces, distended potbellies, and gangly arms passing an assortment of mundane items around in a circle. The items include a vase, a torch, a turtle, a feather, a stone, a small bushel of grain, a sickle, a flower, and what might be some sort of holy symbol. A large round mirror hangs upon the face of a wooden door set into the east wall.

As with the rest of the vault, all the carvings in the room are fraudulent composites and have no real religious significance.

Anyone examining the relief carvings of the two creatures flanking the door in the east wall notes that the figures' bellybuttons are hollow. The hollows are peepholes that extend into the adjacent chamber. Behind each lurks an **olithagorian thrall**. The thralls use the holes to listen only so they need not put their faces near them, making them nearly impossible to see. Anyone peeking through the holes spots what appears to be some sort of humanoid creature, although they cannot make out more than a basic shadowy form.

Characters can use the mirror to avoid looking directly into the accursed pool in **Area 12**. Furthermore, looking into the mirror immediately and permanently breaks the effect of anyone afflicted with the pool's curse.

11. THE CORRIDOR

This narrow corridor extends westward about 15 feet, then opens into a wider hallway. Farther ahead, the hallway appears to empty into a larger chamber, though it appears blocked off by a wall of thick iron bars. An iron door hangs in the center of the wall of bars, its face etched with a curious geometric symbol.

Creatures: Waiting in the shadows behind each peephole flanking the entrance (and hidden by half walls that make the hallway appear narrower than it really is) are a pair of former guild guards — or what remains of them, since their faces have been pulverized and they have no eyes and are now 2 **thralls**. When Dalmont's pact broke, these unlucky men were among the first the olithagorians bludgeoned and reshaped to serve as his thralls.

If the characters don't detect the peepholes in **Area 10**, then the thralls hidden behind the walls gain surprise. They wait for the characters to approach the barred gates, then rush them from behind and attack while their backs are turned. The thralls attempt to smash and butcher the intruders or, at the very least, force the characters into the next room and lock them in. If they manage to somehow trap the characters, one of the thralls rushes to find his master and bring him to examine the prisoners.

Olithagorian Thralls: HD 5; HP 31, 30; AC 5[14]; Atk 2 claws (1d6), headbutt (1d8); Move 12; Save 12; AL C; CL/XP 6/400; **Special:** fear (60ft), immune to cold. (see **Appendix A: New Monsters**)

12. THE CHAMBER OF KINGS

The door to this chamber opens directly in front of a large shimmering pool, its mortared brick sides raised about two or so feet above the mosaic-laid floor. Three statues line each side of the chamber, somberly peering toward a curved alcove that centers upon a reddish-colored sandstone sarcophagus set upon a raised dais. Carved stone beams rise from the floor and run between the statues up to the ceiling where they crisscross into a net-like pattern.

The Waters of Desire: The pool's waters carry a potent curse. Anyone gazing into the pool must make a saving throw or their mind is flooded by promises of fulfilled desires. For the next minute, or until the victim's gaze is broken, he acts as if under a *charm person* spell.

The weighty stone lid of the sarcophagus is sealed with some sort of wax, but isn't locked. It weighs 300 pounds.

Creature: Inside the sarcophagus is the vault's original guardian, a gruesome **flesh golem** crudely assembled from the body parts of half a dozen corpses. The creature's forehead is branded with the mark of the thieves' guild. Dalmont replaced the unreliable monstrosity after it went berserk and killed several of his best thieves. Ever practical, he decided to store the automaton in this chamber as a backup. Unless the characters make an effort to be quiet, the golem hears them and begins banging wildly on the lid. The excitement of hearing living creatures again causes the flesh golem to go berserk and attack 1d4 rounds later.

Flesh Golem: HD 8; HP 40; AC 9[10]; Atk 2 fists (2d8); Move 8; Save 8; AL N; CL/XP 12/2000; **Special:** +1 or better magic weapons to hit, healed by lightning, immune to most spells, slowed by fire and cold.

13. THE HOWLING PASSAGE

When the characters enter the passage, read or paraphrase the following description:

The passage's walls glisten with moisture, and the scents of mildew and musk clot the air. The muck-slicked floor seems to grasp at your feet as you pass through. The passage leads to a worn wooden door, its planks swollen with moisture and spotted with mold.

Anyone inspecting the floor notices a trail of footprints, clear evidence of recent use.

Developments: Dalmont cultivated a patch of shriekers in the adjacent chamber (Area 14). As soon as the characters proceed more than 25ft into the passage, the fungi suddenly erupt with fiercely loud, terrible shrieks.

14. THE FUNGAL TOMB

If characters open the door to the chamber, read or paraphrase the following description:

The door opens into a small chamber centered on a single sarcophagus surrounded by rusted iron candle holders, each about 4 feet tall, and topped with a graying lump of melted tallow. A wash of mud covers the floor, dotted with puddles of brackish water. The entire chamber blooms with drab, fleshy splotches of fungus and mold.

Creatures: Hidden within the patches of normal fungus are 8 **shriekers**. If a light source or living creatures come within 30ft of the fungi, they begin howling and continue wailing until destroyed.

Shriekers (8): HD 3; HP 20, 19x3, 18, 17, 16x2; AC 7[12]; Atk none; Move 1; Save 14; AL N; CL/XP 3/60; **Special:** shriek. (*Monstrosities* 423)

Anyone searching for tracks can discover several pairs of deformed footprints headed toward the back wall.

The water in the room comes from a slowly dripping clay pipe protruding from the western corner of the south wall, set 6ft above the floor.

Creatures: A **black pudding** lives in the leaky pipe, remaining motionless until the characters attract its attention by probing the pipe or by creating a similar disturbance. Once aware of a living food source, the mindless blob slithers forth to claim its meal.

Black Pudding: HD 10; HP 67; AC 6[13]; Atk attack (3d8); Move 6; Save 5; AL N; CL/XP 12/2000; **Special:** acidic surface, immune to cold, divides when hit with lightning. (*Monstrosities* 46)

Sarcophagus: The lid to the sarcophagus is unlocked, but weighs 300 pounds. It contains a mud-covered skeleton.

Secret door: A secret door is in the east wall. The door is unlocked and easily slides open to expose a narrow and rough-hewn tunnel.

15. THE PLATE

This section of the tunnel contains a pressure plate in the floor that causes the secret door in Area 13 to slide shut and lock. Characters searching the tunnel for traps spot an unusual crack in the floor.

The pressure plate is 5ft long and spans the width of the tunnel. While there's not a lot of room to jump over the plate, the cramped walls are narrow enough for characters to climb above it (with a 10% chance of falling onto



the plate). Alternately, an individual with thieves' tools can attempt to disable the mechanism.

Developments: If the characters trip the plate, a soft click echoes throughout the tunnel, but they detect no other obvious effects. If they retrace their steps, however, they discover that the secret door is now shut and stoutly locked. No locking mechanism is obvious, and the only way to open the door is by forcefully prying it open using a prybar or similar tool. Alternately, using magic or breaking down the door might also provide egress.

16. THE BROKEN GLYPH

The air in the passage smells faintly of burnt sagewood. A string of curious arcane markings run the width of the floor. Filled with gray ash, the markings are about a half-inch deep and run the width of the passage. Just beyond the markings, the crudely carved tunnel narrows and twists, continuing into darkness.

The markings are all that remains of a magical circle of protection.

Just beyond the broken glyph, Dalmont's murderous **olithagorian** guardian lies in wait for prey. Unless the characters move quietly, the creature senses their advance and assumes its vapor form to gain surprise. The creature continues to poison victims until it returns to its natural form and retreats to **Area 18** and prepares to make its final stand.

Olithagorian: HD 8; HP 54; AC 3[16]; Atk 2 claws (1d6), headbutt (2d6); Move 12; Save 8; AL C; CL/XP 11/1700;

Special: create thrall (lobotomizes and reshapes unconscious victims, save resists), ESP (3/day), fear (60ft, as spell), immune to cold, noxious vapor form (1d6+2 rounds, 1d8 damage per round, save resists). (see **Appendix A: New Monsters**)

17. TREASURE WARRENS

A crude barricade of broken rubble blocks the entrance to this section of tunnels. Unless previously summoned by their olithagorian creator, 2 olithagorian thralls wait at the barricade and the entrance. They recklessly attack any intruders attempting to access these tunnels.

Beyond the barricade, the tunnels narrow, becoming so cramped that creatures must crawl to squeeze through to access the storage alcoves within. Each passage leads to a hidden cave with just enough room to stand.

Olithagorian Thralls (2): HD 5; HP 36, 31; AC 5[14]; Atk 2 claws (1d6), headbutt (1d8); Move 12; Save 12; AL C; CL/XP 6/400; **Special:** fear (60ft), immune to cold.

17-A. SHALLOW CAVE

This shallow cave hides a small oak chest bound with rusted iron bands and secured with a large padlock. Anyone using thieves' tools can open the lock with a Delicate Tasks and Traps check. Strangely colored dust is sprinkled around the edges of the lid.

Anyone opening the chest triggers a **trap** that explodes for 3d6 points of damage to anyone within 5ft unless they make a saving throw for half damage.

Treasure: The chest contains 110pp, 2100gp, 10,000sp, 900cp, a finely carved drinking horn (35gp), and a set of thieves' tools.

17-B. CAVE ALCOVE

Nestled in a small alcove at the back of this cave lie three small leather sacks tied shut with leather thongs.

Treasure: One sack holds a half-dozen assorted small gemstones each worth 1d10+50gp. Another sack contains a collection of 24 rings in various sizes and of varying value and craftsmanship. The rings are worth 4d20gp each. The last sack holds eight necklaces, all high quality but again of varied styles. Each is worth 1d4 x 100gp.

17-C. CRAMPED CAVE

In the center of this cramped cave stands an ornately etched coffer sculpted from black basalt. The coffer is sealed shut with wax.

Treasure: The coffer holds 6 flasks of flammable oil, 3 pouches of sleep powder (causes a creature to fall into a deep slumber for 1d6+2 hours if they imbibe it and fail a saving throw), a glass vial filled with poison, a *potion of invulnerability*, a *potion of levitation*, and a *potion of extra healing*.

18. THE STORAGE CAVE

An assortment of crates, boxes, and barrels cram this cave, giving it the appearance of a makeshift warehouse. Sealed clay vessels line the walls near which rest large baskets holding bolts of cloth and rope coils. An open-faced crate overflows with a variety of carpentry and masonry tools, including hammers, hand bones, picks, and shovels. Three glass jugs filled with amber fluid balance atop a rickety wooden table next to a short stack of bricks. Beneath the table lie several bent metal bars and hunks of scrap ore.

Dalmont used this section of the tunnels to hide stores of provisions, water, and other mundane items he thought might be necessary if he was forced to hide out in the vault. The crates contain several months' worth of dried fruits and meats, rice, and 6 20-pound bags of flour. There are 12 sealed clay vessels, each holding 30 gallons of fresh water. The three jugs contain lamp oil. The tools and rope are all mundane items. The scrap metal and bricks serve as backup building supplies for shoring up passages and other repairs. In addition to tools, one crate holds several tins of paint pigments, some old paintbrushes, and a bucket of plaster. Another is stuffed with a few dozen torches, some jars of pitch, a bundle of dried kindling, several bits of flint, and a steel file.

Creature. After the characters encounter the olithagorian in **Area 16**, it retreats to this location in the narrow entrance tunnel. The creature waits in this chamber, hiding in human form amid all the junk, hoping to surprise the characters. He uses his significant influence to call the olithagorian thralls in **Area 17** to rush to his aid and defend him. This time, the creature fights until destroyed.

CONCLUDING THE ADVENTURE

Upon exiting the vault, the characters encounter a small encampment of **3 guild members** and a **woman** waiting to parley with them. One of the men bears a strong resemblance to Colben, and is in fact his brother, Tymor. He introduces the woman as Dalmont Black's wife, Adessia. The second man is a magic-user named Utherius, while the third is a thief named Spig. The three men are loyal to Adessia, who has come seeking word of Dalmont's whereabouts or to find out if the characters have learned the location of his secret vault.

The characters can now inform Adessia that she has been widowed. As might be expected, the task is rather unpleasant. Still, she is a strong woman and holds her composure long enough to tie up any loose ends. First on her list of priorities, Adessia seeks to recover a clasp worn by her late husband (see **Area 3**). While it has magical properties, more importantly whoever possesses the clasp — whether by vote, inheritance, or thievery — becomes the new head of Caltoshar's thieves' guild.

She immediately describes the item and pleads for its return. As she speaks, she swells with sentimentality and a tear falls from her eye.

"My husband always fastened his cloak collar with a small clasp, which is of great sentimental value to me. I would ask that if you have it within your possession, that you would return it. For such an act of honor, I would be gratefully indebted to you."

Of course, Adessia withholds information about the clasp's importance, hoping to convince characters of its sentimental value. She is genuinely grieving over her loss, but is still a businesswoman looking to maintain her lifestyle in the guild.

As Adessia awaits a response, her allies listen intently in the event the characters lie or deceive to keep the clasp for themselves. If the characters claim not to have the clasp (whether they truthfully do not have it or if they are lying), the magic-user Utherius attempts to covertly cast a *locate object* spell to determine if the clasp is anywhere in the nearby vicinity.

Should the characters attempt to keep the brooch, either honorably or through chicanery, Adessia makes arrangements with several powerful allies (all former guild members loyal to her husband) to track the characters for a week's travel outside the city or one month if they remain in town. After that, they have commands to reclaim the item by any means necessary.

After dealing with the clasp, Adessia next requests the key to her husband's vault, now hers by right. If the characters took any of the treasure, she informs them that all valuables within the vault are also her property. However, she explains, she is reasonable enough to offer each character a choice item or valuables from the cache equal to 200gp.

Settling with Adessia provides closure to the adventure and, depending on how favorably they dealt with her, she may provide them with resources, jobs, or other offers during their downtime.

Alternatively, any character can use the clasp to claim the title of guildmaster. Should this occur, the individual remains in the city as the guildmaster and thereafter becomes an NPC.

APPENDIX A: NEW MONSTERS

OLITHAGORIAN

Hit Dice: 8

Armor Class: 3[16]

Attacks: 2 claws (1d6), headbutt (2d6)

Saving Throw: 8

Special: create thrall, *ESP*, fear, immune to cold, noxious vapor form

Move: 12

Alignment: Chaotic

Challenge Level/XP: 11/1700

Olithagorians are primordial fiends that drift through the lower planes seeking to spread pain and suffering. In their dominant physical form they appear vaguely humanoid, consisting of corpse-like flesh stretched across a hulking, yet distorted frame that appears as if it was stretched and broken upon a rack. Thick keloid bands cover their entire body and hideously scarred, featureless face. Olithagorians attack with 2 claws and a headbutt.

Once per day, an olithagorian can transform into a noxious cloud of inky vapor toxic to mortals for up to 1d6+2 rounds. Any creature who fails a saving throw takes 1d8 points of damage per round until it exits the vapor cloud or falls unconscious (after 1d4+1 rounds caught in the cloud). The olithagorian can enter the flesh of any unconscious creature and feed off the deliciousness of its pain and suffering. During this process, the olithagorian lobotomizes its victim, transforming it into a mindless thrall with enough life only to keep it breathing. The creature can make a saving throw to resist the damage. If the save fails, the olithagorian gruesomely sculpts flesh and bones until the thrall feels nothing but anguish and suffering.

The horrifying visage of an olithagorian strikes fear into any creature (as the spell) within 60ft who fails a saving throw. Three times per day, an olithagorian can use *ESP* to detect the thoughts of those within 60ft. Olithagorians are immune to cold.

Olithagorian: HD 8; AC 3[16]; Atk 2 claws (1d6), headbutt (2d6); Move 12; Save 8; AL C; CL/XP 11/1700; **Special:** create thrall (lobotomizes and reshapes unconscious victims, save resists), *ESP* (3/day), fear (60ft, as spell), immune to cold, noxious vapor form (1d6+2 rounds, 1d8 damage per round, save resists).

OLITHAGORIAN THRALL

Hit Dice: 5

Armor Class: 5[14]

Attacks: 2 claws (1d6), headbutt (1d8)

Saving Throw: 12

Special: fear, immune to cold

Move: 12

Alignment: Chaotic

Challenge Level/XP: 6/400

An olithagorian thrall is created when an olithagorian reshapes the flesh of a lobotomized victim of its noxious vapor. The thrall's face is usually smashed and broken, transforming it into a pulpy mess unrecognizable to anyone it knows. The thrall otherwise retains the shape of the original creature. An olithagorian thrall attacks with 2 claws and a headbutt.

The horrifying visage of an olithagorian strikes fear into any creature (as the spell) within 60ft who fails a saving throw. Olithagorians are immune to cold.

If *restoration* is cast on a thrall, the spell frees the victim from its torturous condition and the creature falls unconscious on the brink of death.

If the olithagorian that created the thrall dies, the thrall slumps to the floor and flops around spastically for 2d6 rounds before dying (unless a *restoration* is cast on the suffering creature).

Olithagorian Thrall: HD 5; AC 5[14]; Atk 2 claws (1d6), headbutt (1d8); Move 12; Save 12; AL C; CL/XP 6/400; **Special:** fear (60ft, as spell), immune to cold.

APPENDIX B: NEW MAGIC ITEMS

CURSED ITEM

LOADSTONE

This small, jet-colored stone is about the circumference of a coin. Its sheen is slightly dull, and it has tiny veins of galena and iron running through it. The stone feels curiously heavy for its size, a hint that suggests the nature of its curse.

As soon as a character picks up the stone, it immediately bonds to the character. Thereafter, the character is weighed down by the *loadstone*. For as long as the character possesses it, he may move only half his normal movement rate and cannot, swim, jump, or climb. No matter how hard the character tries, he is unable to rid himself of the accursed of the stone. A *remove curse* breaks the curse, at which point the character can rid himself of the stone.

MEDIUM MISCELLANEOUS MAGICAL ITEM

CLASP OF THE THIEF KING

The face of this small steel clasp is inscribed with an unusual symbol or rune.

Any thief can identify it as the symbol of the thieves' guild of Caltoshar. The clasp is also magical: If a thief wears it, it functions as a *necklace of protection* +2 (as a *ring of protection* +2).

For as long as it remains within the city limits, however, the individual wearing the clasp can use it to contact the spirit of any of the city's former Thief Kings (all of whom are deceased). Once per week, they may make contact to consult with any one of these spirits, which provide the individual with information as if they had cast a *legend lore* spell. The clasp belonged to the first Thief King of Caltoshar and has since been passed down as a symbol of his power and influence. It is the tradition of the guild that whoever wears the clasp must serve as the Thief King of Caltoshar. This ensures that only the strongest, most cunning, and most respected individuals have charge over the guild.

Should the clasp's owner transport it more than 30 miles beyond the city of Caltoshar, the owner can no longer use it to seek counsel, although the clasp still functions as a *necklace of protection*. Perhaps more dangerously, once outside the city limits, any guildmember can contest the individual's claim as head of the thieves' guild. Should they gain possession of the clasp and return with it to the city, they become the new Thief King.

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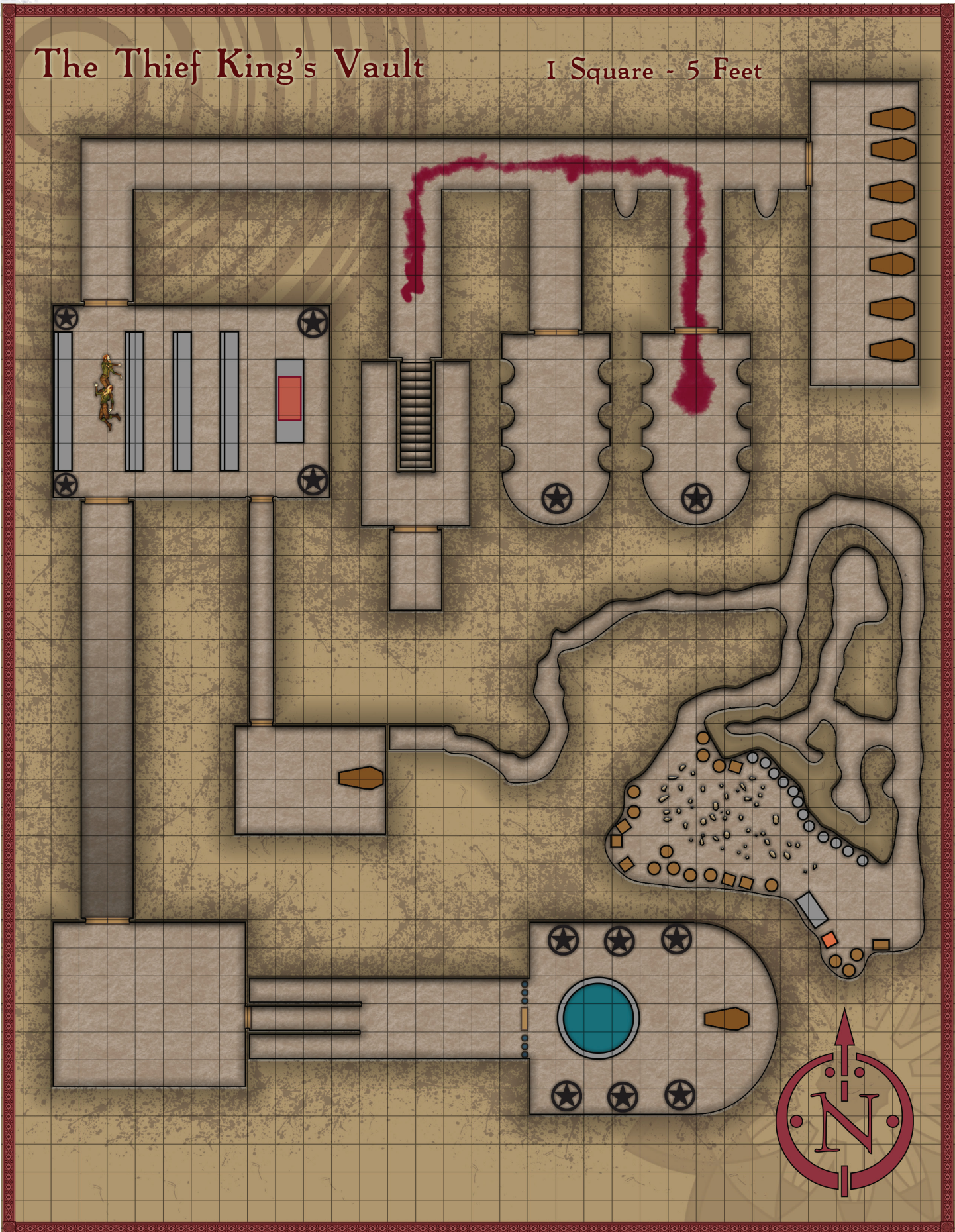
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Authors: Jason Bulmahn, based on material by Jonathan Tweet, Monte Cook, and Skip Williams.

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The Thief King's Vault

1 Square - 5 Feet



THIEF KING'S VAULT

by Tim Hitchcock

It has long been said there are no thieves in the city of Caltoshar.

At night, one can safely walk the streets, and few worry about locking their doors. Yet one would be foolish to believe Caltoshar is without a criminal element, for there are thieves aplenty if one knows where to look. The best advice would be for you to assuage your curiosity with such matters, and enjoy Caltoshar for what it appears to be.

You're probably not one to take wise counsel, though.

The Thief King's Vault is a short adventure for six 5th-level characters. Players can use their own characters or you may run it straight out of the box using the six pregenerated characters in the appendix.



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