

Symbaroun

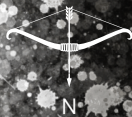
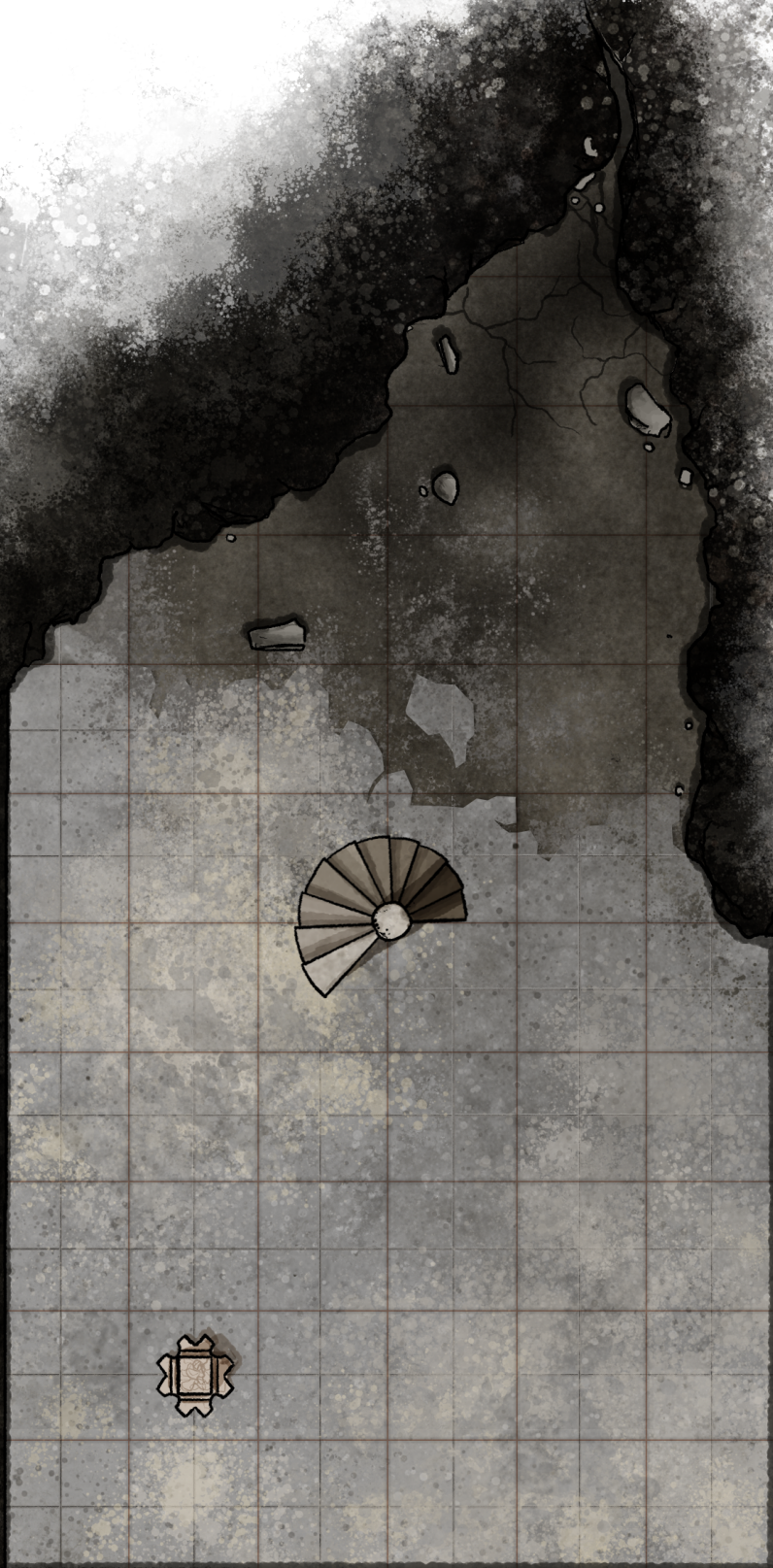
GAME MASTER RESOURCE

The Copper Crown

AN ADVENTURE CHRONICLE

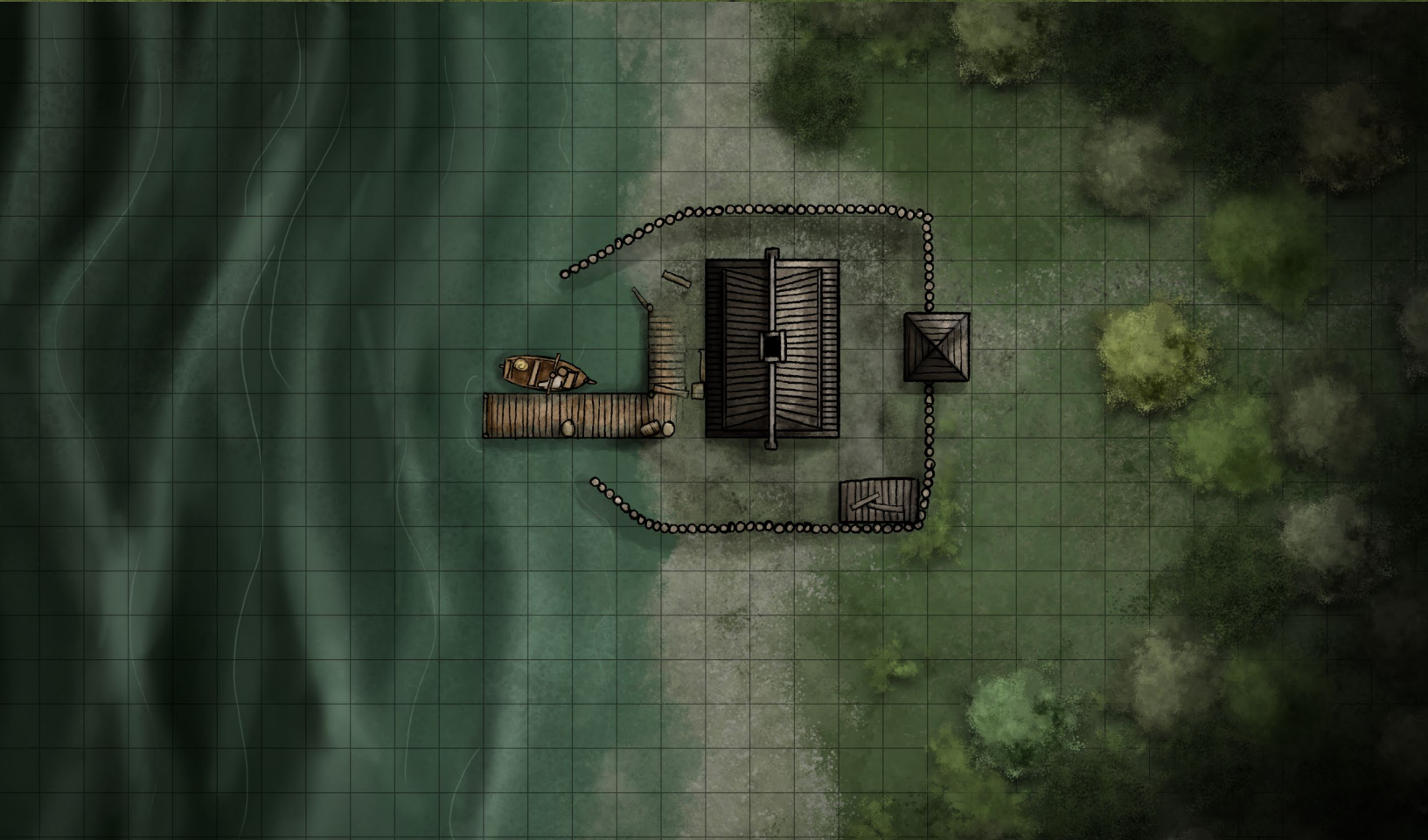
SPOILER ALERT!

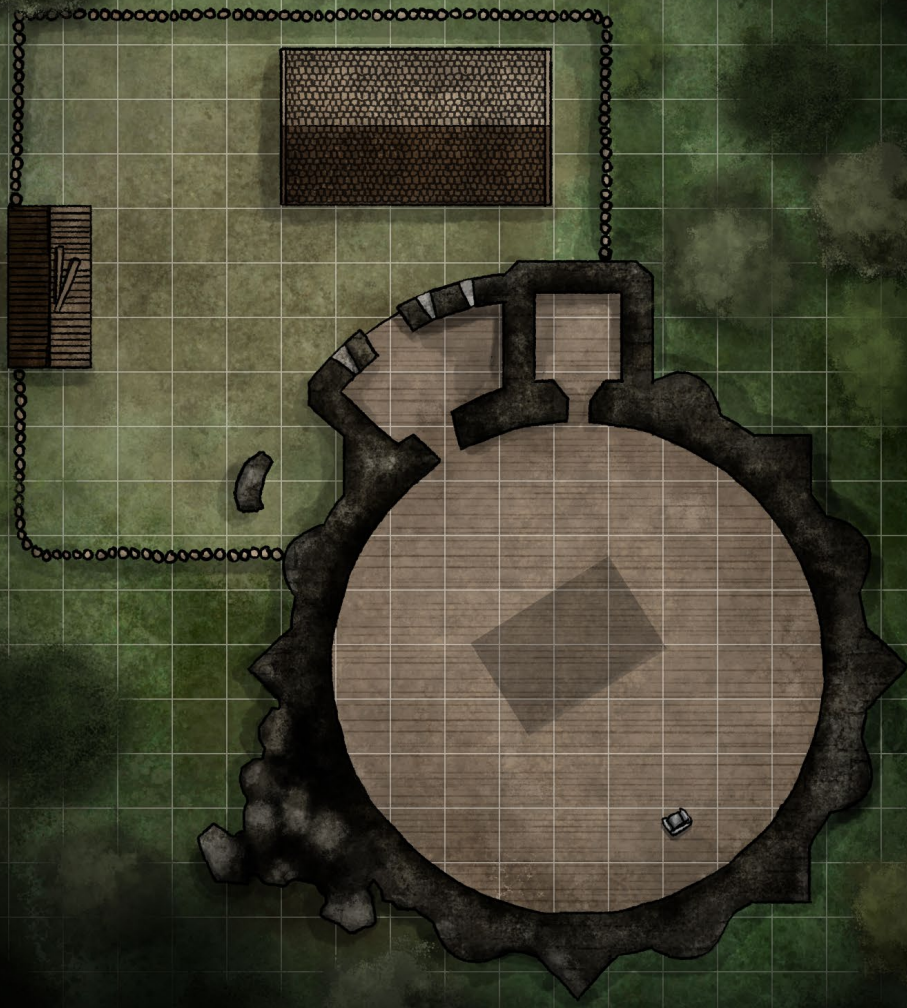
This document contains many revelations regarding the *Chronicle of the Copper Crown* and is only meant for GMs to read. If you intent to play (and not GM) the adventure, you are prompted to stop reading now.

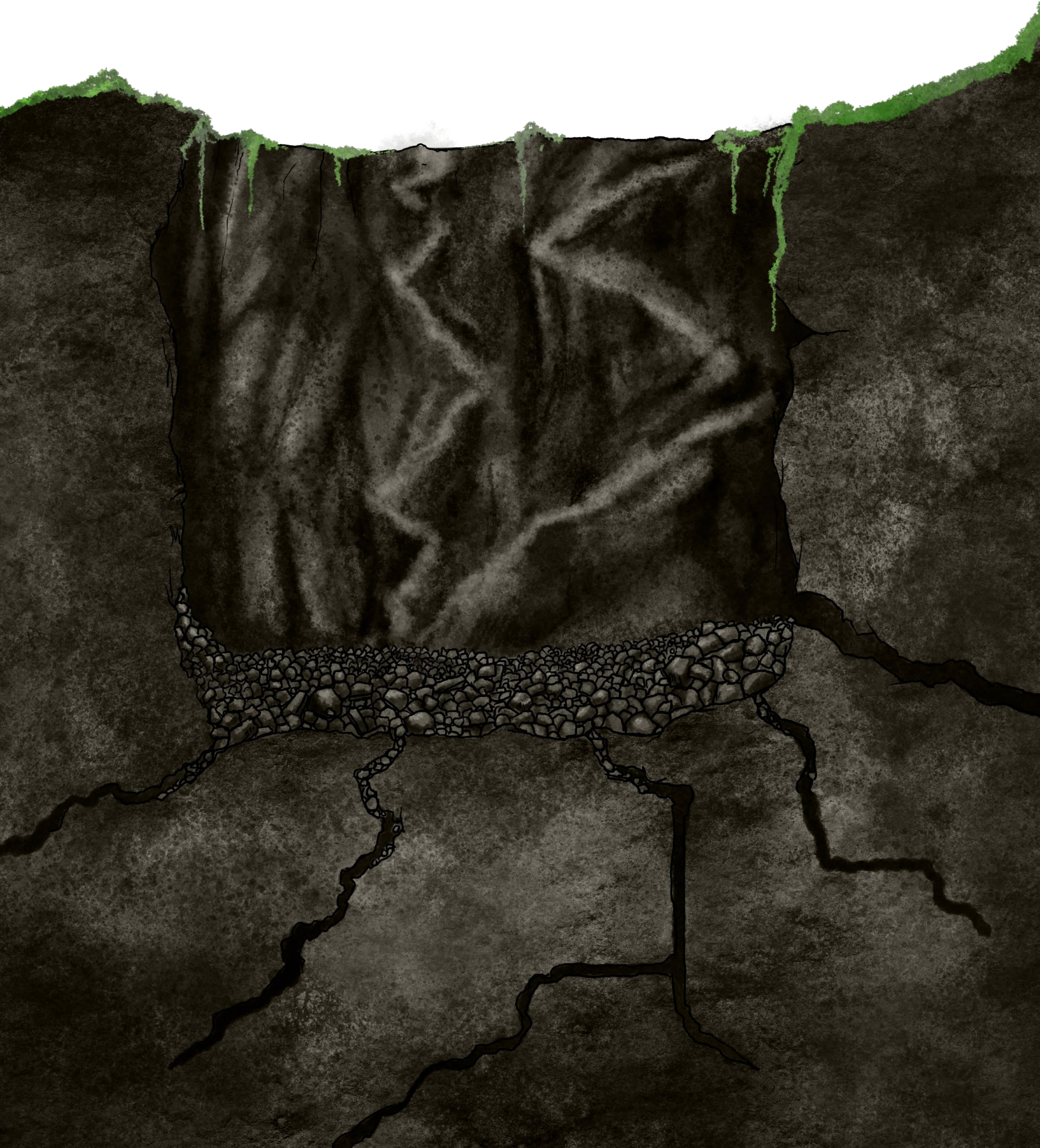


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Dear Master Night Litch,

I know that we seldom see eye to eye, but let

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Dear Master Nightwitch,

I know that we seldom see eye to eye, but let me once again try to explain why I believe that Gorax's failed expedition is connected to the current killings, performed by the so called Slayers. I know that Gorax sought you out and that the skull of the king was shown to you, numerous sources have told me as much, and I realize that a possible link between the murders and the skull is politically delicate.

The king's skull infects all who touch it, infects with the power of corruption. You appear to have escaped its destructive powers; maybe you never held it which, if so, was wise. My elven friends have told me that their soothsayers dreamed of the dead king at the time when Gorax was parading around town with his regnum, and they have returned to me saying that they are still dreaming, meaning that the corrupting powers of the skull are still active here in Whistleford. Precisely how the atrocities and the killings are connected to all this I cannot claim to know, but from a reliable source I have heard that the art of slaying is an ancient and baneful one, born of darkness.

Nevermore the Dark,

Master Vernam

Dear Friends

If you are reading this I am dead. You don't know who I am, just as I don't know you in the common meaning of the word. But I know something about your faith, since it is intertwined with my own - and with the bloody tracks left by the Flayer through our beautiful town. In short, you have appeared in my dream sights, visions I have evoked with the help of rituals, as part of my effort to solve the riddle of the murderous Flayer.

Some months ago, an expedition returned to Fhistlehold. Aside from gold they brought back the skull of a Symbarian King and the expedition leader paraded this distasteful trophy around many of the town's inns and taverns. Unfortunately the treasure-hunters also brought with them a horrible sickness, which claimed their lives one after the other - some just disappeared, others were hunted down by agents of the Dragon Pact, another few turned into abominations and were killed by watchmen or brave residents. Gorak, the leader, went into hiding and took the skull with him.

Peoples' memories are short in the hold and since this new wave of murders began, carried out by the abominable "Flayer", no one has linked the bloody deeds to Gorak's expedition. However, my vision revealed some kind of connection; after many frustrating dream sights one thing is clear to me: there is some kind of association between the expedition and the skinning of our townsfolk.

Alas, I also realized that my own death was a crucial step towards solving the riddle. And so, my unfamiliar friends by faith, are you.

If the how's and the why's are unintelligible to me, but hopefully you will be able to figure them out. If ever we meet in the world beyond you'll have to tell me everything about the events to come. Till then I can but ask you to forgive me for placing this burden on your souls. What's ahead of you I would not wish for my greatest enemy, let alone persons who likely would have been my friends, had I but lived to greet them.

Master Vernam

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At the morning assembly, Magister Senia told us that she has established a circle here at the keep and completed a first report to Thistle Hold. I notice that others besides me find this reassuring, even if all of us know that the feeling of security was an illusion: we are a long way from safety and the circle will not save us if threats arise. But we can get advice, and that is a very precious thing in an exposed situation like ours.

The investigation of the ruins has afforded both joy and some exasperation. Our scouts have located the tomb from which the plunderer Gorak stole his tainted artifact. The ancient writings on the mausoleum indicate that it contains the remains of a person of stature, likely one of the local kings who ruled the area during Symbaroum's early days. That the tomb has already been breached is evident, but hopefully the robbers did not manage to empty it or destroy it completely.

Handwritten text in a stylized, blocky font, possibly representing a name or title.



Just like the scouts foretold, we found the overgrown ruin satisfactory and established our base camp there. During the hike from the outpost we had to be ever diligent, hacking a path through the dense greenery which rules the area. Everyone took to the knife to help clearing out the ruined keep. Outside we left everything untouched, hoping to mask our presence - who knows what famished creatures lurk hereabout?

After mapping the whole area, Magister Senia found the tomb most promising. She also warned us about the sinkhole. This is hardly necessary since we all know that two patrols have vanished in its vicinity, but it demonstrates the greatness of her heart and her care for all members of the expedition. The mutterings and curses of the scouts and servants are evidently misdirected: Magister Senia is far from a "coldhearted slave driver" and the ruins much more than some "overgrown meat-grinder"!

On another note, the scouts have reported seeing streaks of grayish, black death spreading throughout the area, radiating out from the sinkhole if the reports are correct. What this is and if it will affect our work is hard to know but very easy to have nightmares about.

Magister Senia has ordered the whole expedition to start preparing for entering the mausoleum, and she has deciphered the text on the entry vault, hunting for clues as to what awaits us inside. If the streaks of dead nature keeps spreading our time here may soon come to its end, so we have every reason to hurry.

The ground quivers in pain, screams echo through the ruin. I dare not go outside. A deeper kind of darkness roams the night I am nearly paralyzed, the cold eats at my soul. By Prios, the darkness is bleeding through the walls!

From the heavens a light, like a descending sun of simmering limbs, she embraces me. The savior is here, Prios be praised.

