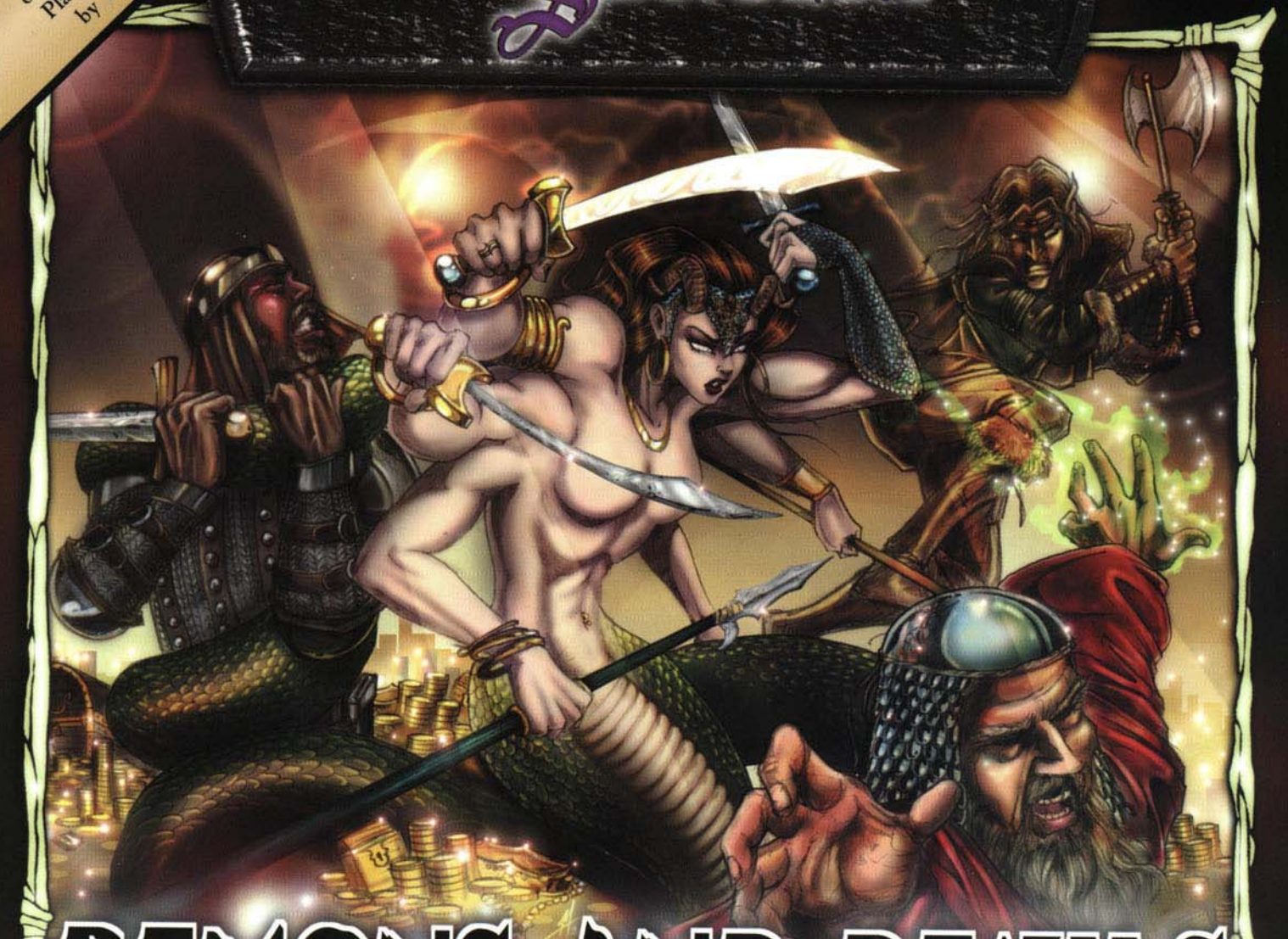
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DEMONS AND DEVILS™

by Bill Webb and Clark Peterson

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Special Thanks
Stephan Wieck and everyone at White Wolf; Ryan Dancey at Wizards of the Coast; and most of all Gary Gygax for the *Tomb of Horrors*—the prototype for the "short, difficult dungeon" and our all-time favorite module.

Product Update Password for
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PRINTED IN THE USA.

Introduction

Present in these pages are three relatively short but very difficult dungeons: **The Sorcerer's Citadel, "Ra's Evil Grin"** and **The Pit of Despair**. Each dungeon presents a perfect place to hide an item for which your party may be questing — whether a powerful magic weapon or some famous artifact. Each dungeon contains such an item as its final treasure: a *sphere of annihilation*, the *Globe of Arden* and the *Sword of Karith* (a *+5 holy avenger longsword)*, respectively.

The three adventures can be run independently or can be linked together as part of a larger quest, possibly to retrieve some multipart item. Or, to reward a party with one item of even greater power, the DM can replace each item found at the conclusion of the three adventures with a piece of a triune key. When fully assembled, the key could permit access to a final location where the party can find this greater item. Ultimately, the final use of these insidious dungeons is up to the DM.

As the name of this module implies, each of these three dungeons culminates in an encounter with either a demon or devil. In **The Sorcerer's Citadel,** the party must fight both an intoxicating erinyes and, in the final encounter, a group of horned devils (now called "cornugons" in Third Edition). In **"Ra's Evil Grin,"** the party comes face-to-face with possibly the greatest physical threat presented in any of these three dungeons — a vicious type V demon (now called a "marilith"), named Dendorandra. In **The Pit of Despair,** the party (unknowingly at first) encounters a demon of a different type—a wicked type IV demon ("nalfeshnee") of super-genius-level intellect who is the agent behind a grand evil deception.

Designed for characters of 9th and higher levels, the dungeons in this module progress in difficulty to challenge characters up to 13th level. **The Sorcerer's Citadel** is the easiest (yet by no means easy), and **The Pit of Despair** the most challenging. In addition to requiring high-level characters, each scenario is designed to challenge PCs of all classes. Rogues and clerics will not sit idly by while their party's wizards and paladins quest for their proverbial grails. Each quest must be a team effort to be successful; a less-diverse party will have a difficult — if not impossible — time achieving the final goal.

All of the adventures presented in this module should be the culmination of important quests. Such quests require lengthy travel and triumph over great peril. Resist the urge to allow PCs to conveniently *teleport* to a dungeon's location. Instead, set these dungeons in remote and inaccessible areas of the game world. Wilderness encounters for each of the three adventures are available as free downloads on the Product Support page of the **Necromancer Games** web site (*www.necromancergames.com*).

This module's adventures also afford a DM and his or her party an opportunity to take a break from their regular campaign and instead use pre-generated characters, also available as a free download from the **Necromancer Games** web site. This approach is appealing for several reasons. First, it lets your players run high-level adventures without spending the years required to build characters up to that level through multiple campaigns. Second, using pre-generated characters allows players to experience the fun and danger of these perilous dungeons without risking the lives of characters that they have been playing for years and to whom they've developed attachments. Having no ties to pre-generated characters, players may also exercise less restraint when roleplaying such characters, which can lead to interesting choices. For example, in **The Pit of Despair,** demonic influences tempt a paladin, who retrieves a magic sword, to become a Blackguard and slay his good-aligned compatriots. The chances that a player, who has been roleplaying her heroic paladin for years, would be tempted by such an offer are slim indeed. But playing a pre-generated paladin in a one-shot adventure…that's another story.

In any case, we at **Necromancer Games** hope that your players find these adventures as challenging and exciting as all the players and playtesters who have attempted them over the years. Their experience, summed up as follows, may be helpful to your PCs: "You can run if you want, but you'll just die tired."

A Note About Monster Statistics: Monsters detailed in this module are described using an "abbreviated stat block" format. It includes a quick reference to information DMs need to run combat but does not list every monster detail or special ability unless unique to that particular monster. Refer to the **MM** (or the ***Creature Collection*** where appropriate) for more details on each monster, particularly for any of the demons or devils encountered. Familiarity with the special powers of the dangerous monsters in this module is a necessity. The abbreviated stat block format includes the following information:

Monster Name (Number): CR [challenge rating]; SZ [size and type]; HD [hit dice]; hp [hit points]; Init [initiative modifier]; Spd [speed]; AC [armor class]; Atk [attack bonus] (with damage and weapon in parenthesis); Face/Reach [face and reach for the monster's attacks, if more that 5 x 5/5]; SA [special attacks, if any] (details in parenthesis); SQ [special qualities, if any] (details in parenthesis); AL [alignment]; SV [saving throw bonuses]; Attributes [Strength through Charisma].

Skills: [lists skills relevant to the encounter]. *Feats:* [list feats].

Spells: [lists spells].

Possessions: [lists relevant possessions].

The Sorcerer's Citadel

Introduction

Designed for a high-level (9+) party, this adventure will challenge players seeking a powerful magic item of the DM's choosing. A *sphere of annihilation* has been provided, but any appropriately powerful item can be substituted as the final objective, as suits the DM's campaign. Though the adventure is designed to test every type of character class, a rogue with a high Disable Device skill is essential, as is a wizard or sorcerer able to cast 5th level spells. This adventure culminates in an encounter with devils—horned devils to be precise, now known as "cornugons" or by their original name, "malebranche"—and a *forcecage* behind which is secreted the *sphere of annihilation*.

The *sphere of annihilation* is hidden deep within the tower-and-dungeon complex of Crane the Sorcerer. Originally set atop a high mountain in a secluded and wild part of the world, the tower and dungeon can be relocated to meet the DM's requirements. Crane, an introvert, stayed as far away from civilization as possible, as is detailed below. DM's will notice that the tower and dungeon (excluding the central chamber) do not present many difficulties for a high-level party—thus lulling PCs into a false sense of security before the final encounter. The central chamber, however, is very, very nasty and will test even the most stalwart group's mettle.

The Legend of Crane the Sorcerer

Crane, a lawful-neutral sorcerer of great power was obsessed with all things lawful. He paid homage to the gods of law, whether evil or good. He was a great scientist and created numerous constructs, such as golems and homonculi. His other interests ran to the diabolic. Crane studied the use of extraplanar creatures as servants and messengers. He also developed a firm knowledge of trap building and alchemy. He acquired and learned to control a *sphere of annihilation*, with which he carved a dungeon beneath his mountaintop tower.

About 100 years ago, Crane set off to do battle with a group of chaotic-evil sorcerers, known as the Violet Brotherhood, whose black arts were linked to the foul demon frog-god, Tsathogga. Though mightier than any individual evil sorcerer, Crane could not prevail against all of them working in concert. Overcome by his foes, he cursed his own arrogance with his final breath. Yet he had taken a great precaution: fearing that, in magical combat, his foes might seize control of his *sphere* and turn it against him, Crane had decided not to use his magical globe of blackness against the Violet Brotherhood. Instead, he sealed his *sphere* within his tower and protected it with powerful magic. It awaits discovery there today, its former master now long dead.

Sages consulted by the PCs offer the following cryptic warning: "Far up in distant mountains lies the Tower of Crane—master of darkness, lord of nothingness. Long is the path, and dangerous. Beware, adventurer, for peril lies both inside and out, both in between and beyond."

Reaching the Tower

Crane the Sorcerer's tower rises above the mist-shrouded summit of a distant mountain embedded within a faraway mountain range. The surrounding area is wild, and finding the tower is an arduous undertaking; just reaching this desolate part of the world should require a night or more of roleplaying. A list of suggested wilderness encounters appropriate for the journey to Crane's tower is available as a free download from the Product Support page of the **Necromancer Games** web site.

The Tower of Crane the Sorcerer

Before you rises Crane the Sorcerer's tower, shrouded in a chilling, damp mist. The cylindrical tower, made of a smooth, dark stone, tapers gradually from the base to its peak, where it is crowned with three sharp spires of uneven height. There are no openings of any kind in the dark walls of the tower.

Some 100 or more feet from the tower itself is a depression of worked stone, set into the surrounding earth and accessed by a downward-sloping ramp. Inside the depression is what appears to be an archway which leads to the tower's interior.

The black stone of which the exterior of the tower is constructed is not native to this plane, but was imported by Crane's infernal servants. The tower itself measures over 160 feet tall at the tip of its tallest spire. The walls are unnaturally smooth and extraordinarily difficult to scale (Climb DC 40), as there are no available handholds. The walls of the tower and the floors between each level are some five feet thick and have been enchanted with an immunity to spells of any type, including *passwall* and *disintegrate*, except those spells specifically cast by Crane himself. The stone also proves impervious to any physical weapon or tool of less than +5 enchantment (the result of a *wish*). Nonmagical weapons or tools striking the stone shatter immediately, and their wielder suffers damage equal to that which would have been inflicted against the tower. Magical weapons and tools of less than +5 enchantment suffer the same fate, though they are given a save on d% equal to 20 times their enchantment bonus. A successful save means the magical weapon or tool does not shatter, but the wielder still takes damage as noted above.

An unknown magical ward (again, the result of a *wish*) prevents magical ingress or egress of any kind; that option is reserved for Crane and those to whom he gave permission (which, because of his death, can no longer be obtained). Anyone attempting magical entry into

the tower is stricken as per a *maze* spell (courtesy of a *permanent contingent maze* spell cast by Crane). When freed from the *maze*, the person reappears on this plane in the middle of the Poisoned Corridor (see below).

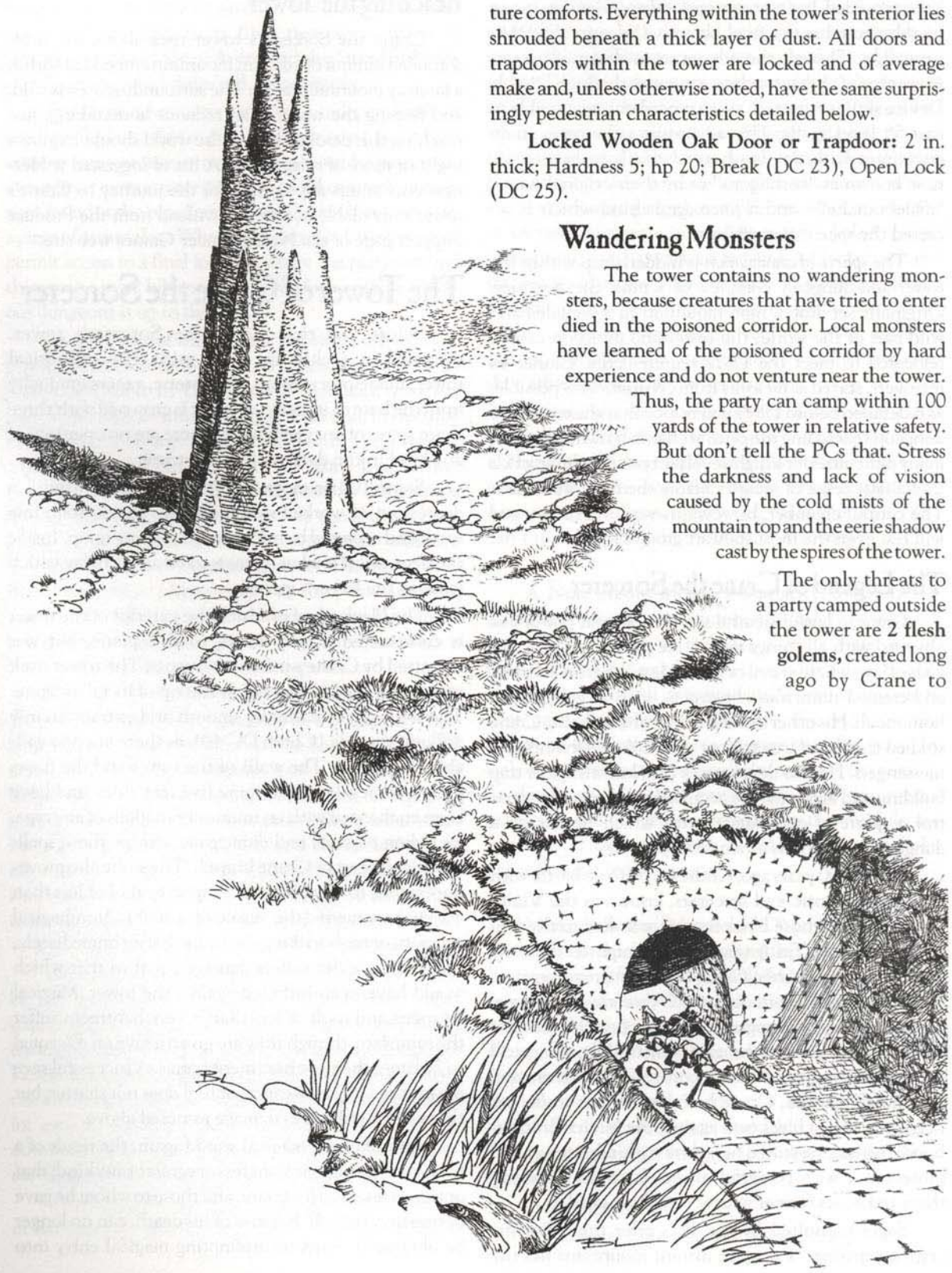
Five levels comprise the tower's interior — four above ground, the fifth below. The upper levels contain various living spaces appointed with the requisite creature comforts. Everything within the tower's interior lies shrouded beneath a thick layer of dust. All doors and trapdoors within the tower are locked and of average make and, unless otherwise noted, have the same surprisingly pedestrian characteristics detailed below.

Locked Wooden Oak Door or Trapdoor: 2 in. thick; Hardness 5; hp 20; Break (DC 23), Open Lock (DC 25).

Wandering Monsters

The tower contains no wandering monsters, because creatures that have tried to enter died in the poisoned corridor. Local monsters have learned of the poisoned corridor by hard experience and do not venture near the tower. Thus, the party can camp within 100 yards of the tower in relative safety. But don't tell the PCs that. Stress the darkness and lack of vision caused by the cold mists of the mountain top and the eerie shadow cast by the spires of the tower.

The only threats to a party camped outside the tower are **2 flesh golems,** created long ago by Crane to



guard the archway leading to the poisonous corridor. With Crane's death, the golems went berserk. They now wander the surrounding wilderness, though they never stray more than five miles from the tower. They attack any creatures they see. Roll for wandering monsters every three hours while the PCs camp outside the tower on 1d20 with the following results:

1-2 **1d2 flesh golems.** Since there are only two of these creatures, no more than two can be encountered. Once both are killed, treat this result as "No encounter."

3-7 **Strange grunts, shouts and shrieks off in the distance.** The berserk flesh golems utter these fearsome noises, and the sounds should unnerve the PCs. Once both golems are killed, treat this result as "No encounter."

8-20 No encounter.

Berserk Flesh Golems (2): CR 7; SZ Large Construct (7 1/2 ft. tall); HD 9d10; hp 65; Init –1; Spd 30 ft. (can't run); AC 18; Atk +10 melee (2d8+5 [x2], fists); Reach 10 ft.; SA berserk (attack on sight); SQ construct, damage reduction (15/+1), magic immunity; AL CN; SV Fort +3, Ref +2, Will +3; Str 21, Dex 9, Con —; Int —; Wis 11; Cha 1.

Skills: Listen +4, Spot +4. *Feats:* None.

Possessions: Each golem "wears" a strange amulet bearing the rune of Crane the Sorcerer. PCs can use these amulets to prevent the invisible door's *cloudkill* trap from triggering (see below). The amulet is otherwise not magical. Woven into the flesh of the golems, the amulets must be "surgically" removed after the golems have been killed.

The Entrance Passage

The stone-lined ramp descends some 12 feet to a flat-bottomed depression. Set into the far wall of this depression is a simple, unadorned archway approximately five feet wide and eight feet high. The cold, swirling mists seem to collect at the bottom of this depression. From the top of the slope, shapes can be seen lying just inside the archway, on the floor of the corridor beyond. Just inside the archway lie several animal and humanoid skeletons of all sizes. Debris surrounds them, some of which appears to be equipment that has long since rotted or rusted. The passageway beyond seems to be constructed entirely of seamless white stone. The sides of the walls appear perfectly smooth and show no chips or tool marks. The corridor stretches on, beyond the range of normal vision, sloping slightly downward.

Crane created this corridor using his *sphere of annihilation*. The corridor extends 180 feet, but the skeletal remains of birds, animals, monsters and humans litter the first 60 feet — creatures slain by the poison of the corridor, as described below. All mundane equipment has long since rotted or rusted beyond usefulness.

The Poisoned Corridor

The citadel's entrance is the most deadly element of the fortress' defense system, which Crane set up to protect his treasures. The floor, walls and ceiling of the corridor comprise a **magically poisonous trap**. Anyone touching these surfaces must make a Fortitude save (DC 20) or take 1d6 points of temporary Constitution damage per round of contact. A similar save must be made one minute later, whether or not the initial save was successful and regardless of whether the person is still within the corridor. DMs must record the number of rounds a PC is inside the corridor and/or in contact with it.

Any material contacting an individual's skin, including boots and gloves, magically transmits the poison. Double-layering clothing or walking across stones, blankets or other items strewn along the floor does not prevent contact with the magical poison; such objects magically "conduct" the poison to any living being in the corridor. To successfully negotiate the corridor, PCs must avoid contacting any part of it. When Crane occupied the tower, guests forbidden magical entrance were carried down the corridor by the flesh golems who are immune to poison. Magical flight or *levitation* provides the most obvious way down the poisoned corridor, though a character doing so will most likely crash into the *invisible wall of iron* (see area 3, below).

Magically Poisonous Corridor: CR 10; 1d6 temporary Con damage per round of contact plus a similar save one minute later; Fortitude save (DC 20) negates 1 round of damage, and a save must be made for each round of contact; Search (DC 30); Disable Device (not possible).

A careful search of the debris (Search DC 20; requires 10 rounds and a *detect magic* spell) turns up a few interesting items of treasure. Touching the items requires a Fortitude save against the magical poison, as described above. These items lose their toxicity when removed from the corridor.

Treasure: The skeletal debris has three items worth noting: a *scroll of two arcane spells* (*shades*, *hold monster*), a *potion of heroism* and a *stone of good luck*.

The Invisible Wall and Door

As the PCs hasten down the corridor they notice in the distance the end of the passage: a mundane-looking wooden door with iron bindings, set into the far wall. What they do not see, unless they make a Spot check, is the *invisible wall of iron* with its *invisible arcane-locked iron door*, which completely blocks their access to the door they see at the end of the corridor.

One hundred fifty feet down the passage (30 feet before its end) is an *invisible arcane-locked* door (the *arcane lock* cast at 18th level) set into a *permanent invisible wall of iron*. Anyone flying down the corridor likely collides with the barrier and suffers 1d4 damage (+1 damage for every 5 feet of movement rate over 15 feet per round), unless the person flying down the hallway

sees the door (Spot DC 25, with an appropriate minus based on movement rate). In addition, there is a 50% chance (+1% for each foot of movement rate above 15 feet per round) that any person thusly striking the door is stunned for 1d4 rounds (a Fortitude save at DC 20 negates stun) and momentarily drops to the floor, contacting the poisoned surface. The only clue to the invisible barrier's presence is the small pile of debris at its base — dust blown down the corridor from outside and detritus from birds and other flyers who previously "encountered" the wall. If a PC notices the debris and triggers a Spot check, give that PC a +2 circumstance bonus to their Spot check to notice the door and wall.

If that weren't trouble enough, the door is trapped and will release poison gas as per a *cloudkill* spell if it is opened by anyone other than Crane or someone wearing his amulet (which can be obtained from the berserk flesh golems; see above). In addition, brute force or any kind of magic used against the door triggers the trap. Failing a roll to pick the lock or disable the trap by more than 5 also triggers the trap. Note: the amulets do not open the door; they simply prevent the trap from springing if the door is successfully unlocked. Crane endowed the golems with the amulets so that they could successfully convey his guests into the tower without setting off the *cloudkill* trap. At first, the *cloudkill* gas fills 30 feet of the corridor directly in front of the door. Then it billows forward at a rate of 10 feet per round, ultimately filling 90 feet of the corridor. The *cloud* lasts for 18 minutes before dissipating. The trap is permanent, resets instantly and can be triggered an unlimited number of times until it is disabled. Once the trap is disabled, the door may be opened safely. However, after the door is opened and closed, the trap automatically resets itself and must be disabled again; otherwise, opening the door again triggers the trap. PC's cannot permanently disable the trap, short of a *wish* cast by a wizard of higher level than Crane.

***Invisible Arcane-locked* and *Cloudkill* Trapped Iron Door and *Invisible Wall of Iron*:** CR 8; 5 in. thick; Hardness 10; hp 180 (immune to spells and magic weapons or tools less than +5); Spot (DC 25); Break (DC 38), Open Lock (DC30). Like the tower's exterior walls, the door and wall are immune to magic weapons and tools of less than +5, are immune to spells, cannot be bypassed by *teleport*, etc. The door's trap releases poison gas, as per a *cloudkill* spell cast by an 18th level caster. Search (DC 30); Disable Device (30).

Once it bypasses this door, the party can safely travel the remaining 30 feet of the corridor to the normal, locked door — the entrance to Level 1 of the tower. This last stretch of corridor is not trapped with poison.

Locked Mundane Oak Door with Iron Bindings: 2 in. thick; Hardness 5; hp 20; Break (DC 23), Open Lock (DC 25).

Tower Level 1

The tower's basement is a large circular room about 40 feet in diameter. Set in the center of the room is a spiral, wooden staircase, which leads to a trapdoor in the ceiling. Barrels and boxes fill the room. A thick accumulation of dust has settled on the room's contents. This level contains various barrels, boxes and preserved foodstuffs stacked neatly along the walls of the room. A wooden staircase leads up to a locked trapdoor and Level 2 of the tower. Nothing of value is present here.

Tower Level 2

This level appears to be a sitting room. Several pieces of beautifully crafted furniture tastefully appoint the room, which is further accented by rich tapestries. Again, a layer of dust covers everything. The masterwork-quality furniture can be removed by ambitious adventurers and sold in a city for 3d6 x 100 gp per piece. The magical fireplace, constructed of the same stone as the exterior walls, does not emit smoke when kindling is burned. Another wooden staircase leads up to a locked trapdoor and Level 3 of the tower. Nothing else of real value is present here.

Tower Level 3

This level of the tower is Crane's alchemical workshop. Opened and stoppered vials, jugs and bottles; pots, bowls, mortars, pestles and crucibles; many rusted tools, like pliers, scoops and tongs; braziers, censers, candles, oil lamps and bits of coal; a scale with weights; parchment, quills and inkpots; and glass piping, brass fittings and support apparatus litter four tables. Six locked cabinets stand against the walls, lined with shelves. Materials present in this laboratory would require several wagon trips to transport. There are, however, a number of rare, semimagical and valuable items here, and the total setup would fetch well over 25,000 gp if sold to a wizard. Another wooden staircase leads up to a locked trapdoor and Level 4 of the tower.

Randomly sampling alchemical materials can be very dangerous. If a PC does so, roll d% with the following results: 01-12: Deadly poison (Fortitude save DC 20 or lose 2d6/2d6 temporary Con); 13-25: Imbiber loses all body hair, though fingernails and toenails grow rapidly for 2 weeks; 26-35: Imbiber becomes delusional (believing that he is invisible, can fly, etc.) for 2d4 hours; 36-50 Mild poison (Fortitude save DC 12 or lose 1d2/1d2 temporary Str and Con); 51-80: No effect; 81-95: Tastes great! Imbiber is immune to *fear* for 2 hours; 96-99 Imbiber gains 1d3 temporary Str for 1 day; 00: Imbiber gains 1 point of a random characteristic permanently.

A **locked, trapped safe** is hidden in a **secret compartment** behind one of the cabinets. This safe contains some of Crane's monetary wealth as well as a few potions.

Secret Compartment with "Floor Transforms to Acid" Trap: CR 6; Spot (DC40; if the cabinet is moved, DC 22); Search (DC 30); 2 in. thick; Hardness 5; hp 20; Break (DC 20); triggering the trap coats a 10 ft. x 10 ft. area in front of the compartment with magical acid, causing 5d6 damage and ruining any footwear, regardless of make. The victim suffers 1d6 damage per round until the acid is neutralized with alcohol or some other base liquid. Reflex save (DC 20) negates (character jumped out of range); Search (DC 28); Disable Device (DC 30).

PCs find the locked safe inside the secret compartment.

Locked Safe with *Cloudkill* Trap: CR 5; 4 in. thick; Hardness 10; hp 120; Break (DC 45); Open Lock (DC 30); triggering the trap fills the room with a cloud of gas, as per a *cloudkill* spell cast by an 18th level caster; Search (DC 30); Disable Device (DC 30).

Treasure: The safe contains 12,200 gp; six matched 100 gp gems (aquamarines); 4 *potions: hiding, protection from elements (cold), nondetection* and *oil of slipperiness;* and a strange black talisman hanging from a pure adamantine chain. This talisman, a ruby-eyed, silver-tongued dragon twined around a ball, weighs four ounces and is exquisitely crafted of stone similar to that of the tower's exterior. It could be sold for as much as 1,000 gp. It detects faintly as magical, but does not reveal its true nature until the party reaches Room N of the dungeon. This talisman — a *talisman of the sphere* — doubles the wearer's intelligence and level bonus when attempting to control a *sphere of annihilation*. In addition, this *talisman* is the key to freeing the *sphere* from the *forcecage* that contains it.

Tower Level 4

This room appears to be Crane's bedroom, and it is lavishly furnished with tapestries, silk curtains and incense burners. The curtains around the canopied bed have been drawn back, revealing a beautiful woman of about 25 years, clothed in a fine red, silken robe, nestled amid the bedclothes. Pots of strange plants rest on tables around the room, filling the space with strange and exotic fragrances. Well-tended pots of **blue lotus flowers** clutter every table surface. Pollen from these flowers permeates the room, and any sudden or violent movement or disturbance stirs up a pollen cloud.

The beautiful woman is in reality a *polymorphed* **erinyes devil**, named "Melissa" (her real name is Vaa'rankariziaalia). Melissa, once his consort, was summoned to this plane and bound to this room by Crane. She cannot leave the room, though she can summon friends, as noted below. These summoned friends are exempt from the prohibition against entering the tower by magical means. Crane *wanted* Melissa to summon help to defend his tower. However, she is bound never to summon them when Crane is present. She wears a *robe of blending* (+15 on Hide checks). Her beauty is flawless, and she is friendly if approached.

Hearing the approach of the PCs, Melissa disturbed the blue lotus flowers, filling the entire room with the narcotic pollen; all PCs entering the room are subject to its effects. Upon her discovery, Melissa engages the party in a dialogue, biding time until the pollen has taken effect. She rises from the bed and pretends to tend the potted plants as she speaks to the party, releasing more clouds of blue lotus pollen every round.

This room contains no stairs. A secret trapdoor (Spot DC 20) in the ceiling, eight feet above the floor, leads to Level 5 of the tower.

Blue Lotus Flowers (CR 4): Blue lotus pollen has a narcotic effect on whoever inhales or ingests it, requiring a Fortitude save (DC 13) to avoid becoming drowsy and enjoying sometimes euphoric hallucinations. Effects occur one minute after inhalation. In addition, anyone thusly affected suffers a –2 to Strength and Dexterity and a –4 to saves versus illusionary magic (such as the hallucinations caused by the pollen) and Melissa's charm powers. The pollen-induced hallucinations seem very real, appearing and disappearing at the DM's discretion. Whenever anyone under the influence has an adrenaline surge (becomes angry, enters combat, etc.), his hallucinations intensify, becoming more pronounced and horrific. Such a subject suffers an additional-2 hallucination modifier to all attack rolls. In addition, the subject imagines that 1d4 hallucinatory beasts attack him. Thusly afflicted PCs attack the hallucinatory dangers instead of actual dangers, unless the actual dangers attack them directly. Treat these additional images as though created by a *mirror image* spell. The hallucinatory effect of the pollen lasts 1d4 hours. Any temporary ability damage is regained when the narcotic effects wear off. For additional details on blue lotus flowers, see the ***Creature Collection***, page 124, published by Sword and Sorcery Studios.

Melissa the Erinyes Devil: CR 6; SZ Medium Outsider [Law, Evil]; HD 6d8+6; hp 38; Init +1; Spd 30 ft., fly 50 ft. (average); AC 20; Atk +8 melee (1d4+2 [x2], claws), +7 ranged (rope, entangle); SA spell-like abilities, charm person, entangle, gating; SQ cold and acid resistance (20), damage reduction (10/+1), darkvision (120 ft.), fire and poison immunity, spell resistance (22), tongues; AL LE; SV Fort +6, Ref +6, Will +7; Str 14, Dex 13, Con 13, Int 14, Wis 14, Cha 22.

Skills: Concentration +12, Escape Artist +8, Hide +10, Intuit Motive +12, Move Silently+10, Search +9, Spot +10. *Feats:* Dodge, Mobility.

SA—Entangle (Su): Melissa disguises her rope as the silk belt of her red robe.

Possessions: In addition to her *robe of blending*, Melissa wears a *ring of limited alignment masking*, which is enchanted to make lawful-evil creatures appear lawful neutral.

Tactics: As mentioned, Melissa disturbs the blue lotus flowers before the PCs enter the room. All PCs entering the level must save versus the effects of the pollen.

Since veteran players should be immediately suspicious of the "trapped maiden" gag, DMs need to use a different tactic with Melissa. First, she detects as lawful neutral, which should throw players off the track, since most disguised demons and devils use lawful-good disguises. Second, players are much less likely to kill something that is played well by a DM. Don't succumb to the "helpless, seductive woman lying on bed" routine. Though she is beautiful, she is clothed and not obviously vamping the party. Instead, try playing her as pissed off when the party enters. Think "Princess Leia," not "Mata Hari." She might voice her doubts about the party's power or competence: "Oh great. A group of adventurers finally gets past the poison corridor, but it must have been dumb luck. By the looks of you people, I will never be freed from this accursed tower." She may even aggressively grab one of the PCs, saying "I need you to free me from this place!"

Once discovered, Melissa uses her *charm* ability against the dumbest-looking, non-paladin fighter in the party (she uses her innate detect- alignment ability) as she speaks with the party, though she does not give him any commands yet. She tells the party that she is Crane's consort and that he extended her life with *potions of longevity*. She explains that she was a rival sorceress who lost a magical duel to Crane, and his prize was her servitude. Now that Crane is dead, she demands that the party free her from her captivity, her debt having been honorably satisfied. Of course, Melissa is just biding her time until the hallucinations begin. After one minute of real time, the fun starts. Melissa, familiar with the onset of the pollen-caused hallucinations — having seen Crane's reaction many times — knows which PCs have been affected.

Once the hallucinations begin, affected PCs begin seeing demon images. Melissa then hides using her *robe of blending*, goes *invisible* and *teleports without error* to another side of the room. She uses both her *robe of blending* and her *invisibility* in case someone in the party can *see invisible*. She then uses her *charm person* ability (which she can do while hiding and *invisible*) by telepathically instructing her victims to kill those who are not charmed. She then sits back and enjoys the ensuing slaughter. Note: Melissa's poison immunity makes her immune to the pollen's effects. If attacked directly, Melissa simply *teleports without error* around the room at will. She uses her *entangle* power against any paladins in the party, attacking from her *invisible* hiding place. She then *teleports* to another location and goes *invisible*. Melissa refrains from using her *gate* ability until the battle goes against her.

Treasure: Melissa wears a collar of finest gold and rubies, which functions as her soul gem and radiates evil, though it is masked by her *ring of limited alignment masking*. The collar is worth 11,000 gp, but whoever possesses it will be visited by a barbazu in one month's time, at night, when he is asleep and helpless. Otherwise, the bedroom furnishings are worth over 3,000 gp if transported and sold.

Secret Locked Trapdoor in the Ceiling: Spot (DC30); Search (DC 20, ceiling only); 2 in. thick; Hardness 5; hp 20; Break (DC 20); Open Lock (DC 20).

Tower Level 5

The walls of the tower's top level slope inward to meet at a pinnacle, creating a pyramid-shaped room. In the north wall, a trapped, secret door opens into a 5 ft. x 5 ft. room with a glowing crystal archway on the opposite, facing wall. This is a two-way portal that *teleports* anyone entering it to the dungeon of Crane. Those passing through this portal emerge through a similar portal in Room A of the dungeon (see below). A **vacuum trap** protects this secret door. If the trap is not disabled before the door is opened, the magic portal sucks all the air from the room, suffocating the PCs, and the trapdoor through which the PCs accessed this level closes itself airtight and locks with an *arcane lock* (cast at 18th level).

Vacuum-trapped Secret Door: CR 5; Spot (DC30); Search (DC 20, ceiling only); 2 in. thick; Hardness 5; hp 20; Break (DC 20); Open Lock (DC 20). The trap deals suffocation damage (see Suffocation in the *DMG*). A Reflex save (DC 15) allows PCs to hold their breath; otherwise, Constitution checks (DC 10) begin immediately. Search (DC 28); Disable Device (DC 30).

The Dungeon of Crane the Sorcerer

To protect his *sphere*, Crane hid it in a magically sealed chamber (Room N), to which he bound three devils as guards. Opening the seal to this chamber requires a fully assembled medallion, the four pieces of which Crane hid among the trapped and construct-populated corridors of his dungeon. No other way of opening the sealed chamber will succeed. (Download a free picture of this medallion from the **Necromancer Games'** web site.).

There are no wandering monsters in Crane's dungeon.

Entering the Central Chamber

Crane dispersed the medallion's four parts throughout the dungeon, thus securing the central chamber's integrity against intrusion — however unlikely the possibility. Fitting together tightly, the four pieces form a 10-inch-high flaming-sun-shaped medallion. Each magically sealed door to the central chamber bears an indentation into which a PC inserts the assembled medallion. Magic runes, read before the medallion's placement (using a *read magic* spell), activate the medallion, causing it to glow with a blue light. This glow lasts only 90 seconds, during which time the medallion must be placed in the door.

If a PC fails to set a *glowing* medallion in the door (i.e., the 90 seconds have elapsed or the runes were not read), that PC takes 6d6 points of damage. No save is allowed, and spell resistance does not apply. Three doors leading to

the central chamber (Room N) are false doors; placing the medallion into these doors causes damage as described above, even if the PCs observed the proper procedure. Only the door in Room L opens into the central chamber. If the medallion is used correctly on that door, the glowing blue light engulfs the entire door, and it opens. The runes may be read a maximum of twice per day, after which they fade from existence for 12 hours.

The central chamber's walls and associated doors, like those of the tower's exterior, are immune to spells and to weapons and tools of less than +5 enchantment and may not be damaged. Literally, the only way to enter the central chamber is by placing the properly assembled medallion into the one, true door.

A. The Door Below

A magically sealed stone door, runes scratched across its surface, looms before the PCs. *Arcane locked* at an 18th level of ability, the door can only be forced opened with a *knock* or *dispel magic* spell. Alternatively, tracing the runes on the door with a finger causes the runes to glow brightly, unlocking the door.

***Arcane-locked* Stone Door:** 2 in. thick; Hardness 10; hp 80; Break (DC 38), Open Lock (DC40).

B. Guardians at the Gate

Beyond the locked door is a corridor leading into a trapezoidal room, its walls and floor constructed of red-veined white marble. Dominating the room are two awe-inspiring statues of large cats, sculpted from black stone. The southern and southwestern walls feature doors. If either unlocked door is opened, the two statues animate and attack until slain, at which time they become statues again. The statues pursue the PCs if they run, though the statues cannot open doors.

Panther Statues (2): CR 5; SZ Huge Animal; HD 8d8+24; hp 60; Init +2; Spd 40 ft.; AC 14; Atk +11 melee (2d4+3 [x2], claws) and +6 melee (2d6+7, bite), +6 melee (2d6+3, rake); SA spring; SQ scent; AL N; SV Fort +9, Ref +8, Will +3; Str 25, Dex 15, Con 17, Int 2, Wis 12, Cha 10.

Skills: Jump +9, Listen +5, Move Silently +5, Spot +5, Track +8. *Feats:* Multiattack, Improved Trip, Improved Grapple.

SA—Spring (Ex): If a panther leaps upon a foe during the first round of combat, it can make an all-out attack even if it has taken a move action; it also can make a grapple attack as a free action.

C. The Sword Room

A brightly-glowing sword floats in midair in this room, which is carved entirely from black stone.

This sword is an **animated object** (cast at 18th level). It immediately attacks anyone entering the room. A successful *dispel magic* allows the sword to be taken as treasure. "Killing" the sword destroys it. Magical cold makes it brittle (AC drops to 17; loses damage resistance ability). This *+2 longsword of wounding* cannot leave the room while animated. A 10 ft. x 10 ft. pressure plate at the room's center activates a **poison gas trap**. A secret door on the east wall leads to Room D.

Animated *Longsword of Wounding*: CR 6; SZ Small Object; HD 3d8; hp 24; Init +10; Spd Fly 60 ft. (excellent); AC 23; Atk +11/+6 melee (1d8+2, sword plus wounding); SA wounding; SQ damage resistance (10/+3), fire resistance (30), magic immunity (except magical cold), poison immunity; AL N; SV Fort +4, Ref +10, Will +0; Str 11, Dex 22, Con —, Int —, Wis 11, Cha —.

Skills: Spot +15, Track +15. *Feats:* Blindfight, Multiattack.

SA—Wounding (Ex): Each sword-inflicted wound bleeds for 1 point of damage per round in addition to any normal damage dealt by the weapon. Multiple wounds have a cumulative effect (e.g., 2 wounds result in 2 points of blood loss per round). Making a successful Heal check (DC 15) or applying any form of magical healing can stop the bleeding.

Poison Gas Trap: CR 8; no attack roll necessary. The trap floods the whole room with burnt othur fumes (see Poisons in the *DMG*); Search (DC 21); Disable Device (DC 25).

Secret Door: Spot (DC30); Search (DC 20); 2 in. thick; Hardness 5; hp 20; Break (DC 20); Open Lock (DC 20).

D. The Statue Room

Two minotaur statues, 10 feet apart, occupy this room. A five-foot-diameter circle of red stones surrounds each statue. The south door features glowing runes. The west wall also contains a door. Both doors have intricate locks. The minotaurs are just what they appear to be: statues. The glowing runes read "Hall of Pools," if *read magic* is used on them. Both doors are locked.

Locked Wooden Doors: 2 in. thick; Hardness 5; hp 25; Break (DC 28), Open Lock (DC 25).

E. Gone Forever

In the center of the corridor, a **trap** plunges PCs into a pit linked to the astral plane. Magic has no effect after the 100-foot mark (allowing about 2 rounds for action). Anyone falling beyond that point risks being lost forever on the astral plane. Rescuing people thusly trapped requires plane travel abilities. A secret door leads past the pit to Room F. The door at the corridor's west end is one of the central chamber's false doors. See "Entering the Central Chamber," above.

Pit Trap (Bottomless): CR 8; no attack roll necessary (lost on astral plane). Reflex save (DC 20) avoids; Search (DC 20); Disable Device (DC 20).

Secret Door: CR 2; Spot (DC30); Search (DC 20); 2 in. thick; Hardness 5; hp 20; Break (DC 20); Open Lock (DC 20).

F. The Big, Mean Statue

Large iron statues, fully 10 feet tall and shaped as warriors, line this room on all sides, surrounding a raised dais in the center. Upon the dais rests a rune-encrusted golden triangle, intricately carved, its center accented with a jewel. The golden triangle is the **first piece of Crane's medallion**.

A single **iron golem,** standing near the east entrance, guards against the piece's theft. The amulet piece is **trapped** with a *fireball* trap. Touching either the amulet or the dais triggers the trap. Note: if injured, the golem touches the dais and triggers the *fireball* trap to heal himself. Should the party emerge through Area E's secret door, it can outrun the golem, who does not pursue the party through the secret passage to the north. Otherwise, if the amulet is disturbed, the golem positions itself to block the east exit and exhales his poison gas. When any person enters the room, the golem animates.

***Fireball* trap:** CR 4; casts *fireball* spell centered on the dais (10d6); Reflex save (DC 23) for half damage; Search (DC 25); Disable Device (DC 30).

Iron Golem: CR 10; SZ Large Construct (12 ft. tall); HD 18d10; hp 99; Init –1 (Dex); Spd 20 ft. (cannot run); AC 30; Atk +23/+18 melee (2d10+11, large iron sword, crit 19-20); SA breath weapon (Fortitude save (DC 17) or suffer 1d4 points of temporary Constitution damage); SQ construct, damage reduction (50/+3), darkvision (90 ft.), magic immunity; AL N; SV Fort +6, Ref +5, Will +6; Str 33, Dex 9, Con —, Int —, Wis 11, Cha 1.

Secret Door: CR 2; Spot (DC30); Search (DC 20); 2 in. thick; Hardness 5; hp 20; Break (DC 20); Open Lock (DC 20).

G. Corridor of the Red Madness

When the PCs penetrate the paltry defenses of the simple wooden door to this corridor, they enter a zigzagging hallway with walls and ceiling composed of a red, spongy material. Small holes in the red matter emit curling wisps of reddish gas.

Locked Wooden Door: 2 in. thick; Hardness 5; hp 25; Break (DC 28), Open lock (DC 25).

The red-colored, spongy material that constitutes this corridor's walls and ceiling puffs out a small cloud of reddish gas with each touch or vibrational disturbance. The walls are so sensitive that even loud speech causes the material to pump out vision-obscuring quantities of this dreadful gas. Inhaling the gas, however, has a single, terrible consequence: total insanity!

Gas of Madness (CR 6): Touching the spongy material causes it to release gas in 10-foot-radius area. Sonic and other vibrations can cause multiple sections of the spongy material to vent gas. Anyone within the gas' area of effect must make a Fortitude save (DC 20) or suffer the effects of the gas: a horrible, mindless madness. Those struck insane grasp their head, fall to their knees and begin to scream—setting off another round of gas release. A victim's skin takes on a reddish sheen. Anyone stricken with madness must make a second Fortitude save (DC 20) or the insanity becomes permanent — curable only by a *heal, limited wish, wish* or *miracle* spell. Success, however, only means that the insanity lasts for 1d20 hours, though it too may be healed as described above.

H. Hall of Pools

This long hall is dotted every few yards with pools of bubbling, blue-green liquid. A huge set of double doors at the hall's far end seemingly bleeds this liquid; it drains into the various pools through a series of channels carved in the floor. Strange writing and a bas-relief carving of a scepter, covered in gold leaf with small ruby chips simulating dripping blood, ornament the door. A hollow sconce, next to the bas-relief scepter, appears large enough to receive an object of a size similar to the bas-relief scepter.

While the liquid's surface ripples only an inch or so below the level of the floor, the pools themselves measure over eight feet deep. This strange liquid actually constitutes some odd form of Earthpower, welling up from the depths. Any mortal touching so much as drop of this potent fluid becomes dizzy, finding it almost impossible to walk. Failing a Fortitude save (DC 20) renders the subject unconscious for 1d6 days.

In the final pool is secreted a golden scepter, eight feet below the surface. If the scepter is fished out, placing it into the sconce beside the bas-relief carving opens the door. The scepter then vanishes, returning to its resting place at the bottom of the pool.

The double doors at the hall's far end enjoy the same defensive immunities as the exterior walls of Crane's tower. Short of a *wish* or *miracle* spell, only by inserting the scepter into the sconce can the doors be opened, as previously described. The strange writing (Celestial) decorating the door details this curse, explaining that "None shall pass till the curse of the earth god is lifted."

I. The Pit

Centered in the room, a 15-foot-square, covered pit rises about one foot above floor level. The cover —

magically preserved leather — is pulled taut and is lashed down securely. At the bottom of the shallow, five-foot-deep pit, the PCs find a locked secret hatch; opening it reveals a 2-foot-long mahogany box with extremely detailed carvings along its entire surface. Within the small casket is hidden the **second piece of Crane's medallion**. The north wall's unlocked door leads to one of the central chamber's false doors; it does not open, even with the fully assembled amulet. See "Entering the Central Chamber," above.

Secret Hatch: CR 2; Spot (DC30); Search (DC 20); 1 in. thick; Hardness 8; hp 20; Break (DC 20); Open Lock (DC 20).

J. "Seven Years Bad Luck"

When the PCs open the door adjoining Room B they hear the tinkling and jangling of glass, as though the room beyond were full of wind chimes. Multiple shiny objects reflect light back to the PCs, like a room full of twinkling stars. Dangling from the ceiling by long strands of thread, are thousands of shards of glass — as though a huge mirror had been broken and its remnants hung in this manner. From the ceiling 15 feet above, the shards dangle to every level of the room, to just about two feet above the floor.

Moving through the room requires a Reflex save (DC12) to avoid the shards. Small characters get a +2 on this save, since they can stoop beneath even the lowest-hanging shards. If a shard is broken or crudely mishandled, it explodes, giving off a thin wisp of smoke. This epicenter explosion initiates a chain reaction among the other shards, causing them all to shatter. The acrid smoke causes blindness and limits a person's ability to speak more than a whisper unless a Fortitude save is made (DC 25). This effect lasts 2d4 days.

There is an ***invisible* secret door** in the ceiling, shielded from view by the hanging shards (it's easier to locate if the hanging shards have been destroyed or if their support threads are carefully parted and secured). The door leads to a small chamber wherein a silver pedestal supports a red-crystal staff. PCs can use the staff to form a crystal bridge in Room M. An image of a bridge spanning a river is inscribed on the staff.

***Invisible* Secret Door:** CR 5; Spot (DC 38); Search (DC 20 after glass is moved or destroyed); 1 in. thick; Hardness 5; hp 20; Break (DC 20); Open Lock (DC 20).

A corridor behind the pedestal heads south. This corridor leads to one of the central chamber's false doors; it does not open, even with the fully assembled amulet. See "Entering the Central Chamber," above.

K. The Final Guardian

Daggers, swords and shards of metal lie piled in the room's center. The PCs can feel a slight breeze. As the PCs enter, the breeze stiffens and a whirlwind suddenly forms, lifting the metal shards and weapons from the pile and sets them spinning through the air.

Crane created this, his final construct—called a **Searing Wind**—to guard the entrance to the strange Earthpower cavern (Room M) he discovered late in his life. This creature will not leave the room; it was programmed only to protect this room. For additional information on the deadly Searing Wind, refer to page 166 of ***Creature Collection,*** by Sword and Sorcery Studios. The locked southwestern door, made of iron, is trapped with a **poison needle**. A secret door leads to the north.

Searing Wind: CR 10; SZ Huge Construct (12 ft. tall); HD 12d12+120; hp 198; Init +7; Spd Fly 50 ft. (good); AC 30; Atk +16 melee (1d8+6 [x1d12 attacks], metal pieces and weapons); Reach 10 ft.; SA barbed whirl; SQ construct, darkvision (90 ft.); AL N; SV Fort +18, Ref +7, Will +4; Str 22, Dex 16, Con 30, Int 3, Wis 10, Cha 0

Skills: Listen +12, Spot +12. *Feats:* Improved Initiative.

SA—Barbed Whirl (Su): Each round the Searing Wind is in combat, roll 1d12 to determine the number of melee attacks it can make that round. Roll each attack separately; due to the wind's dispersed nature, divide its attacks equally among all PCs within its reach.

Locked Iron door: 2 in. thick; Hardness 10; hp 60; Break (DC 48), Open Lock (DC 25).

Poison Needle Trap: CR2; +8 ranged (1 plus Poison); Search (DC 22); Disable Device (DC 20). Note: The needle is coated with greenblood poison (see Poison in the *DMG*).

Secret Door: CR 2; Spot (DC 30); Search (DC 20); 2 in. thick; Hardness 5; hp 20; Break (DC 20); Open Lock (DC 20).

L. The Central Chamber's Entrance Hallway

Mirrors line the walls, floor to ceiling, along the corridor, but the view they offer is strangely distorted. A large rune-etched door marks the hallway's far end. At the corridor's 30-foot mark, a *mirror of life trapping* is affixed to the ceiling. A Will save (DC 19) avoids the effects of the *mirror* (see the ***DMG*** for more details on this wondrous object). Shattering the mirror from the outside releases everything trapped inside. Crane imprisoned a **black pudding, 2 wraiths** and a **rival wizard named Meldeth** in it before placing it here. No one knows how Crane ensnared the wraiths, as undead cannot normally be trapped by such an item.

A final inhabitant of the mirror, a **poisoned and severely wounded wizard named Toth A'karon**, dies from the poison in his veins as soon as he is released from stasis (no statistics provided). All creatures immediately attack the characters. Toth A'karon has the **third piece of Crane's medallion**. Barely alive, he uses his dying breath to relinquish the medallion piece to the PCs.

The command word for the mirror is "Seriwog."

Wraiths (2): CR 6; SZ Medium Undead (Incorporeal); HD 5d12 ; hp 32; Init +7; Spd 30 ft., Fly 60 ft.

(good); AC 16; Atk +5 melee (1d4, touch, plus 1d6 Con drain); SA constitution drain; SQ daylight powerlessness, incorporeal, spawn, turn resistance (+2), undead immunities, unnatural aura; AL LE; SV Fort +1, Ref +4, Will +4; Str —, Dex 16, Con —, Int 14, Wis 14, Cha 15.

Skills: Hide +11, Intimidate +10, Intuit Direction +6, Listen +12, Search +10, Spot +12. *Feats:* Alertness, Blindfight, Combat Reflexes, Improved Initiative.

Black Pudding: CR 8; SZ Huge Ooze; HD 10d10+40; hp 95; Init +0; Spd 20 ft., Climb 20 ft.; AC 14; Atk +8 melee (2d6+4, buffet, plus acid); SA acid, constrict, grab; SQ blindsight (60 ft.), ooze; AL N; SV Fort +7, Ref +3, Will +3; Str 17, Dex 10, Con 19, Int -, Wis 11, Cha 1.

Meldeth, the Evil and Insane Wizard of the Violet Brotherhood, Human Male Wiz9: CR 9; SZ Medium Humanoid; HD 9d4+18; hp 46; Init +2; Spd 30 ft.; AC 15; Atk +5 melee (1d4+1, dagger); SQ insane; AL CE; SV Fort +5, Ref +5, Will +6; Str 13, Dex 15, Con 15, Int 18, Wis 3, Cha 6.

Skills: Alchemy +16, Concentration +14, Hide +8, Knowledge (arcana) +16, Scrye +16, Spellcraft +16, Wilderness Lore (forest) +7. *Feats:* Combat Casting, Iron Will, Maximize Spell, Scribe Scroll, Silent Spell, Spell Mastery (4), Still Spell.

Spells Prepared (5/6/6/5/4/2): 0 — dancing lights, daze, flare, read magic, resistance; 1st—color spray, grease, magic missile (x2), shield, spider climb; 2nd—invisibility, Melf's acid arrow, mirror image, protection from arrows, see invisible, web; 3rd—displacement, fly, lightning bolt, slow, vampiric touch; 4th — confusion, minor globe of invulnerability, phantasmal killer, stoneskin (already cast); 5th — summon elemental (fire), teleport.

SQ—Insane (Ex): Immune to all mind-influencing spells due to insanity; will attack everyone in a room, including monsters, until slain.

Possessions: Robes, spellbook, dagger, *wand of fireballs* (6d6) (12 charges), jade unholy symbol of the frog-god Tsathogga (causes an *unhallow* effect in a 60-foot radius cast at 8th level, 12 charges), *+1 cloak of resistance*, *ring of fire resistance*, map to the Stoneheart Mountain Dungeon with a cryptic reference to the Temple of the Frog (detailed in the dungeon module ***The Tomb of Abysthor*** from **Necromancer Games**).

Once the PCs assemble all the parts of Crane's medallion, they can open the door to Room N. See "Entering the Central Chamber," above.

M. The Earthpower Cavern

The secret door leads to a small cavern through which flows a stream of weird, shimmering blue-green liquid. Across the river towers a huge statue of a 20-armed man, a sword in each hand; inscribed in his chest is a rune symbolizing an unknown lawful-good earth god of battle. In front of the statue, is a 20-foot-diameter pool of red liquid.

Crane discovered this natural cavern while carving out his dungeon. This cavern, linked to a now-unknown earth god, was once sacred to clerics of that sect. The river that winds through this cavern is two feet deep and can be crossed easily (though at great cost). It radiates a strange antimagic effect; no magic functions within 20 feet of either bank. Spellcasters innately notice this antimagic aura. The red-crystal staff, found in the secret chamber above Room J, forms a crystal bridge fording the river if waved over the liquid. The staff is the only magic item immune to the liquid's antimagic power. The liquid loses this antimagic ability when removed from the stream. Any characters crossing the river by any means other than the red-crystal bridge are stricken as though a *Mord's disjunction* had been cast on them and their possessions.

The giant statue — natural rock carved into the form of a 20-armed man — bears the weight of the ages upon his brow. Its expression inspires knee-bending humility, sadness and awe. At the monolith's feet is a two-foot-deep pool of opaque, dark-red-brown liquid that is very poisonous (Fortitude save DC 22 or lose 2d6/2d6 Con). Any characters moving to within 10 feet of any part of the monolith notices that the statue's eyes quickly pulse with blue light. If the warning is not heeded, the statue fires two *rays of lightning* at the transgressor's feet. Should the character persist, the statue fires directly at them (+11 touch attack, 2d8 electrical damage) once every 3 rounds. Any good cleric may approach the statue without recrimination and is immune to the effects of the poison. The **fourth piece of Crane's medallion** lies hidden in the pool of the poisonous red liquid. Fishing the piece of the medallion out with a tool requires a Dex check (DC 20), with one attempt per round. While fishing, PCs count as flat-footed for rolls to be hit by the statue's *rays of lightning*.

N. The Central Chamber

When the medallion is properly inserted, the door ignites with searing blue light; its shape alters, forming a misty archway. The archway reeks with the the stench of sulfur and brimstone. The room beyond is carved from living rock. Smoke and haze in the room obscures vision. At the far end is a strange glowing cube. Three men in black robes are present in the room. They are actually **three cornugon devils**. When they see the PCs, two immediately disappear. The third approaches cautiously. As he gets closer, he announces, "You are not my master!" He then transforms into his devil guise and attacks.

Crane bound these three horned devils (also known as "cornugons," or by their original name "malebranche") to this room to guard his *sphere of annihilation*. Ordered to destroy all but Crane who enter the room, they will neither negotiate nor bargain. If a priest casts *banishment*, *dismissal* or *gate* or if a wizard casts *banishment*,

freedom or *gate*, the cornugons let the spell work (miss SR and saves on purpose), because it frees them from Crane's spell of *binding*.

Due to the magically burning brimstone, vision in this rather featureless room is limited to 50 feet. PCs fighting in heavy armor must make Con checks (DC 6+1 per round over 6) or lose 1 point of Str, Dex and Con from heat exhaustion after 6 rounds in the room. Barefoot PCs take 1 point of damage per round from the hot floor. The distant glowing cube, a *(windowless-cell) forcecage*, contains Crane's *sphere of annihilation*. See **treasure**, below.

Ignus, Alnus and Femus—the Cornugon Devils (3): CR 12; SZ Huge Outsiders [Law, Evil]; HD 10d8+30; hp 75; Init +1; Spd 30 ft., fly 50 ft. (average); AC 24; Atk +9 melee (1d4+5 [x2], claws), +14/+9 melee (1d6+5, whip plus stun), +9 melee (1d4+2, bite) and +9 melee (1d3+2, tail plus wounding); Reach 10 ft.; SA spell-like abilities, fear aura, gating, stun, wounding; SQ cold and acid resistance (20), damage reduction 20/+2, darkvision, fire and poison immunity, regeneration (2/round), spell resistance (25); AL LE; SV Fort +10, Ref +7, Will +9; Str 21, Dex 12, Con 17, Int 18, Wis 14, Cha 14.

Skills: Bluff +13, Concentration +12, Hide +6, Intuit Motive +13, Listen +13, Move Silently +12, Search +13, Spot +13. *Feats:* Cleave, Power Attack, Sunder.

Tactics: Very intelligent, the devils coordinate their attack. They all attempt to gate in 1d6 barbazus to handle the brunt of combat, while they attack lightly armored individuals first. They concentrate their efforts on one victim until that person is dead. One tactic: *teleport* onto the victim, stun and grapple him, then *teleport* him to the far side of the room to tear him apart. If attacked by multiple opponents, they cast *fireball* on their own position. They target wizards first, followed by clerics and thieves, and only thereafter fighters. Another tactic: create a *major image* of themselves in the opposite direction to divide the party's attention. The demons make no attempt to use the *sphere of annihilation*.

Treasure: Hovering in the center of the room, a *permanent windowless cell forcecage* contains Crane's *sphere of annihilation* — a two-foot-wide ball of absolute nothingness. Details of this artifact are given in the *DMG*. To get the *sphere*, the *forcecage* must be brought down in one of two ways. First, destroy the *forcecage* with magic as per the spell description. Second, controlling the *sphere*, a PC can use it to destroy the *forcecage* from within (for which the dragon talisman, secreted in Tower Level 3's hidden safe, might be useful). Of course, this may happen accidentally if a character fails her attempt to control the *sphere* and it slides toward her, destroying the *forcecage* on contact. But then an uncontrolled *sphere of annihilation* would be loose....

The room contains no other treasure.



"Ra's Evil Grin"

Introduction

Designed for a high-level (11+) party, this module challenges adventurers seeking a powerful magic — the *Globe of Arden*. Any appropriate powerful item can be substituted as the final objective, as suits the DM's campaign. This dungeon culminates in a battle with Dendorandra, an extraordinarily powerful type V demon (now known as a "marilith").

As a lead-in to this adventure, the DM may use a map from another treasure hoard showing the location of the *globe* (detailed more fully in "The Legend of the *Globe of Arden*," below) or a priestly tome describing Arden, the long-dead avatar of Ra, and the wondrous powers of an unknown artifact called the *Globe of Arden*. Such a tome might mention that the *globe* emits rays as intense as those of the sun, destroying all they touch. In any event, DMs should require consultation with sages or use of a *legend lore* spell to determine the location and history of the *globe* and dungeon. A sage could also provide a map to the dungeon's location, referenced in the "The Legend of the *Globe of Arden*," below. Originally set on a small, remote island far across the sea, the dungeon can be relocated to meet the DM's requirements.

DMs will notice that the dungeon provides numerous puzzles, a few traps and only two monsters. Those monsters, though few in number, should ably challenge and threaten even the most combat-hardened party — particularly after the party encounters all the vicious creatures that inhabit the Island of the *Globe*.

The Legend of the *Globe of Arden*

Using *legend lore* or consulting sages uncovers the following information about the god, Arden, and the *Globe of Arden*. DMs should read this information to their players.

In days long past, the peoples of the southern lands worshiped the sun god, Arden. Legend says that the gods of darkness destroyed Arden during divine combat. Arden's followers gathered their slain god's remains, storing them in his temples.

Legends tell that one such relic, the *Globe of Arden*, was originally the left eye of the god himself — ripped from its socket by Tsathogga, a vile frog-demon, during Arden's final, hopeless battle. However, the eye retained the powers of the sun, and the demonic servants of Tsathogga, attempting to steal it, were disintegrated by the power it contained. Priests of Arden eventually recovered the eye, which had solidified into a strange sphere seemingly made of cloudy, white glass, and renamed the divine artifact the *Globe of Arden*.

With Arden's destruction, his following waned. Yet the preserved relics — elements of his divine being — prevented Arden's foes from overcoming his temples. What the relics could not prevent, however, was the treachery of Asari. Then a high priest of Arden at the temple where the *globe* was stored, Asari grew jealous and bitter over his loss of personal power, which followed the destruction of his deity. His spell powers failing and followers dwindling, he entertained the overtures of the frog-god Tsathogga, who promised to restore Asari's earthly power. As his final act of betrayal, Asari stole the *Globe of Arden* from the temple's inner sanctuary and fled before the priests detected his treachery. He delivered the *globe* to the demon-priests who took the relic and hid it in a foreign and unpopulated land—a remote island, the legends say—in a complex designed to hide the *globe* from Arden and his followers. Rumors suggest that the demon-priests of Tsathogga, a god of water and darkness, fashioned the complex' entrance to mock Arden, a god of air and light. Legends also caution that Asari, the fallen priest, received great rewards from the gods of evil: renewed earthly power and the gift of unlife. The followers of Arden, now greatly reduced in number and power, were unable to recover the *globe*, and it fell out of all human reckoning.

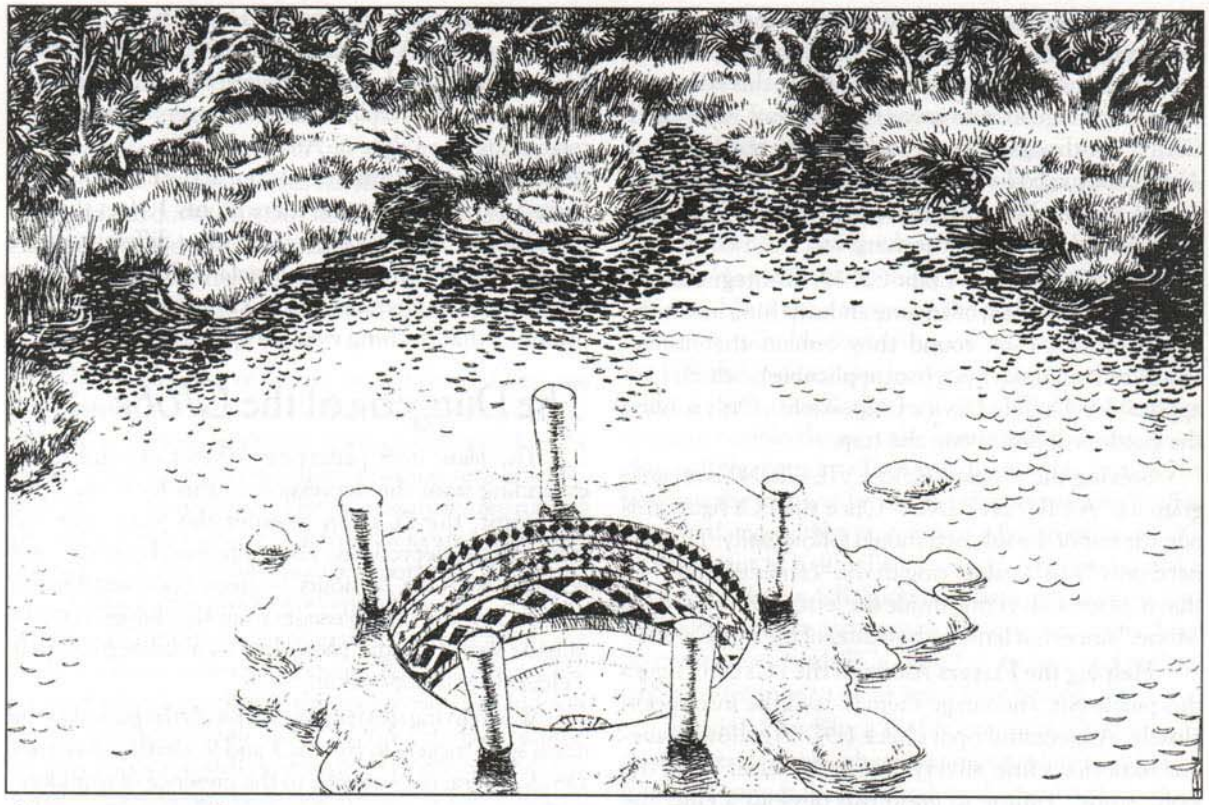
After countless years' passage, the sands of the southern deserts have long since consumed the "civilization" that once thrived there, while men and elves inhabit what were once the "unpopulated foreign lands" of Arden's time.

There exists an ancient map that allegedly depicts a possible location of the island on which the *globe* was hidden. The coastline of those once "foreign lands" seems to correspond to an area of the currently civilized world, though no other maps refer to this island, nor have sailors spoken of it. The map also features these cryptic words, written in a long-forgotten language:

On an island within an island,
Beyond a door that is not a door—
Shielded by the grin of the hated sun—
Lies the *Globe of Arden*, the eye of a dead god,
Stolen long ago by the traitor Asari.

Perhaps this map holds a key to locating the ancient and powerful *Globe of Arden*...

In addition, characters making a Religion check (DC 30) or consulting sages who specialize in ancient religions can obtain the information about Arden. Arden was once worshiped on this plane of existence as a lesser avatar of the sun god, Ra. He was commonly depicted as a hawk-headed, muscular man, wearing a short skirt of precious metals and jewels. He projects searing beams of sunlight from his eyes. His staff is tipped at one end with a bronze sphere, representing the sun and emblazoned with an ankh, and at the other end with a bronze hawk head. Arden also wields a bronze shortsword. Evil deities, Tsathogga the frog-demon among their number, long ago destroyed Arden, but his worshipers gathered and treasured his remains as relics. Ages have passed, however, since Arden was worshiped on this plane.



Arriving at the Island of the *Globe*

The party may have acquired the ancient map from a previously looted treasure hoard or from the sage who related the *globe's* legend. Obtaining the map might also constitute an adventure in its own right. Such an adventure is encouraged, though not detailed here. The map depicts an island located south of normal trade routes, off the coast of a sparsely populated area north of a southern jungle. Thick jungle and swampland cover the island. A large mountain, rising from the center of the island, is reflected in the waters of a lake to its south. Within that lake, a stone outcrop rises above the water's surface. On that inner island lies the entrance to the dungeon.

This module presumes that the PCs have gained the map and traveled overland to a coastal city near the island. From the denizens of this city, skirting the northern border of a vast jungle, PCs can hire a boat to convey them to the island. DMs should spend multiple game sessions detailing this epic journey, foreshadowing trials yet to come.

If you wish to avoid the above trek, you may instead simply begin the module with the PCs having arrived at the island of the globe, passed through the perils of the island and found the inner lake and the rock outcrop on which the dungeon entrance is located. If so, proceed to "The Dungeon Entrance," below. If you wish a more detailed wilderness adventure, both traveling to the island and on the island of the *globe* itself, a list of suggested wilderness encounters as well as a map of the island and the encounters that can be had there are detailed as a free download from the Product Support page of the **Necromancer Games** web site.

The Dungeon Entrance

Once the PCs reach the lake's central island on the Island of the *Globe*, they immediately notice an unnatural depression ringed with 10-foot-tall, rune-covered stone pillars—the only evidence of a humanoid presence on the island. The pillars, heavily worn, have endured the passage of what must have been centuries. The runes are no longer legible. The pillars surround a deep hole, 30 feet in diameter and nearly 20 feet deep. Approaching the edge of the depression, more evidence of humanoid craftsmanship can be seen: the depression, lined with reflective tiles, has thousands of crystal beads set into its surface. PCs descending into the depression notice an inscription encircling a tiny ruby set in black stone. The inscription, shimmering in the sunlight, reads, "Beware the noontime sun if you know not the puzzle behind RAS EVIL GRIN, which is tossed in the center of stone." Each PC perceives the inscription as written in their native language. Strangely, the inscription has not eroded over time.

The DM should write out the inscription and demonstrate how it fully encircles the small ruby; carefully capitalize all the letters of "RAS EVIL GRIN" to assist the PCs in solving the puzzle. If the party does not solve the puzzle by noon, determine whether anyone remains in the depression when the sun reaches its zenith.

At noon, the sun's intense rays strike the central ruby and trigger the **trap**: the ruby-refracted light bounces around the reflective, bead-encrusted depression, heating it to an incredible temperature. Treat any person in the depression when the trap is triggered as hit with a *destruction* spell each round he remains in the depression.

The intensified sunbeams lance around the depression for 10 rounds, after which the sun's angle changes and the heat rays subside. The only way to defeat this effect and enter the dungeon is to solve the puzzle of RAS EVIL GRIN. Tsathogga's priests created this trap to mock Arden, the sun god — harnessing the power of the sun to destroy those followers of Arden attempting to liberate the *globe* hidden within the dungeon.

"Ra's Evil Grin" Trap: CR 10; disintegration, as per a *destruction* spell, of anyone and anything inside the depression for each round they remain therein; no attack roll required. Spot (not applicable); Search (not applicable); Disable Device (impossible). Only solving the puzzle will deactivate the trap.

Solving the Puzzle: "RAS EVIL GRIN" is an anagram for "A SILVER RING." Once the PCs figure this out, the rest of the solution should follow easily. The PCs need only "toss" a silver ring in the "center of stone" — that is, place a silver ring inside the letter "O" of the word "stone," since that letter is the center of the word "stone."

Helping the Players Along: If the PCs can't figure this puzzle out, encourage them to read the inscription closely. A successful Spot check (DC 15) allows someone to notice a fine, silvery dust in the letter 'O' of the word 'stone.' Failing to grasp this obvious a clue, the PCs don't deserve the *Globe of Arden* (or whatever magical goodie awaited their discovery).

The Gems and Beads: An unknown type of magical protection prevents the amplified heat from damaging the gems and beads. Nor can the gems be pried out or removed in any way. PCs attempting such a theft must make a save check (DC 15) for any prying tool used for this action. The item gets a +1 on its save if it is a masterwork item or a magic weapon; it gets a +2 for each "plus." If the save fails, the item breaks; if it succeeds, the item remains whole.

Opening the *Phase Door*: Having solved the puzzle, the players must still wait until noon. If the PCs have properly placed a silver ring in the "O" of "stone," when the sun reaches its zenith, a small crystal cylinder rises from the floor of the tiled depression. The noon sun's light strikes the ruby set in the depression's center, and a dazzling beam of energy immediately shoots from it, striking the crystal cylinder and refracting into a multicolored shower of light. This rainbow strikes the far wall of the depression and creates a shimmering doorway—a phase door that penetrates 10 feet of solid stone and opens into the catacombs below. When the sun passes its zenith, the *phase door* remains.

Unlike the *phase door* spell, an unlimited number of persons and creatures can pass through the door. In addition, the priests of Tsathogga enchanted the rocks that comprise the island; PCs cannot *teleport* or use other, similar means to enter or exit the dungeon (though teleporting within the dungeon is allowed). In addition, the priests enchanted the depression's walls to resist all spells except *disintegrate*. Thus, the only way into or out of the dungeon is the *phase door* or use of a *disintegrate* spell.

The *phase door* remains open for 24 hours, until the following noon. At that time, the cylinder drops into its housing, and the depression again heats like an oven, trapping any PCs still inside the dungeon complex. By recovering the *Globe of Arden*, the PCs could use its *disintegrate* power to blast a way out at the location of the *phase door*, since the stone there is only 10 feet thick. If the *Globe of Arden* is replaced with a different magic item, provide a *scroll of disintegrate* with the final treasure or create an alternative exit. The priests of Tsathogga intended that nothing ever leave this dungeon.

The Dungeon of the *Globe*

The *phase door* penetrates 10 feet of solid stone, extending from the depression to this location. From this point, the PCs can re-enter the *phase door* and return to the depression. The *phase door*, however, only remains open for 24 hours — from noon until noon. Remember: the only passages from the dungeon to the outside world are the *phase door* or a *disintegrate* spell. Teleporting is impossible.

When living matter passes through the *phase door*, an *alarm* spell triggers in Rooms 3 and 9, alerting Asari and Dendorandra, respectively, to the presence of intruders.

1. The Shifting Hallway

The corridor at this point contains large scrape marks on the floor, as if a huge stone block had been dragged over the hallway's paving stones. Any dwarf, gnome or person with the Craft (stone) skill most likely recognizes that a block within this corridor shifts (Stonework or Craft [stone] check at DC 5). Further examination (DC 10) reveals which block: the eastern-most 10-foot stone block in the south wall shifts, apparently sliding north and south.

The Stone Trigger: Careful search of the general area (Search DC 16, Spot DC 22) reveals a stone trigger or button set in the north wall, about 4 feet up the wall, at "A" on the map. The button, a one-cubic-foot stone block, can be pushed inward. Currently flush with the wall, pushing the button inward sets the blocks in motion. The button resets itself, flush to the wall, in one round. Pushing the button again causes the blocks to move in the opposite direction. If the blocks are moving when the button is pushed, the blocks stop for one round, then begin to move backward to their last position. There is no limit to the number of times the button may be pushed. However, there is a 1% chance (non-cumulative) each time the button is pushed that the button sticks and the mechanism malfunctions. The pressure plate at area "D" also triggers the blocks, as described in Room 2, below.

The Shifting Blocks: Once the trigger at "A" is pushed, two blocks within the corridor shift. The first is block "B" —60 feet of solid stone. It moves from its southern position (marked on the map as the solid block

"B"), sliding 10 feet per round northward until it comes to rest against the far northern wall. The block's position when at rest at the north end is marked with dashed lines and the letter "B" on the map.

The second is block "C" —30 feet of solid stone. Unlike block B which slides north and south, block C moves up and down. Initially in its down position, block C fills the corridor at the area marked "C." When the button is pushed, the block rises until flush with the ceiling. It takes 5 rounds for block C to either rise to the ceiling or return to the floor.

The blocks always move in tandem. They are always either "closed" (block B in its southern position and block C flush with the floor of the corridor) or "open" (block B in its northern position and block C flush against the ceiling). The two positions are named for their relation to Room 2. If the blocks are in the open configuration, the PCs can access Room 2; in the closed configuration, the blocks prevent access.

When initially encountered, the blocks are in the closed position, as described above. Pushing button "A" causes the blocks to shift to the open position—block B moves northward and block C rises to the ceiling. Because block B is still shifting by the time block C has stopped, the characters do not initially notice block C.

Finding Block C: If the characters venture down the hallway when the blocks are in the open position, the characters may spot block C (Search DC 14, Spot DC 20). In addition, any dwarf, gnome or person with the Craft (stone) skill can make a check (DC 10) to detect the location of block C, even though it is in its housing, flush with the ceiling. A further check (DC 15) reveals that the block moves up and down.

Getting Caught Between the Blocks: If someone triggers the pressure plate at area "D" (see Room 2, below), the blocks return to the closed position. If the blocks are in the closed position when the plate is triggered, there is no effect. It is therefore possible that characters may be caught between the moving blocks if the plate is triggered when they are trying to escape the room.

After triggering the pressure plate (see below), the characters should make a Listen check (DC 10). Those who succeed hear the sound of grinding stone and realize that the stone blocks are moving; they can then make a Dexterity check (DC 12) to react this round. Any characters failing the Listen or subsequent Dexterity check cannot move during the first round that the blocks are in motion.

The blocks return to their original, closed position. Block B moves 10 feet per round until it returns to its original southern position. Block C descends 1/5th of the distance from the ceiling to the floor per round until it is flush with the floor of the corridor, which takes 5 rounds. Characters may be unable to exit the north/south corridor to the west, where the button is, because block B has moved back into place and closed off the passage; the characters may also be unable to pass descending block C, either into or out of Room 2.

Moving Past Block B: Presuming the blocks are in the open position when the pressure plate is triggered, the characters have 3 rounds to escape through the corridor to the west (presuming they are able to move the first round, which requires the Listen and Dexterity checks detailed above). During the first and second rounds, because block B is not yet obstructing the exit to the western corridor, anyone may move freely through the passage. However, on round 3, the shifting stone block begins to block the passage; by the end of the round, the passage is fully blocked. Anyone attempting to move through the passage into the western corridor during this round must make a Reflex save (DC 20). Those making the save tumble through the aperture just as the block closes off the corridor. Those failing the save are caught between the moving block and the opening and suffer massive damage; they must make a Fortitude save (DC 35) or be cut in half, killed instantly. Those who make the save still take 6d10 points of damage, managing to wiggle through the gap into the western corridor by sheer determination. Such PCs, their legs broken and useless, require assistance to move until fully healed.

Moving Past Block C: Presuming block C is in its raised, open position when the pressure plate is triggered, it takes 5 rounds for the block to descend fully to floor level. For the first two rounds, PCs can move under the descending block with no difficulty, requiring only a little crouching. On the third round of block C's descent, PCs passing under must make a Reflex save (DC 12). Success means they can move their full base movement under the block, and failure means they can only move half their base movement under the block. Running is impossible. On the fourth round, PCs must make a Reflex save (DC 25). Success means they can move half their full base movement under the block, and failure means they are trapped under the block and cannot move. Small characters can add +2 to their saves, while Large characters suffer a –2. On the fifth round, the block settles flush against the floor. Any PCs trapped beneath must make a Fortitude save (DC 35) or be crushed and killed instantly. Those who make the save take 6d10 points of damage and continue to save and take damage every round they are trapped under the block.

"Caught in the Middle": A PC who can't quite make it out might get caught between block B moving south and block C descending. Obviously, block B comes to rest against block C, crushing any PCs caught in the middle. A PC in this situation normally has a few rounds of helpless immobility to contemplate his certain doom. Because block B only moves 10 feet per round, it takes six rounds for block B, after it prevents access to the western corridor, to come to rest against block C. Anyone caught between the blocks must make a Fortitude save (DC 35) or be crushed and killed instantly. Those who make the save take 6d10 points of damage and continue to save and take damage every round they are crushed between the blocks.

Stopping the Blocks: Physically preventing the blocks' movement is impossible. Pushing stone trigger "A" stops the blocks' movement and resets them to their last position. Thus, if the blocks were open and someone triggered pressure plate D, an alert character could reach stone trigger at "A" and push it, sending the blocks—which were on their way to the closed position—back to the open position. Remember: after pushing stone trigger "A," the blocks remain still for one round before reversing direction.

Experience: Set the challenge rating of these blocks carefully. Pushing the button, watching the blocks move but never exploring anything shouldn't be worth anything above CR 2 for the characters. If the trap is triggered, jeopardizing the PCs' lives, DMs should consider treating the trap as CR 10 or more depending on the degree of peril.

2. The False Globe and the Block Trap

Dozens of skeletons are piled in this room. Several wear scraps of rusty armor; all have parts missing. Scratches and scrawling on the walls give evidence that some must have died here. You see tooth marks on some of the bones. Perhaps these skeletons represent previous quests to recover the *globe*; or perhaps they are the servants of the priests of Tsathogga—entombed here once they finished constructing the labyrinth that houses the globe, so that no one would ever learn its hiding place.

False Globe: At the far, eastern end of the room, an altar sits atop a dais, radiating evil. Symbols of the demon frog-god Tsathogga adorn the walls. A glowing globe sits upon the altar. Cautious PCs might feel as though this quest has proved too easy; their suspicion is warranted — this is a trap. The globe, enchanted with *Nystul's magic aura*, radiates magic. It also radiates good. Anyone touching the false globe triggers the **trap**. Touching the globe to disarm the trap does not trigger it, unless the attempt fails by 5 or more.

False Globe with *Chain Lightning* Trap: CR 10; damage as per a *chain lightning* spell cast at 18th level (18d6 damage to the person touching the false globe, and up to 9 bolts of 9d6 damage to anyone within 30 feet), no save for the person touching globe but Reflex save (DC 18) for half for all others; Search (DC 30); Disable Device (DC 30).

Pressure Plate: Located in front of the altar at area "D" on the map is a pressure-plate trap, triggering the blocks at Room 1 to return to their "closed" position. See Room 1, above, for details on how the stone blocks move.

Pressure Plate: CR 4; 100 lb or more triggers blocks at Room 1 to return to "closed" position; Search (DC 25); Disable Device (DC 30).

3. The Evil Chapel

The door opens revealing an evil chapel with an altar carved in the form of a many-armed snake woman. Thirteen white stone pillars stand in a half circle in front of the blood- and skull-covered altar. A single priest chants arcane words as a silver glow envelops his body. Then all goes black.

The priest is **Asari**—the fallen high priest of Arden who long ago stole the *Globe of Arden* and delivered it to the priests of Tsathogga. Tsathogga rewarded Asari's treachery with eternal life as a powerful mummy, making him a consort to Dendorandra, the type V demon (marilith). The chapel area detects as evil, and because of its utter evil, turning of the undead is impossible within its confines. In addition, all divine spellcasting has a 20% chance of failure, except that of chaotic evil priests.

Asari, the Mummy Priest, Cle9 (Tsathogga): CR 12; SZ Medium Undead; HD 6d12+9d8; hp 95; Init -1; Spd 20 ft.; AC 26; Atk +12/+7 melee (1d6+3, buffet plus disease); SA spells, death touch, despair, mummy rot, smite good; SQ damage reduction (5/+1), resistance to blows, vulnerable to fire; AL CE; SV Fort +7, Ref +3, Will +12; Str 17, Dex 8, Con —, Int 12, Wis 18, Cha 15.

Skills: Concentration +12, Hide +5, Listen +5, Move Silently+9, Scry +12, Spellcraft +12, Spot +8 (+13). *Feats:* Alertness, Armor Proficiency (heavy), Combat Casting, Spell Penetration.

Divine Spells (6/5/5/4/3/1): 0— guidance, inflict minor wounds (x3), resistance, virtue; 1st — bane, doom, endure elements, entropic shield, obscuring mists; 2nd — desecrate, hold person (x2), shatter, sound burst; 3rd — bestow curse, deeper darkness, meld into stone, protection from elements; 4th — poison, spell immunity (magic missile, fireball), summon monster IV; 5th—insect plague.

Domain Spells (Destruction/Water): 1st — obscuring mist, 2nd — fog cloud, 3rd — contagion, 4th — inflict critical wounds, 5th — circle of doom.

Domain Powers: Death Touch (touch attack, roll 9d6; if total equals or exceeds the target's current hit points, he dies. No save); Smite Good (1/day can attack a good-aligned creature at +4 to attack and +9 damage).

Possessions: Plate mail armor, *eyes of doom*, *helm of awareness* (magical helm that adds +4 awareness bonus to all Spot and Search checks), silver unholy symbol of Tsathogga, *cursed robe of vermin* (worn by Asari, but it has no effect on him).

Tactics: Asari begins combat by protecting himself from fire using his *protection from elements* spell, then casting *entropic shield*, *desecrate* and *spell immunity* as the party enters. The *alarm* spell, triggered by the PCs at the *phase door*, warned Asari of their arrival. After using his *insect plague* and *summon monster IV* (3 dretches) spells, Asari advances to attack. Remember: Asari can use the *eyes of doom* each round as a free action. Asari uses *meld into stone* if seriously threatened and reappears a few feet away to resume his attack. He also enjoys using his *fog cloud* and *obscuring mist*.

The Altar: If Asari is killed, the face of the many-armed snake woman animates, and a female voice intones, "Little men, your powers are nothing to me. I would have destroyed all of you long before this, but I enjoy breaking

such miserable creatures as you with my bare hands. Humans beg so wonderfully, shrieking and crying as I slowly pull them apart!" Looking at a spellcaster in the group, the female voice adds, "Perhaps I shall use you a replacement for my last companion — the one you so thoughtlessly destroyed." The statue then resolidifies amid distant laughter.

4. The Maze

It should be obvious to the PCs that they are about to enter a maze. Navigating this maze ultimately leads to area 8. The maze does not present much difficulty and can be navigated by normal means. Note that, to pass through the doors at area 7, the secret door at Room 5 must eventually be discovered.

The maze is divided into three sections:

- Section 4A leads eventually to the doors at area 7. No monsters roam this section.
- Section 4B leads nowhere; **2 ochre jellies** wander around this section. (There is a 1 on 1d6 chance per 5 rounds of encountering one of the jellies.)
- Section 4C of the maze leads to the secret door at Room 5, below.

Ochre Jellies (2): CR 5; Large Ooze; HD 6d10+27; hp 85; Init –5; Spd 10 ft., climb 10 ft.; AC 4; Atk +5 melee (2d4+3, slam plus 1d4 acid); Face/Reach 5 ft. x 10 ft./10 ft.; SA acid, constrict, improved grab; SQ blindsight (60 ft.), ooze, split; AL N; SV Fort +4, Ref –3, Will –3; Str 15, Dex 1, Con 15, Int —, Wis 1, Cha 1.

Skills: None. *Feats:* None.

5. Traps and Keys

A secret stone door, locked and trapped, bars entrance to this small room. Opening the secret door without disabling the **trap** triggers it.

Secret Spear Trapped Stone Door: CR 3; 1 in. thick; Hardness 8; hp 20; Search (DC 20); Break (DC 30); Open Lock (DC 25). **Spear Trap:** Three spears fire out through the secret door when opened, +12 ranged (2d8 [x3], crit x3); Search (DC 20); Disable Device (DC 20). Note: 200 ft. max range; target(s) determined randomly from those in its path.

Behind the secret door, on the far wall of this area, are four hooks, from each of which hangs a large key — one made of silver, one of bronze, one of lead and one of brass. PCs need them to open the iron doors at area 7.

6. The Second False Globe

A secret stone door, locked and trapped, bars entrance to this small room, which holds a second false *globe*. Opening the secret door without disabling the **trap** triggers it.

Secret Spear Trapped Stone Door: CR 3; 1 in. thick; Hardness 8; hp 20; Search (DC 20); Break (DC 30); Open Lock (DC 25). **Spear Trap:** Three spears fire out through the secret door when opened, +12 ranged (2d8 [x3], crit x3); Search (DC 20); Disable Device (DC 20). Note: 200 ft. max range, target(s) determined randomly from those in its path.

Opening the secret door reveals a small chamber. Its walls are barren and crudely worked, and the chamber's floor is unworked earth. Rudely placed in a stone basin set in the east wall, shrouded by a black cloth covered with evil runes, sits what appears to be an orb. The vile black cloth cannot mask the light emanating from the orb beneath.

The writing on the cloth, in Abyssal, appears to be some sort of curse of darkness. The cloth detects as evil and as magic. However, this is all a ruse (again), as the cloth is falsely enchanted to detect as evil and magic. Touching the cloth triggers the equivalent of a *poison* spell (1d10/1d10 temporary Con damage, Fortitude save DC 17 negates).

The orb beneath glows with a bright holy light, as if radiating a *daylight* spell and good. This globe, like its predecessor, is enchanted with *Nystul's magic aura*. Anyone touching the second false globe triggers the **trap**. Touching the globe to disarm the trap does not trigger the trap, unless the attempt fails by 5 or more.

False Globe with *Chain Lightning* and *Slay Living* Trap: CR 8; damage as per a *chain lightning* spell cast at 18th level (18d6 damage to the person touching the false globe, and up to 9 bolts of 9d6 damage to anyone within 30 feet), no save for person touching globe, but Reflex save (DC 18) for half for all others; the person touching the *globe* is also stricken as per *slay living* spell (person touching *globe* is instantly slain, Fortitude save DC 17 avoids instant death but victim suffers 3d6+18 points of damage); Search (DC 30); Disable Device (DC 30).

Northern Secret Door: At the north end of the chamber, a second secret door, this one expertly hidden and unlocked, opens into a passage that leads to the iron portals at area 7, below.

Expertly Hidden Secret Door: CR 5; 3 in. thick; Hardness 8; hp 45; Search (DC 35); Break (DC 35).

7. Riddles at the Gate

A set of great iron portals bars the PCs way. The two doors, constructed of the finest material, are engraved with arcane writings. In the center of each door is an elaborate, rune-etched lock with several strange keyholes.

Each door is built from 4-inch-thick magical iron with 1-inch-wide internal channels that run both horizontally and vertically, through which adamantine bars have been inserted. These bars slide away when the locks are disengaged. The lock on the right-hand door causes the vertical bars to retract, and the lock on the left-hand door causes the horizontal bars to retract, thus unlocking the door. Attempting to pick the lock, instead of using the four keys from Room 5, triggers the **trap**. In addition, using the keys improperly subjects the PC(s) to electrical damage.

Trapped, Locked Adamantine-reinforced Iron Portals: CR 5; 4 in. thick; Hardness 15; hp 130; damage resistance (20/+5); spell resistance (immune to all



spells except *wish* and *miracle*); Break (DC 50); Open Lock (DC 40); any failed attempt to pick the lock results in the character being stricken by a *slay living* spell (Fortitude save DC 17 avoids instant death, but victim suffers 3d6+18 points of damage); failing to use the keys in the proper manner or force the door subjects the PC to 2d6 electrical damage, no save.

Each of the two doors has four keyholes and a riddle that explains how to unlock it. Once both halves are opened, the doors can be swung wide into the cave at area 8.

The Riddle on the Right-hand Door: Four colored metal plates in symbolic shapes comprise the lock in the door's center. The shaped plates, each with a keyhole at its center, are as follows: a brass table, a lead sword, a bronze coffin, and a silver diamond. Each lock appears designed to accept a normal-sized key. Surrounding the locks is the following inscription written in magical runes (requiring *read magic*):

One man makes me, does not need me.

One man buys me, does not use me.

One man uses me, does not see me.

Solution: The answer to the riddle is "coffin." When the bronze key is inserted into the coffin-shaped bronze lock, it slides back to reveal a second, coffin-shaped silver lock. If this is in turn opened with the silver key, it reveals a coffin-shaped lead lock, which when opened in turn reveals a coffin-shaped brass lock. Each lock must be opened with the key of similar metal. Using the keys in any other manner causes 2d6 electrical damage. Once all four locks are opened, the characters hear a loud, grinding sound, as the vertical interlocking adamantine bars within the doors slide away. PCs cannot yet open the doors until the left-hand door is unlocked.

The Riddle on the Left-hand Door: Four, square faceplates comprise the locks in the door's center—one each of silver, lead, bronze and brass. Surrounding the locks is the following inscription, written in magical runes (requiring *read magic*):

I fall first the heaviest, and then heaviest from a man's purse.

Solution: The answers are "lead" (because it is the heaviest of the four metals) and "silver" (because coins are made of it). Only by inserting and turning the lead key in the lead lock and the silver key in the silver lock does this half of the door unlock. Using the keys in any other manner causes 2d6 electrical damage. Once both locks are opened, the characters hear a loud, grinding sound as the horizontal interlocking adamantine bars within the doors slide away. PCs cannot yet open the doors until the right-hand door is unlocked.

Once both doors are unlocked — both sets of adamantine bars have withdrawn — they swing open freely, all traps disabled.

8. The Gloomy Cavern

This cave contains large piles of bones, loose rocks, rusty swords, armor and the rotten remains of packs and other soft goods. An eerie, howling wind blows through this place and an otherworldly light emanates from Room 9. There are no monsters here. The demon in Room 9 can create animated servants from these bones.

Treasure: In one of the piles of bones, a *detect magic* spell reveals a *+2 large wooden shield* beneath a large pile of rusty metal.

9. The Guardian

A set of stairs, hewn from the red stone of the living rock of the cave itself, descends about 30 feet to a room of roughly worked stone. Strange crystals are set into its walls. A huge pile of silver and gold glitters and shines in the center of the room.

The monster in this room, initially *invisible*, attacks once the PCs get close, revealing herself. Tsathogga commissioned **Dendorandra the type V demon** (known as a "marilith" in the Third Edition rules) to guard the *Globe of Arden*. She knows that she will suffer eternal torment should she fail in her task.

Dendorandra the Type V Demon (Marilith): CR 12; SZ Large Outsider [Chaos, Evil]; HD 9d8+45; hp 85; Init +2; Spd 40 ft.; AC 29; Atk +16/+16/+11 melee (1d8+8, *+3 longsword of speed*), +14 melee (1d8+6 [x3], *+1 longswords*), +14 melee (1d8+6 [x2], *+1 longspears*) and +11 melee (4d6+7, tail, touch attack plus constrict); Reach 15 ft. constrict, 10 ft. with longspears, 5 ft. with swords; SA spell-like abilities, gating, grab, constriction; SQ cold and fire resistance (20), damage reduction (20/+2), darkvision (120 ft.), electricity and poison immunity, spell resistance (25); AL CE; SV Fort +11, Ref +8, Will +10; Str 21, Dex 15, Con 21, Int 18, Wis 18, Cha 16.

Skills: Spellcraft +14, Move Silently +12, Concentration +14, Hide +14, Bluff +13, Intuit Motive +14, Search +14, Spot +15, Listen +14, Scry +14. Mariliths gain a +8 bonus to listen and spot checks. *Feats:* Cleave, Power attack, Multi-attack.

Tactics: Dendorandra relishes combat. She fights with four longswords and two longspears in her six arms — one is a *+3 longsword of speed*, named Xpatias (literally "frogsticker" in Abyssal). The remaining swords and spears are all *+1*. Prior to the encounter, Dendorandra activates her *magic circle against good*, *see invisibility*, *unholy aura* and *polymorph self* abilities. She assumes the form of a loathsome horsefly. She buzzes around, choosing her victim. She uses *unholy blight* on the party and shifts back into her true form. She then *animates* 12 skeletons to encircle the party, if possible, and herd it into her next attack. Dendorandra begins the melee with a *cloudkill* effect on her position, since she is immune to poison and thus unaffected. She also attempts to *gate* in 1d4 hezrous to occupy the fighters (she prefers hezrou demons, as they fear her blades and serve her willingly, joining her in the frenzied bloodlust). She attacks lightly armored individuals first and concentrates on one victim until that person is dead. If she can grab and constrict someone, she *teleports* him away and kills him before returning. Dendorandra can *teleport* 500 pounds' worth of items. If wounded to over half her hit points, she *teleports* into the large cavern and animates more skeletons to help her (12 per round). In this evil complex, Dendorandra cannot be turned. If a priest tries to turn her or if someone hits her with holy water, she flies into a rage and blindly attacks that person until one or both are slain.

DM Note: Do not underestimate the power of her constriction attack since it deals 4d6+7 damage per round plus possible unconsciousness!

Xpatias, Longsword of Speed +3: Int 15, Wis 13, Chr 18, Ego 22, speaks, reads and telepathically communicates in Common, Infernal and Celestial. The wielder gets one additional attack at her best attack value each round. Of chaotic-neutral alignment, any chaotic (good, neutral or evil) PC may use Xpatias. Non-chaotic creatures touching Xpatias suffer 1d4/1d4 temporary Con damage (Fortitude save DC 22 avoids) as if poisoned each time they touch the sword. It also has the following powers: The wielder has free use of the Blindfight feat and can *see invisible*. The sword detects amphibians within 100 feet and drives the wielder into a rage against those amphibians (like the barbarian power) if an ego test is failed (Will save at DC 22). The wielder can cast *shield* on his person twice per day. The sword's special purpose is to slay amphibians, including hezrou demons, and its special power is *hold monster* on all hits on amphibians (normal save applies, as per the spell).

Treasure: Other than the very magic sword, the pile of gold and silver consists of 4,000 gp and 20,000 sp. Under the pile of coins, a **secret hatch** opens into a passage — a 3-foot-diameter crawlspace of tiled stone — leading to Room 10. There is no magical way to detect the secret door.

Secret Hatch: CR 2; Spot (DC30); Search (DC 25); 1 in. thick; Hardness 8; hp 30; Break (DC 30); Open Lock (DC 25).

10. The Treasure Room

A dim glow can be seen at the end of the tiny passage leading to this room. The PCs emerge into a 5-foot-square room containing a chest and a silver coffer. Both vessels look to be thousands of years old and are covered with ancient and arcane runic and hieroglyphic inscriptions. Fine locks of ancient construction on both items look untouched, as though undisturbed for centuries.

Treasure: Both vessels are locked and trapped. The chest, made of iron, is worth 1,000 gp intact. The coffer, made of mithril silver, is worth 4,000 gp intact. Their value drops to 1/5 the estimate if they are broken open.

The Chest: The chest contains the following 10 gems, sized from 1 carat to as large as a fist: a 10,000 gp uncut corundum sphere (the largest item); a 1,000 gp ruby; a 3,000 gp sapphire; a 6,000 gp emerald; a 2,000 gp garnet; a 8,000 gp opal; a 6,000 gp topaz; a 4,000 gp aquamarine; a large piece of jade worth 4,500 gp; and a 2,500 gp black opal.

Locked Iron Chest: 1 in. thick; Hardness 10; hp 40; Break (DC 30); Open Lock (DC 25). **Poison Gas Trap:** CR 10; releases burnt othur fumes filling a 10-foot-radius sphere (see Poisons in the *DMG*); Search (DC 21); Disable Device (DC 25).

The Coffer: The coffer cannot be magically opened with an *open/close* or *knock* spell due to the unknown



protective runes of a magic-retarding nature. Inside the coffer is an odd, unidentifiable and glowing gem, about 12 inches in diameter, made of a milky-glasslike substance. This is (finally) the *Globe of Arden*—a powerful artifact!

Locked Mithril Coffer: 1 in. thick; Hardness 15; hp 40; Break (DC 40); Open Lock (DC 35). **Lightning Blast Trap:** CR 5; 5-foot-wide, 50-foot-long blast (10d6); no save because of the room's size; Search (DC 26); Disable Device (DC 25).

The *Globe of Arden*: The *globe* has the following powers:

- The *globe* raises its owner one experience level while floating around his head (like an *Ioun stone*).
- It continuously casts *daylight* (its owner cannot cancel this effect, though the *globe* can be put in a sealed container, which negates the *daylight* but also prevents use of any of the *globe's* powers).
- It can cast *shocking grasp* (3/day) at its owner's level.
- It can cast *commune* (1/month) with the god Arden.
- It can cast *searing light* (1/day) and *sunbeam* (1/day) at the its owner's level.

When the *globe's* owner uses any of these powers, she loses all body hair permanently. The globe also has an incredible primary power (which can only be discerned by *legend lore*): it can cast a *disintegrate* beam (1/week). The user must invoke the name of Arden or Ra to use this power then make a ranged touch attack. Any target hit must make a Fortitude save (DC 31). If the save fails, the object hit is utterly destroyed. If the save is successful, the target instead takes 10d10 points of damage and makes a massive damage check (see the *DMG*). If the ranged touch attack misses its target, the attack still hits a randomly determined target. If used against nonliving matter, the beam disintegrates 20 cubic feet of it. Otherwise, the ray functions as per a *disintegrate* spell. Each time the primary power is used, the *globe's* owner loses one point of Constitution permanently unless a successful Constitution check (DC 22) is made. Evil creatures touching the *globe* suffer 5d6 damage with no save.

The Pit of Despair

Introduction

Designed for a high-level (13+) party, this module details an adventure to recover the *Sword of Karith*, a +5 *holy avenger longsword*. Not the straight-forward hack-and-slash treasure hunt your players will be expecting, this adventure is instead a trap laid by the forces of evil to corrupt and destroy their greatest enemy: paladins.

At the direction of Orcus, the demon-god of undead, a type IV ("nalfeshnee") demon named Caanara misappropriated the *Sword of Karith* and hid it in a desert temple, called the Temple of the Justicars. Adding to his villainy, Caanara also replaced the *Sword of Karith* with an *unholy sword*, which Orcus heavily enchanted to mimic the *Sword of Karith*. Knowing paladins simply cannot resist a holy quest to recover a lost, magic sword, the forces of evil have created a win-win situation. Up-and-coming paladins attempting to find the temple and recover the sword will either be killed outright during their quest or be utterly corrupted when they inadvertently recover the *unholy sword*, believing it to be the *Sword of Karith*. This adventure, then, has two possible outcomes: either the PCs all die or they recover an evil and corrupting *unholy sword*. Cruel treatment of the characters, you say? Evil? Wicked? Dastardly? Exactly.

DMs thus must be at their most deceptive, skirting that thin line between gunning for your players and running a complex deception fairly. DMs must run this adventure with an understanding that it was crafted by extraordinarily intelligent deity-like demons whose goals are deception, corruption and slaughter. For instance, do not refer to this adventure as **The Pit of Despair**. Instead, call it **The Temple of the Justicars** or **The Quest for the *Sword of Karith***. Do nothing to tip off the do-gooding heroes to the presence of the trap.

The party's initial trip to the Temple of the Justicars most likely results in their defeating the demon guardians and recovering the false *holy sword*, thus corrupting the party's paladin. This unlucky soul will then need to perform an act of *atonement* to cleanse himself of his unwilling sins and recover his paladinhood once he realized his corruption. Learining that the destruction of the false *holy sword* is the only means of atonement, the PCs no doubt attempt a second trip to the temple, where they return with the *unholy sword* in an attempt to destroy it along with the demon Caanara, and recover the true *Sword of Karith*.

DMs should feel free to replace Orcus, the demon-god of undead, and Thyr and Muir, the god of law and the goddess of virtue and paladins, respectively, with those gods most appropriate to their campaign. For more information on Thyr and Muir, visit the "Product Support" page of the **Necromancer Games** web site (*www.necromancergames.com*) and key in the product support password for this module.

The Legend of the *Holy Sword of Karith*

For the Players

PC paladins are familiar with the legend of Karith—a heroic paladin of old who roamed the lands as a champion of good, wielding a wondrous sword of great power. Consulting a sage or casting a *legend lore* spell reveals the true history of Karith and his holy sword.

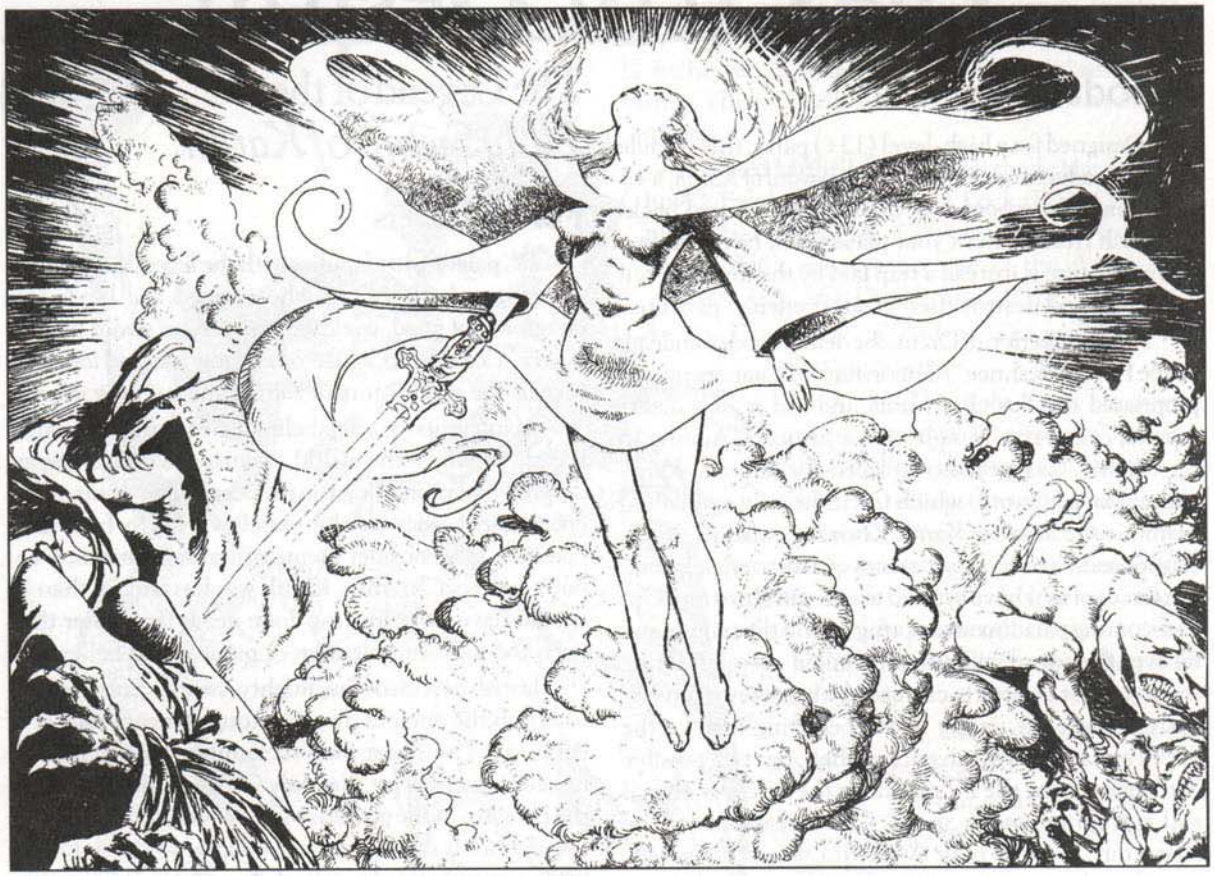
Many years ago, a paladin of great renown, named Karith, roamed the world, righting wrongs, slaying dragons and protecting the innocent. The deeds of this great man border on the unbelievable. In fact, most common folk consider them great exaggerations, if not outright myth. In truth, Karith was less famous than he should have been, having done deeds far greater than even the most superstitious or pious would believe.

Karith wielded the mighty sword, Entrancacor, which in the ancient dwarven tongue means "slayer of demons." The finest dwarven smiths and enchanters forged this sword for the Holy Order of the Justicars—the paladins of the goddess Muir—over 1,000 years ago. Legend holds that no greater weapon was ever forged, before or since. Tales tell of demon armies recoiling from a lone man wielding this sword. The sword was passed from grandmaster to grandmaster within the holy order over many generations, and Karith was the last grandmaster of the Justicars.

As Karith neared the end of his life, the gods of good bade him wait patiently for his successor to appear. However, no paladin of the order then living was sufficiently worthy of bearing the sword and becoming grandmaster. Some held promise, yet none sufficiently distinguished himself from his peers. The high priests of the temple of Thyr and Muir—the god of law and the goddess of virtue and paladins, respectively—*communed* with their gods and were instructed to have faith. After several years passed with no worthy successor appearing, a female celestial of Muir visited the priests. In angelic splendor, the celestial instructed the high priests to relinquish the sword into her keeping. She revealed her plan to set the sword in a temple, hidden in a valley deep within a distant desert, where it would await discovery by a paladin worthy to retrieve it and bear it forth again. By its recovery, the celestial told the priests, they would know the new grandmaster of paladins. Legends call the resting place of the sword the "Temple of the Justicars." Though many brave paladins have attempted the sword's recovery, to this day, none has succeeded.

For the DM

The avatar mentioned above, who retrieved and hid the sword, was unrelated either to Thyr or Muir, and



was instead Caanara, a type IV, "nalfeshnee" demon, sent by Orcus to steal the sword and place it beyond the reach of those serving Thyr and Muir. A master of deception, Orcus also gave his demon a false sword, called Entranhumani ("slayer of humans"), with which to dupe and despoil any paladins who successfully locate the hiding place of Entrancacor. Orcus bound his demon to the sword's resting place and commanded him to guard it. DMs should remember that nowhere in the legends are these demons mentioned; instead, convince any questing paladin that his god's avatar took the sword. The PCs should expect a "quest to find a sword belonging to the good guys" adventure, not an evil trap set by the worst enemies of law and good.

The methods by which the PCs discover the exact location of the Pit of Despair are up to the DM. The *holy sword's* hiding place is a well-kept secret. Because demons do not want a powerful enemy running around slaughtering their kind with so powerful a weapon, even they go to great pains to keep the location a mystery — however fond they are of using the ruse to destroy up-and-coming paladins. And there are never any survivors of failed quests to question—their deaths mistakenly attributed to the paladin's excess pride or arrogant belief in his own worthiness to bear the sword. When in reality he was yet another victim of Orcus' and Caanara's treachery and deception.

Consultation with a sage is, perhaps, the best way to set the adventure in motion. The sage could direct the PCs to a secluded sect of Muir's priests. Those priests, should they deem the party's paladin worthy, provide him with a copy of a map to the Valley of the Temple of the Justicars — the rumored hiding place of the *Sword of Karith*. They also inform the paladin that the legends reveal that "only someone who is prayerful and devout and who sees with the eyes of faith can find the entrance to the Temple."

Other methods of discovering the location of the Pit of Despair include a treasure map, a holy text found secreted away in a vast library, a message scratched onto an abandoned shield or breastplate, a divinely bestowed vision, or consultation of the oracle at Rappan Athuk.

Traveling to the Temple of the Justicars

After learning the location of the Temple of the Justicars, as described above, the PCs must travel to the edge of the desert and beyond to the Valley of the Temple. DMs should make this an arduous journey fraught with danger to provide the right "feel" for a holy quest.

To reach the general location of the Pit of Despair, the party must travel through a wilderness stretching 180 miles beyond the last human settlement. The first 120 miles involve traveling to the edge of the desert and should be dangerous, though not overly so. Once the PCs reach the edge of the desert, they must then travel

an additional 60 miles through it until they reach the Valley of the Temple.

DMs wishing to avoid a prolonged wilderness trek can proceed directly to the section entitled, "The Entrance to the Pit of Despair," below. However, DMs are encouraged to run wilderness encounters as the PCs travel to the Valley of the Temple. This increases the "epic quest" feeling of the adventure, making the PCs more likely be duped when they recover the false *holy sword* after their major battle in the Pit. Otherwise, the PCs might get suspicious if the quest is too easy. A free download is available from the Product Support page of the **Necromancer Games** web site detailing appropriate wilderness encounters for the trek to the Valley of the Temple, including an encounter with evil priests, a vampire-led group of undead and a blue dragon servant of Orcus.

The Entrance to the Pit of Despair

The PCs have traveled miles through the desert and have finally reached this forsaken place—the Valley of the Temple. Their map guides them into a cleft in the red-rock wall. They travel the narrow path in the shade of the looming walls for over an hour, and emerge from between the two large walls of rock into a small canyon, open to the sky.

The canyon ends in a worked wall of red stone, similar to that of the surrounding rock. The floor of the canyon is sand. Worked-stone entrances are set into the wall at various heights. The entrances all have the same general appearance: a 10-foot-high archway flanked by bas-relief statues of knights in mail. There is no detail that distinguishes one from the other. They do not detect as evil, good or magic.

To access the entrances—which do not have ledges in front of them—the PCs must find a way to climb the face of the canyon wall, which is nearly vertical. They can do this by climbing (Climb check at DC 25; DC 20 in the corners of the canyon) or using magic, such as *dimension door*, *fly*, *levitate* or *teleport*.

Climatic conditions in the Valley of the Temple run to extremes: unbearably hot during the day (exceeding 110° at noon) and freezing cold at night (dipping below 0° from 1 AM to 3 AM). This inhospitable region offers no source of water and no natural source of shade to shield the PCs from the sun. The DM should consult the rules regarding Heat Dangers and Cold Dangers in the *DMG*. In addition, the PCs may run short of food or water. If so, consult the rules for Starvation and Thirst Dangers in the *DMG*. Strong winds also plague the valley. Check once every hour on 1d20 with the following results: 1-10: no wind, 11-15: moderate wind, 16-17: strong wind, 18-19: severe wind, 20: windstorm. The winds in the canyon only last for 3d10 minutes. Any time strong or severe winds arise, there is a 50% chance that a dust storm accompanies them. In addition, any windstorm is always accompanied by a dust storm, with a 75% chance of a greater dust storm. The winds themselves, of extreme temperature, do nothing to reduce the effects of heat or cold. See the *DMG* under Weather Hazards for the game effects associated with these winds and dust storms.

Wandering Monsters: Aside from the weather, one other danger threatens the PCs. There is a 1 on 1d10 chance per hour during the hours of darkness that **1d6 huge monstrous scorpions** descend into the canyon to attack the PCs. There is an endless supply of these scorpions. They infest the surrounding hills.

Huge Monstrous Scorpions: CR 6; SZ Huge Vermin (20 ft. long, 10 ft. wide, 3 ft. tall); HD 16d8+32; hp 112; Init +0; Spd 50 ft.; AC 18; Atk +15 melee (1d8+5 [x2], claws) and +10 melee (2d4+2, sting plus poison); Face/Reach 10 ft. x 20 ft./10 ft.; SA improved grab, poison, squeeze; SQ vermin; AL N; SV Fort +12, Ref +5, Will +5; Str 21, Dex 10, Con 14, Int —, Wis 10, Cha 2.

Skills: Climb +16, Hide +4, Spot +11. *Feats:* None.

False Entrances: All of the obvious entrances are false entrances, leading to caves and passages but not to the Temple of the Justicars. Each such cave has a 1-3 on 1d6 chance of being occupied by **1d4 huge monstrous scorpions**, which immediately attack the PCs. Each cave also houses a sarcophagus of marble, carved to represent a knight in mail on the stone lid. Each such sarcophagus has a 1-4 on 1d6 chance of containing the remains of a knight in full plate mail with a sword (of random type) and shield. If remains are present, there is a 1 on 1d6 chance for each that the mail or the sword is enchanted. If enchanted, roll 1d6: 1-4: the item is *+1*, 5-6: the item is *+2*. These remains are, in fact, the corpses of paladins killed during their quest to recover the *Sword of Karith*. The demons have "entombed" the remains to look like the final resting place of revered heroes. The demons find this false reverence very entertaining.

The Real Entrance to the "Temple of the Justicars": The actual entrance to the Pit of Despair is hidden from mortal eyes. Only a paladin under the effects of a both a *prayer* (or who is performing some similarly extreme action, putting her in the proper religious frame of mind) and a *true seeing* spell even has a chance to see the entrance. Such a paladin must still make a Spot check (DC 20) to see the entrance. Powerful magic prevents any other means of detecting the entrance, short of a *wish* or a *miracle*. Even *find the path* does not reveal the entrance. Once the real entrance is exposed, that paladin can thereafter see the entrance as plainly as the false ones. She can direct others to pass through the entrance.

The DM should make it very difficult—though not impossible—to locate the true entrance. Let the party search for several days and suffer the temperature extremes and begin to despair and contemplate abandoning the quest. After no fewer than 3 days' searching, the DM might take pity on the party and give it the

following clue: between midnight and 2 AM, a faint glow can be seen (Spot DC 25 without *true seeing*) from the portion of the cliff face where the true entrance is located. This clue doesn't let the PCs see the actual entrance; it just gives them a hint that there is something there they haven't discovered. They still need to cast *true seeing* and *prayer* on a paladin to see the real entrance. If the PCs still can't find the entrance, prod them to the proper solution by reminding them of the words of the priests that "only someone prayerful and devout and who sees with the eyes of faith can find the entrance to the Temple."

Once located, the entrance threshold may be crossed at will. There are no doors, locks or traps on the entrance. A winding, 10-foot-diameter, roughly worked tunnel leads 120 feet to area 1.

Note: Because the Pit of Despair is a source of conflict between good and evil deities, any spells, such as *commune*, *divination* or *find the path*, cast in an attempt to learn the location of the entrance or the consequences of future actions will have no result. DMs might imply that Thyr and Muir want the PCs to find and recover the *sword* on their own merits, without guidance. Remind them: this is a test of faith and virtue, which can only be surmounted by noble, unguided, individual action. In reality, Orcus himself is watching the PCs and actively disrupting any contact with their good-aligned deities; he cannot, however, interfere with *miracle* spells.

The Pit of Despair

Three areas comprise the Pit of Despair. The first, a large underground amphitheater resembling a temple to Thyr and Muir, functions as the false "Temple of the Justicars." The second area, the pit itself, contains a false avatar of Muir (really an altered nalfeshnee) and the *unholy sword*. The final area, an evil altar room, contains an unholy shrine to Orcus, with the *Sword of Karith* encased in blackest stone. The first two areas are enchanted with a strong magic that both masks alignment and projects a lawful-good alignment. This enchantment does not mask the alignment of the demons (though the *unholy sword* masks Caanara's alignment). Additional shields prevent detection of the third area.

1. The "Temple of the Justicars"

The entrance room is a large temple, designed to resemble an amphitheater. Three, tiered series of pews lead down to a flat central area that features an altar. A recessed area at the far side of the room is lined with columns, ending with a statue of Muir. The recess contains a large pit, 30 feet across, around which mists swirl, obscuring view within. The only inhabitants of the chamber—five robed priests of Muir—chant and dance around the pit. The walls of the amphitheater and the pillars are worked with images of knights in full armor.

The First Visit

At first glance, the room resembles a temple of Muir — austere and dignified with clean, white marble columns, altars and statues. Holy runes and glyphs cover the walls. Careful inspection reveals subtle defacement of the holy images (Knowledge [religion] check at DC 15), vaguely suggesting an evil presence. The room detects as good; however, the dancing priests clearly detect as evil — because they are, in fact, **5 type I "vrock" demons** dancing their Dance of Ruin. They attack immediately.

PCs making an Intelligence check (DC 15) notice that the priests are a little too tall to be human. Clerics and paladins making a Knowledge (religion) check (DC 20) realize that the priests' dance is not of any known ritual in the worship of Thyr or Muir. PCs making a Knowledge (demons) check (DC 20) recognize the dance as the Dance of Ruin, as do PCs making a Knowledge (religion) check (DC 25).

Type I "Vrock" Demons (5): CR 13; SZ Large Outsider [Chaos, Evil]; HD 8d8+24; hp 60; Init +2; Spd 30 ft., fly 50 ft. (average); AC 25; Atk +11 melee (1d8+4 [x2], claws), +9 melee (1d6+2, bite), +9 melee (1d4+2 [x2], rake); Reach 10 ft.; SA spell-like abilities, dance of ruin, gating, screech, spores; SQ damage reduction (20/+2); cold, acid and fire resistance (20); darkvision; electricity and poison immunity; spell resistance (22); telepathy; AL CE; SV Fort +9, Ref +8, Will +8; Str 19, Dex 15, Con 17, Int 14, Wis 14, Cha 12.

Skills: Concentration +14, Hide +9, Knowledge (arcana) +12, Listen +13, Move Silently+13, Search +13, Sense Motive +13, Spellcraft +12, Spot +12. Vrocks gain a +8 bonus to listen and spot checks. *Feats:* Cleave, Multiattack, Power attack.

Tactics of the Vrocks: When the PCs first enter the amphitheater, the vrocks, disguised as robed priests of Muir, are gathered in a circle dancing around the pit and chanting. They started their dance when the party passed through the hidden entrance, completing it the first round the party is fully within the room—which becomes the first round of combat. If the characters have not yet grown suspicious of the dancing priests, the immediate discharge of crackling evil energy convinces them. Once the Dance of Ruin effect occurs, the vrocks on subsequent rounds cast *mirror image* (round 2) and attempt to *gate* in 2d10 dretches each (35% change of success) (round 3), after which three vrocks *teleport* to their selected victims (spellcasters), use their Screech ability and attack. The two remaining vrocks use their *mass charm* ability to convince noncombatants that jumping into the pit is their only hope of escape. If the PCs engage them in combat (or if the vrocks' *mass charm* ability fails), the vrocks switch to melee attacks and fight until slain, using Screech attacks. All vrocks use their special Spores attack every third round as a free action against any targets in range. They *teleport* around

the room to maintain their combat advantage. They focus their initial attacks on spellcasters and priests, dodging fighters and *teleporting* away from them. Once the spellcasters are eliminated, the vrocks concentrate on those heroic paladins. PCs killed in the Pit have their souls taken directly to the Abyss where Orcus himself feasts on them. They cannot be retrieved or *raised* without divine intervention, such as by a *miracle* spell, or by a *wish* or *limited wish*.

Dretch: CR 2; SZ Small Outsider [Chaos, Evil]; HD 2d8; hp 9; Init +0; Spd 20 ft.; AC 16; Atk +1 melee (1d4, bite), +3 melee (1d4 [x2], claws); SA spell-like abilities, gating; SQ damage reduction (5/silver); cold, acid and fire resistance (20); darkvision; electricity and poison immunity; spell resistance (SR 5), telepathy; AL CE; SV Fort +3, Ref +3, Will +3; Str 10, Dex 10, Con 10, Int 5, Wis 11, Cha 11.

Skills: None. *Feats:* Multiattack.

Tactics of the Dretch: Dretches are pathetic, expendable pawns. If they are successfully *gated* in, the vrocks use the dretches to surround and occupy fighters while the vrocks concentrate on spellcasters. Immune to its effects, the dretches use their *stinking cloud* ability. They also use their *darkness* ability, which has no effect on the demons—they see right through it. They continuously *teleport* around the room, distracting the fighters, so the vrocks can focus on killing the spellcasters.

The Arrival of the "Celestial": Caanara, the type IV "nalfeshnee" demon, bides his time at the bottom of the pit (area 2 on the map; where Caanara's statistics are detailed). He monitors the battle between the PCs and the demons. If the characters kill three vrocks and it seems likely they will kill the remaining two, Caanara assumes the form of the female celestial of legend and ascends from the pit, bearing the *unholy sword* (see below). If, however, the PCs are losing the battle, Caanara might interfere, emerging from the pit as "divine intervention." To maintain the charade, give the PCs a chance to defeat several demons, if possible.

Once Caanara ascends from the pit, the room brightens with a blinding, holy light. The demons freeze. Blasting away the mists covering the mouth of the pit, a beautiful, shimmering female figure wearing white robes rises from the pit, as if freed from ages of captivity. She levitates above the pit and holds in her hand a brilliant silver sword, encrusted with gems and inlaid gold and glowing with a holy light. The vrocks recoil in terror, and the dretches melt away from her holy presence. Though she does not speak, each of the PCs hears a voice, so melodic and otherworldly it is almost painful. "May the goddess bless you for freeing me from my captivity," the celestial says. "Many ages ago I built this temple to house the Sword of the Justicars. When I returned to these halls to await the coming of the next grandmaster, hordes of demons and evil priests overcame me, imprisoning me in that pit. Your presence distracted them, allowing me to break free." She turns to the paladin in the party. "To you, great champion, I bestow this mighty weapon. Borne last by the great hero, Karith, and by all Justicar grandmasters before him, you are now chosen to succeed them. Hail to you, Grandmaster! May the lady of virtue bless you! Go forth and use this weapon to bring just retribution to creatures of evil and win glory for our lady's name." Her great task completed, the celestial disappears in a blinding flash.

The vrocks, party to Caanara's deception, recoil from "her" in pretended fear. The vrocks release the *gated* dretches (which is why the latter seem to "bubble away" in the celestial's holy presence), because they are not smart enough to "play along." The vrocks work to convince the paladin and his party that they have, in fact, won the *Sword of Karith* and can return to the world, carrying with them an *unholy sword*, thereby despoiling one of the world's more promising paladins. When Caanara "disappears," he really just *teleports* himself to area 3, where he remains. Remember: Caanara has a 22 Intelligence and Wisdom, as well as very high Bluff and Diplomacy skills. Play him as though he really were Muir's female celestial. The party should have no clue that this is a ruse — unless one of their number has *true seeing* (the *true seeing* on the paladin required to find the entrance should have long since worn off), in which case she sees Caanara as he truly is. If thusly discovered, Caanara and any remaining demons *teleport* to area 3.

Treasure: The sword, Entranhumani, a *+4 unholy reaver longsword*: Int 14, Wis 13, Chr 17, Ego 27; telepathy; Primary Powers: *forget* on wielder (3/day, removes all memory of last 5 minutes, no save), *mask alignment* (continuous, and radiates Law and Good), *cause berserk rage* (7/day); Extraordinary Powers: *teleport* to hands of user (1/day), *feeblemind* (2/day); Special Purpose: slay humans, *slay living* (3/day) on only humans struck. All abilities are as per the spells cast at 27th level. Method of destruction: It must be shattered against the altar on which it was forged, as long as that altar contains a *holy sword* (the players cannot have both!). Usable by: Paladins (or ex-paladins) and Blackguards only. The sword is incorporeal to all others; they cannot grasp it, though it cuts through them when used against them as a weapon. Note that this sword does no damage to demons unless wielded by a Blackguard! Short of a *miracle* or *wish*, the sword detects as a *+4 holy avenger sword*.

Once the paladin grasps the *unholy sword* and Caanara *teleports*, the vrocks make no attempt to engage him, instead resuming their attacks against his companions. They flee from the paladin, acting as through afraid of him. If the paladin attacks them with the *unholy sword*, it seems to cuts through the vrocks like butter. They pretend to die. They shriek and *teleport* to area 3 after they are struck twice by the sword. DMs should make fake rolls to convince PCs that this effect is some special power of the sword.

Conversion: At this point, the DM might choose to have the *unholy sword* tempt the paladin, suggesting his conversion into a Blackguard (see the *DMG*). The sword tells the PC that if he converts right now to chaotic evil, accepts Orcus as his god and joins with the demons in slaying his companions, he can become a Blackguard at two bonus levels of experience above his current paladin level. In addition, the sword promises the PC demon servants of great power, a suit of *+4 demon armor* and a *+5 shield*. If accepted, the sword delivers on these promises, *teleporting* the newly converted blackguard to a far-off cave where these items are hidden. The PC gains two hezrou servants, which are bound to serve the wielder of the *unholy sword*. If the PC refuses to convert, the sword casts *forget* on him (no save), removing any memory of the solicitation from the wielder's mind. Of course, attempting this conversion tips off the paladin's player that the sword is not a *holy sword* and something is amiss. Only attempt this conversion with a trusted roleplayer who will not reveal the sword's secret. DMs should roleplay this scenario away from the main group so that no one else is privy to the discussion. If other players ask questions, suggest that the sword was communicating privately with its new wielder, explaining its powers. Or you could decide to skip this conversion attempt and wait until the paladin leaves with the sword, as detailed below.

Return Visit

At some point in the future, when the PCs return to the Pit of Despair to destroy the *unholy sword*, they find **3 vrocks** waiting for them, scattered about the room. The vrocks immediately attack the party — teaming up against one victim, *teleporting* next to him, grabbing him and *teleporting* to the bottom of the pit where all three rip him to pieces. Then they *teleport* out and do it again.

2. The Pit of Despair

With the demons finally destroyed, the mist shrouding the mouth of the pit dissipates. In the well below lies a massive treasure hoard. The pit, 40 feet deep and carved of stone, has no apparent exits.

The First Visit

Initially, the pit is shrouded with mists that serve no purpose save hiding Caanara from view. He lurks in the bottom of the pit, monitoring the battle above. If any PC is crazy enough to jump into the pit during combat, he encounters Caanara, who, if not expecting this action, will be in his original form. (If Caanara suspects a PC might enter the pit before defeating the demons, he changes into his celestial guise before his arrival and pleads with the PC to slay the demons so that "she" might be free and thus bestow the sword on the paladin.) If seen in his normal form, Caanara engages the PC in melee, using his meager skills. If the melee goes poorly, Caanara casts *forget* on the PC, removing any memory of the encounter, and *teleports* to area 3. Otherwise, Caanara acts as outlined above under "The Arrival of the 'Celestial.'"

Caanara the Type IV "Nalfeshnee" Demon: CR 16; SZ Huge Outsider [Chaos, Evil]; HD 11d8+44; hp 93; Init +1; Spd 30 ft., fly 40 (poor); AC 27; Atk +15 melee (2d4+6, bite), +13 melee (1d4+3 [x2], claws); Reach 15 ft.; SA spell-like abilities, gating, smite; SQ damage reduction 20/+2, cold, acid, and fire resistance (20); darkvision; electricity and poison immunity; know alignment; see invisible; spell resistance (24); telepathy; AL CE; SV Fort +11, Ref +8, Will +13; Str 23, Dex 13, Con 19, Int 22, Wis 22, Cha 16.

Skills: Bluff +33, Concentration +28, Diplomacy +33, Hide +7, Knowledge (arcana) +16, Listen +20, Move Silently+12, Scry +19, Search +20, Sense Motive +26, Spellcraft +20, Spot +20. Nalfeshnees gain a +8 bonus to listen and spot checks. *Feats:* Cleave, Multiattack, Power Attack.

Treasure: 6,200 gp, 36,000 sp, a gold cup set with emeralds worth 7,000 gp, inlaid masterwork harp of silver and elven hair worth 4,000 gp, *amulet of inescapable location* (cursed, identifies as an *amulet of non-detection*), *bracers of defenselessness +5* (cursed, identifies as *+5 bracers of deflection*) and a *periapt of foul rotting* (cursed, identifies as a *periapt of health*). Unless a *wish* is used, the cursed nature of the items cannot be detected while the PCs are within the Pit.

Secret Door: The secret door to area 3 is very difficult to locate, having been concealed with powerful magic. No magic short of a *wish* or *miracle* allows its detection. A *true seeing* spell does not even allow automatic detection; instead, reduce the Search DC from 40 to 30. The secret door consists of an entire 40-foot section of the wall. When opened, the door swings upward 90 degrees, triggering a trap—a *symbol of death* inscribed on the reverse side of the door—and sealing the pit's mouth. If you wish, you could require a paladin be under the effects of *prayer* and *true seeing* spells to have a chance to detect the secret door, thus ensuring that the PCs leave the dungeon without finding the secret door on their first visit.

Secret Locked Stone Wall with *Symbol* Trap: CR 10; Search (DC 40, 30 with *true seeing*); 12 in. thick; Hardness 5; hp 80; Spell Resistance (SR 28); Damage Reduction (15/+4); Break (DC 40); Open Lock (DC 40). A *symbol of death* is inscribed on opposite face of door, revealed when door swings open (one or more creatures within a 30-foot radius up to a total of 150 hit points must make a Fortitude save [DC 22] or be slain).

False Ending

If the PCs do not find the secret door, the DM should smile, solicit feedback on how challenging the adventure was and congratulate the players on a job well done. Remark how incredible it was that the PCs

defeated 5 vrocks (and possibly a blue dragon) to recover the *Sword of Karith*! Then take a break, quit for the night or start the next adventure. The *unholy sword* will show its true colors later. Wait until the next playing session before beginning corruption of the paladin. See "Atonement," below.

Return Visit

Returning to destroy the *unholy sword*, the PCs find the Pit of Despair empty. Any treasure left by the party during its previous visit has been moved to area 3.

3. The Altar of Evil and Good

If the PCs find, open and survive the *symbol of death*-trapped secret door, they enter a large room. The secret wall, however, swings up and seals the pit's mouth with a foot-thick lid of stone. The large room houses an evil altar carved from onyx set upon a black dais. Strangely, the onyx, partially transparent, reveals the fabled *Sword of Karith*, pulsing with a holy white light, sealed within the altar.

At this point, the demons re-enter the picture, attacking the PCs en masse. Their sole purpose: preventing retrieval of the *holy sword*. The forces of darkness include Caanara the nalfeshnee, as many vrocks as survived the initial encounter in area 1 above and 2 more vrocks if this is a return trip to the Pit of Despair. The party will also have to contend with as many dretches as the vrocks and nalfeshnee can summon. Unlike before, all demons now concentrate their attacks on whoever wields the *unholy sword*. They interpose themselves between the PC and the altar, preventing contact at all costs, even *teleporting* out of combat to do so.

During combat (but most likely after combat), the paladin can destroy the altar and *unholy sword*, thus freeing the *holy sword*, by striking the altar with the *unholy sword*. The impact shatters both objects instantly! Destruction of the evil altar and *unholy sword* nets each PC a 5,000 XP story award in addition to any combat experience.

Tactics of the Vrocks and Dretches: The vrocks act as described above in area 1, except that they all *mirror image*, *gate* in 2d10 dretches each (35% chance) and then Screech and attack. None uses its *mass charm* ability. All vrocks shoot Spores every third round as a free action against any targets in range. The dretches surround fighters.

Tactics of Caanara the Nalfeshnee: When encountered in this room —whether by a resourceful party on its first visit to the Pit of Despair or by a party returning to the pit to undo his treachery — Caanara uses all his powers to slay all PCs. He begins the encounter *invisible*. As soon as the secret wall is opened, he *gates* in 2d20 dretches (automatic success). The next round he casts *slow* at the party, followed by *mirror image* and *chaos hammer* or his Smite ability until he is engaged. Once engaged, he *teleports* away and repeats the process until slain, possibly throwing in a *greater dispelling* or *unholy blight* as appropriate. He only fights hand-to-hand as a last resort, and even then he uses *chill touch* or *feeblemind* rather than his usual attacks. If reduced to less than 30 hit points, Caanara *teleports* to area 1 (above the pit, which is now sealed off by the open secret door). There he *gates* in 4 vrocks, which he dispatches to finish off the party. Defeating Caanara should be a feat that all of the surviving PCs brag about for years.

Treasure: The *holy sword*, Entrancacor (inside the stone altar). The sword can be moved from the altar block either by simultaneously casting a *wish* and a *miracle* spell on the altar or by striking the altar with the *unholy sword*, Entranhumani, as described above. Doing so shatters the altar and *unholy sword* and frees the *holy sword* (the party can't have both!). No other way to remove the sword exists. Entrancacor is a *+5 holy avenger longsword*: Int 14, Wis 13, Chr 17, Ego 28; telepathy; Primary Powers: *dispel magic* (3/day), *see invisible* at will, Sense Motive checks at +10; Extraordinary Powers: *heal* (1/day), *true seeing* (2/day); Special Purpose: slay demons, *banishment* (3/day) on demons struck. All abilities are as per the spells cast at 28th level. Method of destruction: Boil in the blood of three good dragons, killed within the hour, followed by taking the life of a good-aligned virgin with the sword. Usable by: Lawful-good-aligned outsiders, paladins and clerics of Muir only. The sword is incorporeal to all others, though it can cut through them if used against them in combat.

Atonement

If the PCs are successfully duped into believing they have recovered the *Sword of Karith*, there is a strong chance that the paladin will fall under the evil sword's sway. The PCs should have no encounters on their return trip. Returning to an area with a large (over 50) population of humans, the PCs might begin to note changes in the sword wielder. The sword waits until a good-sized group of low-level victims are available and, in the presence of few of the paladin's comrades, forces the character into a killing spree! Consider the common room of an inn or tavern, late in the evening after most PCs have retired and the paladin is telling the story of the sword's recovery to some locals, an appropriate venue. Or, more despicably, wait until the paladin visits the local church to pray. The character must make a Will save (DC 27) against the sword's ego or fly into a berserk, xenophobic rage (which he cannot willfully come out of), looking for humans to slay, including other PCs who stumble upon the enraged paladin. After the event, the paladin collapses and awakens a few minutes later. In the interim, the sword casts *forget* on the character. Should the PC paladin make the Will save, the *sword* immediately casts *forget* on him (no save) — erasing any memory of the failed attempt to control the PC.



DMs can find this highly entertaining. Imagine a paladin waking amid the gory remains of a dozen townsfolk — his sword bloodied and his paladin abilities no longer working. Any PC paladin succumbing to the will of the sword and committing the above-described atrocities loses his paladin status and cannot continue as a paladin without doing *atonement*. Any PC attempting to rid himself of the sword discovers that it continually *teleports* itself back to him.

The sword, of course, suggests an alternative. After the PC's paladinhood is lost, the sword tempts the paladin into becoming a Blackguard, as described under "Conversion," above. The only catch: he must slay all of his good- or lawful-aligned companions.

As DM, decide who might properly suggest *atonement* for such vile deeds. For example, require that the PC return to the priests of Muir from whom he obtained the map to the Temple of the Justicars. There, he can relate the story of the quest and its consequences. After much *prayer* and *communing*, the priests describe what must be done to restore paladinhood: the paladin must destroy the *unholy sword!* There is only one way for this to be done: it must be smashed upon the altar on which it was forged. That altar, the PCs are informed, is hidden within the Temple of the Justicars, but no one knows exactly where. When this is done — the PCs are promised — not only will the *unholy sword* be destroyed, but they will also free the true *Sword of Karith*. This act also restores the fallen paladin's status.

Most likely, amid feelings of doubt, hope and regret, the party gears up for a return trip to the Pit of Despair. Plan an appropriate number of wilderness encounters if it travels overland. Perhaps now the PCs might *teleport* to the canyon containing the temple's entrance. Once the PCs arrive at the Pit of Despair for the second time, DMs should refer to the above sections in areas 1 and 2 entitled "Return Visit" for details on how the Pit of Despair is different the second time around. Who knows. Maybe they will even succeed...

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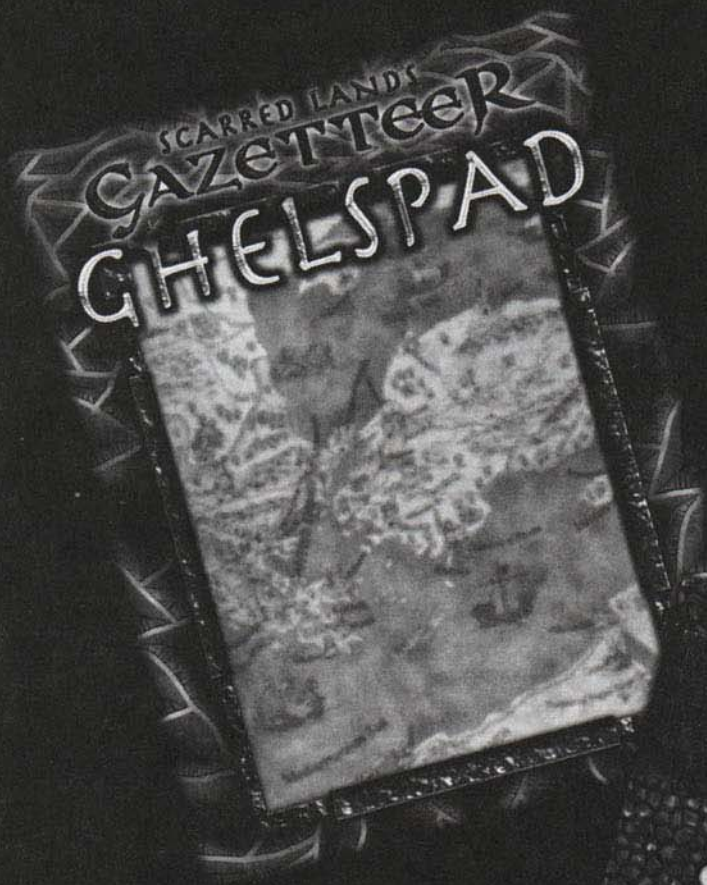
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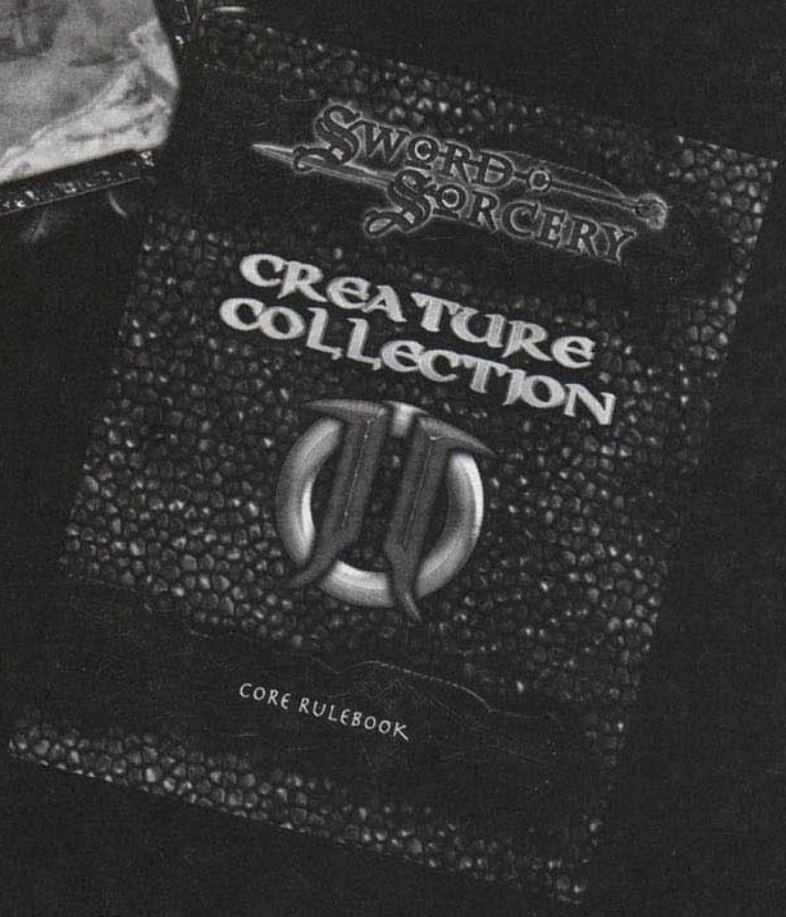
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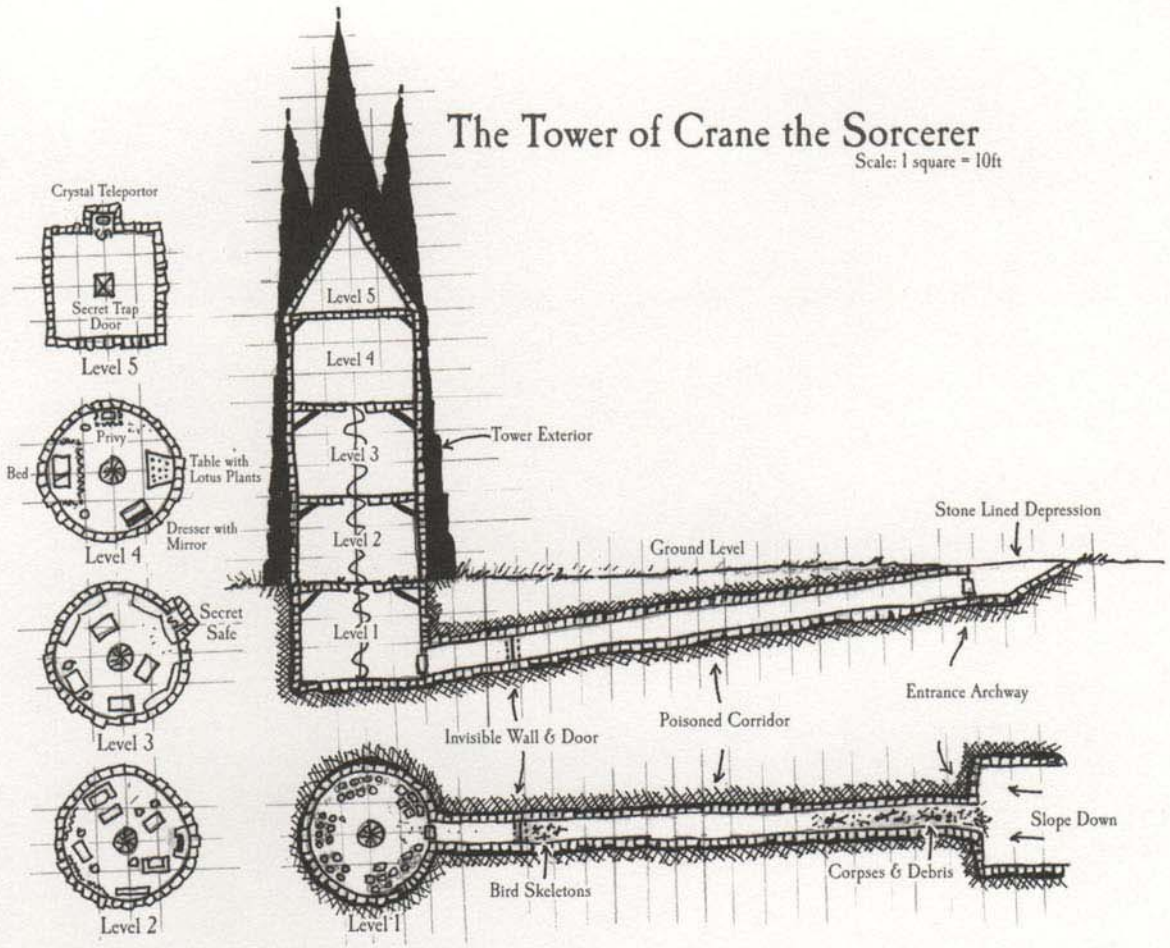
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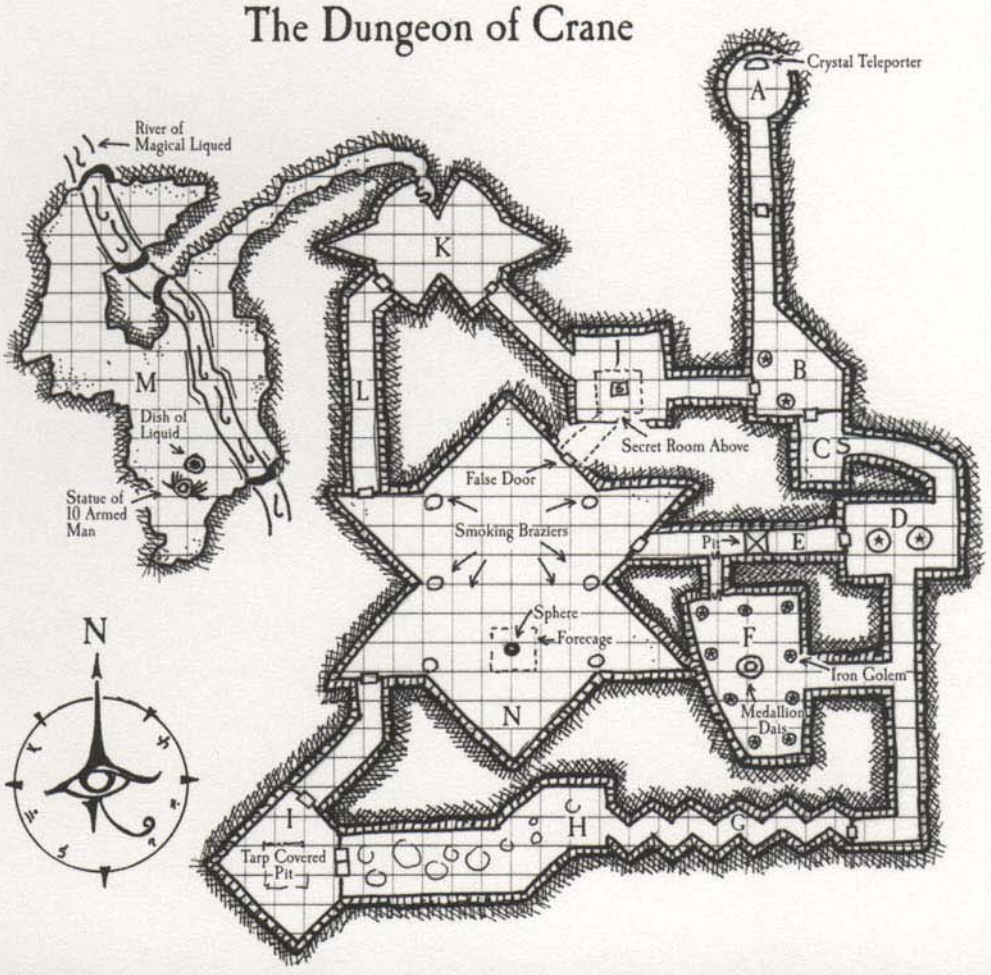
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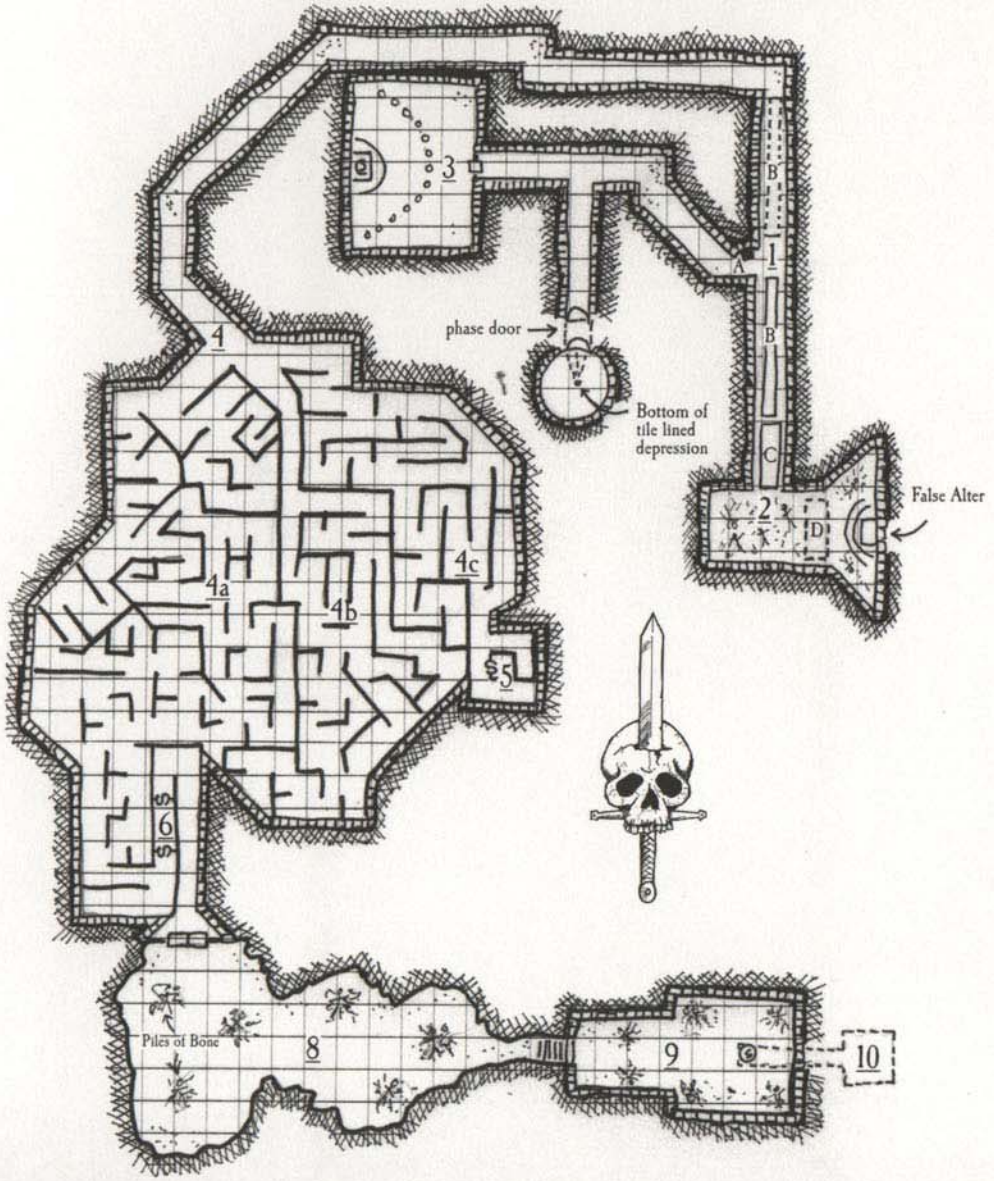
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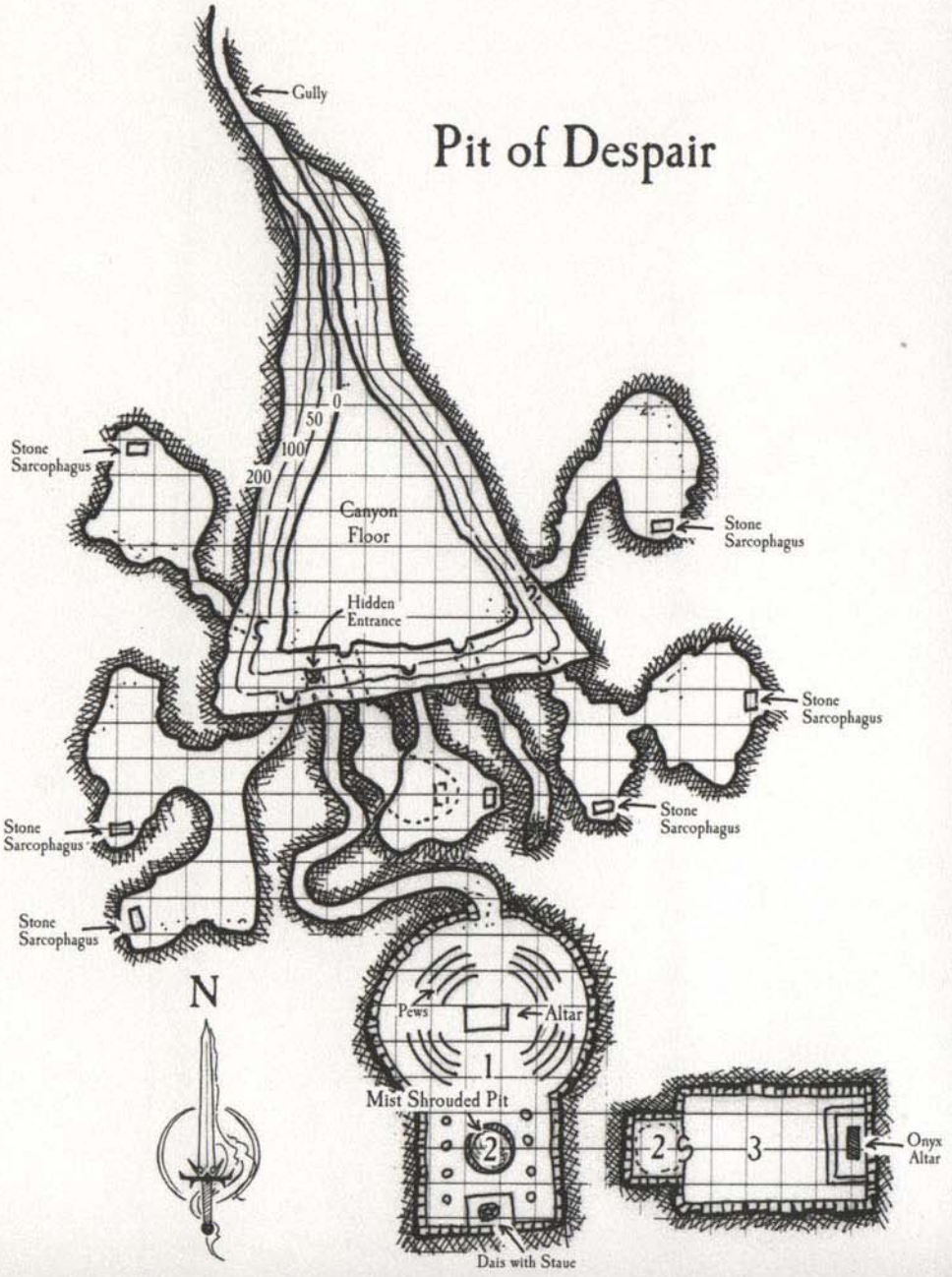

The Tower of Crane the Sorcerer
Scale: 1 square = 10ft
Crystal Teleportor
Secret Trap Door
Level 5
Level 4
Level 3
Level 2
Level 1
Tower Exterior
Privy
Bed
Table with Lotus Plants
Dresser with Mirror
Secret Safe
Stone Lined Depression
Ground Level
Entrance Archway
Poisoned Corridor
Invisible Wall & Door
Slope Down
Corpses & Debris
Bird Skeletons


The Dungeon of Crane
Crystal Teleporter
River of Magical Liqued
Dish of Liquid
Statue of 10 Armed Man
Secret Room Above
False Door
Smoking Braziers
Pit
Sphere
Forecage
Iron Golem
Medallion Dais
Tarp Covered Pit
N
A
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The "Ra's Evil Grin" Dungeon



Pit of Despair



L1W

Requires the use of the Dungeons and Dragons® Player's Handbook, Third Edition, published by Wizards of the Coast®

Demons and Devils

Epic Quests

by Clark Peterson and Bill Webb



*The dungeons contained in **Demons and Devils** deserve to be the final pinnacle of epic and legendary quests. Such quests require lengthy overland travel and encounters with various fearsome foes. Here, then, are some suggestions for the overland travel and monster encounters that you as the DM can use for the various adventures contained **Demons and Devils** to make them truly the epic quests they deserve to be.*

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Demons and Devils
Epic Quests

Credits

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Special Thanks
Scott Greene for his **Creature Catalog** web site (*www.rpgplanet.com/dnd3e/creaturecatalog*). Jamis Buck for his generators (*www.rpgplanet.com/dnd3e/generators*). Our wives and girlfriends for tolerating our late nights and long weekends. And, of course, the fans!

Introduction

Demons and Devils includes three short dungeons that make the perfect culmination of epic quests for powerful items of legend. Though you may want to allow the PCs to *teleport* to the "front door" of the dungeons if you are running them as "one shot" adventures, it would be a shame to allow the PCs to arrive at the dungeons in this fashion if you are incorporating the adventures into your home campaign. Rather, these dungeons deserve to be the final pinnacle of epic and legendary quests. Such quests require lengthy overland travel and encounters with various fearsome foes. Here, then, are some suggestions for the overland travel and monster encounters that you as the DM can use for the various adventures contained ***Demons and Devils***. Of course, you should feel free to add or substitute encounters to reflect your home campaign world and the unique locations you select for the various dungeons.

Enjoy!
Clark Peterson and Bill Webb

Sorcerer's Citadel

The following list of suggested encounters details the trials and hazards that a party of PCs might endure during its journey to the remote location of Crane's Tower. Feel free to create lairs for these monsters and to add or substitute encounters to reflect the world and unique location selected for Crane's Tower.

As the PCs enter the wild plains leading to the distant mountain range that holds Crane's Tower, the characters stumble upon **6 dire lions**. Next, **Shr'arda the ogre magess** and her **5 ogre servants** ambush the characters as they trek over the rolling hills approaching the mountains. The foothills of the mountains serve as the lair of **2 chimeras**, which the PCs may encounter as they make camp. When they enter the lower, forested regions of the mountains, the characters meet **6 trolls** on a hunting expedition. Then, as the characters continue their ascent into the mountains and pass through the most densely forested areas, **4 phase spiders** hamper their progress. Finally, once the PCs break through the treeline onto higher ground, the

characters enter the territory of a **6-headed cryohydra** as they begin their ascent of the mountains in earnest. Following these encounters, you should pick up with the encounters detailed in the module.

Dire Lions (6): CR 5; SZ H Animal; HD 8d8+24; hp 60; Init +2; Spd 40 ft.; AC 14; Atk +12/+12 melee (1d6+7 [x2], claws) and +7 melee (1d8+3, bite), +12 melee (2d6+6, rake); SA pounce, improved grab, rake; SQ scent; AL N; SV Fort +9, Ref +8, Will +7; Str 25, Dex 15, Con 17, Int 2, Wis 12, Cha 10.

Skills: Hide +5, Jump +10, Listen +4, Move Silently +9, Spot +4. Dire lions receive a +4 to Hide and Move Silently checks. In areas of tall grass or heavy undergrowth, the dire lion's Hide bonus rises to +8. *Feats:* Multiattack.

Lair: Their nearby cave lair can be found with a successful Track check (Wilderness Lore DC 25). In it are the corpses of several animals as well as 2 young female dire lions suckling 6 dire lion cubs.

Shr'arda the Ogre Magess: CR 8; SZ L Giant; HD 5d8+15, hp 45; Init +4, Spd 30 ft., fly 40 ft. (good); AC 18; Atk +9 melee (2d8+9, *+1 huge greatsword*) or +2 ranged (2d6, huge longbow); Reach 10 ft.; SA spell-like abilities; SQ flight, regeneration (2), spell resistance (18); AL LE; SV Fort +7, Ref +1, Will +3; Str 22, Dex 10, Con 17, Int 16, Wis 14, Cha 17.

Skills: Concentration +6, Listen +5, Spellcraft +4, Spot +5. *Feats:* Improved Initiative.

Possessions: +1 huge greatsword, *2 potions of cure critical wounds*, elaborate robes of silk (in her humanoid form which she prefers), purse contianing 10d10 gp and 2d10 gems (of 1d10x25 gp each).

Ogre Servants (5): CR 2; SZ L Giant; HD 4d8+8; hp 28; Init –1; Spd 30 ft.; AC 16; Atk +8 melee (2d6+7, huge greatclub) or +1 ranged (2d6+7, huge longspear); Reach 10 ft. (15-20 ft. with longspear); AL CE; SV Fort +6, Ref +0, Will +1; Str 21, Dex 8, Con 15, Int 6, Wis 10, Cha 7.

Skills: Climb +4, Listen +2, Spot +2. *Feats:* Weapon Focus (greatclub).

Possessions: Huge greatclub, hide armor, sack with 3d12 gp, 4d20 sp.

Lair: In a hidden cave nearby is their lair, which can only be found if Shr'arda or her ogres are secretly followed. The three room cave includes the large entrance cavern which contains numerous places from which ogres can ambush intruders, a large cave that is the bed chamber of the ogres as well as a final chamber which is the lair of Shr'arda. That cave contains a desk with writing implements and several books of magic theory in Giant, as well as several other books and a journal also in Giant. A small locked wooden chest in Shr'arda's room (1 in. thick; Hardness 5; hp 1; Break (DC 17); Open Lock (DC 20)) contains: 1,100 gp, an emerald (1,100 gp), a *scroll of two arcane spells (caster level 9, summon monster I, cat's grace)*, a *potion of enlarge*, a *potion of cure moderate wounds*, and a *potion of wisdom*, in addition to the gold, gems and items that Shr'arda carries on her person.

Chimeras (2): CR 7; SZ L Magical Beast; HD 9d10+27; hp 95, 81; Init +1; Spd 30 ft., fly 50 ft. (poor); AC 16; Atk +12 melee (2d6+4, bite), +10 melee (1d8+2, bite), +10 melee (1d8+2, butt) and +10 melee (1d6+2 [x2], claws); Face 5 ft. x 10 ft.; SA breath weapon; SQ scent; AL CE; SV Fort +9, Ref +7, Will +4; Str 19, Dex 13, Con 17, Int 4, Wis 13, Cha 10.

Skills: Hide +4, Listen +9, Spot +9. *Feats:* Alertness, Multiattack.

Lair: In a desolate and isolated cave in the foothills, which can only be reached by a creature with flight, is the lair of these two foul creatures. In their urine and refuse filled lair are the corpses of several recent kills. Strewn about with the corpses and bones are 336 gp, 12,731 sp, a divine scroll of 3 spells (caster level 7, doom, magic fang, detect snares and pits), an arcane scroll (caster level 5, mirror image), a potion of blur, and a +1 light emitting dwarven war axe.

Trolls (6): CR 5; SZ L Giant; HD 6d8+36; hp 68; Init +6; Spd 40 ft.; AC 18; Atk +9/+9 melee (1d6+6 [x2], claws) and +4 melee (1d6+3, bite); Reach 10 ft.; SA rend; SQ regeneration (5 hp/round), darkvision (90 ft.), scent; AL CE; SV Fort +11, Ref +2, Will +4; Str 23, Dex 14, Con 23, Int 6, Wis 10, Cha 6.

Skills: Jump +8, Listen +5, Spot +5. *Feats:* Alertness, Improved Initiative, Iron Will, Multiattack.

Lair: These trolls are on a hunting expedition and are far from their lair. The PCs should not be able to track the trolls to their lair. If they do, however, another 2d6 of the creatures are at the lair. It is devoid of treasure other than a *+1 greatsword* and 259 gp.

Phase Spiders (4): CR 5; SZ L Magical Beast; HD 5d10+15; hp 49; Init +7; Spd 40 ft., climb 20 ft.; AC 15; Atk +7 melee (1d6+4, bite plus poison); Face 10 ft. x 10 ft.; SA ethereal jaunt, poison (2d6/2d6 Con, Fort save DC 15); AL N; SV Fort +7, Ref +7, Will +2; Str 17, Dex 17, Con 16, Int 7, Wis 13, Cha 10.

Skills: Climb +12, Move Silently +11, Spot +9. *Feats:* Improved Initiative.

Tactics: The spiders use *ethereal jaunt* to move out of

their hiding places and attack the party. They continue to phase in and out to allow them to obtain combat advantages. If the battle turns against them, they go ethereal and return to their lair.

Lair: The spiders maintain a lair that is a cave within the mountain that has no external access. It can only be accessed by ethereal or astral travel, or by some type of gaseous form. They have no treasure.

6-Headed Cryo-Hydra: CR 7; SZ H Beast; HD 6d10+30; hp 80; Init +1; Spd 20 ft., swim 10 ft.; AC 15; Atk +5 melee (1d10+3 [x6], bite); Face/Reach 20 ft. x 20 ft./10 ft.; SA breath weapon; SQ cold subtype, scent; AL NE; SV Fort +10, Ref +6, Will +2; Str 17, Dex 12, Con 20, Int 3, Wis 10, Cha 9.

Skills: Listen +6, Spot +6. Each head is allowed a separate check. *Feats:* Combat Reflexes.

Lair: A twisting cave in the stark mountains with a frosted opening is the lair of this fell beast. It aggressively defends its hunting ground. The lair twists a great distance back into the mountain. Several of the side caverns contain frozen corpses of recent kills. Near the corpse of several humanoids can be found 1,356 sp, 549 gp, a *scroll of two divine spells (caster level 9, lesser restoration, invisibility to animals)*, a *scroll of one arcane spell (caster level 6, ghoul touch)*, a set of *masterwork chainmail*, a *wand of daylight* (3 charges), a deep blue spinel gemstone (600 gp), and a *+2 greataxe of lawfulness*.

Once the PCs overcome the above encounters and have climbed high up on the mountain where you have placed Crane's Tower, read or paraphrase the following text:

> It was early this morning when your scout spotted the outline of the tower amid the mists of the mountain tops. You set off believing you would reach the summit and the tower by mid-afternoon. But fate, or magic, forced you to retrace numerous paths, delaying you far beyond your estimate. Now, with night falling, you believe you have found the correct path. As you hike the final mile towards the darkening, mist-shrouded summit, the last cryptic words of the sage you consulted so long ago resound in your mind: "Far up in distant mountains lies the Tower of Crane, master of darkness, lord of nothingness. Long is the path and dangerous. Beware, adventurer, for peril lies both inside and out, both in between and beyond."
>
> Truly, the path has been long and dangerous. You have battled fell creatures and foul magic. Now you are at your journey's end. Before you stands the tower of Crane the Sorcerer, shrouded in cold, damp mist which your newly-lit torches barely illuminates. The tower seems to be made of smooth, dark stone. The tower is cylindrical, tapering gradually from the base to the peak where it is topped with three sharp spires of uneven height. From where you stand you can see no openings of any kind in the dark walls of the tower, though in the torch-lit darkness and mist it is difficult to be sure.
>
> Between your party and the tower—some one hundred or more feet from the tower itself—is a depression of worked stone set into the surrounding earth accessed by a sloping ramp. Inside of the depression is what appears to be an archway. Possibly this archway leads to the interior of the tower. You do a mental inventory of your belongings and begin to consider what wards the old wizard set for those wishing to loot his lair…

Now you can pick up with the adventure as detailed in the module.

Ra's Evil Grin

The following list of suggested encounters details the hazards that a party of PCs might endure during its voyage to the remote island home of the *Globe of Arden*. DMs should modify or expand upon this brief outline as suits their world. There are several ways to run the overland trek to the Island of the Globe. You may require the PCs to play out the whole journey. If so, begin with "Reaching the Island of the Globe," below. Or, you may simply allow the PCs to arrive at the Island of the Globe, requiring them to trek overland on the island to find the entrance to the dungeon. If so, begin with "On the Island of the Globe," below. Last, you may presume the PCs have sailed to the island and treked over it to the inner lake that holds the stone island on which is located the dungeon entrance. If so, proceed to "On the Central Island." In any event, a map of the Island is provided with notations for the DM regarding the various lairs and locations on the Island. A Player's Map is available as a free download from the **Product Support** page of the **Necromancer Games** web site (*www.necromancergames.com*). The map requires the same product update password to download.





Reaching the Island of the Globe

The party runs afoul of **8 hill ogres** (a cross between hill giants and ogres) as it travels overland at the outset of its quest. Later, a **barghest** and **12 worgs** attack the party's camp. Then, while crossing a lightly forested plain, the party stumbles upon a hungry **gray render**. While crossing the plains on approach to the southern town from which they intend to set sail, the party wonders why the area lacks game as **3 manticores** drop from the sky. Next, a strange and frolicsome **jungle nymph** tempts the party to bypass the town and travel further south, into the depths of the southern jungle. Then, just before the party leaves port, a **troglodyte war band** besieges the city, causing delay and destruction. Do the PCs remain to lend their aid, or do they set off in search of the *globe*? After the PCs set out for the island they encounter a huge pod of **dolphins** swimming around their ship amid a silvery spray of water—a favorable omen. After several days at sea, the PCs boat is struck by a great storm that threatens to capsize their vessel. Following the great storm, the party inadvertently steers into a **dragon turtle's** territory. After a lengthy ocean voyage, the PCs sight land and set out in their skiffs. They row for the shallows, only to disturb **3 dire crocodiles** as they near the shore, which capsize their skiffs and devour a large number of the porters. Finally, the PCs land their skiffs on the sandy beach of the Island of the Globe. This, of course is but the beginning of their adventure.

Hill Ogres (8): CR 4; SZ L Giant; HD 7d8+21; hp 30; Init –1 (Dex); Spd 40 ft.; AC 16 (+5 natural, +3 hide armor, -1 size, -1 Dex); Atk +12/+7 melee (2d6+8, huge jawbone club); Reach 10 ft.; SA rage; AL CE; SV Fort +9, Ref +3, Will +1; Str 23, Dex 8, Con 16, Int 5, Wis 8, Cha 6.

Skills: Climb +8, Jump +5, Listen +3, Spot +2. *Feats:* Weapon Focus (club), Power Attack, Cleave.

SA—Rage (Su): This particular band of hill ogres can rage as per a barbarian of level equal to their hit dice. This is not a common quality of hill ogres and is unique to this band as a result of a curse placed on them by a night hag sorceress.

Possessions: Huge jawbone club, filthy hide armor, 3d20 sp each, large sack with various rotting animal body parts, small items such as a length of crusty rope or some iron spikes and possibly a few small stones.

Description: Hill ogres are a cross between hill giants and ogres. They are slow-witted and incredibly strong. They use huge clubs of sharpened bones taken from giant animals.

Tactics: What tactics? They are berserk hill ogres. They charge and attack, screaming and waiving their huge bone clubs, frothing with battle rage.

Lair: The hill ogres have a nearby lair—a dank cave full of the rotting corpses of their recent animal kills. This is only a temporary lair. The ogres have no true home. They have no treasure other than what is on their person.

Barghest: CR 4; SZ M Outsider [Evil, Lawful]; HD 6d8+6; hp 42; Init +6; Spd 30 ft./60 ft. in wolf form; AC 18; Atk +4 melee (1d4+1 [x2], claws) and +9 melee (1d6+3, bite); SA spell-like abilities, feed; SQ damage reduction (15/+1), scent, alternate form, pass without trace; AL LE; SV Fort +6, Ref +7, Will +7; Str 17, Dex 15, Con 13, Int 14, Wis 14, Cha 14.

Skills: Bluff +11, Hide +11 (+15 in wolf form), Intimidate +11, Jump +12, Listen +11, Move Silently +10, Spot +11. *Feats:* Combat Reflexes, Improved Initiative.

Worgs (12): CR 2; SZ Medium Magical Beast; HD 4d10+8; hp 28; Init +2 (Dex); Spd 50 ft.; AC 14 (+2 natural, Dex); Atk +8 melee (1d6+4, bite); SA trip; SQ scent (60 ft.); AL NE; SV Fort +2, Ref +2, Will +2; Str 17, Dex 15, Con 15, Int 6, Wis 14, Cha 10.

Skills: Hide +7, Listen +9, Move Silently +7, Spot +9. A worg has a +1 to Listen, Move Silently, and Spot checks and a +2 to Hide checks. *Feats:* Alertness, Weapon Focus (bite).

Tactics: The barghest uses its wolf form and *pass without trace* ability to scout the party. If it determines they are suitable victims, it organizes its worgs and attacks by surprise in the dead of night. The barghest attempts to *charm* any guards prior to the worg attack. It uses *levitate* and *project image* to hide its true location.

Lair: Some 2 miles away from the site of the entrance to the dungeon—is a rotting tree with a hollow trunk. That hollow opening leads to a root-filled chamber in which the worgs and the barghest make their lair. It is difficult to enter the chamber (Climb check DC 12) and the movement rate of all bipeds is cut in half. The chamber itself is 40 feet in diameter and filled with root-pillars from the tree above. Inside the lair, behind the pile of rugs used by the barghest in goblin form, is a *+2 composite shortbow* and a quiver of 19 *+1 arrows*. Also in this quiver (though indistinguishable from the others unless identified by magic) is a *greater arrow of slaying magical beasts*.

Grey Render: CR 8; SZ L Beast; HD 10d10+70; hp 135; Init +0; Spd 30 ft.; AC 19; Atk +12 melee (2d6+6, bite) and +7 melee (1d6+3 [x2], claws); Reach 10 ft.; SA improved grab, rend; SQ scent; AL

N; SV Fort +14, Ref +7, Will +4; Str 23, Dex 10, Con 24, Int 3, Wis 12, Cha 8.

Skills: Hide +7, Spot +8. *Feats:* None.

Lair: This tremendous beast has no lair and no treasure. It rests wherever it pleases.

Manticores (3): CR 5; SZ H Magical Beast; HD 6d10+24; hp 80, 76, 69; Init +2; Spd 30 ft., fly 50 ft. (clumsy); AC 16; Atk +9 melee (2d4+5 [x2], claws), +7 melee (1d8+2, bite) or +6 ranged (1d8+2, spikes); Face/Reach 10 ft. x 20 ft./10 ft.; SA spikes; SQ scent; AL LE; SV Fort +9, Ref +7, Will +3; Str 20, Dex 15, Con 19, Int 7, Wis 12, Cha 9.

Skills: Listen +9, Spot +9. Manticores receive a +4 racial bonus to Spot checks in daylight. *Feats:* Multiattack.

Tactics: These wicked beasts follow the party from a distance, using the sun to blind those they pursue. One swoops in to attack or snatch the least armored individual while the other two fire tail spikes. If the party is lightly armored, a second then swoops in to snatch another PC, focusing on the smaller humanoids. Once they have captured one or two PCs in this manner, they fly away to their lair.

Lair: The manticores make their lair in a small copse of trees on the plains. They patrol the skies over this section of the plains and have hunted all wildlife in the area to extinction. They are about to be forced to move their lair due to over-hunting. In the lair, which is composed of a large pile of dried grasses between several shade trees, can be found numerous small animal bones as well as 1,400 gp, a solid gold idol (worth 400 gp and weighing 30 lbs.), a *scroll of two divine spells (caster level 5, charm person or animal, detect law)* and a *+1 buckler*.

Golora, Female Jungle Nymph, Sor9: CR 11; SZ M Fey; HD 3d6 plus 9d4+9; hp 51; Init +8 (+4 Dex, Improved Initiative from staff); Spd 40 ft. (30 ft. base), swim 20 ft.; AC 18 (+4 Dex, +4 amulet); Atk +12/+7 melee (1d6+2/1d6+2, *+2 quarterstaff*,), or +17/+12 ranged (1d4+3, *+3 darts*, range 20 ft.); SA blinding beauty, unearthly beauty; SQ spell-like abilities (*dimension door* plus druid spells as 7th level caster), sorcerer class abilities; SV Fort +6, Ref +7, Will +16; AL CG; Str 10, Dex 19, Con 12, Int 20, Wis 19, Cha 19.

Skills: Alchemy +15, Animal empathy +10, Climb +3, Concentration +13, Diplomacy +10, Disguise +6, Escape artist +7, Heal +9, Hide +7, Intuit direction +7, Knowledge (arcana) +15, Knowledge (nature) +9, Knowledge (religion) +3, Listen +11, Move silently +7, Scry +10, Search +8, Sense motive +10, Speak language +3, Spellcraft +12, Spot +9, Swim +19, Wilderness Lore +10. *Feats:* Ability Focus (unearthly beauty), Alertness, Dodge, Enlarge Spell, Great Fortitude, Iron Will, Mobility, Run, Silent Spell, Track.

Sorcerer Spells Known (cast per day: 6/7/7/6/4): 0—dancing lights, detect magic, disrupt undead, flare, light, open/close, read magic, resistance; 1st—charm person, identify, mage armor, magic missile, shield; 2nd—invisibility, magic mouth, mirror image, summon monster II; 3rd—dispel magic, hold person, suggestion; 4th—emotion, lesser geas.

Languages: Sylvan, Common, Common, Druidic, Elven, Giant, Goblin, Ignan, Infernal, Orc.

Possessions: Illuminating +2 Quarterstaff (Int 10, Wis 14, Cha 13, Ego 6, Chaotic Good; semiempathy, wielder gains Improved Initiative as a feat), 7 *+3 darts*, *2 potions of delay poison*, *potion of protection from elements (cold)*, *orb of storms*, *rod of swarming insects*, *wand of darkness (21 charges)*, *amulet of natural armor +4*, *quaal's feather token (bird)*.

Tactics: Golora is an ancient and exotic jungle spirit. She is served by several were-jaguars, though they do not ever make themselves known to the PCs. She approaches the PCs and uses her Charisma to charm the male PCs. She attempts to lead them into the jungle to the south where she intends to use them as her servants. She may be bargained with. In fact, the PCs may convince her to use her magical items to assist them or the nearby town. For example, when attacked by the troglodyte army, the PCs could entreat Golora to use her magic (her *orb of storms*, for istance) to drive them away; or they could request her aid in calming the seas for their travel to the Island of the Globe. This should be a roleplaying encounter, not a combat encounter. Golora is not a "monster" to be attacked, though she is a vicious and powerful foe if crossed.

Lair: Her lair is hidden deep within the jungle and is inaccessible to the PCs.

Troglodytes (1500): CR 1; SZ M Humanoid (Reptilian); HD 2d8+4, hp 13 each; Init –1, Spd 30 ft.; AC 15; Atk +2 melee (1d8, longspear) or +1 melee (1d4 [x2], claw) and –1 melee (1d4, bite); SA stench; SQ darkvision; AL CE; SV Fort +5, Ref –1, Will +0; Str 10, Dex 9, Con 14, Int 8, Wis 10, Cha 10.

Skills: Hide +6, Listen +3, Spot +1. Troglodytes gain a +4 racial bonus to Hide checks due to the chameleon-like properties of their hides. *Feats:* Multiattack, Weapon Focus (longspear).

Tactics: This huge band of troglodytes has emerged from their underground lair to sack the nearby coastal city. Their band also includes several higher level fighters and shamans, as well as a leader. The warband also has 50 giant lizards. They march as an unformed

mob and swarm the walls of the town. They cannot be parleyed with, only defeated. Their attack may cause the leaders of the town to call on the PCs for aid. They tell the PCs of a legendary jungle woman who holds power over storms (Golora the Nymph) whom they beseech the PCs to find and convince to help drive the creatures back to their holes. The DM is encouraged to tailor a lengthy adventure around this seige.

Lair: Their immense, cavernous lair is not detailed here. It is full of hundreds more troglodytes.

Dragon Turtle: CR 9; SZ H Dragon (Aquatic); HD 12d12+60; hp 150 hp; Init +0; Spd 20 ft., swim 30 ft.; AC 20; Atk +18 melee (4d6+8, bite), +13 melee (2d8+4 [x2], claws); Face/Reach 30 ft. x 40 ft./10 ft.; SA breath weapon, snatch, capsize; SQ scent, fire immunity; AL N; SV Fort +13, Ref +8, Will +9; Str 27, Dex 10, Con 21, Int 12, Wis 13, Cha 12.

Skills: Hide +7, Intimidate +17, Intuit Direction +10, Listen +18, Search +16, Spot +18. Dragon Turtles gain a +8 racial bonus to Hide when submerged. *Feats:* Alertness, Blind-fight, Cleave, Power Attack.

Languages: Aquan, Draconic, Common.

Tactics: The dragon turtle attempts to capsize the PCs vessel. If unsuccessful, it surfaces and begins to rake and claw at the boat. It can be parlayed with, if the PCs can communicate with it. It will cease attacking if offered large pearls and horses to eat. It can also direct the PCs towards the island of the globe. Give the PCs every opportunity to speak with the creature and avoid destruction of their vessel. In fact, it may even agree to carry the PCs on its back to the island, thus avoiding the encounters with the dire crocodiles.

Dire Crocodiles: CR 4; SZ H Animal (20 ft. long); HD 7d8+28; hp 65; Init +1; Spd 20 ft., swim 30 ft.; AC 18; Atk +11 melee (2d8+12, bite) or +11 melee (1d12+12, tail slap); Face/Reach 10 ft. x 20 ft./10 ft.; SA improved grab; AL N; SV Fort +9, Ref +6, Will +3; Str 27, Dex 12, Con 19, Int 1, Wis 12, Cha 2.

Skills: Hide +0 (+12 when submerged), Listen +5, Spot +5. *Feats:* None.

On The Island of the Globe

Once the PCs finally reach the island, read or paraphrase the following:

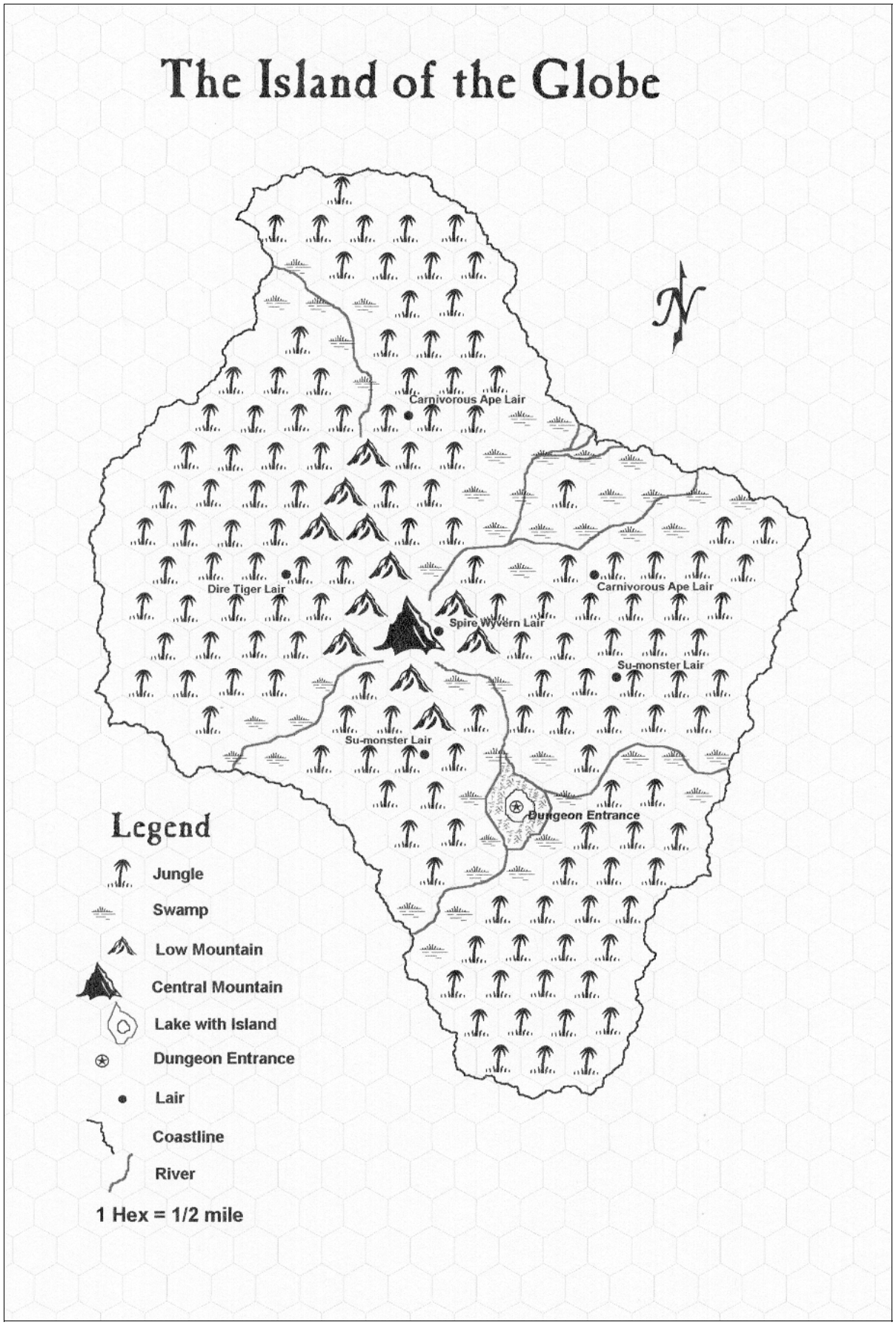
> Finally free from the monstrous crocodiles, and other hazards of your perilous journey, you step out of the skiff that brought you from the ship to the shore of the island you believe holds the entrance to the resting place of the *Globe of Arden*.

> You wipe the sweat from your brow as you order the remaining porters to unload your equipment. Your eyes cast about, searching for shade from the heat of the tropical sun. The thick, humid air is occasionally broken by a cooling ocean breeze. As you walk across the sandy beach you notice that most of the small island is covered in jungle, except for what appears to be a small mountain in the very center of the island. You get the distinct feeling that humans have not set foot on this island for uncounted ages.

The lost Island of the Globe does not appear on any nautical maps. In fact, it is magically warded so that all except those who are specifically seeking it are gently and unknowingly directed around the island. The island itself is covered in heavy jungle or thick swampland except for the very interior which has a low mountain range surrounding a central mountain. The island has an ancient, primordial feel to it—having been long disconnected from the history of men.

The island has a tropical climate, with temperatures exceeding 90 degrees during the hours of 10 am to 4 pm. During these hours characters are required to make Fortitude saves or suffer subdual damage (See Heat Dangers in the ***DMG***). Wearing armor or heavy clothing of any type is uncomfortable and usually leads to the character acquiring a nasty rash. If such armor or clothing is worn for 24 hours straight, the character receives a -2 concentration penalty to attacks, checks and saves until cured with a salve made with a successful DC 12 Heal check. Thunderstorms are daily occurrences, usually arriving around mid-afternoon with thunderous intensity and then leaving as quickly as they came after an hour of torrential downpour. These thunderstorms include severe wind as well as rain (See Weather Hazards in the ***DMG*** for a description of the effects caused by thunderstorms and severe wind). In addition, there is a 2% chance each day that a hurricane strikes instead of a thunderstorm. Strangely, the safest time of day is during these storms, as the spire wyverns do not hunt in these conditions, the dire crocodiles slip out to sea and the sumonsters and carnivorous apes take to shelter. Because of these daily storms, it is never difficult to gather fresh water on the island.

The rivers on the island flow through ancient swamps, thick with mire and muck and overgrown with reeds that make it impossible to determine footing or water depth. The jungle is often "triple canopy" thickness, blocking out all sunlight within. Food is abundant in the jungle. Large, ripe exotic fruits can be found almost everywhere, in contrast to the swamp areas


The Island of the Globe
N
Carnivorous Ape Lair
Dire Tiger Lair
Carnivorous Ape Lair
Spire Wyvern Lair
Su-monster Lair
Su-monster Lair
Dungeon Entrance
Legend
Jungle
Swamp
Low Mountain
Central Mountain
Lake with Island
Dungeon Entrance
Lair
Coastline
River
1 Hex = 1/2 mile

which contain vile and poisonous fish and tubers. The mountains are steep and jagged, often covered with a green lichenous moss, making footing difficult and climbing dangerous. The sandy beaches are beautiful and pristine, undisturbed except for the 20 foot long monstrous dire crocodiles that can often be seen sunning themselves on the sandy expanses.

Since the evil priests of Tsathogga built the complex to house the *globe* some 2000 years ago, there have been no humanoids on the island except for a small band of pirates that happened upon the island and attempted to make the island a base of operations. Most were quickly devoured by the inhabitants of the island. Their comrades fled in their small pirate vessel, though all perished when a dragon turtle capsized the ship. The creatures on the island are unfamiliar with humanoids, particularly intelligent humanoids, and have no experience hunting them which may lead to an advantage for the characters.

There does exist on the island several patches of **Black Lotus**, a rare and deadly plant from which can be derived the most sought after of poisons. See the ***Creature Collection*** by Sword and Sorcery Studios for more details on the black lotus. The locations of these patches correspond with the su-monster lairs, detailed under "Wandering Monsters" below. Su-monsters, it appears, are immune to the effects of the lotus and they covet the blossoms as delicacies. They tend the deadly flowers and protect them as one would protect a precious treasure hoard or one's own young.

If you allowed the PCs to reach the island without using any of the above-mentioned wilderness travel to reach the island, you should immediately begin with an encounter. **Two spire wyverns**, who make their lair in a cave on the central mountain, swoop in shrieking and attack the party as they unload their equipment on the beach. Statistics and tactics for the wyverns are provided below under "Wandering Monsters." Any PCs or NPCs captured by the wyverns are taken back to their lair, detailed below, where they are dropped into the crevasse and feasted on at the whim of the wyverns.

Tactics: One of the spire wyverns uses its screech attack on the first round. They then both swoop in and either use their talons and bite or lance their prey with their stinging tails. They normally focus on prey they have stunned with their screech, poisoning them and seizing them to carry back to their lair and devour once the poison has taken effect. The second spire wyvern uses its screech on the following round. For more information on the spire wyvern, see the ***Creature Collection*** by Sword and Sorcery Studios.

Island of the Globe
Wandering Monster Table

1: **1d2 Spire Wyverns** (from the ***Creature Collection***)
2: **1d4+1 Su Monsters**
3: **1d2 Dire Tigers**
4: **1d4 Night Tyrants** (from the ***Creature Collection***)
5: **1d6+2 Carnivorous (Dire) Apes**
6: **2d6 Large Monstrous Poisonous Toads**
7: **1d3 Shambling Mounds**
8: **1d6 Dire Crocodiles**
9: **1d3 Water Nagas**

Wandering Monsters on the Island

While on the island, check once every three hours for an encounter. An encounter occurs on a 1 on 1d10 during the day and on a 1-2 on 1d10 at night. Roll 1d6 on the following Wandering Monster table to determine the monster encountered (+2 to the roll if in a coast, marsh or river hex with a cumulative +1 to the roll if at night).
Also, if the players ever enter a body of water (river or lake) while on the island there is a 1 in 6 chance of encountering **2d6 Giant Leeches**.

Spire Wyverns (2): CR 4; SZ M (beast); HD 8d10; hp 44; Init +3 (Dex); Spd 20 ft., Fly 120 ft. (average); AC 18 (+5 natural, +3 Dex); Atk +8 melee (2d6, 2 talons) and +3 melee (1d8, bite), or +8 melee (1d10, tail plus poison); SA poison; SQ keen senses, screech of spires; AL N; SV Fort +2, Ref +9, Will +0; Str 11, Dex 17, Con 11, Int 5, Wis 6, Cha 6.

Skills: Search +11 Move Silently +8, Spot +11. *Feats:* Multiattack, Flyby Attack.

SA—Poison (Ex): The spire wyvern's tail delivers a paralyzing venom. Anyone injured by the tail must also pass a Fortitude save (DC 13) or become paralyzed for 1d6 hours. Once injected into prey, the venom takes 1d4 rounds before paralysis sets in (assuming the PC failed their saving throw).

SQ—Keen Senses (Ex): Spire Wyverns can see at distances up to one mile with a great degree of accuracy.

SQ—Screech of the Spires (Su): Spire wyverns are able to let out a great, piercing screech as a standard action up to 5 times per day though no more than once every 10 minutes. This sound can be heard up to one mile away. The screech also deafens opponents within 60 feet for 2d4 rounds and stuns them for 1d4 rounds unless the victim makes a fortitude save (DC 19).

Lair: The spire wyverns make their lair several miles away among the peaks of the mountains. There are a total of 4 wyverns. They have both a cave lair set into the face of the mountain peak and a crevasse below that is 40 feet deep into which they drop their prey until the poison takes effect. The sheer, smooth sides of the crevasse require a Climb check (DC 25) to escape. In the bottom of the crevasse can be found various bits of armor and weapons, in which the wyverns have little interest, including: a suit of *+4 scale mail*, a pot of *stone salve* (5 uses), 262 gp and a large marble statue of an elephant with garnet eyes worth 60 gp, all taken long ago from a pirate band that landed on the island with the hope of making the island a base. All else is rusted and worthless.

Su-Monsters: CR 3; SZ M Magical Beast (4 1/2 ft. long); HD 5d10; hp 30; Init +6 (Improved Initiative, Dex); Spd 40 ft., climb 40 ft.; AC 16 (+4 natural, Dex); Atk +6 [x4] (1d4+1 [x4], claw) and +5 (2d4, bite); SA mind blast; SQ prehensile tail, darkvision (90 ft.); AL CN; SV Fort +4, Ref +6, Will +4; Str 12, Dex 14, Con 10, Int 10, Wis 16, Cha 12.

Skills: Climb +12, Hide +10, Listen +5, Move Silently +10, Spot +6. *Feats:* Multiattack, Improved Initiative, Dodge, Weapon Focus (Claw).

SA—Mind Blast (Sp): This attack is a cone 60 feet long. Anyone caught in the cone must make a Will save (DC 16) or be stunned for 3d4 rounds. Su-monsters use this power to stun their foes while they hang from their prehensile tails prior to attacking with their razor-sharp claws.

SQ—Prehensile Tail (Ex): Su-monsters have a 10 foot-long prehensile tail that allows them to hang from trees and attack with all four claws as well as their bite in one round. A su-monster on the ground may only attack with two claws and his bite. They can also use their tail to retrieve and manipulate items. It is as dexterous as if it were an additional hand.

Description: Su-monsters appear to be a strange cross between a baboon and a lizard. Their fur is dirty gray and their tail and face are jet black. Their paws are blood red. They have razor-sharp claws on all four limbs. Their red eyes flash with a wicked intelligence.

Lair: There are two su-monster lairs on the island, though many more live either solitarily or in small packs. At these lairs, which are always over 50 feet above ground in the thick jungle canopy, are 2d8 males, 2d4 females and 1d4 young. There is no treasure, though patches of **Black Lotus** grow at each su-monster lair. See the description of the island below for more details.

Dire Tigers: CR 8; SZ Huge Animal; HD 16d8+48; hp 120; Init +2; Spd 40 ft.; AC 16; Atk +18 melee (2d4+8 [x2], claws) and +13 melee (2d6+4, bite), +18 melee (2d4+4, rake); SA pounce, improved grab, rake; SQ scent (30 ft.); AL N; SV Fort +13, Ref +12, Will +11; Str 27, Dex 15, Con 17, Int 2, Wis 12, Cha 10.

Skills: Hide +0, Jump +11, Listen +3, Move Silently +9, Spot +3, Swim +5. Dire lions receive a +4 to Hide and Move silently checks. In areas of forest or heavy undergrowth, the tiger's Hide bonus rises to +8. *Feats:* Multiattack, Improved Trip, Improved Grapple.

Lair: A pair of dire tigers live under a mound of rocks with a hollow space beneath. This pair, a male and a female, has no treasure and no young. There are several other lairs of dire tigers on the island.

Night Tyrants: CR 4; SZ L Vermin; HD 8d8+8; hp 48; Init +8 (Improved Initiative, Dex); Spd 90 ft., climb 90 ft.; AC 17/13 (-1 size, +4 natural, Dex/ underbelly); Atk +8 melee (1d8+1, bite); SA sedative spray; SQ vermin, darkvision (90 ft.); AL N; SV Fort +7, Ref +6, Will +2; Str 12, Dex 18, Con 12, Int 1, Wis 10, Cha 6.

Skills: Climb +14, Hide +18, Move Silently +15. *Feats:* Dodge, Improved Initiative, Spring Attack, Track.

SA—Sedative Spray (Ex): The night tyrant exudes a fine mist from its abdomen that has a strong honey-like scent and causes its victims to fall into a deep sleep. All within 30 feet of the spider must make a Fortitude save (DC 17) or fall asleep. Those who are already sleeping when sprayed must save versus DC 23. Those slept by this spray may only be awakened if shaken violently by another person and even then the person must make a Will save (DC 13) to wake from the slumber.

SQ—Vermin: Night tyrants are immune to mind-altering effects.

Description: These huge hunting spiders do not make webs. Instead, they lurk in the upper canopy of the jungle, descending to 30 feet above sleeping or unaware creatures and where they release their sedative spray. Once the spray has taken effect, they descend and drag the inert victims into the trees where they are killed and eaten at will. See the ***Creature Collection*** by Sword and Sorcery Studios for more details on this creature.

Carnivorous (Dire) Apes: CR 3; HD 5d8+10; hp 35; Init +2 (Dex); Spd 30 ft., climb 15 ft.; AC 15 (-1 size, +4 natural, Dex); Atk +8/+8 melee (1d6+6 [x2], claws plus rend) and +3 melee (1d8+3, bite); Reach 10 ft. with claws; SA rend; SQ scent; AL N; SV Fort +6, Ref +6, Will +5; Str 22, Dex 15, Con 14, Int 2, Wis 12, Cha 7.

Skills: Climb +14, Move Silently +9, Spot +9. *Feats:* None.

SA—Rend (Ex): A carnivorous ape that hits with

both claw attacks latches onto its foe and deals an additional 2d6+12 points of damage.

Lair: There are two Carnivorous Ape lairs on the island, though many more live on the island either solitarily or in small groups. These lairs consist of clearings where a tribe of apes makes their home. The tribe consists of 2d10 males, 2d3 females and 2d6 young. There is no treasure.

Large Monstrous Poisonous Toads: CR 2; SZ L Animal (9 ft. long); HD 4d8+2; hp 18; Init +1 (Dex); Spd 30 ft., swim 20 ft.; AC 14 (-1 size, +4 natural, Dex); Atk +4 melee (1d8+1, bite plus poison); SA leap, adhesive tongue, poison; SQ low-light vision, poisonous skin; AL N; SV Fort +3, Ref +6, Will +3; Str 18, Dex 13, Con 17, Int 1, Wis 14, Cha 4.

Skills: Jump +10 (see below), Listen +6, Spot +6, Swim +10. *Feats:* Weapons Finesse (tongue), Dodge.

SA—Leap (Ex): A monstrous toad can leap up to 70 feet horizontally (20 feet vertically) and attack with its bite. This is treated as a charge (+2 bonus to attack roll, -2 penalty to AC). To leap, the monstrous taod must be at least 10 feet from its target.

SA—Adhesive Tongue (Ex): A monstrous toad within 20 feet of its prey normally lashes out with its sticky tongue instead of leaping, striking with a +2 bonus (granted by the Weapon Finesse feat). Tongue attacks deal no damage and are treated as grappling attacks except that they do not provoke attacks of opportunity. If a monstrous toad successfully snares its prey with its tongue, it is automatically drawn into the toad's mouth the following round and bitten (no attack roll required). If the tongue is struck (AC 15) for any amount of damage, the toad releases the victim and does not attack that victim again. These monstrous toads cannot use their tongues to reel in prey of Huge size or bigger.

SA—Poison (Ex): Monstrous toads have a poisonous bite. All creatures bitten by a monstrous toad must make a Fortitude save (DC 15) or suffer 1d6/1d6 temporary Dexterity damage.

SQ—Poisonous Skin (Ex): In addition to their poisonous bite, monstrous toads also exude a toxic poison from their skin (though not their tongue). Anyone touching the skin of a monstrous toad must make a Fortitude save (DC 15) or suffer 1d6/1d6 temporary Dexterity damage in addition to suffering mild hallucinations causing a –2 intoxication modifier to all attacks, checks and saves. Because contact with skin is required, armor provides a bonus to the Fortitude save equal to one-half its bonus to AC, rounded down.

Dire Crocodiles: CR 4; SZ H Animal (20 ft. long); HD 7d8+28; hp 65; Init +1; Spd 20 ft., swim 30 ft.; AC 18; Atk +11 melee (2d8+12, bite) or +11 melee (1d12+12, tail slap); Face/Reach 10 ft. x 20 ft./10 ft.; SA improved grab; AL N; SV Fort +9, Ref +6, Will +3; Str 27, Dex 12, Con 19, Int 1, Wis 12, Cha 2.

Skills: Hide +0 (+12 when submerged), Listen +5, Spot +5. *Feats:* None.

Shambling Mounds: CR 6; SZ L Plant; HD 8d8+24; hp 64; Init +0, Spd 20 ft.; AC 20; Atk +10/+10 melee (2d6+5 [x2], slam); Reach 10 ft.; SA improved grab, constrict, engulf; SQ plant, electricity immunity, fire resistance (30); AL N; SV Fort +9, Ref +2, Will +2; Str 21, Dex 10, Con 17, Int 7, Wis 10, Cha 9.

Skills: +4 (+16 in swamp, forest or jungle), Listen +8, Move Silently +8. *Feats:* None.

Water Nagas: CR 7 (9 nest); SZ L Abberation (Aquatic); HD 7d8+28; hp 63; Init +1; Spd 30 ft., swim 50 ft.; AC 15; Atk +7 melee (2d6+4, bite plus poison); Reach 10 ft.; SA poison, spells; AL NE; SV Fort +6, Ref +5, Will +8; Str 18, Dex 13, Con 18, Int 10, Wis 17, Cha 15.

Skills: Concentration +12, Hide +4 (+12 in water), Listen +10, Spellcraft +8, Spot +10. *Feats:* Lightning Reflexes.

Arcane Spells Known (spells per day: 6/7/7/4): 0—resistance, ray of frost, daze, dancing lights, mage hand, open/close, read magic; 1st—mage armor, obscuring mist, true strike, sleep, magic missile; 2nd—invisibility, hypnotic pattern, mirror image; 3rd—haste, lightning bolt.

Possessions: None.

Giant Leeches: CR ½; SZ S Vermin (2 ft. long); HD 1d8; hp 4; Init +0; Spd 10 ft., swim 20 ft.; AC 11; Atk +0 melee (1 point, bite, plus SAs); SA anesthetize, blood drain, disease; SQ camouflage, salt vulnerability, vermin; AL N; SV Fort +2, Ref +0, Will +0; Str 6, Dex 10, Con 11, Int –, Wis 6, Cha 2.

Skills: Hide +8 (+12 in water), Move Silently +8.

SA—Anesthetize (Ex): If the giant leech attacks a non-aquatic creature in water, the victim might not detect the attack. The victim is entitled to a Spot check opposed by the leech's Hide check to notice the monster's attack. If that Sot check fails, the victim can make another Spot check (same DC) each round the leech is attached to try to notice it.

SA—Blood Drain (Ex): On a successful attack, the giant leech attaches itself to the victim. In each subsequent round it drains 1d2 points of temporary Constitution damage, detaching itself after draining 6 points. Victims recover lost Constitution at the normal rate.

SA—Disease (Ex): Any creature bitten by a giant leech must make a Fortitude save (DC 15) or fall victim to the red ache (incubation time 1d3 days; damage 1d6 temporary Strength points).

SQ—Camouflage (Ex): Giant leeches have a +4 racial bonus to Hide checks in water due to their protective coloration.

SQ—Salt Vulnerability: A handful or more of salt deals 1d4+1 points of damage to the leech on contact and causes it to detach itself from its victim.

SQ—Vermin: Giant leeches are immune to all mind-influencing effects.

The Interior Lake

The evil priests of Tsathogga spirited the *globe* away to this primordial island and there constructed a complex to contain the *globe*, hiding it from the worshipers of Arden. They selected as their hiding place the top of a stony outcropping of rock located in the center of a lake on the island.

The lake itself is composed of reasonably fresh water as a result of the run off from the daily thunderstorms. However, crossing the lake and the swamp may prove difficult. The party could attempt to portage a skiff from the beach to the edge of the swamp and use that to cross the lake. Or they could use a skiff to paddle up river to the lake. In either case, there is a 1 in 6 chance per hex traveled of an encounter. Roll the result on the following Wandering Monster table on 1d6.

Interior Lake
Wandering Monster Table

1-3: **1d6 Dire Crocodiles**
4-5: **2d6 Medium-Sized Abyssal Poisonous Dire Toads** (unique to this lake and central island)
6: **1d3 Water Nagas**

Medium Abyssal Poisonous Dire Toads: CR 3; SZ M Animal (6 ft. long); HD 4d8+12; hp 32; Init +8 (Improved Initiative, Dex); Spd 40 ft., swim 20 ft.; AC 17 (+4 natural, Dex); Atk +6 melee (1d6+4, bite plus poison), +5 melee (1d6+2 [x2], claw); SA adhesive tongue, improved trip, leap, poison, rake, smite good; SQ darkvision, cold and fire resistance (10), damage reduction (5/+1), spell resistance (14); AL CE; SV Fort +6, Ref +7, Will +1; Str 14, Dex 16, Con 14, Int 2, Wis 14, Cha 11.

Skills: Jump (see below), Listen +6, Spot +6, Swim +8. *Feats:* Improved Initiative, Weapons Finesse (tongue), Weapon Focus (bite).

SA—Leap (Ex): A fiendish poisonous dire toad can leap up to 60 feet horizontally (20 feet vertically) and make a full attack even if it has already taken a move action. This is treated as a charge attack (+2 bonus to attack roll, -2 penalty to AC) and is used in concert with the monster's improved trip ability. To leap, the monstrous toad must be at least 10 feet from its target.

SA—Improved Trip (Ex): A fiendish poisonous dire toad leaping on an opponent also makes an automatic trip attack that does not draw an attack of opportunity or require a touch attack. If the trip attack is successful, the fiendish poisonous dire toad has knocked the opponent down and is on top of him. The toad can then use its rake attack.

SA—Rake (Ex): A fiendish poisonous dire toad can make two free rake attacks against any prone or tripped foe at +8 melee. Each successful rake attack deals an additional 1d6+1 damage from its rear claws. This attack is in addition to any bite or front claw attacks. A toad attacking while swimming may make rake attacks with a successful bite attack.

SA—Adhesive Tongue (Ex): A fiendish poisonous dire toad within 20 feet of its prey lashes out with its sticky tongue instead of leaping, striking with a +2 bonus (granted by the Weapon Finesse feat). Tongue attacks deal no damage and are treated as grappling attacks except that they do not provoke attacks of opportunity. If a fiendish poisonous dire toad successfully snares its prey with its tongue, it is automatically drawn into the toad's mouth the following round and bitten (no attack roll required). If the tongue is struck (AC 15) for any amount of damage, the toad releases the victim and does not attack that victim with its tongue again. If the tongue is struck for more than 10 hp it is severed. This damage does not count against the monster's main hit points. These fiendish poisonous dire toads can use their tongues to reel in prey of Medium size or smaller. The tongue is poisonous and a save must be made as detailed below.

SA—Poison (Ex): A fiendish poisonous dire toad exudes poison from the pores of its skin as well as from its toothy maw and tongue. Any creature hit by the toad's tongue, touching the toad with bare skin (including unarmed attacks) or being bitten by a toad must make a Fortitude save (DC 18 if bitten, 12 if touching its skin or tongue only) or suffer 1d6/1d6 temporary Strength damage.

If the characters ever enter the water, there is a 1 in 6 chance they encounter **2d6 Giant Leeches**.

There are plenty of fallen trees, vines and palm fronds from which the PCs can construct make-shift rafts. Have them make appropriate skill checks to do so.

On the Central Island

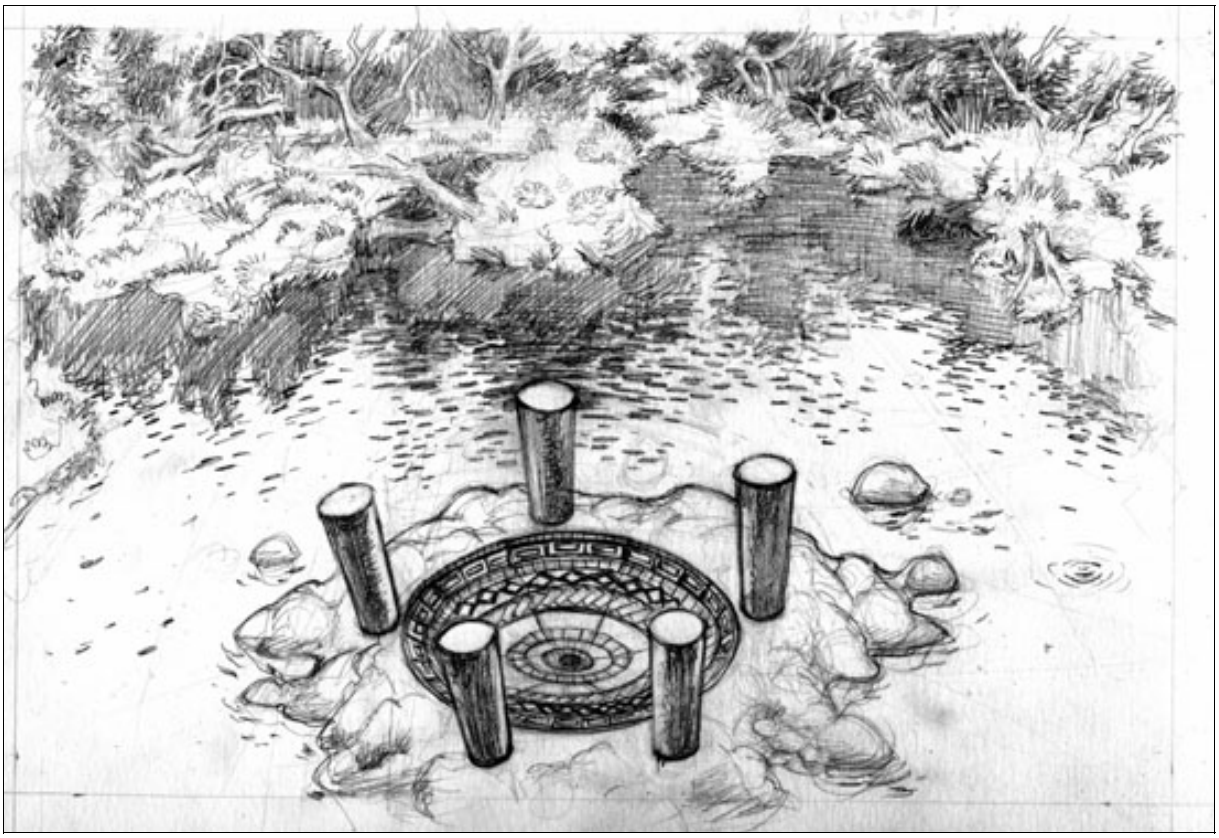
Once the PCs reach the central island that holds the entrance to the dungeon, read or paraphrase the following:

> The sea voyage to the island of the *globe* has been long and difficult and the overland journey across the island to the rumored location of the dungeon entrance has been fraught with peril—giant crocodiles, monstrous spiders, carnivorous apes and worse.
>
> Several hours ago you and your comrades reached a lake within the center of the island and within that lake you observed what appeared to be an island of stone. You gaze at the ancient map and read again the words: "On an island within an island, beyond a door that is not a door, shielded by the grin of the hated sun lies the *Globe of Arden*…" You began constructing rafts, lashing together trunks of some of the fallen trees from the jungle, to cross the lake.
>
> Now, you and your fellow adventurers have paddled across the lake without incident and pulled up onto the stone outcrop that forms the central island. It is relatively flat and barren of life, covered with a green moss. As you begin to make your way across the slippery rock, you hear a sound behind you. You turn to see a number of giant toads emerge from the water, leaping at you!

Regardless of any encounters they may have in their attempt to reach the central island, once the PCs disembark from their rafts, they are attacked by **10 Medium-Sized Abyssal Poisonous Dire Toads** (stats provided under wandering monsters for the interior lake, above). These creatures were brought to the island and bred by the priests of Tsathogga as guardians. They possess an instinctive duty to guard the island against humanoids.

The interior island is covered with moss which makes footing difficult. Any movement other than careful walking requires a Dexterity check (DC 10) or the PC falls as if tripped. Moving in combat requires a similar check (DC 12). Running in combat requires a more difficult check (DC 18). Feats that add to movement may add a modifier to this check.

Once the PCs dispatch the evil toads, proceed to the entrance of the dungeon as detailed in the module itself.



The Pit of Despair

Possibly more than any of the three adventures contained in ***Demons and Devils***, *The Pit of Despair* requires a wilderness trek. Some of that trek is detailed in the module itself. Here, however, is a more detailed series of encounters and notes regarding the lengthy wilderness travel required to reach the Temple of the Justicars. As with *Ra's Evil Grin*, you have several options in running the wilderness trek required to reach the Temple. You could require the PCs to make the full overland trek to the Temple. If so, begin with "Traveling to the Temple of the Justicars," below. Or you may wish to allow them to begin at the edge of the desert. In that case, begin with "The Desert," below. You may also presume that the PC have traveled through the wilderness and through the desert and have now come upon the Valley of the Temple. If so, proceed to "The Valley of the Temple," below. Because the dungeon of *The Pit of Despair* is so short, it is strongly suggested that you use the full overland travel detailed here so that you can better fool the PCs once they "defeat" the demons in the temple and obtain the false holy sword into believing they have accomplished their mission.

Traveling to the Temple of the Justicars

To reach the general location of the *Pit of Despair*, the party must travel through a wilderness stretching 180 miles beyond the last human settlement. The first 120 miles involve traveling to the edge of the desert and should be dangerous, though not overly so. Make wandering monster checks as normal, using wilderness encounters consistent with your game world. In addition to any normal, low-level encounters so generated, the PCs should have the following specific encounters as they travel overland towards the desert:

As they set out, the PCs are waylaid early in their travels by **3 priests of Orcus** and **2 assassins**, along with some thugs, who are bent on destroying the PCs before they even undertake their journey. Next, on a subsequent evening, a pack of **8 abyssal dire bats** attacks from out of the night sky. Then, a few nights later, a **lamia** and her **8 jackalwere servants** cannot resist an opportunity to destroy good-aligned characters in their territory. Next, **"the Vampire Queen"** and her **3 specters** are called by Orcus from their far away isle to hinder the PCs.

Kurthrog, Grondor and Yanuk, Evil Priests of Orcus, Male Half-orc, Cle8 (Orcus) (3): CR 8; SZ M Humanoid; HD 8d8+24; hp 64; Init +2 (Dex); Spd 20 ft. (30 ft. base); AC 20 (+5 armor, +3 shield, Dex); Atk +11/+6 melee (1d8+4, *+1 unholy heavy mace*, plus 2d6 vs. good) or +9 melee (death touch, target's armor is ignored); SA death touch; SQ increased evil spells, control undead, racial abilities; SV Fort +9, Ref +4, Will +9; AL CE; Str 16, Dex 14, Con 16, Int 16, Wis 16, Cha 16.

Skills: Appraise +4, Concentration +10, Diplomacy +6, Heal +7, Intimidate +10, Knowledge (Arcana) +7, Knowledge (Religion) +13, Scry +4, Search +4, Sense Motive +4, Spellcraft +6, Spot +4. *Feats:* Power Attack, Sunder, Weapon Focus (Heavy Mace).

SA—Death Touch (Sp): Once per day a priest of Orcus can make a melee touch attack against a living opponent. If successful, the priest rolls 8d6. If the total equals or exceeds his opponent's current hit points, his opponent dies. No save.

Unholy Spells (6/5/4/4/2): 0—cure minor wounds (x3), guidance, read magic, resistance; 1st—bane, bless, detect good, doom, protection from good; 2nd—bull's strength, desecrate, hold person, silence, summon monster II; 3rd—bestow curse, contagion, cure serious wounds, prayer; 4th—poison, summon monster IV.

Domain Spells (Death/Evil): 1st—cause fear, 2nd—death knell, 3rd—animate dead, 4th—unholy blight.

Possessions: Masterwork chainmail, *+1 large steel shield*, *+1 unholy heavy mace*, holy symbol of Orcus, prayer book, fine black robes emblazoned with the symbol of Orcus and a belt pouch containing *2 potions of cure serious wounds*, a *scroll of 3 divine spells (caster level 10, protection from good, desecrate*, a*nimate dead)*, 5 vials of unholy water, 3d10 gp and 1d4 25 gp gems each.

Tactics: the evil priests of Orcus wade into combat with glee, using spells such as *bull's strength*, *bane*, *doom* and *protection from good* prior to entering battle. They also use *hold person*, *bestow curse*, *contagion* and *poison* on non-paladins (whom they know are immune). They use *silence* on all spellcasters. Once they have softened up opposing clerics with a few melee attacks, they use their *death touch* powers.

Fa'alor and Jendik, "Assassins" of the Cult of Orcus, Male Half-Orc, Rog6/Clr4 (Orcus) (2): CR 10; Size M Humanoid; HD 4d8+4 plus 6d6+6; hp 62; Init +6 (+2 Dex, Improved Initiative); Spd 30 ft.; AC 17 (+2 Dex, +5 armor); Atk +11/+6 melee (1d4+4, +1 dagger of venom, plus poison), or +11/+6 melee (1d6+4, *+1 shortsword*), or +10/+5 ranged (1d8, *+1 repeating crossbow*, crit 19-20, range 80 ft.); SA death touch, sneak attack; SQ racial abilities, class abilities; SV Fort +7, Ref +8, Will +11; AL CE; Str 16, Dex 14, Con 13, Int 12, Wis 16, Cha 14.

Skills: Balance +11, Craft +11, Disguise +11, Hide +2 (+12 with *shadow armor*), Intuit direction +4,

Knowledge (arcana) +6, Listen +3, Move silently +2, Pick pocket +11, Profession +11, Spot +3, Tumble +10, Use magic device +10. *Feats:* Alertness, Dodge, Improved Initiative, Mobility.

SA—Death Touch (Sp): Once per day a cleric of Orcus can make a melee touch attack against a living opponent. If successful, the priest rolls 4d6. If the total equals or exceeds his opponent's current hit points, his opponent dies. No save.

Unholy Spells (5/4/3): 0—cure minor wounds (x2), guidance, read magic, resistance; 1st—bane, command, deathwatch, obscuring mist; 2nd—bull's strength, hold person, sound burst.

Domain Spells (Death/Evil): 1st—protection from good; 2nd—death knell.

Possessions: +2 evil shadow studded leather armor (bestows one negative level on any non-evil persons wearing it and non-evil persons wearing it suffer 2d6 damage), *+1 shortsword*, *+1 dagger of venom*, *+1 repeating crossbow*, 40 bolts, unholy symbol, 5 flasks of unholy water, 3d10 gp and 1d4 25 gp gems each.

Tactics: the "assassins" attempt to use their sneak attack, using *sound burst* to stun opponents. They fire missiles and then use their *daggers of venom*, unless they attack from hiding (aided by *obscuring mist*) and can use their *daggers* as sneak attacks, which they prefer. They use *deathwatch* to help determine who is subject to their *death touch* power. They also enjoy using *hold person* to subject targets to sneak attacks with their *daggers of venom* and subsequent *death touch*. They use the *death knell* spell with glee on near dead PCs.

Abyssal Dire Bats (8): CR 2; SZ L Animal; HD 4d8+12; hp 30; Init +6 (Dex); Spd 20 ft., fly 40 ft. (good); AC 20 (-1 size, +6 Dex, +5 natural); Atk +5 melee (1d8+4, bite); Face 10 ft. x 5 ft.; SA smite good; SQ blindsight, darkvision, cold and fire resistance (10), damage reduction (5/+1), spell resistance (8); AL CE; SV Fort +7, Ref +6, Will +6; Str 17, Dex 22, Con 17, Int 4, Wis 14, Cha 6.

Skills: Listen +12, Move Silently +12, Spot +12. Dire bats receive a +4 racial bonus to Spot and Listen checks, which are lost if Blindsight is negated.

Lamia: CR 6; SZ M Magical Beast; HD 9d10+9; hp 69; Init +2; Spd 60 ft.; AC 17; Atk +9 melee (1 point permanent Wis drain, touch) or +12/+7 melee (1d4+1, *+1 dagger* plus poison (DC 18, 1d6 Dex/1d6 Dex)); SA spell-like abilities, wisdom drain; AL CE; SV Fort +7, Ref +8, Will +7; Str 10, Dex 15, Con 12, Int 13, Wis 15, Cha 12.

Skills: Bluff +13, Concentration +11, Hide +14. *Feats:* Dodge, Iron Will, Mobility, Weapon Finesse (dagger).

Possessions: +1 dagger (coated with 3 doses of giant wasp poison, DC 18, 1d6 Dex/1d6 Dex), vial with 4 more doses of giant wasp poison, *3 potions of cure serious wounds* and a *broach of shielding* (33 points of damage remaining).

Tactics: The lamia uses her *major image* and *suggestion* powers to fool the PCs into creating an advantageous situation for her jackalweres to attack, such as simulating a caravan of merchants (with his jackalweres as merchants). She similarly covers herself with such an illusion (she prefers the illusion of being a dancing girl) and uses it to approach any clerics in the party and drain their Wisdom.

Lair: She and her shapeshifting servants make their home in a set of caves up the side of a broken hill face, hidden from sight. The entrances are frequently covered with images and illusions to better hide them from discovery. Their caves hold numerous bodies of past meals. It also contains 3,402 gp, 1,003 sp, *gloves of arrow snaring*, a *divine scroll of three spells (caster level 9, dispel magic, call lightning, remove disease)*, a *potion of reduce* and a suit of *+1 half-plate*.

Jackalweres (8): CR 4; SZ M Shapechanger; HD 4d8+12; hp 40; Init +2 (Dex); Spd 30 ft. (50 ft in jackal form); AC 16 (+2 Dex, +4 natural); Atk +5 melee (2d4+1, bite) or +4 melee (1d8+1, longsword); SA sleep gaze; SQ alternate form, damage reduction (10/+1), darkvision 60 ft.; AL CE; SV Fort +7, Ref +6, Will +5; Str 13, Dex 15, Con 16, Int 12, Wis 14, Cha 12.

Skills: Bluff +5, Disguise +4, Hide +8, Listen +4, Move Silently +6, Spot +6, Wilderness Lore +3. *Feats:* Scent, Track, Weapon Finesse (bite).

SA—Sleep Gaze (Su): 30 feet range, Will save negates DC 13, or affected as *sleep* spell cast by a 12th-level sorcerer. This ability is not limited by the target's HD.

SQ—Alternate Form (Su): A jackalwere's natural form is that of a jackal. It can assume two other forms. The first is a Medium-size humanoid. The second from is that of a Medium-size, jackal-humanoid hybrid. Changing forms is a standard action. In humanoid form, the jackalwere gains all the abilities of the form (for example, a jackalwere in dwarf form has dwarven racial traits). The jackalwere keeps its ability scores and can use its sleep gaze. It loses it special qualities of damage reduction and it cannot use its bite attack. In hybrid form, a jackalwere looks like a bipedal jackal. The jackalwere can use weapons and natural attacks, and all of its special attacks and special qualities in this form.

A jackalwere remains in one form until it chooses to assume a new one. A change in form cannot be dispelled, nor does the jackalwere revert to its natural

form when killed. A *true seeing* spell, however, reveals its natural form if it is in humanoid or hybrid form.

Tactics: The jackalweres use their *alternate form* power to assume the guise of merchants. Coupled with the lamia's *major image* ability and *suggestion* ability, it is likely that the PCs approach the "merchants" with their guard down. The jackalweres then use their *sleep gaze* power while still in humanoid form and attack any creatures that do not go to sleep.

"The Vampire Queen," Human Female Vampire Priest-Sorceress, Sor9/Cle6 (Orcus): CR 17; SZ M Undead; HD 15d12; hp 120; Init +6 (+2 Dex, Improved Initiative); Spd 30 ft.; AC 29 (+5 Dex, +6 natural, *amulet*, *mage armor*); +9/+4 melee (1d6+1, claws plus energy drain); SA domination, energy drain, blood drain, children of the night, create spawn; SQ undead, damage reduction (15/+2), turn resistance (+8), cold and electricity resistance (20), gaseous form, spider climb, alternate form, fast healing (5/round); AL CE; SV Fort +10, Ref +9, Will +18; Str 18, Dex 20, Con —, Int 20, Wis 20, Cha 23.

Skills: Alchemy +10.5, Craft +14, Diplomacy +13, Forgery +4.5, Heal +11, Hide +2, Knowledge (arcana) +15, Listen +4, Move silently +2, Profession +13, Scry +14, Sense motive +7, Speak language +3, Spot +4, Tumble +5. *Feats:* Alertness, Brew potion, Combat Reflexes, Craft wand, Dodge, Empower spell, Enlarge spell, Improved Initiative, Lightning Reflexes, Quicken spell, Silent spell, Spell focus (necromancy).

Arcane Spells Known (Cast per day: 6/7/7/7/5): 0—arcane mark, dancing lights, detect magic, ghost sound, light, mage hand, ray of frost, read magic; 1st—burning hands, cause fear, charm person, mage armor, sleep; 2nd—alter self, invisibility, protection from arrows, web; 3rd—dispel magic, hold person, lightning bolt; 4th—ice storm, bestow curse.

Unholy Spells Per Day (5/4/4/3): 0—cure minor wounds, detect magic, read magic, resistance, virtue; 1st—bane, command, doom, obscuring mist; 2nd—bull's strength, hold person (x2), undetectable alignment; 3rd—contagion, cure serious wounds, dispel magic.

Domain Spells (Death/Evil): 1st—cause fear; 2nd—desecrate; 3rd—magic circle against good.

Languages: Abyssal, Celestial, Common, Draconic, Infernal.

Possessions: Though the Vampire Queen has many magic items in her palace, she has not brought any of them with her other than her *+4 amulet of deflection*.

Tactics: The Vampire Queen also has with her **2 abyssal dire bats** (stats provided above), in addition to her specters. She ambushes the party at midnight. She sends the bats and her spectres to attack the party. She then joins melee in bat form (she has the stats of an abyssal dire bat in this form), using energy drain and blood drain on clerics in the party. She has cast *undetectable alignment* and *mage armor* on her person before the encounter. Once done in bat form, she flies out of visible range and casts *invisibility*, *protection from arrows*, *bull's strength*, *obscuring mist*, *resistance* and *virtue* on herself before she enters combat. She then uses spells from a distance, such as *lightning bolt*, *ice storm*, *hold person*, *bestow curse* and *web*. She then reveals herself in her full vampiric splendor and enters melee with her wicked claws in a frenzy of bloodlust. She attacks without mercy or quarter, though if damaged severely she flees in *gaseous form* to her fell lair and hides in one of her secret tombs. Orcus himself has commanded her to waylay the PCs on their quest. She has traveled far to do her master's bidding. She is one of his greatest undead servants on this plane.

Lair: Her lair is a ruined palatial castle on a large island called Baylor, an island inhabited mostly by dwarves and ruled by the descendants of the dwarven king Arman, located many, many miles from where she encounters the PCs. Her tomb lies deep beneath the castle in a vast dungeon complex, five levels deep. She is known to the surrounding dwarven hamlets and towns on the island of Baylor as the "Vampire Queen" and her lair is known as "The Palace of the Vampire Queen." Her "palace" contains several female vampire spawn and male vampire guards as well several charmed male servitors and bandits she uses to fetch her live victims, as well as trolls, mummies goblins, skeletons, evil wizards and several evil priests, werewolves, ghouls, various other monsters and several captive dwarven children from the neighboring villages as well as the daughter of king Arman, whom the queen herself personally holds captive. The palace also includes a group of 12 abyssal dire wolves and 6 abyssal dire bats. She has several additional secret tombs hidden in the surrounding wilderness.

Trivia Note: this lair makes reference to a classic in the history of fantasy gaming. *Palace of the Vampire Queen* is the title of a product that has the distinction of being the very first module (or "Dungeon Master's Kit," as they called it) ever published. *Palace of the Vampire Queen* was written by Pete and Judy Kerestan and published by their company, **Wee Warriors**, in June of 1976. **Module G1: Steading of the Hill Giant Chief**—the first module published by TSR—came out in 1978, about two years after *Palace*. The first *scenario* ever published was Dave Arneson's *Temple of the Frog* in **Blackmoor** (Supplement II to classic Dungeons and Dragons) which predates *Palace of the Vampire Queen* by a few months (**Blackmoor**





was first published in September of 1975). *Temple of the Frog*, however, is not considered a "module" since it was a part of a larger work. Pete and Judy Kerestan and **Wee Warriors** went on to produce the classics *The Dwarven Glory*, a modular dungeon made of tiled parts that the DM can arrange as he or she wishes in order to vary the difficulty, and *Misty Isles*, a chain of hidden islands where at one point the PCs can actually recover twentieth-century firearms. This reference to the *Palace of the Vampire Queen* is meant as a tribute to that pioneering classic. Since we at **Necromancer Games** feel a strong connection to the past, we couldn't help but mention this rare module and its groundbreaking history. Hopefully, this reference will encourage all our fans to delve into the long history of fantasy roleplaying adventures. Those wanting information on collecting such supplements, or simply wanting to learn more about the history of our shared favorite pass-time, should visit The Acaeum (www.acaeum.com), an outstanding site listing all of the supplements and modules ever produced for all the various editions of fantasy roleplaying games. It is truly an exhaustive and informative web site.

Spectres (3): CR 7; SZ M Undead (Incorporeal); HD 7d12; hp 55; Init +7; Spd 40 ft., fly 80 ft. (good); AC 15; Atk +6 melee (1d8, incorporeal touch plus energy drain); SA energy drain, create spawn; SQ undead, incorporeal, turn resistance (+2), unnatural aura, sunlight powerlessness; AL LE; SV Fort +2, Ref +5, Will +7; Str —, Dex 16, Con —, Int 14, Wis 14, Cha 15.

Skills: Hide +13, Intimidate +12, Intuit Direction +10, Listen +13, Search +10, Spot +13. *Feats:* Alertness, Blind-fight, Combat Reflexes, Improved Initiative.

Tactics: the spectres use their Hide skills to ambush the PCs as they are distracted by the dire bats. They use their fearsome incorporeal touch attacks on spellcasters and paladins. They show no fear and would be destroyed rather than fail their queen.

The Desert

Having overcome the above encounters, the PCs reach the edge of the desert. They must then travel an additional 60 miles through the desert until they reach the Valley of the Temple—a special part of the desert itself. In the desert, the PCs have several lesser encounters, including: a **pack of baboons**, a **swarm of dire bats** and some **monstrous scorpions**. The PCs may encounter these scorpions on several occasions, particularly at night after they make camp. These desert encounters are but a prelude to the encounter with **Felzinath'aa**, detailed below.

Baboons (20): CR ½; SZ M Animal; HD 1d8+1; hp 6; Init +2; Spd 40 ft., climb 30 ft.; AC 13; Atk +2 melee (1d6+3, bite); SQ scent; AL N; SV Fort +3, Ref +4, Will +1; Str 15, Dex 14, Con 12, Int 2, Wis 12, Cha 4.

Skills: Climb +13, Listen +5, Spot +5.

Dire Bats (8): CR 2; SZ L Animal; HD 4d8+12; hp 30; Init +6 (Dex); Spd 20 ft., fly 40 ft. (good); AC 20 (-1 size, +6 Dex, +5 natural); Atk +5 melee (1d8+4, bite); Face 10 ft. x 5 ft.; SQ blindsight; AL N; SV Fort +7, Ref +6, Will +6; Str 17, Dex 22, Con 17, Int 2, Wis 14, Cha 6.

Skills: Listen +12, Move Silently +12, Spot +12. Dire bats receive a +4 racial bonus to Spot and Listen checks, which are lost if Blindsight is negated.

Medium-Sized Monstrous Scorpions (6): CR 1; SZ M Vermin; HD 2d8+4; hp 18; Init +0; Spd 40 ft.; AC 14; Atk +2 melee (1d4+1 [x2], claws), -3 melee (1d4, sting plus poison); SA improved grab, squeeze, poison (DC 15, 1d4 Str/1d4 Str); SQ vermin; AL N; SV Fort +5, Ref +0, Will +0; Str 13, Dex 10, Con 14, Int —, Wis 10, Cha 2.

Skills: Climb +8, Hide +8, Spot +7.

Ambush!

Finally, as the party draws within two miles of the entrance to the Valley of the Temple, they encounter **Felzinath'aa, a mature adult blue dragon** who ambushes the party from beneath the sand. The dragon was told by agents of Orcus of the coming of the party. He has eaten several paladins questing for *Karith's sword*. If the PCs do not defeat Felzinath'aa, he ambushes them again on any return trip to the Pit. He does not disturb them if they are returning from the Pit with the *unholy sword*, though he does try to stop them if they are returning to the Pit to destroy the *unholy sword*.

Felzinath'aa, the Mature Adult Blue Dragon: CR 15; H Dragon [Earth, Evil] (30 ft. long, 16 ft. tall); HD 24d12+120; hp 312; Init +4 (Improved Initiative); Spd 40 ft., fly 150 ft. (poor), burrow 20 ft.; AC 31 (-2 size, +23 natural); Atk +32 melee (2d8+9, bite) and +26 melee (2d6+4 [x2], claws) and +26 melee (1d8+4 [x2], wings) and +26 melee (2d6+13, tail slap); Face/Reach 10 ft. x 20 ft./10 ft.; SA breath weapon, frightful presence (DC 25), arcane spells (including cleric spells from air, evil and law); SQ dragon immunities, spell resistance (SR 22), damage resistance (10/+1), electricity immunity, create/destroy water, sound imitation, ventriloquism, blindsight, keen senses; AL LE; SV Fort +19, Ref +14, Will +17; Str 29, Dex 10, Con 21, Int 16, Wis 17, Cha 16.

Skills: Bluff +29, Concentration +21, Diplomacy +29, Escape Artist +14, Gather Information +10, Intimidate +30, Jump +36, Knowledge (arcana) +29, Knowledge (history) +29, Listen +31, Scry +15, Search +29, Sense Motive +20, Spellcraft +29, Spot +36. *Feats:* Alertness, Cleave, Sunder, Improved Initiative, Hover, Flyby Attack, Quicken Spell-like Ability, Snatch, Weapon Focus (bite).

Spells Known (can cast 6/7/7/5 spells per day as 7th level sorcerer): 0—inflict minor wounds, mending, ray of frost, mage sound, detect magic, read magic, resistance; 1st—inflict light wounds, protection from good, silent image, identify, ray of enfeeblement; 2nd—resist elements (fire), see invisible, invisibility; 3rd—stone shape, haste.

Languages: Common, Draconic, Infernal, Terran.

Tactics: This is a brutal ambush. Felzinath'aa burrows a hole in which he hides himself and covers it with a *silent image* of a pile of sand similar to the surrounding desert sand. From this position, he keeps watch for the party. When he sees them at a distance, he casts *resistance*, *protection from good*, *resist elements (fire)*, *see invisible* and *invisibility* on himself. As they get close, he calls to the party using *ventriloquism* and his Sound Imitation ability in a celestial voice. He attempts to speak with the party about their quest. He creates the voice in such a way as to make the party turn their back on his hiding place. He then leaps out biting and using his Snatch feat on any paladins and using his claw and wing attacks on the party—particularly spell casters. He then uses his breath weapon on any characters he has Snatched because they get no save if Snatched. He then casts *haste* on himself and begins melee combat proper. If things go poorly for him, he either flies away or uses *gaseous form* and disappears into the air. Felzinath'aa is cunning and extraordinarily evil. He is a servant of Orcus, as are most evil dragons hoping to live on as dragonliches after their death.

Lair: The dragon's lair is deep underground and is not detailed here. It most likely cannot be located by the party. Felzinath'aa created his lair with numerous *stone shape* spells deep beneath the earth. It requires burrowing nearly a quarter mile beneath the desert sands to reach the entrance cavern. A stone wall in the entrance cavern (which Felzinath'aa opens with *stone shape*) block entrance to his actual lair. In the lair is treasure appropriate for a blue dragon, including the remains of some prior questing paladins.

Once these encounters are overcome, the PCs should be allowed to travel without further encounters to the entrance to the Valley of the Temple.

The Valley of the Temple

Once the PCs reach the Valley of the Temple, read or paraphrase the following text:

> You have grown accustomed to traveling in the cooler pre-dawn and early morning hours, avoiding the heat of the desert sun. After countless days of travel, you finally reach the valley indicated on the priests' map, just as the sun comes up. You see before you a rocky gap that winds down into a large, deep, barren valley of red rock. Even the carrion birds that have followed your party for 40 long miles do not circle here.

As the final leg of the journey, the party must travel 15 more miles through one of the hottest, most godforsaken, miserable areas of the known world. The Temple of the Justicars is set in the low desert, in a valley far below sea level. There is no water and very little animal life, and the temperatures soar to over 120 degrees during the day and plummet to near or below freezing at night. DMs desiring more information should research Death Valley, California, for a similar setting, though the Valley of the Temple is even more extreme in its conditions.

Travel in the Valley

All overland movement in the valley is at 1/4 normal rate due to the rocky, trackless conditions and at 1/8 normal from noon to 4:00 PM because of the extreme heat. Each hour of travel in the valley requires a successful Wilderness Lore check (DC 20) and a successful Tracking check (DC 15) to properly follow the map provided by the priests of Muir and find a suitable trail. If either check is failed, the party makes no progress for that hour of travel. As noted below under "Death by Weather," if a dust storm stirs, no significant overland movement is possible, regardless of whether these checks are successful or not. Because of weather effects, detailed below, PCs will most likely limit themselves to traveling for only a few hours a day, unless they use magic to protect themselves and their beasts from the hostile conditions. Once the PCs have traveled 15 miles, they arrive at the far end of the Valley of the Temple. A small gully leads to a canyon where the temple entrance is located.

Death by Weather

Climatic conditions in the Valley of the Temple run to extremes: unbearably hot during the day and freezing cold at night. This inhospitable region offers no source

of water and no natural source of shade to shield the PCs from the sun. It is not a place for the untrained or ill-prepared. The DM should consult the rules regarding Heat Dangers and Cold Dangers in the ***DMG***. Because of this extreme weather, characters and animals must make frequent Fortitude saves; there are few hours each day or night in which the characters have a chance to heal the climatic subdual damage. Camels or other desert animals add +10 to their Fortitude saves. See the ***DMG*** for more details. Using a tent reduces the heat category by one, so characters in a tent from 10 AM to noon and from 4 PM to 8 PM do not need to make Fortitude checks and from noon to 4 PM they only need to make checks once per hour. If they are in a tent and using blankets at night, then the PCs do not suffer the cold effects from 11 PM to 6 AM. A summary of the effects of the extreme weather is summarized in the "Death by Weather" sidebar, below.

In addition, the PCs may run short of food or water. If so, consult the rules for Starvation and Thirst Dangers in the ***DMG***. In either case, PCs suffering from heat or cold subdual damage or from thirst or starvation are considered fatigued. They cannot run or charge and suffer a –2 weather penalty to Strength and Dexterity. Fatigued characters become exhausted (1/2 move, -6 Strength and Dexterity) when they attempt something that would fatigue a normal character. See the ***DMG*** for more details.

Strong winds plague the valley. Check once every hour on 1d20 with the following results: 1-8: no wind, 9-12: moderate wind, 13-15: strong wind, 16-18: severe wind, 19-20: windstorm. These winds last for 6d10 minutes. Any time strong or severe winds arise, there is a 50% chance that a dust storm accompanies them. In addition, any windstorm is always accompanied by a dust storm, with a 75% chance of a greater dust storm. The winds themselves, of extreme temperature, do nothing to reduce the effects of heat or cold. See the ***DMG*** under Weather Hazards for the game effects associated with these winds and dust storms. When a dust storm rises, no significant overland travel is possible.

Wandering Monsters

Wandering monsters are very scarce in the valley. At the DMs discretion, PCs might encounter either or both of the following wandering monsters on separate days of travel: The first encounter can occur at 9 AM on the first full day spent in the valley. As the PCs begin to bed down in their makeshift shade to escape the heat of the day, **8 swarms of berserker wasps** attack. That the PCs provide more nesting material than is usually available motivates these wasps.

The second encounter occurs late during the PCs' second night in the valley, either as they camp or search for the entrance to the temple. At about 11 PM, **4 sand burrowers** attack the party. The creatures are as likely to attack pack animals as PCs. No PC or animal will be attacked by more than one sand burrower, unless there are not enough PCs and animals to go around, in which case a brutal tug of war may ensue.
Once these encounters are dealt with, no others occur, as all the significant local predators in the valley (aside from common scorpions and other similar vermin) have been defeated.

Berserker Wasp Swarms (8): CR 5; SZ Diminutive Vermin; HD 10d8-20; hp 25 (swarm); Init +1 (Dex); Spd Fly 60 ft.; AC 15 (+4 size, +1 Dex); Atk +9 melee (1d10, group sting plus poison); SA poison sting; SQ vermin, vulnerable to cold; AL N; SV Fort +0, Ref +2, Will -1; Str 1, Dex 13, Con 6, Int 1, Wis 8 Cha 2.

Skills: None. *Feats:* Combat Reflexes, Track

SA—Poison Sting (Ex): Berserker wasps inject a powerful paralytic poison with each sting. Every time a victim is successfully stung, he must succeed at a Fortitude save (DC17) or suffer 2 points of temporary Dexterity loss. Wasps build nests and lay eggs in paralyzed victims unless driven off (and continually sting paralyzed victims, preventing recovery).

SQ—Vermin: Immune to mind-altering effects.

SQ—Vulnerable to Cold (Ex): Berserker wasps take double damage from cold-based attacks.

Note: More information on berserker wasps can

Death by Weather

Time of Day	Temperature	Save Frequency	Effect of Failed Save
6 AM -10 AM	40-85°	None	Heal 1 point of subdual damage per hour
10 AM -noon	90-105°	1/hour	1d4 heat subdual damage
Noon-4 PM	110°+	1/20 min.	1d4 heat subdual damage
4 PM -8 PM	105-90°	1/hour	1d4 heat subdual damage
8 PM -11 PM	85-40°	None	Heal 1 point of subdual damage per hour
11 PM -6 AM	<40°	1/hour	1d6 cold subdual damage

be found on p. 17 of **Sword and Sorcery Studios**' ***Creature Collection***.

Tactics: The berserker wasps randomly attack 8 individuals. They target animals of size Large or larger in preference to humans or other Medium size creatures.

Sand Burrowers (4): CR 6; SZ Huge (Long) Beast; HD 10d10+43; hp 98; Init -2 (Dex); Spd 45 ft., Burrow 80 ft.; AC 10 (-2 size, -2 Dex, +4 natural); Atk +18 melee (2d8+10, bite), +13 melee (1d6+5, 5 tentacles plus poison); SA poison; AL N; SV Fort +13, Ref +1, Will +8; Str 30, Dex 6, Con 19, Int 9, Wis 18 Cha 13.

Skills: Listen +14, Search +9, Spot +2. *Feats:* Great Fortitude, Toughness, Track.

SA—Poison (Ex): On a successful hit, a sand burrower tentacle injects its prey with poison. This poison causes an extra 1d8 damage unless a Fortitude save is made (DC 13).

Note: More information on sand burrowers can be found in **Sword and Sorcery Studios**' ***Creature Collection***.

Tactics: These sand burrowers have located the PCs camp and have been tracking their movements. They attack at night, using their superior olfactory senses to locate their prey. They retreat if reduced to 30 hit points or less.

Once the PCs overcome these encounters, the characters should be allowed to discover the gully leading to the Temple of the Justicars. Read or paraphrase the following text:

> It seems like ages since you set out on your quest, guided by the old priests' map. You traveled miles through forests and mountains to a far off desert. You crossed those trackless sands for days until your reached this forsaken place—the Valley of the Temple. Now the map has lead your party into a cleft in the red rock wall. You traveled the narrow path in the shade of the looming walls for over an hour, glad for the break from the sweltering heat. You emerge from between the two large walls of rock into a small canyon, open to the sky. Before you looms a worked cliff wall. Several cave entrances can be seen at various heights on the canyon walls, each flanked by large bas-relief statues of knights in full mail carved from the surrounding rock. You wipe the sand and sweat from your brow and unroll the map given to you by the priests of Muir. As your fingers travel the surface of the map to your current location, your parched lips mutter the words "the Temple of the Justicars."

Now you may proceed with the adventure as detailed in the module.



Conclusion

We hope that the wilderness encounters here allow you to turn the dungeons presented in ***Demons and Devils*** into truly epic quests, as they were meant to be.

Again, enjoy these supplemental encounters and let us know how your players enjoy them by posting at the Necromancer Games forums (links available at *www.necromancergames.com*). And look for more freebies and add-ons coming in the future!

Clark Peterson and Bill Webb
Necromancer Games

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WW8354 $8.95 U.S.
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9 781588 461537