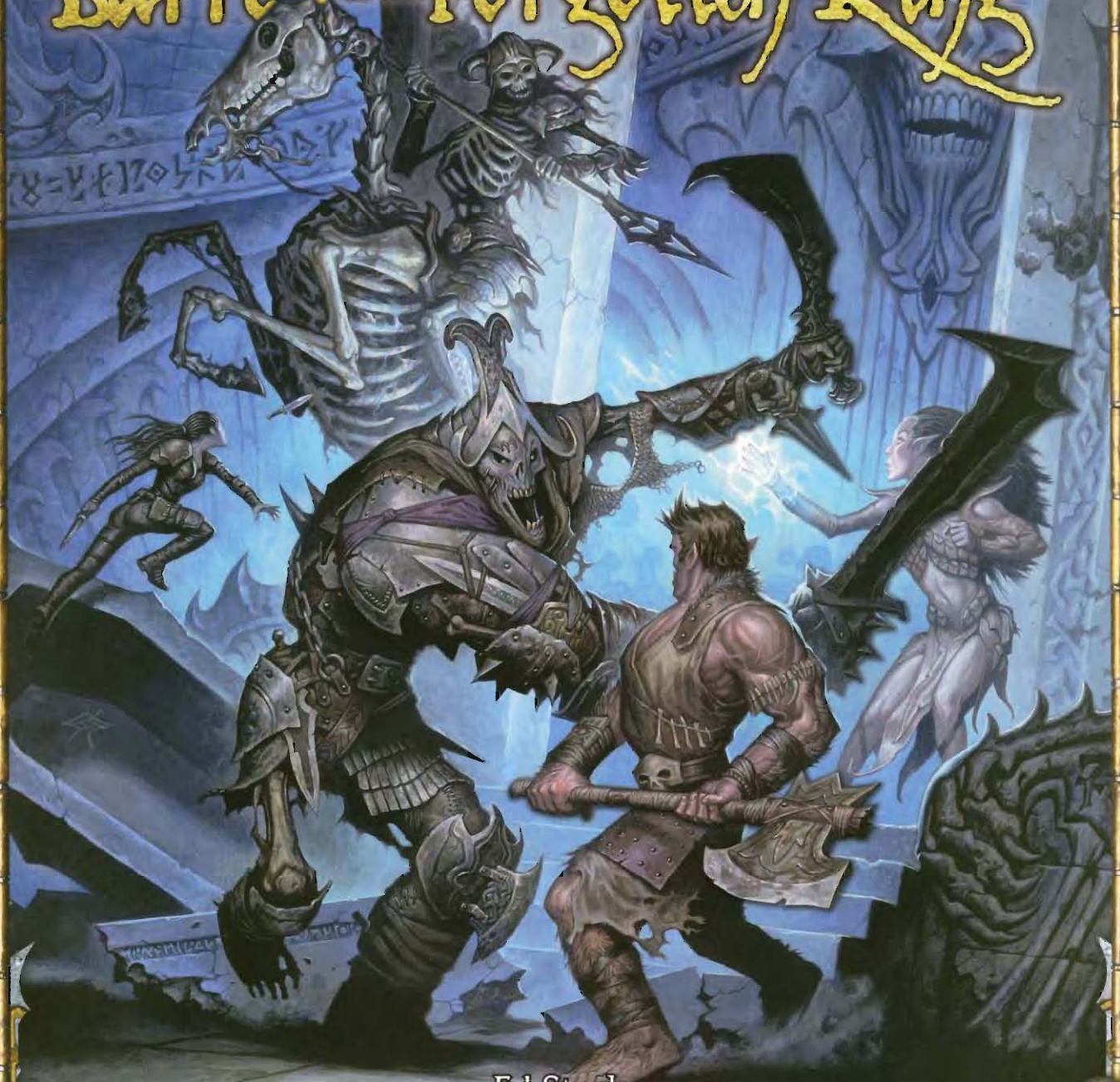




DUNGEONS
& DRAGONS®

AN ADVENTURE FOR 2ND-LEVEL CHARACTERS

Barrow of the Forgotten King™



Ed Stark



Barrow
of the
Forgotten King[™]
Adventure

Ed Stark



BARROW OF THE FORGOTTEN KING™

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Introduction

The shovel clanged against rock, and its wielder snarled in frustration. He shook his brown, furry hands and squinted up into the rain.

"Dig!" a clear voice came from above. "Dig, damn you, or I'll have you flayed alive!"

Deep in the pit, the varag warrior couldn't see the speaker, but he knew the smooth-skinned, silk-clothed fool all too well.

Clang! Another stone. After throwing down his shovel, the varag took a pull from his wineskin. Time for a break, he thought.

A green orb shot out of the darkness above, knocking the wineskin out of the varag's grasp. Snarling in pain and rage, the warrior held his burned hand and watched the wineskin disintegrate in a green pool. Looking up, he saw the smooth-skinned spellcaster, and he grabbed his shovel and gripped it as if it were an axe.

And then he saw the eyes. Those eyes . . .

The varag turned back to the mud and the rock. He began to dig again.

DD1: *Barrow of the Forgotten King* is a DUNGEONS & DRAGONS® adventure designed for four to six 2nd-level D&D characters. Player characters who complete this quest should advance to 4th or 5th level, depending on how successful they are in defeating the evil creatures awaiting them.

WHAT YOU NEED TO PLAY

DD1: *Barrow of the Forgotten King* is intended for use in the DUNGEONS & DRAGONS game. You need the *Player's Handbook* and *Dungeon Master's Guide* to play, and although this

MODIFYING THE ADVENTURE

You can modify this adventure within certain limits.

If you have higher-level D&D characters, say, 3rd- or even 4th-level characters, you might wish to go through the adventure and advance a few monsters (particularly creatures that have class levels). This takes a little effort, but you can adapt a few rooms at a time between game sessions.

If you have more than six players, you might need to expand the size of some of the encounter maps and add a few duplicate monsters. If you are using a battle map to represent rooms, you can redraw the maps in sketch form and finalize them at the table. When you add monsters to an encounter, start by increasing the number of the lowest-level monsters. In encounters where only one monster is present, you might not need to modify the encounter at all. It might be a little less difficult, but each of the PCs gains fewer experience points since they are in a larger group.

This adventure is too dangerous for groups of fewer than four characters, as well as for characters below 2nd level. Small groups should recruit an NPC guide to fill out their ranks. You can quickly create a 2nd-level NPC using the tables in Chapter 4 of the *Dungeon Master's Guide*. Add a character who doesn't duplicate an existing character's abilities.

book includes complete statistics for all the monsters, the *Monster Manual* remains a helpful resource. The adventure draws material from other D&D supplements as well, but you have all the material needed to run the adventure in your hands right now.

PREPARATION

This adventure takes place just outside the town of Kingsholm. Despite its pretentious name, the town is small and sleepy—or it was, until trouble began.

The player characters begin the adventure in Kingsholm. Whether they are native to the area or just passing through is immaterial. The action takes place in an underground complex (an area previously unknown to the townsfolk) located below and to the north of Kingsholm's graveyard.

Read through the entire text to gain familiarity with the material. This adventure has been designed specifically for low-level characters, but it is by no means an "introductory" adventure and assumes that you have some experience as a DM. It is likely you'll run the adventure over several game sessions, so prepare to run the initial encounters the first time you play. In a four-hour game session, you should get through three to five encounter areas. This gives you the opportunity to study upcoming areas between sessions, so you shouldn't have to be intimately familiar with the latter sections of this text to begin the game.

Also, take advantage of the format of this adventure: It's presented in two parts. In the first section, the adventure is discussed as a series of encounters that together form an overarching storyline. The second section contains all the tactical information you need to run the individual battles, puzzles, and other active elements of the adventure.

USING THE FORMAT

The encounter format relies on keyed entries similar to other published adventures. However, tactical encounters are separated from story and roleplaying information.

Numbered, or "keyed," areas are described in the initial section of this text. Use the keyed entries as both a summary of the adventure and a flowchart. If a keyed entry involves combat or some other action that places importance on position and movement, that entry refers you to a tactical encounter.

Tactical Encounters: A tactical encounter includes a map of the area in which the encounter takes place, notes on setting up the encounter, monster statistics blocks, and descriptions of how the terrain and features of the encounter affect game play. Every aspect of an encounter need not be used—the players might not be interested in all the details of an area. Indeed, the PCs might avoid whole encounters, either intentionally or unwittingly.

The combat encounters in this adventure are designed for use with *D&D Miniatures*. If you don't have the exact miniature to represent a monster, or you aren't using *D&D Miniatures*, just use whatever substitute you choose to run the tactical encounters.

ADVENTURE BACKGROUND

Kingsholm lies at the base of a series of rolling foothills. No one knows how long the community has existed; Ian Turbrand, the owner of the Coronet and Cabbage Inn, insists that someone from his family has run the hostelry for more than three hundred years. Kingsholm appears much like every other town in the land, with one exception—its graveyard.

Built on and in the nearby hills, the graveyard has existed for centuries. Some townsfolk believe the graveyard predates the community, and nearly all the people living in Kingsholm evince a particular pride in that fact. Prominent individuals who die in Kingsholm have the honor of being interred in the graveyard's mausoleum, the centerpiece of the graveyard. Kingsholm's guards—known as sentinels—patrol the graveyard almost as frequently as they patrol the community's streets.

The most notable feature of the graveyard actually lies a little over a mile north of the town, high up in the hills. There stands the statue of an ancient king. No one in Kingsholm knows who he was or why the statue was erected there, but the townsfolk live in awe of the monument. Indeed, while the common folk have no fear of their maintained graveyard, few venture up to visit the forgotten king.

WHAT THE PCS KNOW

Two days ago, a family of mourners ventured up into the graveyard and didn't return. A pair of sentinels investigated, but these guards vanished as well. The townsfolk are in a panic. They've always heard rumors of disturbances in graveyards and tombs, but never has such misfortune struck in their town. They look to the player characters for aid.

WHAT THE PCS DON'T KNOW

An evil organization known as the Vanguard of Sertrous discovered that hidden deep below the statue of the forgotten king in the foothills north of Kingsholm is a cache of powerful magic weapons. It also learned of a legend surrounding the forgotten king—"The king shall rise again to defend the land." So the Vanguard decided to take the king's treasures and his bones, the former for obvious reasons and the latter to pervert the prophecy to its own wicked ends.

Xeron: This yuan-ti sorcerer is an initiate of the Vanguard. Raiding the barrow of the forgotten king is his first major mission for that group. The Vanguard ordered Xeron to go into the gravesite from above and investigate the whole complex, except for the mausoleum on the surface, and to leave no chance of overlooking a valuable item or piece of lore. Xeron brought his halfling apprentice, a pet choker, and a loyal runehound with him, along with a human henchman named Teryl and a female half-elf named Leera whom Teryl claimed was good at history.

Other Robbers: In the event that Xeron encountered resistance within the underground chambers, the Vanguard provided him with a band of laborers and mercenaries, led

by a hobgoblin cleric of Hextor named Krootad. Krootad's group was originally made up of two wolf skeletons and an ogre zombie, along with a few hobgoblin fighters, a hobgoblin wererat rogue, a goblin rogue, and several varags.

The Mission: Xeron had strict orders—under no circumstances was he to attract the attention of the locals. So, the yuan-ti instructed the laborers and mercenaries to quietly dig a shaft that led below the statue of the forgotten king. It took the tomb robbers days to dig down to the underground complex, but they were successful. Xeron then began exploring the entire site, venturing first toward Kingsholm's graveyard.

Xeron lost some of his control on the group when the varags began to loot the vaults for whatever treasure they could find. Contrary to the yuan-ti's orders, Krootad and the mercenaries went all the way to the mausoleum in search of valuables. There, mourners from Kingsholm stumbled upon the robbers. His allies killed the commoners quickly and easily, but Xeron realized that it was only a matter of time before someone missed the slain people. He instructed Krootad to set up "discouragement" for those who might investigate, so the cleric animated some of the old skeletons and fresh corpses in the mausoleum. Then, instead of killing a farm girl whom he knew was still hiding in one of the vaults, Xeron had her sealed in. He hoped that releasing the girl and taking care of her would slow any pursuers who had managed to defeat the undead.

Xeron then turned the tomb robbers' attention back to their mission, promising richer loot elsewhere. As they delved deeper into the complex, the robbers' progress slowed considerably. Magic and traps protected chambers deeper in the tomb. As a result, the robbers suffered injuries and had to stop to recuperate before moving on.

Enter the PCs: By the time this adventure begins, Xeron and his allies are only creeping along through the tomb. As time wears on, the robbers suffer more casualties, and the yuan-ti's relationship with the mercenaries becomes strained. Krootad splits from the group to animate more dead to slow pursuers, which doesn't help matters, since only the hobgoblin fighters seem willing to follow Xeron's orders.

Now the PCs have a good opportunity to catch Xeron before he accomplishes his goals. As the tomb takes its toll on the robbers, their numbers dwindle and they spread out. When he is finally cornered, Xeron no longer has a chance of escaping through the tunnel his forces dug. Instead, he resorts to breaking into a secret tunnel that leads out of the king's tomb—a tunnel the Vanguard had instructed him not to use. This turn of events gives the PCs the clue they need to pursue the king's bones further. (This secret tunnel does not play a role in this adventure, but it serves as the entry point for this adventure's successor, *DD2: The Sinister Spire*.)

ADVENTURE SYNOPSIS

After agreeing to investigate the disturbance in the graveyard (see *Adventure Starts*), the player characters find themselves in one fight after another as they descend from

Kingsholm's graveyard into the catacombs beneath. In a way, each step brings them farther into the past as they explore the barrow of the forgotten king.

When the PCs investigate the graveyard, they come upon the large mausoleum built into one of the northern hillocks. The PCs discover the remains of the town's guards and encounter undead creatures, as well as their first puzzle. Also evident is the fact that someone else has been to the graveyard before the characters—someone who killed the guards and animated the undead.

As they descend, the PCs begin to encounter earth-dwelling creatures awakened by the disturbances. They have their first battles with Xeron's tomb robbers. They also come across a couple of transitional areas that contain dangers unrelated to the tomb robbers' invasion of the Kingsholm graveyard.

In a magic labyrinth, the PCs must either search for a way through or give up their quest. Here, they encounter creatures of both good and neutral alignment. If they are careful, they might find a few temporary allies here. At the end of the labyrinth, the PCs have a chance to learn more about the tomb robbers and their mission.

The PCs next arrive in a false tomb. When the tomb robbers reached this area, they believed they'd discovered the end of their quest. Instead, they awakened a great evil and barely escaped it. The PCs have to deal with that evil, along

with other dangers. Here, they discover much about the legend of the forgotten king.

A climactic encounter takes place in the king's tomb. Here, the PCs discover that the tomb robbers have fulfilled their objective, but not all have escaped. Knowing they were being pursued, Xeron forced his remaining minions to open a passage into the Underdark in a desperate attempt to avoid capture. His plan almost succeeded. Xeron battles the PCs to the death while some of the Vanguard's minions escape into the passage below.

At the end of the adventure, the PCs learn of the Vanguard of Sertrous and gain at least one legendary weapon that once belonged to the forgotten king. They also learn of the legend of the king's possible resurrection, though they don't yet know if it is true. Additionally, they gain an opening into a whole new world (the Underdark) and the adventure waiting there.

ADVENTURE STARTS

Characters can become involved in this adventure in a number of ways. Feel free to use one, some, or all of the hooks suggested here.

Adventurers for Hire: Not only is Ian Turbrand the owner of the Coronet and Cabbage Inn, but he is also a councilor in the town and the richest person in it. He has a vested interest in solving Kingsholm's problem, and this is the default hook for the PCs.

The Legend: One of the PCs—someone who has Knowledge (local), Knowledge (history), bardic knowledge, or a similar class feature—has heard the legend of the forgotten king. That character heard that somewhere near Kingsholm lies an ancient overlord resting with his servants and all their treasure. The PC might wonder if the disturbance in the graveyard has anything to do with the legend.

Lost Friend or Missing Relative: One or more of the lost mourners is a friend or relative of one or more PCs. This hook allows for a "happy ending" alternative. The characters might find the NPC, still alive, hiding in one of the vaults in area 2 of the mausoleum, as Tyra Yurling is in the original version of this adventure.

THE NEED FOR HEROES

Kingsholm has armed guards and presumably some hale and hearty townsfolk. Why don't they investigate the tombs themselves?

The answer is simple: They're terrified. Not in living memory (and some of the townsfolk are dwarves) has any disturbance happened in the graveyard of Kingsholm. Townsfolk believe the area to be blessed, and they believe their town has been protected by its proximity to the statue of the forgotten king. Now, suddenly, that immunity is gone. They look to others—those with at least a little adventuring experience—to investigate the disturbance and tell them that everything will be all right.

THE TOWN OF KINGSHOLM

Kingsholm is a rich and sleepy little town that benefits from trade with nearby dwarf clans and peaceful relations with halfling traders and gypsies. It has many trading houses and storage facilities for minerals and other commodities.

Kingsholm (Small Town): Conventional; AL LG; 577 gp limit; Assets 49,824 gp; Population: 1,732; Mixed (75% human, 11% dwarf, 7% halfling, 4% gnome, 3% other).

Authority Figures: Town Speaker Phodor Landros (LG male human aristocrat 3), leader of the town council (currently away on business); Ian Turbrand (LG male human expert 4), town councilor and innkeeper of the Coronet and Cabbage Inn.

Important Characters: Banjatha Minwitten (N female gnome diviner 3), town councilor and most potent local arcanist; Egden Frumm (LN male human commoner 7), town councilor and oldest and most respected farmer in town; Gran Stoutbrace (LG male dwarf expert 3), town councilor and owner of the Kingsholm General Store; Hergon Hilltopple (CG male halfling rogue 1/cleric 2 of Olidammara), town councilor and most powerful divine spellcaster; Sanni Ungart (LN female dwarf expert 6), town councilor and trade overseer.

Town Guard: Mia Desarna (LG female human warrior 4), captain of the guard; two 3rd-level warriors; seven 2nd-level warriors; ten 1st-level warriors; one 2nd-level ranger; and three 1st-level rangers. The militia can call on about seventy other individuals.

The Adventure Begins

As the player characters relax in the Coronet and Cabbage Inn, a commotion arises from the back room. The innkeeper, a woman dressed in the uniform of a town guard, and a prosperous-looking dwarf stride through the doorway and into the common room. Unswervingly, the innkeeper walks up to the PCs' table.

When Ian speaks, read:

"Are you mercenaries?" the big man asks. He glares at you with dark eyes as if challenging you to deny it. "Are you adventurers? We need brave and capable folk, right now, and we're willing to pay!"

Regardless of the PCs' answer, Ian believes them to be for hire and continues in his direct way.

When Ian continues, read:

"Mia says we have trouble up in the old graveyard," the innkeeper continues, indicating the woman in uniform. She looks uncomfortable, and you sense fear from all the onlookers. "We need your help, and we need it now!"

If the PCs respond encouragingly, create a dialogue among Ian Turbrand, the Captain Mia Desarna, and the dwarf merchant Gran Stoutbrace. Over the course of the conversation, the PCs should find out some or all of the following information. The townsfolk freely talk about any of the three main points. Subpoints, bulleted beneath main points, should come up only as part of the discussion and aren't offered immediately.

1. Three locals went up to the graveyard the day before last to prepare a recently deceased member of their family for interment in the graveyard's mausoleum. The family (a mother, father, and daughter) did not return. When the family's servants reported them missing, two sentinels (town guards) went to investigate and didn't return, either. Mia is reluctant to send any more sentinels.

- The missing locals were all human.
- Their names are Desiree, Morgan, and Tyra, respectively. Their family name is Yurling. The dead man's name is Gunar, and he is Morgan's father.
- Morgan and Desiree own a large farm on the prairie south of Kingsholm.
- The family was well liked by everyone.
- Only prominent citizens of the town are interred in the mausoleum. Most are buried at the base of the hills that extend to the north of the sprawling graveyard.
- Virtually all Ian's ancestors have been interred in the mausoleum at one time or another.

2. The missing sentinels, a dwarf man named Dornal and a human woman named Zeera, are trained warriors that Mia trusts to do their job.

- The sentinels are not as competent as professional soldiers or mercenaries.
- Mia is the most experienced.
- Kingsholm has only nine sentinels, counting Dornal and Zeera.

3. No trouble of any kind has occurred in the graveyard for as long as the townsfolk can remember.

- Legends about the graveyard are positive ones about protective spirits and eternal rest.
- Wolves and other creatures live in the hills north of the graveyard, but the high fence, the regular patrols, and the lack of prey keep them out.
- The mausoleum is kept locked, though the sentinels all have keys to the main doors, as do Ian Turbrand and other prominent citizens, including the Yurlings.

Ian Turbrand, on behalf of the town, offers the PCs 50 gp apiece to investigate the disappearance of the Yurlings and the sentinels. If they go up to the mausoleum, explore the area, and find out what happened, Turbrand promises to reward them. If the PCs agree, Ian continues:

TRAVELING COMPANIONS

If you want to change the dynamic of the adventure (or maybe just give the PCs a little help), you could turn any of the NPCs mentioned in the early part of this book into active members of the party.

Perhaps the most obvious choice for a role of this sort is Kethra Tims, the half-elf mentioned above. As a 3rd-level expert with (let's say) an Intelligence of 16, she could have a modifier of as high as +9 in several pertinent Knowledge skills (arcana, dungeoneering, architecture)—and that might make her handy to have around when the characters are faced with the puzzle in the Beholder Room (area 4).

Even though Mia is reluctant to send more sentinels into the mausoleum, she won't see the PCs off on their mission without providing them some firepower if they really need it, in the form of one or more sentinels who are either 1st-level warriors or 1st-level rangers.

Of the townsfolk mentioned in the sidebar on page 5, Banjatha Minwitten is one who might come forward to join the team—particularly if her skills as a diviner might help the PCs in the early going (*detect secret doors* is among her spells prepared). Banjatha is glad to be of assistance, but not foolish: When her spells are gone, she bids the adventurers good luck, doubles back on her path, and heads for home.

"I'll pay you an additional five times that amount to go into the mausoleum and catch or destroy whoever or whatever defiled the place. That's a total of 300 gold pieces each for the deed."

INVESTIGATING FURTHER

If the PCs agree to help the people of Kingsholm but do not rush right up to the graveyard (as the villagers would like them to do), they can question a few of the prominent citizens. Have the PCs make Gather Information checks to discover the following information. Roll for each item of information once; if the PCs fail to beat the indicated DC, move on to the next one until you've finished. Each bit of information comes from an NPC who imparts the information to the curious character.

Divine Assistance (DC 0): The town has a cleric, though the townsfolk appear loath to discuss him. Hergon Hilltopple is a servant of Olidammara. He has operated in the community as its sole healer and priest for just over a year, since the cleric of Pelor passed away and her chief acolyte departed for a larger church to the west. Hergon is capable and has healed many of the villagers at one time or another, but neither Ian nor Gran trusts anyone who worships the Laughing Rogue. If the PCs come back from the graveyard

injured or otherwise in need of a cleric, the townsfolk immediately call for Hergon. The citizens might be suspicious, but they aren't fools.

The Town's History (DC 15): Kethra Tims (female half-elf expert 3) came to Kingsholm because of the interesting statue to the north. She knows that it is the giant statue of a great king, but no one seems to know who the king was or why a statue of him is here. Kethra also knows that the graveyard's existence predates the town.

The Size of the Graveyard (DC 15): Gran Stoutbrace has ancestors who used to live in the mountains to the north ("back before the silver played out, many, many years ago"). He remembers hearing from his father about a series of tunnels under the hills.

Keys and Maps (DC 20): While it might come up in casual discussion, the townsfolk don't make much of the fact that the sentinels have keys to rooms 1 through 3 in the mausoleum and that either Ian or Mia could draw the PCs a map of those areas. If the PCs discover this, they must succeed on a DC 20 Diplomacy check to convince either of those worthies to assist them in these ways. After all, Ian and Mia don't really know the PCs and have always been concerned about grave robbers who might take advantage of the town. Neither of these two knows the secret of the Beholder Room (area 4), nor have they gone beyond it.



Kingsholm—a sleepy little town . . . and a gateway to adventure

Grave Encounters

Any adventure that begins in a graveyard should feel ominous, but adventurers seldom find themselves investigating a cemetery this well cared for. Mia accompanies the player characters as far as the graveyard's entrance. She isn't willing to go farther.

As the PCs approach the graveyard, read:

Ivy winds its way up the iron bars of the cemetery gate. No rust discolors the black metal, and flowers blossom near the wall. Beyond that wall, you see a gravel walkway that weaves its way up through groomed grass and white tombstones. A few statues rise up along the hillside, their gray features gleaming in the sun.

"That's not good," says Mia. "The gate is open."

THE MAUSOLEUM

The centerpiece of Kingsholm's ancient graveyard is the mausoleum. Built long before Kingsholm grew up near this site, the mausoleum has become a landmark of the community, and the townsfolk take pride in its care and upkeep.

Despite their regard for the edifice, the townsfolk know little of its history, and none know that the historic structure stands above an even more ancient underground complex. As the PCs explore the mausoleum and the catacombs below, they find out more about the Kingsholm complex than anyone in the town has known in centuries.

As the PCs follow the gravel path up to the mausoleum, a successful DC 15 Spot check is sufficient for them to notice that the gravel has been stirred up near the structure, as if someone began to run there. A DC 15 Survival check successfully made by a character who has the Track feat reveals that two booted figures, one slightly smaller than the other, did the running.

As the PCs approach the mausoleum, read:

The graveyard appears old but lovingly cared for. Fresh gravel covers the path and flowers, not weeds, grow beside the tombstones.

MAUSOLEUM FEATURES

As the PCs progress through the mausoleum, they might discover that every room signs of recent exploration—the tomb robbers don't hide their activities when they move through an area. A successful DC 10 Search check in any room reveals these signs, but in some areas, the meddling is immediately obvious. A character who has the Track feat can find fresh tracks on the dusty surfaces with a successful DC 20 Survival check. The tracker also recognizes that the most recent tracks lead farther into the mausoleum, not out

of it. Slightly older tracks make it clear that the tomb robbers didn't enter from the graveyard door, but instead they got to this area from somewhere deeper inside the complex.

Rooms in the mausoleum have the following features in common.

Illumination: Unless otherwise indicated, areas of the mausoleum are dark.

Stone Doors: 4 inches thick; hardness 8; 60 hp; break DC 28. Listen DCs increase by 5 through a door.

Unless otherwise specified, every door in the mausoleum is closed and locked—DC 25 Open Lock check to open. Keys found on the sentinel in area 1 work in the locks of areas 1 through 3, but no key opens the door to room 4.

Stone Vault Doors: 8 inches thick; hardness 8; 120 hp; break DC 28. A successful DC 15 Strength check is required to open any of the vault doors, but none are locked.

Walls: The walls of the mausoleum are masonry that's about 1 foot thick—hardness 8, 90 hp, and break DC 35 per 10-foot-by-10-foot section. Climb DC 25.

Ceiling: The ceilings in the mausoleum are uniformly 10 feet high unless otherwise specified. They are too smooth to be climbed by creatures that don't have a climb speed.

1. WOLVES AT THE DOOR

When the PCs approach the mausoleum, they immediately trigger the tactical encounter. This encounter shows that the residents of Kingsholm aren't as safe from the wilderness as they might have thought.

Tactical Encounter: 1. Wolves at the Door, page 22.

2. LOWER MAUSOLEUM

Prominent villagers use this area to prepare the bodies of their dead loved ones before interring them in the mausoleum. The tomb robbers thoroughly ransacked the room, destroying several of the tables of repose. They also forced open numerous vaults lining the northern wall and corridor. Just in case the townsfolk decided to investigate, the robbers left behind two zombies and three skeletal archers to block the way.

When the PCs open the door, read:

A narrow staircase descends to a wide landing below. You can tell the landing leads to a wider room that is lit by wavering firelight.

When the PCs start to descend to the landing, they trigger the tactical encounter.

Tactical Encounter: 2. Lower Mausoleum, page 24.

3. SIDE TOMB

This area contains older vaults, as well as the private resting place of a wizard and his wife.

When the PCs enter this area, read:

This passage has the statue of a human woman set in a niche on the northern wall. She is dressed in robes, and her arms and face are held upward as if toward the sky. On either side of her, fountains gurgle with what appears to be fresh water. The passage smells like rain.

Directly across the hall from the statue is a closed stone door, and farther down the passage is an archway on the northern wall. Beyond that archway, grave vaults like those you've seen before occupy all sides of the passage. Many have been opened and apparently looted.

The water in the fountains is fresh and clean, and the fountains it churns in have faint auras if viewed using *detect magic* (DC 16 Spellcraft check to determine the school is conjuration). The statue is not magical.

The door to the south is engraved with the names Verduun and Gola Mikolos. A successful DC 25 Knowledge (history) or bardic knowledge check identifies the pair as wizards who lived in the Kingsholm area a century or so ago. They were fascinated with constructs.

Other than that, the PCs have a few choices here. If they open the door to the south, they trigger the tactical encounter. If they bypass the southern door and proceed north, they go to area 4. Looting the remaining vaults nets the characters some jewelry (50 gp).

Tactical Encounter: 3. Side Tomb, page 26.

4. BEHOLDER ROOM

The Kingsholm mausoleum has always connected to an older structure that the townsfolk have assumed was the forgotten king's tomb. Nobody in Kingsholm knows what's beyond the door to this room.

When the PCs descend the stairs, read:

The color of the stone here is a darker gray, and the shape of the blocks making up the walls changes. Two small staircases descend to a stone door that has a strange image engraved on it.

A character who makes a successful DC 15 Knowledge (architecture and engineering) check or a successful DC 10 Search check using stonecunning knows this structure is older than the other areas of the mausoleum. The masonry is ancient work, obviously carved with far more care than the rest of the tomb. The work is probably of dwarven manufacture.

The door is locked by a permanent *arcane lock*. It radiates a moderate aura if viewed using *detect magic* (DC 20 Spellcraft check to determine the school is illusion). It displays a meaningless decorative image if scrutinized by a non-good character who fails a DC 17 Will save.

A good character, or a character who uses *read magic*, sees the true image on the door. Show such characters the illustration on page 27 as they approach the door.

Tactical Encounter: 4. Beholder Room, page 28.

5. STAIRCASE

When the PCs descend the ladder from the beholder room, they find themselves on a dark landing.

As the PCs descend, read:

The ladder leads to a wide landing, maybe 10 feet wide. Nearby, a narrow and shallow staircase descends to another landing that is narrower than the one you're on. It looks like the stairs might continue beyond that.

Krootad, the hobgoblin cleric and secondary leader of the tomb robbers, left some pets behind here. When the PCs reach and descend the long staircase in this room, they trigger the tactical encounter.

Tactical Encounter: 5. Staircase, page 30.

CONTINUING

Once the PCs clear the mausoleum, they've finished with but one stage of the overall complex. They should decide at this point whether to make camp and recuperate or to continue without resting.

If the PCs have traveled back to town already, presumably to report on what they've discovered, and are relatively fresh, they should remember that they're on the trail of tomb robbers—bad guys they don't want to let escape. They can open the door to area 6 and continue the adventure without delay.

If the PCs have used up a lot of resources, they might need to rest. Encounters in the Guardian Tombs are more dangerous than those the characters have seen so far. You can have the PCs make Search and Survival checks in the mausoleum, allowing them to learn that the clear area is a place where they can safely rest.

GUARDIAN TOMBS

When the builders of this tomb complex buried the forgotten king, they anticipated that his surviving enemies might want to pillage his resting place. They built sepulchers below the king's statue to hold the bodies of some of his dedicated soldiers, knowing the soldiers' spirits would help protect him even after death.

This is where the tomb robbers entered, tunneling down from the surface. They turned south and found their way into the mausoleum. Now, they have returned and are headed back north toward the lower areas.

GRAVE
ENCOUNTERS

GRAVE ENCOUNTERS

GUARDIAN TOMBS FEATURES

The tomb robbers are moving through the guardian tombs more quickly than they did through the mausoleum. They know they're on a time limit, so Xeron is encouraging his troops to search quickly. A successful DC 15 Search check in any room reveals these signs of humanoid passage through the tombs, beyond those described in the encounters. A tracker recognizes that the tracks from area 6 onward proceed deeper into the tombs with a successful DC 20 Survival check.

Other than the polished gray stone here, the rooms in the guardian tombs have similar features to the mausoleum unless otherwise specified. Doors in the guardian tombs are usually closed but unlocked.

6. SABOTAGED BRIDGE

The tomb's builders built a rope bridge across a narrow crevice here.

When the PCs open the door, read:

A narrow stone landing connects to a bridge built of rope and wood, apparently placed to cross a natural crevice here. The crevice is tight where it connects to this passage, and it isn't much wider below you, though you can tell it contains some water. Gray with age, the bridge still seems sturdy. At its far end, perhaps 30 feet away, the bridge connects to another landing and a wider chamber.

Xeron and his lackeys sabotaged this bridge when they crossed it for what they intended to be their final time. When the characters proceed across the rope bridge, they trigger the tactical encounter.

Tactical Encounter: 6. Sabotaged Bridge, page 31.

Once the PCs reach the western landing, read:

Smooth stone littered with small bits of broken rock and dirt makes up the floor of this chamber. The door to the northwest is shut and intact but remnants of the south door are propped up against a ruined frame and a badly cracked wall.

7. BROKEN CHAMBER

This chamber is where the tomb robbers originally entered the complex.

If the PCs remove the south door from area 6, read:

Shattered stone and fresh dirt cover the slick floor of this devastated chamber. Judging by the remnants of masonry and floor tiles, this area was once part of the tomb complex. A rope ladder hangs near the broken door, leading up into the darkness. Just beyond it to the east, the slippery floor gives way to a shallow pool.

Xeron brought a pet choker with him on the mission, and he ordered it to stay here and guard passage to the surface. He plans on returning for the creature and the goods here as soon as he can. When the PCs arrive, the choker is 70 feet up the shaft to the surface. If the PCs climb the ladder or spend more than a few rounds on the floor of the room, they trigger the tactical encounter.

Tactical Encounter: 7. Broken Chamber, page 32.

If the characters subsequently climb all the way up the ladder, they arrive in area 8. Through the northwestern door lies area 9.

8. FORGOTTEN KING'S STATUE

The shaft to the surface is 200 feet long.

When the PCs emerge from the shaft, read:

You emerge from a hole that is surrounded by earth and rock. The ladder you're climbing is fastened to a post just a few feet beyond the opening, near an immense plinth of stone. Above you looms a weathered statue. Overgrown with creeper vines, it depicts a crowned and bearded man who is regally dressed and points his drawn sword to the east. Some trees nearby are taller than the statue, which has no inscription that you can see.

Xeron left a runehound to guard his band's surface entry point into the tombs. When the PCs step into the open, they trigger the tactical encounter.

Tactical Encounter: 8. Forgotten King's Statue, page 33.

9. CENTRAL HUB

This area once served as the central building area for the complex.

When the PCs open the door, read:

Ancient frescoes decorate the walls of this room, which might be octagonal. It's difficult to be sure of this from your vantage point because walls partition the room. The art is not of the sort customary for a king's tomb. Each of the interior walls that you can see shows images of men and women of many races carousing in a tavern. The outer walls near you depict a gold dragon defeating a red dragon. To the right and left are statues, one in the image of a beautiful princess and the other shaped like a knight ready for battle, sword raised and shield readied.

The characters can hear soft snoring by making a successful DC 16 Listen check. After the PCs have had a moment to eyeball the room and listen, even before all of them have entered, they trigger the tactical encounter.

When the characters have time to see the other outer walls, those walls show a green dragon defeating a bronze dragon, and a knight defeating a black dragon. They also find two other statues—one of a sagacious wizard with an incredibly long beard and another of a peasant woman with a strong, stout build and a proud face.

Tactical Encounter: 9. Central Hub, page 34.

10. CANAL

The northern door into this chamber is unlocked but sealed. It takes a successful DC 28 Strength check to break it open. If the PCs enter from the southern and unlocked door, they have to descend a ladder 15 feet to the floor of the chamber. The sealed door leads to a passageway and a balcony around the corner.

When the PCs can see the room, read:

A balcony on the north wall overlooks this wide room, which is lower and cooler than the previous areas you've explored, and a steep staircase leads from the balcony's west side into the chamber. Atop that stairway is a closed stone door. Swiftly flowing water runs in a canal that flows east to west through the area, and the moisture has made the room damp, the walls and floor slick with malodorous subterranean fungus. A narrow bridge crosses the canal at the foot of the stairs from the balcony. Flanking the canal on the north and south are rows of statues depicting shield-bearing soldiers saluting with their drawn swords. On the south side of the canal, two of the statues are shattered. Nearby lie the bodies of two humanoids.

If the PCs come near the canal, they trigger the tactical encounter.

Tactical Encounter: 10. Canal, page 36.

11. HALL OF THE HONORED

This area contains the remains of the forgotten king's best soldiers. It also holds a secret treasure the tomb robbers couldn't discover, though one of them wouldn't give up.

LEVELING UP

Four characters who began at 2nd level have probably gathered enough experience to gain a level by the time they complete area 9 or 10. It's a good idea to allow the PCs to advance to 3rd level before they continue on the adventure. If they haven't gained enough experience to level up, advancement isn't critical, but they might need to rest more frequently until they reach 3rd level.



High above Kingsholm's cemetery, hidden among the trees atop the hill, stands a massive weather-worn statue of the forgotten king

When the PCs enter, read:

This area is a hall stretching from the southeast to the northwest. Statues along the eastern wall represent different figures, and each one is placed in front of a vault door. The nearest portrays a human wizard, holding her staff aloft. Second is a dwarf cleric brandishing a symbol of Moradin. The third and fourth are twin elves, one an archer aiming a bow and the other a warrior wielding a rapier and dagger. Statues to the east and west of the northern stone door appear to be made of black onyx. Depicting human warriors, they hold halberds crossed over the door. A single stone door is set near the center of the western wall.

No treasure has been interred with the honored dead in the vaults here.

If the PCs search the room, they find little aside from obvious evidence that many humanoids have come through this room recently, tracking wet fungus in from area 10. A PC who has the Track feat and succeeds on a DC 25 Survival check sees that someone recently came back and entered the door to the southwest. That someone is Garjuk, a hobgoblin wererat.

A few rounds after the PCs enter, give Garjuk in the western chamber a Listen check to hear them (Listen +8)—the DC is 10 for him if the PCs aren't trying to be quiet. (Add 1 to the Listen DCs here for every 10 feet the listener is from the sound; see the map.) If he hears, he hides and waits. Otherwise, anyone making a successful DC 5 Listen check hears loud swearing from beyond the western door. If the characters open the western door, they trigger the tactical encounter.

The northern door out of this chamber is locked. A successful DC 30 Open Lock check is sufficient to open it, and Garjuk has the key.

Tactical Encounter: 11. Hall of the Honored, page 38.

EPHOD OF AUTHORITY

This embroidered garment is a priestly vestment much like half of a tabard. (It is one piece of a set—the *vestments of divinity*—that is described in *Magic Item Compendium*.)

Description: Woven of silver thread, this ephod is set with a circle of nine moonstones surrounding a raised silver hemisphere.

Activation: Merely wearing the ephod imparts its magic to you.

Effect: While wearing an *ephod of authority*, your effective cleric level is treated as one higher than your actual level for the purpose of turning (but not rebuking or commanding) undead.

Aura/Caster Level: Faint transmutation; CL 5th.

Construction: Craft Wondrous Item, turn undead, possession of a piece of the *vestments of divinity* set.

Weight: 2 lb.

Price: 800 gp.

12. INNER VAULT

Built as a resting place for more of the forgotten king's trusted soldiers, this quiet room has been defiled by Krootad, a hobgoblin cleric who is one of the tomb robbers' leaders.

When the PCs enter, read:

A wide hallway stretches north and south here. Each end of the passage is a blank wall, although the northern part of each end appears to be an opening.

If the PCs go east, read:

A ladder of iron rungs leads down to a wide hall occupied by four grim statues of men in black armor, each holding a shield in front of his legs and feet. In the far northeast corner of this landing is a statue of a minotaur holding a long spear, the haft resting on the ground and the tip affixed to the ceiling. Vault doors behind each of the statues hang ajar. On the opposite wall, engravings depict a battle between humanoid armies. The passage seems to continue to the west around a corner.

If the PCs go west, read:

The hall ends at a ladder of iron rungs leading down to a narrow hallway that runs north. Scenes of battle are engraved on the wall. The passage seems to continue to the east around a corner.

Krootad is in the inner room preparing more surprises for those following the tomb robbers. Because he rested here before animating the dead, he has taken too long, and the party has caught up to him.

When the PCs descend either ladder, they trigger the tactical encounter.

Tactical Encounter: 12. Inner Vault, page 40.

TRANSITIONAL AREA

The first of the transitional areas begins right at the end of the 60-foot ladder from area 12. Alternatively, you can insert a few random caverns and caves here, giving the PCs an opportunity to rest and plan. If they took advantage of the dragon fountain in area 12, they might not even need to rest.

13. DARK ISLANDS

This area lies inside a great cavern, the ceiling of which is 60 feet above the initial ledge. Great pillars of rock stand in the massive space, forming islands in the darkness.

When the PCs enter, read:

After a long climb into this apparently natural chamber, you reach a wide ledge. A knotted rope is affixed to the ledge's north edge by a large iron spike. The faint sound of running water reaches you from below.

When the PCs arrive on the first ledge, they trigger the tactical encounter.

Tactical Encounter: 13. Dark Islands, page 42.

THE LABYRINTH

After they crawl through the tunnel leading from room 11, the characters discover a wide room with rough walls and multiple exits. While someone worked to dig this area out of stone and earth, nobody put the time and care into these floors, walls, and ceilings that was put into the same features in the guardian tombs or the mausoleum.

The map shows only a stylized version of the vast labyrinth—areas 14 and 15. PCs move through the magic maze as described later in this section.

When the PCs enter the labyrinth, read:

You enter a large room with irregular stone walls, a rough floor, and a high, uneven ceiling. You see no sign of the carefully carved features present in the other sections of this complex, instead crude carvings and patterns of what might be writing decorate the rough walls.

The builders of the forgotten king's tomb designed the labyrinth to dissuade robbers from continuing down toward the complex below. They carved out innumerable tunnels and dead ends, and the wizards and clerics who worked with them imbued the labyrinth with magic.

Detect Magic: The entire labyrinth radiates a strong magical aura, and discerning which type is nearly impossible. If a character focuses *detect magic* on the runes in the maze, that PC might learn more. If a rune is specifically viewed using *detect magic*, it radiates a strong aura (DC 22 Spellcraft check to determine the school is abjuration [25%] or conjuration [75%]).

Random Rooms: Describe the maze in terms of the tunnels the PCs traverse and the rooms they find. Rooms vary in size, but each has 1d3+1 exits. When a room has only two exits, the way to continue is obvious. When more exits exist, the characters have to follow the trail of the robbers or trust in fate to guide them out. Due to its magical nature, the labyrinth cannot be defeated in mundane ways, such as by following the left wall to the end.

Following the Robbers: If the PCs attempt to track the tomb robbers through the labyrinth, the abjuration runes make the task more difficult. Each time a PC first examines a room for tracks or other signs of the tomb robbers, have that

PC attempt a DC 15 Will save. On a success, the character can attempt a DC 20 Survival check to determine the way the tomb robbers went. If the PC fails the save, the character finds tracks all over the place, leading through every possible exit. Once the characters lose the robbers' trail, they might run across it again at your discretion—they certainly find it again near the maze's exit.

Exiting the Labyrinth: Keep track of how well the PCs follow the path of the tomb robbers. If the PCs determine the correct path and exit the room, they earn one point toward escaping the labyrinth. If they choose the wrong path and exit the room, they lose one point (backtracking restores this lost point). The PCs need to gain a total of five points to exit the labyrinth. Keep the point total secret.

If the PCs guess, as they may have to do quite often if they don't have a tracker or fail enough Will saves, roll randomly to determine which exit is the correct one after the PCs choose. Since each troublesome room has three or four exits, the PCs have a 1 in 3 or 1 in 4 chance of taking the correct path each time. Choosing incorrectly often enough can squander a lot of points and get them lost.

The mechanic for the labyrinth is supposed to simulate its magical nature. Obviously, the tomb robbers haven't gone through every room in the labyrinth, but the magic of the maze keeps the PCs guessing and moving along. If you feel the PCs have gotten themselves in too deep a hole, you can arbitrarily let them exit the maze at any time.

Customizing the Labyrinth: The magic maze is a chance for you to devise your own maps and encounters, which can take precedence over the summoning encounters described below. You can use these and the summoning encounters to provide the PCs with more experience, if you find that necessary, and you can run as many encounters in the labyrinth as you and your players find entertaining. This adventure assumes two combat encounters in the maze, along with one roleplaying encounter.

If you want to throw in some extra treasure, do that too. Even though most of the summoned monsters don't have treasure, it's likely that one or more of the tomb robbers succumbed to the labyrinth. A corpse or two might provide some loot or much needed healing. (Varags typically carry *cure* potions, so corpses found here might still have those potions intact.)

Summoning Monsters: The labyrinth's summoning runes used to summon only good creatures to aid good characters, but that aspect of the magic has faded over time. Now they don't function 50% of the time when good characters are present, but they otherwise summon monsters, only a couple of which are good and helpful. Rely on your sense of the dramatic and make sure the players are having fun in the labyrinth, and keep the number of encounters the adventure assumes in mind.

When the runes summon a creature, that event triggers a tactical encounter.

Tactical Encounters: 14. Labyrinth Summoning, page 44; 15. Labyrinth Pool, page 46.

16. MAZE'S END

Eventually, the labyrinth releases its hold on the characters, leading them to this oddly shaped room.

When the PCs enter, read:

You round a corner and come into a roughly octagonal room that is divided by a thick wall. This area doesn't resemble the labyrinth's confusing, rough passages.

Here, the tomb robbers stumbled out of the maze and into great danger. One of them survived. Just a little farther into the room, the PCs discover a 30-foot pit.

When the PCs look into the pit, read:

A yawning pit opens in the floor here, and in it is the body of a young female in a light chain shirt. She has auburn hair and fine features, her ears suggesting elf heritage but her height and build suggesting human ancestry as well. Her equipment indicates she was an explorer of some sort.

The character who has the highest Spot modifier notices that the female is still breathing. A successful DC 15 Heal check is sufficient to tell she's unconscious (at -3 hp) from the fall but stable. If the PCs heal and question her, she reveals quite a bit of information, beginning with the fact that her name is Leera. Work the following discussion points in as the PCs talk to her. Leera doesn't volunteer a lot of information—not because she's hiding anything, but because she's still very shaken up from her near-death experience. If the PCs don't ask, she might not think to tell.

What are you doing here?

"I learned of the expedition to this tomb from Teryl, an associate of mine, and he let me have a place in the party. I didn't know what I was getting into."

What do you know about the forgotten king?

"Centuries ago, a king, his knights, and his spellcasting advisors united this part of the land, bringing the people out of a dark, evil age and restoring faith and hope. But one of the king's most trusted knights betrayed him. The two of them fought desperately, and though the king slew the Betrayer this last battle, the king perished as well. Many of his knights died too, as did those who served the Betrayer. The king's remaining followers built this complex to hold his remains and the remains of his champions, believing that some day, when the realm needs him, the king will return."

Who are the tomb robbers?

"A man named Xeron leads the tomb robbers, but a hobgoblin priest of Hextor also has some clout. Xeron is some sort of arcanist—he's also young, intense, and without mercy. To be honest, he scares me, and I've tried to keep from attracting much notice until I could escape from his band of cutthroats. He's looking for some-

thing deeper in the catacombs, and only his personal magnetism has kept the tomb robbers from escaping with the treasure they've found already. He thinks someone is bound to be pursuing him by now, though, and has talked about finding a different exit from the tomb rather than the hole we dug to come in.

"The hobgoblin cleric—Krootad, they call him—elected to stay behind and take care of the pursuit. You must have already run across him. He wouldn't shirk when it comes to raising the dead and the possibility of killing decent folk.

"I think the remaining tomb robbers are nothing more than servants and hirelings, though most seem reasonably loyal to Xeron. Supposing nobody fell in the next room, he still has Teryl, a few more varags, three hobgoblin warriors, a halfling male I think is a sorcerer, and a nasty goblin female. We left a several goblinoids and undead behind us, as well as some of Xeron's twisted pets. Many members of our band have died in the run through this place."

Undead?

"Krootad had an ogre zombie and two wolf skeletons with him when I joined the band. He left them behind in a stairway. He also animated some of the bodies in the mausoleum near the surface after the varags murdered a family of poor farmers."

Twisted pets?

"Xeron keeps a choker as a pet, and he also kept a tattooed horror that's something like a hound. Both of these were left to guard the way we came in. The runhound, as Xeron called it, is on the surface."

Anything more about Xeron?

"Xeron isn't human or elf. I'm sure of that. I don't know what he is, but something about him makes my skin crawl. He is definitely working for someone, though. I remember Xeron and Krootad quarreling about how to carry out their superiors' wishes, leading me to think that Xeron is either already a member of an organization or trying to join one. He certainly knows a lot about the tomb complex, though he appears unsure of what dangers he might face as he explores. It's as if his map—yes, he has one—has no notes or specific details about the area."

What happened in the next room?

"Xeron led us around the corner to the east, and Teryl found a pit that we all avoided as we went into a wide room beyond. There, we saw two metal statues. There was also a complicated puzzle lock—one that Xeron had considerable trouble unraveling. He got angry and ordered the tomb robbers to smash the platform that contained the lock and break through the door to the north.

"Unfortunately, when we smashed the puzzle, the chests of the statues spit out small automatons that attacked, and the statues' mouths spewed out smoky creatures that distracted and nipped at us. Three of us, including Teryl and I, fought back while Xeron and the others smashed through the door and escaped. When I saw that happen, I ducked back around the corner and fled . . . right into this pit. I don't remember anything from that point until just now.

Leera can tell the PCs where the other pit is. She can also describe the constructs as a Small iron dog that has terrible teeth, a Small stony humanoid with needlelike appendages, and four Tiny humanoid creatures made of smoke—she doesn't know her former comrades dispatched two of the distracters in the tactical encounter.

What do you want to do now?

"I want to get out of this place. Xeron said a waterfall lies just ahead. I think it leads outside. I'm afraid of those automatons, though, but maybe they're dead . . . er . . . destroyed."

She accompanies the PCs and helps them in area 17 to make up for her part in Xeron's wrongdoing. Leera is chaotic neutral. You can treat her as a 3rd-level half-elf bard from Table 4–13: NPC Bard (DMG 114) for the one encounter she's with the PCs. Though she's grateful for the PCs' rescue, she doesn't throw her life away in repayment. Sigur at the waterfall (see area 18) is happy to help Leera get out of the complex if the PCs allow it.

But you're part of that band of murderers!

"And I'm ashamed, but what could I do? Once I fell in with them, I was afraid they'd kill me if I tried to leave! I'm a coward, but I didn't help murder those poor people in the mausoleum. "Yes, I didn't try to stop the murder, but how would my death have helped? I just came along to see a bit of ancient history. You didn't revive me just so I could hang for witnessing the crimes of Xeron's thugs, did you? Please have some compassion. . . ."

Leera is willing to beg for her freedom and her life. If the PCs don't want her to leave, she continues with them, and she gets a full share of experience for doing so. If she thinks do-gooder PCs are going to eventually turn her over to authorities in Kingsholm, she tries to escape at her earliest opportunity, such as at the waterfall in area 18 (she jumps in, whereupon Sigur rescues her).

When the PCs proceed around the corner, because Xeron smashed the only way to avoid facing the constructs in the eastern room, they trigger the tactical encounter. Fortunately for the characters, the creatures have taken damage and suffered casualties.

Tactical Encounter: 16. Maze's End, page 48.

LEVELING UP AGAIN

By the time four PCs who started this adventure at 2nd level complete encounter 16 or 17, they should have accrued enough experience to advance to 4th level. If so, they almost certainly don't have any opportunity to go back to town, but you should allow them to advance in the field. While this doesn't give them an opportunity to scribe new spells in spellbooks or buy new gear, they do gain a better chance of surviving the upcoming stage of the adventure.



A varag

Illustration by J. Thomas

17. ROBBER ENCAMPMENT

Leera was correct. Xeron thinks that someone is pursuing his party. When the battered tomb robbers escaped down the stairs, the yuan-ti leader almost faced a mutiny. His followers insisted upon resting and recuperating. The robber party took the lids off the sarcophagi in this room, broke them, and piled them at the base of the stairs as a ramshackle blockade.

During the night watch, however, Xeron decided to move on without his most vociferous critics—Magruug the varag leader and the two remaining varags. Leaving them sleeping, Xeron awoke his remaining loyalists and moved on. The varags are still asleep in their encampment, unaware that they've been abandoned.

When the PCs descend the stairs, read:

Someone has piled stone slabs in the entrance to what appears to be another chamber. The pile isn't high enough to prevent entry altogether, but pushing it out of the way, jumping over it, or climbing across it appear to be the only obvious choices you have. A sound like roaring water comes from somewhere ahead, and the air here is slightly damp and misty.

If it's day, the PCs can see light. When the PCs begin to interact with the barricade, they trigger the tactical encounter.

Tactical Encounter: 17. Robber Encampment, page 50.

TRANSITIONAL AREA

A second transitional area begins when the PCs follow the rope banister around the corner and down into area 16. By now, the PCs should know that they're catching up to the tomb robbers. If they need to rest, make it possible for them to do so by keeping the robbers from getting too far ahead. If the characters are in good enough shape to push on, they can do so, hoping to catch the robbers before they advance much farther into the complex. You can use hints and clues to prompt them one way or another.

18. CLIFFSIDE WATERFALL

The waterfall is the home of a fey called a fossergrim. This one is named Sigur.

When the PCs enter, read:

The air is filled with mist and spray from the nearby waterfall, but you see a slick staircase leading down to a ledge. A cavernous chamber opens to the east, its floor lost in darkness, and it looks like someone has built a rope line into the stairs as a way to make the descent easier.

When the PCs begin to descend the stairs, they trigger the tactical encounter.

Tactical Encounter: 18. Cliffside Waterfall, page 52.

THE FALSE TOMB

Whether the builders of the king's tomb arranged this area to trick tomb robbers into thinking they'd reached their goal, or whether they had another purpose in mind, the false tomb is beautifully constructed. Instead of the rough but competent stonework of the mausoleum or the polished gray blocks of the guardian tombs, the walls of the false tomb appear made of polished glass. Dark in some places, jewel-bright in others, the walls of this area are dusty and forgotten, but they are also striking.

Despite appearances, the features of this area, such as doors, have the same statistics as those described for the mausoleum. Unless otherwise noted, all the doors in the false tomb are unlocked but closed.

19. FALSE TOMB ENTRY

The PCs leave the natural world behind and enter the dark tomb once again.

When the PCs approach the door, read:

Having navigated the ledge, you reach a landing of stone so finely polished that it shines like glass. Ahead is a door engraved with a coat of arms containing a crown, a scepter, and a dragon rampant. The door is, however, cracked and broken on its upper corner.

The tomb spider that Sigur loathes claims this area. It was sleeping when the robbers hacked their way through. They had destroyed one of its web mummies and almost taken out another when it awakened and attacked. Xeron and his lackeys then made a fighting retreat farther into the false tomb.

When the PCs open the door, they trigger the tactical encounter.

Tactical Encounter: 19. False Tomb Entry, page 54.

20. BALCONY

A tomb spider is here, wrapping a hobgoblin robber it killed and nursing the wounds the robbers inflicted. It might join the fight in area 19; otherwise, any creature that comes onto the balcony triggers the tactical encounter.

Tactical Encounter: 20. Balcony, page 56.

21. TREACHERY'S PRICE

When the man whom Leera called the Betrayer turned against his lord, he didn't do it alone. Those who assisted him were defeated and entombed here. The three main rooms in this area (those connected by stairs, not doors) radiate a strong aura if viewed using *detect magic* (DC 24 Spellcraft check to determine the school is illusion).

When the PCs enter, read:

Instantly, the square room you've entered illuminates, and you have time to discern a winding stair to the southeast before the walls seem to paint themselves with rich images. A magic painting depicts a spring day on a high, green hill, making it seem as if the sun reaches this room as well as the green slope. You can almost smell apple blossoms and awakening flowers. People in fine clothes stand around the hill, and it is as if you are among them. Central in the scene is a tall, raven-haired man dressed in shining plate armor, kneeling before a blond man and a red-haired woman, each wearing golden crowns. The image fades, and the light diminishes but doesn't go out.

As the PCs move down the steps into the central corridor, read:

To the northeast and southwest are gleaming stone doors, each engraved with a grinning, fiery skull. In the southeast corner of the room, another winding stair descends. But the room quickly fills with the image of the hill you saw before, now covered in brown grass, flames leaping into the sky off in the distance. The dark-haired man in shining armor wields two curved swords, battling howling goblinoids and baying wolves. Beside him fights the blond king wielding a black longsword. Light sparkles on the blade and the king's crowned helmet. The red-haired woman holds her ground behind and between the two, her staff held aloft as lightning strikes her foes. Your hair stands on end and your skin tingles, as if electricity were really in the air. As the image fades, you take note again of the doors and the stairs in the magic half-light of the room.

A successful DC 15 Knowledge (religion) check reveals the skulls on the doors to be ancient depictions of the symbol of Wee Jas. If the PCs enter the room to the southwest, they trigger the tactical encounter (see below). Two of the Betrayer's servants preferred to linger in the mortal world rather than face the unknown of the afterlife. If they enter the room to the northeast or continue down the stairs to the southeast, continue with this section.

When the PCs enter the room to the northeast, read:

Four sarcophagi stand within this room, two along the south wall and two to the east. Their lids show the graven images of trapped people on them, one different person for each lid. It's as if each lid is a prison. The imprisoned people are depicted as if they are crying out, their desperate eyes set with rubies. To the north is a huge mirror.

A successful DC 25 Strength check is required to remove any of the sarcophagi's lids. None of the bodies within have possessions.

When a creature that has an Intelligence score of 3 or higher looks at itself in the mirror, that creature must attempt a DC 20 Will save. Good creatures receive a +2 bonus on the save, while evil ones take a -4 penalty. Lawful creatures receive an additional +2 bonus, so a lawful neutral creature has a +2 bonus while a lawful evil creature takes a -2 penalty.

Creatures that fail the save relive the worst deed they ever perpetrated or the worst failure ever to befall them. Such a creature is shaken for the next 24 hours. Creatures that succeed on the save relive an inspiring event or great success, gaining a +1 morale bonus on saves, attack rolls, ability checks, and skill checks for the next 24 hours, as well as the benefit of the most beneficial of *cure moderate wounds*, *lesser restoration*, or *remove disease*. The shaken condition is created by a mind-affecting fear effect. Each creature that looks in the mirror attempts the save only once. The mirror never works for that creature again.

The mirror has a strong aura if viewed using *detect magic* (DC 25 Spellcraft check to determine the school is conjuration).

As the PCs enter the third main room, read:

Snow covers the hill, but bloodstains clash with the mud and frost. The blond king has fallen to one knee, his left arm hanging useless at his side. Bestial humanoids surround him as he caresses the cheek of the red-haired woman lying mortally wounded before him. Behind the golden-haired king stands the raven-haired knight, his silver armor stained with blood and his eyes wild with triumph, wrath, and greed. He holds the king's crown aloft with one hand as his curved blade slices down at the king in the other. As the image fades, the dim light reveals a plain stone door to the east.

Tactical Encounter: 21. Treachery's Price, page 58.

22. BETRAYER'S THRONE

The servants of the forgotten king might have been good people, but they had a strong sense of vengeance. When they created the false tomb, they included an opulent throne room as the Betrayer's prison, and they cursed the Betrayer with a new form.

When the PCs enter the corridor leading west to this area, read:

Soft light illuminates this corridor from no single point. You see more intricate design work on the north and south walls, but no dust, no webs, and no signs of age or weathering. The passage turns north ahead.

When the PCs come to the stairs, read:

Stairs that descend here are gradual and smooth, and the ceiling above stays at the same height as the corridor, despite the descent. Purple curtains that glitter with gold tracery cover a tall opening to the west at the stairway's base. The passage also continues to the east on the other side of a similar curtain. On the wall facing the base of the stairs is a huge painting that depicts a tall, dark-haired man sitting on an opulent throne. He wears a golden crown and frowns darkly.

The ceiling here is 20 feet high, and both the painting and the curtains run from floor to ceiling.



The Betrayer's unkind fate might mean doom for the characters

Illus. by J. Thomas

GRAVE ENCOUNTERS

The whole area radiates a strong aura if viewed using *detect magic* (DC 23 Spellcraft check to determine the school is abjuration).

If the PCs go through the western curtain, read:

The patterned floor and marble walls gleam in the magical light. They appear polished and unmarked by age. To the northwest you see the statue of a mounted warrior, his sword held high in the air. A narrow passage continues eastward along the north wall.

If the PCs go east through the corridor, they trigger the tactical encounter when one of them moves within 10 feet of the throne along the north wall. If they go through the eastern curtain, they trigger the tactical encounter when one moves to within 10 feet of the throne.

A curse imprisons the Betrayer within the eastern part of chamber as the final guardian of the forgotten king's tomb, forcing him to attack invaders. Xeron and the other robbers, who knew they hadn't reached the true tomb of the forgotten king, were able to avoid interacting with the Betrayer. They came through the eastern curtain, stayed along the wall to keep from getting too close to the throne, and went right to the secret door.

Tactical Encounter: 22. Betrayer's Throne, page 60.

THE KING'S TOMB

Hidden beneath the Betrayer's prison is the true tomb.

23. THE KING'S TOMB

Xeron and his band hurtled down the stairs and went to work prying open the four sarcophagi, snatching up all the weapons and valuable items they could. Xeron then ordered Jeroog, the remaining hobgoblin, to take a pickaxe to the floor. It took a long time, but Jeroog finally made a small hole. To everyone's surprise except Xeron's, the hole opened onto a secret tunnel. Tying off a knotted rope, Xeron sent his two smallest servants, the goblin and the halfling, on ahead with the bulk of the loot. When the PCs enter the tomb, the hobgoblin is working on widening the hole.

As soon as the PCs enter the staircase, read:

A tight stairway descends to a landing below. Between sharp ringing reports that must be a metal tool against stone, you hear shouting in a guttural tongue. (In Goblin, "Faster, you idiot! Faster!")

When the PCs can see into the room, read:

The narrow stairs give way to a wide room lit by a faint white light.

Four statues stand in the wide area where the room opens up, each apparently ensorcelled to add a lifelike aspect to it. One represents a tall male human who has a salt-and-pepper beard, plate armor, and a symbol of Heironeous emblazoned on his shield. His brown eyes flash, and his black hair blows in an illusory wind. Another shows a female elf dressed in armor made from overlapping metal leaves. Her tall bow is made of ivory, and the green of her cloak seems to blend into the background of the room. She crouches in a hunter's stance, peering off into the distance at an unseen target. The red-haired woman from the paintings you've seen is depicted in the third statue. Her hair, kept in check by a silver circlet set with a gleaming diamond, falls in waves down her back, over her white and gold robes. In one hand, she holds a staff tipped with a dragon's head. Her other hand stretches out to the statue across the room—a kingly figure. The gold crown on his head nearly blends into his blond, flowing hair. The man's blue eyes shimmer in the dim light as he stares across the room at the red-haired woman. He holds a black longsword point down in one hand. The man's other hand is held out, palm upward, toward the statue of the woman.

Beyond the statues, sarcophagi along the southern wall have been wrenched open, their lids cast to one side. From where you stand, you can't see the eastern part of the room, but you can tell the shouting and ringing come from there.

When the PCs fully enter the room and can see into its eastern section, they trigger the tactical encounter.

Tactical Encounter: 23. The King's Tomb, page 62.

THE ADVENTURE ENDS . . .

Once the PCs defeat Xeron and Jeroog, they've won.

When that happens, read:

All four of the statues look at you. The statue of the king looks up, and a translucent apparition steps forward. He speaks in a strong but somehow distant voice, smiling warmly.

"Thank you, my friends. It is good to see that heroism remains in this world. My time to return is not now, but it might be soon."

The PCs can talk to the ghostly king, and they can examine him briefly if they wish. The apparition is not really a creature, but its alignment is lawful good, and it radiates a strong aura if viewed using *detect magic* (DC 25 Spellcraft check to determine the school is conjuration). He wishes to impart the following knowledge to the PCs.

- "In my time it was prophesied that my rule would end prematurely, but that I would return to aid the world in its most dire struggle. I sense that time coming, but my bones have been stolen, and if they are not recovered, I don't know if the prophecy can be fulfilled."
- "My name is Theron, but that is no matter, for my time is past. The name you need to know is Sertrous. I heard that scoundrel"—the king gestures toward the body of Xeron—"refer to something called Vanguard of Sertrous, and while I do not know who or what the Vanguard of Sertrous is, I know that it is evil. It must not triumph!"
- "The villains stole my bones, and the weapons of my wife and my champions! Those arms are very powerful and should not be used in the service of evil. Still, they did not get this..."

A nagatha encountered in the king's tomb



MERTHÚVIAL

Merthúvial is a jet-black longsword, with a plain hilt decorated by a single large pearl in the pommel. The blade appears to be in perfect condition.

Nonlegacy Game Statistics: +1 adamantite longsword; Cost 5,315 gp. Before learning the results of your roll, you can reroll one Diplomacy check per day.

Omen: When unsheathed, the weapon glows with a light the strength of a torch. In combat, this light changes to a deep red, with no change in strength of illumination.

HISTORY

It is said that dwarves forged *Merthúvial* in the heat of a volcano; its adamantite blade proved devastating against marauding cave trolls and mountain orcs. The weapon was one of many, but it earned distinction when its wielder saved the life of the dwarf king by sundering a stone giant's weapon and spearing the creature on the point of the sword. The king ennobled this dwarf warrior, and the warrior, in turn, presented *Merthúvial* to his lord in tribute. (DC 20; King's Gift)

The dwarf king seldom used *Merthúvial* in combat, preferring to hang the weapon over his throne as a symbol of loyalty and devotion. As long as the black sword hung over the throne, the dwarves of that kingdom experienced little internal strife. The dwarven king and his heirs lived peacefully with the other good races in that part of the world.

But that peace did not extend to the evil, the jealous, and the hateful. Orcs and their monstrous cohorts forged an alliance and eventually drove the dwarves from the underground kingdom, taking the halls for their own. The orcs' chieftain kept *Merthúvial*, but he gained little joy from the weapon. Before long, his lieutenant assassinated him and took the throne, only to die in a civil war weeks later. *Merthúvial* passed from hand to claw and back again, never staying with a single wielder for long. Eventually, it left the dwarf mines and found its way to the surface, falling into the hands of an evil half-orc warlord named Kroack.

Kroack had united the nearby orc, goblin, and hobgoblin tribes in an attempt to destroy the local human kingdom. Indeed, by the time the warlord "inherited" *Merthúvial* he had nearly succeeded. Only one fortified village remained, and the half-orc moved quickly to burn the citizens out.

In desperation, a young warrior named Theron and a few of his friends infiltrated Kroack's camp as the tribes waited

At an appropriately dramatic moment, read:

King Theron reaches down into a sarcophagus and through its bottom. When his hand emerges, it holds a black longsword that glows with a silvery light.

"This weapon, *Merthúvial*," he says, "once helped me save a kingdom. May it aid you in your heroics and serve as thanks from a forgotten king."

After handing you the sword, the apparition disappears, as do the lifelike images on the other statues. The quiet of stone and death pervades the area the light of the magic blade shining brightly.

Any character who understands Celestial translates the word *Merthúvial* as "kingmaker." *Merthúvial* is a legacy item detailed in the next section.

The magic of the statues never returns. Further, the magic of the tomb complex fades quickly, removing much of the danger and wonder from the locale.

... ANOTHER BEGINS

The tale begun in this adventure continues in *DD2: The Sinister Spire* with an expedition through the secret tunnel under the forgotten king's tomb and into the Underdark.

for the order to attack. Somehow, this small band found their way to Kroack's tent—just before the guards discovered them. Theron and his friends fought for their lives, but most of them died quickly, and Theron himself was disarmed and thrown to the feet of Kroack. Kroack gloated at the young warrior's defeat and desperate efforts. But when the half-orc lifted Theron by the throat, the man snatched *Merthúvial* from Kroack's hip, and a red light shown from the blade for the first time. The guards stumbled back in fear; Theron slew Kroack, freed his remaining friends, and escaped.

Rumors of treachery flew through the raiders' camp, and factions set upon each other. Theron rallied the remaining villagers and attacked. Even though the humanoids still outnumbered the villagers five to one, the young warrior broke the spirit of the besiegers and drove them out of the valley. Not surprisingly, the villagers soon named Theron their lord, and his surviving friends became his most loyal retainers. (DC 25; **Know the Pain**)

Theron realized, however, that the threat of conquest was not gone from the land. Riding to distant settlements, Theron forged agreements with them, ensuring that when the need arose, they would unite with each other against their common enemies. Theron made similar alliances with elves, dwarves, halflings, and all other good peoples. Soon, this young warrior from a small village found himself at the center of a great alliance. Before long, other lords began to acknowledge Theron as a king. This actually surprised the young man, who thought of himself as a servant of the people, not a ruler. And though his victories on the battlefield and his diplomatic successes made him king, it was this humble attitude that made him truly great.

As King Theron's power and influence grew, *Merthúvial*'s abilities took shape. The sword became as renowned as the king, and the chosen weapons of Theron's retainers also became well known. It was said that while King Theron wielded *Merthúvial*, no enemy could defeat him. Unfortunately for Theron, the tales said nothing about a friend.

One of Theron's oldest compatriots, a man whose name has been expunged from all histories of the time, betrayed him. This "Betrayer" made a pact with the humanoids and evil races of the Underdark; such was his skill at deceit that he corrupted Theron's kingdom from within. The humanoids struck the kingdom by surprise and devastated the king's holdings.

But the Betrayer's scheme ultimately backfired. Though few in the kingdom fully trusted one another, they all trusted King Theron. Out of the ashes of his court, Theron rallied his loyalists, destroyed the invading army, and battled the Betrayer to the death. Though the king did not survive this final duel, Theron's remaining supporters captured the Betrayer and cursed him—the treacherous knight was forced to guard the king's tomb for as long as fate required, atoning for his crimes through the lonely years. (DC 30; **Unite the People**)

WHAT IS A LEGACY ITEM?

A legacy item is a powerful magic item with history and potential. Such an item is similar to an artifact. The item was probably created with a simple purpose, but developed abilities over time.

Every legacy item has the potential to improve with some sacrifice from the user. When a character meets the wielder requirements, he can attune to the weapon and gain abilities as he goes up in level. For the set cost specified under Legacy Rituals and detailed on the weapon's table, the user gains new abilities at particular experience levels. The table shows certain penalties and costs associated with the legacy. A legacy item's user must take the penalties and losses associated with his level to use the legacy item's abilities. For *Merthúvial*, the penalties are not cumulative, but the hit point losses are.

Feats are required to gain access to the legacy item abilities of *Merthúvial*, and those feats can be acquired only by completing legacy rituals. Least Legacy (*Merthúvial*) allows a user of equivalent level to access abilities from 5th to 9th level, while Lesser Legacy (*Merthúvial*) is required to use abilities from 10th to 16th level. Greater Legacy (*Merthúvial*) grants access to 17th-level and higher abilities.

Whenever a user wants to gain the feat required to open up access to a new tier of abilities (Least, Lesser, or Greater), that wielder must somehow learn about the history of the item and a related ritual by making or having another character make a successful Knowledge (history) check, the DCs of which are detailed parenthetically in the history of *Merthúvial*. The user must then pay the gold and roleplaying costs associated with the ritual. If the PC does that, he gains access to all the legacy abilities linked to that bonus feat (Least Legacy, Lesser Legacy, Greater Legacy) as soon as he advances to the appropriate character level. So, if a 10th-level character undergoes the Know the Pain ritual for *Merthúvial*, that character pays 12,500 gp for ritual materials and allows a foe to strike him for a critical hit. Upon successful completion of that ritual, the user gains the bonus feat Lesser Legacy (*Merthúvial*), which gives access to the sword's 10th-level legacy ability. When the user advances to 11th level, he doesn't have to undergo the ritual again—the Lesser Legacy (*Merthúvial*) feat allows access to the *keen* ability, as well as *lordly orator* at 13th level and *expel from the realm* and *loyal minions* later on. If the user wishes to open up access to *Merthúvial* as a +2 *keen shocking burst adamantine longsword*, he must complete the legacy ritual required to gain the Greater Legacy (*Merthúvial*) feat and advance to 17th level.

For more information on legacy items, see the *Weapons of Legacy* supplement.

LEGACY RITUALS

Three rituals are required to unlock all the abilities of *Merthúvial*.

King's Gift: You must have the weapon passed on to you willingly by its rightful owner or the owner's rightful heirs. If no heirs live, you must perform an attunement ritual with *Merthúvial*, marking you as the weapon's new owner. Cost: 2,500 gp. *Feat Granted:* Least Legacy (*Merthúvial*).

Know the Pain: In combat with real foes, you must allow an enemy to strike you. That foe automatically scores a critical hit. Cost: 12,500 gp. *Feat Granted:* Lesser Legacy (*Merthúvial*).

Unite the People: You must forge an alliance between two or more disparate groups of people in order to unite them against a common foe, and you must work to protect them from that foe until the danger is past. Cost: 40,500 gp. *Feat Granted:* Greater Legacy (*Merthúvial*).

Wielder Requirements

The typical wielder of *Merthúvial* is a good-aligned character who has some fighting skill, such as a fighter or paladin. It is most useful to a character interested in developing leadership and Charisma-based skills.

MERTHÚVIAL WIELDER REQUIREMENTS

Any non-evil except chaotic neutral
Base attack bonus +3
Diplomacy 2 ranks

PENALTIES AND ABILITIES

Wielder Level	Attack Penalty	Save Penalty	Hit Point Loss	Abilities
5th	—	—	—	<i>Detect thoughts</i> 1/day
6th	—	—	4	—
7th	—	—	—	Strength of kings
8th	—	-1	—	Loyal servitor
9th	-1	—	2	—
10th	—	—	—	<i>Merciful redress</i> 3/day
11th	—	—	—	+2 keen adamantine longsword
12th	—	—	2	—
13th	-2	—	—	Lordly orator
14th	—	—	—	<i>Expel from the realm</i> 1/day
15th	—	—	2	—
16th	—	-2	—	Loyal minions 1/day
17th	—	—	—	+2 keen shocking burst adamantine longsword
18th	—	-3	2	—
19th	—	—	2	—
20th	—	—	2	King's command 1/day



Merthúvial

Legacy Item Abilities

The following are the legacy item abilities of *Merthúvial*.

Detect Thoughts (Sp): Starting at 5th level, once per day, you can use *detect thoughts* as the spell. The save DC is 13, or 12 + your Charisma modifier, whichever is higher. Caster level 5th.

Strength of Kings (Su): When you reach 7th level, *Merthúvial* grants you a +2 enhancement bonus to Strength while you carry it.

Loyal Servitor (Su): At 8th level, you gain the continual benefit of an *unseen servant* as the spell. If dissipated by 6 or more points of damage from an area attack, or if it ceases to exist by moving more than 35 feet away from you, the servant re-forms 1 round later in any square adjacent to you. Caster level 5th.

Merciful Redress (Sp): Beginning at 10th level, three times per day, you can use *lesser restoration*, as the spell, by touching *Merthúvial* to the afflicted creature and speaking a command phrase, "Your strength shall return!" Caster level 10th.

Lordly Orator (Su): At 13th level, you gain a +10 competence bonus on Diplomacy checks. In addition, you can attempt a Diplomacy check as a full-round action without the normal -10 penalty (PH 72) unless the target is currently hostile. Against a hostile target, you still gain the competence bonus, but you must otherwise perform your Diplomacy check according to the normal rules for that skill.

Expel from the Realm (Sp): Starting at level, once per day by issuing the command word, "Begone!" and gesturing with the sword, you can force a creature to return to its native plane, as by the *dismissal* spell. The base save DC is 16, or 14 + your Cha modifier, whichever is higher. Add your character level to this number and subtract the target creature's HD to determine the final save DC. Caster level equals your character level.

Loyal Minions (Sp): At 16th level, once per day when you utter the command phrase "To me!" and gesture with *Merthúvial*, you can use *summon monster V* as the spell. You can summon only good or neutral creatures from that spell's list. Caster level 15th.

King's Command (Sp): At 20th level, once per day when you issue the command "Hear and obey!" and gesture with *Merthúvial*, you can use *dominate monster* as the spell. The save DC is 23, or 19 + your Cha modifier, whichever is higher. Caster level 20th.

WOLVES AT THE DOOR

Encounter Level 3

SETUP

A lone young worg has gathered two wolves as followers, and the worg has led them to the smell of blood in the Kingsholm graveyard, where wolves rarely go. As the PCs approach the mausoleum's entrance, pit their Spot checks against the Hide checks of the wolves and worg lurking in the graveyard. If the characters see the creatures, have them place their miniatures at the southern edge of the map, along the road, and place the wolf (W) and young worg (Y) miniatures as indicated on the tactical map. If the PCs fail to see the wolves, allow them to move up to the mausoleum steps and examine the bodies they find there before giving the wolves a surprise round.

When the PCs first enter the graveyard, read:

A narrow path winds its way up the hill toward a large structure flanked by ancient, life-sized statues of a warrior and a priest. Two humanoids lie sprawled on the mausoleum's steps. Dark liquid seeps out from under the bodies, and beyond them, the doors to the mausoleum are open.

If the PCs spot the wolves, read:

You perceive movement at the feet of the statues. Two pairs of feral eyes gleam out at you from behind the graven images. Wolves! Another darker wolf-shape roams farther away, among the nearby gravestones.

When the PCs can clearly see the bodies, read:

Two bodies, seemingly savaged by some wild beast, lie in a pool of blood. One is a male dwarf, and the other is a female human. Each wears the remnants of a town sentinel's tabard. Blood spatters cover the landing and the flagstones just inside the tomb's doorway.

When the PCs look inside the mausoleum, read:

The open doors reveal a large stone room containing a stone table and several vaults built into the walls. Across the room you see a closed stone door. Blood is spattered and smeared on the table, walls, and floor.

TACTICS

Each wolf charges if possible, attacking a single PC. The wolves focus on that target, aiming to bring down one foe at a time. A wolf flees if reduced to 4 or fewer hit points.

The worg delays until after the wolves attack, trying to gauge the strength of its enemies. If the characters seem to

2 WOLVES

CR 1

hp 13 each (2 HD)

N Medium animal

Init +2; Senses low-light vision, scent; Listen +3, Spot +3

Languages —

AC 14, touch 12, flat-footed 12

Fort +5, Ref +5, Will +1

Speed 50 ft. (10 squares)

Melee bite +3 (1d6+1)

Base Atk +1; Grp +2

Abilities Str 13, Dex 15, Con 15, Int 2, Wis 12, Cha 6

Feats Track⁶, Weapon Focus (bite)

Skills Hide +2, Listen +3, Move Silently +3, Spot +3,

Survival +1 (+5 when tracking by scent)

Trip (Ex) A wolf that hits with a bite attack can attempt to trip the opponent (+1 check modifier) as a free action without making a touch attack or provoking attacks of opportunity. If the attempt fails, the opponent cannot react to trip the wolf.

YOUNG WORG

CR 1

hp 15 (2 HD)

NE Medium magical beast

Init +2; Senses darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision, scent;

Listen +4, Spot +4

Languages Goblin, Worg

AC 14, touch 12, flat-footed 12

Fort +5, Ref +5, Will +1

Speed 50 ft. (10 squares)

Melee bite +4 (1d6+3)

Base Atk +2; Grp +4

Abilities Str 15, Dex 15, Con 15, Int 6, Wis 12, Cha 10

Feats Track

Skills Hide +4, Listen +4, Move Silently +4, Spot +4,

Survival +1 (+5 when tracking by scent)

Trip (Ex) If the worg hits with a bite attack, it can attempt to trip the opponent (+2 check modifier) as a free action without making a touch attack or provoking attacks of opportunity. If the attempt fails, the opponent cannot react to trip the worg.

be doing well against the wolves, it maintains its distance, then flees if the PCs kill both wolves during the first round of combat. If it's confident after the wolves attack, or if one or both wolves remain alive after the first round, the worg enters the fight, targeting either a wounded PC it can flank or a dangerous, unengaged PC such as a spellcaster. The worg pursues wounded PCs into the mausoleum unless they shut the doors. If the worg enters the mausoleum, the remaining wolves follow. The worg flees if reduced to 5 or fewer hit points.

If you want the characters to know they're up against more than just wolves, the worg might threaten or insult the PCs in Goblin.



A mausoleum dominates Kingsholm's hillside cemetery

Illustration by J. Thomas

FEATURES OF THE AREA

The area has the following features.

Gravestones: A square that contains a gravestone costs 2 squares of movement to enter. A gravestone provides cover.

Medium Statues: 5 feet thick; AC 4; hardness 8; 900 hp; break DC 45; Climb DC 15. It costs 2 squares of movement to enter a square containing a statue, and a creature can't end its movement in a statue's square without climbing onto the statue. A Medium statue provides cover. If broken, a statue fills its square with dense rubble (see page 25).

Gradual Stairs: The stairs from the ground up to the mausoleum ascends 5 feet in four wide steps. Creatures gain a +1 bonus on melee attack rolls against foes lower than them.

Bodies: The dwarf male was Dornal, and the human female was Zeera. Anyone who succeeds on a DC 15 Heal check can see they didn't die from being mauled

by the wolves. One was bludgeoned to death, and the other was shot with arrows. The shafts broke off after the wolves began eating the bodies. Their armor tattered, the sentinels otherwise carry a spear, a sling, and 10 bullets each.

Stone Double Doors: The stone double doors that lead into the mausoleum are open and unlocked.

Illumination: Within the mausoleum, daylight provides bright illumination. If it's dark outside, it's also dark inside.

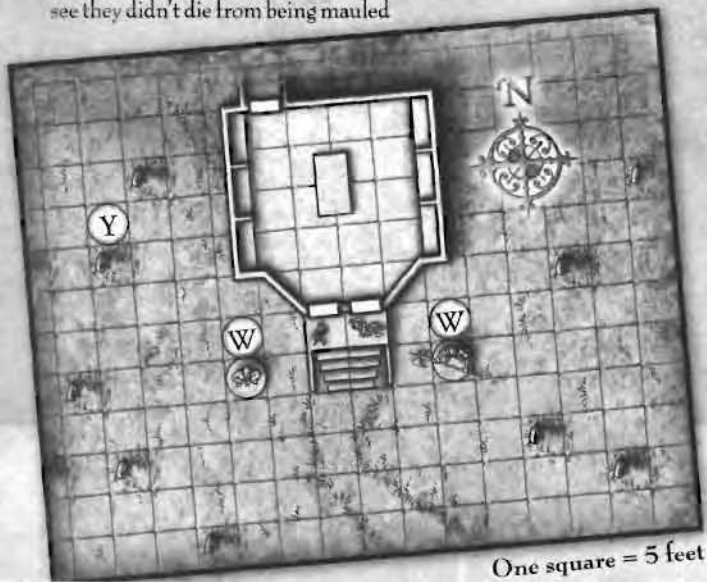
Blood Trail: A trail of blood leads back into the mausoleum all the way through the entry area and back to the closed door to the north. A successful DC 10 Survival check is sufficient for someone who has the Track feat to tell the bodies were dragged out of the mausoleum by the wolves.

A successful DC 15 Survival check made by the tracker reveals that the sentinels fought a battle in the mausoleum. They didn't fight wolves, but instead engaged assailants armed with bows and bludgeoning weapons. Wolves came later.

A successful DC 20 Survival check by the tracker reveals a partial footprint near the northern door. That footprint was clearly made by a Medium humanoid skeleton.

Vaults: Three rows of three vaults line each of the east and west walls, each vault door neatly engraved with a name. If the PCs open and loot all the vaults, they find a few pieces of jewelry (100 gp). The townsfolk aren't pleased if they discover this has happened.

Northern Door: This door to the inner tomb is not locked, because a key still rests in the lock, a ring of eleven more keys dangling from it. The door leads to a staircase down into the lower mausoleum (area 2).



LOWER MAUSOLEUM

Encounter Level 2

SETUP

Have the players arrange their miniatures in marching order on the narrow staircase. When the PCs descend the stairs, allow them to attempt DC 15 Spot checks. Those who succeed can tell that the corpse on the floor nearest the stairs and the one closest to them on the first table to the west, as well as the other marked as a zombie (Z), appear fresh and not prepared for burial. When you describe the zombies' attack, be sure to describe them as fresh corpses, one a middle-aged man with graying black hair and a long mustache, the other an old man with a bald pate and long white beard.

Three skeletons (S) wait around the corner. They are the remains of ancient warriors taken from the vaults in the walls.

When the PCs arrive on the landing, read:

Lit torches illuminate this chamber. From the landing you now stand upon, a shallow staircase leads down into a room obviously designed to allow corpses to be prepared for burial. At the bottom of that staircase is the corpse of a human woman, crumpled and broken. The statue of some winged celestial being overlooks the scene from its pedestal east of the stairs. Several tables stand against the east and west walls, and all but two of the seven have corpses on them. Farther into the chamber is a long pile of crushed stone where somebody or something toppled and crushed two of the tables. Aside from the one table that is beyond that debris, the farthest features you can see are vault doors along the north wall, a couple of which hang open, exposing the rudely touselled bones within.

2 ZOMBIES

CR 1/2

hp 16 each (2 HD); DR 5/slashing
NE Medium undead
Init -1; Senses darkvision 60 ft.; Listen +0, Spot +0
Languages understands creator's orders

AC 11, touch 9, flat-footed 11
Immune undead immunities
Fort +0, Ref -1, Will +3

Speed 30 ft. (6 squares, can't run)
Melee slam +2 (1d6+1)
Base Atk +1; Grp +2

Abilities Str 12, Dex 8, Con —, Int —, Wis 10, Cha 1
SQ single actions only, undead traits
Feats Toughness
Skills Listen +0, Spot +0

Single Actions Only (Ex) Zombies can perform only a single move action or standard action per round. A zombie can move up to its speed and attack in the same round if charging.

3 SKELETAL ARCHERS

CR 1/3

hp 6 each (1 HD); DR 5/bludgeoning
NE Medium undead
Init +5; Senses darkvision 60 ft.; Listen +0, Spot +0
Languages understands creator's orders

AC 13, touch 11, flat-footed 12
Immune cold, undead immunities
Fort +0, Ref +1, Will +2

Speed 30 ft. (6 squares)
Melee 2 claws +1 each (1d4+1)
Ranged shortbow +1 (1d6×3) or
Ranged shortbow +2 with +1 flaming arrow
(1d6×3 plus 1d6 fire)
Base Atk +0; Grp +1

Abilities Str 13, Dex 13, Con —, Int —, Wis 10, Cha 1
SQ undead traits
Feats Improved Initiative
Skills Listen +0, Spot +0

Possessions shortbow with 10 arrows, 2 +1 flaming arrows

When a PC comes within reach of a zombie, read:

Suddenly, the corpse on the nearby table swings its arm at you. Moaning accompanies another corpse's shifting from its resting place and shambling toward you. A clattering comes from deeper in the room.

When the PCs see the skeletons, read:

The clattering comes from animated skeletons that round the corner from the passage to the east. All are unarmored, and each wields a bow and has a quiver at its hip. The skeletal archers have arrows nocked, and one of those arrows is swathed in flame.

TACTICS

The zombies were ordered to remain motionless unless approached, and to attack the first creature that comes within reach. Doing so counts as attacking from a prone position (-4 penalty on the attack roll), but unless the PCs somehow detected the zombies before they attack, the undead get a surprise round. Once the first zombie swings at a PC, both creatures rise from their tables and attack.

Zombies then simply attack whomever is nearest, staying with the same target until that character goes down or moves farther away than another possible target. The zombies don't leave this area unless forced to do so.

Immediately after the zombies awaken, the skeletal archers move around the corner and take up positions on the north side of the rubble, making it a little more difficult for the PCs to approach them quickly. The skeletal archers fire at the PCs, first targeting those who are not in the melee with the zombies. Every round, one of the skeletal archers shoots one of its +1 flaming arrows while the others use conventional ammunition. If a PC engages an archer in melee, that archer immediately drops its bow and attacks with its claws.

FEATURES OF THE AREA

The area has the following features.

Illumination: Everburning torches; 20 feet of bright illumination, 20 feet of shadow illumination. Six of these torches light the room, as marked on the map. Each rests in a holder 8 feet off the floor and can be easily removed. Due to the placement of the torches, the entire area of repose is brightly illuminated, but the hallway around the corner to the east becomes shadowy and then dark.

These torches belong to the citizens of Kingsholm, and those citizens won't look kindly on the torches' permanent removal from this site. However, the PCs are free to borrow a torch for their mission deeper into the tomb.

Gradual Stairs: The shallow staircase leading from the foyer to the mausoleum proper descends 5 feet, but the ceiling remains level. Creatures gain a +1 bonus on melee attack rolls against foes lower than them.

Medium Statues: 5 feet thick; AC 4; hardness 8; 900 hp; break DC 45; Climb DC 15. It costs 2 squares of movement to enter a square containing a statue, and a creature can't end its movement in a statue's square without climbing onto the statue. If broken, a statue fills its square with dense rubble (see below).

Dense Rubble: Squares containing dense rubble cost 2 squares of movement to enter. Dense rubble increases the DC of Balance and Tumble checks by 5, and it imposes a -2 penalty on Move Silently checks. Running or charging through dense rubble is impossible.

Tables of Repose: When important villagers bury their dead in the mausoleum, they first lay them to rest on one of these tables. Here, friends and family stand watch or hold a wake while they or hired hands prepare their loved ones for interment. After a body has been prepared, caretakers seal it inside one of the vaults.

Creatures can stand in any squares that include a table, but those squares cost 2 squares of movement to enter. A creature can jump atop a table, gaining a +1 bonus on melee attack rolls against those on the floor. Doing so is automatic for someone who takes a move action in any of a table's squares, or it can be done as part of a larger move action with a successful DC 24 Jump check (DC 12 with a 20-foot running start).

Corpses: The corpse nearest the stairs is Desiree Yurling. She has been bludgeoned to death (a successful DC 15 Heal check ascertains this fact). On the southwestern table closest to the stairs is Morgan Yurling, who has been animated as a zombie. These two are easily recognized from the descriptions Ian Turbrand gave. The other zombie is Morgan's father, Gunar.

The other corpses in the room are wrapped in burial shrouds that are in disarray. They have been thoroughly looted.

Vaults: Rows of vaults containing the prepared remains of the dead line the northern wall of this room. Five

rows of three vaults start near the floor and ascend to near the ceiling. Most of the vaults remain sealed, but the tomb robbers opened a few, giving each a cursory search and relieving the bodies of valuable trinkets. The vault doors each bear a number of engravings—names, holy symbols, family insignias, and simple decorations.

A successful DC 20 Spot check from the landing is sufficient for a PC to see that the vault in the northwest corner has been nailed shut with pitons. Those who search the area near the vault can readily notice the pitons that hold the door closed. Tyra Yurling (female human commoner 1, 3 hp) somehow survived the robbers' initial attack, and she crawled into this vault. The robbers then used pitons to seal her in, according to Xeron's orders, leaving gaps big enough to let air into the vault for her to breathe. When she hears the PCs speaking in a "civilized" manner, she slaps the vault door and begs to be released. Someone who succeeds on a DC 22 Strength check can open the nailed vault door in 1 minute.

Tyra is quite distressed, but she's willing to run for Kingsholm if the PCs don't want to take her to the Coronet and Cabbage. She doesn't willingly look closely at any of the bodies. She's in a state of shock and denial.

If the PCs loot all the vaults, they find coins and jewelry worth a total of 100 gp. Tyra, while grateful for being rescued and wise enough not to reveal her distress at the PCs' grave robbing while she is with them, immediately tells Ian Turbrand of the looting when she arrives in Kingsholm.



One square = 5 feet

SIDE TOMB

Encounter Level 2

SETUP

When the PCs open the door, the clockwork menders remain stationary in niches on the walls (they aren't marked on the map). Make a Hide check for the constructs, opposed by the PCs' Spot checks. If the characters enter the room without spotting the clockwork menders, the constructs get a surprise round.

When the PCs can see the room, read:

Three steps lead down into what must be a private vault. A low whirring comes from somewhere within, but it fades quickly. To the east stands the statue of a man in robes, his eyes downcast. His marble hands hold an open stone book. Two plain sarcophagi are also here, their lids sealed. The stone here gleams as if it was polished yesterday, and no sign of vermin or dust is anywhere. Tiny niches are built into the masonry in a sparse but orderly pattern.

When see the clockwork menders, read:

Four tiny creatures flit into the air. They look and sound like wasps, but each has a humanlike metal face and two minuscule limbs.

4 CLOCKWORK MENDERS

CR 1/2

hp 5 each (1 HD)

LN Tiny construct (extraplanar, lawful)

Init +4; Senses darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision; Listen +1, Spot +1

Languages Abyssal, Celestial, Infernal (can't speak)

AC 18, touch 16, flat-footed 14

Immune construct immunities

Fort +0, Ref +4, Will +1

Speed 10 ft. (2 squares), fly 30 ft. (perfect); Spring Attack

Melee sting +6 (1d2–4 plus poison)

Space 2-1/2 ft.; Reach 0 ft.

Base Atk +0; Grp –12

Atk Options aligned strike (lawful), poison (DC 12, 1d4 Dex/1d4 Dex)

Special Actions repairing touch

Abilities Str 3, Dex 19, Con —, Int 4, Wis 12, Cha 10

SQ construct traits, repairing touch

Feats Skill Focus (Craft), Spring Attack^B, Weapon Finesse^B

Skills Craft (masonry) +4, Hide +12, Listen +1, Spot +1

Poison (Ex) The save DC includes a +2 racial bonus.

Repairing Touch (Su) Once per day, a clockwork mender can touch an object or construct to repair 1d8 points of damage.

TACTICS

The clockwork menders use Spring Attack to swoop in and sting, then fly away. They use the sarcophagi for cover between their attacks, and each mender uses its repairing touch on itself when it's wounded. All the clockwork menders fight until slain.

The menders leave this room only to attack those who attack them from the hall. However, if the PCs retreat, the menders shut the stone door behind them. One flies into a hole in the wall to retrieve a key. It then relocks the door and puts the key back in a hidden cache.

FEATURES OF THE AREA

The area has the following features.

Gradual Stairs: The shallow staircase descends 5 feet, but the ceiling remains level. Creatures gain a +1 bonus on melee attack rolls against foes lower than them.

Medium Statue: 5 feet thick; AC 4; hardness 8; 900 hp; break DC 45; Climb DC 15. It costs 2 squares of movement to enter the square containing the statue, and a creature can't end its movement in a statue's square without climbing onto the statue. If broken, a statue fills its square with dense rubble (see page 25).

Sarcophagi: Creatures can stand in squares that include a sarcophagus, but those squares cost 2 squares of movement to enter. A creature can jump onto a sarcophagus, gaining a +1 bonus on melee attack rolls against those on the floor. Doing so is automatic for someone who takes a move action in one of a sarcophagus's squares, or it can be done as part of a larger move action with a successful DC 24 Jump check (DC 12 with a 20-foot running start). Sarcophagi provide cover.

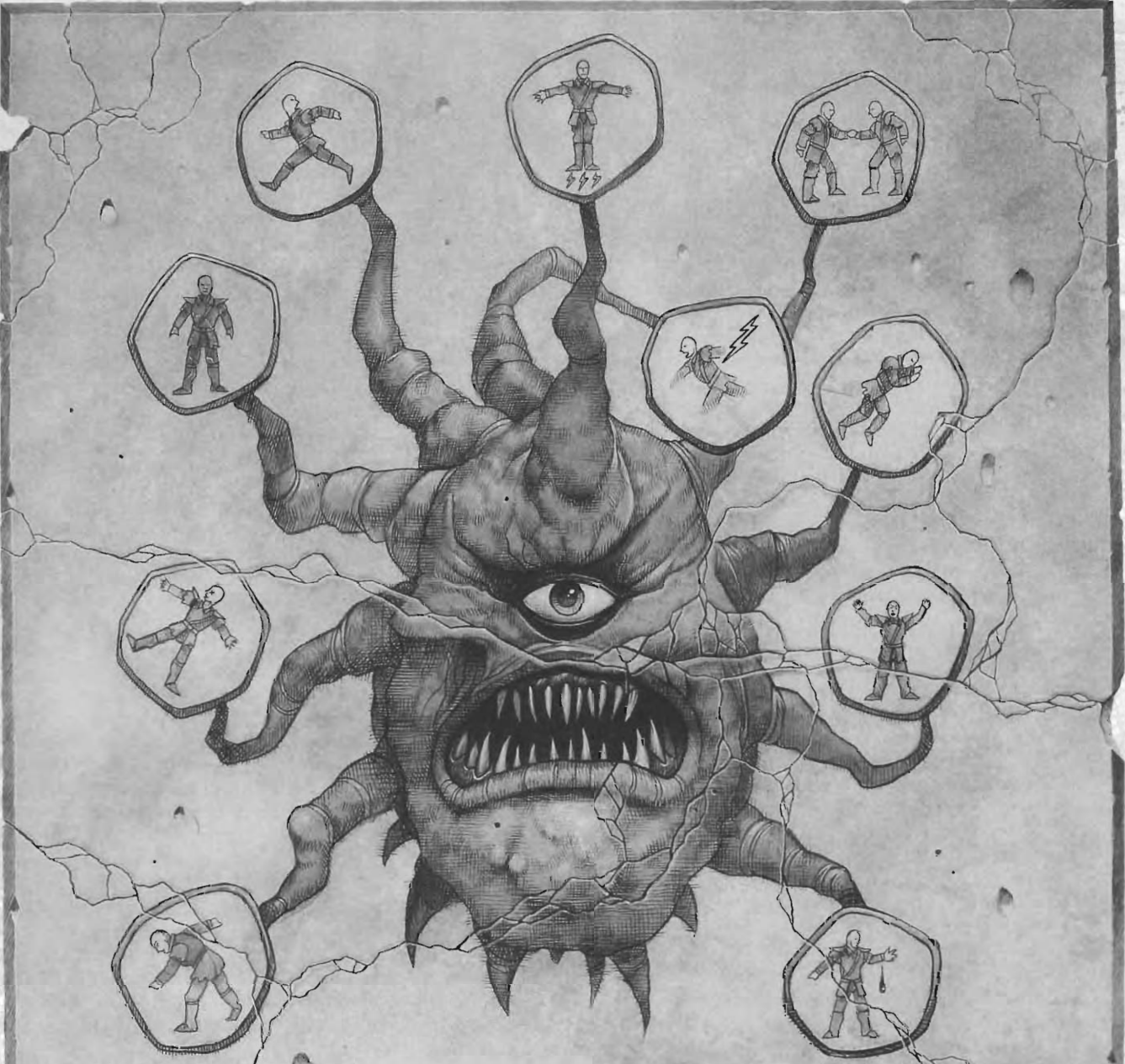
A sarcophagus's lid can be removed by someone who succeeds on a DC 25 Strength check. Inside each one is a desiccated corpse dressed in a burial robe and shrouded in linen.

Wall Niches and Holes: The wall has tiny niches where the menders can land. It also has four holes carved in it, so the menders can go out and access a buried cache of raw stone and metal for their repair work, as well as a key to the door.



One square = 5 feet

Illustration by W. England



MAGIC DIES,
 FAST MEN
 SLOW, THE
 PASSAGE YOU
 SEEK IS
 NOT BELOW.

EYE OF DEATH,
 EYE OF STONE,
 THE KEY
 TO PASSAGE
 THEY HAVEN'T
 SHOWN.

FEAR AND MIND,
 YOU CAN SAY,
 WILL MOVE YOU
 AROUND IN
 THE WRONG
 WAY.

FRIENDS ARE
 SHY, SLEEP
 IN REST,
 NEITHER POINTS
 TO THE PASSAGE
 THAT'S BEST.

ENEMY FRIEND,
 PAINFUL WOUND,
 OBLIVION AIDS
 IT IS
 RUNED.

BEHOLDER ROOM

Encounter Level 4

THE DOOR

The image graven into the door of this room is depicted on the previous page.

This image is related to solving a puzzle that awaits the characters. It shows the correct placement of all the images that describe the eye rays of a beholder, and it has five bits of verse that serve as clues about how to find the way out of the room.

The tactical map depicts a central eye ringed by a series of numbered squares in a clockwise sequence. Currently the sequence is out of order—it reads 1-2-6-3-4-5-7-8-9-10. If the PCs pick up tiles from the misnumbered squares and place them on their correct squares, they discover how to exit this room. The image on the door shows the proper order, counting clockwise from the bottom left symbol (*slow*) and assuming the disappearing man struck by a ray (*disintegrate*) as the seventh square.

SETUP

After the PCs enter the room, describe the overall area. Describe the tiles on the floor as the PCs become able to see and examine them. When a character moves adjacent to a square containing a tile, describe the appearance of that tile before continuing with other actions. If a character moves onto the eye square or a numbered square (see the map), an effect is triggered that might be harmful, helpful, or a clue to solving the puzzle.

When the PCs open the door, read:

Magical white light suddenly illuminates a wide room that's divided into four distinct areas. Each area is roughly octagonal and roughly the same size. The ceiling in each of these areas is vaulted and about 20 feet high at the apex. A stylized symbol of an eye adorns the center of the tiled floor in the central section of the room.

THE PUZZLE

Each of the numbered squares on the map contains a tile with a special symbol. At the start of the encounter, four of the tiles are not in their correct locations (the places indicated for them on the image engraved into the door).

Skill	Check DC	Hint
Knowledge (architecture)	15	This room is some sort of complex key to opening a way deeper into the mausoleum.
Knowledge (dungeoneering)	18	This puzzle seems to be modeled after a beholder and its eyes.
Knowledge (dungeoneering)	23	Tell what one of the beholder's eye rays does per successful check.
Knowledge (arcana)	15	The symbols on the floor correspond to the door engraving and its verse.
Knowledge (arcana)	15	Tell how one symbol corresponds to a verse in the puzzle per successful check.
Search	10	Four of the tiles on the floor (squares 3, 4, 5, and 6) seem as though they can be picked up and moved. The others are engraved into the floor.
Search	25	Beneath the tile in the center of the northern chamber is a secret door.

When the PCs enter, the tiles in the third, fourth, fifth, and sixth squares are misplaced (as described in Features of the Area). When a character moves into one of these squares, he can pick up the tile the square contains. Switching two tiles is accomplished by picking up one tile and putting it down in place of one of the other movable tiles.

If the characters correctly place the misplaced tiles into their proper squares, a secret door is revealed in square 7 that opens onto a descending ladder.

A character who moves into any other numbered square or the eye square is targeted by a magical effect, as described in Features of the Area.

THE CLUES

After you show the players the illustration, give them an opportunity to solve the puzzle by exploring and asking questions, allow the skill checks from the table below to acquire hints.

The Verses on the Door

The engraved symbols on the door serve as a set of clues to help the characters eliminate the tiles that do not help to get them out of the room. Beginning with the central eye, each bit of verse refers to two of the tiles and suggests that neither of those tiles is the key to discovering the exit.

For instance, the first stanza mentions the eye's *dispel magic* effect ("Magic dies") and the tile on the first square representing the *slow* ability ("Fast men slow"). The start of the fifth stanza mentions the tile on the ninth square representing the *charm monster* ability ("Enemy friend") and the tile on the tenth square representing *inflict moderate wounds* ("Painful wound").

The only tile not included in this verse structure is the one mentioned at the end of the fifth stanza ("Oblivion aids")—which represents *disintegrate* (the seventh square). This is the square where the secret exit out of this room is located.

CONCLUSION

When the PCs solve the puzzle, award them experience points as if they had overcome an encounter with a Challenge Rating of 2.

FEATURES OF THE AREA

The area has the following features.

Detect Magic: The whole room radiates a strong aura if viewed using *detect magic*, but the school can't be determined since so much magic is interacting here.

Eye—Dispel Magic: The central eye uses *dispel magic* on any creature that moves onto it. This automatically dispels any of the effects of the other tiles, presupposing the victim of another tile can move or be moved to this square. The tile also acts as a targeted dispel against any ongoing effects on any creature that touches it. Roll 1d20 + 10 against each effect on the target—the DC is the effect's caster level + 11. If the tile's check succeeds, the targeted effect ends.

1—Slow: (Bent-over Man) A creature that moves onto this tile must succeed on a DC 18 Will save or be able to take only a single move action or standard action each round for 20 rounds. Additionally, the affected creature moves at half speed and takes a -1 penalty on attack rolls, Reflex saves, and AC.

2—Finger of Death: (Sprawled Man) A creature that moves onto this tile must succeed on a DC 22 Fortitude save or be knocked unconscious for 1 hour. On a successful save, the tile deals 3d6 points of nonlethal damage instead, but the target can only take nonlethal damage equal to its hit points (and thus become staggered) by this effect.

6—Charm Person: (Men Shaking Hands) The tile in the third square should be moved to the sixth square. The tile currently in the fourth square (*flesh to stone*) should be moved to the third square.

3—Flesh to Stone: (Rigid Man) The tile in the fourth square should be moved to the third square. The tile currently in the fifth square (*fear*) should be moved to the fourth square.

4—Fear: (Running Man) The tile in the fifth square should be moved to the fourth square. The tile currently in the sixth square (*telekinesis*) should be moved to the fifth square.

5—Telekinesis: (Levitating Man) The tile in the sixth square should be moved to the fifth square. The tile currently in the third square (*charm person*) should be moved to the sixth square.

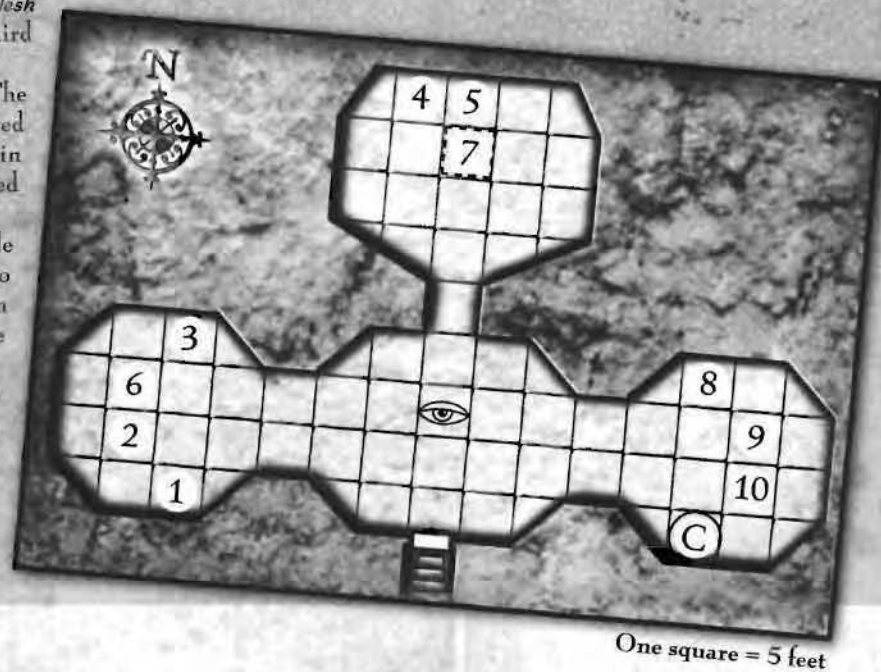
7—Disintegrate: (Disappearing Man Struck by Ray) This tile is engraved on the lid to a secret door. The door can be detected by someone who makes a successful DC 25 Search check. It can't be opened except by solving the puzzle, but the stone that makes it up can be broken—hardness 8, 25 hp, break DC 35. If the stone is broken, it reappears 1 hour later, totally intact.

If the misplaced tiles are put in their proper places, a green ray shoots from the ceiling above this square, and the floor in this location disappears for 1 hour. Anyone standing on the square numbered 7 when it disappears falls 10 feet into area 5 (1d6 points of damage). Beneath the floor, a ladder leads down into the darkness. If the PCs go down and return more than an hour later, touching the top rung of the ladder causes the beam to strike again, removing the floor for safe passage upward.

8—Sleep: (Sleeping Man) A creature that moves onto this tile must succeed on a DC 16 Will save or fall asleep for 20 minutes. Creatures that have 5 or more Hit Dice are immune.

9—Charm Monster: (Man with Arms Raised) A creature that moves onto this tile must succeed on a DC 19 Will save or attack its nearest ally. The target continues to do so for 20 rounds, until subdued or killed, or until no allies are within line of sight.

10—Inflict Moderate Wounds: (Bleeding Man) A creature that moves onto this tile takes 2d8+10 points of damage (Will DC 17 half).



STAIRCASE

Encounter Level 4

SETUP

Show the room as the PCs discover it—some of them might still be in area 4 while others begin their descent. Marching order is important. When the first PC reaches the stairs just above the second landing, allow that character a DC 10 Spot check. On a success, the PC notices the movement in the “piles of bones” on the floor, isn’t surprised when the wolf skeletons (W) attack, and is free to warn fellow party members. If the character doesn’t notice the wolf skeletons, or doesn’t warn his comrades, the skeletons gain a surprise round. A PC who saw the skeletons can act during the surprise round.

Don’t reveal the ogre zombie (O) until someone sees it. See Tactics for how to involve it in the combat.

If the PC notices the wolf skeletons moving, read:

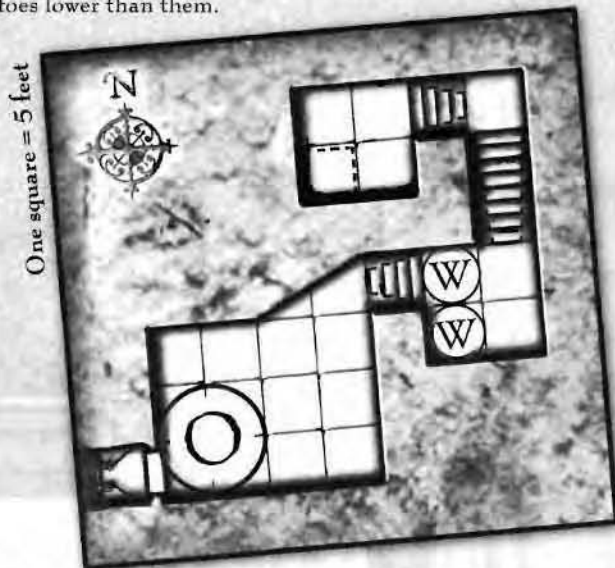
As you reach the bottom of the second staircase, the narrow passage opens into a wide landing. Two piles of bones lie near an opening to the west, where another stairway descends. As you watch, the bones shift and stir. You hear what sounds like a wolf howl, but the call seems as if it comes from far away. Two doglike skeletons rise and face you.

FEATURES OF THE AREA

The area has the following features.

Gradual Stairs: The staircases that descend 5 feet are gradual and don’t affect movement. Creatures gain a +1 bonus on melee attack rolls against foes lower than them.

Steep Stairs: The long staircase that descends 10 feet is steep. It takes 2 squares of movement to negotiate each square. Creatures running or charging down steep stairs must succeed on a DC 10 Balance check, ending their movement 1d2×5 feet later if they fail. Those who fail by 5 or more fall prone and take 1d6 points of damage at the end of that movement. The DC of Tumble checks increases by 5. Creatures gain a +1 bonus on melee attack rolls against foes lower than them.



2 WOLF SKELETONS

CR 1

hp 13 each (2 HD); DR 5/bludgeoning
NE Medium undead

Init +7; Senses darkvision 60 ft.; Listen +0, Spot +0

Languages understands creator's orders

AC 15, touch 13, flat-footed 12

Immune cold, undead immunities

Fort +0, Ref +3, Will +3

Speed 50 ft. (10 squares)

Melee bite +2 (1d6+1)

Base Atk +1; Grp +2

Abilities Str 13, Dex 17, Con —, Int —, Wis 10, Cha 1

SQ undead traits

Feats Improved Initiative

Skills Listen +0, Spot +0

If the PC doesn't notice the wolf skeletons, read:

A distant, otherworldly howl floats through the cool air. You hear a rattling noise and look up to see two skeletal wolves coming toward you.

TACTICS

The wolf skeletons move to attack the closest PC while that character is still on the stairs. They were ordered to keep intruders on the stairs and take them out one at a time.

When the wolf skeletons attack, the ogre zombie is alerted. It remains at the room's lowest landing with a readied action. As soon as a PC steps onto the lowest stairs in this area, the ogre zombie charges and uses its reach to slam its opponent. A character on the stairs sees the ogre zombie before it attacks by making a successful DC 5 Spot check. If it would have to squeeze up the stairs to reach its assailants, the ogre zombie instead retreats to its starting position and readies another charge.

OGRE ZOMBIE

CR 3

hp 55 (8 HD); DR 5/slashing

NE Large undead

Init -2; Senses darkvision 60 ft.; Listen +0, Spot +0

Languages understands creator's orders

AC 15, touch 7, flat-footed 15

Immune undead immunities

Fort +2, Ref +0, Will +6

Speed 40 ft. (8 squares, can't run)

Melee slam +9 (1d8+9)

Space 10 ft.; Reach 10 ft.

Base Atk +4; Grp +14

Abilities Str 23, Dex 6, Con —, Int —, Wis 10, Cha 1

SQ single actions only, undead traits

Feats Toughness

Skills Listen +0, Spot +0

Single Actions Only (Ex) Zombies can perform only a single move action or standard action per round. A zombie can move up to its speed and attack in the same round if charging.

SABOTAGED BRIDGE

Encounter Level 3

SETUP

Have the players arrange the miniatures representing their characters in the order they plan to cross the bridge. It's important to know who's where when the bridge falls. A flotsam ooze (F) is currently in the pool at the crevice's bottom, having arrived through narrow cracks in the waterway. It gets a Hide check because of its location in the water, gaining a surprise round if the PCs don't see it before it attacks.

SABOTAGED BRIDGE

From a distance, the bridge appears aged but sturdy and made to last. It is unstable, however, and it creaks loudly while bearing weight.

A PC can safely move across the bridge by holding on with both hands and moving at half speed. Otherwise, crossing the bridge requires a Balance check that has a DC of 5 per hand not used, and a penalty of -5 for moving at full speed. Failure by 1 to 4 means no progress, but failure

by 5 or more means the character slips and falls 10 feet to the pool at the crevice's bottom (1d6 points of damage; see Pool in Features of the Area).

When four PCs are on the bridge, or when one of them reaches the square marked on the tactical map, the bridge's support ropes break on the far side. A successful DC 20 Spot check (+1 to the DC per 10 feet away) allows a PC to see the weakened ropes fraying and pulling apart 1 round before the bridge breaks. Those who fail to escape the bridge before it breaks are dumped into the crevice (1d6 points of damage).

TACTICS

The flotsam ooze attacks and grapples the first PC it reaches. It then pulls the victim underwater and tries to grapple its victim into unconsciousness or drown that character. None of the fissures in the crevice are big enough to drag even a Tiny creature through, so the ooze lets go of its prey and retreats when reduced to 5 or fewer hit points.

CONCLUSION

The Encounter Level is higher than the monster's Challenge Rating because the conditions favor the ooze. Award PCs who defeat or cleverly outmaneuver the ooze experience points as if they overcame a CR 3 monster.

FLOTSAM OOZE

CR 2

hp 17 (2 HD)

N Medium ooze (aquatic)

Init +0; Senses blind, blindsight 60 ft.; Listen -5

AC 13, touch 10, flat-footed 13; transparent

Immune ooze immunities

Fort +3, Ref +0, Will -5

Speed 10 ft. (2 squares), swim 30 ft.

Melee slam +3 (1d6+3)

Base Atk +1; Grp +7

Atk Options adhesive, improved grab

Abilities Str 14, Dex 10, Con 17, Int —, Wis 1, Cha 1

SQ amphibious, ooze traits

Feats —

Skills Hide +8, Listen -5, Swim +10

Transparent (Ex) A flotsam ooze is transparent in water, granting it total concealment (50% miss chance).

Adhesive (Ex) A flotsam ooze exudes a thick slime that acts as an adhesive. It gains a +4 bonus on grapple checks and opposed attack rolls to disarm an opponent.

Strong soap or lye dissolves the adhesive, and a flotsam ooze can dissolve its adhesive at will. The substance breaks down 5 rounds after the creature dies.

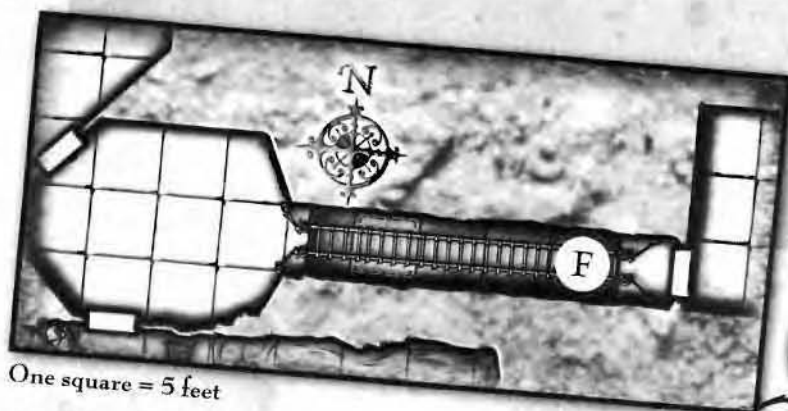
Improved Grab (Ex) To use this ability, a flotsam ooze must hit an opponent of up to Large size with a slam attack. It can then attempt to start a grapple as a free action without provoking attacks of opportunity.

FEATURES OF THE AREA

The area has the following features.

Walls: The walls of the pit are rough but slick (Climb DC 20). Bridge supports on either side make fine spots for attaching a grappling hook.

Pool: The pool is 4 feet deep. It costs Medium or larger creatures 4 squares of movement to move through a square in the pool, or they can swim if they wish. Small or smaller creatures must swim (Swim DC 10). Water in the pool provides no defense against attacks from the flotsam ooze, and concealment is all the water provides to the ooze. The pool imposes a -2 circumstance penalty on Move Silently checks. Tumbling is impossible within the pool.



BROKEN CHAMBER

Encounter Level 2

SETUP

The choker (C) sneaks down to where it can see into the room, then it stealthily moves into position to attack a target that appears weak. Pit the choker's Hide and Move Silently checks against the PCs' Spot and Listen checks as the choker moves into position. If the characters don't become aware of the aberration, it gets a surprise round.

When the PCs see the choker, read:

From the shadows, spindly creature snarls through its oversized sharp teeth. It resembles a hairless, carnivorous chimp that has tentaclelike limbs, each ending in spiny, handlike appendages.

FEATURES OF THE AREA

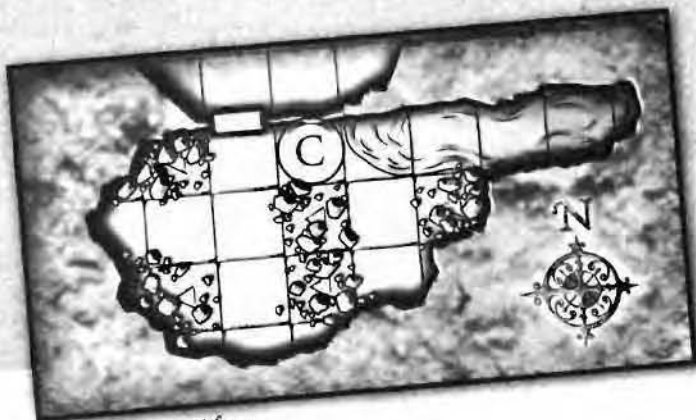
The area has the following features.

Ceiling: The ceiling is 10 feet high, but it is so rough that someone can climb on it (Climb DC 25).

Dense Rubble: Squares containing dense rubble cost 2 squares of movement to enter. Dense rubble increases the DC of Balance and Tumble checks by 5, and it imposes a -2 penalty on Move Silently checks. Running or charging through dense rubble is impossible.

Pool: The pool is about 1 foot deep. It costs 2 squares of movement to enter a square in the pool. The DC of Tumble checks in such squares increases by 2.

Ladder and Shaft: A rope ladder ascends into a shaft in the ceiling. See the Climb skill (PH 69) for rules on fighting while climbing. Directly above the rope ladder, this shaft is 5 feet wide and roughly dug. A creature within the shaft has cover from those not in the ladder's square.



One square = 5 feet

CHOKER

CR 2

hp 16 (3 HD)

NE Medium aberration

Init +6; Senses darkvision 60 ft.; Listen +1, Spot +1

Languages Undercommon

AC 17, touch 13, flat-footed 15

Fort +2, Ref +5, Will +4

Speed 20 ft. (4 squares), climb 10 ft.

Melee 2 tentacles +6 each (1d3+3)

Base Atk +2; Grp +5

Atk Options constrict 1d3+3, improved grab

Abilities Str 16, Dex 14, Con 13, Int 4, Wis 13, Cha 7

SQ quickness

Feats Improved Initiative^a, Lightning Reflexes, Stealthy

Skills Climb +13, Hide +10, Listen +1, Move Silently +6, Spot +1

Constrict (Ex) A choker deals 1d3+3 points of damage with a successful grapple check, in addition to damage from its tentacle attack. Because a choker seizes its victim by the neck, a creature in its grasp cannot speak or cast spells with verbal components.

Improved Grab (Ex) To use this ability, a choker must hit an opponent of up to Large size with a tentacle attack. It can then attempt to start a grapple as a free action without provoking attacks of opportunity. If it wins the grapple check, it establishes a hold and can constrict.

Quickness (Su) A choker can take an extra standard action or move action each round.

NEGOTIATION

The choker has been here a while, and it's bored and hungry. If the PCs spot it before it attacks, someone who speaks Undercommon can try to talk to the creature.

Starting Attitude: Unfriendly.

Modifiers: PCs offer food (+2); PCs offer shiny baubles (+2); PCs threaten the choker (-2).

If Unfriendly or Hostile (14 or lower): Snarls and attacks.

If Indifferent (15–24): Takes any bribe and leaves the PCs alone. It doesn't talk further, instead climbing out of the shaft to hide at the camp in area 8 and enjoy any loot it acquired.

If Friendly (25 or higher): Says, "Me big guard. Protect place like Xeron said." The choker knows when the robbers arrived and that they left a camp on the surface. It expects Xeron, whom it can otherwise identify only as "the master," to return. The choker knows Xeron has a "bunch of goblinses" with him, as well as some "deaders" (undead), a human man, and a creature it calls "pretty" (referring to Leera, whom the PCs meet in area 16). It forgets to mention the runehound on the surface.

TACTICS

The choker stays on the ceiling, trying to remain out of the PCs' reach. It uses the shaft for cover, and retreats up the shaft if it falls to 5 or fewer hit points.

FORGOTTEN KING'S STATUE

Encounter Level 3

SETUP

When the PCs emerge on the surface, the runehound (R) guarding the clearing spots them and rushes to attack.

When the PCs see the runehound, read:

A hairless, houndlike creature races from the undergrowth to the north, its pale skin covered in runic patterns and glistening. Sprouting from the center of the creature's back is a serpentine neck supporting an eyeless head that is mostly a toothy maw too big for the creature's body. Its squealing turns to a gurgle as it begins to fill its maw with green bile.

TACTICS

The runehound spews goo at the farthest foe. It chases, then backs up as necessary to keep its reach advantage. When it can do so again, it spews goo or acid. It fights until slain.

RUNEHOUND

CR 3

hp 37 (5 HD); fast healing 3; DR 5/silver
NE Medium aberration

Init +2; Senses blind, blindsight 500 ft.; Listen +5

Languages understands Undercommon

AC 16, touch 12, flat-footed 14; can't be flanked

Fort +4, Ref +5, Will +5

Speed 50 ft. (10 squares)

Melee bite +8 (2d6+7)

Ranged vile spew +5; see text

Space 5 ft.; Reach 10 ft.

Base Atk +3; Grp +8

Atk Options Combat Reflexes

Abilities Str 20, Dex 14, Con 17, Int 5, Wis 12, Cha 8

Feats Combat Reflexes, Lightning Reflexes, Track^B

Skills Hide +5, Listen +5, Move Silently +3, Survival +1,
Swim +5

Vile Spew (Ex) Once every 1d4 rounds as a standard action, a runehound can spit either acid or glutinous goo to a range of 100 feet, targeting a single opponent and making a ranged touch attack to hit. The acid deals 5d6 points of acid damage (Reflex DC 15 half), while the goo acts as a *web* spell that affects one creature (Reflex DC 15 negates).

FEATURES OF THE AREA

The area has the following features.

Ladder and Shaft: The rope ladder is connected to a pole, and it descends into a shaft in the ground. A creature within

the shaft has cover. Someone who falls into the shaft plummets 200 feet (20d6 points of damage), but the narrow space and the rope ladder mean a successful DC 20 Climb check is sufficient for a falling character to catch himself.

Earth Pile: It costs 2 squares of movement to enter a square filled with debris from the digging. This shifting earth increases the DC of Balance and Tumble checks by 5, and it imposes a -2 penalty on Move Silently checks. Running or charging through the pile is impossible.

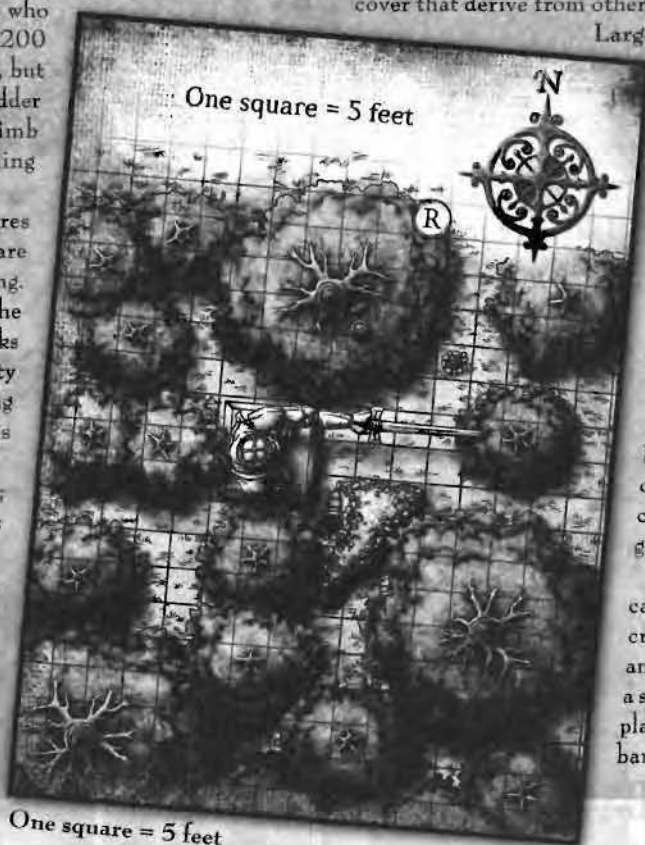
Huge Statue: 15 feet thick; AC 3; hardness 8; 2,700 hp; break DC 85; Climb DC 15. It costs 2 squares of movement to enter a square containing a statue, and a creature can't end its movement in the statue's square without climbing onto the statue. The statue provides cover.

Trees: 2 feet thick; AC 4; hardness 5; 200 hp; break DC 25; Climb DC 15. A creature standing in the same square as a tree gains a +2 bonus to Armor Class and a +1 bonus on Reflex saves (these bonuses don't stack with bonuses for cover that derive from other sources).

Large Trees: 10 feet thick; AC 3; hardness 5; 900 hp; break DC 45, Climb DC 15. These trees have trunks that take up 4 squares. They provide cover.

Light Undergrowth: All squares covered by the tree canopy also have light undergrowth. A square covered with light undergrowth costs 2 squares of movement to enter and provides concealment. Undergrowth increases the DC of Tumble and Move Silently checks by 2. A creature with a slashing weapon can clear a square of light undergrowth with a full-round action.

Campsite: The remains of a campsite include a fire pit, a cracked chest, a pile of meat, and an open barrel. The chest contains a suit of Medium masterwork full plate armor. Rainwater fills the barrel.



CENTRAL HUB

Encounter Level 4

SETUP

Xeron stationed two varags, Sargus (S) and Krusis (K), a mated pair, in this room as guards. He wanted to give the surly and charismatic Sargus something to do away from the main group, and he knew Sargus would be more content guarding the area with his mate. Xeron also knew the two couldn't be relied upon to remain alert at all times, so he had Krootad animate a dead varag as a zombie (Z). Xeron then proceeded, locking the door to the west to make sure the varags didn't follow him until he was ready to leave.

When the PCs arrive, the zombie moves to attack them, but the varags are asleep. The varags awaken immediately when the fight starts. They enter the battle 2 rounds later.

When the zombie attacks, read:

A hairy, hunched humanoid that has a face like that of a feral hobgoblin with horns that curve away from its skull lurches around the corner of a nearby wall. It would easily stand 7 feet tall if it weren't traveling in an apelike manner, using its arms for additional support. Despite its dreadful pallor and oozing wounds, it moves with amazing speed. It wears dark leather studded with black iron, and it raises a scimitar in one of its gnarled hands as it gurgles and charges.

When the varags attack, read:

Living versions of the undead creature you've been fighting leap into the fray. One of the horned creatures is thickly muscled and bears two swords, one shorter than the other. The second creature is more slender and wields only one curved blade. The larger one barks, "Varg yom!" (That's Goblin for "Flank 'em!")

TACTICS

The zombie charges intruders, attacking the nearest foe until that opponent falls.

Once the varags enter combat, they use Spring Attack to control the battle, maneuvering into flanking positions whenever possible and using the support walls to foil pursuit. Sargus uses his Tumble skill to avoid attacks of opportunity as he tries to flank, but he doesn't risk tumbling through an opponent's space. If the zombie goes down, the varags synchronize their attacks, one moving up to a PC and readying an action to attack when the other varag moves in on the other side. That way, both varags achieve flanking bonuses and Sargus can deal sneak attack damage.

VARAG ZOMBIE

CR 2

hp 42 (6 HD); DR 5/slashing
NE Medium undead (goblinoid)
Init +1; Senses darkvision 60 ft.; Listen +0, Spot +0
Languages understands Sargus's orders

AC 19, touch 11, flat-footed 18

Immune undead immunities

Fort +2, Ref +3, Will +5

Speed 60 ft. (12 squares, can't run)

Melee mwk scimitar +7 (1d6+3/18–20)

Base Atk +3; Grp +6

Abilities Str 17, Dex 13, Con —, Int —, Wis 10, Cha 1

SQ single actions only, undead traits

Feats Toughness

Skills Listen +0, Spot +0

Possessions masterwork studded leather, masterwork scimitar

Single Actions Only (Ex) Zombies can perform only a single move action or standard action per round. A zombie can move up to its speed and attack in the same round if charging.

SARGUS

CR 2

hp 27 (4 HD)

Male varag rogue 1

CE Medium humanoid (goblinoid)

Init +6; Senses darkvision 60 ft., scent; Listen +1, Spot +0

Languages Goblin

AC 22, touch 15, flat-footed 17

Fort +3, Ref +10, Will +0

Speed 60 ft. (12 squares); Run, Spring Attack

Melee mwk scimitar +5 (1d6+4/18–20) and

mwk short sword +5 (1d6+2/19–20) or

Melee mwk scimitar +7 (1d6+4/18–20)

Ranged mwk composite shortbow +8 (1d6+4/x3)

Base Atk +2; Grp +6

Atk Options sneak attack +1d6

Combat Gear *potion of cure moderate wounds*

Abilities Str 18, Dex 20, Con 15, Int 6, Wis 8, Cha 12

Feats Improved Initiative, Run^B, Spring Attack^B, Two-Weapon Fighting

Skills Balance +7, Jump +18, Listen +1, Move Silently +16*,

Spot +0, Survival +0 (+4 when tracking by scent),

Tumble +10

*A varag can always choose to take 10 on a Move Silently check, even if rushed or threatened.

Possessions combat gear plus +1 studded leather, masterwork scimitar, masterwork short sword, masterwork composite shortbow (+4 Str bonus) with 14 arrows, 42 gp

KRUSIS

CR 1

hp 16 (3 HD)
 Female varag
 CE Medium humanoid (goblinoid)
Init +6; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., scent; Listen +0, Spot +0
Languages Goblin

AC 18, touch 12, flat-footed 16
Fort +2, **Ref** +5, **Will** +1

Speed 60 ft. (12 squares); Run, Spring Attack
Melee mwk scimitar +6 (1d6+2/18–20)
Ranged shortbow +4 (1d6/x3)

Base Atk +2; **Grp** +4
Combat Gear 2 *potions of cure light wounds*
Abilities Str 15, Dex 15, Con 13, Int 6, Wis 10, Cha 10
Feats Improved Initiative, Run^B, Spring Attack^B, Weapon Focus (scimitar)
Skills Jump +17, Listen +0, Move Silently +13*, Spot +0, Survival +0 (+4 when tracking by scent)
 *A varag can always choose to take 10 on Move Silently checks, even if rushed or threatened.
Possessions combat gear plus masterwork studded leather, masterwork scimitar, shortbow with 12 arrows, 15 gp

FEATURES OF THE AREA

The area has the following features.

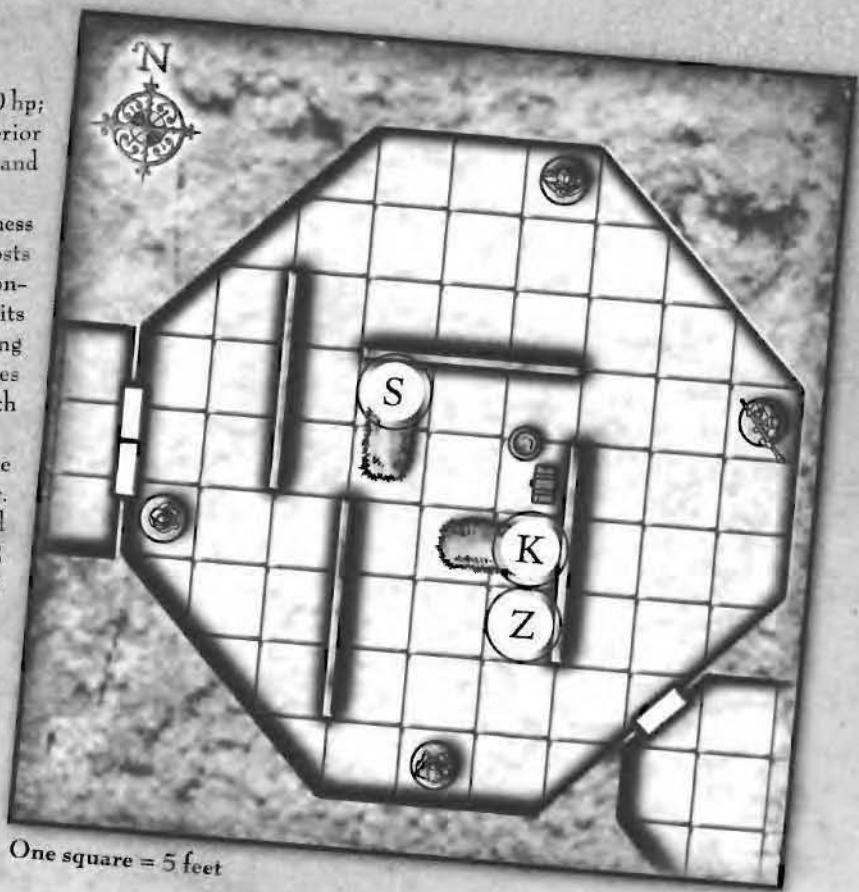
Inner Walls: 1 foot thick; hardness 8; 90 hp; break DC 35; Climb DC 20. These superior masonry walls stretch from floor to ceiling and provide structural support to the room.

Medium Statues: 6 feet thick; AC 4; hardness 8; 900 hp; break DC 45; Climb DC 15. It costs 2 squares of movement to enter a square containing a statue, and a creature can't end its movement in a statue's square without climbing onto the statue. A Medium statue provides cover. If broken, a statue fills its square with dense rubble (see below).

Dense Rubble: Squares containing dense rubble cost 2 squares of movement to enter. Dense rubble increases the DC of Balance and Tumble checks by 5, and it imposes a –2 penalty on Move Silently checks. Running or charging through dense rubble is impossible.

Varag Camp: The varag camp contains two fur pallets, a water barrel half full of water, and a chest. Inside the chest are a few pounds of preserved meat.

Stone Double Doors: The western double doors are locked (Open Lock DC 25 to open).



CANAL

Encounter Level 4

SETUP

When the PCs try to cross the bridge in the room, the wounded lesser water weird (W) in the water rises and warns them. It is invisible until it rises, and it emerges adjacent to the bridge.

When the lesser water weird rises, read:

A graceful serpent of clear water rises from the canal, making a sound that resembles bubbling speech. It seems to say, "More intruders. Leave this place the way you came, or face the price of your folly, as have those before you."

NEGOTIATION

The water weird doesn't immediately attack, and it's willing to listen to the PCs. It understands all languages.

Starting Attitude: Unfriendly.

Modifiers: PCs identify the tomb robbers as enemies (+2); PCs threaten the weird (-4).

If Hostile (4 or lower): Attacks.

If Unfriendly (5-14): Says, "Leave now, to the east, and don't return. This is a place of rest." It prevents the PCs from heading north if it can.

If Indifferent (15-24): Says, "If you pursue those who have thwarted me, good luck on your quest. Leave me." The weird retreats into the water and allows the PCs to go wherever they please.

If Friendly (25 or higher): As indifferent, but the weird is willing to answer questions about itself and the tomb robbers. A "wizard of old" summoned the weird here and bound it to guard the bridge. It can describe Xeron as an arcane spellcaster, and it knows a hobgoblin cleric, several "mongrels" (the weird gestures to the dead varags—it counts Garjuk the wererat among these), and numerous other humanoids round out Xeron's group.

TACTICS

The weird can't leave the water of the canal. It begins the fight by retreating to a position where it can't easily be caught in melee and using its water blast. It grapples those who do engage it in melee, dragging heavily armored foes into the canal, where the weird hopes they won't be able to swim. If that maneuver is successful, the weird then grapples other melee combatants, knowing that the grappled foe's comrades might strike their friend if they attack the weird.

LESSER WATER WEIRD

CR 5

hp 23 (36 full normal; 8 HD)

N Medium elemental (extraplanar, water)

Init +8; Senses darkvision 60 ft.; Listen +8, Spot +8

Languages can communicate with any creature that has a language

AC 18, touch 14, flat-footed 14; Dodge, Mobility

Fort +6, Ref +6, Will +4

Speed swim 90 ft. (18 squares)

Melee slam +7 (1d4+1 plus 1d6 cold)

Ranged water blast +10 (2d6 cold)

Base Atk +6; Grp +7

Atk Options constrict 1d4+1, improved grab, suffocate

Special Actions elemental command

Abilities Str 12, Dex 19, Con 11, Int 12, Wis 15, Cha 11

SQ elemental invisibility

Feats Dodge, Improved Initiative, Mobility

Skills Hide +15, Listen +8, Move Silently +14, Spot +8, Swim +9

Water Blast (Ex) A lesser water weird can blast at a range of 120 feet, with a 30-foot range increment.

Constrict (Ex) A lesser water weird deals 1d4+1 points of damage with a successful grapple check, in addition to damage from its slam attack.

Elemental Command (Su) If a lesser water weird hits a water elemental with a slam attack, that elemental must make a DC 14 Will save or succumb to the weird's control. Controlled elementals respond explicitly to the weird's mental commands. The weird can control any number of elementals in this way, and controlled elementals serve the weird for 1 day, until dismissed, until the weird dies, or until the duration of the effect that summoned them expires.

Improved Grab (Ex) To use this ability, a lesser water weird must hit an opponent of up to Large size with a slam attack. It can then attempt to start a grapple as a free action without provoking attacks of opportunity. If it wins the grapple check, it establishes a hold and can constrict and suffocate.

Suffocate (Su) While being grappled by a lesser water weird, a creature is deprived of air and must succeed on a DC 8 Constitution check each round. The DC increases by 1 each subsequent round. A creature that fails the check begins to suffocate. In the first round after a failed check, the victim falls unconscious (0 hit points). In the following round, the victim drops to -1 hit points and is dying. In the third round, the victim suffocates and dies.

Elemental Invisibility (Ex) A lesser water weird that is fully submerged in water can become invisible as a full-round action. *True seeing* reveals a weird rendered invisible in this way.

After the fight begins, the weird warns its enemies of the condition of a PC it's suffocating. It might listen to entreaties for a truce. A successful DC 25 Diplomacy check can accomplish this, but the weird attacks the characters without mercy when they next intrude on this chamber. The lesser water weird fights to the death.

CONCLUSION

Since the lesser water weird is wounded, it's worth experience points for a CR 4 creature to a party that defeats it. Award the same amount if the PCs deal with the weird peacefully.

FEATURES OF THE AREA

The area has the following features.

Balcony: The balcony is 15 feet off the floor of the main room, and a fall from it deals 1d6 points of damage. The 3-foot-high wall on the southern edge of the balcony provides cover to anyone standing on the balcony.

Steep Stairs: It takes 2 squares of movement to enter each square. Creatures running or charging down steep stairs must succeed on a DC 10 Balance check, ending their movement 1d2x5 feet later if they fail. Those who fail by 5 or more fall prone and take 1d6 points of damage at the end of that movement. The DC of Tumble checks increases by 5. Creatures gain a +1 bonus on melee attack rolls against foes lower than them.

Bridge and Floor: The stone floor is covered with patches of damp fungus, making it slick. The slickness adds 2 to the DC of Balance and Tumble checks. Any creature attempting to run or charge in the room must succeed on a DC 10 Balance check or be unable to do so, acting normally otherwise.

A successful DC 10 Search check is sufficient to notice the slime has been disturbed in areas, and the PCs can discover tracks in the slime in these areas. A tracker can attempt a DC 15 Survival check, success revealing that a good number of humanoids came through this chamber from east to west, stopping to fight something that came out of the canal. The party that made the tracks apparently fled the room.

Canal: The clean water of the canal flows briskly from east to west. It's 10 feet deep. Those in the canal must succeed on a DC 15 Swim check to keep from being swept eastward, and failing by 5 or more means that PC goes under (see Water action in encounter 15, page xx, or DMG 93). A steel grate keeps anything of Tiny or larger size from being



One square = 5 feet

swept out of the room, and a similar grate allows water to flow in from the east. The water flows into a natural passage to the west, eventually spilling into the chasm at area 13.

Medium Statues: 5 feet thick; AC 4; hardness 8; 900 hp; break DC 45; Climb DC 15. It costs 2 squares of movement to enter a square containing a statue, and a creature can't end its movement in a statue's square without climbing onto the statue. A Medium statue provides cover. If broken, a statue fills its square with dense rubble (see below).

Dense Rubble: Squares containing dense rubble cost 2 squares of movement to enter. Dense rubble increases the DC of Balance and Tumble checks by 5, and it imposes a -2 penalty on Move Silently checks. Running or charging through dense rubble is impossible.

Corpses: Each of these corpses appears to be a recently deceased varag, and someone who makes a successful DC 15 Heal check can tell they died of hypothermia. Each varag has masterwork studded leather, a masterwork scimitar, a shortbow, 2d6 arrows, and a satchel containing undercooked meat, a *potion of cure light wounds*, and jewelry looted from the mausoleum (200 gp total). If the PCs return the mundane jewelry to the town, Ian Turbrand rewards them with 400 gp—otherwise, the jewelry can be sold somewhere besides Kingsholm (the townsfolk eventually recognize heirlooms sold to them) for half its value.

HALL OF THE HONORED

Encounter Level 4

SETUP

Have the players arrange their miniatures in the hallway outside the room to the southwest. As the PCs descend into the chamber, Garjuk (G) can make Listen checks against their Move Silently checks or a flat DC of 5. If Garjuk hears something, he hides in the corner indicated. Otherwise, he's standing in front of the vault door in this room.

When the PCs can see the western chamber, read:

You enter a small, clean chamber that has only two distinct features. A statue depicting an old man in robes holding an open book stands in the southeastern corner, just beyond a flat stone door in the south wall.

When Garjuk attacks, read:

A tall, ratlike humanoid dressed in black leather studded with dark iron leaps from the shadows, a black cloak and long hair trailing behind. Its rapier and prominent fangs flash as it rushes in.

TACTICS

Garjuk remains in hybrid form to fight the PCs. If he's hiding, he sneak attacks the first PC he can. He uses his Tumble skill to maneuver around the battlefield, trying to gain high ground on the PCs. Using Improved Feint, he makes Bluff checks as move actions to set up further sneak attacks. Combat Expertise is a good way for Garjuk to add his base attack bonus to his AC if he needs to.

If Garjuk begins his action with 10 or fewer hit points, he takes a withdraw action and attempts to run for the door. (He moves up to double his speed as a full-round action. The square he starts out in is not considered threatened by opponents he can see.) He doesn't do this if he faces the possibility of other attacks of opportunity, but if he makes it, he leaves the complex through the shaft in area 7. Garjuk's dire rat form is useful for evading pursuit, since he can climb into places PCs can't reach easily, but Garjuk avoids this form unless he thinks he's going to die otherwise. He must drop his armor if changes into a dire rat.

If he stands a poor chance of escaping, Garjuk tries to surrender.

GARJUK

CR 4

hp 26 (3 HD); DR 10/silver

Male wererat (hobgoblin) rogue 2

LE Medium humanoid (goblinoid, shapeshifter)

Init +6; Senses darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision, scent; Listen +8, Spot +8

Languages Common, Goblin, Yuan-Ti

AC 21, touch 16, flat-footed 15

Resist evasion

Fort +7, Ref +12, Will +6

Speed 30 ft. (6 squares)

Melee mwk rapier +8 (1d6+1/18–20) and bite +1 (1d6 plus disease)

Ranged mwk light crossbow +8 (1d8/19–20)

Base Atk +1; Grp +2

Atk Options curse of lycanthropy, sneak attack +1d6

Abilities Str 12, Dex 23, Con 18, Int 13, Wis 12, Cha 8

SQ alternate form, rat empathy, trapfinding

Feats Alertness, Combat Expertise, Improved Feint, Iron Will[®], Weapon Finesse[®]

Skills Balance +8, Bluff +4, Climb +4, Disable Device +6, Hide +11, Jump +3, Listen +8, Move Silently +11, Open Locks +11 (+13 with tools), Sense Motive +6, Spot +8, Swim +9, Tumble +11

Possessions masterwork studded leather, masterwork rapier, masterwork light crossbow with 6 bolts and 5 silver bolts, *cloak of resistance* +1, satchel (*elixir of vision*), masterwork thieves' tools, food, key to area 12), waterskin

Alternate Form (Su) Garjuk can assume the form of a hobgoblin, a bipedal ratlike human, or a dire rat.

Disease (Ex) Filth fever; bite, Fortitude DC 15, incubation period 1d3 days, damage 1d3 Dex and 1d3 Con.

Curse of Lycanthropy (Su) Any humanoid or giant hit by a wererat's bite attack in animal or hybrid form must succeed on a Fortitude save (DC 15) or contract lycanthropy.

Rat Empathy (Ex) Communicate with rats and dire rats, and +4 racial bonus on Charisma-based checks against rats and dire rats.

When in dire rat form, Garjuk has the following changed statistics:

AC 19, touch 17, flat-footed 13

Speed 40 ft. (8 squares), climb 20 ft.

Melee bite +8 (1d6+1 plus disease)

Ranged —

Grp -2

Skills Climb +12, Hide +15, Jump +7

In this form, Garjuk can take 10 on Climb checks even if rushed or threatened.

DEVELOPMENT

Garjuk feels no loyalty to Xeron or the mission, and he spills the beans if he surrenders and he's asked. Use this section to handle the negotiations with a captured Garjuk.

Starting Attitude: Unfriendly.

Modifiers: PCs promise to let Garjuk go after questioning him (+2); PCs abuse Garjuk (-2).

If Hostile (4 or lower): Tries to flee.

If Unfriendly (5-14): Tells the PCs how the tomb robbers got into the complex through the excavation and area 7. "The two leaders are Xeron and Krootad—one's a human sorcerer and the other's a hobgoblin priest. The rest of the crew are—or were—varags, except for a half-elf woman, a human man, three hobgoblin men, a little goblin, and a half-ling mage. I wasn't hired on till after the diggin' was done.

"I turned back after the rest of the crew entered a magic maze that's a ways ahead. Don't know much more than that."

FEATURES OF THE AREA

The area has the following features.

Medium Statues: 5 feet thick; AC 4; hardness 8; 900 hp; break DC 45; Climb DC 15. It costs 2 squares of movement to enter a square containing a statue, and a creature can't end its movement in a statue's square without climbing onto the statue. If broken, a statue fills its square with dense rubble (see below).

Dense Rubble: Squares containing dense rubble cost 2 squares of movement to enter. Dense rubble increases the DC of Balance and Tumble checks by 5, and it imposes a -2 penalty on Move Silently checks. Running or charging through dense rubble is impossible.

Gradual Stairs: The stairs down into the western chamber are shallow and easy to maneuver on. Creatures gain a +1 bonus on melee attack rolls against foes lower than them.

Reinforced Vault Door: 1 foot thick; hardness 8; hp 200; break DC 30. The door is locked with a special lock as described below, as well as a permanent *arcane lock* spell. If viewed using *detect magic*, the door radiates a moderate aura (DC 16 Spellcraft check to determine the school is abjuration).

Statue of the Old Man: This Medium statue radiates a moderate aura if viewed using *detect magic* (DC 20 Spellcraft check to determine the school is illusion). The book's stone pages are blank if scrutinized by a non-good character who fails a DC 17 Will save. A good character, or a character who uses *read magic*, sees inscribed on the statue's book in Common:

*Two as one can win the day,
The one with two shows the way,
Brave the blade to break the seal,
Twist the knife, it will reveal.*

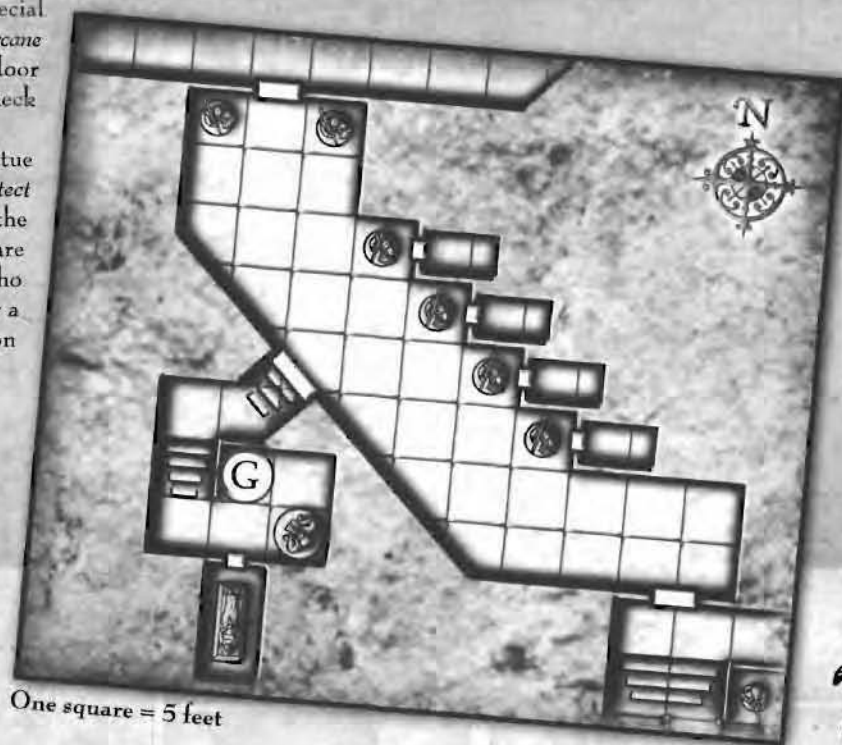
If Indifferent (15-24): Says, "Xeron's been riding us hard. He's looking for something specific, and he suspects he's being followed. Guess he was right.

"Krootad can animate the dead. He camped in a room ahead to animate some more skeletons. In fact, he should be there now."

If Friendly (25 or higher): Identifies Xeron as a yuan-ti. Says, "Listen, if you need a place to rest, we had a camp on the surface. If you'll let me go, I'll call off the runehound Xeron left to guard the place." If the PCs aren't interested in that offer, Garjuk offers to help them get the drop on Krootad in area 12. He does so by announcing his presence to Krootad, allowing the PCs a surprise round when they appear with Garjuk. Then Garjuk flees at the first opportunity.

Garjuk failed the save and couldn't read the riddle. "Two as one" refers to the twin elf statues. The "one with two" indicates the twin holding the rapier and dagger. A character who twists the dagger in that twin's hand unlocks the vault in this room and reveals a sarcophagus.

Sarcophagus: The sarcophagus lid looks like a sleeping woman, and it opens easily on a swivel. Inside are items once precious to the four heroes depicted by the statues outside in the hallway—an *ephod of authority* (see sidebar, page xx), a pair of *bracers of armor +1*, a *quiver of Ehlonna*, and a *+1 rapier*. The sarcophagus also contains a scroll in a thick leather case. The scroll is written in Draconic and reads, "We who rest still long to serve. If greed moved this stone and not a true heart, may our curse find you ere we awake." This final warning can be an idle threat or one you work into your campaign based on the PCs' actions.



INNER VAULT

Encounter Level 6

SETUP

Once the PCs enter the room, anyone who succeeds on a DC 15 Listen check can hear the clink of Krootad's (K) armor as he walks slowly, and the murmuring of his unholy prayers to Hextor. Increase the DC by 1 for every 10 feet the PCs are from Krootad. Krootad might hear the characters as well, and he gets a Listen check opposed by their Move Silently check results or a DC of 15 +1 per 10 feet he is from them. He receives a -2 penalty on his check because he's distracted. Even if Krootad hears the PCs, he has to beat the DC by 5 to be sure that what he hears isn't Garjuk from area 11, unless the characters make noises that allow him to determine the sounds aren't coming from Garjuk. If Krootad isn't aware of the PCs by the time they reach the central area of this room, the party gets a surprise round. Otherwise, Krootad continues putting onyx in the eyes of the skeletons he's about to animate, but the PCs don't get the drop on him.

KROOTAD

CR 5

hp 36 (5 HD)

Male hobgoblin cleric 5

LE Medium humanoid (goblinoid)

Init +2; Senses darkvision 60 ft.; Listen +3, Spot +3

Languages Common, Goblin

AC 19, touch 12, flat-footed 17

Fort +6, Ref +3, Will +7

Speed 20 ft. in breastplate (4 squares), base speed 30 ft.

Melee +1 flail +6 (1d8+3)

Base Atk +3; Grp +5

Atk Options smite 1/day (+4 attack, +5 damage)

Special Actions rebuke undead 7/day (+0, 2d6+5, 5th),
spontaneous casting (inflict spells)

Combat Gear *potion of levitate*

Cleric Spells Prepared (CL 5th):

3rd—*animate dead* (2), *contagion*^D (DC 16)

2nd—*cure moderate wounds*, *death knell* (DC 15),
desecrate[†], *spiritual weapon*^D

1st—*cause fear* (DC 14), *cure light wounds*, *doom* (DC
14), *inflict light wounds*^D, *shield of faith*

0—*cure minor wounds* (2), *detect magic* (3)

D: Domain spell. Deity: Hextor. Domains: Destruction,
War.

†Already cast

Abilities Str 14, Dex 14, Con 15, Int 8, Wis 16, Cha 10

Feats Combat Casting, Extra Turning, Martial Weapon
Proficiency (flail)^B, Weapon Focus (flail)^B

Skills Concentration +6 (+10 casting defensively),

Knowledge (religion) +3, Listen +3, Move Silently +0,
Spot +3

Possessions combat gear plus masterwork breastplate,
masterwork heavy steel shield, +1 flail, iron holy symbol
of Hextor, 3 small black onyx gems (25 gp), large black
onyx (250 gp), satchel (food and oilskin packet; see
Conclusion), waterskin

4 WARRIOR SKELETONS

CR 1/3

hp 7 each (1 HD); DR 5/bludgeoning

NE Medium undead

Init +5; Senses darkvision 60 ft.; Listen +0, Spot +0

Languages understands creator's orders

AC 13, touch 11, flat-footed 12

Immune cold, undead immunities

Fort +1, Ref +2, Will +3

Speed 30 ft. (6 squares)

Melee 2 claws +2 each (1d4+2)

Base Atk +0; Grp +1

Abilities Str 13, Dex 13, Con —, Int —, Wis 10, Cha 1

SQ undead traits

Feats Improved Initiative

Skills Listen +0, Spot +0

MINOTAUR SKELETON

CR 3

hp 45 (6 HD); DR 5/bludgeoning

NE Large undead

Init +5; Senses darkvision 60 ft.; Listen +0, Spot +0

Languages understands creator's orders

AC 12, touch 10, flat-footed 11

Immune cold, undead immunities

Fort +3, Ref +4, Will +6

Speed 30 ft. (6 squares)

Melee 2 claws +7 each (1d4+5) or

Melee gore +7 (1d8+5)

Base Atk +3; Grp +11

Abilities Str 19, Dex 12, Con —, Int —, Wis 10, Cha 1

SQ undead traits

Feats Improved Initiative

Skills Listen +0, Spot +0

When the PCs reach the inner chamber, read:

A thin wall cordons an oddly shaped inner chamber, inside which a statue of a gold dragon spits water into a clear pool. Near you, the skeleton of a massive horned humanoid lies. Beyond that and the statue lie four humanoid skeletons. A hobgoblin dressed in a black breastplate stands near them, having just placed something in the eye of one.

TACTICS

Once battle is joined, Krootad casts *animate dead* on the four skeletons nearest him, ordering them to attack if he succeeds. He uses both of his *animate dead* spells if he must. He then casts *cause fear* on a capable melee combatant, followed by *spiritual weapon*, which produces a black flail that Krootad sends to harry a spellcaster or archer. While so casting, if Krootad still has an *animate dead* spell remaining, he maneuvers to get close to the minotaur skeleton, and as soon as he can, he drops his largest onyx piece into the skeleton's eye (a move action that provokes attacks of opportunity) and then casts *animate dead* on that skeleton. That done, Krootad casts *doom* on his enemies, and he casts *shield of faith* on himself if his skeletal minions give him enough time and space to do so. He uses *death knell* at his first opportunity.

The skeletons simply attack the PCs, although Krootad is adept at using them to control the battlefield. He does so mostly to provide himself with unliving shields while he casts spells.

Krootad uses his healing spells as he must to stay in the battle. If he falls below 10 hit points, he withdraws toward the south, trying to reach area 7 and the surface. He doesn't surrender under any circumstances.

CONCLUSION

Once Krootad and his skeletal minions are defeated, the PCs find a piece of thick paper in an oilskin packet among his

possessions. (If Krootad manages to get away, you can rule that he accidentally dropped his satchel in his haste. It lies on the floor near the door leading south, in a spot where the characters can discover it automatically.) The paper is a draft good for 500 gp from the temple of Hextor, signed by someone named Xeron on the authority of an organization or person called "Vanguard." Nothing indicates who or what this Vanguard is. Of course, you know that this document refers to the Vanguard of Sertrous.

Even if Krootad fails to animate his minions due to the PCs' resourcefulness, award the characters experience points as if they had defeated the skeletons.

FEATURES OF THE AREA

The area has the following features.

Desecrated: Krootad cast *desecrate* on this area prior to the PCs' arrival, centered on the dragon statue. Charisma checks made to turn undead take a -3 profane penalty. Undead gain a +1 profane bonus on attack rolls, damage rolls, and saving throws, and undead created here gain +1 hit point per Hit Die (included in their statistics).

Medium Statues: 5 feet thick; AC 4; hardness 8; 900 hp; break DC 45; Climb DC 15. It costs 2 squares of movement to enter a square containing a statue, and a creature can't end its movement in a statue's square without climbing onto the statue. A Medium statue provides cover. If broken, a statue fills its square with dense rubble (see below).

Dense Rubble: Squares containing dense rubble cost 2 squares of movement to enter. Dense rubble increases the DC of Balance and Tumble checks by 5, and it imposes a -2 penalty on Move Silently checks. Running or charging through dense rubble is impossible.

Large Statue: 10 feet thick; AC 3; hardness 8; 1,800 hp; break DC 65; Climb DC 15. Otherwise like a Medium statue.

Vaults: The vault doors are all slightly open, and the chambers are all empty.

Inner Wall: 1 foot thick; hardness 8, 90 hp, break DC 35 per 10-foot-by-10-foot section. Climb DC 20.

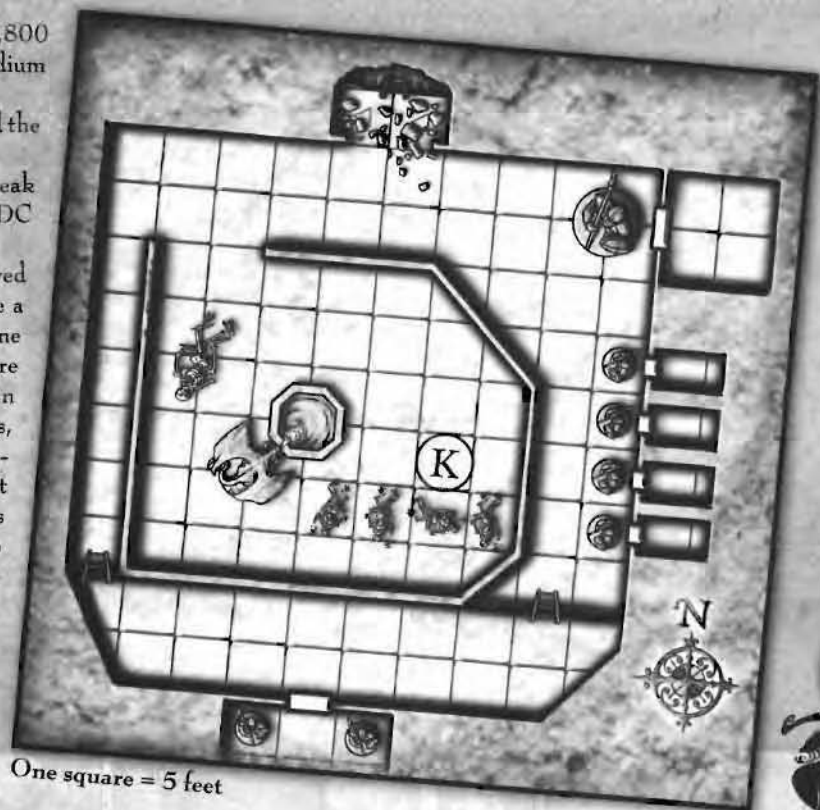
Dragon Statue: This is a Large statue. If viewed using *detect magic*, the statue and the water radiate a moderate aura (DC 20 Spellcraft check to determine the school is conjuration). Any good-aligned creature that spends a full round drinking from the fountain is refreshed as if he or she had just slept for 8 hours, recovering hit points, spells, and all other daily abilities that don't come from items (items don't benefit from the water). A neutral creature that drinks regains hit points as if he or she had slept 8 hours, but no other benefit. Evil creatures that drink from the fountain gain no benefit. Water removed from the well and not drunk immediately loses its magical potency. A creature can benefit from this effect once every 24 hours.

Pool: The pool is about 1 foot deep. It costs 2 squares of movement to enter a square in the pool, and the DC of Tumble checks in such squares increases by 2.

Skeletons: If Krootad fails to animate them, each humanoid skeleton has a black onyx (25 gp) in its eye. The minotaur skeleton might have Krootad's large gem in its mouth. None of these gems remain if Krootad successfully used *animate dead* on the skeletons containing them.

Northern Ledge: The tomb robbers smashed through a set of double doors here, filling the squares with dense rubble. Squares of dense rubble cost 2 squares of movement to enter. Dense rubble increases the DC of Balance and Tumble checks by 5, and it imposes a -2 penalty on Move Silently checks. Running or charging through dense rubble is impossible.

A rope ladder affixed to the ledge leads down into the darkness of an apparently natural cavern (area 13). Someone who falls here takes 6d6 points of damage from the 60-foot drop.



DARK ISLANDS

Encounter Level 3

SETUP

Have the players arrange their miniatures on the first pillar. The PCs can attempt Spot checks to see the lurking strangler (L) hiding on a narrow ledge that's level with the first pillar. The strangler certainly sees the characters, however, unless they are invisible. It observes the PCs for a while, assessing the threat they present, attacking as per its Tactics. Xeron's party encountered three of these creatures, once servants of the beholder whose corpse sits at the bottom of the cavern. Two of the three now lie dead on the cavern's floor.

When the PCs look deeper into the cavern, read:

The knotted rope descends into darkness.

When the lurking strangler attacks, read:

A 3-foot-long strand of sinew connects two grotesque eyeballs, and the whole mass twists as it flies through the air toward you.

CROSSING THE CAVERN

A PC who has darkvision can see the next pillar 50 feet below. Climbing down requires a series of DC 5 Climb checks, with each character moving at one-quarter speed. Those who fail by 4 or less make no progress; those who fail by 5 or more fall.

Another rope is attached to the next two pillars with pitons, and it stretches over an open chasm and down 10 feet. It's unknotted. A character who succeeds on a DC 10 Climb check can progress over the 10-foot open area. It's also possible for a character to wrap a leather, cloth, or rope strap over the rope and slide down to the next level in 1 round. Doing this requires a successful DC 5 Use Rope or Dexterity check to affix the strap carefully, failure meaning a PC who tries to slide with a poorly affixed strap falls 50 feet into the cavern for 5d6 points of damage. A successful DC 10 Tumble or Dexterity check is required to land safely on the third pillar after such a slide—those who fail take 1d6 points of damage.

A rope was affixed to allow passage from the third pillar to the fourth, 10 feet away from and 20 feet below the third. Xeron cut the rope after the tomb robbers crossed. Hanging from the western edge, the rope now dangles 20 feet down, its end 20 feet above the floor 40 feet below. (Creatures take 4d6 points of damage from a fall from the top of the third pillar, or 2d6 points of damage from a fall from the end of the dangling rope.)

The final ledge is only 20 feet from the cavern floor (2d6 points of damage from a fall), and it has a large piton similar to the others attached to ropes elsewhere in the cavern. A character who has a grappling hook and 15 feet of rope can attempt a DC 14 Use Rope check, success indicating that he has hooked the piton. Following that, a successful DC 10 Use Rope check enables the character to tie a firm knot to secure the loose end. After that, the rules for climbing across are the same as those to go from the second pillar to the third.

On the northern side of the cavern is a rope ladder 30 feet in length. It does not require a Climb check to ascend, and it leads up to a narrow ledge and into a passage to area 14. The opening is 5 feet wide and about 3 feet tall, so Medium or larger creatures must squeeze through while stooped or on their hands and knees.

TACTICS

Once the PCs begin moving along the pillars toward the eastern exit, the lurking strangler takes serious notice. Always flying out of melee range, it uses its *cause fear* eye ray to divide the party, then it uses its *sleep* ray to zap a PC who is isolated and preferably climbing between two pillars.

If one of the PCs becomes helpless, the strangler flies in and targets that character with its lash attack so it can use its suffocate ability. While it's doing that, the lurking strangler can continue to use its eye rays, and those who try to attack the aberration have a 50% chance to hit their comrade.

The lurking strangler has good maneuverability while flying, so it has no minimum forward speed, it can hover, and it can move backward. It costs the strangler 5 feet of movement to turn up to 90 degrees, which is the maximum turn it can make in one square. It can fly upward at any angle and does so at half speed, and it can fly downward at any angle and does so at double speed. It can switch between downward, upward, and level flight at no cost.

If the strangler takes more than 6 points of damage, it flies away and hides, leaving the PCs to continue in peace.

LURKING STRANGLER

CR 2

hp 11 (2 HD)

LE Tiny aberration

Init +4; **Senses** all-around vision, darkvision 60 ft.;

Listen +5, Spot +8

Languages understands Beholder and Common

AC 16, touch 16, flat-footed 12

Fort +1, Ref +4, Will +3

Speed 5 ft. (1 square), fly 20 ft. (good)

Melee lash +7 (1d4-3)

Ranged 2 eye rays +7 ranged touch each

Space 2-1/2 ft.; Reach 0 ft.

Base Atk +1; Grp -10

Atk Options suffocate

Abilities Str 5, Dex 19, Con 13 Int 4, Wis 10, Cha 10

Feats Alertness[®], Weapon Finesse

Skills Hide +12, Listen +5, Search +1, Spot +8

All-Around Vision (Ex) A lurking strangler's eyes and physiology give it a +4 racial bonus on Search and Spot checks.

Flight (Su) A lurking strangler's body is naturally buoyant. This buoyancy allows it to fly and grants it a permanent *feather fall* effect, as the spell, with *personal range*.

Eye Rays (Su) A lurking strangler has two eye rays, both usable at will. One functions as the *cause fear* spell; range 30 ft.; caster level 3rd; Will DC 11 partial. The other functions as the *sleep* spell, except that it affects one creature that has up to 4 HD; range 130 ft.; caster level 3rd; Will DC 11 negates.

Suffocate (Ex) If a lurking strangler hits a helpless foe with its lash attack, it wraps itself around the target's throat and begins to strangle that opponent. After being deprived of air, a creature must succeed on a DC 8 Constitution check each round. The DC increases by 1 each subsequent round. A creature that fails the check begins to suffocate. In the first round after a failed check, the victim falls unconscious (0 hit points). In the following round, the victim drops to -1 hit points and is dying. In the third round, the victim suffocates and dies.

CONCLUSION

Circumstances in this encounter favor the lurking strangler, so award the PCs experience points as if they had defeated a CR 3 monster if they kill or defeat the aberration.

FEATURES OF THE AREA

The area has the following features.

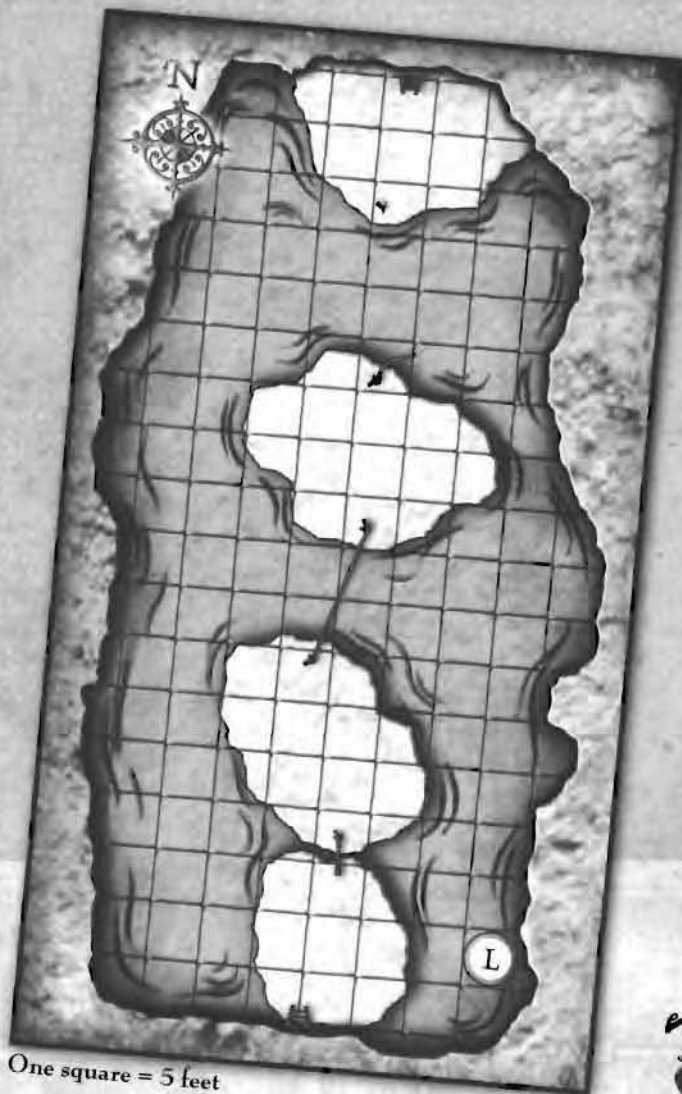
Ropes: Each rope has AC 9, hardness 0, and 2 hp.

Unworked Stone Walls: The natural walls of this cavern, as well as the sides of the pillars, are unworked stone that requires DC 20 Climb checks to climb.

Cavern Floor: The floor of this cavern is covered with slowly running water about 1 foot deep. It pours in from the south and flows north. It costs 2 squares of movement to enter a square in the water, and the DC of Tumble checks in such squares increases by 2.

Evidence of past inhabitants can be found on the floor. The bones of a long-dead beholder rest in the water under the outcropped top of the third pillar. How the creature died is not apparent. Elsewhere in the water are the bodies of two other lurking stranglers, both the victims of violence.

Ceiling: The ceiling is rough enough that a successful DC 25 Climb check is sufficient for a strong climber to make progress across it. Above and 10 feet to the east of the third pillar are signs that a shaft once allowed egress from this cavern. The chute is now filled with a jumble of large boulders, but it is actually open enough to allow a Tiny creature passage to the surface.



LABYRINTH SUMMONING

Encounter Level Varies

SETUP

After the PCs enter a labyrinth encounter, use the map for this tactical encounter, or create your own map on the spot. Each map should have three or four entrances (see Dead Ends in Features of the Area), several dividing points (walls, pillars, waterways, and so on), and prominent runes on the floor. Indicate to the players where the PCs enter (your choice), then allow them to place their miniatures on the map.

LANTERN ARCHON CR 2

Use statistics on *Monster Manual* 16 if the PCs attack.

2 FIENDISH WOLVERINES CR 2

hp 28 each (3 HD)

CE Medium magical beast (augmented animal, extraplanar)

Init +2; Senses darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision, scent; Listen +6, Spot +6

Languages —

AC 14, touch 12, flat-footed 12

Resist cold 5, fire 5; SR 8

Fort +7, Ref +5, Will +2

Speed 30 ft. (6 squares), burrow 10 ft., climb 10 ft.

Melee 2 claws +4 each (1d4+2) and bite -1 (1d6+1)

Base Atk +2; Grp +4

Atk Options smite good 1/day (+3 damage)

Special Actions rage

Abilities Str 14, Dex 15, Con 19, Int 3, Wis 12, Cha 10

Feats Alertness, Toughness, Track^B

Skills Climb +10, Listen +6, Spot +6

Rage (Ex) A fiendish wolverine that takes damage flies into a rage at the beginning of its next turn. It can't end this rage voluntarily. When it rages, it has the following changed statistics.

hp increase by 6

AC 12, touch 10, flat-footed 10

Fort +9

Melee 2 claws +6 each (1d4+4) and bite +1 (1d6+2)

Grp +6

Abilities Str 18, Con 23

Skills Climb +12

SUMMONED CREATURES

d%	Monster Summoned	EL	Action
01–05	Lantern archon	2	Uses <i>detect evil</i> , and leads non-evil PCs the right way. Otherwise, it hovers.
06–25	2 fiendish wolverines	4	They attack.
26–45	2 fiendish dire weasels	4	Arrive out of sight. Follow and ambush the PCs.
46–60	Magma mephit	3	Bluffs the PCs into following it the wrong way. Disappears if attacked.
61–75	Fiendish monstrous spider	3	It attacks.
76–90	2 fiendish boars	4	They attack.
91–95	Fiendish monstrous scorpion	4	Use only if PCs are not weakened. It attacks.
96–100	Hound archon	4	Uses <i>detect evil</i> , and leads non-evil PCs the right way. Taunts evil characters.

2 FIENDISH DIRE WEASELS CR 2

hp 13 each (3 HD)

CE Medium magical beast (augmented animal, extraplanar)

Init +4; Senses darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision, scent; Listen +3, Spot +5

Languages —

AC 16, touch 14, flat-footed 12

Resist cold 5, fire 5; SR 8

Fort +3, Ref +7, Will +4

Speed 40 ft. (8 squares)

Melee bite +6 (1d6+3)

Base Atk +2; Grp +4

Atk Options attach, smite good 1/day (+3 damage)

Special Actions blood drain

Abilities Str 14, Dex 19, Con 10, Int 3, Wis 12, Cha 11

Feats Alertness, Stealthy, Weapon Finesse^B

Skills Hide +8, Listen +3, Move Silently +8, Spot +5

Attach (Ex) If a fiendish dire weasel hits with a bite attack, it latches onto the opponent's body. An attached fiendish dire weasel is effectively grappling its prey. The fiendish dire weasel loses its Dexterity bonus to AC and has an AC of 12.

An attached fiendish dire weasel can be struck with a weapon or grappled. To remove an attached fiendish dire weasel through grappling, the opponent must achieve a pin against it.

Blood Drain (Ex) A fiendish dire weasel drains blood for 1d4 points of Constitution damage each round it remains attached.

Use the following table to determine what monster is summoned and what it does. Each monster remains for 10 rounds, and all creatures fight back if attacked. Each room produces only one summoning at a time. If a summoned monster disappears, the room doesn't summon another creature unless the PCs exit that room and return. The labyrinth never summons the same monster twice in a row. (Roll again if a repeated result occurs.)

CONCLUSION

Award the PCs normal experience points when they defeat summoned monsters that attack them. No experience should be awarded for destroying either of the archons.

FIENDISH MONSTROUS SPIDER CR 3

hp 22 (4 HD); DR 5/magic
 CE Large magical beast (augmented vermin, extraplanar)
 Init +3; Senses darkvision 60 ft., tremorsense 60 ft.;
 Listen +0, Spot +8
 Languages —

AC 14, touch 12, flat-footed 11
 Immune mind-affecting spells and abilities
 Resist cold 5, fire 5; SR 9
 Fort +5, Ref +4, Will +1

Speed 30 ft. (6 squares), climb 20 ft.
 Melee bite +4 (1d8+3 plus poison)
 Ranged web +5 ranged touch
 Base Atk +3; Grp +9
 Atk Options poison (DC 13, 1d4 Str/1d4 Str), smite good 1/day (+4 damage)

Abilities Str 15, Dex 17, Con 12, Int 3, Wis 10, Cha 2
 Feats —
 Skills Climb +10, Hide +3, Jump+12, Listen +0, Spot +8

Web (Ex) A fiendish monstrous spider can throw a web up to eight times per day. This is similar to an attack with a net but has a maximum range of 50 feet, with a range increment of 10 feet, and is effective against targets of up to Huge size. The web anchors the target in place, allowing no movement.

An entangled creature can escape with a successful DC 13 Escape Artist check or burst the web with a successful DC 17 Strength check. The web has 12 hit points and hardness 5.

FIENDISH MONSTROUS SCORPION CR 4

hp 32 (5 HD); DR 5/magic
 CE Large magical beast (augmented vermin, extraplanar)
 Init +0; Senses darkvision 60 ft., tremorsense 60 ft.;
 Listen +0, Spot +4
 Languages —

AC 16, touch 9, flat-footed 16
 Immune mind-affecting spells and abilities
 Resist cold 5, fire 5; SR 10
 Fort +6, Ref +1, Will +1

Speed 50 ft. (10 squares)
 Melee 2 claws +6 each (1d6+4) and sting +1 melee (1d6+2 plus poison)
 Base Atk +3; Grp +11
 Atk Options constrict 1d6+4, improved grab, poison (DC 14, 1d4 Con/1d4 Con), smite good 1/day (+5 damage)

Abilities Str 19, Dex 10, Con 14, Int 3, Wis 10, Cha 2
 Feats —
 Skills Climb +8, Hide +0, Jump+12, Listen +0, Spot +4

Constrict (Ex) A fiendish monstrous scorpion deals 1d6+4 points of damage with a successful grapple check, in addition to damage from its claw attack.

Improved Grab (Ex) To use this ability, a fiendish monstrous scorpion must hit with a claw attack. It can then attempt to start a grapple as a free action without provoking attacks of opportunity. If it wins the grapple check, it establishes a hold and can constrict.

HOUND ARCHON CR 2

Use statistics on *Monster Manual* 17 if the PCs attack.

2 FIENDISH BOARS CR 2

hp 25 each (3 HD); ferocity
 CE Medium magical beast (augmented animal, extraplanar)
 Init +0; Senses darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision, scent;
 Listen +7, Spot +5
 Languages —

AC 16, touch 10, flat-footed 16
 Resist cold 5, fire 5; SR 8
 Fort +6, Ref +3, Will +2

Speed 40 ft. (8 squares)
 Melee gore +4 (1d8+3)
 Base Atk +2; Grp +4
 Atk Options smite good 1/day (+3 damage)

Abilities Str 15, Dex 10, Con 17, Int 3, Wis 12, Cha 4
 Feats Alertness, Toughness
 Skills Listen +7, Spot +5

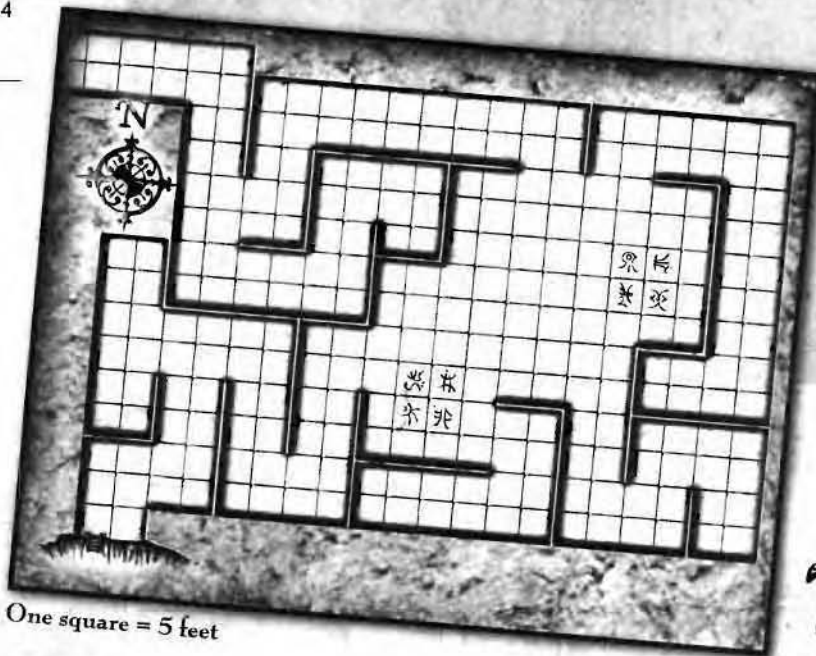
Ferocity (Ex) A fiendish boar continues to fight without penalty even when disabled or dying.

FEATURES OF THE AREA

The area has the following features.

Inner Walls: 1 foot thick; magically reinforced; hardness 16; 180 hp; break DC 55 per 10-foot-by-10-foot section. Climb DC 20.

Dead Ends: Some of the "dead ends" on the map might instead be points at which the PCs can enter or exit. Determine arbitrarily or randomly where the PCs enter and where the correct exit is located. See page xx for information on navigating the maze.



LABYRINTH POOL

Encounter Level 4

SETUP

Near the end of the labyrinth, the natural waterway that runs through the canal in area 10 and the cavern in area 13 emerges briefly in the maze, forming this cavernlike room. When you draw and describe the room, assume the PCs come to the middle entrance in the southern wall, and don't show or mention the runes until the characters see them.

Characters about to enter the water can make Spot checks opposed by the Hide checks of the Stygian leeches (L) and leech swarms (S). The leeches use Move Silently to close if they must. If the swarms remain undetected, they get a surprise round when they attack.

When the PCs see the area, read:

You look down on a cavern that appears natural. Openings pierce the southern and northern walls, allowing ingress and egress from several points. A deep and dark pool fills most of the room, though a rough, pebbly floor is visible to the east, and three spires of rock with flat tops jut from the water, one of them not far from where you now stand.

When the PCs see a Stygian leech, read:

Covered in bony protrusions, a violet and crimson worm the size of a human leg swims toward you. A gurgling hiss escapes its round toothy maw as it surfaces during its attack run.

When the PCs see the Stygian leech swarms, read:

A roiling mass of spiny thumb-sized crimson worms wells out of the depths of the pool, all of them squirming and hissing.

CONTROL WATER TRAP

The areas of the room displaying runes are special magic traps (Search DC 15; Disable Device DC 29). Each 4-square area marked with runes discharges one burst of the trap. A *detect good* effect is still attached to these runes, so good characters can't set off the traps—only neutral and evil characters can. Good characters are affected normally if a trap goes off, however, and the Stygian leeches still attack anyone who enters the water. The trap can go off only twice in a 24-hour period.

When the runes discharge, a brief *control water* effect raises the water in the whole area by 20 feet, which is enough to flood all the dry places in the cavern. Those standing on the dry areas are picked up and swept 2d4×5 feet into the pool as the trap dismisses its effect a moment later, unless they succeed on a DC 25 Swim check. Those who succeed are still swept away, but they manage to arrest

2 GIANT STYGIAN LEECHES

CR 1/2

hp 13 each (2 HD)

CE Small magical beast (aquatic, extraplanar)

Init +1; Senses darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision; Listen +1, Spot +1

Languages —

AC 12, touch 12, flat-footed 11

Immune mind-affecting spells and abilities

Resist acid 5, cold 5, fire 5; SR 7

Fort +4, Ref +4, Will +1

Speed swim 20 ft. (4 squares)

Melee bite +3 (1d4–2 plus disease)

Base Atk +1; Grp –5

Atk Options attach, blood drain

Abilities Str 6, Dex 12, Con 12, Int 3, Wis 12, Cha 2

Feats Stealthy, Weapon Finesse^b

Skills Hide +11, Listen +1, Move Silently +8, Spot +1, Swim +6

Disease (Ex) A creature that is damaged by a Stygian leech must succeed on a DC 18 Fortitude save or contract *demon fever* (incubation time 1 day; see DMG 292 for other details).

Attach (Ex) If a Stygian leech hits with a bite attack, it latches onto the opponent's body. An attached Stygian leech is effectively grappling its prey. The Stygian leech loses its Dexterity bonus to AC and has an AC of 11.

An attached Stygian leech can be struck with a weapon or grappled. To remove an attached Stygian leech through grappling, the opponent must achieve a pin against it.

Blood Drain (Ex) A Stygian leech drains blood for 1 point of Constitution damage each round it remains attached.

their movement and end up on the next nearest rock spire or dry area when the water subsides.

Deep in the pool is a gemlike control device (X) that provides magical energy for this trap and periodically summons new leeches, sending others back to the River Styx in the Abyss. This sizable glass orb glows slightly with a red light, and someone might see it by making a successful Spot check (DC 20, +1 per 10 feet the character is from the orb). The orb has AC 10, hardness 8, and 15 hit points. Destroying it sends all the leeches back to the Abyss and renders the *control water* traps inert.

Detect Magic: The magic of the labyrinth is absent in this room except for the runes and the control orb of the trap. If viewed using *detect magic*, the runes radiate a strong aura (DC 22 Spellcraft check to determine the school is transmutation). The orb radiates a moderate aura (DC 18 Spellcraft check to determine the school is conjuration).

Modifying the Trap: This trap can be very dangerous. If the PCs are already hurting, Xeron's band might have discharged runes recently enough that the trap goes off only once. Maybe it doesn't go off at all. If the characters are fresh or prepared for the challenge, maybe the *detect good* effect works only 50% of the time if good characters are present, like the weakened magic in the rest of the labyrinth.

2 STYGIAN LEECH SWARMS

CR 1

hp 13 each (2 HD)

CE Fine magical beast (aquatic, extraplanar, swarm)

Init +0; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision; Listen +1, Spot +1

Languages —

AC 18, touch 18, flat-footed 18

Immune mind-affecting spells and abilities, weapon damage

Resist acid 5, cold 5, fire 5; **SR** 7

Fort +4, **Ref** +3, **Will** +1

Weakness swarm vulnerabilities

Speed swim 10 ft. (2 squares)

Melee swarm (1d6 plus blood drain and disease)

Base Atk +1; **Grp** —

Atk Options distraction

Abilities Str 1, Dex 11, Con 12, Int 3, Wis 12, Cha 2

SQ swarm traits

Feats Stealthy

Skills Hide +18, Listen +1, Move Silently +7, Spot, +1, Swim +3

Blood Drain (Ex) A Stygian leech swarm deals each foe in the swarm's area 1 point of Constitution damage each round until that foe exits the swarm and spends a full-round action removing leeches.

Disease (Ex) As the Stygian leech.

Distraction (Ex) Fortitude DC 12, nauseated 1 round.

WATER ACTION

Creatures in the pool that have no swim speed or *freedom of movement* must make successful DC 10 Swim checks to move one-quarter their speed as a move action. Those who fail are considered off balance—they lose their Dexterity bonus to AC, and foes gain a +2 bonus on attack rolls against them. A failure by 5 or more results in a creature going underwater and needing to hold its breath. Move Silently checks take a –2 penalty in water.

Creatures swimming in the water but breaking the surface have improved cover against attacks from land (+8 to AC, +4 on Reflex saves). A creature wholly covered by water has total cover against attacks from on land.

Those making ranged attacks while underwater take a –2 penalty on attack rolls for each 5 feet of water the attack passes through, in addition to range increment penalties. Those making slashing and bludgeoning melee attacks take a –2 penalty on attack rolls while underwater.

The surface of the water blocks line of effect for fire spells. A spellcaster who casts a fire spell in the water must succeed on a Spellcraft check (DC 20 + spell level) or the spell fails and is wasted. On a success, the spell produces a bubble of steam instead of fire, but otherwise works as described. Supernatural abilities that produce or require fire are ineffective in water unless the effect's description says otherwise.

Holding Breath: A creature can hold its breath for a number of rounds equal to twice its Constitution score, but only if taking move actions or free actions. A creature holding its breath that takes a standard action has the number of rounds that it can hold its breath reduced by 1. When a creature

can hold its breath no longer, that creature must succeed on a DC 10 Constitution check each round. Each round, the DC increases by 1. A failed Constitution check causes a creature to fall unconscious. On the following round, the creature is reduced to –1 hit points. On the round after that, the creature dies.

CONCLUSION

Since the conditions of this encounter favor the leeches, if the PCs face the trap and the creatures here, award them an additional 300 experience. If you modified the trap to make it easier, don't give them this extra award.

FEATURES OF THE AREA

The area has the following features.

Ceiling: The ceiling is rough and wet, and it's about 10 feet higher than the rest of the labyrinth. A skilled climber can traverse it by making DC 30 Climb checks.

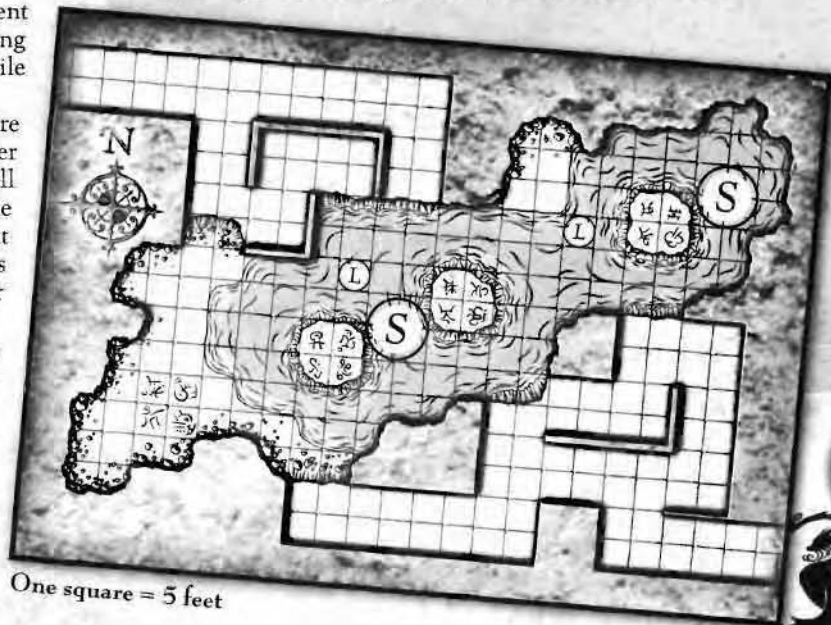
Natural Walls: The rough stone walls of this chamber are slippery (Climb DC 25). They stretch 40 feet where they go from floor to ceiling. Where the walls open into the labyrinth proper, it's a 20-foot drop to the floor (2d6 points of damage from a fall) or the water (no damage).

Natural Stone Floor: The cavern floor is pebbly, uneven, and slick. It takes 2 squares of movement to enter a square in the areas above water in this room, and the DC of Balance and Tumble checks increases by 5. Running and charging are impossible.

Rock Spires: These spires rise 10 feet above the water. Climbing them is as difficult as climbing the walls of the room.

Pool: In its normal state, the pool is 15 feet deep and moves slowly to the northeast. While the underground stream here does enter and leave the chamber, the leeches in this room can't, and the crevices in the rock are too small for creatures larger than Diminutive to pass through them.

Interior Walls: These are the thin walls in the maze. 1 foot thick; magically reinforced; hardness 16; 180 hp; break DC 55 per 10-foot-by-10-foot section. Climb DC 20.



One square = 5 feet

MAZE'S END

Encounter Level 4

SETUP

The PCs might have to deal with the remaining pit trap in this area first, which takes it out of play for the rest of the encounter. If they don't, the characters might find the trap the hard way during the fight. Regardless, the automatons inside the statues in the eastern area do not react to anything the PCs do until the characters move past the pit and into the room, examine the hobgoblin corpse, or attack one of the statues from range. At that point, the statues open and spit forth their constructs.

When the PCs can see the eastern room, read:

The smell of blood and entrails reaches you from this large, oddly shaped room. A hobgoblin lies at your feet, twisted and broken in death. Dark spatters and smears point toward another body near the center of the room. Beyond it is a pile of rubble that might once have been a stone table or platform. To the north, a set of stone doors lies in shambles, their frame forming a dark opening to what might be a stairway. The most prominent features of the room are two large light-colored metal statues, one to the southeast and one to the northwest. Dried blood is visible around what look like compartment doors in each statue's chest.

When the statues open, read:

Each statue spits from its mouth a tiny creature that looks like nothing more than animated smoke with luminous eyes and a humanoid form. The chests of both statues open. From the one in the southeast leaps a small, vaguely humanoid creature that looks like it's made of stone, but it's covered in dark spatters and has burning eyes. Each of its four appendages is a long spike. On two of these it runs with good speed. To the northwest, a black, metallic, animallike creature tumbles from the statue, its four pawlike limbs used to run and support its oversized jaws, which are filled with sharp teeth. This creature, too, has dried blood all over it, and both of the constructs appear to have suffered damage in an earlier battle.

INTELLIGENT CONSTRUCTS

The constructs in this room are animated by elemental spirits in a way that allows them to fight in the highly coordinated way detailed in the Tactics section. Other than providing the constructs with limited Intelligence and some sense of self, the elemental spirits have no other motivation. When the constructs are destroyed, the elemental spirits simply return to their native planes.

HARRIER

CR 2

hp 28 (43 full normal; 6 HD)

N Small construct

Init +3; Senses darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision; Listen +0, Spot +0

Languages —

AC 18, touch 14, flat-footed 15; Dodge, Mobility

Immune construct immunities

Fort +2, Ref +5, Will +2

Speed 40 ft. (8 squares)

Melee spike +6 (1d6+1)

Base Atk +4; Grp +1

Atk Options sneak attack +1d6

Abilities Str 12, Dex 17, Con —, Int 4, Wis 10, Cha 5

SQ construct traits

Feats Acrobatic, Dodge, Mobility

Skills Jump +12, Listen +0, Spot +0, Tumble +11

ASSAULTER

CR 2

hp 25 (43 full normal; 6 HD)

N Small construct

Init +6; Senses darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision; Listen +6, Spot +0

Languages —

AC 17, touch 13, flat-footed 15

Immune construct immunities

Fort +2, Ref +4, Will +2

Speed 50 ft. (10 squares)

Melee bite +8 (1d6+3)

Base Atk +4; Grp +2

Atk Options Power Attack

Abilities Str 14, Dex 15, Con —, Int 4, Wis 10, Cha 5

SQ construct traits

Feats Improved Initiative, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (bite)

Skills Jump +13, Listen +6, Spot +0

2 DISTRACTERS

CR 1/2

hp 5 (1 HD)

N Tiny construct

Init +8; Senses darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision; Listen +0, Spot +0

Languages —

AC 16, touch 16, flat-footed 12

Immune construct immunities

Fort +0, Ref +4, Will +0

Speed 60 ft. (12 squares)

Melee bite +0 (1d4–2)

Base Atk +0; Grp –10

Abilities Str 6, Dex 19, Con —, Int 4, Wis 10, Cha 5

SQ construct traits

Feats Improved Initiative

Skills Jump +10, Listen +0, Spot +0, Tumble +8

PIT TRAP

Two pit traps were built into this room, but Leera sprang one. The other one (T) hasn't been discovered yet.

Pit Trap: CR 2; mechanical, location trigger; manual reset; Reflex DC 20 avoids; 30 ft. deep (3d6, fall); Search DC 20; Disable Device DC 20.

TACTICS

The harrier and assaulter charge on their first turn if they can, jumping if they have to do so to avoid an obstacle. Melee combatants are the assaulter's preferred foes, while the harrier prefers archers and spellcasters. Using its Tumble skill, the harrier tries to attack from the best position to get a sneak attack whenever it can.

Providing flanks for the tougher constructs, the distracters take standard actions to aid another instead of using their bite attacks. When a distracter does so, it makes an attack roll against AC 10, and if it hits, it grants the construct it's aiding a +2 bonus on that construct's attack roll. The distracters use Tumble to help their maneuvering.

CONCLUSION

The damaged constructs are worth 400 experience points each when they're defeated. Distracters are worth the normal amount. Award the PCs normal experience points for disarming the pit trap even if Leera warned them about it.

FEATURES OF THE AREA

The area has the following features.

Dense Rubble: Squares containing dense rubble cost 2 squares of movement to enter. Dense rubble increases the DC of Balance and Tumble checks by 5, and it imposes a -2 penalty on Move Silently checks. Running or charging through dense rubble is impossible.

The rubble just south of the broken doors appears to have once been a table. Even a cursory search reveals mangled mechanical pieces. The puzzle and the doors have been totally smashed.

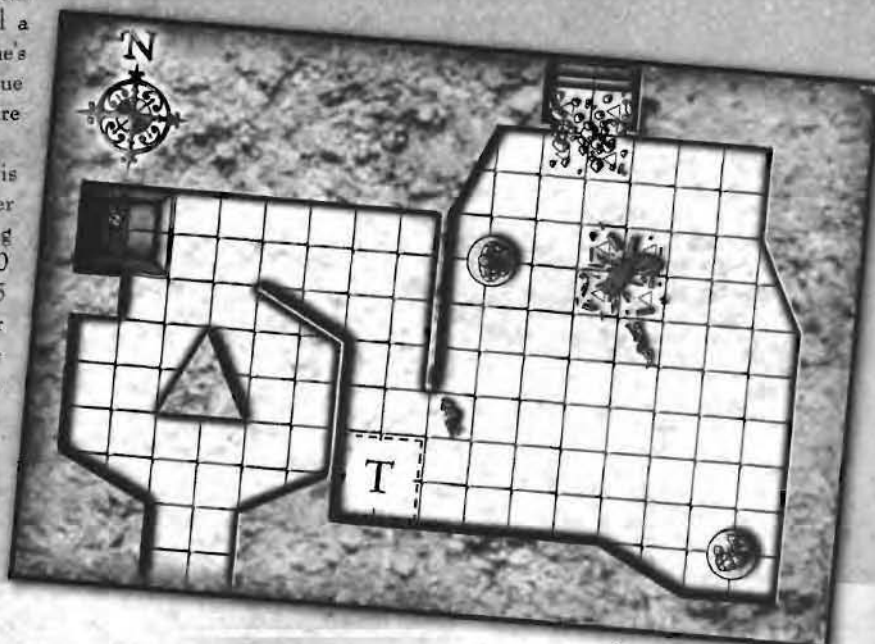
Large Statues: The statues are hollow and made of dark iron. 5 feet thick; AC 3; hardness 10; 2,000 hp; break DC 75; Climb DC 15. It costs 2 squares of movement to enter a square containing a statue, and a creature can't end its movement in a statue's square without climbing onto the statue. A statue provides cover. If broken, a statue fills its square with dense rubble (see above).

Steep Stairs: The staircase to the north is steep. It takes 2 squares of movement to enter each square. Creatures running or charging down steep stairs must succeed on a DC 10 Balance check, ending their movement 1d2×5 feet later if they fail. Those who fail by 5 or more fall prone and take 1d6 points of damage at the end of that movement. The DC of Tumble checks increases by 5. Creatures gain a +1 bonus on melee attack rolls against foes lower than them.

Corpses: A corpse lies in the entryway to this wide room, and another sprawls farther

inside. The one nearest the pit was a male hobgoblin warrior—he has a ruined suit of studded leather, a masterwork longsword, a light wooden shield, and an *amulet of natural armor* +1. The other was a male human rogue who has a ravaged suit of leather armor, a masterwork buckler, a masterwork short sword, and a *wand of magic missile* (caster level 3rd) that has 6 charges remaining.

If Leera is with the PCs, she recognizes the human as her acquaintance Teryl. She's sorry to see him dead, but she's sorrier for herself and the predicament Teryl got her into when he told her about the expedition. "I don't know why he thought I'd want to be part of a band of thugs," she says, "but even he deserved better than this."



One square = 5 feet

ROBBER ENCAMPMENT

Encounter Level 5

SETUP

As the PCs descend the stairs, they come to broken masonry piled about 4 feet high in the stairway. Climbing over the pile is easy, but doing so is noisy, and jumping over the pile requires a successful DC 32 Jump check; running on the stairs is impossible. The pile can instead be pushed over (Strength DC 8) or carefully cleared—each block weighs about 75 pounds, and removing ten of them is enough to clear the doorway.

Some actions might cause enough noise to awaken Magruug (M) and the varags (V) here. Whatever the PCs do, have the varags attempt Listen checks with a –18 penalty for distance, the roar of the nearby waterfall, and the fact that they're sleeping. If the PCs climb over the barricade quietly (one-eighth speed), they can attempt Move Silently checks—the varags' Listen DC is 0 if the characters simply climb over without thought for stealth, if they move the rocks carefully, or if they jump over. If the PCs push the rocks over, the DC is –10.

If the varags awaken before the PCs see them, Magruug moves to the northern stairway and hides. The other varags

MAGRUUG

CR 4

hp +2 (6 HD)

Male varag scout* 3

*Class described in *Complete Adventurer*

LE Medium humanoid (goblinoid)

Init +5; Senses darkvision 60 ft., scent; Listen +7, Spot +7

Languages Goblin

AC 22, touch 15, flat-footed 22; uncanny dodge

Fort +4, Ref +11, Will +4

Speed 70 ft. (14 squares); Run, Spring Attack

Melee mwk scimitar +9 (1d6+3/18–20)

Ranged +1 composite shortbow +11 (1d6+4/x3)

Base Atk +4; Grp +7

Atk Options skirmish (+1d6, +1 AC)

Combat Gear *potion of bull's strength*, *potion of cure moderate wounds*

Abilities Str 17, Dex 20, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 8

SQ battle fortitude +1, trackless step, trapfinding

Feats Iron Will, Run^B, Spring Attack^B, Weapon Focus (scimitar), Track

Skills Hide +10, Jump +20, Listen +7, Move Silently +18*,

Spot +7, Survival +8 (+12 when tracking by scent)

*A varag can always choose to take 10 on a Move Silently check, even if rushed or threatened.

Possessions combat gear plus masterwork chain shirt, masterwork scimitar, +1 composite shortbow (+3 Str bonus) with 17 arrows and 6 silvered arrows, gold necklace (100 gp), 68 gp

Skirmish (Ex) +1d6 on damage rolls and +1 to AC in any round in which Magruug moves at least 10 feet.

Battle Fortitude (Ex) Bonus on initiative checks and Fortitude saves while wearing light or no armor and carrying a light load. Included above.

2 VARAGS

CR 1

hp 16 each (3 HD)

CE Medium humanoid (goblinoid)

Init +6; Senses darkvision 60 ft., scent; Listen +0, Spot +0

Languages Goblin

AC 18, touch 12, flat-footed 16

Fort +2, Ref +5, Will +1

Speed 60 ft. (12 squares); Run, Spring Attack

Melee mwk scimitar +6 (1d6+2/18–20)

Ranged shortbow +4 (1d6/x3)

Base Atk +2; Grp +4

Combat Gear *potion of cure moderate wounds*

Abilities Str 15, Dex 15, Con 13, Int 6, Wis 10, Cha 10

Feats Improved Initiative, Run^B, Spring Attack^B, Weapon Focus (scimitar)

Skills Jump +17, Listen +0, Move Silently +13*, Spot +0,

Survival +0 (+4 when tracking by scent)

*A varag can always choose to take 10 on Move Silently checks, even if rushed or threatened.

Possessions combat gear plus masterwork studded

leather, masterwork scimitar, shortbow with 15 arrows, 3d6 gp

hide against the wall near their pallets and wait to ambush intruders. Otherwise, they continue to sleep. Even so, the PCs can't immediately see them.

When the PCs can see the room, read:

Just beyond the pile of rocks is a wide room full of mist and moisture. Directly ahead are three sarcophagi, their lids removed obviously to provide material to block the doorway. To the west is a wide crack in the floor, near which stand three weathered statues of human warriors leaning on longswords and bearing shields. Straw has been spread thinly on the floor just beyond the fissure.

When the PCs see the bedrolls, read:

A large, worn leather backpack sits near three unfurled bedrolls along the southern wall.

When the PCs can see the varags, read:

Three of the hairy and horned hobgoblins you've seen before are here (sleeping on pallets or attacking, depending on how the events have unfolded).

CALTROPS AND STRAW

The varags spread straw around the floor both to dry it out and to hide a little surprise for invaders. Any PC who wants to move into a square containing caltrops must succeed on a DC 15 Spot check to notice the hidden spikes. A successful DC 10 Search check is sufficient to uncover the caltrops.

If a creature moves into a caltrop-laden square (C), the caltrops make an attack roll (attack bonus +0) against that creature. Armor, shield, and deflection bonuses do not count when resolving this attack, but shoes or other solid footwear grant a +2 bonus to AC. If an attack succeeds, the caltrop deals 1 point of damage and the creature's speed is reduced to one-half for the next 24 hours, or until the creature receives 1 point or more of magical healing or the benefit of a successful DC 15 Heal check.

TACTICS

The varags slept in their light armor with their weapons at hand. When battle begins, they retreat to the north side of the room, hoping to draw the PCs into the straw-covered area. The varags know which squares have caltrops in them. They

try to use their superior speed and mobility to their advantage, but they're boxed into this room and unwilling to retreat in either direction. Therefore, they fight to the death.

A varag might try to charge and bull rush a PC into the waterfall. To do so, the varag moves into the defender's space, provoking an attack of opportunity. Then the varag and the defender make opposed Strength checks. Charging grants a +2 bonus on the check, but each character involved in the bull rush receives a +4 bonus for each size larger he is than the other or a -4 penalty for each size smaller. If the varag wins, he pushes the PC back 5 feet and, while moving with the defender, another 5 feet for every 5 points he won the opposed check by. If the varag loses, he moves back into the space he started in, falling prone in an adjacent space if that space is occupied.

FEATURES OF THE AREA

The area has the following features.

Illumination: Daylight provides bright illumination through the waterfall. If it's dark outside, it's also dark inside.

Medium Statues: 5 feet thick; AC 4; hardness 8; 900 hp; break DC 45; Climb DC 15. It costs 2 squares of movement to enter a square containing a statue, and a creature can't end its movement in a statue's square without climbing onto the statue. A Medium statue provides cover. If broken, a statue fills its square with dense rubble (see below).

Dense Rubble: Squares containing dense rubble cost 2 squares of movement to enter. Dense rubble increases the DC of Balance and Tumble checks by 5, and it imposes a -2 penalty on Move Silently checks. Running or charging through dense rubble is impossible.

Slick Stairs: The stairs leading to area 18 would be gradual, but the moisture from the falls has worn them and made them slippery. See their statistics in area 18 if they become important to the fight here.

Sarcophagi: Creatures can stand in western squares that include a sarcophagus, but those squares cost 2 squares of movement to enter. The eastern squares of the sarcophagus are impassable without jumping into or over the coffin. A creature can jump into a sarcophagus, gaining a +1 bonus on melee attack rolls against those on the floor. Doing so is automatic for someone who takes a move action in any of the sarcophagus's squares, or it can be done as part of a larger move action with a successful DC 24 Jump check (DC 12 with a 20-foot running start). Sarcophagi provide cover.

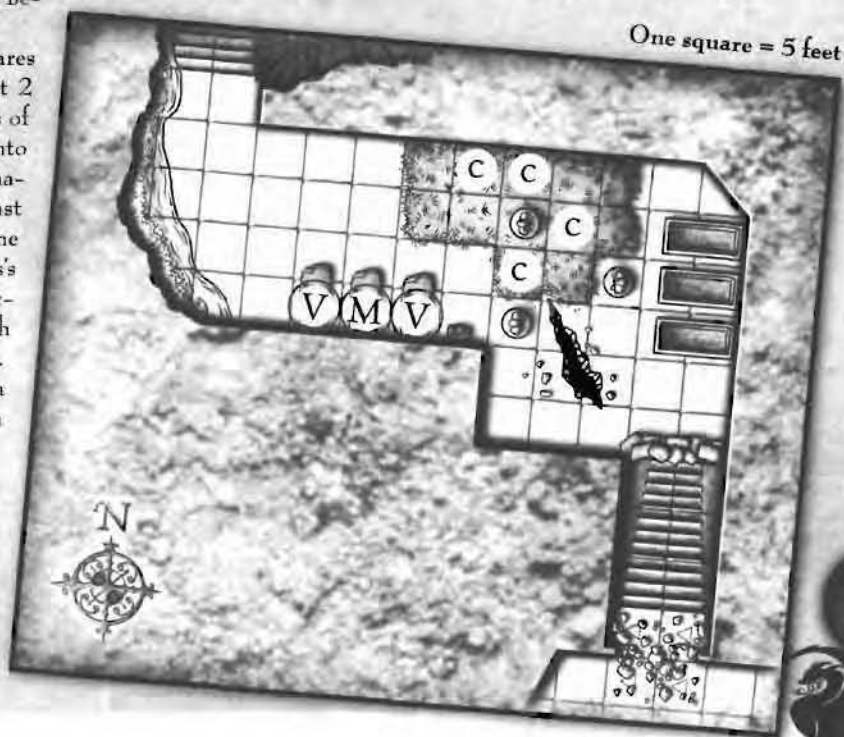
Inside each is a mummified corpse dressed in a burial robe and shrouded in linen. Nothing of worth was interred with the bodies.

Fissure: This hole is wide, but it's not deep. Entering a square of the fissure costs 4 squares of movement. Anyone who tries to jump the fissure must succeed on a DC 10 Jump check (DC 5 with a 20-foot running start) or fall prone, ending his movement in that square. Running and charging are impossible across the fissure.

Bedrolls: The sleeping mats in this room are unremarkable at first glance. A successful DC 10 Search check turns up a gold pendant on a broken iron chain (15 gp). The pendant looks like a three-headed creature. The leftmost head looks human, the rightmost looks like a viper, and the middle one appears to be a snake-human hybrid.

Backpack: This worn pack radiates a moderate aura if viewed using *detect magic* (DC 19 Spellcraft check to determine the school is conjuration). It's actually a *Heward's handy haversack*, and in addition to the bale of straw and caltrops it still contains, it also holds dried meat, waterskins, and any adventuring gear you want to place here.

Waterfall: A waterfall plummets from about 100 feet above into a pool 100 feet below. The opening between this chamber and the outside is 5 feet high and worn smooth by the falling water. The water is clear and clean, and the pool outside is 20 feet deep. A fall from the cascade deals 2d3 points of nonlethal damage and 6d6 points of lethal damage.



CLIFFSIDE WATERFALL

Encounter Level 6

SETUP

Have the players arrange the miniatures representing their characters in the order the PCs are traveling as they start down the stairs onto the wet ledge. See Features of the Area for more on the dangers of the steps and narrow shelf.

Sigur (S), the fossergrim who lives in the waterfall, used *detect evil* on Xeron when he and his band came through. Since the remaining tomb robbers are all evil, the fossergrim used *obscuring mist* and harried them toward the tomb spider in the next room, hoping for mutual annihilation of both sides. He watched the PCs fight the varags in area 17, however, and he made a Sense Motive check on them, so he knows he might be dealing with good-hearted folk. Sigur observes the characters until they make it to the narrow part of the ledge and they're all on it—make a Hide check for him opposed by the PCs' Spot checks. If the characters make it to the narrow section or Spot him, Sigur reveals himself.

When the PCs descend, read:

After descending the slick and worn steps, you come to a ledge. On one side of the slick shelf is the waterfall, and on the other is a cavernous pit. Spikes have been driven into the ledge on the western side nearest the waterfall, and a rope has been threaded through loops in their tops, forming a banister of sorts.

SIGUR

hp 49 (6 HD); fast healing 5*

*Applies only if Sigur is standing in his waterfall

Male fossergrim cleric 1

N Medium fey (aquatic)

Init +7; Senses low-light vision; Listen +5, Spot +12

Languages Common, Sylvan

AC 18, touch 13, flat-footed 15

SR 15*

*Applies only if Sigur is standing in his waterfall

Fort +7, Ref +7, Will +11

Speed 30 ft. (6 squares), swim 60 ft.

Melee mwk silvered battleaxe +6 (1d8+3/×3) or

Melee mwk silvered battleaxe +4 (1d8+3/×3) and
mwk silvered handaxe +4 (1d6+1/×3)

Base Atk +2; Grp +5

Atk Options *true strike**

*Applies only if Sigur is standing in his waterfall

Special Actions spontaneous casting (*cure* spells), turn
undead 9/day (+6, 2d6+7, 1st)

Cleric Spells Prepared (CL 1st):

1st—*cause fear* (DC 16), *detect evil*†, *obscuring mist*‡
(2; 1 cast)

0—*create water*, *detect magic*, *purify food and drink*

CR 6

When Sigur emerges, read:

"So many visitors this day," cries the waterfall in a gravelly baritone. But no, the voice belongs to a ruggedly handsome man who steps from the falls clad in a shirt of shimmering mail. His silvery hair isn't wet, but it cascades over his shoulders in ringlets. A trim beard rounds out his face, accented by a silver chain around his neck from which hangs a pendant shaped like an acorn. Silvery bladed axes hang from a shining belt. His intense eyes are placid pools of blue and white, and he fixes a grim gaze on you, his jaw set. "Tell me, why came you here?"

NEGOTIATION

Sigur suspects the PCs are friendly, but he's too capricious to just tell them what he wants them to know and let them go. The fossergrim and Leera get along splendidly, if she is still with the party.

Starting Attitude: Indifferent.

Modifiers: Party contains a cleric of Obad-Hai (+4); party contains a cleric of Ehlonna (−4); PCs negotiated with the varags in area 17 (−2); PCs slew the varags in area 17 (+2); one of the PCs is a human, elf, half-elf, or half-orc woman (add that PC's Charisma bonus even if she doesn't do the speaking; double her bonus if she does); female PC displays bravery, intelligence, or general high-spiritedness (+2); PCs threaten Sigur (−6).

If Unfriendly (1 or lower): Says, "Get you gone from here. This sacred place is where a king sleeps eternal, and

D: Domain spell. Deity: Obad-Hai. Domains: Animal, Water.

†Already cast

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 1st):

1/day—*speak with animals*

Abilities Str 17, Dex 16, Con 18, Int 10, Wis 20, Cha 22

SQ amphibious, waterfall dependency

Feats Combat Casting, Improved Initiative, Two-Weapon
Fighting

Skills Concentration +4 (+8 casting defensively),

Diplomacy +8, Heal +10, Hide +9, Knowledge

(nature) +2, Listen +5, Move Silently +6, Sense

Motive +10, Spot +12, Survival +13, Swim* +17

*+8 racial bonus on Swim checks. Can take 10 on Swim

checks even if rushed or threatened. Can swim up a

waterfall as easily as walking across solid ground.

Possessions combat gear plus +1 *chain shirt*, masterwork
silvered battleaxe, masterwork silvered handaxe, mithral
belt (300 gp), silver necklace and holy symbol (50 gp)

True Strike (Su) If both Sigur and his opponent are standing
in Sigur's waterfall, Sigur receives a +20 insight bonus
on his attack rolls.

Waterfall Dependency (Ex) Sigur is mystically bound to his
waterfall and must not move more than 1,000 feet from
it. If he does, he dies within 4d6 hours.

it's not fit for you to invade it." If the PCs continue forward, Sigur attacks them.

If Indifferent (2-14): Says, "Listen, evil ones have preceded you into the tomb, where they will certainly be destroyed. The Betrayer is compelled to slay them, if the foul creature in the next room does not. Who has gone ahead, you say? Well, I have a friendly wager..."

Sigur challenges a strong PC to a wrestling match, with his information on the line against something valuable to that character. He knows about the tomb spider in area 20 and the composition of Xeron's party, and as much about the Betrayer and the rest of the tomb as you care to reveal. He doesn't know about the secret entrance to the true tomb, nor has he done more than see the Betrayer and retreat.

If Friendly (15-29): As indifferent, but Sigur offers his advice and information freely. If the PCs need help across the ledge, he provides it by standing in the falls and steadying one character at a time. He heals badly injured PCs, and he also offers to heal the characters if they come back and prove the tomb spider is slain.

He says, "It has learned I wish it ill, and it comes and goes in the night. I can't watch this way in my sleep. My duty to guard these falls is more important than risking my life driving it from the tomb. Still, it's an abomination, and it must be destroyed. Weapons touched by virtue can harm the spider most easily."

If the PCs destroy the tomb spider and prove it to Sigur, he heals them (but he knows the spider's poison changes the effect of healing spells).

Helpful (30 or higher): As friendly, but Sigur heals the PCs before the battle with the tomb spider if they need such assistance. He watches the battle and uses *obscuring mist* to aid the PCs if they need to retreat.

TACTICS

At the beginning of the battle, Sigur moves into the waterfall and casts *cause fear* on a fighter or other melee combatant. He then fights from the falls, moving back and forth to assault the PCs. Sigur accepts surrender. If he has fewer than 10 hit points at the beginning of his turn, he flees to the bottom of the falls to heal, giving the PCs time to retreat or move forward.

CONCLUSION

If the PCs deal peacefully with Sigur, award them 300 experience points each. They should receive no experience for fighting the fossergrim.

The PCs might need a silvered weapon to use against the huecuva in area 21. If they do, Sigur can reward them for living up to their agreement by giving them his handaxe.

FEATURES OF THE AREA

The area has the following features.

Illumination: Daylight provides bright illumination through the waterfall. If it's dark outside, it's also dark inside.

Slick Stairs: The stairs leading to area 18 would be gradual, but the moisture from the falls has worn them and made them slippery. East of the stairs (and ledge), the floor falls away into an underground cavern 50 feet deep (5d6 points of damage from a fall). It takes 4 squares of movement to ascend each square. Creatures moving on the stairs must succeed on a DC 10 Balance check, ending their movement if they fail. Those who fail by 5 or more fall prone and must make a successful DC 15 Climb check to avoid slipping into the waterfall on the west or the cavern to the east. The tomb robbers nailed a piton into the wall and attached a rope to it, which provides a +4 bonus on both checks but requires the use of one hand.

Creatures gain a +1 bonus on melee attack rolls against foes lower than them, but those fighting on the stairs lose their Dexterity bonus to AC unless they have 5 or more ranks in Balance. Anyone struck while standing on the stairs must succeed on a Balance check similar to the one to move on the stairs.

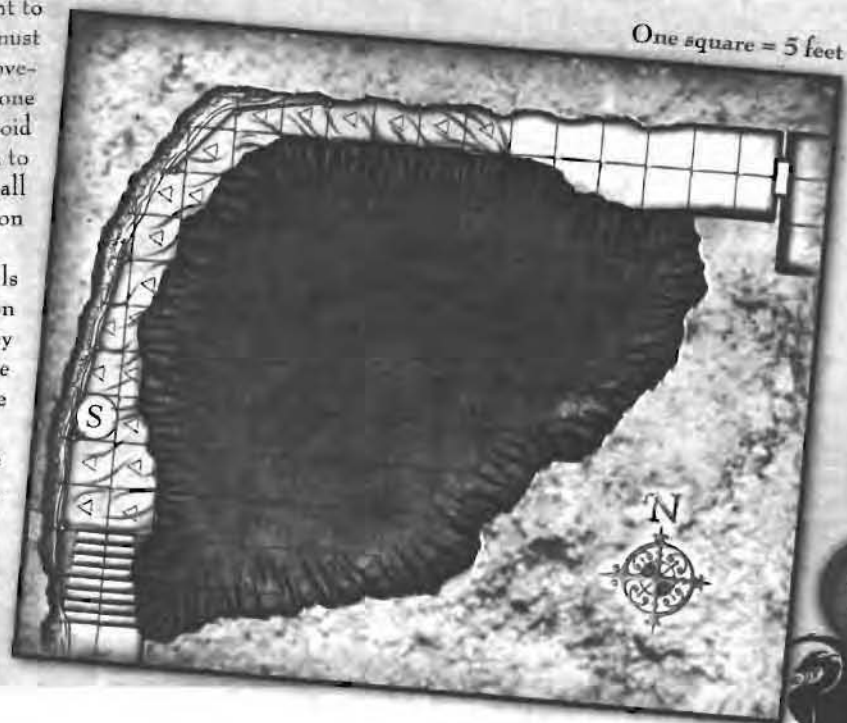
Natural Ledge: The tomb robbers affixed large pitons into the floor under the waterfall, creating a rope banister. Entering a square anywhere on the ledge costs 2 squares of movement. A creature can move faster than this, but doing so requires a successful DC 7 Balance check. Holding on to a rope provides a +4 bonus on the check, but it also requires

one free hand. Failing by 5 or more carries the same risk as for the stairs above.

Running or charging on the ledge requires a successful DC 12 Balance check. Someone who fails can't run or charge, and risks falling, but can otherwise act normally.

Broken Rope: The rope banister is broken in the section indicated on the map. It takes a successful DC 15 Use Rope check and 12 feet of rope to replace the banister.

Waterfall: See area 17.



FALSE TOMB ENTRY

Encounter Level 5

SETUP

Webs cover the room, and among them crawl the members of a single tomb spider broodswarm (B). These creatures are the remains of a web mummy the tomb robbers managed to destroy. Make a Hide check (with a +25 bonus) for them when the PCs enter. If nobody spots the broodswarm, the tiny spiders attack with surprise. A web mummy (W) leans against the statue in the room, out of the PCs' line of sight until the broodswarm attacks.

Unless the PCs succeed on a DC 20 Spot check when they enter the room, they don't initially see anything but a lumpy, web-covered wall when they look in the balcony's direction. Webs are woven from floor to ceiling there.

A tomb spider rests on the balcony (see area 20), nursing its wounds from its run-in with Xeron's gang, and wrapping a hobgoblin it killed. It might enter the melee here (see Development), but initially all the PCs have to worry about are its progeny.

WEB MUMMY

CR 4

hp 13 (29 full normal; 4 HD); DR 3/—

NE Medium undead

Init +1; Senses darkvision 60 ft., tremorsense 60 ft.;

Listen +1, Spot +1

Languages —

AC 20, touch 11, flat-footed 19

Immune undead immunities, webs

Fort +3, Ref +2, Will +5

Weakness vulnerability to fire

Speed 20 ft. (4 squares), climb 20 ft.

Melee slam +9 (1d6+10)

Base Atk +2; Grp +9

Atk Options enraged

Abilities Str 25, Dex 13, Con —, Int —, Wis 12, Cha 7

SQ adhesive, broodswarm host, undead traits

Feats Great Fortitude^a, Toughness^a

Skills Climb +15, Listen +1, Spot +1

Immunity to Webs (Ex) A web mummy's movement is not affected by webs, including those created by a *web* spell.

Enraged (Ex) If a web mummy's creator tomb spider is destroyed, the mummy becomes enraged, gaining a +2 bonus on attack rolls and damage rolls for the next 10 minutes.

Adhesive (Ex) A web mummy is extremely sticky. A weapon that strikes it is stuck fast unless the wielder succeeds on a DC 19 Reflex save. Creatures using natural weapons are automatically grappled if they fail the save. Pulling a weapon or limb loose from a web mummy requires a successful DC 19 Strength check.

Broodswarm Host (Ex) Tomb spiders use web mummies as hosts for their young. When this web mummy is destroyed, a broodswarm is released from the corpse and can act in the next round.

TOMB SPIDER BROODSWARM

CR 2

hp 22 (3 HD)

NE Tiny magical beast (swarm)

Init +5; Senses darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision, tremorsense 60 ft.; Listen +11, Spot +11

Languages —

AC 17, touch 17, flat-footed 12

Resist half damage from piercing and slashing weapons

Immune swarm immunities

Fort +5, Ref +8, Will +6

Weakness swarm vulnerabilities

Speed 20 ft. (4 squares), climb 20 ft.

Melee swarm (1d6 plus poison)

Space 10 ft.; Reach 0 ft.

Base Atk +3; Grp —

Atk Options distraction, poison (DC 13, 1d4 hp/1d4 hp)

Abilities Str 7, Dex 20, Con 15, Int 1, Wis 16, Cha 2

SQ swarm traits, tomb-tainted soul, web walk

Feats Alertness, Iron Will

Skills Climb +13, Hide +17*, Jump +2, Listen +11, Move Silently +7*, Spot +11

*Broodswarms gain an additional +8 racial bonus on Hide and Move Silently checks when moving in tomb spider webs.

Distraction (Ex) Fortitude DC 13, nauseated 1 round.

Poison (Ex) Creatures affected by tomb spider poison are healed by negative energy and harmed by positive energy as if they were undead. This effect lasts for 1 minute after a failed save.

Tomb-Tainted Soul (Ex) A tomb spider broodswarm is healed by negative energy and harmed by positive energy as if it were undead.

Web Walk (Ex) A tomb spider broodswarm can move across tomb spider sheet webs at its climb speed and can determine the exact location of any creature touching the web.

When the PCs enter the room, read:

Dust chokes the air in this large, open room. Webs cover the walls, but you can see the gleam of their glasslike surfaces in a few clear patches. The webs also blanket the walls to the south and cover the large statue in the center of the room. You can barely make out its features—it appears to be a man sitting on a throne. The tracks of humanoid are apparent, leading from the door deeper into the chamber.

When the PCs see the broodswarm, read:

A swarm of bright red, fist-sized spiders boils out of the webs, rushing toward you.

When the PCs see the web mummy, read:

A human-shaped creature wrapped in webs shambles out from behind the web-shrouded statue. Its skin ripples as if many tiny creatures squirm inside, and through openings in its wrappings, you see flashes of red.

TACTICS

Although the attacks of the mummy and broodswarm aren't sophisticated, none of the monsters pursues characters who manage to flee the room.

DEVELOPMENT

The tomb spider certainly hears the battle here, but it's busy and a little apprehensive after its thrashing by the tomb robbers. When the web mummy is destroyed, though, the spider stows the hobgoblin it's turning into a mummy, cuts

out of its protective webs, and 3 rounds later it crawls into area 19. If the PCs are still there, it attacks.

If the PCs attempt to ascend the stairs to the balcony before this happens, the tomb spider hides as indicated in the Setup section of area 20.

CONCLUSION

The damaged web mummy is worth only 800 experience points instead of its full amount. The broodswarm it produces is included in this total.

FEATURES OF THE AREA

The area has the following features.

Floors: The dusty floors pose no impediment to movement, but they do have tracks. If someone with the Track feat examines the room, a successful DC 15 Survival check reveals that the robbers looked through the room quickly, fought mummies that emerged from the sarcophagi in the alcove, then faced a spiderlike creature. One of them fell in battle, and the rest headed up the stairs, cutting away a tunnel of webbing as they progressed to the balcony.

Webs: Most of the webs are so thick and old in the lower section of the room that they are clearly visible and not sticky. These webs do burn slowly. Clearing an area of cobwebs can be done as part of a move action if a PC moves at half speed.

Those who move under the balcony, intentionally or not, must succeed on a DC 20 Spot check to notice fresh webbing; otherwise they stumble into it and become entangled. An entangled creature can escape with a successful DC 19 Escape Artist check or burst the web with a successful DC 19 Strength check. Each 5-foot section of webbing has 12 hit points and damage reduction 5/—.

Large Statue: 10 feet thick; AC 3; hardness 8; 1,800 hp; break DC 45; Climb DC 15. It costs 2 squares of movement to enter a square containing a statue, and a creature can't end its movement in a statue's square without climbing onto the statue. The statue provides cover. If broken, a statue fills its squares with dense rubble (see below).

If the PCs remove the webbing and dust from the statue, they see what appears to be the statue of a king on a throne. It bears a resemblance to the statue of the king on the hill outside (see area 8), though a successful DC 10 Search check reveals the stone hands and feet are actually shackled to the throne. This is a statue of the Betrayer.

Dense Rubble: Squares containing dense rubble cost 2 squares of movement to enter. Dense rubble increases the DC of Balance and Tumble checks by 5, and it imposes a -2 penalty on Move Silently checks. Running or charging through dense rubble is impossible.

Sarcophagi: Creatures can stand in squares that include a sarcophagus, but those squares cost 2 squares of movement to enter. A creature can jump into one of these sarcophagi, gaining a +1 bonus on melee attack rolls against those on the

floor. Doing so is automatic for someone who takes a move action in any of the sarcophagus's squares, or it can be done as part of a larger move action with a successful DC 24 Jump check (DC 12 with a 20-foot running start). Sarcophagi provide cover.

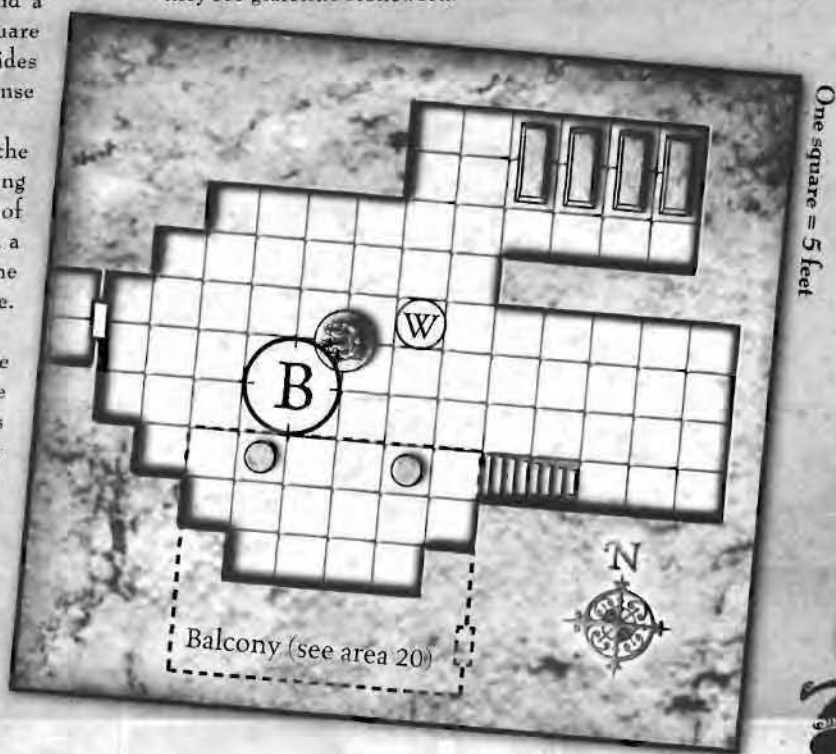
These sarcophagi have no lids. They contain no bodies and no treasure.

Gradual Stairs: The stairs to the balcony are easy to maneuver on. Creatures gain a +1 bonus on melee attack rolls against foes lower than them.

Balcony: The bottom of the balcony is 10 feet off the floor. Slender pillars support it, and if they both fall, the balcony collapses 2d4 rounds later. In this unlikely eventuality, use the rules for cave-ins (DMG 66). This area is described in detail in area 20.

Slender Pillar: 1-1/2 feet thick; AC 4; hardness 8; 250 hp; break DC 30; Climb DC 20. A creature standing in the same square as a slender pillar gains a +2 bonus to Armor Class and a +1 bonus on Reflex saves (these bonuses don't stack with bonuses from other sources of cover). The presence of a slender pillar does not otherwise affect a creature's fighting space.

Walls: If the PCs brush webs off any portion of the walls, they see glasslike stonework.



BALCONY

Encounter Level 6

SETUP

The tomb spider either joins the battle in area 19 on its initiative count (as detailed in that encounter), or it fights on the balcony after the PCs approach. If the characters ascend the balcony before the spider joins the fight in area 19, the spider hides and waits here in ambush. It has woven sheet webs across the way that the tomb robbers cut through, so the PCs might have a nasty surprise in store (see Sheet Webs).

When the PCs climb the stairs, read:

A shroud of webs, thick and strong, like gray, silken threads, covers a balcony. Someone has cut a hole in the shroud atop the stairs. The dust in the air below was thick, but here it is nearly unbearable. You can feel the particles the air.

When the PCs see the spider, read:

A spider as large as a horse rises up on spindly legs from its resting place in the southeast corner of the room. As it moves, pieces of its mottled gray chitin flake off.

When a PCs can see the whole balcony, read:

Amid the webs to the southeast, where the spider came from, is a human-shaped bundle and a jumble of discarded equipment. Just beyond the body, a door stands open to the east.

SHEET WEBS

Those who attempt to move onto the balcony from the stairs must succeed on a DC 20 Spot check to notice fresh webbing; otherwise they stumble into it and become entangled. An entangled creature can escape with a successful DC 19 Escape Artist check or burst the web with a successful DC 19 Strength check. Each 5-foot section of webbing has 12 hit points and damage reduction 5/—. Similar fresh sheet webs cover the open door to the east.

TACTICS

Once the tomb spider identifies the PCs most likely to damage it in melee, it uses webs to keep those foes in place while it attacks softer targets. It does the same to potent spellcasters and archers. The spider doesn't pursue those who escape the room, and it flees if it begins its turn with

TOMB SPIDER

CR 6

hp 50 (76 full normal; 8 HD); DR 5/good

NE Large magical beast

Init +5; Senses darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision, tremorsense 60 ft.; Listen +11, Spot +11

Languages —

AC 19, touch 14, flat-footed 14

Fort +10, Ref +11, Will +7

Speed 30 ft. (6 squares), climb 20 ft.

Melee bite +12 (2d6+7 plus poison)

Ranged web +12 ranged touch (entangle)

Space 10 ft; Reach 5 ft.

Base Atk +8; Grp +17

Atk Options poison (DC 18, 1d4 hp/1d4 hp)

Abilities Str 21, Dex 20, Con 19, Int 3, Wis 16, Cha 18

SQ tomb-tainted soul

Feats Alertness, Improved Natural Attack (bite), Iron Will

Skills Climb +13, Hide +8*, Jump +15, Listen +11, Move Silently +9*, Spot +11

*Tomb spiders gain an additional +8 racial bonus on Hide and Move Silently checks when in their webs.

Poison (Ex) Creatures affected by tomb spider poison are healed by negative energy and harmed by positive energy as if they were undead. This effect lasts for 1 minute after a failed save.

Web (Ex) A tomb spider can throw a web up to three times per day. This is similar to an attack with a net but has a maximum range of 60 feet, with a range increment of 10 feet, and is effective against targets of up to Medium size. The web anchors the target in place, allowing no movement. An entangled creature can escape with a successful DC 19 Escape Artist check or burst the web with a successful DC 19 Strength check. The web has 12 hit points and takes double damage from fire.

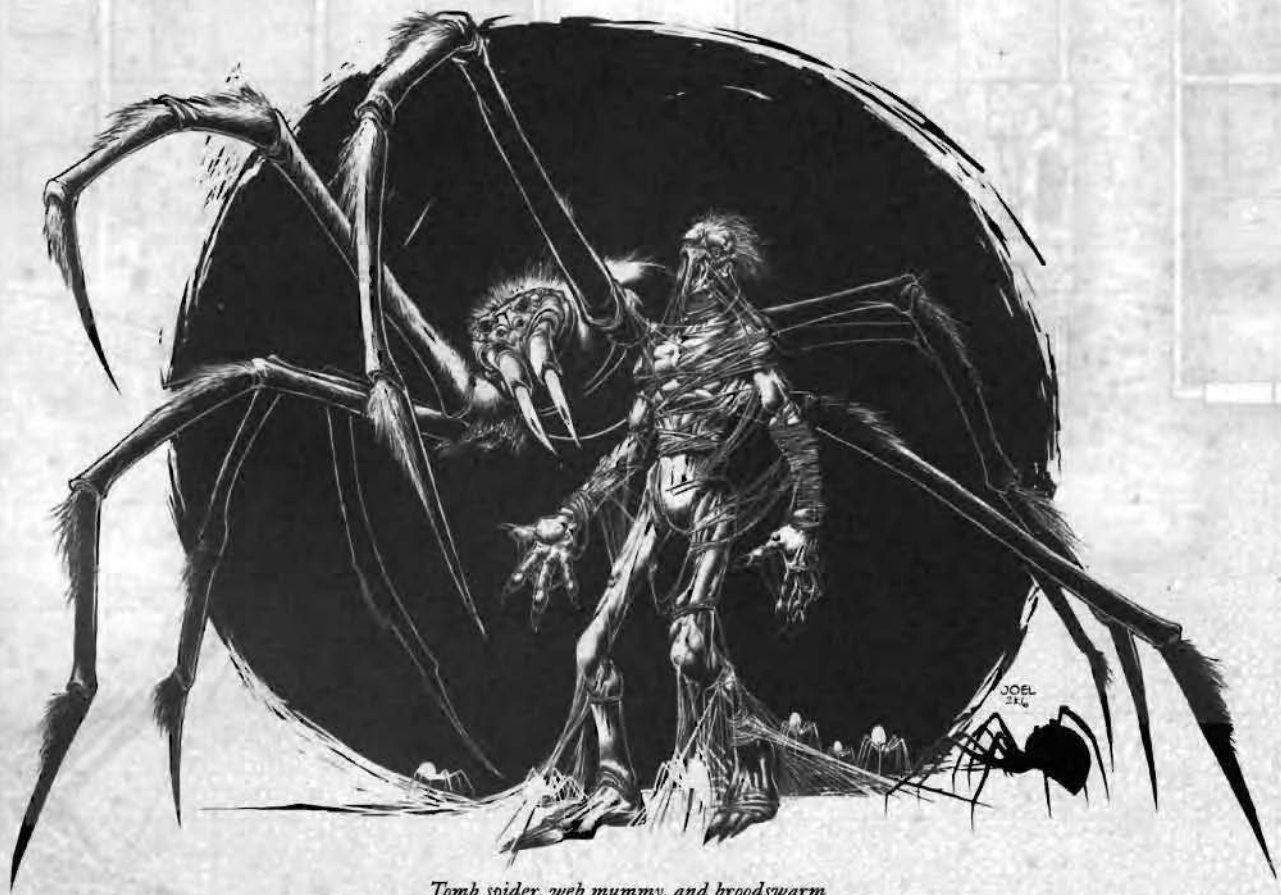
A tomb spider can create sheets of sticky webbing as described in the Sheet Webs section. A tomb spider can move across its own sheet web at its climb speed and can determine the exact location of any creature touching the web.

Tomb-Tainted Soul (Ex) A tomb spider is healed by negative energy and harmed by positive energy as if it were an undead creature.

fewer than 15 hit points. If it does so, it tries to flee through an opening where the waterfall's force isn't very strong in area 18. (Sigur might attack the spider there, trapping it and allowing the PCs to finish it off, if that makes for a dramatic scene you'd like to portray.)

CONCLUSION

Wounded as it is, the tomb spider is worth only 1,800 experience points to a party that defeats it.



Tomb spider, web mummy, and broodswarm

Illus. by J. Thomas

FEATURES OF THE AREA

The area has the following features.

Floors: If someone who has the Track feat examines the balcony, a successful DC 15 Survival check made by that character reveals that the robbers fled through the open door to the east.

Gradual Stairs: The stairs to the balcony are easy to maneuver on. Creatures gain a +1 bonus on melee attack rolls against foes lower than them.

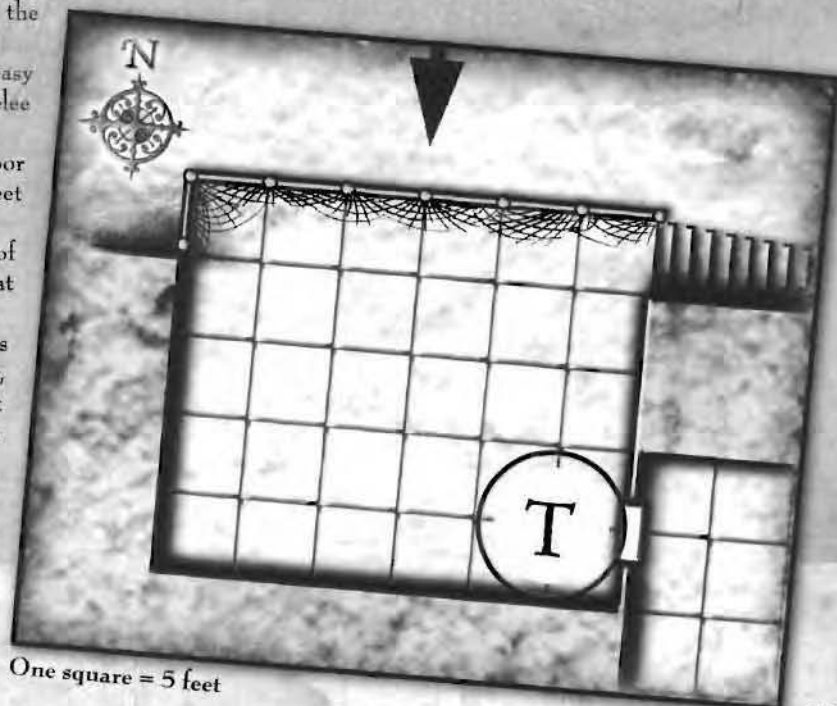
Eastern Door: Xeron and his crew left this door open as they fled the spider. It's covered in sheet webs.

Walls: If the PCs brush webs off any portion of the walls, they see fine, shining stonework like that in area 19.

Corpse: While this unfortunate hobgoblin was going to be the tomb spider's latest web mummy, the corpse isn't animated yet. If the webbing is cut away, the PCs can see that the corpse wears a mithral breastplate.

Equipment: Among worthless bits of debris, such as a burst waterskin, the balcony contains

three throwing axes, a heavy wooden shield, a masterwork battleaxe, and a satchel (food, bones, a *potion of cure moderate wounds*, two large diamonds [200 gp each], 12 pp, and 67 gp). An old skull here wears a *phylactery of faithfulness*.



TREACHERY'S PRICE

Encounter Level 6

SETUP

Within this room two lesser servants of the Betrayer, once the forgotten king's retainers, wait out eternity. One is a huecuva (H), a former paladin doomed by his own treachery who wears armor cursed by his wretched and wrathful existence. The other is a plague walker (P), a former healer whose festering greed has manifested in an unsavory way after his death.

PLAGUE WALKER

CR 3

hp 42 (6 HD)
CE Medium undead
Init -2; Senses darkvision 60 ft.; Listen +10, Spot +1
Languages —

AC 12, touch 8, flat-footed 12; bloated target

Immune undead immunities

Fort +2, Ref +0, Will +6

Speed 20 ft. (4 squares)

Melee 2 claws +8 each (1d6+4 plus diseased touch)

Base Atk +3; Grp +7

Special Actions putrid burst

Abilities Str 18, Dex 6, Con —, Int 4, Wis 13, Cha 3

SQ undead traits

Feats Skill Focus (Listen), Toughness, Weapon Focus (claws)

Skills Climb +7, Listen +10, Spot +1

Bloated Target (Ex) The -4 penalty for firing into melee does not apply to foes making ranged attacks made against a plague walker.

Diseased Touch (Su) Any living creature struck by a plague walker's claws must succeed on a DC 13 Fortitude save or be overcome with racking pain and mild nausea, causing that creature to become sickened for 1 minute. Creatures that have immunity to disease are not affected by this ability.

Putrid Burst (Ex) When reduced to one-quarter or fewer of its full normal hit points, a plague walker can use a swift action to explode. This burst has a 30-foot radius and deals 3d6 points of damage to everything in the area. All living creatures in the area are nauseated for 1 round; a successful DC 15 Reflex save halves the damage and negates the nauseated effect. If reduced to 0 hit points before it can activate its putrid burst, a plague walker dissolves into a pile of rotting flesh.

When the PCs come down the stairs, read:

A musty putrescence pervades the air here. Two warrior statues in this room look stern, even angry, as they brandish their spears southward. You see four standing sarcophagi along the southern wall, two sealed ones flanking two others that are open, their lids lying smashed on the ground before them. Each remaining lid has the graven image of a person on it, each one looking like the lid is a prison and each face screaming in pain, wide eyes set with rubies.

The sound of steel clearing its sheath is the first sign you have of danger as a skeletal figure in ornate full plate leaps from the eastern open coffin with a hiss, its eyes burning under its helm. "Blood and vengeance," it whispers.

With great deliberation, a bloated, rotting figure raises its arms and shambles forward from the other open coffin. A gurgling moan escapes its flabby lips.

HUECUVA

CR 5

hp 28 (3 HD); DR 10/silver

LE Medium undead (augmented human)

Init -1; Senses darkvision 60 ft.; Listen +2, Spot +2

Languages Common

AC 22, touch 9, flat-footed 22; foes gain +1 morale bonus on attack rolls

Immune undead immunities

Resist turn resistance +2

Fort +3, Ref +0, Will +3

Speed 20 ft. in full plate (4 squares; run at ×3 speed), base speed 30 ft.

Melee slam +6 (1d6+3 plus *huecuva blight*) or
Melee ceremonial longsword +6 (1d8+2/19–20)

Base Atk +3; Grp +6

Special Actions lay on hands (1/day, self only, heal 3 hp),
smite good 1/day (+1 attack, +3 damage)

Abilities Str 16, Dex 8, Con —, Int 4, Wis 15, Cha 13 (17 normal)

SQ undead traits

Feats Mounted Combat, Ride-By Attack, Toughness^a,
Weapon Focus (longsword)

Skills Diplomacy +7, Knowledge (nobility and royalty) +2,
Listen +2, Ride +5, Sense Motive +7, Spot +2

Possessions *armor of rage* (DMG 274), ceremonial
longsword (-1 on attack rolls and damage rolls, 5 gp)

Huecuva Blight (Ex) Those struck by a huecuva's slam must succeed on a DC 14 Fortitude save or contract the magical disease *huecuva blight* (incubation 1 day; 1d2 Str and 1d2 Con). A victim must succeed on two saves or receive magical treatment to recover from *huecuva blight*.

TACTICS

Both of these creatures are dull-witted, and they don't employ sophisticated tactics. The huecuva alternates slam and longsword attacks with a malign desire to infect the living with its blight.

Most important, however, is the creatures' hatred for each other, which prevents them from coordinating



Plague walker

their attacks. The plague walker despises its companion so much that it won't hesitate to explode. Fortunately for the huecuva, its DR applies against that attack.

Neither creature can leave area 21, but they pursue fleeing PCs anywhere in the chambers that make up the locale depicted in the tactical map.

FEATURES OF THE AREA

The area has the following features.

Ceiling: The ceiling here is 30 feet from the chamber floor.

Steep Stairs: The staircase here sharply descends 20 feet into the room. It has no banister or guard rail. It takes 2 squares of movement to enter each square. Creatures running or charging down steep stairs must succeed on a DC 10 Balance check, ending their movement 1d2×5 feet later if they fail. Those who fail by 5 or more fall prone and take 1d6 points of damage at the end of that movement. The DC of Tumble checks increases by 5. Creatures gain a +1 bonus on melee attack rolls against foes lower than them.

Medium Statues: 5 feet thick; AC 4; hardness 8; 900 hp; break DC 45; Climb DC 15. It costs 2 squares of movement to enter a square containing a statue, and a creature can't end its movement in a statue's square without climbing onto the statue. A Medium statue provides cover. If broken, a statue fills its square with dense rubble (see below).

Dense Rubble: Squares containing dense rubble cost 2 squares of movement to enter. Dense rubble increases the DC of Balance and Tumble checks by 5, and it imposes a -2 penalty on Move Silently checks. Running or charging through dense rubble is impossible.

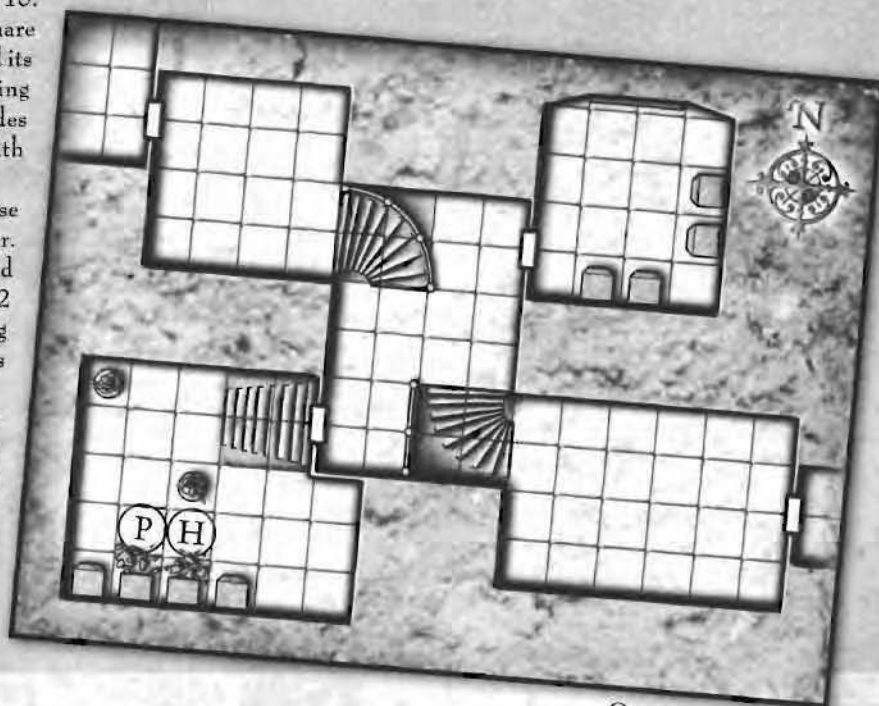
Intact Sarcophagi: These sarcophagi take up too much space for anyone to enter the squares occupied by them. Someone standing in an adjacent square east of the easternmost sarcophagus can use that coffin for cover.

Each lid is set with two flawed rubies (a total of four, 100 gp each). A sarcophagus's

lid can be removed by someone who makes a successful DC 25 Strength check. Inside each is a mummified corpse dressed in a burial robe and shrouded in linen. One is a hobgoblin, interred with a iron symbol (DC 20 Knowledge [religion] check to discern it as an ancient symbol of Maglubiyet).

Open Sarcophagi: Creatures can stand in squares that include an open sarcophagus, but those squares cost 2 squares of movement to enter. The eastern squares of the sarcophagus are impassable without jumping into or over the coffin.

Two flawed rubies (100 gp each) lie among the shattered remains of each sarcophagus's lid (a total of four).



One square = 5 feet

Illustration by J. Thomas

BETRAYER'S THRONE

Encounter Level 7

SETUP

The Betrayer (B) senses the PCs as soon as they come through the curtains, regardless of their efforts, and the magic of the room tells him whether invaders are good or evil. Regardless, he waits upon his throne.

The Betrayer also has two allies. He can transform the statues in the corners of the room into skeletal warriors riding skeletal steeds.

When the PCs see the throne room proper, read:

This large room has glossy stone floor and marble walls. Patterns on the floor and walls shine in the magical light. To the southeast, you see the statue of a mounted warrior, his horse's front hooves kicking at the air. North of that statue, along the eastern wall, are two iron coffers. A large dais and a jewel-encrusted throne are set against the north wall. Sitting on the throne is a handsome, clean-shaven man who has a powerful build, his raven locks spilling from beneath a golden crown onto the pauldrons of his fine plate armor and violet cloak. Sheathed blades lean on either side of his fine chair. As you look on, he opens his dark eyes and frowns. "Who would disturb the rest of the king?" he asks in a deep voice.

TALKING WITH MADNESS

The creature on the throne is the Betrayer, though the PCs might believe he is the king. He certainly won't dissuade them from that belief.

When speaking to a good-aligned person, the Betrayer cannot lie, but he can dissemble (using his Bluff skill). He rambles and cajoles, questioning the PCs about the outside world and expounding on days of old. His manner is noble, and his knowledge of court life is genuine. Some questions he can't answer, however—he is forbidden to speak his name, the name of the king, the name of the queen, or the names of any of their servants and protectors.

In roleplaying the Betrayer, depict an intelligent and literate man who is ignorant of the modern world but eager to learn. He expects respect, but he seems to be fair and honorable, and he seems to want only to talk. However, he occasionally slips into madness, spewing incoherent statements or displaying violent emotions.

The Betrayer consistently masks his contempt and hatred for all living beings. During his interaction with the PCs, make a few Bluff checks for him opposed by the PCs' Sense Motive checks. They might discern his malevolence.

The Betrayer brooks no insult. If he becomes annoyed with the PCs, or if they bore him, he attacks immediately, trying to bluff to get the drop on the characters. If the result of his Bluff

FEATURES OF THE AREA

The area has the following features.

High Ground: Someone standing on one of the features described below receives a +1 bonus on melee attack rolls against foes on the floor.

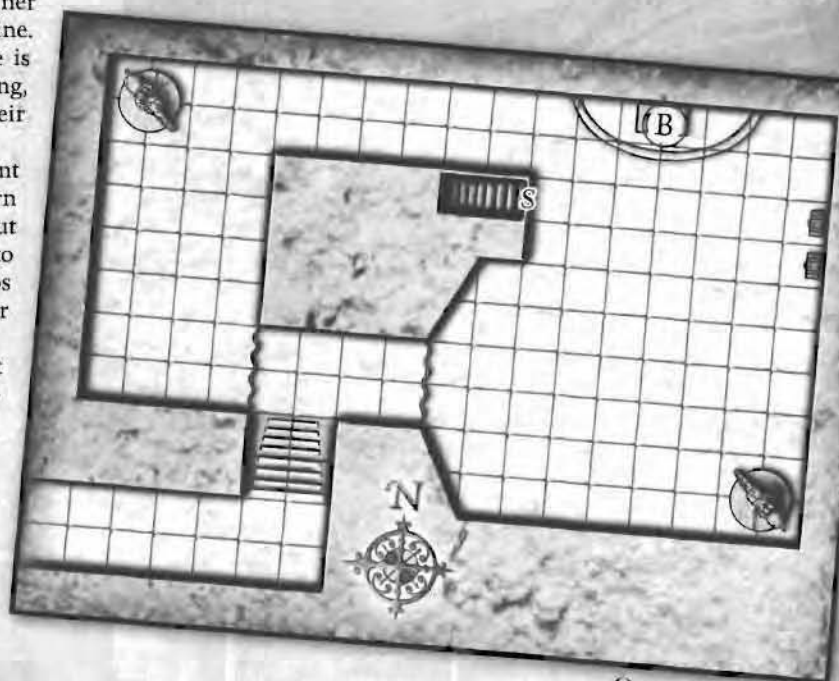
Throne: 7 feet wide, 3 feet thick, 8 feet tall; AC 3; hardness 8; 1,200 hp; break DC 45. It costs 2 squares of movement to enter a square containing the throne. It can provide cover. Someone can clamber atop the throne's seat by taking a move action to do so from a square next to it. Otherwise, jumping atop the throne requires a successful DC 16 Jump check (DC 8 with a 20-foot running start).

Dais: This platform poses no penalty to movement.

Pedestal: The pedestals where the skeletons stood are 3 feet high, and they can be ascended by anyone who takes a move action to do so when in an adjacent square. Otherwise, jumping atop a pedestal requires a successful DC 24 Jump check (DC 12 with a 20-foot running start).

Coffers: In an effort to mislead thieves into thinking they had reached the king's tomb, the builders filled two small coffers here with a total of 500 gp, 10 pp, and a gold and diamond necklace (400 gp).

Secret Door: A successful DC 25 Search check is required to find this secret door. Any PC who comes near the door and makes a successful DC 18 Listen check can hear shouting and clanging through the wall. If a PC succeeds on the Listen check, the party gets a +6 circumstance bonus on checks to discover the door. Opening the door takes a successful DC 25 Strength check if the Betrayer is still alive and he wills it to remain closed, but it moves easily if he is dead or willing to let it open. (It's best to let the PCs find the door if they're having trouble—don't let things become boring.)



One square = 5 feet

THE BETRAYER**CR 5**

hp 63 (7 HD); fortified body
 CE Medium aberration
 Init +3; Senses darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision; Listen +1,
 Spot +1

Languages Common

AC 21, touch 13, flat-footed 18

Immune mind-affecting spells and abilities

Fort +6, Ref +5, Will +8

Weakness divine suffering

Speed 40 ft. (8 squares)

Melee slam +9 (1d6+4 plus horrific rot) or

Melee +1 *bastard sword* +10 (1d10+5/19–20) or

Melee +1 *bastard sword* +8 (1d10+5/19–20) and

slam +7 (1d6+2 plus horrific rot) or

Melee +1 *bastard sword* +8 (1d10+5/19–20) and

+1 *short sword* +8 (1d6+3/19–20)

Base Atk +5; Grp +9

Atk Options Power Attack

Special Actions call to betrayal

Abilities Str 18, Dex 17, Con 18, Int 12, Wis 12, Cha 16

Feats Iron Will^B, Power Attack, Two-Weapon Fighting,

Exotic Weapon Proficiency (*bastard sword*)

Skills Bluff +8, Diplomacy +9, Intimidate +10, Knowledge

(history) +6, Knowledge (nobility and royalty) +6,

Listen +1, Ride +8, Sense Motive +6, Spot +1

Possessions +1 *bastard sword*, +1 *short sword*

Fortified Body (Ex) The Betrayer's plate armor and crown are parts of his body. These features, along with his frightful physiology, grant him a 50% chance to ignore extra damage from critical hits and sneak attacks.

Divine Suffering (Su) If struck by a positive energy effect that deals damage, such as a spell that has the good descriptor, the Betrayer takes 50% more damage from that attack. When caught within the area of a turn undead attempt, the Betrayer takes 1d6 points of damage plus 1 point per level of the cleric performing the turn attempt.

Horrific Rot (Su) A living creature struck by the Betrayer's slam attack must succeed on a DC 17 Fortitude save or take 1 point of Charisma damage. The affected creature's skin and muscle appears to distend and detach until that creature looks somewhat like the Betrayer.

Call to Betrayal (Su) As a swift action, the Betrayer can order an opponent to attack an adjacent creature. That foe must succeed on a DC 16 Will save or be forced to attempt an attack against the indicated target as an immediate action. This is a mind-affecting ability.

check exceeds the highest Sense Motive check among the PCs, the characters are surprised when he attacks. Once he takes this step, the final aspect of his curse is revealed.

When the Betrayer attacks, read:

Leaping to his feet, the man on the throne draws his blades and descends from the dais. As he does, the bejeweled throne fades into a plain stone seat. The man's hair withdraws under the crown, and his skin grays and runs, revealing bone and muscle beneath. His armor sags and corrodes, seemingly grafting to his distended flesh along with the crown, which has lost all luster. Lidless, his eyes burn with madness.

2 MOUNTED SKELETONS**CR 2**

hp 32 each (5 HD); DR 5/bludgeoning

NE Large undead

Init +6; Senses darkvision 60 ft.; Listen +0, Spot +0

AC 17, touch 12, flat-footed 15

Immune cold, undead immunities

Fort +1, Ref +3, Will +4

Speed 40 ft. in chainmail (8 squares), base speed 50 ft.

Melee lance +6 (1d8+6/×3) and

2 hooves +6 each (1d6+4) and

bite +1 (1d4+2) or

Melee longsword +6 (1d8+4/19–20) and

2 hooves +6 each (1d6+4) and

bite +1 (1d4+2)

Space 10 ft.; Reach 10 ft. (lance), 5 ft. (bite and hooves)

Base Atk +2; Grp +6

Abilities Str 18, Dex 15, Con —, Int —, Wis 10, Cha 1

SQ fused, undead traits

Feats Improved Initiative^B

Skills Listen +0, Spot +0

Possessions chainmail, lance, longsword, military saddle and bridle

Fused (Ex) The human skeleton and horse skeleton are fused together, and they act as one unit.

"How dare you come here?" he howls. "Now you shall share my pain. Knights, to arms!"

The statue of the mounted figure in the corner changes to reveal a lance-bearing skeletal warrior atop a skeletal horse. A clatter from the passage to the west suggests more trouble.

TACTICS

The Betrayer attacks the nearest PC using both his weapons, intermittently using a slam to cause horrific rot. He uses call to betrayal every round. When he can, he takes advantage of a flank provided by one of the mounted skeletons. If any character uses positive energy or a turn attempt to damage the Betrayer, he focuses on killing that character as quickly as he can.

The mounted skeletons charge into the melee on the first round, dealing double damage with their lances if they hit. If possible, they withdraw and charge again. If forced into close-quarters combat, the humanoid portions of the skeletons drop their lances and draw their longswords to attack.

The skeletons turn to dust if slain, and that dust magically begins to blow toward the dais or the pedestal each creature started on. They re-form over the course of 7 days. However, they are tied to the will of the Betrayer. If he dies, they turn to dust immediately, never to re-form.

None of the creatures in this room surrender for any reason.

THE KING'S TOMB

Encounter Level 7

SETUP

Have the players set their miniatures representing the characters in the order they descend. Xeron (X) and Jeroog (J) make Listen checks as the PCs approach, but they both have a -10 penalty on their checks (in addition to the -1 per 10 feet the characters are from them) due to the noise of the pickaxe against the stone and their distraction with the work at hand. The DC for the checks is the lowest result among the PCs' Move Silently checks or a flat DC of 5. Even if Xeron knows intruders approach, he continues to shout and order the hobgoblin to dig. He's just not surprised when the PCs arrive.

When the PCs can see the room's eastern section, read:

Two more thoughtlessly opened sarcophagi occupy the eastern portion of the room. Here also, swinging a pick at the floor is a male hobgoblin clad in half-plate, his black hair shorn close to his scalp. Nearby stands a slight but imposing man in rich violet robes, reptilian scales on his forehead and bald pate, as well as his bright yellow eyes, marking him as not quite human. He leans wearily on an ornate spear. "Fools!" he sputters. "You'll ruin everything!"

JEROOG

CR 3

hp 30 (3 HD)
Male hobgoblin fighter 3
LE Medium humanoid (goblinoid)
Init +2; Senses darkvision 60 ft.; Listen +1, Spot +1
Languages Common, Goblin

AC 17, touch 10, flat-footed 17; Dodge
Fort +6, Ref +3, Will +2

Speed 20 ft. in half-plate (4 squares; run at x3 speed), base speed 30 ft.
Melee mwk greataxe +7 (1d12+3/x3)
Ranged throwing axe +5 (1d6+2)
Base Atk +3; Grp +5
Atk Options Cleave, Power Attack
Combat Gear *potion of cure moderate wounds*

Abilities Str 15, Dex 15, Con 16, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 8
Feats Cleave, Dodge, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (greataxe)
Skills Climb +1, Jump +1, Listen +1, Spot +1
Possessions combat gear plus masterwork half-plate, masterwork greataxe, 3 throwing axes, 4 pearls (100 gp each), 47 gp

TACTICS

In the first round, Xeron draws his *figurine of the nagatha* from his pouch and throws it into an open square adjacent to one of the PCs. The figurine shatters when it hits the stone, summoning up a nagatha.

When the nagatha appears, it attacks on the initiative count immediately following Xeron's, targeting an unengaged PC. Xeron can command the nagatha as a free action. The creature remains for 3 rounds.

XERON

CR 5

hp 29 (8HD)
Male yuan-ti pureblood sorcerer 4
CE Medium monstrous humanoid
Init +7; Senses darkvision 60 ft.; Listen +5, Spot +5
Languages Abyssal, Common, Draconic, Goblin, Undercommon, Yuan-Ti

AC 19, touch 14, flat-footed 18; Dodge
SR 18
Fort +2, Ref +8, Will +9

Speed 30 ft. (6 squares)
Melee +1 spear +9 (1d8/x3)
Base Atk +6; Grp +6
Combat Gear *potion of cure moderate wounds, wand of magic missile* (CL 3rd; 13 charges), *figurine of the nagatha*

Sorcerer Spells Known (CL 4th):
2nd (4/day; 2 used)—*Melf's acid arrow* (+9 ranged touch)
1st (7/day; 4 used)—*mage armor*†, *magic missile*, *ray of enfeeblement* (+9 ranged touch)
0 (6/day; 3 used)—*acid splash* (+9 ranged touch), *detect magic*, *mage hand*, *prestidigitation*, *read magic*, *touch of fatigue* (+9 melee touch, DC 13)
† Already cast

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 8th):
At will—*detect poison* (CL 6th)
1/day—*animal trance* (DC 16), *cause fear* (DC 15), *charm person*† (DC 15), *darkness*†, *entangle* (DC 15)
† Already used

Abilities Str 8, Dex 16, Con 10, Int 15, Wis 12, Cha 19
SQ alternate form
Feats Alertness^B, Blind-Fight^B, Combat Casting, Dodge, Improved Initiative
Skills Bluff +9, Concentration +10 (+14 to cast defensively), Diplomacy +6, Disguise +11 (+13 to act in character, +18 when impersonating a human), Knowledge (history) +7, Knowledge (arcana) +10, Listen +5, Spellcraft +9, Spot +5
Possessions combat gear plus +1 spear, *ring of protection* +1, scribe's kit, map of the tomb complex

Alternate Form (Su) Xeron can assume the form of a Tiny to Large viper (MM 280) as a psionic power.

Xeron then uses *cause fear* on a fighter type, following up with *ray of enfeeblement* if *cause fear* doesn't work. Then he focuses on dealing damage. He starts with *Melf's acid arrow* and works down to his less powerful remaining spells. Avoiding melee as long as possible, he resorts to his *wand of magic missile* only after he has exhausted his 2nd- and 1st-level spellcasting capabilities.

Jeroog drops his pickaxe, draws his greataxe, and charges an obvious melee combatant. He tries to stay between Xeron and the PCs as best he can, using his Power Attack feat if he thinks that's to his advantage.

Xeron doesn't flee or surrender. He knows the Vanguard of Sertrous will kill him anyway if he fails. If Xeron goes down, however, Jeroog attempts to escape up the stairs, withdrawing if possible.

CONCLUSION

The nagatha in this encounter isn't worth any experience—it comes and goes too quickly.

FEATURES OF THE AREA

The area has the following features.

Gradual Stairs: The stairs from the Betrayer's throne room are long and narrow, but gradual. Creatures gain a +1 bonus on melee attack rolls against foes lower than them.

Medium Statues: 5 feet thick; AC 4; hardness 8; 900 hp; break DC 45; Climb DC 15. It costs 2 squares of movement to enter a square containing a statue, and a creature can't end its movement in a statue's square without climbing onto the statue. A Medium statue provides cover. If broken, a statue fills its square with dense rubble (see below).

The lifelike effect of the statues is magical—they radiate strong auras if viewed using *detect magic* (DC 23 Spellcraft check to determine the school is illusion).

Dense Rubble: Squares containing dense rubble cost 2 squares of movement to enter. Dense rubble increases the DC of Balance and Tumble checks by 5, and it imposes a -2 penalty on Move Silently checks. Running or charging through dense rubble is impossible.

Sarcophagi Lids: The squares containing sarcophagi lids cost 2 squares of movement to enter. A lid increases the DC of Balance and Tumble checks by 5. Running or charging through a square containing a lid is impossible.

Sarcophagi: Creatures can't stand in squares that include a sarcophagus, but a creature can jump onto a sarcophagus, gaining a +1 bonus on melee attack rolls against those on the floor. Doing so is automatic for someone who takes a move action in a square adjacent to that sarcophagus, or it can be done as part of a larger move action with a successful DC 24 Jump

NAGATHA

CR 4

hp 60 (8 HD)

CE Medium monstrous humanoid

Init -1; Senses blind, blindsight 60 ft.; Listen +15

Languages Abyssal, Common

AC 17, touch 9, flat-footed 17

Immune gaze attacks, illusions, visual effects

Fort +7, Ref +5, Will +7

Speed 10 ft. (2 squares), burrow 10 ft.

Melee 2 claws +10 each (1d8+2) and bite +5 (1d4+1 plus poison)

Base Atk +8; Grp +10

Atk Options poison (DC 17, 2d4 Wis/2d4 Wis)

Abilities Str 14, Dex 8, Con 16, Int 6, Wis 13, Cha 9

SQ viper's speed

Feats Great Fortitude, Improved Natural Attack (claws), Skill Focus (Listen)

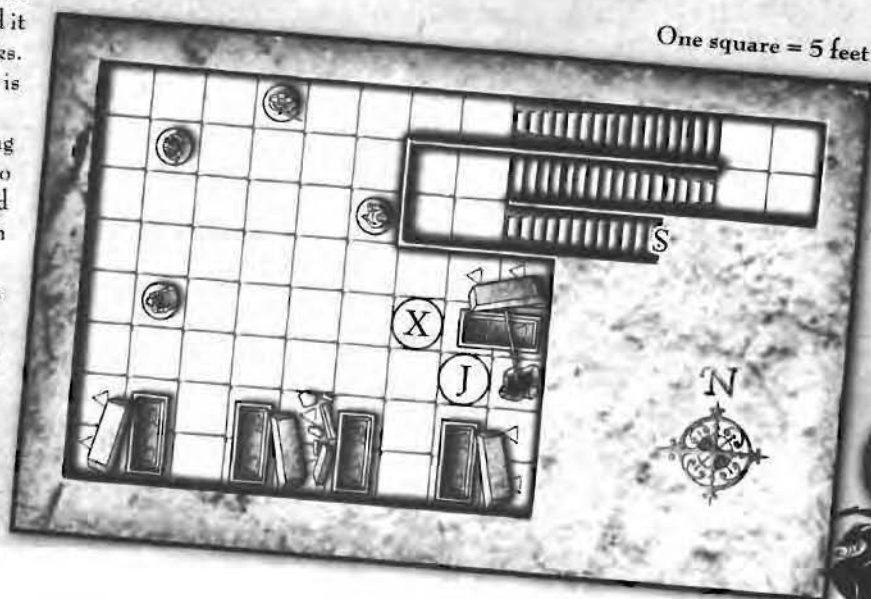
Skills Listen +15

Viper's Speed (Ex) Whenever a nagatha takes two move actions to move twice its land speed or a full-round action to run, it gains a 40-foot bonus to its land speed, allowing it to move up to 100 feet with two move actions or run up to 200 feet.

check (DC 12 with a 20-foot running start). Sarcophagi provide cover.

Skeletal remains of the king's three closest allies lie in disarray among burial linens in their sarcophagi, but the king's remains (in the northeastern sarcophagus) are missing. The sarcophagus in the southeast corner contains a map of the king's ancient realm—the land that died when the Betrayer slew the forgotten king.

Hole: In the floor south of the king's sarcophagus is a hole 2-1/2 feet square. That square costs 2 squares of movement to enter, and Tumble checks are impossible in it. The stone floor has hardness 8, and every 10 points of damage dealt to it expands the hole by one inch. A knotted rope tied to the king's sarcophagus leads into the hole, which in turn opens onto a tunnel that stretches into the darkness...



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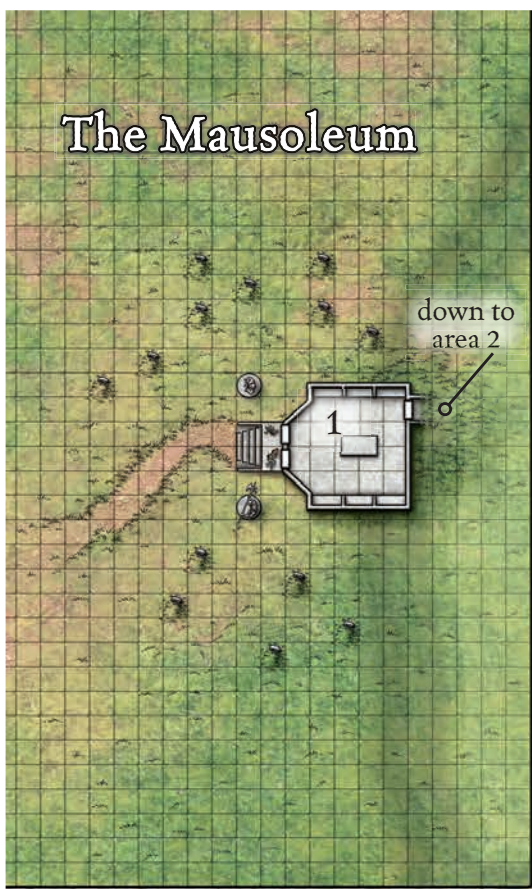
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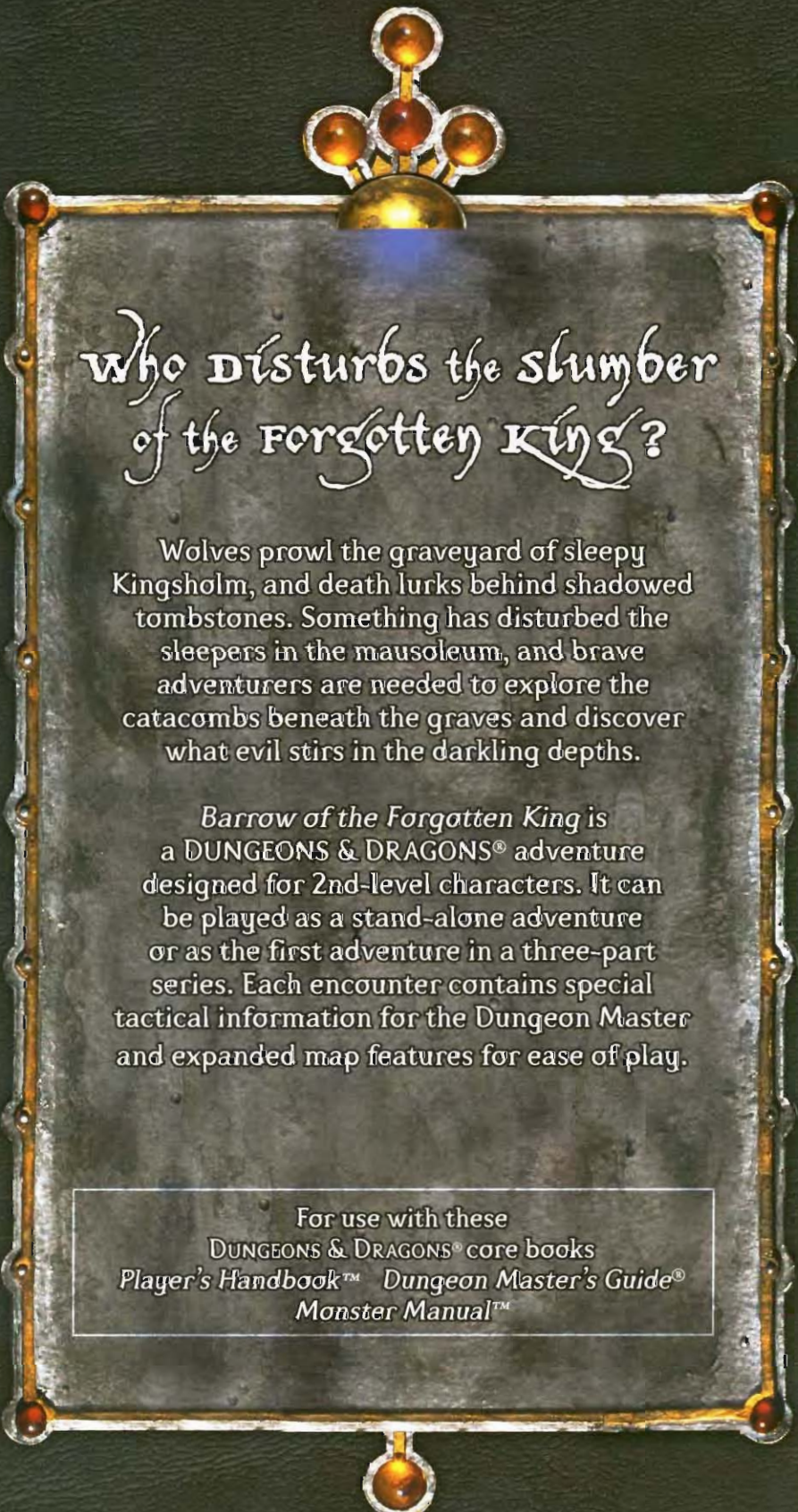
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The Mausoleum



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