

THIS ADVENTURE MODULE IS 4E COMPATIBLE



MASTER DUNGEONS PRESENTS CURSE OF THE KINGSPIRE



A LEVEL 4-6 ADVENTURE
by Harley Stroh



MASTER DUNGEONS



M2: CURSE OF THE KINGSPIRE
BY HARLEY STROH

CURSE OF THE KINGSPIRE

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MASTER DUNGEONS

Some explorers perish in pit traps while others found fiefdoms. What sets them apart? Master dungeons: heroes are chiseled from the challenges they face, and those who conquer master dungeons rise to be kings. Lost artifacts that raise continents from the sea, an empire's treasures buried to avoid capture, nascent godlings amassing divine energies: choose these challenges over the goblin cavern if you want to prove yourself worthy of glory and empire!

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INTRODUCTION

Legends are born from epic heroes and timeless adventures. While some are content to wile away their lives wresting grubby pieces of copper from kobolds and goblins, a select few are called to high adventure. Many will rise and many will fall, but those that survive will have earned the fated title of Hero.

Curse of Kingspire is designed for 5 characters of 4th through 6th level, but can easily be scaled to accommodate higher-level PCs or larger adventuring companies. Eladrin and elven heroes will enjoy moments in the spotlight, with special encounters keyed for (or against) them. Wizards will find special challenges amid the eldritch secrets concealed by the Kingspire, rogues will be tested during the infiltration of the citadel, and warriors of every stripe will find foes aplenty to challenge them.

Caution: Like all Master Dungeons, Curse of Kingspire is not recommended for first-time GMs or players. The adventure is designed to reward intelligent play, just as foolish choices must surely be punished. New players testing their character's wings may find the adventure unforgiving and harsh, while new GMs may be challenged when the adventure calls for improvisation. There are many other excellent adventures eminently more suitable for beginning players and GMs.

However, for players and GMs looking for a challenging, dynamic adventure, or for those brazen enough to laugh in the face of danger, the Kingspire awaits!

ADVENTURE SUMMARY

The Curse of the Kingspire takes place in three distinct chapters, each requiring — and rewarding — its own style of game play. The first chapter, focusing on the infiltration of a shire and the ruins atop the ridge known as the Kingspire, rewards careful infiltration, and quick, deadly strikes. The second chapter, taking place in a distant, otherworldly realm where the Kingspire is eternally under siege, rewards roleplaying and overcoming skill challenges. The final chapter, set in the gloomy underworld beneath Old Kingspire, is a violent, bloody climax, where the heroes must use both wit and brawn to overcome monstrous foes.

The adventure begins with the heroes investigating rumors of demon worship on the outskirts of the realm. Happening upon the hamlet of Kingshire, the PCs discover it devoid of inhabitants, save for a few cultic devotees. The leader of the cult, driven to insanity by the encroaching madness that roils and seethes amid the foul mists of the Drachenvold, has been sacrificing his fellow villagers to the fell power that lurks within the ruins of the Kingspire citadel. While Arkos aims to restore his people to greatness, the rite he is enacting has far graver results.

Investigating the abandoned hamlet of Kingshire, the PCs encounter a band of cultists, a rearguard ordered to ward off any that might risk interrupting Arkos' fell rite. Continuing with their investigations, the PCs press into the Drachenvold swamp, where they encounter the sinister remains of Arkos' wicked deeds.

Arriving at Kingspire citadel, the PCs infiltrate the ruined keep, by guile or by blade, bypassing guardian sentries and traps and finally encountering Arkos, the leader of the cult. In a climactic battle, Arkos' misbegotten rite comes to a head, resulting in an eldritch apocalypse that washes over the heroes, transporting them through space and time to Old Kingspire, where an eternal battle wages.

In order to escape this extra-dimensional prison, the PCs must ply their guile against the sinister Crow King and his Twilight Court. Winning the graces of the king (or failing that, one of his rivals), the PCs discover the secret that will win their release:

The Twilight Court is divided, the eldest son of the eladrin clan exiled to the endless caves beneath the Kingspire. When he fled from his treacherous family, the rogue lord stole an ancient *Runeblade* in his flight. That same relic holds the key to releasing the Kingspire from its internment, returning the Twilight Court (and the heroes) back to the Known Realms from whence they came.

But recovering the relic is no small feat, and will test the heroes to their fullest. The worst crimes are those committed brother against brother, and the Twilight Court is no exception. Before recovering the *Runeblade* the PCs will face down a tribe of rebel Eladrin, their dead master, and the gruesome fiend that lurks beneath the Kingspire and the plot to undo all the realms of the North.

GAME MASTERS SECTION

ENCOUNTER TABLE

To help the GM prepare, we have included a quick reference table showing all encounters at a glance. The abbreviations used are: **Loc** — the location number keyed to the map for the encounter. **Pg** — the module page number that the encounter can be found on. **Type** — this indicates if the encounter is a trap (T), puzzle (P), combat (C), or hazard (H). **Encounter** — the key monsters, traps or NPCs that can be found in the encounter.

SCALING INFORMATION

Curse of the Kingspire is designed for five characters of 1st through 6th level, but it can be easily modified for parties of different sizes or levels. Note that, like all Master Dungeons, the Kingspire is a deadly place, not intended for new players or GMs. A simple misstep that might be easily forgiven in another adventure can have dire repercussions beneath the Kingspire.

Location	Pg	Type	Encounter	EL
K-1	8	P/C	The Witch of Drachenvold	1
			Two ancient crocodiles	
			Three jumping spiders	
K-3	11	P/C	Jon Ocat	6
			Four spearmen	
			Four huntsmen	
K-5	12	C	<i>The Miller's Apprentice</i>	6
D-2	15	C	Three swamp zombies	3
			Five decrepit swam zombies	
			Ancient crocodile	
I-1	17	C	Army of Phantasm Eladrin and Savages	1+
I-5	18	C	Three archers	1+
I-6	19	C	Two woodsmen	6
			Five hunters	
			Ten cultists	
I-8	22	T	<i>Icy Ward</i>	1
I-9	22	P/T	Collapsing Ceiling and Iron Maiden Trap	3
I-11	23	C	Five Ruined Gargoyles	5
I-12	24	T	Oil Trap	2
I-13	25	C	<i>Arkos</i>	5
			Two cult champions	
			Four initiates	
Level 2	28	C	Eight knights of Elihai	7
2-5	32	T/C	Hall of Four Panes	Var.
2-6	36	C	Invading Savages	Var.
2-7	37	C	Invading Savages	Var.
2-8	38	T	<i>Frostward</i> Trap	1
2-9	38	C	Invading Savages	Var.
2-10	38	C	Invading Savages	Var.
2-11	42	C	Invading Savages	Var.
2-12	42	C	War Bear	7
2-14	43	C	<i>Torturer</i> , Lesser Fomorian	5
		T	Poison Gas Trap	2
2-15	44	P	Portal Puzzle	5
2-16	45	C	<i>The Mad Gaoler</i>	7
			Eight dire rats	
			Three rat swarms	
2-19	47	T	Oil Cloud	1
		T	Collapsing Ceiling	
2-20	48	H	Doom Arch	5
2-21	48	C	Two feywracked Impalers	8
			Three feywracked Knights	
			Feywracked Shaman	
			Javelin trap	
			Collapsing hut	
2-25	52	C	Devourer Worm	10

With your specific party in mind, consider the following suggestions:

Weaker parties (3 or fewer characters, or lower than 5th level): Remove 1 spearman and 1 huntsman from area K-3; remove all the decrepit swamp zombies from area D-2; remove the 2 woodsmen from area 1-6; reduce the number of gargoyles in area 1-11 to 3; remove the 4 initiates from area 1-13; lower the shard dragon's level by 2 in area 2-5; reduce the number of invading savages by half in area 2-6 through 2-11; remove the war-bear from area 2-12; remove the rat swarms from area 2-16; reduce the number of impalers to 1 and the number of knights to 1 in area 2-21; lower the devourer worm's level by 2.

Stronger parties (7 or more characters, or higher than 5th level): Increase the Witch's level by 2 and add 3 more jumping spiders to area K-1; add 2 spearmen and 2 hunstmnen to area K-3; add 2 levels to the Miller's Apprentice; add 3 more swamp zombies and 5 more decrepit zombie to area D-2; add 2 huntsmen to area 1-5; double the number of woodsmen and hunters in area 1-6; increase the levels of the *icy ward* by 3; add 2 ruined gargoyles to area 1-11; add 2 levels to Arkos and his cult champions in area 1-13; increase the shard dragon's level by +2; increase the level of the *frostward* tap by +2; raise the war bear's level by +2; raises the Torturer's level by +2; increase the Mad Gaoler's level by +2, and add an additional 3 dire rats; double the number of impalers and knights in area 2-21; increase the worm's level by +2.



GETTING THE PLAYERS INVOLVED

The Kingspire offers mystery, wealth, and magic to spare, and these are but a few lures to offer curious PCs. GMs can design story hooks specific to their PCs, or modify one of the story hooks listed below:

- The party, sent at the behest of their liege, has been ordered to ferret out the mystery lurking beneath the Kingspire. The liege's finest seers aver that the Kingspire was once home to a clan of rebel eladrin, though the truth behind the legends will likely never be known.
- Studying ancient tomes late into the night, one of the PCs (likely either a wizard or warlock) discovers an antediluvian scroll hinting at the Kingspire's secrets. Penned in an ancient eladrin tongue, the scroll records the flight of a lost clan, which built up a citadel high atop the Kingspire. Of more interest to the heroes, the eladrin carried a fabled eldritch blade with them, a relic from another age: the *Runeblade*.
- The party's cleric is tasked by his church to root out a nascent cult taken root in the shire at the foot of the Kingspire. The cleric is shown a terrible vision of a war between eladrin and sub-human savages, and once the cult is placed to rest, the cleric and his allies must put the wandering spirits to rest.

BACKGROUND STORY

The Kingshire was once a hamlet of sixty or so hunters and fisherfolk that made their livelihood on the marshy banks of the Drachenvold. The hamlet sits on the tip of a peninsula that extends into the marsh, and takes its name from the rocky ridge at the heart of the swamp — the Kingspire.

All that changed in past winter, when Arkos the Miller ventured into the ice-laden swamp to harvest roots from the lower slopes of the Kingspire. Caught in a surprise ice storm, Arkos was forced to weather the night in the ruins. As night fell and howling winds stripped his life away, he witnessed ghostly lights dancing high on the icy ridge. Mistaking the lights for searchers sent from the hamlet, Arkos crawled from his hovel, pleading for aid. Exhausted and frozen, he reached the top of the spire only to discover the lights were phantasms, ghost warriors with blazing brands, heedless of the freezing rain.

Arkos cried out to any gods that would listen, offering up his soul for his life. And while no gods deigned to answer, some *thing* did.

When the storm broke, Arkos emerged from the swamp a changed man. Though covered in sheet ice from head to toe, an unnatural fire burned behind his crystal blue eyes. Returning to his village, Arkos bore witness to his miracle to

any that would listen. In short order, the charismatic miller was the leader of a small — but devout — cult, dedicated to the mystery of the Kingspire. Each full moon, Arkos and his followers rowed their shallow punts into the swamp and made offerings to the unknown powers of the Kingspire. At first the cultists offered up simple animal sacrifices, laying the bodies of lambs and calves upon the fallen stone blocks that litter the slope of the Kingspire ridge. Whether out of divine favor or simply the fickle, uncaring hand of fate, the cultists prospered while the rest of the hamlet suffered misfortune and disaster.

Fearing the rise of the swamp-born cult, the local priest sent word to the king. The messenger betrayed the priest and instead reported the missive to Arkos. The next full moon, it was the priest's steaming corpse that adorned the crude altar. The death of the priest ushered in a time of terror for the villagers. Those with the means to flee deserted the hamlet, but those that were too poor or weak to leave either professed devotion to Arkos' mystery god or were offered up in bloody sacrifice.

Arkos knew that their sacrifices were merely a means to an end. In his heart, he knew that the secret of Kingspire was hidden inside the ridge, and the miller was marking the path with blood.

THE SECRET OF KINGSPIRE

Ages past, long after the sun had set on the eladrin, the Drachenvold swamp marked the furthest reaches of the feyborn empire. As the empire fell into darkness and chaos, rebel lords accelerated its decline by breaking from the royal houses and claiming fiefdoms for their own. Chief among these young lords were the brothers Nyrae, who led their kith and kin into the wilderness, and erected the mighty Kingspire, a citadel from whence they might subdue the surrounding lands and rule independent of their decadent kind.

But the wilderness brought its own host of challenges, and chief among them were the dread tribes of sub-human savages who coveted the eladrin's near-mystical mastery over magic and metal.

So long as the eladrin remained united, not even the hordes of barbarians presented a true threat. But the divisive lords were anything but united. Chafing beneath his brother's rule, Prince Rynth betrayed his fellow eladrin, and led his followers into the deep caverns beneath the Kingspire.

Thus weakened, the eladrin had no hope of deterring the hordes of swarming savages. Their sole hope of salvation was a foul ritual, a desperate plea made to ancient powers. On the eve of the siege, the eladrin cast the monumental ritual, sweeping the citadel's inhabitants from the prime material plane. The spell proved tragically powerful, and the hordes of savage barbarians were swept along with the Kingspire.

Since that fateful day, the Kingspire's inhabitants have been trapped in a place out of time. Neither the past, nor the future, but rather elsewhere, this demi-plane exists suspended in temporal stasis in which the same night repeats itself, again and again. They are the Twilight Court, caught in a place where it is eternally the night of siege, when the savage barbarians overran the Kingspire, slaughtering its guardians and all that dwelled within.

The arrival of the heroes offers the eladrin a chance to escape their relentless fate. Trapped like the eladrin, the heroes' sole hope of escape lies with upsetting the balance of power, changing the tide of history and the fate of the Kingspire.

PLAYER BEGINNING

Read or paraphrase the following to begin the adventure:

By the time you reach the hill overlooking Kingspire the sun is low in the sky, casting an ominous red haze through the thick swamp mists. The hamlet is set on the edge of a low marsh; from your vantage point you can just make out the rocky spire at the heart of the Drachenvold swap. The village itself is strangely silent.

The muddy, rutted road that has brought you this far continues down the slope to the hamlet's low, earthen wall. To your left, a narrow footpath picks its way down the rocky slope to the swamp, before continuing on to the hamlet.

The air cools as the day wears on, causing the seething mists to roll in from the swamp, first obscuring the hamlet, and then curling like ghostly tentacles around you and your companions.





LEVEL K

KINGSPIRE HAMLET

At the time of the PCs' arrival, most of the hamlet's populace is already high atop of the Kingspire, preparing a rite that is intended to shatter the boundary between the past and present Kingspires. The remaining inhabitants are leaving to join their fellow cultists shortly.

While it is likely that encounters in Kingspire will turn to combat, violence is not necessary to advance the plot. Heroes favoring duplicity and deception can accomplish much by disguising themselves as cultists or their allies.

There are two principle entrances to the hamlet. The first, the Queen's Road, is the most direct, and shows signs of regular use. The second is a humble footpath winding its way down the ridge to the swamp's edge, before meandering into town.

AREA K-1

THE WITCH OF DRACHENVOLD

(EL 1, XP 575)

Read or paraphrase the following:

The narrow, muddy footpath wends its way down the rocky slope. At the base of the steep hill, where the ridge meets the swamp, is a small hut with a thatched roof and mud and wattle walls. The bones of small animals dangle from the eaves like wind chimes, clattering and clacking as a chill breeze blows mist in from the swamp.

The thick mists move in, and in moments, the hut vanishes into a bank of fog.

The hut is home to an ancient, slightly crazed eladrin crone, known to the locals as the Witch of Drachenvold. One of the original inhabitants of the Kingspire Citadel, the witch is quick to recognize heroes and their purpose for coming to Kingspire. Far from a force good or evil, the crone is content to let her auguries determine her reaction to the heroes.

As the fog descends upon the PCs, anyone succeeding on a DC 17 Perception check immediately feels as if they are being watched. The crone's "lovelies," a pair of ancient crocodiles, move in with the fog, lurking 50 feet or more from the hut, but closing quickly if the encounter devolves into combat.

Inside: The hut has a single, low entrance that forces Medium-sized PCs to stoop as they enter. From the outside, the hut is surely no more than 12 feet across, but inside it seems to be quite spacious and nearly 20 feet in diameter. A fire pit in the center of the hut's muddy, wooden floor provides illumination and warmth. The walls are hung with the skins of dead rats, lizards, and vultures, alongside large ceramic decanters filled with odd, viscous liquids. A variety of rats, toads, crows, and small black cats sit in cages hung from the ceiling, and tiny black spiders race everywhere. The hut smells of bitter herbs, burnt fat, and wood smoke.

The crone is crouched before the fire, stirring the dying embers with a smoldering twig (actually a +1 wand). As the PCs enter, she looks up with milky white eyes and begins to giggle. Tossing a log onto the fire, the witch beckons the heroes closer.

The crone is a skeletal, hunchbacked eladrin dressed in a robe of rags and stitched animal skins. Her hands are dark from soot and grease, and her curling black fingernails haven't been cut in decades. When she smiles (which is nearly constantly), the Witch reveals blackened, dying teeth and diseased gums that have whitened with age. Her speech alternates between high-pitched giggles, and a grim, threatening growl.

Development: The sole inhabitant of the Kingspire to escape the fell curse, old age has rendered the mad Witch utterly mad. What little sanity she has is founded on loyalty to her long vanished kin; the Witch works to aid the Twilight Court, but her tactics are obscure at best.

The crone insists on reading the PCs' fortunes, preferring to single out any eladrin or elf.

Read or paraphrase the following:

The ancient crone cackles with unholy delight as you draw near. "The Kingspire knows its own, yes it does. You have been here before, no? And here you will remain, until the spire sinks back into the mists from whence it arose, until the end comes to all things."

Still cackling madly, the crone empties a vial of viscous blood onto the muddy floor, scraping runes into the grime. Looking up with pale white eyes, she extends a single bony hand, saying, "A bit of hair, or flesh, to give the spell its soul. The stones must have something to win, eh?"

If the hero complies, offering the Witch a bit of his or her hair or a piece of flesh, she places the component into her mouth, chewing vigorously with the few teeth she still has, before spitting it into the witch's brew on the floor. Her preparations complete, the witch casts three runestones into the slick puddle.

To replicate the rite, roll three 4-sided dice before the players and act out the result.

3d4 Fortune

- 3 “Woe! You are the end to House Nyrae, and this must not come to pass!” Cackling madly, the Witch calls for her lovelies (the pair of crocodiles), and then hurls herself into battle.
- 4–5 “Heavy is the head that wears the crown. We honor you, Monarch of the Damned. Your throne awaits you atop Old Kingspire.” The crone reaches into her robes and retrieves a blackened iron crown, swaddled in rags, and offers the crown to the PC.
- 6–9 “Secrets lurk beneath Old Kingspire. Search there for answers, but ‘ware the exiled Regent and his Court. The humblest twig will be the end of them all!” The witch offers the PCs the Witch’s Twig.
- 10–11 “The Dragon arises, once more! Share this ring with the black-haired regent, and she will favor you with her boons.” The crone removes an emerald ring from her skeletal fingers and presses it into the PC’s hands.
- 12 “Your coming has been long foretold. The old rites are undone, and the end is upon us all! Lord Death rises from the deeps, and you are his herald!” Cackling madly, the Witch calls for her lovelies (the pair of crocodiles), and then hurls herself into battle.

Tactics: If at any point the PCs attack the Witch, she responds in kind, calling out for her lovelies. As the pair of crocs enters, the hut enlarges even further, reaching a diameter of 30 feet across. At the same time, a trio of leaping spiders descends from the ceiling, growing from small spiders (the size of a small coin) to fearsome, dog-sized monstrosities. The Witch keeps the spiders close, using them to deflect ranged attacks with her *devil’s luck*, while using her *evil eye* to weaken foes, following up with *witch’s curse*. The crocs, for their part, hurl themselves at their foes, doing everything in their power to defend their mistress.

Treasure: Ages past, the Witch owned jewels and treasures worthy of an eladrin princess. But in the centuries since her flight from the Kingspire, much of what she owned has been lost, traded in exchange for favors, or simply abandoned and left to vanish into the swamp’s murky waters. The little treasure she does have is worn on her person. In addition to the wand, ring, and crown, the witch wears a greasy golden necklace hung with a bird skull (worth 50 gp), and carries a simple leather pouch that contains 50 well-worn cp.

The items hung about the hut are largely worthless, but a close search (Perception, DC 25) turns up the equivalent of 3 doses of a *potion of healing*, a vial of black dragon acid (does 5 ongoing acid damage to a target, save ends), and an ominous carven idol depicting a dragon devouring itself.

The Witch of Drachenvold**Level 3 Controller****Medium fey humanoid, eladrin XP 150****Initiative** +4 **Senses** Perception +8; low-light vision
HP 43; **Bloodied** 21**AC** 17; **Fortitude** 13, **Reflex** 16, **Will** 16**Saving Throws** +5 against charm effects**Speed** 6

↑ **Agonizing Caress** (standard; at-will)
+8 vs.AC; 1d6 + 3 damage.

⚡ **Evil Eye** (standard; at-will) ♦ **Fear, Psychic**
Range 10; +8 vs.Will; 1d6 + 4 psychic damage, and the target suffers a –2 penalty on attack rolls and saving throws (save ends).

⚡ **Witch’s Curse** (standard; recharge 5,6) ♦ **Psychic, Polymorph**

Ranged 5; +7 vs. Fortitude; 3d6 + 3 psychic damage, and the target is slowed (save ends). *First Failed Save:* the target is immobilized instead of slowed (save ends). *Second Failed Save:* The target turns into a frog until the end of the encounter (no save).

Devil’s Luck (immediate interrupt, when targeted by a ranged attack; at-will) The Witch can change the attack’s ranged target to an adjacent ally.

Fey Step (move; encounter) ♦ **Teleportation**
The Witch can teleport 5 squares.

Alignment Evil **Languages** Common, Elven**Skills** Arcana +8, History +4, Nature +7, Religion +7**Str** 10 (+1) **Dex** 17 (+4) **Wis** 14 (+3)**Con** 11 (+1) **Int** 13 (+2) **Cha** 17 (+4)**Equipment** Witch’s Twig (+1 wand), emerald signet ring, blackened iron crown**Ancient Crocodile (2)****Level 4 Soldiers****Large natural beast (reptile) XP 175****Initiative** +5 **Senses** Perception +3; low-light vision
HP 58; **Bloodied** 29**AC** 20; **Fortitude** 19, **Reflex** 14, **Will** 15**Speed** 6, swim 8

↑ **Bite** (standard; at-will)
+10 vs.AC; 1d8 + 4 damage, and the target is grabbed (until escape). The crocodile cannot make bite attacks while grabbing a creature, but it can use *crushing jaws*.

↑ **Crushing Jaws** (standard; at-will)
If a crocodile begins its turn with a target grabbed in its jaws, it makes an attack against the grabbed creature: +10 vs.AC; 2d8 + 4 damage. *Miss:* Half damage.

Alignment Unaligned **Languages** —**Skills** Stealth +8**Str** 18 (+6) **Dex** 12 (+3) **Wis** 13 (+3)**Con** 18 (+6) **Int** 2 (–2) **Cha** 7 (+0)

Jumping Spider (3)

Level 1 Minion

Small natural beast **XP 25**

Initiative +3 **Senses Perception** +1

HP 1; a missed attack never damages a minion.

AC 15; **Fortitude** 11, **Reflex** 13, **Will** 11;

Speed 6, climb 6 (spider climb)

↑ **Fanged Bite** (standard; at-will)

+5 vs. AC; 4 damage.

⚡ **Web Thrower** (standard; at-will)

Ranged 5; +3 vs. Reflex; target slowed (save ends).

Jump (minor; at-will)

The spider shifts 2 squares.

Alignment Unaligned **Languages** –

Skills Stealth +8

Str 8 (–1) **Dex** 16 (+3) **Wis** 12 (+1)

Con 12 (+1) **Int** 9 (–1) **Cha** 10 (+0)

AREA K-2

THE BODY IN THE RUSHES

As the PCs pass this area, secretly make Passive Perception checks (DC 17). Alternately, if the heroes are alert and on the lookout for danger, call for active Perception checks (DC 15).

If the Perception check is successful, read or paraphrase the following:

You and your sharp-eyed companions spy something hidden in the rushes on the side of the road — a figure hunched low to the ground and perfectly still.

Investigation shows the figure to be the body of a man in his late forties, dressed in muddy rags. A pair of arrows lodged in the corpse's back leave little mystery about the cause of death. The arrows are fletched with black feathers, matching those carried by the bowmen in area K-3.

The villager was Tomkin the Shepherd. Refusing to bow to the cult's evil ways, he attempted to flee and was shot. Tomkin eluded pursuit, but finally succumbed to his wounds, collapsing in the ditch.

Tomkin collapsed atop a sheet of parchment, stolen from a tome Arkos found in the ruins of Old Kingspire. A passing search (Perception, DC 10) finds the parchment, ruined with mud and tucked into Tomkin's belt. Show the players Handout A.

AREA K-3

THE WATCH (EL 6, XP 1,200)

Read or paraphrase the following:

Ahead, the muddy track runs to a crude wooden gate set into the wooden palisade that surrounds the hamlet. Smokey torches are set atop the palisade wall, casting a hellish red glow through the mist and soot.

A small earthen rampart rises to the palisade. Figures stand watch atop the wall, their spears held at the ready.

A band of watchmen stand atop the wall at the ready. Rough men in shaggy beards and muddy armor, they are loyal to the cult, and tasked with ensuring that the night's ritual isn't interrupted.

Their captain, Jon Ocat, is a cagey veteran. What he lacks in intelligence, he makes up in cunning and hard earned experience. Ocat calls out to the PCs, asking their names and business, playing the part of an anxious watchman. A quick look is enough to ascertain that the Watch's bowmen carry black-fletched arrows identical to those that killed the villager in area K-2.

Jon Ocat is eager to learn what brought the PCs to the hamlet. If they appear to be agents of the crown, sent to investigate Kingspire, the captain does his best to lure them into an ambush (see below). However, if the PCs keep Jon in the dark about their true intent (or manage to convince him that they are a part of the cult), Jon hesitantly allows them to enter (see **Duping the Watch**).

Duping the Watch: When Arkos led his people into the swamp, he warned them that like-minded souls would be drawn by the power of the Kingspire, so there is a chance that the PCs can convince Ocat that they are allies. However, Jon is a shrewd judge of character, and tricking him into believing that the PCs are allies is no simple task. The PCs must succeed on three DC 20 checks, before one failure. Diplomacy and Intimidate are both obvious skill choices, but Religion can also dupe Jon into believing that the PCs are here to advance the cause of the Kingspire cult.

If the heroes manage to weasel their way inside, Jon still isn't convinced. He insists on accompanying the PCs, escorting them to the Miller's Apprentice (area K-5).

Ambush! The captain calls for the gates to be drawn aside and welcomes the PCs into the hamlet. Once the heroes enter, he springs an ambush, attacking the PCs from all sides with his spearmen, while the archers fire into the melee. Jon Ocat is no fool — if all his spearmen fall in battle, he orders a withdrawal, retreating back to the Old Mill (area K-5), joining the Miller's Apprentice in the defense of the hamlet.

If captured, Ocat attempts to buy his freedom by spinning a tale of how he and other villagers were pressed into service by Arkos. (The tale is a lie; Jon Ocat joined freely, eager to indulge his cruel and hateful nature.) While the Captain has little insight into Arkos' true motivations, he readily betrays his master, confessing to the PCs how Arkos has pressed the entire hamlet into service of a foul, unknown power. He also tells the PCs that tonight the cult is holding a rite atop the Ruins of Old Kingspire, in the hopes of opening a portal to lost powers.

Jon Ocat, Watch Captain

Level 5 Soldier (Leader)

Medium natural humanoid, human XP 200

Initiative +6 Senses Perception +7

HP 64; Bloodied 32

AC 21 (23 with *strength in numbers*); Fortitude 18,

Reflex 15, Will 16

Speed 6

↑ **Spear** (standard; at-will) ♦ **Weapon**

+12 vs.AC; 1d8 + 4 damage; see also *make them bleed!*

☼ **Take Them!** (minor; recharge 5,6)

Close burst 5; allies in the burst shift 3 squares.

See Them bleed!

When Jon Ocat's hits an enemy with a melee attack, all allies within 5 squares gain a +2 power bonus to attack and damage rolls against that enemy until the end of Jon Ocat's next turn.

Strength in Numbers

Jon Ocat gains a +2 bonus to AC while adjacent to an ally.

Alignment Evil **Languages** Common

Skills Bluff +9, Insight +7, Intimidate +9

Str 18 (+6) **Dex** 14 (+4) **Wis** 10 (+2)

Con 16 (+5) **Int** 12 (+3) **Cha** 15 (+4)

Equipment leather armor, heavy shield, spear

Spearmen (4)

Level 2 Skirmisher

Medium natural humanoid, human XP 125

Initiative +5 Senses Perception +1

HP 38; Bloodied 19

AC 16; Fortitude 15, Reflex 14, Will 12

Speed 6

↑ **Spear** (standard; at-will) ♦ **Weapon**

+7 vs.AC; 1d8 + 4 damage.

⚡ **Javelin** (standard; at-will) ♦ **Weapon**

Ranged 10/20; +6 vs.AC; 1d6 + 3 damage.

↑ **Goring Strike** (standard; encounter) ♦ **Weapon**

Requires spear; +7 vs.AC; 1d8 + 8 damage, and the target suffers ongoing 2 damage (save ends).

Alignment Unaligned **Languages** Common

Str 16 (+4) **Dex** 14 (+3) **Wis** 11 (+1)

Con 14 (+3) **Int** 10 (+1) **Cha** 8 (+0)

Equipment leather armor, spear, 4 javelins

Huntsman (4)

Level 2 Artillery

Medium natural humanoid, human XP 125

Initiative +4 Senses Perception +6

HP 32; Bloodied 16

AC 14; Fortitude 14, Reflex 15, Will 12

Speed 6

↑ **Short Sword** (standard; at-will) ♦ **Weapon**

+7 vs.AC; 1d6 + 1 damage.

⚡ **Shortbow** (standard; at-will) **Weapon**

Ranged 15/30; +9 vs.AC; 1d8 + 3 damage; see also *archer's mobility*.

Archer's Mobility

If the huntsman moves at least 4 squares from its original position, it gains a +2 bonus to ranged attack rolls until the start of its next turn.

Devil's Accuracy (free; encounter)

The huntsman can reroll a ranged attack roll. It must use the second roll, even if it's lower.

Alignment Unaligned **Languages** Common

Skills Nature +5, Stealth +9

Str 13 (+2) **Dex** 16 (+4) **Wis** 11 (+1)

Con 14 (+3) **Int** 9 (+0) **Cha** 11 (+1)

Equipment leather armor, shortbow, quiver of 20 arrows, short sword

AREA K-4

ABANDONED HOME

Read or paraphrase the following:

The ramshackle hut is silent and cold. Cobwebs hang over the door, in the corners of the hut, and from the low, thatched ceiling. The hearth is cold and untended, with simply a rusted pot hanging over the dead coals.

When the cultists came to power they drove out most of the village's good folk, leaving many of the homes abandoned. The cultists have looted these huts, taking anything of use and destroying everything else. If the heroes inspect multiple huts, the DM should vary the description slightly (one might have a muddy floor from a leaking roof, while another shows signs of a rat infestation), but on the whole, the huts are identical.



Heroes taking the time to scour the huts have the chance to uncover clues pointing to the fate of the hamlet. On a successful, active search (Perception, DC 20) roll 1d12 and consult the following table:

1d12	Discovery
1–3	Bloodstains on the walls and floor, and a broken, bloodied, spear-tip buried in one of the wooden beams.
4	A weapons cache, once hidden beneath the floor in the back of the hut, has been unearthed. A few worthless items, scavenged from battlefields in generations passed, still remain, including a pair of pitted and scarred short swords, a dozen spear tips, and a rusted chain hauberk.
5–6	A smashed holy symbol dedicated to the good-aligned Goddess of Hearth and Harvest. The symbol is half-buried and crushed into a dozen pieces.
7	A child's homemade ragdoll, tied from scraps of homespun fabric. The doll has been torn in half and tossed into the hearth.
8–10	A large X drawn in charcoal across the wooden planks of the hut's door. (A symbol marking the inhabitants as non-believers.)
11	A severed human hand, staked above the hearth with an iron nail; a warning to those that would try to steal from the cult.
12	The corpse of a dog, collapsed in the corner of the hut. A trio of black fletched arrows (matching those carried by the Watch in encounter K–3) is buried in the animal's chest.

AREA K-5 OCCUPIED HUT

Read or paraphrase the following:

The muddy hut squats low to the damp ground. Thin trails of smoke curl from the mud-brick chimney in long tendrils, before vanishing into the gray mist. A single, humble door bars the entrance.

Villagers that have either dedicated their lives to the Cult of the Kingspire, or turned a blind eye to the cult's crimes occupy these huts. Those that aid or abet the cult's work have prospered under Arkos' rule, while their goodly neighbors suffer and starve, making their sins all the more damning.

None of the huts have locks, and all the villagers are already en route to the Kingspire, so there is little to prevent the heroes from thoroughly searching the huts. If the heroes inspect multiple huts, the DM should vary the description slightly, but on the whole, the huts are identical.

Heroes taking the time to search the inhabited huts have a chance of uncovering clues pointing to the hamlet's involvement with the cult. On a successful, active search (Perception, DC 20) roll 1d12 and consult the following table:

1d12	Discovery
1–3	A simple shrine set into the hut wall, composed of a candlewick in a shallow stone bowl filled with lamp oil. Beneath the bowl is a simple, hand woven altar-cloth, stained with blood, wine, and the ashes of burnt offerings.
4	A partially completed embroidery depicting a worm devouring its own tail.
5–6	A hammered copper chalice, swaddled in cloth and sticky with blood and matted hair.
7	A wooden block, carved to resemble a terrible dragon curling around to devour itself.
8–9	A tray of maggoty sweetmeats, made from the remains of past sacrifices. (See the Old Mill, area K–6).
10–11	A bloody cleaver, fastened to the end of a cudgel. The haft is decorated with a winding carving of a ferocious worm.
12	A hidden shrine dedicated to a good-aligned deity of the DM's choice. The shrine is secreted beneath a pair of muddy floorboards at the back of the hut.

AREA K-6 THE OLD MILL (EL 5, XP 1,000)

Read or paraphrase the following:

A small, tepid stream runs down the side of the ridge, splashing down over a moss-eaten waterwheel. Beside the waterwheel, set into the grassy ridge, is a humble mill. A simple footpath wends its way past a pair of clay ovens, to the front of the mill.

Before falling under the spell of the Kingspire, Arkos was a humble miller. The mill, situated away from the village proper, allowed Arkos and his devotees to worship without fear of interruption from their fellow villagers. Once the cult seized control of the village, the cultists no longer had any need to conceal their horrid practices. Now, the mill serves as a staging place and headquarters for the cult.

The Ovens: The clay ovens are hot to the touch. Inside each oven are a dozen small-wafer like sweetmeats made from the ground remains of the cult's previous victims. Each sweetmeat has been rolled and baked in the shape of a looped knot, in homage to the cult's all-devouring worm.

The sweetmeats, intended to be part of an unholy sacrament atop the Kingspire, are steeped in unholy magics. Anyone consuming one of the cakes immediately marks himself as a devotee of Arkos, granting the cleric power over him. (See encounter area 1, The Ruins of Old Kingspire for more information.) There are a total of 24 sweetmeats baking in the twin clay ovens.

The Mill: The inset map details the interior of the mill. The miller's apprentice labors inside the mill room, hurriedly working to finish preparations for the night's festivities. The misshapen giant is feeding corpses of villagers and animals into a chute, then driving the millstone by hand, grinding the bodies into a bloody mush that he bakes into sweetmeats.

Once the handsomest youth in all of Kingspire, the miller's apprentice has suffered terribly under Arkos' ministrations. A towering, misshapen hulk of a man, the apprentice's bones are twisted and overgrown, his skin is stretched taut over his tall, narrow frame, and his eyes and ears have been crudely stitched and stretched to resemble the eladrin Arkos has mistaken for the Old Gods.

Despite his size, the apprentice displays only a childlike intelligence. In fact, his master's unpredictable cruelty has made the apprentice hesitant and uncertain. Once his ire is aroused, however, the apprentice is a terrible opponent. He takes up his maul and charges into battle, effortlessly dancing in and among his foes as he deals out devastating blows.

Environment: The apprentice does his best to drive PCs into the waterwheel — anyone moving into the 2 squares on the wheel's north side risks being crushed (immediate reaction, +10 vs. Reflex, 1d12+6 damage) and is dragged underwater for a round, before surfacing on the far side.

The mill is only one floor, with rafters supporting a half-loft above. Agile (or foolhardy) PCs can ride the turning waterwheel to its peak and leap into the rafters to gain a tactical advantage against the rampaging apprentice. The stunt requires a DC 20 Acrobatics check, and PCs failing the check are immediately caught by the wheel and dealt damage as above. Those making it into the rafters gain combat advantage against their foe, and receive a +2 bonus to AC and Reflex defenses. (Note that PCs hiding in the rafters are easily within the range of the apprentice's enormous maul.)

However, any time a PC attempts move action in the rafters, or takes more than 10 points of damage, he must succeed on a DC 15 Acrobatics check or lose his footing, falling to the floor below and taking 1d10 points of falling damage.

Arkos' Quarters: This room holds a simple pallet made from furs and quilts stitched from homespun rags. Arkos carries all of his most prized possessions on his person, so there is very little here of worth.

A simple beeswax candle stands in one corner of the room, beside a collection of odd relics looted from the ruins of Old Kingspire. Included in the pile are a pommel of a shattered sword, a few links of chainmail armor, and the hammered boss of a shield depicting a dragon-like worm devouring itself. A close inspection of the relics (History, DC 20) affirms that they are of eladrin make. A DC 25 check reveals that the relics likely belonged to one of the race's exiled rebel houses. DMs should reveal as little or as much of the background story as they see fit, based on the PCs' background and their knowledge of eladrin history.

At the head of the bed is a sheaf of muddy sheets of parchment. Arkos has diligently recorded his visions, but they are nearly entirely gibberish. The sole sheet of use to PCs is recorded on the reverse of one of the sheets (Perception, DC 15): a crude map of Old Kingspire. (Show Players Handout B.)

The Loft: Arkos' apprentice spends his nights sleeping on a narrow bed of planks placed across the rafters. Amid the tick-eaten pelts and homespun blankets, there is little of worth. A careful search of the pallet (Perception, DC 15) reveals a worn bracelet of silver and gold — Arkos discovered the bracelet in the ruin on one of his later expeditions, and gave it to his apprentice as an afterthought. The simple ornament has become the simpleton's prized possession. The bracelet, a broad band, has little worth (20 sp) were it not for the inscription on the inside of the band. The inscription is in Ancient Eladrin and reads:

Atop the Kingspire

We raise this Staff of Scorn.

And this Sword of Runes

Kith & Kin, Bound by Blood

May they never be Sundered

The Crawlspace: A trap door is concealed beneath a pile of sacks in the corner of the mill (Perception, DC 20). Swollen shut with moisture, a DC 18 Strength check is sufficient to wrench the trap door open, revealing a crawlspace below. At first glance, the crawlspace is filled with sacks loaded with tubers and squash. Hidden at the very back of the crawlspace (Perception, DC 15, to anyone that crawls inside) is a small iron coffer.

The coffer, looted from the ruins of Old Kingspire, is befouled with age, making picking the lock more difficult than normal (Thievery, DC 25). The iron is pitted with rust, and a DC 25 Strength check is sufficient to wrench opens the lid.

The coffer opens to a pair of rotted wooden trays. The top tray holds 21 soiled pp; each is heavily worn and bears the stamp of a dragon, with a sword and arrowhead on the reverse. Investigators succeeding on a DC 20 History check correctly trace the coins to ancient, Eladrin make. Amid the platinum coins is a shard of thick blade (likely a bastard sword or narrow greatsword). The shard bears the stamp of a dragon matching the coin.

Miller's Apprentice

Level 5 Solo Brute

Large natural humanoid **XP 1,000**

Initiative +3 **Senses** Perception +1

HP 272; **Bloodied** 136

AC 19; **Fortitude** 22, **Reflex** 17, **Will** 14

Saving Throws +5

Speed 6

Action Points 2

↑ **Crushing Maul** (standard; at-will) ♦ **Weapon**

Reach 2; +8 vs.AC; 2d8 + 6 damage.

↑ **Mighty Swat** (standard; recharge 5,6) ♦ **Weapon**

Reach 2; requires maul; +8 vs.AC; 4d8+6 damage, and the target is pushed 3 squares and knocked prone.

※ **Floor Sweep** (standard; recharge 5,6) ♦ **Weapon**

Close burst 2; +6 vs.AC; 2d8 + 6 damage, and the target is knocked prone.

Alignment Evil **Languages** Common

Skills Athletics +13, Endurance +12

Str 22 (+8)

Dex 12 (+3)

Wis 9 (+1)

Con 20 (+7)

Int 8 (+1)

Cha 10 (+2)

Equipment maul

LEVEL D

THE DRACHENVOLD SWAMP

The swamp is ancient in aspect: its leafless trees are gnarled and twisted, the marsh grasses crackle and break underfoot, and the water is stagnant and still. The thick evening mists are pervasive, curling underfoot and obscuring sight beyond 30 feet. Light behaves strangely in the mists — torch and lantern light seems to flicker and reflect in the distance, while pale globes appear from the swamp waters and vanish in an instant. The stench of rot and decay is everywhere, and the swamp is perfectly silent, making the actions of the heroes jarringly loud in comparison.

The depth of the bogs varies throughout the swamp. As a rule of thumb, bogs within 50 feet of the shore are 1d6+3 feet in depth, while those further than 50 feet from the shore are 1d12+6 feet deep.

While there are no wandering monsters for the purpose of this adventure, the Drachenvold does lend itself to eerie experiences. For every half-hour spent in the swamp, roll 1d12 and consult the following table:



Id12 Encounter

- 1 A ball of light hovers in the mist just at the edge of the PCs' vision.
- 2 The heroes hear screams in the darkness.
- 3 A PC feels biting worms crawling through the sole of his boot, and burrowing into his flesh. (Inspection reveals that the soles are whole.)
- 4 One of the heroes sees an enormous, serpentine form gliding through the swamp, away from the heroes.
- 5 A pair of sinister vultures circle above the heroes, following them on their way through the swamp.
- 6 One of the heroes senses a squirming sensation coming from his backpack. Upon inspection the heroes discover that all their food is spoiled, contaminated with writhing worms.
- 7 One of the heroes sees a corona glowing around the head of an eladrin or elf PC. (If there are no elves or eladrin in the party, determine a PC at random.) None of his companions sees the same halo.
- 8 A PC slips knee-deep into a hidden bog, coating his trousers and armor in a stinking, red ooze.
- 9 The heroes hear their names being called from somewhere out in the swamp. The voices are human, but have a sinister, delighted tone.
- 10 One of the PCs pitches forward in a coughing fit, spitting up a bloody, six-inch worm.
- 11 Cold chills pass over the party. One PC (determined at random) is strangely immune.
- 12 A PC's shadow detaches from his form, kills a nearby animal, then returns.

AREA D-1**THE SODDEN PUNT**

Read or paraphrase the following:

A narrow dock extends from the muddy shore out over the brackish waters. No more than three planks wide, covered in black mold, and surrounded by high reeds, the dock seems about to vanish into the swamp.

At the end of dock is a single, sodden skiff, moored to the dock with a single rotting rope. A pair of 10-foot poles rests against the bow of the skiff.

The skiff is the last of villager's boats. The rest have already borne the cultists to the Kingspire. The skiff is large enough to accommodate up to 8 Medium-sized passengers, but any Large-sized creatures or mounts will need to be left behind or make their own way through the deep-water bogs.

AREA D-2**A WATERY GRAVE (EL 3, XP 740):**

In the course of his ritual sacrifices, Arkos sinks the corpses into the swamp. Some of the corpses, animated by the unholy power of the Kingspire, have awakened from the dead. They lurk beneath the dark waters, and then flip over the PCs' punt as they pass overhead. The zombies seize hold of the hapless PCs, dragging them down to their watery doom.

Active Perception checks (DC 15) note ripples in the murky waters just before the zombies surface. If the PCs fail to take active measures, DC 20 Passive Perception checks permit the PCs to shout out a warning just before the zombies lurch to the surface.

Read or paraphrase the following:

The brackish water erupts in violence all around you. Horrid groans and the stench of maggoty flesh fills the night, even as rotting fingers seize hold of the skiff, threatening to flip you into the black waters!

A total of 8 zombies lurk in the waters. Five of the corpses are older and weakened from rot, collapsing quickly beneath determined blows. Three, however, are fresh and fight with terrible, unholy strength.

Tactics: Any zombie adjacent to the punt can attempt to grab hold of it as a minor action. As a minor action, any PC in the punt can make an attack against a zombie's Reflex defense to knock free a hand. At the beginning of any round with 3 or more zombies having hold of the punt, the zombies flip the punt over as a standard action, spilling all the PCs into the water.

The swamp waters here are 7 feet in depth — just deep enough to drown most PCs (see the DMG). Heroes fighting in the water do not receive Dexterity bonuses to their Armor classes or Reflex defenses.

Complicating matters, a crocodile lurks nearby, a mere 50 feet distant. Drawn by the abundant supply of food, and wary of the animated dead, the crocodile is quick to make a meal out of one of the living. The crocodile closes in using Stealth at the first sign of combat, attacks the PC furthest from the action, and then retreats into the swamp with its meal. The crocodile has no interest in the battle itself, and retreats once bloodied.

Swamp Zombie (3)

Level 2 Brute

Medium natural animate (undead) XP 125

Initiative –1 **Senses** Perception +0
darkvision

HP 40; **Bloodied** 20; see also *zombie weakness*

AC 13; **Fortitude** 13, **Reflex** 9, **Will** 10

Immune disease, poison; **Resist** 10 necrotic;

Vulnerable 5 radiant

Speed 4

↑ **Slam** (standard; at-will)

+5 vs.AC; 1d8 + 2 damage.

↑ **Drowning Grasp** (standard; at-will)

+3 vs. Reflex; the target is grabbed (until escape). Grabbed targets in the water suffer a –5 penalty to Endurance checks to avoid drowning.

Zombie Weakness

Any critical hit to a swamp zombie reduces it to 0 hit points instantly.

Alignment Unaligned **Languages** —

Str 14 (+3) **Dex** 6 (–1) **Wis** 8 (+0)

Con 10 (+1) **Int** 1 (–4) **Cha** 3 (–3)

Decrepit Swamp Zombie (5)

Level 3 Minion

Medium natural animate (undead) XP 38

Initiative –2 **Senses** Perception –1; darkvision

HP 1; a missed attack never damages a minion.

AC 13; **Fortitude** 13, **Reflex** 9, **Will** 10

Immune disease, poison

Speed 4

↑ **Slam** (standard; at-will)

+6 vs.AC; 5 damage.

Alignment Unaligned **Languages** —

Str 14 (+2) **Dex** 6 (–2) **Wis** 8 (–1)

Con 10 (+0) **Int** 1 (–5) **Cha** 3 (–4)

Ancient Crocodile

Level 4 Soldiers

Large natural beast (reptile) XP 175

Initiative +5 **Senses** Perception +3; low-light vision

HP 58; **Bloodied** 29

AC 20; **Fortitude** 19, **Reflex** 14, **Will** 15

Speed 6, swim 8

↑ **Bite** (standard; at-will)

+10 vs.AC; 1d8 + 4 damage, and the target is grabbed (until escape). The crocodile cannot make bite attacks while grabbing a creature, but it can use *crushing jaws*.

↑ **Crushing Jaws** (standard; at-will)

If a crocodile begins its turn with a target grabbed in its jaws, it makes an attack against the grabbed creature: +10 vs.AC; 2d8 + 4 damage. *Miss*: Half damage.

Alignment Unaligned **Languages** —

Skills Stealth +8

Str 18 (+6)

Dex 12 (+3)

Wis 13 (+3)

Con 18 (+6)

Int 2 (–2)

Cha 7 (+0)

AREA D–3

THE RUINED STEPS

Read or paraphrase the following:

A crude platform of wooden planks and thick branches sit atop enormous blocks of cut granite that have tumbled into the reedy marsh. Above, stand two twin pillars, the remnants of the collapsed stone arch.

Several wooden skiffs are moored at the docks, and tracks lead up the muddy slope of the Kingspire.

The makeshift dock is built atop the fallen blocks of the once mighty arch. Once a memorial built in honor of the eladrins' might, all that remains are the pillars and the fallen blocks.

Each of the pillars bears engravings depicting the history of Clan Nyrae: their break from the eladrin empire; the clan striking out into the wilderness; and finally, the founding of the Kingspire Citadel. Heroes taking the time to inspect the fallen, muddy blocks discover a grim prophecy: The stones of the fallen arch depict a skeletal king sitting atop a stone throne. A skeletal court, assailed by armies on all sides, surrounds the king. The throne rests upon the back of a two-headed worm.

AREA D–4

THE SILENT MARCH

Read or paraphrase the following:

A narrow path wends its way up the barren ridge. Candles placed along the sides of the path light the way into the high mists. High above, you can make out the silhouette of the citadel atop the moonlit spire.

A moment or two after the PCs start up the slope, ghostly blue figures emerge from the black waters and march up the path to the top of the spire. Towering, spectral savages armed with spears and battleaxes and girded in hides, the ghosts were once proto-humans, a mere step above Neanderthals. They are the ghosts of the savages that stormed the Kingspire Citadel, bringing the eladrin conflict to a head.

There are over 100 ghosts emerging from the swamp, marching up the ridge. The silent ghosts ignore the heroes, unless there is an elf or eladrin among them, in which case, the ghosts gather around the hero, their weapons raised in threat.

The ghosts are entirely insubstantial, and only pose a threat if the PCs flee. The ghosts give chase, their spectral howls filling the night. Elves and eladrin are targeted by +5 Will attacks each round until they reach the citadel (area 1–1) or leave Kingspire Island. Those falling to the attack suffer 1d12 psychic damage and are slowed. A successful save ends the slow effect, but a failed save worsens the condition to unconsciousness, forcing the PC's allies to carry them to safety.

As the PCs come within 100 feet of the gatehouse (area 1–2), a heavy mist rolls over the battlefield, obscuring all sight beyond 5 feet. The mist smells of smoke and burning flesh, a fell harbinger of things to come. As the foul mists lift, the PCs see two opposing armies. First, an army of sub-human savages charges up the slope in their wolf pelts and bear skins, axes and spears raised high. Second, an army of cruel-faced eladrin, armed with bows and sharp blades, stream from the gatehouse and take up formation at the top of the hill. The PCs are caught between the clashing forces.

LEVEL 1

RUINS OF OLD KINGSPIRE

The ruins of the citadel are overgrown with ashen vines and noxious weeds. The ruins are mostly 1 story high, with crumbling walls stretching up another 1 or 2 stories in height. Unless otherwise noted, there is no natural light in the old ruins.

AREA 1–1

FIELD OF THE FALLEN

(EL 1, XP 570 + VARIABLE)

Read or paraphrase the following:

The rocky ridge gives way to a barren field, utterly devoid of life. A phantasmal light rings the top of the ridge, causing the mists to glow as if lit from below. Ragged war banners, shattered weapons, and bits of broken armor litter the field. Deep in the heart of the mists, a crumbling ruin stands silent in the darkness.

The war banners, weapons and armor, are all ghostly remnants of a terrible battle waged over a thousand years ago. The battlefield is haunted, and on certain moonlit, misty nights, the spirits of the fallen return to continue their endless battle. Normally, these battles cannot affect the living, but Arkos' fell rites have brought the battle to a fever pitch that spills over into the realm of the living.

As the PCs come within 100 feet of the gatehouse (area 1–2), a heavy mist rolls over the battlefield, obscuring all sight beyond 5 feet. The mist smells of smoke and burning flesh, a fell harbinger of things to come. As the foul mists lift, the PCs see two opposing armies. First, an army of sub-human savages, charge up the slope in their wolf pelts and bear skins, axes and spears raised high. Second, an army of cruel-faced eladrin, armed with bows and sharp blades, stream from the gatehouse and take up formation at the top of the hill. The PCs are caught between the clashing forces.

It is mere seconds before the armies clash, and immediate action is called for. The battlefield is sufficiently pocked and pitted to allow quick PCs to seek cover (Stealth, DC 15), but this solution is only good for a few rounds at the most. The armies clash in chaotic melee, and the eladrin formations stop the charging humans, but their forces are scattered in the process. However, 1d4 rounds into the battle there is nowhere on the

ridge for the PCs to hide. The heroes must either flee from the battlefield or fight their way through to the gatehouse.

This area is entirely filled with phantasmal combatants. To make any progress, the PCs are forced to hew their way through the chaotic battlefield. For every 15 feet moved, the PCs must kill two minions. Heroes that move as a pack, back to back, can make good progress, but if they become separated, the encounter quickly resolves into a deadly bloodbath. In addition, roll 1d8 each round to determine random battlefield encounters. If the PCs are separated by 15 feet or more, roll for each individual group.

1d8	Random Encounter
1	No random encounter for the round.
2	A savage astride an enormous warhorse rides down the PCs, spear couched for a charge (+10 vs.AC, 10 damage; 50 XP).
3	The PCs hear the mournful whistle of war arrows fired from the ranks of the eladrin. The arrows rain down over them (burst 2, +5 vs. Reflex, 5 damage; 75 XP).
4	A savage standard bearer collapses before the PC, his wolf-skin banner falling to the ground. If the PCs take up the banner, the savages rally around them and surge forward, bringing the PCs within 30 feet of the gatehouse.
5	A mob of savages charges the PCs, howling wildly. They clash with the ranks of heroes, driving them back 10 feet, stabbing and slicing with their ghostly weapons (burst 10, +5 vs.AC, 5 damage; 100 XP).
6	A spectral wave of fire washes over the battlefield, slaughtering eladrin and savages alike (burst 10, +10 vs.Will, 1d12+4 fire damage; 100 XP), clearing a way for the PCs to advance 30 feet without encountering combatants.
7	An eladrin dragonrider swoops down from on high. The dragon attempts to snatch 2 PCs in its ghostly-blue talons, flinging them 30 feet distant (+5 vs. Reflex, 2d10 damage, and the target slides 6 squares; 150 XP).
8	No random encounter for the round.

Phantasm Eladrin and Savages

Level 3 Minion (500 or more)

Medium natural animate (undead) XP 38

Initiative -2 **Senses** Perception -1
darkvision

HP 1; a missed attack never damages a minion.

AC 13; **Fortitude** 13, **Reflex** 9, **Will** 10

Immune disease, poison

Speed 4

↑ **Ghost Strike** (standard; at-will) +6 vs.AC; 5 damage.

Alignment Unaligned **Languages** —

Str 14 (+2) **Dex** 6 (-2) **Wis** 8 (-1)

Con 10 (+0) **Int** 10 (+0) **Cha** 3 (-4)

AREA 1-2

THE GATEHOUSE

The heroes are forced to fight their way up the blood soaked stone steps, slaying 4 eladrin phantasms (see area 1-1 for statistics) to reach the gatehouse floor. Once the PCs reach the gatehouse, read or paraphrase the following:

You stumble up the blood soaked steps and into the ruined gatehouse. All is silent, an eerie contrast to mad melee. The field where two great armies fought, just moments before, is now still as the grave.

The gatehouse stands in ruins. Fallen blocks and rotting timbers litter the floor and a pair of mighty, ironbound portals, that once might have held back an army, now hangs loosely from their hinges.

There is little for the PCs to discover in the gatehouse. A close inspection of the floor (Perception, DC 15) done before the party tracks through the dust and cobweb reveals that a large group of humanoids (Arkos and his cultists) recently passed through the gatehouse, en route to the citadel.

AREA 1-3

THE BRIDGE

Read or paraphrase the following:

A narrow stone bridge spans the gap between the gatehouse and the citadel. Leering, horned gargoyles look down from the walls of the ruined citadel, and you can spy holes along the edge of the bridge that once supported wooden railings. Gray mists swirl below in the darkness. Any fall from this height would surely be fatal.

Despite its age, the bridge remains as sturdy as the day it was constructed. A mere 10 feet in width, those crossing the bridge feel an acute sense of exposure, with the knowledge that it would take little to knock them into the swirling abyss below. The rocky base of the ravine is 60 feet below, hidden in darkness and the swamp mists.

Cautious heroes succeeding on a Perception check (DC 20) note light shining into area 1-4 from the arrow slits in areas 1-5, and hear the sounds of loud chanting and drumming coming from area 1-6.

AREA 1-4

THE KILLING HALL

Read or paraphrase the following:

The short hallway is littered with fallen blocks and overgrown with weeds. It runs no more than five paces before coming to an enormous portal, banded in rusty iron. The portal stands partially open, and from beyond you can hear fevered voices raised in unholy prayer and song.

Heroes distracted by the rite taking place in the courtyard (area 1-6) may make a deadly mistake: the north and south walls of the hall are punctuated by arrow slits. Cautious PCs (Perception, DC 15) that take the time to inspect the hall before turning their full attention to the courtyard are quick to notice the arrow slits.

As detailed in area 1-5 below, the guards placed by Arkos are anything but attentive, and only take notice of the PCs after one or more of the heroes have passed into the hall. Careful PCs can slip past the archers if they take pains to hide themselves in the shadows and are quiet enough to avoid detection (Stealth, DC 15). Of course, cunning PCs might come up with even more effective solutions (perhaps by distracting the guards, or dispatching them with well placed spells).

Combat is the least effective tactic. The archers inside the guardrooms enjoy superior cover (-5 to attack rolls), but have no penalties while raining down their arrows on the PCs. See area 1-5 for more information.

AREA 1-5

GUARDROOMS (EL 1+, XP 375+)

Read or paraphrase the following:

The small, ruined chamber has been turned into a camp of sorts. A small fire smolders in the heart of the chamber. A trio of archers dressed in humble, woodsmen garb are crouched around the fire, taking long draws from their wineskins and idly casting dice for handfuls of copper pieces.

On the opposite wall you spy a pair of arrow slits.

Note, the description of the archers is different if the PCs are detected passing through area 1-4, or if the archers join in the general melee of area 1-6.

There are 3 huntsmen in both of the areas keyed 1-5, for a total of 6 huntsmen that can attack area 1-4 if the PCs are discovered. Arkos ordered them to stand guard over the gatehouse to ensure that his ritual isn't interrupted, but the archers believe there is nothing in the swamp foolish or powerful enough to merit guard duty. Sullen because of their assignment, the guards have instead taken to drinking as they wait for Arkos to permit them to return.

If the archers detect the PCs passing through area 1-4, they spring to the arrow slits, firing volley after volley of arrows into the hall. If the PCs make it past the archers, or if the archers hear sounds of combat coming from the courtyard (area 1-6),

they desert their post, hurrying to their bows in support of their comrades.

Treasure: There is little treasure here, as all of the cultists have turned over any items of worth to their master Arkos. A careful search of the bodies (Perception, DC 15) garners a meager cache of 1d100 cp, 1d12 sp, and a pair of silvered arrows.

Archer (3)

Level 2 Artillery

Medium natural humanoid, human **XP 125**

Initiative +4 **Senses Perception** +6

HP 32; **Bloodied** 16

AC 14; **Fortitude** 14, **Reflex** 15, **Will** 12

Speed 6

↑ **Short Sword** (standard; at-will) ♦ **Weapon**
+7 vs.AC; 1d6 + 1 damage.

⚡ **Shortbow** (standard; at-will) **Weapon**
Ranged 15/30; +9 vs.AC; 1d8 + 3 damage; see also *archer's mobility*.

Archer's Mobility

If the archer moves at least 4 squares from its original position, it gains a +2 bonus to ranged attack rolls until the start of its next turn.

Devil's Accuracy (free; encounter)

The archer can reroll a ranged attack roll. It must use the second roll, even if it's lower.

Alignment Unaligned **Languages** Common

Skills Nature +5, Stealth +9

Str 13 (+2) **Dex** 16 (+4) **Wis** 11 (+1)

Con 14 (+3) **Int** 9 (+0) **Cha** 11 (+1)

Equipment leather armor, shortbow, 20 arrows, shortsword

AREA 1-6 OVERGROWN COURTYARD AND THE PLAGUE OF WORMS (EL 6, XP 1,285)

Read or paraphrase the following:

The ruined courtyard is overgrown with weeds and even a stunted trio of trees. Thick moss has overgrown the surrounding walls, as if the swamp were trying to draw the citadel down into its brackish waters.

The courtyard is littered with rubble, but you can spy a mob of ragged and muddy villagers dancing, chanting and howling in the night. They carry flaming brands that send sparks drifting into the misty sky, and farming tools — pitchforks and cleavers — transformed into cruel implements of slaughter.

At the far end of the courtyard, obscured by the swamp mists and smoke from the flaming brands, you can make out a high balcony. Lights glimmer and flicker inside the crumbling ruin as the wild dancers reach a fevered pitch.

There are 27 cultists in all, reveling in the courtyard. Ten have been forced into the ritual, and still cling to a semblance of their rational minds. The remaining 17 have sworn their souls and lives to Arkos and his strange cult, and are thoroughly wicked.

The cultists are caught up in their rite. If the PCs make any effort to conceal themselves, it is relatively easy (Stealth, DC 15) to slip unnoticed to the southern entrance. The northern entrance, set closer to the bonfire, is more difficult to reach (Stealth, DC 25).

Statistics for the 17 dedicated cultists are listed below, but the remaining 10 flee at the first chance, wanting nothing but to flee the cult and Arkos' cruelty. These craven villagers are of no use in a fight, dropping their weapons and falling prone if confronted.

The 17 cultists, however, have no qualms about giving their lives in the name of Arkos. Their master has promised them eternal rewards and more, and the cultists have foolishly bought into his promises. While the minions try to surround the heroes, the hunters hurl their daggers into the fray, while the woodsmen brutes lay into those that try to break free of the cordon.

Development: Arkos and his retinue are preparing their rite from atop the balcony (area 1-13). If the PCs elect to bring the battle to the cultists, Arkos retires to area 1-14 to complete his ritual, but if the PCs conceal themselves and allow the ritual to progress, read or paraphrase the following:

A ragged, wild haired man appears on the balcony above the courtyard. A pair of silent priests dressed in black robes and bearing a chalice and a large, earthenware jug flanks the man.

The wild-haired man raises his arms to the crowd and the dancers go quiet.

"Ages past, when the world was still young, and the race of man was little more than tribal bands," he intones, his deep voice filling the courtyard, "the Kingspire shined like a jewel in the wilderness. But our ancestors, with savage cruelty and bloodied fist, laid low the Kingspire and its rulers, destroying what should have been our legacy."

"The rulers of this mighty citadel fled, beyond the veil of day and night, like unto immortals. We were meant to sit with them and raise cups of ruby wine in their eternal court at twilight, as kith and kin."

With wild eyes the man fills the chalice from the earthen jug and drinks deeply, spilling down his beard and staining his robes crimson. "Join me, brothers and sisters! Let your chants echo through the ages as we call back the Master of Kingspire! You are the holy ones, chosen to feed his hunger, and thereby secure your place beside his mealy throne! Give your lives for him now, so that he might cleanse the world, and raise your fists in triumph! For long has he slept and great is his hunger!"

The wild-haired man raises the earthenware jug over his head and casts it out over the courtyard. It crashes down among the revelers, who immediately break into a riot, fighting for drops of the foul potion. Laughing mightily, the priest withdraws into the citadel.

As the cultists fall upon the liquid, a great rumbling shakes the Kingspire. Moments later, the ground underfoot begins to roll and shift as thousands of worms squirm their way up from the ground. Unless engaged in combat, the cultists hurl themselves to the ground, and are quickly devoured by the worms, leaving naught but bones stripped of muscle and flesh. However if the PCs played their hand too early, the cultists stumble their way through the plague of worms in an effort to turn the PCs into a sacrificial offering.

For their part, the PCs must succeed on DC 10 Acrobatics checks each round or fall to the ground. Any hero falling against the ground is immediately attacked by flesh eating worms (immediate reaction, +10 vs. AC, 1d12+6 damage). Additionally, with the arrival of the worms, the entire courtyard is treated as difficult terrain.

The plague of worms is merely a precursor of things to come, and only extends over area 1–6. Once the PCs leave the courtyard, they are free from the threat of the worms.

Arkos does not stay to fight — he is too busy bringing about the end of the world. If the PCs somehow force Arkos and his retinue to stay, their statistics are provided in area 1–14.

Woodsman (2)

Level 4 Brute

Medium natural humanoid, human **XP 175**

Initiative +3 **Senses** Perception +2

HP 66; **Bloodied** 33; see also *battle fury*

AC 16; **Fortitude** 17, **Reflex** 14, **Will** 14

Speed 6

↑ **Woodsman's Axe** (standard; at-will) ♦ **Weapon**
+7 vs.AC; 1d12 + 4 damage (crit 1d12 + 16).

⚡ **Handaxe** (standard; at-will) ♦ **Weapon**
Ranged 5/10; +5 vs.AC; 1d6 + 4 damage.

↑ **Fury of Arkos** (free, when first bloodied; encounter) ♦ **Weapon**

The woodsman makes a melee basic attack with a +4 bonus to the attack roll and deals an extra 1d6 damage on a hit.

Alignment Evil **Languages** Common

Skills Athletics +11, Endurance +10

Str 19 (+6) **Dex** 12 (+3) **Wis** 11 (+2)

Con 16 (+5) **Int** 10 (+2) **Cha** 12 (+3)

Equipment woodsman's axe (greataxe), brace of three handaxes

Hunter (5)

Level 2 Skirmisher

Medium natural humanoid, human **XP 125**

Initiative +6 **Senses** Perception +1

HP 37; **Bloodied** 18

AC 16; **Fortitude** 12, **Reflex** 15, **Will** 12

Speed 6

↑ **Boar Spear** (standard; at-will) ♦ **Weapon**

Reach 2; +7 vs.AC; 1d10 + 1 damage, and the hunter shifts 1 square.

⚡ **Dagger** (standard; at-will) ♦ **Weapon**

Ranged 5/10; +7 vs.AC; 1d4 + 3 damage.

↑ **Immobilizing Thrust** (standard; encounter) ♦ **Weapon**

Requires boar spear; +7 vs.AC; 1d10 + 1 damage, and the hunter makes a secondary attack on the same target. *Secondary Target*: +5 vs. Fortitude; the target is immobilized. *Special*: The hunter cannot move from his square while the target is immobilized.

Combat Advantage

The hunter deals an extra 1d6 damage on melee and ranged attacks against any target it has combat advantage against.

Alignment Evil **Languages** Common

Skills Stealth +9, Nature +6

Str 12 (+2) **Dex** 17 (+4) **Wis** 11 (+1)

Con 13 (+2) **Int** 10 (+1) **Cha** 12 (+2)

Equipment leather armor, boar spear, 4 daggers

Village Cultist (10)

Level 2 Minion

Medium natural humanoid, human **XP 31**

Initiative +0 **Senses** Perception +0

HP 1; a missed attack never damages a minion.

AC 15; **Fortitude** 13, **Reflex** 11, **Will** 11

Speed 6

↑ **Cleaver** (standard; at-will) ♦ **Weapon**

Reach 2; +6 vs.AC; 4 damage.

Mob Mentality (standard; at-will)

A village cultist gains combat advantage against a target if the target is within at least 5 squares of 2 or more of its allies.

Alignment Evil **Languages** Common

Str 14 (+3) **Dex** 10 (+1) **Wis** 10 (+1)

Con 12 (+2) **Int** 9 (+0) **Cha** 11 (+1)

Equipment cleaver fastened to a 10-foot pole.



THE DUNGEON TOWER

Read or paraphrase the following:

This wide tower once offered a commanding view over the swamp to the north and east. Now it is like much of the rest of the castle, merely a ruined shadow of its former majesty. Debris litters the tower floor, forcing you to carefully pick your way through the fallen rubble.

Concealed amid the rubble (Perception, DC 20) is a locked (Thievery, DC 20) iron grate opening to a spiral staircase. The key to the lock is kept hidden in area 1–8. The staircase below has collapsed, making passage impossible without weeks of heavy digging.

The tower once served as quarters for the eladrin archers serving the regents of the Kingspire. A careful search of the rubble along the arrow slits lining the walls reveals a deteriorating leather quiver containing a sheaf of arrows. While all of the arrows are ruined with age (and worthless, like the quiver) there is a pair of bowstrings threaded into the decaying leather of the quiver. Wound with gold and silver thread, and strands of hair taken from a unicorn’s mane, the bowstrings bestow a +2 bonus to any non-magical bow. The ancient bowstrings fray quickly and are only good for 1d12 uses, each.

AREA 1–8 RUINED STOREROOM (EL 1, XP 200)

The western door to this chamber is stuck, and requires a DC 15 Strength check to force open, alerting the archers in area 1–5 who investigate the noise in 1d6 rounds. Read or paraphrase the following:

The rotting door gives way, revealing what appears to be an old storeroom. Shelves line the walls, laden with ancient casks, bundles and crates. Many of the shelves have collapsed, spilling their ruined contents to the floor.

At first glance, there is little here to merit the PCs’ interest. The storeroom’s contents have all been rendered worthless by the passage of time. Thorough PCs, however, are in luck: a DC 23 Perception check reveals a hidden panel set into the north wall. Plastered over with mud, ages ago, the panel is easily pried loose with the tip of a dagger. However, the panel is also trapped, and PCs failing to take the appropriate countermeasures are targeted by a billowing cloud of icy air that freezes skin, sears eyelids, and scars the lungs.

Hidden behind the panel is a dark velvet pouch sewn with small diamond chips in imitation of the night sky (worth 200 gp). The pouch contains a large, ceremonial key ring chased with platinum (worth 50 gp) and a ring of five keys (three to open the gates in area 2–15, one to open the grate in area 1–7, and one to open the gate in areas 1–9 and 2–9).

Icy Ward

Level 5 Warder

Trap XP 200

Perception

DC 20: The character feels a slight chill radiating from the panel.

Trigger: When a creature opens the panel.

Immediate Reaction Close burst 3

Targets: All creatures in burst

Attack: +8 vs. Reflex

Hit: 2d8+3 cold damage, and the target is slowed (save ends).

Miss: Half damage, and the target is not slowed.

COUNTERMEASURES

- The characters can trigger the trap from afar with missile weapons. The trap has an AC of 20, and triggers if more than 10 points of damage are dealt to it.
- An adjacent character can disable the trap with a DC 25 Thievery check

AREA 1–9

THE RUINS BELOW (EL 3, XP 750)

Read or paraphrase the following:

The narrow staircase descends the side of the citadel to a platform below. The steps are slick with black moss and condensation. Swirling mists obscure the sheer drop to the base of the citadel far below.

Descending the steps brings the PCs to an old ruined entrance to the citadel’s dungeon level. The entrance is secured by a locked iron gate (Thievery, DC 20 to unlock); the key to the gate can be found hidden in area 1–8.

Through the rusty bars, the PCs can see that the chamber is largely in ruins. The ceiling above has partially caved-in, and the remainder of the chamber is in danger of collapse. The chamber was once the quarters of the dungeon’s master torturer, the cruel eladrin responsible for extracting secrets and instilling fear in the regent’s enemies. Apart from a few cruel implements trapped beneath fallen blocks (leg irons, brands, thumb screws and bits of a broken rack) little is left to testify to the horrors that took place here.

In the very back of the chamber, some 20 feet distant from the entrance, stands an iron maiden. When the citadel fell to the Nyrae’s curse, a half-elven rogue was left trapped in the iron maiden, where she died a slow and agonizing death. The residual, psychic taint of her tortured spirit permeates the torture device, threatening to draw the PCs into its ancient misery.

The first PC to see the iron is targeted by the lingering spirit (standard action, +10 vs. Will). Whether or not the attack is successful, the PC feels hatred and agony wash over him, emanating in waves from the iron maiden. Additionally, on a

successful attack, the PC is pricked, as if by a thousand tiny spikes, causing the PC to take 1d12 points of damage per round. The PC's blood, however, weeps from the iron maiden, emerging from a hundred tiny pinholes and running in tiny rivulets down into the stone floor.

The condition continues until the heroes open the iron maiden, or the PC is brought out of the area (up the stairs to area 1–8 is sufficiently distant).

Opening the Maiden: One of the timbers supporting the remainder of the ceiling is resting precariously against the iron maiden. Opening the maiden causes the beam to shudder and fall, causing the ceiling to collapse. When the maiden is opened, the animated corpse of the half-elf springs out, grasping hungrily for the nearest living creature.

When the maiden is opened, call for initiative for every PC in the room; roll 1d20 + 5 for the corpse as well. Characters beating the corpse's initiative can leap for safety, insuring that they take only half damage from the falling ceiling.

However, if the corpse succeeds in beating any of the PC on initiative, it leaps to the closest, slowest PC (+7 vs. Reflex). If the corpse succeeds on its attacks, the PC is held in place and suffers the full brunt of the collapsing ceiling.

If the PC survives the collapse, he discovers a ring clutched in the skeletal hand. Forged in the likeness of intertwined leaves, wound around a glittering ruby. Though not magical, this band once held great worth to the regent of the Kingspire.

Apart from the ring, there is no treasure in the chamber.

Collapsing Ceiling

Level 7 Lurker

Trap XP 250

Perception DC 20: The character notices that the scaffolding is concealing the trap.

Trigger: When a creature opens the iron maiden.

Immediate Reaction Close burst 3

Targets: All creatures in burst

Attack: +10 vs. Reflex

Hit: 3d8+3 cold damage, and the target is immobilized (save ends).

Miss: Half damage, and the target is not immobilized.

Special: If the corpse in the iron maiden successfully hits and grabs a PC, the trap automatically hits the PC (no attack roll required).

COUNTERMEASURES

- An adjacent character can disable the trap with a DC 25 Thievery check
- A DC 15 Dungeoneering check grants the party a +2 bonus to Thievery checks to delay or disable the trap.

AREA 1–10

HALL OF SHATTERED PANES

Read or paraphrase the following:

A once-majestic hall now stands in ruin. The vast ceiling arches high overhead, decorated with leering gargoyles, demons, and devils that seem frozen in the semblance of life. Four towering windows line the outside of the hall, their panes shattered into a thousand shards that litter the floor. Something, or someone must have disturbed the shards, sometime in the past, because they are laid out in the shape of a dragon.

A DC 15 Perception check made in an effort to look for tracks confirms that nothing (living) has passed through this hall in many a decade. Arkos rightly fears this hall, and has commanded his followers not disturb the “haunted hall of many panes.”

This hall was once decorated with elaborate stained glass panes — works of art that also came with a curse. While the hall poses very little threat in its ruined condition, keen investigators might glean details that will aid them when they encounter the hall in its previous incarnation (see area 2–5).

A cursory inspection of the glass reveals that most of the shards are stained with blood, and that the skeletons of a dozen tall humanoids litter the corners and walls of the chamber. (Heroes might mistake these for eladrin, but their build is far too stocky. They actually belong to the sub-human savages that attacked the Kingspire in ages past.)

A more thorough inspection of the chamber reveals four stone shelves set in the north wall. In the past, these nooks served as simple altars to the vices celebrated by the cruel eladrin, but now their contents have been scattered throughout the ruined hall or stolen by scavengers.

AREA 1–11

TOWER OF THE MAGUS

(EL 5, XP 1000)

The arched stone bridge leading to area 1–11 fell away decades ago, forcing explorers to puzzle their way across the gap. Read or paraphrase the following:

The stone archway comes to an abrupt halt. The bridge has fallen away here, leaving a daunting gap to the far side. Across the gap are the ruins of an enormous tower. Once several stories in height, the tower now stands as an empty husk, a few ruined gargoyles watching from atop its crumbling walls.

It is a 10-foot jump (Athletics DC 11 or DC 21 without a running start) to reach the far side of the collapsed bridge, but PCs making the leap without adequate precautions (spells, or simply tying a rope to their companions) are in for a deadly surprise. The 5 feet of the platform on the tower side (to the south) is crumbling and readily collapses under the weight of a landing PC jumping the gap. Characters successfully leaping

the gap hit the far side, only to have it crumble beneath their feet. PCs must succeed on an immediate DC 25 Athletics or Acrobatics check (player's choice). Those failing *this* check must make a saving throw or plummet 50 feet to rocky ground below (5d10 falling damage).

Characters succeeding on the saving throw are clinging by their fingertips, and must make a DC 20 Athletics check each round to hold on. Those succeeding by 5 or more manage to drag themselves back on to the bridge, but otherwise, they must be saved by their allies before weakening ... and plummeting to their fate. Note that once the bridge falls away, the leap to jump the gap becomes 15 feet in width (Athletics DC 16 or DC 31 without a running start).

Once the PCs have the time to inspect the tower on the far side of the collapsed bridge, read or paraphrase the following.

A single hammered copper portal, stained with verdigris, guards the entrance to the ruined tower before you. The portal is decorated with reliefs of a spiraling vine that follows the curve of the arched door, wending its around a hammered copper sun and moon, before winding down the far side of the portal. Framed within the work, wielding the contrasting might of the sun and moon is a single eladrin spellcaster.

This tower was once the lair of powerful eladrin magus. It has since fallen into a ruin and little remains to interest heroes. Some of the magus' guardians, however, remain ready to carry out their tasks, in obedience to a master who has long since passed from the world.

Five ruined gargoyles lurk atop the crumbling walls of the tower, some 25 feet overhead. Their bodies are pitted and cracked with age; their magic has diminished to the point that they no longer have the ability to fly. However, the gargoyles have adapted to their ruined condition and still make deadly opponents. They lurk, in stone form, atop the walls, waiting for the PCs to cross the ruined bridge. As the last of the PCs crosses over to the far side of the bridge, the gargoyles turn from stone long enough to hurl themselves off of their perches at the heroes, crashing down amid them.

Once at ground level, the gargoyles scratch and claw at the PCs, doing their best to repel the intruders. The gargoyles are under orders to repel all invaders; the sole foes that escape their wrath are any eladrin wizards.

Treasure: The interior of the tower is a collection of fallen granite blocks, rotted timbers, and shards of slate shingles. The rubble makes searching for anything of value exceedingly difficult. However, thorough explorers are rewarded for their diligence. A close search of the tower floor (1 hour or more; Perception, DC 20) discovers a small silver coffer trapped beneath the rubble.

Digging the coffer free, the PCs find that — while the coffer is hopelessly crushed — its contents have survived. Once locked, the coffer's clasp was snapped off when the tower collapsed. Inside, swaddled in a black velvet bag stitched with silver runes is a gold-colored orb, carved out of crystal.

Out of place and out of time, this Orb of the Magi functions as a magic +3 orb that grants +2 to any Arcana check, with the special ability to grant a PC spellcaster the ability to recast a spent daily encounter power, at the price of two healing surges. There is a cumulative 1% chance each time the orb is used that the spent surges are permanently lost.

Ruined Gargoyle (5)

Level 5 Lurker

Medium elemental humanoid (earth) XP 200

Initiative +8

Senses Perception +9;
darkvision

HP 51; Bloodied 25

AC 19; Fortitude 19, Reflex 17, Will 17

Immune petrification

Speed 6

↑ Claw (standard; at-will)

+10 vs.AC; 1d10 + 4 damage.

↑ Silent Drop (standard; encounter)

Can only be used if the gargoyle is 10 feet or more above its target. +10 vs.AC; 2d10 + 4 damage, and the target is knocked prone.

Stone Form (standard; at-will)

The gargoyle becomes a statue and gains resist 25 to all damage, regeneration 3, and tremorsense 10. It loses all other senses and can take no actions in stone form other than revert to its normal form (as a minor action).

Alignment Evil Languages Primordial

Skills Stealth +9

Str 18 (+6)

Dex 15 (+4)

Wis 15 (+4)

Con 15 (+4)

Int 5 (–1)

Cha 12 (+3)

AREA 1–12

WESTERN BLOCKHOUSE

(EL 2, XP 600)

Read or paraphrase the following:

The square tower chamber is littered with debris. Water collects in pools on the stone floor, amid the fallen timbers and crumbling stones. Muddy stone steps rise to a central platform above. A dozen or so small burning lamps rest on the steps, casting the staircase in flickering yellow light.

A successful tracking check (Perception, DC 15) confirms what cautious PCs likely suspect: dozens of muddy footprints lead up the stairs. The staircase is trapped, however, and it requires a DC 22 Perception to note the thin trip wire strung along the steps. Heroes unlucky enough to spring the trap overturn 3 casks of oil, showering all 10 squares of the steps with oil.

The oil is instantly ignited by the lamps resting on the steps, resulting in a raging inferno that washes up the stairs, causing fire damage to all characters on the stairs. The flames persist for 3 rounds, before dying down into tiny patches of pooled oil. The trap can only be triggered once.

Oil Trap

Level 7 Elite Lurker

Trap **XP 600**

Perception DC 22: The character notices the tripwire.

Trigger: When a creature steps onto the stairs, the trap rolls initiative.

Initiative +6

Standard Action **Close special**

Targets: All creatures on the stairs.

Attack: +12 vs. Reflex

Hit: 3d8+3 fire damage, and ongoing 5 fire damage (save ends).

Miss: Half damage, no ongoing damage.

Special: The trap attacks all PCs on the stairs every round for three rounds.

COUNTERMEASURES

- Characters alert to the tripwire can easily step over it. Additionally, an adjacent character can disable the trap with a DC 27 Thievery check.
- A DC 15 Dungeoneering check grants the party a +2 bonus to Thievery checks to delay or disable the trap.

AREA 1-13

BALCONY (EL 5, XP 1,050)

Read or paraphrase the following:

Stairs rise to a wide balcony that overlooks the courtyard below. At the back of the balcony, stairs climb towards to the inner keep of the citadel. The balcony is decorated with elaborate stonework: curling stone vines, forest animals, and bas-reliefs of dark, wooded groves, adorn the chamber.

Plates of glowing embers are placed about the floor in a semblance of some esoteric rite, and the air is thick with the smell of burning incense.

If the PCs have not raised an alarm among the cultists, Arkos and his 5 initiates are here, preparing to make an offering in the name of the spirits inhabiting the Kingspire.

If the PCs have been detected, however, or set off the trap in area 1-12, Arkos has retreated to area 1-14, leaving his cultists to fend off the PCs. The cultists fight in a holding action, stalling the PCs long enough for Arkos to finish his rite.

The cult champions are arrayed in rusted armor, scavenged from the innumerable armies that perished trying to assault the Kingspire. The champions fight with ancient, rusted bastard swords and pockmarked shields. The initiates swarm around them, doing their best to harass and harry the PCs, buying their master time.

If the PCs succeed in surprising the cultists, Arkos fights just long enough to break free to area 1-14. Arkos is obsessed with completing his rite, never realizing that the damage has already been done. His initiates fight to the death, confident in the eternal reward promised them.

Development: If the PCs succeed in defeating Arkos here, see **Curse of the Kingspire**, below.

Arkos

Level 6 Controller (Leader)

Medium natural humanoid, human **XP 250**

Initiative +4

Senses Perception +12

Unholy Aura (Healing) aura 5; allies that start their turns in the aura regain 3 hit points.

HP 70; **Bloodied** 35

AC 20; **Fortitude** 16, **Reflex** 15, **Will** 19

Speed 6

↑ **Morning Star** (standard; at-will) ♦ **Weapon**
+11 vs.AC; 1d8 + 2 damage.

⚡ **Fury of the Ancients** (standard; at-will) ♦ **Psionic**
Ranged 10; +10 vs.Will; 1d10+4 psychic damage.

🔥 **Fist of the Ancients** (standard; encounter)

Area burst 2 within 10; +8 vs. Reflex; 2d8+4 damage, and the target is immobilized (save ends). The area of the burst becomes difficult terrain until the end of the encounter.

🔥 **Poison Cloud** (standard; recharge 5,6) ♦ **Poison**
Area burst 2 within 10; +8 vs. Fortitude; 2d6 + 4 poison damage, and the target is dazed until the end of Arkos' next turn.

Alignment Evil

Languages Common

Skills Athletics +10, Religion +8

Str 15 (+5)

Dex 13 (+4)

Wis 19 (+7)

Con 14 (+5)

Int 10 (+3)

Cha 12 (+4)

Equipment morningstar, rusted breastplate



Cult Champion (2)

Level 6 Brute

Medium natural humanoid, human XP 250

Initiative +6 **Senses** Perception +4

HP 88; **Bloodied** 44

AC 19; **Fortitude** 19, **Reflex** 17, **Will** 16

Speed 5

↑ **Bastard Sword** (standard; at-will) ♦ **Weapon**

+9 vs. AC; 1d10 + 5 damage.

↑ **Shield Bash** (standard; at-will) ♦ **Weapon**

+9 vs. AC; 1d6 + 5 damage, and the cult champion makes a secondary attack on the same target. *Secondary Attack*: +7 vs. Fortitude; the target is knocked prone.

↑ **Slash and Bash** (standard; recharge 5,6) ♦ **Weapon**

The cult champion makes a bastard sword and a shield bash attack against the same target.

Alignment Evil **Languages** Common

Skills Athletics +9

Str 20 (+8) **Dex** 16 (+6) **Wis** 12 (+4)

Con 18 (+7) **Int** 8 (+2) **Cha** 6 (+1)

Equipment bastard sword, heavy shield, rusted plate armor, belt pouch with 1d10 gp

Initiate (4)

Level 7 Minion

Medium natural humanoid, human XP 75

Initiative +5 **Senses** Perception +4

HP 1; a missed attack never damages a minion.

AC 19; **Fortitude** 18, **Reflex** 17, **Will** 17

Speed 6

↑ **Spear** (standard; at-will) ♦ **Weapon**

+10 vs. AC; 5 damage.

Alignment Evil **Languages** Common

Str 16 (+6) **Dex** 14 (+5) **Wis** 12 (+4)

Con 13 (+4) **Int** 12 (+4) **Cha** 14 (+5)

Equipment rotting leather armor, spear

AREA 1-14

CHAPEL OF THE CROW KING

If Arkos survives his encounter with the PCs in area 1-13, he flees here, desperate to complete the rite that will return the Kingspire to greatness. Unbeknownst to the deluded would-be sorcerer, the curse of the Kingspire has already been triggered.

If Arkos was slain atop the balcony in the previous encounter, proceed to **Curse of the Kingspire**, below. Otherwise, read or paraphrase the following:

The dark chapel is silent and still, a preternatural gloom smothering all hints of light or sound. A thick coat of dust covers the doors, cobwebs hang from the ceiling, and moldering tapestries drape the walls. A dusty stairway rises to a loft, decorated with solemn gargoyles and leering dragons. The sensation of magic is thick in the air, like a terrible storm about to break.

If the PCs are bearing light, a quick Perception check (DC 15) is sufficient to note the tracks leading up the stairs rising to the balcony above. Arkos is lurking in the back of the loft, ready to spring an ambush on the heroes.

As the PCs enter the chamber, they hear a soft chanting that quickly rises to an apocalyptic shout. Crying out to the Crow King, Arkos hurls a black orb down from the loft. The DM should determine a square as a target; PCs within 5 feet have the opportunity (Athletics/Acrobatics DC 25) to catch the orb before it strikes the ground. However it avails them little — the orb has an eggshell-like consistency and whether it strikes the ground or is caught by a PC, it shatters into a thousand tiny shards.

For an instant, a mute, eldritch silence engulfs the world. Moments later, a wave of magic, sounding like the crash of a thousand armies, washes over the PCs, rendering them unconscious (save ends). When they awake, they are still in the Kingspire, though in another world.

See the **Player Beginning for Level 2** for more information.

Curse of the Kingspire: Despite Arkos' success or failure at completing his faux rite, the results are largely the same. With the priest's death, the curse is triggered, sending an eldritch wave rolling over the Kingspire.

Read or paraphrase the following:

You hear a crash, and then a cacophony like the breaking of a thousand crystal shards. Your companions shout over the noise and point towards the heart of the Kingspire. A wave of eldritch force, distending and destroying everything it passes, rolls your way!

The PCs cannot outrun the eldritch wave, though DMs should call for actions all the same.

As above, all heroes in the Kingspire are rendered unconscious (save ends). When they awake, they remain within in the Kingspire, though in another time and space.

For those that manage to cling to consciousness, and for those awakening in the Kingspire of old, see the **Player Beginning for Level 2** for more information.

LEVEL 2

LOST KINGSPIRE

In order to escape the barbarian assault, the rulers of Kingspire tore the fabric of space and time to carry their home to safety. However, the rite was only a partial success, and the inhabitants of the Kingspire have languished in their self-inflicted prison ever since.

Lost Kingspire is the citadel at the height of the barbarian siege, a segment frozen in time, like an ant caught in amber. While the world outside has long since forgotten about the inhabitants of the Kingspire and the battles fought there, the inhabitants are forced to relive the same 24 hours, again and again.

The rite that will free the eladrin from their prison requires three days to cast. Ironically, the eladrin are trapped in an eternity of only *one* day, and can never complete the rite. Weary from their endless existence and unable to win their freedom, the eladrin have bitterly resigned themselves to their fate.

The arrival of the PCs changes all this. For the last several hundred years, the eladrin have dealt only with one another, warred against the barbarians at their gate, and fought against their kith and kin in the dungeons beneath the Kingspire (detailed in level 3). The arrival of the PCs heralds the introduction of chance, chaos, and change; if the PCs succeeded in entering their cursed prison of shadow and time, there is still the chance that the eladrin might escape.

However, the eladrin also know that they must act quickly. The heroes must not be allowed to become jaded, cynical, and forlorn; for once this comes to pass, the PCs will simply be additional courtiers in the Crow King's immortal retinue. Therefore, the eladrin court moves quickly, each attempting to turn the PCs' arrival to his or her advantage.

THE TWILIGHT COURT

The noble court of the Elihai family is composed of three principal personalities, each with his or her own strategies and goals. Although polite and kind when in each other's presence, each is a heartless, deceitful traitor, willing to take whatever steps are needed to eliminate any obstacles to their ends.

Nyrae the Crow King: (Area 2–2) Cruelly handsome, charismatic, and confident, Nyrae symbolizes all the arrogance and hubris that laid the Kingspire low. Tall, with a shock of white hair pulled back beneath his serpent crown, and a cloak of raven feathers cast over his shoulder, the Crow King sees the PCs as mere pawns — intriguing pawns, to be sure, but little more than playthings provided by the fates for his amusement. The Crow King can be kind or cruel as it suits him, but in truth, he cares for naught but himself, a trait that becomes immediately apparent when he forgets himself and flies into a rage.

Obsessed with the defeat of his elder brother, Nyrae seeks to convert the heroes to his cause. He does this through all

manner of lies and deceits, but his most effective ploy is the truth: his brother has the means of escape from the Kingspire. Nyrae refuses to share the specifics of this relic, instead insisting that the heroes “trust him,” fully knowing that they can't, and yet won't have a choice.

The Path of Betrayal: The Crow King “confides” in the PCs that his brother possesses a dangerous artifact that has the power to free them from the curse of the Kingspire. If the heroes can succeed in defeating his brother and recovering the *Runeblade*, the Crow King promises to help them to escape the Kingspire, along with great rewards of gold and magic once they return home.

Of course this is a lie, but the Crow King is careful not to appear too eager, knowing that this will only drive his pawns away. He makes his offer, and if the PCs decline, Nyrae simply waits for his less subtle kinfolk to drive the PCs back to him.

If the PCs accept the Crow King's offer, his knights escort them to area 2–19 and command them to fulfill their master's will. The Crow King joins his servitors a short while later, and they secret themselves atop the trapped staircase, lying in wait for the PCs when they emerge from the caverns below. See **Conclusion** below for details on the adventures' dramatic finale.

Lady Ariarch: (Area 2–10) Mistress of the Tower of the Magus, Lady Ariarch was once the star of Kingspire, a shining beauty, sorceress without peer, and lady-in-waiting to Clan Elihai. Secretly, she was also the secret lover of Prince Rynth, and when the Kingspire was overrun, it was Lady Ariarch's magic that whisked the citadel away from certain defeat.

But her efforts to save her lover's life cost her his love. With the Kingspire trapped within a demi-plane of eternal violence and war, Prince Rynth cursed the day that Lady Ariarch had ever been born, casting her from his side and leading his followers into exile in the caverns beneath the citadel. Since that day, Lady Ariarch has pined for her lost lover, wanting only to be in his arms once more.

Though her physical beauty has not diminished with the passage of centuries, it pales before her bitterness and simmering hurt. Unlike her regent, Lady Ariarch is unable to conceal the anger and disappointment that consumes her. Worse, whatever eldritch talent she might have once had was spent long ago in her efforts to return the Kingspire to its home. While far from helpless, her once awesome magical powers have been reduced to mere shadows of her former might.

The PCs' arrival sparks a glimmer of hope in Lady Ariarch's blackened heart. She cannot contain her eagerness around the heroes, questioning them without end, and staring at them with stark, desperate eyes when her regent commands silence. Given the opportunity, she exhausts the PCs with her constant presence, quietly observing every action, and interrogating them about their passage into Lost Kingspire.

The Path of Obsession: Lady Ariarch fully believes that, with Prince Rynth at her side, she would be content in the eternally warring demi-plane of Lost Kingspire. She begs, bribes, curses and threatens the PCs, all in an effort to win their loyalty, or failing that, obedience. Lady Ariarch proposes an expedition, a quest in search of her lost love. Though she cannot join the heroes (the Crow King forbids it), she does her utmost to aid her champions, using all the wiles at her disposal.

The Vizier: (Area 2–4) Seated at the left hand of the Crow King, the eladrin known simply as the Vizier, is a gaunt, skeletal creature perpetually garbed in dark robes, and with his magical rod always close at hand. The Vizier has a cruel face, with sharp features and stern, commanding eyes. Seldom speaking (at least, in the presence of his regent), when the Vizier does speak, it is with unflinching honesty and cruel appraisal.

The Path of Regicide: Among the twilight court, the Vizier alone does not care to escape the demi-plane. But he has no desire to serve for eternity; rather, he would rule from this hell, the lovely Ariarch at his side, constantly warring against the savage sub-humans that assault the spire time and again. To accomplish this, he must find a way to slay the Crow King, no small task, given the nature of the Kingspire's curse. The answer lies with Lord Rynth's *Runeblade*. The eldritch blade consumes the souls of its foes, and its powers are so great that even the curse of the Kingspire cannot return the dead to life.

The Vizier has tried, and failed, to recover the *Runeblade* on his own. The heroes' arrival offers him the chance to shift the balance of power in his favor. The Vizier pulls the PCs aside, and in his cold, calculating manner, approaches them with a simple bargain: aid him in recovering the *Runeblade*, and he will assure them safe passage home. The Vizier warns the PCs against attempting to use the sword — the ancient relic is the reason behind the curse that laid the Kingspire low, and to toy with power of its magnitude is to invite destruction. The Vizier speaks the truth: the *Runeblade* poses a dire threat to those that dare to wield it.

Tracking Time: The Kingspire's curse necessitates strict timekeeping. While the PCs can gather information, make allegiances, and achieve other non-material gains over the course of several days, any material gains (specifically magic items and treasure) are lost when the Kingspire resets at the end of 13 hours. It falls upon the GM to note the passage of time, applying changes to the encounter locations as noted.

After suffering through one or two cycles of the curse, astute PCs may wish to do their own time keeping. This is particularly challenging given the perpetual night that shrouds the citadel — without the cycles of day and night, or even the turning of the stars, the usual methods of estimating time are worthless. Heroes will need to divine their own means of tracking time, either through magic, the measured burning of lantern oil, or the like. Cunning PCs are sure to relish this somewhat

mundane challenge, and an effective timepiece can afford the heroes considerable advantages over the curse, allowing them to predict key events in the siege. Note that the PCs can have a significant influence on the Cycle (by killing key members of the Twilight Court, or by driving back the savages), and DMs should alter the events as needed to reflect the PCs' actions.

Finally, while it has no explicit effect on the PCs, the savages rain down arrows, spears, and boulders on the citadel throughout the night. The clatter of arrows on flagstones, catapult shot crashing through the slate shingles, and the plaintive cries of the dying can be heard throughout the night, no matter the time.

THE FALL OF KINGSPIRE CYCLE

Hour	Event
0	<i>The Turning of the Worm.</i> All inhabitants are returned to their original encounter areas. All wounds are healed, the dead are raised, and encounter and daily powers are regained.
1	The first wave of barbarians assaults the gatehouse (area 2–13), sundering the portals, but is driven back.
2	Servants prepare a banquet in area 2–1.
3	The second wave of barbarians storms the gatehouse (area 2–13), pushing back the defenders to area 2–12.
4	The Crow King, Lady Ariarch, and the Vizier join one another for a final repast in area 2–1.
5	The barbarians charge area 2–12, but are driven back across the bridge to the gatehouse (area 2–13).
6	The banquet ends. Lady Ariarch retires to her tower (area 2–10) to prepare her defenses, while the Crow King and the Vizier leave for the Hall of Four Panes, offering prayers to the foul principles, in hopes of winning divine assistance in the night's battles.
7	The savages launch a surprise attack on area 2–9 from below, swarming the lower level (area 2–14) and slaying everyone they encounter. The barbarians hold area 2–9 with archers and javelin bearers, cutting Lady Ariarch off from the rest of the citadel.
8	The savages press up through area 2–8 and slaughter the guards in the south 2–11.
9	Submitting to the pleas of his men-at-arms, the Crown King retires to chambers (area 2–2) to prepare for battle. The Vizier gathers his warriors in area 2–4 and prepares for the final defense of the Kingspire.

- 10 *The Death of Magic.* The savages storm the Tower of the Magus (area 2–10) at great cost of life. After exhausting her arcane powers, Lady Ariarch perishes to a savage’s spear, and the Tower of the Magi is sacked, ending the citadel’s surviving arcane defenses.
- 11 The eladrin forces clash with the savage sub-humans in the courtyard (area 2–6). Chaotic battle rages as the outnumbered eladrin slowly succumb to the overwhelming numbers of the savages.
- 12 The Vizier and his surviving warriors are forced back to area 2–1, while the barbarians swarm over the rest of the Keep. The Crow King and his royal guard stage a final assault from the throne room (area 2–2), driving the savages from area 2–3.
- 13 *The Fall of Kingspire.* In a frantic last stand, the Crow King, the Vizier, and a handful of royal guards perish atop the balcony (area 2–3). The savages sack the citadel, reducing it to ruin.

DEATH WITHIN THE CYCLE

The Curse of Kingspire ensures that death poses little meaningful threat to the inhabitants of the Kingspire. At the end of 13 hours, all inhabitants, living and dead are returned to their original encounter areas. The dead are *raised*, the living are healed of any wounds, and the bloody cycle begins again.

The heroes, though, are not as lucky. While they are healed and “reset” with the beginning of each cycle, death still comes with a cost.

Each time a PC is raised through the turning of the worm, the PC’s total number of healing surges is reduced by one. This cost is permanent for as long as the PC remains under the curse of the Kingspire, and multiple deaths result in multiple penalties. A PC cannot be brought below one healing surge.

The sole exceptions are those slain by the *Runeblade*. Their souls are forever lost, consumed by the fell weapon, and they are not raised from the dead with the following cycle (nor can they be raised in any manner).

THE SAVAGE HORDE

There are multiple opportunities for the PCs to battle the horde of savage sub-humans throughout the 13-hour Cycle of the Worm. Rather than duplicate the stats each time there is a chance that an encounter might be called for, statistics for members of the horde are listed here. Mark or photocopy the page for easy reference in battles with the marauding horde.

Savage Warchief

Level 5 Soldier (Leader)

Medium natural humanoid, human XP 200

Initiative +6 **Senses Perception** +5

HP 64; **Bloodied** 32

AC 21 (23 with *savage mob*); **Fortitude** 19, **Reflex** 15, **Will** 16

Speed 6 (8 while charging)

↑ **Spear** (standard; at-will) ♦ **Weapon**

+12 vs.AC; 1d8 + 5 damage; see also *trail of blood*. If the warchief hits with an opportunity attack, it shifts 1 square.

☼ **Battle Cry** (minor; recharge 5–6)

Close burst 5; allies in the burst shift 3 squares.

Trail of Blood

When the warchief’s melee attack hits an enemy, allies gain a +2 bonus to attack rolls and damage rolls against that enemy until the end of the warchief’s next turn.

Barbarian Resilience (immediate reaction, when the warchief suffers an effect that a save can end; encounter)

The warchief rolls a saving throw against the effect.

Savage Mob

The warchief gains a +2 bonus to AC while at least one ally is adjacent to it.

Alignment Evil **Languages** Common

Skills Athletics +11, Nature +8, Intimidate +7

Str 20 (+7)

Dex 14 (+4)

Wis 16 (+5)

Con 16 (+5)

Int 12 (+3)

Cha 10 (+2)

Equipment hide armor, heavy shield, spear

Description *The savage sub-human stands over seven feet in height, even hunched over. The warchief carries his courage on his sleeve, in the form of the hides of bears and catamounts. A sinister, wolfish intelligence glimmers beneath his thick brow, the instincts of a fierce northern predator sighting its prey.*

Barbarian Champion

Level 8 Elite Soldier

Medium natural humanoid, human XP 700

Initiative +9

Senses Perception +8

HP 184; **Bloodied** 92; see also *bear totem*

AC 26; **Fortitude** 24, **Reflex** 20, **Will** 23

Saving Throws +2

Speed 6 (8 while charging)

Action Points 1

↑ **Sword of Fury** (standard; at-will) ♦ **Fear, Weapon**

+12 vs.AC; 1d10 + 6 damage, the target is marked until the end of the champion’s next turn, and the champion makes a secondary attack against the same target. *Secondary Attack:* +10 vs.Will; the target takes a –2 penalty to all defenses until the end of the encounter or until the champion dies.

↑ **Sword of Kings** (standard; recharge 6) ♦ **Weapon**

Requires greatsword; +12 vs.AC; 2d10 + 6 damage, and the target is stunned until the end of the champion’s next turn.

Bear Totem (when first bloodied; encounter)

The champion gains a +4 bonus to damage rolls for the remainder of the encounter.

Barbarian Resilience (immediate reaction, when the champion suffers an effect that a save can end; encounter)

The barbarian rolls a saving throw against the effect.

Alignment Evil **Languages** Common

Skills Athletics +14, Intimidate +14, Nature +11

Str 22 (+10) **Dex** 17 (+7) **Wis** 18 (+8)

Con 20 (+9) **Int** 14 (+6) **Cha** 21 (+9)

Equipment greatsword, hide armor, brown bear cape and helm

Description *The barbarian towers over you, his hulking frame stitched with crude tattoos and war paint. His crown is adorned with the skull of a fierce dire bear, matching the thick fur cape thrown over the barbarian's shoulder. He wields an enormous sword in his thick, scarred hands, and gives a savage howl as he charges, wild-eyed, towards you!*

Barbarian Archer**Level 3 Artillery**

Medium natural humanoid, human **XP 150**

Initiative +5 **Senses Perception** +8

HP 39; **Bloodied** 19

AC 15; **Fortitude** 15, **Reflex** 17, **Will** 14

Speed 6 (8 while charging)

↑ Spear (standard; at-will) ♦ **Weapon**

+8 vs.AC; 1d8 + 2 damage.

⚡ Shortbow (standard; at-will) ♦ **Weapon**

Ranged 15/30; +10 vs.AC; 1d8 + 4 damage, and the archer grants an ally within 5 squares of it a +2 bonus to its next ranged attack roll against the same target.

Barbarian Resilience (immediate reaction, when the archer suffers an effect that a save can end; encounter)

The archer rolls a saving throw against the effect.

Alignment Evil **Languages** Common

Skills Athletics +7, Nature +6

Str 14 (+3) **Dex** 19 (+5) **Wis** 14 (+3)

Con 15 (+3) **Int** 11 (+1) **Cha** 10 (+1)

Equipment Hide armor, spear, shortbow, quiver with 30 arrows

Description *The barbarian darts for cover and draws his bow in a smooth, practiced motion, sending shrieking war arrows whistling through the air!*

Barbarian Warrior**Level 4 Minion**

Medium natural humanoid, human **XP 44**

Initiative +2 **Senses Perception** +2

HP 1; a missed attack never damages a minion.

AC 16; **Fortitude** 16, **Reflex** 12, **Will** 12

Speed 6 (8 while charging)

↑ Spear (standard; at-will) ♦ **Weapon**

+9 vs.AC; 5 damage.

Alignment Evil **Languages** Common

Str 16 (+5) **Dex** 10 (+2) **Wis** 10 (+2)

Con 14 (+4) **Int** 8 (+1) **Cha** 9 (+1)

Equipment hide armor, spear

Description *The hulking warrior snarls like a feral dog, his flint spear clutched in thick, meaty hands. Hungry for slaughter, he advances, weapon at the ready.*

PLAYER BEGINNING

(EL 7; XP 1,500)

Following the events concluding Level 1, read or paraphrase the following:

The silence passes, replaced by a cacophony of howling cries, the clash of blades on armor, and the piteous screams that can only be the sound of pitched battle. Weakly, you open your eyes to discover that you are atop a balcony. A pair of staircases descends to either side. The air is thick with black smoke, but through the haze you spy a warband of frenzied barbarians charging up the stairs towards you, voices raised in a battle cry!

Though it is the third hour in the Cycle of the Worm, a band of sub-human savages have succeeded in scaling the northwest tower, and entering a window into area 2–4 (an event that is not repeated in future cycles). The PCs, awakening on the balcony (area 2–3), must immediately contend with a band of howling, frenzied, bloodied savages.

The war band is composed of a barbarian champion, a warchief and 4 archers. The archers hang below, winging barbed war-arrows from cover, while the warchief follows the champion up the stairs, using his abilities to support his ally.

If the PCs can hold the barbarians to the stairs and area 2–4 below, they gain a +1 to attack rolls due to higher ground. The savage warriors are consumed by savage bloodrage, and do not retreat or withdraw.

Once the battle has ended, the PCs have the opportunity to examine their surroundings. They are atop the balcony overlooking the courtyard (area 2–6) below. Troops of disciplined eladrin are fighting a horde of savage sub-humans, driving them out the gate to area 2–13. The barbarian horde has routed; whether or not the PCs lend their aid, the eladrin succeed in securing the keep in 1d4 rounds.

Unless the PCs immediately take pains to hide themselves from discovery, a troop of 8 bloody and exhausted eladrin cautiously approach them. The knights of Elihai are unsure whether the PCs intend to be friends or foes.

This second encounter is a pivotal one. If the PCs conduct themselves with intelligence and grace, they can easily win the eladrins' trust. However, if they behave foolishly or resort to violence, the eladrin immediately assume them to be a

band of sub-human warchiefs. Role-playing is essential, and DMs should award a +3/-3 bonus to skill checks based upon the players' choice of words, tone and tenor. Furthermore, if the party nominates one of their own eladrin or elves, their negotiations receive a +2 bonus.

Convincing the Knights of Elihai: The PCs must convince the eladrin that they are here to aid their plight.

Complexity: 2 (requires 6 successes before 3 failures)

Primary Skills: Bluff, Diplomacy, Intimidate.

Bluff (DC 22): The PCs try to win the eladrin's trust under false pretenses. Other characters can aid the lead PC in making the check.

Diplomacy (DC 18): The PCs try to foster an alliance with the eladrin, based on their mutual goals of survival.

Intimidate (DC 26): The PCs win the eladrin's compliance through brute threats of violence.

Success: The knights offer to escort the PCs to audience with their lord and master of the keep, the Crow King (area 2-2).

Failure: The knights attempt to capture the PCs for questioning. Captured PCs are brought to the torturer (area 2-14) where the Vizier oversees their interrogation (from area 2-4).

Quartered in the Kingspire: Once the PCs have an audience with either the Crow King or his Vizier, they are free to explore the Kingspire at their leisure. The sole exception is the King's throne room (area 2-2) and Lady Ariarch's tower (area 2-10). The PCs are granted quarters in the small room east of area 2-8, but given the Kingspire's short cycle, they will have little cause to use it.

Eladrin Knight of Elihai (8)

Level 7 Soldier

Medium fey humanoid, eladrin XP 300

Initiative +11

Senses Perception +4;
low-light vision

Shadow Touch aura 10; fey creatures in the aura score a critical hit on a roll of 19 or 20 (a roll of 19 is not an automatic hit, however).

HP 77; **Bloodied** 38

AC 23; **Fortitude** 18, **Reflex** 21, **Will** 17

Saving Throws +5 against charm effects

Speed 5; see also *shadow step*

↑ **Longsword** (standard; at-will) ♦ **Weapon**

+12 vs.AC; 1d8 + 4 damage.

↑ **Driving Slash** (standard or opportunity attack; recharge 5-6) ♦ **Weapon**

Requires longsword; +12 vs.AC; 3d8 + 4 damage, and the target is pushed 1 square.

⚡ **Twilight Challenge** (standard; encounter)

Ranged 10; the target is marked until the end of the encounter or until the knight of Elihai dies, taking 4 damage each round it does not attack the knight.

Shadow Step (move; encounter) ♦ **Teleportation**

The knight of Elihai can teleport 7 squares.

Alignment Unaligned **Languages** Common, Elven

Skills Athletics +11, Arcana +7, History +7, Nature +10

Str 18 (+7)

Dex 22 (+9)

Wis 13 (+4)

Con 13 (+4)

Int 14 (+5)

Cha 16 (+6)

Equipment chainmail, light shield, longsword

AREA 2-1 GREAT HALL

Read or paraphrase the following:

Before you stands a sumptuous banquet hall overlooked by a balcony. A large table, capable of seating 20 or more, dominates the center of the chamber, while braziers used for heat and cooking occupy the back wall.

The walls of the chamber are hung with thick, embroidered tapestries depicting shining armies of eladrin triumphing over dwarves, orcs, and human savages. The tapestries show the defeated forces, enslaved to their eladrin masters, and working to build the Kingspire Citadel.

If it is hour 2 of the Cycle of the Worm, 5 servants are here, preparing a meal for Crow King and his court:

Eladrin servitors, dressed in tunics and breeches, scurry about readying a meal for their masters.

If it is hour 4 of the Cycle, the Crow King, Lady Ariarch, the Vizier, and 5 knights of Elihai are enjoying a sumptuous meal:

A royal court is seated at the grand table. Upon your entrance, the eladrin at the head of the table stands and claps his hands once. Immediately new places are set. Offering a smile that could be mistaken for a snarl, the eladrin motions for you to sit.

For stats on the Crow King and his court, see areas 2-2, 2-4, and 2-10. The PCs are the immediate focus of the dinner, harassed with an endless series of questions from the Crow King and Lady Ariarch. For his part, the Vizier sits back and quietly observes. The PCs are served crimson wine in crystal goblets, and grilled steaks, cut from the corpses of the sub-humans.

The servitors are non-combatants, fleeing at the first sign of violence. If cornered and unable to flee, the minions put up a mere show of a fight. If captured and interrogated (Intimidate, DC 18), the servitors happily buy their freedom with information, providing a detailed accounting of the layout of the Kingspire, as well as a depiction of their masters.

AREA 2-2

THRONE OF THE CROW KING

Read or paraphrase the following:

The stairs open into a magnificent throne room. Furs and skins taken from fell monsters adorn the floors, while trophies from defeated foes (including the head of a dwarf king, and several human skulls) adorn the walls. At the head of the chamber, seated atop a high throne carved from the heart of a great ironwood tree, sits an imperious eladrin, girded in an ancient suit of fir trimmed armor and adorned with a cloak of raven feathers; a greatsword rests at his side. An enormous black cat sits at his feet, watching you with hungry eyes.

Flanking the throne are 4 royal guards, their eyes watching you with the intensity of hawks. Outside the siege rages on, but here all is calm and still, like a storm about to break.

The throne chamber of the Crow King is the spiritual heart of the Kingspire Citadel. The Crow King is a stern and solemn warrior, given to violent mood swings and passionate outbursts. He embodies the worst of the eladrin traits: chaos, wickedness, and heartless cruelty. Fortunately for the heroes, he needs them to exact his revenge upon his twin brother. Therefore, they merit the Crow King's kindness ... or at least his patience. The regent invites them to approach the throne, though the royal guards ensure that the heroes come no closer than 10 feet.

If the PCs arrive uninvited, they do not make it past the entrance before being stopped by the royal guard. If the PCs can offer a sensible reason for their request of an audience, the Crow King deigns for them to enter.

TREATING WITH THE CROW KING

The Crow King attempts to win the PCs' favor, asking them to aid him in his endless battle against his brother, the dread Lord Rynth. In exchange for their aid, he promises release from the Curse of the Kingspire. It is a simple bargain, and the Crow King makes it clear that his patience is limited: The heroes are free to choose as they like, but if the heroes refuse, they are worthless to the Crow King, and Nyrae has little patience for them.

If pressed, the Crow King concedes that it is true that he doesn't have the power to end the curse at the moment. Nyrae contends that this is because Rynth stole a portion of his eldritch power when he fled into the caverns beneath the Kingspire, and that once his brother is slain, the power will return to him. It is a flimsy story that doesn't hold up well under cross-examination.

If questioned as to how his brother manages to escape the reset that occurs every 13th hour, the Crow King curses and calls the audience to an end, immediately commanding the PCs to leave his presence. The next time he encounters the PCs, he is cold, but polite, refusing to grant them another audience until the PCs accede to his demands.

Ring of the Crow King: The Crow King is secretly in love with the half-elven maiden held captive in area 2-14. She carries his signet ring, a testimony to their forbidden love. The Crow King, caught up in the defense of the Kingspire, has no idea that his love is being tortured, under orders of the Vizier.

If the PCs succeed in discovering the ring in area 1-9 and present it to the Crow King, he demands to know where they found it, and how they came by it. If the PCs answer honestly, the King immediately realizes that his trusted advisor has betrayed him. He takes his royal guard to apprehend the Vizier, while sending the PCs to free his beloved from her torture in area 2-14. If the PCs are successful, they win the Crow King's full trust and the regent does everything in his power (short of endangering himself or any of his subjects) to aid the heroes in their quest.

Nyrae the Crow King

Level 8 Elite Brute

Medium fey humanoid, eladrin XP 700

Initiative +8

Senses Perception +7;
darkvision

HP 212; **Bloodied** 106

AC 22; **Fortitude** 22, **Reflex** 18, **Will** 23

Saving Throws +2, +5 against charm effects

Speed 6

Action Points 1

↑ **Hellsword** (standard; at-will) ♦ **Fire, Weapon**
+12 vs.AC; 1d10 + 6 fire damage (crit 2d6+16 fire damage).

↑ **Flame Strike** (standard; recharge 5-6) ♦ **Fire, Weapon**

Requires greatsword; +12 vs.AC; 2d10+6 fire damage, and ongoing 5 fire damage (save ends).

Doom's Embrace

When the Crow King charges an enemy, he can make a greatsword attack against each enemy within his reach at the end of his charge.

Reap the Fallen

The Crow King gains 10 temporary hit points each time he bloodies an enemy or reduces an enemy to 0 hit points or fewer.

Shadow Step (move; encounter) ♦ **Teleportation**

The Crow King can teleport 7 squares.

Alignment Chaotic evil **Languages** Common, Elven

Skills Athletics +13, Arcana +6, Intimidate +14, History +6, Insight +12, Diplomacy +14, Bluff +14

Str 20 (+9)

Dex 18 (+8)

Wis 16 (+7)

Con 16 (+7)

Int 10 (+4)

Cha 21 (+9)

Equipment eladrin darkhide, +2 *flaming* greatsword

Shadow Cat

Level 4 Skirmisher

Medium fey beast **XP 175**

Initiative +8 **Senses** Perception +8;
low-light vision

HP 54; **Bloodied** 27

AC 18; **Fortitude** 16, **Reflex** 18, **Will** 15

Speed 8, climb 6; see also *fey step*

↑ **Bite** (standard; at-will)

+9 vs.AC; 1d6 + 4 damage, and the shadow cat shifts 1 square.

Shadow Pounce (move; encounter)

The shadow cat teleports 5 squares, and then attacks, dealing an extra 2d6 damage and knocking the target prone.

Alignment Unaligned **Languages** —

Skills Stealth +11

Str 14 (+4) **Dex** 18 (+6) **Wis** 13 (+3)

Con 14 (+4) **Int** 2 (–2) **Cha** 11 (+2)

Eladrin Knight of Elihai (4)

Level 7 Soldier

Medium fey humanoid, eladrin **XP 300**

Initiative +11 **Senses** Perception +4;
low-light vision
Shadow Touch aura 10; fey creatures in the aura score a critical hit on a roll of 19 or 20 (a roll of 19 is not an automatic hit, however).

HP 77; **Bloodied** 38

AC 23; **Fortitude** 18, **Reflex** 21, **Will** 17

Saving Throws +5 against charm effects

Speed 5; see also *shadow step*

↑ **Longsword** (standard; at-will) ♦ **Weapon**

+12 vs.AC; 1d8 + 4 damage.

↑ **Driving Slash** (standard or opportunity attack; recharge 5–6) ♦ **Weapon**

Requires longsword; +12 vs.AC; 3d8 + 4 damage, and the target is pushed 1 square.

⚡ **Twilight Challenge** (standard; encounter)

Ranged 10; the target is marked until the end of the encounter or until the knight of Elihai dies, taking 4 damage each round it does not attack the knight.

Shadow Step (move; encounter) ♦ **Teleportation**

The knight of Elihai can teleport 7 squares.

Alignment Unaligned **Languages** Common, Elven

Skills Athletics +11, Arcana +7, History +7, Nature +10

Str 18 (+7) **Dex** 22 (+9) **Wis** 13 (+4)

Con 13 (+4) **Int** 14 (+5) **Cha** 16 (+6)

Equipment chainmail, light shield, longsword

AREA 2–3

BALCONY

Read or paraphrase the following:

The balcony overlooks a barren courtyard below. The sounds of battle echo from outside the dark stone walls: the guttural war cries, the whistle of flights of arrows, the resounding rumble of boulder smashing into the citadel from below. A thick smoke hangs in the air, mixed with the smell of burnt hair and flesh.

If it is the 10th hour, or later, in the Cycle of the Worm, the courtyard below is filled with raging barbarians, rampaging through the citadel and slaughtering all they encounter.

AREA 2–4

THE VIZIER'S REDOUBT

Read or paraphrase the following:

A trio of braziers flames in the corners of this chamber, offering light and heat to stave off the gloom. A large table, stacked with maps and small stone counters, occupies the center of the chamber. Racks of weapons adorn the walls, and their air is heavy with the smell of weapon oil.

If it is the 9th hour of the siege or earlier, the Vizier is likely with his knights, directing the defense of the Kingspire. Unless the PCs have come specifically to agree to his quest, he has no time for their questions. The Vizier orders the PCs out so that he and his knights can focus on the defense of the Kingspire.

If the PCs come to area 2–4 after the 12th hour, the chamber is overrun by savage sub-humans. Bent on slaughter, they charge the heroes, hoping to add to their growing collection of bloody trophies. There are 8 barbarian warriors (level 4 minions) in all, with an additional 1d6 warriors arriving every 1d6 rounds. There is no way for the heroes to triumph in this battle — all the PCs can win is a few spare moments, in between waves of savage barbarians.

Treasure: Buried amongst the Vizier's battle plans is a rudimentary sketch of the lower levels of the Kingspire. The map (Handout C) is easily found by any PC taking the time to review all the maps, but if the heroes are harried or pressed by foes, the map can be discovered with a DC 20 Perception check.

Additionally, the Vizier keeps a ring of heavy iron keys on his belt. The keys open the leering gates of area 2–15.

Vizier

Level 7 Elite Lurker

Medium natural humanoid, eladrin **XP 600**

Initiative +12 **Senses** Perception +10;
low-light vision

HP 128; **Bloodied** 64

AC 21; **Fortitude** 18, **Reflex** 22, **Will** 20

Saving Throws +2, +5 against charm effects

Speed 6

Action Points 1

↑ **Poisoned Dagger** (standard; at-will) ♦ **Poison,**

Weapon

+12 vs. AC (+13 against a bloodied target); 1d4 + 5 damage, and the Vizier makes a secondary attack against the same target. *Secondary Attack:* +10 vs. Fortitude; ongoing 10 poison damage (save ends).

Combat Advantage

The vizier deals an extra 2d6 damage against targets he has combat advantage against.

Nimble Counterattack (immediate reaction, when the vizier is missed by a melee attack; at-will)

The makes a melee basic attack, and shifts 1 square.

Shadow Walk (move; recharge 6) ♦ **Teleportation**

The Vizier teleports 5 squares, and becomes invisible until the end of his next turn.

Alignment Evil **Languages** Common, Elven

Skills Arcana +6, Bluff +11, History +6, Stealth +13

Str 13 (+4) **Dex** 20 (+8) **Wis** 14 (+5)

Con 16 (+6) **Int** 13 (+4) **Cha** 16 (+6)

Equipment poisoned dagger, gold chain (worth 50 gp), platinum tipped rod (worth 100 gp)

Knights of Elihai (see above) (3)

AREA 2-5

THE HALL OF FOUR PANES (EL VARIES, XP VARIES)

Read or paraphrase the following:

The majestic hall seems out of place in the dour, block-like citadel. The vast ceiling arches high overhead, decorated with leering gargoyles, demons, and devils that seem frozen, caught in the semblance of life. But more disturbing than the stone artistry decorating the ceiling are the towering panes of stained glass. Each depicts a court of eladrin engaged in a fell vice, casting pale shades of sickly colored light upon altars set into the wall of the hall.

There are four stained glass windows casting their light over the hall, each depicting a different vice celebrated by the cruel eladrin of Kingspire. From east to west, the themes of the panes are Cruelty, Pride, Wrath, and Envy. Four altars, matching each of the 4 panes, are set into the north wall. The light of each pane falls upon each of the altars, so that the simple religious relics are illuminated in garish, sickly light.

Heroes have nothing to fear here — so long as they leave the altars and panes alone. If the altars are disturbed, or worse, if one or more of the panes are shattered, the repercussions pose a dire threat to the heroes.

Inversely, if the PCs make offerings to the altars, they will be suitably rewarded — after a fashion — though no PC can be the recipient of more than one blessing. Each condition lasts until the PCs' next extended rest. Paladins, clerics, and other divine spellcasters electing to make offerings at the altar are immediately stripped of all their divine powers.

Cruelty: This pane depicts an eladrin king, his queen, and their court looking on while a torturer performs his trade on 4 helpless humans. The altar has an empty basin and a razor sharp blade designed for bloodletting. If blood is added to the basin, the PC making the offering receives +2 bonus on damage rolls until his next extended rest.

Pride: This pane depicts an eladrin regent and an army of shining knights, reigning from atop a verdant hill. Beneath them, the rulers of the elves, dwarves, and dragonborn offer up their crowns to the triumphant eladrin. The altar is adorned with a simple, white silk; an arrowhead, spearhead, and the shattered blade of a longsword have been placed atop the silk. If a PC leaves a weapon at the altar, he or she gains 10 temporary hit points.

Wrath: This pane depicts a black knight standing amid a field of fallen foes. Corpses litter the land around him, their blood and entrails staining the ground. The altar holds a simple teak box. Inside the box is a gruesome collection of trophies taken from the bodies of slaughtered foes. The trophy box contains dried ears, finger bones, and shards of shattered skulls. If a PC leaves a foe's body part within the box (a bit of flesh or hair is sufficient) then every time the PC has the chance to make an opportunity attack, the attack is an automatic hit.

Envy: The pane depicts a radiant eladrin king, seated at the center of an adoring court. All the courtiers look on with envy and jealousy. A censer sits atop the altar, beneath a portrait of a handsome eladrin regent. Any incense has long since rotted away, but if a PC is able burn his own incense in the censer, he or she receives a +2 bonus to all defenses, including AC.

If the PCs are foolish enough to desecrate the altars or break the panes, all four of the stained windows shatter, showering the hall (and any PCs) with shards of falling glass (+5 vs. AC; hit 1d8+4 damage). Once round later, the shards takes the form of an enormous glass dragon. The dragon immediately attacks any PC in the chamber, continuing its assault until all the characters have fled the area. Once the PCs have left, the dragon reforms as the stained glass window, healing all damage, and regaining all spent powers. If the dragon is slain, it cannot reform as the stained glass window.

Treasure: At first glance, there is no treasure in the hall. However, if the PCs defeat the dragon and carefully search the remnants of shattered glass (Perception, DC 23) they discover small, brilliantly faceted jewels amid the shards. A successful search turns up 3 jade gems (worth 100 gp each), 1 topaz (worth 500 gp), 1 fire opal (worth 1,000 gp) and a single, bright sapphire that functions as a +2 orb.

Red Shard Dragon

Level 7 Solo Soldier

Large construct (dragon) XP 1,250

Initiative +8 **Senses** Perception +10; darkvision

HP 332; **Bloodied** 166; see also *bloodied breath*

AC 25; **Fortitude** 25, **Reflex** 22, **Will** 21

Resist 15 fire; **Vulnerable** 10 thunder

Saving Throws +5

Speed 6, fly 8 (hover), overland flight 12

Action Points 2

↑ **Bite** (standard; at-will) ♦ **Fire**

Reach 2; +14 vs.AC; 2d6 + 6 plus 2d6 fire damage.

↑ **Claw** (standard; at-will)

Reach 2; +14 vs.AC; 2d6 + 6 damage.

↑ **Double Attack** (standard; at-will)

The dragon makes two claw attacks.

↑ **Tail Strike** (immediate reaction, when an enemy

moves to a position where it flanks the red dragon; at-will)

The dragon attacks the enemy with its tail: reach 2; +12 vs.

Reflex; 1d10 + 6 damage, and the target is pushed 1 square.

※ **Breath Weapon** (standard; recharge 5, 6) ♦ **Fire**

Close blast 5; +10 vs. Reflex; 1d12 + 4 fire damage. *Miss:*

Half damage.

※ **Bloodied Breath** (free, when first bloodied;

encounter) ♦ **Fire**

The dragon's breath weapon recharges, and the dragon uses it immediately.

※ **Frightful Presence** (standard; encounter) ♦ **Fear**

Close burst 5; targets enemies; +10 vs. Will; the target is

stunned until the end of the dragon's next turn. *Aftereffect:*

The target takes a -2 penalty to attack rolls (save ends).

Alignment Evil **Languages** Common, Draconic

Skills Bluff +9, Insight +10, Intimidate +9

Str 22 (+9)

Dex 17 (+6)

Wis 14 (+5)

Con 19 (+7)

Int 11 (+3)

Cha 12 (+4)

AREA 2-6 COURTYARD (EL VARIES, XP VARIES)

Read or paraphrase the following:

The wide courtyard serves as a central staging area for the entire citadel. A thick haze of black smoke hangs over the courtyard, choking the lungs and stinging the eyes. The smell of burnt flesh and spilled blood assaults your senses, and just outside the thick citadel walls you can hear the clamor of a heated battle.

If it is the 10th hour of the siege or earlier, the eladrin still hold the courtyard. Every 1d12 minutes a troop of eladrin charge past, hurrying to reinforce the citadel's defenses. If the PCs have met with any of the principle three rulers of the Kingspire, the eladrin ignore them. However, if the PCs have not yet been formally presented before the Twilight Court, the troop mistakes the PCs for sub-human commanders. The Eladrin call for the PCs' surrender; if the heroes resist, the eladrin sound their warhorns for reinforcements, and attempt to capture the heroes. Captured PCs are brought to area 2-14 to be interrogated by the Torturer and the Vizier.

If it is the 11th hour of the siege or later, the courtyard is overrun with barbarians battling the eladrin defenders. The horde is nearly unstoppable, and it requires all the PCs' strength simply to move across the battlefield, let alone turn the tide against the sub-humans. During the battle, treat every square as rough terrain, with every 5-foot move incurring an attack of opportunity. Every round, roll 1d12, and on an 8 or higher, a random PC is charged by a barbarian warrior (see above).

If the PCs elect to stay and fight, they have their pick of foes. There are a total of five barbarian champions, eight barbarian archers, and a seemingly unending stream of barbarian warriors. If the PCs somehow call out and defeat all five of the champions, the battle turns against the barbarians, and the eladrin drive the savages from the courtyard.

Eladrin Knights of Elihai (3)

Level 7 Soldier

Medium fey humanoid, eladrin XP 300

Initiative +11

Senses Perception +4;

low-light vision

Shadow Touch aura 10; fey

creatures in the aura score

a critical hit on a roll of 19 or 20

(a roll of 19 is not an automatic

hit, however).

HP 77; **Bloodied** 38

AC 23; **Fortitude** 18, **Reflex** 21, **Will** 17

Saving Throws +5 against charm effects

Speed 5; see also *shadow step*

↑ **Longsword** (standard; at-will) ♦ **Weapon**

+12 vs.AC; 1d8 + 4 damage.

↑ **Driving Slash** (standard or opportunity attack; recharge 5–6) ♦ **Weapon**
Requires longsword; +12 vs.AC; 3d8 + 4 damage, and the target is pushed 1 square.

⚡ **Twilight Challenge** (standard; encounter)
Ranged 10; the target is marked until the end of the encounter or until the knight of Elihai dies, taking 4 damage each round it does not attack the knight.

Shadow Step (move; encounter) ♦ **Teleportation**
The knight of Elihai can teleport 7 squares.

Alignment Unaligned **Languages** Common, Elven
Skills Athletics +11, Arcana +7, History +7, Nature +10
Str 18 (+7) **Dex** 22 (+9) **Wis** 13 (+4)
Con 13 (+4) **Int** 14 (+5) **Cha** 16 (+6)

Equipment chainmail, light shield, longsword

Eladrin Warriors

Level 2 Skirmisher

Medium fey humanoid, eladrin XP 125

Initiative +7 **Senses** Perception +3
low-light vision

HP 39; **Bloodied** 19

AC 16; **Fortitude** 14, **Reflex** 16, **Will** 14

Saving Throws +5 against charm effects

Speed 5; see also *shadow step*

↑ **Longsword** (standard; at-will) ♦ **Weapon**
+7 vs.AC; 1d8 + 4 damage.

↑ **Short Sword** (standard; at-will) ♦ **Weapon**
+7 vs.AC; 1d6 + 4 damage.

↑ **Lightning Slash** (standard; encounter) ♦ **Weapon**
The eladrin warrior makes a longsword attack and a short sword attack against the same target. If both attacks hit, the eladrin warrior deals an additional 4 damage.

Shadow Step (move; encounter) **Teleportation**
The eladrin warrior teleports 7 squares.

Alignment Unaligned **Languages** Common, Elven
Skills Arcana +3, History +3, Nature +6, Stealth +9
Str 12 (+2) **Dex** 18 (+5) **Wis** 14 (+3)
Con 15 (+3) **Int** 10 (+1) **Cha** 12 (+2)

Equipment chainmail, longsword, short sword

AREA 2-7 BARRACKS

Read or paraphrase the following:

This wide tower is host to a series of arrow slits, each peering down onto the battlefield below. Barrels of arrows are spaced throughout the chamber within easy reach, with additional bows and bowstrings hanging from racks set along the walls. In the center of the chamber is a spiral staircase, sealed by a locked grate.

If it is the 10th hour of the siege or earlier, twelve eladrin archers are here, raining clouds of arrows down on sub-humans below.

After the 11th hour, this chamber is overrun with three barbarian champions, five archers, and eight warriors (see above for statistics). Having shattered the grate's lock, the savages swarm from below, replacing 1 champion, 2 archers and 3 warriors each round. In order to fight their way into the dungeon below, the PCs need to cut their way through a total of 5 champions, 8 archers, and 15 warriors.

Treasure: There are six barrels in all, each holding 100 arrows. The finest archer of the group, a tall eladrin female with long dark hair tied in a tight braid, has a pair magical bowstrings threaded into her quiver. Wound with gold and silver thread, and strands of hair taken from a unicorn's mane, the bowstrings bestow a +2 item bonus to attack and damage rolls to any non-magical bow. The bowstrings fray quickly and are only good for 1d20 uses each. If the tower falls to the savages, the archer fights to the end, leaving her bowstrings to be discovered by later generations.

Eladrin Archers

Level 2 Artillery

Medium fey humanoid, eladrin XP 125

Initiative +5 **Senses** Perception +9;
low-light vision

HP 32; **Bloodied** 16

AC 15; **Fortitude** 14, **Reflex** 16, **Will** 15

Saving Throws +5 against charm effects

Speed 6; see also *shadow step*

↑ **Short Sword** (standard; at-will) ♦ **Weapon**
+5 vs.AC; 1d6 + 4 damage.

⚡ **Longbow** (standard; at-will) ♦ **Weapon**
Ranged 20/40; +7 vs.AC; 1d10 + 4 damage; see also *archer's mobility*.

Archer's Mobility

If the eladrin archer moves at least 4 squares from its original position, it gains a +2 bonus to ranged attack rolls until the start of its next turn.

Eladrin Accuracy

 (free; encounter)

The eladrin archer can reroll an attack roll. It must use the second roll, even if it's lower.

Easy Flight (immediate reaction, when an enemy makes a melee attack against the eladrin archer; encounter) The eladrin archer shifts 1 square and makes a ranged attack against the enemy.

Shadow Step (move; encounter) ♦ **Teleportation**
The eladrin archer teleports 7 squares.

Alignment Unaligned **Languages** Common, Elven
Skills Arcana +4, History +4, Nature +9, Stealth +10

Str 13 (+2) **Dex** 18 (+5) **Wis** 16 (+4)
Con 14 (+3) **Int** 12 (+2) **Cha** 11 (+1)

Equipment leather armor, short sword, longbow, quiver with 30 arrows

AREA 2-8 STOREROOM (EL 1, XP 350)

Read or paraphrase the following:

The storeroom walls are stacked high with casks, bundles and crates, left in disarray in the face of the pressing siege.

If it is the 7th hour of the siege or earlier, the storeroom is in disarray, though still held by the eladrin.

If it is the 8th hour of the siege or later, the savages have overrun the storeroom, pressing into the south 2-11, and slaughtering the guards.

Treasure: A DC 15 Perception check reveals a hidden panel set into the north wall. The panel has not been plastered over yet, a last minute action taken by the eladrin before surrendering the citadel to the barbarians. However, the panel *has* been trapped, and a billowing cloud of icy air that freezes skin, sears eyelids, and scars the lungs targets PCs failing to take the appropriate countermeasures. Heroes who have suffered this ward in the future (area 1-8) are in for a surprise: the ward is newly cast, and the magics are far more powerful.

Hidden behind the panel is a dark velvet pouch sewn with small diamond chips in imitation of the night sky (worth 200 gp). The pouch contains a large, ceremonial key ring chased with platinum (worth 50 gp), and a trio of keys that open the locks in 2-15.

Frostward Trap

Level 8 Blaster

Trap

XP 350

Perception

DC 28: The character notices a magical glyph on the panel.

Additional Skills: Arcana

DC 24: The character notices the glyph, and provides a +2 bonus to Thievery checks to disarm the trap.

Trigger: When a creature opens the panel.

Attack

Immediate Reaction Close blast 2

Targets: All creatures in blast

Attack: +11 vs. Reflex

Hit: 4d6+4 cold damage, and the target is slowed (save ends).

Special: The trap deals an additional 1d6 cold damage, each time the Cycle resets.

COUNTERMEASURES

- An adjacent character can disable the glyph with a DC 28 Thievery check.

AREA 2-9 CATWALK

Read or paraphrase the following:

Your ears are assaulted by the cacophony of war. Hundreds of feet below, a seething tide of fierce barbarians surges along the base of the ridge. Arrayed in the pelts and skins of bears and lions, they look and sound more like horde of beasts than an army.

The stairs wrap along the side of the citadel, ending at a locked iron gate (Thievery, DC 20 to unlock); the key to the gate can be found hidden in area 1-8. The gate can also be torn free (Strength, DC 30) or battered down after taking 75 hp of damage.

Heroes descending the stairs must succeed on DC 15 Stealth checks, or draw the attention of the barbarians below. If the savages spot the PCs, a mob of archers begins to rain down arrows on the heroes. Once spotted, each exposed PC is targeted by an attack (+5 vs. AC). A successful attack means the PC is struck by 1d4 arrows, each inflicting 1d6 damage.

If it is the 7th hour of the siege or later, the barbarians have succeeded in scaling the side of the ridge with ropes and crude ladders, tearing open the iron gate and swarming the lower levels. In order to clear the way down to 2-16, the PCs have to fight their way through two barbarian champions, two archers, and three warriors.

AREA 2-10 TOWER OF THE MAGUS

When the PCs cross from the main citadel to area 2-10, read or paraphrase the following:

A narrow stone bridge arches from the citadel to the tower. The tower stands apart, both physically and aesthetically, from the grim and dour citadel. Built of polished stone, high buttresses, and graceful spires, the tower calls to mind a solemn pine, high atop a rocky slope. Its beauty does not distract your eye from the leering gargoyles that circle above, keeping a watchful eyes on the battle below.

If Lady Ariarch, the ruling magus of the tower, is present, the PCs are allowed to pass over the narrow bridge. However, if the Lady of the Tower is not present, the gargoyles make it clear that the heroes are not welcome, first by flying close over head, screeching, then by dive bombing the heroes as they cross the bridge, turning to stone just before impact, and knocking the heroes from the bridge. Those knocked off the bridge fall to their doom 80 feet (8d10 damage) to the rocky ground below, before being swarmed by the savage horde.

If the PCs manage to cross the bridge, read or paraphrase the following:

A single hammered copper portal, stained with verdigris, guards the entrance to the ruined tower before you. The portal is decorated with reliefs of a spiraling vine that follows the curve of the arched door, winding around a hammered copper sun and moon, before winding



down the far side of the portal. Framed within the work, wielding the contrasting might of the sun and moon is a single eladrin spellcaster.

The portal opens at the command of Lady Ariarch. If the heroes are not welcome (or expected for that matter), they must find a means of opening the portal. Brute strength (Strength, DC 30) or raw damage (AC 20, 200 HP) is sufficient to open the portal, but each and every time a living creature touches the portal without the Magus' permission, an arc of eldritch lightening lances from the door, striking the nearest living creature (+10 vs. Ref, 2d10 lightning damage).

Once the PCs gain entry to the tower, read or paraphrase the following:

The interior of the tower is like something out of a dream. Lit by dancing fireflies and floating globes, the interior of the tower is a single chamber, its ceiling rising to a point several stories above. The walls of the chamber are adorned with hundreds of eldritch tomes and scrolls, beakers filled with strange, glowing liquids, complete skeletons of creatures that have long since passed from existence, and hundreds of other eldritch curiosities.

Lady Ariarch makes her home inside the tower, with her pseudodragon assistant for company. Here she spends her time plotting a means of winning back the love of Lord Rynth, and ridding herself of the Crow King and the hated Vizier. She welcomes the PCs as an end to that quest, and if the heroes agree to aid her, she readily permits the PCs to paw through her treasure cache (see **Treasure** below). Lady's Ariarch's quest is a simple one: Find Lord Rynth and convince him of the Lady's love. (Of course the quest is not so easily accomplished: Lord Rynth died decades ago.)

If the PCs spurn her advances, she responds with fury, using all the magic at her disposal to slay them. The pseudodragon immediately flies to her aid, while any surviving gargoyles enter through high windows above to do battle for their mistress.

If the PCs enter the tower after the 10th hour of the siege, it is overrun with savages. The sub-humans destroy everything within reach, finally setting fire to the interior of the tower. If the PCs attempt to stop the destruction, two warchiefs, four champions, six archers, and ten warriors attack them.

Treasure: The tower is home to a seemingly unending array of eldritch curiosities and secrets. Few may be of much value to the heroes, but every nook and cranny contains something of interest. If the PCs agree to act as Ariarch's agents — reaching Lord Rynth to relay her message of love and devotion — she permits them to peruse her tower, taking anything of interest. Note that any items garnered from the tower are lost at the Turning of the Worm.

For every 1/2 hour a PC spends inspecting the tower, he or she is permitted an Arcana check. On a roll of 15 or better, the PC discovers something of value and interest amid the eldritch curiosities. Roll 1d20 and consult the following table. Each find can only be discovered once.

1d20	Treasure
1	A glass globe of lightning bugs. If the globe is shattered, anyone within 10 feet is targeted by a blast of crackling lightening and resounding thunder (+13 vs. Reflex, 2d12 lightning and thunder damage and the target is deafened (save ends)).
2	A jug containing silvery, viscous liquid (3 doses of <i>potion of healing</i>).
3	A scroll with the ritual Silence.
4	A silver-plumed pen that scribes whatever is spoken within a 5-foot radius.
5	An empty spell book composed of sheets of hammered gold (worth 500 gp).
6	A pair of <i>catstep boots</i> .
7	A tome containing the ritual Enchant Magical Item.
8	A silver <i>skeleton key</i> . Cast as a skeleton (that then molds itself into whatever lock it is placed) the silver key has three charges.
9	A <i>scroll of holding</i> (functions as a 256-page spell book). Presently holds the rituals Animal Messenger, Comprehend Languages, Gentle Repose, Magic Mouth, Make Whole, Secret Page, Silence, and Floating Disk.
10	An orc skull with gold teeth (worth 3 gp).
11	<i>Gauntlets of ogre power</i> , forged as blackened iron greaves.
12	A pair of crystal, 6-sided dice that roll whatever total the owner whispers. (Note that the owner has no control over whatever numbers make up that sum.)
13	Pages containing the ritual Raise Dead.
14	An <i>elven cloak</i> folded inside a small teak box decorated with elaborate woodland carvings.
15	A trio of pseudodragon eggs, warming over a bronze bowl of embers. If kept warm, the eggs hatch in 1d4 weeks.
16	A spear tip carved from a black unicorn's horn. If affixed to a pole, and wielded by a good-aligned hero, it functions as a +3 <i>spear</i> .
17	A tome containing the ritual Pass Wall.
18	A rolled tapestry depicting the heroes dying to an enormous worm in a mushroom forest. Detailed with gold and silver thread, the tapestry is worth 100 gp. If the PCs survive the adventure, the tapestry changes to show their death at the hands of their next most powerful foe.
19	A trio of scrolls tied together with a silver band, containing the rituals Magic Mouth, Eye of Alarm and Magic Circle.
20	Roll twice.

Lady Ariarch

Level 8 Elite Controller

Medium fey humanoid, eladrin **XP 700**

Initiative +7 **Senses** Perception +9;
low-light vision

HP 164; **Bloodied** 82

AC 24; **Fortitude** 17, **Reflex** 23, **Will** 23

Saving Throws +2, +5 against charm effects

Speed 6; see also *shadow step*

Action Points 1

↑ **Spear** (standard; at-will) ♦ **Weapon**

+13 vs.AC; 1d8 + 1 damage, and the target is slowed until the end of Ariarch's next turn.

⚡ **Binding Bolt** (standard; at-will)

Ranged 10; +12 vs. Reflex; 2d8 + 5 damage, and the target is immobilized until the end of Ariarch's next turn.

⚡ **Teleporting Bolt** (standard; at-will) ♦ **Teleportation**

Ranged 10; +12 vs. Reflex; 1d8 + 3 damage, and the target is teleported up to 3 squares. The target cannot be teleported into an unsafe space.

⚡ **Dazzling Blast** (standard; recharge 5, 6) ♦ **Radiant**

Close blast 3; +10 vs. Will; 2d6 + 5 radiant damage, and the target is blinded until the end of Ariarch's next turn.

Shadow Step (move; encounter) ♦ **Teleportation**

Ariarch can teleport 7 squares.

Alignment Evil **Languages** Common, Elven

Skills Arcana +16, History +16, Nature +10

Str 12 (+5) **Dex** 16 (+7) **Wis** 12 (+5)

Con 10 (+4) **Int** 20 (+9) **Cha** 16 (+7)

Equipment robes, spear



Pseudodragon

Level 3 Lurker

Tiny natural beast (reptile) **XP 150**

Initiative +9 **Senses** Perception +8

HP 40; **Bloodied** 20

AC 17; **Fortitude** 14, **Reflex** 15, **Will** 14

Speed 4, fly 8 (hover); see also *flyby attack*

↑ **Bite** (standard; at-will)

+8 vs.AC; 1d8 + 4 damage.

↑ **Sting** (standard; recharge 4, 5, 6) ♦ **Poison**

+8 vs.AC; 1d8 + 4 damage, and ongoing 5 poison damage (save ends).

↑ **Flyby Attack** (standard; at-will)

The pseudodragon flies up to 8 squares and makes one melee basic attack at any point during that movement. The pseudodragon doesn't provoke opportunity attacks when moving away from the target of the attack.

Invisibility (standard; recharges when the pseudodragon is damaged) ♦ **Illusion**

As long as the pseudodragon doesn't move, it is invisible.

Alignment Unaligned **Languages** —

Skills Insight +8, Stealth +10

Str 13 (+2) **Dex** 18 (+5) **Wis** 15 (+3)

Con 16 (+4) **Int** 6 (–1) **Cha** 17 (+4)

Gargoyle (5)

Level 9 Lurker

Medium elemental humanoid (earth) **XP 400**

Initiative +11 **Senses** Perception +12
darkvision

HP 77; **Bloodied** 38

AC 25; **Fortitude** 21, **Reflex** 19, **Will** 19

Immune petrification

Speed 6, fly 8; see also *flyby attack*

↑ **Claw** (standard; at-will)

+14 vs.AC; 2d6 + 5 damage.

↑ **Flyby Attack** (standard; recharges after using *stone form*)

The gargoyle flies up to 8 squares and makes a melee basic attack at any point during the move without provoking an opportunity attack from the target. If the attack hits, the target is knocked prone.

Stone Form (standard; at-will)

The gargoyle becomes a statue and gains resist 25 to all damage, regeneration 3, and tremorsense 10. It loses all other senses and can take no actions in stone form other than revert to its normal form (as a minor action).

Alignment Evil **Languages** Primordial

Skills Stealth +12

Str 21 (+9) **Dex** 17 (+7) **Wis** 17 (+7)

Con 17 (+7) **Int** 5 (+1) **Cha** 17 (+7)

AREA 2-11 GUARD ROOM

Read or paraphrase the following:

A pair of barrels and a rack of long-bladed spears crowd the narrow chamber. The far wall is composed entirely of arrow slits, offering a view into the hall beyond.

Four eladrin archers watch over each of these paired chambers, firing arrows into area 2-12 when the barbarians succeed in breaking down the gates. The archers resort to the spears only if the barbarians threaten to stab their own weapons through the narrow arrow slits.

If it is 8th hour of the siege or later, barbarians have overrun the south guard room, slaughtering the archers, stripping their bodies of armor and weapons, and making blood trophies of the archers' scalps, ears and fingers.

Eladrin Archer (8)

Level 2 Artillery

Medium fey humanoid, eladrin XP 125

Initiative +5 **Senses** Perception +11;
low-light vision

HP 32; **Bloodied** 16

AC 15; **Fortitude** 14, **Reflex** 16, **Will** 15

Saving Throws +5 against charm effects

Speed 6; see also *shadow step*

↑ **Spear** (standard; at-will) ♦ **Weapon**
+5 vs.AC; 1d6 + 1 damage.

⚡ **Longbow** (standard; at-will) ♦ **Weapon**
Ranged 20/40; +7 vs.AC; 1d10 + 4 damage; see also *archer's mobility*.

Archer's Mobility

If the eladrin archer moves at least 4 squares from its original position, it gains a +2 bonus to ranged attack rolls until the start of its next turn.

Eladrin Accuracy (free; encounter)

The eladrin archer can reroll an attack roll. It must use the second roll, even if it's lower.

Easy Flight (immediate reaction, when an enemy makes a melee attack against the eladrin archer; encounter) The eladrin archer shifts 1 square and makes a ranged attack against the enemy.

Shadow Step (move; encounter) ♦ Teleportation

The eladrin archer teleports 7 squares.

Alignment Unaligned **Languages** Common, Elven

Skills Arcana +4, History +4, Nature +8, Stealth +10

Str 13 (+2) **Dex** 18 (+5) **Wis** 16 (+4)

Con 14 (+3) **Int** 12 (+2) **Cha** 11 (+1)

Equipment leather armor, spear, longbow, quiver with 30 arrows

AREA 2-12

KILLING HALL (EL 7, XP 1,200+)

Read or paraphrase the following:

A pair of enormous portals, banded in iron, blocks the way. A single mighty bolt, as wide as a tree, is laid across the gates, sealing them closed.

If it is the 5th hour of the siege, a troop of barbarians has succeeded in breaching the portal with their massive battering ram. A force of eladrin knights and spearmen meets the savages once they breach the portal. The eladrin are ultimately successful in driving the savages back, but only at great cost of life. If the PCs lend their aid, enough eladrin survive to forestall the events of the 10th hour of the siege by an hour.

The attacking force is made up of a mob of savage champions, warriors, and a single enormous war bear outfitted with metal claws, fangs, and crude hide barding. Ten warriors lead the charge, but once they are quickly cut down, savage champions and the rampaging war bear take their place.

In order to make a difference in the battle, the PCs must slay either three barbarian champions or the war bear. (The PCs can slay any number of warrior minions, but they are quickly replaced by their brethren.) Heroes that succeed in slaying the deadly war bear are quickly hailed as champions by the eladrin. At the DM's discretion, 3 eladrin archers swear fealty to the PC heroes, pledging their bows and blades to the defense of the heroes.

War Bear

Level 11 Elite Brute

Large natural beast XP 1,200

Initiative +8 **Senses** Perception +9

HP 276; **Bloodied** 138

AC 25; **Fortitude** 25, **Reflex** 22, **Will** 23

Saving Throws +2

Speed 8

Action Points 1

↑ **Claw** (standard; at-will)

Reach 2; +15 vs.AC; 2d8 + 6 damage.

↑ **Maul** (standard; at-will)

The war bear makes two claw attacks. If both claw attacks hit the same target, the war bear makes a secondary attack against the target. *Secondary Attack*: +13 vs.AC; the target is grabbed (until escape).

↑ **Ursine Crush** (standard; at-will)

The war bear deals 4d8 + 6 damage to a grabbed creature (no attack roll required).

Alignment Unaligned **Languages** —

Str 23 (+11)

Dex 16 (+8)

Wis 18 (+9)

Con 18 (+9)

Int 2 (+1)

Cha 16 (+8)

AREA 2-13 THE GATEHOUSE

Read or paraphrase the following:

The stout gatehouse watches over the ridge rising to the citadel. Arrow slits face out onto the high moors, where an army of savages rage.

The gatehouse falls early in the siege (hour 3), making it unlikely that the PCs find their way here. It is also a difficult place for the heroes to make a difference in the battle; the brunt of the barbarian horde is directed at the gatehouse, and defending it is suicidal.

There are 8 eladrin stationed here, doing their best to fend off the army of savages. Once the front gates fall and the gatehouse is overrun, an endless stream of barbarian champions and warriors charge into the gatehouse. If the PCs manage to slaughter 10 champions and 30 warriors, they accomplish the impossible: giving the horde pause.

Their triumph is sure to be short lived. The horde falls back to make room for a troop of 50 archers. Armed with flaming arrows, the archers set fire to the gatehouse in 1d8 rounds. Thereafter, anyone remaining in the gatehouse suffers 2d8+4 points of fire damage per round, for the next 20 rounds, as the gatehouse burns. After 20 rounds, the gatehouse is reduced to blocks of granite and cinders. The army surges through the gates, and lays siege to the gates in area 2-12.

AREA 2-14 TORTURER'S QUARTERS (EL 5, XP 1,050)

Read or paraphrase the following:

Various implements of torture adorn the walls of the horrific chamber. Leg irons dangle from the ceiling, brands rest in braziers of glowing embers, and thumb screws rest in bloodied pans. A large wooden rack rests in the back of the chamber, alongside an iron maiden. You see to your horror that fresh blood is weeping from the iron maiden — some poor soul is trapped inside!

This chamber is home to the lesser fomorian that serves as the Crow King's torturer. Unknown to the regent of the Kingspire, the Torturer is loyal only to the Vizier. Presently the Torturer is in the process of slowly killing the Crow King's secret lover. The half-elven maiden, Sefra, is slowly dying within the confines of the iron maiden.

At first glance, the chamber is empty. Unless the PCs pause to take a longer inspection of the chamber (Perception, DC 15) they take no notice of the haze hanging in the back of the chamber, mistaking it for the black smoke of the siege. In truth, the haze is the Torturer, in his gaseous form. (The Torturer enjoys entering his victims, in gaseous form, as they die, so that he can feel the death rattle of their final breaths first hand.) In his physical form, the lesser fomorian is a large humanoid resembling an especially grotesque ogre, with

purple skin, knobby joints, and leering, watery eyes. Their fell kind delight in inflicting pain on helpless foes, making them the preferred practitioners of the torturer's arts.

The Torturer waits for the PCs to focus their attention on the iron maiden before returning to his solid form and attacking the weakest PC (preferably a rogue or warlock), spending an action point to follow up with a *crushing blow* if the target is knocked prone. Once the battle goes against the lesser fomorian, he returns to gaseous form and attempts to flee, joining his fellows to fight on.

If it is the 7th hour of the siege or later, this chamber is overrun by savages. The Torturer has already retreated to the citadel above, in the hopes of lending aid to his master, the Vizier. The savage sub-humans move on once the room is clear, ignorant of Sefra and her plight. If the PCs manage to fight their way here, they do not encounter savages while in the quarters.

Treasure: The Torturer keeps little in the way of treasure. However, a DC 22 Perception check reveals a secret door in the west wall of the chamber. Opening the secret panel, the heroes discover a small hidden chamber where the Vizier likes to sit and enjoy the punishment of his foes. Inside the chamber, set into the wall, is a small wooden coffer. The coffer is locked (Thievery, DC 25), and trapped with a small glass vial. If the coffer isn't unlocked twice, the vial breaks when the coffer is opened, filling the secret chamber with poison gas. (See trap stats below for details.)

Inside the coffer are a large emerald (1,000 gp), a medium ruby (750 gp), and a +2 *wand of icy rays*.

Saving Sefra: There is little that the heroes can do to save the half-elf maiden. The Torturer's cruel ministrations ensure that death is only a few minutes away. Worse, since she was already shut inside the maiden when Lady Ariarch's spell whisked the Kingspire away, Sefra is "reborn" into the maiden, and her lingering death, every 13 hours. Only defeating the Curse of the Kingspire can free the poor half-elf maid from her eternal misery.



Torturer, Lesser Fomorian

Level 8 Elite Controller

Large fey humanoid XP 700

Initiative +7 **Senses** Perception +5;
darkvision

HP 180; **Bloodied** 90; see also *siren song*

AC 24; **Fortitude** 22, **Reflex** 18, **Will** 21

Saving Throws +2

Speed 8

Action Points 1

↑ **Morningstar** (standard; at-will) ♦ **Weapon**

Reach 2; +13 vs.AC; 1d12 + 5 damage, and a Medium or smaller target is pushed 1 square or knocked prone (fomorian's choice).

↑ **Crushing Blow** (standard; at-will) ♦ **Weapon**

Affects a prone target only; +13 vs.AC; 2d10 + 4 damage.

※ **Soporific Whispers** (standard; recharges when first bloodied) ♦ **Charm, Sleep**

Close blast 5; +10 vs.Will; the target is dazed (save ends).

First Failed Save: The target falls unconscious (no save).

Deceptive Veil (minor; at-will) ♦ **Illusion**

The Torturer can disguise itself to appear as an elderly Medium or Large humanoid. A successful Insight check (opposed by the Torturer's Bluff check) pierces the disguise.

Gaseous Form (standard; sustain standard; encounter) ♦ **Polymorph**

The Torturer becomes insubstantial and gains a fly speed of 8 (hover). It can enter and move through a porous obstacle that would otherwise prevent movement (such as a door or a cracked window). It remains in this form as long as it sustains the power.

Alignment Evil **Languages** Common, Giant

Skills Bluff +13, Insight +10, Stealth +12, Thievery +12

Str 20 (+9) **Dex** 16 (+7) **Wis** 12 (+5)

Con 18 (+8) **Int** 12 (+5) **Cha** 18 (+8)

Equipment morningstar

Poison Gas

Level 8 Lurker

Trap XP 350

Perception

DC 25: The character notices the shine of glass, inside the lock.

Trigger: When a creature opens the lock..

Attack

Opportunity Action **Close** burst 3

Targets: All creatures in burst

Attack: +11 vs. Fortitude

Hit: 1d10+4 poison damage, and the target is dazed (save ends). *First Failed Save:* The target falls unconscious (no save).

Miss: Half damage.

COUNTERMEASURES

- An adjacent character can disable the trap with a DC 25 Thievery check.

AREA 2-15

GATES OF DECEIT (EL 5, XP 350)

Read or paraphrase the following:

A trio of iron gates frames this chamber. Each gate is topped with a demonic fey, leering down from above. The air is wet and stinks of mold and filth. The sounds of battle are diminished, as if held in abeyance by the grim gates and solemn atmosphere.

The gates are all locked, and the Vizier holds the keys (in area 2-4). They can be picked by talented rogues (Thievery, DC 25), broken down by the diligent (1 hour of time, AC 20, 250 hp in damage) or torn out by the exceptionally strong (Strength, DC 30). If the Vizier's keys are used (found in area 2-4), the trap-puzzle is deactivated.

The gates pose no threat to any individual PC. When approached as a party, however, the gates can quickly threaten to undo a party.

The gates' magic is sufficient to deter the weakened horde — in the 7th hour of the siege a band of 3 champions, 1 warchief, and 12 warriors attempt to batter down the gates. Failing, they return to the battle in the citadel above.

Stepping through a gate produces a magical effect. Puzzling out the right combination is not difficult if the PCs are persistent, but violent parties might find their own swords and spells turned against them.

Any PC stepping through a gate vanishes in puff of black smoke, leaving only a cloud of falling ash and dust. Above, the gemstone eyes of the gate flash, blinding any PC within 10 feet (saving throw ends). At the same instant, a terrible, roaring wind fills the chamber and the PC reappears at the opposite gate, cloaked in illusion and shadow, appearing — for all intents and purposes — as a raging shadow demon. This illusion only lifts if the PC leaves the area or steps through the next gate. While the PCs remain in the area, verbal communication is impossible, as all sounds are drowned out by the roaring wind.

No harm comes to the hero, unless his own allies respond with violence.

Portal Puzzle: PCs stepping through the north gates are teleported to the south side of the south gates; similarly, PCs stepping through the south gates are teleported to the north side of the north gates. In order to pass through the western gates, PCs without the Vizier's keys need to pass through a total of 2 portals. For instance, a PC coming from the south must open the south gate, step through to the north gate, open the north gate, teleport *back* once again to the south gate. At this

point the PC may pass through the south gate, and through the western gate.

Exiting the dungeon causes no teleportation.

Treasure: The iron fey gargoyles overlooking the gates are each adorned with gemstone eyes. The gems can be pried free from the iron castings, but this does not deactivate the gates' teleporting magic. The eyes of the south gate are 2 emeralds (worth 250 gp each). The eyes of the north gate are sapphires (worth 300 gp each). The eyes of the west gate are paste and worthless (though they appear to be pair of diamonds worth 1,000 gp each).

AREA 2-16 THE KINGSPIRE DUNGEONS (EL 7, XP 1,475)

Read or paraphrase the following:

A large chamber emerges from the darkness. The air is cold with moisture, and the stink of mold is thick in the air, clinging to the back of your throat and chilling your lungs. Squinting to make out the features of the grim chamber, you are able to discern leg irons and manacles set into the grimy stone walls. Skeletons, their bones long since picked clean by rats and roaches, line the corners of the chamber.

Since the start of the siege, the dungeons have seen little action. The barbarians, stymied by the gates in area 2-15, focus their forces on the upper citadel, while the Crow King and his sycophants have little use for a dungeon when they are pressed for friendly swords and spells above.

The Mad Gaoler (found in area 2-17) has come to regard the dungeons as his own domain. Since the barbarians fail to make it past the portal puzzle, the Gaoler does not perish nightly in the siege like his companions in the citadel above. Instead, his existence is largely the same, night after accursed night, without any means of distinguishing one from the next. This endless monotony cost the gaoler dearly, breaking his mind, and driving him into madness.

Now the gaoler spends his days in fantasy, repeatedly building his throne in area 2-17 and ruling over his "kingdom" of mice and rats. Unless the PCs conceal their passage through area 2-16 (including both light and sound), the Mad Gaoler sends his minions to repel the intruders. If the heroes repulse his armies of rats, the gaoler himself investigates. The gaoler, believing the heroes to be potential allies, calls for an armistice, and attempts to negotiate a treaty.

Tactics: Upon the PCs' entry, a trio of rat swarms scurry from area 2-17, swarming about the heroes. If one or more of the swarms is destroyed, the surviving swarms retreat, squeaking and squealing in dismay. A mere 1d6 rounds later, the Mad Gaoler enters from area 2-17 with eight dire rats and the surviving swarms.

The Mad Gaoler is a disturbingly tall eladrin, with wild eyes, rotting teeth, and matted hair that has — literally — become a nest of mice. He wears mouse-eaten rags over a hauberk of rusting chainmail, and fights with a spiked club in one hand, and a manacle attached to a 6-foot chain in the other.

Before entering combat, the Mad Gaoler calls for a truce, offering terms of parlay. The gaoler giggles disconcertingly the entire time, obsessively rubbing his hands together, and repeatedly licking his lips. The gaoler asks for the heroes to forgive his aggressive "armies," declaring that it has been so long since they have received visitors. The gaoler offers for one of the PCs to join him in his "throne room," to discuss a treaty between the two powers. To earn the heroes' trust, the Mad Gaoler offers to leave a swarm of rats behind as insurance against any duplicity on his part.

If the heroes refuse or press the attack, the Mad Gaoler fights to the death in futile defense of his demesne.

Cell A: The cell's iron door is bolted closed from the outside, and rusted closed (Strength, DC 25 to open). Opening the cell, the heroes discover tufts of moldy straw, harmless green-black mold covering the walls and ceiling, and a pair of empty shackles bolted into the south wall.

A secret door is hidden in the back of the chamber (Perception, DC 25 to discover). This cell is used exclusively for the select few prisoners that the Vizier secretly releases.

Cell B: The iron door to this cell is also bolted closed from the outside. A simple padlock (Thievery, DC 15) secures the iron bolt in place. Inside the cell PCs find moldy straw, several sets of shackles and chains set into the walls, and a shallow, muddy pool dug into the floor to collect water. The anchors are stout, and difficult to tear from the wall (Strength, DC 25); similarly, the manacles, once fastened by Mad Gaoler's iron bolts, are difficult to break (Strength, DC 30, or 25 hp of damage).

Captured by the Eladrin! If the PCs are captured by the eladrin, the Vizier orders them placed in cell B. The PCs are disarmed and escorted to area 2-16, where the Mad Gaoler puts them in shackles, hammering heated iron slugs into the leg irons and manacles to secure them closed. Any PC thus shackled receives a -2 penalty to his or her AC and Reflex saves, and has his or her speed reduced by 2.

The Mad Gaoler is ignorant of the secret door in cell A, and randomly chooses where to place the heroes. Roll 1d20 — on an even number the heroes are placed in cell A, and on an odd number the PCs are placed in cell B.

The Mad Gaoler

Level 7 Soldier

Medium natural humanoid, eladrin XP 300

Initiative +11 **Senses** Perception +4;
low-light vision
King's Swarm aura 10; The Mad Gaoler or ANY rats in the aura score a critical hit on a roll of 19 or 20 (a roll of 19 is not an automatic hit, however).

HP 77; **Bloodied** 38

AC 23; **Fortitude** 18, **Reflex** 21, **Will** 17

Saving Throws +5 against charm effects

Speed 5; see also *shadow step*

↑ **Spiked Club** (standard; at-will) ♦ **Weapon**
+14 vs.AC; 1d8 + 4 damage.

↑ **Chain** (standard; at-will) ♦ **Weapon**
Reach 2; +14 vs.AC; 1d8+4 damage.

↑ **Entrapping Chains** (standard; recharge 5, 6) ♦ **Weapon**

Requires chain; reach 2; +12 vs.AC; 3d8 + 4 damage, and the target is restrained until the end of the gaoler's next turn. The gaoler cannot attack with his chain while the target is restrained.

⚡ **Madman's Challenge** (standard; encounter)

Ranged 10; the target is marked until the end of the encounter or until the gaoler dies, taking 4 damage each round it does not attack the gaoler.

Shadow Step (move; encounter) ♦ **Teleportation**

The Mad Gaoler can teleport 7 squares.

Alignment Evil **Languages** Common, Elven

Skills Athletics +11, Arcana +7, History +7, Nature +9

Str 18 (+7) **Dex** 22 (+9) **Wis** 13 (+4)

Con 13 (+4) **Int** 14 (+5) **Cha** 16 (+6)

Equipment chainmail, spiked club, manacle and chain.

Dire Rat (8)

Level 1 Brute

Medium natural beast XP 100

Initiative +2 **Senses** Perception +5
low-light vision

HP 38; **Bloodied** 19

AC 15; **Fortitude** 15, **Reflex** 13, **Will** 11

Immune filth fever

Speed 6, climb 3

↑ **Bite** (standard; at-will) ♦ **Disease**
+4 vs.AC; 1d6 + 2 damage, and the target contracts filth fever.

Alignment Unaligned **Languages** —

Skills Stealth +7

Str 14 (+2) **Dex** 15 (+2) **Wis** 10 (+0)

Con 18 (+4) **Int** 3 (–4) **Cha** 6 (–2)

Rat Swarm (3)

Level 2 Skirmisher

Medium natural beast (swarm) XP 125

Initiative +6 **Senses** Perception +6
low-light vision
Swarm Attack aura 1; the rat swarm makes a basic attack as a free action against each enemy that begins its turn in the aura.

HP 36; **Bloodied** 18

AC 15; **Fortitude** 12; **Reflex** 14; **Will** 11

Resist half damage from melee and ranged attacks;

Vulnerable 5 against close and area attacks

Speed 4, climb 2

↑ **Swarm of Teeth** (standard; at-will)
+6 vs.AC; 1d6 + 3 damage, and ongoing 3 damage (save ends).

Alignment Unaligned **Languages** —

Str 12 (+2) **Dex** 17 (+4) **Wis** 10 (+1)

Con 12 (+2) **Int** 2 (–3) **Cha** 9 (+0)

AREA 2–17 GAOLER'S QUARTERS

Read or paraphrase the following:

A long, narrow cot occupies the north wall of this chamber. Nearby, a brazier of glowing coals casts the rest of the chamber in a hellish light. Placed in the center of the long east wall is a tall chair decorated with moldy, blackened rags. More disturbing, the chair has been decorated with hundreds of rodent skulls, ranging from tiny mice to enormous rats, nailed to the chair in some peculiar, esoteric pattern.

This chamber is the home of the Mad Gaoler and his army of rats and mice. Lost in a world of fantasy, the Mad Gaoler mistakenly believes that he has come to rule over the Kingspire Dungeons. The fantasy is a fragile one, immediately banished when the Vizier enters the dungeons, but with few visitors, the gaoler has more than ample time to indulge his fantasies.

Treating with the Mad Gaoler: The gaoler is first encountered in area 2–16, where he offers the heroes terms of parlay. If the PCs agree, sending one of their own as a delegate to meet with the madman, he escorts the ambassador to his chambers. The gaoler sits upon his throne with regal dignity, pulling on a mouse-skin cape and raising a scepter topped with a fanged dire rat skull. Then the Mad Gaoler offers the PC a treaty: the heroes may pass through his “lands” so long as they agree to never again harass his “folk” (the mice and rats). Furthermore, the gaoler knows the secret to reaching the hidden dungeons of Kingspire, and is willing to share his secrets with the PCs in return for a tithe: all the heroes’ food and drink. If the PCs accept the Mad Gaoler’s terms, he immediately calls his rat and mice, handing out the food, and pouring out bits of drink to his ravenous people.

Once his folk are sated, the Mad Gaoler shows the PCs the secret door hidden in the west wall, opening the portal with practiced ease. Giggling madly, the gaoler shares that it was many centuries ago when Prince Rynth led his band of exiled fey into the caverns below.

Treasure: The gaoler has little of worth. However, his *mouse-skin cloak* has taken on a bit of the Kingspire's magic, and acts as a +2 *elven cloak*.

Secret Door: A secret door is hidden in the west wall of the chamber. Agents of the Vizier used spy holes cut into the secret door to spy on the gaoler; however, since his descent into madness, the spies visit less and less often. The door itself is masterfully hidden (Perception, DC 30), but a DC 22 Perception check allows PCs to spot the spyholes. Once the spyholes are detected, finding the secret door is an easy matter (Perception, DC 20). As noted above, the gaoler is aware of the secret door and the spyholes.

AREA 2-18 SPY CHAMBER

Read or paraphrase the following:

A trio of crates stands in the center of this chamber, making a crude table and benches. Atop the center crate is a pair of dice and a shallow copper dish. A handful of coins — mostly gold and silver — are scattered about the floor. A pair of clay jugs, stained with wine, sits on the floor beside the makeshift table.

This spy chamber hasn't seen use in many a year. Agents of the Vizier, tiring of watching the ever more insane gaoler, have taken to gambling and drinking instead.

Because of the peculiarities of the Kingspire's curse, there is little point to winning (or losing) at dice, a frustration the spies discovered centuries ago. Similarly, the wine jugs are filled halfway with every turning of the worm. There are total of 5 gp and 18 sp scattered about the floor.

The wine is exceedingly strong, and any PC taking more than a few draughts from the jug suffers -1 on all attack rolls and defenses until he or she takes an extended rest. Heroes insisting on drinking half a jug or more are severely impaired (-5 to all attack rolls and defenses).

AREA 2-19 STEPS OF FIRE (EL 1, XP 400)

Read or paraphrase the following:

You have been descending the seemingly endless stairs for what must be hours. Each flight is the same, stone steps descending ever further, and elegant wooden beams, arching towards the high ceiling, creating the effect of a silent, gloomy forest.

Finally, in the darkness ahead, you spy an end to your interminable descent. One last flight descends to the feet of a pair of towering portals

lit by braziers of burning oil. The smell of smoke, mixed with the stench of rot and mold, is thick in the air.

The steps, and the caverns past the portals were once the sacred burial grounds for Elihai regents and servants. However, now they are home to the exile Prince Rynth and his servitors.

A pair of secret doors (Perception, DC 20) is set within the north wall of the steps. The steps between the secret doors are trapped, so that as the heroes descend the stairs, a faint cloud of vaporized oil descends from above. The oil cloud rolls down the steps, reaching the braziers in 1d4 rounds, causing the cloud to explode into flames, incinerating any PC remaining on the flight of stairs or in the chamber below.

The trap's flames ignite the oil-soaked wooden beams supporting the ceiling. After 3 rounds, the fire has progressed, causing the beams and the ceiling blocks to collapse. Falling beams and stone blocks target any PC attempting to move down the steps. The fire continues for 1 hour.

Deactivating the Trap: If the PCs investigate the upper secret door they discover a corridor running parallel to the steps. Inside the hidden corridor is a large iron lever, soaked in oil. Lifting the lever deactivates the trap, making it safe for the heroes to descend the steps.

Once the PCs reach the base of the steps, read or paraphrase the following:

The ancient portals of brass and hammered copper tower before you. The gates are decorated with bas-reliefs depicting an eladrin funerary procession beneath a star-lit sky. The solemn figures, led by a queen of inestimable beauty, carry the body of a regal warrior towards a high-mountain cairn.

A makeshift beam is placed over the door and laden with stones.

Oil Cloud

Level 5 Warder

Trap **XP 200**

Perception

DC 20: The character notices an oily sheen on the stone steps.

Trigger: Descending the steps.

Immediate Reaction **Close burst 5**

Targets: All creatures in burst

Attack: +8 vs. Reflex

Hit: 4d8+3 fire damage, plus 5 ongoing fire damage (save ends).

Miss: Half damage, and no ongoing damage.

COUNTERMEASURES

- The characters can disable the trap from inside the secret chamber running along the steps.
- An adjacent character can disable the trap with a DC 25 Thievery check.

Ceiling

Level 5 Warder

Hazard **XP 200**

Perception

DC 20: The character notices the wooden beams are soaked in oil.

Trigger: The oil cloud trap.

Target: All creatures remaining on the steps

Attack: +7 vs. Reflex each round for 1 hour.

Hit: 1d12+8 damage, plus ongoing 5 fire (save ends).

COUNTERMEASURES

- The characters cannot disable this hazard; only avoid it.

AREA 2-20

DOOM ARCH (EL 5, XP 600)

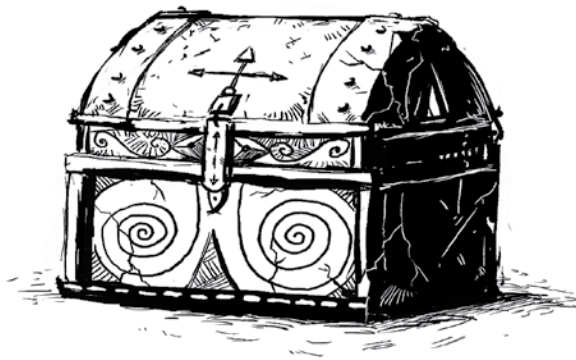
Read or paraphrase the following:

A narrow stone bridge, crumbling with age, arches out into an enormous cavern, coming to rest at a stalagmite. The Cyclopean stalagmite, titanic in size like the rest of the chamber, houses what looks like a small village, separated from the arch by a wooden gate!

Note that unless the heroes take precautions to conceal themselves as they draw open the gate, they are exposed to the javelins of the feywracked exiles lurking across the arch. The impalers lurk atop 2-21B, giving them both cover (-2 to hit) and an excellent view of the arch. The impalers wait for the PCs to begin crossing the arch before hurling their javelins at the heroes. If one or more of the PCs falls to the impalers' poison, the feywracked knights throw wide the gates and one of their number rushes in to finish off the poisoned hero.

The knights fall back behind the gates if the PCs put up a fierce resistance, fully aware that a fall from the high arch to the cave floor below could well be fatal (20d10 damage).

See area 2-21 for statistics on the feywracked exiles and additional tactics for the defense of their village.



Treating with the Feywracked: Cunning heroes can call across the gap, in an attempt to win a truce from the feywracked exiles. This is challenging, at best, with the exiles slow to trust the invaders. The PCs' cause is aided if they think to offer (or hint at) potential gifts to the feywracked exiles. Metal weapons and coins are especially prized by the exiles, as they have little means for mining ore.

Complexity: 2 (requires 6 successes before 3 failures)

Primary Skills: Bluff, Diplomacy, Intimidate.

Bluff (DC 22): The PCs try to win the exiles' trust under false pretenses. Other characters can aid the lead PC in making the check.

Diplomacy (DC 18): The PCs try to foster an alliance with the exiles; this requires an offering of some sort — weapons and treasure are especially prized.

Intimidate (DC -): Immediate failure. The feywracked exiles, mad from their lonely exile, respond to threats with violence.

Success: The feywracked exiles safely escort the heroes to the cavern floor, directing the PCs to the Tomb of the Last King (area 2-25).

Failure: The feywracked exiles fight to the death, willingly giving their lives in an attempt to repulse the heroes.

AREA 2-21

STOCKADE OF THE EXILES

(EL 8, XP 1,700)

Read or paraphrase the following, keeping in mind that the heroes are likely under attack:

The high, sturdy palisade walls off the stockade. Past the wooden walls, you can spy the wooden ruins of a village, all in various states of decay. A short tower, the second story barely standing, keeps watch to the north, while further down the stalagmite you can spy a large ruined great hall.

In order to gain the exiles' stockade, the heroes must first negotiate the wooden gate. Heroes can easily scale the gate (DC 10 Athletics, taking 2 rounds, and granting combat advantage) or vault the gate in a single round with a DC 18 Athletics check. Alternately, brutish heroes can shatter the gate in a single round with a DC 25 Strength check, or by inflicting 40 points of damage (AC 15) with physical weapons.

Inside the stockade are the sole survivors of Prince Rynth's original company. The six feywracked exiles are tormented souls, ruined in body and mind. Once they were simple eladrin, but after centuries of exposure to the fell magic of their prince's *Runblade* and the absence of the sustaining fey magics of the upperworld, the survivors are now gaunt, gray-skinned monstrosities, with sunken cheeks, and dulled, hollow eyes. They move with the preternatural quickness of feral predators, exploiting any opportunity the instant it appears, withdrawing (or *shadow stepping*) away from foes, only to flank and attack from another direction. Wounded, they fall back to

make sniping attacks, making their last stand in the ruins of the great hall.

Though their stockade has fallen into ruins, the feywracked exiles use it to great advantage in battle. Weapons are cached throughout the ruins, along with traps for unwary heroes that might try to give pursuit. Note that the exiles are aware of all the traps, and avoid them easily, whereas the heroes might not be so fortunate.

Area A — Tower Ground Floor: This room appears empty save for a fire pit that hasn't seen use in many a year. A crude staircase in the back of the tower rises to the second floor (area B). A fine wire is stretched across the third step; the first PC to ascend the steps without noticing the trip wire is targeted by a crossbow bolt fired from above.

Area B — Tower, Second Floor: The 2 impalers begin the encounter atop the tower, hidden behind the battlements for cover. They hurl their javelins at heroes crossing the bridge, but once the heroes fight their way into the stockade, the exiles withdraw to ground level and split up, sneaking through the ruins to hurl javelins at unsuspecting heroes.

Area C — Backroom: This room is empty save for a bundle of javelins resting in the shadows against the back wall (Perception, DC 15 to notice unless the PCs inspect the chamber). The 4 javelins are all poisoned with the exiles' mushroom oil. The foul-scented oil (+5 vs. Fortitude) causes ongoing 5 poison damage and the target is slowed (save ends both).

Fermented Mushroom Poison

Level 5 Poison

Attack +5 vs. Fortitude; ongoing 5 damage and slowed (save ends).

First Failed Save: The target is immobilized instead of slowed (save ends).

Second Failed Save: The target is stunned instead of immobilized (save ends).

Area D — Collapsing Hut: This hut is propped up by key supports set by the exiles. A narrow trip wire is stretched across the entranceway at chest level (for Medium-sized creatures). Medium-sized creatures entering the hut snap the wire, causing the hut to collapse forward, atop them. See below for trap statistics.

Area E — Curing Hut: A fire pit is dug at the base of this partially collapsed hut. Soot-blackened chains hang from a beam placed across the walls; hanging from the chains are several skinned rats, curing over the fire. The rats' skins are affixed to the walls by spikes whittled from dried mushroom stalks.

Five poisoned javelins lean against the walls of the chamber, covered by a large lizard skin (Perception, DC 15 to notice).

Area F — Mushroom Hut: This collapsed hut stinks of rot and mold, and is kept constantly wet from a formation of dripping stalactites high above. The feywracked have taken to cultivating various breeds of mushrooms in the rotting structure, all poisonous. Dried, powdered, and then mixed into a paste, the proper combination of mushrooms produces the poison the feywracked use on their javelins and spears. Foolish heroes consuming any of the mushrooms are targeted: +15 vs. Fortitude; 1d10 +5 damage and 5 ongoing (save ends). *First Failed Save:* The target takes an additional 1d10 + 5 damage. *Second Failed Save:* The target is reduced to 1 hit point.

Area G — Water Hut: This structure collapsed long ago, and is now little more than rotting walls. A crude javelin trap wards the entrance to this hut (see below). A formation of stalactites high above provide a constant drip of water; the feywracked have taken to collecting the water in a large mushroom cap. Five clay jugs are set against the wall of the hut. Four are filled with water, and are safe to drink. The fifth contains a potent alcohol brewed from mushrooms and glowworms. A single swig of the stuff grants a drinker +10 temporary hp, -2 to his initiative rolls and Reflex defense, and +1 to his Fortitude defense. Fools imbibing more than a mouthful must make 3 saving throws or fall unconscious for the next 24 hours.

Area H — Collapsing Hut: This hut is propped up by key supports set by the exiles. A narrow trip wire is stretched across the entranceway at chest level (for Medium-sized creatures). Medium-sized creatures entering the hut snap the wire, causing the hut to collapse forward, atop them. See below for trap statistics.

Feywracked Impaler (2)

Level 7 Artillery

Medium natural humanoid **XP 300**

Initiative +5 **Senses** Perception +9; darkvision

HP 69; **Bloodied** 34

AC 21; **Fortitude** 22, **Reflex** 17, **Will** 17

Speed 6

↑ **Spear** (standard; at-will) ♦ **Weapon**

+12 vs.AC; 1d8 + 4 damage.

⚡ **Poisoned Javelin** (standard; at-will) ♦ **Poison, Weapon**

Ranged 10/20; +14 vs.AC; 1d6 + 4 damage, and the target takes ongoing 5 poison damage and is slowed (save ends both). *First Failed Save:* The target is immobilized instead of slowed (save ends). *Second Failed Save:* The target is stunned instead of immobilized (save ends).

Shadow Step (move; encounter) ♦ **Teleportation**

The feywracked can teleport 7 squares.

Alignment Chaotic evil **Languages** Elven

Skills Athletics +12, Endurance +13

Str 19 (+7)

Dex 14 (+5)

Wis 13 (+4)

Con 21 (+8)

Int 7 (+1)

Cha 9 (+2)

Equipment spear, quiver of 6 javelins

Feywrecked Knight (3)

Level 6 Soldier

Medium natural humanoid XP 250

Initiative +6 **Senses** Perception +5; darkvision

HP 74; **Bloodied** 37

AC 22; **Fortitude** 19, **Reflex** 15, **Will** 17

Speed 6

↑ **Bastard Sword** (standard; at-will) ♦ **Weapon**
+13 vs.AC; 1d10 + 5 damage, and the target is marked until the end of the feywrecked knight's next turn.

↑ **Poison Dagger** (standard; encounter)
+13 vs.AC; 1d4 + 4 damage, and the knight makes a secondary attack on the same target. *Secondary Attack*: +11 vs. Fortitude; the target is immobilized (save ends).

⚡ **Javelin** (standard; at-will) ♦ **Weapon**
Ranged 10/20; +11 vs.AC; 1d6 + 4 damage.

Shadow Step (move; encounter) ♦ **Teleportation**
The feywrecked can teleport 7 squares.

Alignment Chaotic evil **Languages** Elven

Skills Athletics +12, Endurance +12

Str 18 (+7) **Dex** 12 (+4) **Wis** 15 (+5)

Con 18 (+7) **Int** 6 (+1) **Cha** 8 (+2)

Equipment bastard sword, 2 javelins

Feywrecked Shaman

Level 8 Controller (Leader)

Medium natural humanoid XP 350

Initiative +5 **Senses** Perception +13; darkvision

HP 93; **Bloodied** 46

AC 22; **Fortitude** 22, **Reflex** 17, **Will** 20

Speed 6

↑ **Quarterstaff** (standard; at-will) ♦ **Weapon**
+13 vs.AC; 1d8 + 2 damage.

↑ **Dagger** (standard; at-will) ♦ **Weapon**
+13 vs.AC; 1d4 + 2 damage.

⚡ **Filth Ray** (standard; at-will) ♦ **Poison**
Ranged 10; +12 vs. Fortitude; 1d6 + 5 poison damage, and the target is weakened (save ends).

⚡ **Worm's Curse** (standard; recharge 4,5,6) ♦ **Necrotic**
Ranged 5; +12 vs. Fortitude; the target takes ongoing 5 necrotic damage and is slowed (save ends both).

✱ **Slayer's Fury** (minor; recharge 4,5,6)
Close burst 10; all allies in the burst gain +5 speed until the end of the shaman's next turn.

✱ **The Worm, Reborn** (standard; encounter) ♦ **Healing**

Close burst 5; bloodied allies in the burst regain 15 hit points.

Shadow Step (move; encounter) ♦ **Teleportation**
The feywrecked can teleport 7 squares.

Alignment Chaotic evil **Languages** Common, Elven

Skills Dungeoneering +13, Endurance +14, Religion +9

Str 15 (+6) **Dex** 12 (+5) **Wis** 18 (+8)

Con 21 (+9) **Int** 10 (+4) **Cha** 14 (+6)

Equipment robes, quarterstaff

Javelin Trap

Level 1 Obstacle

Trap XP 100

Perception

DC 20: The character notices the trip wire.

Trigger

The trap attacks when a creature enters the chamber without noticing the trip wire. When the trap is triggered, a javelin fires from above, attacking a random target in the trigger squares.

Attack

Opportunity Action Ranged 10

Target: One random creature on the trigger step when the trap activates.

Attack: +7 vs. Reflex

Hit: 1d10 + 3 damage

COUNTER MEASURES

- An adjacent character can disable the trap with a DC 22 Thievery check.

Collapsing Hut

Level 1 Lurker

Trap XP 100

Perception

DC 22: The character notices the trip wire.

Additional Skills: Dungeoneering

DC 20: The character notices that the hut is unstable, granting a +2 bonus to attempts to disable the trap.

Initiative +3

A trip wire, stretched across the entrance of the hut at chest level for Medium-sized creatures.

Attack

Standard Reaction Close burst 3

Targets: Creatures in burst

Attack: +4 vs. Reflex

Hit: 2d6 + 2 damage, and the target is immobilized (save ends).

Miss: Half damage.

COUNTER MEASURES

- An adjacent character can disable the trap with a DC 22 Thievery check.

RUINED GREAT HALL

Read or paraphrase the following:

Stone steps descend to the collapsed ruins of a great hall. A crude roof of tanned hides covers much of the structure, supported by beams and enormous mushroom stalks, scabbed onto the walls. Inside you can spy fire pits, pallets made of skins and hides, and a large altar chimney.

Driven from the upper ruins, the exiles make their last stand here in the great hall. They fight bitterly, with the knowledge that their cause is doomed. If the last survivors are all bloodied, they give up their lives, plunging through a hole in the floor at the back of the hall, plummeting to their death on the cavern floor below.

Heroes inspecting the ruins find little of value. The piles of furs and skins are the exiles' crude beds. The skins are largely cave rats with the occasional lizard, and are worthless. Three bundles of 6 javelins are placed along the back wall of the chamber. None of the javelins are poisoned.

The stone chimney set against the back of the chamber is actually a crude forge. Resting atop the forge is a variety of ruined metal objects — the exiles' most valuable commodity. Unable to mine for metal, the feywracked have taken to using and reusing any metal object. Belt buckles and pendants are

transformed into spearheads, broken weapons are re-forged and sharpened, coins are beaten into javelin tips — nothing metal is wasted or neglected.

Determined PCs (Perception, DC 15) are able to collect 15 gp worth of hammered gold here, though most of the soft metal has been mixed with iron and used in the exiles' weapons.

AREA 2-23 BASKET LIFT

Read or paraphrase the following:

Narrow steps painstakingly carved into the side of the stalagmite run down to a narrow platform. A crude basket winch, built from a giant mushroom cap, fibrous rope, and counterweight stones, sits atop the platform, permitting access to the cavern floor.

Far below, you can spy the cavern floor, covered in a dense forest of giant mushrooms. A narrow path of stones cuts through the forest, angling toward the cavern wall.

The exiles use the basket winch to access the cavern floor. Though crude in appearance, the basket winch isn't dangerous so long as nothing attacks the heroes as they descend to the cavern floor.

It takes the lift 5 minutes to make 1 trip from the platform



to the cavern floor. Ascending is much quicker, taking only half the time. Thanks to the counterweights, the basket can be raised and lowered from the winch platform, from within the basket, and from the fungi forest floor below.

If, at any point in a descent or climb, the riders make quick shifts inside the basket, or are hit by an attack, there is a chance that the mushroom cap flips; one PC in the cap must make a DC 15 Acrobatics check to keep the cap from overturning. If the cap does flip, riders must make DC 10 Athletics or Acrobatics checks to seize hold of the cap, or risk falling to their death (damage ranging from 6d10 to 1d10 depending on the height of the basket).

AREA 2-24 FUNGI FOREST

Read or paraphrase the following:

The floor of the cavern is covered in a thick bed of spongy humus. The stench of rot is thick in the air, as if every breath fills your lungs with stinging spores. Giant mushrooms tower around on all sides. A narrow path of stones is set in the soft ground, winding its way through the fungi forest.

The humus is thick, and every step drops the character a foot or more into the rotting soil. While movement on the stone path is normal, the humus is treated as difficult terrain. Additionally, creative PCs can move along the tops of the mushroom forest, leaping from cap to cap. Each round spent moving this way, the PC must succeed on a DC 15 Acrobatics or Athletics check, or slip, falling to the spongy soil (no damage).

There are a nearly endless variety of mushrooms filling the cavern, ranging from deadly strains to those with bizarre magical properties. Eating the mushrooms is exceedingly foolhardy, but what are heroes if not fools?

For each mushroom tasted roll 1d20 and consult the following table. Heroes succeeding on a DC 20 Nature or Dungeoneering check add +5 to their roll. Multiple tastes of the same mushroom type by the same character do not stack or repeat effects, though tastes from different species do. Samples taken from the mushrooms are good 1d6 days before drying and losing their properties.

1d20	Effect
1-4	Common Poison. The PC takes 1d20 damage, and his Fortitude defense is lowered by 5 for the next week. The PC must make an immediate saving throw; on a failure, the hero takes 5 ongoing poison damage (save ends).
5-10	Harmless. The mushroom is tasty, but otherwise has no effect.
11	Spore of Madness. The PC loses his mind for 1d6 rounds, attacking the nearest living creature with intent to kill.

- 12-14 **Healing Cap.** The hero recovers 1d20 hp, and any spent encounter powers. Eladrin tasting this mushroom treat is as **common poison** (see above).
- 15 **Dancing Spore.** The PC takes 5 points of poison damage, but for the next 1d10 rounds, the PC's AC and Reflex defense are improved by +2. Tieflings tasting this mushroom treat it as **common poison** (see above).
- 16 **Spore of Timorous Dread.** For the next hour, the PC is stricken with dread. All Initiative checks suffer a -2 penalty, and all fear effects targeting the hero receive a +2 bonus to hit.
- 17 **Invigorating Spore.** The PC takes 5 points of poison damage, but for the next 1d10 rounds, the PC gains a +5 bonus to damage rolls. Elves and halflings tasting this mushroom treat it as **common poison** (see above).
- 18 **Shadow Stem.** The PC slowly fades from sight, becoming invisible for the next 1d4 rounds. Dwarves and dragonborn tasting this mushroom treat it as **common poison** (see above).
- 19 **Death Cap.** The PC immediately takes 25 poison damage plus 7 ongoing poison damage (save ends). *First Failed Save:* The character drops to 1 hit point. *Second Failed Save:* The character dies.
- 20+ **Heroes' Cap.** Characters tasting this mushroom gain 15 temporary hp, a +1 bonus to all defenses, and immunity to all fear effects. The benefits last until the heroes' next extended rest. Ending the rest, the PC gains 500 XP. As wise heroes might expect, the powers of this mushroom only work once per hero. Greedy would-be heroes discover that if the mushroom is eaten twice (or more), the second result is **common poison** (see above).

AREA 2-25 TOMB OF THE LAST PRINCE

Read or paraphrase the following:

The narrow stone path winds its way to the cavern wall. There, set beneath a small overhang, is a crude stone throne carved from the living rock. Seated atop the throne, girded with bejeweled armor and covered in a dark fungus, sits a grim skeleton.

A massive greatsword rests against the throne. The dark blade pulses

with ancient, malign power, calling up bitter bile and filling your mind with dreams of bloody slaughter.

This skeleton is the corpse of Prince Rynth; the skeleton's bones have been entirely replaced by mold and fungus. Touching the skeleton causes it to collapse into a slithering pile of rot.

The bejeweled armor is a suit of *+1 bloodcut plate armor*. The sword at the skeleton's side is the *Runeblade* — the goal of the heroes' quest.

The malignant, dire magic of the *Runeblade* is so great that it counteracts the Curse of the Worm. Living creatures within 500 feet of the blade age normally, and are not “reset” with the turning of the worm. The *Runeblade* is a fell artifact of inestimable power. In the hands of Heroic tier characters, its powers are greatly reduced, but terrible all the same.

The sword derives its name from the eldritch runes set in its blade. The runes pulse like dying red embers, the light growing brighter whenever the blade tastes blood. The blade is forged of some unknown black metal, and close inspection shows wisps of mist spilling across the blade, forming tortured, screaming faces.

In the hands of a Heroic-tier character, the *Runeblade* is a *+3 lifedrinker greatsword* with a sinister bent; see **New Magic** for a full examination of the blade's properties and powers. The might of the *Runeblade's* enchantment counteracts the Kingspire's curse, and returning the blade back to the upper levels of the Kingspire brings Lady Ariarch's ill-wrought enchantment to an end.

However, the might of the blade has also attracted a powerful defender: an enormous, devourer worm. Taking the blade from the throne draws the attention of the worm. The first round, the heroes feel something moving beneath the humus, and see the stalks of the mushrooms displaced as the enormous creature moves towards them. The second round, the worm erupts from beneath the rotting soil, plunging down to devour the heroes.

The worm can easily outmatch the heroes. A giant, ravenous predator, there is little that would daunt the terrible foe, and the heroes' sole hope of survival lies in flight.

The worm gives chase, up to the base of the stalagmite. The worm can rear up to 20 feet in the air and still make its attacks; once the heroes have ascended 20 feet or more, the worm is impotent, screeching their fury, but affecting naught.

Devourer Worm

Level 10 Elite Skirmisher

Huge aberrant magical beast XP 1000

Initiative +12 Senses Perception +13

HP 210; Bloodied 105

AC 26; Fortitude 24, Reflex 24, Will 22

Saving Throws +2

Speed 8, burrow 8

↑ Bite (standard; at-will)

Reach 2; +5 vs.AC; 2d8+6 damage, and the target is knocked prone.

↑ Death from Below (standard; at-will)

The worm moves below the surface up to its burrow speed, avoiding opportunity attacks, and then bursts up from the ground and makes a bite attack with combat advantage: +17 vs.AC; 2d8+6 damage, and the target is grabbed.

☞ Acidic Spew (standard; recharge 4, 5, 6) ♦ **Acid**

Area burst 1 within 10; +15 vs.AC; 1d8 + 5 damage.

Alignment Evil

Languages –

Skills Stealth +15

Str 21 (+10)

Dex 20 (+10)

Wis 17 (+8)

Con 17 (+8)

Int 4 (+2)

Cha 12 (+6)

CONCLUSION: LEGACY OF THE SWORD OF RUNE AND RUIN

For all the pain and torment it has wrought, ending the curse is remarkably simple. The heroes must return *Runeblade* to the upper level of the Kingspire.

When the heroes return to the citadel, read or paraphrase the following:

The runes of the sword flare bright red, like embers about to catch fire. An unbearable brightness passes over you, and for an instant, you feel as if your entire body is disjointed — torn between two dimensions.

Then the sensation passes. Above, the constant dark mists part to reveal the blue sky. As the mists fade, you realize that the citadel is returned to its ruined state. The sounds of battle cease abruptly, leaving naught but the natural sounds of the swamp in their wake.

*You are triumphant! Your companions give a shout, but a lingering sense of malignant dread hangs over you like the tendrils of fading mist. What of the *Runeblade* you still carry? It calls for blood, and you know in your heart that this tale has only begun...*

The inhabitants of the citadel and the sub-human barbarians are not so fortunate. They age several centuries in the span of a few moments, reduced to gaunt, withered forms, then corpses, then dust. A cold wind blows over the citadel carrying away the remnants of the Kingspire's folk, erasing them from memory and legend, save for the tales told of the heroes.

APPENDIX I: NEW MAGIC

THE RUNEBLADE

One of the four blades forged for the Courts of the Eladrin, the Runeblade exists only to bring death and destruction to fey folk. Known in legend as the Winter Blade, and the Tirling, the blade brings ruin to any that dare to wield it in violence.

The *Runeblade* is a +3 *lifedrinker greatsword* and is appropriate for upper heroic-tier characters.

Enhancement: Attack rolls and damage rolls.

Critical: +2d6 damage, or +2d8 against good-aligned foes.

Property: This weapon deals an extra +1d6 damage to good-aligned foes.

Property: You gain a temporary +1 bonus to attack rolls and damage rolls for each foe reduced to 0 hit points or less (minions don't count) during your turn. Bonuses last to the end of your next turn.

Power (Encounter ♦ Weapon): You can use *reckless strike* (Fighter 7).

Special: Any creature slain by the *Runeblade* cannot be raised from the dead.

Special: The *Runeblade* counteracts the curse of the *Kingspire*.

Goals of the Runeblade: The *Runeblade* aims to bring death and destruction to the world, reaping the ranks of the champions of order and law, and spreading strife amongst the civilized realms. Its thirst for blood is insatiable, and drives the sword on, regardless of its wielder's wishes.

CONCORDANCE

Starting Score	5
Owner gains a level	+1d10
Owner is an evil-aligned eladrin	+1
Owner slays a close friend	+2
Owner slays a good creature of 10 th level or higher	+1
Owner is good-aligned	-1
Owner permits a foe to live	-2
Owner spends 8 hours in the presence of a higher-level martial character (maximum 1/day)	-2
Owner goes for 24 hours without slaying a living creature of 5 th level or greater (cumulative until a suitable creature is slain)	-1

PLEASED (16–20)

"I am become Death, destroyer of worlds."

The *Runeblade* is pleased with its host — for the moment. It continues to aid the hero, slaughtering as many good-aligned creatures as possible, and spreading strife and terror throughout the world.

Property: You gain +4 to hit and damage, and +2 to Initiative checks while wielding the blade.

Property: You take a -5 penalty to Diplomacy checks.

Power: (Encounter ♦ Divine, Weapon): You can use *whirlwind smite* (Paladin 13).

SATISFIED (12–15)

"The blade calls to me, and I must answer in blood"

The *Runeblade* has found a suitable wielder, but is not yet sated. When touched, it fills the wielder's mind with thoughts of slaughter and destruction, and of the great rewards that will surely follow.

Property: You gain +2 to hit and damage, and +1 to Initiative checks while wielding the blade.

Property: You take a -3 penalty to Diplomacy checks.

NORMAL (5–11)

"To achieve true peace for all, sacrifices must be made."

When taken up, the *Runeblade* tries to seduce its owner with offers of power, and all the good that can be accomplished by a benign tyrant. At first the blade urges the wielder on to combat evil foes, slowly urging the hero into attacking those that present a threat to the heroes' plans, and finally those that *might* offer a threat.

UNSATISFIED (1–4)

"I cannot control the chaos blade — it controls me."

The blade works actively against the wielder, goading him into battle in the hopes that the owner will fall.

Property: You take a -5 penalty to Diplomacy checks. At the DM's discretion, a failed Diplomacy check angers the NPC, causing him to attack.

ANGERED (0 OR LOWER)

"Get away! The blade's hunger must be sated!"

The *Runeblade* is at war with the wielder, actively working to free itself from the character. Everywhere the hero travels, he is confronted by angry, embittered foes, determined to bring his life to an end.

Property: You take a -10 penalty to Diplomacy checks. At the DM's discretion, a failed Diplomacy check angers the NPC, causing him to attack.

Special: In any instance calling for a potential random encounter, the wielder is sought out and attacked by a wandering monster, to the exclusion of all other potential targets.

Special: Once per week the *Runeblade* can make a special attack against your Will defense, rolling 1d20+ your level. If this attack hits, you must attack the next stranger you encounter.

MOVING ON

For every creature slain by the *Runeblade*, a portion of the wielder's soul also dies. The DM should track the number of creatures slain, applying the following table:

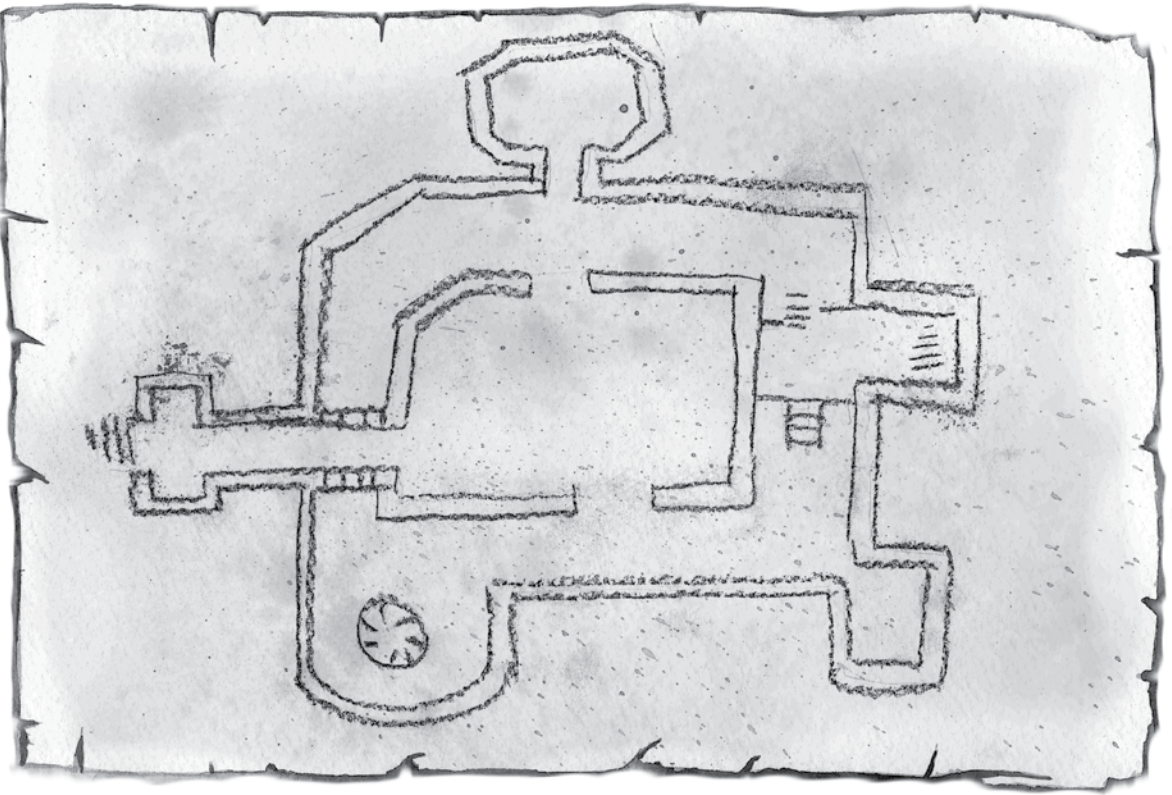
Foes Slain	Effect
0–5	No effect.
6–10	The hero grows cold and distant, seldom caring for social niceties. (–1 to Diplomacy and Bluff checks.)
11–16	The hero no longer cares for friends or allies, taking action only if it has a direct and immediate benefit to himself. If good-aligned, the hero becomes unaligned.
17–21	The hero displays open disdain for the cares and pain of others. (–3 to Diplomacy checks).
22–25	All animals fear the hero. Horses refuse to be ridden, dogs snarl and attack, and cats flee.
26–28	The hero engages in cruelty for pleasure. Left alone with another, he attacks with the blade to observe his targets' responses.
29–30	The hero actively seeks out old allies to kill, bent on wiping all traces of their existence from the world.
31+	The hero has become numb and indifferent to the world of the living. The player must forfeit his character to the DM, who can run the character as a psychopathic villain.



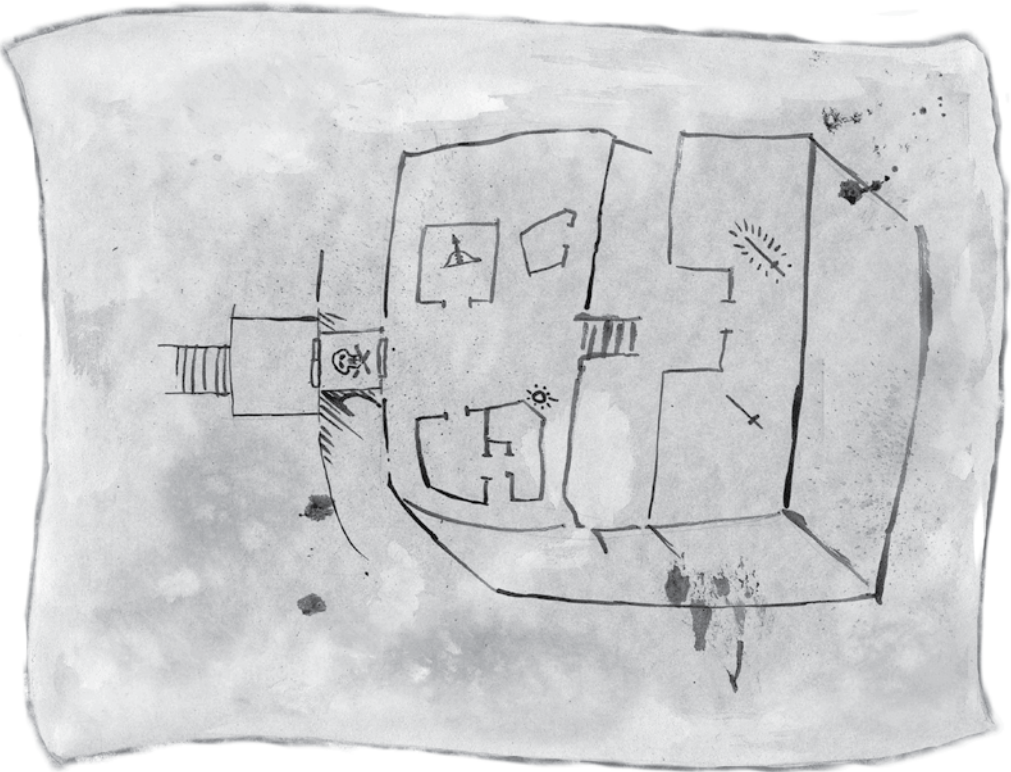
MY BROTHER LEE HIS REMAINING HENCHMAN FOR FORMORIANS AND TWISTED FITH, ACC
 INTO THE CAVERNS BENEATH OUR CITY SEEL. I WOULD SEAL THE GATES AND
 FORGET HIM, WERE IT NOT FOR THE RUNESWORD. THE SAVAGES DRAW
 CLOSER EVERY DAY, AND THOUGH LADY ARMARCH AVERS THAT HER
 MAGICS CAN SAVE US, I'D RATHER PUT MY FAITH IN THE HELL BLADE
 MY FOND
 GIVE ME, A THOUSAND TIMES THAT I EVER TRUSTED HIM.
 MAY THE HELL BLADE TAKE HIS SOUL, AS IT IS CONSUMED SO MANY
 BEFORE HIM AND FATHER HIS
 APPROXIMATELY THE REST OF THE
 EVEN NOW THE SAVAGES BEAT OUR MIGHTY GATES, THE TIME
 FOR BATTLE IS AT HAND. I SHALL GRAB THE ULZER TO ME SO THAT

HANDOUT A

HANDOUT B

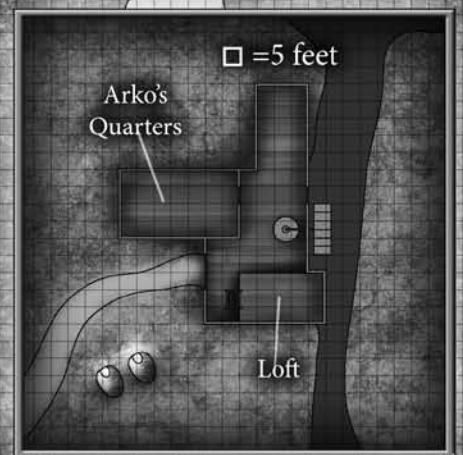
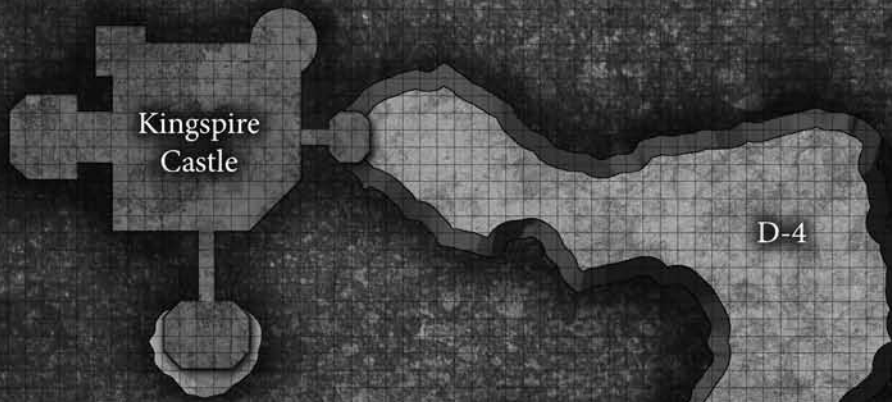


HANDOUT C



AREA MAP
AREAS K-1 THROUGH D-4

□ = 10 feet



KINGSPIRE RUINS
AREAS 1-1 THROUGH 1-14

◇ = 5 feet

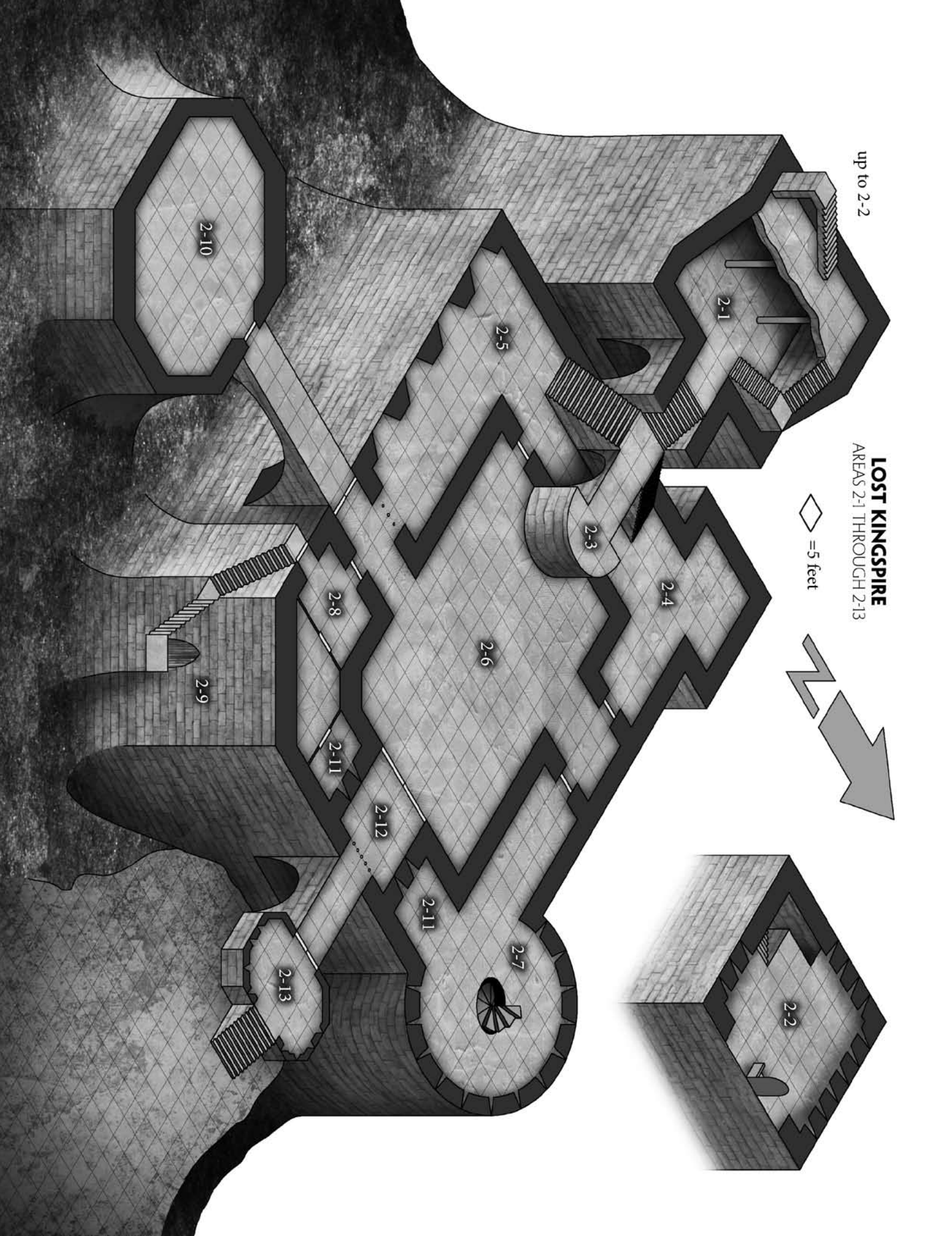
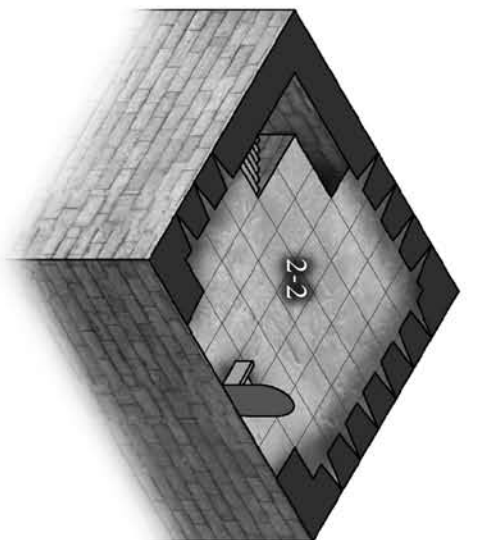
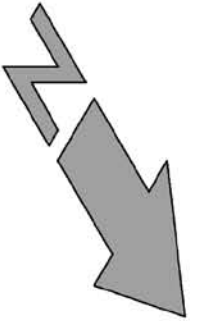


up to 2-2

LOST KINGSPIRE

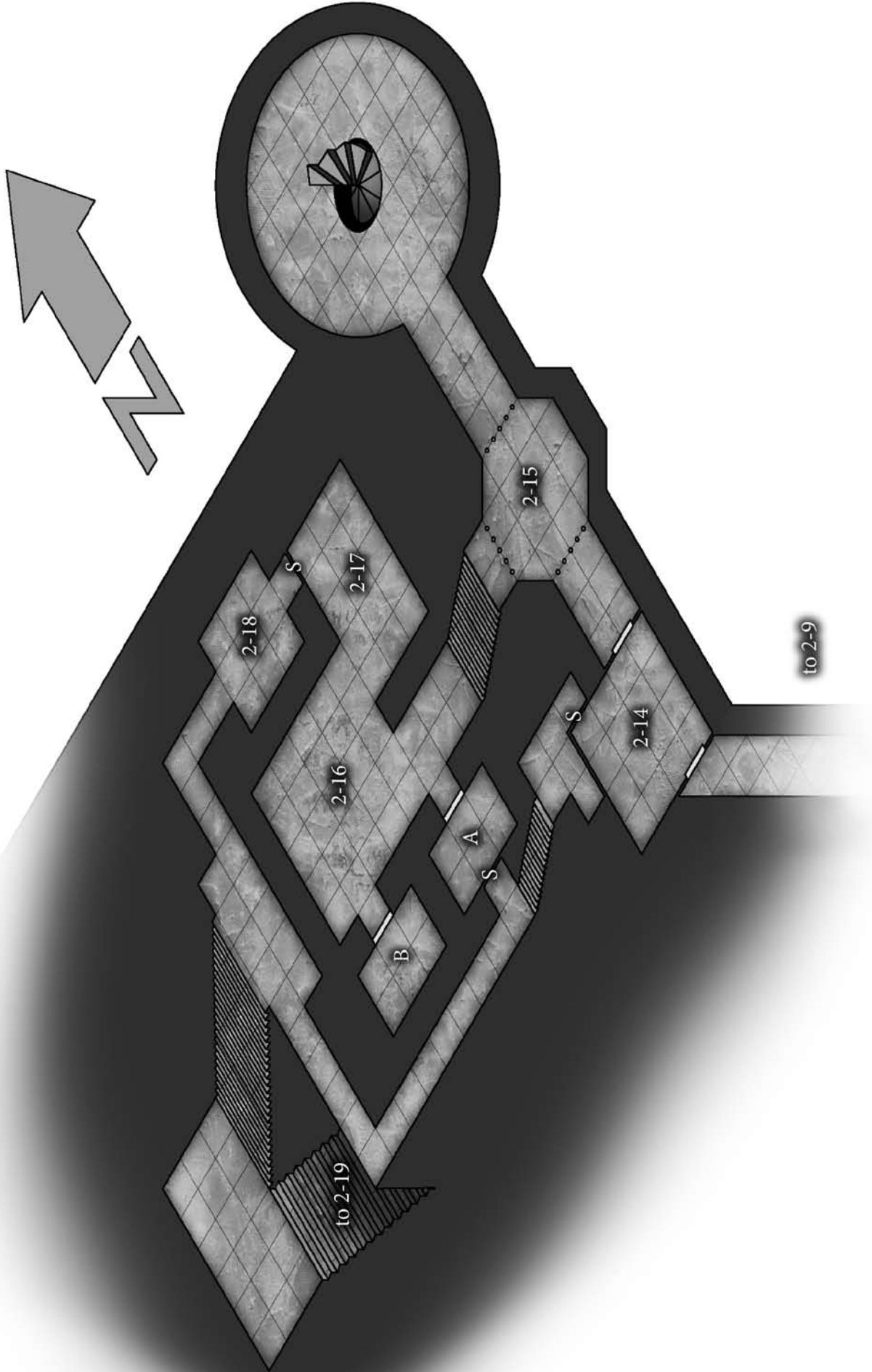
AREAS 2-1 THROUGH 2-13

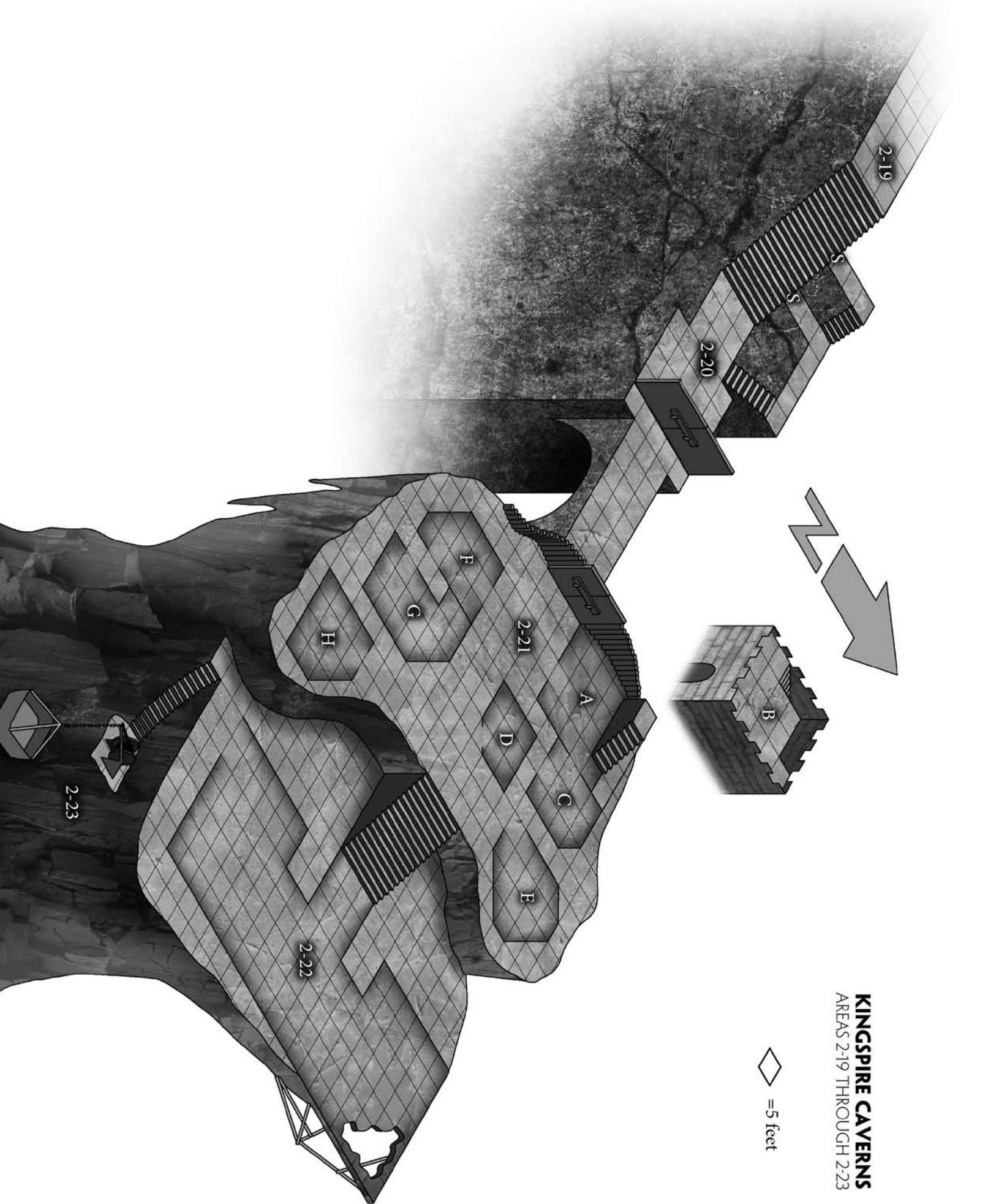
◇ = 5 feet



KINGSPIRE DUNGEONS
AREAS 2-14 THROUGH 2-18

 = 5 feet



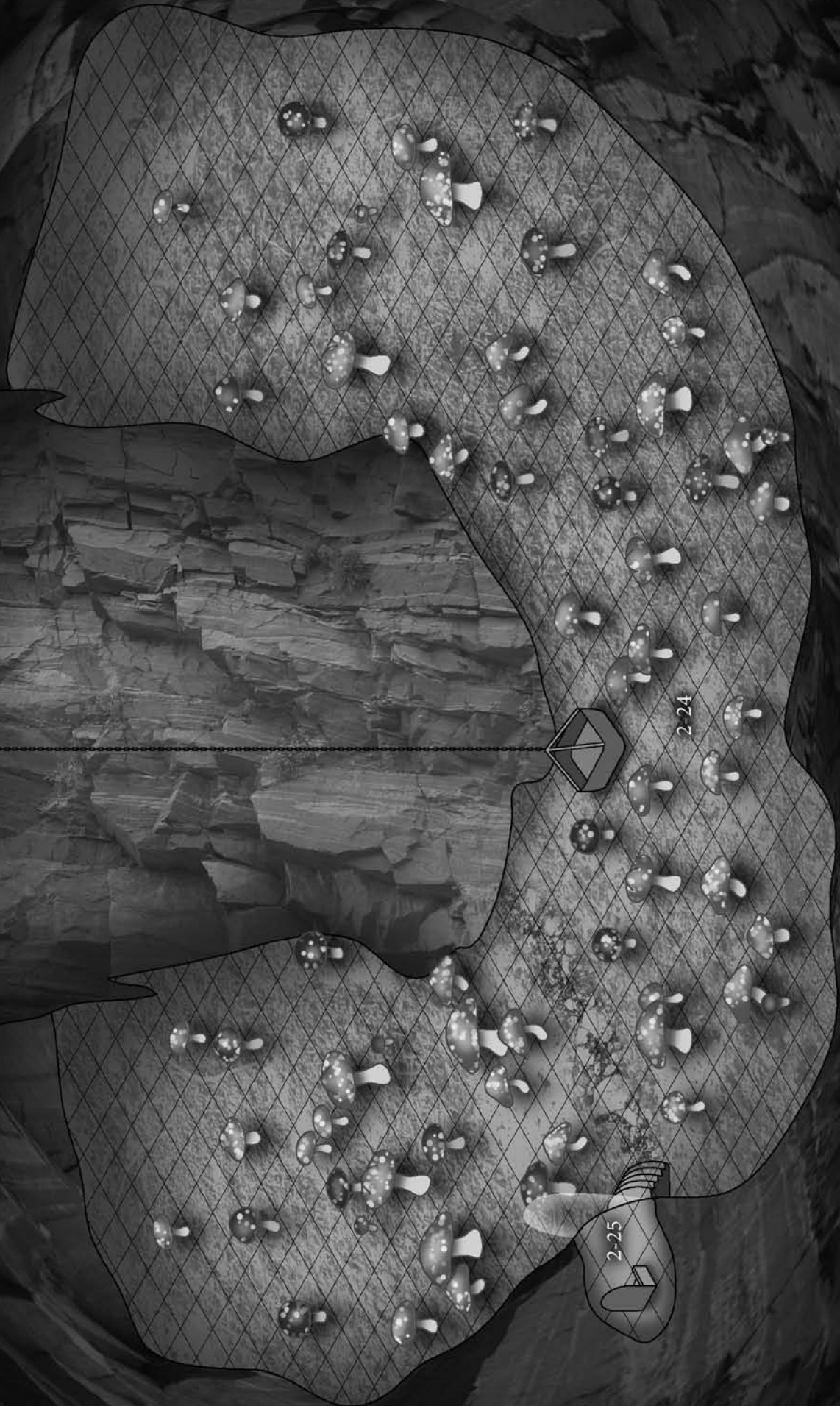


KINGSPIRE CAVERNS
AREAS 2-19 THROUGH 2-23

◇ = 5 feet

THE MUSHROOM FOREST
AREAS 2-24 AND 2-25

 = 5 feet



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