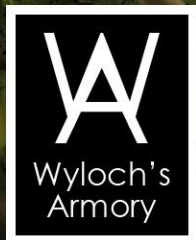


THE VAULT OF IPTIZ

AN ADVENTURE FOR CHARACTERS OF 5TH LEVEL

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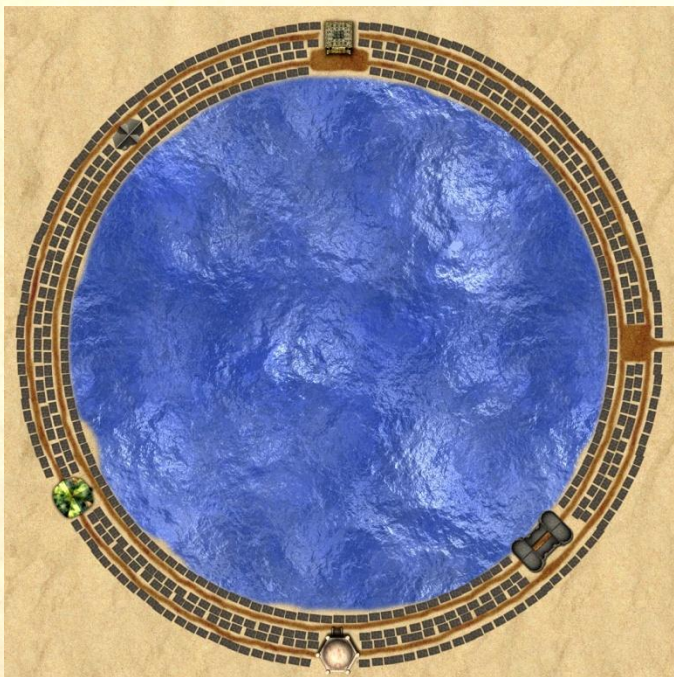
INTRODUCTION

Overview

As recorded history is concerned, there has always been a strange void in the night sky; a circular area curiously absent of any stars. The myth goes that there was a moon, but Selune stole it away, to give to another world on another plane. All that remains now is its shadow.

There is the well-known regional legend of Iptiz, a spirit naga whose greed was remarkable even among its own kind. Murderous raids and relentless pillaging yielded a hoard so valuable that the creature needed some place to store and protect it. Thus was the Vault conceived: an underground complex custom built to destroy anyone who is not its creator. Years ago, Iptiz's campaign of terror suddenly ended without precursor or cause. The location of the Vault was never discovered.

Until now. The ring-city of Sulindal, built upon the shores of a mile-wide desert oasis, has come under martial law by an invading army of yuan-ti. They intend to exploit the resources in this renowned city of knowledge to locate the third and final Beacon of Selune. Their ultimate motive is to activate the beacons and restore the missing moon, which will cataclysmically alter the tidal forces of a nearby ocean and flood the entire desert.



Adventure Hook

The party has either just come to Sulindal or was there when the yuan-ti army first showed up. The invaders were in possession of a map indicating the vault's entrance, but needed the university's scholars to decode it. The rumor is that they've succeeded, and have begun launching daily expeditions to the vault.

City leaders now hold secret meetings to figure out how to thwart the enemy's efforts. Somehow, they come into contact with the PCs and implore them for help.

- The scholars who did the decoding might be found and convinced to turn over what they remember.
- The party could spy on and follow a yuan-ti expedition group.
- The party could attempt to steal the map from the occupiers.

Dungeon Notes

Entrance

The entrance is many miles due north of Sulindal. At an arbitrary spot in the vast fields of sand, not near any notable rock or tree, there is a thick wooden trapdoor in the ground. It was buried under several feet of sand but now lies exposed due to the recent yuan-ti expeditions. Beneath is a spiral staircase going down 200 feet and ending at Room 1.

Dressing

The floors, walls and ceiling are a dark sandstone color, hewn smooth but with strength similar to stone.

Doors are made of sturdy thick wooden boards with iron banding. They are slicked with mold but still sturdy. They are unlocked unless otherwise noted. They are all spring-loaded to close and re-lock (if applicable), a design choice resulting from Iptiz's legendary paranoia and greed.

Random Encounters

It is not recommended to include random encounters in the vault. The adventure has been specifically designed to be run in a single four to six hour session.

THE VAULT OF IPTIZ

Room 1

- *Cold but humid.*
- *Musty odor with an acidic, organic taste to the air.*
- *A yuan-ti corpse is slumped in the corner opposite the western-most door.*

Corpse DC12 Investigation check reveals that the veins in its right arm seem burst and bruised. Its hand is scorched black.

Western Door Mechanically trapped (DC20 to detect, DC15 to disable). Any contact with the handle by a conductive material triggers an electric shock dealing 4d10 electricity damage plus another 1d10 electricity damage if the victim is wearing metal armor (save Constitution for half of all damage).

Room 2

- *The walls, floor, and ceiling of this corridor are a glossy smooth black marble.*
- *Ahead is a long pool of translucent green liquid, wall to wall.*
- *Suffocating odor of chlorine.*

Marble Perfectly smooth walls cannot be scaled, and a Climber's Kit is useless.

Pool The pool is 40 feet deep and contains acid. Immersion deals 2d10 acid damage per round.

Trap There is a two foot thick clear solid glass wall here, spanning floor to ceiling and wall to wall. A DC22 Perception check, a test projectile, or a long jump attempt will reveal its presence (but the last obviously doesn't end very well).

Secret Door See Room 4.

North Door The frame is adorned with humanoid skulls frozen in terror and a large topaz mounted at top center. There is no door, but a black and gold swirling ether which is totally impenetrable. Touching this ether or the topaz itself causes the topaz to flash brilliantly and cast *power word kill* on the perpetrator. The entire apparatus is immune to magic of 6th level and lower. See Room 7 for further detail.

Room 3

- *In the center of this room is a large bizarre sculpture of gray and red metal piping, branching, spiraling and zig-zagging.*
- *In the northwest corner is a large shimmering golden platform, with a glowing green arcane symbol pulsing at its center. Standing upon it glowering at you is a vicious looking being with horns, leathery wings, and red skin. Luckily, he seems to be surrounded by a 10' cube of translucent blue bars.*
- *A dead yuan-ti lying nearby, a pool of blood still growing outward from the body.*
- *An large chest in the corner.*

North Door Missing one board.

Chest The chest contains the Blade of the Braggart (see Appendix). It is locked (DC16 to pick) and magically trapped (DC20 to detect and disable). The lock is warded to cast *magic missile* at 5th level on any who would try to pick or open it without the proper key.

Platform The yuan-ti in Room 4 mistakenly activated the device and then managed to re-contain the cambion, though they lost their comrade in the process. The cambion is surrounded by a *forcecage* which currently has 30 minutes remaining.

Cambion The cambion (MM 36) is named Zoyra. See the Appendix for role-playing tips.

Device Certain sections of the metal framing can be twisted; these are the machine's controls. There are shallowly carved characters in the base of the device, engraved in Abyssal. These are the instructions on how to use the device. Any attempt to use the machine without first reading and understanding the instructions produces a random result.

d4	Result
1	The forcecage vanishes, if present
2	The forcecage activates or resets
3	Anything on the golden platform is teleported to the Nine Hells
4	A denizen of the Nine Hells is summoned to the golden platform

Room 4

- Half empty bookshelves line the walls, moldy gray wood.
- Equally decrepit table and chairs in the middle of the room.

Malisons Two yuan-ti malisons (MM 223) are in this room exploring the books. They have lost two comrades so far (in Rooms 1 and 3) and as a result might be willing to flee.

Wheel There is a gear-and-wheel type of device at location w. Turning it will pump all of the acid from Room 2 into Room 6.

Bookshelves An Investigation check will reveal (cumulatively):

Roll	Found
10	25 gp mirror in painted frame
13	A scroll of <i>grease</i>
16	Manifest of Selune (see Appendix)
19	A scroll of <i>continual flame</i>



Room 5

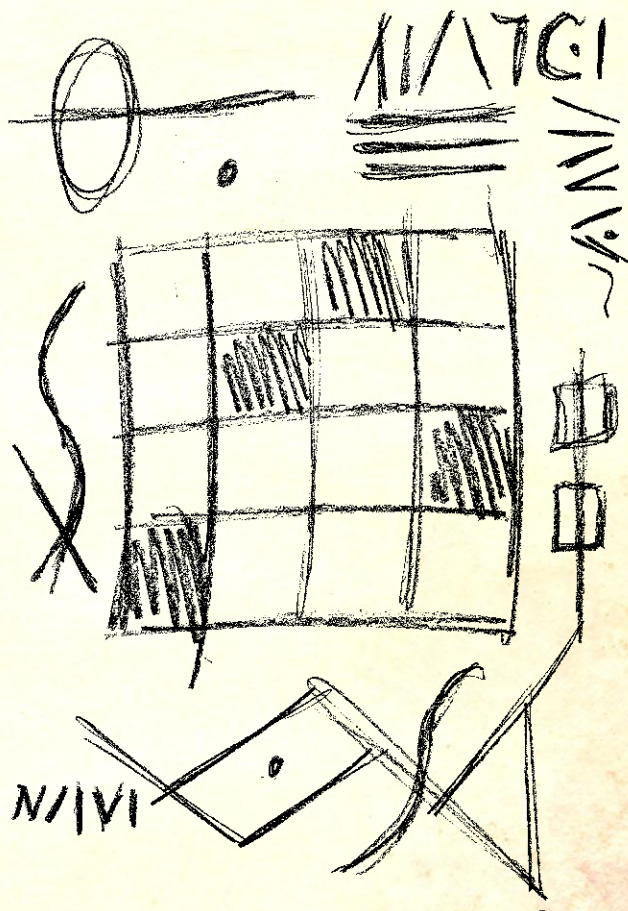
- Black scrawling completely covers the north wall.
- Two parallel tables chock full of bottles of varying sizes and shapes. Most are cracked or broken, their contents spilled to the floor and collected in the center of the room.

Bottles These were once potions but have long since lost their potency. A DC14 Arcana check reveals a two viable potions of *resistance (necrotic)* remaining somewhere in the lot. A DC18 Investigation check reveals a small brass key mixed in among the debris (it is used in Room 6).

Ooze The collection of spilled magical fluids has created a sod sleeper (see Appendix), which skitters toward the door as soon as it opens.

Secret Door A slab of the wall freely rotates in place. The seams are detectable on a DC16 Perception check.

Scrawling Iptiz's formula notes, written in Infernal. A DC12 Investigation check points out one particular figure:



Room 6

- The floor is 10 feet below, essentially making the entire room a pit.
- Along the west wall is a 10 foot platform at your current elevation upon which there is a statue of a formidable orc, great axe held overhead and threatening to crash down.
- A narrow 5 foot walkway chases the perimeter of this room, as if it were a gallery to display and view the statue.
- Mounted in the center of the eastern wall is a crystal green half-sphere.

Trap If the pit is not filled with acid, then it is filled with bones which animate into eight skeletons (MM 272) and attack as soon as any PC steps here (magical proximity trigger, DC18 to find).

Acid If the wheel in Room 4 was turned, the pit is filled with the acid from Room 2 and is now glowing and swirling, having dissolved and absorbed the evil essence of the skeletons. Each move action on the walkway triggers a pseudopod to rise and attack as a reaction to that move (+6 to hit, 1d6 acid + 1d12 necrotic damage, no save).

Statue The statue is the petrified orc warlord Guggzugg (MM 246, War Chief), kept as a prize by Iptiz. If un-petrified, Guggzugg completes his mighty swing, and then his rage collides with confusion. He might attack the nearest thing he sees. If he can be placated, see the Appendix for role-playing tips.

Half-Sphere Breaking this glass object causes Guggzugg to become un-petrified.

West Secret Door DC18 Perception to find a tiny keyhole in the wall. DC28 to pick, or use the proper key from Room 5. A panel of the wall slides upward.

North Secret Door A well-made hinged slab of wall can be detected on a DC20 Perception check. However, it is stuck in place and can only be unlocked via Room 8. This section of the wall itself is magical, and is immune to magic below 6th level.

Room 7

- The square chamber appears to be totally bare except for another handwheel mounted on the south wall.

Wheel If Room 6 is flooded with acid, turning this hand wheel pumps it back into Room 2.

Plates The floor is broken into 16 square plates, each five feet across. They are spring loaded. If all the black squares (see Room 5) are depressed while all the others are not, there is a loud click, all plates become stuck in place where they are, and the swirling ether in the door from Room 2 into Room 10 dissipates for one day, after which time the plates release and the portal re-seals itself.

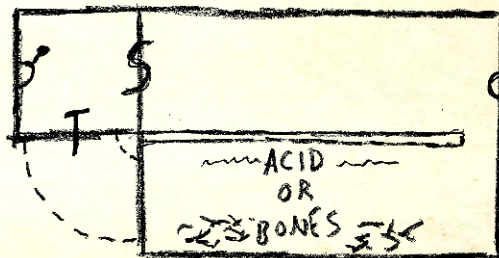
Room 8

- The floor of this small alcove is almost totally hidden by mounds of coins dotted with brilliant gemstones.
- From the west wall protrudes a metal lever, and below it is a bronze plaque with an inscription.

Door Enchanted with an *alarm*. If it is opened, Iptiz becomes aware and might begin patrolling between Room 9 and Room 10.

Treasure The treasure appears to be lavish, but the gemstones are colored glass, and the coins are painted tin. This lode is worth little, and is a decoy for the real vault.

Plaque The plaque says "Push Me," written in Common. It is clear that the lever can be either pushed or pulled. Doing either causes the floor to give way, spilling everything in the room down a curved chute which ends in the pit in Room 6 (if filled with acid, the treasure dissolves in 2 rounds). Pushing the plaque itself, as instructed, causes the north secret door in Room 6 to unlock and swing open.



Room 9

- *Built into the east and west walls of this room are two stone shrines. Upon the eastern pedestal an enormous round-cut clear gemstone, at least 6" across. Resting on the western pedestal is a thick tome, bound in aged blue leather.*
- *In the center of the room is an ornate pedestal. It holsters a dense mesh of bronze wires, chaotically woven into the shape of a perfect sphere, about 8 inches in diameter.*

Secret Door See Room 6.

Gemstone This is actually a Lumin Filter (see Appendix).

Tome This book belonged to an evil cleric who experimented in necromancy. Any living non-evil creature that touches the book receives 3d10 necrotic damage (save Constitution DC17 for half). It contains three scrolls (*animate dead*, *speak with dead*, and *raise dead*) which do not carry this ward once removed from the book.

Sphere The sphere is a Beacon of Selune (see Appendix).



Room 10

- *The air is pregnant with hatred and malcontent. Even the fires in the wall sconces seem to flicker in a timid manner, hesitating to spread their light.*
- *To the west side of the room is a black iron forge and a series of racks haphazardly covered with burlap tarps.*
- *To the east, a cruel archway leads to a corridor beyond.*
- *Against the far wall is a font of murky water, and in the center of the chamber is a large heap of dark gray bones.*

Forge The forge contains 2d4 fragments of unrefined jade crystal worth 20 gp each.

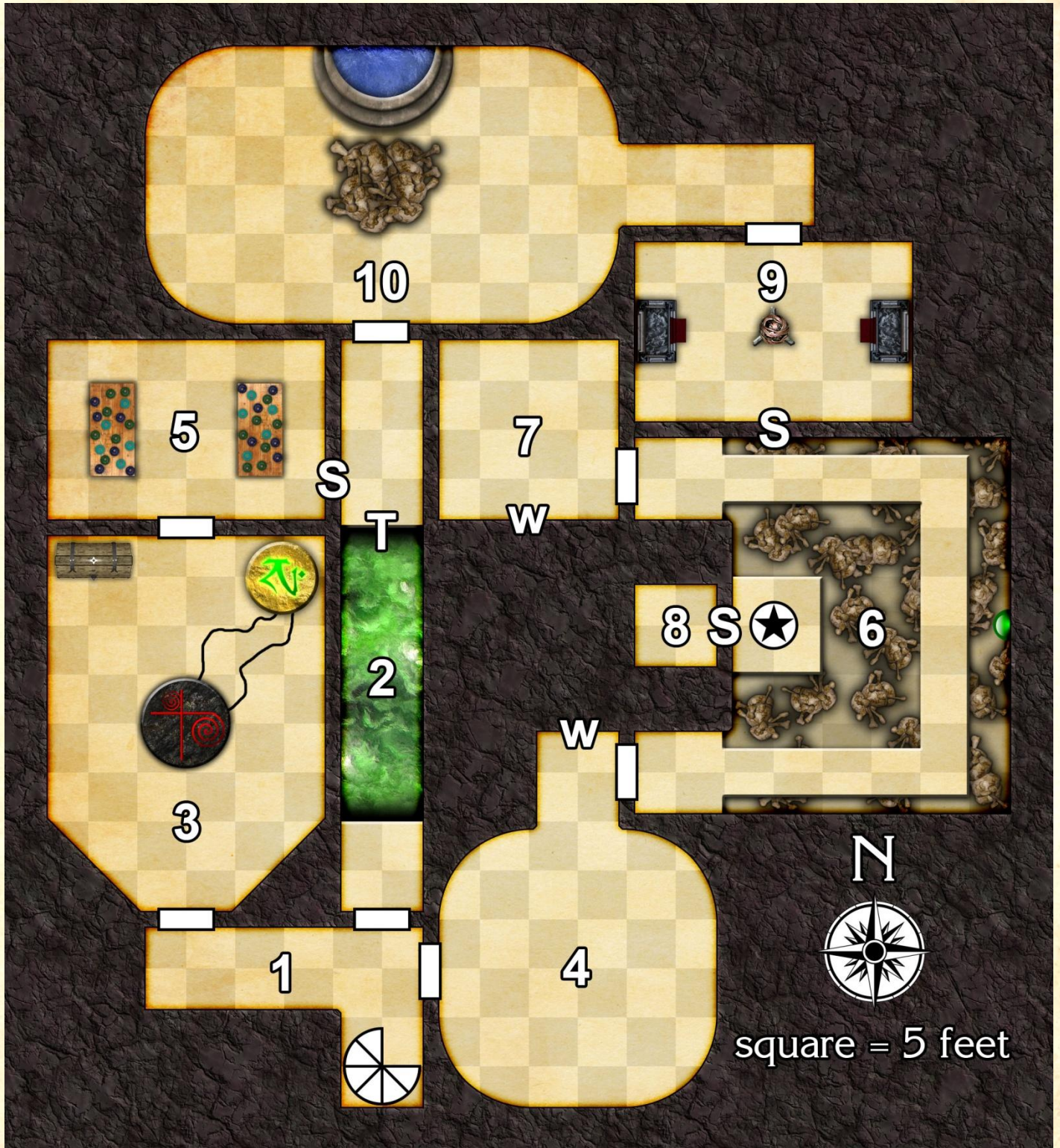
Racks Inside one of the tarps is a patch of yellow mold (DMG 105) ready to burst. Mounted on the wooden racks are three short swords, a long bow, a suit of scale mail, and a Sentinel Shield (DMG 199).

Pool This trough houses a water elemental (MM 125) which is under Iptiz's control. It does not manifest until summoned.

Bones Stepping beyond the door causes the bones to animate, fly together, and form into Iptiz in one round.

Iptiz See the Appendix for roleplaying tips. For combat stats, see MM 233 with the following adjustments: 90 hp, three third level spell slots instead of two, and its Bite attack is +7 to hit.

MAP



APPENDIX

New Monsters

Sod Sleeper CR 4 (1,100 XP)

The sod sleeper is essentially a living patch of grass sod. It will wrap itself around a victim and attempt to grow its vegetation, the roots burrowing for sustenance.

N Large ooze

AC 10 **HP**55 (10d10) **Speed** 40
Str16 (+3) **Dex**13 (+1) **Con** 10 (+0)
Int 1 (-5) **Wis** 6 (-2) **Cha** 1 (-5)

Damage Immunities acid, cold, lightning, slashing

Condition Immunities blinded, charmed, deafened, exhaustion, frightened, prone

Senses blindsight 60 ft., passive Perception 8

Languages None

Envelop *Melee Attack*: +6 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target large or smaller. *Hit*: No damage, but the victim becomes enveloped, totally immobilized, and unable to take any action. On the victim's turn, it may attempt a Strength contest against the sod sleeper to break free; failure means 4d8+4 piercing damage, and the sod sleeper gains hp equal to the damage dealt (it has no maximum).

Notable NPCs

Guggzugg

This orc barbarian was in the heat of battle defending his tribe from Iptiz. As he was about to deliver a death blow, the naga someone petrified him. He is now 100 years removed from his own time. When he learns of this, a jolt of sadness will be overcome by rage. He will be open to avenues of vengeance, and if the PCs play that angle, take it as an opportunity to have Guggzugg join the party. After Iptiz is defeated, he will feel without purpose, and strike out to explore this new world. He will consider joining the party permanently, if offered. Additionally, the blacksmith in the Sulindal bazaar is a descendant of Guggzugg.

Zoyra

He will play at rewarding the PCs for freeing him. However, as soon as he is freed, he will most likely insult their trusting nature and attack, blaming the PCs for the actions of all the middling races of the material plane. His explanation for the dead yuan-ti currently bleeding out on the floor nearby is a sardonic: "he tripped." In other words, he knows that the PCs know that he's evil. One angle for securing his allegiance would be to convince him that his stature in the Nine Hells could be improved by destroying a naga; he will join the party but immediately turn on them once Iptiz is destroyed, or even better, during that battle.

Iptiz

This bone naga was a spirit naga back in life. Many years ago, a group of hedge wizards performed a ritual to halt its regenerative ability, and though it slew them, it has been stuck in this state ever since, searching for a solution. Its voice sounds like paper being ripped. It will offer to spare the party's lives if they can undo the ward. If they offer to do so, this could serve as the basis for another adventure; Iptiz will keep at least one party member hostage as collateral. Or, if they decline, it will summon up the water elemental and attack with extreme prejudice. Alternatively, perhaps the yuan-ti have already been through here and somehow claimed the beacon in which case Iptiz offers a reward for its retrieval. This villain has no sense of humor, and is generally straightforward - it feels too superior and too capable to ever need to stoop so low as to bluff.

New Magic Items

Beacon of Selune

Wondrous item, artifact

This is a tangle of thick bronze wires, chaotically woven into the general shape of an 8" sphere. There are three in existence, and they grow colder to the touch the nearer they are to their sisters. If all three are touching, and are in a the same pool of water, they will activate in a brilliant sequence of levitation, spinning, and flashing white light before being jettisoned toward the heavens. This will initiate the Great Waxing.

Blade of the Braggart

Weapon, rare

This is a short sword whose solid platinum hilt is lavishly - nay, garishly adorned with sapphires, emeralds, and rubies. It functions as a magical short sword -1, but is a magic weapon nonetheless. While it is wielded, its user has advantage on all d20 rolls pertaining to Charisma, and cannot be intimidated or frightened.

Lumin Filter

Wondrous item, uncommon

This is a large, clear crystal prism which at first glance appears to be a massive round-cut diamond. To activate it, strong light (i.e. more than ambient sunlight) must be shone through it, such as a lit torch, or even the *light* spell. When activated, the prism fractures the light passing through it, casting *color spray* at 3rd level. It cannot be activated again until the next dawn.

Manifest of Selune

Wondrous item, artifact

This unique book is not actually magical, but does contain a written history of the lost moon as well the arcane instructions needed to activate the Beacons. It confirms the legend that Selune did remove a moon from the sky to balance both this world and another. It also describes the Great Waxing, in which the lost moon is restored to its place in the sky, drastically altering the tidal forces of the world and flooding entire nations.

