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DASTOW GAMES

THE

PRISTINE

CITY



*An adventure compatible with 5th edition DUNGEONS & DRAGONS
for 5th- to 7th-level characters*

A perfect, untouched city has been discovered deep underground—a city created to honor a legendary dwarven clan. No one lives there...but as you'll learn, that doesn't mean it's deserted. Can you explore the city on behalf of the dwarves, or will you too become part of its buried history?

BY STACEY JANSSEN AND DAVID NOONAN



THE PRISTINE CITY

A delve into mysterious dwarven ruins,
suitable for the Forgotten Realms™ setting
or a world of your own design

by DASTOW Games
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Introduction

When an influential and infamous dwarven clan went missing, ancient dwarven culture saw it as a sign to get their act together. Over time, the clan's home city fell to ruin, and the dwarves decided to tear down the old and build up something new—something more befitting of the prestigious Thunderaxe clan. A beautiful place made of crystal and alabaster, the city was made complete with the addition of an artificial sun in an artificial sky. Despite the hopes of many, however, it didn't magically bring the Thunderaxes back. Disappointment and resentment eventually led to the city being closed off—it, and the clan meant to live there, fell into memory and legend.

Recently, tunnelers found the city by accident, and exploring it is all anyone talks about. Once inside, though, they find quite a surprise—the city is falling down around them! They'll have to meet their objectives and get back out before the city collapses, or they may not see a real sky again.

This adventure is designed for characters levels 5–7.

Adventure Synopsis

Players enter the scene as debate over what to do about the Pristine City comes to a close. The chieftain of Dun Lodar hires the players to explore the city, but from their first step on this fabled ground, their hopes of a simple dungeon run are dashed—the ground literally cracks beneath their feet.

It shouldn't take the players long to realize that everything they do contributes to the destruction of the city (see *City Collapse* for specifics). They'll need to explore the city thoroughly and achieve any objectives before the city collapses on them.

This is not a linear adventure—players can explore the neighborhoods in the city organically, in any order. Each encounter location is marked on the map.

Once inside the city, players start exploring the buildings by the entrance, including the library, which they'll quickly realize houses almost nothing but blank volumes. Those books that aren't blank aren't exactly filled with knowledge.

The Temple District presents many interesting obstacles, including the temple itself and the tall clock tower, which speeds up as the city crumbles down.

Beneath the temple, players find the tombs of the Thunderaxe clan. These tombs predate the Pristine City, and hold the remains of generations of Thunderaxes past—or they certainly did before

the foul scum and vermin found their way inside. Now the graves have been destroyed, the bodies desecrated, and the entire place turned upside down. But the tombs have plenty to teach—both of Thunderaxe past and future.

The Clan Elderhame neighborhood has many interesting spots designed to please and entertain the elders of the Thunderaxe clan. Among these include the home of the clan leader as well as the clan meeting area. Players can also visit the community center.

Paragon Plaza is a special place—or, it was meant to be. Designed with six statues that grant blessings with the recitation of a password and *melody crystals* that play lovely sounds, this was one of the first sections of the city to see completion—they needed those investing in the project to see progress and get an idea of what the end-product city would be. Once the contractor was able to show off the plaza and get the appropriate “ooo”s and “ah”s from the appropriate people, she promptly forgot about it.

In the Hall of Shieldmaidens, the dwarves prepared a feast for the Thunderaxe clan upon their return. The building is equal parts banquet hall and museum, with chambers dedicated to the Thunderaxes' greatest victories—and even a chamber that holds their old enemies in suspended animation.

If, during the course of the adventure, the players end up raising the collapse score to 100, the Demon Dispossession Event immediately triggers. A series of demon attacks come toward the PCs—they start underpowered, but quickly escalate until they completely overwhelm the PCs. Once this event triggers, the city is lost. The last encounter for this event cannot be defeated—the PCs *must*

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flee back to the comfort of Dun Lodar, where they'll face an unhappy community—but talking to the mayor will eventually mitigate some of that.

Adventure Background

The Thunderaxe clan went missing centuries ago. A clan of prestige and power, they shook the world when they disappeared, leaving not so much as a clue behind.

Some took this disappearance as a sign—strife and argument plagued the dwarven clans in this part of the world, and the Thunderaxes often seemed to be the only thing holding them together. This noble clan, in all their wisdom, had left them so they might learn to solve their own problems. The Thunderaxe city eventually fell into disrepair. With no one to watch over and care for it, time did as time does. Those eager to see the clan return—now the children of children to those who actually knew them—decided to tear down the old city and build up something new. Something better.

Something perfect.

Unfortunately, not everyone involved in the project held the same ideals. The architect, Whurya Granitehewer, thought the idea was silly, but she still gave the project her all. The same could not be said of the contractor, Rerna Foespoke. Cutting corners in every possible place, she was more concerned with lining her own pockets than seeing the Thunderaxes with a well-constructed home upon their return. Eventually, this city was walled off and forgotten about, soon to be nothing more than the stuff of legends.

The Pristine City and the Forgotten Realms

First, real talk: We designed “The Pristine City” to be easy to add to any campaign world, and we did so before we had the opportunity to set it in the Forgotten Realms. The Realms is a big place, so it's easy to find a home for the events of this adventure—but this isn't an adventure deeply rooted in Realms lore, nor does it feature prominent Realms personalities and factions.

If you're playing in the Forgotten Realms, place Dun Lodar in the Underdark beneath the Ruatrym Mountains in the Silver Marches. It's several days' travel northwest of Citadel Adbar. Merchant caravans connect Dun Lodar to the citadel, but Dun Lodar is otherwise of minor importance, rarely given a second thought by shield dwarves unless they have relatives there.

Make some minor alterations to the NPCs: change Sibda the Mighty to King Harbromm, and Rilug the Fearless becomes Obould Many-Arrows or a descendant, depending on where you are in the Realms timeline. Instead of Annabella, use Sharindlar (CG dwarf goddess of healing and mercy). Solomon Graves is based in Everlund, and Casaem has a tower on the edge of the Anauroch desert to the east.

Beyond that, alter this adventure as you see fit. You know your table and your world better than anyone, after all.

It wasn't until tunnelers broke through, finding the city by sheer accident, that most modern folk even thought of it. Then, naturally, came the debates about what to do with it. This is where the PCs come in.

NPCs Interested in the Pristine City

We've provided “adventure hook” backgrounds for the following NPCs beyond Dun Lodar. Use them to get the PCs to Dun Lodar in the first place, or otherwise adapt them for your ongoing campaign.

Sibda the Mighty—Dwarf Queen

Sibda is nothing if not practical, and she realizes that while the Pristine City is a great prize, it's not one the dwarves can successfully preserve. While the city is doomed, Sibda is keen to get key relics out of the city before it collapses. A dozen key relics are listed in various encounters; the more the PCs can take with them when they flee the city, the better.

Rilug the Fearless

The imminent destruction of a dwarven city is just what Rilug the Fearless wants to hear. Specifically, the well-known orc commander wants to recover *Gravenhelm*, a helmet worn by an orc champion of centuries past and taken by the dwarves (along with the champion's head) as a trophy. *Gravenhelm*, located in area H7, is a treasure of deep significance—one that Rilug desperately wants a new orc champion to wear.

Annabella—Demigoddess of Light and Healing

Annabella's light is said to illuminate the dark corners of the world—and mile-deep caverns certainly qualify as “dark.” One tangible thing Annabella wishes to extract from the Pristine City is the “Erdlieder Saga,” a sonorous tone-poem the dwarves of a bygone age performed in the Hall of Voices (area H5). She would love to recover the song and have it performed in the cathedral of a major city, and she's undeterred by the fact that no dwarf alive knows the words or the tune.

Solomon Graves—“The Shadow”

An entire dwarven city to plunder, with a cavern collapse to cover one's tracks? Sounds perfect for

the secretive man known as the Shadow. In this case, he's content to let the PCs carry off as much of the Pristine City's wealth as possible, but he takes great glee in making sure the PCs don't keep their wealth.

The Shadow's chief agent is Reukall, the self-styled "merchant prince of Dun Lodar." Reukall will happily exchange the treasures of the Pristine City for more portable wealth and some minor magic items (see the "Dun Lodar" section for more information). Reukall has a darker motive, however: He's looking for agents on behalf of his master, the Shadow. Anyone willing to loot the treasures of a dwarven city in its final hours might be willing to abscond with other treasures as well...

Casaem Lightseer—Feared Wizard

In times past, generations of wizards were known to rack up victories with a mysterious flaming gauntlet called *Flamehand*, fashioned by the Thunderaxe clan. The gauntlet is lost to history, but the plans for it sit on the shelves of the Pristine City's library—if the many legends surrounding both the city and the mysterious gauntlet are to be believed.

Casaem, ever-interested in the destructive power of fire, wants those plans for...nothing nefarious at all. Obviously.

Initial Explorations

This city was built with the best of intentions—and the most beautiful of materials. While beautiful, however, these materials weren't the strongest. Carved crystal and alabaster made the city sparkle, but over time they also made it delicate. Everything the players do adds to the city's collapse score (see *City Collapse* for specifics). Whether they'll be able to get everything they're after inside the city and get back out in time depends largely on them and their treatment of both magic and the city itself.

Adventure Setup

The PCs begin in the underground dwarven settlement of Dun Lodar—what brings them there is up to you. One suggestion is to choose one or more NPCs from the previous page and work them into your campaign a bit before you intend to send your

Key Relics for Sibda the Mighty

Redhammer Loom: This ancient loom was passed down through the Redhammer family, one generation to the next, since time immemorable. When the Pristine City was built, it was placed inside, then forgotten. *This relic is in the community center (area CE7) in the Clan Elderhame neighborhood.*

Dwarf King Statue: Small enough to fit on a table, this statue commands an unusual presence. Sculpted to resemble the last dwarf king, this relic has some heft to it. Exactly when it was made is unsure, but it has been lost for quite some time. *This relic is in the banquet hall (area CE5) in the Clan Elderhame neighborhood.*

Jar of the Ages: Supposedly made during the Ravanbrach War (which originally established the Thunderaxe clan), this jar is said to house the souls of every Thunderaxe clan leader. *This relic is in City Hall (area TD5) in the Temple District neighborhood.*

Anvil of the Desert: This anvil is always warm to the touch and always perfectly flat. The anvil weighs 75 pounds and is an unwieldy burden. *This relic is by the statue of Sigrun (area P3) in Paragon Plaza.*

Kadisha's Mold: This mold for spear points cures the metal in a matter of minutes, enabling dwarven smiths to produce weapons far faster than with conventional tools. *This relic is in the weapon shop (area CE13) in the Clan Elderhame neighborhood.*

The Myrdikka Bas-Relief: This carved art, taking up a 15-foot section of wall, depicts a dwarven caravan descending into a vast network of caves. Details include weeping children, advance scouts fighting goblins, overburdened carts, and what is believed to be the only surviving graven image of the dwarven monarch, Myrdikka the Lightbringer. *It takes 45 minutes to remove the five panels from the wall in the Clan Leader's Home (area CE1), and each panel weighs 50 pounds.*

Shieldmaidens' Banner: The Thunderaxe shieldmaidens, an elite force of shock troopers, carried this banner into battle at Kharandor Bridge centuries ago. *The banner is part of the Shieldmaiden Monument (area H3) in Shieldmaiden Hall.*

Wheel of Gardauth: This great grindstone has been carved with the names of the Anvilsparran chieftains for centuries. The Anvilspars later married into the Thunderaxe clan when they lived on the surface, so the stone disc has sentimental significance for dwarves who long to explore the upper world. The wheel weighs about 200 pounds, so getting it back to Dun Lodar may pose a challenge. *This relic is in the same courtyard as the statue of Tuva (area P8) in Paragon Plaza.*

Urn of Lost Rikkenhall: This urn holds ashes from the burnt rubble of Rikkenhall, an ancient dwarven fortress destroyed by the orcs centuries ago. The dwarves kept some ashes in this ceremonial urn and hope to sprinkle them on the foundation of a "new Rikkenhall" built at the site of the old fortress. *This relic is in the tomb antechamber (area TO1).*

Druhella's Dowsing Rod: The dwarves believe the great explorer Druhella used this rod to find the underground spring that supplies the Pristine City with fresh water. *This relic is in the school (area TD3) in the Temple District neighborhood.*

Figurehead of Beren: Ages ago, the dwarves lived near the ocean and fished in great longboats. Those days are long gone, but the dwarves saved a figurehead depicting a dragon from one of those longboats to remind themselves of their nautical heritage. *This relic hangs from the ceiling in the Hall of Engines (area H8) in Shieldmaiden Hall, its eyes glowing.*

Toll of the Ceaseless Seasons: This ironbound tome contains genealogical records of important dwarven families, including most of the important clans in Dun Lodar. *This relic is in the main library (area IE6) in the Lantern District.*

players to the Pristine City. They each have their own reasons for wanting someone to explore it.

Shortly after the PCs arrive, a servant finds them and invites them to Dun Lodar's great hall, where three dwarves await them in a small office: Mari Fardul, head of the local mining syndicate; Rotu Komrad, Dun Lodar's high priest; and Tali Bazaast, the settlement chieftain.

▶ The chieftain's office is surrounded on three walls by bookshelves. Most shelves hold books, though some hold personal effects, photos, and so on.

▶ A sturdy wooden desk and two chairs sit in the middle of the room.

▶ The chieftain is an older dwarf female, hair only beginning to gray at the temples. She has a golden gavel hanging on a heavy chain around her neck. To her right is a younger dwarf female in gray work garb and an older dwarf male in a finely embroidered tunic.

▶ Five dogs of varying sizes sit obediently nearby.

▶ Two tall candelabras stand behind the mayor's desk.

Where's the Readaloud Text?

We're trying something a little different with this adventure: a descriptor box that takes the place of the readaloud text that's been commonplace in adventures for decades. Why get rid of the readaloud box? Because it turns conversation into oration.

Those readaloud boxes rose to prominence in *DUNGEONS & DRAGONS* adventures originally written for multiple groups to play in tournaments at game conventions. The tournaments had a competitive aspect, and players were scored on how efficiently and cleverly they traversed the dungeon. In an effort to make things "fair," the adventure instructed dungeon masters to read room descriptions verbatim so no table would get an unfair advantage or disadvantage. That style of play is rare nowadays, yet readaloud text remains a vestige of those bygone days.

If you observe a table playing an adventure with readaloud text, watch how the players react. We've seen the same pattern at countless conventions: players' eyes glaze over after the first sentence and the GM winds up having to repeat it all anyway. Listening comprehension plummets around the table as players must simultaneously listen, imagine the scene, and anticipate their characters' actions.

Even worse, the flow of the game changes dramatically. Since the dawn of the hobby, roleplaying games have had conversations at their heart. Even the most ordinary resolution of an attack is a back-and-forth conversation between the GM and the player. Whether players are scheming among themselves or peppering the GM with questions, the game sounds like a conversation.

The readaloud box turns that conversation into oration: a canned speech you recite to your players. Even if you ad-lib during the speech, it still represents a break in the conversation at the heart of the game. So, again, we're replacing it with a descriptor box: a set of key elements present (and usually visible) at the start of the encounter. Weave these elements into a brief impromptu description, then encourage your players to ask questions; restore the conversation, in other words. The descriptor box ensures you don't forget anything important, but it gets you out of the oration business.

Mari speaks first. "Dun Lodar needs your help. Our miners recently breached an immense cavern—a cavern that contains a wondrous city we thought lost to the ages. We've always called it the Pristine City."

Rotu interrupts: "And it should remain pristine! For the record, this is folly, and I want no part of it. No true dwarf of Dun Lodar would enter the cavern before the Thunderaxe clan returns."

The PCs might interrupt with questions at this point. If they do, see the suggested answers below. Otherwise, Tali gestures at the other two dwarves. "And that, travelers, is my dilemma. To solve it—and to get these two out of my hall—I'll pay stacks of gold for you to explore the city."

At this point, the PCs almost certainly have questions, which the three dwarves gladly answer.

How much gold? Tali answers this one: "We'll pay three thousand gold pieces if you fully explore the Pristine City. A quarter of it up front." The PCs can bargain at this point, especially if they have relevant backgrounds. Let the conversation flow naturally, but convincing the dwarves to part with a greater percentage of the money in advance is generally a DC 15 Charisma (Persuasion) check, and getting up to 500 more gp overall is a DC 20 Charisma (Persuasion) check.

What do you mean by "fully explore?" Tali again: "We'd like a basic map and a report on the city's condition: what's intact, what's in disrepair, that sort of thing. If anything...hostile...is in the city, we'd want to know about that, too."

Why us? Mari answers before the other two can speak: "Because Rotu here"—she glares at him—"has threatened a lifetime shunning for any dwarf of Dun Lodar who so much as sets foot inside the cavern." She pauses and smiles triumphantly. "But even he must admit there's no ancient pledge forbidding outsiders from doing so."

What's the Pristine City's history? Rotu steps forward: "Our ancestors built the Pristine City centuries ago to honor the greatest among us: the Thunderaxe clan. We pledged that no one"—he glares at Mari—"would enter the city until the Thunderaxes return."

The Thunderaxe clan? Rotu's voice quavers: "They were the best among us, fearsome in battle and honorable in peace. They disappeared into a magical rift, marching off on a grand crusade they said no other clan could handle." He frowns. "We were hoping that if we found the Pristine City, we'd find the Thunderaxes living there. But that doesn't seem to be the case."

How do you "lose" a huge cavern with a city inside it? Mari answers: "Building the Pristine City

nearly bankrupted our ancestors when they should have been worried about the orc barbarians at Dun Lodar's gates. Those orcs broke through, sacked Dun Lodar, and it was eighty years before we were able to reclaim it. Few excavation records survived the orc looting, and frankly we younger dwarves thought the whole thing was just folklore."

How did you rediscover it? Mari shrugs: "A routine exploratory dig on the outskirts of the city. I've unearthed a lot of strange things, but never a city of white marble with its own artificial sun." She pauses. "I'll note for the record that technically the entire Pristine City is covered by our mining claim." This infuriates Rotu and triggers a shouting match that Tali ends only by pounding the ceremonial gavel she wears around her neck.

Once everyone calms down, Tali suggests the PCs spend the rest of the day obtaining provisions in Dun Lodar and entering the Pristine City the following morning. The other dwarves leave (Mari smirking, Rotu in a huff), and Tali assigns a servant to act as a guide for the PCs during their time in Dun Lodar. The servant arranges comfortable quarters at Fionna's inn and otherwise is at the PCs' beck and call for the rest of the day.

Dun Lodar

Sometimes during an adventure, the best thing you can do is retreat to a safe place. Maybe you're out of health potions. Maybe your cleric died, and you need to find someone who can resurrect the dead. In any case, this section can guide you should your party head back to Dun Lodar. See *City Collapse* for how the city fares in your absence.

Key NPCs in Dun Lodar include:

Fionna Ovest: *pub owner*

Fionna dislikes people. She constantly tries to close early, doing whatever it takes short of actually kicking people out. The busier the pub is, the grumpier she is about it.

Fionna also runs an inn across the street from the pub, offering rooms to Reukall's caravan drivers and the few visitors Dun Lodar sees. She regards visitors as interruptions to her staff's housekeeping schedules and is always asking, "When can I get the room back?"

The rooms themselves are quiet and clean. Individual rooms cost 5 sp per night, and a six-person suite is 4 gp.

Garer Jardum: *general shopkeeper*

Garer is overly concerned about not cheating people out of their money—to an obsessive degree. He counts and recounts change to make sure, and is more likely to undercharge and overpay.

Business is actually not going very well.

Garer offers all general goods, weapons, and armor in the Trade Goods, Adventuring Gear, Weapons, and Armor tables in Chapter 5 of the *Player's Handbook* with a price of 100 gp or less. In addition, he has the special items listed in the sidebar for sale.

Rotu Komrad: *high priest*

Rotu is on the grumpy side. He hates being bothered, and if anyone comes to him looking for healing or other assistance, he'll loudly proclaim that he's not a "caster-for-hire"—but then he'll mention a "donation to the faith" that's functionally the same thing.

Beyond his ordinary grumpiness, he's deeply torn by the discovery of the Pristine City. On the

Fionna's Menu

Warm bread and dwarven cheese plate	9 cp
Spiced mushroom platter	3 sp
Goat and carrot stew	1 sp
Sausage dumplings	3 sp
Family-recipe hotcakes	3 sp
Braised pork cutlets	7 sp
Slow-cooked boar (serves six)	8 gp
Mushroom tea	4 cp
"Vintage" beer	5 cp
Lodar ale	1 sp
Beard-curler stout	5 sp
Drakeblood brandy	4 gp
Elven wine (bottle)	5 gp
Laborer's rations, packaged to go	5 sp

Garer's Goods

Illustrated dwarven playing cards	1 gp
Illustrated dwarven playing cards, subtly marked	45 gp
Illuminated <i>Little Barthna</i> book	5 gp
Canary	2 gp
Canary trained to sing; not trained to stop	6 gp
Birdcage	4 gp
Dwarven bugle	5 gp
Sheaf of blank parchment	1 gp
Surveyor's tools	10 gp
Transit (includes spyglass)	50 gp
Handcart or wheelbarrow	10 gp
Wagon	20 gp
Excavation tools	5 gp

one hand, Rotu is appalled outsiders are treading in a place so sacred to him. On the other hand, he spent his whole life venerating the Thunderaxe clan and is desperate to learn their fate, so he wants any clues the PCs discover.

If the PCs interrupt his prayers, Rotu raises the suggested donation amount just to make them go away. If the PCs are persistent, though, he'll come around and give his visitors the assistance they need according to the table below. This typically requires a DC 15 Charisma (Persuasion) or DC 20 Charisma (Intimidation) check. He won't be any happier about it, though.

Rotu is functionally a 9th-level cleric and can cast *raise dead*. He won't advertise this fact, and he'll flat-out refuse if asked unless the PCs can: a) make a sizeable donation to the faith, including the material components for the spell; b) demonstrate they've treated the city with respect; and c) convince Rotu they're the best hope of finding out more about the lost Thunderaxe clan.

Tali Bazaast: *chieftain*

Tali is obsessed with dogs. She owns five dogs

of varying sizes, all well trained. Any time you meet with her, the dogs are always sitting nearby, watching closely. Tali is stern and stone-faced with just about everyone, but she's kind and gentle with her dogs always.

If the party heads back to the chieftain because they discovered the city is collapsing, she'll be furious the PCs were so careless after being given such an important task. If the PCs can convince her the city is merely brittle and old, she'll advise them to hurry up and find out what they can before the whole thing collapses.

Tali is also the de facto face of law enforcement in Dun Lodar. If the PCs misbehave in Fionna's pub or otherwise come into contact with the long arm of the law, Tali acts police, judge, and jury.

Mari Fardul: *in charge of tunneling expedition*

Mari is quite irritated about her big project being put on hold. To keep digging, even in different directions, she has to get approval from the chieftain, and *she* has already said that all tunneling is halted until the Pristine City has been thoroughly explored. So basically, you're holding up her work.

Most of Mari's laborers are unwilling to risk the ire (and shunning) from the rest of the community by entering the Pristine City, but triple wages (6 gp per laborer per day) and the promise of discretion will convince up to a dozen dwarves to accompany the PCs on their explorations. The laborers flee when faced with combat or wholesale collapse damage, but they'll act as porters and excavators without complaint.

Reukall: *self-styled "merchant prince of Dun Lodar"*

Reukall runs the caravans connecting Dun Lodar's exports (mostly ingots and finished metal goods) to the surface world. He has an eye for a bargain, and he always has room on his wagons for "dwarven antiquities" and "ancient rarities" pulled from places like the Pristine City. If the PCs walk off with the city's wealth, Reukall purchases it, no questions asked. (Well, he'll ask questions, but only to assess an item's worth. He has no ethical objections to trafficking in antiquities.)

Reukall happily pays gold for objects from the Pristine City, but he'll also offer some rarities from his "private stock" in exchange.

Because many of his goods come from the surface world, Reukall's private stock is limited to 1d6 of each item in the table, unless otherwise noted. Reukall can get resupplied with another 1d6 items, but it takes 48 hours to do so.

Rotu's Spellcasting

<i>Cure wounds</i> (5d8+4)	500 gp
<i>Divination</i>	400 gp
<i>Greater Restoration</i>	750 gp
<i>Commune</i> (3 yes/no questions)	600 gp, 1 min.
<i>Raise dead</i> (see Rotu's description)	1,500 gp, 1 hour

Reukall's Goods

<i>Potion of healing</i>	50 gp
<i>Potion of greater healing</i>	300 gp
<i>Potion of resistance</i>	300 gp
<i>Potion of giant strength</i> (hill)	300 gp
<i>Potion of giant strength</i> (stone)	750 gp
<i>Potion of heroism</i>	750 gp
<i>Potion of superior healing</i>	750 gp
Animated quill that takes dictation	20 gp
Glowing mushroom (illuminates as a torch)	100 gp
Lore bottle with a sarcastic-but-ill-informed spirit	150 gp
Ore cart that rolls forward with the slightest push	400 gp
Goggles that assess ore deposits	150 gp
Hammer once owned by Bellura, the noted dwarven smith	425 gp
Dwarven playing cards that shuffle themselves	100 gp
Dwarven coin that always lands on "heads"	50 gp

Common City Elements

Some features of the Pristine City remain the same no matter where the PCs go.

Day/Night Cycle

When the players first enter the city, they'll notice the artificial sun shining down on them. It provides twelve hours of daylight before setting at 6 p.m. to provide twelve hours of night. As the city starts to collapse, however, the cycle speeds up (see City Collapse). When the city reaches minor collapse (35 points), the cycle doubles its speed, providing six hours of daylight and six hours of night. At medium collapse (70 points), the cycle doubles again for three daylight hours and three hours of darkness per cycle. Once the city hits heavy collapse, the cycle doubles a final time, providing one-and-a-half light hours for every one-and-a-half dark hours.

Lighting

Whenever the artificial sun is up, all outside areas have bright light. When it's down, many areas of the city are lined with magical streetlamps casting dim lighting, but some are simply dark. Most interiors are lit with magical sconces, which provide dim lighting, unless otherwise stated.

Walls

The buildings within the Pristine City were made to be beautiful. While the designers had hoped they would also stand the test of time, they hadn't counted on just how much time would go by. Constructed from alabaster marble and carved crystal, the walls and buildings of the city are slick and brittle, making them not only difficult to climb, but likely to collapse should you manage. The walls take a DC 15 Strength check to burst through (see City Collapse) or a DC 20 Dexterity (Acrobatics) check to climb. A typical wall has AC 13 and 20 hit points.

If players successfully climb the wall, roll a d6 for each player on the wall (or roof) each turn they remain there. A result of 5 or 6 for each player means the wall holds steady. Even one result below 5, however, brings the entire wall down.

Doors

The doors around the city are a bit sturdier, being made of wood, but that doesn't help the buildings any. The doors take a DC 18 Strength check to break down.

Most doors are a bit low by human standards, but they don't hamper movement overall. You may wish to occasionally roleplay the low doors with the excessively tall members of your party.

Roofs

A city with an artificial sun has no need to worry about weather. As such, some non-residential buildings lack roofs completely. Climbing one of these buildings in an attempt to get onto the roof results in a DC 15 Dexterity (Acrobatics) check to keep the player's balance and stay atop the wall.

The roofs that do exist are made from the thinnest, cheapest material available—again, because they wouldn't have to contend with actual weather. Climbing up onto these roofs causes them to immediately collapse beneath the weight of any creature who's fighting or moving faster than a careful creep.

Creatures who fall through a roof into a building interior (or off the side of a building) take falling damage of 1d6 per 10 feet fallen. Unless otherwise specified, buildings within the city are (1d4+1) x 10 feet tall.



Where Are the Thunderaxes?

Generations ago, the Thunderaxes were feared. They presented themselves as diplomatic and humble, when the truth was opposite. Those who didn't often come in direct contact with the clan believed the façade; those who did knew better.

These dueling perceptions of the clan often led to squabbling among those who find squabbling interesting, and powerful forces eventually took notice.

An archsorcerer named Deflyn visited the clan in disguise to see what sorts of shenanigans they were really getting up to. When he saw the true nature of their dealings, he was so disheartened he ended up laying a trap—one they'd never need worry about if only they acted out what they claimed. Instead, of course, they walked straight into it.

An extraplanar rift opened, and the clan was pulled through. Ever since, they've found themselves stuck in a land of fire giants, with no way to escape. Dwarven historians such as Rotu (see below) embellish matters somewhat when they describe the Thunderaxes willingly marching through the rift.

If the players get this information from Marar Ruknabek's ghost in the tombs, she'll also tell the players that the best way to cross the planes and get to the Thunderaxes is to get in touch with someone allied with Deflyn. If the players don't manage to find Ruknabek's ghost, Rotu in Dun Lodar can also lead them toward this information.

Collapse Effects

The Pristine City is fundamentally an artificial place, held together with decaying magic, fragile crystal, and brittle marble. As the characters explore the city, their actions—and the relentless march of time—causes city structures to fall apart. The damage is gradual at first, but as the adventure progresses, buildings crumble, rubble fills the streets, and unchecked magic courses across the cityscape. Throughout the adventure, you'll keep track of the collapse score, which measures the extent of the devastation.

The collapse score starts at zero the moment the characters first set foot in the Pristine City, and it advances according to the table below. The PCs can control and mitigate the collapse, but the collapse score advances every four hours whether they are actively exploring the city or not. As soon as the PCs set foot in the Pristine City, it's doomed in a matter of days.

Tracking the Collapse

When the collapse reaches certain thresholds (35, 70, 100, and 140), the state of the city fundamentally changes for the worse. Take a moment—even in the middle of a battle—to describe degrading conditions within the city. Walls crumble, columns collapse, and uncontrolled magic courses through the city in whorls and waves.

Minor Collapse (35–69 points)

Once the collapse score reaches 35, the Pristine City starts to fall apart. Describe arcs and waves of colorful magic flashing across the chamber roof (think northern lights), far-off rumbles, tremors in the earth, and decorative elements (cornices, finials, and the like) falling off nearby buildings.

Some encounters have special descriptions you'll read only during the minor collapse phase.

Accumulating Collapse Points

Event	Score
4 hours elapse	+2
battle reaches 5th round	+1
casting 5th-level spell	+1
clockwork monster destroyed*	+1
golem destroyed (per golem)	+2
team of dwarven workers making repairs (per 8-hour shift)	-1

*+1 for all clockwork in a fight, not for each one

PCs Automatically Know: The city's structural elements are falling apart, and uncontrolled magic released in the breakdowns seems to be the primary cause.

PCs Can Learn with DC 20 Intelligence (History) check: Shoddy building materials and woefully inadequate magical safeguards have made this city much more fragile than it otherwise would be. Some of the breakdowns cause damage or release bound magic that makes future breakdowns more likely.

Day/Night Cycle: 6 hours.

Every 10 minutes, roll 1d10 and consult the text below.

d10 *Minor Collapse Effect*

1–2 **Earth Tremors:** The sound of rolling earth comes from all directions. Nearby buildings tremble, and glass shakes within its frame.

3 **Nearby Architectural Collapse:** A large building on the other side of the street quivers for a moment, then comes down in one jerky motion.

4 **Far-Off Crashing and Rumbling:** In the distance—though it's difficult to tell direction through the echoes of the cavern—something is crashing. It sounds like a building or three. Rumbling comes from all directions.

5 **Light Debris from Above:** The roof shakes—dust, pebbles, and other small debris fall from the ceiling. Small amounts at first, then more and more until it finally stops. If outside, the debris falls from the cavern ceiling.

6 **Localized Magic Dead Zone:** Functions as an *antimagic field* centered where the PCs are standing; lasts for 10 minutes.

7 **Cloud of Dust:** A large cloud of dust emerges from between the buildings across the street, billowing ever closer. Creatures who rely on ordinary vision have their visibility reduced as if in a sandstorm, imposing disadvantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on sight.

8 **(Day) Solar Flare:** Bzort! The flare attacks, acting functionally like the *scorching ray* spell. It automatically hits, dealing 2d6 fire damage to all

Determining Distance and Direction

When faced with a collapse effect that moves randomly, roll 1d8 and determine its distance and direction from the table below.

1	1d6 x 10 ft. north
2	1d6 x 10 ft. northwest
3	1d6 x 10 ft. west
4	1d6 x 10 ft. southwest
5	1d6 x 10 ft. south
6	1d6 x 10 ft. southeast
7	1d6 x 10 ft. east
8	1d6 x 10 ft. northeast

PCs. Creatures inside buildings hear the roar of the flare, but they're otherwise unaffected.

8 **(Night) Monster Encounter:** Roll on the night encounter table below.

9–10 **Monster Encounter:** Depending on the time of day, roll on either the day or night encounter table below.

Medium Collapse (70–99 points)

During this phase, the Pristine City has been hit by the equivalent of a moderate earthquake. Coruscating magic is visible at all times over the city, and sometimes it flashes downward like lightning, hitting buildings or streets. Arches and walls collapse entirely, and debris obstructs many of the streets.

Some encounters have special descriptions you'll read only during the medium collapse phase.

PCs Automatically Know: The interconnected city infrastructure is failing, and each failure leads to further problems down the line. Damage in one part of the city inevitably affects the whole.

PCs Can Learn with DC 20 Intelligence (Arcana) check: Combat (especially against the city's constructs) and magic use seem to be contributing to the breakdowns, but even if the PCs left, the city's collapse would continue.

Day/Night Cycle: 3 hours.

Every 10 minutes, roll 1d10 and consult the text below.

d10 *Medium Collapse Effect*

1–2 **Earthquake:** The ground rumbles and shakes—softly at first, as though far away, but it quickly overtakes you, knocking PCs to the ground. This functions like the *earthquake* spell, but it won't knock over structures or open fissures in the earth.

3 **Distant Collapse:** Somewhere nearby but out of sight, you hear a building crashing down. From between nearby buildings, smoke billows toward you.

4 **Nearby Architectural Collapse:** The nearest structure tumbles down around you. Roll 1d4—a result of 1 means a PC might be hit by a collapsing wall (see below), and any other result means the wall wasn't near enough to affect the PCs.

A collapsing wall deals 3d6 bludgeoning damage to all targets within 15 feet of the wall (DC 15 Dexterity saving throw for half).

5 **Spreading Structure Fire:** Most of the Pristine City isn't flammable, but magically augmented fires burn without fuel for a while. This functions as described in the sidebar.

6 **Localized Magic Dead Zone:** This functions like the *antimagic field* spell, but it's centered on the PCs and has a 20-foot radius.

7 **Positional Scramble:** Wrinkles in reality briefly emerge. All characters are randomly teleported to a location 1d6 x 10 feet away in a random direction (see the sidebar on p. 10). If you're using plastic miniatures, try dropping them on the table from a height of several feet.

8 **(Day) Solar Flare:** Bzort! The flare attacks, acting functionally like the *scorching ray* spell. It automatically hits, dealing 2d6 fire damage to all PCs. Repeat the *scorching rays* each round for 1d6 additional rounds. Creatures inside buildings hear the roar of the flare and feel a heat flash, but they're otherwise unaffected.

8 **(Night) Monster Encounter:** Roll on the night encounter table below.

9–10 **Monster Encounter:** Depending on the time of day, roll on either the day or night encounter table below.

Heavy Collapse (100–139 points)

At this point, the PCs are exploring ruins, not a city. All buildings have collapsed entirely or suffered major structural damage. Rubble covers the streets. Glowing cyclones of uncontrolled magic roar across the city.

A collapse score of 100 triggers the Demonic Dispossession event (described on p. 46). Once the event starts, the PCs must contend with roving packs of demons as they try to escape the city.

PCs Automatically Know: The city is doomed—and even if they leave, the city won't survive the chaos of earthquakes, building collapses, and wild magic.

Monster Encounter Tables

Day d6	Encounter
1	2 phase spiders
2	3 gibbering mouthers
3	5 ochre jellies
4	4 clockwork dwarves
5	3 gargoyles
6	4 ettercaps
Night d6	Encounter
1–2	2 will-o'-wisps, 1 gaslight
3–4	2 gaslights
5	1 bulette (when it arrives, its burrowing adds +4 to the collapse score)
6	PCs hear screams and crazed laughter in the distance

PCs Can Learn with DC 20 Intelligence (Arcana) check: Reveal the collapse score to the players, tell them they won't survive if it reaches 140, and inform them whenever the score changes.

Day/Night Cycle: 90 minutes.

Every 10 minutes, roll 1d10 and consult the text below.

How Did They Get in Here?

The Pristine City was built and then sealed up ages ago. It should be completely empty. So where did all these critters come from?

Clockworks, golems, and gargoyles: These creatures were programmed or trained with the express purpose of guarding the city. They're supposed to spot and stop any interlopers that may get in.

Oozes: These things show up in the weirdest places. Sometimes they come through the water main, and sometimes they slide in through cracks, but several oozes have managed to evade even the built-in city guards.

Wights, fungus monsters, and ghouls: All the creatures in the tombs got in through a hole in one of the walls. They must have dug their way inside sometime after the tomb was sealed off. For the most part, creatures in the tombs are not present in other parts of the city.

Wraiths: Some wraiths developed from the dead Thunderaxes in the tombs. Some came by choice to the Hall of Shieldmaidens.

Ettercaps: The ettercaps entered the city at roughly the same time the PCs did—probably a bit before. Their adventuring party got in through a fissure in the cavern ceiling, and since then, they've been exploring the city. Those that still survive are paranoid and hostile from encounters with the golems and clockworks that went poorly—many of their group died, and those who remained split up.

Will-o'-wisps and flameskulls: Somewhere in the city, quite some time ago, an extraplanar rift developed. Creatures flooded through before the rift managed to repair itself. Some of the creatures died to the guards, but others managed to hide out around the city.

Gaslights: Gaslights float about all sorts of places and, like oozes, end up in strange spots. These gaslights likely got in through a crack or fissure somewhere in the cavern.

Spiders: Most spiders around the city are trained companions of the ettercaps. Some got lost from the group, some are with the group, and some aren't connected with the ettercaps at all. Some are just pests that found their way into the city (maybe through the water line?).

Bulettes: Attracted to the commotion, these monsters came from further underground.

Bat swarm: Most are pests that found their way into the city as it lay dormant.

Demons: The Pristine City had the unfortunate combination of being made with both the best intentions and the worst execution. Much of the city was built by binding demons into the architecture—unbeknownst to those who actually designed the city. Over time bonds weakened, and some of those demons can be found around the city.

Mimics: A group of arcane students studied the mimics, becoming fascinated with them. As a prank, they captured a few and put them in suspended animation, posing them as actual furniture, which was later placed into the Pristine City. They occasionally awakened over the intervening years but found just a dead city, so they continued to sleep...but now something *interesting* is happening.

d10 Heavy Collapse Effect

1-2 **Earthquake:** This functions as the *earthquake* spell, but unlike the less severe tremors described above, this quake does include structure collapses and fissures in the earth.

3 **Nearby Architectural Collapse:** The nearest structure tumbles down around you. This functions as the trap above, but it's definitely near enough to put the PCs at risk.

4 **Spreading Structure Fire:** Most of the Pristine City isn't flammable, but magically augmented fires burn without fuel for a while. This functions as described in the sidebar.

5 **Nearby Explosion:** Something—a building, a magical ward, a dwarven clockwork machine—goes kaboom. The explosion deals 1d6 bludgeoning damage (the shockwave) and 2d6 piercing damage (the shrapnel) to creatures within 20 feet of the blast (DC 15 Dexterity saving throw for half).

6 **Demonic Nightmares:** Visions of rampaging demons assault the PCs; treat this as the *phantasmal killer* spell cast by a 10th-level caster (DC 15 Constitution saving throw).

7 **Localized Magic Dead Zone:** As the *anti-magic field* spell, but it's centered on the PCs and has a 100-foot radius.

8 **(Day) Solar Flare:** Bzort! The flare attacks, acting functionally like a *flame strike* spell. It automatically hits anyone outdoors, dealing 4d6 fire damage and 4d6 radiant damage to all PCs. Creatures inside buildings automatically take 5 fire damage from the heat flash. Even the undead in the tombs take damage from the solar flare, and some of them are vulnerable to radiant damage.

8 **(Night) Monster Encounter:** Initiate the next demon encounter immediately.

9-10 **Monster Encounter:** Initiate the next demon encounter immediately—even if the PCs are still fighting the last band of demons.

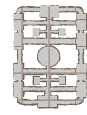
Total Collapse (140 points)

When the collapse score reaches 140, the uncontrolled magic coursing through the city hits critical mass and explodes, destroying the city and collapsing the cavern roof. What was once the Pristine City is now buried under a half-mile of earth and stone, and nearby communities on the surface world feel the ground shake.

Everyone in the city perishes, and the Pristine City is no more. (It's possible that PCs in the tombs survive the city's destruction, but they'll need magic or the assistance of others to escape the pocket of dwindling air they're now trapped in.)

THE PRISTINE CITY

Buildings in **red** have specific encounters associated with them.
For other buildings, see the "Residential Areas" section on p. 38.



Encounters TO1–TO16
are in the tombs (p. 17)
under the temple in
the center of the city.

Backdrop-style paintings on the cavern wall
give the appearance of the streets and buildings
continuing to the northwest.

Original city entrance
(now buried).



Encounters H1–H9
are inside Shieldmaiden
Hall (p. 39).

50 ft.

IE1
— 13
To
Dun Lodar

Structure Fires

As the collapse score increases, so too does the commotion around the city. Structure fires are just one of the things your players may face.

A structure fire is visible from as far as 2d4 x 100 feet away, as long as no buildings are in the way. Noticing the fire if buildings are in the way requires a DC 15 Wisdom (Perception) check. Creatures notice the structure fire automatically when it has halved its original distance. The smoke is visible from anywhere in the city.

The building where the fire starts takes 1d6 x 5 minutes to fully engulf, at which point an adjacent building catches fire. It takes 1d4 x 5 minutes to fully engulf and catch another building on fire; repeat this process until all buildings on that block are aflame. The fire dies down after 1d4 hours.

Each creature in the fire must make a DC 15 Constitution saving throw, taking 11 (2d10) fire damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one. Creatures caught in the fire are subject to extreme heat, as described in Chapter 5 of the *Dungeon Master's Guide*.

IE1. Entrance to the City

“Did you know you have a giant hole in that wall?”

- ▶ The entrance to the city is at the end of a long tunnel lit only by sporadic lanterns, which provide dim lighting.
- ▶ At the end of the tunnel, light as bright as day shines through a large hole.
- ▶ Two dwarf miners stand guard on either side of the opening.
- ▶ Far behind are the sounds of a bustling city. The scent of dirt and dust fills the air.
- ▶ **DC 15 Charisma (Deception):** The players can get by the guards if they just wandered in without being sent.
- ▶ **DC 20 Charisma (Persuasion):** The players convince the guards that it's a good idea to let them in.
- ▶ **DC 25 Charisma (Intimidation):** The guards are more scared of the PCs than of anything in the city.

It looks like no one has entered the city yet—not since making a giant hole in the side of it, anyway.

If the players arrived independent of an escort, they'll need to convince the dwarf guards to let them by. If they fail to convince, the PCs need to either go back to town and sign up for the job or fight the guards to get through. The guards don't initiate combat, and if badly wounded, they run back to town to report the PCs for trespassing. If this happens, Tali herself will return with a group of guards to collect the PCs and bring them back to the Great Hall. After chiding, Tali will finally agree to let the PCs explore the city for them. The advantage to this approach is that Tali will see how fragile the city is and may be more lenient at the end of the adventure.

If the PCs intentionally start breaking things, the nearest building collapses and encounter IE2 begins immediately.

City Street: Hairline spiderweb cracks spread out beneath the players' feet with each step they take—not enough to add to the collapse score, but enough to indicate how fragile this city is.

Cavern Walls: The entry passage the dwarves dug is sturdy and fortified with timber cross-struts. (It'll survive the city's collapse.) The walls in the

great cavern that contains the city are smooth granite, almost featureless and difficult to climb, requiring a DC 20 Strength (Athletics) check.

Aftermath: If the players destroy the nearest building because of their carelessness, encounter IE2 begins immediately and is much more difficult.

IE2. First Surprise

The building nearest the entrance seems like a fine place to start exploring.

- ▶ Depending on how the players come to this encounter, they either see a pile of rubble with slimes oozing about or an unlit house.
- ▶ If the PCs walk in and light the room, a simple table with chairs around it dominates the center of the room. If the house is destroyed, the main thing they see is rubble.
- ▶ Ochre jellies seem to have taken over this home. Bats hide up in the rafters.
- ▶ If PCs enter this house the old-fashioned way (through the front door), the house is unlit.
- ▶ Squishing sounds come out of the darkness.
- ▶ **DC 15 Wisdom (Perception):** Players notice bats in the rafters if they succeed at this check before combat.

Once the players light the room, they see the ooze approaching them. If the PCs entered this encounter by knocking down this first building, combat begins with three jellies.

As you're running the battle, be mindful of the jellies' ability to split in two whenever they're hit with electricity damage or a slashing weapon. If you can, position the jellies so there's room for another ochre jelly without crowding out the PCs.

It's also a good idea to have the giant bats attack PCs who use slashing weapons after a few rounds if the players don't adjust on their own. It's no fun to fight with counterproductive weapons.

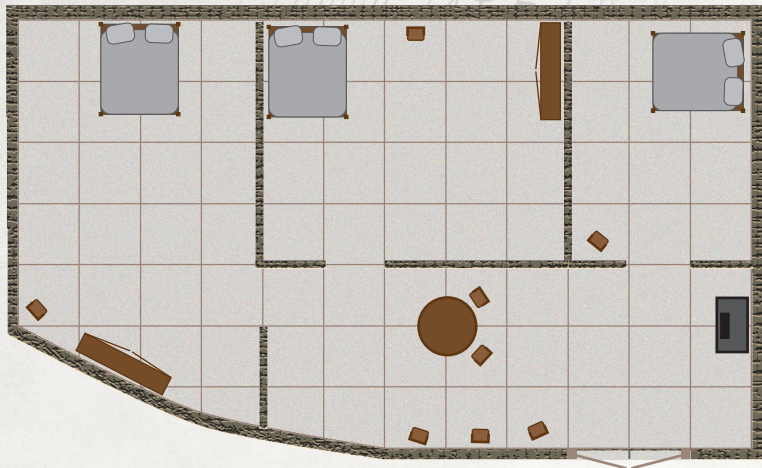
The jellies and bats don't attack each other; they instinctively sense that the PCs are the real threat.

Ochre Jellies (2): *Monster Manual*

Giant Bats (4): *Monster Manual*

Rewards: Five *potions of healing*, which the jellies absorbed at some point.

IE2: FIRST SURPRISE



IE3. Broken Clockwork Dwarf

A broken machine in a mysterious, perfect, unoccupied city? You should probably go mess with it.

- ▶ A four-way intersection sits up ahead, buildings on all four corners. Nothing moves.
- ▶ A clockwork dwarf sits, immobile, in the intersection up ahead. Gears, belts, and wheels are rusted and broken.
- ▶ The closer the machine, the stronger the scent of old oil.
- ▶ **DC 15 Intelligence:** Players can repair the dwarf back to its functional (murderous) state. Doing so takes 1d6 hours.
- ▶ **DC 25 Intelligence:** Players can repair and reprogram the dwarf to befriend them and fight beside them; doing so takes 1d6 hours.

If the players can't or don't try to repair the dwarf, nothing happens; they continue on to the next encounter. If the players repair and befriend the dwarf, it joins them, fighting alongside them until destroyed.

If the players repair the dwarf, but don't think to rewire it (or fail to), it initiates combat immediately. When badly damaged, it sounds an alarm, but nothing is close enough to hear it.

Clockwork Dwarf (1): Appendix B

Dialogue: "Powering up." "Enemy detected."

Rewards: If the players rewire the dwarf, they've gained another party member. If they defeat the dwarf, they collect a couple steel gauges worth 250 gp each, a gear train worth 500 gp, and two copper bearings worth 100 gp each.

Aftermath: If the players rewired the dwarf,

they'll have an extra hand as they move through the city, trying to achieve their objectives before the city caves in on them.

Questioning the Clockwork Dwarf

Once reprogrammed, the clockwork dwarf can answer the following questions:

What are you doing here? Prime instruction: Protect this city until the return of the illustrious Thunderaxe clan.

What were you doing before we arrived? Current task: Await city completion.

How long have you been here? Since construction began.

What else is in the city? Golems and clockwork entities work together to keep the city safe.

Are there any dwarves in the city? None at present. (Unless the PCs are dwarves.)

How many of you are there? (Subtract the current collapse score from 150 and tell the PC that number.) Number diminishes; faults throughout the city.

How can you all be deactivated? We serve until the Thunderaxes return.

Can you communicate with other clockwork entities? Only according to instructions given by the dwarves.

What were those instructions? We communicate and coordinate to expel intruders and make repairs.

Where are the Thunderaxes? Unknown. We await their return.

Are there any valuables here? Secondary instruction: Treat every part of the city as equally valuable.

What's happening to the city? City structural elements are unused to stress. Magic that binds and powers the city is beyond control. Failures cascade and accelerate.

Can the collapse be stopped? Tertiary instruction: Repair damage. Task viability is unknown.

IE4. Golems at the Library

If golems are guarding this building, it must be pretty important, right?

- ▶ A large staircase leads up to a large pair of double doors.
- ▶ Two alabaster golems stand steady on either side of the doors.
- ▶ The golems make no noise. Maybe they're broken, too?
- ▶ **DC 20 Wisdom (Perception):** Players can tell the golems are functional.

The library takes up the entire next block. While the golems guarding the entrance are just as still as the dwarf was, they may be more functional—and deadly.

The golems try to initiate combat as soon as they spot intruders. These particular golems, having stood still in this spot for the last several centuries, will be stiff and take a round to really get all their parts moving. They'll go through stilted motions of attacking, though nothing they attempt is at all effective in the first round of combat.

When damaged, the golems sound an alarm. Roll on the Random Encounter Table to see whether they call a nearby patrol.

Alabaster Golems (2): Appendix B

Aftermath: If the players try to run inside the library to avoid fighting the golems, the golems

follow, breaking down the doors and walls to get at the intruders. This both adds to the collapse score and makes searching the library in encounter IE5 more difficult if it's even still possible.

IE5. Library

The library should contain all manner of books deemed worthy of or interesting to the Thunderaxe clan. It truly should. But it doesn't.

- ▶ The library is large—reading areas, lecture halls, and what must be thousands of books.
- ▶ Books line every shelf, floor to ceiling.
- ▶ The main room smells of old books.
- ▶ **DC 15 Wisdom (Perception):** From the front door, it looks like all the books use the same binding and are the same color. But...surely they can't all be the same.
- ▶ **DC 20 Wisdom (Perception):** Players can find the books that contain actual information right away. If the check fails, they can find all the books if they spend at least an hour looking.

The front room of this library is huge—the back wall seems miles away and the ceiling is so high that ladders are required to reach the second half of available books in the room. The ladders slide along tracks on the very top shelves and are wheeled down on the ground. These are safe to use as long as the collapse score is below 35. Over

Real Books in the Pristine City

- *Architect's Journal*. This handwritten journal is more a collection of burned, ripped paper scraps than a proper book. The legible fragments are described on p. 17.
- *The History of the Thunderaxes*. An elaborate history of the Thunderaxes that *might* be embellished a bit. I mean, I guess they *could* have invented gold, but...
- *The Toll of Ceaseless Seasons*. This collection of genealogical records is a relic of Sibda the Mighty; the "NPCs Interested in the Pristine City" section discusses its importance.
- *101 Unique Uses for Gems*. This is a jewelfrafter's guide.
- *My First Axe: A Little Barthna Book*. A book from a popular children's line.
- *I Saw the Sky (When I Opened Up My Eyes): The Dulna Rocksmasher Story*. The heroic tale of a dwarf raised above ground by elves.
- *His Face Went Crunch!: A Little Barthna Book*. A book from a popular children's line.
- *Contractor's Ledger*. A list of payments to various suppliers and subcontractors. PCs with training in Knowledge (engineering) can tell there's much more light carpentry and plaster work and not nearly enough masonry and earthworks.
- *Cutting Corners the Easy Way*. A how-not-to guide.
- *Maps of the Pristine City*. A collection of maps of the Pristine City and its various neighborhoods (give the PCs the player map at the back of the adventure).

- *Twelve-Hour Quarry Shift: A Little Barthna Book*. A book from a popular children's line.
- *Programming Your Clockwork*. A tech guide book.
- *The True Story of the Assault on Meghloduhr*. An underground book that was banned by the Thunderaxe elders. It tells the real story of what happened at Meghloduhr.
- *Can Daddy Still Love Us if He's Undead?: A Little Barthna Book*. A book from a popular children's line.
- *In Case of Interplanar Emergency*. A guide for dealing with interplanar rifts.
- *What Is the Sky?: A Little Barthna Book*. A book from a popular children's line.
- *Your Mace and You*. A guide to caring for your blunt weapons.
- *The Care and Feeding of Persnickety Magic*. A guide to caring for finicky magic items.
- *Plans for Flamehand* (inside a folder on a shelf). The plans for a magic flaming gauntlet, greatly sought by Caseum Lightseer (described in the "NPCs Interested in the Pristine City" section). To recreate this epic magic item, either independently or at the Lightseer's behest, is an adventure in itself.
- *Trees, Clouds, and Other Myths*. This book exposes lies about the surface.
- *Stone Stew*. An odd children's cookbook.
- *#NotAllSurfaceDwellers*. This book, perhaps unnecessarily, defends above-ground visitors. They can't *all* be bad.

that, and they crack and shudder once a player is halfway up, breaking apart once the player reaches the top. If the collapse score is over 70, the ladders are broken and unusable.

Once the PCs start looking through the books, they'll quickly notice almost all of them are blank.

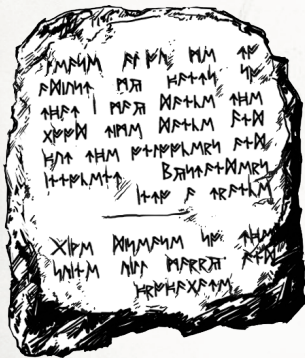
If the players choose to use this building for a short or long rest, they can do so unmolested.

Bookshelves: The shelves are filled with books almost to bursting—but all save a scattered handful are completely blank.

Rewards: The library does contain a handful of actual books with actual information. If the players can find them, they keep them and gain the information within. The books that are not magic items total about 2,000 gp. Players can also find the *Tome of Demonology* (Appendix A, p. 50).

Thunderaxe Tombs

The tombs of the Thunderaxe clan predate the Pristine City. When those dwarves tore down the old city, they left the tombs untouched out of respect for the dead. When building the new city, however, they were sure to place the city center directly over the tombs—a clan known for venerating their ancestors, the Thunderaxes were sure to appreciate it. The tombs give the players an idea of why the Pristine City is so symmetrical and ornate and should help them discern the respect with which the Thunderaxes treat their dead—if they can imagine it before the monsters got to it.

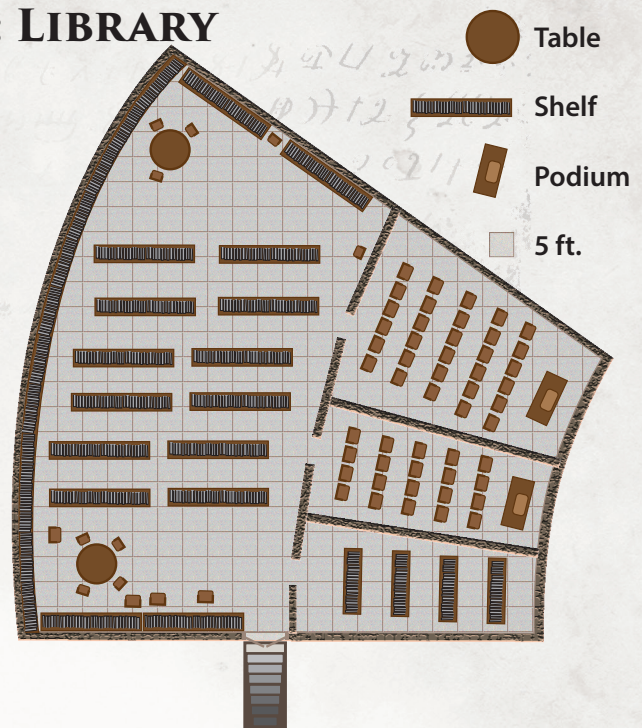


Architect's Journal

This is a collection of ripped, deteriorated scraps.

[...] for the return of the Thunderaxes. On the one hand, what an honor to be chosen for this project—designing the home for our beloved clan. Every architect wants it—the prestige! On the other hand, I can't help feeling like it's a little silly. There's no logical reason to expect them to come back. I understand they were extremely influential in their time, but their time has passed. Rather than clinging to what worked in the past,

IE5: LIBRARY



Tomb Hallways

The hallways in the tombs of the Thunderaxe clan are lined with statues of all the previous clan leaders. Below each name, their number is listed, such as, "27th Leader of the Thunderaxe clan."

Here are a few names for these statues. Assign them whatever numbers you like.

- Lada Thunderaxe
- Mabala Thunderaxe
- Elif Anvilspär
- Rengan Anvilspär
- Danorn "The Willful" Thunderaxe
- Aglara Thunderaxe
- Oami Anvilspär
- Rona Thunderaxe
- Grothna "One Arm" Thunderaxe
- Jakabb Redhammer
- Ketariah Redhammer
- Scought Anvilspär
- Victrina Thunderaxe

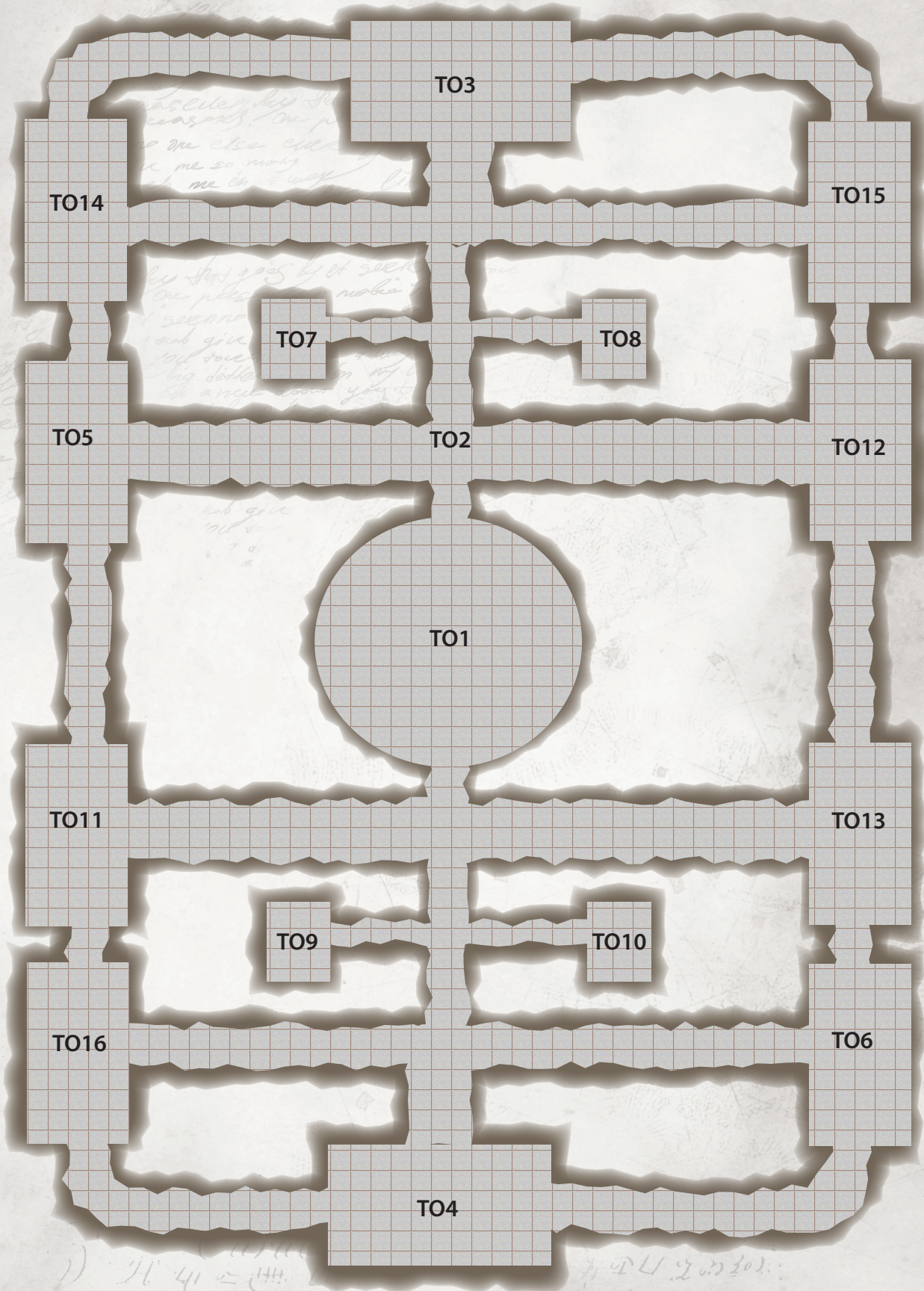
shouldn't we instead concentrate on forging ahead into what will work for our future? I firmly believe [...]

[...] don't know about her, though. I wish they'd at least consulted me when they chose the contractor. I could have listed ten that I'd trust over Rerna. I've only worked closely with her once before, and it was several years ago, but she cut corners at every opportunity.

Anyway, she's on the project now, so I suppose I'll just have to [...]

THE TOMBS

□ 5 ft.



TO1. Antechamber

It has been a long time since anyone swept in here.

- ▶ The antechamber is an ornate, perfectly circular room. Marble benches line the opposite wall and dot the room. It's also littered with rotting body parts.
- ▶ Directly opposite the stairs is a large fireplace with a roaring magical fire.
- ▶ Two medium-sized cabinets sit against the near wall on either side of the entrance. Each is covered in candles (real, not magical) of varying wax levels. None are currently lit.
- ▶ A map hanging on the wall shows where the different rooms are and which houses what.
- ▶ The light from the fireplace fills the room with dim amber light and casts flickering shadows around the room.
- ▶ Skittering, shuffling, and other sounds are audible from this room, though the echoes make it difficult to tell which direction the sounds are coming from.
- ▶ The air holds a strong odor of decay.
- ▶ **DC 15 Wisdom (Perception):** The dust on the ground has a clear path made from many sets (and many kinds) of footprints—most notably between the north and south hallways.
- ▶ **DC 20 Wisdom (Perception):** The sounds are coming from the north hallway.

The sounds coming from outside the room further indicate the PCs aren't alone.

From this room, players can take either the north or south hallway. North leads to an encounter and, eventually, the burial room of the well-to-do Thunderaxes.

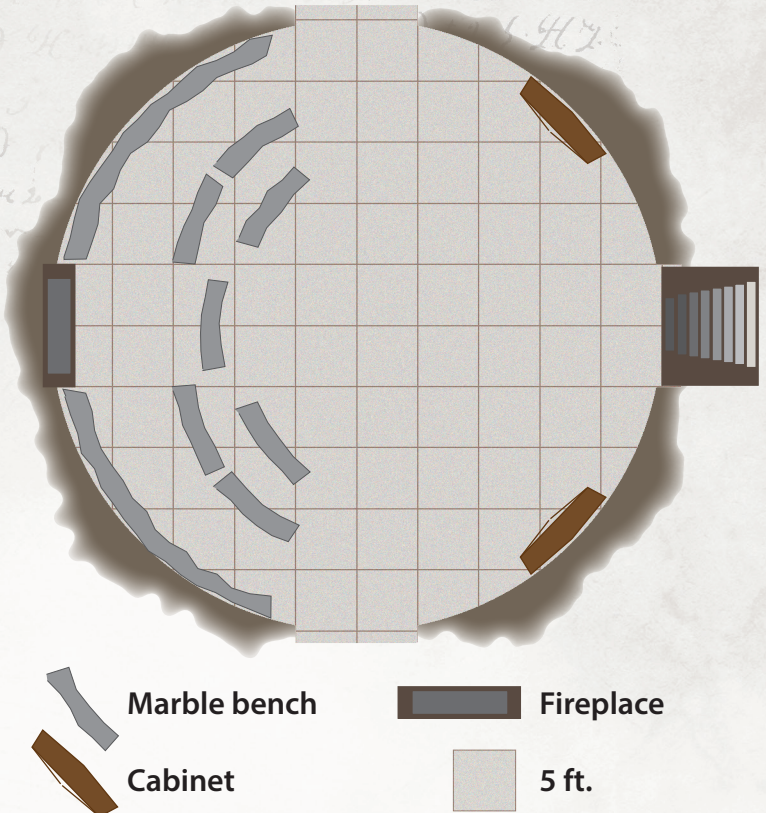
Cabinets: Both are locked, but can be picked with a successful DC 15 Dexterity check. Inside one cabinet, players find more candles, matches, snuffers, two golden candlesticks, and a few bottles of liquor. Folded in neat stacks along the bottom shelves are clean handkerchiefs.

The other cabinet contains one object: an urn helpfully labeled, "Urn of Lost Rikkenhall—display in tomb antechamber." The label is accurate; the urn is a key relic of Sibda the Mighty, described in the NPCs Interested in the Pristine City section.

Rewards: The golden candlesticks in the cabinets are worth about 500 gp each. Among the debris in the room, players also find an aquamarine gem, two black pearls worth 500 gp each, and a broken marble horse figurine, worth nothing. Drink the liquor at your own risk.

Aftermath: This is not a safe spot to rest and shouldn't be treated as one. If the players remain here for over an hour, encounter TO2 patrols its way into the antechamber and that encounter begins.

TO1: ANTECHAMBER



TO2. North Hallway

That skittering might be coming from...north?

The descriptive parts of this encounter can also be used to describe the south hallway.

- ▶ The hallway stretches out, long and wide. It has been ripped apart, with several statues broken or knocked over.
- ▶ Statues line either side of the hallway. On the base of each statue is a nameplate detailing the person depicted and their significance. Each one is buried behind their respective statue.
- ▶ A wraith and a wight walk this hall.
- ▶ Magical sconces light up as PCs approach, starting about ten feet away, and cast a dim light. Beyond that, everything is darkness. A few feet behind, they start going back out.
- ▶ The further down the hallway, the louder the shuffling sounds get. Quiet groans and grunts also become audible.
- ▶ **DC 15 Wisdom (Perception):** Players can tell how close the monsters up ahead are.

The walls behind most statues are disrupted, suggesting either the dearly departed have walked away or been removed. Like the antechamber, discarded rotting limbs lie here and there around the floor.

Neither the wight nor the wraith flee during combat.

Wraith (1): *Monster Manual*

Wight (1): *Monster Manual*

Dialogue: "You don't belong here." "New toy!"

TO3. Upper-Class Clan Burial Chamber

Because why wouldn't you want a chance to poke some dead rich people?

- ▶ The room is large and rectangular. Elaborate tombstones cover most of the ground. Several nameplates are attached to the wall. Several more used to be.
- ▶ An elaborate portrait of seemingly well-to-do dwarves is prominently displayed opposite the entrance to the room. A nearby plaque describes them as the most prominent family in the city.
- ▶ This room has been dug up and destroyed—nameplates ripped from the wall, bodies ripped out, and tombstones askew or broken.
- ▶ Some sort of fungus creatures have taken over this room.
- ▶ Dim-light magical sconces are already lit in this room.
- ▶ The smell of rot and decay is much stronger here than in the hallway.
- ▶ **DC 20 Intelligence (Nature):** Players recognize the fungus as monsters right away.

All monsters in this room attack as soon as the PCs enter. All attempt to flee when badly hurt.

Myconid Sovereigns (2): *Monster Manual*

Myconid Adults (2): *Monster Manual*

Wight (1): *Monster Manual*

Dialogue: "We haven't seen anything new here in quite some time."

Rewards: The large oil painting at the back of the room is worth 2,500 gp.

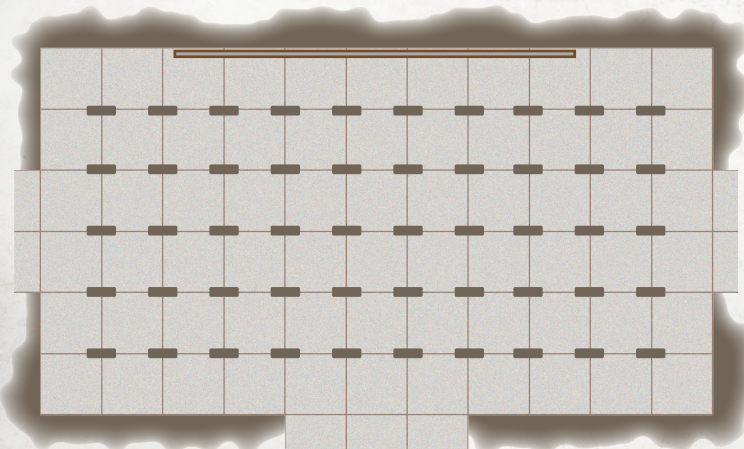
TO4. Working-Class Clan Burial Chamber

Though they may not have held the same status as their upper-class counterparts, those buried in this room were still Thunderaxes, and the room reflects this. Or, it used to...

- ▶ This room is large and rectangular, its walls covered in moss. Nice, simple nameplates and tombstones dot the walls and ground, respectively. The graves in this room are terribly cramped together.
- ▶ A portrait opposite the entrance depicts a line of what appear to be factory workers.
- ▶ Ghouls and fungus creatures are in this room.
- ▶ The scent of decay is strong. The sound of flesh ripping fills the air.
- ▶ **DC 15 Intelligence (Investigation):** A small hole on the opposite wall leads into darkness. This may be how the creatures got into the tombs.

The dwarves in these graves were turned into ghouls over the years as negative energy suffused the tomb. But with nothing to eat, the ghouls fell dormant...until the PCs arrived. The fungus are likewise in a dormant state, but plants and ghouls don't eat each other, so they've arrived at as much of a truce as incoherent, semi-sentient creatures can.

TO3: UPPER-CLASS BURIAL CHAMBER

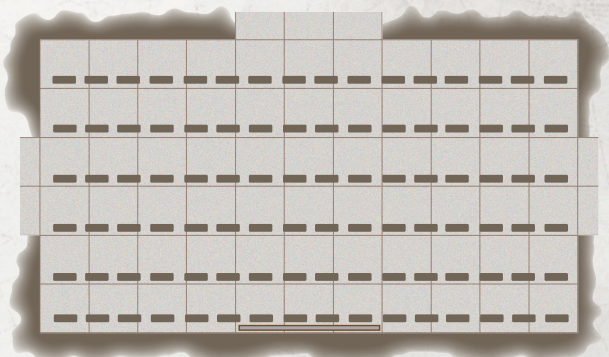


■ Headstone

■ 5 ft.

— Oil painting

TO4: WORKING-CLASS BURIAL CHAMBER



■ Headstone

■ 5 ft.

— Oil painting

Ghouls rise from graves as soon as the PCs reach the entrance, and they're joined in the second round by the myconid and spore servant.

Myconid Sovereign (1): *Monster Manual*

Quaggoth Spore Servant (1): *Monster Manual*

Ghouls (3): *Monster Manual*

Rewards: The small oil painting at the back of the room is worth 1,200 gp. Players also find four granite bear figurines worth 300 gp each.

TO5. Marar Ruknabek's Burial Chamber

Considering Marar *has* a burial chamber...she probably shouldn't be up walking around...right?

- ▶ This room is quite large—the same size as the group burial chambers.
- ▶ Two large statues of Marar sit on opposite sides of the room. They are made of sturdy marble; one depicts a dwarf holding a sword and shield, battle-ready; the other depicts the same dwarf standing stately.
- ▶ An empty grave sits in the middle of the room.
- ▶ A mohrg is using Marar's body. The gaslight floats around the room.
- ▶ The sconces in this room glow dimmer than in the other rooms.
- ▶ The scent of decay is not as strong here as in other rooms. Shadows move in the dim light.
- ▶ **DC 20 Intelligence:** Based on how far gone the corpse is, the mohrg has been here for more than six months.

The statues in this room are untouched—the monsters clearly saw no need to get involved with them. All monsters drift around the room.

Mohrg (1): Appendix B

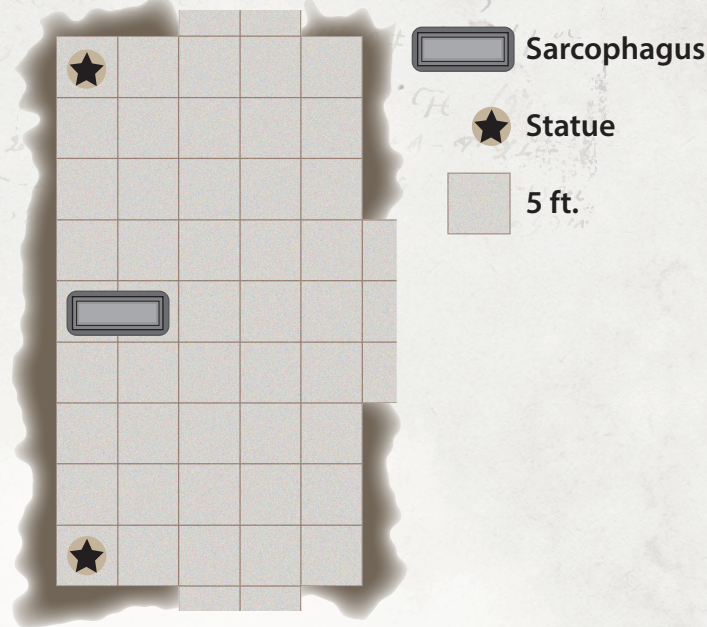
Gaslight (1): Appendix B

Dialogue: "What is this?" "No—the body was mine!"

Rewards: The wall tapestry in this room is intact and worth about 1,000 gp. Everything else is destroyed, except the *hammer of Bohr* (described in Appendix A, p. 50), which Marar directs players to. It's buried about a foot below the existing grave site.

Aftermath: Once the players defeat the mohrg, the spirit of Marar Ruknabek appears to them. She tells the player what happened to the Thunderaxes and where they are now.

TO5: MARAR RUKNABEK'S BURIAL CHAMBER



TO6. The Battle of Gon Tarihr Burial Chamber

A hall dedicated to those who served in battle—and desecrated by the dead themselves.

- ▶ This room is smaller than the two main burial rooms, but is still quite sizable.
- ▶ A row of statues sits at the back of the chamber, depicting various stately looking dwarves.
- ▶ This room contains an eerie amber light, and flames from a flying skull cast shadows on every surface.

Not only is this room home to a will-o'-wisp (the amber light), but the flameskull is no happier about having company. These monsters have coalesced to feed off the spirit residue within the tombs, but fresh souls are even better..

Will-o'-Wisp (1): *Monster Manual*

Flameskull (1): *Monster Manual*

Rewards: While most things in this room are broken, a few small, intricately designed pots worth a total of 750 gp sit undisturbed in one corner of the room.

TO7–10. Priest Quarters

Each of these four small rooms has a serviceable bed against the opposite wall, as well as a wash basin and a small footlocker. The footlockers can contain any personal items your players may need, from a few coins to health potions. They are otherwise barren, save thick layers of dust.

TO11–13. Important Person Burial Rooms

Each of these three burial rooms holds the remains of an important Thunderaxe. A statue of the entombed sits in the center of the room, though each room has been significantly disturbed. A few small gifts sit along the walls of each room, but most have been strewn about in the commotion.

Inscriptions on the tombs read:

- Tyvor the Grim: *"While others laughed, he slew."*
- Balan Khurram: *"Father of 18, widower of 4."*
- Kalmae Grazdan: *"May your excavations end in vein."*

The gifts left at the tombs are flasks of long-evaporated alcohol, melted candles, a few coins, and cheap jewelry. It's collectively worth 50 gp.

TO14–16. Group Burial Rooms

Each of these rooms houses a group of heroes from an important battle. The rooms each have a different portrait of fighting dwarves and statues that line the back wall. Several bodies have been dug up, and it's quite clear the monsters infesting the rest of the tombs have already come through here.

Each room has an explanatory placard (words stamped into a tin sheet) that explains the tomb's historical significance.

Assault on Meghloduhr: *The Thunderaxes have always favored diplomacy over fighting, but the same can't be said of others. As the clan met in Meghloduhr for what was expected to be a peaceful meeting, they were attacked by an unknown clan. Many were lost, but many more staggered and limped back to tell the tale of triumph.*

Battle at Thalam Hill: *Begun over a flagon of wine, this battle was the bloodiest the Thunderaxes ever faced. The clan was split, unable to agree on who had made the wine—the winner was to receive 200 gp from the chieftain, but two separate wine-makers laid claim to the winning product.*

A proper winner was never declared, and the contest ultimately called off, never to be held again.

Attack on Korndihm: *This battle began when the Firebrand clan stole the sacred axe of the Thun-*

deraxe namesake. The latter fought valiantly and quickly managed to retrieve the axe with minimal casualties, and the axe now resides in the Hall of Heroes; but the axe was eventually lost to time. (The strikethrough appears on the placard.)

Paragon Plaza

Most of the Pristine City was built to honor the Thunderaxe clan, but Paragon Plaza is different. While the dwarves revere their past, they also look to their future, and so they built Paragon Plaza to honor dwarven heroes yet to come. The six immense statues each represent a particular dwarven virtue; the builders intended them to inspire future generations of Thunderaxes.

Because the builders were more focused on ostentatious appearance than practical function, they built Paragon Plaza as a labyrinth with a single walking path, rather than a park where visitors could wander as they liked. Unless the PCs fly, they'll enter the plaza through the grotto or the garden, then pass three statues before reaching the other side. At that point, the PCs can exit the plaza or continue along the intended path, passing three other statues before reaching their starting point.

Exploring the Plaza

Paragon Plaza was one of the first parts of the city to be completed, and the builders lavished attention on it because it was an effective way to show progress to visiting patrons and other dignitaries.

Melody Crystals: As elsewhere in the Pristine City, *melody crystals* are marked on the map. In Paragon Plaza, they play stirring, uplifting music (with lots of brass and percussion) when they detect a humanoid within 20 feet. *Melody crystals* are particularly prevalent in area P1, where they can trigger a dangerous hazard.

Illusory Crowds: The password to activate the illusory crowds within Paragon Plaza is "khorvurth kulaa." The crowds appear for 1 minute in front of each statue, milling about in identical fashion (another example of how the builders cut corners). The grotto and the garden don't have illusory crowds activated. The crowds in area P2 don't disappear after 1 minute; they continue to walk around and talk to each other in a perpetual loop.

Paragon Blessings: Each statue has a paragon blessing PCs can receive if they spend a minute in quiet contemplation and prayer near the statue, then chant *sadram thalinek andru*, which means "grant me your blessing" in an old Dwarvish dialect. Each blessing lasts one hour. A PC can obtain

PARAGON PLAZA

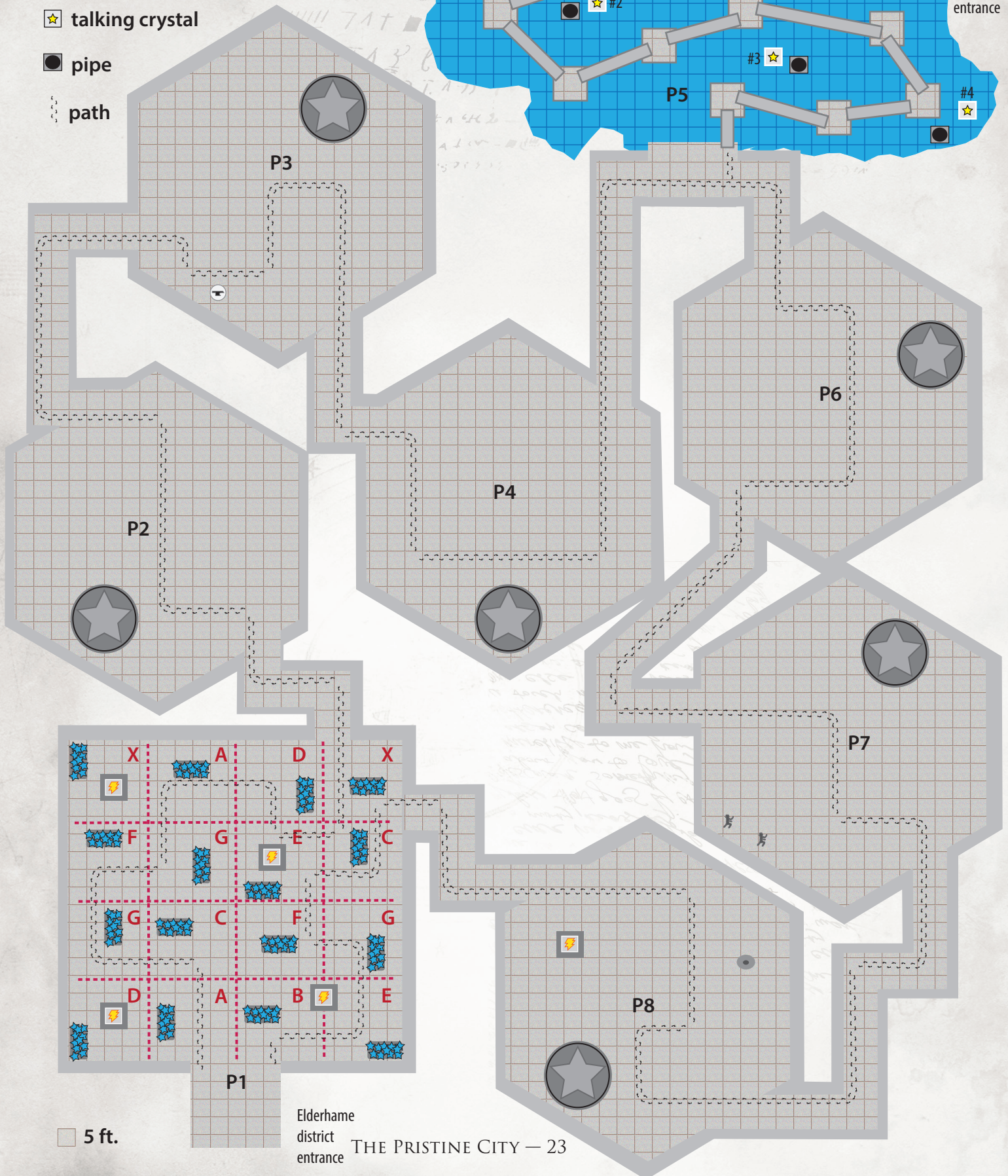
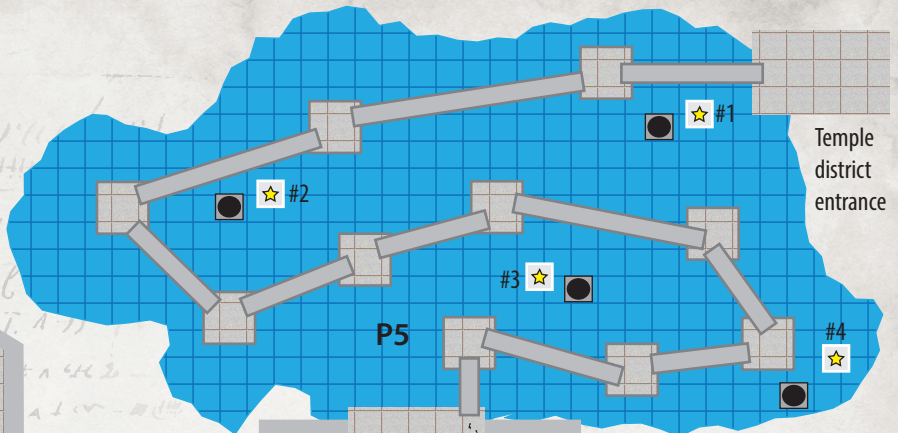
★ melody crystal

⚡ lightning tower

★ talking crystal

● pipe

⋯ path



□ 5 ft.

Elderhome district entrance

only one blessing at a time and can obtain each blessing only once.

If the collapse score is 35 or higher, obtaining a blessing has a side effect: a network of fine cracks emerges on the surface of each statue, crackling as it covers the statue head to toe. This cosmetic damage doesn't damage the statue's integrity, but it might worry the PCs standing nearby. If the collapse score is 100 or higher, the magic of the *paragon blessings* no longer functions.

Other Collapse Effects: Beyond the specific changes listed for each location, the six grand statues remain intact until the collapse score reaches 70, at which point heads and arms fall off; that's visible from any reasonable vantage point in the city. When the collapse score reaches 100, the statues themselves topple over.

PI. Crystal Garden

This entrance to Paragon Plaza contains no monsters, but if the city's collapse damages the decorative "singing crystals" on display here, the PCs must negotiate a hazardous path to reach the statues beyond.

The encounter description below assumes the collapse score is at least 35. If it's lower, describe only a few broken crystals, and the melody crystals play a coherent tune as the PCs walk through the area.

- ▶ A broad flagstone courtyard is hemmed in by marble walls, with winding paths set in dark stone. The paths lead to two exits on the far side.
- ▶ Raised platforms have softly glowing crystals in clusters. They look like bushes and hedges, but are made entirely of quartz-like crystal.
- ▶ Shattered crystal fragments litter the ground.
- ▶ Four ironbound towers, each 20 feet high, overlook the paths.

The dwarves created hundreds of *melody crystals* that would play stirring symphonic music as visitors walked through the garden. Now that they're damaged, the crystal harmonics create a lethal hazard when the music turns dissonant.

Using Music in the Crystal Garden

If you have a keyboard handy (or even a keyboard app on a smartphone), you can play music that corresponds to the zones so the players hear the dissonance for themselves.

The zone names correspond to musical notes, and the safe combinations are major chords (CEG, ACF, BDG) and minor chords (ADF, BEG, ACE). Whenever the PCs move from zone to zone, describe the crystals lighting up in the new area and play the combination of tones they hear. Your players will soon pick up on how dissonance deals damage.

The obvious danger is the four lightning towers in the garden; PCs who've encountered them in other parts of the city know to spread out (or they'll figure it out quickly). But there's a second danger: dissonant music can shatter the *melody crystals*, causing a blast of magic energy and jagged shards.

As the PCs approach a lightning tower, be sure to describe the electrical effect before a PC gets close enough to discharge the lightning. The challenge lies in avoiding a discharge that cascades through the whole group.

Lightning Tower: Creatures within 30 feet of a lightning tower are limned in St. Elmo's fire, which does no damage but warns of the forthcoming electrical discharge.

The lightning tower activates when a creature steps within 20 feet of it, releasing an arc of electricity. That creature must make a DC 15 Dexterity saving throw, taking 16 (3d10) electricity damage on a failed saving throw, or half as much damage on a successful one.

After the electricity hits the first creature, it arcs to another random creature within 10 feet of the first creature, dealing 2d10 more electricity damage (5d10 total). This arcing effect continues, adding 2d10 electricity damage each time, as long as there's another creature within 10 feet of the last target who hasn't been hit yet. If it arcs, the electricity can extend beyond its usual range of 20 feet.

Damaged Melody Crystals: As depicted on the map, the crystal garden is divided into sixteen zones. As a PC steps into each zone, the remaining *melody crystals* play swelling music notes in unison (mostly horns and wordless voices) and light up in a particular color as long as at least one PC remains in the zone:

Zone	Color	Zone	Color
A	red	B	orange
C	yellow	D	green
E	blue	F	indigo
G	violet	X	no lights, no music

If the PCs are in only one or two zones at a time, the music poses no threat (but they're grouped together, which makes the lightning towers more dangerous). When the PCs are standing in three or more different zones, there's a chance for the music to turn dissonant and the crystals to explode.

As the PCs move through the crystal garden, keep track of which zones are playing music. The following combinations sound harmonious and are safe: CEG, ACF, BDG, ADF, BEG, and ACE. Anything

else causes crystals to explode throughout the garden, dealing 2d10 damage every round until the *melody crystals* are all gone (see below) or the PCs move out of zones to end the dissonance.

The garden contains enough *melody crystals* to sustain 10 rounds of crystal explosions. After that point, the lightning towers are still dangerous, but the few remaining crystals don't play music anymore.

Aftermath: If the PCs destroy all the *melody crystals* or disable the lightning towers, add 3 to the collapse score.

P2. Torulf, Who Cleaves in Twain

To reach this statue, the PCs must contend with hostile constructs and a malfunctioning crowd illusion.

- ▶ An open flagstone courtyard sits hemmed in by marble walls, a 50-foot statue in the center.
- ▶ The statue is a male dwarf holding an axe overhead, about to chop downward. The art style is smooth and abstract, with few details visible.
- ▶ Inscription on the plinth reads "TORULF, WHO CLEAVES IN TWAIN."
- ▶ A clockwork dwarf and a clockwork minotaur walk toward the statue base.
- ▶ A crowd of dwarves milling about in the courtyard impedes the constructs' paths.
- ▶ **DC 15 Wisdom (Perception):** PC notices the dwarves are illusory; automatic if the PCs observe for a minute or more.
- ▶ If a PC is within 20 feet, *melody crystals* play stirring music at each corner of the statue base.
- ▶ PCs can see a gap in the marble walls on the far side of the courtyard.

Unlike the other statues, Torulf's illusory crowd has malfunctioned and can't be turned off. As the players confront the constructs, they'll have to fight in a crowd of illusions.

For their part, the constructs are treating the crowd as if it's real, pausing so they won't run into the dwarves.

Clockwork Dwarf (1): Appendix B

Clockwork Minotaur (1): Appendix B

Dialogue: "Disperse, citizens! Interlopers are present!" (The dwarf isn't having much luck getting the illusions to obey.)

Illusory Crowds: These crowds function similarly to the *mirror image* spell, but they are pre-programmed images rather than copies of any PC. At the start of each round, roll 4d6. The result is how many illusory dwarves are nearby. These illusions provide cover as though they were solid medium creatures. The illusions don't make opportunity attacks, but each takes up its own space.

Move each one 20 feet in a random direction at the beginning of each subsequent round.

Rewards: The *paragon blessing* for Torulf expands your critical range by +1 for one hour.

P3. Sigrun, Who Tends the Flame

The area around this statue is deserted, though the floating fireballs may worry cautious players.

- ▶ An open flagstone courtyard sits hemmed in by marble walls; a 50-foot statue sits in the center.
- ▶ The statue is a female dwarf holding a torch in one hand and blacksmith's tongs in the other. The art style is smooth and abstract, with few details visible. Inscription on the plinth reads "SIGRUN, WHO TENDS THE FLAME."
- ▶ Opposite the statue on the courtyard's periphery, a short column has an iron anvil atop it.
- ▶ Five balls of flame, each the size of a basketball, drift aimlessly through the courtyard.
- ▶ If a PC is within 20 feet, *melody crystals* play stirring music at each corner of the statue base.
- ▶ PCs can see a gap in the marble walls on the far side of the courtyard.

This statue is dedicated to the dwarves' paragon of blacksmiths. The floating fireballs are dangerous only if PCs approach them, so PCs can move through the area quickly or pause to obtain the *paragon blessing* (if they know the proper prayer).

Balls of Flame (5): These function just like giant wasps (*Monster Manual*), except they deal fire damage and don't react at all to creatures they aren't adjacent to. Left alone, they just drift around the periphery of the courtyard, moving only a few feet per second. They don't move within 20 feet of the statue unless the PCs antagonize them.

Illusory Crowd: If someone says "khorvurth kulaa," the crowds appear and function as described in the Common Elements section, lasting for 1 minute. The balls of flame ignore the illusions and float right through them.

Anvil: The short column (about 10 feet high) has an inscription encircling the base: "Anvil of the Desert." This is one of the key relics of Sibda the Mighty (described in the NPCs Interested in the Pristine City section). A gift from a far-off community of dwarves, it weighs 75 pounds and is always warm to the touch.

Rewards: The *paragon blessing* for Sigrun renders the recipient immune to fire damage for 1 round—starting when the recipient next takes fire damage. The immunity fades in one hour if unused. To obtain the blessing, a PC must chant *sadram thalinek andru* at the statue base.

P4. Brodur, Who Sings to Stone

Ettercaps here are trying to obtain the statue's *paragon blessing*, but they aren't performing the prayer correctly. They can't pronounce the words right.

- ▶ An open flagstone courtyard sits hemmed in by marble walls; a 50-foot statue sits in the center.
- ▶ The statue is a male dwarf stooped over, holding a hammer in one hand and a chisel in the other. The art style is smooth and abstract, with few details visible.
- ▶ Inscription on the plinth reads "BRODUR, WHO SINGS TO STONE."
- ▶ Ettercaps chant and gesture about 30 feet from the statue.
- ▶ One ettercap has an ornate staff, one carries a spear, and the last two have daggers in belt sheaths.
- ▶ **DC 15 Wisdom (Perception):** PC hears from a distance that the ettercap nearest the statue is chanting "shadram zalinek andru" repeatedly. PCs learn this automatically if they get closer.
- ▶ **DC 20 Intelligence (History):** PC knows that *sadram thalinek andru* means "grant me your blessing" in an old Dwarvish dialect. Dwarf PCs and PCs who speak Dwarvish know this automatically, and they can tell that the ettercap isn't pronouncing it right.

If a PC moves within 20 feet of the statue, *melody crystals* play stirring music until the PC departs.

If the PCs watch for a while, they see the chanter pause and look expectantly at the statue for a few moments. Then the largest ettercap cuffs it on the back of the head, and the others start chanting again. The last two ettercaps stand guard, occasionally glancing back at the others.

The ettercaps can't pronounce the "s" or "th" sounds correctly in the prayer, so they aren't getting the paragon blessing from the statue like they thought they would. They crawled into the city at roughly the same time the PCs did (arriving through a fissure in the cavern ceiling), and they've been exploring the city ever since.

The ettercap explorers were a larger band, but they've fared poorly in battles against the built-in guards, so they're paranoid and hostile, apt to attack first and ask questions later. The spiders attack as soon as the ettercaps do. If the PCs can parley with them (or interrogate them after a battle), the ettercaps can describe what they've found during their initial explorations.

Talk Like an Ettercap

If you get the opportunity to roleplay the ettercaps, make sure you don't pronounce the "s" or "th" sounds when an ettercap speaks. Use "sh" and "z" instead. Clever players may be able to deduce the actual prayer that grants them the *paragon blessing*.

How much the ettercaps know about the city depends on how much time has elapsed since the PCs arrived, because the ettercaps started exploring at roughly the same time. The ettercaps can generally describe places they've been—a mix of places the PCs have and have not explored—but they don't go into details unless forced to. The ettercaps didn't disturb much. They wanted an overview of the city before returning home with news of the wondrous place they discovered.

Ettercaps (3): *Monster Manual*

Giant Spider (1): *Monster Manual*

They'll fight at a moment's notice, but they aren't particularly brave. If the battle goes poorly, they'll use their webs to slow down the PCs long enough to escape.

Dialogue: "Shurfash dwellersh! Get zem!"

Illusory Crowd: If someone says "khorvurth kulaa," the crowds appear and function as described in the Common Elements section, lasting for 1 minute. The ettercaps can't trigger the illusion because they can't pronounce "khorvurth" clearly enough.

Rewards: The *paragon blessing* for Brodur grants the recipient 10 temporary hit points, which fade in one hour if unused. To obtain it, a PC must chant *sadram thalinek andru* at the statue base.

P5. Grotto of Contemplation

Before the PCs even get to the six statues in Paragon Plaza, they'll have to contend with one of the few watery parts of the Pristine City—and the hostile ochre jellies that call the grotto home.

- ▶ This walled, artificial lagoon has a winding, elevated walkway above dark water.
- ▶ Gaps in the walls at two points on the opposite end lead to the immense statues or the city streets (adapt this based on where the PCs start the encounter).
- ▶ **DC 15 Wisdom (Perception):** PC notices from a distance that the water is gently rippling. The air is utterly still.
- ▶ **DC 20 Wisdom (Perception):** PC notices from a distance that the walkways are badly rusted.
- ▶ Copper pipes, green with age, stick up from the water in four spots near the walkways.
- ▶ Next to the walkway, and near each set of copper pipes, is a crystal mounted on a waist-high dais.
- ▶ **DC 17 Intelligence (Arcana):** Determine that the crystals speak through the *magic mouth* spell.

The city builders intended the grotto of contemplation to be one of the two primary entry points to Paragon Plaza. (The crystal garden in area P1 is the other.) The fountains have been deactivated and the walkway is rusting away, but the greatest hazards are the four ochre jellies that lurk beneath the water's surface.

The jellies inevitably attack the PCs, but you can amp up the tension with splashes and ripples in the water, creaking and groaning walkways, and so forth. The jellies are effectively invisible to creatures who aren't also in the water.

Ochre Jellies (4): *Monster Manual*

Copper Pipes: The copper pipes are part of a fountain system the dwarves turned off when they departed the city.

The fountains spring back to life after an ochre jelly uses the pipes to move from place to place—that movement creates a siphon effect, causing water to start pumping through the whole system. The first time an ochre jelly slithers into one of the pipes marked on the map, it reappears the following round at the corresponding fountain, and the other fountains start spraying water. Thereafter, the ochre jellies use the pipes and fountains for nearly instantaneous transportation across the grotto. Have the jellies use the pipes at even the slightest justification. You want the PCs to experience the “fountain of lethal ooze” at least a few times during this encounter.

Rickety Walkways: Each 10-foot section of walkway might collapse under the PCs' weight. At the beginning of each turn, roll 1d12 for each section of walkway with one or more PC atop it. If the result is equal to or lower than the number of PCs, that section of walkway groans and collapses, dumping the PCs into the water. Players can make a DC 20 Dexterity saving throw to avoid also landing prone once in the water. If prone in the water, the player must spend a move-equivalent action to get back up.

Water: The lagoon is 5 feet deep throughout. The water is fresh, but has a metallic taste.

Talking Crystals: If the collapse score is below 35 and a creature passes within 10 feet of a dais, the *talking crystal* atop the dais activates, talking about the city in a disembodied monotone. (See sidebar for what the crystals say.)

The ochre jellies activate the *talking crystals*, too. You can engineer a *Jaws*-like moment if the PCs discover how the nearest *talking crystal* works—they see ripples in the water just before a far-off *talking crystal* activates.

What the Talking Crystals Say

The dwarves who built the city set the crystals up for demonstration, but never recorded the actual message they intended visitors to hear.

Crystal 1: “Throughout the long history of our people, throughout the many adversities we have overcome, one truth has remained evident. One truth guides us...”

Crystal 2: “...and so on. Bakluria's ‘One Truth’ speech is one of the options we're considering for the grotto of contemplation.”

Crystal 3: “Our intent is for the visitor to feel calmed, yet inspired. The committee will have an approved message within the month, and then we'll replace this voice.”

Crystal 4: “Until then, imagine hearing inspirational poetry as you admire the fountains and stroll toward the paragon statues.”

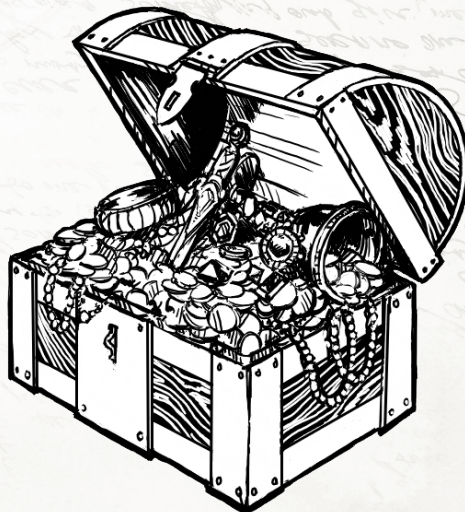
P6. Vidkun, Who Grieves at Dawn

This statue has one of the more useful *paragon blessings*—and conveniently for the PCs, the area is deserted.

- ▶ An open flagstone courtyard sits hemmed in by marble walls; a 50-foot statue sits in the center.
- ▶ The statue is a male dwarf kneeling, staring at his hands with mouth agape. The art style is smooth and abstract, with few details visible.
- ▶ Inscription on the plinth reads “VIDKUN, WHO GRIEVES AT DAWN.”
- ▶ If a PC is within 20 feet, *melody crystals* play stirring music at each corner of the statue base.
- ▶ PCs can see a gap in the marble walls on the far side of the courtyard.

Vidkun's statue isn't part of any clockwork patrols, so the PCs can rest here safely. Unless they actively lure someone here, they're safe from the city's denizens.

Rewards: The *paragon blessing* for Vidkun grants the recipient a *cure wounds* (5d8 + 4). To obtain the blessing, a PC must chant *sadram thalinek andru* at the statue base.



P7. Gerda, Who Mocks the Tomb

This area has a tough battle against golems, but clever players can mitigate the threat by luring the golems elsewhere or otherwise tricking their programming.

- ▶ An open flagstone courtyard sits hemmed in by marble walls, a 50-foot statue in the center.
- ▶ The statue is a female dwarf charging forward, with a shield on one arm and a warhammer in the other hand. The art style is smooth and abstract, with few details visible.
- ▶ Inscription on the plinth reads “GERDA, WHO MOCKS THE TOMB.”
- ▶ Two alabaster golems wrestle near the base of the statue.
- ▶ PCs who observe the wrestling for at least a minute see it’s a loop of the same grappling moves performed over and over.
- ▶ If a PC is within 20 feet, *melody crystals* play stirring music at each corner of the statue base. PCs can see a gap in the marble walls on the far side of the courtyard.
- ▶ Two furry, humanoid corpses lie on the periphery of the courtyard, each in a pool of dark liquid. (These are ettercap explorers, part of the group found in area P4.)

The alabaster golems are guardians of the city, but a flaw in their programming has them identifying each other as intruders, and they’ve been locked in a repetitive wrestling match for centuries.

If the golems notice intruders, the programming loop breaks and they’ll attack immediately. It’s possible to get the golems locked back in an endless wrestling match, but only if the golems first see no other intruders, then each sees only the other. The PCs can engineer that state if they retreat in two different directions, then hide until the golems return to area P7.

Clever PCs might also lure the clockwork creatures from area P8 back into this plaza. If they do, the golems attack the clockwork entities—another programming flaw.

Alabaster Golems (2): Appendix B

Dialogue: “New...foes...” The golems repeat this phrase over and over again. If no enemies are within sight, a golem says, “Where...foes?” until it finds an enemy. Then it says “old...foe...” (if it’s the other golem) or “new...foes...” (if it’s the PCs).

Ettercap Corpses: Each ettercap has a dagger in a belt sheath and 1d4 x 10 gp.

Rewards: The *paragon blessing* for Gerda grants three rerolls of attacks or saves, to be used whenever the recipient wishes. Unused rerolls are unavailable after one hour has passed. To obtain the blessing, a PC must chant *sadram thalinek andru* at the statue base.

Reminder: Destroying a golem adds 2 to the collapse score, so a battle here could have bigger-than-usual implications for the city as a whole.

P8. Tuva, Who Guards the Womb

This courtyard has clockwork guardians for the PCs to fight, but if the PCs observe their enemies first, they might figure out how the lightning towers work.

- ▶ An open flagstone courtyard sits hemmed in by marble walls, a 50-foot statue in the center.
- ▶ The statue is a female dwarf wearing a robe, cradling a bundled infant in one hand and brandishing a spear in the other. The art style is smooth and abstract, with few details visible.
- ▶ Inscription on the plinth reads “TUVA, WHO GUARDS THE WOMB.”
- ▶ Opposite the statue on the courtyard periphery is a massive stone wheel upright and embedded in the flagstones.
- ▶ Two clockwork creatures scuttle near in the middle of the courtyard.
- ▶ A 20-foot ironbound tower sits opposite the statue.

The clockwork entities are experimenting with the lightning tower. It’s not worth tracking the electricity damage they take, but the PCs can observe them and infer how to minimize the danger of the tower.

If a PC is within 20 feet, *melody crystals* play stirring music at each corner of the statue base.

A single clockwork minotaur approaches the lightning tower until it’s covered in St. Elmo’s fire. Then the other construct moves toward it to form a simple formation such as a line or a triangle. When the lightning tower discharges an electrical arc, describe how it bounces from each clockwork being to the next. Then they retreat, and the process repeats itself.

Clockwork Minotaurs (2): Appendix B

Dialogue: “Suspend test! Interlopers are present!”

Lightning Tower: Creatures within 30 feet of a lightning tower are limned in St. Elmo’s fire, which does no damage but warns of the forthcoming electrical discharge. If a creature steps within 20 feet of a tower, it triggers the trap.

The lightning tower activates when a creature steps within 20 feet of it, releasing an arc of electricity. That creature must make a DC 15 Dexterity saving throw, taking 16 (3d10) electricity damage on a failed saving throw, or half as much damage on a successful one.

After the electricity hits the first creature, it arcs to another random creature within 10 feet of

the first creature, dealing 2d10 more electricity damage (5d10 total). This arcing effect continues, adding 2d10 electricity damage each time, as long as there's another creature within 10 feet of the last target who hasn't been hit yet. If it arcs, the electricity can extend beyond its usual range of 20 feet.

Stone Wheel: This is the Wheel of Gardauth, one of the key relics of Sibda the Mighty. See the NPCs Interested in the Pristine City section for a discussion of its importance.

Rewards: The *paragon blessing* for Tuva grants the recipient the ability to automatically stabilize the next time the PC hits 0 hp (thereby avoiding death saves). This lasts one day. To obtain the blessing, a PC must chant *sadram thalinek andru* at the statue base.

Clan Elderhame

The elders of any clan are entitled to a few extra comforts, and the Thunderaxes were no different. When the new city was built, the designers saw to it that the neighborhood intended for the elders was well above average.

CEI. Clan Leader's House

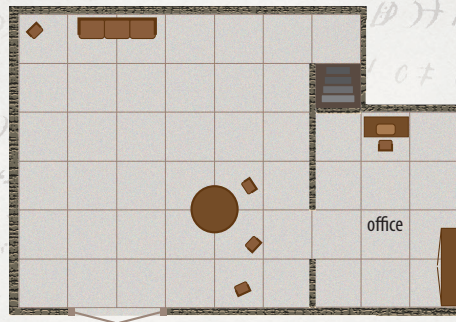
This house was probably in pretty good shape before the guards started throwing each other around.

- ▶ This large, two-story house is quite elaborate—golden banisters, expensive furniture—and obviously meant for someone important.
- ▶ A clockwork butler continuously goes between each of the enemies, trying to determine if they need refreshments.
- ▶ A malfunctioning clockwork minotaur attacks an alabaster golem in the front room.
- ▶ The clang of metal and the whir of gears fills the room. The air smells of dust.
- ▶ At the top of the central stairway is a bas-relief depicting a dwarven caravan heading into a vast network of caverns.

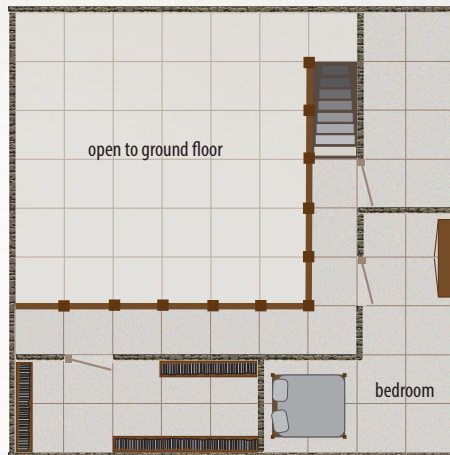
As soon as the players enter, the clockwork butler (equivalent to a clockwork dwarf, but it doesn't fight) rushes over to them, individually inquiring if they need any refreshments. The other two creatures in the room notice this and initiate combat with the players immediately. Throughout this fight, the butler gets very close to each combatant in turn, trying to see what they need. Maneuver the butler so it's in the most annoying place possible for the PCs, blocking their lines of advance and

CE1: CLAN LEADER'S HOME

Ground floor



Upstairs



retreat and otherwise getting in the way.

None of the creatures flee, but when badly damaged, the alabaster golem sounds an alarm. No one responds to the alarm, but it's quite loud.

Alabaster Golem (1): Appendix B

Clockwork Minotaur (1): Appendix B
Dialogue: "Cease resistance."

Bas-Relief: This is Myrdikka's Bas-Relief, a key relic of Sibda the Mighty described in the NPCs Interested in the Pristine City section.

Rewards: Three copper couplings worth 100 gp each, one copper bearing worth 200 gp, and a gear train worth 500 gp from the clockwork myrmidon. The room also has four small granite figurines of various animals worth 250 gp each. Players can also find the *builder's gloves* (see Appendix A) here.

If the collapse score is over 100, the figurines are broken and worthless, but the gloves are undamaged.

CE2. Overview

Ettercaps get the lay of the land.

- ▶ This large patio area takes up as much space on the corner as a building might. Tables and chairs are neatly set up.
- ▶ A large, sagging awning covers the patio.
- ▶ Clockwork dwarves are trying to adjust the awning supports.
- ▶ The dwarves make clunky mechanical sounds.
- ▶ A dead ettercap lies near the patio's center.
- ▶ **Stealth:** PCs can sneak to the front door of the building—but like so many buildings in this city, this one is nothing more than a façade.
- ▶ **Perception:** Ettercaps sit on a nearby roof, eyeing the dwarves. (Make a Stealth check for them if the PCs take a moment to look around.)

Other than the monsters having taken over the area, this would be a lovely spot for brunch. The ettercaps want revenge for their fallen comrade, and they're waiting for the right moment to attack the clockworks. The PCs' arrival gives them that moment.

Ettercaps start off on the roof, and it takes them about a round to safely get down. They're able climbers, but they can't move faster than a careful creep on the roof without it caving in (see the Common City Elements section above).

PCs can take this time as an opportunity to open conversation with them (presuming the PCs have noticed them) or to fight the clockwork spies while they're still the only adversaries.

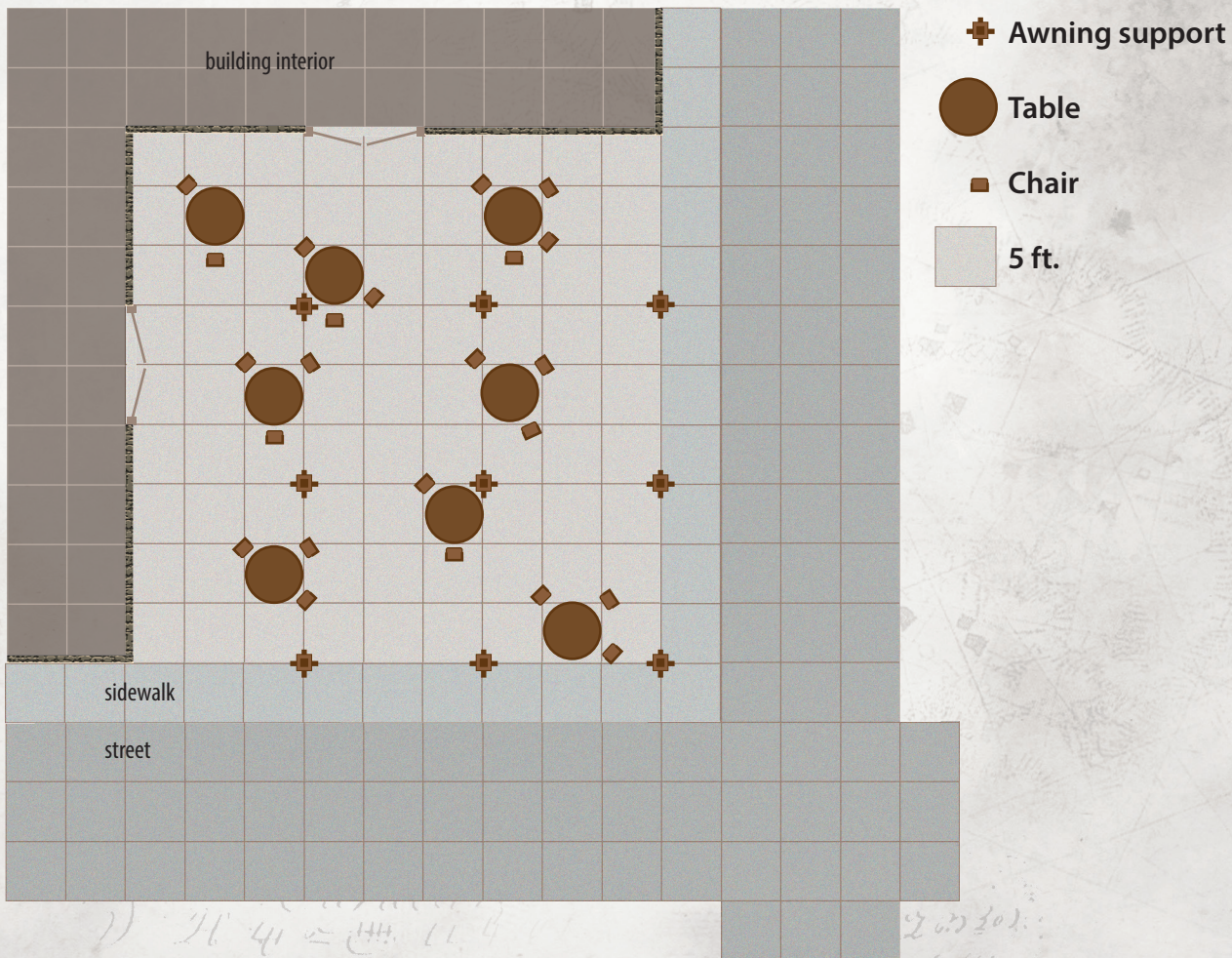
As elsewhere, the ettercaps are suspicious and jumpy from separation and loss. The time they spend getting down from the roof will probably be the only chance the PCs have for parlay—of course, they'll have to try to speak while also fending off the clockwork dwarves.

The ettercaps focus on the clockwork dwarves until one of the ettercaps falls to a PC or until all the spies are dead. Then they turn on the PCs. The dwarves attack whomever they feel is the biggest threat.

Clockwork Dwarves (2): Appendix B

Ettercaps (2): *Monster Manual*

CE2: OVERVIEW



Dialogue: "Enemy detected." "Intrudersh!"

Collapse Effects: If the collapse score is over 70, the building is cracked and the windows are broken. If the score is over 100, the awning above has fallen down, causing rough terrain throughout the fight.

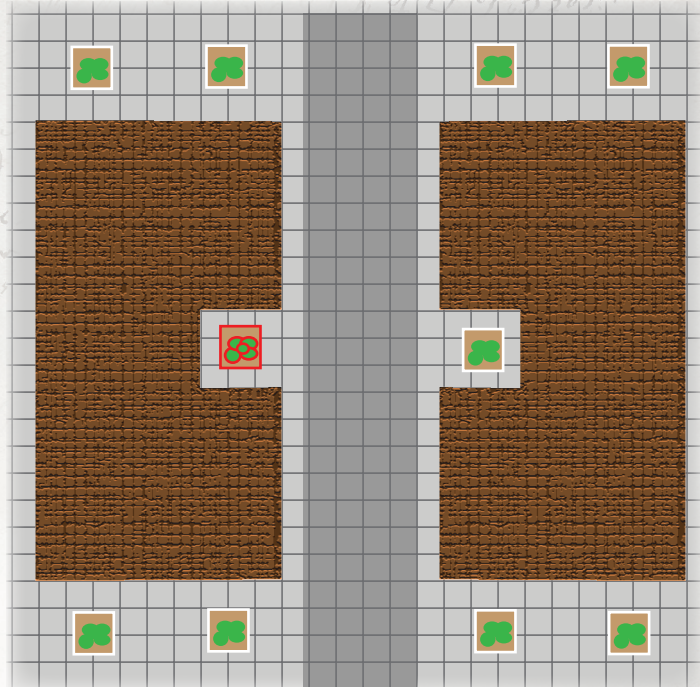
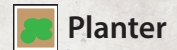
CE3. Tree Stand

The mouths argue with each other about all sorts of things—like how to pronounce "gibbering."

- ▶ This street has big, important-looking buildings surrounded by big, important-looking trees.
- ▶ One tree (marked in red) is particularly large and sits in a recess of a nearby large building.
- ▶ The trees are actually two dimensional, but are magically designed to follow the largest group of people, showing them the side that looks like a real tree.
- ▶ A gibbering moulder and a few ochre jellies are in this area.
- ▶ **Perception:** Players might notice the jellies before they drop from the roof.

Everything seems calm here. The gibbering moulder isn't necessarily hiding, but *is* behind the tree. It attacks when the players approach. The ochre jellies drop down from the roof when combat starts. Their aim is to land *on* the PCs. If the collapse score is over 100, chunks of the building also fall onto the PCs, causing incidental damage.

CE3: TREE STAND



Gibbering Moulder (1): *Monster Manual*

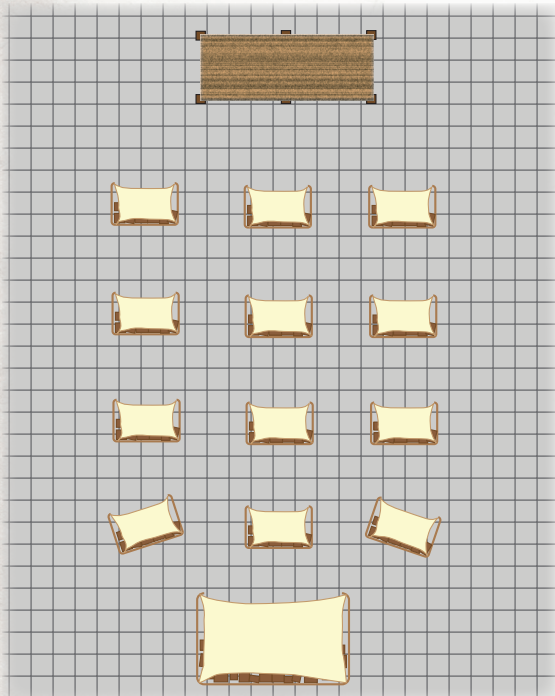
Ochre Jellies (2): *Monster Manual*

Trees: The trees here are all made of cardboard. Trying to climb them results only in their falling down.

Rewards: Two *potions of resistance (acid)*.

OPEN MARKET

5 ft.



CE4. Open Market

The stalls are empty, but plenty of critters can keep an eye on them anyhow.

- ▶ Empty stalls dot this large open area, just waiting to house lovingly crafted what-have-yous. Each is draped with a "coming soon" sign.
- ▶ A good-sized stage sits at one end of the open space, ready to hold entertainment for market-goers.
- ▶ Clockwork dwarves and a clockwork minotaur patrol this area.
- ▶ The mechanical sounds of the clockwork dwarves mix with the clunking walk of the minotaur.

The stalls are set up very neatly. All they need are wares and people to sell them. None of the creatures flee.

Clockwork Dwarves (2): Appendix B

Clockwork Minotaur (1): Appendix B
Dialogue: "Enemy detected."

Stage: This stage was clearly intended to hold entertainment both live and holographic, but it has fallen into disrepair with age. The holographic entertainment comes to life when someone enters the market, but it only sputters with occasional

eerie half-sounds and flickering images, giving the market a creepy, post-apocalyptic feeling. A DC 15 Dexterity (Acrobatics) check is sufficient to leap onto the stage from a running start; failure means the PC's move ends at the edge of the stage.

Collapse Effects: If the collapse score is over 35, the stage starts looking unsafe to climb on. If it's over 70, several stalls begin to look rickety. If the score is over 100, some stalls have fallen over completely, while the rest look very close to following suit.

Rewards: One iron axe worth 550 gp, two iron couplings worth 200 gp each, and five steel fasteners worth 150 gp each.

CE5. Banquet Hall

This hall was clearly intended for the elite—and very elite monsters seem to have taken it over.

- ▶ A long banquet table sits at the front of the room, elevated slightly above the other tables.
- ▶ The table center has a statue of a dwarf with a heavy beard (heavy even by dwarven standards).
- ▶ Two clockwork waiters continuously move from creature to creature, checking to see if they need anything.
- ▶ A wraith wanders the room. Two quasit demons are rummaging through cupboards on the far end of the room.
- ▶ One wall has an empty frame on it, and mirrored shards litter the floor beneath it.
- ▶ A room like this should smell of food, but this one just smells like age.

This place was designed for and with good taste—save a little dust, it's a lovely place. It does appear to be infested with ghosts, however.

When the PCs enter, the waiters notice them immediately and hurry over to see what they need. This draws attention of the other creatures in the room, who attack immediately. As in area C1, the clockwork waiters are statistically identical to clockwork dwarves, but they don't fight or

effectively defend themselves. They're good at two things: providing excellent customer service and getting in the way during a battle. Maneuver them to be obstacles to the PCs, and make sure they tell the PCs what the soup of the day is. None of the ghosts or demons flee.

Quasits (2): *Monster Manual*

Wraith (1): *Monster Manual*

Dialogue: "What do you want?"

Statue: This statue is one of the key relics of Sibda the Mighty. See the NPCs Interested in the Pristine City section for a discussion of its importance.

Cupboards: The cupboards contain only ceramic plates and cups.

Broken Mirror: The demons were bound into the mirror, where they would create disturbing imagery as an "artistic" delight for banquet-goers. When the mirror broke, the demons were freed. (Other demons are similarly bound throughout the city, and when the collapse score reaches 100, they'll all escape.)

Collapse Effects: If the collapse score is over 70, the walls are cracked, and some rubble from the ceiling is now on the floor, causing rough terrain.

Rewards: The linens on these tables, though old, are worth about 750 gp total. The silver tableware is worth about 1,500 gp total. The plates and cups are fragile, but they're worth 800 gp if they're returned to Dun Lodar intact.

CE6. Banquet Hall Basement

Groaning from the basement is never suspicious.

- ▶ The basement is pitch black.
- ▶ If players light the basement, they see the walls are piled high with barrels. A staircase leads down.
- ▶ Flames lick the far wall (which is down the stairs), and there's a pile of bones on the floor.
- ▶ Pitch black unless/until the PCs light it up.
- ▶ The otherworldly groaning...and the faint smell of oak barrels.
- ▶ **DC 20 Strength:** Players can throw the barrels hard enough to break them open. They're filled with wine, but it's centuries old, and only the heartiest of dwarves would drink it.

This room is empty, save the barrels and flameskulls.

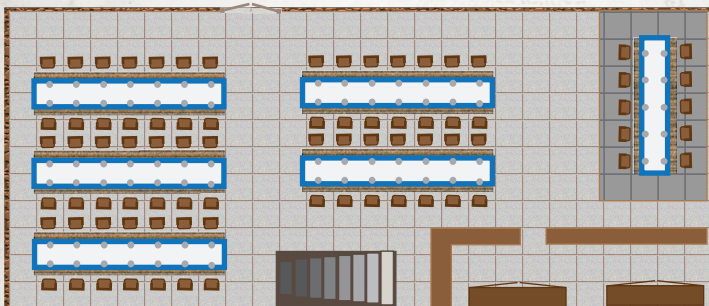
The hungry fogs look frighteningly unearthly. They don't flee.

Flameskulls (2): *Monster Manual*

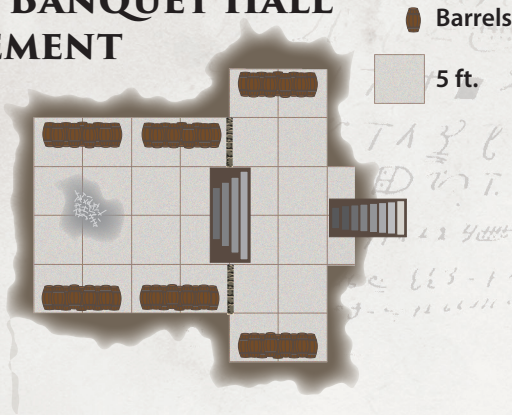
Collapse Effects: If the collapse score is over 70, a few barrels of wine are already broken, and the floor is slick, potentially hampering movement during the battle.

CE5: BANQUET HALL

5 ft.



CE6: BANQUET HALL BASEMENT



Barrels: If the barrels by the door were to roll down the stairs, they'd smack right into the fogs.
Rewards: All the rancid wine you can drink off the floor.

CE7. Community Center

A collection of things people you don't remember thought people they didn't remember might like.

- ▶ This building seems to be free of critters and creatures, but it has lots of rooms, each with something different.
- ▶ The front room has a large, empty reception desk opposite the front door. It also has various crafting areas set up around the room.
- ▶ The whole building is quiet, and the only smell is your fellow PCs.

This building feels peaceful, like the library. It's probably a reasonable place to take a rest. Or hide from the dark.

Illusory Crowds: Illusory crowds were added to the dance floor of the community center. The password to activate the illusory crowds is "khor-vurth kulaa." The crowds appear, stand on the dance floor in pairs as if ready to dance, then fade after 1 minute. (The dwarves never got around to programming the illusions to dance.)

Loom: The loom is the Redhammer Loom, one of the key relics of Sibda the Mighty (described in the NPCs Interested in the Pristine City section).

Collapse Effects: If the collapse score is over 70, the glass walls that look out onto the garden are broken, leaving broken glass all over the floor.

Rewards: Among the crafting supplies sits a very old loom. It's the Redhammer Loom, one of Sibda the Mighty's relics. Also visible are several bolts of silk and satin totaling 3,500 gp.

CE8. Sweet Shop

Candy! Wait...is it any good?

- ▶ This little shop is filled with candy.
- ▶ Barrels, each with a different kind of sweet, line the walls and dot the floor in between.
- ▶ Sun comes in from the windows during the "day;" magical sconces light the shop at night.
- ▶ The scent of sugar is strong. Sugar...and age.
- ▶ **DC 15 Wisdom (Perception):** Something about a few of these barrels seems off...like maybe they aren't filled just with candy.

The sweet shop seems undisturbed.

Candy Bins: The bins are made of wood and are DC 15 Strength to break apart.

Mechanical Toys: Several of the toys listed in the sidebar are turned on already, flying or crawling around the shop.

Rewards: Candy! Really old candy. Also the *cloak of the bear* (see Appendix A, p. 50) and magical toys totaling 1,750 gp (see sidebar).

Aftermath: Sugar high, most likely.

CE9. Luxury Furniture Store

This looks like a safe, comfortable place players can take a long or short rest. It's not, but it looks like it.

- ▶ Fancy furniture is everywhere—sofas, chairs, ottomans, beds. It all looks very comfortable.
- ▶ Several furniture items are mimics.
- ▶ This whole building smells musty, as though furniture has been sitting in it for centuries.
- ▶ **DC 25 Intelligence (Arcana):** Players can identify the mimics immediately.

Magical Toys in the Sweet Shop

- Clockwork hummingbird that follows you around
- Mechanical snake that slithers across the floor
- Mechanical turtle that flips itself onto its back, but can't flip back
- Clockwork gnats ("To annoy your enemies!")
- Little mechanical ooze that follows you around (makes it harder to hear the real oozes)
- Tiny mechanical dragon that follows you around; it's also a lighter
- Game of jacks (which function as caltrops if the PCs are the sort who weaponize everything); the jacks always remain within 5 feet of each other, hopping like frogs if necessary
- My First Prospecting Kit (with glow-in-the-dark pickaxe and long-since-dried-up assaying chemicals)
- Go Catch a Mole (a popular card game where you ask other players for cards that match those in your hand)
- Tiny but functional versions of the clockwork creatures that patrol the city (collect the rare minotaur model!)
- Elders' beards (comically long false beards for kids)
- Hungry Hungry Hippogriffs (a board game)

No one has touched anything in this room in a long time.

The mimics wait until the players have finished searching the building for monsters. If the players notice the mimics and initiate combat, all mimics join in immediately. Otherwise, they'll wait until the players either get comfortable or are about to leave, at which point the closest mimic initiates combat, with the rest joining in round two.

Mimics (4): *Monster Manual*

Aftermath: After the mimics are destroyed, this legitimately is a comfortable place for a rest.

CE10. Clerical House

This is a modestly sized building with just one main room on the main floor and one room above, the latter of which is a shrine to the dwarven ancestors.

The main room holds several drawers and cupboards—some have actual medical supplies, but most have slips of paper with notes like, “embalming tools go in this drawer” or “healing and resistance potions go in this cabinet.”

The shrine holds an intentionally gender-ambiguous statue in the center. This statue is intended to be the embodiment of all dwarven ancestors. All around the statue on the floor are pillows and cushions of varying shapes, sizes, and colors.

CE11. Barber Shop

Plenty of grooming supplies to be found for the prima donna in your party. It's a simple building with a few chairs and mirrors. (Scissors make a mediocre weapon in a pinch.)

As soon as the players walk in, a mechanical barber scurries up to them: “I CAN TRANSFORM. YOUR. LIFE. Through hair.” He should sound like he's playing for keeps on a reality show. He's not here to make friends.

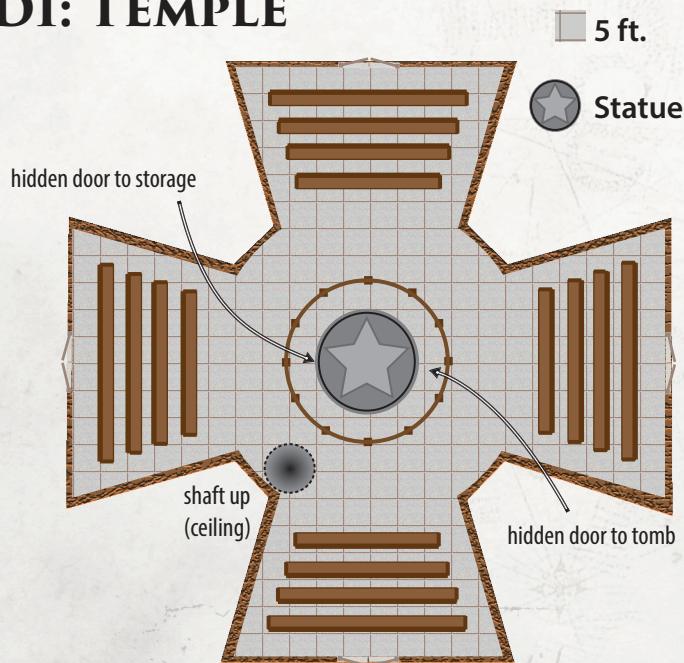
CE12. Trade Emporium

The front room is small and more or less empty save a counter for an employee to stand behind. The back room is large and contains empty crates and wagons the players can easily take.

CE13. Weapon Shop

Nothing makes players' eyes light up like the promise of looting a weapon shop, but this one is devoid of weapons. It does have all the equipment (forge, bellows, and so on) for a smithy. Kadisha's Mold, one of the key relics of Sibda the Mighty, is among the tools here (see the “NPCs Interested in the Pristine City” section).

TD1: TEMPLE



Temple District

The Temple District sits at the heart of the city. Besides the temple itself, this district holds the monastery, the school, and a few other interesting places.

TD1. Temple

The temple is the heart of the city. Directly below the clock tower and above the tombs, the temple grants access to more than just the veneration of those who came before.

► Four rows of pews sit before you. Each wing is laid out identically—four pews and a door in the back, each door leading to one of the city's four main streets.

► A huge statue of a dwarf stands tall in the middle of the room. The statue is encircled by a short, ornate crystal railing.

► A phase spider and two ettercaps wander about. Magical candles flicker around the edges of the room and around the statue in the center.

► **DC 15 Wisdom (Perception):** Find the door to the tombs and the door to the storage area immediately. They can also be located if the PCs examine the statue base for two minutes. Both are flush against the base of the statue.

The ettercaps attempt to flee when wounded, but their pet, the phase spider, does not.

Phase Spider (1): *Monster Manual*

Ettercaps (2): *Monster Manual*

Dialogue: "We have already claimed zis plashe."

Collapse Effects: If the collapse score is above 35, the glass windows are spiderwebbed. If the score is above 70, the windows are shattered, and glass is strewn about the floor. The statue in the center is cracking. If the score is above 100, the statue in the center has crumbled, so the ground has broken marble and glass (difficult terrain).

Shaft Up: Anyone standing under this hole in the ceiling floats slowly upward to area TD2. This functions similarly to the *levitate* spell.

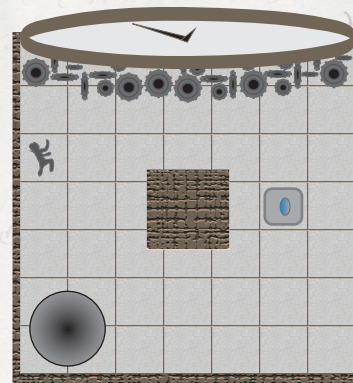
Tomb Door: The tomb door has no handle and is flush with the base of the statue. Push the door in to open it.

Illusory Crowds: The password to activate the illusory crowds is "khorvurth kulaa." The crowds appear, silently file into the pews, and then repeatedly start to sit down, only to jerk back into a standing position. (The dwarves never finished their programming.) They disappear after 1 minute.

Rewards: The storage area holds two healing potions and the *ring of holy orders* (see Appendix A).

Aftermath: If the players find the ring, they'll have an easier time in the tombs.

CLOCK TOWER



Clock gear

Scrying stone

Dwarf body

5 ft.

shaft down

TD2. Clock Tower

Only time will tell what you could find up there.

- ▶ At the top of a long spiral staircase sits a small room. The gears behind the clock face are visible.
- ▶ A skeleton—roughly dwarf-sized—is slumped against the wall next to what looks like a journal.
- ▶ A dretch demon and a vrock demon are trying to wreck the gears.
- ▶ A scrying stone sits on a pedestal in the center of the room.
- ▶ The clockworks smell like oil and metal.
- ▶ **DC 20 Dexterity:** Players can remove the scrying stone from its base while preserving its magic.

Clock Tower Journal

First Entry

With construction wrapping up, they want someone to stay and keep an eye on the city. They put the scrying stone up here, and the tower also gives a pretty good view. Makes sense that they'd want someone to look after it, considering who it's for. I don't know what the rotation looks like, though. I asked when I'd be relieved, and they said not to worry about it. That usually means they plan to leave you longer than you'd like, so I packed a couple lunches, just in case.

So far, I haven't seen a thing besides the patrol guards. I actually expect this to be a pretty easy gig.

Second Entry

Well, it's now well into the night. I've eaten both lunches, and haven't seen any of the construction workers since the sun went down. Maybe I misunderstood, and my shift was actually the full 24 hours. No harm, I suppose. I'll know for next

Third Entry

Last entry cut short because of lots of banging coming from the entrance. I used the stone to see what was going on, and they were sealing it up! I got down from the tower quick as I could and ran all the way there, but I was too late. The city was already sealed, and with me inside. I screamed my head off, but...they can't have heard me.

They must have forgotten I was in here. I guess I just wait for them to notice I'm missing.

Fourth Entry

A few days in now. If they were going to come back for me, I think they would have. I've searched the city, but there's not any food (save the candy shop). I found water enough, but...I mean, that's only going to last me so long.

Fifth Entry

It's been...I don't know...a week or so on nothing but candy. Candy and water. I thought maybe I could make that work, but...it's kind of just making me sick more than anything. So. I guess that's it, then.

Sixth Entry

I'm getting the creeps. I know the builders cut corners. I've heard what they bound into the walls...

Seventh Entry

Haven't much seen the point of writing—never was one for talking to myself. It's been...I'm not sure. A few weeks. Just holding this damn pen is really hard right now. But the weirdest thing happened.

It might have just been hallucinations. It had to be. Nothing else really makes sense. But just in case it's not...I don't know.

Something happened to the air. I don't know how to describe it. It just got...wobbly. Then all this stuff started coming through it. All these...what, monsters? I mean, I guess they were. I don't know what else I'd really call them. They look like nothing I've ever seen. It's almost like
[the journal stops here]

Everything seems in order—the demons haven't had much time to muck with the clockworks. They'd both rather fight living intruders, though, and immediately turn on the PCs.

The vrock demon can try to shove the PCs into the gears of the clock by pushing them into a square adjacent to the gears. Once a creature is adjacent to the gears, roll initiative for the gears. When it's the gears' turn, the sprockets and lever-arms grab at nearby creatures, grappling with a +4 bonus contested by the creature's choice of Strength (Athletics) or Dexterity (Acrobatics). If the gears seize the creature, they deal 2d6 + 3 bludgeoning damage every turn the creature is caught in the mechanism.

The gears can be escaped like any other grapple, or destroyed (they're AC 12 and 10 hp). Destroying them adds 1 to the collapse score. The PCs can likewise use this tactic against the monsters.

Neither monster flees, even if badly wounded.

Vrock (1): *Monster Manual*

Dretch (1): *Monster Manual*

Dialogue: "Wait—these new ones are alive."

Scrying Stone: You can see anywhere in the city with this. It can be removed from its pedestal, but its awkward size and weight (100 pounds) might hinder the party. Removing it causes the tower to shake long enough that the players fear its collapse. Players can activate the scrying stone simply by speaking. For example, "Show me the Temple District" or "Show me the furniture store."

Shaft Down: Anyone who steps out—or is

pushed—over this hole in the floor floats slowly downward to area TD1. This functions similarly to the *levitate* spell.

Rewards: The dead dwarf's journal might explain how he got in here and why he's dead. (See sidebar.)

TD3. School

The Thunderaxes were a learned bunch, so the stories say. Maybe a school built specially for their children can shed light on exactly why.

The lack of monsters makes this a good place to rest if the players feel they need to. If you like, play up the echoing a bit to keep players cautious or to add a spookier overtone to this place.

- ▶ This building has about ten identical rooms, each containing long tables and benches, bookshelves, and a writing board.
- ▶ The entryway has a large statue of an academic-looking dwarf.
- ▶ A glass case in the entryway contains a wooden dowsing rod and a placard reading: "Thirst for knowledge, not just water."
- ▶ Empty school buildings always echo so.
- ▶ **DC 20 Wisdom (Perception):** Immediately find the one different book.

Each room looks ready for students, and also has shelves full of books. Like the library, most of the books are empty.

Collapse Effects: If the collapse score is over 70, parts of the walls and ceilings are crumbling into the rooms.

Dowsing Rod: The rod is Druhella's Dowsing Rod, one of the key relics of Sibda the Mighty (see the NPCs Interested in the Pristine City section).

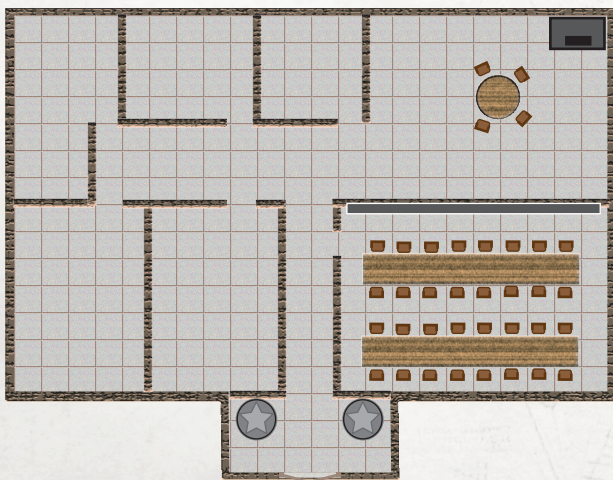
Rewards: One book is a false book that functions more as a box. Inside is a slip of paper with a crudely drawn lewd image. Players can also find the *robes of destruction* hidden behind books on one of the shelves.

TD4. Monastery

Those learning to become religious leaders need a place to live and study—but this building has attracted something else instead.

- ▶ With just a few rooms, this monastery is on the modest side, but could house and educate several monks and clerics.
- ▶ Ettercaps are creeping through the monastery, moving toward the main hallway. (This building also contains an alabaster golem.)
- ▶ In the entryway, two statues hold immense braziers that burn with silvery fire.

TD4: MONASTERY



- ★ Statue
- Table
- Chalkboard
- Stove
- Chair
- 5 ft.

The ettercaps, part of the larger ettercap expedition, arrived at the monastery shortly before the PCs did. They're about to discover it's not uninhabited. One of the statues in the main chamber is a dormant alabaster golem.

The PCs can fight the ettercaps immediately, or they can follow along behind if they're sufficiently stealthy. The ettercaps are being cautious, but they're focused on threats in front of them.

At the start of the third round of any combat, one of the statues awakens as an alabaster golem, dropping its brazier and moving to attack. Silvery liquid fire spills from the brazier, leaving a pool of flame on the ground.

The flame causes 1d6 fire damage to any adjacent creatures when the golem drops the brazier, and it starts a structure fire (as described in the sidebar on p. 14).

Each of the three groups (PCs, ettercaps, and golem) attacks the other two, so this battle can become quite complex.

The ettercaps flee when badly wounded; the golem does not.

Alabaster Golem (1): Appendix B

Ettercaps (2): *Monster Manual*
Dialogue: "We were here firsh."

Rewards: Three wall tapestries worth 100 gp each are still intact. Five silver pendants sit around the room, each worth 250 gp.

TD5. Official Clan Hall

You can't fight city hall...but you can fight the monsters inside.

- ▶ This large, circular building is modestly decorated.
- ▶ An important-looking desk sits right in the middle of the room. A jar made of ceramic and colored glass sits atop it.
- ▶ A curio cabinet in the corner has a fancy-looking birdcage with a colorful songbird inside. Occasionally the bird twitters.
- ▶ A will-o'-wisp now calls this place home, and a clockwork minotaur is keeping an eye on the place.
- ▶ Even from outside, PCs can hear the clunky sounds of the minotaur's gears.

City hall is in disarray and an invisible evil stalks the innocent—so all seems in order.

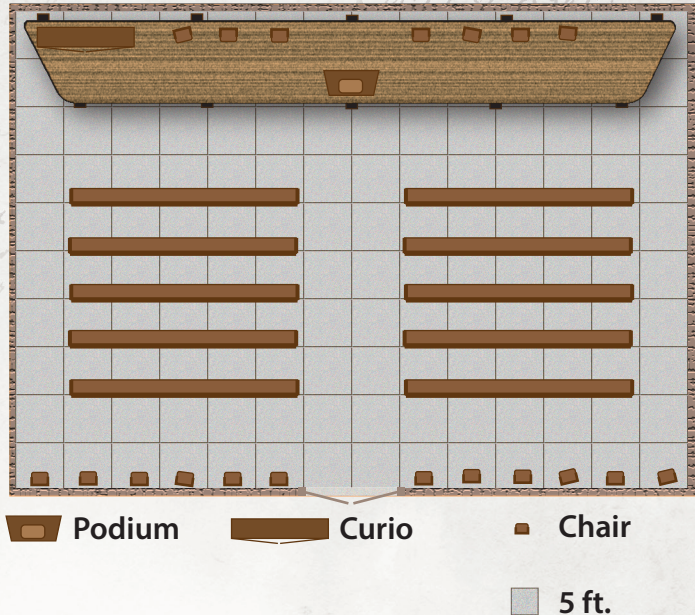
None of these creatures flee, even when badly wounded.

Clockwork Minotaur (1): Appendix B

Will-o'-Wisp (1): *Monster Manual*
Dialogue: "Enemy detected."

Desk: Atop the desk is the Jar of the Ages, a key relic of Sibda the Mighty. (See the NPCs Interested in the Pristine City for a discussion of its impor-

CLAN HALL



tance.) A scribbled note reads: "Jothan—get rid of the bird and give the Jar of the Ages the prominence it deserves!"

Collapse Effects: If the collapse score is over 70, several chairs and benches are knocked over and the walls and ceiling have started crumbling into the room.

Rewards: Two wall tapestries worth 1,500 gp each hang from the walls on either side of the main room. On the raised platform sits a birdcage with a magical illusion bird inside. The magical cage is worth 5,000 gp.

TD6. Religious Book Shop

As in the library, most of these books are blank. Every shelf is no more than four feet high, so most players are able to see over them.

Past the books, the back of the shop has shelves of other things, too. You can find boxed mini sets of the *melody crystals* placed throughout the city as well as toy models of the lightning towers and the six statues from Paragon Plaza (collect them all!). Each of the six statuettes has *sadram thalinek and-ru* inscribed on the base—the phrase the PCs must say aloud at the real statues to obtain the paragon blessing.

You can also find a mini version of the temple for sale, complete with clock tower.

TD7. Temple Streets

Elaborate tapestries hang from magical street lamps, and statues dot the sidewalk. No one walking this way would doubt they were somewhere important. This area also has illusory crowds.

Illusory Crowds: The password to activate the illusory crowds is “khorvurth kulaa.” The crowds appear for 1 minute, milling about in identical fashion.

TD8. Empty Storefront

No way to know what the designers hoped would move in here, but the empty shelves are certainly ready to be filled with something. Written in a scrawled, rushed hand above the entrance is: “Sign Goes Here.”

Residential Areas

“As cheap as possible” was the directive for the team building the residential areas of the Pristine City. Once construction was underway, the builders received a second directive: “as fast as possible.” This came to fruition in a few different ways, depending on the builder.

As the players approach any buildings within the residential areas, roll a d8 to see which of the following construction shortcuts they face.

R1. Cardboard Exterior

As the players approach this building, they’ll notice something about it seems...off. It’s not standing properly upright, and...is the bottom of that wall folding like an accordion?

This “building” is just a giant cardboard box, painted to look like a real building. It takes no effort at all to lift an edge or knock it on its side, and it’s completely hollow within.

If the players *do* knock it over, it’s not strong enough to start a domino effect unless it hits another R1 building. If it hits an R3 building, it falls through the illusion, giving the odd appearance of a building sideways inside another building.

If players knock the building over, roll a d8 to see which type of building it lands on.

R2. Painted Brick

As players get closer, they’ll be able to notice the definition of the brick under the paint. None of the doors or windows are real—everything is just painted onto the brick. Examination reveals the building is nothing more than four brick walls in a

square.

These walls are stronger than the others in town—DC 20 Strength check to break down and a DC 20 Dexterity (Acrobatics) check to climb. This building has no roof, however, so players who climb the walls need to be careful not to fall in, else they’ll have to climb again or break the walls down to get out.

Inside these walls is a reasonable place for a short or long rest. Breaking the walls down adds 4 to the collapse score.

R3. Illusion Building

This building looks perfectly normal. Stare at it long enough, though, and players notice a brief flicker—the spell holding this illusion in place is quite old, and its strength is starting to fade.

Besides the occasional flicker, the building doesn’t really look unusual when the players approach, but when PCs reach out to grab the door handle, their hands go through the knob as if passing through air. PCs can easily pass through doors and walls.

If the players enter the inside of the illusion, they’ll find nothing inside. It’s not an overly safe place for a long rest, since patrols can easily wander in, but it’s probably a reasonable spot for a short rest.

R4. Dried Mud Building

Something looks wrong with this building from the start. It’s hard to place exactly what it is, but it looks...lumpy? Can buildings look lumpy?

When players grab hold of the doorknob, it crumbles. It’s just a big, painted cube of dried mud. Players can’t break through the walls, though, because it’s not hollow. Players *can* break away at the mud cube, but nothing’s inside and enough ruckus ends up adding to the collapse score.

The mud building takes a DC 15 Dexterity (Acrobatics) check to climb, but immediately crumbles under the weight two small PCs or one medium PC.

R5. Glass Building

As players approach, it becomes obvious the walls and doors are perfectly flat and painted on. It’s made of only four large panes of glass and is very easy to break. If players break the glass walls, though, they’ll take 2d12 damage from the glass shards (DC 20 Dexterity saving throw for half damage), and the collapse score increases. The walls take a DC 30 Dexterity (Acrobatics) check to climb, being glass, but won’t hold the PCs long. It

has no roof, so if PCs can safely get inside the glass walls, they can use the space for a short or long rest—they'll have to safely climb back out again afterward, however.

R6. Rickety Building

This building has no windows, but as players get close, they'll find that unlike the other buildings, the doors on this building actually open. The doors are not locked.

If players enter the building, they'll find nothing more than a dirt floor and some rudimentary cross-beams to keep the walls up. The walls take a DC 15 Strength check to knock down, but doing so adds 2 to the collapse score.

Inside this building is safe enough for a rest.

R7. Theater Set Piece

This house is completely two-dimensional—it is a wall held up by wooden beams and painted to look like a proper house with three dimensions. As soon as you come around the side, though, it's easy to tell what you're looking at.

R8. Rubble

There used to be a house here—or more likely, one of the fake house imitations—but it has fallen to pieces and is now just a mess of brick or wood.

Once the collapse score hits 70, switch your d8 to a d10 for residential areas—any hit on 8–10 gives you area R8 as a result.

R9. Fake District

This entire district doesn't even exist. It exists on the map and was part of the original city designs, but when the contractor realized she'd have to spend time and money carving out more of the cavern to make it fit, she decided it wasn't worth it. Instead, she had the cavern wall painted to look like the streets and houses continued on. Even the sky blends in. If you get close enough, though, you can see this is just a cavern wall.

Players can attempt to dig through it or break it down, but only more rock is behind it, and it adds 8 to the collapse score.

Hall of the Shieldmaidens

This grand complex in the northern part of the city was intended as a combination banquet hall and museum to honor the Thunderaxe clan—especially their many victories on the battlefield. Work on

it was nearly complete when the dwarves abandoned the Pristine City, and many of the clan's war trophies and prized possessions remain within the silent hall.

The hall has its dangers—even if the city wasn't collapsing around it. Undead spirits and extraplanar demons lurk in the shadows, and a group of ettercaps attempts to abscond with the clan's treasures. Most dangerous of all are several enemies of the Thunderaxes, held captive in a magical stasis field that weakens as uncontrolled magic cascades around the city.

Exploring the Hall

The architect responsible for the Pristine City had a simple goal for this building: take a traditional dwarven feasting hall, quadruple the size, and make it as ostentatious as possible. Anything less would be unworthy of the Thunderaxes, they reasoned. More so than other places in the Pristine City, it seems the builders thought the clan's return was imminent. They even stocked food and drink for an epic celebration when the Thunderaxes re-emerged and moved into the city built in their honor.

Melody Crystals: As elsewhere in the Pristine City, *melody crystals* are marked on the map. In the Hall of the Shieldmaidens, they play soothing string music when they detect a humanoid within 20 feet. In area H6, the music is faster-paced and percussive.

Clockwork Servers: These four servers were built to serve drinks to visitors. The ale taps have been shut off for centuries, however, so the servers now carry empty mugs on round serving trays. They cycle through each of the rooms in a continuous loop, pausing in H9 to exchange dirty mugs for clean ones (though they're all dusty now) and wait underneath the drink casks for several minutes. See room H9 for more details.

It takes a clockwork server about 20 minutes to loop through all the rooms. When the PCs enter a new chamber, check to see whether a clockwork server is in there. The clockwork servers are similar in construction (and game statistics) to clockwork dwarves, but they don't attack or defend themselves. They occasionally wander into the middle of combat trying to serve drinks.

Walking Braziers: Magically animated braziers wander each room of the hall on three stubby legs. Unlike the clockwork servers, the wandering braziers don't move from room to room. Most of the time, a walking brazier wanders its assigned room randomly. When people enter the room, the brazier slowly walks closer, then does its best to

follow about 20 feet behind the visitors. When receiving multiple visitors, the brazier tries to stay in between them, providing light to all. The brazier doesn't respond to other stimuli. Any attack tips it over, after which its legs flail in the air until it's righted. The flame in the brazier is magical and warm to the touch but not hot enough to burn.

H1. Entry Hall of Faces

The main entry to the Hall of the Shieldmaidens has carved faces that speak to the PCs—though what they say is misleading.

- ▶ Marble steps rise to a massive set of oak doors.
- ▶ Six stone faces, each carved into a six-foot-high column, are set at regular intervals on the stairs.
- ▶ Wood paneling covers the interior walls and ceiling.
- ▶ *Everburning torches* sit in chandeliers hung from the ceiling.
- ▶ *Melody crystals* sit on either side of the doors, playing a rising theme with heavy brass.
- ▶ **DC 17 Intelligence (Arcana):** Determine that these faces speak through the *magic mouth* spell.

The stone faces here have animated mouths and deliver messages whenever someone passes near. The dwarves set up the carved faces before they were done building the Pristine City, so some of what the faces say represents wishful thinking on the dwarves' part.

The sixth face was left unfinished and ready to record. The ettercaps in room H7 inadvertently recorded dialogue for that statue, which players hear when they pass near.

Faces: The six faces here each deliver a different message.

First face: "Strong arms, Shieldmaidens! And strong arms, Thunderaxe clan. Welcome to the hall we built to honor you."

Second face: "Long have you stood at the vanguard of our armies, protecting our people's way of life. We hope this hall will inspire future deeds."

Third face: "Inside you'll find testaments and tributes to the great victories of the Thunderaxe clan, and especially of its shieldmaidens."

Fourth face: "You'll also find feasts and comforts for when you wish to leave the battlefield behind."

Fifth face: "If you have recently returned to the city, understand we are assembling an honor guard and will celebrate your return in glorious fashion."

Sixth face (a different voice; one of the ettercaps): "Zish one didn't shay anyzing. What? No, I'm not shticking my hand in itsh mou—"

Trap: The dwarves also tried to make these faces tamper-proof. Touching them briefly is fine,

but closely examining or manipulating the mouth mechanism delivers a nasty shock. It's a DC 20 Wisdom (Perception) check to notice the smell of ozone and the tingle of nearby electrical current. The ettercaps failed their checks, obviously.

The trap deals 22 (4d10) electricity damage to the creature examining or manipulating it (DC 13 Dexterity saving throw for half damage).

Each face discharges its trap only once; the dwarves put only minimal power in them.

Doors: The main doors leading into the hall are unlocked, but they're quite heavy; it'll take a strong PC or two less brawny PCs to swing them open.

H2. Main Feast-hall

This cavernous banquet hall is empty, but the stained-glass dome above it is on the verge of collapse and poses a significant hazard.

The PCs must deal with falling glass and an unoccupied room the first time they pass through H2, but the second time they come through, clockwork entities have arrived to deal with the intruders. The falling glass rains on PC and clockwork alike.

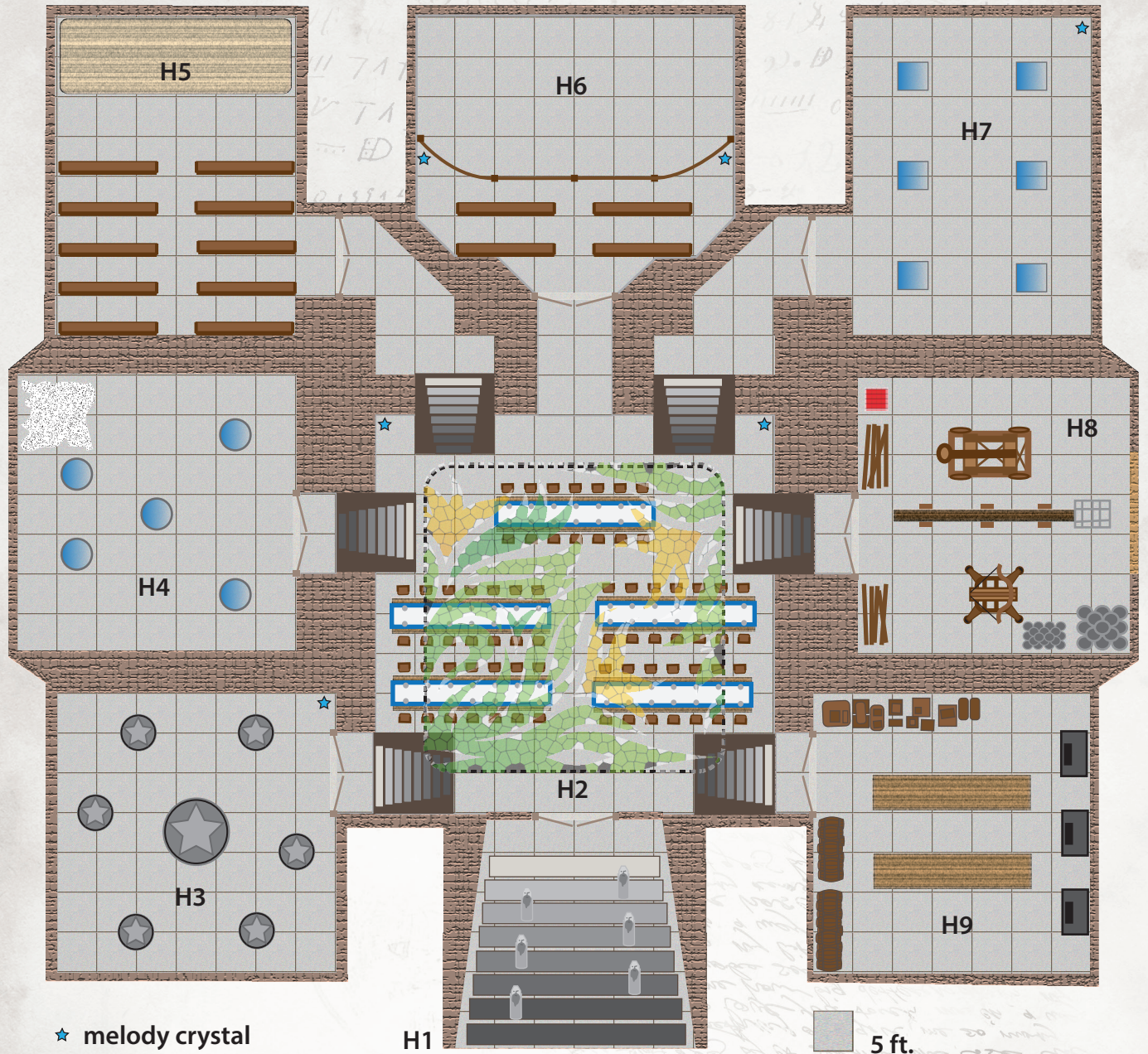
- ▶ This room is a great hall with parallel rows of banquet tables in the center.
- ▶ The stained glass skylights have gaping holes with shards of glass hanging precariously.
- ▶ Clockwork dwarves respond to a disturbance (the PCs) and attack any intruders present.
- ▶ Broken, colored glass litters the floor.
- ▶ Two northern stairways ascend to balconies with closed doors.
- ▶ Between the stairways is a wide corridor heading north.
- ▶ Staircases also ascend to the east and west, each ending at closed doors.
- ▶ Descending staircases are in the northeast and northwest corners.

As the PCs explore Shieldmaiden Hall, they'll pass through this room multiple times, because it connects to every other room in the building. After a few times dealing with the hazard of the falling glass, they'll figure out a way to traverse the room with minimum risk; it's okay to dispense with a rigorous set of rolls at that point.

Note that the clockwork dwarves and clockwork minotaur arrive shortly after the PCs exit this area, and they initiate combat when the PCs come back through the feast-hall a second time.

Stained-Glass Dome Panels: The glass along the roof of this hall hangs precariously, and unless the PCs carefully sneak across this room, they risk having jagged shards of glass rain down on their heads. Each time a PC traverses the room and doesn't specify that they're moving slowly and

SHIELDMAIDEN HALL



quietly, a panel of stained glass falls when the PC is about halfway across the room.

The falling glass is functionally a ranged attack with a +8 bonus that deals 2d8 piercing damage. Roll attacks separately for everyone under the marked area. There's enough glass hanging precariously to fall on four occasions. After that point, the area is safe.

If a battle breaks out in this area, glass falls in the second round and every 1d4 rounds thereafter. PCs can avoid the hazard by hugging the walls and staying on the room's periphery, but they're

exposed if they use the staircases to areas H3, H5, H7, and H9.

Clockwork Dwarves (2): Appendix B
Dialogue: "Interlopers. Not Thunderaxe clan. Depart or perish."

Clockwork Minotaur (1): Appendix B
Dialogue: "Eliminate interlopers, then repair damage."

H3. Shieldmaiden Monument

The undead who lurk here venerate the shieldmaidens of the Thunderaxe clan, and they confront anyone who doesn't approach with the utmost respect.

- ▶ A central statue depicts four female dwarves in battle armor, rallying around a banner. Statues of individual female dwarves stand around the periphery of the room, all facing toward the central statue.
- ▶ Wraiths have taken residence within the statues. Tapestries on the walls depict the Thunderaxe clan heraldry.
- ▶ Bronze plaques are affixed to each statue.
- ▶ No illumination other than what the PCs bring with them.
- ▶ **Wisdom (Perception):** See "a smoky, translucent dwarf female in heavy armor" (one of the wraiths) floating from one statue to another. Roll Stealth for the wraiths.

This room has been closed—but not locked—for centuries. The wraiths inside are dormant unless a living creature enters the room. They emerge from within the statues and speak in harsh, echoed tones.

The wraiths menace the PCs once they're inside the room, shouting, "bow before the might of the Thunderaxes!" If the PCs immediately do so, they'll forestall a battle—at least temporarily. Otherwise the wraiths attack and fight until destroyed.

If the PCs immediately bow, the wraiths loom over them and ask, "Why do you disturb the shieldmaidens?" Again, the PCs must answer immediately and respectfully. The wraiths have some sense that centuries have passed since anyone saw the Thunderaxe clan, so the wraiths question the PCs closely: "Why do you seek us out when no one else has?"

Play the wraiths as interrogators with hair triggers. If they detect even the slightest bit of disrespect or falsehood in the PCs responses, they'll attack. But if the PCs convince the wraiths they admire the Thunderaxe Shieldmaidens, the wraiths permit them a few moments of reflection at the monument before warning them to leave and never return.

This encounter is a place where PCs with dwarf-related backgrounds can shine, as can PCs who are convincing speakers. The wraiths aren't cackling evildoers; they're militant about the superiority of their clan and eager to expunge any unworthy intruders.

Wraiths (2): *Monster Manual*

Dialogue: "In life, I could have slain you easily. In death, it's easier still."

Statuses: The statues commemorate the elite shieldmaidens: female dwarf soldiers of the Thunderaxe clan that acted as shock troopers in the vanguard of several dwarven armies centuries ago. PCs with a relevant background may have heard of the shieldmaidens generally and some of their great heroes specifically.

Plaques: Each plaque lists the name of the dwarf shieldmaiden depicted and a brief sobriquet such as "Hero of Kharandor Bridge" or "Slew Eight Giants." The plaque on the central statue doesn't list names, saying only "We shield each other."

Rewards: The four tapestries each weigh 100 pounds. They're worth 750 gp each.

H4. Hall of Humiliation

Ancestral enemies of the clan struggle against their magical prisons, and as the city collapses, they have an opportunity to escape...even if that escape is ultimately futile.

The mix of monsters in this room varies depending on the city's collapse score, as described below. Before you describe this room to the players, check the collapse score, because there could be anywhere from one to four monsters here. Adjust your description accordingly.

- ▶ This exhibit hall is done in white marble, with rubble and a partially collapsed ceiling in the northwest corner.
- ▶ Five glass tubes run from floor to ceiling, some with creatures in them and others broken open (see below).
- ▶ Monsters (see below) try to break open any intact glass tubes.
- ▶ An immense banner along the north wall reads: "Defy the Thunderaxes, Suffer Eternal Defeat."
- ▶ *Everburning torches* on wall sconces for illumination.

The glass tubes held captured enemies of the Thunderaxe clan, held in suspended animation. When ground tremors damaged this room, the glass tubes started to fail, and the higher the collapse score, the more escapees have been released before the PCs arrive.

The drow elite warrior has definitely escaped. If the collapse score is 30 or higher, add the minotaur. If it's 50 or higher, add the quaggoth thonot, and 70 adds the drider. The escapees are bewildered but defiant, and they'll collaborate with each other to try to escape together. (The fifth tube was broken years ago, but far be it from us to discourage the PCs from worrying about it.)

The PCs might be able to make common cause with some of the escapees (with the minotaur most

likely and the quaggoth thonot least likely), at least temporarily. The captives know only that they were captured by the Thunderaxes long ago, and now they've awakened to find themselves in what is obviously a dwarven stronghold of some kind. (The architecture and proportions give that much away.)

The PCs also might decide to set any remaining captives free. Doing so earns them the (very temporary) loyalty of those creatures. The drow warrior tries to manipulate the PCs and make them bargain; they can't refuse. If possible, give some thought beforehand to what he might offer, and what entreaties might appeal to the players.

Drow Elite Warrior: *Monster Manual*. He wants to get out of what he believes is a traditional dwarven stronghold, and he's quite surprised to learn no dwarves live here.

Dialogue: "We'll never escape individually, but together I like our odds."

Minotaur: *Monster Manual*. The minotaur is cunning (by minotaur standards, anyway), but she isn't a long-term thinker. She wants payback against anyone who imprisoned her, or anyone who had the temerity to live while she was imprisoned.

Dialogue: "Escape? Bah! Revenge..."

Quaggoth Thonot: *Monster Manual*. The thonot is insane, but that makes him no less dangerous. He's unpredictable but has a strong sense of self-preservation.

Dialogue: "Revenge? Too personal. But chaos... chaos is revenge writ large."

Drider: *Monster Manual*. The drider tries to make common cause with the drow, though they were captured decades apart and don't know each other.

Dialogue: "Just want out out out out out..."

Glass Tubes: The tubes are fairly easy to break once the suspended animation magic is gone. They are AC 12 and have 10 hp.

H5. Hall of Voices

This concert hall has perfect acoustics—and spirits echoing in the rafters.

- ▶ This high-ceilinged room has wooden chairs facing an empty stage on the far wall.
- ▶ The stage has built-in wooden cabinets along the back wall.
- ▶ This room has five rows of pews—enough seating for about 50 people.
- ▶ Chandeliers (like the ones in area H1) are attached to the ceiling with chains.
- ▶ Gaslights float near the ceiling.
- ▶ The floors are black marble; the walls are tiled in alternating horizontal bands of red and black marble.
- ▶ The empty stage is three feet higher than the floor. Curtains hang from the ceiling on both sides using a rope-and-pulley system.
- ▶ Even the smallest sound echoes through the chamber.

The gaslights descend and attack immediately—and the acoustic perfection of the room makes their whispers (and any noise from the PCs) louder and more intense.

Note that characters who are trying to perform the *rite of the distant encore* on behalf of Annabella must do so here. It's the only place in the Pristine City with the right acoustics.

Gaslights (3): Appendix B

Dialogue: *Incoherent whispering.*

Stage: This stage is 3 feet tall; it's a DC 15 Dexterity (Acrobatics) check to get atop it with a running leap.

Chairs: The wooden chairs haven't aged well and collapse into splinters if the PCs sit in them or engage in melee combat next to them. This doesn't directly affect the battle, but it makes a mess.

Cabinets: The cabinets contain musical instruments: a mix of stringed and brass instruments. A dozen have been ruined by the passage of time, but six of them (three trumpets, two lutes, and a zither) are intact.

Rewards: The intact musical instruments are worth 450 gp each.



H6. Battle Dioramas

The phantasmal magic in this chamber reenacts the great battles of the dwarves, and the PCs can end up reenacting moments in dwarven history.

- ▶ The south part of the room has rows of seats on a slope (like a theater), leading down to a fenced-off area in the north end of the room.
- ▶ Within the fenced-off area, dwarves in heavy armor battle frenzied demons.
- ▶ A closed gate stands at the center of the room near the front row of seats with a roped-off queue area.
- ▶ The roars of the demons and the clash of weapons and armor fill the air.
- ▶ (If the PCs watch for a while) The dwarves slowly turn the tide against the demons and slay them after a few minutes.

This “battle diorama” reenacts three key historical battles of the dwarves in a continuous loop. The PCs can merely observe, or they can enter the diorama and become part of the fight. If they do, the enemies (demons, bugbears, or a dragon) attack them and deliver actual wounds, though players fully heal once they leave the diorama.

At the start of each battle, a single dwarf with a herald’s bugle plays a fanfare, then announces the name of the battle. The herald disappears into thin air as the combatants appear and the battle begins. The battle plays out identically each time—with a dwarven victory, of course—if the PCs don’t interfere.

In each case, the dwarven side in the diorama is a dozen dwarf warriors in plate mail wielding greataxes, and six shieldmaidens (like those depicted in area H3, with shield and warhammer). The phantasmal dwarves ignore PCs who enter the diorama; they’re programmed to focus solely on their usual opposition.

The enemies, on the other hand, are programmed to attack PCs. (The dwarves who built the dioramas anticipated spectators might want to try fighting alongside the dwarves of legend and reliving great moments in dwarven history.) The wounds they deliver are quite real, though the magic of the diorama heals anyone who leaves the diorama.

Barlgora Demons (2): *Monster Manual*. The herald calls this “The Closing of the Medernian Gates.”

Dialogue: “No! You must not reach the gate!”

Bugbear Chief (1) and Bugbears (5): *Monster Manual*. The herald calls this “The Ambush at Marakoor.”

Dialogue: “Slay them all! Crush! Crush! Bloody Fist!”

Young Black Dragon (1): *Monster Manual*. The herald calls this “The Death of Ebonsnarl.”

Dialogue: “Your dwarven tunnels are forfeit, for I have chosen to claim this place.”

Rewards: PCs who brave at least one battle in the diorama gain a free *bless* spell cast on them at the start of their next battle anywhere in the city.

H7. Trophy Hall

Ettercaps are trying to steal some of the dwarves’ greatest treasures and trophies, but they’re stymied by the hall’s magical defenses.

- ▶ This dimly lit room has six glass cases, each with a finely wrought weapon or suit of armor within it.
- ▶ At regular intervals, a short gout of flame erupts from a cone-shaped brass implement on the ceiling over a case, illuminating that case like a spotlight.
- ▶ The ettercaps stand in a crowd, well away from the glass cases. Three are binding together two long poles with leather cord. Spiders hang out nearby the ettercaps.
- ▶ A brass plaque is affixed to each glass case.
- ▶ Two ettercap corpses, clearly burned, lie near a glass case with a jeweled hammer in it.

The ettercaps tried to break into one of the cases, but two of them got fried by the fire trap in the ceiling. Now they’re jury-rigging a long pole, hoping to break the case from a distance. (The cases are magically enhanced and this probably won’t work, but they don’t know that.)

These ettercaps are part of the exploration party that descended from a gap in the cavern ceiling a few days ago, and like the other ettercaps, they’re finding the city more dangerous than they imagined. They’re more than a little paranoid and will attack unless they have a rock-solid reason not to. The spiders will attack as soon as their owners do.

Ettercaps (3): *Monster Manual*

Dialogue: “Get away! Zish ish oursh!”

Giant Spiders (2): *Monster Manual*

Dialogue: “Push zem againsht ze casesh!” “Take zem out quietly! Don’t attract ze machinesh!”

Fire Trap: Anyone who touches the exhibit triggers a trap; a spell or other effect that senses the presence of magic, such as *detect magic*, reveals an aura of evocation magic around the case. When triggered, the trap releases a 20-foot cone of flame that deals 22 (4d10) fire damage (DC 15 Dexterity saving throw for half damage). The fire trap resets after 1 round and has enough magic for five blasts.

Cases: Each case has a plaque that identifies its contents. The glass has been magically augmented by the dwarves to be as strong as steel, and the lock on the base requires a DC 25 Dexterity check to

open. (Failure triggers the fire trap, of course).

Southwest Case: Plaque reads “Gureth-Atama’s Greataxe. Do not touch.” Described in Appendix A.

Southeast Case: Plaque reads “Grimoire of Valrek the Discerning. Do not touch.” Valrek was a renowned architect who lived several centuries before the Pristine City was built. The grimoire is full of blueprints and construction notes for dwarven fortresses. It’s worth 5,000 gp back in Dun Lodar, and at your discretion it can also lead to future adventures by detailing secret doors and hidden areas in nearby adventure sites the current occupants don’t know about.

West Case: The plaque reads “Shield of Brylessa the Pale. Do not touch.” It’s in Appendix A.

East Case: The plaque reads “Gravenhelm. Do not touch.” This iron helm is eagerly sought by agents of the Orc King (described in the NPCs Interested in the Pristine City section), and it’s described in Appendix A.

Northwest Case: The plaque reads “Ceremonial Armor of the Death-Blessed Retinue. Do not touch.” This heavy armor isn’t magical, but it’s quite ornate and is decorated with a skull motif. Reukall will drool over this armor, which is worth 4,000 gp.

Northeast Case: The plaque reads “Jewels of Darvel Nuar. Do not touch.” It’s described in Appendix A.

Rewards: The contents of the cases are some of the most valuable items in the city.

H8. Hall of Engines

Antique siege weapons from the dwarves’ surface-world conquests are on display here. PCs with a penchant for destruction might take them outside and use them against their enemies or against the city itself.

- ▶ Lumber, bricks, and stone blocks are stacked near the entrance, and carpentry tools are scattered about.
- ▶ A mangonel sits on a wheeled frame, and a ballista with iron legs stands near the center of the room.
- ▶ A massive wooden beam bisects the room from east to west, propped up on spars. Silver runes are etched into the beam.
- ▶ The prow of a ship hangs on wire from the ceiling, its figurehead depicting a dragon.
- ▶ A brick patch in the eastern wall, about 15 feet across, runs from floor to ceiling.

The dwarves didn’t finish this exhibit hall, which was supposed to hold examples of dwarven combat engineering and siege weaponry. The PCs might find a couple of the planned exhibits (the ballista and the mangonel) useful, though they risk hasten-

ing the city’s demise if they activate them.

Walking Ballista: The walking ballista looks like an immense crossbow with four ironclad legs beneath it. The ballista has a magical clockwork mechanism that automatically follows behind a creature holding its “leash”—a 20-foot chain attached to the front of the mangonel. It can move up to 20 feet per round. The ballista functions as described in Chapter 8 of the *Dungeon Master’s Guide*, and it deals heavy structural damage (+1d6 to the collapse score) with each shot fired. It magically generates its own ammunition (an iron spear crackling with magic energy); a new spear appears in the launch channel every round and there’s no need to spend an action loading it.

Rolling Mangonel: This siege engine has a magical chain “leash” like the ballista, but this heavy mangonel has wheels and cannot manage stairs or uneven surfaces without aid. The mangonel requires an special check to fire (as described in Chapter 8 of the *Dungeon Master’s Guide*), and it deals heavy structural damage (+2d6 to the collapse score) and 5d10 bludgeoning damage to any creature it hits. Missed shots land somewhere, as with an ordinary mangonel, adding to the collapse score and messing up the city’s scenery. It takes two actions to re-aim the mangonel, which doesn’t create its own ammo like the ballista does. The mangonel’s main arm winches itself down magically, so it takes only one action to reload it.

Trebuchet Arm: This 25-foot length of wood has silver runes embedded within it and an iron cage at the end large enough to fit a horse. Characters with dwarven backgrounds recognize runes for “destruction,” “ruin,” “flight,” and “arc.” A brass plaque attached to one of the spars holding it up says “Hellfire trebuchet arm, used by General Theuruk Thunderaxe in Siege of Montresor Keep.”

Iron Spheres: The spiked, iron spheres range from 2 feet to 4 feet in diameter. About 30 are small enough to be used as ammunition in the rolling mangonel, and another 30 were crafted for larger siege weapons not found in this hall. The spheres aren’t solid, but they’re heavy: 500 pounds for the small spheres and more than a ton for the largest ones.

Figurehead: The ship’s prow is the Figurehead of Beren, one of the key relics of Sibda the Mighty. The “NPCs Interested in the Pristine City” section discusses its importance.

Brick Patch: The ballista, mangonel, and trebuchet arm won’t fit through the doors, so the dwarves left the east wall incomplete, then bricked it up after the siege weapons were inside.

H9. Hall of Celebration

Once the PCs see what's stored in this room, they'll know the dwarves planned an epic party for the day the Thunderaxes returned to claim their city.

- ▶ This room is filled with crates marked "venison," "sausage," and other meats and cheeses.
- ▶ Tuns and barrels are stacked along the western wall. A few of the barrels have glowing corks or stoppers on them.
- ▶ Two long tables have more glassware and crockery on them.
- ▶ Several stone ovens sit along the eastern wall, with chimneys leading outside.

This storeroom holds food for a feast to welcome the Thunderaxe clan. Any PC who tallies the amount of food and drink stored here can quickly conclude this room has enough food for several hundred hungry dwarves.

The food was put here centuries ago, however, and none of it is any good. In many cases, it's desiccated and disintegrated to the point where it's unrecognizable as food, and only the labeling on the crates and barrels tells the PCs what was once in there.

The clockwork servers (described in the Shieldmaiden Hall introduction) frequently visit this room, dropping off mugs and trying to fill up new mugs by holding them under the taps of now-empty beer and wine tuns. They're oblivious to the fact that no booze flows into their mugs.

Rewards: Four small barrels have glowing corks—magic that preserved the whisky inside long after it should have evaporated. Each barrel is worth 250 gp.

Collapse Event: Demon Dispossession

The Pristine City was under budget every step of the way—largely because the contractor cut every corner possible. One of the main ways she did that was by binding demons into the architecture.

Throughout the city, the players will have seen the demons being freed from those binds on a small scale—here and there as damage to the city continued—but once the city reaches a collapse score of 100, the magical bindings that hold the demons in place throughout the city break down. The demons escape their prison one by one—and they aren't overly pleased about it.

This event, which triggers when the collapse score reaches 100, brings the adventure to a climax—hopefully with the PCs escaping the Pristine

City and returning to Dun Lodar shortly before the cavern collapses entirely, burying everything under tons of solid rock. Make sure the players understand the rational course of action is to escape before the collapse score hits 140.

Because of the Demonic Dispossession event, however, escape won't be easy. Starting 20 minutes after the collapse score reaches 100, introduce a demon encounter every 20 minutes, starting with DD1. (You're also rolling on the collapse table every 10 minutes, so you might want to synch up the timing so you roll on the collapse table just before—or, for maximum chaos, during—each demon encounter.)

Visible bands of demons wander the city throughout the event, so if the players want to careen from demon group to demon group even faster, by all means let them.

Once they're free, the demons rampage across the city, attacking the buildings with their bare hands (and claws, and horns, and...) to try and free their fellow demons. Ordinarily this wouldn't have much of an effect, but the Pristine City's buildings are abnormally fragile and it doesn't take much to knock them over. No demon is going to pass up a chance to mix it up with the PCs, of course.

The city structures are almost entirely ruined once the collapse score reaches 100, and the ordinary monsters in the city are buried under rubble or hunkered down for their last moments. Unless you're orchestrating something specific, you can ignore specific area details and monsters in the parts of the Pristine City the PCs are moving through. If the PCs are bound and determined to get into the trophy cases in Shieldmaiden Hall or collect one more relic for Sibda the Mighty, that's great—but make sure they know it's a race against the clock, and they have to fight their way through a horde of demons to get back to Dun Lodar. Continue to make rolls on the heavy collapse table every 10 minutes, however—those environmental effects can add challenge to the next demon fight.

If the PCs get back to Dun Lodar after this event starts but before the collapse score reaches 140, let drama, not the collapse score, guide you. Collapse the cavern ceiling and destroy the Pristine City moments after the PCs reach the safety of the tunnel to Dun Lodar.

The key to managing this event is to be extra aware of pacing. As the GM, you want each new wave to appear *just* before your players are ready for it—but at the same time, you want them to have a chance to get out of the city. From this point on, the stakes should always feel high, and the threat of a party wipe should feel very real.

CITY INTERSECTIONS

rectory

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-  Planter
-  Magic gaslight
-  5 ft.
-  Statue
-  Grate



DD1. First Sign of Trouble

From buildings nearby, a handful of demons head your way. They look angry—even for demons.

- ▶ The area depends on where the players were when the event triggered.
- ▶ Two dretches and a shadow demon are headed your way.

By the time this event triggers, the city is practically in ruins. Buildings are beginning to crumble and demons are coming out everywhere. In the distance, demons are already rampaging, further destroying already demolished structures.

Starting toward the entrance after this fight might not be the world's worst idea.

Dretches (2): *Monster Manual*

Shadow Demon (1): *Monster Manual*

Rewards: The pleasure of living for at least a few more minutes.

Aftermath: Add 5 to the collapse score at the end of this fight.

DD2. Slow Heat

Some of those rampaging demons have noticed you.

- ▶ The area depends on where the players were when the event triggered.
- ▶ Two shadow demons are attacking the columns and arches of a nearby building (which probably is already in ruins due to the collapse).

The city is falling even further, even faster. The demons are attacking the city itself. At the end of the first round, the column the shadow demons were attacking falls to the ground, and two quasit demons emerge from the rubble in a gout of magic flame.

Shadow Demon (2): *Monster Manual*

Quasits (2): *Monster Manual*

Rewards: Arms, legs, and a pulse. Presuming you began with all of those things.

Aftermath: Add 5 to the collapse score at the end of this fight.

DD3. Out of the Woodwork

The last two encounters were pretty easy. Maybe these demons won't be so hard to fight after all.

- ▶ The area depends on where the players were when the event triggered.
- ▶ Rubble in the streets (difficult terrain).
- ▶ Five—wait, no, six—demons have spotted you.

It's getting harder to walk these streets, let alone fight in them.

Barlgura (1): *Monster Manual*

Dretches (5): *Monster Manual*

Rewards: Free rubble (all you can carry!) and an overwhelming desire to run for the exit.

Aftermath: Add 10 to the collapse score at the end of this fight.

DD4. Big Trouble in Little Ruins

On the other hand, maybe staying here and wading through demons isn't a great idea.

- ▶ The area depends on where the players were when the event triggered.

- ▶ A vrook and three quasits are heading straight for you.

Things are getting pretty grim pretty fast.

Vrook (1): *Monster Manual*

Quasits (3): *Monster Manual*

Rewards: One last chance to flee.

Aftermath: Add 10 to the collapse score at the end of this fight.

DD5. A Wild Apocalypse Appears

It's probably time to leave.

- ▶ The area is covered in rubble, the buildings have all crumbled to the ground, and demons are everywhere.
- ▶ More demons are heading toward you than you can count. A hezrou, two barlguras, some shadow demons, and several more dretches—and that's just what's nearby.

You can't win this fight. The only reasonable thing to do here is run all the way back to Dun Lodar. If players stay and fight, run it if you want to, but they'll all die. If they run for town, the city collapses completely behind them.

Hezrou (1): *Monster Manual*

Barlguras (2): *Monster Manual*

Dretches (9): *Monster Manual*

Shadow Demons (3): *Monster Manual*

Rewards: Not getting squished.

Aftermath: The city collapses completely, destroying anything (and anyone) that still remains within.

Conclusion

If the party died to the city collapse, then you probably don't have anything else to worry about. Death pretty much covers it.

In most cases, though, the PCs escape the Pristine City, but the city's collapse will cause aftershocks for some time.

CI. Revisit the Chieftain

It's a good thing you've got nothing but good news for the chieftain.

► The office looks the same as it did the first time—bookshelves, dogs, and a desk between you and a stern-faced woman.

The group outside the door this time is angry—those who were against anyone going inside the city now have proof they were right, and those who were for it feel betrayed.

To say the chieftain is unhappy about how things turned out is an understatement. She is calm and speaks in a low voice, but she is fuming. She explains that she trusted you to be careful and preserve the city, and she considers withholding your payment entirely.

If the players managed to get out before the demon explosion, they can offer to show her how easily the city breaks apart, though she'll decline.

Once they explain that destruction of some degree was inevitable, she'll soften a bit and reconsider providing your payment, though she'll remain extremely disappointed and upset. She relaxes more and more as the players show her more of the things they retrieved from the city—relics, maps, trinkets, books.

If the players announce their intent to track down the Thunderaxes, she'll default to assuming the clan is merely long-dead. If the PCs persist, though, she becomes almost excited—certainly much more pleased than you've ever seen her. She'll ask about your timetable and if she can provide any help. If she can't be the chieftain who preserved the infamous Pristine City, she may still be able to be the chieftain who facilitated saving the ancient Thunderaxe clan.

Rewards: The chieftain rewards you with the rest of the agreed-upon amount for successfully completing your mission.

Aftermath: Beyond the chieftain's irritation, the other prominent citizens of Dun Lodar have their own views on the city's collapse.

Rotu: After the PCs meet with Chieftain Tali, Rotu seeks them out. He's intensely curious about

what the PCs learned about the Thunderaxe clan. If the PCs describe seeing the Thunderaxe burial sites in the tombs or the monuments in Shield-maiden Hall, Rotu's eyes light up. "I know we had our differences, but just knowing that the Thunderaxes were properly honored by my ancestors...that pleases me."

Mari: The prospector also seeks the PCs out and thanks them for taking the risk. "Who knows what would have happened to my excavators if we'd explored the city ourselves?" she says. "At least you survived...and now I know where not to dig."

Dwarven Society After the Collapse

The promise of the fabled Pristine City got more than a few dwarves excited. Word spread far beyond Dun Lodar—dwarves from many cities have come to get even a glimpse of the city through the tunnel. Many more are still on their way.

No one expected the Pristine City to crumble so easily. Most dwarves won't believe it was inevitable, especially if your party is not predominantly dwarf (as most won't be). For a long time, you may hear jeers or receive sideways glances whenever you visit a dwarven town, though significantly fewer if you escape before the city's complete collapse. The more dwarven relics you managed to collect and the more items that highlight the Thunderaxes' history, the city's history, or general dwarven history, the better off you'll be. Another way to win back favor from the dwarves, of course, is to go after the Thunderaxes and bring them back. Except in cases of failure or deliberately skipping areas, your players should have the information necessary to find the Thunderaxes. See *Further Adventures* for more details.

Further Adventures

So you've explored and escaped the Pristine City—and if you've looked for the information, you know what happened to the Thunderaxes. From here, the next steps are fairly straightforward: Find someone affiliated with Sibda the Mighty or the sorcerer Deflyn (even someone in your party) and convince them to look into extraplanar travel for you. Collect your belongings, and go after the mythical clan to rescue them from the fire giants.

"Straightforward" doesn't mean "simple," however. Finding a patron capable of mounting an extraplanar expedition can be an adventure in and of itself; neither dwarven monarchs nor arch-sorcerers are known for their approachability.

As for the expedition...fire giants are supposed to be super nice, so what could go wrong?

Appendix A: New Magic Items

The treasures of the dwarves aren't to be trifled with; many are infused with powerful magic. And with the city's collapse imminent, these items will be buried forever if the PCs don't take them.

Builder's Gloves

Wondrous item, rare

These brass-knuckled leather gloves, found in area CE1, are surprisingly supple for their thickness. The wearer of the gloves has +1 attack against constructs and gains 2d6 damage when attacking objects.

Gravenhelm

Armor, rare

A battered, spiked helmet of black steel found in area H7. It was famously worn by an orc champion, and the skull remains inside the helmet. (The PC must remove the skull before wearing this item.) If the wearer recites a short poem in Orc—the “Litany of Pain”—as a free action, then any melee weapon in hand hums with magical energy, dealing an extra 2d6 damage to the target and 1d6 damage to the wielder, until the start of the wielder's next turn. A DC 25 Intelligence (History) check or a *legend lore* spell is sufficient to learn the “Litany of Pain.” This can be invoked up to three times per day.

Gureth-Atama's Greataxe

Weapon, rare

This +1 *greataxe*, found in area H7, has a sharp silver edge. It reputedly once belonged to Gureth-Atama, a scholar-general renowned in dwarven folklore. Its owner occasionally hears gruff, whispered monologues—as if a long-dead dwarf were commenting on current events. This functionally gives a +4 bonus on Intelligence (History) checks when dwarven history is the topic. The bearer also speaks fluent Dwarvish.

Hammer of Bohr

Weapon, rare (requires attunement)

This stone-headed warhammer, found in area T05, is always cool to the touch, dealing 1d4 extra cold damage on a hit. Whenever it successfully deals cold damage, the hammer grants its wielder fire resistance until the start of the wielder's next turn.

Jewels of Darvel Nuar

Wondrous item, rare

This necklace has eight amethyst pendants shaped like teardrops. It's found in area H7. As a reaction, the wearer can touch a pendant to reroll any failed saving throw. Whether the rerolled save succeeds or not, the pendant crumbles into dust. The wearer can take the immediate action to gain the reroll even if the consequences of the failed save would forbid it (paralysis or unconsciousness, for example), but each saving throw can be rerolled only once.

Ring of Holy Orders

Ring, rare (requires attunement)

Found in area TD1, this golden ring has a runic prayer inscribed on its inner surface. When its wearer deals radiant damage, the DC to resist it gains a +1 bonus. Undead within 20 feet of the ring suffer disadvantage on all saving throws.

Robes of Destruction

Wondrous item, rare (requires attunement)

These black and gold robes always undulate as if stirred by a breeze, even if the wearer is perfectly still. The robes are hidden behind books in area TD3. If you aren't wearing armor, your base AC is 12 + your Dexterity modifier. Three times a day, you can sacrifice the AC bonus to give enemies disadvantage on saving throws against your attacks. The AC bonus returns and enemies lose disadvantage at the start of your next turn.

Shield of Baylessa the Pale

Armor, rare

This +1 *heavy wooden shield* is bound in iron and has wicked-looking hooks on its front. It's in area H7. If you shove a creature with this shield (as described in the *Player's Handbook*), roll with advantage. If your shove attempt succeeds, deal an extra 1d6 piercing damage from the hooks.

Tome of Demonology

Wondrous item, rare

Found in area IE5, this book explains everything currently understood about demons in the known world. Those who study it (which takes a total of 24 hours over a minimum of 3 days) gain a +2 bonus on Intelligence (Religion) checks involving demons.

When found, the tome of demonology has 2d4 x 10 pages. As an action, the bearer can summon a demon (as described in the sidebar on p. 54 of the *Monster Manual*), but doing so causes some of the tome's pages to burn into ash permanently.

Summon as a vrock: 5 pages

Summon as barlgura: 5 pages
Summon as a hezrou: 10 pages
Summon as a glabrezu: 20 pages

Note that in each case, the summoning has only a 30 percent chance of success. The owner can repeat a failed attempt, but the pages are destroyed even if the summoning fails.

If the summoning provides multiple options, the tome's owner chooses which demons to summon.

Cloak of the Bear

Wondrous item, rare

This bear pelt grants a +1 bonus to AC and a +1 bonus on saving throws. As a reaction, the wearer can sacrifice the AC bonus to gain resistance to bludgeoning damage for 1 round. The AC bonus returns 1 minute later. The cloak is in area CE8.

Appendix B: Monsters

The following monsters are unique to the Pristine City.

Alabaster Golem

Made of a white, almost translucent limestone, the alabaster golem has the smooth, sculpted appearance of a masterwork statue, but it's more brittle and fragile than other golems. Often built as a giant-size imitation of its builders, the alabaster golem often remains motionless, like an ordinary statue, until it's called upon to act as a guardian or perform some other labor for its creator.

Like golems made of clay or flesh, the elemental spirit bound within the alabaster golem can break free, leaving mayhem in the golem's wake as it destroys everything in its path. As with all golems, it resists spells and other special attacks that would slay a living creature, but its fragile form lacks the resistance to weapon attacks that other golems have. The brittle nature of alabaster makes the golem uniquely vulnerable to cold attacks, but the razor-sharp flakes and shards that break off from the golem can pose a danger to anyone standing nearby.

Alabaster Golem

Large construct, unaligned

Armor Class 14 (natural armor)

Hit Points 95 (10d10+40)

Speed 20 ft.

Str 20 (+5)

Dex 7 (–2)

Con 18 (+4)

Int 3 (–4)

Wis 8 (–1)

Cha 3 (–4)

Damage Immunities poison, psychic

Condition Immunities charmed, exhaustion, frightened, paralyzed, petrified, poisoned

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 9

Languages understands Dwarvish but rarely speaks

Challenge 4 (1,100 XP)

Berserk. Whenever the golem starts its turn with 40 hit points or fewer, roll a d6. On a 6, the golem goes berserk. On each of its turns while berserk, the golem attacks the nearest creature it can see. If no creature is near enough to move to and attack, the golem attacks an object, with preference for an object smaller than itself. Once the golem goes berserk, it continues to do so until it is destroyed or regains all its hit points.

Alabaster Shards. When the golem takes more than 10 damage in a single attack from a weapon or from a force effect, shards of alabaster break off the golem's body, dealing 7 (2d6) piercing damage to all creatures within 5 feet of it.

Aversion of Cold. If the golem takes cold damage, it has disadvantage on attack rolls and ability checks until the end of its next turn.

Immutable Form. The golem is immune to any spell or effect that would alter its form.

Magic Resistance. The golem has advantage on saving throws against spells and other magical effects.

Magic Weapons. The golem's weapon attacks are magical.

Actions

Multiattack. The golem makes two slam attacks.

Slam. *Melee Weapon Attack*; +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 14 (2d8+5) bludgeoning damage.

Gaslight

Travelling through swamplands is difficult for the most savvy of explorers, but many of those who venture into the bogs unprepared never venture back out. A body that decomposes in these swampy areas often putrefies faster than one in another setting, and when the body starts to emit gas, the life of the person inside leaks out with it, and they meld into one being. The gaslight takes the form of a gaseous skull. Mostly transparent, it glows a very faint green color as the gas flows around its shape.

Gaslight

Tiny undead, neutral evil

Armor Class 12 (natural armor)

Hit Points 36 (8d4+16)

Speed 0 ft.; fly 35 ft.

Str 5 (−3)

Dex 16 (+3)

Con 14 (+2)

Int 15 (+2)

Wis 10 (+0)

Cha 11 (+0)

Damage Immunities necrotic, poison

Condition Immunities prone, exhaustion, poisoned, grappled

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 10

Languages Common

Challenge 3 (700 XP)

Incorporeal Movement. The gaslight can move through other creatures and objects as if they were difficult terrain. It takes 5 (1d10) force damage if it ends its turn inside an object.

Disorienting Fog. As a free action, the gaslight emits a thick fog, which billows out to a radius of 20 feet. Any creatures within the fogged area inhale and become confused (as the *confusion* spell) for 1d4 rounds.

Mislight. As a standard action, the gaslight can project a magical illusion that makes a light appear near its actual location, causing attack rolls to have disadvantage. If it is hit by an attack, this trait is disrupted until the end of its next turn.

Innate Spellcasting. The gaslight's innate spellcasting ability is Intelligence (spell save DC 12, +4 to hit with spell attacks). It can innately cast the following spells, requiring no material components:
At will: *blink*, *dissonant whispers*

Clockwork Creatures

Sometimes, you just need a clockwork octopus. A clocktopus, you might say. Perhaps a roving band of clockroaches. Or maybe you're just really eager to build a clockwork version of yourself. In any case, clockworks are built from gears, axles, and hard work on the part of some humanoid creature. They can't be magicked into existence—their creator must put the time and effort into actually physically building them. Not only can they be programmed to take orders, though—they're also very sturdy in a fight.

Clockwork Minotaur

Large construct, unaligned

Armor Class 15 (natural armor)

Hit Points 76 (9d10+27)

Speed 40 ft.

Str 18 (+4)

Dex 11 (+0)

Con 18 (+4)

Int 6 (−2)

Wis 12 (+1)

Cha 3 (−4)

Damage Immunities poison, psychic

Condition Immunities charmed, exhaustion, frightened, poisoned

Skills Perception +7

Damage Resistance slashing damage

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 17

Languages Dwarvish, Common

Challenge 4 (1,100 XP)

Charge. If the clockwork minotaur moves at least 10 feet straight toward a target and then hits it with a gore attack on the same turn, the target takes an extra 9 (2d8) piercing damage. If the target is a creature, it must succeed on a DC 14 Strength saving throw or be pushed up to 10 feet away and knocked prone.

Labyrinthine Recall. The clockwork minotaur can perfectly recall any path it has travelled.

Reckless. At the start of its turn, the clockwork minotaur can gain advantage on all melee weapon attack rolls it makes during that turn, but attack rolls against it have advantage until the start of its next turn.

Actions

Greataxe. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 17 (2d12+4) slashing damage.

Gore. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 13 (2d8+4) piercing damage.

Clockwork Dwarf

Medium construct, unaligned

Armor Class 16 (scale mail, shield)

Hit Points 30 (4d8+12)

Speed 25 ft.

Str 14 (+2)

Dex 11 (+0)

Con 16 (+3)

Int 11 (+0)

Wis 6 (-2)

Cha 3 (-4)

Damage Immunities poison, psychic

Condition Immunities charmed, exhaustion, frightened, poisoned

Damage Resistance slashing damage

Senses darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 10

Languages Dwarvish, Common

Challenge 2 (450 XP)

Actions

War Pick. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (1d8+2) piercing damage.

Javelin. *Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft. or range 30/120 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d6+2) piercing damage.

Safety Protocol (1/day). As an action, the clockwork creature can cast dispel magic, using Intelligence for the relevant ability check.

Mohrg

Mass murderers who die before justice reaches them sometimes rise from the grave as mohrgs, as vicious in death as they were in life. A skeleton with a torso full of glistening viscera, the mohrg has an elongated, spiked tongue that paralyzes its prey.

Mohrg

Medium undead, chaotic evil

Armor Class 15 (natural armor)

Hit Points 153 (18d8 + 72)

Speed 30 ft.

Str 14 (+2)

Dex 17 (+3)

Con 18 (+4)

Int 11 (+0)

Wis 13 (+1)

Cha 10 (+0)

Damage Immunities necrotic, poison

Condition Immunities frightened, poisoned, exhaustion

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 11

Skills Athletics +5, Stealth +9

Languages Common

Challenge 6 (2,300 XP)

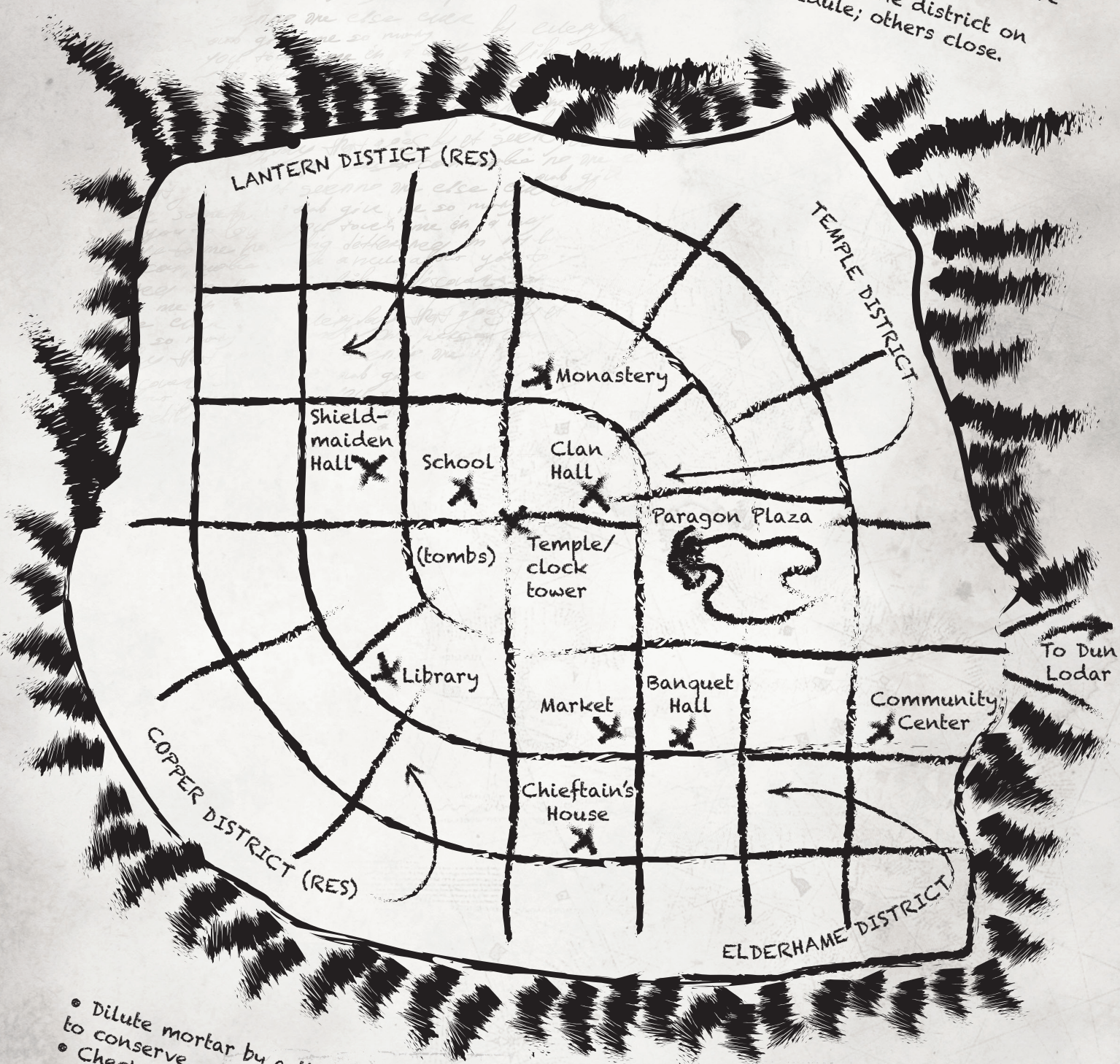
Actions

Slam. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* The creature is grappled (escape DC 15). Until this grapple ends, the target is restrained, and the mohrg can't slam another target (but it can use the paralyzing touch attack from its tongue). In addition, at the start of each of the target's turns, the target takes 20 (4d8 + 2) bludgeoning damage.

Paralyzing Touch. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +12 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 11 (2d8 + 2) necrotic damage. The target must succeed on a DC 18 Constitution saving throw or be paralyzed for 1 minute. The target can repeat the saving throw on the end of each of its turns, ending the effect on itself on a success.

Key City Locations

- FOR COUNCIL:
- Chamber ceiling can withstand earthquake.
 - Divinations/portents are promising.
 - Elderhame district on schedule; others close.

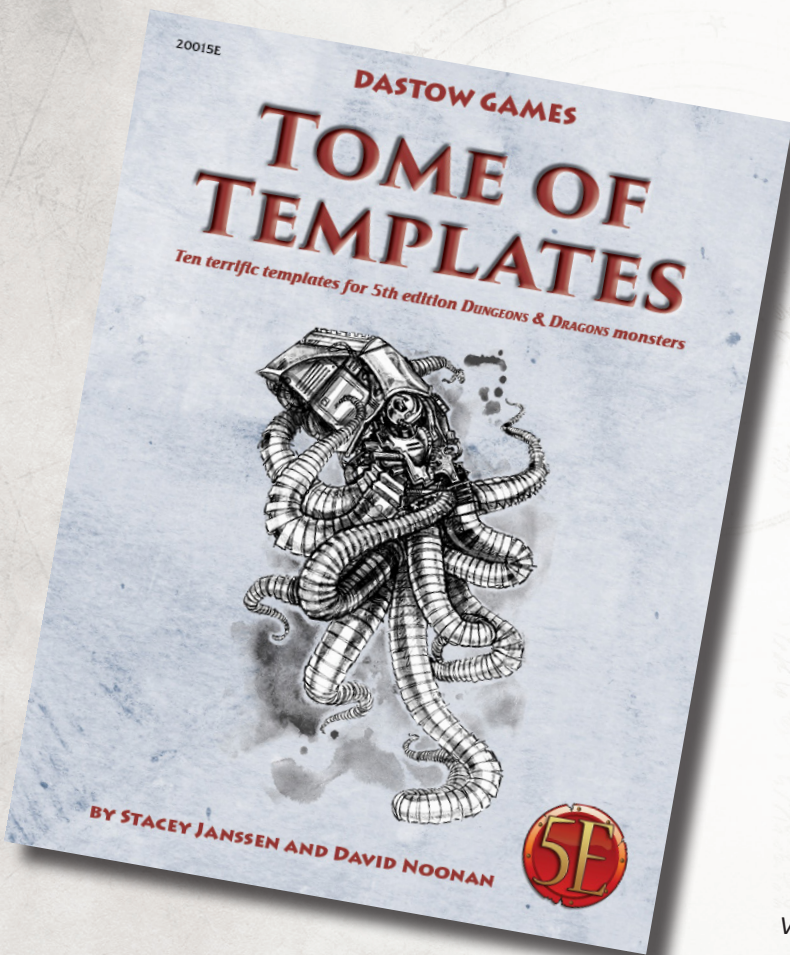
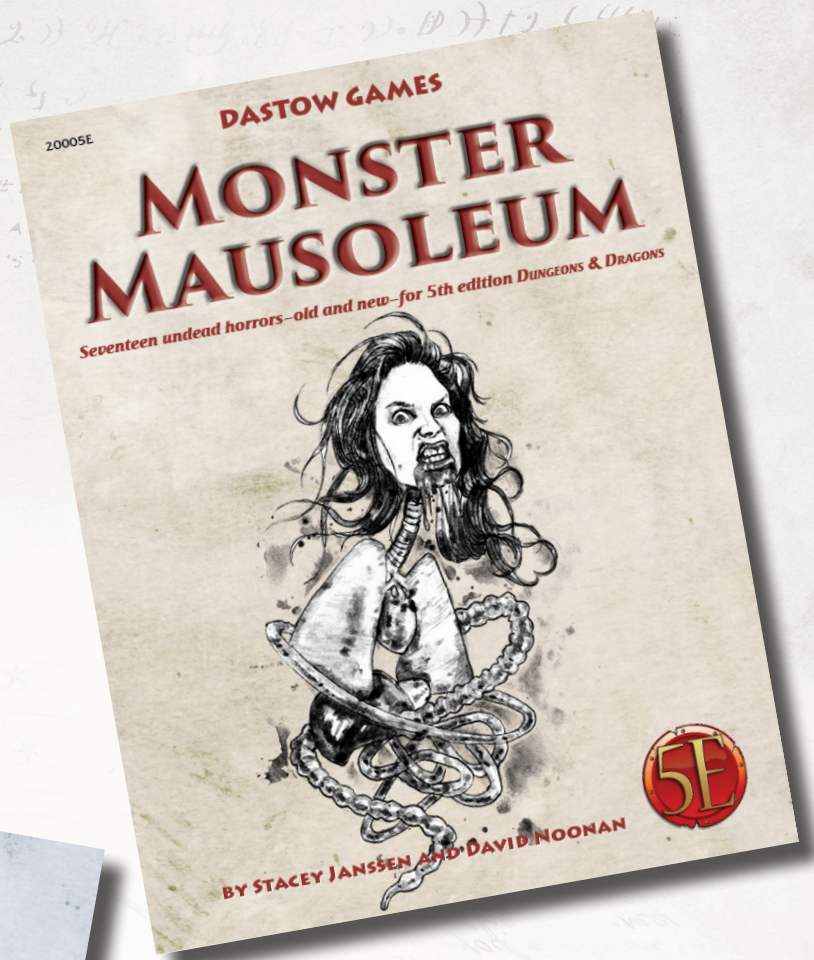


- Dilute mortar by a third to conserve
- Check on supply delays
- Meet with Tordek
- Ask Rerna about "demon" rumors

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