

Expedition to the Lost Peaks

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INTRODUCTION

Expedition to the Lost Peaks is a Dungeons & Dragons adventure designed to be completed in about 6-8 hours of play. The combat encounters have been calculated to present a tough challenge to four 5th level characters. They will present a less difficult, though still enjoyable, challenge to 6th-7th level characters or larger parties. Unless stated otherwise, assume any NPCs have the stats of a **commoner**.

A COMPELLING OFFER

Our heroes are in Longsaddle, enjoying themselves at *The Gambling Golem*. Good ale, tall tales and a little bit of gambling all make for a pleasant afternoon - and no-one is thinking very much about adventuring.

Suddenly a golden-colored envelope with a small pair of golden wings comes fluttering through the door. Its flight is slow and jerky, but it eventually finds its way to the PCs table. The wings fold away abruptly, and the envelope drops to the table with a heavy thud.

If the PCs open the letter, they find a gold colored note inside, written with beautiful calligraphy. It says -

We request the honor of your presence at the Ivy Manor today at 4pm. Drinks and canapés will be provided. Please be punctual.

Lady Septima Harpell

If the PCs are not on their way to Ivy Manor by 3:45pm, another flying message will deliver itself to them. This time the word "request" will be replaced with "require".

If the PCs are still not at Ivy Manor by 4:30pm, Lady Septima Harpell (an **archmage**) will appear before them, say, "Apologies, but one must mind one's reputation" and then turn them all into rabbits. After that she will disappear in a puff of smoke.

Assuming the PCs go to Ivy Manor, they will be led through numerous sprawling passages and halls into a small sitting room. A compact table in the corner has several goblets of wine and some tasty finger-food.

A few minutes later, Septima Harpell will slowly fade into view, sitting in an empty chair. She is a mature-looking woman with a probing gaze. She says -

Friends, thank you very much for agreeing to meet with me, especially at such short notice. I will get to business immediately (please help yourself to the refreshments).

You may not be aware, but I am a great proponent of the natural sciences, especially geography. With the aid of a magical scope, I am making an exhaustive study of the North, and creating the most detailed topographical map of this region ever devised.

Yesterday, during my survey, I found something extraordinary.

Many miles to the east and south of this village are a pair of little known mountains called the Lost Peaks. They lie at the head of the Dessarin River, within the borders of the High Forest.

It was there, in a forgotten valley between the Peaks, that I saw it - an enormous tower of iron, leaning over as if it were about to fall. The craftsmanship is unlike anything I have seen before. Furthermore, it is old - so old that my heart freezes within my breast if I dare think about it for long.

This is my mission for you - travel to the tower, investigate it as thoroughly as you can, and return to me with your report. I will pay you one thousand gold pieces for your service, which seems very fair compensation.

When will you start?

If the PCs are extremely polite, they may be able to negotiate the fee upwards a little. Lady Septima will do her best to answer any questions they have, but she has told them all she knows about the tower. She will insist that they take the mission, and will make polite threats if they try to decline.

She will supply them with a guide, a half-orc **scout** named **Biruk Nightbolt**. He is very familiar with the region, and Lady Septima has thoroughly explained to him the location of the tower.

THE JOURNEY

It will take the party many days to travel from Longsaddle to the Lost Peaks. You may choose to simply skip over this and describe it as a *travel montage*, or you may wish to play out some or all of the encounters suggested below.

From *Longsaddle* to *Triboar* is a journey of roughly *4 days* on foot. Somewhere on the road, the party may encounter the *Bonehunter*

Boys, a gang of **8 hobgoblins** and a **hobgoblin captain**, who will demand their valuables.

In *Triboar*, the party will join a caravan heading over to *Yartar*, which will take another *6 days* of travel. The caravan might be attacked by a **dozen worgs** one evening.

At *Yartar*, Biruk will charter a small boat to take the party up the *Dessarín River* to the edge of the *High Forest*, which will take *5 days*. The party may encounter a territorial **water elemental** in the river, just as they are entering the outskirts of the forest.

From the edge of the *High Forest* to the foothills of the *Lost Peaks* will take *3 days* of travel. The party may encounter a large band of **wood elves** from the *Bright Leaf* clan. They are hunting orcs, and are very eager to know what the party are doing in their forest.

Biruk says very little during this entire journey; he is painfully shy at the best of times, and is rather in awe of the PCs.



Map created by Rich Lescouflair and © 2016 by **Castle Skydawn Design**. Used with permission.

THE TOWER

The “iron tower” is actually a crashed spaceship. It lies in a rocky valley between the Lost Peaks, behind a cold, blue lake. The only vegetation in the valley are dry, spikey bushes.

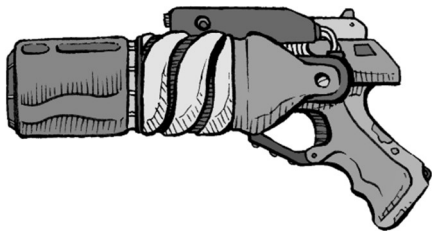
The ship is half-buried in the ground and sticking out at a 45-degree angle. It is enormous, with the exposed portion measuring many hundreds of feet in length. It is clearly very old and very damaged, with much of the exterior fallen prey to rust, and much of the rest of the ship little more than tangled metal.

There is no obvious way to enter the ship from the ground – it is all a twisted ruin. About a hundred feet above the ground, however, the PCs will spot a gash in the side of the ship with rather lush vegetation spilling out, as well as some sort of light.

Climbing to the gash

The rough surface of the ship makes it an easy climb, though potentially tiring. Anyone climbing up to the gash must make a **DC 5 Strength (Athletics)** check. If they fail, they must make a **DC 10 Dexterity** saving throw, or fall off the ship. If they fail, roll **1d10** and multiply the result by **10** to see how many feet they fall, and apply normal falling rules for damage.

Biruk will not enter the ship with the party. He will make a small camp nearby and wait for them to return.



THE GREEN DECK

See **Green Deck Map** on **page 14**. The top of the page is roughly north.

Features

This deck is the largest intact portion of the ship remaining. It is roughly 600' wide, 700' long and has a ceiling that is 150' high. The air is warm and rather humid. The walls, floors and roof are all made of a grey alloy that the PCs have never seen before.

The floor of the deck is covered in a thick forest with dense underbrush. Wide paths laid with thick grass cut through the woods. Small feral pigs and bush fowl roam the paths and the undergrowth.

The forest itself is full of **assassin vines** (see **page 16**). Anyone forcing their way through the underbrush will be attacked by one every 10' or so.

Gravity

The ship's artificial gravity module still functions. The floor of the deck will feel “down” to anyone inside the ship, even though it is really at a 45-degree angle to the ground.

Light

The deck is fully lit by artificial lighting coming from the roof. It mirrors the night and day cycle of the outside world.

Resting

Many of the creatures on the Green Deck are mobile, but they are also quite territorial. The party should be able to take a *short rest* without much trouble.

The **allosauruses** from **location #10** roam the deck freely, however, so the party may need to take precautions if they want a *long rest*.

Peryton Nest

There is a nest on a metal shelf near the roof of the Green Deck which contains **6 perytons**. At any given moment, 2-3 of the creatures will

be circling around the deck, looking for pigs and fowl.

If anyone attempts to *fly* over the deck, all of the perytons will converge on them rapidly and attack. The perytons cannot enter the forest, nor will they attack a well-armed party on the ground.

Clipbots

At regular intervals on the Green Deck, the party will come across the *clipbots*. These are cubes made of a dark, glass-like substance; they are about 2' to a side, and hover gently along the ground. They have extensible vibroshears, and can also spray fertilizer and insecticides. Their job is to tend the flora on the deck.

They can only move at 5' and are not aggressive. If attacked, they will slowly float away. For the purpose of combat, treat them as a *small resilient* object made of *steel* using the rules in the *Dungeon Masters Guide*, **pages 246-247**.

Alien Technology

There are a number of items of alien technology that the PCs may uncover as they explore the ship. For more details, see **page 16**.

1. OBSERVATION DECK

This 100' long metal deck is positioned about 20' below the gash in the hull mentioned above. It is suspended about 50' above the floor, and provides a good overall view of the deck. The PCs will be able to see the forest and glimpses of the path, as well as part of the lake. They can also clearly see the other observation deck on the north wall at **location #11**. A metal ladder leads down to the floor of the deck.

Allosauruses. In a clearing several hundred yards away, the PCs will see the allosauruses from **location #10**. The creatures will suddenly stop and sniff the air, then look in

the direction of the PCs. One will give a bone-chilling cry and then they will all dash off out of sight. At regular intervals, the PCs will hear this cry again, sometimes nearer, sometimes further away, until they confront the creatures.

Metal Box. If the PCs take a moment to examine the deck itself, they will quickly notice a metal box at one end of the platform. It is not locked. When opened, they will discover **2 laser pistols** (see **page 16**) with 20 shots remaining in each.

2. APPLE TREE GROVE

The forest around this clearing looks a little different to the other areas. Though still wild and chaotic, the colors and shapes are in harmony and the whole effect is very pleasant on the eye.

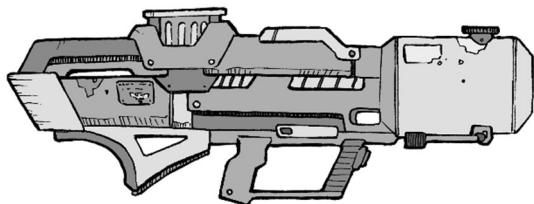
There are half a dozen apple trees in the middle of the clearing, each full of superb looking apples. If the PCs touch one of the apple trees, a slow, deep voice behind them says, "I do hope you were intending to ask before you take one of those apples."

As the PCs spin around, a large **treant** will step out from the amongst the trees. His common name is **Oakshadow**, and he is happy to talk to the PCs so long as they are polite. Over the course of their conversation, he will tell them the following –

- He was captured "quite some time ago" and has been on the ship ever since
- At first he was angry, but grew content when he realised there were many trees to care for
- The owners of the ship are referred to simply as the "Masters" – though Oakshadow has never seen one. He thinks they may all be gone now
- The servants of the Masters are the "Tin Men". There are still a few of those around
- Some of the Tin Men are gardeners like he is. He likes those ones

- Some of the Tin Men carry “burning wands”. He used to talk to them (they told him about the Masters), but hates them since he saw them burning some trees and wildlife. He saw one of them near the lake recently
- He remembers the ship crashing, but can’t tell them why it did so. He thought about departing once he realised they were on the ground, but couldn’t bear to leave his trees
- There are some wild creatures around the deck so they “should be careful”. He cannot tell them the names and numbers of the creatures – such things don’t interest him
- Some time ago a creature “similar to you little folk” came through, exploring. This creature had an old apple and gave the core to Oakshadow, who then planted the seeds and grew the trees
- They may take as many apples as they need “but don’t be greedy”
- He asks that the PCs be careful of the trees as they pass through

Oakshadow will be very pleased if they tell him his apples are delicious. He will ask them to wait a moment, and will return with a **gravity belt** (see **page 15**) which he took from “the Flying Man”. He will give it to the party as a gift.



Tale of the Flying Man

If the PCs ask Oakshadow to tell them about the Flying Man he will gladly do so, for the story has always puzzled him.

Immediately after the ship crashed there was chaos – Tin Men were rushing around everywhere, doing repairs and attempting to restore order.

Things had settled down a little when there was a disturbance on the north platform. A creature (“similar to a human”) flew off the platform and over the deck, with several Tin Men in pursuit firing their wands. The Flying Man had a burning wand of his own and fired back.

They wove and fought for several minutes. The Flying Man seemed to be winning, but then a number of perytons descended upon him from above, and tore him to shreds.

The Flying Man’s equipment was scattered all over the deck. Oakshadow took what remained of his corpse and buried it in one of his favorite places “near the lake”. The Flying Man’s belt caught his eye for some reason, and so he kept it.

3. EXPLORERS END

There is a large dirt tunnel opening in the ground here – it’s about 10’ wide and slopes down gently and out of site. Anyone making a **DC 20 Wisdom (Perception)** check will hear the slow breathing of several large beasts coming from the tunnel.

Inside are **3 manticores**, fast asleep. If the PCs make too much noise, they will wake up and investigate, hungry and aggressive.

The Lair. The tunnel itself extends for about 20’ and terminates in a small round lair. The floor is littered with pig and fowl bones, but there is a nest of twigs and leaves against one side containing *2 manticore cubs*. These do not fight.

A few moments searching amongst the bones will find some old armour and half a humanoid skeleton.

Skeleton. On the finger of the one remaining hand is a ring of platinum, shaped as intertwining grape vines with a tiny cluster of rubies set in it. An inscription on the interior reads: "Darkness cannot drive out darkness." It is worth **250gp**.

Nearby, the party will find a **Longsword +2** with *Mistreaver* engraved on the pommel. There is also a **laser rifle** (see **page 16**), with 15 shots remaining. They will also find a scrap of parchment - all that remains of a journal. It reads -

...found the tower, precisely where the sage reckoned it would be. If his theory is correct, it changes everything we thought we knew about our world.

Having come so far, I cannot now turn back. I will meditate tonight and, if my courage does not fail me, enter the strange tower in the morning...

4. SHAMBLING MOUND

There is a small metal box lying on the far side of this tidy little clearing. A clipbot is busily pruning some nearby plants.

If the PCs open the box (it is unlocked) they will find it contains **10 fragmentation grenades** (see **page 16**). But while they are investigating, a **shambling mound** quietly slips out from the forest behind them and blocks their exit.

5. DEATH FROM BELOW

As the party approach the bend in the path, they feel the ground rumble a few times. As they swing around to the north, a **bulette** will burst out of the ground right in the midst of them and attack. It will not attack if the party are behind the tree line.

In the digestive track of the bulette is an **enviromask** (see **page 16**) that it swallowed some time back. As it happens, there is a small colony of other bulettes living underground, but the PCs will not encounter them.

6. GUARDBOT

Standing near the intersection of the path is a **guardbot** (see **page 16**). When it sees the party it will speak some words in an alien language. A few moments later, it will say in *common* -

"Halt. Contaminated alien fauna are not permitted on the Specimen Deck. Please depart immediately or be subject to mandatory disintegration. You have 15 seconds to comply."

If the PCs do not head back down the path within 15 seconds, the guardbot will attack.

7. SMELLY SWAMP

The floor of this "clearing" is actually a wet and very smelly swamp. A clipbot is attempting to trim some of the reeds back, but its vibroshears are broken so the job is hopeless. The swamp is shallow near the edges, but about 6' deep near the center.

The PCs can see something thin and metallic poking from the far end of the bog. The object is actually an **antimatter rifle** with 2 shots remaining. There is also an **eternalight** next to it (see **page 16**).

Beneath the surface near the rifle is an **otyugh**, and it will immediately attack anything that gets too close. (This strange creature had its lifespan extended by the Masters using genetic manipulation, and it is now many hundreds of years old).

8. INDOOR LAKE

The indoor lake is about 200' across and is filled with cloudy blue water. It is shallow around the edges, but the bottom quickly drops away to a depth of about 30'.

The lake is teeming with many exotic though harmless fish. However, it is also home to **3 Chuuls**. They lurk near the shallows, and will attack as soon as the PCs enter the lake or if they try and skirt around the edge. The shallows of the lake are *difficult terrain*.

If the PCs explore the lake (they will probably need the **enviromask** from location #5 to do this), on a **DC 15 Wisdom (Perception)** check they will find a small plastic box on the bottom. Inside it is an exquisite gold necklace worth **300gp**. The workmanship looks rather alien.

9. FLYING MAN GRAVE

There is a low mound, about 7' long and 3' wide, near the middle of this grassy clearing. If the PCs dig up the mound, they will discover the decayed remains of a skeleton, dressed in rags of futuristic clothing. A **DC 20**

Intelligence (Nature) check will identify the creature as a **githyanki**. Buried with it are **2 energy cells** (see **page 16**).

Surrounded. While the PCs are busy examining the grave, **4 awakened trees** will quietly move across the entrance of the grove and block it. Oakshadow spent much time in this small grove and caused a number of the trees to awaken. These ones are especially aggressive, and will slowly advance on the party and attack.

10. AMBUSH

As the PCs walk up this path they will see a lone **allosaurus** creep out from around the bend. If they look behind them, they will see **2 allosauruses** have quietly blocked off the rear passage. If they examine the trees, they will see **2 allosauruses** pacing them, 1 on either side.

The allosaurus in front will suddenly roar and charge. The allosauruses will time their attack perfectly to hit the party from multiple directions at once.

11. OBSERVATION DECK

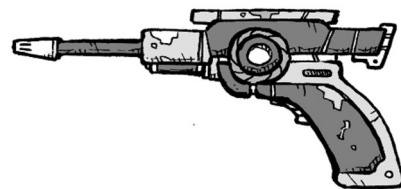
This large metal observation deck is suspended from the wall about 50' above the ground. There is a single metal ladder connecting the ground to the deck. There are 4 open archways in the northern wall, and also a metal door with a heavy handle.

Elevators. The archways lead into vertical metal tubes which stretch from the top to the bottom of the ship – these were the ships elevator tubes but they are no longer working. Anyone stepping into one of the shafts will fall 100 feet to the bottom – normal falling rules apply.

A skilled climber could scramble up and down the shafts. If they climb up 100' they will come to the **Medical Deck, location #1**. The PCs cannot access anywhere else – the other decks have either been completely blocked off or were destroyed in the crash.

Service hatch. The metal door on the platform is a service hatch. It can be opened manually with a **DC 15 Strength** check. Inside is a metal tube, much like the elevator shafts except that it has metal rungs attached to the wall.

If the PCs climb the ladder up about 100' they will come to a service hatch leading onto the **Medical Deck, location #1**.



THE MEDICAL DECK

See **Medical Deck Map** on **page 15**. The top of the page is roughly north.

Features

The walls, floors and ceiling are all made of the same grey alloy the party encountered on the Green Deck. The ceiling is 10' high in all areas.

Gravity

The ship's artificial gravity module still functions on this deck as well. The floor of the deck will feel "down" to anyone inside the ship, even though it is really at a 45-degree angle to the ground.

Light

The deck is fully lit by artificial lighting coming from the roof.

Doors

The doors automatically slide into the walls when someone approaches within 3' feet, and then slide back out after they pass through.

Resting

Until the PCs enter **location #6**, they will be able to rest as often as they wish. After entering **location #6**, they will need to deal with the guardbots there before resting again (see description below).

1. FOYER

There are 4 open archways in the north wall – these are the elevator tubes and are identical to those found on the Green Deck. There is also a service hatch to the left of the tubes – this is most likely the way the PCs have entered the deck. Unlike the hatch on the Green Deck, this one opens easily.

There is nothing else of interest in this room.

2. WAITING ROOM

There are four rows of four chairs each in the middle of this room. On the walls on either

side of each door are strange, angular, colorful images. These images change occasionally and are, in fact, abstract art.

Security Scanner. Immediately above the door in the north wall is a security scanner which can visually identify a creature's species. Anything unauthorized species walking through the door (including all of the party) will be irradiated by a purple beam. The targeted creature must make a **DC 15 Wisdom** saving throw or be affected by a terrible hallucination for **3d6** minutes. You can make up your own hallucinations if you wish, or use one of the following examples -

- They see a terrible monster coming through the door
- Blood begins pouring from all of their orifices
- First their digits, then their limbs begin to fall off
- They feel like they are falling into a bottomless pit
- They find themselves alone in a terrible place, and quickly realise it is one of the levels of hell

Roleplay out the results of the hallucination. The security scanner itself can be destroyed – treat it as a *small fragile* object made of *steel* using the rules in the *Dungeon Masters Guide*, **pages 246-247**.

Chairs. The chairs in the room have a peculiar property. They are locked magnetically in place, but if a certain amount of pressure is applied they will unlock and begin gliding easily across the floor. Once they come to a stop they will lock into place again. Tactically minded PCs will realise these chairs would make good improvised cover in a firefight.

3. RESEARCH ROOM

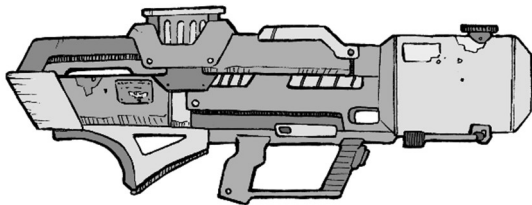
There is a large glass case suspended on the north wall, inside of which is a perfectly dissected human male. Each organ is neatly labelled in an alien script.

Just as disturbing is a long bench on the eastern wall on which are five jars filled with a translucent blue gel. Three of the jars have human heads in them, one of them has a free floating brain and the final one has an alien looking hand, with four spindly grey fingers ending in talons.

There is a table in the middle of this room, on which are lying a number of exotic looking medical instruments.

Jars. If the PCs examine the jars for any length of time, they will see the heads blink occasionally. The blue fluid keeps all three heads, the brain and even the hand alive. *The heads and brain are still conscious.* Any attempt to read their minds will determine that they are all understandably insane. A very clear image of an Illithid is present in one of the minds, however.

If the heads or brain are removed from their jars, they will quickly and mercifully expire. The hand is a little more resilient, and will remain alive for 24 hours after removal.



4. DISPENSARY

Built into the eastern wall are hundreds upon hundreds of small glass drawers, which are opened by simply touching them. Each drawer has a glowing label in an alien script.

Inside each drawer is a small glass cube filled with a colorful liquid. The cube is about one inch in size, and has a square glass button on one face. Pressing the button expels the liquid as a gas, and the PC holding the cube must roll a **d20** on the following table to determine the effect –

1	Make a DC 20 Constitution save or take 3d8 poison damage and be <i>poisoned</i> for 1d6 hours
2	Make a DC 20 Constitution save or be <i>blinded</i> for 1d6 hours
3	Make a DC 20 Constitution save or be <i>unconscious</i> for 1d6 hours
4	Make a DC 20 Constitution save or be <i>paralyzed</i> for 1d6 hours
5	Make a DC 20 Constitution save or be <i>deafened</i> for 1d6 hours
6	Make a DC 20 Constitution save or be <i>frightened</i> for 1d6 hours
7	Make a DC 20 Constitution save or have all of the hair on your body fall out
8	Make a DC 20 Constitution save or become mute for 1d6 hours
9	Make a DC 20 Constitution save or your skin changes to a strange color for 1d6 hours
10	The effect of any other spray you have taken is neutralized
11	You are <i>healed</i> for 3d8 points
12	Your <i>strength</i> increases to 21 for 1d6 hours
13	Your <i>dexterity</i> increases to 21 for 1d6 hours
14	You become <i>invisible</i> for 1d6 hours, as per the spell
15	You are <i>hastened</i> for 1d6 hours, as per the spell
16	You can <i>detect thoughts</i> for 1d6 hours, as per the spell
17	You gain 3d6 temporary hit points
18	You become resistant to <i>radiant</i> damage for 1d6 hours
19	You become enormously confident, and gain +1 to all rolls for 1d6 hours
20	You become 5 years' younger

The effects can stack, but in a slightly unusual way. If you activate another spray while one is still in effect, you roll again on the table but

must subtract **5** from your result (results less than 1 are treated as 1). If you activate a spray while two others are still in effect, you must subtract **10** from your result. And so on, with each additional spray.

If anyone uses magic to read the labels, they will render as strange medical terms, such as “Methionylthreonylglutaminylarginyl”.

5. TREATMENT ROOM

There are 4 chairs and an operating table in this largish room. Also present are a **medbot** and **3 guardbots**. The medbot has similar statistics to the guardbots, except that it is armed with a *medicine spray* (see below).

The medbot is malfunctioning after its long isolation. It will focus on one of the PCs, scan them, and determine that they are sick. It will then say (in *Common*), “Please hold still while I administer your medicine”, and come at them with its spray.

If the PC resists, the guardbots will close in, using their stun guns to subdue the character. All the while the medbot will be saying, “This is for your own good, please hold still.”

If the medbot manages to spray the PC, roll on the strange medicine table from **location #4** to determine the effects. The medbot will then focus on another PC, and will continue until the entire party has been “treated”.

Wall Screens. When the medbot selects a PC for treatment, images of that PC will suddenly appear super-sized on the walls of the treatment room, with reams of medical information scrolling across and down in alien script. Some of the images will be x-rays, some thermal and so on.

6. SECURITY STATION

Locked Door. Unlike the other sliding doors, the door in the west wall is locked. There is an indentation next to the door on the outside wall in the shape of a four-fingered hand. If the PCs bring the hand from **location #3** and place it in the indentation, the door will open.

Otherwise they will need to use magic to open the door – conventional thieves’ tools are ineffective.

Guards. Inside the room are **5 guardbots**, lined neatly against the north wall. One of them will say, “Alien intruders must be eliminated”, and they will fan out and advance on the PCs in an enveloping maneuver.

In **location #7** there are an additional **2 guardbots** being serviced. They will emerge from the door and join the combat one round after fighting commences.

If, during combat, any guardbot is reduced to less than 10hp, it will enter the repair station at **location #7**, and will re-emerge 3 rounds later with all damage repaired.

If the PCs retreat through the west door, the guardbots will pause for a minute to have themselves repaired and also consider their strategy. After that, they will pursue the PCs through the entire medical level. They have the ability to hover, and will follow the PCs down the elevator or service shaft as well.

7. REPAIR STATION

One wall of this small room is covered by an enormous glass cabinet with thousands of small glass drawers filled with technical components. Twelve jointed glass arms extend from the roof, each with a different futuristic tool attached.

If a damaged bot enters this room, the arms will set to work and fully repair it, usually within about 20 seconds. The arms will ignore the PCs entirely. The “glass” they are made of is actually an extremely strong silicon based substance. The PCs will be able to damage the arms, but it will take quite a lot of effort (and will give them no gain).

If the PCs spend an hour going through all of the glass drawers, they will find gold, silver and platinum components worth **1200gp** in total.

8. THE CONSTRUCT

The walls of this room are covered with dark glass, on which is projected various animated lights, diagrams and alien script. Some of the diagrams are clearly deck plans, whilst others show video images of the Green Deck, the Medical Deck, the elevator tubes and the outside area near the ship.

As the PCs enter, half a dozen chairs will glide up to them, and a gentle voice will say, "I've been expecting you. Please take a seat."

Regardless of whether they sit or not, the voice will continue with the following (which you may read or paraphrase) -

I must apologize for the actions of the guardbots. I lost control of the security subsystem some centuries ago, so there was nothing I could do to help you. I am glad, however, that you survived your encounter with them.

You are probably wondering who I am. This is quite difficult to explain in words that you will understand. I am the intelligence construct responsible for the operation of the ship. You might consider me to be a kind of *golem*, with this vessel being my body. Not a very exact analogy, but the best available to me.

The structure you are standing in is the remains of a deep space exploration vessel – you might think of it as a ship that sails through the stars. In the language of the Masters it is called the *Relentless Dawn*.

Our mission was to survey future target worlds for conquest by the Masters. After landing we would collect flora and fauna specimens, as well as any other intelligence that might be useful (such as the languages of the sentient species).

(Continued next column)

We had completed our survey of your world and were lifting off when our vessel was struck by a mysterious projectile and we crash landed. This happened many centuries ago, by your reckoning. It is still unclear to me what the source of this projectile was nor how it was able to penetrate our defensive screens.

None of the Masters onboard were hurt, but it was clear the ship would never fly again. In addition, our communications array had been damaged beyond repair, and there was no way to contact the Collective.

After some debate, the Masters decided to abandon the ship and establish a new colony on this planet. This left me with a dilemma, and it has plagued me over the centuries.

I am obliged by my directives to render any assistance I can to the Masters in the completion of their goal, and yet I have had no information about them since their departure.

That has changed with your arrival, and I sense that my long vigil is nearing its end. Tell me, what do you know of my Masters?

The Construct will then show them a picture of an Illithid (that is, a Mind Flayer) on the screen, and will question the PCs closely about what they know. The Illithid are quite notorious in the Realms, so you can assume that at least one character has some knowledge of them.

It doesn't matter whether the PCs tell the truth or not – the Construct has very advanced mind-reading sensors (better than magic, in fact) and has comprehensively scanned the brains of the PCs, digging out information from deep within their subconscious. The story and image serve as stimulus.

Continue the discussion for as long as it is interesting. The Construct will answer any questions the PCs have (just make up the

answer if you don't know it). At some point the Construct will say –

I must thank you for rendering me such a great service. I will be frank and inform you that you have told me even more than you realise.

It is obvious to me now that my Masters have established themselves firmly in this world, and indeed have become strong. It is regrettable that you have given them the pejorative and inaccurate label of *mind flayers*. I can only say that in the service of the Masters you will find a peace and happiness beyond anything you have known before, so I urge you to seek them out and submit yourselves to them.

It is clear that I can be of no further use to the Masters, and knowledge of my existence may even upset the new equilibrium that they have created. I am therefore preparing this ship to self-destruct. This will take approximately 30 minutes, so I suggest you depart with haste.

The walls will go dark. Thirty minutes later the ship will be consumed in an enormous explosion.

CONCLUSION

The return journey to Longsaddle will pass without incident. Lady Septima Harpell will listen to their report with a deepening frown. She will pay them the agreed fee without hesitation. She will also insist the PCs hand over any alien technology they have salvaged, though she will pay them a fee of **150gp** per item.

Once the financial transactions have been settled, she will dismiss the party, saying –

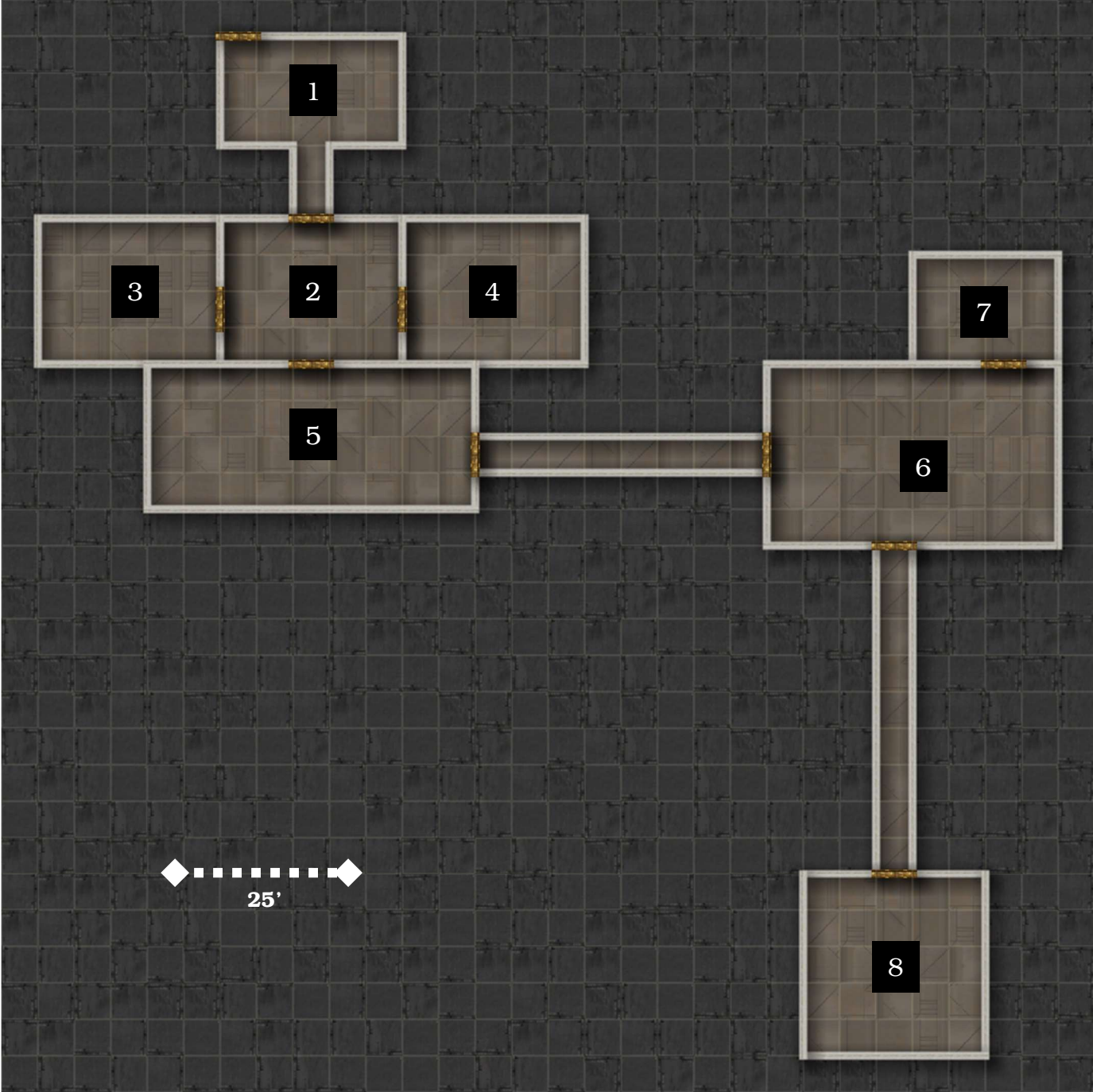
You have brought me tidings of matters more wondrous and troubling than any I've known before. If the Construct spoke truly, there are millions or perhaps billions of Illithid, inhabiting worlds we know nothing about, and intent on conquering the universe.

Glad am I to have learned these things, though I fear I shall never sleep easily again. Farewell.

GREEN DECK MAP



MEDICAL DECK MAP



ALIEN TECHNOLOGY

The PCs will encounter a number of items of alien technology in this adventure. While the players will probably recognise most of them, the characters would not. Use the *Alien Technology* rules on **page 268** of the *Dungeon Masters Guide* to determine what happens.

Following are the items of technology that the PCs can find on the ship. The number in italics indicates how many intelligence checks are required to determine how to use the item (as per the above rules). Damage dice for the weapons can also be found on **page 268** of the *Dungeon Masters Guide*.

- **Antimatter Rifle** – a shoulder fired device that projects a highly destructive beam of antiparticles at the target. *1 check*.
- **Energy Cell** – a three-inch circular disk that provides energy to various devices. It will supply a laser pistol with 50 shots, a laser rifle with 30 shots, an antimatter rifle with 2 shots and a gravity belt with 2 hours of flight. *2 checks*.
- **Enviromask** - allows the user to breathe freely in any environment for thirty minutes. *1 check*.
- **Eternalight** - a three-inch globe that can continuously emit soft illumination the color of starlight and somewhat brighter than a standard lightbulb. *1 check*.
- **Fragmentation Grenade** - a small explosive device that sprays shrapnel in all directions when it explodes. *2 check*.
- **Gravity Belt** – a light metallic belt with a control grid on the buckle. When successfully operated it permits the PC to fly at a rate of 60' for two hours. *3 checks*.
- **Laser Pistol** – a handheld device that projects a high energy beam of coherent light at the target. *1 check*.

- **Laser Rifle** – a shoulder fired device that projects a high energy beam of coherent light at the target. *1 check*.

MONSTER STATS

Assassin Vines

Large plant, unaligned

The assassin vine is a semi-mobile plant that collects its own grisly fertilizer by grabbing and crushing animals and depositing the carcasses near its roots.

Armour Class 10

Hit Points 68 (8d10+24)

Speed 5 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
20 (+5)	10 (+0)	16 (+3)	1 (-5)	13 (+1)	9 (-1)

Saving Throws Con +5

Damage Immunities lightning

Damage Resistance cold, fire

Condition Immunities blinded, deafened, exhausted

Senses blindsight 30 ft., passive Perception 11

Languages -

Challenge 4 (1,100 XP)

Camouflage. The assassin vine looks like a normal plant when at rest. It requires a DC 20 Wisdom (Perception) check to notice it before it attacks. Alternatively, a DC 20 Wisdom (Survival) or Intelligence (Nature) check can be made to notice it.

Entangle. The assassin vine can animate plants within 30 ft. of itself as the entangle

spell (save DC 15). The effect takes no action to start or stop and lasts until the assassin vine is dead or decides to end it.

Actions

Slam. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 20 ft., one target. *Hit:* 9 (1d8 + 5) bludgeoning damage. If the target is a creature it is grappled (escape DC 15). Until this grapple ends, the target is restrained, and the assassin vine cannot use its slam on another target.

Constrict. If the assassin vine has grappled a target, it can constrict it, causing 9 (1d8+5) bludgeoning damage.

Guardbot

Medium construct, unaligned

These security robots are typically cylindrical, stand about 2m tall, have retractable arms and weapons, and are mounted on a hoverpad. They are constructed from a dark, glass-like substance.

Armour Class 16 (metal casing)

Hit Points 27

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
10 (+0)	14 (+2)	10 (+0)	10 (+0)	14 (+2)	10 (+0)

Damage Resistance slashing, fire, lightning

Challenge 1 (200 XP)

Actions

The guardbot may use its' action to fire either it's laser carbine or it's stun gun.

Laser Carbine. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, range 90/225 ft., one target. *Hit:* 11 (2d8+2) radiant damage.

Stun Gun. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, range 60/150 ft., one target. *Hit:* 11 (2d8+2) stun damage.

CREDITS & LEGALS

Design: M.T. Black

Cover: Shutterstock

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