



SHIELD OF THE HIDDEN LORD



Explore the world beneath Baldur's Gate in this adventure for the world's greatest roleplaying game

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

Shield of the Hidden Lord is a fifth edition DUNGEONS & DRAGONS adventure for characters of levels 1-4, optimized for level 3. The adventure takes place beneath the city of Baldur's Gate, with the characters exploring an infernal temple in search of the Shield of the Hidden Lord. It can be played stand-alone or as part of *Baldur's Gate: Descent into Avernus*.

To run this adventure, you need the fifth edition *Player's Handbook*, *Dungeon Master's Guide*, and *Monster Manual*. Statistics for any creatures not in these books can be found in *Appendix B: Creatures*. Access to *Baldur's Gate: Descent into Avernus* is useful when running this adventure, but not strictly necessary.

ADJUSTING THIS ADVENTURE

This adventure is optimized for 5 characters of level 3. To determine whether you should consider adjusting the adventure, add up the total levels of all the characters and divide the result by the number of characters. This is the group's average party level (APL). To approximate the party strength for the adventure, consult the table below.

Determining Party Strength

Party Composition	Party Strength
3-4 characters, APL less than 3	Very weak
3-4 characters, APL equals 3	Weak
3-4 characters, APL greater than 3	Average
5 characters, APL less than 3	Weak
5 characters, APL equals 3	Average
5 characters, APL greater than 3	Strong
6-7 characters, APL less than 3	Average
6-7 characters, APL equals 3	Strong
6-7 characters, APL greater than 3	Very strong

BACKGROUND

Thalamra Vanthampur, one of the ruling dukes of Baldur's Gate, is a devout disciple of the archdevil Zariel. Tremendously ambitious, her goal is to become grand duke and present the city to her infernal mistress. To accomplish this, she needs an artifact called the *Shield of the Hidden Lord*, which

was lost somewhere beneath the city generations ago. However, knowledge of the Shield's location has recently come to light.

More information on the duke's scheme can be found in *Baldur's Gate: Descent into Avernus*. More information on the Shield can be found in *Appendix A: Magic Items*.

A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE SHIELD

The Hhune family are wealthy and influential residents of Baldur's Gate. The most famous patriarch of the family was Inselm Hhune, who lived about a century ago. Universally celebrated for his remarkable business acumen, Inselm harbored a dark secret.



As a young merchant, he was inducted into a secret society called the Knights of the Shield. This was a network of merchants and nobles, bound together by commercial and political interests. As Inselm rose through the ranks, he discovered that the inner circle of the society revered a magical shield, which was the means of communicating with an otherworldly presence calling itself the Hidden Lord.

The Hidden Lord provided the Knights with valuable political and commercial intelligence, which enabled them to prosper. In exchange, they were required to conduct certain vile rituals and perform various other tasks of questionable morality. Inselm continued his progress in the Society and was eventually proclaimed First Shield Lord.

Deep beneath the Hhune family estate in Baldur's Gate were some ancient catacombs, colloquially known as "The Pit." Inselm excavated a secret underground temple above The Pit, with a hidden entrance in the sewers. The Knights called this the Temple of the Hidden Lord and used it as a place to commune with the Shield, as well as to conduct the abhorrent rites demanded by it.

After several decades of profitable communication, the *Shield of the Hidden Lord* suddenly and mysteriously fell silent. The society slowly disintegrated as the stream of valuable information ceased, and Inselm eventually abandoned the Temple and hid the Shield in a secret location.

Inselm's final years were miserable, his body ruined by debauched living and his mind wracked by visions of his coming damnation. His ravings grew increasingly violent, until his daughter (and heir) smothered him one night with a pillow. She then buried him in The Pit, as per the Hhune family custom.

And so, the story of Inselm Hhune would have ended... except for a peculiar circumstance. When someone next had cause to enter The Pit, they discovered that Inselm's sarcophagus was open and his corpse was leaning upright against a wall, its face wearing a hideous leer. The body was returned but was found in a similar state the next time The

Pit was entered. This happened on several occasions, despite the entrance being locked and guarded.

Inselm's daughter was so unnerved by these happenings that she had the entry tunnel collapsed, and thus sealed forever whatever evil The Pit contained. Or so she hoped.

GETTING STARTED

The adventure hook varies depending upon whether you are running this adventure as part of *Baldur's Gate: Descent into Avernus* or as a standalone dungeon.

Baldur's Gate: Descent into Avernus. This adventure expands the Vanthampur Villa section of chapter 1 in the book. The characters should be level 3. Make the following changes:

- **Area V13.** Thurstwell Vanthampur tells the adventurers that his mother is searching for the *Shield of the Hidden Lord*.
- **Area V29.** Falaster Fisk tells the party that the *Shield of the Hidden Lord* can be found in the tomb of a man called Inselm Hhune. This tomb can be approached through an ancient temple beneath the sewers, to which he knows the way. He learned this information from his mistress, Sylvira Savikas. He urges the party to secure the Shield before Thalamra does. He also suggests they might need some shovels.
- **Area V36.** Remove the *Shield of the Hidden Lord* from this location.

FALASTER FISK IN COMBAT

Falaster has the statistics of a spy. Although determined to retrieve the Shield, he is also very concerned about self-preservation. He does not enter the front-line of combat, preferring to make ranged attacks from a position of safety.

Standalone. The characters are frequenting a favored tavern in Baldur's Gate. A friendly associate mentions that Thalamra Vanthampur, one of the ruling dukes of Baldur's Gate, is seeking a party of discrete adventurers to carry out a sensitive task. She is offering a generous payment. Interested

parties should apply at her residence in the Upper City.

Vanthampur Villa is a stately stone edifice with a sloped rooftop covered with red clay tiles. **Duke Thalamra Vanthampur** meets them in the parlor, sitting in an austere, high-backed chair.

Acid-tongued, shrewd, and aggressive, Thalamra tells the characters that generations ago her family lost a valuable heirloom: a golden shield engraved with a fiendish face. Through means which she does not elaborate upon, she has discovered that the shield is in the tomb of a man called Inselm Hhune.

This tomb is deep underground and the entry was blocked off many years ago. But Thalamra has found a back entrance, which can be approached through an ancient temple beneath the sewers. She offers 500 gp in total if the party returns the shield to her. With negotiation, this offer can be increased to 650 gp.

Thalamra has one more clue to share with the party; the entrance to the tomb is accessed via a secret door in the chapel.

Upon acceptance, she supplies the party with a guide, a yellow-haired gnome **commoner** named Unvera Nucklestamp, along with 4 shovels.

ADJUSTING THE SCENE

If the party is very weak or weak, Thalamra offers the characters several guards to round the party numbers up to 6.

CITY SEWERS

Either Unvera Nucklestamp or Falaster Fisk guides the characters into the spidery network of sewer tunnels that lies below the city.

Features. The main tunnels are crudely hewn from the granite and are 5-feet to 10-feet wide with an arched roof. A water channel typically runs down one side of the tunnel, while a narrow walkway runs down the other. Numerous shafts and pipes empty into the main tunnels, and it is not unusual for them to intersect with natural caves. The smell is repulsive.

DOWN, DOWN, UNDERGROUND

The guide leads the adventurers down through the sewer tunnels. At your discretion, the adventurers might encounter something along the way:

Sewer Encounter Table

d8	Encounter
1	2d4 giant rats
2	1d4+2 giant bats
3	1 gibbering moucher
4	1 wererat
5	1 ochre jelly
6	1d4 crocodiles
7	2d6 kobolds
8	2d6 stirges

After an hour of careful travel, the party finds themselves deep below the city, in a dry and dusty tunnel that looks like it was abandoned before completion.

TEMPLE ENTRANCE

Several natural caves branch off from the main tunnel, and the guide leads the adventurers down one of these, which terminates at a wall of loosely packed gravel. The guide points out a large, flat-faced rock which is engraved with a leering, fiendish face.

The guide begins digging the loosely packed gravel and asks the party to do the same. Each round, every digger must make a Strength (Athletics) check. The first one to roll 15 or higher breaks through the wall. If the characters lack shovels, a roll of 20 or higher is required. The hole reveals an ancient rugged and gloomy tunnel.

PROCEEDING TO CHAPTER 2

Following the ancient tunnel leads to **Chapter 2: Temple Upper Level**. If the guide is Falaster Fisk, he accompanies the party. If the guide is Unvera Nucklestamp, she remains at the tunnel entrance.



CHAPTER 2: TEMPLE UPPER LEVEL

The Temple was built by the Knights of the Shield as a place to worship the *Shield of the Hidden Lord* and to carry out certain fiendish ceremonies.

Features. A large natural cavern formed the basis of the Temple of the Hidden Lord, with the sides hewn into the required shape. The interior walls are constructed from well-cut granite blocks and the floor is covered by large slate tiles. The ceiling is hewn from the granite and is typically 8-feet to 10-feet high.

Light. Except where indicated, the Temple is completely dark.

Doors. The doors are made of mahogany and do not have locks, except where noted.

The cave tunnel from the sewers winds onwards for about 200 feet before opening into location T1. A map can be found in the attached package of maps.

RESTING

The temple is a challenging dungeon and most parties will need to rest. There are no defined wandering monsters, meaning it is safe to stay in any cleared location. If the party is resting too often, have an adult kruthik from location T22 interrupt them.

T1. THRESHOLD

This spacious natural cavern is perhaps 100 feet in diameter, with thick stalagmites and columns everywhere. A granite portico extends out from the far wall, housing a pair of dark wooden doors.

GHOSTLY GUARDIANS

There are **2 shadow mastiffs** on the portico. The creatures attack anyone who comes within 10 feet of them unless that person is openly wearing a holy symbol of the Knights of the Shield (see Treasure, below).

ADJUSTING THE SCENE

Here are some suggestions for adjusting this scene:

- **Very Weak:** Remove 2 shadow mastiffs.
- **Weak:** Remove 1 shadow mastiff.
- **Very Strong:** Add 1 shadow mastiff.

TREASURE

Anyone taking ten minutes to search the cavern, and succeeding on a DC 12 Wisdom (Perception) check, finds an old corpse wearing rough woolen robes and a shield-shaped copper pendant. This is the holy symbol of the Knights of the Shield. It is worth 15 gp.

PERILOUS PORTALS

The tall double doors are made of carved ebony, and each has a skull-shaped silver knocker. Each door also has a message inscribed on it. The left-hand one says, "Temple of the Hidden Lord". The right-hand one says, "Please knock before entering".

The doors are not locked. They swing inwards and can be easily opened by pushing on them, gently swinging back to the closed position after a few minutes.

Trap. If anyone touches either knocker, it explodes into a cloud of silvery energy spores. Anyone within 10 feet of the knocker must succeed on a DC 15 Constitution saving throw, taking 7



(2d6) lightning damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.

T2. NAVE

The 15-foot-high stone ceiling is arched and supported by a double row of columns. Several frescos are painted on the walls in muted colors. There is a shortsword on the floor.

This long chamber was used by the novitiates of the Hidden Lord to worship.

THICK WEBS

The eastern half of the nave is covered in thick web. Several humanoid shapes entirely cocooned in web can be seen hanging from the ceiling. The adventurers must tread carefully through this area or become entangled by the webs (see “Dungeon Hazards” in chapter 5 of the *Dungeon Master’s Guide*).

The door on the northern wall is covered by webs, but still readily visible.

SPIDERY SURPRISE

The webs are home to an **ettercap** and **2 giant spiders**. The creatures are well hidden amongst the webs but can be spotted with a successful DC 16 Wisdom (Perception) check. They attack when seen, otherwise waiting for an opportune moment to ambush the adventurers.

ADJUSTING THE SCENE

Here are some suggestions for adjusting this scene:

- **Very Weak:** Remove the **ettercap** and 1 **giant spider**.
- **Weak:** Remove the **ettercap**.
- **Strong:** Add 1 **giant spider**.
- **Very Strong:** Add 2 **giant spiders**.

TREASURE

Three bodies encased in web, a halfling and two humans, are dangling 10 feet above the floor. Once unraveled, the corpses are far too desiccated to permit identification. Between them they have 18 gp, 21 sp, and 51 cp. One of the humans is wearing a tarnished silver bracelet worth 15 gp. The halfling



is wearing leather armor and has a gold scarab pendant worth 35 gp.

HIDDEN EXIT

Recent subsidence opened a large crack in the roof which ultimately leads to a sewer tunnel. This is how the ettercap and its spider companions came to be in the Temple in the first place. They use this passage to enter the city by night and hunt for prey. The crack can be spotted with a successful DC 20 Wisdom (Perception) check. The passage beyond it is narrow, twisty, and vertical, but a determined adventurer making a DC 20 Strength (Athletics) check could use it to enter the sewer tunnels.

INFORMATIVE FRESCOS

There are four large frescos painted on the walls in muted colors, two on either side of the nave.

First Fresco. A handsome sage in amber robes sits on a throne with a pile of scrolls next to him. He is speaking to a group of kings and queens, who listen to him with interest and respect.

Second Fresco. The sage in amber robes looks at a city in the background. The city is burning, and soldiers fight in its streets. In the foreground are two snakes, twisted together.

Third Fresco. The sage in amber robes rides a blue dragon over a dark forest. In a clearing in the forest is a unicorn with a broken, twisted horn.

Fourth Fresco. The sage in amber robes wields a rapier and fights a shadowy figure in dark armor. The shadowy figure wears a jeweled gauntlet.

Anyone examining the frescos and making a successful DC 20 Intelligence (History) or Intelligence (Religion) check will conclude that these frescos depict the mysterious infernal power known as Gargauth.

T3. CHOIR STALL

On the southern wall is a choir stall, made from beautifully carved ebony. The door to the stall is secured by a golden bolt.

As the characters draw near, they see a group of four faint ghostly figures in the stall. The figures silently shuffle back and forth, their faces twisted in anguish. The golden bolt is engraved with arcane runes.

These miserable creatures were sacrificed to the Hidden Lord, with their spirits then bound to the infernal choir and cursed to an eternity of worshipping the very being they were sacrificed to.

THE CHOIR SINGS

A dusty ebony baton rests on the front of the stall. If anyone picks up the baton, the choir stops shuffling and instead stares intently at it. Waving the baton about causes the choir to sing with beautiful, otherworldly voices. They sing the following chant:

*Hidden Lord, we seek your face
Hidden Lord, we seek your face
Hidden Lord, we seek your face
Let us know your will*

The choir once knew several dozen chants, but this is the only one they still recall. They continue to sing so long as the baton is waved.

DRAWING THE GOLDEN BOLT

If the golden bolt is drawn, the **4 specters** in the choir box burst through the door and attack the party ferociously. The specters cannot leave the nave.

ADJUSTING THE SCENE

Here are some suggestions for adjusting this scene:

- **Very Weak:** Remove 2 specters.
- **Weak:** Remove 1 specter.
- **Strong:** Add 1 specter.
- **Very Strong:** Add 2 specters.

TREASURE

The golden bolt is drained of its power once drawn. It can be easily detached from the choir stall and is worth 50 gp.

T4. CHANCEL

This area is elevated a foot above the nave, and the floor is covered by ebony boards rather than tiles. In the middle of the chamber is a basalt altar.

The altar is roughly 6-feet long, 3-feet wide, and 3-feet high. Sculpted on the sides in bas-relief are images of serpents and insect swarms. There are dark stains on the top and sides of the altar.

Each side also has a phrase engraved into the stone, written in infernal. The phrases are:

- *The Hidden Lord*
- *The Unknown Lord*
- *The Watchful Lord*
- *The Outcast Lord*

TREASURE

Laying on the altar is the *Dagger of the Hidden Lord* (See Appendix A. Magic Items).



T5. VESTRY

This room contains a tall wardrobe, a cupboard, several chairs, a full-length mirror, and a pair of tall candle holders. The furniture is old, worn, and dusty, and everything has been upended.

BEARDED BURGLAR

Rummaging through the wardrobe is a **bearded devil**. Its name is Hrizlach, and it is especially stupid. It has spent over fifty years searching the sewers for the Shield on behalf of its archfiend mistress, Zariel, but has frequently gotten lost.

It only stumbled upon the Temple five days ago. Sensing magical emanations from the vestry, but unable to locate the secret compartment (see below), it has spent the whole time searching and re-searching the furniture.

Though normally aggressive, it is initially surprised to see the characters and demands to know who they are. It is very credulous and can be convinced of any reasonable-sounding statement with a successful DC 12 Charisma (Persuasion) check. For example, an adventurer might claim to be a member of the cult of Zariel, and therefore is an ally.

ADJUSTING THE SCENE

Here are some suggestions for adjusting this scene:

- **Very Weak or Weak:** Replace the **bearded devil** with an **imp**.
- **Very Strong:** Add a **bearded devil** named Bialgith.

TREASURE

The candle holders are gold-plated and worth 20 gp each. The wardrobe contains several moth-eaten cassocks, amber in color. The cupboard contains a large supply of candles, a box of incense, and writing implements.

SECRET COMPARTMENT

A successful DC 15 Wisdom (Perception) check will locate a secret compartment in the north wall. It contains a *potion of clairvoyance*, a set of gold-

plated prayer beads (worth 15 gp), and a *spell scroll (levitate)*.

T6. COURTYARD

This large courtyard is filled with water. Greenish slime covers much of the surface with sickly, twisted reeds poking through.

There are six doors facing the courtyard, each with a set of granite stairs leading down into the slimy water. The domed, rocky ceiling peaks 25-feet overhead.

BENEATH THE SURFACE

The floor of the courtyard is 3-feet below the level of the door. Treat the courtyard as difficult terrain for anyone wading across it.

There is a well with a stone wall around it in the middle of the courtyard. This flooded some years ago, creating the current situation. Characters able to breathe underwater could potentially swim down the well. After about 30 feet, they come to an underground stream which ultimately leads down to the Underdark.

SLIME TIME

Numerous green slimes float about in the water, perfectly blending with the harmless algae (see “Dungeon Hazards” in chapter 5 of the *Dungeon Master’s Guide*). For every 5 feet the adventurers move through the water, there is a 15% chance of encountering a 5-foot square patch of green slime.

Since the slime does not move, it is possible to mark the location of the infested squares on a map.

TREASURE

Anyone spending 10 minutes searching the courtyard underwater and making a successful DC 16 Wisdom (Perception) check, finds a shield-shaped copper pendant. This is the holy symbol of the Knights of the Shield. It is worth 15 gp. There is also a partially dissolved halfling skeleton and a few other bones.

T7. NOVITIATES DORMITORY

Several dozen pallets lie scattered around this plain, dusty room. Many of them are torn and there is straw everywhere. Two overturned wardrobes are stacked together at the northern end of the room, and there is an empty water barrel at the southern end.

Soft, echoey moans can be heard from the eastern door.

This dormitory is where the novitiates slept. The Knights recruited them to assist with the worship of the Hidden Lord and to maintain the Temple. In return, the novitiates were promised wealth and the possibility of becoming a Knight of the Shield. At its peak, the Temple had around fifty novitiates in service.

TREASURE

Beneath the wardrobes is a pile of torn and moth-eaten novice habits, now soiled by mildew and the passage of time.

There are various small items scattered about the dormitory. Ten minutes searching and a successful DC 12 Wisdom (Perception) check is required to locate each one.

Dormitory Treasures

d10 Treasure

- | | |
|----|---|
| 1 | An old wooden comb with broken teeth. |
| 2 | An electrum-plated anklet (worth 15 gp). |
| 3 | A shield-shaped copper pendant. This is the holy symbol of the Knights of the Shield (worth 15 gp). |
| 4 | A pouch of smoking weed. |
| 5 | 20 feet of rope. |
| 6 | A battered, but working, lamp. |
| 7 | A razor with a gold-plated grip (worth 20 gp). |
| 8 | A silver, satyr-shaped earring (worth 10 gp). |
| 9 | A crumpled-up letter of regret (see Handout #1 in Appendix C). |
| 10 | A gold tooth (worth 2 gp). |

T8. LATRINE

An enclosed stone bench runs along the northern wall, with holes piercing the upper surface. A low rectangular basin in the middle of the room has a couple of inches of putrid water in it. Several short sticks with old rags wrapped around the end sit in the basin.

Loud, echoey moans can be heard through the holes. The smell from the basin is nauseating. A hinged 5-foot square iron grill at the eastern end of the room is secured by a bolt.

PITIABLE PRISON

There is a 20-foot drop from the latrine bench to the pit below, which has dimensions matching the chamber above. At the bottom of the pit are **12 nupperibo**, groaning in abject misery due to their perpetual hunger. These pitiable creatures were formerly members of the society but were transformed and placed here as punishment for various infractions.

Entry to the latrine pit can only be achieved by opening the iron grate and dropping in.



TREASURE

The nupperibo devour anything that falls into the pit, including a surprising amount of loose change. Rummaging through the stomachs of the fiends after destroying them yields 24 gp and a gold ring set with bloodstones worth 125 gp.

T9. REFECTORY

A marked and scored wooden table runs nearly the full length of this room, with narrow wooden benches squeezed in either side.

There is an empty beer barrel in the north-eastern corner, with a wooden dipper and mugs nearby. Engraved on the northern wall in large letters are the words, “The Hidden Lord Sees All Things” in common.

GREEDY GRUBS

The table is almost completely covered by 4 **swarms of rot grubs**. There are two lumpy shapes in the middle of the table, but they cannot be identified as the grubs cover them.

A character making a successful DC 10 Dexterity (Stealth) check can slip past the table safely. On a failed check, a swarm attacks the character. If attacked, the swarms leave the table and engage the adventurers. If the characters then flee, the swarms pursue them until destroyed, crawling on the walls and ceiling to avoid hazards if required.

ADJUSTING THE SCENE

Here are some suggestions for adjusting this scene:

- **Very Weak:** Remove 2 **swarms of rot grubs**.
- **Weak:** Remove 1 **swarm of rot grubs**.
- **Strong:** Add 1 **swarm of rot grubs**.
- **Very Strong:** Add 2 **swarms of rot grubs**.

HALF A HALFLING

If the adventurers manage to clear away the grubs, they see that one of the shapes on the table is a sack, and the other is a halfling with its head and torso missing.

The halfling was a member of a novice adventuring party called the Kneehigh Knights

(franchise #127). His companions had already fallen victim to miscellaneous dangers by the time he was partially consumed here.

TREASURE

The sack contains four gold-plated candelabra, worth 25 gp each. The halfling is wearing leather armor and a shortsword, both of inferior quality. Tied to his belt is an old jar containing a *potion of resistance (necrotic)*. He also has 13 gp in a pouch, alongside a printed document (see Handout #2 in appendix C).



T10. KITCHEN

Flour and dirt mingle together on the floor of this cramped kitchen. There are two large, cold hearths on the eastern wall, a large iron stove on the opposite wall, a long wooden bench, and several barrels and tuns.

Pots, pans, kettles, cauldrons, bowls, knives, forks, spoons, and ladles hang from the walls. A few of these items are also scattered across the benches.

The room is very warm, with the heat coming from the western wall. The northern door is open, and from there comes a putrid smell and the sound of noisy grunting.

TREASURE

A ten-minute search and a successful DC 15 Wisdom (Perception) check locates a *ring of jumping* in an old kettle. One of the novitiates hid

this contraband item here but forgot to retrieve it when the Temple was abandoned.

T11. BUTTERY

The walls of this small room are stacked with barrels, crates, caskets, and jars.

The containers are full of consumables. The vegetables have rotted away and the flour is rancid, but the salted pork and hard biscuits are both still (barely) edible. The oil is also still good.

FOUL FORAGERS

There is a **leucrotta** here, devouring the salted pork. It is all that remains of a larger pack of the monstrosities that wandered into the Temple some days ago. This vicious beast is hungry and attacks the characters on sight.

ADJUSTING THE SCENE

Here are some suggestions for adjusting this scene:

- **Very Weak:** Replace the **leucrotta** with a **death dog**.
- **Weak:** The **leucrotta** has 40 hit points.
- **Strong:** The **leucrotta** has 90 hit points.
- **Very Strong:** Add a **leucrotta**.

TREASURE

A ten-minute search and a successful DC 13 Wisdom (Perception) check locates a silver cloak pin set with a moonstone worth 25 gp.

T12. CALEFACTORY

There is a brick furnace in the middle of this uncomfortably hot room. An iron hatch at the front of the furnace gives an occasional clang as something collides with it.

The furnace is 5-feet square and 3-feet high. Anyone listening carefully and making a successful DC 12 Wisdom (Perception) check hears a faint squealing and banging noise coming from inside.

Anyone touching the furnace or the iron door with unprotected hands must make a successful DC 14 Constitution saving throw or take 2 points of fire

damage. Opening the door requires a successful DC 15 Strength check.

ELEMENTAL EMPLOYEES

There are **4 fire snakes** inside the furnace, slithering around in distress and confusion. If the furnace door is opened, they immediately glide out and attack the adventurers.

ADJUSTING THE SCENE

Here are some suggestions for adjusting this scene:

- **Very Weak:** Remove 2 **fire snakes**.
- **Weak:** Remove 1 **fire snake**.
- **Very Strong:** Add 1 **fire snake**.

TREASURE

It takes six hours for the furnace to cool after the fire snakes leave. After that, anyone entering and making a successful DC 15 Wisdom (Perception) check spots two small diamonds worth 50 gp each. These are residue from the spell used to summon and bind the elemental creatures.

T13. PARLOR

The entrance is arch-shaped with a pair of plain double doors made from ebony. There is an infernal inscription on the arch:

THE WISE ARE INSTRUCTED BY REASON,
THE FOOLISH BY THE ROD.

The doors are not locked.

The parlor is small but comfortably furnished. The walls and ceiling are paneled with mahogany, while the floor is covered with a sumptuous rug. There are two cushioned reading chairs, a side table, and a writing desk.

Light is provided by four tall candle holders, which are lit when the adventurers enter. An open archway leads to area T14.



IUZAKOR'S INTRODUCTION

When the door is opened, the adventurers see an insect-like monstrosity sitting upright in one of the chairs, reading a book. The creature looks up in surprise, then transforms into a beautiful **incubus**.

His name is Iuzakor, and he is very charming, inviting the adventurers to be seated and asking about their adventures so far. He wants to find out whatever they know, while not revealing anything himself.

IUZAKOR'S MOTIVATION

Iuzakor is seeking the *Shield of the Hidden Lord*, as he knows that the archfiend Zariel will richly reward whoever finds it. He recently discovered the Temple and has explored the top level. Guessing that the Temple library may have some useful information, he has spent several hours here researching for clues.

IUZAKOR'S PLAN

At some point during the discussion, Iuzakor attempts to charm one of the characters. He plans to let the party explore the Temple ahead of him to see what they discover. He keeps track of their progress via telepathy with the charmed character, or by transforming into a fly or spider and trailing them.

He does not want them to possess the Shield, however. If they find the entrance to The Pit, he attempts to stop them from going down—possibly by luring monsters from other parts of the dungeon to them. If the party gets the Shield, Iuzakor flees.

If the party enters the library (T14), he picks up his book again and says, "Go right ahead, don't mind me."

TREASURE

The gold-plated candleholders are worth 20 gp each, though they are too tall to carry easily. Iuzakor was reading the *Demonic Shards of Alvagaerus*, an often-incoherent book that details many incidents from the Blood War. One section features the archfiend Gargauth.

ROLEPLAYING IUZAKOR

Iuzakor is an **incubus** from Avernus. He is handsome, dark-haired, bat-winged, and leather-clad.

- **Trait.** I enjoy shapeshifting often while talking to mortals, as it annoys them. If I'm asked to think about something, I might shift into the form of a sage with a long beard. If someone asks me to look for something, I might shift into the shape of a kuo-toa with enormous eyes. It is especially amusing to shift into the shape of the person talking to me, but without clothing.
- **Ideal.** Power. There is nothing else in the multiverse that matters. But it's good to have a laugh along the way.
- **Bond.** I am loosely aligned with Zariel.
- **Flaw.** I am rather vain and can be susceptible to flattery if done well.

Iuzakor generally does not wish to fight and simply enters the Ethereal Plane if attacked.

T14. LIBRARY

Wooden bookcases line the paneled walls of this small library. There is a richly carved table in the middle of the room, but no chairs. Light comes from two golden candelabra on the table.

The library contains a solid selection of books, covering classics, history, natural philosophy, arcana, theology, as well as some more popular works. Typical titles include:

- *Relics of Religion* by Tantar
- *On the Diseases of Dwarfs* by Estrel
- *The History of the World* by Sorele
- *Metrical Lore of Place* by Urthorkh
- *Garden of the Soul* by Alvagaerus Firlthond
- *The Complete Travels of Volo*
- *Execrations of Philosophy* by Albhaera
- *Praktikal Mechanics* by Bravren
- *The Flowing Light of Divinity* by Vornduir

A glass encased shelf contains several volumes on the occult and esoterica, such as:

- *Accursed Scrolls of Shinalstar*
- *Arcane Tablets of Thardock*

- *Eldritch Apocrypha of Sarkhx*
- *Ilmicoll Incunabulum*
- *Vile Parchments of Alathaera*

THE GARGAUTHIKA

In the occult section is a book composed of 66 6-inch square engraved plates of electrum, bound at the spine with a hinge. It is written in infernal and is called the *Gargauthika*. This book, written by an anonymous prophet, gives a brief history of Gargauth's existence:

- He was once a powerful fiend aligned to Bel, ruler of Avernus.
- He was a cunning politician who alienated many powerful fiends through his trickery and deceit.
- Bel exiled him when he discovered Gargauth was secretly in contact with Zariel, Bel's great rival.
- Gargauth took to wandering the planes, trying to establish a power base that would enable him to return to Avernus in triumph.

Trap. To safely open the book, one must utter the phrase "We hail thy dread majesty, Gargauth." Anyone opening the book without saying this phrase must succeed on a DC 15 Constitution saving throw, taking 7 (2d6) lightning damage on a failed



save, or half as much damage on a successful one. If Iuzakor is still in the parlor when the trap is triggered, he sniggers.

TREASURE

The *Gargauthika* is an extremely rare book, possibly one of a kind, and is worth 900 gp. The remaining occult volumes are worth 120 gp total. The other books are in poor condition, and not likely to fetch a price at market.

T15. CELLS

The cell floor is covered with dirt and straw, and there is the odor of rotten flesh mingled with mold. There are several old buckets on the floor and a dozen rusty manacles bolted to the walls. Lying at the back of the cell are three glittering, golden humanoid skeletons.

The door is locked and is made of oak, reinforced with iron bands. Picking the corroded lock requires a successful DC 18 Dexterity check made using thieves' tools. Even if the adventurer has the key (from location T17), it requires a successful DC 10 Strength check to unlock.

GOLDEN SURPRISE

These are regular skeletons covered by a type of yellow mold that has evolved to resemble gold dust. If a creature touches the mold, it ejects a cloud of deadly spores (see "Dungeon Hazards" in chapter 5 of the *Dungeon Master's Guide*).

The corpses belonged to ordinary Baldur's Gate residents who were captured by the Knights of the Shield for a sacrificial ritual.

TREASURE

A ten-minute search and a successful DC 17 Wisdom (Perception) check locates a silver bangle, pushed into a gap between two granite blocks. Engraved on the interior are the words, "To my dearest Luciana, thank you for saying yes! Love always, Cassian." It is worth 30 gp.

T16. STOREROOM

Three rows of wooden shelves run around the north, east, and west walls of this room, stacked with religious items. Several rusty, naked swords dangle down from the southern wall, each secured by a length of chain 5-feet long.

The shelves contain items such as robes, vestments, candles, incense pouches, cups, towels, blankets, candle holders, quills, ink, paper, sacks, and so on.

TREASURE

There are four gold-plated candleholders on the shelves (worth 20 gp each).

CUNNING COMPARTMENT

A 15-minute search and a successful DC 15 Wisdom (Perception) check locates a slightly off-color block in the western wall. Pushing the block causes it to spring outward, revealing a small compartment.

Trap. If the person opening the secret compartment is not wearing a holy symbol of the Knights of the Shield, the hanging swords jump to life. They are **10 flying swords**, and attack anyone within 5 feet of the western wall.

ADJUSTING THE SCENE

Here are some suggestions for adjusting this scene:

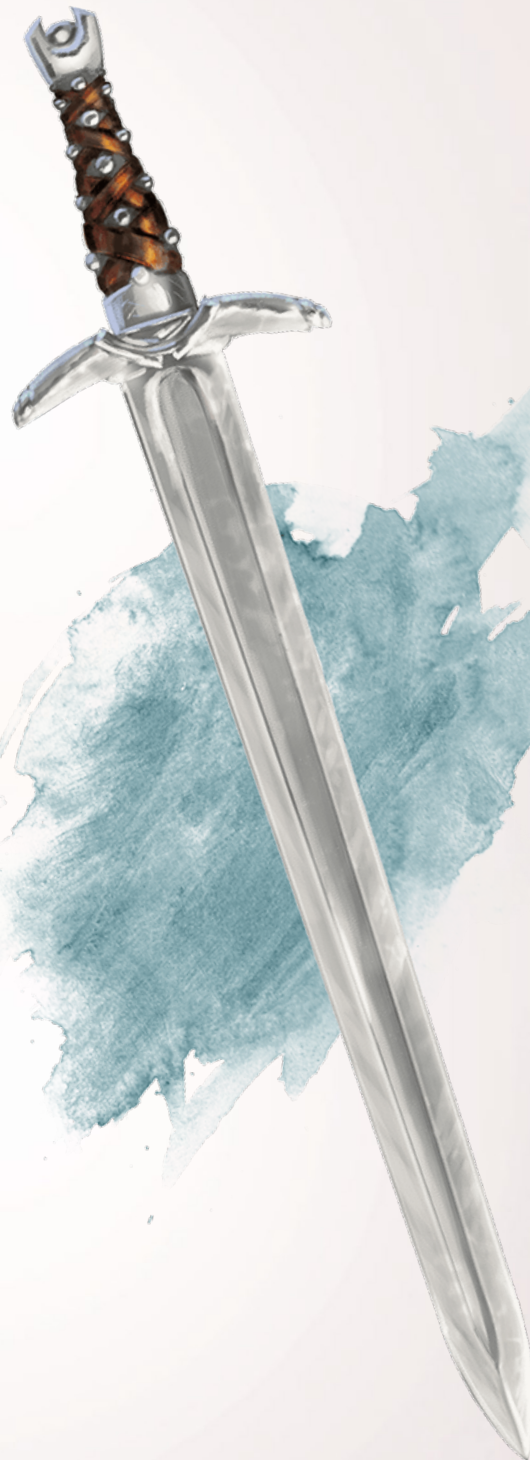
- **Very Weak:** Remove 5 flying swords.
- **Weak:** Remove 3 flying swords.
- **Very Strong:** Add 3 flying swords.

TREASURE

Inside the compartment are two *potions of healing*, a *potion of resistance (fire)*, and a *potion of animal friendship*. There is also a fine leather purse holding 80 gp.

PROCEEDING TO CHAPTER 3

The stairs near area T16 lead to **Chapter 3: Temple Lower Level**.



CHAPTER 3: TEMPLE LOWER LEVEL

The stairs to this level descend 15 feet. The features of the lower level are identical to those of the upper level. A map can be found in the attached package of maps.

T17. GRAND CHAMBER

There is a brass plate on this grand mahogany door. An inscription reads, “Display your allegiance before entering.”

The walls and ceiling of this chamber are paneled with carved mahogany, while the floor is covered by an intricate tile mosaic showing warriors in battle. The room contains a large bed, several padded chairs, a wardrobe, and a dressing table.

The furniture is cracked and faded, while a thick layer of dust lies on the bed and floor. Golden candleholders are set in the walls, and the room smells of mildew.

Trap. Anyone openly wearing the holy symbol of the Knights of the Shield may enter the chamber safely. If anyone else enters, 4 mosaic warriors stand up out of the floor and attack the intruder. These 2-foot high creatures are made from tiles and cement; they have the same statistics as **animated armor**, except they have Size small.

ADJUSTING THE SCENE

Here are some suggestions for adjusting this scene:

- **Very Weak or Weak:** Remove 2 mosaic warriors.
- **Strong or Very Strong:** Add 2 mosaic warriors.

TREASURE

Amongst various worthless trinkets, there is a gold signet ring on the dressing table engraved with the word “Hhune” beneath a coat of arms (worth 40 gp), and an iron key that unlocks the cells (area T15). There is also a small gold hand mirror (worth 50 gp).

The wardrobe contains several amber-colored vestments, as well as regular clothing of superior

quality. All of it is dusty and moth-eaten. One shirt has the initials “IH” monogrammed on the collar.

T18. VAULT

The door to this room is locked, and the key was lost long ago. Picking the lock requires a successful DC 14 Dexterity check made using thieves’ tools. Forcing open the door requires a successful DC 15 Strength check. The door can also be smashed open; it has AC 15, 25 hit points, and immunity to poison and psychic damage.

A stone shelf runs around the inside of this small room.

TREASURE

On the shelf rests 1900 cp, 500 sp, 110 gp, a pouch with five zircons (50 gp each), an *eversmoking bottle*, and two *potions of healing*. There is also a pentagram-shaped block of ebony, which opens the door to T20.



T19. STUDY

The floors and ceiling of this cozy room are paneled with mahogany and there is a luxuriant rug covering the floor. A padded chair and a large desk are the only furniture in the room.

A thick layer of dust covers everything. There are several dried-up ink pots and some withered quills on the desk, as well as a brazier full of dusty old coal. There is also a sheaf of old papers. Most them are old invoices made out to Inselm Hhune, but a successful DC 12 Intelligence (Investigation) check locates a sheet containing Inselm's memoirs (see Handout #3 in appendix C).

A SINGULAR SKULL

There is also a skull on the desk, and next to it is a small wooden box containing a pair of inch-wide amber crystals (5 gp each) on a cushion. If the crystals are placed in the eye sockets of the skull, they project a map of the Temple onto the wall. The map shows both levels including the secret rooms at T23 and T25.

T20. SUMMONING CHAMBER

The door to this chamber is made from ebony, reinforced with dark iron, and is secured by an *arcane lock*. There is a pentagram-shaped indentation on the door. If the ebony key from T18 is placed in the indentation, the door opens.

Forcing open the door requires a successful DC 22 Strength (Athletics) check. The door can also be smashed open; it has AC 20, 70 hit points, and immunity to poison and psychic damage.

The granite walls of this chamber are elaborately sculpted in bas-relief, depicting a vast assortment of devils and various fiendish motifs. The floor is made of polished granite.

A 10-foot diameter circle has been engraved into the floor on one side of the chamber. Next to the circle is a stone podium with five small colored gems sitting in small indentations on top of it, each with an engraved label:

Gem Labels

Gem Color	Label
White	Celestials
Blue	Elementals
Green	Fey
Red	Fiends
Black	Undead

There is an empty indentation next to the row of gems with an ornate pattern around it. Placing a gem in the empty indentation causes a cylinder of magical energy to rise from the engraved circle, which behaves like the *magic circle* spell, except that it is permanent until the gem is removed from the ornate indentation. The label on the gem indicates the type of creature affected.

TREASURE

The gems themselves are made from crystal. They are pretty but not rare and are only worth 5 gp each.

T21. INQUIRY CHAMBER

The rough-hewn floor is stained with blood and oil. Bas-relief sculptures on the granite walls depict agonizing tortures inflicted on wretched victims and the room is littered with various cruel implements.

Several sets of manacles hang from the walls. In the center of the room is a single iron chair bolted to the ground, with a large brazier fixed beneath it. A stone bench against one wall has a collection of rusty interrogation devices, such as: scourges, pincers, finger-screws, choke pears, pliers, iron boots, etc.

ANGUISHED AUGURY

Many unfortunate victims perished in this torture chamber and some of their spirits remain here. Upon entering the room, have everyone make a DC 17 Wisdom (Insight) check. On a success, they hear a faint, anguished groaning in their minds.

If anyone touches the iron chair, they see visions of the final, appalling moments of the departed and their mind is filled with a piteous wailing. Anyone touching the iron chair for more than a round must make a DC 14 Wisdom saving throw. On a failed

save, the adventurer takes a short-term madness condition (see “Madness” in chapter 8 of the *Dungeon Master’s Guide*).

On a successful save, the adventurer sees a pale, gray spirit in a vision. “Ask your questions, three,” howls the spirit, who then answers as per the *commune* spell. The spirit disappears after answering the third question and does not appear again.

T22. KNIGHT’S QUARTERS

The door has a lock but is ajar, and a damp, earthy, acidic odor emerges from the room.

Mahogany panels line the walls and ceiling of this chamber, while the tiles on the floor are slick and dirty. The far end of the room has been filled, floor to ceiling, with the smashed remnants of cots, wardrobes, and chests. Low hissing and chittering noises can be heard from the wooden heap.

This is the nest of **2 adult kruthik**, who are very aggressive. After two rounds of increasingly loud chittering, they emerge from the heap to attack the adventurers and pursue them outside the chamber if they retreat.

TREASURE

The Knights left behind a small amount of treasure when they abandoned this dormitory and it is now strewn about the nest. Locating each item requires 10 minutes of searching and a successful DC 13 Wisdom (Perception) check:

- A purse containing 110 sp, 19 gp.
- A leather belt studded with hematite (25 gp).
- A *potion of healing*.
- Four turquoise gemstones (10 gp each).
- A stoppered ebony tube containing a *spell scroll* of *blur*.
- A gold-plated holy symbol in the shape of a round shield with an engraved eye in the center.

ANOTHER EXIT

At the back of the nest is a tunnel 5-feet in diameter through the granite, created by the

kruthik when they burrowed into the dormitory. The tunnel travels horizontally for about a hundred feet

ADJUSTING THE SCENE

Here are some suggestions for adjusting this scene:

- **Very Weak or Weak:** Remove an **adult kruthik**.
- **Strong or Very Strong:** Add an **adult kruthik**.

before dropping three hundred feet straight down into an enormous cavern. This cavern ultimately leads to the Underdark.

T23. RELIQUARY

The secret door to this room is disguised by a large fresco depicting a handsome sage in amber robes, pointing at a unicorn with a broken horn. A successful DC 15 Wisdom (Perception) check reveals that the unicorn horn can be depressed, which opens the door.

This is a closet-like room with the walls, floor and ceiling made of smooth-hewn, polished granite. Stone protrusions support a javelin on one side of the room. There are more stone protrusions on the opposite wall, but these are empty.

TREASURE

The item in the reliquary is a *javelin of lightning*. The empty hooks on the far wall used to hold the *Shield of the Hidden Lord*, but Inselm Hhune moved it to The Pit when the Temple was abandoned.



T24. CHAPEL OF ILLUMINATION

A sculpted granite altar sits in a semicircular recess at the end of this small chapel. A small gold rack sits atop the altar, surrounded by fluted columns. The rack is conspicuously empty.

A gilded bas-relief frieze decorates the polished granite walls either side of the chapel, while a bright fresco covers the entire back wall. There are four stone benches in the middle of the room. The Knights of the Shield used to gather here to worship the Shield and seek its counsel.

CORRUPT CURING

The chapel is thrumming with diabolical energy due to the infernal worship that once occurred there. Because of this, all healing spells cast by good-aligned creatures inflict an identical amount of necrotic damage instead of healing.

ERUDITE ASSAILANT

An invisible **deathlock** stands near the altar. In its former life, it was a bard who broke a contract with Gargauth and now must serve the fiendish lord forever.

The deathlock says:

You have one chance to live, fleshly and foolhardy mortals, one chance to avoid an otherwise inexorable doom.

Begone! Fly! Leave this place! Forget what you have seen and seek out what peace you can in your allotted span. For the days of light are few and the days of darkness are many. And a mortal is like a flower in the field, flourishing for a moment then gone and remembered no more.

If the adventurers do not leave promptly, the deathlock says, "So be it." Then it moves into the recess and casts *hunger of Hadar*, filling the rest of the chapel. As the spell manifests, the deathlock says:

Death is the destiny of all, and it comes to each alike. The lights fade, the music grows dim, the strength flees from the body, and then the breath of life is gone. With the coming of death, so go joy and hope and peace. Such is the fate of all mortals.

ADJUSTING THE SCENE

Here are some suggestions for adjusting this scene:

- **Very Weak or Weak:** Replace the **deathlock** with a **poltergeist**.
- **Strong or Very Strong:** The **deathlock** has maximum hit points.

THE FRIEZE AND THE FRESCO

The long frieze gives a summary of Gargauth's existence. It shows a handsome sage advising the archfiends, then expelled from the Nine Hells, then wandering the multiverse, and finally establishing a cult and followers.

The fresco at the back of the chapel shows the handsome sage in a burning wasteland, with fiendish creatures bowing before him. His eyes glisten and there is a halo about his head. The fresco is a secret door. A successful DC 15 Wisdom (Perception) check reveals that the eyes can be depressed, which causes the door to spring open.

A CLUE

If Falaster Fisk is with the party, he tells them that he believes the entrance to the tomb is accessed via a secret door from this area. Otherwise, the party should have learned this information from Thalamra.

TREASURE

The rack on the altar is solid gold (250 gp).



T25. ANTECHAMBER

The floors, chamber, and ceiling of this small room are all made of finely polished, smooth-hewn granite. In the center of the floor is a 3-foot-square stone lid, carved with snakes, scrolls, and broken horns. There are four statues in the corners of the room.

There is a thick layer of dust on everything. The four statues, one in each corner of the room, are identical and depict a handsome sage pointing. The statues are 3-feet tall and made of granite. They are aligned such that each statue is pointing to the next one clockwise in the room.

ENCHANTED ENTRANCE

The lid is sealed with an *arcane lock*.

Anyone examining the statues and making a DC 15 Wisdom (Perception) check notices that the bases can swivel. Rotating the statues so that they all point towards the center of the room deactivates

the *arcane lock* on the lid. It reactivates if the statues are swiveled back.

If the lid is opened, it reveals a rocky shaft with an iron ladder. There is a sudden rush of fetid air from the shaft, which feels like a kind of otherworldly exhalation. At the same time, a deep hollow whisper in everyone's mind says, "Yes."

IUZAKOR MAKES A MOVE

If Iuzakor has not been killed or frightened, he will use this as his last opportunity to stop the adventurers. He does not like fighting personally, so might seek to lure another monster toward the adventurers (for example, the kruthik from the dormitory). Alternatively, he might telepathically tell whichever adventurer he charmed that the party should not descend, because certain death lies that way, etc. You might devise other tricks he can try.

PROCEEDING TO CHAPTER 4

The ladder leads to area P1 in **Chapter 4: The Pit**.



CHAPTER 4: THE PIT

The Pit is an ancient catacomb that lies hundreds of feet beneath the Hhune family estate. The original entrance was a snaking tunnel leading down from the estate grounds, but that was permanently closed by Inselm Hhune's daughter. Now the only entrance is via area T25. A map can be found in the attached package of maps.

Features. The passages are roughly hewn from the granite. They are typically 8-10 feet wide and 10-12 feet high, with an arched ceiling. The floors are uneven, covered in dirt and loose stones.

Light. The Pit is completely dark.

Sound. The Pit is completely silent. Any noise the adventurers make echoes noisily through the tunnels.

OSSUARIES

Many of the tunnels have ossuaries lining the walls. These shelves are carved into the rock and are usually 3 feet from the ground, 1-foot high and 2-foot deep. These are used to store the bones of minor members of the family, and each one is carefully labelled with a brass plaque, usually with the name of the deceased and a short epitaph. If the adventurers read a plaque, roll on the Ossuary Names table.

Ossuary Names

d20	First Name	Family Name
1	Farah	Jannath
2	Layla	Jannath
3	Rihanna	Jannath
4	Saffron	Jannath
5	Tahira	Jannath
6	Zaina	Jannath
7	Bashir	Jannath
8	Hazim	Hhune
9	Nadir	Hhune
10	Rakim	Hhune
11	Caomh	Smythe
12	Enid	Dunbeigh
13	Cadman	Warden
14	Maccus	Bormul
15	Kasumi	Caldwell
16	Ettvard	Rillyn

17	Sigur	Oathoon
18	Elendra	Tillerturn
19	Prulasyk	Dlusker
20	Skie	Linnacker

Note that the Hhune estate was originally owned by the Jannath family, until it was purchased by Inselm Hhune. Some of the ossuaries have epitaphs attached to them.

Epitaphs

d20	Epitaph
1	'til memory fades & life departs, you live forever in our hearts
2	A friend to many and sadly missed
3	Always in our hearts
4	Ever remembered, ever loved
5	Fondly loved and deeply mourned
6	Generous of spirit and a friend to many
7	In loving memory of [name]
8	Laughed often, loved much
9	Love's last gift is remembrance
10	Modest and gentle of heart
11	Of generous heart... And of beautiful spirit
12	Remembered with love
13	Rest is thine and sweet remembrance ours
14	The dead live on in our hearts
15	This was no ordinary life
16	Time cannot steal what we carry in our hearts
17	Loved in life. Remembered always in death
18	What we keep in memory is ours forever
19	Words of kindness, deeds of love
20	Your beautiful spirit lifted our hearts

P1. SECRET ENTRY

The iron ladder from area T25 descends about 80-feet to a small nook in an old tunnel. This was Inselm's preferred method for entering and leaving the tunnels when he was alive.

The tunnel here is roughly hewn from the granite. The air is cold, and the uneven ground is covered in dust.

THE RETURN OF INSELM HHUNE

After the adventurers enter The Pit, but before they locate the Shield in area P4, they hear the crunch of feet on loose stones ahead. They hear a raspy chuckle and the frigid air grows even colder. The raspy voice says, “So we have some visitors? There is always room for a few more guests at my table.” It then chuckles again.

This creature is what remains of Inselm Hhune, who recently returned to the world as a **revenant** (90 hp). He has wandered the corridors for many months, unable to escape but longing to take revenge against his heirs.

Inselm’s Tactics. Having discovered intruders in the catacombs and feeling powerful in his new form, Inselm plays a little cat-and-mouse with the adventurers, slowly trailing them and calling out things like, “Ol’ Inselm just wants a little chat,” and chuckling. If the adventurers try to enter area P4 or return up the iron ladder, he swiftly attacks.

Defeating Inselm. A revenant is a dangerous foe for adventurers of this level, so they will need to use intelligent tactics to beat him. Using hit and run tactics and ranged weapons is a good approach.

ADJUSTING THE SCENE

Here are some suggestions for adjusting this scene:

- **Very Weak or Weak:** Replace the **revenant** with a **wight**.
- **Strong or Very Strong:** The **revenant** has maximum hit points.

P2. FAMILY VAULTS

This large vault houses several sarcophagi. The walls are decorated with peeling frescoes showing a family in business and leisure. The floors are brushed free of loose stones, though there is a thick layer of dust on everything.

Each vault contains up to a score of sarcophagi, mostly made from marble, and many with intricate bas-relief scenes sculpted on the sides. Some have statues on the lid, and still others have grave effigies.



PROMINENT NAMES

Each sarcophagus is labeled with the name of the incumbent, as well as an epitaph (see Epitaph table above). Roll on the Prominent Names table.

Prominent Names

d20	First Name	Family Name
1	Adalina	Jannath
2	Ana	Jannath
3	Arcos	Jannath
4	Bernat	Jannath
5	Cande	Jannath
6	Elena	Jannath
7	Escobar	Jannath
8	Gostantin	Jannath
9	Juana	Jannath
10	Matilde	Jannath
11	Ramon	Jannath-Hhune
12	Suelo	Hhune
13	Tristan	Hhune
14	Valentia	Hhune
15	Ynigo	Hhune
16	Meritamen	Caldwell-Hhune
17	Shabaka	Caldwell
18	Cloelia	Oathoon
19	Noriko	Tillerturn
20	Vrsula	Rillyn

TERRIFYING TRANSFORMATION

The presence of the Shield, combined with the necromantic energies which naturally accrue in a catacomb, have caused the corpses to turn into **ghouls**, which are resting fitfully. If a sarcophagus is opened, the ghoul awakes and attacks furiously.

TREASURE

The Hhunes were commonly buried with some valued item. Consult the 250 gp Art Object tables in chapter 7 of the *Dungeon Masters Guide*.

P3. EXIT TO THE HHUNE ESTATE

This tunnel was the original entry and exit to The Pit. After about two hundred windy feet, the tunnel is completely blocked by a cave-in. This was the work of Inselm Hhune's daughter, over a century ago.

P4. VAULT OF THE SHIELD

There is a single sarcophagus in this room. It is a smooth box sculpted from yellow onyx, with the name "Inselm Hhune" engraved on one end. The sarcophagus is open.

The sarcophagus appears empty on first inspection. A DC 12 Wisdom (Perception) check reveals that there is a false bottom in the sarcophagus. Lifting this out reveals the *Shield of the Hidden Lord* wrapped in a long piece of linen.

For more information about the Shield, see Appendix A: Magic Items. As the Shield is revealed, a deep, hollow whisper telepathically says, "It is time."

ARMY OF GHOULS

Once the adventurers have retrieved the Shield, a sudden great boom is heard. It is the sound of fifty sarcophagus lids crashing to the ground simultaneously. With the Shield revealed, the ghouls have awakened and are emerging.

If the adventurers delay, the hollow whisper says, "Best get back to the Temple, and quickly." As they head back to the Temple, they see ghouls emerging

from every tunnel, loping after them and howling. Soon there are **fifty ghouls** in pursuit.

If the adventurers head straight back to the ladder in area P1, they can comfortably stay ahead of the pursuit. If they take a wrong turn and end up in a dead end, they may be in trouble.

Returning the statues in area T25 to their original positions closes the magic trapdoor leading to The Pit, which traps the ghouls below. Should they leave the trapdoor open, the ghouls will be close behind.

WRAPPING UP

The adventure wrap-up varies depending upon whether you are running this adventure as part of *Baldur's Gate: Descent into Avernus* or standalone.

Baldur's Gate: Descent into Avernus. Resume the adventure at the Vanthampur Villa section of chapter 1 in the book.

Standalone. Duke Thalamra Vanthampur awaits the characters in her Villa. Upon receiving the Shield, she smiles broadly (a tad unpleasantly) and hurriedly pays the agreed fee before dismissing them. As the characters leave, they hear the Shield say, "Now, let us get down to business..."



APPENDIX A: MAGIC ITEMS

DAGGER OF THE HIDDEN LORD

Weapon, unique (requires attunement)

This weapon is made entirely of gold, with the handle engraved in the shape of a coiling serpent. You gain a +1 bonus to attack rolls and damage rolls that you make with this weapon.

Curse. This dagger is cursed and becoming attuned to it extends the curse to you. While you remain cursed, you are unwilling to part with the dagger, keeping it on your person always. While attuned to this weapon, you feel compelled to kill a humanoid creature with it every ten days, proclaiming “To the Hidden Lord!” when you do so.

Every day that you resist this compulsion, you must make a successful DC 10 Constitution saving throw or take a level of fatigue. This magically induced fatigue disappears when you kill a humanoid with the dagger.

SHIELD OF THE HIDDEN LORD

Armor (shield), legendary (requires attunement)

The Shield of the Hidden Lord is of celestial origin and serves as a prison for the pit fiend Gargauth, whose mortal followers revere it as a god. Over time, Gargauth’s evil has warped the shield’s appearance so that its celestial motif and designs have become twisted into a fiendish face that subtly move in disturbing ways.

While holding this shield, you gain a +2 bonus to AC and resistance to fire damage.

Sentience. The Shield of the Hidden Lord is sentient as long as it imprisons Gargauth. While sentient, the shield has the following properties:

- The shield has an Intelligence of 22, a Wisdom of 18, and a Charisma of 24, as well as hearing and truesight out to a range of 120 feet. The shield can speak, read, and understand Common and Infernal. It can also communicate telepathically

with any creature it can sense within 120 feet of it. Its voice is a deep, hollow whisper.

- The shield has 3 charges. You can use an action to expend 1 charge to cast fireball or 2 charges to cast wall of fire from the shield (save DC 21 for each). The wall of fire spell lasts for 1 minute (no concentration required). The shield regains all expended charges daily at dawn.
- Anytime during your turn, the shield can choose to radiate an aura of dread for 1 minute. (This is not a power of the shield that you control.) Any creature hostile to you that starts its turn within 20 feet of the shield must make a DC 18 Wisdom saving throw. On a failed save, the creature is frightened until the start of its next turn. On a successful save, the creature is immune to this power of the shield for the next 24 hours. Once the shield uses this power, it can’t use it again until the next dawn.

Personality. Gargauth desperately seeks freedom but can’t escape on its own. The pit fiend won’t reveal its true nature, referring to itself only as the Hidden Lord. It drops hints and subtle suggestions that it is an angel trapped in an unholy prison. For more information, see appendix C of *Baldur’s Gate: Descent into Avernus*.



APPENDIX B. CREATURES

Adult Kruthik

Medium monstrosity, unaligned

Armor Class 18 (Natural Armor)

Hit Points 39 (6d8 + 12)

Speed 40 ft., burrow 20 ft., climb 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
15 (+2)	16 (+3)	15 (+2)	7 (-2)	12 (+1)	8 (-1)

Senses Darkvision 60 ft., Tremorsense 60 ft., Passive Perception 11

Languages Kruthik

Challenge 2 (450 XP)

Keen Smell. The kruthik has advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on smell.

Pack Tactics. The kruthik has advantage on an attack roll against a creature if at least one of the kruthik's allies is within 5 feet of the creature and the ally isn't incapacitated.

Tunneler. The kruthik can burrow through solid rock at half its burrowing speed and leaves a 5-foot-diameter tunnel in its wake.

Actions

Multiattack. The kruthik makes two stab attacks or two spike attacks.

Stab. Melee Weapon Attack: +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 6 (1d6 + 3) piercing damage.

Spike. Ranged Weapon Attack: +5 to hit, range 20/60 ft., one target. Hit: 5 (1d4 + 3) piercing damage.

Deathlock

Medium undead, neutral evil

Armor Class 12 (15 With Mage Armor)

Hit Points 36 (8d8)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
11 (+0)	15 (+2)	10 (+0)	14 (+2)	12 (+1)	16 (+3)

Saving Throws INT +4, CHA +5

Skills Arcana +4, History +4

Damage Resistances Necrotic; Bludgeoning, Piercing, and Slashing from Nonmagical Attacks that aren't Silvered

Damage Immunities Poison

Condition Immunities Exhaustion, Poisoned

Senses Darkvision 60 ft., Passive Perception 11

Languages the languages it knew in life

Challenge 4 (1,100 XP)

Innate Spellcasting. The deathlock's innate spellcasting ability is Charisma (spell save DC 13). It can innately cast the following spells, requiring no material components:

At will: *detect magic, disguise self, mage armor*

Spellcasting. The deathlock is a 5th-level spellcaster. Its spellcasting ability is Charisma (spell save DC 13, +5 to hit with spell attacks). It regains its expended spell slots when it finishes a short or long rest. It knows the following warlock spells:

Cantrips (at will): *chill touch, eldritch blast, mage hand*
1st–3rd level (2 3rd-level slots): *arms of Hadar, dispel magic, hold person, hunger of Hadar, invisibility, spider climb*

Turn Resistance. The deathlock has advantage on saving throws against any effect that turns undead.

Actions

Deathly Claw. Melee Weapon Attack: +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 9 (2d6 + 2) necrotic damage.

Duke Thalamra Vanthampur

Medium humanoid (human), lawful evil

Armor Class 10

Hit Points 78 (12d8 + 24)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
17 (+3)	10 (+0)	15 (+2)	13 (+1)	16 (+3)	18 (+4)

Skills Deception +6, Insight +5, Intimidation +6, Religion +3

Senses Darkvision 120 ft. (see Devil's Sight below), Passive Perception 13

Languages Common, Infernal

Challenge 4 (1,100 XP)

Dark Devotion. Thalamra has advantage on saving throws against being charmed or frightened.

Devil's Sight. Thalamra can see normally in darkness, both magical and nonmagical, out to 120 feet.

Actions

Multiattack. Thalamra uses eldritch blast twice or makes two unarmed strikes.

Eldritch Blast (Cantrip). Ranged Spell Attack: +6 to hit, range 120 ft., one creature. Hit: 9 (1d10 + 4) force damage.

Unarmed Strike. Melee Weapon Attack: +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 4 bludgeoning damage.

Reactions

Hellish Rebuke (1st-Level Spell; 2/Day). When Thalamra is damaged by a creature within 60 feet of her that she can see, the creature that damaged her is engulfed in hellish flames and must make a DC 14 Dexterity saving throw, taking 16 (3d10) fire damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.

Personality. Thalamra Vanthampur is a cunning, devil-worshipping beast of a woman in her late sixties who can stare down a hell hound without flinching. She is barrel-bodied, with strong hands and forearms that speak to her beginnings as a manual laborer. Her youth was spent in the cellars and sewers of Baldur's Gate, repairing pipes and clearing out the city's filth. Thalamra rose from such lowly work to become the minister of the city's sewers and waterworks. Now she dresses in the finery that suits her station as a duke of Baldur's Gate.

Leucrotta

Large monstrosity, chaotic evil

Armor Class 14 (Natural Armor)

Hit Points 67 (9d10 + 18)

Speed 50 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
18 (+4)	14 (+2)	15 (+2)	9 (-1)	12 (+1)	6 (-2)

Skills Deception +2, Perception +3

Senses Darkvision 60 ft., Passive Perception 13

Languages Abyssal, Gnoll

Challenge 3 (700 XP)

Keen Smell. The leucrotta has advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on smell.

Kicking Retreat. If the leucrotta attacks with its hooves, it can take the Disengage action as a bonus action.

Mimicry. The leucrotta can mimic animal sounds and humanoid voices. A creature that hears the sounds can tell they are imitations with a successful DC 14 Wisdom (Insight) check.

Rampage. When the leucrotta reduces a creature to 0 hit points with a melee attack on its turn, it can take a bonus action to move up to half its speed and make an attack with its hooves.

Actions

Multiattack. The leucrotta makes two attacks: one with its bite and one with its hooves.

Bite. Melee Weapon Attack: +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 8 (1d8 + 4) piercing damage. If the leucrotta scores a critical hit, it rolls the damage dice three times, instead of twice.

Hooves. Melee Weapon Attack: +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 11 (2d6 + 4) bludgeoning damage.

Nupperibo

Medium fiend (devil), lawful evil

Armor Class 13 (Natural)

Hit Points 11 (2d8 + 2)

Speed 20 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
16 (+3)	11 (+0)	13 (+1)	3 (-4)	8 (-1)	1 (-5)

Skills Perception +1

Damage Resistances Acid, Cold; Bludgeoning, Piercing, and Slashing from Nonmagical Attacks that aren't Silvered

Damage Immunities Fire, Poison

Condition Immunities Blinded, Charmed, Frightened, Poisoned

Senses Blindsight 10 ft. (blind beyond this radius), Passive Perception 11

Languages understands Infernal but can't speak

Challenge 1/2 (100 XP)

Cloud of Vermin. Any creature, other than a devil, that starts its turn within 20 feet of the nupperibo must make a DC 11 Constitution saving throw. A creature within the areas of two or more nupperibos makes the saving throw with disadvantage. On a failure, the creature takes 2 (1d4) piercing damage.

Hunger-Driven. In the Nine Hells, the nupperibos can flawlessly track any creature that has taken damage from any nupperibo's Cloud of Vermin within the previous 24 hours.

Actions

Bite. Melee Weapon Attack: +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 6 (1d6 + 3) piercing damage.

Shadow Mastiffs

Medium monstrosity, neutral evil

Armor Class 12

Hit Points 33 (6d8 + 6)

Speed 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
16 (+3)	14 (+2)	13 (+1)	5 (-3)	12 (+1)	5 (-3)

Skills Perception +3, Stealth +6

Damage Resistances Bludgeoning, Piercing, and Slashing from Nonmagical Attacks while in Dim Light or Darkness

Senses Darkvision 60 ft., Passive Perception 13

Languages --

Challenge 2 (450 XP)

Ethereal Awareness. The shadow mastiff can see ethereal creatures and objects.

Keen Hearing and Smell. The shadow mastiff has advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on hearing or smell.

Shadow Blend. While in dim light or darkness, the shadow mastiff can use a bonus action to become invisible, along with anything it is wearing or carrying. The invisibility lasts until the shadow mastiff uses a bonus action to end it or until the shadow mastiff attacks, is in bright light, or is incapacitated.

Sunlight Weakness. While in bright light created by sunlight, the shadow mastiff has disadvantage on attack rolls, ability checks, and saving throws.

Actions

Bite. Melee Weapon Attack: +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 10 (2d6 + 3) piercing damage. If the target is a creature, it must succeed on a DC 13 Strength saving throw or be knocked prone.

Swarm of Rot Grubs

Medium swarm of Tiny beasts, unaligned

Armor Class 8

Hit Points 22 (5d8)

Speed 5 ft., climb 5 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
2 (-4)	7 (-2)	10 (+0)	1 (-5)	2 (-4)	1 (-5)

Damage Resistances Piercing, Slashing

Condition Immunities Charmed, Frightened, Grappled, Paralyzed, Petrified, Prone, Restrained

Senses Blindsight 10 ft., Passive Perception 6

Languages --

Challenge 1/2 (100 XP)

Swarm. The swarm can occupy another creature's space and vice versa, and the swarm can move through any opening large enough for a Tiny maggot. The swarm can't regain hit points or gain temporary hit points.

Actions

Bites. Melee Weapon Attack: +0 to hit, reach 0 ft., one creature in the swarm's space. Hit: The target is infested by 1d4 rot grubs. At the start of each of the target's turns, the target takes 1d6 piercing damage per rot grub infesting it. Applying fire to the bite wound before the end of the target's next turn deals 1 fire damage to the target and kills these rot grubs. After this time, these rot grubs are too far under the skin to be burned.

If a target infested by rot grubs ends its turn with 0 hit points, it dies as the rot grubs burrow into its heart and kill it. Any effect that cures disease kills all rot grubs infesting the target.

APPENDIX C. HANDOUTS

HANDOUT #1

Dear and honored mother!

With a heart burdened by anguish, I am writing this letter to you, knowing full well that it is impossible that you should receive it. Too late do I regret my inattention to your warnings! Youth and folly led me astray, as well as my own intractable nature. You only ever wished me good, and I gave you evil in return. I have paid a terrible price for my ingratitude.

I have fallen in with a cult. They drew me in by degrees, with displays of wealth and extravagant living, and promises of power. But it was all lies. The reality has been harsh living, arduous labor, and severe discipline. And I've been forced to participate in ceremonies that I cannot bear to speak of. May the gods forgive me!

I despise this holy symbol I wear about my neck, but to remove it in this infernal temple is death. I tempt fate by writing this note, but I no longer care. I think the end will come soon. If I am lucky, they will simply kill me. I now know there are things worse than death. Far worse.

If I am fortunate enough to die, perhaps I will experience that peace in another world that I could never find in this one. Commend my soul to the mercy of the gods! I bid you an eternal farewell.

*Your unhappy daughter,
Satina Asherow*

HANDOUT #2

Kneehigh Knights Franchise #127

Congratulations on your purchase of a Kneehigh Knights adventuring franchise! As a member of the Kneehigh Knights family, your annual franchise fee entitles you to many services and benefits:

- Discounts on equipment purchased from our approved list of quality manufacturers.
- A subscription to our quarterly newsletter, High Adventure, which contains many useful articles and tips.
- Five hours free consultation per year with recognised experts in the field of adventuring.
- An invitation to the annual Kneehigh Knights franchisee conference.
- And even more...!

There are also intangible but real benefits gained from association with a globally recognised brand like the Kneehigh Knights. They are simply too numerous to list! And remember that bonus payments and other incentives are available if you sponsor new franchisees into the business.

Good luck with your new career! Remember to slay some orcs for us!

Seraphina Tenpenny
Franchisor, Kneehigh Knights

HANDOUT #3

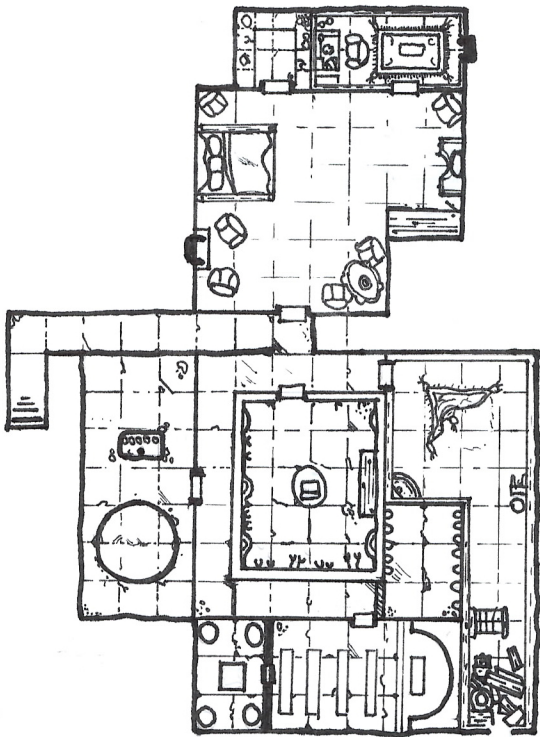
It is peculiar that I feel compelled to write these memoirs now, after so many years spent practicing the utmost secrecy. Perhaps it is because the Hidden Lord has been silent for so long now, and it seems this chapter in my life has at last come to a close. Or perhaps I grow sentimental in my old age. It matters not.

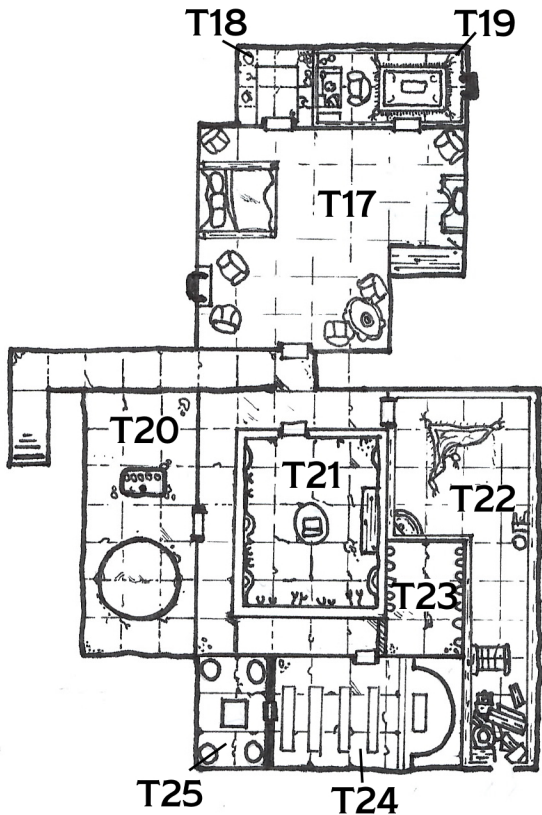
Let me explain how the great affair began. My family, the Hhunes, have been wealthy and influential residents of Baldur's Gate for several generations. It is no idle boast to state that I am the most famous scion of my house, and during my life I have been universally celebrated for my remarkable business acumen and extraordinary wealth. But I have a great secret.

As a young merchant, I was inducted into a secret society called the Knights of the Shield. This was a network of merchants and nobles, bound together by commercial and political interests. Such networks are common amongst the privileged. As I rose through the ranks, I discovered that the inner circle of the society revered a magical shield, which was the means of communicating with an otherworldly presence calling itself the Hidden Lord.

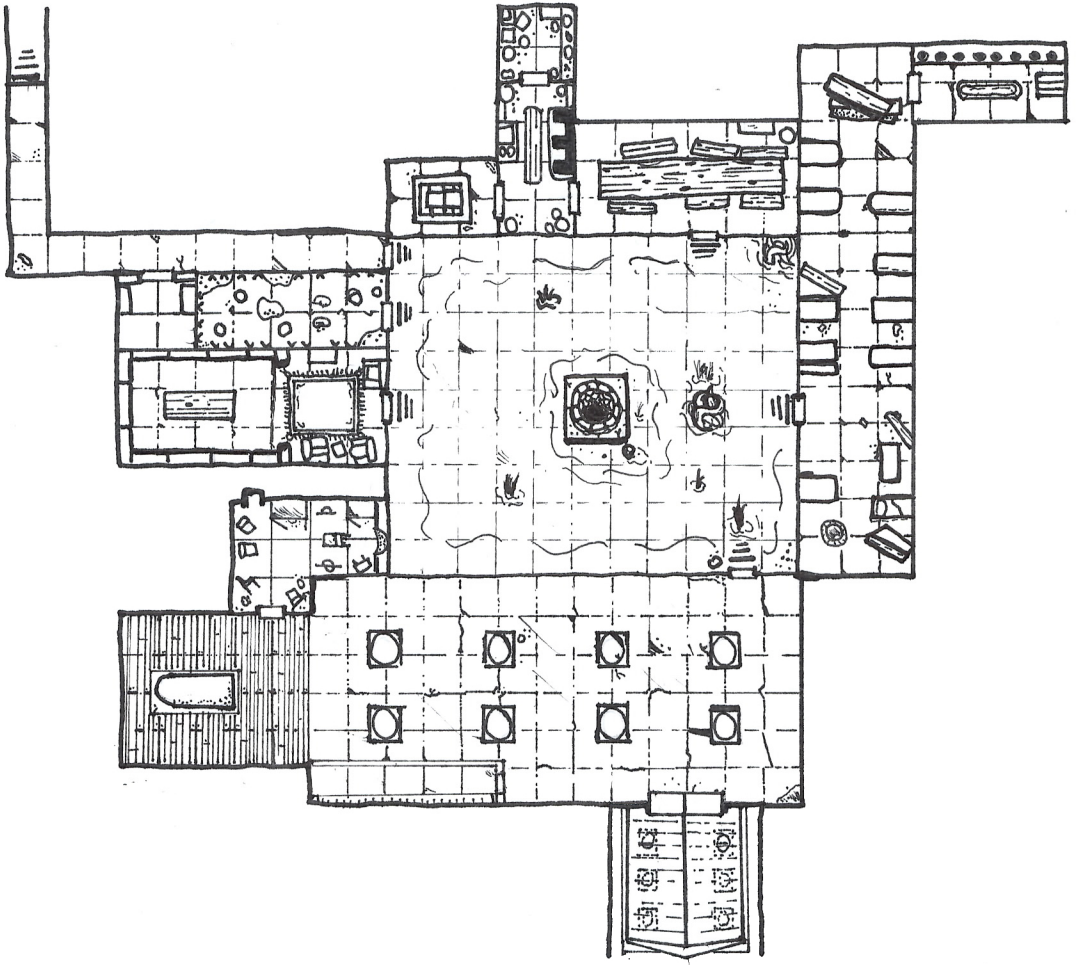
The Hidden Lord provided us with valuable political and commercial intelligence, which enabled us to prosper. In exchange, we were required to conduct certain rituals, the nature of which I choose not to divulge at this time. I continued to progress in the Society and was eventually proclaimed First Shield Lord.

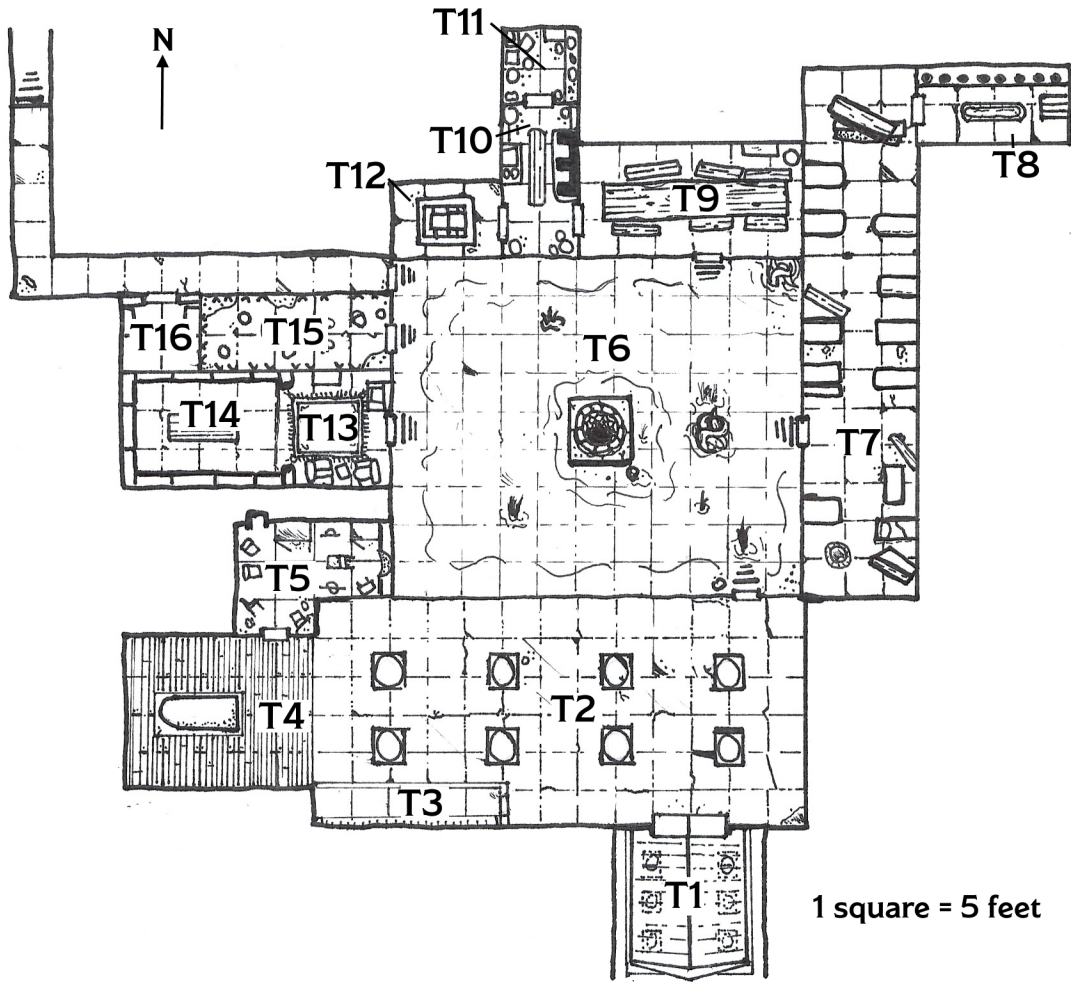
Deep beneath my family estate were some ancient catacombs, colloquially known as "the Pit," which housed the mortal remains of my ancestors and certain other families. At great expense, I excavated a secret underground temple above the Pit, with a hidden entrance in the sewers. The Knights called this the Temple of the Hidden Lord and used it...

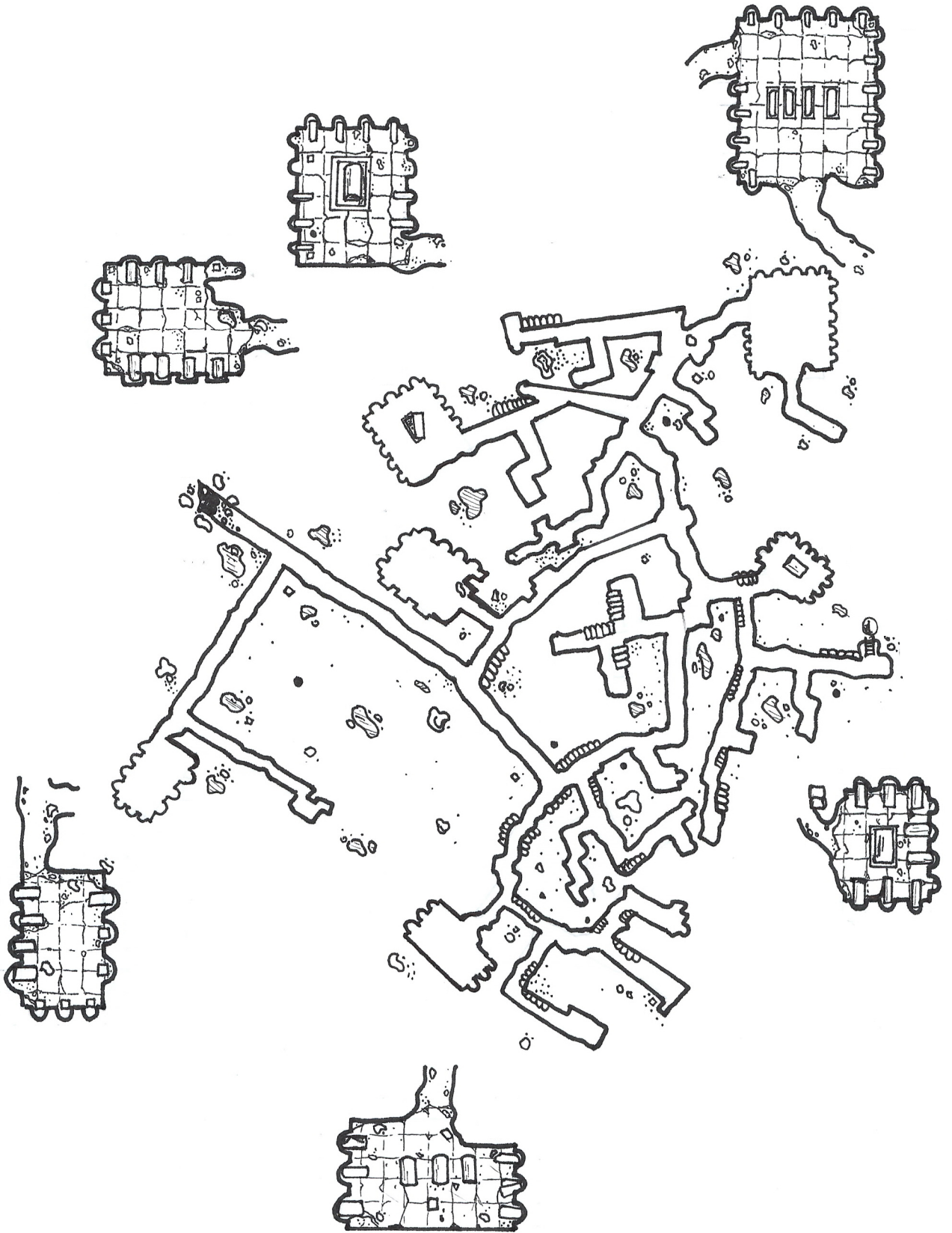


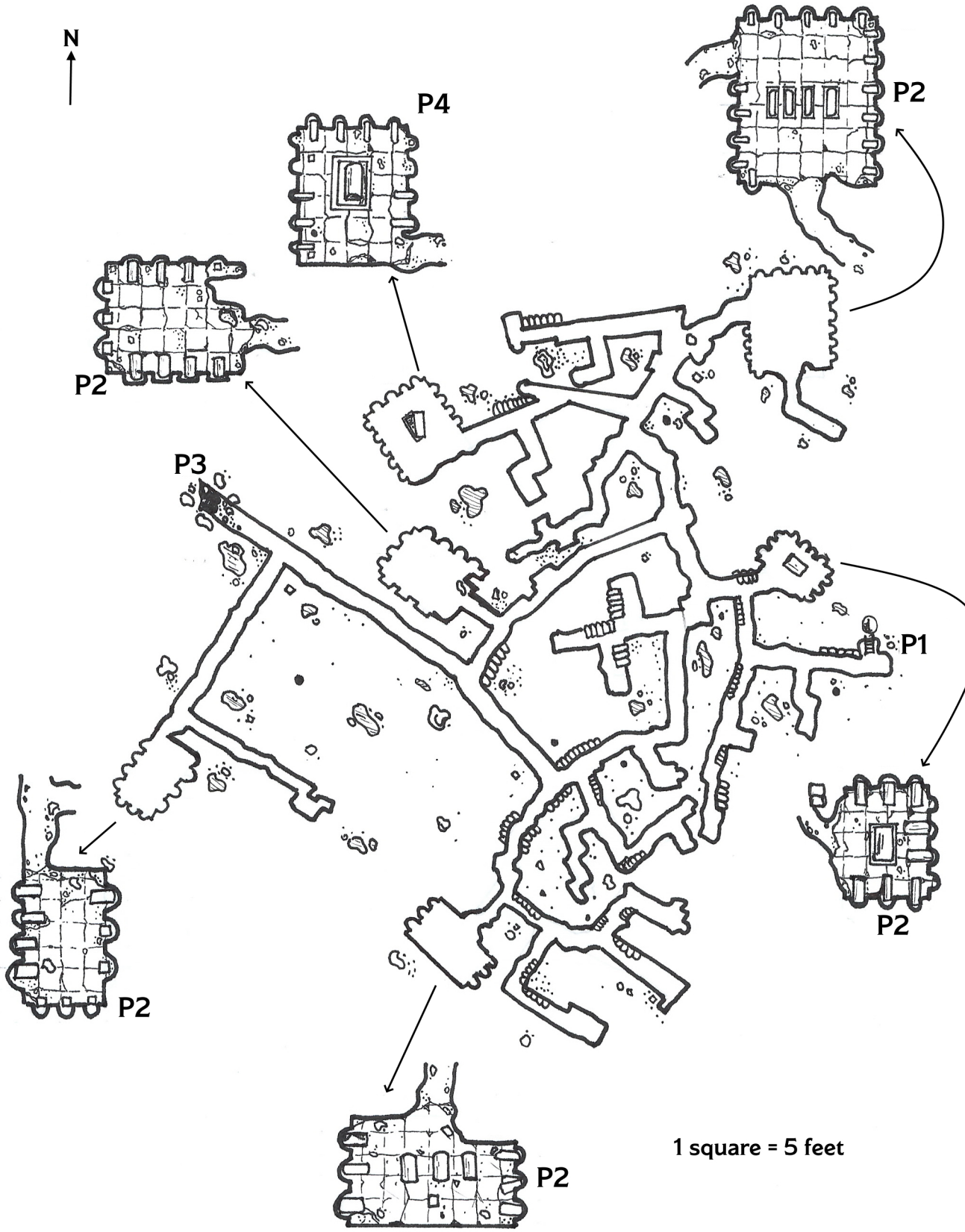


1 square = 5 feet









P4

P2

P2

P3

P1

P2

P2

P2

1 square = 5 feet