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The Mud Sorcerer's Tomb

An adventure for four 14th-level characters

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Introduction

Centuries ago, the cruel, sadistic mud sorcerers foresaw their cult's demise and concocted a plan to outlive their adversaries. Retreating beneath the surface, the powerful members of the cult's ruling council constructed hidden tombs filled with complex traps and immortal guardians. To these crypts they retreated, content to relax in temporal stasis until their enemies had vanished. One of these ancient resting places has been discovered, intact and unexplored. Do you have what it takes to obtain the fabulous treasures that await you in the mud sorcerer's tomb?

The Mud Sorcerer's Tomb is a DUNGEONS & DRAGONS® adventure for four 14th-level characters. This adventure originally appeared in *Dungeon* 37 and was revised for 3rd edition rules in *Dungeon* 138. This version has been revised and updated to the D&D® Next rules. Inspired by Gary Gygax's classic *Tomb of Horrors*™, *The Mud Sorcerer's Tomb* is a deadly dungeon crawl designed to challenge high-level parties to the utmost of their abilities.

Adventure Background

Centuries ago, political turmoil shook the pillars of civilization and plunged a large region into anarchy. While established religious institutions fell into chaos, many scholarly individuals turned to the ancient, esoteric writings of Jezule, a long-dead wizard-priest of dreadful reputation. State temples had repressed his lunatic texts for years, but now, absent their formidable influence, his work resurfaced. New followers of Jezule flourished, converting numerous people to a bizarre mix of wizardly mysticism and elementalism combining aspects of both water and earth. This elemental mix earned the Jezulein the disparaging label "mud sorcerers." In typical Jezulein style, they adopted the jab as a name.

Little information concerning this secretive cult survives today. It is known that the members delighted in conundrums, disdaining those who failed to equal Jezulein mental prowess. The mud sorcerers' rituals involved evil elemental forces and vile acts. The cult flowered in the chaos that ruled at that time, and the mud sorcerers grew wealthy and powerful in only a few years.

The Jezulein were not ones to rest on their laurels. Through the use of forbidden oracles, the mud sorcerers probed the future, and what they saw displeased them. Their divinations revealed that the chaos would soon end, and when a new government subdued the anarchy, efforts to eradicate the Jezulein would begin and succeed. This forthcoming doom troubled the Jezulein ruling council, the Iron Circle, which met in dark chambers and fiercely debated methods by which the mud sorcerers might thwart fate.

After heated arguments, the council finally agreed on an audacious, insidious plan to construct labyrinthine crypts beneath the earth. There, the most powerful mud sorcerers would hide in temporal stasis. Meanwhile, trusted minions would carry on the Jezulein traditions in secret, waiting for the day when they could awaken their masters.

Eight years after the members of the Iron Circle committed themselves to their earthbound slumber, an alliance of powerful temples and noble families reestablished the rule of law. The Jezulein failed to anticipate the ferocity of the suppression of their cult. The minions who had been entrusted with the secrets of the hidden crypts were hunted down and put to the sword in what historians call the Great Purge.

Centuries passed, and the cult of mud sorcerers became little more than a footnote in obscure histories. Then adventurers of great renown began uncovering the crypts of Szecolar, Mishtot, Baakar Mot, Jillal, and several other high-ranking Jezulein. Many of these adventurers perished in their explorations, but those who survived emerged with a wealth of treasure and tales of horror. Some survivors ended their adventuring careers on the spot, thanking the gods for their lives.

Although several Jezulein tombs have been found and explored, the resting sites of other Iron Circle members have yet to be uncovered. The true nature of the mud sorcerers is still shrouded in mystery, and exploration of one of their tombs is not a task to be undertaken lightly.

Adventure Synopsis

The Mud Sorcerer's Tomb is a fantastic dungeon filled with fiendish traps, vicious monsters, and

rich treasures. Navigating the tomb is difficult, but explorers can benefit from the fact that the mud sorcerers intended to awaken. The Iron Circle hid clues throughout the dungeon, pointing to instructions for followers to prepare them for awakening. These instructions have long since been lost, but the clues remain, giving canny adventurers the edge they need to survive the mud sorcerer's tomb.

Adventure Hooks

The newly discovered tomb belongs to an Iron circle member named Tzolo, although this information is not known. The identity of its occupant becomes clear only after explorers move deep inside.

The Mud Sorcerer's Tomb begins and ends at the dungeon entrance. Here are a couple of ways to attract the characters to the threshold.

Mysterious Map: Maavu, a merchant of esoteric goods, contacts the characters. His associates have obtained a map rumored to lead to a tomb of one of the infamous mud sorcerers. He has little use for the map, but he knows it's just the sort of item an adventuring party might want. He offers to sell the map for 5,000 gp.

Alternatively, the characters can obtain the map in the treasure hoard of any defeated enemy.

In any case, the Jezulein symbol of the earth in harmony with water appears on the map (symbol 4 on the handout). A DC 20 Intelligence check is required to identify the symbol. If the characters cannot identify it, a sage or similarly learned person might do so for them.

Seeking the Seekers: Karal, an agent of a secretive organization of treasure hunters called the Seekers, approaches the adventurers. She is aware of the characters' reputation, and she believes they might be suitable candidates for membership. Before she can grant them an audience with her superiors, however, she needs them to perform a task for the Seekers that is part favor and part test.

A group of Seekers recently found the location of a mud sorcerer's tomb and set out to explore it. They never returned from the expedition, and the organization believes they might have perished. The Seekers want the characters to enter the tomb and discover what befell the missing explorers. The adventurers must return any

remains they find to the Seekers, but they are entitled to any profit from the venture.

If you use this hook, place dead Seekers in the tomb. Most probably perished in area 4, although the corpses in the pit in area 19 might also be those of Seekers.

Mud Sorcerer Lore

Before the characters enter the tomb, they might want to learn a little about it. Use the information in this section to answer their questions.

Knowing this lore requires an Intelligence check, but no one except those trained in historical or magical lore is likely to know much more than what is revealed with a successful DC 15 check.

DC 15: The mud sorcerers were a pseudo-religious cult that followed the teachings of Jezule, a devotee of the princess of evil ooze, Bwimb. The term "mud sorcerer" is a derogatory term for an elementalists who mixes the forces of earth and water.

An alliance of secular and religious forces destroyed the order centuries ago. But within the last two decades, various parties have recovered treasures and scrolls supposedly taken from mud sorcerers' tombs. These scrolls are always written in a dead language known as Taalese. Rumor has it that all writing in Jezulein tombs is also in this language.

The mud sorcerers were extremely protective of their hiding places, and explorers have encountered numerous traps, tricks, and false sepulchers before discovering the actual tombs. However, cryptic riddles written in Taalese have been found in other tombs, sometimes providing valuable information, while other times leading to disaster.

Spells that deal with earth and water have unusual and unpredictable effects around mud sorcerer relics. The Jezulein were also masters of protective magic, and they have likely placed powerful magical wards to limit the operation of magic inside their tombs.

DC 20: Although the cult was destroyed, numerous texts, as well as the testimony of cultists, predicted that the mud sorcerers would rise again. The leaders of the order, known as the Iron Circle, were never found, suggesting that they might have escaped the purge in some sort of magical refuge.

Even to this day, divinations concerning the mud sorcerers have a much higher chance than usual of providing false or misleading information. This fact suggests that some powerful force still protects the cult's secrets.

Four glyphs of power are associated with the mud sorcerers' magic, numbered 1 to 4 in the handout. The first symbol represents the convergence of earth and water, the second is earth dominant, the third is water dominant, and the fourth shows the harmony of earth and water.

DC 25: The mud sorcerers' tombs were created to serve as refuges for the cult's most powerful members. Supposedly, these leaders are still alive somewhere within, resting in temporal stasis. They left detailed instructions guided by clues to help their followers decipher the many riddles within the tombs, making it easier to wake the sleepers within. None of these instructions survived the purge that destroyed the Jezulein cult.

Iron Circle members whose tombs remain undiscovered include: Alyph, Aqai, Boukettu, Daedis Ko, Eyenne, Graptis, Irdraz, Iyayo, Jikyor, Lalotte, Markule, Nagiyat, Nala, Oiru, Oyallum, Piyyat, Szew, Tilyat, Timla Ji, Tzolo, Ulshidar, Uso, Visivius, and Xialta.

Dungeon Features

Most areas within the tomb have the following features in common, with exceptions noted in specific rooms.

Light: The entire tomb is dimly illuminated by a bluish, ambient magical light that has no discernable source, much like the diffuse light underwater. This magical light causes the whole tomb to radiate a weak evocation aura when viewed with *detect magic*.

Clues: A number of clues appear in various locations in the tomb. These clues are consolidated as player handouts in appendix 1.

Construction: The rooms and corridors within the tomb have ceilings 12 feet high, and are made of tightly fitted, white stone blocks that have been magically bonded to trace amounts of adamantine. This bond has two unique effects. The 5-foot-thick walls are treated as metal for spells that manipulate or sense through matter. The doors in the tomb are made of 3-inch-thick

iron and locked (AC 15; immune to cold, necrotic, poison, psychic; hp 100; DC 25 Strength check to break open; DC 25 Dexterity check to pick the lock).

Magical Effects: The mud sorcerers created several magical wards in this sanctuary.

One ward prevents all extraplanar travel so that no one can teleport into or out of the tomb, but teleportation within its boundaries is possible. No one can use abilities within the tomb that require travel to another plane, other than coterminous areas such as the Ethereal and Astral. This ward also prevents scrying of any sort.

The second ward interferes with elemental magic. Any such spell cast within the tomb (for example, one that creates or shapes earth or water, or that deals acid or cold damage), in addition to its normal effect, has a 50% chance to create a weird elemental creature known as a mud grue. The mud grue appears next to and attacks the spell's caster, other than servants of the mud sorcerers (such as Tzila in area 31). In this case, the grue serves the caster for 1 hour, at which point it dissolves back into the elemental energy that birthed it.

Third, the mud sorcerers enlisted the aid of powerful elemental forces to protect their secrets centuries ago. These beings continue to fulfill their ancient agreement, even though the Jezulein are long gone. As a result of this elemental interference, any divination spell (such as *augury*, *commune*, and *divination*) always has a chance of failing as if the spell had been cast more than once on a given day.

Finally, powerful wards protect several of the closed areas and compartments within the tomb. These can be opened only with magical keys. No other means can bypass these obstacles. Consult the "Magical Key" table for a list of these items, the locations where they are found, and where they can be used.



Mud grue. Illustration by Mike Franchina

MAGICAL KEY TABLE

| Item | Found | Used |
|--------------------------------|-------|-------|
| Black key | 2C | 4B |
| Inscribed stones (4) | 7 | 34 |
| Green key | 8 | 9 |
| Metal key | 10C | 10B |
| Copper key | 14B | 14C |
| <i>Talisman of the Uzrivoy</i> | 19 | 34 |
| Red tusk | 30D | 29 |
| Elephant statuette | 34 | 35 |
| <i>Ward stone</i> | 35 | 1, 17 |
| Crystal orb | 35 | 35 |

New Magic Items: See appendix 2.

1. Entrance

The tomb entrance is in a hidden cavern that can be placed in any remote region in your world.

This dark-gray block of granite is the entrance to the tomb. Steel insets in the stone block spell out three words: “Errukiz,” “Ezdrubal,” and “Elomcwe.”

A DC 15 Intelligence check is required to recognize these words as the Three Sins of Ruin in dwarven philosophy (treachery, sloth, and foolishness), although a dwarf automatically succeeds. The words’ relationship to dwarven philosophy is a diversion.

Close examination of the letters “Elomcwe” reveals that they depress with a soft click. If these letters are depressed so as to spell “Welcome,” the entry opens.

The granite block slides into the earth, accompanied by a multitude of wailing voices.

The doorway remains open for 1 minute, after which time it returns to its original position. Nothing can hold it back, and anything that stays in its way as it grinds closed takes 50 (9d10) bludgeoning damage. Once the door has closed, it cannot be reopened from inside without the *ward stone* from Tzolo’s guardian in area 35. It can be reopened from the outside after one year, when the steel letters return to their normal position.

Opening the stone block also activates several of the tomb’s traps and releases several of its guardians from temporal stasis.

2. Entry Chamber

This lofty chamber has been sculpted from swirling dark-green marble. A row of four black pillars crosses the room, and behind them are two long pools filled with clear water. At the far end of the room, a smaller pool sits in front of a massive black iron bell suspended between two upright columns. Wailing voices echo through a passageway in the north wall.

Ceiling: 30 feet.

Mud Sorcerer Symbols: The east side of the granite block (A) bears the first mud sorcerer symbol, visible when the block returns to its closed position. Close examination of the west

face of each pillar, 6 feet from the floor (B; DC 10 Intelligence check), reveals one of the four mud sorcerer symbols (1 through 4 from north to south).

Bell: Sounding the bell causes the square pool to empty at the rate of 5 feet every round. Striking the bell again reverses this process.

Long Pools: Littered with bleached humanoid bones, which are the remains of laborers who assisted in the construction of the tomb, these 80-foot-long pools are 5 feet deep. The bones have been ritually treated, so they respond to no spell or magical effect that might manipulate them.

Square Pool (C): The 10-foot-square pool is 30 feet deep. A special black key (used on the pillar in area 4B) has been wedged into a crack in the pool's bottom. It can be found with a DC 7 Intelligence check made at the bottom of the pool. If the pool is empty, a character might notice the key from above with a DC 25 Wisdom check.

3. Crying Eye Chamber

The walls of this chamber are covered with eyes of countless shapes, sizes, and descriptions. Tears pour forth in rivulets as the eyes blink and squint. A narrow stone gutter runs along the walls, catching the tears and draining them into small holes in the four corners of the room. The holes are also the source of the wailing, which is nearly overwhelming in this area.

The secret door on the west wall can be found with a DC 25 Intelligence check. The tears of the eyes are actually a powerful acid, which makes searching this room difficult. Each round of contact with the tears deals 15 (3d10) acid damage.

The eyes are impervious to harm, but they can be neutralized with *color spray* (closes the eyes on a wall, shutting off the flow of tears until the start of the caster's next turn), *daylight*, *light*, or *sleep* (closes the eyes on a wall for the duration of the spell); *lesser restoration* permanently turns the tears of a wall into normal water.

4. Chamber of Alcoves

The walls of this chamber are painted with fading geometric designs of red, gold, and green. Iron doors are set into the north, west, and south walls.

An imposing nine-foot-tall, green basalt statue stands in the center of the room. It depicts an elephant-headed human pointing an accusing finger at the east wall. Its other hand reaches for the hilt of a sheathed sword. It is bare-chested and heavily muscled, and wears baggy pantaloons and sandals.

Four stone features stand on stout pedestals in alcoves in each corner of the room. To the northwest is a black pillar. The northeast alcove contains a gray statue of a jackal-headed male humanoid. To the southwest is a gray statue of a cat-headed female humanoid, and the southeast alcove contains a gray statue of a hawk-headed male humanoid.

This chamber was used for ceremonial purposes, and the statues in the alcoves represent various characters in the strange Jezulein mythos.

Ceiling: 20 feet.

Creatures: The three gray stone statues in this room are actually stone golems. Each of the golems starts with 65 hit points. If any statue is damaged, or if the black key is turned in the black pillar's lock, all three constructs animate and attack.

Central Statue (A): The central statue rests on a 1-foot-high circular base, which can be rotated with a DC 20 Strength check. Each door in this room can be opened only if the central statue is pointing at it. An open door slams shut as soon as the statue is rotated away from it.

Black Pillar (B): The southeast face of the black pillar bears all four mud sorcerer symbols, forming a diamond. Three feet up the northwest face of the pillar, a small keyhole can be found with a 15 Intelligence check. The black key from the pool in area 2C fits this hole. If the key is turned in a full circle clockwise, a secret compartment in the pillar opens, revealing treasure but also activating the golems (see the "Creatures" and "Treasure" entries).

Anyone who uses a tool other than the black key on the hole triggers a magical trap (evocation school; DC 20 Intelligence check to discern). The trap zaps the character attempting to pick the lock for 1d4 lightning damage, and the character must make a DC 14 Dexterity saving throw or take disadvantage on Dexterity checks and all attack rolls for 1 hour. If *dispel magic* is cast on the keyhole, a successful DC 11 magic ability check suppresses the trap for 10 minutes.

Southwestern Pedestal: The statue pedestal in this corner can be easily rotated counterclockwise. Doing so has no practical result.

Southeastern Pedestal: If the black pillar has been unlocked, the statue pedestal in this alcove can be rotated counterclockwise with a DC 15 Strength check. If its pedestal is completely rotated four times, the statue can be lifted off with a DC 15 Strength check, exposing a 1-foot-deep cylindrical cavity containing treasure (see that entry).

Lifting the statue also releases a 20-foot-radius magical cloud of toxic gas centered on the pedestal. The cloud's area is lightly obscured, and the gas remains in place until it is removed with *dispel magic* (DC 12 magic ability check) or dispersed with a strong wind. If so removed, the cloud gathers again after 10 minutes.

When the cloud appears, each living creature in it must make a DC 13 Constitution saving throw. A creature takes 15 (3d10) poison damage on a failed save, and half as much damage on a successful one. Any living creature that enters the cloud or ends its turn there must also make this saving throw (no more than once per turn).

Northern Door: This door is locked like all the rest. Its lock also has a poison-needle trap (DC 15 Intelligence check to find). Someone who successfully picks the lock bypasses the needle automatically, and it can be disarmed with a DC 20 Dexterity check. If not disarmed, the trap is triggered when someone fails to pick the lock, making a melee attack against that character: +9 to hit; 1 piercing damage, and the target must make a DC 16 Constitution saving throw or become paralyzed by poison for 1 hour. The afflicted character can attempt a DC 20 Constitution check as an action once every 10 minutes to end the paralysis.

Treasure: The compartment within the black pillar contains an ordinary sword and dagger enchanted to appear magical. A *detect magic* spell reads evocation magic (DC 20 Intelligence or Wisdom check to discern the illusion). The compartment also holds a sealed bone scroll tube containing a piece of aged vellum with an inscription written in Taalese (see handout 1). This clue refers to the mosaic-symbol trap in area 15.

Inside the southeastern pedestal are seven amber pieces, five tourmalines, three coral pieces (each gem worth 100 gp), two yellow topazes (500 gp each), a platinum statuette resembling the cat-headed statue (750 gp), a *potion of healing*, a *potion of delusion* (*potion of flying*), and a scroll of *stoneskin*.

5. Dirt Plot

Against the far wall is a plot of bare earth.

Burial Plot: The dirt fills a pit that is 7 feet deep. At the pit's bottom is a wooden coffin, holding the mummified corpse of one of Tzolo's minor servants, a male human dressed in moldering rags that were once fine red robes. Careful examination of the corpse's neck (DC 10 Intelligence check) reveals signs of strangling with a garrote.

Treasure: In its left hand, the corpse clutches a sealed metal scroll tube that contains another piece of vellum with a Taalese inscription declaring loyalty to Tzolo (see handout 2). The corpse also wears a gold ring set with a topaz on its right hand (worth 250 gp) and grips an ancient silver piece (worth 5 gp to a collector of ancient coins or 1 sp to anyone else) between its teeth.

6. Stone Face

On the western wall is an enormous, roughly circular carving of a face, its convex stone surface protruding from the wall. The face has heavy eyes, thick lips, large ears, a bulbous nose, and a pair of dull fangs. The ears have hollows in them, and the nostrils are deep.

The face is the back of a one-way door that opens only from the other side. However, a DC 10 Intelligence check reveals that the face's nostrils connect to a 1-foot-wide passage that leads through the wall into a hallway beyond. The ear hollows are empty.

7. Mummy Crypt

Six stone sarcophagi lie in this chamber, four of normal size and two large ones. The gate guarding this room's eastern entrance has dozens of curved daggers welded to its bars on the eastern side.

Creatures: The two larger sarcophagi contain giant mummies. At its breast, each mummy grips a massive clear jewel (DC 20 Intelligence check to discern they are cut glass worth 50 gp each). If these jewels, or anything in the other four coffins, are disturbed in any way, the mummies attack. If necessary, a mummy breaks out of its coffin (DC 15 Strength check from inside).

Sarcophagi: All the coffin lids are sealed with mortar, which must be chiseled out before they can be removed. Once the mortar is gone, a character needs a DC 10 Strength check to lift off the smaller lids, and a DC 15 check to lift the larger ones.

Eastern Gate: The gate in the east wall is fitted with an intricate lock, requiring a DC 25 Dexterity check to open.

Treasure: The four smaller coffins contain the mummified remains of Jezulein priests. They have long braided hair and wear rotting red robes, bejeweled gold phylacteries (1,200 gp each), gold earrings set with tiny sapphires (200 gp for each pair), and simple gold rings etched

with the mud sorcerer symbols (100 gp each). They each clutch a bronze mace, green with age.

Clenched in the teeth of each corpse is a gemstone (a bloodstone, a carnelian, a citrine, and an onyx), each inscribed with one of the four mud sorcerer symbols (25 gp each). These stones radiate faint abjuration magic, and are the keys necessary to enter the true crypt.

One mummy's wrappings contain an inscription (see handout 3). This clue gives guidance on using the inscribed stones on the secret door in area 34, which leads to the true crypt (area 35).

8. Stone Face

The eyes of this massive stone face look sidelong down the south tunnel, and its lips are pursed as if whistling. The face's ears have large hollows, and a soft breeze escapes from its mouth. A single word has been carved into the wall beneath the face.

Word: The word inscribed beneath the carving is *ilyatak* ("listen" in Taalese).

Trap: The face is magical (evocation school), hinting at a trap (DC 25 Intelligence check to discern). Reaching into the left ear causes the gate to area 7 to slam shut. Then a 10-foot-wide blast of wind erupts from the mouth. Any Medium or smaller creature standing in front of the face must make a DC 13 Strength saving throw. A creature that fails is pushed down the hall into the daggers on the gate for 30 (12d4) piercing damage. On a successful save, the creature is pushed halfway down the passage before falling prone. If *dispel magic* is cast on the trap, a successful DC 16 magic ability check suppresses it for 10 minutes.

Treasure: A green key (used on the pillar in area 9) is hidden inside the statue's right ear.

9. Hidden Coffin

A pillar of green basalt stands in the center of this chamber. The pillar is remarkable only for its size, six feet in diameter.

Ceiling: 15 feet.

Pillar Lock: The pillar has a keyhole in its southern base that can be found with close inspection (DC 20 Intelligence check). The green key from the statue in area 8 fits this hole. Anyone who uses a tool other than the green key on the hole triggers a magical trap (evocation school; DC 20 Intelligence check to discern). The trap zaps the character attempting to pick the lock for 1d4 lightning damage, and the character must make a DC 14 Dexterity saving throw or take disadvantage on Dexterity checks and all attack rolls for 1 hour. If *dispel magic* is cast on the keyhole, a successful DC 11 magic ability check suppresses the trap for 10 minutes.

If the green key from area 8 is inserted and turned a full rotation counterclockwise, the pillar emits a loud click. One round later, a blast from within the pillar creates an oval opening, 6 feet tall and 3 feet wide, in its south face. The blast deals 11 (3d6) slashing damage in a 20-foot cone to the south of the pillar.

Hidden Coffin: A coffin made from a strange purple wood rests upright in the pillar cavity and can be removed easily. The coffin's lid is only an inch thick, secured by dozens of nails. It is painted to depict a beautiful woman with flowing black hair, hands crossed over her chest, eyes closed, a silver pendant bearing the first mud sorcerer symbol around her neck.

Within the coffin is the mummified corpse of a male half-elf. Careful examination of the corpse's neck (DC 10 Intelligence check) reveals signs of strangling.

Pillar Core Trap: Anyone who enters the pillar cavity after the coffin has been removed spies a woven cord of human hair dangling from a small hole in the cavity ceiling. Examining the cord carefully might allow a creature to identify the trap (DC 20 Intelligence check), which can be disarmed only by pulling and cutting the hair carefully so its remaining length retracts into the hole (DC 15 Dexterity check). If the cord is pulled too far, or a character fails to disarm the device, a dull click occurs. One round later, the core of the pillar comes crashing down, dealing anyone inside the cavity 70 (20d6) bludgeoning damage. A character inside can make a DC 13 Dexterity saving throw to leap clear just in time, landing

prone in a square adjacent to the pillar on a successful save.

Treasure: The corpse wears a silver pendant around its neck, like the one painted on the coffin lid, but with no mud sorcerer symbol. This item is a *necklace of strangulation* (see appendix 2).

The corpse also holds a metal scroll tube that contains a brittle piece of papyrus bearing an inscription in Taalese (see handout 4). The inscription refers to the *mud ship* in area 34. However, the necklace around the half-elf's neck is not the one mentioned in this message.

10. Long Pillared Hall

A row of black marble pillars extends the length of this high-ceilinged hallway.

Ceiling: 20 feet.

Creature: A dark suit of plate armor with curved blades instead of gauntlets stands against the wall beside the southern door (B). Close inspection of this armor reveals gears at the joints and peculiar geometric designs etched into its metallic surface. There is a keyhole in the base of the neck.

This armored suit is an automaton. If the key from area 10C is inserted into the keyhole and turned a full rotation counterclockwise, lightning flows over the surface of the armor, and it attacks. If the key is turned a full rotation clockwise, the machine shakes violently. It explodes one round later, dealing 22 (4d10) fire damage in a 30-foot radius. A creature that succeeds on a DC 13 Dexterity saving throw takes half damage.

Northern Door (A): The door in the north wall is painted with a fanged camel's head. It is a one-way door, opening only from area 14D.

Southern Door (B): This door leading into area 10C is magically locked, but the lock can be picked (DC 25 Dexterity check).

Treasure (C): Area 10C contains a locked metal chest (DC 25 Dexterity check to open). This chest holds eight flasks of oil, a number of odd-looking metal tools, and a thick book entitled *Codissus il Yurushyui Ittemmet* ("Manual of Yurushyu's Automaton"). Hidden in the back cover of the book is a metal key, which can be

discovered with careful examination (a DC 15 Intelligence check).

The manual is poorly written and missing crucial information, so the instructions can't help a character repair the automaton if it is destroyed. The tome does reveal that a big diamond (5,000 gp) is part of the works inside the automaton's chest. If the machine explodes, the jewel is obliterated.

11. Naga Lair

Black pillars in this dark chamber are fashioned to look as though enormous snake-like creatures are coiled up around them. The heads of the snake-like carvings are those of various animals and humanoids.

Creature: The snake-like figure coiled around the central pillar is a spirit naga guardian named Cenixil, released from temporal stasis when the tomb opened.

Tactics: Cenixil's preferred tactic is to remain on the pillar, almost indistinguishable from the statues, until the characters have passed through this chamber. (A DC 25 Wisdom check is needed to notice the creature, or a DC 20 Intelligence check if searching.) Cenixil follows them, attacking when they are engaged with another guardian or trap. The naga cannot move beyond the part of the tomb bounded by areas 7 through 16.

Development: Cenixil surrenders if it drops to a quarter of its hit point maximum or less. The naga tries to convince the characters to leave it in peace, freely telling them everything it knows about areas 7 through 16. If it can, Cenixil uses its curative magic to recover, preparing an ambush for returning invaders.

12. Ceremonial Chamber

The high ceiling of this chamber is painted with a swirling pattern of churning water, alien creatures struggling in the maelstrom. The walls are dull pink, possibly faded from red.

The room has several decorations. A large rug covers the middle of the floor. It is woven with a scene that mirrors that of the painting on the ceiling, except it shows humanoids and a few beasts in the water. A large tapestry on the north wall depicts several animal-headed humanoids staring into the chamber, as if in a trance. Another tapestry on the south wall depicts a banquet scene in which animal-headed beings fight one another for scraps of food.

A deep-red marble altar flanked by two brass candelabras stands against the east wall. Each candelabra holds seven candles, all black except for the southernmost one, which is red. The altar has dozens of symbols etched into it, and several items rest atop it.

Two brass braziers with glowing-hot coals stand in the northwest and southwest corners.

Ceiling: 18 feet.

Rug: The central rug is a magical trap (necromancy school; DC 20 Intelligence check to discern). Any creature that touches it must make a DC 13 Wisdom saving throw. Those that fail vanish, along with all possessions. Examination of the rug at the point of contact reveals the creature has become part of the woven scene, a tiny figure struggling in the maelstrom. The trapped creature is in a violent watery area and must begin holding its breath to avoid drowning.

Any of the following spells can rescue a trapped creature: *dimension door*, *dispel magic*, *fly*, *levitate*, *remove curse*, and *water breathing*. Spells that have similar effects might also be effective. Someone who drowns before being rescued becomes a permanent part of the rug, never to be removed from the scene or raised from the dead by anything short of the most powerful magic.

If *dispel magic* is cast on the rug, all living trapped characters are released, and a successful DC 15 magic ability check suppresses the trap for 10 minutes.

Braziers: Also magical traps (evocation school; DC 15 Intelligence check to discern), each brazier fires a red-hot coal at any creature that touches it. The brazier makes the following melee attack: +9 to hit; 5 (1d10) fire damage.

Secret Door: The southern tapestry covers the secret door. Once the tapestry is removed, the door can be found with a DC 20 Intelligence check.

Candelabras: The candles give off a sickly sweet odor when lit but are otherwise harmless. However, if the red candle is lit, it emits pink smoke that outlines the location of the secret door.

Altar: The altar deals 5 (1d8 + 1) cold damage to any creature that touches it. Resting on the altar is a locked ebony box (DC 20 Dexterity check to open), and other items (see the “Treasure” entry).

The box’s lock has a poison-needle trap (DC 20 Intelligence check to find). Someone who successfully picks the lock automatically bypasses the needle, and it can be disarmed with a DC 20 Dexterity check. If not disarmed, the trap is triggered when someone fails to pick the lock, making a melee attack against that character: +9 to hit; 1 piercing damage, and the target must make a DC 16 Constitution saving throw or become paralyzed by poison for 1 hour. The afflicted character can attempt a DC 16 Constitution check as an action every 10 minutes to end the paralysis.

Treasure: On the altar are an obsidian dagger (15 gp), a small piece of torn green silk, and four 4-inch-wide octagonal disks, each with a different mud sorcerer symbol etched on it.

The box contains a red silk pillow, upon which rests a little coiled snake statuette with green and blue bands. It activates and speaks to the party, telling the characters that it can answer three of their questions about the tomb for releasing it from its prison. However, the little snake’s voice is very faint, and a DC 20 intelligence check is needed to understand what it is saying unless a character puts his or her ear right next to the snake.

After answering the third question (whose answer is always false), the snake strikes the listener. It makes a melee attack: +9 to hit (with advantage if the target is leaning close to listen); 1 piercing damage, and the victim must make a DC 13 Charisma saving throw or fall asleep for a year. *Remove curse* can end this enchantment (DC 15 magic ability check). The snake then deactivates, becoming an agate statuette (250 gp).

Inside the pillow is a powerful item known as the *mud ring*. See appendix 2 for details.

13. Mural Corridor

A faded mural covers the entire length of the east wall of this corridor. It depicts four humanoids (bull-, camel-, cat-, and mole-headed) holding a long green banner with an inscription.

The inscription is written in Taalese (see handout 5), and holds a clue to the golems in area 28.

14. Stone Face and Pools

Veins of black run through the white stone of this chamber.

Two pools, one long and one short, both shallow, occupy the room’s center. The long pool holds clear water in which countless rainbow-colored fish swim. Coins are scattered over the short pool’s bottom. A carved face is prominent on the west wall. This one grimaces with its eyes wide, nostrils flared, and lips taut across fangs.

Ceiling: 20 feet.

Maddening Fish Pool (A): Anyone examining the fish swimming in the larger, 3-foot-deep pool notices that they swim in an odd and interesting way. A character who examines the pool for longer than a round must make a DC 14 Wisdom saving throw. Failure means the character attacks the nearest creature, repeating the saving throw after each attack. On a success, the character babbles incoherently and does nothing other on his or her turn except use an action to make a DC 14 Wisdom check. Success on such a check ends the effect.

Door (D): The southern portal is a one-way door that bears the image of a cross-eyed, snake-headed humanoid wielding a greataxe. This door is locked (DC 25 Dexterity check to open) and opens inward.

Stone Face (C): A secret door is built into the face, which has a lock in its right nostril (DC 20 Intelligence check to find the lock). The key in the small pool (see the “Treasure” entry) opens the lock, or it can be picked with a DC 25 Dexterity

check. Once unlocked, the door takes a DC 15 Strength check to pull open.

Treasure (B): The smaller pool is 2½ feet deep and contains 18 pp, 26 gp, 105 sp, and 161 cp. Among the coins is a small copper key that can be found with a DC 15 Intelligence check (or automatically if the characters take all the coins). The key opens the stone face's lock.

15. Mosaic Symbol

The gate to this chamber is made from a strange bluish metal. A huge mosaic of the first mud sorcerer symbol, made of small bits of black obsidian and white quartz, covers the floor.

Stepping on any part of the mosaic sets a powerful illusion in motion (DC 20 Intelligence or Wisdom check to disbelieve). Dozens of shining, whirling blades appear out of nowhere and seemingly hack the creature that stepped on the symbol to bits. After this grisly spectacle ends, the bits and blades vanish.

In fact, the mosaic teleports any creature that steps on it to area 18A, facing east.

16. Stairway

The stairs in this cold, dusty corridor descend forty feet. Ten feet beyond the last step, the corridor ends.

Hidden Inscription: The vertical face of the last step has an inscription in Taalese that reads: "North, then south." Any character passing over the inscription notices it with a DC 15 Wisdom check, or automatically if searching. This clue instructs the party to use the secret door to the north, then, after being teleported to area 17, exit through the secret door to the south.

Secret Door: The door in the north wall can be found with a DC 20 Intelligence check. It swiftly closes after one creature moves through it.

Secret Chamber (A): This area is a secret room.

When someone enters the room, read:

This ten-foot-by-ten-foot room is decorated with hundreds of intricate glyphs and sigils painted on the walls, floor, and ceiling. A particularly large depiction of the fourth mud sorcerer symbol dominates the center of the north wall.

If the north wall is touched while the secret door is closed, everyone in the room is teleported to area 17.

17. Trick Chamber

This room is identical in appearance to area 16A. The secret door in the south wall is identical to the one in area 16 and does not need to be searched for again. The secret door in the north wall can be found with a DC 15 Intelligence check, but opening it triggers a trap.

One round after the northern secret door is opened, the north wall of the northern chamber slides into the ground, revealing a magical storm of swirling blades. The storm sweeps rapidly across both rooms, repeating the sweep at the start of each round. Anyone in either room when the storm moves through takes 52 (15d6) slashing damage. A creature that makes a successful DC 13 Dexterity saving throw takes half damage.

After each sweep, anyone who succeeds on a DC 15 Intelligence check notices that the blade-filled area is not quite flush with the walls. Creatures in the room can flatten themselves against the east and west walls to avoid further damage. The blade storm lasts for 15 minutes, or until it is canceled with *dispel magic* (DC 15 magic ability check).

While the trap is in effect, the secret door between the two chambers cannot be closed.

18. Hag Lair

The ceiling of this room is supported by a great number of pillars decorated with intertwining thorny roses, snakes, and delicately clawed hands making strange signs. A twenty-foot-square pool occupies the center of the chamber.

Those teleported from area 15 or area 26 arrive here in the pool (area A), facing east.

Illusory Wall: Area B is hidden from the rest of the room by the illusion of a wall, which becomes apparent if interacted with. Creatures and objects pass through it easily.

Pool (A): Full of murky water, this pool is 35 feet deep. Climbing out over the slippery lip requires 15 feet of movement unless the character succeeds on a DC 15 Dexterity or Strength check.

Creature (B): This chamber is the lair of Ulzaada the annis hag. Once a servant of Tzolo, she was condemned to imprisonment in the tomb, never growing old, for failing her mistress. Ulzaada is immediately aware of any creature that is teleported into her lair, and she attacks such creatures. If hard pressed, she retreats and tries to hide among the cells in area 20A.

Development: If Ulzaada is captured, her sanity breaks down completely. Reduced to a giggling, paranoid wreck, she titters madly that the characters are doomed to fail and that Tzolo will destroy them utterly. Still, she can provide the party with information about areas 17 through 27, and she can reveal the secret door in her lair. She can also tell the characters about Tzolo. The mud sorcerer was a woman, and she supervised the construction of the tomb as a hiding place before her “glorious return to power.” Ulzaada admits she never witnessed Tzolo’s demise. She refuses to guide the party anywhere, even on pain of death.

Treasure: Ulzaada has a ring of bronze keys to the cells in area 20. Each key opens one cell.

19. False Crypt

The north wall of this large chamber bears a sloppily carved inscription. A large oak sarcophagus sits on a stone block, flanked by two suits of exquisitely fashioned plate armor holding outlandish polearms. Odd curling horns, hooks, and other strange fixtures adorn these suits.

Inscription: The inscription reads, in Taalese, “Let the chips fall where they may.”

Coffin: Silver letters on the lid of the sarcophagus read, in Taalese, “Disturb not the slumber of Tzolo.”

Three iron padlocks secure the lid. Each requires a DC 20 Dexterity check to open, but the middle one has a poison-needle trap (DC 20 Intelligence check to find). Someone who successfully picks the lock automatically bypasses the needle, and it can be disarmed with a DC 20 Dexterity check. If not disarmed, the trap is triggered when someone fails to pick the lock, making a melee attack against that character: +9 to hit; 1 piercing damage, and the target must make a DC 16 Constitution saving throw or fall asleep for 1 hour. (This is a poison effect.) An afflicted character can use an action to make a DC 16 Constitution check every 10 minutes to end the sleep.

The padlocks can also be broken. Each has AC 12 and 30 hit points.

The hinges creak dramatically when the sarcophagus lid is opened to reveal a mummified male human corpse clad only in a bright-blue loincloth. This person was Huadi, once one of Tzolo’s elite bodyguards, and his luxurious mane of gray hair fills much of the coffin. A talisman of ebony and ivory, bearing the second mud sorcerer symbol on one side and the third on the other, is around Huadi’s neck on a delicate silver chain. A gruesome grin is frozen on the corpse’s face, and two ancient gold coins rest on its closed eyelids.

Trap: Touching the necklace sets in motion a powerful illusion. The corpse’s left hand appears to shoot up with amazing speed, grabbing hold of the character’s wrist. The thing sits up and the coins fall away from its eyes, revealing empty black sockets as it begins a horrible, cackling laughter. At this moment, the north wall rumbles and seemingly begins to advance southward at a rate of 10 feet per round. At the same time, an iron gate drops to block the archway (it is very real and requires a DC 20 Strength check to lift).

Anyone can attempt a DC 20 Intelligence or Wisdom check to see through the illusion, although the character trapped by the corpse’s hand takes a –4 penalty on the check. Attacks on the corpse and attempts to sever its arm appear fruitless, the weapons passing through its flesh as if the creature were a ghost.

When the north wall is only a few inches from the sarcophagus, the stone block appears to sink into the floor and the corpse's fingers seemingly snap off, freeing the person in its grasp. The advancing wall then appears to push the coffin noisily across the floor toward the south wall.

The goal of this illusion is to drive the party into the southern 10 feet of this chamber, which contains a pit (DC 20 Intelligence check to discover). The hinged pit lid opens as soon as a total weight of 350 pounds or more is placed on it. It can be jammed closed if someone with the proper tools takes three actions to do so and succeeds on two DC 20 Dexterity checks. The pit is 30 feet deep and lined with spikes, dealing 35 (10d6) piercing damage to those who fall in. Two human corpses sprawl at the bottom (see the "Treasure" entry for more information).

Blades are embedded in the pit walls, forcing anyone scaling them to make DC 10 Strength checks. Anyone failing an attempt to climb the wall takes 2 (1d4) slashing damage.

Once the illusory advancing wall reaches the southern wall, the illusion ends and the gate rises.

Treasure: The polearms are decorative and break the first time they hit a target, dealing normal damage. The butt of the odd halberd in the grasp of the northern suit of armor holds a scroll of *cone of cold*, a scroll of *raise dead*, a scroll of *water breathing*, and a scroll with a clue, written in Taalese (see handout 6), referring to the illusion trap in this room.

The silver letters in the coffin's lid are worth 40 gp if removed. The ancient gold coins on the corpse's eyes are worth 50 gp each to a collector of ancient coins, or 1 gp each to anyone else. Hidden beneath the corpse is a secret compartment that holds a *potion of displacement*, a *potion of strength*, a fire opal (1,000 gp), and a silver-filigreed walnut box (850 gp). The box is locked (DC 25 Dexterity check to open) but contains its own key.

The silver necklace about the corpse's neck is the *talisman of the Uzrivoy*. See area 34 for more information on the *mud ship* and its talisman.

Some valuables can be found on the corpses in the pit. One wears rotting leather armor but has a *+1 shield* and a *+1 short sword*. The other wears a moldering gray robe over *+1 splint mail*. A staff that glows permanently as if a *light* spell were

cast on it, a halberd, and a leather pouch containing 22 gp and a tourmaline (100 gp) lie between the two bodies.

20. Cells

This long corridor is lined with iron doors on either side.

Aged Doors: In addition to being locked (DC 20 Dexterity check to unlock), these doors have become stuck fast with age (DC 20 Strength check to force). The dank rooms are strewn with rotting straw. Two buckets (both empty), a wooden stool, and a chipped wooden bowl and spoon are the only items that remain in each cell. The skeleton of each cell's single occupant is manacled to the wall opposite its door by a single 8-foot-long chain. These are the remains of various servants who somehow failed Tzolo.

Hag Refuge (A): Ulzaada flees to this cell if the fight in area 18 goes badly for her. She takes the form of a female ogre and claims to be a prisoner of Tzolo. She fights again only if she is attacked.

West Passage: One cell has no back wall, instead joining the corridor that stretches west to area 23. An 8-foot-high wall of magical force (evocation school) blocks the passageway after 60 feet. Nothing can move through the wall, including ethereal beings, but there is a 4-foot gap between its top and the 12-foot ceiling of the hall. The wall is visible, like a pane of glass, but similarly transparent. It provides total cover against attacks and effects that come from the opposite side (unless the attacker exploits the aforementioned gap). *Dispel magic* doesn't affect the wall, but another ability that cancels magic might work to bring it down.

21. Squinting Stone Face

A stone face, six feet in diameter, covers the wall at the end of the corridor. The face's sharp teeth are pressed together, its eyes squint shut, and its hair is in disarray.

The stone face's jaw is visibly hinged, and it can be pushed open with a DC 15 Strength check.

Opening the jaw reveals an iron lever in the mouth. If the lever is pulled (DC 10 Strength check), the jaw snaps shut, dealing 10 (3d6) bludgeoning damage to the person pulling.

Close examination of the left eye (DC 10 Intelligence check) reveals that one of the eyelashes is actually a metal latch. If unlatched, the lid of this eye can be opened, revealing a small peephole. A character who peers through the hole can see the outline of a 3-foot-square portal (the back of the secret door at area 24) on the wall 10 feet to the west.

22. Sea Chamber

Along the east side of the hallway is a twenty-foot wide, ten-foot high wall made of thick, murky glass.

Someone touching the glass can detect vibrations. If the wall is shattered (AC 5; immune to cold, necrotic, poison, psychic; hp 15; DC 15 Strength check to break), thousands of gallons of water gush forth. The rush of water slams everyone standing in front of the glass against the opposite wall, dealing 5 (1d10) bludgeoning damage from the force of the water and 5 (1d10) slashing damage from the shards of glass. Anyone who fails a DC 25 Strength or Dexterity check also falls prone.

In a single round, the sea chamber empties and a wall of iron (AC 15; immune to cold, necrotic, poison, psychic; hp 500; DC 25 Strength check to break) magically replaces the shattered wall of glass. This leaves the hall 5 feet deep in salt water from area 23 to the wall 60 feet west of area 24. Beyond the iron wall, the sea chamber is cold, damp, and empty.

23. Stone Face Drain

This stone face looks as if it's holding its breath. The eyes bulge, the nostrils are pinched shut, the lips are closed tight, and the cheeks puff out. Stone hair is matted to the forehead as if wet.

The stone jaw of this statue is hinged and can be pulled downward with a DC 15 Strength check.

Opening the jaw reveals a stone plug, 1 foot in diameter and set with an iron ring. The plug can be removed with a DC 10 Strength check to reveal an iron grate at the end of a cylindrical opening. If water from area 22 fills the corridor, it drains through this opening. After 4 minutes, only 7 inches of water remain.

24. Secret Door

This secret portal can be found with a DC 25 Intelligence check. Grant a +5 bonus on this check if the door was seen through the peephole in area 21. The door won't open while the corridor is flooded beyond a few inches deep.

25. Moat Crypt

This high chamber is composed of dark-green marble. In the center of the room, a pool of murky water forms a moat around an island, thirty feet long on each side. A body wrapped in unstained white linen strips lies in the center of the island. Another pool is visible beneath a one-foot-tall archway in the east wall.

Ceiling: 25 feet.

Creatures: Six water elementals guard this room, emerging from the moat to attack anyone trying to cross the water. Due to a trick of the light, these creatures appear to be made of swirling dark-green marble. Any destroyed water elementals re-form two rounds later unless a spell that creates cold conditions or deals cold damage, or *dispel magic*, is cast on the pool. The water elementals cannot pursue enemies beyond this room.

Corpse (A): The mummified corpse is that of Calistus, a lesser mud sorcerer devoted to Tzolo. Although he was male, the corpse is that of a female human with long hair in several braids, since a *belt of masculinity/femininity* changed Calistus's gender moments before his death. The body lies on a metal scroll tube inscribed with a false clue in Taalese (see handout 7).

Long Pool (B): Passing into the hall under a low archway, this long pool of clear water is 4 feet deep. The arched tunnel roof is 1 foot above the water for the length of the passage.

Scroll Tube: The metal scroll tube contains a scroll, on which are written runes that explode with magical force when read. The reader takes 21(6d6) force damage; creatures within 10 feet of the reader take the same amount, or half damage on a successful DC 13 Dexterity saving throw.

Treasure: Unwrapping the corpse's linens reveals several items. Two platinum coins (200 gp each to a collector of ancient coins, or 1 pp to anyone else) cover Calistus's eyes. A scepter of ivory and fine silver filigree, topped by a diamond (5,000 gp), rests in the crook of the right arm. The scepter is a *rod of absorption*. Wrapped around the corpse's waist is a *belt of masculinity/femininity* (see appendix 2), and the skull clutches a large blue spinel (500 gp) jewel in its teeth.

26. Water Crypt

This lofty chamber is made of dark-green marble. Four black pillars, each bearing one of the four mud sorcerer symbols, stand on either side of a waterway. The eastern half of this chamber has a domed ceiling above a pool of clear water surrounded with gleaming blue tiles. An iron door is set in the center of the east wall.

Ceiling: 30 feet.

Square Pool: The pool is 12 feet deep and surrounded by azurite tiles. On the bottom is a corpse wrapped in white linen. This is Fzalle, Tzolo's chief bodyguard. A male human with long hair, Fzalle fell into disfavor just prior to the tomb's completion, and his successor, Yartes, stabbed him in the back.

Creature: Touching the water of the square pool releases a dread wraith (Fzalle's spirit) that cannot leave this room. If someone touches the corpse, any Turn Undead effect on the wraith immediately ends.

Eastern Door: The iron door to the east has indecipherable glyphs etched upon its surface and a lock at its center. The lock can be picked with a DC 20 Dexterity check. It is a magical trap (evocation school; DC 20 Intelligence check to discern); the first time anyone tries to unlock it, the trap triggers a *cone of cold* spell. Each creature in a 60-foot cone originating from the

door into the room must make a DC 13 Constitution saving throw. A creature takes 14 (4d6) cold damage on a failed save, and half as much damage on a successful one. If *dispel magic* is cast on the trap, a successful DC 16 magic ability check suppresses its effects for 10 minutes.

The chamber beyond contains the first mud sorcerer symbol opposite the door. Any creature that touches the symbol is teleported to area 18A.

Treasure: Each of the 200 azurite tiles that surround the square pool is worth 10 gp.

Inside the linen, two ornate silver daggers (120 gp each) are crossed on the corpse's chest. A black pearl (500 gp) is clutched in the right fist, and a sapphire (1,000 gp) in the left. Tightly sealed ivory scroll tubes are concealed behind the corpse's legs. One contains a scroll of *haste*, a scroll of *thunderwave*, and a scroll of *dispel magic*. The other contains a scroll of *phantasmal force*, a scroll of *stoneskin*, and a scroll of *lightning bolt*.

The second tube also contains a cursed scroll that casts a *polymorph* spell when read, transforming the reader into a butterfly. A DC 16 Wisdom saving throw negates the effect. The target can use an action to make a DC 16 Wisdom check after every 24 hours spent as a butterfly to end the effect. A *remove curse* spell can end the effect with a DC 14 magic ability check.

27. Great Mausoleum

The walls of this huge chamber of white stone are covered with four tiers of burial niches, one row every five feet. Iron rungs are set into the walls between each row of niches. Each burial niche holds a human-sized corpse clad in moldering rags.

Ceiling: 40 feet.

Corpses: The people interred here were once scribes, laborers, alchemists, stonemasons, architects, acolytes, bodyguards, and minor magicians who served Tzolo. Each corpse bears signs of foul play (garrote marks around the throat, an entry wound from a blade in the back, lips discolored by poison, and so on). Their once-colorful garments are now rotting and worthless. Many wear strange pieces of bronze jewelry green with age, while others clasp books that fall

apart as soon as they are touched. A few clutch nicked bronze swords, spheres of colored glass, fragile wooden staffs, or ancient metal rods marked with disturbing glyphs.

Deadly Illusion: One minute after the characters enter, a complex illusion begins. The characters hear rustling, but looking around reveals nothing. This event recurs several times. After another minute, as part of the illusion, the corpses seem to stir, rise, and make their way to the iron rungs, descending to the floor. They pursue anyone fleeing the chamber as far as area 25. Attacks and spells pass harmlessly through the corpses, which swarm over characters, appearing to rip apart those who believe them to be real.

A character can see through the illusion with a DC 20 Intelligence or Wisdom check. Anyone who succeeds sees only shadowy shapes moving while the real corpses remain in their niches. A character who reveals the nature of the illusion grants another check to others who still believe it, with a one-time +4 bonus. Those who confront the corpses and voice skepticism at their reality are entitled to another check, with a +2 bonus on the roll. Those who fail all checks to discern the illusion take 70 (20d6) psychic damage.

If the characters reenter the chamber, the entire illusion begins again 1 minute later. However, those who have disbelieved the illusion or survived damage from it are immune to its effects. Those who watch closely (DC 20 Intelligence check) notice that one corpse never moves. Its niche conceals a secret door.

Secret Door: In the rear wall of a third-tier niche, this secret door can be discovered with a DC 20 Intelligence check.

28. Pool and Plots

This chamber has a high vaulted ceiling that peaks at the center of the room. The passageway from the mausoleum enters this room at a height of thirty feet above the floor. A long pool of clear water runs down the north half of the room, a row of three large mud pits to the south. Beyond them is an iron door.

Ceiling: 35 feet at the apex.

Pool: A silver ladle resting in the southeast corner of the pool bottom can be seen from the surface with a DC 10 Intelligence check. *Detect magic* reveals that the ladle radiates an aura of transmutation magic. It bears an inscription in Taalese (see handout 8) that suggests its use.

Door: The door on the south wall has no lock but does have a metal handle. Leering, inhuman faces are etched into its surface. The only way to open the door is to use the ladle to pour water from the pool onto the mud pits.

Creatures: Three rounds after water is poured into a pit, a stone golem rises from it. The golem in the western pit takes the shape of a heavily muscled human with the head of a camel. The center golem resembles an emaciated human with the head of a fanged pig, while the eastern one appears as an obese human with the head of a hippopotamus. The camel- and pig-headed golems attack as soon as they rise. The hippo-headed one instead lumbers to the iron portal and opens the door. This golem serves the party, as long as the characters give it orders in Taalese, until the secret door in area 29 is opened. At that point, the golem collapses into a shapeless pile of mud and is destroyed.

29. Secret Door

One of the 2-foot-square stone blocks that make up this corridor has a 2-inch-diameter hole at its center. This is discovered automatically if anyone searches this hall, or with a DC 20 Wisdom check by someone passing by. If the red tusk from area 30D is screwed into this hole, the block can be removed with a DC 15 Strength check. The length of the red tusk provides a grip for only one individual, and no other means can open this portal.

30. Chamber of the Colossus

When the characters can see area A, read:

A row of five red marble pillars runs down the hallway leading to a chamber. Each of the pillars has a word inscribed on its south face.

When the characters can see into the room, read:

The high vaulted ceiling of this chamber is painted to depict animal-headed humanoids dueling one another with ornate blades. Blue tiles and black tiles frame a long pool of clear water that runs down the chamber's center. Eight red marble statues of tiger-headed humanoids, naked to the waist and brandishing elaborate polearms, stand along the walls.

A statue set in a northern alcove is the room's largest, twenty feet tall from its base to the top of its head. It depicts a kneeling elephant-headed humanoid sitting back on its haunches, its heavily muscled gray chest bare and its arms outstretched, palms open in welcome. Baggy yellow pantaloons cover its legs and torso, and sandals gird its feet. Its huge trunk rears back against its forehead, from which a massive red gem sparkles. Two more dark gemstones are set into the statue's eyes. Two great stone tusks, one painted red, the other green, jut out of the statue's maw, which is full of blue fangs.

Ceiling: 45 feet at the apex.

Pillars (A): Each of the pillars has a word written in Common. From south to north, the words read, "Tzolo," "shall," "vanquish," "her," and "foes."

Pool (B): The water in the central pool is 15 feet deep. The message "Tzolo shall vanquish her foes" is spelled out using red tiles in Common along the bottom of the pool.

Statue Head (C): The head of the tiger-headed statue at area 30C screws off (DC 10 Intelligence check to discover this fact). It contains treasure, described in that entry.

Elephant Colossus (D): Climbing the colossus is easily done (DC 10 check if one is called for). The jewels in the statue are described in the "Treasure" entry.

Secret Door: Below the colossus's navel, five ivory tiles are painted in red with the letters H, T, F, V, S. If depressed in the correct order ("Tzolo Shall Vanquish Her Foes"), a secret door in the statue's stomach opens inward, revealing a corridor leading to area 31. Otherwise, a DC 25

Intelligence check is needed to locate the door, which can be opened only by pressing the tiles.

Crushing Palms: If a character enters either of the statue's open palms, 20 feet above the floor, a visible hand of magical force appears and grasps the character. A character who wins a Dexterity or Strength contest (the hand's score in both is 18) scrambles out of the palm and escapes. A character who fails takes 21 (6d6) bludgeoning damage and is restrained by the hand. A restrained character can take an action to reattempt the contest to escape. Each time the restrained character fails, he or she takes the bludgeoning damage again.

Tusks: Both the statue's tusks can be unscrewed. The red one is the key to the secret door at area 29. Unscrewing the green one releases a 20-foot-radius magical cloud of toxic gas centered on the colossus. The cloud's area is heavily obscured, and it remains in place until it is removed with *dispel magic* (DC 13 magic ability check) or dispersed with a strong wind. If so removed, the cloud gathers again after 10 minutes.

When the cloud appears, each living creature in it must make a DC 15 Constitution saving throw. A creature takes 15 (3d10) poison damage on a failed save, and half as much damage on a successful one. Any living creature that enters the cloud or ends its turn there must also make this saving throw (no more than once per turn).

Treasure: The hollow statue head contains a scroll of *augury*, a scroll of *lesser restoration*, a scroll of *create food and water*, and another clue written in Taalese (see handout 9). This one refers to the red tusk found on the colossus.

A ruby is set into the colossus's forehead (5,000 gp) and the eyes are black opals (1,000 gp each). The colossus has thirty-six fangs made from smoky blue quartz (50 gp each).

31. Tzila's Chamber

Eighteen green basalt statues of fly-headed humanoids line the walls of this chamber. Each brandishes a scimitar of red clay. In the center of the chamber is a red marble sarcophagus covered with carvings of serpents, worms, roses, and toads. A large circular seal of red wax bearing the fourth mud sorcerer symbol seals the lid of the sarcophagus at its foot.

Fly-Headed Statues: These figures produce a magical curse (necromancy school; DC 20 Intelligence check to discern the danger). Anyone who touches one must make a DC 13 Wisdom saving throw or suffer a curse that fills the subject's ears with the sound of buzzing insects whenever he or she undertakes any significant activity. The buzzing imposes a -2 penalty to attack rolls, saving throws, and checks for one year or until *remove curse* is applied (DC 15 magic ability check to remove the curse). Casting *bless* 10 minutes before *remove curse* removes the need to make a magic ability check.

Sarcophagus: Wax seals the lid of this stone coffin. Once the seal is broken, a DC 20 Strength check is needed to remove the lid. The female human body within is clad in flowing red robes over scale mail of a red alloy. In her right hand she holds a heavy mace made of the same red alloy, its head shaped like those of the statues in this room. She also wears a white ring on her left index finger.

A green silk kerchief covers the face of the coffin's occupant, and upon it is a magical rune (necromancy school; DC 20 Intelligence check to discern the danger). Anyone who looks on the rune or touches the kerchief suffers a curse like that on the statues above, except that the source of the penalty is intense pain, and the effect lasts only 1 hour. Beneath the silk is the beautiful, imperious face of a perfectly preserved young woman, her raven hair worn in several braids and gathered in a platinum loop set with a small emerald.

Creature: The woman is Tzolo's sister, Tzila, held in temporal stasis. Totally devoted to her sister, Tzila is instantly stirred from stasis if any of her garments or belongings are touched. If she

is attacked prior to awakening, an unseen force deflects the first blow or spell, and Tzila rouses instantly. She attacks the party ferociously, shouting in Taalese, "How dare you disturb the sleep of the great Tzolo! You shall all perish! Prepare to meet your destruction, fools!"

Treasure: In addition to her equipment, Tzila has an ornate box of blue steel (50 gp) that contains a *potion of invisibility*, a *potion of speed*, a scroll of *cure critical wounds*, and a scroll of *cone of cold*.

At the bottom of the sarcophagus is a secret compartment that can be found with a DC 10 Intelligence check. The compartment contains a box filled with 125 worthless smooth pebbles covered with illusions to look like tourmalines, pearls, and aquamarines worth 100 gp each, and four larger rocks that appear to be emeralds worth 10,000 gp each. The illusion magic ends if the box is taken more than a mile from the tomb.



Illustration by Mike Franchina

32. False Crypt

An archway leading into a crypt bears an inscription written in several languages, including Common, saying, "You have reached the Inner Sanctum of Tzolo. Tzolo sleeps, waiting for the predestined time of the Jezulein Rebirth. Gloat not, lest your pride usher in your Unalterable Doom."

This room beyond the arch contains an enormous woven rug depicting three fanged elephant heads, and the walls are painted with dizzying geometric designs of red, green, and gold. A pair of gold candelabras flank the coffin, each holding a dozen burning red candles that give off a spicy scent.

On a block of red marble four feet high sits a casket made of finely finished mahogany with silver handles. Inlays on the coffin lid depict the four mud sorcerer symbols as well as geometric designs matching those on the walls.

Candles: The candles burning in this room light magically as soon as the secret door in area 29 is opened. They burn for 1 hour and give off smoke that acts as a mild inhaled poison. Anyone who enters the room while the candles are burning must make a DC 10 Constitution saving throw or fall asleep for 2 minutes. A character who successfully saves against the effect or who wakes up after sleeping the full 2 minutes is immune to the candles' poison thereafter; a character awakened prematurely must make another saving throw against the poison.

Coffin: The coffin lid opens easily to reveal the body of Yartes, another one of Tzolo's bodyguards, covered by a thin shroud of red silk. The male human corpse has long hair in several braids and wears jewelry made of platinum covered with complex geometric etchings and glyphs. It also wears an ornate platinum breastplate set with six peridots. See the "Treasure" entry for more information.

The casket can be moved aside easily.

Pedestal: Beneath the casket is the clear outline of a compartment with a keyhole in the center. If the lock is picked (DC 15 Dexterity check), a mechanism causes the block to slowly sink into the ground for two rounds until it is flush with the floor. After another round, a black adamantite portcullis drops to block the archway (DC 25 Strength check to lift). On the fourth round, the south wall begins to move northward at the rate of 10 feet per round. The moving wall can be detected beforehand if someone searches the area (DC 20 Intelligence check).

False Hiding Place: After the wall has advanced 20 feet, the marble block sinks another foot, allowing room for two Medium creatures to lie flat within. After the wall has advanced 40 feet, the block sinks again, leaving enough room for four Medium creatures. As soon as a weight of 200 pounds or more is placed on the block, it drops away into a 10-foot-wide, 40-foot-deep pit. The trap can be found (DC 20 Intelligence check)

and reinforced to remain closed (four DC 20 Dexterity checks). The walls of this pit are sheer and virtually impossible to climb without aid.

Secret Door: In the south wall is a secret door, which can be found with a DC 20 Intelligence check after the wall starts moving (DC 25 beforehand). If this door is discovered and opened, the wall stops its advance 5 feet from the north end of the chamber. Otherwise, all those in the chamber take 70 (20d6) bludgeoning damage per round for ten rounds as they are crushed between the walls.

Wall Countermeasures: A weapon made out of metal or an iron rod can slow the wall's advance for two rounds before being destroyed. Magic weapons of metal might slow it for longer, and certain spells and other devices might be able to stop the wall at your discretion. If the characters manage to hold the wall back for ten rounds, it recedes at the end of that time.

Treasure: The rug in the center of the room is worth 250 gp. Each candelabra is solid gold (700 gp each). The four handles on the coffin are solid silver (50 gp each). The corpse's platinum ornaments include wide bracelets on the wrists and ankles (400 gp each), a broad gorget around the neck (1,200 gp), three rings bearing the heads of a pig, a camel, and a hippo (350 gp each), a circlet (500 gp), and a perfectly fitted, fanged face mask (1,350 gp). The breastplate is worth 5,200 gp.

33. Pit

Each time a character passes over this pit trap (DC 20 Intelligence check to find), it has a 1-in-4 chance of opening into a 40-foot-deep shaft. (Two DC 20 Dexterity checks are enough to disable the trap.) The lid of the pit snaps back into place one round after it opens. An illusory floor and magical silence cover the bottom 20 feet of the pit. The walls of this pit are sheer and virtually impossible to climb without aid.

34. Vault of the *Uzrivoy*

The archway leading into this chamber is inscribed with a phrase in Taalese.

A U-shaped pool of rippling water dominates the high-domed chamber beyond, which is cool and humid. The ceiling shines like mother-of-pearl. Resting on a platform in the center of the pool is a mastless ship made of a fine reddish wood. Eight oak beams angled up from the stone platform support the hull of this ship. The deck is twelve feet above the floor and holds a small cabin to the west, a covered stairway to the east, and a great wheel inlaid with ivory between these two structures.

Two fanged elephant heads, ten feet above the floor on the west wall, spray water from their curled trunks into the pool. They flank another stone face, six feet in diameter, that sits somewhat lower on the wall. The face has a fanged grin, wild unkempt hair, huge ears, an arrogant, jutting chin, and squinting eyes from which pour a steady river of tears.

Ceiling: 35 feet.

Archway: The Taalese inscription reads, "The reverent should proceed with care. The irreverent shall die." The final word in the inscription is magical (necromancy school; DC 20 Intelligence check to discern the danger). *Dispel magic* (with a DC 15 magic ability check) can render the word harmless. Otherwise, someone who reads and understands the final word must make a DC 16 Constitution saving throw or trigger the trap, taking 70 (20d6) necrotic damage or as much damage as is required to kill it. If this damage kills the reader, the death magic spills over to the next nearest creature, which must also make the same saving throw or take damage in the same way, and so on. The trap can deal up to 150 damage (count the actual amount dealt to each creature) before it loses its magic.

Pool: This pool magically circulates water through pipes up to the spraying elephant carvings. Those jets of water flow in small channels back into the pool.

A stone sarcophagus lies at the bottom of the 25-foot-deep pool, directly under the platform. The sarcophagus is not visible from the surface, and it is part of the stone floor, so it cannot be moved. The lid is sealed with wax and bears an inscription in Taalese that reads, "Death waits beneath this lid. Watery doom in here is hid."

The sarcophagus can be opened with a DC 15 Strength check after the wax is removed. The coffin is filled with a colorless, tasteless poison. The poison contaminates the area to a depth of 10 feet under the platform immediately, the entire area under the platform at the end of the next round, and the entire pool at the end of the fourth round. After 2 minutes, a chemical reaction in the pool breaks down the poison and renders it harmless. While the poison is active, any creature that ends its turn in the poisonous water must make a DC 13 Constitution saving throw or take 14 (4d6) poison damage.

A secret compartment hidden in the bottom of the sarcophagus can be found with a DC 20 Intelligence check (see the “Treasure” entry).

Platform: The stone platform in the center of the U-shaped pool is supported by eight stone columns beneath the water. The entire platform is warded with a magical glyph (evocation school; DC 15 Intelligence check to determine the nature of the ward). *Dispel magic* (with a DC 15 magic ability check) can render the glyph harmless. Otherwise, anyone who steps on the platform sets off the trap, which deals 45 (10d8) lightning damage to everyone on the platform or within 10 feet of it. A successful DC 13 Constitution saving throw halves the damage.

Ship: This magical watercraft, the *Uzrivoy*, is a *mud ship* (also known as a *ship of earth and sea*), a gift to Tzolo from powerful elemental beings. (See appendix 2 for detailed information.) The ship’s ivory wheel is carved with hundreds of letters in a weird, alien script. The doors to both the stairs and cabin are locked (DC 25 Dexterity check to open) and contain a magical trap (illusion school; DC 15 Intelligence check to discern). Picking the lock while someone using *detect magic* monitors the trap triggers it only if the attempt to pick the lock fails. *Dispel magic* (with a DC 15 magic ability check) can render the trap harmless.

Otherwise, if anyone tries to pick the lock, the trap explodes in a 15-foot-radius burst of dazzling blue-and-red light. A character can attempt a DC 14 saving throw with an ability score of the player’s choice. Those who fail and chose Intelligence, Wisdom, or Charisma are overcome with fatigue and despair, granting advantage to attackers’ attack rolls and moving at half speed. Those who fail and chose Strength,

Dexterity, or Constitution experience overpowering rage. Such a character takes an action on his or her next turn to make a melee or ranged attack against the nearest creature, moving if necessary to reach that creature. After making an attack or being attacked as a result of this effect, the character can repeat the saving throw, ending the effect if successful. The effect otherwise ends after 1 minute.

Cabin: An extradimensional space, 20 feet by 30 feet, forms the cabin, which holds a great oak table surrounded by a dozen chairs. Cabinets line the walls. A narrow staircase leads to the ship’s hold.

Hold: This storage area is an extradimensional space, 60 feet long and 30 feet wide. The hold contains barrels and boxes of perfectly preserved provisions for a long journey. At its center is a wooden casket that contains this area’s creature (see that entry, below). A false bottom can be found in the empty coffin with a DC 15 Intelligence check (see the “Treasure” entry).

Creature: The sarcophagus contains the remains of Majalor, another of Tzolo’s elite bodyguards. He has been rewarded with special undead status, and attacks as soon as the sarcophagus lid is removed. His armor has been glamoured to look like a marvelously preserved robe embroidered with flowers and snakes, and decorated with small gemstones.

Stone Face: The tears of the stone face flow down the wall and through an iron grate on the floor, and then back up into the face. The sweet-smelling liquid is actually a contact poison. Any creature touching the tears takes 35 (10d6) poison damage, but a successful DC 15 Constitution saving throw halves the damage.

A small metal wheel is hidden in the right ear. If turned a full rotation clockwise, the wheel stops the flow of poison. The face dries completely, with no poison on it, 1 minute later. Turning the wheel a full rotation counterclockwise causes the poison to spray on everything within a 10-foot radius.

The chin of the stone face has a secret compartment that can be found with a DC 15 Intelligence check. Folded up in the compartment is a scroll with a clue in Taalese (see handout 10) that refers to the secret door in this chamber.

Secret Door: The center of the east wall contains four slight oval depressions lightly etched in green with the four mud sorcerer symbols. The semiprecious inscribed stones found in area 7 fit perfectly into these depressions. If the correct symbols are matched, the stones stick in place and require a dagger or similar tool to pry out.

If the four correct stones are left in place for a full minute, the sound of stone grinding on stone echoes throughout the chamber. After four rounds, a 10-foot section of wall sinks into the ground, ending flush with the floor. The four inscribed stones are crushed to powder in the process.

Just inside the door, in the middle of the floor, stands a platinum statuette of a fanged elephant with tiny chrysoberyls for eyes and bearing an ivory palanquin on its back (2,000 gp). The palanquin has a little latched door and contains 20 turquoise stones (20 gp each). This statue has an inscription in Taalese on its belly, which reads, "Walk beneath dead Jaiku's face, this beast reveals the hidden place." The statue is the key to Tzolo's true hiding place.

Treasure: Inside the false bottom in Majalor's coffin are a bag filled with 764 gp, a bag filled with 412 pp, a wooden case containing carved jade tiles (an ancient game set worth 900 gp), *gauntlets of fumbling* (see appendix 2), and a dagger, a handaxe, and a sap (treat as a club that deals 1d3 bludgeoning damage).

The secret compartment in the pool sarcophagus contains a *potion of remove curse*, a *potion of neutralize poison*, a *gem of seeing*, and a jade-and-ivory ring (420 gp).

35. True Burial Chamber

The walls of this twenty-foot-square chamber depict dozens of animal-headed humanoids struggling to break free of thorny strangling vines. A dozen stoppered clay urns line the north and south walls, each bearing the picture of an animal-headed humanoid. Red, green, and gold ceramic tiles make up the floor.

On the east wall, above the mural, hangs a banner of red silk, embroidered over and over with the four mud sorcerer symbols. A broad, iridescent-green tapestry is suspended from the center of the ceiling. In the corners, four brass braziers, each filled with blue coals and dangling from delicate chains in the ceiling, hang four feet off the floor.

A great black iron portal stands in the center of the east wall. The door is covered with complex etchings of various glyphs, although only the four mud sorcerer symbols are recognizable. A two-foot-diameter spherical cavity is in the center of the door.

The main feature of this room, however, is the sarcophagus. Seven feet long, three feet wide, and four feet high, the coffin is made of white marble, its sides carved to depict intertwining snakes and thorny roses. The lid has a bas-relief carving of an elephant-headed humanoid wearing an exquisite breastplate, its arms crossed over its chest. In one hand it holds a smooth oval stone, carved with the first mud sorcerer symbol. A sheathed bastard sword is at its side. The sculpture's head protrudes from the lid more than the rest of its form, the curling trunk, sharp tusks, fanged maw, and evil eyes all carved in great detail.

Ceiling: 15 feet.

Creatures: This room contains three different creature threats; a doom swarm, an amphisbaena snake, and Tzolo's Guardian.

Doom Swarm: Moments after anyone enters this room, a guttural whisper issues forth from the chamber. In Common, it says, "Grave robbers! Defilers! You have violated my tomb! I, the indomitable Tzolo, shall have my revenge! You shall all perish!" Immediately afterward, a high-pitched buzzing sound issues from within the room, and the green tapestry hanging from the ceiling unravels into a cloud of buzzing insects.

At the start of the third round after the insects begin to appear, they cover this area and area 34. At that time and while the swarm persists, any creature that ends its turn in either area takes 7 (2d6) piercing damage from the insects. Those in the swarm have disadvantage on attack rolls and checks, and grant advantage to attackers' attack rolls. Although the swarm is immune to damage

from melee and ranged attacks, 10 damage from an area effect can clear a 5-foot square. Once the swarm takes 300 damage, it is completely dispersed. The swarm remains in the area for 20 minutes, then disappears.

Red Banner Serpent: The red banner is 14 feet off the floor and can be easily removed by anyone who can reach it. If the doom swarm remains in the area, after 1 minute, the insects eat through the cords suspending the banner. As soon as any part of the banner touches the ground, it turns into a red amphisbaena snake that bears the mud sorcerer symbols along its length. It attacks, unerringly pursuing those who flee the area. When slain, it transforms back into the banner, now in tatters.

Tzolo's Guardian: This strange creature was a gift to Tzolo from evil elemental beings. The guardian is released if anyone touches the sarcophagus, as described in that feature's entry below.

Braziers: If lighted, these braziers emit blue smoke that keeps the insects out of the vault.

Sarcophagus: As soon as the sarcophagus is touched in any way, its eldritch power is activated. All creatures standing near the sarcophagus are pushed back 10 feet. Then a sphere of magical force encloses the sarcophagus. Nothing can move through the sphere, including ethereal beings. The sphere is visible, like a bubble of glass, but similarly transparent. It provides total cover against attacks and effects that come from the opposite side. *Dispel magic* doesn't affect the sphere, but another ability that cancels magic might bring it down.

As the sphere appears, the carving on the sarcophagus lid takes on a fleshier, gray hue. Within a round, the carving takes humanoid form, struggles free of the stone, sits up, and then stands on the coffin lid, sword drawn, facing the characters. On the creature's initiative count, the sphere of force disappears. Once the protective sphere is gone, Tzolo's guardian attacks. If it can, it pursues the characters wherever they flee.

The sarcophagus lid can be lifted with a DC 15 Strength check. It contains a mummified corpse under three silk shrouds (red, green and gold). The corpse is a male human wrapped in white linen strips. Under the linen, the corpse has long hair in several braids and wears a great deal of

jewelry. It holds a baton of green marble in its right hand, and its left hand is a balled fist. See the "Treasure" entry.

This corpse is another decoy, the remains of one of Tzolo's lieutenants who was once called Jaiku. The real Tzolo lies beneath Jaiku in a hidden compartment. Under Jaiku's head is a 2-inch-diameter crystal magical orb (transmutation school). Four indentations resembling round footprints surround the orb. The orb can be removed easily. On the cavity where it rested is an inscription in Taalese (see handout 11).

The clue refers to the elephant statuette from area 34. If the feet of the elephant are set in the orb's footprints, a 2-inch-thick stone divider disintegrates, and Tzolo's resting place is revealed at last. (See "Tzolo's Niche" below.)

Treasure Door: This ornately etched iron door at the back of the chamber leads to the decoy treasure vault (area 36). If the orb from the sarcophagus is placed in the hollow at the center of this door, it slams open with incredible speed, dealing 21 (6d6) bludgeoning damage to anyone standing in front of it who fails a DC 15 Dexterity saving throw to dodge out of the way.

Urns: An animal-headed humanoid is depicted on each urn in the room. Each urn is 3 feet tall and 10 inches in diameter, and has a rubber stopper sealed with tar. Six urns line the north wall, depicting the heads of (from west to east) bear, tiger, snake, mole, toad, and camel. Another six line the south wall, depicting (from west to east) donkey, dog, cat, raven, horse, and goat.

All the urns contain treasure, except for the raven and snake urns, which are trapped.

Raven Urn: This urn is a magical trap (necromancy school; DC 25 Intelligence check to discern). *Dispel magic* cast on the urn negates the trap with a DC 20 magic ability check. Breaking the urn also negates the trap.

If the urn is opened, a great ghostly raven's head emerges and makes a melee attack against the opener: +10 to hit; 30 (6d8 + 3) slashing damage (150 damage on a critical hit). If the opener is killed, his or her head is severed. In any case, after one strike, the raven vanishes.

Snake Urn: This urn is a magical trap (necromancy school; DC 25 Intelligence check to discern). *Dispel magic* cast on the urn

negates the trap with a DC 14 magic ability check.

Opening this urn releases a 20-foot-radius magical cloud of toxic gas centered on the position in which the urn is opened. The cloud's area is lightly obscured, and it remains in place until it is removed with *dispel magic* (DC 12 magic ability check) or dispersed with a strong wind. Once so removed, the cloud does not reappear.

Each creature within the cloud when it appears or that ends its turn in the cloud must make a DC 13 Constitution saving throw. A creature takes 10 (2d10) poison damage on a failed save, and half that damage on a successful one.

The cloud also drives the insect swarms from its area.

Treasure: The smooth, oval stone held by Tzolo's guardian is the *ward stone*, the key to leaving the tomb. Any character holding the stone is aware of its powers. If the stone is held up to the large symbol in area 17, everyone within the room is teleported back to area 16. The *ward stone* also reopens the granite block at area 1. Furthermore, the enchantment that prevents extraplanar travel in the tomb ends when the *ward stone* exits.

Inside the sarcophagus, three fine silk shrouds (25 gp each) cover Jaiku's mummy. Jaiku's jewelry includes a silver circlet inset with a dozen ebony tiles (550 gp), two silver bracelets designed as snakes gripping their own tails (300 gp), a thin collar of beaten silver with mud sorcerer symbols etched into its surface (250 gp), and a silver nose ring set with a tiny ruby (275 gp). The baton (50 gp) Jaiku holds has his name engraved on it. In the left fist is a black pearl (500 gp). The circlet, nose ring, and baton are enchanted to appear magical to *detect magic* (abjuration school for the jewelry, evocation school for the baton; DC 20 Intelligence or Wisdom check to discern the illusion).

The urn contents include the following.

- *Bear*: 500 pp.
- *Tiger*: Fifty tiger-eye agates (10 gp each).
- *Mole*: 1,000 cp.
- *Toad*: Five *potions of healing*, which are destroyed if the urn is broken.
- *Camel*: 1,000 sp.

- *Donkey*: 1,000 lead pieces painted gold (no value).
- *Dog*: Forty pieces of cut glass (5 sp each) that look like 100 gp gems.
- *Cat*: Fifty cat's-eye agates (10 gp each).
- *Horse*: A *potion of heroism*, which is destroyed if the urn is broken.
- *Goat*: A scroll of *dimension door* and a scroll of *polymorph*.

Tzolo's Niche

Tzolo is entombed in a secret cavity underneath Jaiku's sarcophagus. Characters can access Tzolo's niche using the magical orb found in Jaiku's crypt and the elephant statuette found in area 34, as noted above. When the stone divider separating the two crypts vanishes, read the following text.

A shimmering curtain of dazzling color hovers an inch above a figure covered in a shroud of translucent red silk. Below the silk, a youthful, striking woman with platinum coins on her eyes lies among fabulous treasures. Fine white strips of linen wrap her body except her hands, feet, and head. Her arms are crossed over her chest, fists clenched, one holding a black-and-silver wand shaped like a shepherd's crook. Her long white hair is woven into five thick braids. She wears quite a lot of silvery jewelry.

Curtain of Light: This curtain prevents any object or magical effect from reaching Tzolo's body. Any creature that touches the light takes 35 (10d6) radiant damage, or half damage with a successful DC 16 Constitution saving throw. Each time a creature ends its turn touching the light, it is subject to the damage again. Touching the *ward stone* or Tzolo's corpse to the light permanently cancels the effect.

Tzolo's Corpse: Tzolo is truly dead, despite her careful preparations. When the sarcophagus was opened, the curtain of light should have protected Tzolo until she could awaken and rise. Her emergence would have ended the light's effect.

Only another member of the Iron Circle could cast the spells necessary to seal Tzolo in her tomb. The colleague she chose was Piyyat,

a wily man who had gained Tzolo's confidence. Piyyat believed that eliminating Tzolo could secure his position within the Iron Circle when the Jezulein were released from slumber. Despite sacred oaths sworn to the contrary, he neglected essential incantations, so that Tzolo's body was perfectly preserved while her life force slowly ebbed.

The corpse lies on a midnight-blue silk shroud. Beneath the shroud is a bed of twenty-four platinum ingots. Removing the ingots reveals a 2-foot-square compartment.

Treasure: Under the red silk shroud (25 gp), Tzolo's corpse wears a circlet of platinum set with four amethysts (1,100 gp); two platinum rings, each set with a small tourmaline (350 gp each); a wide platinum choker set with six rectangular topazes (3,600 gp); platinum ankle bracelets (425 gp each); and platinum earrings fashioned in the shape of the first mud sorcerer symbol (75 gp each). Beneath her folded arms is an exquisite breastplate made of twenty-eight long rectangles of jade strung together with green thread on a platinum sternum (6,800 gp). Two ancient platinum coins (200 gp each to a collector of ancient coins, or 1 pp to anyone else) rest on her eyes. She holds an ebony-and-silver wand fashioned like a shepherd's crook in her right hand (500 gp), and she clutches two emeralds (1,000 gp each) in her left hand. She also wears an invisible *ring of three wishes* on her left pinky finger (see appendix 2), detectable only with a DC 25 Intelligence check made to search the body. Someone who specifically checks her fingers also discovers the ring.

- The midnight-blue silk shroud is worth 25 gp, and each of the twenty-four platinum ingots is worth 500 gp each. The compartment under the ingots holds the following.
- A *staff of earth and stone* (see appendix 2).
- A *ring of wizardry*.
- A *frost brand longsword*.
- A small cube of platinum (250 gp).
- Two *ioun stones* (deep red sphere and pale lavender ellipsoid).
- An ivory scroll tube (worth 125 gp) containing the following scrolls: *raise dead*, *remove curse*, *telekinesis*, *dominate person*, *lesser restoration*, and *commune*. The scroll tube also contains

maps to two other mud sorcerer tombs, which are left to your imagination.

- Two fire opals (1,000 gp each), a black opal (1,000 gp), a jacinth (5,000 gp), a ruby (5,000 gp), seven pink corals (100 gp each), two deep blue spinels (500 gp each), and two peridots (500 gp each).
- Two ancient tomes written in Taalese. One is entitled *Kaia Jezulein Prophaetus Minorum* ("Minor Prophecies of the Jezulein"), the other is *Perfectus Fe Syrcae Magica et os Jezulein* ("Perfect Iron Circle Magic and the Jezulein"). The rare codices are worth 3,000 gp each to a sage or scholar.

36. Decoy Vault

A huge moth-eaten tapestry covers numerous items in this chamber.

Treasure: Nine locked iron chests sit against the east wall, each containing 1,200 cp painted gold. Twenty-four tall clay urns, adorned with faded geometric designs of blue and green and sealed with cork and tar, stand in the southern area of the vault. They contain the dried viscera of the servants buried in area 27.

Twelve statues of various animal-headed humanoids made of green basalt are stored in the northern area of the chamber, and all are magical (transmutation school). Each round, a random character notices these statues moving. They are harmless, though, placed only as an unsettling distraction.

Other items are strewn about the floor. Those marked with an asterisk are enchanted to appear magical to *detect magic* (various schools; DC 20 Intelligence or Wisdom check to discern the illusion). The treasures include: 86 pp, 441 gp, 712 sp, two short swords, four javelins*, three spears, a longsword with a tourmaline in its pommel* (worth 100 gp), three sticks of lacquered wood* with the meaningless words "tisha," "magware," and "gont" inscribed on them, a *vacuous grimoire* (see appendix 2), two handaxes, a battleaxe, six 8-inch-wide polished discs of iron*, a gnarled oak staff*, an 8-foot-long birch-wood pole, a black marble baton*, and seven brooms.

Treacherous Compartment: A secret compartment can be found in the center of the east wall with a DC 15 Intelligence check. Within are four tomes and a red dial. The books are minor mud sorcerer texts, but each is still worth 1,500 gp to a sage.

If the red dial is turned a full rotation in either direction, the iron door to the vault slams shut, trapping all inside as the crystal orb is jarred out of its cavity, falling to the ground in area 35. Once the door is closed, the only means of reopening it from the inside is casting a spell that manipulates water or earth, or that creates cold effects or deals cold damage, on the iron door. Someone in area 35 can return the orb to the cavity, reopening the door violently as described in that area.

Concluding the Adventure

Tzolo and her Jezulein cohorts sought to cheat fate. Hidden from their just punishment, many

mud sorcerers still wait until the time is right for their return. The characters might use the two maps found in Tzolo's niche to pursue these leads to other Jezulein tombs.

His treachery accomplished, Piyyat crept off to his crypt. Whether he met a similar fate at the hands of some other colleague or yet lies waiting in stasis is unknown. One of the maps could lead to his tomb.

Another possibility for further adventure exists if the adventurers manage to take the *Uzrivoy* with them. Perhaps the creators of this craft, the mysterious genies Uzrith and Ayolvoy, fight each other for possession of the *mud ship*, drawing the party into their fierce rivalry.

When news of the party's success gets around, greedy cutthroats and unscrupulous merchants will doubtless dream up plots to relieve the adventurers of their excess wealth—and perhaps their lives.

Appendix 1: Player Handouts

The following handouts are clues the characters find along the way.

1.

*Dancing on the first great sign
Calls lying blades for cuts unkind.
The dancer finds another room
And suffers here a watery doom.*

2.

*I delight in the service of my mistress. It is for her
I live or die, whatever her choosing. May the lords
of earth and water bless her in every endeavor.*

3.

*Colored stones to you bequeathed,
Bitten tight in priestly teeth.
Each a key to Tzolo's Wall,
Sign to sign will make it fall.*

4.

*To sail the ship that is smiled upon,
The silver necklace must be donned.*

5.

*Pig or camel bring only woe
Hippo clears the way to go.*

6.

*Those who cower to the south
Fall into a hungry mouth.*

7.

*Portal in this watery depth,
Leads to secret treasures kept.
Tzolo's rest is thus disturbed;
You will find her quite perturbed.*

8.

*Iron portal locked up tight,
Pound and pull with all your might.
Precious metal waters clay,
Earthen being makes the way.*

9.

*Ivory blade, a crimson sword,
Leads you to the hidden hoard.*

10.

*Four fair stones that bear four signs,
Keys to she whose tongue maligns
Those who dare disturb her sleep;
Grief and woe is what they'll reap.
Turn back now, your soul to save,
Or seek her tomb, and find your grave.*

11.

*Bearing gems upon its back,
Place the creature in its tracks.
Trunk and tusk have platinum beast.
By its walk, she is released.*

Appendix 2: Magic Items

Mud Ring

Dark red clay, slightly soft to the touch as if not fully baked, forms this ring.

On first fitting this ring to a finger, the wearer feels it squeeze slightly, and gains a vision of a towering earth elemental rising to do the wearer's bidding.

An evil entity of elemental earth and water called Bwimb gave this ring to the Jezulein, an order of mystics also known as mud sorcerers.

Property (Attuned): As an action, you can use one of the following effects.

Water Walk: You can move across any liquid surface as if it were solid ground.

Control Water: Once every ten days, you can choose a 100-foot-by-100-foot area of water or similar liquid within 500 feet of you that you can see. You can reduce or increase the water's depth by up to 20 feet, to a minimum of 1 inch, for up to 1 hour. In larger bodies of water, a decrease in depth creates a squarish depression in this effect's area. An increase in depth in a similar situation creates a squarish hump of water. In this case, if the area includes dry land nearby, the water can spill over onto the dry land.

Meld Into Stone: Once per day, you can enter an area of nonmagical stone large enough to contain you and your equipment, remaining within for up to 1 hour. While inside the stone, you have total cover from and are not visible to other creatures. Creatures and objects are heavily obscured to you.

If you do not leave the stone before the duration elapses, or if the effect is dispelled or the stone heavily damaged, you are violently expelled from the stone and take 17 (5d6) bludgeoning damage.

Stone Shape: Twice per day, you can touch a stone or stone object with a weight of up to 2,000 pounds (about 15 cubic feet). You can form it into any solid shape, but fine detail isn't possible.

Summon Earth Elemental: Once every ten days, you can choose a point of earth or stone within 25 feet of you that you can see. A Large earth elemental emerges from that spot and acts immediately on the same action, attacking the

creatures closest to it other than you. The elemental remains for up to 1 minute, or until it is destroyed. If you can communicate with the elemental, you can direct it to perform actions.

Summon Water Elemental: Once every ten days, you can choose a point of water or similar liquid within 25 feet of you that you can see. A Large water elemental emerges from that spot and acts immediately on the same action, attacking the creatures closest to it other than you. The elemental remains for up to 1 minute, or until it is destroyed. If you can communicate with the elemental, you can direct it to perform actions.

Transmute Mud to Rock: Once every ten days, you can choose a section of nonmagical mud or similarly soft earth within 100 feet of you that you can see whose volume doesn't exceed ten adjacent 5-foot cubes. The mud within that volume turns to sandstone permanently. A creature in the mud when it is transmuted is allowed a DC 13 Dexterity saving throw to escape before the area turns to stone.

Transmute Rock to Mud: Once every ten days, you can choose a section of nonmagical stone within 100 feet of you that you can see whose volume doesn't exceed ten adjacent 5-foot cubes. The stone within that volume turns to mud with a viscosity you choose (soft clay to quicksand). A creature standing on the stone when it is transmuted is allowed a DC 13 Dexterity saving throw to escape before the area turns to mud.

Water Breathing: You can breathe underwater.

Earthquake: Once every thirty days, you can cast the *earthquake* spell, using Intelligence, Wisdom, or Charisma (your choice) as your magic ability.

Secret: A character wearing the *Mud Ring* has advantage on all saving throws against spells and effects that deal bludgeoning or cold damage, and disadvantage on saving throws against spells and effects that deal fire or lightning damage.

In addition, each time the ring is used after the first use each day, there is a 2% chance that four Large earth or water elementals appear from the closest area of similar material and attack the wearer. If he or she is defeated, the surviving

elementals return to their home plane with the wearer, who is then imprisoned on that plane. The ring is left behind.

Rarity: Artifact.

Ring of Three Wishes

This platinum band is set with three bright red rubies.

Gods of trickery, lords of chaos, and powerful djinns sometimes create these tempting items to create havoc when mortals use them foolishly.

A character who puts on the ring momentarily feels an exhilarating sense of unlimited possibility, along with a strange sense of peril.

Property: This ring is found with up to three rubies. Each ruby contains a *wish* spell. When you take an action to command the ring and speak your wish, the ring grants the wish and one ruby crumbles to dust.

Rarity: Artifact.

Mud Ship

This mastless, 30-foot-long ship is made of a fine reddish wood. The deck is 12 feet above the keel, and includes a small cabin to aft and a forward hold. These are both extraplanar spaces: The cabin is 20 feet by 30 feet with a stairway to the hold, which is 60 feet by 30 feet.

Only seven *mud ships* are known. Each has a name: *Otonkolas*, *Faronos*, *Miktyr*, *Tarjana*, *Iquonabus*, *Ungulisar*, and *Uzrivoy*. The vessels were created by powerful and evil elemental beings named Uzrith and Ayolvoy. If they learn that one of their craft has fallen into the hands of nonworshippers, they seek to eliminate the thieves.

Property (Attuned): When standing at the wheel, you can pilot the *mud ship* as if a normal craft overwater, underwater, and overland at a speed of 40 feet. If you have a talisman keyed to a named craft, you do not have to attune to that *mud ship* to pilot it.

In addition to your normal mode of respiration, you can breathe underwater while you stand at the wheel. Other creatures must stay in the cabin or the hold or risk drowning if they can't breathe underwater.

The *mud ship* is unaffected by weather and is always seaworthy even while underwater. It otherwise has the traits of a small galley.

A *mud ship* sailing on land leaves the earth behind it undisturbed. It must sail around inclines greater than 45 degrees, though it can pass through as much as 500 yards of solid earth and stone (including artificial structures) once every ten days. After utilizing this latter ability, the craft must remain inactive for a full hour.

Rarity: Artifact.

Gauntlets of Fumbling

These hand coverings appear to be another sort of magic gloves or gauntlets, and they look and feel just like the ones they mimic.

A character who puts on *gauntlets of fumbling* finds that they act just as expected during every test trial, revealing their curse only when it matters.

Property: This item apparently has the property of the item it mimics. When the wearer enters combat or becomes embroiled in some other life-and-death situation, the mimicked property is lost and the secret curse is activated.

An *identify* spell indicates only that the gauntlets have a secret, but not its nature.

Secret: The item is cursed. When the curse is activated, the wearer becomes fumble-fingered, with a 50% chance each round of dropping anything held in either hand. The gauntlets also lower the wearer's Dexterity by 2. Once the curse is activated, removing the gloves (and restoring lost Dexterity) requires a *remove curse*, *wish*, or *miracle* spell.

Rarity: Very rare.

Belt of Masculinity/Femininity

This belt is a broad leather band suited for attaching a variety of bags, pouches, scabbards, and other traditional adventuring gear.

A character who puts on the belt immediately notices that his or her clothing doesn't fit as comfortably as before.

Property: If this belt is buckled on, your gender immediately becomes the opposite of your current gender.

Secret: Once a wearer's gender is switched, he or she becomes immune to the belt's property for 30 days.

Rarity: Very rare.

Necklace of Strangulation

This necklace appears to be another sort of magic necklace, and looks and feels just like it.

A character who dons a *necklace of strangulation* immediately learns its secret.

Property: This necklace apparently has the property of the item it mimics. When it is placed around the wearer's neck, the mimicked property is lost and the secret curse is activated.

An *identify* spell indicates only that the necklace has a secret, but not its nature.

Secret: The item is cursed. When the curse is activated, the necklace immediately constricts, dealing 3 bludgeoning damage per round, during which time the wearer cannot breathe. The necklace cannot be removed by any means short of *remove curse*, *wish*, or *miracle* and remains clasped around the victim's throat even after death. Only when the wearer has decayed for about one month, or has otherwise been reduced to a dry corpse or skeleton, does the necklace loosen.

Rarity: Very rare.

Vacuous Grimoire

This tome appears to be a normal book on a mildly interesting topic. If the *vacuous grimoire* is placed with other books, its appearance instantly alters to conform to the look of those other works.

A character who reads the tome—even a single word—immediately learns its secret curse.

Property: A *detect magic* spell reveals only that the book is magical. An *identify* spell indicates only that the book has a secret, but not its nature.

If someone reads even a single word written in the grimoire, the secret curse is activated.

Secret: The item is cursed. When the curse is activated, the reader must make two DC 13 Wisdom saving throws. The first is to avoid the loss of one point of Intelligence. The second is to avoid the loss of two points of Wisdom. Only destroying the *vacuous grimoire* can restore lost ability points.

The book is resistant to destruction. The only sure method of destroying it is to burn it while casting *remove curse*.

Rarity: Very rare.

Potion of Displacement

This potion seems sometimes gray and cloudy, other times clear as water, depending on how the vial is held. Sampling or drinking it causes the imbiber to feel a vague sense of shifting.

Effect: For 1 hour, attackers have disadvantage on attack rolls against you.

Rarity: Very rare.

Potion of Neutralize Poison

This potion gleams like liquid silver. A poisoned character who samples the potion feels slightly better.

Effect: The effects of any poisons on you end.

Rarity: Rare.

Potion of Remove Curse

This potion glimmers like molten gold, but it is cool to the touch.

A cursed character who samples the potion feels slightly better. A cursed character who drinks it feels the effects of the curse fade away.

Effect: All curses on you end.

Rarity: Rare.

Potion of Strength

This tiny iron vessel contains a ampoule of brown liquid whose hearty aroma is redolent of yeast.

A character who samples the potion feels a surge of might. Drinking it causes the imbiber's muscles to visibly swell with strength.

Effect: Your Strength score increases by 4 for 1 hour, even if that increases your score above its normal maximum.

Rarity: Rare.

Staff of Earth and Stone

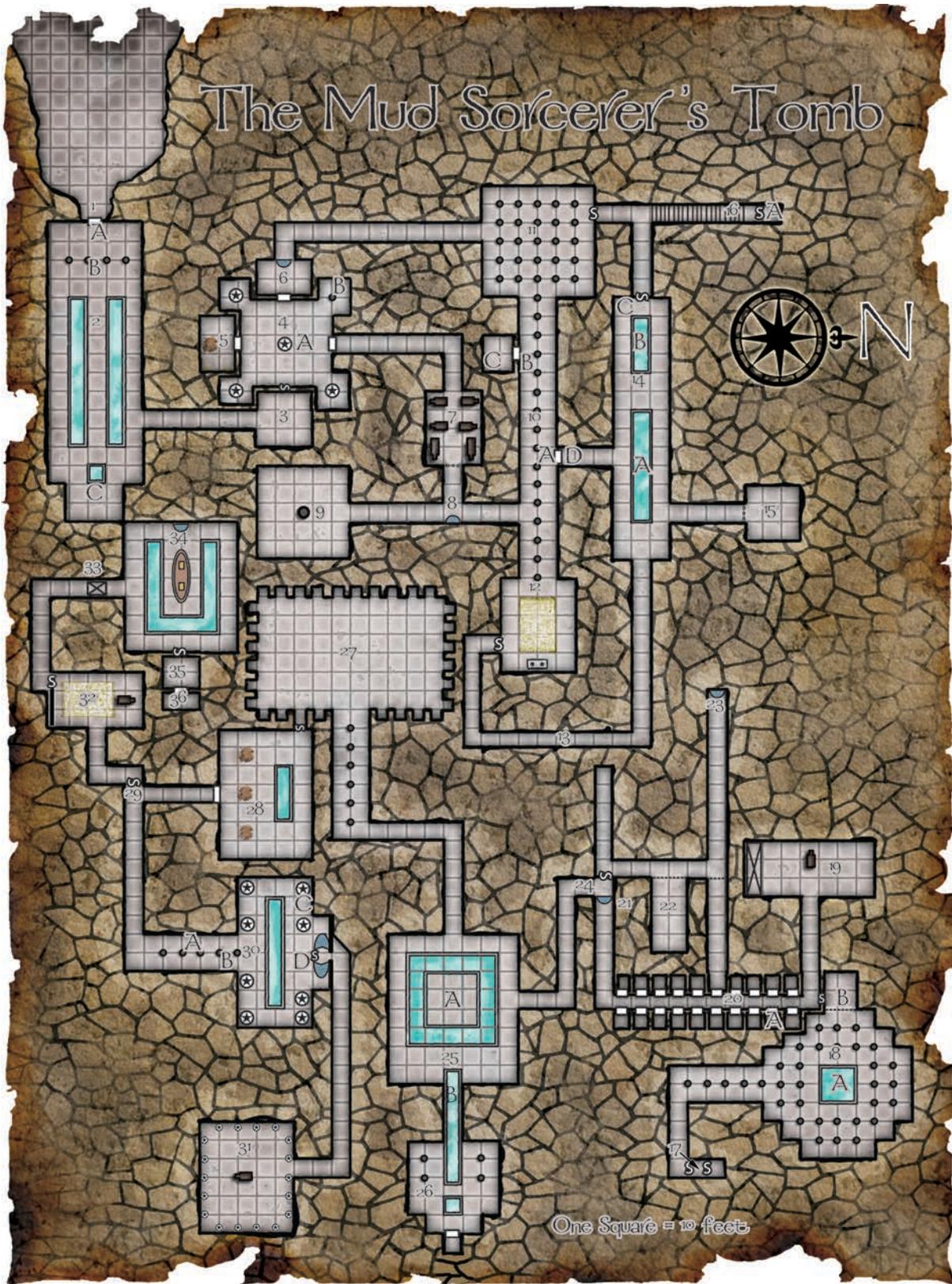
This length of mahogany is topped with a fist-sized emerald. When held, the staff's emerald headpiece gleams with smoldering power.

Property (Attuned): You must be a wizard to become attuned to this item.

As an action, you can expend a charge to cast one of the following spells contained in the staff.

- *passwall*
- *move earth*

Rarity: Rare.



Cartography by Robert Lazzaretti



Symbol 1



Symbol 2



Symbol 3



Symbol 4

Illustrations by Mike Franchina