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For **ADVANCED**
FRP Games

Lake Geneva Castle & Campaign™ The Original Bottle City™

by Robert J. Kuntz

AN ADVENTURE FOR CHARACTER LEVELS 8-12



Bottle City is a site of high adventure, where strange magic interweaves with nine trapped gods, demigods and demons who vie for its control — but all are minikins, captive in the magical city in the bottle!

In 1974 Bottle City was one of the largest design projects Rob Kuntz undertook as the co-DM of the original Lake Geneva campaign. Found on the second level of the Castle, it stupefied the Lake Geneva Gamers — that is until they touched the bottle itself and were drawn into the city, where the fun really began... Bottle City is a setting that will enthrall your players as they seek to escape the deadly place they have unintentionally entered; the adventure is designed to challenge PCs for level 8-12. First edition compatible using the OGL.

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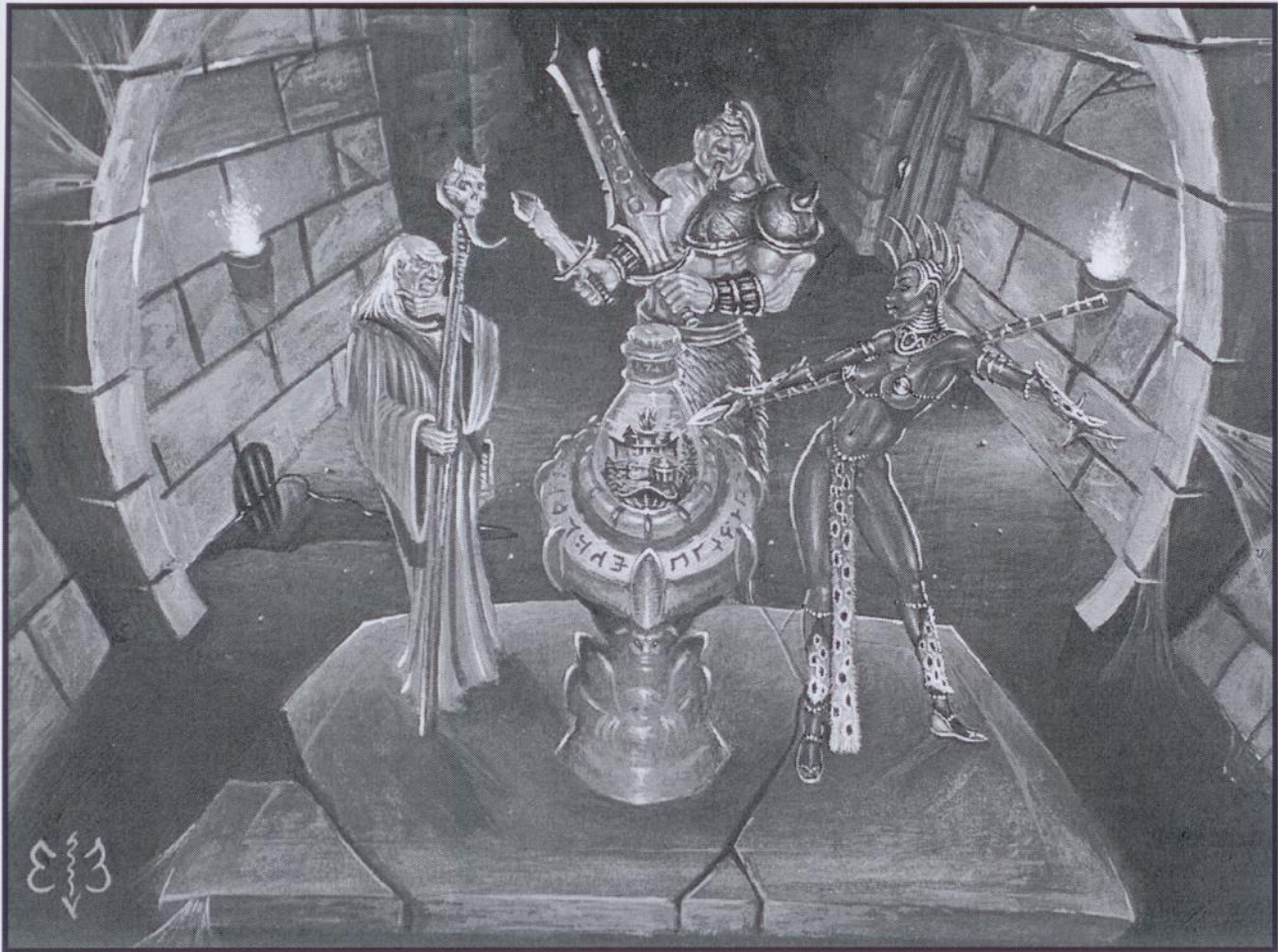
**Lake Geneva
Series Campaign
product launch!**

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The Original Bottle City™

by Robert J. Kuntz



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My heart-felt thanks to all of the fans who continue to support Pied Piper Publishing.



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And in memory of Martin Wright.

The Lake Geneva Castle & Campaign Series

Rob Kuntz created the Lake Geneva Castle & Campaign series (LGC&C for short) in order to publish original materials from the dawn of the role-playing game industry. Each release in the series will feature one or more of the early building blocks that created our hobby, whether adventures, artifacts, deities, dungeons, encounters, magic items, monsters, NPCs, planes, spells, traps, and/or tricks. As much as possible, these foundations will be presented in their original formats and contexts, to showcase the inspired and imaginative gaming environments from the Lake Geneva scene of the 1970s, and to allow you to use them in your games today.

Introduction — The Original Bottle City™

The Original Bottle City™ is the second product produced for Pied Piper Publishing's LGC&C line of products (the first was The Original Living Room™, a set-piece encounter from the Lake Geneva Castle). Rob Kuntz created the Bottle City level in 1974, for inclusion in the Lake Geneva Castle (rather than his own castle, El Raja Key™). The original manuscript consists of seven sheets of lined, loose-leaf, notebook paper which detail the encounters in the level, and a 17" by 22" map, drawn in pencil and colored pencil on graph paper (five squares to the inch, with every five squares begin grouped into a larger square). The key is written in ink and in colored pencil across all seven recto sides of the sheets, and on the verso side on three sheets (writing appears only on the recto side of sheets one through four, while writing appears on both the rectos and versos for sheets five through seven).

The text of the original manuscript has been reorganized and expanded for game play, and Rob has added historical commentaries throughout the adventure to provide context to the encounters, and to explain some of the more-cryptic notes in the manuscript. The map was drawn to maximize visual utility during play — colored pencils call out encounter numbers and dungeon features like teleporters, shifting and illusory walls, trapdoors, etc.— and to challenge the players' mapping skills (the level was difficult to negotiate due to its complexity, teleporters, and shifting walls, with the result that only one player ever encountered the Advancing Veteran). The Original Bottle City™ manuscript was sold at auction 22 May 2005 to a well-known Australian collector, for \$3650.

Fans of the original Lake Geneva campaign settings may recognize some analogues to the deities and demigods in the Hall of the Gods, and will also discover other caches of campaign lore seeded throughout the book. These pieces of lore — while fun for the researcher interested in the development of the original game and its settings — pale in comparison to the work of art that is The Original Bottle City™, which contains many hours of fun and enjoyment for you and your players. The Original Bottle City™ is an ever-evolving, multi-faceted dungeon which can easily expand into a mini-campaign. So grab your d6s and start rolling initiative—deadly challenges and hidden troves await your plundering players!

Allan T. Grohe Jr.
Lake Geneva Castle & Campaign series editor

Special Author Forward – What is the Bottle City?

The Bottle City was, like the majority of original Lake Geneva Castle levels, a tactical challenge. The idea of “challenge” then was vested with the player, unlike later reinterpretations which vest it with the character. As co-DM of the campaign I got to know our players very well, what tricks and stratagems they’d use, and without seeming too conniving, I planned my own stratagems accordingly, lest they run over encounters, which is what they did for the most part in the earliest days of the campaign.

Learning to DM then without the many guides, materials, books, and online resources which are available today was a task. Being versed in historical military gaming was a saving grace for both myself and my counterpart, E. Gary Gygax, such that tactics and strategies were natural to us. Unfortunately for us as DMs, many (but not all) of the original Lake Geneva gamers were also versed in military tactics and strategy (Don Kaye, Terry Kuntz and Ernie Gygax in particular).

Our best players knew to expect a hard challenge and a dangerous setting and were therefore more cautious, had tricks and strategies planned in advance, and proceeded more carefully through the adventuring steps, taking their time to think about accumulated information and rising situations. They organized the party to act as a unit as best as possible, and tried to make plans for every possible situation. They were a pain, for sure, because this approach called for more planning and counter-strategies on our parts as DMs, lest they continue to bulldoze through our “wonderful” creations.

I have always been a champion of strange and bizarre settings wherein newness could run rampant and push the sense of wonder high. But in retrospect, these settings were sometimes crafted in answer to our growing concern that the players were getting too used to the “normal” that the challenges were not uncommon enough, and that we were being pushed to our limits as DMs—it was conquer or be conquered, and we would not go down without a tough fight.

So, such creations as Bottle City spring in part from ingenuity, in part from desperation, and in whole from wanting to have great fun. Though not meant as a publishable adventure, Bottle City served its purpose—to confound and to retest our best players, and even new ones, like Jim Ward, who learned tactics real fast, inside its glassy walls.

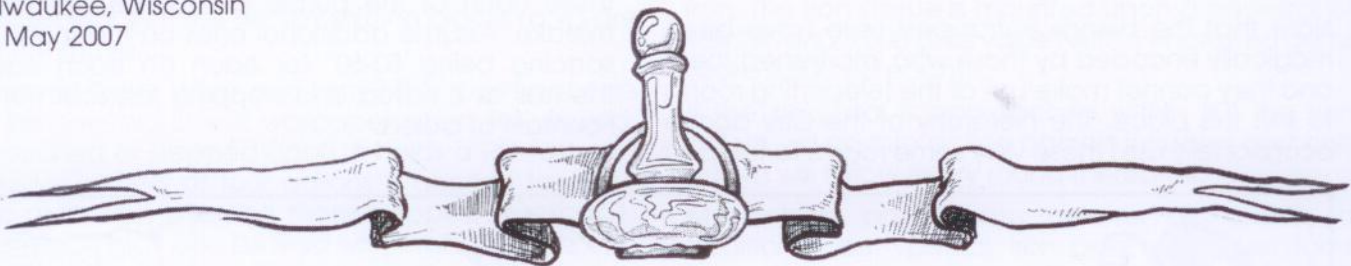
Bottle City contains iconic components of other adventures yet-to-come: the Maze of Zayene’s art gallery, in prototypical form first appears herein (though later changed for that future publication), and Formalhaut (among others).. You have newness and strangeness everywhere, as the main idea was to keep veteran players guessing and off-balance in order to even the playing field. In this regard many levels of the original castle succeeded in doing just that with our capable DMing, and Bottle City is one of the best examples from these.

So, what is Bottle City? As an early design it’s a strange agglomeration of magical weirdness meant to challenge veteran players. It is also the very bottom of the prison in a city, for indeed I envisioned additional levels for it, and over time I would have drawn more as the PCs began to access the actual city above, where some “real” challenges awaited them. Moreover, Bottle City is a prime example of the earliest days of FRPG when rhyme and reason didn’t matter, and when only spell- and sword-work, along with well-timed flight, either lead to glory or, often times, to ignominious death at the hands of two challenging DMs.

The passageways of Bottle City have been tread upon by the best players I judged then, but its challenge still remains....

Have at it and enjoy!

Rob Kuntz
Milwaukee, Wisconsin
17 May 2007



Level of Challenge

Bottle City is intended for 9-12th level parties that consist of four PCs, minimum. Feel free to adjust this according to prevailing needs, of course, or to adjust the encounters herein described to balance in that manner. It's yours now, so make use of its contents as you see fit.

Starting the Adventure and Entering/Leaving the Bottle City

Place the bottle in your campaign where ever you like--perhaps as presented on the cover, in an obscure part of a dungeon. Note that it is not moveable and cannot be destroyed through any way as certain supreme powers protect it from such.

Touching the bottle, including using extensions such as poles to do so, automatically transports those upon the slab (note cover) to the Bottle City at one of the red keyed 10' square rooms faintly marked **1A-1G**. All are near an agglomeration of 20' square rooms starting at the mid-point of the southern edge of the map. Note the map errata below, as I seemingly left out 1C when devising the map, so in truth there are only 6 possible entry points (1A, 1B, 1D, 1E, 1F, and 1G). Further note that these are **not related to Key #1** near the top of the map.

Lastly, the ceiling height within the dungeon remains a constant 30' unless otherwise noted and all walls **seem** to be of new construction, though this is really not the case, as they are preserved by a mysterious magic which in some cases preserves the inhabitants here as well (though that is another story).

Leaving the Bottle City Complex

PCs returning to the specific room they initially arrived in will *teleport* the party to the slab again, but only if this is accomplished within a 24 hour period after entering. Otherwise they are trapped here if they do not themselves have a *teleport* spell. Using that spell at anytime transports the party outside of the bottle to the

original slab from which they entered, no matter the announced place they wish to *teleport* to while invoking it.

Note that the beings entrapped here have been magically encoded by those who imprisoned them and they cannot make use of the teleporting rooms to exit this place. The hierarchy of the City above occasionally uses these very same rooms to teleport

here for various reasons.

Map Errata, Addenda, and Guides

Up and Down Arrows Numbered 1 and 2 on South Wall of Key #1: These are magical, two-way *teleporters* that move PCs entering the alcoves numbered 1 and 2 on the North side (inside Key #1) to the alcoves numbered 1 and 2 on the South side (below Key #1), and vice-versa.

Blocks of Stone with Red Arrows South of Key #5: Every time they are passed, these blocks move 10' in a random direction (as noted by the arrows) over one round, with a delay of one minute before they move. PCs trapped between these blocks and a wall are crushed to death.

Red Outlined Room Areas with Long Red Arrow, SE of Key #5: This is a sliding room, which noticeably or silently (50/50) slides from its southern start position to its extreme northern position in 1 round (very fast!). Note the one-way doors at both positions.

Key #7A's Secret Door: This is a magic shifting secret door. When first encountered it will access the areas connected from the corridor noted by a 1, 2, 3. When subsequently returned to, roll 1d6 for which of the two adjacent corridors it accesses from #7C's room side: A 1-3 allows access to the corridor connecting back to Key #7C, whereas a 4-6 opens upon a long and turning passage which eventually leads the party on a wild goose chase culminating in a spiked pit.

Circular Room West of Key #7B: The north/south entry/exit corridors should have access doors (or secret doors, DM's choice) which were dropped while designing this!

Key #7C's Two Squares with Connecting Line: This is a two-way teleport pad between the two areas. It was initially one way only (see nearby map notation) but was subsequently changed to both ways.

Green Inked Notation "A7" on East Wall of Key #9: A design goof made with pen which I couldn't undo (ignore it). Always use pencils when designing maps!

Red X's, Key #9: Magical cressets illuming the area as noted in the primary text; however, I didn't add these north of the purple pool there, which is a mistake. Assume additional ones on the map, with spacing being 50-60' for each on each side of the hall as is noted and stopping just south of the Fountain of Colors.



Colored Rooms of Trapezoidal Shapes South of Key #13: These are magical teleportation rooms; stepping in one moves the occupants to the nearest similarly colored room in the sequence (DMs roll for which if choices are equidistant).

Trigonal Rooms A-E, South of Key #13: A teleports to B, B to C, etc., then back to A from E.

Room, 20x20, with Circular Area Noted as "UP," Just SE of Letter Key "C": This is a rough-hewn chute which rises 80' and then stops near some ledges above. Perhaps a good hiding place for up to 4 PCs, but no more.

Room, 10x20, with "C2" Notation NW of Letter Key "D": This is a C1/C2 *teleporter* to/from linked to the 10' square room just outside the entryway to the Great Gallery of Pictures. Note that the Cs apparent on some of the teleporter entry rooms/access points for the Bottle City (see beginning matter references) were used to remind me that these were *teleporters* and are not linked other than as stated in the introduction.

Black X's on Map: Open or disguised pits (50/50) ten feet deep and containing spikes 25% of the time (tripling falling damage). Note that I usually colored squares orange or blue when marking these in the Lake Geneva Castle but used pencil here, making them more difficult to ascertain on the map. The X with attached arrow at Key #9C is not a pit, merely a whimsical graphic I drew to indicate that PCs advancing beyond that point animated the statues there (since clarified in that key's text).

Great Gallery of Pictures: Spelled "Great Gallerery" and one of those moments of misspelling that will now live with me throughout time. I also had difficulty at one time with "Sapphire" dropping the 2nd "p" in two separate design pieces. You may encounter similar errors of youth in the maps and manuscript....

Lime Green Areas: *Teleports To/From*. North of Art Gallery; Key #5 and nearby A and B area; and Key #2's *teleport* encounters.

Room of Slipping: Appears south of Key #5 near the edge of the map. While remaining in this room, and for the proceeding 1-6 rounds after exiting, PCs slip and fall, no save. DMs should have some fun with this, especially if the nearby shifting blocks (q.v.) are on the move....

Room of Tape: What can I say? This room appears to be covered in wet wallpaper when first viewed; if touched or stepped upon, it holds a PC fast until liquid in excess of four gallons is applied to dilute the glue, thus allowing those trapped to escape. The place may also be fired with brands, spells, etc. but the resulting conflagration will cause double damage and will billow smoke for a day afterwards in a 200' radius. The room is essentially destroyed through this action.

Red Splotch NE of Fountain of Colors: Ink test before starting to draw map.

Secret Doors: Marked with an "S" in pencil, but I usually used red in the Lake Geneva Castle, so these are harder to spot on the Bottle City map.

Keyed Encounters

The Bottle City, Alternate 16

Commentary: "Alternate 16" refers to the level of challenge within the castle as then designed. Though found on level two--making it an alternate level and not a mainstream one--many such placements of higher-level challenges were common then. This in turn kept the adventurers guessing at all times as to whether they should run or fight. This design concept is seemingly lost to many of today's linear adventures wherein player-expectations of success are a given. This mindset has also been promulgated by the published adventure wherein DMs need a specific level of challenge for their current players. The Lake Geneva Campaign I co-DMed had no such "design" strictures, which in essence is more representational of a "real" setting. The "elevator-room" is another example of this historical philosophy—it would fall by gradation to the tenth level of the original castle, having started on the third! Informed adventurers learned real fast not to use that route unless they were upwards in level.

1. Trove of the Metal Kings.

Commentary: What can I say? I've always liked golems (**WG5**), robots (the Original Machine Level of the Lake Geneva Castle) and automatons (Lord R's programmed contestants in my "Journey to the City of the Gods" short story). This is in part inspired by the movie "The Day the Earth Stood Still," which made me an instant Gort fan, and R. E. Howard's stories, especially "The Devil in Iron." Thaumaturgy was rife in the original campaign with contraptions, robots, strange animating statues, and other variant pieces, such as the Juggernaut. So different golems and their ken were created to mystify our players who had grown used to the many "mundane" monsters which had previously confronted them.

Long curtains screen the walls of the room, hiding the alcoves and Man of Many Colors (see below). On the map, numbers 1 through 8 and the encircled star in the center of the room show the locations for kingly-type looking statues (golems). Numbers 1 through 4 are bronze statues, while numbers 5 through 8 are copper; the starred statue is (naturally) iron. The iron statue is mounted upon a pedestal of solid silver (25,000 gold value) with 5 encrusted gems (base 5,000 gp each).

If the pedestal is approached within 30' the iron golem will go into action against intruders and one golem will follow every round thereafter.

My copper and bronze golems, along with a traditional, but special, iron golem are described hereafter. If the iron golem is killed first, this will destroy golems 1, 4, 5, and 8 after one turn, after which they break apart (if they haven't already been destroyed). Golems 2, 3, 6, and 7 will crack

2-5 turns later.

Bronze Golem: AC 4, HP 35, HD 8, MV 12". Breathes a weak *sleep* gas (1-2); or, attacks with two fists (3-6) every round. The gas *sleeps* opponents for 1-4 rounds; fist damage is 2-7 per hit. Immune to electrical attacks.

Copper Golem: AC 5, HP 30, HD 7, MV 15". Discharges electrical bolts derived and compounded from the surrounding air (1-3); or, attacks with 2 fists (4-6) every round. The bolts cause 7 hp damage to anything in a 10' radius; fist damage is 1-5 (1-6-1 per hit with a minimum of 1 hp damage). Regains hp at ½ the damage inflicted from electrical attacks.

Iron Golem (Special): AC 3, HP 50, HD 10, MV 9". Breathes a gout of green flame which does magical fire damage and poisons the target (1-2); or, attacks with two fists (3-6) every round. The 5' long x 2' wide flame does 10 hp of damage to a single target (unless another target is aligned directly behind the first, in which case up to two targets can be affected by the gout) and requires a poison save to be made at -1 or the target takes an additional 1-4 poison damage every turn for 2-5 turns thereafter, or until cured; fist damage is 1-8+1 per hit. Immune to fire and electrical attacks.

On the map, the X in the northern-most alcove denotes the Man of Many Colors, who is and chained to the wall, and encapsulated within a permanent *anti-magic shell* (invisible, 9' radius centered on the prisoner). If saved, the prisoner will offer the players his cloak (it is of *scintillating colors*, though it will not detect as magical while within the *anti-magic shell*). Clever players could use this as a shelter from the golems....

Commentary: The Man of Many Colors relates to my **Red Book™** and **Maze of Zayene** references to Roloc and the false religion permeating the campaign. This was a wandering group of charlatans, but with real magical powers, who had set up a false religion in order to dupe the weak and foolhardy. Their intents were never discovered as the original players avoided contact with them. In this instance alone does the otherwise chaotic-neutral Man of Many Colors show his gratitude for being saved. He is in actuality a high priest of that strange religion based in the City.

2. Room of the Past.

The person entering here will be teleported to a similar situation/battle he had in the past where he will have to refight that particular monster or being. 1 = North, 2 = South, 3 = East, 4 = West.

Commentary: Isolating the target, a DM's dream. This encounter forces the worst battle circumstance back upon the player that he or she experienced, and this time there is no escape except through victory or death. In the original campaign isolating a PC was not uncommon, as in the case of Erac, who died of starvation due to entrapment and isolation on a very tough

level of the Lake Geneva Castle. Note that many of the Castle's pocket dimensions employed the same principle but targeted the entire party. The party could easily enter these areas, but there were often specific tasks they had to accomplish before escape was possible (c.f. Garden of the Plantmaster, the Maze of Zayene, the Original Horsing Around Level, et al).

3. Chamber of Decisions.

Each player is instantly *geased* (no save) to walk down two passages:

Roll Effect on Character

- | | |
|----|---|
| 1 | Lose 15,000 experience |
| 2 | Gain 1-4 <i>arrows of slaying</i> |
| 3 | 6th level monster appears and attacks |
| 4 | Make poison gas saving throw |
| 5 | Gain 50,000 experience |
| 6 | Gain <i>potion of permanent human control*</i> |
| 7 | Lose 2 levels |
| 8 | 9th level <i>fireball</i> explodes |
| 9 | Gain a <i>ring of spell storing</i> (random roll for 1st-6th) |
| 10 | Re-roll |

***Permanent Human Control:** Affects one human of choice. If the save is missed this effects them as a permanent *charm person*. Save -2 negates. The potion bottle contains 1-3 doses.

Commentary: I simply loved these encounter-types, and the players despised them, for they knew they were balanced for good and bad, and often the greediest of the group got their comeuppance through these "push-or-pull" pieces. In the Lake Geneva Campaign, Bombadil was certain to start pulling levers or pushing buttons right and left, as James Ward loved to gamble. This encounter-design certainly influenced the creation of such things as the *deck of many things*, *wand of wonder*, the *bean bag* and the *bag of tricks*, to name but a few. In this case each PC is instantly *geased* to walk down two of the passages before them. I was not too forgiving in those days, so DMs could instead decide to let the choice of departure here lie wholly with each PC.

4. The Art Gallery.

Commentary: This is the inspiration for the much-expanded Pynyck's art gallery which I designed for *Prisoners of the Maze*, Part 1 of the Maze of Zayene series of adventures first published by my old firm, Creations Unlimited, and then for the d20 market through Necromancer Games, with the final module in the series published by Different Worlds.

The idea of designing encounters from strange and magical pieces of art was just too tempting to resist within such a bizarre level as Bottle City. Note that I attempted to make these very tough and added many new magic items as well. Some of the encounters incorporate well-known beings, whereas others, such as the Advancing Veteran, are influenced by other concepts or designs, like the nine-level draining sword I created for Supplement 1 or from myths of giants of the earth who became stronger as they fought or were undefeatable until lifted from the ground. Five demi-gods are introduced



herein, and they had their history vested with the adventure area I designed—Fomalhaut—which was a major part of the Lovecraftian Mythos slant I had created for the campaign. Note that I also include additional commentary where necessary to explain the adventure paths that some of these pictures reveal.

Map Notes/Entering The Gallery: Note on the map that an illusionary wall perfectly hides the entrance to the gallery. The red lines indicate a red carpet, approximately 8' wide, which acts as comfortable pathway to viewing the pictures.

DM Notes: Where statistics are not given for the creatures, DMs must generate them.

These encounters can have personal treasure only, and have no in-lair treasure. DMs can refer to the outdoor encounter treasure generation table(s) for generating suitable treasures for those having none listed. Encounters guarding special treasures will only have personal treasure in addition to it.

Note: An asterisk (*) proceeding the letter key indicates that the picture must be entered by touching it; this transports those doing so to a pocket dimension which is 80 yards square. Unless noted otherwise, upon touching each picture, the creatures depicted come forth from each to fight the party.

A. Five runes are seen floating in the air. If read they sear the PC's skin for 2-12 points of damage. The runes represent the demi-gods: AZA, LOLATHO, ZIRX, PHANNON and N'TEE. Physically touching a rune indicates that the essence of the corresponding demigod *magic jars* the PC doing so (no save).

Alien Gods: Capsule Descriptions

Commentary: It is not my intent to fully-describe the following five alien gods which the original players had run-ins with. In fact the original notes only lightly detail how each immediately interacts when and if the picture that contains their essence is touched. Note that these gods when viewed by the actions following are not very pleasant deities.

Aza: The victim receives a mental image of a being composed of pure energy and then receives a massive mental shock (spell save at -6). If the save is failed, Aza strips the PC of 1-4 personal magic items and leaves them immobilized and in shock for 2-12 turns thereafter, whereupon the PC recovers fully.

Lolatho: The victim receives a mental image of a being wrought from the coldest ice and frost and then receives a jolt of cold (spell save -4). If the save is failed, Lolatho takes all monies in whatever form (gold, gems, etc.) that the PC is carrying and leaves them paralyzed for 2-8 turns.

Zirx: The victim receives a mental image of the blackest void and must make a save vs. spells (at -2) or be possessed by Zirx for 24 hours. As retribution for the effrontery, Zirx will kill all of the PC's henchman and followers by using the quickest possible transportation methods available to locate them. In the end the PC will be blamed for having killed his own followers and will be a hunted criminal unless he can prove that he was possessed.

Phannon: The PC receives a vivid mental image of a chaotic vortex of swirling colors out of which one primary one seems to touch his inner soul. Roll % dice:

Roll	Mental Image
1-50	(White/Lawful): The PC receives a clue to any one of the pictures in the gallery and then the mental contact ends.
51-70	(Grey/Neutral): There is a deafening sound of a metal door slamming shut and the mental image is broken, leaving the PC held (no save) for 1-10 turns thereafter.
71-100	(Black/Chaos): A fire rises from the blackness, like an erupting volcano, and the PC is bathed in a 20 HD fireball (save at -1), and the mental image is then broken. Anyone else in the fireball's area of effect saves at normal against a 10 HD fireball as this fire seems mostly directed at the PC who touched the rune.

N'Tee: The victim receives a mental picture of a cloud of noxious gas and hears a weird buzzing sound. He immediately grows weak and hungry, thirsty and faint, and must make a spell save (at -2) or lose 1-3 energy levels.

B. 10 Large Sticks. These turn into 10 spitting cobras and attack when the picture is touched.

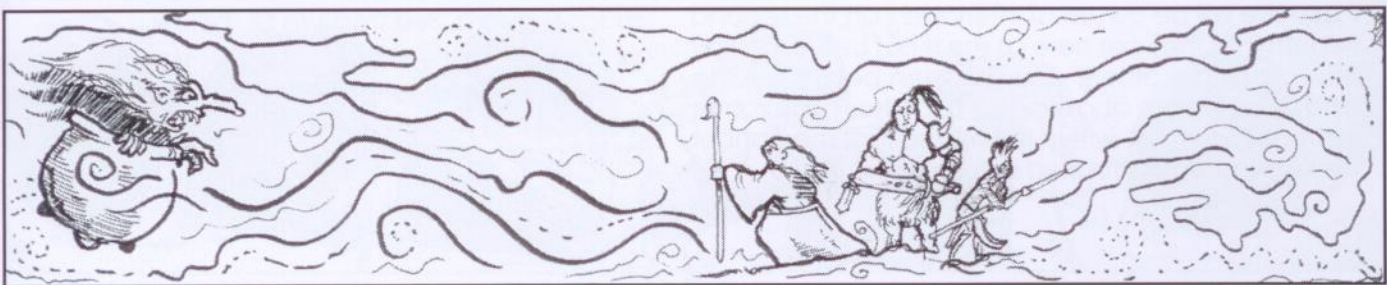
Spitting Cobras (10): AC 5, HP 15 each, HD 4, MV 15". Spits (50%) or bites (50%) in a given combat round. The spit is venomous, doing 2-8 points of damage and the bite inflicts 1-6 points.

***C. Five Non-Descript Gnolls.** These are *polymorphed* cloud giants who reveal their real forms when the picture is entered. See treasure **CC**, below.

CC. *Girdle of cloud giant strength* plus 4,000 gp per giant.

***D. A Large Laughing Face.**

Commentary: A giggler from *Empire of the Petal Throne* was originally used in this picture; I expanded on that encounter below.



Ahsat the "Laughing" Witch: AC 8, HD/LV 11, hp 40, Mv 18"/12 fly" (golden cauldron).

Small Giggler: AC 9, HD 1-1, HP 7, Mv 15", snatch (see sidebar for details).

Kurukú "the Small Giggler"

These little creatures have six legs, like so many of Tékumel's fauna, and they also have a pair of hands just beneath their blunt, anthropoidal snouts. They never attack humans and always flee if approached. They do try to snatch bright objects from passing travellers, however, running off with it an giggling in a very human fashion. There is a 50 percent chance of their attempting to snatch something, and if so, there is a 60 percent chance of success. The victim is chosen randomly from those nearest the Kurukú, and the referee rolls randomly to determine the item snatched. There is a 20 percent chance that the item will be thrown down as the little beast runs away; otherwise it is lost forever—unless the Kurukú can be cornered, a difficult task in open forest. Because of the agility of the Kurukú, hitting them with a missile requires +1 to be added to the hit die throw.

When the picture is touched the party appears in the NE corner of a 100 x 100 yard area of green sward which has an all-encompassing cloud of dense mist hovering over it starting at 40 yards above the ground and presumably extending upwards.

Ahsat makes her home in her golden cauldron approximately 120 yards above and in the SE corner (DMs may draw a quick sketch map here). She lives there with her familiar, a giggler (see The mist blocks all magical or physical attempts to see through it, including detect spells and the like, in essence making her invulnerable to location or detection unless the party comes within sighting distance of her in the mist (10 yards) or if she descends beneath the mist line at the 40 yard mark. The mist extends upward forever.

Ahsat has been consigned to the picture due to transgressions against the City rulers, which is no laughing matter. Over the years of her confinement, she and her familiar have grown more alike—Ahsat's one failing is that she always taunts and laughs at her enemies in combat, so her actual position in the obscuring mist could be triangulated due to this incessant babbling, but DMs are left to decide the chances of that happening (and whether she may send the giggler in a different direction to confuse PCs). She will be aware of interlopers on the second full turn that they are here as she is not befuddled by the mist as are others; and she then begins casting attack spells from above while using her cauldron to secretly maneuver within the mist so that she cannot be located and attacked in turn.

Ahsat's Golden Cauldron. This item combines the magical abilities of a *broom of flying* (12" fly) and a *portable hole*. It was created by Ahsat and only she knows the magical control word to activate and control it ("cackle"). If she is killed the cauldron falls to the ground and remains magically impotent and unmovable through normal means. Ahsat sits in the cauldron's top so only one human-sized being can enter it at a time (her). The cauldron resists damage as a major artifact would and can only be destroyed through some extraordinary means as prescribed by each DM. Only upon activating the cauldron can it be entered or manipulated.

The cauldron's inner *'hole* area contains a sparsely appointed living space with bed, a small table and chair, a small alchemical laboratory (with six random potions), a full-length standing mirror and two large chests of drawers. One chest contains coins and gems (202 pp, 1,334 gp, 2,103 sp, 396 ep, 57 100gp base gems), while the second one contains assorted clothes (one article is a *robe of eyes*). There is also a jug wedged underneath the bed (an ever-smoking bottle), its spout sealed tight with a piece of rolled copper. The copper (if successfully checked) is actually a magical notepad containing cipherings about an "Uncontrollable Laughter" spell she perfected. A *read magic* spell is needed to uncode the ciphers, making it thereafter understandable by the one who cast the spell. If then studied for 1-4 days a mage reading this gains the power to automatically cast the "Uncontrollable Laughter" spell once per day, this in addition to regular numbers of castable spells. Once read the copper notepad disintegrates into dust that falls to the floor, there forming an outline of Ahsat's cackling face...

NOTE: This is a special encounter for treasure; no more or less can be gained here as Ahsat has no treasure on her person. Her spell books are secreted many miles above in an extra-dimensional space she discovered and can only be located by expending a month of uninterrupted time searching for them.

***E.** Large Red Dragon. This guardian dragon takes full hit points and breathes 75% of the time in a given combat round. See treasure DD, below.

DD. *Necklace of missiles* plus 250,000 sp.

***F.** An Empty Room. Mantle.

Commentary: Like the whelk (c.f.) this is another creature from *Empire of the Petal Throne*. In this case substitute a full HD and hp lurker above which scores +2 to its damage rolls if you feel that the original needs to be beefed up.

***G.** A Pointy Hat. Four enchanters (i.e. 7th level mages) guard. See treasure EE, below.

EE. *Pointy Hat of Spell Making*. When worn this otherwise non-descript wizard's hat allows the mage donning it to make scroll spells or research new spells at full cost but at 1/2 the time.

Birdlú "the Mantle": AC 3, HD 4+1, hp 25, Mv 6"/13" fly

These ancient treasure guardians are cape-like, black, flying creatures which cling to ceilings and drop down upon the unwary. They then suffocate their victim, gibbering and shrieking, in their powerfully muscled folds. They cannot be cut by Chlén-hide weapons but only by steel. A victim inside has a 40 percent chance of cutting himself free on the first combat round, a 30 percent chance on the second, and a 15 percent chance on the third. Those outside may also try to cut their friend free: this requires a normal hit and is successful only when the beast is slain. A victim takes one 6-sided die of damage on the first round, 2 dice on the second, and 3 dice on the third. The Birdlú fights maniacally until all life is gone from it, and the body must be burned; otherwise it regenerates within 3 combat rounds.

***H.** A Skull Cap. Four bishops (i.e. 6th level clerics) guard. See treasure **FF**, below.

FF. *Cap of Holding.* When worn and a hold spell is cast, the spell has an initial chance of holding one targeted being 90% of the time. If a 91-100 is cast, the spell-caster is instead held, no save.

***I.** A Silver Helm. Six myrmidons (i.e., 6th level fighters) guard. See treasure **GG**, below.

GG. *Helm of Full Hit Die.* When this golden helm is worn all damage rolls are at maximum for the wielded weapon. This is not a combat helm and its tensile strength is equal to tin, so there is a 1-3% chance per gaming session (rolled at the end of same) wherein the bearer was involved in intense combat (DM discretion for adducing this and the percentile range noted above) that the helm sustained a hit which cracked it; thereafter the helm's magical powers slowly seep out over an 8-24 hour period making it non-magical.

***J.** A Pair of Hands. These giant-sized hands levitate at a good speed, reaching out to pummel or crush interlopers. They pursue targets as far as the illusion wall but not beyond that point.

Floating Hands (2): AC 0, HP 40 each, HD 12, MV 15" fly. The hands can (50%) pummel for 2-12 points of damage per hit. On a score of 11 or 12 points of natural damage the target is knocked unconscious for 1-4 turns. The hands, combined, can also grasp a single target (50%) to crush it for 3-24 points. On a

natural damage score of 23 or 24 points the target must make a save versus death or it is crushed to death. Note that if one of the hands is dispatched that the remaining one can only attack to pummel.

K. Five Blue Giants. These are five cloud giants whom attack at one level higher due to being enraged from their captivity.

L. Empty Canvas. This appears to be empty. If the frame is examined a small button is found. If pressed the one doing so is transported inside the picture. The canvas then reveals a picture of that person caught in the moment of pressing the button.

This insidious trap can be worked only once per month. Prisoners are kept in a state of suspended animation during that time—they neither hunger nor thirst nor do they or their belongings decay. After a month, the button may be depressed again, but the one doing so is exchanged with the one in the picture. Note that this only works by depressing the button with flesh. The PCs might work around this by having a prisoner of their own press the button to release a trapped compatriot.

M. Six Balors. As three melee the others immediately start summoning other demons to assist them. See treasure **HH**, below.

HH. 30,000 gp in gems and a *Belt of Immolation*. The *belt of immolation* confers +2 AC and allows the wearer to immolate like a balor. This fiery-red, iron belt provides +2 fire damage to his or her wielded magic weapon. Normal weapons can provide the bonus as well, but will sustain fire damage which either warps or chars them (i.e., metal or wooden) to such an extent that in their next usage they will break. Only magic weaponry can resist the fires summoned by the belt.

Further, when the wearer immolates, a 10' radius area becomes embroiled in a hellish red flame. Any living being in this flame sustains 2-4 hp fire damage per turn, and this includes friends and foes alike. The wearer may safely immolate twice per 24 hour period for a full ten minutes per interval. The belt then changes color to burnt charcoal until its internal fires are regenerated whereupon it appears fiery red again.

N. Twenty silver pointed objects. Twenty spears fire at those passing in front of it, attacking as 7th level fighters and doing 1-6 damage each. The picture is afterwards black for 1-4 turns, and then the silver points appear, ready to fire again.



O. A Doughty Looking Fighter. This is the Advancing Veteran, a strange being with subtle powers.

The Advancing Veteran: AC 0 (+1 *platemail* and +1 *shield*), HP 8, HD 1st level fighter, Dmg 1-8+2/special (*battle-mace* +2, plus *dancing sword*), MV 12"; 95% magic resistance. The advancing veteran is a special being whose ability is to redirect a sustained hit upon him into a level increase. Every hit upon him causes no damage, but secretly causes him to advance in level, with corresponding hit points, attacks, saves, etc. Each level grants him a +1 level increase and 1-8 hp increase, with 1s being re-rolled. The maximum level of advancement is to 12. Upon reaching 12th level, each physical hit upon him thereafter does real damage until he is killed.

The advancing veteran will cast his *dancing sword* into the air when first encountered and then brings forth a large *battle-mace* +2 to melee with. He is fearless due his many defense and attack modes and fights to the death.

P. A Roper. This is a prince-among-ropers! It takes twice the hp that normal ropers do and attacks and makes all saves as a 12th level fighter.

Q. Sixteen-headed Hydra. This monstrosity bursts forth from its containment to attack anyone passing in front of the picture. See treasure II, below.

II. *Hydra Teeth (artifact)*. Upon dispatching the hydra, 3-12 of its magical teeth may be removed. They all have different properties when cast to the ground (note that this *must* be earth and not wood or stone-work flooring, for example).

3 teeth—summons 3 3 HD skeletons that move at double speed and are immune to clerical turning.

4-6 teeth—summons 4-6 4 HD skeletons that move at double speed, do +1 damage and are immune to turnings.

7-9 teeth—summons 3-6 6 HD skeletons that move at double speed, do +2 damage, are immune to turnings and reverse 10% physical damage upon attackers.

10 teeth—summons 2 8 HD skeletons that move at double speed, do +3 damage, are immune to turnings and reverse 20% physical damage upon attackers.

11 teeth—summons one 10 HD skeleton that moves at double speed, does +3 damage, is immune to turnings and reverses 40% physical damage upon attackers.

12 teeth—summons a 12-headed hydra which serves the caster of the teeth until slain. Upon being slain its magical teeth may be plucked again (re-roll for the number).

Skeletons obey the caster of the teeth and serve for twice their HD in turns and then crumble into dust.

Note: Even if PCs are lucky to gain the teeth they must then deduce their use. Casting one tooth, for

example, causes that tooth to disappear with no gain, thus deteriorating the potency of the set as a whole.

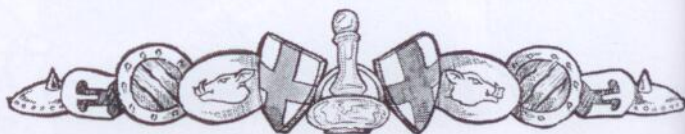
*R. An Empty Room.

When PCs enter this picture they appear at the center of an 80' square room. They are immediately attacked by a fantastic creature from above—a 20' long by 15' wide amorphous mass of grey flesh with 8 6' long flat, octopus-like appendages!

Whelk: AC 3, HD 11, hp 44, Mv 6" crawl/15" fly. This creature is related in function to the lurker above as its mode is to wait and drop upon unsuspecting creatures below it, but that is where the similarity ends. The whelk gets as many attacks as there are targets below it and within its body area when it drops. A hit indicates that a being is trapped within its confines and wrapped tight by its appendages and cannot move to attack or cast spells. Only killing the whelk releases trapped victims. The whelk thereafter exudes an ethereal substance known as *gat* upon its trapped victims. This has two effects: It slowly disintegrates material plane matter, in essence doing 1-6 points of damage per turn; and it poisons the target (save at -2) per turn they are trapped. The poison is special, causing a weakened resistance to the exuded *gat*. For every poison save that is missed, *gat* damage per turn increases by +3 hp. Living beings killed by this disintegrating process are removed to the ethereal plane where their spirits wander as formless and mindless ghosts (known as *gotchar*) and cannot be restored from the dead but through the use of a wish or divine intervention.

Ngóro "the Whelk": AC 6, HD 16, hp 64, Mv 6"

These huge (30 feet in length) creatures lie flat upon the floor of a chamber and appear much like the rough stone flooring of the Underworld, although they may feel a little springy to walk upon. They are intelligent and use their millions of tiny cilia (beneath their bodies) to hold miniature weapons (both edged and "Eyes"). They may also close up on unwary passersby, crushing them in their powerful folds. A saving throw of 14 is needed by any character so trapped to jump free before the Ngóro can close up on him. There is a 50 percent chance percent chance that it will close upon a party (it can crush 1-20 at once). A person thus trapped suffers two 6-sided dice of damage per round until he is freed by him companions, who must kill the creature in order to rescue him. If subdued (i.e., brought to exactly one or zero remaining hit points), the Ngóro will offer one of its magical weapons in return for its life.



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Commentary: The whelk was thought a "lost monster" from the original campaign as only its name was referenced in the Bottle City's original notes and outline. My memory of it was fresh to a degree when reviewing it for print and I instantly noted, "Oh yeah, that strange creature like the lurker which drops on PCs." The remainder of the creature was refabricated from educated guesses based on that recollection, and based upon my way of creating monsters and magic during that time period in the Lake Geneva Campaign, which was to take word entries, such as from the dictionary or encyclopedia (see "welk" and related words in a good dictionary), and applying attributes based on key phrases or words into the conceptual framework. (My creative process has always been inspired. For instance, in Supplement #1 we have a creation of mine, the *cube of force*, which was conceived while I worked at a wood-working factory and viewed the many cubes of wood that accumulated about me). Subsequently, the whelk was discovered to originate from *Empire of the Petal Throne*, so the original whelk is also included herein, and you may choose which to use in this encounter.

NN. A scroll with a *meteor swarm* spell; in its upper left-hand corner are the letters "BB". There is very minute writing at the bottom of this scroll. If found it reads: *Bombadil's Blast*, followed by magical instructions on how to cast this particular *meteor swarm* for maximum damage. Discovering the writing requires examining the scroll with some device or power allowing x30 magnification. The instructions must then be memorized over a two-week span of uninterrupted study before this special spell may be used. The reader will also note a warning appended to the instructions: "I have tried this only twice, and one time it backfired, so maintain resistances when using." There is a 25% chance that *Bombadil's Blast meteor swarm* will instead detonate on the user

when cast. The scroll and its instructions could be used to scribe a spellbook as a new spell, though the costs and time needed for this should be double to quadruple, at the DM's discretion. The spell otherwise functions normally if cast without first referencing and applying the knowledge gained from the magical notes. The notes disappear from the scroll when this spell is cast, so if these haven't been preserved beforehand they are lost.

S. Four Copperish Looking Men. These are copper golems (note **Key # 1** for statistics). See treasure **KK**, below.

KK. *Sword of Golem Slaying.* This silver-edged sword does double damage against golems but confers no bonuses to hit.

T. Five Mages. Five 8th level mages come forth; and the first one in the lot speaks, assuring the party of their own good intentions, but this is only a ruse so that the other mages can ready their spells and attack. If the party listens to the talking mage, give +1 on initiative to the other four.

U. Five Priests. Five 7th level priests come forth to assail the adventurers.

V. Five Fighters. A 12th level lord and 4 8th level fighters rush forth to contest the defilers of the gallery. They have a flaming tower emblazoned on their baldrics and all bear +2 armor, +2 shields and +3 bastard swords. They cast any prisoners into picture **L**, where these are left to starve (read **L**). They otherwise slay all who oppose them and then return to their picture!

Commentary: In the original campaign I conceived of a gargantuan tower on the elemental plane of fire named the Tower Of Bärz. I even drew an 8" x10" pastel illustration of it (which a former girlfriend's cat destroyed in a way I will not relate). The Tower Of Bärz had many strange and powerful inhabitants that guarded one of the ways to the City of Brass, which is accessed in this case through the fiery land of Emyrean whereat the tower is located. The tower's invisible lord was thought to be a magical creation of a demented, time-travelling wizard. The fighters contained in this picture are from that very same tower (and land). Several veteran players of the original campaign encountered inhabitants from it.

***W.** (An Iron Shell Surrounds the Picture Here.)

The shell is magical, sustains 100 points of magic damage (physical or spell-like) to break through. When broken it shatters into thousands of pieces that reform 24 hours later into its original form.

When shattered, the floating canvas beyond it depicts an immense multi-tiered castle set atop an enormous cloud bank. Touching the picture transports the party to its front gate, where they are assaulted by 4 full hit dice air elementals. There is nowhere to flee in this 80 yard square area, as the nearby surroundings appear to be insubstantial cloud matter (PCs stepping upon it fall one mile to their deaths on the ground beneath; or if they

can fly, PCs are assaulted by teeming numbers of flying creatures of the DM's choice, which will, in the same right, kill them). The way back to the picture is only achieved by killing the guardian air elementals, as these will not flee as they fight to the death in defending the gate. Upon the last one's death, a golden key drops to the ground from mid-air; touching the key reveals the shimmering outline of the picture from this side, like an ethereal door, which the PCs may return to the gallery through; touching it to the castle's gate opens the doors to the inner sanctum of **The Fortress of Aër, Lord of the Winds**. DMs must create the adventure or otherwise await its publication from Pied Piper.

Commentary: Aër was ostensibly my concept of the combined "Winds" of classical myth. He has appeared elsewhere in my writings under different names, as well. An old sketch I rendered of Aër was sold in the first of my several auctions.

X. Three Priests Mounted on Manticores. Three 10th level priests and the manticores come forth to escape their imprisonment and will naturally fight to the death doing so. See treasure **MM**, below.

MM. 26,000 gp and a *Everlasting Scroll* of seven 6th level clerical spells. Upon reading each spell there is a 35% chance that each reappears on its surface making them castable again. Once the last spell permanently disappears the scroll dissolves into dust.

Y. Three Mages mounted on Wyverns. Three 11th level wizards and the wyverns fight to the death to be free of the picture. See treasure **LL**, below.

LL. 28,000 gp and a *Bronze Horn of Blasting*. This horn is specially enchanted to allow a triple-effect blast, once per year.

***Z.** Six Fighters mounted upon large White Dragons. These are 6 8th level fighters and 6 large white dragons who fight to the death. See treasure **JJ**, below.

JJ: *Beaker of the White Dragon* (artifact). This lidless, crystal-clear beaker weighs 15 pounds and was magically carved from a single piece of quartz. It radiates no magic if this is checked for. However, its inside contains a fine filmy residue (which is pulverized quartz crystal). If the beaker is filled (and maintained) with three pounds of quartz crystal dust, its magical properties are realized when held:

White Tongue. The bearer immediately gains a surpassing knowledge of the white dragon tongue. Due to this excellence, +30% is added to reaction rolls when dealing with white dragons as they are exceedingly impressed by the bearer's fluency with their tongue. This language fluency lasts as long as the beaker is held.

Cold Immunity. As long as the beaker is held, all cold attacks affect the bearer for half or no damage.

Ice Scales. If reduced to 50% or less hp, the bearer's

armor or skin automatically changes form to icy-white scales that confer a +2 AC bonus, reduce further physical or magical damage by 50%, and *slow* all opponents in a 20' radius area about him, the latter two powers together lasting 2-12 turns. However, the bearer's movement rate is reduced by half for this interval due to the immense chilling effect of the scales and he cannot be healed during this time period.

Frost Burn. The bearer must dip his hand into the beaker and extract a handful (6 oz.) of crystal dust to initiate this power. Once extracted, the dust is absorbed into the hand itself, which, in turn, changes its composition to blue ice. The hand may be wielded for 1 hour as a weapon to club or touch opponents for 2-20 points of cold damage per successful strike. Damage scores of 16 or above also have a chance of freezing opponents, with a base of 2% at 16, and progressing to 10% at 20 hp dealt. Targets remain frozen for rounds equal to 1/2 the above percentile range (1-5); whilst frozen their movement is reduced to 1/2" (less than crawl speed), their AC is reduced to 10, they take double physical damage when struck, and cannot avoid area effect spells.

The bearer must make a system shock roll upon his hand returning to flesh. Failing this loses the hand and results in another system shock at -10%, which if failed results in death.

Note: After the one hour has elapsed for this particular power the beaker *must be replenished* with the missing 6 oz. of powdered quartz crystal to bring it back up to three pounds for any of powers to function.

5. Lever Area.

Commentary: Oops! Here I go again! The original PCs had a penchant for pushing, pulling, lifting, or otherwise messing with anything we put in the Castle. They were in fact less concerned about the possible bad results of doing so than in discovering what goodies lay behind the DMs' contrivances. They were cautious, do not get me wrong, but overall such temptations were too strong for them to resist for long. Also note that as a DM I was pressed for time to design many extravagantly-detailed encounters, so a note system was used and the important facts about each encounter were remembered. This lightly sketched lever/button/plate, etc. "static encounter" was in fact meant to promote role-playing and evolving DM-player exchanges in place of presenting a full-blown "living encounter." We as DMs were not numb to the fact that a player might come back to pull the "good" levers he'd previously discovered, and so we often, on the fly, changed the effects of said levers, much to the surprise of a PC who had originally pulled them. This is represented in the following table where there is a first and a second effect, which you may use and/or amend as you see fit.

You note that the corridor here has 8 levers, 4 each on the north and south walls.

DM Note (Two-Way Transporter): Upon advancing past the levers and to the end of the maze-like corridor here (see map) any beings in the green-shaded area are transported east via a two-way transporter to an exact duplicate of this maze area (noted as "From" on the map). The only difference is that upon backtracking from the dead-end there the PCs will note that the levers have mysteriously disappeared!

First Set of Lever Effects

1. *Polymorphed* into an insect (save at -4)
2. Lose 10,000 gp from banked gold
3. Block drops from ceiling for 15 dice of damage
4. Gain 20,000 gp in gems
5. Gain a *ring of contrariness* (or other cursed)
6. 12th level Monster attacks (DM choice)
7. +1 on Strength
8. Gain a *scroll* of 7 5th level mage spells

Second Set of Lever Effects

1. Gain 15,000 experience
2. Poison gas (-3 save or die)
3. Strange gas envelops (+1 to Wisdom)
4. Lose one magic item (random)
5. -1 on Strength
6. Gain 1 level for 6 months
7. Gain 1-8 jewelry pieces
8. 14th level monster attacks

6. The Joust.

This huge room's floor is covered in a fine green sward! Near its center is a knight mounted upon a large destrier. As you enter he trots to you while keeping his lance raised.

"In order to pass, he says, "one of you must contend with, and best me in the joust, or allow me to select and retain one of your magic items."

If the PCs choose to joust, the knight pulls forth a green gem and summons a near duplicate destrier as he has, complete with barding and lance, this for the champion contesting him. The joust will begin with the lance charge and whoever yields first during the ensuing combat is the loser, otherwise the battle proceeds to the death.

The Joust: AC -2 (+2 *platemail* and +2 *shield*), Fighter 15, HP 85, Mv 12" foot/15" mounted; Dmg 1-8+2 (+2 *sword*) or 6-18 (lance charge; 2d4+1 doubled) or 1-4+2 (+2 *bolt*).

If the PCs opt to pay with a magic item, the knight

will study their items and choose the most powerful one that they have!

Upon winning or paying, the party may pass through the room and to its only other exit, a twenty foot wide passage west.

If they instead opt to attack the knight instead of jousting, he quickly pulls forth his gem and summons three other knights on horses, all of 9th level with +1 *swords*, +1 *platemail*, +1 *shields* (AC 0), and 50 hp. If flyers leverage the 40' high ceiling here, the knights all pull forth light crossbows with +2 *bolts* (30 each) to drop those opponents. If the party yields to this onslaught they can save their lives but forfeit all personal magic items for their treacherous deed!

If the party bests all of the knights in combat they receive all of the aforementioned goods (though the horses magically disappear) and the green gem which the original knight wielded.

The Sward Crystal: This appears as an intricately carved and faceted green crystal. Palm-sized, it must be held tightly to invoke its summoning powers while speaking the appropriate word to summon the being so invoked.

"Horse": Summons a destrier (heavy war horse) as noted, complete with chainmail barding and lance. The horse remains in service for 1 week, and always disappears after that allotted time when the rider is dismounted. Only one horse can be summoned from the crystal during any given time period. Attempting to summon more than one accomplishes nothing. This horse may be summoned 7 times only, returning rested and fresh even if damaged or killed during prior summonings.

"Knight": While the Joust could make use of the gem in more potent ways to summon three knights at once, any PC may only summon a single knight for an interval of 1-4 hours. The 9th level knight (50 hp) obeys the owner of the crystal only and will come to his or her aid alone unless ordered by the crystal owner to aid others. The knight comes replete with warhorse and lance, +1 *longsword*, +1 *kite-shield*, +1 *platemail* and a light crossbow with 30 +2 *bolts*. If his horse is killed during any summoning he thereafter appears horseless when subsequently resummoned; and if the knight is killed he is no longer summonable. The crystal can be used to summon this knight 3 times only.

7. Worship Area of the Umbra Hulk.

DM Note: This very secret area is accessed by three



entrances on the map: a secret door in the southwest part of the room, another such on the east wall, near-center, and by the 30' circular room west of area #7B (see the Map Errata, which indicates the two missing doors there).

This area is huge and well-lit. The PCs immediately notice that its central portion is taken up by an elaborate arrangement of 9 statues (representing the nine gods described at **Key #9** and its sub-keys, c.f.) surrounding a large, lit fire pit (magical; and which supplies the lighting here) with five small platforms extending over it (the "teeth" as seen on the map). To the north of this are two smaller fire pits shaped like eyes that are equidistant from each other and—by artistic contrivance, together with the pit and when viewed from above—form a noseless face on the floor below. Four exits are apparent from this room: three passageways to the east, west, and south, and a door in the north wall.

The Statues. Note **Key #9's** descriptions for these as they match them exactly, starting at #1 for the top most (north of the pit at 12 o'clock) and proceeding clockwise until #9. They have no superior or ulterior function—they are merely sculptures.

The Fire Pits.

Main: *The Pit of Empyrean.* This pit is one of the few conduits out of the Bottle City (other than ascending to its upper structure). However, even standing near it (within 10') for more than one round inflicts 1-4 points of heat damage. Its variegated flames lick on, and sometimes above, its walkways, making these dangerous to tread upon, and causing 10-30 points of fire damage to those who do so. Being thrown into it, even with items or spells in force which would allow immunity to fire, causes instant death, for these fires broil forth from a stronger source related to the eternal fires which feed the Elemental Plane of Fire and are not vanquishable by mere mortal contrivances.

The pit is used by the umbra hulk at **Key #8** for a special ritual to summon forth a fiery spirit called *ganze*, a class of spirit known for its procreative powers in the Land of Empyrean. This spirit has in the past coupled with the umbra hulk's spirit and progenitive cycle to produce the umbra orcs as their "offspring." The pit has no ulterior function; and the *ganze* has never again appeared since its initial joining with the umbra hulk. However, upon its first appearance it mysteriously left behind 20 ruby-like spheroids (*spirit gems*) which were ignored by the umbra hulk but later gathered up by the umbra orcs at **Key #7C** (q.v.).

Small-western/-eastern Pits: These ancillary pits are fed by the main one. Their fires are less damaging, doing 1/2 the damage listed for it, but still cause death if entered.

None of the above-mentioned pits can have

their fires altered or effected in any way through known magic-use. Legends note that the ability to command such fires can be accomplished through a lost (or forgotten) magical art known as runic lore (sometimes also known as symbology and/or cypher-magic), the knowledge of which current civilizations are but scraping the surface at this time.

7A. Many Orcs.

40 umbra orcs and an umbra orc priest attack the party upon sight. They reinforce (or are reinforced by) **Key #7B's** forces should there be a fight here. There is also a slight chance that they reinforce **Key #7C** when the gong is rung there (q.v.).

Umbra Orcs (40): AC 4 (chainmail and shield), HD 4, hp 22, 20x4, 19x10, 18x14, 16x4, 15x7, Mv 12", Dmg 1-8 (long swords); immunities and special confusion (50% per round). See the boxed text section for additional information on umbra orcs.

Umbra Orc Priest: AC1 (+1 *platemail* and normal shield), HD 8, hp 44, Mv 12", Dmg 1-6+2 (+2 *mace*); immunities and special confusion (75% per round); spells as 8th level evil cleric. See the boxed text section for additional information on umbra orcs.

Umbra Orcs. These are the magical offspring of the umbra hulk at **Key #8**. They differ from regular orcs by having 2-4 HD, +6-12" height increase, +1 to intelligence, and every 10th umbra orc has a 50% chance to employ the *confusion* power of the umbra hulk. All umbra orcs are immune to *sleep* and take -1 damage/die from fire. They are not conjured, so *protection from evil*, for example, will not hedge them out. They never check morale, never sleep, and always fight to the death.

Umbra orcs speak different languages than regular orcs, including the common orc tongue, umbra hulk, and Chaotic Evil. They do not procreate. Umbra orcs are usually armed and armored as regular orcs, or with whatever arms and armor are available. As a rule their priests are their captains, and all pay homage to the umbra hulk at **Key #8** as their only god. If encountered by another umbra hulk they will not attack it and will actually flee if attacked by it, such is their sensitivity for these creatures' resemblance to their deity.

7B. Many Ogres.

The ogres here follow the commands of the ogre arch-magi, Beemoth. As noted elsewhere they reinforce (or are reinforced by) **Key #7A's** forces when there is a battle.

Beemoth is a master tactician and should be played as a super-intelligent being; he will use all the powers at his disposal to defeat any intruders, and will in particular, make good use of his two special magic

items to do so (q.v.).

Ogres (16): AC5, HD 4+1, hp 27, 25x6, 23x4, 22x4, 20, Mv 12", Dmg 1-10 (spiked clubs).

Beemoth, Ogre Arch-Magi: AC 0 (*headdress of skulls*, see below), HD 12, hp 52, Mv 12", Dmg 2-8+3 (*bone sword*, see below); ogre magi powers at +20% to damage, range and effectiveness.

Headdress of Skulls: Fashioned from the skulls of slain enemies, this headdress fits about the head like a circlet, contracting or expanding to fit human- to ogre-sized craniums. It confers an AC of 0, but its bonus is not cumulative with other AC-conferring items like *rings of protection*, magical armor, etc. The item also protects the wearer from *magic missiles* by deflecting up to 21 missiles per day and from *death spells*, negating one such casting upon the wearer per day.

Bone Sword: Made from the thigh-bone of any dead giant, this serrated weapon does 2-8 points normal damage and confers a +3 bonus to attack and damage, does double damage vs. demi-humans, and as long as it is held allows the wielder to cast *bone missiles* 3 times daily at the 12th level. Bone missiles are like *magic missiles* but are made from bone and do 1-6 points of damage per hit. As well, every missile has an additional 5% chance of doing double damage and a 1% chance of additionally stunning the opponent for 1-4 rounds.

7C. Anterior Guard Room/Ancillary Treasury.

This oddly-shaped room contains 20 orcs all of a surprising size. They display a swiftness and fierceness uncommon to normal orcs as the majority move to attack. At the same time a lone orc raises a large striker and hits a brass gong with it! The great sound from this momentarily hides the roar of rushing noises made by your assailants' charge!

DM Note: The gong sounding has a 20% chance to summon the forces from **Key #7A**, which will arrive here in 1-2+1 turns. It otherwise alerts them and they are ready for the party should it enter through the secret door at **#7A**. This also alerts the forces at **Key #7B**, who do not move from their position and instead remain on alert to reinforce **#7A** if they hear sounds of battle.

Umbra Orcs (20): AC 4 (chainmail and shield), HD 4, hp 22, 20x2, 19x5, 18x7, 16x4, 15, Mv 12", Dmg 1-8 (bastard swords); immunities and special confusion

(50% per round). See the boxed text section for additional information.

If the orcs are dispatched, the room may be examined for its contents. Besides the four-foot oval brass gong (worth 300 gp and weighing 75 pounds) there are two very large chests set against the walls. Each contains 50,000 sp and a pouch of 10 100 gp gems (peculiar ruby-like spheroids). These "ruby" gems have a keen brilliance to them upon close inspection (they have a 1 in 5 chance each of going up in value, to a maximum of 5,000 gp each). Note **Key #7's** description of the gems left by the spirit summoned forth from the main fire pit there.

8. The Gigantic Umbra Hulk.

DM Note: Once aware of any intruder in areas **#7-#7C** the umbra hulk will wait patiently near the door to its room for interlopers to enter through it. Unless the party has prepared against such an ambush, double the chances of it surprising them.

Immediate Description. Upon sighting the umbra hulk for the very first time, read its following description:

You see an incredibly large umbra hulk which stands perhaps as high a 12' erect! This particular one has skin which is black but emits a faint, yellowish aura. It roars as it attacks!

The umbra hulk will fight to the death. Upon death, its body disintegrates in a puff of yellowish smoke which can be seen to quickly flow towards the room with pits; if followed, the smoke enters the main pit and vanishes!

Gigantic Umbra Hulk: AC 0 (magically imbued skin), HD 14, hp 72, Mv 12"/2" tunnelling, Dmg 1-10+1 bite/1-6 claw/1-6 claw; *confusion gaze*; immune to fire; immune to normal weapons; SPECIAL: Upon eating a demi-human or human, the umbra hulk spawns a fully-matured 1-4 HD umbra orc which emerges from its body in 1 turn,. It takes a full turn to consume an average-size human. Each umbra orc produced in this manner has no weaponry or armor and unless otherwise equipped (as from the weapon racks in the room, c.f.) it may only inflict clubbing damage with its 2 hands (1-3 Dmg each per round).

Room Contents: This large circular room has many items in it. In racks along most of its wall space are arms and armor, no doubt used to equipping the umbra orcs, although all appear to be of an ancient



make and style.

- 20 sets of chainmail
- 18 shields (round)
- 24 spears
- 8 long swords
- 6 battle axes
- 3 superbly crafted bec-de-corbins (+1 damage)
- 12 short swords

There is a thick, ancient tapestry (10' long by 6' high, weighing 124 pounds) depicting a tall fighter liveried in green and wielding a golden sword to slay a purple, many-headed beast resembling a hydra. Behind this is a space in the northern wall containing an upright coffin, open, revealing a skeleton of a man in tattered green livery with the majority of his body encompassed in chains. In his right hand is a golden sword (see description hereafter). An inscription on a plaque above the coffin reads, "The Lord Bhane, Interred Alive For His Transgressions Against The Order, City Year 762."

Lord Bhane's Sword: This appears to be a +3 sword with no special abilities; however, if examined closely its golden hilt reveals curious magical inscriptions which if studied for 3 hours straight will allow the sword wielder thereafter to command the guardian statues at **Key #9C** (q.v.) as well as reducing magical or physical attack damage inflicted by constructions of this type (golems, animated statues, et al) by 50%. Both powers are apparent only when the sword is held unsheathed. This sword also shines a dull, yellowish hue when within 100 feet of such beings.

Commentary: The history of Lord Bhane and of those who caused his death will be explored in future PPP **Bottle City** releases which will detail its upper-most levels.

9. Hall of the Gods/Throne Area (Insert ZZ).

Commentary: **Insert ZZ** was merely a reference for me to employ a separate page marked as such. The actual encounter information has been combined here rather than keeping it separated as it was in the original manuscript.

This is a very challenging encounter area, complete with substantial rewards. In the original campaign I made it very tough for players to enter this place by having guardian statues outside the entry doors. I figured that if the players could defeat those that they would have a fighting chance with the encounters to follow. The inspiration for creating this complex and deadly area derives from the fact that my original character, (the **Lord of the Green Dragons™**), had previously enjoyed fighting and/or releasing gods within the Castle. I thought to give the players in our campaign the same "fun" opportunity I had experienced....

Room Description (Read to Players Upon Entering from Key #9C)

You have entered what must be one of the largest halls you have ever gazed upon! You note to the north a great amount of colored water intermingled with light rising into the air,

but that must be hundreds of feet away, which would make the water streams (as seen from this distance) of enormous lengths! Before you are three circular pools--one blue, one green, and one yellow--and to the south are additional pools of colored water leading off in that direction. Even though the walls hold cressets which seemingly burn with magical flames, it is hard to discern the hall's true dimensions, as it must be well-over 100' wide and proceeds north and south as far as the eye can see!

DM Note: The hall is 120' wide and proceeds north and south. Ceiling height remains a constant 100 feet.

Special Areas.

The Fountain of Colors

This large, hexagonal fountain spews forth a combination of nine colors amidst a streaming bright light. They are wide and long, reaching high into the air and profusion of light actually illuminates the ceiling here, giving you a different depth perspective on the overall area.

Even though the fountain is magical, it is display only, and has no useful function. The jets of color soar up to 80' high. Note that the nine colors mentioned correspond exactly to the pool colors below.

The Pools

Each pool is highly magical and of a different size and color. The pool colors are (from N to S, and note map): Dark Blue; Green; Yellow; Purple; Black; Grey; Orange; Red; and White. The bottoms of the pools cannot be seen (even though each is only waist deep) and their surfaces do not cast reflections. Their waters are so calm that not even spells (*gust of wind*, for example) can move them. The water from each pool will magically replenish itself over 24 hours if depleted.

Touching a pool's water causes a feeling of overwhelming dread which reflexively causes the PC to immediately cease touching it. Wading, or immersing oneself, in a pool requires a successful check versus system shock at -30%; failing this immediately drives the PC insane. DMs must ascertain the type of insanity, but mayhem and extreme psychopathic behavior are appropriate outcomes. The insanity is always accompanied by a spiritual unravelment which propels the victim into a constant fit of dementia; death results if the insanity is not cured within 1-4 days.

The Throne Area

DM Map Note on Orange Circular Areas (sub-keys 1-9): These are simple white circles fashioned from



God-Aspect (Template)

As the beings summoned to the thrones are only aspects of each true god, they will differ in strength upon each summoning. The guide to determine their base statistics appears hereafter. Specific powers for each god-aspect appear in their appropriate encounter keys. Note that when a god-aspect is killed, they and their belongings disappear in a mighty profusion of smoke that matching the color of their throne of origin!

AC (magical): 0 to -3 (d4-4 roll)

HD (d8): 13-18 (d6+12 roll)

HP (d4 roll) : 1: average (normal rolls); 2: above average (rolled 1s become 2s); 3: high average (rolled 1s become 2s and 2s become 3s); 4: near-maximum average (1s through 6s become 6s, 7s and 8s normal)

Move (Normal foot speed): 12"-18" (d8 roll, where 1s and 8s = 12" and 2-6 is added to 12" base)

Move (Fly): 30% chance for 12" flight

MR: 5-20% (d4 roll)

Spells (MU): 20% chance for magic-user spells at 10th to 13th level (d4 roll)

Spells (Priest/Clerical): 15% chance for clerical spells at 8th-11th level (d4 roll)

Spells (Other): 10% chance of having other class spells for up to two additional classes (rolled for each class) of the 7th-10th level for each (d4 roll)

Spell-like Powers (twice daily for each, but roll d4 for number known, in sequence): 1) *dimension door*; 2) *invisibility*; 3) *haste*; 4) *mirror image*

Innate Powers (always active): *detect invisibility*; *detect magic*; *infravision*; *locate object*

Given the variability in each god-aspect's powers, you should generate at least two god-aspects of each color before your players breach the Hall of the Gods.

inlaid stone, each circle of a different size. When one is stepped within, the corresponding **Blue** sub-key (A1-A9) should be consulted as the god-aspect related to it manifests on its associated throne (read both **DM Notes** following).

DM Note on Blue Sub-Keys A1-A9: Each blue-coded sub-key (A1-A9) on the map is an empty stone throne upon which a god-aspect manifests when the corresponding (orange circular) map area (1-9) is stepped within—each god-aspect appears on its respective throne and immediately acts to contest the party to the death! In several instances a god-aspect could be summoned at quite a distance

from the party, depending on the circle stepped in and which corresponding throne is thus activated. Note distances and PC positions carefully, as sighting and surprise will become paramount in such cases. God-aspects, no matter the distance between them and the party, will *always* be aware of their summoners' location! **Note that (luckily) only one god-aspect can be summoned and fought at a time.** The same god-aspect can may be summoned multiple times by defeating it and then stepping within the same circle again, though this "tactic" is not recommended (and may perhaps cause some divine disfavor...).

DM Note on Red Sub-keys A1-A9: Each red-coded sub-key (A1-A9) on the map represents differently-sized magical-containment areas which open for one hour upon the defeat of the corresponding god-aspect summoned. For instance, **Key #1 (Small White Circle Less Than 10' in Radius)** has sub-key **Red A1** (located west of the **Fountain of Colors**), which opens for one hour upon defeating Hyero's god-aspect. All openings are 10' square and open on **Key #9's side of the room** and not upon the outside (opposing) walls, so they are immediately accessible if found. These containment rooms **cannot** be accessed in any other manner than as described above. Upon reclosing, each containment room can only be reopened by again defeating the god-aspect related to it. Their contents are delineated in the following grouped keys.

Sub-Key Descriptions

1. Small White Circle Less Than 10' in Radius

A1 (Blue): The god-aspect of Hyero manifests on the throne and moves to attack!

Hyero appears as a stout fighter in cobalt blue chainmail and wields a sword-like weapon fashioned from a lightning bolt!

Cobalt Chainmail: Prevents less than +3 weapons from doing damage; 1/2 damage from lightning.

Lightning Sword: +3 to hit; inflicts 2-20 lightning damage; on max damage knocks the target unconscious for 3-10 rounds.

Hyero's Special Powers: Can deflect one physical blow of his choice per day;

has a 33% chance of deflecting lightning attacks back upon the caster; cannot be slowed.

A1 (Red): *Clear Diamond of Hyero.* A large diamond rests upon a velvet cushion. It radiates immense magic if this is checked for. This must be inset either in a sword or set of armor to realize its various powers. It is worth 10,000 gp if sold for its gem value.

Armor: The wearer becomes resistant to physical damage (such damage is reduced by 1 hp/die inflicted) and he cannot be *slowed*; he also gains +3 on saving throws versus lightning attacks.

Sword: The sword is magically enhanced by +1 to hit and damage, inflicts 1-4 points of lightning damage per hit, and if a natural 20 is rolled, that attack inflicts triple lightning damage (3-12 points).

Once inset Hyero's diamond cannot be removed without totally negating its magical properties.

2. Small White Circle About 10' in Radius

A2 (Blue): The god-aspect of Arathnul manifests on the throne and moves to attack! Arathnul appears as a hulking, red-skinned man in rusty scale mail wielding a large black mace.

Scale Mail: +3; negates *fear* and *mind control* attacks; allows him to *salvage* 20-50% of damage dealt him in a round by either replacing the hp in himself or transferring these as damage added to a successful physical attack in the next round. Note in the latter case that the transferred hp dissipate and are lost if his attack is unsuccessful.

Large Mace: +3 to hit, for 2-16+3 points of damage; hit causes *fear* (save -2 negates); and as long as the mace is held he takes -1 to -3 hp (d6 roll) physical damage per successful hit upon Arathnul, though 1 hp of damage is always achievable.

Arathnul's Special Powers

When his hp are reduced to 50% 1-4 *Simulacra* of Arathnul appear to defend him, manifesting from the strands of his flesh and shed blood. Each takes 21-30 hp, moves at 1/2 his speed in inches, has AC 3 and employs two iron claw attacks (1-6 hp damage each) while fighting as 6th level monsters. They appear as 5' tall red humanoids with blackish tints to their skins. Upon his death they disappear without a trace.

When his hp are reduced to 75% or more, a *Red Vestige of Arathnul* appears, springing forth as another complete entity from his body as if Arathnul had divided himself! This 9th level monster appears as an exact replica of the god-aspect, having 40% of his original hp, moving at 3/4 his speed in inches, having AC 2 and wielding a *mace of blood*. This magic mace has no plus to hit but inflicts 2-12 points of damage and there is a 10% chance that each hit causes unrestrained bleeding in the target for an additional 2 hp/round. This bloodletting can only be abated by a *cure critical wounds* or higher-level spell (*heal*, etc.). The Red Vestige of Arathnul and its equipment automatically disappears upon his death or the death of Arathnul's god-aspect.

A2 (Red): *Red Ruby of Arathnul.* A large ruby rests upon a velvet cushion. It radiates immense magic if this is checked for. This must be inset either in a mace or set of armor to realize its various powers. It is worth 8,000 gp if sold for its gem value.

- *Mace:* Any mace inset with this ruby gains the following properties:

- +2 bonus is added to hit and damage scores; this will not boost a magic mace's plus to hit and damage beyond +4.

- *Devastating Blow:* There is a 10% chance that a blow from this inflicts 1-8 extra points of damage; as well, if the extra damage is 6 points or more, the target is stunned for 1-4 rounds.

- When held, the wielder regenerates lost hp at 2 hp per round.

Metallic Armor: Any suit of metal armor inset with this ruby gains the following additional properties:

- +2 bonus to AC (with a maximum of +5 achievable when coupled with magic armor).

- +10 hp bonus as long as worn. If removed when the PC is damaged to the point of this causing a negative hp score if done, the PC's hp automatically convert to 1 hp instead.

- Reduces all target ACs by -2 in a 10' radius about the wearer.

Once inset Arathnul's ruby cannot be removed without totally negating its magical properties.

3. Small White Circle About 10' in Radius

A3 (Blue): The god-aspect of Trython manifests on the throne and moves to attack! Trython appears as a red-robed man wielding a short spear and a round shield emblazoned with three beastly faces: that of a ferocious hound, a hawk or falcon, and a lizard.

Short Spear: +3 to hit; grants +20% to MR; a successful hit requires a spell save vs. *polymorph* at -2 or the target is changed into a small beast of Trython's choice.

Beast Shield: +2; when Trython is hit in combat there is a 25% chance that his shield is struck as well and that one of the three beast-faces upon it activates (roll 1d6 below). Spells such as *fireball* or *magic missile* will not activate the beast-faces—the strike must involve a physical body part or an immediate extension thereof (*sword chop*, *burning hands* spell, *arrow hit*, *thrown spear*, etc.). Note that only one face may be active at any time. All beast-faces appear to extend from the shield, growing in size to 4' diameter to initiate attacks in defense of Trython. Each appears connected to the shield by a thin, red ethereal cord. They cannot be struck or dispelled as there are no (currently) known measures to combat this magic.



Roll Activated Beast Face

- 1-2: *Ferocious Hound*: For 2-5 rounds this beast-face will attack any being within 20' of Trython. It attacks as a 10th level monster and its bite inflicts 2-16+2 points of damage.
- 3-4: *Hawk (or Falcon)*: For 1-4 rounds this beast-face will attack any being within 20' of Trython by emitting an ear-piercing screech that damages all those in the area of effect for 3-12+3 points of damage (no save).
- 5-6: *Lizard*: For 1-6 rounds this beast-face will attack any being within 30' of Trython by breathing a swath of fire 10' wide, 20' long, and tapering to 5' wide at its base; the flames inflict 2-20 points of damage (save for half).

Trython's Special Powers

Polymorph: Can *polymorph* himself at will; not effected by spells which would change his form.

Special Banishment: Can *dispel* up to 12 HD of summoned creatures at will and still attack in any given round.

Bestial Projections

- *Bay of the Hound*: Trython unleashes a death-curdling howl which causes fear to all those within hearing distance of him (save negates). Making the save still decreases both to hit and AC scores of those hearing it by -2 for the next 2-8 rounds. Trython may initiate this howl twice daily.
- *Falcon Stare*: Trython's eyes become deep and piercing orbs. Anyone within 20' of him and able to see his eyes must save vs. spells to avoid doubt and fear. Failing this lowers effected beings to hit rolls by -4, their damage scores by -2 and their movement by -1" to -3" for the next 2-5 rounds. Anyone already effected by the Falcon Stare who misses a subsequent saving throw becomes *paralyzed* with fright for 2-8 rounds and will not move, cast spells or take any other actions during that time. Both effects have no known cures. Trython may initiate this stare 3 times per day.
- *Lizard's Tongue*: Trython's tongue darts up to 20' from his mouth and attacks a single target. A successful hit requires a save vs. paralyzation at -4. This power can be used indefinitely, at will, in place of his other attacks. The paralyzation lasts for 4-16 rounds.

A3 (Red): Orange Jacinth of Trython. A large jacinth rests upon a velvet cushion. It radiates immense magic if this is checked for. This must be inset either in a short spear or shield to realize its various powers. It is worth 6,000 gp if sold for its gem value.

Short Spear: The wielder gains resistance to spells which would alter his form (+4 to appropriate saving throws) or charm him (+2 to save); the spear may be used once daily to *dispel* by touch those under the effects of a *polymorph* or *charm*. It has no intrinsic plus to hit, but if inset within a magic spear, that weapon retains its own bonuses and/or other

powers in addition to those granted by the gem.

Shield: One of Trython's bestial faces appears on the shield (roll on the above table for which) and functions as described in the explanatory text regarding it. This shield has no intrinsic plus, and inseting it into a magic shield completely negates that shield's former powers.

Once inset Trython's jacinth cannot be removed without totally negating its magical properties.

4. Small White Circle About 12' in Radius

A4 (Blue): The god-aspect of Rhalysch manifests on the throne and moves to attack! Rhalysch appears as a tall man in bone armor, wielding a longsword.

Bone Armor: +2; damaging Rhalysch with physical or magical attacks requires a save vs. paralyzation, or one of the following magic curses effects the one failing this (roll 1d6):

Roll Magical Curser

- 1-2: *Curse of the Sands*: This puts the attacker in a deep sleep for 1-6 rounds.
- 2-4: *Bewildering Curse*: This causes those affected to fumble their weapons (50% chance, rolled each round) during attacks or to miscue on spells (33% chance, rolled each round) for the next 2-6 rounds, essentially ruining both forms of attacks.
- 5-6: *Ruinous Curse*: This causes an overwhelming decrepitude to intrude upon the body and mind, *slowing* the person so affected and also decreasing to hit chances by 1/2 their levels for 1-4 rounds. Spells cast by mages/clerics effected by this have a 25% chance of failure.

Note that the *Curse of the Sands* can be dispelled normally, but no known magic will counteract the latter two curses; not even *remove curse* will help those so afflicted, unless that spell is empowered by a lesser god or greater being.

Longsword: +3 to hit, and inflicts 2-16 points of base damage.

Rhalysch's Special Powers

Rhalysch has two specific gaze attacks which he may use in place of any other attacks in a round:

Gaze of the Grave: Save vs. death, single being only. This may be used 3 times daily.

Gaze of the Mote: Save vs. poison at -2, single being only. Those missing their saves are penetrated by Rhalysch's controlling presence, which manifests in the soul as a tiny particle of his will. Over the next 24 hours they are prone to *suggestions* made by him (save negates) for as long as they remain within a 40' radius of him. Further, they are less likely to finish their physical attacks against him (-2 to hit and damage). This effect is dispellable by reducing Rhalysch's hp to 75% or less (which breaks the psychic connection

between him and all those controlled) or through the use of a *dispel magic* spell cast upon the affected being at Rhalys's current level of magic-use. This power is useable 3 times daily.

A4 (Red): White Opal of Rhalys. A large white opal rests upon a velvet cushion. It radiates immense magic if this is checked for. This must be inset either in specially-contrived bone armor (see text following) or in a longsword to realize its various powers. It is worth 8,000 gp if sold for its gem value.

Bone Armor: This must be fashioned at a cost of 10,000 gp before the gem can be inserted. Acquiring the bone materials, locating an armorer who would be willing to fashion such a suit, and determining the time needed to craft it, must be decided by the respective DM.

Once the opal is inset, the armor becomes a +3 suit equivalent to platemail (AC 0), with the following additional properties:

- Hitting the wearer with a physical attack will cause a mild fear in the attacker (save +2 negates) for 1-3 rounds.
- The wearer becomes resistant to sleep spells or similar powers (+4 to save).
- The wearer can, if he or she is a cleric, command/turn undead at +1 their normal level for success.

Longsword: When inset in a longsword, the weapon becomes +3 with additional powers ascertained by rolling 4 times on the swords magic table (where applicable) and choosing the most powerful result from those generated. These additional properties (but not the additional magical plusses) are imbued in the sword and round out its total powers. Note that the DM may experiment with this formula, and could even make the sword intelligent, etc. as suits their campaign or design needs.

Once inset Rhalys's opal cannot be removed without totally negating its magical properties.

5. Small White Circle About 12' in Radius

A5 (Blue): The god aspect of lahss manifests on the throne and moves to attack!

lahss appears as an old man with a crooked staff and is robed in black. From his neck depends a silver amulet carved in the likeness of a slug.

Crooked Staff: +3 to hit, and inflicts 3-10 points of base damage per hit; envenoms the victim on a natural to hit roll of 19-20. The venom is volatile, causing 6-24 points of poison damage, save for 3/4 damage; allows lahss to strike 2 opponents at once on a natural roll of 16-20, with the initial score determining if a hit is achieved against the second target.

Amulet of the Slug: Allows lahss to launch a wad of spittle up to 30' feet at twice his level for calculating to-hit chances; upon impacting the target, the spittle causes 2-16 points acid damage. This attack

can be used in place of any other attack in a given round but not in combination with same; makes lahss immune to acid and additionally causes 1-3 hp acid damage to any opponent who strikes his person through a non-ranged melee attack, or 2-6 points of damage to any opponent who directly strikes the wearer with flesh (monk open hand attack, touch attack for spells, etc.).

lahss's Special Powers

lahss has four magical faces, and he may choose to portray one as a single attack in any round; all of these are highly magical (spell saves at -3). These magical "expressions" can affect anyone concentrating attacks upon him within a 120 degree arc of his forefront and up to 20' away. The effects of these expressions are not accumulative, so while suffering under one an afflicted PC may not be adversely affected by a different one until the initial expression's effect(s) has lapsed. Note that some of the same expressions when portrayed back-to-back can compound where noted; even so, none of the four expressions' effects can overlap the others, as indicated above.

- **Vile Sneer:** 10 hp magical damage, with a further save vs. spells which if failed slows the target(s) for 2-8 rounds. The effects of this expression *are compoundable* if used again upon a being already effected by it.
- **Maniacal Rage:** Causes rout in the target(s) for 3-18 rounds, allowing lahss to strike those affected for +4 damage per hit. The effects of this expression *are not compoundable* if used again upon a being already effected by it.
- **Faceless Visage:** A thick veil of flesh that entirely obscures his prior features encases lahss' face; this featureless visage afflicts opponents with omnipresent anxiety and doubt for 1-4 rounds. During this time lahss' AC increases by +4 and physical attacks against him score only 2/3 damage. The *duration* of this expression *is compoundable* if used again upon a being already effected by it, but this subsequent use will not increase either lahss' already active AC bonus or his damage reduction bonus beyond those proportions noted above.
- **Rot:** lahss' face transforms into one entirely cadaverous and worm-infested, which is repellant to those missing their initial spell saves. Those negatively affected by this transfiguration must roll a second spell save vs. *fear*-2 over each of the next 1-4 rounds. Failure means that they will not attempt to grapple, strike or in any way touch lahss; spellcasters affected by this revulsion suffer a 50% chance that the spells they initiate against lahss fail before conclusion, resulting in the loss of the spell. The effects of this expression *are not compoundable* if used again upon a being already effected by it.

A5 (Red): Black Opal of lahss. A large black opal rests upon a velvet cushion. It radiates immense magic if this is checked for. This must be inset either

in a staff or plain amulet to realize its various powers. It is worth 8,000 gp if sold for its gem value.

Staff: This adds the additional properties of a *snake staff* to any staff inset with this stone.

Plain Amulet: This protects the wearer from acid attacks by reducing the damage by 50%; additionally, the amulet inflicts 1-3 hp acid damage to any opponent who strikes the wearer via a non-ranged melee attack, or 2-6 points of damage to any opponent who directly strikes the wearer with flesh (monk open hand attack, touch attack for spells, etc.).

Once inset lahss's black opal cannot be removed without totally negating its magical properties.

6. Medium White Circle About 15' in Radius

A6 (Blue): The god-aspect of Sestian manifests on the throne and moves to attack! Sestian appears as a medium sized human in black robes interwoven with many star-like images.

Sestian's Robe: Adds an additional 20% MR (see template sidebar); negates all lightning or energy attacks; emits a "chill" field which inflicts 2-9 points of cold damage to anyone within a 10' radius of him. There is no save against this deep chill summoned from space and no known resistances counter it.

Sestian's Wand: +4 to hit; hit jolts the target with a massive stroke of heat lightning causing 3-18+6 points of damage; on a natural roll of 19-20, a thunderous sound occurs, and all within hearing distance (to a maximum radius of 20 feet) are deafened for 2-5 rounds (no save), stunned for 2-5 rounds (save -2 negates), and take 2-12 points of additional shock damage.

Sestian's Special Powers

Immune to stun, deafening, blinding, and cold attacks; +4 damage versus summoned creatures (via his physical or magical attacks); creates thunder once per day by clapping his hands together, which deafens for 2-8 rounds (no save), stuns for 2-8 rounds (save -2 negates), and inflicts 2-20 points of shock damage to all those within 30 feet of him.

A6 (Red): *Purple Oriental Amethyst of Sestian.* A large purple amethyst rests upon a velvet cushion. It radiates immense magic if this is checked for. This must be inset either in a magic wand or plain ring to realize its various powers. It is worth 8,000 gp if sold for its gem value.

Magic Wand: This immediately boosts the wand's previous magic powers by doubling its charge

capacity and restoring its charges in full (based on the new capacity). It also allows the person wielding it to strike at +2. A successful hit jolts the target with heat lightning for 2-12+1 points of damage.

Ring: When inset into a plain, non-magical ring the ring takes upon the properties of a *ring of shooting stars*, but with double the usages, effects, durations, etc. as described under a normal ring of that type. If added to an already-magical ring, all of its original properties are nullified and replaced with those described above.

Once inset Sestian's amethyst cannot be removed without totally negating its magical properties.

7. Medium White Circle About 17' in Radius

A7 (Blue): The god-aspect of Haxor manifests on the throne and moves to attack!

He appears as a six-armed, ogre-sized human wielding a very large black shield in two arms and an impressive hooked spear with two other hands. His two other hands remain free.

Black Shield: +3; reduces damage by -2 hp per hit; +4 save vs. poison attacks which inflict 1/2 or no damage; while held cannot be blinded.

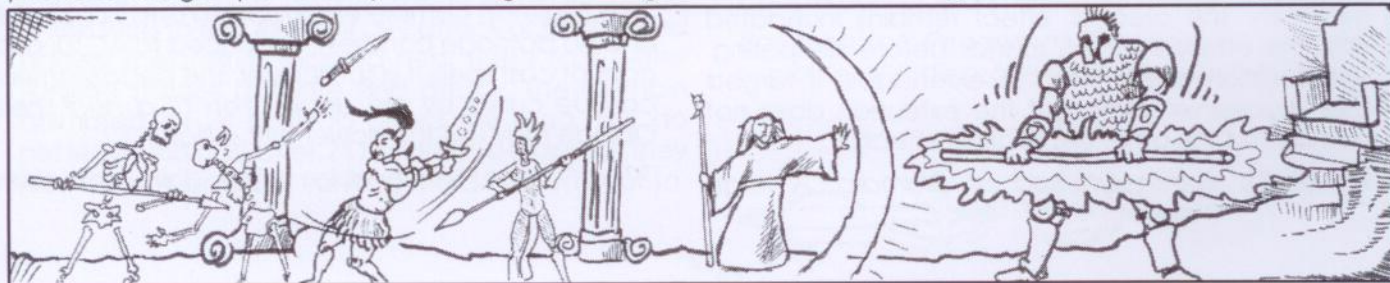
Hooked Spear: +3; does 1-12 base damage per hit; a successful hit allows Haxor to hook the target's armor if he so wishes; and this successful hook gives his next round of attack a +4 to hit modifier that does 2-24 points of damage. If the second hit scores, the target is pinned or lifted by Haxor and automatically skewered each round following this (3rd and succeeding rounds) for maximum damage (24 points). The only way to break the hook is if Haxor disengages it himself or if the hooked PC sheds his armor, the latter taking 2-4 rounds to accomplish while so engaged. Note that Haxor cannot hook unarmored opponents, against whom the spear can only inflict regular damage.

Haxor's Special Powers

Haxor is immune to backstabbing in any manner, cannot be surprised, and has a 50% chance of always going first in the initiative sequence (rolled before each initiative roll).

A7 (Red): *Yellow Fire Opal of Haxor.* A large fire opal rests upon a velvet cushion. It radiates immense magic if this is checked for. This must be inset either in a shield or spear to realize its various powers. It is worth 8,000 gp if sold for its gem value.

Shield: Grants a +2 defensive bonus (though it will not increase magical shields beyond +4); reduces



damage by -1 hp per hit; +2 vs. poison saves; the wielder is blinded for only one-half normal duration, or, if the blindness is permanent, for only 30 base turns minus his constitution score in turns.

Spear: Grants a +2 bonus to hit and damage (to a maximum of +4 for magical spears); inflicts double damage on natural rolls of 17-20.

Once inset Haxor's fire opal cannot be removed without totally negating its magical properties.

8. Large White Circle About 20' in Radius

A8 (Blue): The god-aspect of Diamara manifests on the throne and moves to attack! Diamara appears as a heavily green-scaled man wielding a trident and buckler.

Trident: Scores 3-12 points base damage, with +3 to hit and damage; each tine has a special power, listed hereafter.

- *Left:* Double damage vs. demi-humans and humanoids.
- *Middle:* Hit pierces defenses for 1-6 additional points of damage.
- *Right:* Hit charms target (spell save negates).

When a target is hit, roll on the table below to determine how many tines affect the victim:

d20 roll	# of tines that hit
1-4	1 tine (Left)
5-14	2 tines (Left/Middle)
15-20	3 tines (All)

Buckler: This +3 buckler deflects up to 50 normal missile attacks launched against Diamara in a round, and negates the to-hit and damage bonuses for magical arrows or bolts up to +3. It also reduces damage from *magic missiles* by 50%.

Diamara's Special Powers

Shell: Diamara may cause the scales of his skin to grow and encapsulate him in an impenetrable shell which deflects physical and magical damage for 6 turns. While in this shell he regenerates 6 hp/turn, but cannot otherwise launch attacks. He may use this power once daily.

Obscene Effusion: Twice daily Diamara may exude a horrid greenish-yellow vaporous gas in a 30' radius. This rancid essence causes all those within it to save vs. poison at -2 or fight at 1/2 their original levels and makes all spellcasters who likewise miss their saves incapable of casting spells, such circumstances lasting for 18 base rounds minus the victim's constitution scores in rounds, with a one-round minimum. The area of effect remains inundated with the effusion for 2-5 rounds before dissipating. The duration of this effect is extendable if targets miss successive saves, but the extension does not compound the other debilitating effects.

A8 (Red): *Green Emerald of Diamara.* A large

emerald rests upon a velvet cushion. It radiates immense magic if this is checked for. This must be inset either in a trident or buckler to realize its various powers. It is worth 8,000 gp if sold for its gem value.

Trident: This gains 2 of the 3 powers that Diamara's own trident has; roll on the "tines" table above to determine which, re-rolling duplicates.

Buckler: This +2 buckler deflects up to ten normal missiles launched at the wielder in one round, as well as negating the to hit and damage bonuses of +1 arrows or +1 bolts. It also reduces damage from magic missiles by 1 hp/missile, with a score of "1" being reduced to no damage.

Once inset Diamara's emerald cannot be removed without totally negating its magical properties.

9. Large White Circle About 25' in Radius

A9 (Blue): The god-aspect of Obihae manifests on the throne and moves to attack! Obihae appears as a man with two faces, with each being 50% exposed on the front of the head and wrapping about each side, so that two eyes (one from each face) appear wide-set apart in the front with the other two being located near each temple. He appears to have no ears but has one mouth and nose positioned normally. Obihae wears splint mail of many-colored bands and wields a golden staff.

Splint Mail: +3; MR +20% (see god aspect template for normal MR); hitting his mail (80% chance on a successful melee attack) causes *confusion* (save negates).

Golden Staff: +3; base 2-9 points of damage; a successful strike teleports the target in a random direction and up to 100 feet, but not into solid matter (save negates); constantly emits a magical dampening field in a 10' radius that has a 25% chance per round of negating enemy magic items within it (roll by PC per item, or by group, DM's choice). Effected items are negated for 2 rounds.

Obihae's Special Powers

Sundering Bash: This power is used in combination with his staff and if it is lost this power cannot be employed. Upon striking a target, Obihae can immediately implement this extra power for 8 points of additional damage. There is also a 25% chance that the victim is *mentally sundered* by the hit, causing a combination of stunning, confusion and partial delusions. There is no save against this mental bedazzlement, which lasts 2-5 rounds. During this time the effected being is reduced to 3" in movement, is only capable of action 20% of the time, is almost completely unable to attack (-8 to hit and no damage bonuses), is reduced to AC10, and cannot cast spells if a spellcaster. The bedazzlement can be cured by the application of a *heal* spell. Obihae may use this power thrice daily.

"Root" Foot: Employable twice daily, this roots

Obihae to his current position, from which he cannot be forcibly moved, borne over, or in any other way unwillingly moved. This also increases his AC by +2 and his hp by +10. The power lasts 2-8 rounds.

A9 (Red): Blue Sapphire of Obihae. A large sapphire rests upon a velvet cushion. It radiates immense magic if this is checked for. This must be inset either in mail armor or a staff to realize its various powers. It is worth 8,000 gp if sold for its gem value.

Mail Armor (any): +2 AC bonus (to a maximum of +4 if already magical armor); grants 5-10% variable MR per day for 1 year and then the power wanes to +2 saves vs. spells. The MR may be reconstituted for another year by a quest (DM's choice) and the sacrifice of 50,000-100,000 gp in gems and/or magic (again, DM's choice) to the god of magic.

Staff (any): Makes any staff +3 to hit and damage and cancels any former magic properties it may have had; as long as the staff is held allows the wielder to cast an additional one each of 1st-4th level spells per day; allows the wielder to *polymorph self* at will.

Once inset Obihae's sapphire cannot be removed without totally negating its magical properties.

9A/9B. Brass Fonts.

The waters in these two magical, 30' circular by 6' high, fonts ferociously bubble when the god-aspects here are summoned and fought and cease doing so when none are in the room. Their water temperatures reach and exceed 300 degrees. They have no alternate function. Each weighs, with water, over 10,000 pounds.

DM Map Note: There are no map graphics for these, so each of their placements should be centered as near as possible upon their key numbers.

9C. Hall of Kings (Guardian Statues).

Commentary: There are no statues here other than the two indicated on the map that flank the entry doors (the "doughnut-like" graphics). The arrow, and reference to **Statues** on the map titling, in fact refers to them alone.

Upon Entering the Hall:

You enter a long hall 40' wide. Its floor is inlaid with black marble and tessellated with a golden design of nine nondescript faces spread along a compressed and elongated ring covering the majority of floor space here.

DM Note: When the party moves to within 40' of the entry doors to **Key #9**—or if any attack or spell is used against the statues located near these (q.v.)—the flanking statues animate and attack. They remain animated for 24 hours to guard the area, but do not leave this hall; after 24 hours have elapsed, they resume their positions flanking the doors just prior to

the expiation of this cycle. Read the following player text:

Two 12' high stone-like golems step forward from their once-inert positions flanking two large bronze valves. Their eyes sparkle with a variegated scheme of colors and each wields a golden bardiche!

DM Note re: Using Lord Bhane's Sword: If the players have Lord Bhane's sword in their possession (see **Key #8**), it starts glowing a very strong yellowish hue and emits a noticeable whining sound while rattling itself where stored or otherwise sequestered! If drawn forth and used to command the golems, they cease attacking and resume their positions flanking the doors; as they do so the doors open inward, allowing entry to **Key #9**.

The only other way to bypass these "impenetrable doors" is to destroy the stone guardians; and when the last of these crumples and falls, the doors likewise open, allowing entry. No magic spells or physical attacks will allow entry through these, including transference spells, like *teleport* (see Leaving the Bottle City Complex in the introduction) or *dimension door*, for example.

Battle Aftermath Note: If the pulverized remains of the "stone golems" are carefully examined it will be noted that their composition defies classification! The stone is a variety of **tarbal**, which is quarried at secretive locations upon the *World of Kalibruhn™* for its use by artificers in fashioning magical beings like the "stone" golems encountered here.

Their bardiches are useable if not removed from the Bottle City; upon their removal they crumble into fine dust.

Tarbal (Stone) Golems (2): AC 1, HD 12, hp 80 each, Mv 12"; immune to fire; 1/2 damage from lightning; immune to normal weapons; weapons break on impact chance: normal 100%, +1 50%, +2 10%, +3 5%; Dmg 1-12 (magic bardiche) plus special (see below). Also note special powers of these bardiches which effect the golems' adjusted ACs, etc.

Bardiche of the Centurion: This golden weapon is capable of hitting any creature which requires up to a +5 weapon, but it confers no bonus to hit or damage. The wielder gains a +1 AC bonus, ignores a total of 20 hp of damage taken per day (upon each attack, divisible by the wielder's choice into lots of 2 or more, up to a grand total of 20), and does *double damage* on natural to hit rolls of 18-20.

Bardiche of Rendering: This golden weapon is capable of hitting any creature which requires up



to a +5 weapon, but it confers no bonus to hit or damage. The wielder gains a +2 AC bonus, inflicts *double damage* on natural to-hit rolls of 17-19, and *triple damage* on a natural to-hit roll of 20.

10A. Bottle in Last Room.

Commentary: There is no actual Key #10 proper, as would be suggested by a #10A. While adding in a specific encounter at #10B I changed Key #10 to #10A. This will be noted at both key numbers on the map which have a black penciled-in **A & B** respectively. Such is the way of last-minute design work.

Regarding the encounter itself, this is the old "bait and trap" in which PCs are dumbfounded by their lack of gain after endeavoring to arrive at "the end," while the return path is now found to be guarded by monsters summoned by the PCs messing with the "bait." Also note that this encounter tends to channel PCs 1 or 2 at a time through the trap doors and adjoining tunnels, and further lessens the choice of their using area affect spells in the enclosed and cramped spaces, whereas the summoned monsters are at an advantage as the party clammers one at a time up through the trap doors. I must have been in an excellent mood while designing that day....

Note that I originally had the PCs enter the bottle here and contest the wizard inside it to trigger the magical effects, which varied each time. This encounter has been slightly rewritten from the original, but retains its former nuances and flavor (and then some).

In keeping with the way we "built upon" many Castle encounters at that time, a lot of original encounter matter was rewritten, stemming from on-the-fly ad-libbing, with resulting additions being duly noted "in stone" thereafter for the various encounters this technique was used with. This allowed us as DMs a greater range of imaginative application, since we would often change encounters for a second stab at them by the PCs (i.e., having defeated said wizard, PCs might later return to find his apprentice or other enraged cohort now present and manning the defenses, etc.). This technique allowed us to craft specific challenges that the party had fixated upon during the campaign **rather than detailing everything in advance**. We thus mitigated the risk that many pre-detailed portions of the Castle would be subsequently ignored by the PCs. Call it "creative management," but it worked for all involved because it placed the **adventure emphasis** on where the players wanted to be and not so much on where we preferred them to be.

DM Note: The PCs will here discover a series of circular rooms, each with a single 5' square trap door in its floor. When opened, the space below each of the trap doors reveals a small ladder descending 15' to a second floor. In each case, after descending, the PCs arrive in a similar-sized hexagonal room with a 5' wide passage leading out of it to the NW. These corridors in turn connect to all the hexagonal/circular rooms in the series, as noted on the map.

The very last circular room is a dead end with no way to go but back, but in its NE part, set against the wall and bolted to the floor, is a bottle similar in shape, but not in size, to the one the PCs touched to enter the Bottle City.

Only one player at a time may ascend or descend a ladder; and the sub-corridor widths similarly negate any attempts to place more than two PCs abreast in these. DMs should note weapon lengths and maneuvering space when and if combat occurs in any of these cramped quarters.

You see a 2' high by 1/2' round bottle set against the NE wall of this room. There is no apparent exit from this room besides the trap door.

The bottle appears to have a very tiny man inside it, perhaps clothed in wizard attire!

The bottle is indestructible, unmovable and radiates a strong magic of an indeterminate sort if this is checked for. It possess a multi-faceted *anti-magic shield* and cannot be assailed, magically entered, or moved through spell use. Touching it in any way alerts the wizard inside and he triggers three immediate and secret magical effects (1-3, below):

- 1) Four hoard trolls are summoned to the *middle room*, which the PCs will encounter upon their return, since they must pass through that room to exit this maze-like area. As only one PC at a time can negotiate entering the middle room by way of the trap door, the hoard trolls will be at an advantage. Two trolls may attack the climber as he first appears when breaching the 'door, making entering the room very difficult for the remaining PCs in train behind him! The hoard trolls fight to the death, even jumping one at a time into the room beneath their original position to pursue PCs retreating from them!

Hoard Trolls (4): AC: 2, HD 9, hp 44, 42x2, 40; Mv 12"; Dmg 1-8 x 2 (iron claws), 1-6, plus poison (bite, plus save vs. poison or take 1-8 hp poison damage); immune to cold; 1/2 damage from lightning, double damage from acid; +1 or better weapons to hit; regenerates 1-4 hp per round; acid damage in excess of 50% of original hp stops their regenerative process for 1-3 days.

Legend (roll for a 15% chance for each PC to have heard the following legend about these creatures): These seemingly-regular trolls guard treasure hoards and are rumored to be specially-mutated by powerful beings to do so, oftentimes being imbued with extra powers that heighten their combat abilities to an extreme degree.

- 2) A magical chest is summoned to the *first room*, atop the trap door there, essentially blocking it with its weight and size. Due to its magical nature and heavy contents (q.v.), the chest can only be

moved by cloud giant strength or better, and then only slid safely aside without otherwise triggering the poison gas trap upon it. Striking the chest's bottom or hurling the chest so that it crashes upon the room's stonework automatically breaks the trap seal and a magical poison gas pours forth which will, over the next 12 turns, eventually make its way to all interconnected rooms in the series, no matter if the PCs close the trap doors to these, as it is that pervasive. This occurrence also has the undesired effect of consuming 1/2 of the remaining air here! The poison gas lasts for 2-20+10 hours and cannot be dispelled (though a *gust of wind* will cut its duration in half). It causes 4-16 hp of damage per turn exposed to it (save for half).

Giant Chest (6' long x 6' wide x 3' deep) : The chest weighs 2,000 pounds and contains 6,001 gp; 13,453 sp; 4,065 cp, 79 500 gp gems; 4 *potions of greater healing* (heals 6-24 points each), a wand of acid globs, and the **stone key**.

Wand of Acid Globs (50 charges): Casts an acid glob up to 120' range which bursts in a 20' radius area, spraying all within it for 3-24 points of acid damage, no save. The residual acid forms a very shallow pool in the burst area, causing 1-3 points additional damage per round for 6 turns to those beings remaining in it. The wand can be fully recharged by immersing it in a pool of acid for 1 hour. Retrieving it thereafter may be problematical....

Stone Key (minor artifact) (25 charges): This appears to be a larger than normal skeleton key fashioned from granite, and approximately 6" in length. Its magical abilities, and the charges expended by using these, are:

- *Passwall* (1 charge). As the spell, but at the caster's level.
- *Dispel Wall of Stone (or similar)* (1 charge). This dispels on touch any magically produced walls of stone up to 24th level in origin.
- *Stone Lock* (3 charges). A *stone lock* is an extraordinary power equatable to a *stone shape* and *wizard lock* being cast simultaneously. Its use also adds other specific magical attributes to the effected area as described hereafter.

This power is initiated when the key is used to touch an area to be transformed. It can affect up to 100 cubic feet of wood, metal or stone, essentially making it magical and seamless stone. There must be such substances available in the whole area to be transmuted for this power to work. The area thereafter is transformed to magical stone, which the key-wielder can freely pass through as if it wasn't there. A *stone-locked* area cannot otherwise be breached by magical or physical attacks, cannot be bypassed by magical transportation spells (c.f., *dimension door*), and even *passwall* and similar rock-

effecting spells fail when used against it.

Each *stone-locked* area lasts as many days as the wielder of the key has levels after which time the effected area reverts to its normal substance and shape. Using two successive *stone locks* (6 charges) on a singular area makes the *stone lock permanent* until dispelled.

- *Dispel Stone Lock* (no charge expenditure). This dispels the *stone lock* power as previously described; the key is touched to the area's surface which is automatically transformed back to its original substance and shape.

N.B. It is believed that this subtle artifact's powers are expandable by those who crafted the device and its attendant magic. Research will point to a clan of gnomish artificers long-thought extinct who at one time contrived such magic deep in the earth near the most ancient of volcanic fires. DMs must devise a subterranean quest for those PCs wishing to recharge this device, as only by bringing it into contact with its fires of origin can it be reconstituted.

3) The entry door in the *first room* transforms into solid, and impassable rock that is only openable by use of the *stone key's dispel stone lock* power (q.v.). The *stone key* can be found in the previously noted chest (q.v.).

Note that this last effect essentially entombs the PCs without a renewable air supply, except as remains in the rooms and corridors here. For an average party of 4-6 this equals 3 days of remaining air. DMs should increase/decrease that time proportionately if the number of PCs is less than 4-6 or if it exceeds this number, but with no more than four days of air and no less than one being available in any instance.

Upon defeating all of these encounters the PCs hear an explosion followed by a horrendous scream! If they return to the last room and view the bottle they will see that it is now but a melted lump of charred glass. And the tiny wizard form who was once inside it is no where to be seen... .

10B. Four Invisible Stalkers.

DM Note: Unless the party has *detect invisibility* powers active this 20' x 20' room appears empty with a door to the east, in the north corner.

Four invisible stalkers have been positioned here by **Key #11's** forces (q.v.) to guard the passage to their sanctum. Two are located in the SE corner, one is positioned before the eastern door, and the remaining one is in the NW corner. As the PCs commit to crossing the room and are halfway across its width, all of these creatures attack from surprise, with the two to the SE attacking the rear rank and flanks!

Invisible Stalkers (4): AC: 3, HD 8, hp 32, 35, 37, 41; Mv 12"; Dmg 4-16.

Important Afternote: Carefully read the matter at **Key #11** inclusive noting the information regarding the readiness and tactics of its occupants and the notation concerning the pit (marked on map) encountered prior to entering that area.

11. "Many" Men.

DM Note: The many men in this room include the mirror images cast by the wizard, as he is aware of the death of his guardians at **Key #10B**. As soon as the party's presence is made known, either by their falling into or skirting the pit just south of here (see map; either case triggers an alert-oriented *magic mouth*), he casts *mirror image*. This group cannot be surprised due to these prior warnings. Their positions and special tactics are noted below. In addition to the magic they carry, each has a side pouch containing 8-80 mixed gems, 10-60 pp and 4-40 gp.

Read to Party Upon Entering this Room:

You see a lavishly-bedecked room with full-length carpets, wall hangings, tables, beds and other diverse objects. There are many men here, all appearing out of its long and shadowy depths to the north. Several appear to be spell-casters preparing or mumbling spells!

This group is a sect of religious fanatics who have embraced whatever evil power source they could since being made prisoner here. Their immediate evil alliances are centered upon the two artifact pictures present at **Keys #11A** and **#11B** (read those carefully). They will not surrender, but as fanatics prefer to die with their beliefs rather than be made slaves or sacrificial victims. Likewise, prisoners taken by them will be sacrificed to the snake picture.

Wizard, 14th Level: AC 4 (*bracers of defense*), HD 14, hp 35, Mv 12" Dmg 1-4+2 (+2 *dagger*), *potion of invisibility*, *wand of polymorph* (22 charges); spells: 5/5*/5/4/4/2/1.

Special Tactics: Will cast a *mirror image* before the party enters the room; these are the "many men" initially seen by the PCs.

"The Lord," 10th Level Fighter: AC 0 (+2 *platemail* and shield), HD 10, hp 52, Mv 12"; Dmg 1-8+3 (+3 *longsword*); *potion of speed*, *ring of fire resistance*.

Special Tactics: Will stand near the efreet picture (q.v.) and let attackers come to him, invoking the power of the picture; will consume his *speed potion* before initiating combat.

"The Evil High Priest," 8th Level Cleric: AC 2 (+1 *chainmail* and +1 *shield*), HD 8, hp 43, Mv 12"; Dmg 2-7+2 (+2 *flail*); 2 *potions of greater-healing* (6-24); *infernal ring of spell turning*. Spells: 5/4/3/2.

Special Tactics: Stands within range of the snake

picture (q.v.) and targets spell-casters with his spells while supporting the wizard and fighter when needed.

Infernal Ring of Spell Turning: This gold ring has a spiralling onyx figure of a snake rising 1" from its top. Besides having the properties of a standard ring of spell turning, it has the following additional properties **when within 100'** of the Snake Picture artifact (q.v.):

- Once per day the wearer can fully-turn a spell aimed at him with 100% efficiency if the caster was of good alignment. This passive power makes the ring wielder aware beforehand if the directed spell is of good origin.
- Grants a +1 save vs. spells cast by beings of good alignment.
- Once per day, allows the wearer to absorb the energy from a spell cast by those of good alignment so that in the next round he can double the effects of one of his own spells. If the energy is not immediately used by casting a spell in the following round it dissipates and is lost.

If the Snake Picture is destroyed this ring loses its special powers and is thereafter just a normal *ring of spell turning*.

11A. Efreet Picture.

The picture of a lone efreet occupies a 6' high x 3' wide frame of brass upon the western wall, just south of its mid point.

Any being who is hostile to the room inhabitants and comes within 10' of the picture triggers its defensive magic (roll a 1-6).

Roll Defensive Magic

- 1-2: 10' gouts of flame strike the closest two beings for 2-24 points of fire damage (no save).
- 3-4: The Efreet's eyes emit two concentrated beams of fire which meet at a single point upon one target. The target is allowed a spell save at -2 to avoid the beams. Failure results in 20 points fire damage (no save) and the target is lit with a glowing, red *infernal light* similar to a *faerie fire*. This immediately grants evil beings a +2 bonus to attack and damage against targets so outlined. For as long as this condition persists it is impossible for those so affected to hide in shadows, turn *invisible*, or otherwise obscure their physical form, as this hellish light outlines their body and reveals their true location. The beams have a range of 100' and cannot pass through obstructions. The *infernal light* effect lasts for 3-24 rounds.
- 5-6: A large efreet manifests and steps from the picture to physically assault nearby attackers! The picture afterward appears empty and will no longer trigger further magical powers. If the efreet is killed the picture remains blank for 7 days.



after which time it is restored as when first seen (unless destroyed, and see below for that), with its attendant powers, etc. in full force once again.

Summoned Efreet: AC (special): 2; HD (special): 10+3; hp 47; Mv 12" plus special*; Dmg 1-12+3 (+3 *giant scimitar*); *special powers (see your source book).

Destroying the Picture: The picture, though an artifact, can be destroyed (AC 9, hp 47). However, as the force which created it is evil to the core, upon its destruction a whirling fiery vortex appears on the remaining canvas. **All beings** within 10' of the picture (notwithstanding previous alliances or alignments) must make spell saves to avoid being pulled into this vortex and consumed in fire. PCs are automatically and irrevocably destroyed in this instance, short of a *wish* or divine intervention to bring them back. The efreet, if present, disappears in a red flash when this happens. As well, all malign effects attributed to the picture are canceled and previous damage taken from its fire attacks is automatically healed by 50% of the total inflicted in each case. Removing the picture from the wall also triggers its destruction with the same results as outlined above. The vortex disappears after 1 round, leaving the charred remains of the picture frame behind.

11B. Snake Picture.

The picture of a coiled and ferocious-looking snake occupies a 6' high x 3' wide frame of brass upon the eastern wall, just south of its mid-point. The snake's back scales display weird geometric designs as part of its natural markings.

This picture is a contact aperture to the enigmatic deity known as *Yhyg*, as well as the source of power for the evil high priest's *ring of infernal spell turning* which he wields (q.v.). Though an artifact it can easily be destroyed through normal means (AC 8, 68 hp). Once destroyed, the ring as noted above loses part of its power. The evil high priest will immediately redirect his attacks against those attacking the picture, and will even close to melee them should he run out of attack spells!

When the picture is destroyed:

The snake image disappears from its canvas, but not before several large rectangular fragments--perhaps tablets--of stone fall to the floor from those parts representing the geometric designs on its back!

12. The Brain Flayer.

You find the dead but non-decomposed corpse of a brain flayer here. Its body radiates a noticeable green aura.

Fragments of *Yhyg*: There are 3 fragments each 3 feet long and 1 foot in width. Three equally-spaced pictographs are engraved upon each tablet. Players may require sage/bard consultation, research time, or divination spells to deduce the proper history and powers of these tablets.

1st Tablet: Displays 1) several robed people lifting a large flat stone; 2) they are standing with the stone before a structure resembling a temple; 3) they are inserting the stone into a vacant spot in a wall.

2nd Tablet: Displays 1) the same robed people are removing the stone from a wall; 2) they are with the stone in a spacious room; 3) they are inserting the stone into a vacant spot in a floor.

3rd Tablet: Displays 1) several robed people placing the stone upright, outside under the stars; 2) the same people are setting a second upright stone in conjunction with the first, forming a pyramidal shape with two faces; 3) the same people are setting a third upright stone in conjunction with the two previously placed, forming a shape with three faces; a pair of serpent's are appearing in the background.

The pictograms depict a complex ritual involving the tablets, by placing one in a wall (perhaps relating in kind to the picture these tablets fell from) for 120 days; the second into a floor for 120 days; and the last outside under the stars for another 120 days; after which the latter placement is added to by the other two tablets to form the pyramid as suggested in the 3rd tablet's third episode.

Once inset, the first tablet will protect a structure, and up to 360 square yards of its grounds, from any invasion of snakes of any kind or size. There is a 25% chances that serpentkind such as drakes, dragons, nagas, etc., will avoid entering an area so protected, though this avoidance check is only rolled once per visiting creature to determine their individual dispositions. Note that any type of serpent-kind that is magically summoned within this area, except for those summoned by members of the immediate household, will flee this area when this is done, such is the fear generated by the emanations of *Yhyg*!

The second tablet will provide a +4 saving throw bonus against all serpent-generated poisonous- or magical attacks, but only to those individual who partook in the ritual to inset the tablet into the floor. These extra resistances cease when anyone so protected moves beyond the area of effect noted in tablet #1, and are restored upon returning within the same.

The third tablet is used to attract *Yhyg*, and when the 3 tablets are joined it will summon him for 120 days. *Yhyg* is a powerful lesser god, though very evil, and he will destroy those of other alignments who do not immediately change their alignments on the spot to worship him! *Yhyg* appears as represented in the snake picture.

Publisher Note: Publisher Note: *Yhyg*'s full history, statistics, and image will be added as a web enhancement on *Pied Piper*'s site preceding a future product which further details him.

the aura or the body is touched, an image of the brain flayer manifests above the body and speaks the following rhyme:

*The way is barred for my return,
And if you ease my plight in turn,
I will assuage your endless fight,
And help you with **your** future plight.*

If the PCs remove the body to the outside world, it disappears, and they each receive a greenish aura which lasts for as many days as each has intelligence points.

This *Aura of the Mind* grants +2 saves against any spells or powers which would effect the mind. Magic-using PCs also gain +1 to both intelligence and wisdom scores for double the time period noted above.

13A-E. Sage Room-Corridors.

Each of these long corridors contains at its center point a single sage sitting on a mat while contemplating the space before them. The double doors apparent at the end of each corridor can only be opened if each one wills it.

A. Lightning Sage. This man is robed in white and black and is a master of lightning who contemplates the world's energies and how to harness these. For 100,000 gp sacrificed to the god of storms at any nearby temple, he will teach a mage how to increase their lightning spell attacks by +1 per HD; he may also teach priests, fighters, and thieves how to add +1 lightning damage to their main melee weapons, though these must be for the most part made of metal. If attacked he immolates in a self-destructive burst of *chain lightning* inflicting 16 HD of damage (spell save for half damage for each stroke) to anyone within a 10' radius.

B. Fire Sage. This man is robed in red and orange and is a master of fire who contemplates the world's many conflagrations and how to harness these. For 100,000 gp sacrificed to the god of fire or volcanoes at any nearby temple, he will teach a mage how to increase their fire spell attacks by +1 per HD; he may also teach priests, fighters, and thieves how to add +1 fire damage to their main melee weapons, though these must be for the most part made of metal. If attacked he immolates in a self-destructive burst of many-colored fires, inflicting 22 HD of damage (spell save for half damage) to anyone within a 20' radius.

C. Ice Sage. This man is robed in blues and whites and is a master of ice who contemplates the world's icy regions and how to control these. For 100,000 gp sacrificed to the god of ice (or winter) at any nearby temple, he will teach a mage how to increase their

ice spell attacks by +1 per HD; he may also teach priests, fighters, and thieves how to add +1 ice damage to their main melee weapons. If attacked he explodes in a self-destructive burst of ice shards and hoary frost, inflicting 20 HD of damage (no save) to anyone within a 10 foot radius of him.

D. Earth Sage. This man is robed in brown and is a master of earth who contemplates the entire world's mineral matter and how to manipulate it. For 100,000 gp sacrificed to the god of earth (or dwarves or gems/minerals) at any nearby temple, he will teach a mage how to increase their earth spell attacks by +1 per HD; he may also teach priests, fighters, and thieves how to add +2 raw (non-magical) damage to their main melee weapons, though these must be composed entirely of metal or stone. If attacked he explodes in a massive self-destructive eruption of rock, doing 18 HD of damage (no save) to anyone within a 10 foot radius of him.

E. Magic Sage. This man is naked and is a master of magic who contemplates the entire universe while seeking to manipulate its hidden energies. For 200,000 gp sacrificed to the god of magic at any nearby temple, he will teach a mage how to increase each of the four elemental spell types (as noted under each previous sage) so that attacks by these all gain +1 per HD; he may also teach priests, fighters, and thieves how to add +3 magic damage to their main melee weapons, in effect making them +3 weapons if normal, or increasing them to a maximum of +6 if they had magic plusses to begin with. If attacked he immolates in a self-destructive explosion of all-elements accompanied by a rain of colorless fire which cascades throughout the entire corridor space and inflicts 24 HD of damage (spell save for 3/4 damage) to anyone within it.

Note that none of the powers taught to singular PCs can be subsequently transferred by them to others. If PCs wish one of these increases they must pay the respective sage for them.

Note also that upon attack, each sage disappears as if blasted into nothingness by their own respective magical powers, but this is only a ruse, as they have *teleported* to safety; and each will return to their original starting locations within 1-4 hours.

Sages (5): AC 10, hp 35 each, Mv 12" plus *teleport* 3x per day at will (within the dungeon only); attacks/damage (negligible hand-to-hand and special immolations, see above text).

DM Note: DMs wishing to further integrate these NPCs into their campaigns can attach to them a level



of magic-use (and HD level) starting at 12th for the Lightning Sage and ending at 16th for the Magic Sage. Their spells would on the main correspond to their respective study areas with only slight deviations therefrom. Appropriate major and minor subjects of sagely study may also be detailed, if desired.

14. Falso the Omnipotent.

Commentary: Falso is a trickster figure common to many mythologies (African, Mayan, Norse, et al.). The Lake Geneva Castle was rife with these types of beings (the Face in the Floor that duped Aylerach and Erac being another good example). Subterfuge and dissembling were common traits of many powerful creatures in the Castle, and our players got inured to this fact to the point of distrusting just about everything we put in front of them or, oppositely, were so taken-in that not even applied common sense could have extracted them from these situations. Such is the way of a tricky DM who pulls off such stratagems with a straight face and sincere demeanor....

DM Note: At 10 feet outside the hexagonal room which comprises **Key #14**, a magic mouth is triggered which shouts: "Halt! Approach the Fiery Eye at your own risk, and be prepared to offer sacrifice!"

Upon entering the room:

You note a man robed in orange who wears a large conical headdress inset at midpoint from the brow with an immense ruby that glows from the many lit cressets adorning the walls here.

The ruby is actually a red crystal of no great value (100 gp), but it is large and impressive-looking until closely examined.

This is Falso the Omnipotent, a thief/mage of no small powers, but who is ultimately a liar who will attempt to trick the party out of their goods or otherwise destroy them depending on which way the proceedings between them fall.

At first he states: "What is your reason for approaching the Fiery Eye? Be quick with your responses and make no hostile move lest the wrath of the 'Eye consume your souls!"

Whatever the party says, he replies: "I will grant you knowledge to aid you in your quest to defeat or escape this prison! But, sacrifice must be made. If you are willing to receive my help, proceed to place an item of power before the 'Eye and I shall enlighten you on the path best suited to your current endeavors. If knowledge and wisdom are to your distaste, then begone!"

If the players agree to the terms and give him an item of worth (DM's discretion, but Falso is no fool and will not accept baubles), then he prattles a bit about the level while mentioning "Nine Gods" to the East and gives them a series of complicated directions to get to these (all false, of course). There is a 20% chance that he does mention one piece

of useful information while spitting forth his many lies (DMs must determine what that might be). After the exchange he dismisses them.

If they do not agree to his terms and turn to leave, he summons the fire elemental in front of them to block their exit and initiates combat area effect spells to damage as many opponents as possible, possibly conjured from the *ring of false projections* (as was the elemental).

If he appears to be losing the combat he uses a pinch of the *dust of disappearance* and *spider climbs* via his ring to the ceiling to make good his escape from the room.

The room itself is bare of anything as Falso lives while on the move, though this area is a favorite resting spot for him.

If he survives to escape, there is only a 2% chance, no matter what circumstance prevails between them, that Falso will be here upon the party returning to this room at any future point. DMs should feel free to place him at another random location.

Falso "The Omnipotent" (12th level Thief/8th level MU): AC 1 (*magical +2 leather and +2 buckler of blocking*—+4% to block), HD 12, hp 40, Mv 12"; Dmg 3-8 (+2 short sword), spells (Falso knows all fire spells up to the 4th level; and DMs should provide his other spells according to want), *ruby ring of false projections*, *ring of spider climbing* (usable 3 times per day as the spell cast at 9th level), *dust of disappearance* (3 applications).

Buckler of Blocking: This appears as a normal buckler but always has an intrinsic magical plus of +1 to +3 (d6 roll); it also has a 2% chance per magical plus of blocking any blow negotiated against the wielder. However, the wielder cannot block blows of a massive nature (such as from mature giants or dragons, for instance). DMs must adjudicate the chances to block when the attacking creature (or their weaponry) straddles this criteria, possibly reducing it to +1% for each magical plus in such instances. Sages familiar with this type of shield will also reveal that there are greater shields made—known as *fortresses*—which allow the wielder to block at higher percentages.

Ring of False Projections: This ring is always inset with a large 10,000 gp gem of either ruby (60%), amethyst (30%), or sapphire (10%). It confers different powers according to the type of gem (see following). Only six of these rings are legended to exist: 3 ruby, 2 amethyst, and 1 sapphire. It is believed that the mixture of false, semi-real, and real projections intrinsic to these rings are meant to keep beings targeted by their powers confused as to what is a real spell or not, thus lowering their resistances to all of its powers.

Ruby

- Conjures *illusionary fire* spells so believable that these

can only be disbelieved with a -1 to the spell save of those disbelieving. The spell to be conjured must be known by the caster.

- Once per day *conjures* a semi-real fire-elemental (16 HD) which if believed deals damage, has the hp and other characteristics of a real fire elemental, with range limitation of the spell, though there is no control factor involved. If successfully disbelieved it still has 1/2 its normal hp, inflicts 1/2 its normal damage, etc.
- Once per week allows the caster who has attuned himself to the ring (through 30 straight days of wearing it) to cast a *prismatic spray* spell of the 10th level. Discovering this power is best left to role-playing between the DM and player.

Amethyst

- Conjures *illusionary lightning* spells so believable that these can only be disbelieved with a -2 to the spell save of those disbelieving. The spell to be conjured must be known by the caster.
- Once per day *conjures* a semi-real lightning elemental (18 HD) which if believed deals damage, has the hp and other characteristics of a real elemental, with range limitation of the spell, though there is no control factor involved. If disbelieved it still has 1/2 its normal hp, inflicts 1/2 its normal damage, etc. Lightning elementals are a special type similar to fire (+10%-20% increase to stats).
- Once per week allows the caster who has attuned himself to the ring (through 30 straight days of wearing it) to cast *Zygon's Bolt*, a special lightning bolt which has many properties of the spell but inflicts 30 points of damage, *no save* and cannot be deflected or defeated by magical protection devices or powers (such as spells and rings, etc.), magic resistance, or by magical barriers (such as the type created by a *cube of force*, for instance). Discovering this power is best left to role-playing between the DM and player.

Zygon is legended to have been an elementalist specializing in lightning. It is not known whether he still survives, but past wizards who have sought him out for "enlightenment" upon his peculiar brand of magic have never returned to share their experiences....

Sapphire

- Conjures *illusionary cold* spells so believable that these can only be disbelieved with a -3 to the spell save of those disbelieving. The spell to be conjured must be known by the caster.
- Once per day *conjures* a semi-real frost-elemental (20 HD) which if believed deals damage, has the hp and other characteristics of a real elemental, with range limitation of the spell, though there is no control factor involved. If successfully disbelieved it still has 1/2 its normal hp, inflicts 1/2 its normal damage, etc. Frost elementals are a special type similar to water (+10%-30% increase to stats).

- Once per week allows the caster who has attuned himself to the ring (through 30 straight days of wearing it) to cast a *boreal barrier*. This special power allows the caster to create a mobile wall of frost, which moves at 1/2" per caster level, is 10 feet high, 30 feet long and 6 feet deep, and inflicts 10-40 points of frost damage to any being contacting it per round. It lasts for as long as the summoner concentrates without moving or until willfully dispelled. Note that when cast that its length can be interchanged with its height if the caster wishes; and even if the space is less than the aforementioned dimensions for the spell, the wall truncates to those dimensions. The barrier fails to materialize if cast in less than a 5 foot x 5 foot area. Its first touch also *slows* all beings, no matter their physical composition, to 1/2 their movement rate for 30 turns minus their constitution score in turns (thus an 18 constitution PC would be slowed 12 turns, for example). This special power is not dispellable as it is summoned from the very depths of the elemental planes; and some sages insist that its origin relates to the coldest reaches of space. Discovering this power is best left to role-playing between the DM and player.

Personal Bottles--Letter Keys A-G.

Commentary: Each player in the game had their own "personal bottle" which I as DM created to further test their individual skills. Only they could enter it, defeat the encounter I placed for them within, and recover from it the prize which it guarded.

Hereafter will be listed suggestions for using this area in your own campaigns, and the original prizes. I created each player-specific encounter on the fly, as I was aware that each player's level could possibly fluctuate upwards during the time spent adventuring previous to finding their bottle. So, I fairly matched what I thought was a decent encounter to challenge them at the point before they entered.

If you as a DM decide to use the lettered keys A-G for the same purpose, the following notes are the only guides I can offer for how you might do so.

DM Note: Each lettered area **A-G** contains a single bottle similar to the original bottle as first seen before entering the Bottle City. Each is magically bolted to the floor—unmovable and indestructible. Only the PC which you have secretly noted as attuned to a particular bottle can enter it, which is accomplished by touching it: that PC is instantly transported within its confines—an 80' square area, 40' high, of plain stone—wherein an encounter which would make a good contest for the PC lies in wait. Upon defeating the encounter an item or items—again, depending on your choice, but these could have more significance for the player's class, hopes, wishes, or ambitions in your campaign—is seen in its place.

Touching any of the walls after defeating the encounter removes the PC from the room and to his or her original position before first touching the bottle; the PC cannot escape the bottle except through defeating the encounter. Once outside

again, retouching the bottle does nothing. Note that in campaigns where there are more players than rooms for the bottles merely start doubling-up the bottles per room, as there is lot of space at each keyed area for them.

I list hereafter the original players and what their "prizes" were, as extracted from the original Bottle City manuscript notes:

- Don Arndt: *Scroll of 7 super prayerspells (-4) + clue.*
- Dave Arneson: 2-8 smoke bombs for his monk PC.
- Brian Blume: Special *scroll* to change a target's alignment from evil to law, or vice-versa, so save.
- Bob Burman: Random misc. magic.
- Mike Carr: *Bottle of endless fresh water.*
- Tom Christansen: *Scroll of permanent x-ray vision.*
- Joe Fischer: *+2 sword; +1 armor.*
- Joe Goodfellow: Raised one level.
- Ernie Gygax: *Scroll to create 3 homunculi.*
- Don Kaye: *Scroll of permanent elongation.*
- Terry Kuntz: *Scroll with 3 restoration spells.*
- Dave Meggery: *Ring of fire resistance.*
- Mike Mornard: *Ring of Silence.*
- Debbie Nafziger: Lawful *sword* with 12 Int and 12 ego/slay demons.
- Mark Ratner: *Girdle of fire giant strength.*
- David Sutherland: *Efreet picture.*
- Jim Ward: *Scroll of 3 legend lore spells about the Bottle City.*
- Skipper (Skip Williams): *Tome of Gainful Exercising.*

Afterword: Author's Final Commentary on the Bottle City

The Bottle City as detailed herein is the lower portion of the city in a bottle. More levels exist above it and the very city level itself is a very high-level challenge indeed!

Upon glancing at the map, DMs will note that it has many empty, unkeyed spaces. This was true of many of the Lake Geneva Castle levels created at that time. This allowed us as DMs to move keyed encounters to other locations (intentional relocation by intelligent beings for safety reasons, etc.), add other keyed encounters or situations (repopulation/migration), erase portions of the map (expansion by residents, or demolishing of same by monsters or other beings capable of such, as in the case of the umbra hulk which appears within this work) and, more importantly perhaps, these empty areas kept our players wondering and off-guard.

The absence of any encounters for a "long" period of time, relatively speaking, often led to a *subtly rising impatience* as the players endeavored to discover

something; and this often put the party in less-than-prepared states for the eventual tricks, traps, and ambushes to come. This rising and falling encounter scheme had in truth a lot to do with tension building and slight foreshadowing, as the original players eventually learned in Bottle City that many of its encounter situations were very complex, often being huge areas with scores of opponents and literal battlefields in other cases. Overall these did not fit within the typical encounter-after-encounter concept they were used to in many prior cases, but rather with the organized and divergent ideal of higher-level-, or more mass-tactical play.

Successive areas void of encounters whatsoever were, in retrospect, often a no-mans land—zones patrolled by nearby power groups which would, given time and growth, expand into the vacuums. After short stays, any beings that migrated into these seemingly "safe" zones would be driven away, killed, or absorbed into the proximate force which held sway in these areas. Additionally, the "empty" areas often caused the original adventuring parties confusion and direction problems through the many magical contrivances sporadically placed within these to accomplish such.

In all, the above-noted combined DM strategies acted to keep the players' wonderment levels and tensions high, and indeed built a rising expectation as well; this was especially true when several of the original players eventually discovered the "god thrones" at Key #9, this having made their confused investigations of the labyrinthine and maze-like areas beforehand all the more worth it.

It is my exhortation as one of the oldest-surviving DMs from the original game that current DMs make use of these tried-and-tested methods to enrich their own game play and in so doing make Bottle City your own. By such adaptation Bottle City will become yours in whole, just as it was and still is, mine; and through this imaginative exploration there is much **fun and creativity** to be had, as well. For this, my respected readers, was the *simple yet dynamic* purpose behind the original game to begin with.

-R.IK



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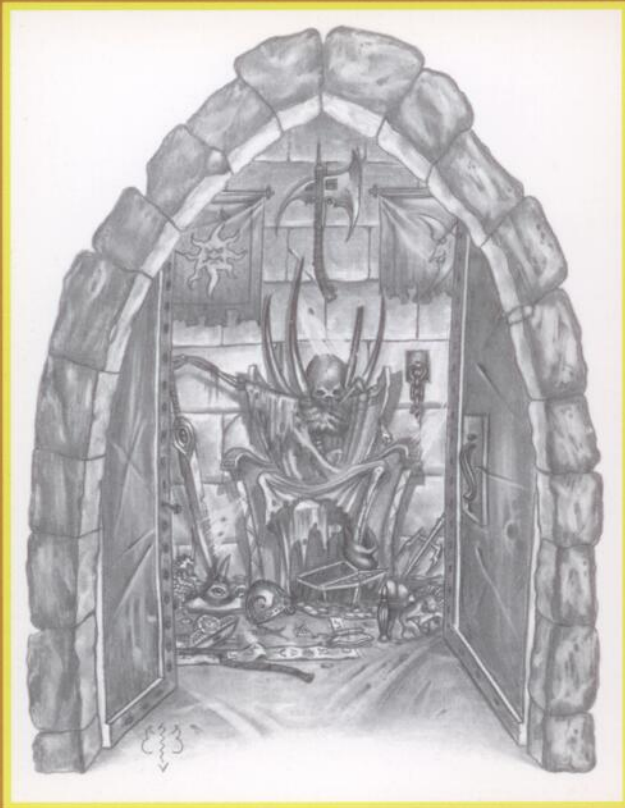
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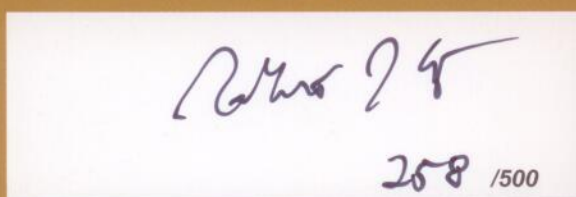
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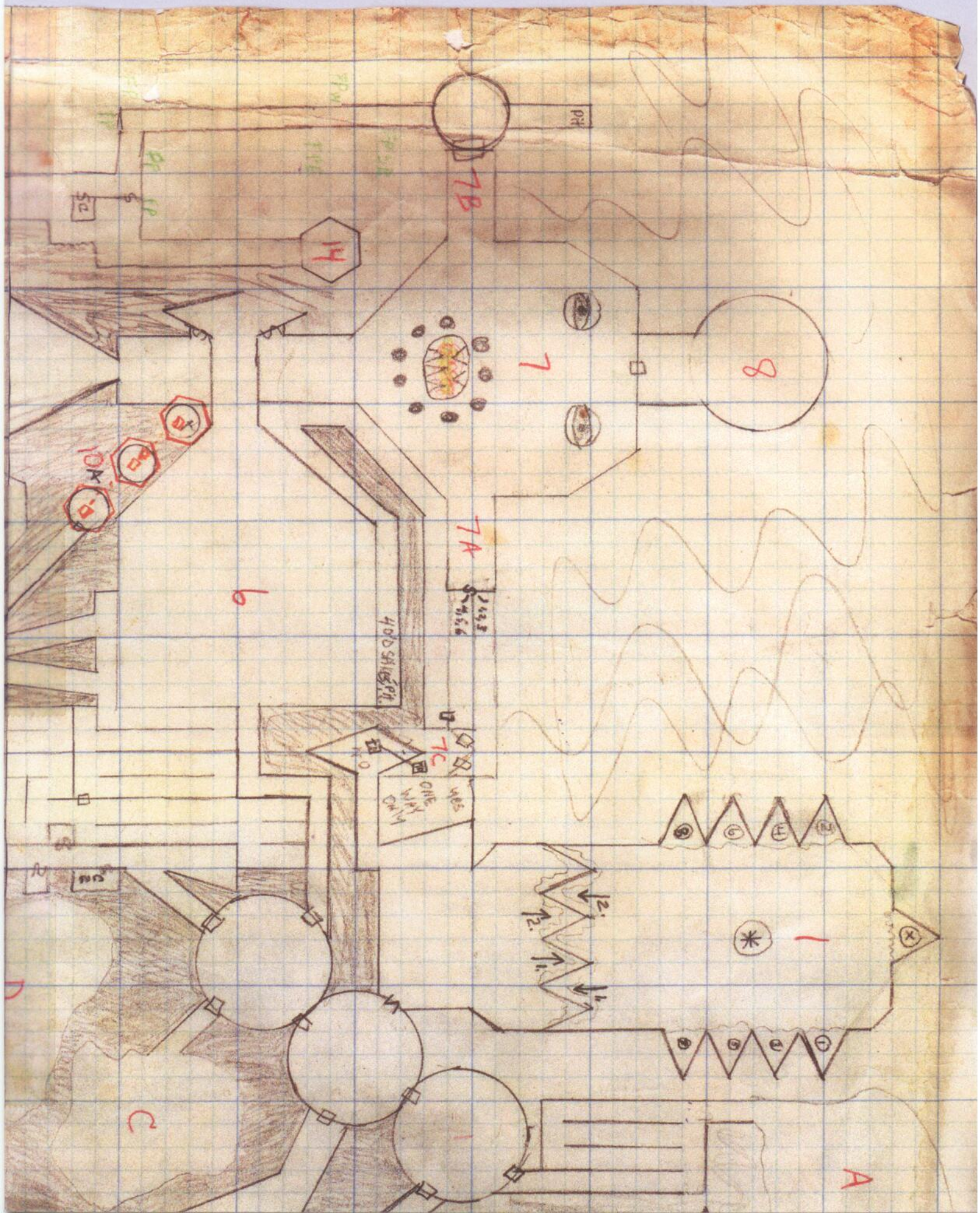
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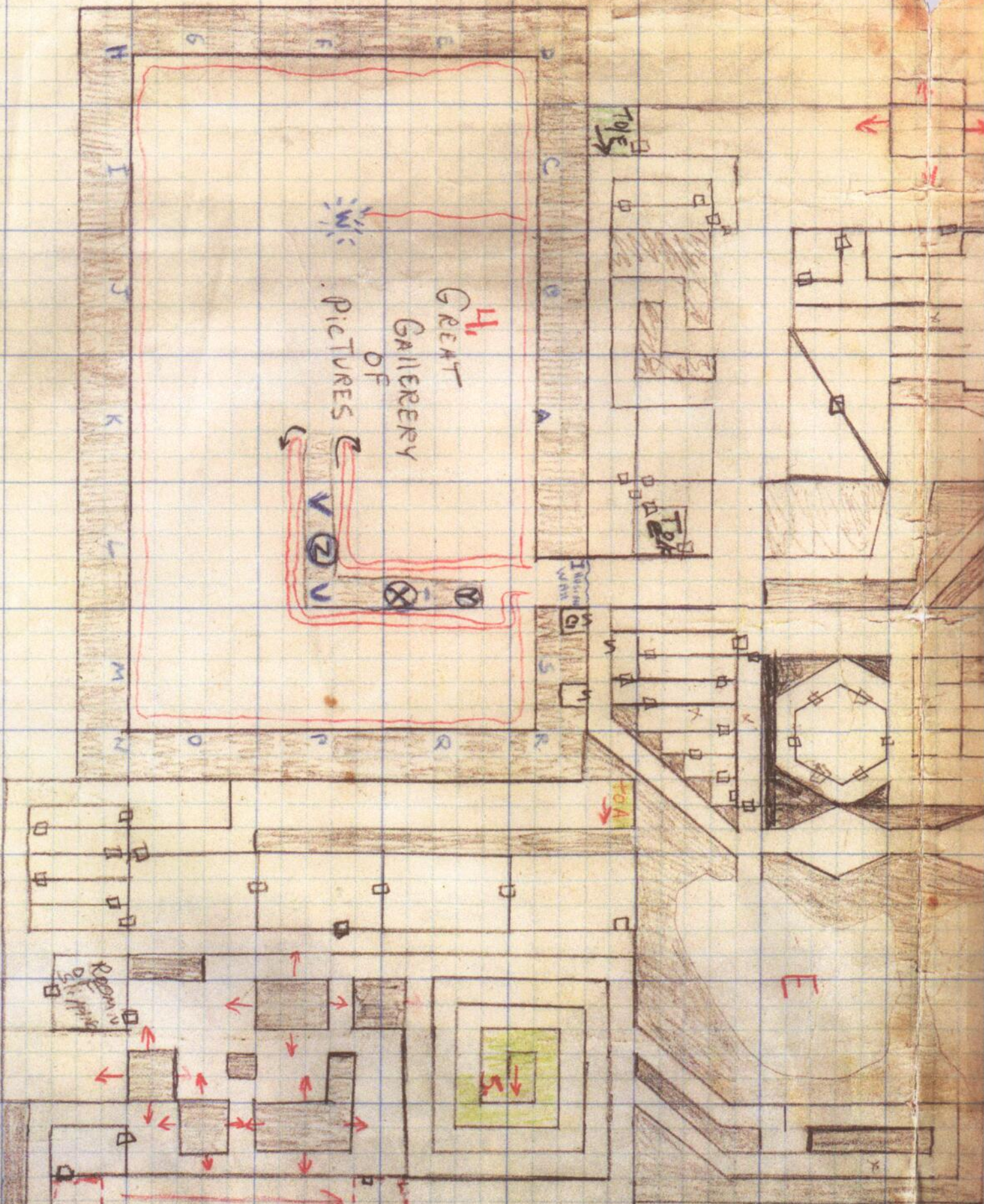


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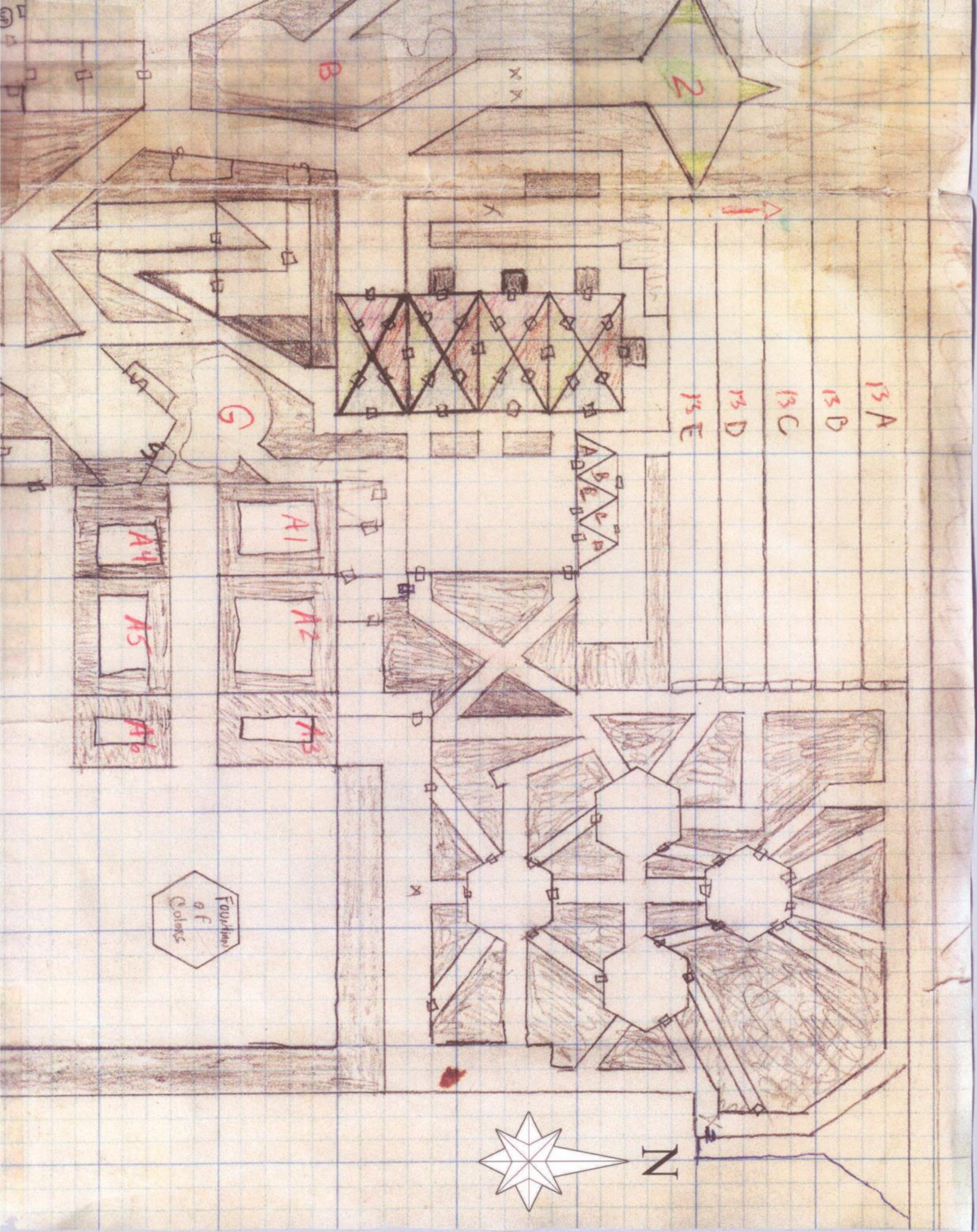
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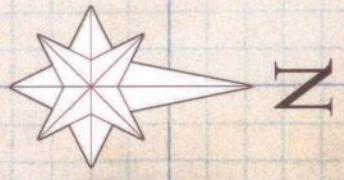
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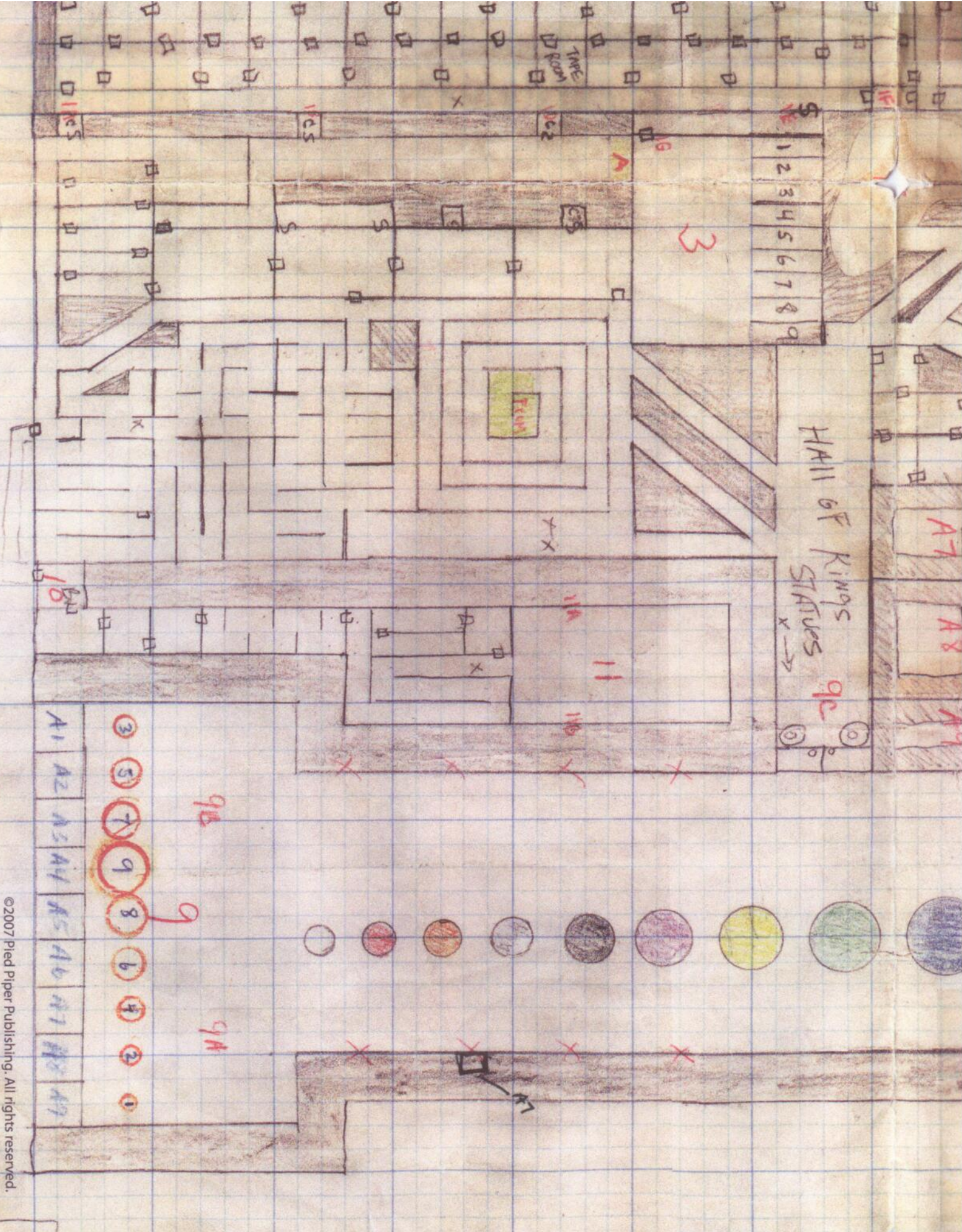
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11

11B

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9

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3
5
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9
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