

4-6 PCs

Adventure  
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Level 10

# To Catch a Serpent



B5

# TO CATCH A SERPENT

A short adventure by Michael McCarthy for a party of four to six 10th level adventurers.

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## Adventure Background

For the naga Tassi, that she found herself on the run from a clan of garuda was nothing short of ironic. After all, both she and the Shadowcloud Clan had been seeking the same thing – the death of one of her supposedly royal cousins. That she had finished the deed not an hour before the garuda arrived to do the very same thing was no reason for them to turn their sights on her. She had done them a favor.

Worse, the garuda were far more persistent than she had suspected at the outset, driving her far out of the lands she had been working so hard to assert dominance over. After several faked deaths and many more close calls, Tassi found herself in the sewers beneath Tawwa, barely more than a small trading village at the mouth of the Rio River.

Now that she was safe from pursuit, Tassi began to realize the advantages of living beneath the fledgling city. It should be easy to ensnare a few minds and redirect some of the wealth passing through into her coffers. She thought, perhaps, it would even make a suitable new home.

In the nine years since her arrival, Tassi has wormed her way into the hearts and minds of nearly every official in Tawwa. She has whispered into their ears, and sparked in them the desire to expand, to grow. So Tawwa prospered, and as it grew, so did Tassi's ambitions; the more trade that passes through the city, the more makes its way into her growing treasure horde.

This arrangement could have continued for decades more, if not for the return of the Shadowcloud garuda clan just over a month before, searching for the remains of one of their fallen warriors. His ashes happened to be contained within a golden urn that was recently 'lost' from a shipment through the city.

In searching for the urn, however, the garuda uncovered a more troubling affair – that the city was the home to a powerful naga. Putting aside their search for the remains for a more important task, the garuda began to identify, and eliminate, the naga's allies within the city, attempting to root out the corruption wherever it stood. But, unable to find it, they summoned for the arrival of a carefully trained pet from the mountains to aid in locating and eliminating the serpentine creature.

Over the past twenty-four days, they have eliminated twelve of the naga's servants from the city, stealing into their homes at night, evading their hired guards, and putting an arrow through their heart.

While careful to erase any trace of their passing, the bodies are still piling up, and the loss of so many city officials is beginning to drive up paranoia, making it nearly impossible to work in the city above – and forcing the garuda to the much more difficult task of locating the naga herself in the sewers below the city.

## Adventure Summary

Arriving in Tawwa, the PCs find the city a bureaucratic nightmare. A dozen murders have taken place in the last three weeks, all of city officials. As the PCs look into this missing dozen, there is another disappearance, that of the harbormaster in one of his own warehouses.

The warehouse itself has been largely destroyed, with walls knocked out and obvious signs of a struggle. It appears the culprit took the harbormaster's body underground, breaking through the floor into the sewers to escape.

In the surprisingly palatial sewers, the PCs encounter a party of garuda hunters far out of their element. While here to catch a naga and recover a missing relic, their pet beast has escaped as well. Though initially hostile, they are quick to implore the PCs to help find both the naga and the escaped aurspeily.

Two hunts ensue, leading the PCs to lairs at opposite ends of the city. The aurspeily itself is easy enough to dispatch, but Tassi has been entrenched within the city for a decade and has many layers of protections in place around her. The PCs must brave the deathtrap that surrounds the naga's lair to save the city from her crushing grasp, and stop the murders all in one fell swoop.





## Tawwa

LN Small Town

**Government** Autocracy (Overlord)

**Population** 1,813 (78% human, 8% elf, 7% halfling, 5% half-elf, 1% dwarf, 1% other)

### Notable NPCs

**Mayor Joifassen Nasar III** (LN male human noble)

**Father Theras Whiteleaf** (LE male human cleric)

**Captain Ophiduas** (LN male dragonborn fighter)

## Introduction

This adventure begins with the PCs finding themselves in the normally booming city of Tawwa. However, the city has all but shut down as every influential and official person in the city has gone into hiding – over the past month, twelve important figures have been murdered.

While a few disappearances aren't uncommon in the city, the effective and sudden absence of any sort of power structure is causing chaos on the streets. Trade has ground to a halt, and ships are languishing offshore, unable to continue their journey upstream.

The city's soldiers are doing what they can to keep the city from complete chaos, but they are rapidly reaching the end of their resources.

## Starting the Adventure

With the city's soldiers having their hands full with the chaos on the streets, Captain Ophiduas has put out the call for private investigators to identify, and ideally stop, the murderer.

Below are a number of potential reasons the PCs may have to be in Tawwa, interested in aiding the captain with his investigation.

Accusation of criminal activity have been laid against Tawwa, as far too many shipments passing through have been received lighter than when they were sent. The PCs may represent some external power investigating the potential rise of a thieves guild, or similar threat to trade.

The city's chaos has begun to make it impossible to travel up or down the Rio river. The PCs ship could find itself stranded here for weeks if nothing is done to clear the harbors.

There have long been rumors of Tawwa bargaining with some dark power. Too often do people simply go missing from the streets at night, and now city officials are going missing from their homes. The PCs could represent a church seeking to ensure nothing unholy is rising within the city.

As the murders have continued, the prize for stopping the killer has only grown. The PCs could be interested simply in the escalating reward.

## Investigating the Previous Murders

In the weeks before the PCs arrival in Tawwa, there have been twelve murders within the city, all of them city officials or high standing members of important families. When the PCs offer to take up the investigation, the captain is overjoyed – even without hearing their qualifications he can tell the PCs are a capable sort by looking at their equipment – and he is eager to get them searching for the killer.

Read the following:

*Captain Ophiduas is a towering Dragonborn, nearly eight feet tall and as wide as a barn, made all the more imposing by his short draconic snout. Fortunately, his bronze coloration betrayed his attitude – inquisitive and intelligent.*

*He shakes each of your hands vigorously, “I have to thank the gods that our cries for help have not fallen on deaf ears. Even with the reward, it didn't seem anyone was willing to get involved in this mess.”*

Currently, he is trying to schedule how few soldiers he can get away with stationed at the town hall tonight – the mayor has grown paranoid he is the killer's next target – but he will answer whatever questions he can, not that he has been able to uncover much.



What he does know is that all twelve murders have had the same MO: something has broken into the building through a window, evaded any observation, and slain their targets with what appears to be a bow – though no arrows have been left behind as evidence.

In several cases, particularly the recent ones, a number of bodyguards have also fallen victim to the killer, suggesting who or whatever it is, is quite dangerous.

The twelve victims so far are; Kasey Ruo, the mayor's secretary; Itna Salluuson the city treasurer; Cheori, city architect; Melliösen Halfleaf, mayor's replacement secretary; Judge Asabra; Jeffery Marcusson, banker; Cheball Poxin, merchant; Aubullox Iron tongue, city architect's replacement; Master Sorea, patriarch of a Sorea trading house; Uo Hua, patriarch of Hua crafting house; Sir Scuddulte, guard sergeant; and just two days ago, Devlan Smith, city planner.

### Skill Check

While the PCs are welcome to search any of the crime scene they desire, for the purposes of this investigation, all twelve locations are effectively identical.

A **DC 16 Wisdom (Perception) check** at any of the scenes will locate several scratches on the floors

*A matching set of unusual scratches mars the ground here. From the shape, it seems that a large bird, or otherwise taloned creature, passed through here towards where the body was found. And, it seems, only through here.*

A **DC 18 Wisdom (Perception) check** will also reveal that a necklace seems to have been pulled from the necks of each of the victims.

### Skill Check

PCs who wish to seek out information outside of official sources can make a **DC 16 Charisma (Persuasion) check** to ask about.

*After asking about, an older woman pulls you aside and tells you "Not that I don't feel for those bureaucrats bein' killed and all, but there's been plenty of disappearances in Tawwa that you don't hear about, too. Someone does a lot of work to make sure the word doesn't get out that people go missin' – it'd be bad for business – and I can't imagine this isn't related."*

Inquiring about these disappearances to Captain Ophiduas returns only a disheartened grimace. He has been ordered too many times to simply chalk up a missing person as someone running off on a ship to seek adventure.

What Ophiduas doesn't realize is that he had never received these orders from the mayor himself, but always one of his aides on behalf of Tassi – both of whom are already victims of the garuda's hunt.

**Development** No matter what the PCs actions during this first day, before the PCs retire for the night Captain Ophiduas will invite them to join him and a squad of other soldiers at the town hall tonight. A number of city officials, including the mayor himself, will be there, to protect as many people as possible from the potential attack of this assassin.

## High Level Solutions

By 10th level, PCs are likely to have a number of magical solutions to as simple a problem as seeking a murderer. Below is a list of common PC solutions, and their outcomes.

### Divination seeking the previous murderer

*A snake sleeps beneath the surface, and a flock of greedy birds eat its many heads. They hide beneath your feet, seeking its heart.*

### Divination seeking the harbormasters killer

*A flock of greedy birds feeds their pet with a snake. But the beast within finds man still more delicious.*

### Raising the murder victims from the dead

So far, all of the murder victims have been faithful, if bureaucratic, servants of Tassi. While they will be grateful to be raised from the dead, they are unable to provide much useful information but a description of their killer – a half-man half-bird with bright red coloration. None of them know why they were attacked, not associating their allegiances with Tassi as something important to the case. A **DC 18 Intelligence (Nature) check** can identify that the creature described is most likely a Garuda.

### Speak with dead on the murder victims

For purposes of this spell, the victims are all considered Lawful Evil. Once enchanted, they can tell the PCs anything they might have while alive. In addition, if asked who they work for, they will answer "Tassi, the snake".

### Locate Creature

Attempting to track using *locate creature* always fails, due to the running water within the sewer.

### Scrying on the killers or Tassi

The only obstacle to scrying in this adventure is a lack of useful information; once the PCs know who to search for, any scrying attempts work normally.

# A. City Hall

Read the following:

*Tawwa's city hall is a connection of narrow buildings, all with the same peaked roof. Several soldiers stand about outside, directing clusters of people inside.*

The people here are all those who feel threatened by the attacks, and for most of them – their families. The mayor, however, is smart enough to note that other than the collateral damage of a few bodyguards has wisely left his family at home for the night, bringing only his 'assistant' (actually mistress) with him.

The mayor, a somewhat slight man with few discerning features other than a small mustache, is actually not the target of tonight's attack – he is totally oblivious to Tassi's presence beneath the city or her control over it – instead, the garuda are targeting the mistress who finds it so easy to whisper ideas into his ear.

When the PCs arrive, Captain Ophiduas will station them in the hallway directly outside the mayor's room, where they will easily be able to defend against attack from any direction.

And at two minutes after ten, the garuda will steal into the hall, and create a distraction to allow them to approach the mistress without disruption. One of them will use *alter self* to appear as a hook-nosed merchant several rooms down from the PCs. He will call out that a giant bird is attacking, hopefully drawing the PCs off, and allowing the other two members of his group entrance to the mayor's room from the other side.

If the PCs fail to see through this disguise, and are drawn off, the garuda will execute the mayor and his mistress as planned. However, detecting the feint is likely easy for the PCs – especially as there is no giant bird outside. Once discovered, the garuda will take to the sky, calling out for his allies, and attack the PCs from the air. The other garuda will arrive after two rounds.

**Development** if the PCs opt not to aid in the defense of town hall, the captain will instead station four other soldiers outside the mayor's door. In the morning, all four guards, as well as the mayor and his assistant, will be dead.

## Combat

(2) Garuda, CR 12; 5800 XP; Adjusted Difficulty 8700 XP; Hard.

**Development:** Once one or both of the the Garuda are reduced to a collective half hp, they will scatter. If both are alive, one will call out to the other to "meet up with the huntmaster", before departing in two different directions to maximize their chances for escape. Following them will lead the PCs to one of the many large sewer drains beneath the city.



## Garuda

Medium humanoid (garuda), neutral good

Armor Class 16

Hit Points 153 (18d8+72)

Speed 25 ft., fly 50 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
11 (+0)	22 (+6)	18 (+4)	14 (+2)	15 (+2)	17 (+3)

Skills Perception +5, Intimidate +6, Stealth +9

Senses darkvision 60ft., passive Perception 15

Languages common, garuda

Challenge 7 (2900 XP)

**Innate Spellcasting.** The garuda's innate spellcasting ability is Charisma (spell save DC 14). The garuda can innately cast the following spells, requiring no material components:

At will: *mending*, *message*, *prestidigitation*, *light*, *mage hand*, *true strike*

3/day each: *haste*, *alter self*, *see invisibility*, *shield*

**Hatred.** Garudas have advantage on attack rolls against nagas and other serpentine monsters. **Dive Attack.** If the garuda is flying and dives at least 30 feet straight toward a target and then hits it with a melee weapon attack, the attack deals an extra 6 (2d6) damage to the target.

## ACTIONS

**Multiattack.** The garuda makes three ranged attacks with its longbow or two attacks with its claws.

**Talon.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +9 to hit, reach 5ft., one target. *Hit:* 10 (2d4 + 6) slashing damage.

**Shock longbow.** *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +9 to hit, range 150/600 ft., one target. *Hit:* 10 (1d8 + 6) piercing damage and 9 (3d6) lightning damage.

# The Harbormaster's death

The next morning, the captain will seek out the PCs wherever they are staying. There were two attacks the previous night – the one on the mayor as predicted and one on the harbormaster as well.

However, as the circumstances surrounding the harbormaster's death are so different than the other deaths, the captain recommends the PCs search the scene as soon as possible, hoping a second killer hasn't entered the town.

## B. The Harbormaster's Warehouse

The harbormaster's personal warehouse, where he was found dead this morning, is a smallish building in the older, central part of Tawwa just on the lip of the Rio river.

For years, harbormaster Nasir Fandic has been one of Tassi's most critical pawns, overseeing every shipment and invoice that passes through the city. He and his assistants have carefully forged hundreds of invoices over the years to ensure a steady supply of goods to their naga overlord – it is no accident that the Shadowcloud Clan chose this warehouse to deliver the Skyrunner, the ship currently docked outside, and its aurspeily cargo.

### B1. Warehouse offices

The office section of the warehouse is in disarray, desks and cabinets are askew, and an entire wall between the office and the warehouse sections is missing. In the corner, Nasir's desk is shattered like kindling, and blood is spattered everywhere.

#### Skill Check

A DC 15 **Wisdom (Perception)** check reveals the contents of Nasir's former desk to be a number of carefully duplicated documents referring to the contents of the Skyrunner. A DC result of 17 or Higher will allow the PC to differentiate the original from the duplicate, and note the difference – Nasir was intending to remove nearly a quarter of a crate of lead bars.

## B2. Main warehouse

Normally busy, the main section of the warehouse is shut down today due to Nasir's death.

#### Skill Check

A DC 16 **Wisdom (Perception)** check identifies that amongst the shelves, the interior of the warehouse isn't the same shape as the exterior – some space near the docks has been separated off from the rest of the building.

Exploring the area will reveal this secret area connects to one of the docks outside – it is inaccessible through the interior of the building.

## B3. The Skyrunner

Moored just behind the warehouse, the Skyrunner is a small merchant vessel that the Garuda commandeered for their own purposes some time ago. Its contents have already been distributed about the city, save for one crate, supposedly containing lead bars, which has been temporarily stored in a hidden section of the warehouse for Nasir's men to 'adjust'.

#### Skill Check

A DC 17 **Intelligence (History)** check will identify the Skyrunner as supposedly having sunk several months ago. Informing city officials of the ship's presence allows the PCs to claim it as a reward at the end of the adventure, should they desire.



SEWER INTERSECTION  
C1, C2, C3



D - AURSPAILY LAIR



# SEWER MAPS

ONE SQUARE = 5 FEET



## B4. Hidden Corner

Read the following:

*Much less busy than the main warehouse, the corners of the hidden section are filled with skids and empty crates, covered in a thick layer of dust. In the center space, one large crate seems to have burst open, inciting some sort of struggle.*

Not seeing the same volume of goods in and out as the main warehouse, only a select few of Nasir's employees know of this space – and with his death, they make themselves scarce.

The broken crate in the center of the room is the same one that had once contained the aurspeily, and is marked on the side with 'warning – heavy'. When the workers opened the crate to lighten the load, they found it to contain a vicious beast instead of what they were expecting, and promptly found themselves dinner.

Exploring the area reveals that behind one of the rear shelves, the floor seems to have caved in, opening down to the sewers below.

## C. Sewers

The sewers beneath Tawwa far outclass the construction of the city above. The semicircular tunnels are eight feet tall and fifteen feet wide along the main channels, with iron grates covering the sewage channels throughout, and well fit stone walls. Irregularly along the tunnels are feeder branches, where a number of five foot wide, eight foot tall passageways branch off to drain the waste from large establishments or busy areas. In fact, other than the faint smell of sewage, the sewers are significantly cleaner than the streets above.

### Tawwa Sewers

**Location:** Just beneath the surface of Tawwa is a palatial network of 'sewers', more akin to a kingly catacomb than a waste management system.

**History** When Tassi arrived in Tawwa nine years before, the sewers beneath Tawwa were nothing more than a system to keep flood waters out of the streets of the city. Once she took control, however, the sewers were one of the first things to expand, far outstripping the needs of the city above for both sanitation and flood control. Now, they are kept maintained by a dedicated group of Tassi's followers, selected from the ranks of those within the city.

**Location:** Tawwa Sewers

**Dangers:** monsters

**Lighting:** Dim, through sewer entrances

**Walls:** Smooth stone

**Doors:** none

**Mood/Theme:** The sewers should be played as an utterly abandoned, expansive complex. However, background noise of the city occasionally slips through, giving the place almost a haunted feel.

Whether the PCs have entered the sewers looking for the harbormaster's killer, or the garuda that had attacked the mayor, the long straight tunnels of the sewers make travel extremely easy throughout.

### Skill Check

Once the PCs begin searching, a **DC 14 Wisdom (Perception) check** will find traces of a group moving through the sewers.

*Scratches mar the ground from many pairs of sharp talons moving about on the soft stone. From here, they seem to be heading south.*

### Skill Check

A **DC 18 Wisdom (Perception) check**, however, will identify not just the one, but three distinct trails.

*In fact, there are at least two different sets scratches on the ground, and an irregular scuffing along the ground that suggests regular travel by booted feet, as well.*

Following the scratches to their source, or attempting to track the aurspeily will lead the PCs south, in the direction of the garuda hunting party, moving slowly through the sewers currently in search of their escaped beast.

If the PCs move through the sewers in search of Tassi herself, or if they search unsure of a target, they will encounter two separate groups of naga cultists.

Regardless of what the PCs are searching for, there is a cumulative 10% chance per hour of the PCs wandering through the old sewers.



# C1. Shadowcloud Hunting Party

Read the following:

*A crew of bright red, lean birdmen squat in a circle, staring at something on the ground between them.*

After too long searching for the naga on the streets above, the garuda have finally moved their investigation into the sewers. However, this investigation has been put on hold, as the aurspeily they smuggled into the city has escaped from them, forcing them to hunt instead for it, to prevent too much collateral damage.

If the PCs had met with the garuda at town hall, the garuda will draw their bows immediately in preparation of combat. However, they will not immediately attack, preferring to parley – which they will request of the PCs.

The huntmaster can explain the story of why the garuda are in the city, and why they are in the sewer, as well. Further, he can tell the PCs that he is beginning to suspect the naga they are hunting here is one they had hunted a decade before – Tassi, a paragon of her kind and likely to have warded her lair specifically against the garuda. He hopes that perhaps he can enlist the aid of the PCs to eliminate her in his stead.

He also requests that the PCs keep an eye out for the aurspeily – he is unsure if his group could capture or subdue it, and it might be necessary to simply eliminate it to prevent it from digging in, and becoming even more a threat to the city than the naga it was brought here to hunt.

Should the garuda be engaged in combat, they will fight to the death.

## Combat

(1) **Garuda Huntmaster** and (2) **Garuda**, CR 18; 10800 XP; Adjusted Difficulty 21600 XP; Deadly.

### Garuda Huntmaster

*Medium humanoid (garuda), neutral good*

**Armor Class** 17

**Hit Points** 170 (20d8+72)

**Speed** 25 ft., fly 50 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
11 (+0)	24 (+7)	18 (+4)	14 (+2)	15 (+2)	18 (+4)

**Skills** Perception +6, Intimidate +7, Stealth +11

**Senses** darkvision 60ft., passive Perception 16

**Languages** common, garuda

**Challenge** 9 (5000 XP)

**Innate Spellcasting.** The garuda's innate spellcasting ability is Charisma (spell save DC 15). The garuda can innately cast the following spells, requiring no material components:

At will: *mending, message, prestidigitation, light, mage hand, true strike*

3/day each: *haste, alter self, see invisibility, shield*

**Hatred.** Garudas have advantage on attack rolls against nagas and other serpentine monsters. **Dive Attack.** If the garuda is flying and dives at least 30 feet straight toward a target and then hits it with a melee weapon attack, the attack deals an extra 9 (3d6) damage to the target.

## ACTIONS

**Multiattack.** The garuda makes three ranged attacks with its Compound shockbow or two attacks with its claws.

**Talon.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +11 to hit, reach 5ft., one target. *Hit:* 11 (2d4 + 7) slashing damage.

**Compound shockbow.** *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +11 to hit, range 150/600 ft., one target. *Hit:* 12 (1d10 + 7) piercing damage and 9 (3d6) lightning damage.

## Garuda

*Medium humanoid (garuda), neutral good*

**Armor Class** 16

**Hit Points** 153 (18d8+72)

**Speed** 25 ft., fly 50 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
11 (+0)	22 (+6)	18 (+4)	14 (+2)	15 (+2)	17 (+3)

**Skills** Perception +5, Intimidate +6, Stealth +9

**Senses** darkvision 60ft., passive Perception 15

**Languages** common, garuda

**Challenge** 7 (2900 XP)

**Innate Spellcasting.** The garuda's innate spellcasting ability is Charisma (spell save DC 14). The garuda can innately cast the following spells, requiring no material components:

At will: *mending, message, prestidigitation, light, mage hand, true strike*

3/day each: *haste, alter self, see invisibility, shield*

**Hatred.** Garudas have advantage on attack rolls against nagas and other serpentine monsters. **Dive Attack.** If the garuda is flying and dives at least 30 feet straight toward a target and then hits it with a melee weapon attack, the attack deals an extra 6 (2d6) damage to the target.

## ACTIONS

**Multiattack.** The garuda makes three ranged attacks with its longbow or two attacks with its claws.

**Talon.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +9 to hit, reach 5ft., one target. *Hit:* 10 (2d4 + 6) slashing damage.

**Shock longbow.** *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +9 to hit, range 150/600 ft., one target. *Hit:* 10 (1d8 + 6) piercing damage and 9 (3d6) lightning damage.

**Development:** If the PCs ally with the Shadowcloud garuda, award them XP as if they had defeated them in combat. Improving their attitude from neutral to friendly will also have one garuda offer to travel with the party for the duration of their quest here in Tawwa.

## C2. Naga Cultists

Read the following:

*A group of figures move along the tunnels slowly, brushing dust into the sewage channel and wiping splatters from the walls as they go.*

These figures are a group of Tassi's most devout followers, living beneath the city to keep her sewers and home well maintained. Upon seeing the PCs – intruders into their territory – will shout out and draw weapons for combat, except for one, who will immediately turn tail and flee north-east, towards Tassi's lair to warn her – potentially leading the PCs right there.

### Combat

(10) Naga Cultist, CR 2; 250 XP; Adjusted Difficulty 625 XP; Trivial.

#### Naga Cultist

*Medium human, lawful evil*

**Armor Class** 12 (leather armor)

**Hit Points** 9 (2d8)

**Speed** 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
11 (+0)	12 (+1)	10 (+0)	10 (+0)	11 (+0)	10 (+0)

**Skills** Deception +2, Religion +2

**Senses** passive Perception 10

**Languages** any one language (usually Common)

**Challenge** 1/8 (25 XP)

*Dark Devotion.* The cultist has advantage on saving throws against being charmed or frightened.

#### ACTIONS

**Scimitar.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 4 (1d6 + 1) slashing damage.

**Development:** While the cultists are faithful to Tassi, they are neither foolish nor suicidal. If captured, they will tell the PCs of Tassi, and where to find her. Unless pushed, however, they will omit to mention the traps within her lair.

If all the cultists are defeated, the PCs will find each of them to be wearing a small silver pennant featuring a naga.



## C3. Old Sewers

Unlike the tunnel you were just in, the sewer here appears to not have been cleaned in years. Ancient grime, and black spots that might be blood, covers the walls.

These original tunnels have been part of the city since its founding – a way to keep the flood waters out of the city streets. Yet, they quickly became infested with vermin and worse – and the mayor at the time contracted a wizard to ensure they would stay vermin free.

To do so, the wizard summoned, and bound, a pair of ancient invisible stalkers to the city's sewers, instructing them to 'keep the sewers free of vermin.' Now, as old as they were, they considered the wizard himself, and all other mortal races, to be vermin, and very nearly did the wizard in. But, the binding was done, and they have remained within the sewers ever since.

The Stalkers, as they have come to be known, have clashed with Tassi on occasion. However, they doesn't consider the naga to be vermin, so they mostly leave her alone.

When the PCs enter into the old sewers, The Stalkers will immediately take notice, and begin to follow them invisibly. They will wait for the PCs to lower their guard before attacking – typically waiting until they are distracted sorting the items they have collected in the center of the sewers.

### Combat

(2) Invisible Stalker, CR 10; 4600 XP; Adjusted Difficulty 6900 XP; Medium.



## Invisible Stalker

Medium elemental, neutral

Armor Class 14

Hit Points 104 (16d8 + 32)

Speed 50 ft., fly 50 ft. (hover)

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
16 (+3)	19 (+4)	14 (+2)	10 (+0)	15 (+2)	11 (+0)

Skills Perception +8, Stealth +10

Damage Resistances bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical attacks

Damage Immunities poison

Condition Immunities exhaustion, grappled, paralyzed, petrified, poisoned, prone, restrained, unconscious

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 18

Languages Auran, understands Common but doesn't speak it

Challenge 6 (2,300 XP)

*Invisibility.* The stalker is invisible.

*Faultless Tracker.* The stalker is given a quarry by its summoner. The stalker knows the direction and distance to its quarry as long as the two of them are on the same plane of existence. The stalker also knows the location of its summoner.

## ACTIONS

**Multiattack.** The stalker makes two slam attacks.

**Slam. Melee Weapon Attack:** +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. **Hit:** 10 (2d6 + 3) bludgeoning damage.



## Treasure

The old sewers are one of the few places within the city that Tassi and her servants don't travel, allowing The Stalkers to accumulate a number of items from 'vermin' who don't know enough to stay away from these disused tunnels. The majority of these items are broken weapons and armor, but amongst the debris is an unblemished +2 Longsword.

# D. Aurspeily Lair

Read the following:

*The tunnels here are unfinished, carved through the bedrock but not yet reinforced by the carved stone omnipresent elsewhere.*

The aurspeily has moved quickly about the sewers, finding a passage still under construction in the north-western corner of the city.

While the tunnels are far from its natural habitat, the proximity of stone, metal and flesh to one another were too appealing for the creature's simple appetites. So, instead of returning to its garuda masters, it instead began to make a nest here, fully intent on staying within the sewers until it has eaten the entire city.

When the PCs arrive, the aurspeily will be in one of the offshoot tunnels, gnawing on the iron grating covering the sewage channel. It has no trouble sensing the approach of the PCs, and will immediately attack to defend its newly claimed lair – bursting through the wall directly behind the group to do so.



## Skill Check

If a garuda is with the party, allow the PCs to make a DC 18 Handle Animal check to attempt to calm the aurspeily before it attacks.



## Combat

(1) Aurspeily, CR 7; 2900 XP; Easy.





## Aurspeily

*Medium beast, chaotic good*

**Armor Class** 15 (natural armor)

**Hit Points** 190 (20d8+100)

**Speed** 50 ft., burrow 35 ft.

<b>STR</b>	<b>DEX</b>	<b>CON</b>	<b>INT</b>	<b>WIS</b>	<b>CHA</b>
22 (+6)	14 (+2)	20 (+5)	6 (-3)	13 (+1)	8 (-1)

**Skills** Perception +4, Stealth +5

**Damage Resistances** fire, cold and piercing

**Damage Immunities** acid

**Senses** darkvision 60ft., tremor sense 40ft., passive Perception 14

**Challenge** 7 (2900 XP)

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

*Camouflage.* The aurspeily has advantage on Dexterity (Stealth) checks made to hide in dark and low light environments.

*Unstoppable.* An aurspeily's density makes it incredibly difficult to stop once it gets moving. If the aurspeily moves at least 30 feet toward a creature and then hits it with a claws attack on the same turn, that target must succeed on a DC 18 Strength saving throw or be knocked prone. If the target is prone, the aurspeily can make one bite attack against it as a bonus action.

### ACTIONS

**Multiattack.** The aurspeily makes either two attacks with its claws or one attack with its bite and one with its claws.

**Bite.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +9 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 16 (3d6 + 6) piercing damage.

**Claws.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +9 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 20 (4d6 + 6) slashing damage.

Cousin to the smaller aurumvorax, the aurspeily is a perpetually hungry beast. They stalk the mountainsides, seeking ore or preferably living creatures to devour, rarely leaving even a scrap of stone behind once they have set their mind of devouring something.

Their incredible mobility around the mountains only makes them more fearsome. While they are typically unable to leap from one cliff side to another due to their weight, taking to the air is the only way to escape these beasts.

Fortunately, their size vastly limits the amount these truly omnivorous creatures are able to consume. However, while they will stay put for weeks or months at a time once they have found something they are interested in eating, they will almost always pursue live prey when it is available, killing their targets and dragging them into an enclosed space to devour them in entirety.

With the amount of stone and metal that is normally part of their diet, aurspeily are incredibly dense creatures, often weighing nearly a thousand hundred pounds despite their size of only four feet high at the shoulder, and five feet long.

Much like the aurumvorax, aurspeily can quite easily be trained when young – however acquiring one is an exceedingly dangerous task, for they are jealously watched over by their mothers until the cub is large enough to strike out on its own.

If the PCs calm the aurspeily down so that it can be recaptured by the garuda, grant them XP as if they had defeated it in combat, plus an additional 9,600XP.

## E. Tassi's Spiral

Having long since established herself within the city, a position she has never found as interesting as it was essential, Tassi has invented a new 'game' with which to amuse herself.

In this game, she selects a target from Tawwa's streets at night, and steals them into the center of her lair. From there, she pretends to lose interest in the victim, allowing them to 'escape' into her coiling lair – a gauntlet traps leading eventually to an illusory dead end.

Though the traps have become more complex and dangerous over the years, Tassi still derives no end of amusement from watching humans fall into one of her many diabolical devices.



### Tassi's Spiral

**Adventure Location:** Tassi's Spiral

**Location:** secretly connected to Tawwa's sewers, Tassi has created a huge deathtrap, in the center of which she lives.

**History** While excavating a new passageway through the bedrock beneath Tawwa, Tassi's miners found this cavern beneath the city, and the naga eagerly claimed it as her permanent home. Now heavily modified from the original chamber, this spiral-shaped dungeon leads down to a comfortable nest.

**Location:** Tassi's Spiral

**Dangers:** Traps, Naga

**Lighting:** None unless specified

**Walls:** Smooth stone

**Doors:** none

**Mood/Theme:** Breaking into a maniacal prison designed to keep something in, while someone is always watching.

The entrance from the sewers is a set of double doors, installed at a junction, where normally there would be a hallway continuing south.

**Development** The entrance to Tassi's lair is warded against the presence of garuda. Should one attempt to pass through the doorway, it takes 12d6 psychic damage. Rightly fearing the presence of similar wards inside, any garuda with the party will refuse to enter the spiral.



open pit

pressure  
plate

illusionary  
wall

series of  
pressure plates

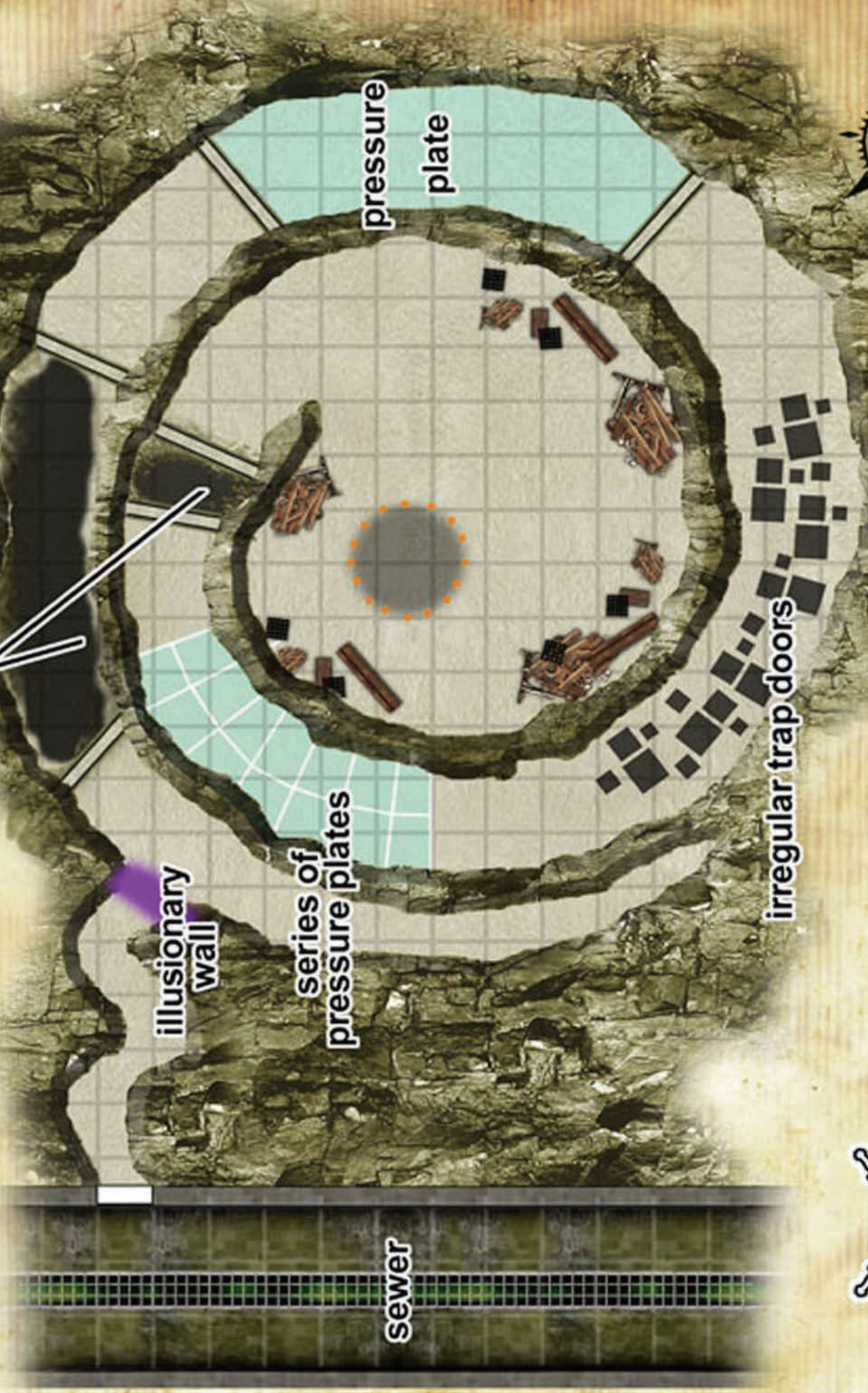
irregular trap doors

sewer



# TASSI LAIR

ONE SQUARE = 5 FEET



# E1. Jagged Entrance

Read the following:

*The door glides open, as light as a feather, revealing a jagged passageway twisting through the rock.*

Untouched since the original discovery of the cavern, this fifty foot long passageway conveniently zags back and forth, blocking any view from the interior to the exterior of the structure.

Once the PCs have entered the spiral proper, Tassi's illusion takes hold of the group. A **DC 14 Intelligence (investigation) check** will dispel the illusion for each character.

The passageway behind you suddenly winks out, replaced by a smooth plastered wall.

# E2. Electrified Ladder

Read the following:

*As the passageway curves away to the left, the floor drops into a pit of rusty spikes. It seems the only way across is a narrow metal ladder suspended several feet from the ceiling.*

This ladder is Tassi's experimentation with magical traps, designed to trigger and electrocute the ladder whenever a creature grips onto any of the middle three rungs.

Though dangerous in its own right, the thirty foot pit here (as irregular pits below) is only intended as a distraction from the real danger the ladder presents, as the electricity causes muscles to seize up and make it difficult to release.

## Electrified Ladder

**DC 14 Wisdom (Perception) check** notices the trap.

A **DC 14 Intelligence (Arcana) check** disables the trap. A

**DC 14 dispel magic** disables the trap. The trap is triggered whenever any creature touches the ladder. Any creature that touches the ladder must make a **DC 14 Constitution saving throw** taking 5d6 lightning damage on a failure. A creature takes half as much damage on a success. At the beginning of that creature's turn it must repeat the saving throw or remain attached to the ladder and continue to take damage.

## Skill Check

Several spy holes throughout the spiral allow Tassi to easily track the motion of anyone within her lair. At any point from E2 onwards, any PC making a **Wisdom (Perception) check** for any reason with a result of 15 or higher will notice a narrow hole leading down and inwards, towards the center of the spiral.

# E3. Falling Ceiling

Read the following:

*The passage curves inwards and downwards in an ever tightening spiral. A clear line here cuts across the passage, dividing the floor into two smooth sections.*

Just around the corner from the electrified ladder, the corridor is designed as one enormous pressure plate that triggers the trap in the ceiling whenever a medium or small creature puts its weight on it – too much weight at once will avoid starting the ceiling's descent, though multiple creatures stepping on separately will not stop the system.

The dropping ceiling includes a random element, and falls at an unpredictable speed.

## Lowering Ceiling

**DC 15 Wisdom (Perception) check** notices the trap.

A **DC 15 Intelligence (Investigation) check** disables the trap. The trap is triggered whenever any creature steps on the trapped floor plate. Any creature trapped under the lowering ceiling takes 6d6 bludgeoning damage. Any creatures backing out to avoid the trap can do so with a **DC 13 Dexterity saving throw**, but once the ceiling is down the trap must be reset before the passage can be crossed once more. A **DC 19 Strength (Athletics) check** is enough to lift the ceiling and reset the trap.

## E4. Irregular Pits

Read the following:

*The ground here becomes a patchwork of stone – with several tiles featuring poorly disguised hinges as if they were trapdoors.*

These pits are disguised in a variety of ways, but the majority of the poorly hidden trapdoors are actually fakes to throw off anyone attempting to identify the real traps. Any character attempting to identify which spaces are pits always believes they have identified them all, resulting in the next character that must make a save to do so with disadvantage.

### Irregular Pits

DC 17 **Wisdom Perception** check notices the trap. A

DC 16 **Intelligence (Investigation)** check disables the trap.

Any creature stepping on a trapdoor must make a DC 16

**Dexterity saving throw** taking 2d8 piercing damage per spike on a failure. A success reduces the damage by half.

## E5. Spear Traps

Read the following:

*Carefully drilled holes litter the walls, floor and ceiling. On covering the floor are many dozen small plates.*

### Skill Check

A DC 17 **Wisdom (Perception)** check can identify a clear path through the pressure plates, allowing a user to pass without triggering the trap. Otherwise, a PC will step on 1d8 spear traps as they proceed across.

### Spear Traps

DC 17 **Wisdom Perception** check notices the trap.

A DC 16 **Intelligence (Investigation)** check disables the trap.

Any creature stepping on a pressure plate must make a DC 16 **Dexterity saving throw** taking 1d8 piercing damage per spear on a failure. A success reduces the damage by half. A pressure plate launches 3 spears at the creature that steps on it.

## E6. Short fall

Read the following:

*A short pit spans the hallway here, dropping a mere twenty feet into the ground. Just beyond, the left wall seems to fall away into a large chamber.*

There is no way to bypass this pit – Tassi has no difficulty leaping the pit herself normally.

### Pit Trap

This simple pit spans the hallway, forcing characters to jump or fly over to proceed. The pit itself is 20 ft. deep (2d6 falling damage) and 10 ft. wide. A DC 13 **Dexterity (Acrobatics)** check is required to jump over the pit.

## E7. Tassi's Nest

Read the following:

*A bowl of smooth black stone fills the center of the room, inset with a number of softly glowing rubies. Broken bones and other trophies gather around the edges of the room.*

Tassi has gone through great lengths to make herself comfortable here, which her many trophies do. The smooth bowl provides a comfortable place to rest, as the gems infuse the rock with warmth, as well as emitting a dim light throughout the room.

### Combat

**Tassi and (3) Naga Cult Fanatic, CR 15; 7250 XP; Adjusted Difficulty 14500 XP; Deadly.**

Before combat Tassi will have cast invisibility and shield of faith as the PCs arrived at E6. During combat Tassi will spit poison attacking any PC within range. Tassi will use her spells if the PCs attempt to stay at range. Tassi will fight to the death and Naga Cult Fanatics will fight to the death to defend her.

### GM Note

This fight is meant to be challenging but if you find it is too difficult for your players then feel free to adjust the number of Naga Cult Fanatics or to eliminate them entirely.



## Tassi

Large monstrosity (naga), lawful evil

**Armor Class** 18 (natural armor)

**Hit Points** 136 (16d10 + 48)

**Speed** 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
19 (+4)	18 (+4)	16 (+3)	16 (+3)	19 (+4)	18 (+4)

**Saving Throws** Dex +8, Con +7, Int +7, Wis +8, Cha +8

**Damage Immunities** poison

**Condition Immunities** charmed, poisoned

**Senses** darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 14

**Languages** Celestial, Common

**Challenge** 10 (5,900 XP)

**Rejuvenation.** If it dies, the naga returns to life in 1d6 days and regains all its hit points. Only a wish spell can prevent this trait from functioning.

**Detect Thoughts.** Nagas have continuous use of the detect thoughts spell. **Guarded Thoughts.** Nagas are immune to any form of mind reading, such as that granted by detect thoughts.

**Spellcasting.** The naga is an 11th level spellcaster. Its spellcasting ability is Wisdom (spell save DC 16, +8 to hit with spell attacks), and it needs only verbal components to cast its spells. It has the following cleric spells prepared:

Cantrips (at will): *mending, sacred flame, thaumaturgy*  
1st level (4 slots): *command, cure wounds, shield of faith, inflict wounds*

2nd level (3 slots): *calm emotions, hold person*

3rd level (3 slots): *bestow curse, clairvoyance*

4th level (3 slots): *banishment, freedom of movement*

5th level (2 slots): *flame strike, geas*

6th level (1 slot): *true seeing*

3/day: *invisibility*

Always in effect: *detect thoughts*

## ACTIONS

**Bite.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +8 to hit, reach 10 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 8 (1d8 + 4) piercing damage, and the target must make a DC 15 Constitution saving throw, taking 45 (10d8) poison damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.

**Spit Poison.** *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +8 to hit, range 15/30 ft., one creature. *Hit:* The target must make a DC 15 Constitution saving throw, taking 45 (10d8) poison damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.

## Naga Cult Fanatic

Medium human, lawful evil

**Armor Class** 13 (leather armor)

**Hit Points** 33 (6d8 + 6)

**Speed** 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
11 (+0)	14 (+2)	12 (+1)	10 (+0)	13 (+1)	14 (+2)

**Skills** Deception +4, Persuasion +4, Religion +2

**Senses** passive Perception 11

**Languages** Abyssal, Common

**Challenge** 2 (450 XP)

**Dark Devotion.** The fanatic has advantage on saving throws against being charmed or frightened.

**Spellcasting.** The fanatic is a 4th level spellcaster. Its spellcasting ability is Wisdom (spell save DC 11, +3 to hit with spell attacks). The fanatic has the following cleric spells prepared:

Cantrips (at will): *light, sacred flame, thaumaturgy*

1st level (4 slots): *command, inflict wounds, shield of faith*

2nd level (3 slots): *hold person, spiritual weapon*

## ACTIONS

**Multiattack.** The fanatic makes two melee attacks.

**Dagger.** *Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft. or range 20/60 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 4 (1d4 + 2) piercing damage.



## Treasure



Despite spending so much of her ill-begotten wealth on Tawwa's development, gathered around the edges of her room are what Trophies Tassi kept. Amongst the bones of at least a dozen creatures are a *rope of climbing* that appears to be spun gold, an *immovable rod* carved from a single piece of crystal, a large golden egg that holds a fine white dust (actually the ashes of a garuda hero), and other smaller pieces worth a collective 1,500gp.

# Concluding the Adventure

This adventure is complete once the PCs have defeated Tassi, releasing the city of Tawwa for people to once again live their lives in freedom from the fear they might one day disappear.

The PCs can, of course, continue exploring the sewers and Tawwa as long as they'd like, though once Tassi is dead, if they PCs have not met the shadowcloud Garuda, the group will quickly flee the area, resulting in an end to the murders as well. If not caught, the aurspeily will remain in Tawwa's sewers, potentially forever.

The mayor's cabinet – and the mayor himself, if he survived – will arrange a reward for the PCs of 8,000gp, or of 2,000gp and the Skyrunner if the ship has been brought to the city's attention.

If the PCs recognize the urn for what it is, they will be able to return it to the garuda huntmaster as he prepares to leave the city. In return, he will offer the PCs an Oath of Payment (see below: the power of an oath). If the PCs keep the urn, however, it won't be long before more shadowcloud garuda come seeking it.

## Experience

Grant your players **6400 XP** for Returning the Urn to the Garuda.

Grant your players **6400 XP** for completing the adventure.

## The Power of an Oath

Like many words, an oath can hold power even beyond what the speaker intends. Though many mortals keep oaths for the sake of honor or duty, supernatural creatures can make oaths that are bound to the very essence of what they are.

Any creature with the outsider type or lawful subtype can make an oath to a single creature as a full round action, binding himself to any willing creature he can see. The oath must be made with absolute conviction, and it is impossible to force a creature unwillingly to make an oath, though oaths made through magical compulsion or similar means are as valid as any other. The oath is permanent until it is dissolved, or either creature involved in the oath is slain. Otherwise, it can only be removed by powerful magic, such as *wish* or *miracle*.

At the time an oath is made, the speaker must decide what sort of oath they are making, and it can be as specific or as vague as the speaker wishes – though in self interest, most creatures that would speak an oath limit the scope of the oath to a single task. While an oath can refer to anything, several commonly made oaths are listed below.

At any time after the oath is made, the target of the oath can call the oath due as a standard action. Doing so immediately causes the oath-speaker, no matter the distance between the speaker and the target, to fulfill the oath to the best of their ability, even if doing so would put themselves or others in personal danger.

## Common Oaths

**Oath of Aid** – the oath speaker promises to come to the assistance of their target at any time, against any threat or to any task. Creatures that make oaths of aid rarely do so unless they are able to travel swiftly from place to place, such as by teleportation, as they may not be able to complete their oath if they cannot reach their target in time.

**Oath of Payment** – the oath speaker promises to give the target any item of any value that they can rightly claim is theirs. Often, this oath is made with the intent to be repaid in the relatively short term.

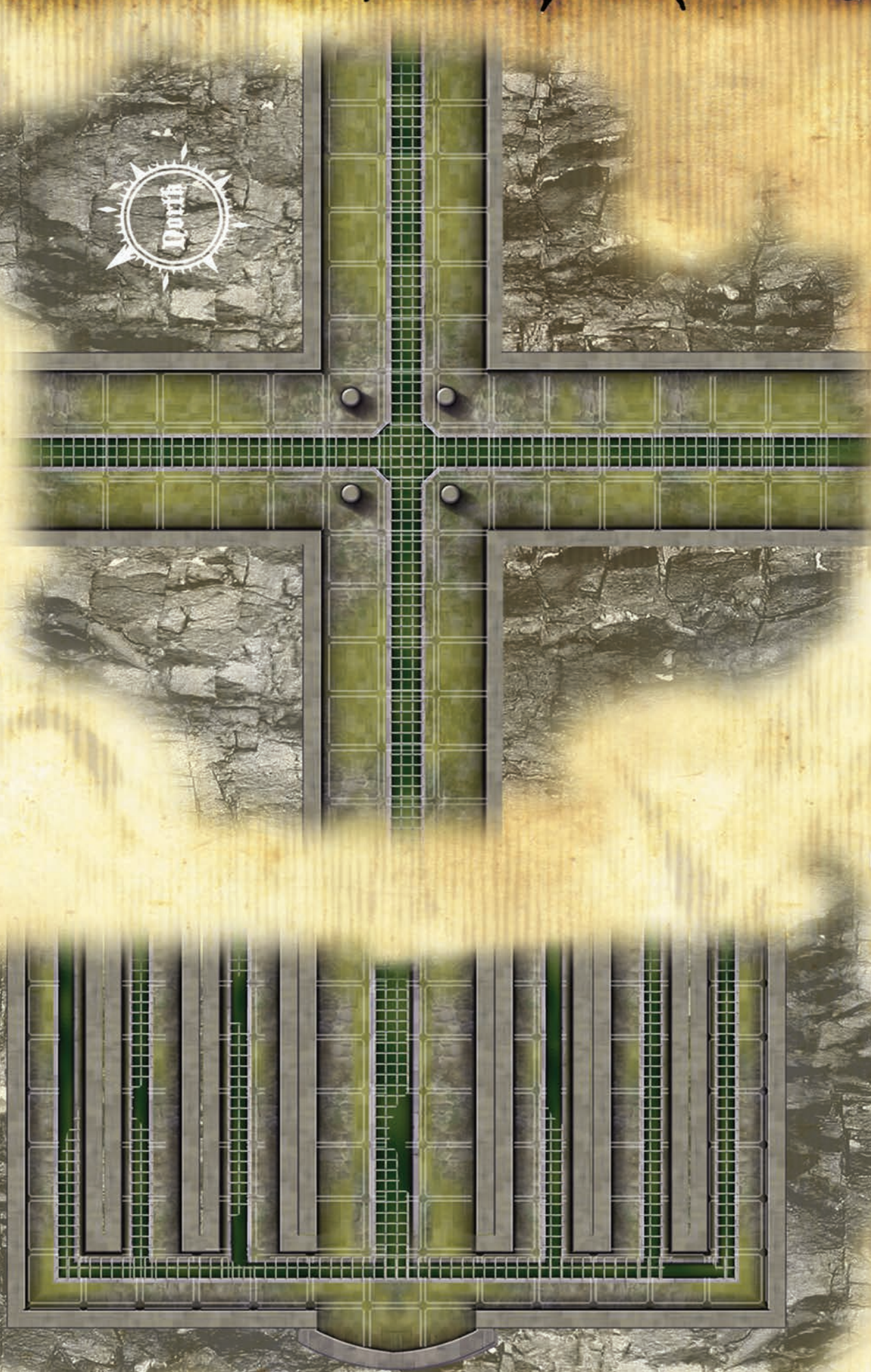
**Oath of Protection** – the speaker promises to protect a place or item to the best of their ability, often forever. These oaths are the most common of oaths, and often occur between immortal creatures and mortals with aligned goals.





# SEWER MAPS

ONE SQUARE = 5 FEET





# TASSI LAIR

ONE SQUARE = 5 FEET



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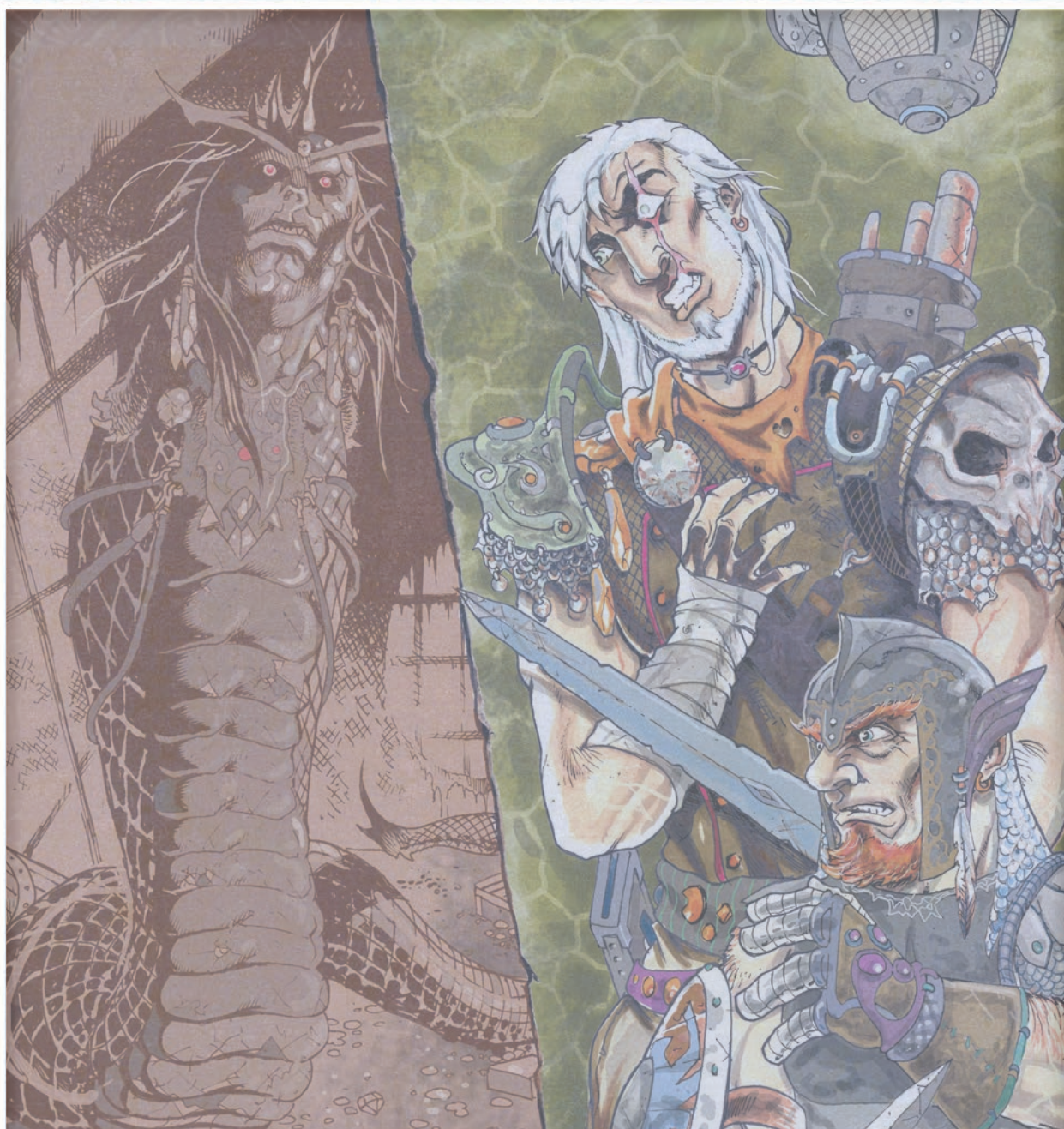
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## A 5th Edition compatible adventure for four to six 10th level PCs

The portside city of Tawwa is under attack from within! The PCs find themselves waylaid in the harbor of the busy port city as the government has begun to fall into chaos - a dozen city officials have been murdered over the last month, and the attacks show no sign of stopping. The mayor is panicking, and the harbor has all but stopped. The party has to unravel the mystery, searching the city above and below to find this killer before they strike again!

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- The Power of an Oath - a new set of rules for securing the services of an outsider
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- A new city on the river, Tawwa, a perfect place to stop and refuel before setting sail for adventure
- Maps by three time ENnie Award winning cartographer Todd Gamble