

A HEROIC TIER ADVENTURE

# DUNGEONS & DRAGONS<sup>®</sup>

## TOMB OF HORRORS



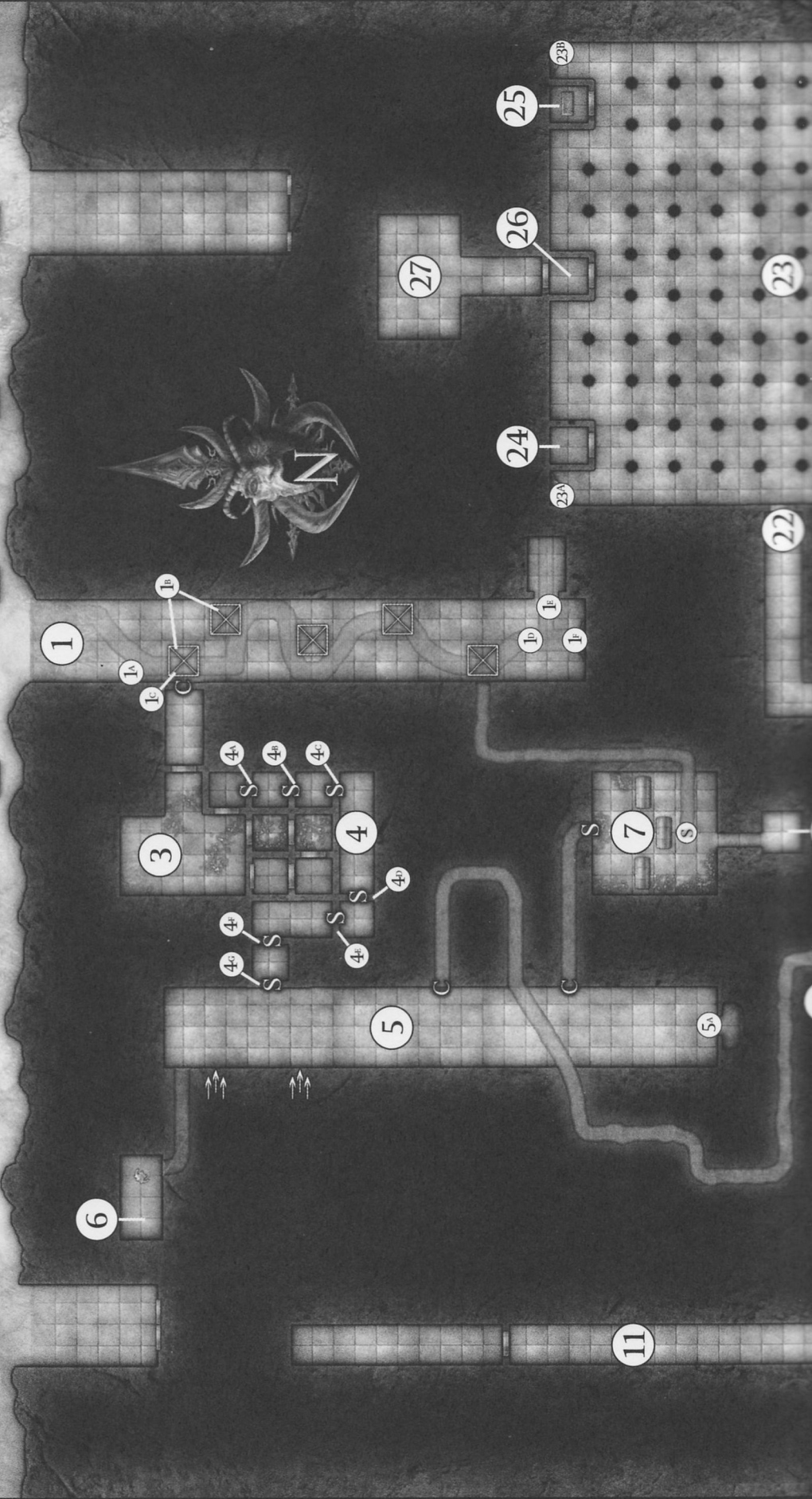
AN ADVENTURE FOR FIVE 9TH-LEVEL CHARACTERS

Gary Gygax • Scott Fitzgerald Gray

# TOMB OF HORRORS

1 Square = 5 Feet

- |                     |                  |                      |                |
|---------------------|------------------|----------------------|----------------|
| Stairs              | Secret trap door | Chest                | Rubble, debris |
| Door                | Concealed door   | Candelabra           | Table/desk     |
| Double doors        | Fresco/relief    | Pew                  | Tapestry       |
| One-way door        | Crawlspac        | Railing              | Mosaic path    |
| False door          | Pit trap         | Altar                | Mist           |
| False double doors  | Spear trap       | Chair, throne, couch | Sarcophagus    |
| Secret door         | Open pit         | Vat                  | Pillar         |
| One-way secret door | Archway          | Urn                  | Statue         |



Somewhere under a lost and lonely hill of grim and foreboding aspect lies a labyrinthine crypt. It is filled with terrible traps and not a few strange and ferocious monsters to slay the unwary. It is filled with rich treasures both precious and magical, but in addition to the aforementioned guardians, there is said to be a demilich who still wards his final haunt. (Be warned that tales told have it that this being possesses powers which make him nearly undefeatable!)

Accounts relate that it is quite unlikely that any adventurers will ever find the chamber where the demilich Acererak lingers, for the passages and rooms of the tomb are fraught with terrible traps, poison gases, and magical protections. Furthermore, the demilich has so well hidden his lair that even those who avoid the pitfalls will not be likely to locate their true goal. So only large and well-prepared parties of the bravest and strongest should even consider the attempt, and if they do locate the tomb, they must be prepared to fail. . . .

## HORROR NEVER DIES

The text above, penned by Gary Gygax, heralded *Tomb of Horrors*' assault on an unsuspecting hobby in 1978. One of a handful of now-classic adventure modules published in the earliest days of the **ADVANCED DUNGEONS & DRAGONS**<sup>®</sup> game, *The Tomb* made its first appearance three years before as the official D&D<sup>®</sup> tournament adventure at the Origins I gaming convention. It used the original **DUNGEONS & DRAGONS**<sup>®</sup> rules, published in 1974. In the time since, the adventure has become a legend in gaming circles—loved by some, vilified by others, and indelibly burned into the memories of every player and DM who set their imaginations loose within it.

In 1998, the original adventure became the centerpiece for (and was reprinted as part of) the legendary *Return to the Tomb of Horrors* boxed set for 2nd Edition AD&D<sup>®</sup>. At the height of 3rd Edition's popularity, *Return* author Bruce R. Cordell updated the adventure as a free release.

Now, the most legendary dungeon crawl in gaming history has been updated for 4th Edition D&D rules. In keeping with the spirit of the new edition, the challenges herein might prove more calculated and consistent than those of the original adventure. Be warned, however, that the challenges can be just as deadly. Characters who survive the adventure should attain 11th level and will have begun to make a name for themselves as they cross from the heroic to the paragon tier.

## THE WORLD OF THE TOMB

Gary Gygax's *World of Greyhawk*<sup>®</sup> campaign provided the setting for the original *Tomb of Horrors*, which suggested a number of possible locations for the tomb. *Return to the Tomb of Horrors* set the legendary dungeon in the Great Swamp of the remote county of Sunndi—and expanded on the scope of Acererak's evil.

Evil humanoids and undead, drawn to the site of the tomb, founded a settlement called the City of Skulls, or Skull City. Priests and necromancers of the Bleak Academy—a sinister cabal dedicated to the worship of Acererak as a deity—lead the city. Skull City played a part in the Acererak lore in *Open Grave*. Robert J. Schwalb further updated Skull City for 4th Edition in “The Legacy of Acererak” (*Dragon* #371).

Place the *Tomb of Horrors* wherever you like in your campaign world. This adventure follows Schwalb's lead by placing the tomb at the center of the City of Skulls and granting the Bleak Academy control of access to the tomb; this adventure also sets the backstory of the new 4th Edition *Tomb of Horrors* super-adventure, scheduled to release in July 2010.

## CREDITS

**Gary Gygax**  
Original Design

**Scott Fitzgerald Gray**  
4th Edition Design

**Rodney Thompson**  
Developer

**Miranda Horner**  
Editor

**Chris Tulach**  
Organized Play Content Developer

**Matthew Stevens**  
Art Director

**Cole Meier**  
Graphic Designer

**Justin Sweet**  
Cover Illustrator

**David C. Sutherland III**  
**David A. Trampier**  
Interior Illustrators

**Jason Engle**  
Cartographer

**Joe Yochum**  
Production Manager

This 4th Edition update makes use of material from “The Legacy of Acererak” (*Dragon* #371), *Open Grave*, and the v.3.5 *Tomb of Horrors* update.

**DUNGEONS & DRAGONS**, **ADVANCED DUNGEONS & DRAGONS**, **D&D**, **AD&D**, **d20**, **d20 System**, **Wizards of the Coast**, *Player's Handbook*, *Dungeon Master's Guide*, *Monster Manual*, and all other **Wizards of the Coast** product names and their respective logos are trademarks of **Wizards of the Coast LLC** in the U.S.A. and other countries. All **Wizards** characters and the distinctive likenesses thereof are property of **Wizards of the Coast LLC**. This material is protected under the copyright laws of the United States of America. Any reproduction or unauthorized use of the material or artwork contained herein is prohibited without the express written permission of **Wizards of the Coast LLC**. Any similarity to actual people, organizations, places, or events included herein is purely coincidental. Printed in the U.S.A. ©2010 **Wizards of the Coast LLC**.

# THE TOMB OF HORRORS

Ages past, a human magic-user/cleric of surpassing evil took the steps necessary to preserve his life force beyond the centuries he had already lived, and this creature became the lich Acererak. Over the scores of years that followed, the lich dwelled with hordes of ghastly servants in the gloomy stone halls of the very hill where the tomb is. Eventually, even the undead life force of Acererak began to wane, so for the next eight decades, the lich's servants labored to create the Tomb of Horrors. Then Acererak destroyed all of his slaves and servitors, magically hid the entrance to his halls, and went to his final haunt while his soul roamed strange planes unknown to even the wisest of sages.

## ACERERAK'S PLOTS

The truth behind the creation of the Tomb of Horrors is even more insidious than the legends that lure adventurers to the tomb. Centuries ago, Acererak built the tomb to serve as an altar: In it, countless heroes would sacrifice themselves for his purposes. Each group of adventurers destroyed by the tomb generated spiritual energy, which the demilich siphoned to a hidden phylactery in preparation for turning himself into a deity.

A generation ago, a group of heroes shattered Acererak's plans by dealing him a near-fatal setback. The Bleak Academy, known at the time as the Black Academy, received its current name because of the failure of the demilich's plots.

The masters of the academy believe that Acererak will return, primarily because the Tomb of Horrors continues to draw adventurers to their doom and to provide Acererak with spiritual energy. After each new wave of heroes perishes in the tomb, the forces that have kept the complex standing for centuries slowly and inexorably repair the damage done to it.

In fact, the demilich has hatched new plots even more ambitious than his previous ones—plots unknown even to the masters of the Bleak Academy. The *Tomb of Horrors* super-adventure reveals the full scope of those plots—and reveals Acererak's fate.

## QUEST XP

Two major quests define the characters' incursion into the Tomb of Horrors.

**Major Quest (2,000 XP):** Avoid being misled by a false Acererak (area 14), and locate the magically warded secret door that offers access to the rest of the tomb.

**Major Quest (2,500 XP):** Destroy the Acererak construct.

## INTERIOR FEATURES

**Illumination:** Unless otherwise indicated, the interior of the tomb is dark.

**Ceilings, Floors, and Walls:** Ceilings in passages and smaller chambers vary from 10 to 15 feet high unless otherwise indicated. Passages and rooms are granite or marble unless otherwise indicated. Except in crawlspaces and in area 18, ceilings, floors, and walls are smooth.

**Interior Doors (Visible):** Doors are iron-banded oak unless otherwise indicated. Characters must force doors open unless otherwise indicated.

*Iron-Banded Oak Door:* 2 inches thick; AC 5, Reflex 5, Fortitude 10, 20 hit points. Strength DC 21 to open.

**Secret Doors:** Secret doors typically look like the surrounding walls. Unless otherwise indicated, a character can detect a secret door with a DC 16 Perception check and can open a secret door with a DC 16 Strength or Thievery check.

**Treasure:** Powerful magic protects some of the tomb's treasure, exacting Acererak's revenge on those who challenge him. Such treasure becomes worthless if removed from the tomb, but no check or power reveals this property while the treasure is in the tomb. See areas 9 and 29.

This adventure presents specific magic items in its treasure parcels; however, unless otherwise indicated, you can replace any magic item with an item of the same level from your players' wish lists. Magic items from sources other than the *Player's Handbook* reference the source, or you can find them in the *D&D Compendium*. The abbreviation AV refers to *Adventurer's Vault*; AV2 is *Adventurer's Vault 2*; and DMA09 is *Dragon Magazine Annual 2009*.

## ENTERING THE TOMB

This adventure assumes that the characters have journeyed to Skull City and have prepared to enter the tomb by way of the Bleak Academy, as described in "Legacy of Acererak" (*Dragon* #371). When the tomb was an isolated ruin, adventurers had to find its entrance from among false and trap-guarded portals. Because the Bleak Academy now encases those entrances, a silent escort brings the characters to the tomb.

# 1. MOSAIC HALL

At the entrance to the tomb, the characters gain their first glimpse of Acererak's nightmarish masterpiece. See the illustration on the inside front cover.

*The first light brought to bear on the corridor ahead reveals a flare of color undimmed by the passage of time. The walls and the ceiling 20 feet overhead are smooth plaster frescos illustrated with interior and exterior scenes. Herds of cows graze in open fields. A wooded copse conceals wolves on the prowl. Slaves of various humanoid and monstrous races go about their labors under the whips of fiends and other cruel creatures.*

*Certain of the frescoes create the illusion of an interior space. A wizard's workroom is guarded by two jackal-headed humanoids. A library stands filled with many books and scrolls. A torture chamber holds a barred door behind which some fiendish creature lurks.*

*The floor of the corridor is an equally colorful mosaic of stone, set with a distinct 2-foot-wide path of red tiles snaking its way south.*

## 1A. FRESCO OF THE WIZARDLY WORKROOM

The characters' progress down the mosaic hall is hindered by pit traps (see below). However, the first trap (marked "T" on the map) is uniquely dangerous.

### Bronze Chest Pit Trap

Level 7 Elite Warder  
Trap XP 600

*Two jackal-headed humanoids appear to hold a real bronze chest jutting out from the wall.*

**Trap:** This 30-foot-deep pit is a deadlier version of the poison-spikes pit traps that fill this long corridor.

#### Perception

- ◆ DC 16: The top of the bronze chest features a hidden catch.
- ◆ DC 23: A character adjacent to a square can determine whether that square is part of the pit trap.

#### Trigger

If the catch is pressed, the lid of the chest swings down to reveal an empty interior. However, any character that probes the chest discovers an invisible lever attached to the bottom. The trap attacks when a creature pulls the invisible lever.

#### Attack

**Immediate Reaction**      **Melee 1**

**Target:** Each creature in one of the trap's squares.

**Attack:** +10 vs. Reflex

**Hit:** The target drops into the pit, takes 5d10 + 2 damage and ongoing 5 poison damage (save ends), and falls prone.

**Miss:** The target moves to any safe square adjacent to the triggering square.

**Effect:** The false floor opens and the pit is no longer hidden. After 24 hours open, a pit trap in the tomb magically closes and resets itself.

#### Countermeasures

- ◆ The character who pulled the lever can make a DC 17 Acrobatics check to grab the chest, gaining a +2 bonus to Reflex against the trap's attack.
- ◆ See "Countermeasures" for the poison-spikes pit trap, but add 2 to the DCs of all checks to trigger or disable the trap.

**Treasure:** Any character who falls into the pit or makes a DC 16 Perception check finds 6 gems (50 gp each) at the bottom of the pit.

## 1B. DANGEROUS PATH

The characters' progress down the corridor depends on how quickly they determine how the pit traps protecting this area work.

### Poison-Spikes Pit Trap

Level 7 Warder

Trap

XP 300

*The floor suddenly collapses to reveal a deadly spiked pit below.*

**Trap:** A 2-by-2 section of the floor hides a 10-foot-deep pit lined with poisoned spikes.

#### Perception

- ◆ DC 16: A character adjacent to a square can determine whether that square is part of a pit trap.

#### Additional Skill: Athletics

- ◆ DC 23: A character can strike the floor hard in his or her square to sound it. With a successful check, the character determines the location of all adjacent pit trap squares. A check made in a square of a pit trap triggers the trap, which gains a +2 bonus to its attack roll against the character making this check.

#### Trigger

The trap attacks when a creature moves from one of the trap's 4 squares into another of the trap's squares.

#### Attack

**Immediate Reaction**      **Melee 1**

**Target:** Each creature in one of the trap's squares.

**Attack:** +10 vs. Reflex

**Hit:** The target drops into the pit, takes 2d10 + 1 damage and ongoing 5 poison damage (save ends), and falls prone.

**Miss:** The target moves to any safe square adjacent to the triggering square.

**Effect:** The false floor opens and the pit is no longer hidden. After 24 hours open, a pit trap in the tomb magically closes and resets itself.

#### Countermeasures

- ◆ A character adjacent to a trapped square can safely trigger the trap with a DC 23 Athletics or Thievery check (standard action).
- ◆ A character on a trapped square can disable the trap with a DC 23 Thievery check (standard action, trained only). The floor becomes safe to cross for 24 hours, after which the pit trap resets. If this check fails by 5 or more, the character triggers the trap. The trap gains a +2 bonus to its attack roll against that character.
- ◆ A character can jump over the pit with a running start by making a DC 11 Athletics check (DC 21 without a running start).
- ◆ A character can climb into or out of the pit with a DC 16 Athletics check. The spiked floor of the pit can be safely crossed at half speed.

These traps activate only when a character moves from one trapped square to another, making it possible for a character to stand on the trap without realizing it.

**Secret Door:** A one-way secret door at the bottom of the southernmost pit can be detected from this side (DC 23 Perception check). However, it can be opened only from the crawlspace leading from area 2.

## 1C. THE TORMENTOR

The fresco of the torture chamber shows an iron door confining a demon from which torture victims cower in fear. If the plaster and lath of the fresco is broken (three DC 16 Strength checks), a door leading to area 3 is revealed.

## 1D. ACERERAK'S MESSAGE

Observant characters (DC 10 Perception check) and those who have studied the path from the entrance to this point notice faint runes set into the mosaic floor. As they wind their way from north to south, the runes spell out a message.

**ACERERAK CONGRATULATES YOU ON YOUR POWERS OF OBSERVATION. SO MAKE OF THIS WHATEVER YOU WISH, FOR YOU WILL BE MINE IN THE END NO MATTER WHAT!**

*Go back to the tormentor or through the arch, and the second great hall you'll discover. Shun green if you can, but night's good color is for those of great valor. If shades of red stand for blood the wise will not need sacrifice aught but a loop of magical metal—you're well along your march.*

*Two pits along the way will be found to lead to a fortuitous fall, so check the wall. These keys and those are most important of all, and beware of trembling hands and what will maul. If you find the false, you find the true and into the columned hall you'll come, and there the throne that's key and keyed.*

*The iron men of visage grim do more than meets the viewer's eye. You've left and left and found my Tomb and now your soul will die.*

## 1E. MISTY ARCHWAY

The red mosaic path splits at the end of the hall. To the east stands a mist-filled archway whose magical controls the characters must decipher.

Teleport Archway	Magical Location
------------------	------------------

A stone archway set into the wall is completely obscured with swirling white mist.

**Magical Location:** This teleport arch sends characters deeper into the tomb.

**Arcana**

◆ DC 25 (trained only): This archway is imbued with powerful teleportation magic.

**Effect:** The luminous mist cannot be seen through with any vision or power. Whenever a creature moves adjacent to the arch, three of its stones begin to glow—bright yellow at lower left; blue at the top; and orange at the lower right.

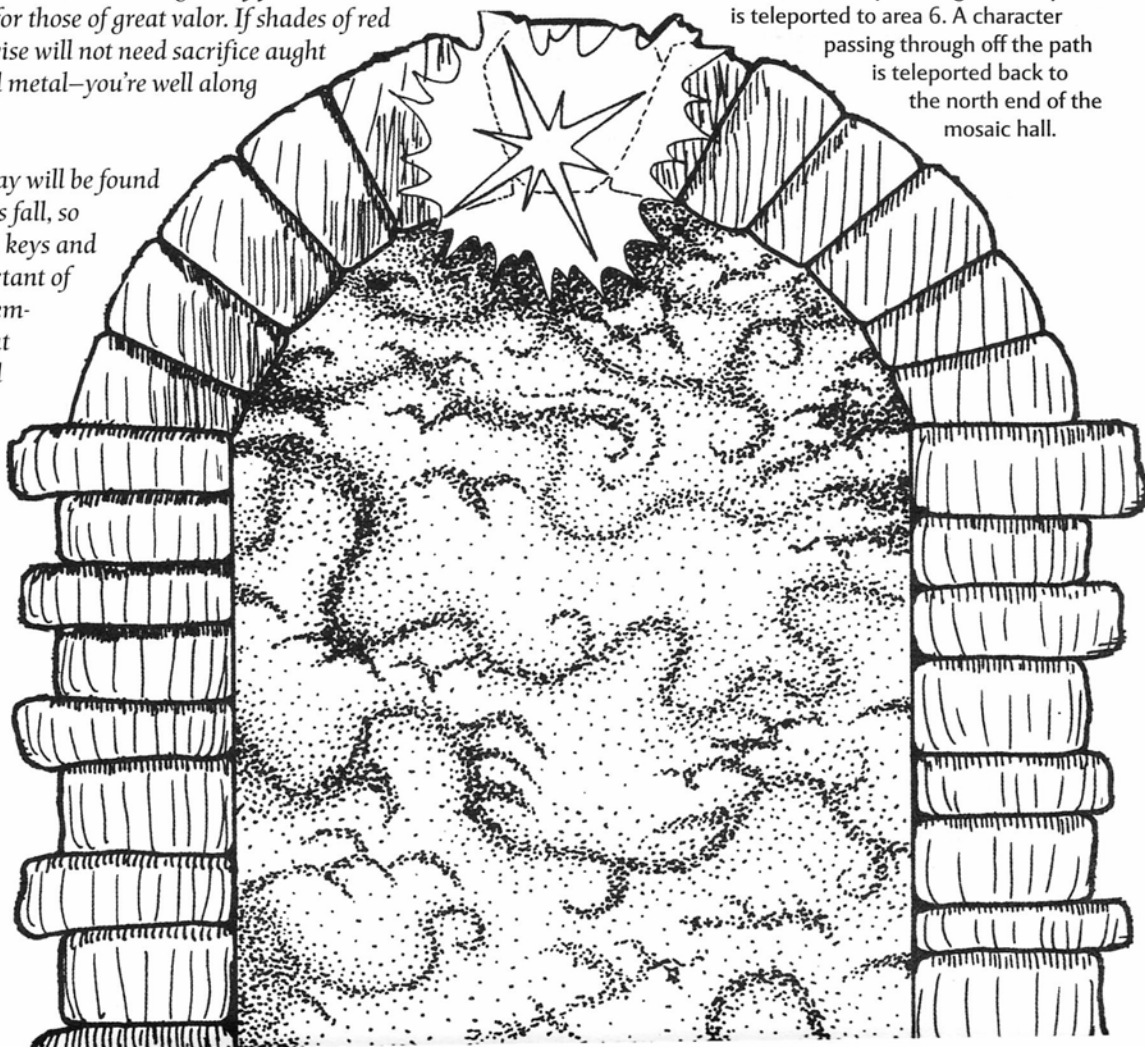
**Arcana**

◆ DC 23: Safely working the arch involves touching its glowing stones in a particular order that the characters must guess.

◆ DC 23 (trained only): This archway is imbued with powerful teleportation magic.

**Effect:** If the stones are pressed in the sequence yellow, blue, orange, the mist disappears. The characters can see a smooth-walled stone chamber, and the mosaic path ends at the far wall.

A character who enters the archway while it is clouded is teleported to area 2 (see page 5). If the arch is passed through after pressing the glowing stones in the proper sequence, a character who steps through on the path is teleported to area 6. A character passing through off the path is teleported back to the north end of the mosaic hall.



## 1F. THE DEVOURER

Carved of sickly green stone, this great devil's face is the last sight many would-be heroes ever see. The faithful of the Bleak Academy call this icon of Acererak's evil "the Devourer," a name familiar to characters who have spent any time in Skull City.

### The Devourer

### Cursed Location

The mouth of the great green devil is an impenetrable dead-black haze.

**Cursed Location:** This darkness is a void that destroys all it touches.

#### Arcana

◆ DC 28 (trained only): This stone face is imbued with deadly arcane power.

#### Trigger

Any creature that enters the Devourer's mouth is subject to attack.

#### Attack

**Opportunity Action**  
Melee 0

**Target:** One creature

**Attack:** +17 vs. Fortitude

**Hit:** 3d6 + 6 damage, and the target is stunned (save ends).

**Miss:** 2d6 damage.

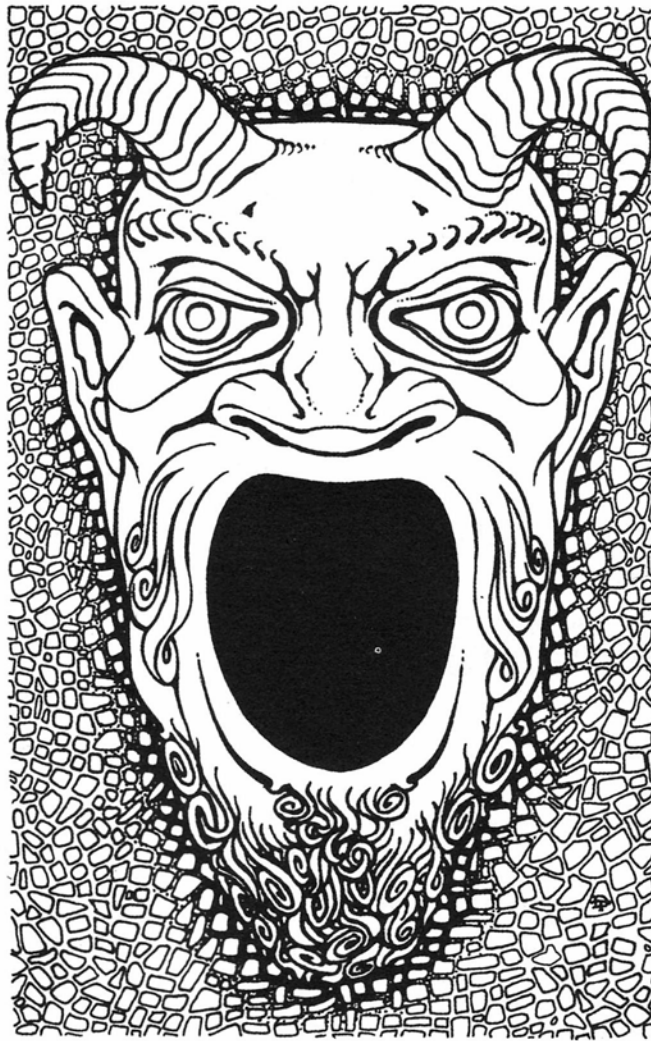
**Special:** A creature reduced to 0 hit points by this location's damage is destroyed, reduced to a pile of fine gray dust.

**Effect:** A creature starts its turn within the mouth, takes 10 damage. Creatures outside the mouth do not have line of sight to a creature that has entered the mouth.

#### Countermeasures

◆ A creature can leave the mouth by making a DC 23 Endurance check (standard action).

◆ A creature that cannot leave the mouth can be pulled out by a character adjacent to the Devourer. The character locates the unseen creature by touch by making a DC 16 Perception check (minor action) and takes 10 damage. The character pulls the creature out with a DC 16 Strength check (standard action).



## 2. FORSAKEN PRISON

Characters teleported from area 1E are trapped in this small cell.

This miserable cubicle is 10 feet on a side and appears to have no exit. Three foot-long iron levers jut out from the south wall.

### Forsaken Prison

### Level 8

#### Puzzle

XP 350

The three levers must control the hidden exit to this place, but they offer no hint as to their operation.

**Puzzle:** Each lever moves horizontally or vertically, controlling the trapdoor in the ceiling and a deadly pit trap beneath the floor.

#### Perception

◆ DC 11: A 5-foot-diameter trapdoor sits in the center of the ceiling, but no force or magic will open it.

◆ DC 16: The stone of the floor seems newer than the walls and ceiling.

#### Arcana

◆ DC 23 (trained only): Magic imbues the walls, floors, and ceiling of this room, and the magic is connected to the three levers.

#### Thievery

◆ DC 23: The levers are designed to be operated in concert, all pushed in one direction or the other.

#### Effect

Only the act of moving all three levers together has any result. Moving all three straight up at the same time opens the ceiling trapdoor. Pushing them simultaneously down causes the magical effect that creates the floor to end, dropping all creatures in the room to the bottom of a 100-foot deep pit. Creatures take 10d10 damage and fall prone amid the skeletal remains and ruined gear of adventurers who previously passed this way.

The smooth walls of the pit can be climbed with a DC 16

Athletics check. However, the stone floor (now the ceiling) forms again in 1 minute. An adjacent character can disrupt the magic of the floor beneath him or her with three DC 23 Arcana checks.

The ceiling route is a crawlspace 5 feet in diameter. Where it turns east, a stone plug in the ceiling can be detected only with a DC 23 Athletics check made to sound the stone of the passage. It can be pushed up (Strength DC 16) to reveal an access to area 7. The crawlspace leads to a magic one-way door that opens into the bottom of the southernmost pit in the mosaic hall (see page 1).

### 3: GARGOLYLE LAIR

**Encounter Level 10 (2,500 XP)**

#### SETUP

**1 lesser gargoyle mauler (G)**

When any door leading to this room is opened, it frees a dread guardian from temporal stasis.

*Even as the door opens, a shriek erupts from beyond it. An enormous four-armed gargoyle rears up, preparing to attack.*

A single character at the door can make an opposed Dexterity check to slam it shut before the gargoyle attacks. However, the creature claws its way through the door in 1d6 rounds.

#### TACTICS

The gargoyle mauler retreats to the ceiling to put it out of range of melee attacks, then executes a *flying strike* on its next turn.

If the characters flee, the gargoyle pursues them into any area of the tomb.

*“Look low and high for gold, to hear a tale untold. The archway at the end, and on your way you’ll wend. – A.”*

**Lesser Gargoyle Mauler (G)**      **Level 10 Solo Lurker**  
Large elemental humanoid (earth)      XP 2,500

**Initiative** +15      **Senses** Perception +7; darkvision

**HP** 428; **Bloodied** 214

**AC** 24; **Fortitude** 23, **Reflex** 23, **Will** 21

**Immune** petrification

**Speed** 6, fly 8 (hover)

⊕ **Claw** (standard; at-will)

+15 vs. AC; 4d6 + 4 damage.

⊖ **Mauling Claws** (standard; at-will)

The mauler makes four *claw* attacks. If two attacks hit the same target, the target is dazed (save ends). If all four attacks hit the same target, the target instead takes ongoing 5 damage and is dazed (save ends both).

⊖ **Flying Strike** (standard; recharge ☒ ☒ or after using *stone form*)

The gargoyle flies 8 squares, making *claw* attacks against up to four targets during this movement. On a hit, a target also takes ongoing 5 damage and slides 3 squares.

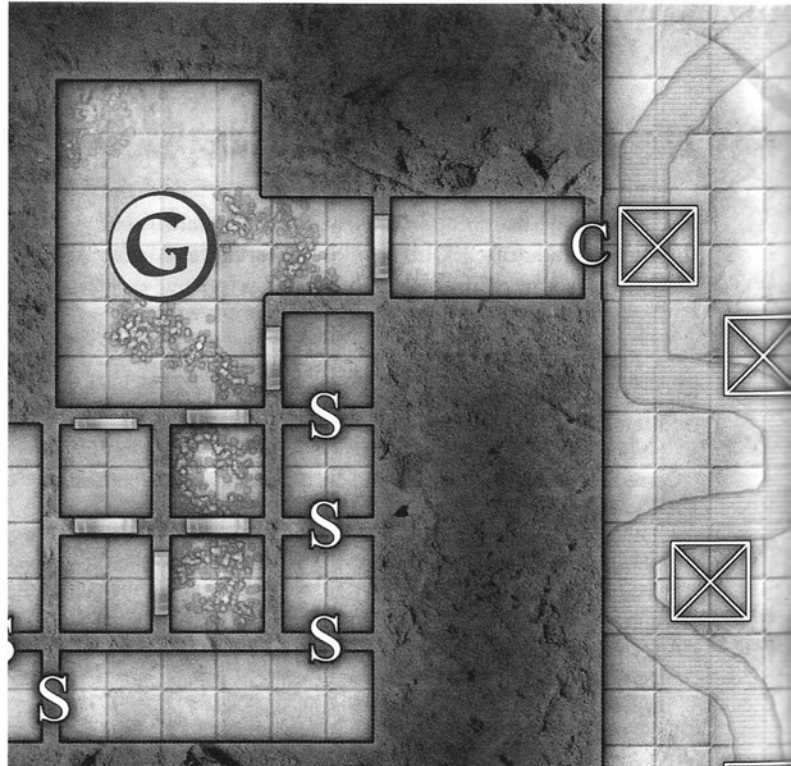
**Stone Form** (standard; at-will)

The gargoyle mauler becomes a statue and gains resist 15 to all damage, regeneration 5, and tremorsense 10. It loses all other senses and can take no actions in *stone form* other than reverting to its normal form (a minor action).

**Alignment** Chaotic evil      **Languages** Primordial

**Str** 23 (+11)      **Dex** 22 (+11)      **Wis** 14 (+7)

**Con** 19 (+9)      **Int** 13 (+6)      **Cha** 18 (+9)



#### FEATURES OF THE AREA

**Ceiling:** The ceiling is 20 feet high.

**Illumination:** None.

**Grasping Rubble:** The rubble strewn across the floor is the remains of previous gargoyles, slain and summoned again by Acererak’s magic countless times. Any creature except the gargoyle that starts its turn in rubble is subject to an attack: +13 vs. Reflex; 4d6 + 6 damage and the creature is slowed until the end of its turn.

**Empty Rooms:**

The rooms to the south contain only grasping rubble.

**Treasure:** Around the gargoyle’s neck is a collar studded with blue quartz (worth 250 gp). Hidden within the leather bands of the collar (DC 15 Perception to find) is a slip of parchment scribed with magical runes (DC 17 Arcana to decipher).





## 4. GAUNTLET OF DOORS

### Encounter Level 9 (2,000 XP)

A normal door connects the gargoyle's lair (area 3) with the first room in this area. (The characters cannot enter this area from area 5; see page 8.)

*The chamber beyond the door is 10 feet on a side and empty of everything but dust and grit.*

Passing through this area involves a skill challenge that takes the party through a succession of secret doors. The skill challenge is time sensitive and is treated somewhat like a combat encounter. Characters roll initiative as normal. However, they can act in any order as long as each character takes only his or her normal allotment of actions for each round. On initiative count 0, characters in any part of the gauntlet are subject to an attack by the magic trap that fills the area.

Start the encounter when the first character steps through the door from area 3.

## GAUNTLET OF DOORS

*These empty rooms are divided by a series of secret doors.*

**Setup:** Each room contains a secret door that requires a minimum of three standard actions to detect and open. Each of the rooms that make up this gauntlet of secret doors is protected by a magical bolt trap (see the statistics block). Characters who take too long to open a door are targeted by the trap.

**Level:** 9 (XP 2,000).

**Complexity:** 5 (special).

**Primary Skills:** Athletics, Thievery.

**Athletics, Thievery (DC 17, standard action):** By testing or investigating the physical setup of the door, the character intuits the operation of one of its two mechanisms (see the table).

**Perception (DC 12, standard action):** The character detects the location of the secret door, after which characters can attempt to determine the workings of its two mechanisms.

**Secondary Skills:** Insight.

**Insight (DC 17, standard action):** The character gains a hint of the operation of the secret door by second-guessing its design. With a successful check, the next Athletics or Thievery check made in the challenge gains a +2 bonus.

**Success and Failure:** This skill challenge has no overall success or failure. Instead, the challenge ends when the characters successfully identify, open, and pass through all the secret doors within the area. Failure in the challenge is marked by the number of attacks the magic trap gets against the characters.

It takes one primary skill check to locate a secret door, followed by two primary checks to identify both of the door's opening mechanisms. When the characters identify the second mechanism, they open the door, after which the characters can use move actions to move into the next area. The trap attacks on initiative count 0, but it ignores a room whose door has been opened for the first time during that round. The characters can avoid the trap if they move into a new room in the gauntlet each round.

**Special:** If the characters gain only one successful primary check for a door, they determine its initial mechanism (see the table). With this knowledge, a character can attempt to guess the door's second mechanism as a standard action. If a character guesses successfully, the door opens.

The door in area G of the gauntlet is also a trap. If the characters accidentally drop the door on themselves, it stays open. However, the magical bolt trap attacks as normal.

### Magical Bolt Trap

Trap

Level 10 Blaster  
XP –

*With a pulse of white light, bolts of arcane force lance out from the walls and ceiling.*

**Trap:** Each round on initiative count 0, the trap fires a barrage of magical force missiles that attack one target.

#### Perception

This trap cannot be detected with Perception.

#### Additional Skill: Arcana

♦ DC 25 (trained only): The character detects a pulse of arcane energy building in the walls of the room.

#### Trigger

The trap activates when a creature enters any room in the gauntlet, then attacks each round on initiative count 0.

#### Attack

##### Standard Action

##### Ranged special

**Target:** One creature in any part of the gauntlet. The trap ignores creatures in a room whose door has been opened for the first time during that round.

**Attack:** +15 vs. Will

**Hit:** 4d8 + 2 force damage.

## GAUNTLET OF DOORS

Door	Mechanism 1	Mechanism 2
A.	Hidden catch at top	Pulls down
B.	Thin handholds at edges	Pivots centrally
C.	Hidden catch at bottom	Pulls inward and up
D.	Faint ridge at bottom	Slides up
E.	Faint seam down the middle	Double panels pull inward
F.	Hidden catch at right	Slides left
G.	7 hidden studs	Press all and door opens; press 1 and 7, door falls inward, dealing 3d6 damage to all creatures in the room and knocking them prone

## 5. GREAT HALL OF SPHERES

This broad hall is similar to the tomb entrance, its floor set with inlaid tiles and the walls and ceiling covered with painted frescos.

*Strange glyphs, symbols, and faces are set within two ranks of humanoid and monstrous figures standing along both walls. Each figure appears to hold a colored sphere. A mist-filled archway opens up at the south end of the hall.*

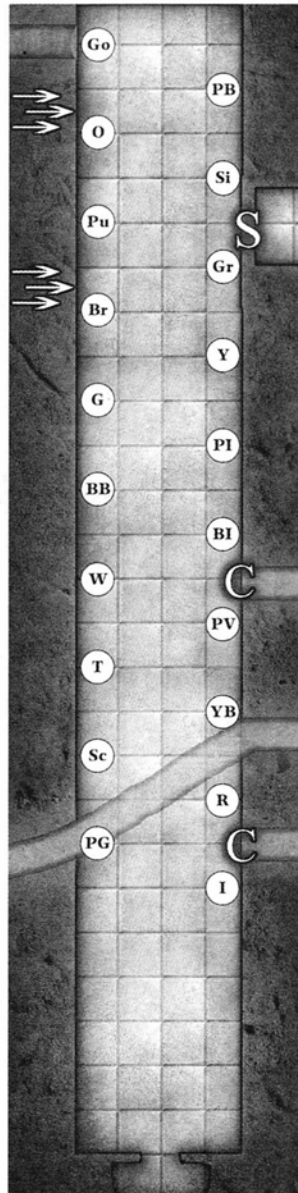
A DC 17 Arcana or Religion check determines that the glyphs are purely decorative.

Most of the 3-foot-diameter spheres are painted onto the plaster walls. However, six spheres are illusions that conceal openings behind them. A creature can detect an illusory sphere only by touch. Creatures cannot see through it, and any object passes through it. A creature must thrust its head into a sphere to see what lies beyond it.

The creatures and spheres along the west and east walls are as indicated on the tables, running from north to south.

### WEST WALL

Key	Description
Go	A naga holds a gold sphere above its head. The sphere is an illusion covering a 5-foot-diameter crawspace leading to area 6.
O	A mummy holds an orange sphere at waist height. The sphere is an illusion covering a spear trap (see the statistics block). Any creature putting an object or a part of its body through the sphere triggers the trap.
Pu	A purple sphere held at the feet of a minotaur.
Br	A lamia holds a bronze sphere at waist height. The sphere is an illusion covering a spear trap (see above).
G	A gray sphere sits on the shoulder of an owlbear.
BB	A sahuagin holds a bright blue sphere at its feet.
W	A white sphere is held above the head of a red slaad.
T	A satyr holds a turquoise sphere at its shoulder.
Sc	A mind flayer holds a scarlet sphere waist high.
PG	A medusa has a pale green sphere at its feet.



### EAST WALL

Key	Description
PB	A werewolf holds a pale blue sphere at shoulder height.
Si	A silver sphere is held at the feet of a four-armed gargoyle. The sphere is an illusion covering the secret one-way door exiting from area 4. The secret door mechanism is obvious but cannot be opened from this side.
Gr	A green sphere is held high above the head of an armored giant.
Y	A warden in hawk-headed guardian form holds a yellow sphere at shoulder height.
Pi	A yuan-ti holds a pink sphere above its head.
Bi	A black sphere sits at the feet of a hydra. The sphere is an illusion covering a 5-foot-diameter crawspace leading to area 9.
PV	A pale violet sphere is held on the shoulder of a kuo-toa.
YB	A white-bearded human wizard holds a yellow-brown sphere at its feet.
R	A red sphere is held waist high by a skeleton. The sphere is an illusion covering a 5-foot-diameter crawspace leading to area 7.
I	A succubus holds an indigo sphere high above its head.

### Magic Spear Trap

Level 7 Blaster  
Trap XP 300

*As the door opens, a glowing spear erupts from the blank wall behind it.*

**Trap:** From a plain stone wall, a magically summoned spear launches itself at a single target.

#### Perception

This trap cannot be detected with Perception.

#### Additional Skill: Arcana

◆ DC 23 (trained only): A pulse of magic betrays the presence of the trap.

#### Trigger

The trap attacks when a character reveals or touches the section of wall it occupies.

#### Attack

**Immediate Reaction** Ranged 5

**Target:** The nearest creature

**Attack:** +10 vs. Reflex

**Hit:** 3d8 damage, and ongoing 5 damage (save ends).

**Miss:** Ongoing 5 damage (save ends).

#### Effect:

The spear fades to mist and disappears.

#### Countermeasures

◆ A character adjacent to the trap can disable the trap with a DC 16 Arcana or Thievery check. The trap resets after 1 hour.

## 5A. CURSED ARCHWAY

This arch is identical to the arch at area 1E. However, this location has a more nefarious purpose.

### Cursed Archway

### Cursed Location

The swirling white mist within the archway hides whatever lies beyond it.

**Cursed Location:** This archway steals a character's gear to strike a blow against the characters' morale.

### Arcana or Thievery

◆ DC 28 (trained only): The mists of this archway are imbued with a powerful magical curse.

### Effect

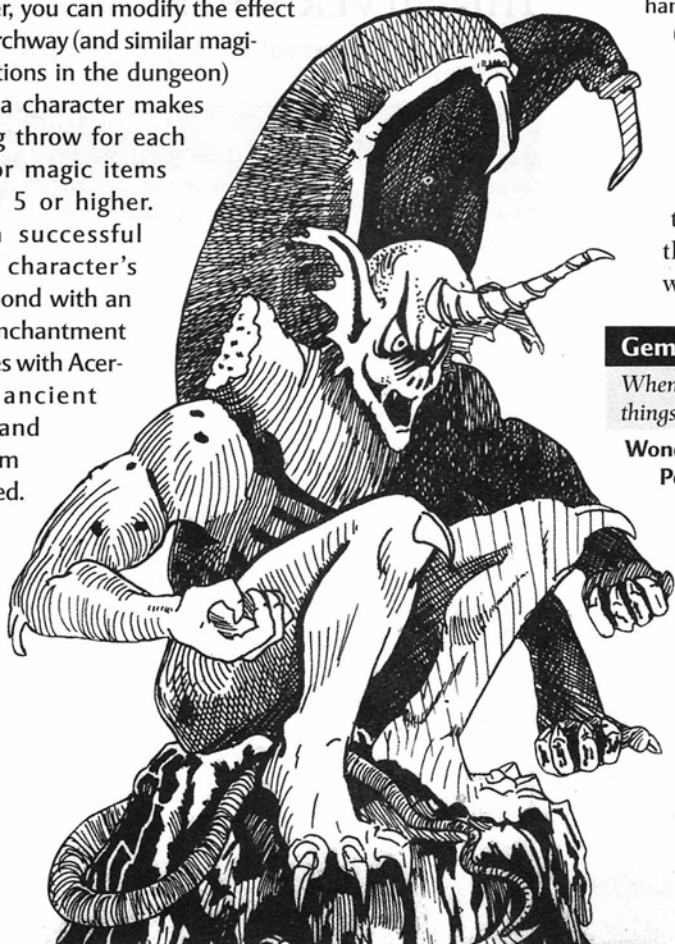
Whenever a creature moves adjacent to the arch, three of its stones begin to glow—dull olive green on the lower left; russet brown at the top; and a sickly citron yellow at lower right. No matter which stones are pressed and in what order, the archway remains clouded and veiled with a haze that cannot be seen through with any vision or power. Any character that steps through the arch has all his or her clothing and gear teleported to the crypt at area 32, while the character (now nude) is teleported to the tomb entrance at area 1.

## “CRUEL, BUT MOST ENTERTAINING . . .”

For many players of the original *Tomb of Horrors*, this cursed archway was a fate worse than death. Raising a character is difficult but not impossible. However, nothing can restore a career's worth of magic gear stolen in a heartbeat.

The quest to retrieve precious magic gives characters great incentive to return to the tomb.

However, you can modify the effect of this archway (and similar magical locations in the dungeon) so that a character makes a saving throw for each of his or magic items of level 5 or higher. With a successful save, a character's heroic bond with an item's enchantment interferes with Acerak's ancient magic, and the item is retained.



## 6. THREE-ARMED STATUE

At the end of the 5-foot-diameter crawlspace, a small chamber opens up.

Aside from rubble on the floor, the only other thing you see in this chamber is an 8-foot tall statue of a four-armed gargoyle. One of its arms has been broken off, and it rests on the floor at its feet.

### Statue's Sacrifice

Level 10

Puzzle

XP 500

The statue's hands are outstretched, as if waiting for some offering.

**Puzzle:** Sacrificing gems in the statue's three attached hands calls forth a powerful magic item.

### Perception

◆ DC 18: Each of the statue's three intact hands is carved with an indentation, as if some object is meant to be placed there. The fourth has no such concavity.

◆ DC 26: The rubble and debris surrounding the statue contains traces of diamond dust.

### Arcana or Thievery

◆ DC 26 (trained only): Both the statue and its broken arm are imbued with powerful magic.

◆ DC 30 (trained only): Activating the statue's magic requires a series of repeated actions.

### Effect

If three gems are placed within the statue's outstretched hands, the stony digits close and crush them to powder. After dumping the dust on the floor, they return to their normal positions.

This process must be repeated three times, destroying nine gems. If one or more gems are then placed in the statue's hands, they are not crushed, but the statue appears to speak (by way of a Magic Mouth ritual):

*"Your sacrifice was not in vain. Look to the fourth to find your gain."*

If the characters successfully solve the puzzle, an invisible *gem of seeing* appears in the palm of the statue's broken arm. Characters can feel for the gem in the statue's fourth hand, and it appears when touched.

### Gem of Seeing

Level 12

When you look through it, this flat-polished oval diamond reveals things unseen.

**Wondrous Item** 13,000 gp

**Power (At-Will):** Standard Action. You hold the gem before one of your eyes. You can see invisible creatures and objects within 10 squares of you.

The *gem of seeing* can be used only twelve times. After the twelfth use, the gem shatters and is replaced with 2,600 gp worth of *residium*.

## 7. CHAMBER OF THREE CHESTS

**Encounter Level 5-12 (3,900 XP)**

### SETUP

When the party enters the crawlway hidden by the red sphere in area 5 (page 8), they come to an apparent dead end after 40 feet of rough passage. A DC 13 Perception check notes the secret door at the end.

Opening the secret door causes the end of the tunnel to collapse. The character opening the door must make a DC 13 Acrobatics check or drop 10 feet into area 7, taking damage as normal. The other characters can descend safely.

*Within this otherwise empty chamber, three closed chests are set across the stone floor.*

#### Three Chests

#### Encounter Setup

Each chest is 4 feet long, 2 feet wide, and 3 feet high. The first chest gleams gold. The second is untarnished silver. The third is oak bound with thick bronze bands.

**Encounter Setup:** Each of these three chests contains potent magic that triggers an individual part of the overall encounter.

#### Arcana

◆ DC 26 (trained only): A character can detect magic within all three chests, but he or she gains no specific information as to its nature.

#### Perception

◆ DC 13: The precious-metal chests are only poor-quality gold and silver plate over iron. All three chests are magically affixed to the floor and cannot be budged.

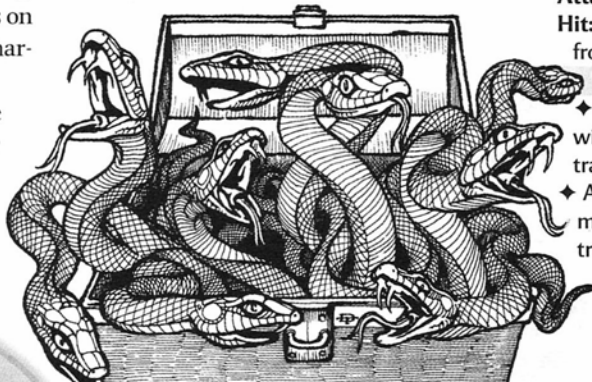
#### Thievery

◆ DC 18 (trained only): The chests are not locked or trapped. (The magic trap mechanism is wholly inside each trapped chest and cannot be identified from outside.)

#### Effect

- ◆ A character can open a chest easily. A chest also opens magically if it is:
  - ◆ Caught within the area of an arcane or divine area attack power.
  - ◆ Targeted by a weapon attack.
  - ◆ Struck by a creature under the effect of forced movement.

Each of the chests triggers an encounter when opened. Taken individually, each encounter represents a minor challenge for a party of the characters' level. However, each encounter creates the chance that any remaining chests will also be opened. The range of levels in the encounter information above depends on whether the characters take on each challenge individually or all at once.



## THE GOLD CHEST

Opening this chest summons a horde of poisonous snakes that fight until destroyed.

*A pulse of green light erupts as the chest opens, and a swarm of hissing vipers pours forth.*

#### Horde Vipers

Small natural beast (reptile)

#### Level 10 Minion Soldier

XP 125 each

**Initiative** +12

**Senses** Perception +5; low-light vision

**Death Rattle (Fear)** aura 2; any enemy within the aura takes a -2 penalty to attack rolls.

**HP** 1; a missed attack never damages a minion.

**AC** 25; **Fortitude** 21, **Reflex** 24, **Will** 22

**Resist** 15 poison

**Speed** 4, climb 4

Ⓢ **Bite** (standard; at-will) ◆ **Poison**

+16 vs. Reflex; ongoing 8 poison damage (save ends). If the target is already taking ongoing poison damage from a horde viper's attack, the ongoing damage increases by 2.

**Alignment** Unaligned

**Languages** –

**Str** 13 (+6)

**Dex** 20 (+10)

**Wis** 10 (+5)

**Con** 17 (+8)

**Int** 2 (+1)

**Cha** 18 (+9)

### TACTICS

The vipers stay close to any closed chests, hoping that an area arcane or divine attack opens them. They focus their attacks on slow-moving foes.

## THE SILVER CHEST

When this chest is opened, a deadly magic trap is activated.

#### Force Dart Fusillade

Trap

#### Level 10 Elite Blaster

XP 1,000

*A pulse of shadow erupts as the chest is opened, and the air around you is filled with a barrage of black darts.*

**Trap:** Each round on its initiative, the trap fires a barrage of force darts throughout the area.

#### Perception

This trap cannot be detected with Perception.

**Initiative** +10

#### Trigger

When the silver chest is opened, the trap rolls initiative and attacks.

#### Attack

**Standard Action**

**Ranged** 10

**Target:** The creature that opened the chest and each ally in range

**Attack:** +15 vs. Reflex

**Hit:** 4d6 + 1 force damage and the target is pushed 2 squares from the chest.

#### Countermeasures

- ◆ A character adjacent to the chest can disable the trap with two DC 26 Arcana or Thievery checks (standard action, trained only).
- ◆ A character who moves more than 3 squares on his or her most recent turn gains a +2 bonus to Reflex against the trap's attack.



## THE OAKEN CHEST

This chest summons a skeletal guardian that lashes out against the nearest characters.

*With a burst of white light, an enormous skeletal figure erupts from the oaken chest, its twin scimitars lashing out.*

**Skeleton Blade Guardian** **Level 12 Elite Brute**  
Large natural animate (undead) XP 1,400

**Initiative** +13 **Senses** Perception +10; darkvision

**HP** 292; **Bloodied** 146

**AC** 24; **Fortitude** 23, **Reflex** 26, **Will** 23

**Immune** disease, poison

**Saving Throws** +2

**Speed** 6

**Action Points** 1

⊕ **Scimitar** (standard; at-will) ♦ **Weapon**

Reach 2; +15 vs. AC; 3d10 + 6 damage.

⚡ **Preemptive Slash** (immediate interrupt, when the blade guardian is targeted by a melee attack; at-will)

The blade guardian makes a *scimitar* attack against the triggering attacker. If the attack hits, the triggering attacker also takes a -2 penalty to the triggering attack roll.

↶ **Rain of Steel** (standard; recharge 1/1)

Close burst 3; +13 vs. Reflex; 3d10 + 6 damage, and the blade guardian slides the target 2 squares.

**Retaliating Blades**

A creature that makes an opportunity attack against the blade guardian takes 2d6 damage.

**Alignment** Evil

**Languages** –

**Str** 18 (+10)

**Dex** 24 (+13)

**Wis** 19 (+10)

**Con** 16 (+9)

**Int** 5 (+3)

**Cha** 8 (+5)

## TACTICS

The skeleton blade guardian takes on the strongest-looking melee combatants, laying into those foes with *scimitar* and *preemptive slash* attacks. It reserves *rain of steel* until it can attempt to drive foes into any unopened chests.

## DEVELOPMENT

All the summoned creatures here remain indefinitely if they are not destroyed. If the characters flee this area, the blade guardian pursues them but the asps do not.

## FEATURES OF THE AREA

**Ceiling:** The ceiling is 20 feet high.

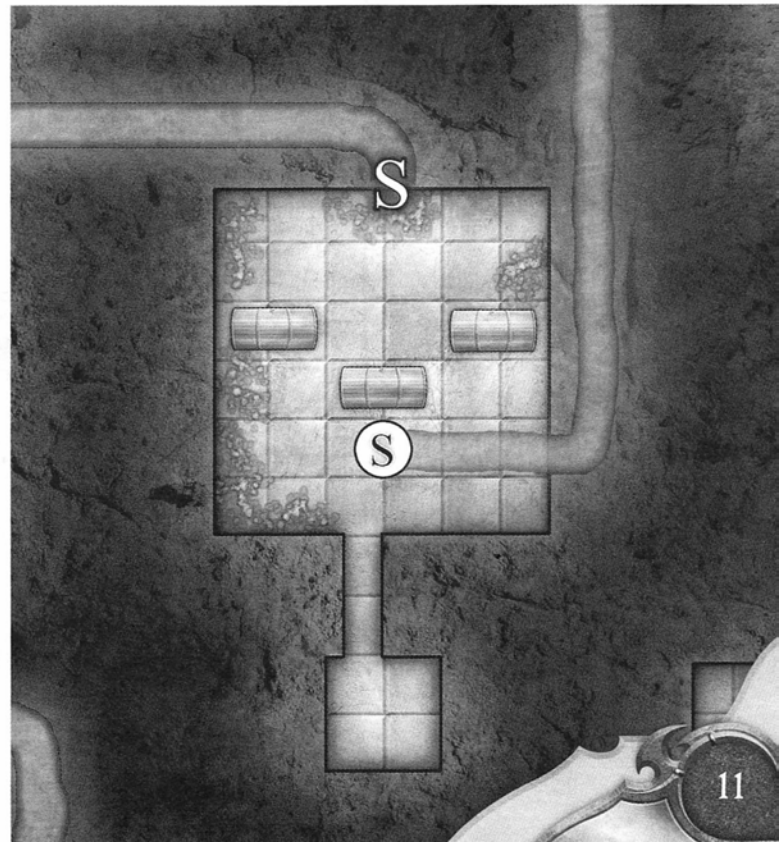
**Illumination:** None.

**Chests:** Each chest provides cover to a Medium or smaller creature crouching or prone behind it. It takes 1 extra square of movement or a DC 13 Athletics check to hop over a chest.

**Rubble:** These areas of loose scree are difficult terrain. A character who runs, charges, or is forced to move through rubble must make a DC 13 Acrobatics check or fall prone at the end of that movement.

**Treasure:** The gold and oaken chests are empty, but the silver chest holds a *watcher's signet* magic ring (DMA09 46) in a clear crystal box (worth 150 gp). (If none of the characters has come into possession of a magic ring in the heroic tier, do not replace this ring with another magic item. The party needs a magic ring to open the secret door at area 9c.)

With 10 minutes work, the characters can strip the plating from the gold and silver chests. Though poor quality, it is worth 70 gp and 30 gp, respectively, if sold.



## 8. DEAD END

A 5-foot-diameter crawlspace lies beyond the illusionary black sphere in area 5.

*The tunnel turns twice but maintains a southward course. Then suddenly, around a last bend, it stops dead at a blank wall of stone.*

It takes two DC 23 Perception checks to locate the door, or one DC 18 Perception check by a character who can see invisible objects. It takes two DC 13 Thievery or Strength checks to open it.

## 9. CHAPEL OF EVIL

*A mosaic path like the one at the tomb entrance runs from the secret door to pass between two rows of great wooden pews. The walls are painted with scenes of everyday rural life. However, the figures depicted there have rotting flesh and skeletal limbs, their features eaten away by worms.*

A DC 26 Arcana or Religion check (trained only) indicates that powerful magic fills this area, and that its arcane essence is inextricably consecrated to good. (However, see "The Blue Altar," below).

*A wooden railing divides this chapel, the mosaic path leading through it to a tiered dais set with a wooden chair, a pair of brass candelabra, and two large ceramic urns. Atop the dais, a stone altar glows an opalescent blue. The symbols of Pelor, Avandra, Moradin, and Bahamut are engraved on its front.*

*To the west of the altar, a stone archway is filled with glowing orange mist. A humanoid skeleton in badly rusted black chainmail lies on the floor, pointing toward it.*

The candelabra and the empty urns are as worthless as everything else in this false temple of good. Designed to confuse Acererak's foes, this area is as deadly as any other part of the tomb.

## WOODEN PEWS

Each of these benches features a hinged seat that reveals a storage space underneath it.

**Treasure:** The back pair of pews each contain 2,000 sp. The next pair each hold 1,400 gp and 3,500 sp. The next pews each hold 2,100 gp. Part of this treasure is protected by Acererak's magic. If removed from the tomb, all of it turns to worthless low-quality copper and tin except for 400 gp.

A DC 18 Perception or Thievery check on any one of these pews determines that it is not trapped—unlike the front pair of pews.



**Weakness Gas Trap****Level 8 Blaster**

Trap

XP 350

*As the seat of the pew is lifted, a cloud of acrid gas fills the air.***Trap:** Each of the front pews in the chapel of evil is trapped.**Perception**

This trap cannot be detected with Perception.

**Additional Skill: Thievery**

♦ DC 16 (trained only): The lid of this pew is a subtly hidden trap, ready to trigger if opened.

**Trigger**

The trap attacks when the lid of the pew is opened. Each trap triggers separately.

**Attack****Standard Action** Close burst 4**Target:** Each creature in burst**Attack:** +11 vs. Fortitude**Hit:** 4d8 poison damage.**Miss:** 1d8 poison damage.**Effect**

1 round after the trap attacks, the gas spreads to a close burst 8 that completely fills the area. The trap makes a second attack with a -2 penalty to the attack roll. The gas then dissipates harmlessly.

**Aftereffect**

The next time the target rolls initiative in a combat encounter, it becomes weakened (save ends). The target takes a -1 penalty to this saving throw for each time it has been hit by this attack. The target gains a +1 bonus to the saving throw for each extended rest it has taken since last being hit by this attack.

A character remains unaware of this aftereffect until he or she starts the next combat encounter.

**Countermeasures**

♦ A character gains a +2 bonus to Fortitude against the trap's next attack with a DC 16 Endurance check (standard action).

♦ The magical weakness gas is absorbed through the lungs and the skin. However, a character holding his or her breath gains a +5 bonus to Endurance checks made to resist the effects of the gas.



DAVID C. SUTHERLAND III

## 9A. BLUE ALTAR

A DC 30 Arcana or Religion check (trained only, made adjacent to the altar) reveals that the aura of good detectable earlier in the chapel is wholly false, masked by the altar's powerful magic.

**Lightning Blast Altar****Level 8 Blaster**

Trap

XP 350

A bolt of lightning erupts from the altar to blast any creatures standing before it.

**Trap:** The altar glows with pulsing power that waits for the touch of a living creature.**Perception**

This trap cannot be detected with Perception.

**Additional Skills: Arcana or Thievery**

♦ DC 24 (trained only): The glowing altar is a deadly magic trap.

**Trigger**

If touched by a living creature, the altar sends a pulse of lightning up the aisle between the pews, from the altar to the north wall.

**Attack****Immediate Reaction** Close blast special**Target:** Each creature in the aisle between the pews**Attack:** +11 vs. Reflex**Hit:** 3d8 + 4 lightning damage, and ongoing 5 lightning damage (save ends).**Miss:** Half damage.**Effect**

In the aftermath of the attack, the altar glows a fiery purple.

**Secondary Trigger**

If the altar is touched by any object or creature, the trap makes another attack.

**Immediate Reaction** Close blast 5**Target:** Each creature in blast**Attack:** +11 vs. Reflex**Hit:** 5d8 + 5 fire damage.**Miss:** Half damage.**Effect**

The altar is destroyed, but reforms in 1 week.

**Countermeasures**

♦ A character adjacent to the trap can disrupt the altar's power with a DC 16 Arcana, Religion, or Thievery check (standard action). With each successful check, the trap takes a -2 penalty to attack rolls if subsequently triggered. Three successful checks disable the trap for 24 hours. However, a check that fails by 5 or more triggers the trap.

## 9B. ORANGE ARCHWAY

This third archway is even more diabolical than those previously seen.

### Cursed Archway

### Cursed Location

*The skeleton sprawled across the floor points toward the arch—but was the figure trying to reach it or to warn others away?*

**Cursed Location:** A character who steps through the arch emerges the next round as a screaming berserker of the opposite sex (no doubt giving her or his companions pause).

### Arcana or Thievery

◆ DC 26 (trained only): The mists of this archway are imbued with a powerful magical curse.

### Effect

The luminous orange mist within the arch cannot be seen through with any vision or power. Unlike with the archways at area 1E and area 5A, the stones of this cursed arch do not glow. Any character passing through the portal enters the small room beyond. The portal has different effects depending on how many times a creature enters it. (Exiting the portal each time has no additional effect.)

### First Time

The first time a character enters the portal, he or she is subjected to two powerful effects.

- ◆ The character's sex is changed to its opposite. All her or his armor and clothing is magically modified as necessary.
- ◆ The character flies into a murderous rage (save ends; the character takes a -2 penalty to the saving throw). While in a murderous rage, the character makes a basic attack or a charge against the nearest creature. This is a charm effect.

### Arcana

◆ DC 26 (trained only): Once the rage ends, a character can determine that the sex of the changed character can be restored only by a combination of a Remove Affliction ritual and the character entering the archway again. However, the precise conditions are not revealed.

### Second Time

The character takes 1d6 damage. A Remove Affliction can now reverse the character's sex back to normal.

### Third Time

The character's sex (and all her or his clothing and armor) is reversed back to normal. However, the character's clothing and gear are teleported to the crypt at area 32 while the character (now nude) is teleported to the tomb entrance at area 1.

## 9C. RING PORTAL

A search of the temple reveals a small down-sloping slot in the wall to the southeast.

### Ring Portal

### Puzzle

### Level 9

XP 400

*Above the small slot, a circle has been carefully scribed in the stone wall.*

**Puzzle:** The characters must sacrifice a magic ring to activate a secret door.

### Perception

◆ DC 17: A character notices the small slot in the wall.

### Thievery

◆ DC 17 (trained only): The slot is the mechanism for a hidden mechanical portal within the wall, but no hint is given of how to activate it.

### Effect

The slot is the size of a coin, a flat gem, or a ring. Any item placed into the slot falls through and lands unseen on the other side of the 2-foot-thick wall.

A magic ring fed into the slot activates the portal:

With a grinding sound, the wall suddenly begins to drop. An immense wedge-shaped block of stone sinks slowly into the floor, revealing a passageway beyond it.

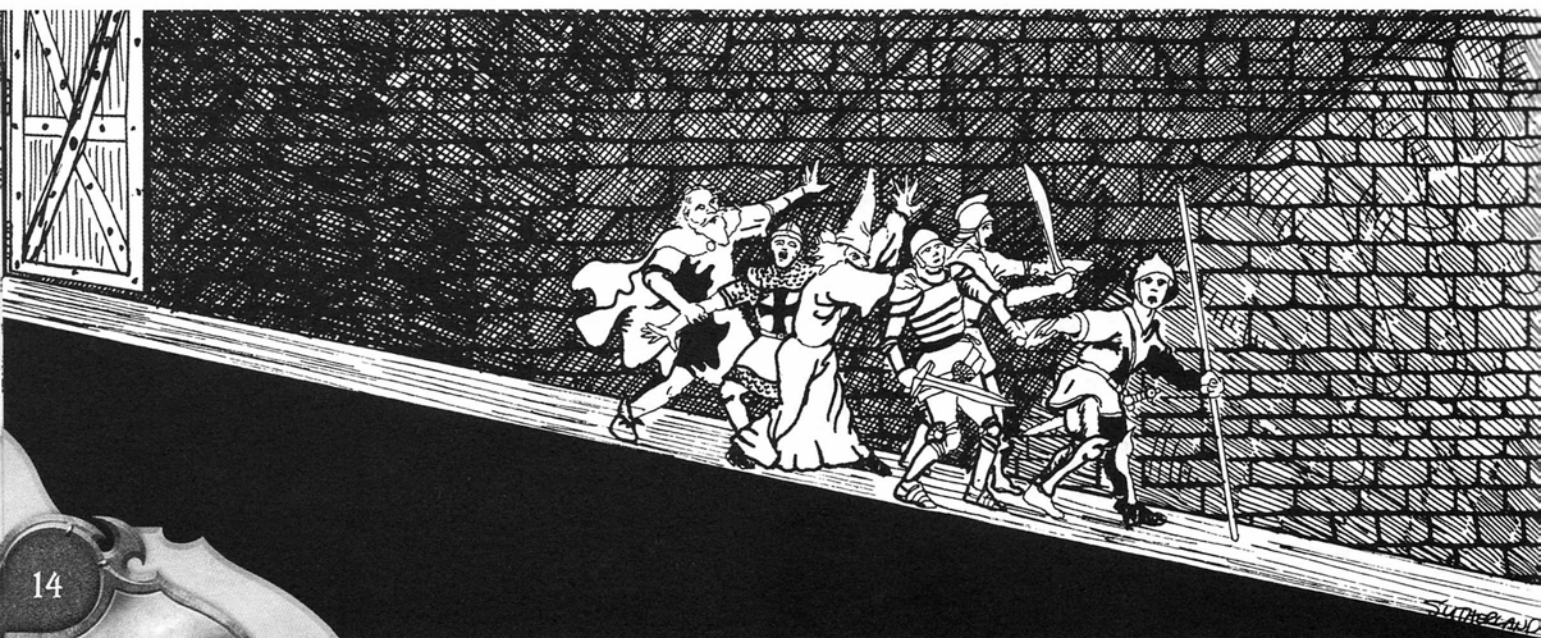
The ring and all other objects deposited into the slot are crushed and destroyed beneath the sinking stone.

The portal's counterweight controls allow it to be raised or lowered easily from the other side.

## 10. THREE PITS

Beyond the ring portal, a flight of steps leads to a series of pit traps and an important secret door. After forcing a door open as normal, a pit trap triggers if the characters move ahead without checking the floor. See the poison spikes pit trap on page 3.

The routine of working past these three pits makes it likely that the party ignores the third pit by the time they receive it. At the bottom of that pit, a poorly concealed secret door (DC 10 Perception) leads to the last section of this first half of the tomb.





# 11. PERILOUS HALL

This long hallway conceals one of the Tomb of Horrors' deadliest traps.

*At the end of this long corridor stands a broad door heavily bound with iron bands and locks. As you approach, you hear the sound of far-off music and happy singing coming from beyond.*

Six heavy locks are built into the door, all rusted shut. A DC 25 Arcana check (trained only) reveals that powerful magic also bars the door, which cannot be picked, forced, or opened with the Knock ritual. It must be attacked and destroyed with melee weapons or powers that specifically target objects: AC 4, Reflex 4, Fortitude 12, 80 hit points.

*As the door collapses inward, sounds of confusion come from the darkness beyond, as of numerous creatures fleeing into the distance. Beyond the door stands another long passageway with walls of smooth white alabaster, its floor a highly polished smoke-gray marble. The faint glow of torchlight can be seen receding ahead of you.*

The destruction of the door triggers an auditory and visual illusion that creates the appearance of the tunnel running off into darkness. However, when the first character passes more than 30 feet from the doorway, the magically counterweighted passageway suddenly lurches to slope steeply down from the doorway. At the end of the passage, a planar vent opens up to the Elemental Chaos. All characters north of the door are caught in the trap—not just those who trigger it.

Elemental Vent	Level 10 Elite Obstacle
Trap	XP 1,000

*A shimmering elemental gate opens up to a vast pit of flames and molten lava, ready to consume anything that falls into it.*

**Trap:** The elemental vent occupies an area 2 squares on a side. Creatures within 10 squares of the vent are blasted by its intense heat.

### Perception

This trap cannot be detected with Perception.

### Additional Skill: Arcana

◆ DC 30 (trained only): Powerful planar magic can be detected at the location of the elemental vent before it erupts.

### Trigger

The elemental vent attacks any creature that starts its turn within 10 squares of it.

### Attack

**Opportunity Action**      **Ranged**

**Target:** The triggering creature

**Attack:** +12 vs. Fortitude; for every 2 squares closer the target is to the elemental vent, the trap gains a +1 bonus to the attack roll.

**Hit:** 2d10 + 5 fire damage, and the target takes ongoing 5 fire damage and is dazed (save ends both).

**Each Failed Saving Throw:** The ongoing fire damage dealt by the trap increases by 5.

**Miss:** 1d10 fire damage, and the target is dazed until the end of its next turn.

### Special

If a creature enters the elemental vent, the vent automatically hits with its next attack against that creature, even if the creature has left the vent by the time that attack is made. Any creature slain by the elemental vent is wholly consumed, its body and gear destroyed.

### Countermeasures

- ◆ A character gains a +2 bonus to Fortitude against the trap's next attack with a DC 18 Endurance check (minor action).
- ◆ A character can avoid the elemental vent by moving away from it. However, the slanting passageway makes this difficult, especially for characters dazed by the trap's effects. See the skill challenge.

## PERILOUS HALL

*As the corridor lurches downward, a blast of fire erupts at its end—a deadly elemental vent toward which you slide.*

**Setup:** The magic of the corridor dumps the characters toward a deadly elemental vent. Scrambling up and away from the trap is a skill challenge.

**Level:** 9 (XP 1,200).

**Complexity:** 3 (special).

**Primary Skills:** Acrobatics, Athletics.

**Acrobatics or Athletics (DC 17, move action):** The character fights his or her way back up the slanting corridor. A successful check allows the character to move at half speed. On a failed check, the character slides 2 squares toward the bottom of the corridor and the elemental vent.

**Acrobatics (DC 17, standard action):** A character with a grappling hook and rope at hand can throw it to the top of the corridor and secure it on the remains of the door. See "Special," below.

**Secondary Skills:** Acrobatics, Arcana, Athletics.

**Acrobatics or Athletics (DC 12, standard action):** The character helps an adjacent character climb. A successful check grants one character adjacent to the character a +2 bonus to his or her next primary skill check in the challenge. On a failed check, both characters slide 2 squares toward the bottom of the corridor and the elemental vent.

**Arcana (DC 12, minor action):** The character attempts to disrupt the magic controlling the movement of the corridor. With a successful Arcana check, the character grants a +2 bonus to the next primary skill check made in the challenge.

**Special:** A rope, whether tossed down and anchored by characters beyond the door or affixed to the door with a grappling hook, grants a +2 bonus to primary checks made in the challenge.

The same magic that turns the corridor north of the door into a deadly trap negates teleportation effects and any flying ability granted by an arcane, divine, or psionic power.

**Success and Failure:** This skill challenge has no overall success or failure. Each character trapped in the corridor must make as many successful checks as necessary to clamber up and out of danger. Failure in the challenge is marked by the number of characters slain by the trap.

## 12. WARDED DOOR

The corridor south of area 10's third pit ends in a false crypt (see the next page) designed to make characters believe they have bested the legendary Tomb of Horrors. The real entrance to the rest of the tomb is hidden behind a secret door at the top of the stairs.

### Warded Door Puzzle

Level 10  
XP 500

A secret door stands at the top of the stairs, but powerful magic wards against its opening.

**Puzzle:** The characters must work out the mechanism of this secret door to gain access to the second half of the tomb.

#### Perception

◆ DC 18: A character detects the secret door, but cannot determine its opening mechanism.

#### Arcana

◆ DC 26 (trained only; two checks): The character identifies the powerful magic wards holding the door shut. A character who can see invisible objects needs to make only one successful check.

◆ DC 30 (trained only; after the wards have been successfully identified): The door can be opened only after being targeted by a *dispel magic* spell or a Remove Affliction ritual.

#### Athletics or Thievery

◆ DC 18 (after *dispel magic* or Remove Affliction; two checks): The character opens the door.

The characters earn the major quest XP for the first half of the adventure when they open this route to the second (and far more dangerous) half of the tomb.

## 13. CORRIDOR OF FEAR

Two flights of stairs lead to a mist-filled corridor below.

A faint haze hangs in the air, obscuring the corridor beyond 20 feet from the stairs. Faint in the haze, you see a closed door.

It takes three DC 18 Athletics or Thievery checks to open the door to area 14. However, before the characters can open the door, they must contend with the magically generated fear gas that fills this corridor.

### Fear Gas Hazard

Level 8 Obstacle  
XP 350

A rising dread fills you as you advance farther down the corridor.

**Trap:** This hazard fills area 13.

#### Perception

No check is necessary to notice the gas.

#### Arcana or Thievery

◆ DC 14 (trained only): The air here is tainted by a potent magical toxin.

#### Trigger

The hazard attacks when a creature starts its turn in any of its squares.

#### Attack

**Opportunity Action**      **Melee 1**

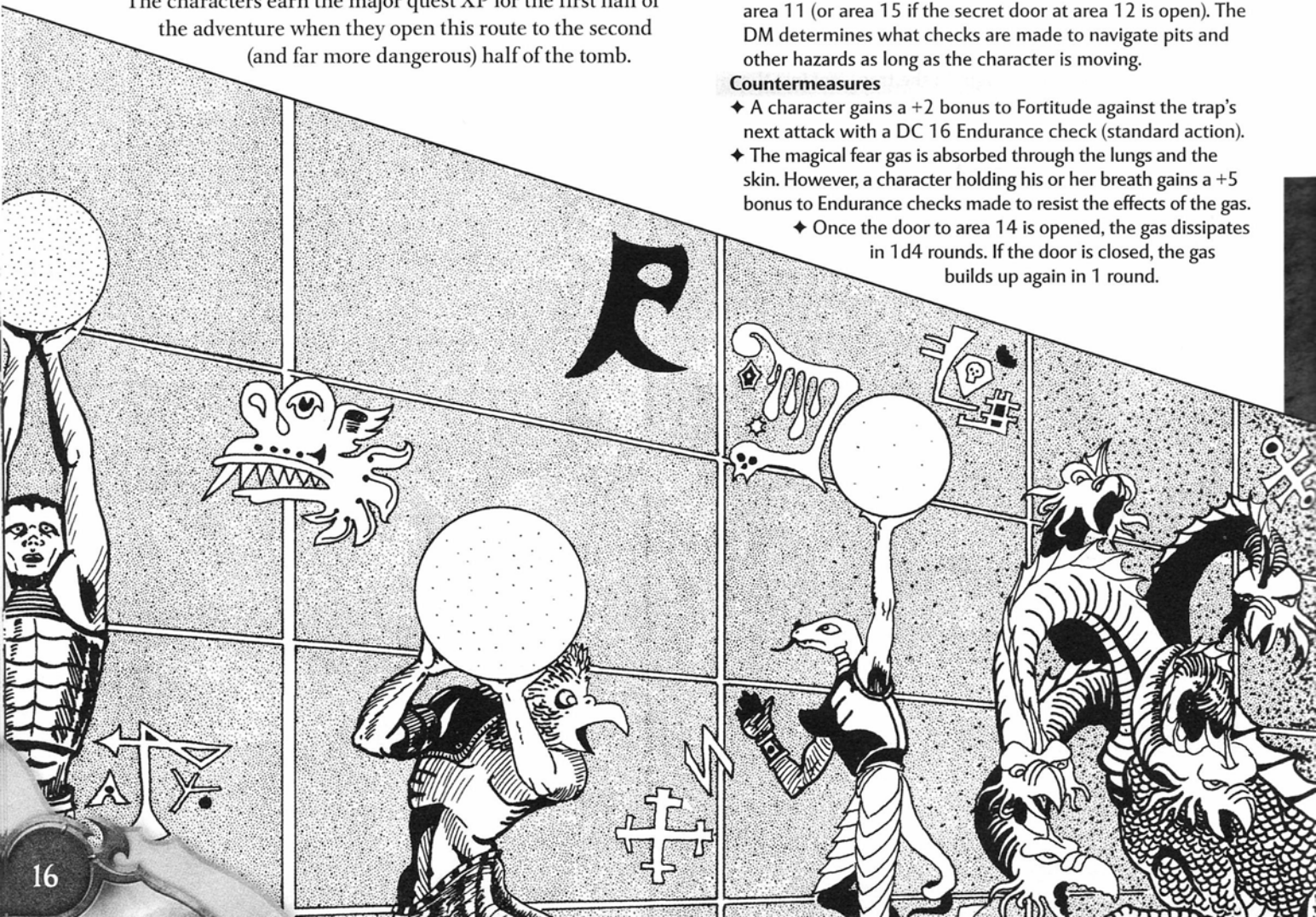
**Target:** Creature in a hazard square

**Attack:** +11 vs. Fortitude

**Hit:** The target moves up the stairs and flees the area at a run (save ends). The character chooses to run toward area 10 or area 11 (or area 15 if the secret door at area 12 is open). The DM determines what checks are made to navigate pits and other hazards as long as the character is moving.

#### Countermeasures

- ◆ A character gains a +2 bonus to Fortitude against the trap's next attack with a DC 16 Endurance check (standard action).
- ◆ The magical fear gas is absorbed through the lungs and the skin. However, a character holding his or her breath gains a +5 bonus to Endurance checks made to resist the effects of the gas.
  - ◆ Once the door to area 14 is opened, the gas dissipates in 1d4 rounds. If the door is closed, the gas builds up again in 1 round.



## 14. FALSE CRYPT

### Encounter Level 12 (3,600 XP)

#### SETUP

##### False Acererak (A)

Beyond the door, the characters descend into an area that they are meant to believe marks the end of the adventure.

*A dark stairwell filled with webs descends to a narrow stone chamber beyond. At the foot of the stairs, a faint golden light glows.*

The thick webs block any movement down the stairs. A DC 18 Athletics check or 6 points of fire damage clears 1 square of webs.

*The gleam of golden light comes from a heavy mace inlaid with silver that lies at the foot of the stairs. Beyond it spreads a crypt filled with rotting and decayed furnishings. A gleaming golden couch stands at its center. From it, a skeletal figure with a crown on its head slowly rises.*

Acererak has created a lich construct to distract and defend against those who seek him. As it attacks, it shouts out in a booming voice that emanates from the whole of the chamber:

*"Who dares to disturb the rest of Acererak? It is your death you have found!"*

If the mace is picked up, it flares with the brightness of a torch and informs its wielder that it is a +3 *disrupting mace* (DMA09 31; see the statistics block). Though very real, this weapon has been planted here by Acererak (see "Tactics," below).

#### +3 Disrupting Mace

Level 13

*Created in ancient days by priests of Pelor, this weapon is the bane of undead everywhere.*

**Weapon** 17,000 gp

**Enhancement:** Attack rolls and damage rolls

**Critical:** +3d6 radiant damage, or +3d10 radiant damage against undead

**Property:** This weapon can be used as a holy symbol. It adds its enhancement bonus to attack rolls and damage rolls, and attacks can be augmented by this weapon's power when it is used as an implement. You do not gain your weapon proficiency to an attack roll when using a disrupting weapon as an implement.

**Power (Daily ♦ Radiant):** Free Action. *Trigger:* You hit an undead creature with this weapon. *Effect:* The attack deals 3d10 extra radiant damage.

#### False Acererak (A)

#### Level 14 Elite Controller

Medium natural humanoid, lich construct (undead) XP 2,000

**Initiative** +11 **Senses** Perception +7; darkvision

**Necromantic Aura (Necrotic)** aura 5; any living creature that enters or starts its turn within the aura takes 5 necrotic damage.

**HP** 286; **Bloodied** 143

**Regeneration** 10 (if the lich construct takes radiant damage, regeneration doesn't function on its next turn)

**AC** 28; **Fortitude** 27, **Reflex** 25, **Will** 25

**Immune** disease, poison; **Resist** 10 necrotic

**Saving Throws** +2

**Speed** 6

**Action Points** 1

⚡ **Lightning Bolt** (standard; at-will) ♦ **Lightning**

Ranged sight; does not provoke opportunity attacks; +19 vs. Reflex; 4d8 + 6 lightning damage.

⚡ **Pulse Lightning** (standard; at-will)

The lich construct makes *lightning bolt* attacks at two different creatures. If an attack hits, the target also falls prone.

⚡ **Shadowstorm** (standard; recharge ⏳) ♦ **Necrotic, Psychic, Zone**

Area burst 2 within 20; +19 vs. Fortitude; 4d8 + 6 necrotic and psychic damage. The burst creates a zone that lasts until the end of the lich construct's next turn. The zone is heavily obscured for all creatures except the lich construct. Any creature that starts its turn within the zone takes 10 necrotic and psychic damage.

**Sustain Minor:** The zone persists.

**Bound to the Tomb**

When the lich construct is reduced to 0 hit points, its body and possessions crumble into dust, but it is not destroyed. It reappears in 10 days within the area in which it was killed.

**Alignment** Evil

**Languages** Abyssal, Common

**Str** 14 (+9)

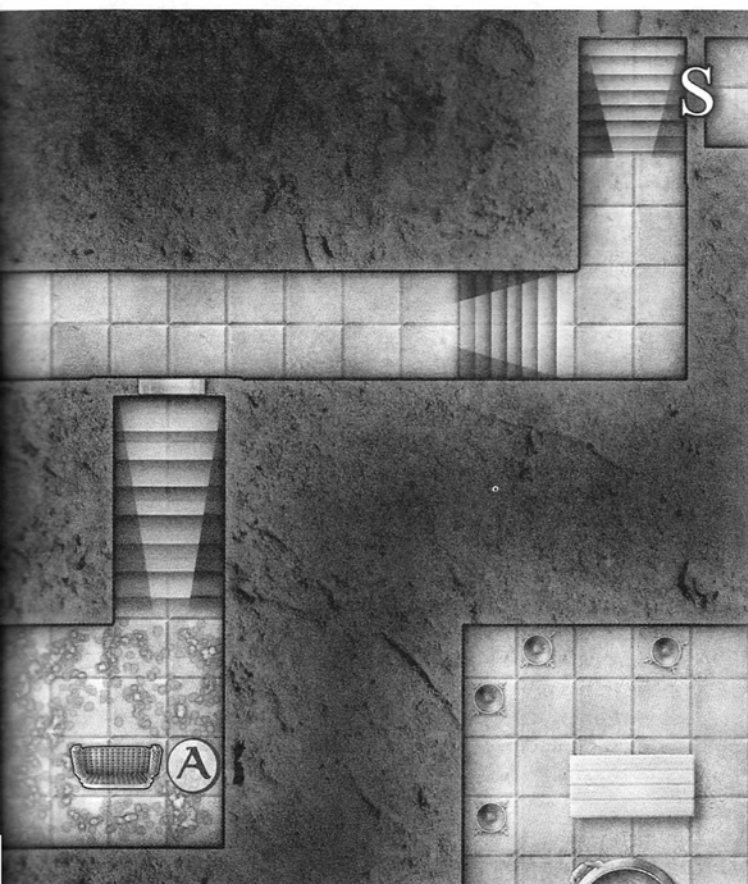
**Dex** 18 (+11)

**Wis** 11 (+7)

**Con** 23 (+13)

**Int** 10 (+7)

**Cha** 18 (+11)



## TACTICS

The close quarters and difficult terrain of this area are designed to create a difficult encounter for characters who normally depend on movement in combat. The lich construct builds on this by laying down a *shadowstorm*, sustaining that power and striking with *pulse lightning* as it ignores the concealment that hinders its foes. The construct pursues characters if they flee, trusting the narrow confines of the nearby corridors to grant it further tactical advantage.

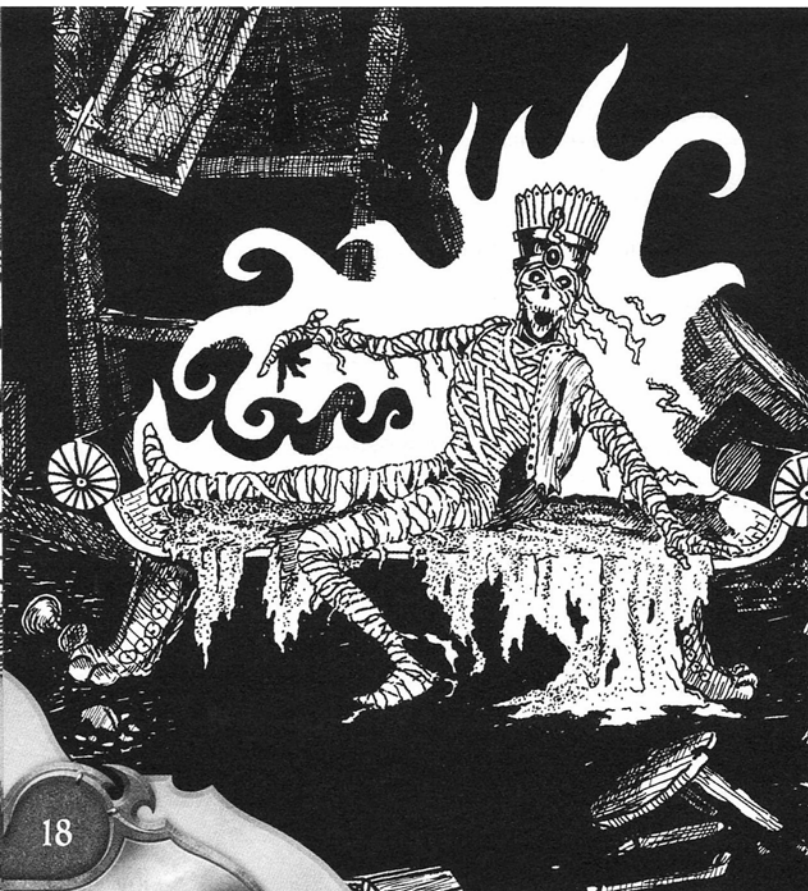
Though the lich construct fights to the best of its ability, it acts under a powerful charm effect tied to the golden mace. If hit by the mace, the creature makes a roaring bellow as the weapon appears to stagger it. (Roll dice and shake your head as if the weapon has some as-yet unknown property dealing potent damage to Acererak).

## DEVELOPMENT

The false Acererak shrieks as it dies, disappearing in a cloud of dust that leaves only its crown behind. The characters have 2 rounds to investigate the room (see “Treasure,” below). Then read the following:

*With a dull rumbling, the room starts to shake. Stones rain down from the ceiling as a great grinding sounds out within the walls, seeming to warn of an imminent collapse.*

Magic brings the ceiling of the false crypt down in a cloud of dust and rubble 1 round after the characters flee. (If the characters don't flee, the collapse deals 2d10 damage to anyone remaining in area 14.) Whether the party runs out or pokes around the rubble in the aftermath, ask them if they thought it was too hard a dungeon. . . .



DAVID C. SUTHERLAND III

## IS THAT IT?

Until the secret door at area 12 has been detected and opened, the players might assume that this point in the adventure marks the end of the *Tomb of Horrors*. If the relative ease of the combat with “Acererak” doesn't inspire them to keep exploring, they hopefully remember that relatively few of the clues in the demilich's message (page 4) have so far come to pass. Additionally, something as simple as a Consult Mystic Sages ritual can confirm that the demilich has not been destroyed.

## FEATURES OF THE AREA

**Ceiling:** The ceiling is 15 feet high.

**Illumination:** None.

**Detritus:** Rubble and rotting furniture make this entire area difficult terrain.

**Treasure:** The characters have only a limited time to search this area, during which time they find a jade coffer, the false Acererak's crown, and a fine leather bag. (Savvy players might wonder why this item hasn't rotted away with the rest of the room's contents. Let them wonder.)

The jade coffer is worth 600 gp and contains 5 *potions of healing*. The jeweled crown is a *circlet of mental onslaught* (AV 139) once the lich is destroyed. The leather bag holds 450 gp, 28 gems (50 gp each), and ritual scrolls (level 13 or lower) worth a total of 2,600 gp. (Raise Dead and Remove Affliction should be among them.)

The gold-plated couch survives the collapse. It weighs 1,000 pounds, but four or more characters can squeeze it through the dungeon's crawlspaces. It can be sold for 1,500 gp.

### Crown of Fear

### Level 13 Elite Blaster

Trap

1,600 XP

*The jeweled crown worn by the lich pulses with an unholy black light.*

**Trap:** Each round, the crown flares to instill fear in those around it.

**Additional Skills:** Arcana or Religion

DC 20 (minor action): The crown is the source of the lich construct's aura of fear, but it is susceptible to attack.

**Initiative** +17

**Trigger**

The trap attacks on the initiative of the creature that wears it.

**Attack**

**Standard Action** Close burst 10

**Target:** Two creatures in range

**Attack:** +17 vs. Will

**Hit:** 4d8 + 5 psychic damage, and the target is pushed 1 square and dazed (save ends).

**Countermeasures**

◆ The crown can be targeted separately from its wearer by divine, arcane, or psionic powers. The crown uses the wearer's defenses. If hit, the crown ignores the power's normal damage and effect but takes a -2 cumulative penalty to attack rolls. If the crown is hit five times, the trap is disabled until the end of the encounter.

◆ The trap is permanently disabled if the lich construct is destroyed, but the crown retains some of its magic. See “Treasure” under “Features of the Area.”

# 15. RUINED LABORATORY

## Encounter Level 9 (2,400 XP)

### SETUP

#### 3 vat oozes

The former function of this area is clear when the characters gain their first look through the door.

*This ruined chamber was once a laboratory, and dusty jars still clutter the shelves that line its walls. The floor is strewn with rubble and dust, workbenches and tables covered with clay pots and urns, and bones and skulls. Three huge vats stand to the south.*

#### 3 Vat Oozes

Large natural beast (blind, ooze)

#### Level 9 Elite Brute

XP 800 each

Initiative +8  
Sense Perception +8

Senses Perception +6; blindsight 10, tremorsense 10

HP 240; Bloodied 120

AC 21; Fortitude 22, Reflex 21, Will 19

Immune gaze; Resist 5 acid

Saving Throws +2

Speed 4; climb 4

Action Points 1

⊕ Slam (standard; at-will) ⊕ Acid

Reach 2; +12 vs. AC; 2d12 + 3 acid damage, and the target is dazed until the end of its next turn.

⊕ Pseudopod Strike (standard; at-will)

The vat ooze makes two slam attacks against two different creatures. If both attacks hit, each attack deals 1d12 extra damage.

⊕ Foul Spew (when first bloodied and again when the vat ooze drops to 0 hit points) ⊕ Acid

Close burst 5; +10 vs. Fortitude; 2d12 + 3 acid damage, and the target is stunned until the start of its next turn.

#### Liquid Body

A vat ooze ignores difficult terrain and does not provoke opportunity attacks by moving.

Alignment Unaligned

Languages –

Str 15 (+6)

Dex 18 (+8)

Wis 15 (+6)

Con 20 (+9)

Int 1 (-1) Cha 1 (-1)

### Three Vats

### Encounter Setup

Each of the vats is filled with murky liquid whose undisturbed surface gleams in the light.

**Encounter Setup:** These three vats conceal important treasure and a deadly menace.

#### Arcana

- ⊕ DC 25: Magic in all three vats prevents their contents from evaporating.
- ⊕ DC 30: The third vat is also imbued with more powerful magic, but its function is unknown.

#### Perception

- ⊕ DC 12: At the bottom of the third vat lies a golden skeleton key (see “The First Key,” below).
- ⊕ DC 17: An apparently identical key lies at the bottom of the second vat.

**The First Vat:** The first vat holds only a 3-foot depth of murky water.

**The Second Vat:** This contains a slow-acting acid that deals 5 ongoing acid damage starting the third round after contact (save ends). A character who tests the acid by immersing an object in it likely concludes that it is harmless unless the object is watched for 3 rounds or more.

**The Third Vat:** The liquid in this vat is a trio of deadly oozes in magical suspension. They attack if they or the vat are disturbed in any way.

A character can enter the vat to retrieve the key, or can hook the key with an object of suitable length and a DC 17 Dexterity check. However, the acid utterly destroys any mundane object (including the clothing of a creature that enters the vat) within 1 minute of immersion. Magic items are immune to this effect.

### TACTICS

The oozes flow mindlessly toward the nearest creatures, ignoring the difficult terrain of the rubble and the vats as they lash out with *pseudopod strike*.

### THE FIRST KEY

*The golden skeleton key shows no sign of age but is cut in half along its axis. Another mirror-image key would lock to this piece to make a whole.*

The two keys are two halves of the same key, both magical and impervious to harm. Joined together, the two halves fuse to form the First Key. See area 31 for details.

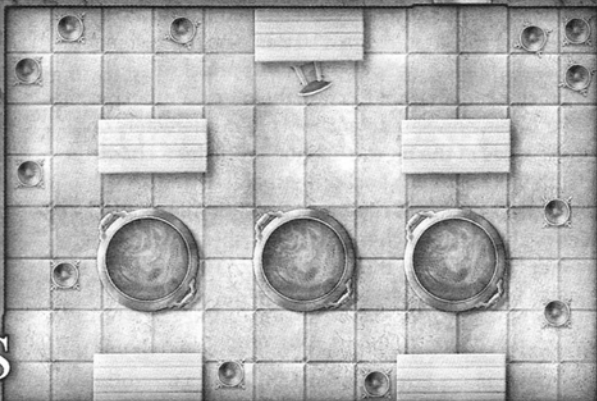
### FEATURES OF THE AREA

**Ceiling:** The ceiling is 15 feet high.

**Illumination:** None.

**Vats:** The three vats are affixed to the floor and cannot be moved. Each vat is 7 feet in diameter and 4 feet high. The interior of a vat is difficult terrain. Hopping into or out of a vat costs 1 additional square of movement.

**Ritual Supplies:** The jars, pots, and urns scattered throughout the room contain inactive alchemical reagents, rotting unguents, and dried ointments. A DC 17 Religion check connects these to the dark rituals by which a lich is created (the lich construct in area 14 was made here).



## 16. PIT SPIKE BARRAGE

As the characters descend the stairs, they find the way forward blocked.

*Beyond the corner, a 10-foot deep pit completely fills 30 feet of passageway ahead. Its floor is a mass of wide-set rusted iron spikes.*

Climbing down into the pit (a DC 17 Athletics check) and walking through the wide-set spikes is easy enough. However, the last 2 squares of the pit hold a deadly trap.

### Pit Spike Barrage

Trap

Level 10 Elite Blaster

XP 1,000

*The rusted iron spikes set across the floor of the pit suddenly launch upward in a deadly barrage.*

**Trap:** The two easternmost squares of the pit are a magic trap that attacks with a volley of spikes.

#### Perception

This trap cannot be detected with Perception.

#### Additional Skill: Arcana

- ◆ DC 25 (trained only): The last 5 feet of the pit are a magic trap.
- ◆ DC 30 (trained only): A powerful enchantment at the midpoint of the pit negates teleportation and any flying ability granted by an arcane, divine, or psionic power. Any creature that teleports or flies across the pit ends its turn and drops into a trapped square, triggering the trap.

#### Additional Skill: Thievery

- ◆ DC 17: As Arcana DC 25.

#### Trigger

Whenever a character moves into a trapped square, the trap attacks.

#### Attack

##### Opportunity Action      Ranged 5

**Target:** The triggering creature and all other creatures in, above, or adjacent to a trapped square

**Attack:** +13 vs. Reflex

**Hit:** 3d6 damage, and the target is stunned until the end of its next turn. The target must make a saving throw or be knocked prone into the pit, landing on the spikes and taking 1d10 damage. A target falling prone on the edge of the pit must make a saving throw or tumble into the pit, taking 2d10 damage and triggering the trap.

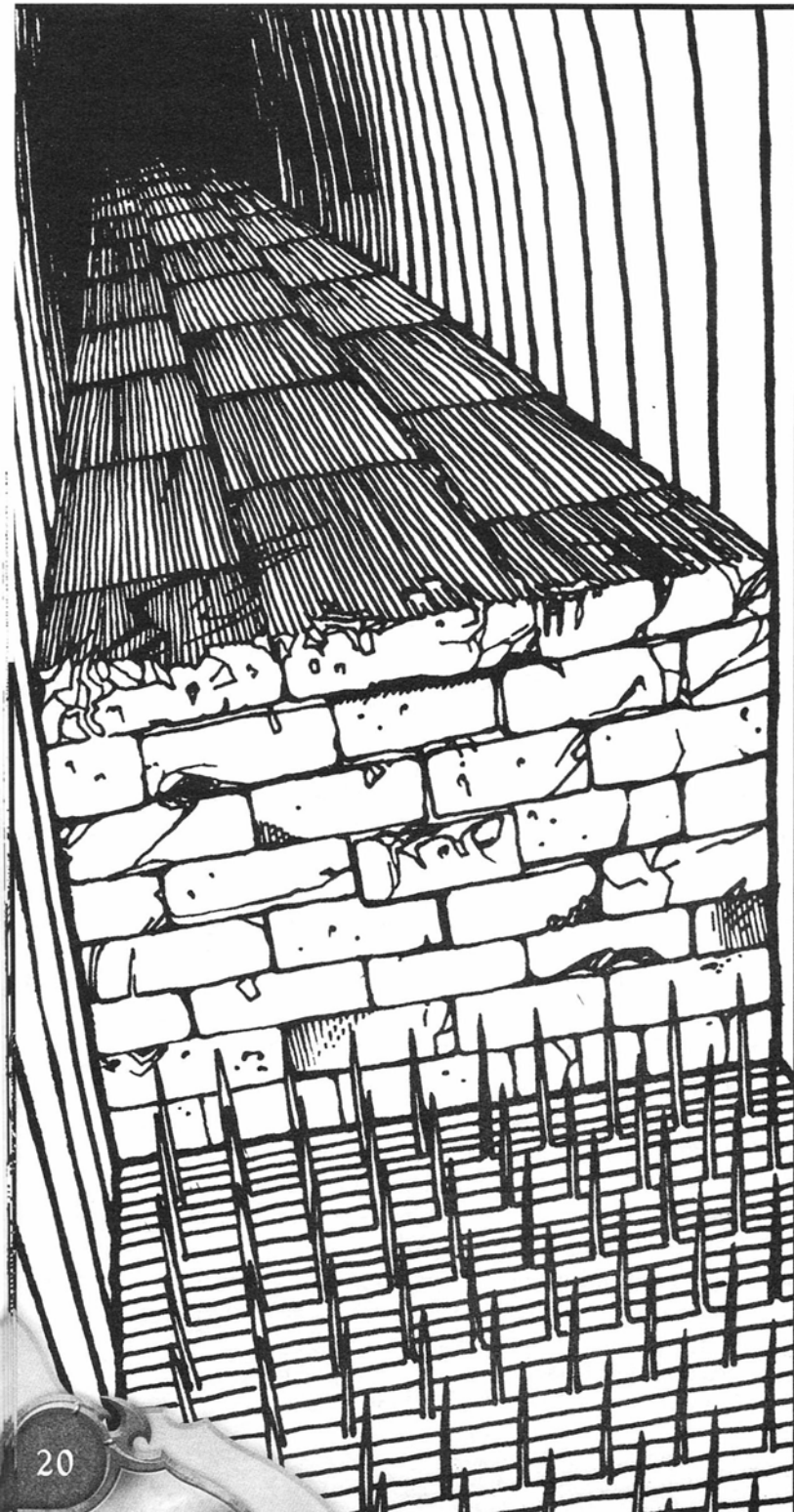
**Miss:** Half damage.

#### Effect

The fired spikes dissolve into black mist, and new spikes appear in the floor.

#### Countermeasures

- ◆ A character can jump the pit with a DC 31 Athletics check (running start only). On a failed check, a character falls prone in the pit, taking 3d10 damage. If the character's check result determines that he or she lands in one of the squares of the trap, the trap attacks.
- ◆ A Medium character standing in the pit adjacent to the area of the trap can make two successive checks (DC 25 and DC 17 Athletics) to jump over the trap and grab the edge of the wall above, then climb up and out. If either check is failed, the character falls in one of the squares of the trap, which attacks.
- ◆ A character can climb the wall in or above the pit with a DC 17 Athletics check. If a character attempts to climb horizontally above the entire length of the pit, make checks as appropriate. Only one check is necessary to climb above and over the trapped squares. On a failed check, a character falls prone in the pit, taking 2d10 damage. If the character falls in one of the squares of the trap, it attacks.
- ◆ A character can attempt to cross the pit on a rope, but the corridor offers nowhere to anchor it. Two characters on opposite sides of the pit can anchor a rope for a character to clamber across. Each anchoring character makes a DC 12 Athletics check; the climbing character makes a DC 17 Athletics check. If any character fails a check, the climbing character falls prone in the pit, taking 2d10 damage. If the character falls in one of the squares of the trap, it attacks.



# 17. CHURNING CHAMBER

## Encounter Level 11 (Variable)

### SETUP

Once a sort of fine lounge or funeral chamber, this area has been thoroughly ransacked.

*The remains of rotting sofas and thronelike chairs stand among upturned tables, broken braziers, and chipped and dented vases and urns. Only the plain tapestries hanging upon the east and west walls appear to have been spared a rough looting. These feature weed-grown rocks and green and golden scenes of undersea life.*

The hidden dangers of this room are quiescent until someone disturbs them. However, the characters are unlikely to remain here long without doing so. Each round starting 2 rounds after the first character enters, a violent magical churning shakes the area. Each creature in the chamber must make a DC 19 Acrobatics check or slide 1d4 squares in a random direction. (Once combat begins, this occurs on initiative count 0.)

### DEADLY TAPESTRIES

Each square of tapestry lining the walls is a magically treated creation of green slime and brown mold. A tapestry can be handled safely with a DC 19 Dexterity check. On a failed check, or if a tapestry is roughly jostled (as by a character sliding into it), it transforms into a green slime horror and attacks.

A green slime dealt any amount of cold, fire, or lightning damage is transformed into brown mold that fills one of the green slime's squares.

### TACTICS

The green slime horrors throw themselves at the nearest combatants until the first character is successfully attacked by *engulf*. All other slimes then target that foe for a quick kill.

### DEVELOPMENT

The characters cannot detect the secret door out of this area until its tapestry is safely handled or transformed.

### FEATURES OF THE AREA

**Ceiling:** The ceiling is 20 feet high.

**Illumination:** None.

**Rotting Furnishings:** The debris here makes this entire chamber difficult terrain.

**Treasure:** Platinum coins and gems are scattered among the detritus. A DC 13 Perception check (a standard action) allows a character to scoop up 3 pp or 2 gems (100 gp each). The characters can claim a total of 15 pp and 10 gems in this way.

### Green Slime Horrors

Large natural beast (blind, ooze)

### Level 7 Lurker

XP 300 each

**Initiative** +10      **Senses** Perception +5; blindsight 10, tremorsense 10

**HP** 67; **Bloodied** 33

**AC** 21; **Fortitude** 20, **Reflex** 19, **Will** 18

**Immune** gaze; **Resist** 5 acid; **Vulnerable** 5 fire, 5 radiant  
**Speed** 4, climb 4

⊕ **Engulf** (standard; at-will) ♦ **Acid**

+10 vs. Reflex; 1d10 + 4 acid damage, and the target is engulfed (save ends). While engulfed, the target takes ongoing 5 acid damage and is restrained. While a target is engulfed, attacks that target the green slime deal half damage to the slime and half damage to the engulfed creature. While it has a creature engulfed, the slime can make attacks only against the engulfed creature.

### Rapid Dissolution

A green slime's attacks deal 1d6 extra acid damage to a creature that is taking ongoing acid damage.

**Alignment** Unaligned

**Languages** –

**Skills** Stealth +11

**Str** 14 (+5)

**Dex** 16 (+6)

**Wis** 14 (+5)

**Con** 19 (+7)

**Int** 3 (-1) **Cha** 1 (-2)

### Brown Mold

Hazard

### Level 7 Obstacle

XP 300

*The air grows noticeably cooler as you approach a patch of dark mold.*

**Hazard:** A patch of brown mold drains heat from its surrounding area, crippling creatures with deadly cold.

### Perception

No check is necessary to notice the mold. In addition, the area within 30 feet of brown mold is noticeably cool.

**Additional Skill:** Dungeoneering

♦ DC 19: The character recognizes the brown mold.

### Trigger

The hazard attacks when any creature enters or starts its turn in its square or any square adjacent to it.

**Attack** ♦ **Cold**

**Opportunity Action**      **Melee** 1

**Target:** The triggering creature

**Attack:** +10 vs. Fortitude

**Hit:** 2d8 cold damage, and ongoing 5 cold damage (save ends).

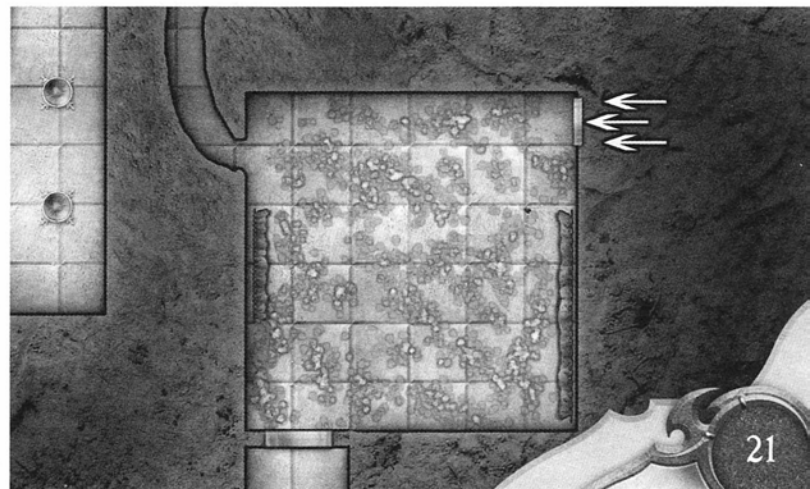
**Miss:** Half damage.

### Special

If a square of mold is targeted by or within the area of an attack that deals fire damage, all adjacent squares become brown mold if they are not already.

### Countermeasures

♦ A square of brown mold is destroyed if targeted by an attack that deals cold damage.



## 18. CAVERN OF MISTS

Encounter Level 9 (2,300 XP)

### SETUP

#### 1 cavern siren (S)

Acererak has bound a cavern siren to this place with a powerful charm.

*The corridor's walls of finished stone give way to the rough rock of a natural chamber. Silvery mist shot through with delicate streamers of gold fills the air ahead.*

The siren appears to the first character to pass more than 10 feet into the area.

*From out of the mists steps a regal human female. As she prepares to attack, her voice rings out like music: "Forgive me. . . ."*

### TACTICS

The siren uses *prison of tears* as often as possible to avoid the penalty for concealment in the mists. It uses its *voice of compulsion* until *prison of tears* recharges.

### ACERERAK'S CURSE

*The siren fights with all its strength, but its heart is not in this battle.*

**Setup:** In addition to the siren's initial words, any Insight check suggests that the creature is under some sort of compulsion forcing it to fight.

**Level:** 8 (XP 700).

**Complexity:** 2 (requires 6 successes before 3 failures).

**Primary Skills:** Bluff, Diplomacy, Intimidate. *Bluff, Diplomacy, or Intimidate (DC 17, standard action):* The character attempts to cajole or threaten the siren. All skills are equally effective, but a character cannot make both Diplomacy and Intimidate checks in the challenge.

**Special:** A character that fails a check in the challenge makes a charge attack or a basic attack against its nearest ally as a free action, then ends its turn. This is a charm effect.

**Success:** If the characters earn 6 successes in the challenge, they break Acererak's control of the siren.

**Failure:** If the characters have 3 failures in the challenge, the siren gains a +1 bonus to attack rolls and a +2 bonus to all defenses until the end of the encounter.

### DEVELOPMENT

If the characters succeed on the skill challenge, the siren breaks off hostilities, whispering thanks as it vanishes into the mist. Award full XP for the creature if it has not been bloodied; half XP otherwise.

## FEATURES OF THE AREA

**Ceiling:** The ceiling is 30 feet high in the center of the chamber and 10 feet high along the walls.

**Illumination:** The mist sheds dim light throughout the area.

**Silver and Gold Mist:** The flowing mist grants concealment to all creatures in the cavern. In addition, any creature except the siren that starts its turn in the mist must make a DC 17 Endurance check or be dazed (save ends). A creature that makes a successful check is no longer affected by the mist.

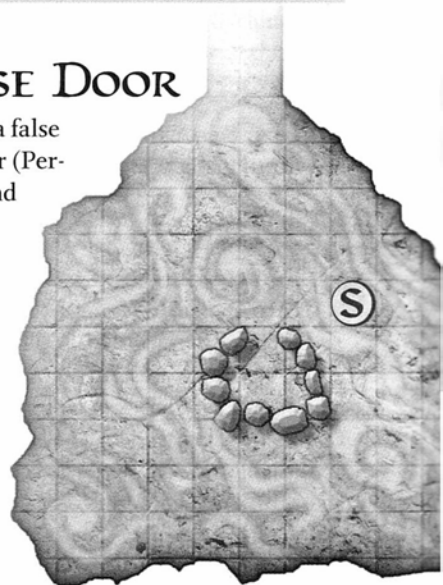
**Grotto:** A stone-walled grotto in the center of the cavern is the siren's lair. These rough stone walls are blocking terrain.

**Treasure:** A search of the chamber turns up two ragged leather packs in the siren's grotto. The first holds 1,000 sp, 600 gp, and 10 pp. The second contains level 12 *bracers of respite* (AV 115). Though they appear worthless, both packs are *handy haversacks*.

Cavern Siren (S)	Level 13 Elite Controller
Medium fey humanoid	XP 1,600
Initiative +10	Senses Perception +13
Siren's Song aura 1; any enemy that enters the aura or starts its turn there is dazed until the end of its next turn.	
HP 262; Bloodied 131	
AC 27; Fortitude 24, Reflex 24, Will 28	
Immune charm	
Saving Throws +2	
Speed 8 (earth walk)	
Action Points 1	
☞ <b>Voice of Compulsion</b> (standard; at-will) ♦ Psychic +17 vs. Will; 4d8 + 5 psychic damage.	
✱ <b>Prison of Tears</b> (standard; recharge ☞ ☞) ♦ Psychic Area burst 1 within 10; targets one creature; +17 vs. Reflex; 4d8 + 5 psychic damage, and the target takes ongoing 5 damage and is stunned (save ends both).	
<b>Cavern Walk</b> (move; at-will) ♦ Teleportation The cavern siren can teleport 8 squares if it begins and ends that movement on unworked rock or stone.	
Alignment Unaligned	Languages Common, Elven
Skills Bluff +17, Insight +13, Stealth +15	
Str 16 (+9)	Dex 18 (+10) Wis 14 (+8)
Con 19 (+10)	Int 11 (+6) Cha 22 (+12)

## 19. TRUE FALSE DOOR

A solid stone wall behind a false door conceals a secret door (Perception DC 17). Just beyond the secret door is a secret trapdoor in the corridor floor (Perception DC 25). A flight of rough stairs leads down to a 5-foot-diameter crawlspace and area 22.





## 20. JUGGERNAUT CORRIDOR

Encounter Level 10 (2,800 XP)

### SETUP

The corridor from the true false door leads to a dead-end flight of stairs leading up—and a deadly hazard.

*This heavy stone door is hinged to open from either side, its surface battered and cracked. The stone floors here are stained a disquieting red-black.*

All three doors in this area are identical, allowing the juggernaut (see below) to pass in both directions. Opening the first set of doors triggers two effects.

**Stone Juggernaut**                      **Level 16 Elite Obstacle**  
Hazard    XP 2,800

*The rumbling construct advances, then suddenly retreats, charting an erratic course along the corridor.*

**Hazard:** This hazard fills a space 2 squares on a side, and moves back and forth along the corridors north of area 19. Characters must move past the juggernaut to advance.

#### Perception

No check is necessary to notice the juggernaut.

#### Trigger

The juggernaut is activated when the door to area 20 is opened. It then attacks whenever a creature moves into its space.

#### Attack

**Opportunity Action**                      **Melee 1**

**Target:** The triggering creature

**Attack:** +21 vs. Reflex

**Hit:** Ongoing 15 damage (save ends). The target cannot save against this ongoing damage while it is within the juggernaut's space.

**Each Failed Saving Throw:** The ongoing damage increases by 5.

#### Effect

Each round on initiative count 0, roll a d6. On a result of 3 or lower, the juggernaut rolls 2d4 squares ahead (south or west). On a result of 4 or more, it rolls 2d4 squares back toward area 21 (north or east). The juggernaut completely fills the width and height of the corridor, magically flexing to turn corners.

#### Countermeasures

- ◆ A character adjacent to the juggernaut can leap over its crushing wheels and scramble across to the other side with a DC 31 Athletics or Acrobatics check as part of a move action. If the check fails by 5 or lower, the character stays in place. If the check fails by more than 5, the character falls under the juggernaut's deadly rollers and triggers an attack.
- ◆ A character attempting to fly past the construct must make an Acrobatics or Athletics check as above, but gains a +5 bonus to the check.
- ◆ The juggernaut can be teleported past, as normal.
- ◆ A character adjacent to the juggernaut can attempt to direct its movement with a DC 22 Arcana or Thievery check. With a successful check, a character adds or subtracts 1 to the construct's next d6 roll, increasing the chances that it retreats along the corridor in one direction or the other.
- ◆ A character who moves south of area 19 or into the dead-end stairs cannot be attacked by the juggernaut.

#### Sleep Gas

#### Environment Effect

*A sudden torpor comes over you as a sweet scent wafts through the air.*

**Environment Effect:** A pulse of sleep gas drops unwitting victims in advance of the juggernaut's approach.

#### Trigger

The door to area 20 is opened

#### Attack

**Opportunity Action**                      **Area special**

**Target:** Each creature north of area 19

**Attack:** +14 vs. Fortitude

**Hit:** The target is dazed and slowed (save ends both).

**First Failed Saving Throw:** The target falls prone and is stunned instead of dazed.

**Second Failed Saving Throw:** The target is unconscious instead of stunned and also takes a -2 penalty to saving throws (save ends).

A great magical construct known as a stone juggernaut leaves area 21 at the same time, moving as indicated in the statistics block. Although this is not a combat encounter, use initiative and a battle map to track movement.

*From ahead comes a dull rumbling. Bursting through the swinging stone doors, a massive construct fills the corridor as it advances on heavy bloodstained wheels.*



## 21. JUGGERNAUT ROOM

This dusty, bloodstained chamber houses the juggernaut encountered in area 20.

## 22. ADAMANTINE DOOR

Another corridor and a wondrous door lies beyond the narrow crawlspace.

*An enormous door fills the corridor from floor to ceiling, gleaming with the dull sheen of adamantine.*

### Adamantine Door

Puzzle

Level 10

XP 500

*The door has no handle or visible lock—only three slots at waist height, each 3 inches wide by 1 inch high.*

**Puzzle:** The presentation of weapons opens this magic door.

#### Arcana

- ◆ DC 26 (trained only): Powerful magic seals this door and makes it impervious to damage or theft.
- ◆ DC 30 (trained only): Identical objects fed into the three slots activate the magic that opens the door.

#### Effect

The door can be opened only if three sword blades are placed simultaneously into the three slots. (Panicked characters might assume that this door destroys items used to open it, as with the portal of area 9C. However, the swords can be removed even as the door swings open.)

After 5 minutes, the door swings shut in 1 round with an echoing clang. It cannot otherwise be budged or blocked, and it cannot be opened again from the other side. This section of the tomb can be exited only through the phase doors at area 30.

## 23. PILLARED THRONE ROOM

*The ceiling of this huge chamber is supported by scores of massive columns, each carved of colorful pastel stone. A gentle breeze blows through the room.*

### Pillars of Levitation

### Environment Effect

*The muted colors of the pillars reflect light with a strangely sinister cast.*

**Environment Effect:** The pillars of the throne room are imbued with powerful levitation magic.

#### Arcana

- ◆ DC 26 (trained only): Each of the 3-foot-diameter pillars radiates powerful levitation magic.

#### Effect

Any creature that comes into contact with a pillar floats upward to bounce along the ceiling 30 feet above (save ends; the creature takes a -5 penalty to this saving throw). When the effect ends, the creature falls for 3d10 damage.

While this levitation is in effect, a creature has no control over its movement. The magical breeze in this area is drawn into the mouths of the devil faces to the northwest and northeast (see below). A levitating creature drifts at a rate of 4 squares per round toward one face or the other.

#### Countermeasures

- ◆ Magic imbued into the columns and the ceiling gives the stone an icy slickness onto which characters cannot grab. However, a floating character can loop a rope around a column to stop his or her movement with a DC 18 Acrobatics check (standard action).
- ◆ A character on the floor can toss a rope up to a floating character with a DC 13 Acrobatics check. The floating character makes the same check to grab the rope, stopping his or her movement.

## 23A. GREEN DEVIL

*Just below the ceiling, the wall is set with a mosaic of a green devil. This appears to be exactly the same as that first seen in the entrance hall to the tomb.*

Any creature floating within 5 feet of this face's gaping maw is sucked in and teleported nude to area 1F, and spat out from the green devil's mouth. The character's gear is teleported to area 32.

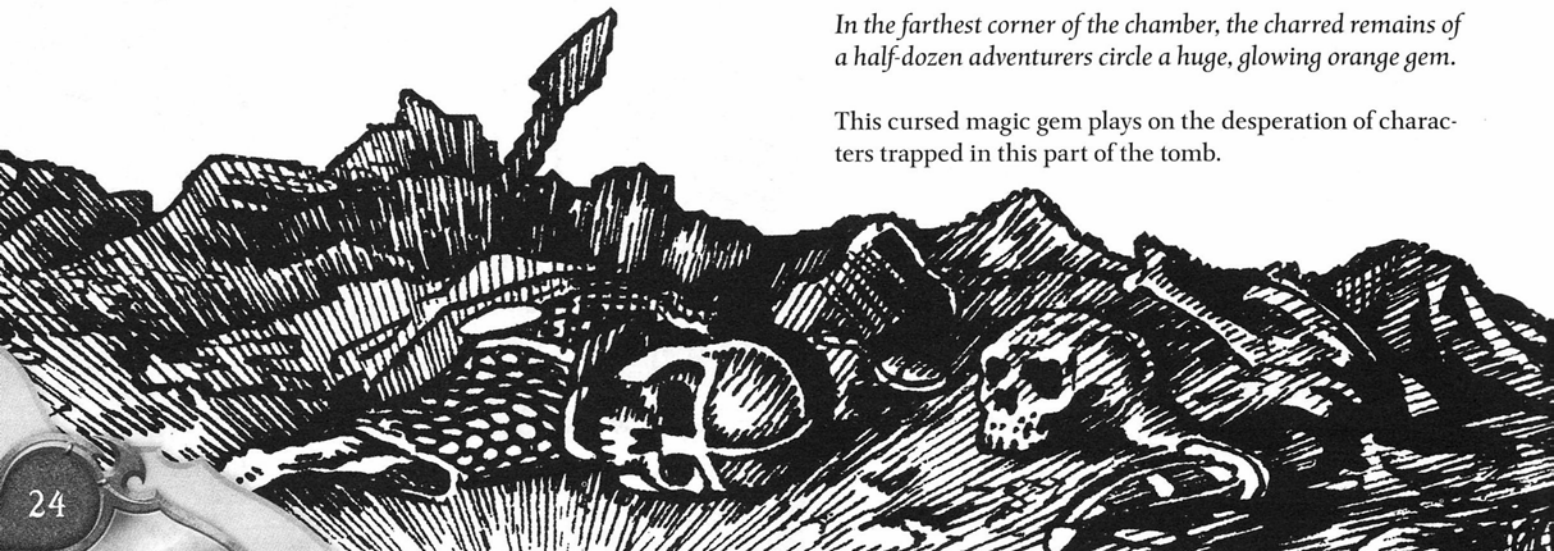
## 23B. BLUE DEVIL

Except for its color, this face is identical to the green devil, above. Any character floating within 5 feet of its mouth is drawn in and teleported to area 27.

## 23C. CHARRED REMAINS

*In the farthest corner of the chamber, the charred remains of a half-dozen adventurers circle a huge, glowing orange gem.*

This cursed magic gem plays on the desperation of characters trapped in this part of the tomb.



### Cursed Wishing Gem

Magic Relic

*The gem's unearthly light pulses with a slow and sinister air.*

**Magic Relic:** This cursed gem destroys those who attempt to use it.

#### Arcana

- ◆ DC 25 (trained only): This powerful magic gem allows a creature to make a single wish for anything it desires.
- ◆ DC 30 (trained only): The gem's curse twists any wish made through it.

#### Effect

No matter what is desired by the character daring to touch it and wish, a reverse or perversion will bring doom to that character and all named in the wish. The gem then begins to pulse with a red glow and explodes 1 round later.

**Standard Action** Close burst 3

**Attack:** +18 vs. Reflex

**Hit:** 5d10 damage, and ongoing 10 damage (save ends).

**Aftereffect:** Ongoing 5 damage (save ends)

**Miss:** 3d10 damage, and ongoing 5 damage (save ends).

**Effect:** The gem remains as a noisome mass of stinking purple mold that reforms as the gem in one week.

## CAREFUL WHAT YOU WISH FOR

Wish magic was a popular part of older editions of the DUNGEONS & DRAGONS game—not just for the power it offered players, but for the fun a DM could have twisting wishes in amusing ways. This gem takes that concept to its worst level. A character who wishes Acererak destroyed will be teleported alone to the demilich's crypt (area 32) to do the job. A character who wishes for a +5 *holy avenger* will have it delivered in the form of an animated weapon that fights to the death. For those foolish or desperate enough to use this gem, feel free to pull out all the stops.

## 23D. EBONY DAIS AND SILVER THRONE

*The stark blackness of this huge dais contrasts with the pastel shades of the rest of the hall. Atop the dais rests an obsidian throne inlaid with silver and ivory skulls. A gold crown and a scepter of gold and silver rest upon the throne.*

Keyed to the scepter, the throne marks the hidden entrance out of this area.

The front of the throne is set with a replica of the crown inlaid in silver. If the silver end of the scepter touched to it, the throne sinks and reveals a 5-foot-wide passageway leading south (see area 28). The throne cannot be moved again by any means.

### Golden Crown and Scepter

Magic Relics

The crown upon the throne is solid gold and set with white diamonds. The scepter is crafted of a silver-gold alloy, with a golden ball at one end and a silver knob at the other.

**Magic Relics:** The crown and scepter allow the characters to pass beyond this hall and into area 28. However, characters using them must be wary.

#### Arcana

- ◆ DC 26 (trained only): The crown and the scepter have distinct powers and properties, and are inextricably linked.
- ◆ DC 30 (trained only): Once put on, the crown cannot be removed without touching the correct end of the scepter to it. However, no clue is given as to which end of the scepter is the correct one.

#### Effect

A creature wearing the crown is immune to the effect of the pillars of levitation and can see within the darkened hall as if in normal daylight. However, that creature is blinded while outside area 23. A character who wears the crown knows that it cannot be removed without touching the scepter to its top. If the golden ball of the scepter is touched to the golden crown, the wearer can lift it safely from his or her head. If the silver end is touched to the crown, the wearer takes ongoing 20 damage (save ends) but the crown falls free.

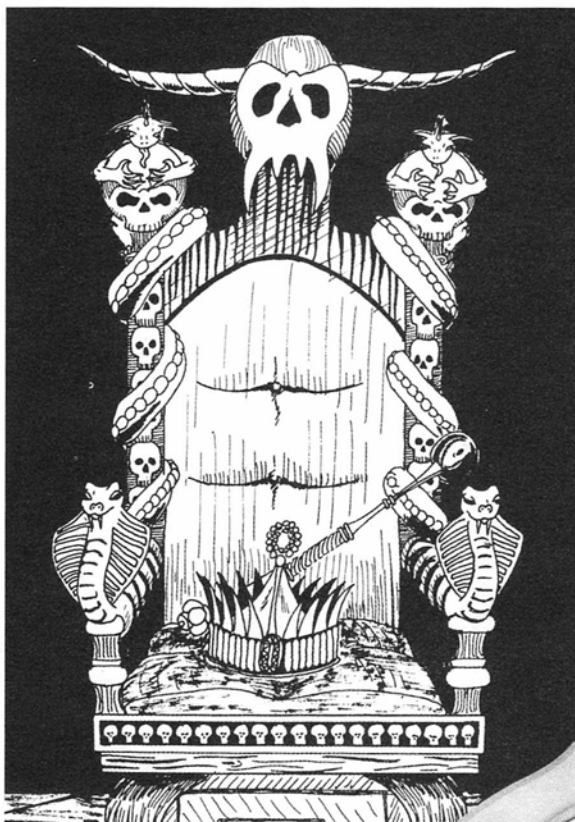
Both of these items are bound to this area. A character wielding either the crown or the scepter cannot move beyond the doors at area 22 or area 28.

## 24. EMPTY CHAMBER

This door is identical to the door to area 25.

*This door is smooth stone with a brass pull at its center. As you approach, it shimmers with a faint blue light.*

When the door is touched, the blue glow flares brighter. Inside the chamber is nothing but dust.



DAVID C. SUTHERLAND III

## 25. CRYPT MASTER'S TOMB

\*The mummy crypt master's wrappings are imbued with resistance magic that overcomes its normal vulnerability to fire.

### Encounter Level 9 (2,000 XP)

#### SETUP

##### 1 mummy crypt master

As the characters approach, this stone door glows blue like that of area 24 (previous page). However, this chamber is not empty.

A large wooden sarcophagus rests upon a low stone table at the center of this small room. Various broken and looted chests, urns, and coffers are scattered about the area.

Inside the sarcophagus are the mummified remains of a human, its tattered wrappings partially undone. A huge amethyst is barely visible in the corpse's left eye socket (Perception DC 18). This gem radiates dark magic (Arcana DC 30, trained only). If it is removed, the remains animate as a mummy crypt master.

#### Mummy Crypt Master Level 9 Solo Brute Medium natural humanoid (undead) XP 2,000

**Initiative** +7      **Senses** Perception +11; darkvision  
**Despair (Fear)** aura 5; enemies within the aura take a -2 penalty to attack rolls against the mummy crypt master.  
**HP** 400; **Bloodied** 200  
**Regeneration** 10 (if the crypt master takes radiant damage, regeneration doesn't function on its next turn)  
**AC** 23; **Fortitude** 23, **Reflex** 21, **Will** 20  
**Immune** disease, poison; **Resist** 5 fire while not bloodied\*, 10 necrotic  
**Saving Throws** +5  
**Speed** 5  
**Action Points** 2  
⊕ **Rotting Slam** (standard; at-will) ♦ **Disease, Necrotic**  
+14 vs. AC; 4d8 + 1 necrotic damage, and the target is exposed to level 8 mummy rot (see *Monster Manual*, page 192).  
↓ **Double Attack** (standard; at-will)  
The mummy crypt master makes two *rotting slam* attacks. If both attacks hit the same target, the target is exposed to level 13 mummy rot instead of level 8 mummy rot.  
↓ **Stunning Strike** (minor 1/round; at-will) ♦ **Fear**  
+12 vs. Will; 4d8 + 1 damage, and the target slides 3 squares and is stunned until the end of its next turn.  
✱ **Crypt Shroud** (standard; recharge [2]) ♦ **Necrotic**  
Area burst 2 within 10; +12 vs. Fortitude; 3d8 + 9 necrotic damage, and the target is weakened (save ends).  
← **Mummy's Curse** (when reduced to 0 hit points) ♦ **Disease**  
Close burst 10; targets enemies; +12 vs. Will; the target contracts level 8 mummy rot.  
**Unholy Aid** (immediate interrupt, when the crypt master suffers an effect that a save can end; recharge [1])  
The crypt master automatically saves against the triggering effect.  
**Alignment** Unaligned      **Languages** Common  
**Str** 18 (+8)      **Dex** 17 (+7)      **Wis** 14 (+6)  
**Con** 20 (+9)      **Int** 8 (+3)      **Cha** 15 (+6)

#### TACTICS

The mummy crypt master opens with *stunning strike*, forcing the nearest character out the door and pushing the fight into the wide-open space of the pillared hall.

Once in the open, the creature spends its action points to use *double attack*, *stunning strike*, and *crypt shroud* in the same rounds. It uses *stunning strike* to slide characters into the pillars and levitate them out of the fight. If a character tries the same approach, the crypt master's *unholy aid* and bonus to saving throws quickly bring it back to the ground.

The crypt master does not pursue if the characters flee the pillared hall.

#### FEATURES OF THE AREA

**Ceiling:** The ceiling is 20 feet high in the crypt and 30 feet high in the pillared hall.

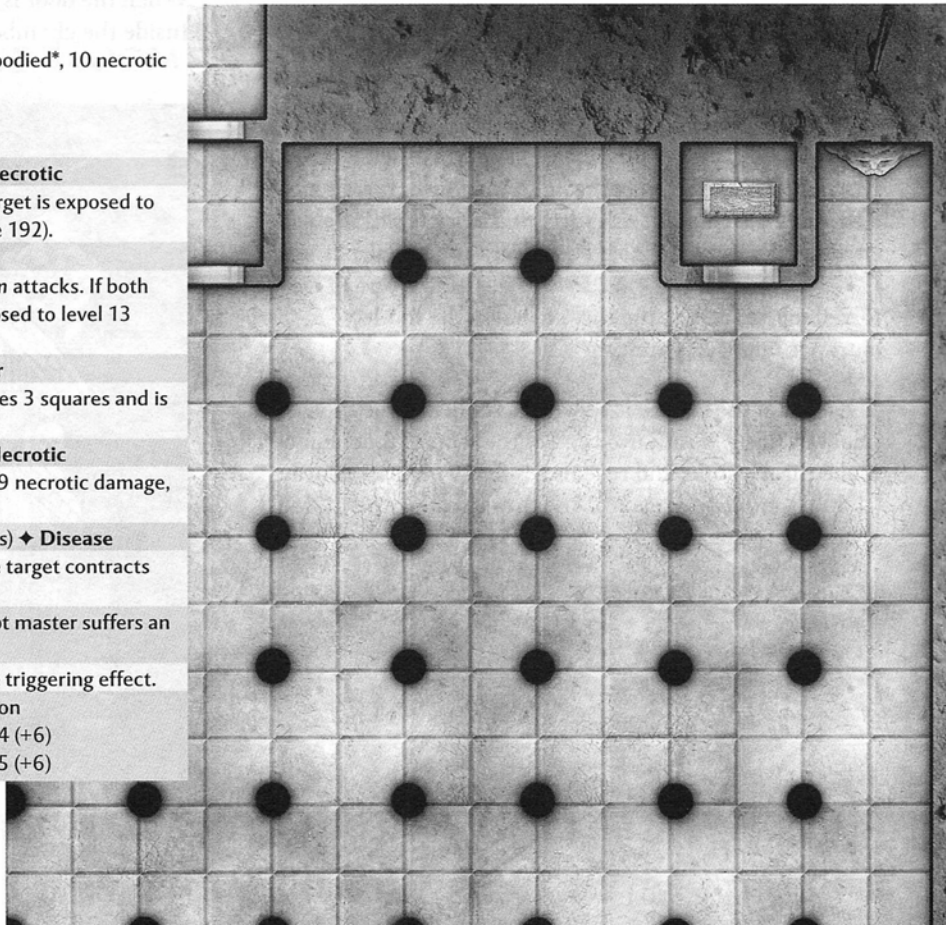
**Illumination:** None.

**Sarcophagus:** This stone sarcophagus is blocking terrain.

**Pillars:** See "Pillar Throne Room," page 24.

**Treasure:** The huge amethyst is worth 500 gp, but any creature carrying it takes a -2 penalty to saving throws because of its curse. A Remove Affliction ritual (see *Player's Handbook*, page 311) negates this effect.

Inside the sarcophagus, three level 4 *potions of resistance (fire)* are hidden within the mummy's discarded wrappings. (Similar potions are what bestowed the creature's fire resistance.)



## 26. CURSED ARMORY

### Encounter Level 9 (2,000 XP)

#### SETUP

The characters can enter this area from the pillared hall (area 23), or after being teleported to area 27 by the blue devil in the hall. Both doors into this area are identical, and both are similar to the doors to areas 24 and 25.

*Set with an iron pull ring, this stone door glows a faint lilac color as you approach.*

When either door is touched, the glow pulses to a bright and coruscating purple with tinges of sickly green. The view beyond both doors is the same.

*A small, bare chamber has another door on the opposite wall. Pairs of swords crossed behind shields hang here—three such sets are on each of the side walls, with two sets flanking each of the doors.*

#### TACTICS

This trap encounter requires you to track movement only if the characters flee. However, you need to track hit points and defenses for each shield and weapon set, and attack and damage modifiers for the trap as a whole.

The trap continues to attack targets anywhere in area 23, area 26, or area 27, regardless of where or how those targets move. If the doors to area 26 are shut, a shield and weapon set teleports through them. However, area 24 and area 25 can be used to hide from the trap, or the characters can flee to area 28 if the secret door has been opened.

If the mummy crypt master encounter (area 25) spills into area 26 while the trap is active, the trap attacks the mummy as well as the characters.

#### Animated Arms and Armor Level 9 Solo Obstacle Trap XP 2,000

*Shields and weapons fly off the walls of their own accord, battering and slashing a deathly swath through any creatures within the area.*

**Trap:** When any creature crosses the threshold of the room, the weapons and shields here fly off the walls and attack.

#### Perception

This trap cannot be detected with Perception.

#### Additional Skill: Arcana

◆ DC 25 (trained only): The shields and weapons are imbued with powerful magic that animates them to attack.

#### Trigger

◆ Each creature that enters area 26 triggers the trap and becomes a target.

#### Attack

**Standard Action**                      **Melee special**

**Target:** The triggering creature

**Attack:** +12 vs. AC (see "Special"); two attacks

**Hit:** 4d8 damage. If both attacks hit, the target is dazed until the end of its next turn.

**Miss:** Half damage.

#### Effect

Whenever another creature becomes a target of the trap, another shield and weapon set flies off the wall to attack that creature. The trap gains a +1 bonus to attack rolls, damage rolls, and all defenses (see below), to a maximum of +8 if eight creatures are engaged by all eight weapon and shield sets. A creature cannot be targeted by more than one set.

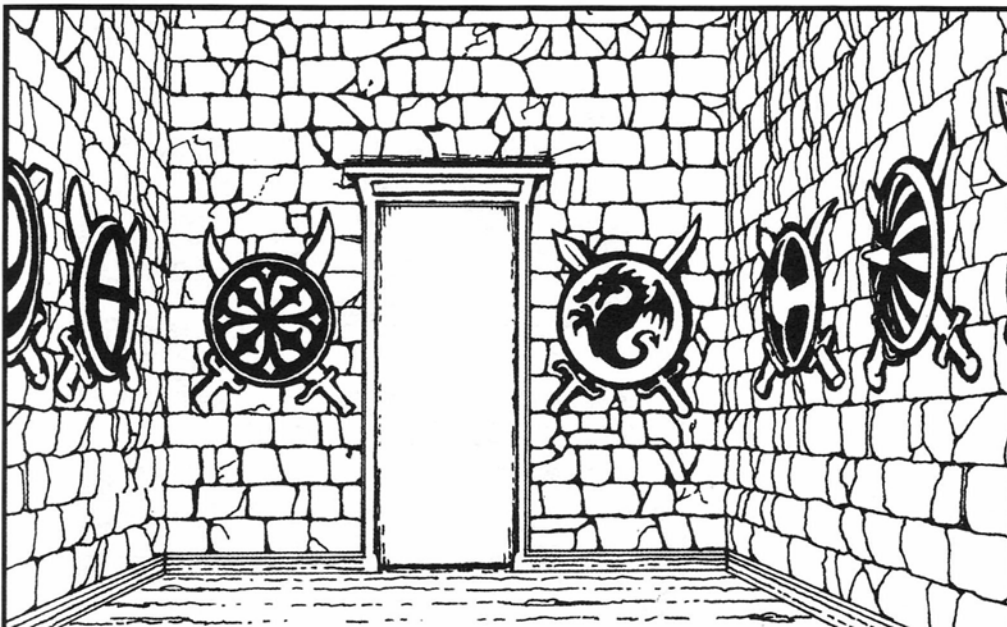
#### Special

The attack modifier above assumes that the triggering creature enters the room from area 23. If the triggering creature enters from area 27, the trap starts the encounter at its maximum +20 vs. AC, with a +8 bonus to damage rolls and a +8 bonus to all defenses.

#### Countermeasures

- ◆ A character gains a +2 bonus to AC against the trap's next attack with a DC 17 Acrobatics, Arcana, or Athletics check (minor action).
- ◆ An individual shield and weapon set can be attacked to destroy it: AC 8, Reflex 8, Fortitude 8; 30 hit points (but see "Effect," above). If a set is destroyed, the trap's bonus to attack rolls, damage rolls, and all defenses is reduced by 1. The target is no longer attacked unless he or she triggers the trap again by leaving, then entering area 26.

- ◆ Each time a creature is reduced to 0 hit points or fewer by the trap, the shield and weapon set attacking that creature flies back to the wall. The trap's bonus to attack rolls, damage rolls, and all defenses is reduced by 1.
- ◆ If the trap goes 5 rounds without making an attack roll because it has no targets, all shield and weapon sets return to area 26. The trap resets until such time as another creature enters area 26.
- ◆ Only after all shield and weapon sets are destroyed is it possible to safely pass through area 26.





## 27. CHAMBER OF HOPELESSNESS

Creatures teleported here from the blue devil in area 23 face a grim fate.

*This small chamber is strewn with numerous skeletons and it is foul with the scent of rot. A small fountain spills water into a basin and drains away through side holes along the floor. In glowing letters, a grim warning is set along one wall:*

*“You who dared to violate my tomb now pay the price. Stay here and die slowly of starvation, or open and enter the door to your south where certain but quick death awaits.”*

The water is drinkable and can prolong the lives and suffering of those trapped here. The only exit from the room is the door to the south. However, if any creature enters area 26 from here, the deadly trap in that chamber attacks that creature at full strength (see the previous page).

## TREASURE

The scattered gear of the adventurers who died here amounts to 350 gp, 500 sp, 10 gems (20 gp each), and a level 10 *potion of clarity* (AV 188). It takes 10 minutes to thoroughly search the room.

## 28: MITHRAL GATES

Once the throne has been opened (see area 23D), the narrow passage behind it leads south.

*A wide landing opens up ahead, its walls and ceiling of untarnished silver and copper inlaid with ivory. A rising staircase is carved of multicolored semiprecious stone, and two massive mithral gates stand closed above it. Upon the fourth step is a large, cylindrical bronze key.*

The bronze key is the Second Key (see area 31). A powerful magical effect means that any creature attempting to touch the key must make a DC 18 Arcana check or be unable to come within 2 feet of it for 24 hours.

### Mithral Gates

Puzzle

Level 10

XP 500

*Where the mithral gates meet, a hemispherical cavity with a hole at its center is set at waist height.*

**Puzzle:** The characters must open these gates to move farther into the tomb, but doing so improperly can be dangerous.

#### Perception

♦ DC 18: The hole in the concavity is clearly a keyhole, but the lock cannot be picked.

**Effect:** If the Second Key is inserted into the keyhole, the creature doing so takes 1d10 lightning damage. A creature trying the First Key in the hole takes 2d10 lightning damage.

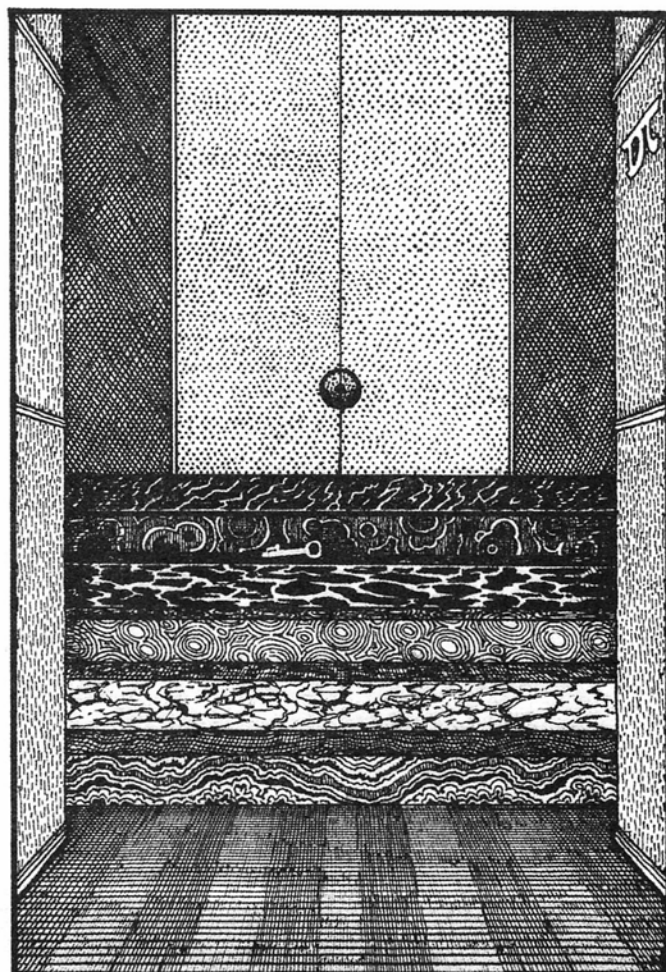
#### Arcana

♦ DC 26 (trained only): Powerful magic seals these doors and makes them impervious to damage or theft.

♦ DC 30 (trained only): The keyhole is false. Magic is the only thing that can open these gates.

#### Effect

The real key to these great gates is the scepter from area 23D. The golden ball is an almost perfect fit for the cavity. If the ball is placed within the cavity, the mithral gates swing silently open. If the silver knob is instead touched to the doors, the scepter's wielder is teleported and spat out nude from the devil's mouth at area 1F. The character's gear is teleported to area 32, while the crown and scepter teleport back to the throne at area 23D.



## 29. FALSE TREASURE ROOM

### Encounter Level 11 (Variable)

#### SETUP

Acererak has constructed another false crypt to dissuade treasure-seekers from further exploration.

*A ceiling of untarnished silver rises above the polished stone floor of this imposing chamber, its ivory walls inlaid with gold. Two iron chests stand to either side of a granite sarcophagus graven with ancient glyphs. A thin stream of smoke rises from a large brass urn set with filigreed gold. In all four corners stand 9-foot-tall statues of fierce demonic warriors cast in black iron, and their dread weapons are raised.*

The only exit from this area is hidden beneath one of the iron statues. However, moving any statue or touching the urn summons this area's guardians.

#### EFREET SMOKE URN

*The urn shudders as a humanoid form bursts from the top—an efreet warrior-slave, howling in murderous rage.*

**Setup:** Each round on initiative count 0, the brass urn summons two efreet urn slaves that appear in unoccupied spaces in the chamber. The urn summons efreets until disabled.

**Level:** 11 (XP 1,800).

**Complexity:** 3 (requires 8 successes before 3 failures).

**Primary Skills:** Arcana, Athletics, Thievery.

**Arcana (DC 18, standard action):** The character disrupts the urn's summoning magic. In addition to gaining a success in the challenge, the next time the urn summons efreets, only one appears.

**Athletics (DC 26, standard action):** The character can hinder the urn's power by smashing it with brute force. On a failed check, each efreet in the chamber gains a +2 bonus to attack rolls and damage rolls until the end of its next turn.

**Thievery (DC 18, standard action):** The character attempts to disrupt the urn's summoning mechanism. Once the characters have 7 successes, they can make only Thievery checks in the challenge.

**Success:** The urn cracks and collapses to shards as any surviving efreets vanish. The summoning energy fading from the urn restores each character as if he or she had taken an extended rest.

**Failure:** The urn summons four efreets and resets itself. The characters must attempt the skill challenge again.

#### Efreet Urn Slaves

Large elemental humanoid (fire)

#### Level 12 Minion Artillery

XP 175 each

**Initiative** +11

**Senses Perception** +9

**HP** 1; a missed attack never damages a minion.

**AC** 24; **Fortitude** 24, **Reflex** 25, **Will** 23

**Immune** fire

**Speed** 6, fly 8 (hover)

⬇ **Fiery Slam** (standard; at-will) ♦ **Fire**

Reach 2; +15 vs. Reflex; 11 fire damage (save ends).

⚡ **Fire Bolt** (standard; at-will) ♦ **Fire**

Area burst 1 within 10; +16 vs. Fortitude; ongoing 5 fire damage (save ends). *Each Failed Saving Throw:* The ongoing fire damage increases by 5.

**Slave's Rage** (immediate interrupt, when the urn slave is damaged by an attack; encounter) ♦ **Fire**

The urn slave takes no damage from the attack, and it gains a +2 bonus to attack rolls and damage rolls until the end of its next turn.

**Alignment** Evil

**Languages** Primordial

**Str** 18 (+10)

**Dex** 21 (+11)

**Wis** 16 (+9)

**Con** 16 (+9)

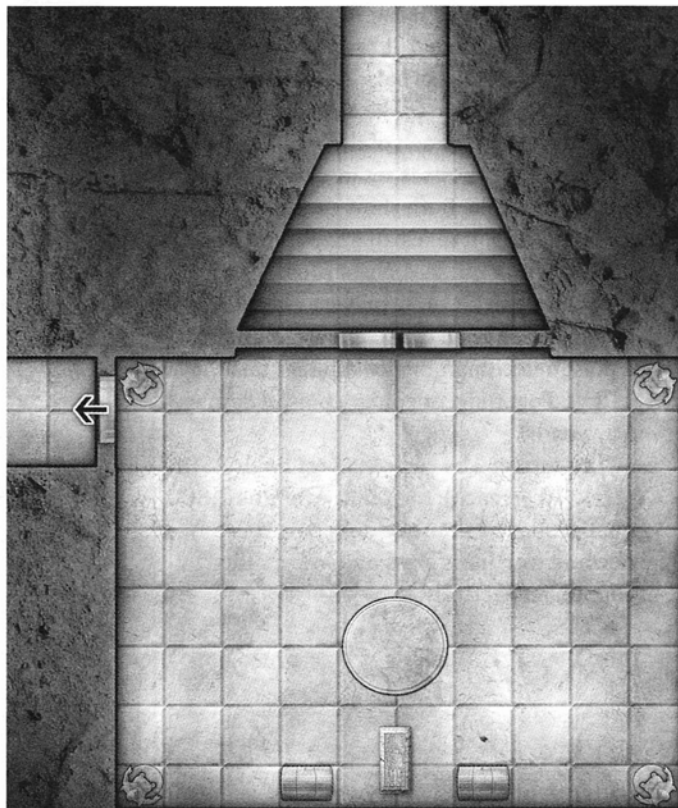
**Int** 12 (+7)

**Cha** 11 (+6)

#### TACTICS

The urn slaves mob the nearest opponents initially, knowing that their *slave's rage* protects them from initial attack. An urn slave then breaks away from other slaves to avoid area attacks.

The efreets do not pursue characters out of this chamber, but they remain here ready to fight if the characters leave and then return.



## FEATURES OF THE AREA

**Ceiling:** The ceiling is 30 feet high.

**Illumination:** None.

**Brass Urn:** The smoke issues from a vent where the urn's brass stopper has been sealed with gold. Touching the urn starts the skill challenge.

Any creature fighting adjacent to the urn gains a +2 bonus to attack rolls, damage rolls, and all defenses.

**Sarcophagus:** The granite sarcophagus is set into the floor and immovable. It takes a DC 13 Athletics check to jump onto or over the sarcophagus as part of a move action. The sarcophagus provides cover.

The ancient glyphs can be read as "ACERERAK" with a DC 18 Arcana or Religion check. It takes three simultaneous DC 18 Strength checks to lift the lid, revealing bones, ruined jewelry, a broken staff, and a shattered skull. A DC 26 Arcana check identifies an epic tier staff of power, drained and ruined. Acererak hopes intruders conclude he is likewise destroyed, even as his magic traps have somehow survived him.

**Iron Statues:** Any creature fighting adjacent to a statue takes a -2 penalty to attack rolls. This is a fear effect.

The characters can move the massive statues only by making four simultaneous DC 18 Strength checks. Moving any statue activates the skill challenge. If the statue in the northwest corner is moved, it reveals a ring pull that raises a small plug of stone. A narrow chute drops 10 feet down to the corridor to the west.

**Iron Chests:** Each of these 3-foot-by-3-foot-by-5-foot chests is set into the stone floor and immovable. Both show marks of prying and battering. It takes an extra move action to hop up onto a chest. A chest provides cover.

It takes two DC 18 Thievery checks (trained only) to open each chest. On each failed check, a poison needle in the lock makes an attack: +13 vs. Fortitude; ongoing 5 poison damage (save ends).

**Treasure:** The eastern chest holds 250 gems (10 gp each); the other contains 2,800 gp. If removed from the dungeon, these become worthless glass and low-quality copper, respectively.

## 30. PHASE DOOR

Two portals here let characters pass through to the corridors to the south. The doors cannot be detected from the corridor side.

## 31. EMPTY CRYPT

The characters' travails in the tomb have finally led them to Acererak's resting place. However, entering the demilich's crypt involves a deadly challenge.





## Empty Crypt

Puzzle

Level 10

XP 500

A single hidden keyhole stands at the center of this blank stone wall.

**Puzzle:** A pair of magically warded portals marks the entrance to Acererak's crypt.

### Arcana

◆ DC 26: Magic pulses within this blank stone wall.

### Perception

◆ DC 18: A chip of stone in the wall flakes away to reveal a metal-lined keyhole.

### Effect

◆ If the First Key is inserted into the keyhole, the wall descends to expose area 32.

With a rumble, the entire wall sinks into the floor, revealing a burial vault whose arched ceiling rises 25 feet overhead. The room is empty of everything but dust.

### Arcana

◆ DC 26 (trained only): The floor of this empty vault pulses with arcane power.

### Perception

◆ DC 18: Another hidden keyhole is revealed beneath a thin layer of painted plaster in the center of the room.

### Effect

A character who inserts the First Key into the keyhole is blown 20 feet into the air, takes 2d6 necrotic and radiant damage, then takes falling damage as normal. The Second Key can be inserted safely into the keyhole.

### Arcana or Thievery

◆ DC 18: The character must turn the key more than once to activate the magic within the floor.

### Effect

If the character turns the key three times to the right in succession, the floor of area 32 splits along its midway point and begins to rise slowly. The true crypt (see the next page) is beneath this empty chamber, moving up from below to fill it.

Turning the second key heralds the appearance of Acererak's true crypt—and puts the characters in grave peril.

## Hidden Vault

Trap

Level 13 Elite Blaster

XP 1,600

The slowly rising floor suddenly slams upward at high speed, crushing anyone on it against the ceiling above.

**Trap:** The hidden chamber below this one slams up to fill this area.

### Perception

This trap cannot be detected with Perception.

### Trigger

Once the floor begins to rise, each character in area 32 has one action with which to leave.

### Attack

**Free Action**      **Melee**

**Target:** All creatures in area 32

**Attack:** +18 vs. Reflex

**Hit:** Ongoing 20 damage and the target is stunned (save ends).

**Miss:** Ongoing 10 damage and the target is dazed (save ends)

### Effect

The target falls prone and is trapped between the risen floor (the ceiling of the new chamber) and the old ceiling above. A character cannot make saving throws against ongoing damage dealt by this trap until he or she is freed from it.

### Countermeasures

◆ A trapped character escapes from the trap with two DC 26 Athletics checks (standard action). A character not stunned by the trap can make these checks, as can characters outside the trap and at the height of the ceiling. (A character who cannot fly can make a DC 26 Athletics check to climb to the height of the arched ceiling 20 feet above.) A character who escapes from the trap falls 20 feet to the floor.



DAVID C. SUTHERLAND III

## 32. THE CRYPT OF ACERERAK

### Encounter Level 13 (4,500 XP)

#### SETUP

##### Acererak Construct (A)

When the true crypt has risen from beneath the floor, area 32 is filled with a sealed mithral vault that separates it from area 31 once more.

*A new wall of gleaming mithral stands where the old wall sunk down. A door is set in the wall, and an inset ring hangs at its center.*

A DC 18 Strength check allows a character to pull the heavy door open. Beyond is the crypt of Acererak and the final challenge of the tomb.

**Treasure:** Treasure scattered across the floor of the crypt is the first thing the characters see. This includes the following:

- All items from any characters teleported nude within the tomb.
- 50 small gems (10 gp each).
- 4 large gems (200 gp each).
- Potions or elixirs of level 10 or lower, worth a total of 1,700 gp.
- A +3 rod of first blood.
- A +3 banishing spellblade longsword (AV2 16).

*A stone dais on the far side of the chamber holds a jeweled skull that sits amid bone shards and dust. Its eyes are blood-red rubies, and its teeth are set with diamonds.*

The Acererak construct takes the form of a jeweled skull sitting in the dust of the demilich's bones. If the treasure in the crypt is touched, or if the characters linger here for 5 rounds, the construct becomes aware of their presence and attacks.

*On the far side of the crypt, dust swirls as the jeweled skull rises into the air. Slowly, it turns from side to side, appraising you as it prepares to attack.*

#### CLOSE QUARTERS

Remembering the fight with the lich construct in area 14, the characters are likely to quickly assess the challenge of fighting in the close confines of the crypt. However, Acererak's magic makes this fight a different kind of challenge.

Each round at the start of the construct's turn, roll a d6. On a result of 4–6, the construct, the characters, and any other creatures are teleported from their current location to some other area of the tomb. Roll another d6 and consult the table.

##### d6 Location\*

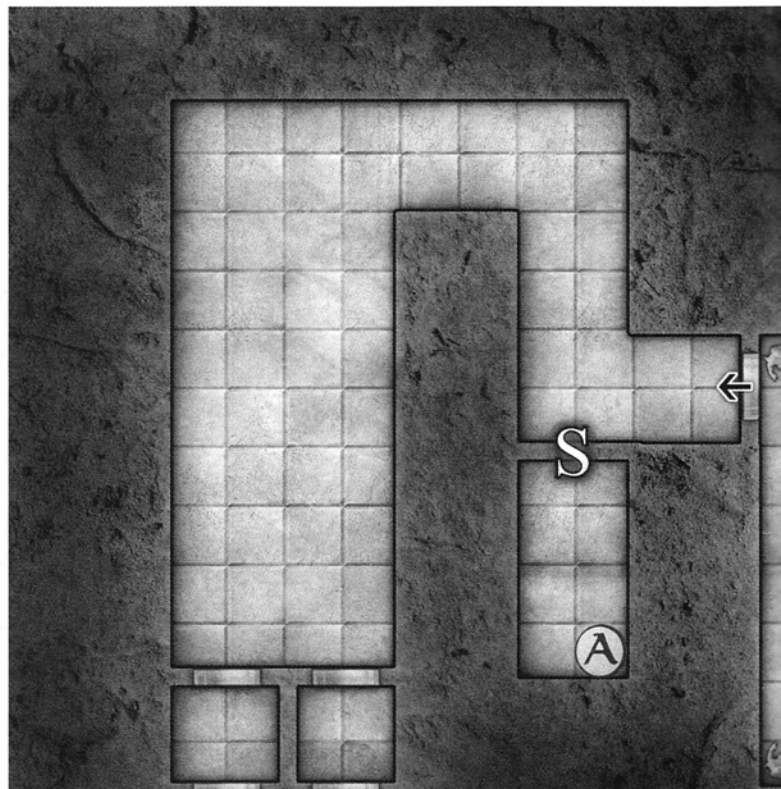
1	Chamber of Three Chests (area 7)
2	Chapel of Evil (area 9)
3	Chamber of Mists (area 18)
4	Pillared Throne Room (area 23)
5	False Treasure Chamber (area 29)
6	Crypt (area 32)

\* If the die roll indicates that the combatants are teleported to the same area they are currently in, roll again.

After each teleportation, the Acererak construct appears in midair in a square of its choice in the rough center of the new area. The characters appear in random unoccupied squares within the chamber. (Have each player drop a d20 onto the center of the battlemat. Whichever square the die is nearest to the center of when it stops is the character's starting place.) The construct then makes an attack against each creature within the area as a free action: +16 vs. Reflex; the construct slides the target 1 square and knocks it prone.

Summoned creatures, companions, familiars, and so on are teleported with the characters. Conjurations and zones end when the characters teleport away from an area.

This teleportation effect ends when the Acererak construct is first bloodied. From that point on, the combat finishes within the area in which the combatants last teleported.



## Acererak Construct

Level 13 Solo Artillery

Tiny natural animate (homunculus, undead)

XP 4,000

Initiative +9

Senses Perception +13; darkvision

Intruding Terror (Fear) aura 2; enemies within the aura take a -2 penalty to attack rolls.

HP 600; Bloodied 300

AC 28; Fortitude 29, Reflex 26, Will 25

Immune disease, poison, sleep; Resist 10 necrotic, 10 psychic;

Vulnerable 5 radiant

Saving Throws +5

Speed fly 10 (hover)

Action Points 2

☞ **Shadow Ray** (standard; at-will) ♦ Necrotic

Ranged 20; +18 vs. Reflex; 2d8 + 6 necrotic damage.

☞ **Twin Rays** (standard; at-will)

The Acererak construct makes two *shadow ray* attacks.

☞ **Drain Soul** (standard; recharge ☞ ☞ ☞)

Ranged 5; does not provoke opportunity attacks; +18 vs. Fortitude; the target is dazed and restrained (save ends both). *First Failed Saving Throw:* The target is instead stunned and restrained (save ends both). *Second Failed Saving Throw:* The target dies, and its soul is trapped in one of the Acererak construct's *soul gems* until the construct is destroyed; see also *consume soul* and the "Fate of Drained Souls" sidebar.

☞ **Soul Shriveling Pulse** (immediate reaction, when a creature fails a saving throw against *drain soul*; at-will) ♦ Fear, Necrotic

Close burst 5; +18 vs. Will; 2d6 + 4 necrotic damage, and the target takes a -2 penalty to saving throws (save ends).

**Guard Area**

An Acererak construct can use its *drain soul* power against any creature in the crypt (area 32), even if the power hasn't recharged.

**Consume Soul** (minor; expends a trapped soul; recharge ☞ ☞) ♦

**Healing**

The Acererak construct regains 150 hit points.

**Soul Gems**

The Acererak construct's four *soul gems* can each hold the soul of one of its victims. At the beginning of the encounter, the *soul gems* are empty.

Alignment Evil

Languages –

Str 14 (+8)

Dex 17 (+9)

Wis 14 (+8)

Con 18 (+10)

Int 12 (+7)

Cha 22 (+12)

## TACTICS

The Acererak construct uses *drain soul* as often as it can, staying in the thick of combat to maximize its *soul shriveling pulse*. It makes *twin ray* attacks while it waits for *drain soul* to recharge.

Acererak created this area's magical teleport effect to throw would-be tomb raiders off guard and to take a final revenge against characters who have made it this far by avoiding the tomb's deadlier traps. The Acererak construct knows the tomb and takes full advantage of its features and effects. For example, in the chamber of three chests, it attempts to slide characters into any unopened chests. In the pillared throne room, it moves characters into the pillars to levitate them out of the fight.

## DEVELOPMENT

The destruction of the demilich earns the characters the major quest XP for this second half of the adventure.

**Treasure:** In addition to the treasure noted above, the destruction of the Acererak construct leaves the skull's gems. Its two ruby eyes are worth 1,450 gp each; the six diamonds that were its teeth are worth 250 gp each. (Four of these diamonds are soul gems; see the sidebar for the fate of souls trapped in them.)

## FATE OF DRAINED SOULS

When a victim of the drain soul attack fails its second saving throw, the victim's soul is trapped in one of the construct's skull's gems. The soul's former body crumbles into dust at the end of the creature's next turn. If the skull is destroyed, each creature trapped in a gem is targeted by an attack: +18 vs. Will; the soul is destroyed. On a miss, the soul remains intact but is trapped in a gem. If a target's soul remains intact within a gem, then the gem glows with a faint inner light and reveals an image of a tiny figure inside it. Characters can use this gem as part of the Raise Dead ritual, reducing the component cost by half. Characters can bring back a target whose soul is destroyed by the Raise Dead ritual.

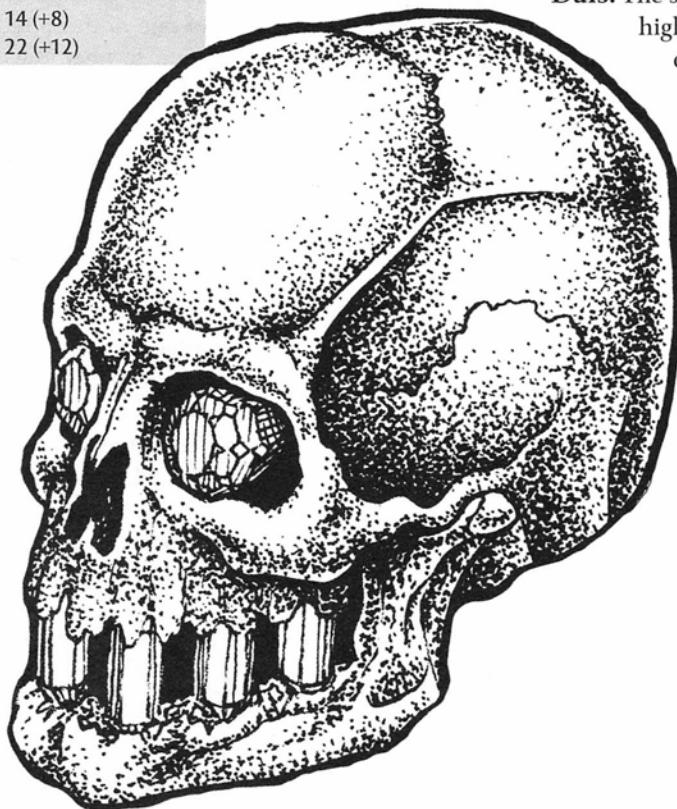
## FEATURES OF THE AREA

**Ceiling:** The ceilings are arched and are 20 feet high in the middle. They are 10 feet high along the walls.

**Illumination:** None.

**Treasure Piles:** Areas of piled treasure are difficult terrain.

**Dais:** The stone dais is 3 feet high and provides cover. It takes 1 extra square of movement to hop up on the dais.



## BEYOND THE TOMB

*This ends the expedition to the Tomb of Horrors. We hope you and your players will have found it exciting, challenging, and rewarding.*

One way or another, the Tomb of Horrors marks your campaign's progression into the paragon tier. If the Acererak construct has fallen to the characters' bravery, word of this accomplishment quickly spreads from Skull City into the wider world. However, even if the heroes ultimately failed at their quest to break Acererak's power, they might have gained a sense of purpose even more valuable in the long term.

In the heroic tier, conflicts and adventure hooks are frequently local and small-scale. However, to succeed in the paragon tier and beyond, characters must learn that defeating evil such as Acererak's is the task of a lifetime, not simply of a single adventure. Those who survive the tomb will be stronger because of it—driven by the memory of the companions lost and the challenges faced there.

Whatever its outcome, this adventure can play into the development of your campaign. Regardless of the party's success, the leaders of the Bleak Academy maintain faith in their lord and his unknowable plans as long as the tomb still physically stands. However, for the sheer temerity of having survived it, the characters might find themselves targeted by necromancers, assassins, vampires, and intelligent undead that seek to complete the sacrifice their master has been denied.

Beyond the Bleak Academy, who knows what fresh plots you might be inspired to hatch on Acererak's behalf? The demilich's ultimate goals are revealed in the upcoming *Tomb of Horrors* super-adventure, but in your campaign, that adventure can build on the outcome of this one. A different generation of heroes can take up the final fight against Acererak, but they will know the names of the heroes who came before them—the characters who braved the peril of this Tomb of Horrors and set the stage for that final showdown.

## AUTHOR'S NOTE

As clever players will gather from a reading of the Legend of the Tomb, this dungeon has more tricks and traps than it has monsters to fight. THIS IS A THINKING PERSON'S MODULE, AND IF YOUR GROUP IS A HACK AND SLAY GATHERING, THEY WILL BE UNHAPPY!

*Tomb of Horrors* had been around for a while when we first played it, but its dark reputation had passed us by. We were an isolated enclave of high-school gamers, mainlining AD&D in our small corner of the Canadian hinterland with no lifeline to the rest of the hobby. We knew Gary Gygax's twisted imagination, of course, from *Hommet* and *Barrier Peaks* and the meat-grinder that was the giants-drow series. Though we all DMed in a kind of chaotic rotation, it was Dave who'd run most of the Gygax canon, and who prepped the tomb for us that night in 1982. As a result, we were pretty sure we knew what we were in for.

On Dave's face as we started, I remember a smile I'd never seen before. . . .

We were ready, though. We were savvy. We were the "thinking persons" that Gygax spoke of in the module's introduction—the slacker core of our high school's geek elite. We were methodical. We were paranoid as all hell. We were confident.

And we died. Badly. Over and over and over again.

The body count in that first session was beyond comprehension. My character was one of the few survivors, swearing oaths of vengeance with all the rest as we bankrupted ourselves paying for group-rate resurrections—and then went back for more.

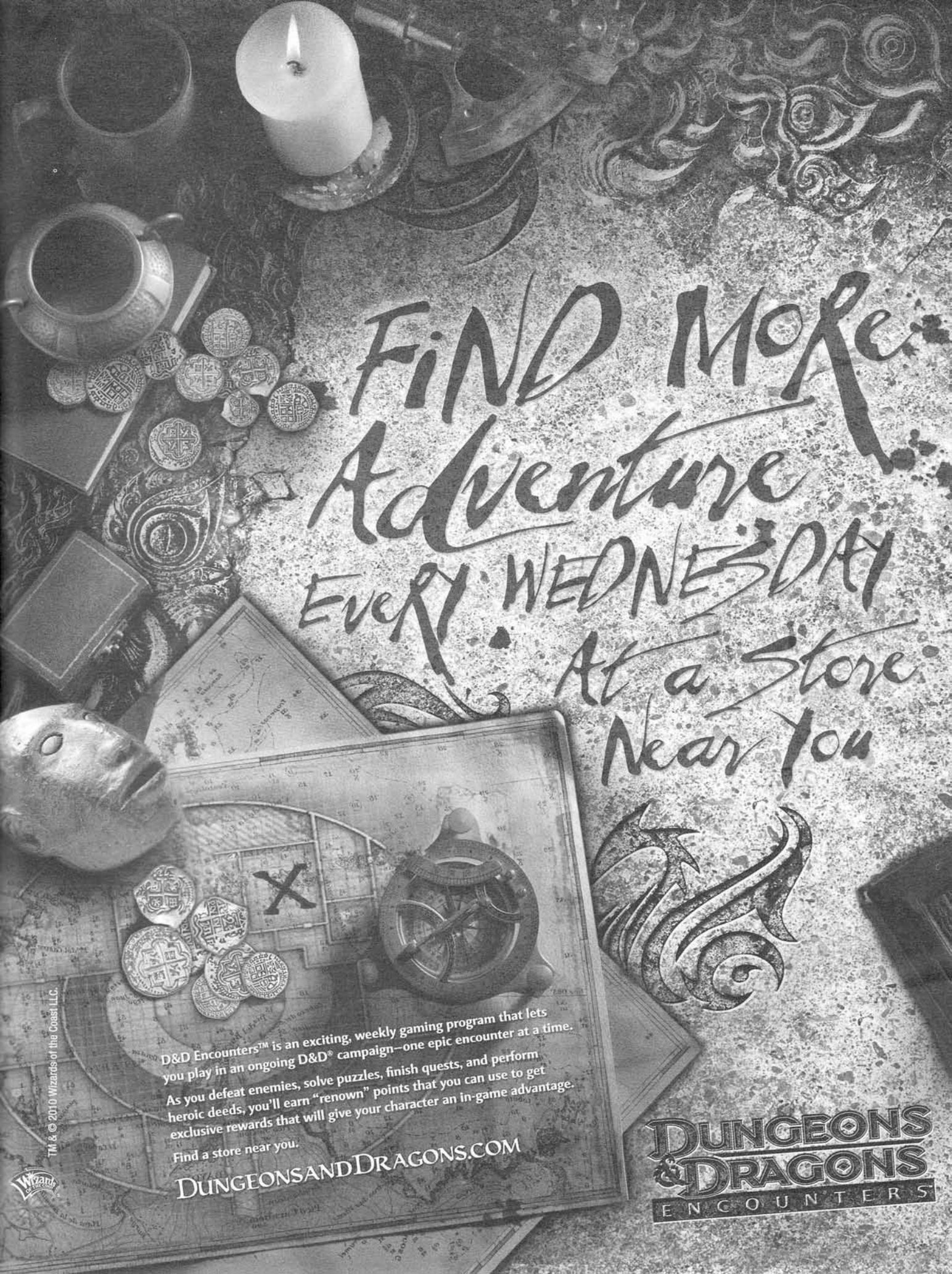
Success came slowly, built on perseverance and blind luck and sheer "Do nothing; touch nothing!" terror. Victory and the destruction of the demilich came finally in the form of one of those tedious campaign stories you really don't want to hear. But the larger point is that for those of us who kept coming back to it, the tomb was a challenge like nothing we'd ever played before.

This was an adventure in which it wasn't enough for your character to be the best at what he or she did. To survive the tomb, you—the player, the person behind the character sheet—had to be even better.

This adventure isn't a new work based on or inspired by the original. This is *Tomb of Horrors*—sharpened, not blunted, by the 4th Edition rules. There are some changes, to be sure. Those who know the original will hopefully find at least a few surprises herein. But the heart of this updating of Gary Gygax's masterwork is the raw ingenuity and sense of ever-impending doom that made the original Tomb what it was.

Your players already know how good their characters are. Now they get to find out how little that matters. . . .

—Scott Fitzgerald Gray



FIND MORE  
Adventure  
EVERY WEDNESDAY  
At a Store  
Near You

D&D Encounters™ is an exciting, weekly gaming program that lets you play in an ongoing D&D® campaign—one epic encounter at a time. As you defeat enemies, solve puzzles, finish quests, and perform heroic deeds, you'll earn "renown" points that you can use to get exclusive rewards that will give your character an in-game advantage. Find a store near you.

[DUNGEONSANDDRAGONS.COM](http://DUNGEONSANDDRAGONS.COM)

**DUNGEONS  
& DRAGONS**  
ENCOUNTERS



# JOIN OUR ADVENTURING PARTY

The D&D Community is where you'll encounter a world of other fans—including the people who make the game.

By joining the official D&D Group, you have direct access to D&D R&D and get the latest news and information, along with the chance to enter exclusive contests and get access to special promotions.

And with other features like forums, wikis, and blogs, the D&D Community makes it easier than ever to find other players, get together, share your campaign, and play some games.

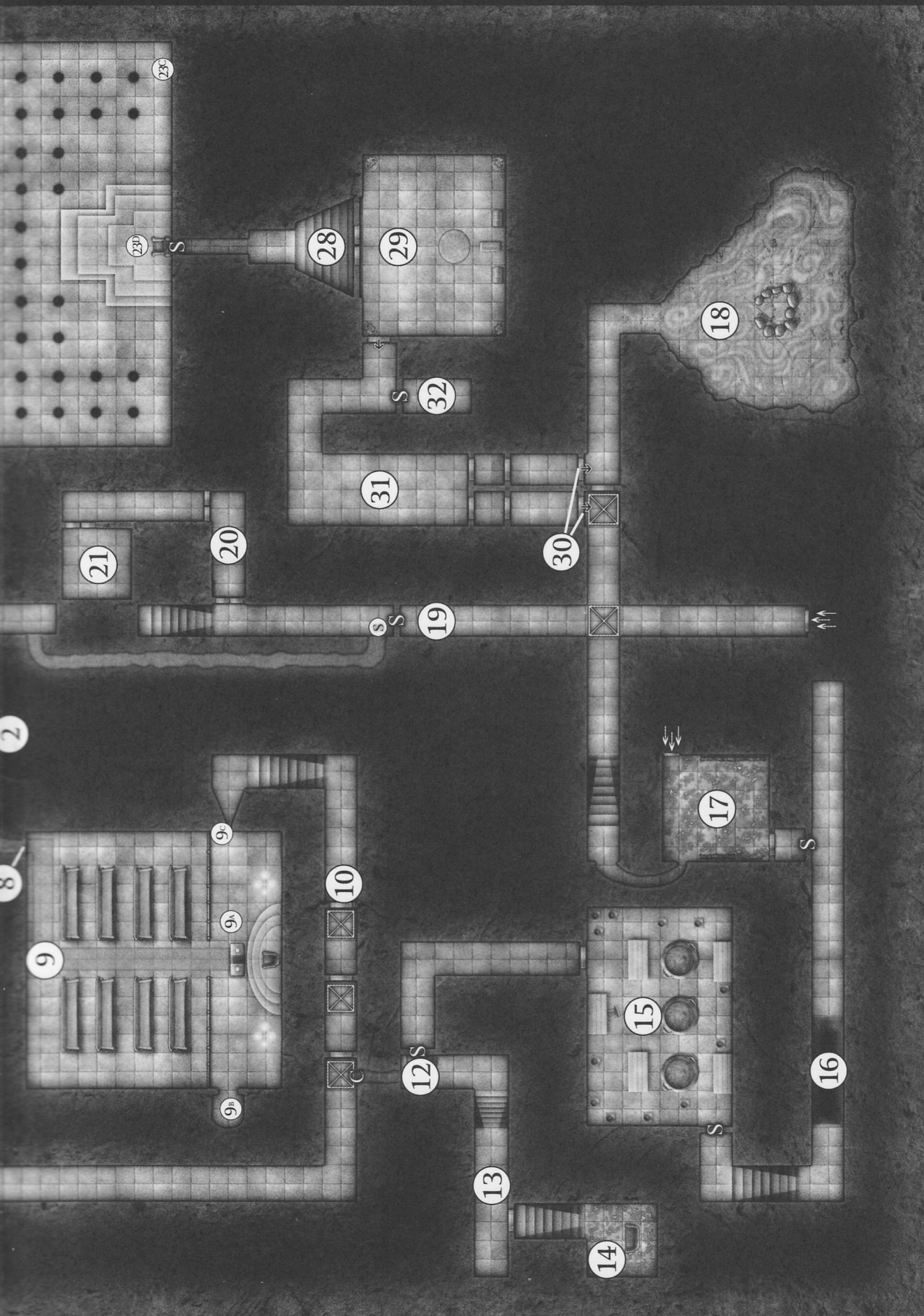
SET UP YOUR PROFILE AND CREATE YOUR CAMPAIGN GROUP TODAY.  
[DUNGEONSANDDRAGONS.COM](http://DUNGEONSANDDRAGONS.COM)

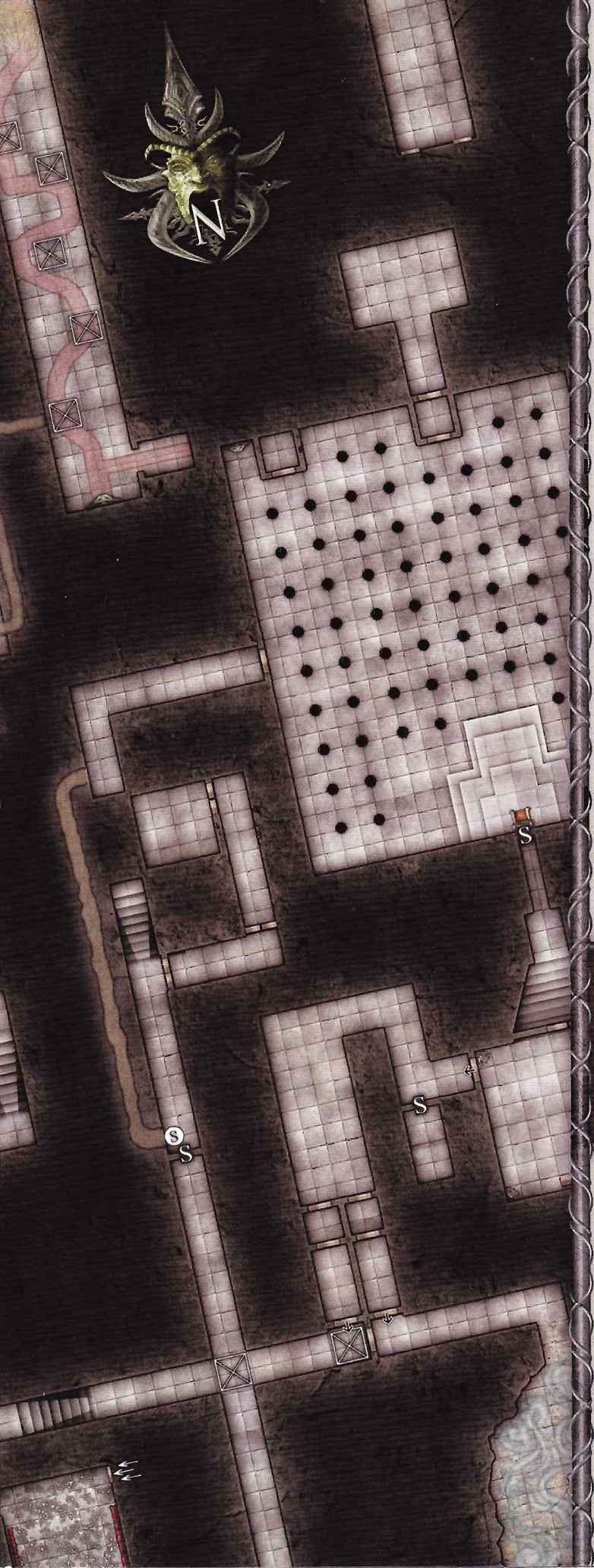


TM & © 2010 Wizards of the Coast LLC.

**DUNGEONS  
& DRAGONS**

NEVER SPLIT THE PARTY





# HORROR NEVER DIES

In an isolated corner of one of the world's fallen kingdoms lies the last crypt and redoubt of the demilich Acererak. For countless generations, this legendary Tomb of Horrors has attracted the avaricious and the noble, as well as the foolish and the brave, with legends of great wealth and even greater evil to be undone. Now a new generation of heroes stands ready to delve into the tomb's deadly madness—or to be destroyed like those who came before them.

*Tomb of Horrors* is a 4th Edition update that faithfully recreates the classic Gary Gygax adventure, generally regarded as one of the most memorable dungeon crawls of all time. Written for five characters of 9th level, this **DUNGEONS & DRAGONS**® adventure includes a poster map; deadly combat encounters, traps, and puzzles; and the adventure hooks and history necessary to make this legendary dungeon part of your own campaign.

For use with these 4th Edition **DUNGEONS & DRAGONS** core products:

*Player's Handbook*® core rulebooks

*Dungeon Master's Guide*® core rulebooks

*Monster Manual*® core rulebooks

*D&D*® Miniatures     *D&D*® Dungeon Tiles

[DUNGEONSANDDRAGONS.COM](http://DUNGEONSANDDRAGONS.COM)



TM & © 2010 Wizards of the Coast LLC.  
Cover Illustration by Justin Sweet, 4429A