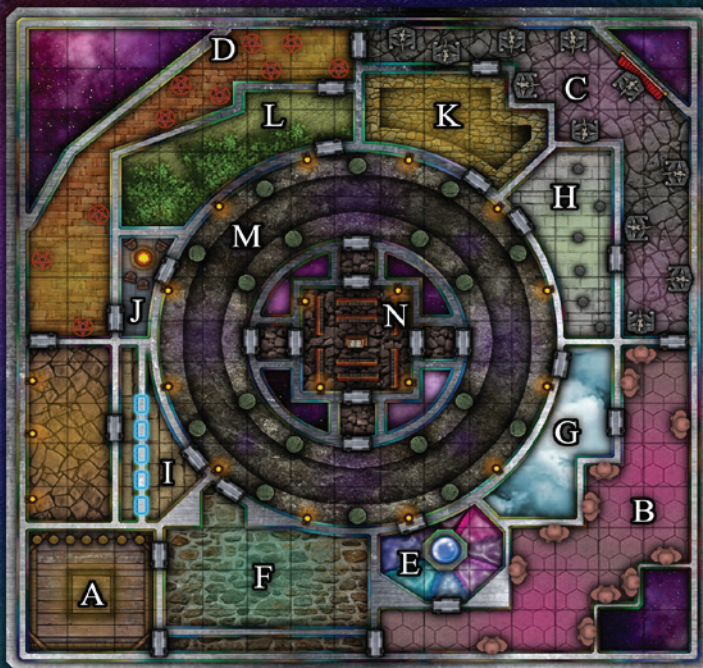


THE ENDING OF IT ALL

AN ADVENTUREAWEK.COM MINI-DUNGEON BY STEPHEN YEARDLEY



THE THEATRE



HASTUR'S DEMI-PLANE

Square = 20 ft.

BACKGROUND

Liikkua rested her hand on the great serpent's head and spoke softly to her creation. The dragon was magnificent, even to a deity of travel who has seen unimaginable sights. Despite its awe-inspiring presence, it waited for her words. She talked of the *codex* and of how Hastur, the King in Yellow, fought to steal it, ransacking the infinite planes to find it. The guardian rumbled understanding, so Liikkua drew a simple map of six planes, separate from each other but connected by a sense of order. She folded it into a cube and shaped a key phrase for each face. She set the dragon and *codex* into the *cube*—despite it being just 2 inches on each side—and then picked up a simple atlas of 144 maps. She leafed through it and devised a mystery for each one, before allocating it to random future travelers. Then she pushed the *cube* through the tome's cover, unaware of where it would end up,

waiting to be found. But the concentration it took to complete the encasing ritual meant she missed the tiny yellow moth with tattered wings fluttering at her side. As she pressed the *cube* into the atlas, the moth landed on a face, leaving a diminutive, golden, star-shaped mark. It was in this way that Hastur inscribed his own key and entered the cube without the goddess knowing.

INTRODUCTION

Each non-chaotic character receives a cryptic petition soon after reaching 20th level that reads, "I humbly ask that you help bring to book the chaotic old. The traveling repository holds our futures." Recreating a set of folds in the letter forms an origami phoenix. When completed, it takes flight, ignites, and then leaves an ash trail towards a part of the city the characters somehow haven't seen

before. There they find a forgotten, nondescript library with a single dilapidated door. Inside, five people sit around a worn table.

- A paladin petitioner from Heaven
- A monk petitioner from Utopia
- A fighter petitioner from Abaddon
- A bard petitioner from Hell
- A sorcerer petitioner from Purgatory

There are quiet greetings as food and empty chairs materialize. The five wait for the characters to sit, and then the sorcerer makes a book on the table visible. The tome is old beyond reckoning, yet clearly well made. The monk taps the cover and says, "Although you won't know it, this atlas is a record of your exploits and those of others like you. You've been watched over time, and you are the first to gain the required experience. But another also watched you, and we all have a problem. Now bear with us and prepare."

The bard starts a dirge, and a *cubic* gate rises from the book. Five faces bear symbols from the petitioners' home planes; the sixth, a diminutive yellow moth. The petitioners stand; the table disappears, and the tome and cube hover in the air. As the paladin grips his hilt, the fighter leans forward and says, "Ready?" He touches the moth mark, and instantly everyone is on a stage in an opulent opera house, facing a roaring crowd that melds and rises as a **shoggoth**. After the shoggoth is beaten, everyone reappears in the library. Characters receive a moth token for the victory. [For a longer adventure, the GM may instead require the characters to venture to each of the petitioner's planes listed above on quests to assemble the moth token in five parts.]

The petitioners say they cannot directly help the characters enter the cube, defeat Hastur, and recover the *codex*, but they explain the use of the moth token. When touched to the cube, it transports the characters inside to face the defenses Hastur has built around the *codex*.

Note: In the planes of the *cubic* gate, the characters are outsiders. Each time the characters enter a room, the doors lock behind them. Locked doors require the relevant stone tokens to open.

A. GREEN-GROWN RUSHES

The characters arrive at a 30-foot-square barn. As they enter, they see an aged monk in tattered yellow robes. The monk is so thin that light seems to pass through him. He is feeding dozens of birds with scales instead of feathers. Their claws, beaks, and wattles "clack" as they peck at the rush-covered ground. When the character reaches the center of the barn, the monk—Hastur in disguise—sends all 78 **cockatrices** to attack the character, and then disappears. The beasts become stone tokens when dead, comprising 1 circle, 2 ellipses, 3 triangles, 4 squares, 5 pentagons, 6 hexagons, 7 heptagons, 8 octagons, 9 nonagons, 10 decagons, 11 undecagons, and 12 dodecagons. The barn becomes a large room with two doors.

B. THE TWELVE APOSTLES

Twelve four-armed **gargoyles** line this room, one against each wall. As soon as the party is in the room, the doors lock and the gargoyles swarm the party (this is standard behavior for the rooms that follow). Each gargoyle has a dodecagonal recess in its chest that needs a stone token from Area A in it to unlock the doors.

C. THE ELEVEN WHO WENT TO THE HEAVENS

This dusty space looks like an eternal waiting room. Eleven **flesh golems** are dotted about the room, all slumped on decrepit thrones, animate and attack. A huge tapestry on the northeast wall reads, "The kingdom of heaven has suffered violence, and the violent take it by force." Each flesh golem has an undecagonal recess in its skull that needs a stone token in it to unlock the doors.

D. THE TEN COMMANDMENTS

Hastur cast the following *symbol* spells on the walls as indicated (all DC 20): (a) death, (b) discord, (c) fear, (d) hopelessness, (e) insanity, (f) pain, (g) sleep, (h) stunning, (i) death, (j) discord. A **pit fiend** appears to attack the party at any suitably awkward moment as they deal with the symbols.

Each symbol has a decagonal recess in its center that needs a stone token in it to unlock the doors.



E. THE NINE BRIGHT ALIGNERS

This octagonal room has nine sections in a floor made of unadorned clear crystal that has been magically hardened. Each section represents an alignment, and shines with a different color from beneath the crystal (see below). The sections do not flow in the usual “alignment wheel” but are set randomly. When someone not of the same alignment as the section stands on it, a *prismatic spray* targets the character as follows (all DC 20):

- **LG (blue):** The target takes 10d6 cold damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.
- **NG (indigo):** On a failed save, the target is restrained. It must then make a Constitution saving throw at the end of each of its turns. If it successfully saves three times, the spell ends. If it fails its save three times, it permanently turns to stone and is subjected to the petrified condition. The successes and failures don’t need to be consecutive; keep track of both until the target collects three of a kind.
- **CG (violet):** On a failed save, the target is blinded. It must then make a Wisdom saving throw at the start of your next turn. A successful save ends the blindness. If it fails that save, the creature is transported to another plane of existence of the DM’s choosing and is no longer blinded. (Typically, a creature that is on a plane that isn’t its home plane is banished home, while other creatures are usually cast into the Astral or Ethereal planes.)
- **CN (red):** The target takes 10d6 fire damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.
- **CE (orange):** The target takes 10d6 acid damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.
- **NE (yellow):** The target takes 10d6 lightning damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.
- **LE (green):** The target takes 10d6 poison damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.

- **LN (clear):** The target is struck by two rays. Roll twice more, rerolling any 8.
- **N (black):** No effect.

Each section has a nonagonal recess in its center that needs a stone token in it to unlock the doors.

F. THE EIGHT ABERRANT RAINERS

Each section of floor has a large, round grate set in it. The eight-foot-high “ceiling” is dark and undulates. In fact, this is the bottom of a 30-foot-deep flooded space that holds eight **lake trolls**. Two rounds after characters enter the room, gravity reverses so that characters “fall” upward into the water to face the trolls – and possible drowning.

As the last troll dies, gravity returns to normal. Characters, trolls, and water crash to the floor. All characters take 7 (2d6) falling damage, and the water rapidly drains away through the large



grates. Each troll has an octagonal recess in its chest that needs a stone token in it to unlock the doors.

G. THE SEVEN STARS IN THE SKY

This heavenly looking space is 40 feet high and has seven **vrock** veiled to look like angels in it. In addition to listed qualities, their feathers are multicolored and shimmer constantly with a *hypnotic pattern* (DC 17). Each vrock has a heptagonal recess between its wings that needs a stone token in it to unlock the doors.

H. SIX HEAVY WALKERS

The six **clay golems** here patrol rooms with traps and report on any that have been triggered, bringing captives or remains to their master. Each golem has a hexagonal recess in its forehead that needs a stone token in it to unlock the doors.

I. FIVE HEADS ARE BETTER THAN ONE

There are five stone pedestals here. Each one holds an unbreakable glass (as small *wall of force*) box with a severed head that looks like one of the characters. Physically touching or attacking any box with a melee weapon triggers an imprisonment spell (minimum containment; the character must succeed on a **DC 25 Wisdom save** or be trapped inside the glass box).

If a character can get into a box without opening the door, she can extract the item within. Each head has a pentagonal recess in its forehead that needs a stone token in it to unlock the doors.

J. FOUR VANITIES (AND A BONFIRE)

Four mysterious hooded humanoids sit in deep chairs around a warm fire in the middle of this homely looking room. They are a cabal of **abominable beauties**. Each abominable beauty has a square recess in the palm of its left hand that needs a stone token in it to unlock the doors.

K. THREE RIVALS

Three **nalfeshnee** fight to prove their worth as defenders of Hastur's plans, but all will turn on intruders. Each demon has a triangular recess in its back that needs a stone token in it to unlock the doors.

L. TWO CLOTHED ALL IN GREEN

This space is a piece of a planet that belongs to Hastur, engulfed by a prehistoric forest. A **Spinosaurus** lairs here, keeping out of the way of a **vesiculosa**. Party members will find themselves caught between these two foes. Each has an elliptical recess that needs a stone token in it to unlock the doors. If the characters defeat Hastur and return here, they can explore the planet, which is like Mesozoic-era Earth.

M. ONE IS THE LONELIEST NUMBER

The immense, **ancient void dragon**, created by Liikkua to guard the *codex*, now circles Hastur's library beyond the farthest ends of the Material Plane where it maintains its eternal vigil. Killing it earns the wrath of a goddess, but the characters need to get past it somehow (see Area N description for options). The guardian has a circular recess in its forehead that needs a stone token in it to unlock the doors to the library.

N. THE LIBRARY

The *codex* is in this library. Hastur, the Great Old One [you may wish to adapt a high-level **fiend**, perhaps the **Archduke of the Undead**], formed it within the guardian's defensive ring without its knowledge. It is on a table in the middle of the room, still sealed by Liikkua's magic. If the characters manage to convince the guardian dragon of Hastur's duplicity, it enters the library with them, destroying everything there except the *codex* in its efforts to reach the Great Old One.

Defeating Hastur and regaining the *codex* for the guardian is no small feat. In gratitude, it casts limited wish to benefit the party.

