

Quests of Doom 4

A Little Knowledge

By Tom Knauss



FROG GOD
GAMES

Quests of Doom 4

A Little Knowledge

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 Fields of Blood ^{PF}
 Mountains of Madness ^{PF}
 Marshes of Malice ^{PF}

* (forthcoming from **Frog God Games**)

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A Little Knowledge

*Life within me ebbs, yet this is not the end,
Deem me worthy, and my soul it shall ascend.
Into the heavens I soar far beyond and so on high
By the side of my lord Ra, on a boat across the sky.*

— A Khemitian funerary prayer

A Little Knowledge is a 5th-level adventure that takes the characters across the Stoneheart Mountains onto the forbidding Feirgotha Plateau to investigate the myths and tales surrounding the ancient and presumably deserted Library of Arcady. The characters soon discover that the venerable building is not as abandoned as originally believed, and its unusual caretaker keeps more terrible secrets than any of its fabled lost writings.

Adventure Background

More than 2,000 years ago, the legendary archmage Aka Bakar magically transported his formidable tower and thousands of his former home's fearsome soldiers from the city of Pharos onto the cold, largely uninhabited high desert of the distant Feirgotha Plateau amid the Stoneheart Mountains. In a series of brilliant military maneuvers, the shrewd human wizard and his invading army expelled those mountain dwarves who were resident from the plateau. He cleared their few citadels on the plateau and destroyed the infamous keep of Baen Halfhammer in Baen's Pass. With his major opposition eliminated, the keen ruler embarked on a bold plan to construct numerous settlements, temples, monuments, and public works in his newly conquered land. These wondrous buildings served as the foundation for the Kingdom of Arcady.

Under his astute guidance, the newfound state rapidly expanded. He imported the architectural and technological traditions of his native people, transforming the frigid, lifeless wasteland into fertile farmland capable of supporting vital food staples and sustaining vast herds of livestock. Aka Bakar concentrated most of his construction and irrigation efforts around the centrally located bottomless lake, Toh Kristael, which included the burgeoning settlement of Deepharbor found along its northern shore. Within two years of its founding, countless refugees fleeing the Great Darkness poured into the growing town, transforming the quaint community into a bustling and magnificent city replete with wondrous marvels and exotic goods.

The influx of residents secured the Feirgotha Plateau's northern and central borders, but its southern flank remained vulnerable to invasion via the remote Southern Pass. In order to attract settlers to the desolate region, Aka Bakar commissioned his grandest project to spearhead migration to the area. The renowned wizard gathered many of the great works he had claimed from the Great Library of Pharos and transported them to what would be the site of his newly constructed Library of Arcady, less than ten miles from the Southern Pass. He chose his most-promising young apprentice, Thanopsis the Learned, to oversee the edifice's construction and catalog its immense inventory. Just as Aka Bakar intended, the huge undertaking drew scholars, intellectuals, artisans, and laborers to the distant locale, which in turn attracted countless support industries and the settlers to supply them, thus bolstering the southern boundary's defenses and increasing his influence in this backwater region.

For the next forty years, Thanopsis relished his role as the caretaker of Arcady's treasure trove of knowledge, yet even Aka Bakar's loyal servant could not overlook his sovereign's escalating descent into eccentricity and madness. In a surprise move, a massive hobgoblin army struck at the heart of Arcady. The devastating attack caught the kingdom's army completely off-guard. Farther south, a horde of orcs marched up the Southern Pass and launched a simultaneous assault against the kingdom's vulnerable underbelly. The rampaging orcs besieged the Library of Arcady. Aka

Bakar's legions hung on for dear life in the face of the combined hobgoblin and orcish onslaughts. When all seemed lost, the deranged sovereign and his legendary *Sword of Air* arrived on the scene and turned back the hobgoblin and orcish invaders. Yet victory came at a frightening cost. Aka Bakar disappeared and was believed lost, and the capital of Deepharbor was destroyed. Arcady's leaderless survivors abandoned the Feirgotha Plateau soon after, leaving the high desert and the vengeful dwarves to reclaim the desolate landscape. Only one man remained behind in the aftermath — Thanopsis, Arcady's genius librarian.

Cheating Death

Like many of his Khemitite-descended brethren, the noble Thanopsis looked forward to reaping the splendors of the afterlife. Yet, he never faced death until the barbarous orc warriors forced him to confront his own mortality. In those frightful moments, Thanopsis realized that dying terrified him. He rationalized that the afterlife was a blissful fallacy conjured to comfort the dying and the living alike. In his mind, death was an absolute finality. He found the path of joining the ranks of the undead equally undesirable. For Thanopsis, the act of dying irreparably corrupts the individual, regardless of whether the soul embarks on an eternal journey into the afterlife or not, or the body or spirit is reanimated by an arcane or divine force.

As the orc hordes surrounded his embattled library, Thanopsis, with some unwitting assistance from the legendary archmage Aka Bakar, concocted a wicked plan to cheat death. The clever apprentice remembered one of his master's offhand comments before his disappearance. "Thought," he said, "is the essence of being. As long as it endures, death is powerless." He conjectured that if his consciousness survived, he could live forever.

The magician scoured the library searching for the mystical solution to his dilemma. In a neglected, obscure tome, he found the answer — the designs for a magical device that could transfer a living mind's consciousness into a perfectly preserved dead body. Thanopsis instantly knew what he must do next. Aka Bakar's disappearance had thrust the ravaged kingdom of Arcady into chaos, presenting Thanopsis with the perfect opportunity to obtain the human subjects he needed to conduct his amoral magical experiments. The seemingly genial librarian rescued hundreds of orphaned children from the carnage and offered them sanctuary within the library. Then he waited for everyone else to flee the library and the surrounding settlements before he set his plan into motion. In the dead of night, the devious librarian duped the children into a frigid cavern beneath the library in the heart of an underground glacier. He then sealed the exit and consigned his victims to their fate within the deep freeze. Their muffled cries for help went unanswered while he waited for the sounds of life to cease. When his victims had all succumbed to the bone-chilling cold, the subzero temperatures in the frigid cavern kept their corpses in a state of pristine preservation.

Alone at last, Thanopsis toiled in his laboratory to create the magical item he named the *consciousness crystal*. The moment his mind and body showed the first telltale signs of aging, Thanopsis took a monumental leap of faith. He activated the crystal and sank into a deep coma alongside his first handpicked human subject. Twenty-four hours later, his consciousness awoke in the new, vigorous body of a previously deceased teenage boy. Thanopsis repeated this process every few decades for the next 2,000 years. But, magic can be a temperamental and imprecise mistress in the hands of a mere mortal. The slightest change in intonation or disruption of rhythm can have a profound effect. On occasions small errors in the ritual diminished his mental acumen. Through the passing centuries repeated errors in use of the *consciousness crystal* steadily lessened his arcane powers and intellect. Now occupying the body of an old woman, the despondent librarian faces his first crisis in more than 2,000 years: Thanopsis neglected to notice that an unusual warm spell several years

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earlier had affected the glacier cave and partially thawed his remaining frozen subjects, allowing subtle decay and rendering the corpses useless for their intended purpose. The aging wizard desperately sought a suitable new human host, but the xenophobic dwarves of Clan Craenog who watch over the Feirgotha Plateau had expelled the last human residents from this land long ago. Since the dwarves continue to kill humans on sight, men and women from foreign lands never willingly set foot in their territory.

At the zenith of his power, the brilliant wizard could have used his magic to solve his problem, but the act of transferring his consciousness so many times with so many tiny imperfections had dulled his wits and corrupted his memory. He now lacks the intelligence to wield his most-powerful spells and must rely upon more-conventional means to achieve his ends. Each morning, the desperate necromancer animates his former tests subjects and other dead humanoids from the grounds around the library and sends them into battle against the dwarven garrison now guarding the Southern Pass. He seeks to destroy the dwarven outpost and hopefully use any human prisoners he finds in their custody for his intended purpose. Otherwise, with the dwarves eliminated, he is free to lure humans from the lowlands up the Southern Pass and into his clutches. In either event the dwarves, long beleaguered by attacks from the walking dead, stand on the verge of defeat unless relief arrives soon, and Thanopsis' parasitic existence is poised to claim countless more innocent victims.

Adventure Synopsis

You may begin the adventure in Miners' Refuge, which is detailed in *Mountains of Madness* by **Frog God Games**, or start the tale in another location closer to their ultimate destination. In either event, an interested party asks the characters to travel to the remote, southern edge of the frigid Feirgotha Plateau in search of the fabled Library of Arcady. (The Feirgotha Plateau can be found on the **Gulf of Akados Region Map** from **Frog God Games**.) Alternately, a representative of the Clan Craenog implores his fellow dwarves to aid the beleaguered dwarven garrison of Burvaadun. The fortress guards the strategic Southern Pass that carves a path through the Stoneheart Mountains connecting the lands below the mountains with the Feirgotha Plateau.

Of course, the rugged Stoneheart Mountains and its native denizens stand between the intrepid adventurers and their goal. Fortunately for dwarven characters, the ancient dwarves of the Great Mountain Clans long ago created "high-ways", narrow, twisting paths that wind among the mighty peaks connecting the regions of one Great Clan to another. Only mountain dwarves know of the existence of these treacherous high-ways, but one does indeed connect the clan peaks of Clan Krazzadak around the Ice Plateau with the clan peaks of Clan Craenog around the Feirgotha Plateau. Parties that have no mountain dwarves must find other means to reach Burvaadun and either scale the challenging peaks or travel from the lowlands east of the Stonehearts and take the well-worn and safer Southern Pass onto the Feirgotha Plateau.

Characters that travel to Burvaadun, either intentionally or en route to the Library of Arcady, find the stronghold close to the breaking point. Skeletons and zombies attack the crumbling fortress every night in ever-increasing numbers. The undead marauders killed the garrison's commander along with more than half of his battle-weary soldiers. The trail of the walking dead leads back to the site of the presumably abandoned and ruined Library of Arcady where Thanopsis, the raid's architect, seeks to shatter the dwarves' defenses and hopes to obtain human subjects from their prison or from the lands below the mountains.

When the characters arrive at the Library of Arcady, the settlement around it is destroyed save for a mound of snow-covered rubble where the Pyramid of Thanopsis once stood. However, they then discover that the rumors of the library's demise at the hands of its orcish invaders are greatly exaggerated. The structure of obvious Khemitian origin remains intact, and Thanopsis' mindless undead minions muster in and around its outer courtyard. Characters that defeat or slip past the guardians can then enter the library proper. The building's current resident transformed some of his former colleagues into his undead servants, while swarms of voracious scarab beetles, malevolent constructs, and other monsters originally hailing from Thanopsis' homeland also perform the bidding of their sinister master.

In the subterranean chambers below the library, the characters locate Thanopsis' unoccupied tomb and the ghastly secret to the librarian's incredible longevity — a large icy vault filled with the frozen yet decaying bodies of numerous children, as well as dozens of festering, elderly corpses. Thanopsis' consciousness now occupies the body of an old woman, a guise that the cunning wizard uses to his advantage to allay the characters' suspicions. The fear of death consumes the wily librarian as he attempts to destroy the characters by leading them into a prearranged trap. If the characters survive the lethal trick and realize the deception, the enraged and frightened Thanopsis uses his arsenal of magic to destroy his foes and once again cheat death. It is up to the characters to stop this ancient menace from claiming more lives to prolong his wretched existence.

Part I: Knowledge Lost

The first portion of the adventure takes place in the formidable Stoneheart Mountains en route to the frigid Feirgotha Plateau. During their trek, the characters encounter several of the area's native inhabitants. Their interactions with these men and beasts reveal important information about the region's history and the dwarven clan that dominates this region of the Stoneheart Mountains. In addition to contending with these creatures, the characters must devise a means to reach the elevated plateau. Unless they have access to the secret "high-ways" of the mountain dwarves, the characters must either scale the sheer cliffs and icy rock walls along the mountain range's southern boundary, or travel from the more distant Southern Pass. In the latter case, the characters must pass through the dwarven garrison of Burvaadun to gain access to the arctic wasteland that lies ahead of them.

Beginning the Adventure

The adventure may begin in one of several locations. A likely stepping off point is the mountainside town of Miners' Refuge, which is a rural settlement that lies roughly 350 miles south of the distant Feirgotha Plateau, where the Library of Arcady is located. The journey to the site by conventional means could last several weeks or months as the characters wind their way through the inhospitable and treacherous Stoneheart Mountains or circumnavigate them entirely to reach the Southern Pass north of the ruins of Tsar (see *The Slumbering Tsar Saga* by **Frog God Games** for information about those ruins and the surrounding Desolation or *Sword of Air* by **Frog God Games** for more information about travel through that region). If you want to forego such a long, perilous trek you could alternately use a closer location as a jumping-on point, thus

Clan Craenog

This potent clan of mountain dwarves controls large swaths of territory within the eastern and central Stoneheart Mountains, particularly in the areas around the Feirgotha Plateau as well as the three mountain passes (Baen's Pass, Pelivar Pass and the Southern Pass) that grant access to the elevated flatlands high atop the mountain range. The dwarves refer to their kingdom as Flaencragh, and for much of its history, a king ruled the realm. This practice ended more than three centuries ago when the last king vanished without a trace during the Battle of Tsar. His subjects left the title vacant and instead bequeathed the title of High Thane upon Om, the former king's first cousin. The High Thane rules the land from his citadel of Erod Flan, where he keeps a watchful eye on the neighboring Feirgotha Plateau and the hobgoblin strongholds of the Starcrag Range.

Though the dwarves focus much of their attention on the barbarous goblinoids to their north, they also keep a close watch on the human settlements to the east. The dwarves of Clan Craenog are all too familiar with humanity's treacherous ways. The High Thane's loyal subjects, still seething from ancient betrayals, usually kill human trespassers on sight.

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eliminating the need to recreate several weeks of travel. The dwarven citadel of Erod Flan, the primary stronghold of the Clan Craenog, is the most logical choice, though you are ultimately free to start the adventure practically anywhere within or near the Stoneheart Mountains.

Adventure Hooks

The characters are likely drawn into the adventure's events in one of three ways. An interested party asks the characters to travel directly to the Library of Arcady to retrieve a particular item or to solve a long-standing mystery about the foreboding locale. Alternately, the adventurers may be sent to the remote garrison of Burvaadun to aid the weary soldiers manning the lonely stronghold straddling the border between the strategic Southern Pass and the Feirgotha Plateau. The strange events plaguing the garrison ultimately lead back to the supposedly abandoned Library of Arcady. You may use one or more of the following hooks or create one of his own to set the adventure into motion.

Relief Force

After the third assault at the hands of Thanopsis's undead minions, Foran Rockfeller, the now-deceased commander of the Burvaadun garrison, dispatched his nephew Voorn Rockfeller (LN male mountain dwarf **veteran**) to seek aid for his beleaguered troops fending off the attacks. Naturally, the young warrior only approaches a party composed entirely of dwarves, so this hook is only appropriate for a group of characters that meets this requirement. If the characters are members of the Clan Craenog, the passionate Voorn appeals to the characters' familial loyalty to perform this service on behalf of their thane. Otherwise, Voorn offers to pay 750 gp worth of gems and jewels to his fellow dwarves to help break the siege. If the characters balk at his initial offer, Voorn reluctantly agrees to add a 250 gp emerald to the payment. After reaching an agreement with the characters, he tells the characters that a horde of skeletons and zombies attacked the strategic garrison of Burvaadun for three consecutive nights before his departure. The remote fortress overlooks the Feirgotha Plateau and the Southern Pass that leads into the lowlands beyond. He is certain that the animated human and orc corpses originated from the ruins of the Library of Arcady, the only significant abandoned settlement near the garrison.

Ancestral Mystery

For the last seventeen years, Octavio de Morreau of Bard's Gate (N male human **commoner**), a renowned historian and genealogist, longed to solve an ancient mystery. The human scholar knows that the dwarves watching over the Feirgotha Plateau kill humans on sight, so he seeks adventurers to travel in his stead to the lost Library of Arcady and investigate rumors that hundreds of humans disappeared into the library shortly before the remaining residents abandoned the site. Most scholars believe that these refugees died in the ensuing chaos or fled to unknown locations. However, Octavio is convinced that something else happened to these misplaced souls. He also takes a special interest in this matter because he recently discovered that several of his distant ancestral relatives were among the missing. Octavio tells the characters that a powerful wizard from the far-off land of Khemit established a human kingdom on the desolate plateau roughly 2,000 years ago. After a short period of prosperity, the kingdom suddenly and violently collapsed without any credible explanation. He offers the characters a rare Khemitian religious relic, a golden statue of a reed boat worth 900 gp in exchange for their assistance in his investigation.

Full Verse

Most dwarves take little interest in poetry, but Gromm Nethervein (CG male hill dwarf **noble**) is a rare exception. The effervescent dwarf boasts an impressive collection of rare poetry books, yet there is one seminal volume missing from his stacks: "*The Lamentations of a Broken Man*" by the legendary poet Suqri. Gromm is nearly certain that the coveted work still rests on the Library of Arcady's ancient shelves, and he is more than happy to pay adventurers the sum of 1,000 gp to retrieve the priceless verses for him. If the characters fail to locate Suqri's illustrious poems, Gromm offers to pay them 500 gp for the effort, provided of course that

they can prove that they actually visited the library by acquiring some other equally rare written work.

Stoneheart Mountains

The adventure's opening foray takes the characters on a potentially epic journey through the inhospitable mountains. Among the peaks temperatures are cold except for a brief period of warmer weather around midsummer, and winter can be brutally frigid. Precipitation is an uncommon occurrence in the summer, but Nature makes up for its lost opportunities in the other seasons by deluging the peaks of the Stoneheart Mountains with torrents of rain from thunderstorms or blanketing the land in several feet of fresh snow from howling blizzards. The foothills around the Stoneheart Mountains receive enough moisture from rainfall and water runoff from the higher elevations to support hardy grasses and in some cases thick forests. In the valleys and saddles between the peaks where the elevation extends below the tree line, alpine forests of spruce, pine, larch, and fir. Greenery is scarce throughout the higher peaks of the Stoneheart Mountains proper due to the rocky terrain lacking any real soil layer. Some durable shrubs cling to life along with the occasional tenacious twisted pine, but otherwise the surface areas consist almost entirely of bare rocks covered in hardy lichens and other small plants often buried beneath a layer of snow and ice at the higher elevations.

The preceding terrain features and the prevailing weather conditions make travel through the rugged peaks slow at best and lethal at worst. There are no roads or even rudimentary trails, so the terrain is considered to be trackless in all locations, and slopes range from gradual to steep. More importantly, characters who seek to remain among the lower peaks and draws when moving through these areas do not reach heights exceeding 5,000 feet above sea level, so the altitude has no physiological effects on living creatures.

If the characters attempt to climb among the higher peaks, they ascend at a sharp rate, thus the area is treated as a steep slope. In addition, there is a 20% chance per day that the characters also encounter scree while moving through the area. The most daunting obstacle is the altitude. The summits of these formidable mountains tower 3d4 x 1,000 feet above sea level. Creatures that are not acclimated to high altitude must succeed on a DC 10 Constitution saving throw every hour that they spend traveling above 5,000 feet or gain a level of exhaustion. Additionally, travel at this altitude is extremely taxing for those not acclimated to it. Characters will only be able to travel for 4 hours at a time before they must rest. If they push on beyond 4 hours, the DC of the saving throw increases by 2 for every hour the party continues (DC 12 for the fifth hour, and so on). As usual, completing a long rest will remove a single level of exhaustion. It is important to note that creatures found in these heights are considered native to the area and acclimated to the high altitude. This includes the indigenous mountain dwarves. Likewise, other creatures that live at this altitude for at least a month straight can become acclimated but until then are subject to the effects and exhaustion.

Reaching the Feirgotha Plateau is not a simple task. The peaks that make up the boundary between the Stoneheart Mountains and the Feirgotha Plateau loom large and serve to fend off unwanted trespassers. These fearsome mountains are not only treated as steep slopes that ascend above 5,000 feet in altitude, but they also contain terrifying cliffs and rock walls coated with thick sheets of ice. On average, they reach a staggering height of 5,000 feet plus 2d4 x 1,000 feet. The cliffs in these regions are typically 2d6 x 10 feet tall, whereas the rock walls are 2d4 x 10 feet tall. For the sake of simplicity, characters attempting to scale the mountains in this area encounter a cliff every 3d6 x 100 feet that they travel through this terrain. Likewise, they encounter a rock wall every 1d4 x 1,000 feet that they travel. It would normally require a successful DC 10 Strength (Athletics) check to ascend a cliff, and a successful DC 15 Strength (Athletics) to ascend a rock wall. However, the ice covering these surfaces increases the difficulty of both checks by 5, to DC 15 and DC 20, respectively. Characters that encounter one of the preceding natural barriers must either successfully negotiate it or turn back and try their luck at another location 3d6 x 1000 feet away.

Mountain High-Ways

Though the Great Mountain Clans of the Stonehearts are often at odds with each other and frequently even involved in small-scale armed conflicts, this wasn't always the case. In far olden days before the coming of the Hyperboreans, the mountain clans were united under a single dwarven king. Even after the fracturing that occurred following the Great Betrayal at Hummaemidon peace and unification was achieved at times, most notably through the efforts of King Kroma at the Battle of Tsar three centuries ago. Constructed from these older times when greater harmony existed among the mountain clans, the dwarves constructed secret "high-ways" among the mountain peaks. These were precarious roads and trails that twisted among peaks, over saddles, and through valleys to connect the clan peaks of one of the Great Clans with those of another. The highways were by no means safe or easy paths (though to the hardy mountaineers of the Great Clans, they seemed convenient enough), but they were certainly easier and safer than scaling cliffs and valleys among the trackless peaks. These high-ways also sometimes connected individual citadels and thaneholds within the clan peaks of a single clan, but more often than not these were connected by more easily guarded "low-ways", a series of strategically placed tunnels that burrow through and beneath intervening mountains and create trails among the thick foliage of the lower peaks to provide more secure paths within a hold that are safer from the prying eyes of enemies and predators.

The most obvious high-way between the clan peaks of Flaencragh and old Krazzadak stretches between the southern portion of the Feirgotha Plateau and the northern tip of the Shengotha Plateau. However, since the coming of the Ice Mage and the destruction of the Krazzadak holdings upon what is now the Ice Plateau, this simpler route has long been abandoned in favor of the high-ways that extend along the western side of the Ice Plateau all the way down to Krazzadak clan peaks around the headwaters of the River Eamon and beyond. It is this route that mountain dwarf characters will likely take if starting in Miner's Refuge.

Mountain dwarves of the Great Clan in any given area are already aware of the location of his own clan's high-ways. Mountain dwarves of another Great Clan can locate another clan's high-ways with 1d3 days of searching in a given area where such a high-way exists. The dwarf may make a DC 10 Intelligence (Investigation) check, and for every 5 by which the check exceeds the DC, the search time is reduced by 1 day. If the search time is reduced below 1 day, then the search requires only 1d6 hours to locate a suitable high-way. For races other than mountain dwarves, locating a suitable high-way requires a DC 18 Intelligence (Investigation) check and a minimum of 1d6+3 days. If the individual has been on this particular high-way before, then the length of time to search is reduced by 1 for each 2 by which the check exceeds 18 but can never be reduced to less than a full day of searching.

Once a suitable high-way has been found, a mountain dwarf can follow the winding and treacherous hidden trail with no problem. All other races must make a successful DC 15 Wisdom (Survival) check each day or lose the hidden track. It takes 2d12 hours for these races to realize they have lost the trail, and they must backtrack the same amount of time and make a new DC 15 Wisdom (Survival) check to find the high-way again.

High-ways remain above the 5,000-foot elevation along their entire length, so hazards and conditions above these altitudes apply as normal as described above. If a mountain dwarf is using the high-way, it is considered a road or trail and allows three-quarter speed. For other races that do not at least have the benefit of a mountain dwarf guide, it is considered trackless allowing only one-half speed but at least without the burden of having to contend with the difficulties of scree fields or scaling cliffs and peaks.

If ascending from the Gulf of Akados lowlands, the Southern Pass grants access to the Feirgotha Plateau without having to overcome the steep slopes, icy cliffs, and rock walls found throughout the uncharted mountains abutting the frigid plains. For the purposes of determining the characters' speed, the Southern Pass is treated as a road. Creatures that remain in the pass move at three-quarters their normal speed instead of half their normal speed as in the case of traversing through trackless terrain. The Southern Pass ascends at a gradual slope throughout its climb up to the Feirgotha Plateau. Creatures that use the Southern Pass are still subject to the effects of high altitude once they reach a height greater than 5,000 feet.

In the end, the trek through the Stoneheart Mountains is intended to serve as a prelude rather than the adventure's focal point. The following sections present a handful of unusual events, some combat encounters and several clues about what lies ahead of them on the Feirgotha Plateau and within the Library of Arcady. These activities are likely enough to satisfy the characters' craving for action and prevent the characters from feeling bogged down by the repetition of an endless trip through harsh wilderness. Spending several weeks moving through the bleak, mostly uninhabited landscape can quickly become an exercise in tedium if mishandled.

Events in the Stonehearts

The southern Stoneheart Mountains are a sparsely populated, inhospitable landscape, but they are not devoid of life and adventure. You may insert some or all of the following events to break the monotony of traveling through the rough terrain. In addition to testing the characters' combat mettle, these events may also challenge their moral and ethical codes.

Salvagers

Durden Stoneshifter, Kruuz Gemblaster, and Zern Hammerstroke (N male mountain dwarf **commoners**) salvage scrap metal and spare parts from ruined settlements throughout the Stoneheart Mountains. The hardy mountain dwarves eke out a meager existence in their line of work and are currently looking for an opportunity to ply their trade somewhere within the immediate vicinity. If the characters direct them to a prospective location such as the nearby lair of a slain monster, the normally sullen dwarves instantly perk up and engage them in conversation. They relay that they occasionally venture to the Feirgotha Plateau, but they refuse to go anywhere near the only worthwhile site nearby on the frigid plains — the Library of Arcady. Kruuz was the only member of the group to summon enough courage to even see the building, but the sight of shambling corpses wandering around the building's perimeter sent him into a full retreat.

Dwarven Deserter

A young, exhausted dwarf, Hlaavor Bloodstone (CE male mountain dwarf **veteran**) catches his breath while resting against some rocks. He claims that an unknown monster attacked him and his fellow miners a few hours ago. He has been on the run ever since. Hlaavor describes the beast as a sleek, fast-moving quadruped made from earth and stone. His account of the combat is extremely vague, as are his directions to the alleged mine, which he claims is 3 miles east of his current position. In actuality, the young dwarf deserted his post at Burvaadun. Fortunately for him, he is a more-accomplished liar than a soldier. Hlaavor comes from a prominent family in the Clan Craenog, and his assignment to the remote military installation resulted from several indiscretions that brought great embarrassment to his relatives. If the characters see through his deception, he admits to his cowardice and offers to accompany the characters back to Burvaadun in exchange for their silence about his desertion. He tells the characters that skeletons and zombies attacked the garrison every night for an entire week before he fled. The undead monstrosities seemed to be acting under directions, as they always swarmed around one or two individuals rather than attacking en masse. Hlaavor deserted in the early morning hours after the garrison commander fell. When he returns, he tells his superiors that he abandoned his post to seek aid from a band of adventurers that he heard were in the region. The acting garrison commander is too fearful of the Bloodstones' influence to take any

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direct action against Hlaavor other than confine him to the prison until reinforcements arrive.

Mountain Music

Minstrel Flintspark (NG male mountain dwarf **minstrel**) (see **Appendix A**) is exactly what his name suggests — a traveling performer. The eccentric male dwarf constantly smashes rocks against each other in his never-ending quest to duplicate musical notes and create fresh, new sounds. The jovial fellow tells the characters that he is on his way to the Eamonvale, where he believes that his unique blend of music and showmanship would find a better audience than with his dour kin in Erod Flan. Never one to pass up the opportunity to play to a captive audience, Minstrel indulges the characters with an ancient song that he claims dates back to the heyday of the Arcady Kingdom:

*“Kings and dragons covet gold,
Minstrels sing of tales old,
Fools rule from atop their hoard
Blind to all that they ignored.
Too late they learn the awful truth
That riches fade just like their youth;
Yet there is treasure that endures
Ideas, thoughts, and precious words.”*

The talented singer claims that the song is intended to mean knowledge lasts forever, whereas tangible goods eventually turn to dust. He believes that it is a tribute to the Library of Arcady, though he cannot say that with any degree of certainty.

Lost Guard

Gascon Chartreau, a human caravan **guard**, is hopelessly lost within the lands over which the dwarves of Clan Craenog keep a close watch. While en route to the town of Miners’ Refuge, a troll attacked his caravan, slaying three of his fellow guards and scattering the remaining survivors. The young and obviously scared man barely escaped and ran for his life. The novice outdoorsman could not regain his bearing as he wandered deeper into hostile territory. At this point, he has no idea where the battle against the troll took place, other than indicating that the combat took place three days ago. The frightened soldier is strongly aware of the indigenous dwarves’ hatred of his people. If the characters do not attack him on sight, he begs them to point him in the right direction back to the Eamonvale. If dwarven characters attack Gascon, he is no match for the characters in a fight, but before falling he falsely claims to be the illegitimate son of a powerful witch. Gascon utters several phrases of gibberish and then curses his dwarven assassins, claiming that they are doomed to die by the sword of the fair-haired man with nine fingers.

Rumors in the Stonehearts

Travelers are generally few and far between in the rugged Stoneheart Mountains, but the intrepid explorers that call this region home are often happy to exchange stories with others they encounter along the way. There is no need to succeed on a Diplomacy or Knowledge (local) check to gather this information. Merely conversing with willing humanoids is sufficient to grant access to 1d4 of these tales.

- The Feirgotha Plateau is largely desolate and uninhabited with the exception of some wild beasts and several herds of mountain sheep that graze upon its grasses during the slightly warmer summer months.
- Attempting to scale the icy rock walls and cliffs adjacent to the Feirgotha Plateau is extremely dangerous business. It is far better to travel a little farther and make use of the Southern Pass than risk falling to one’s death to save a few days’ travel.
- The dwarven garrison of Burvaadan stands watches over the Southern Pass and the Feirgotha Plateau. No dwarf in his right mind volunteers for this miserable detail in a remote, barren stretch of the world. Misfits, troublemakers and petty criminals make up much of the outpost’s ranks. (This rumor is partially true.)

- Thousands of years ago, a human kingdom known as Arcady instantly appeared on the desolate Feirgotha Plateau. These people built strange pyramids, worshipped foreign gods, and adorned their buildings and temples with bizarre pictographs. The kingdom collapsed into anarchy and ruin almost as suddenly as it sprang into being.

- The Kingdom of Arcady’s human subjects never died. Instead, they retreated into a great necropolis, where they were mummified and transformed into a variety of undead monsters. (This is a false rumor.)

Further Inquiries

Characters seeking detailed information about the Kingdom of Arcady, the Library of Arcady, the Feirgotha Plateau, and Burvaadan must interact with the right individuals for at least a few hours. You should exercise discretion when determining whether a particular individual is aware of the rumor. For instance, mountain dwarves know a great deal about Burvaadan and possibly the Feirgotha Plateau. They generally know nothing about Arcady, however. Under the right circumstances, characters can learn additional rumors from the locals with a successful Diplomacy or Knowledge (local) check.

It is also possible that the characters came across some of these stories and rumors during the course of their brief adventuring careers. In that case, the characters may attempt a Knowledge (history) check to recollect the tale. Of course, you are the final arbiter when determining whether the character has the prerequisite knowledge to attempt the check. For instance, a character born and raised in a distant, foreign land may know something about the Khemitite people, but he is unlikely to know specific details about the Feirgotha Plateau regardless of the check’s outcome.

Arcady

The characters may learn the following information about the Kingdom of Arcady with a successful DC 15 Intelligence (Investigation) check. Likewise, the character may also know the same information with a successful DC 15 Intelligence (History) check.

- The instantaneous arrival of a great tower and thousands of foreign troops marked Arcady’s auspicious beginning. A great archmage magically transported entire buildings, thousands of people and even a vast collection of scrolls and books from his native land onto the Feirgotha Plateau. He disappeared long ago.
- The spirits of the dead haunt the ruined Library of Arcady. Dwarven patrols always avoid the building. (This rumor is partially true.)

If the check succeeds by 5 or more, the character also learns the following information.

- The archmage commissioned the Library of Arcady along the southern edge of his borders, and he appointed Thanopsis, his most studious apprentice, to oversee its construction and serve as the institution’s head librarian.
- A horde of orcs assaulted and destroyed the Library of Arcady during the kingdom’s dying days. After a prolonged siege by the marauding invaders, the army arrived and beat back the orcs. However, Arcady collapsed shortly afterward, and Thanopsis along with hundreds of other people vanished under mysterious circumstances. (This rumor is partially true.)

Feirgotha Plateau, Clan Craenog, and Burvaadan

The characters may learn the following information about any of the preceding topics with a successful DC 15 Intelligence (Investigation) check. Likewise, the character may also know the same information with a successful DC 15 Intelligence (History) check.

- Foran Rockfeller commands the garrison of Burvaadan. He leads a force of forty soldiers who keep a vigilant watch over the Southern Pass.
- The mountain dwarves of Clan Craenog are the dominant humanoid population in the area. Their mian stronghold, Erod Flan, is 200 miles

A LITTLE KNOWLEDGE

northwest of Burvaadun. The clan hates humans, hobgoblins, and elves. They attack these enemies on sight. The dwarves that man the garrison all belong to the clan and owe their allegiance to their kin.

- The Feirgotha Plateau is cold and desolate. No humanoids other than several dwarven outposts permanently inhabit the area since the humans abandoned the area millennia ago.

If the check succeeds by 5 or more, the character also learns the following information.

- Over the course of the past several weeks, several groups of mindless undead have attacked Burvaadun, claiming the life of the garrison commander as well as half of his beleaguered force. In spite of the casualties inflicted upon their undead foes, their numbers continue to swell.

Encounters in the Stonehearts

In addition to the more benign events presented in the preceding **Events in the Stonehearts** section, wicked beasts and sinister humanoids also roam the Stoneheart Mountains in search of a fresh meal or an unfortunate victim. Depending upon the duration of the characters' journey within the Stoneheart Mountains, you may use one or more of the random encounters that follow. It is recommended that you use at least one encounter for every two days spent traveling through the Stoneheart Mountains. These combats are deliberately more difficult than conventional encounters because they are likely to be spread out over the course of several days of travel rather than compacted into a short span of time.

A Troll's Best Friends

Though the dwarves of the Stoneheart Mountains loathe humans, the entire race regardless of location, has an innate enmity for giants. In this part of the world, none of these massive humanoids is held in lower esteem than an ancient foe: the troll. These malevolent humanoids stalk the gravelly passes and higher elevations in a constant quest to eat and mete out suffering. This hungry **troll**, who refers to himself as Mangutter in his native tongue, is no exception and **2 trollhounds** (see Appendix A) accompany him on his nightly hunts. These are squat, muscular quadrupeds resembling bestial canines. Disgusting puss oozes out of weepy sores on their skin. The trio is well acclimated to life at high altitudes, so the troll and his voracious pets are typically found at the higher elevations where they can wear down their non-indigenous foes. The monsters are not equipped to sneak up on their foes, but they have keen eyesight and can detect the odor of fresh prey from quite a distance away. Once they catch a glimpse or a whiff of a potential victim, the faster trollhounds fan out to envelop their foes, whereas the giant brute charges headlong into the fray.

Tactics: Though the trio is not particularly bright, they are cunning combatants. They concentrate their melee attacks against a single opponent, flanking the hapless foe whenever possible and attempting to beat their victim to a bloody pulp before moving onto their next target. The troll and his pets fear nothing except acid and fire. If the characters wield either, the monsters flee at the first sign of adversity. Otherwise, they fight until killed, confident that they are going to simply regenerate later on and live to fight another day.

Treasure: Constantly on the move, Mangutter carries his treasures with him in a weathered leather bag. The bag contains 409 gp, 6 pearls worth 100 gp apiece, a *potion of resistance*, a handaxe, and a scrimshaw carving kit worth 75 gp.

Completely Abominable

Icy cliffs and snow-covered rock walls are not the only hazards that face adventurers who attempt to scale these sheer surfaces to reach the Feirgotha Plateau beyond the mountains. A select handful of hardy and fearsome creatures also inhabit this formidable landscape. The most legendary of these monsters is the reclusive yeti. These mighty humanoids are an extremely rare sight, even for those that dare to ascend into the heavens atop the highest peaks. Most yetis shun contact with other humanoid creatures, but these **3 yetis** (see Appendix A) do not shy away from potential prey.

Tactics: The yetis are able hunters and adept climbers. The trio uses these skills to lie in wait for their prey and then to leap down upon them. It takes a successful DC 17 Wisdom (Perception) check with disadvantage to notice the yetis, which blend into the snow almost seamlessly. In the absence of such wintry conditions, characters can instead spot the yeti with a successful DC 14 Wisdom (Perception) check. These ambush predators take up a position atop or alongside a natural barrier such as a steep slope, cliff or rock wall. As soon as the target begins its ascent, the yetis spring their trap and leap down upon their startled foes, tearing into their flesh with their jagged claws. They immediately flee, leaving their belongings behind, as soon as one of them is reduced to fewer than 10 hit points.

Treasure: Right before the ambush, the yetis dug through a soft patch of snow and concealed their treasures within that recess. In spite of their efforts to hide the disturbance, the characters can spot the telltale signs of humanoid activity with a successful DC 16 Wisdom (Perception) check. After brushing away several feet of snow, the characters discover *boots of the winterlands*, 8 chunks of unpolished quartz worth 25 gp each, and a strange piece of stone covered in hieroglyphs. The yetis found the piece near the Library of Arcady. If the characters can translate the hieroglyphs by being familiar with the Khemitite language, succeeding on a DC 15 Intelligence (History) check, or by using magical means the message reads as follows:

"The journey to knowledge begins not with a single step, but with the turn of the first page."

This further alludes to the importance of the Library of Arcady.

Scapegoat

Few places are as unforgiving as the Stoneheart Mountains. A slight deviation from a familiar trail or a patch of dense fog can render even the most seasoned traveler hopelessly lost within the treacherous landscape. For many, death serves as the merciful end of an earthly journey and the gateway to the next life. However, some unfortunate individuals remain trapped in an unnatural state between this world and the next stage of existence. Instead of dying, their wayward souls depart their mortal coil and are imprisoned within a magical receptacle dangling from the neck of its undead host, the sinister **lantern goat** (see Appendix A). The hideous creature collects these lost souls inside of a mystical iron lantern.

The evil monster typically roams in the mountain's lower elevations and the surrounding foothills in search of a lone, preferably lost, victim traveling through its domain. From a distance, the foul creature looks very similar to an ordinary goat with a lantern hanging around its neck; thus, its initial appearance rarely alarms those that cross paths with the parasitic beast. In fact, recognizing the creature for what it truly is requires the character to succeed on a DC 15 Intelligence (Religion) check. In this guise, the foul undead host innocently walks up to its unsuspecting targets and attempts to send them into a panic using the magical power stored within the fell lantern hanging from its scrawny neck, choosing one to chase in an attempt to capture his soul.

Part II: Fiergotha Plateau

After braving the journey through the Stoneheart Mountains, the characters arrive upon the cold, desolate Fiergotha Plateau. Characters who reached the plateau via the Southern Pass or the high-way and characters enlisted to aid the beleaguered dwarven defenders first arrive at the besieged garrison of Burvaadun, which is severely hampered by its crumbling infrastructure and flagging morale. Adventurers who stay the night experience the terror firsthand as Thanopsis's undead legions once again march upon the battered walls and attempt to breach the last remaining obstacle in Thanopsis's quest to reach the lowlands beyond. Characters who forego the conventional route and scale the rugged Stoneheart Mountains must still contend with the dizzying altitude and frigid weather conditions that plague the bleak landscape. In spite of nature's unbridled wrath, free-willed undead creatures and frightening beasts stalk this desolate realm.

Nature's Fury

Though the dwarves of Clan Craenog keep a watchful eye over the desolate Feirgotha Plateau, the environment itself remains its staunchest defender. The harsh climate requires specialized adaptations. The most immediate and life-threatening concern is the bitterly cold temperatures. For much of the year, temperatures remain firmly entrenched below 40° F. During the winter, overnight temperatures frequently drop below 0° F and occasionally fall below -20° F. The icy winds that swirl across the flat landscape make it feel even colder. The adventure takes place in the late months of spring when winter's grip has not yet fully loosened its hold upon the plateau, and the warmer summer months have not yet had the chance to melt away the sparse accumulation of snow and ice.

Creatures who are exposed to temperatures at or below 0° F must make a successful DC 10 Constitution saving throw for each hour they are exposed to the frigid temperatures or gain one level of exhaustion. Creatures with resistance to cold, that are properly attired in cold weather gear, or are adapted to the cold automatically succeed on the saving throw.

The effects of high altitude are a constant danger on the Feirgotha Plateau. Every location on the plateau is between 5,000 and 15,000 feet above sea level. Characters who are not indigenous to this environment or properly acclimated to these staggering heights suffer the ill effects associated with high altitude as described in the "Stoneheart Mountains" section from **Part I** of this adventure. Thunderstorms and blizzards are a rarity in the semiarid plateau. On the other hand, violent, bone-chilling winds constantly challenge explorers that brave the formidable terrain.

Burvaadun

The dwarves' remote, isolated garrison is the only permanently inhabited settlement for miles in every direction. Strategically perched atop a gentle slope, the imposing structure offers an unobstructed view of the roughly twenty-mile stretch of the Southern Pass that lies below it and several miles of visibility across the Feirgotha Plateau. Built nearly 2,000 years ago upon the foundation of an ancient Khemitian temple, the fortress is a neglected shadow of its former self. Though the dwarves of Clan Craenog openly proclaim that Burvaadun is an important defensive cog in their military plans, the truth is much different. The remote, isolated stronghold is badly underfunded and undermanned. Ambitious dwarves longing for fame and glory eagerly volunteer to serve along the clan's northern and eastern frontiers. These brave warriors savor the opportunity to smite their race's hated goblinoid and orc enemies. On the other hand, few choose to fritter their days away standing guard over a barren wasteland far from the comforts and political intrigue of Erod Flan. Instead, a handpicked leadership cadre of devout loyalists commands a garrison composed almost entirely of exiles and misfits seeking redemption rather than a unit of cohesive professional soldiers. They can still stave off a rogue monster or a band of disorganized troops, but they fare far worse against a determined, cohesive enemy.

Burvaadun is literally footsteps away from the edge of the Southern Pass. Sheer cliffs and rock walls delineate the boundary between the trail and the surrounding terrain. In fact, it is impossible to slip past the fortress without scaling or climbing down one of these treacherous, nearly vertical surfaces. While it is plausible that a solitary mountaineer could negotiate the dangerous ascent or descent, maneuvering a vehicle or transporting a heavy load across the steep landscape would be a feat fit for the gods. Even then, the daring individual would still have to elude the gaze of the sentries manning the outer walls in order to enter or escape the Feirgotha Plateau unnoticed.

In light of recent events, Burvaadun's guards display far more vigilance and attentiveness than they would have shown just weeks earlier. Stationed atop the stronghold's outer walls, four guards keep their eyes peeled on the high plains west of the garrison with an occasional glance towards the Southern Pass. Naturally, the weary sentinels rejoice at the sight of their fellow dwarves. When the characters enter Burvaadun's visual range, you may read or paraphrase the following description.

Decayed human and orc corpses along with shattered humanoid skeletons lie strewn along the ground outside of two gaping holes in a crumbling, 20-foot-high circuit wall. Four armored dwarves stand atop parapets affixed to the wall. A heavy iron gate built into the northern wall serves as the conventional point of entry into the garrison proper. The silhouette of a large, central building is slightly visible behind the wall.

Burvaadun's outer wall has stood for nearly 2,000 years. But the ravages of time and neglect have taken their toll on this testament to the dwarves' superior stonemasonry skills. The garrison's architects and engineers constructed the perimeter wall from precisely carved, interlocking stone blocks securely joined together without the need for mortar by the forces of gravity and friction. In spite of their stellar craftsmanship, freezing temperatures, wind, lack of resources, and callous indifference conspired together to undo their handiwork.

There are now three breaches in the wall — one on the eastern wall and more importantly two on the southern wall. The 8-foot-wide abscess in the eastern wall abuts a nearly vertical rock wall currently covered by a layer of solid ice. However, the two 5-foot-wide breaches in the southern wall are far more problematic as demonstrated by the eighty-four humanoid corpses and sundered skeletons littered around the area. The dead bodies show obvious signs of decay, and in most cases, the cause of their current demise — wicked lacerations from a very sharp instrument or crossbow bolts buried into their rotting flesh. No useful information is gleaned from examining the skeletons; however, a successful DC 25 Intelligence (History) check confirms that all of the human corpses are of Khemitite descent.

Naturally, the remaining dwarves are relieved to see their kin, whom they presume are part of a larger force sent to reinforce the garrison's defenses. Though it is easy to walk through the breaches and into the courtyard, Burvaadun's defenders insist that the characters pass through the main gate.

The 4 soldiers (LN male mountain dwarf **veterans**) that man the wall are clearly nervous and edgy as they open the gate for the characters and escort them into the garrison building in order for them to speak with their current leader, Thurn Rockfeller, Foran Rockfeller's younger brother. These 4 guards are part of the garrison described under **Soldiers** below, and their loss should be subtracted from that total accordingly.

You may read or paraphrase the following description of what lies behind the walls.

At least a dozen wooden statues carved into the likeness of a man cover the grounds of an expansive courtyard. The telltale marks of axes rip into the sides of these combat training dummies. In spite of the cool temperatures, broad, green leaves and stems arranged into neat rows protrude from the nearly frozen soil. Likewise, ten sheep mill about inside a fenced enclosure, as they feed upon brown stalks that emerge from the snow-covered ground. The garrison's centerpiece is a large stone structure that stands 25 feet high and occupies nearly half of the area behind the walls. Two bronze statues of armored dwarf warriors flank the entrance into the ancient stone keep.

Though the characters' arrival buoys the sagging morale of Burvaadun's defenders, even the most casual observer cannot help but noticing the residents' glum facial expressions and defeated body language. Four dwarves accompany the characters and lead them into the central building to meet with the garrison's current commander. One of the dwarves raps several times on a heavy wooden door before he throws it open. The portal grants access to an ancient audience chamber. Intricate wooden carvings of dwarven faces adorn the walls and sundered waraxes are affixed to the ceiling. A haggard, middle-aged dwarf seated behind a desk feverishly scratches words onto a piece of vellum.

Thurn Rockfeller

Unlike most of Burvaadun's inhabitants, the steadfastly loyal Thurn Rockfeller (LN male mountain dwarf **captain**) (see **Appendix A**) gladly stepped forward and lent his warhammer and mind to his family's cause. Unfortunately for the current situation, his acumen with the latter outweighs his prowess with the former. Thurn grew up in the imposing shadow of his confident older brother, Foran, who consistently outperformed his younger sibling in warfare and politics. The cerebral Thurn never coveted an opportunity to lead his kin into battle or outmaneuver his rivals to attain a position of authority within the clan. Instead, he prefers to advise others rather than make the decisions himself. He functioned admirably in this role during his brother's tenure as the garrison commander; however, it is grossly apparent that the consummate second-in-command lacks his brother's decisiveness and charisma.

Thurn occupies his time writing letters begging his clan's leaders to send aid to his exhausted garrison. Unfortunately, there are no dwarves available to deliver this correspondence, just as there are no skilled artisans to repair the gaping holes in the outer wall. The characters' sudden arrival is enough to momentarily lift Thurn's spirits and distract him from the current task at hand.

Thurn gives the characters a rousing welcome, for he falsely believes that they are the vanguard for a much-larger relief force. If the characters tell him that there are no other reinforcements on their way, the dwarf's giddy attitude deflates to cautious optimism. In spite of his reluctance to lead his fragile soldiers into battle, Thurn is still an adequate commander and an excellent source of information about the recent attacks and the Feirgotha Plateau. The characters' conversation with Thurn, if they choose to speak with him, reveals the following information. There is no need to succeed on Charisma (Persuasion) or Intelligence (Investigation) checks, as Thurn willingly relays the subsequent details without any prodding, though the characters should ask questions to obtain the following information. Thurn will only volunteer those items that the characters fail to ask about.

- The attacks began several weeks ago and progressively grew stronger with each passing evening. At first, the garrison fended off the small assaults with little difficulty, however, the enemy's sheer numbers started to take their toll. On average, a mixed force of fifteen to thirty human and orc zombies along with assorted skeletons attack Burvaadun during the overnight hours.
- A horde of zombies and skeletons killed his brother Foran 2 weeks earlier. The mindless, undead minions purposefully surrounded the garrison's commander in an act that suggested they were acting under the directions of a more-intelligent creature.
- The nightly assaults has claimed the lives of Foran and 18 soldiers so far, which leaves the garrison at half of its original strength. In addition to those killed, Foran also dispatched Thurn's son, Voorn to enlist aid to the beleaguered garrison. If pressed, Thurn reluctantly admits that three young dwarves deserted the garrison, including Hlaavor Bloodstone (see the **Events in the Stonehearts** section in **Part I** for more details regarding Thurn's reaction toward the deserter).
- The garrison now lacks the manpower to patrol the surrounding area. Though his soldiers rarely encountered anyone other than an occasional renegade human or small orc expeditionary force, Burvaadun's troops always stayed away from the Library of Arcady. They believed that it is haunted, and Thurn suspects that the animated corpses came from the ancient structure. He reached this conclusion based upon the facts that the undead monsters' tracks always lead in that general direction and that the long-forgotten battleground is a plentiful source of dead bodies.

Thurn is grateful for whatever assistance the characters can provide to his shell-shocked soldiers. If the characters arrive later in the day, he implores them to remain at the garrison that evening and help his men fend off tonight's assault. Otherwise, he believes that someone or something at the Library of Arcady is responsible for animating the dead and coordinating the attacks. He implores the adventurers to travel to the Library of Arcady and eradicate the creature or creatures directing the assaults before the garrison faces certain doom. He cannot offer the characters any monetary reward now, but he pledges to relay their tale of heroism and bravery to the clan's leadership in Erod Flan. He also invites

them to speak with Varus Broadshield, the resident cleric of Dwerfater, and his soldiers, if necessary.

Varus Broadshield

While Thurn may feel overwhelmed, Varus Broadshield (LG male mountain dwarf **priest** of Dwerfater) truly is. The cleric's faith hangs by a thread, as he has spent the better part of 3 weeks burying the dead and tirelessly tending to the living's spiritual needs and physical injuries. Varus's healing potions are completely gone. He exhausts his daily allotment of spells as soon as he regains them, and he wavers in his belief that his patron deity cares about him and his followers. The garrison's Temple of Dwerfater resembles a triage unit more than a place of worship. Three weak and gravely injured dwarves lie on the hard, stone floor. The masks of pain etched unto their chiseled faces and an occasional prolonged groan attests to the brave recruits' suffering.

Given their present circumstances, actions speak much louder than words. If the characters assist in aiding the dwarves in his care, Varus reciprocates by helping the characters in any way possible. On the other hand, Varus turns his back on characters who ignore the plight of those under his care. He blames Clan Craenog for the current state of affairs. Unlike the measured and diplomatic Thurn, Varus lambasts the clan's leadership for habitually starving Burvaadun of resources and using the remote outpost as a dumping ground for rejects and ne'er-do-wells. He asserts that the undead legions would not be a problem if Burvaadun were staffed to its full capacity with capable soldiers and the necessary infrastructure. With these criticisms aside, Dwerfater's cleric is aware of the same information that Thurn knows, with one important addition.

The Khemitites, the library's builders, were obsessed with the afterlife. Those unwilling to pass onto the next world were sometimes transformed into undead monstrosities. Mummification was also a common practice, and it was not uncommon for the dead to arise from their coffins and terrorize the living. He cannot explain why such a creature would remain dormant for so long, but he is convinced that a vestige from Arcady's heyday directs the recent attacks against Burvaadun for some unknown purpose.

Soldiers

Culled from the ranks of miners and other commoners with little formal military training, this motley army has surprisingly outperformed its meager expectations. At its peak, 40 dwarves manned the walls and patrolled the garrison's perimeter. Deaths, desertions, and injuries whittled the force down to a mere 5 conscripts (LN male mountain dwarf **guards**) and 11 seasoned soldiers (LN male mountain dwarf **veterans**). Because the attacks occur exclusively at night, the exhausted soldiers sleep in six-hour shifts during the day. They affirm that their patrols always stayed away from the haunted Library of Arcady, though with a little coaxing in the form of a successful DC 10 Charisma (Persuasion) check, a few of Burvaadun's soldiers admit that they approached the supposedly deserted site on several occasions. They never saw any signs of life during these rare excursions. Even from a distance, however, frozen human and orc corpses were visible throughout the seemingly abandoned location. In addition, the building itself still stands with no visible signs of damage. Of course, no one ventured close enough to the Library of Arcady to confirm that it is deserted. Burvaadun's soldiers have no other useful information. It is important to note that all of Burvaadun's soldiers do not share the same statistics as noted in the subsequent entries.

Undead Attack

Naturally, the worried defenders ask the newly arrived reinforcements to fight beside them and repel the undead horde expected to appear during the overnight hours. This combat is not intended to severely challenge the characters, as the substantially weaker lesser undead are not a serious threat to highly skilled opponents. Rather, this combat gives the characters an opportunity to offer the dwarves hope and rebuild their shattered morale. After this encounter, it becomes apparent that the true danger lies farther west in the suddenly rejuvenated Library of Arcady.

On this particular night, Thanopsis dispatches a fresh legion of 14 **zombies** and 8 **skeletons** to Burvaadun. The attack occurs 2d4 hours after sunset. The zombies and skeletons approach the stronghold from

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the northwest and immediately proceed toward the breaches in the south wall. The garrison counters by positioning 6 crossbowmen on the parapets along with any characters who volunteer for the duty. The remaining 10 soldiers fill the breaches in the southern wall. Thurn coordinates the defense from the top of the parapet, directing his soldiers to hold their fire until the undead minions come within 300 feet of the wall.

Tactics: The characters are free to operate in conjunction with Burvaadun's defenders or independent of them. If the characters opt for the latter, you can shape the battle in accordance with the characters' actions. Characters that choose to meet the zombies and skeletons on the open field do so alone, as the garrison's soldiers remain behind the walls. In this case, the combat proceeds normally with the characters singlehandedly battling against Thanopsis's mindless minions. On the other hand, you must make some adjustments for characters fighting alongside their dwarven counterparts. As a general rule, the zombies and skeletons concentrate their attacks against a handful of individuals rather than spreading out over a wide area and fighting multiple enemies. By surrounding one or two dwarves, the enemy is more likely to kill their target than if they split up and attacked larger groups. The undead monsters indiscriminately encircle the closest defenders, whether that is a character or one of the dwarven soldiers. The zombies and skeletons always fight until destroyed.

Development: What the characters and Burvaadun's defenders do not know is that Thanopsis observes the battle from afar using a *scrying* spell. The adventurers' appearance and intervention greatly concerns the undead wizard, prompting him to respond to the impending crisis by taking the actions outlined in **Part III** of the adventure.

Path of Knowledge

Any tenderfoot can follow the legion's tracks through the packed snow and back to their starting point with a successful DC 5 Wisdom (Survival) check. A character can locate, but not follow the tracks with a successful DC 5 Wisdom (Perception) check. The Library of Arcady lies 10 miles northwest of Burvaadun.

Roads Untraveled

Characters that scale the sheer cliffs and icy rocky walls barring passage to the Feirgotha Plateau may skip traveling to Burvaadun altogether. Under these circumstances, the characters cannot follow any well-worn trails to the Library of Arcady; therefore, they must locate the ancient site through other means. Landmarks are extremely few and far between, but a character who succeeds on a DC 15 Intelligence check can direct his fellow adventurers to the presumably abandoned complex.

It is recommended that you grant the character an appropriate modifier to the preceding check based upon the character's familiarity with the region. A dwarf character that has been to the Feirgotha Plateau before could be allowed to add their proficiency bonus to this check, whereas a mountain dwarf indigenous to the area would have advantage on his Intelligence check. Likewise, a character with just passing knowledge of the area would attempt the check unmodified, while a character with absolutely no familiarity with the area would make the check with disadvantage. Getting lost on the Feirgotha Plateau for an extended time can be an adventure in itself, as the bone-chilling temperatures and icy winds take an extreme toll on even the hardest humanoids.

Pyramid of Thanopsis

No building is more closely associated with Khemitian civilization than the iconic pyramid. Made from enormous blocks of limestone, the outwardly simple structure serves as a source of wonder for the average citizen and an eternal residence for the individual entombed inside its walls. Thanopsis commissioned the pyramid's construction shortly after his arrival on the remote site. Unlike his older self, the pragmatic wizard did not fear death and looked forward to the afterlife — especially one safe from tomb robbers. While teams of laborers toiled to erect his impressive pyramid, a handful of trusted engineers and artisans secretly worked belowground to construct his subterranean tomb located directly beneath the apex of the aboveground structure. Naturally, the practical and notoriously cheap Thanopsis did not want to waste precious time, money, and resources building an opulent decoy, so he instructed his

architects to cut costs wherever practical. In the end, they compromised structural integrity for outward appearance. Under normal circumstances, the tradeoff would go completely unnoticed. However, Thanopsis's decision sealed the pyramid's fate. Years of weathering and winter storms finally caused the Pyramid of Thanopsis to collapse into a massive heap of shattered stones.

The pyramid that once soared nearly 100 feet into the sky is now a 15-foot-high pile of rubble covered in a thick layer of ice and snow. The gently sloping mound encompasses a 20,000-square-foot area and is visible from 1,000 feet away. You may read or paraphrase the following description of the razed site.

An extremely broad, gently sloped snow-covered mound rises above the flat terrain surrounding it. Several jagged pieces of stone pierce the white tapestry.

After brushing away the outer coating of snow and ice, the characters discover that the massive blocks that made up the pyramid's outer walls shattered into numerous smaller pieces when the building collapsed. A character who succeeds on a DC 10 Intelligence check determines that a pyramid once stood on this site based upon the stones' shape and their alignment. In addition, the volume of stone found here is surprisingly smaller than expected considering the size of the perimeter. A successful DC 15 Intelligence check reveals the answer. The structure's builders used refuse, garbage, construction debris, and sand to fill the structure's interior, a fact that also leads the character to conclude that the pyramid was hollow and did not serve as a burial vault.

It takes a successful DC 15 Intelligence (Religion) check to determine that the Khemitite people entombed only the most powerful and influential people inside of their pyramids along with their material wealth. The dwarves of the Stoneheart Mountains know virtually nothing about this archaic human culture and religion, therefore, they have disadvantage on both of these checks. In the end, digging through the stones proves to be an exercise in futility that uncovers no treasure and reveals no greater insight about the Pyramid of Thanopsis.

Encounters

The dwarves keep a vigilant eye over the Feirgotha Plateau especially for their hated human adversaries, yet even their keen vision cannot see everything. There are no permanent humanoid settlements in the southern reaches of the plateau, but the desolate wasteland is not entirely uninhabited. As the characters travel on their way to the Library of Arcady, the characters may randomly stumble upon these rare creatures. You may use the mountain hazards that appear in **Appendix B** or create random encounters to challenge your players as they travel.

Part III: Library of Arcady

The harrowing trek across the Stoneheart Mountains and the Feirgotha Plateau culminates in the characters' arrival at the fabled Library of Arcady. Though the surrounding Khemitian structures collapsed into ruins over the passing centuries, the legendary repository of knowledge still endures thanks to its resident wizard. Contrary to what the dwarves believe, the ancient building is far from being abandoned or destroyed. Vile undead minions and servitor constructs patrol the grounds and protect their master from harm. In addition to Thanopsis's servants, the living and undead relics of a bygone era also lurk in the library's neglected corners and sealed chambers, waiting to pounce on unwitting trespassers who disturb their rest. As the characters descend deeper into the earth, the magnitude and horror of Thanopsis's crimes evidenced by the numerous youthful corpses in his frozen vault becomes apparent. To finally break the millennia old cycle of evil, the characters realize that they must introduce Thanopsis to his greatest fear — his own death.

Approach to the Library

Scholars and residents alike interchangeably use the term Library of Arcady to describe the structure itself as well as the complex and settlement surrounding it. At the zenith of its influence, the library functioned as the centerpiece of a vibrant community where several thousand artisans, servants, visiting scholars and influential citizens dwelt year-round. These people needed places to live and ancillary services. Sprawling residential areas, temples, markets, and public works soon sprang up around the library, encompassing an area of approximately one square mile around the central building. Unfortunately, the kingdom's sudden collapse 2,000 years ago and the subsequent mass exodus ensured the complex's eventual demise. By the end of the following century, the once-grandiose pyramids, stelae, and monuments fell into ruin. Most of their crumbled foundations lie beneath a layer of ice and snow. Massive cornerstones and half-buried ruined walls are the only visible remnants of a lost community that once surrounded the library complex itself.

The Library of Arcady rests atop a slight elevation overlooking the flat expanses of the southern Feirgotha Plateau. This geographical feature allows the characters to see the outline of the immense building as well as the rubble surrounding it from a distance of 1,000 feet away. When the characters first see the library, you may read or paraphrase the following description.

Large blocks of stone and vertical monuments covered in layers of ice and snow are spread throughout the area surrounding an immense, 25-foot-high stone structure consisting of a central building and two adjoining wings with steeply pitched, ice-slicked roofs. An open courtyard featuring a marble fountain and numerous small gardens overgrown with hardy plants occupies the space in front of the main structure and between the opposing annexes. The only visible entrance is a stone door in front of the main building. Two limestone statues of a muscular man with the head of an ibis flank the stairs leading up to the limestone portal.

If the characters arrive at the library while Thanopsis's undead warriors are away in battle at Burvaadun, the library is surprisingly undefended. Shortly after their destruction, Thanopsis immediately replaces his fallen minions. He raises a force of 12 **skeletons** and 12 **zombies** to defend the library. They form in area **L1**, where they wait quietly and occasionally wander around the building's perimeter. The mindless skeletons and zombies attack living creatures on sight.

As discussed in **Part II** of the adventure, Thanopsis becomes extremely worried if his *scrying* sees unfamiliar faces, especially those wielding magic, fighting alongside the garrison's defenders. If this occurs, the troubled wizard calls upon his two former protégés who now serve him in death. Shortly after the library's fall, Thanopsis transformed these unfortunate souls into 2 **spellgorged zombies**. Though visually indistinguishable from normal zombies, Thanopsis programmed these creatures to unleash their arsenal of spells against any living humanoids they encounter. Each is armed with a *lightning bolt* and *scorching ray* spell that they use against the closest enemy when they are encountered.

The source of these undead is apparent. Characters who succeed on a DC 7 Wisdom (Perception) check notice unusual, protruding contours in the snow around the library as well as the glint of steel above the icy surface. An examination of these areas reveals a humanoid corpse beneath the surface. Fallen orc warriors from the ancient siege account for 60% of these bodies, whereas the human defenders make up another 35% of these individuals, and slain mounts constitute the remaining 5% balance. There are 204 of these bodies scattered in a 1-mile-radius around the Library of Arcady. Despite the currently frigid temperatures, they are either skeletal remains or badly decomposed cadavers. Two thousand years of exposure to the elements rendered their equipment useless and the epic battle's survivors looted their valuables countless centuries ago. In addition, a character who succeeded on the preceding Wisdom (Perception) check also notices more than 200 hollows in the ice and snow. Astute characters figure out that the gouges were made when the bodies were disinterred

from their previous resting place. The overwhelming majority of these holes were made within the last few weeks as Thanopsis scavenged the grounds around the library for more corpses to animate in his battle against Burvaadun.

The resident wizard's salvage operations do not extend to the rubble and debris that surrounds his beloved library. The remains of the buildings' razed foundations sit beneath several feet of ice and snow, yet there are still several pieces of useful material and intact objects from Arcady's golden era scattered outside the premises. The most notable of these objects are the four obelisks that surround the library itself. Hieroglyphs once covered these 20-foot-high limestone monoliths, but the constant barrage of wind, ice and snow erased the pictographs from all of the obelisks except for the one near the northeastern corner of the building. You may read or paraphrase the following description.

Strange runes and pictures are carved into the face of a 20-foot-high limestone stela, worn and pitted with wind and age.

The message is written in Khemitian and states: *"He who thirsts for knowledge, let him drink from my waters. He who enters with an open mind, let ideas fill every corner of his being. For I am Thoth, divine guardian of this repository and patron of learning."*

While self-evident in the message, a successful DC 12 Intelligence (Religion) check confirms that Thoth is the Pharonic god of knowledge and magic still often worshipped in far Khemit. Dwarves unfamiliar with this human faith would have disadvantage on the preceding check.

Entering the Library

There are three conventional ways to enter the library. The most obvious and direct route is through the heavy stone door that opens into the main building that is accessible through area **L1**. Less obvious are the rock crystal skylights built onto the roofs of both annexes. During the library's operation, these openings allowed natural light to illuminate the rooms beneath them. Now, 2d4 inches of packed snow cover them. Still, it is possible to spot the crystal partitions with a successful DC 15 Wisdom (Perception) check, modified, of course, by the distance between the observer and the skylight. Getting onto the 20-foot-high roof requires a successful DC 18 Strength (Athletics) check or a suitable alternate means such as *levitate* or *fly*. (The base of the roof is 20 feet high, but the apex of the slanted roof is 25 feet high as mentioned in the structure's initial description.) In addition, the roof's 30-degree slope and the accumulated ice and snow require the character to succeed on a DC 7 Dexterity (Acrobatics) check to maintain his balance while moving across the slick surface. A character that fails the check slides off the roof and lands on the ground, taking 2d6 points of falling damage. Otherwise, the character can brush away the packed snow and shatter the opaque rock crystal to gain access to either area **L11** or area **L13** beneath the window.

Library Features

The library is a classic example of Khemitian architecture. All outer and interior walls, floors, and ceilings are constructed from worked granite quarried from the nearby mountains. The ceiling height is 20 feet along the perimeter of the exterior walls and 25 feet at its highest point. Archways reach a height of 15 feet at their apex. The stone doors are surprisingly well maintained, allowing characters to open unlocked portals without exerting any effort. Doors that are stuck, locked, or barred are noted in the room description. In an effort to reduce the possibility of a catastrophic fire, Thanopsis spent the better part of a year casting *continual flame* spells on 40 agate stones that he later embedded into the ceilings, safely illuminating the entire complex in warm light. The only exceptions are in area **L11** and parts of area **L13**, which were lit by sunlight pouring through the skylights built into the ceiling. These two locations are now dark.

Random Encounters

Most of the library's denizens are bound to their particular areas in accordance with Thanopsis's instructions or because of the circumstances surrounding their creation. There is one noteworthy exception. Shortly after Arcady's demise, Thanopsis created 4 **flesh golems** to maintain the library. He modeled these constructs into the likeness of an idealized Khemitite scholar rather than after a specific individual. Nevertheless, after several months they acquired sentience and became convinced that they are actual librarians. These creatures roam the complex in pairs, though one pair remains in the west annex at all times. While traveling through the main building and the eastern annex, there is a non-cumulative 25% chance of encountering these creatures for every 10 minutes spent in these areas. The chances of encountering them increase to 50% while venturing through the western annex. They never go outside.

The flesh golems encountered in the main building and eastern annex are not immediately hostile and approach the party asking if they require any assistance. They are generally helpful, directing the characters in accordance with their wishes. However, they provide no information about Thanopsis and do not lead the characters toward the western annex. They immediately attack the adventurers if they triggered the magical trap in area L7. Likewise, they attack on sight characters wandering through the western annex.

L1. Courtyard

The withered and frozen husks of numerous plants remain firmly embedded in the hardened soil within enormous garden boxes bordered by 4-foot-high stone walls. Large, circular flagstones create paths and walkways among the garden boxes. Despite the snow cover, most of these decorative pieces are still visible. An immense limestone fountain occupies a significant portion of the central courtyard. Snow and oddly shaped icicles cover a statue of a remarkably tall man that stands on an elevated platform in the center of the fountain, which is filled with a solid block of ice. Farther ahead, two limestone statues of a man with an ibis head flank a stone staircase that leads to a heavy stone door.

The grand courtyard is a far cry from its former self. The breathtaking flowers and exotic plants that thrived in its gardens are dead, brittle stalks of frozen organic matter. The flagstones spread throughout the compound also have seen better days, as neglect, erosion, and the harsh climate cracked most of the polished stones and erased the images sculpted onto them. It takes a successful DC 15 Wisdom (Perception) check to notice that intricate carvings once detailed the face of these sett stones. Even with a successful check, it is impossible to determine what image originally appeared on the stone.

Unlike the paving stones, the two limestone statues depicting the Pharonic god Thoth are still in remarkably good condition. It takes a successful DC 12 Intelligence (Religion) check to confirm the statues' identity as a patron of Khemit. Dwarves unfamiliar with this human religion should make this check with disadvantage. Likewise, the stone staircase shows minimal signs of wear, but the stone door adjacent to it was not as fortunate. The hieroglyphics that once covered the portal's surface are faded in many spots. It takes a successful DC 15 Intelligence (Investigation) check to read the entire message, which is written in Khemitian. The message on the door says, *"May wisdom guide you; may knowledge enlighten you. This journey begins not with a single step but with a word and an idea."*

In addition to the undead guardians, the frozen statue in the fountain is Thanopsis's most-vigilant and frightening defender. The mindless construct makes no deliberate effort to disguise its appearance; therefore, it takes a DC 5 Wisdom (Perception) check to recognize that the statue covered in ice is in fact an **ice golem** (see **Appendix A**) formed out of a solid block of frozen water. The construct immediately attacks if it is attacked or if a dwarf approaches within 60 feet of it. It releases its frigid breath weapon and then wades into melee combat, swinging its mighty, jagged icy fists at its opponents. The creature does not surrender and attacks until destroyed.

L2. Entry Hall

Intricate carvings on the walls depict men and women separating tiny pieces of plant fiber and immersing them in water. Two large archways on the east and west walls lead into adjoining antechambers. Hieroglyphics run across the frieze of both archways. The chamber then narrows and opens into a smaller archway covered in more hieroglyphics. Though lifeless, the well-preserved corpse of a creature with a lion's body, falcon wings, and a beautiful woman's head and torso sits in a semi-upright position in the center of the room.

The carvings adorning the walls depict servants making papyrus. It takes a successful DC 10 Intelligence (Nature) check to identify the plants as papyrus and recognize the technique used to make the writing material. The hieroglyphics adorning the archway's friezes provide directions to visitors in Khemitian. The writing above the east wall translates to: *"Speaking rooms and eating areas"*, whereas the writing above the west wall translates to: *"Private reading and gathering places"*. The hieroglyphics above the central archway translate to *"Main collection and administrative."* It is important to note that the phrase "private reading" can be interpreted in two different ways. Because of the subtleties in language (and the lack of comma usage in Khemitian), it is impossible for a non-Khemitite to determine if it is referring to private reading areas or if it is written as a list, meaning private areas and reading areas. In actuality, the latter interpretation is correct.

During the library's last chaotic days, the cowardly Thanopsis cajoled the library's most frequent visitors and patrons into fighting against the orcs besieging the surrounding settlement. Most gladly took up arms at the powerful wizard's behest, but the aloof sphinx, Travvok, refused. The spiteful wizard never forgot Travvok's betrayal. When she returned to peruse the library's shelves after Arcady's demise, the angry Thanopsis momentarily forgot his fear and killed the beast that had abandoned him in his darkest hour. In a deliberately ironic twist, he transformed Travvok into a **sphinx zombie** (see **Appendix A**) that guards the library today. The sphinx zombie immediately attacks any living creature other than Thanopsis that enters the west corridor or otherwise disturbs it.

L3. East Antechamber

The colorful bas-relief sculptures on the walls depict an assembly of men gathered in a large hall, and a group of human men and women feasting on roasted lamb. Two polished marble columns apparently support the ceiling overhead. The statue of a beautiful woman clad in robe still bearing the traces of light-colored paint stands beside an archway. A crown and the sun disc adorn her head.

The painted, carved images on the walls further confirm that the rooms within the annex function as lecture halls and dining areas. The two columns primarily serve as decorative pieces rather than support pieces. The statue depicts the Pharonic goddess Hathor, the patron of music and the arts. A character can ascertain this fact with a successful DC 15 Intelligence (Religion) check. Dwarves and those unfamiliar with the Khemitian pantheon make this check with disadvantage.

L4. West Antechamber

The paintings on the walls depict men and women looking at and presumably reading scrolls in small chambers as well as many of these same individuals gathered together in a larger chamber. Two fluted marble columns presumably support the ceiling overhead. A statue of a woman dressed in a panther-skin dress stands adjacent to an archway. She wears a seven-pointed crown with a pair of downward facing horns.

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The paintings on the walls suggest that the rooms within the annex function as reading rooms and meeting chambers. The two columns primarily function as decorative pieces rather than support beams. The statue depicts the Pharonic goddess Seshat, Khemit's patroness of writing, history, time, knowledge, and architecture. A character can ascertain this fact with a successful DC 15 Intelligence (Religion). Dwarves and those unfamiliar with the Khemitian pantheon make this check with disadvantage.

L5. Main Collection

An impressive statue of a muscular man with outstretched arms and an ibis head seemingly welcomes visitors to an expansive and breathtaking library. Latticed, triangular shelves built into the outside walls house thousands of bound scrolls. Some of these written works are stored in decorative cases, but a sizable majority is rolled up around a metallic or bone dowel affixed or sewn onto the top of the scroll. Hieroglyphics appear above some of these shelves as well as across the faces of six freestanding lattice works that fill most of the enormous chamber. Like the shelves attached to the perimeter walls, these pieces of furniture also feature interlocking triangular woodwork that separates and stores a substantial inventory of scrolls.

Khemitite scribes used papyrus as their exclusive writing medium. The material was abundant at the time from the shores of the lake Toh Kristael, but it unfortunately disintegrates relatively quickly in any environment other than an arid climate. Tragically, all of the scrolls that were not stored in cases stick together and crumble to pieces when unfurled or even handled. In fact, while searching through the shelves, the characters find large piles and thick layers of detritus from scrolls that already fell apart centuries earlier. The scrolls stored within the cases fared better than their unprotected counterparts. Of the 1,075 documents sealed inside of wooden, ceramic, bone, and metallic containers, 604 of them are still intact and viable.

Thanopsis was a true visionary. Instead of storing the scrolls according to size, age, or some other indiscriminate rationale, he arranged the library's contents by subject matter, dividing the collection into ten different categories as designated by the letters **A** through **J** on the map of area **L5**. This allowed the library's patrons to more easily locate the scroll they were looking for rather than sifting through hundreds and possibly thousands of works. Thanopsis could not alphabetize the scrolls, because the Arcadians used Khemitian hieroglyphics rather than a conventional alphabet. However, he devised a clever solution. He sorted the scrolls based upon the length of the hieroglyphs used for the author's name. He placed the scrolls written by the author with the shortest symbol at the top left of the rack, whereas the author with the longest symbol appeared at the opposite end of the rack. It takes a successful DC 15 Wisdom (Perception) check to figure out Thanopsis' organization system. Characters who understand the preceding method and comprehend the Khemitian language and know what they're looking for can locate a specific scroll within 1d6 minutes. Otherwise, the characters must spend 10d6 minutes and succeed on a DC 12 Intelligence (Investigation) check to find a particular item.

Library Categories

- A:** Philosophy
- B:** Atlases and Maps
- C:** Religion
- D:** Linguistics
- E:** Literature
- F:** Science and Mathematics
- G:** History
- H:** Social Sciences and the Arts
- I:** General Works
- J:** Biographies

The secret door on the east wall grants access to the arcana section. The library's architects concealed the opening mechanism behind the latticework in the freestanding shelves in area **F**.

Locating the secret door requires a successful DC 17 Wisdom (Perception) check while locating the opening mechanism requires a DC 15 Intelligence (Investigation) check. Alternatively, the door can be forced with a DC 20 Strength check.

While spending an inordinate amount of time in the library may not be a pressing concern, lingering too long browsing its shelves almost assuredly attracts the interest of the 4 **thought mists** (see **Appendix A**) that dwell within the library. Formed from the essence of an idea about to fade into oblivion, these thoroughly alien life forms dwell on the Ethereal Plane but never venture far from their birthplace. They feed on the intellect of living beings, devouring their thoughts for some unknown, malevolent purpose. For every minute spent in this room, there is a 20% chance that the thought mists manifest on the Material Plane and attack the unsuspecting trespassers. Despite their intelligence, the creatures fight as individuals and not as a cohesive unit. Once in the presence of a living mind, every thought goes by the monster's wayside except for one primeval urge — to feast on the consciousness of the living.

Treasure: Decay and time have taken their toll on the library's inventory. None of the surviving written works are in mint condition, and they are so obscure and archaic that they are worth a meager fraction of their original value. On average, the viable scrolls are worth 1d4 gp apiece with a few exceptions. If Gromm (see the **Full Verse** hook in **Part I** of the adventure) sent the characters to retrieve Suqri's "*The Lamentations of a Broken Man*," the characters fortuitously find the masterful poem sealed within a bone scroll case. It is worth 500 gp. Likewise, a character may attempt a DC 15 Intelligence (History) check to recall the names of the classical authors from this period. If the check succeeds, the character can search the shelves and locate up to six other noteworthy scrolls worth 1d4 x 100 gp each. Of course, the amount of time spent on this undertaking depends upon the character's understanding of Thanopsis's organization system as described above.

L6. Administration

Spilt black ink covers sections of the floor as well as three wooden desks spread throughout a crowded chamber. There is a small stool behind each desk and fragments of moldy papyrus and worn styluses sit atop the desks' surfaces. Two open cabinets abutting the near wall contain numerous ledger books, though the quantity of detritus on its shelves and the surrounding floor indicate that most of their contents disintegrated long ago. The same fate befell two spools of rolled papyrus flanking one of the desks as well as an unfurled scroll resting upon a table adjacent to the far wall.

Lesser librarians and scribes under Thanopsis's tutelage operated a sophisticated acquisitions and cataloging department within this bustling room. The ledgers precisely detail every scroll and document that the library attained from its inception until the Kingdom of Arcady's collapse. None of the ledgers survived intact. In most cases, the ledgers are too dry rotted to even open without causing irreparable damage. A handful of pages have endured, and the glimpse into the distant past gives additional insight about the Khemitite culture. Locating just one of these fragments among the debris takes a successful DC 16 Wisdom (Perception) check and 1d4 minutes. There is a 10% chance that the characters locate the page referring to the acquisition 2,024 years ago of Suqri's "*The Lamentations of a Broken Man*" for a payment of 50 gp. Gromm (see the **Full Verse** hook) would also be very interested in this document and is willing to pay an additional 200 gp for it. In addition, if the characters did not locate Suqri's work on the shelves, he is willing to accept this page as proof of their visit to the library.

A close examination of the desk nearest to the far wall provides some useful information. The stylus sitting atop it is worn to the base. The scribe assigned to this station carved a hidden message onto the desk's underside. Locating the hieroglyphics requires a successful DC 20 Intelligence (Investigation) check. Written in Khemitian, it cryptically says: "*Thanopsis*

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doubts Maat's feather and Ra's boat." If the character succeeds on a DC 18 Intelligence (Religion) check, the sentence mentions Thanopsis's doubts about the gods and the afterlife. As always, dwarves and those unfamiliar with the Pharonic pantheon make this check with disadvantage.

L7. Arcana Section

Musty air pours out of a tightly packed chamber. There is barely enough room to move between the latticework shelves affixed to all three walls. Rotten scrolls fill the shelves, though several scrolls sealed within ceramic and thick glass cases are interspersed among the others. The intrusion swirls up a cloud of loose papyrus fragments from the floor and the latticework.

Unlike the library's main collection, Thanopsis maintained rigid control over who entered the arcana section. To enforce his edict, he cast a protective glyph upon the floor directly underneath the portal's threshold. The *glyph of warding* triggers whenever any creature other than him enters the arcana section. A character can find the glyph with a successful DC 18 Intelligence (Investigation) check. If the glyph is triggered, it casts *symbol (sleep)* (as the spell *symbol*), and all creatures within 10 feet of the glyph must succeed on a DC 16 Wisdom saving throw or fall unconscious for 10 minutes. Creatures that fall asleep will wake if they take damage or if someone uses an action to shake or slap them awake.

This trap can be especially problematic if the thought mists from the adjoining chamber or the pair of roaming flesh golems arrive on the scene. Either group of monsters immediately attacks sleeping characters and their allies on sight.

The lack of ventilation in this small, crowded chamber exacerbated the growth of mold and other destructive organisms within the papyrus fibers. As in the main collection, none of the unprotected papyrus scrolls survived the devastation. There are 44 scrolls inside of glass or ceramic cases.

Treasure: Though the voracious fungi destroyed the majority of the papyrus scrolls within the ceramic and glass cases, 6 of them survived. If the characters cast *detect magic* in the area, all 6 scrolls radiate an aura of magic based on its contents. Otherwise, the characters must rely upon trial and error to discover the viable scrolls. Each scroll contains an individual spell. There are 6 scrolls: *acid arrow*, *burning hands*, *conjure minor elementals*, *daylight*, *enlarge/reduce*, and *fire shield*.

L8. Major Lecture Hall

An elevated platform against the far wall overlooks four rows of stone benches facing it. A central aisle bisects the seating area and stone stairs ascend to the elevated platform. Numerous images and gouges mar the stone surfaces.

Arcady's greatest orators and visiting scholars lectured audiences within this distinguished hall. In spite of the speakers' magnitude, graffiti covers the entire back of every bench and nearly every seat as well. The vast majority of writing consists of hieroglyphs containing the individual's name and a date. A successful DC 18 Wisdom (Perception) check notices one mysterious sentence scrawled in Sphinx. It reads: "*He says there is no afterlife, and nothing lies beyond this mortal world. Let him stay behind and discover the truth.*" Travvok, the sphinx from area L2 scrawled the message eons earlier, though she never specifically mentions the speaker's name.

L9. Minor Lecture Hall

An elevated platform overlooks three rows of stone benches facing it. A central aisle bisects the rows, and stone stairs ascend to the platform. A single, marble chair in each of the near corners faces the platform.

Thanopsis conducted intimate discussions in this smaller lecture hall, thus accounting for the noticeable lack of graffiti on the furniture. The two marble chairs in the hall's corners were for guests of honor. Despite appearances, the chamber is not empty. Lurking amid the benches are 2 **pipefoxes** (see **Appendix A**). The diminutive creatures used their minute size and their magical abilities to sneak past the mindless undead guardians and make their way to the lecture halls on their quest for knowledge. The creatures are naturally shy and adept at remaining out of sight as they carefully observe the characters. If the characters succeed on a Wisdom (Perception) check (versus the Dexterity (Stealth) check of the pipefoxes) and spot the cunning serpents, the pipefoxes use their spell-like abilities to vanish and relocate to a new hiding spot.

Development: If they remain undetected, the pipefoxes do not reveal their presence unless they witness one of the characters casting a spell. In that case, the magical beasts summon the courage to approach that individual and converse with him about obscure bits of knowledge. The pipefoxes interact with humanoids in a quid quo pro manner. For every bit of knowledge they impart to the characters, they expect an equal or even greater amount in return. The information can be about the library itself or something fascinating that the characters found in the library such as reading them Suqri's poetry. In return, the pipefoxes tell the characters that the entrance to the subterranean level is in the western annex. They also mention that the library's "master" seeks young humans for some unknown purpose. If questioned about the source of their information, they have firsthand knowledge of the former and they obtained the latter bit of knowledge through magical means.

Otherwise, the inherently inquisitive creatures follow the characters from a distance and observe their actions for 1d4 minutes. If the characters simply barrel through the rooms in the eastern annex without taking some time to search for clues or analyze the situation, the pipefoxes lose interest in the characters and return to this room. If the characters appear thoughtful and introspective, the pipefoxes behave as previously described. The pipefoxes are not aggressive by nature and always use their spell-like abilities to evade and avoid combat. They fight only if cornered and are left with no other choice.

Ad Hoc XP Award: Characters who gain useful information from the pipefoxes earn 1,200 XP for their efforts. Alternately, if good-aligned characters kill the pipefoxes without provocation, you may award the characters no XP for the encounter.

L10. Kitchen

Thick layers of dust and soot cover the surfaces of two stone hearths in the corners adjacent to the north wall. An immense stone firebox filled with crumbled charcoal and ash nearly spans the entire length of the south wall. Interlocking, blackened steel bars comprise a grilled cooking surface. An oversized porcelain sink with two spigots is built into an ornate wooden cabinet with numerous drawers and several cutting surfaces on top of it.

An entire team of servants feverishly worked in this kitchen during the library's operation to feed hungry scholars and visitors in the adjoining dining hall. They used the two hearths to create savory soups and stews while using the grill to roast a wide variety of native and imported meats. The equipment still functions, though it requires extensive cleaning before use. Even the sink's two faucets release a torrent of cold water into the basin that washes away down the drainpipe.

The cabinet supporting the sink has eight drawers containing an assortment of kitchenware including utensils, cutlery, cooking implements, mugs, plates, sharpening tools, spare charcoal, jars of desiccated herbs, and three crumbled scrolls that contained ancient recipes.

L11. Dining Hall

Six tables surrounded by an equal number of wooden chairs occupy most of a spacious dining hall. A much-longer, yet narrower, table surrounded by fourteen chairs is near the far wall. Dust-covered plates are scattered on the tables, and numerous shards of broken pottery and porcelain are strewn across the floor. Snow and ice are visible through the crystalline skylight that makes up much of the ceiling.

The library's visitors and employees alike left the dining hall in shambles in their haste to flee the structure and the Feirgotha Plateau after Arcady's rapid collapse. The plates on the tables have been there for 2,000 years, along with the shattered pieces. None of these items has any value or significance. The skylight on the eastern annex opens into this chamber; it is slightly more than 20 feet above the floor and slightly less than 20 feet above one of the tables. Characters that fall onto either surface take the appropriate amount of falling damage.

L12. Reading Room

A simple, wooden desk is against the far wall. A wooden chair is tucked beneath it.

Visitors who chose not to stand in the main collection area could use these small private rooms to read a scroll at their leisure. All of the reading rooms are empty except for one. A brief, cryptic note written in Common on parchment is affixed to the bottom of the desk in the northwest reading room. The partially damaged note reads: *"The librarian says he knows a ... place ... the complex. The orcs are everywhere. We cannot escape. These may be my ... words. What ... is there but ... him."* The message's missing passages in order are "safe," "underneath," "last," "choice" and "to trust." The use of parchment and Common suggests that the author was not of Khemitite descent like most of the inhabitants of Arcady, but the writer provides no further clues about his or her identity.

L13. Meeting Room

A round wooden table surrounded by six chairs rests in the center of the room. Snow and ice prevent light from entering through an opaque crystalline skylight built into the ceiling.

Scholars and ordinary citizens routinely gathered in these private meeting rooms to engage in everything from heated intellectual debates to clandestine trysts. The skylight on the library's western annex illuminates the corridor connecting these rooms as well as portions of some meeting rooms as shown on the accompanying map. It is a little more than 20 feet down from the skylight to the floor and slightly less than 20 feet from the skylight to the top of a table.

The heavy, stone door and granite walls suppress most sound in either of the preceding cases, and the doors can be locked from the inside, thus preventing unwelcome visitors from barging into a raucous argument or an awkward situation. All the rooms are empty except for the middle meeting room off the southern wall. During the library's last chaotic days, someone carved an image of a boat falling from the sky onto the table's face. The drawing's exact meaning is unclear, but a character who succeeds on a DC 12 Intelligence (Religion) check recalls that the Pharonic god Ra uses a boat to transport the dead into the afterlife. Dwarves and those unfamiliar with Khemit's pantheon make this check with disadvantage.

L14. Privy

There are twenty-four holes cut into the surface of two elevated marble slabs that nearly span the entire length of the north and south walls as well as a small portion of the far wall.

The library's architects wisely used a primitive septic system to store and degrade the waste from this privy, eliminating the need to manually remove such materials and dispose of it elsewhere.

L15. Staff Living Quarters

Though they did not always stay here, the library's three most senior staff members were given the option of residing in this chamber on a full-time basis. Because it served as their personal living quarters, the door was usually kept locked at all times, as it is now. The lock can be picked with a successful DC 16 Dexterity check with thieves' tools, or it can be forcefully opened with a successful DC 22 Strength check.

Three military-style bunk beds rest against the far wall. Two dressers with three drawers apiece are adjacent to the near wall.

The fretful Phamses lived here throughout the orc siege. The timid scribe left immediately after Arcady's army routed the orcs. The meticulous worrywart missed a scrap of papyrus that fell behind the bottom drawer in the east dresser. It is impossible to spot the stray page without opening the drawer, and it still requires a successful DC 15 Wisdom (Perception) check to notice the papyrus when the drawer is opened. Completely removing the drawer decreases the DC of the Wisdom (Perception) check by 10, to a DC of 5. Written in Khemitian hieroglyphs, the damaged papyrus reads: *"... is a fraud. A hoax perpetrated on the weak-minded and fools. There is nothing ... death except emptiness."*

L16. Guest Quarters

Two beds rest against the far wall, and a dresser with two drawers abuts the near wall.

Visiting scholars used these guest quarters. As the situation in Arcady rapidly deteriorated and the orcs' grip on the surrounding settlement tightened, no one dared to make the harrowing trek to the renowned library. Therefore, the guest quarters stood empty for an entire year before the Arcadians abandoned the Feirgotha Plateau. The beds and dresser are empty.

L17. Supply Room

The stone door is always closed, yet it is not secure. A successful DC 5 Wisdom (Perception) check notices a small fissure at the bottom of the door large enough for a Small creature to squeeze through.

Warped wooden crates and barrels stacked nearly to the ceiling form makeshift aisles and rows in a packed supply room. Most of these wooden items show signs of heavy gnawing with the fragments of many more scattered upon the floor.

This room has recently been converted into a nest by 3 **ratlings** (see **Appendix A**) and their 2 **giant rat** companions that have wandered in from the frigid high desert. The ratlings use their spell-like abilities to remain concealed as they move about the complex. The clutter makes it especially difficult to see the ratlings, granting them advantage on their Stealth checks.

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Tactics: Whether the characters see them or not, the cunning adversaries immediately call for reinforcements using their *summon swarm* spell-like ability. They are poor melee combatants, but if forced to fight, they surround one of the characters and deal sneak attack damage. Once the battle turns against them, they become invisible and flee, using *dimension door* to get as far away from the characters as possible. Ratlings forced to surrender bargain for their lives with sketchy details about the library. They are aware of the flesh golems that roam the hallways, and they believe that the “old woman” lives somewhere beneath the building. Otherwise, they have no other useful information. On the other hand, the giant rats attack intruders on sight and fight until killed.

Treasure: The ratlings are adept at using scrolls of any variety. The three ratlings carry 5 scrolls: *call lightning*, *color spray*, *enhance ability*, *hold monster*, and *speak with dead*.

L18. Thanopsis's Office

The fearful Thanopsis always keeps this door locked. The characters can unlock the door with a successful DC 17 Dexterity check with thieves' tools or can break it open with a successful DC 22 Strength check.

Intricate carvings and paintings depicting scribes feverishly copying papyrus scrolls cover the walls and the outer surface areas of an exquisitely crafted desk made from a rare, black wood. A chair constructed from the same exotic material is partially tucked underneath it, juxtaposed against the furniture's two drawers. Two statues of an engorged, squat beetle flank the desk.

Thanopsis's ebony desk is the centerpiece of his old office. The details engraved onto the sides and legs represent some of Arcady's finest handiwork and craftsmanship. The huge desk weighs 400 pounds, making it extremely difficult to remove from this location. The two desk drawers are empty. Though the statues appear solid at first glance, a successful DC 16 Wisdom (Perception) check reveals the presence of a tiny crack separating the top from the bottom. In other words, the statues are more akin to a jar and a lid than a solid structure. The two halves are securely fastened together for a reason that soon becomes apparent.

The paintings and carvings on the wall are Khemitian masterpieces, both artistically and architecturally. The paintings on the west wall and south wall each contain a sun disc, one of which is placed in the middle of the door on the southern portion of the west wall and the other a few inches from the nearby corner. A successful DC 18 Intelligence (Investigation) check determines that the sun discs are actually stone buttons. The two buttons must be pressed simultaneously in order to deactivate the trap on the door. The trap can be disabled with a successful DC 15 Dexterity check with thieves' tools, otherwise 2 **swarms of beetles** emerge from the statues flanking the desk and attack the closest living creature.

Treasure: If the characters can devise a way to remove the desk and transport it back to civilization, it is worth 500 gp.

L19. Thanopsis's Quarters

An open armoire reveals an assortment of ancient silk clothing befitting royalty. Likewise, a nearby vanity table with an attached mirror and adjacent stool contains an array of perfumes and cosmetics jars. An alabaster bathtub supported by four legs fashioned into the likeness of a leopards' paws and adorned with carvings of nautical images rests in front of a luxurious bed covered in an exotic, spotted fur with silk sheets.

Thanopsis resided in his luxurious bedchamber until he began his assaults against Burvaadun. He now resides in the perceived safety of his planned tomb beneath the Pyramid of Thanopsis. In his current female form, Thanopsis made extensive use of the vanity table and cosmetics until several weeks ago. He only visits the room on rare occasions.

Treasure: The silk sheets and leopard fur covering the bed are worth 50 gp and 100 gp. Nine jars of rare, exotic perfume on the vanity table are worth 25 gp each. Likewise, four jars of makeup are worth 10 gp each. The clothing in the armoire is the equivalent of two noble's outfits worth 75 gp each and two royal outfits worth 200 gp apiece.

L20. Passage to Pyramid Level

Stone stairs descend at a steep angle into a corridor that bends sharply toward the southeast. The painted images of anthropomorphic creatures adorn the smooth, limestone walls.

The stairs descend 25 feet at a 45-degree angle before the passage turns in a southeasterly direction. A character that succeeds on a DC 8 Intelligence (Religion) check determines that the anthropomorphic figures on the walls depict various members of the Pharonic pantheon of Khemit. The long corridor continues in that direction for 3,000 feet before it ends in a heavy stone door that marks the beginning of the Pyramid Level.

Pyramid Level

Under Thanopsis's guidance, the library's architects, masons, and artisans built and designed the Pyramid of Thanopsis to serve as his tomb. The calculating librarian felt that the ostentatious display served no purpose other than to invite grave robbers to plunder his worldly goods after his demise. Instead, he instructed his servants to construct his mausoleum 25 feet below the pyramid's base. As his fear of the afterlife grew, Thanopsis used his formidable magical powers to create the tunnels and chambers that would become his laboratory and frigid vault. As a result, the walls and ceilings in area **P2** and area **P3** as well as the adjoining corridors, are roughhewn stone surfaces with an average height of 1d4+8 feet. The areas constructed by the library's original workforce, i.e. area **P1**, area **P4** and area **P5** share the same architectural characteristics as the library itself. The stone doors open with little effort, with exceptions of the doors in area **P2** and area **P3**.

P1. Embalming Chamber

Pungent aromas fill the musty air. Dried herbs, resins, and other globular materials float on the surface of a cloudy solution that fills the halfway point of an oversized alabaster bathing vessel adjacent to a large, stone slab. The same liquid is also found in a metallic barrel against the far wall. A spool of thick gray linen affixed to the top of a bronze pole sits on each side of the tub. Numerous jars rest upon a series of shelves affixed to the far wall. Two statues of a humanoid with a jackal's head stand before an archway opposite the stone door.

The Khemitite priests used this funerary chamber to mummify the library's deceased scribes before interring their preserved bodies in the adjacent ossuary. The embalmers first removed the decedent's organs while the body rested atop the stone slab. Despite their cleanliness, a successful DC 15 Wisdom (Perception) check detects splotches of dried fluids on the cold surface. The character must then succeed on a DC 17 Intelligence check to identify the stains as bile and blood. The adjacent desiccation vessel's liquid solution is filled with a mixture of herbs, resins, oils, honey, and natron, an alkaline salt mineral, which is the primary ingredient. The barrel against the far wall also contains a natron solution. After soaking the body in the solution for several weeks, the embalmers then wrapped the corpse in the specially treated funerary linens. The fourteen jars on the shelves include an assortment of the materials floating on top of the vessel's surface. Time has rendered all of them inert save for one — a sealed jar of rare honey. The two statues depict the Pharonic god, Anubis. Identifying the guardian of the dead requires a successful DC 10 Intelligence (Religion) check.

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If Thanopsis failed to detect the characters' presence at Burvaadun, the 2 **spellgorged zombies** stand guard in this chamber. They immediately attack all living creatures except Thanopsis.

Treasure: The rare jar of honey is still viable. Produced from the pollen of the black locust tree, the exotic commodity is worth 250 gp. Alternately, if used to treat a poisonous wound, the recipient has advantage on saving throws made to resist that poison. Using the honey in this manner requires a full-round action that provokes attacks of opportunity.

P2. Frozen Vault

Thanopsis magically sealed the stone door of this room using an *arcane lock* spell. The door can be opened by magical means, with a successful DC 25 Dexterity check with thieves' tools, or with brute force, requiring a successful DC 30 Strength check.

Frigid air surges out of a vast chamber covered in thick layers of ice. More than a hundred frozen human corpses partially buried beneath alternating layers of ice and snow are scattered across the floor. Pain is etched onto their chiseled faces, and nearly all of the bodies are curled up in the fetal position in a futile effort to retain body heat. A smaller number is huddled together in macabre death poses. Adolescent boys and girls make up the overwhelming majority of these unfortunate victims, though there are roughly thirty elderly, time-worn bodies interspersed among the young.

The frozen vault is the sad legacy of one man's efforts to defy death regardless of the cost. Characters investigating the youngsters' disappearance at Octavio's behest (see the **Ancestral Mystery** hook) solve the riddle of what happened to countless refugees seeking sanctuary during Arcady's last dark days. The heartless Thanopsis broke his promise to help these poor souls and instead condemned them to the horrific fate of freezing to death for his own selfish purpose. In order to accomplish

that goal, he built this vault in the heart of an underground glacier. The temperature within the room is -10° F. Characters unprepared for these conditions take must succeed on a DC 10 Constitution saving throw at the end of each hour exposed to the cold or gain a level of exhaustion. The room is so cold that it only takes a successful DC 5 Wisdom (Perception) check to feel the icy air through the stone door.

Thanopsis cast the spell nearly 2,000 years ago when he first imprisoned his future hosts within the vault. The door now prevents 3 **hoar spirits** (see **Appendix A**) from escaping. Thanopsis uses his arsenal of spells to keep the vengeful undead at bay on those rare occasions when he enters the frozen vault searching for his next suitable host. Though their anger is directed at the wizard who killed them, the enraged spirits attack any living creature that stumbles into their lair. The monstrosities unleash a *cone of cold* at the first opportunity before wading into combat with their icy claws. The intelligent undead avoid fire-wielding opponents whenever possible. They fight until destroyed.

P3. Thanopsis's Laboratory

In order to prevent any interruptions as well as guard against intruders, he cast an *arcane lock* on this stone door as soon as he finished building his laboratory. The door can be opened by magical means, with a successful DC 25 Dexterity check with thieves' tools, or with brute force, requiring a successful DC 30 Strength check.

The roaring flames in an adjacent hearth warm and illuminate a spacious laboratory. Two lit, golden braziers dangle from a chain imbedded in the ceiling, filling the room with the scent of burning incense. Numerous leather-bound books nearly fill a large bookcase against the near corner. Against the far wall are a simple writing desk, a matching chair, a closed iron chest and a wooden cabinet topped by a granite counter covered with alchemical equipment. A pool of fresh, clean water is adjacent to the north wall.

Thanopsis spends many hours in his laboratory, attempting to recall the spells that he can no longer cast because of the detrimental effects of the *consciousness crystal* (see **Appendix B**). During his 2,000 years of isolation, the brilliant wizard occupied countless hours transcribing the main collection's most valuable works from fragile papyrus onto more-durable parchment and vellum. He copied 304 tomes that he now stores on the bookcase in his laboratory.

Thanopsis's summoning circle in the center of the room is dormant, thus, it does not emit a magical aura. He uses the pool of water against the north wall as the material component of his *scrying* spell. Thanopsis cares little for his monetary treasures, so the iron chest is neither locked nor trapped. For a wizard of his former stature, his alchemical equipment is ordinary at best.

There is a 50% chance of encountering **Thanopsis** (see **Appendix A**) within his laboratory. You may read or paraphrase the following description of Arcady's legendary librarian. If he is not here, he is always found in area **P5**.

An old woman with an olive complexion, long gray hair, longing brown eyes, and attractive features loiters around the workspace against the opposite wall. She wears numerous pieces of elaborate jewelry of ancient make on her hands, neck, and wrists. A wondrous cloak drapes around her stooped shoulders.

Thanopsis's consciousness now occupies the body of an old, Khemitite woman, a guise that he uses to his maximum advantage. The characters' presence naturally frightens the cowardly wizard, but he maintains his composure and attempts to bluff his way out of an immediate confrontation. "She" claims to be Arsinoa, one of Thanopsis's servants. Arsinoa feigns regret over her master's many sins, though she begrudgingly justifies his actions based upon the "troubling times" that he endured. She then tells the

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characters that Thanopsis died 2,000 years ago, and any creature claiming to be Arcady's revered librarian is an imposter. To prove her point, she offers to take the characters to see his mummified body in area **P4**. Once there, she and the chamber's resident crypt thing immediately attack the characters. If the characters already destroyed the undead guardian and went to area **P5**, she shrugs her shoulders and tells the adventurers that she did all she can to help.

Tactics: Thanopsis dispenses with the ruse once it becomes apparent that the adventurers do not believe his elaborate tale. If the characters struggled to open the door, Thanopsis bolsters his defenses before the encounter. He casts *mage armor*, and will cast *shield* as a reaction when needed in order to substantially improve his AC. If he still has enough time, he also casts *vampiric touch*, *resistance* and *false life* as a 4th level spell to grant himself 20 temporary hit points. In battle, Thanopsis prefers to divide and conquer his foes when possible. To achieve this aim, he places a *wall of fire* in an ideal location to separate one or two characters from the rest of their party. In rapid succession, he then uses his *wand of lightning bolts* on the characters in his line of sight followed by a strategically positioned *cloudkill* or *circle of death* intended to affect the characters on his side of the wall and those on the opposite side.

Thanopsis' fear of death consumes him. He has no magic to aid his escape. Therefore, whenever he is reduced to fewer than 10 hit points, he begs and grovels for his wretched life. The terrified wizard offers the characters all of his worldly treasures in exchange for mercy. If they refuse his offer, he reluctantly continues to fight, intermittently moping, sobbing, and crying between actions until he either defeats the characters or his greatest nightmare finally comes true.

Even though Thanopsis has not personally encountered another living soul in twenty centuries, he cast a *glyph of warding* that triggers *feeblemind* on his spellbook's front page eons ago to prevent other wizards from stealing his lifetime of mystical research. Thanopsis can read his spellbook's contents without harm. A successful DC 16 Intelligence (Investigation) check will identify the glyph as dangerous. The trap will need to be removed magically, using *dispel magic*. If it is triggered, the character suffers 14 (4d6) psychic damage and must succeed on a DC 16 Intelligence saving throw or suffer the effects of the *feeblemind* spell.

Treasure: Thanopsis' iron chest holds 2,075 gp and 6,443 sp. The 304 books on the bookcase are worth 5 gp each. The alchemical equipment is extremely archaic and in poor shape, reducing its value to a meager 25 gp.

P4. Ossuary

Six ornately carved and masterfully painted stone sarcophagi occupy custom-fitted niches built into the surrounding walls. The upright coffins are decorated with gold plating and inlaid stones. Sculptures and paintings on the walls, floor, and ceiling presumably depict the souls of the dead sailing on reed boats past a menagerie of anthropomorphic figures. Hundreds of browned papyrus scrolls rest upon two sets of shelves against the far wall. An unusual chair crafted from reeds and shaped into the likeness of a seat found on a boat rest in front of each collection of scrolls.

In contrast to Thanopsis, six of the library's greatest scribes and scholars embarked on the journey into the afterlife as described in the numerous decorative artworks on the walls and ceiling. Once again, a successful DC 10 Intelligence (Religion) check identifies the Khemitian traditions of the afterlife and identifies the anthropomorphic figures as members of their pantheon. The decedents' beloved scrolls and comfortable chairs also joined them in the next world. However, just like the papyrus scrolls in the library proper, these too succumbed to the ravages of age and moisture, rendering them unreadable and worthless. In accordance with Khemitian tradition, each of the sarcophagi's lids was fashioned into the likeness of the person contained within the stone receptacles. Names do not appear anywhere on the coffins' surfaces. Of course, the artisans tasked with replicating the individuals' faces and bodies glossed over their imperfections and produced highly stylized and idealized likenesses of these individuals. Opening one of the coffins requires a successful DC

20 Strength check. The coffins contain nothing other than the occupant's mummified corpse.

Thanopsis and a visiting priest combined forces to create the **crypt thing** (see **Appendix A**) that protects the ossuary and Thanopsis' tomb from defilement. Its wizardly creator forbade the crypt thing from conversing with anyone other than him. Based upon these instructions, the monster seems perfectly content to stand in the center of the room and monitor the characters' actions without uttering a single word. It does not attack until the characters enter the room or attack it. Once either condition is satisfied, the undead creature unleashes a teleporting burst to scatter the adventurers throughout the pyramid level. Though stationed within the ossuary, it can *dimension door* to any location in sight, though it cannot pass through the north door in area **P1**.

If Thanopsis accompanied the characters into the room, the crypt thing obeys his master's commands and attacks their shared foes with its claws. Under these circumstances, it never uses its teleporting burst ability unless Thanopsis directs it to do so. The crypt thing fights until destroyed.

P5. Thanopsis's Tomb

An immense barge made from reeds dominates the center of the room. The huge boat is thirty feet long and just wide enough to accommodate an unpainted alabaster coffin with smooth, flat surfaces and no imagery or sculptures. On the other hand, numerous paintings and bas-reliefs depicting hosts of anthropomorphic figures greeting a middle-aged man on a reed boat cover every available surface on the walls. Several hundred papyrus scrolls rest upon freestanding shelves adjacent to the reed barge.

Surprisingly, the egotistical Thanopsis specifically requested that his coffin not bear any images of his likeness. The same cannot be said for the artworks covering the walls. The handsome, bald middle-age man shown in these paintings and bas-relief sculptures accurately depict the great librarian before his numerous transformations. The images portray Thanopsis' journey into the afterlife, which the characters can confirm with a successful DC 10 Intelligence (Religion) check. Likewise, a character that succeeds on a DC 15 Intelligence (History) check identifies Thanopsis as the paintings' subject. Thanopsis also desired to keep his treasured written works for all eternity, but his nonmagical papyrus scrolls turned into tattered shreds eons ago. The ever-cautious Thanopsis preserved four magical scrolls in ceramic cases and stashed them on the shelves. He can locate the scrolls with ease, but it takes a successful DC 13 Wisdom (Perception) check for someone other than him to quickly spot each of the concealed writings.

There is a 50% chance of encountering **Thanopsis** here. If he is not here, he is always found in area **P3**. You may read or paraphrase Thanopsis' description from that area as well. Though the door is not secured, the characters' combat with the crypt thing in the adjacent tomb likely alerts Thanopsis to the presence of intruders. (Each round, Thanopsis may attempt a Wisdom (Perception) check to hear the commotion from area **P4**.) The cunning wizard has no option left other than to fight, so he prepares for combat as described in area **P3** with two notable exceptions: His first actions are to cast *greater invisibility* and *stoneskin* from two of the scrolls scattered among his collection. Otherwise, he behaves and acts as described in area **P3**.

Treasure: As previously mentioned, Thanopsis hid the following 4 scrolls (*greater invisibility*, *seeming*, *stoneskin*, and *teleport*) among his scroll collection. Thanopsis's alabaster coffin is empty, but the 500-pound vessel is worth 250 gp.

Concluding the Adventure

Thanopsis's defeat rids the Feirgotha Plateau of a long-standing menace, but it also increases the likelihood of other malevolent monsters taking up residence in the abandoned structure. This development prompts the dwarves of Clan Craenog to monitor the remote region more closely. Over the coming months, Burvaadun witnesses significant upgrades in structural improvements and manpower. Dwarven stonemasons repair the breaches in the garrison's outer wall and even construct several small outposts in the Library of Arcady's vicinity.

Clan Craenog also takes notice of the characters' actions in this matter. If dwarven characters aided Burvaadun in its time of need, the High Thane invites the brave dwarves to Erod Flan to express his personal gratitude. This time, a column of troops escorts the characters from the isolated fortress to the distant dwarven capital. Even if they did not directly intervene on behalf of the dwarven defenders, Thanopsis's destruction ends the prolonged siege of Clan Craenog's beleaguered garrison. The grateful dwarves enthusiastically greet their liberators and offer to accompany them to Erod Flan once a relief force arrives at the garrison.

The characters' fortunes now turn north, though they are still free to revisit Miners' Refuge for some much-needed rest and recuperation in addition to restocking their supplies. Alternately, the characters can accomplish these tasks when they reach the next leg of their journey at Erod Flan or another suitable location along the way.

Appendix A: New Creatures and NPCs

Captain

Captain

Medium humanoid (any race), any alignment

Armor Class 17 (chain mail and shield)

Hit Points 75 (10d8+20)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
18 (+4)	10 (+0)	15 (+2)	12 (+1)	12 (+1)	16 (+3)

Saving Throws Str +6, Con +6

Skills Athletics +6, Perception +5, Intimidation +7

Senses passive Perception 15

Languages Common, Dwarven

Challenge 4 (1,100 XP)

Brave. The captain has advantage on all saving throws against fear.

Leadership (1/day, duration 1 minute). Allies within 30ft who can hear and understand the Captain add 1d4 to their attack rolls and saving throws.

Actions

Multiattack. The captain makes three melee attacks.

Warhammer. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (1d8 + 3) bludgeoning damage.

Heavy Crossbow. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +2 to hit, range 100/400, one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d10) piercing damage.

Crypt Thing

A skeletal humanoid wearing a dark hooded robe sits in a high-backed chair before you. Its eyes appear as small pinpoints of reddish light. As you approach it, the creature raises a bony hand and points at you.

Crypt Thing

Medium undead, neutral

Armor Class 15 (natural armor)

Hit Points 84 (13d8 + 26)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
12 (+1)	16 (+3)	15 (+2)	12 (+1)	14 (+2)	16 (+3)

Skills Deception +6, Perception +5

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 15

Languages Common

Challenge 5 (1,800 XP)

Magic Weapons. The crypt thing's weapon attacks are magical.

Actions

Multiattack. The crypt thing makes two melee attacks with its claws.

Claws. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 13 (3d6 + 3) slashing damage and 10 (3d6) necrotic damage.

Teleport Other (1/Day). As an action, the crypt thing can teleport all creatures within 50 feet of it to a randomly determined location. A creature effected by the crypt thing's Teleport Other must make a DC 15 Wisdom saving throw to avoid being teleported.

An effected creature is teleported in a random direction (roll 1d4: 1 – north, 2 – south, 3 – east, 4 – west) and a random distance (1d10 x 100 feet) away from the crypt thing. Roll randomly for each creature that fails its saving throw.

If the affected creature would arrive in a place already occupied by an object or another creature, the affected creature takes 4d6 force damage and is not teleported.

Golem, Ice

This icy statue stands a head taller than a normal human. A rime of frost coats it, and razor-sharp shards of ice adorn its limbs.

Ice Golem

Medium construct, neutral

Armor Class 14 (natural armor)

Hit Points 71 (11d8 + 22)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
16 (+3)	12 (+1)	14 (+2)	2 (-4)	10 (+0)	1 (-5)

Damage Immunities cold, poison, psychic; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical attacks that aren't adamantine

Condition Immunities charmed, exhaustion, frightened, paralyzed, petrified, poisoned

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 10

Languages understands the languages of its creator but

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can't speak
Challenge 4 (1,100 XP)

Icy Destruction. When the golem dies, it shatters in an explosion of jagged ice shards, and each creature within 15 feet of it must make a DC 13 Dexterity saving throw, taking 10 (3d6) piercing damage and 7 (2d6) cold damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.

Immutable Form. The golem is immune to any spell or effect that would alter its form.

Magic Resistance. The golem has advantage on saving throws against spells and other magical effects.

Magic Weapons. The golem's weapon attacks are magical.

Actions

Multiattack. The golem can make two slam attacks.

Slam. Melee Weapon Attack: +6 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. Hit: 10 (2d6 + 3) bludgeoning damage plus 7 (2d6) cold damage.

Cold Breath (Recharge 5-6). The golem exhales a blast of freezing wind in a 15-foot cone. Each creature in that area must make a DC 13 Dexterity saving throw, taking 18 (4d8) cold damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.

Hoar Spirit

This being is a gaunt humanoid dressed in tattered rags. Its skin is pale gray and ice crystals have formed on various parts of its body. Its hands end in claws, each with translucent icy blue nails. Its eyes are frozen solid and show no signs of life.

Hoar Spirit

Medium undead, chaotic evil

Armor Class 14 (natural armor)

Hit Points 33 (6d8 + 6)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
17 (+3)	15 (+2)	13 (+1)	10 (+0)	15 (+2)	15 (+2)

Skills Perception +4

Damage Immunities cold

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 14

Languages —

Challenge 2 (450 XP)

Glaciate. A creature that touches the hoar spirit or hits it with a melee attack while within 5 feet of it must succeed on a DC 12 Constitution saving throw or take 10 (3d6) cold damage and be paralyzed by bone-numbing cold for 1 minute. The target can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns, ending the effect on itself on a success. If the target's saving throw is a success, it is immune to the paralyzing effect of the hoar spirit's Glaciate for 24 hours.

Heat Sense. The hoar spirit can detect heat (such as that generated by living creatures) within 60 feet, regardless of whether the hoar spirit can see the heat source or not.

Innate Spellcasting. The hoar spirit's spellcasting ability is Charisma (spell save DC 12). The hoar spirit can innately cast the following spells, requiring no material components:

3/day: ray of frost

1/day: cone of cold

Actions

Multiattack. The hoar spirit makes two melee attacks with its claws.

Claws. Melee Weapon Attack: +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 8 (2d4 + 3) slashing damage and 10 (3d6) cold damage.

Lantern Goat

This creature resembles a goat with tangled and patchy gray-and-white hair, and horns and hooves that appear to be made of stone. Its eyes are stark white. Around its neck hangs a dented and ugly iron lantern, glowing with a foul amber light.

Lantern Goat

Medium undead, chaotic evil

Armor Class 16 (natural armor)

Hit Points 93 (17d8 + 17)

Speed 40 ft., fly 60 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
13 (+1)	18 (+4)	13 (+1)	6 (-2)	14 (+2)	17 (+3)

Skills Perception +6, Stealth +5

Damage Immunities poison

Condition Immunities exhaustion, poisoned

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 16

Languages —

Challenge 5 (1,800 XP)

Charge. If the lantern goat moves at least 20 feet straight toward a target and then hits it with a head butt attack on the same turn, the target takes an extra 14 (4d6) bludgeoning damage. If the target is a creature, it must succeed on a DC 15 Strength saving throw or be knocked prone.

Fear Light. As a bonus action, the lantern goat can emit an ugly yellow light from the lantern around its neck. Any creature that can see the light within 30 feet of the lantern goat must make a DC 15 Wisdom saving throw, unless the lantern goat is incapacitated. On a failed save, the creature is frightened until the start of its next turn. If a creature's saving throw is successful, the creature is immune to the lantern goat's Fear Light for the next 24 hours.

Life Sense. The lantern goat can innately sense all living creatures within 60 feet of it.

Actions

Multiattack. The lantern goat makes three attacks: one with its head butt and two with its hooves.

Head Butt. Melee Weapon Attack: +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 11 (2d6 + 4) bludgeoning damage.

Hooves. Melee Weapon Attack: +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 9 (2d4 + 4) slashing damage

Reactions

<RULE>

Soul Capture. As a reaction, when a creature within 60 feet of the lantern goat that it can see dies, the lantern goat can draw the soul of that creature into the lantern around its neck unless the creature succeeds on a DC 15 Wisdom saving throw. On a failure, the creature's soul is drawn into the lantern, where it will be digested over the next 1 hour by the lantern goat. Once the hour has elapsed, the creature

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dies and can only be returned to life by a *resurrection*, *true resurrection*, or *wish* spell. The lantern can only be removed from the lantern goat or be destroyed — thus releasing the trapped soul — if the lantern goat is slain.

Minstrel

Minstrel

Medium humanoid (any), any alignment

Armor Class 15 (chain shirt)

Hit Points 44 (8d8 + 8)

Speed 30 ft.

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

Saving Throws Dex +4, Wis +3

Skills Acrobatics +4, Perception +5, Performance +6

Senses passive Perception 15

Languages any two languages

Challenge 2 (450 XP)

Spellcasting. The minstrel is a 4th-level spellcaster. Its spellcasting ability is Charisma (spell save DC 12, +4 to hit with spell attacks). It has the following bard spells prepared:

Cantrips (at will): *friends*, *mage hand*, *vicious mockery*
1st level (4 slots): *charm person*, *healing word*, *heroism*, *sleep*, *thunderwave*

2nd level (3 slots): *invisibility*, *shatter*

Song of Rest. The minstrel can perform a song while taking a short rest. Any ally, or the minstrel itself, who hears the song regains an extra 1d6 hit points if it spends any Hit Dice to regain hit points at the end of that rest.

Taunt (2/day). The minstrel can use a bonus action on its turn to target one creature within 30 ft. If the target can hear the minstrel, the target must succeed DC 12 Charisma saving throw or have disadvantage on ability checks, attack rolls, and saving throws until the start of the minstrel's next turn.

Actions

Shortsword. Melee Weapon Attack: +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d6 + 2) piercing damage.

Shortbow. Ranged Weapon Attack: +4 to hit, range 80/320 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d6 + 2) piercing damage.

Pipefox

This furry, minute serpent has a foxlike head and tiny eyes that glitter with intelligence.

Pipefox

Tiny monstrosity, neutral

Armor Class 15

Hit Points 10 (3d4 + 3)

Speed 30 ft., climb 20 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
1 (-5)	16 (+3)	12 (+1)	14 (+2)	14 (+2)	14 (+2)

Skills Arcana +6, History +6, Perception +4, Stealth +7

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 14

Languages Common, Draconic

Challenge 1 (200 XP)

Innate Spellcasting. The pipefox's spellcasting ability is Charisma (spell save DC 13). The pipefox can innately cast the following spells, requiring no material components:

At will: *comprehend languages*

3/day: *augury*, *invisibility*, *silent image*

1/day: *detect thoughts*, *divination*, *fear*

Actions

Bite. Melee Weapon Attack: +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d4 + 3) piercing damage.

Ratling

This ratlike creature has tiny human hands in place of its front paws, and an unnerving human face with a toothy mouth.

Ratling

Tiny monstrosity, chaotic evil

Armor Class 14 (natural armor)

Hit Points 10 (3d4 + 3)

Speed 30 ft., burrow 10 ft., climb 20 ft., swim 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
6 (-2)	15 (+2)	13 (+1)	12 (+1)	10 (+0)	13 (+1)

Skills Perception +4, Stealth +6

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 14

Languages Deep speech, telepathy 120 ft. (rodents only)

Challenge 1 (200 XP)

Attuned to Magic. The ratling is attuned to magic and can sense any magic within 30 feet of itself. The ratling can use its action to see a faint aura around any visible creature or object in the area that bears magic, and will know what school of magic, if any.

This ability penetrates most barriers, but is blocked by 1 foot of stone, 1 inch of common steel, a thin sheet of lead, or 3 feet of wood or dirt.

Innate Spellcasting. The ratling's spellcasting ability is Charisma (spell save DC 11). The ratling can innately cast the following spells, requiring no material components:

At will: *tongues*

3/day: *dimension door*, *fear*, *invisibility*

Sneak Attack (1/Turn). The ratling deals an extra 1 (1d6) damage when it hits a target with a weapon attack and has advantage on the attack roll, or when the target is within 5 feet of an ally of the ratling that isn't incapacitated and the ratling doesn't have disadvantage on the attack roll.

Spider Climb. The ratling can climb difficult surfaces, including upside down on ceilings, without needing to make an ability check.

Actions

Bite. Melee Weapon Attack: +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 4 (1d4 + 2) piercing damage.

Summon Swarm (1/Day). The ratling telepathically calls a swarm of rats from the surrounding area. The called creatures arrive in 1d4 rounds, acting as allies of the ratling and obeying its commands. The swarm remains for 1 hour, until the ratling dies, or until the ratling dismisses them as a bonus action.

QUESTS OF DOOM 4

Thanopsis

Thanopsis

Medium humanoid (human), neutral evil

Armor Class 12 (15 with mage armor)

Hit Points 66 (12d8+12)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
10 (+0)	14 (+2)	12 (+1)	19 (+4)	17 (+3)	16 (+3)

Saving Throws Int +7, Wis +6

Skills Arcana +7, Deception +6, History +7, Religion +7

Senses passive Perception 13

Languages Common, Dwarven, Khemitian

Challenge 9 (5,000 XP)

Spellcasting. Thanopsis is a 12th-level spellcaster. Its spellcasting ability is Intelligence (spell save DC 16, +8 to hit with spell attacks). It can cast the following spells:

Cantrips (at will): *chill touch*, *mage hand*, *ray of frost*, *resistance*

1st level (4 slots): *false life*, *mage armor*, *shield*

2nd level (3 slots): *blindness/deafness*, *ray of enfeeblement*, *web*

3rd level (3 slots): *animate dead*, *bestow curse*, *vampiric touch*

4th level (3 slots): *blight*, *stoneskin*, *wall of fire*

5th level (2 slots): *cloudkill*, *dominate person*

6th level (1 slot): *circle of death*

Actions

Grim Harvest. When Thanopsis kills a creature that is neither a construct nor undead with a spell of 1st level or higher, it regains hit points equal to twice the spell's level, or three times if it is a necromancy spell.

Quarterstaff. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d6 + 2) bludgeoning damage, or 6 (1d8 + 2) bludgeoning damage if used with two hands.

Thought Mist

Letters, symbols and runes periodically erupt onto the surface of a copper-colored sphere of dense mist.

Thought Mist

Small aberration, neutral evil

Armor Class 13

Hit Points 17 (5d6)

Speed fly 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
6 (-2)	16 (+3)	10 (+0)	10 (+0)	10 (+0)	19 (+4)

Saving Throws Wis +2

Skills Arcana +2, Perception +4, Stealth +7

Damage Immunities acid, cold, fire, lightning, poison, psychic, thunder; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical attacks

Condition Immunities charmed, exhaustion, frightened, grappled, paralyzed, petrified, poisoned, prone, restrained

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 14

Languages Draconic

Challenge 2 (450 XP)

Incorporeal Movement. The thought mist can move through other creatures and objects as if they were difficult terrain. It takes 5 (1d10) force damage if it ends its turn inside an object.

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

At will: *comprehend languages*, *detect thoughts*
3/day: *suggestion*

Inscription. When the thought mist dies, its mists dissipate and the words that gave origin to it attempt to bond to the nearest living creature. The creature must succeed on a DC 13 Wisdom saving throw or the words are instantly tattooed into the creature's flesh, dealing 3 (1d6) piercing damage. The tattooed creature gains a +1 bonus on to hit and attack rolls for 1 minute. Once the bonus expires, the tattoo remains. If the tattooed creature is slain, the tattoo separates from the creature's body and is reborn as a new thought mist.

The tattoo can be removed by a *remove curse* spell.

Actions

Mind Lash. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d4 + 3) slashing damage and 7 (2d6) psychic damage.

Mind Feast. The thought mist targets one creature it can see within 10 feet of it. The target must succeed on a DC 13 Intelligence saving throw or take 11 (2d10) psychic damage and be stunned for 1 minute. The target can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns, ending the effect on itself on a success. If the target's saving throw is a success, it is immune to the Mind Feast of the thought mist for 24 hours.

Trollhound

Trollhound

Medium monstrosity, neutral

Armor Class 13 (natural armor)

Hit Points 32 (5d8+10)

Speed 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
18 (+4)	13 (+1)	15 (+2)	2 (-4)	11 (+0)	6 (-2)

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 10

Languages —

Challenge 2 (450 XP)

Keen Smell. The trollhound has advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on smell.

Regeneration. The trollhound regains 10 hit points at the start of its turn. If the trollhound takes acid or fire damage, this trait doesn't function at the start of the trollhound's next turn. The trollhound dies only if it starts its turn with 0 hit points and doesn't regenerate.

Actions

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 15 (2d10 + 4) piercing damage. If the target is a creature, it must succeed on a DC 13 Constitution saving throw against disease or become poisoned until the disease is cured. Every 24 hours that elapse, the

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target must repeat the saving throw, reducing its hit point maximum by 5 (1d10) on a failure. The disease is cured on a success. The target dies if the disease reduces its hit point maximum to 0. This reduction to the target's hit point maximum lasts until the disease is cured.

Yeti

This creature stands like a man, yet is half again the height of most men and covered with a coat of thick white fur.

Yeti

Large monstrosity, neutral

Armor Class 14 (natural armor)

Hit Points 95 (10d10 + 40)

Speed 30 ft., climb 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
19 (+4)	12 (+1)	18 (+4)	9 (-1)	12 (+1)	10 (+0)

Skills Perception +5, Stealth +3

Damage Immunities cold

Condition Immunities frightened

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 15

Languages Yeti

Challenge 4 (1,100 XP)

Keen Smell. The yeti has advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on smell.

Pyrophobic. If the yeti takes fire damage, it has disadvantage on attacks, saving throws, and ability checks until the end of its next turn.

Camouflage. The yeti has advantage on Dexterity (Stealth) checks made to hide in mountainous and snowy terrain.

Actions

Multiattack. The yeti can make two claw attacks and use its Icy Glare ability.

Claw. Melee Weapon Attack: +6 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 11 (2d6 + 4) slashing damage plus 3 (1d6) cold damage.

Icy Glare. The yeti glares at one creature within 30 feet of it. If the target can see the yeti, the target must succeed on a DC 13 Constitution saving throw or take 14 (4d6) cold damage and be frightened for 1 minute. The target can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns, ending the effect on itself on a success. If the target's saving throw is a success, it is immune to the Icy Glare of the yeti for 1 hour.

Zombie, Spellgorged

The shambling zombie shuffles forward, opens its mouth in a silent moan, and suddenly spits out a gout of searing fire.

Spellgorged Zombie

Medium undead, neutral evil

Armor Class 10 (natural armor)

Hit Points 66 (12d8 + 12)

Speed 20 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
13 (+1)	10 (+0)	16 (+3)	3 (-4)	6 (-1)	5 (-3)

Saving Throws Wis +0

Damage Immunities poison

Condition Immunities poisoned

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 8

Languages understands the languages it knew in life but can't speak

Challenge 1 (200 XP)

Spell Storing. The zombie can store any spells cast into its mouth as if it were a ring of spell storing. The zombie can store up to 5 levels worth of spells at a time. The spells stored in the zombie uses the slot level, spell save DC, spell attack bonus, and the spellcasting ability of the original caster. Once the spell is released by the zombie it is no longer stored in it, freeing up space for additional spells.

Undead Fortitude. If damage reduces the zombie to 0 hit points, it must make a Constitution saving throw with a DC of 5 + the damage taken, unless the damage is radiant or from a critical hit. On a success, the zombie drops to 1 hit point instead.

Actions

Slam. Melee Weapon Attack: +3 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 4 (1d6 + 1) bludgeoning damage.

Zombie, Sphinx

This once majestic sphinx has been reduced to moldering, rotten meat and seeping wounds. It lurches and stumbles before awkwardly taking flight.

Sphinx Zombie

Large undead, neutral evil

Armor Class 11 (natural armor)

Hit Points 168 (16d10 + 80)

Speed 30 ft., fly 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
22 (+6)	6 (-2)	20 (+5)	3 (-4)	10 (+0)	5 (-3)

Saving Throws Wis +3

Damage Immunities poison, psychic; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical attacks

Condition Immunities charmed, frightened, poisoned

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 8

Languages understands the languages it knew in life but can't speak

Challenge 5 (1,800 XP)

Magic Weapons. The zombie's weapon attacks are magical.

Undead Fortitude. If damage reduces the zombie to 0 hit points, it must make a Constitution saving throw with a DC of 5 + the damage taken, unless the damage is radiant or from a critical hit. On a success, the zombie drops to 1 hit point instead.

Actions

Multiattack. The zombie makes two claw attacks.

Claw. Melee Weapon Attack: +9 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 17 (2d10 + 6) slashing damage.

Appendix B: New Equipment and Magic Items

Consciousness Crystal

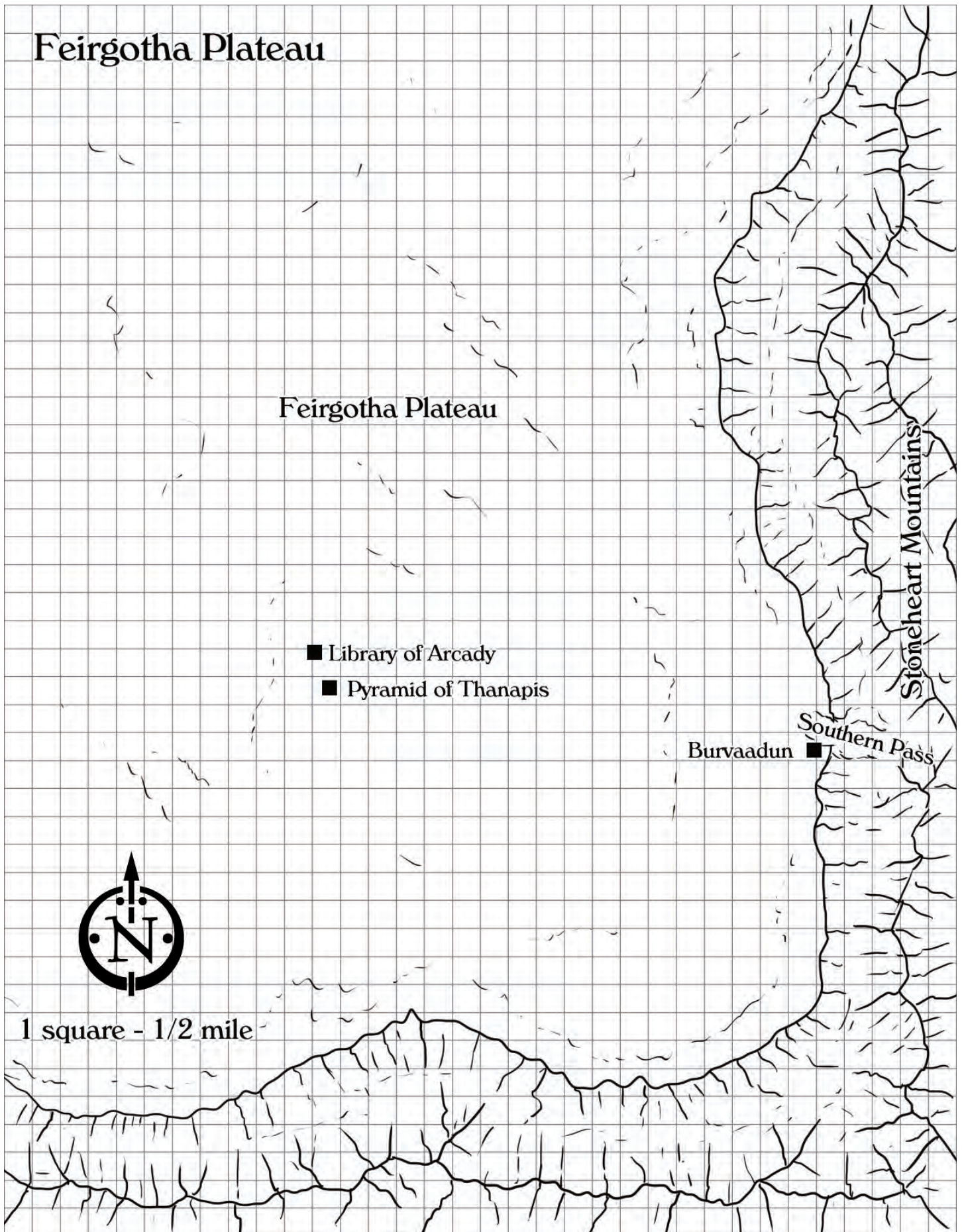
Wondrous item, legendary (requires attunement by a sorcerer, wizard, or warlock)

Centuries ago, the great wizard Thanopsis crafted this unique magical item in order to cheat death and to live forever. This multifaceted crystal allows its owner to transfer his consciousness and soul from his existing body into a new body. The crystal used to create this item must be worth at least 100 gp. The new body must be of the same creature type and subtype, if any, as that of the crystal's owner. The crystal attunes itself to its owner after 24 hours. This item cannot force a living host's consciousness and soul out of its body, thus the owner can transfer his consciousness and soul only into a fresh corpse.

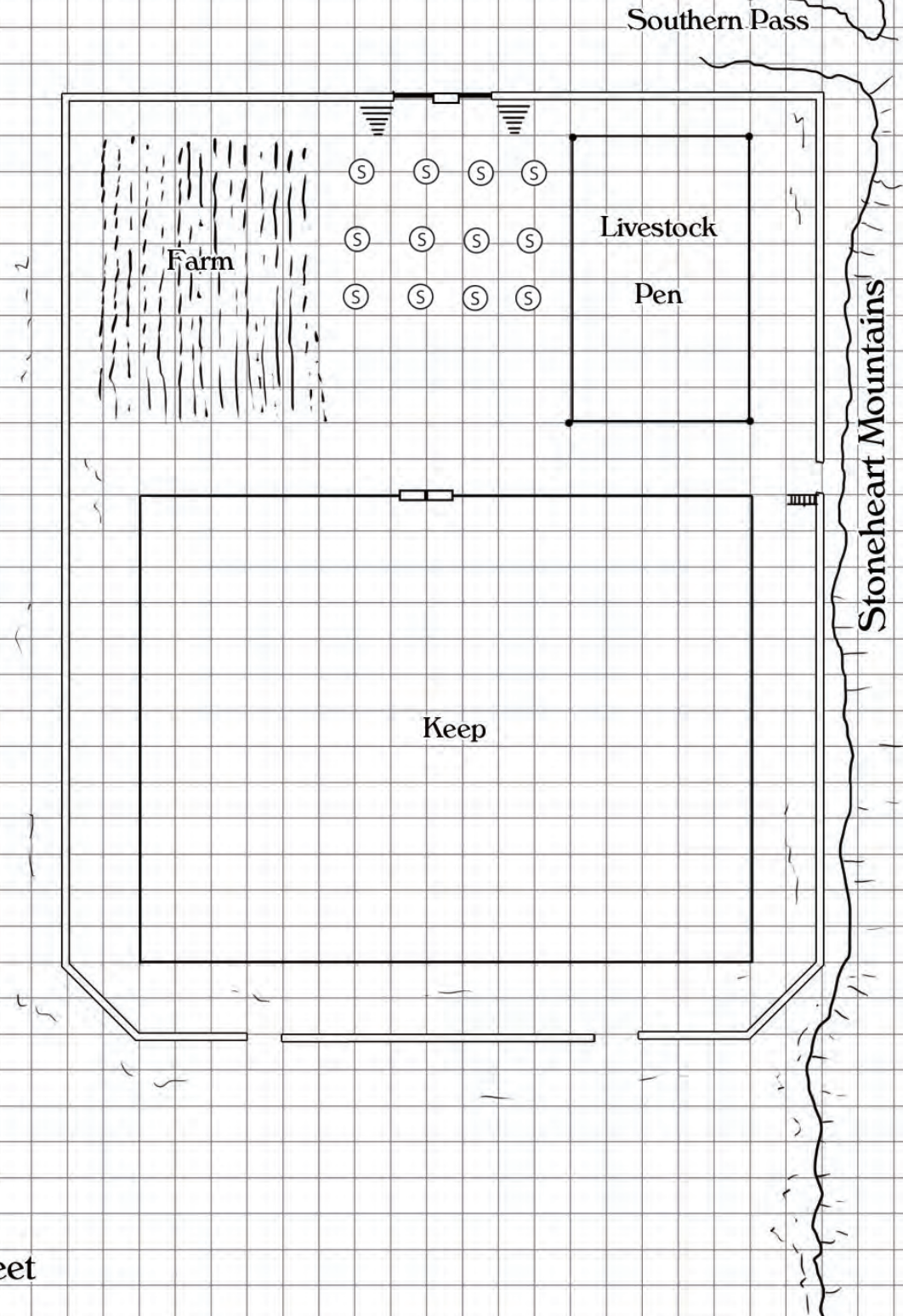
The consciousness crystal cannot reverse death attributable to any injury, disease, poison, or natural cause with one exception: hypothermia caused by exposure to extreme cold. Any attempt to transfer the owner's consciousness and soul into a corpse that died from any cause other than hypothermia automatically fails, resulting in your Intelligence being reduced by 1d4 points. A *greater restoration* spell restores the ability to normal. Corpses killed by cold-based spells and effects are also unsuitable for transference. The new body must be fully intact and well-preserved, which can be accomplished by constantly storing the corpse at a temperature at or below 32° F. The body can be indefinitely preserved in this manner, though even momentary exposure to a temperature greater than 32° F renders the corpse unsuitable for transference.

Attempting to transfer one's consciousness and soul into a new body takes 10 minutes. The crystal's owner and the new body must remain in contact with the crystal at all times during the transference process. At the conclusion of the transference process, the owner must succeed on a DC 10 Wisdom saving throw. The owner cannot use any spells or effects that allow him to reroll this saving throw. If the save fails, the transference still succeeds, but a portion of the owner's consciousness is forever lost, resulting in 1 point of Intelligence drain that can only be restored by a *wish* spell.

The crystal's owner transfers his Intelligence, Wisdom, Charisma, level, class, hit points, alignment, feats, tool and skill proficiencies, and mental abilities into his new body. The new body retains its Strength, Dexterity, Constitution, and natural abilities. However, the owner's hit points may be adjusted based upon the new body's Constitution modifier. The owner can transfer his consciousness and soul from one body into a new body an indefinite number of times, though he may do so only once a year. If a year has not passed since his last transference, the attempted transference automatically fails. Worse yet, his consciousness and soul immediately depart his existing body and are expelled onto the Astral Plane.

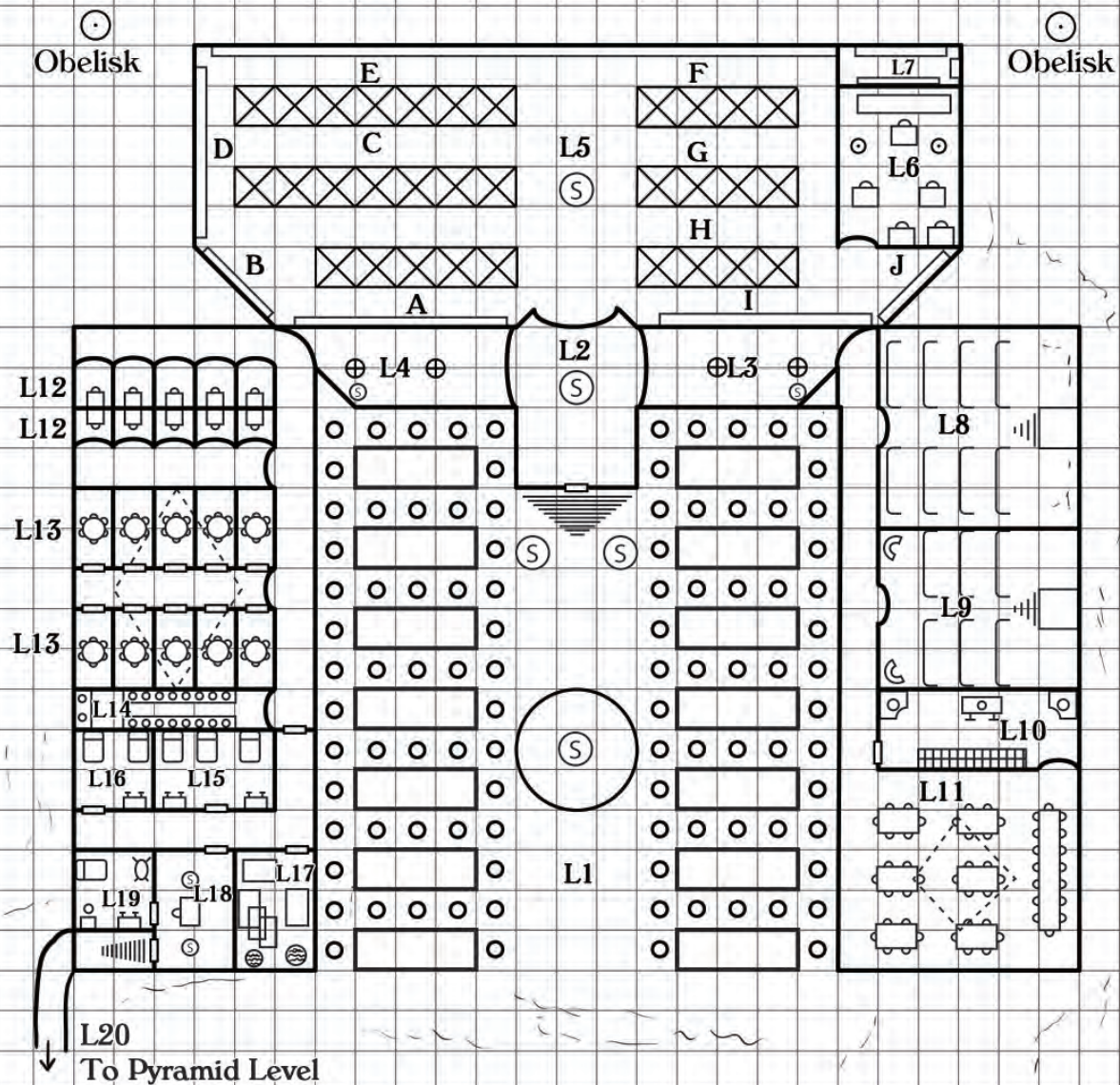


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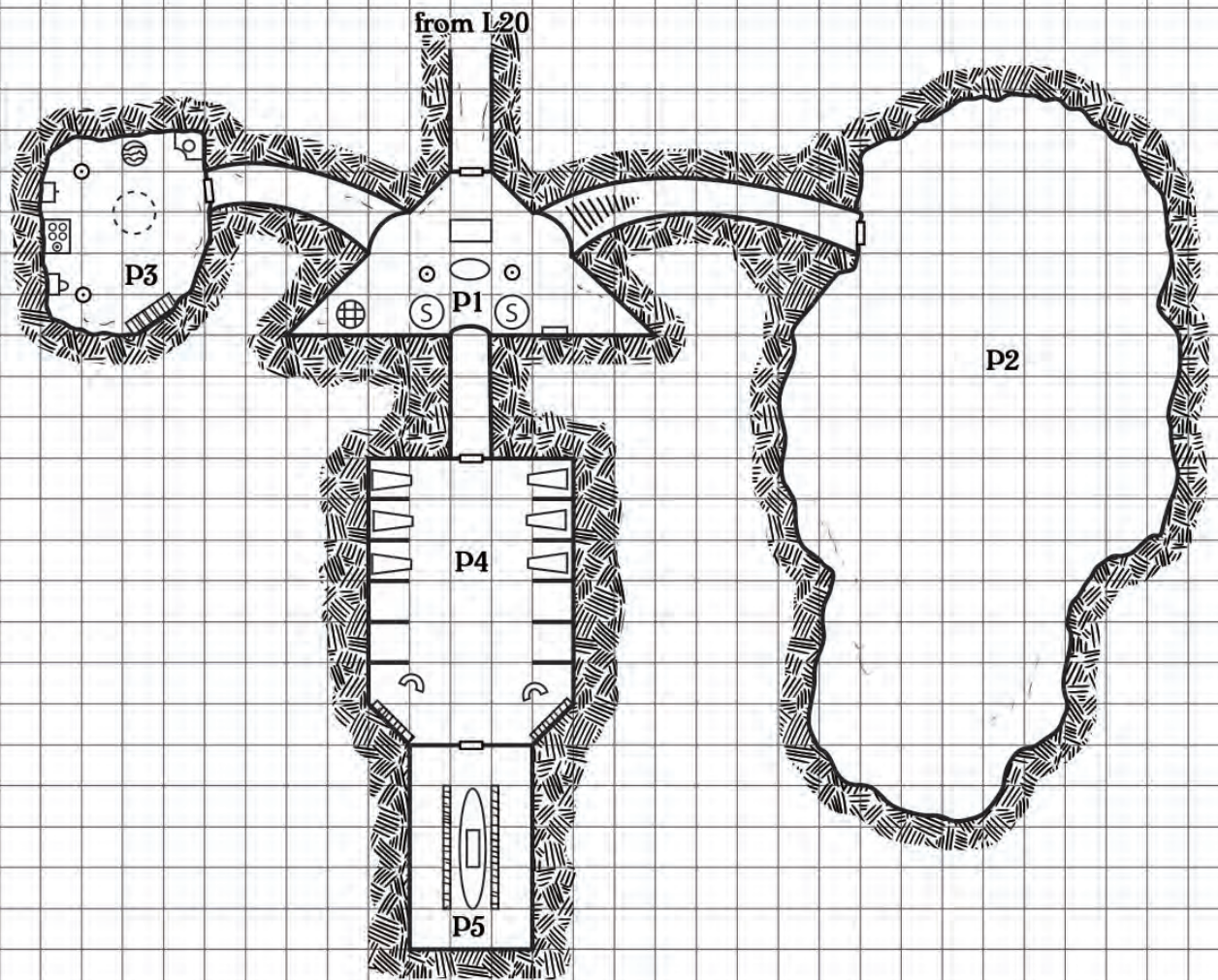
1 square - 10 feet

Library of Arcady



1 square - 10 feet

Pyramid Level



1 square - 10 feet

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Quests of Doom 4

A Little Knowledge

A Little Knowledge is a 5th-level adventure that takes the PCs across the Stoneheart Mountains onto the forbidding Feirgotha Plateau to investigate the myths and tales surrounding the ancient and presumably deserted Library of Arcady. The PCs soon discover that the venerable building is not as abandoned as originally believed, and its unusual caretaker keeps more terrible secrets than any of its fabled lost writings.



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