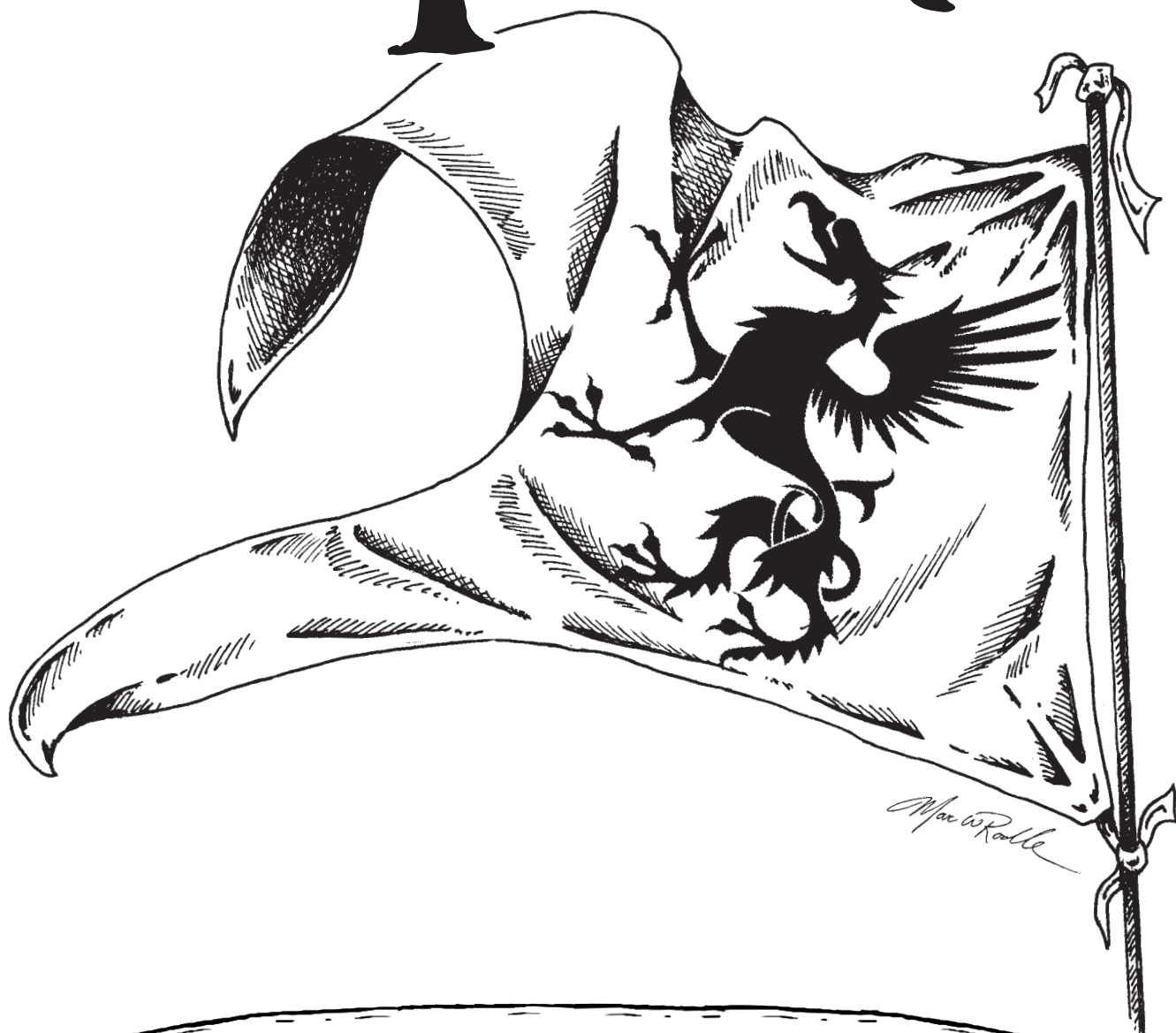


FOR 5-6 PCS OF 4TH LEVEL

THE PRIDE OF ILLYRIA



A 5E WARLOCK MIDGARD ADVENTURE
BY CHRIS HARRIS

THE PRIDE OF ILLYRIA

For the GM

The Pride of Illyria is set in a nation conquered by the Mharoti Dragon Empire. As an adventure for 4th-level PCs, the “guts” of it can also serve as a small garrisoned tower in any campaign.

History

A squadron of Illyrian Sky Riders were retreating on their hippogriff mounts when the forces of the Mharoti Dragon Empire wounded one of their number, a minor noble named Menalcas. When his mount died, Menalcas made his way on foot to a recently abandoned tower with which he was familiar, hoping to avoid capture in the tunnel underneath and to hide the guidon of the Illyrian Sky Riders he carried in his saddlebag.

He hid the pennant within a secret room and made his way to the hidden dungeon, but he never made it back out. Menalcas was slain by the undead remains of the prisoners left behind when the tower was deserted months before.

He awoke not long after, transformed into a darakhul, now trapped and no longer able to open the passage out in undeath.

Seven years passed, and in that time the Dragon Empire garrisoned the tower, never detecting the dungeon’s entrance or the room where the guidon was hidden.

The remaining Sky Riders, now living outside the walls of Raguza, scheme against the Dragon Empire. They have long suspected Menalcas died or was taken near the tower, and that the guidon may still be there. Recovery of the pennant would do much for morale among the refugees. More importantly, they struck a deal with a shadowmancer to help them infiltrate the area in greater numbers when the time is right.

Synopsis

Lady Orania Oreste, commander of the Sky Riders, hires the PCs to infiltrate the tower through a secret tunnel from the nearby sea cliffs. They will encounter the remains of the prisoners left abandoned in the dungeon and Menalcas, now a darakhul, who can reveal where he hid the pennant. They must then ascend the tower, recover the pennant, and use the shadowmancer’s bundle to open a shadow road on the roof without being killed or captured.

Illumination. All rooms are unlit except where noted otherwise. Rooms containing windows or archer slots are in dim light, the rest are in total darkness.

Sound. The thick stone floors keep sound from traveling from floor to floor.

Battles on the Stairs. The stairs are designed to be defended from above, preventing large numbers from coming into play all at once.

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Publisher: Wolfgang Baur

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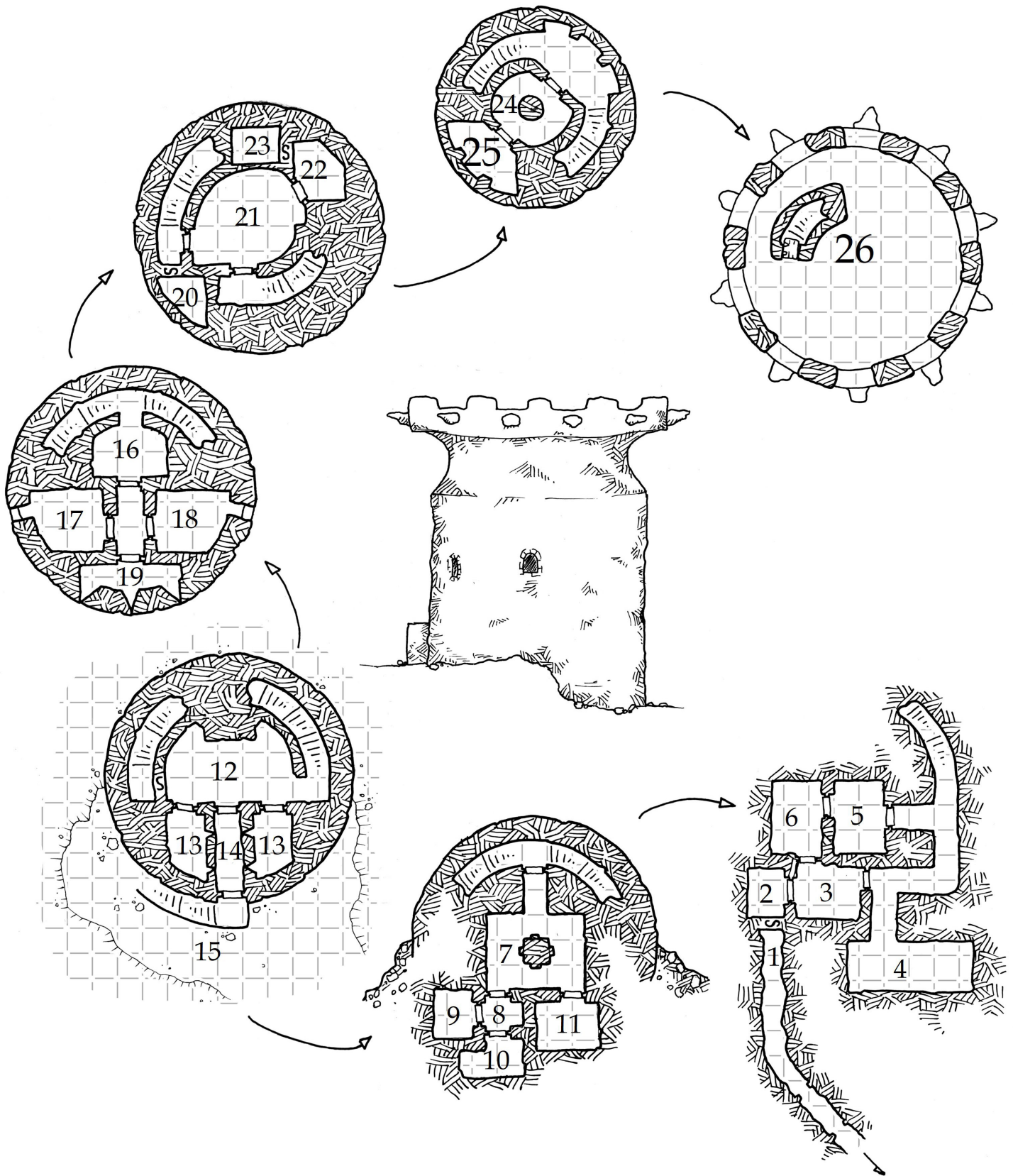
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MIDGARD

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1. TUNNEL FROM THE SEA CLIFFS

From its concealed entry in a sea cliff to its opposite end, this rough-hewn, man-made tunnel smells of low tide. The close walls and low, jagged ceiling make for uncomfortable walking. Here and there, graffiti can be seen, mainly in the form of lewd carvings that look quite old.

Arcane symbols are carved in the shape of a doorway on the wall at the end of the tunnel. A DC 20 Intelligence (Arcana) check reveals that the door may be opened from either side by channeling an evocation spell into it. The spell is absorbed harmlessly and the door slowly swings open.

2. STORAGE ROOM

Pieces of broken furniture, wooden planks, and a barrel full of nails lean against one wall of this small room, and a single, barred door stands half open in another.

This room holds little of interest, but the open door to Room 3 provides access to the ghouls waiting there who will rush to the attack at the slightest noise.

3. GUARD'S ROOM

An unlit lantern hangs from an iron hook in the wall of this room. Two iron doors with viewports lead north and east, and a barred door stands open to the west.

Four **ghouls** languish here, each one bearing wounds from encounters with Menalcas, the darakhul in Area 4. Menalcas occasionally captures one of the ghouls and locks it in a cell for conversation, though it's never worth the effort. These creatures were ignorant, petty criminals from the countryside and becoming ghouls has not improved their social skills.

The doors to Areas 4 and 6 are locked (DC 15 Dexterity check with thieves' tools to pick). Both viewports open from this side.

4. BUTTERY

The smell in this room indicates that it was used to store barrels of beer and, likely, food. Other than the odor, all that remains of the former contents are smashed lumber and twisted bits of iron. A scribe's desk and chair stands against one wall with an inkpot and quill in their holders.

Menalcas, now a darakhul (*Tome of Beasts*), spends most of his time in this room, distracting himself from his hunger with the smell of beer and the feeling of sitting at a desk in a chair "like a civilized person."

When he arrived in the dungeon, he barricaded himself in Area 5 to escape the ghouls, only to discover the room was occupied by a darakhul chained to the wall. The creature lunged and bit Menalcas, fatally wounding him and infecting him with darakhul fever. Menalcas slew the creature on

rising from death and trapped the ghouls, only to discover that he could no longer open the door to the tunnel since he could no longer cast spells. He has been here ever since, dining on rats. He controls his hunger long enough to parlay, and he gladly tells the PCs where and how to find the guidon. He also offers a bargain: he is not yet ready to truly die, at least not here. If they will allow him to escape through the tunnel, he promises to kill as many Mharoti in the surrounding region as he can. He offers up his sword to sweeten the deal.

Menalcas' sword is a *silvered vicious longsword* with a pommel shaped like an eagle's claw clutching a star sapphire.

5. PUNISHMENT HOLDING CELL

Four sets of iron shackles hang from rings set high on the walls in the corners of this otherwise bare room. One shackle holds a mummified forearm and hand. A pile of bones and leathery flesh lie below it on the floor.

This was a punishment cell where uncooperative prisoners were held. The remains belong to the darakhul who killed Menalcas and was later killed by him in turn.

6. HOLDING CELL

Wooden benches line the walls of this room. The stone walls are covered in scratched and carved graffiti, most of it obscene, some religious, and some of both. The squeaking of rats occasionally breaks the silence.

The rats here serve as the only source of food in the dungeons.

7. PILLARED ROOM

A thick pillar dominates the room, carved in the shape of a jackal-headed warrior from far to the south. Pegs jut from the walls here and there, presumably for lanterns. Three thick, wooden doors exit the room, one to the north down a short passage and two to the south. The southwestern door is partially open.

The door to Area 8 is partially open.

The pillar is a **possessed pillar** (*Tome of Beasts*), looted from a Nurian temple in antiquity by Illyrian raiders. It attacks any creature that enters the room who is not undead or a construct (Menalcas is unaware it is anything more than statuary). A necklace worn by those stationed here once kept the pillar from attacking, but all of these were lost when the tower was deserted.

The pillar does not support the ceiling, and destroying it will not cause a collapse.

8. UPPER OBSERVATION ROOM

Two closed, barred doors lead to cells (Areas 9, 10). Both are locked and can be opened with a DC 16 Dexterity check made with thieves' tools.

9. HAUNTED CELL

This bare cell contains a long wooden bench against the back wall.

The **ghost** of a jailer who was strangled against the bars of this cell long ago now haunts it. Rarely heard from over the last five decades except when annoyed by some overlooked chore or shoddy discipline among the living jailers, the sound of combat in Area 7 snaps him out of his reverie and angers him enough to attack.

10. EXPANDED CELL

This cell is empty. The broken stone and pick strikes covering the back wall indicate that the cell was being expanded when it was abandoned.

This cell contains nothing of note. It might serve as a good place to rest, provided the ghost next door is dealt with.

11. JAILER'S QUARTERS

This room contains a dusty old cot, a small table almost entirely covered in the wax of melted candle stubs, and a dusty mess kit sitting on the floor near the door.

This was the jailer's quarters when the tower was still in Illyrian hands and has sat empty since its abandonment.

12. MUSTERING HALL

Three silk banners hang from the ceiling here, almost touching the floor. One depicts a hunting scene, and the other two bear southern heraldic devices.

This is the mustering room for changing shifts in the tower. When not in use, it is unoccupied.

Secret Door. The secret door here requires a DC 20 Wisdom (Perception) check to notice, made more difficult than it would ordinarily be by the banner hanging in front of it. It is obvious and easily opened from the stairway side. This hidden stairway leads to Area 7.

13. ARCHER STATIONS

Small wooden platforms, about two feet in height, stand beneath two archer slots in one wall of this narrow room.

A pair of **kobolds** in each of these rooms plays a game with chalk on the wall between the archer slots.

14. ENTRY HALLWAY

This narrow corridor has an iron door with a latched viewport overlooking the outside. The inner door is identical to the external, but bars from the other side. The walls to either side of the corridor contain two archer slots each.

A **kobold** equipped with a signal horn stands ready here to summon those in the courtyard before retreating to Area 12, barring both doors. He also keeps score between the kobolds in both Areas 13.

15. CLEARING

A clearing of ancient and cracked flagstones skirts the southern approach to the old tower. Hand carts stacked with lumber sit here and there in orderly rows. Cut stone blocks stand stacked in lines along the rough road. Lines of wooden stakes surround the tower at some distance, indicating plans for a defensive wall and outlining the footprints of a few buildings. A single stair winds up the side of the tower to a heavy iron door set deep in the wall.

Seven **kobold** recruits under the direction of a **dragonborn edjet** patrol the clearing. Their standing orders are to fall back to the tower and defend it from within should a threat arise. If alerted to a threat within the tower, they will come running.

DRAGONBORN EDJET

This dragonkin wears plate armor and a conical helm and carries a glaive. A red sash crosses his chest, and he has an imperious air about him.

DRAGONBORN EDJET

Medium humanoid (dragonborn), lawful neutral

Armor Class 14 (chain shirt)

Hit Points 45 (6d10+12)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
17 (+3)	12 (+1)	14 (+2)	10 (+0)	13 (+1)	13 (+1)

Saving Throws Str +5, Con +4

Skills Athletics +5, Perception +3

Damage Resistances fire

Senses passive Perception 13

Languages Draconic, Trade Tongue

Challenge 3 (700 XP)

Line of Battle. When the dragonborn edjet is within 5 feet of two allies that aren't incapacitated, it makes any save against becoming frightened with advantage.

Martial Advantage. Once per turn, the dragonborn edjet can deal an extra 10 (3d6) damage to a creature it hits with a weapon attack if that creature is within 5 feet of an ally of the edjet that isn't incapacitated.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The dragonborn edjet makes two melee or ranged attacks.

Halberd. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 8 (1d10+3) slashing damage.

Shortsword. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (1d6+3) piercing damage.

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

Fire Breath (Recharge 6). The dragonborn edjet exhales fire in a 15-foot cone. Each creature in that area must make a DC 13 Dexterity saving throw, taking 10 (3d6) fire damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.

The classic edjet are heavy troops of dragonborn devoted to one or another of the elemental gods and commanded by paladins or priests.

Their general is typically a lesser dragon or major drake, and their officers are timarli. Their numbers include any number of holy warriors and elementalists devoted to Veles and the Four Elemental Gods, as well as heavily armored lizard-riders, and even oliphaunt-riding artilleryists. Their rank and file consist of halberdiers, feared as much for their prowess as for their ability to breathe gout of flame into their enemy's front line.

The edjet are raised from birth to believe in the superiority of the scaled folk over all others, and their confidence shows on the battlefield.

Their charges are swift and crushing, and they fight with a zeal rarely seen elsewhere. The edjet are believers, and this gives them courage to stand tall against giants, magic, or even the walking gods of Nuria Natal.

16. ADJUTANT'S ROOM

A writing table and chair stand against one wall. A leather scroll case hangs from a peg nearby.

A **dragonborn edjet** adjutant for the tower's commander works at the table here. The scroll case holds several documents detailing Mharoti forces in the area. These papers would be highly prized by the Illyrian forces in exile and, likely, many others.

17. EDJETS' QUARTERS

Three cots with small sea chests beside them stand against the walls here. A window set deep in the wall looks out to the sea not far to the west.

Two of the **dragonborn edjet** occupy the room currently. They respond to the sound of combat in Areas 16-19. The three chests contain an assortment of coins totaling 147 gp in value.

18. ALCHEMIST'S WORKSHOP

A scarred, blackened, and pitted wooden table, half-covered in bottles, jars, and small pots, stands against one wall next to a window set deep in the stone wall. Several other instruments of a clearly alchemical nature are scattered here and there throughout the room in a haphazard manner.

Trap! The top of the table is trapped, and the trap is a bit more explosive than its creator intended. If triggered, the explosion will destroy most of the contents of the room (GM's discretion) and blow the shutters out of the window with a highly-visible jet of fire. No creature within visual range of the tower will fail to notice it.

OVERCOMPENSATING FIRE TRAP

Mechanical trap

This trap is activated when the weight of the tabletop lightens by more than 4 ounces (removing two items), which severs a wire and drops a highly explosive bundle under the table. Any creature who removes one object from the table notices the table's slight shift with a successful DC 15 Wisdom (Perception) check. A DC 15 Intelligence (Investigation) check reveals the nature of the trap and a successful DC 15 Dexterity check made with thieves' tools will disarm the trap. Attempting to disarm the trap, and failing, triggers the trap. Once the trap is activated, creatures within 25 feet of the explosion (the entire room, including the door and window) must make a DC 15 Dexterity saving throw (the door and window automatically fail). A target takes 14 (4d6) fire damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.

The kobold alchemist keeps a well-stocked workshop. Given time, an alchemist's kit can be cobbled together here, along with enough uncommon ingredients to make a few explosive poison flasks:

Improvised Exploding Poison Flask. *Ranged Weapon*

Attack: range 30 ft., explodes in a 10-foot-radius.

Creatures in the area take 10 (3d6) poison damage and are poisoned for 1 minute, or take half damage and are not poisoned with a successful DC 13 Dexterity saving throw. A poisoned creature makes a DC 13 Constitution saving throw at the end of each of its turns, ending the poisoned condition on a success.

19. OVERWATCH

Three archer slots provide a view of the approach to the tower and the exterior stair.

Two **kobolds** cover the approach to the tower with light crossbows here. The **kobold alchemist** (*Tome of Beasts*) loiters here for the conversation.

20. HIDDEN ROOM

Secret Door. If Menalcas gave instructions, then this door is easily found and opened. Otherwise, finding the door requires a successful DC 20 Wisdom (Perception) check to detect the one stone set slightly deeper than the others in the wall at the top of the stairs. If pressed, the stone opens the door to the hidden room.

A saddlebag lies on the floor of this tiny room, and a round bronze shield painted with the image of a hedgehog passant leans against the wall.

The saddlebag contains the guidon the PCs were sent to find as well as a velvet pouch containing 12 rubies worth 30 gp each. The shield is an *arrow-catching shield*, which Menalcas was too weak to carry any further.

21. BARRACKS

The sound of snoring fills the air in this room. Hammocks slung like spider webs fill the room almost entirely except for a narrow path leading from one door to another.

Eighteen **kobolds** currently occupy this room, all of whom are sleeping soundly after a long shift. All Dexterity (Stealth) checks that the PCs make involving noise are made with advantage due to the loud snoring of the kobolds.

22. COMMANDER'S QUARTERS

The commander of the tower, a **half-red dragon veteran** named Nizar, sorts through reports detailing supplies needed to complete construction of the outbuildings. The secret door to Area 23 stands open. Periodically, Nizar pokes his head out the main door to make sure the kobolds aren't up to anything destructive.

23. THE COMMANDER'S HOARD

An impressive assortment of silver items take up this room, from candlesticks to a large candelabra, to religious symbols and a leather saddle heavily decorated with silver caps.

The commander sends his kobolds into the countryside to gather what silver they can from the abandoned hillside estates nearby. Most of it will be melted down and spent to complete the expansion of the tower into a walled fort, though all of those garrisoned here look forward to a healthy bonus. The kobolds in Area 21 will fight to the death to protect the silver. The total value of the hoard, when melted down, is roughly 3,500 sp.

24. PILLARED PASSAGE

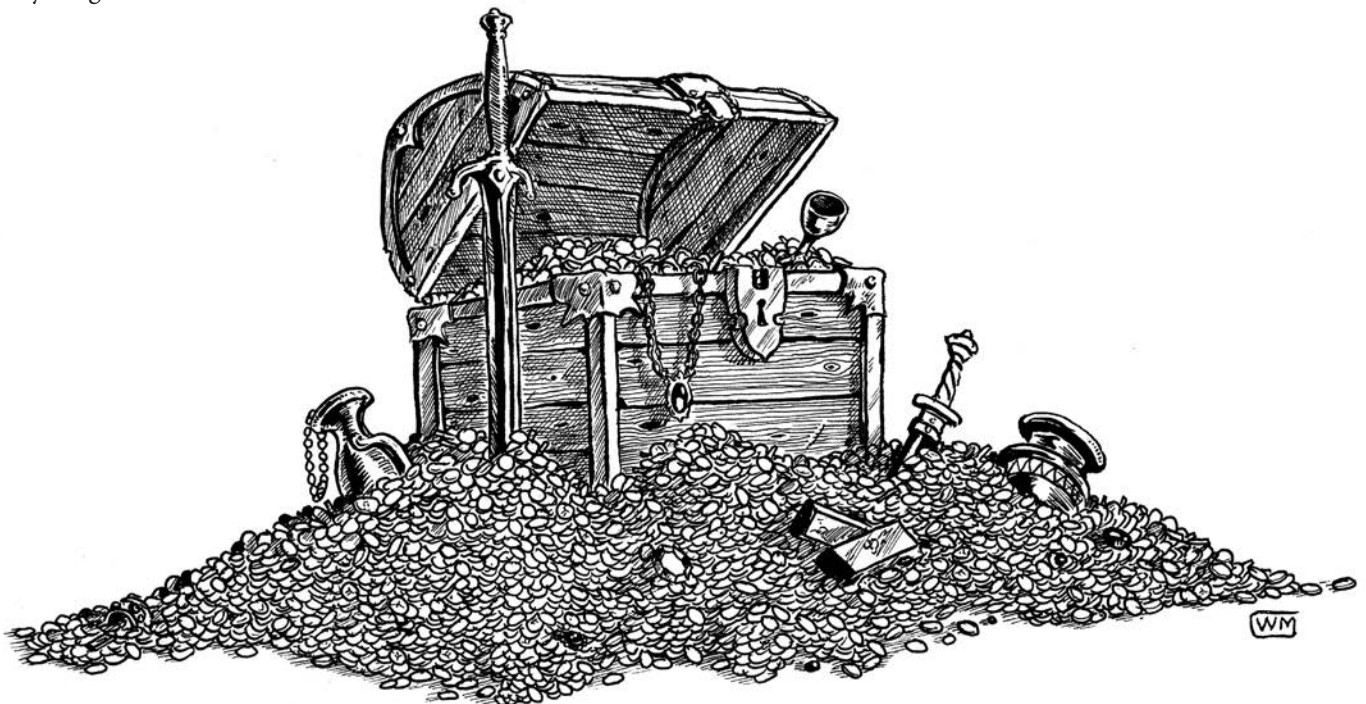
Intricate carvings cover a stone pillar in the center of the room in depictions of a variety of ships, merfolk, sea serpents, compasses, and various other nautical symbols. Great detail and years of effort clearly went into the work.

There is nothing of note in this room, but a DC 16 Wisdom (Perception) check based on hearing will detect the sound of muttering kobolds coming from Area 25.

25. THE WYVERN'S LARDER

Slaughtered sheep hang from hooks in the ceiling here. Judging by the odor, they are beginning to rot.

The kobolds have learned the hard way to keep the wyvern on the roof above well fed. There is a 25% chance that a pair of **kobolds** are here, preparing to carry a dead sheep up to the roof.



26. TOWER ROOF

Heaps of straw and the cracked and splintered bones of several large animals lie scattered over the stone floor of the tower's top. The stench of rotten meat comes and goes with the seaside breeze.

The door to the roof is unlocked, but oaken and sturdy. The application of the shadowmancer's bundle requires four rounds and a successful DC 16 Intelligence (Arcana) check while placing a number of quail hearts in the cracked mortar of the roof and reciting a poem called 'Her Name is the Sea' in Umbral. This is complicated by the presence of the **wyvern** who nests here when she isn't patrolling the area from the air. The spectacle of the wyvern in combat will draw the attention of those on the ground below, who will take 1d6 rounds to reach the roof.

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CONCLUSION

Once the shadow road is opened, the PCs can exit the tower through it. It closes after two rounds. Once through the doorway, they must journey for two days along a shadow road before exiting on a hilltop near Raguza. They will find the Lady Orania Oreste very grateful and generous in rewarding them. She certainly has more work for the PCs, should they remain willing to aid the Illyrian exiles' cause.

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