

Return to Steelbone Meadows

A One-Round Dungeons & Dragons® Living Greyhawk™
Bandit Kingdoms Adventure
Version 1.0

by Theo Judd

Circle Reviewer: Britt Frey

Playtesters: Joe Aker, Chad Aylen, Liz Gillespie, Diana Hostetler, Cory Light, Douglas Poynor, Adam Waggenspack, Robert Watson, John Williamson

Within the haunted grounds of Steelbone Meadows lies a dark secret regarding the origin of That Which Slept. Are you strong enough to face the trials that lay therein to recover the forgotten lore? Members of the Northern Alliance, Army of the Warfields, and Death Cultists are encouraged to participate in this adventure. Part one of the Gathering of Fiends series. A Bandit Kingdoms adventure set in the Midlands for characters levels 7 to 13 (APLs 8 to 12).

Resources for this adventure include *Miniatures Handbook* [Michael Donais, Skaff Elias, Rob Heinsoo, Jonathan Tweet], *Spell Compendium* [Matthew Sernett, Jeff Grubb, Mike McArtor], *Complete Adventurer* [Jesse Decker], and *Complete Arcane* [Richard Baker].

Based on the original DUNGEONS & DRAGONS® rules created by E. Gary Gygax and Dave Arneson and the new DUNGEONS & DRAGONS game designed by Jonathan Tweet, Monte Cook, Skip Williams, Richard Baker, and Peter Adkison.

This game product contains no Open Game Content. No portion of this work may be reproduced in any form without permission of Wizards of the Coast. To learn more about the Open Gaming License and the d20 SYSTEM license, please visit www.wizards.com/d20.

This is an official RPGA® play document. To find out more about the RPGA and to learn more on how you can sanction and run DUNGEONS & DRAGONS game events of all sizes, visit our website at www.rpga.com.

DUNGEONS & DRAGONS, D&D, GREYHAWK, Living Greyhawk, D&D Rewards, RPGA, *Player's Handbook*, *Dungeon Master's Guide*, and *Monster Manual* are trademarks of Wizards of the Coast, Inc. in the US and other countries. This material is protected under the copyright laws of the United States of America. Any reproduction or unauthorized use of the material or artwork contained herein is prohibited without the express written permission of Wizards of the Coast, Inc. This product is a work of fiction. Any similarity to actual people, organizations, places, or events is purely coincidental. © 2005 Wizards of the Coast, Inc.

Visit the LIVING GREYHAWK website at www.rpga.com.

For questions specific to this document, please e-mail your Triad at contact.bdk@iuzlg.com; for LIVING GREYHAWK campaign questions email rpgahq@wizards.com.

RPGA® SANCTIONED PLAY

Most likely you ordered this adventure as part of an RPGA event from the RPGA website, or you received it from your senior gamemaster. To play this adventure as part of the LIVING GREYHAWK campaign—a worldwide, ongoing D&D® campaign set in the GREYHAWK setting—you must sanction it as part of an RPGA event. This event could be as elaborate as a big convention, or as simple as a group of friends meeting at the DM's house.

To sanction an RPGA event, you must be at least a HERALD-LEVEL™ gamemaster. The person who sanctions the event is called the senior gamemaster, and is in charge of making sure the event is sanctioned before play, runs smoothly on the date sanctioned, and then reported back to the RPGA in a timely manner. The person who runs the game is called the session Dungeon Master (or usually just DM). Sometimes (and almost all the time in the cases of home events) the senior gamemaster is also the session DM. You must be at least a HERALD-LEVEL GM to run this adventure. By sanctioning and reporting this adventure, you accomplish a couple of things. First, it is an official game, and you can use the AR to advance your LIVING GREYHAWK character. Second, players and DMs gain rewards for sanctioned RPGA play if they are members of the DUNGEONS & DRAGONS REWARDS program. Playing this adventure is worth two (2) points.

This adventure retires from RPGA-sanctioned play on December 31, 2008.

To learn more about the LIVING GREYHAWK character creation and development, RPGA event sanctioning, and DUNGEONS & DRAGONS REWARDS, visit the RPGA website at www.rpga.com.

PLAYERS READ NO FARTHER

If you are planning on playing this adventure, stop reading now. The rest of the information in this adventure is for the DM only. If you read farther than this section, you'll know too much about its challenges, which kills the fun. Also, if you're playing this adventure as part of an RPGA-sanctioned event, reading beyond this point makes you ineligible to do so.

PREPARING FOR PLAY

To get the most out of this adventure, you need copies of the following D&D rule books: *Player's Handbook*, *Dungeon Master's Guide*, and the *Monster Manual*.

Throughout this adventure, text in ***bold italics*** provides player information for you to paraphrase or read aloud when appropriate. Information on nonplayer characters (NPCs) and monsters appear in abbreviated form in the adventure text. Refer to Appendix 1 for full information on NPCs and monsters. For your convenience, Appendix 1 is split by APL.

Along with this adventure, you'll find a RPGA session tracking sheet. If you're playing this adventure as part of an RPGA-sanctioned event, complete and turn in

this sheet to your senior GM directly after play. You'll also find a LIVING GREYHAWK adventure record (AR). You need one copy of this for each participating player.

AVERAGE PARTY LEVEL (APL)

See Chapter One of the *Living Greyhawk Campaign Sourcebook* for details on APLs. If the APL of your group is an odd number, ask them before the adventure begins whether they would like to play the higher or the lower adjacent APL.

LIVING GREYHAWK adventures are designed for APL 2 and higher. Four or five 1st-level characters may find the challenge of an APL 2 adventure difficult. Suggest the following to these groups to help increase their chances of success:

1. Enlist a sixth player.
2. Advise characters to buy riding dogs to help protect them and fight for them.

TIME UNITS AND UPKEEP

This is a standard Metaregional adventure, set in Iuz's Border States. Characters native to that metaregion pay 1 Time Unit per round; all other characters pay 2 Time Units per round.

More information about Lifestyle and Upkeep can be found in the *Living Greyhawk Campaign Sourcebook*.

ADVENTURE BACKGROUND

Many eons ago, a dark dragon brought destruction and ruin to an ancient order of mage-priests. Though they found the monster indestructible, they did manage to bind it forever in a deep sleep. However, many of their number were lost in the battle, contributing to their ultimate decline.

When Iuz conquered the city of Molag he learned the legend of That Which Sleeps from records in its hallowed halls. He mused that with such a powerful creature under his control, his rule would be uncontested. Therefore, he tasked the Boneheart with finding a method to awaken it. For many years they labored at the task, only to learn that to release That Which Sleeps required the aid of a good cleric.

Meanwhile the scattered servants of the Horned Society, knowing Iuz's foolish proposition would doom the land to a new era of darkness in which they played no part, fought to stymie the progress of the Boneheart. Several times they made overtures to adventurers to aid them, but most of the time the so-called heroes would slay them when they learned of their devotion to Nerull.

The Boneheart gained the upper hand in 594 CY when they learned a bard named Oytens sought the *Last Tome of Zenam* to learn more about Nerull's Bane, which lay in the hands of the de facto ruler of Wormhall, an agent of Iuz named Nerzan. The Boneheart lured adventurers to Nerzan, who promised them the tome in exchange for their aid in destroying a "horrible monster."

Nerzan tricked the adventurers into traveling to Steelbone Meadows and releasing the creature, spelling certain doom for the entire land.

Now, That Which Slept has brought chaos and destruction to the land once again, and many seek to return it to slumber. To learn the old method of the mage-priests now requires a return to Steelbone Meadows.

ADVENTURE SUMMARY

As the adventure begins, the PCs come across a mongrelman named Magh, who claims to seek a way to end the terror of That Which Slept. He has had difficulty swaying others to his path, so he entreats the PCs to help him. Some PCs may know of That Which Slept from previous adventures or membership in certain meta-organizations. Magh says the key to making That Which Slept slumber again lies in Steelbone Meadows, where the creature once slept.

If the PCs follow Magh to Steelbone Meadows, he shows them the dilapidated temple where the creature used to lie. Searching the grounds, they PCs find a secret passage to an underground dungeon. Within, they find many tricks and traps to try to thwart their progress, but eventually they find the *grimoire of imprisonment*, which documents the efforts of the mage-priests to defeat That Which Slept. Magh asks to be entrusted with the *grimoire*, and he uses chicanery to get it anyway if the PCs do not comply with his request.

PREPARATION FOR PLAY

The most important NPC in this adventure (Magh) is a bard/marshal, so it is important that you are familiar with the way a bard's and marshal's abilities work. A full description of each ability is presented in his stat block so it is recommended you review this thoroughly.

A few props will also aid you in the presentation of this adventure. It is recommended that you have the following miniatures from the D&D Miniatures line: medium silver dragon, large copper dragon, bronze wyrmling, and brass dragon. For *Encounter Eight*, it greatly aids the suspense if you bring an egg timer with you to track the "countdown to doom." Additionally, if you own the D&D Icons Colossal Red Dragon, you will be pleased to know you can get some use out of it in *Encounter Nine*.

REGIONAL WARNING

If your players are unfamiliar with the Bandit Kingdoms region, read the following aloud before running this event:

It is important to realize at all times that the Bandit Kingdoms are under the control of Iuz, the Old One, a chaotic, evil deity who revels in torture, depravity and trickery. Government officials tend to imitate many of the attributes of their dread lord. Things

that you might take for granted in other lands, such as freedom of worship and the rule of law, are not valued by the rulers of the Combination of Free Lords. You may be able to strike at Iuz, but seldom can you strike at him overtly without paying the final price. Be warned, life is short for those who openly defy Old Wicked.

INTRODUCTION

As the adventure begins, the PCs are ending a brief holiday. They find themselves in Obresthorpe at a joint called Stout Surmal's, a popular tavern. Surmal, the owner, is stout indeed, but his brews are good and his wenches are pretty. Surmal is used to letting traveling minstrels perform on his stage and tonight there is a fairly large crowd to hear an out-of-town performer. Read the following to the PCs when they settle into their seats:

You are just getting back from a brief holiday and passing through the village of Obresthorpe. Some locals recommended a tavern to you, so you headed there for some relaxation. Stout Surmal's is bustling tonight with patrons who are anxious to hear the renowned traveling bard known as the Magnificent Magh. He is said to be an excellent performer with a moving voice and the place is packed to capacity.

As you sit in anticipation, lucky to be here in town on such a fortuitous night, you hear a herald announce the arrival of Baron Horrace. Everyone rises to their feet as a tall, lanky man enters escorted by a dozen guards. His red and black robes hang loosely on his thin frame. His skin appears as soft, white wax, tight on his bones. His eyes are underlined by dark rings. Around his neck, hangs a bulbous, writhing worm of a sickly green pallor held by a silver chain. The Baron is led to a sequestered portion of the tavern where a raised seat has been set apart.

The PCs can roll a single DC 15 Gather Information check to learn about the Magnificent Magh from the crowd. Or they can learn the same information with a DC 15 Knowledge (local: Iuz's Border States) check. A successful check indicates the following. The Magnificent Magh is a mysterious figure whose talent for song is virtually unmatched in the Flanaess. He randomly appears in towns and cities and announces a performance, then disappears again suddenly until show night. He always wows the crowd and it is rumored that he has never performed in the same place twice. Many say he has traveled the width and breadth of the Flanaess many times, and no one ever knows where he will pop up next.

Some of the PCs may be interested in approaching the Baron. If they do so, his guards attempt to keep them away. However, if they are intimidated (they have a +6 modifier to resist) or the PCs can improve their initial

Unfriendly attitude to Helpful (DC 40 Diplomacy check), then they relent and allow the PCs to approach.

Some PCs may have met the Baron in BDK5-04 A Leather Bound Tome, but he is not of sound mind. Baron Horrace is thoroughly insane at this point and cannot remember any of the PCs or why they came to him. If they make a good case to him or simply become too annoying, he sighs and allows them to “kiss the worm.” Any PC who foolishly does so is exposed to slimy doom (DMG 292). After that, Horrace brooks no further conversation as the show is about to begin.

Lanterns are brought up to highlight the stage and those in the bar are dimmed as a charming man enters stage right and bows amidst cheers from the crowd. He thanks everyone for attending and asks that you listen carefully to his tune, for he claims that he does not sing of fanciful things, but of truth. He then begins.

*“Back in the old forgotten years,
“A tragedy of many tears,
“Befell this land where you now dwell,
“And took many a soul to hell.”*

*“A fearsome beast who men did fear,
“An awesome thing of evil clear,
“It came this land to subjugate,
“Within the grip of greatest hate.”*

*“The creature came to kill and slay,
“It brought destruction every day,
“And from the coldness of its eyes,
“It called down darkness from the skies.
“The mage-priests fought a bitter fight,
“Their best were bested in a night,
“Their magic ineffectual,
“The creature was unkillable.”*

*“A dreadful thing that men did fear,
“A harbinger of evil clear,
“It willed this land to subjugate,
“And bring about unending hate.”*

*“The mage-priests held a long discourse,
“The way to end the monster’s force,
“If it could never be destroyed,
“Then death magic they must avoid.
“Their magic they would all combine,
“To hold the beast its soul to bind,
“Within a cage their foe would be,
“To sleep for all eternity.”*

*“A monster great that men did fear,
“Calamity of evil clear,
“Ambition strong to subjugate,
“And spread the vice of cruel hate.”*

*“Much blood was spilled that fateful day,
“The mage-priests gave their souls away,*

*“To put the foul beast ‘ere to dream,
“The battle ended with a scream.
“It lay many a century,
“Was undisturbed ‘till recently,
“The Lord of Pain’s desire fulfilled,
“The creature woke with cries most shrill.”*

*“A terror huge that men did fear,
“A demon spawned of evil clear,
“A vile wish to subjugate,
“A twisted and perverted hate.”*

*“It dwells this day not far away,
“It plots and schemes in every way,
“Its empire of darkness grim,
“Restored to grant its every whim.
“Our mission now, our destiny,
“To seek a way our lives to free,
“To make the creature sleep again,
“The land now needs heroic men.”*

1: A STRANGE MAN

Magh ends his song to uproarious applause. His Perform check was 46 (this includes a +4 from his motivate charisma aura after taking 10). The patrons give him a standing ovation and look at the PCs like they are crazy if they do not do likewise. Magh sings several other popular songs to the delight of the crowd, but none seems to resonate like the first. At the conclusion of his performance, he thanks the crowd for their enthusiasm and exits stage left to be mobbed by fans requesting autographs. His bodyguards (burly half-orcs) then escort him to a private room.

About a half hour after the concert, Surmal, the stout owner of the tavern, approaches the PCs.

“Scuse me there blokes, but I been asked to deliver this ‘ere message from the Magnificent Magh. Enjoy the beer.”

Surmal hands them Player Handout 1, which indicates that Magh wishes to meet with them in his private room. Assuming the PCs comply with Magh’s wishes, proceed by reading.

Following the instructions in the letter, you make your way to Magh’s private room. His guards grimace at you, but after looking you over, they nod and allow you to enter. Inside, you see an elaborate dressing room with an impressive array of costumes and makeup. Sitting in front of a mirror combing his hair is one of the ugliest creatures you have ever seen. It has long, wide, and sharply pointed ears, a flat, broad nose, a sloped forehead, and large, bright eyes. Its hide is covered in thick patches of coarse, black hair, and its teeth are sharp, crooked, and rotten.

“Greetings!” the beast professes, “I am the Magnificent Magh. Do not let my appearance fool you. I am the same one you saw on that stage. However, for obvious reasons, I am forced to mask my visage when performing.”

Magh: male mongrelfolk ex-bard 10/marshal 4; see Appendix 1.

Magh answers any questions about his heritage honestly, but if the PCs feel like it would be rude to ask, they can make a DC 10 Knowledge (local) check to realize Magh is a mongrelman. He does not have an evil aura.

Assuming the PCs do not freak out, Magh gets straight to the point. Roleplay the following information out, answering questions as they are asked to the best of Magh's ability. Use the following as his main talking points and a reference for what he knows.

- As the PCs may have suspected, his first song was about That Which Slept, a great evil dragon who has taken up residence in the Bluff Hills.
- Magh knows most of the information given in the *Adventure Background* regarding That Which Slept, but he doesn't know any more specific details.
- Magh claims that his singing, although quite a fulfilling vocation, is only a cover for his true mission. He says that his kind is slighted and that he wishes to do those like him a service by doing great things that will be remembered for ages. Having learned of That Which Slept, he wishes to aid in putting it to rest once again. (This is not entirely true. Magh is actually working for Aundurach, a former Boneheart who returned to the Bandit Kingdoms in 596 claiming to be a convert of St. Cuthbert. If the PCs beat his Bluff check of 42 and confront him, he admits to working for Aundurach, but assures the PCs that Aundurach is wholly devoted to making sure That Which Slept is defeated.)
- Magh asked the PCs to meet with him because he noticed they seemed moved by his song for some reason. He also had a hunch that they were more than mere travelers or mercenaries. (He learned all this with his Sense Motive skill.)
- Magh has approached others about helping him in his task, but has found few with both the heart and the wherewithal to actually be of assistance.
- Magh has researched the subject and learned That Which Slept was originally imprisoned in a now-run-down temple to the Far Wanderer (Celestial) in Steelbone Meadows. He believes there remains a clue at that temple to defeating That Which Slept and he wants to recruit a group to help him find it. (He actually learned this from Aundurach, who cast a *commune* spell to divine most of this information.)
- Magh offers no reward to the PCs. He says that if making the Bandit Kingdoms safe from That Which

Slept is not reward enough then they have weaker hearts than he thought and bids them adieu.

- If a PC at the table played BDK16-08 *The Count of Dahlvier* and has a cert indicating a deal with Aundurach (this will be written in), then Magh uses Bluff to send the PC innuendo suggesting Aundurach will owe a favor for the service.

If the PCs agree to accompany Magh to Steelbone Meadows, then he is elated. Since it is late, he recommends they start out first thing in the morning. He indicates that he is not much use in a fight, but will come along to show them the way (if necessary) and offer his expertise in other matters.

2: THE ENCOUNTER THAT WASN'T

It is very likely the PCs will never realize this encounter happened. The reason for this is because Magh makes every effort to ensure it is erased from their memories completely. In the middle of the night before the PCs arrive at the temple, Magh plans his subterfuge. His basic plan is to *fascinate* the PCs, and then make a *suggestion* that they allow him to keep any useful information or artifacts they find regarding That Which Slept. Although Magh sees the PCs as useful pawns, he does not ultimately trust their ability to use the information properly. In order to accomplish this task without being detected, use the following guidelines for Magh.

- Magh sneaks away to a safe distance (everyone has to relieve themselves at night now and again) and casts *invisibility*, *sculpt sound* (to make his voice quieter) and *zone of silence* before making his way back to the PCs.
- He casts *invisibility* on his snake familiar, then casts *silence* on the familiar and tells it to slither so that it is within 15 ft. of at least two sleeping PCs, but not the PCs on watch.
- When all is ready, he dismisses *zone of silence*. As a surprise action, he begins to sing (although since he used *sculpt sound*, he does not cause a great commotion, not that the other PCs sleeping in a *silence* spell could hear him anyway). He takes 10 on a Perform check to *fascinate* up to four PCs with his song (remember at least two of them should be in the area of a *silence* spell). A DC 46 Will save resists.
- While he continues to sing, he proceeds to make *suggestions* to the PCs until they fail their Will saves (DC 19). Remember that *suggestion* does not count against his daily uses of bardic music so he can continue making *suggestions* until the PCs fail their saves. His *suggestion* is that they allow him to keep any useful information or artifacts they find regarding That Which Slept. He then makes a *suggestion* that the PC either goes back to sleep immediately or goes back to standing watch (depending on which activity the PC was involved in first). He then tells his familiar to cover the PCs going back to sleep with the area of *silence* and repeats the process with the remaining PCs.

Finally, he casts *modify memory* with his staff of *befuddling* on any PCs who were awake when he entered to erase their memories of this event. He then crawls back into his bedroll just as the spell ends.

- Once the PCs have failed their saves against his *fascinate*, you can merely assume Magh has no trouble. If one or more of the PCs pass their first saving throw (likely by rolling a natural 20) when he takes his surprise action, then Magh has a good shot at winning initiative in the first round and gets to act again before the PCs can. He tries one more time to *fascinate* the PCs in this event. If he fails again, then he tries to occupy the PCs using *song of discord* and make his getaway if need be.

Development

If by some unlikely twist of fate, Magh is caught in the act by the PCs, he fesses up to his crime. He confesses he does not trust them (he does not really trust anyone in the Bandit Kingdoms) and asks them to forgive him. If they place him under a *zone of truth* or cast *discern lies*, he does not resist, and the PCs see he is not lying. Magh tries to salvage the situation as best he can, even promising the PCs a reward of one of his magic items (only if they force the issue) if they agree to continue with the plan. He promises no more deception.

3: THE RUINED TEMPLE

The journey to the ruined temple takes several days. There are no encounters along the way. Beneath the temple the PCs will encounter many puzzles and riddles. Throughout the following encounters, Magh accompanies the PCs and offers his opinions whenever they ask. However, it is important to realize that Magh does not have all the answers. Magh is a cautious fellow and likes to think things through before acting. If the PCs are having particular difficulty with some of the earlier puzzles, Magh offers hints every 5 minutes (or every 3 rounds of combat in the case of the final encounter). Suggested hints are given for each puzzle in order of usefulness. You should give the least useful hints first and the most useful hints last.

Magh rides along with the PCs atop his *phantom steed*. It takes several days to reach the temple unless the PCs use *wind walk*, *teleport*, or similar magic. Read the following when the PCs are prepared to approach the temple.

In the event the PCs cast *legend lore* on the temple or the dungeon complex below, they learn that the dungeon was constructed long before the temple. The dungeon was originally built by the mage-priests over a thousand years ago beneath a fortress of theirs. The fortress did not withstand the test of time, but the dungeon did.

It has been several days since Magh and your party left Obresthorpe for Steelbone Meadows. Though you were harassed by several wild animals throughout the trip, none of them were threatening

enough to cause you worry. Other than that, you have passed unmolested into the Midlands of the Bandit Lands, a desolate place now devoid of any sign of civilization. This place, perhaps more than any other, has been ravaged by the occupation of Iuz and the reminder of the grim tragedy that befell the bandits at this place many years ago still keeps many away.

At the end of your journey, you arrive at your destination. The old temple is countless years old and appears long abandoned. The remains of an old, crumbled wall lie about it. The temple itself is covered in thorny ivy vines, making it almost indistinguishable from the landscape at a distance.

All APLs (EL 9)

Dezzda “the Night Witch”: female night hag; hp 68; see *Monster Manual*, page 193.

Refer to DM Map 1: *The Old Temple*, for a layout of this location. Much has changed since the temple was last visited two years ago. When That Which Slept emerged, it left a palpable taint of evil over the place. The entire area is under the effect of a permanent *unhallow* spell (CL 20th). Additionally, the creature's malign influence was so great that its mere presence created a temporary planar rift to the Gray Waste of Hades, through which a night hag named Dezzda passed.

Dezzda does not know why, but she feels as if she has a special connection to this place. She has dwelt here ever since her arrival on Oerth, occasionally attacking human settlements nearby to satiate her hunger for flesh. She has no desire to attack the PCs however. A fragment of the planar rift still remains near where That Which Slept emerged, and she sees herself as a caretaker to a living shrine of darkness. As long as the PCs do not attempt to *consecrate* or *hallow* the area (or something similar) she follows them out of sight using *etherealness* and does not harass them until they find the secret passage (see below). Whenever she approaches the PCs, she is disguised through *polymorph* as a venerable human woman in a cowl (Spot DC 23 to notice).

As some PCs may realize there is a connection between That Which Slept and Tharizdun, it is important to note that Dezzda is NOT a follower of Tharizdun. She worships darkness and corruption as an ideal and has no specific patron deity.

If, at any time, the PCs attempt to sleep in the temple ruins or in the dungeon below, Dezzda sends each character a *nightmare* to encourage them to hurry up with their investigation (as she is curious to learn a few things from them as well).

3A) VESTIBULE

The entrance hall is wide and tall. Cracks line its walls where vines have rooted themselves to it. Along the inner wall rest two sconces, lined with algae and filled with foul-looking water. Behind these, in cracked and faded mosaics, is the likeness

of the god, Celestian. His arm is outstretched and a flurry of stars flies from his palm to fill the sky. This likeness has been defaced with dark brown stains that seem to resemble writing.

As you approach, you are affected by an overwhelming miasma. It is as if pure evil hangs thick in the air.

The dark brown stains are dried blood. Upon closer inspection, the PCs may recognize the blood as being a message in the Infernal script. It reads "Damnation to the stars! Darkness envelope them for all time."

3B) BELFRY

High above you rises the open tower. At its highest point, you can still make out the rusty bell. A rope dangles down, easily within reach.

If the PCs pull the rope, a swarm of creatures attacks from above. The bell was once a nest for stirges, but they were eaten by a group of bats who now nest there.

All APLs (EL 5)

Bat swarms (2): hp 13 each; see *Monster Manual*, page 237.

3C) CLOAK ROOM

This closet contains a few tattered remains of priestly vestments and robes worn by the clerics who once served here. A pile of humanoid bones are scattered in the corner.

Dezzda leaves the remains of those she devours here.

3D) MEDITATION CHAMBER

This chamber is sparsely decorated. The ceilings bear faded paintings of Oerth's constellations. More brown stains cover the ceiling forming elaborate figures of haunting visages.

Dezzda has drawn fiendish constellations over the existing ones in blood. Anyone with a DC 20 Knowledge (the planes) check realizes that the constellations seem to fit the realm of Hades more than Oerth.

A DC 20 Search check of the floor of one of these rooms reveals that there is a loose flagstone. Beneath the flagstone is a hidden stairway that descends down into darkness. Dezzda found it when she arrived here and explored the chamber below briefly, but found she could not pass through because of her evil alignment, even while in ethereal form. When the PCs uncover the stairway, Dezzda approaches them.

"Mortals!" you hear the voice of an old woman call. Looking around, you notice a venerable woman in an ragged cowl standing nearby, as if she had materialized from nowhere.

"You tread upon hallowed ground," she squawks, "I am the Night Witch, guardian of the Gateway to Darkness. What is your purpose in this forbidden place?"

Dezzda is now curious as to whether the PCs are simply treasure-hunters or if they have a greater purpose in mind. She is fearful that they have come to ruin her shrine. If they lie to her and she detects it through Sense Motive, she cries:

"Falsehoods shall not be tolerated! Truth, you must speak, or else darkness shall overcome you."

If they tell her of their true purpose, she mutters softly to herself for a few moments before speaking again. She is genuinely curious about what is to be found beneath and wishes to encourage the PCs to explore it so that she might learn more. She already knows a bit about the area having pieced together several clues she found in the entrance over the years.

"Deep beneath these hallowed grounds lie the secrets you seek. But be warned, for not all is as it seems. Your magic there will avail you not, and your senses will deceive you. Dark history lies underneath this temple. Be careful not to spend too much time down there, for it will pervert your soul if you do."

Dezzda offers little more than vague warnings such as this since she simply does not know much else. After this, she becomes ethereal again and follows the PCs for as far as she can, stopping at the entrance to the dungeon complex. She continues to watch carefully for their return so that she can spy on them and learn what they have learned. As noted above, if they rest near the area, she sends each of them a nightmare.

3E) DORMITORY

One of many similar chambers, this room appears to have once housed the clerics who resided at the temple.

One of these rooms (it does not matter which one) is where Dezzda makes her abode. This room is different in that it appears recently lived in. There are many rags and haggard dresses (stolen) tossed about the room, as well as dark offerings in Infernal written in blood here and there upon the walls.

With a DC 25 Search check, the PCs can find a loose stone behind which Dezzda keeps her treasure, Keoghtom's ointment and an elixir of truth. If the PCs take this treasure, Dezzda demands that they return it. If they refuse, then she sizes them up with Sense Motive. If they are an APL 8 party, she attacks, escaping via etherealness if she is outmatched. If she survives or the PCs are too powerful for her to take on, she vows revenge and escapes using etherealness.

Treasure: The PCs can gain the following treasure here:

All APLs: Magic 374 gp; *elixir of truth* (41 gp), Keoghtom's ointment (333 gp); Total 374 gp.

3F) ONCE—INFESTED DORMITORY

The door to this one is broken off its hinges and appears to have been gnawed through.

A swarm of rats once made their nest here, but they have since been run out by Dezzda (who ironically finds the creatures disgusting).

3G) VESTIBULE

The passage from the dormitories is lined with thick, sticky webs, though it appears the webs once filled the chamber.

This is another room Dezzda cleared out when she moved in.

3H) THE INNER SANCTUM

The main entrance to this immense domed altar room is collapsed and the rest of the chamber seems to have fared even worse. The floors, once a mosaic of blue and white tiles, are covered with rubble from the ceiling, which is now little more than an enormous gaping hole into the sky. Beneath it is a great pile of destroyed masonry. In the corner of the room lies the cracked and sundered remains of a statue in the likeness of the god, Celestian.

At the back of the room has been constructed a crude altar from the rubble within. It is covered with brown stains and bones fashioned into various forms of apparel and objects rest upon the top. Among them are a tiara, a scepter, a candelabra, and even a censer, which is filled with an odorous mixture of spices.

It is this chamber from which That Which Slept escaped when it was released in 595 CY. The rubble and the hole in the ceiling were formed when it burst from its grave beneath the temple and took flight. Dezzda does not bother the PCs unless they deface her altar to darkness.

4: DESCENT INTO DARKNESS

All the walls and doors of this dungeon are lined with a thin layer of adamantine and many areas are warded with *antimagic field*, making successful solving of the puzzles therein the only way to reach the end and discover the secrets of the mage-priests. Note that *antimagic field* makes magical *light* nonfunctional, so the PCs will have to rely on natural darkvision or mundane light sources to navigate this dungeon successfully. Also, note that the names of the trials given in the title sections are for your benefit only. Do not tell them to the players as it may give them too much of a hint at the nature of the puzzle.

The stairway goes down for 100 feet before ending at a landing before a great archway. The archway is covered in sigils of warding and protection against evil (Decipher Script DC 20). Evil outsiders cannot pass through the archway. Beyond the archway is a massive chamber that has been the victim of the ravages of time. The entire area is filled with a permanent *hallow* effect. Consult DM Map 2: The Dungeon for a map of this location.

The chamber beyond is grand. Eight statues depicting robed men with swords, staves, and books in various poses line the middle. The men have an otherworldly quality to them and each has a stylized star with an eye in the center gently etched into their foreheads. The walls are decorated in frescoes that depict an epic battle against a wave of pure darkness that apparently resulted in many casualties. At the far end of the chamber is a great stone door with an ancient inscription of sigils upon it.

A DC 20 Knowledge (religion) check indicates that the star symbol on each of the statues is an archaic symbol of Boccob, god of magic. It requires a DC 30 Decipher Script check, *comprehend languages*, or *tongues* to read the script, as it is in an ancient dead language. It reads: "This hallowed hall tells the great legend of the Dark Beast. Behind these doors are the secrets of its capture. If you are brave enough to face the trials ahead, proceed, but be warned that your magic cannot be relied upon and your very wits will confuse you. Wish it were so, and you may pass."

The door only opens if a non-evil character wills it to. It is lined with adamantine and cannot be physically manipulated in any way. A permanent *wall of force* also protects the door until it is willed open by a non-evil character.

5: THE TRIAL OF SIGNS

This square room treats you to four majestic statues that each depicts a different metallic dragon, one brass, one silver, one bronze, and one copper. Each dragon faces the center of the room where an enormous coiled gold dragon fresco is designed upon the floor.

This entire room is covered with a permanent *antimagic field*. It is dismissed once the puzzle is solved. The locations of the dragons and their apparent ages are as follows.

- Top left: medium brass juvenile
- Top right: medium silver very young
- Bottom left: large copper young adult
- Bottom right: small bronze wyrmling

The gold dragon in the center is of young age. The PCs can determine the ages of the dragons with a DC 15 Knowledge (arcana) check for each if they wish, but their

age is only a red herring. The dragon statues (but not the gold dragon fresco) can be manipulated, but only by depressing them, in which case they are pressed a half-foot down. Each statue remains depressed until the puzzle is solved or all four dragons have been depressed, at which point they each pop back up (and if pressed in the incorrect order, a trap is activated; see below). Each dragon statue is lined with the appropriate precious metal and the tiles that make up the gold dragon fresco are made of solid gold themselves (allow each PC to roll a DC 20 Appraise check to realize this).

The solution to the puzzle is actually quite simple. The dragons must be depressed in the proper order, which is indicated by the direction of the gold dragon's coil on the floor. The gold dragon's coil is indicated by the backwards 'S' on the map. The gold dragon's head points towards the brass dragon and his tail points towards the bronze dragon. It is recommended you simply draw the dragon coiled on the floor in this way and not mention anything about it unless the PCs ask. You need not be an artist. Just draw an S, add a triangle for the head, sticks for legs, wings, and you are done.

The PCs must depress the dragons in the following order to solve the puzzle: brass, silver, copper, bronze. Once they solve the puzzle, the *antimagic field* is dismissed and the symbol of a star with an eye at the center (the archaic symbol of Boccob) magically appears on the wall (*permanent image*) indicating the secret door. Pressing the symbol causes the secret door to open, revealing a hallway. Additionally, the tiles immediately above the gold dragon's head move away revealing a tiny chamber in which rests a *chime of opening*. The *chime* is engraved with an open padlock.

Try to encourage the PCs to solve this puzzle through wit as opposed to brute force (pressing the dragons in random combinations until getting the right answer).

Trap: Depressing the dragons in the incorrect order releases a non-magical gas from the dragon that fills the entire room. The gas is incendiary, frigid, acidic, or electrically charged depending on the dragon depressed last. There is no save for the effect and magical resistance or immunity to energy is suppressed by the *antimagic field*.

- **Brass:** 4d6 fire damage.
- **Silver:** 4d6 cold damage.
- **Copper:** 4d6 acid damage.
- **Bronze:** 4d6 electricity damage.

Treasure: If the PCs pry the tiles loose from the gold dragon fresco, they can sell them later. The *chime of opening* is also worth a bit of cash:

APL 8: Coin 250 gp; Magic 250 gp; *chime of opening* (250 gp); Total 500 gp.

APL 10: Coin 500 gp; Magic 250 gp; *chime of opening* (250 gp); Total 500 gp.

APL 12: Coin 750 gp; Magic 250 gp; *chime of opening* (250 gp); Total 500 gp.

Development

If the PCs have a lot of difficulty with this puzzle, Magh can give them the following hints, in order, every 5 minutes.

- "Perhaps the answer is staring us in the face."
- "Maybe it isn't a matter of age or color."
- "Hmm, the dragons all seemed focused on one thing. Perhaps they point to the solution."

6: THE TRIAL OF MECHANISMS

This small room contains a chest and a pedestal, upon which rests a key. The chest appears to be made of adamantine and has a single lock built into the front. The key on the pedestal is made of silver and is otherwise unremarkable.

The object of this puzzle should be obvious; open the chest. However, the entire room is covered with a permanent *antimagic field* which is only dispelled once the puzzle is solved. To make matters even more complicated, the chest is ensorcelled in such a way that if it is ever removed from the chamber, it immediately *teleports* back inside (although this dwoemer is dismissed if the puzzle is solved). The lock on the chest requires a DC 50 Open Lock check (beyond the ken of most PCs). Additionally, there is a warning on the chest in an ancient language (DC 20 Decipher Script check) that sundering the chest releases a trap that destroys the contents. Effectively, the only way to open the chest is to solve the puzzle. The silver key does not fit the lock. If the PCs attempt to use the *chime of opening* in this room, they discover its magical properties are suppressed (because of the *antimagic field*) until they solve the puzzle.

The solution to this puzzle is also fairly simple. The key lying on the pedestal is there to indicate that the pedestal itself is the key. If the chest is placed upon the pedestal, then the *antimagic field* in the room is dismissed for as long as the chest remains there. At this point, the PCs can use the *chime of opening* to open the lock on the chest. Inside the chest is a simple, 10-foot wooden ladder concealed within an extradimensional space. Once the chest is opened, the archaic symbol of Boccob (the eye in the star) appears on the wall, indicating the secret door to the next puzzle.

If the PCs are foolish enough to try to sunder the chest, remind them that attempting to do so without adamantine weapons would ruin their weapons. Even using adamantine weapons could result in great damage. If they persist and the chest is destroyed, then the magic on the chest is ruined, and the riddle cannot be solved. The PCs have failed the test and are unable to progress further.

Treasure: The chest functions as a *bag of holding* (type dependent upon APL):

APL 8: Magic 208 gp *chest of holding* type I (208 gp); Total 208 gp.

APL 10: Magic 416 gp chest of holding type II (416 gp); Total 416 gp.

APL 12: Magic 616 gp chest of holding type III (616 gp); Total 616 gp.

Development

If the PCs have a lot of difficulty with this puzzle, Magh can give them the following hints, in order, every 5 minutes.

- “That key is clearly useless for opening the lock. Perhaps it signifies something else.”
- “Maybe the positioning of the chest has something to do with the solution.”
- “I wonder why the key was resting on a pedestal.”

7: THE TRIAL OF SENSATION

This cylindrical room is 20 feet in diameter and sports sheer walls covered with a greasy, black substance. The ceiling is 30 feet above the floor. You can hear the din of gale-force winds above, but everything is strangely calm where you stand.

The only exit from this chamber appears to be a small exit at the top of the chamber. On the opposite side of the room there is a rune carved into the floor.

The lower 10 feet of this room is covered with a permanent *antimagic field*. Even those who brought along a flying animal companion discover that 10 feet above the floor they are subject to tornado-strength winds (DMG 95).

If the PCs investigate the rune carved into the floor and succeed at a DC 20 Decipher Script check, they discover that it is a rune signifying an escape route. However, casual examination of the immediate area around the rune reveals nothing.

The solution to this puzzle is to place the ladder on top of the rune and climb 10 feet up. If one touches the wall there, one discovers that the wall (just outside the range of the *antimagic field*) is actually an *illusory wall* and the character can move through it with no difficulty to find a hallway. Sitting just on the other side of the wall is an odd disk that resembles a sundial. On the top, instead of 12 numbers, it has five numbers and a skull. On the bottom, it carries the archaic symbol of Boccob (the eye within a star). The sundial can be picked up and carried. In fact the PCs require it for the next puzzle.

Development

If the PCs have a lot of difficulty with this puzzle, Magh can give them the following hints, in order, every 5 minutes.

- “How pointless to give us a ladder that doesn’t even go halfway up! We’ll NEVER get up there.”
- “Maybe we should think of the rune as more of an arrow pointing us in the right direction than as the solution itself.”

- “Clearly, the ladder has something to do with the solution. Has anyone tried climbing it?”

8: THE TRIAL OF PATIENCE

This room seems fairly ordinary. However as the last of you steps inside a door slides down from the archway and slams shut, trapping you inside. As you look around, you see that there is little of note in the room besides a large number of stone vents that practically blanket the ceiling and a small circular depression in the center of the room. There is also a faint acrid odor in the room. Magh sniffs at the air.

“What on Oerth is that smell? I could swear I’ve smelled it before,” he muses.

Like many other rooms, this room is warded by a permanent *antimagic field*. The PCs will have to use their wits to solve this one. Unfortunately, cursory examination of the room yields absolutely no clues other than the circular depression in the center. If the PCs place the sundial within the depression (a perfect fit), read the following:

The “sundial” locks in place in the circular depression. Suddenly, you see a bright light coming from a sliver in the corner of the ceiling. The light forms a focused beam that strikes the sundial just to the left of the skull symbol and begins moving around counter-clockwise very slowly, back towards the skull. Near the sundial, the ground rises up to form a small, circular pedestal no more than a few inches in diameter.

It is just then that Magh pipes up. “Oh dear, Cuthbert! I just remembered where I last smelled that awful odor. It was at White Plume Mountain many years ago. It’s green slime!”

The purpose of this little trap is merely to deceive the PCs into thinking certain death is about to plummet from the vents above and force them to think irrationally. Any PC who makes a DC 15 Knowledge (dungeoneering) check can corroborate with Magh that the odor does indeed reek of green slime and that it is likely to be permeating from the vents above. Feel free to remind the PCs of all the hazards green slime causes. Automatic Constitution damage (no save!) each round, 2d6 damage to exposed wooden and metal items (no hardness!), and a tendency to creep towards living things. To make matters worse, there appears to be no safe place to stand in the entire room.

At this point the egg timer comes in handy. If you have one, then set it to 5 minutes as soon as the PCs place the sundial in the depression. Every time the PCs press the small pedestal that rose from the ground, the light resets itself to the fifth mark and you may reset the egg timer. If you do not have an egg timer, use a stop watch or wrist watch to time the light beam’s movement. Keep track of the number of times the PCs press the button, as

it affects the amount of green slime that falls from the ceiling at the end.

Encourage the PCs to waste time and resources on this encounter in futile efforts to escape. The vents cannot be manipulated in any way and the odor is stronger the closer a character gets to them. Try to get them to drink potions, cast spells (which fizzle thanks to the *antimagic field*), explore every nook and cranny, and so forth. Eventually, they should simply despair and let the sundial run down, at which point the archaic, magical symbol of Boccob appears on the wall indicating the secret door to the next trial. The *antimagic field* is dismissed at this point.

Once the PCs allow the sundial to run down, tally up the number of times they pressed the pedestal to reset the timer. For each time they pressed it, the vents above one random 10-foot square open up to release green slime to all targets below (no save). There are eight 10-foot squares in the room, so roll d8s to determine which squares open up randomly, to a maximum of all eight squares. Consult the DMG page 76 for the effects of green slime.

After the slime has fallen, the sundial opens up to reveal a spellbook. The book has a rune on its cover. A DC 20 Decipher Script check identifies the rune as that of lawful good. The book contains one copy of every single 1st level spell in the *Player's Handbook*, and no other spells whatsoever.

Treasure: The PCs can take the spellbook if they wish:

All APLs: Magic 325 gp; *spellbook* (325 gp); Total 325 gp.

Development

Magh offers no hints this time. Instead he panics quickly and begins singing to ease his nerves.

9: THE TRIAL OF KNOWLEDGE

As you approach this room, your nostrils burn with the inhalation of smoke, and palpable heat assails your flesh. The short hallway ahead opens into an enormous volcanic cavern with rivers of lava flowing amid jagged rocks, stalactites, and stalagmites. However, the cavern itself is but a trifle compared to the colossal beast that resides within. Resting atop an immense mound of gold, art objects, gems, and countless other valuable items is an incredibly sized dragon with crimson scales. The dragon has horns extending back over the neck, frilled ears, and smaller horns at the cheeks and chin, with rows of horns over the brows. The nose is beaklike and sports a small horn. A frill begins behind the head and runs to the tip of the tail. The dragon reeks of smoke and sulfur, and its scales shine with shades of crimson and scarlet.

Querlax: female gynosphinx sorcerer 20.

If you happen to own the D&D Icons Colossal Red Dragon, then this is the perfect time to bring it out. You can even use the map provided with it as the map for this encounter.

Querlax is a sphinx who was bound to this chamber ages ago by the mage priests to ward it from evil and protect the lore contained within. The chamber is actually a simple rectangular one but Querlax has cast a few spells to make things more interesting. First of all, she has cast *mirage arcana* to make the place appear cavernous and volcanic, as well as much larger than it really is. Secondly, she has cast *permanent image* to create the image of a colossal red dragon resting on its horde. If the PCs interact with either, the save DC of each illusion is 35. Querlax herself remains hidden under cover of *superior invisibility* for the duration of this encounter (cannot be detected by any means short of *true seeing*). Additionally, Querlax has a permanent *detect evil* spell up, which she uses to see whether the PCs register any evil auras. Any PCs who do are not allowed to pass under any circumstances whatsoever and Querlax offers no explanation as to why.

When the PCs enter, “Querlax the great wyrm” roars with anger at having her rest disturbed. However, she promises to let the PCs live, and even pass through unmolested, if they can answer her riddle correctly. However, if they answer incorrectly, she promises they will burn.

*One to five of me depart,
We stick together or split apart,
I seek you out wherever you be,
For even ghosts can't hide from me.*

The answer is a *magic missile*. The PCs may feel proud of themselves for answering the riddle and be anxious to move quickly along. However Magh quickly remembers something important if none of the other PCs do.

“Pardon me, o mighty Querlax, but I am afraid we may be forgetting something,” Magh exclaims.

“You see, we have found an item in each previous trial that has helped us in the next and as far as I am aware we have received nothing from you.”

The dragon strokes its chin with its clawed hand and chuckles before booming in her great voice, “Oh yes, how silly of me! Of course, I can't just be giving it away now. I shall give you the clue you seek if you answer me one more riddle correctly. Of course, should you answer incorrectly, I might be forced to dine on one of you to sate my appetite.”

The dragon's final riddle is:

*You cannot lift me if I fall,
But one beneath me heeds my call,
I never fear the threat of plague,
And my intent is rarely vague.*

The answer is a paladin. If the PCs answer both successfully, the sphinx gives each one of them a vial of red liquid.

“Alchemist’s fire,” the dragon exclaims with a toothy smile, “something of a delicacy really. ‘Tis a shame to give it away. It’s quite tasty. You should try it sometime.”

The vials are actually *potions of calm emotions*. If any PC with at least 5 ranks in Craft (alchemy) examines the contents of the vial, it becomes evident to that character that the vials do not contain alchemist’s fire at all, but rather a relatively inert substance that smells of butterscotch. A DC 25 Spellcraft check correctly identifies the potions, but do not prompt the PCs to do so. Allow them to figure out the dragon’s clue on their own. Once they receive the “alchemist’s fire,” the symbol of Boccob appears on the far wall. The dragon allows the PCs to pass through to reach it.

In the event the PCs answer a riddle incorrectly, the dragon roars in anger as Querlax casts a silent *fireball* spell (caster level 20th; DC 30 Reflex save for half) targeted at the PCs (treat this as a surprise action since the PCs are likely not aware of Querlax). Querlax makes the *fireball* appear to issue from the dragon as if it were a breath weapon. She then allows them to answer again. If they answer a riddle incorrectly a second time, the dragon appears to breath fire again as the PCs are targeted by a silent *cone of cold* spell with fire substituted as the energy type (caster level 20th; DC 32 Reflex save for half). She then gives them one more chance. If they fail a third time, she targets them with a *delayed blast fireball* spell (caster level 20th; DC 34 Reflex save for half). If they answer the first riddle correctly, she allows them to heal before answering the second, but otherwise allows no spellcasting of any kind. If the PCs try to leave, she tells them they may never return if they do so.

Treasure: PCs who solve the second riddle earn six vials of swirling red and white liquid that appears to be alchemist’s fire, but are in fact, *potions of calm emotions*. Magh receives one as well, but this is not PC treasure:

All APLs: Magic 150 gp; *potions of calm emotions* (6) (25 gp each); Total 150 gp.

Development

In the unlikely event the PCs disbelieve Querlax’s illusion, she still refuses to let them pass without answering her riddles and threatens to bombard them with *meteor swarm* if they refuse.

10: THE TRIAL OF METTLE

This room is filled with illusory images of mage-priests battling amongst each other. Each one of them wears the same livery and standard and yet they fight with each other just the same. At the

center of the chamber rests a large scroll upon a raised dais.

The final trial involves a particularly nasty magical trap, the one trap of this dungeon that is truly deadly, but only as deadly as the PCs themselves. The *scroll of eldritch binding* at the center is what the PCs seek. It is warded by an *antimagic field* that suppresses the trap, but if it is removed from the dais, the *antimagic field* is dismissed, allowing the trap to function. Attempts to search for the magical trap fail as long as the *antimagic field* persists, but once it is dismissed, the trap is immediately sprung. The *maddening whispers* trap creates Violent Hallucinations in all subjects.

APL 8 (EL 11)

Heightened Maddening Whispers Trap: CR 10; spell; visual trigger (*true seeing*); automatic reset (2 minutes); spell effect (heightened [9th] *maddening whispers*, 20th level caster, DC 23 Will save negates); Search DC 34; Disable Device DC 34.

APL 10 (EL 13)

Heightened, Widened Mind Fog Trap: CR 10; spell; visual trigger (*true seeing*); automatic reset (30 minutes); spell effect (heightened [6th] *widened mind fog*, 20th level caster, DC 23 Will save negates); Search DC 34; Disable Device DC 34.

Heightened Maddening Whispers Trap: CR 10; spell; visual trigger (*true seeing*); automatic reset (2 minutes); spell effect (heightened [9th] *maddening whispers*, 20th level caster, DC 23 Will save negates); Search DC 34; Disable Device DC 34.

APL 12 (EL 15)

Heightened, Widened Mind Fog Traps (2): CR 10; spell; visual trigger (*true seeing*); automatic reset (30 minutes); spell effect (heightened [6th] *widened mind fog*, 20th level caster, DC 23 Will save negates); Search DC 34; Disable Device DC 34.

Heightened Brilliant Aura Trap: CR 10; spell; visual trigger (*true seeing*); automatic reset (2 minutes); spell effect (heightened [9th] *brilliant aura*, 20th level caster, DC 23 Will save negates); Search DC 34; Disable Device DC 34.

Heightened Maddening Whispers Trap: CR 10; spell; visual trigger (*true seeing*); automatic reset (2 minutes); spell effect (heightened [9th] *maddening whispers*, 20th level caster, DC 23 Will save negates); Search DC 34; Disable Device DC 34.

Assuming the PCs survive fighting, they can recover the *scroll of eldritch binding* and be on their way.

CONCLUSION

If the PCs managed to survive the dreaded dungeon of the mage-priests and escape with the *scroll of eldritch*

binding, then they have accomplished an important task. The scroll contains detailed information for an epic spell that the mage-priests developed to place That Which Slept in an eternal slumber. Nevertheless, Magh wishes to hold the scroll for safe-keeping. He explains that if it were to fall into the wrong hands, it could spell disaster for the Flanaess. That Which Slept does not know how the mage-priests accomplished their binding ritual the first time, and it will no doubt stop at nothing to ensure it does not work again. Consequently, making copies of the scroll would simply ensure that it would be easier for the dark beast's agents to acquire one. Magh assures the PCs that the scroll will be safe in his possession and that he will call on them at a future time when the scrolls have been deciphered.

Magh hopes the PCs do not force his hand, but if they do, he is willing to fight them if necessary. If he managed to place the PCs under his *suggestion*, then the PCs find they are unrestrainedly compelled to comply with his request, at which point he makes a fast getaway atop his *phantom steed* in case they figure out what he was up to. If the PCs managed to resist his compulsions then they must fight Magh for the scroll. If they defeat him, they may claim it for themselves.

If the PCs allow Magh to take the scroll without contest, they receive the *Favor of Magh*. If the PCs attack Magh and he survives, whether he recovers the scroll or not they receive the *Enmity of Magh* unless they make peace with him before the adventure ends.

Treasure: If the PCs defeat Magh in combat, they can take his stuff (note this is an evil act on the PCs' AR and contact the Triad with the names of the offending players and their characters):

All APLs: Loot: 27 gp; Magic 2,433 gp; *scroll of teleport* (93 gp), *staff of befuddling* (1,023 gp), +1 *studded leather armor* (97 gp), *circlet of persuasion* (375 gp), *choker of eloquence* (500 gp), *cloak of charisma* +2 (333 gp), *scroll of knock* (12 gp); Total 2,460 gp.

3: The Ruined Temple

Defeat Dezzda in combat
All APLs 270 XP

3b: Belfry

Defeat the bat swarms
All APLs 150 XP

5: The Trial of Signs

Solve the statue puzzle
All APLs 150 XP

9: The Trial of Knowledge

Answer the dragon's riddles
All APLs 240 XP

10: The Trial of Mettle

Survive the trap
APL 8 330 XP
APL 10 390 XP
APL 12 450 XP

Story Award

Recover the *scroll of eldritch binding*
APL 8 125 XP
APL 10 150 XP
APL 12 175 XP

Discretionary roleplaying award

APL 8 100 XP
APL 10 120 XP
APL 12 140 XP

Total Possible Experience

APL 8 1,125 XP
APL 10 1,350 XP
APL 12 1,575 XP

CAMPAIGN CONSEQUENCES

Please turn in the answers to these questions to your senior GM or report them directly to airwalkrr@gmail.com. Do not do both.

Did the PCs learn of Magh's affiliation with Aundurach? If so, was it peaceable or did it end violently?

Did the PCs succeed in recovering the *scroll of eldritch binding*? If so, who claimed it, the PCs or Magh?

EXPERIENCE POINT SUMMARY

To award experience for this adventure, add up the values for the objectives accomplished. Then assign the experience award. Award the total value (objectives plus roleplaying) to each character.

TREASURE SUMMARY

During an adventure, characters encounter treasure, usually finding it in the possession of their foes. Every encounter that features treasure has a "treasure" section within the encounter description, giving information about the loot, coins, and magic items that make up the encounter's treasure.

The loot total is the number of gold pieces each character gains if the foes are plundered of all their earthly possessions. Looting the bodies takes at least 10 minutes per every 5 enemies, and if the characters cannot take the time to loot the bodies, they do not gain this gold. If you feel it is reasonable that characters can go back to loot the bodies, and those bodies are there (i.e., not carted off by dungeon scavengers, removed from the scene by the local watch, and so on), characters may return to retrieve loot. If the characters do not loot the

body, the gold piece value for the loot is subtracted from the encounter totals given below.

The coin total is the number of gold pieces each character gains if they take the coin available. A normal adventuring party can usually gather this wealth in a round or so. If for some reason, they pass up this treasure, the coin total is subtracted from the encounter totals given below.

Next, the magic items are listed. Magic item treasure is the hardest to adjudicate, because they are varied and because characters may want to use them during the adventure. Many times characters must cast *identify*, *analyze dweomer* or similar spell to determine what the item does and how to activate it. Other times they may attempt to use the item blindly. If the magic item is consumable (a potion, scroll, magic bolts, etc.) and the item is used before the end of the adventure, its total is subtracted from the adventure totals below.

Once you have subtracted the value for unclaimed treasure from each encounter add it up and that is the number of gold pieces a characters total and coin value increase at the end of the adventure. Write the total in the GP Gained field of the adventure certificate.

Loot = Looted gear from enemy; Coin = Coin, Gems, Jewelry, and other valuables; Magic = Magic Items.

3: The Ruined Temple

All APLs: Magic 374 gp; *elixir of truth* (41 gp), *Keoghtom's ointment* (333 gp); Total 374 gp.

5: The Trial of Signs

APL 8: Coin 250 gp; Magic 250 gp; *chime of opening* (250 gp); Total 500 gp.

APL 10: Coin 500 gp; Magic 250 gp; *chime of opening* (250 gp); Total 500 gp.

APL 12: Coin 750 gp; Magic 250 gp; *chime of opening* (250 gp); Total 500 gp.

6: The Trial of Mechanisms

APL 8: Magic 208 gp *chest of holding* type I (208 gp); Total 208 gp.

APL 10: Magic 416 gp *chest of holding* type II (416 gp); Total 416 gp.

APL 12: Magic 616 gp *chest of holding* type III (616 gp); Total 616 gp.

8: The Trial of Patience

All APLs: Magic 325 gp; *spellbook* (325 gp); Total 325 gp.

9: The Trial of Knowledge

All APLs: Magic 150 gp; *potions of calm emotions* (6) (25 gp each); Total 150 gp.

Conclusion*

All APLs: Loot: 27 gp; Magic 2,433 gp; *scroll of teleport* (93 gp), *staff of befuddling* (1,023 gp), +1 *studded leather armor* (97 gp), *circlet of persuasion* (375 gp), *choker of eloquence* (500

gp), *cloak of charisma* +2 (333 gp), *scroll of knock* (12 gp); Total 2,460 gp.

*Only if the PCs defeated Magh in combat

Treasure Cap

APL 8: 1,300 gp

APL 10: 2,300 gp

APL 12: 3,300 gp

Total Possible Treasure

APL 8: 3,767 gp

APL 10: 4,225 gp

APL 12: 4,675 gp

ADVENTURE RECORD ITEMS

Favor of Magh: Magh speaks highly of you, granting you a +2 Circumstance bonus on Diplomacy and Gather Information checks made within the Bandit Kingdoms and a 25% discount on upkeep during Bandit Kingdoms regional adventures for the next calendar year. Your name becomes well-known to Iuz, earning you a WCI point (Malcontent). You receive Adventure access to his magic items indicated below with a *.

Enmity of Magh: Magh speaks ill of your misdeeds, imposing a -2 Circumstance penalty on Diplomacy and Gather Information checks made within the Bandit Kingdoms and a 25% increase in upkeep during Bandit Kingdoms regional adventures for the next calendar year. Your name becomes well-known to Iuz, earning you a WCI point (Dissenter).

Chest of Holding: This item functions like a *bag of holding* in every way, except it is a chest made of adamantine, allowing it to hold sharp objects without incident.

Moderate conjuration; CL 9th; Craft Wondrous Item, *Leomund's secret chest*. Market Price (type I) 3,500 gp, (type II) 6,000 gp, (type III) 8,400 gp.

Spellbook: This spellbook contains one copy of every 1st-level sorcerer/wizard spell in the *Player's Handbook*. Market Price 3,900 gp.

Staff of Befuddling: This appears to be a normal walking stick and allows use of the following spells:

- *Song of discord* (2 charges)
- *Modify memory* (1 charge)
- *Glibness* (1 charge)

Strong enchantment; CL 13th; Craft Staff, *glibness*, *modify memory*, *song of discord*; Price 34,125 gp.

Dream Haunting: The night hag Dezzda haunts you for disturbing her treasure. For the next calendar year, at the beginning of each adventure, you suffer one point of Constitution drain. You can avoid this drain by not

sleeping, but you are exhausted for the entire adventure, unless you require no sleep.

Scroll of Eldritch Binding: You are the bearer of an ancient, indecipherable scroll detailing a powerful binding spell.

ITEM ACCESS

*Only if the PCs defeated Magh in combat or received the Favor of Magh

APL 8:

- **Choker of eloquence* (Adventure; CAd)
- **Circlet of persuasion* (Adventure; DMG)
- **Scroll of teleport* (Adventure; DMG)
- **Staff of befuddling* (Adventure; see above)
- *Chest of holding type I* (Adventure; see above)
- *Chime of opening* (Adventure; DMG)
- *Elixir of truth* (Adventure; DMG)
- *Keoghtom's ointment* (Adventure; DMG)
- *Spellbook* (Adventure; see above)

APL 10 (all of APL 8 plus the following):

- *Chest of holding type II* (Adventure; see above)

APL 12 (all of APLs 8-10 plus the following):

- *Chest of holding type III* (Adventure; see above)

MAGH**CR 14**

Male mongrelfolk ex-bard 10/marshal 4

LN Medium humanoid (mongrelfolk)

Init +10; **Senses** Listen +11, Spot +12

Aura major aura (resilient troops), minor aura (motivate Charisma, motivate Dexterity)

Languages Common, Elven, Old Oeridian

AC 16, touch 12, flat-footed 14

(+2 Dex, +4 armor)

hp 76 (14 HD)

Fort +8, **Ref** +10, **Will** +12

Speed 30 ft. (6 squares)

Melee mwk longsword +10 (1d8-1/19-20)

Base Atk +10; **Grp** +9

Special Actions bardic music 10/day (countersong, *fascinate*, inspire competence, inspire courage +2, inspire greatness, *suggestion*), grant move action 1/day, sound imitation

Combat Gear *scroll of teleport*, *staff of befuddling* (18 charges)

Bard Spells Known (CL 10th):

4th (1/day)—*dominate person* (DC 18), *zone of silence*

3rd (3/day)—*clairaudience/clairvoyance*, *cure serious wounds*, *phantom steed*, *sculpt sound*

2nd (4/day)—*invisibility*, *mirror image*, *silence* (DC 16), *tongues*

1st (4/day)—*charm person* (DC 15), *disguise self*, *silent image*, *Tasha's hideous laughter* (DC 15)

0 (3/day)—*detect magic*, *ghost sound*, *know direction*, *light*, *mending*, *open/close*

Abilities Str 8, Dex 14, Con 12, Int 14, Wis 12, Cha 18

SQ bardic knowledge +14, emulate race, snake familiar

Feats Blooded, Improved Initiative, Obtain Familiar, Quick Reconnoiter, Skill Focus (Diplomacy)^B, Skill Focus (Perform)

Skills Bluff +32, Concentration +18, Diplomacy +17, Hide +10, Knowledge (history) +10, Knowledge (local: luz's border states) +10, Listen +11, Perform (sing) +32, Spellcraft +14, Sense Motive +13, Sleight of Hand +13, Spot +12, Use Magic Device +24

Possessions combat gear plus +1 *studded leather armor*, masterwork longsword, spell component pouch, *circlet of persuasion*, *choker of eloquence*, *cloak of charisma* +2, *scroll of knock*

Auras (Ex) Magh exerts an effect on allies in his vicinity. He can learn to produce different effect, or auras, over the course of his career. Magh may project one minor aura and one major aura at a time.

Projecting an aura is a swift action. The aura remains in effect until Magh uses a free action to dismiss it or activates another aura of the same kind (major or minor). Magh can have an aura active continually; thus, an aura can be in effect at the start of a combat encounter even before Magh takes his first turn.

Activating an aura involves haranguing, ordering, directing, encouraging, cajoling, or calming allies. Magh sizes up the enemy, allies, and the terrain, then gives allies the direction that they can use to do their best.

Unless otherwise noted, Magh's aura affects all allies within 10 feet times his Charisma modifier (including himself) who can hear him. An ally must have an Intelligence score of 3 or higher and be able to understand Magh's language to gain the bonus. Magh's aura is dismissed if he is dazed, unconscious, stunned, paralyzed, or otherwise unable to be heard or understood by his allies.

All bonuses granted by Magh's auras are circumstance bonuses that do not stack with each other.

Minor Aura A minor aura lets allies add Magh's Charisma modifier to certain rolls.

Motivate Charisma: Bonus on Charisma checks and Charisma-based skill checks.

Motivate Dexterity: Bonus on Dexterity checks, Dexterity-based skill checks, and initiative checks.

Major Aura Magh can project a major aura in addition to his minor aura. A major aura lets allies add +1 to certain rolls.

Resilient Troops: Bonus on all saves.

Grant Move Action (Ex) Magh can direct and motivate his allies to act immediately. Once per day, as a standard action, he may grant an extra move action to any or all of his allies with a range of 10 feet times his Intelligence modifier. Each of the affected allies takes this extra move action immediately, acting in their current initiative order. This extra action does not affect the allies' initiative count; the round continues normally after Magh's turn is over. (This may mean, for example, than an ally whose initiative count immediately follows Magh's may get an extra move action from him, followed directly by a full round worth of actions on the ally's turn.)

A character can take only one extra move action per round. (In other words, two marshals can't use this ability on the same ally in the same round.) If an ally chooses not to take the extra move action, it is lost.

APPENDIX 2: NEW RULES ITEMS

MAGIC ITEMS

Staff of Befuddling: This staff appears to be a normal walking stick and allows use of the following spells:

- *Song of discord* (2 charges)
- *Modify memory* (1 charge)
- *Glibness* (1 charge)

Strong enchantment; CL 13th; Craft Staff, *glibness*, *modify memory*, *song of discord*; Market Price 34,125 gp.

Violent Hallucinations: The subjects perceive any nearby creatures as dangerous enemies, attacking the nearest ones and fighting until the subjects are slain or until no more creatures are in sight.

Source: *Spell Compendium* 135

SPELLS

Brilliant Aura

Transmutation

Level: Cleric 8, druid 8, sorcerer/wizard 7

Components: V, S

Casting Time: 1 standard action

Range: Close (25 ft. + 5 ft./2 levels)

Target: Weapons carried by one creature/2 levels, no two of which are more than 30 ft. apart

Duration: 1 round/level

Saving Throw: Will negates (object)

Spell Resistance: Yes (object)

Taking fresh insight from contemplation of light, you cast the spell and set your allies aglow with white brilliance.

You transform all weapons, natural weapons, thrown weapons, and projectiles of the subject creatures into weapons with the brilliant energy special ability (DMG 224). If this spell is cast on arrows or crossbow bolts, the effect on a particular projectile ends after one use, whether or not the missile strikes its intended target. Treat shuriken as arrows, rather than as thrown as thrown weapons, for the purpose of this spell

Source: *Spell Compendium* 39

Maddening Whispers

Enchantment (Compulsion) [Mind-Affecting]

Level: Sorcerer/wizard 8

Components: V

Casting Time: 1 round

Range: Close (25 ft. + 5 ft./2 levels)

Targets: 1 creature/level

Duration: 1 round/level

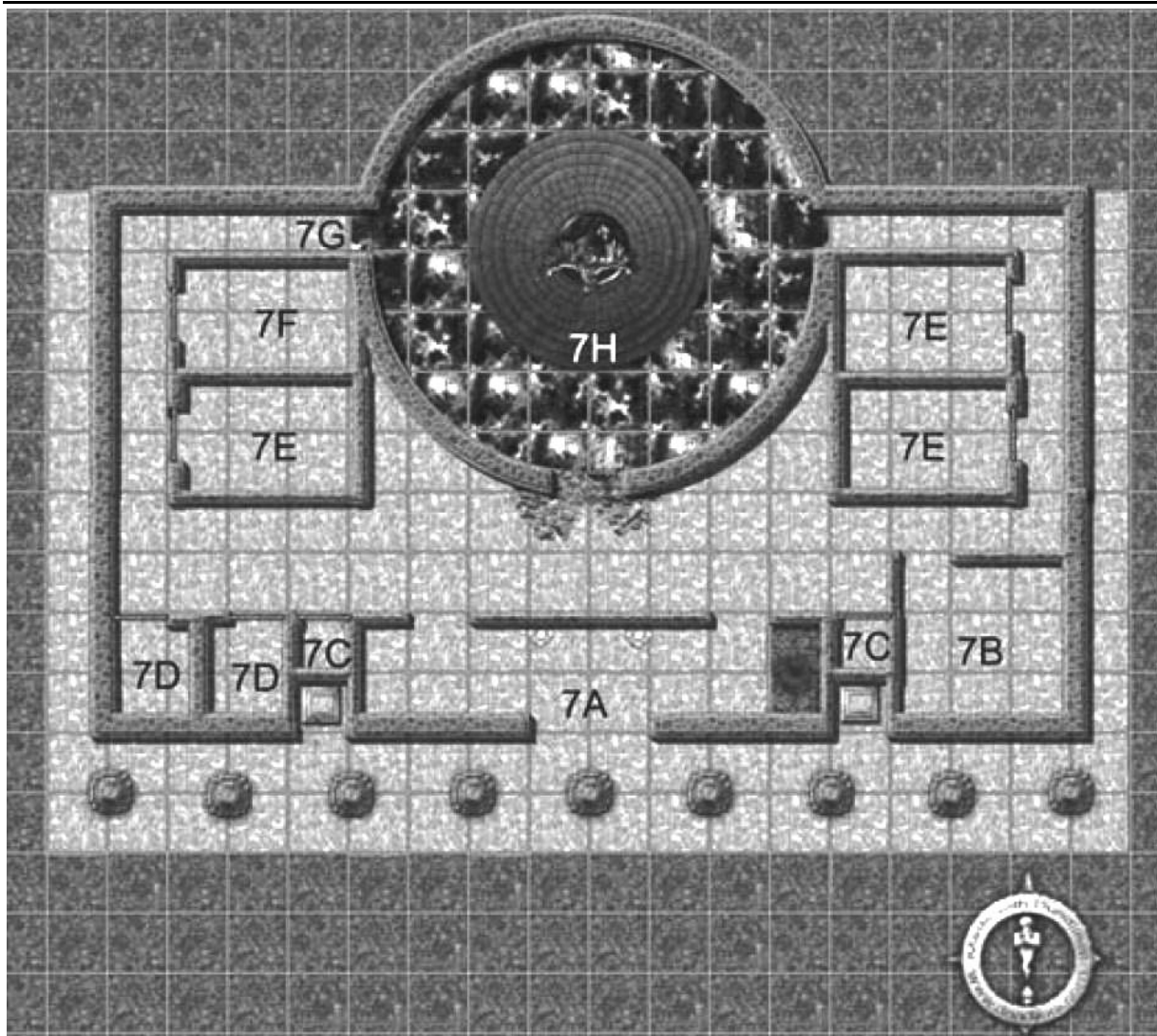
Saving Throw: Will negates

Spell Resistance: Yes

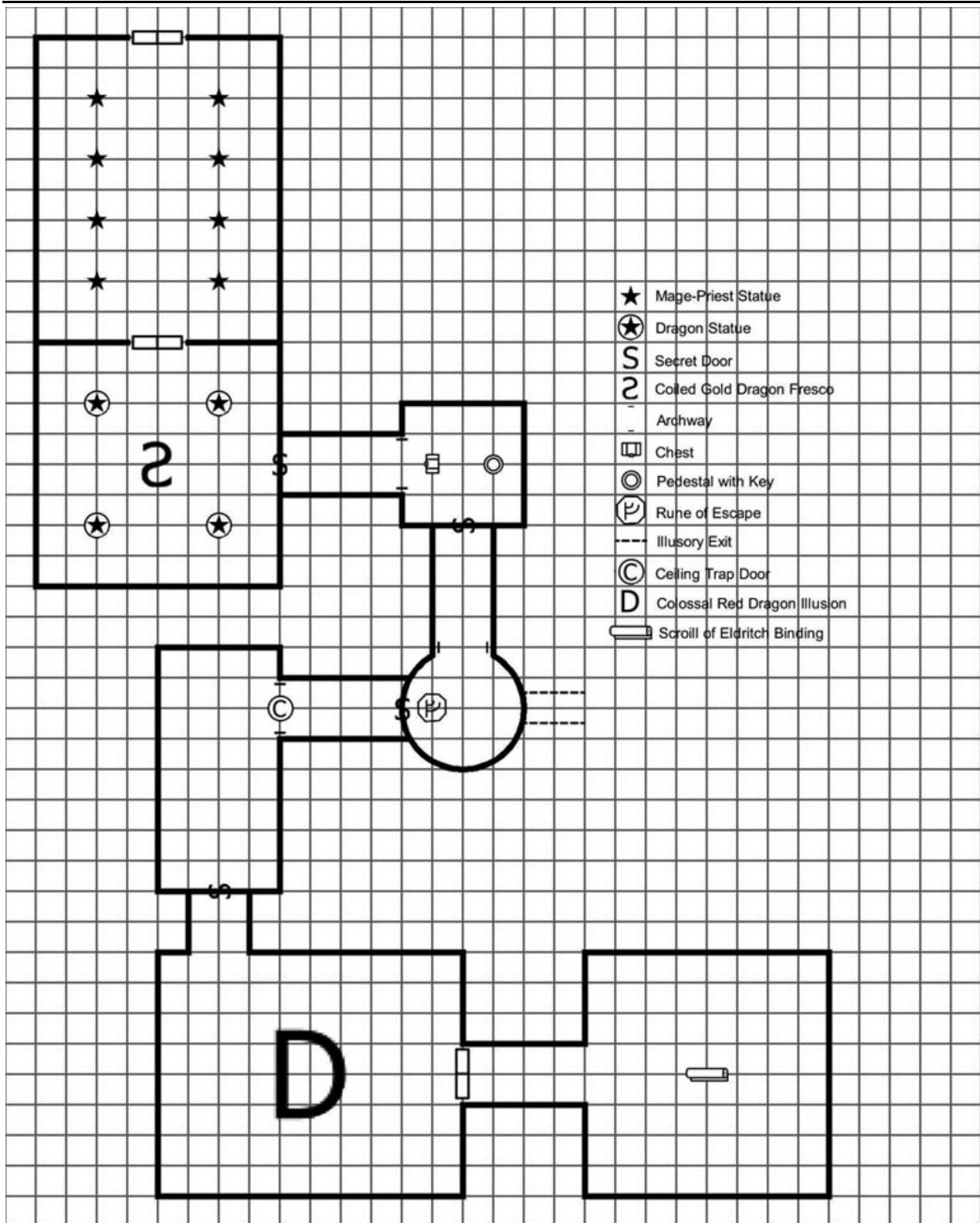
As you mutter this spell, your words burrow into your foes' minds like hungry maggots, spawning dark and disturbing thoughts.

You can choose to inflict one of the following conditions upon any creatures that fail their saving throws. (Only one condition is presented as it is the only one pertinent to the adventure.)

DM MAP 1: THE OLD TEMPLE



DM MAP 2: THE DUNGEON



Most Illustrious Heroes,

I write this to you in hopes that I have found kindred spirits. I am more like you than appears and I have seen in your faces a desire to do great things for this land. For that reason I ask that you meet with me to consider a proposal of grand proportions. If you agree, then come to my private room in the back. My guards know who you are and have been instructed to allow you in. Please make haste, as it grows late and there is much for me to tell you. I hope to meet with you all soon.

*Respectfully Yours,
The Magnificent Magh*