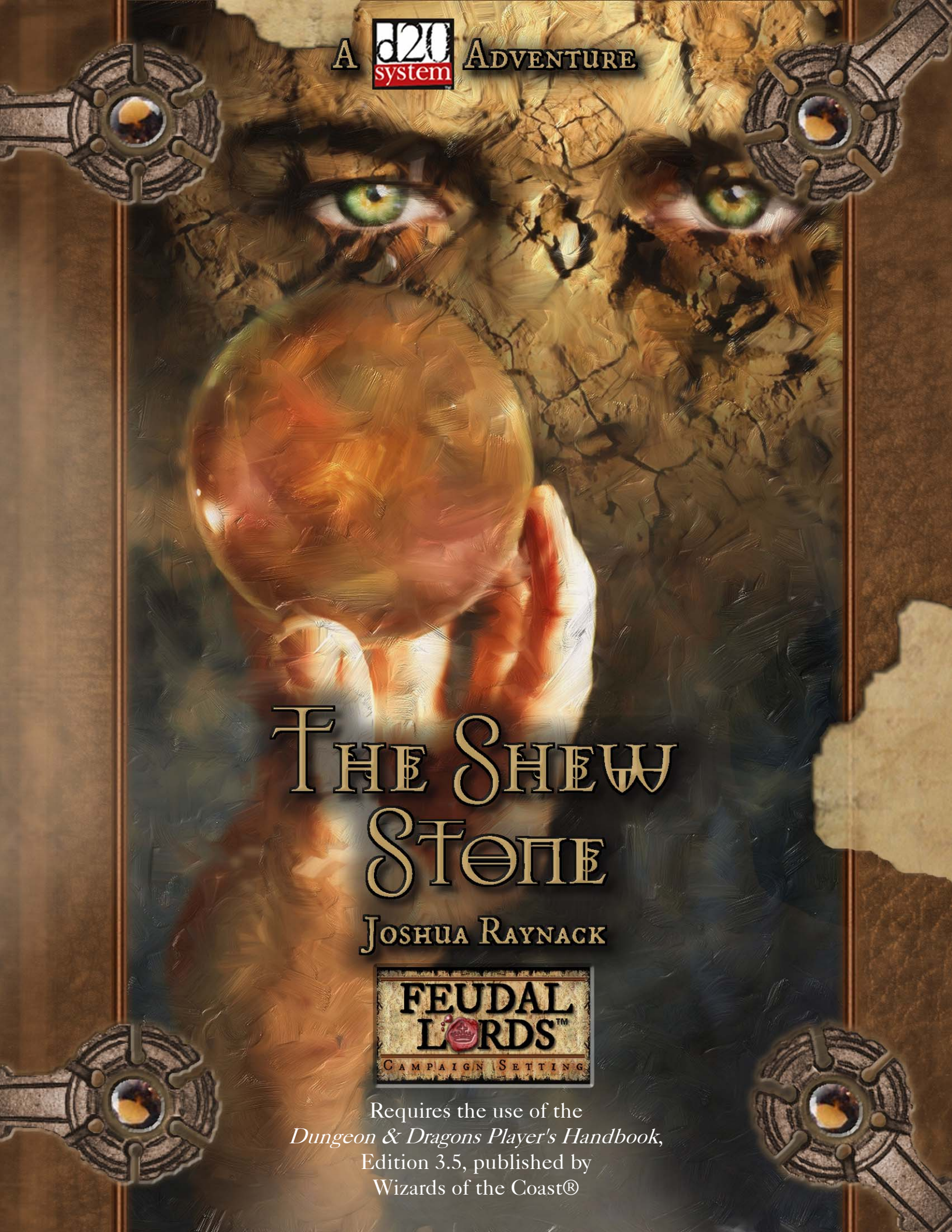
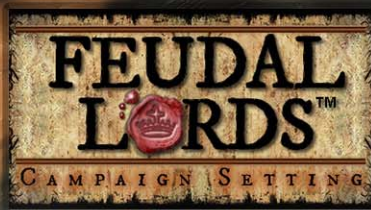


A  ADVENTURE



THE SHEW STONE

JOSHUA RAYNACK



Requires the use of the
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THE SHEW STONE

A d20 Adventure

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PLAYTESTING

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Requires the use of a Roleplaying Game Core Book published by
Wizards of the Coast, Inc.

Introduction



INTRODUCTION

Calmar the Swift Mind, stealer of the great dragon scale of Fec' Chron Null, last seen more than seventy-five years ago, was or *is* the possessor of the *Shew Stone*. Now, a noble lord acting on behalf of Cthonia's king seeks the stone to present it as a gift to Lord Arthur Welles, Earl of Wesfolk.



TARTING POINT

You, as Game Master, need the core rules books, published by Wizards of the Coast, Inc. or the SRD found at various distributors. Furthermore, knowledge of Cthonia featured in the FREE campaign primer, *The Chronicles of Yrza the Crow* is useful.

This adventure can fit into any existing campaign without difficulty. Feel free to add or adjust material within to fit your needs.

First, read through each encounter and carefully study the maps so that you are familiar with them. This will help you run each encounter smoothly. Also, familiarize yourself with each of the encounters in order to utilize them effectively.

Secondly, print out the product, or just run it from your computer. These encounters are filled with numerous bookmarks and hyperlinks to help you zip from place to place.

Material italicized contains information that can be read or paraphrased to your players while all other information is only meant for you.



ACKGROUND

Lord Arthur Welles holds the titles of King's Lord of Caldor and Wesfolk. In short, he acts upon the king's behalf in those areas. Although a loyal follower of the king, Lord Welles holds a dark secret: he is slowly learning arcane powers, something many people fear is taught from either demons or devils. However, rumors from political enemies coveting his post reached the king's ears. Rumors claim Lord Welles, along with other lords, are plan-

ning a rebellious movement to separate Wesfolk from the Westlands, home of Cthonia's capitol.

To protect his interest without succumbing to a rash decision brought about by rumors, the king seeks the *Shew Stone*. It is a great elven, crystal ball believed to read thoughts of the possessor.

The king sent Sir Wethword to Caldor to find the elven stone and present it to Lord Welles. However, its last possessor, Calmar the Swift Mind, hasn't been seen in more than seventy-five years. With his men coming up with loose ends, Sir Wethword looks toward a group of adventurers to help complete his task.

To further complicate matters, the leader of a mysterious necromantic cult, called the reanimationists, is feared of its discovery should Lord Welles obtain the *Shew Stone*. For one of its leaders, Thomas, a merchant of House Morgan, teaches the arcane arts to Lord Welles. He feels that should Lord Welles receive the elven stone, he will in turn unconsciously divulge himself as a heretic.



DVENTURE SYNOPSIS

Characters are charged with the task to unearth the whereabouts of the *Shew Stone*, a magical stone of elvenkind. This places them at odds with political enemies and also a cult of necromancers, called reanimationists, who wish to remain hidden.

The investigation leads characters to discover an ancient underground Romas plaza buried years ago: a site discovered by Calmar and systematically plundered for its wealth. Inside, they witness horrific scenes of the original citizens' final hours, the numerous traps of a covetous rogue, and a secret greater than the *Shew Stone* they seek—the fate of Calmar the Swift Mind.



DVENTURE HOOKS

There are several means to lead characters onto the path toward the Romas



plaza and the secrets beneath.

- Either through reputation or through a town crier, the adventurers meet with Sir Wethword as he assigns them the task of recovering the elven stone.
- Not to attract notice by using his own soldiers, Lord Welles hires the characters to beat Sir Wethword to the stone. Although, completely loyal to the king, Lord Welles fears, should he possess the stone, the king will discover his practice of arcane magic.
- A farmer discovered an entrance into the Romus plaza while digging a new well. Soon the farmer turns up dead while trying to sell a piece of antiquity he found in the well (see Encounter 1 pg. 7 for more details).

You may use one of the following hooks or intersperse them all throughout the adventure to peak character's curiosity.

CALDOR

This adventure takes place in Caldor. Caldor is described in greater detail in *Caldor: City of Crossroads*, however that product is not needed to run this adventure. In fact, it is generic enough to fit in almost any fantasy campaign setting. But if you do decide to run it in its original setting, we recommend you download *The Chronicles of Yrza the Crow*, a FREE product briefly detailing the lands surrounding Caldor.

Caldor (small city): Conventional; AL LN; 15,000 gp limit; Assets 5,760,000 gp; Population 7,680; Mixed (79% human, 9% half-malekin, 5% halfling, 3% dwarf, 2% malekin, 1% half-orc, 1% other races).

Authority Figures: Lord Arthur Welles, Earl of Wesfolk, N male human aristocrat 3/fighter 4/wizard 8 (the King's Lord of Caldor and Wesfolk); Lord William Mercer, Sheriff of Caldor, LN male human ranger 8 (commander of the royal castle), Hugh of Blackburn, LN male human cleric 12 (Bishop of Caldor); Thomas Thibault, LN male human expert 12 (Mayor of Caldor).

Important Characters: Petulengro, CN male human rogue 10/Wizard 4 (Caldorean King of the Gypsies); Helena, N female human expert 13 (matriarch of House Myopia); Henry the Lambe, LE male human expert 12 (patriarch of House Morgan); Thomas Marshall, LN male human aristocrat 2/fighter 5/Knight of St. Malchus 4/Knight Commander 4 (Knight Commander of the St. Malchus Commandry).

Notes: The most notable place is Caldor Castle as it serves a powerful central point for the region. Construction of the grand St. Bastion Cathedral brings

many curious onlookers and pilgrims especially since it is estimated to near completion in another two years.

The gypsy market is possibly the largest such market in the region rivaling the one located in Tollbridge. However, besides the inquisitive onlooker, the market also brings a variety of tricksters, pickpockets, vagabonds, and charlatans.

RUMORS

Characters looking for work, to sell or buy items, or among other things, just plain curious, a successful Gather Information check reveals the following throughout the adventure:

In the Old Gate District: Old Unger, a poor wretch of a man always looking for a few coin.

[DC 5] *"A few dogs and cats have gone missing in Old Gate District recently. I say its due to either necromancers or reanimationists—they're always stealing small critters for their experiments. A further Knowledge (arcana) check (DC 10) defines reanimationists as people who use electricity to reanimate the dead.*

[DC 10] *"But now I've heard a little boy is missing in that same area. I'll bet they'll listen to Old Unger now, hey Gert, my boy!"* (Unger pats his ragged dog on the head).

In the Gypsy Market or Crossroads District: Various merchants gossip among themselves.

[DC 5] *"A discovery of antiquities were unearthed several days ago—I would like to get my hands on that find!"*

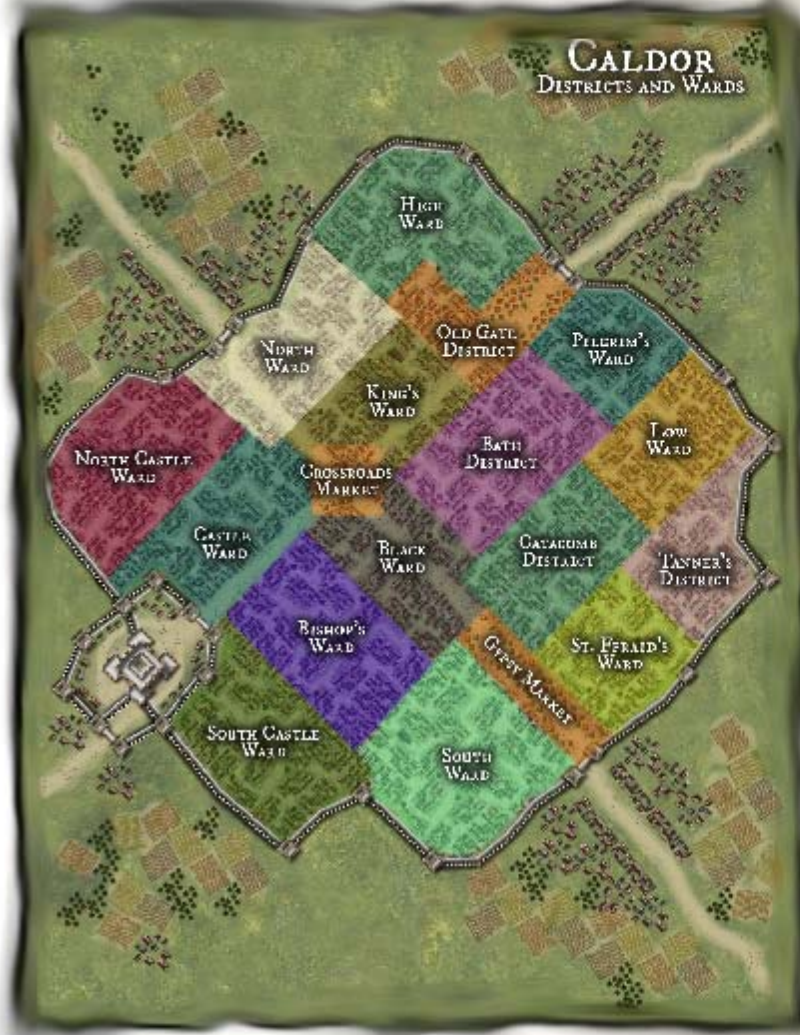
[DC 10] *"It was a farmer, or so I've heard, that found the ancient relics—a freeman at that—no lord to claim his find. He'll make money to be sure!"* (False; the farmer is a peasant under Lord Arthur Welles. He farms the King's Fields).

In the Black Ward: Nefarious rogues in the black market putting out feelers.

[DC 20] *"I am not at liberty to say who my present employer is, but he wishes Sir Wethword and men under his employ to never uncover the whereabouts of the Shew Stone."*

In Caldor: Numerous royal pages spread the word that Sir Wethword seeks adventurers.

[DC 5] *"Hear Thee, Hear Thee! Sir Wethword seeks stout adventurers to find the whereabouts of Calmar the Swift Mind and more importantly a stone of elvenkind."*



NPCs

Character meet or hear about many interesting NPCs throughout the adventure. Should the situation arise, some characters might wish to find out more about these NPCs with a successful Gather Information or Knowledge (local) check.

In addition, there are some notes for the Game Master of what these NPCs wish to achieve from the outcome of the adventure.

Albert, Peasant to Lord Welles

For the most part, peasants are lowly commoners who rarely have distinguishing extraordinary abilities to warrant a Knowledge (local) or Gather Information check. The information given below is a general summary of a peasant's life.

[DC 10] A peasant is granted land by a lord, in this case by Lord Welles, and in turn, he farms the land giving a large portion of the crop to the lord. He is allowed what is left to sell for profit or feed his fam-

ily. A peasant is not allowed to marry or leave the lord's land without permission.

[DC 30] It is rumored, though only whispered in the darkest of alleys, that Albert is a descendant of the peasant-king, Marcosis of Mithras, a servant of seventh Lich-King, Lord Septum.

Game Master's Note

While tilling the fields Albert commands, he discovered burnt knuckle and finger bones. They were old, belonging to ancient Romas citizens who perished in a volcanic earthquake hundreds of years ago. He sold them to local merchant, Barbas, as saintly relics—a common practice.

With the extra money, Albert bought two new cattle from Lord Welles. Needing extra water, the peasant farmer began digging a well. Soon afterward, Albert discovered a holy symbol of Mithras, a Romas religious cult along with a possible entrance into a temple dedicated to the same deity.

He brought the holy symbol to Lord Alcott Bese-Deable, a merchant with a taste for artifacts. Unbeknownst to anyone, Lord Alcott is actually the famed rogue, Calmar the Swift Mind. Fearing Albert uncovered his nearly forgotten lair, Lord Alcott offered the peasant a nearly irresistible fruit that rendered the farmer unconscious. Afterward, Lord Alcott forced black lotus poison down the sleeping man's throat.

When he came to, Albert immediately left finally succumbing to the poison near his only contact within the city, Barbas. Lord Alcott, not wanting suspicion drawn to him, let the man go knowing his time limited.

Lord Alcott Bese-Deable

[DC 10] He is a noble of much wealth, investing much as his father before him—in rare artifacts and unusual treasures. He receives his name, meaning Kiss-the-Devil, from his venerable age. Lord Alcott is nearly ninety-years old.

[DC 15] His father, Lord Alcott the Elder, had many connections with nefarious individuals including Calmar the Swift Mind. It is possible that Lord Alcott the Younger witnessed such meetings between his father and the thief as a young lad. However, if he is able to remember such fine details is another question entirely.



Game Master's Note

Lord Alcott is actually dead, killed nearly seventy five years ago, along with his father, by the thief, Calmar the Swift Mind. The rogue, since murdering the young boy, used magic to take his place as heir. This not only granting access to the merchant lord's fortune, but also to a mysterious fountain that seemingly grants immortality.

Lord Arthur Welles, Earl of Wesfolk

[DC 5] He is a warrior of some renown along the western fringes. He is the King's Lord of Caldor, which means he represents the king on all matters pertaining to Caldor in his majesty's absence. He is more of a warrior than an aristocrat though he holds his own on political matters.

[DC 10] It is nearly impossible to talk to Lord Welles personally, unless you are a high ranking church official or noble. It requires a Diplomacy check (DC 40). Subtract the difference of a failed check to determine the amount of days that a message or request for an audience reaches his ears. A success grants an immediate audience.

[DC 15] It is rumored that Lord Wethword, an agent of the king is secretly investigating Lord Welles. A seal from such a man would allow an immediate audience with Lord Welles should characters wish to ask a few questions.

[DC 25] It is rumored that Lord Welles seeks the tutoring of arcane masters. With such magic under his command, he will be able to consolidate his power and evade prying political enemies.

[DC 30] Lord Welles is indeed a magician of some power and draws his knowledge from a reanimationist, known in dark circles, as Lord Nascent, the Birth Giver, and his minion, Lord Galvinis.

Game Master's Note

Lord Arthur Welles does not wish to receive the *Shew Stone*, since he knows it will undoubtedly make his skill in the arcane arts public. But, it is impossible to refuse a gift from the king. Therefore, he must try to retrieve the stone and destroy it before Lord Wethword discovers its whereabouts.

Caldor the Swift Mind

[DC 10] Little is known of this legendary thief save of what bards sing praise to: stealer of the great dragon scale of Fec' Chron Null and possibly the last possessor of the *Shew Stone*. He

was last seen nearly seventy-five years ago and his body is still lost to time.

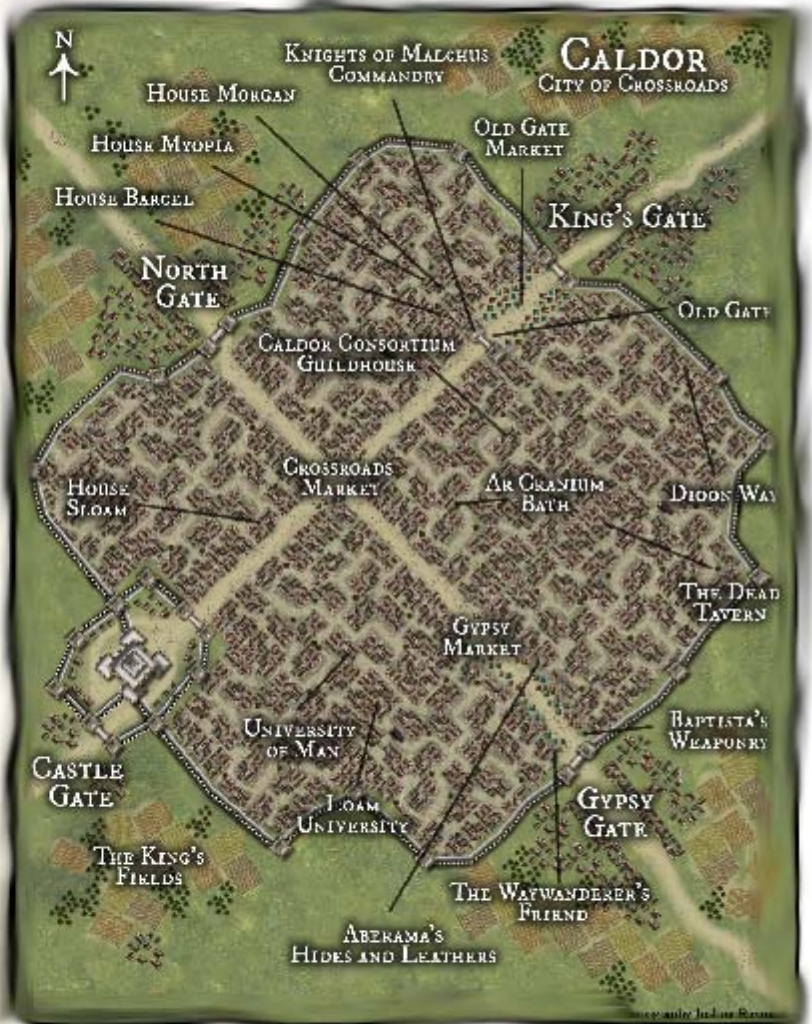
[DC 15] He dealt in trade with many, but none more so than with Lord Alcott the Elder, who passed away many years ago.

[DC 20] It is rumored that Calmar lurked beneath the city in one of the many undiscovered Romus streets that sank due to an ancient earthquake. It is there, many scholars believe, he fell to one of his own traps.

[DC 25] Calmar was obsessed with immortality and sought the means to live forever from a demonic entity (False).

Game Master's Note

Calmar the Swift Mind is alive and well after usurping the role of Lord Alcott nearly seventy-five years ago. He possesses the *Shew Stone* and the manor house built around a strange, magical fountain that grants immortality. He is obsessed about keeping his identity secret.





LACK TONGUE

This encounter takes place in either the Gypsy Market, Crossroads Market, or the Old Gate District, while characters are buying or selling items.

The merchant in the left stall takes pride in his wares: small wooden statues of saints; a few ancient marble seals of protection from the old gods Zeus and Aphrodite; several saintly reliquaries with knuckle bones; as well as various holy prayers written on tiny pieces of parchment. A peasant farmer stumbles into the stall, disrupting several items, even a few fall to the ground. The merchant instantly protects his wares then scrambles to recover the rest.

“Easy, my friend,” he tells the peasant. Then he whispers a brief message.

Have players make a Listen check. If any are successful continue with the following:

Listen check (DC 15): *“I do not need anymore knucklebones at the moment—I will send word when I do. Now, move along. You’re bringing unwanted attention.”*

Regardless of a successful Listen check read or paraphrase the following:

“It is important,” replies the farmer, “I must . . .”

“You do not look well.”

“I do not feel . . . well.” The farmer barely responds before collapsing to the ground in a lifeless heap.

RUNNING THE ENCOUNTER

A Search check reveals the following:

[DC 10] Nothing of import save for a Romus denarius, a standard Romus silver coin.

Role-Play: The merchant, Barbas, will quickly shout “Thief!” should any character begin to search the farmer, exclaiming: *“Do you not know it is wrong to steal from the dead?”* Any character claiming to be a healer or someone who may benefit the farmer, must make a successful Bluff check (DC d20-5) or a Diplomacy check (DC 15) to calm Barbas down. Otherwise, guards will arrive in 2d4 rounds.

A Heal check reveals the following:

[DC 15; 200 XP] The victim died from a contact poison. An intoxicating smell comes from the lips.

[DC 20; 500 XP] A trace amount of black lotus extract runs along the victim’s lips turning his tongue

black as night.

NPCS

Barbas (CN; Expert 2): Barbas is a lowly turcoman merchant making a living selling religious items regardless if truly blessed, cheap imitations, or altogether fake.

DEVELOPMENT

Suspicious characters or those who heard Barbas whisper his message to the farmer might wish to ask the merchant a few questions. Fearing discovery of his questionable trade practice, if any character is an inquisitor or cleric, such characters receive a +5 circumstance bonus to Diplomacy checks when dealing with Barbas.

A Diplomacy check reveals the following depending on the questions asked:

What was it you whispered to the farmer just before he collapsed?

[DC 15] *“I occasionally did business with the man. I told him I did not need any of his wares today.”*

What was his name?

[DC 15] *“His name is Albert. He is a peasant farmer of the King’s Fields. His lord is Arthur Welles, Earl of Wesfolk.”*

What kind of business would you have with a peasant farmer?

[DC 15] *“Caldor is built upon a once, great Romus city. With all the tilling and plowing, farmers occasionally turn up minor artifacts: bits of bone, pottery, and sometimes a sword or weapon.”*

[DC 30; 750 XP] *“Albert is or I should say was digging a new well. Lord Welles granted Albert with two new cattle and he needed extra water. He began to unearth a trove of scorched bits of bone: knuckles, fingers, and even an elbow. He eluded to something else he found—something big. I asked him to see it, but he told me that I could not afford the price he wanted for it. I guess he went elsewhere.”*

Who else is interested in Romus artifacts?

[DC 10; 100 XP] *“The one on the top of my mind is Lord Alcott Bese-Deable. He is the son of the late Lord Alcott the Elder, who also took interested in rare artifacts and ancient artwork. He lives in South Castle Ward.”*



THE INVESTIGATION

This part of the adventure takes place prior to characters delving into the ancient Romus ruins beneath Caldor. It involves the backdrop for what is to come, but more importantly, it provides a basis for possible adventures or NPC contacts after completion of the *Shew Stone*.

There is no particular order in which the characters need to run their investigation for it entirely depends on questions they have or people they wish to seek. It is also possible that characters might intentionally or unintentionally evade one or more of the encounters in this section. That poses no problem, but it is vital that characters have a chance to meet Lord Alcott prior to descending into the ancient ruins. It is also important they enter the ruin by way of Albert's farmstead.

LORD WETHWORD

Characters may encounter Lord Wethword should they inquire about his summons, wish to speak with Lord Arthur Welles, or is forced to bypass Captain Panhorn (see below). Lord Wethword, on such trips to Caldor, normally stays at the castle. However, due to the very nature of his mission, he fears loyal servants of Lord Welles might interfere. Therefore, Wethword takes residence in High Ward with Thomas the Fat, a merchant of House Morgan. Since Wethword hired many pages to spread his summons, characters easily find his whereabouts.

When characters approach the residence, they are met by a steward, William Shoehorn, and are shown to the main hall. Read or paraphrase the following:

The steward, William Shoehorn, escorts you into the main hall directing each to take a seat at the large trestle. Dim light crawls from the large fire place and spreads throughout the room save for the dark recesses of the tall, timbered ceiling. Long tapestries decorate the waddle and daub walls, their geometric design almost hypnotizing.

"Lord Wethword will be with you shortly," the steward announces and allows servants to fill mugs with ale for your pleasure. "Furthermore," the steward speaks, "My master, Thomas of House Morgan, is not here to welcome you at present. He suffered the loss of his daughter recently and took leave for a few weeks."

Lord Wethword greets each of them warmly despite how any uncouth character presents his or herself. He is tall, slim, and shrewd, observing everything and everyone about him. Once he takes his seat, read or paraphrase the following:

"I am glad there are a few stout adventures about Caldor who takes the summons of the king seriously. So many see such things as elven stones and legends of Calmar as mere children's fantasies.

"Lord Arthur Welles, Earl of Wesfolk, King's Lord of Caldor, does well for himself and his king.

The City of Crossroads fairs greatly and Lord Welles is able to keep the merchant lords at bay. Therefore the king wishes to honor him with a gift, but not just any gift—the Shew Stone of Ellesthir, a crystal of elven design.

"The last rumored possessor was none other than Calmar the Swift Mind, great rogue of Caldor, stealer of the dragon scale of Fec' Chron Null, so forth and so on. The problem is, Calmar was last seen nearly seventy-five years ago, more than likely dead, and, if I am to be so lucky, the stone is upon

Vitality Points

Vitality Points (vp) is a special ability available to the Feudal Lords Healer class.

What can they do?

1 VP: Heal 1 point of damage and 1 nonlethal point of damage.

5 VP: Heal 1 ability damage or remove one of the following conditions: dazed, fatigue, fear, paralysis, or sickened.

20 VP: Remove one of the following conditions: blindness, deafness, diseased, or insanity.

his rattled bones. It does seem fantastic as I repeat this to you, but it must be done and my servants have come up with loose ends. Therefore, I seek other alternatives to find its whereabouts.”

Role-Play

Lord Wethword is prepared to offer characters a small chest containing 1,000 gp, a fourth of the stone’s estimated value. Characters may make a successful Diplomacy check (DC 15) to increase this amount to 1,200 gp. For every 5 points above the DC increases the amount another 400 gp to a maximum of 3,400 gp. Lord Wethword cannot exceed his authorized amount.

Additionally, the church also supports this endeavor providing a healer dedicated to the Angel of Retribution. The healer, a woman named Elsie Kinfolk, has a daily total of 20 vitality points (vp) to divide among the group should anyone become seriously injured (see Vitality Points sidebar). She is staying at a hostel dedicated to St. Ffraid in St. Ffraid’s Ward.

Should characters accept Lord Wethword’s offer, he bids them good luck and stresses that they are under no time constraint since his post here is indefinite. Furthermore, he has other business to attend to, such as looking for a building to set up an office for himself and his servants. Therefore, should characters wish to contact him again, they are told to do so through the steward of Master Thomas. Also, before they leave, Lord Wethword gives the most charismatic character, or one with a noble allegiance, Papers of Aggression bearing his personal seal (see sidebar).

Development

Suspicious characters might think it odd that a healer dedicated to the Angel of Retribution is involved. A Knowledge (religion) check (DC 10) reveals the Angel of Retribution, an aspect of the Church of the Eternal Spirit, is followed by inquisitors and paladins.

Papers of Aggression

Such papers are issued by a lord to specific individuals carrying out an aggressive mission in their name. They are carefully sealed from prying eyes with a combination of interwoven parchment strips and the issuing lord’s wax seal.

An successful Open Lock check (DC 30) is needed to open the scroll unharmed otherwise it becomes unresealable.

Should the carrier of a paper of aggression is caught doing violent acts on a neighboring lord’s lands, they simply show them the scroll. Within the scroll, it states the nature of their business and their personal description. Afterward, the neighboring lord usually reissues another set of aggression papers, should he approve of their actions, along with his seal.

Furthermore, characters might have questions for Lord Wethword. He answers them to the best of his ability, since he himself has limited knowledge about the matters at foot.

What is the *Shew Stone*?

“The Shew Stone of Ellesthir is something akin to a crystal ball or similar divination magic. At least, that is what is rumored.”

Where would you suggest we begin our investigation?

“If I knew, I would not have need of your services. My servants talked with Lord Alcott Bese-Deable, son of the man who last seen Calmar the Swift Mind. However, he proved to have little information about the matter. You may wish to talk with him again, but keep in mind, he is an aged man and tires easily.”

A healer dedicated to the Angel of Retribution? Does that mean the inquisition is involved?

“That is always a possibility since they never sleep. Nevertheless, I would advise caution using the dark arts while in the presence of Elsie Kinfolk.”

How did the daughter of Master Thomas die?

“His daughter, Mary, died almost immediately when her horse threw her on a hunt. It is sad, since I’ve known her since she was a little girl.”

THE MESSENGERS

The night after they meet with Lord Wethword, a group of minions from a small reanimationist cult cell assaults the characters.

Encounter 2—The Messengers: This encounter is detailed on page 14.

Development

Depending on the outcome of the encounter, a piece of parchment is found in the mud following the woman’s fall or in one of the character’s pockets. It



Go to
Encounter 2:
The
Messengers



reads:

Enclosed is a lock of hair from an innocent—if you do not cease your search for the Shew Stone, William Shoehorn’s blood will be upon your hands.

—Lord Galvinis, Reanimationer of Rats

Shrewd characters might make use of this lock of hair to cast a *scrying* spell upon William. If they do, read or paraphrase the following:

A glint of light bores down onto the face of an unconscious William Shoehorn. Though still in movement, he breathes softly as the sound of rats echo throughout the doorless chamber. One of these rats clamors close to the young man. It is missing an eye, stitched with fine thread, arcane markings, and more surprisingly—a cat’s tail instead of its own along with a human ear straight upon its back.

If characters take this message to Lord Wethword, he confirms that William is missing and he too received such a letter. He beckons characters to continue their search as he will inquire about the poor lad and send a message to Thomas about the plight of his servant.

Of course, William is in no danger since he is a loyal follower of Thomas, otherwise known as Lord Galvinis. It is meant as not just a warning to characters about the seriousness of the situation, but as a diversion to those who might think William betrayed their description to the rogues attacking them. Which, or course, is the case.

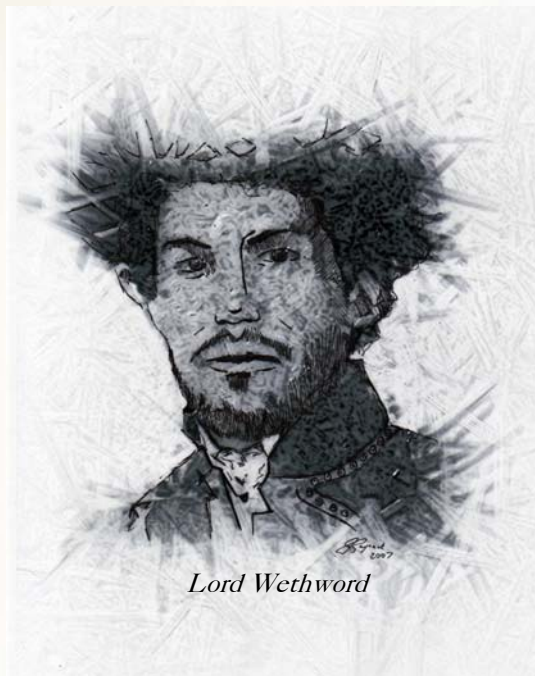
LORD ARTHUR WELLES

Characters might encounter Lord Arthur Welles should they wish to question him or if they are caught doing any violent acts and are forced to present their Papers of Aggression. Also, sometime after their meeting of Lord Wethword, Lord Welles sends his steward, Albert Dungshod, to summon the characters to the castle.

As stated earlier in the NPC section, it is nearly impossible to request an audience with Lord Arthur Welles. However, should a character possess the Papers of Aggression with the seal of Lord Wethword, they are granted an immediate audience.

When the characters meet Lord Welles for the first time, read or paraphrase the following:

A tall, stout man of forty-five sits before you upon a decoratively painted wooden chair in the great hall. Grand tapestries hang along the cold, stone walls and



Lord Wethword

along the thick beams crossing the ceiling.

Accompanied by his stewards, Lord Arthur Welles sees to one of his many duties: overseeing transgressors of the law. A line of burghers await before the lord. A scribe dutifully takes an accurate account of the transgressions and fines levied against the guilty.

“Isabella,” the scribe announces, “widow of Peter begs mercy for her son, who trespassed in the lord’s wood.”

“You may have my mercy,” Lord Welles announces, “A fine of eighteen copper.”

“Thank you, mi lord,” Isabella manages to say as she grabs her son by the ear.

The scribe continues: “William Jordan is in mercy for plowing his lord’s fields poorly.”

“A fine of six cop—,” Lord Welles is suddenly aware of your presence, directing the sheriff of Caldor to continue in his absence, he waves to those escorting you into a small alcove. Afterward, a colorful screen depicting a hunting scene is placed between you and those in the great hall.

Lord Welles takes a moment to sniff a pouch containing dried flowers and herbs: “You should visit the apothecary for such an item if you have yet to do so. Plague is thick in the Wildlands and approaches. The fragrance purifies the most putrid of air.”

If characters are here to ask a few questions, and if they have Papers of Aggression bearing Lord Wethword’s seal, Lord Welles looks at the seal briefly before handing it back. In this instance, Lord Welles

Illustration by Joshua Raynack

will not break the seal. Proceed to Part C.

However, if characters were brought here because they were caught in a violent act, then proceed to Part A before proceeding to Part C.

If characters were caught in a violent act, but have Papers of Transgression to justify their act, then Proceed to Part B, before proceeding to Part C.

Part A

Read or paraphrase the following:

“Committing a violent act may lead to a heavy fine, public humiliation and injury in the stocks, or perhaps even the hangman’s noose. However, with the title of King’s Lord of Caldor and Wesfolk, I have it within my power to grant a pardon for such transgressions. But, before I am able to do such a thing, I have a proposition for the lot of you.”

Continue to Part C.

Part B

Read or paraphrase the following:

Lord Welles breaks the seal of Lord Wethword and quickly reads the Papers of Aggression before turning to you: “It seems everything is in order. However, it will take a few days to pen a new set of papers for you to carry about your person.

“Therefore, if I were you, I would think twice before getting into trouble again. Otherwise, you might find yourself in my hallmote at my mercy. But, I do have a proposition for you whereas you will not need such papers to continue your work.”

Continue to Part C.

Part C

Read or paraphrase the following:

“Should you breath a word I am about to say, I will deny every portion of it and you will not only be at my mercy, but that of my allies as well. Agreed?”

“My practice of the arcane arts is no great secret, but I do keep pains of concealing it from the church for obvious reasons. But my political enemies have the king’s ear for the moment and wish to usurp my power in Caldor altogether. It is my service and loyalty to the king that prevents him from taking direct action against me.

“But should the Shew Stone be found and given to me, it will undoubtedly unravel all the good I do here. Lord Wethword, a spy under the king’s

employ, is assigned to keep a close eye on me and my court. He is a fair man, but I fear his many puppeteers. He will do his duty and remain until he finds the stone.

“I offer you double of what Lord Wethword would or has offered you to find the stone and bring it to me instead. Otherwise, I will not interfere with your work or that of Lord Wethword, for, as I said, I am a loyal servant of the King. On the hand, I cannot count on my allies—there are a few treacherous lords in this area, and with the stone in my possession, my life as well as yours would be in constant danger.”

Role-Play

Should the characters have any questions for Lord Welles, this is the time to ask them. Outlined below are some possible questions and answers.

Do you know who attacked us?

“No, I do not—as I have said, there are many in Caldor who do not want my thoughts read by the Shew Stone.”

Lord Welles does not know that his master moved against the characters, but he might have a suspicion that is the case. Of all his allies, his teacher, Thomas the Fat, would be the most likely of candidates to do such a thing.

Since you practice the arcane arts, do you have a familiar?

“I am uncertain about the term familiar, but I do have a close connection to the hawk I hunt with.”

Did you know that Albert, one of your peasants, is dead?

“There were one hundred and fourteen murders last year alone. I find it difficult to keep up with each name—especially someone who was a peasant. But, yes, I do know he was murdered and I have men looking into it.”

Why did you give Albert, one of your peasant farmers, two new cattle?

“Albert, hmmm, let me see . . . oh, yes—he actually bought the cattle from me and I have it written in the ledger as such. You can never trust rumors. As a matter of fact, at the time, I became quite curious on how he obtained the monies needed to purchase to fine beasts.”

Where would you suggest we begin our investiga-



tion?

"If I knew, I would not have need of your services. However, I would talk with Lord Alcott Bese-Deable, son of the man who last seen Calmar the Swift Mind. He might have some information about the rogue, since it is Calmar who held possession of the Shew Stone before his disappearance. But keep in mind, he is an aged man and tires easily."

Development

If taken, characters will receive new Papers of Aggression from Lord Welles in three days time. Shrewd characters might return to Lord Wethword to ask for a new set of papers, but Lord Wethword is unable to do so. He explains: *"Since the seal was broken, it is the duty of the lord who broke them to issue new orders along with the opened orders. It gives evidence that the lord agreed with the transgression should it become a matter of a higher authority."*

Furthermore, should characters elect to work for Lord Arthur Welles, he will uphold his end of the bargain. He will also let Thomas the Fat, his teacher in the arcane arts, know that as well. Thomas will then relinquish the thought of interfering with the characters and continue with his experiments.

LORD ALCOTT BESE-DEABLE

Character might venture to meet Lord Alcott, secretly known as Calmar the Swift Mind, after meeting with either Lord Wethword or Lord Welles, or after discovering a connection with Albert in the Black Tongue encounter. Lord Alcott lives in an walled manor house in High Ward.

Characters are greeted by a servant and shown to the courtyard to await Lord Alcott's presence. Read or paraphrase the following:

The courtyard, made of fine, hewn stone centers around a fountain depicting mermaids holding aloft great clamshells. Ancient weapons and exotic shields hang poised on the wall, interspersed with tapestries. All these treasures are protected by a wal-

Calmar the Swift Mind

During this encounter, characters face Calmar the Swift Mind posing as Lord Alcott the Younger. Although characters at this point might not be suspicious of Lord Alcott, thorough players might try the use of magic or the Sense Motive skill since the merchant is not entirely truthful. Therefore, here are some quick stats that might prove useful to run this encounter without causing characters to divert their attention to Lord Alcott.

Lord Alcott (Calmar)

Skills Bluff +13, Disguise +28*

Possessions ring of mind shielding, hat of disguise*

Click here to see
Calmar's
complete statistics



nut constructed overhang that encircles the top of the courtyard walls. Vines grow upward toward the sun, embedding itself into the brick, giving the appearance of an old ruin.

A man, dressed nobly with clothes of excessive fabric, ermine fur lined robes, and a hat of equal quality, walks into the courtyard aided by a servant. He eases onto a marble bench and stares at the fountain for a moment before speaking: "I have never seen a mermaid. I wonder if its beauty could compare to an imaginative sculptor."

He dismisses his servant: "You may go, Geoffrey. How can I help you today?"

Characters are here mainly to ask questions that might lead them to Calmar the Swift Mind, his corpse, or offer some clues about Albert's mysterious death. He will not answer questions unless presented

with either the seal of Lord Wethword, Lord Welles, or if one of the characters is an inquisitor. Listed below are some possible questions characters might pose to Lord Alcott as well as his answers.

Did a peasant farmer, named Albert come to see you recently?

"Yes, he did. While digging a well, he discovered an interesting piece of charred wood bearing an ancient holy symbol of Mithras, a Romus cult. He was an oaf—most of the fragile wood fell apart in his hands by carrying it here. I did buy it nonetheless."

If characters ask to see it, he will deny them this pleasure telling them he sent it away for authentication (true).

Did you know that Albert died recently?

"No, I did not. That is a shame since it seems the well he began digging might lead into an actual temple dedicated Mithras. He promised me more artifacts from the site, should he find them."

Lord Alcott pauses for a moment, the cogs in his head turn as if searching a solution for a problem. He continues with renewed vigor: "I understand you

have obligations and responsibilities, but if you could uncover some of the artifacts from the well before Lord Welles lays claim to the land, I will pay handsomely.”

This is a ploy, since Lord Albert knows what lies below, since it was once his lair as Calmar the Swift Mind. He hopes the characters will indeed investigate and fall prey to one of the many dangers the area presents or any number of traps.

What do you know of Calmar the Swift Mind?

“He was a quite, cunning man with a shrewd eye and a nose for what people truly desire. It is almost as if he could read their thoughts—that is how he came by his moniker.

“My father thoroughly enjoyed his company, not just the treasures he found for him. It has been nearly seventy-five years since I saw him—I was just a lad of fifteen.

“The most I remember about him is that he brought my father and I the most intoxicating fruit I have ever eaten. I can close my eyes and almost taste it. The smell of it was almost hypnotic.

“I do not know the name of the fruit, but I have yet to taste anything like it since his last visit. Ah, to be young again—what a life I would lead. Enjoy your time on this earth. Too soon does time pass.”

What do you know of the Shew Stone?

“Only that Calmar possessed such a rarity. My father inquired about it on one occasion, but Calmar would not part with it. However, my father did gaze into it once—he saw a bull, bloodied and consumed by warriors. I am not sure what that image portended, but my father found it disturbing.”

This is another ploy by Lord Alcott. By planting such imagery connected to the *Shew Stone*, thorough characters might roll a successful Knowledge (religion) or Knowledge (history) check (DC 15) to identify it with the cult of Mithras. Once again, Lord Alcott is attempting to direct characters to the Temple of Mithras in hopes they will endanger themselves.

Development

Should characters miss the subtle, false clue connecting the *Shew Stone* with the Temple of Mithras, Lord Alcott will send them a note via his servant, Geoffrey. Read or paraphrase the following:

Talking with you yesterday brought back a flood of memories, especially with my father’s vision and its

possible connection with the Shew Stone you now seek. I believe we have a mutual interest, since the bloody visage my father saw in the depths of the elven stone is representative of the Mithras cult.

Why it appeared to my father so many years ago and why now, with the recent possible discovery of a Mithras temple, I cannot say. But perhaps within the temple you might find the stone and I could reward you with any artifacts you might find.

*Sincerely,
Lord Alcott the Younger*

In addition, characters with Knowledge (religion) or Knowledge (history) might try to recall any information about the Mithras cult. This information is provided on page 19.

ALBERT’S FARMSTEAD

Characters venture here either to gather more information about the mysterious death surrounding the peasant farmer or to search for the entrance into the Temple of Mithras. Once characters reach the farmstead, an encounter ensues with a few men under the employ of Lord Welles.

Encounter 3—Captain Panhorn: This encounter is detailed on page 18.

Development

The farmstead, besides Captain Panhorn, his soldiers, or the small animals, is deserted. Fay, Albert’s wife, is staying with her uncle in a nearby village along with their children. She will not know of her husband’s death until she returns.

Characters easily find the entrance to the Temple of Mithras via the unfinished well. A pile of broken, scorched pottery lies adjacent to the well and unstacked stone. Captain Panhorn did notice the Romas pottery, but ignored the suggestion that this is the wealth Albert discovered.

Any character looking down into the well with a torch, low-light, or darkvision, sees an obvious extended cavern along with broken floor tiles interspersed around the pool of water below. Once characters decide to venture down into the ancient temple, proceed to Chapter Three.



Go to
Page 19 for
more info on
the Mithras
Cult

Go to
Encounter 3:
Captain
Panhorn



ESSENGERS

This encounter takes place an evening after the characters meet with Lord Wethword. While walking along a dimly lit street, read or paraphrase the following:

As the last light of the sun dims, so too does the hustle and bustle of city life. Merchants pack their wares, more ward patrols take to the streets, and even the bawdy taverns quiet down slightly as drunks stumble homeward to make curfew.

A woman carrying a bucket of water falls as a drunkard loses balance falling into her. Along with her bucket, her coin purse spills unto the ground. She quickly clamors to pull the coins from the mud before the drunk notices them.



Reanimationist Minion (5)

CR 3

LE Medium human Rogue 1/Wizard 2

Init +6 **Senses** Listen +4, Spot +4; darkvision 60 ft.

Languages Trade tongue (common), celestial, abyssal

Allegiances freeman, reanimationist cult, orcus

AC 12, touch 12, flat-footed 10
(+2 Dex)

hp 14 (3 HD)

Fort +1, **Ref** +4, **Will** +3

Speed 30 ft. (6 squares)

Melee mwk throwing axe +3 (1d6+1) or
mwk dagger +3 (1d4+1/19-20)

Ranged mwk dagger +3 (1d4+1/19-20 plus poison)

Base Atk +1; **Grp** +2

Atk Options sneak attack +1d6

Combat Gear 2 potions of cure light wounds, potion of darkvision (used)

Wizard Spells Prepared (CL 2nd):

1st—expeditious retreat^D, mage armor^D, true strike
0—detect magic^D, flare (DC 12), light^D, read magic

Abilities Str 12, Dex 14, Con 12, Int 15, Wis 10, Cha 9

SQ trapfinding

Feats Improved Initiative, Quick Draw, Scribe Scroll^B, Toughness

Skills Bluff +4, Concentration +3, Disguise +3, Escape Artist +6, Gather Information +5, Hide +7, Listen +4, Move Silently +6, Slight of Hand +5, Spellcraft +6, Spot +4

Possessions combat gear plus mwk throwing axe, mwk dagger, spell component, peasant clothes

Poison (Ex): An opponent hit by a minion's poisoned weapon must succeed on a DC 13 Fortitude save or fall unconscious. After 1 minute, the subject must succeed on another DC 13 Fortitude save or remain unconscious for 2d4 hours.

Give characters a moment to react to the woman before making Spot checks (DC d20+7) for the surprise round. Since the minions reveal their true nature 40 feet (8 squares away) they have a -4 penalty to Spot checks. Also, anyone choosing to help the fallen woman or take her coin, receives an additional -5 penalty for being distracted.

Suddenly, one of the stumbling drunks stands upright out in front and brandishes a dagger—then more come from the shadows

revealing their blades as well, poised to strike.

RUNNING THE ENCOUNTER

The minions will not fight to the death, even if a companion falls. They are from a minor cell and have nearly nothing to offer in way of information about the reanimationist cult or who initially gave them this assignment. Their duties range from collecting small dead animals for experiments or scribing scrolls.

THE CREATURES

A summary of the following creatures in this area follows:

Reanimationist Minions: These cultists dress as peasants giving no outwardly signs of their allegiance to the reanimationist cult. They are assigned with the task of delivering a message and a warning for characters to stop their search for the *Shew Stone*.

TACTICS

The woman (**W**) and the drunk (**D**) that stumbled into her are also reanimationist minions with the sole purpose to cause a distraction. On her initiative, she readies an action to use her Slight of Hand skill on any character adjacent to her. She will take her ready action when her target looks away to join their comrade in combating the other minions.

She uses her Slight of Hand skill (DC 20) to plant a message on the character's person. She re-

ceives a +4 bonus on the attempt due to the message's small size. Furthermore, she receives an additional +2 bonus if her target is wearing a cloak or other baggy clothing. Her target is allowed an opposed Spot check.

Regardless of her success or failure, she quickly leaves the scene using *expeditious retreat* if need be. If she failed in her task, she drops the message near her bucket and coin purse. Her drunken accomplice also flees, leaving the other minions to issue their warning.

Use the following tactics for the remaining minions:

Surprise round: The three remaining minions (**M**) quick draw their daggers (each needs to make a poison use check; 5% chance to poison themselves) and cast *true strike*.

Round 1: One shouts a warning: "*The Shew Stone is not worth finding!*" Afterward, all three throw their daggers, choosing clerics and arcane casters as a first choice, then those with apparent ranged weapons such as bows or hand axes.

Should any minion roll a natural 1 on their attack roll, they must make an immediate Reflex save (DC 15) or poison themselves.

Round 2: If all characters are unconscious, they will take from each a bit of hair. Otherwise, they cast *expeditious retreat* and make their escape.

TREASURE

The coins in the mud left by the female minion total

Hue-and-Cry

Hue-and-cry was the medieval form of a neighborhood watch program. When a townsfolk or citizen witnessed an illegal activity, they were immediately supposed to give a shout, sounding the alarm. Failure to do so, a witness was usually found suspect of the crime and fined appropriately as if they actually committed the crime themselves.

When fighting breaks out in a town, depending on the time of day, someone will most likely give a hue-and-cry. At the beginning of each round of combat after the initial time frame depending on the time of day, make a general

Spot Check (DC 10) during the day and a general Listen check (DC 10; this includes all modifiers save for distance). If the check is successful, someone gives a hue-and-cry.

Morning: Morning is usually the busiest time of day within a town or village. 1 round before the hue-and-cry check.

Afternoon: While still a busy time, most people are off in the fields or distracted by their work. 2 rounds before the hue-and-cry check.

Early Evening: Everybody has supped and are ready for bed. 3 rounds before the hue-and-cry check.

Nighttime: Most but the dubious are sleeping. 4 rounds before the hue-and-cry check.

10 cp.

DEVELOPMENT

If all the minions escape, then their mission is considered successful, thus characters get only half the normal experience point reward for the encounter. Characters receive the total reward, should they capture at least one of the minions for interrogation.

Characters have a few moments to question any minions they captured before a ward patrol arrives. The minion will not answer any question unless an Intimidate check (DC d20+3) is made. The following outlined below might be some possible questions characters may have for their prisoner:

Who sent you here to do this?

“One of our reanimationist leaders. Do not bother to ask us for a name or description, for we communicate through messenger owls.”

Why do you not want the *Shew Stone* discovered?

“I am not sure what the stone does other than it is useful tool when spying. Those who use it, might discover the location of our cells.”

What do the reanimationists stand for?

“The church wishes the dead to stay dead rather than use miracles the Divine Spirit imbues unto them. While the use of the arcane is heresy in such situations, the use of science and electricity might produce the same outcome without the stigma. But, church fathers also forbid the progress of science and enlightenment to keep their grasp over the people!” Thus, we are forced underground to practice our craft.”

Should characters kill one or more of the minions and are around when the ward patrol arrives, they are escorted to the castle for the night. In the morning, they are brought before Lord Arthur Welles to present their Papers of Aggression and to explain themselves.



Return to the
adventure



APTAIN PANHORN

Captain Panhorn and his small contingent interacts with characters when they venture to Ablert's farmstead in search of the well or to question family members.

Finding Ablert's hovel is not hard should characters learn the farmer's name from Barbas the Merchant. Otherwise a successful Gather Information check (DC 10) is required. Once characters reach the farm, read or paraphrase the following:

The Albert farmstead looks like any other peasant dwelling dotting the countryside: a few interspersed fields for crops and grazing, a wattle and daub hovel with a thick, thatched roof, and a variety of small animals. An unfinished, roughly hewn stonework well takes a prominent position near a pig and cow pen.

Three Caldor guards, each armed with a polearm, casually stroll the grounds keeping watch while their captain searches the fields not far to the rear. He is strong, but apparently a eater of rich food as his wide belly stretches is tabard.

Elite Guard (3)

CR 3

LN Medium human Fighter 2

Init +1 **Senses** Listen +1, Spot +3

Languages trade tongue (common), gypsy tongue

Allegiances Caldor, Captain Panhorn, freeman

AC 16, touch 11, flat-footed 18

(+1 Dex, +5 armor)

hp 17 (2 HD)

Fort +6, **Ref** +1, **Will** +1

Speed 20 ft. (5 squares)

Melee ranseur +6 (2d4+3) or

dagger +5 (1d4+3/19-20)

Ranged dagger +3 (1d4+3/19-20)

Space 5 ft.; **Reach** 5 ft. (10 ft. with ranseur)

Base Atk +2; **Grp** +5

Atk Options Combat Expertise (2), disarm (+14)

Combat Gear 1 *potions of cure moderate wounds*

Abilities Str 16, Dex 13, Con 16, Int 13, Wis 12,

Cha 12

Feats Combat Expertise^B, Improved Disarm^B, Skill

Focus (Intimidate), Tower Shield Proficiency^B,

Weapon Focus (ranseur)

Skills Climb +0, Intimidate +6, Handle Animal +2,

Jump +0, Spot +3

Possessions combat gear plus chainmail, ranseur, 2

daggers, tabard (Caldor), backpack (3 torches)

belt pouch (flint and steel playing cards, signal

whistle).

Captain Panhorn

CR 7

LN Medium human Ranger 1/Fighter 4/Captain of the Guard 2

Init +2 **Senses** Listen +3, Spot +3

Languages trade tongue (common), gypsy tongue, halfling

Allegiances Caldor, Lord Welles, freeman

AC 23, touch 12, flat-footed 23; Dodge, Mobility, uncanny dodge

(+2 Dex, +6 armor, +5 shield)

hp 43 (7 HD)

Fort +9, **Ref** +7, **Will** +2

Speed 20 ft. (5 squares)

Melee +1 *bastard sword* +11 (1d10+5) or

Ranged mwk dagger +10 (1d4+2/19-20)

Base Atk +7; **Grp** +9

Atk Options favored enemy humans +2, urban mastery

Combat Gear *brooch of shielding* (74 points), 2

potions of remove fear, *potion of cure moderate wounds*

Abilities Str 15, Dex 14, Con 10, Int 14, Wis 8,

Cha 12

SQ tactical aid, wild empathy +2 (-2 magical beasts)

Feats Dodge^B, Exotic Weapon Proficiency (bastard

sword)^B, Heroic Surge, Lightning Reflexes,

Mobility^B, Tower Shield Proficiency^B, Track^B,

Weapon Focus (bastard sword)^B, Weapon

Specialization (bastard sword)

Skills Diplomacy +4, Climb -7, Gather Information

+5, Intimidate +11, Knowledge (geography)

+6, Knowledge (local) +6, Listen +3, Search +7,

Sense Motive +8, Spot +3, Survival -1 (+0 when

tracking)

Possessions combat gear plus +1 *chainmail*, +1

tower shield, +1 *bastard sword*, *cloak of resistance*

+1, *brooch of shielding* (74 points), tabard

(Caldor), belt pouch (flint and steel, signal

whistle, whetstone).

RUNNING THE ENCOUNTER

Captain Panhorn will introduce himself to the characters and demand to know the business that brought them to Albert's farmstead. Unless characters present him with Paper of Aggression bearing the seal of Lord Welles, Captain Panhorn will precede to give them a warning and to leave the property immediately. Should characters ignore this warning, he will attack.

It is possible that characters might present Captain Panhorn with Papers of Aggression bearing Lord

Wethword's seal. Should this happen, read or paraphrase the following:

Captain Panhorn gruffly snatches the sealed parchment to examine it. Without so much as a warning, he breaks the wax seal and looks over it with mocking diligence.

"Oi, men—it looks as though we have a problem," he announces, "I forgot I can't read nothing that doesn't have our lord's seal."

His men grin slyly. He shoves the parchment back. "I am truly sorry, but it seems your paper is worthless. Now git off this here land," the captain commands.

THE CREATURES

A summary of the following creatures in this area follows:

Captain Panhorn: He is a gruff, slightly out of shape, but experienced soldier. He prefers to bully than use more diplomatic measures and is not afraid to overstep his boundary of authority every now and then.

He is extremely loyal to Lord Welles and the master of the castle knows it, for it was he who assigned the captain to guard Albert's farm from interlopers and to find anything that might be of value. Lord Welles believes Albert's sudden wealth is attributed to something the farmer found while tilling the fields.

Elite Guards: Captain Panhorn is accompanied by three elite guards. Each were handpicked by Panhorn and are extremely loyal.

TACTICS

Captain Panhorn and his men are extremely well trained and fight accordingly.

Round 1: Captain Panhorn will take up a position behind his men, using his shield to grant full cover, and activate his tactical aid ability granting each of his allies +1 to attack rolls. Should his soldiers go first in the initiative, they will delay until Panhorn takes his action. Afterward, they will attempt to disarm any threatening character then move onward to an enemy with a ranged weapon or spell-casting abilities.

Please note, that the guards are +15 to their attack rolls to disarm an opponent. This includes a +4 bonus for their two-handed weapon, a +4 bonus due to the Improved Disarm feat, and their Captain's tactical aid ability. Also note, defenders with a nonmelee weapon (such as a bow) have a -4 penalty to their opposed disarm roll.

Round 2: Captain Panhorn will precede to take out any spellcaster first while his men continually attempt to disarm opponents that might threaten Captain Panhorn.

DEVELOPMENT

If characters decide to flee, Captain Panhorn will not pursue, but will send one of his remaining men to request three additional elite guards. These guards will appear by next morning.

Any death of a guardsmen or Captain Panhorn might put characters in a sticky predicament. A character still possessing Papers of Aggression with Wethword's seal will save him and his companions from the law. Although, it might make an enemy of Lord Welles should the deaths become linked to the characters.

Characters without Papers of Aggression could very well find themselves at the mercy of Lord Welles. Lord Welles will take advantage of this situation offering a pardon in exchange for the *Shew Stone*. Again, this happens only if characters are linked with the deaths.



Return to the adventure.

Chapter Three

3

TEMPLE OF MITHRAS

This chamber once enraptured the followers of Mithras, an underground Romus cult. Cult members worshipped their patron deity, Mithras the Sun God, by sacrificing bulls, basking in their blood, and bringing light to darkness.

During the great quake that brought down most of the ancient city in this area, the temple pillars supported the ground above so that it did not sink inward as well.

Characters can enter via the well above Area 1: Pool or through the temple entrance via the stairway should they find a different access into the sunken Romas street. Either case, read or paraphrase the following:

Light pours into the cavern from the well above as the remains of pillars, benches, and an altar spread across an ancient marble floor. Though the interior simulates the grandeur of a normal Romus temple, closer examination proves otherwise. Broken stone street signs, uneven and mismatched marble, and unrefined mosaics, leads to believe that worshippers scavenged materials to build this holy site.

The temple stretches a good length eventually leading to a downward staircase that once served as a temple entrance. Near the temple center, two rubble pathways lead into adjacent rooms.

Mosaic patterns in the floor depict a man killing a bull then feasting upon its flesh and drinking its blood with his followers. In another time, this might have been a grisly place to visit, but it seems, for now, only dust and ancient memories fill this area.

Development

A Knowledge (religion) check reveals the following:

[DC 10] In Romus temples, it is customary for worshippers to present gifts. Such temples also have many means of protection against defilers.

[DC 15] This is a temple dedicated to sun worship with a bull symbolizing immortality or salvation.

[DC 20] This is a temple dedicated to the ancient underground cult of Mithras. Worshippers mostly included stout warriors and gladiators. They were

often built underground from scavenged materials.

[DC 25] They would usually sacrifice a bull and partake of its flesh and blood to give them strength before battle ensuring their celestial place next to Mithras should they die. Priests would invigorate the altar with an evocation spell to satisfy the divine guardians.

A Knowledge (architecture and engineering) check reveals the following:

[DC 10] It looks as though a quake shook the foundations of this temple causing its destruction, but it is also what prevented the ceiling from collapsing.

Encounter 4—The Lost God: Characters trigger this encounter once they attempt to pass the ruined altar without imbuing the alter with a spell from the sun domain. This encounter is detailed on page 24.

Treasure: The golden idol intact is worth 2,600 gp on the open market as a treasured piece of antiquity. However, if destroyed, the bits of fine gold dust is worth only 1,600 gp. A still sizeable some.

THE STAIRS BELOW

Leading from the Temple of Mithras is a set of stairs and a pair of crumbling, massive wooden doors. Characters begin to encounter the full horror the volcanic earthquake posed for victims of the sunken street. Read or paraphrase the following:

Through massive wooden doors, a cavernous area opens up displaying a surreal scene: an ancient Romas street completely sunk into the earth. The air is stale and hot as a thin layer of hardened ash cakes around fountains and scorched bone. Directly across, as far as you can see in the enveloping darkness, mostly intact buildings still look as though they may hold a purpose to the hundreds of blackened, skeletal remains.

Some of the surviving victims realized the street sunk beneath the earth and tried to take shelter. Most took refuge in buildings, while some unfortun-

Click here to go to Encounter 4: The Lost God

nates tried to open the great door of Mithras for shelter. However, once the super heated steam poured from a newly opened fissure, their skin was seared off their bone. A great pile of these remains lie directly in their path, covering a fissure.

Characters may wish to examine some of the skeletal remains. Those doing so find the following with a successful Heal check:

[DC 15] Most of the skeletal remains are fused together in the position which the victims perished. Their hands and feet contorted as their skin incinerated from their body. Teeth and most skulls exploded, while some of the skulls remained intact only to boil the brain of the victims. All these indicators point to a superheated death.

Those moving pass the doors are subject to a trap and encounter.

Fissure Pit Trap: CR 2; natural; location trigger; no reset; DC 20 Reflex save avoids; 20 ft. deep (2d6, fall); multiple targets (first target in each of two adjacent 5-ft. squares); Search DC 20; Disable Device DC 20.

Encounter S1—The Charred Ones: This encounter is detailed on page 26.

Development

One minute after the fissure trap is disturbed, a vast gush of steam erupts from the once dormant gap. Characters within 10 feet of the steam wall receives 2d4 points of heat damage per round, while those past 10 feet but within 10 feet, suffers 1d4 points of heat damage per round. Those passing through this wall of steam suffers 2d6+20 points of heat damage.

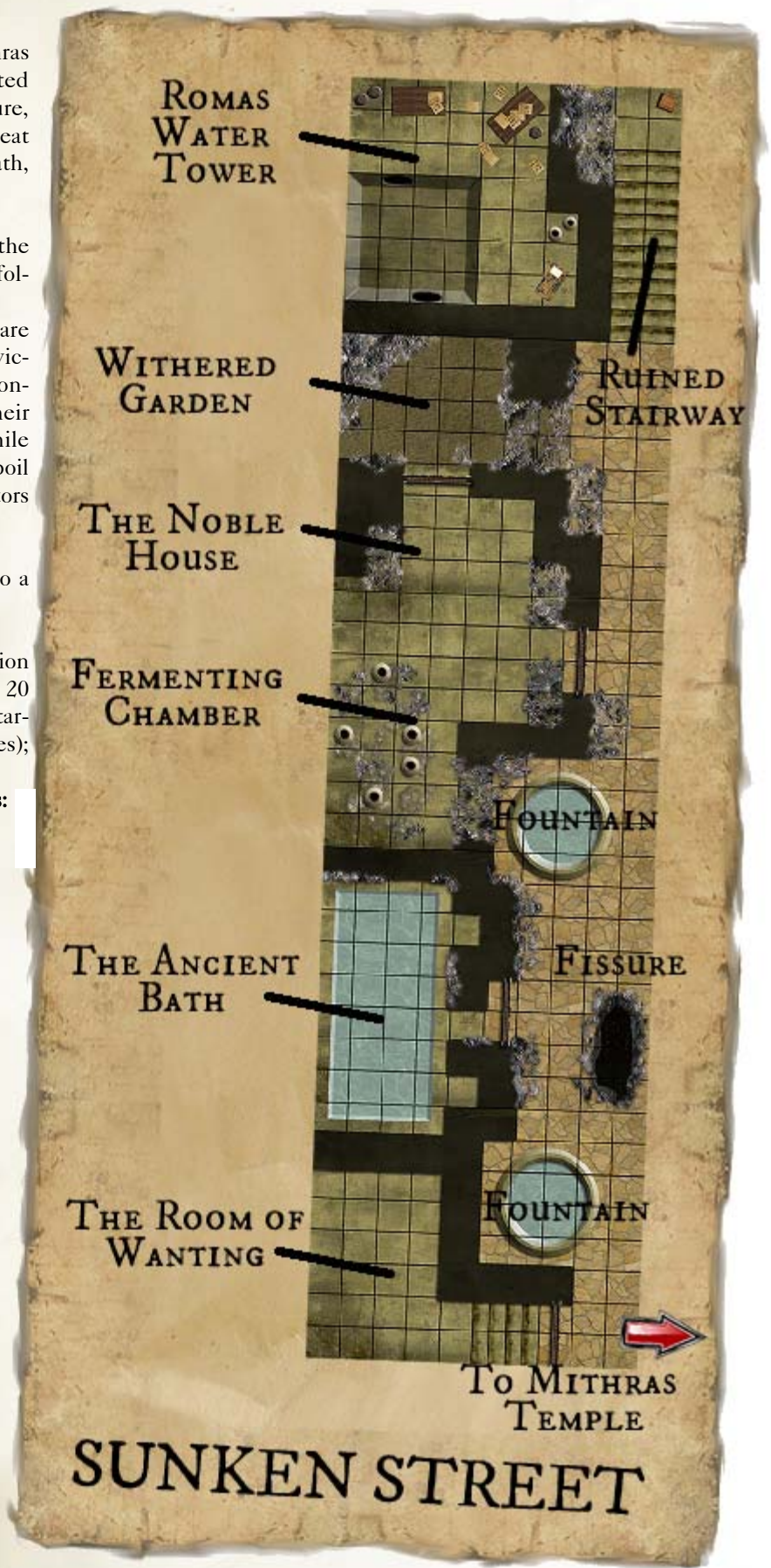
If any 5-foot length of steam takes 20 points of cold damage or more in 1 round, that length remains inactive for 10 minutes.

This development might force characters to seek the alternative exit located in the water tower.



SUNKEN STREET

The stairs leading from the Temple of Mithras empty



Click here to go to Encounter S1: The Charred Ones



into the ancient Romas street. This street and its adjacent buildings sunk below the earth hundreds of years ago as a giant fissure opened the land. The people who survived the shock waves of the volcanic earthquake were subject to the superheated air and ash that filled the area. Their skin was quickly seared, almost instantly vaporizing them. Save for a few, only their scorched skeletal frames remain.

Despite the volcano beneath this area is long since dormant, the sunken street and other exposed buildings suffers from severe heat. In severe heat, a character must make a Fortitude save once every 10 minutes (DC 15, +1 for each previous check) or take 1d4 points of nonlethal damage. Characters wearing heavy clothing or armor of any sort take a -4 penalty on their saves. A character with the Survival skill may receive a bonus on this saving throw and may be able to apply this bonus to other characters as well. Characters reduced to unconsciousness begin taking lethal damage (1d4 points per each 10-minute period).

SUNKEN STREET FEATURES

There are several special features within the sunken street area that characters might investigate. These are detailed below.

Fountains

There are two fountains in the ancient Romas street. Each grace either side of the entrance to the bathhouse. The water that fills these fountains were once fed from a deep fresh water spring. However, since the catastrophe hundreds of years ago, they and the pool within the bathhouse in contaminated by sulfurous vents.

Anyone approaching within 10 ft. of either fountain detects a strong, smell of rotting eggs and must make a Fortitude save (DC 13). Failure results with the character becoming sickened for the time they remain in the area and 1d4 rounds afterward. Should anyone be daring to drink the water, they must make a Fortitude save (DC 15) or become sickened for 2d4 hours.

Fissure

In the middle of the street, just outside the entrance into the Romas bathhouse is the fissure that caused most of the deaths after the street sunk beneath the earth. It is still active after all these years and is responsible for the extreme heat in the area. It also has a tendency to blow forth superheated steam into the area.

Each round characters are in the area, roll a d10.

A result of a 9 or 10, the fissure belches forth superheated steam in a 20 foot area.

Fissure Steam Trap: CR 4; natural; location trigger; automatic reset; DC 20 Reflex save half damage; (5d6, heated steam); multiple targets (all target within 20 ft. of the fissure opening); never miss; Search DC 20; Disable Device DC 20 (cannot disable, however character knows 1 round prior to the fissure erupting).

Furthermore, characters moving past the fissure, are subject to the fruitful aroma issuing from the dread tree in the Withered Garden (see page 35 for more details).

Ruined Stairs

These stairs once lead upward to an entrance into the Water Tower. However, that entrance long since collapsed leaving the only entrance into the water tower via a water pipe located in the Withered Garden (see below).

There are several hairline cracks in the ceiling just above the stair landing that allows steam to exit the massive chamber. It is much cooler here and characters do not suffer from the heat effects discussed earlier while on the landing. Otherwise, it is devoid of any special features and might offer a place to rest for characters.

THE ROOM OF WANTING

This is also known as the smoked room for the constant billowing of ash from several steam vents from the floor. Entering this room might trigger an encounter should characters precede up the stairs.


Encounter 5—The Smoked Room: This encounter is detailed on page 28.

THE ANCIENT BATH

Several crocodiles, including a giant crocodile, discovered this secluded pool several generations ago. Those that survived the sulfurous waters became only stronger with age so that now each of the crocodiles are immune. However, the sulfur deadened any sense of smell that these creatures might have once possessed.

Also, there is a young boy, Hugh, trapped here. He ventured too close to one of the ancient Romas water pipes that run throughout the city and became enthralled by the fruit of the dread tree in the Withered Garden. He followed the pipe downward and was snatched by one of the smaller crocodiles. He is missing his right leg and the water level rose, block-


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Room

ing his only means of escape. Hugh now sits, whimpers, and waits for his imminent death.

Encounter 6—The Ancient Bath: This encounter is detailed on page 30.

FERMENTING CHAMBER

This room and the one adjacent once were part of a grand noble house, belonging to a vain Romas woman and her servants. The instant exposure of superheated steam from the fissure, evaporated their skin.

The noble woman, Camilla, rose from the ashes, along with some servants, to become skin feasters. Camilla turned her efforts from fermenting wine to fermenting skin to preserve her looks. Needless to say, most of the skin she consumes is that of rodents and other small animals. She and her servants hunger for humanoid skin.

Encounter 7—Fermenting Chamber: This encounter is detailed on page 32.

Treasure

Camilla wears a barely scorched, green cloak. The thread is gold and has predominant Romas designs along the nape. It is a *cloak of resistance +2*.

WITHERED GARDEN

The dread tree in this area is another guardian created to draw unwanted treasure hunters away from the wraith chest in the Room of Wanting. Its creator carefully salvaged the original tree from death and reinvigorated an appetite for blood, which it first tasted during the volcanic earthquake.

In addition, its creator also used a magical item (see below) to enable him to cast *endure elements* on the dread tree and make it permanent by means of a *permanency* spell. Although the dread tree finds the environment, at times, uncomfortable, it is bearable.

Its potent fruit proved a valuable deterrent and nearly killed Calmar when he first ventured here nearly eighty years ago. However, as he formulated his plan for the Alcotts' Fountain in the depths of the water tower, he slowly grew an immunity to the intoxicating fruit.

Entering the garden either via the crumbled opening from the street or through the doors from the Fermenting Chamber, immediately begins this encounter.

Encounter 8—Withered Garden: This encounter is detailed on page 35.

Treasure

As soon characters defeat the dread tree, read or paraphrase the following:

A cracking and splintering of the heartwood echoes throughout as the center of the dread trunk splits apart and a fine, desert sand spills from the mortal wound. The sand pours into a pile, slowly shaping itself into a pair of boots.

These are *boots of the wastelands*. Its description is found in Appendix One: New Magic Items on page 43.

Development

An old pipe once carried water to this broken fountain and many others through the city. It is now dry and medium or smaller characters may easily transverse the pipe into the ancient water tower.

THE WATER TOWER

In its day, this water tower was one of many that supplied water to the Romas city of Caldorium, now present day Caldor. Its main purpose was to distribute the water entering into the city into three outlets: public water, private water, and sewer water.

Everyone received water for free, but the wealthy purchased a further refined and filtered water for drinking, their fountains, and pools. This water tower ceased when the volcanic earthquake struck the city hundreds of years ago. However, nearly eighty years ago, it served as a lair for Calmar the Swift mind as he planned to take over the Alcott estate and the fabled *Fountain of Prestor John*.

Calmar, after stealing great dragon scale of Fec' Chron Null, sought his next prize: the phylactery of Lord Septum. Such a treasure would solidify his fame as the greatest thief and adventurer of his time. Needless to say, after being nearly killed by the ash wraith, he found the chest empty. Distraught, succumbed by the curse of the Wanting Room, and eager not to leave empty handed, explored the rest of the ruins.

He discovered something beyond his wildest dreams: the ancient legend of Prestor John and his fountain of youth was real. He followed the ancient pipes and discovered the fountain still existed, after rumors of its destruction during the fall of Caldorium, on the Alcott estate.

After spending two years exploring the Romas street and building up an immunity to the dread tree's intoxicating fruit, used the water tower to usurp the estate from the wealthy merchant and his



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Encounter 9:
Water
Tower

son. However, upon succeeding in his task, something dreadful manifesting preventing Calmar to return to the water tower. Forcing to leave the tower and his notes behind, he left it forever.

Entering the water tower will begin the encounter.

Encounter 9—Water Tower: This encounter is detailed on page 37.

Development

After characters deal with the aura of greed that inhabits the pit, the chamber above is littered with papers and notes penned by Calmar. This small collection details his plan to usurp the identity of Lord Alcott and his son.

Once characters investigate these papers, give the handouts in the order following the word “Handout” next to each journal entry. The journal entries are in order for the benefit of the Game Master. You may also read or paraphrase the following:

Journal Entry #1 [Handout 4]

“Prestor John’s fountain exists! I do not know if Lord Alcott the Elder or his son knows the ancient Romas spring within their garden is the fountain of youth. They have built a stone fountain around the spring and glorify it with mermaids. I will use their weakness for antiquities to investigate further.”

Journal Entry #2 [Handout 2]

“They indeed know the true magic of the spring. It is guarded, add effectively by the very fountain that surrounds it. I consulted with a mage of some ill repute, describing to him the effects of the magic, but not the source. He claims a wall comprised by sheer force of will (wall of force; CL 20th) guards it from intruders and surrounding this force wall is an invisible globe that prevents magic (antimagic field; CL 20th).

“However, he concluded most vehemently that an object could not have such an effect upon it. He continued that only a person may guard himself with such protective magic. I did tell him that the object itself was a statue, but I did not describe what creature it depicted. He said that was most interesting and that I could be dealing with saintly or deific magic.

“He further cautioned to be wary—it could be an artifact I coveted. This must then be Prestor John’s fountain. There is no more doubt in my mind.”

Journal Entry #3 [Handout 1]

“It is quite ingenious after some thought. The late

mage I consulted about the matter shared some further insight during our last meeting.

“The field suppressing the magic would not nullify the effects of the fountain nor the spell of the arcane wall. It would also hide the fountain from magical detection. Furthermore, the wall of force would prevent interlopers from using the fountain.

“My impatience with the mage proved my downfall in this matter. I realized after his sudden demise, that I needed a word—a command word, to lock and unlock the wall of force. It is time I return one of the two dragon scales I stole.”

Journal Entry #4 [Handout 3]

“Neither Fec’ Chron Null or his minions were pleased to see me, but he exchanged the stone of elvenkind for one of his scales. I will offer the stone to Lord Alcott and use it to determine the command word to unlock the well of eternal youth. I cannot risk the death of Lord Alcott through torture or the command word will be lost forever. I also nicked a scroll from the dragon’s hoard that will help me see this venture through.

“However, I will need to quickly control the magic of the Shew Stone after I am done, since I am now considered a previous owner. I am not as thick as that old beast believes—he too will use the stone to find the whereabouts of myself and his other scale. Perhaps the fountain will have a dual purpose.

“But, he knows me too well. I will not destroy the stone, for the reptile has many other interesting trinkets. The stone will still have worth after the deed is done.”

Journal Entry #5 [Handout 5]

“The deed will be performed tonight. Through the Shew Stone, I discovered the command word. I will kill both Lord Alcott and his son and take their place. After a year, I will fake the death of Lord Alcott and assume the identity of the son.

“Feed their flesh to Camilla and I will live forever. I will awake tomorrow, immortal!”

Characters can leave the sunken Romas street through the well dug by Albert or via the small pipe leading up into the city. Creatures medium size must squeeze to make their way upward, while large creatures will need to exit the way they came.

Characters choosing the pipe route, follows it nearly 40 feet, emerging from an empty Romas fountain in South Castle Ward. Passersby stop for a moment and watch in awe at the spectacle before moving on in their daily business.





THE LOST GOD

An idol, dedicated to the Temple of Mithras, became somewhat sentient when its followers grasped and prayed to it during their last minutes of life.

The quake sank the Romus street around the buried temple. The pillars supporting the cavern ceiling saved the temple from collapse, but the intense heat burned the priest and followers of Mithras alive. Their religious fervor and magical prayers secured a part of their consciousness into the idol.

Unless one character imbues the altar remains with sun domain spell, the idol awakens to protect the temple from possible desecration. Once a character moves past the broken altar remains, read or paraphrase the following:

You pass an altar, completely ruined and scorched. Several bones reach toward it in desperation for a miracle, and as you pass, it seems as their prayers are answered. From the rubble remains of the altar, a intense glow of light erupts from a burnished idol of a bull. The light stretches toward the bubbling water causing your flesh to swell and your stomach to churn.

THE CREATURE

A summary of the creature in this area follows:

Scorned Idol: This idol (**I**) is in the shape of a bull made of gold, but the intense heat that caused its followers to perish years ago gave it a burnished tinge.

TACTICS

The scorned idol performs these actions during combat:

Surprise Round: The idol uses its *loathing light* directing its cone toward the pool of water.

Round 1: It will then proceed to push opponents with its *telekinesis* spell-like ability toward the heated pool.

Subsequent Rounds: It will use its shock ability against opponents, while it continues to push with its *telekinesis* spell-like ability against any who comes close enough to strike it. Should it fail to push those opponents, it will attempt to *charm person* on the closest foe. It attempts to convince those charmed to take it as a treasure. Afterward, it will cease to attack unless threatened.

Scorned Idol

CR 5

CN (as worshipers) small construct

Init +9 **Senses** Listen +7; blindsense 60 ft.

Allegiances Mithras, Chaos, Neutral

AC 15, touch 6, flat-footed 15; Dodge, Mobility, uncanny dodge
(+9 Cha, +1 size)

hp 38 (6 HD)

Resist fire resistance 10

Fort +2, **Ref** +11, **Will** +5

Speed —

Melee —

Ranged *telekinesis* (1d6) or
shock (2d6 electrical damage)

Base Atk +4; **Grp** -5

Atk Options *loathing light*, shock

Spell-like Abilities (CL 10)

At will—*charm person* (DC 20), *daze* (DC 19),
telekinesis (DC 24)

Abilities Str 1, Dex —, Con —, Int 15, Wis 16,
Cha 28

SQ charismatic awe, construct traits

Feats —

Skills Knowledge (religion) +11, Listen +7, Sense
Motive +12

Charismatic Awe (Ex): Creatures hesitate to strike

or damage a scorned idol due to its intense presence. A scorned idol uses its Charisma modifier instead of its Dexterity modifier for initiative checks, a bonus to armor class, and Reflex saves.

Loathing Light (Sp): As a standard action, a scorned idol can produce an extremely bright, white light in a 60-foot cone. This light is not so much an attack form as a side effect of the means by which the creature gathers information. Nevertheless, exposure to the effect can cause mild discomfort or even harm to living creatures. Each creature within the area of the light takes 1d4 points of fire damage and is nauseated for 1d4 rounds; a successful Reflex save (DC 22) halves the damage and negates the nauseating effect. A creature that fails the saving throw by 5 or more is also paralyzed until removed from the area. A creature that fails the save by 10 or more experiences such severe swelling of the flesh that it is blinded as well as paralyzed. The paralysis and blindness last for 2d4 days, or until the victim receives medical attention (Heal DC 15). This effect is Charisma-based.

Shock (Ex): A scorned idol automatically hits one target within 60 ft. dealing 2d6 points of electricity damage.



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DEVELOPMENT

Depending on combat, there are several scenarios that might take place.

Destroyed: Once destroyed, it crumbles into gold dust, presenting characters with a small treasure.

Charmed: Should the idol charm one or more characters and is allowed to travel with the adventurers, it will remain still in hopes to exchange hands with someone who might eventually worship it. This might even include any already charmed characters. Those not under the idol's spell, might find their comrades laying small offerings or praying before the idol before falling asleep or after waking in the morning.

The idol will continue to try to charm other members of the group. It might even try to charm others to steal it, if the idol feels threatened by any characters in the group.

MAP DETAILS

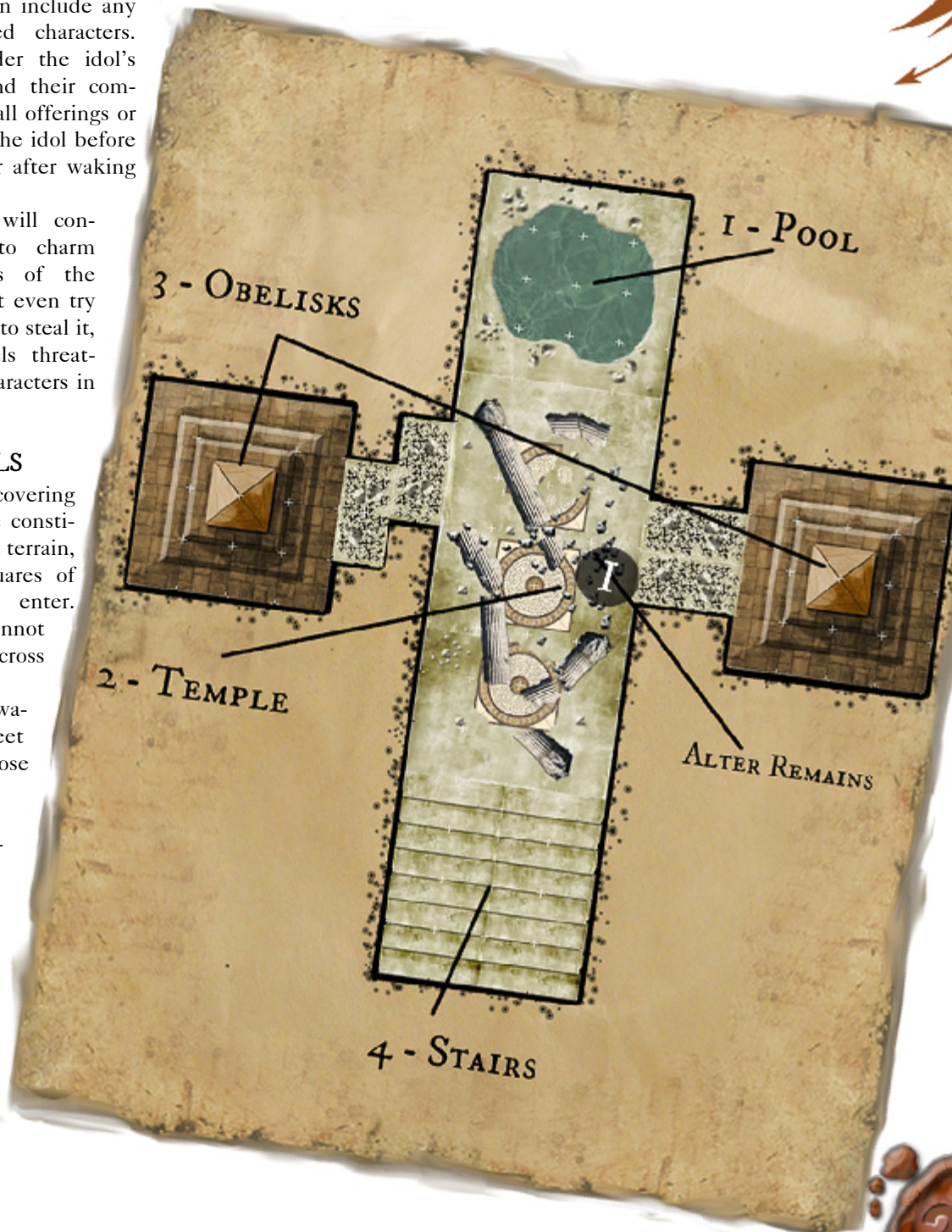
Any rubble covering half of a square constitutes as difficult terrain, requiring 2 squares of movement to enter. Characters cannot run or charge across difficult terrain.

Pool: The water is only five feet deep, but it is close to the boiling point due to a superheated volcanic vent from below. Those remaining around within the pool area suffer from severe heat outlined in the *Dungeon Master's Guide*. The heated wa-

ter deals 1d4 points of damage to those within the pool, unless the character is fully immersed, in which it deals 5d6 points of damage per round of exposure.

Obelisks: These are Eygus in origin and long existed before the Temple of Mithras. Mithras followers painted graffiti over the ancient symbols re-dedicating them to the sun god.

Stairs: These stairs lead downward into the sunken Romas street, possibly triggering another encounter.





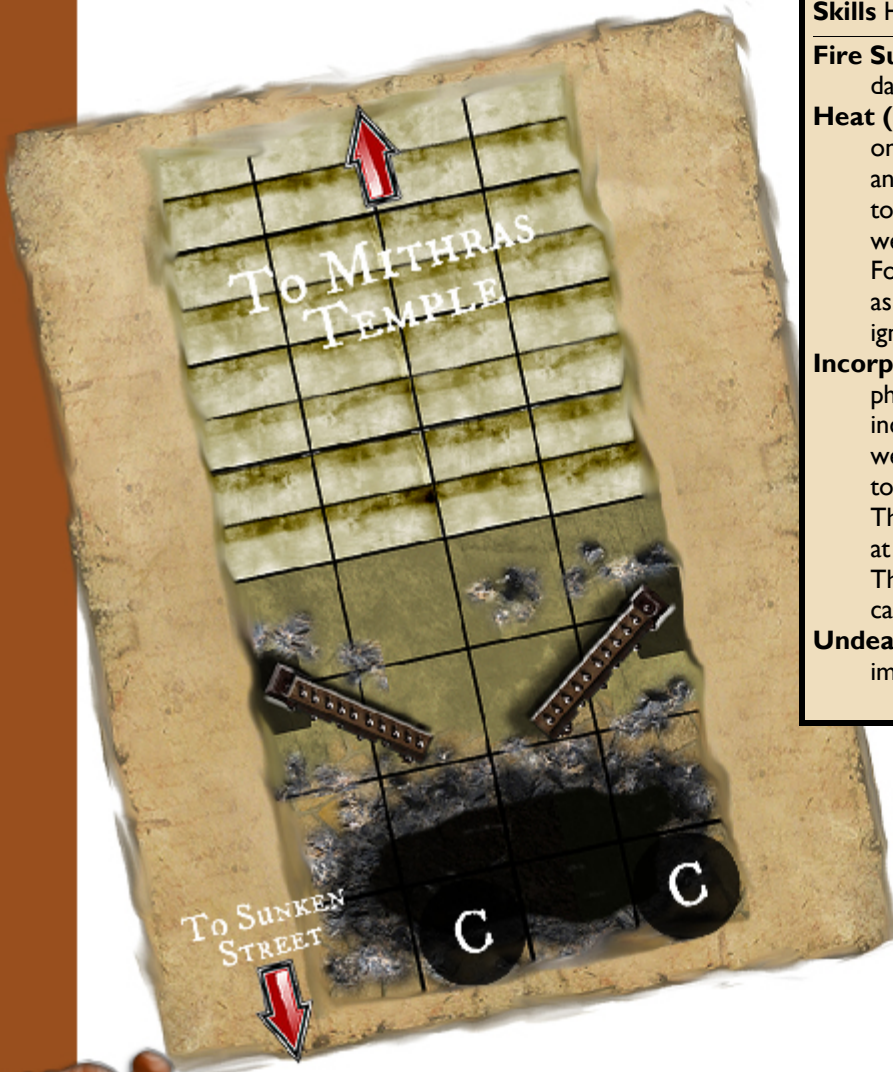
HARRED ONES

This encounter begins as soon as one or more of the characters avoid or fall into the fissure pit trap.

TRAP

A natural covering formed over this fissure as steam and ash spewed heated victims from its maw until a thin layer of bone cooled. Any characters moving into the squares immediately outside the door are subject to make a Reflex save. When characters step into the trapped square, read or paraphrase the following:

The seared bones beneath you collapse, spewing ancient ash into the air revealing a gaping maw below. As the ash settles, the walls of fissure are rock



Charred Ones (2)

CR 3

CE Medium undead (fire, incorporeal)

Init +1 **Senses** Listen +11, Spot +11

Languages ancient Romas (sounds like cackling flames)

Allegiances Chaos, Evil

AC 12, touch 12, flat-footed 11
(+1 Dex, +1 deflection)

hp 32 (5 HD)

Fort +1, **Ref** +4, **Will** +7

Speed fly 30 ft. (perfect) (6 squares)

Melee incorporeal touch +4 (2d10 fire)

Base Atk +2; **Grp** —

Atk Options heat

Abilities Str —, Dex 13, Con —, Int 6, Wis 17,
Cha 13

SQ fire subtype traits, heat, undead traits

Feats Lightning Reflexes, Weapon Focus
(incorporeal touch)

Skills Hide +6, Intimidate +6, Listen +11, Spot +11

Fire Subtype: A charred one is immune to fire damage. It takes 50% more damage from cold.

Heat (Su): The intense heat generated by a charred one's body deals 2d10 points of fire damage to anything it touches. This heat is usually enough to melt nonmagical weapons, but a magic weapon subjected to this effect receives a Fortitude save (DC 13). Flammable items, such as clothing, wood, or paper, are automatically ignited by the touch of a charred one.

Incorporeal Subtype: A charred one has no physical form and can be harmed only by other incorporeal creatures, +1 or better magic weapons, or magic, though it has a 50% chance to ignore any damage from a corporeal source. The charred one can pass through solid objects at will, and its own attacks pass through armor. The charred one moves in complete silence and cannot be heard at all.

Undead: A charred one has the traits and immunities common to undead.

and bone; skulls are locked in a deathly scream while skeletal hands clamor for the sky.

Fissure Pit Trap: CR 2; natural; location trigger; no reset; DC 20 Reflex save avoids; 20 ft. deep (2d6, fall); multiple targets (first target in each of two adjacent 5-ft. squares); Search DC 20; Disable Device DC 20.



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THE CREATURES

A summary of the creatures in this area follows:

Charred Ones: These creatures (C) inhabit the area within the pit. They sorely resent and hate any living creatures that disturbs the pit seeing such creatures in the same light as those that survived the catastrophe. Created from the horror of being seared alive centuries ago, they dimly see themselves as guardians of the remains of those that also perished on this spot.

TACTICS

The charred ones first attack characters in the pit before rising to meet any others above them. They are not particular on whom they attack, save for those that are the closest to the pit. Since they somewhat see themselves as guardians, they will not push the attack should characters elect to retreat, but rather once again take shelter in the pit.

MAP DETAILS

The walls of the fissure are relatively easy to climb (DC 15) as it is a natural walled embedded with petrified bone.



Illustration by Joshua Raynack

Advanced Charred One	CR 5
CE Medium undead (fire)	
Init +1 Senses Listen +13, Spot +13; darkvision 60 ft.	
Languages Trade tongue (common; sounds like crackling flames)	
AC 12, touch 12, flat-footed 11 (+1 Dex, +1 deflection)	
hp 71 (11 HD)	
Fort +3, Ref +6, Will +12	
Speed fly 30 ft. (perfect) (6 squares)	
Melee incorporeal touch +7 (2d10 fire)	
Base Atk +5; Grp —	
Abilities Str —, Dex 13, Con —, Int 6, Wis 17, Cha 13	
SQ fire subtype traits, heat, undead traits	
Feats Iron Will, Lightning Reflexes, Weapon Focus (incorporeal touch)	
Skills Hide +10, Intimidate +10, Listen +11, Spot +11	
Heat (Su): The intense heat generated by a charred one's body deals 2d10 points of fire damage to anything it touches. This heat is usually enough to melt nonmagical weapons, but a magic weapon subjected to this effect receives a Fortitude save (DC 16). Flammable items, such as clothing, wood, or paper, are automatically ignited by the touch of a charred one.	

SCALING THE ENCOUNTER

This encounter is designed for 6th to 10th level characters in mind, however you may wish to advance it to prove challenging to characters 11th level and higher. First, to do so, those that succumb to the pit trap accidentally reopen the dormant fissure, causing those below to receive 1d6 points of heat damage per round. Secondly, use two advanced charred ones.

THE SMOKED ROOM

T Calmar the Swift Mind was not the only man to pierce the depths of the sunken street since its demise. A once follower of Mithras and servant of the Lord Septum, Marcosis, revisited the site as the burgeoning city of Caldorium lay smoldering from the devastating volcanic earthquake. In his possession was what he believed his master's phylactery and sought to find a safe, secret location for this treasure.

He remembered the concealed Temple of Mithras, of which he was once a follower and rushed to Caldorium to protect it in that most hidden place. However, he found the city in ruins and chaos and when he ventured below saw to his amazement that the temple was not in ruins, but an entire street sunk below the earth. Marcosis and his companions examined the area deciding upon this room to house

the phylactery.

The phylactery has long since disappeared from this room, but some of its guardians and ancient magic still resound in the area. The encounter truly begins once characters ascend the staircase into the room.

RUNNING THE ENCOUNTER

Characters might be careful when approaching this door, although that might also be unlikely should they wish to take immediate shelter from the steam issuing from the fissure in Encounter S1. However, those that use *detect magic* reveals a very, very dim lingering aura (250 XP). A Knowledge (arcana) (DC 25) eludes to an ancient, unknown magic that once sealed the door from intruders.

Upon characters opening the door, read or paraphrase the following:

The door opens with some ease, scraping along the ash encrusted floor. However it is not physical strength that blocks the path before you, but of strength of will as you spy a contorted, bone-infused stairwell. Each piece of bone, skull, and ribcage, littering the ashen stairs are completely warped.

Again, a Knowledge (arcana) (DC 20) reveals the bones are slowly warping and contorting from an extremely long exposure to ancient magic (250 XP). A further Heal check (DC 15) reveals that some of the bones are from victims of the catastrophe bearing similarity to those in the fissure of Encounter S1, but others look to have died after the event. Markings on the bone resembles a sacrifice.

THE ANCIENT SPELL

Once characters enter into the room, read or paraphrase the following:

The room is bare and as its only feature is the loose, gray ash that covers the floor. However, it is then, once you notice the vast emptiness of the room you begin to feel utter defeat and hopelessness. As this feeling takes hold of your heart, the ash begins to swirl, collecting to form a shadowy figure of wistful, translucent robes.

All characters once entering the room receive a -3 penalty to all saving throws. This effect is permanent until the characters find the





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shew stone. A successful Knowledge (arcana) check (DC 20) allows the character to understand the nature of the ancient spell. It is referred to as a *longing* spell, a much greater, epic version of a *geas* spell. Whomever enters this room, suffers from a defeatist attitude until one finds what they are truly seeking.

In this case, it is the *shew stone*, the center for this adventure. However, its original purpose is truly meant for those looking for the phylactery.

THE CREATURE

A summary of the creature in this area follows:

Ash Wraith: This creature is one of the guardians of this area, designed to kill those that entered the room and to create more guardians. When destroyed it does not truly die, but will reform the next day.

DEVELOPMENT

Should the ash wraith become defeated by sheer force or by a destroyed result from a turn undead attempt, read or paraphrase the following:

The ash explodes and begins to swirl about the room causing much irritation to the throat and eyes. However, it quickly reforms into a small chest made of ash in the center of the room.

Characters opening this chest finds it empty and that whatever it once housed is gone.

Ash Wraith	CR 3
LE Medium undead (incorporeal)	
Init +7 Senses Listen +13, Spot +13	
Languages ancient Romas, trade tongue (common)	
Allegiances Law, Evil	
AC 15, touch 15, flat-footed 12 (+3 Dex, +2 deflection)	
hp 39 (6 HD)	
Fort +2, Ref +5, Will +7	
Speed fly 60 ft. (good) (6 squares)	
Melee burning touch +6 (3d6 fire)	
Base Atk +3; Grp —	
Atk Options burning touch	
Abilities Str —, Dex 16, Con —, Int 14, Wis 14, Cha 15	
SQ fear of daylight, incorporeal subtype traits, spawn, undead traits, unnatural aura	
Feats Alertness, Blind-Fight, Combat Reflexes, Improved Initiative	
Skills Hide +12, Intimidate +11, Listen +13, Search +9, Sense Motive +11, Spot +13	

Undead: Undead are immune to poison, sleep, paralysis, stunning, disease, necromantic effects, and mind-affecting effects. They are not subject to critical hits, nonlethal damage, ability damage, ability drain, energy drain, or effects of massive damage, or any effect requiring a Fortitude save unless the effect also works on objects or is harmless. They may be healed by application of negative energy (such as an *inflict light wounds* spell). They are destroyed if reduced to 0 hit points or less.

Incorporeal (Ex): An ash wraith can be harmed only by other incorporeal creatures, +1 or better magic weapons, and spells, spell-like abilities, and supernatural abilities. It is immune to nonmagical attack forms. Even when hit by spells or magic weapons, it has a 50% chance to ignore damage from a corporeal source (except for force effects, such as *magic missile*, or attacks made with ghost touch weapons). It can pass through solid objects at will, but not force effects (such as a *wall of force*). Its attacks ignore natural armor, armor, and shields, although deflection bonuses and force effects (such as mage armor) work normally against it.

An ash wraith moves silently and cannot be heard with Listen checks. It has no Strength score, so its Dexterity modifier applies both to its melee and ranged attacks. Nonvisual senses, such as blindsight and scent, do not function against an ash wraith. An ash wraith cannot be tripped or grappled by a corporeal attacker.

Burning Touch (Ex): The touch of an ash wraith deals 3d6 points of fire damage, and creatures hit by an ash wraith must succeed at a Reflex save (DC 15) or catch on fire.

Spawn (Su): Any humanoid slain by an ash wraith's burning touch is immolated and reduced to a pile of ash that rises as an ash wraith in 1d4 rounds. Spawn are under the command of the ash wraith that created them and remain enslaved until its death. They do not possess any of the abilities they had in life.

Unnatural Aura (Su): Both wild and domesticated animals can sense the unnatural presence of an ash wraith at a distance of 30 feet. They will not willingly approach nearer than that and panic if forced to do so; they remain panicked as long as they are within that range.

Fear of Daylight (Ex): Ash wraiths exposed to natural sunlight are panicked (no save). A panicked ash wraith flees from the sunlight as fast as possible; it can defend normally but can not attack while exposed to natural sunlight.



THE ANCIENT POOL

This encounter begins as soon as characters open the door to the ancient bath. Anyone may make a Listen check (DC 15) at the door to hear a young boy's whimpering and something thrashing about in water. Once characters enter the chamber, read or paraphrase the following:

The door opens and sulfurous steam billows out revealing a small passage into an ancient Roman bathhouse.

Those entering suffer from effects as if they approached either of the fountains (see page 21).

RUNNING THE ENCOUNTER

The characters entering the chamber alerts the boy

Crocodiles (2)

CR 2

N Medium animal

Init +1 **Senses** Listen +4, Spot +4; low-light vision

AC 15, touch 11, flat-footed 14
(+1 Dex, +4 natural)

hp 22 (3 HD)

Fort +6, **Ref** +4, **Will** +2

Speed 20 ft. (4 squares); swim 30 ft. (6 squares)

Melee bite +6 (1d8+6) or
tail slap +6 (1d12+6)

Base Atk +2; **Grp** +6

Atk Options improved grab

Abilities Str 19, Dex 12, Con 17, Int 1, Wis 12,
Cha 2

SQ hold breath

Feats Alertness, Skill Focus (hide)

Skills Hide +7, Listen +4, Spot +4, Swim +12

Improved Grab (Ex): To use this ability, a crocodile must hit with its bite attack. It can then attempt to start a grapple as a free action without provoking an attack of opportunity. If it wins the grapple check, the crocodile establishes a hold on the opponent with its mouth and drags it into deep water, attempting to pin it to the bottom.

Hold Breath (Ex): A crocodile can hold its breath for a number of rounds equal to 4 x its Constitution score before it risks drowning.

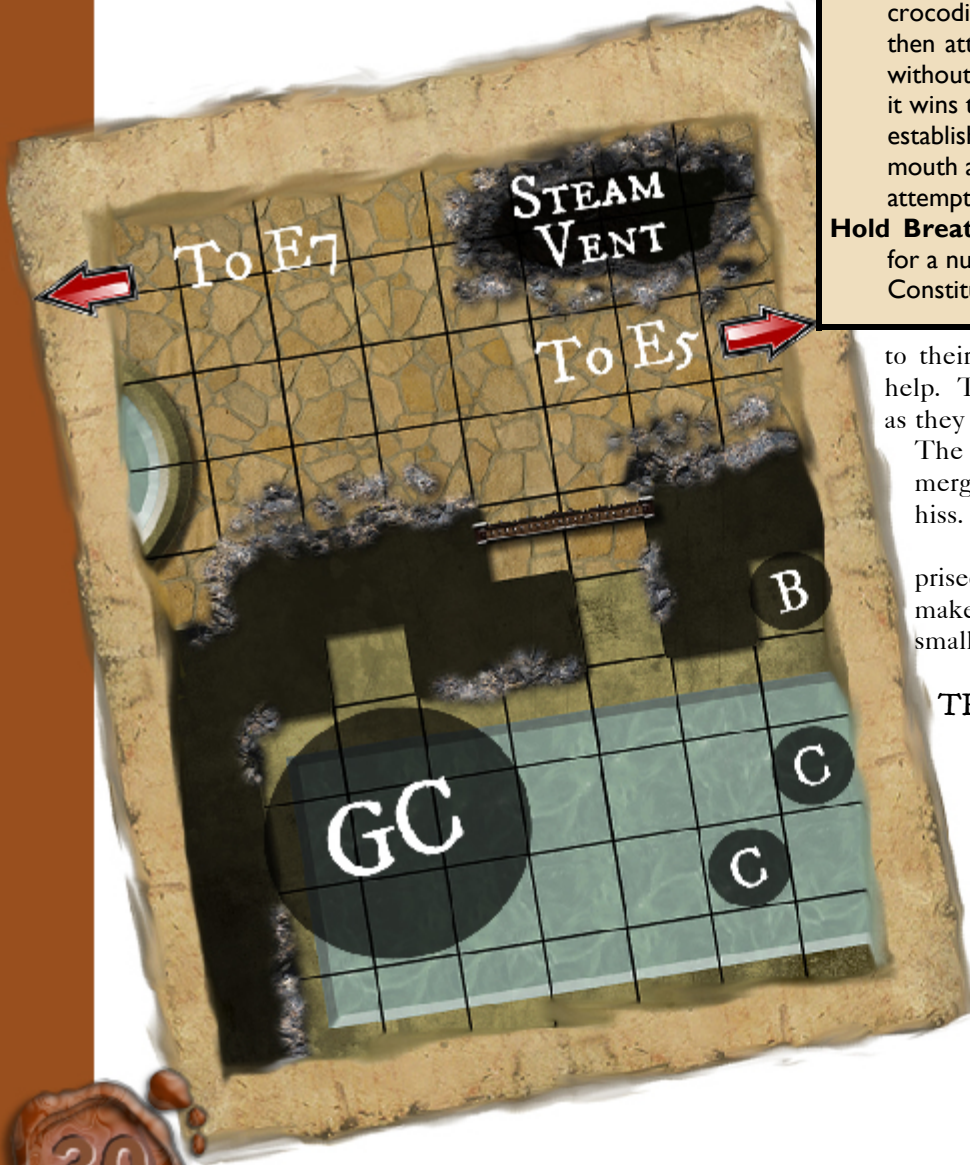
to their presence and he begins to shout for help. This startles the two medium crocodiles as they immediately take cover into the water. The giant crocodile is too large to fully submerge into the pool, but issues a growl-like hiss.

Though characters may not be surprised by the giant crocodile, they must make a Spot check (DC d20+17) against the smaller crocodiles to avoid being surprised.

THE CREATURES

A summary of the creatures in this area follows:

Giant Crocodile: This creature grew too big to travel the old water pipes and now relies entirely on the two smaller crocodiles to bring food from which it can snatch. This is what happened to the boy's leg, and during the struggle, he managed to summon enough strength to break free. He now takes refuge in an alcove awaiting





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Giant Crocodile	CR 4
N Huge animal	
Init +1 Senses Listen +5, Spot +5; low-light vision	
AC 16, touch 9, flat-footed 15 (-2 size, +1 Dex, +7 natural)	
hp 59 (7 HD)	
Fort +9, Ref +6, Will +3	
Speed 20 ft. (4 squares); swim 30 ft. (6 squares)	
Melee bite +11 (2d8+12) or tail slap +11 (1d12+12)	
Base Atk +5; Grp +21	
Atk Options improved grab	
Abilities Str 27, Dex 12, Con 19, Int 1, Wis 12, Cha 2	
SQ hold breath	
Feats Alertness, Endurance, Skill Focus (hide)	
Skills Hide +1, Listen +5, Spot +5, Swim +16	
Improved Grab (Ex): To use this ability, a crocodile must hit with its bite attack. It can then attempt to start a grapple as a free action without provoking an attack of opportunity. If it wins the grapple check, the crocodile establishes a hold on the opponent with its mouth and drags it into deep water, attempting to pin it to the bottom.	
Hold Breath (Ex): A crocodile can hold its breath for a number of rounds equal to 4 x its Constitution score before it risks drowning.	

death.

Crocodiles: These creatures move about the water pipes, usually feeding on small dogs, cats, and rats, that are attracted to the fruit of the dread tree in the Withered Garden. They either must wait when the water is low or the feed on fish trapped here from other underground springs.

TACTICS

The giant crocodile will move no more than 5 ft. due to its size, but will move more if attacked from afar. The two smaller ones will approach the edge and await submerged, ready to strike those characters moving close. It will try to pull those within their jaws below the water. The two medium crocodiles will retreat to a water pipe should their hit points become reduced to 5 or below. The giant crocodile, with no place to retreat, will fight to the death.

DEVELOPMENT

Hugh (Com 1; 4 HP; currently at 0) is in bad shape. Any further serious damage, he will die. He explains

to the group how he got here, but further tells them the water now fills the 20 ft. length of pipe that reaches to the surface.

It is possible for small characters to reach the surface using this pipe, but filled with water, proves a dangerous task. In addition to the sulfur effects, characters will need to make a Swim check (DC 12), moving at half-speed to reach the surface. The pipe empties out from a small fountain near a lesser known bathhouse in Caldor. The fountain is known to fluctuate in water depths and, at times, becomes empty.





FERMENTING CHAMBER

As characters move pass the fountain, whether they are investigating the street or if following a comrade walking toward the dread tree, read or paraphrase the following after a successful Spot check (DC d20+6):

The other side of the fountain, a collapsed wall reveals a shadowy interior of a once Romas noble house. Cautious movement within leads to the assumption that it may still be inhabited. Nonetheless, you feel that you are closely watched.

Once characters enter the area via either entrance, read or paraphrase the following:

Two servants crouch in shadows; anxious though

they are, they await the bidding of their mistress. A noble woman emerges from the sweltering darkness with fine, rich features: a supple nose line, high cheek bones, and soft skin.

"I am Camilla, and though I am thrilled, I was not inspecting guests. The last gentleman to call burdened me with a sumptuous gift of two noble men with fine skin, then disappeared. I have waited a long time for him to return, but nonetheless you shall dine in his stead. I, for one, deserve a rich meal, but must satisfy what fortune brings me.

"I do truly apologize, for I am as presentable for the moment as I possibly can be. We, after all, are what we eat."

She turns completely to you revealing the other half of her face: flea infested rat fur serve as flesh; a spiny, pink tail dangles from her cheek bone; bits of dog and cat flesh cover almost the rest of her body, while areas without skin reveals strong, sinewy muscles. Her servants, moving from the shadows, look very similar, though one is completely skinless and only wet muscle holds her body together. All three salivate as they move closer.

RUNNING THE ENCOUNTER

There are two immediate means for characters to enter the area: through the crumbled wall exposing the fermenting chamber or through the double doors from the street. Either way characters enter, the inhabitants are aware and eager of their presence.

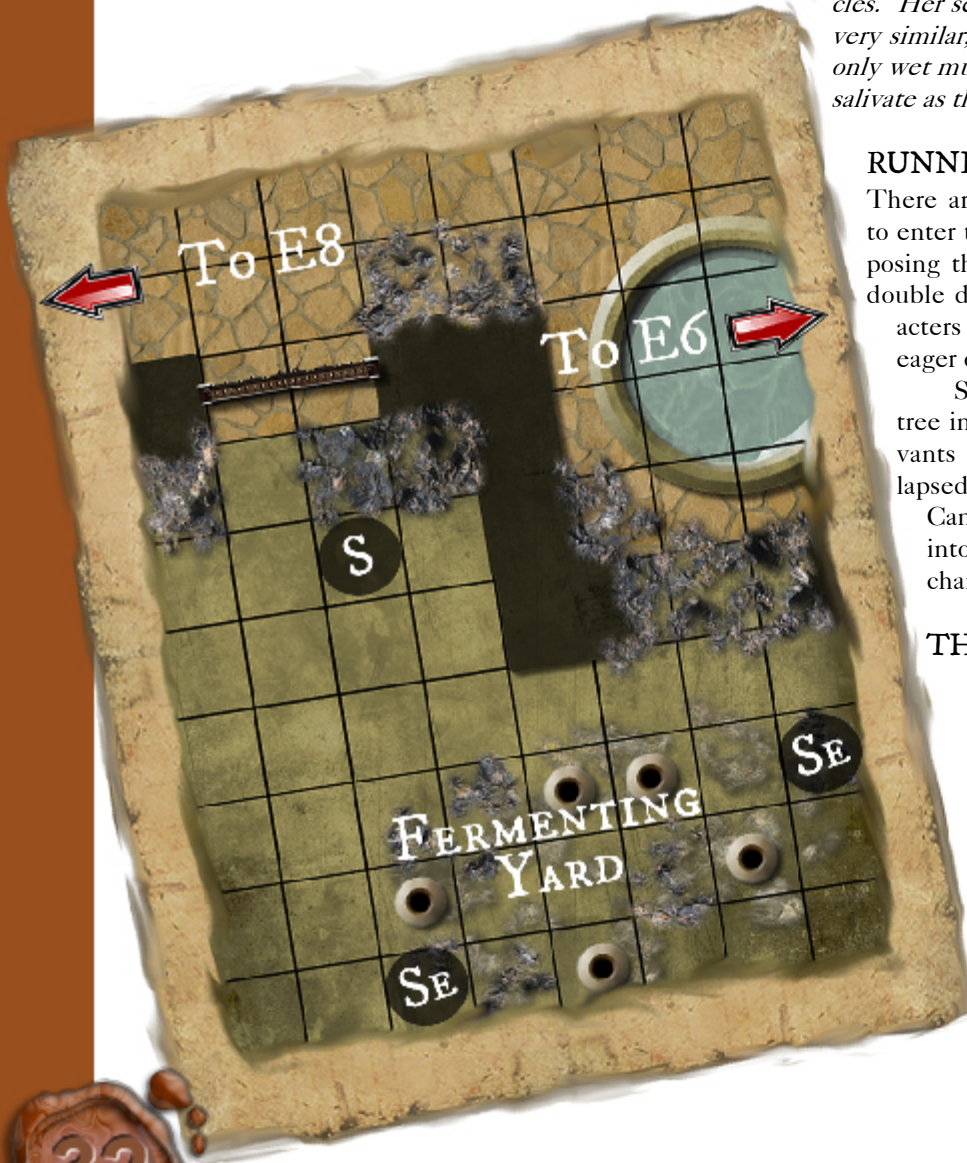
Should characters proceed to the dread tree in the adjacent area, then one of the servants will follow behind out from the collapsed wall, while another servant and Camilla will exit through the door leading into the Withered Garden to encounter characters.

THE CREATURES

A summary of the creatures in this area follows:

Camilla: She (S), like her servants, is a skin feaster. They consume flesh and as they do, it grows new skin over their exposed muscular frame. Any excess flesh, her servants ferment to become consumed at a later date. However, reserves are running dry.

Servants: The two servants (Se) were as vain as their mistress in life and continue to serve her in death.



While one is satiated, the other has no flesh upon her and is very eager to eat once more.

TACTICS

Only the servant without skin suffers from flesh weakness, while the other two, fully satiated, use their necrotizing touch continuously until characters are dead. The two servants will try to flank characters that surround their mistress, but they tend to strike out at creatures that have no apparent means to defend themselves such as spellcasters.

DEVELOPMENT

The two servants will fight to the death, but if Camilla is within 5 hit points of being destroyed, she will cower and ready to attack should characters press the fight. She will even command the others to cease, but to no avail.

It is possible for shrewd characters to question Camilla about the *Shew Stone* or Calmar the Swift Mind, for she knows them both, but only vaguely. Characters could earn extra experience for asking the right questions. Below are possible questions characters might ask:

Who was the gentleman that last visited you?

“He called himself Calmarious Swiftis. He told me of the plight above being completely singed and engulfed by Hades. This is why he sought shelter underground. And why I remain below, plus I remember my home in its former glory.”

Why didn’t you attack Calmarious? [XP 200]

“In exchange for his life, he claimed he would present me some victims with noble blood to make my body beautiful again. He kept his promise. Alas, with time, beauty too fades away.”

Who were the two noblemen you consumed? [XP 200]

“Did I ask your names before I sought to sink my teeth in your flesh.”

Where is the lair of Calmarious? [XP 250]

“He often crawled through the pipe that once fed the fountain in the garden adjacent to my home. Through those doors as a matter of fact (She points to the doors that lead to Encounter 8). The pipe leads into the water tower. There was another entrance but has since collapsed.”

Where is Calmarious now? [XP 200]

“Dead perhaps. I do not know. After delivering me

Skin Feasters (3)

CR 3

LE Medium undead

Init +3 **Senses** Listen +8, Spot +8

Languages ancient Romas, Camilla also speaks trade tongue (common)

Allegiances Evil

AC 16, touch 13, flat-footed 13
(+3 Dex, +3 natural)

hp 26 (4 HD)

Fort +1, **Ref** +4, **Will** +6

Speed 30 ft. (6 squares)

Melee claw +2 (1d4) or
necrotizing touch +2 (1d3 Con; Fort. DC 13)

Base Atk +2; **Grp** +2

Atk Options necrotizing touch

Abilities Str 10, Dex 16, Con —, Int 6, Wis 15,
Cha 12

SQ flesh weakness, skin regrowth, undead traits

Feats Simple Weapons Proficiency

Skills Climb +6, Jump +6, Listen +8, Spot +8

Flesh Weakness (Ex): A skin feaster that successfully deals damage to an opponent with its necrotizing touch attack must spend its next turn devouring the flesh that has fallen from that opponent’s body. It takes no other actions during this time but can defend itself normally. It can consume an amount of flesh equivalent to 3 points of Constitution damage (or drain; see below) per round.

Necrotizing Touch (Su): With a successful melee touch attack, the skin feaster causes lumps of flesh to fall from the target’s body, dealing 1d3 points of Constitution damage; a successful Fortitude save negates (DC 13). On a failed save, the target must attempt a second Fortitude save at the same DC. Failure indicates that 1 point of the Constitution damage already taken becomes Constitution drain instead.

Skin Regrowth (Su): If a skin feaster manages to eat an amount of flesh equivalent to 6 points of Constitution damage (or drain; see above) in any 24-hour period, it begins to regrow its skin. This process requires 1d6 hours. For the next 1d3 days thereafter, the skin feaster appears just as it did before its death, excluding scars, moles, or other minor skin imperfections. Only the creature’s appearance changes—it is still an undead with all of its usual species traits except the flesh weakness, which is not active while the skin feaster wears its new skin. Once this period is over, the skin feaster’s regrown skin sloughs off, restoring it to its usual appearance and reactivating its flesh weakness.

the noblemen later that evening, he tried to consume them and even launched himself at me when I stopped him. He was able to get a hold of himself and apologized. Although he promised more nobles for me to feast upon for his indiscretion, he never returned. It seems that the land of Hades above consumed him too—we shared so much together.”

Why did he try to eat the flesh and attack you?

“I have no idea, but I did wish he was becoming more like me and that I might have a true partner.”

TREASURE

Refer to page 22 for a description of the treasure for this encounter. Camilla wears a *cloak of charisma* +2, increasing her necrotizing touch DC by 1.

SCALING THE ENCOUNTER

Use the previous encounter when running the adventure for 8th level characters. For characters of higher levels make the following changes:

6th—7th Level: Camilla is accompanied by only one servant.

9th—10th Level: Camilla is an advanced skin feaster and neither servant is suffering from their flesh weakness.

11th—12th Level: Use the advanced skin feaster for Camilla and both of her servants.

Skin Feasters, Advanced

CR 5

LE Medium undead

Init +3 **Senses** Listen +10, Spot +10

Languages ancient Romas, Camilla also speaks trade tongue (common)

Allegiances Evil

AC 18, touch 13, flat-footed 15; Dodge (+3 Dex, +5 natural)

hp 58 (9 HD)

Fort +3, **Ref** +5, **Will** +8

Speed 30 ft. (6 squares)

Melee claw +7 (1d6+6) or necrotizing touch +7 (1d3 Con; Fort. DC 15)

Base Atk +4; **Grp** +8

Atk Options necrotizing touch

Abilities Str 18, Dex 16, Con —, Int 6, Wis 15, Cha 12

SQ flesh weakness, skin regrowth, undead traits

Feats Agile Riposte, Dodge, Simple Weapons Proficiency

Skills Climb +9, Jump +9, Listen +10, Spot +10

Flesh Weakness (Ex): A skin feaster that successfully deals damage to an opponent with its necrotizing touch attack must spend its next turn devouring the flesh that has fallen from that opponent’s body. It takes no other actions during this time but can defend itself normally. It can consume an amount of flesh equivalent to 3 points of Constitution damage (or drain; see below) per round.

Necrotizing Touch (Su): With a successful melee touch attack, the skin feaster causes lumps of flesh to fall from the target’s body, dealing 1d3 points of Constitution damage; a successful Fortitude save negates (DC 15). On a failed save, the target must attempt a second Fortitude save at the same DC. Failure indicates that 1 point of the Constitution damage already taken becomes Constitution drain instead.

Skin Regrowth (Su): If a skin feaster manages to eat an amount of flesh equivalent to 6 points of Constitution damage (or drain; see above) in any 24-hour period, it begins to regrow its skin. This process requires 1d6 hours. For the next 1d3 days thereafter, the skin feaster appears just as it did before its death, excluding scars, moles, or other minor skin imperfections. Only the creature’s appearance changes—it is still an undead with all of its usual species traits except the flesh weakness, which is not active while the skin feaster wears its new skin. Once this period is over, the skin feaster’s regrown skin sloughs off, restoring it to its usual appearance and reactivating its flesh weakness.



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WITHERED GARDEN

Characters might come this way by the strong fragrance of the intoxicating aroma or by means to find Calmar the Swift Mind's lair. The entrance of which is located via a water pipe embedded in the garden wall, surrounded by a crumbling fountain.

As characters enter the area and are within reach, read or paraphrase the following:

A gnarled, withered tree looms amongst the bones of children and small animals. Its shadow fills the sullen garden, where dark grass grows, craving blood to saturate its black bark.

RUNNING THE ENCOUNTER

Those under the charm of the fragrant fruit will not notice the danger they are in and characters might have to restrain their fellows. Once succumbed characters reach an adjacent square of the tree, they must make a another Will save to pick a fruit and eat it. This is followed by a Fortitude save to determine if the character falls unconscious.

THE CREATURES

A summary of the creatures in this area follows:

Dread Tree: The huge dread tree (DT) engulfs most the garden. It rarely moves from this spot since many animals follow the small, ancient Romas pipes from the city above. This allows it to have an adequate food supply, despite the heat.

The heat, however, doesn't allow its leaves to grow properly, thus it is bare in many places. Characters looking carefully (Spot DC 18) may see two branches ending in what appear as humanlike hands and a twisted, evil looking face.

TACTICS

The dread tree will hold its attack once characters eat the fruit hoping that some might fall unconscious. Although, should some characters attack prior to this, the dread tree will not hesitate to attack those characters.

Savvy characters might elect to attempt a Bluff check (DC d20+2) in order to act like they succumbed to the fragrance to avoid the creature's amazing reach. This only works if

they have yet to attack the tree or if they prepared any spells or items out of site of the withered garden.

ADVANCED TACTICS

Should characters of the appropriate level deal with the advanced dread tree, the tactics used in the normal encounter are similar. However, the advanced dread tree will use its improved grab ability on two opponents, taking the -20 penalty on grapple checks to hold them.

The advanced dread tree does not lose its Dexterity bonus to AC, still threatens the area, and can use its remaining attacks against other opponents. Although the dread tree is not able to use its special smash ability while holding an opponent, it still deals its slam damage each round it maintains the hold.

DEVELOPMENT

If characters failed to deal with the skin feasters in



the Fermenting Chamber, they will circle from behind and attack characters a round after combat begins. Since the creatures are undead, the dread tree will not attack them. Also, the dread tree, after some time, finally understood that Camilla and her servants devour only the skin of the dread tree's victims.

TREASURE

Refer to page 22 for a description of the treasure for this encounter.

SCALING THE ENCOUNTER

Use this encounter when running the adventure for 6th-10th level characters. For characters of higher levels make the following changes:

11th—12th Level: Use the advanced dread tree instead.

Dread Tree	CR 8
NE Huge plant	
Init –1 Senses Listen +5, Spot +5; blindsight 30 ft.	
Languages cannot speak; however emits horrible creaking sounds when brought to anger	
Allegiances Evil	
AC 20, touch 7, flat-footed 20 (–2 size, –1 Dex, +13 natural)	
hp 66 (7 HD)	
Fort +10, Ref +1, Will +4	
Speed 20 ft. (5 squares)	
Melee slam +12 (2d6+13)	
Space 10 ft.; Reach 15 ft.	
Base Atk +5; Grp +22	
Atk Options smash (2d6+13)	
Abilities Str 29, Dex 8, Con 21, Int 2, Wis 15, Cha 12	
SQ double damage against objects, fire vulnerability, intoxicating fruit (Will DC 14), plant traits	
Skills Hide –6 (+10 in forested areas), Intimidate +4, Listen +5, Spot +5	
Blindsight (Ex): A dread tree is blind but can ascertain all creatures and objects within 30 feet just as a sighted creature would. Beyond that range, all targets have total concealment with respect to the dread tree.	
Double Damage against Objects (Ex): A dread tree that makes a full attack against an object or structure deals double damage to it.	
Fire Vulnerability (Ex): A dread tree takes 50% more damage from fire attacks.	
Improved Grab (Ex): To use this ability, the dread tree must hit an opponent at least one size	

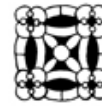
category smaller than itself with its slam attack. If it gets a hold, it automatically deals slam damage each round that the hold is maintained, and it can smash in the next round (see below).

Intoxicating Fruit (Ex): The fruit of a dread tree produces a scent that is extremely intriguing to mammals. Any such creature within 100 feet of a dread tree must make a successful Will save (DC 14) or move into its fighting space. Once there, the creature must make another successful Will save (same DC) or pick and eat the fruit. A creature too small to reach the branches eats fruit that has fallen from the tree. The fruit contains an ingested poison (Fortitude save DC 18; 1d6 Dex/unconsciousness for 2d6 rounds). The toxin remains viable for 1d6 days after picking.

Plant: Dread trees have the traits and immunities common to plants.

Skills: Because a dread tree is intelligent, it gains skill points as if it were an animal. A dread tree gains a +16 species bonus on Hide checks made in forested areas.

Smash (Ex): A dread tree can smash a grappled opponent into its trunk or on the ground, dealing slam damage every round the hold is maintained.



Advanced Dread Tree	CR 12
NE Gargantuan plant	
Init –1 Senses Listen +5, Spot +5; blindsight 30 ft.	
Languages cannot speak; however emits horrible creaking sounds when brought to anger	
Allegiances Evil	
AC 22, touch 5, flat-footed 22 (–4 size, –1 Dex, +17 natural)	
hp 195 (17 HD)	
Fort +17, Ref +4, Will +7	
Speed 20 ft. (5 squares)	
Melee slam +25/+20/+15 (2d8+17)	
Space 20 ft.; Reach 20 ft.	
Base Atk +12; Grp +41	
Atk Options smash (2d8+17)	
Abilities Str 37, Dex 8, Con 25, Int 2, Wis 15, Cha 12	
SQ double damage against objects, fire vulnerability, intoxicating fruit (Will DC 19), plant traits	
Skills Hide –6 (+10 in forested areas), Intimidate +4, Listen +5, Spot +5	



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ATER TOWER

Years ago, with his plan to usurp the identity of Lord Alcott and his son in place, Calmar used the fruit from the dread tree to render them both unconscious. Afterward, he brought them both here, killed them, and began putting his plan into motion. However, Calmar did not anticipate the ancient magic, once used throughout the area, mingling with the horror that befell the inhabitants.

As Lord Alcott and his son departed to the great beyond, their subconscious, disturbed by their sudden betrayal in the name of greed, enabled the awakening of an ancient curse. The curse is in the form of an aura of greed centered in the pit.

Calmar briefly succumbed to the aura, forcing him to attack Camilla. Afterward, coming to his senses, he quickly gathered a few things and left the area never to return.

Characters enter the water tower via an ancient pipe from the Withered Garden. Once they enter, read or paraphrase the following:

Crawling from the ancient clay pipe, you emerge into a ten foot pit designed to separate water flow into three separate pipes. Though most other pipes leading from this area are smashed beyond repair, a small pipe leaves this chamber in an upward direction. The pit, once full of water at the height of its glory, remains empty.

From the bottom of the pit, you can make out a chamber above covered in dust, cobwebs, and other remnants of age. From certain angles, you see tables, chairs, and a number of papers.

However, before you can begin searching the area for any remains that might lead to the Shew Stone, a sudden cold chills you in place. Your breath emerges from your mouth in wisps of smoke as if your soul is being drawn from your body.

Each character must immediately make a Will save (DC 15) or be overcome with greed. A creature that fails its saving throw must immediately attack another random creature within 60 feet and attempt to take its valuables. If no target is within reach, the affected creature must move toward a randomly chosen tar-

get it can see and attack as soon as possible. This effect lasts 1d4 rounds. Except as noted above, the effect functions like the spell *dominate monster* (caster level 10th). A character who successfully saves against the effect is not subject to this effect again for 24 hours.

RUNNING THE ENCOUNTER

A *protection from good* or similar spell will only postpone the aura of greed's effect until after the spell's duration.

SCALING THE ENCOUNTER

Use the previous encounter when running the adventure for 6th-8th level characters. For characters of higher levels make the following changes:

9th—12th Level: The Will save to overcome the aura of greed increases (DC 21).



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Chapter Four



CONFRONTATION

The third part of this adventure begins when players find out the truth about Lord Alcott and decide to confront him about his true identity. This scenario is very open ended and a variety of situations and outcomes may arise. Although this adventure plans accordingly to the complicated mind of Calmar, as well as his options, it is recommended that the Game Master study this encounter closely and prepare for other possible outcomes.

Encounter 10—Calmar: Characters begin this encounter when returning to Lord Alcott's villa to confront him about his true identity. This encounter is detailed on page 40.

EXPERIENCE

Characters successfully finding and retrieving the *Shew Stone* receives an experience reward equivalent to a CR of their level. If they somehow manage to stop Calmar from escaping and defeat him, reward them instead experience warranting his demise.

TREASURE

The small chest Calmar carries is a *chest of secrets* (detailed on page 43). Finally, with Calmar gone and his servants destroyed, they are free to rummage throughout the quaint manor house. Each character that makes a successful Search check (DC 20) finds random treasure as detailed in Chapter 3 of the *DMG* equivalent to a CR of their level.

This check involves one full day of searching. Characters wishing to take 20 may do so, but it increases the time to search the house to one month. This also assumes that characters are taking their time to avoid any traps Calmar may have set within the house.

Finally, the *shew stone*, the *dragon scale of Fec' Chron Null*, and *Prestor John's Fountain* are found in Appendix 1 beginning on page 40.

DEVELOPMENT

It is wholly possible that characters might not overhear or obtain the command word to access *Prestor*



Calmar is considerably younger than what he appears.

John's Fountain. This is doubly disturbing if they have yet to acquire the *Shew Stone* or if they wish to sample the mystical elixir promised by the fountain.

Shrewd characters can access the inside of the fountain from beneath the earth, however to do so requires a Knowledge (architecture and engineering) or Craft (stonemasonry) (DC 30). Failure indicates that they have damaged the spring and it ceases to provide the fountain with its youthful elixir.

Second, though the spring itself is an artifact, the fountain covering the spring is not, thus an *analyze dweomer* or a *legend lore* spell will reveal the command word to access the fountain.

KEEPING THE FOUNTAIN

Some characters, with Calmar gone, might wish to keep the fountain, and for good measure, the manor

Illustration by Joshua Raynack

house as well. Unless characters divulge the secret of the fountain, it is relatively easy to utilize the fountain with little intrusion from the outside world.

However, the fountain, due to Calmar's efforts, is still poisonous. The diluted black lotus extract will filter completely out of the fountain in four months time unless magic is used.

Secondly, the manor house does not rightly belong to them. Unless they continue the charade set forth by Calmar, city officials will attempt to find Lord Alcott's next of kin. Otherwise, it becomes property of the merchant guild and is auctioned to the highest bidder. This might become another adventure in itself as characters try to obtain the property from a wealthy nobleman whose eyed the manor house for years.

Lastly, Calmar, should he survive his encounter with the characters, will return at least once a year to sustain his youth. Regardless the scenario, the magic of the fountain, though powerful, is not detrimental to the game and should pose no threat in maintaining game balance.



LOOSE ENDS

There are several loose ends as adventurers travel to discover the whereabouts of Calmar and the *Shew Stone*. This section addresses those side treks and characters left dangling, however feel free to use these loose ends to spark another adventure.

Sir Wethword: If characters agree to return the stone to Sir Wethword, he thanks them whole heartily and pays them what he promised. He will ask the characters for the honor of escorting him to present the gift to Lord Arthur Welles.

Should they accept, the procession begins at the King's Gate and continues straight toward the castle. This is an opportune time for some members of the reanimationist cult to spring into action, sparking an entirely new adventure.

Lord Welles begrudgingly accepts the gift and those of his court do not appear any happier. Some minor lords, who live far from the King's influence, might leave during this ceremonial occasion as a statement.

Lord Arthur Welles: The lord is thrilled at the recovery of the *Shew Stone* and sets his mind and trusted minions to destroy it. He thanks characters for their diligence in the matter and assures them that they very well might have prevented civil war. He, too, pays them what is promised.

Sir Wethword will remain in the area for an-

other five years, committed to finding the *Shew Stone*. He also keeps a close eye on Lord Welles and perhaps on the characters as well. Though he is trusting, there are others in his company that are not as so when it comes to failure.

William Shoehorn: Never in any real danger, William is released no worse for wear for his imprisonment. Should characters follow up with William, he assures them that he was not their responsibility and that Sir Wethword is looking into the matter.

Reanimationist Cult: In one way or another, this cult still survives and continues to experiment on the dead in isolated cells. Though not a direct threat to characters or the city at large, those that belong to the church might find them a nuisance and wish to stomp them out of existence.

Albert Farmer: Albert and his family is the real tragedy of this adventure. With a little diligence, characters can track down the whereabouts of his family and offer them some support to begin again. Characters electing to do this receive extra experience based on 5 x the amount of gold given to a maximum of 1,000 XP.



HERE NEXT

There are also some questions and NPCs that can spawn a whole campaign of adventures. Below are some possibilities.

- If Calmar escaped, where is he off to next? What will be his next great plunder? He has had seventy-five years to plan his next legendary caper. Maybe it involves ridding Fec' Chron Null of his hoard.
- Who is or was Lord Septum and what has become of his phylactery? Did Calmar find it and is now looking to find out what it is? Is this the item he initially sought below and suffers from the curse of the Room of Wanting?
- Is Thomas, otherwise known as Lord Galvinis, successful in his attempts of bringing people back to life through electricity? Does he bring his beloved daughter back? Has she changed and would the church consider it a blasphemy?

Furthermore, Calmar could easily become a recurring character within your campaign. Depending on their confrontation with one another, he could be a villain, a reluctant ally, or a friend.

Whatever happens, it is entirely up to you.





ALMAR THE SWIFT MIND

This encounter begins when characters return to the home of Lord Alcott to confront Calmar the Swift Mind. Unless they decide to break into the garden, the servant, Geoffrey, will once again lead them where the fountain is and gesture for them to take a seat.

Moments later, Calmar the Swift Mind, continuing to pose as Lord Alcott, enters the area. If given a moment to speak, read or paraphrase the following:

Lord Alcott, ailing in his age, enters the garden with the assistance of his servant Geoffrey. Tucked under one arm a small chest, gilded and of masterful quality, rests firmly snug.

"I see you have returned, but I sense there is

still a treasure you seek. You may or may not know what I speak of, but I am assuming that you do—I can keep secrets as you may realize, well . . . let us hope you can do the same.

"Therefore, I propose that you keep whatever secrets you may have found beneath the city and in return, I will give you the Shew Stone to do with what you wish and this . . ."

The old noble gestures to a burnished, bronze shield with a green undercoat. It is beautifully crafted, but aged.

" . . . the dragon scale of Fec' Chron Null. True, it is marred with age and inept craftsmanship, comparative, of course, to the work of dwarves, it is still a prize. Think of the reputation of possessing such an item."

The old man bores into your eyes—"So, what say you, stout adventures? Do we have a deal?"

RUNNING THE ENCOUNTER

Calmar is no fool. He does not trust the characters, any character, to keep their word. Even if they are true in their intentions, word of his whereabouts might slip during a drunken stupor or during some other desperate situation. Calmar prepared to leave should the characters return from below. The rogue might even say:

"I grew too complacent as a nobleman. It is time that I move on. The fountain, like many other things in my life, served more as a curse than a blessing."

Should characters except his bargain, Calmar will honor it, to a point, and mutter the incantation that suppresses the *wall of force* guarding the fountain. He will then comment:

"The Shew Stone is in the clamshell held by the mermaid."

As characters investigate the clamshell, Calmar will invite them to drink from the fountain. Those that drink are subjected to a delayed poison.

Delayed Black Lotus Poison: DC 10 Fortitude resists; 2d6 Con/3d6 Con; Onset 1 minute.

Afterward, he mumbles another in-



Illustration by Joshua Raynack

Calmar the Swift Mind CR 15

Male human rogue 7/shadowdancer 8

LE Medium humanoid

Init +9 **Senses** Listen +0, Spot +0; darkvision 60 ft.**Languages** trade tongue (common)**Allegiances** none**AC** 24, touch 15, flat-footed 14; Dodge; Mobility (+5 Dex, +4 armor, +3 shield, +1 deflection, +1 natural armor)**Immune** black lotus poison, dread tree fruit**hp** 93 (15 HD)**Fort** +6, **Ref** +16, **Will** +4**Speed** 30 ft. (6 squares); shadow jump 80 ft.**Melee** +2 rapier +18/+13 (1d8+3/18-20)**Ranged** +1 dagger +17/+12 (1d4+2/19-20)**Base Atk** +11; **Grp** +12**Atk Options** Deflect Arrows, sneak attack +4d6, shadow illusion (1/day), defensive roll**Abilities** Str 12, Dex 20, Con 14, Int 13, Wis 10, Cha 16**SQ** hide in plain sight, improved evasion, improved uncanny dodge, trap sense +2**Feats** Combat Reflexes, Deflect Arrows, Dodge, Improved Initiative, Improved Unarmed Strike, Mobility, Weapon Finesse**Skills** Appraise +11, Bluff +13, Climb +6, Decipher Script +11, Disable Device +11, Disguise +18, Escape Artist +15, Gather Information +13, Hide +23, Listen +10, Move Silently +15, Perform (dance) +8, Search +11, Slight of Hand +10, Spot +10, Tumble +10, Use Magic Device +13, Use Rope +10**Possessions** Combat gear plus +2 buckler, amulet of natural armor +1, bracers of armor +4, ring of protection +2, gloves of dexterity +2, hat of disguise, ring of mind shielding, robe of useful items, noble clothes, 500 gp worth of jewelry, belt, eating knife, and belt pouch (54 gp)**Hide in Plain Sight (Su):** Calmar can use the Hide skill even while being observed. As long as he is

within 10 feet of some sort of shadow, Calmar can hide himself from view in the open without anything to actually hide behind. He cannot, however, hide in her own shadow.

Shadow Illusion (Sp): Calmar can create visual illusions. This ability's effect is identical to that of the arcane spell *silent image* and may be employed once per day.**Shadow Jump (Su):** Calmar has the ability to travel between shadows as if by means of a *dimension door* spell. The limitation is that the magical transport must begin and end in an area with at least some shadow. Calmar can jump up to a total of 80 feet each day in this way; this may be a single jump of 80 feet or eight jumps of 10 feet each. This amount can be split among many jumps, but each one, no matter how small, counts as a 10-foot increment.**Defensive Roll (Ex):** Once per day, when Calmar would be reduced to 0 hit points or less by damage in combat (from a weapon or other blow, not a spell or special ability), he can attempt to roll with the damage. He makes a Reflex saving throw (DC = damage dealt) and, if successful, takes only half damage from the blow. He must be aware of the attack and able to react to it in order to execute his defensive roll. If he is in a situation that would deny him any Dexterity bonus to AC, he can't attempt a defensive roll.**Slippery Mind (Ex):** If Calmar is affected by an enchantment and fails his saving throw, 1 round later he can attempt his saving throw again. He only gets this one extra chance to succeed at his saving throw. If it fails as well, the spell's effects occur normally.**Improved Evasion (Ex):** Calmar takes no damage at all on successful saving throws against attacks that allow a Reflex saving throw for half damage. What's more, he takes only half damage even if he fails his saving throw.cantation reactivating the *wall of force*, bid the characters farewell, and will make his leave of Caldor.**CREATURES**

The summary of creatures in this area is as follows:

Calmar: In the guise of an aging Lord Alcott, Calmar is fully prepared to deal with the characters if forced in a corner. However, he has no intention of staying to fight.**Geoffrey:** An advanced shadow summoned to serve Calmar until its destruction. It wears an *incor-**poral mask* (described in Appendix 1) giving an illusion that it is alive and corporeal. Once it attacks, however, its true form appears.**TACTICS**

The following suggestions are listed below for a fight should it arise.

Calmar: Calmar is not willing to fight, which could end up in his death or capture. The thief is not willing to answer for any of the crimes he committed: namely the murders of Lord Alcott, the no-

Calmar's Immunities

Calmar is immune to the black lotus extract poison, and that of the dread tree fruit. He built up a tolerance to both poisons over his many years.

Please note that this is impossible for a player character to duplicate and is unique to Calmar.

ble's son, and Albert. However, if attacked, he will do the following.

As a free action, Calmar drops the small chest he carries to the ground, spilling forth fruit from the dread tree encounter. Next, Calmar uses his hide in plain sight ability to observe his opponents. The old

rogue wants to know their intentions toward him, the *Shew Stone*, or any other future plans that might interest him.

If it seems characters finally feel safe that he has indeed left and are interested in drinking from the fountain, he will mutter the incantation to allow them to do so. Characters are allowed a Listen check (DC d20+15) to hear someone whispering or (DC d20+25) to make out its Calmar speaking the specific command word for the fountain.

If his hide in plain sight ability is not efficient enough to fulfill this task, he will use his shadow jump ability to get to the other side of the garden wall. He will then use a crack in that wall to observe them. This increases the Listen checks to (DC d20+20) and (DC d20+30) respectively.

When there is no longer a point to his being there, Calmar will leave the premises permanently (well, he might just return once a year to benefit from the power of the fountain).

Geoffrey: Once a conflict begins, the shadow servant will fight to the death, allowing for his master time to escape. During combat, it will use its Flyby Attack feat to the best of its ability relying on its Dodge feat and incorporeal nature to avoid attacks of opportunity.

SCALING THE ENCOUNTER

This encounter is designed for 6th to 7th level characters in mind, however you may wish to advance it to prove challenging to characters 8th level and higher. For characters 8th level to 12th level, simply add another shadow servant.

This shadow servant is a constant protector of the fountain. And even though it might not seem a challenge for higher level characters, remember that these shadows cannot be turned or controlled and

are incorporeal.



Click here to return to the adventure

Advanced Shadow (Geoffrey)	CR —
LE incorporeal undead	
Init +2 Senses Listen +7, Spot +7; darkvision 60 ft.	
Languages understands trade tongue (common)	
Allegiances Calmar the Swift Mind	
AC 14, touch 14, flat-footed 12; Dodge (+2 Dex, +2 deflection)	
hp 32 (5 HD)	
Fort +2, Ref +4, Will +6	
Speed Fly 40 ft. (good) (8 squares)	
Melee incorporeal touch +4 (1d6 Str)	
Base Atk +2; Grp —	
Atk Options Flyby Attack, strength damage	
Abilities Str —, Dex 14, Con —, Int 6, Wis 12, Cha 14	
SQ incorporeal traits, undead traits, immune to turn and command attempts	
Feats Dodge, Flyby Attack, Mobility	
Skills Hide +10, Listen +8, Search +4, Spot +8	
Possessions <i>incorporeal mask</i> .	
Strength Damage (Su): The touch of a shadow deals 1d6 points of Strength damage to a living foe. A creature reduced to Strength 0 by a shadow dies. This is a negative energy effect.	

Shadow	CR —
LE incorporeal undead	
Init +2 Senses Listen +7, Spot +7; darkvision 60 ft.	
Languages understands trade tongue (common)	
Allegiances Calmar the Swift Mind	
AC 13, touch 13, flat-footed 11; Dodge (+2 Dex, +1 deflection)	
hp 19 (3 HD)	
Fort +1, Ref +3, Will +4	
Speed Fly 40 ft. (good) (8 squares)	
Melee incorporeal touch +3 (1d6 Str)	
Base Atk +1; Grp —	
Atk Options strength damage	
Abilities Str —, Dex 14, Con —, Int 6, Wis 12, Cha 13	
SQ incorporeal traits, undead traits, immune to turn and command attempts	
Feats Dodge, Mobility	
Skills Hide +8, Listen +7, Search +4, Spot +7	
Strength Damage (Su): The touch of a shadow deals 1d6 points of Strength damage to a living foe. A creature reduced to Strength 0 by a shadow dies. This is a negative energy effect.	

Appendix

I



MAGIC ITEMS

There are several magic items, some completely new or slightly adjusted, in this adventure. These are in addition to those found in the *DMG*.

Boots of the Wastelands

Price: 2,500 gp

Body Slot: Feet

Caster Level: 5th

Aura: Faint; (DC 17) abjuration and transmutation

Activation: —

Weight: 1 lb.

These boots are made entirely from sand, shifting as the wearer walks. When in the tundra, the soles harden, becoming a gritty, sand-like texture.

This footgear bestows many powers upon the wearer. First, he is able to travel across sand at his normal speed, leaving no tracks. The boots also enable him to travel at normal speed across the most slippery ice, such as that found in the tundra, (horizontal surfaces only, not vertical or sharply slanted ones) without falling or slipping. Finally, *boots of the wastelands* cools the wearer, as if he were affected by an *endure elements* spell.

Prerequisites: Craft Wondrous Item, *cat's grace*, *endure elements*, *pass without trace*.

Cost to Create: 1,250 gp, 100 XP, 3 days.

Chest of Secrets

Price: 500 gp

Body Slot: —

Caster Level: 9th

Aura: Moderate; (DC 19) conjuration

Activation: —

Weight: 3 lbs.

Shunning Step

Abjuration

Level: Clr 3, Sor/Wiz 4

Components: V, S, M, DF

Casting Time: 1 standard action

Range: Personal

Target: You

Duration: 1 minute/level

Saving Throw: None

Spell Resistance: No

You gain evasion against breath weapons and spells cast by creatures with the dragon type (When a breath weapon or spell normally allows a Reflex save for half damage, you take no damage on a successful save).

The effects of this spell does not stack with other evasion or improved evasion abilities.

Material Component: A mixture of powdered dragon tongue and an emerald worth 375 gp.

This is a masterwork chest wrought from extremely valuable materials such as ebony, teak, gold, silver, and platinum.

The *chest of secrets* opens into a nondimensional space. Regardless of what is put into the chest, it always weighs 3 lbs. It can hold a quantity totaling 50 lbs.

If the chest is overloaded, the chest bursts and is ruined. Unlike a normal *bag of holding*, sharp objects cannot pierce it (from inside or outside). Otherwise, except noted above, a *chest of secrets* behaves similar to a normal *bag of holding* as described in the *DMG*.

Prerequisites: Craft Wondrous Item, *secret chest*.

Cost to Create: 250 gp, 20 XP, 1 day.

Fountain of Prestor John

Price: Artifact

Caster Level: 20th

Aura: Strong; (DC 25) conjuration (healing)

Activation: — (command word is needed to unlock its protections; standard action)

This is a curative underground spring discovered centuries by the famed explorer and priest, Prestor John. Drinking from this spring grants the imbiber with the timeless body ability for one year. After

that year, the recipient of its magical properties must replenish himself with the rejuvenating elixir or otherwise lose the benefits.

Timeless Body (Ex): A character no longer takes penalties to her ability scores for aging and cannot be magically aged. Any such penalties he has already taken, however, remain in place. Bonuses still accrue, however, unlike the monk ability of the same name, he does not die of old age when his time is up.

Incorporeal Mask

Price: 400 gp

Body Slot: Face

Caster Level: 3rd

Aura: Faint; (DC 16) illusion

Activation: —

Weight: 1 lb.

The mask appears in a constant flux between what exists and what does not exist. When held by an incorporeal hand, it appears as a solid, ivory mask with screaming faces etched delicately along the surface.

This mask, when worn by an incorporeal creature, presents an illusion that it is a corporeal, living creature. It works as soon as it is worn and stops immediately when taken off, becoming powerless for future use.

The wearer still makes no sound, unless it has another method of doing so, but otherwise appears to the senses as alive and corporeal. If the wearer is also undead, *detect undead* and *deathwatch* spells fail to detect the creature as such.

Prerequisites: Craft Wondrous Item, *disguise self*, *misdirection*.

Cost to Create: 200 gp, 16 XP, 1 day.

Scale of Fec' Chron Null

Price: 9,846 gp

Body Slot: —

Caster Level: 5th

Aura: Faint; (DC 17) abjuration

Activation: — (see below)

Weight: 20 lbs.

This burnished bronze shield has a green underlay with a great ridge running down the center. Its form and shape is natural rather than something fashioned

by man, though it seems ineptly augmented, especially the crude painting of a dragon crest.

This *+1 heavy steel shield* that, upon command as a standard action, becomes a tower shield. As a tower shield, it provides the wielder with the evasion ability against breath weapons and spells cast by a creature with the dragon type (When a breath weapon or spell normally allows a Reflex save for half damage, the wielder of the shield takes no damage on a successful save).

In addition, it is impervious to acid. The wielder also does not suffer the -2 penalty to attack rolls while as a tower shield.

Prerequisites: Craft Magic Arms and Armor, *protection from energy*, *shunning step* (New Spell detailed on the previous page).

Cost to Create: 4,923 gp, 394 XP, 10 days.

Shew Stone

Price: 4,000 gp

Body Slot: —

Caster Level: 10th

Aura: Moderate; (DC 20) divination

Activation: must cast *screaming*

Weight: 5 lbs.

This is a burnished crystal ball about 4 inches in diameter.

A character can use this crystal sphere to see over any distance on the Material Plane, when used in conjunction with the *screaming* spell (unlike a normal *crystal ball* you must actually cast the *screaming* spell for this item to work). Furthermore, you may also cast a *screaming* spell targeting the *Shew Stone*. Doing this, allows you to scribe on a 50-ft.-radius spread surrounding the crystal allowing individual saves for each in the area.

The subject, if an owner or previous owner and if on the Material Plane, they receive no saving throw as a target of a *screaming* spell.

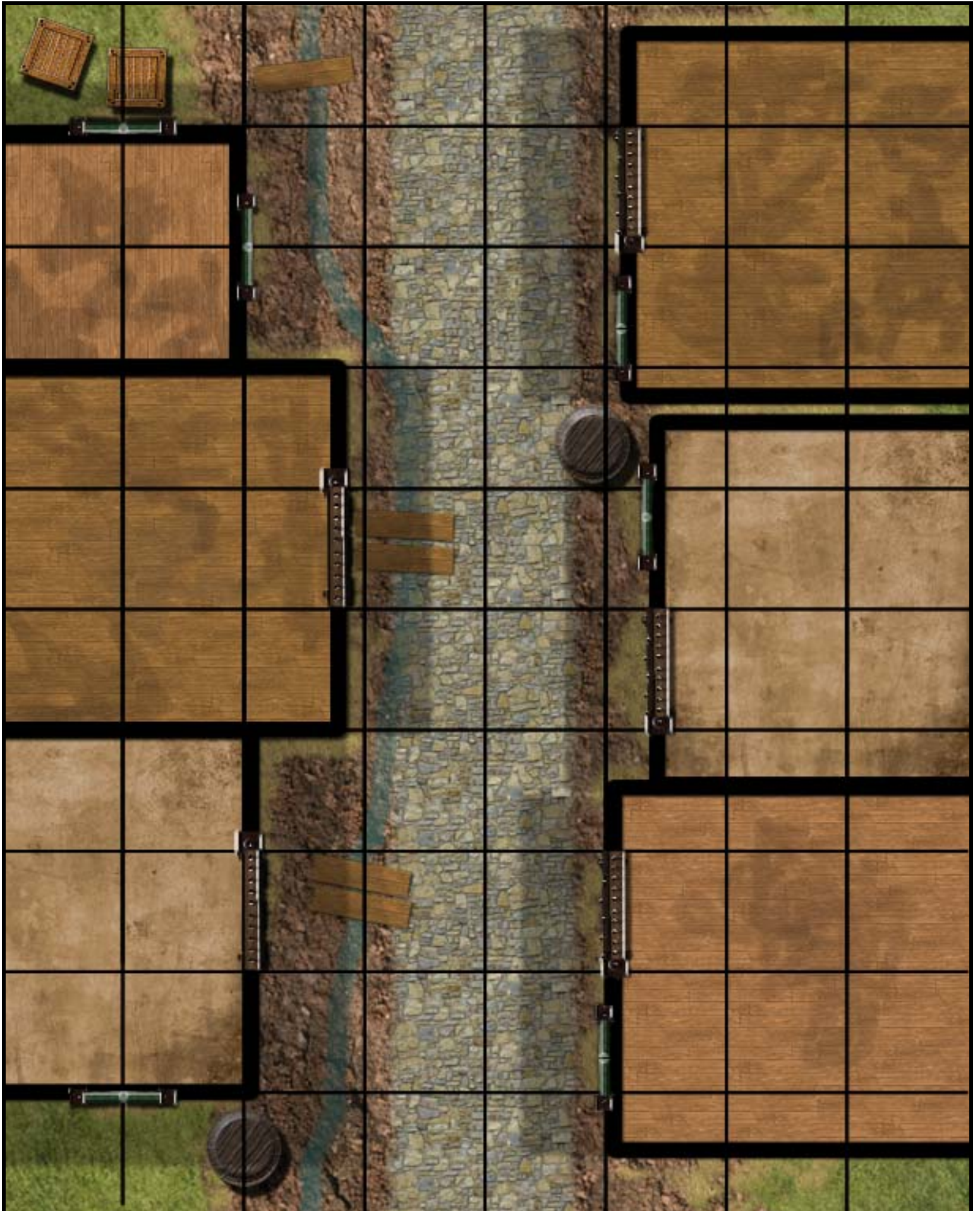
Prerequisites: Craft Magic Arms and Armor, *protection from energy*, *shunning step*.

Cost to Create: 2,000 gp, 160 XP, 4 days.

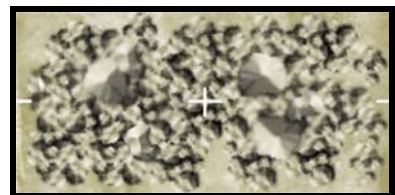
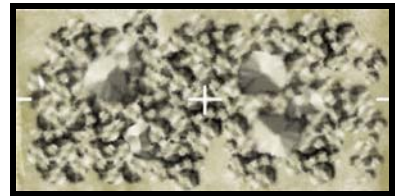
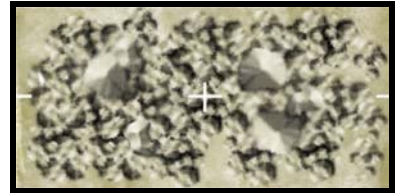
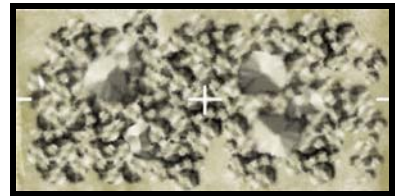
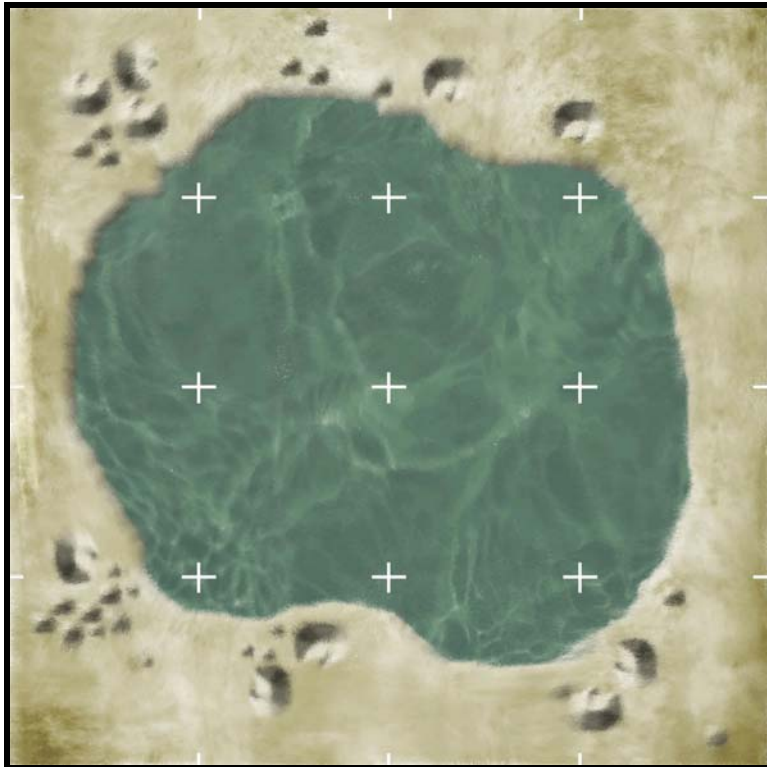
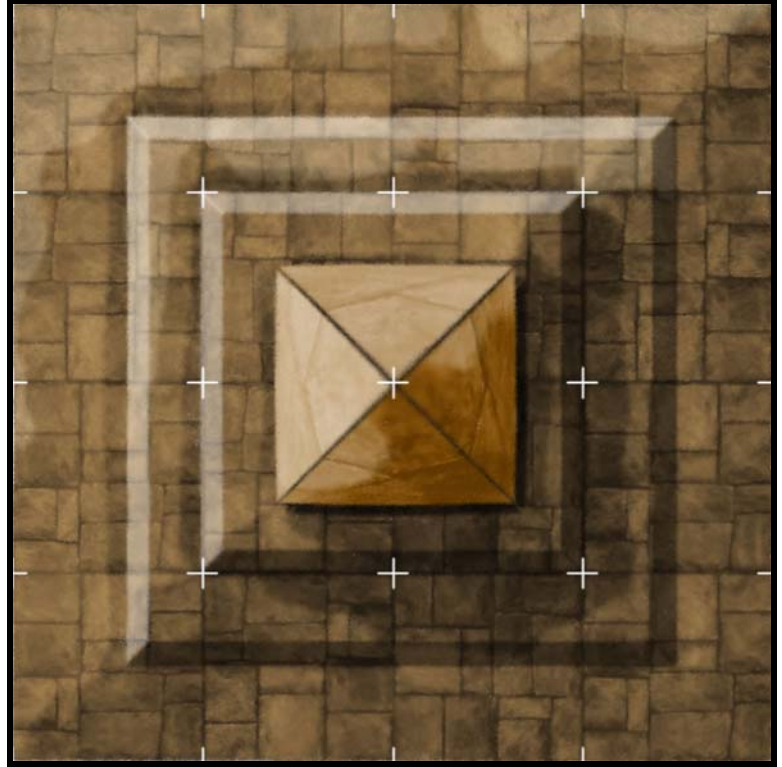
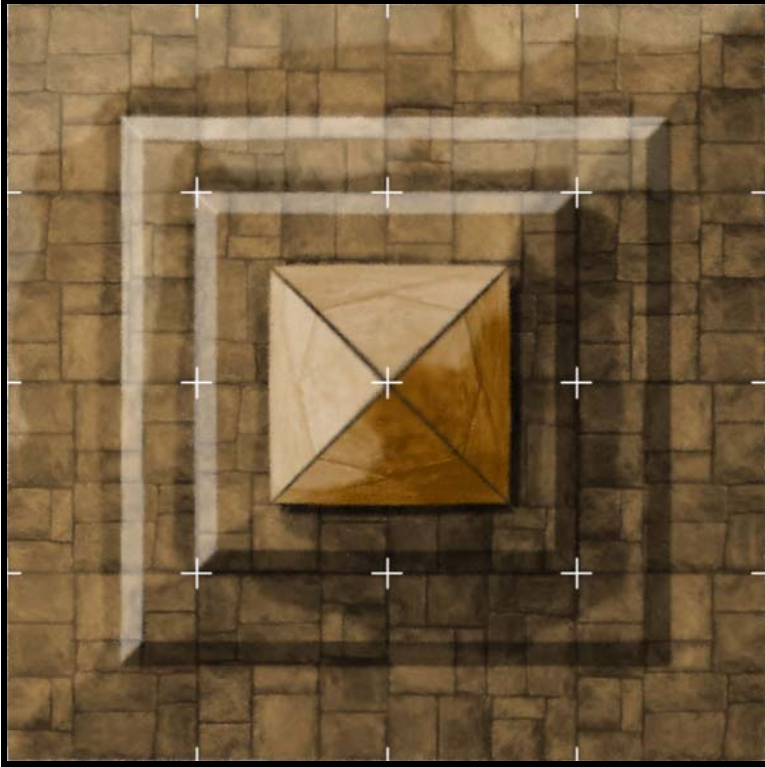


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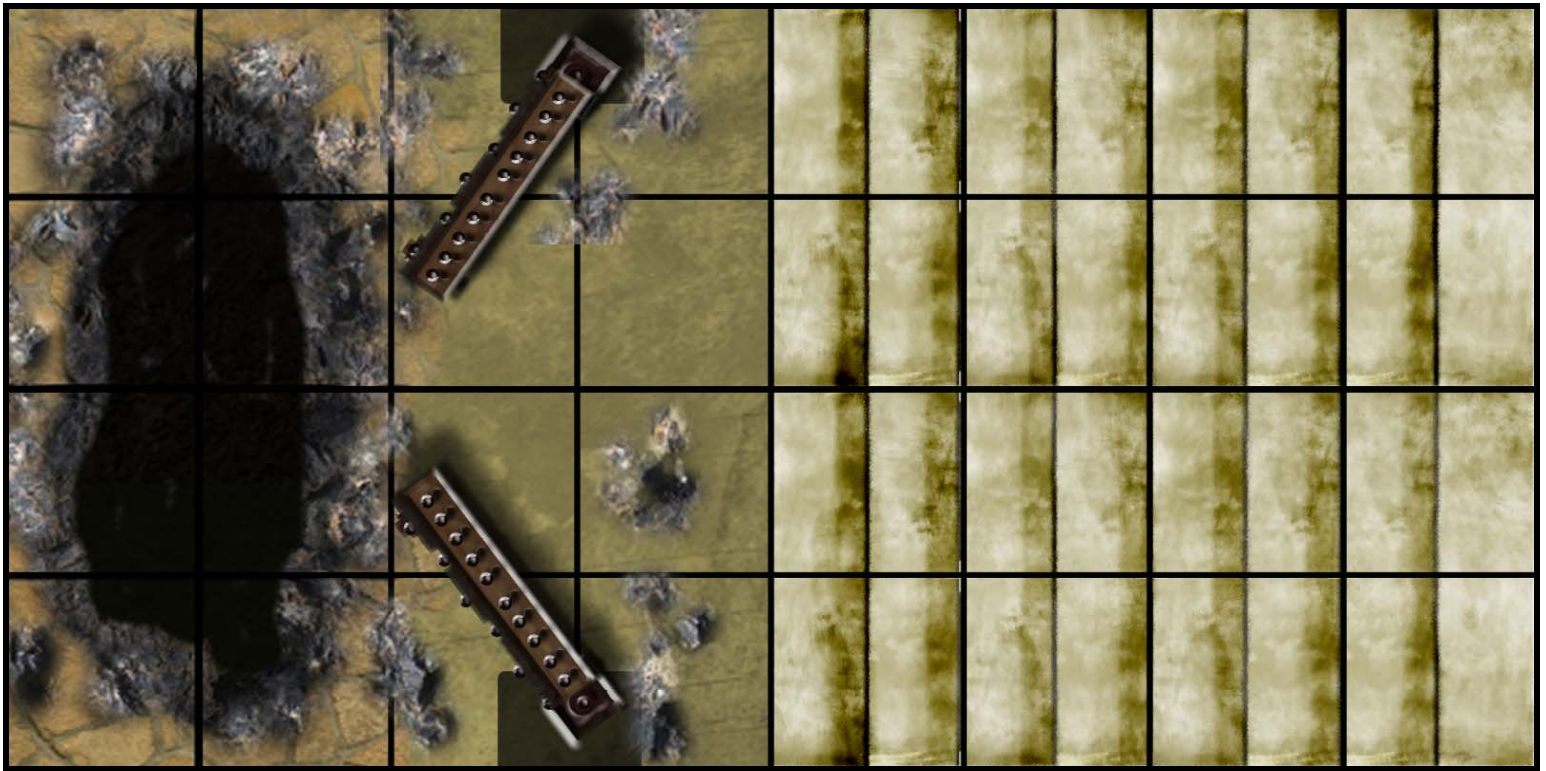
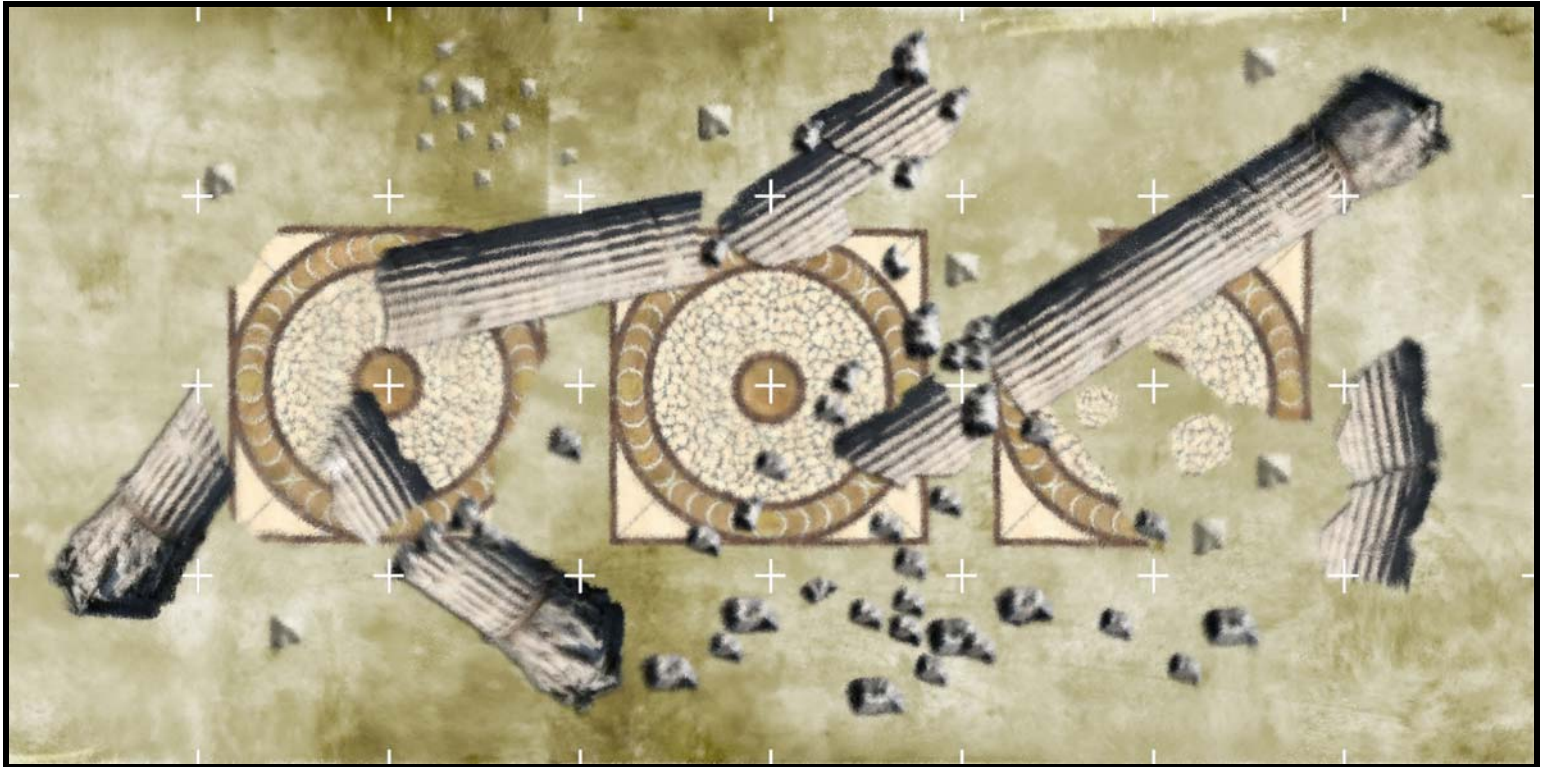
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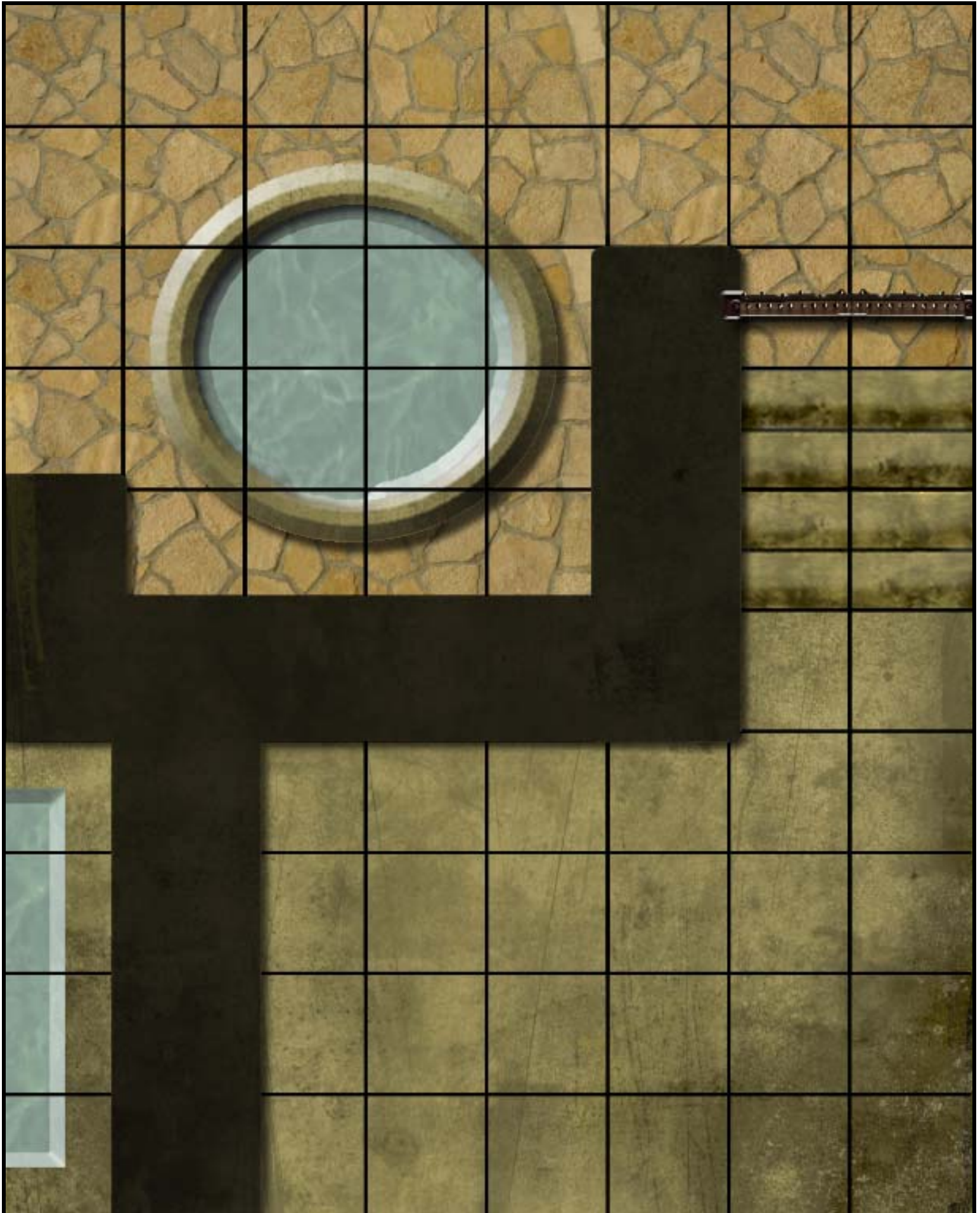
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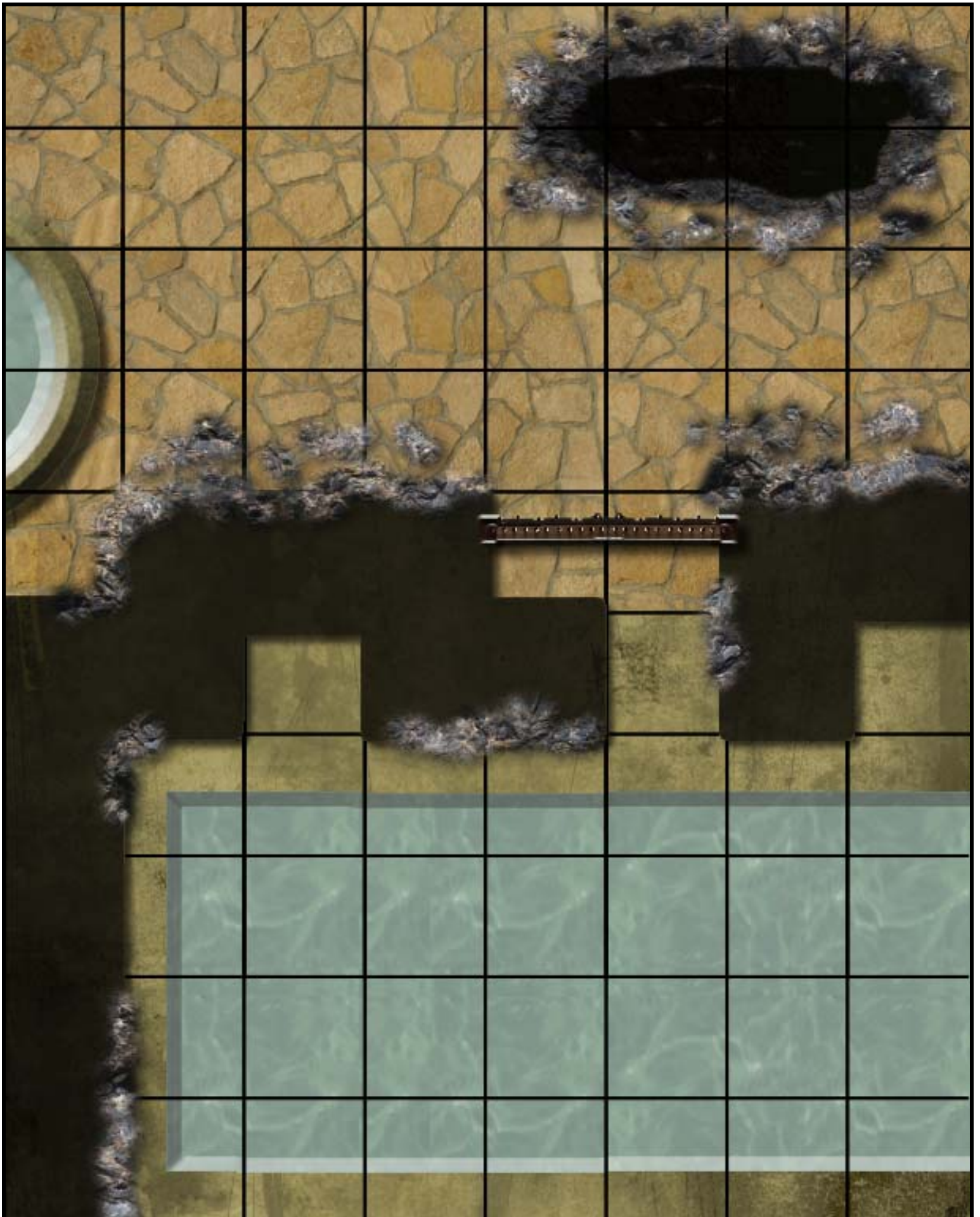
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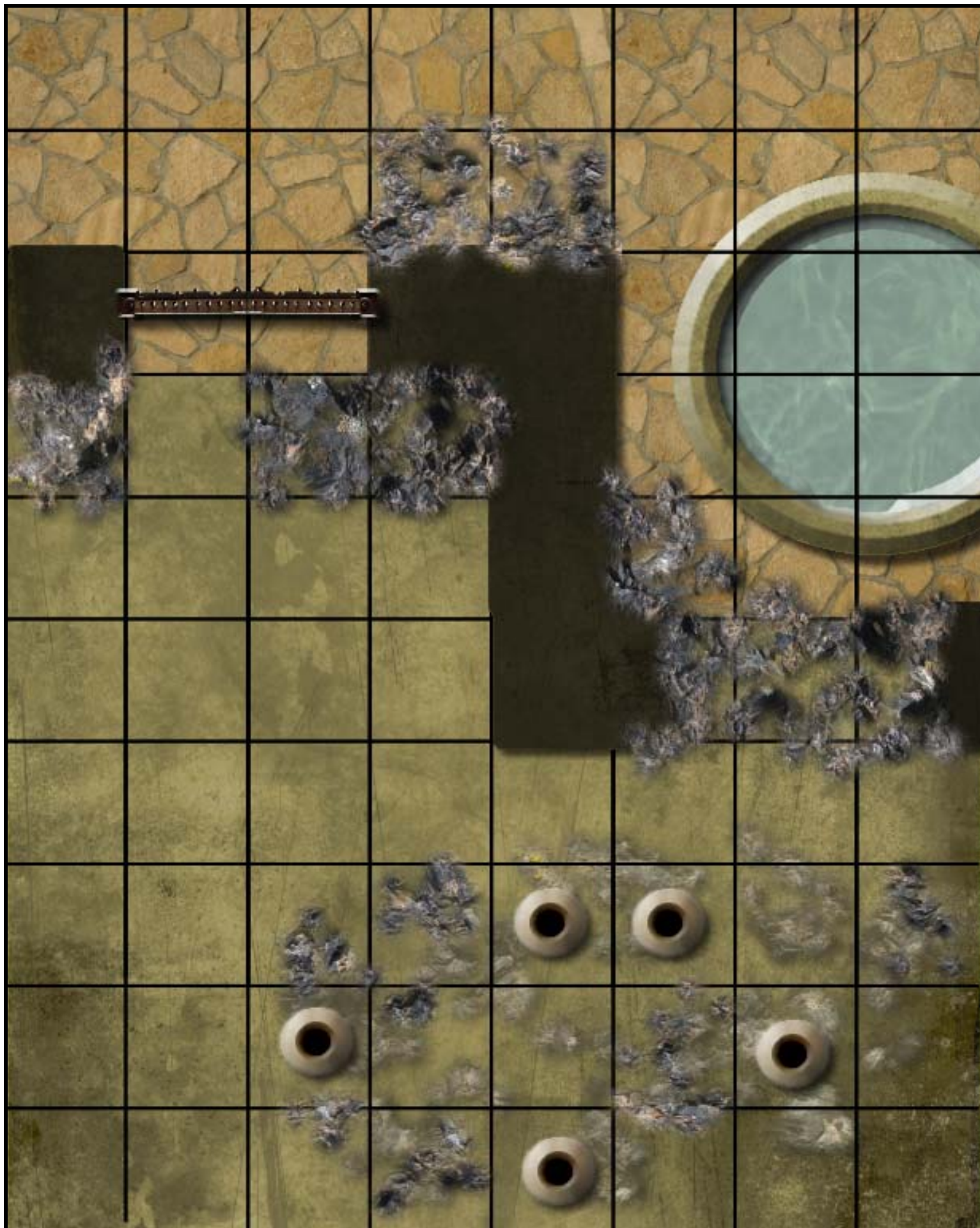
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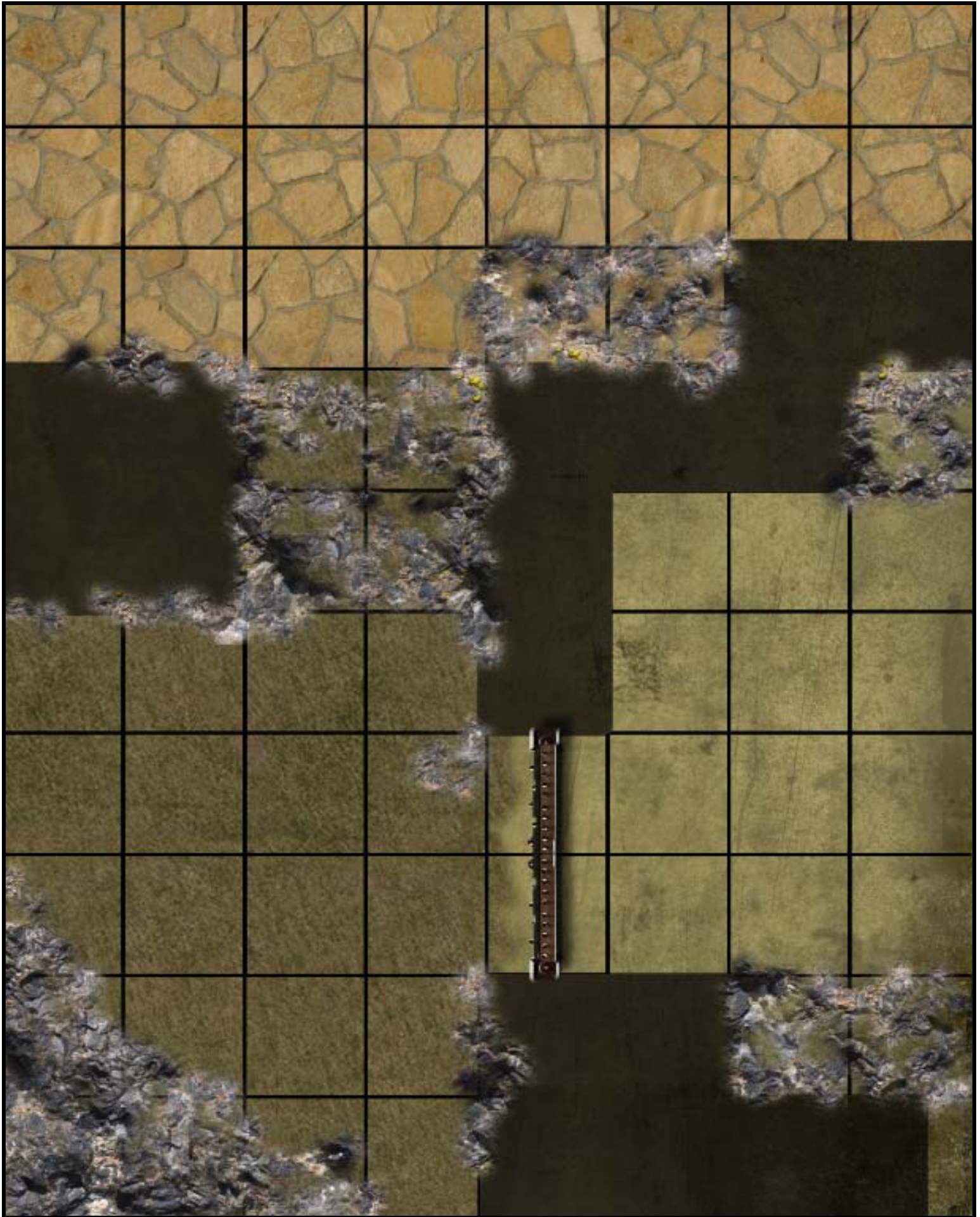
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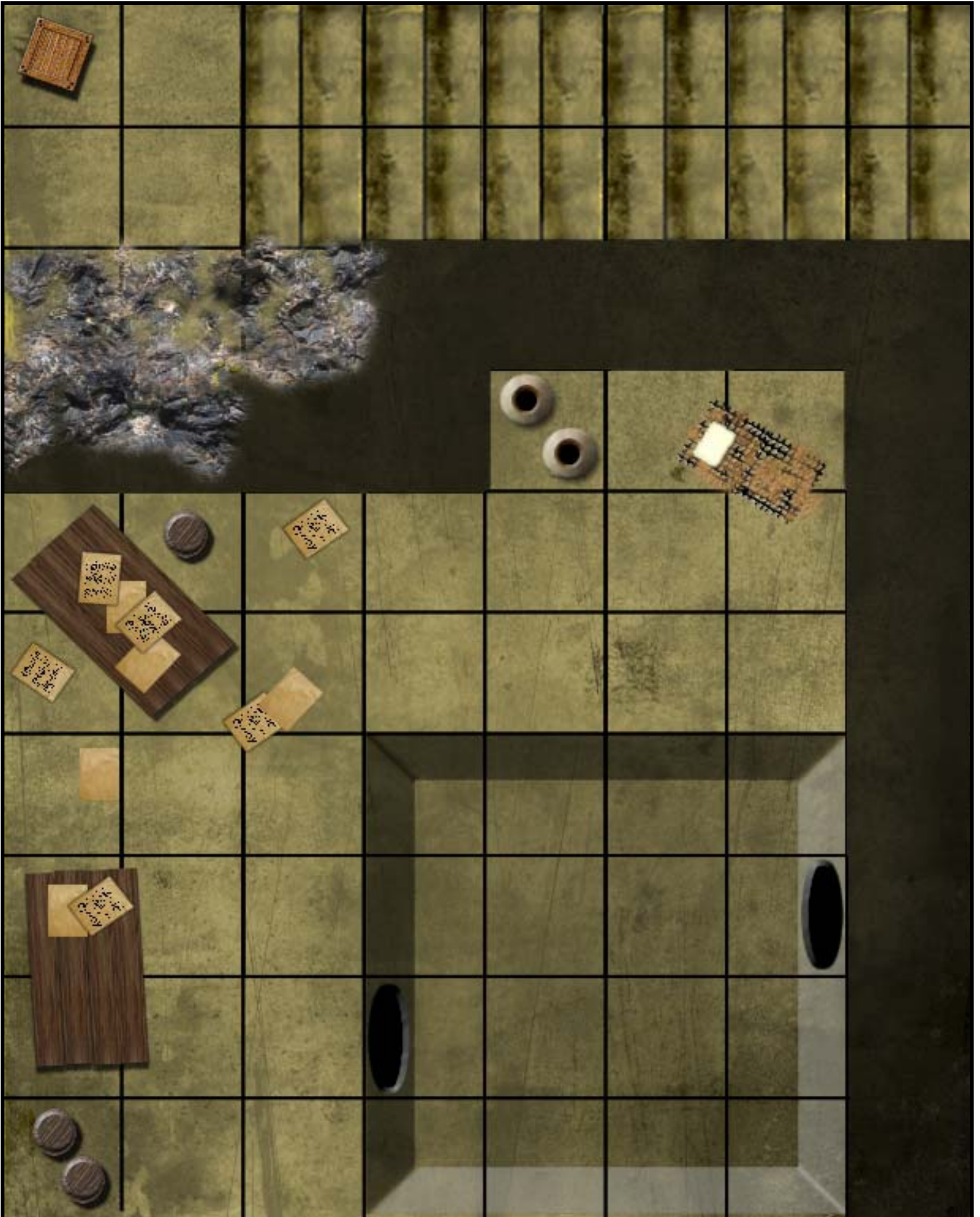


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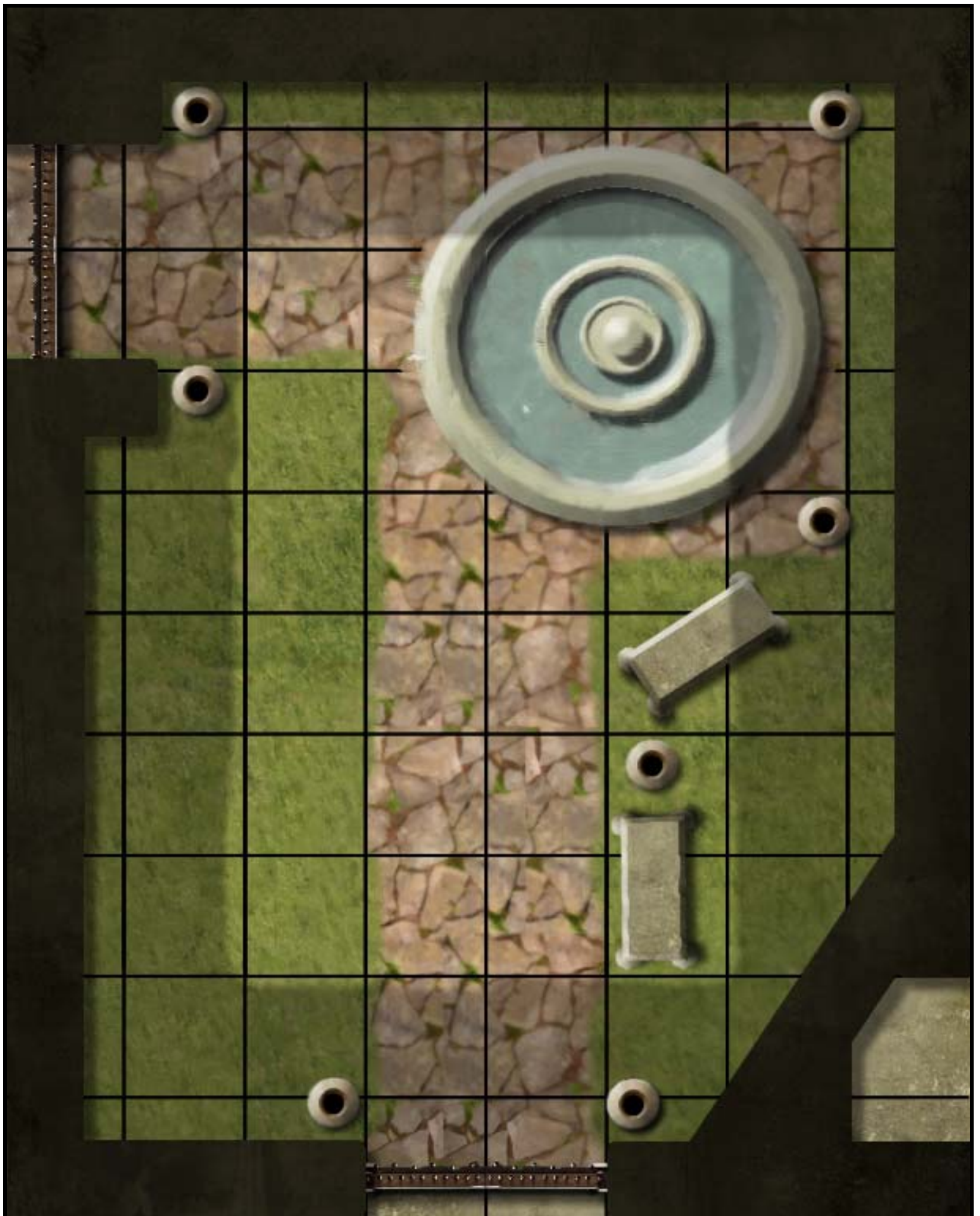


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HANDOUT #1

It is quite ingenious after some thought. The late mage I consulted about the matter shared some further insight during our last meeting.

The field suppressing the magic would not nullify the effects of the fountain nor the spell of the arcane wall. It would also hide the fountain from magical detection. Furthermore, the wall of force would prevent interlopers from using the fountain.

My impatience with the mage proved my downfall in this matter. I realized after his sudden demise, that I needed a word—a command word, to lock and unlock the wall of force. It is time I return one of the two dragon scales I stole.

HANDOUT #2

They indeed know the true magic of the spring. It is guarded, and effectively by the very fountain that surrounds it. I consulted with a mage of some ill repute, describing to him the effects of the magic, but not the source. He claims a wall comprised by sheer force of will guards it from intruders and surrounding this force wall is an invisible globe that prevents magic.

However, he concluded most vehemently that an object could not have such an effect upon it. He continued that only a person may guard himself with such protective magic. I did tell him that the object itself was a statue, but I did not describe what creature it depicted. He said that was most interesting and that I could be dealing with saintly or deific magic.

He further cautioned to be wary—it could be an artifact I coveted. This must then be Prestor John's fountain. There is no more doubt in my mind.

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HANDOUT #3

Neither Fec' Chron Null or his minions were pleased to see me, but he exchanged the stone of elvenkind for one of his scales. I will offer the stone to Lord Alcott and use it to determine the command word to unlock the well of eternal youth. I cannot risk the death of Lord Alcott through torture or the command word will be lost forever. I also nicked a scroll from the dragon's hoard that will help me see this venture through.

However, I will need to quickly control the magic of the Shew Stone after I am done, since I am now considered a previous owner. I am not as thick as that old beast believes—he too will use the stone to find the whereabouts of myself and his other scale. Perhaps the fountain will have a dual purpose.

But, he knows me too well. I will not destroy the stone, for the reptile has many other interesting trinkets. The stone will still have worth after the deed is done.

HANDOUT #4

Prestor John's fountain exists I do not know if Lord Alcott the Elder or his son knows the ancient Romas spring within their garden is the fountain of youth. They have built a stone fountain around the spring and glorify it with mermaids. I will use their weakness for antiquities to investigate further.

HANDOUT #5

The deed will be performed tonight. Through the Shew Stone, I discovered the command word. I will kill both Lord Alcott and his son and take their place. After a year, I will fake the death of Lord Alcott and assume the identity of the son.

Feed their flesh to Camilla and I will live forever. I will awake tomorrow, immortal!

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THE SHEW STONE, A CRYSTAL OF ELVEN DESIGN, IS HIGHLY SOUGHT AFTER BY THE KING'S MEN.

HOWEVER, THE LAST TO HAVE POSSESSION OF THE STONE IS THOUGHT DEAD. CALMAR THE SWIFT MIND, DISAPPEARED NEARLY SEVENTY-FIVE YEARS AGO AND NO ONE KNOWS HIS FATE.

NOW, ADVENTURERS MUST BRAVE POLITICAL INTRIGUE, CULTISTS, AND AN ANCIENT SUNKEN ROMAN STREET, TO FIND THE SHEW STONE, AND MORE IMPORTANTLY, THE FATE OF CALMAR.

**INSIDE:
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MAP TILES
EASY TO USE ENCOUNTERS
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