

COMMUNION

01

Mystery, Remote Monastery

The PCs visit a monastery as a secretive group prepare an unorthodox—borderline heretical—ritual to commune with their deity.

Getting the PCs Involved:

- One (or more) of the PCs is a member of the religious order that keeps the monastery.
- The party is simply traveling. The monastery is a convenient stopping-off point and the monks are usually rather hospitable.

Encounters:

- The monks invent strange customs to try to force the PCs to leave.
- An air of tension underlies even ordinary events and the head monks seem very busy.
- The PCs recognize a dangerous or banned book.
- The senior monks have posted a guard on an otherwise normal door.
- The PCs arrive just in time to see an outsider summoned, and it isn't what the monks expected to arrive.

Follow-up Adventure Ideas:

- The abbot, consumed by shame, submits himself for punishment.
- The monk who brought the heretical documents/book has escaped during the fighting.

SideQuest Decks: Dungeons, Caves, & Ruins Fantasy © 2017 Inkwell Ideas

SIDEQUEST DECKS:

DUNGEONS, CAVES, & RUINS FANTASY

Dungeons, caverns, and ruins are the centerpiece of a great fantasy adventure. **SideQuest Decks: Dungeons, Caverns, & Ruins Fantasy** are filled with dynamic adventure outlines and maps!

Draw a card for an adventure outline. The outline includes backstory, ways to get the PCs involved, encounter possibilities, and follow-up ideas. The other side of the card is the most important map for that adventure. Use maps from other cards as needed.

SideQuest Decks are perfect for stocking a hex crawl or developing a side trek on the fly. You may even chain several together for an entire campaign!

Writing:

Richard Crookes, Misha Handman, Tim Höregott, Fil Kearney, Joe Wetzels, David Winterbottom

Editing:

Chad Mercer, Daniel Shaefer

Cartography:

Robert Altbauer, Tim Ballew, Tony Brotherton, Keith Curtis, Tim Höregott, Shane Knysch, Sigurd Johansson, Matt Jackson, Dyson Logos, AJ Stone, Joe Wetzels, Maciej Zagorski

SideQuest Decks: Dungeons, Caves, & Ruins Fantasy © 2017 Inkwell Ideas

OUTSIDE IN

03

Investigation, Dungeon, Strong Magic

A botched summoning has turned the hapless magician into a dungeon in his own right, and in it dwell monsters.

Getting the PCs Involved:

- They are meeting with the summoner regarding an unrelated matter.
- One of the creatures from within attacks a local peasant, and the PCs pursue it back to the summoner's dwelling.

Encounters:

- The mage's home is full of odd vermin shaped vaguely like hands.
- A doorway framed with gnashing mandibles leads into a corridor too long to fit in the house.
- Mockeries of human form imitate the worship of a bone idol carved to look like the sorcerer.
- Eyeballs open along rib-lined walls, spitting eldritch flame.
- Giant spider-like things repair a maze of membranous walls.
- In the center the summoner stands bound into a pillar, madly lashing out with magic and treelike structures growing from the floor.

Follow-up Adventure Ideas:

- The magical space collapses, the PCs will have to flee before it detaches from reality entirely.

SideQuest Decks: Dungeons, Caves, & Ruins Fantasy © 2017 Inkwell Ideas

THE DEMON'S DIG

02

Town, Slavery, Summoning

A sorcerer has enslaved a town to dig for a trapped demon. The demon isn't there, but the sorcerer will work the town to death looking.

Getting the PCs Involved:

- The PCs arrive in a strange, empty town, with signs of forced movement to the north.
- The PCs are hired by a nearby town to find out why their neighbors no longer attend market days.

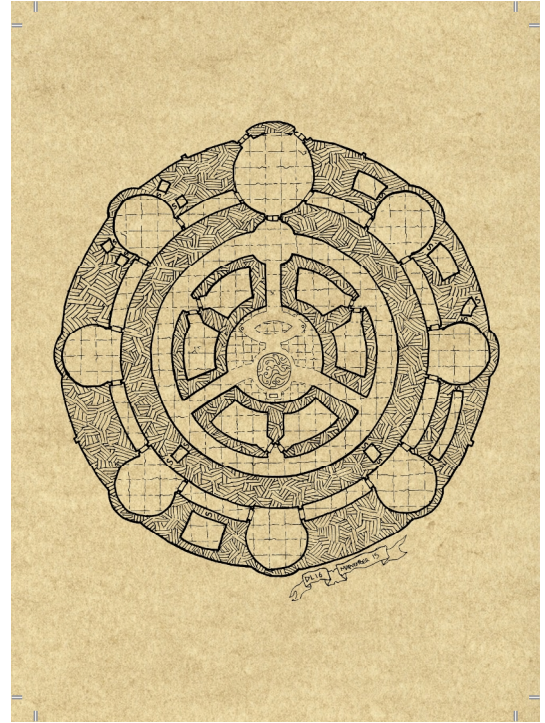
Encounters:

- The PCs run into a group of heavily-armed guards taking half-starved and injured prisoners into the woods, preparing to kill them as useless.
- Near a cave mouth, the PCs find a camp, which contains a group of soldiers with battle-enhancing potions and a map of the local caves. The map has areas that have been searched scratched off.
- In the mines, a collection of minor bound demons are acting as overseers of village miners, hoping to sense the great demon's presence.
- At the mountain's summit, the sorcerer is trying to divine the demon's location; he is waiting for sunset in order to work a human sacrifice.

Follow-up Adventure Ideas:

- Someone must have found the demon. Where have they taken it, and for what?
- In their digging, the townsfolk have broken into goblin tunnels, and soon the goblins are raiding the town.

SideQuest Decks: Dungeons, Caves, & Ruins Fantasy © 2017 Inkwell Ideas



THE CATHEDRAL OF RICHES 05

Demon, Extraplanar

The PCs find an abandoned cathedral with inexplicable piles of gold. Old ritual circles bring them to a parallel version of the cathedral, where a deity brought their people to protect them from a gold demon.

Getting the PCs Involved:

- The PCs stumble upon the cathedral.
- The PCs are sent to the cathedral to retrieve an item.

Encounters:

- The PCs come across piles of various golden coins.
- Candles light up and things are moved but only one is visible. Magic reveals vague, elephant forms.
- They find an old ritual circle with burnt down candles. Entering the circle will bring them to the Other Side.
- Once on the Other Side, the cathedral is full of life with many friendly, elephant-headed monks doing their work: lighting candles or performing services.
- The God ruling the cathedral grants an audience. He confides to have created this Other Side to protect his people from a gold demon.
- Any gold taken by PCs or on piles manifests into a demon that instantly attacks.
- PCs flee through the halls, in and out of the Other Side, to escape the demon's or elephants' wrath.

Follow-up Adventure Ideas:

- All gold the PCs own has become infected.
- The god was the area's protector. When he dies, it will fall to darkness.

SideQuest Decks: Dungeons, Caves, & Ruins Fantasy © 2017 Inikwell Ideas

PARADISE 04

Ruins, Magical Portal, Tower

Stumbling through a portal, the PCs find themselves in a fertile, ancient version of this former city. It is a dream realm made to comfort a lonely wizard and her family, but it turned a nightmare when her parents left.

Getting the PCs Involved:

- The PCs travel overland when they stumble into it.
- The PCs are sent to find someone missing in the area—the stranger lost inside.

Encounters:

- Night falls. Everything becomes a dark and twisted version of itself with horrible creatures attacking.
- The PCs find an injured stranger that stumbled into the realm like them.
- A river of tears flows through the land. In the water, shadowy, immaterial human shapes are seen floating.
- Through the silence, a wailing is heard from a distant tower, much higher during day than during night.
- Hidden in a building, a small boy cries. He claims his family lives in the tower.
- The tower is smaller, but more dangerous at night. At the top, they find a lonely wizard. When breaking the spell through waking her, they all return to the real version of this place: a tower ruin in a destroyed city.

Follow-up Adventure Ideas:

- Only those in the tower were transferred outside. Somebody is trapped.
- The wizard asks the PCs to help her find her parents.

SideQuest Decks: Dungeons, Caves, & Ruins Fantasy © 2017 Inikwell Ideas

THE OLD MINER'S TALE 07

Hunt, Frontier, Mining

A bizarre tale of rock-people and fire-men, told by the sole survivor of a mining camp, sends shockwaves through the local community.

Getting the PCs Involved:

- The sponsors of the mining camp, dismissing the story as an exaggeration, decide to send out adventurers to secure the area.
- The survivor's story has disturbing similarities to a nefarious plot they foiled not long ago.

Encounters:

- The group have the chance to interview the survivor, though their story is full of assumption and superstition.
- Minor elementals are busy looting the mining camp. Most flee to the caverns when strangers approach, but some confront the intruders.
- Elementals are busy digging out the inner caverns to a magical pattern, spells will work strangely here.
- Mechanical traps, seemingly sculpted from living rock, litter the caves.
- A great elemental emerges from the glowing crystals in the central chamber, enraged at being disturbed.

Follow-up Adventure Ideas:

- The grand elemental's death causes the caverns to begin collapsing. A speedy retreat is necessary.
- Part of the elemental is a potent ingredient in the construction of a magical item.

SideQuest Decks: Dungeons, Caves, & Ruins Fantasy © 2017 Inikwell Ideas

GOBLIN TRADE 06

Caves, Goblins, Occult, Politics

The PCs are sent down into a goblin den to investigate. The goblins have a pact with a demon, exchanging stolen goods for weapons. But the demon is the court magician in disguise!

Getting the PCs Involved:

- The King asks the PCs to investigate the goblins' recent superior weapon supply.
- The PCs enter the goblin den by pure chance.

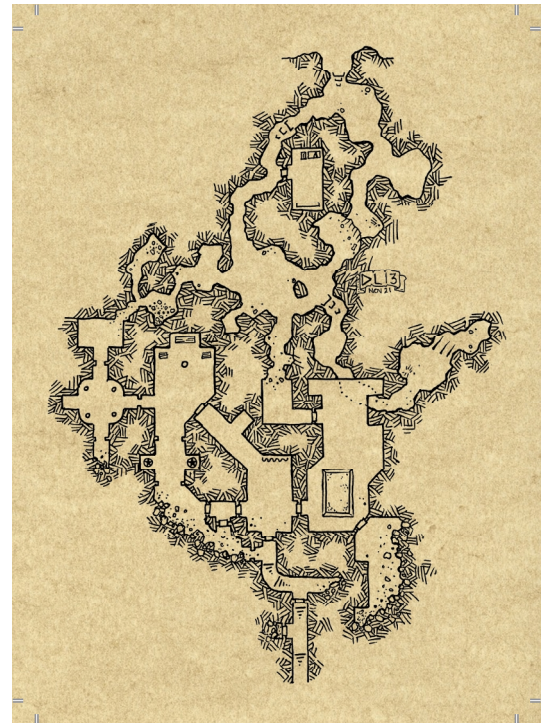
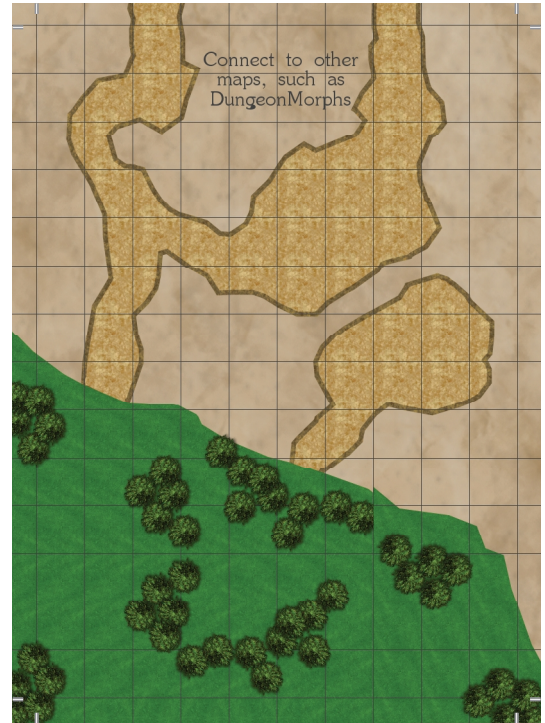
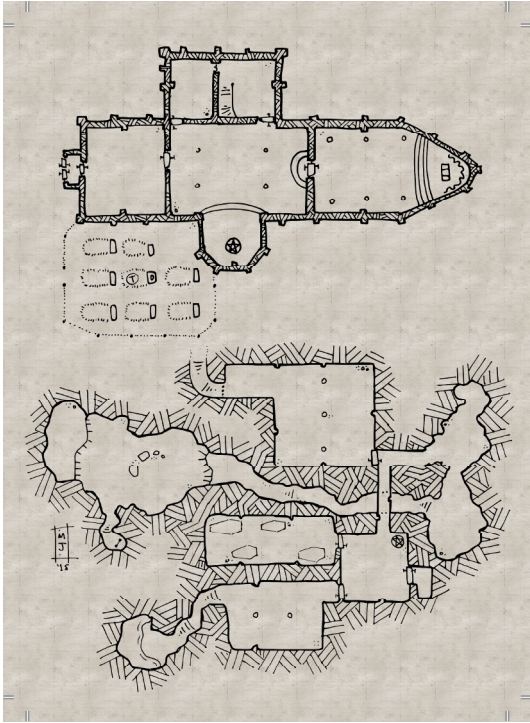
Encounters:

- Three goblins patrol through the corridor. They have weapons of fine quality, and use them to poke into corners to try and find intruders.
- A minecar full of pillaged loot moves through the den, deep down to the chasm at the bottom.
- Goblins in ceremonial clothing perform a ritual for a blue-faced demon, throwing the pillaged loot down the chasm, chanting loud prayers.
- A goblin child notices the PCs, staring at them without saying anything. If they let it go, it won't tell anyone.
- On a ledge in the chasm, the blue-faced demon receives the loot and conjures the weapons. The PCs see he is the king's court magician in a blue mask!

Follow-up Adventure Ideas:

- The court magician being a traitor will sure result in some tension between him and the king.
- The PCs somehow have to get out of the den full of superiorly armed goblins.

SideQuest Decks: Dungeons, Caves, & Ruins Fantasy © 2017 Inikwell Ideas



THE CAVERN PACT GAMBIT 09

Tribal Politics, Caverns

An alliance is forming between the tribes that dwell in an immense cave system. This alliance could be what tips the subterranean races into war with the surface, and must be prevented.

Getting the PCs Involved:

- After a number of expeditions in the area, one of the tribes invites the party along, intending to prosper from whatever trouble they cause.
- The tribal gathering has gained the attention of the rulers on the surface, who decide to send a small group to observe.

Encounters:

- Bullying brutes decide to pick on the surface folk.
- Faced with distrust, the party must earn the respect of the subterranean folk through a traditional ordeal.
- Masked strangers are observed entering the encampment of one of the anti-alliance clans.
- Given where they were at the time of the incident, the group are given the chance to blame another tribe for the attempted assassination.
- Planted suspicions cause the gathering to descend into violence.

Follow-up Adventure Ideas:

- The escaping party are confronted by those they humiliated in the course of events.
- With the alliance in ruins, its hidden architect moves onto a new scheme.

SideQuest Decks: Dungeons, Caves, & Ruins Fantasy © 2017 Inkwell Ideas

CALLED FORTH 08

Summoning, Politics

The PCs enter a stronghold where a demon summoning is in progress to attack a neighboring kingdom. They need to get in and stop the ritual.

Getting the PCs Involved:

- The PCs are employed by the opposing kingdom to investigate what their enemies are doing.
- By chance, the PCs enter the "deserted" stronghold.

Encounters:

- The stronghold appears empty. No lights are burning inside and no one is seen. Suddenly, a scream for help echoes through the hallways.
- The PCs hear distant chanting, followed by reality distortions and manifestations of minor demons.
- Approaching the inner core, guards patrol the corridors, wearing black armor and appearing invisible to the minor demons patrolling with them.
- In a chamber, books on summoning a powerful demon, as well as details on how to protect yourself from it with magical armor, lay out in the open.
- Caged prisoners scream for help, waiting to be sacrificed. The stronghold's masters only choose those sentenced to death for human sacrifice.
- In a huge chamber, a dozen people chant in ritual around a very large pentagram.

Follow-up Adventure Ideas:

- These people will find other ways to call infernal help.
- Minor demons have escaped, causing mayhem.

SideQuest Decks: Dungeons, Caves, & Ruins Fantasy © 2017 Inkwell Ideas

MONEY FOR LIFE 11

Ransom, Caves, Traps

To pay ransom for a prince, the PCs escort a huge amount of money through a dangerous underground passage. But they are not the only ones that know about the traveling treasure...

Getting the PCs Involved:

- The King sends the PCs to deliver the ransom.
- At the entrance of the passage, one of the guards asks the PCs if they want to help for a reward.

Encounters:

- A wild bear living in the cave attacks the intruders.
- A few steps ahead, a covered pit is set up as a trap for the PCs. It is pretty hard to get a person or even a heavy gold chest out.
- A hidden magician conjures illusionary flames to scare the PCs from the chest and empties it.
- A PC notices additional steps. A group of bandits is following them, trying to stay in hiding.
- Right at the passage's exit, they are ambushed by sellswords. The kidnapper sent them to get the money without losing his leverage.
- A treasure guard appears unfamiliar. She is an impostor stealing from the chest when unobserved.

Follow-up Adventure Ideas:

- The kidnapper will not release the prince, even after getting the money.
- The prince wasn't kidnapped, but fled to this guy to be safe from his terrible family.

SideQuest Decks: Dungeons, Caves, & Ruins Fantasy © 2017 Inkwell Ideas

SHOULD STAY FORGOTTEN 10

Lost City, Undead

A city was cursed and submerged millenia ago. Its haunted residents have finally drained the city via an underground cave.

Getting the PCs Involved:

- The party is crossing some deadlands and spots a city within a very large dry lake bed.
- The PCs are contacted by the local officials after travelers have reported seeing an unknown city.

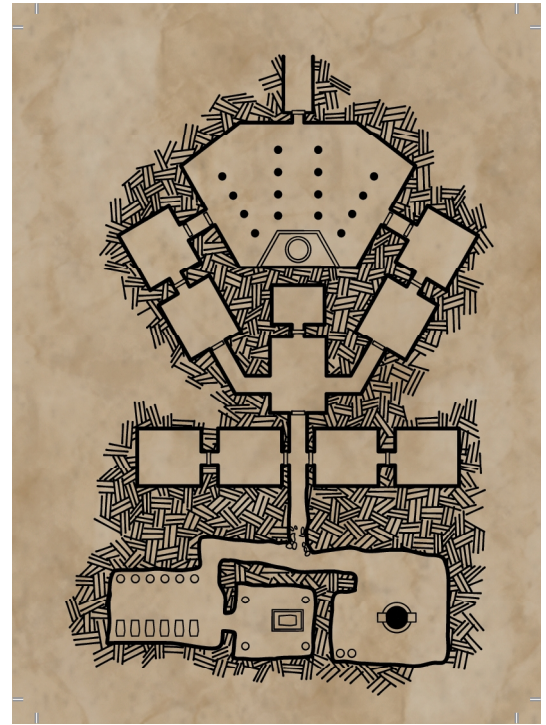
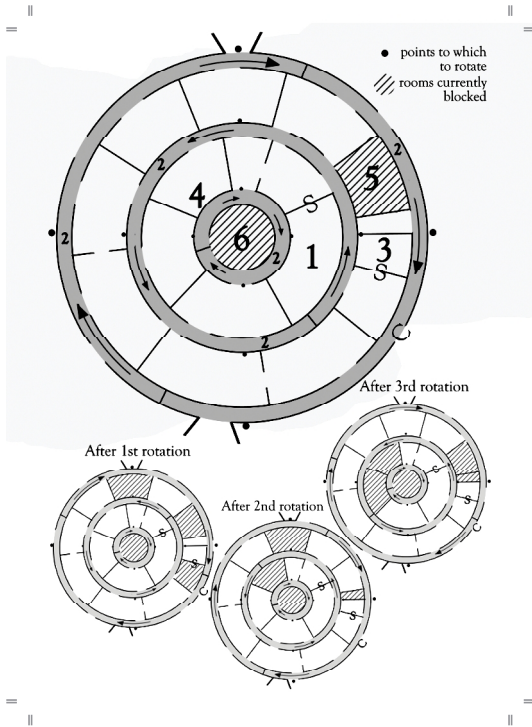
Encounters:

- PCs notice evidence of underwater vegetation (now drying out).
- They also see small and medium size aquatic creatures dying.
- Signs eventually betray the name of the city. Legends say the city was submerged by a natural disaster or cursed by the gods centuries ago.
- Undead attack the PCs again and again.
- The PCs find many ancient artifacts, but most are water-damaged.
- The PCs may stumble across a large crevasse. They see water far below.
- An intelligent undead may explain what happened and negotiate.

Follow-up Adventure Ideas:

- The party decides to come back with a larger force.
- The party slowly clears the city of undead bit by bit.

SideQuest Decks: Dungeons, Caves, & Ruins Fantasy © 2017 Inkwell Ideas



WHAT WASN'T SOUGHT

13

Mines/Fortress, Undead

A dwarven mine is now controlled by an evil/unholy force. The dwarves cut into ancient tunnels...

Getting the PCs Involved:

- The PCs have a relative who was a member of the dwarven clan in charge of the mines.
- The party is sought out for their "expertise" and told they can keep anything they can reasonably carry if they overcome the evil in the mine.

Encounters:

- The messenger who contacted the PCs explains a couple dwarves escaped. He knows some evil spirit was released. It then overcame some of the miners and conscripted them into its army.
- The party may ask him for a partial map of the area. They may be able to ask sages or find info in a great library on what evil may have been imprisoned there.
- Outer chambers of the mines are barren & quiet.
- Every dwarf left behind is now an undead warrior that patrols the rest of the mines.
- Has the spirit empowered undead commanders?
- The entity itself remains in its divinely locked chamber. It is still physically confined, but its mental domination allows it to control others. Maybe the PCs are just what it needs...

Follow-up Adventure Ideas:

- The dwarven bodies must be put to rest.
- If the evil entity wasn't killed, it must be re-confined.

SideQuest Decks: Dungeons, Caves, & Ruins Fantasy © 2017 Inkwell Ideas

AND ROUND AND ROUND IT GOES

12

After entering ancient Dwarven ruins, the whole dungeon turns, obscuring the entrance. The PCs must find their way through a dungeon that revolves.

Getting the PCs Involved:

- They are hired or need to get an artifact in the ruins.

Encounters:

Every few minutes, each corridor turns one dot in the arrow direction, creating or obstructing paths. The inner corridor won't turn (see 4).

1. Hidden weapon storage with fine Dwarven weapons. Many are damaged though, as a rust being lives here, attacking any iron-bearing intruder.
2. Clockwork-powered automata patrol, attacking on sight. They meet to wind each other every 30 minutes.
3. A hidden lab with many potions. Drinking them might have any kind of effect dramatically appropriate.
4. A hole in the wall reveals cogs jammed by Dwarven bones. Unjamming will allow the inner corridor to turn.
5. Control room with levers to turn the corridors. The mechanism is wound every 30 minutes by an automaton guard.
6. The treasure chamber with a cursed artifact, raising Dwarven skeletons to prevent theft.

Follow-up Adventure Ideas:

- The artifact keeps sending undead after every thief.
- A descendant of the dwarves wants the PCs to take him inside again.

SideQuest Decks: Dungeons, Caves, & Ruins Fantasy © 2017 Inkwell Ideas

DRAGON HUNT

15

Caves, Monsters, Eggs

Many years ago the town council decided that if the dragon of the nearby cave was not seen for 10 years, they would send a group of explorers. That day is today.

Getting the PCs Involved:

- The PCs were children of the town and have dreamed of being selected for exactly this mission.
- News of this quest has had time to spread throughout the land. The PCs are one of many groups to apply.

Encounters:

- There are signs of use by other creatures.
- A roper, piercer or similar creature awaits passers-by in an outer chamber.
- An otyugh, xorn or similar creature has taken up residence in another area.
- Another creature (thoqqua, purple worm, or similar) has created new tunnels that cross-cut the original caverns.
- There are some dragon bones near where the two sets of caves intersect.
- A deep chamber contains undisturbed dragon eggs.

Follow-up Adventure Ideas:

- If disturbed and taken into the light, does the warmth hatch the eggs? If so, are the PCs prepared?
- If the PCs don't take the incentive to scout the second cave complex, that needs to be done.

SideQuest Decks: Dungeons, Caves, & Ruins Fantasy © 2017 Inkwell Ideas

IN THE DARK, A CRY

14

Caves, Misdirection, Trap, Hunt

The PCs find a village whose inhabitants tell them a child is lost in the nearby cave and beseech them to help. The villagers are in league with a shapeshifter, sending victims into the caves.

Getting the PCs Involved:

- The villagers ask the PCs, claiming that a child is lost.
- The PCs hear a child's cries coming from the caves.

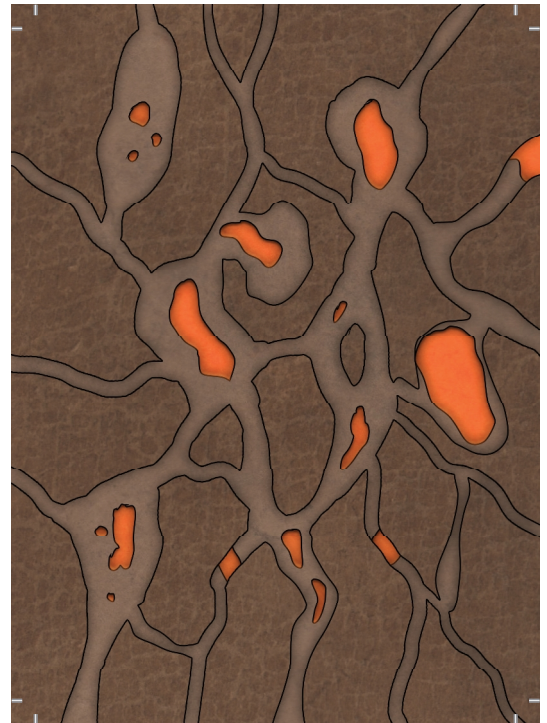
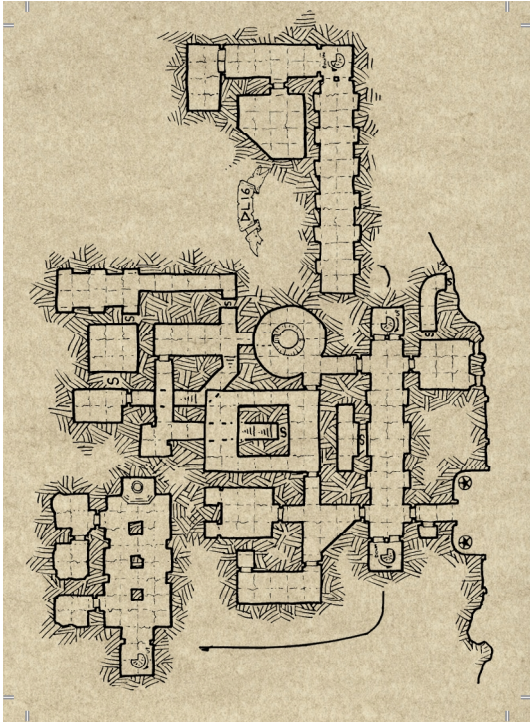
Encounters:

- At the entrance they hear a child's cries and bestial roars from below. The villagers press them to enter!
- Deeper in the caves they start finding humanoid bones. All of them show signs of having been attacked by something large.
- They see the child in the distance however as they follow the shapeshifter causes a rockslide to split them up and then attacks. It escapes into the darkness once it has weakened them.
- They find the child surrounded by the bodies of various travelers. The child goes with them, but keeps disappearing whenever the shapeshifter attacks!
- They reach the exit only to find it blocked by the villagers who refuse to open the way if the child is with them. Its hiding place revealed, the shapeshifter tries to finish the job!

Follow-up Adventure Ideas:

- Does the shapeshifter have a mate?
- Were the villagers actually coerced, or willing?

SideQuest Decks: Dungeons, Caves, & Ruins Fantasy © 2017 Inkwell Ideas



STATUESQUE

17

Hunt, Frontier

A series of nearby caves or a small forgotten dungeon is the home of a creature (or creatures) that can turn others to stone.

Getting the PCs Involved:

- In a desolate area, the PCs see a cave or dungeon entrance in the distance. Closer examination reveals remarkable statues out front.
- A trader brings a statue to town and hires the PCs to bring the rest.
- Villagers implore the PCs to help look for a runaway child. The child was dared to go in a direction all are told to avoid.

Encounters:

- When examined, most statues have a look of horror on their faces.
- The PCs find one statue holding a shattered mirror.
- One room has giant poisonous snakes. If the main resident is a medusa, these are her pets.
- The creature uses surprise to attempt to petrify the PCs. It often waits until the PCs are already under attack.

Follow-up Adventure Ideas:

- The runaway child will be found as a statue in one of the later rooms. Magic or perhaps the creature's blood can restore him to normal.
- The nearby village is thrilled to have the threat addressed.

SideQuest Decks: Dungeons, Caves, & Ruins Fantasy © 2017 Inkwell Ideas

LOST FORGE

16

Treasure hunt, Melancholy, Revelation

The forge was buried by an eruption with few Dwarves escaping. Now an earthquake has revealed the entrance, and one of the descendants wants to enter. Once inside they find the disaster was civil war.

Getting the PCs Involved:

- The PCs are hired by one of the survivor's relatives to investigate.
- If one of the players is a dwarf, they are related.

Encounters:

- The forge was buried, but the lava has cooled. The PCs must climb the slick surface to enter.
- Inside the entrance they find some corpses of Dwarves who were trapped by the lava, one has scrawled "Why?" on the wall.
- They find a jeweler's forge covered in a slick of silver, from which jut charred bones. The Crucible was obviously sabotaged as it has a hole smashed in its side by an axe.
- Near a destroyed gate there are the corpses of dwarves who obviously died fighting each other. Cooled lava has spewed from the gate.
- In the depths, there are signs of a battle amid a sea of cooled lava. One body looks like the King, who was killed as he opened the lava gates.

Follow-up Adventure Ideas:

- Why did the King seek to destroy the forge?
- The treasure is lava-covered—what else is covered?

SideQuest Decks: Dungeons, Caves, & Ruins Fantasy © 2017 Inkwell Ideas

TO FORGE A LEGEND

19

Caves, Extraplanar, Fire Creatures

The caverns nearby have long been known as a place connected to the elemental plane of fire. Now a smith needs to use these fires to forge a magical blade.

Getting the PCs Involved:

- The smith offers to make the party an item if they protect him while he works.
- The person funding the blade sends them to help.

Encounters:

- The caverns are filled with volcanic vents, and they must pick their way between them avoiding eruptions.
- In a cavern the smith stops to investigate some ore and is attacked by a pair of salamanders who have made their home here.
- They find a very simple forge belonging to a pair of azer. While the forge is no use to the smith, the azer may have information to trade.
- As they close on the forge, fire elementals patrol a cavern filled with rock pillars. Sneaking would be advisable, but the area also has many volcanic vents.
- The Elemental Forge is found, and the smith begins work. He must be protected from various denizens of the Elemental Plane as he works.

Follow-up Adventure Ideas:

- The smith has heard of other places of elemental power which may infuse items with power.
- Using the fires for such a mundane use has angered the planes denizens.

SideQuest Decks: Dungeons, Caves, & Ruins Fantasy © 2017 Inkwell Ideas

DEATH'S SEPULCHER

18

Ruins, Undead, Combat

Undead have begun to pour forth from a ruin nearby. Little does anyone know the undead are only a symptom of a vampire slowly returning to life.

Getting the PCs Involved:

- The PCs are attacked by undead, and track them.
- The local villagers tell them stories of undead wearing ancient jewelry being seen in the area.

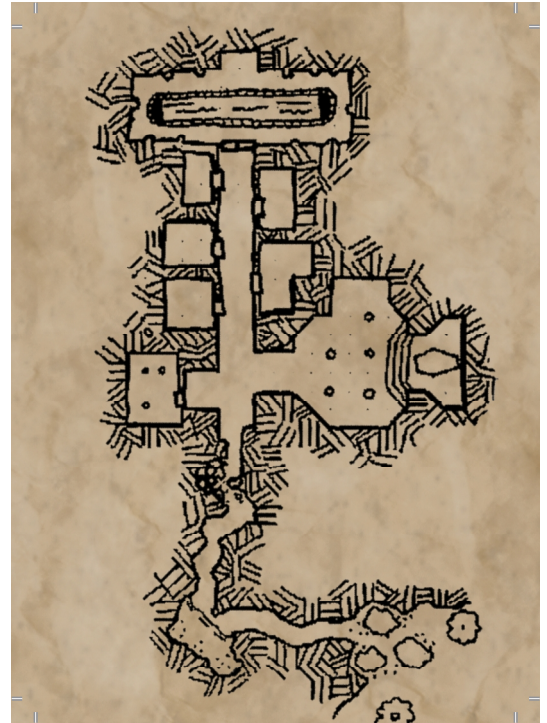
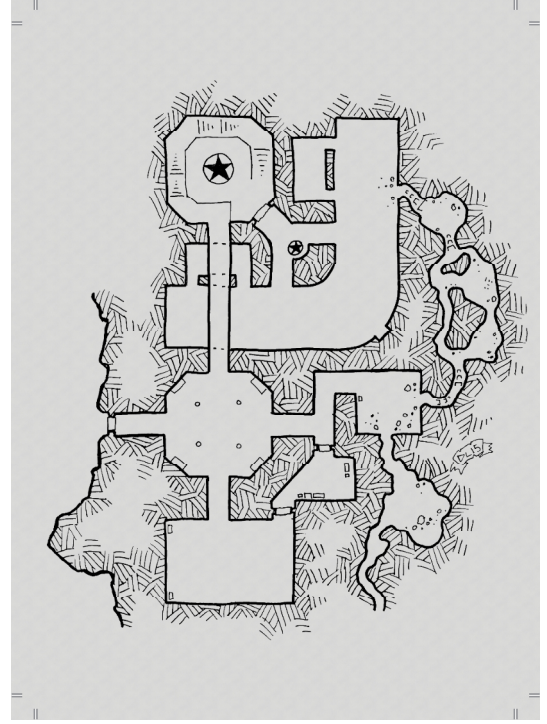
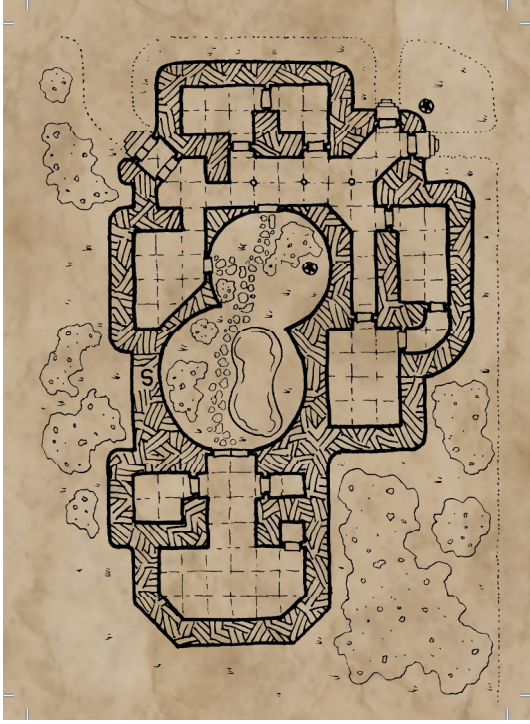
Encounters:

- The party find the ruin, but as they do zombies in ancient jewelry lurch out on the attack.
- Inside the ruin the zombies are working to repair the ruin and collecting and pouring blood into bowls which drain to somewhere below. They defend the blood!
- A number of captives are found in a cage, and begin to call for help. If they cannot be silenced zombies and thralls will come to investigate.
- A number of thralls to the vampire lay an ambush in a crypt, hiding in coffins and under dirt to catch the players by surprise.
- The Players reach a huge cavern, with the blood from above dripping into a huge bronze bowl. As they enter the Vampire rises from the bowl, dressed in the garb of an ancient queen.

Follow-up Adventure Ideas:

- Why was the vampire trapped?
- Why did she awaken, did someone rouse her?

SideQuest Decks: Dungeons, Caves, & Ruins Fantasy © 2017 Inkwell Ideas



INTO THE BREACH

21

Escape, Ruins, Dungeon, Extraplanar

What lies beyond the gate is a mystery, but some have their suspicions. Armed with omens, speculations, and fragments of ancient lore, the explorers must venture forth into the unknown.

Getting the PCs Involved:

- Taking a sacred idol from its pedestal causes a temple complex to collapse, the gate being the only means of escape.
- Strange things have emerged from the gate. With the symptoms dealt with, it is time to deal with the cause.

Encounters:

- With little time to take in their surroundings, the travelers must retreat as the area around the gate becomes unstable.
- Natural features turn out to be ambush predators.
- Crossing the wilds, the group are stalked by native humanoids.
- A stationary storm shields the entrance to a huge hall. The party must press through or find another.
- In the hall, a magical despot directs an immense construct in setting up the gate. They pettily refuse to let any other near their prize.

Follow-up Adventure Ideas:

- Having escaped through the gate, the adventurers must work out where they have escaped.

SideQuest Decks: Dungeons, Caves, & Ruins Fantasy © 2017 Inkwell Ideas

MISSING INGREDIENT

20

Search, Wilderness

When the alchemist left on urgent business, it was expected that she would return. She hasn't, and she's the only one who knew the formula for an unusual potion. Now, that potion is needed.

Getting the PCs Involved:

- The PCs are the ones who need the potion, and will have to venture into the alchemist's laboratory to retrieve the formula.
- Someone important needs the potion, and has instructed the party to get it at any cost.

Encounters:

- The laboratory is situated deep in a swamp.
- A giant cobra lurks in the trees, waiting for prey.
- The door is guarded by a pair of semi-living constructs.
- Inside, common pests have consumed alchemical reagents and have grown to colossal sizes or have extra abilities.
- A fight against a giant wasp breaks a jar containing a quiescent elemental.

Follow-up Adventure Ideas:

- Now that the formula is retrieved, the next step is to brew it.
- What exactly did happen to the alchemist, anyway?

SideQuest Decks: Dungeons, Caves, & Ruins Fantasy © 2017 Inkwell Ideas

FORGOTTEN RUNES

23

Investigation, Remote Temple

In a temple lost to the ages lies a great secret, the true name of an entity from another plane. That entity has recently returned to the world.

Getting the PCs Involved:

- The entity is a recurring foe, the carving's existence is made known to the PCs by one of their allies.
- The entity is the subtle foe of a secretive order. They don't have the expertise required to explore the temple, so they contact the PCs.

Encounters:

- The library holds a map showing the location of the temple. Unfortunately, the mortal agents of the entity are seeking to destroy it.
- The paths to the temple are the hunting ground of a group of carnivorous plants.
- Sensitive to threats to its name, the entity sends servitors to ambush the PCs before they enter the temple.
- Within the temple, guardian creatures attempt to expel intruders.
- The name itself is kept from casual view by a magical puzzle.

Follow-up Adventure Ideas:

- The name can be used to control or empower the entity instead, others will seek to learn it.
- The PCs must face down the entity in a final confrontation and banish it from the world.

SideQuest Decks: Dungeons, Caves, & Ruins Fantasy © 2017 Inkwell Ideas

MYTHING PERSON

22

Spirit, Goblins/Orcs/etc., Sorcery

The body of a great warrior-king is missing. The spirit calls for help while a shaman uses the body for a ritual to make the tribe's warriors more powerful.

Getting the PCs Involved:

- The PCs have a reputation. The king's spirit reaches out to them and directs them.
- The PCs are contacted by the town guard. They investigate the scene, and then see the king's spirit.

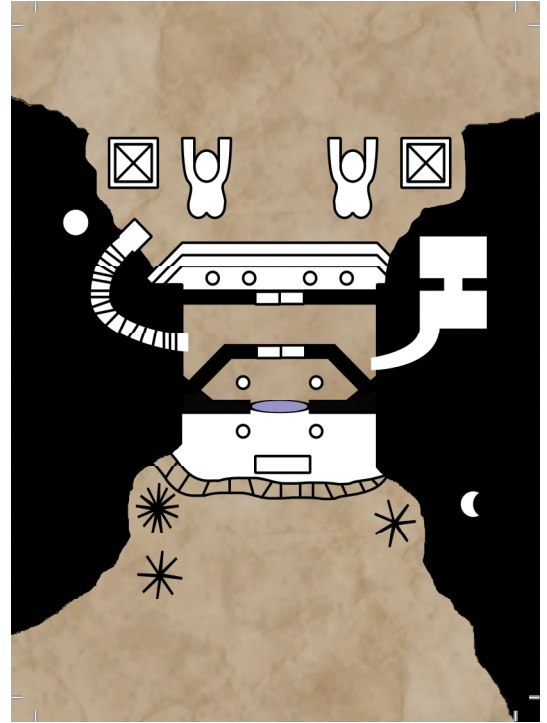
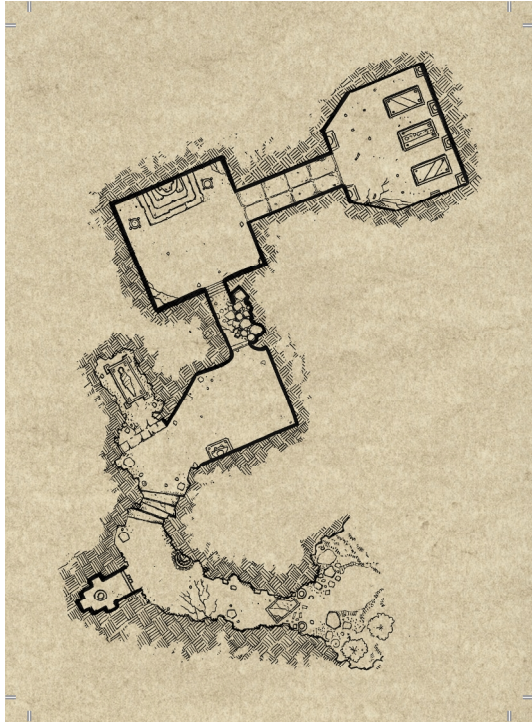
Encounters:

- The spirit leads the PCs to the tribe's caves.
- The spirit can't speak, but uses gestures to indicate where guards hide. The gestures may confuse the party at first.
- Not all the guards can be avoided.
- The ritual has many guards and junior shamans attending. Fortunately the main shaman's power is weak from the ritual. Some defenders do have limited special powers from the half-complete ritual.

Follow-up Adventure Ideas:

- A new funeral is held for the king, but a few nobles are absent... is a coup planned?

SideQuest Decks: Dungeons, Caves, & Ruins Fantasy © 2017 Inkwell Ideas



SHADOWS, BURNING BRIGHT 25

Sacrifice, Cult

A cult leader plans a suicide/sacrifice of his followers to bring forth a demon, oni, etc.

Getting the PCs Involved:

- A relative of the PCs has another relative in the cult who was making suspicious "final" arrangements...
- The cult leader is an old foe of the party and they are already investigating him.

Encounters:

- The PCs may visit the temple under friendly auspices.
- Guards would defend the temple after hours or private areas at any time. Some guards may be wizards or clerics.
- The temple uses shadow creatures to monitor visitors (before or after hours). Perhaps the party notices.
- Minor outsiders (such as shadows or elementals related to the god's domains) guard the inner sanctums.
- The cult leader will sacrifice followers, then himself to bring the demon/creature to life. The more sacrificed, the stronger it is. Perhaps even followers slain by the party fuel the creature.

Follow-up Adventure Ideas:

- The surviving followers will need to be de-brainwashed.
- Where did all the shadow creatures go?

SideQuest Decks: Dungeons, Caves, & Ruins Fantasy © 2017 Inikwell Ideas

THE LOST LOVES 24

Ghost Story, Treasure Hunt

A previous adventuring party came to an unpleasant end long ago. Now their shades wish to be released from their bondage to the place where they died.

Getting the PCs Involved:

- They find a skeleton trapped in a rock fall. The spirit appears and begs them to return his ring to his love.
- They find a small cache of jewelry in a dusty corner. As they reach for it words appear asking for help.

Encounters:

- The PCs see the ghosts of the adventuring party ahead. They seem to be trying to decide whether to pull a lever which is broken but disables a trap ahead.
- The ghosts reappear, one badly injured against the wall, although there is no corpse. There is no sound but he is warning them of something.
- The ghosts appear in a cavern ahead, and are ambushed. There are monsters hiding in crevices waiting to ambush the players.
- The PCs find another body which has been looted. The ghost definitely had a magical sword which may be nearby.
- They find the body of the other adventurer, also with a ring. If the players return the ring both ghosts appear and bless them before fading.

Follow-up Adventure Ideas:

- Did someone survive the original group?
- Why are these caves so spiritually active?

SideQuest Decks: Dungeons, Caves, & Ruins Fantasy © 2017 Inikwell Ideas

OLD SUMMONER'S LAIR 27

Wizard, Hideout

Getting the PCs Involved:

- The summoner has been tried in absentia and tracked to a location near this town. The judge's emissary has posted a reward for the summoner's execution.
- The PCs have been slighted by the summoner and have tracked him down.

Encounters:

- The creek is the home of a summoned water creature who will protect the summoner's lair.
- The pillars in the main entrance room are actually minor earth elementals, grudgingly tasked with guarding the complex.
- The spare room may have a visiting wizard or elemental that is friendly...to the summoner.
- The summoning circle enslaved the summoner's latest victim who will plead for freedom.
- A pet mimic (or other stealthy creature) hides in the storeroom (near the back entrance).

Follow-up Adventure Ideas:

- If possible, the summoner magically or physically flees using the secret door to the stairs and out the office exit.
- The PCs may discover a powerful summoning item.

SideQuest Decks: Dungeons, Caves, & Ruins Fantasy © 2017 Inikwell Ideas

TOO HEAVY A PRICE 26

Fiend, Wizard, Sacrifice

What happens when a wizard can't follow through on a deal with a powerful fiend?

Getting the PCs Involved:

- The NPCs are with the wizard when one of his spells goes awry and injures an ally.
- The wizard sends an envoy to hire the PCs.

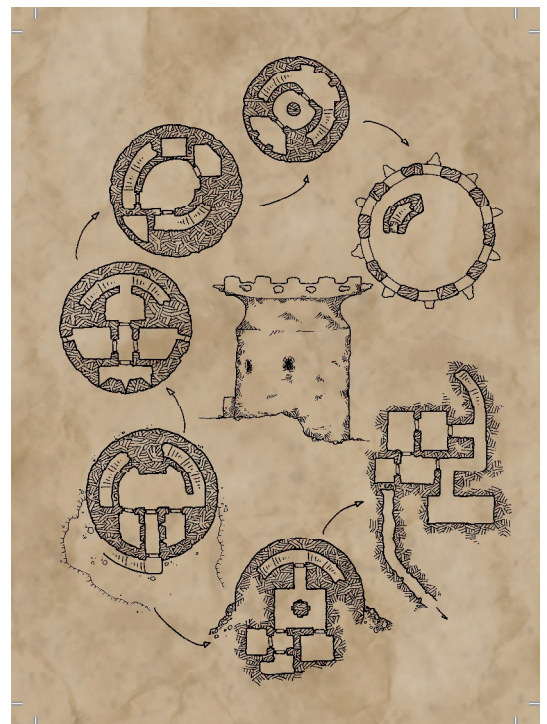
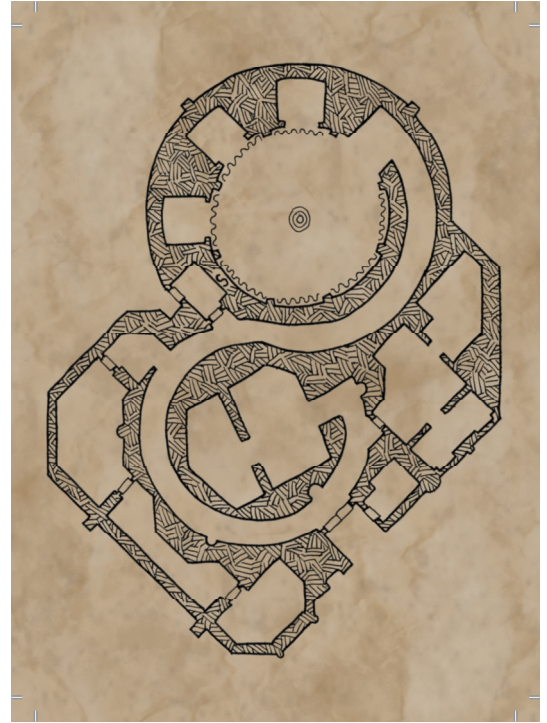
Encounters:

- The wizard admits his powers are limited because it relies on the support of a fiend he has crossed by not sacrificing his niece.
- The niece is locked in a room in the wizard's mansion. Should she be let go?
- The fiend sends creatures to attack the wizard. Fortunately, the wizard has the PCs to help guard him, right?
- The next time someone sees the niece, she is possessed by the fiend.
- If able, the wizard offers himself for his niece. Of course the fiend takes control, attacks the niece (as the wizard) to relish in the wizard's misery and uses the wizard's power and its own to attack the wizard's allies.

Follow-up Adventure Ideas:

- The party saves the wizard from a horrible fate.
- Or, the PCs gain a long-term nemesis when the wizard becomes even more powerful under sway of the fiend.

SideQuest Decks: Dungeons, Caves, & Ruins Fantasy © 2017 Inikwell Ideas



DRAGONS DON'T MAKE GOOD PETS 29

Cult, Dragons

A foreign dragon cult has grown over the past few years. Its pet has been active.

Getting the PCs Involved:

- The characters are hired by the local officials to find out what has happened to missing livestock.
- A PC's farmer-friend asks for help finding missing livestock.

Encounters:

- The farm's fences are secure.
- A shadow may be seen overhead, especially if the PCs are out at night.
- Others have spotted a shadow flying in and out of the dragon cult's temple.
- The temple gate and other common areas have normal guards and common acolytes.
- The inner chambers have more fervent members and clergy. There are even some dragon-men, whether another race or a magical mutation of devout followers.
- A large tower room contains the dragon, the true leader of the cult.

Follow-up Adventure Ideas:

- Will there be any repercussions if the entire cult is taken out? After all, some members were regular townspeople.
- Town leaders will push for all the temple's resources to be handed over, unless terms were negotiated.

SideQuest Decks: Dungeons, Caves, & Ruins Fantasy © 2017 Inkwell Ideas

IT'S DANGEROUS TO GO ALONE 28

Investigation, Occult

A dilettante noble, suspected of being a member of a proscribed order, apparently heads out on a foolish quest. Those who have been sent to gain his trust and report his secrets are left in an awkward position.

Getting the PCs Involved:

- The cult the noble belongs to is a recurring foe.
- The secretive order is thought to possess a mysterious crystal, but the noble is the only member the PCs have managed to find.

Encounters:

- The party's quarry slips away before they can meet.
- The noble does his best to shake off followers. If he loses them, the PCs may find the trail in better light.
- If the party is slow, they are approached by others following behind the PCs.
- Approaching a bridge, the adventurers spot a patrol of monstrous humanoids crossing.
- The monstrous humanoids have an encampment at the main entrance to an underground temple.
- Having gained entry, the group find that the temple's corridors are home to horrid verminous creatures.
- Four different outsiders, bound to protect the item, stand watch over the central dais.

Follow-up Adventure Ideas:

- Can the item be used for a good purpose?
- The noble turns out to be an infiltrator for another group which is better informed than the party.

SideQuest Decks: Dungeons, Caves, & Ruins Fantasy © 2017 Inkwell Ideas

ALWAYS BE WARY 31

Undead, Tower Assault

The PCs are crossing the plains and spot a old tower at dusk. The tower has recently been taken over by an undead lord—its guards are now undead warriors.

Getting the PCs Involved:

- There are no other defensible places to rest.
- It was held by a friendly lord who assists travelers.

Encounters:

- The PCs approach and seem to be waved at by the bowmen atop the tower. There is a small chance to notice something is not right with the guards.
- When the PCs are within medium bow range—or when they seem to notice something's up—the archers open fire. There is no cover.
- The PCs may flee and take an alternate route or perhaps wait until dusk and use stealth. However, the undead guards are still very likely to see anyway.
- When the PCs get to the tower (either by ingenuity, taking out the archers from a distance, or just running for it). They must then clear out the undead lord's guards as well as the lord himself.
- If most or all of the undead lord's guards are cut down, the undead lord will make a show of his power and convince the PCs to work for him. If they won't, he flees; if they do agree, he'll double-cross them.

Follow-up Adventure Ideas:

- The PCs may contact someone to hold the tower.
- The undead lord may become a recurring enemy.

SideQuest Decks: Dungeons, Caves, & Ruins Fantasy © 2017 Inkwell Ideas

THE HIDDEN SAGE 30

Search, Caverns

Deep within an unforgiving landscape resides a hermit known for their wisdom. This wisdom is sorely needed, however the hermit does not want to be found.

Getting the PCs Involved:

- The hermit is the only living person who has visited a place of power and knows what lies within.
- The hermit is said to know the cure to a magical disease.

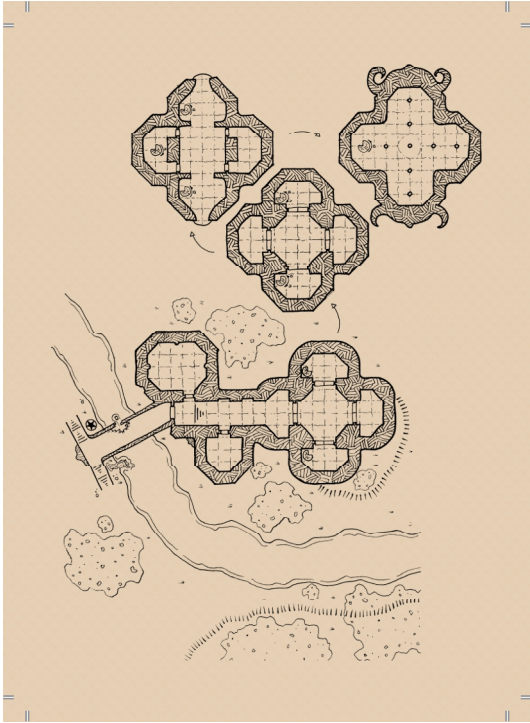
Encounters:

- Opportunistic hunters attack when the PCs are off guard.
- An ancient guardian awakens, blocking the way forward. It may let the PCs pass without battle depending on their actions and demeanor.
- Swarming creatures attempt to feast on the party. If any escape, more will return.
- The hermit makes their home where powerful magical beasts also make their lairs.

Follow-up Adventure Ideas:

- The sage speaks in riddles that refer to the hardships they faced.
- Armed with the knowledge, the PCs may continue on their quest.

SideQuest Decks: Dungeons, Caves, & Ruins Fantasy © 2017 Inkwell Ideas



ON THE TIDE COMES FIRE

33

Defense, Remote Outpost

On the night of the full moon they come, on the peak tide. Each time they arrive a little further down the coast. The monastery would be a fine prize, but when they come, they will find it defended.

Getting the PCs Involved:

- The religious order that keeps the monastery offers a reward for those that would defend the faithful.
- Upon arriving at a small village, the PCs find it in ruins. The villagers recount the tale of the moonlight raiders.

Encounters:

- The abbot asks the PCs to help train the monks to defend the monastery.
- The local terrain would be advantageous if prepared correctly.
- The PCs will have to prepare a plan for the monks to follow when the raid arrives.
- The lesser of the raiders come swarming from their boats.
- In the wake of their smaller cousins, the main raiding party advances up the hill, eliminating resistance.

Follow-up Adventure Ideas:

- To avoid the shame of being rebuffed, the raider chief prepares a final assault on the monastery.
- The raids were driven by an uncommon need for resources, a prelude to something worse.

SideQuest Decks: Dungeons, Caves, & Ruins Fantasy © 2017 Inkwell Ideas

THE POLTERGEIST

32

Investigation, Wilderness, Necromancy

A ghost haunts the party, incoherent and babbling. It needs to be put to rest, but first they must work out how to do so.

Getting the PCs Involved:

- Introduce the ghost in prior sessions by causing minor mischief and moaning.
- The ghost makes itself known by causing an embarrassing—and public—incident to one PC.

Encounters:

- Barely comprehensible, the ghost leads the party to an abandoned house. It is warded against undead. Inside, behind a number of traps there are the ghost's (while living) notes.
- In life, the ghost was against the evil cleric. The notes describe a way to disrupt the evil cleric's power.
- A tower in the wilderness is the cleric's base. As they approach, restless shades attempt to drain the life from them.
- Inside the tower, undead creatures go about some occult work, and react violently when disturbed.
- The cleric behind the undead unleashes his strongest creations in a final showdown.

Follow-up Adventure Ideas:

- Taking revenge against the evil cleric frees the ghost.
- Looking through the cleric's possessions reveals a familiar sigil.

SideQuest Decks: Dungeons, Caves, & Ruins Fantasy © 2017 Inkwell Ideas

CAVES OF MADNESS

35

Wizard, Caverns

A wizard hermit has a device/ingredient the PCs need. He went mad many years ago and created caverns that match his state of mind.

Getting the PCs Involved:

- The mad wizard is rumored to have a device or ingredient the PCs need.
- A friend of the PCs has been lost in the caves.

Encounters:

- In the caverns, a primitive drum beats constantly. No one can sleep well.
- The caverns change. Each area rotates almost imperceptibly. Areas can tip to move up or down a level. If PCs are near an edge corridor while rotating, they can notice a moving wall. However, caverns try not to rotate if guests are near an edge corridor.
- In some areas, hallucinogenic plants emit mind-altering spores. Cavern residents know about this and wait for wanderers to be affected.
- Food quickly goes bad. Eating anything that has been in the caverns for a day may affect the mind.
- The party meet undead that resemble friends, but they zombie before the PCs' eyes and steal each others' limbs, take a bite of each other, etc.

Follow-up Adventure Ideas:

- Deep in the caves, the PCs meet the hermit and get what they want and perhaps cure him or slay him.
- How do they get out?

SideQuest Decks: Dungeons, Caves, & Ruins Fantasy © 2017 Inkwell Ideas

REVERSE TREASURE HUNT

34

Fiends, Artifacts, Deception

A great demon or outsider has been destroyed, but its slayers perished in the battle as well. The remains could not be destroyed, so the lord decided to separate the crystallized body parts. Someone must deliver the artifacts across the land.

Getting the PCs Involved:

- Based on reputation, the lord contacts the party.
- PCs encounter a minor villain stealing one of the artifacts. Once defeated, the royal guard seeks help.

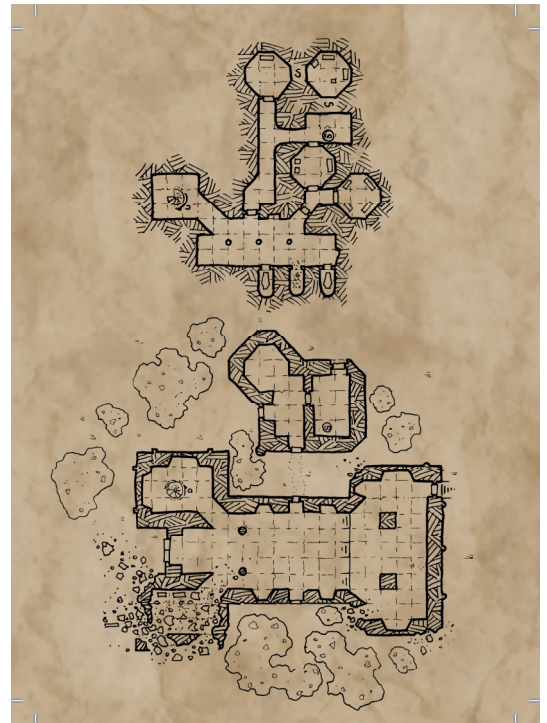
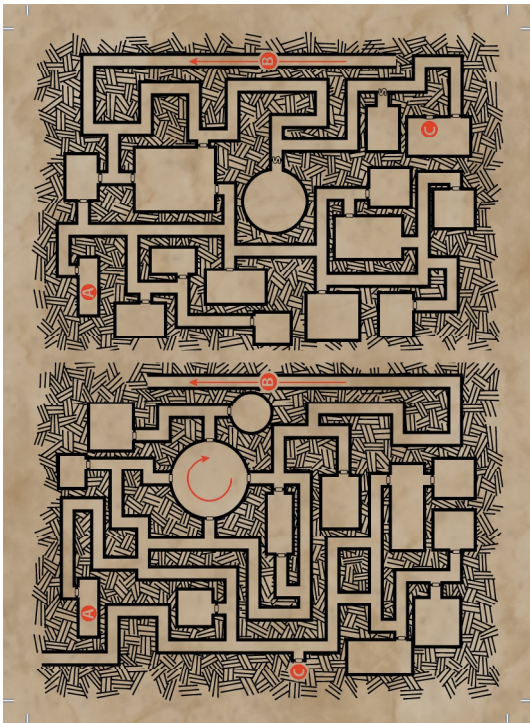
Encounters:

- While the artifacts are still together (on the lord's castle grounds), evil forces make their best attempt to get them back. The castle guard, royal advisers, etc. help the PCs in the fight.
- PCs are entrusted to take a piece to a distant, aloof wizard—who misunderstands their intent.
- When the PCs return, they are to take the next piece to a great king...with a deceptive and evil adviser. Do the PCs realize this?
- The third piece goes to an evil priest in yet another part of the world. This priest is a rival to the destroyed villain, so the lord feels it will be safe there. The PCs are guaranteed safe passage.

Follow-up Adventure Ideas:

- If the PCs didn't recognize the evil adviser's intentions, what does he do?
- How does the destroyed entity come back?

SideQuest Decks: Dungeons, Caves, & Ruins Fantasy © 2017 Inkwell Ideas



A DAGGER'S DESTINY 37

Search, Barrow/Tomb, Prophecy

It tasted the creature's blood once before, long ago. The dagger, buried with its wielder, is prophesized to finally slay its ancient foe. A pity, then, that it lies deep within the barrow.

Getting the PCs Involved:

- The creature from ancient times has returned, and is making their lives very difficult.
- The PCs are present when the prophecy is spoken, perhaps before the creature has re-emerged.

Encounters:

- The barrow-lands are home to the predatory shades of the lost. The locals wear charms to keep them at bay.
- Ghosts pick through the PCs belongings in the night, looking for their ages old treasures.
- They must locate the right barrow from a poetic description.
- The dead rise to drag down those who would disturb them.
- Skeletal champions guard their king even in death.

Follow-up Adventure Ideas:

- The wielder of old, trapped in undeath by their inability to kill their foe, will not relinquish the weapon.
- With the dagger acquired, the creature can be slain, perhaps permanently.

SideQuest Decks: Dungeons, Caves, & Ruins Fantasy © 2017 Inikwell Ideas

THE OCEANS SHALL RULE 36

Tyrant, World's End, Aquatic

A tyrant leader of an aquatic race or a mad genius who loves the oceans wishes to expand the seas by reducing the polar icecaps & raising the oceans.

Getting the PCs Involved:

- The PCs spot an iceberg moving faster than normal.
- The party overhears a ship captain tell of strangely moving icebergs and investigate.

Encounters:

- Observation of the iceberg seems to show it is attached to an underwater ship or beast tugging it. (The ship's periscope can be seen or the creature surfaces at times.)
- The PCs may attack it or track it.
- If they defeat the beast/ship directly, they may interrogate the ship's crew or beast's handlers.
- A group of the tyrant's guards will investigate the disruption.
- Underwater predators attack the party either by themselves or with some of the tyrant's guards.
- The PCs find the tyrant's base. Can they take him out using his environment against him?

Follow-up Adventure Ideas:

- If the tyrant represented an aquatic race, what are relations with the surface world like afterward?
- Do the icecaps need restoration?

SideQuest Decks: Dungeons, Caves, & Ruins Fantasy © 2017 Inikwell Ideas

THE TRIAL 39

Legal, Puzzle, Ruins

An ancient creature sits in judgement in a crumbling court. It claims great authority, and will only allow those who pass the trials it sets to leave.

Getting the PCs Involved:

- In the course of an adventure, the PCs have trespassed in the judge's domain.
- The PCs represent a larger group that seeks to free itself from a curse the judge laid upon them.

Encounters:

- The PCs must explain why they should be allowed the chance to take the trials and go free.
- Trial of the mind: a puzzle to be solved.
- Trial of the body: a deadly obstacle course with assailants.
- Trial of the soul: a difficult moral dilemma.
- Events indicate the judge may not be as powerful as it implies.

Follow-up Adventure Ideas:

- If they complete the trials, the judge offers them a boon to set things straight once more.
- If they confront the judge and his attendants, a great battle awaits.

SideQuest Decks: Dungeons, Caves, & Ruins Fantasy © 2017 Inikwell Ideas

MINOTAUR'S MAZE 38

Labyrinth, Puzzle

A minotaur's maze is especially confusing...

Getting the PCs Involved:

- The party needs help solving a puzzle or riddle. Someone suggests asking the minotaur for help.
- The PCs are dared to prove their worth by defeating the minotaur, who demands annual sacrifices.

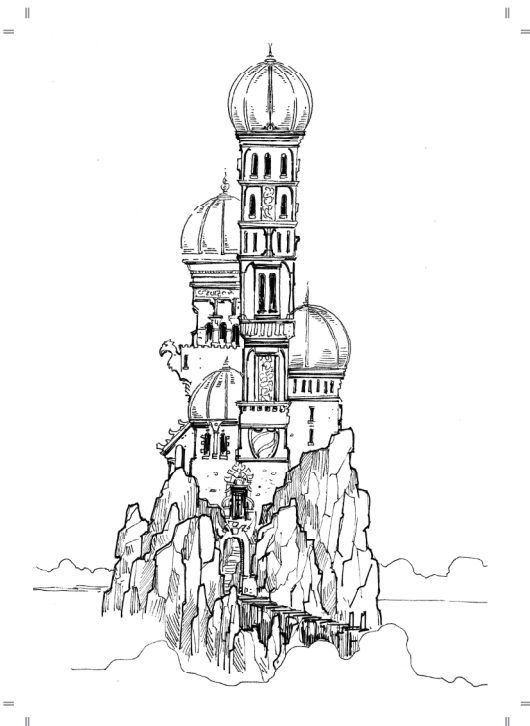
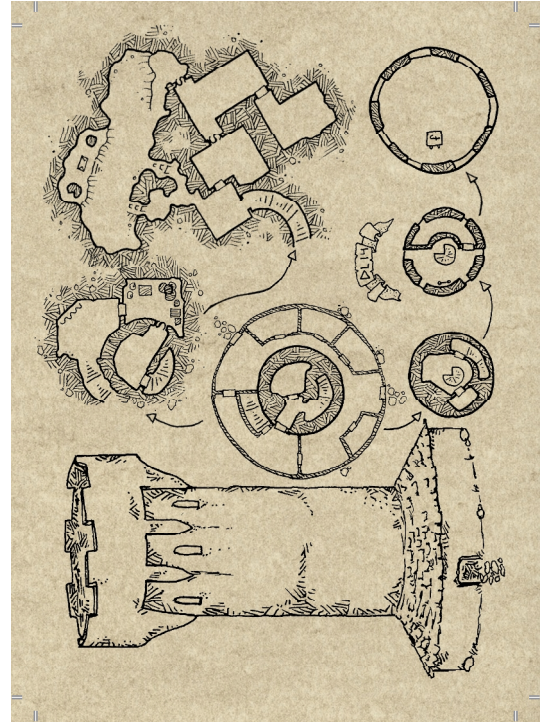
Encounters:

- The maze is scattered with the minotaur's followers who must be defeated.
- The maze is multi-level, but doesn't appear to be so. A couple of long corridors have almost imperceptible slopes between levels. Another couple of rooms are on very gradual lifts that change levels when the doors are closed.
- Marks left by the party to record their path are erased or interfered with by the minotaur's followers.
- A false door is a teleport.
- The minotaur is in his throne room within the maze. If things go badly—or the party seems very accomplished—he tries to negotiate: asking riddles, releasing the town of its sacrifices, etc., in exchange for exile.

Follow-up Adventure Ideas:

- The party is able to solve a tough riddle/puzzle.
- If it is exiled, do the PCs meet the minotaur again?

SideQuest Decks: Dungeons, Caves, & Ruins Fantasy © 2017 Inikwell Ideas



THE LATE, GREAT WIZARD

41

Ruined Keep, Necromance, Goblins

A reclusive necromancer has died, and his old keep has been taken over by his former goblin servants.

Getting the PCs Involved:

- The PCs get word of the necromancer's death, and the treasures in his keep.
- The PCs are attacked by a group of goblin bandits who all have magical trinkets, and a map of the area with the keep marked on it.

Encounters:

- A gargoyle at the front gate is bound to keep intruders out, but would like the PCs to find a way for it to slaughter these dumb goblins.
- The goblins accidentally released a creature. Now it is stalking the keep's lower levels trying to escape.
- An apprentice has locked himself in a set of old labs, and is working on unleashing a plague vs. goblins.
- A goblin shaman has figured out how to command the necromancer's ghouls, and is feeding them weaker goblins to increase their numbers and power.
- The goblin 'lord' is wearing the necromancer's old robes, and is protected by dark powers that leech the life from anyone he injures.

Follow-up Adventure Ideas:

- The souls of the goblins killed in the keep return as a gang of vicious ghosts.
- The keep is claimed by the necromancer's sister, an equally powerful dark wizard.

SideQuest Decks: Dungeons, Caves, & Ruins Fantasy © 2017 Inkwell Ideas

OOZE MINING

40

Town, Caverns, Oozes, Humanoids

A massive underground ooze is breeding, sending out tunneling spawn that will collapse the local hills if it isn't found and killed.

Getting the PCs Involved:

- The PCs camp is attacked by a spawn-ooze that erupts from the ground, leaving a tunnel behind.
- A town hires the PCs to discover the source of strange earthquakes.

Encounters:

- Ooze-spawn carve a maze of branching tunnels.
- Giant ants and slugs invade the outer tunnels, feeding on the ooze-spawn (or anything they cross).
- An ooze-spawn breaks through into a lava flow, and magma starts to flow through a section of tunnels.
- Underground humanoids from the lower caverns sneak up to steal gemstones revealed by the spawn. They are jumpy and violent.
- A massive earthquake collapses several tunnels, creating deep pits and rendering maps inaccurate, and dropping rocks on the PCs.
- 'Antibody' slimes slink along the inner tunnels, launching acid spit at intruders.
- The great ooze's heart has tendrils that lash at any movement and attract more antibody slimes.

Follow-up Adventure Ideas:

- One of the tunnels burrowed into a long-lost city. What treasures and dangers lie within?

SideQuest Decks: Dungeons, Caves, & Ruins Fantasy © 2017 Inkwell Ideas

ANT COLONY

43

Caves, Giant Ants, Earthquake

An earthquake opens a tear to a deep tunnel network full of giant ants. The ants surface and begin destroying all the crops of the nearby town's farms.

Getting the PCs Involved:

- While traveling, the PCs are suddenly attacked by wolf-sized ants!
- A village hires the PCs to remove giant ants from the nearby wilderness

Encounters:

- An earthquake causes everyone within miles to fall or stumble about for a few minutes before subsiding.
- The PCs find wolf sized ants cutting corn stalks in a nearby field and dragging the shorn plants into hilly wilderness... more show up every 6 hours until there is a constant path of ants
- If the PCs attack, the harvesting ants flee, but within 6 hours horse size enforcers defend the workers.
- Following the worker ants into the wilderness leads to an earthquake-torn hill defended by more horse sized ants and hundreds of giant worker ants.
- Fighting into the hive will eventually lead to a house sized queen ant to kill, causing all the ants to scatter

Follow-up Adventure Ideas:

- Hoards of wolf and horse sized ants suddenly have no commands. They scatter across the countryside.
- Orc shamans begin training captured ants to attack local human communities

SideQuest Decks: Dungeons, Caves, & Ruins Fantasy © 2017 Inkwell Ideas

UNEARTHED IN THE SAND

42

Ruins, Desert, Tower

After a sandstorm, a rusted brass tower is found in the desert. Ash-monsters commanded by an efreeti attack caravans on a nearby trade route.

Getting the PCs Involved:

- The PCs get lost in a sandstorm. Afterward, they find the uncovered tower.
- After a sandstorm, desert trade caravans have been attacked by ash monsters in the heat of the day

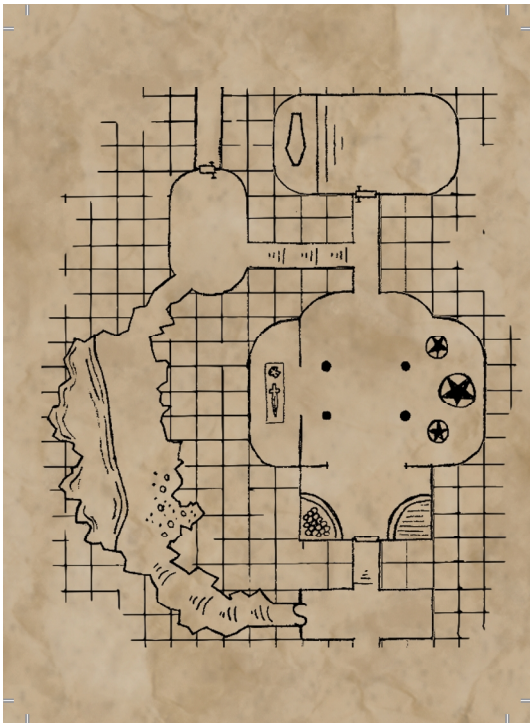
Encounters:

- While on a road between desert towns, the PCs are attacked by ash creatures that burn metal and bite fire. A efreeti with a burning sword commands them.
- When the PCs defeat the efreeti and ash creatures, they turn to smoke and return to the brass tower.
- At the tower, large guardian ash creatures block the PCs from entering. Fire braziers heal the guardians, ash creatures and efreeti inside.
- Destroying the braziers prevent the ash creatures from returning, and prevents the efreeti from healing.
- When hurt, the efreeti retreats up the tower to his lamp. If killed, he turns to smoke and enters the lamp to heal... emerging at dawn refreshed.
- If the PCs remove the lamp from it's place in the tower, the brass tower will collapse under the PCs.

Follow-up Adventure Ideas:

- The PCs defeating the efreeti is a signal to the immortals to challenge the PCs...

SideQuest Decks: Dungeons, Caves, & Ruins Fantasy © 2017 Inkwell Ideas



A BARGAIN, FORGOTTEN

45

Intrigue, Occult, Emmisaries

Great pacts, forged in antiquity, are the stuff of legend. But when the time comes for one of them to be fulfilled, can the immortal power be convinced to uphold their end of the bargain?

Getting the PCs Involved:

- The pact was forged to defend a nation (the powerful PCs represent) against an ancient foe, and now that foe has arisen once more.
- The group have dealt with the entity, or its agents, in the past and are obvious choices to petition it for aid.

Encounters:

- The entity lives in a grand palace in another realm. The magic at the characters' disposal will get them most—but not all—of the way there.
- Dismissive of the pact after so long, the entity ejects the party from his halls.
- A servant, sympathetic to the party's plight, tells them of another way to enter the palace.
- Having gained entry, the PCs must avoid the other servants as they make their way to the throne room.
- The entity bids his greatest champion to challenge the PCs, the battle taking place before the throne.

Follow-up Adventure Ideas:

- Impressed, the entity assigns the party an honor guard and bids them return home with their prize.
- The party return triumphant, only to find their enemies have moved in their absence.

SideQuest Decks: Dungeons, Caves, & Ruins Fantasy © 2017 Inkwell Ideas

NO PLACE LIKE HOARD

44

Hunt, Wilderness, Dragon's Lair

It isn't every day a dragon has a problem it needs people to solve, but it does happen. The dragon in question has returned from a sojourn to find that squatters in its lair. Whilst it could possibly clear it out itself that's not something it fancies having to do right before bed, thank you very much.

Getting the PCs Involved:

- The dragon offers to provide something the party wants in return for a little service.
- The dragon anonymously posts a request in a tavern the PCs frequent.

Encounters:

- Showing considerable foresight, the way up to the lair is watched.
- There are groups of squatters still exploring near the entrance to the lair.
- Some of the dragon's treasure defences have been reconfigured by the squatters.
- Squatters wallow in opulent splendor near temperamental arcane devices.
- The leader of the squatters and his chosen lieutenants use powerful items from the hoard to defend his claim.

Follow-up Adventure Ideas:

- A dragon's horde is known for its treasures.
- Alternatively, the dragon could offer a boon of a different kind, given its great knowledge and magic.

SideQuest Decks: Dungeons, Caves, & Ruins Fantasy © 2017 Inkwell Ideas

SKYHAMMER

47

Quest, Wizard, Betrayal

A wizard wants a magical stone, but for a dark reason.

Getting the PCs Involved:

- A wizard hires them to break into a newly-discovered tomb under the city, unearthed by construction. He wants a hefty stone. The PCs can keep all else.
- A member of a secret cult contacts the PCs, asking for help relocating the stone before anyone else gets it; they have protected it until the recent construction.

Encounters:

- First, break in through all the traps. Then, deal with all the construct guards. Finally, solve the puzzle and bring out the 500 lb. stone—a meteor.
- A scholar can decipher the wall art that depicts destruction if the stone falls into the wrong hands: cities and kingdoms die, darkness covers the sun.
- Members of a secret cult attack any who remove the stone, but their numbers are depleted by time.
- The wizard will poison anyone who brings the stone to him with a victory toast of fine wine. Then he will begin the complex ritual to summon a meteor to smite the city and kingdom a few days later.
- The wizard's apprentice is scared, and may try to warn them ahead of time or revive them from poison.

Follow-up Adventure Ideas:

- There are records and correspondence with other apocalyptic madmen in the wizard's tower.
- The stone must be hidden again.

SideQuest Decks: Dungeons, Caves, & Ruins Fantasy © 2017 Inkwell Ideas

TOMB OF THE UNKNOWN SOLDIER

46

Investigation, Occult, Fort

A great warrior's body has gone missing from a small mausoleum in a town near where a great battle was held. A group of priests are attempting to create powerful undead.

Getting the PCs Involved:

- The PCs are visiting the town when the body goes missing.
- The PCs see a vision of a spirit asking for help to recover its body.

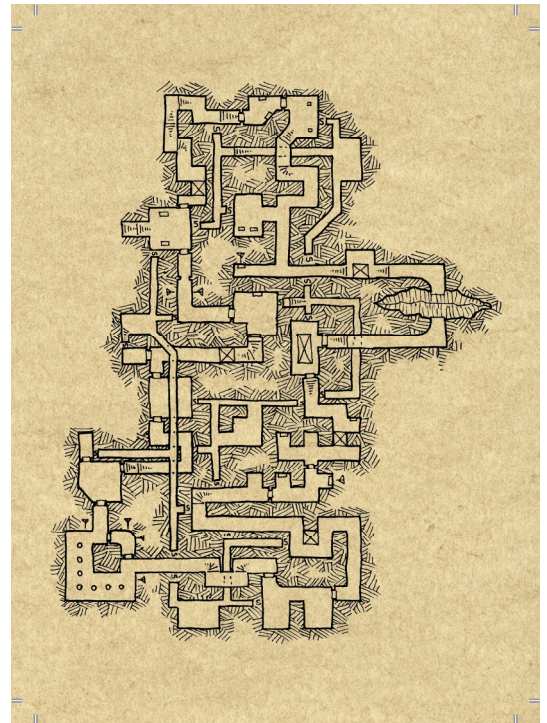
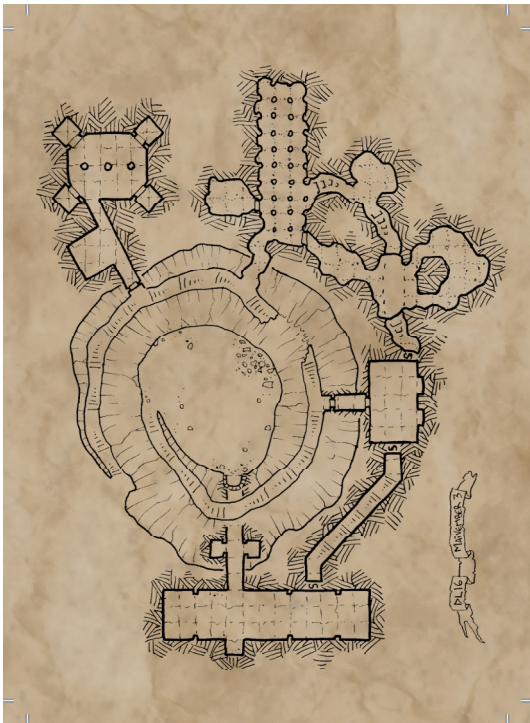
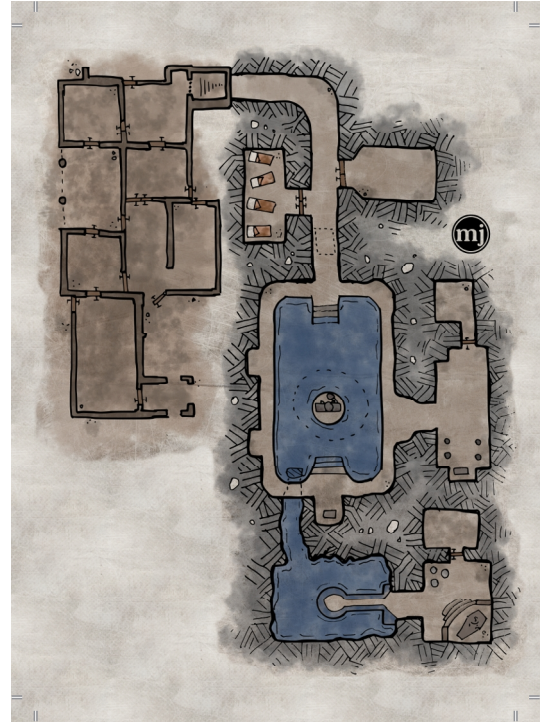
Encounters:

- The PCs visit the mausoleum.
- Thereafter the warrior's spirit points them to its body.
- An abandoned fort is now in use by a small sect.
- The fort is guarded by low-level thugs and acolytes.
- Several higher level undead have already been created and guard inner chambers.
- The PCs attempt to stop the spirit's body from being violated. The high-level priests also defend themselves, albeit not at full power because spells are needed for the ceremony.

Follow-up Adventure Ideas:

- The body is put back to rest.
- The spirit offers each party member a small gift or a bit of special knowledge.

SideQuest Decks: Dungeons, Caves, & Ruins Fantasy © 2017 Inkwell Ideas



MORE THAN A TITHE

49

Monastery, Occult

A threatening force has taken over a monastery. Voluntary tithes from nearby townsfolk have turned into shakedown money.

Getting the PCs Involved:

- The PCs are visiting one of the towns and a couple of monks demand their tithe.
- A PC who is a monk or priest of the same god/spirituality of the monks receives a vision of corruption at the monastery.

Encounters:

- Townfolk don't seem hospitable to strangers, especially those who seem spiritual.
- With persistence, the PCs get a townsfolk to open up. He describes that the monastery has changed over the past year.
- The PCs will be asked for a donation. Refusal has consequences—a visit from monks that night.
- The monastery has open services, but will be guarded at all hours.
- A below ground worship area has been defiled and is now used to worship another being.
- A secret underwater tunnel leads to another chamber. A champion of darkness is growing in power here. It Attacks!

Follow-up Adventure Ideas:

- A haze lifts from the monks and they make apologies and restitution.

SideQuest Decks: Dungeons, Caves, & Ruins Fantasy © 2017 Inkwell Ideas

UNREST

48

Ambush, Journey, Inn

A cult runs an inn in the middle of nowhere and kills travelers to make them into undead minions.

Getting the PCs Involved:

- The PCs need a place to stay on a longer trip.
- The party knows of a friend who went missing in this area and decides to investigate.

Encounters:

- Everything seems normal at first.
- PCs are offered separate rooms to split them up—perhaps an "upgrade" is provided because they ordered so much food and drink, or any excuse.
- Rooms have secret doors that the cultists use to ambush PCs in the middle of the night, hopefully while they're sleeping.
- If the secret doors are not found, the PCs are ambushed individually by two acolytes per PC.
- If the secret doors are found, the PCs are able to sneak up on a larger group of acolytes while they are eating dinner and relaxing.
- The leader, a couple of lieutenants, and several undead retainers are found in a large building behind the inn. The building's interior is covered in blood and entrails, a gruesome reminder of what has occurred.

Follow-up Adventure Ideas:

- PCs can take over the inn or find someone to run it.

SideQuest Decks: Dungeons, Caves, & Ruins Fantasy © 2017 Inkwell Ideas

THE WEAPONS OF WAR

51

Infiltration, Search

The Dwarves were transporting some of their ancient artifact weapons to aid their allies in a nearby human kingdom. Unfortunately the shipment was hijacked by kobolds on the way. Now the weapons must be retrieved before they work out how to use them!

Getting the PCs Involved:

- The dwarves hire the PCs to get the weapons back as soon as possible, but quietly.
- The human king sends them to find out where the weapons he secretly needs are located.

Encounters:

- The PCs locate and infiltrate the Kobold's lair.
- They find several dead Kobolds around a mechanical centipede, a large glowing gem in its forehead. The PCs must find a way of removing the gem while avoiding its poisoned claws.
- In another cave they find kobolds using some form of lightning weapon trying to kill the remaining dwarven prisoners. Their aim is haphazard, but it is improving.
- They find a kobold wearing a glowing helm that renders it incorporeal, but only occasionally.
- A final stack of weapons is found with the chieftain. As they approach he starts using artifacts at random!

Follow-up Adventure Ideas:

- How did the kobolds know about the shipment?
- The weapons all have the same makers mark and are not dwarven made. Where are they really from?

SideQuest Decks: Dungeons, Caves, & Ruins Fantasy © 2017 Inkwell Ideas

THEY DUG TOO DEEP

50

Occult, Great Beast, Caverns

A dwarven underground compound was expanded—unleashing a beast of the depths! The beast harries the countryside once each month. Meanwhile a small cult worships it.

Getting the PCs Involved:

- The beast attacks the PCs on their journey. They fend it off, but decided to track it.
- A cult member comes to their senses and flees, warning anyone he or she encounters.

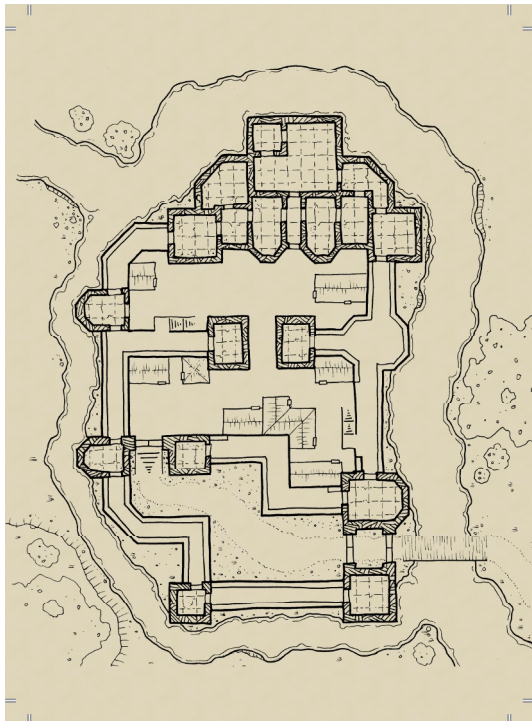
Encounters:

- The cult has trained creatures which will alert the members.
- The stairs down have a large gap which must be overcome.
- A cult member will sacrifice himself to wake the beast.
- The cult leaders have formidable magic. It would be best to not fight the beast and the leaders at the same time.

Follow-up Adventure Ideas:

- The PCs have earned the gratitude of the villages nearby.
- A wizard may know if some of the beast's parts have value or are useful.

SideQuest Decks: Dungeons, Caves, & Ruins Fantasy © 2017 Inkwell Ideas



THE KING'S TOMB

53

Caves, Escape, Wilderness

Hundreds of years ago, a barbarian king died in exile. His followers built a cairn atop a cave.

Getting the PCs Involved:

- The party stumbles into a monstrous humanoid (goblin, orc, bugbear, etc.) patrol. They track the patrol to the cairn.
- The party is on the run and looking for a place to hide. They see a cave entrance hidden by a large number of rocks.

Encounters:

- A small group of monstrous humanoids guard the entrance chamber. Help arrives immediately from the next room.
- Another group of creatures is sleeping in an adjacent chamber. Without an alarm, combat has a 30% chance of waking them per round.
- A secret door hides other undisturbed and dust-covered chambers.

Follow-up Adventure Ideas:

- In the final chamber, the dead king slumps on a makeshift throne with a magic item in hand. Guard statues flank him on each side. When the item is touched, the king and guards come to life.
- The king and guards may be skeletons, skeletal champions, golems, etc.

SideQuest Decks: Dungeons, Caves, & Ruins Fantasy © 2017 Inkwell Ideas

STONE QUARRY

52

valley, Caves, Medusa

In a rocky valley, the PCs find themselves among lifelike statues expressing faces of terror and pain.

Getting the PCs Involved:

- The PCs are lost in the mountains, stumbling on the eerie menagerie purely by accident.
- The PCs hear that a nearby valley is cursed where many brave heroes have disappeared.

Encounters:

- The valley is home to a medusa. She would normally petrify any who enter the valley, but she was blinded by sickness. She can still hunt by bow due to her serpent hair, but can't petrify.
- The PCs are the first challenge since the medusa went blind. She is terrified. She hides in her cave lair, only attacking if they find it. She'll hide for days.
- The PCs may recognize the statues are exact replicas of various heroes that have gone missing.
- If the PCs find the lair, she uses her bow to shoot at the first target. If the PCs overpower her she begs for life, offering prophecies if they restore her vision.
- The PCs will need to be creative to find a means of restoring her sight if they wish to help her.

Follow-up Adventure Ideas:

- If the PCs find a means to restore her sight, she really can foretell the future. She may even be truthful.
- The valley has many petrified heroes... The medusa won't surrender her "collection".

SideQuest Decks: Dungeons, Caves, & Ruins Fantasy © 2017 Inkwell Ideas

SIDEQUEST DECKS:

DUNGEONS, CAVES, & RUINS FANTASY

Dungeons, caverns, and ruins are the centerpiece of a great fantasy adventure. **SideQuest Decks: Dungeons, Caves, & Ruins Fantasy** are filled with dynamic adventure outlines and maps!

Draw a card for an adventure outline. The outline includes backstory, ways to get the PCs involved, encounter possibilities, and follow-up ideas. The other side of the card is the most important map for that adventure. Use maps from other cards as needed.

SideQuest Decks are perfect for stocking a hex crawl or developing a side trek on the fly. You may even chain several together for an entire campaign!

Writing:

Richard Crookes, Misha Handman, Tim Höregott, Fil Kearney, Joe Wetzel, David Winterbottom

Editing:

Chad Mercer, Daniel Shaefer

Cartography:

Robert Altbauer, Tim Ballew, Tony Brotherton, Keith Curtis, Tim Höregott, Shane Knysch, Sigurd Johansson, Matt Jackson, Dyson Logos, AJ Stone, Joe Wetzel, Maciej Zagorski

SideQuest Decks: Dungeons, Caves, & Ruins Fantasy © 2017 Inkwell Ideas

A SUDDEN SILENCE

54

Seige, Fiends

A seige ended abruptly when the fortress's defenders disappeared suddenly. Why?

Getting the PCs Involved:

- The PCs are part of the force conducting the seige. Their "help" was enlisted.
- The army sent a small force into the fortress—it didn't come back. They reached out to a mutual contact of the PCs to bring them to the fortress.

Encounters:

- Every door is unlocked and ajar.
- The PCs find headless corpses in the outer gatehouse.
- In the barracks, imps scatter as the adventurers approach. The guards, also headless, were slain in their sleep.
- A wandering, magical mist winds through the courtyard, stripping flesh from bone if it touches.
- Blade-bearing fiends descend from above in the great throne room.
- A fiend wearing the robes of an emissary approaches the party, bidding them to follow it to the underworld.

Follow-up Adventure Ideas:

- An offer is made by a great fiend/evil demi-god sitting atop a pile of heads. Do the PCs accept?
- What is the party's future role with the army?

SideQuest Decks: Dungeons, Caves, & Ruins Fantasy © 2017 Inkwell Ideas