

BRING BACK THE CONQUEROR! 01

Cult, Armageddon, Mind-powers

Millenia ago, a cosmic giant attempted to conquer the planet. While levitating high above the planet, it was petrified in its defeat then broken apart and scattered. One hand landed upright and was later made into a wizard's tower. Now a doomsday cult occupies it.

Getting the PCs Involved:

- A party member's mind is nearly overpowered. He or she visualizes the source: a giant hand statue.
- A PC's loved one was abducted by the cult. That person escaped and tells the party about the cult.

Encounters:

- The party member or the PC's loved one will be able to describe the location and that a cult there wishes to re-activate the galactic conqueror.
- A lookout (with archers on call) is in the top tower. The leader may also step out near the thumb & cast.
- The conqueror (its life-force still exists!) tries to overpower the mind of a PC.
- Most of the cult members are low-level acolytes, able to call upon some of the conqueror's power as spells. They are fanatics and fight to the death.
- The thumb contains a device slowly reversing the petrification & a portal to another of the conqueror's body parts. The cult leader will try to escape.

Follow-up Adventure Ideas:

- Are other cult groups restoring its other parts?
- Where exactly does the portal go?

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SIDEQUEST DECKS:

SCIENCE FANTASY

Need science fantasy adventure ideas for a one-shot or to build a campaign? Use our **SideQuest Decks: Science Fantasy**. Each card is a dynamic adventure!

This sub-genre focuses on worlds where magic has returned after technology has regressed, when space travelers visit a fantasy world, or magic is used to travel through space.

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!

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THE SPHERE 03

Alien Probe, No Win Scenario

An alien culture has sent a metallic sphere to conduct recon of the area.

Getting the PCs Involved:

- The party crosses the sphere's path.
- The PCs do something (major magic, large battle) which gets the sphere's attention.

Encounters:

- The sphere never attacks. It simply is nearly indestructible. It is quick so it can avoid many attacks. Its metal is so strong that no weapon will damage it. It has no intelligence, so mind affecting spells won't work. It is highly resistant to heat and ice. It can wash acid off itself.
- If the party does a massive amount of fire/ice/acid damage or finds some other way to affect it, it self-destructs. A new sphere appears a day or two later with a new defense against whatever capability was able to damage it.
- After a few days, it goes away.

Follow-up Adventure Ideas:

- If this was a recon device, who sent it and what are they planning?

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RETAKE THE PLANET 02

Techno-wizard, Monsters

A mad techno-wizard decides humanoid races shouldn't be saved; he is creating a race of monsters to conquer planet.

Getting the PCs Involved:

- PCs meet the techno-wizard at his travelling caravan and they impress him.
- The techno-wizard watches while the party defeats a powerful foe.

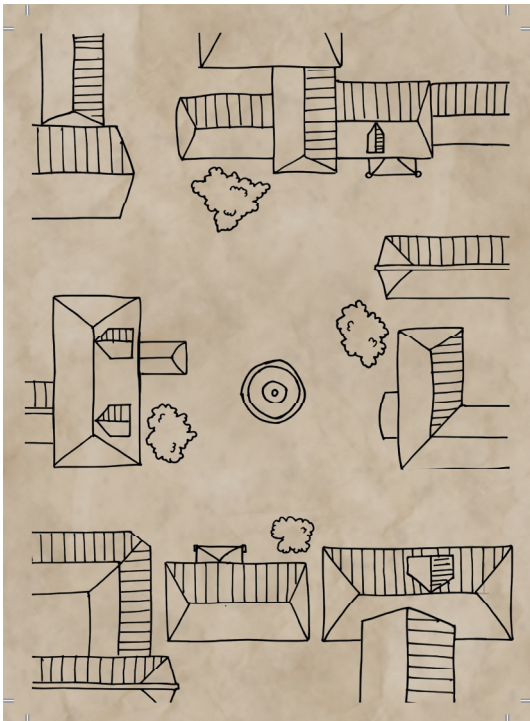
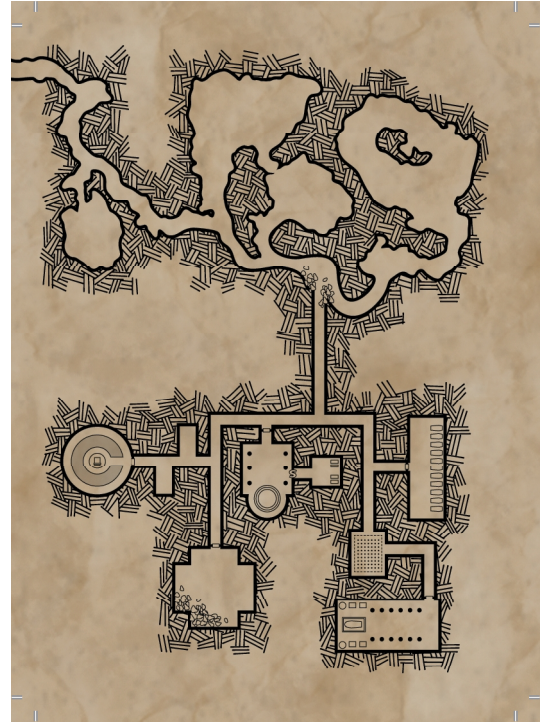
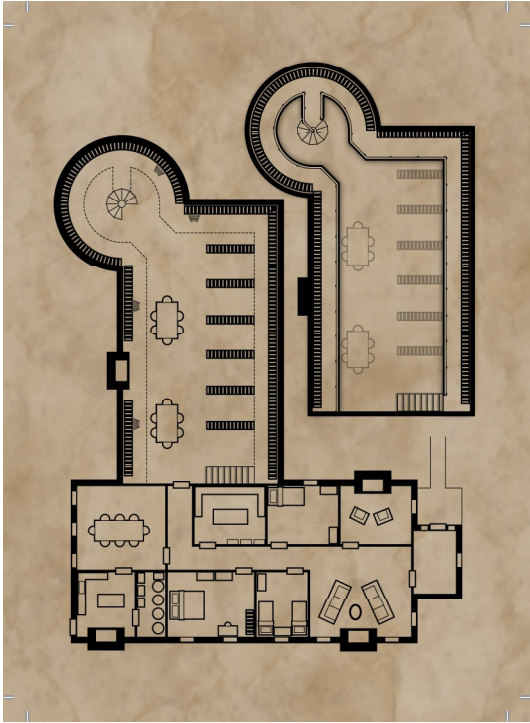
Encounters:

- The wizard is impressed with the party and asks them to retrieve the teeth of an unusual predator.
- Something seems "off" about the wizard.
- PCs hunt the creature or investigate the wizard.
- The hunt takes the PCs to a remote area to find the creature.
- Along the way they are given a clue that the wizard has foul plans.
- The wizard may activate his manse's defenses (traps, guardians such as the wizard's other (failed) creations) if he suspects the PCs have turned on him.
- Or the party may surprise the wizard—who will activate defenses or release creatures to defend him ASAP.

Follow-up Adventure Ideas:

- Is it possible to help some of the creatures?
- There is evidence the wizard was working with allies.

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UNDER THE SUN

05

High Magic, Fading Sun

A group of wizards needs item(s) for a spell to re-strengthen the fading sun.

Getting the PCs Involved:

- The PCs are monitoring the sun closely and notice a change. They make inquiries.
- The PCs are contacted because an object needed in a ceremony to strengthen the sun is located in an area they explored—but missed!

Encounters:

- The PCs meet wizards who are experts on the state of the sun. These wizards know the PCs last explored a dungeon/cavern/ruins where a special ingredient was located.
- The wizards give a riddle or clue or partial map showing where the ingredient/device was missed.
- The PCs set off to re-investigate. The area is changed. New creatures have moved in, walls have crumbled, new caverns added, etc.
- The PCs find the missing area. It has been untouched in centuries, and is full of undead.
- The PCs return with the device/ingredient, but there is one techno-wizard who wishes the world to end anyway.

Follow-up Adventure Ideas:

- The device restores the state of the sun.
- Or, does it make the sun worse?! Was the traitor actually trying to prevent a mistake by the wizards?

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IF I COULD GO BACK

04

Noble, Search, Ancient Device

A minor noble/rich man wants to travel to another planet or a prior time to avoid the end of the world. He has found a reference to a device that would help.

Getting the PCs Involved:

- The party is of some repute, so the man sends his servant to invite the group to dinner.
- After finishing one quest for a town council or noble, the PCs are "invited" to entertain another offer.

Encounters:

- The man gives the PCs the research he has done so far to find the device.
- The party looks for other references to the device, based on the man's suggestions/research.
- While researching (in a library, another wizard's manse, etc.) they are attacked by the minions of someone else who wants the device.
- The minions know of a critical missing piece.
- The PCs may discover the device won't work without a special key/ingredient.
- The device is guarded by its creator's spirit.
- Another attack, this time by the actual person who sent the minions previously.

Follow-up Adventure Ideas:

- Do the party want to go with the rich man?
- If they don't go with the man, perhaps he sends a request for help.

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CITY BENEATH THE EARTH

07

Underground City, Diplomacy, First Contact

A sinkhole has appeared in a farmer's field. Nothing will grow near it and the barren area is expanding.

Getting the PCs Involved:

- The farmer is a friend of a PC and he asks for help.
- The PCs spot a barren area while high above the land (flying, on a mountainside, etc.) and investigate.

Encounters:

- The PCs find it hard to breathe in the area of the sinkhole. And it smells! But there seems to be a way to climb down...
- If the party can't figure out a way to breathe the air, the farmer knows someone with a device.
- The party may also observe explorers from underground coming out of the sinkhole at night. The explorers have special breath-masks.
- The PCs may travel down the sinkhole a mile or two to find an underground city.
- The PCs may be guided down by the explorers to meet the city's leaders.
- A fierce creature crosses their path on the way.

Follow-up Adventure Ideas:

- The city's leaders explain the sinkhole is a air vent and will compensate the farmer above ground.
- The leaders may be impressed with the PCs and wish to open trade. If the PCs are impolite, a misunderstanding may become much worse.

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SNAKE OIL

06

Charlatan, Potions, Fading Sun

A charlatan is selling potions that help deal with a lack of sunlight, heat, plants, etc. in preparation for the death of the sun.

Getting the PCs Involved:

- A family member/friend bought a potion from the charlatan and tested it.
- The PCs see the charlatan selling the potions in the market/town square. A PC is mistaken as one of the charlatan's accomplices.

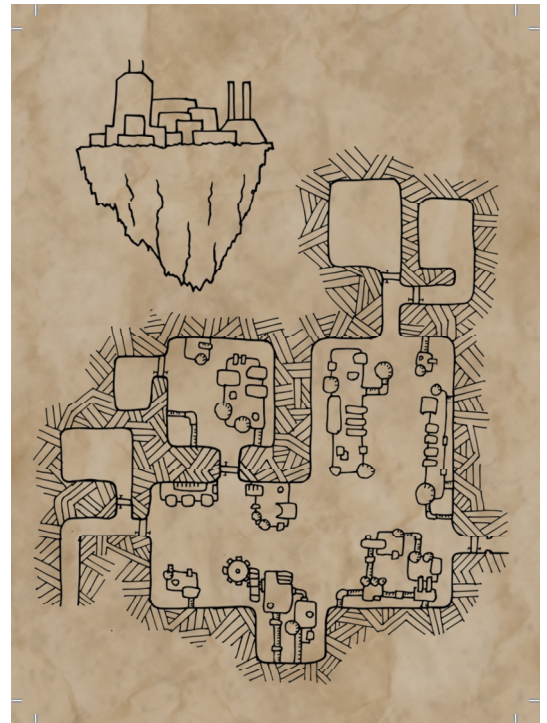
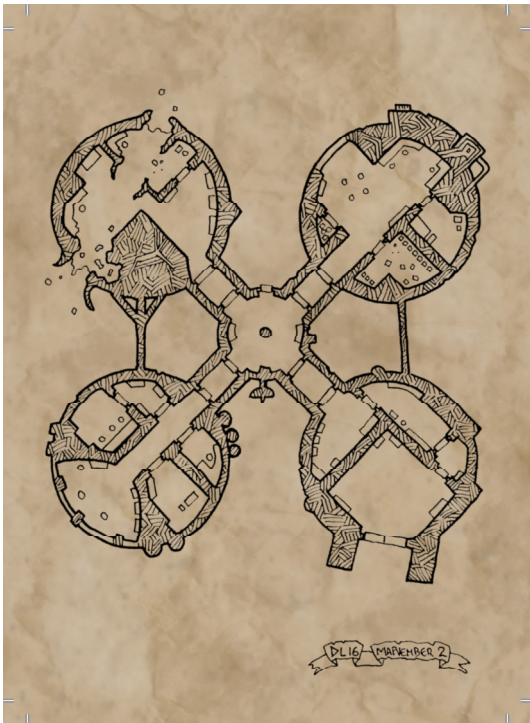
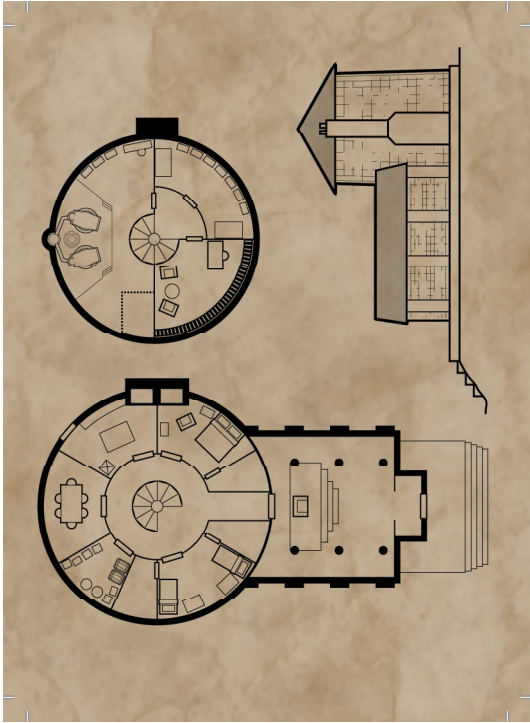
Encounters:

- PCs see a demonstration (or seek the charlatan).
- Intrigued, one PC volunteers or is chosen by mistake—instead of the charlatan's accomplice who would have feigned the drug's effects.
- The PCs may subversively inspect the substance.
- If the PC publicly claims the drug has no effect, the charlatan and accomplice(s) claim it doesn't work until a condition is met (darkening of the sun, etc.)
- The charlatan may have bodyguards who distract the PCs or defend the charlatan.
- He also has other substances that may help escape: a potion of grease, smoke bombs, etc.

Follow-up Adventure Ideas:

- The charlatan is arrested or run off. He may seek revenge on the party.
- Perhaps he isn't a complete fraud and can assist making some potions.

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THE MARKET

09

Timelines, Other Technology, Trade

A stellar convergence merges a market of the PCs' time with those of other times.

Getting the PCs Involved:

- The party hears tales of a wondrous market only available when the stars align.
- A noble sends the PCs to buy an unusual weapon.

Encounters:

- Once the stars align, shops shimmer and change every few minutes. Interaction keeps people together.
- The PCs can find all sorts of items available: for those from a magical realm one can find science-based weapons, medicines, stealth devices, etc. Likewise those from a science era can find magical healing which cures what science can't or magical items that can do what seems impossible.
- When the PCs attempt to make a purchase, they quickly find out nothing is for sale. Currency means nothing to the other party—even if they use currency, it won't be identical. Even precious metals aren't valuable to some cultures/timelines. Most barter.
- Valuable items to another party are usually those based on something impossible in their world.
- An ignored cultural custom may ruin a deal.
- The shimmering of surroundings begins to occur less often when the convergence is nearly complete.

Follow-up Adventure Ideas:

- Are the PCs purchases effective in this realm?

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DOWNLOAD

08

Mind Transfer, Fiend, Sacrifice

A sci-mage transfers his psyche into a new sacrifice's body every 50 years. But this year's victim already has an extra occupant.

Getting the PCs Involved:

- The mage is a former benefactor of the party and reaches out to them for help.
- The PCs happen to be nearby and hear an explosion in the mage's mansion.

Encounters:

- The PCs arrive (either through a magical means provided by the mage or on foot if they were nearby) to see the mage and the sacrifice struggling.
- The victim pleads for help and tries to explain the mage is trying to evict his soul.
- The PCs may remember stories of a town that has agreed to give a young person to a mage every other generation in exchange for protection.
- The mage claims the victim's body is legally now his.
- The victim's voice and attitude changes...it is obvious even more is happening. The new voice exclaims: "This body is already mine!"
- If the PCs cannot intervene, the victim dies.

Follow-up Adventure Ideas:

- But where did the other entity go? Is the mage still the mage?
- Or does the other spirit attempt to inhabit a PC's body?

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CITY FROM THE CLOUDS

11

City, Failing Technology

A floating city's device/method to stay afloat is failing.

Getting the PCs Involved:

- The party hears a siren. The town's leaders have been told the city in the clouds is going to crash—likely into the town in a week.
- A PC tuned with nature or who has some pseudo-science devices detects the city about to fall.

Encounters:

- The PCs determine (through calculations or from the town's leaders) the city will fall in one week.
- The party meets with the falling city's mayor and top advisors through the town leaders or by getting up to the city on their own. (The town leaders will introduce the PCs to the falling city's dignitaries who can transport the PCs if needed.)
- The city's advisors can help the PCs figure the problem out technologically through the library and machine rooms. A part may need to be fixed or replaced, special material found, and an expert craftsman needed.
- Or, a visiting wizard is looking for assistants to bring together other powerful wizards to create a massive spell and/or special material for the spell.

Follow-up Adventure Ideas:

- The floating city's lift is repaired. Both cities are grateful.
- Or, the PCs assist in the rescue and cleanup effort.

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FALLING FROM ANOTHER AGE

10

Shipwreck, Alien Technology

A space station of a forgotten age crash lands near the PCs

Getting the PCs Involved:

- The party spots an unusually bright asteroid and sees the impact on the horizon.
- A hermit accosts the PCs and tells them of wondrous devices in an object that fell to the earth. He is in pain and his skin slides off him at times.

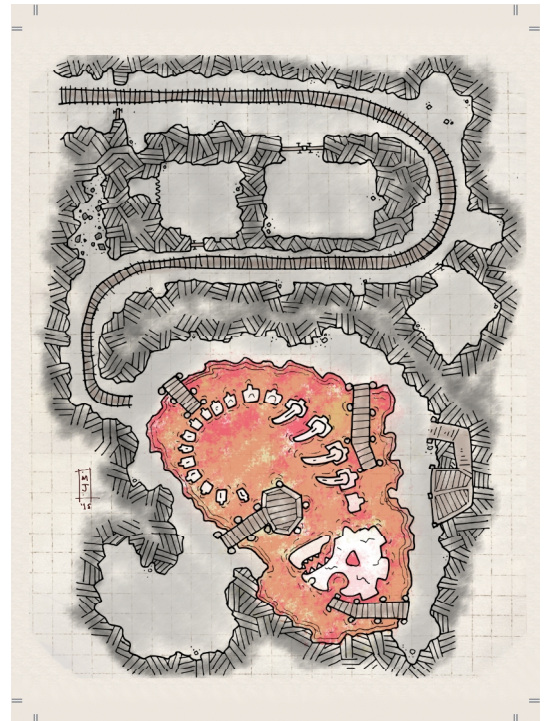
Encounters:

- Some mysterious disease (radiation) may affect those who approach the wreck.
- Some of the space station's defenses are active and shoot at the party as they approach.
- The entrance is not obvious and not easy to open.
- A predatory beast found a way in. The PCs can't easily spot it.
- A robot or two attempt to guard the station using guerilla tactics.

Follow-up Adventure Ideas:

- The party may have some minor "magical" items they salvaged.
- Depending on the technology level of the party, they may be able to repair it into a base or something more.

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COMMUNICATIONS TOWER

13

Other Worlds/Extraplanar

The party uses an old tower to communicate to another plane or world.

Getting the PCs Involved:

- As part of a larger quest, the party needs to contact another world or plane and hears about a communications tower from another age.
- The PCs hear rumors of a cult who wishes to repurpose the tower into an extraplanar gateway.

Encounters:

- Villagers nearby distrust strangers who do not plainly state their purpose.
- Cultists have guards stationed, ready to ambush.
- If the PCs do not make it to the top of the tower quickly, the summoning is complete: The PCs must face an otherworldly beast as well as the cult's leader and top acolytes.

Follow-up Adventure Ideas:

- The PCs have access to the tower for whatever purpose they need to use it.
- A mysterious communication is received while the PCs are at the tower's top...

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COMING OF TRONVOL

12

Monsters, Region, Ritual

A prophecy foretells 5 great evils joining together in a mysterious ritual and becoming unstoppable.

Getting the PCs Involved:

- The fates warn the PCs of danger in a dream.
- The PCs become concerned after hearing five separate but similar stories.

Encounters:

- The PCs learn more about the evils: a foe of the forest, a scourge of the skies, a savage of the seas, a fiend of the fields, and a villain of the underworld.
- Best to take the creatures out one by one, perhaps by which is closest, know most about, etc.
- The forest foe's evil is cursing the forest. Creatures living there are corrupted.
- The sky scourge is making travel along a main road very difficult. Almost every caravan is attacked.
- The sea savage has effectively embargoed the nearest port. It even whips up the waves at times.
- The field foe attacks a random farm each day.
- The underworlder has overtaken a nearby mine. It must be cleared out to put the mine back to use.
- If these creatures escape or are not dealt with in a timely fashion, they will mystically merge into an uber-villain with each creature's powers & skills.

Follow-up Adventure Ideas:

- Dark forces try to fulfill the prophecy again later.

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DOWSING FOR TROUBLE

15

Town, Altered Creatures, Forgotten Defenses

An earthquake has damaged a mountain ruin, and toxic waste is leaking into a town's water. If the source can't be found and sealed, the town will die.

Getting the PCs Involved:

- The town's alder hires the PCs to enter the ruin, as the locals can't approach without becoming corrupted.
- A PC becomes infected by poisonous water, and must find the source in order to devise a cure.

Encounters:

- The PCs encounter a group of locals who have been corrupted and are attacking border farms; if restrained, they can be cured, but they are too violent for the townsfolk to approach.
- The outskirts of the ruin are filled with thorny, poisonous plants corrupted by the waste, which reach out to grab trespassers.
- The ruin's defenses are still partially operational. They mistake the PCs for scrap thieves and threaten to kill them if they won't leave.
- The reservoir from which the waste is leaking contains the remains of an evil beast. The waste itself is corrosive. How can it be sealed?

Follow-up Adventure Ideas:

- Someone in town gets the bright idea to try to siphon the waste to use as a weapon against enemy states.
- Corrupted beasts are still at large, and must be hunted down before they spread the taint.

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STARFALL

14

First Contact, Bounty Hunt

A prison transfer spaceship crash lands nearby.

Getting the PCs Involved:

- A member of the party sees a shooting star crash nearby.
- The party hears of a large metallic object where the shooting star crashed.
- Aliens were transporting a prisoner who takes advantage of the crash to escape. The party must capture him, and he isn't rational at all.

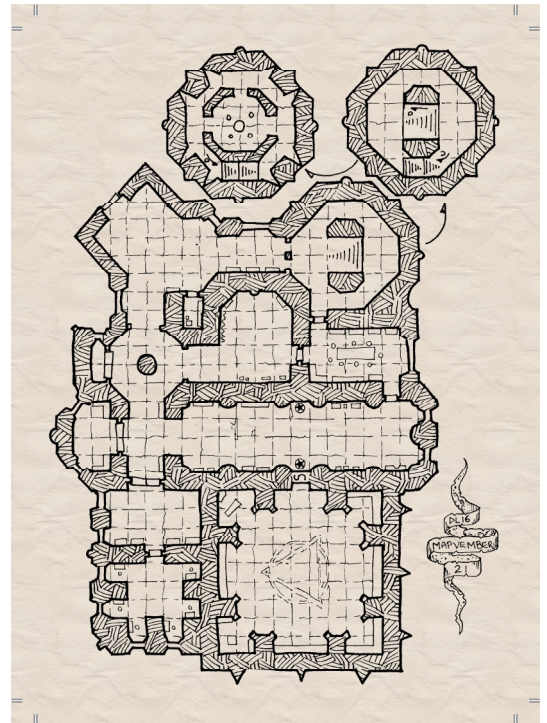
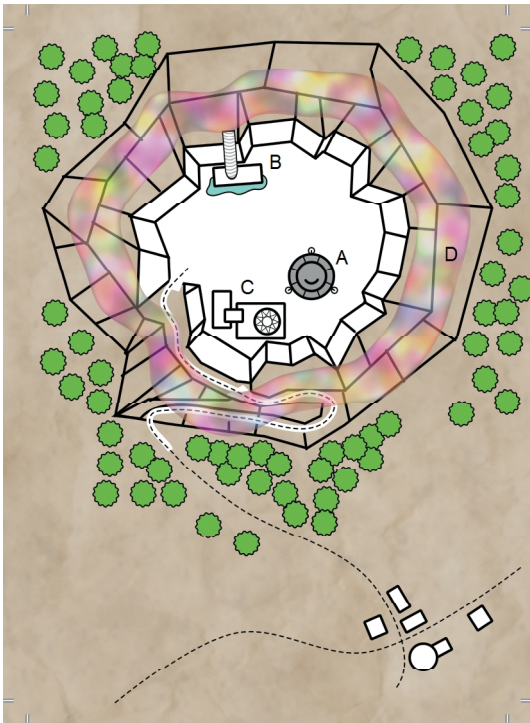
Encounters:

- While still far off, the PCs see a figure escape and run.
- Getting into the ship may be a challenge due to the unusual door mechanisms.
- The remaining aliens are injured and ask for help hunting the escapee.
- Are the aliens friendly or antagonistic? The party's actions can greatly impact the flow of events.

Follow-up Adventure Ideas:

- If friendly, perhaps the party helps the aliens repair the ship.
- If unfriendly, the aliens are vanquished. Other aliens will likely investigate soon.
- In either case, a few unusual alien trinkets may be awarded or taken, respectively.

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DISPOSE OF PROPERLY

17

City Defense , Huge Creature

A monster has evolved from an old garbage dump. It is huge and approaching the city.

Getting the PCs Involved:

- The PCs spot a 40' wide blob of trash off in the distance as they travel.
- The PCs are in a town that conscripts all able-bodied defenders when the blob is spotted.

Encounters:

- The creature has some not-obvious special defense which must be overcome. Examples: sharp weapons have no effect, fire makes it stronger, its touch is acidic, it is sticky so weapons that touch it may become stuck, it rusts metal, magic has no/limited effect, etc.
- Perhaps different parts of the creature have different effects. There may be some clue (color, consistency, etc) about which part has which power.
- The creature splits whenever half-damaged; each has the full damaged hp. Each piece will divide until it reaches 1 hp.

Follow-up Adventure Ideas:

- All the trash needs to be cleaned up.
- New rules/enforcement are needed to avoid placing hazardous material in trash.

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BIG GAME HUNTING

16

Altered Beasts, Game Hunt

A local magistrate wishes to capture an ancient beast alive in order to display it in her private zoo.

Getting the PCs Involved:

- A servant of the magistrate approaches the PCs, having heard about their exploits.
- The PCs are in legal trouble, and are offered the chance to capture the beast in lieu of imprisonment.

Encounters:

- A sage offers to sell the PCs knowledge of the creature's powers and weaknesses at a high price.
- Another band of hunters attempts to intimidate the PCs into abandoning the hunt.
- As the party approaches the monster's domain, they find birds with fungal growths in their feathers spying.
- The PCs encounter a group of dire animals, maddened with terror at the creature's approach.
- The creature demonstrates the ability to slip through the root network of its forest home, leaping out to attack and then literally vanishing into the trees.
- The PCs pursue the monster to its lair: a vast, cave-riddled fungal mass in a lake in the woods.
- The creature breaks free of its zoo and starts hunting the magistrate's family. Is it sentient?

Follow-up Adventure Ideas:

- The creature is sick. The magistrate needs someone to acquire the plants it ate in its home territory.

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INSTRUCTION MANUAL

19

Robots, Techno-mages

A cabal of evil wizards have found an ancient book to make an army of robots. They have adapted the process to make "magibots."

Getting the PCs Involved:

- The PCs are recognized as potential foes. A magibot hunts them.
- The PCs spot a bot murdering a prominent citizen.

Encounters:

- After fighting one of the bots, the PCs make inquiries of who could have made it.
- They may get a clue from a famous smith who made the bots' shells. Or a miner who was paid good coin for rare minerals. Or someone may have seen one before near a mage's tower. In any case, the island tower is the source.
- The island is infested with defense bots.
- The inside has mostly maintenance bots until you get to the workrooms or unless the wizard detects the assault.
- Experimental defense bots with extra powers are in the research rooms, but may be released by the wizard.
- The wizard will attempt to teleport away to an ally's location, but only if he can get the book.

Follow-up Adventure Ideas:

- Can the PCs use the manual for themselves?
- Do the PCs need to assault another wizard's manse?

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A NEW HOME

18

Aliens, Terraforming, Tower Assault

An alien civilization's world was destroyed. This planet is perfect for them—if the sun is blocked out.

Getting the PCs Involved:

- A PC notices it is the 18th cloudy day in a row. The low clouds touch a mountaintop nearby.
- A group of wizards contact the party's wizard and ask the party to investigate the cloud cover, which continually touches a nearby mountain.

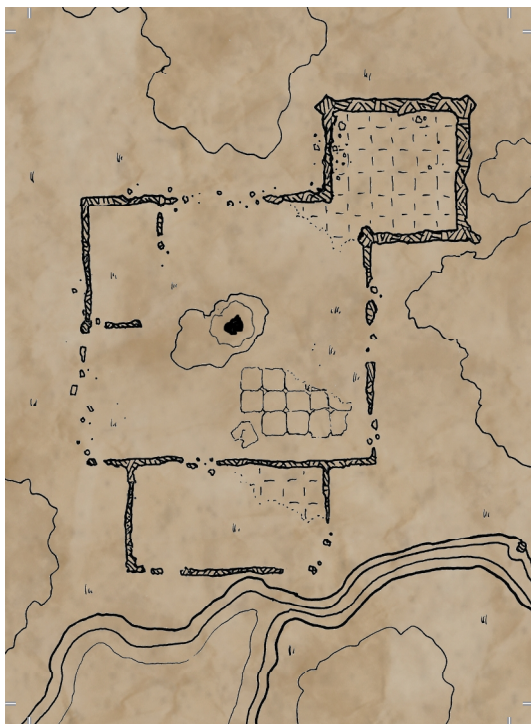
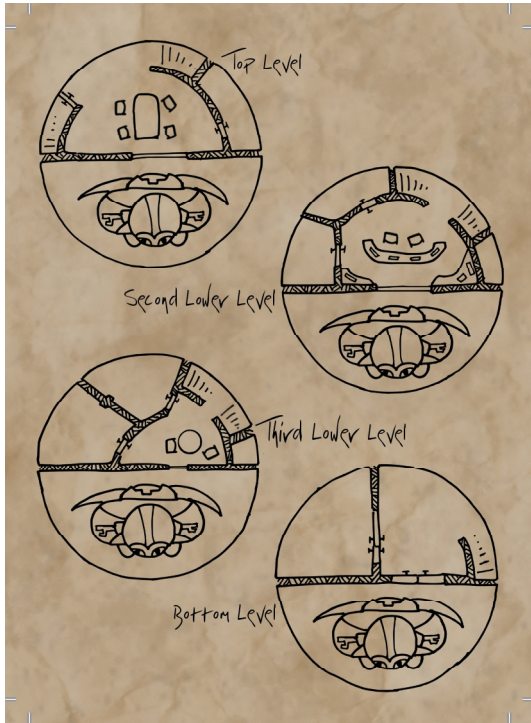
Encounters:

- While preparing/leaving, the party may notice a group of people who don't quite fit in. (Clothing, mannerisms, unusual facial feature, etc.)
- The climb to the mountaintop is arduous and the weather harsher than usual.
- The aliens brought unusual guard-creatures with them which block the mountain pass.
- Alien sensors can detect the party's approach within a few hundred yards.
- When the PCs are detected, a battle commences.

Follow-up Adventure Ideas:

- Many of the aliens' devices would have self destruct mechanisms or be difficult to decipher.
- Do any of the devices call home? Or perhaps another alien group investigates the missing ship.

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STEAM FIEND

21

Town, Spirit/Elemental, Golem

A golem is possessed by a water spirit that is angry about the local dam stifling the river's natural flow.

Getting the PCs Involved:

- While visiting a riverside town, the PCs hear of its new protector. They are invited to see it up close.
- Alternately, the PCs hear a rumor from the local shaman/witch/druids that the river spirits are angry.

Encounters:

- While in town, the PCs find the golem attacking buildings, waterwheels and people along the water front, slowly making its way towards the new dam.
- When the PCs have nearly defeated the steam golem, it falls into the river where it stands its ground to continue fighting anyone that comes near.
- The water spirit causes waves, current, and undertows to push away and attack any boats or swimmers coming near to stop the golem.
- The water spirit wades the golem in the river at the dam. It attacks the structure until the river is released.
- If the dam breaks, or the PCs find a way to coax the spirit out of the golem, the spirit exits the golem, leaving the machine inert and sinking underwater.
- If instead the PCs destroy the golem, the pieces sink but the water spirit will try another way.

Follow-up Adventure Ideas:

- The golem's owner may want to hire the PCs to retrieve the submerged golem or its missing pieces.

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JOYRIDE

20

Giant Robot, Hijinks

A giant robot is laying waste to the countryside. A couple of children are missing.

Getting the PCs Involved:

- The house of a friend of a PC is attacked by the robot; the friend fetches the party.
- The PCs see a strange beam of light. They hear metallic noises from one (the robot) end.

Encounters:

- The robot is difficult to defeat. It's possible, but the PCs should realize there is a better approach.
- The PCs notice a green magical energy beam arcing from the robot's head to a distant point.
- The PCs can follow the robot's path. There will be victims to heal.
- The PCs may have to stop others from attacking the robot—the battle would go badly.
- The party can follow the energy beam to a tower.
- The tower was cloaked, but that technology has failed. A few kids found the tower and the robot's control center.
- The kids may have fun with the tower defenses when the party approaches.

Follow-up Adventure Ideas:

- The party now may have access to a giant robot.
- Who was the owner of the robot & tower?

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KCOPS'S BRAIN

23

City, Sewers, Preserved Brain

A long forgotten engineer had his brain preserved and connected to a computer years ago. It took over maintenance of the city years ago, but is now failing.

Getting the PCs Involved:

- Trash is piling up in the party's current city.
- The sewers suddenly smell much worse.

Encounters:

- The PCs meet the town leader about the problem. He will tell them of a long lost underground control room.
- The PCs decide to look for the city's plans. They reveal the underground control room location.
- Following the smell will also lead to the control room.
- Bio-mechanical "rats" eat the trash at night and bring the big stuff to the sewers.
- Underground, there are all sorts of dangers: malfunctioning "rats", overgrown "pets", etc.
- At some point while underground (via a loudspeaker or an augmented speaking "rat") Kcops will appeal to the PCs to aid him in his sanctuary.
- A "rat" leads the PCs to Kcops's sanctuary. No living person has been inside in millennia. Kcops's brain is dying; the machines can no longer keep it going.

Follow-up Adventure Ideas:

- New ways to maintain the city must be found. Perhaps a new volunteer is hooked up to the machinery.

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POWER-UP

22

Fort, Asteroid, Altering Powers

An asteroid strikes a fort held by humanoids hours before the PCs are about to attack. All nearby gain temporary powers, especially the foes.

Getting the PCs Involved:

- The PCs have accepted a contract to clear the fort.
- The PCs are attacked by a raiding party and interrogate or track the foes to this fort.

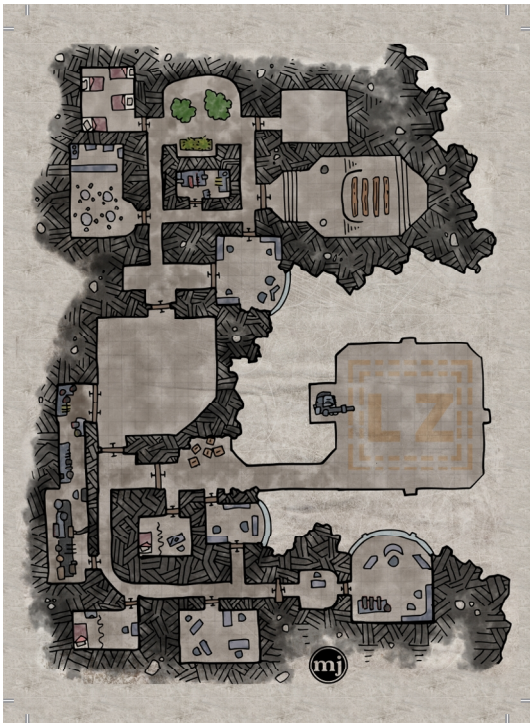
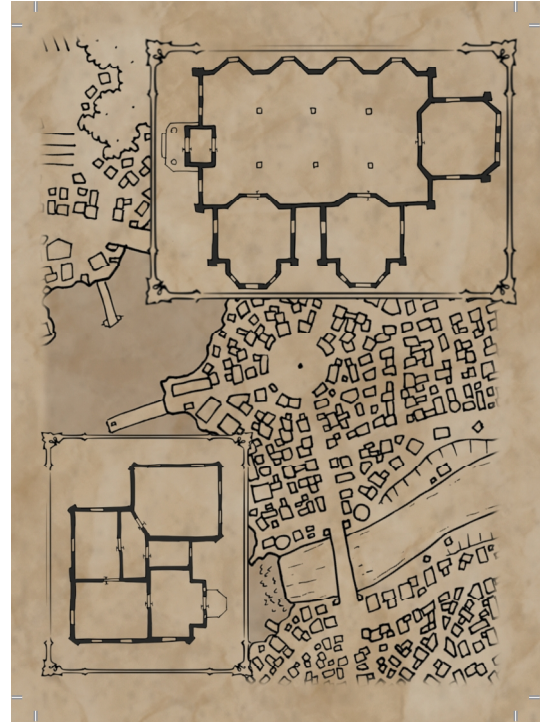
Encounters:

- Those nearest the asteroid (inside the fort) gain the full power of a random potion after one hour of exposure inside. Ex: enlarge, reduce, increased ability (strength, dexterity, etc.), jump, invisibility, fly.
- Those outside, but within sight of the compound gain 1/2 of the potion's effect. (Unless they were inside the compound for the past hour.) After one hour out of sight of the compound, the effects end.
- The humanoids have had some time to play with the effects and find out who can do what. They don't know that if you rest for one hour or longer, your ability will change.
- Outside guards are invisible. Those on the ramparts can fly/jump. The courtyard has enlarged foes who will fight there or run out to assist invisible scouts. Guard groups inside have increased abilities.

Follow-up Adventure Ideas:

- A wizard would certainly pay well to study the object.
- But the asteroid loses its powers in 3 days.

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AND THE CHILDREN SHALL LEAD

25

Contagion, Town, Children

Volangth the Voluminous was researching the extension of life... but his experiments had the opposite effect. Now a virus is killing only those over 20 years old. No one in the city is over 20.

Getting the PCs Involved:

- The party have not heard from a relative in the city.
- PCs are passing through. The city is a natural stopover. They see warnings, but want to help.

Encounters:

- The party meets the town's teenage leaders. They know who first had the virus (those near Volangth's mansion) and what the symptoms are (see below).
- Any hour the PCs are within 20' of a resident of any age, they must save against the virus. Symptoms are a cough, then a sore throat, then fever and after 3 days of fever: death.
- Wizard's mansion has several magical traps.
- A scholarly PC can follow the wizard's notes. He was close to a cure.
- The PCs can send for help.
- The party may look for clues in the city library.

Follow-up Adventure Ideas:

- The party finds the cure or perhaps a group of techno-mages comes in time to save them.
- The city needs adults to step in and serve as mentors, advisors, leaders, etc.

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TOWN OF MUTANTS

24

Town, Mad Scientist, Strange Behavior

A paranoid scientist convinced the town to install his defensive device. However, it gives off radiation which is mutating the populace, driving them insane.

Getting the PCs Involved:

- PCs haven't heard from a loved one living in town.
- The town is on the way to a necessary destination.

Encounters:

- The PCs may spot an energy field covering the town. Walking through it causes damage, unless using one of the special town gates.
- The town is surrounded by several devices attached to towers. The devices can't be seen from outside.
- Residents are deformed monstrosities to varying degrees. Most have claws, forked tongues, lizard eyes. Some have fur, wings, tails, and/or horns.
- Residents see themselves and others as normal. However, one little comment can provoke a sudden attack, usually resulting in death. Then they continue as if nothing happened.
- Residents will explain when asked that their lives improved when the energy field was turned on.
- Attempting to destroy the devices will provoke the scientist and his top guards.

Follow-up Adventure Ideas:

- Scientist is captured/killed and the field dissipates.
- How long do the transformations last?

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ETHER BANDITS

27

Investigation, City, Crime

Metropolis banks and wealthy homes are being robbed by what witnesses call ghosts walking through walls.

Getting the PCs Involved:

- PCs are hired to investigate "ghost" robberies.
- The PCs see glowing men walk through a wall. The next day, the PCs hear the building was robbed.

Encounters:

- One bank hasn't been robbed yet. The PCs can hide inside or wait outside. Bandits arrive, but try to flee.
- A hurt bandit drops a spare vial of phase oil: it allows passing through walls when a person is coated; doesn't prevent being hit. Soapy smell.
- PCs are approached by the last un-robbed wealthy family who offer to display treasures in a museum.
- If the PCs hide in the museum, the bandits sneak behind the PCs using phase oil! The bandits ignore the treasures, focusing on the phase oil.
- If any bandit is wounded, that bandit will flee, leaving blood trails and blood on walls... each wall damaging the un-oiled wound until the bandit can't take more.
- Bandits are in the warehouse where the oil (and the soap) is manufactured, owned by the "bait" family. Some are there, making oil when the PCs arrive.
- The family may confess they've been fencing the items to foreign collectors to pay off family debt.

Follow-up Adventure Ideas:

- Rewards for returning any of the recovered valuables.

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GUINEA PIGS

26

Ancient Technology, Testing

A trove of ancient technology has been uncovered, and the discoverers are offering big rewards to test objects and help find out the items' capabilities and limits.

Getting the PCs Involved:

- The PCs meet a traveler with a rain-calling artifact, which he was given as payment for his own work testing several other treasures.
- The PCs need a particular piece of technology, which the discoverers have. They will trade it for help.

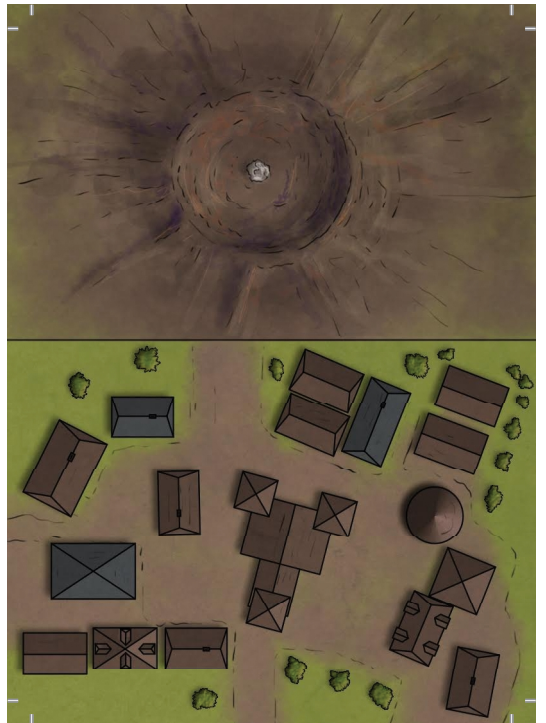
Encounters:

- A silver rod creates wild bolts of lightning; the discoverers want a safe way to figure out its range and how often it can be used.
- A small box is sealed, but glows as it is moved; it is drawn to certain types of monsters.
- A small gold box glowed briefly when someone grabbed it; they are now sick. The box actually identifies illnesses—the finder was already sick and didn't know it.
- A group of sneak thieves attempt to steal all of the artifacts while the PCs are present, grabbing what they can and fleeing in all directions.
- An artifact is low on power; it activates once then goes dark. The PCs are accused of breaking it.

Follow-up Adventure Ideas:

- The ancient tech leaves those who use it connected, and now the PCs have to break that link!

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EXTREME TRAINING

29

Forgotten Robot, Countryside/Travel

An ancient training robot has activated. Until someone passes its regimen, it won't let anyone take the main road through the mountains.

Getting the PCs Involved:

- They are trying to pass through a blocked path.
- They've been hired by someone who wants to disable the robot without damaging it and study it.

Encounters:

- The robot effortlessly moves a stupendously heavy rock, and then demands that a PC do deadlifts with it.
- The robot directs the PCs to climb a dangerous cliff, and stands at the top throwing small objects at them.
- The robot engages in a first to three hits duel with a PC; its attacks are set to minimum output but still deal notable damage.
- The robot directs the PCs to an obstacle course made from deadfall and brambles, and gives them a limited time to clear it.
- If someone tries to sneak past the robot, and it attempts to crush them as "mild chastisement". The PCs have to save them.

Follow-up Adventure Ideas:

- Someone moves the disabled robot to another route and deliberately re-activates it to block merchants from reaching an enemy town.
- The robot rewards the PCs with a key to an unlooted complex. What lies within?

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DANGEROUS REPAIRS

28

Treasure Hunt, Ancient Tech Repair

A critical greenhouse power supply has broken, and the only parts exist in dangerous, monster-filled areas.

Getting the PCs Involved:

- The PCs are local inhabitants, and need to fix the greenhouse if they want to keep eating.
- The PCs are recruited by the town's repairman after mentioning they're heading in that direction anyway.

Encounters:

- The ruins where the greenhouses can be found can't be reached without climbing a mountain.
- The greenhouses with working power supplies are filled with Old World experimental carnivorous plants.
- A tribe of near-human beings hunts the greenhouse's spawn; if the power supply is removed, they will either starve or come out of the mountains looking for food.
- A giant millipede has made its nest in the ruin's power supply; it could be dangerous to fight it directly, but it will be hard to trick it into leaving long enough to make the swap.
- The power supply is easily removed, but delicate. It has to be moved very carefully; any damage could make it useless.

Follow-up Adventure Ideas:

- The new power supply is tainted in some way, and produces strange and possibly supernatural plants.
- Several key plants died while the power supply was out, and now they need to be replaced, too!

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STARFALL

31

Meteor, Monsters, Mystics, Raiders

A shooting star has fallen to ground near a local town, and both scavengers and monsters are arriving to claim it.

Getting the PCs Involved:

- The PCs are near the crash site, and discover the shooting star first.
- The PCs are residents of the local town, and see the star flash by overhead.

Encounters:

- The shooting star is large and deeply embedded; the PCs can't remove it quickly or alone.
- A group of intelligent metal eaters come to devour it. They'll happily eat all the metal in town on the way.
- Two mystics arrive in town. Both want the star, and are willing to pay well for it, but they try to kill each other and each vows that if they don't get what they want, there will be blood spilled.
- A gang of raiders tracking the star mistakenly assumes that the town already has it, and threaten to kill everyone to find it.
- A cult arrives in the area; they believe the star is the body of their fallen god, and try to protect it from anyone who would take it.

Follow-up Adventure Ideas:

- What uses does a meteor of strange energies have?
- More stars start to fall, and now fields and rivers are being destroyed.

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THE MYSTERY SIGNAL

30

Ancient Technology, Robot Guards

An old radio station has activated, overriding all of the region's communications.

Getting the PCs Involved:

- The radio signal suggests that there's an intact ruin full of valuables in the area.
- The PCs depend on the other radio communications.

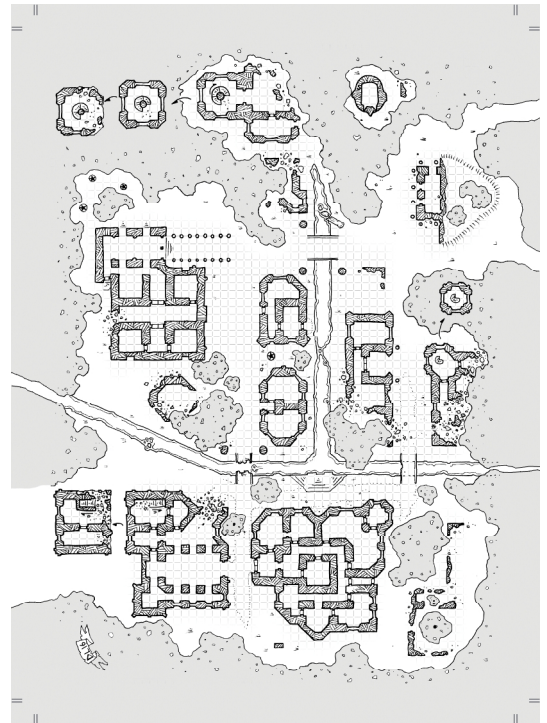
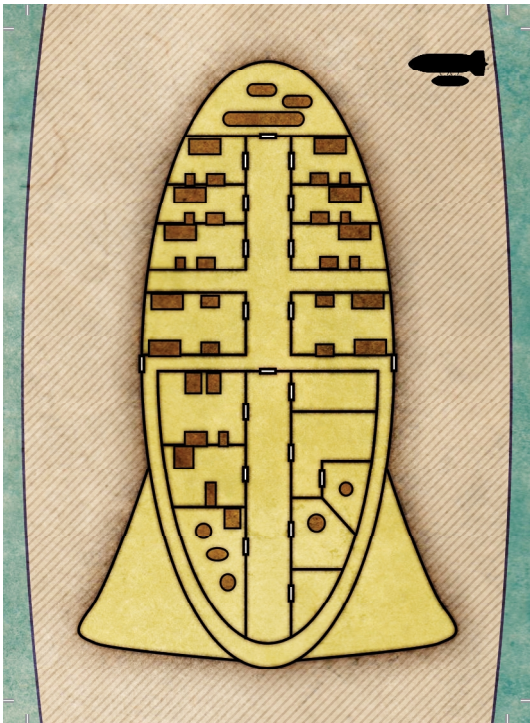
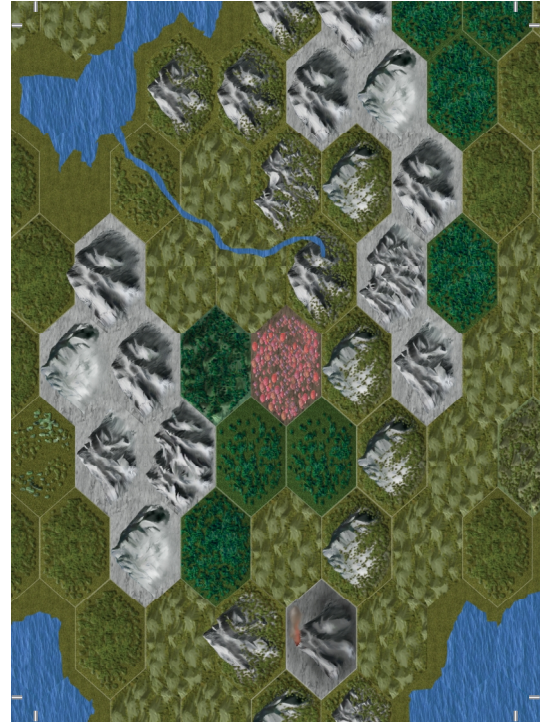
Encounters:

- Raiders take advantage of the disrupted comms to bypass sentries and attack outlying farmers.
- The PCs have to triangulate the signal by finding the edges of its effect, requiring a lot of travel.
- A group of psychic shamblers have been attracted by the signal, and are wandering near the tower repeating its words. They attack if they believe the PCs are planning to "remove the voice of the gods".
- The tower is protected by security robots, who believe the PCs are trespassers and attempt to arrest them and "temporarily" put them in holding cells.
- There are already captives in the tower, who arrived to try to loot it earlier. They are frightened and violent, but can be talked down.
- The tower is a complex system with an unknown power source. If deactivated the wrong way it could explode, ruining its treasures and injuring or killing!

Follow-up Adventure Ideas:

- The radio station wasn't activated automatically. Why did someone want to disrupt comms in the area?

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SOMETHING TO EAT

33

Wilderness, Mutations

Scouting an uncharted area, the PCs come across a fertile valley of juicy plants that are evolutionarily specialized to consume humans and animals.

Getting the PCs Involved:

- The PCs are sent to scout an area in search of food.
- Exploring the area, the PCs stumble upon the valley.

Encounters:

- The PCs see an opening valley full of plants bearing the most delicious fruit. Attentive PCs will notice a slight musty odor hanging in the valley.
- Hungry, the PCs try one of the fruits, becoming intoxicated.
- The PCs come across a human corpse, entangled in plant matter. It might have something valuable on it...
- Following screams for help, the PCs encounter a trapped person, but it is only a trick of the plants.
- The PCs encounter a person trapped and half-digested by one of the plants.
- On their way through the valley, the PCs are attacked by a particularly large specimen.
- Upon trying to leave the valley, all the plants attack in unison to try and stop the party.

Follow-up Adventure Ideas:

- The plants procreate through seeds the PCs now carry all over their bodies.
- A mayor decides the fruit are still valuable to his people and commands villagers to harvest them.

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GUESTS OF A GUST

32

Storm, Radiation, Mutations

Seeking shelter from a radioactive storm, the PCs enter an abandoned factory. Soon, another joins them—who is the Eye of the Storm, luring them out.

Getting the PCs Involved:

- Travelers through uncharted land, the PCs are surprised by the storm and seek shelter.
- Alternatively, the PCs want to explore the factory when suddenly hit by the storm.

Encounters:

- The generators are not running. The PCs have to remove the radiation-burned corpse blocking one.
- A resounding knock summons the PCs to the door. A cloaked figure demands shelter.
- A generator breaks down. A mutated animal destroyed it and needs to be fought.
- The factory is shaken. The stranger suggests it might be safer outside lest they be crushed by the building.
- The PCs' water is spoiled by radiation and burns them when they drink it.
- Despite countermeasures, radiation levels rise. Iues point to the stranger as the source.
- The stranger evades all questions about their identity, instead insisting on leaving the building.
- If confronted with force, the stranger reveals their nature and fights back.

Follow-up Adventure Ideas:

- One of the PCs now bears the seed of the Storm.

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BIG GAME HUNTING

35

Beast, Thieves, Ruins

Hunting a giant beast threatening an area, the PCs find it to be a magic-powered machine run by thieves, stealing the victim's goods to support their hometown.

Getting the PCs Involved:

- The PCs are tasked to hunt down the Beast.
- Alternatively, they come across ruins of an attacked town and decide to investigate.

Encounters:

- The PCs find remnants of an overrun city, with hoof marks all over, and a survivor telling of a giant beast.
- Tracks in the wildlands become weird when suddenly they mix with human prints and dropped engine parts.
- The PCs catch a person stealing rare magical engine parts as replacement parts for the beast.
- A caravan gets attacked by the beast—the PCs try to flee or save as many people or goods as they can.
- Parts dropped or smashed down from the beast can be traced to a town in the hills.
- Upon confrontation, the thieves defend themselves with the need of the raids to provide for their people (who are ignorant how the supplies are acquired).
- The thieves either fight the PCs, or ask the party for an alternative to provide for their town.

Follow-up Adventure Ideas:

- A powerful mage engineer is seeking their lost pet.
- The original raid victims decide to take revenge on the thieves' hometown.

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HIJACKED ABOVE THE CLOUDS

34

Airship, Pirates, Monster

Aboard a magical airship, pirates take control. They don't anticipate the other unwanted guest though: a malevolent giant mutant snake hiding in the gas bag.

Getting the PCs Involved:

- The PCs are hired to protect the airship (armed).
- The PCs travel aboard the ship (weapons turned in).
- The PCs are stowaways (potentially armed).

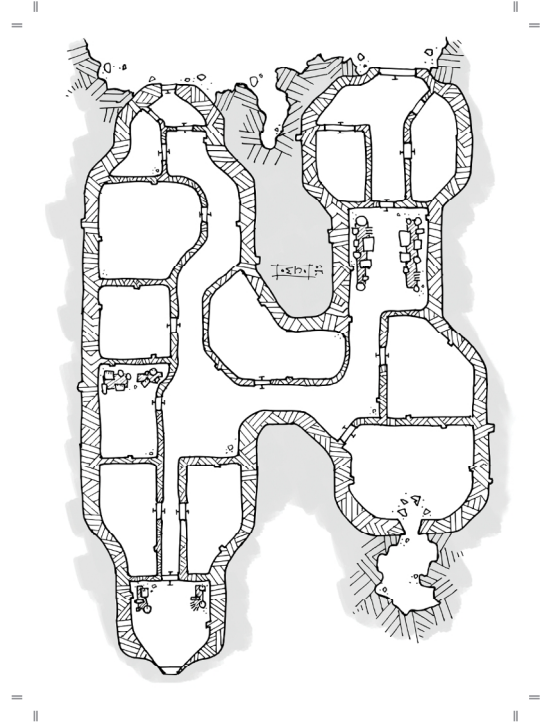
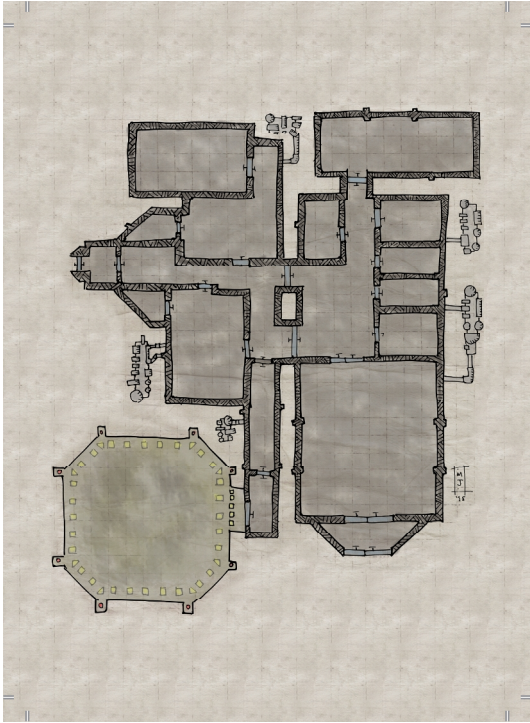
Encounters:

- During their sojourn, the PCs find a crewmember, bound and locked away, talking about hijackers.
- The ship suddenly veers, irritating passengers.
- Gunshots from the cockpit alarm everyone when sky pirates start collecting weapons and taking control.
- Deep rattling sounds from the gas balloon seem to alarm even the pirates.
- The PCs might need to get hold of their collected weapons by sneaking into the guarded armory.
- In the corridors, an armed guard attacks the PCs.
- All fighting ceases when a giant snake leaves the gas bag and roams the hallways.
- Someone suggests to set the gas bag on fire to kill the snake and won't listen to any reasoning.
- With or without the pirates, the PCs must manage an emergency landing or escape.

Follow-up Adventure Ideas:

- There was something valuable the pirates wanted.
- In the gas bag, snake eggs are hatching.

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VISITORS

37

Spacewreck, Aliens, Ambush

A spaceship crashed and the PCs embark to search it. They will find that the fiends aboard have not killed the human crew. They are what became of them!

Getting the PCs Involved:

- The PCs witness a spaceship crash and decide they might want to help the survivors/loot the cargo hold.
- The PCs are sent to investigate the reason of an orbital spaceship crashing into the desert.

Encounters:

- In the entrance hall, two human corpses with weird mutations are found, killed by the crash.
- While exploring the shipwreck, its emergency power breaks down and everything gets dark.
- The PCs hear a nearby scream. If they investigate, they find another scavenger dragged into a room.
- Suddenly, one of the alien creatures attacks. The PCs have to fight it in the dark.
- In a wet room the PCs find writhing larvae on the ground, possibly stinging one of them!
- In the cargo hold, the PCs find the creatures' Queen, laying eggs and nurturing half-humans.
- A passenger, half-mad, approaches the PCs, transforming into a beast just as it attacks.

Follow-up Adventure Ideas:

- The sting might be nothing, but...
- A single larva escapes, spreading its kind...

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TOXIC WASTE

36

Wilderness, Radiation, Demigod, Mutations

The PCs need to cross an area plagued by high radiation. They experience weird anomalies until they discover the misguided demigod causing mutations.

Getting the PCs Involved:

- The PCs must cross the radioactive wastelands to deliver something to a faraway city.
- The PCs become aware of their surroundings only when they are already deep into the wastelands.

Encounters:

- Coming to a body of water, a PC burns himself—either at the water or at a weed curling from it.
- An animal mutated in a way never seen before attacks the PCs from the undergrowth.
- Personal or item-bound magic behaves weird: it changes the environment around it.
- The PCs are pursued by someone. It is a human, mutated and twisted into a half-scorpion form.
- They come to a grove of beautiful plants, emitting a hallucinogenic gas to make the forest appear endless.
- When entering a small town, the PCs notice every building and person, upon touch, crumbles to dust.
- In the ruins of a nuclear reactor, the PCs find a demigod using radiation to shape his own Creation.

Follow-up Adventure Ideas:

- The demigod must be healed of radiation to come back to its senses.
- The PCs begin to change into a demigod creation.

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THE LIVING MUSEUM

39

Living Fossils, Techno-Mage

Science-magicians are restoring to life long dead creatures. The leader of the group wants to create a "living museum". But he underestimates the abilities and intelligence of some.

Getting the PCs Involved:

- The PCs are hired as security at the museum.
- The town council hires the PCs to investigate the museum.

Encounters:

- PCs are given a tour of the facilities; including monitors on the creature exhibits, secondary doors, etc.
- But the creatures attempt escape from each exhibit at the same time.
- Many creatures have abilities that weren't known (lost to history) that helped escape: change size, levitation, firebreath, super-strength, etc.
- Some of the smarter ones will use the distraction to find a more subtle way to escape. (Shape change as a guard for example.)

Follow-up Adventure Ideas:

- Are any creatures still missing?
- If the PCs work for the museum, are they arrested for allowing the escape?

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RAPTURE

38

Cult, Portal, Rapture

A formerly lively town is suddenly completely empty. The PCs uncover an underground cult that managed to make the whole town go to the rapture in another world, exchanging the same amount of alien matter...

Getting the PCs Involved:

- The PCs travel to a town to conduct business there, but find it empty.
- Receiving a radio signal, the PCs trace it to the town.

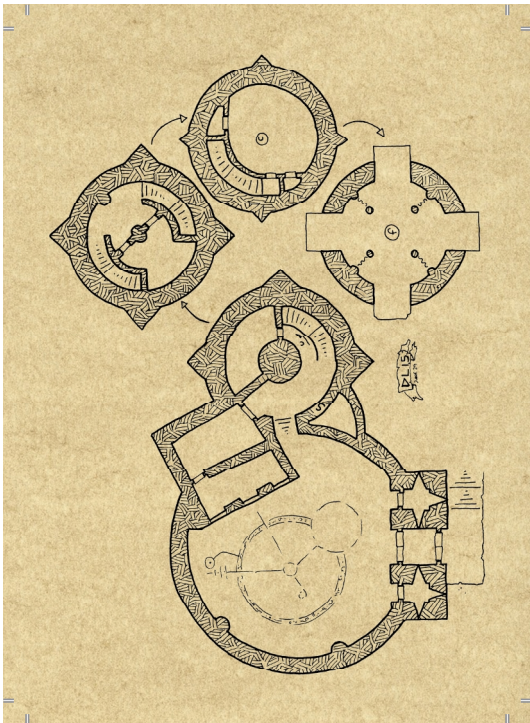
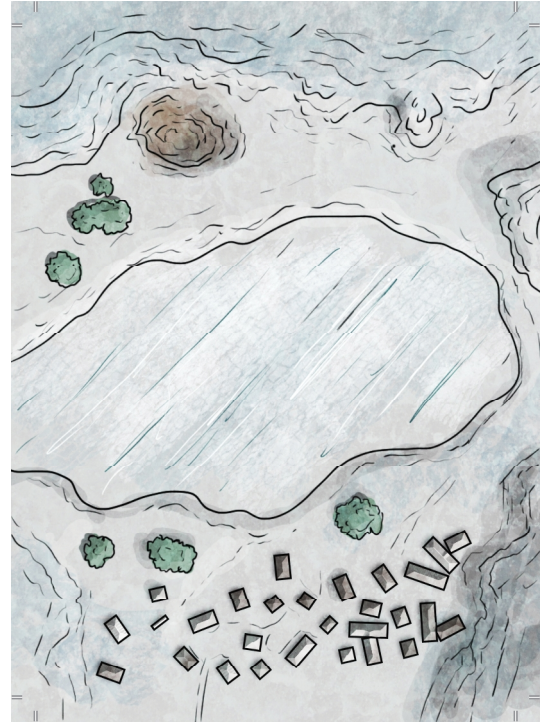
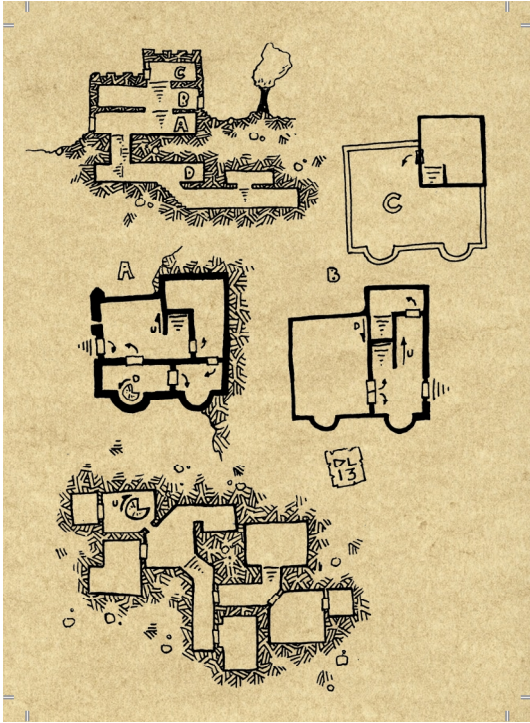
Encounters:

- In the town square, clothing lies scattered everywhere. Searching it causes a giant, unknown insect to crawl forth and possibly bite.
- Noise comes from a gallery dominated by paintings of alien landscapes. An old radio transmits on its own.
- A central building is crushed by a big block of unknown metal that couldn't have fallen from the sky.
- Many houses contain farewell letters speaking of "a new home" and "a cosmic exchange".
- The basement of a well-used building houses a chapel of an unknown religion. Its holy text describes exchanging matter from earth to paradise, and back.
- A weird alien creature follows and attacks the PCs.

Follow-up Adventure Ideas:

- Many more things have come through the exchange. The countryside is crawling!
- Paradise isn't what it seemed. The survivors send desperate radio signals from the other world for help.

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ALL GOOD THINGS COME FROM ABOVE 41

Weather, Ancient Technology

It's inexplicably starting to snow heavily, and the PCs investigate. The cause is a powerful ancient machine revived by a benevolent but careless engineer.

Getting the PCs Involved:

- A friend or relative of a PC suffers from the cold and begs them to do something.
- The PCs have a task they can't do due to weather.

Encounters:

- A sudden blizzard forces everyone to seek shelter and potentially destroying buildings and vehicles.
- The PCs hear a rumor of a dig site where such unusual weather has happened before.
- A frozen lake lies between the PCs and their destination. They must decide if they want to take the dangerous route.
- A PC suffers from frostbite that needs immediate medical attention.
- Grave robbers plunder the dig site. Among their booty is a diary talking about a strange machine and a retreat in the mountains.
- An avalanche rolls towards the PCs, forcing them to take shelter in a dangerous cave.
- The engineer didn't know what he caused through tinkering with the machine. When he tries to shut it off though, it fights back.

Follow-up Adventure Ideas:

- It wasn't the only half-conscious machine in the dig.

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A CURE FOR EVERYTHING 40

Unusual Healing, Infiltration

There is a magical remedy summoned from another world centuries ago. The PCs locate it in a gang's fort, only to discover it is conscious and the gang's leader.

Getting the PCs Involved:

- The PCs are sent by a city to locate the substance to save the city from a plague.
- One of the PCs falls incurably sick until they hear about the substance.

Encounters:

- The PCs speak to a chemist about the substance, who becomes anxious. She talks about a dangerous woman seeking to destroy all evidence of it.
- An old text narrates the substance is not what it seems and can be located by its eerie green glow.
- The site of the original summoning has a faint green glow. There is a gun of infamous design, belonging to a dangerous gang.
- Ggang members try to abduct the PCs. If defeated, they can lead the PCs to their fortress.
- The PCs can either sneak through the gang fortress or approach violently. Overheard conversations tell them the substance is in the grand hall.
- The leader is a woman glowing green, summoned and trapped here. She won't heal without reward.

Follow-up Adventure Ideas:

- She asks the PCs to fulfill a quest as a return favor.
- The leader asks for help to get back to her home.

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SEEING IS BELIEVING 43

Ancient Technology, Shadow World

Magic lenses that can see into the shadow world reveal creatures feeding on neighbors' shadows as they become increasingly lethargic.

Getting the PCs Involved:

- An inventor hires the PCs to help investigate supernatural events.
- The PCs acquire unusual glasses as part of recent treasure... and they start seeing strange shadows.

Encounters:

- The PCs see shadow-cat creatures licking at townfolks' shadows. Their drinking leaves the victim lethargic and unmotivated.
- An old crone knows that cold silver used to be hung over children's beds to keep them safe at night. If used as a weapon they can strike shadows.
- The local church has old tomes about entrapping evil spirits in complex rituals. The team could try to catch the shadowcats.
- The cats will frequently harass the PCs shadows when they can sneak up on the PCs in dark areas.
- If the PCs can destroy or chase off the shadowcats, the townfolk will eventually recover.

Follow-up Adventure Ideas:

- Did the old crone or church-man use their knowledge to summon the shadowcats for some purpose?
- In future adventures, the same PCs are attacked by shadow-cats at the worst moments.

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THE MISSING ASSISTANT 42

Sorcery and Technology

The PCs search for a missing sorcerer's assistant. They find him hiding in an old workshop, having learned the truth: He is a spirit in an artificial body.

Getting the PCs Involved:

- The sorcerer employs the PCs to find his assistant.
- The PCs need something from the sorcerer, but what they want has been stolen by the assistant.

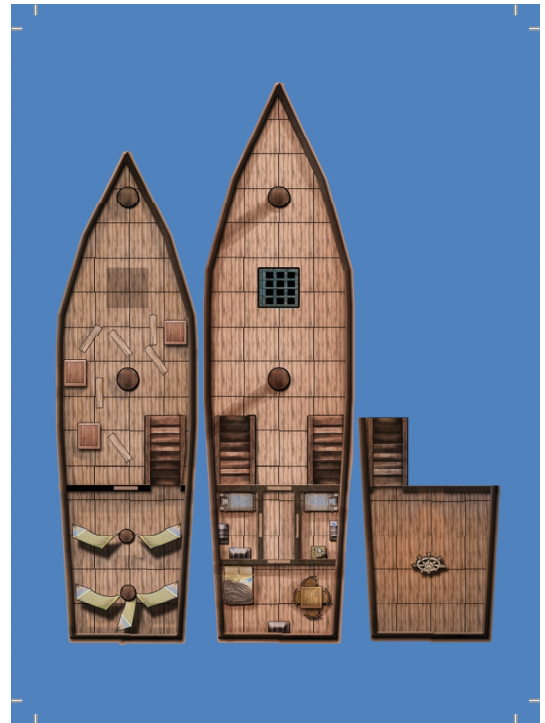
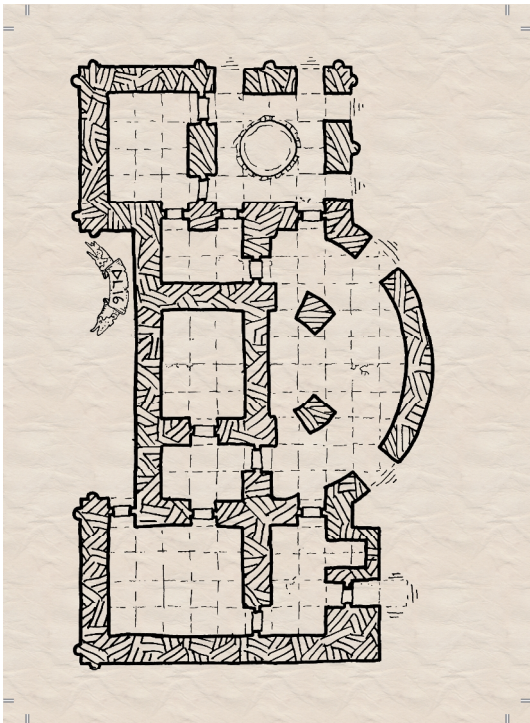
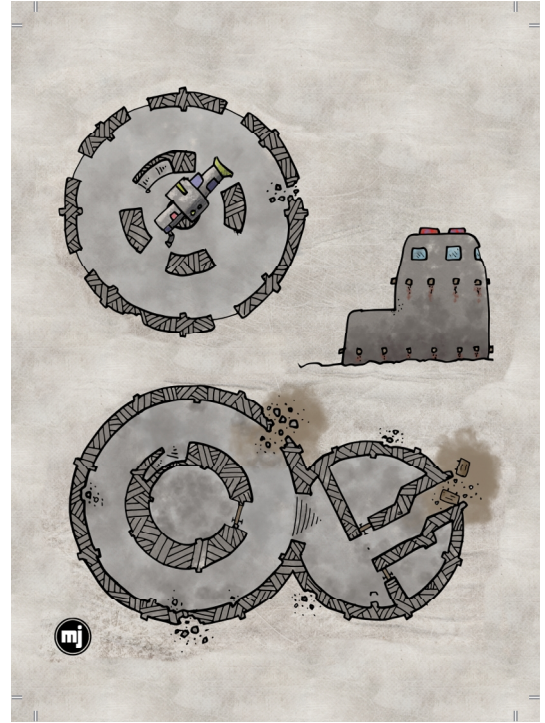
Encounters:

- In the assistant's room, they find an old camera lens and a friendly letter from the local tinkerer.
- Neighbors speak of a painful scream in the night and the assistant, holding his face, talking to the tinkerer.
- The tinkerer's son talks to a PC, checking if they are friendly or angry towards the assistant.
- The tinkerer spoke to the assistant about his missing eye, and said he needed spare parts to help him. He sent him to the old workshop.
- At night, the tinkerer's son breaks into the sorcerer's house to steal the camera lens. The PCs can follow him to the workshop.
- The assistant hides in the workshop, desperate, with one eye camera missing. He learned his body was artificial, and he was a powerful spirit bound to it to be abused as a magical power source.

Follow-up Adventure Ideas:

- The PCs are asked to help free the assistant's soul.
- The assistant takes revenge on the sorcerer.

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EXTRAPLANAR TRANSPORT 45

Extra-dimensional Travel, Ancient Technology

An old portal device has fallen into disrepair. The party may wish to fix it, if they can get there first.

Getting the PCs Involved:

- The PCs need to travel to another dimension, planet, or time and hear there is a portal device in a remote tower.
- A PC receives a prophecy of a great destroyer arriving on this planet/dimension through the tower.

Encounters:

- The tower is infested with sub-humanoids who have made it their home.
- An ancient alarm trap which places the party in a cell must be avoided or overcome. If activated, after a minute the bars start moving closer together.
- Stairs up are also trapped. Sturdy doors at the top and bottom lock, and sand fills the stairway.
- An old mechanic works upstairs. He has tried to keep the device working, but a critical piece is missing. He asks the PCs to find it.

Follow-up Adventure Ideas:

- The PCs may use the device to travel, but now others can travel here...

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A RITUAL OF LIVING STONE 44

Techno-mage, Ancient Technology

A modern wizard believes he can bring back to life an ancient colossus from a forgotten age.

Getting the PCs Involved:

- In the distance, the PCs spot a giant statue which seems to move—not by much, just an occasional head tilt or arm adjustment.
- Nearby villagers see many strangers traveling to the statue. They send messengers to the local ruler who sends the PCs to investigate.

Encounters:

- The entrances (through the eyes—a long climb) or behind a waterfall are difficult to spot. A hard to see trail leads to the latter.
- In a worship area, initiates are reading and copying ancient notes. They can be surprised.
- A secret passage leads up. It is long and trapped.
- A small river inside seems to be a power source. Perhaps it can be sabotaged.
- Further up are more rooms with various controls. The wizard is continuing his research unless the PCs have made a great disturbance or he has been alerted.
- The wizard makes a good argument for continuing his work: he isn't harming anyone, bought this land, etc.

Follow-up Adventure Ideas:

- If allowed to continue his work, what does the wizard do with the colossus when he gains control?
- If not, do the PCs destroy an ancient historical site?

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EMERGENCY EVACUATION! 47

Disaster, Escape

The floating island is torn apart in a sci-tech magical explosion. All air ships are being commandeered in order to evacuate everyone nearby.

Getting the PCs Involved:

- If the PCs have a ship: If they want to remain in charge of it, they'll assist.
- If the PCs don't have a ship, but can captain one: Or if they can't, they should "volunteer" as crew or risk being left behind.

Encounters:

- Evacuees board. More try to push their way on, but the ship can only carry so many.
- An evacuee turns out to be a thief. He is caught trying to steal an item precious to a character.
- A group of ships, including the party's, is attacked by a flight of creatures.
- The ship lands in a safe location. Those in charge take a census. If the ship isn't the party's, the government takes control.

Follow-up Adventure Ideas:

- Opportunities abound: ruins may have been revealed, reconstruction is needed, etc.
- What was the cause of the sci-tech explosion?

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THE IRON HARVEST 46

Trials, Puzzles, Ancient Technology

Every decade the Iron Star appears above the kingdom and drops huge tear shaped lumps of iron on the country. The damage may finally end if someone can take control of the Temple of the Star.

Getting the PCs Involved:

- A sage hears of the PCs and asks them to help, having researched the iron star.
- They find a village that has been destroyed, and the survivors beg them to enter the temple.

Encounters:

- Reaching the temple they find it defended by a golem, which demands to know why they are worthy to enter.
- Inside they are assigned a golem as a guide. Although friendly it tries to get them killed, leading them into traps then protesting its innocence.
- In one hall the floor has rusted away leaving only the support pillars over the gnashing gears of the temple.
- Outside the control room is a final golem. It tries to persuade them to leave. If that fails it attacks.
- In the control room they find a structure with a corpse inside. To take control one of them will have to replace it permanently, unless they can think of another plan.

Follow-up Adventure Ideas:

- Is there more than one iron star?
- Someone may wish to seize the temple to use it as a weapon.

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DEATH CAVE

49

Radiation, Undead, Alien Beast

A local cave is radiating undead energy. It kills the living (people and animals) and raises them as "undead."

Getting the PCs Involved:

- The PCs pass a very sick horse that dies as they pass. Later that night it attacks them, seemingly undead.
- They stop at a hamlet to find everyone very sick. In the night, the sick die, and attack as "undead."

Encounters:

- The nearest town has fortified everyone in the main hall, in siege mode. The mayor knows the problem started in the death cave, where nothing stays dead, but it never got this bad before. Maybe the PCs could put a stop to it?
- The cave has attracted and spawned many undead that must be chopped down. PCs start getting sick.
- The center is an alien beetle that emits tiny metallic bugs. They are breathed in or crawl into skin, making the subject sick and die, then the victim will rise under the beetle's command.

Follow-up Adventure Ideas:

- They kill the beetle. But will one of the infected germinate a new one in the future?

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BROOD MOTHER

48

Aliens, Hunt, Spawn

Aliens lost a beast and need help before it lays eggs.

Getting the PCs Involved:

- Nervous town leaders involve the PCs, because aliens came to them and the town guard is weak.
- Camping is interrupted by bright light and a landing alien ship. The aliens want help.

Encounters:

- The aliens explain their transport crashed, and a pregnant Zoorgrob escaped stasis. It will lay thousands of eggs. Aliens offer healing globes & stunners to knock-out the beast; regular weapons have no effect.
- PCs find a hamlet destroyed and an angry mob. The monster will kill the peasants if they catch up to it.
- Following a river, they find the first floating egg cluster. It hatches, and they face dog-sized spawn.
- They find an impressive local alpha predator destroyed by the Zoorgrob.
- They corner the exhausted Zoorgrob in a cave. Eggs begin to hatch all around it. Stunning the jelly affects eggs that touch it & knocks the birthing monsters out.

Follow-up Adventure Ideas:

- The aliens gratefully depart with subdued Zoorgrobs.
- If the PCs can't or won't subdue the mother, the aliens crash their ship into the hatching site & nuke it.

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WAYWARD GUARDIAN

51

Honor, King, Guardsman

The king's bodyguard is to be entombed in a hulking steel machine to better guard the king forever. He rejects his duty and becomes a fugitive.

Getting the PCs Involved:

- A quiet night in a tavern is ruined by a massive ambush against a lone hooded man who makes a mess of the king's elite troops and tries to escape. Do they help capture or free him?
- A source shares that the king has put a bounty on his prize bodyguard; do the PCs want to hunt him?

Encounters:

- If they have a heroic reputation, the bodyguard may approach them for help.
- If they have a terrible reputation, the bodyguard may hire them to mislead the pursuit.
- During any meeting, a massive number of soldiers surround the place. They bring metallic robots piloted by disembodied human heads to fight.
- The PCs may get to choose if the guardian escapes, gets a mercy killing, or is delivered alive to the surgeons to be implanted in a machine for years to come.

Follow-up Adventure Ideas:

- They may earn the favor or ire of the king, who has mechanical servitors at the ready.

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MUTANT COUP

50

Mad Doctor, Intelligent Apes

Revolutionaries pay a mad doctor to mutate them into super-warrior creatures so they can stage a coup.

Getting the PCs Involved:

- A college student, giving a revolution talk, is chased by town guards. A monster ape aids his escape.
- The king hires the party to find the source of the monsters plaguing his guard.
- A revolutionary seduces a PC and invites them all to see the future.

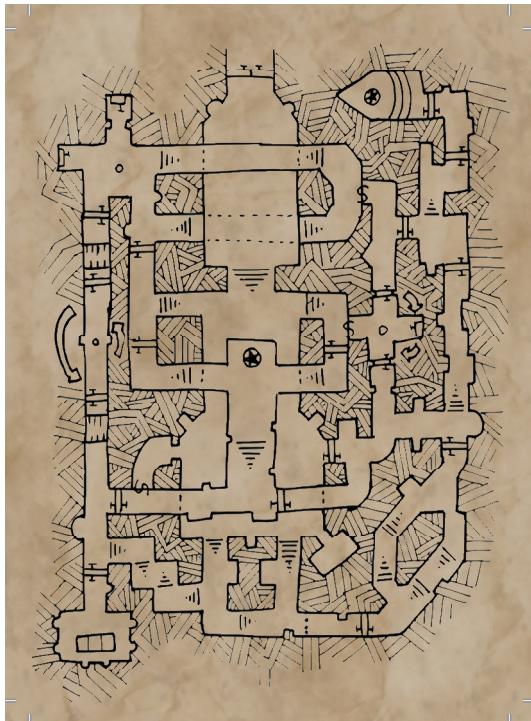
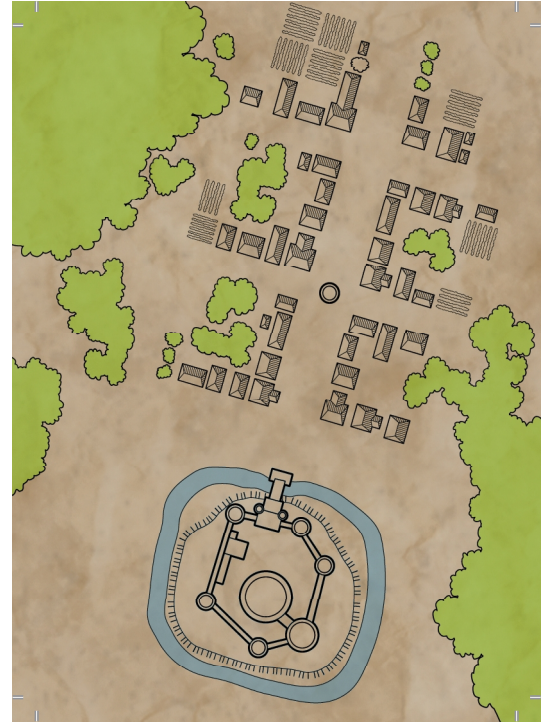
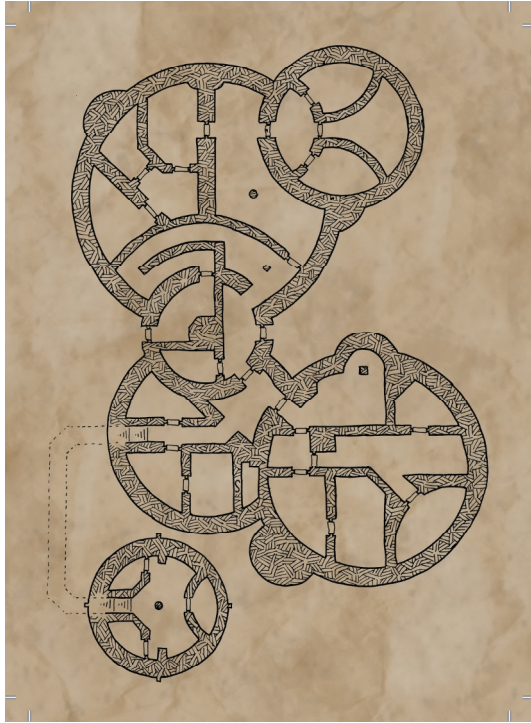
Encounters:

- A few super-intelligent apes live in a cave defended by failed experiments—true monsters with tentacles, huge maws, etc. They may show off their mutations, combining energy and chemicals to warp foes.
- The apes have worked the revolutionaries into a frenzy. They hope to get rid of the king so their people may move into this area.
- If PCs lose a fight they become experiments. If they kill/capture the doctor, they face frenzied monsters.

Follow-up Adventure Ideas:

- Ideally they have an opportunity to try and sway someone with rhetoric, whether it is the king, the revolutionary leader, or the apes.
- One or more of the three leaders (king, revolutionary, mad ape) probably dies.

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BLACK KNIGHT

53

Robot, Plague, Town

A booby-trapped, armored robot is challenging famous heroes and villains to single combat.

Getting the PCs Involved:

- A PC gets word that a famous mentor was slain. They learn about the armored knight that killed her.
- PCs are pursuing an infamous villain who is intercepted and slain by the armored knight.
- A famous PC is challenged by the knight.

Encounters:

- A local nobody is getting lots of attention for witnessing the battle. He relates a colorful tale of the fight, and observes that at the end the knight demanded the target yield; when the target did not, the target was slain.
- A worried scholar observed the rune on the armor, and connects it to the rune of a lost city famed for its magical and technological advances. In the ancient language, the rune indicates that if defeated, the knight will self destruct and poison the land! However, there is a shut-off option that they can reach if they are very clever.
- The PCs get updates on the robot's location from passersby. They find it.

Follow-up Adventure Ideas:

- If they defeat it, it detonates and covers the area with radiation. If they shut it down, it goes inert. If it wins, the target may yield.

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FUSION PLAGUE

52

Machinery, Infection, What is human?

A plague is spreading, and when people contract it they are able to attach metal implements to their bodies and use them like limbs.

Getting the PCs Involved:

- Soldiers are demanding a sick beggar infect them with the "fusion plague."
- In a village, they meet an adventurer on his deathbed, mostly metallic. He says he released the fusion plague, and their only hope to find a cure is at a nearby mountain-top monastery.

Encounters:

- They are waylaid by bandits who have metal claws, partially armored bodies, or spear arms.
- They see a farmer with a pruning hook on his wrist, flexible like a hand.
- They reach the monastery, and see a wise four-armed alien who gives them a drink of strange pixelated water. He tells them their breath and blood will cure victims, and make victims cure-bearing.
- They confront the forces of the local lord, who do not WANT to be cured. (They may survive for years with the plague.) In the battle, the PCs can try and cure as many as possible.
- The local lord marches out, now a metallic centaur, to kill them for their interference.

Follow-up Adventure Ideas:

- Do the PCs seek to wipe all evidence of the plague?

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SIDEQUEST DECKS:

SCIENCE FANTASY

Need science fantasy adventure ideas for a one-shot or to build a campaign? Use our **SideQuest Decks: Science Fantasy**. Each card is a dynamic adventure!

This sub-genre focuses on worlds where magic has returned after technology has regressed, when space travelers visit a fantasy world, or magic is used to travel through space.

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!

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TEMPLE SHIFT

54

Space/Time Transport, Arcane/Divine Energy

A massive and ancient temple is legendary for warping reality. The temple is actually a reality-warping spacecraft propulsion system that is melting down.

Getting the PCs Involved:

- Creatures are terrorizing the local town. Some are from the distant past, others are not recognizable. The townsfolk are outmatched.
- The clergy of a local church speak gravely of the temple they only visit for pilgrimages. They'll pay for an escort for their high priest to reach the site safely.

Encounters:

- The party runs across a pack of dangerous dinosaurs, really out of place.
- On the way to the temple, they battle confused aliens.
- In the temple itself, the party meets the metal guardians; the temple was built around a crashed starship.
- The high priest knows a ritual passed down as a secret of the priest class, and can shut it off at the control panel. If it is simply smashed there will be unpredictable results for reality.

Follow-up Adventure Ideas:

- Even if the engine is turned off neatly, there will be many creatures stuck here out of time & place.
- If it was not shut down neatly, anything may happen!

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