

THE FOLIO

Part 1 of the
Hidden Valoria
Campaign

DF1 The Patina Court

New Monster:
Hopping Brain

Mythras City of
Valoria Gazetteer
PC1

Adventure for
Levels 1-3 in both
1E & 5E formats!





Part One
of
The Hidden Valoria Campaign
An Adventure for
Characters Levels 1-3

The Troubled
Crypt



- A. The Fallen Warlock Hostel
- B. The Rancid Cauldron
- C. Murtel's Mortuary
- D. Abrella of the Third Eye
- E. House of Sigils
- F. The Helicrium Bathhouse
- G. House of Flying Daggers
- H. Isildred of Golden Sylph
- I. Prometheus Soup Kitchen
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The Portina Court

The Patina Court, fallen neighborhood within the greater metropolis of Valoria. Once the home to many proud practitioners of the arcane, the copper roofs have now turned green and the magic has fled. Weathered signs still proclaim wares to be had, and downtrodden folk nonetheless walk the shadowed streets.



The Rancid Cellar



Brawl Club



Main Street



The Alienist

Mythras City^{of} Valoria Gazetteer

The Patina Court

Introduction

Mythras Sandbox: How can I not be excited today to get my first opportunity to present a joint venture between Dwarven Forge and Art of the Genre? Well, honestly it would be impossible, especially since I get to play in their Sandbox for a bit!

This union of adventure and terrain came about in the spring of 2015 after Stefan at Dwarven Forge saw what we were doing with The Folio series and approached us about the possibility of exploring his world of Mythras. I'll tell you — I jumped at the chance because I know full well that Stefan is an avid gamer, and getting a chance to dive into his homebrew world and add my own wrinkles was just too good to pass up.

So, after more than half a year of development, I present to you DF1, the first in a trilogy of adventures that will flesh out a little corner of

the epic Mythras city of Valoria. Taking pieces from Fritz Lieber, Robert E. Howard, Michael Moorcock, and even a touch of H. P. Lovecraft, I've melded Stefan's vision of his fabulous city with what I think best represents the flavor all of you are after.

Together, we've blended aspects of Dwarven Forge terrain with fast swords & sorcery adventuring, as well as unmatched classic fantasy art to give you this unique look into Valoria. I hope you all enjoy what we've created, and remember, this is just a guidebook, not gospel, so feel free to change, adapt, and reuse in your own campaigns, anything you enjoy in these pages.

Best,
Scott Taylor



Alexa shopping at the House of Flying Daggers



CAMPAIGN BACKGROUND ON

The Patina Court

Valoria is a vast and dynamic city of more than 50,000 inhabitants. Its districts are unique, varied, and play integral roles in its vibrant ecology. However, that isn't to say that every block inside its walls is worthy of record. Each street is like a wave in a vast ocean caught in a single moment in time. Some are at a high point, curling in the break, and raise the city's esteem. Others have spent their energy on a sandy shore, now bleeding away into depths until they will perhaps rise again or fade into antiquity.

So is the story of the Patina Court. Once a proud neighborhood tucked north of Main Street and west of Odin's Way, it has become a forgotten footnote in the annals of Valoria's lore.

Two centuries ago, when the nobility were building estates along Basilisk Lane in the North Ward, a collection of magically adept and independent minded citizens moved from the Wizard's Knoll to form their own elite neighborhood in direct competition with the moneyed markets of Basilisk.

Using gold gained from their varied arcane services, they built large homes and decorated their eaves with bronze imported from the gnomes of Urn. With passing years, the regal bronze flashing took on a deep green patina, and so the name of the neighborhood was born, the Patina Court.

Magic, like life itself, is cyclical, and so attrition slowly wore away on those of the Patina. Unlike mundane noble families bent on political marriage and heredity, the magic practitioners of the Patina were loners, eccentrics, and in many social graces backwards. They cared more for intellectual study than raising children, and so within several generations the grand experiment of the Patina lost its luster just as the gnomish bronze.

As the magic faded from the Patina, the grand houses were closed, and foot traffic from Valoria's citizens, once heavy seeking potions, elixirs, spells, and enchantments, died away as well. The Patina darkened and was all but forgotten.

Decades passed and the homes still stood as stark reminders of pride, wealth, and even the magic of its creators as the structures rarely decayed as though standing vigil for their long lost masters.

Today, the Patina is little more than a squatter's paradise, a place where many without hope can find some shelter or those wishing to get lost can disappear. There is no reason to come here, save for those passed from this world, as Murtel's Mortuary services corpses for entombment into crypts within the base of the Wizard's Knoll on the Patina's northern border.



Petty gangs hide amid the old estates, and the Begger's Guild holds one such structure as its Guild House, although no registry exists for the union. The Fallen Warlock Hostel can also be found here, its patrons an eclectic mix of personalities, races, and ages without purses worthy of an inn like the Gracious Arms along the Main.

Certainly other folks still call the Patina Court home, from the decrepit Helicrium Bath

House to Isildred the Golden Astronomer, last of the magically adept in residence, but even then, only the locals have knowledge or care concerning them and they draw almost no interest south of Main.

Truly, this isn't a place you would choose to visit unless you have no other options, are deceased, or are a believer in child's tales of magical treasures hidden beneath the foundations of the ancient homes.

Places of Interest

The Fallen Warlock Hostel:

Situated two streets back from the Main, and farther east than the famed Gracious Arms Inn, this building has become home to an eclectic mix of downtrodden and aspiring pilgrims. Most have recently moved to Valoria, but there are others who have called their small room in the hostel home for several years. Run by an old city guardsman named Alshock the Thrifty, this gruff man acquired the hostel under mysterious means and many locals speak of his secret deals with gangs and a lost illicit goods bust that lined his purse before his retirement. Whatever the case, Alshock runs a tight ship, is never without a well-worn cudgel, and accepts payments for rooms on the first of each month, otherwise you and your things will land roughly on the cobbles by the 2nd.

Residents of Note:

Brimbold Elderman the Lark

Brimbold is a young minstrel from parts unknown who fancies himself a bard. He does play the lute, has a fair voice, and knows three epic poems, but otherwise his greatest passion is charming local ladies for free meals and trinkets he can fence for coin to pay for his room.

Estaban Moncrief of the White Palm

As dark as polished slate and tattooed with half a hundred odd sigils, Estaban is a healer who deals in mundane methodology rather than the magical piety of godly blessings. He will often be found at the Rancid Cauldron trading remedies and small treatments of minor ailments for drink. Once imbued with spirits, he has been known to spin tales of deep deserts, wild fire demons, and knights who fly about the cloudless skies on winged horses.



Lanka the Shade

Lanka is a half-orc, but the heritage of what she claims as her elven father (again, hard to believe) has tempered her orcish side to the point some folks consider her attractive, if in an odd way. She is well-versed in both the elven tongue and orc speech, and has contacts with the orcish clans that dwell outside the walls of Valoria. She makes coin as a scout, often straying from the hostel for weeks at a time, but has a room paid three months in advance so she never loses it. Some locals say she not only knows the land around the city, but more importantly the sewers and catacombs beneath.

Proprias the Learned

A broken-shouldered and thin-bearded dwarf, Proprias is on the last of his days, or so folks have been saying for a full generation and yet he lives on. Local lore speaks of Proprias as one of the dwarves that helped dig tombs into the Wizard's Knoll on the northern border of the Patina, and he is often seen making the commute to Murtel's Mortuary where he writes eulogies for even the most lowly of the dead. Whatever the case, there is no doubt that Proprias has lived through a great deal of the city's history.

Cano, Rogue of the Scarf

Cano keeps to himself, a wiry human with broad shoulders and fingers long enough to palm a full-ripe melon. No one can say they have ever seen his face, the man always wearing a black scarf, and if he has a job, none can speak of that either. In truth, Cano lost his family to gang violence three seasons ago and now takes to the Patina at night seeking to do justice for those who cannot. What he takes from his victims

pays for his room and board, and what he doesn't use is donated to the Prometheus Soup Kitchen.

The Rancid Cauldron:

Where the Gracious Arms serves those with standing along the Main, the Rancid Cauldron is home to the less fortunate of the Patina. Well off the map, this local dive serves up cast-off food from the Gracious Arms (purchased expired and spoiled goods in a backdoor type deal), mostly by boiling it into thick stews. Many a guest has found themselves attached to a privy after a night of stew and spoiled beer, but nonetheless, the fare is cheap and hot, giving those who don't wish to make their own meals a place to gather and talk about daily events.

Murtel's Mortuary:

Certainly the most profitable business run in the Patina, and probably the city (death just never goes out of style), Murtel's has been serving the dead of Valoria for over three hundred years. The Mortuary most often uses its crematorium for customers, but those with more wealth have been known to be interred into Murtel's catacombs, a place marketed as sanctified by both Osiris and Hades. There are also several aboveground crypts located on the Wizard Knoll's slopes where wealthy aristocrats have purchased family tombs, all maintained by the Murtel holdings. Currently run by Brigit Murtel, a young woman of no more than thirty winters, she inherited the business from her older brother who was lost at sea while investigating exotic woods and metals in Urn.



Abrella of the Third Eye:

There is a fortune teller of some renown in the Patina, and her shop ‘Of the Third Eye’ is often the destination for those seeking portents about their future. Most times these are troubled souls looking to discover cheating spouses or unlawful business partners, but lovers, dreamers, entrepreneurs, and even gang members sometimes come looking for answers. Whether Abrella actually has any true divination skills is highly debated, but she does have a well-established network of snitches, spies, and eavesdroppers that she maintains with copper coins, and most patrons would agree Abrella’s second reading is always much more interesting and specific than her first.

House of Sigils:

Babar Ikala, a former sailor of the Golden Lake, runs a small tattoo parlor in the Patina just off the Main. It is a favorite hangout for gangs, so much so that each specific gang has its own devoted day of the week to see Babar; otherwise bloodshed is sure to ensue. The man has real talent, and no design is too large or small, folks of the Patina swearing that Babar’s skill comes from a sea witch he bedded long ago. Either that or he’s seen most of the bizarre creatures on his journeys that patrons ask him to place on their skin.

The Helicrium Bathhouse:

Located on the north side of the Patina, this old bathhouse once served as a congregating point for the magically adept of the neighborhood. Some whisper that the magic of the former patrons still keeps the waters fresh and warm, as no hot spring rises in the Patina. Whatever the case, the place has long since

run down, even if the water is still good, and now it is little more than a front for the Teller Gang to run an underground brothel. The Flesh Guild requires costly permits for such activities in the city, but here, away from the public eye, young women can be found to provide ‘private baths’ for patrons if the coin is right.

House of Flying Daggers:

Ling Tuo, a man of foreign ancestry and a way with working metal, runs what many claim is the finest dagger shop in Valoria from a small shop deep in the Patina. As open-carry swords are frowned upon by the city watch, most citizens concerned about personal protection carry a sling-blade or dirk, and Tuo has no shortage of short blades for those looking to conceal a deadly weapon. His prices are high, especially for the Patina, but his wares often find resale in stalls and shops throughout the city, and more than one violent crime has been traced back to his doorstep.

Isildred of Golden Sylph:

Elves are always looked upon as otherworldly, and those of the Northern Forests of Mythras can sometimes be seen as akin to legend, but nonetheless, some do find their way into Valoria. Isildred is one of these, a female of the race. She has been in the Patina since its founding and is the last of the original builders to maintain a household. Her home, known to the locals as the White Spires, is meticulously maintained and provides a glimpse into the wealth the Patina once held. She is a known mage, and yet her devotion is not to fireballs and lightning bolts, but instead her time is bent studying the constellations as if seeking answers to some question no citizen of the human world has yet to

ask. Known for her ageless beauty, Isildred typically takes a lover every half-century, producing a single child, and then raising it alone. Her children, some say there are over a dozen half-elves that call her mother, still come to visit her on occasion, but none have taken up permanent residence in the Patina.

Prometheus Soup Kitchen:

Seeing as the denizens of the Patina are the last rung of social class before tagged with a homeless moniker, most are in need of assistance, especially concerning food. Large families are prevalent here as contraception is unknown to most. To help combat hunger, the Temple of Prometheus, known by the locals as the Prometheus Soup Kitchen, opens its doors four days a week to the locals for free food. During these petty feasts, gang hatreds are put aside, family feuds left at home, and business squabbles forgotten. At no other time is the Patina more a community than on feast nights, and certainly Prometheus is the most venerated god among the people.

Overall Story Arcs and Threads

Adventure Seed:

Players will be in full introduction mode during this adventure. First they must establish a base of operations in the Patina (probably the Hostel), then they will need to find some type of gainful employment which should lead to the scenarios ‘The Rancid Cellar’ and ‘The Troubled Crypt’. Once they’ve gotten a name for themselves, they will catch wind of several disappearances within the Patina, and that some blame a mysterious creature, or creatures, known as ‘Black Eyes’. Following leads,



and also running afoul of the Teller Gang, who is also seeking these creatures, the players will embark on the final scenario ‘The Alienist’.

Character Money:

Valoria has the standard fantasy type coins, although there are some setting distinct names in the mix. That said, one thing I’d like to make clear to DMs is that characters (like the Conan RPG) should start the game broke. Any money not spent on equipment is removed from play, and all characters are allotted two gold pieces each. This will limit their ability to flee the Patina Court, and most likely stick them in the Hostel, which is a great place to begin things. Costs of goods within the Patina are as follows, just so folks can keep track and know what it takes to ‘move up’ in the world.

Rooms:

Gracious Arms —

2 GP per night for Private Room,
1 GP for Common Room.

Broken Warlock Hostel —

1 GP per week for Private Room,
5 SP per week for Commons.

Meals:

Gracious Arms —

Upwards of 2 GP per meal.

Rancid Cauldron —

5 CP for stew, 1 SP for stew and
bread, 2 SP for stew/bread/stale beer

Also, there isn't a massive amount of monetary treasure in this adventure. That is by design to keep the characters 'lean and mean' as they must really work to gain wealth and position inside the Patina.



Dungeon Master's Notes & Suggestions

1. Running the Patina:

First off, all city campaigns must establish a 'feel'. Some might be more swords & sorcery, others regal high adventure, some dark fantasy, etc. In the case of Valoria, we get a standard Euro feeling mixed with the vestiges of Rome and Egypt, but the real need of the DM here is to set the tone for the Patina. What happens

in the other neighborhoods or wards of the city isn't your concern, only the roughly eight blocks that encompass a world inside a world. When I wrote the Patina, I was leaning heavily on the downtrodden, the ruined magic, and the eccentric folk who still call these buildings home. Like the Roslof Keep Campaign before it, Patina Court is meant to actually mean something to these players, and it falls on the DM to create relationships within the

network of pre-built NPCs, and those of your own creation, that will galvanize the players into true members of ‘the court’. This is the challenge I give to you.

2. Running the Mystery:

The overreaching arc for Folio #8 will be the mystery of the Black Eyes, a race of magically created raccoon people who have been living in the shadows for more than a hundred years. They were created (like Smurfs!) by a magic-user of the Patina for companionship, but now have established their own micro-society that revolves around the work of their long-dead creator. Whenever something odd happens in the Patina, folks often are heard murmuring, ‘It was them that did it,’ meaning the Black Eyes. Still, folk don’t like to talk about the creatures, and many insist they are completely fabricated by gangs to deflect guilt for petty crimes. Whatever the case, the players will have moments when ‘them’ are going to be mentioned, and the pursuit of the final truth will help propel the party into the events of Folio #9.

3. The Hostel & the NPCs:

It is my suggestion that players begin play as independent entities, who after various runs of bad luck, have all come to call the Fallen Warlock Hostel home, at least temporarily. There are great and helpful NPCs already in house, and it makes a great meeting point (stay

away from the dreaded and overplayed, ‘okay, you are all at a tavern’ campaign opening!) for early scenarios. Each player should be in need of coin, as the city isn’t cheap, so use that as your leverage point.

4. Hints of the Black Eyes:

The Black Eyes are the cause of limited chaos inside the Patina, but more recently their thefts have become more brazen (namely since the Teller Gang has taken something the Black Eyes need to maintain control of their master’s other creation, the Hopping Brains. This puts the Black Eyes directly in conflict with the Tellers, and Rexa, leader of the Tellers, believes that the Black Eyes are the gatekeepers to riches beyond the norm, now hidden secretly beneath the streets of the Patina. In the end, the players will likely side with the Black Eyes, thus putting them firmly in the crosshairs of the Tellers as each races for the ultimate prize found in Folio #10.

5. Interactions with the Teller Gang:

This is another key to this adventure. The DM should be using the Teller Gang as a foil to place the players firmly in one camp and the Tellers in the other. Assuming you manage to get the players vested in the health and safety of the Patina, then utilizing low level Teller ‘thugs’ to rough up friends of the players, thus prompting reprisals, should ensure not only that the players become ‘benefactors’ of the Patina,

but also that they will have to watch their backs whenever they travel. This will lead to a greater sense of dread or tension, something that can be utilized by you as the DM to add depth to the trilogy. Also, the lower ranking Tellers are uneducated and slow, quick to act and rarely with concepts of consequence. It is never an issue to sacrifice Tellers to the altar of ‘making the players feel tough’ as there are other dangers in the Patina that should be the true challenge, at least in Folio #8.

Art of this Issue

It has been my longstanding pleasure to work with cover artist Jeff Easley since 2009. In fact, it was Jeff who helped me launch Art of the Genre in 2012 when I released The Cursed Legion on Kickstarter. That Easley covered and illustrated novel, set in the Nameless Realms, has always been the genesis point for what I do here at AotG, and I’m extremely excited to have him on the cover of Folio #8. Interior color art is dealt with by now senior illustrator at AotG, Chet Minton, and you can see not only does he do a great revisit to a classic Monster Manual illustration on the back cover, but his other work also gives a fantastic feel for what Valoria has to offer. B/W interiors are by Michael Wilson as well as his standard ‘iconic’ color character found on the back cover. Other contributors include the inspiring Peter Bradley and the ever gritty Jeff Laubenstein who is channeling Russ Nicholson with his illustration of the Crypt Thing.

The Teller Gang

Operating as the most powerful gang in the Patina, the Tellers are run by a young fallen noble from the North Ward named Notorus Rexa. He has used his charisma and education to win over the former gang of Bryce Teller (killed by Rexa in a duel with poisoned blade), and now fancies himself ‘The Lord of the Patina Court’.

The Tellers now have their hands in many pies, from prostitution at the Helicrium Bathhouse to extortion, petty theft, and gambling, all out of the sight of the city’s various guilds. Rexa is smart enough to keep his business interests profitable but not overt, and he’s also got a good network of informants working in the Patina that can apprise him of anyone who is a serious threat to his power, i.e., the players, or so he fears.

All told, the Tellers have more than thirty members, most below 3rd level, the bulk being of thief or fighter classes. Rexa is a 5th Level fighter with a penchant for poisoned blades.

Credits:

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Color Module Back Cover Character Art: Michael Wilson

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New Monster

Hopping Brain

Lawful Evil

Frequency: Very Rare

No. Appearing: 2-20

Armor Class: 5

HD: 3

Move: 12"

No. of Attacks: 1

Damage/Attack: 1-6

Special Attacks: Spring Attack

Special Defenses: NIL

Magic Resistance: Standard

Intelligence: Very

Size: M

Psionic Ability: NIL

% in lair: 15%

Treasure Type: D

Hopping Brains [AC 15, Speed 30', HD 3d8+6, HP 16, #AT 1, Hit +5, Dam Bite 4 (1d6+1), Spring Attack (can attack and jump away if they hold the initiative, disallowing melee reprisals by their victim)]

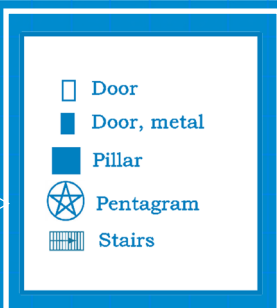
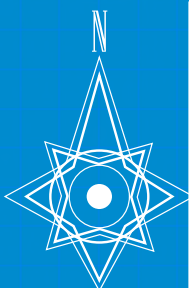
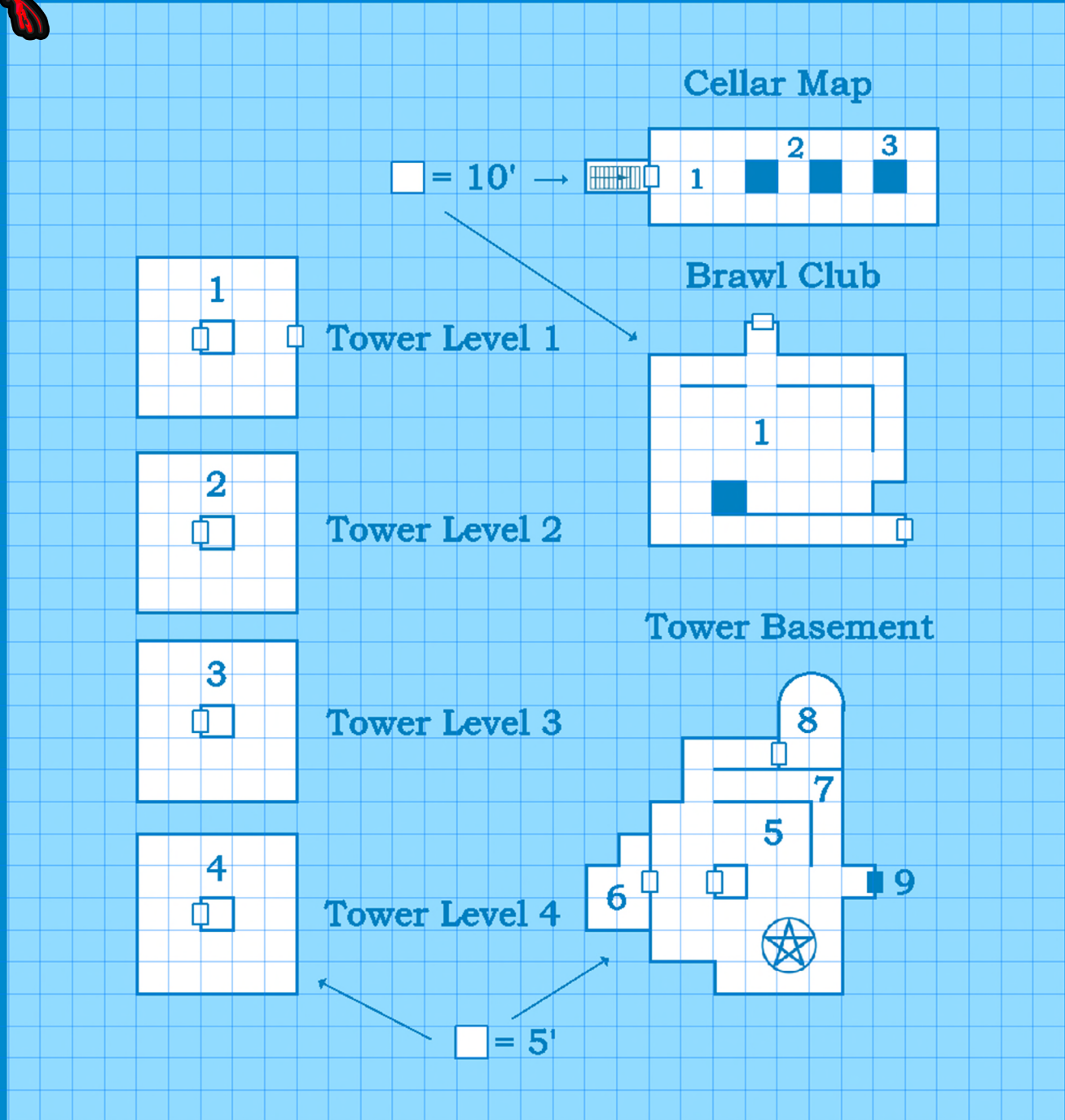
Spring Attack: These creatures have the ability to leap at a target, bite, and then leap away, precluding reprisal from melee attacks against them. To accomplish this, the Hopping Brains must win the initiative. If successful, they can only be attacked by ranged attack for that round as they leap around the area hissing and biting, but never staying in one place long enough to approach.

Each 'pod' of Hopping Brains will have a central 'Leader Brain' who has increased HD (to 8), and also have a 'Frenzy' attack which adds +2 to hit and damage if the Leader Brain is on the property of its master at the time of attack.

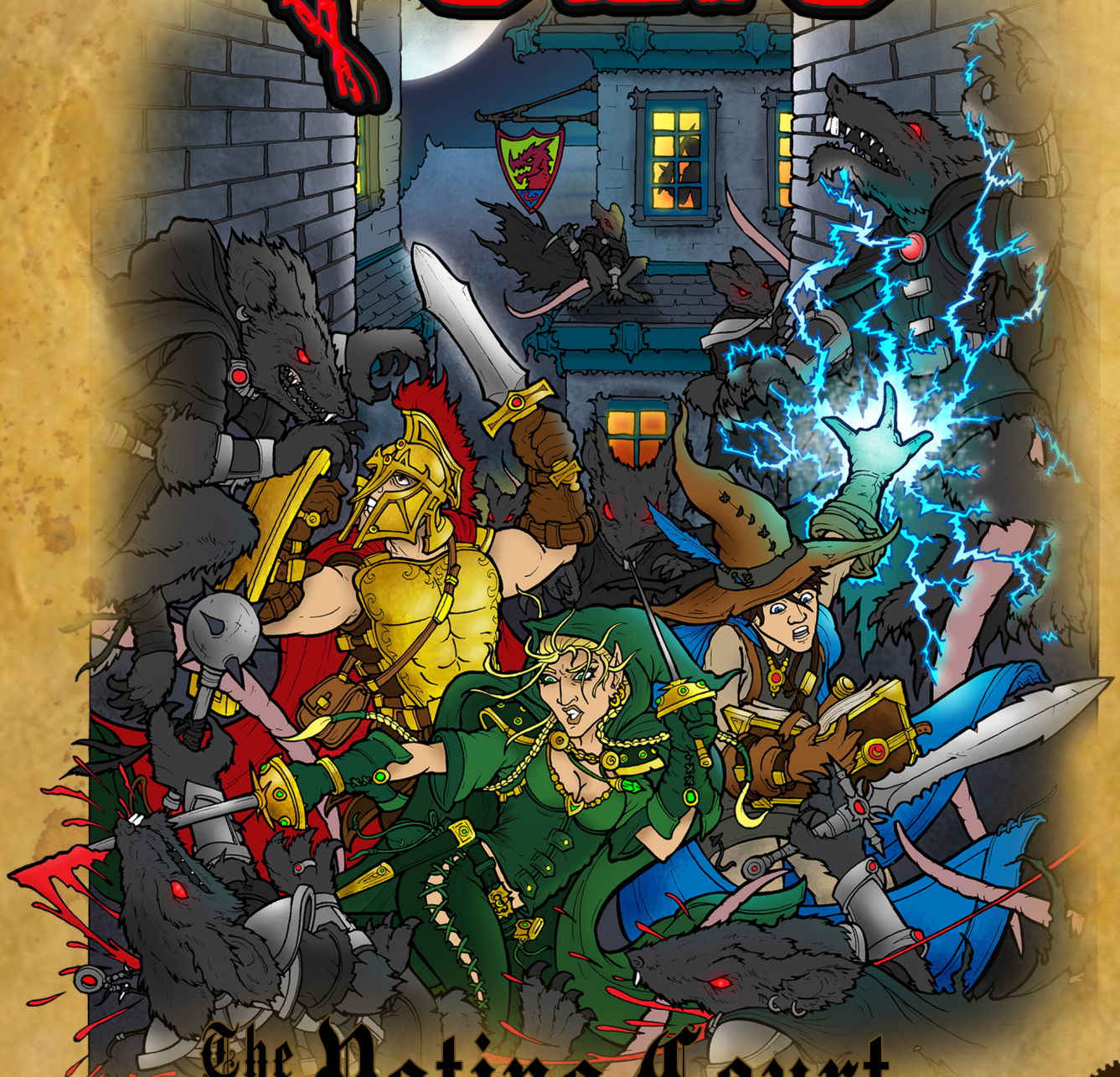
Like the Black Eyes, these creatures are creations of the famed enchanter Kalium Rosa. Where the Black Eyes were created as companions, the Hopping Brains were more the guard dogs of the mage's various treasures. However, once Rosa passed from this plane, the Black Eyes were forced to take over stewardship of the Hopping Brains. Thankfully, Rosa created an enchanted whistle that can subdue the creatures, putting them into a docile state. After the Teller Gang murdered the Black Eye who held the whistle and took the artifact, the Hopping Brains have awoken and begun to systematically hunt within the Patina at night.

Little more than a large 'brain-like' globe attached to two skinny legs and armed with a slavering maw, the Hopping Brains are excellent hunters. They can leap great distances, communicate via limited telepathy, and use a form of echo-location to draw a picture of their environment. This talent means that Hopping Brains are preceded by disturbing and regular 'clicks', so think of their attacks kind of like the foreboding music in Jaws...





THE FOLIO



The Patina Court

FOLIO MODULE OF
An Adventure for Characters Levels 1-3
by Scott Taylor



Folio Module DF1

The Patina Court

An Adventure for Characters Levels 1-3

The Adventure of DF1, The Patina Court, is broken down into three scenarios to introduce low level characters into the trilogy. Each scenario features a small series of encounters built around a Dwarven Forge dungeon, created for this particular campaign, using various sets offered by the company. Although dedicated to Dwarven Forge terrain, non-miniature using players will have access to both OSR 'Blue' maps and fully rendered 3D maps, so that ease of play is not impacted. The bulk of this adventure lies in the introduction of the players to the Patina Court as detailed in the Gazetteer. DMs running the adventure should familiarize themselves with the colorful tapestry of personalities and locations the players will encounter, and define the players' backstories of how they came to the Patina and what motivations they have for the future.

Adventure Seed:

Players will be in full introduction mode during this adventure. First they must establish a base of operations in the Patina (probably the Hostel), then they will need to find some type of gainful employment which should lead to the scenarios 'The Rancid Cellar' and 'The Troubled Crypt'. Once

they've gotten a name for themselves, they will catch wind of several disappearances within the Patina, and that some blame a mysterious creature, or creatures, known as 'Black Eyes'. Following leads and also running afoul of the Teller Gang, who is also seeking these creatures, the players will embark on the final scenario 'The Alienist'.

All 'grey blocks' are for 5E conversions in this section.

Scenario One:

The Rancid Cellar

The Hook:

This micro adventure revolves around stolen foodstuffs in the cellar of the Rancid Cauldron. As Noxis Pike, the owner of the Cauldron, is a miser, he's not about to hire a real professional to handle the thefts (especially since he sent one of his servers, Nile Wash, down to investigate the issue and he never returned). Noxis will happily provide the characters with a week's worth of meals at the Cauldron if they can take care of the problem for him.

The Chase:

Noxis can relate the following story —

He bought the Rancid Caldron from a man nearly fifteen years before and the fellow left it in a despicable condition (he will gesture around the tavern at this like he's showing off the Taj Mahal), not like you see her now. But more so than the main room, the upstairs, and even the kitchen, the cellar was the worst.

It was so bad, in fact, that he decided just to leave it be, lock the door, and forget about it. Still, the area right at the bottom of the stairs was eventually cleared enough for his own ‘overflow’ storage. One of his servers went to retrieve some spices for the stew two days ago, but never returned. He’s not sure if the guy just quit and he didn’t see him leave or if he’s still down there someplace. Whatever the case, he wants the mystery solved.

The Truth:

Noxis packed the cellar with his own junk and cast-offs, so much so that over fifteen years he forgot everything he had down there until something reminded him of a couple of bottles of wine he’d acquired when he bought the place. He was convinced they were still down there, so he sent poor Nile Wash down to retrieve them. When he didn’t return, the coward panicked and locked the door without a search. In reality, the trove of old foodstuffs and such has attracted the foraging elements of a colony of giant ants. They’d only acquired a couple of crates before encountering Nile and killing him, but not before he managed to kill two drones. Now the colony is alerted, and have sent warrior ants to assist in the further retrieval of foods within the cellar.

The Dungeon:

I’ve broken the cellar into three parts for the purposes of encounters. You’ll see the zones on the map, and the encounters are below.

1.

Your light source bounces oddly off heaps and stacks of refuse, mostly rotting boxes and crates that fill what looks to be a good-sized chamber. From somewhere to your right, the sound of movement sounds among the trash.

A single bullet ant worker is within the trash making a search for viable food sources. Anyone approaching the pile will draw its attention and it will start ‘hissing’ (just watch the movie ‘Them’ if you want a good reference).

1 Giant Ant [AC 3, HD 2, HP 12, #AT 1, D 1-6, Bite]

TREASURE:

NONE.

1 Giant Ant [AC 17, HD 2d8+4, HP 12, #AT 1, Hit +2, Dam Bite 4 (1d4+2)]

2.

Almost inch by inch, you plow, pull, tumble, and climb farther back into the monstrosity that is the Rancid Cellar. At the first central stone pillar, a break appears in the trash, opening into a small cleared area where two more ants, as well as an even larger version, move from concealment to cast back your incursion into their territory.

1 Giant Ant [AC 3, HD 2, HP 12, #AT 1, D 1-6 (Bite)]

1 Giant Ant Warrior [AC 2, HD 4, HP 24, #AT 1, D 1-6 (Bite), Poison Sting (Save versus poison or take an additional 1-10 damage)]

TREASURE:

NONE.

1 Giant Ant [AC 17, HD 2d8+4, HP 12, #AT 1, Hit +2, Dam Bite 4 (1d4+2)]

1 Giant Ant Warrior [AC 18, HD 4d8+6, HP 19, #AT 2, Hit +4, Dam Bite 5 (1d6+2), Target must make a DC 13 Constitution saving throw or take 9 (2d8) poison damage]

3.

Like an archeologist sifting through layers, you are taking a trip back through time with each step farther toward the back of the cellar. An old tower clock, a set of three extinct beehives, and an ornate bedboard all provide evidence to a better time for the Rancid Caldron. As you marvel at your finds, you note a spot of blood still tacky on the stone floor. It is only then that the now familiar hissing begins anew...

Three warrior ants (as big as a medium-sized dog) are moving from a large hole in the rear wall of the cellar. They will continue to hiss as they move to attack, and within 1d4 rounds, another two will appear (repeat this forever if

needed). The only way to stop them is to collapse the hole or burn them out. Luckily, a successful Find Traps roll (**DC 13 Perception**) will show that a keg of high grade liquor (moonshine) is housed close to the hole. If ignited and rolled down, it will stop the invasion long enough for the party to fill the hole with viable, heavy debris that will put an end to the menace.

3 Giant Ant Warriors [AC 2, HD 4, HP 24, #AT 1, D 1-6 (Bite), Poison String (Save versus poison or take an additional 1-10 damage)]

TREASURE:

NONE.

3 Giant Ant Warriors [AC 18, HD 4d8+6, HP 19, #AT 2, Hit +4, Dam Bite 5 (1d6+2), Target must make a DC 13 Constitution saving throw or take 9 (2d8) poison damage]

Scenario Two:

The Troubled Crypt

The Hook:

Word will come trickling through the Patina that two grave diggers (actually 'internment specialists') have gone missing up at Murtel's Mortuary. Brigit Murtel, the hard-nosed operator of the mortuary is looking for some stalwart individuals that are willing to enter one of her many catacombs to see what is amiss, and discover what has befallen her employees.

They crypts are not to be looted, but she will pay each party member a 5 gold piece ‘bounty’ for evidence of the fate of each grave digger (thus 10 GP per party member).

The Chase:

Brigit will tell the party all she can, that two of her internment specialists were sent to lay a client’s bones to rest in Crypt 48 only to never return (are you getting a trend here?). She has decided that stronger measures are needed rather than closing Crypt 48 for good (too much space still left and the money loss would be worrisome). Not wanting to take any bad press by contacting the authorities, she has instead decided on the discreet route of hiring some locals to investigate the matter.

The Truth:

The Murtel Family has had a side business for years, that being exporting magical goods and treasures interred with the dead. Although Brigit is unaware of these practices since she was forced into leadership before anyone let her in on the secret, she does suspect there have been illicit dealings in the past that have swollen the family’s coffers. Very recently a Crypt Thing has come into possession of Crypt 48 and is utilizing it to create undead for some unforeseen reason.

The Dungeon:

1. Entry:

A metal vault door stands before you flanked by two pillars decorated

with skulls. Ancient writing denotes something over the arch at the threshold and a palpable sense of cold slithers out of the place.

Brigit will have provided a massive skeleton key to the crypt. The words atop the arch, if anyone has the ability via magic to read them, state, ‘Resting place of the dead of Valoria, Crypt 48 of House Murtel, and Vault of the Ruloff Family’.

2. God’s Mouth:

The door opens, hinges grinding slightly as a fine layer of ash drifts around your feet. Within, a large chamber is empty save for wall sconces, one that is empty, and one that holds an unlit torch. A single hall stretches into darkness before you.

There is nothing within the entry chamber, although the secret doors to rooms 3 & 4 are just as you enter the hall to the rear of the crypt. Each secret door can be discovered on a 1 in 6 chance **[DC 14 Perception]**.

3. Guard Chamber One:

Within this small room are desecrated rags and the stench of necrotic gases.

An animated skeleton, now acting as a guard, lurks here and will come forth once the party is well passed the door. If the characters find the secret door upon passing, add the following line to the description above: A lone humanoid figure dressed in old rags stands at attention in the middle of the chamber, a rusted short blade in one hand.

A search 1-2 in 6 **[DC 12 Perception]** will reveal a gold and pearl earring, fallen from a corpse at some point, that is worth 25 GPs on the open market.

1 'Enhanced' Skeleton [AC 7, HD 3, HP 18, #AT 2, D 1-6/1-6, Two Claw Attacks!, ½ damage versus slashing/piercing weapons]

TREASURE:

GOLD & PEARL EARRING.

1 'Enhanced' Skeleton [AC 13, HD 4d8+6, HP 19, #AT 2, Hit +4, Dam Claws 5 (1d6+2), Multiattack, (Exp. 200)]

4. Guard Chamber Two:

This small chamber stretches back from the main hall and is filled with slowly drifting cobweb strands that sway in the now disturbed air.

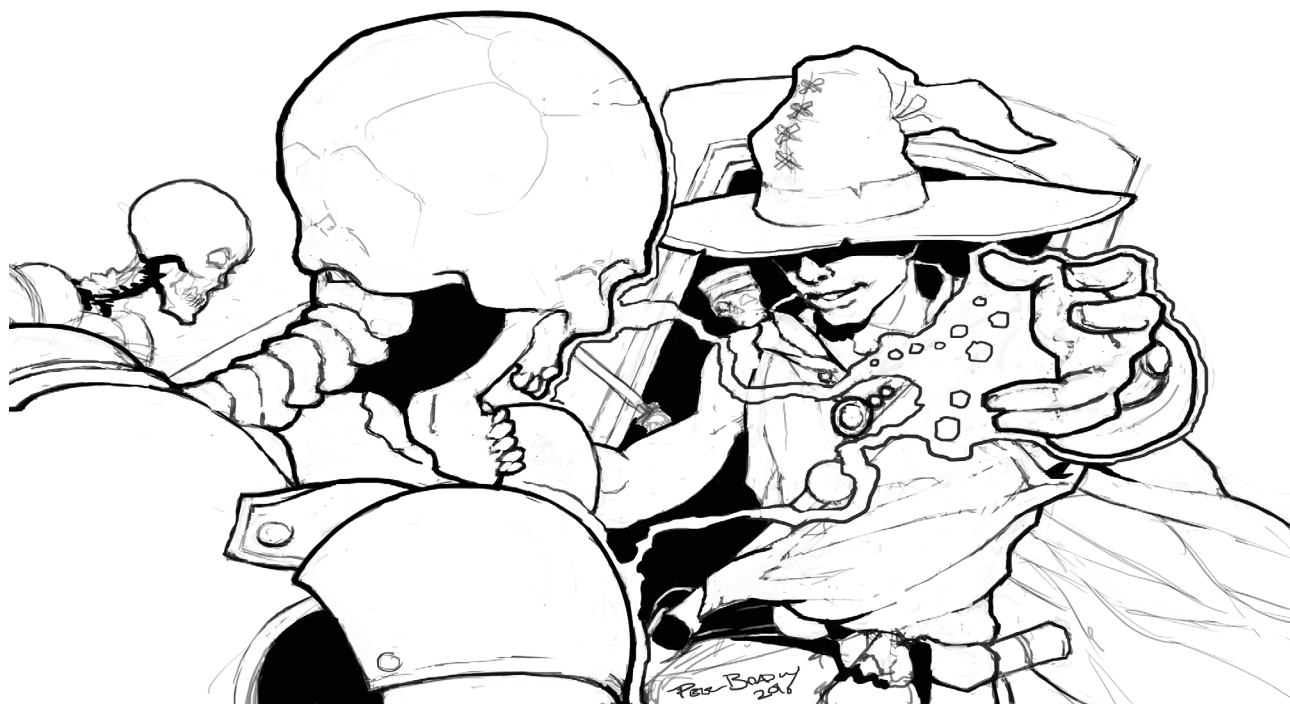
Now is the perfect time for a zombie apocalypse 'jump scare'. I suggest jumping at and hissing toward the closest player to you! Two freshly animated zombies lie within the secret room, both are 'fresh', so they have a bit more anima than regular zombies.

2 'Fresh' Zombie [AC 8, HD 2, HP 12, #AT 1, D 1-8, does get an initiative roll!]

TREASURE:

NONE.

2 'Fresh' Zombies [AC 10, HD 3d8+9, HP 22, #AT 1, Hit +3, Dam Fists 1 (1d6+1), Undead Fortitude (when reduced to 0 HPs, it must make a Constitution saving throw of DC 5 + Damage Taken. If made, the zombie is simply reduced to 1 HP.)]



5. Urn Resting Hall:

Shelf upon shelf line the walls of this crooked chamber. Skulls and urns, many smashed and leaking the still swirling ashes of dead Valorians, lie atop the shelves while a carved stone pedestal has fallen to ruin west of the entry area. At the north, another metal door, this one also decorated with skulls, is set into the wall.

No enemies can be found here, but a search will reveal three dozen (6D12) or so silver coins amid the ash. These were meant to pay for passage in the afterlife and one was placed in each urn.

The skeleton key provided by Brigit will also work with this door.

6. Skull Chamber:

The open arch to this chamber reveals twin piles of bones on the floor, each lying to the side of a single skull pillar similar to the ones at the front entry. A prayer dais, set with a slowly guttering blue flame, casts oddly eerie light around the room.

Huddled as though beneath covers, five fully animated skeletons are beneath the bone piles. As long as the light on the dais (now taken over by the power of the Crypt Thing) is burning, the skeletons cannot be turned via clerical magic.

5 Skeletons [AC 7, HD 1, HP 6, #AT 1, D 1-6, ½ damage versus piercing and slashing weapons]

TREASURE:

SILVER COINS.

5 Skeletons [AC 13, HD 2d8+4, HP 13, #AT 1, Hit +4, Dam Claws 5 (1d6+2), Damage Vulnerability: Bludgeoning]

7. Hall of Ashes:

An open arch allows your light to drift into this crypt chamber that is empty save for full skeletons set into the walls, seven of them, and an oddly guttering blue flame upon a dais in the north wall of the room. One skeleton, closest to the dais, has a hand that rests on the pommel of an ancient blade. An inscription below his feet has been marked in the same language found at the archway to the tomb entry.

Once the party enters, the skeletons will fully animate and attack. The skeleton with the sword is no different than the others, save he attacks with the blade (1d8) instead of claws. The sword is a fake replaced years ago by Brigit's ancestors, but the inscription reads 'Magnus Ire Drake, keeper of the Sunset Ulfberht'.

5 Skeletons [AC 7, HD 1, HP 6, #AT 1, D 1-6, ½ damage versus piercing and slashing weapons]

TREASURE:

NONE.

5 Skeletons [AC 13, HD 2d8+4, HP 13, #AT 1, Hit +4, Dam Claws 5 (1d6+2), Damage Vulnerability: Bludgeoning]

8. Crypt of the Keeper:

The key clicks through a series of levers before the catch releases and the heavy door swings open. A pall of dread, like an icy wave, washes out and over you all as more of the blue glowing flame reveals an angled wall of skulls that precludes full vision of the chamber beyond.

Once past the wall, read the following: Two dais, both with blue flame, burn to the north and northeast of the chamber. Upon the western wall is a seated figure in heavy robes and a skull face. Beside the figure is a fully scarf-clad and bandaged warrior with a longsword still in its sheath, fine etchings are still visible along the leather scabbard.

The ‘warrior’ is actually a type of martial undead called a Son of Valus. It will serve the Crypt Thing that created it, attempting to destroy anyone who makes it past the Crypt Thing’s teleportation magic. Its blade is a +2 Longsword (+4 versus Lycanthropes) called WyrGrief and was summoned by the Crypt Thing from some other crypt within Murtel’s holdings.

The Crypt Thing has arrived here only to instill unrest and chaos upon the Murtel House and has collected no treasure, other than a bag of 47 silver pieces that lies on the ground near its feet.

As the only way to hurt the Crypt Thing is with magic, either spells or the blade the Son of Valus carries, it could be quite a feat for the party to take the thing down. Scenarios might mean multiple trips into the lair, or being teleported outside, and then rushing back in repeatedly until the thing can be destroyed. In all, it could be very comical if you wanted to take it that way as the DM. Crypt Things never leave their crypt, and if a full twenty-four hours passes between attempts to destroy the Crypt Thing, it will create another 2d6 skeletons to help defend it, these being kept in room 8 after the first encounter.

1 Crypt Thing [AC 3, HD 6, HP 36, #AT 1, D 1-8 (Double Claw swing), Teleport (all party members must make a saving throw versus spell or be teleported outside Crypt 48), Requires a +1 or better weapon to hit]

TREASURE:

47 SILVER PIECES.

1 Crypt Thing [AC 17, HD 6d8+18, HP 42, #AT 1, Hit +6, Dam Claws 7 (1d8+3), Teleportation Purge (DC 13 Wisdom saving throw targets in a twenty-foot



radius or be teleported to the entrance of Crypt 48) **Damage Immunity: non-magical weapons]**

Again, all doors are locked, and must be picked or opened with the key from Secret Room One (3)!

1 Son of Valus [AC 4, HD 5, HP 30, #AT 1, D 1-8+2, +2 Longsword, ½ damage versus slashing/piercing weapons]

TREASURE:

LONGSWORD +2/+4 VERSUS WERE-CREATURES.

1 Son of Valus [AC 16, HD 5d8+10, HP 30, #AT 2, Hit +7, Dam Longsword 6 (1d8+2), Multiattack]

Scenario Three:

The Alienist

The Hook:

Continuing petty thefts around the Patina are growing troublesome, and when one of the characters (choose the wealthiest or a person who leaves some equipment behind, especially after a night out eating or drinking) comes back to the hostel room to find it pilfered, even the players will be up in arms. Although no local constabulary has stepped in, word around the local drinking holes is there must be a damn fine petty hoard stashed somewhere in the Patina with as much that has been stolen.

The Chase:

This will be the first real ‘test’ of what and who the characters have come to know in the Patina. I’d suggest Charisma checks for information acquisition **[DC 13 Charisma]** once players come up with who they want to talk to about these disappearances. Any successes will push the players closer to a location, the old block tower of Kalium Rosa. Although the wizard didn’t build a fine house like so many others in the Patina, his tower is impressive and well-known, and no one dares enter it. Once the players have tabulated a total of four successes on their checks, they will get a confirmation from a source (DM’s choice), that creatures known as Black Eyes are said to sneak in and out of the tower at night.

The Truth:

Burglaries are indeed ‘up’ in the Patina, but not because of the Black Eyes who typically just steal food. The Teller Gang has stepped up their operations now that their new leader is looking to increase his war chest. Certainly he has used the Black Eyes as scapegoats in his plans, but unbeknownst to him, one of his gang members actually stole something of extreme value from the Black Eyes recently. It was a whistle that helps control and soothe Kalium Rosa’s other creation, the Hopping Brains. Since the Black Eyes have lost control of the Hopping Brains, they have fled Rosa’s tower, even leaving the door open in hopes that the Brains will leave the place (they won’t as they see it as the home of their master) or someone with more fighting skills will come in and clear it so they can return. They anxiously await this event.

The Dungeon:

This is pretty standard affair, and should be run with a little bit of ‘horror’ factor in it as the Hopping Brains inside love to hide and then pounce.

1. Entry Level:

A number of low chairs, a wall cupboard, and three large rugs decorate this roughly 25’x25’ chamber. A single door, set into a rectangular stone support at the tower’s center, is the only exit from this chamber.

3 Hopping Brains lurk under the low chairs, just waiting for the right moment to spring!

3 Hopping Brains [AC 5, HD 3, HP 12, #AT 1, D 1-6, Spring Attack (can attack and jump away if they hold initiative, disallowing melee reprisals by their victims)]

TREASURE:

NONE.

3 Hopping Brains [AC 15, HD 3d8+6, HP 16, #AT 1, Hit +5, Dam Bite 4 (1d6+1), Spring Attack (can attack and jump away if they hold the initiative, disallowing melee reprisals by their victim)]

The central stair is not locked, and within, the stairs lead up and down. The downward stair comes to a door that is Wizard Locked, only the key found around the brain of a ‘hopper’ that is leading a particular scout group on Tower Level Four will open it short of a Knock spell, and even then the lock will not release and requires an Open Locks check at -15% [DC 20].

2. Guest Quarters:

Although no stone walls appear other than around the perimeter of the tower, large teak screens have been moved into place to form ‘rooms’ on this level. Each screen is painted with a delicate mural of nature, and within the cordoned areas are low beds, a dresser, and pitcher & water basin.



These were the guest chambers of the tower, and could easily house four guests. Currently they only house six Hopping Brains, all lurking behind half-folded screens or under beds.

6 Hopping Brains [AC 5, HD 3, HP 12, #AT 1, D 1-6, Spring Attack (can attack and jump away if they hold initiative, disallowing melee reprisals by their victims)]

TREASURE:

NONE.

6 Hopping Brains [AC 15, HD 3d8+6, HP 16, #AT 1, Hit +5, Dam Bite 4 (1d6+1), Spring Attack (can attack and jump away if they hold the initiative, disallowing melee reprisals by their victim)]

3. Kitchen and Dining:

A long table with eight chairs dominates the eastern side of this chamber, while more of the decorated screens obscure the western side.

If the players check the table, of course, Hopping Brains! 3 of the little buggers lurk beneath.

3 Hopping Brains [AC 5, HD 3, HP 12, #AT 1, D 1-6, Spring Attack (can attack and jump away if they hold initiative, disallowing melee reprisals by their victims)]

TREASURE:

NONE.

3 Hopping Brains [AC 15, HD 3d8+6, HP 16, #AT 1, Hit +5, Dam Bite 4 (1d6+1), Spring Attack (can attack and jump away if they hold the initiative, disallowing melee reprisals by their victim)]

Once they make it past the screen to the west, they will spot a large wooden cupboard with a metal latch, some shelves with foodstuffs (incredibly still fresh), a butcher's block, and a smaller stone table with four rune glyphs carved into the top. This is the kitchen, and if anyone with magical power of any kind investigates the runes, they will ignite with slowly burning flame and burn until the player is more than 10 feet away. The latched cupboard is an ice chest, and has arctic enchantments placed on it to keep food cold.

No other Hopping Brains are on this side of the screen.

4. Bedchamber:

A large four-post bed dominates the northern portion of this room behind the stairs. A dressing screen, a wardrobe, a full-length silvered mirror, and several arcane tapestries hang about the chamber. There is also a small writing desk to the chamber's east.

The players should be prepared by now for the Hoppers. They've congregated under the bed, and will hop out in force once the players get within 10' of it. The 'key' brain is also here, and it has a 'collar' strapped around its 'head' that has the key to the laboratory in the basement.

5 Hopping Brains [AC 5, HD 3, HP 12, #AT 1, D 1-6, Spring Attack (can attack and jump away if they hold initiative, disallowing melee reprisals by their victims)]

TREASURE:

NONE.

5 Hopping Brains [AC 15, HD 3d8+6, HP 16, #AT 1, Hit +5, Dam Bite 4 (1d6+1), Spring Attack (can attack and jump away if they hold the initiative, disallowing melee reprisals by their victim)]

5. Summoning Hall:

Larger than the chambers above, this room gains definition as your light illuminates its corners. A summoning circle has been etched

into the floor of the room's southeastern side, and beyond that a thin hall breaks away from a massive metal door. The door has arcane symbols placed upon it but no keyhole. The hall seems to be some kind of shielding area, perhaps from the summoning circle's power. A single wooden door stands across from the stair entry on the southern wall, and a larger hallway moves away from the chamber to the east.

There are no encounters in this room, but investigation of the wooden door shows it to be unlocked. The metal door is another Wizard Locked portal and leads to the cavern tomb of Rosa himself. (This dungeon can be found in Folio #9.)

6. Component Room:

The door opens to reveal a small chamber lined with stocked shelves and hanging oddities. From the smell, preservatives have been in play, and the room is so full it is hard to move about.

This is a spell component room, and two Hopping Brains are within, hidden among the components. If they remain unseen, 1 in 6 **[DC 13 Perception]**, they will wait for the party to leave, then jump on the person trying to shut the door and pull the unfortunate back in.

2 Hopping Brains [AC 5, HD 3, HP 12, #AT 1, D 1-6, Spring Attack (can attack and jump away if they hold initiative, disallowing melee reprisals by their victims)]

TREASURE:

NONE.

2 Hopping Brains [AC 15, HD 3d8+6, HP 16, #AT 1, Hit +5, Dam Bite 4 (1d6+1), Spring Attack (can attack and jump away if they hold the initiative, disallowing melee reprisals by their victim)]

7. Safety Hall:

This narrow passage flanks the summoning room and runs from the runed metal door to the western hall.

8. Study:

This door opens to reveal a small study. Dominated by a heavy wooden desk half-covered in beakers and alchemical instruments, the room's walls seem overly stacked with parchment, scrolls, and books.

The door to this chamber is locked, but can be easily opened with the key found on the bedchamber Hopper.

Beneath the desk is the Leader Brain, and it will leap forth and go into a frenzy whenever anyone tries to look over the contents of the desk.

1 Leader Brain [AC 2, HD 8, HP 48, #AT 2, D 1-8, Frenzy (if defending the home of its master, add an additional +2 to hit and damage rolls), Spring Attack (can attack and jump away if they hold initiative, disallowing melee reprisals by their victims)]

TREASURE:

NONE.

1 Leader Brain [AC 17, HD 8d8+16, HP 40, #AT 2, Hit +8, Dam Bite 7 (1d8+3), Frenzy (if defending the home of its master, add an additional +2 on attack and damage rolls), Spring Attack (can attack and jump away if they hold the initiative, disallowing melee reprisals by their victim)]

A successful search, 1-2 [DC 13 Perception], will reveal 5 magical scrolls amongst all the notes, writings, and the like as well as three viable potions. Inside one of the drawers, a Wand of Magic Missiles (27 Charges) is also kept as well as a bag with 10 GPs.

9. Caverns Entrance:

The smell of old rot and salty brine drifts past you on air disturbed by the opening of the door. Beyond, a chamber of natural design twinkles in the light from your party, and the sound of dripping water tickles your ears...

This is one of the scenarios you'll find in Folio #9, the cavern dungeon and Tomb of Rosa.



Scenario Four:

Brawl Club

The Hook:

The first rule of Brawl Club, don't talk about Brawl Club! Secretly, the gangs of the Patina like to get together and see who is tougher, no holds barred, in the abandoned warehouse behind what was once Windham's Exotic Leathers. They take great pride in bloodying each other up here, and it is a great way for fighter types in your party to garner some extra experience points.

The Chase:

Since no one is talking about Brawl Club, it is hard to find out about, but the real person that can get the characters the skinny, especially to fighter types that are looking for a chance to test their mettle, would be Cano at the Hostel. He has been tracking gang members to Windham's for months and knows what goes on there. He'll share the information with those looking to do damage to the gangs, especially the Tellers, who he blames for the death of his family.

The Truth:

Brawl Club is actually a recruiting site for the Tellers, the gang using it to see who are the best of the best so they can recruit them. Entry into

any fight is free, but once the Tellers recognize the characters, they will likely pull back and wait to see the outcome, measuring player strength. However, they will not stop any fights, this is too important to them, so characters can come as often as they like to have a fight. Typically, a character can get in up to 4 fights a night. Of course, they will have to deal with cumulative damage from those fights, but still 4 is about the max. Thus, a player could pick up nearly 1000 experience points per week if successfully ‘running’ a character in Brawl Club. Although once he gets ‘known’ in the fight game, fewer fighters will accept his challenges and this number should drop off.

The Dungeon:

Windham’s warehouse was once used to store a hippogryph, but now is a perfect large pen to have up to thirty fans watch two combatants beat the crap out of each other. Blades are welcome here, but there is no surgeon on staff, so if you get stuck, that’s on you. Death blows, once a target is in the negative hit points, are not allowed, but if a single blow kills a fighter, that is just the gods calling him home.

1.

Windham’s Exotic Leathers
(shop where fights take place)

Gang Member (Bandit Template) [AC 8, HD 1, HP 6, #AT 1, D 1-3 (Fist)]

Experienced Gang Member [AC 7, HD 3, HP 13, #AT 1, D 1-3+2 (Fist)]

TREASURE:

NONE.

Gang Member (Bandit Template) [AC 12, HD 2d8+2, HP 11, #AT 1, Hit +4, Dam Fist 3 (1d3+1)]

Experienced Gang Member [AC 14, HD 5d8+5, HP 25, #AT 1, Hit +5, Dam Fist 5 (1d3+3)]

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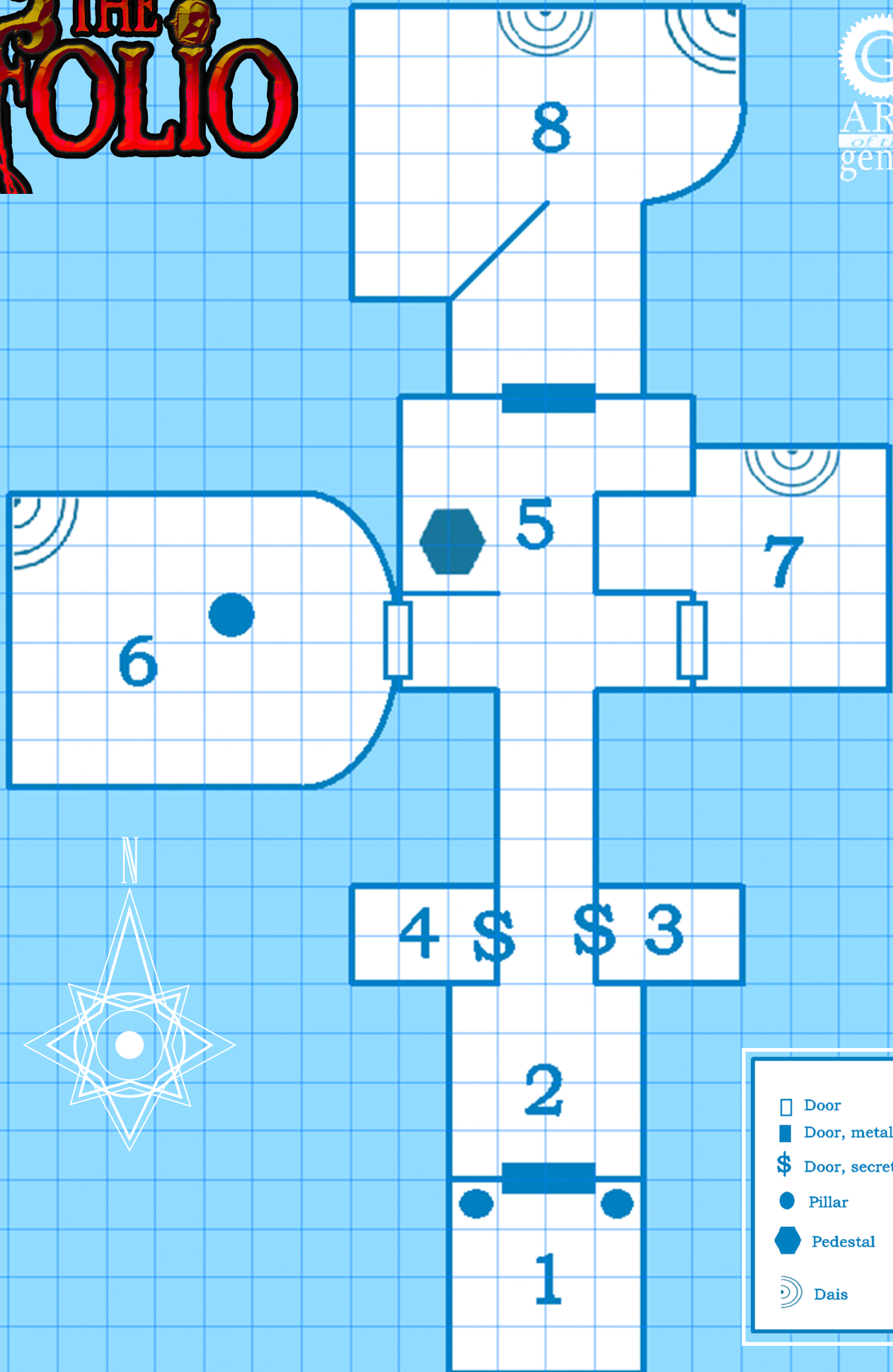
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Valoria, jewel of the world of Mythras... This ancient and fabled city is home to more than fifty thousand inhabitants, but little does that matter to the downtrodden who find refuge in the Patina Court. Once a place of high magic, now little more than a forgotten slum, this neighborhood holds more adventure and mystery than one might think. Can your players discover all its secrets? Will they be able to face the challenges of refuse-strewn cellars, newly haunted crypts, and enchanted wizard towers? Only time, ingenuity, and dice will tell. The Patina Court is an adventure for 1st thru 3rd level characters in both 1st Edition and 5th Edition mechanics.