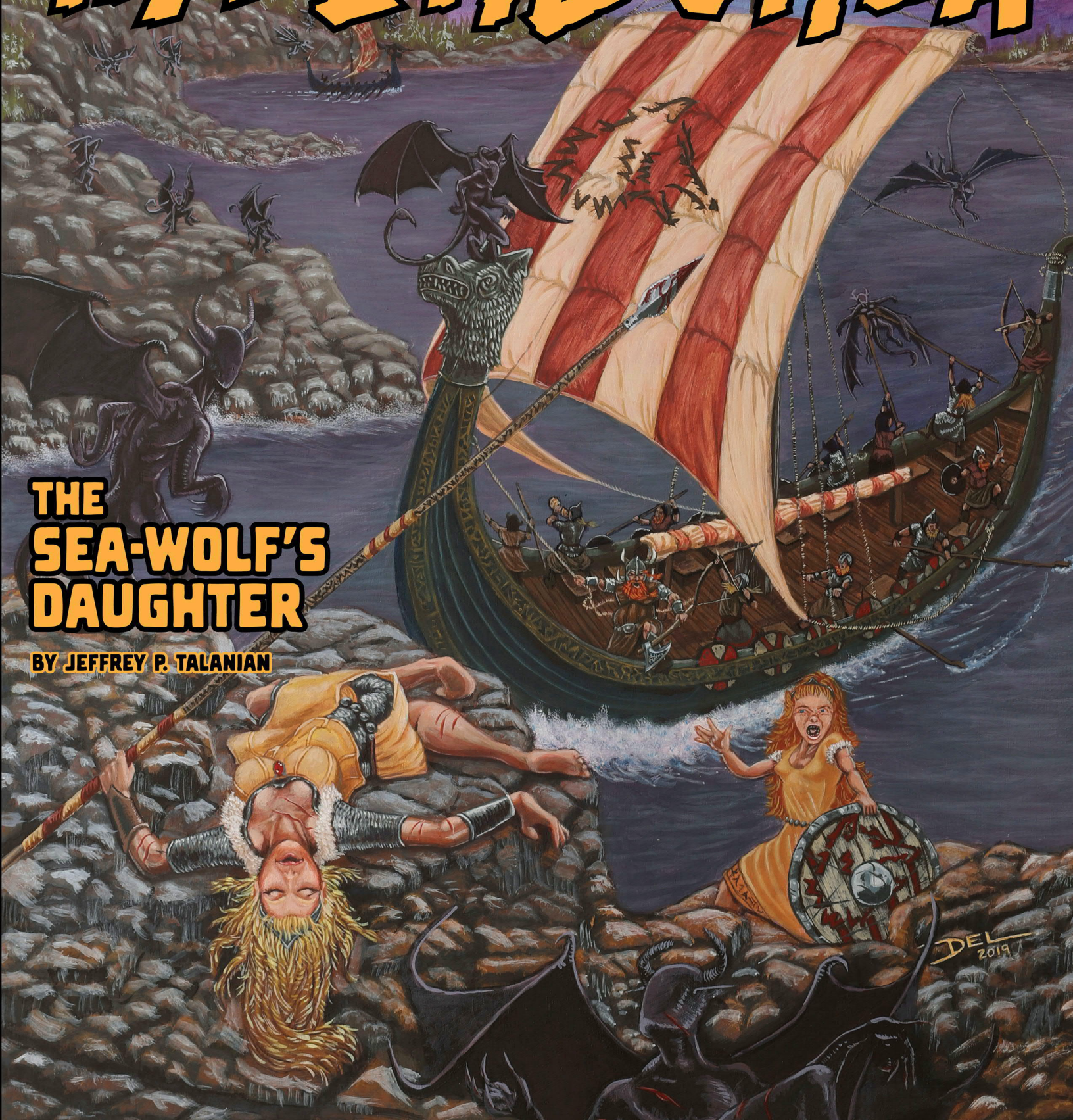


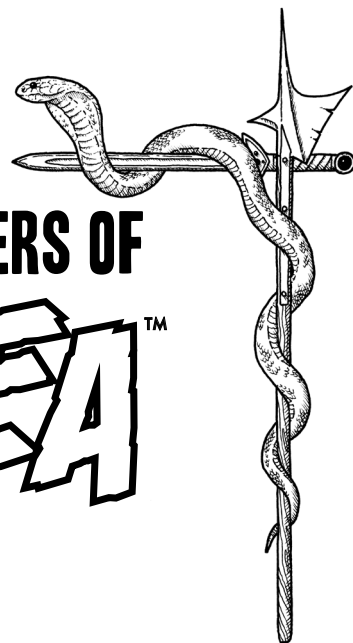
ASTONISHING SWORDSMEN AND SORCERERS OF

HYPERBOREA

THE SEA-WOLF'S DAUGHTER

BY JEFFREY P. TALANIAN



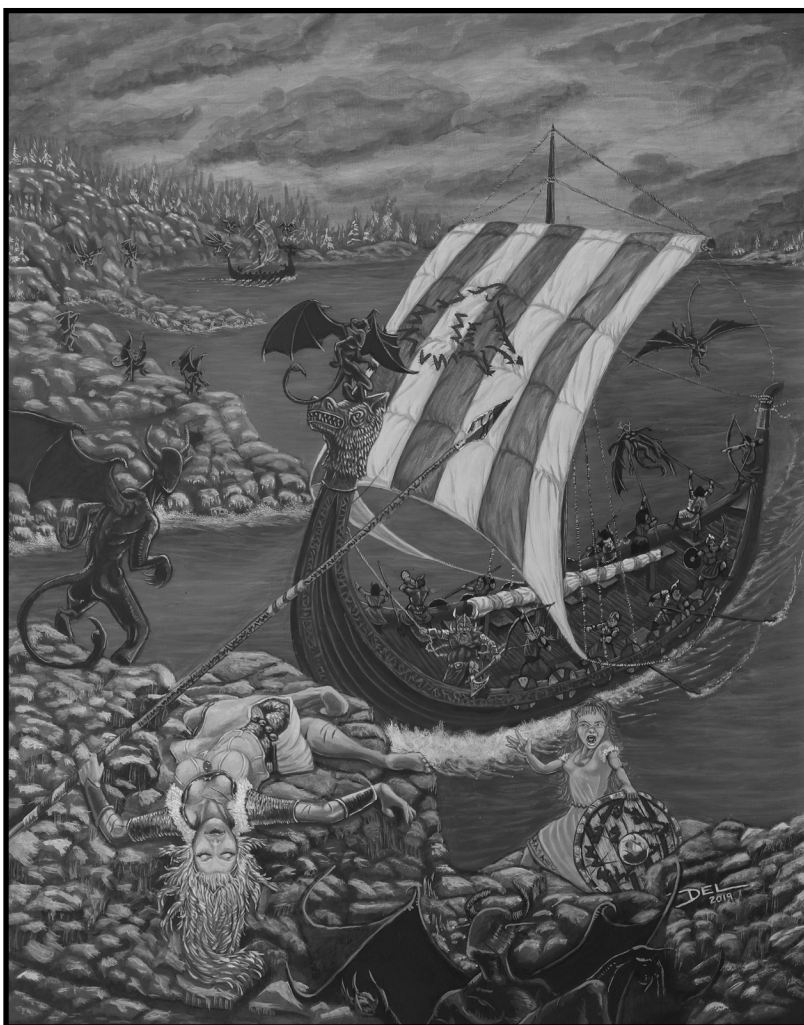


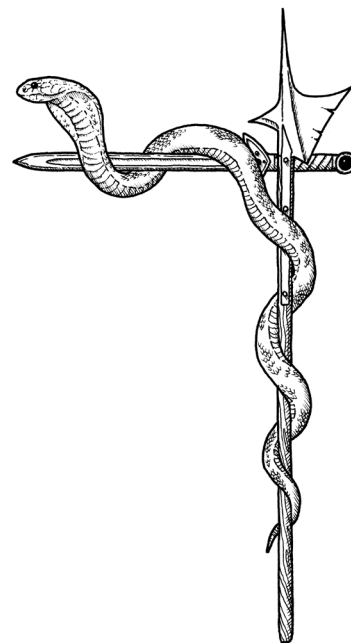
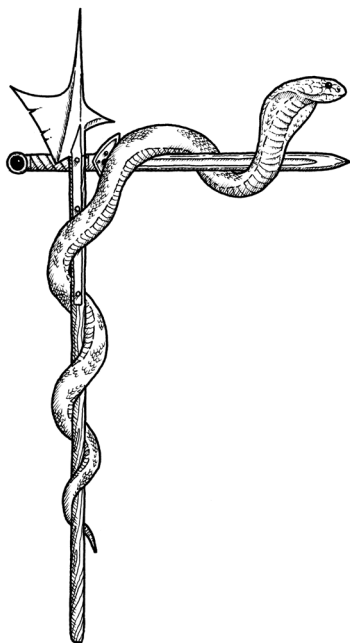
ASTONISHING SWORDSMEN AND SORCERERS OF **HYPERBOREA**TM

THE SEA-WOLF'S DAUGHTERTM

An adventure in Hyperborea
designed for from four to six characters of 7th through 9th level

by Jeffrey P. Talanian





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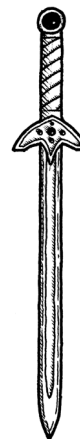
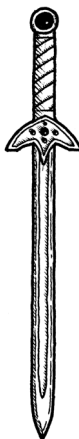
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Special thanks to Joseph Salvador for Lemurian numerals.

The Sea-Wolf's Daughter™ takes players into an action-packed realm of adventure: the mythical world of Hyperborea, a sword-and-sorcery campaign setting inspired by the fantastic fiction of Robert E. Howard, H.P. Lovecraft, Clark Ashton Smith, and others. This adventure is designed for *Astonishing Swordsmen & Sorcerers of Hyperborea™* (AS&SH™), a role-playing game descended from the original 1974 fantasy wargame and miniatures campaign rules as conceived by E. Gary Gygax and Dave Arneson. Therefore, AS&SH is compatible with most traditional fantasy role-playing games (c. 1974–1999) and their modern simulacra, such as OSRIC™ and *Swords & Wizardry™*.

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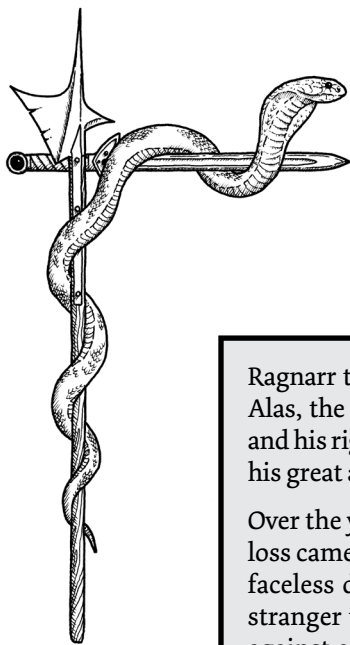
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Author's Note: Many wonderful sources inspired the creation of this adventure. Chief amongst these are *Tigers of the Sea*, by Robert E. Howard; *Egil's Saga*, translated by various; Valkyrie, the Marvel character created by Roy Thomas and John Buscema; and lastly, the tormenting nightmares of a young H.P. Lovecraft, in which "night-gaunts" would snatch him up and carry him off.

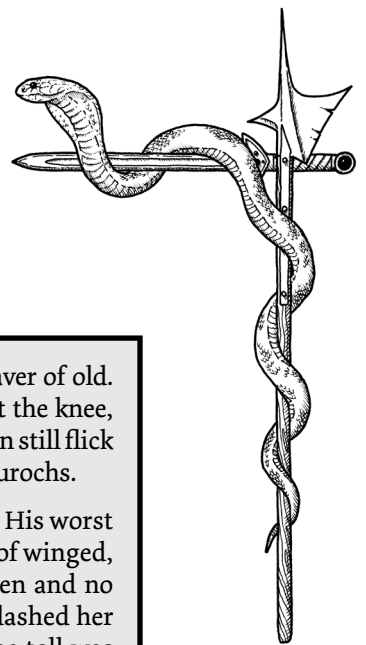
*Out of what crypt they crawl, I cannot tell,
But every night I see the rubbery things,
Black, horned, and slender, with membranous wings,
They come in legions on the north wind's swell
With obscene clutch that titillates and stings,
Snatching me off on monstrous voyagings
To grey worlds hidden deep in nightmare's well.*

*Over the jagged peaks of Thok they sweep,
Heedless of all the cries I try to make,
And down the nether pits to that foul lake
Where the puffed shoggoths splash in doubtful sleep.
But ho! If only they would make some sound,
Or wear a face where faces should be found!*

—H.P. Lovecraft, "Night-Gaunts"



PART I: THE ADVENTURE BEGINS



INFORMATION FOR THE PLAYERS

Read aloud or paraphrase the following boxed text to the players:

Ragnarr the Sea-Wolf is a red-bearded giant of a man, a jarl of New Vinland and a reaver of old. Alas, the Sea-Wolf's best years are behind him. One of his tree-trunk legs is locked at the knee, and his right eye is sightless, slashed by an enemy he later slew. Notwithstanding, he can still flick his great axe as if it were a toy, and with his bare hands he can snap the neck of a bull aurochs.

Over the years, the Sea-Wolf has enjoyed many triumphs and endured many defeats. His worst loss came seven years ago, when his steading was assaulted from the sky by a swarm of winged, faceless devils. Geira, his wife, took up shield and spear, for she was a shieldmaiden and no stranger to battle. After Geira felled two of the devils, a third snatched her up and dashed her against a rock. The Vikings ultimately drove off the otherworldly horrors, but lo, the toll was heavy. Geira was among the dead, her broken body discovered by her 12-year-old daughter Gunnhildr.

The Sea-Wolf never married again, and as the years passed his daughter Gunnhildr blossomed into a rare beauty—tall, long, and lean, with red-gold locks and ice-blue eyes. Jarls far and wide yearned for her as a wife, but despite all the lavish offers of gems and jewellery, silver and gold, Ragnarr could not bear to let her go.

Two weeks ago, a brute named Björn Blackbeard arrived at the Sea-Wolf's hall. Blackbeard offered a king's ransom for the young woman, but the Sea-Wolf was offended by the villain's impudence. Blackbeard and his men were ousted from the Sea-Wolf's hall. That night, Gunnhildr Ragnarsdóttir disappeared.

Since that fateful night, the Sea-Wolf has led a desperate search to find his daughter. At sea, he crossed sails with a blood-feud enemy of old, and from the crimson-flecked lips of a dying foe he learnt the location of Blackbeard's stronghold: deep in the misty fjords of Brigand's Bay, where pirates, freebooters, thieves, and murderers thrive.

INFORMATION FOR THE REFEREE

This adventure begins near **Björn Blackbeard's** stronghold, BJÖRNHEIM, which lies deep in Brigand's Bay, an inlet on mainland Hyperborea lined with the petty holdings of thieves, outlaws, and other villainous men. It is assumed that the PCs will have a reason to help **Ragnarr the Sea-Wolf** rescue his daughter. INFORMATION FOR THE PLAYERS (q.v.) contains the Sea-Wolf's saga, some or all of which may be revealed to the players, either before the adventure begins or throughout it. **Involving the PCs** (q.v.) provides alternative and/or additional motivation for involvement. Furthermore, **Adventure Hooks** and **Rumours** are provided for the referee's convenience (qq.v.), but a motive that derives from the needs and desires of the party may be most effective.

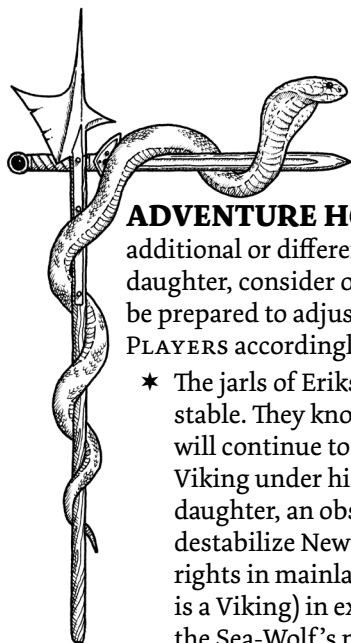
The saga might continue in distant Sharath, the cold desert peninsula at the edge of the world. If the situation in Sharath is not resolved, the circumstances that led to current predicaments will continue to occur elsewhere in Hyperborea.

INVOLVING THE PCs: How the party came to know **Ragnarr the Sea-Wolf** is up to the referee. Possibilities include:

- ★ The party work for someone who owes the Sea-Wolf a debt of honour
- ★ The Sea-Wolf rescued the party; they owe him their lives
- ★ The Sea-Wolf is offering a 5,000-gp reward in gems and jewellery
- ★ The Sea-Wolf is offering land and title on his island in New Vinland

The party are unknown to **Björn Blackbeard**, so the Sea-Wolf bids them to gain entry into the villain's compound (possibly under the guise of mercenaries seeking employment) and to devise a way to rescue **Gunnhildr**. She is then to be conveyed to the Mossy Gorge, where the Sea-Wolf and his 40 bloodthirsty Vikings lie in wait.

¹ The suggested starting point is the HIDDEN DREKAR.



ADVENTURE HOOKS: If the party need an additional or different reason to liberate the Sea-Wolf's daughter, consider one of these adventure hooks, but be prepared to adjust the INFORMATION FOR THE PLAYERS accordingly.

- ★ The jarls of Erikssgard want to keep New Vinland stable. They know that **Ragnarr the Sea-Wolf** will continue to fruitlessly sacrifice every capable Viking under his command until he recovers his daughter, an obsession which could potentially destabilize New Vinland. The jarls offer farming rights in mainland New Vinland (and land, if one is a Viking) in exchange for the quick resolution of the Sea-Wolf's problems.
- ★ A company of rangers, in the course of their efforts to eradicate the otherworldly horrors that assail Hyperborea, have learnt that **Gunnhildr**, daughter of Ragnarr the Sea-Wolf, is important to their cause. The PC party are offered 2,000 gp to liberate the young woman and eliminate the reprehensible creatures linked to her in song and story.
- ★ The infamous pirate, **Björn Blackbeard**, abducted Gunnhildr, the daughter of a jarl of New Vinland. For an Evil party, stealing her away from her abductor will likely fetch a king's ransom from Blackbeard or Ragnarr the Sea-Wolf—whoever pays the most. Agents of the Khromarium Assassins' Guild will negotiate the ransom for a 50% fee.

POTENTIAL DEVELOPMENTS: The following developments are presented for the referee's consideration.

Ragnarr's men may attack Björnheim if:

- ★ Gunnhildr is dead
- ★ The party do not return

Ragnarr's men may retreat if:

- ★ Gunnhildr is rescued
- ★ Ragnarr is killed

N.B.: If Ragnarr's Vikings retreat to sea (with a rescued Gunnhildr or not), Blackbeard may pursue—conflict at sea!

RUMOURS: Whether or not the referee uses the foregoing **Involving the PCs** and/or **Adventure Hooks** to entice the PCs to rescue **Gunnhildr**, perhaps they have heard tales about either **Ragnarr the Sea-Wolf** or **Björn Blackbeard**. Roll 1d10 for each PC to determine what he has heard about these two pivotal figures.

Table 1: Rumours

d10 Roll	Rumour Heard	Veracity
1	Ragnarr the Sea-Wolf once snapped the neck of a bull aurochs with his bare hands.	True
2	Ragnarr the Sea-Wolf has tampered with otherworldly sponsors, and these caused his steading to be attacked.	False
3	Ragnarr the Sea-Wolf was a notorious raider when he was younger, slaying, looting, and enslaving.	True
4	Ragnarr the Sea-Wolf was exiled to New Vinland for being a Thor worshiper.	False
5	Ragnarr's daughter is as deadly as she is beautiful, a shieldmaiden with the temperament of a she-wolf.	True
6	Björn Blackbeard is gaining prominence in Brigand's Bay, hiring the most violent and bloodthirsty mercenaries in all of Hyperborea.	True
7	Björn Blackbeard is unassailable in personal combat, because he is empowered by Thaumagorga.	False
8	Björn Blackbeard has kidnapped a jarl's daughter, and he intends to marry her.	True
9	Björn Blackbeard is actually a dæmon that has taken the guise of a man.	False
0	Björn Blackbeard is steered by the wisdom of a crone whose every word he deems to be unquestionably certain and true.	True

MONSTER AND NPC STATISTICS: Monsters and non-player characters (NPCs) may have the following statistics, abbreviated as noted:

UT = Undead Type

AL = Alignment

SZ = Size

MV = Movement

AC = Armour Class

DR = Damage Reduction

HD = Hit Dice

hp = Hit Points

FA = Fighting Ability

TA = Turning Ability

CA = Casting Ability

#A = Attack Rate

D = Damage

SV = Saving Throw

ML = Morale

XP = Experience Points

ST = Strength

DX = Dexterity

CN = Constitution

IN = Intelligence

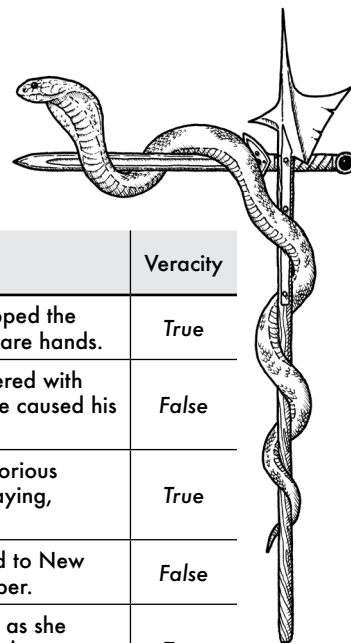
WS = Wisdom

CH = Charisma

Special = Special Abilities

Gear = Equipage and Treasure Carried

Attack roll bonuses are noted for each weapon in the **Attack Rate (#A)** entry. **Armour Class (AC)** and **Damage (D)** figures are calculated to include all pertinent modifiers from attribute scores, magic items, *weapon mastery*, and the like; temporary and situational bonuses (e.g., *berserk rage*) are not included.



PART II: BJÖRNHEIM ENVIRONS

Refer to the BJÖRNHEIM ENVIRONS MAP on the inside front cover. BJÖRNHEIM is located on the coast of Brigand's Bay, a steep-walled inlet etched with fjords and dotted with the petty holdings of thieves, outlaws, and other villainous men. These independent fortresses are in constant competition with one another; hence, it is not uncommon for bloodshed to erupt. Alliances are made, treachery ensues, and blood-feuds are oft inevitable. As a consequence of this ceaseless strife and conflict, the coniferous wilderness that hems in Brigand's Bay oft remains unchecked and populated by all manner of beast and monster. In short, the wilderness of Brigand's Bay is as deadly a place as any in Hyperborea.

RIVER SAWYER: The River Sawyer is a cold, vigorous river that trickles down from a sharp spine of mountains overlooking the Gal Hills. It is joined by the River Nova, which is fed by Lake Nova, and ultimately empties into Brigand's Bay. River Sawyer is populated by several species of bass, salmon, and trout; thus, it attracts many predators.

RANDOM ENCOUNTERS: The journey from **Ragnarr the Sea-Wolf's** longship (see HIDDEN DREKAR) to **Blackbeard's** stronghold (see PART III: BJÖRNHEIM) is through the conifer-thick woods. These environs are infested with hostile and dangerous creatures. To check for wandering monster encounters, roll 1d10 every mile travelled during daylight and every half-mile at night. On a roll of 1 or 2, the party encounter something on the table below. If the party are particularly loud, or using campfire-sized light at night, a roll of 1–3 on 1d10 would lead to an encounter.

Table 2: Björnheim Environs Encounters

d100 Result	Encounter
01–05	Ant, Giant (1d8+2)
06–10	Ape, Carnivorous (1d4)
11	Archæopteryx (1)
12–18	Bat, Giant* (1d10)
19–30	Bear, Black (1d3)
31–32	Bear, Cave (1d2)
33–38	Bee, Giant** (1d6)
39–43	Centipede, Giant Brown (3d4)
44	Dæmon, Sublunary, Babi-Ngepet (1)
45–49	Deer, Giant Elk (1d2)
50–59	Deer, Red (5d6)
60–64	Ghoul (1d6)
65–69	Lion, Mountain (1)
70–74	Rat, Giant (3d6)
75	Sloth, Ground (1)
76–80	Spider, Giant Wolf (1d6)
81–85	Stirge (2d6)
86–90	Tick, Giant (1d6)
91–99	Wolf (2d4)
00	Wyvern (1)

* Strictly nocturnal; reroll if daytime.

** Strictly diurnal; reroll if nighttime.

Ant, Giant: Voracious hunters looking to strip their prey down to the bones. AL N; SZ M; MV 60; DX 12; AC 3; HD 4 (hp 18); #A 1/1 (bite); D 1d8; SV 15; ML 8; XP 90.

Special: Upon successful bite, 2-in-6 chance ant will sting target at +2 on attack roll. Attack causes 1 hp damage and delivers venom; make *death* (poison) save or suffer additional 2d8 hp damage.

Ape, Carnivorous: Young males looking to establish themselves locally. AL CE; SZ M; MV 40; DX 11; AC 6; HD 5 (hp 23); #A 2/1 (claw/claw); D 1d6+1/1d6+1; SV 14; ML 9; XP 200.

Special: Chance to be surprised reduced by 1-in-6. If both claws hit one opponent, ape rends for additional 1d8+1 hp damage.

Archæopteryx: Scavenging bird seeking carrion. AL N; SZ S; MV 20 (fly 60); DX 10; AC 6; HD ½ (hp 3); #A 3/1 (claw/claw/bite); D 1/1/1d2; SV 17; ML 5; XP 9.

Special: If both claws hit one opponent, wing claws rend, each causing 1d2 hp damage.

Bat, Giant: Aggressive hunters seeking to quick-strike a single target. AL N; SZ S; MV 10 (fly 70); DX 12; AC 6; HD 2 (hp 9); #A 1/1 (bite); D 1d4; SV 16; ML 7; XP 64.

Special: Bite causes paralysis for 1d10 rounds unless *death* save made; will then drain blood for 1d4 hp damage per round for 2d4 rounds. 1-in-4 bats carry disease; bite victim must make *death* (poison) save or die in 2d6 days unless *cure disease* cast.

Bear, Black: Hungry omnivores looking for scraps, but will attack live prey if nothing easier presents. AL N; SZ M; MV 60; DX 13; AC 7; HD 3+3 (hp 17); #A 3/1 (claw/claw/bite); D 1d3/1d3/1d6; SV 15; ML 8; XP 105.

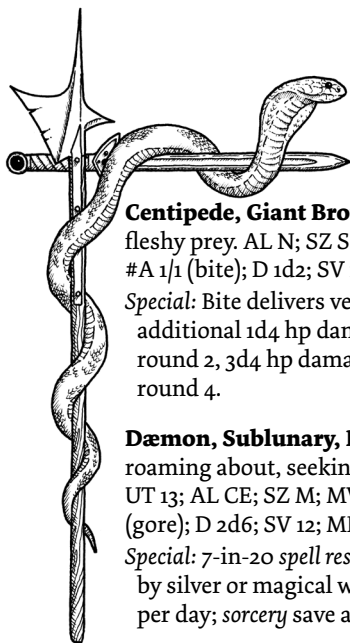
Special: If bear hits same victim with both claws, it hugs for 2d4 hp damage.

Bear, Cave: Enormous beasts that fear nothing and prefer warm flesh. AL N; SZ L; MV 40; DX 9; AC 5; HD 8+5 (hp 41); #A 3/1 (claw/claw/bite); D 1d10/1d10/2d6; SV 13; ML 9; XP 1,000.

Special: If bear hits same victim with both claws, it hugs for 2d10 hp damage.

Bee, Giant: Aggressive insects that attack without provocation. AL N; SZ S; MV 10 (fly 50); DX 10; AC 7; HD ½ (hp 3); #A 1/1 (sting); D 1d3; SV 17; ML 12; XP 17.

Special: Sting victim must make *death* (poison) save or suffer additional 2d6 hp damage, plus 2-in-6 chance of death in 1d4 turns. Bee dies when it stings.



Centipede, Giant Brown: Voracious myriapods will seek fleshy prey. AL N; SZ S; MV 20; DX 13; AC 9; HD ½ (hp 3); #A 1/1 (bite); D 1d2; SV 17; ML 4; XP 25.

Special: Bite delivers venom; make *death* (poison) save or suffer additional 1d4 hp damage on round 1, 2d4 hp damage on round 2, 3d4 hp damage on round 3, and 4d4 hp damage on round 4.

Dæmon, Sublunary, Babi-Ngepet: Mad, ranting dæmon roaming about, seeking vengeance on a sorcerer long dead. UT 13; AL CE; SZ M; MV 40; DX 10; AC 3; HD 9 (hp 41); #A 1/1 (gore); D 2d6; SV 12; ML 9; XP 1,500.

Special: 7-in-20 *spell resistance* vs. CA 12 casters. Harmed only by silver or magical weapons. Can cast *charm person* thrice per day; *sorcery* save at -2 penalty.

Deer, Giant Elk: Enormous herbivore that is preyed upon by few predators. AL N; SZ L; MV 60; DX 7; AC 7; HD 4 (hp 18); #A 2/1 (antler/antler); D 1d8/1d8; SV 15; ML 7; XP 90.

Special: Can attack two adjacent opponents with single *charge attack*, doubling damage dice for each victim.

Deer, Red: Skittish herbivore will seek to escape conflict. AL N; SZ M; MV 70; DX 13; AC 8; HD 1 (hp 5); #A 1/1 (gore); D 1d4; SV 16; ML 3; XP 13.

Special: Charging gore attack results in double damage dice.

Ghoul: Cursed undead roaming the woodlands, preying on men and beasts alike. UT 3; AL CE; SZ M; MV 40; DX 11; AC 6; HD 2 (hp 9); #A 3/1 (claw/claw/bite); D 1d3/1d3/1d6; SV 16; ML 10; XP 68.

Special: Immune to poison, paralysis, fear, and cold. *Protection from evil* holds at bay. Hit causes paralysis for 2d6 turns unless *death* save made. Slain victims later become ghouls.

Lion, Mountain: Opportunistic carnivore that lies in wait and pounces on stragglers. AL N; SZ M; MV 60; DX 18; AC 6; HD 3 (hp 14); #A 3/1 (claw/claw/bite); D 1d4/1d4/1d6; SV 15; ML 8; XP 47.

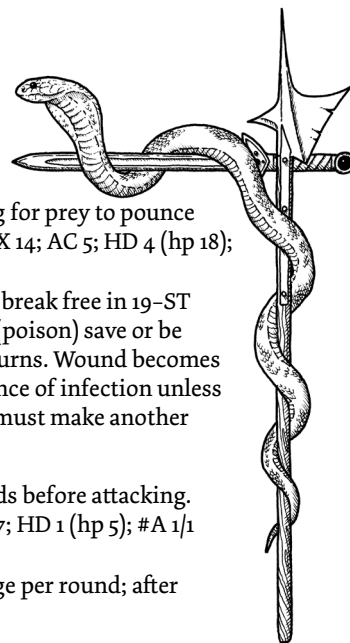
Special: If mountain lion hits with both claws, rear claws automatically rake for 1d4+1 hp damage each.

Rat, Giant: Feral rodents running in packs, looking for a quick meal. AL N; SZ S; MV 40 (swim 20); DX 8; AC 7; HD ½ (hp 3); #A 1/1 (bite); D 1d4; SV 17; ML 8; XP 9.

Special: 1-in-6 chance of disease upon successful hit, unless *death* (poison) save made. If save fails, victim either dies in 1d6 days, or is bedridden for a month. Roll a d6: On a 1-3, disease is terminal.

Sloth, Ground: Docile, slow-witted, lumbering beast of 20-foot length and weighing as much as 3 tons. Ignores humans, unless attacked. AL N; SZ L; MV 30; DX 6; AC 4; HD 12 (hp 54); #A 2/1 (claw/claw) or 1/1 (tail lash); D 2d8/2d8 or 3d4; SV 11; ML 7; XP 1,500.

Special: Tail lash lifts and propels smaller prey 1d20+20 feet in the air; additional damage caused upon landing.



Spider, Giant Wolf: Arachnid hunting for prey to pounce upon or ensnare. AL N; SZ L; MV 50; DX 14; AC 5; HD 4 (hp 18); #A 1/1 (bite); D 2d6; SV 15; ML 8; XP 255.

Special: If entrapped in web, a man can break free in 19-ST rounds. Bite victim must make *death* (poison) save or be paralyzed in 1d2 rounds, lasting 2d6 turns. Wound becomes necrotic in any event, with 3-in-6 chance of infection unless *cure disease* cast. After 30 days victim must make another save or die.

Stirge: Will hover nearby for 1d4 rounds before attacking. AL CE; SZ S; MV 10 (fly 60); DX 10; AC 7; HD 1 (hp 5); #A 1/1 (sting [+2]); D 1d3; SV 16; ML 8; XP 19.

Special: Drains victim for 1d4 hp damage per round; after ~12 hp, sated stirge flies away.

Tick, Giant: Will lurch out from foliage to attack. AL N; SZ S; MV 20; DX 5; AC 3; HD 3 (hp 14); #A 1/1 (bite); D 1d4; SV 15; ML 12; XP 107.

Special: Chance to surprise increased by 1-in-6 when dropping from tree or other hiding place. Bite transmits venom; make *death* (poison) save at +2 bonus or suffer paralysis for 1d2 turns. Tick remains attached once bite established, draining blood for 1d6 hp damage per round until victim or tick is dead. Can be driven off with fire; 3-in-6 chance it releases if attached.

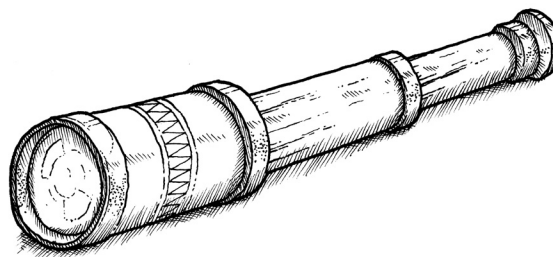
Wolf: Searching for easy food; they gladly will accept scraps, but will eat humans if necessary. AL N; SZ M; MV 60; DX 11; AC 7; HD 2+1 (hp 10); #A 1/1 (bite); D 1d6; SV 16; ML 7; XP 35.

Wyvern: Has been terrorizing the region for months. AL N; SZ L; MV 30 (fly 90); DX 16; AC 3; HD 7+4 (hp 36); #A 2/1 (bite/sting); D 2d8/1d8; SV 13; ML 10; XP 1,080.

Special: Sting delivers venom; make *death* (poison) save or suffer instant paralysis, followed by death in 2d4 rounds.

HIDDEN DREKAR

Here, approximately two and a half miles away from BJÖRNHEIM, is where **Ragnarr the Sea-Wolf's** longship lies hidden, and where the adventure begins. The **Vikings** landed at this small, cobblestone beach and then dragged the ship in, pulling it under the boughs of hemlocks and spruces. From this location, Sea-Wolf, his two score Vikings, and the party move a mile inland to the MOSSY GORGE to set up camp. There, Sea-Wolf and his Vikings will await the rescue of **Gunnhildr Ragnarsdóttir**.



MOSSY GORGE

The following text may be paraphrased or read aloud when the PCs and their Viking companions arrive at this location, a mile away² from the HIDDEN DREKAR:

Shoulder to shoulder with some two score of bloodthirsty Vikings—including the Sea-Wolf himself—your party negotiate a one-mile path inland through a tangle of conifers and bracken, until at length you achieve a narrow, steep-walled, mossy gorge. Here the Vikings will anxiously await your return as you venture forth in an attempt to liberate the Sea-Wolf's daughter.

The MOSSY GORGE is where **Ragnarr the Sea-Wolf** and his band of **40 Vikings** will lie in wait. The gorge is long, narrow, and steep-walled (about 30 feet). It provides natural protection; too, a narrow stream trickles between mossy boulders and ferns. Here

² Random encounter (see TABLE 2) possible, if the referee wishes, though some creatures might not engage a party of nearly 50 armed men.

the Vikings have erected temporary shelters whence they bide their time, awaiting the rescue of the Sea-Wolf's daughter. They brought a chest full of supplies: bandages, blankets, ropes, stakes and wooden mallet, tinderbox, torches, wineskins, iron rations, bag of salt.

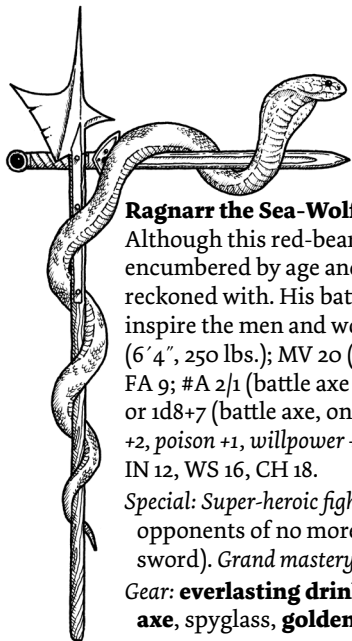
When the PCs strike out from the MOSSY GORGE, they may hear amidst the cacophony of forest noise the distinct sound of large simians grunting and snorting (see APE DEN).

COLD-IRON BAR: Just before the party depart the MOSSY GORGE, the Sea-Wolf produces a crudely-formed **cold-iron bar**. The bar is just over 10 inches long, 2 inches in diameter, and weighs nearly 10 lbs. Graven with runes from the Old Norse tongue, it reads *Valkyrieström*. Ragnarr the Sea-Wolf will place the bar in the hands of a random party member (he favours warrior-types, especially Vikings) and say, "When you find my daughter, hand this bar to her. It will prove both your trustworthiness and connexion to me." In the hands of a Viking female, the cold-iron bar transforms into a **cold-iron spear** (*Valkyrieström*)³.

³ See APPENDIX C.



Mossy Gorge

**Ragnarr the Sea-Wolf** (9TH-LEVEL VIKING FIGHTER):

Although this red-bearded, shaven-headed veteran is encumbered by age and injuries, he remains a force to be reckoned with. His battle prowess, leadership, and bravery inspire the men and women he commands. AL CG; SZ M (6' 4", 250 lbs.); MV 20 (bad knee); AC 3; DR 1; HD 9 (hp 72); FA 9; #A 2/1 (battle axe [+6]); D 1d10+7 (battle axe, two-handed) or 1d8+7 (battle axe, one handed); SV 12 [death +2, transformation +2, poison +1, willpower +1]; ML 12; XP 1,500; ST 17, DX 10, CN 15, IN 12, WS 16, CH 18.

Special: *Super-heroic fighting* (double normal melee attacks vs. opponents of no more than 2 HD). *Weapon mastery* (broad sword). *Grand mastery* (battle axe).

Gear: **everlasting drinking horn**, **+2 chain mail**, **+3 battle axe**, spyglass, **golden cones** ×3.

Hersirs (×7) (5TH-LEVEL FIGHTERS): AL CG; SZ M; MV 30; AC 4; DR 1; HD 5 (hp 36); FA 5; #A 3/2 (short spear [+2] or broad sword [+3]) or 1/1 (dagger [+1]); D 1d6+2 (short spear, one-handed) or 1d8+3 (broad sword, one-handed) or 1d4+1 (dagger); SV 14 [death +2, transformation +2]; ML 9; XP 200; ST 16, DX 10, CN 13, IN 12, WS 12, CH 14.

Special: *Heroic fighting* (double normal melee attacks vs. opponents of no more than 1 HD). *Weapon mastery* (short spear). *Grand mastery* (broad sword).

Gear: chain mail, small shield, dagger, broad sword, short spear, **3d10 cp**, **3d10 sp**, **2d10 gp**.

Warriors (×33) (2ND-LEVEL FIGHTERS): AL CG; SZ M; MV 40; AC 6; HD 2 (hp 17); FA 2; #A 3/2 (short spear [+1] or broad sword [+1]) or 1/1 (dagger); D 1d6+1 (short spear, one-handed) or 1d8+1 (broad sword, one-handed) or 1d4 (dagger); SV 16 [death +2, transformation +2]; ML 9; XP 30; ST 12, DX 12, CN 13, IN 9, WS 10, CH 12.

Special: *Heroic fighting* (double normal melee attacks vs. opponents of no more than 1 HD). *Weapon mastery* (short spear, broad sword).

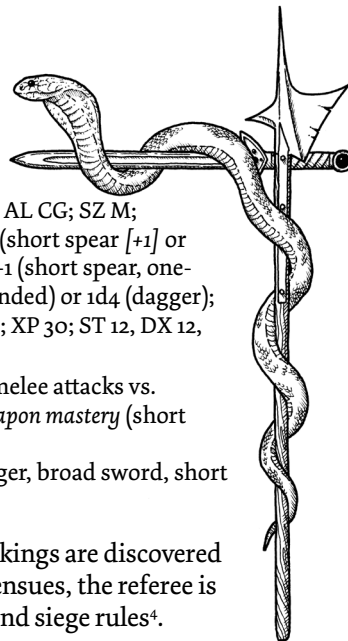
Gear: leather armour, small shield, dagger, broad sword, short spear, **1d12 cp**, **1d12 sp**, **1d12 gp**.

N.B.: If Ragnarr and his two score Vikings are discovered by **Blackbeard's** forces, and battle ensues, the referee is encouraged to employ the warfare and siege rules⁴.

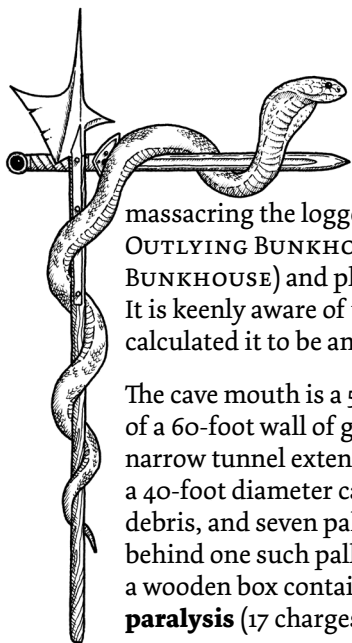
APE DEN

This forest-tangled ridge contains a cave that serves as the den of a troop of **6 carnivorous apes** and their extra-species leader, an **albino ape superior** wearing an ornate silver crown on its head. This four-armed, snowy-furred brute recently challenged and killed the alpha male of the carnivorous apes. Since then, it has cunningly organized its troop to more precise action,

⁴ See AS&SH VOL. III, p. 282: WARFARE AND SIEGE.



Ape Den



massacring the loggers at the most remote of the OUTLYING BUNKHOUSES (now referred to as RUINED BUNKHOUSE) and planning to assault another soon. It is keenly aware of the BERSERKERS' LODGE and has calculated it to be an unwinnable match, for now.

The cave mouth is a 5-foot diameter rent in the middle of a 60-foot wall of granite. From the cave mouth, a narrow tunnel extends 30 feet and ultimately opens to a 40-foot diameter cave cluttered with broken bones, debris, and seven pallets of moss and leaves. In a nook behind one such pallet lies the horde of the alpha: a wooden box containing **1,553 sp**, **1,008 ep**, a **wand of paralysis** (17 charges), and a **+1 falcata**.

Ape, Albino, Superior: AL CE; SZ L; MV 30; DX 8; AC 4; HD 8+4 (hp 55); #A 4/1 (claw ×4) or 2/1 (weapons); D 1d8+2 (×4) or 4d4/4d4; SV 13; ML 10; XP 1,400.

Special: Chance to be surprised reduced by 1-in-6. If all four claws strike one opponent, strangulation ensues next round, causing 1d8+2 hp damage per round; *extraordinary feat of strength* can break ape's grasp. After 3 rounds, victim must make *test of constitution* or asphyxiate; victims who survive have been known to lose voices.

Gear: **3 deep blue spinels** (300-gp value each) in a leather pouch, **gold-filigreed silver crown** (400-gp value).

Apes, Carnivorous (×6): AL CE; SZ M; MV 40; DX 11; AC 6; HD 5 (hp 34, 32, 26, 23, 22, 17); #A 2/1 (claw/claw); D 1d6+1/1d6+1; SV 14; ML 9; XP 200.

Special: Chance to be surprised reduced by 1-in-6. If both claws hit one opponent, ape rends for additional 1d8+1 hp damage.

OUTLYING BUNKHOUSES

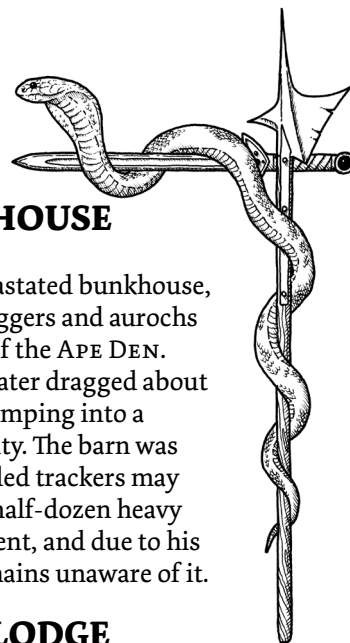
Two bunkhouses (c. 14 × 16 feet) are deep in the forest west of Björnheim. Accessible by rutted cart paths, each is a barn-like, open structure that contains seven narrow, tightly arranged double bunks. Each bunkhouse houses **14 loggers** and keeps a team of **2 aurochs** that are stabled in a small appurtenant structure. These beasts of burden skid logs to the mill at SAWYERS CLEARING. A third outlying bunkhouse (now referred to as RUINED BUNKHOUSE) was recently destroyed by the carnivorous primates of the APE DEN, but no one at Björnheim knows of this yet.

Loggers (×14): AL N; SZ M; MV 40; DX 10; AC 9; HD ½ (hp 4); FA 0; #A 1/1 (knife or hand axe); D 1d4 (knife) or 1d6 (hand axe); SV 17; ML 8; XP 5.

Gear: knife, hand axe, **2d6 cp**, **1d4 sp**.

Aurochs (×2): AL N; SZ L; MV 30; DX 9; AC 5; HD 4 (hp 18); #A 1/1 (gore); D 1d10; SV 15; ML 6; XP 90.

Special: Initial gore as *charge attack* at +2 bonus and double damage dice. Can gore two adjacent foes on single attack roll.



RUINED BUNKHOUSE

Here lie the ruins of a recently devastated bunkhouse, attacked by violent simians. The loggers and aurochs were killed and eaten by the **apes** of the APE DEN. Human and animal remains were later dragged about by opportunistic scavengers, so bumping into a human skull or femur is a possibility. The barn was ripped down and stomped on. Skilled trackers may discover the footprints of about a half-dozen heavy apes. Because the attack was so recent, and due to his pending nuptials, **Blackbeard** remains unaware of it.

BERSERKERS' LODGE

An overgrown trail cuts through the local wilderness two miles to **Björn Blackbeard's** secret weapon:

40 wild berserkers. These bestial men and women chew lotus leaves (supplied by Blackbeard) and dine on raw flesh. They exist much as beasts do, in a moss-covered lodge with no front door. When either or both moons are full, they can be heard baying like wolves. These wild folk retain enough discernment to view Blackbeard as their supreme lord, and sometimes he deigns to revel with them, comporting himself much as they do. When Blackbeard is not about, their leader is Faxi, whose loyalty to Blackbeard has been waning of late; he has ambitions.

Men, Wild Berserkers (×37): AL CE; SZ M; MV 40; DX 10; AC 8; HD 1+4 (hp 9); #A 2/1 (short spear [+2]); D 1d8+2 (short spear, two-handed) or 1d6+2 (short spear, one-handed); SV 14; ML 12; XP 32.

Special: Can withstand temperatures as low as -15°F.

Gear: short spear, **4d4 sp**.

Men, Wild Berserker Sub-Chiefs (×2): AL CE; SZ M; MV 40; DX 12; AC 7; HD 3+6 (hp 20); #A 2/1 (battle axe [+2]); D 1d10+2 (battle axe, two-handed) or 1d8+2 (battle axe, one handed); SV 13; ML 12; XP 120.

Special: Can withstand temperatures as low as -15°F.

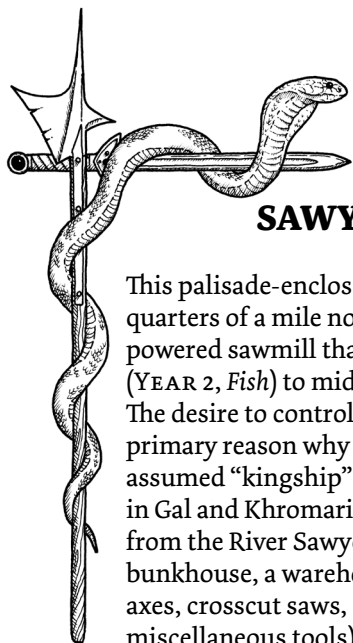
Gear: battle axe, **1d8 gp**.

Faxi, Wild Berserker Chieftain: AL CE; SZ M; MV 40; DX 14; AC 3 (2 vs. missiles); HD 5+8 (hp 31); #A 2/1 (battle axe [+2]); D 1d8+2 (battle axe, one handed); SV 12; ML 12; XP 420.

Special: Can withstand temperatures as low as -15°F.

Gear: **+2 large shield** (silver filigreed with Viking runes), battle axe, **2d8 gp**.

In the lodge, hidden beneath a pile of soiled rags and lice-ridden thatch, lies a leather pouch containing **5 jade pieces** (100-gp value each).



SAWYERS CLEARING

This palisade-enclosed clearing, located some three-quarters of a mile north of BJÖRNHEIM, holds a water-powered sawmill that functions from mid-Renaissance (YEAR 2, *Fish*) to mid-Twilight (YEAR 11, *Mammoth*). The desire to control this prosperous operation was a primary reason why **Blackbeard** invaded this area and assumed “kingship”; the lumber is sold to partners in Gal and Khromarium. An aqueduct branches from the River Sawyer to the mill, beside which is a bunkhouse, a warehouse, and a tool shed (contains axes, crosscut saws, a large sharpening stone, and other miscellaneous tools).

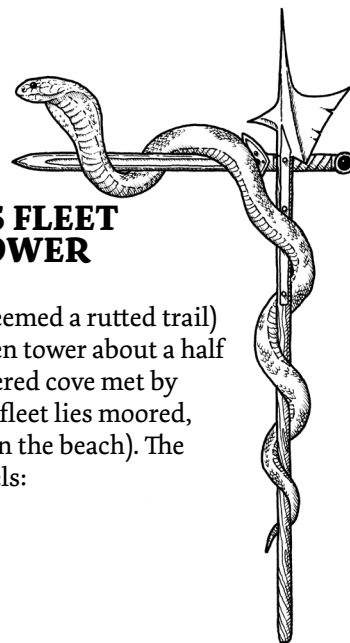
Blackbeard has stationed **6 bandits** (not considered part of the STRONGHOLD ROSTER) at SAWYERS CLEARING to protect this operation from neighbouring enemies as well as the horrors that lurk in the darksome forest depths. They are charged with making routine patrols in pairs. Deeper in the forest are OUTLYING BUNKHOUSES where loggers fell trees used here. Rutted trails lead to BJÖRNHEIM (south) and to the OUTLYING BUNKHOUSES (west).

Men, Bandits (×6): AL CE; SZ M; MV 40; DX 9; AC 7; HD 1 (hp 5); #A 1/1 (short spear or dagger); D 1d8 (short spear, two-handed) or 1d6 (short spear, one-handed) or 1d4 (dagger); SV 16; ML 6; XP 10.

Gear: leather armour, short spear, dagger, **3d4 ep**.

Sawyers (×6): AL N; SZ M; MV 40; DX 10; AC 9; HD 1/2 (hp 4); FA 0; #A 1/1 (knife or hand axe); D 1d4 (knife) or 1d6 (hand axe); SV 17; ML 8; XP 5.

Gear: knife, hand axe, **1d6 cp**, **1d6 sp**.



BLACKBEARD'S FLEET AND WATCHTOWER

The south road (more accurately deemed a rutted trail) from BJÖRNHEIM leads to a wooden tower about a half mile away. It overlooks a deep-watered cove met by a gravel beach. Here **Blackbeard's** fleet lies moored, except for the *færings* (which rest on the beach). The fleet comprises the following vessels:

- ★ Amazon carrack
- ★ Viking *Færings* (×3)
- ★ Viking *Knarr*
- ★ Viking longship, large (*drekar*)

The fleet is guarded by **6 bandits** (not considered part of the STRONGHOLD ROSTER), who utilize a wooden watchtower from which two canoes are hung. The tower is a 20-foot high, pole-mounted affair. A rope ladder accesses a trap door that opens into a single-chamber 15 × 15-foot cabin. Within, it is sparsely furnished, with three sets of narrow bunks, a table, three 3-gallon casks (water, wine, whisky) and a few benches and chairs. A pair of pole-suspended lamps provide light. Three footlockers contain old boots and extra clothes. Unbeknownst to Blackbeard, the guards have become lax of late; they've taken to drinking and gambling.

Men, Bandits (×6): AL CE; SZ M; MV 40; DX 9; AC 7; HD 1 (hp 5); #A 1/1 (short spear or dagger); D 1d8 (short spear, two-handed) or 1d6 (short spear, one-handed) or 1d4 (dagger); SV 16; ML 6; XP 10.

Gear: leather armour, short spear, dagger, **4d4 cp**, **4d4 sp**, **3d4 ep**, **1d2 gp**.

PART III: BJÖRNHEIM

APPROACHING THE STRONGHOLD

As the PCs approach BJÖRNHEIM, the following boxed text can be read or paraphrased to the players as the referee sees fit:

Atop a high cliff overlooking Brigand's Bay, you see the ancient, crumbled walls of a great castle complex, a ruin seemingly from a bygone age. Breached walls have been fitted with timbers, effectively restoring the defensive integrity of the edifice. Similarly, the old towers have been restored to operation, whence armed guards practice vigilance. Within the ancient walls, tendrils of smoke curl to the sky. A sturdy wooden gate provides ingress.

Björn Blackbeard's stronghold, called BJÖRNHEIM⁵, is hemmed in by the walls of a Hyperborean lord's fortress that fell to ruin millennia ago, when Hyperborea was still a part of Old Earth. The structure was crushed by

glacial ice spawned by the Ashen Worm. The timber-repaired walls stand 15 feet tall; likewise, the repaired towers stand 20 feet in height. Furthermore, gates to the east and northwest have been recently installed.

⁵ See p. 12 for a map of BJÖRNHEIM; see PLAYERS' HANDOUT #1 for a players' version.

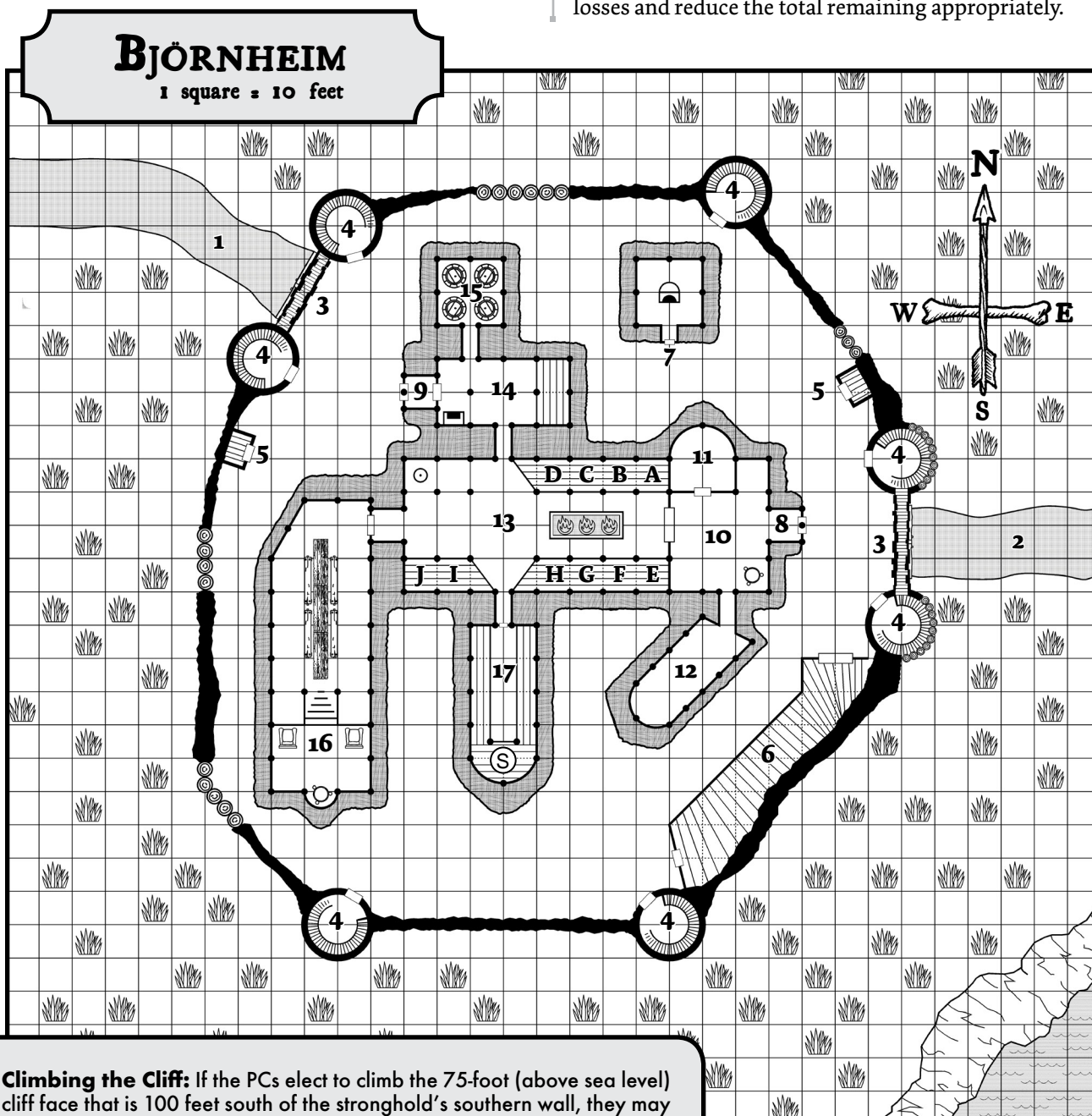
By contrast, within the confines of the ancient Hyperborean walls there stands a traditional Viking turf house:

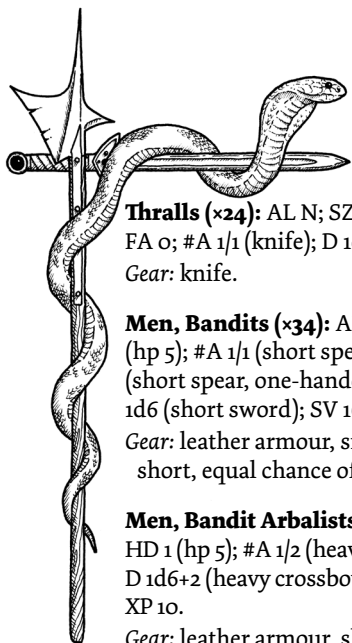
- ★ Walls built with stone bricks and layered with turf
- ★ Roof composed of cedar bark blanketed with sod
- ★ Interior load-bearing timbers
- ★ Windowless
- ★ Entrances near the east and northwest gates
- ★ Exterior stable abuts ancient Hyperborean wall
- ★ Unattached smoke house

Hidden beneath the stronghold lies the cellar and dungeon of the old Hyperborean fortress. Because Blackbeard brutally executed every last man who previously occupied this stronghold, he remains ignorant of the hidden depths below.

STRONGHOLD ROSTER

COMMON PERSONNEL: The lesser inhabitants of Björnheim are as follows. It is important to note that the number of each roster type is the total for the entire stronghold, so the referee should keep track of all losses and reduce the total remaining appropriately.





Thralls (×24): AL N; SZ M; MV 40; DX 10; AC 9; HD ½ (hp 4); FA 0; #A 1/1 (knife); D 1d4; SV 17; ML 8; XP 5.
Gear: knife.

Men, Bandits (×34): AL CE; SZ M; MV 40; DX 9; AC 6; HD 1 (hp 5); #A 1/1 (short spear or long sword or short sword); D 1d6 (short spear, one-handed) or 1d8 (long sword, one-handed) or 1d6 (short sword); SV 16; ML 6; XP 10.

Gear: leather armour, small shield, short spear, sword (long or short, equal chance of either), **3d4 ep**.

Men, Bandit Arbalists (×28): AL CE; SZ M; MV 40; DX 9; AC 7; HD 1 (hp 5); #A 1/2 (heavy crossbow) or 1/1 (short sword); D 1d6+2 (heavy crossbow) or 1d6 (short sword); SV 16; ML 6; XP 10.

Gear: leather armour, short sword, heavy crossbow, heavy crossbow bolts ×10, **3d4 ep**.

Men, Bandit Lieutenants (×6): AL CE; SZ M; MV 30; DX 11; AC 5; DR 1; HD 3 (hp 14); #A 3/2 (long sword [+1]) or 1/1 (short spear); D 1d10+1 (long sword, two-handed) or 1d8+1 (long-sword, one-handed) or 1d8 (short spear, two-handed) or 1d6 (short spear, one-handed); SV 15; ML 7; XP 41.

Special: *Weapon mastery* (long sword).

Gear: chain mail, short spear, long sword, **2d8 gp**.

Men, Bandit Captains (×2): AL CE; SZ M; MV 30; DX 13; AC 4; DR 1; HD 5 (hp 23); #A 3/2 (short spear [+1] or long sword [+1]); D 1d10+1 (long sword, two-handed) or 1d8+1 (long sword, one-handed) or 1d8+1 (short spear, two-handed) or 1d6+1 (short spear, one-handed); SV 14; ML 8; XP 175.

Special: *Weapon mastery* (short spear, long sword).

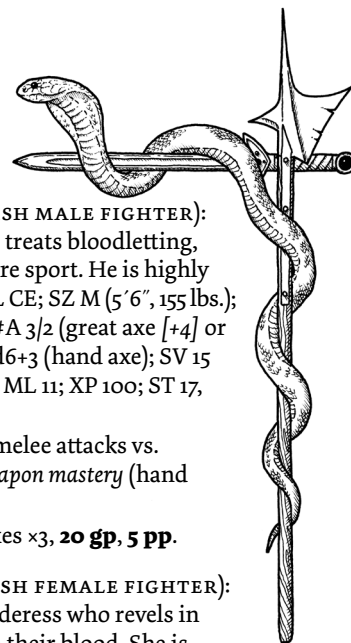
Gear: banded mail, short spear, long sword, **3d8 gp**.

THE “WOLF PACK”: The following nine people are considered **Blackbeard’s** finest (and deadliest), each afforded a bedstead dwelling in the fire hall (#13) or, in the case of **Sagka the Wise**, two such bedsteads. Blackbeard refers to this group as his “**Wolf Pack**”. In play, this group could become a rival party hunting down the liberators of the Sea-Wolf’s daughter.

Arnkell the Toothless (4TH-LEVEL COMMON [VIKING-ESQUIMAUX MIX] MALE BARBARIAN): Touched with no small amount of madness; bald-headed wild man always smiling, his toothy grin revealing more teeth than seems humanly possible. AL CE; SZ M (5’10”, 200 lbs.); MV 30; AC 4; DR 1; HD 4 (hp 40); FA 4; #A 3/2 (short spear [+2] or battle axe [+3]); D 1d6+3 (short spear) or 1d8+4 (battle axe); SV 13 [dodging +1, poison +1]; ML 11; XP 100; ST 17, DX 15, CN 16, IN 5, WS 9, CH 16.

Special: *Alertness* (–1 to be surprised). *Ambusher* (+1 to surprise outdoors when alone or with prepared party). *Draw poison*. *Horsemanship*. *Leap* 25 feet. *Sense magic* 4-in-12. *Track* (10-in-12 wilderness, 3-in-12 non-wilderness). *Weapon mastery* (short spear, battle axe). *Wilderness survival*.

Gear: scale armour, small shield, **+1 battle axe**, short spear, **10 cp, 10 sp, 74 gp**.



Ch’aal (4TH-LEVEL HALF-BLOOD PICTISH MALE FIGHTER): Heavily tattooed, sadistic axeman who treats bloodletting, murder, and torture as though they were sport. He is highly protective of his twin sister, **Ch’eeet**. AL CE; SZ M (5’6”, 155 lbs.); MV 30; AC 3; DR 1; HD 4 (hp 23); FA 4; #A 3/2 (great axe [+4] or hand axe [+2]); D 2d6+5 (great axe) or 1d6+3 (hand axe); SV 15 [death +2, transformation +2, dodging +1]; ML 11; XP 100; ST 17, DX 15, CN 12, IN 12, WS 9, CH 8.

Special: *Heroic fighting* (double normal melee attacks vs. opponents of no more than 1 HD). *Weapon mastery* (hand axe). *Grand mastery* (great axe).

Gear: splint mail, **+1 great axe**, hand axes ×3, **20 gp, 5 pp**.

Ch’eeet (4TH-LEVEL HALF-BLOOD PICTISH FEMALE FIGHTER): Heavily tattooed, unconscionable murderess who revels in mutilating her enemies and bathing in their blood. She is highly protective of her twin brother, **Ch’aal**. AL CE; SZ M (5’5”, 150 lbs.); MV 40; AC 3; DR 1; HD 4 (hp 25); FA 4; #A 3/2 (falcata [+3] or hand axe [+2]) or 5/2 (falcata [+1] and falcata [–1], *two-weapon fighting*); D 1d6+4 (falcata) or 1d6+3 (hand axe); SV 15 [death +2, transformation +2, dodging +1]; ML 11; XP 100; ST 17, DX 15, CN 12, IN 10, WS 12, CH 7.

Special: *Heroic fighting* (double normal melee attacks vs. opponents of no more than 1 HD). *Weapon mastery* (hand axe). *Grand mastery* (falcata).

Gear: **+1 chain mail**, falcatas ×2, hand axes ×3, **24 sp, 29 gp, 7 pp**.

Demetria “Demi” Ambrosidoros (5TH-LEVEL AMAZON FEMALE WARLOCK): One-breasted, heavily-scarred woman; speaks in hoarse whispers, covets power above all else. Lacking a crew, she donated her carrack to **Blackbeard’s** cause, but will readily betray him. AL LE; SZ M (5’11”, 155 lbs.); MV 30; AC 3; DR 1; HD 5 (hp 30); FA 5; CA 5; #A 3/2 (broad sword [+2]) or 2/1 (longbow [+2, +3 point blank]); D 1d8+2 (broad sword, one-handed) or 1d10+2 (broad sword, two-handed) or 1d6+2 (longbow); SV 14 [transformation +2, sorcery +2, dodging +1]; ML 9; XP 200; ST 15, DX 15, CN 9, IN 15, WS 12, CH 8.

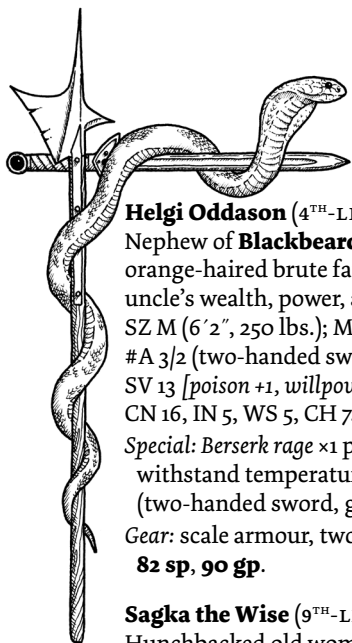
Special: *Magician spells* (*enlargement* ×2; *invisibility* ×2; *fly*). *Magic item use* (as fighter or magician). *Read magic*. *Read scrolls*. *Scribe scrolls*. *Weapon mastery* (broad sword, longbow).

Gear: banded mail, broad sword, longbow, arrows ×12, **spell book** (contains all prepared spells), **magician scroll** (*invisibility*), **12 sp**.

Gormal Macc Conn (5TH-LEVEL COMMON [KELT-VIKING MIX] MALE FIGHTER): Loveless mercenary who will sacrifice anything for money and personal pleasure. Fond of whisky, wine, and lotus. AL CE; SZ M (5’11”, 175 lbs.); MV 30; AC 4; DR 1; HD 5 (hp 27); FA 5; #A 3/2 (footman’s flail [+3] or short sword [+2]); D 1d10+3 (footman’s flail) or 1d6+2 (short sword); SV 14 [death +2, transformation +2, dodging +1]; ML 9; XP 200; ST 16, DX 15, CN 9, IN 9, WS 9, CH 9.

Special: *Heroic fighting* (double normal melee attacks vs. opponents of no more than 1 HD). *Weapon mastery* (short sword). *Grand mastery* (footman’s flail).

Gear: chain mail, footman’s flail, short sword, **10 sp, 90 gp**.



Helgi Oddason (4TH-LEVEL VIKING MALE BERSERKER): Nephew of **Blackbeard**. This cross-eyed, bulbous-nosed, orange-haired brute fancies himself the heir apparent to his uncle's wealth, power, and all the attendant paramours. AL CE; SZ M (6'2", 250 lbs.); MV 30; AC 6; DR 1; HD 4 (hp 39); FA 4; #A 3/2 (two-handed sword [+3]); D 3d4+4 (two-handed sword); SV 13 [poison +1, willpower -1]; ML 11; XP 100; ST 18, DX 10, CN 16, IN 5, WS 5, CH 7.

Special: Berserk rage x1 per day. Leap 25 feet. Thick skin (can withstand temperatures as low as -15° F). Weapon mastery (two-handed sword, great axe).

Gear: scale armour, two-handed sword, key to coffer at #13-F, 82 sp, 90 gp.

Sagka the Wise (9TH-LEVEL LAPP FEMALE SHAMAN): Hunchbacked old woman; spiritual counsellor and confidante to **Björn Blackbeard**. She is ever at his elbow whispering her prognostications and advice into his ear, and lo, his confidence in her abilities is absolute. Blackbeard disallows others from seeking her counsel; in sooth, none mind, for she unnerves them. Her totem is an obsidian owl of unknown origin, so ancient that it is little more than a featureless lump at this point. AL CE; SZ M (5'1", 98 lbs.); MV 20; AC 9; HD 9 (hp 30); FA 5; TA 7; CA 9; #A 1/1 (dagger); D 1d4-1 (dagger); SV 12 [death +2, sorcery +2, willpower +2]; ML 7; XP 1,500; ST 7, DX 8, CN 9, IN 17, WS 18, CH 16.

Special: Cleric spells (detect magic, omen, perceive disguise; augury, hold person, incantation; bestow curse, speak with dead; divination, scrying font; commune). Necromancer spells (locate the dead, necromantic ventriloquism, protection from good; cause blindness, visualize death; dispel magic, wraithshape; brain death). Draw poison. Magic item use (as cleric or magician). Medicine man (heal 1d4 hp x9 allies per day; treat poison or disease x1 per week). Read magic. Read scrolls (shaman only). Scribe scrolls. Totem (contact otherworldly being x1 per week). Turn/command undead.

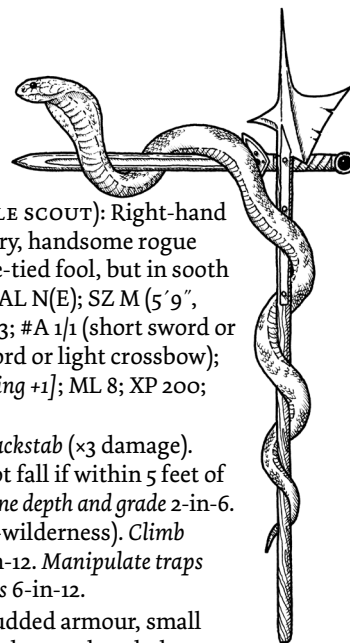
Gear: ring of invisibility, wings of flying, silver dagger, spell book (contains all prepared necromancer spells), shaman scroll (omen; augury; divination), potion of diminutiveness, 12 pearls (100-gp value each).

Sarakos the Black (5TH-LEVEL IXIAN MALE ASSASSIN): Smirking, greasy-haired, black-toothed killer. Sarakos is a taciturn man who oft twirls his daggers between his fingers.

Blackbeard calls on him to engineer his most problematic tasks (e.g., abducting **Gunnhildr**). AL LE; SZ M (5'11", 150 lbs.); MV 40; AC 5; HD 5 (hp 16); FA 3; #A 1/1 (dagger, melee [+2]) or 3/2 (dagger, hurled [+3]); D 1d4+2; SV 14 [device +2, avoidance +3, other dodging +1, poison +1]; ML 9; XP 200; ST 15, DX 17, CN 10, IN 14, WS 12, CH 14.

Special: Assassinate (kill target or x3 damage). Detect secret doors 3-in-6. Disguise. Poison use. Climb 10-in-12. Discern noise 6-in-12. Hide 8-in-12. Manipulate traps 6-in-12. Move silently 8-in-12. Open locks 6-in-12.

Gear: carpet of flying, studded armour, +1 daggers x2, penetrative II poison (3 doses), dust of sleepiness (3 doses), 255 gp.



Torr Kaitos (5TH-LEVEL COMMON MALE SCOUT): Right-hand man of **Sarakos the Black**. This slippery, handsome rogue plays the role of a charming yet tongue-tied fool, but in sooth he is an efficient intelligence gatherer. AL N(E); SZ M (5'9", 155 lbs.); MV 40; AC 4; HD 5 (hp 18); FA 3; #A 1/1 (short sword or light crossbow [+1]); D 1d6+1 (short sword or light crossbow); SV 14 [device +2, avoidance +3, other dodging +1]; ML 8; XP 200; ST 13, DX 16, CN 10, IN 14, WS 9, CH 16.

Special: Alertness (-1 to be surprised). Backstab (x3 damage). Controlled fall (no damage from 50-foot fall if within 5 feet of wall). Detect secret doors 3-in-6. Determine depth and grade 2-in-6. Track (7-in-12 wilderness, 9-in-12 non-wilderness). Climb 10-in-12. Discern noise 6-in-12. Hide 8-in-12. Manipulate traps 6-in-12. Move silently 8-in-12. Open locks 6-in-12.

Gear: slippers of spider-climbing, studded armour, small shield, short sword, light crossbow, light crossbow bolts x20, 35 sp, 52 gp.

THE KING: Björn Blackbeard is not a recognized "king" outside of this stronghold, not even amongst the other petty kinglets of Brigand's Bay, but his notoriety is growing due to his daring exploits, brutal conquests, and fearsome mettle.



Björn Blackbeard

Björn Blackbeard (9TH-LEVEL COMMON [VIKING-MIX] MALE BERSERKER): Notorious pirate and beast of a man. He has a barrel-shaped chest, a bull neck, thick hands, and a furrowed brow over close-set eyes. His black beard is burly and streaked grey, and he has a similar mane of hair. Blackbeard is prone to grim moods, macabre humour, and wild-eyed paranoia. In battle, he is nigh peerless. AL CE; SZ M (6'4", 260 lbs.); MV 40; AC 3; HD 9 (hp 82); FA 9; #A 2/1 (great hammer [+5]); D 2d6+6 (great hammer); SV 10 [dodging +1, poison +1]; ML 11; XP 1,500; ST 18, DX 15, CN 15, IN 13, WS 9, CH 16.

Special: Berserk rage x3 per day. Climb 10-in-12. Leap 25 feet. Thick skin (can withstand temperatures as low as -15° F). Weapon mastery (great axe, great hammer, great mace). Bestial form (bear).

Gear: knots string, +2 great hammer, potion of super-heroic action.



BJÖRNHEIM

1. BEACH ROAD: Wheel-rutted road of sand and gravel descends from the stronghold to the beach (see **BLACKBEARD'S FLEET AND WATCHTOWER**). The road skirts the cliffside in many places, making for a treacherous negotiation in wet conditions. The referee is encouraged to check for a random encounter should the party elect to tarry or make undue noise along this road (see **TABLE 2**).

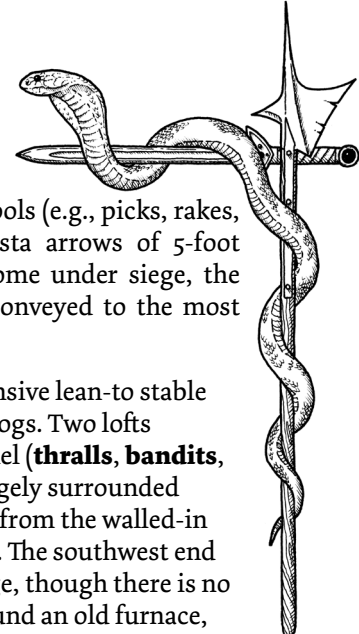
2. SAWYERS ROAD: Old cart path pierces the wilderness of Brigand's Bay and leads to **SAWYERS CLEARING**, where local loggers and sawyers live in utter fear of **Björn Blackbeard**. His bloody conquest of the region and subsequent reign of terror have the locals broken to absolute compliance with his black will. To make matters worse, an **OUTLYING BUNKHOUSE** was recently obliterated by a roving tribe of **carnivorous apes** (see **APE DEN**). Travel down **SAWYERS ROAD** should entail random encounter checks (see **TABLE 2**).

3. GATE: Stout, wooden entry gate with a **locked**, iron-reinforced draw bar. Whether approaching **#1 (Northwest Gate)** or **#2 (East Gate)**, intruders will encounter **3 bandits**, **1 bandit lieutenant**, and **2 war dogs** stationed behind the gate. Peep holes have been cut into the gates, allowing the bandits to observe new arrivals, whilst the **bandit arbalists** question them from atop the adjacent towers (see **#4**). The top of each gate is overlooked by a plank-built catwalk that stretches between the two towers that flank the gate; thus, arbalists from the towers that shoulder the gate will oft patrol across these.

Dogs, War (x2): AL N; SZ M; MV 40; DX 13; AC 6; HD 2 (hp 9); #A 1/1 (bite); D 1d6; SV 16; ML 9; XP 24.

Special: Perspicacious to otherworldly horrors and undead; may bark or howl in their presence, even if unseen.

4. TOWER: Tower crowned with jagged masonry stands 20 feet high, the gaps repaired with cedar planks. Interior access is through a narrow (2½-foot wide) door of new wood construction. Each tower's ground floor serves as storage for food (grains) and miscellaneous supplies. Each also includes interior stone stairs that curls up widdershins to a trap door. This opens to an observation platform whence **2 bandit arbalists** keep watch.



5. SHED: Contains excavation tools (e.g., picks, rakes, shovels), a ballista, and 12 ballista arrows of 5-foot length. Should the stronghold come under siege, the ballista from each shed will be conveyed to the most advantageous tower for defence.

6. STABLE AND FORGE: Extensive lean-to stable houses horses, sheep, goats, and dogs. Two lofts provide lodging for lesser personnel (**thralls**, **bandits**, **lieutenants**). As the fortress is largely surrounded by grasses, livestock are taken out from the walled-in stronghold each morning to graze. The southwest end of the building is oft used as a forge, though there is no dedicated blacksmith. Here are found an old furnace, an anvil, tongs, bellows, fullers, a sledge hammer, and other tools of the trade. During the day, **2d6 thralls** can be found here at any time, while **1d6+12 thralls** will be present at night.

7. SMOKEHOUSE:

Contains a central fire pit used for smoking fish and venison. It is attended by **1d4-1 thralls** at any time. This location is oft used by **Blackbeard** and his crone, **Sagka the Wise**. Using steam and smoke, they petition gods, dæmons, and animistic spirits for guidance.

8. EAST ENTRANCE:

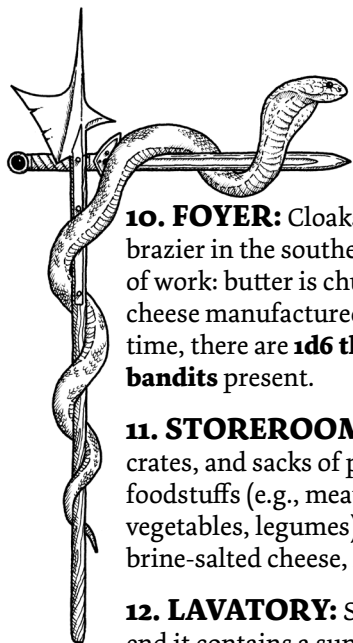
Short (5-foot), iron-reinforced hardwood door. On a 3-in-6 chance it is **locked** with an interior drop bar. If the PCs are admitted through the east gate (**#3**), they will be conveyed through this door to the foyer (**#10**).

9. WEST ENTRANCE: Short (5-foot), iron-reinforced hardwood door. On a 3-in-6 chance it is **locked** with an interior drop bar. If the PCs are admitted through the northwest gate (**#3**), they will be conveyed through this door to the sitting room (**#14**).

THE WEDDING: When the PCs are admitted into Björnheim, the bulk of the stronghold's fighting force is located in the king's hall (**#16**), celebrating their master's forthcoming nuptials. (This is a key event; i.e., it will be ongoing whether the PCs have spent a short time in the local forest, or days.) Consequently, the most capable combatants are located there. If the PCs have been brought in to be interviewed for mercenary employment, they will be directly conveyed to the king's hall, where they will get to eat, drink, and speak with other attendees who all await the ceremony.

APPROACHING THE GATE: When the PCs approach either gate (**#8** or **#9**), they will be addressed by the bandit arbalists that man the flanking towers. The crossbowmen will ask what business the PCs have with Björn Blackbeard, "the greatest king of Brigand's Bay". They may warn the PCs not to speak mistruths about their intentions, proclaiming that their lord is gifted with sorcerous insight. If the PCs claim to be mercenaries as the Sea-Wolf suggested, the men on the towers will laugh and say, "This is good! Our master seeks fresh bodies to replace those recently slain whilst viking." The PCs most likely will be admitted, unless they openly avow their intention of rescuing Gunnhildr, but if they present some tale or reason for arrival besides serving as mercenaries, the referee will have to adjudicate the reaction to their pretence accordingly.





10. FOYER: Cloaks and furs hung and dried here; brazier in the southeast corner. This also is a place of work: butter is churned, flour is ground, and soft cheese manufactured with a stone cheese press. At any time, there are **1d6 thralls** (women, typically) and **1d4 bandits** present.

11. STOREROOM: Heavily congested with barrels, crates, and sacks of pickled, salted, and smoked foodstuffs (e.g., meat, fish, crustaceans, fruits, vegetables, legumes). Hung from racks are bags of brine-salted cheese, flour, salt, oats, and other grains.

12. LAVATORY: Short, 5-foot entrance. At the far end it contains a sunken vat, clay chamber pots, and other evacuation apparatuses. A pair of narrow ceiling vents allows the fumes to rise. **Thralls** collect the urine for tanning leather and laundering.

13. FIRE HALL: Main living area of **Blackbeard's** people. At any time during daylight hours, **4d4 thralls** may be found here conducting daily chores. The fire hall features a narrow hearth running along the centre of the floor, a grinding stone in the northwest corner, and ten large bedsteads.

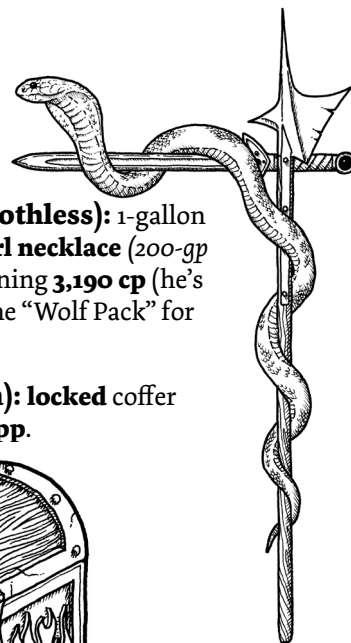
The bedsteads are the apartments of Blackbeard's "**Wolf Pack**", his most trusted and deadly henchmen (see "**Wolf Pack**"), though Blackbeard reserves one for his own purposes. Each bedstead is partitioned by a drapery of animal skins. Each unit contains furs, skins, and woollen blankets. Storage cabinets, each accessible via a hinged lid, contain boots, fur cloaks, gloves, and other personal effects (see below).

13-A. Bedstead (Ch'aal): wooden splint armour (less effective than metal; AC 5, DR 1); coffer containing **340 cp, 875 sp, 98 ep, 400 gp**, and a **yellow ivory charm of a mammoth** (25-gp value).

13-B. Bedstead (Ch'eeet): 30-inch sinew cord sewn with a collection of 27 human ears, pouch containing **60 sp**.

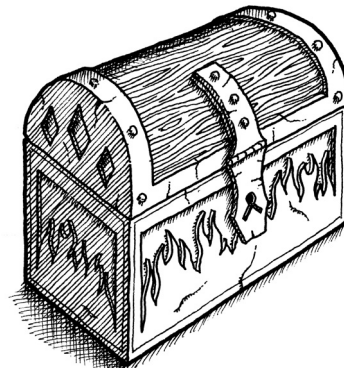
13-C. Bedstead (Gormal Macc Conn): leather scroll case containing a vellum map that illustrates the Trogos region with notes suggesting which forested slot canyons might provide ingress to the cavernous depths below (and possibly even Underborea); coffer containing **390 cp, 675 sp, 88 ep, and 370 gp**.

13-D. Bedstead (Demetria "Demi" Ambrosidoros): brass spyglass tucked in an old boot, bottle of wine (very fine), **luckstone**; coffer containing **500 cp, 650 sp, 40 ep, 509 gp**, and the deed to an Amazon carrack (written in the Hellenic Amazon tongue).



13-E. Bedstead (Arnkell the Toothless): 1-gallon clay jug of whisky, pouch with **pearl necklace** (200-gp value), ape-man skull, coffer containing **3,190 cp** (he's convinced that he's the richest of the "Wolf Pack" for having the most coins).

13-F. Bedstead (Helgi Oddason): locked coffer containing **862 sp, 240 gp, and 40 pp**.



13-G. Bedstead (Sarakos the Black): silver daggers ×2, blowgun, blowgun needles ×7, padlock and key, 50' silk rope; coffer containing **190 cp, 650 sp, 108 ep, and 770 gp**.

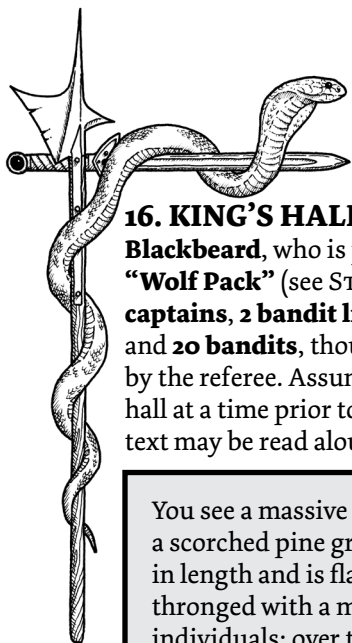
13-H. Bedstead (Torr Kaitos): makeup kit, wig (long red hair); coffer containing **195 cp, 375 sp, 40 ep, and 420 gp**.

13-I. Bedstead (Sagka the Wise): pouch of grey and black hair (**Blackbeard's**), pouch of griffin ashes, pouch of polished sticks, pouch of river stones, human skull (her great grandmother), vial of goat's blood.

13-J. Bedstead (Sagka the Wise): 12-inch jade statuette of **Xathoquua** (300-gp value). **Blackbeard** sleeps here about half the time, for he oft wishes to be near his wise woman; otherwise he sleeps at #17.

14. KITCHEN AND WORK ROOM: Functions as a kitchen, work room, and dwelling place for the **2 bandit captains**. At any time, **2d4 thralls** (usually women) may be found here, sewing, weaving, cooking, cleaning, and so forth. A double bedstead is provided to this favoured staff, beneath which a variety of cleaning tools and cooking implements are stored. A large iron stove here is used frequently.

15. STOREROOM: Four hogsheads (c. 60-gallon casks) are sunk into the ground here. These respectively contain sour whey, wine, whisky, and water. A back wall shelf is haphazardly lined with bottles of brandy, mead, whisky, and wine of various qualities. Empty carafes (and an alarming number of empty bottles) line the shelf as well.



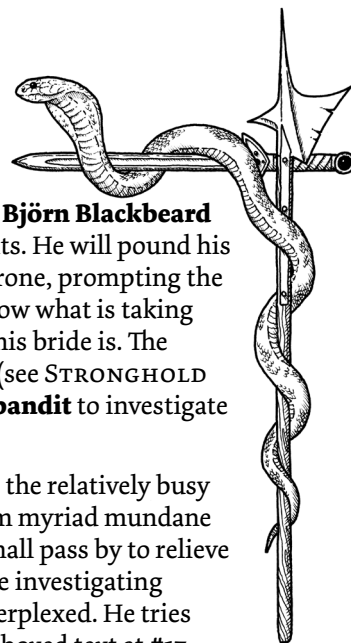
16. KING'S HALL: The throne room of **Björn Blackbeard**, who is present. It also is attended by his **"Wolf Pack"** (see **STRONGHOLD ROSTER**), **2 bandit captains**, **2 bandit lieutenants**, **10 bandit arbalists**, and **20 bandits**, though these numbers can be modified by the referee. Assuming the PCs are conveyed to this hall at a time prior to the nuptials, the following boxed text may be read aloud or paraphrased:

You see a massive post-and-beam hall spanned by a scorched pine grand table that stretches 40 feet in length and is flanked by long benches. The hall is thronged with a motley assemblage of unsavoury individuals: over two score battle-scarred men and women, all armed to the teeth. The place is raucous with activity: roaring laughter, boisterous cheers, mugs slamming and foaming over, empty wine bottles clattering to the floor, braziers smoking, roasted boar's meat steaming, body odour wafting, and deep exhalations of whisky breath. Servants flit in and out of the hall, clearing plates, filling mugs, and enduring general abuse.

Above the din a raised platform holds a pair of cedar-carved thrones, each embellished with deer antlers. One throne is vacant, the other occupied by a burly, black-bearded beast of a man. This one appears to be brooding, his haunted eyes burning with the unquenchable black flames of deepest melancholy. Hunched in the shadows by his elbow lurks a shrivelled old crone with dark leathery skin and knotted grey hair laced with bone. On occasion she whispers into the ear of the man, which prompts brief recognition in the brute's close-set eyes before black thoughts consume him again.

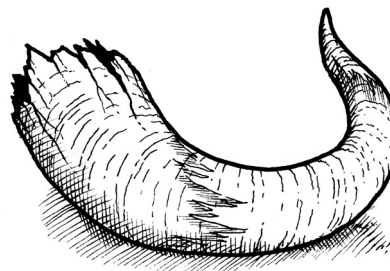
The PCs are offered seats at the table. After being served, they are soon approached by **Gormal Macc Conn** and **Torr Kaitos** (see **STRONGHOLD ROSTER**), both of whom typically interview new arrivals. After a brief introduction, the following list includes questions and comments that may be directed to the PCs:

- ★ "What is your purpose here?"
- ★ "What skills do you have to offer?"
- ★ "Are you afraid to kill or be killed?"
- ★ "Are you morally bound against performing the blackest deeds?"
- ★ "You will be rich, eat well, drink well, and have your pick of mates."
- ★ "It is unwise to address Blackbeard unless he addresses you first."
- ★ "You have arrived at a fortuitous time: Our master is about to be wed!"



At a time of the referee's choosing, **Björn Blackbeard** may emerge from his black thoughts. He will pound his heavy fist against the arm of his throne, prompting the hall to go silent. He demands to know what is taking so long, and wants to know where his bride is. The Ixian assassin, **Sarakos the Black** (see **STRONGHOLD ROSTER**), orders a relatively sober **bandit** to investigate the delay.

The bandit exits the hall and enters the relatively busy firehall (**#13**), where **thralls** perform myriad mundane tasks; also, attendees of the king's hall pass by to relieve themselves at the lavatory (**#12**). The investigating **bandit** pauses at the door of **#17**, perplexed. He tries the door, which is ajar. Refer to the boxed text at **#17**, if one or more PCs are present. Unless hindered, the investigating **bandit** will hurry back to the king's hall, crying for help. This prompts **Blackbeard** and his **"Wolf Pack"** to jump to their feet and hurry to **#17**.



17. ROYAL BEDCHAMBER: **Björn Blackbeard's** bedchamber, bedecked with the finest furs in Hyperborea—bear, ermine, fox, and vhuurmis. Trophy heads of aurochs, cave bear, lion, reindeer, ground sloth, and sabre-tooth tiger are mounted throughout. The perimeter is lined with lidded storage benches that curl into a master bed overarched by a pair of mammoth tusks. The door has a keyless, interior drop bar for **locking** it from within. The following boxed text may be read or paraphrased:

The door to this room is ajar. Looking in, you see the scene of a butchery. Two handmaidens have been beaten bloody and unconscious, and two guards have been slain – one with a slit throat, the other disembowelled from groin to sternum. There is a tremendous amount of blood pooled about the floor and soaked into the beddings at the far end of the chamber. Gunnhildr Ragnarsdóttir is nowhere to be seen.

Careful scrutiny will reveal that one of the dead guards has an empty scabbard. More obviously, one of the unconscious handmaidens has been stripped of her woollen tunic and left stark naked on the floor.



Björn Blackbeard

Sagka the Wise

Cb'aal

*Demetria "Demi"
Ambrosidoros*

Helgi Oddason

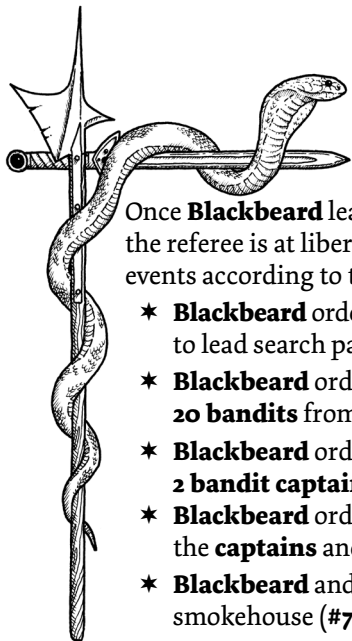
*Sarakos
the Black*

Torr Kaitos

Cb'eet

*Gormal
Macc-Conn*

*Arnkell
the Toothless*



Once **Blackbeard** learns of **Gunnhildr's** disappearance, the referee is at liberty to develop the next series of events according to tastes:

- ★ **Blackbeard** orders his "**Wolf Pack**" (except **Sagka**) to lead search parties outside
- ★ **Blackbeard** orders **10 bandit arbalists** and **20 bandits** from **#16** to follow his "**Wolf Pack**"
- ★ **Blackbeard** orders **2 bandit lieutenants** and **2 bandit captains** to search within the stronghold
- ★ **Blackbeard** orders new arrivals (the PCs) to assist the **captains** and **lieutenants**
- ★ **Blackbeard** and **Sagka the Wise** repair to the smokehouse (**#7**) to cogitate

Clues: Bloody handprints may be found all over the south end of the chamber, on the fur-draped benches. The copper toggle to a **secret trap door** may be found in a seam here. The toggle is wet with blood. Opening the **secret door** reveals dusty, cobwebbed stairs spiralling down into darkness. The stairs are laced with cracks and fissures. A trail of fresh blood glistens down the steps.

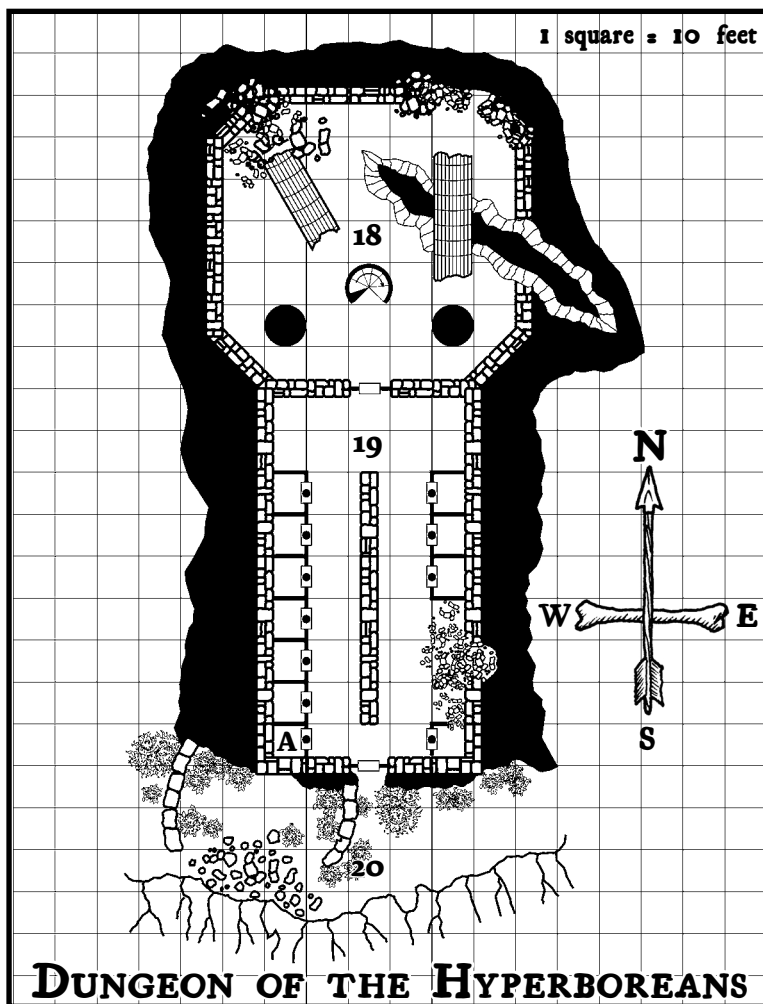
Notes: The servants working in the fire hall (**#13**) didn't see the bride-to-be exit, but if the bloodily-beaten handmaidens recover, they say that the young Viking woman snatched a sword out from a guard's scabbard and disembowelled him. The second guard engaged her in sword play, stabbing the bride-to-be in the left arm, but she repaid him by slashing his throat. She then abused the handmaidens.

DUNGEON OF THE HYPERBOREANS

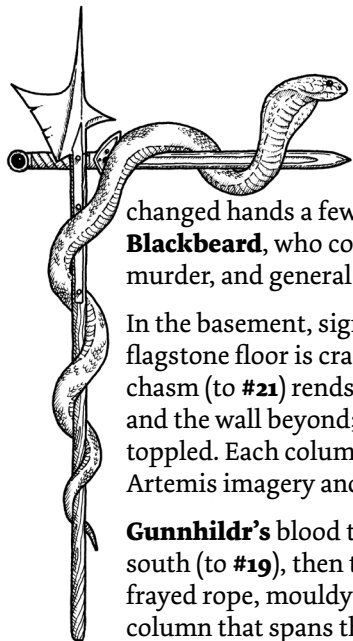
18. BASEMENT: Masonry-enclosed spiral stairs descend 30 feet to an ancient basement. Some stairs are split, and the enclosing masonry is laced with cracks. Spatters of fresh blood trail down into darkness, and the faint scent of burnt wool wafts up from below.

This basement is part of the original Hyperborean structure, which fell to ruin ages ago, crushed by the weight of glaciers spawned by the Ashen Worm. Viking raiders built atop the ruins, set within the confines of the extant outer walls. Since then, the place has

1 square = 10 feet



Referee's Note: At a time deemed appropriate by the referee, if the PCs have achieved the DUNGEON OF THE HYPERBOREANS and have failed to cover their tracks well, Blackbeard's "Wolf Pack" (except for Sagka the Wise; see STRONGHOLD ROSTER) may pursue and a possible confrontation may ensue. Furthermore, if the **sphere of tenebrosity** (see **#31**) is destroyed, perhaps this happens at the very moment that the "Wolf Pack" have closed in on their quarry, thus transporting them as well to distant Sharath, a rival party somewhere else in the forest of scarlet cacti surrounding the TOWERING FORTRESS OF BLACKENED STEEL.



changed hands a few times and is now the property of **Blackbeard**, who conquered it by means of betrayal, murder, and general savagery.

In the basement, signs of tremors are evident: the flagstone floor is cracked and heaved; a 50-foot-deep chasm (to #21) rends the eastern portion of the floor and the wall beyond; and two of the four columns lie toppled. Each column is engraved with Apollo and Artemis imagery and symbology.

Gunnhildr's blood trail leads to the rusted shut door south (to #19), then to the edge of the chasm. An old, frayed rope, mouldy with age, is tied around a toppled column that spans the chasm. The rope is bloodied, and a fresh snap down its length is evident at 20 feet below the pillar to which it is affixed. Indeed, Gunnhildr plummeted 30 feet and injured her leg. If the remaining rope bears 100–200 pounds of weight, an *item saving throw* of 13 or higher is required, or it snaps again. More than 200 pounds and it automatically snaps.

19. GAOL: Both doors to this area are rusted shut (**stuck**), requiring a *test of strength* to force open. Some jails cells are ruined, but many remain intact, albeit **locked**. Six cells contain 7-foot-tall skeletons within, mostly crumbled and decayed.

19-A. Cell of Kaladar Shoon: The forehead of a skull in the southwest corner cell is embedded with a **sapphire** (1,500-gp value). This was an evil Hyperborean sorcerer who starved to death after the glacier destroyed the original castle of a Hyperborean lord named **Kurozon Rhaan**. If the skull is touched, it will speak aloud for all to hear, though it moves not. In the Hyperborean dialect of the Hellenic tongue, it will say, "My name is **Kaladar Shoon**, renowned sorcerer supreme. Speak your name, dog!" He will repeat this in the "uncouth" common tongue (which he has learned from listening to the men above) if none speak his language. Some basic facts about Kaladar, which may be revealed through conversation, are as follows:

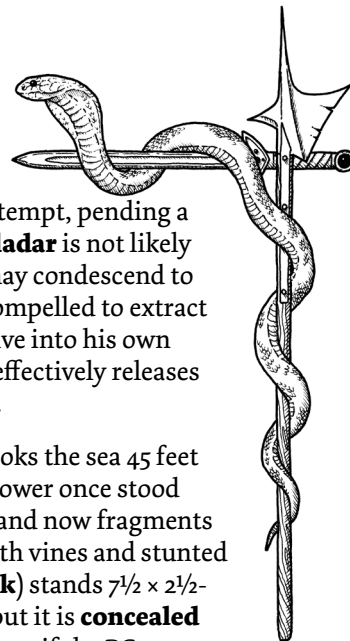
- ★ He was a cryomancer cultist when Hyperborea was still part of Old Earth
- ★ He was imprisoned for threatening the unreformed Apollonians of the region with a "frore cleansing"
- ★ He views non-Hyperboreans as witless apes, scarcely worthy of his notice
- ★ He wants a vessel (new body) to inhabit, preferably not the body of an "ape"

It is the purview of the referee on how to further proceed with this development. I leave it to your fertile imaginations, fellows. I suggest that a Hyperborean in close proximity to the skull for a period of 72 hours

becomes subject to a possession attempt, pending a *sorcery save* (*willpower* applies). **Kaladar** is not likely to possess a "lesser" man, but he may condescend to if he must. The possessed will be compelled to extract the sapphire from the skull and drive into his own skull. Destruction of the sapphire effectively releases Kaladar's spirit to the netherworld.

20. LEDGE: Narrow ledge overlooks the sea 45 feet below (at mean sea level). A watchtower once stood here, but it crumbled into the sea, and now fragments of its foundation are overgrown with vines and stunted evergreens. A rusty iron door (**stuck**) stands $7\frac{1}{2} \times 2\frac{1}{2}$ -feet. It is plainly visible from #19, but it is **concealed** from the outside by the flora (relevant if the PCs scaled the seaside cliff to arrive here). Regardless of the direction from which the PCs arrive, the door must be forced open via a *test of strength*⁶.

⁶ See AS&SH VOL. I, p. 7: ATTRIBUTES, *strength*.



Kaladar Shoon

CAVERNS OF THE OTHERWORLDLY

21. SUBTERRANEAN RIVER CAVERN:

The river runs along the western side of the cavern, welling up from under the northern wall and dropping under the southern wall; ultimately, it pools at #27 and mingles with the sea. The water is cold and fresh, its flow steady and vigorous. Long strings of mossy vegetation cling to the banks of the river, betraying the highest typical waterline. A trail of fresh blood leads north from #21-A to #21-B. Presently, burnt wool may be scented.

21-A. Rope: 50 feet below the chasm of #18, a subterranean river flows across a basalt cavern. The old, frayed rope, which snapped 20 feet below the pillar (see #18), dangles 30 feet above the rocky floor. This is where **Gunnhildr** fell and injured her leg.

21-B. Where the Blood Trail Ends: **Gunnhildr** is here, her back to the wall in a natural alcove, attempting to bind her wounds. Her torch, a stub of wood wrapped in shorn wool, went out before she could preserve the flame. Nathless, when this area is approached, the following text may be read or paraphrased:

You see a Viking woman with red-gold hair, garbed in a blood-stained wedding dress. Her left arm is wrapped in a blood-soaked length of shorn wool, and she seems to favour one leg; notwithstanding, she presents with the attitude of a cornered wolf, wielding a bloody short sword and glaring at you with ice-blue eyes. As she levels the point of her blade at you, through gritted teeth she hisses, "Take one step closer and I will run you through."

Presenting the rune-engraved **cold-iron bar** will likely change her attitude, as it proves the party to be trustworthy; otherwise, she is not easily convinced that the party are allies. A *reaction roll*⁷ (modified as the referee deems appropriate, based on the words and actions of the PCs) is suggested, but simply presenting the bar *should* inspire **Gunnhildr** to soften her stance. She may lower her sword and inquire about her father. Irrespective of that, she is on a personal quest and will not desist until she believes her mother has been avenged. She may explain as much, which the referee may read or paraphrase:

⁷ See *AS&SH* VOL. III, p. 240: THE ENCOUNTER, *reaction*.

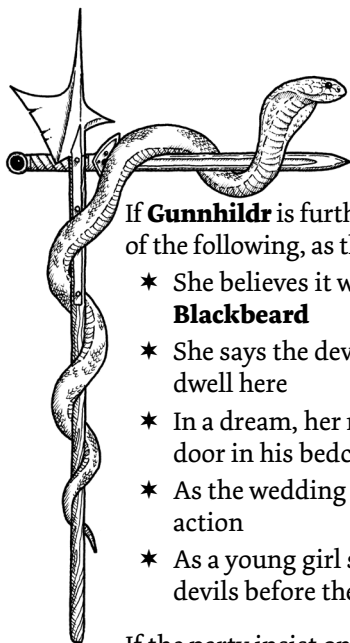
CAVERNS OF THE OTHERWORLDLY

1 square = 10 feet



Gunnhildr traces the runes on the iron bar and whispers, "Valkyrieström." At once, the bar transforms into a spear of 8 ½-foot length, composed of a rune-graven shaft of ash with a head and butt of iron. Gunnhildr admires the weapon, like an old, cherished friend. Then, in measured tones, she says, "I thank you for finding me on behalf of my father, and for delivering my weapon, but I do not require further assistance. You may go now. My fate lies elsewhere. When you see my father again, tell him to go home. Tell him that I shall return to his side after I've sated my thirst for vengeance."





If **Gunnhildr** is further engaged, she might divulge some of the following, as the referee deems appropriate:

- ★ She believes it was fate that she was abducted by **Blackbeard**
- ★ She says the devils that murdered her mother dwell here
- ★ In a dream, her mother shewed her the secret trap door in his bedchamber
- ★ As the wedding drew closer, she resolved to take action
- ★ As a young girl she had nightmares about the devils before they attacked

If the party insist on accompanying her, she will accept their aid. Gunnhildr is headstrong and somewhat reckless, an armourless shieldmaiden who bears a short sword and/or her magic spear called **Valkyrieström** (if the party hand the **cold-iron bar** to her). She is willing to follow the lead of others⁸ and is open to suggestions, so long as she's not steered away from her quest for vengeance. She has an uncanny sense for **night-gaunts** and the source of their power: the **sphere of tenebrosity** at #31.

Gunnhildr Ragnarsdóttir (7TH-LEVEL VIKING FEMALE FIGHTER): AL CG; SZ M (5' 9", 150 lbs.); MV 40; AC 8; HD 7 (hp 42 [currently 29]); FA 7; #A 2/1 (long spear [+7]) or 3/2 (short sword [+1]); D 1d8+7 (long spear, two-handed) or 1d6+1 (short sword); SV 13 [death +2, transformation +2, dodging +1]; ML 11; XP 800; ST 16, DX 15, CN 13, IN 9, WS 11, CH 17.

Special: Super-heroic fighting (double normal melee attacks vs. opponents of no more than 2 HD). *Weapon mastery* (long bow). *Grand mastery* (long spear).

Gear: **Valkyrieström**⁹ (+4 long spear, control winds, once per day, CA 9), short sword, blood-splattered wedding dress.

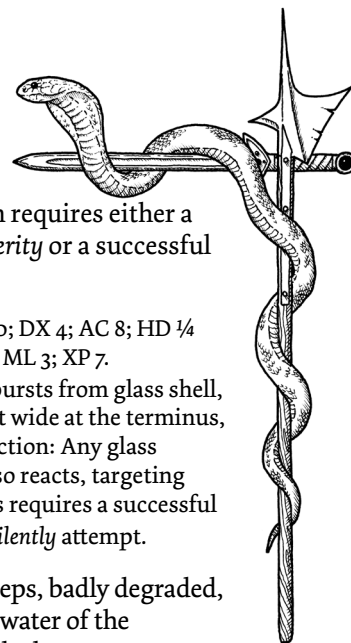
N.B.: If the party neglect to follow the blood trail to this location, **Gunnhildr** should be soon encountered at a time best determined by the referee.

21-C. Glass Snails: The floor and walls of the cavern here crawl with **160 glass snails**¹⁰. These fist-sized molluscs have transparent shells within which swirls a strange purple fluid. If frightened by any loud noise or sudden movement, any glass snails (1d20+10) within 5 feet of the disturbance will eject their viscera, killing themselves and releasing a purple spray of acidic fluids. The activity of the glass snails extends from the south end of the cavern to the mouth of the southernmost east tunnel (to #26 and #27). Negotiating through

⁸ As a point of advice to the referee, it is not suggested that Gunnhildr be made the "leader" of the PCs, or the absolute director of their activities. Yes, she is intended to be driven and headstrong, but the players will derive a greater pleasure and sense of accomplishment when the actions of the PCs are the driving force of the adventure, as opposed to them being carried along for the ride.

⁹ Assumes PCs return her weapon to her.

¹⁰ See APPENDIX B.



the snails without disturbing them requires either a successful *extraordinary feat of dexterity* or a successful *move silently* attempt.

Snails, Glass (>160): AL N; SZ S; MV 10; DX 4; AC 8; HD 1/4 (hp 2); #A 1/1 (acid spray); D 2d4; SV 17; ML 3; XP 7.

Special: If frightened, viscera ejection bursts from glass shell, spraying acid in an 18-foot cone, 5 feet wide at the terminus, effectively killing the snail. Chain reaction: Any glass snail within 5 feet of initial ejection also reacts, targeting offender. Passing through glass snails requires a successful *extraordinary feat of dexterity* or *move silently* attempt.

22. WESTERN BANK: Stone steps, badly degraded, ascend to darkness. Sometimes the water of the subterranean river laps right up to the bottom two steps.

23. YIKKORTH STATUE: This granite and earthen cave of 26-foot ceiling height houses an 18-foot alabaster statue of a great segmented worm rearing up; from its gaping, fanged maw stares the aloof face of a man with inhumanly-high cheekbones. The statue is set in a rough-hewn western alcove. Before it stretches a low table carved of granite and embedded with shackles that have corroded to rust and decay. The statue represents the deity Yikkorth, "The Ashen Worm", whose cultic worship thrived in the sea caves here during an impossible age of Old Earth. The eyes of the human head are set with **2 white diamonds** (5,000-gp value each). To a thief or any other character knowledgeable about precious stones, these gems are clearly worth a fortune. Any attempt to wrest the gems from the statue causes a **remorhaz** to manifest, attacking any who do not flee. To the north and south, natural shelves rise, 12 feet high to the north, 8 feet high to the south, each extending into darkness.

Remorhaz: AL N; SZ L; MV 40; DX 17; AC 0; HD 10 (hp 44); #A 1/1 (bite); D 5d6; SV 12; ML 11; XP 2,650.

Special: *Infrared vision* to 240-foot range. 7-in-20 *spell resistance* vs. CA 12 casters. Once per day can emit trilling song that charms all within 60 feet who hear it, unless *sorcery* saves made; charmed individuals stand dumbly, allowing remorhaz to swallow a single target, but this attack breaks spell for other charmed victims. Any non-magical weapon striking remorhaz has 3-in-6 chance to melt; touching spine ridge causes 3d10 hp damage. On natural 20 attack roll, Small or Medium victim swallowed whole, causing immediate death; this action ends trilling.

24. TREASURE TROVE NORTH: This cave is piled with ancient Hyperborean **electrum pieces**, each coin depicting twisting towers on one face and an eye of Xathoquua on the other. To an antiques dealer, these coins are valued as much as **gold pieces**. A gleaming suit of armour also lies within the horde, which is as follows: **3,502 ep**, a suit of **+2 copper chain mail**, and a **+1 bronze small shield**.

Referee's Note: If the skull of Kaladar Shoon (see #19) is brought to #23, he may inform his "liberators" that this is hallowed ground, where his cabal of Ashen Worm followers once held sacred rites and human sacrifices, all overseen by Shazarazal Rhaan, the wise sibyl who prognosticated the coming of the deity.

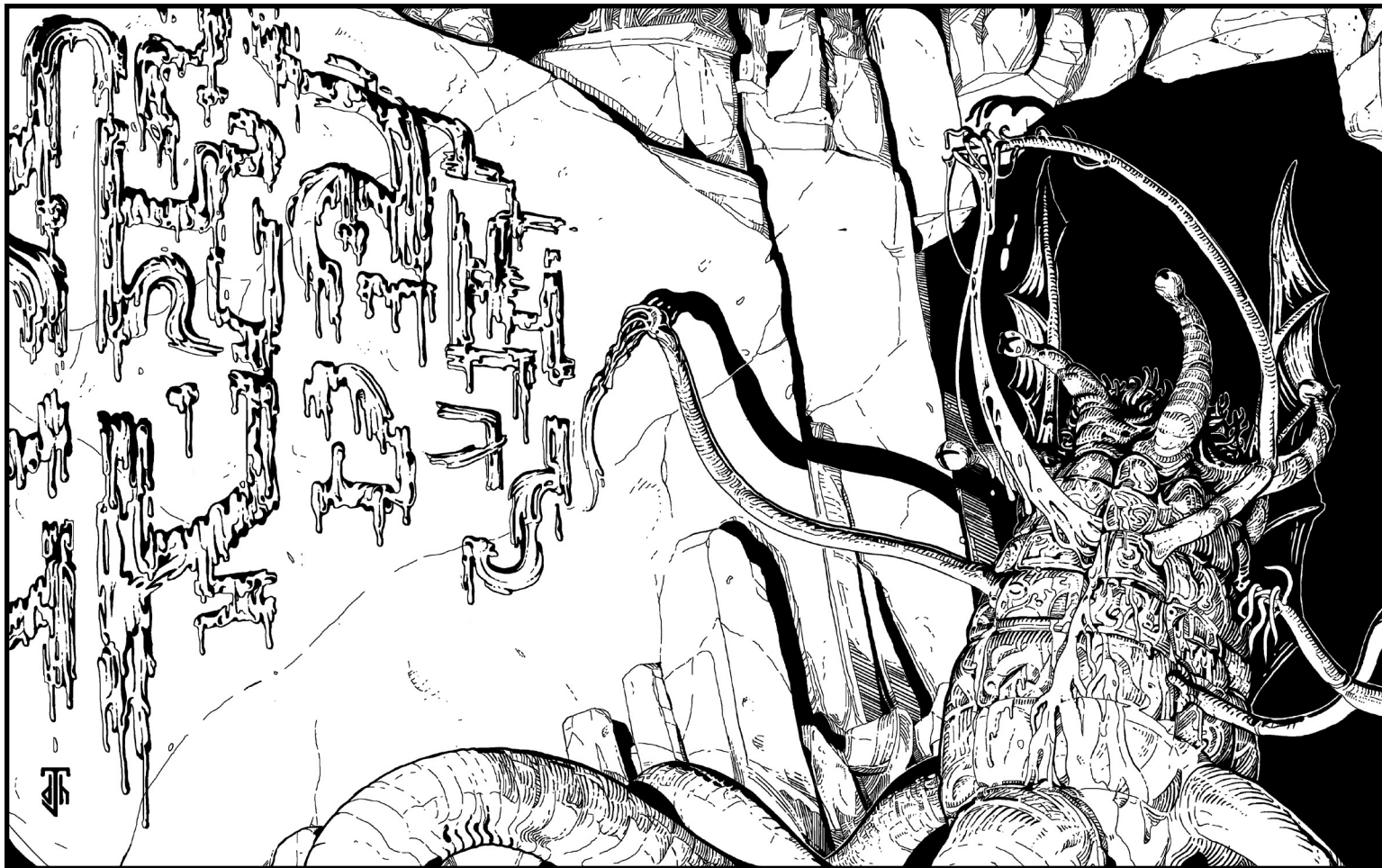
25. TREASURE TROVE SOUTH: This cave is piled with gems and jewellery. It contains **4 blue quartzes** (8-gp value each), **6 moss agates** (15-gp value each), **10 tiger-eyes** (12-gp value each), **7 turquoises** (15-gp value each), **5 garnets** (80-gp value each), a **peridot-studded gold brooch** (600-gp value), a **ruby-studded silver diadem** (1,000-gp value), and a **necklace of missiles** (CA 3 fireballs [x2], CA 5 fireball [x1]).

26. GRAFFITI ARTISTS: For untold millennia, here hibernated a trio of **elder things**. In recent times they have emerged from their torpor and, like most of their species, they are infected with madness. Between bouts of continued lethargy, they wile away the hours painting nonsensical graffiti. They paint with

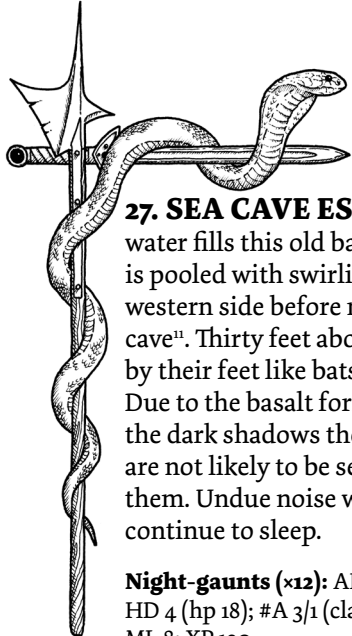
their tentacles using their own putrid green blood as a medium. If sorcery is used to translate these alien writings, these creatures prewise the coming of Yug; indefatigable is their conviction that the shapeless deity aspires to envelop all within its bubbling, frothing mass. If disturbed in any way (arrival qualifies), the "graffiti artists" react with savage violence.

Elder Things (x3): AL CE; SZ L; MV 40 (fly/swim 60); DX 11; AC 2; HD 6+6 (hp 33); #A 5/1 (pummel x5); D 1d4+4 (x5); SV 14; ML 12; XP 870.

Special: Immune to cold and airless vacuum. Once per turn, can release terrifying piping sound that inspires *fear* effect; *sorcery* save to resist. Once *fear* ends, second *sorcery* save required; if it fails, 1d3 forms of insanity manifest.



Graffiti Artists



27. SEA CAVE ESTUARY: The scent of brackish water fills this old basalt cave. The south half of the cave is pooled with swirling water that flows in from the western side before mingling with waters of this littoral cave¹¹. Thirty feet above the water, **12 night-gaunts** hang by their feet like bats, their wings folded around them. Due to the basalt formations of the cavern ceiling, and the dark shadows they produce, these horrific monsters are not likely to be seen unless light is shone directly on them. Undue noise will wake them up; otherwise, they continue to sleep.

Night-gaunts (×12): AL CE; SZ M; MV 30 (fly 60); DX 16; AC 5; HD 4 (hp 18); #A 3/1 (claw/claw/sting); D 1d4/1d4/1d6; SV 15; ML 8; XP 120.

Special: Sting delivers venom; make *death* (poison) save or suffer *slow* effect for 2d6 turns.

In the eastern part of the cavern, a throng of **60 glass snails**¹², strange fist-sized molluscs with transparent shells within which weird purple ink swirls, linger at the water's edge.

¹¹ Depending on the tide, this pool can be nearly flush with the cavern floor (high tide; a 15-foot-deep pool), or it can be a 10-foot drop to a 5-foot deep pool (low tide).

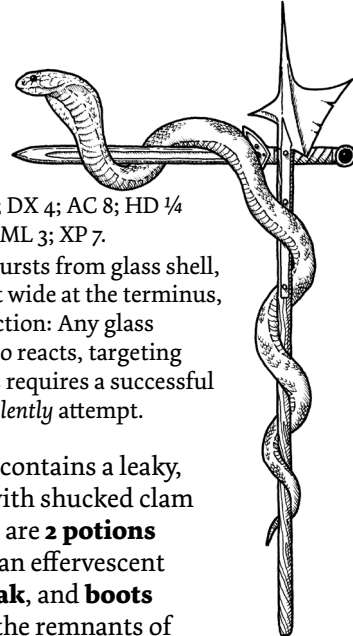
¹² See APPENDIX B.

Snails, Glass (×60): AL N; SZ S; MV 10; DX 4; AC 8; HD ¼ (hp 2); #A 1/1 (acid spray); D 2d4; SV 17; ML 3; XP 7.

Special: If frightened, viscera ejection bursts from glass shell, spraying acid in an 18-foot cone, 5 feet wide at the terminus, effectively killing the snail. Chain reaction: Any glass snail within 5 feet of initial ejection also reacts, targeting offender. Passing through glass snails requires a successful *extraordinary feat of dexterity* or *move silently* attempt.

The eastern edge of the cavern also contains a leaky, lidless 32-gallon barrel half-filled with shucked clam and mussel shells. Under the shells are **2 potions of giant power** (in tin flasks, with an effervescent honey mead taste), an **aurochs cloak**, and **boots of levitation**. Beside the barrel lie the remnants of a rusted, broken treasure chest, its lid pulverized. Digging here will yield **17 cp**.

The outdoors can be accessed via this cave by an able swimmer. Depending on the tide, there could be a 5 to 15-foot water depth that must be swum to pass under the cavern wall and come up by the rocky cliffside below Blackbeard's stronghold.



Night-Gaunts

TIDES IN HYPERBOREA: The rise and fall of sea levels in Hyperborea are caused by the gravitational effects of the sun (Helios), the moons (Phobos and Selene), and the planet Saturn (Kyranos). Furthermore, some sages aver that the inscrutable Great Obelisks, which rise from the six corners of the world, also may regulate the tides. Selene appears to exert the most daily influence, pulling the high tide with it in from 5- to 10-foot swells; when Selene is full (every 45½ days), 15-foot swells are not unusual. When both moons are full (every 91 days), swells of up to 25 feet have been recorded, oft resulting in tragic floods.

On most Hyperborean shores, the sea level ebbs and floods from low to high tide in cycles of approximately nine hours. If the referee finds such verisimilitude enhances his players' enjoyment, then he might wish to track the times of low and high tide and their effects on the adventuring environment.

28. MOSSY CAVE: This two-level cavern is bisected by an old upheaval: a ledge of moss-covered basalt that elevates the eastern half of the cavern 15 feet higher than the western half.

28-A. Lower Mossy Cave: The stringy curtain of moss that thrives along a columnar-jointed ledge on this side of the cave is home to **10 giant brown centipedes**. If a character attempts to climb the 15-foot mossy ledge of the western half up onto the eastern half, the giant myriapods wriggle beneath the curtain of vegetation and potentially surprise the climber.

Centipedes, Giant Brown (×10): AL N; SZ S; MV 20; DX 13; AC 9; HD ½ (hp 3); #A 1/1 (bite); D 1d2; SV 17; ML 4; XP 25.

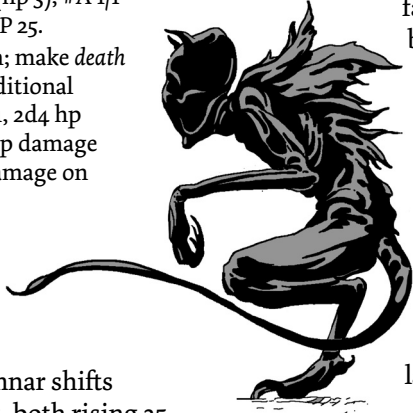
Special: Bite delivers venom; make *death* (poison) save or suffer additional 1d4 hp damage on round 1, 2d4 hp damage on round 2, 3d4 hp damage on round 3, and 4d4 hp damage on round 4.

28-B. Upper Mossy

Cave: This half of the cave rises 15 feet above its western counterpart.

Too, it has further columnar shifts northeast and southeast, both rising 25 feet above the floor of this portion of the cave. In the northern end of this half of the cave, several parched rodent bones are strewn, stripped of their flesh and fur. Note that descending into the western half of the cave will alert the **giant brown centipedes** of #28-A, if they yet endure.

Youngling



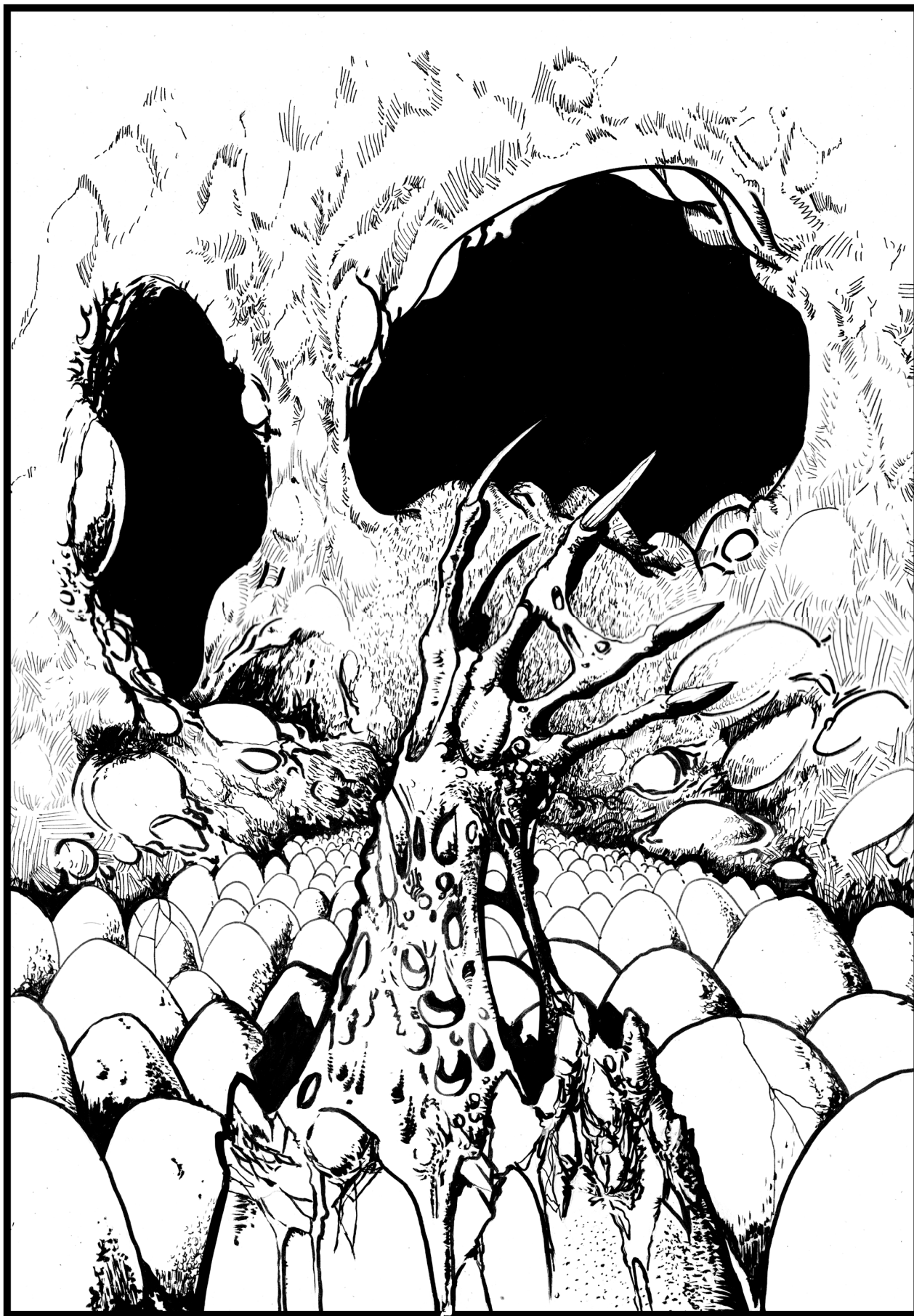
29. CAVERN OF NIGHTMARES: This dry, lumpy cavern is host to 54 eggs, grey and somewhat translucent, each standing about 2 feet tall and spaced 3 to 5 feet away from each other. If light is shone on the eggs (e.g., torch, lantern), strange, wriggling, scorpion-like creatures can be observed within.

Any disturbance to the eggs provokes them to hatch; a fleshy, leathery ripping sound heralds the appearance of a rent whence oozes steaming yellow embryonic fluid. Emerging from the eggs, at a rate of 3d4 per round, are **40 night-gaunt younglings**—rubbery, inky-black, scorpion-like, otherworldly creatures, each 12–18 inches in length, with disturbingly human-like heads that lack facial features. Fourteen are not mature enough to hatch, but they will be agitated, squirming in their eggs.

The hatched specimens will skitter with alarming speed toward their prey, running on all fours with shiny, barbed tails held erect. For every **night-gaunt youngling** killed or egg destroyed, there is a cumulative 1% chance that the **night-gaunt queen** stirs, releasing a low, reverberating groan; this should be checked at the end of any round that an egg or night-gaunt youngling is harmed. If awakened, she will emerge 1d4 rounds later from her lair at #31.

Night-gaunt Younglings (×40): AL CE; SZ S; MV 50; DX 15; AC 4; HD 1 (hp 4); #A 1/1 (sting); D 1d4; SV 16; ML 10; XP 40.

Special: Stinger delivers venom unless *death* (poison) save is made, causing immediate paralysis for 1d3 turns. Empathic link with other **night-gaunt younglings**, even the unhatched.



Night-Gaunt Eggs

Referee's Note: The night-gaunts that attacked Ragnarrheim were simply seeking a repelled mote (**sphere of tenebrosity**) and its attendant night-gaunt, for that one would metamorphize to a night-gaunt queen. Because the mote briefly passed Ragnarrheim in the black of night, the pursuing night-gaunts were leaving no stone unturned in their desperation. Those that survived the battle with the Vikings later found their quarry in Brigand's Bay, beneath a ruined Hyperborean fortress. There, the night-gaunt queen took many mates, producing eggs that will soon hatch night-gaunt younglings.

30. BLACK PIT: This 12-foot-diameter pit is black as pitch and exudes a bone-chilling cold. Any paladin who looks upon this pit will sense palpable Evil, a malignancy wholly incongruent with the welfare of mankind. Rangers that combat the otherworldly horrors that plague Hyperborea may likewise cognize this place as a haven for the antithesis of weal. The pit descends 30 feet to the ceiling of the cavern below, and another 40 feet to that cavern's floor. Note that the pit's depth cannot be gleaned by dropping a torch or shining a lantern's light, for it is laid with a permanent enchantment akin to the *darkness* spell.

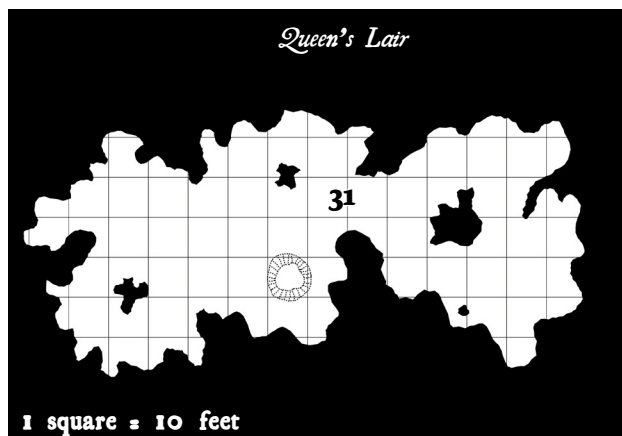
31. QUEEN'S LAIR: This old basalt cave with 40-foot-high ceiling is ridged with columnar striations, like the pillars of a madman's fortress. This cave is where the **night-gaunt queen** dwells; too, it is where her power source is located, a **sphere of tenebrosity**¹³.

The **night-gaunt queen** lurks in the western half of the basalt cave. She is an 18-foot-long behemoth, an otherworldly, scorpion-like beast with four long-taloned arms and a 15-foot-long barbed tail. The beast is inky-black, rubbery, and pliable, but perhaps her most disturbing feature is a nearly human, bulbous, faceless head.

The **night-gaunt queen** has a mental connexion with her eggs, potentially reacting violently if her "babies" are disturbed. If she is aware of coming intruders, she will create *darkness* and hide, preparing to pounce at the right time.

N.B.: **Gunnhildr**, if present, will at once recognize this beast as blameworthy for her mother's death, though it did not strike the fatal blow personally. Per referee's discretion, Gunnhildr will not rest until either she or this otherworldly horror is dead.

¹³ See APPENDIX C.

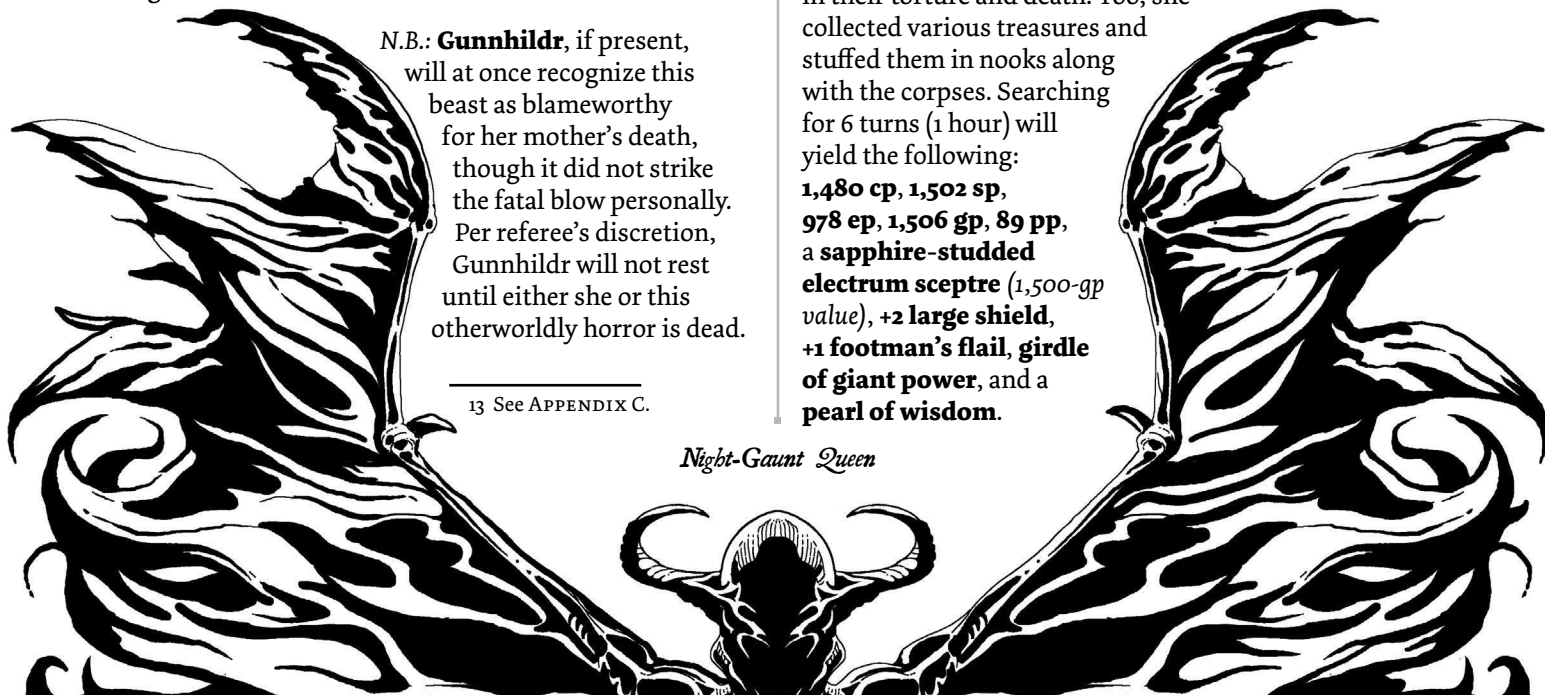


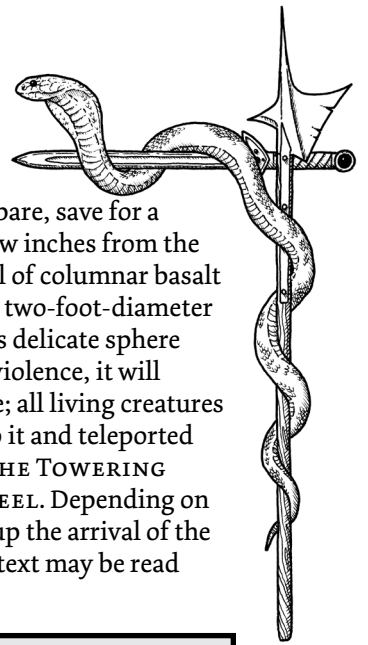
Night-gaunt Queen: AL CE; SZ L; MV 30; DX 8; AC -3; HD 10+2 (hp 60); #A 5/1 (claw x4/sting); D 2d4x4/3d6; SV 12; ML 10; XP 2,050.

Special: Stinger delivers venom unless *death* (poison) save is made, causing immediate death. Can create *darkness*, per the spell, thrice per day. Regardless of distance from her brood, cumulative 1% chance for every egg or **night-gaunt youngling** harmed that the queen will cognize the attack and respond aggressively, fighting with a 12 morale. This chance is checked every round that any egg or night-gaunt youngling is harmed.

The western half of the cave is stuffed with the 42 skeletal corpses of past victims, a combination of sacrifices brought to the queen by her **night-gaunts** and adventurers who were foolish enough to probe these caverns. In each instance, the queen delighted in their torture and death. Too, she collected various treasures and stuffed them in nooks along with the corpses. Searching for 6 turns (1 hour) will yield the following:
1,480 cp, 1,502 sp, 978 ep, 1,506 gp, 89 pp, a sapphire-studded electrum sceptre (1,500-gp value), +2 large shield, +1 footman's flail, girdle of giant power, and a pearl of wisdom.

Night-Gaunt Queen





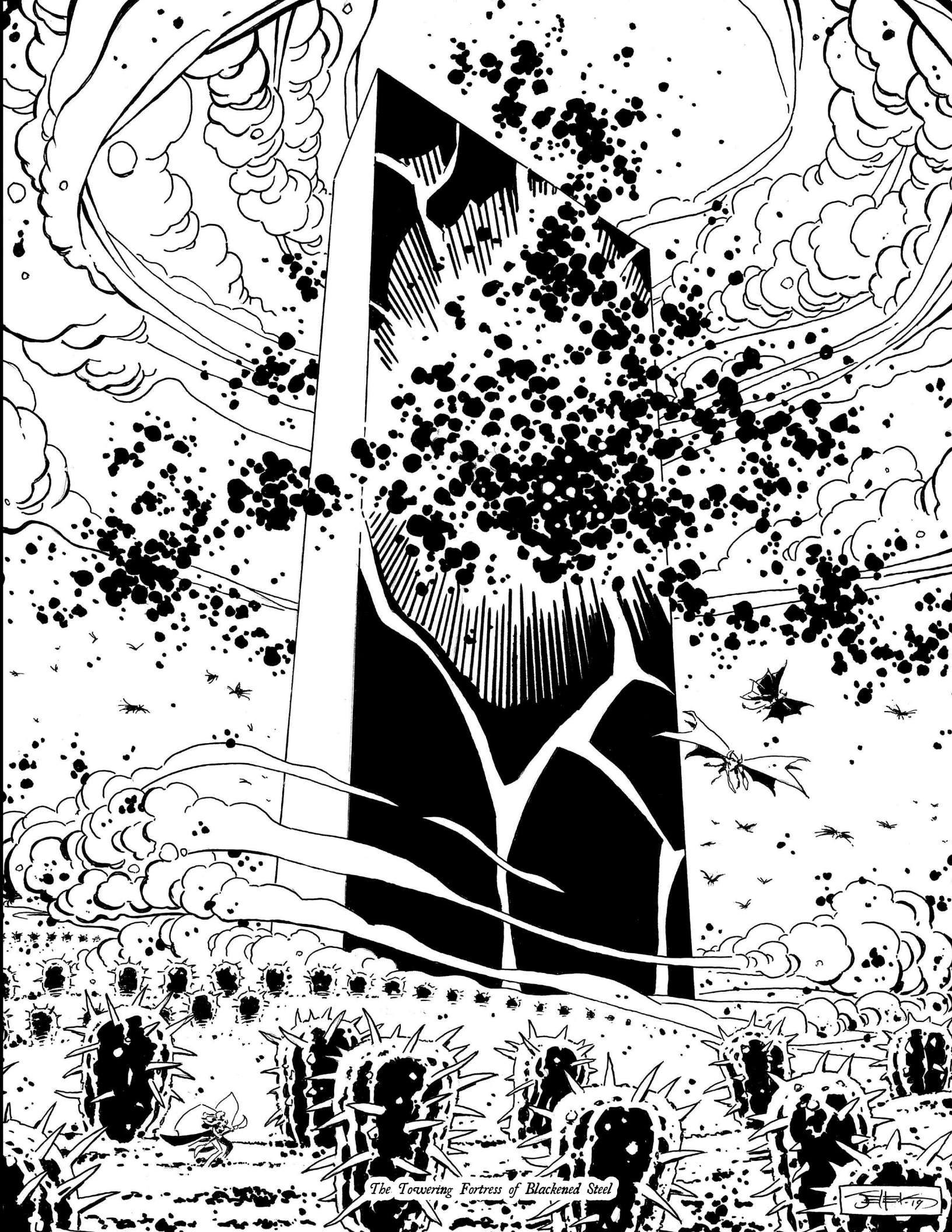
The eastern half of the cave is bare, save for a singular artefact: Floating a few inches from the top surface of a 5-foot pedestal of columnar basalt is a **sphere of tenebrosity**¹⁴, a two-foot-diameter globe of utter blackness. If this delicate sphere is struck with any amount of violence, it will implode with irresistible force; all living creatures within 150 feet are sucked into it and teleported to a location 300 yards from THE TOWERING FORTRESS OF BLACKENED STEEL. Depending on how the referee wishes to set up the arrival of the PCs in Sharath, the following text may be read aloud or paraphrased:

You begin to come to, rising to your hands and knees, coughing and choking on wind-blown dust. You see that you are in a black, dusty desert clearing set within a bristling forest of scarlet cacti that rise over twice the height of a man. Looming above the cacti, some 300 yards distant, you see a towering fortress of blackened steel, at least 250 feet tall and over 100 feet wide. Swirling around the tower's midsection, you observe hundreds of black spherical motes being pursued by dozens of inky-black humanoid devils with bat-like, membranous wings. Dark clouds surge across the sky with uncanny rapidity. You do not believe you are in Brigand's Bay any longer.

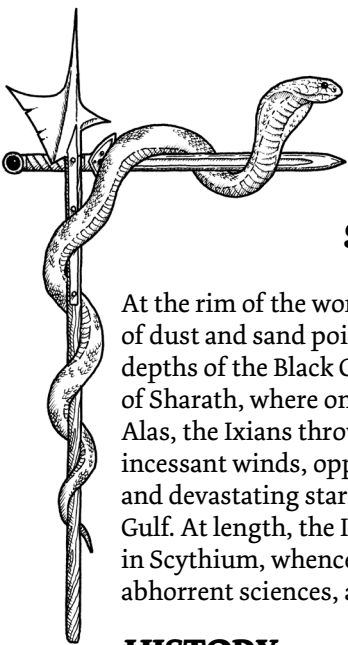
This astonishing structure of alien geometry contains a machine that pulls in sphere-like black motes of negative energy from the Black Gulf, modifying and absorbing that energy. The spheres are sometimes inadvertently repelled to other parts of Hyperborea. (Alternatively, some referees may wish to place the PCs farther away from the fortress than 300 yards, creating more of a hex-crawl environment for them to explore in the treacherous land of Sharath.)

Referee's Note: The destruction of the **sphere of tenebrosity** is a key event for transporting the PCs to the next part of this adventure, THE TOWERING FORTRESS OF BLACKENED STEEL, but it is not a *required* event. If the artefact is not destroyed, it will eventually attract more **night-gaunts**, one of which will metamorphose to become a **night-gaunt queen**. Problems will persist in the region, as best developed by the referee.

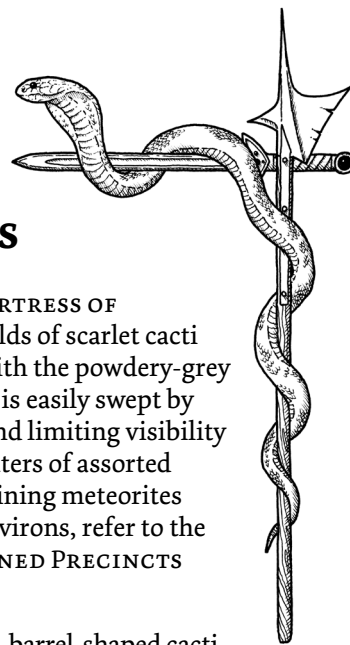
¹⁴ See APPENDIX C.



The Towering Fortress of Blackened Steel



PART IV: THE TOWERING FORTRESS of BLACKENED STEEL



SHARATH

At the rim of the world, a parched and blighted finger of dust and sand points inward from the nameless depths of the Black Gulf. This is the desert peninsula of Sharath, where once dwelt the earliest Ixian settlers. Alas, the Ixians thrive not in Sharath: They endured incessant winds, oppressively suffocating cosmic dust, and devastating star stones hurtling in from the Black Gulf. At length, the Ixians found a less hazardous life in Scythium, whence they pursued black sorceries, abhorrent sciences, and ophidian exaltations.

HISTORY OF THE TOWERING FORTRESS

THE TOWERING FORTRESS OF BLACKENED STEEL lies 180 miles from the world's edge, at the approximate centre, or "waist", of the Sharath peninsula. Here, overlooking fields of leprous lichens and scarlet cacti, rises a monolith of black-as-pitch steel. When and how the tower came to be is unknown. Regardless, it is operated by a pair of **transmundane**, alien beings of extra-dimensional origins.

Outside the tower, weird black motes swirl about the structure's mid-section. Some crash against the fortress, further blackening its walls; others are pursued by bat-winged humanoids (**night-gaunts**). Occasionally a mote repels with incredible velocity, sucking with it any night-gaunts in its proximity. These motes and their attendant night-gaunts land in various corners of Hyperborea. The repelled mote becomes a **sphere of tenebrosity** and, at length, one night-gaunt metamorphoses to a **night-gaunt queen**. The **transmundane** refer to this phenomenon as "The Scattering", though they deem it inconsequential to their work.

In the centre (LEVEL FIVE) of the tower dwells a strange, armoured being called a **transtellaral**. This alien from beyond operates a machine called the **great attractor**. This artefact is what reels in the motes from the Black Gulf, which in turn attracts the **night-gaunts**, lured to the negatively-charged motes like ticks to a blood-fat cow. The transtellaral consults the **transmundane** and communicates with other towers located on various moons and planets, from Ganymede to Yuggoth. Their primary objective in this endeavour is to keep Khalk-Xu (Kraken) from invading this dimension, which becomes ever more likely as the flow of negative energy (Chaos) outbalances positive energy (Law). A rift—a tear in the fabric of the multiverse—exists between Ouranos and Poseidenos. The expansion of the rift may admit countless members of Khalk-Xu's race to flood into the Helios system.

ENVIRONS

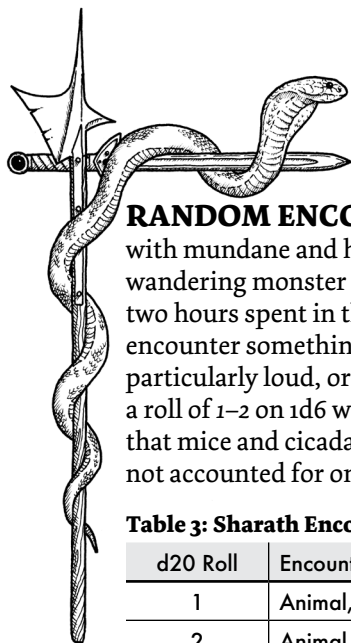
The environs of the TOWERING FORTRESS OF BLACKENED STEEL bristle with fields of scarlet cacti and leprous lichens. Sand mixes with the powdery-grey ash of crumbled star stones, and it is easily swept by the wind, producing whirlwinds and limiting visibility to less than a quarter mile. Too, craters of assorted sizes pock the ground, some containing meteorites (star stones). For the immediate environs, refer to the TOWERING FORTRESS OF BLACKENED PRECINCTS map on the inside back cover.

SCARLET CACTUS: These tall, barrel-shaped cacti are the most notable succulents of the area. They grow as tall as 18 feet, rounded out in the central portions, and bristle with 6-inch to 3-foot-long spines. Their spiny fruits contain white, potable water ("milk"), but the spines are coated with a poisonous enzyme. For every fifteen feet travelled through a congested field of scarlet cacti, there is a 1-in-6 chance of contacting a spine¹⁵. Contact causes a burning sensation at the site. A *death* (poison) saving throw must be made, or 1 turn later the site of the scratch swells, splits, and causes 1d4 damage. Further such damage is suffered daily for 1d4 days unless a *cure disease* spell or other like treatment is provided.

LEPROUS LICHEN: This yellow-white, scaly lichen grows in patches, rings of 25 to 30 feet in diameter. (These patches are not shown on the map; they may be placed wherever would be most amusing for the referee or inconvenient for the players.) It has a symbiotic relationship with scarlet cacti, drooping from the spines of some cacti groupings. Contact with leprous lichen causes a rapid flesh-eating disease, eating the skin of the victim at a rate of 2d6 hp damage per round. Only a *cure disease* can stop it. When the lichen has devoured the skin of its victim (bird, mammal, or reptile), it then produces a flower that sends pollen out to the ashy wind. *N.B.:* In an area of leprous lichen, a suffering **hare** might be observed in the throes of rapid flesh consumption.

CRATERS AND METEORITES: The craters that pock this region are almost all barren, the scars of meteoric strikes in millennia past that have since crumbled to powder and dust. A typical crater is 5 to 20 feet in diameter, and 2 to 8 feet in depth. Some recent strikes may still contain meteorites, but most of these have been collected by the **dwarfs** and **minotaurs** that work in the TOWERING FORTRESS OF BLACKENED STEEL. They use the iron and nickel for tools, and the zircon (a mineral that is in high concentration in these strikes) to work other feats of engineering. The referee is at liberty to place a star stone of 1d20 × 10d10 lbs. in one of the local craters.

¹⁵ Characters with the *traverse overgrowth* ability are unsusceptible to contacting cacti spines.



RANDOM ENCOUNTERS: The environs crawl with mundane and hostile creatures. To check for wandering monster encounters, roll 1d6 for every two hours spent in the desert. On a roll of 1, the party encounter something on the table below. If the party are particularly loud, or using campfire-sized light at night, a roll of 1–2 on 1d6 would lead to an encounter. Note that mice and cicadas are frequently observed, though not accounted for on the below table.

Table 3: Sharath Encounters

d20 Roll	Encounter
1	Animal, Small (Bird), Owl (1)
2	Animal, Small (Mammal), Fox (1d2)
3–4	Animal, Small (Mammal), Hare (1d12)
5	Archæopteryx (1)
6	Beetle, Giant Stag (1d2)
7	Lizard, Giant Chameleon (1)
8–10	Night-gaunt (1d6)
11–12	Phoongh (1)
13–14	Pterodactyl (1d8+4)
15	Scorpion, Giant (1d6)
16–18	Snake, Rattle- (1)
19	Spider, Giant Wolf (1d6)
20	Worm, Purple (1)

Animal, Small (Bird), Owl: Sharp-eyed raptors. AL N; SZ S; MV 10 (fly 80); DX 15; AC 7; HD ½ (hp 3); #A 3/1 (claw/claw/bite); D 1/1/1; SV 17; ML 4; XP 11.

Special: Chance to surprise increased by 3-in-6 at night. Dive bomb attack (claws only) from 50+ feet at +2 damage bonus, with –1 AC penalty.

Animal, Small (Mammal), Fox: Opportunistic omnivores attempting to survive. AL N; SZ S; MV 50; DX 15; AC 7; HD ½ (hp 3); #A 1/1 (bite); D 1d3; SV 17; ML 5; XP 7.

Special: Pelt turns white in winter years; 6-in-12 chance to *hide* in snow.

Animal, Small (Mammal), Hare: Swift, alert animals that rely on speed and elusiveness to survive. AL N; SZ S; MV 90; DX 17; AC 5; HD ¼ (hp 2); #A 1/1 (bite); D 1; SV 17; ML 4; XP 7.

Special: Pelt turns white in winter years; 6-in-12 chance to *hide* in snow. Can treble or quadruple MV in short bursts.

Archæopteryx: Curious bird that will follow men. AL N; SZ S; MV 20 (fly 60); DX 10; AC 6; HD ½ (hp 3); #A 3/1 (claw/claw/bite); D 1/1/1d2; SV 17; ML 5; XP 9.

Special: If both claws hit one opponent, wing claws rend, each causing 1d2 hp damage.

Beetle, Giant Stag: Flora-eating insects that attack only if agitated. AL N; SZ L; MV 20; DX 7; AC 3; HD 6 (hp 27); #A 3/1 (gore/gore/bite); D 1d10/1d10/2d8; SV 14; ML 7; XP 340.

Lizard, Giant Chameleon: Hungry predators stalking the landscape. AL N; SZ L; MV 40; DX 10; AC 5; HD 5 (hp 23); #A 1/1 (bite or tail); D 1d10 or 1d6; SV 14; ML 7; XP 200.

Special: Blending increases chance to surprise by 2-in-6. If tail sweep hits, target must make *avoidance* save or be knocked prone.

Night-gaunt: Seekers of black motes, agitated and violent. AL CE; SZ M; MV 30 (fly 60); DX 16; AC 5; HD 4 (hp 18); #A 3/1 (claw/claw/sting); D 1d4/1d4/1d6; SV 15; ML 8; XP 120.

Special: Sting delivers venom; make *death* (poison) save or suffer *slow* effect for 2d6 turns.

Phoongh: Sadistic killers seeking to single out easy prey. AL CE; SZ L; MV 60; DX 17; AC –1; HD 9+3 (hp 44); #A 2/1 (slash/slash); D 2d4+4/2d4+4; SV 10; ML 9; XP 1,450.

Special: Once per day can *emanate shadows* in three-foot radius; within shadows can *hide* 10-in-12. Any target that passes within 10 feet of *hidden* phoongh subject to *backstab* at +4 bonus and ×4 base damage. Chance to surprise increased by 2-in-6. Can leap 30 feet once or twice per round or four times if charging; need not be in straight line. If not charging, phoongh can make its two attacks at any points in leaps, though opponents have opportunity to strike back; when charging (requiring at least two leaps), phoongh delivers single attack at end of charge at +2 damage bonus, though with –1 AC penalty.

Pterodactyl: Scavengers that circle high above, awaiting opportunity. AL N; SZ L; MV 10 (fly 80); DX 15; AC 6; HD 3+3 (hp 17); #A 1/1 (bite); D 2d4; SV 15; ML 7; XP 90.

Scorpion, Giant: Quick and deadly predators of the desert. AL N; SZ L; MV 50; DX 17; AC 2; HD 4 (hp 18); #A 3/1 (pincer/pincer/sting); D 1d6/1d6/1d4; SV 15; ML 7; XP 180.

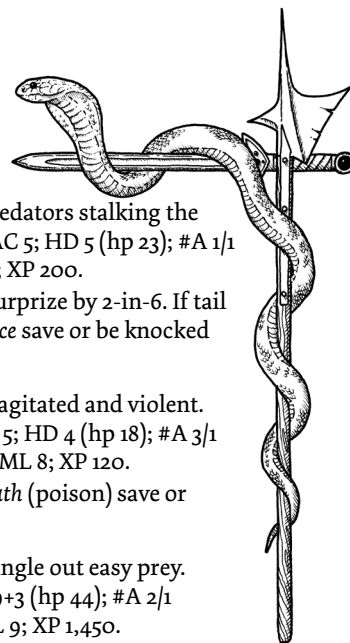
Special: When *ultraviolet vision* in effect, giant scorpion takes on phosphorescent glow; all attacks against it at +1 attack bonus. If both pincers hit, stinger at +2 bonus on attack roll. Stinger delivers venom unless *death* (poison) save made, causing immediate loss of speech, paralysis 1 round later, and death in 2d4 rounds.

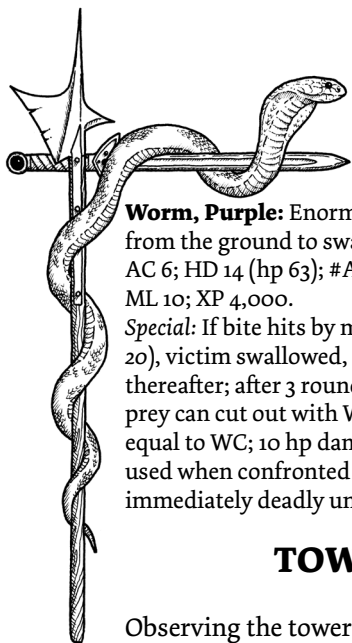
Snake, Rattle-: Small yet potent and aggressive serpent. AL N; SZ S; MV 40; DX 15; AC 6; HD 2 (hp 9); #A 2/1 (bite/bite); D 1d2/1d2; SV 16; ML 7; XP 64.

Special: *Infrared vision* to 30-foot range. Bite injects venom twice per day. Victim must make *death* (poison) save or suffer 2d6 hp damage, dying in 1d6 turns. Site of wound purple and swollen; may become septic if victim survives (*cure disease* heals).

Spider, Giant Wolf: Active hunters of the landscape. AL CE; SZ L; MV 50; DX 14; AC 5; HD 4 (hp 18); #A 1/1 (bite); D 2d6; SV 15; ML 8; XP 255.

Special: If entrapped in web, a man can break free in 19–ST rounds. Bite victim must make *death* (poison) save or be paralyzed in 1d2 rounds, lasting 2d6 turns. Wound becomes necrotic in any event, with 3-in-6 chance of infection unless *cure disease* cast. After 30 days victim must make another save or die.





Worm, Purple: Enormous, segmented worm that emerges from the ground to swallow its prey. AL N; SZ L; MV 30; DX 4; AC 6; HD 14 (hp 63); #A 1/1 (bite or sting); D 2d8 or 2d6; SV 10; ML 10; XP 4,000.

Special: If bite hits by margin of 4 or more (or on natural 20), victim swallowed, inflicting 1d6 hp damage per round thereafter; after 3 rounds, victim may asphyxiate. Swallowed prey can cut out with WC 1–3 blade, with attack penalty equal to WC; 10 hp damage from within for escape. Tail sting used when confronted from rear, or if space allows; venom immediately deadly unless *death* (poison) save made.

TOWER EXTERIOR

Observing the tower for a minimum of 6 turns (1 hour) provides a 2-in-6 chance of noticing the windows of LEVEL FIVE (GREAT ATTRACTOR) briefly opening, admitting a score or more black motes up to 3 feet in diameter. Otherwise, the infrangible walls are of a hardness that, for purposes of item saving throws, may be considered *hard metal*, with a +3 applied to all saves.

CLIMBING THE TOWER: Climbing the tower is difficult, the chance-in-twelve reduced by 2. Climbing beyond 40 feet up will attract the aggressive attention of **2d6 night-gaunts** per turn spent on the tower.

Night-gaunt: AL CE; SZ M; MV 30 (fly 60); DX 16; AC 5; HD 4 (hp 18); #A 3/1 (claw/claw/sting); D 1d4/1d4/1d6; SV 15; ML 8; XP 120.

Special: Sting delivers venom; make *death* (poison) save or suffer *slow* effect for 2d6 turns.

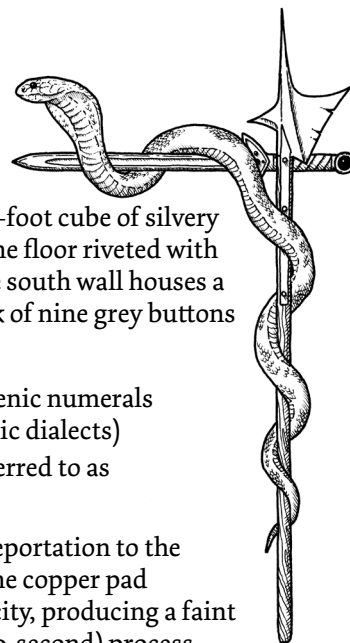
TOWER INTERIOR

The black tower floats 10 feet above the ground and is comprised of nine levels. Level dimensions are as follows (all levels include a 1-foot ceiling thickness):

LEVEL ONE: 30 × 120 × 10 feet
 LEVEL TWO: 30 × 120 × 30 feet
 LEVEL THREE: 30 × 120 × 30 feet
 LEVEL FOUR: 30 × 120 × 30 feet
 LEVEL FIVE: 30 × 120 × 50 feet
 LEVEL SIX: 30 × 120 × 30 feet
 LEVEL SEVEN: 30 × 120 × 30 feet
 LEVEL EIGHT: 30 × 120 × 30 feet
 LEVEL NINE: 30 × 120 × 30 feet

LIGHTING: Except for LEVELS ONE, FIVE, and NINE, all levels are well lit by softly-glowing 1 × 1-foot wall panels every five feet (LEVELS FIVE and NINE have alternate sources of light as noted hereafter). If the **supercomputer** (LEVEL FIVE, #5-C) is destroyed, all of these lighting panels will go dark.

DOORS: Unless otherwise noted, all doors are pegged, oval-shaped, and composed of lead-lined steel.



TELEPORTATION PADS: 10-foot cube of silvery steel, the north face exposed and the floor riveted with a 10-foot-square copper plate¹⁶. The south wall houses a shallow recess that contains a bank of nine grey buttons and one black button¹⁷.

- ★ Grey buttons etched with Hellenic numerals (1 to 9; intelligible to all Hellenic dialects)
- ★ Black button is unlabelled; referred to as “EXODUS” button

Pressing a grey button engages teleportation to the respective level. When activated, the copper pad coruscates with blue-white electricity, producing a faint scent of ozone. This is a 3-round (30-second) process that can be cancelled during round 1 or 2 if the button of the present level is pressed. Pressing the black button transports the passenger(s) to the stone dial beneath the TOWERING FORTRESS OF BLACKENED STEEL.

During teleportation, passengers feel a bodily pins-and-needles stinging sensation as their cells are dismantled and reconfigured. If this device is used a second time without waiting at least 1 turn, a *trauma survival* roll must be made, with failure resulting in gelatinization of all bones and cartilage, leaving naught but a quivering mass of dying flesh (death in 1d4 rounds with no saving throw); furthermore, all mundane possessions are carbonized into a pile of dust, though magic items may be allowed *class 3* item saving throws¹⁸. Additional uses of the teleporter within 1 turn are likewise subject to *trauma survival* checks, though with a cumulative 10% penalty per attempt. (Use of the teleportation pad with an **infinity key**¹⁹ does not incur this risk of instant death.)

TRANSMUNDANE: **Aspasia and Atlas**, the **2 transmundane** who operate the TOWERING FORTRESS OF BLACKENED STEEL, are wont to visit the various levels, except for LEVEL ONE. When the PCs enter the tower, the referee can determine their location by rolling 1d20. Encountering the transmundane does not necessarily imply combat, but interactions with them may soon reveal that they do not exactly value the welfare of mankind; indeed, they see it as a lesser species.



Transmundane

¹⁶ See PLAYERS' HANDOUT #2.

¹⁷ See PLAYERS' HANDOUT #3.

¹⁸ See AS&SH VOL. III, p. 260: SAVING THROW, *item saving throws*.

¹⁹ See APPENDIX C.

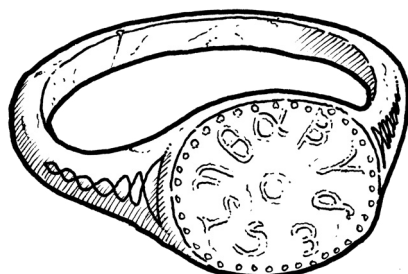
Table 4: Transmundane Location

d20 Roll	Transmundane Location
1	LEVEL TWO
2	LEVEL THREE
3	LEVEL FOUR
4–8	LEVEL FIVE
9	LEVEL SIX
10	LEVEL SEVEN
11–13	LEVEL EIGHT
14–20	LEVEL NINE

The **transmundane** are condescending, distracted, and mostly uninterested in humans; they may allude to having greater work to do than what mankind can possibly apprehend. Nathless, they may value unique knowledge that human visitors sometimes bring to the TOWERING FORTRESS OF BLACKENED STEEL, for they have had some positive contact with Ixian philosophers, poets, and sorcerers from Fazzuum.

The **transmundane** understand that their operation has had some unfortunate consequences for other parts of Hyperborea, but they neither care nor sympathize, because to them “The Scattering” (as they refer to the repelled motes cast about Hyperborea that become **spheres of tenebrosity**) is but meaningless collateral damage from more important work. To them, the **night-gaunts** are merely pests.

If the PCs impress the **transmundane**, the aliens will provide a designated “leader” of the party with an authorization seal. **Aspasia** or **Atlas** will take out a small square of cellulose paper and a ball of blue wax. Then, using a signet ring²⁰, the transmundane will press a seal of approval. The transmundane may or may not accompany the PCs (referee’s choice). Because the defences of the TOWERING FORTRESS OF BLACKENED STEEL are so vigorous, the arrogant aliens have little concern about (or fear of) most human visitors, considering them but ants to be squashed, should they become hostile or annoying.

Infinity Key*Silver Signet Ring*

²⁰ See PLAYERS’ HANDOUT #4.

Aspasia, Female Transmundane: AL LE; SZ M; MV 40; DX 13; AC 3; HD 7+7 (hp 42); #A 2/1 (+2 lightning spiked staff [+2]); D 1d10+4; SV 13; ML 11; XP 1,640.

Special: 12-in-20 spell resistance vs. CA 12 casters. Immune to poison, paralysis, disease, illusions, and any spell that affects the mind. +1 or better weapon to hit. Can cast following spells at will: *advanced spectral phantasm*, *charm person or beast*, *detect evil*, *dimension door*, *discern lie*, *extrasensory perception*, *hold monster*, *invisibility*, *tongues*.

Gear: +2 **lightning spiked staff** (7d6 lightning bolt, thrice per week), **infinity key**²¹, **silver signet ring**²², small leather pouch containing a ball of blue wax and five 4 × 4-inch squares of thick cellulose paper.

Atlas, Male Transmundane: AL LE; SZ M; MV 40; DX 13; AC 3; HD 7+7 (hp 39); #A 2/1 (+2 bastard sword, +4 vs. dæmons [+2 or +4 vs. dæmons]); D 2d6+4 or 2d6+6 vs. dæmons; SV 13; ML 11; XP 1,640.

Special: 12-in-20 spell resistance vs. CA 12 casters. Immune to poison, paralysis, disease, illusions, and any spell that affects the mind. +1 or better weapon to hit. Can cast following spells at will: *advanced spectral phantasm*, *charm person or beast*, *detect evil*, *dimension door*, *discern lie*, *extrasensory perception*, *hold monster*, *invisibility*, *tongues*.

Gear: +2 **bastard sword**, +4 **vs. dæmons**, **infinity key**²³, **silver signet ring**²⁴, small leather pouch containing a ball of blue wax and five 4 × 4-inch squares of thick cellulose paper.

N.B.: Should the **transmundane** find themselves in an uncompromisingly deadly situation, and morale flags, they will attempt to use the teleporter, whilst activating their **infinity keys** to teleport to a moon of Saturn.

*Transmundane*

²¹ See APPENDIX C.

²² See PLAYERS’ HANDOUT #4.

²³ See APPENDIX C.

²⁴ See PLAYERS’ HANDOUT #4.

LEVEL ZERO (UNDERTOWER)

- ★ Tower hovers 10 feet above ground
- ★ 10-foot-square blocks of grey-black stone positioned under each corner
- ★ 5-foot diameter stone dial, etched with symbols, centred under tower

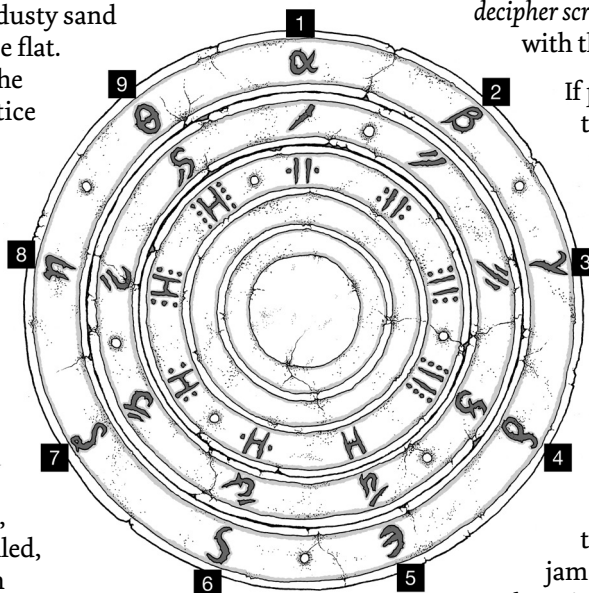
Underneath the tower, only peculiar, twisted, ground-crawling cacti thrive. The grey dusty sand is slightly rippled but otherwise flat.

Diligent observers who study the underside of the tower may notice a circular, 5-foot diameter seam; this is just north of the stone dial's position (see **stone dial** below), not centred on the underside.

GREY-BLACK BLOCKS:

Each is a 10-cubic-foot block of Yuggothan lodestone, buried in the ground so that only the top surface is exposed, giving the impression of a platform. The blocks hold no sand or dust, and in fact such grains are repelled, forming ripples away from each block's top surface. Standing within 5 feet of a block attracts static electricity, raising the hair of anyone nearby, but otherwise causing no harm. Standing on one induces nausea, and after 1 turn a *transformation* saving throw is required, or every atom in the body squeezes, distorts, and disintegrates to dust, whisked away by the whispering winds of Sharath. After 2 turns, this effect is automatic. *N.B.*: The Yuggothan blocks do not keep the tower afloat, but they do stabilize it and prevent wobbling.

STONE DIAL: A dust-covered stone dial²⁵, 5 feet in diameter, is centred under the tower. In three concentric sections, the dial is engraved with the numbers 1–9 in Hellenic²⁶, Lemurian, and Muat, each in consecutive order in their respective written languages. However, the three concentric sections are currently misaligned with respect to the numerals written on them. Stone pegs allow one to turn the dial's concentric sections. Matching the numerals can be accomplished by a thief with the *decipher script* ability, or perhaps a sorcerer with the *decipher language* spell.



Stone Dial

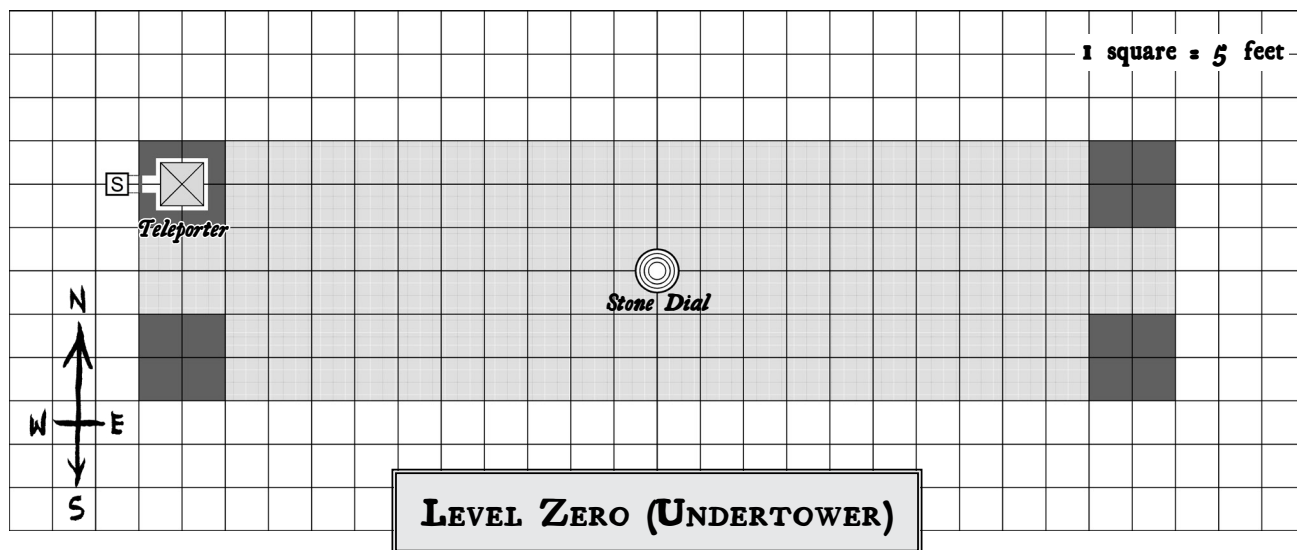
If properly matched (ones aligned, twos aligned, etc.) the numerals glow in hues of violet and blue, causing a 5-foot-diameter mechanical chain-lift²⁷ elevator to descend from LEVEL ONE (LABYRINTH), touching ground just north of the stone dial. It remains for 6 rounds (1 minute) and then rises, reseating itself in the bottom of the tower. The material of the TOWERING FORTRESS OF BLACKENED STEEL is so sturdy that anything used to potentially jam the mechanism must make a *class 2* item saving throw²⁸. After the elevator reseats itself, the numerals randomly rearrange themselves, each section spinning wildly before slowing to a halt.

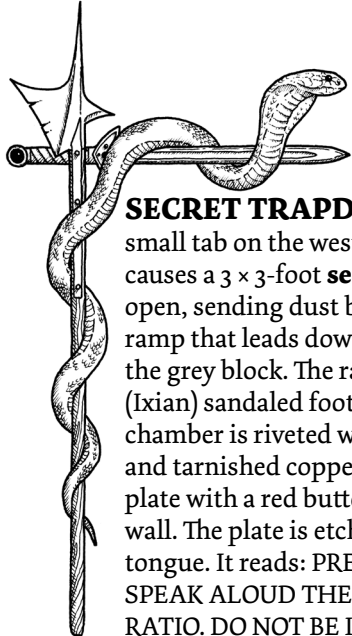
²⁵ See PLAYERS' HANDOUT #5.

²⁶ Because portions of the Hellenic tongue have been incorporated into the common tongue, anyone with a 15 intelligence or greater may (2-in-6 chance) recognize that the Hellenic portion of the dial contains numbers, but they may not be sure about the values of the individual numerals.

²⁷ Chains are considered *metal*, *hard* for item saving throws.

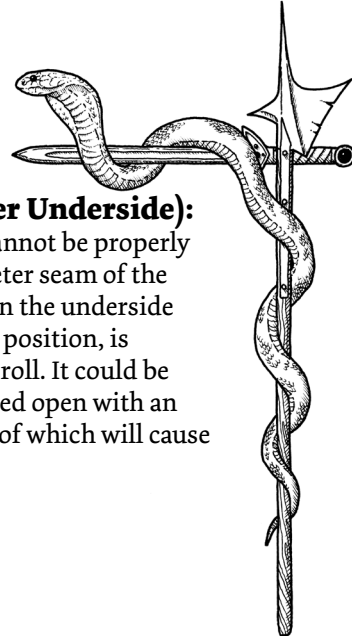
²⁸ See AS&SH VOL. III, p. 260: SAVING THROW, *item saving throws*.





SECRET TRAPDOOR (Ground): If pressed, a small tab on the western edge of the northwest block causes a 3 × 3-foot **secret trap door** to split up and open, sending dust blowing away. It exposes a short ramp that leads down to a 6 × 6 × 6-foot chamber within the grey block. The ramp is dusty and shews recent (Ixian) sandaled footprints. The floor of the secret chamber is riveted with a 6 × 6-foot plate of scratched and tarnished copper. A small (18 × 12-inch) bronze plate with a red button is mounted on the eastern wall. The plate is etched in the Hellenic (Hyperborean) tongue. It reads: PRESS THE BUTTON AND THEN SPEAK ALOUD THE TOWER'S PRECISE, SIMPLIFIED RATIO. DO NOT BE IMPRECISE. Speaking the correct ratio (1:4:9 or 1²:2²:3²) in any language within 2 rounds teleports all visitors within the block to the LEVEL Two teleportation pad²⁹. The trap door closes after 12 rounds (2 minutes) but is easily pushed open from within.

²⁹ See PLAYERS' HANDOUT #2.

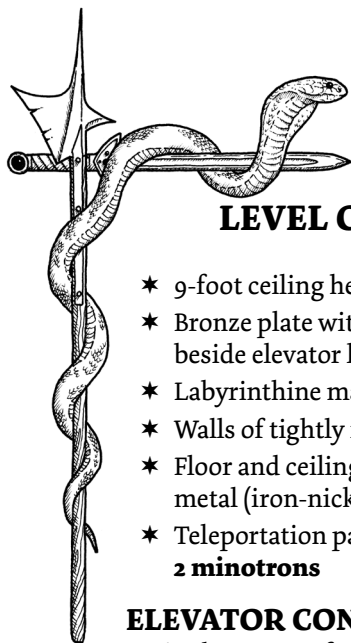


SECRET TRAPDOOR (Tower Underside):

If the numerals on the stone dial cannot be properly matched, the circular, 5-foot diameter seam of the **locked secret trap door**, located on the underside of the tower just north of the dial's position, is discoverable via a *detect secret doors* roll. It could be picked open (*open locks*), or wrenched open with an *extraordinary feat of strength*, either of which will cause the elevator to lower.



Undertower



LEVEL ONE (LABYRINTH)

- ★ 9-foot ceiling height
- ★ Bronze plate with toggle switch mounted on wall beside elevator lift
- ★ Labyrinthine maze that contains **3 traps**
- ★ Walls of tightly fitted white blocks
- ★ Floor and ceiling riveted with narrow strips of metal (iron-nickel alloy)
- ★ Teleportation pad³⁰ at end of labyrinth guarded by **2 minotrons**

ELEVATOR CONTROL: The toggle switch is set in the centre of a bronze plate beside the elevator lift: toggle down to lower the elevator, up to raise it. However, after 6 rounds (1 minute) the elevator automatically ascends back into the tower, shifting the toggle to the up position. As previously noted, after the elevator reseats itself, the numerals of the **stone dial** randomly rearrange themselves, each section spinning wildly before slowing to a halt.

LABYRINTH TRAPS: This narrow, circuitous labyrinth contains **3 traps**, intended to eliminate uninvited guests. At the centre of each trapped area shewn on the map, a nearly imperceptible 5 × 2-foot section of the floor protrudes 1/4-inch. When stepped on, it depresses, detonating one of the following traps:

- a:** jets of fire, 4d6 damage, *avoidance* save for 1/2 damage.
- b:** jets of cold, 6d4 damage, *avoidance* save for 1/2 damage.
- c:** burst of pink powder, *avoidance* save to escape; if failed, subsequent *death* (poison) saving throw must be made to avoid death from burning, collapsing lungs; even if the second saving throw is successful, the victim suffers spasmodic coughing for 1d4 turns.

³⁰ See PLAYERS' HANDOUTS #2 and #3.

Because unexpected visitors rarely bypass this level, the **transmundane** scarcely pay attention to those (the occasional explorer or thrill-seeker) who would find ingress here. Clever Ixians and Amazons have done so in the past, but most have fallen prey to the traps herein. Thus, it is generally assumed that “guests” who achieve LEVEL TWO have either been formally invited, or are smart enough to be worthy of confabulation.

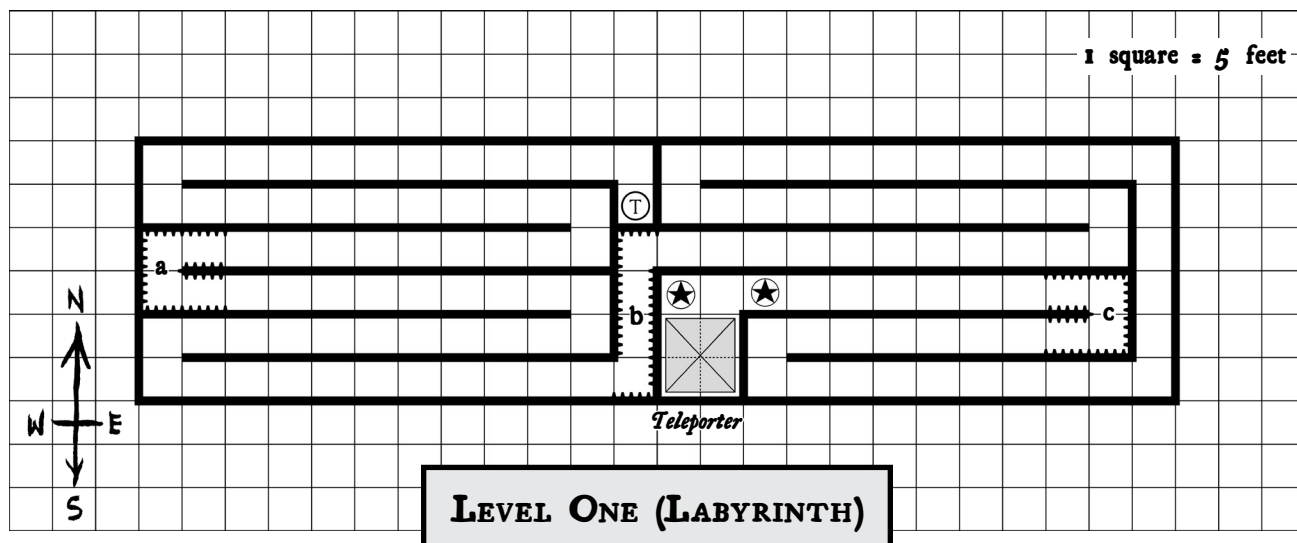
THE MINOTRONS AT THE END: At the end of the labyrinth stand two bronze statues, each 10 feet tall and portraying an axe-wielding minotaur. These are **2 minotrons (bronze automatons)**. Using the common tongue, in hollow, reverberating, imperatory voices, they announce in unison, “WE ARE TWO SHIPS FOREVER CIRCLING AROUND ONE ANOTHER ON A PLACID SEA OF IGNORANCE, TWO STARS WHEELING IN FIRMAMENT, LOCKED IN ETERNAL CHASE. ANNOUNCE OUR NAME IF ONE OR NONE SEEKS TO PASS.”

If asked, they will repeat the riddle. The correct answer is “binary”, though some referees might let “duality” serve, and the most lenient referees might allow “twins” or “Gemini” to suffice. The correct answer will prompt the statues to rotate and flatten themselves against the walls, permitting passage. An incorrect answer, or any attempt to bypass the **minotrons** without stating the correct answer, prompts them to pursue and attack.

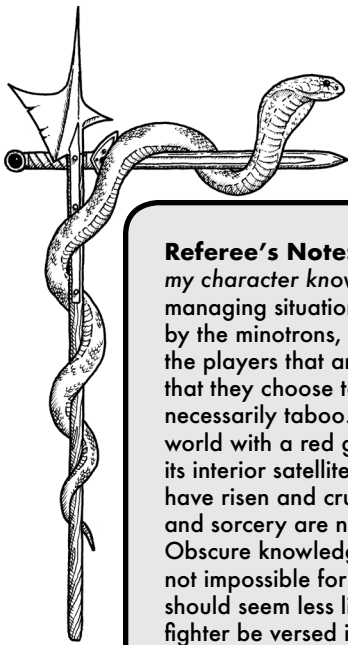
Automata, Bronze (x2): AL N; SZ L; MV 30; DX 9; AC 2; HD 10+2 (hp 47); #A 1/1 (gore or battle axe); D 2d8 or 4d6; SV 12; ML 12; XP 2,200.

Special: +1 or better weapon to hit. Immune to sorcery, except lightning, which functions as *slow* spell for 3 rounds. Fire attacks heal it. Can deliver charging gore at +2 bonus and double damage.

1 square = 5 feet



1 square = 5 feet



Referee's Note: *Anachronisms! And, does my character know what I know? When managing situations like the riddle spoken by the minotrons, the referee may remind the players that any "real world" knowledge that they choose to bring to the table is not necessarily taboo. Hyperborea is a far-flung world with a red giant sun that has consumed its interior satellites. Over millennia, empires have risen and crumbled, and technology and sorcery are nigh interchangeable. Obscure knowledge of binary star systems is not impossible for the well-read; of course, it should seem less likely that a 6 intelligence fighter be versed in the workings of the universe.*

On the wall between the original positions of the two **minotrons** is mounted an embossed bronze sign which reads the following, in both the Hellenic (Hyperborean) and Hellenic (Atlantean) languages: ATTENTION! ACCESS TO LEVELS 3-9 REQUIRES AUTHORIZATION SEAL. FAILURE TO COMPLY MAY RESULT IN TERMINATION.

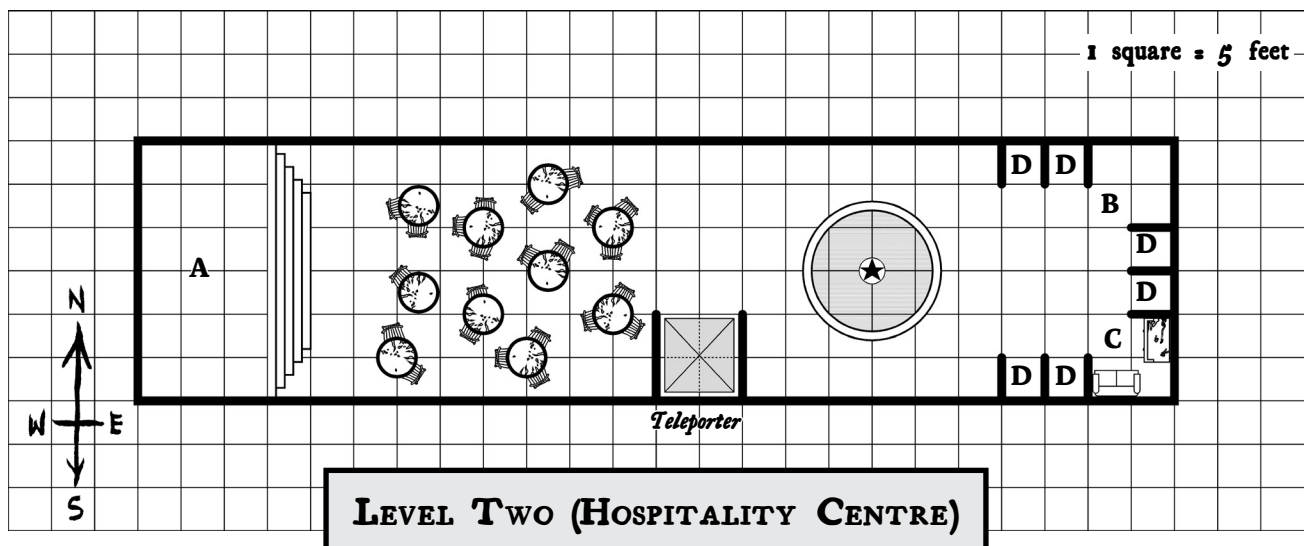
LEVEL TWO (HOSPITALITY CENTRE)

- ★ 29-foot ceiling height
- ★ Floor and walls dressed in grey-flecked white marble
- ★ 10 red marble tables surrounded by padded, iron-wrought chairs
- ★ Gurgling font with 10-foot-tall red marble sculpture of up-pointing arrow
- ★ Cubicles at eastern end
- ★ Western stage with percussion instruments attended by scarred musicians



Minotrons

This level is where visitors find respite, awaiting enlightenment from the **transmundane**, if the aliens design to grace the visitors with their magnificent presence.



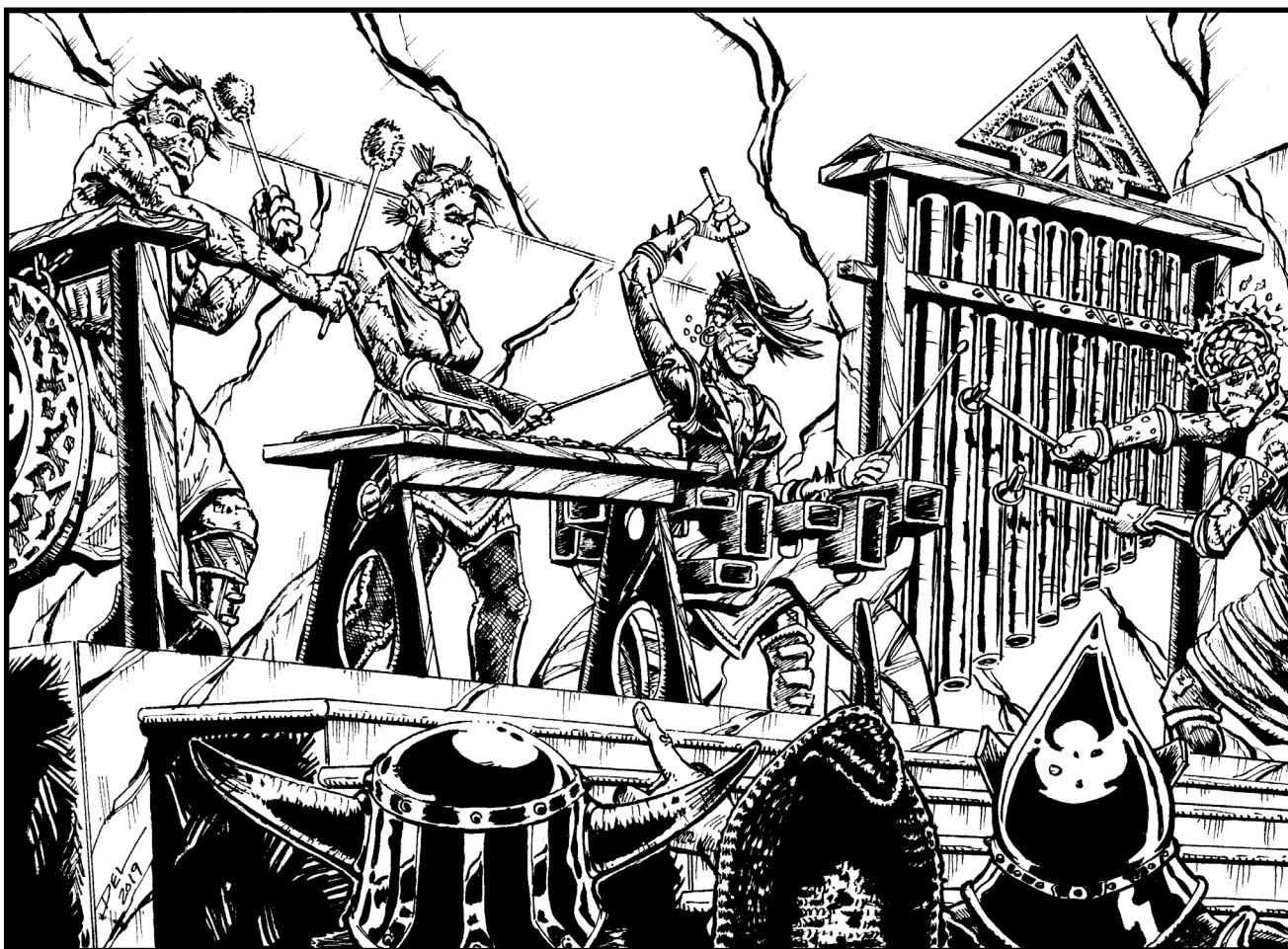
A moment after PC arrival, *unseen servants* (x12) emerge from the eastern side. The following may be read aloud or paraphrased:

From beyond the gurgling font to your right, floating in mid-air you see dinnerware, bottles of wine, crystal decanters of milk, and silver platters brimming with foodstuffs. They float over to the tables left of you, gently setting down in a gorgeous spread. Pomegranate wine is poured in goblets, sweet milk froths up in mugs, and plates are piled with sweet breads, exotic fruits, spiced jerky, pickled herring, smoked octopus, sharp cheeses, and other like viands. On the stage to the far left, an uncanny quartet of heavily scarred musicians begin to play a variety of odd percussive instruments, first softly and somewhat disjointedly, then intensifying and finding synchronicity. Emerging from the cubicles to the right, you see a tall, withered old Ixian man garbed in a pristine white suit. Smiling with eyes that look like polished black gems, he says, "Welcome to the Towering Fortress of Blackened Steel! I am Phandarazos, your concierge."

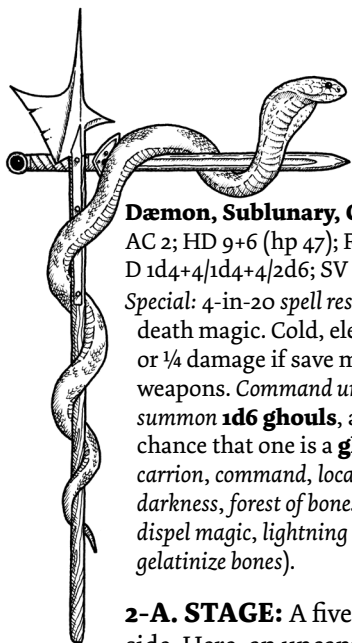
THE CONCIERGE: With sickeningly sweet politeness, **Phandarazos** extolls the delectability of the various viands that his "honoured guests" may savour. He will then casually take a seat, fold his legs, and go on to inquire about what knowledge and/or wisdom the PCs seek to share with "the masters" who operate the tower. While picking at small cubes of cheese, Phandarazos mentions that he may put in a good word with the masters if the honoured guests impress him with their erudition. He will divulge no information about the tower, maintaining that he is but a simple concierge. He may or may not inform the party that they cannot safely access the upper levels without an authorization seal from the masters.

Phandarazos is in fact a **desert dæmon** bound to serve his otherworldly masters in their efforts to (amongst other things) thwart his own kind. Boring or uninteresting visitors will soon be asked to leave; Phandarazos will direct such unwanted guests to step on the teleportation pad³¹ and press the black button. If guests prove intriguing or threatening, he will, if possible, excuse himself to #2-C.

³¹ See PLAYERS' HANDOUTS #2 and #3.



Uncanny Quartet



Dæmon, Sublunary, Ghul: UT 13; AL LE; SZ L; MV 50; DX 17; AC 2; HD 9+6 (hp 47); FA 9; TA 9; CA 9; #A 3/1 (claw/claw/bite); D 1d4+4/1d4+4/2d6; SV 12; ML 9; XP 3,400.

Special: 4-in-20 spell resistance vs. CA 12 casters. Immune to death magic. Cold, electricity, fire, and gas inflict ½ damage, or ¼ damage if save made. Harmed only by silver or magical weapons. *Command undead* ×9 per day. Once per day, can summon **1d6 ghouls**, arriving 1d4 rounds later, with 1-in-6 chance that one is a **ghast**. Necromancer spells (*animate carrion*, *command*, *locate the dead*, *protection from good*, *scare*; *darkness*, *forest of bones*, *ghoul touch*, *ray of enfeeblement*; *dispel magic*, *lightning bolt*, *slow*; *animate dead*, *black tentacles*; *gelatinize bones*).

2-A. STAGE: A five-step dais rises on the western side. Here, an uncanny quartet of extremely scarred musicians (**4 flesh automatons**; 2 females, 2 males) play percussive instruments: frame-hung gong, tubular bells, wood blocks, and a xylophone. Any attempt to disrupt the percussionists or harm the **concierge** (or the **transmundane**, should they be present) will provoke the musicians to react violently; too, vandalization will cause them to respond with force.

Automaton, Flesh (×4): AL N; SZ M; MV 20; DX 7; AC 7; HD 9+2 (hp 43); #A 2/1 (pummel); D 2d8/2d8; SV 12; ML 11; XP 1,600.

Special: +1 or better weapon to hit. Immune to *charm*, *hold*, *sleep*, and other mind-affecting sorcery. Electrical attacks heal it. 1-in-10 chance per round that creature loses control, attempting to kill all in sight; it attacks berserkly at +2 to attack and damage rolls and then flees after 2d6 rounds.

2-B. UNSEEN SERVANT QUARTERS: This is where the 12 *unseen servants* gather and stand, whispering æthereally to one another while awaiting their next task.

2-C. CONCIERGE'S OFFICE: In the southeast cubicle, the **concierge** has a sofa and a three-drawer desk carved from ebony pine. The top two drawers are cluttered with parchments, quills, and dried ink bottles. Some of the parchments contain crude

sketches of horrifically vulgar dæmons committing unspeakable atrocities against their human captives. The bottom drawer contains the following treasures: **ring of animal command** (folded into a white silk kerchief), a tightly folded suit of **+3 leather armour**, and a **+1 copper-bladed dagger** (*sheds ruddy light when unsheathed*) in an ornate bronze scabbard.

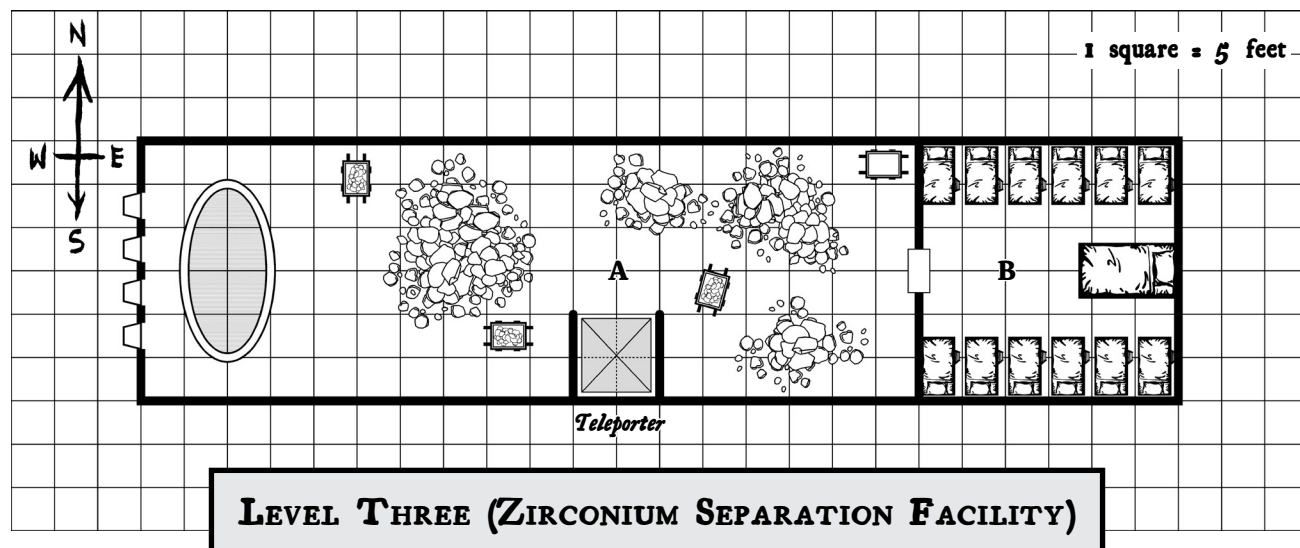
On the underside of the desktop where the top drawer rests, there is a **secret button** (i.e., the top drawer must be pulled open to access the button). Pressing it alerts the **transmundane** of intriguing³² visitors via a light bell that sounds in the above levels. Holding the button for three or more seconds generates an intensified bell sound, alerting the **transmundane** (and the other tower inhabitants) to a potential threat.

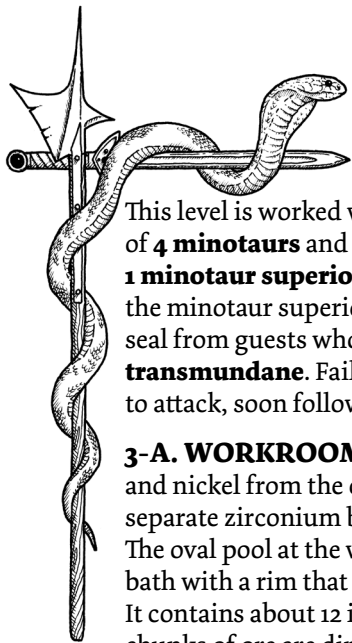
2-D. REFRESHMENT CUBICLES: Wine, milk, and foodstuffs are stored here, including pomegranate wine (42 bottles), sweet cactus milk (18 bottles), sweet breads, spiced jerky, pickled herring, smoked octopus, sharp cheeses, and other like refreshments as the referee might imagine.

LEVEL THREE (ZIRCONIUM SEPARATION FACILITY)

- ★ 29-foot ceiling height
- ★ **8 dwarfs** and **4 minotaurs** labouring; **1 minotaur superior** supervising
- ★ Floor, walls, and ceiling tiled in granite
- ★ Large, oval-shaped chemical bath
- ★ Massive piles of ore spread about; carts, shovels, picks, and the like

³² Note that it is possible for a PC party to impress the **transmundane** to such a degree that the aliens offer a tour of the facility (*reaction rolls recommended*).





This level is worked with but little respite by a group of **4 minotaurs** and **8 dwarfs** that are overseen by **1 minotaur superior**. In deep, snorting exhalations, the minotaur superior will demand an authorization seal from guests who are not accompanied by the **transmundane**. Failure to produce said seal causes it to attack, soon followed by its minions.

3-A. WORKROOM: Here, the labourers separate iron and nickel from the ore, but their main purpose is to separate zirconium by using a chemical bath process. The oval pool at the western side is a zirconium-plated bath with a rim that stands 18 inches above the floor. It contains about 12 inches of corrosive acid. Zircon-rich chunks of ore are dipped into the pool using 3-foot-long zirconium tongs. All impurities are stripped, leaving only the zirconium, which is forwarded to LEVEL FOUR via carts. *N.B.:* Living creatures that fall into the acid bath will die instantly with no saving throw, melting to sludge that disintegrates moments later. Standing in the acid (no matter how briefly) requires an *extraordinary feat of dexterity* to make an (albeit legless) escape; such escapees must make a *trauma survival* roll to avoid death in 1 round from shock.

Dwarfs (x8): AL LE; SZ S; MV 20; DX 13; AC 7; HD 3+2 (hp 16); #A 1/1 (war hammer); D 1d10+1; SV 15 [*device +4*]; ML 9; XP 90. *Special:* Can see in complete darkness. -2 attack penalty when exposed to bright light. *Gear:* war hammer, **10d8 gp**.

Minotaurs (x4): AL LE; SZ M; MV 40; DX 12; AC 6; HD 6+6 (hp 33); #A 1/1 (gore) or 3/2 (two-handed scimitar); D 1d6+2 (gore) or 3d4+2 (two-handed scimitar); SV 14; ML 11; XP 510. *Special:* Unaffected by *forget the path*, *maze*, and like sorcery. *Gear:* two-handed scimitar.

Minotaur Superior: AL LE; SZ L; MV 30; DX 14; AC 0; HD 10+6 (hp 60); #A 1/1 (gore) or 2/1 (two-handed scimitar); D 1d10+3 (gore) or 3d4+3 (two-handed scimitar); SV 12; ML 12; XP 1,150. *Special:* Unaffected by *forget the path*, *maze*, and like sorcery. *Gear:* two-handed scimitar, **key** (to iron chest).

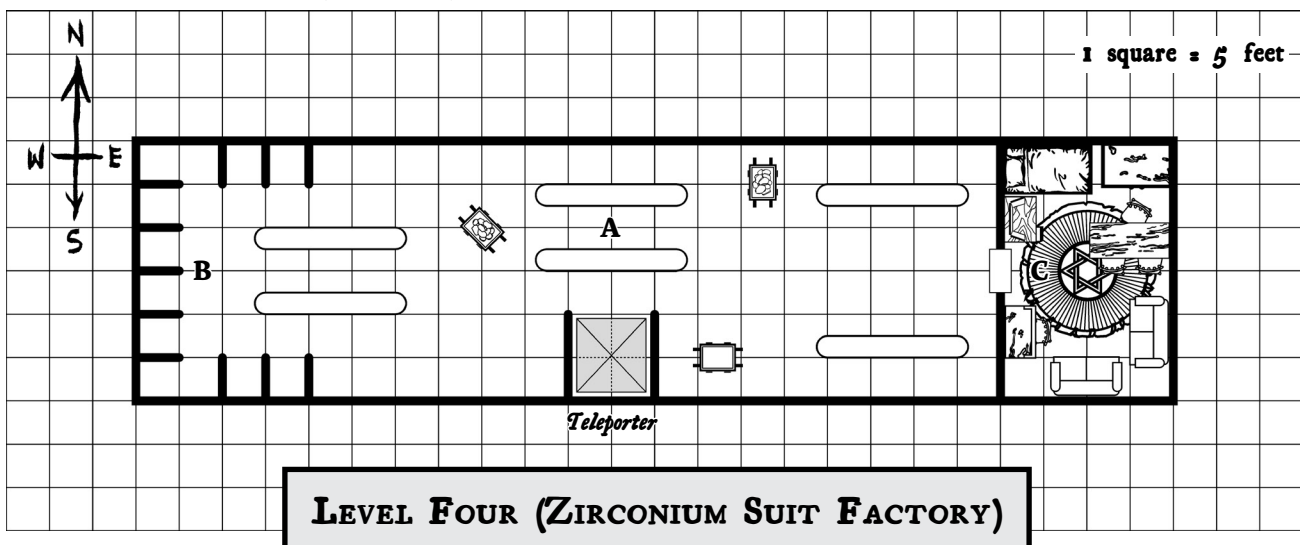
3-B. BARRACKS: The east chamber is lined with 12 steel-frame bunkbeds for the **minotaurs** and **dwarfs** (including the dwarfs from LEVEL FOUR). Each bunkbed is composed of a pair of 7-foot-long beds of straw and down. Under one pallet is a boar's bladder with a sinew drawstring; it contains an **electrum medallion** (500-gp value). Hidden in another pallet are **6 jaspers** (60-gp value each).

The **minotaur superior** keeps a large pallet on the east wall. Under the pallet it has a **locked** iron chest that contains its horde, which is bolstered periodically by the **transmundane**: **63 ingots of gold** (100-gp value each).

LEVEL FOUR (ZIRCONIUM SUIT FACTORY)

- ★ 29-foot ceiling height
- ★ Green-robed **Atlantean magician** and **12 dwarfs**
- ★ Metal tables (2½ × 16 feet) cluttered with tools and dismantled machinery
- ★ Carts containing raw zirconium
- ★ Cubicles at western end hung with weird suits of dismantled armour

4-A. WORKROOM: This is where silver-grey **zirconium suits** are assembled. Here can be found an ancient Atlantean sorcerer named **Iason Poseidon**, who oversees **12 dwarfs** (his engineers). Iason is garbed in a tattered black cloak under which he wears sea-green garments of pristine make and tailoring; the contrast between unkempt cloak and impeccable clothing is obvious. Unless visitors are accompanied by the **transmundane**, the sorcerer will demand to see an authorization seal. Failure to produce said seal compels him to insist that visitors immediately return to LEVEL TWO (HOSPITALITY CENTRE) or face his ultimate wrath.



1 square = 5 feet

Dwarfs (x6): AL LE; SZ S; MV 20; DX 13; AC 7; HD 3+2 (hp 15); #A 1/1 (war hammer); D 1d10+1; SV 15 [device +4]; ML 9; XP 90.
Special: Can see in complete darkness. -2 attack penalty when exposed to bright light.

Gear: war hammer, **10d8 gp**.

IASON POSEIDON (9TH-LEVEL ATLANTEAN MALE MAGICIAN): AL (L)N; SZ M (5' 10", 175 lbs.); MV 40; AC 4; HD 9 (hp 22 [25 with familiar]); FA 4; CA 9; #A 1/1 (long sword [+3]); D 1d10+3; SV 12 [device +2, sorcery +2]; ML 7; XP 1,500; ST 10, DX 10, CN 10, IN 17, WS 9, CH 15.

Special: Magician spells (detect magic, identify, magic missile, message, shield, sleep, unseen servant; continuous light, cool metal, invisibility, levitate x2, sorcerer lock; blink, fly, lightning bolt x2, tongues; polymorph other, polymorph self, wall of fire; fabricate x2). Read magic. Read scrolls. Scribe scrolls. New weapon skill (long sword). Alchemy.

Gear: **defensive bracers** (AC 4), **wings of flying**, +3 **long sword** (blue-steel blade engraved with Atlantean runes that emit blue light when unsheathed), **magician scroll** (polymorph other), silver holy symbol of Tlakk-Nakka.

Philon, Rat Familiar:

AL N; SZ S; MV 30 (swim 20); DX 16; AC 9; HD ¼ (hp 3); #A 1/1 (bite); D 1; SV 17; ML 5; XP 7.

Special: Within 120 range, magician can see ("tunnel vision") and hear (thinly, metallicly) through animal; if it dies, magician suffers 1 hp damage per level.

Philon is quite plump and spoiled; Iason dotes on it and speaks to it like it is his child. Because of its refined diet and living conditions, Philon carries no disease in its bite.

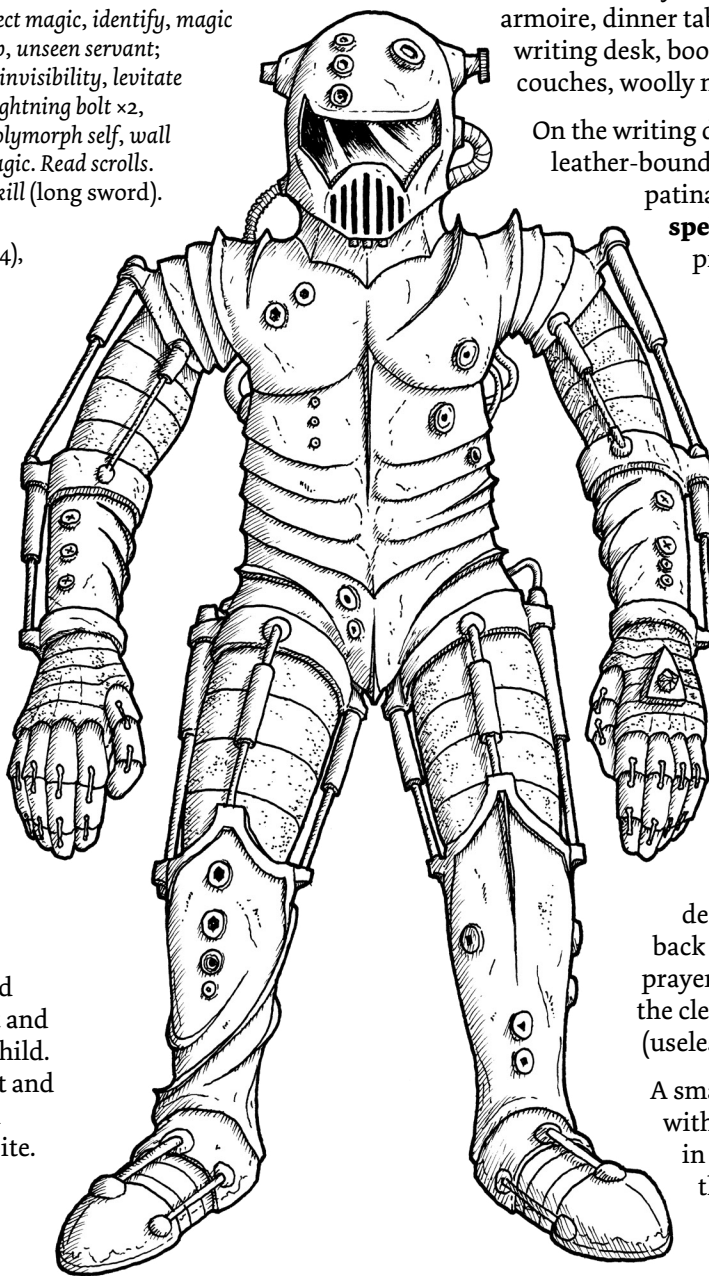
4-B. CUBICLES: The cubicles along the western side are hung with **8 zirconium suits** in various stages of development (each is 10–33% complete and thus unusable) and a complete and usable **zirconium suit** (it has sustained 15 perfect blows and can sustain 35 more).

4-C. SORCERER'S CHAMBERS: At the east end of the level, the **magician's** quarters are partitioned off. His room is luxuriously furnished in Amazonian and Atlantean-styled decor: large bed, dresser, armoire, dinner table (surrounded by chairs), writing desk, book shelf, plush chairs, couches, woolly mammoth fur rug.

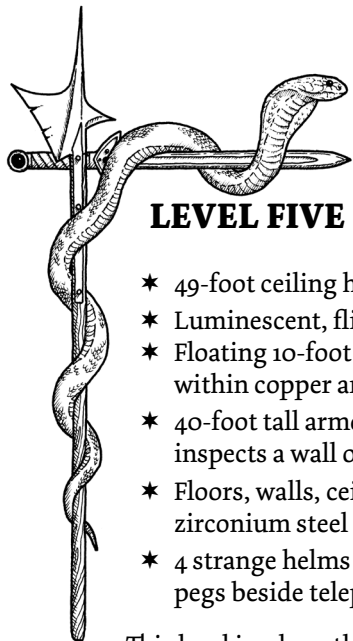
On the writing desk rests a vermiculated leather-bound volume with hasps of patinated bronze. This is Iason's **spell book** (contains all prepared spells). The desk also contains a quill, an ink bottle, and 12 vellum sheets. In the armoire lies a **portable hole**. Within the **portable hole** is a sack with **2,200 gp**, a sack with **5,080 sp**, and a **cloak of poisonousness** (cursed).

The three shelves of the bookshelf are lined with crude stone sculptures of Tlakk-Nakka, the arachnid goddess. A **prayer book** bound in mammoth hide contains prayers dedicated to Tlakk-Nakka; the back of this book contains the prayers for the ritual that invokes the cleric spell *perform exorcism* (useless to **Iason**).

A small wicker basket stuffed with archæopteryx down rests in one corner. This is where the magician's **rat familiar** sleeps.



Zirconium Suit



LEVEL FIVE (GREAT ATTRACTOR)

- ★ 49-foot ceiling height
- ★ Luminescent, flickering white light fills level
- ★ Floating 10-foot diameter white sphere contained within copper armillary sphere
- ★ 40-foot tall armoured being (**transtellar**) inspects a wall of alien machinery
- ★ Floors, walls, ceiling plated with sheets of zirconium steel
- ★ 4 strange helms with dark-glassed vizors hang on pegs beside teleporter

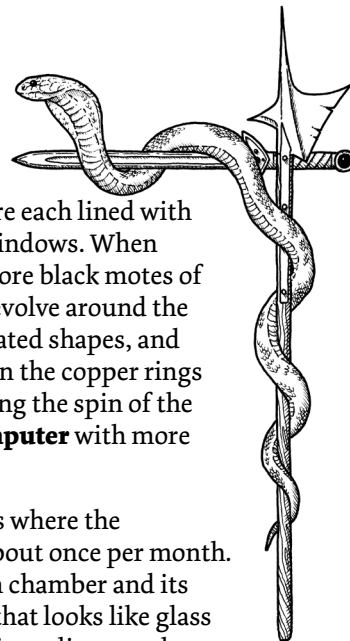
This level is where the **transtellar**³³ works on computer banks that stretch from floor to ceiling. The computer is powered by a potent sphere of positive energy contained within a 5-ring armillary sphere. The copper bands of the armillary sphere are constantly rotating, producing a gentle hum and causing the light of the sphere to appear to blink or flash. This artefact is known as the **great attractor**. Visitors are not allowed here without **transmundane** accompaniment and/or their seal of approval; however, the enormous alien that dwells here scarcely pays heed to visitors unless they demonstratively seek to gain its attention.

The **great attractor** is nigh blinding³⁴ to behold without appropriate head gear: **4 dark-vizored helms**³⁵ that hang on a wall beside the teleporter. If they are present and on good terms with the party, the **transmundane** will don two and offer two to esteemed guests. They will suggest that others keep their eyes shut as often as possible.

³³ See APPENDIX B.

³⁴ -2 to all attack rolls; after 1 turn of exposure, -4 to all attack rolls and permanent blindness.

³⁵ See APPENDIX C.

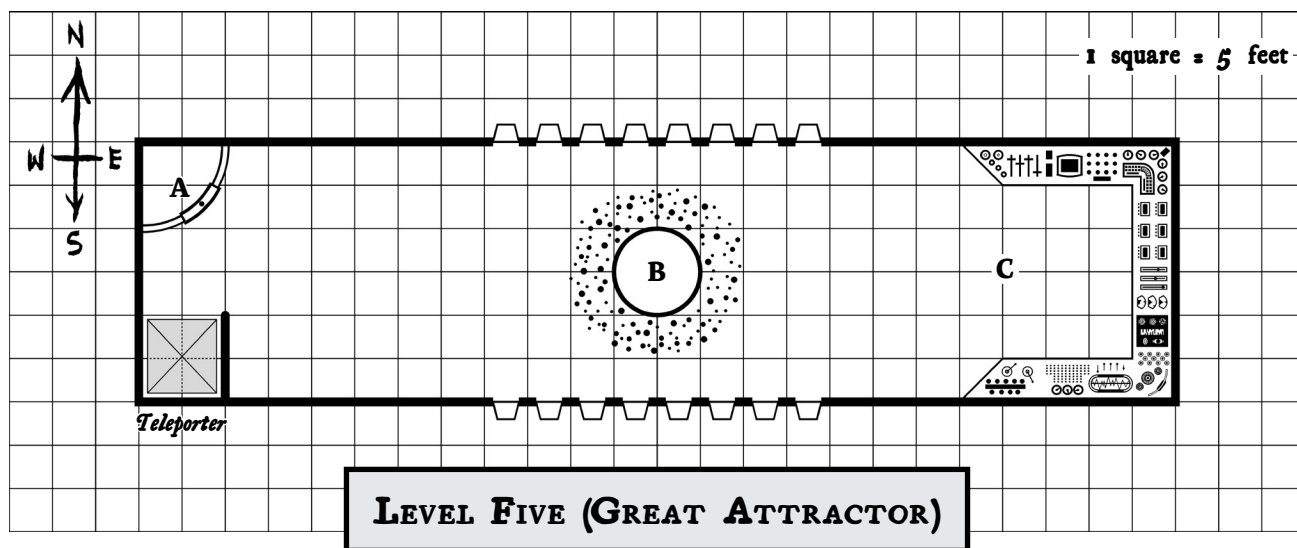


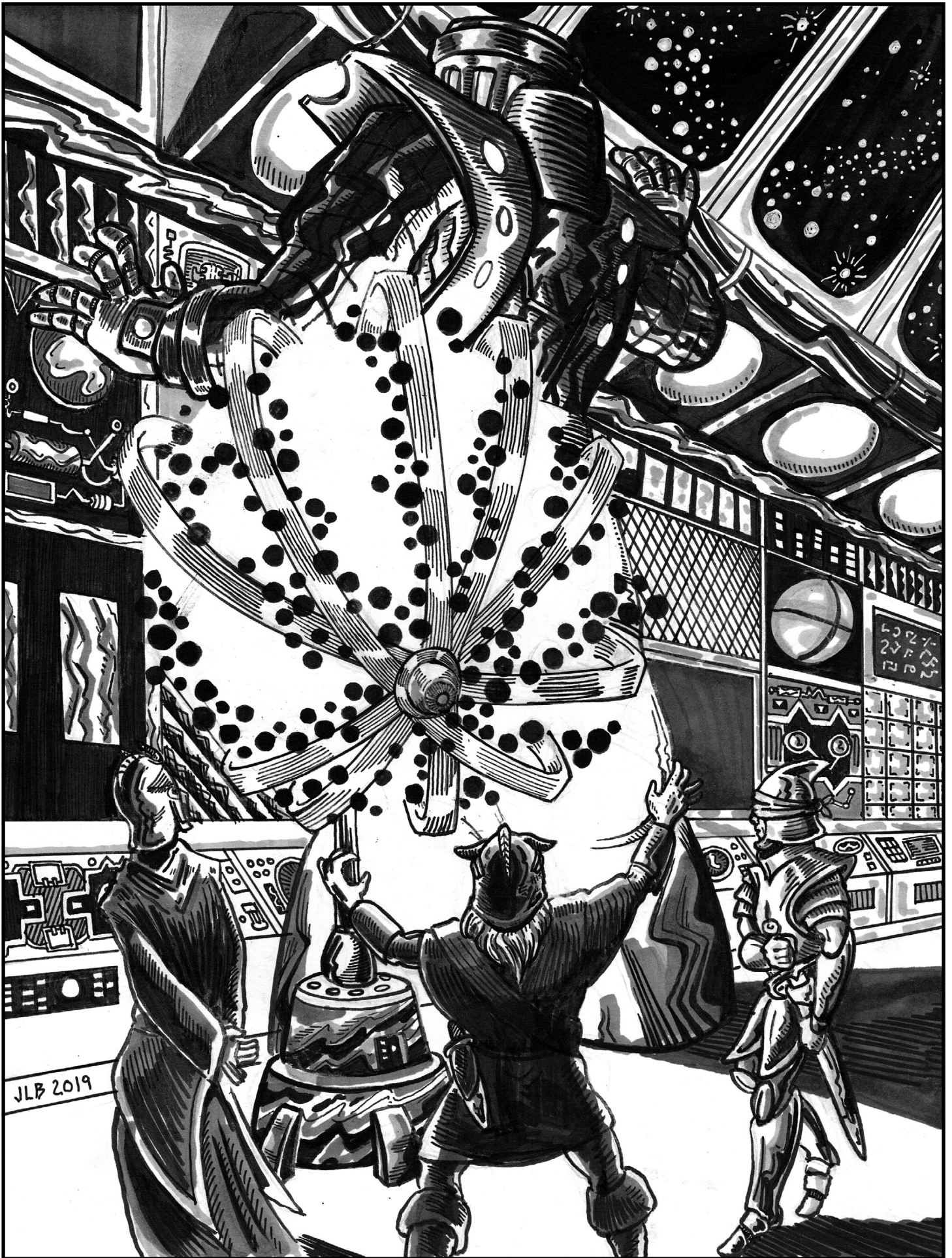
The northern and southern walls are each lined with five rows of 3 × 3-foot flap-portal windows. When activated, these admit a score or more black motes of 6 to 36-inch diameter. The motes revolve around the **great attractor**, stretch into elongated shapes, and ultimately collide with (and blacken the copper rings of) the armillary sphere, accelerating the spin of the rings and supplying the **supercomputer** with more power.

5-A. STASIS CHAMBER: This is where the **transtellar** rejuvenates itself, about once per month. The convex face of the 50-foot-high chamber and its door are of a transparent material that looks like glass but has the hardness of iron. The giant alien stands within the chamber and enters a deep reverie for 1d12+12 hours before resuming work. Whilst the transtellar is within, the door is **locked** (a condition caused by the placement of the alien's hand on the face of the door).

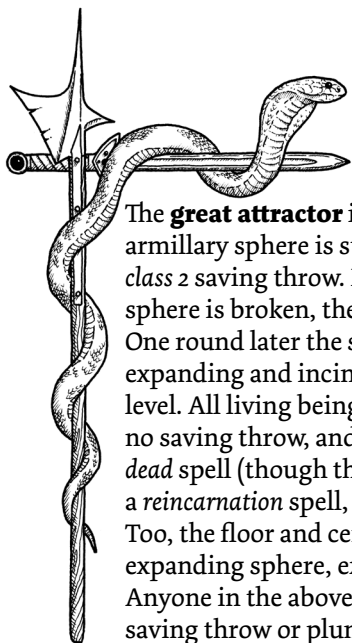
5-B. GREAT ATTRACTOR: This is the 10-foot-diameter sphere of bright white light, a source of incredible positive energy contained within the copper rotating bands of the 5-ring armillary sphere (which is supported by a central post). Objects of negative energy empower the **great attractor**; black motes admitted through the computer-activated window flaps increase its power, as well as the rotational spin of the armillary sphere. Too many motes at one time (if the flaps are left open, for example) lead to a complete overload, causing the sphere to explode (see below). Conversely, objects of positive energy are repelled by the **great attractor** with tremendous force. Living creatures cannot approach within 5 feet of the artefact without being repelled, unless an *extraordinary feat of strength* is achieved at a -10% penalty³⁶.

³⁶ See AS&SH VOL. I, p. 7: ATTRIBUTES, strength.





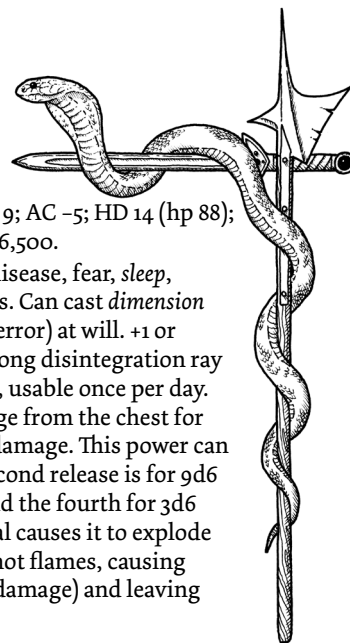
Great Attractor



The **great attractor** is somewhat delicate. If the copper armillary sphere is struck, it must make a soft metal class 2 saving throw. If a single ring of the armillary sphere is broken, the entire apparatus falls apart. One round later the sphere will lose containment, expanding and incinerating everything within this level. All living beings are instantly seared to ash with no saving throw, and cannot even benefit from a *raise dead* spell (though they may still be brought back with a *reincarnation* spell, if some ashes can be retrieved). Too, the floor and ceiling are melted to slag by the expanding sphere, exposing the levels below and above. Anyone in the above level must make an *avoidance* saving throw or plummet 80 feet down to LEVEL FOUR (ZIRCONIUM SUIT FACTORY), taking 8d6 damage; similarly, those below must make an *avoidance* saving throw or take 6d6 damage from falling debris.

5-C. SUPERCOMPUTER: The 50-foot-tall **supercomputer** at the eastern end is notable for its many banks of buttons, dials, levers, lights (blinking), screens, switches, toggles, and wheels. This is where the **transtellar** spends most of its time, monitoring the function of the **great attractor** and its carefully calibrated interactions with motes of negative energy drawn in from the Black Gulf. When the **great attractor** reaches its ultimate potential, the **transtellar** intends to forge a super-weapon to seal the growing rift between Ouranos and Poseidenos. Significant damage to the **supercomputer** will cause it to spark madly, send forth billows of black smoke, and then explode, causing 3d6 damage (*avoidance* save for half) to anyone within 25 feet. Too, the armillary sphere will come to a halt, causing the **great attractor** to pulse and wobble within it, and the lighting panels will fail on all levels except LEVEL NINE (although this level, which lacks such panels in the first place, will remain lit by the **great attractor** itself).

Transtellar: The **transtellar** will interact with the **transmundane**, but otherwise ignores other visitors unless they actively seek to interrupt or inconvenience it. Compelling information may change the alien's attitude, however, prompting it to pause and share the nature of its work with "estimable guests". It speaks in a hollow, booming, monotone voice. The **great attractor** does, as a side effect of its function, sometimes hurtle motes to various points in Hyperborea, but this and the **night-gaunts** ("mere gnats") hold no significance to the **transtellar**. The giant alien will seek to eliminate threats, but it will also use its transportation abilities to retreat (possibly to a moon of Saturn) if its outlook seems grim—PCs vandalizing the armillary sphere that contains the **great attractor** qualifies.



Transtellar: AL N; SZ L; MV 30; DX 9; AC -5; HD 14 (hp 88); #A 1/1 (weapon); D 9d6; SV 9; ML 9; XP 6,500.

Special: Immune to poison, paralysis, disease, fear, *sleep*, *charm*, and other mind-altering effects. Can cast *dimension door*, *plane shift*, and *teleport* (without error) at will. +1 or better weapon to hit. Emit a 60-foot-long disintegration ray from eyes, as per the *disintegrate* spell, usable once per day. Emit a 75-foot-long electrical discharge from the chest for 12d6 damage, *avoidance* save for half damage. This power can be emitted 4 times per day, but the second release is for 9d6 damage, the third for 6d6 damage, and the fourth for 3d6 damage. Destruction of a **transtellar** causes it to explode in a 40-foot-diameter blast of white-hot flames, causing 10d6 damage (*avoidance* save for half damage) and leaving naught but melted slag behind.

LEVEL SIX (MOULD AND FUNGUS LABORATORY)

- ★ 29-foot ceiling height
- ★ Moulds and fungi studied here
- ★ Scientists are 2 **albino apes superior** of elevated intelligence

THE SCIENTISTS: The two female simians who work here always wear their four-sleeved white lab coats. They speak in husky voices, requesting the appropriate seal (unless the visitors are accompanied by the **transmundane**); if the seal is not presented, they grunt, snort, pound their chests, and turn hostile. The referee may elect to assign a 2-in-6 chance that the **albino apes superior** are currently recording their observations on LEVEL EIGHT (RATIOCINATION CENTRE).

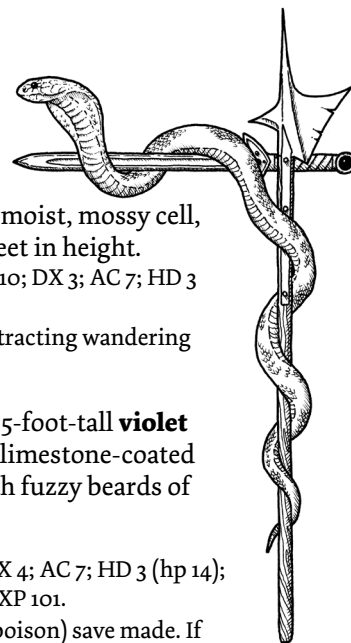
Apes, Albino, Superior (x2): AL LE; SZ L; MV 30; DX 8; AC 4; HD 8+4 (hp 60, 48); #A 4/1 (claw x4) or 2/1 (weapons); D 1d8+2 (x4) or 4d4/4d4; SV 13; ML 10; XP 1,400.

Special: Chance to be surprised reduced by 1-in-6. If all four claws strike one opponent, strangulation ensues next round, causing 1d8+2 hp damage per round; *extraordinary feat of strength* can break ape's grasp. After 3 rounds, victim must make *test of constitution* or asphyxiate; victims who survive have been known to lose voices.

The experiments here range from relatively benign to seemingly pointless and sadistic. The **transmundane**, concerned with loftier matters, but loosely oversee the work here. Experimentation subjects include foxes, hares, and mice (in cages along the south wall). To the east of the teleporter, two four-armed white suits with bubble helms hang on pegs. The suits are fully covering and airtight. The glass bubble helms screw in and seal. Clipped to the waist of each suit is a small silvery can of **fungicide** containing six charges; when the stud on top of a can is pressed, it releases a 10-foot diameter, sickly

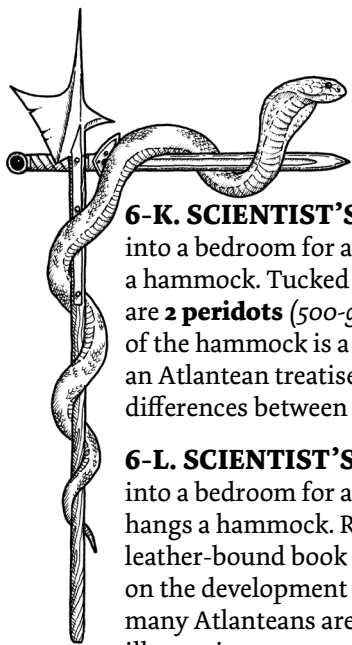
6-D. FUNGOID: Curious brown fungi is held in sealed glass cannisters. These are **mi-go** innards, which rapidly decay when exposed to air.

6-J. EMPTY CELL



38 See *ASESH VOL. I*, p. 9: ATTRIBUTES, *wisdom*.





6-K. SCIENTIST'S CELL: This cell has been turned into a bedroom for an **albino ape superior**. Here hangs a hammock. Tucked into an open seam of the hammock are **2 peridots** (500-gp value each). Resting in the centre of the hammock is a leather-bound book containing an Atlantean treatise on the physical and mental differences between men and ape-men.

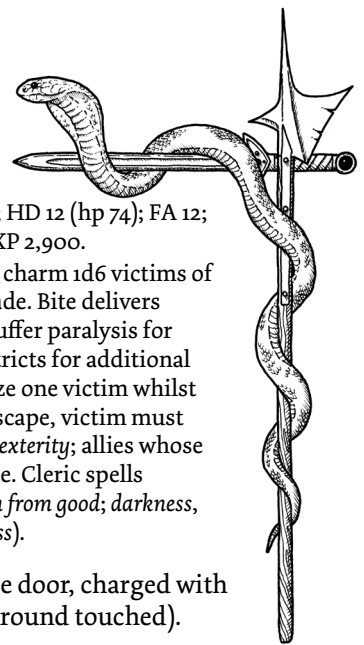
6-L. SCIENTIST'S CELL: This cell has been turned into a bedroom for an **albino ape superior**. Here hangs a hammock. Resting in the hammock is a leather-bound book containing an Atlantean treatise on the development of the aquatic features that many Atlanteans are born with, including several illustrations.

LEVEL SEVEN (MENAGERIE)

- ★ 29-foot ceiling height
- ★ Captive primates: men, apes, monkeys
- ★ Each cell contains a male and female primate pairing
- ★ Mounted, lidded box contains switches that lock and electrify cell bars
- ★ **Naga** guarding

The **transmundane** are studying the physical and social interactions of male and female primate pairings, treating them as curious zoo creatures; sometimes they send the **2 albino apes superior** of elevated intelligence from LEVEL SIX to record their own observations (referee at liberty to place them here on a 1-in-6 chance).

THE GUARDIAN: This level is protected by a **naga** that slinks forth hissing for an authorization seal. It will attack any visitors who do not bear the appropriate seal; otherwise, it coils in front of the **switch box** (see #7-I). If the **naga** feels threatened, it might release the captive **albino apes** and **carnivorous apes**.



Naga: AL LE; SZ L; MV 50; DX 15; AC 3; HD 12 (hp 74); FA 12; CA 6; #A 1/1 (bite); D 1d6; SV 11; ML 11; XP 2,900.

Special: Singing voice once per day can charm 1d6 victims of 6 or fewer HD, unless *sorcery* saves made. Bite delivers venom; make *death* (poison) save or suffer paralysis for 1d6+6 turns. On successful bite, constricts for additional 2d4 hp damage per round. Can squeeze one victim whilst continuing to bite other targets. To escape, victim must make *extraordinary feat of strength or dexterity*; allies whose strength totals 60 may pull victim free. Cleric spells (*command*, *cure light wounds*, *protection from good*, *darkness*, *hold person*; *dispel magic*, *inflict blindness*).

Each exhibit has a **locked** steel cage door, charged with potent electricity (2d6 damage per round touched).

The following primate exhibits each contain a bench, a pile of straw, and wall-mounted branches. The walls are crudely painted to represent a coniferous forest. Every day, water, vegetation, and/or meat is presented to the primates. Notes on their individual eating habits, evacuation routines, and mating habits are recorded.

7-A. MOUNTAIN APE EXHIBIT:

Apes, Mountain (x2): AL CE; SZ L; MV 30; DX 8; AC 5; HD 4+4 (hp 27, 26); #A 1/1 (weapon); D 1d10+2; SV 15; ML 9; XP 200.

Special: Can hurl large stone to range 50 for 1d10+2 hp damage.

7-B. ALBINO APE EXHIBIT:

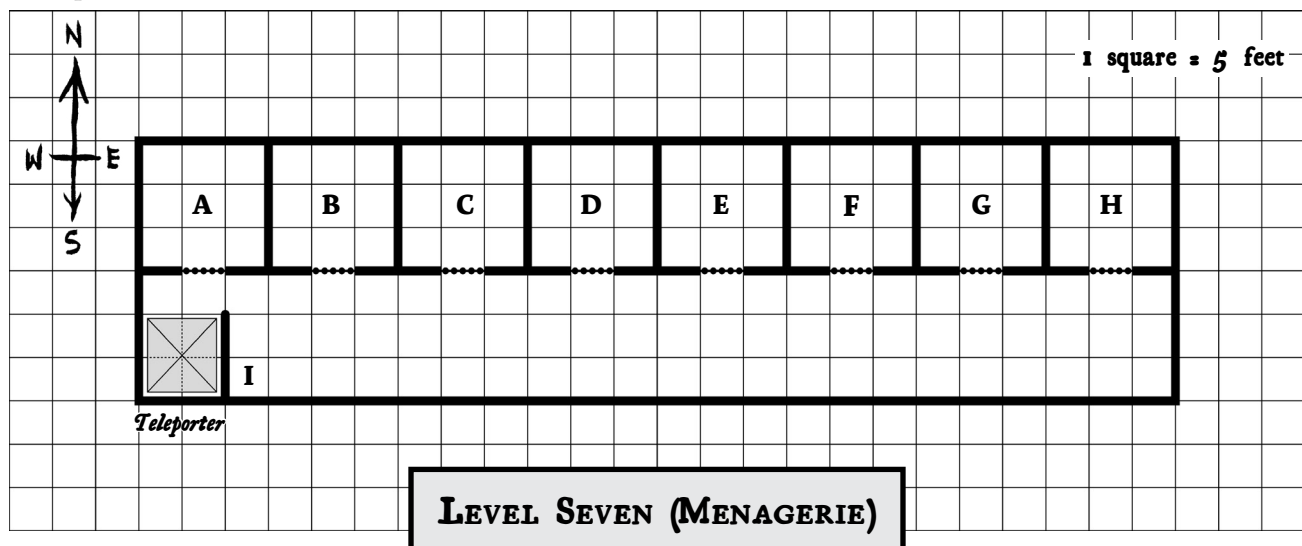
Apes, Albino (x2): AL N; SZ M; MV 40; DX 10; AC 5; HD 4+2 (hp 26, 18); #A 2/1 (claw/claw); D 1d6+1/1d6+1; SV 15; ML 8; XP 175.

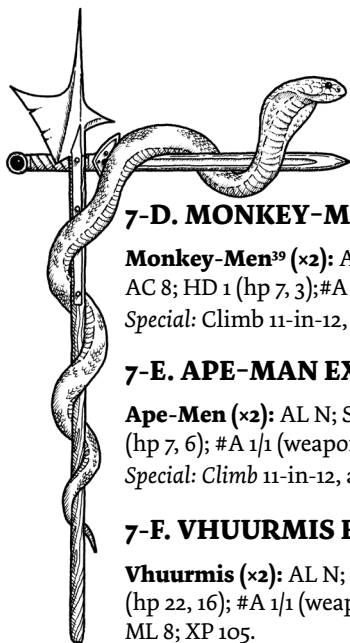
Special: Chance to be surprised reduced by 1-in-6.

7-C. CARNIVOROUS APE EXHIBIT:

Apes, Carnivorous (x2): AL CE; SZ M; MV 40; DX 11; AC 6; HD 5 (hp 33, 14); #A 2/1 (claw/claw); D 1d6+1/1d6+1; SV 14; ML 9; XP 200.

Special: Chance to be surprised reduced by 1-in-6. If both claws hit one opponent, ape rends for additional 1d8+1 hp damage.



**7-D. MONKEY-MAN EXHIBIT:**

Monkey-Men³⁹ (x2): AL N; SZ M; MV 30 (brachiate 40); DX 13; AC 8; HD 1 (hp 7, 3); #A 1/1 (pummel); D 1d4+1; SV 16; ML 6; XP 13.
Special: Climb 11-in-12, at 40 MV.

7-E. APE-MAN EXHIBIT:

Ape-Men (x2): AL N; SZ M; MV 30; DX 10; AC 8; HD 1+2 (hp 7, 6); #A 1/1 (weapon); D (per weapon +1); SV 16; ML 9; XP 24.
Special: Climb 11-in-12, at full MV.

7-F. VHUURMIS EXHIBIT:

Vhuurmis (x2): AL N; SZ M; MV 50; DX 11; AC 4; HD 3+2 (hp 22, 16); #A 1/1 (weapon); D (per weapon +1); SV 15 [cold +2]; ML 8; XP 105.
Special: Climb 11-in-12, at full MV.

7-G. CAVE-MAN EXHIBIT:

Cave-Men (x2): AL CE; SZ M; MV 30; DX 10; AC 8; HD 1+1 (hp 6, 5); #A 1/1 (weapon); D (per weapon +1); SV 16; ML 8; XP 20.

7-H. HUMAN EXHIBIT:

2 commoners are caged here: **Demetrios**, an Amazon male, and **Alda**, an Ixian female. These lovers from Scythium sought to escape the city of Fazzuum before their forbidden marriage was discovered. They stole a small boat and washed up on Sharath several weeks ago. Alda is 3 months pregnant. They can explain the function and use of the **switch box** that opens the cells.

Commoners (x2): AL CG; SZ M; MV 40; DX 10; AC 9; HD 1/2 (hp 2); FA 0; #A 1/1 (weapon); D (per weapon); SV 17; ML 8; XP 5.
Gear: none

39 Originating from Lemuria, monkey-men are an arboreal race of sub-humans akin to ape-men. Covered in short fur of varying hue, they stand around four feet in height, with long arms and short legs. Long, muscular, prehensile tails help them brachiate through trees; they attain surprising speed when travelling in this manner. Monkey-men employ a primitive language of barks and chortles that can be understood by men but is impossible to replicate.

7-I. SWITCH BOX: On the east side of the wall that separates the teleportation pad⁴⁰ from the open floor area, a lidded 8 × 8 × 4-inch aluminium switch box is mounted. Inside, it contains 8 metal toggle switches. Each switch opens (and simultaneously switches off the electricity that charges the bars of) the corresponding cell. Some of the primates have come to understand the function of this box and conspire to liberate themselves; e.g., the **albino apes** have been attempting to create a crude lasso by braiding their hair.

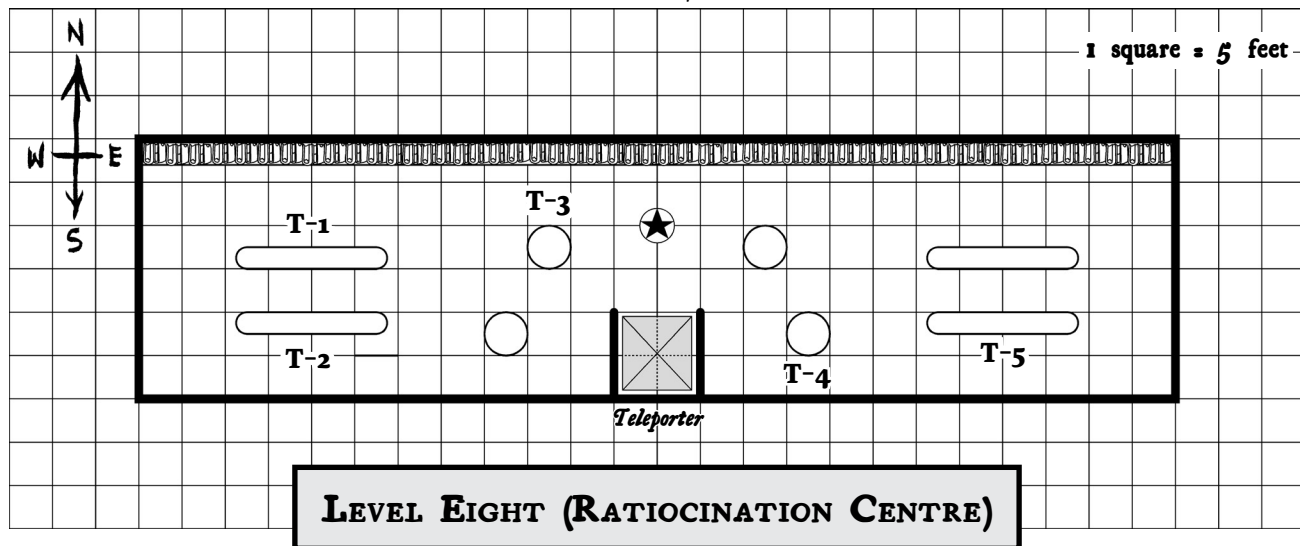
LEVEL EIGHT (RATIOCINATION CENTRE)

- ★ 29-foot ceiling height
- ★ North wall lined with book shelves
- ★ Floor spread with tables cluttered with books and charts
- ★ **Iron automaton** guards the level

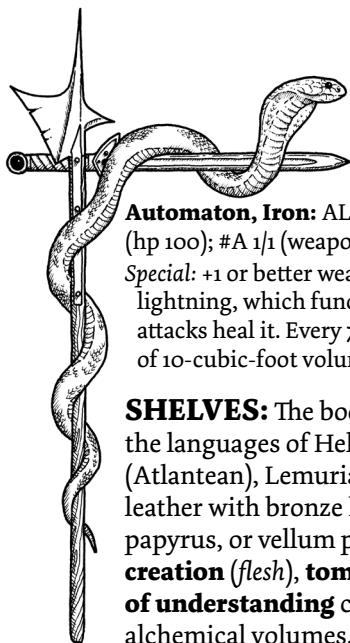
The ratiocination centre is where the **transmundane** study outer and inner dimensions, Law and Chaos, and the balance of positive and negative energy. The north wall is lined with book shelves, the floor spread with tables.

THE GUARDIAN: Facing the teleporter is a 12-foot-tall iron statue, stylized to portray a heavily muscled gladiator wearing lorica segmentata and wielding an enormous sword. It stands on a 3 × 5 × 3-foot white marble plinth engraved with floral designs. This is an **iron automaton** whose purpose is to protect the ratiocination centre from theft and vandalization. It does not animate unless the sanctity of this location is violated (damage, theft, conspiracy to bring harm to the tower or its inhabitants). It listens to, and is acutely aware of, all activity here.

40 See PLAYERS' HANDOUT #2.



1 square = 5 feet



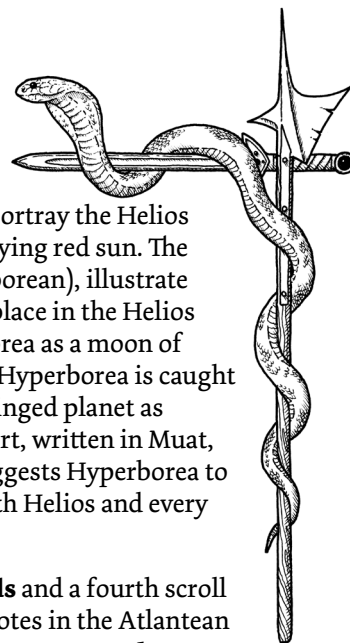
Automaton, Iron: AL N; SZ L; MV 20; DX 5; AC 3; HD 16+2 (hp 100); #A 1/1 (weapon); D 4d10; SV 9; ML 12; XP 6,000. *Special:* +1 or better weapon to hit. Immune to sorcery, except lightning, which functions as *slow spell* for 3 rounds. Fire attacks heal it. Every 7 rounds, can breathe poison gas cloud of 10-cubic-foot volume, as *cloudkill*.

SHELVES: The books on the shelves are written in the languages of Hellenic (Hyperborean), Hellenic (Atlantean), Lemurian, and Muat. Most are bound in leather with bronze hasps and contain parchment, papyrus, or vellum pages. A **manual of automaton creation (flesh)**, **tome of clear thought**, and **tome of understanding** can be found amongst various alchemical volumes.

TABLES: Eight metal tables are situated in the RATIOCINATION CENTRE. Of these, the contents of five are described. The remaining three may be left empty or stocked with materials suitable to the referee's campaign.

T-1: Cluttered with metal-bound books containing thick, cellulose pages. These books are inscribed with the alien, curvilinear script of the **transmundane**. If translated (by magical means or otherwise), these strange treatises reveal exhaustive studies of outer dimensions and baleful myths concerning the antemundane entity Khalk-Xu (Kraken), a deity (or race of deities) that has been invoked by various men of Hyperborea and the other worlds and moons that circuit swollen Helios. This supplication, coupled with a widening rift between dimensions, compels this deific, extradimensional agent to reach its void tentacles through time and space, obliterating matter and feeding its eternal hunger; in the darkest corners of Hyperborea, human sacrifice is a popular form of oblation to this entity.

T-2: Spread with metal-bound, cellulose-paged books scribed in the curvilinear style of the **transmundane**. If translated (by magical means or otherwise), these books discuss the honing of the **great attractor's** energy, using black motes pulled in from the Black Gulf, to create a power source that might seal the ever-expanding rift in the Black Gulf between Ouranos and Poseidenos. Cellulose documents resting on this table record (also in the tongue of the **transmundane**) the phenomenon of the **night-gaunts** that soar in from the Boreas, attracted by the motes of negative energy. The **transmundane** postulate that the night-gaunts use the negatively-charged spheres to bolster their reproductive capacity, but the details are not entirely understood; in sooth, the **transmundane** are indifferent about this development, deeming it meaningless to their work.



T-3: Spread with star charts that portray the Helios system—its planets, moons, and dying red sun. The charts, written in Hellenic (Hyperborean), illustrate varying theories on Hyperborea's place in the Helios system; i.e., some portray Hyperborea as a moon of Saturn, whilst others suggest that Hyperborea is caught in Saturn's grip, trailing after the ringed planet as though it were on a tether. One chart, written in Muat, appears to be from antiquity. It suggests Hyperborea to be at the centre of the universe, with Helios and every other body revolving around it.

T-4: Holds **3 regeneration⁴¹ scrolls** and a fourth scroll that has been ruined. Parchment notes in the Atlantean dialect of Hellenic indicate that the **transmundane** acquired these druidic scrolls from an unspecified source. The aliens seek to unlock the eldritch secrets of this enchantment. The notes are written by **Iason Poseidon** (see LEVEL FOUR [ZIRCONIUM FACTORY]), who has been tasked with unlocking their eldritch secrets; thus far he has only been met with failure.

T-5: Scattered with notes and observations made by the **albino apes superior** of LEVEL SIX (MOULD AND FUNGUS LABORATORY). Notes detail the effects of the various fungi and moulds on animal test subjects. The referee is at liberty to reveal as many or as few observations as desired. The scientist apes have also visited and made notes on the primate pairings of LEVEL SEVEN (MENAGERIE); notes include eating habits, evacuation routines, and mating habits. (If **Demetrios** and **Alda** were liberated from LEVEL SEVEN and are accompanying the party, they will be thoroughly mortified by any discussion of this latter point.) If encountered here, the albino apes superior may be seen writing with two arms (of one side) at a time. They have little patience for distractions.

LEVEL 9 (TRANSMUNDANE SUITE)

- ★ 29-foot ceiling height
- ★ Apartments of the **transmundane**
- ★ **2 stone automatons** protect the level
- ★ Glowing wall panels that become windows when activated

Here lie the palatial apartments of the **2 transmundane**, with fluted marble pillars, pilasters, and a mosaic, red-and-white marble floor. Four-foot square wall panels between the pilasters around the entire perimeter of the level become transparent when touched, giving glimpse to the world beyond, including the Black Gulf and the Great Obelisk; likewise, they become opaque when touched again (when opaque, these panels give off a soft white light that sufficiently illuminates the level).

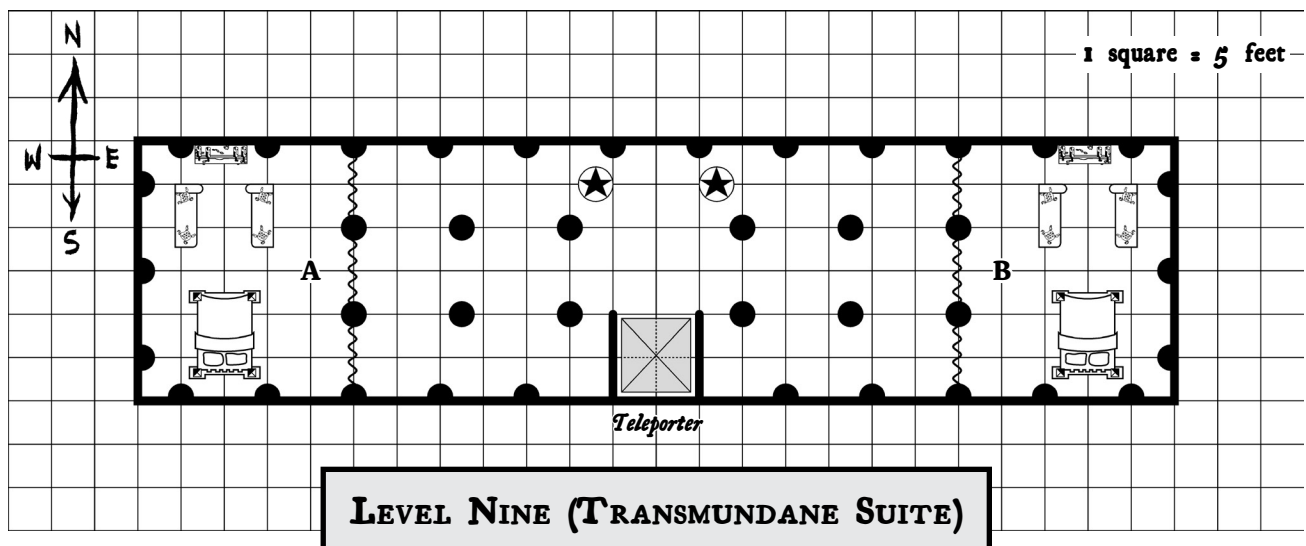
⁴¹ See APPENDIX A.



Transmundane and the Guardians

THE GUARDIANS: Two stone statues (2 **stone automatons**) carved of granite, standing 10 feet tall and stylized to portray classical Greek hair and dress. These automata protect the aliens who dwell here; too, they protect the level from theft and vandalization.

Automaton, Stone (x2): AL N; SZ L; MV 20; DX 5; AC 5; HD 14+2 (hp 78, 65); #A 1/1 (weapon); D 6d6; SV 10; ML 12; XP 3,250.
Special: +1 or better weapon to hit. Immune to sorcery, except *stone to flesh* (renders creature AC 8 and vulnerable to normal weapons for 1d4 rounds) and *transmute rock to mud* (functions as *slow* spell for 2d6 rounds).



Stranded on Sharath: It is quite possible that, upon the conclusion of this adventure, the PCs (and perhaps Gunnhildr) find themselves stranded on the peninsula of Sharath. How will they escape this environmental nightmare? They may, over time, attract the attention of an Ixian, Amazonian, or Lemurian vessel, or attempt some other means of escape. The situation is sure to be both dangerous and taxing.

9-A. FEMALE'S QUARTERS: Hung with light blue silk draperies, these quarters feature a massive 4-poster bed, several divans, and mounds of pillows. A silk pouch hanging on a bedpost contains **9 fire opals** (800-gp value each). An ornate **bronze spyglass** (essentially a small telescope; ×20 magnification; 2,500-gp value) with a leather strap hangs from another bedpost. A large clay pot contains the newly emerging herbaceous flowers of 12 root vegetables⁴². A bar of marble and cedar is stocked with 6 Kyranosan wine⁴³ bottles and **12 crystal goblets** (10-gp value each).

9-B. MALE'S QUARTERS: Hung with orange silk draperies, these quarters feature a massive 4-poster bed, several divans, and mounds of pillows. A silk pouch hanging on a bedpost contains **7 star sapphires** (700-gp value each). A bar of marble and cedar is stocked with 10 Kyranosan wine⁴⁴ bottles and **12 crystal goblets** (10-gp value each).

⁴² Purple potatoes that originate from Ganymede. If one potato is consumed, the eater must make a *test of constitution* or vomit immediately and be unable to hold down food for 48 hours. If the test is passed, the eater needs no other sustenance for 48 hours.

⁴³ Wine that is made from the fermented fruit of a crystal cactus that grows only on the planet Saturn.

⁴⁴ Wine that is made from the fermented fruit of a crystal cactus that grows only on the planet Saturn.

Author's Closing Note: Yes, gentle reader, as you have no doubt deduced by now, this entire adventure is a “damned if you do, damned if you don’t” situation. If the **great attractor** housed within the TOWERING FORTRESS OF BLACKENED STEEL is somehow destroyed, the dimensional rift that exists between Ouranos and Poseidenos will continue to grow, admitting extradimensional horrors (such as Kraken) whose objectives are incongruous with the prosperity of mankind—or any other intelligent species. If the **great attractor** is not destroyed, motes will continue to find ingress from the Black Gulf, which in turn will attract more **night-gaunts** to plague Hyperborea. What are the seekers to do⁴⁵? Well, this is Hyperborea, my friends, and sometimes there is no winning, only suffering and doom. Your players should learn to accept the futility of their characters’ existence. So it goes.

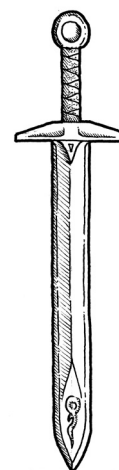
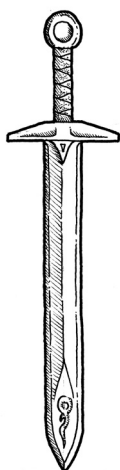
⁴⁵ Note that if Gunnhildr is present and becomes aware that these aliens were ultimately responsible for her mother’s death, she may well force the party’s hand by attacking their hosts.

APPENDIX A: NEW SPELL

Regeneration

Level: drd 6 | Range: touch | Duration: permanent

This spell causes dismembered limbs (arms, legs, tails), or parts of limbs (fingers, toes, hands, feet), to grow back. The *regeneration* spell can also apply to shattered bones or subtracted organs. Casting this spell takes 6 rounds (1 minute) if the severed parts are present and touching the subject at the site of dismemberment; otherwise, it takes 6 turns for this process to complete. Note that in cases of decapitation, the original head must be present; otherwise, it is not enough to save the hopelessly beheaded, for it but causes the creation of a mindless, drooling imbecile. *Regeneration* also repairs up to 1d10+10 hp of damage. The material component of this spell is the tail of a lizard or the arm of a starfish.



APPENDIX B: NEW MONSTERS

NIGHT-GAUNT	Queen	Youngling
No. Encountered:	1	6d10
Alignment:	Chaotic Evil	Chaotic Evil
Size:	L	S
Movement:	30	50
Dexterity:	8	15
Armour Class:	-3	4
Hit Dice:	10+2	1
Attack Rate:	5/1 (claw ×4 / sting)	1/1 (sting)
Damage:	2d4×4 / 3d6	1d4
Saving Throw:	12	16
Morale:	10	10
Experience Points:	2,050	40
Treasure Class:	C, Z	X

Special (night-gaunt queen):

- ★ Stinger delivers venom unless *death* (poison) save is made, causing immediate death.
- ★ Can create *darkness*, per the spell, thrice per day.
- ★ Regardless of distance from her brood, cumulative 1% chance for every egg or **night-gaunt youngling** harmed that the queen will cognize the attack and respond aggressively, fighting with a 12 morale. This chance is checked every round that any egg or night-gaunt youngling is harmed.

Special (night-gaunt youngling):

- ★ Stinger delivers venom unless *death* (poison) save is made, causing immediate paralysis for 1d3 turns.
- ★ Empathic link with other **night-gaunt younglings**, even the unhatched. When one or more night-gaunt younglings are attacked, the eggs of developed to mostly developed embryos will hatch at a rate best determined by the referee.

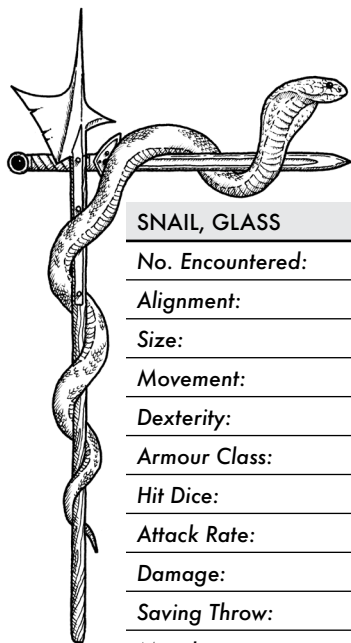
A **night-gaunt queen** is an 18-foot-long behemoth, an otherworldly, scorpion-like beast with four long-taloned arms and a 15-foot-long barbed tail. The beast is inky-black, rubbery and pliable, but perhaps her most disturbing feature is a nearly human, bulbous, faceless head. Night-gaunt queens take form when a **night-gaunt** establishes propinquity with a **sphere of tenebrosity**, a mote of negative energy from the Black Gulf.

When a **night-gaunt queen** is fertilized, her embryonic eggs first develop in her stomach and travel to the tail, giving the night-gaunt queen the semblance of an enormous centipede-like horror, as the lower abdomen and tail swell prodigious, lumpy, and segmented. Rudimentary legs grow from the tail during this stage, allowing grotesque ambulation. After the eggs are deposited in a cave, the tail contracts to its normal size and the rudimentary legs wither off.

Night-gaunt queens have a mental connexion with both their eggs and brood (**night-gaunt younglings**), reacting violently if these are harmed or disturbed.

Night-gaunt younglings are small, rubbery, inky-black, scorpion-like, otherworldly creatures, 12-18 inches in length, with disturbingly human-like heads that lack facial features. They skitter toward their prey with alarming speed, running on all fours, their shiny, barbed tails held high. These eerie horrors hatch from 2-foot tall, oval, leathery grey eggs that are laid in cool subterranean lairs.



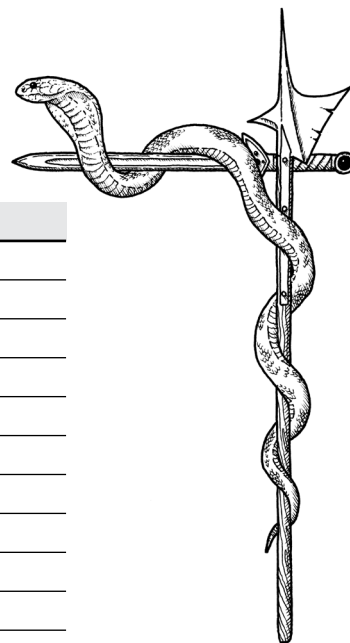


SNAIL, GLASS	
No. Encountered:	2d10×10
Alignment:	Neutral
Size:	S
Movement:	10
Dexterity:	4
Armour Class:	8
Hit Dice:	1/4
Attack Rate:	1 (acid spray)
Damage:	2d4
Saving Throw:	17
Morale:	3
Experience Points:	7
Treasure Class:	-

These fist-sized, freshwater molluscs have transparent shells within which swirls a strange purple fluid. **Glass snails** are found in moist, subterranean environments, typically in close proximity to running water. These odd creatures are quite timid, avoiding contact with any creature save their own species. If frightened by any loud noise or sudden movement, glass snails will eject their viscera, killing themselves and releasing a purple spray of acidic fluid.

Special:

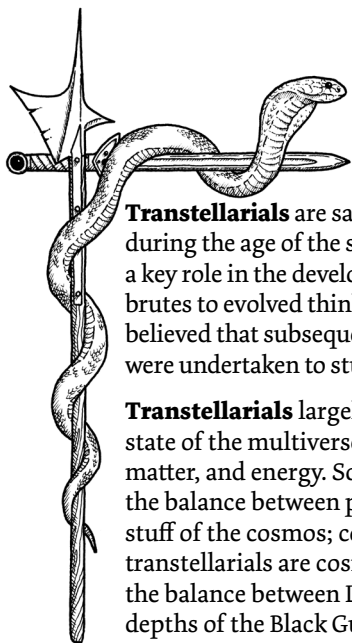
- ★ If frightened, viscera ejection bursts from glass shell, spraying acid in an 18-foot cone, 5 feet wide at the terminus, aiming the spray at the instigator. This effectively kills the glass snail.
- ★ Chain reaction. Any glass snail that is within 5 feet of a glass snail that ejects its viscera will also eject its viscera, targeting the offender.
- ★ Negotiating through glass snails without disturbing them requires a successful *extraordinary feat of dexterity*; alternatively, a *move silently* attempt may be made.
- ★ Ink is valuable to sorcerers.



TRANSTELLARIAL	
No. Encountered:	1 (2d6)
Alignment:	Neutral
Size:	L
Movement:	30
Dexterity:	9
Armour Class:	-5
Hit Dice:	14
Attack Rate:	1/1 (weapon)
Damage:	9d6
Saving Throw:	9
Morale:	9
Experience Points:	6,500
Treasure Class:	V

Transtellarials are a race of less than 100 otherworldly beings whose origins are mired in mystery. In their natural form, these fully armoured giants stand 40 feet tall, though they are able to double their size or reduce themselves to as small as 10 feet tall. Although it is generally believed that a humanoid form exists beneath the sealed armour of a transtellaral, some Ixian sages aver that these alien beings may be entirely composed of raw energy from the stars.





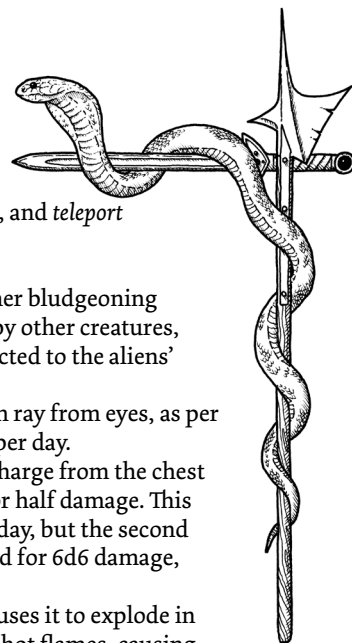
Transtellarials are said to have frequented Old Earth during the age of the snake-men, and they may have played a key role in the development of mankind from apish brutes to evolved thinkers and innovators. It is furthermore believed that subsequent visitations, spaced over millennia, were undertaken to study the development of mankind.

Transtellarials largely concern themselves with the state of the multiverse, experimenting with space, time, matter, and energy. Some believe that they are arbiters of the balance between positive and negative energy, the very stuff of the cosmos; conversely, some druids postulate that transtellarials are cosmic avatars who strive to maintain the balance between Law and Chaos out in the nameless depths of the Black Gulf.

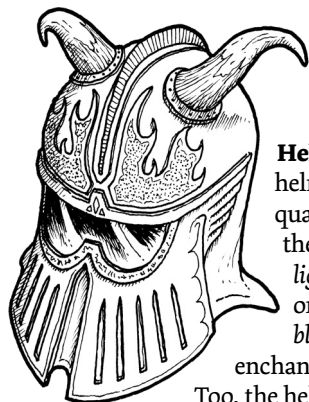
Special:

- ★ Immune to poison, paralysis, disease, fear, *sleep*, *charm*, and other mind-altering effects.

- ★ Can cast *dimension door*, *plane shift*, and *teleport* (without error) at will.
- ★ +1 or better weapon to hit.
- ★ Typically wield great maces or other bludgeoning weapons, but these are unusable by other creatures, as their function is directly connected to the aliens' armour.
- ★ Emit a 60-foot-long disintegration ray from eyes, as per the *disintegrate* spell, usable once per day.
- ★ Emit a 75-foot-long electrical discharge from the chest for 12d6 damage, *avoidance* save for half damage. This power can be emitted 4 times per day, but the second release is for 9d6 damage, the third for 6d6 damage, and the fourth for 3d6 damage.
- ★ Destruction of a **transtellarial** causes it to explode in a 40-foot-diameter blast of white-hot flames, causing 10d6 damage (*avoidance* save for half damage) and leaving naught but melted slag behind.



APPENDIX C: NEW MAGIC ITEMS



Helm, Dark-vizored: These ornate bronze helmets are remarkable for their smoky quartz eye shields. These shields protect the eyes of the wearer from unfavourable light effects (i.e., the attack on visual organs version), *blinding light*, *cause blindness*, *glitterdust*, and other spells or enchantments that damage or impede vision.

Too, the helmet has two nearly imperceptible studs on each side of the vizor. The left stud, when pushed, grants *infrared vision* for 6 turns, whilst the right stud grants *ultraviolet vision* for 6 turns. Dark-vizored helms are an appropriate accessory for characters able to wear medium or heavy armour; others should be prohibited and/or penalized accordingly. *XP Value* = 1,500; *GP Value* = 9,000

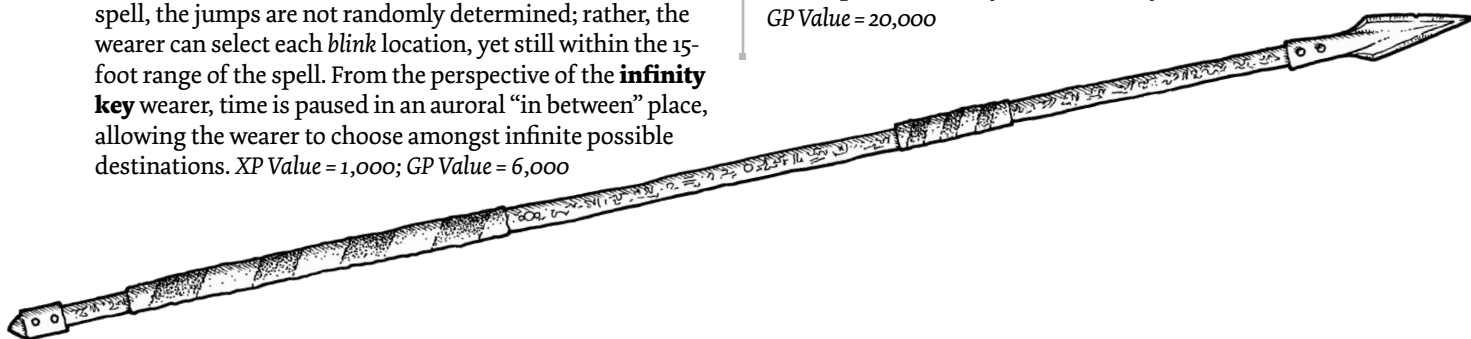
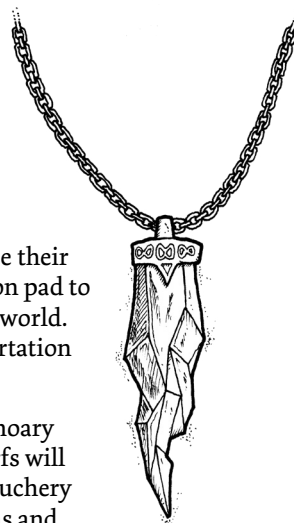
Infinity Key: When this “key” (an uncanny length of pink crystal) is held or worn, the wearer is able to control personal teleportation effects, or any other type of transdimensional movement. The wearer becomes cognizant of, and in control of, the destination. The destination must be known; i.e., the wearer must be able to see the target destination or be “very familiar” with it. Anything less, and the **infinity key** fails to function.

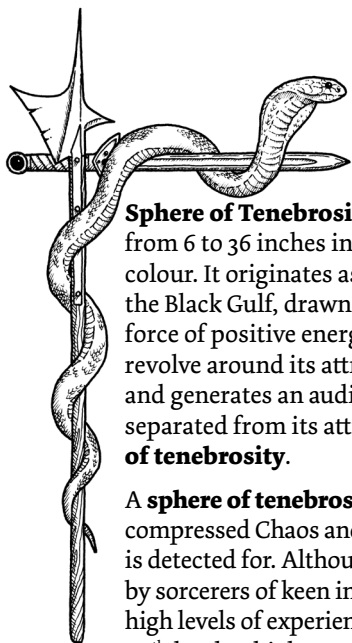
Use of this item is subject to the limits of the source spell or effect. For example, if the **infinity key** wearer casts the *blink* spell, the jumps are not randomly determined; rather, the wearer can select each *blink* location, yet still within the 15-foot range of the spell. From the perspective of the **infinity key** wearer, time is paused in an auroral “in between” place, allowing the wearer to choose amongst infinite possible destinations. *XP Value* = 1,000; *GP Value* = 6,000

N.B.: The **transmundane** will sometimes use their **infinity keys** to teleport from a teleportation pad to a non-pad area—sometimes even going off-world. Other times, they will simply use the teleportation pads as per their normal function.

Spear, Cold-Iron (Valkyrieström): In the hoary depths of Underborea, vile and odious dwarfs will sometimes adjourn from their routine debauchery to work impossible forges, crafting weapons and armour of wondrous properties. **Cold-iron spears** were long ago crafted for Ymir's fiercest shield maidens, the Valkyries, but in post-Green Death Hyperborea, most examples are lost.

Forged from star stones that pounded Old Earth in the epoch of the snake-men, this artefact appears to be nothing more than a 10-inch-long, 2-inch-diameter bar of crudely formed iron that is graven in the Old Norse tongue to read *Valkyrieström*. In the hands of a Viking woman (minimum 50% Viking blood), when the word “Valkyrieström” is uttered, the cold-iron bar transforms to a **+4 long spear** that grants the ability to invoke *control winds* (CA 9) once per day, as the spell. The spear has a lozenge-shaped head and an 8½-foot-long shaft that is composed of a fine-grained ash. In its fully realized form, further runes on the shaft describe the unquenchable fury of Ymir's Valkyries. *XP Value* = 2,000; *GP Value* = 20,000



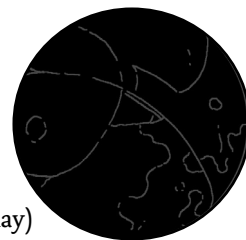


Sphere of Tenebrosity: A **sphere of tenebrosity** ranges from 6 to 36 inches in diameter and is wholly black in colour. It originates as a mote of negative energy from the Black Gulf, drawn in to a terrestrial body by a potent force of positive energy (i.e., an “attractor”). The mote will revolve around its attractor, which excites its particles and generates an audible hum. Sometimes a mote is separated from its attractor, and so it settles into a **sphere of tenebrosity**.

A **sphere of tenebrosity** is composed of exceedingly compressed Chaos and could be discerned as Evil, if such is detected for. Although stationary, it can be controlled by sorcerers of keen intelligence and moderate power (i.e., high levels of experience). If within 10 feet of the sphere, a 7th-level or higher magician (or magician subclass) of 16 or greater intelligence can issue a mental command to assume control of the sphere; it will then compress to a 2-inch-diameter spheroid which will float up to (and revolve around) the head of the sorcerer at a 6 inch distance. This effect is similar to an IOUN stone, but less halo-like, in that it revolves just above the eyes of the sorcerer.

The sorcerer can mentally trigger the **sphere of tenebrosity** to emit 30-foot-long, jagged bolts of black energy. These bolts function as the following spells (excepting the noted 30-foot range), each at CA 9 capacity:

- ★ *disintegrate* (usable once per week)
- ★ *enervation* (usable once per day)
- ★ *ray of enfeeblement* (usable once per day)



The **sphere of tenebrosity** is quite delicate. If struck by an inanimate object (weapon, etc.), it must make a *class 3* item saving throw as “crystal”⁴⁶. If the sphere fails its saving throw, it is destroyed, exploding into a million firefly-sized motes, covering all living creatures within 150 feet, then transporting those affected to the proximity of the attractor that originally sucked the black mote in from the Black Gulf and excited its particles. However, a **sphere of tenebrosity** that is under the control of a sorcerer is quite difficult to hit, requiring a natural 20 attack roll.

The **sphere of tenebrosity** attracts and stimulates otherworldly **night-gaunts**. When a night-gaunt takes possession of a **sphere of tenebrosity**, it transforms into a **night-gaunt queen**, attracting more night-gaunts to reproduce with. Consequently, night-gaunts are ever attracted to find **spheres of tenebrosity**, leading some sages and scholars to deem them cursed artefacts; in sooth, when a sorcerer possesses a **sphere of tenebrosity**, it is only a matter of time before otherworldly horrors come calling, oft at the most inopportune times.

XP Value = 3,500; *GP Value* = 35,000

⁴⁶ See *AS&SH* VOL. III, p. 260: *SAVING THROW*, *item saving throws*.

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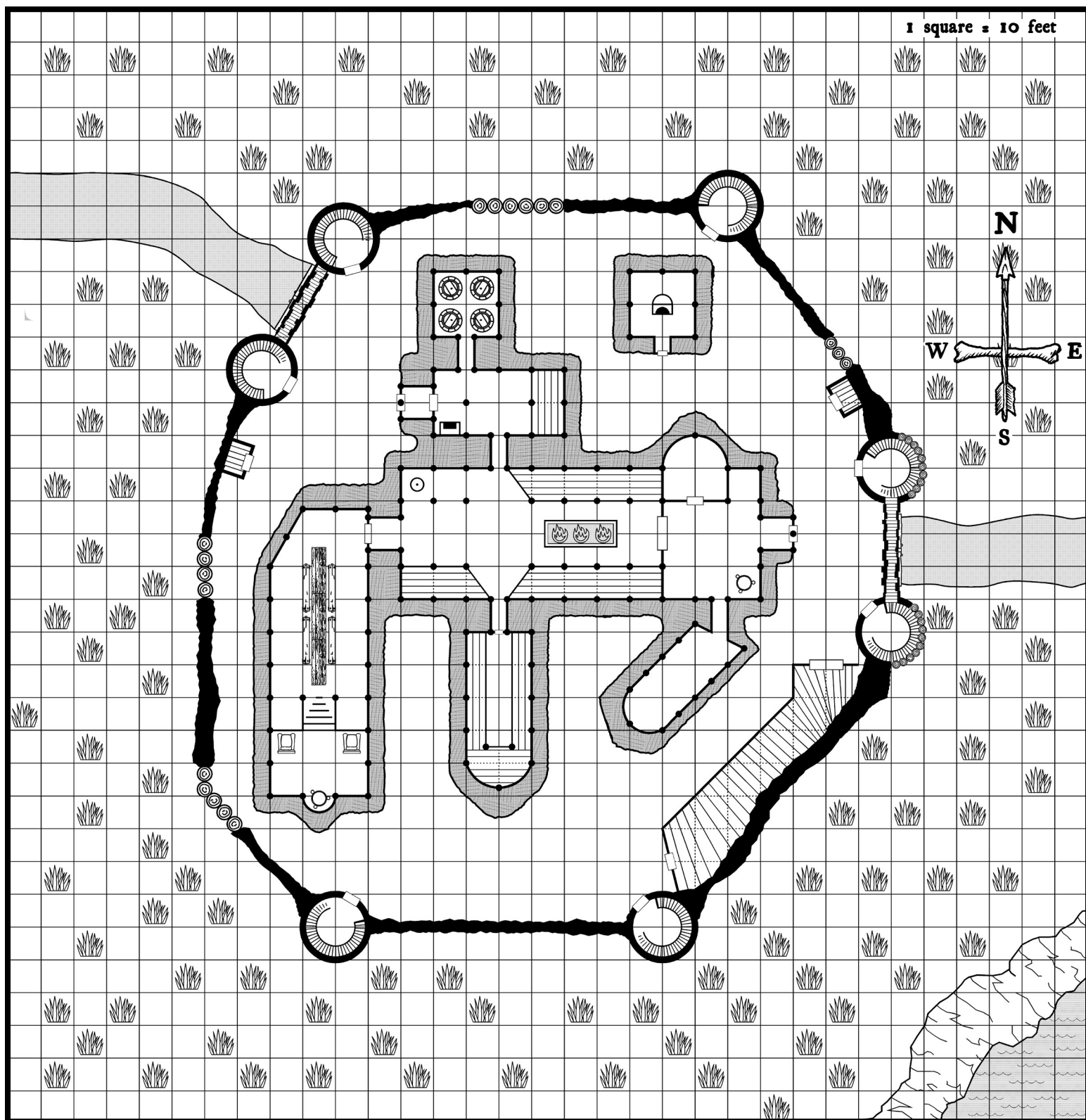
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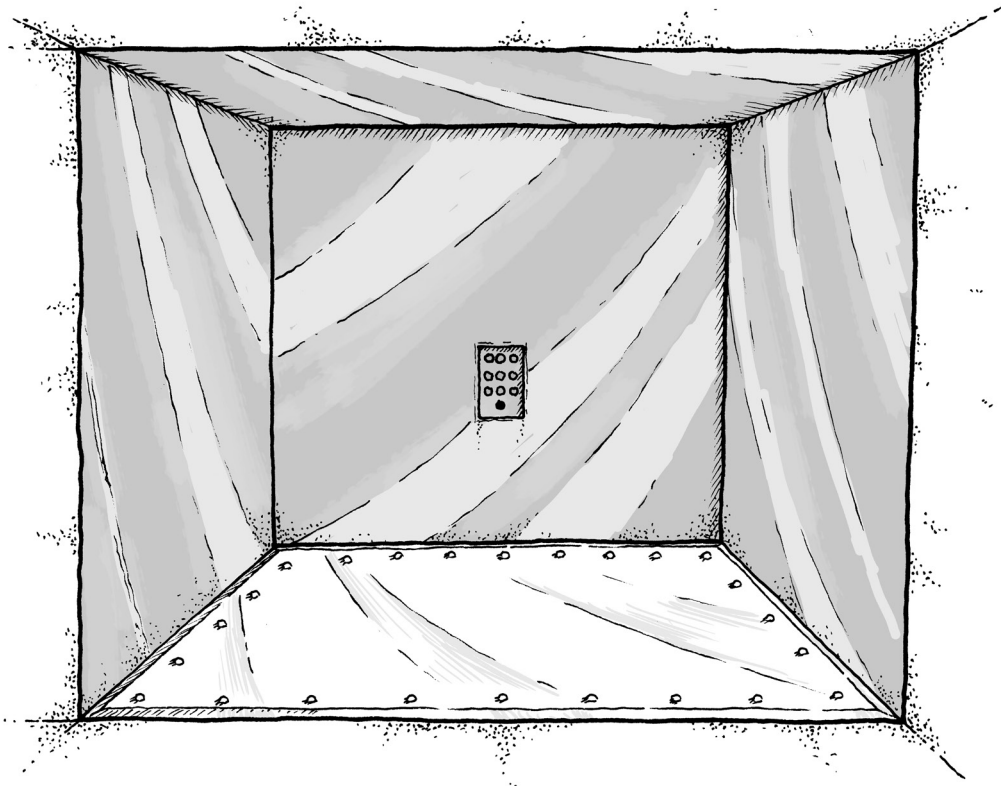
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PLAYERS' HANDOUTS

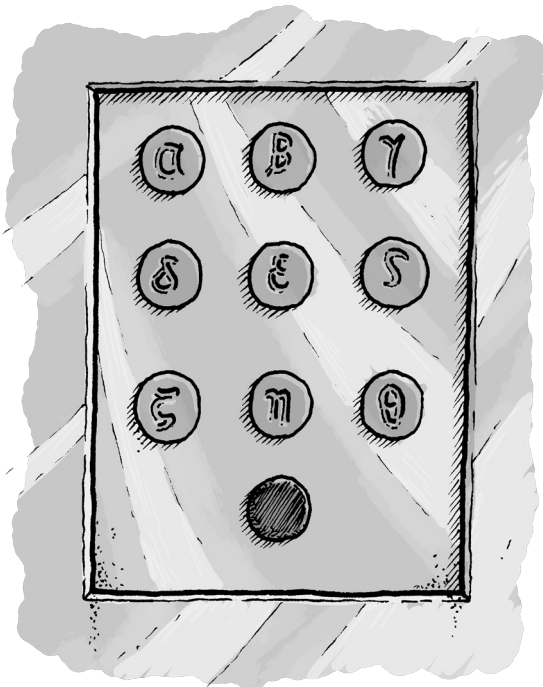
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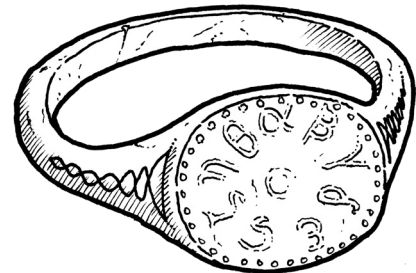
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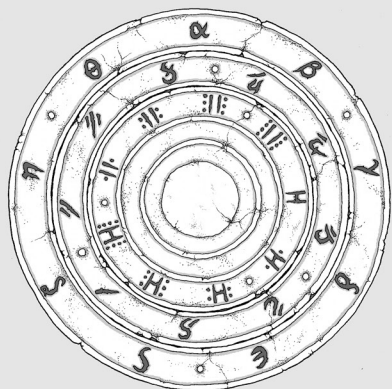


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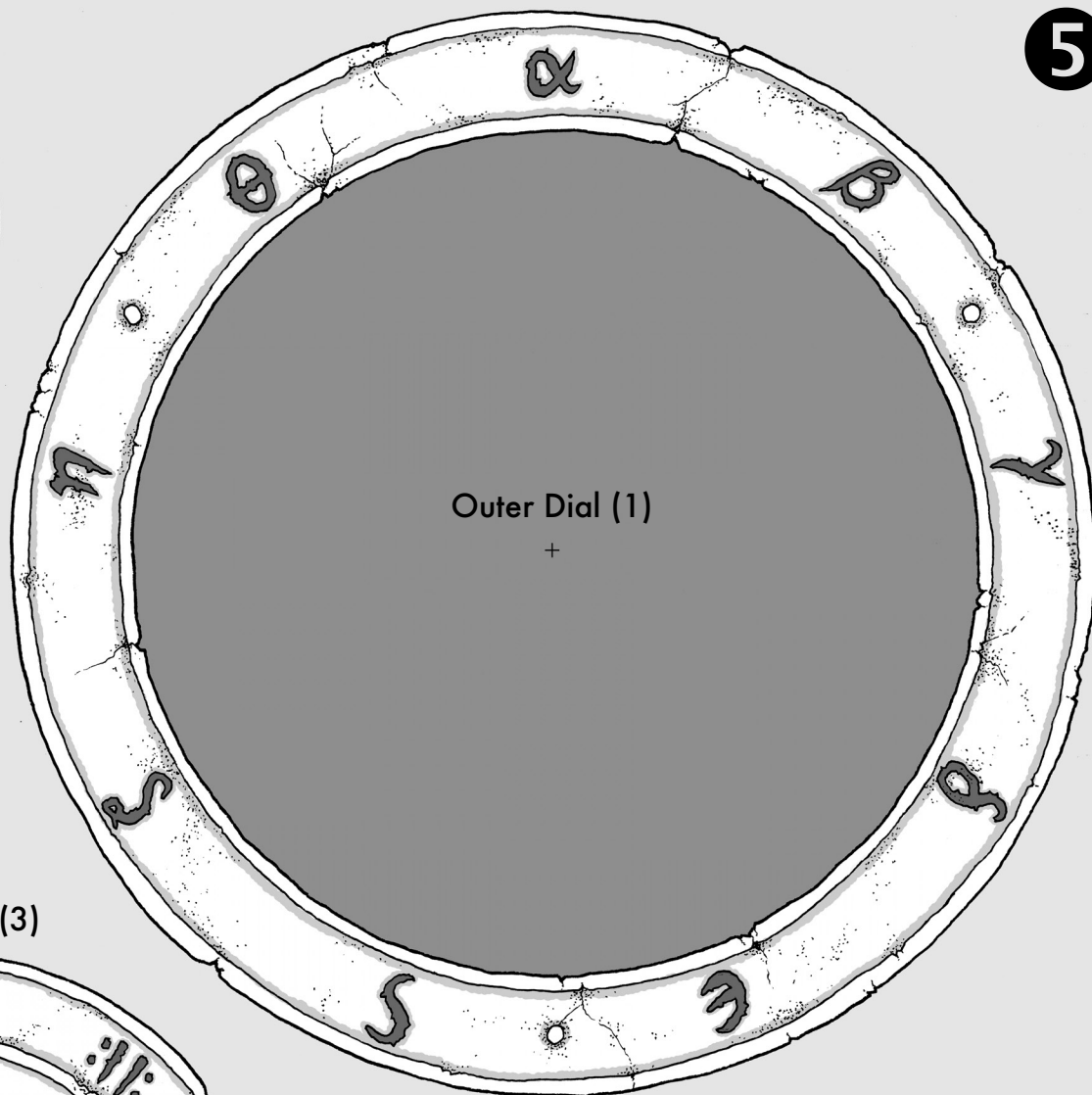


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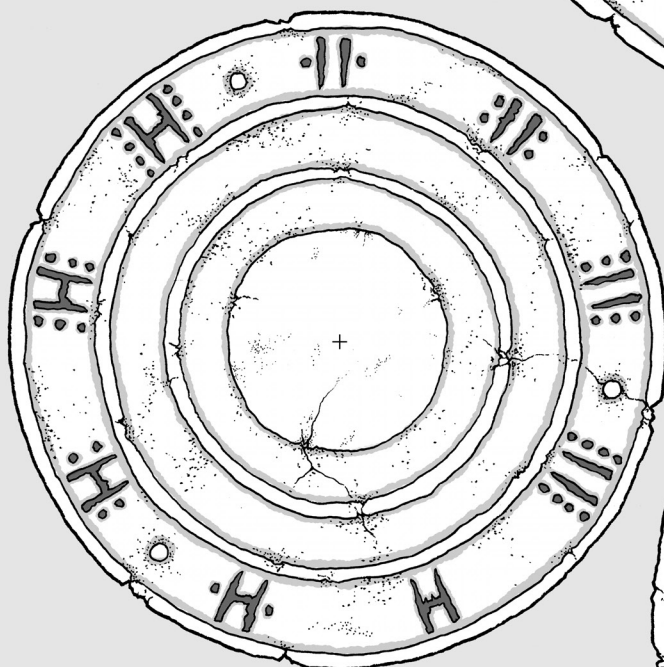
Example of Assembled Dial



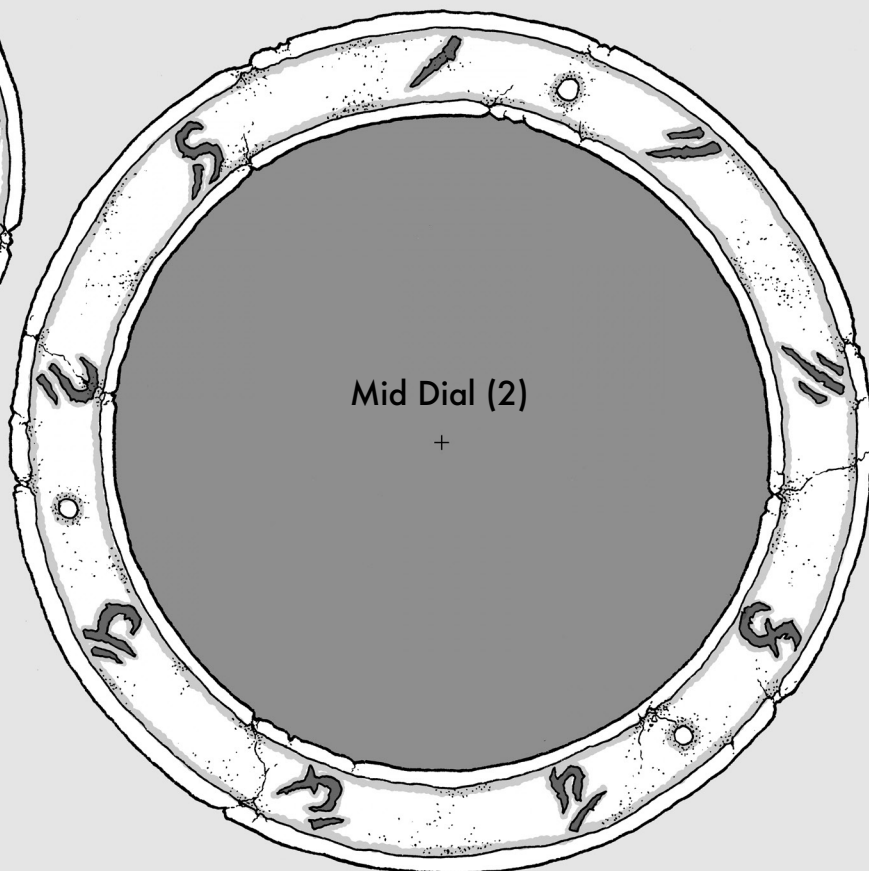
Outer Dial (1)

+

Inner Dial (3)



+



Mid Dial (2)

+

STONE DIAL ASSEMBLY INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Print or photocopy this page.
2. Cut out pieces #1–3 and assemble with outer dial (#1) at the bottom, mid dial (#2) in the middle, and inner dial (#1) at the top.
3. Place the stacked components on a piece of cardboard or other like material.
4. Using a tack or pin, puncture through the indicated centre (+) of all three components, allowing each section to rotate independently.



卐



BJÖRNHEIM ENVIRONS

1 hex = ¼ mile

River Sawyer

BRIGAND'S BAY

N

W

E

S

- | | |
|--|--|
|  HIDDEN DREKAR |  BERSERKERS' LODGE |
|  MOSSY GORGE |  SAWYERS' CLEARING |
|  APE DEN |  BLACKBEARD'S FLEET |
|  OUTLYING BUNKHOUSE |  WATCHTOWER |
|  RUINED BUNKHOUSE |  BJÖRNHEIM |

1 square = 15 feet

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An adventure in Hyperborea designed for from four to six characters of 7th through 9th level



Your party finds itself in the employ of Ragnarr the Sea-Wolf, a jarl of New Vinland and a reaver of old. His daughter, a shield-maiden named Gunnhildr, has been abducted by a brute called Björn Blackbeard. During a desperate search, the Sea-Wolf crossed sails with a former rival, and from the blood-flecked lips of a dying foe, he learnt the location of Blackbeard's stronghold. Now, deep in the misty fjords of Brigand's Bay, where cutthroats, pirates, and freebooters thrive, you have been charged with liberating the Sea-Wolf's daughter.

ASTONISHING SWORDSMEN AND SORCERERS OF HYPERBOREA™



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