



# CASTLES<sup>®</sup> CRUSADES

## THE DUNGEONS OF AUFSTRAG

UMBRAGE SAGA PART 3

STEPHEN CHENAULT





# THE DUNGEONS OF AUFSTRAG

BY STEPHEN CHENAULT



## UMBRAGE SAGA PART 3 ADVENTURE MODULES A13-A17

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# AUFSTRAG ~ AN INTRODUCTION



*Aufstrag is the iron will of evil. It is a house of terror where dwell the shadows of Darkness, named the Fell Beast, Unklar, the Horned God. From that bastion he ruled the world of Aihilde for a thousand years. Those long centuries saw Aufstrag grow into an edifice like to a mountain and one filled with all the nightmares and shadows of his, nay, the world's despair.*

Over three thousand feet tall and a thousand wide, it is a catacomb of unbelievable dimensions. Torn from the ruins of glorious Al Liosh, lifted on high by his very might, it stands a heap of slag, dominating the sprawling swamps that cover the ruins of the old world. Aufstrag is like to a tower, but so great its size, it is more like to a fortress, to a city than ought else. But there dwelt the Horned God for his long reign and to it came the damned and he housed them in dungeons of horror and madness. And thus men call it, more than the pit of the Horned God, or his city, or his throne. Men call it Hell, and so it is.

Aufstrag is a multi-level dungeon/city complex that is both huge and ever changing. It is designed for use for any level of play, though low-level characters may suffer a higher mortality rate than higher level. Within the tower and city there are hosts of different terrain, from swamps to forests to streets, and because of this any character class is ideal for the setting.

## INTRODUCTION

Aufstrag is a city in the world of Aihilde that served as the capital of Unklar's Empire.

During the Fifth Rin of the World of Aihilde the Emperor of Aenoch, in consort with the wizard Nulak, summoned a god to the world. The god, one of the first created in the Void by the All Father, was powerful beyond their understanding. He entered the world and slew the Emperor outright and condemned the wizard to slavery. He set about, and soon accomplished, the conquest of the world. He determined that the Emperor's throne and halls in the city of Al Liosh were insufficient for his needs. He destroyed them, and created a vast swamp where a city and pleasant valleys once stood. In the midst of this swamp he constructed a tower and city, Aufstrag. From there he ruled the world for a long age called alternatively the Long Centuries, the Millennial Dark or Winters Dark.

At the end of the Long Centuries, Unklar was banished from the world of Aihilde, but Aufstrag remained, a masterless house, filled with the damned.

The city of Aufstrag consists of one large tower complex. It is 3,260 feet tall and roughly 2000 feet in diameter. The city is shaped like a great tree, shorn of all its branches but three. These three crown its roof, hanging out and over the marsh. The city itself consists of wards, levels, and domains.

There are four recognizable wards in Aufstrag: The Trenches, Klarglich, The Halls, and the Citadel. The wards consist of a variety of levels, but are not wholly distinct as they interconnect and weave together through, ramps, split-level rooms, stairs, halls etc. The tower itself is not divided up into even levels like

a traditional dungeon; each level is different than the next; each level is roughly 100-200 feet high. There are 21 distinguishable levels. These levels are connected through a variety of halls, stairs, ramps, elevators, dumb waiters, shafts, ladders and chimneys (called "the stacks").

The tower is further divided up into domains; these domains are either wild and uncontrolled or they are controlled by some power or group. A domain may cover several levels on the same ward or on more than one. They need not be contiguous either. A domain may be part of level 4 and level 17, depending on who and how the creature that controls the domain rules it.

The most recognizable aspect of Aufstrag is the multitude of chimneys found throughout the whole citadel. Called the Stacks, these chimneys were designed to vent all the extreme heat generated on the various levels and wards by the manifold magical and mundane fires that burnt within. The chimneys range in size from very small, to very large and because they often bypassed whole levels, they became roads for the clever and agile denizens of Aufstrag. One could travel great distances, unimpeded, in a short amount of time. The risk that a fire might be lit and the heat of it flood the chimney was slight, particularly after time saw many of the chimneys interconnect with each other. Since Unklar's fall these roads have become home to many creatures, who now dwell in their relative safety and enjoy the security of rapid movement up and down the towering structure.

## THE STORY OF ITS CREATION

In order to understand the nature of Aufstrag, its construction and its place in the world, one must know a little of the history of Aihilde, for Aufstrag is no mere fortress or city, but a statement, an act of defiance and a testament of power.

## OF THE EAHRTAUT

Its story begins in the First Rin of the World, when Erde, the All Father, lord of all creation, came to the long valley.

So it came to pass after his many labors, as he sat upon Mount Eedlemere, that the sun beat down upon his brow and he felt the heat of it. The sky hung pale blue overhead, empty of clouds or comfort. The dream came to him then, unbidden, and Erde remembered the cool shade, the comfort and the smell of the earth in the air. Mordius caught his eye even as his mind wandered into the manifold passages of his imaginings and he saw her frolicking in the grass of her design. He strode down from the mountain and stood in the grass upon the plains. He saw then what she had wrought and was pleased, for he saw that the earth was broken with the many roots of Mordius' labor.



## INTRODUCTION

He took up his thought and from that high place he hurled it as a bolt of thunder through the sky; he spoke to it, casting the language upon it so that it took shape. It landed with great force into the folds of the snow capped mountains. It cut the land and flattened it so that a wide valley became its home. The force of his thought broke a glacier asunder, so that a mighty torrent of water fell to the valley, broadening out into a river, clear and cold. As the thought of Erde took shape and form, it germinated, unfolding from the seed of origins. He blew wisdom into it and its form unfolded as the shell of it fell away and it sprouted; a great root crawled forth into the dirt and a stem broke the surface of the world. And it grew and grew, rising from the valley floor, climbing ever higher, its roots spreading beneath the earth, cutting beneath the feet of the mountains, even through the world and into the Wall of Worlds and beyond. Its roots tapped the Maelstrom to drink of the Firmament. Its limbs grew likewise into the heavens, spreading ever further, as if to hold up the dome of the sky. Strong and unyielding the tree grew, thick covered in armor of bark. It was an Ash, and it was the Father of All Trees.

As it broke the earth it called to Mordius, for all things that grew in the earth were known to her. She came to the tree and marveled at it and she loved it and took the greater store of her wisdom and poured it as water upon the roots of the tree, so that the water pooled all about it spreading through the valley in lakes. In later days they were called the Pools of Green. The tree drank of her, and embodied all that she saw, knew, and understood of the world.

Fed thus, the tree sprouted green across its broad limbs and boughs and the leaves soaked in the world's youthful sun in all its glory, drinking of the power of Erde as it lay in all things.

This tree was named Eahrtaut, the Great Tree, what the dwarves in after ages called Vestotomrud, the Cup of Wisdom. And it blossomed for all the Rin of the world, unmarred by time or weather. It became a symbol of power, for the tree is timeless and pays no heed to the Arc of Time.

### COME THE AENOCHIANS

Of all the peoples of the world the Aenochians are the most plentiful and powerful. Of the greater tribes they wandered first from the distant Sea of Erun, their birthplace, into the wilds. They were followed by the Ethrum and Engale. The Aenochians wandered far and wide, and had concourse with many creatures great and small. But their wandering ended when one of the greatest hunters discovered the Land of Lakes.

Baetan, while on the trail of wild game, spied a great stag. He followed in hopes of bringing it down, for the renown of such a kill would carry for years to come. But the stag proved elusive and led him deep into the forests on a wild chase, until at last the trees gave way and a wide, open country unfolded before him. Beyond a green slope of dark grasses he saw a wide country that lay between two large rivers. Water was plentiful in the multitude of lakes and ponds, streams and courses that dotted the land. He named it then Al Liosh and claimed it for his

people. But as he did so he discovered a woman living there alone. She took him in and there he remained for many days until she bid him bring his people to Al Liosh, so that they might not suffer in the wilderness.

And this he did, bringing the greater part of them to Al Liosh and there they settled in many houses and villages between the two rivers. It was then that they learned that the woman was no lost soul, but of the Val Eahrakun, those of the highest order of the gods. And she named herself Imbree and promised to teach them wisdom and the Aenochians loved her.

In time she wed Baetan and they sired many sons and when Baetan passed away she took their son as her husband and their son after, so that she ruled the Aenochians for many years.

It was Imbree who set the Aenochians on the hard road. For Imbree was not a kindly soul; her true name was Imbrisius, and she was the consort of Narrheit, one of the greatest of her order and his bent was in chaos, trickery and cruelty. It was Narrheit who bid Imbree to bind the Aenochians and lead them astray, though it was Imbree alone who laid seeds of their strength and weakness. For she told them that the world was not as it seemed, "The Val Eahrakun are weak. They are fearful of men and you, the Aenochians most of all. For in you the All Father lay a secret knowledge, and power beyond their understanding. They fear it and you." And she bid them cast aside the gods and love themselves, for in them lay the true designs of the All Father.

Thus it was that the Aenochians lay aside the worship of the gods and turned instead to their own people, their ancestors, spirits and like-minded creatures that dwelt in the world at that time.

They rose in an arrogance of power and seeded with the hope of it they proved unconquerable and cruel and in time they came to dominate much of the known world and many of its diverse peoples. The valley of Al Liosh became a city of wondrous size that housed the Emperors and a host of many people. As wealth poured into the city its marbled halls and streets became a wonder of the entire world so that even the gods marveled and the dwarves looked upon it in envy. Their kings called themselves the God Emperors and cast aside the gods in all that they did. Through several Rin of the world the Aenochians rose and fell, but in the end their power waned and their realm dissolved from within as well as without.

When Sebastian came to the throne he laid the Cuna Mundus Usquam, the Cradle of the World, the crown of his people, upon his head. He sought, above all else to rebuild what was lost and to return the Aenochians to the power of their youth. He joined in league with a wizard of some power, Nulak Kiz Din and together they lay the machinations of summoning one of the Val Eahrakun to the world of Aihilde and enslaving it to them.

### UNKLAR AND THE COMING OF THE DARK

Using the Winter Rune, Nulak stepped back into Ure, his fortified tower that stood in the Gottland, wherein laid the Iron Pillar and all his gates to the many realms. Passing through, he saw the many mirrors, each one a gate to a world. He chose the

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one that bridged the Wall of Worlds to the Void. Nulak made ready the rods of binding and calling upon his fountain of magic, he spoke the Incantations of the Paths of Umbra, bound in the Winter Rune, to summon the beast from the Void.

None could have foretold the true horror that the Paths of Umbra would bring. Indeed, had Nulak foreseen the consequences he would not have cast the spell, and had the Emperor known the fate which darkness would deal him, he certainly would not have consented to the atrocity.

The Darkness, wrapped in shrouds of the substance of creation, stepped into the world of Aihilde. Nulak knew, instantly, what it was, and that he could not best it, and sought to flee. The Arch Mage cast forth power, using rods of power he had long hidden for just such a purpose to protect himself. But as is told in the *Andanuth*, many of these were tainted by the darkness and they failed the Arch Mage, so that he fled back to Ure and sought to close the gates. But it was too late and Darkness stepped through, so that Nulak had to flee again, and he fled to the Emperor's court. But he did not use the Pillar, but mundane magic, for he feared the darkness would follow him.

The Darkness stood upon the bridge between the Tower of Ure and the Void, within the Iron Pillar and he cast out for the Mage. He saw first all the gates to the many realms and even those that allowed the mage passage around Aihilde. Unbeknownst to the Emperor, the mirror behind his throne, large and reflecting all that went on in the throne room was itself a portal, bound to Ure, for through it Nulak had watched all that the Emperor did and said. It allowed him passage to the throne room. Through this the Darkness came.

Sebastian Oliver, last of the House of Aenoch, turned in his throne and sought to master the Darkness. He cast a spell of binding, one designed by his great master, the Wizard Aristobulus. Nectanebo, the high priestess of Imbrisius, joined him: calling upon her mistress, she threw ropes of power about the Darkness, hoping to hem it in. All was for naught, for the Darkness was pure and unspent through all the long years of his banishment and he was a power the likes of which only the great of the Val Eahrakun might master.

So, as is told, in the year 7480y, the devil came to Aihilde and the long days of the Feast of Death began. The Darkness was named Unklar, the Horned God, and he was like nothing the world had seen, not since the wars of Ornduhl and Corthain in the early Rin of the world.

Unklar dwelt in awe of his father Erde, but loathed him for he saw that all creation was marred with chaos. This he could not abide. He set about remaking the world about him, slaying those who opposed him, or hounding them when he could not. So all fled from him, gods and men, for he was terrible in his might and the Red God was bound in his chair in the Homeless House and Mordius lay bound in the Eahrtaut.

But Unklar could not master all things. The wind evaded him and the light in the skies, so he bound the world in a Shroud of Darkness. The realms beyond Aihilde were greater than he

ever imagined so he blocked the portals that led to them. And the Eahrtaut was beyond even his understanding and though he tried to uproot the massive tree through force and sorcery, he failed and cursed it.

Thus it was, after many years of war and conquest, of suffering and death that he returned to the lands of Al Liosh and the ruins of those people. For he could not kill all those who opposed him and he set about building a fortress.

In this fortress he sought to bind the power of the world, to punish the godless, and mock those he could not conquer and who feared his might. Thus Aufstrag came to be, a massive tree set in mockery of the Eahrtaut, with roots in the world, and standing upon the ruins of all Al Liosh.

### AUFSTRAG

For his fear of the Val Eahrakun, Unklar roused himself and fortified the City of Al Liosh. Her towers he destroyed. The houses and palaces he pulled down. The wide avenues he turned over on themselves. All was destroyed and with it all those who had dwelt in that fair town. Their lives were spent in the filth of it and their bodies became the rot.

Rending the earth with a great axe, he clove huge rifts about the city, laying waste to its walls. With his breath he wilted and clove the earth for miles in every direction. He then drew the might of the rivers Udunilay and Uphrates to spill into the wreckage and it soon became a swamp of fell death. All the city he ruined in his design and its people were consumed by earth and water, but bound to it as ghostly apparitions that haunted the realm of the Horned God.

Narrow, slow moving streams pushed their way through the thick, deep gray-green grasses of the once beautiful Land of Lakes, filling holes and crevices. Soon the swamp stood a morass of deep pools, covered in a slimy gray filth, the refuse of the city and the damned beneath her. Small islands appeared here and there with stunted trees rooting into the filth about them. Moss grew from their branches, with fingers in the foul waters below. The ruin of the ancient city remained however, and it shown through the nightmare, so that here and there stone walls, the tops of towers or even walkways that were once part of battlements rose from the filth. And from the brackish pools small patches of dense fog rose, pockets of polluted air driven from the ruins. Giving way to the pressure of time they bubble up, carrying with them the horrible stench and heavy air of death. Little wind blew in the marsh so that the patches of fog linger for long days, clouding the nest of Unklar's fortress.

In the midst of the Gray pools he set his mighty house. Lifting the ground on high, he made a true mountain of slag amidst the tumbled buildings. Rock, pulled from the earth below and blasted with heat and fire, melted into gigantic plates of porous charcoal, the slag became a foundation for his throne. Piled and heaped upon one another these slag heaps rose above the gray pools.

Always in his mind was the Eahrtaut; for it had defied him and



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he sought to mock it, so it was that his fortress took on the shape of a mighty tree. But this tree was dead, shorn of limb or leaf, and its roots were as hollow tombs, catacombs of the damned of Al Liosh. Thick of bole, deep of root and tall, the edifice rose above the gray pools, over three thousand feet high.

After, he set about fortifying the tree itself. Its flanks he cut in jagged lines, the scars of which made climbing it near impossible for it tore clothes to shreds and lacerated flesh. But it was frail too, for it chipped and broke away easily, and those who sought to master it often fell to long deaths. But the swamp renewed the slag, for the filth that rose from it clung to its surfaces and bonded where it would.

His thought rose about him then and hollowed out the tree with many courses and rooms and his minions followed his thoughts and shaped it and carved there homes for themselves, and it became a bastion of evil and a fortress, for upon its heights and far and wide over its surface he built mighty buttresses and fell towers. And thus it became a fortress the likes of which the world had never seen, and the greatest in all the creations but for the Homeless House of Ornduhl that lies in the Wretched Plains.

And this abode he named anew, calling it Festung Aufstrag, the Citadel of Command. The ruins of Al Liosh sprawled underneath Aufstrag and into the swamp far around. And these were renamed, called the Grausumland, the Gray Pools.

## WITHIN AUFSTRAG

As noted Aufstrag consists of four separate Wards: the Trenches, Klarglich, the Halls, and the Citadel. These are crowned by the Aeries. Below are very brief descriptions of each ward.

### THE DEEPS, ALSO CALLED THE TRENCHES

The trenches are a horrid complex of tunnels beneath Aufstrag. They are the original remains of the palace complex of the Emperors of Aenoch. Unklar destroyed them and buried them in the ground and built Aufstrag upon their ruins. Creatures dwelt there in the buried ruins. Many of them are undead, for it was the fashion of the high nobility of Aenoch to have themselves slain and raised from the dead. These lingered in tortured cells, wandering the buried halls for years.

But this did not last, for as more creatures came to Aufstrag, many began to tunnel their way into the earth beneath, creating hives and warrens for themselves. These eventually broke into the twisted ruins of the palace and its dungeons beneath. They plundered them and shaped them, making them their homes. They fought the undead when they could, allied with them or fled from them, as was their want.

In time the ruins became a whole separate world beneath that of Aufstrag, occupied by goblins, run away slaves, orcs, other foul creatures who crawled from above, as well as ghouls and wights and the walking undead.

The fall of Aufstrag began in the Trenches, for such a host of creatures had settled there that they rose against their masters

above. Led by dwarves and goblins, joined in slavery, the Trench Wars sparked a decades long struggle against the Masters of Aufstrag, which in turn was a prelude to the Winter Dark Wars that ended the rule of Unklar on Aihrede.

## FIRST WARD: KLARGLICH “THE PITS OF WOE”

The First Ward contains the entry hall, the prisons and dungeons, the garrisons, the forge, the torture chambers, and the slave pits. The greater part of the hosts of Aufstrag dwelt here and devil-lords reigned over all, marshaling the needs of Aufstrag in peace and war. It is a wicked place that reeks of the suffering of the damned for few of the living, of any noble nature, dwelt here. It earned and retained its namesake: The Pits of Woe.

The First Ward consists of nine levels.

### LEVEL 1: THE BONE PIT

The Ahargon Den gives entry to the Bone Pit through the Forgingen. The Still Lake, called by the occupants the Dwimmelere, touches a huge entry hall that gives the level its name. The hall is massive with ramps and stairs that branch off from it on either side, going up to the levels above, or down to the Trenches. The hall is supported by large pillars, 40 feet wide at the base, made of bone. Here the dead lie entombed, stacked in neat piles, fused together with the magic of Unklar, to prop up the vaulted ceiling above.

The Bone Pit also has multiple rooms and pits where those who fall from above land. These are the dead or half dead from the Hall of Chains, Torture Gardens and the Pit of Woe, as well as creatures killed from the Red Fort and those scooped from the dungeons. They are left in the Bone Pit, to rot or to serve as food for the host of vermin who dwell there.

The Bone Pit is haunted by the undead, lesser devils and imps, and the flotsam from above, creatures (both human and other) that have lost their place in Aufstrag.

### LEVEL 2: THE HORNED GOD’S ACRE

Here lie the temples of Unklar. All creatures came to the Horned God’s Acre to pay homage to the Dark God in the Halls above. There were many of temples here, all calling upon his many different aspects, as well as other, lesser temples devoted to the Captain Kings and other lesser powers that ruled during the Winter Dark.

The Horned God’s Acre is a hive of rooms, tunnels and halls, some grandiose, others common and simple. Because it was a region ruled by the weak, it was a hot bed of conniving, murderous creatures and is well known for its many secret doors and chambers.

It lies mostly in ruins, little occupied but for the truly devoted of Unklar’s people; it has many priests who attempt to carve out domains for themselves with magic that is derived from a banished god. It offers the knowledgeable many safe havens to hide and recoup or build power bases of their own.

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### LEVEL 3: GALLERY OF SOULS

The dungeons served as a prison for all the lesser creatures found wanting in the reign of Unklar. Evil men, villains, beasts and all manner of evil creatures were hauled here and chained to walls, bound in cages, thrown into pits or holes. There are large rooms and small, some connected, others isolated. Some chambers were open and governed by their occupants, the greatest of which was called simply the Bulwark. The Bulwark was often at odds with the masters of the Dungeons and rose in rebellion, slaying their keepers and plundering the surrounding levels before they were driven back to their fortress within the Dungeon.

From the southern flank of Aufstrag are a series of balconies that overlook the swamp below. Here victims were hung on gibbets, many left to die, others to serve as food for the wyverns or other flying creatures that rose from the Gray Pools below.

The level plays host to a wide variety of creatures, the remnants of Aufstrag's days of glory.

### LEVEL 4: THE RED FORT (THE YOKE)

The Red Fort housed the main garrison of Aufstrag. It was named in mockery of the Val Eahrakun Ornduhl's mighty fortress upon the Wretched Plains. The Hosts of Darkness dwelt here, his armies and lesser Captains. Here the unger built their barracks and dwelt in massive hosts. Clean and orderly, without purpose other than to serve their lord the unger kept the Red Fort a bastion. But others dwelt here as well, men, giants, orcs, goblins, evil dwarves, hounds and other hunting beasts. Their quarters were set to their own standards, some in order, others in disarray.

But all those who dwelt here died in the many long campaigns of the Winter Dark Wars, the last fed to the Gray Pools in the Brimottaut, the Battle of the Tree. Now the Red Fort is empty of the hosts of darkness, haunted by the ghosts of its past.

All manner of creatures dwell here, any that have crawled or wandered into the halls, seeking shelter within Aufstrag or seeking treasure left behind by the captains and soldiers.

### LEVEL 5: HALL OF CHAINS

The Hall of Chains served as both prison and as quarters to the many creatures who served Aufstrag as torturers. Chains hang from almost every ceiling, be it a room or hall. The unfortunate victims were bound to these chains by hooks and barbs so that the Halls always stank of blood, feces, and other filth. Hosts of black-eyed flies dwelt here and it is in these Halls that the Captain King Beelzebub, Lord of Flies, reigned supreme.

A great many lesser devils and Captains made their abodes here as well, either to serve the Lord of Flies, or to attend Unklar, for it was Unklar's habit to visit the Hall of Chains to torment those who he thought needed his particular attention.

The Hall of Chains served as a forge for many evil devices of lesser make and had an unusual number of chimneys, allowing easier passage to and from it for those who used the Stacks.

There are many creatures, devils, tormented spirits, the undead, shadows and more that dwell here. In particular are the large herds of zombies that roam the halls.

### LEVEL 6: THE TORTURE GARDENS

Here stood the heart of all suffering in Aufstrag. These were called Unklar's Gardens. The whole level is devoted to suffering and pain. Every room housed a particular device, or devices, designed to draw out the agony of creatures. Unicorns were dehorned, elves skinned while yet alive, halflings boiled and cooked, men rent and torn and so on. The Gardens also served the wizards of the Paths of Umbra, and they experimented on creatures, making monstrosities of their own design.

The Torture Gardens were built to house not only the suffering of the damned, but to capture the agony of their demise, for the echo of their living or dying sufferances were captured in the very stone work, and the howl of their torment is heard by all who enter the Gardens.

The Gardens are abandoned now but for the remains of the dead and their tormented spirits who haunt them here and there. As with most of Aufstrag, many other creatures have wandered into the Gardens and taken up refuge.

### LEVEL 7: THE PIT OF WOE

Here stood Unklar's forge, where he mastered the unger, mogrl and other fell creatures. It was here that he made his mighty mace, Utriel, the Mace of Judgment, and other monstrosities. This was his domain and it housed an army of slaves to serve his whim, many of whom perished in the labors of the Horned God. Only the dwarves and goblins bound to him by his own will could long survive within the Pit.

The forge of Unklar was mighty, larger than any the world had seen. Massive bellows created heat that wilted the flesh of normal men. There were tools of such power and strength that the very substance of creation bent to their and their master's will. He set the forge alight with his breath and it burned for all time. This he called the Stodtine Plum; that is the Flawless Fire, and he alone worked this forge, until Dolgan the Dwarf came to his service.

Here the stacks are greatest, and the chimneys rise from the floor, and walls and ceilings of countless rooms, venting the heat that blankets the level. The forge of Unklar burns still and the Flawless Flame sends smoke rising up into the rafters and stacks, heating the Hollows above.

It is occupied by the wildest and most dangerous of creatures. Beasts mutilated by Unklar's spite and able to withstand the terrible heat, or others that feed upon it, elementals and devils and the like.

### LEVEL 8: HOLLOW (DEN OF THE MOGRL)

Here lie 24 Halls that housed the greater and lesser mogrl, devils of nightmare and terror who served their Master with



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unquestioning obedience. It was the number of halls that gave rise to the belief that there were 24 of these beasts forged in the Pits, but that it was never truly known how many he birthed or where even they went when they were slain.

The halls are massive affairs, but still and empty, filled with shadows of terror they drive even the bold to madness and despair. Tis rumored that many of the world's wonders lie here, taken by the Mogrl from those that they slew and set in their own dens to ponder over.

Only shadows remain, and the fear of shadows. Only the bold come to the Hollows to seek its hidden treasures.

### LEVEL 9: THE DEADPANS

Dominated by a wide-open central room with a large lake and many tributaries that watered the lower levels, the Deadpans served as home to the slaves of Aufstrag. A forest of twisted, dull-green trees grows along the lake's shores. They are always wet and covered in moss.

The army of the chain-bound, or so the slaves of Aufstrag were named by those free in Aufstrag (if there is such a thing in Hell), dwelt here. They lived in unkempt rooms bored out of the walls of Aufstrag, in halls and along the shores of the lake. It was a miserable existence as they served as labor, entertainment and food. Many times they rose in revolt, to fall before the terror of their masters. For this reason the Deadpans are filled with hidden rooms and secret ways, and treasures stolen from all over Aufstrag.

Many remain there still. They are twisted creatures with little hope of salvation. Their lives have grown long, but will be longer still, for the magic of that place binds them. They are consumed by fear, hatred and spite and they attack any and all they see.

## SECOND WARD: THE HALLS

The Halls were the heart of the city of Aufstrag. Merchants who came to trade were housed here, the bazaars, shops, craftsmen and all those needed to keep a city alive, dwelt here. Of the Wards, it was the most safe and normal, more like to a city than the rest of Aufstrag.

It is in the Second Ward that the Great Rift exists. Here a dragon tore the skin from Aufstrag, pulling massive chunks out of the Ward, spanning levels 12 and 13, and leaving them open to the outside. It offers the most obvious point of entry if one can bypass the wyverns or climb the unclimbable wall.

The Second Ward consists of seven levels.

### LEVEL 10: THE LONG WALK

To enter the Second Ward one must follow the ramps of the Long Walk. Here are a multitude of ramps that rise at alternately low or high angles, going up to the 3<sup>rd</sup> District or beyond. They created avenues both for travel for those bringing goods to the higher levels, but also defensive measures if ever the lower halls were overrun or rose in revolt. Any attack from below had to

crawl up the ramps of the Long Walk (or go up the Stacks).

The walls of the ramps are lined with rooms of all sizes; these were hostels, taverns and inns that served the weary traveler. There were homes as well that housed those who guarded or ran the Long Walk.

The Long Walk is a dark and musty place, used by those who traffic one way or the other, but only a few of the hostels and taverns remain, and these may or may not welcome strangers depending upon who runs it.

### LEVEL 11: 3<sup>RD</sup> DISTRICT

The 3<sup>rd</sup> District was the merchants district. It is dominated by large market squares or bazaars. Here merchants set up shop by renting or buying space, or set up stalls in the open - much as any city anywhere in the world. Almost anything was available in the 3<sup>rd</sup> District from ink to slaves of the most exotic nature. Buying weapons, armor, scrolls of spells, as well as fruit, cakes or worked goods was all very common.

The level is a virtual warren of halls and rooms where people dwelt, living out their lives as best Aufstrag would allow.

After the Winter Dark Wars the merchant's district became deserted, the once loud and raucous auction blocks empty and those who ran them gone. It is haunted now by any number of creatures that have crept in, making a home for themselves. Some few merchants remain but these are rare; the life is extremely dangerous, for the law of yesteryear is gone, and devils without masters oft times devour those that annoy them.

### LEVEL 12: 2<sup>ND</sup> DISTRICT

The 2<sup>nd</sup> District housed craftsmen of all stripes. Those who worked in metals, leather, wood, clay and more dwelt here. They fed all the desires of Aufstrag, from some high lady that desired a long cloak to some orc who sought a leather apron to work out his daily tasks in the Gardens below. But for the dwarves, the craftsmen were not particularly skilled at any one great art, no less nor more than others. The captive dwarves were masters of the forge, they made weapons, armor, siege engines, and fortifications that were the envy of the world.

As with the merchants, the craftsmen left, or were slain, during and after the fall of Unklar. The District was plundered and is now home to a large number of warring factions; orcs, men, wizards and the like.

Travel here is difficult; the narrow, winding pathways lead one on dark and dangerous paths and those who dwell here now are cruel and desire wealth stolen as well as earned.

### LEVEL 13: 1<sup>ST</sup> DISTRICT

The 1<sup>st</sup> District housed the nobles of Aufstrag as well as the bulk of the greater clergy of Unklar. The rooms they built were multi-level rooms, and joined with roadways carved above and below. Many windows, balconies and outside fortifications broke the surface of Aufstrag, allowing them to at least take of the air, fresh or no.

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This level also housed a host of small armies, nobles and their retinues of sycophants and guards. Some of these were human, others were not. When Unklar fell many of the nobles fled to their distant realms to live or die as their fates allowed, but some stayed, preferring the security of Aufstrag to the dangers of the wide world. These served the memory of Unklar, or Coburg after Unklar's fall, or themselves as their conscious dictated.

It is a dangerous place, for those creatures that remained are petty and evil, filled with a bitterness that nothing but wanton cruelty and suffering can assuage. But they are powerful and jealous of what little remains to them.

### LEVEL 14: GRANARIES

Much of the tribute paid to Aufstrag was in foodstuffs. Whether crops or livestock, it was carted here and housed in huge granaries, barns, stables and pens. The whole of it reeked in the days of its use and was a reek that clung to the walls and rafters for even now, the smell is heavy in the air. It is well watered here, with cisterns fed by pipes and channels from above or from the outside where the air was always moist.

The Granaries are the tightest of the chambers, built to keep out moisture and wandering creatures. The halls here are narrower than normal and smaller, allowing travelers less room to move than other levels. Of course most of it is empty now, most of the grain long gone and the animals as well. Only the pigs remained; they bred and multiplied. Huge, tusked things with some innate intelligence, they roam the halls, eating any organic matter that comes into view.

### LEVEL 15: ARMORIES

The armories of Aufstrag were vast. Armors, helms, shields decked the walls, weapons in racks, all designated to one troop or the other. Here dwelt armorers, their families, slaves and others besides. The dwarves bound in servitude dwelt here and it is from here that the Crimson Guard rose to prominence, a breed of the All Father's people bent on evil and service to the Horned God.

In the Armories the Horned God ordered weapons of fire and ash constructed, and there are cannon stored here, able to hurl chunks of rock great distances. Muskets too, large, bulky affairs, little preferred by the denizens of Aufstrag, for they were slow to fire, risky and too often killed the wielder.

The level is long since plundered, mostly during Coburg the Undying's first reign after the fall of Unklar. He used it to arm his host that was destroyed in the First Battle of the Tree. Now it is a fell place, home to powers great and small, cut into several domains and factions who war continually with one another.

### LEVEL 16: DEVIL'S MESS

Here the devil's meals were made. In the kitchens a host of cooks and slaves labored upon the torment of the living to make food for the undead and the Val Eahrakun Lord who ruled them all. There were many, great and small, some owned by one lord or the other, others by the Horned God, still others stood alone.

The Slaughter House lay in the Devil's Mess. Creatures were drug here; beaten, tortured, killed (or left alive) and cooked. The flesh was served to whoever sought it or paid for it. It was a madness of death. Huge ogres wandering the halls carrying or collecting food for the pots of various cooks here and there. Some fought and some fled, but all suffered and like as not, all ended in the Slaughter House.

The Devil's Mess played hell with the souls of its victims, for many were torn from their living bodies and devoured or used to heighten the flames of the cook fires. Their twisted writhing often left stains of shadow upon the wall and floor, stains which could break free of their spiritual domain and slay the living.

### THIRD WARD: THE CITADEL

The Citadel lacked the size of the First and Second Wards, but it housed the greater host of the power that dwelt in Aufstrag, from heroes of the Winter Dark, the Wizards of the Paths of Umbra, the High Priest and the Horned God himself. It was the center of all the Empire and the Winters Dark. Unklar spent the greater part of his latter years in the Citadel, mostly in the Horned God's Halls, watching the world of his remaking and pondering what dark thoughts amuse dark gods.

The Third Ward is crowned by the Aeries. These are the three "branches" that extend from the top of Aufstrag, out over the Gray Pools. They are massive, scores of feet wide and hundreds long. They house a host of wyverns. Nestled in the center of the mighty tower, at the top, at the confluence of the three branches, lie the Barajin, called by men, the Nest of Scales. Here in ages past a dragon, old and wicked in thought and deed, dwelt.

The Third Ward consists of five levels.

### LEVEL 17: MANSIONS OF THE THRALL

Unklar bound many creatures, great and small, to his service. Some were surrendered of themselves willingly, others less so. The greatest of them were the Val Eahrakun, but others rose to greatness through their own actions, such as Dolgan the Dwarf Lord. These were not of his servants, but rather slaves, and they bore no love for him and in time he feared them, for his power waned during the Long Centuries.

He sought to keep them close and content, so he ordered that they dwell in the Mansions of the Thrall. Opulent chambers, filled with all the comforts of his or their imagining, dominated the Mansions. From baths and pools, dance halls, observatories, to libraries and dens filled with pelts and prizes of the wide world. Elaborate sleeping chambers, with kitchens and private dining halls. Whatever pleasure they sought or mused upon, he gave them.

With his fall, many fled his service, or indeed rose against and played a hand in his fall, but some few remained, taking abode in the Mansions as a debt paid to them by the Horned God. For that reason the Mansions have remained largely intact, but are deadly dangerous to enter.



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### LEVEL 18: THE PENITENT'S DOMICILE

Here were a sprawling set of halls and chambers where those of worth came to pay homage to the Horned God. Marbled floors, pillars of worked stone, walls decked with gold reliefs, and ceilings held on high with arched spans carved of woods and stones rare and wonderful. Creatures dwelt here or passed through the halls as befit their purpose, but all felt the presence of the Horned God, for it was designed such that his thoughts echoed here and bruised the minds of those who lingered in the Penitent's Domicile.

Coburg the Undying, Captain of the Gate under Unklar, but Lord of the Citadel after his fall, loved the Domicile and spent much of his time here, wandering its halls with the Lady of Garun, his paramour. He held it against his many foes during the strife that followed the fall of the Horned God, but even so, part of it was sacked and burned and left in ruin.

The level is half held by Coburg, who cherishes its beauty and the resonance of his old master (though in truth, as is known, he does not seek his master's return). But the rest is wild and dangerous, the chambers despoiled or held, some filled with wealth untold, others filled with madness and grief. The Stacks end here, none rising further than the Penitent's Domicile.

Strange creatures dwell here, powerful memories of Unklar and shades of his devoted. These must vie with the Wizards who come from time to time, seeking to unmask Coburg and bring back the rule of the Horned God.

### LEVEL 19: THE CRIMSON WALLS

The level housed Unklar's personal guard. It consisted of the Crimson Guard, masters of the Paths of Umbra, Crna Ruk assassins and troops of unger. Aside from the Mogrl, these were the most devoted to Unklar, those that he trusted the most, particularly the Crimson Guard, made up entirely of dwarves. Fierce warriors who served their master with unswerving loyalty, believing that Unklar was the son of the All Father and they would pay their debt of life, the Andanuth, to him through service to Unklar.

The level consists of a veritable warren of halls and rooms. The soldiers' barracks, their commanders' personal chambers, kitchens, supply rooms, armories, training rooms and so forth. It was well kept in the rule of Unklar but with his fall the guards turned on one another, some supporting Coburg, others some wizard or the other, some each other. The Crimson Walls were sacked in the strife and many slain. But some dwarves held on and they forged a small kingdom of their own within the Walls.

The Crimson Walls are in ruins but for the small region controlled by the Guard. Here order reigns and they interfere with any trying to mount into the Horned God's Halls. They are not, however, loyal to Coburg.

The rest of the of the Walls are dangerous places where creatures have crept to and settled, seeking the source of Aufstrag's power, the Horned God's Throne Room, but fearing the power that resides there still in the Undying High Lord, Coburg.

### LEVEL 20: THE HORNED GOD'S HALLS

Here stands the throne room of Unklar, from where he ruled for many long years. It is massive, as big as the Bone Pit far below. A chamber lined with pillars holding up a vaulted roof, pillars built with the visage of the greater Val Eahrakun. Carved from marble with such detail it seems they watch those who pass beneath them. The throne itself is massive, built of wood carved from the Eahrtaut, the Great Tree, its roots are buried in the floor and its limbs rise to hold up a massive mirror that rides the wall behind the throne. Here the Horned God sat, dispensing his cruelties for a thousand years.

The Halls are home to other rooms as well, the treasures and the personal menagerie of the Horned God. Wealth untold lies here, if it remains un plundered by all the many creatures that tore at the foundations of Unklar's rule when he fell. There are dining halls and kitchens and chambers to house the Mogrl. All here in the Horned God's Halls.

But the great evil here lays in its master, Coburg the Undying. He controls the throne room and the rooms around it; much of the treasure lies in his hands. But few serve him loyally and fewer still trust him. But others beside Coburg dwell here, creatures of Unklar's design, suffered beasts of his malice, roam these halls, freed from their cages. Devils, wizards and masterless assassins, all lost without their master come here to dwell, so that the memory of the Horned God might give their lives meaning, though in truth few remember his whim and cruelty save for Coburg. It is for this reason he seeks to keep the dark at bay, and also that he never sits upon the Wooden Throne.

### LEVEL 21: GOD'S CUSP

The Cusp lies beneath the Barajin, the Nest of Scales, and it consists of only a few rooms, Unklar's Chambers. Hidden from prying eyes, few have ever entered the Cusp and those that do often go mad for it. These were the chambers of Unklar's mastering of the world and the remnants of his magic linger still, poisoning the air.

Here he devised the end and the beginning. It was here that he saw, or thought he saw, the flaw in the All Father's makings and here that he remade the world. From the Cusp he cast out the Shroud of Darkness that covered all the wide world. From here he threw the chains upon the sun and moon, and all the other crimes of his thought and deed besides.

The chambers are hidden by secret ways and traps of a devil's design. The rooms themselves are lush and hold all the comforts a god might desire.

No creatures wander here by accident, only those made of his fell thought, who he desired to keep or who rebelled against him and hid from his wandering eye. They are part of him and apart from him and for this, feared by the wise, and ignored by the foolish.

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### PLAYING AUFSTRAG

Aufstrag is a living environment, meaning that there are many creatures that live there. They have carved out homes for themselves, complete with political institutions and micro-economies. It is not a typical dungeon environment where creatures dwell in rooms and hide treasure. They fight for control, they cultivate food (where needed and they can), they hunt, they fight. There are monsters that wander its many halls and rooms like any creature in the wild. Sections are torn down and rebuilt as need dictates, or they collapse in ruin. Aufstrag is a living environment. It moves. It evolves. It wastes away. It grows.

To make it worse Aufstrag is Hell on Aihilde. Creatures drift to it, borne there on winds of their own spite and evil, both the dead and the living. Once there, they take up whatever role suits them, haunting it, a slave to the will of some powerful creature, a lord who dominates others. They kill and die as all creatures do, driven to the morass of nothing in the Endless Pools that lies beyond Aufstrag and the Arc of Time.

Playing the tower is challenging. Simple adventures in and out of the citadel are almost impossible as the realm is difficult to enter. Once inside an adventure can last a lifetime. As an adventuring group clears out a lower hall on the second ward, they could move to the first ward and begin plundering another level. Behind them creatures will creep into the vacuum left in the second ward. It never ends. Aufstrag is too large.

To make the adventure more challenging allow for the environment to change. A troop of goblins may pull a wall down and block off a hallway the characters used only a day or so before. The occupants, though almost all evil, may deal with the party, employing them to destroy some other faction or enemy that threatens them. The scenarios are endless.

### THE EXTERIOR

The exterior of Aufstrag includes the slag walls, towers, catwalks that wind along the surface, stairs, ladders, windowed halls, buttresses and other fortifications that have been built over time. The jagged slag surface prohibits easy climbing, making a mess of gear and flesh in short order. Flying up or down is possible, but attracts the flocks of wyverns that dwell in the Aeries high above the Third Ward.

### THE OUTER SKIN

Though built to look like a massive tree the fortress is in fact made of stone, burnt and twisted by the heat of Unklar. Massive blocks give way to ever smaller or intricately shaped stones designed to give the fortress its peculiar look. Iron rings are driven into the stones and bind one block to another. Chains and rivets join the twisted slag everywhere, driven into the walls to give it strength and its peculiar look of shredding bark. They aid one in climbing, but never cover enough ground to see one safely very far up or down.

### THE AERIES

Aufstrag is crowned by three large, branch-like appendages. Built to resemble dead limbs shorn of leaves, these avenues are huge, jutting hundreds of feet out over the swamp, and are scores of feet thick. They are home to hosts of wyverns. They dwell in holes dug out of the branches, where they perch and watch the swamps. They hunt far and wide, day and night. It is rare that there are not wyverns in flight around Aufstrag.

However, they rarely hunt creatures around the front entrance, the Ahargon Den, for that was, for many long centuries, certain death for the wyverns. For this reason they shun it, making the front entrance even more appealing for those entering Aufstrag.

### TRAVEL TO AUFSTRAG

Aufstrag stands near the center of the Grausumland, or Gray Pools, a massive marshland where the great rivers Udunilay and Uphrates meet. Surrounded by hundreds of miles of swamp, the fortress city is almost impossible to enter. It looms upon the horizon like a mountain; filled with the reek of evil, its echo carries far and wide across the mist shrouded desolate landscape. To arrive at Aufstrag one must cross the vast swamp either overland or upon the Wasting Way.

### THE WASTING WAY

The Wasting Way is a causeway and connects the dry land to the north of the Gray Pools, with Aufstrag. The Causeway passes over the swamps of the Grausumland for many miles before it encounters a large stone dike that lies before the city gate. When Unklar ruled Aufstrag the stone dike held the swamp at bay. The dike stood six miles out from the main gate and looped to the east and west around the gate before it curved back to the tower. It created a large half circle of dry land, holding back the swamp, around the gates of Aufstrag.

### FETID MORASS

The area within the dike was called the Ebudeth Lich, the Feasting Pit, an amphitheater of sorts. In his day the Horned God set loose horrors unimaginable in the Ebudeth Lich. Since those days the Feasting Pit has filled with water, muck and mire as the drains that kept it clear clogged long ago. The tall walls of the dike have helped turn the Ebudeth Lich into a marshy pool. It is the home of the black dragon, Umlet, and is called by men the Fetid Morass.

The Wasting Way continues through the Outer Gate, and across the Fetid Morass until it comes to a ramp that climbs up to the portico and the gates. Here however, the Causeway is under a few feet of water, as it itself was built lower than the walls of the dike. It ends in the ramp that climbs up to the Portico and Gates.

### THE RAMP AND PORTICO

The ramp gave one access to the portico and the gates, angling up from the Wasting Way. The portico was and remains a



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broad porch a quarter mile wide that played home to the many supplicants who came to Aufstrag to cast themselves upon the mercy of the Horned God. The portico itself housed the Gosserra, the kennel that stood as home to the mogrl lords who watched the gate with their master's eyes. Upon the portico stood the landing, and the gates themselves, the Ahargon Den.

### THE AHARGON DEN

In all of towering Aufstrag there is but one physical gate, the *Ahargon Den*, the Great Maw, called the *Art et Unklar*, the Mouth of Darkness, for all that entered there were devoured by the malice of Aufstrag.

The dwarves fashioned this gate for Unklar, for in those distant days he bound them to him by chains of servitude that they could not break. And they put all of their skill into the project and made for Aufstrag an unbreakable set of doors. They cast the doors of bronze, but laced that bronze with iergild, that magical ore from beyond the worlds of men. They scripted runes into the doors, words of making from their forges that the bronze absorbed, but that gave the doors a magical property that protected them against sorcery. They set riddles into the bronze as well. These riddles captured sound and absorbed it so that none could speak words of opening to it. Thus protected they ordered it set into a frame of stone. Trolls, huge and monstrous, came at the bidding of Unklar and set the doors in place. There it stood, overshadowing the Portico, Ramp and Feasting Pit.

To open the door the dwarves crafted a horn of exquisite beauty. Shaped from the horn of a dragon, bound with bands of platinum and inlaid with thin strips of gold, the instrument's final shape resembled a ram's horn. Upon the mouthpiece they carved runes. Upon the inner coils of the horn were more runes and these they set with a chime of opening and it alone could force the gates wide. Only the very strong or clever ever mastered the horn and those who tried and failed opened magical portals to other worlds. They were hurled into the Void where history forgot them. The horn the dwarves set upon a stand before the Gate and there it stood for many long centuries.

The Portico ends in a broad patio of flagstones, exactly 100 feet wide and sixty feet deep. The flagstones here are little affected by the traffic of time; only the telltale signs of rain and water have made a dent in the tiles. The gates are set into two half-moon shaped towers, and are covered by a huge arch of stone. The two giant doors stand between the towers, 36 feet high and are each twelve feet wide at the base. In sharp contrast to the gray stone, the doors have a green tint to them. The left door has a crack in it; the right is entirely intact. Beneath this, both doors have a relief of a crescent moon upon them. When closed, the moons come together in a large circle. A tangle of wrought iron tops the doors and arch. Shaped like thorns and brush, they are stained a rusty brown. The doors stand shut.

The green tint is from oxidized metal; it flakes off to expose the bronze beneath. If the doors are pounded upon the green flakes fall off and expose the words carved into the doors by the dwarves at the Horned God's request:

*Suffer Not the Tyranny of Fear  
Embrace the Dominion of Law  
The Yoke Shall Set You Free*

At the foot of the door, set dead center in front of the doors and beneath the arch the stone is stained a dark red. This stain comes from the binding of Jaren, who Unklar nailed to the overriding arch, a place the holy man stayed in agonized torment for over nine centuries. His blood spilled here upon the ground, staining the flagstones.

Opening the doors is actually very simple. By applying equal pressure on each door simultaneously they swing wide and open, exposing the interloper to the Forgingen beyond.

### TURM-UN

A single bastion flanks the left side of the Ahargon Den. It is part of the overall structure and looks much like an irregularity in the overall wall, more so than an independent tower. This is the Turm-un, the Tower of the Horn. There is a secret entrance into Aufstrag here, see **A12 The Paladin's Lament**.

## TRAVEL IN AND OUT OF AUFSTRAG

### VIA GROUND

Travel over the swamps is possible, but unless an entrance has been found, one could spend weeks looking for a way into the fortress. Those entrances not underwater are cleverly hidden such as the drainage from Lake Murreaal, or purposely blocked up. There are only a few that are obvious, the gibbets on the Horned God's Acre, the South Window Stair, the balconies of Castle Furth and others. Those under the waters of the swamps are often hidden. Entering below the gate levels means entering into the ward of the Trenches, a vast network of tunnels hollowed out beneath Aufstrag that merge in multiple areas within the ruins of the ancient city of Al Liosh. If one finds themselves in the Trenches, becoming lost is a certainty.

### VIA AIR

Any attempt to fly up to Aufstrag summons a host of highly predacious wyverns. The fortress is capped by the Citadel, which itself consists of several levels, but leads out onto three broad limb-like structures that protrude several hundred feet from the main structure. These house flocks of wyverns. Well in excess of one hundred live, breed, and nest here. Any attempt to fly up the slopes of Aufstrag brings at least a few of the wyverns. The commotion these cause when swooping for prey alerts others and summons any and all that see it. That commotion of course summons more, and so on, making the attempt via air perilous.

Any attempt to approach using magic to cloak one's presence suffers a similar fate. In the days of his youth, Unklar fashioned creatures to serve him. One such was the cunalrur, The Eye Upon the Road. These six legged winged beasts are able to see invisible creatures and see through illusions. Their ability to fly is limited, but they do attempt to intercept anything they spy.

## 12 CASTLES & CRUSADES

## INTRODUCTION

Again, as with any motion in the air, their flight attracts the flocks of wyverns.

### USING MAGIC

When Aufstrag was first constructed, Unklar did not control the plane in its entirety. Many foes hounded him and sought to unseat him. They came to his halls and chambers and fell upon his minions, or attacked Unklar himself. He sought to put an end to this. So when he fashioned the walls of the tower, he wove a net of magic into the city. The net snared any who attempted to come to Aufstrag without permission and cast them upon the doorstep, just beyond the archway of the outer gate. The net deflects any attempt to enter or leave Aufstrag magically via *teleport* or similar spells. Any attempt to breach this magical barrier does so only upon a successful intelligence check (CL 20).

### TRAVELING THE DARK ROAD

As noted, Aufstrag is no simple dungeon or tower complex occupied by evil creatures who sought a place to hide their treasures. It was, for a thousand years, the domicile of the Horned God Unklar, one of the twelve named Val Eahrakun. Steeped in spite, his every thought and deed emanated from a malicious design to remake all that was or would be in his own image. His thoughts were black, his voice one of terror, his actions evil. Unklar spent of himself to make Aufstrag, so that he was a part of it. And it continued to capture the echoes of him, so long as he dwelt there. These echoes linger long after his passing.

The darkness in Aufstrag is not as normal darkness one might find under the ground. It is almost palpable. One can feel it as an oppressive weight that bears down upon them. It comes in the form of a mindless fear that creeps around the shadows of one's thought; a tiny voice in the mind, causing alarm. The longer one is in Aufstrag, the heavier the weight of it becomes, and the more raw the fear, the voice of which becomes louder.

Traveling in Aufstrag is difficult. For each day that someone lingers there, they must make a successful primary attribute check (CL 10) or suffer from the oppressive darkness. If they succeed there are no ill effects, and they gain a bonus +1 to their next day's check, up to a maximum of +5. Paladins gain a +5 and give anyone in the party a +1 to their checks when saving against clinging darkness or seeing the dark. If one fails their check, then the fear of Aufstrag has settled into their mind and nothing removes it short of a *remove fear* or *restoration* spell, potion, ring, etc. It lingers even after one leaves Aufstrag. This is called the "clinging darkness."

**CLINGING DARKNESS:** When one succumbs to the clinging darkness the victim begins to move slower, hear noises in the dark, suffer troubled sleep, lose their appetite, and have a nagging doubt about them all the time. They see things as going ill, no matter the circumstance. The character begins to suffer the ill effects almost immediately. All attribute checks are made at a -1, initiative and attack rolls are reduced by -1 (damage is unaffected), movement is reduced by 1/3, any spell casts requires 1 round longer to cast (a CT 1 would go at the end of the round), and the time to regain spells takes 1/3 longer. Those

affected by the clinging darkness lose their appetites and do not eat as much; rations generally last twice the time they normally do. All of this can lead to what is called 'seeing the dark'.

**SEEING THE DARK:** Anyone who succumbs to the clinging darkness, must continue to save against it. A check is made every day. If someone fails 5 days in a row, the darkness settles in them like a ball of despair. From that point forward they suffer a -5 on all checks. If one should fail 10 days in a row they go mad, they "see the dark." Intelligence and wisdom are immediately reduced to 3 and the unfortunate sheds their clothes and flees wither chance takes them, becoming another lost soul in Aufstrag. They cannot be reasoned with, or talked down, they are utterly mad. Nothing short of a *heal* spell brings them back from the darkness.

The clinging darkness does not affect creatures native to Aufstrag. In previous times, those in Aufstrag did not remain without magical protection from the clinging darkness.

### DYING IN AUFSTRAG

Aufstrag serves as both a physical kingdom in Aihrde and spiritual realm where the evil dead reside.

Beneath Aufstrag are many intersecting passages which were meant to mimic the roots of Eahrtaut, and span the planes. But most of these failed to do as Unklar desired and they exist as tunnels, snaking into the earth beneath Aufstrag. One, however did cross the Wall of Worlds and broke through to the Arc of Time. This road is called the Hule Rupt, which is the Road of Horrors.

Unklar sought to people Aufstrag with the restless dead that wandered the Arc of Time, but only those who had served his vile purpose. In this he had the aid of Heth and the messengers of Toth, who culled the dead for binding evil and guided these to Aufstrag, where they served as worms, insects, imps and the discarnate in the filth of that place. The condemned haunt the halls, or serve in whatever capacity they may manage, wallowing in the ruin of their lives. Only time and service allowed them to rise to greatness.

But those who come to Aufstrag through Aihrde and suffer the misfortune of dying there cannot easily escape it. It is hell and binds its victim. There is only one road from Aufstrag to the Arc of Time (where all spirits go to be judged for the Stone Fields, Wretched Plains, or Endless Pools). It is the Hule Rupt, and it is hidden. When people die here, their spirits are trapped and linger, no matter who or what they were in life.

If a character dies in Aufstrag, their spirit becomes lost and confused, suffering the torment of the damned. They are generally considered a discarnate (see **New Monsters**), but the may desire them to return as any number of undead. Though it may not turn evil, its actions are mindless and wreak havoc on whoever or whatever it may cross. The character cannot be resurrected unless their body is brought from the tower and buried in hallowed ground. Otherwise their spirit remains, manifesting as a ghost or similar creature, haunting Aufstrag until the Gonfod should bring ruin to all the makings of the Val Eahrakun.

# A13 THE BONE PIT



*The Ahargon Den gives entry to the bone pit through the Forgingen and the Dwimmelere, that touches a huge entry hall. The hall is massive and supported by large pillars made of bone. Here the dead lie entombed, stacked in neat piles, fused together with the magic of Unklar.*

**The Bone Pit** is an adventure module designed for 3-5 characters of a variety of levels. It is the 13<sup>th</sup> adventure in the “A” series, or Umbrage Saga, adventure modules. The adventure is designed to be part of a series that begins in distant lands and ends in the mountainous dungeon of Aufstrag. For more details on this, please read *Involving the Player Characters* below.

**The Bone Pit** begins at the Ahargon Den, the fabled gates of Aufstrag, or if coming from **A12: The Paladin's Lament**, just inside the door over the Inner Gate. Aufstrag, long a bastion of evil is a mountainous tower over 3200 feet high and 1500 feet wide. The Bone Pit consists of the first level of Aufstrag and includes the inner gate, the Dwimmelere, the Hall of Bones as well a host of other rooms. Adventures in the Bone Pit take the characters through an array of encounters that they can either fight their way through or avoid. It should allow for areas of sanctuary where they can heal and recuperate. It leads to the next level **A14: The Horned God's Acre**.

## INTRODUCTION

There are four recognizable wards in Aufstrag: The Deeps (or Trenches), Klarglich, The Halls, and the Citadel. The wards consist of a variety of levels, but are not wholly distinct as they are interconnected and weave together through ramps, split-level rooms, stairs, halls etc. The tower itself is not divided up into even levels like a traditional dungeon; each level is different than the next; each level is roughly 100-200 feet high. There are 21 distinguishable levels. These levels are connected through a variety of halls, stairs, ramps, elevators, dumb waiters, shafts, ladders and chimneys (called “the stacks”). The First Ward contains the entry hall, the prisons and dungeons, the garrisons, the forge, the torture chambers, and the slave pits. The greater part of the hosts of Aufstrag dwelt here and devillords reigned over all, marshaling the needs of Aufstrag in peace and war. It is a wicked place that reeks of the suffering of the damned, for few of the living, of any noble nature, dwelt here.

The Bone Pit is the first level of the Klarglich, the first ward. It sits atop the Deeps, however, entry to the Trenches is blocked off or sealed in some capacity or the other. Only one easy entrance exists to the Trenches, and that is through the secret door in the Forgingen, the inner gate.

The Ahargon Den gives entry to the Bone Pit through the Forgingen. The Still Lake, referred to by the occupants as the Dwimmelere, touches a huge entry hall that gives the level its name. The hall is massive, hundreds of feet long and wide, with scores of ramps and stairs that branch off from it on either side, going up to the levels above, or down to the Trenches. The hall is supported by large pillars, 40 feet wide at the base, made of bone. Here, the dead lay entombed, stacked in neat piles,

fused together with the magic of Unklar, to prop up the vaulted ceiling above.

The Bone Pit also has multiple rooms and pits where those who fall from above land. These are the dead or half dead from the Hall of Chains, Torture Gardens and the Pit of Woe, as well as creatures killed from the Red Fort and those scooped from the dungeons. They are left in the Bone Pit, to rot, to serve as food for the host of vermin who dwell there, or to simply decay.

The Bone Pit is haunted by the undead, lesser devils and imps, and the flotsam from above, creatures (both human and other) who have lost their place in Aufstrag.

## INVOLVING THE PLAYER CHARACTERS

The gates of Aufstrag, the Ahargon Den, are generally considered closed. When constructed, they were designed to remain closed unless opened from the inside. From the outside they are protected against all sorcerous attempts to open them by first a silence spell (CL 19) and then the magic on the doors themselves (CL 19). The dwarves constructed the *Horn of Opening* in order to breach the doors. It was destroyed, but is attainable in playing adventure modules A1-A12. There is a secret entrance revealed in adventure module **A12: The Paladin's Lament**. Entering via magic is difficult if not impossible. Climbing the side of Aufstrag summons wyverns from above. All that aside, entering Aufstrag is not the challenge of this adventure. Use any one of the following to allow the characters to gain access to the tower.

- 1) For whatever reason, the doors are open. No explanation need be given.
- 2) Purchase **A12: The Paladin's Lament** and play through the adventure there. That should allow the characters entry. Alternatively, allow them to find the secret door through happenstance or payment, using the adventure **A12: The Paladin's Lament**.
- 3) Allow that the characters have assembled the *Horn of Opening*, or retrieved it (intact) from another adventure. Blowing the horn opens the Ahargon Den, allowing the characters to pass into the inner gate and the Forgingen.
- 4) Someone within has contacted the characters and agreed to meet them at the front gate, opening it from within. This is no easy task as they must pass through the Forgingen and overcome the dangers there, so the creature should be a goblin or some other creature that might naturally inhabit Aufstrag.
- 5) The rings of brass are powerful portals allowing creatures to move about the world of Aihrde and the multi-verse around it. They were commonly constructed in giant ringwells, with stairs leading into tunnels between the worlds. However, the greatest of smiths fashioned them into items,



such as rings or coins. Allow that someone within has one such device and that the characters the other. By activating them, the characters pass through the portal and into Aufstrag. Getting out is an entirely different problem. If this approach is taken, play should begin at the point of entry wherever the CK desires.

### WANDERING MONSTERS

The Bone Pit is a very active level, with many monsters in it. Some, as noted, live in certain rooms. Many simply wander the halls and rooms hunting for food, water, souls, or whatever it is that drives them on.

See **Appendix C: Wandering Monsters**.

### FORGINGEN: THE INNER GATE

This is the inner gate, the foyer. It is a large vaulted room, roughly 100 feet across, 100 feet deep and 40 feet high. It is lined with four half-columns on either side of the room, for a total of eight columns. On the far side of the room is an open doorway, 20 feet wide and 30 tall. It is crowned by gargoyles and other statuary.

But none of that is readily visible to the entrant as the room is pitch black. In ages past, the denizens of Aufstrag set spells of *fear*, *darkness*, and *control weather* upon the room.

**The room is utterly dark and cold and a pall of fear hangs about it. Looking into the room is unsettling. In fact, the dark of the room is so thick you feel as if you can touch it, and from where you stand you cannot see into the room at all.**

Magical light mutes the darkness, pushing it back, but the weight of it clings to the edge of the lights like water to a drowning man. All magical lights (unless they originate from a holy item or artifact) are muted, their strength cut in half.

Only magical light can penetrate the darkness; no special vision works. Anyone entering the darkness without using magical light is utterly blind and must make a charisma check (CL 24) or suffer from the *control weather* and *fear*. If a magical light is used, they must make a successful charisma check (CL 12) against the affects of the spells. Anyone who fails their check is unsettled, becoming cold and slightly disoriented. All attribute checks are made at -2 while in the darkness and for the first four rounds after anyone that failed their save has left the darkness. If the entrants have a light source, its affects are halved upon an unsuccessful attribute check.

The columns in the Forgingen are fashioned from discolored white marble as are the floor and ceiling. The columns are smooth but the discolorations are distinct. Anyone who looks at the columns closely for 1 round notices vague shapes in them, distorted faces that seem to look out at the viewer as if they had been frozen within. The character must make a wisdom check (CL 10) for every round after the initial round that the character looks at the face. If they fail, they are mesmerized for 1d4 rounds.



There is a secret door hidden in one of the columns. Finding it is very difficult without becoming mesmerized by the marble of the column. If one becomes mesmerized, it is impossible to find, otherwise a secret door check (CL 15) is required. Opening it is equally difficult. It has a key which the captain kept upon a chain on his neck. The lock is on the base of the column. It requires a successful pick lock (CL 12).

The secret door leads to a small landing in a sink hole that goes up to the captain's quarters in the Turm-Un (see **A12: The Paladin's Lament**, Area 9d). It leads down to the river below, which is the beginning of the Trenches below Aufstrag. There is not obvious method to go up or down the shaft, and it appears to be rough cut. Upon close examination (wisdom CL 6, dwarfs CL 2) it appears as if it was once a stair case that has collapsed and fallen away into the river below.

Passing beneath the arched doorway brings one to the Dwimmelere.

### DWIMMELERE

Unklar fashioned this pool to guard his front gate. It is a pool as broad as it is wide, 100 feet in either direction. There are sides, and only a single bridge, 20 feet wide, that spans it. The water is still and dark. Looking within is difficult, lights tend to reflect back and only penetrate a few feet. The water does not easily move. Items thrown into the water vanish, causing only a single ripple, one that vanishes once it hits the side of the pool. It is for this reason that it is called the Still Lake, or Dwimmelere.

## A13: THE BONE PIT

The Dwimmelere is unfathomably deep, for its bottom opens into the Endless Pools that lie at the end of the Arc of Time. This is the realm where the Arc of Time settles. They are also called the Darkling, or “Where Memories Lie.” It is a bog, dark and dismal, cast in shades of gray, and ruled by a limitless pool of unmoving time. It is where the lonely dead come, whether man, humanoid, beast, demi-human, or god. Those creatures without gods or spiritual homes come to the plane to reside in this, their drab afterlife. Sailors fear drowning and curse the Endless Pools, for it is believed that many of those lost at sea are doomed to spend an eternity there.

Crossing the Dwimmelere is easy enough. One has but to cross the bridge without disturbing the water.

Disturbing the water is not necessarily bad. Passing a blade through it, or staff, does little beyond sending a single ripple through the pool. However, if a hand, or foot, or any flesh is stuck into the water, it proves disturbingly cold, and the character must make a successful constitution save (CL 8) or suffer 1d8 points of damage. If they remain in the water for more than 4 rounds, or drink the water, they must make a successful constitution save or fall into a coma for 1 minute for each round they are in the water beyond the initial four. Anyone in the water, who falls into a coma, sinks beneath it.

**NOTE:** Good aligned clerics or paladins gain a +5 to their saves.

Those who fall into, or enter, the Dwimmelere suffer the risk of passing into the land of the dead and summoning the dead. In fact, anything, that is thrown into the water and allowed to sink, wakens the dead.

**SUMMONING THE DEAD:** It is always the desire of the weak to pull others down when they fall, and so it is for the restless dead who occupy the Endless Pools. Anything thrown into, or that falls into the Dwimmelere summons the dead. Between 20-120 (2d6X10) wights begin to climb up from the Endless Pools, passing from their lifeless beds into the belly of Aufstrag. They have no purpose, nor desire, beyond pulling others into their misfortune. Anything living and conscious in the Dwimmelere, or upon the span of the bridge, is attacked. They attack, attempting to pull those on the bridge off the bridge and into the pool, where they suffer the effects of the water.

When they are summoned they come in ones and twos, but quickly grow in number as more of the dead rise. As soon as their heads break the surface, the wights begin an awful moaning and howling.

The wights will not attack beyond the pool or the span of the bridge.

**WIGHT** (These lawful evil creatures’ vital stats are HD 4d12, AC 15, HP 24. Their primary attributes are mental. They attack with a slam attack for 1d6 points of damage. They can see with darkvision for 60 feet and are able to create spawn. Each strike drains hit points and, temporarily, a level. The level lost returns in 1 minute, unless the victim falls to 0 level, in which case they die. If desired, and if the wight kills a human, they can turn that victim into a wight of half strength. They have no

*treasure to speak of, though 1 in 10 may have a special item on their person. Consult table 3.6 in **Monsters & Treasure** to determine value. The item itself should be randomly chosen by the CK, such as a pipe, music box or some similar item that the person took to the Endless Pools.)*

In battle, if more than 5 wights attack one individual it is considered a swarm. Anyone in the combat automatically takes 2 hit points of damage per round, this is on top of any physical damage they take from each wight’s slam attack.

**PASSING INTO THE WATER:** Anyone who falls into a coma or cannot swim and sinks because of this, slips beneath the Dwimmelere. Once beneath the water, they are on their way to the Endless Pools. They sink 5 feet every round until after 10 rounds when they begin sinking faster at 10 feet around. When they reach 100 feet they have passed from the land of the living and are in the Endless Pools.

Getting them out of the water runs certain hazards.

- 1) **PHYSICALLY:** One can attempt to jump into the water, reach into it or throw a grappling hook and rope. Anyone attempting to do this, whose flesh touches the water, must make a successful constitution save or they will also suffer the effects of the water.
- 2) **USING MAGIC:** Any *levitate* or similar spell works so long as the caster can see the sinking target. Visibility is about 10 feet into the water, twice that if a *light* spell is cast into the water.
- 3) **HEAL:** Any *heal*, *restoration*, or *resurrection* spell that reaches the victim (*area heal*, for instance), wakes them up and they can attempt to pull themselves back to the bridge.

**PASSING TO THE ENDLESS POOLS:** Someone who has passed to the Endless Pools, but is still living, cannot be resurrected or restored, because they are not dead. Bringing them back requires a journey to the Endless Pools, with all the danger that that entails, or a *summon planar ally*. For more on the Endless Pools refer to the **Codex of Aihilde**.

## THE LONG HALL

This is the Great Hall of Aufstrag, called the Long Hall, or the Long Walk. It was designed to awe the visitor with the power and majesty of Aufstrag. Men and beasts passed beneath the Ahargon Den and through the darkness of Forgingen, over the Silent Lake and into the Long Hall. Beneath its vaulted ceiling they feel smaller, for here all the oppressive weight of Aufstrag bears down upon them.

The Long Hall is 1000 feet long and 800 feet wide. It is dominated by gigantic columns. Its ceiling is 50 feet above the floor, rising into The Horned God’s Acre above. There is no “end” to the hall, no destination, no throne, or altar. It consists of the columns and the columns alone. From the Long Hall, ramps and stairs rise into the levels above, allowing passage to one level or the other. But beyond that the room is home to only the dead, bound to the columns themselves.

## 16 CASTLES & CRUSADES

## A13: THE BONE PIT

Unless extraordinary care is taken to move quietly and to silence equipment, sound in the Long Hall carries far and wide. Its echo is picked up by the vaulted ceilings and seems to roll through the hall and back to the original source. This is as much an echo of the power of Unklar, as it is a reality, for the Hall itself is oppressive.

Anyone entering the Long Hall must make a successful charisma save (CL 6) or come to believe that the hall is larger than it is and hear the sound they make as larger than it is. It seems an echo designed to summon all manner of attention, the likes of which no one wants while in Aufstrag. Anyone who fails suffers a -1 from all attribute checks and combat rolls while in the hall.

**THE COLUMNS:** Each column is massive in size, 50 feet high, from floor to ceiling. The columns are thick, 24 feet in diameter, 40 feet at the base, round and smooth to the touch. They are ivory colored and made of bone. Here the dead of Aenoch and Al Liosh lie entombed, stacked in neat piles, fused together with the magic of Unklar, to dominate the room. Each column is set 50 feet apart. The columns do not reach the ceiling. A close investigation of this, so long as the viewer can see the top of the column reveals this (CL 4). They fall about 2 feet short of the ceiling above.

**LIGHT IN THE LONG HALL:** The hall is magically lit. Any who pass within 25 feet of a column (and you must) activate the light bound in the column. It creates light around the traveler in a 25ft globe. It is soft light, easy on the eyes, but does not diffuse all the shadows around it. In particular it does not light the air all the way to the ceiling. Unless the traveler has some type of light that can extend beyond the globe, the area beyond the globe is dark.

This of course serves as a way to light the hall, but it also alerts the bone devils that dwell upon the tops of the columns of anything that enters the Long Hall.

The bone devils are evil creatures, but they are not mad, nor driven by some design to destroy anything they see. In the days of its Glory, Aufstrag played host to a countless flow of traffic. There were men and beasts, orcs and ungern, warriors, merchants, travelers, and all the wide vast assortment of people who had business in the halls of Unklar. The bone devils were not set upon the tops of the columns as guards, for Aufstrag feared little from the traffic of those days; all had to pass beneath the gaze of the mogrl who sat upon the Portico beyond the Ahargon Den, and few who promised treachery could withstand their gaze.

Rather, the bone devils came to occupy the columns by choice. In the early days of his rule Unklar summoned the creatures of the Wretched Plains to serve him, and some came (others resisted) and these settled into his shadow and became the servants of his will. The bone devils were such a folk. But once in Aufstrag the Long Hall called to them, for its great columns were made of bone, and the scent of it hung in the air. So they came and settled on the tops of the columns as Unklar had intended.

They served him in many capacities: they fleshed out his armies, held the gates against the lords of the west when they assailed the tower, and so forth. And when he passed, they took little notice. Being timeless creatures, it mattered not to them when in the unfolding of events they were, Unklar must come and Unklar must go. For an immortal, one day is as meaningful, or meaningless, as the next. And all the many people who passed into the Long Hall in days past, were of no more consequence than the rare or occasional visitor to the Long Hall now. The bone devils watched and waited for nothing more than a mood to strike them.

Thus they have sat upon the columns, moving as is there want, when driven to by desire or need. This of course is what makes the hall so very dangerous and few come here unless pressed by need.

When creatures enter the hall, the bone devils perched on the columns take note, largely because of the light that shines between the columns. Also, if the wights were raised on the Dwimmelere, their howling would be heard by some of the devils at the very least.

The bone devils are able to leap from the column to the floor below or climb down much like a spider. However they choose to descend, or if they decide to at all, is entirely up to the Castle Keeper. There are several options. If the CK desires a random choice, roll on a d6.

- 1 **REMAIN HIDDEN:** They may choose to remain hidden, not revealing themselves unless someone climbs the column.
- 2 **ATTACK:** Some of them may see an opportunity to harvest souls for Aufstrag and leap from the columns, attacking the party. They are not particularly greedy, nor competitive; their evil is more rooted in time than happenstance, so not more than 8 of the creatures will attack. Others may make their presence known by standing upon the columns or leaping down and watching the fight, but will not attack.
- 3 **REVEAL THEMSELVES:** They may choose to reveal themselves without doing anything. They can stay on the columns or descend to the floor. In this case, the characters see them, but are not readily attacked. If the characters attack them first, only up to 8 will engage, the rest fading into the background.
- 4 **SUMMON A GREATER DEVIL:** They may call upon another servant of Aufstrag. In this case, it will be a pit fiend. The pit fiend will not be indecisive in his actions and attacks immediately.
- 5 **HERD THE PARTY:** They may wish to drive the party one direction or the other. In this case a few dozen leap down from the columns and begin harrying the party, trying to drive them away, to one of the other rooms, ramps or stairs.
- 6 **IMPRISON THE PARTY:** A group may decide to bind the party in walls of ice, casting the spell of the same name between columns, enough to hem them in so that they must fight their way out, or at least climb or destroy the walls. Their intent in such a case is to keep them from entering Aufstrag until some message from above informs them what to do with the interlopers.

## A13: THE BONE PIT



**BONE DEVILS** (These lawful evil creatures' vital stats are HD 9d10, AC 21, HP Varies. Their primary attributes are physical. They attack with a variety of bone weapons for 3d6 points of damage. They have powers common to all devils, take half damage from piercing weapons, spell-like abilities, and an SR 12. Upon a successful hit with its bone weapon of 18-20, the bone devil impales its victim for the standard 3d6 points of damage, however, it is able to rip the weapon free in the next melee round for an automatic 20 points of damage. They are able to strike with their claws as well, and upon a successful hit break off chunks of bone into the victim, who must make a successful dexterity save or be blinded for 1d4 rounds. Furthermore, the bone fragments lodge into the skin and calcify, turning it into bone. The bone devil is able to summon a pit fiend and has the following spell-like abilities: dispel magic (3/day) fear (1/day), icestorm (1/day), lightning bolt (1/day), ray of enfeeblement (2/day) (imparting a -2 to hit, -2 damage) and wall of ice (1/day).)

The bone devils have an impressive array of treasure, most likely odds and ends found or taken through the years. They keep their valuables at the top of the columns. The Castle Keeper should roll for each column cleared of bone devils and actually explored by the characters. They have a treasure rating of TR 9.

### THE CAGE OF THE DEATH KNIGHT

It is well recorded that before the fall of Aenoch and the rise of Unklar and Aufstrag that many of the nobles of that realm fell to the fad of being slain and risen from the dead. They returned as undead lords and knights. Many of these went on to serve Unklar in his armies as officers and commanders.

Such was one Baron Herovich. An evil man in life, he became dreadful in death. He haunted the realm of his people for years and when he passed to the service of Unklar, he continued to haunt it. His guile and his robust approach to meting out punishment allowed him to rise high in the ranks of Winter's Dark. But that all ended when Unklar was banished from the plain and his earthly realm collapsed. Herovich was one who attempted to rally the peoples of Aufstrag around the priests but was shunned and driven to the deep holes of Aufstrag by Coburg the Undying (who now holds dominion in the Citadel.)

Herovich lingered in the darkness for many years until he felt his strength returned. He gathered a small army about him and waged war in and around the lower levels until he was driven to heel. He took up refuge in the stables in the Bone Pit. From there he plotted to master the bone devils and bent himself to that task. He attempted to over-awe the devils of the Long Hall but failed. He attempted to split their ranks but found them indifferent to the power of the world. At last he made war on them, summoning the undead to aid him.

It was a short lived war as the bone devils made short work of his people and drove him to the edge of the Dwmmlere. There he fought, but fell to their overwhelming strength. Though he was not destroyed, his bones were carted off, all in separate directions, so that his power was much wasted.

Herovich now is little more than a skull. For the longest while he sat atop one of the columns, watching and plotting, hoping against hope that somehow fate might reunite him with his scattered and much ruined bones. Eventually, he was knocked

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off the column and landed with a thud and a crack to his cranium on the floor below.

There he sits, nestled against the column, looking out from his hollow eyes.

If anyone should chance upon him, or if a bargain is struck with the bone devils and they deliver him, he can be used as a guide or servant. He is a skull with a long crack across his cranium and a jaw. The eye sockets are hollow but contain the tell tale signs of burnt flesh within. He can speak a wide variety of languages, but only telepathically.

**HEROVICH** (*This lawful evil creatures' vital stats are HD 4d10, AC 26, HP 30. His primary attributes are mental. He has no attacking function. However once a day he can cast a symbol of hopelessness. He has telepathic powers and can communicate with anyone in any language up to 100 feet.*)

If found, rescued, or bargained away by the bone devils, Herovich attempts to persuade whoever finds him to find his bones (which are scattered everywhere around the Long Hall, on the columns and on the floor, some have been hauled off by wild animals) and return him to his natural form. If this is done, partially or wholly he returns as a full-fledged death knight and attacks whoever rescued him, if he has a reasonable chance of success.

If whoever finds him chooses to keep him as a talking skull they can. He will help them as he can, hoping that he is able to convince them, or that chance and opportunity should allow that he is reunited at some point with the rest of his body. He will attempt to manipulate his keeper into doing his bidding. For any such purposes assume that Herovich has a charisma of 14.

### EXITING THE LONG HALL

There are many exits leading to and from the Long Hall. Some are small and not notable, such as a staircase or ladder. Others are large, or served a specific purpose when constructed. The more significant ones are described in detail. Others are simply listed.

**RISEN ROAD:** The largest and most commonly used road from the Long Hall was the Risen Road. On this road men traveled up from the 1<sup>st</sup> to 2<sup>nd</sup> wards. It is wide enough to accommodate two or one horse carts and small wagons, beasts of burden, a troop facing 6 in the front. It began in the Bone Pit and ended in the 3<sup>rd</sup> District on the 11<sup>th</sup> Level of Aufstrag.

At 30 feet wide and 18 or more high, the ramp rose at a long, easy slope to each higher level, giving beasts of burden and merchants and porters and easier method of getting their wares up to the higher levels. It was policed by troops of orcs and their overseers who made certain that those on it were going up, always up. The down road was reserved for the Durnin Road.

It is abandoned now, and only used by some of the more mindless creatures who wander the halls and levels of Aufstrag.

**DURNIN ROAD:** On the far side of the Long Hall from the Risen Road stood the Durnin Road. Identical in design to the Risen Road, it was intended for traffic coming back down the tower.

Piled around the entrance to the Durnin Road are several large, very smooth boulders. They lay haphazardly around the entrance, one laying against one of the mighty columns of the Long Hall. Bones are scattered around, old, covered in dust and webbing. Equipment, too, lies littered amongst the debris-swords and armor. None of it has any value and is old beyond reckoning. The bones are those of orcs and one giant.

Some years back a tribe of orcs (now located in **A14: The Horned God's Acre**) went to war with several giants. Coming down the Risen Road they tried to go up the Durnin, but the giants were on to them and met them with rolling boulders they sent tumbling down the ramps. Many of the orcs were killed and the rest fled.

The Durnin Road leads to all the levels above, but where it empties on God's Acre, it does so next to a hill giant's den. Seven of these creatures dwell there. If the characters make a great deal of noise at the bottom of the road, the giants send one or more of their number down the Durnin Road to see what is amiss.

**PENITENT'S ROAD:** A small arched doorway leads to a steep, narrow, circuitous ramp, 3 feet wide and 6 feet high, that winds its way up the height of Aufstrag. It traverses all the levels until it ends at the Penitent's Domicile, Level 18 of Aufstrag. It offers access to most of the levels between the Bone Pit and its ending. However, just beyond the third level it has been walled off (**A15: Gallery of Souls**).

Those seeking salvation through sufferance took this road, in the hopes that their pain would draw the attention and grace of Unklar. Many died on the Penitent's Road for there was no water, no food, and the narrow path became stifling hot and choked with the stench of other travelers. To make travelling conditions worse, those that died on the road, or even fell out, became food for the rats; giant creatures that crawled from the crevices and quickly stripped flesh from bone.

Travel on the Penitent's Road is difficult. The angle up is such that the pressure is put upon the lower, back calf, which strains the lower back as well. The only breaks in the walk are the exits at the various levels, but these were, in the days of Aufstrag's glory, usually shut and barred. The bones and some gear of the fallen remain, at the bottom of the stair.

A quick investigation of the doorway reveals the ramp. It ascends rapidly but at the first turn there is an orc lying upon the floor, dead.

**The orc is lying upon his side, hollow eyes staring up the road he was traveling upon. His skin, normally dark and mottled, is striped and pale in places as if a whip tore the hide from his body. His body is sunken in. Several rats skitter about, gnawing on his flesh. One in particular seems bent on opening his stomach. His equipment lies about him, most of it in unrecognizable heaps.**

The orc is the unfortunate victim of a rust monster that is presently lingering up the road, just out of sight of those coming from below.

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It attacks anything that gets near the orc, or comes around the corner. This encounter should be beefed up if necessary.

**RUST MONSTER** (*This neutral creature's vital stats are HD 5d8, HP 19, AC 18. Its primary attributes are physical. It attacks with a touch attack that destroys metal equipment. The rust monster eats the metal, leaving the flesh unharmed.*)

**THE SOUTH WINDOW STAIR:** On the southern end of the Long Hall is a doorway. It is wooden, bound in metal, and protected by runes of longevity, giving it a +1 against any destructive force. Beyond is a narrow landing that leads to a low rising stair that winds its way up to the 3<sup>rd</sup> level of Aufstrag. It ends in a wide balcony overlooking the swamps outside. Once here one can see a great distance, a dozen miles or more on a sunny day. It is roughly 300 feet above the swamps.

Exiting Aufstrag here is extremely dangerous as the swamp beneath the balcony is little more than a large patch of quick-sand. Flying to and from the window automatically draws the attention of the wyverns above, who come down in screeching flocks of a dozen or more to fall upon those who are foolish enough to fly out.

There is a ladder built into the wall that leads one up to the 3<sup>rd</sup> level and a window there.

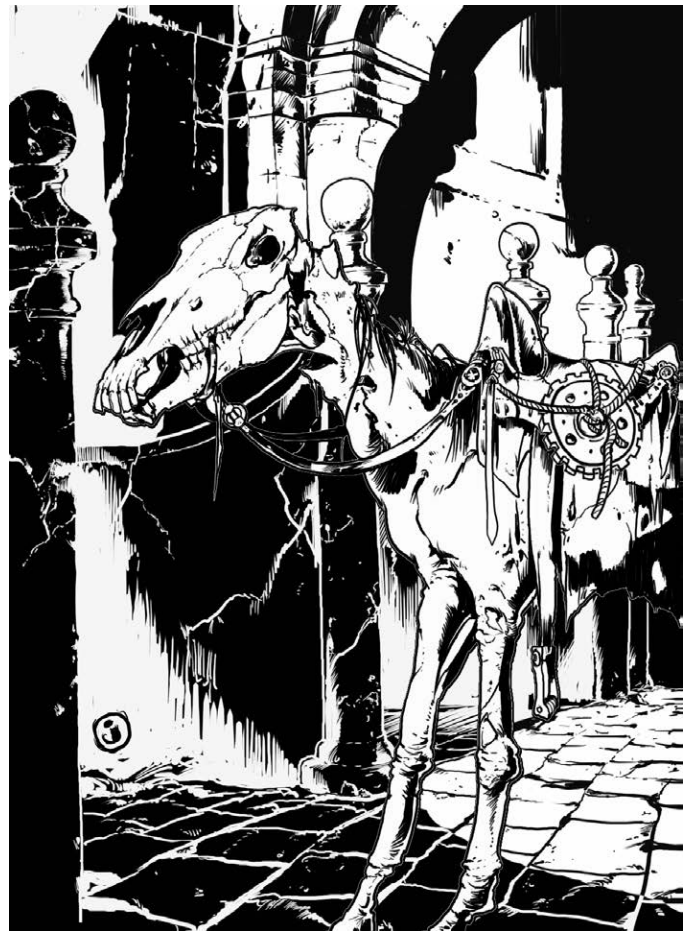
**LIFTS:** There are several makeshift elevators in the Long Hall. These consist of small 2 foot by 2 foot square shafts with a pulley-chain system attached to a 'car.' One is able to sit in the car and pull on the chain, lifting themselves up to the level above. The car is 4 feet tall, and can accommodate a halfling, dwarf, gnome or similar sized creature. It can carry up to 400 pounds as the chains are very stout. These were used to move messengers from one level to the next and are still used. Some tend to stick, requiring a strength check (CL 3) to get them moving again. All make a great deal of noise on the level above, attracting possible wandering monsters.

## STABLES

The stables stood off the Long Hall. Access to them was gained by a long tunnel that led to a deep, wide room, partitioned off by many independent stables, but topped by a large corral where the beasts could be exercised. Used to house the heavy horse of the Captains Guard as well as those who did not wish their beasts to travel up the length of Aufstrag, the stables were always full. Now, little comes this way as a colony of stirges has settled in the ceiling above the corral.

**STALLS:** The stables themselves are largely intact as the partitions were made of stone and have survived the test of time. Each partition is 4 feet high, allowing the steeds to see over them. None of them have doors; those that did, have long since fallen or been carted away. There is only one occupant in the stalls, an undead steed (see below).

**CORRAL:** The corral itself is covered in a thick, short-bladed, dark green grass. It's a creeping grass, with many roots, fed by the droppings of the stirge colony that dwells on the ceiling above it.



The stirges nest in the corral. There are about a hundred of them. They sleep, like bats, clinging to the ceiling, waiting to feed. When hungry they drop off in pairs or groups and fly out of the stables and into the Long Hall, hunting. They usually quickly go up the Risen or Durnin Roads, though some travel other paths as they desire. There are almost always 4-12 on the hunt.

They are extremely aggressive when hunting, otherwise they are rather docile. One can enter the corral without rousing them, unless one or more are about to hunt. There is a 10% chance that a group is just ready to hunt or just returning when the characters enter the room.

The stirges are slow to realize they are being attacked as a group, not until a number of them die does the entire colony rouse itself. If any large fire spells are used, they flee the chamber, seeking a new nest.

**STIRGES** (*These neutral creatures' vital stats are HD 1d6, AC 16, HP 3 or varies. Their primary attributes are physical. They attack with a touch attack for 1d3 points of damage. If a stirge successfully strikes a victim, it automatically attaches. In the following round, and every round thereafter, the stirge drains 1d4 points of damage until it has drained 12 total hit points. It flies at 40 feet and gains a +3 to all attacks and dexterity saves.*)

**THE MOUNT:** Long ago some undead lord dwelt in the Bone Pit and tried to master the bone devils. He thought that he could

rule them and use them as the strong arm of an army to take the lower halls of Aufstrag. They laughed at him and in a long and terrible fight they slew him, harvesting his bones as is their want (see above The Cage of the Death Knight).

But what he left behind remains in a stall of one of the stables. Once a proud and noble Kareelian war horse, the steed was slain and raised as undead by its grim-faced master. He rode the creature to countless battles and its grim countenance terrified many a soul. But in his battles with the bone devils, the undead steed did its master little good, so he left it in the stables when he went out to his final battle.

It remains in the stables even now; standing still, head hung low. The stirges ignore the hapless beast and no creatures come to the corral for fear of the stirges. Its tack and harness are hanging on the wall at the back of the stall.

It is in the last stable before the corral. If discovered, it makes no move to attack or impede anyone. If led from the stable it will follow as any horse might. It has little intelligence beyond a vague memory of what it was trained to do, so it will suffer one to ride it and will fight if commanded to do so. The stink of its decay is only a small thing, for it has stood so long in the stall that it smells more of old dried leather.

If attacked, it will defend itself.

**UNDEAD HORSE** (*This neutral creature's vital stats are HD 5d8, AC 16, HP 37. Its primary attributes are physical. It attacks with two hooves for 1d6 points of damage each. The steed never gains initiative in battle.*)

In the saddle bags, hanging upon the stall are some of the treasures of the dead knight. These include a bag of 86gp, a +2 silver dagger with runes etched on its hilt, a bundle of scrolls with 1-8 spells on them, and a diadem worth 1000gp.

### **BLACK POOL OF ATHIEL**

In the early days of Aufstrag there was a fountain of some exquisite design set off of the Long Hall. Here one could leave the hall and take refreshment before climbing any one of the avenues to the levels above. It was a commonly used pool for the denizens of Aufstrag.

But there came a time when a maiden, Athiel by name, was brought to the fountain. She had been abducted by some lords of Aufstrag from a distant land and though she had fought for freedom, she proved unequal to the task. In those days, the lords of darkness were in their prime and feared nothing, for their master ruled all. So they brought her to Aufstrag, bent on delivering her to one of the many masters of that place, hoping that her beauty and stature might gain them entry to the throne room so high above.

After entering the Long Hall, they came to the fountain for refreshment, and for news as well. Here, they hoped to learn some gossip that might better their chances of reaping a greater reward. They found there many suffering for want of the same

desires, and they set the maiden upon the side of the fountain.

Athiel knew then that all hope had left her, for she was bound and sat in the heart of darkness. There would be no minor torment in some lesser lord's captivity for her, but rather a life time's worth of evil visited upon her. Where in other circumstances she might hope to escape, in these, there was none, for she was bound and taken to hell.

She listened for a time to her captors, and though she did not wholly understand the language, she could glean the intent. She looked at the pool of dark water and could see no end to it, though all down the wall of the well, vanishing into the depths, were hooks, set for what purpose none could say.

She looked at her captor, dressed in all the finery of his armor and the glory of his weaponry. "I would that you bathe with me," she spoke to him. And he laughed at her and threw her into the water. As she slipped beneath the water, she cast the chain she'd been bound with under a hook and held herself there, looking up at him. Her gown and hair spread out from her, and she took on the appearance of a ghostly apparition. When she did not rise, he realized that she was going to drown. He cursed her, leaned forward and reached into the water.

Thus, he was off balance when she looped the chains around his neck and pulled. Being bound by the hook below gave her the leverage she needed to flip him over and into the water where he sank and drowned. Unfortunately, he took her with him; thus, Athiel died with her captor. Her ghost now haunts the pool so that ever after any who came there bearing a captive of any sort, she causes them such grief that they age before her. Thus, the pool is called the Black Pool of Athiel.

But Aufstrag does not play host for redemption, vengeance or victory of any kind. The weight of it is heavy with the breath of darkness, turning Athiel's vengeance to evil. For, in her haunting, she cannot tell friend from foe, good from evil, and all but a few who have seen her were aged in the shadow of her terror. So, the lords of Aufstrag drug captives to the Black Pool and thrust them into the room, to suffer at the empty hands of Athiel.

### **FIGHTING THE GHOST**

Anyone who enters the Pool Room is subject to an attack by the ghost. After four rounds the ghost is aware of the entrant and comes to the surface of the water. She lingers there for awhile, floating in the water. Anyone who is looking in the water sees her coming up from the deep pool.

For anyone looking in the pool they see the following:

**Deep in the water of the well, a figure forms. At first little more than a white mote in the dark water, it rises slowly, forming into a beautiful, haunting figure. Her face is lined with terror and pain, her arms spread wide, and the gown of her demise hovers around her like a cloud of silk. Her eyes beckon, holding you in their gaze.**

Anyone seeing the figure must make a charisma save (CL 10) or be held by her until she comes to the surface. Once her ghostly

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figure is seen, the spell breaks and they can look away, but suffer a -2 on any action taken against her.

In 1d8 rounds she leaps from the water, attacking any in the room.

**GHOST** (This neutral creatures' vital stats are HD 10d8, AC 20, HP varies. Her primary attributes are mental. She attacks with a slam for magical affect. Any successful hit ages the victim: humans and half orcs 1d4 decades, halfling 1d6 decades, and dwarves and gnomes 3d6 decades. Elves are immune. She is able to utter a frightful moan that, unless a wisdom save is made, anyone who hears it is subject to a fear spell. She is incorporeal and uses telekinesis.)

She can be turned, but if she is, she returns to the room after 1 day, for she cannot be destroyed unless her bones are retrieved from the pool and buried in hallowed ground.

She will not attack true neutral characters. If she encounters one alone, she does not attack them, but rather approaches them, attempting to touch or talk with them. If the character in question has some manner of speaking with the dead, they may unriddle her story and learn her fate.

At the bottom of the pool are the bodies of Athiel and her captor. Lying by her is a wide brass ring that held her hair back and out of her face. Next to her lies the ruin of her captor. Nothing is left of him but for his armor, axe and dagger.

**TREASURE:** *Ring of Athiel*, +2 plate mail, +1 battle axe, +2 dagger. There are 77gp and 14 10gp gems lying about his body as well.

**RING OF ATHIEL:** It is plain on the outside, but the inner ring is carved with the words: "For Athiel. Wear in comfort. Free of fear. Given of your Father." It is a hair ring that gives the wearer a +5 against all fear effects, magical or otherwise. It must be worn, not carried.

### THE BONE PITS

Aufstrag is a network of terror. Throughout its many levels, the damned are tortured with many devices. They are beaten and bound, devoured in spirit and flesh, and killed. The bones of the dead are cast into chutes and sent tumbling down vertical shafts until they land in one of the bone pits. This is truly why the entry hall is called the Bone Pit.

There are 8 Bone Pits of varying sizes. Each of these is accessed through the avenues that lead from the Long Hall. They all have heavy iron doors and large slide locks, that open from the outside.

#### PIT 1 THE BONE GARDEN

Some few years ago, a band of adventurers entered Aufstrag. Most fell victim to the wights of the Dwimmelere and were pulled into the morass of the Endless Pools. Two fled into the Long Hall: Berick Two-Eyes (named thus because his eyes were two different colors) and his comrade Rorath. They crossed the Long Hall and took up refuge in the south window stair, there to plot their next move. There they rested, Rorath sleeping first. When he woke, Berick Two-Eyes was gone. There was no trace

of him, and Rorath never saw his friend again. He attempted to climb the stair, but his spirit broke, and he fled back to the Long Hall. There, he cast illusions upon himself to hide from prying eyes. He did not, however, account for the clinging darkness and after some weeks, he succumbed to it and madness gripped him.

He fled from his own illusions into the Bone Roads and there wandered wild for some time until he came to one of the Bone Pits. There, he saw a mountain of bones, and he thought to himself that here must lie Berick Two-Eyes. He set to looking for his friend, convinced he could recognize his bones. He placed illusions upon the door to make it seem barred, though in truth it was not. With each morning, he rose and recast his illusions.

He began to organize the bones, setting them in piles and categorizing them. None molested him for they thought the door locked, and those few who riddled it, entered and were terrified as if by some vision of a greater devil, for the bones were stacked high and in neat order. He has also become very adept at removing flesh from the bone, doing so to any living creature that he finds.

**THE DOOR:** The door is bound in a *minor image* (CL 11) spell, making the bar seem locked with a padlock. Unless this image is overcome, the door must be kicked in or the lock picked. If someone attempts to force the door or pick the lock a magic mouth appears on it and utters these commands "Lest ye be Berick Two-Eye, be off. Or bones alone will you leave behind."

**THE ROOM:** The walls are all lined with neatly arranged bones, all organized by their own type and size: heads along one wall, legs another and so on. Space was left for the rats to come and go for on those Rorath lives, casting minor illusions to trap them, at which point he slays them, eating them raw. A *rope trick* hangs in the air, and is visible to anyone who enters that corner.

He lives in the *rope trick* spell, hanging in the southwest corner of the room. Years previous, he used a scroll with *permanency* on it to make the *rope trick* remain. He crawls into it and out of it whenever need presses him. He has also cast *invisibility* on himself. Thus he hides himself from true danger.

If anyone enters the room, he immediately casts *fear*. This is not considered an attack, so it does not affect his *invisibility*. If the interlopers do not flee, he begins to use *ghost sound* and *ventriloquism* to mimic the voices of the dead. He whispers in their ears, so only one or two can hear him, or calls from the far side of the room.

He says the following or similar statements: "Your bones to line my wall," or "One is for you. Two is for me. Both beneath the bone laden tree," or "There is no getting out. You are going to die here."

If he is discovered, or if the characters do not leave, he becomes more and more agitated, until at last he unleashes the full power of his sorcery, attacking the characters as opportunity dictates. He generally casts *shadow conjuration* to attack his foes and mislead them, allowing himself to become invisible again and attack the party while they are looking at the false him.

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He has cast *explosives runes* on his chest, so that anyone who reads the words triggers the spell, whether he is dead or alive. If he is dead and his body is searched there is a chance the searcher accidentally sets off the spell. Dexterity (CL 9) negates this. If, however, they should pull off his cloak, they definitely read it, setting off the runes. If he feels he is close to death he rips his cloak open and triggers the runes anyway, causing 6d6 points of damage to all within 10 feet.

**RORATH** (This 11<sup>th</sup> level, insane human's vital stats are HP 36, AC 19. His primary attributes are dexterity, intelligence, and wisdom. He attacks with his clawed hands for 1d2 points of damage or his straight-edge razor which he yields to deadly effect and 1-4 points of damage. He has the following spells memorized each day: 0 level ghost sounds x3, message x3. 1<sup>st</sup> level color spray, ventriloquism x 4. 2<sup>nd</sup> level dark chaos, invisibility x 2, minor image. 3<sup>rd</sup> explosive runes, rope trick x 2. 4<sup>th</sup> level dragon scales, phantasmal killer, shadow conjuration. 5<sup>th</sup> level nightmare, guards and wards, 6<sup>th</sup> level mislead.)

**TREASURE:** Within the *rope trick* is a mountain of treasure that Rorath has collected over the years. His spell book that has all the spells listed above plus 15 more at the Castle Keepers discretion. There is 5000gp in mixed coin set in bags and iron lock boxes. There is a *devil's whip* (see **New Magic Items**), along with a *shield +1*, 2 *cure light wounds* healing potions, and a *stone of alarm*.

### PIT 2: LAST PIT STANDING

The door to this pit is closed and barred. Opening it is difficult, requiring a successful strength check (CL 8), because a mountain of bones is heaped against on the other side. If the door is opened the bone pile gives way and pours through the open door in an avalanche. Anyone in the way must make a successful dexterity save (CL 6) or suffer 1d8 points of damage.

This is the last pit still being continually used. Its shafts connect with levels in the high citadel and the court of Coburg the Undying. His victims are thrown in the shafts and sent tumbling down to this particular bone pit. Over the years the chamber has filled with bones and several of the shafts as well.

The room has little of value in it, as it is almost entirely filled with bones. It is easy enough to climb and clamber up and over them, coming into the chamber, though any attempt to so do so causes more of them to slide this way and that.

There are four shafts that open into the room. Three are clogged with bones and will require a great deal of moving bones to clear them. Such an operation would require 8 hours of continuous work. One shaft is not filled, but is very close to it. The bones mound right up to the opening.

The shaft is 4 x 4 feet and made of iron. The iron is much corroded and in poor shape, allowing for plenty of hand holds. Climbing it is possible with a successful dexterity check (CL 4). A check must be made every 4 rounds. The climber can move about 10 feet in a round. If they should fall they can attempt to arrest their descent by any means possible with a further dexterity check (the Castle Keeper must assign a CL depending on what they attempt to do).

The shaft is very dark; a very small light is discernible high up. It leads to an opening on Level 3, The Gallery of Souls. However, any attempt to climb it alerts a colony of huge spiders that dwell in the shaft. They nest just beyond the light. Upon feeling the vibrations caused by a climber they begin descending rapidly. The swarm is so thick that when they pass over the opening on Level 3, they dim it a little. The swarm moves 10 feet per round and is roughly 220 feet up the shaft. Anyone within 100 feet of the swarm and being reasonably quiet can hear the thousands of clawed feet scratching on the metal of the shaft.

**SWARM (200)** (These creatures' vital stats are HD 1/2, HP 1, AC nil. Their primary attributes are none. They attack by biting victims for 1d2 points of damage per round, until they are destroyed or the victim flees the swarm. The swarm moves at 10 feet per round. Victims can kill up to 2 spiders a round with weapons or open hands. Area of effect spells kill one spider per hit point of damage. The swarm only follows a victim for 50 feet if it is fleeing.)

### PIT 3: BY THE BONE

The door to this room is ajar, though it has swollen some, jamming it into the door frame. It requires a successful strength check (CL 4) to open it all the way. Regardless of whether the door is opened or not, one can see into the room just enough to peer around.

There are bones all over the room, scattered here and there, some of them are crushed and broken. Some are even ground to dust. The ruins of the bones are all over, except in the center of the room. But amidst the bones are several figures. Some of them are obviously orcs. One might be a goblin and two are hell hounds. All are slightly chewed on by rats, many of which surround the bodies, similarly crushed.

This is the lair of a malicious spirit, a minor devil who has taken up residence here, and animated some of the bones that lie in the room. It does not attack until there are several people in the room. When that happens, he animates some of the bones, forming a misshapen giant, some of whose bones belong to other creatures. He attacks with the giant skeleton. If it is slain, he waits 4 rounds and then animates another one. He does this until he is found and killed.

**GIANT SKELETON** (This creatures' vital stats are HD 9d10, AC 21 and HP 61. Its primary attributes are physical. It slams opponents with its fists for 2-12 points of damage. Slashing and stabbing weapons do half damage. It can be turned.)

**HERIN, DEVIL** (This creatures' vital stats are HD 3d8, AC 17, HP 19. Its primary attributes are mental. It attacks with one claw for 1d6 points of damage. Upon a successful hit with the claw the victim must make a successful charisma save or the skin around the wound begins to rot. It rots at 1d4 hit points per round. The rot continues to spread for four rounds or until stopped with magical healing and cleric spells such as bless, etc. When the herin sits absolutely still, it creates a displacement field around itself, making it virtually invisible. It can only be seen on a successful intelligence save (CL 12). He has all powers common to devils.)

## A13: THE BONE PIT

**TREASURE:** The herin devil has a ring of *animate dead*. He uses this to bring the golems to life. The ring has 25 charges on it.

### PIT 4: THE HAG'S GIBBET

A night hag has taken up residence in this pit. The hag is often hunting and the Castle Keeper should determine if she is or is not in the room when the characters approach.

All the chutes to it have long since clogged and no bones have fallen from above for years. The hag found the pit while wandering the halls of Aufstrag. There she set about making a house of horrors.

Beyond the door, a muffled scream of inescapable terror is heard. The room's darkness is murky, thick to the taste, and heavy with the scent of blood. A large fire crackles on the far side of the room, casting distorted shadows on the walls and floor around. Old discarded rags, boxes, bits and pieces of armor, some weapons and more are scattered about. Several tables covered in blackened, dirty cloth stand near the far wall. One table holds a huge, rotting body. All of this stands beneath the gibbets and chains that dangle from the high ceiling, each ending in some barbed hook. Figures dangle from several of the hooks, some moving, others hanging motionless. They are bound with ropes and wires, gagged and horribly mutilated. The whole room reeks of death.

The hag, Merci by name, is rarely in the room, for she is usually out hunting. If she was in any way alerted to the party's approach she slipped from the room and hid herself as best she could in the shadows of the halls. She takes great joy in hunting creatures, good and evil, so that she may occupy their dreams. This way she is able to control them, and through them captures others or slays them. All end up on her gibbet one way or the other, where she tortures them until all their strength is gone, at which point she sets them loose in Aufstrag or devours them.

She will follow the party for days, attempting to get into their dreams. She does not care about her treasure, or her room, seeking rather to hunt and kill fresh victims.

If she is in the room when the party enters, she attempts to treat with them first, trying to convince them that she is the hand maiden of a terrible devil and made to do his bidding. If they would but set her free, she would leave Aufstrag and never return.

If pressed to fight, she will.

**NIGHT HAG** (*This lawful evil creatures' vital stats are HD 8d8, AC 22, HP 56. Her primary attributes are mental. She attacks with a bite for 2d6 points of damage. She has spell-like abilities, dream haunting, SR 10 and an immunity to fire, cold, charm, sleep and fear. For a full description of her abilities refer to Monsters & Treasure.*)

**TREASURE:** The night hag has slain innumerable creatures over the years and amassed quite a small treasure trove. Jammed into the half rotten corpse of a dead ogre on the table is the following:

3000gp in coin, a *ring of freedom of movement*, a small stone with a healing rune upon it that cures 1 HP per hour it is held, a flask of gladus buds (see **New Magic** below) and a +2 hand axe.

### PIT 5: LONG ABANDONED

The bones stopped falling here some time ago. The chutes became clogged one after the other and, with no one to clean them, they filled up or were abandoned. Enough removed from the Long Hall, the room is not occupied.

It is covered, however, in old, brittle bones. Near the door are four wheel barrows, a dozen hammers, half dozen crowbars, a large box of iron wedges, and a hundred or so iron spikes. The skeletal remains of a body lays next to one of the wheel barrows, its head stove in. Against the wall, to the left of the door, is a small mountain of yellow-white bone dust and a stack of a hundred or so old sacks. There are about 20 that are filled with the dust.

A cursory track check (CL 4) reveals the many thousands of tiny bone shards on the floor, surrounding areas of powdered bone that have been hammered into the floor. The goblins here were using the hammers to powder the bones. For what purpose, none can now say.

The room is empty and has nothing of value in it.

### PIT 6: FIELDS OF WORMS

Part of the ceiling here has collapsed and water poured into the room. The water brought sediment from above, mixed with the bones and created a foul swamp that soon become occupied by blood worms. Years of fresh corpses fertilized the room, creating a rich, black earth, which in turn allowed all manner of strange plants to grow. Amongst the bizarre garden of short, broad leafed bushes and thick-bladed grass, there is a nest of screechers. The stand of them lies upon the far side of the room.

The screechers begin howling as soon as anything enters the room, trying to draw whoever or whatever it is in to them. This brings the victim across the dirt, which attracts the blood worms.

**BLOOD WORMS X 60** (*These neutral evil creatures' vital stats are HD 1d8, AC 10. Their primary attributes are physical. They attack by latching onto any victim that comes within reach, striking out much as a snake does to bite a victim for 1 point of damage. Thereafter they begin draining a victim's blood for 1 point of damage per round. After they latch onto a victim, they inject toxins into the victim's body. See Monsters & Treasure of Aihrde for the full description.*)

Clearing the blood worms out is next to impossible. Even if they are all killed, larvae in the ground will hatch and repopulate the room in a matter of a few days. The blood worms have treasure scattered about the room, most lying beneath the earth. However, one figure lies clearly upon the ground, wearing +1 chain mail with a sword of wounding in hand.

The room is relatively cool and almost comfortable but the smell of blood permeates everything.

## 24 CASTLES & CRUSADES



**PIT 7: LAND OF WIGHTS**

The bone pit here has become the home of a seere devil, a very powerful creature. He commands a retinue of wights that he can summon from his long spear. He has taken the bones in the room and built a large vaulted chamber, in which he sits, contemplating those things that the damned contemplate.

The door to the room is gone.

The cold stone of the hall gives way to a large, circular room. The room itself contains a large structure, a circular room woven of bones. To all appearances, it seems to be a yurt, only one made of the bones of many creatures. It fills the whole, gigantic room. A broad opening gives way to the bone-yurt, and within several fires burn in large braziers. Beyond them, a man sits comfortably in a chair, also made of bone. He is beautiful, well dressed, and the scent of perfume reaches you even here. But his jaw is strangely dislocated, seeming too large for his head, and bound to his head with wires.

The seere devil has assumed his favorite form: that of a beautiful man, short and dark haired. But as with many devils, his favored form defies his own nature and his jaw looks wholly unnatural, disjointed and long. For a complete description of the seere devil see **Monsters & Treasure of Aihrde**.

The devil will attempt to treat with anyone who comes into his domicile, but as he speaks, he casts *confusion* upon them. If and when they seem disoriented, he leaps forward with his essunk spear and attempts to disable the first of any near him. As soon as he does, he swallows them whole, turning then to the next victim.

**SEERE DEVIL** (This lawful evil creatures' vital stats are HD 13d8, AC 24, HP 78. His primary attributes are physical. He attacks with a bite for 1d12 points of damage or his essunk spear for 1d10+3 points of damage. He has dark and deep vision, spell-like abilities, SR 11, swallow, true seeing, and twilight vision. Through his spear he can summon 1d4 wights each time he strikes the ground. He can do this 1d20 times. Any successful strike with the spear requires a constitution save or the target becomes blind. A second strike makes the target deaf. He casts as a 12<sup>th</sup> level caster *confusion*, *darkness*, *insect plague*, *symbol*, *summon undead*, and *vision*.)

The seere devil prefers to disable an opponent, for as soon as opportunity allows he swallows them whole, adding them to the essunk spear's army of wights.

**TREASURE:** There is much of worth in the bone chamber. Each of the braziers is magical, with an ever burning flame in them. Each burns until water is poured upon them, at which point the magic is ruined. He has a chest behind him with the following items: 5000gp in coin and gems, a necklace of rubies and diamonds worth 1500gp, a *feathered rope* (**Monsters & Treasure of Aihrde**), a flask of *boot oil* (**M&TofA**), a +2 *military pick*, a +1 *bow* with a quiver of 7 +2 *arrows*.

**PIT 8: GRAVEL AND ASH**

A black, acrid stench greets anyone approaching down the hall toward this bone pit. Heat and the sound of crackling flames

assail them before they come to the doorway. The door itself has been pulled off its hinges and leans against the wall.

Inside the room the floor is sunken some 40 feet below the floor level. A flame twists up from the floor in long snake-like tendrils, only to drop back to the floor leaving smoke and a cloud of settling ash behind. Above, the ceiling is open and extends up hundreds of feet. It ends in a deeper darkness, broken only by a dull, red glow. But the thought of that is broken as a huge, black hound rises from the gravel of the pit.



## A13: THE BONE PIT

This bone pit is connected directly to Level 7, The Pit of Woe. Animals butchered in the Pit of Woe were tossed down the shaft to land here in this smoldering hell. Their bodies were consumed, but their spirits were trapped, twisted into the evil incarnations that occupy the pit now, hell hounds.

**HELL HOUND 1-20** (*These lawful evil creatures' vital stats are HD 5-8d8, AC 16, HP varies. Their primary attributes are physical. They attack with a bite for 1d6 points of damage; any successful bite inflicts a further 1d6 points of heat damage. They have a breath weapon that inflicts 1 hit point of damage per hit dice. They are immune to fire based attacks and have darkvision.*)

The hell hound numbers are limitless; countless beasts dwell in the dark gravel and fire pit, but only a score or so awaken at any one intrusion. The number should be scaled by level and size of the party.

**ASCENDING TO THE PIT OF WOE:** It is possible to ascend from the Bone Pit to the Pit of Woe. It is some 700-800 feet. The shaft is warm, but only about 95 degrees. Climbers should check every 10 feet with a CL of 2. Natural climbers who have automatic climb, such as rangers, should check once every 50 feet (CL 2). Falling into the fire pit does normal fall damage, plus an additional 2-20 fire damage. There is nothing to stop one from flying up however.

## THE WARRENS

The Warrens are a network of rough corridors and tunnels that lead to a number of nests (rooms) of a variety of sizes. It served as the living quarters to orcs for many hundreds of years. The rooms range in size and include sleeping chambers, barracks, kitchens, temples, and meeting halls.

The Bone Pit played host to many travelers, but it was the first level of defense against intruders. Thus, a host of orcs were set to guard it and took up residence in the regions around the Long Hall, on both sides and behind. There were thousands of these orcs, and when the hosts of Aufstrag were called to war, they poured from the holes and crevices they dug for themselves in the Warrens.

But they lived there as well and to make a home for themselves they tunneled through the slag rock, carving out a nest of homes and a network of corridors to connect them. These corridors and nests were ever-changing, for the orcs would block up one and dig a new one as they desired. As with all things in Aufstrag, much changed due to the whim of those who dwelt there.

They were last fully occupied when the Battle of the Tree occurred. All the host of the west broke through the Ahargon Den and, led by many paladins, forced the Forgingen and crossed into the Long Hall. There, they met all the strength that remained in Aufstrag, part of which lay in the warrens. The orcs issued from their tunnels in vast numbers and fought in the Long Hall. Most died there, but some fled from Aufstrag and others returned to the warrens, though their numbers remained few ever after.

**TRAVEL IN THE WARRENS:** As noted the warrens are simply a large network of tunnels and connecting rooms that are really no more than large tunnels. There are several types of rooms, described in general below. None are specifically designated on

the map, as they change constantly, as orcs and other creatures move through them, use them or fill them up and tunnel new ways through the slag.

There are orcs occupying the warrens, several hundred to a thousand at any given time. They move a lot, every week or so picking up and moving to another locale in the warrens. This allows the rats to come in behind them and devour the waste they leave behind. The orcs travel in small bands, but will gather in a central location if they feel they are threatened. They dwell in very tight places, often sleeping pressed up against one another. They always keep sentries as Aufstrag is a dangerous place.

The tunnels are all lined with torch sconces. These metal brackets are driven into the walls with no skill nor any design to keep them stable. Some have torches, some do not. The tunnels are dirty, have a heavy odor in them, that brings to mind a mixture of old sewage and rotting meat. In areas where the orcs have recently set up or had a camp, the odor is much thicker.

When traveling in the Warrens, either place the orcs in several groups before the characters enter and allow them to find them or not, or roll on the encounter chart below.

**SLEEPING:** These rooms occur where the tunnel is wide enough to accommodate a dozen or more orcs, male, female and young. The walls of such rooms are usually marked with orc graffiti. They show some signs of occupancy, usually in the form of small animal bones, bits and pieces of clothing or equipment, broken masonry, and other sundry items. There is rarely anything of value as the orcs are careful to haul that off with them, and the rats eat anything edible.

**BARRACKS:** A large room, several dozen feet across and 40-60 feet long. These rooms are much the same as sleeping quarters.

**KITCHEN:** There is always a well in a kitchen. It drops down to the morass under Aufstrag, or further into the trenches. The rooms are caked in old, dried blood. Large creatures are slaughtered here for the orc's meals.

**Wells:** The water in the wells here is brackish and covered in a thin layer of oil. It is drinkable, however, it does little to alleviate one's thirst, but it does sate the bodies' need for nourishment.

**TEMPLE:** These rooms are set aside from a main corridor. Crude altars to Unklar are built within. These always consist of a block of stone with some type of horn set upon it. Sacrifices are heaped about the altar, and usually include corpses or at least the flesh from a victim. They are blood stained. The orcs move them now as many creatures in Aufstrag do not wish to see Unklar's return.

**MEETING HALL:** Orcs have no government but the strong. Meeting halls are generally for the community to gather and watch some victim being tortured, executed, or eaten alive. They are larger than other rooms and generally round. Their most common features however, are the piles of slag and stone stacked against the walls. Here the orcs sit and stand to watch the entertainment.

## 26 CASTLES & CRUSADES

## THE ORCS

The Bruhl Nu have dwelt in the warrens for as long as any of the denizens of Aufstrag can remember. They are shorter in stature than normal orcs, ranging only 4 to 5 feet high. They are thin and wiry, with long limbs, fingers and toes. They are particularly brutish and unintelligent. They cannot craft weapons well, but do master them quick enough, thus are armed with all manner of armaments. In short, whatever they have taken from the dead or each other.

They are nasty, foul tempered, small-minded creatures. They prefer murder to out and out fighting and almost always flee unless cornered, only to return in the quiet and fall upon their victims as opportunity dictates.

The Bruhl Nu are a large tribe that range over the first three levels of Aufstrag. They have no real tribal organization, but travel in bands that trade with one another. A band is led by a chief, usually the toughest warrior. There is little difference in appearance or physical build between male and females, aside from the obvious. Females in the Bruhl Nu are as strong as males, and the most wicked rules the band and reaps all the treasures and reward they desire. Children must walk within a few hours of birth or they are left to die, usually ending up in the gullet of a hell hound.

A band consists of 10-40 warriors (male and female) and a dozen or so children. If hard pressed they flee. If cornered they call, via horns, to other bands that may be in the area. They try to avoid blasting horns however, for this may bring unwanted attention.

**BRUHL NU** *(These lawful evil creatures' vital stats are HD 1-5d8, AC 13, HP varies. Their primary attributes are physical. They attack with weapons for an average of 1-8 points of damage. They prefer long knives, man catchers, darts and similar weapons. They move faster than most of their kind at 40 feet per round. They usually have 4-12gp in treasure.)*

## ENCOUNTERS IN THE WARRENS

The warrens are a busy place. They offer roads for the many smaller creatures that occupy the Bone Pit and as such attract predators. All of these move in the contained area and are often drawn to noise. Encounters should be rolled every 6 hours. On a roll of 1 on a d12 an encounter occurs. Design one, or use the chart below.

### ENCOUNTER CHART

- |    |                                    |
|----|------------------------------------|
| 1  | Eridu, 1-6 (see New Monsters)      |
| 2  | Hell Hound, 1-4                    |
| 3  | Human Wizard and Band, 1 and 2-12* |
| 4  | Orc scout 1                        |
| 5  | Orc patrol, 10-16                  |
| 6  | Orc band, 3-60                     |
| 7  | Giant Rats, 2-20                   |
| 8  | Skeleton, 1-8                      |
| 9  | Wight, 1-4                         |
| 10 | Zombie, 1-8                        |

\* These are always slavers come down from one of the higher levels. The wizard is always of the Paths of Umbra. The level of the band ranges as to CK's need. Their purpose is to come to the warrens and take orc young to be raised as fosters above.

## HUAMAN'S INN

Huaman was a well known murderer in his day. He poisoned many of his patrons in order to rob them or sell their carcasses for the meat. When he was found out by his fellow villagers, they took him from his inn and set him in a cage of iron. At his trial his lord condemned him to death and ordered the cage lowered in water and the murderer drowned. But Huaman cursed them and promised that if they drowned him he would blacken their water and poison their crops. The villagers protested and would not see their water polluted and crops ruined with his evil, so the lord rethought his judgment. "I condemn you to death. You will be set upon the high cliffs overlooking the wilds to the south and there set in chains. Your flesh will be flayed from your bones so that the scavengers shall come to you and devour you utterly."

So it was that Huaman died in great pain and all his last moments were filled with suffering. Driven from the house of his body, he wandered the Arc of Time until Heth cast judgment upon him and banished him to Aufstrag. There, he dwelt a slave, beaten and mistreated. And when the lords of Hell learned of his evil deeds they set him to work again as an inn keeper and tavern master. Though his restless spirit thought that he had risen in hell, it was not so, for his masters tormented him and abused him so that he knew no peace. And they set thoughts of terror upon him and he came to believe that he was alive again and the whole world sought to poison him, so he would not eat or drink and his body shriveled into a withered thing and he knew only pain.

Many came to Huaman's Inn and ate and drank the inn keeper's fare, leaving well-nourished for hard journeys. This was a greater torment to Huaman, for he could see their comfort, but never feel it.

When Aufstrag fell, Huaman's Inn fell with it. No longer the toy of greater creatures, Huaman fell once more and the suffering twisted him and he dwelt in utter terror in the ruins of his inn. And few would come to drink of his brew, nor eat his meals.

## H1 TAVERN ROOM

The main room is the tavern. Here, people gathered for drink and food. Much remains as it did when it was last used about a century ago. The tables and chairs of thick wood are scattered now, and show much decay. Some are rat-chewed or rotten, but by and large they in good shape. It is dominated by a very large fire place in the south wall. The room is cold and clearly unused for many years. Everything is covered in a thick layer of dust. A careful search (CL 5) reveals that the room is undisturbed at least for a few months.

**FIRE PIT:** The fire place, much like the rest of the room, is unused, but there are plenty of ashes in the pit from previous use. If one approaches the fire pit they might notice (wisdom CL 6) it is slightly warm, despite showing no signs of use for a great long while. It is warm because several fire mephits have taken up residence here, living under the ash.

## A13: THE BONE PIT

If anyone begins moving the ash around, attempts to warm themselves over a fire, or anything that involves getting close to the fireplace the mephits attack. They all single out one victim, attack until they kill the victim, and begin to devour them. If someone attempts to interfere by attacking one of the mephits, it simply spreads its wings to block the attacker and continues to devour the original victim.

**FIRE MEPHIT, 4** *(These lawful evil creatures' vital stats are HD 2d10, AC 14, HP 20. Their primary attributes are physical. They attack with 2 claws for 1d3 points of damage and a bite for 1d2 points of damage. They are able to shoot a bolt of flame three times a day for 1d10 points of damage.)*

**TREASURE:** Hidden in the ash of the fireplace is the mephits' only treasure, a golden armband that grants the wielder +3 AC.

### H2 KITCHEN

The kitchen is dominated by a large stone table running down its middle. This is topped with marble that is well used. Here Huaman prepared the food for whatever meal was coming along. There are counters, tables and cabinets lining the walls, filled with all manner of cookery. Four large ovens line the east wall. These are little used now and show the signs of age. There is a large bin of coal next to the ovens with enough coal to keep them going for several weeks.

There is also a well in the room that descends 40 feet before it hits water. The water is fairly good, though a little metallic tasting.

There is little of value here beyond the kitchen ware, most of which is very serviceable, though it needs to be cleaned.

**THE OVENS:** It is possible to fire up the ovens, but doing so causes the pipes behind the wall to suddenly heat up, expand and begin popping. The sound of course alerts things up in the levels above. They may come to investigate, or may not care. Roll on **Appendix C Wandering Monsters** at the back of this book.

### H3 STORAGE

There is a small storage room here. It has two large padlocks on it. Both can be picked (CL 7). There is all manner of rotten food here. However, there are several racks of very aged wine. There are 48 bottles in total, each worth about 100gp. They are good wines from the Luneberg Plains before its despoilment. None of the food is salvageable.

### H4 HUAMAN'S CHAMBERS

Huaman haunts these chambers, a dried, shriveled husk of a creature. Presently he is curled up in a ball behind the door of his chambers. He moans ever so slightly, so that anyone listening at the door has a chance of hearing it (CL 7). The room itself is in horrid shape. The stench from the room is almost palpable. Anyone entering must make a successful constitution save (CL 10) or real backwards, disoriented and ill for one round. Everything is ruined and covered in feces, blood

and other fluids. There are dead rats everywhere, their worm filled, half-gnawed carcasses, show signs of being eaten violently and raw. The furniture is ruined.

Any light that spills in the room terrifies Huaman, and he begins to climb the wall behind him. He is disjointed and able to cling to the wall and ceiling with little problem, all the while facing the door. He crawls up on the ceiling, attempting to avoid any interlopers. If he is spied, he screams a wild, reckless scream and vomits a wicked, diseased bile upon whoever torments him. He runs, crawling the ceiling like a mad man, screaming all the while.

**HUAMAN** *(This lawful evil creatures vital stats are HD 8d8, AC 17, HP 48. His primary attributes are mental. He attacks with a bite for 1d8 points of damage, being able to unhinge his jaw and use the full range of his teeth. He also sprays a poisonous bile up to 6 feet in a cone 6 inches wide at the mouth and 4 feet wide at its furthest. Anyone caught in the bile suffers from the same affects as Type IV poison. Upon a successful save the victim(s) take 1d8 points of damage and -1 from all attribute checks for 2-4 days. Those who fail their save suffer 2d8 points of damage and fall into a coma for 3-9 days. His joints play no role in the movements he takes, he can turn his head 360 degrees, twist his arms and wrists, etc.)*

Huaman fights until he can flee the room, failing that he fights until he is killed. If he is killed, he is cast out of his shell and is reborn in a few days as an Eridu, even more mindless than he is now.

**Treasure:** Huaman has no treasure of his own, however, in the room are the scraps from his previous victims. They are filthy, scattered about in the room as they are, and will require some cleaning. It takes 10 rounds to gather it all up. In all there is 200gp, a ring set with small diamond shards worth 500gp, +2 *tulwar*, a magical *wind fan*, a suit of chain mail with coif, a shield emblazoned with the coat of arms of a knight of Kareelia.

## KARA NUEL

The tower of Kara Nuel sits in the south east corner of Aufstrag. It spans three levels of the fortress: the Bone Pit, the Horned God's Acre and the Gallery of Souls. It served as the quarters for a captain of the hosts of Aufstrag, but after the Battle of the Tree it was left empty. Eventually a witch orb, one of the devoted servants of Unklar, came to occupy it. In little need of sustenance and desiring power beyond his station, the witch orb has little to do with the lower level of his own tower, preferring to dwell in the upper reaches.

### KARA NUEL LEVEL 1

Access is gained via the foyer and the tunnels that lead to the Long Hall. For a complete write up an Kara Nuel see Level 2, The Horned God's Acre and Level 3, The Dungeons.

### CREVICE

A deep crevice has cut the hall. It descends over 120 feet into the Trenches below. An odd smell rises with a thin vapor from



below, a mixture of soured milk and rotten food. Aufstrag stands upon the grave of ancient Al Liosh, and this crevice looks down into that grave. A narrow bridge, made of two planks hobbled together with slats crosses the span.

Crossing the bridge requires no attribute check unless the individual is careless, encumbered, inebriated or in some other capacity out of their senses.

Climbing down the crevice is possible but very difficult as the sides of the crevice are very loose and made mostly of soft stone set in clay and mud. Anyone with a natural climb ability must make a dexterity check (CL 7) every 50 feet, everyone else must make one every 10 feet (CL 10). The challenge level reflects the wall collapsing more than the skill of the climber.

**CLERICS AND PALADIN:** Any cleric or paladin who looks down the crevice can see the movement of restless spirits. They pull themselves from the mud of one side of the crevice and into the mud on the other side. Their expressions are bewildered, as if they were lost and could not find the way home. The spirits are not good, nor evil.

Any amount of noise above alerts the pack of qu fiends that dwell and hunt along the crevice floor. If alerted, they begin calling to each other in their low guttural language, causing fear (see stat block). When a good 20 have gathered, they begin rapidly climbing up the walls. Small, agile, with long claws and a tail, the qu fiends have long since mastered climbing through the Trenches. It takes them 10 rounds to reach the top, and they attack anything they see.

**QU FIENDS** (These neutral evil creatures' vital stats are HD 1d8, AC 14, HP 7 each. Their primary attribute are physical. They attack with 2 claws for 1d2 points of damage and a bite for 1d6 points of damage. The qu fiend's voice can cause fear, anyone within range must make a successful charisma save or suffer -1 to all saves, attribute checks, and combat rolls to include damage.)

The qu fiends mindlessly attack until they are destroyed or until they pull one person off the edge and down into the crevice. At that point, they all start leaping down to share in the feast.

#### KA1 FOYER

The tunnel ends in a large iron door, set in walls of stone. The door is topped by a large frieze of men and women falling into the flames of a pit. On either side of the door are two large statues of men, long of limb, with breast plates, helms, and spears. The work is exquisite.

Twenty feet before the door are two circular apertures. Each contains the statue of a woman holding a large dish in one hand and a flagon in the other. The statue on the left is broken at the waist, and the woman's head and upper body lies upon the ground, along with the crockery. The one on the right is intact and water trickles from the flagon into the basin, where it runs over the edge and down to the ground, seeping into the sand.

The water in the fountain is drinkable, if a bit warm.

If a *detect magic* is cast upon them the flagons and basin are magical and work in concert (see **Appendix B New Magic** Below).



## A13: THE BONE PIT

**THE DOOR:** The door is locked from the inside. It requires a magic *knock* spell to open, or a successful pick locks (CL 6). Breaking it down would be extremely difficult as it is in excellent shape and made of iron, set in stone. It has 30 hit points per square foot.

The wall that the door is set in goes up some 50 feet, where several windows look out over the foyer. These windows lead into the second floor of the complex, and can be located on **Level 2 The Horned God's Acre**.

### KA2 GUARD CHAMBER

There is a large room that once served as guard station for the master of the tower. A table sits in the middle of the room with six chairs around it. Several shields with crossed swords and spears line the wall.

There are four shields, four spears and four swords. All are in reasonably good condition, though a little age worn. The shields are round with no devices.

Behind one of the shields is a flagon of wine, hidden there by a guard many years ago. It is sweet, but good.

### KA3 STORAGE

This large room served as a storage room. It still contains a mountain of barrels, crates, jars, and other containers of food and spices. Much of the food is ruined, but some remains edible, dried fruits, canned goods and the like. The barrels contained beer, but it has long since evaporated or what has not, is undrinkable.

In all, there are about 100 days of edible food in the room.

There are 12 cases of 10 torches each in the room, along with pitch and flint and steel in each case.

### KA4 KITCHEN

This room is lined with cabinets, 2 large ovens, 4 small ovens, and counters. Two long tables and a large butcher block dominate the middle of the room. The place is well stocked with crockery, though all of it is covered in dust, spider webs and the filth of time. A coal bin in the corner has about 2 weeks' worth of coal in it.

If the ovens are fired up they make loud popping noises as the metal heats up after so many years. Creatures upstairs will hear the sound emanating through the wall.

There is a soul thief here, lingering in the shadows. He is presently coiled up under one of the ovens, waiting for a feast to come by. When he sees the party, he steals into one shadow, hides there, and begins to drain the victim of their life's force.

**SOUL THIEF** (*This lawful evil creature's vital stats are 5d8 HD, 19 AC, 22 HP. Its primary attributes are mental. It attacks with 2 claws for 1d3 points of damage and a bite for 1d4 points of damage. It can become incorporeal, is able to camouflage itself, and uses an improved grab to cause energy drain. It uses its camouflage to merge with the shadow of its intended victim; once there it begins draining the victim's soul. See **Monsters & Treasure of Aihrde**.)*

### KA5 PREPARATION ROOM

The ruins of a huge, long table attached to chains lie in the middle of the room. A large opening in the ceiling shows where the table was obviously hauled up and down to the floor above. Food was prepared in the kitchen and set on the table and the whole lifted up to the floor above.

Though the pulleys are ruined and cannot lift the chain, the chain itself is easy enough to climb (CL 2), bringing one into the rooms above and onto the second floor of the Kara Nuel and into **Level 2, The Horned God's Acre**.

There is nothing of value here.

### KA6 BARRACKS

Twenty iron beds with iron bound springs line the walls. They have mattresses of stuffed straw; however, all but 4 of them are ruined and disintegrate if they are touched. There are 10 torch sconces in the room.

Strapped to springs beneath one of the beds is a *potion of healing* with 4 drinks. Each drink is worth 1d8 hit points.

### KA7 ARMORY & STAIR CASE

This room served as a weapons room for the guard barracks here. There are spear and sword racks on the walls and large pegs on the wall beneath the stair that held suits of armor.

Only a single bascinet helm remains, with a high conical form and cheek guards.

The stairs lead to **Level 2, The Horned God's Acre**.

# A14 THE HORNEDED GOD'S ACRE



*ere lie the lesser temples and houses of worship of Unklar. All creatures came to the Horned God's Acre to pay homage to the Dark God in the Halls above. His priests dwelt here and ministered the willing and unwilling alike. They buried their dead here and the dead of other heroes of Aufstrag. The Umbrians dwelt here as well and they built a repository for their knowledge and a hall to train initiates.*

**The Horned God's Acre** is an adventure module designed for 3-5 characters of a variety of levels. It is the 14<sup>th</sup> adventure in the "A" series, or Umbrage Saga, adventure modules. The adventure is designed to be part of a series that begins in distant lands and ends in the mountainous dungeon of Aufstrag. For more details on this, please read "Involving the Player Characters" below.

**The Horned God's Acre** is the second floor of fabled Aufstrag. Built for the lesser priests and the retinue of slaves and retainers in their employ, it is packed with temples, sanctums, and dwellings as well as living quarters, kitchens, barracks and other houses. Long abandoned, though still occupied by all manner of feral creatures, the Acre, as it is called, is both a monument to the power of Unklar and a challenge for any interlopers. It is haunted by the priests of the Paths of Umbra, the undead, lesser devils and imps, and the flotsam from above and below, creatures (both human and other) who have lost their place in Aufstrag and tumbled down to the Acre. While clearing out the level is not a realistic goal, as it constantly changes, plundering its wealth (however transitory) is an opportunity not to be missed.

## INTRODUCTION

This is the second level of the first ward of Aufstrag. It is called the Acre by all those who dwell within Aufstrag.

There were three powers that summoned Unklar to the world of Aihirde. Nulak Kiz Din (the wizard known as Trigal) was one, and the most powerful. The Emperor Sebastian, God Emperor of Aenoch was the second. And the third was a priestess, Nectanebo. She ruled the godless house of the emperor, drawing her power from the lesser creatures of the houses of her people. When Unklar passed from the Tower of Iron, through the throne room's mirror, and came to the emperor's palace in Al Liosh, he unleashed a wave of destruction. He slew Nectanebo first and the emperor immediately after. The wizard cast himself down upon the feet of the dark god and begged mercy; Unklar spared him.

The Aenochians, who dwelt outside the care of the greater Val Eahrakun (the gods of Aihirde), were destroyed soon after, for in those days few could withstand the wrath of the Horned God. Many, however, joined Unklar, wedding themselves to his power. These were lords of Aenoch, and the many peoples of their realms. Few shared the honor of Unklar's power, for they were caught up in the web of their own conceit and they were bound to him as thralls. But some did rise, for they were powerful in their own right and many were already undead lords of fallen Aenoch. They flooded his ranks and worshipped him as the Aenochians had worshipped no god since the fall of Mordius the Green in the Days before Days, when they were wild and young.

When Unklar lifted Aufstrag from the ruin of the ancient city of Al Liosh he did so in order to build a fortress for himself, for in those early days of his reign, he was plagued by doubt, and feared the Val Eahrakun might return to smite him for his sudden assumption of the world.

Aufstrag was also built as a temple to house those who paid him homage and who would serve him in all his thoughts. These were his most devoted: those who bent to his will without question and served him as priests and champions. He set them above all others in his realm and gave them both the tasks of service to his worship and the defense of Aufstrag.

Thus it was that the second level of that dread tower was given over to the priests. It served to house them, and as a bastion from which they could rule all that passed through Aufstrag, to and from, the Citadel on high. A high priestess was set to lord over them. Chosen from the ranks of the Aenochian Lords, the priestess was given the name Nectanebo, for Unklar knew no other at that time. Thus, they were called ever after, both in name and title. So that the first to grace Aufstrag they called Nectanebo II. After she fell to the Aenochian Rebellion, Nectanebo III ruled and so on through the centuries.

After its completion, Unklar ordered the Acre given over to Nectanebo II to rule. There, she set the lesser ranks of her priests, giving them quarters to live in and instructing them to build temples for the worship of Unklar, cells for the punishment of those who defied him, rooms for contemplation, meeting halls for the priests to gather for instruction, and all the many other and varied rooms necessary for the maintenance of the rank and file of the priesthood. Rooms were also given to the Crna Ruk, Unklar's assassins, the Ungern, his most trusted soldiery, and wizards of the Paths of Umbra. All these represented the lesser minions of the priesthood and peopled the Acre.

For their part, the priests proved loyal; watching the traffic of all peoples, for it was given to them that if they rooted out other creatures that threatened the sanctuary of Aufstrag, that they might rise higher than their station. Reporting on others became commonplace, having someone hauled before the higher priests easy and often profitable. For this reason, the Acre became a mad house of intrigue and murder where a whispered word meant the change of power. Here those in Unklar's service honed the skills necessary to survive in a world governed by evil.

In its prime, the Acre was a wonder to behold. The halls and ramps were cobbled in fresh stones and kept clean. The walls were set with designs and covered with tapestries or plaster. The rooms, decorated with all manner of furnishings, allowed all to live in comfort and security. It was a realm of perfect (if staged)

## A14: THE HORNED GOD'S ACRE

beauty, echoing an orderly universe that set stock and glory in itself. But all that ended during the Brimottaut, the Battle of the Tree. Never had the sanctity of Aufstrag been blemished, not in eight centuries, but the battle ended that.

By the time of the Brimottaut, Unklar was banished to the Undeeps from whence he had come, and the Lords of the Red River and Ethrum had come against Aufstrag in great force. For 10 days, the battle waged at the feet of Aufstrag, and only after the death of that dread captain, Coburg (who rose again later), was the host of Aufstrag overthrown. The captains of the west could not take Aufstrag, and though some made a sortie into it, they did not get beyond the Acre. This hall they ravaged, and they put all that they found to death or on the rack. Their strength, however, was spent, and they returned to their realms far away.

The Acre never recovered, though some have returned to dwell there and have tried to rebuild the temples of old; these are few and their power scant. Too, there are many powers in Aufstrag, and not all of them friendly to the priests of Unklar, so they ravage it from time to time, scattering and slaying those who dwell here if they may . . . or suffer that fate themselves if the battle should go against them.

Now, the Acre sits a ruin of darkened halls and abandoned rooms. The plaster is burned away, the furnishings wrecked and used up in fire pits that wandering beasts pitch wherever they desire, the rooms are sacked, and the temples despoiled. Many of the occupants are quiet, cautious, in fear of other creatures. Others, however, stalk the halls in a terrible wrath and lust for killing that is never sated. Souls, bound to Aufstrag wander the halls as well, the undead, cursed, and lost. All were driven to Aufstrag for the misspent coin of their life.

### USING THE ACRE

There are many rooms here, the majority of which are not being used as living quarters. They are abandoned, many were sacked, and their contents burned or destroyed. Those that survived have, in the 90 years since the Brimottaut, been used and used again, mostly as temporary quarters for monsters, men, goblins, ungerm, orcs, and other riff-raff. These have left a trail of debris behind them that include all the mundane items required for survival to the more unusual items such as a chair, preserved all these years, or a table, tools and the like. There are bodies laying about, half-devoured, cooked, or left to rot. Many left to die are devoured by the many rats that swarm through Aufstrag. Others are consumed in their entirety. The whole level is in ruins.

**STENCH:** A foul stench permeates the whole of the Acre with the exception of the tower of Kara Nuel. It is the stench of old death, of blood and rot, of things left unburied that should have been entombed beneath earth and stone. The walls are stained with the nightmares of the dying, for all that dies here dies cruelly. There is no mercy in hell and there is less in the Acre.

Travel in the stench is difficult. When one first enters the Acre, they must make a successful constitution save (CL 10). The stench is such that it triggers the gag reflex, anyone failing the

save begins to cough and wretch. They suffer -1 from all actions for 1d4 hours, until they become used to the stink.

### LIGHT

As a flower thrives in the light, so evil does in darkness. Those that dwelt in the Acre did so in the shadow of Unklar's malice and, in time, this became palpable. The darkness is not easily overcome. All natural sources are dimmed to half their normal strength. Magical light is reduced by a quarter. Magical light created by lawful good characters is unaffected.

### THE FACTIONS

There are two basic powers in the Acre, the Paths of Umbra and the Nebians. There are other creatures as well, but these are generally restricted to their own areas as noted below.

#### PATHS OF UMBRA

The members of this order are called Umbrians. The "Paths" reflect a dual meaning. On the one hand, they are a series of spells and magical incantations which Nulak-kiz-din mastered and used to summon the Horned God to the world of Aihrde. Later, they became indicative of the wizard-priests of Unklar and Nulak, for it was said that a wizard-priest who served either of the two must first follow the Paths of Umbra to know his dark lord.

Today, as the spells themselves are reputedly lost in the deep treasure labyrinths of Aufstrag, the "Paths" refer to the guild of wizard-priests who serve the memory of the Horned God and worship Nulak. Since the Winter Dark Wars, the guild has broken apart into many smaller units. Only in the Punj and the Confederation of Torrich does it exercise any real power. In the latter, it rules at the right hand of Prince Innocent and frequently works with the Crna Ruk. In other lands, the order has gone underground, building temples in old dungeons or abandoned castles. They remain in Aufstrag, but are weakened and unloved by the lords of the upper levels and the Nebians of the Acre.

Those who follow the Paths of Umbra are altogether evil, seeking the destruction of the new world and a return to the order of the Winter Dark. They forever seek the Blood Runes, those incantations which allow one to travel time, in order to bring back the Horned God and the "Age of Winter Dark". For more on the Blood Runes refer to the **Players Guide to Aihrde**.

Members of this order include lawful evil sorcerers, wizards, clerics, or multi-classed combinations of both. They possess masterful knowledge of cold-based spells, and receive +2 on saving throws against them. They are sometimes referred to as "ice wizards."

#### NEBIANS

In the early years of his rule Unklar ordered his realm as he deemed necessary. Chief amongst these necessities were the religious orders. Many had already turned to his worship and called him their god. They gathered in the valleys of Al Liosh before the making of Aufstrag and there built temples to him and

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sacrificed in his honor. They were wild with a lust for him that drove them to terrible deeds. As Unklar brewed upon thoughts of Aufstrag, he thought that some must be set to manage it. So he walked amongst the proselytes, and of them all chose a woman to lead them. She was fell and beautiful, filled with a power that lay all low before her. He gave her the name Nectanebo, and she joined him willingly. All those that followed her were given station and rank, and when others saw this they flocked to join her. Some she accepted, others she cast out.

These account for the first priests and were called in after days, the Nebians. Thereafter, their high priestess bore the name Nectanebo.

As Aufstrag rose from the ruins of Al Liosh, so did the Nebians. The high priestess took up quarters in the Citadel, but the greater body of the priesthood she established in the Acre, the second level of the first Ward. Here they governed all that came and went from Aufstrag and they wielded a power greater than all others.

When Unklar fell, so did the Nebians. Their ranks were thinned by war and strife, for civil war consumed the powers of Aufstrag, as one power sought to dominate another. Nectanebo XIX set herself against this blasphemy and struggled to maintain control of Aufstrag and rally all to the cause of Unklar, but she was unseated in her attempt, and the Nebians wasted in the strife that followed.

Now they are a shadow of their former selves, with enclaves scattered through Aufstrag and some few in the lands beyond. They are all bent on the worship of Unklar but weak for his absence. The vestments of the high priestess are lost, far above in the towers of Aufstrag and none presently rules the order.

Members of this order include clerics of Unklar. They are powerful within Aufstrag, but if found beyond the confines of that dread tower they can only cast up to 5<sup>th</sup> level spells.

### SPECIAL ROOMS

The small rooms set in hallways and inside other rooms and marked with a "T" are toilets. These consist of 1 or 2 seats cut into a stone bench, usually set over a cesspit. The holes are small, about the size of a modern day toilet. The cess pits are accessible to small creatures. The rats that terrorize Aufstrag live in these cesspits and use tunnels, carved out of the foundations of the tower long ago, to move all over the level, and to the levels above and below.

### WANDERING MONSTERS

The Acre is a very active level with many monsters in it. Some, as noted, live in certain rooms. Many do not. They wander the halls and rooms, hunting for food, water, souls, or whatever it is that drives them on.

There are many chance encounters in Aufstrag, see **Appendix C: Wandering Monsters**.



### SPECIAL ENCOUNTERS

Some creatures are residents here, but have no particular home or domain. They wander the halls in search of this, that, or the other.

**LODEWYCK THE MAD:** Many years ago Lodewyck entered Aufstrag through the secret entrance (see **A12 The Paladin's Lament**). He brought with him a small group of stout-hearted thieves and rogues. They sought the wealth in abandoned treasure believed to be lying about the lower halls. Two of his friends were slain by bone devils in the Bone Pit. One fell in the pool of everlasting life and returned as an undead whom Lodewyck slew (though he kept his head). Another climbed up one of the chimneys and never returned, and the last was devoured by rats while he rested from wounds and weariness. Lodewyck survived, though he lost his light and wandered in the dark, a hunted thing. In time, the creeping darkness took him and he went mad. He wanders the lower halls now, making his way mostly by memory for he has no light source of his own. He has developed a little dark vision, being able to see things as gray shapes, about 20-30 feet in front of him, even in total darkness.

In all respects, he acts as a 10<sup>th</sup> level rogue. He does not fight, however, unless he absolutely has to. He tries to avoid being cornered. For instance, he knows all the dead-end hallways or rooms and he does not enter them for fear of not being able to escape. He talks to the ghost of his comrade (whom he refers to as "Misanthrope") all the time, but only in quiet whispers.

The party can befriend him by coaxing him with a successful charisma check (CL 10). He talks constantly and as much to Misanthrope as to anyone else, but he will answer questions.

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He will not join in any endeavor, but he will share information about things on the Acre. For instance, he knows about the shadow guardians hiding at the entrance of the Temple of Nectanebo (B1-B9) and will warn people if coached properly with a successful charisma check (CL 10 if he is unknown, CL 5 if he has already been befriended). He should know as much as the CK desires him to.

### RISEN ROAD TEMPLE

This large temple area is accessed via the Risen Road from below. It was the temple most commonly visited by the lay who traveled through the Acre and on up to the higher levels. In its day, it was a center of power, for many left sacrifices in coin and gems with the priests there. It was this wealth that attracted powerful devils.

### A1 TEMPLE

This large temple consists of a dozen columns lining either side of a lengthy hall that ends in a statue of Unklar.

The hall is wide and tall, almost 20 feet high. The ceiling is vaulted and fuses with the columns in intricate designs of marble squares. The squares are mimicked on the floor beneath and larger ones set in the walls to either side. The checker board pattern remains, however, time and violence have marred them, chipping, scratching, and scoring the marble. A large statue of Unklar stands inside a small wall at the end of the temple itself.

Dust is prevalent everywhere.

The columns are round and without decoration, but large, ornate, iron rods join the columns, held up by hooks fashioned into the column's side. These are curtain rods and once held tapestries that have long since fallen and disintegrated.

The remnants of a rug, old and thread bare lines the center of the hall from the door to the foot of the statue.

**THE STATUE:** Unklar stands upon a dais; a cloak of darkness hangs from his shoulders, pooled around him in heaps. It seems a living darkness and anyone who looks at it sees it moving ever so slightly, writhing around the Horned God's feet. This illusion is powerful and requires a successful intelligence check (CL 12) to overcome it.

The statue of Unklar is 18 feet high and holds the mace of judgment in his right hand. He glares down, from beneath black horns, at any who enter the hall. The body of the statue was painted a deep rusty red when first set upon the dais, but that has largely fallen away and only chips of the paint remain, revealing cold stone beneath. The horns and mace are black and made of burnt iron.

The statue seems to follow one's movement, and the power of it is such that it casts a pall of fear about it. Any who come within 12 feet of the statue, stop, fearful of the god's waking. It requires a successful charisma save (CL 12) to overcome it and approach the statue. If the victim failed their save

against the illusion (see above) they suffer a -2 penalty from their roll. If they fail their fear check, they cannot move any closer to the statue.

There are two rubies set in the eye sockets of the statue. If pried loose they are each worth 2000gp. There is no monster set to guard them, nor spell upon their protection, for none ever thought to guard the statue against intruders. But none of the denizens of Aufstrag have stolen the rubies for they pay homage, however great or small, to the Horned God and would not deface his statue.

The rubies are magical and possess the mirrored sorcery so common during the Winter Dark and in Aufstrag. The spells allowed one to see through portals, sometimes to communicate, but more often to simply watch. The ruby eyes in many of the temples were set to allow those in the high citadel above to watch what went on below. Mirrors set in the Hall of Mirrors, controlled now by Coburg the Undying, reflect what the rubies, or statues, saw and see. In the days of its glory priests watched these mirrors day and night. The priests are long gone and the Hall of Mirrors largely abandoned. Now the hall lies between Coburg's domain and that of the Paths of Umbra. It is used by them both on occasion.

If the rubies are touched and removed, the images that they see, whether in hand or in a pouch, are reflected in the mirror high above. There is a 1 in 10 chance every day that someone above notices this. Taking them is blasphemous for any natural denizen of Aufstrag, and returning them to the statue is of utmost importance. To this end, whoever sees the rubies, in whatever capacity, dispatches a pack of cunalrur to the Acre to hunt them down, slay whoever has them and recapture the rubies. These should arrive in about 6 hours.

**CUNALRUR, 1-8** (These lawful neutral creatures' vital stats are HD 5d8, AC 14, HP varies. Their primary attributes are physical. They attack with 4-6 claws for 1d6 points of damage or a bite for 1d8 points of damage. They are able to climb as a ranger, are unaffected by illusions, and can see invisible creatures. They are telepathic, projecting images to one another. They have a rake attack that, if they successfully bite or strike with two claws, allows them to automatically hit with 4-6 claw attacks in the following round. They have exceptional vision.)

### A2A CHANTRY

Here priests bent knees and prayed to Unklar. Every day, day and night, priests came here (usually on scheduled rotations) and prayed to the Horned God. Setting their knees upon the floor and their brows upon the wall they chanted and prayed.

A narrow trench runs the length of the east wall. It is stained black. Priests found wanting in devotion were executed as they kneeled in prayer. A swift blade across the throat and their blood filled the trench, to run its length into small grates in the floor. Their blood drained bodies were hauled to the Bone Pits.

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The spirits of the dead haunt the room. They attack anyone who enters within 1d4+1 rounds. They rise from the floor moaning and howling. Their racket attracts the shadows from A2B.

**SHADOW, 1-8** (*These chaotic evil creatures' vital stats are HD 3d12, HP 15, AC 13. Their primary attributes are mental. They attack with an incorporeal touch for 1d4 points of damage. They can cause strength drain. They have darkvision 60 feet, are able to blend with their environment but have sunlight vulnerability.*)

### A2B CHANTRY

This room is much as A2A above. However, lying on the floor is the relatively fresh body of a human man.

**The room is dark and seems to defy the light you cast upon it. The paint of the walls, no doubt glorious in some forgotten age, is chipped and dirty. A long trough that ends in a drain along the far wall seems somehow ominous. The floor and walls around the trench are stained black. But more than that, a body lies curled up against the wall. His robes are settled about him, old and threadbare. His hands and face are in no better condition, a dried up husk of a mummified man. No rat or other carrion creature has dined upon him, nor any other creature seemed bold enough to molest him.**

The figure was a wizard of the Paths of Umbra, who came here of his own will, to see what power remained in the temple. He fell to the shadows of the dead, who rose up from the trough and drain, to rend him of strength and life.

The spirits of the dead haunt the room. They attack anyone who enters within 1d4+1 rounds. They rise from the floor moaning and howling. Their racket attracts the shadows from A2A.

**SHADOW, 1-8** (*These chaotic evil creatures' vital stats are HD 3d12, HP 15, AC 13. Their primary attributes are mental. They attack with an incorporeal touch for 1d4 points of damage. They can cause strength drain. They have darkvision 60 feet, are able to blend with their environment but have sunlight vulnerability.*)

**TREASURE:** The Umbrian's robes are of little use, but he does have a symbol of Unklar around his neck. The holy symbol is made of platinum and is worth 500gp. He carries a potion of *cure light wounds*, as well as a +2 mace that upon a successful hit can shatter bones. Any victim of it must make a successful constitution save (CL 6) or suffer a broken bone.

### A3 CHAPEL

This is a small chapel set aside from the chantry and main temple. It was for those who could afford the donatives and wished to ask a special boon of Unklar. The room is dominated by a frieze of Unklar on the northern wall. He stares down upon the penitent with watchful eyes. There is a small fountain in the room that still trickles water; the water is drinkable.

### A4 CLOISTER

This large room served the priests as a meeting hall. Here they gathered to discuss the day's business. It is lined with stone benches that are sorely used, chipped and broken, though still serviceable. Friezes line the wall, depicting Unklar or his minions bent to different tasks.

The columns in the center of the room are in terrible shape, as if some creature laid upon them with a whip of stone. The damage is deliberate and consistent to each of them. It is caused by the two nafuel that have dwelt in the room for years.

Long ago a high priest of this temple captured and brought in two nafuel as pets. These he kept in cages in his room, allowing them out occasionally. But when the Battle of the Tree occurred and the Acre was ransacked, he guarded his rooms by chaining the nafuel to the columns in the cloister. These creature, mad with hate and rage, lashed out at anything attempting to enter the room. Their mighty tails destroyed the columns, leaving them a scarred ruin.

The priest eventually grew tired of them, for they had destroyed the columns and floor. He unleashed the beasts and they promptly beat him to death and devoured him. Set free, they mated and from that pair the whole foul breed has been brought to Aufstrag. The two remain however, lurking in and around the cloister.

A successful track (CL 14) reveals the nature of the tail swipes. If the tracker is familiar with the nafuel they gain a +5.

**NAFUEL, 2** (*These chaotic evil creatures' vital stats are HD 9d8, AC 15, HP 61, 56. Their primary attributes are physical. They attack with a tail slap for 2d6 points of damage. They are able to create clones of themselves during combat. Upon taking 1/9th of its hit points in damage, the spilt blood forms into a smaller 1 hit dice replica of itself. For more see Castles & Crusades Classic Monsters.*)

### A5 GUARD ROOM

This room is bare. The stone floors, wall and ceiling are without raiment of any kind. In each corner is a statue of a man or woman (two of each), carved in black onyx. These statues are elongated, twisted, with feet splayed wide on the floor and hands wide on the ceiling as if bracing themselves to hold up the roof. They are nude, both beautiful and grotesque. The statues are wet, with water running down them as if they stood in a gentle rain. It seems to originate from the stone itself. It pools at their feet but goes no further.

The room is otherwise bare.

The statues radiate magic and each contains a bound elethu, elemental creatures ill bent toward living things and tasked to guard the chambers of the priest. They have stood thus, consuming all that enter the room. They attack the moment anyone enters with any source of light. The simple way around the elethu is to not bare light in the dark room, but few know this, and fewer still understand it. Thus by chance or design the priest's rooms beyond are largely intact.



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**ELETHU** (*These neutral evil creatures' vital stats are HD 8d10, AC 20, HP varies. Their primary attribute is physical. They attack with a slam for 1d10 points of damage. They are immune to cold or cold based attacks. They can use lightning strike five times a day for 8d6 points of damage. If an elethu moves over an opponent it engulfs them and attempts to polymorph them. A successful dexterity save avoids the engulf attack, a successful wisdom save avoids being polymorphed. For more refer to Monsters & Treasure of Aihrede.*)

If a creature is polymorphed it becomes a lesser elethu itself (half hit die) and joins the many unfortunate souls lost in the halls of Aufstrag.

### A6 STUDY

The door here is closed and locked. It requires a successful pick lock check (CL 7) to open it. Otherwise it must be broken down with a successful strength check (CL 10). The door, once opened, is spring loaded to close again unless it is propped open. It automatically locks when it does so.

The room is clearly designed for comfort. The room itself is nicely decorated with rugs and tapestries, several chairs, small tables and a long shelf containing 11 goblets and two serving pitchers. On the west wall is a large fireplace with a stone mantel. A skeletal body lies on the floor before the fireplace. A goblet lies in front of him. He wears a suit of leather armor with a dagger and a tulwar belted to his side. The mantel is decorated with horned devils, their faces torn with joy, pulling men and women down into the depths of the fire. They tumble down the sides of the fire place, and into it. Some are pulling themselves out, faces ripped with pain and bodies tormented by the hell-spawn.

This was the priest's study and antechamber. The furniture is in relatively good shape, though dusty and old, the fabric on the chairs a little brittle. The body on the floor is a rogue who passed into the room years ago and fell under the spell of the mantel, and there died from want.

**THE MANTEL:** The mantel is magical. The figures on the mantel are moving, if very slowly. They depict the souls of those who have come to Aufstrag being pulled through the tower toward the Torture Gardens above. They are moving, an inch or so every 10 minutes.

The movements are not noticeable on a causal glance but if someone looks at them for more than four rounds they notice. In fact, looking at the frieze for more than 4 rounds is captivating as one must make a successful wisdom saving throw (CL 5) or be held, fascinated, until something breaks the spell. They can be shaken, struck, water thrown upon them, etc., but until the spell is broken, with *dispel magic*, *restoration* or a similar spell, they remain captivated. Anyone who stands there for more than 1 hour swoons, falling into a coma, from which they can only be woken with a *heal* spell. They lay there until they die.

**TREASURE:** The rogue's clothes are in decent shape and include heavy breeches, high hard boots, a shirt worn under his +2 leather armor. He has a satchel underneath him that has old, dried rations, thieves' tools, a 50 foot rope with grapple of never miss (see **Appendix B New Magic Items** below).

The goblets and pitchers are not magical; the goblets are worth 5gp and the pitchers 10gp a piece.

### A7 HIGH PRIESTS ROOM

The last priest of Risen dwelt here, and here he lost his mind. In his final weeks, boarded up as he was, he feasted on the torment of others. Bereft of food and water he lured people, many his own clerics, to his room, where he killed them, drained, butchered and ate them.

**What was once a four poster bed stands now on its headboard, stripped of its mattresses. Tied to the metal springs beneath is the undead corpse of man. It groans as the light spills upon it and it looks with wild eyes upon you. The floor about him is stained black and the whole of it covered in bones. What was once a desk is covered in dried excrement and unbelievable stains. Some wadded bedding covers it. The room itself is in shambles. Books, burnt and molding, lay upon the floor. Furniture broken and thrown about. A fountain dribbles water from a broken basin that soaks through the floor to some unknown nether region. The whole place is dank and stinks of mold and death.**

The creature tied to the bed is a zombie.

**ZOMBIE** (*This neutral evil creatures' vital stats are HD 2d8, HP 8, AC 11. It has no primary attributes. It attacks with one claw for 1d8 damage plus possible rot grub infestation.*)

The room has little of value other than a pedestal that lies in a heap of rubbish in the corner and a hidden lock box. Fashioned by the Aenochians it was the priest's prized possession; see *pedestal of wisdom* in **Appendix B New Magic Items**. In a secret panel in the back of the desk there is a lock box hidden. Someone must look on that panel from the chair side of the desk to discover it (wisdom CL 7). Opening the box requires a successful dexterity check (CL 5) or they can just smash it open with a hammer, it has an AC of 12 and 25 HP.

**LOCK BOX:** Within the box are 450gp, 3 25gp gems and a diamond ring set in platinum worth 500gp. There is a small vial of type V poison, one application.

### A8 CELLS

The cells were used by the priests and clerics of the Risen Temple as a dormitory. Each was similarly decorated with one stone bed built into the wall. A stone table is built in the wall as well as a small trough and water pump. The occupants lived and died here. The rooms have been ransacked several times over. At some point, creatures dwelled here but have since moved on.

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**ROOM DESCRIPTIONS:** The cells are dark and dank, the moisture from the water pump has long since given birth to all manner of bacteria and fungus, much of which grows on the walls, floors, in the crevices between the flagstones, and so forth. The rooms were used as sleeping quarters but also as chambers of self-inflicted penance and atonements to the Horned God. The walls are all covered in odd scribbles and writings. The words "He sees all" are repeated many times over, in many different languages. Dark stains mark the floors and stone beds. There are few actual items left in the cells.

The water was channeled from above, through ducts in the walls and ceiling and fed into each room. The water pumps may or may not be working (primary check roll for each, no CL).

Roll for wandering monsters if desired.

The back room in the north east corner contains a gibbering moulder. The door is locked (CL 4) and braced (CL 9) from within. The priest here refused to leave his chamber and remained. He died in madness, slowly consuming himself. But the evil within him morphed him into a twisted creature, fed only by a hunger that never ends.

**As the door gives way, a foul, sickly-sweet stench of rotten fruits washes over you. Within, you see a horror stretched from wall to wall and ceiling to floor. What appears to be flesh ripped from its vessel and pulled tight with pinions blankets the center of the room. As light falls upon it, eyes begin to appear in the ruinous tissues, and mouths as well. It begins to caterwaul as it reaches out to you with twisted hand-like appendages.**

**GIBBERING MOULDER** (*This neutral creature's vital stats are HD 4d8, HP 28, AC 19. Its primary attributes are physical. It attacks with 6 biting maws doing 1d10 damage per bite or uses its acidic spittle inflicting 1d4 damage plus requiring a dexterity save of the victim or they are blinded for 1d4 turns. Its special abilities are gibbering, spittle, blood drain, engulf, amorphous and dark vision 60 feet. See Monsters & Treasure for more details.*)

### A9 REFECTORY

Here the clergy gathered to dine and hear the discourses of the high priest. But now the room is largely empty, though a huge pile of ash and burnt wood stands in the center of the room. The long tables and all the chairs were heaped here and set afire. Scorch marks line the ceiling above, and a few tattered tapestries still hang on the wall.

The dais that overlooks the room once housed table and chairs as well. But these too are long gone.

### TEMPLE OF NECTANEBO

Built during the reign of Nectanebo XI, the temple honored the first six of the high priestesses, Nectanebo II-VII. Statues of the six priestesses were set in the Nebian alcove and the entry rooms. These were designed to unnerve any who came into the greater temple complex beyond.

The temple itself was built to revere both Unklar and the high priestesses. In its day it served to solidify the power the Nebian order had over Aufstrag. It is still occupied by a few Nebians. Though they dwell in the hidden chambers they still actively use the temple itself. They number about 20. The priests will not fight to the death unless they have to, though they defend their temple as best they can. Any that survive any battle do so by fleeing through secret doors, only to return later.

They have set two shadow guardians to watch the entrance and, unless these creatures are marked and destroyed quickly, the priests are immediately informed of whoever is entering the complex. The officiate priest will determine whether they fight or hide. If they fight, they set up the ambush as outlined in room B5. If they flee, the bulk of the priests retire to the hidden chambers in room B7-B9. Regardless, one immediately goes to the balcony in B4 overlooking the temple and begins chanting a call to the naerlulth that dwells there.

**UNSETTLING EFFECTS OF THE TEMPLE:** Passing through the temple puts the characters in a world of evil. In several of the rooms they are required to make several attribute checks that can affect them. The effects are cumulative and noticeable. Anyone suffering from one failed save feels drained and tired, whether physically or mentally. The effects become worse with each room entered.

### ENTRY HALL

Two shadow guardians sit just before area B1 Nebian Alcove. They watch the hall and upon seeing any creatures approaching the temple, fly away to their masters to report what they have seen. They cannot see invisible creatures but they see the living as well as the damned. Their vision is easily confused by magical light and usually causes them to hesitate for 1-2 rounds before they take any action.

**SHADOW GUARDIAN** (*These lawful evil creatures' vital stats are HD 1d6, AC 12, HP 3. Their primary attributes are mental. They have no physical attacks. As incorporeal creatures, they are able to pass through an opponent, draining hit points to the tune of 1d4 a round. They can only be struck by +1 or better magical weapons. They can be turned. Holy water or any holy item does twice normal damage.*)

If spied, they flee. They will only attack if forced to by another.

**NOTE:** As the priests use the area to live in, there is a chance that, as the characters enter the area, the priests will be out and about and the lights of their lanterns, even while fleeing to their quarters, are seen by the characters. Allow a 50% chance for this to occur. Any party members in the line of sight of the nave should make a wisdom check (CL 8) to spy the light moving away.

### B1 NEBIAN ALCOVE

This circular room is flanked by six alcoves on either side. Within are statues of six of the high priestesses of the Nebians. Each is a human female, 8 feet tall, and carved in exquisite detail. They look imperiously up and across the room, as if refusing to see any

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that walk beneath them. There is some age shown, but mostly in dust, cobwebs, and the like.

The room radiates magic and casts a pall upon any who pass beneath the statues. Those who fail a charisma save (CL 5) enter the rest of the complex slightly unsettled, plagued by doubt. All attribute checks are made at a -1 until they leave the temple complex.

### B2 ENTRY ROOMS

Originally, anyone entering the temple complex was required to enter each of the six rooms, B2A-B2F, and make some small sacrifice. The magic within served to unnerve them. Though few know of this necessary sacrifice, the power of the room remains intact. All effects of the statues are cumulative.

**B2A NECTANEBO II:** The room is empty but for a statue of a tall, angular, though imperious woman. She holds out her right hand, fingers extended; in the other she holds a long dagger. Anyone who looks upon the statue must make a successful strength save (CL 10) or suffer -1 from all physical checks while in the temple complex.

**B2B NECTANEBO III:** The room is empty but for a statue of a nude woman with long hair. Her body is covered in lash marks, and both of her hands are open, fingers spread wide. Anyone who looks upon the statue must make a successful wisdom save (CL 10) or suffer -1 from all mental checks while in the temple complex.

**B2C NECTANEBO IV:** The room is empty but for a statue of an old woman, with long hair bound to her head in wires. This statue is greenish. Her mouth is open and both hands held in clenched fists, pressed against her stomach. Anyone who looks upon the statue must make a successful strength save (CL 10) or suffer -1 from all physical checks while in the temple complex.

**B2D NECTANEBO V:** Here, the statue is of a young woman with soft features. Her gowns are long and flowing, her face demure. Her hands are open, as if welcoming any to her embrace. Anyone who looks upon the statue must make a successful wisdom save (CL 10) or suffer -1 from all mental checks while in the temple complex.

**B2E NECTANEBO VI:** The statue here is broken at the legs and lies shattered upon the floor. Beneath it are the bones of an armored dwarf, long dead. He wears old, crumbled half plate and chain and has a large double-headed war hammer in his hand. His gear is crushed, and all that is salvageable is the hammer and a small pouch with 12gp and a *ring of spell resistance* 2 in it.

**B2F NECTANEBO VII:** A heavy set woman, comely, with wide eyes, looks beyond you. She is scantily clad with one hand pointing at the door and the other extended, palm down. Anyone who looks upon the statue must make a successful strength save (CL 10) or suffer -1 from all physical checks while in the temple complex.

### B3 THE NAVE

To the right, a large black alter stone stands before two half-circle alcoves. Each alcove contains a statue, one of Unklar and the other of Nectanebo XI. Shattered stone lies all about the floor.

**NOTE:** From here a low chanting is heard from B4 The Temple area.

The nave connects the temple's living quarters with the temple itself. An odd smell of damp and mildew hangs in the air. It is empty save for any wandering monsters that may be within.

The shattered stone is actually the remnants of two people, both of who were turned to stone (at different times) by the Ring of Stone below, and their statues destroyed by the Nebians. If the shattered stone is examined, it appears to be of an elf and a man. The workmanship is exquisite.

**STATUE OF NECTANEBO XI:** A kindly looking woman with short hair and a haunting smile, both cruel and inviting. She wears flowing gowns and a high collared, fur-lined cloak over her shoulders. Her hands are extended out, palms down and the fingers spread. On her left hand is a ring.

**RING OF STONE:** If the ring on her finger is pulled upon a doppelganger of the ring slides off with ease. The original remains on her finger. Anyone who puts the stolen ring on turns to stone (CL 25). When/if the Nebians see it, they destroy it with hammers.

### B4 THE TEMPLE OF NECTANEBO

This temple served as a place of worship for Unklar and the Nebian priestesses. The star marks the placement of the statue. The lower chamber is flooded under 3 feet of water.

The nave gives way to a wide balcony that overlooks the temple proper and two sets of stairs that lead down to the floor. The balcony looks across to a gigantic statue of a six-faced Nectanebo. She stands with her arms splayed wide and held high in a gesture of worship, though one arm is broken off. She looks up to a mural of Unklar sitting upon his throne painted upon the ceiling. Long ago, a portion of the wall behind the statue gave way, and the rubble of it is heaped about her feet. A pipe there burst and flooded the room, so that the temple stands beneath 3 feet of water. The walls here were once carefully laid stonework, but have suffered damage from the naerlulth that lurks in the water. A cowed figure kneels upon the balcony, facing the statue and mumbling in a foreign tongue.

The whole temple is huge, 80 feet from floor to roof. The steps lead down 40 feet, and the balcony stands 40 feet above the floor of the chamber. The statue is large enough that her breasts, shoulders and head are above the balcony.

**NOTE:** A Priest is kneeling at the edge of the balcony, chanting, calling on the naerlulth to come and punish the interlopers. Even as he is approached, the creature rises from the water.

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Within the water dwells a naerlulth, a spirit of Unklar's making, that devours and lays waste to all it encounters. It rises from the water with the priest's chants and pulls itself up toward the balcony while gathering rocks from the walls and beneath the water.

**NAERLULTH** (This lawful evil creatures' vital stats are HD 12d10, AC 24, HP 115. Its primary attributes are physical and mental. It attacks by hurling 6 rocks per round for 1d12 points of damage per rock. It is able to cast an ash cloud, engulf its prey, assimilate them, inspire fear, and regenerate. If it comes close to dying, it becomes incorporeal and flees and begins to regenerate its power elsewhere. For a more complete description see **Monsters & Treasure of Aihrede**.)

It attacks until it is driven off, or has destroyed the party or driven them from the temple. It does not differentiate between the party and the priest who woke it. If he is unable to flee, he is attacked as well, though he will not defend himself against the naerlulth, but simply die.

**NEBIAN PRIEST:** (He is a lawful evil 4<sup>th</sup> level cleric whose vital stats are HP 17, AC 14. His primary attributes are wisdom, intelligence, and dexterity. His significant attribute is dexterity 16. He wears leather armor and bracers as well as a heavy green cloak that is a +2 cloak of protection. He carries a +2 mace, scroll of curse, potion of healing, and 240gp worth of jewelry and coin.)

### B5 VESTIBULE

This large, colonnaded room is separated from the hall beyond by a heavy curtain. It is in unusually good shape and clean, kept so by the priests that use the temple. The flagstones here are dark red marble, though they show some signs of wear and tear. The columns are a similar color as is the roof above. On the far wall is a frieze of two women bowed before Unklar, who stands with the Mace of Judgment in hand. There are six rooms abutting the vestibule.

The priests set up an ambush here if they desire to fight the party. There are 20 of them (21 if the priest from B4 survived), led by one officiate priest. The officiate is in room A with two other priests. There are three each in the other rooms. As soon as anyone enters the vestibule, they attack.

**NOTE:** The remaining two priests are standing at the ready inside the secret door in the apse. They open it for any of their members forced to flee in that direction.

**SUFFRAGAN, 5** (These lawful evil 1<sup>st</sup> level clerics' vital stats are HP 5 and AC 15. Their primary attributes are strength, wisdom, and dexterity. Their significant attributes are wisdom 14. They wear mail shirts, have shields and helms. They wield maces and hammers for 1d6 points of damage. They each have 3 zero level spells and 2 first level spells.)

**ACOLYTE, 10** (These lawful evil 2<sup>nd</sup> level, female and male, clerics' vital stats are HP 12 and AC 16. Their primary attributes are strength, wisdom, and dexterity. Their significant

attributes are strength 13 and wisdom 14. They wear mail hauberks and small helms and carry shields. They wield maces and flails in battle. They each have 4 zero level spells and 2 first level spells.)

**CLERIC, 2** (These lawful evil, 3<sup>rd</sup> level, female and male, clerics' vital stats are HP 15 and AC 18. Their primary attributes are strength, wisdom, and charisma. Their significant attributes are dexterity 15 and wisdom 16. They wear full chainmail, and carry a +1 mace, a potion of healing, a scroll of fear, and 130gp in coin and jewelry. They each have 4 zero level spells, 3 first level spells and 2 second level spells.)

**OFFICIATE PRIEST** (This lawful evil 8<sup>th</sup> level human clerics' vital stats are HP 40, AC 22. His primary attributes are wisdom, constitution, and dexterity. His significant attributes are intelligence 14 and wisdom 20. He wields a mace in combat and wears magic armor. He possesses +3 cloak of resistance, +1 plate mail of spell resistance (SR 5), wand of cure light wounds with 50 charges (1<sup>st</sup> caster level), wand of cure serious Wounds with 23 charges (5<sup>th</sup> caster level), 50 pp.

**Spells Prepared:** 0: create water x2, detect magic x2, detect poison, purify food and drink; 1st: bless, death watch, entropic shield, obscuring mist, shield of faith, doom, protection from chaos; 2nd: augury, death knell, hold person, remove paralysis, calm emotions; 3rd: prayer, invisibility purge, searing light, speak with dead, dispel magic 4th divination, freedom of movement, tongues, imbue with spell ability.)

**NOTE:** The officiate priest attempts to flee if the battle goes ill for him. He takes whoever he can with him, but will sacrifice them all to get away. He returns to the secret door and his own chambers in the B9 Chapel.

**ROOM A ALTAR ROOM:** This room contains an altar at the far end and, before it, a carpet of red. The altar stone is indented to allow the proselyte to place his head upon the stone. The altar is a simple affair with no design or statuary upon it. It looks a little out of place.

**ROOM B SLEEPING CHAMBERS:** There are three two-man bunks here. The beds are in relatively good condition with hair stuffed mattresses and pillows and rough wool blankets. These are the sleeping quarters of the clerics. There are many personal effects here necessary for daily life, such as a small table, some food and drink, small mirrors, soap, razor, garments, cask of oil (72 hours worth for a small lantern), small lantern, etc.

**ROOM C SLEEPING CHAMBERS:** As in Room B Sleeping Chambers.

**ROOM D SLEEPING CHAMBERS:** As in Room B Sleeping Chambers.

**ROOM E ENTRY ROOM:** This room is clean and continues the red marbled floor pattern, but is empty, serving only as an entrance to Room B6 Apse.

**ROOM F GUARD CHAMBER:** This room has a table and four chairs. The priests keep continual watch here, for wandering monsters plague them at all turns. The room is barren otherwise.

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### B6 APSE

The entry room gives way to a large room with a vaulted ceiling and a red marble floor. This served as the center of the officiate priest's temple. At the far end of the room is a stone chair, large and embellished with massive horns, the chair of the officiating priests. From here they dispensed justice.

Now the room is barren, its wealth stripped and hidden in the secret chambers, safe for the day the Nebians rise.

Only the murals on the ceiling and walls remain. They are brightly colored though stained dark from the soot of lanterns and torches. Few now clean them for the priests here have more pressing matters. Beneath the darkened ash lie brightly colored paintings of high priestesses in their many guises.

**SECRET DOOR:** There is a secret door in the north wall. This door was originally open, but the priests have covered the doorway with fresh stone and attempted to hide it, making it look like the rest of the wall. It is, however, a false wall that swings open if forced. To find the door requires a successful check (CL 4).

### B7 QUARTERS

This chamber serves the Nebians if they are forced to flee the outer chambers. The room has one long table in the center, able to sit 24 people. Dishes line the walls on shelves, mostly bronze plates and goblets. A large fire place offers warmth and light.

Any priests who fled the battle outside are here. Or, if they never lay the ambush, they are all in here in force and ready to fight. If all others have fallen, the two who hid themselves in the secret door are here. They retreat to B9 if the door is forced by invaders.

There is a water basin here, fed by a hand pump.

**ACOLYTE, 2** (These lawful evil 2<sup>nd</sup> level, female and male, clerics' vital stats are HP 12 and AC 16. Their primary attributes are strength, wisdom, and dexterity. Their significant attributes are strength 13 and wisdom 14. They wear mail hauberks and small helms and carry shields. They wield maces and flails in battle. They each have 4 zero level spells and 2 first level spells.)

### B8 STORAGE ROOM

The Nebians have traffic with some of those who still ply the merchant's trade in Aufstrag, and for this reason are well stocked in food and gear. This large room contains a makeshift set of shelves containing clothing, sleeping gear, weapons, and food.

In all, there are the following in relatively good condition:

- 25 sets of sleeping gear
- 15 sets of normal cloths
- 10 cloaks
- 200 day supply of food
- 12 large barrels of beer
- 10 cushioned chairs
- 1 100 foot long, 5 foot wide carpet
- 100 torches
- 5 lanterns
- 10 barrels of oil (72 hour supply)

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### B9 CHAPEL AND ALTAR

In ages past this served as the private chapel of the officiate priest, and though it remains as such, it now serves as his sleeping quarters as well. Here, he sleeps and dines when his body needs it, but mostly he casts himself face down in front of the statues and altar at the end of the hall, praying for guidance.

**Your lights flicker and give way before the darkness in the room. As you pass through the door, the darkness recedes, only reluctantly, fighting for each last breath. Your lights pale and shrink. The dank smell of stale urine, unwashed flesh and blood, creeps over you, settling in your nostrils, in your lungs, like the black breath of coal dust. You choke on it, gasp for breath, the blood rushing to your ears, thumping in your mind as an echo of the slow moving wind that mingles the stench with a low murmur of disembodied voices. Down and through the darkness a few lights glimmer, candles set upon a stone floor, lighting a host of statuary. You see the figures of women, the same as before in the alcoves, surrounding a great horned beast that looks down on all. Around them all, however, are the shadows of darkness.**

There are no furnishings here. Only a long, dark orange rug and a butcher's block set before the altar.

The worship of Unklar took many turns, and blood sacrifices (though not common) were conducted by some. The officiating priest, driven half mad by the silence to his prayers has taken up the blood sacrifices with zeal. Any and all that he captures are brought before the altar and forced to kneel, their heads placed on the ground in a gesture of subservience. He shouts the prayer of Aufstrag:

*Suffer Not the Tyranny of Fear*

*Embrace the Dominion of Law*

*The Yoke Shall Set You Free*

And then cuts their throats. He has killed dozens in this manner.

**NOTE:** Any characters captured by the priest are immediately sacrificed.

Because of this, the room is haunted by a host of malevolent spirits, bound here by their ritual murder, a murder they relive time and again. The room is filled with them. The longer someone is in the room, the louder the shadows become. After four rounds they begin to attack anyone other than the Nebians.

After the first 4 rounds that some non-Nebian is in the room 1d4 shadows creep from the darkness and attack them. After that 1 shadow per round assails them until a full 45 have come.

**TURNING:** The shadows can be turned. If more are turned than are attacking the party, the turn affects those that would materialize in the coming rounds. For instance, if there are 2 shadows attacking, and a turn would drive 4 off, no shadow appears for 2 more rounds. Unless the turn destroys the shadow, they return to the room after 1 day.

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**SHADOW** (These evil creatures' vital stats are HD 3d12, HP 15, AC 13. Their primary attributes are mental. They attack with an incorporeal touch for 1d4 points of damage. They can cause strength drain. They have darkvision 60 feet and are able to blend with their environment but have sunlight vulnerability.)

### THE CRYPTS

The crypts were set up long ago by High Priestess Nectanebo XII. They were carved from the rock of Aufstrag and made a space for the bodies of those priests, holy men, and clerics who died in service to Unklar or the Nebians.

The bodies of the priests were taken to the Hall of Records, where their names, deeds, and services were recorded in the Rusted Books. The bodies were then moved to the preparation room, embalmed, wrapped in cloth, tagged, and removed to the burial chambers where they were laid to rest. Their spirits were snared and sent to the Pool of the Undead. The bodies of those who were deserving were eventually, after a time determined by their service, taken to the Pool of the Undead where they were immersed in the waters there and brought back to life, reunited with their spirit.

In time, of course, the practice died off. Some bodies were not tagged, others fed to some devil or hound, some entries were never made and the bodies just tossed in a crypt, their spirits set free or captured in the Pool of the Undead. When Unklar fell and the Acre was largely sacked, the record keepers vanished and the crypts were left alone.

### C1 HALL OF RECORDS

Two large doors framed by skeletal giants give access to the room, though a smaller door, the wicket gate, set into the double doors allows easier entrance. Within, the walls are lined with shelves of dusty books, from floor to ceiling. A large desk faces the door, and on it are a jar of ink and a sheaf of papers.

It was the duty of the record keepers to record the dead, bury them and mark their bodies to awaken when their time should come. Each body was tagged with a small spike through their hand which was scribed with a date set for their awakening. The spike revived the body. The books recorded the time of the revival.

The books are all 9 x 6 inches, 300 pages long, and bound in rust-brown leather. Each is marked in gold on the outside with dates and letters. The books contain long lists of names of people, ranks, items of service, and how they died and a letter/number code corresponding to the room they are buried in. Some are marked undeserving, others with dates to be resurrected. There is no clear order in the books to allow the record keeper to know when to resurrect someone. A typical entry reads like this:

**CRYNOTH OF HALPSTEAD. ACOLYTE.** Served without conviction the officiating priest. Life taken during prayers. Immersion 987. C12.

The books are in chronological order. A person's name was entered in the book of the year when they died. The date of

his revival was marked down as "immersion" dates. In order to track who would be revived, the priests studied the text continually, but too they relied upon the bodies rising from the crypt, which was checked each day. Those found wanting were given immersion dates far in the future, the truly devoted were raised soon after death. If the books in the Hall of Records are accessed, it is possible to find a particular body in the crypts.

The desk has nothing of value on it except for the sheaf of paper and the small jar of ink. The jar is magical and has an unending supply of ink in it.

### C2 PREPARATION ROOM

After they were recorded and tagged, the bodies of the dead were brought to the preparation room to be embalmed and buried in the burial chambers.

The room itself is long with a high ceiling. The floor is concave, dipping slightly toward a grate in the floor of the center of the room. Twelve sets of chains dangle from on high, each about 4 feet off the floor, and ending in a large, smooth, razor sharp hook. A steel table stands next to a wheeled cart toward the back of the room. There are large jars on the cart.

A body was brought in, hung upside down from one of the hooks, and opened to drain the blood into one of the jars. Once clear of fluid, they laid the corpse on the table, removed the organs, dumped those in the jars and wrapped the body in a holy cloth. The body was then sent to the crypt and the rest taken to the Pool of the Undead and poured in.

**HOOKS:** Four of the hooks have bodies hanging from them. They have been there a long, long time. They move and twist, trying to get at anyone entering the room. If released they attack anyone near them.

**ZOMBIES** (These neutral evil creatures' vital stats are HD 4d8, HP 16 each, AC 11. They have no primary attributes. They attack with one claw for 1d8 points of damage.)

**TABLE:** The table in the back of the room has a shelf attached to it with various surgical instruments on it. The instruments are in good shape.

### C3 BURIAL CHAMBERS

There are dozens of burial chambers here. The door to each chamber is locked and barred from the outside. A key hangs on the wall next to the door.

In the beginning, bodies were set in alcoves carved into the walls, but after many years the alcoves were occupied, so two and then three bodies were placed in each alcove. This did not solve the problem, however, as the alcoves filled up with multiple bodies, and soon the bodies were laid on the floor. Then, they were laid on top of each other until each of the rooms was full from floor to ceiling.



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The stacked bodies became unmanageable. The rooms became so crowded that when one of the corpses awoke to be taken to the Pool of the Undead, the record keepers could not easily get to them, and they eventually stopped trying. Even if the body was on the top of the pile, getting to it proved onerous. Once the task became unmanageable, the doors were locked and barred.

Each room is lettered and numbered. The markings are on brass plates set above each door. The first row is Row A the room closest to the Pool (the west side) is A1, down to A14. The second row is B, then C and so on.

The bodies are old, decayed bones. The cloth they were wrapped in is brittle if it remains at all, often crumbling at the slightest touch. Every corpse or skeleton was buried without clothing or articles of any kind.

A typical tomb description reads as follows:

The door creaks open on rusty hinges, clouds of dust roll out around the frame. Within, you see what at first seems to be stacks of wood, but on a quick observation, it is clear that they are bodies. Long dead corpses wrapped in a red cloth and stacked, one on top of the other. The stacks have collapsed and the bodies are now just a heap of bones, bound together by their funeral shrouds. Behind the larger stack of bodies, something groans and the pile moves ever so slightly.

**THE TRAPPED DEAD:** When a body's time comes to be immersed, it awakens. More often than not, the awakened body is trapped beneath other dead or in the alcoves behind the stacks of dead. In either case it cannot move, though it continues to struggle.

Almost every crypt has some type of movement caused by the dead awakening as prescribed by the record keepers. For each room investigated, roll 3d20 to determine how many have awoken. There are typically 50 bodies per room. If more than half have woken, they have worked themselves up and about and are able to attack the party.

Two of the crypts are filled with zombies, bodies that have lain there for many hundreds of years, rising one after the other. There are 40 in each. The CK should choose which rooms.

***ZOMBIES** (These neutral evil creatures' vital stats are HD 2d8, HP 8, AC 11. They have no primary attributes. They attack with one claw that does 1d8 damage plus possible rot grub infestation. If more than 8 zombies surround a victim they gain a swarm attack, dealing 1d2 damage per round per zombie.)*

### C4 POOL OF THE UNDEAD

The jars of blood and guts harvested from the bodies of the priests in the preparation room were wheeled down by cart to the Pool of the Undead and the contents dumped in. It is well known that a spirit lingers near the warmth of its body for a short while before departing upon the Arc of Time, so it was that the spirits of the dead priests, lingering near the warmth of the jars of their waste, followed the carts to the Pool. When the fluids were dumped, the spirits were trapped, lost in the grotesque pool.

In order to resurrect them, those dead priests who were scheduled for resurrection were removed from the crypt where they lay and brought to the Pool of the Undead and lowered into the brackish, blood-filled waters. Their spirit would reunite with the body and rise from the wicked mesh, alive once more.

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The pool itself became a place of pilgrimage, where others would come to speak to the dead and call on friends or enemies to seek their aid or taunt them as was their want. For their part, the spirits bound in the pool never truly understood (as they still do not) that death had claimed them. They only knew they were bound and suffering for crimes they could barely remember. So the spirits became filled with a rage and bitterness at their condition. They could speak to those who called them, but could not wholly understand what was going on.

It was thus that the imp, Tashfin, found the pool. In time, he learned to summon up the spirits so that he could taunt and torture them. He did this whenever the mood struck him. After a while, he crossed over to one of the island-like rocks that dot the pool. From there, he could visit his suffering upon the spirits even more. In the end, he learned how to drink of the waters and master the spirits therein. So, he drank his fill every day until, bloated and fat, he sat in his own spite and hatred.

Eventually, the water consumed him and drew his own spirit from his body. His spirit slipped into the water where it was devoured by the pool, and a monstrous creature of wicked temper and foul despoise was born. His body remains upon the rock, a dried up husk of a thing.

**As the hall gives way to a larger room, a wall of stench forces you to pause. Before you stands a wide pool, filled with a viscous liquid. The water is still, though lumps of tissue seem to hang upon its surface, covered in foul looking slime. Several large stones break its surface, but there is no movement. A small landing pushes out into the pool.**

Everyone entering the room should roll to see if they notice Tashfin's body lying upon the stone across the pool. It is difficult to spot as it is small and blends in with the rock. He is only discernible from the landing on a successful wisdom save (CL 9). If someone crosses over to the rock, they instantly notice him.

Anyone who approaches the water draws Tashfin's attention. He attacks at the first opportunity.

**TASHFIN** (*This lawful evil creature's vital stats are HD 10d10, AC 24, HP 85. Its primary attributes are mental. It attacks with a slam for 1d12 points of damage. It is made of the thick blood-filled and organ-bound water of the Pool. Having no discernible shape other than the amorphous mass of water, it has an effective damage reduction of 2. It has all traits common to devils, SR 4, and is able to release a stinking cloud that acts as the spell as if cast by a 10<sup>th</sup> level wizard. If Tashfin scores a hit with an 18-20 the victim must make a successful dexterity save or be pulled into the pool. In the following round, the devil can create a vortex as a water elemental.*)

Killing the water-devil lasts for only a day or more, then it reforms. However, if Tashfin's body is slain he is banished to the lower orders of Aufstrag, and the pool returns to its more natural state. Killing Tashfin's body is easy enough. The imp

lies motionless and prone on the rock across the pool. He is not however, that easy to see, as is noted above.

**IMP** (*This lawful evil creature's vital stats are HD 1d8, AC 15, HP 7. Its primary attributes are physical and mental. It attacks with a bite for 1d4 points of damage and a stinger for 1 point of damage. It is able to turn invisible, has an SR of 3 and regenerates 1 hit point per round. Its stinger has a poison barb that can cause a further 2 points of damage for 4 rounds.*)

If the creature is defeated, the devil is consumed by the Pool, and the spirits bound to him are released. They are not released from the Pool, however. For that, they must await their physical form's immersion or the Gonfod, which is the end of days.

Read the following if the Imp is destroyed.

**As he dies, a great clamoring of noise rises from the Pool, and the water is lifted on high, splattering the ceiling and walls in ichorous gore. Faces appear in the blood-thick waters, as if pushing through it, only to fall back into the waters and vanish. After a few minutes the pool settles back down.**

**DRINKING THE WATER:** If someone drinks the water they can commune with the dead as the spell of the same name. However taking a single drink is hard. Anyone who drinks of the pool must make a successful constitution save (CL 12) or they must drink again. Once they drink again they must make another save, but it gets harder to resist (CL 13). For each drink they must make a save with one CL higher. They drink until they make a save or reach their fill (20 drinks + their constitution). Once they have reached their fill, their spirit breaks free and enters the pool, suffering the same fate as Tashfin, bound there until they can return to their body. If their body is lost they are doomed to Aufstrag until the Gonfod should come.

### C5 CHAMBER OF TONUL

Tonul was a powerful warlord who served the Nebians in many capacities. He fought for them, championed them on the field of battle, executed their enemies, and guarded their treasures. When at last he fell slain by a poisoned arrow shot from a halfling's bow, the Nebians granted him the honor of his own crypt.

They carved a room out for him and set it in the midst of their honored dead. There, they built a stone pedestal and set his sarcophagus upon it. Ornately carved, it depicted the many battles and heroic deeds of his life. Laying his body in it, the high priestess breathed the breath of life upon him so that he might waken. Closing the stone upon him, they gave him a bed of darkness.

From this bed he rises, and with his great strength lifts off the lid. Stealing from the chamber, he haunts the lower quarters, hunting and feasting on any he can find.

**SECRET DOOR:** The door is cleverly hidden at the end of the tunnel. Finding it requires a successful find hidden door check (CL 14).

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Tonul is a human man, a vampire. He is very intelligent and fluent in a number of languages. He is not a ravenous madman, but cold, calculating, and careful with his own life. He is well versed in the many passages of the first ward and uses his abilities to travel around them frequently. However, he often sleeps, for months at a time. For this reason, he is more than likely resting in the sarcophagus. There is a 75% chance he is sleeping when anyone enters the room.

He wakes up immediately if anyone enters the room. He does not, however, leave his sarcophagus, but rather he listens to them, trying to determine who and what has entered the room.

If the tomb is opened, he does not immediately move, but waits, listening for any telltale sign of action. If he is struck, he immediately turns into a gaseous form and flees the room, reforming later.

At this point, he becomes a nemesis for the party.

If, by chance, the party engages him, he will not fight to the death unless there is no way for him to escape whatever predicament he is in.

**TONUL, VAMPIRE** (*This unique chaotic evil creature's vital stats are HD 8d12, HP 52, AC 20. His primary attributes are mental and physical. He attacks with a slam attack for 1d6 points of damage. He has a blood drain attack, energy drain, and can dominate foe, create spawn, and summon wolves and similar creatures. He can assume a gaseous form and spider climb. He also has the abilities of a fighter at the same level hit dice.*)

## THE ATRIUM

This large room is a holding pen. A powerful illusion lies upon the room, and any who enter must make a successful intelligence save (CL 18) or believe they have passed through a portal and into a wickedly dark forest. A path leads through the room and as one walks forward they seem to be passing beneath the trees and ever deeper into the wood. In truth, they are not moving at all.

Within, there appears to be a forest of dark oak trees. The trees are identical to those found in the west in the Eldwood and Darkenfold. Two creeks run through the room. The illusion changes as the characters move forward so that it is possible to pass through the woods for days and never know they are underground. The sun sets and rises with the illusion. The environment is harsh however: the water is metallic tasting, the ground is dry, the trees seem more dead than alive, caught in that moment between summer and fall when the leaves are dying, and there are no bird or animals sounds.

For each day in the woods, random monsters should be rolled from any forest random encounter chart. See the **Castle Keepers Guide** for a proper list. During combat, anyone wounded is allowed an additional saving throw against the illusion, given a bonus equal to half the damage they have taken, the pain of their wounds jarring the illusion's spell.

Anyone from the Darkenfold or Eldwood forests receives a +4 on their intelligence checks. Anyone caught in the illusion is allowed an intelligence check once a day. If they are successful, they see the walls and ceiling above them and realize that they are caught in an illusion.

## THE ASYLUM

The asylum was designed as a holding pen for those under the knife of the Nebians. Victims were brought here for conversion. Those who failed to convert were sold into slavery, butchered and sold on the market (or given freely to the priests to eat), or just killed. Many who perished here were skinned alive and their skin turned into hides for armor and shields.

The asylum is little traveled by the denizens of Aufstrag as it is infested with the domenfelt, the damned of Aufstrag. The domenfelt attack without reason or purpose, and their incessant wailing draws ever more of the infernal creatures.

Below is the stat block for a domenfelt, refer to it for encounters in the asylum. There are several set encounters listed in rooms below, but the domenfelt are everywhere and will come from the shadows if summoned by the wailing of the others.

**DOMENFELT** (*These lawful evil creatures' vital stats are HD 1-8d8, AC 16, HP varies. Their primary attributes are mental. They attack with a wailing attack for 1d8 points of damage. They can be turned but only temporarily. Anyone who hears their wailing attack must make a constitution save or suffer -1 to all attack rolls, including initiative. They are mindless and cannot be affected by illusions or any mind-affecting magic. With each wail there is a 50% chance they attract 1-2 more of the domenfelt. They flee from any holy light such as that cast by protection from evil or holy weapon. They merge with shadows and forms and are therefore difficult to detect, gaining a +5 bonus to hide checks and a +10 to surprise.*)

## ROOM 1

The door is locked (CL 6 to pick or kick in). The room within is dominated by one large wooden table and a dozen chairs. Wall sconces for candles and torches are on the left and right walls. The table is covered in metal pots, burners, and other alchemy wares. The chair at the head of the table is lying on its back, just out of sight of the door. A skeleton lies next to it, he wears tattered leather, breaches and boots, but the shirt he wore is long gone. A necklace lies in the ruins of his bones, it is a *perapt* against missile attacks (+1 AC against all missile weapons). There is a fire place here.

There is a domenfelt in the room, laced with the bones of the man at the table. It rises when anyone approaches it, wailing as it does.

## ROOM 2

A powerful stench of old plant matter pervades the room. Part of the floor in the center of the room has collapsed, water has leaked in from below, creating a pool. The water is brackish, and though drinkable tastes foul, leaving a metallic taste in the

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mouth. The pool itself is some 4 feet deep and if explored leads to a cavern that leads to the nearest stack or chimney. The rest of the room is covered in black mold.

#### ROOM 3

A smooth concrete floor marks this room. It is damp, so much so that water has pooled on the floor. The ceiling is high with one large candelabra hanging from it. Windows set in the walls are covered in dark stained glass. They are in relatively good shape, but front nothing but stone and are for decoration only.

**DOMENFELT X 1:** There is one of the domenfelt here clinging to the darkness of the window.

#### ROOM 4

This lavishly decorated room is empty of furniture. However, a large, ornate fire place on the far wall sports a series of wild sculptures depicting men and women, contorted in lust or pain or both. The walls too are lined with similar depictions. As with many of the fireplaces here, the chimney opens into a broader chimney and eventually leads to the nearest stack.

**DOMENFELT X 4:** There are four domenfelt here, lying in the shadows of the forms on the walls.

#### ROOM 5

The room is dominated by a large iron press, used to flatten sheets of vellum, paper, or flesh. The machine is made of metal, but it is all covered in a thick layer of rust. The large gears are rusted and turn only reluctantly and with tremendous effort. When they do turn, they do so slowly. The rollers are stained black, mostly in the center. A metal corded wire runs along the top of the walls, all around the room, one chunk of it however has broken free and lies upon the floor next to the press.

There is nothing of value in the room.

#### ROOM 6

This cabinet-lined room has a long pedestal table built into the center of the room. The pedestal and table are white porcelain. The table sits upon a set of gears and a lock holds it in place. A simple investigation reveals this and allows the user to turn the table. The room itself is tiled in white ceramic tiles on the floor and the walls. The cabinets have been rifled through but some few surgical instruments remain in them and on the floor. Several broken vials lay upon the floor. The whole room is covered in grime and mold.

**DOMENFELT X 4:** These creatures linger in the shadows around the table where they died.

#### ROOM 7

Set in the center of the room is a large, iron chair. The chair is lined with small spikes on the seat, back and arm rests. Broad leather straps allow the occupant to be strapped to the chair. Tightening them squeezes flesh into the nails. The nails are stained black and rusted. Lying on the floor beneath the chair

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and beneath a hole in the seat, is a pan, flakes of black dust cling to it. Two hooks on chains hang from the ceiling. A torch sconce by the door offers the only light.

**DOMENFELT X 1:** A powerful domenfelt sits still in the chair. His form is plain to see for any who enter the room. Consider it an 8HD domenfelt.

#### ROOM 8

These 10 holding cells are identical and were designed to hold one to three occupants. Each cell has a metal door with an iron barred window. Roll randomly to see if the door is open or closed (d6: 1-3 open, 4-6 closed), if closed, roll again to see if it is locked (d6: 1-3 locked, 4-6 unlocked). Each room has three chains attached to each of the walls. The chains are 3 feet long and end in an iron band that was meant to lock around the victim's neck. The rooms are in horrid shape, the stone scarred and scratched with ramblings in many tongues, dirt piled in the corners, and grime on the floor and walls. Clearly many suffered here in ages past.

**DOMENFELT:** Roll randomly, 25%, for 1d3 domenfelt per room. If a battle begins, they summon more from the other rooms.

#### ROOM 9

This roughed out room has stone walls that are plastered over. The plaster has, in many areas, fallen away, exposing the natural stone beneath. A set of chains, bolted to the wall about 5 feet above the floor, follow the walls from one side of the entry door, around the room, to the other side of the door. Hooks hang intermittently from the chains.

#### ROOM 10

The ceiling is partially collapsed, leaving a heap of rubble on the floor. The remnants of what was probably some furniture lie beneath. Water drips into the debris, turning the old wood and dust into a thick muck. The opening in the ceiling leads up into a narrow crevice that rises about 20 feet before it breaks into one of the stacks, a narrow chimney that leads up to the Gallery of Souls above.

#### ROOM 11

The room is in shambles, clearly ransacked. Two beds are flipped over, their straw mattresses, now much the worse for wear, are cut open. A trunk lies on the floor, split open, its contents of clothes and boots rifled through. A night stand lies on the floor, a porcelain bowl lying next to it. There is a mirror on the far wall over a small water pump and bowl that brings fresh water to the room; the pump still works.

**PORCELAIN BOWL:** The porcelain bowl is stained with evil. Though empty now, if it is filled with water, it quickly settles into a still, mirror-like surface. It settles far too fast and anyone watching notices this on a successful wisdom save (CL 3). If anyone looks into the water, which they must naturally do in order to bathe, they must make a successful charisma save (CL 10) or suffer the loss of life and vitality. A failed save permanently drains 1d6 hit points. The bowl radiates magic.

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### ROOM 12

Half a dozen metal bunk beds line the walls. The mattresses are long gone, and all that remains are the metal springs of the frames. These are somewhat deteriorated, due to moisture and rust. Torch sconces offer plenty of places to set a light.

### ROOM 13

The large room is dominated by a jumble of iron cages. They are stacked haphazardly or lie randomly about the room. The cages are a variety of sizes, from a few feet across to one monster cage that is 7 feet tall and 4 feet square.

Bodies and bones lay scattered everywhere in the room, some inside the cages, some out. These are those left in the cages during the fall. They have since evolved into a wicked monster, the bag o' bones. Within four rounds of someone entering the room the bones begin to assemble, rising up into a multifaceted creature of bones and flesh that falls upon any in the room.

**BAG O' BONES** (*This neutral creature's vital stats are HD varies, 5-12d8, AC 15, HP varies. Its primary attributes are physical. It attacks with one claw for 1d6 points of damage or by weapon. Due to its nature, the bag o' bones has a natural turn resistance and it is turned as 3 HD higher. It only takes half damage from edged weapons and piercing weapons.*)

Scattered about the room is the creatures' treasure, items collected from its previous victims.

**TREASURE:** 300gp in assorted coin, a dwarven death mask worth 1500gp, a suit of chain mail +1, a potion of water walking, and a small pouch with 12 good berries in it.

### ROOM 14

A room with a single iron bed, with iron springs sits in the corner. A small fountain, broken, but dripping water into the ruined floor sits across from the bed. A small china doll lies under the bed, its face is disfigured with black lines and cracks, hair matted, and the stuffing of its body puts off a stench akin to rotting vegetation. Tangled in the doll's hair is a thin metal wire. It is a +1 garrote.

The room is repeated for the other similar rooms marked 14. The other rooms do not have the doll or magical garrote.

### ROOM 15

The vaulted ceiling sports a single candelabrum at the far end of the room, held by a chain affixed to the ceiling above. There are several candles in the candelabra. In the wall beneath it is a tiny alcove. A stone bench is built into the left wall, facing a frieze on the right wall that depicts a group of dwarves in chains following a priest-like human with a whip. The frieze is old and somewhat defaced. The alcove contains four brass coins, set in a stack. These are dwarven kam, brass coins, each worth 10 silver pieces. There is nothing special about them.

### ROOM 16

A heavy, metal door with a small window blocks easy entrance. The window has its own door but is so rusted that it only opens a few inches allowing one to peer in only a few feet. The door is locked (CL 10). The room is devoid of all furnishing but for a single metal pan. There are time-lines scratched haphazardly on the wall, in groups of five. Clearly someone was counting the days of their entombment.

**DOMENFELT X 1:** There is a powerful domenfelt here, at least 6HD.

### ROOM 17

A clean, tiled floor and well-preserved stone walls reflect a beautiful ceiling framed out in large 8 inch square wooden beams. The beams are in remarkably good shape.

The dominant features of the room are two bathtubs. Large affairs, they are built side by side and set in a tile housing. They are accessed by a set of steps that lead up to their top edge, allowing one to step into them easily. The drains are rather large, about 4 inches in diameter. The tubs were filled with an acidic substance and used to boil the flesh from bodies. Bones were reduced to shards and all this was sent down to Bone Pit 8 on level 1. A small door in the tub housing allows one to crawl beneath the tubs and enter the chute that leads down to the Bone Pits.

Four long, brass poles hang from the east wall. Each ends in a spiked claw. These were used to hold people in the tubs.

The room houses a fireplace built in the wall opposite the door. The flue that opens into the chimney of the fireplace is unusually wide at 2 feet across. It leads up into the stacks above.

**FILLING THE TUBS:** It is possible to fill the tubs, the water falling clean and clear. However, as soon as the tub is full the water turns dark green and immediately begins burning whoever is in the water. They suffer 1d8 points of damage per round until removed or they die.

## EHARUK-MONS

This was the common, or greater temple. It served the whole first ward as a place of worship. The priests here were Nebians and dwelt in the quarters to the west of the temple proper (marked D2 on the map), though those quarters are long since abandoned and are now the home of a troop of unger. The power of the priests have gone and all that remains are the shadows and the ruins.

### D1: TEMPLE PROPER

The Eharuk-Mons is large.

A statue of Unklar dominates the center of the court. He stands upon cloven hooves, with legs coated in hair, the torso of a man, with snouted head and horns that rise from his brow, massive and unwieldy. Unklar looks down upon the courtyard, and all that passed by him felt his horrid gaze. Surrounding him were four lesser statues, each of the elements, marking him master of each their domains.

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In the days of its glory, the Mons served as a town square. Here people came to discuss whatever business pressed the denizens of hell. They gathered in all their finery and opulence. They sold slaves, food, drink, ores, goods both manufactured in Aufstrag and beyond the Ahargon Den, bartered prices, planned conquests, conspired against powers great and small, made alliances and so forth. It was a thriving place, always filled with people and beasts coming to and fro.

But those days are past, and now it is nothing more than a squalid waste, filled with the detritus of hell. When the lords of the west broke into the Acre, they stormed the Mons and here fought the last battle in that long grueling contest. Hundreds, if not thousands, died here, and their bodies lay where they fell, heaped in piles upon the floor, mixed with the fallen defenders. The ceiling suffered a blow and collapsed, exposing the Gallery of Souls above, the filth of which spilled onto the Mons, as it continues to do to this day.

The room is little more than a field of waste, portions of it burning, belching up an acrid, black smoke that hangs in the air around the room. As one fire burns out, another crops up. The room is fed its filth from above, where the floor has given way, and a slow moving river of sludge tumbles from there to the Mons.

The heap in the middle ranges from a few feet to over 20 feet deep.

**NOTE:** There are tusked devils upon Unklar's statue, resting on the head and shoulders (see below).

A cloud of thick, toxic smoke greets you, watering your eyes and clogging your lungs. It hangs several feet above the floor and rises to the cavernous ceiling above. As your vision slowly adjusts to the burning air, a tumbled wasteland of rotting filth unfolds before you. In the center stands a statue 50 feet or more high. Unklar, in all his glory, stares down upon the room. But what he sees is ruin and waste. For the ceiling high above has given way to some tumult of the past and fallen to heaps upon the floor. Some ichorous tar drops from the gaping wound in the ceiling, splattering all but the statue in this primordial sludge. The heaped piles of compost hold all manner of ruin: clothing, packs, shoes, bits of armor and shields, weapons, molded leathers and jutting out here and there are bones. And it burns. Here and there, flames lick the surface, shudder and vanish, only to crop up 10 feet away. From somewhere within comes the steady slurping noise of some thick liquid falling from on high. A large form is easy to spy from the shadows, a boar, ruffling around in the thick heap of rotting garbage.

The room and its ancillary rooms are occupied by semi-intelligent boars. They dwell in warrens beneath the filth, rooting out dens, by eating the rot. When they become too large, they leave the warrens and roam the room and halls. They are vicious and attack anything they see. They do not attack to kill, only to eat. They are as dangerous underground as well as above.

**CROSSING THE HEAP:** Crossing the heap is like crossing a field of garbage. It is slow-going as one crossing over it sinks into the

filth with each step, and the black tar-like substance clings to the boots. And there is always a risk of falling through. All movement is halved, unless one possesses magical *boots of striding and springing* or something similar. All combat actions other than damage and missile weapons suffer a -1 penalty. The boars beneath the heap hear any movement up above and scurry to get beneath it. They follow anyone moving about. Their clicking hooves can be heard on a successful wisdom check (CL 8). Checks should be made every 3-4 rounds or as the CK determines.

**FALLING THROUGH:** Every 40 feet, anyone in the room should make a dexterity check (CL 4) or their foot breaks through the surface of the heap and into one of the boar tunnels. On a natural 1 they fall all the way through and into a large boar den. As soon as someone falls through they are attacked by a boar, usually within one round. The boars attack to bite off chunks of flesh and eat it, so pulling one's foot back up through the heap is possible with a successful strength check (CL 4).

**BOARS:** The boars are vicious and attack as soon as they see meat. They rush an opponent to gore and butt them in their first attack, hoping to knock the victim off guard. In the second, they bite them with such force that it rends flesh, which they proceed to eat like some maddened carnivore. It takes one full round to devour a chunk of rent flesh, at such times their AC drops to 14.

**BOAR** (These lawful evil creatures' vital stats are HD 1-4d8, AC 16, HP varies. Their primary attributes are physical. They attack with a gore attack for 2d6 points of damage. They deliver a bite as well for 1d8 points of damage. Once the boar bites an opponent, it begins to eat them, latching on. Each attack after that gains a +4, however, their AC drops to 14. They have twilight vision.)

**UNKLAR'S STATUE:** Amidst all the filth and ruin stands Unklar's statue. It remains in pristine condition, untouched by time and unmarred by any hand or weapon. It houses a host of tusked devils. Curling up high upon Unklar's shoulders, the beastly creatures sit in quiet, watching all that unfolds around them. They remain utterly still until they see something that interests them. If someone is actively looking at the statue, they are spotted on a successful spot check (CL 6), otherwise they simply look like gargoyles.

**DEVIL, AGHUL, TUSKED 4** (These lawful evil creatures' vital stats are HD 7d8, AC 17, HP varies. Their primary attributes are mental. They attack with 2 tusk attacks for 1d8 points of damage, or they use the knoglen blade for 1d10 points of damage. They have all traits common to devils as well as Reg 1, SR 3, twilight vision, immunity to elements and spell-like abilities. They cast the following as 10<sup>th</sup> level casters: *air/water walk*, *animate dead*, *control wind*, *detect thoughts*, *glyph of warding*, *magic circle*, *speak with dead*, *spiritual weapon*. The knoglen blade is a +3 magical weapon that upon a successful hit where a 19 or 20 is rolled, pieces of it flake off into the wound. They cause rot after four rounds, at which point the limb or portion of the body struck becomes numb and useless. Unless treated, the rot causes 1d10 points of damage per day until the victim dies. There is no saving throw. See *Monsters & Treasure of Aihrde* for more information.)



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**TREASURE:** There are items of value in the heap. For every hour a person spends searching they have a 1 in 20 chance of finding something valuable. In this case, roll on the treasure chart. Roll on Table 4.0 in **Monsters & Treasure** to determine what the item is. If gems are preferred, roll on Table 2.0 in the **Monsters & Treasure**.

### D2 VILLAS

In the days of its glory the priests of Eharuk-Mons dwelt here in lavish opulence. Each room was, and still is, supplied with its own water via a water pump. Stone beds and tables gave them a luxury few others enjoyed. Heavy tapestries, some of which remain, covered the walls and rugs covered the floors, blocking out the damp and the cold.

When the Acre was sacked the priests could do little to protect their rooms. Many had fallen in and around the gates and in the long hall of the Bone Pits. Others scattered. Weakened by death and the fall of their god, the Nebians failed at every turn, until they became a ghost of their former power. As the lower hall fell and the lords of the west pushed into the Acre, the inhabitants of Aufstrag went mad. With no leaders, they turned on each other as well as the invaders and much of the first ward fell into chaos.

In the temple, the villas were looted, largely by denizens of Aufstrag. Many of the rugs, tapestries, and other possessions were carted off or destroyed. Within a short span of time, the rooms were abandoned to the wandering monsters that came to dwell in Aufstrag.

Despite all this, the rooms themselves remain largely intact. The pumps still work, and the water still flows. The doors remain on their hinges. The beds and tables, made of stone, are intact.

It is for this reason that the unger chose the temple villas for their outpost. A huge troop of them have taken over a section of the of Aufstrag high above. Seeking to expand their power and control in Aufstrag, and being devoted to Unklar, they have recently sent a troop down, passed the Gallery of Souls, to the Acre. They have fortified the villas here, creating something of an outpost or colony.

Ungern are highly organized, clean and meticulous creatures so they have taken considerable effort to make the villas livable. The rooms are clean, and the gear stored in there is done so neatly and in a uniform manner. They have carted down foodstuffs, water barrels and other supplies to keep the garrison well nourished.

The outer rooms are given over to the soldiers, 2 unger in each room. The inner rooms are reserved for the sergeants, chiefs, and priest. One of them is filled with supplies. The large room in the center is their meeting hall.

**TROOP DISPLACEMENT:** A guard of four always watches the main hall and door. The door is locked (picked on a CL 4). The unger send patrols out frequently, for they are trying to ascertain how difficult it will be to conquer the level and bring it under their command. On a roll of 1-3 on a d4 the following troops are absent from the villa: 10 unger, 2 sergeants, and 1 sub-chief.

If the villas are entered and the unger are alerted, they sound horns and call all to ranks. The leaders form the troop into squads, the first of which is sent down the exit corridor to hold off intruders. A second squad gathers in the great hall and forms a shield wall. The third squad, led by the unger priest, moves into the rooms flanking the hall to surprise any interlopers when and if the battle should spill into the hall.

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**UNGERN, 70** (These lawful evil creatures' vital stats are HD 2d8, AC 16, HP varies. Their primary attributes are physical. They can attack with weapons or with 2 claws for 1-2 or gore for 1-6+2 points of damage. They each carry a chain coat, bardiche, dagger, and 4-40gp worth of jewelry and coin.)

**UNGERN SERGEANTS, 8** (These lawful evil creatures' vital stats are HD 2d8, AC 14, HP varies. Their primary attributes are physical. They can attack with weapons or with 2 claws for 1-2 points of damage or gore for 1-6+2 points of damage. They each carry a chain coat, morningstar, dagger, and 2-20gp worth of jewelry and coin.)

**UNGERN SUB-CHIEFS, 2** (These lawful evil creatures' vital stats are HD 3d8, AC 16, HP 20. Their primary attributes are physical. They can attack with weapons or with 2 claws for 1-2 or gore for 1-6+2 points of damage. They carry a +1 chain coat, bardiche, dagger, and 200gp worth of jewelry and coin.)

**UNGERN PRIEST** (This lawful evil creature's vital stats are HD 3d8, AC 15, HP 17. His primary attributes are mental. He can attack with weapons or with 2 claws for 1-2 damage or gore for 1-6+2 damage. He carries a chain coat, a morningstar, and 120gp worth of jewelry and coin. He can cast the following number of druid spells: 0-3, 1st - 2, 3rd -1.)

**UNGERN CHIEF** (This lawful evil creature's vital stats are HD 4d8, AC 15, HP 24. His primary attributes are physical. He can attack with weapons or with 2 claws for 1-3 damage or gore for 1-8+2 damage. He carries a +3 cleaver that causes 1-8+3 damage. Additionally, the chief is very good at cutting meat and causes an extra +4 damage to each damage roll with the cleaver.)

**TREASURE:** The Chief has a large trunk in his room containing the following: 3000gp, 4 bolts of silk cloth 3 feet wide and 40 feet long, 12 100gp gems, 24 sheets of papyrus, ink, and 4 quills.

### D3 KENNEL

This room suffered a wicked fire and is scorched. The water pump is broken and constantly flowing. The unger have turned this over to several huge dire wolves. They also have imprisoned two people in the alcoves here.

The room itself is in utter disarray with half eaten bodies lying about, and the wolves lying about with them.

**DIRE WOLVES, 8** (These neutral evil creatures' vital stats are HD 4d8, AC 14, HP 28, 20, 19. Their primary attributes are physical. They attack with a bite for 2-8 damage and are able to pull down opponents.)

**TREASURE:** There is little of value here as the unger strip the victims before tossing them into the kennel.

A crude cage door has been built over each of the two alcoves. The first cage is squalid and filthy, the second pristine, with the smell of spring lingering around it. The doors are locked (CL 5) and each of the occupants are chained to the wall (CL 7 to pick, CL 10 to break). The chains are not magical and can be cut.

**CAGE 1:** A gnome is chained to the wall here. He is naked, and his flesh is bruised purple and black. His eyes have been

removed, and he is completely blind. His left eye, however, has been placed in his left hand and he clutches it furiously, for he can see dim shapes through it. He has hung here long enough that he has gone mad and little if anything remains of his mind. If freed, he screams in fear, opens his hand to "see" and runs as fast as he can to escape. If he is captured, he talks nothing but nonsense. The eye has been magically grafted onto his hand.

**CAGE 2:** An elven woman stands in this cage. It is clean of all debris and smells of early spring. She, too, is nude, though her long hair covers her as clothing would. Hers is a beauty beyond compare to anything in Aufstrag (aside from the Lady of Garun), and when she speaks her voice is like light in a dark tunnel. Her name is Valeuses and she hales from the south, in the Aenochian Forest. She was captured by raiders of Coburg the Undying, who were, in turn, raided by these unger, who took her with them. She has been here for many months. Valeuses is a 9<sup>th</sup> level bard, though all of her worldly goods have been taken from her. She will travel with the party if there are no options to escape, though she wishes to leave Aufstrag as swiftly as she can.

### D4 FETTERED WAY

This long, wide hallway leads to an inner temple. The ceiling has utterly collapsed into a heap of debris along the entire hall. Rotted out wooden beams mingle with stone, tapestry rods, and other decorations that once lined the hall. All are now heaped in a tangled mess upon the floor. Movement here is half what it normally is. Furthermore, moving down the corridor creates a bit of noise for all except the most skilled.

The noise summons a monster, roll on the wandering monster chart, consult **Appendix C Wandering Monsters**.

### D5 WISHING WELL TEMPLE

This long room ends in a broad flight of steps that lead up to a large well. The walls are covered in friezes, all depicting various accomplishments of Unklar. The lip of the well is wide, about 2 feet, allowing plenty of room to sit upon it. The water within is black and cold. The priests used this well to cast far-seeing sorceries, but each time some foul sacrifice was made the waters became receptacles for all that the priests were. And in time they were polluted with the poison of despair.

Anyone putting flesh into the water feels an excruciating pain. They must make a successful constitution save (CL 12) or suffer the permanent loss of 1d4 hit points. They do, however, gain a view of something else in Aufstrag. What they see is left up to the Castle Keeper; it can be something they may encounter, something they have already encountered, or a particular room, etc.

**SECRET DOOR:** There is a secret door in the back wall, set in a frieze of tortured souls (CL 9). Once discovered it opens easily enough. Within the room is a small chest of 250 gold coins. Each coin is marked with a bloody thumb print. These were tribute, paid and hidden here. Unless a *remove curse* is cast upon the coins anyone carrying 1 or more of the coins suffers a -1 from all to hit rolls and attribute checks.

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### THE VILLAGE OF FUNARCH

This complex of rooms sits north of the Eharuk-Mons complex. The village housed a community of humans who served the priests of Nectanebo. These were blacksmiths, leather workers, barrel makers, porters, and similar types. The village sports a large tavern and a complex of rooms to rent, as well as a common hall, market, and several shops. People lived and worked in the village for many long years.

It avoided much of the sack during the Battle of the Tree. To accomplish this, however, inhabitants tore down sections of their walls and boarded up the entrances. They remained during the course of the battle, but as it ended, the halls beyond their makeshift walls were torn apart in madness. Sounds of death and dying carried through to them, and they remained within, terrified. The wailing of the damned beyond their walls eventually began to drive the inhabitants of Funarch mad, and one after the other they fell upon their own. Men and women killed each other, they slew and devoured their children, and all the halls of the village ran with blood.

They remain behind the rubble of their walls, only a few breaks here and there allowing easy entrance to Funarch.

The village is now a ransacked hell within hell. All the rooms are laid to waste, and what was in them has been destroyed. The walls are smeared with blood, and cryptic writings of the mad and damned. Debris lines the floors and many of the ceilings have been pulled in. Rubble is everywhere and burn marks on the floors and walls where bodies were torched, fires made, and tapestries put to flame. The whole stinks like burnt flesh and old blood.

This area is designed as a small internal dungeon, the rooms, long vacant, are designed to occupy the attention of any adventurers while the undead creatures who dwell here begin walking and crawling toward the noise of the intruders, hell bent on destroying them. As soon as anyone enters the village area and makes noise, any of the forsaken within 200 feet begin moving toward them.

The forsaken themselves are everywhere, laying on the floor, leaning on walls, in rooms in groups of one and two, etc.

**FORSAKEN 10-60** (*These chaotic evil creatures' vital stats are 7d8, HP varies, AC 16. Their primary attributes are mental. They attack with 2 claws for 1d3 points of damage each, a spike attack for 1d4 points of damage, and a bite for 1d4 points of damage. They have darkvision for 120ft. They have a fearful gaze that, unless a successful charisma save is made, causes the victim to cower for 1d2 rounds. If they strike with two claws they get an automatic spike attack. Any successful bite heals the forsaken as much damage as it caused the victim. They can summon 2d4 rats once per day.*)

**TREASURE:** There is debris everywhere, the mindless creatures do not horde it, nor do they care for it. What treasure there is, lies scattered amidst the village wreckage, in halls, in rooms, etc. Allow each character, at separate times, to stumble on a piece of treasure: a pouch of money, a gem, jewelry, or a minor item. The treasure should be unearthed accidentally. Pick randomly or choose something as follows:

100gp in coin  
1000gp in gems  
Necklace 100gp  
Ring 50gp  
Item from Table 3.4 in **Monsters & Treasure**  
Item from Table 3.5 in **Monsters & Treasure**  
Magic Potion  
Magic Ring  
Magic Scroll  
+ 1 magic item

### ENTERING FUNARCH

Each doorway that leads into the village is an obvious doorway, and one that is obviously blocked with a makeshift wall. These walls can be torn down with some effort, about a day's worth of work with hammer and chisel. If magic is used, passing through is easy enough. The halls marked with an "E" on the map has an opening in the wall big enough for one person to crawl or spelunk through.

### GENERAL ROOMS

All the rooms here are ransacked and have little if anything of value in them. Each room should be considered separately and a check made for a wandering monster.

### COMMON HALL (CH)

The hall is long, decorated with friezes of men working beneath the yoke of Unklar and has a host of iron pegs on the walls. This was a common hall where people gathered for various reasons. The pegs are for cloaks, hats, armor, and the like.

### THE INN

This set of rooms consists of four large dining areas (D), the storage rooms (S), and three kitchens (K) as well as small curtained off alcoves with stone beds in them for those wishing to rent a space to rest. The whole of it is a brilliant mess, the walls covered in blood-inked writing, the furniture long since turned to dust.

### MARKET

The market is a large room with eight candelabra hanging from the ceiling. The room itself has been sacked and most of the valuables hauled off.

### UMBRIAN SANCTUARY

The Umbrian Sanctuary is a small enclave of Umbrian wizards who have carved a small holding for themselves out of the Acre. They dwell on the edge of the level, for they are hated by all and hunted by all. The Nebians see them as self-serving wizards who do not follow Unklar's holy path, but rather a blasphemous path of knowledge and power. The ungern despise them for their power was less than it promised and Nulak betrayed Unklar in the end by fleeing. The Umbrians of course care not a whit for what anyone feels or believes, for theirs is a path to power.

**NOTE:** This area is occupied by wizards and is highly deadly. Any party approaching the area should be made aware that

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the hall leading to the Sanctuary is clean and well kept, wholly different than any other part of the Acre.

They are led by a warlock, a 6<sup>th</sup> level wizard who is a devoted follower of Nulak, the wizard who summoned Unklar to Aihrde. They do not desire the return of the Horned God, however, they do desire the return of their master, whom they believe is still alive. To this end, they have begun to carve enclaves out of Aufstrag. The Sanctuary is one of several governed locally but with loose ties to the Umbrians throughout the tower.

The Umbrians are in an ongoing war with the Nebians. Despite their allegiances and alignments, the Umbrians are not driven by a fanatical devotion to a religion, but rather see their mission as far greater than good against evil, or law and chaos. As a result, they can be reasoned with, assuming, of course, anyone wants to reason with them.

There are 15 wizards here: the warlock and his students. There are nine 1<sup>st</sup> level, two 3<sup>rd</sup> level, two 4<sup>th</sup> level, one 6<sup>th</sup> level, and one 10<sup>th</sup> level wizard here.

The wizards live in the Umbrian Sanctuary and should be placed in the Sanctuary depending on when and how the characters enter. If the *magic mouths* are allowed to go off, then the wizards assemble to defend the Sanctuary. Otherwise, they are in their private quarters, in the lecture hall, etc. Castle Keepers should mark the map accordingly.

**MAGI ILSONWA** (He is a lawful evil 10<sup>th</sup> level wizard whose vital stats are HP 41 and AC 18. His primary attributes are dexterity, intelligence, and wisdom. His significant attributes are intelligence 18 and dexterity 18. He wears a +3 ring of protection, a +2 cloak of protection, and a ring of damage absorption that absorbs 1-3 hit points of damage per blow per round. He also carries a potion of haste, and a staff of striking with 35 charges. He has 1000gp in coin and finery.)

**WARLOCK TEGLU** (He is a lawful evil 6<sup>th</sup> level wizard whose vital stats are HP 19 and AC 14. His primary attributes are dexterity, intelligence, and wisdom. His significant attributes are intelligence 17 and dexterity 18. He wears a +1 ring of protection, a +1 cloak of protection, and a ring of damage absorption that absorbs 1-3 hit points of damage per blow per round. He also carries two healing potions, a potion of haste, and a wand of magic missiles with 33 charges. He has 500gp in coin and finery.)

**4<sup>TH</sup> LEVEL** (They are lawful evil 4<sup>th</sup> level wizards whose vital stats are HP 12 and AC 12. Their primary attributes are dexterity, intelligence, and wisdom. Their significant attributes are intelligence 15 and dexterity 15. They each have a +1 ring of protection, normal clothes, robes, daggers, and 15gp in coin and finery.)

**3<sup>RD</sup> LEVEL** (They are lawful evil 3<sup>rd</sup> level wizards whose vital stats are HP 4 and AC 12. Their primary attributes are dexterity, intelligence, and wisdom. Their significant attributes are intelligence 15 and dexterity 15. They each have a +1 ring of protection. They have normal clothes, robes, daggers, and 15gp in coin and finery.)

**1<sup>ST</sup> LEVEL** (They are lawful evil 1<sup>st</sup> level wizards whose vital stats are HP 4 and AC 11. Their primary attributes are dexterity, intelligence, and wisdom. Their significant attributes are intelligence 15 and dexterity 15. They have normal clothes, robes, daggers, and 15gp in coin and finery.)

**REGARDING SPELLS:** Each of the wizards has access to the library and can memorize any spells given time. Refer to the **C&C Players Handbook** for spell listings.

### ENTRY

The entry hall here is clean and open. There are friezes on the walls depicting the face of Nulak repeated 12 times, six on either wall, evenly spaced, though with different expressions. Anyone who passes a face triggers a *magic mouth* spell. The face begins to whisper quietly in the tongues of Aufstrag. The tone is low and very quiet, but unnerving.

Anyone passing through the entry must make a successful intelligence save (CL 12) or suffer -1 from all attribute checks while in the Umbrian Sanctuary. If they are translated, the words are gibberish and nonsense.

### 1 THE MIRRORED HALL

The Mirrored Hall was feared by many of the denizens of Aufstrag and protected the room against many who would otherwise have entered it, because it is a *mirror of true seeing*. Anyone who entered it was revealed in the mirror on the wall.

**This large hall is dominated by a gigantic wall-sized mirror on the east wall. Before it are three large columns all shaped like human men with hands and arms stretched above their heads. The statues are exquisitely detailed, muscular and braced as if straining to hold the ceiling up. The hall itself is devoid of decoration or trappings of any kind. It is rather clean, the floors free of dust, and the air possesses a crisp, clear smell to it.**

The mirror is a *mirror of true seeing* and acts as the spell of the same name. The mirror reflects the true image of anyone passing before it. A devil would appear as a devil, and not a beautiful human, illusions are revealed, etc.

The three statues are stone golems and can be activated with the command phrase: "Trigal Summons Thee."

**STONE GOLEMS x 3** (These neutral creatures' vital stats are HD 12d10, AC16, HP 40 each. Their primary attributes are physical. They attack with a slam for 2d6 points of damage. They can slow their opponents and are immune to magic. It takes magical weapons of +1 or better to strike the stone golem.)

### 2 LIBRARY

There is a secret door (CL 9) that leads to the library. If discovered, the door is locked (CL 12). If it is opened, it immediately triggers a *glyph of warding* and an *alarm* spell. The alarm sounds throughout the complex, but the *glyph of warding* releases an *iron wall* spell that immediately slams shut as the door opens. Treat the iron wall as if cast by a 12<sup>th</sup> level wizard. The spells are overcome by the phrase: "Trigal Show Me the Way."

All the wizards in the complex move to intervene as soon as the alarm spell is triggered.

Within the room is a giant circular library. The room is 50 feet high, and the walls are lined with book shelves from floor to

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ceiling. The shelves are filled with scrolls (both loose and in cases), books, pamphlets, maps, etc. The center of the room is dominated by two sets of circular bleachers. There is no other furniture in the room.

There is a *faithful hound* in the room. It attacks anyone who gets past the *iron wall* and enters the room without the password. For a full description of the *faithful hound* see the **Castles & Crusades Players Handbook**.

The books consist of a wide variety of subjects, ranging from history to detailed instructional language books (3 whole volumes on various orc dialects), as well as general books of literature and science (the flora and fauna of the Mark, for example). There are a large number of magical texts as well, in a set of red leather books, each 9 x 6 inches, are detailed spells from 1<sup>st</sup> to 9<sup>th</sup> level wizard spells from the **Castles & Crusades Players Handbook**.

### 3 WRETCHED WELL

This room is dominated by a large, low-rimmed well. Runes are cast into the rim, all around the well. The well itself glows with a sickly orange color and smells faintly of spring flowers.

The room was used as an executioner's chamber. The well is a portal to the Wretched Plains and anyone entering the room that fails to utter the words "Trigal's Peace" opens it. The runes begin to glow, and the light in the well changes from orange to red to white; this takes three rounds. As soon as this happens, a huge devil leaps from the well and attacks anyone in the room.

**DEVIL, AGHUL, TUSKED** (*This lawful evil creatures' vital stats are HD 7d8, AC 17, HP varies. Its primary attributes are mental. It attacks with 2 tusk attacks for 1d8 points of damage, or it uses the knoglen blade for 1d10 points of damage. It has all traits common to devils as well as Reg 1, SR 3, twilight vision, immunity to elements, and spell-like abilities. It casts the following as a 10<sup>th</sup> level caster: air/water walk, animate dead, control wind, detect thoughts, glyph of warding, magic circle, speak with dead, and spiritual weapon. The knoglen blade is a +3 magical weapon that upon a successful hit where a 19 or 20 is rolled, pieces of it flake off into the wound. This causes rot after four rounds, at which point the limb or portion of the body struck becomes numb and useless. Unless treated, the rot causes 1d10 points of damage per day until the victim dies. There is no saving throw.*)

**SECRET ROOM:** There is a panel on the far side of the room that is hidden in the wall. If the secret door is discovered (CL 9), a small latch opens the panel. Within is a trunk with the Umbrian's treasure: 1200gp, ten 10gp gems, 4 *potions of cure light wounds*, 2 *potions of cure serious wounds*, and a *dagger of sacrifice* used in the Hall of Oaths (see **Appendix B New Magic** below).

### 4 HALL OF OATH

This is a simple room with few furnishings and only a set of wall sconces to hold torches. At the end of the hall is a large rack where supplicants are bound and bled. Their blood is allowed to stain the floor and through it they are bound to the service of Nulak-kiz-din.

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Here, wizards take the oath of the order of the Umbrians as well as receive rank and elevation. They swear an oath to serve the order and its masters before all their brethren. Any who fail in this oath are damned, and their souls made to wander Aufstrag or the wider world beyond for eternity.

**NOTE:** The soul of anyone slain in this room, who does not take the oath of the Umbrians, is damned to Aufstrag. Their bodies must be placed in hallowed ground outside of Aufstrag to bring it relief and allow it to travel to the afterlife.

### 5 LECTURE HALL

The room is devoid of any furnishings aside from 24 small podiums set as in a class room facing the end of the hall. There, a large podium stands. From here the master teaches and instructs the pupils.

### 6 DORMITORY

There are nine student rooms. Each of these is decorated identically: 2 beds and 2 foot lockers. A small table is set between them and beneath a water pump. There is a small fire place in each of the rooms as well. The rooms are all meticulously cleaned.

These are the living quarters of the wizards. Each of the rooms is occupied. The master's quarters are in the northwest corner.

Each trunk has several sets of clothing, robes, shoes, and other personal items in them. The Umbrians carry their portable wealth and magic on their persons.

### 7 ALTAR ROOM

This opulently decorated hall is the temple to Nulak-kiz-din. The walls are covered with tapestries, each one depicting some feat of his. The southern wall possesses a statue of him as well as a tapestry sporting his holy symbol (see **Codex of Aihilde**). There is a prayer rug before the statue on the floor where those who desire to commune with Nulak come to pray.

The room is lit with large, free-standing candelabra. There are 10 in all and each sports 12 candles. They are coated with gold and worth 200gp apiece. A small alcove by the door houses boxes of tallow candles, about 1000 in all.

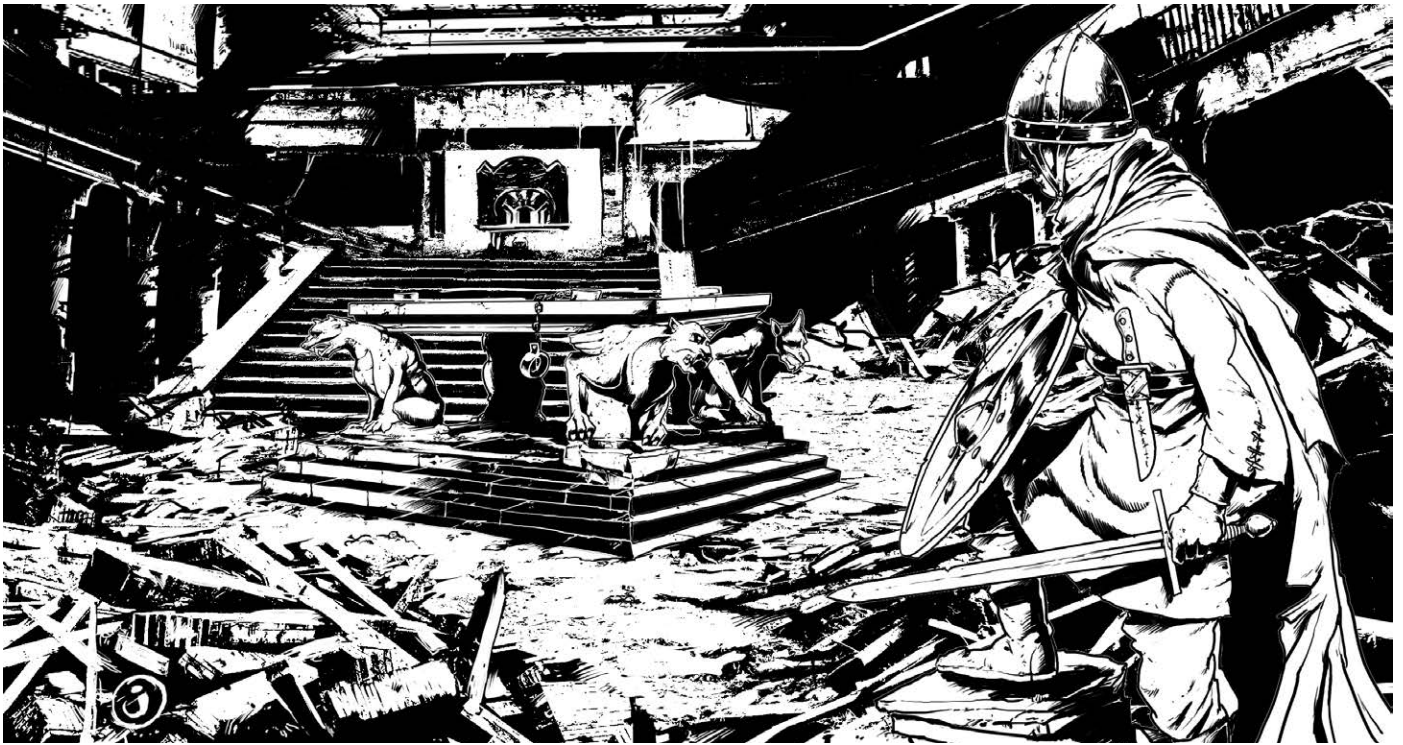
### THE SOUL CHAMBER

The arena served the Nebians and the Umbrians as an audience chamber. In days past, the leaders of the two sects gathered here to debate, proselytize, atone, or make sacrifice to Unklar. The arena consists of four separate sets of bleachers divided by walkways that led to vestment chambers, holding cells and the like.

### E1 HALL OF FRESCOES

This is an entry hall, or foyer, for the Soul Chamber, where people gathered before an event, to talk or enjoy an intermission.

**The room is wide, and though the ceilings are intricately designed in some network of baroque manufacture, they**



are decayed and much of the elaborate frescoes have suffered the ravages of time. Despite this, it is clear that the roof here is made of many vaulted ceilings, each rising from the pillars to merge with one another and all are decorated with frescoes of wild and bestial shapes. Here, creatures of nightmare feast upon the innocent, slaying them, devouring them, tormenting them. The victims are torn and ravaged with fear or pain. The pillars, that mark the entrance to some greater room beyond are scratched and chipped, as if some wild beast fell upon them in its madness. Benches circle each of the columns and line the walls. Tables set between them offer a place to set a drink, or food or some other desired article. Despite all this, the room is horribly decayed. The paintings are dried and cracked and, in places, peeling and falling away from the ceiling. There is dust everywhere, and the floor is covered in scattered bones. Beyond the room seems empty other than a gentle, almost indiscernible scratching sound from the shadows.

**MADMAN:** Curled up in the corner of the room is the figure of man. His face is turned in toward the wall and he lies in the fetal position. His clothes are ragged, though the remnant of a chain shirt hangs on his shoulders. His hands are bloodied, and his ears are torn and mangled. He entered the arena and suffered for the madness there. His mind is utterly gone, beyond redemption. If he is straightened up, his face is exposed, and it is plain to see that his facial features are gone. His eyes and mouth are smoothed over with flesh and his nose is nothing more than two slits.

**MADMAN** (*This chaotic neutral creatures' vital stats are HD 5d8, AC 10, HP 31. His primary attributes are nil. He has no extraordinary attributes.*)

He is too far gone to do anything but whimper and die.

#### E2 THE ARENA

Once adorned with statues to the greater powers of Aufstrag, paved in beautiful green paving stones (carted from the creeks of the Darkenfold Forest), and bathed in the light of many hanging lanterns, the arena has fallen into ruin. The lanterns are little more than tethers upon which half rusted buckets hang, the plaster and paint peels from the walls, the floors are covered in debris, brought from only the gods know where. The whole room just a rotted out husk of its former glory.

At the center of the room stands a large altar set upon the backs of four fiendish-looking devils. The cold marble slab is 8 feet long and 4 feet wide. Chains stretch from each corner and end in large iron manacles. The marble is stained a rusty color in the center and along the sides where the blood of ages past pooled and dribbled down, the last act of those who perished upon the altar.

This is a cursed room of madness that consumes those who do not adhere to the tenants of hell. Any who enter here suffer for it. See below.

The room always carries the sound of the wind blowing, though air is actually never moving here. The sound comes from the souls of the damned who linger near the altar.

**SOULS OF THE LOST:** Because of what it was, it attracts the souls of the lost. These are the souls of good people brought to hell for sacrifice to the dark god. Many died here in this broad chamber, as their bodies were tossed aside, their souls were given over to the higher orders who devoured them or tortured them as they saw fit. When Aufstrag fell, these souls were cut loose to wander in mind-numbed horror, only vaguely aware of who or what they were.



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There is one such soul now, lingering in the center of the room. It is a small child, taken from her family several centuries ago to suffer death at the hands of the evil lords of Aufstrag.

**NOTE:** Any cleric or paladin entering the room is allowed a primary attribute check (CL 6). If successful, they can see the telltale signs of restless spirits. They linger just on the edge of one's vision. They are neither good nor evil.

The wide door gives way to a short walk set between two sets of high bleachers, beyond which lies a large arena. The room is dark though your light casts back a greenish tint. Within, decay holds everything in its grasp. The floor is buckled and the tiles broken and dislodged. The walls, once garishly painted are peeling, with strips of paint hanging at odd angles. The roof sags and the long tendrils that once held lanterns either drag the ground or hold the rusted remains of the lamps only a dozen or so feet from the floor. The darkness fades, however, for in the center of the room stands a large, marble altar held upon the backs of twisted demons and devils. And before it, standing lost and alone, is a child. Her long red hair is beautifully combed, and her dress, the only thing of color in the whole room, is a bright and clear blue. She appears to be weeping. She cannot be over 10 summers old.

**LOST CHILD** (*This chaotic good creatures' vital stats are HD 1d4, AC 13, HP 3. Her primary attributes are physical. She has no offensive abilities. She has an SR 10 and is immune to being turned by good aligned creatures. She moves at 40 feet a round and can see in any environment.*)

If examined, a long, clear line across her throat is discernible. If she is questioned, she gives her name as Anne. She has no memory beyond that. She is looking for her father, but cannot find him. If she is magically scried, it reveals only the image of fire and a man being killed in front of her. She isn't aware of where she is, but she is genuinely scared.

Anne follows the party where ever they go, begging them to help her find her father. She is not evil, she does not threaten them, she does nothing in any way to overtly harm them. However, she is damned to Aufstrag and as such, she attracts devils of all stripes. If she stays with the party, as she will surely attempt to do, roll double the number of possible encounters, rerolling any encounter that is not a devil.

She cannot be put to rest until her body is buried in hallowed ground outside the confines of Aufstrag. Anne's body is part of one of the columns in the long hall in the Bone Pit. Retrieving it will require the destruction of that column and risk raising the ire of the bone devils. Finding the bones will be a quest in and of itself. To drive off the spirit, a cleric must use one of the following, or a similar spell or spell like effect: *banishment*, *repulsion* or *dismissal*. Otherwise, she follows them.

**THE ARENA'S MADNESS:** Anyone entering the arena is immediately assailed by the hosts of spirits that have died here and who linger in the shadows. It is the sound of the wind they hear when they enter. Any intelligent creature in the room for more than 4 rounds must make a charisma save (CL 10). If they fail it they are

afflicted by unsettling thoughts. Visions of their own horrid ends or those of their comrades steal into their minds. They cannot shake them no matter what they do. They suffer the effects of a *nightmare* spell until they have left the room for over 24 hours or a *dispel evil* or similar spell is cast upon them.

Furthermore, anyone who remains in the room for more than 10 minutes, and is not loyal to the power of Aufstrag, must make a wisdom save (CL 10) or begin to suffer the effects of a *polymorph other* spell. The spell begins slowly, affecting the lip and cheek, stiffening it, after that it washes away the face of the victim.

MINUTES	EFFECTS
10	Wisdom Save
11	Lips and chin stiffen, difficult to talk
12	Eyes droop, cheek muscles stiffen
14-15	Upper and lower lip begin to merge
16	Eyes close, nose begins to sink into the face
17	Mouth seals shut
18	Eyes seal shut, nose vanishes, leaving two slits
19	All texture leaves the face
20	The victims face is no more than two slits from which to breath

After 20 minutes after the loss of one's face, the victim must make a successful intelligence save once every 10 rounds until cured or they go insane, their intelligence being effectively reduced to 3.

The effects of the polymorph are permanent unless cured. To cure the effects of the alteration, a *remove curse*, *polymorph other*, *greater restoration* or similar spell is required.

**HALF-MOON ROOMS:** There are eight of these rooms, and they were used to hold those set to die in the arena. The rooms are identical, lined in benches with chains set in the walls. The benches are made of marble, and the chains are magical and can only be cut or damaged with a +3 magical weapon. Any attempt to destroy them causes a great noise to rise from the room. This was a way to warn the Nebians of any prisoners who might attempt to escape.

Roll for wandering monsters.

## ARMORY

The area at the top of Penitents Road served the Nebians as an armory and guard post. The barracks, depot, cafeteria, kitchen, and weapons area all stood here. The area was fiercely defended during the battle and sacking of the Horned God's Acre, and once it was overwhelmed, it was despoiled and torched. Now little remains but a burned out husk. The chambers are all much the same.

The following description holds for all the rooms:

The area houses little but burnt ruins. The walls are blackened and the ceiling, which once sported broad wooden beams, has collapsed into a heap of rubble. The fire burned so hot that the walls themselves have cracks in them, and the tile upon the floor is shattered. Looking beyond the rubble there is little but for darkness, ash, and soot.

## A14: THE HORNED GOD'S ACRE

The armory consists of the following rooms; all are in shambles:

**G:** Guard Room

**B:** Barracks

**W:** Weapons area

**MESS:** Dining Hall

**K:** Kitchen

**D:** Depot

All the rooms have been thoroughly sacked and burned out. There is, however, dwelling in the complex a pack of nupperibo. These creatures are everywhere in the ruins, hiding in the rafters, beneath rubble, clustered in the debris of cabinetry, or even under broken wall masonry.

They do not come out at first, rather, they wait for any interlopers to enter deep into the armory. At that point they begin crawling forth, calling to other members of the pack.

The Castle Keeper should place as many nupperibo in the room as necessary for a fun and challenging encounter.

**NUPPERIBO 3-100** (These lawful evil creatures' vital stats are HD 3d10, AC 17 HP varies. Their primary attributes are lawful evil. They attack with 2 claws for 1d6 points of damage each or by weapon for weapon damage. They are able to regenerate 1d4 hit points per round.)

**TREASURE:** Roll randomly on the treasure tables provided in **Monsters & Treasure**.

### RISEN PARK

The Risen Park lies on a slightly elevated section of the Acre and long served the denizens of the Acre as living quarters. Here, lesser priests, artisans, merchants, masons and the like had their residence. They lived on the neatly manicured streets, one next to the other. When the lower levels were plundered these rooms survived intact, however, the shattered legions of Aufstrag turned upon each other and Risen Park became a battlefield. Rooms were sacked, its occupants slain, scattered, or driven into hiding, and the whole became a wasteland haunted by the spirits of the fallen.

Soon after a lesser lord of hell came to reside in Risen Park, he bound the spirits to him and ruled over them like a god over his world. He was named Maztheul, and he carved out his den and set up his throne in the lower dining hall. All who are captured in Risen Park are taken to him, and he torments them, whether their flesh is living or dead.

The rooms of Risen Park are fairly uniform and rarely play host to anything other than the dead. Some creatures unknowingly wander into the area and are usually killed or taken to Maztheul. Some few escape to carry the horrors of the area to other parts of Aufstrag.

The occupants are ghouls who cling to the shadows, largely incorporeal and difficult to detect. When creatures (living or dead) pass by, they crawl from the shadows, become corporeal, and attack, calling their comrades to boot. The bulk of them

are utterly mindless but for their service to Maztheul. Some, however, (the greater ghouls) are possessed of the singular desire to please their master, and they attempt to capture their victims and carry them before the devil lord, serving them up as gifts.

**GHOUL ENCOUNTERS:** Roll for a ghoul encounter every 50 feet. Ghoul encounters occur on a 1 in 6. They are largely shadows that cling to the walls, ceilings, and floors. If a ghoul encounter is imminent, the characters may spot the pack before they awaken it. Allow a spot check (CL 5); if successful the viewer is able to see that there are deeper shadows in the dark corners or shades lingering here or there. What they are is their best guess.

A *detect evil* or similar spell detects the ghouls, whether corporeal or incorporeal.

The ghouls awaken if any creature, living, dead, or magical, passes within 10 feet of any member of the pack. The ghouls, upon seeing their victims, become corporeal and attack the following round. The CK should roll to see if any other packs of ghouls are in the vicinity, if they are, they are summoned by the commotion, awake and attack.

For every five ghouls encountered, a greater ghoul comes to investigate, joining the combat. All remaining ghouls respond to the greater ghoul, doing as it bids. It will attempt to capture any party member that opportunity allows. The moment a foe is paralyzed, the greater ghoul grabs up the victim and carries them to Maztheul's chambers.

**GHOULS** (These chaotic evil creatures' vital stats are HD 2d8, HP 12 each, AC 14. Their primary attributes are physical. They attack with 2 claws for 1d3 points of damage and a bite for 1d6 points of damage.)

**GHOULS, GREATER** (These chaotic evil creatures' vital stats are HD 2d8, HP 12 each, AC 14. Their primary attributes are physical. They attack with 2 claws for 1d3 points of damage and a bite for 1d6 points of damage. Upon a successful bite, the greater ghoul paralyzes its victim unless a successful strength check is made.)

**RISEN PARK ROOMS:** In exploring the rooms, roll on the following chart to determine what, if anything, is in the room. Creatures come and go and leave their belongings behind when taken by the undead. The whole area is dark, dirty, and filled with trash and the madness of the damned.

Where desired, roll a d12 on the following table to determine what is in the room.

### ROOM TABLE

- |     |  |
|-----|--|
| 1-5 | Old furniture, a bed, trunk, small table, all blackened with mold and rot. The room stinks.                |
| 7-9 | The room is empty.   |
| 10  | The walls are covered in markings, strange glyphs that have little meaning.                                |
| 11  | The door is closed and wedged shut. It requires a strength check (CL 4) to open. Bones lie upon the floor. |
| 12  | The center of the room is blackened with burn marks where the furniture was burnt.                         |

## A14: THE HORNED GOD'S ACRE

### MAZTHEUL'S CHAMBER

The devil lord's lair is marked on the map with an M. He sits in lordship here upon a large chair-like web woven of the skins of his victims. The monstrous heap hangs in the far corner of the room and Maztheul sits upon it, holding the rod of his rule, awaiting the next suffering soul brought before him.

**The room is dominated by a host of webbing, old and new, that clings to the walls and ceiling. Scattered across the floor are piles of bones, some old, some such that the flesh still clings to them. They lay all about, circling a blackened portion of the floor that sits before a massive ball of webbing within which sits a creature of curious disposition. Its long limbs seem more like tubes than arms or legs, and its head seems attached to a small torso with no neck. Large, black eyes stare back at you, devoid of all emotion.**

**MAZTHEUL** (*This lawful evil creatures' vital stats are HD 16, AC 27, HP 96. His primary attributes are physical. He attacks with four claw attacks that deal 1d8 points of damage. His bite inflicts 2d6 points of damage. He has the following abilities: darkvision 60 ft., immunity to elements, immunity to weapons, poison, speak with the dead, spell-like abilities, spin web, SR 4, summon ghoul, and vanity. For a complete write up see Appendix A New Monsters below.*)

If near death Maztheul spins webs, using them to flee the room.

**TREASURE:** Heaped about the throne of skins, lies Maztheul's treasure. There are 12000gp worth of coin, a 5000gp bejeweled crown, a ring of feather falling, an arm band of comprehend languages (acts like the helm), +2 short sword, +1 small war hammer, +2 small shield, and one javelin of lightning.

### KARA NUEL, LEVEL TWO

The tower of Kara Nuel rises from the Bone Pit, up through the Acre, and ends in the Gallery of Souls above. From top to bottom, it is roughly 300 feet high. It was established long ago by the master of the lower wards, a captain of sorts, set to watch over the three first levels of Aufstrag. The post was filled routinely by all manner of creatures until the civil strife after the fall of Unklar, at which point the post and tower was abandoned.

It stayed thus for many long years until a Nebian priestess came to dwell there. Seeking to rebuild the power of her order, she established a foothold in the tower and slowly drove out its many occupants.

Eventually, she triumphed and made the tower her own. Afterward, she called others to her; some came, others fought her rule, and some ignored her. It was ever her intent to control the order and all its minions, and eventually assume the dignity of high priestess. So it was that Kara Nuel became a bastion of sorts for the Nebians.

She took the name of Nectanebo, but without possessing the true power of it and ruled her small realm within Aufstrag in such tyranny that it was marked as unique in Aufstrag. She butchered most who came to her and all who failed her. Her victims were skinned and the bodies eaten. The skins she wove

into a cloak that she wears, even now, and the souls of the departed she bound in her iron-headed mace.

Denizens of Aufstrag took to calling her Nectanebo the False, and no one would join her. Her army, if ever it could be styled as such, shrank to a few of the devoted, and she eventually became lost in her tower of horrors. Her people sealed her off and brought her offerings of flesh and blood, gold, and magic ores. These they bathed her with and left in her possession.

For the first and third floors of the tower of Kara Nuel, see the Bone Pit and The Gallery of Souls.

Anyone climbing up from below, in the Bone Pit, can enter the tower through the open windows in the dining hall.

Any movement on the landing or in the guest chambers draws the attention of Nectanebo the False from level three. She begins to watch the party at this point.

### KA8 MEETING AND DINING HALL

This large room is dominated by a large wooden table. There are 25 ornately carved, high-back chairs at the table. A large hutch stands against the western wall, housing a plethora of dishes, glasses, mugs and the like. The drawers are filled with flat ware. Tapestries line the walls, each depicting men and women in priestly garb worshiping at the feet of a beautiful woman. She holds a staff in her hands. There is a fire place on the eastern wall, large and ornate. It is shaped like a devil's face, with maw agape.

The room is home to a mimic, set here by the priestess to guard her chambers against interlopers. It has taken the shape of a large chair and attacks anyone who gets within a few feet of it.

Two windows look out from here to the crevice below and landing below (see The Bone Pit, Kara Nuel Area 16A.) They are open windows, without panes or glass.

**MIMIC** (*This neutral creatures' vital stats are HD 7d8, AC 15, HP 35. Its primary attributes are physical. It attacks with a slam attack for 3d4 points of damage. It has darkvision 60 feet, the ability to crush an opponent and mimic shape. Refer to the Monsters & Treasure book for details.*)

### KA9 PRIVATE GUEST CHAMBER

This room is opulently decorated. A four poster bed, fully made up with silk and linens dominates the center of the room. Two tapestries flank the bed. Night stands sit on either side, and a large trunk sits beneath a mirror. There are two comfortable chairs as well.

The mirror is magical. It connects with a mirror in the upper tower (see "Gallery of Souls") that allows the priestess, Nectanebo the False, to watch whoever is in the room. She accesses it for whatever reason via the secret doors that lead from above down to this floor (see Map).

The trunk is filled with clothing and bed linen. There is a nice bottle of wine in there as well, old but still very good. She always leaves one there for whomsoever stays so that they can become relaxed as they wait. The clothes all fit a normal human or elf.

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#### KA10 SECRET ROOM

This room is devoid of any trappings but for the ladder that goes up to the third level of the tower.

#### KA11 LANDING

The landing here leads up to the third level of the tower. There is nothing of interest here but for a large painting of the same woman depicted in the tapestries in the other rooms. She looks upon any passing through, up or down, her eyes seemingly following them.

The canvas is magical and cannot be harmed with anything less than a 5<sup>th</sup> level spell or a +3 magical weapon. However, each time it is struck it makes a loud keening noise.

#### KA12 SERVANTS QUARTERS

A bed and a trunk is in the corner. The bed is caved in and the linen here is stained with old, dried blood. The trunk is closed and locked (CL 3). Within are a set of human clothes, chainmail, a shortsword, dagger, a small pouch with 37gp in it and a *potion of flying* (one drink).

#### KA13 SERVANTS QUARTERS

A bunk and trunk stand in the room. The trunk is empty and the bed is rumpled.

#### KA14 SERVANTS QUARTERS

A bunk and trunk stand in the room. The trunk is empty. The bed is turned over but in decent shape as are the linens, though they are scattered about the floor.

#### KA15 GUARD CHAMBER

There is a large room that once served as guard station for the tower. A table sits in the middle of the room with six chairs

around it. There are several shields with crossed swords and spears lining the wall.

There are four shields, four spears, and four swords. All are in reasonably good condition, though a little age worn. The shields are round with no devices.

There are three mugs on the table, one knocked over. They are empty but all smell odd. Anyone with knowledge of poisons can identify the scent on a successful primary attribute check (CL 4).

The last of her loyal servants remain here, four bearded devils. These four large creatures cling to the ceiling or walls, mindlessly waiting her call or for some new interloper to enter the room. They attempt to capture anyone they can, to deliver them to their mistress intact.

**DEVIL, BEARDED** (These lawful evil creatures' vital stats are HD 6d10, HP Varies, AC 19. Their primary attributes are physical. They attack with 2 claws for 1d4 points of damage, a tail for 1d6 points of damage or a beard attack for 2d4 points of damage. Their preferred method of attack is with a guisarme for 2d4+3 points of damage. They have heightened initiative of +1, and the following spell-like abilities: *bane* (1x day), *freedom of movement* (constant), *haste* (1x day with no ill effects). They have an SR 3.)

**TREASURE:** The bearded devils have some treasures scattered across the floor: a pouch with 42pp in it, a magical arm band that gives a +1 to attribute checks while worn, a scroll case with a 4 scrolls on papyrus (CK's choice), and a music box that when played casts a *protection from evil* in a 10 foot radius sphere. The music box can only be played three times.

# 15 GALLERY OF SOULS



*he gallery served as a prison for all the lesser creatures found wanting in the reign of Unklar. These included good and evil, all hauled here and chained to walls, bound in cages, thrown into pits or holes. There are large rooms and small, some connected, others isolated. Some chambers were open and governed by their occupants, others pits of nightmare.*

GALLERY OF SOULS is an adventure module designed for 3-5 characters of a variety of levels. It is the 15<sup>th</sup> adventure in the "A" series, or Umbrage Saga, adventure modules. The adventure is designed to be part of a series that begins in distant lands and ends in the mountainous dungeon of Aufstrag. For more details on this, please read "Involving the Player Characters" below.

**Gallery of Souls** is the third floor of fabled Aufstrag and comprises the Horned God's dungeons, prisons, pens and cages. The dungeons served as a prison for all the lesser creatures found wanting in the eyes of Unklar. Those bound here included the good and the evil, those who bound themselves to him, but were found lacking, those who fought him, those who were innocent and whose souls were stained black. All those hauled here were hung in the Gallery, impaled, chained to walls, bound in cages, or thrown into pits or holes. There are large rooms and small, some connected, others isolated. Some chambers were open and governed by their occupants, the greatest of which was called simply the Bulwark. The Bulwark was often at odds with the masters of the Gallery and during the aftermath of the Brimottaut they rose in rebellion, slaying their keepers and plundering the surrounding Gallery, releasing many of those bound there.

The greatest structural damage occurred in the greater dungeons, where the floor gave way and collapsed into the rooms below, the Eharuk-Mons. The sludge from the dungeons spilled into the lower level, as it continues to do to this day.

## INTRODUCTION

In many ways the Gallery's history is long and sordid. As is known, Unklar ruled in spite of all other creatures, and he loved none, not even his closest lieutenants. His was a rule of malice and power born of fear and death. He made a prison of the third level of Aufstrag, filled it with a network of dungeons and created the socjuwa to watch over them. The socjuwa were but slivers of his spite and made to serve his justice without thought or action of their own.

Those who opposed him died, or, if some future purpose was seen in them, they were bound in chains and carted to the dungeons. There they sat until called, or until the need was great, or worse, until some lord of Aufstrag thought to use them for pleasure (often in the Torture Gardens). The Gallery quickly became a nightmare of the damned, for most were forgotten in the dark, dank cells and died in madness and despair.

The first to occupy the dungeons were the Aenochians themselves. Any of that noble people found wanting were carted

off to the dungeons and imprisoned. It is they who coined the name of the level, for in it they deemed their souls were bound and lost to the Arc of Time, such that they could not escape, even in death.

Their numbers included the very high and the very low. Princes of the old empire sat in cells next to street urchins of Al Liosh. They ate the same horrid food produced in the Gallery's kitchens. They suffered from the Clinging Darkness and the weak went mad for it. They called out to their captors (lesser imps of hell) to no avail. They spoke to each other through the walls and doors, trying to aid one another and keep them from the darkness. In this they failed, for there was no hope of rescue and they wasted away to nubs of bone and flesh clinging to shadows on walls scored deep from the nails of those who came before them.

The Aenochians were joined by the dwarves soon after. Carted from the northern Grundliche Mountains, that proud people of the All Father came into the Gallery bound in heavy chains of brass. In long lines they came, for they were subdued in mighty battles under the mountain's domes. Their All Father's commanded them to stay the fight and live, for a time would come that they would need their strength. They came to Aufstrag in long lines and they sang dirges of loss as they tramped up through the Bone Pit and the Acre. Many of Unklar's legions fell back before their songs, for in them there lingered the echo of dark places far beneath the earth and wars uncounted that the people of Aufstrag could not understand.

And the dwarves were scattered into the dungeons and locked and bound. But this proved deadly, for in short order they mastered their stone cells, broke free, and rose in rebellion, slaying many thousands of their captors, orcs, and ungern, before they were subdued. The lords of the Gallery ordered the Hall of Cages built for the dwarves.

They carved a cavernous hall from the rock of Aufstrag and filled it with pits. The pits they filled with an ichorous gas and other foul despoilments. Above each pit, they hung a cage and in the cages they stuffed the dwarves. If any raised their voices in song, called to aid, or in any way disturbed their captors, the cages were lowered into the pits and all were slain or maimed by the gas. Thus, the dwarves suffered until the rise of Dolgan, and he brought many to Klarglich to serve him at the forge.

The wars in the east, west, and south brought many more souls to the Gallery, and they suffered as those before them had. When the greater dungeons were full, the lesser dungeons were constructed and after that, the tunnels. These last were built

to allow the weaker prisoners to fend for themselves. They fed on rats, bugs, or each other and drank from what little water dribbled into the tunnels. Beyond the caged gates few knew or cared what transpired in the tunnels.

Soon, however, the dungeons became crowded and the cages filled and could hold no more. At that time the halls between locales were widened and the ceilings above them raised. Any prisoners who could not fit into the many rooms were nailed to the walls overlooking the roads. This, the masters of the Gallery did for practical reasons, but also in grim humor, for now the whole Gallery earned its name twice over for the damned now hung on the walls for all to see.

In the 4<sup>th</sup> century of Unklar's rule, the Gallery was seen as a place of chaos for there was no one there to command it and all had fallen into disrepair. Unklar appointed one of his chief lieutenants, Ousmane, Lord of the Gallery, or as those who dwelt there called him, Lord of Souls. Though his real name is long forgotten, it is known that he was an undead master of old Aenoch and had lived for many long and bloody years. He ruled over the Gallery as Unklar ruled over the world. It was he who built the maze and the lake and carved out a warden for his army of slaves.

Thus the Gallery stood for many long centuries until Ousmane suffered a rebellion. The tale relates that a Vale Knight fell into the hands of Unklar's people and, when brought before Unklar, would not die. And so the Horned God ordered him set in irons and put on the block for all to see. Ousmane, however, defied his master and set the knight to the rack. For long days, he suffered the torment of the Lord of Souls until at last his heart exploded, and he passed from the world. When word came to Unklar of the knight's death, he rebuked Ousmane and drove him to heel.

When word reached the Gallery a host of Ousmane's servants rose against him, for they hated his rule and hated him more. They turned prisoners loose, and war broke out across the Gallery. Ousmane returned, diminished in stature and fought the war as best he could. In the end, however, he was bested, and the rebels carved out a section of Aufstrag for themselves. It was called the Bulwark and stood against the might of all the tower. The Bulwark was ruled as a separate realm, even against Unklar's people.

It amused Unklar to allow the Bulwark to survive, for it kept his servant in check. Thus, Ousmane was reminded of his own weakness, for he could not unseat the power of the Bulwark.

When Unklar was banished, the dungeons were full to overflowing. In the power struggles that followed, however, many of the prisoners were freed to join one faction or another or to flee Aufstrag altogether. Most wandered lost in the vast tower, succumbing to madness or the predations of devils and other beasts of hell.

Thus the Gallery has stood, a haunting shadow of its former self, though still the domain of Ousmane, the damned, and the mad.

## USING THE GALLERY

The Gallery is a wild place of haunting evil with no particular power in control. The locales are largely abandoned and have become wild and dangerous. The level is haunted by the socjuwa, and its lord, Ousmane, but little else.

Much of the level, particularly the greater and lesser dungeons have similarly constructed rooms, and for these reasons each area is given only a few room descriptions that generally apply to all the rooms. Notes are made below on how to expand or embellish the descriptions in order to create some ambiance. However, at the end of the day, the rooms are prison cages, built like a prison and set in gallery formation.

There are regular roads in the Gallery that connect the various locales. These are called the galleir and named like streets in any town. They are truly the galleries of the level.

The stacks truly begin here, these are marked on the map and reflect the vented heat from the chambers beneath them, driven up pipes in the stone, and into the stacks themselves. These are accessible and offer one a different form of passage to the levels above the Gallery.

**OUSMANE:** Ousmane has lost almost all control over the Gallery. Unklar's fall left him fearful of the wrath of greater powers. For this reason, he has retreated into the Hall of Lords, where he dwells now. The Castle Keeper should steer characters of lower level away from the Hall of Lords as Ousmane is extraordinarily powerful.

**SOCJUWA:** These creatures wander around constantly, though rarely leaving the level itself. They have no master, only instinct now and they follow it as would any mindless beast. Any they capture on the road or in rooms are carted to either the Hall of Cages, the dungeons, or the galleir and imprisoned. The choice of one or the other should be random.

## WANDERING MONSTERS

The Gallery is a very active level, with many monsters in it. Some, as noted, live in certain rooms. Many do not, and they wander the halls and rooms hunting for food, water, souls, or whatever it is that drives them on. They are, by and large, evil and bent toward whatever purpose they were set in the days of old.

**RATS:** The Gallery is swarming with rats. They feed off the many prisoners and the sludge in the Gallery of Souls. Encounters with rats occur almost constantly and, if one sits still too long, they will come to investigate. If they are able to approach a living creature that is not moving, they begin attacking them immediately. More join the feast, 1 per round.

**BATS:** The slave wardens are swarming with bats, and once per day these creatures take flight, often thundering around the Gallery until they take flight up one of the stacks or out through the gibbet area in the lesser dungeons. They do not attack anyone but fly down corridors, swarming the halls, creating a great deal of noise and confusion. Anyone caught in

## A15: GALLERY OF SOULS

the corridor without adequate protection (AC 12 and under) suffers 1d4 points of damage from bats. The bats return in the mornings. These encounters should happen once every few days at least.

See **Appendix C: Wandering Monsters**.

### SPECIAL ROOMS

There are several rooms randomly placed adjacent to halls throughout the structure. Anytime a party attempts to enter one, pick one of the following room descriptions and, if necessary, roll for a wandering monster to determine if there is something in there.

There is a 1 in 4 chance that the pit, room, or cell has a prisoner in it. Upon seeing any living creature, the undead goes mad with rage, leaping up to the small window, clasp the bars and reaching out with its claw, howling all the while. If attacked, it falls back into the room but continues to make a great deal of noise.

**NOTE:** Aufstrag is still an active place and many are hauled into the Gallery and sold or housed in the prisons. The CK may desire newer, living occupants in the rooms. If so, design a specific encounter as needed.

### CAGE PITS

These rooms are simple 20 foot by 20 foot rooms, with a trap door built into the floor. There are four torch sconces in the room allowing for plenty of light. The trap door is iron with a small window built into it allowing one to peer down into the room below, which is clearly a holding cell. The room below is smaller than the cage pit itself, about 8 feet deep and roughly 12 feet x 12 feet.

Frequently creatures that were imprisoned in the Cage Pits were left there and have long since died and turned into some undead monstrosity, generally a domenfelt, wraith, or wight.

**DOMENFELT** (*These lawful evil creatures' vital stats are HD 1-8d8, AC 16, HP varies. Their primary attributes are mental. They attack with a wailing attack for 1d8 points of damage. They can be turned but only temporarily. Anyone who hears their wailing attack must make a constitution save or suffer -1 from all attack rolls, including initiative. They are mindless and cannot be affected by illusions or any mind-affecting magic. With each wail, there is a 50% chance they attract 1-2 more of the domenfelt. They flee from any holy light such as cast by a protection from evil or holy weapon. They merge with shadows and forms and are therefore difficult to detect, gaining a +5 bonus to hide checks and a +10 to surprise.*)

**WIGHT 1-4** (*These lawful evil creatures' vital stats are HD 4d12, HP 32, AC 15. Their primary attributes are mental. They attack with claws for 1d6 points of damage, and a successful hit drains the victim of one level of experience. Its special abilities are create spawn, energy drain, and dark vision 60 ft.*)

**WRAITH** (*These lawful evil creatures' vital stats are HD 5d12, HP 37, AC 15. Their primary attributes are mental. They attack with incorporeal touch for 1d6 points of damage, and a successful hit drains the victim of one level of experience. A wraith is incorporeal and can only be hit by a +1 or better magic weapon. Animals fear wraith's and will not willingly approach within 30 feet of them. They can create spawn from any that they slay with their energy drain ability.*)

### GALLERY CAGES

This two floor room contains steps leading down 10 or so feet into the bedrock and into a room 20 x 20 feet. The ceiling is vaulted, usually about 20 feet from the floor. These were often designed for larger than human prisoners, ogres, giants, and the like. They were almost always chained directly to the wall, with little or no lead in the restraining chains.

If there is an inhabitant in the room, then there is a 50% chance it is a giant sized undead.

### SOLITARY PITS

Throughout the Gallery are small pits, 5-8 feet deep, and 2 x 2 feet wide. They were designed to hold an iron coffin. They are covered by an iron hatch. Prisoners were thrown into the tiny holes and the doors locked for punishment. These are often found in the halls and galleir.

Many of these have iron coffins in them. The coffin is evident by the handle on the coffin just inside the hatch, pulling on it allows one to lift the coffin from the pit. They are heavy and it requires a successful strength check (CL 8) to pull one out. Once lifted out, it is locked with two latches but does have an opening for the occupant to look out. There is a 1/3 chance a wraith, wight or domenfelt is in the coffin.

### INTERROGATION ROOMS

This rather small 20ft x 20ft room is dominated by a large iron chair. The chair is built upon a gear box that allows it considerable movement up or down, or to flatten out so that the occupant is laid down or sitting up. The occupant is restrained by metal bands on the wrists, ankles, waist, and neck. These served as holding cells where prisoners were questioned for purpose or for the joy of the torment, before being hauled to some other dungeon.

The chairs are often occupied (1 in 4 as above), for these creatures are mostly still restrained in the chair by the metal bands.

### IRON HELM ROOMS

These small 10 foot x 10 foot rooms were empty but for a heavy chain suspended from the ceiling. An iron helm, weighing about 40 pounds, was attached to the chain. The helm has a small opening for the mouth, where the occupant can eat and breathe, and it is covered by a caged door. The helm was secured on a prisoner and bolted snugly around the neck. Once in the helm the prisoner is allowed to move and even sit down,

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but little else. They bear the weight of the helm, as well as the discomfort, all in darkness and the stench of sweat, blood, and other foul body odors.

Wearing the helm causes more than physical discomfort, for it carries an echo of the suffering damned. Anyone who puts the helm on immediately hears the telltale signs of voices murmuring in the distance. The words are indistinguishable, but are clearly spoken. It grows words with each passing minute. For every minute the helm is worn, the wearer must make a constitution saving throw or become unnerved, suffering a -1 from all future attribute checks until magically healed (any heal spell serves this purpose, including *good berries*).

### SOUTH WINDOW STAIR

Note that the south window stair that begins in the Bone Pit leads to a balcony that overlooks the swamp. Next to the balcony is a ladder cut into surface of Aufstrag that climbs its flank a few hundred feet. It ends about level with the Gallery of Souls. There is a secret door here (CL 6), that once opened allows one entry into the garden of the lesser dungeons (see below).

### GALLEIR

The galleir are roads that connect and crisscross the Gallery of Souls. Each of the named galleir are 40 feet wide, and 35 feet high. The walls consist of large blocks of stone capped by a slab of flat rock 10 feet tall and 8 feet wide. Each of these slabs has the carving of a tree upon it. The image of the tree is thick, with two roots and two branches, much like a thick X. These are called the binding stones for they were set with manacles to hold prisoners.

**THE MANACLES:** There are four sets of manacles on each block of stone. The lower manacles, those in the roots of the tree, are roughly 22 feet from the floor, the upper manacles are attached to the wall at roughly 30 feet, though these extend down at times, allowing for victims smaller than 10 feet. The lower set binds the feet, the upper, the hands/wrists. The victim hangs spread eagle on the wall. The lower manacles are set above a 3-inch-long by 2-inch-deep ledge that victims stand upon, in this way all the weight is not on the arms. The manacles are not magical and are simply locked in place. A rogue, with a successful dexterity check (CL 6) can open any of the locks. Each lock the rogue picks gives them a +1 on the next lock for a maximum of +3. The locks can be opened by a *knock* or similar spell as well.

The majority of these are empty, however some may still contain a corpse, half devoured or starved, the bones of some previous prisoner, etc. One may actually encounter a living prisoner, for many come here and fall to the socjuwa who dwell in the slave wardens. These lonely victims often die before they can be rescued, usually of starvation or for the unlucky, their cries bring some foul beast who devours them where they hang.

The Castle Keeper should have encounters with creatures mounted on the walls as need or desire dictates. These can be

other adventurers, denizens of Aufstrag, or the undead of some long gone creature chained to the walls. These can happen anywhere along the galleir.

Below are two sample encounters set in the galleir.

### GALLEIR ENCOUNTER 1

This encounter should be placed on any of the roads the CK desires.

Nine unlucky adventurers made their way into Aufstrag through the back side of the tower, entering the stair noted on the southern edge. They followed the stair down to the Bone Pit and traveled their way up through the Acre into the Gallery where they ran afoul of a pack of devils. Five died in the battle, four retreated, battered and mangled into the Hall of Cages where they were set upon by a pack of socjuwa and overcome. The four of them were chained to the walls on the binding stones. Three are now dead, and one lives, though one of those who died, unbeknownst to his comrade, has reanimated and hangs limp next to him.

**Further down the wide corridor several bodies are bound to the high wall above you. The closest to you is moving and looking your way, it appears to be a human of some sort, arms and legs chained to the wall. Next to him hangs the limp body of another, an elf or human, you could not say. Further down hangs another body that stirs slightly, but more from some primeval instinct than any idea that you are here to rescue him. And beyond him hangs the mangled body of a man. He is pulled tight in his chains and his arms seem twisted and elongated as if he was pulled and stretched. Indeed, his lower torso and legs are missing, the walls and floor beneath it smeared in gore.**

As the characters approach, they waken the one living man. When he spies them, he groans out in a gruff, broken voice:

*"Help me! Please, by the bones of Heth! Help me!"*

It should be noted that of the two remaining, only one is alive. The other, Paderin, is undead. He moves slightly but any attempt to detect heat, alignment or similar function reveals his state. If he is released without finding out his true nature, he turns on the nearest living person and attacks them.

**ZOMBIE** (*This neutral evil creatures' vital stats are HD 5d8, HP 43, AC 11. It has no primary attributes. It attacks with a bite for 1d8 damage and can cause rot upon a successful, untreated bite.*)

The only living person is Piers. The characters may desire to interrogate him while he is hanging and if so he asks only for a little water to wet his parched throat. He answers any questions they have whether they cut him down or not. Read or paraphrase the following:

*"We came in through the stair that leads to the outside. It is here, I think, in the Gallery. We wandered below for some time, making our way back up here when the seer devils found us.*

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*We fought them off but only after losing half our company. We retreated into the Hall of Cages and there the socjuwa fell upon us and overwhelmed us. We were wasted and wounded and our magic spent. They took us and bound us here. I do not know how long we have hung here, but it has been too long.*

*Gruneth there went mad and began to shout for our comrades, but it brought only the sauld devils, and they rent him limb from limb and left him there. Bugstu died some day or so ago, the madness took him, and he bashed his head against the stone until death took him. Now it is only myself and Paderin there."*

Piers joins the party if asked, and if he is not asked, he asks if he can join them. However, he is tremendously wasted from his exertions and really just wishes to leave Aufstrag. He knows the way to the stair where he entered, and offers the party their flesh weight in gold if they take him there. He cannot pay it, of course, until they come to his home in Augsburg where he owns a great deal of land, but his word is good, and he speaks the truth.

**NOTE:** Encouraging the characters to guide Piers to freedom serves two purposes. First, it reveals another entrance/exit to Aufstrag. Secondly, it plants the seed for future adventure when the characters meet Piers in the future.

If he joins the party use the following stats for Piers, he will be only marginally useful. His time in Aufstrag has taken its toll. Use the following stat blocks, the stats in parenthetical are his normal stats which only return to him after he has been out of Aufstrag for several months.

**PIERS** (This 8<sup>th</sup> level, chaotic good human fighter's vital stats are HD 1(8), HP 14 (76), AC 10 (AC 13). His primary attributes are strength, dexterity, and constitution. His exceptional abilities are strength 14 (18) and dexterity 14 (17). He has no weapons or belongings of any kind.)

### GALLEIR ENCOUNTER 2

An arm dangles from one of the upper manacles, some 26 feet above the floor of the road. It is wrapped in chain mail, clearly the remains of a victim devoured by some evil of Aufstrag. Gore smears the wall. On the finger is a ring of energy resistance (fire).

### STACKS

These are the mighty chimneys of Aufstrag. The stacks are famous throughout the Lands of Ursal. Tales of the strange avenues that allow travelers to move throughout Aufstrag abound, heroes fleeing devils, to climb to levels high above, slaves fleeing into the dark chimneys, rogues climbing to breathless heights and so forth.

The Acre housed many men and creatures, and their living quarters were supplied with kitchens and fire places. Thus, the heat and smoke was channeled into scores of flues. Eventually, all of the half burned detritus of so many fires places drifted up the flues until it caught some cranny, where it clung, gathering more waste in soot and ash, smoldering all the while. Eventually the trash caught fire and the flames damaged the flues and more. In the early days Aufstrag was plagued by these fires. So the lords of Aufstrag ordered it restructured.

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The flues and chimneys were widened, large enough for goblins to crawl into them. These were directed into larger shafts, huge chimneys, that grew as they climbed the heights of Aufstrag. These large shafts were lined with catwalks and access given at several points, allowing those that fought the fires easy and quick access. The denizens came to call these chimneys the "stacks." The stacks climbed their way through level after level, through the cut rock of Aufstrag until they exited on some high flank of the tower or vented out the roof. The flues served to heat walls, floors, rooms, kitchens, and the baths of men wealthy enough to afford such. In time the denizens of Aufstrag learned to tap into the flues and stacks to bring heat to them as much as to channel smoke from their fire places. Above all this though, the stacks fed the giant forge room, Klarglich, with massive amounts of heat.

Some of the stacks are 20 feet in diameter, and this combined with the many smaller shafts cut into them, allowed creatures to take up residence in them. In the days of Aufstrag's glory, the stacks were home to fast moving creatures that flourished on the heat, for it was continuous. In the days after her fall, they have become home to all manner of wicked creatures. Since the fires of Aufstrag no longer burn hot, the stacks have become tunnels for spiders, giant bats, fire lizards, minor devils, kobolds, goblins, and other creatures too many to name.

There are several large stacks in the Gallery, these mark the beginning of the mighty flues. Each is marked on the map. Access is gained through doors in the walls.

The following goes for any of the stacks in the Gallery.

**The door gives way to the floor of a large circular shaft, about 10 feet x 10 feet. The floor is covered in grates, each leading to a small shaft that climbs into the rock below. Many of these on the floor are too small to enter. Heat rises gently from one, hinting at some creature far below burning a fire for its own needs. Above you, a mighty cylinder opens up, rising into the darkness far overhead. A ladder, built into the stone, lies on the far side of the massive flue and climbs up 60 feet before it breaches a narrow ledge that circles the chimney before climbing up again. The darkness is inky black, and the faint cries of some wild beast come to you from on high.**

The stacks can and are used as roads through Aufstrag. Climbing up the ladder sends one to the level above, or down the ladder sends one to the level below. They breach the levels as noted on the maps.

**NOTE:** It is impossible to map the entire network of flues that crisscross Aufstrag, there are too many of them and the nature of this fortress disallows this. It would make a book of blue prints. With this in mind, the Castle Keeper should feel free to create tunnels that lead out into rooms all over the fortress. With this avenue available, many of the denizens have naturally cut their own secret doors into rooms that lead through narrow walls to the stacks (amidst other places) that allow them escape or

easier passage to and from destinations. The CK should create such passages as any adventure dictates.

**HEAT:** The stacks are not as hot as they used to be. At times, one could enter the stacks and the heat alone would kill them. However, only in the higher levels of Aufstrag are the fires burning continually. Here in the First Ward, it is quiet and only occasionally do fires burn, the heat of which is noted by any creature passing through the stacks.

## **WANDERING MONSTERS**

There are any number of wandering monsters that dwell here. Roll twice as frequently for wandering monsters. Consult **Appendix C: Wandering Monsters** for more information.

## **MURGLUND**

The Murglund is a huge square hall, with vaulted ceilings and with four fountains in it, and with benches and balconies. All these are centered on the large block of carved marble set in the square's center. Here, special victims of Unklar's wrath were put on display for all to see. Princes, demons, devils who rose against Unklar, paladins and other dignitaries, all suffered here.

The Risen Road enters the eastern edge of the hall, forcing all who use it to see the block itself and any displayed there.

### **1 ENTRY HALL**

The hall itself is hundreds of feet long and wide, with walls that are covered in friezes of Unklar in all his glory. Crowned upon this throne with swirling cloaks and his mace of judgement in hand, he looks upon all that enter the room. There are benches, now long abused and covered in grime, that circle the block, offering comfortable seating to any and all who desired to sit and watch the suffering of the unfortunate.

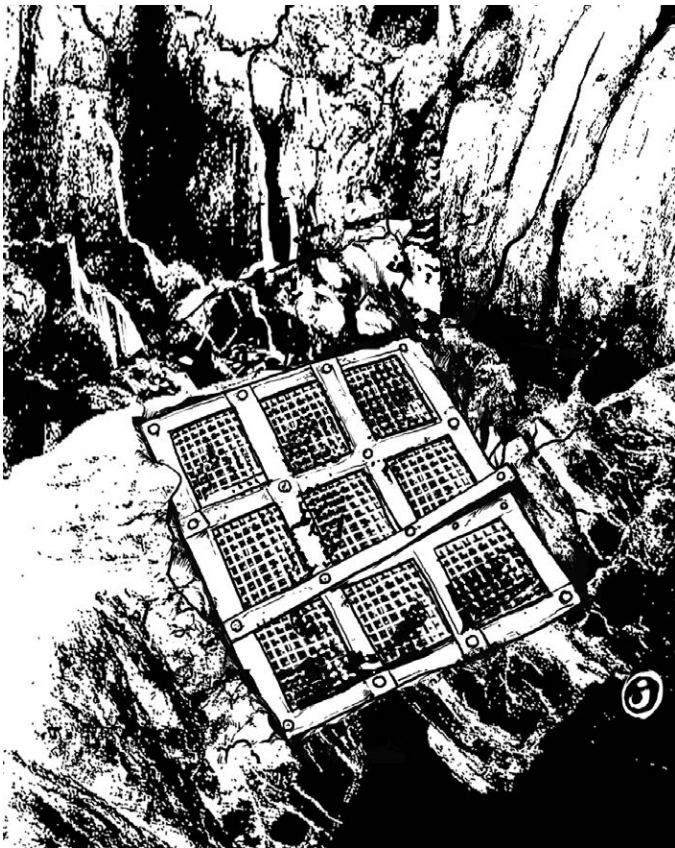
The floor is covered in a thick sludge and rivulets of water.

There is a nest of rithkin hidden in the ceiling above.

**MALICE OF UNKLAR:** The room is heavy with the malice of Unklar, set in the statuary that stands high above the hall's floor. Anyone entering the room should make a wisdom save (CL 13). Any who fail the save suffer a -1 to all attribute checks and initiative rolls while in the room and for an hour after leaving the room.

**The door opens to a wide, tall hall dominated by a giant block of marble that resembles the inverted head of an intricately decorated mace. Around it the floor is covered in several inches of black grime, rot, and other filth. Bones litter the floor here and there and the sparkle of gold as well. There are, or were, four fountains here, three are now in ruins, their water spilling out over their wide basins to seep into the mess before you. Only one remains, its water running clean, and the tumbling music of its voice brings to mind less dismal surroundings. Balconies set in the walls on high, overlook the hall. Above, the statues of devils**

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and other creatures stand upon outcrops in the wall, looking down upon all who enter. The ceiling, 40 feet above is lost in gloom.

**THE FOUNTAINS:** Originally, water flowed through the fountains continually, the trickle of it playing on the mind of whoever stood on the block. The water was clear and good for drinking and offered travelers a respite on the road to the higher levels of Aufstrag, but now the whole area is fallen into waste. Three of the fountains have suffered damage so that the water spills out, running over broken masonry and slides across the floor, there to combine with the dirt, grime, mold, and filth of the floor.

The fourth fountain works well enough, the water running through the pipes, spilling into the large basin, to run off into pipes further below, feeding rooms in the lower levels.

**THE BALCONIES:** Each balcony is set about 20 feet above the floor. Access is gained via a narrow doorway that leads to stairs that climb steeply up to the balcony itself. Within is a small room, perhaps 15 feet deep and the balcony overlooking the hall below. In times of old, people gathered here to eat and dine while they enjoyed the torment of whoever stood on the block.

**The Block:** The block is a huge square marble dais that dominates the center of the hall. It is intricately carved on all sides, with servants of the Horned God rising from fields of unfolding flowers. Their upturned faces, outreaching arms, and clawed hands seem to look up at the block and its victim with a mixture of scorn and wonder. The marble itself is white, though it is stained red, where

the blood of past victims ran across the smooth marble and down the sides of the dais there to be lapped up by whatever seed of Unklar dwelt in the Murglund in ages past.

Upon the top of the dais stand two iron poles, both black and smooth. These were called the Ferenthru, and they are set 15 feet apart and 20 feet high. Two large rings at the top hold long chains and manacles that still hang, awaiting their next victim. At the bottom of each pole are more manacles and chains, laying upon the floor in a haphazard fashion.

**THE NEST:** High above the floor, the ceiling is lost in gloom. It is a thick, clinging darkness that no light seems to penetrate. Spells do not breach it, and only the magic of a holy item that passes through it, or is able to send a pointed ray into its midst, parts the inky dark. If light can be brought to bear, the viewer notices a host of minor devils within.

The rithkin are spent souls of evil men who died in the service of their craft. Their souls were cast into Aufstrag by Heth and harvested by one of the many lords of hell. Once within they are hounded, tortured and devoured by the greater devils. They wander in constant fear and terror of all things but their own kind, and for this reason they tend to group together in packs and spew their fear in webs of thick darkness.

A nest of rithkin have settled upon the ceiling, clinging to it like bats. Their stench and darkness has surrounded them in their gloomy web of filth.

The rithkin are alerted to anyone entering the hall. As soon as that happens they begin to stir and move. Anyone observing the darkness around them has a chance to detect the movement (CL 4). Within 4 rounds in the hall, the rithkin begin howling and pouring down like black ink from the web above.

**RITHKIN** (These lawful evil creatures' vital stats are HD 2d8, AC 14 and HP varies. Their primary attributes are physical. They attack with a moaning howl for 1d4 points of damage. They continually secrete a thick smoke-like darkness that expands 1 foot per round around the creature. The darkness acts as a darkness spell that grows stronger the more rithkin are near. See Appendix A New Monsters below.)

### HALL OF BINDING

Far above, in the Klarglich, the slaves of Aufstrag forged manacles, chains, bands, rings, and other restraints for use in the Hall of Binding. The huge room was home to an army of slaves that took prisoners in and clapped irons upon them, wrist and leg, ball and chain, neck braces and arm bands, leashes and iron coffins. Whatever was called for was administered in the Hall of Binding.

Prisoners were first brought into the marshaling yard where they were divided into groups and placed in large domed pens lined with iron spikes. After, they were taken under guard and driven into the binding room and sent to the various stalls where irons were set upon them. The type depended on the punishment.

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Some were simply branded and set free under watch, others were set into iron coffins and carried to the pits, cast in and left to die.

When bound, they were hauled before the branding trench, and the mark of Aufstrag was placed upon them. This mark remained ever after and only the most powerful of magics could remove it.

A group of fire giants have made the Hall of Binding their home.

### 1 MARSHALLING YARD

The room is huge and dominated by a dozen large domed cages, each of which rises from the floor some 40 feet at the highest point. The cages are made of wide bands of flattened iron, first riveted, and then welded together. Within, these bands are laced with spikes that discourage any from pressing themselves up against the cage itself. When overcrowded, the spikes played end to many lives as prisoners were pushed up against them and killed.

The cage bands are 6 inches wide and allow only 12 inches of space between them. Small creatures frequently escaped but no one cared. Each cage has an entrance set facing another cage's entrance.

This room is devoid of life, for the fire giants in the binding room have claimed it as a part of their domain. It is dark and empty and only marked by the blackened stains of blood and excrement that mar the stone floor.

### 2 BINDING ROOM

This massive room is dominated by a hundred stalls that line the southern wall and a broad, shallow trench of molten rock that lines the northern wall. The room is exceedingly hot, easily reaching temperatures of 100 degrees.

A group of fire giants have holed up here, making this room their domicile. The Castle Keeper should adjust the number of fire giants in the room by the number of party members there are.

**GIANT, FIRE** (*These lawful evil creatures' vital stats are HD 12d8, AC 23, HP 61. Their primary attributes are physical. They attack with 2 fists for 2d8 points of damage or by weapon for 5d6 points of damage. They can throw rocks 450 feet for 2d10 points of damage. They have full immunity to fire, but suffer double damage from all cold based attacks.*)

**STALLS:** The stalls line the southern wall from the corner to the door that leads into the marshaling yard. Each is 10 feet wide, 20 feet deep, and consists of a raised stone step on the wall and a stone table that itself is surrounded by a single stone step. Each table is 4 feet wide and 10 feet long.

What was once an orderly room that allowed hundreds to be bound and manacled at once is now a cacophony of iron scattered all over the floor and hanging unused on the walls. The stalls are littered with hammers and tongs, bands, manacles, chains, links of chains, and iron buckets with chains in them. All the walls of the stalls have pegs in them with more chains and tools hanging from them.

The tables are stained black with the blood of countless prisoners. The table tops themselves bare the imprint of their victims. The traffic here was immense, and countless bodies cast upon the stone tables, which wore away over time, leaving the imprint of the tortured in the very stone itself.

**BRANDING TRENCH:** This long trench is fed from a tube on the eastern wall, where molten rock drips down into the cavity, slowly pushing its way down the trench until it enters another tube at the far end. The rock burns and pops, consuming the air in the room. The burning rock puts off a massive amount of heat that fills the room and chokes any who come too near.

**HOWLS OF THE DAMNED:** Anyone who approaches within 2 feet of the trench hears a distant moaning, as if voices twisted in anguish were calling for aid. Anyone who hears the voices must make a successful charisma check or be haunted by them, suffering a minus one from all wisdom checks for the next 24 hours.

The howls are the echoes of those who passed through here. Prisoners were brought before the trench and forced to lay face down. A large brand was set to their backs and the mark of Aufstrag burned into their flesh. The mark caused extraordinary anguish and few could suffer it without screams of pain and cries for mercy. In time, the stone became full of the echo of their voices, and for this the room always seems to moan and howl.

**TREASURE:** The fire giant's treasure is heaped in the northwest corner with the bones of their many victims. It consists of 12000gp, 40 rubies, each worth 10gp, a wizard's book with 5 3<sup>rd</sup> level spells in it, a *ring of protection +1*, a *pearl of healing* (heals 1 HP per hour to the possessor), *chain mail +1*, and *+2 footman's mace*.

### 3 HALL OF REST

In the Hall of Rest, Ousmane sat in lordship over the Gallery, calling out punishments, devising new tortures, tormenting the living and the dead, and devouring souls.

**NOTE:** Ousmane is a Lord of Hell and as such will easily overcome any lower level parties he encounters. The Castle Keeper should steer parties away that are not able to offer Ousmane a challenge.

The Hall of Rest earned its name for many came to a bitter end here, brought before Ousmane who lifted their souls from their bodies and devoured them, casting their lifeless husks upon the stone where traders gathered them up and sold their skin and bones to the other denizens of hell. A soul devoured by Ousmane was denied the judgement of Toth, or his servant Heth, upon the Arc of Time, but was excreted into the wasting pool at Ousmane's feet and damned for all eternity to Aufstrag. For this reason, he earned the name Soul Eater and was despised by the good and the evil, and all those who dwelt between.

**THE DOORS OF BLUE:** There is but one entrance to the Hall of Rest, and this is through the Doors of Blue. Two large double

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doors built into a frame of intricate design, the doors are bound in iron, but made of a colored bronze. The blue stands out in the gray halls and dark corridors and can be seen from several hundred feet down the corridor.

The columns are made of ivory and resemble multiple dragons climbing the frame, meeting at the lintel in a ball of confused heads, claws, and scale-covered necks. They were crafted in intricate detail, something that has not been lost with age, and are a wonder to behold to any who appreciate such things. The doors themselves are bound in flawless iron, smooth to the touch. The bronze of the doors themselves possesses a bluish tint, colored by the craft of dwarves.

The doors open to the touch, however anyone under 10<sup>th</sup> level must make a save against fear (CL 10) to enter. If they fail, they are taken with visions of their death and consumption by the Soul Eater, and cannot enter.

**The doors swing wide on silent hinges, stirring a faint dust upon the tiled floor. The room is lit by fires that burn in braziers hanging from the ceiling high above, but the flame is haunting and seems alive, as if clawed hands were grasping shoulders of the dark and pulling them into the fire. The flickering casts shadows around the gilded room, and gilded it is, for the many columns that line the walls are set with monstrous reliefs carved in gold and platinum. These serve to catch the fire's light and cast it back out in patterns of gesticulating madness. The light of the madness climbs its way up the columns to a roof of purest white, except in the center where the visage of Unklar looks down upon all below. Beneath it all is a long room with mixed white and blue tiles that lead the way to a huge, hulking beast lying upon a mound of treasure. The beast, coiled in his serpentine heaps seems asleep.**

This is the bed of Ousmane, and he lies on it now, sleeping. He is aware of all that goes on in the Hall of Rest, and sees whoever enters. He does not rouse himself unless there is a palpable threat, or his treasure is molested, for he is weary and ever fearful since the fall of his master. He has given up rule of the Gallery and waits now for Unklar's return.

As noted the flames from the braziers cast flickering lights up and down the gold covered columns. These tend to draw the eye and create a distraction for any in the room. Anyone remaining in the room for longer than five rounds must make a successful intelligence save (CL 13) or become partially mesmerized by the lights. Anyone who fails their save, automatically loses any initiative roll until such times as Ousmane hits them with a blow. The blow serves to focus their attention, ending the effects of the flames.

**NOTE:** Players should be allowed to roll initiative but the CK may desire to say something like "you were fast, but the lights on the columns seem to distract you and allow the devil a slight edge."

If attacked, he rises with amazing speed to defend himself. Once roused, he does not break off the fight until he is destroyed.

If someone attempts to treat with him, he speaks in muffled tones: "I am full to bursting with the souls of the damned, do not

cast yourself in the role of dinner, for I shall surely accommodate you." He says no more, but if someone attempts to treat with him for longer than 5 rounds, he attacks them.

Attempting to steal the treasure is very difficult as he can see all the space around him. Getting something out of the mound without being seen requires a successful dexterity check (CL 19).

**OUSMANE SOUL EATER** (*This lawful evil creatures' vital stats are HD 16 (d10), HP 150, AC 27. His primary attributes are physical and mental. He attacks with a huge crowbill, that rends the soul. Ousmane is aware of all his surroundings and cannot suffer a back or sneak attack. He sees into the darkest shadows, even magical darkness spells. Ousmane has a SR 4, and possesses spell-like abilities. He can devour souls set loose before him. For more see Appendix B New Monsters below.*)

**KILLING OUSMANE:** It should be noted that killing Ousmane is not possible for he is not on his native plane. If he is defeated in battle, his corporal body dies and Soul Render falls to the floor. But within a month Ousmane begins to take shape again, somewhere in the Gallery. He hides himself in the shadows of the Slave Wards and devours the socjuwa until his shadow is full and he can take his form once again. Soul Render is a lawful evil weapon and can only be lifted by Ousmane.

**TREASURE:** Ousmane's treasure is massive. 100,000gp in assorted coins. 1000 gems totaling a further 25,000gp. The greatest gem in the trove is the Watersfall Stone, a blue gem of immense value (5000gp street value) to the Aenochian Lords of Dunbar in New Aenoch south of Aufstrag. If brought to them it is worth 50,000gp. The magic items are immense as well: +1 bow and a quiver of 7 +3 arrows, +2 two-handed sword, a frostbane mace, +2 staff, +4 dwarven mail shirt, +2 kite shield, tome of clear thought, and 4 scroll cases with a mixed group of 1<sup>st</sup>-4<sup>th</sup> level spells on them. The Castle Keeper should adjust treasure as necessary and roll the spells, mixing the cases up between casting classes.

## THE KITCHEN

Though hell has no pity, still, it must feed the damned. The Gallery's kitchen is a massive affair, and it has become the home of one unsavory beast.

**A massive hall opens before you, dominated by huge ovens lined against the southern wall, crowned with chimneys that reveal a past where food was made by the ton. Pantries, butteries, larders, prep tables, butcher blocks, cabinets, and counters burdened with the flatware, dishes, pots, pans, skillets, boilers, and all the paraphernalia of a kitchen adorn this marvel. Mountains of coal, 50 gallon barrels stacked 12 feet high, boxes and crates (broken) show a room that died suddenly and in mid stride. Here was the Gallery's kitchen, and it fed an army. All is quiet now, for the kitchen was left to its own devices long ago, and it has fallen into ruin and shadow. Rot and debris are everywhere, animals scurry for the shadows as you enter, and the blackened soot of hell's gluttony hangs over all.**

On the southern wall stand twelve gigantic ovens fed by coal shoveled into their coke chambers. These dominate the massive

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hall. In days of old, hordes of goblins scurried over and around the ovens, feeding the fires, tending the flames, filling the trays, opening and closing the flues, and dousing all in water to clean and prep for the next day's work. Others slaved over the preparation tables, cleaving the meat and feeding it into pies for baking. An army of slaves took the pies by tray to the dungeons and fed the damned, regularly if not consistently.

Now the room is a wreck. The tableware lies scattered about, the coal is home to colonies of rats, the ovens are clogged and filled with filth. Dirt and dust abound, spider webs cling to everything, for even though they are small, thousands now occupy the room.

If anyone scours the room, they cannot help but find goblets of pewter and silver, as well as dinnerware and flatware.

**THE OVENS:** The ovens are huge affairs. Made of cast iron and designed to withstand extreme heat, they can easily hold 6 people (if the grime is cleaned out).

But none of that has dissuaded the pack of mongrel devils from taking up residence in the oven in the southeast corner. They are lazy and indolent beasts, mad with their own hate and will not notice anyone entering the room until they are within 100 feet of the oven they turned into their den. They attack as soon as they take note of the intruders.

**DEVIL, MONGREL x 5** (*These lawful evil creatures' vital stats are HD 5d8, HP 40, AC 15. Their primary attributes are physical. They attack with a bite for 2d4 points of damage. They are able to bay, which causes attackers to suffer a -1 from all actions. They are able to heat metal three times a day as a 10<sup>th</sup> level spell caster. Their bite is poisonous and deals damage as well as -2 to primary attribute checks. They have scent and twilight vision.*)

**TREASURE:** The mongrels have recently dragged a human into the oven and have not had the desire to rend it for it is dressed in +2 elven chain mail. The body also has a *potion of cure serious wounds* on him.

### HALL OF CAGES

As noted previously, this vast hall and the smaller adjacent halls were designed to hold the dwarves, for their mastery of stone allowed them to escape the greater dungeons more than once. In time, others were imprisoned here. When the wars came and battered the lower levels of Aufstrag, the Hall of Cages was abandoned and those bound here left to die. Most went mad and devoured their fellows or themselves. But all died, both in the greater hall and the lesser.

The souls and spirits of those who died in the Hall of Cages were trapped in Aufstrag, whether good or evil, it didn't matter. They joined the discarnate spirits marooned in Aufstrag, penned by the weight of hell. Lost in fear, they shed what they were, became nameless voices of despair, and eventually slipped into the pits. There, they gathered like some foul gas, congealing into a noxious poison. The pits became all they knew, and they rested there, a mass of twisted fear.

At times, one or more of the discarnate climb up the side of a pit and drift around the room, occasionally even into wider halls beyond. For the most part, however, they linger in the pits, clinging to the edge, or settling in the deep.

### GREATER HALL

The Greater Hall of Cages is devoid of decoration but for the cages and the ledge that circles the room. There are dozens of cages, one set upon a chain every 50 feet. Each cage is dome shaped, roughly 20 feet in diameter and 12 feet high.

The cages here are hung by a thick chain that passes through a pulley set in the ceiling and on to the nearest wall, where they were set upon a spool that allowed the jailers to raise or lower the cages. The spools themselves were set into the wall, 20 feet above the ground level and accessed by a broad ledge that circled the room. Access to the ledge was gained by staircases set in the corners.

The cages hang over deep pits cut into the floor beneath. The pits are 20 feet deep and designed to hold the cage that hung above it. In the days of its power, the pits were filled with creatures, devils, undead nightmares, poisons or other devices that tormented those lowered from above.

**RANDOM ENCOUNTER:** Before characters enter the Hall of Cages, roll for random encounters to determine if anything has entered the hall recently.

**Before you lays a huge room filled with giant, flat-bottomed cages hanging from the high ceiling. A dozen or more of these cages dominate the room. Beneath each is a floor pit, clearly the size and shape of the cage itself. Smoke rises from the pits, coiling up a few feet before it collapses back down, or it clings to the edges. The cages are held up by chains that snake through a pulley system that ends in the far wall and a ledge some 20 feet above the floor. All around the pits, wisps of smoke, green in the light, hover, drifting in lonely silence.**

**THE DISCARNATE:** As noted, the "smoke" is actually the spirits of those who died in the cages. Each cloud, only a few feet across and a few feet high, is the spirit of someone who died in the hall. They are barely cognizant of anything around them, though life attracts them as a haunting memory of what they once were. They naturally drift toward it, hoping to engulf it to make themselves whole again. Of course they cannot, and all they manage to do is choke to death the person with whom they sought to join.

**DISCARNATE** (*These neutral evil creatures' vital stats are HD 1d8, HP 7, AC 10. They have no primary abilities. They have no attack form. They are able to engulf and deliver a powerful poison for 1d4 points of damage per round. A successful constitution save reduces the damage by half. A victim can break free from a discarnate with a successful dexterity check.*)

Each discarnate moves very slowly, 1 foot per round. To the casual observer, it is difficult to tell if it is moving at all, and



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looks more like natural air currents are carrying the gaseous form along with them. A successful wisdom save (CL 6) reveals the true nature of the movement.

If more than one gas cloud engulfs a character, the saving throws must be made for each discarnate (once per round). Effects are cumulative.

**PITS:** Falling into, or entering one of the pits is extremely dangerous as there are 4-16 discarnate in each pit, and anyone unfortunate enough to fall into any of the pits suffers multiple attacks and must make a saving throw for each discarnate in the pit.

**TREASURE:** The discarnate have slain many who have passed into the hall, and their treasures are scattered here and there. The CK should create a treasure based on the level of the party. Consult the **Monsters & Treasure** treasure tables and follow the established pattern.

### SMALLER CAGE HALLS

Attached to the Hall of Cages are a number of smaller rooms. These were originally used to imprison first dwarves, but later any and all the jailers desired.

There are no pits nor hanging cages, only small cages about the size of a coffin or small bed. Individuals were placed in these cages and the cages set in the rooms, sometimes one on top of the other. Those so imprisoned often died.

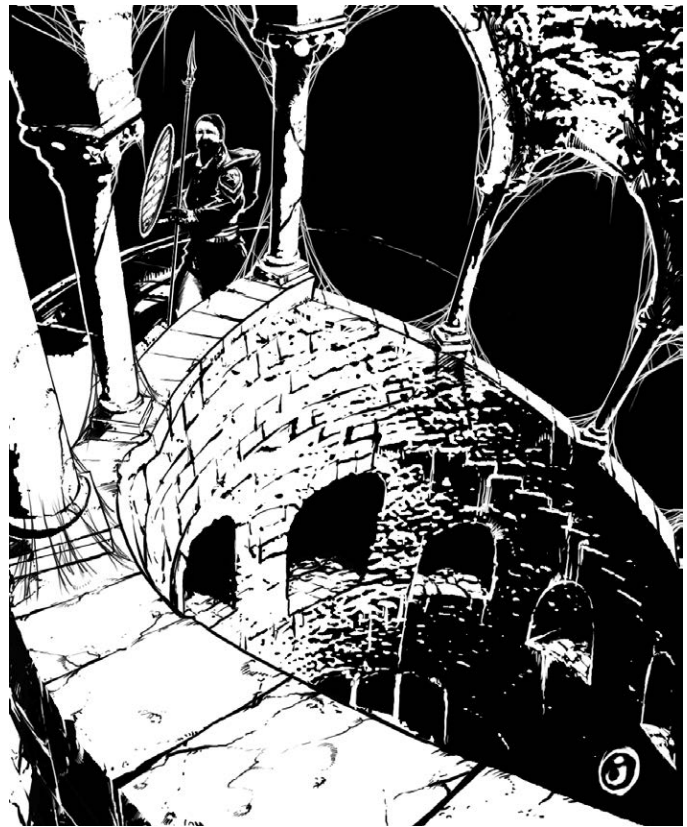
The rooms should have 1-20 coffin-sized cages in them. They are usually stacked, but are sometimes knocked around as if something wandered through them. The cages are often filled with 1-3 bodies and these bodies are frequently undead, most still trapped in the cages and unable to escape. They moan and twist, continually trying to escape.

These rooms are a favored haunt of the erinyes, beautiful female devils who roam the cage rooms tormenting the undead. It is their great delight to see them writhe and struggle for freedom. Those that escape are hounded into the Greater Cage Hall where they become entangled with the discarnate.

Anyone approaching a room with an erinyes in it has a chance (wisdom attribute check CL 6 of hearing the creatures' tormenting laughter or the tormented souls' groans of anguish.

**ERINYES** (These lawful evil creatures' vital stats are HD 6d8, AC 18, HP varies. Their primary attributes are physical. They attack with a dagger for 1d4 points of damage, but anyone struck must make a constitution save or fall into a stupor for 2 rounds, at which point they slay the victim, usually maiming them first. They have superior intelligence. They can move, flying or on foot, 30 feet per round. They can detect invisible objects, locate objects, assume a gaseous form, polymorph themselves as well as possessing all powers common to devils. They have SR 7. For more details see *Tome of the Unclean*.)

**NOTE:** Place as many erinyes in the area as will make the encounter challenging.



### STONE-BROW STAIR

A massive stair case that climbs from the Gallery to the Devils Mess, the 16<sup>th</sup> level of Aufstrag. Built inside a shaft a hundred feet wide, the stair winds its way up into the infernal darkness above. It grants access to all the levels of Aufstrag from the 3<sup>rd</sup> to the Devils Mess. The stair itself is well constructed and elaborately built. Stone buttresses, interspersed with columned windows, hold up the stair case itself, and as one winds further up or down, they are able to see into the central shaft. Every few hundred feet a columned alcove, built on a platform that overlooks the central shaft, allows weary travelers the chance to sit and rest.

It was constructed by the dwarves who took up residence in Aufstrag. They wearied of the ever changing nature of Aufstrag and built their own road that granted them easy access to the many levels. Unklar forbid the stair to breach his upper halls and the captains kept it from extending into the base for they always feared the madness that rose from the Trenches.

The dwarves put little beauty into the stair, but much craftsmanship. They fashioned the stone work with hammer, chisel and runes, casting their might into the stone, to both make it sturdy and to last for all time. However, the dwarves who labored here were slaves of Unklar's capture and suffered the work at great cost, so as with many of their creations, they laced hidden powers within the stair. Set in the mortar were runes of power that gave courage to those of good intent and those creatures of a like mind to the dwarves. For those of an evil nature, however, the effects were opposite; it wearied them, settling the fear of doubt upon their brows so that travel up the stair became a laborious task.

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In this way, the dwarves made a refuge for themselves, hidden in plain sight. And though it is known that some of the greater lords of Aufstrag knew of the dwarven trickery, they turned the other way, for they used the stairs to weaken their enemies. For most, however, it was a wearisome walk and seen to be the folly of the dwarves who were too headstrong to learn the greater ramps and stairs of Aufstrag.

Thus the Stone-brow earned its name, doubly so, for it gave the strength of stone to the dwarves and settled upon the shoulders of others like a stone.

**EFFECTS OF THE RUNE STONES:** Any non-evil creature that enters the Stone-brow receives a respite from the Clinging Darkness. If they remain in the staircase for more than 3 days, the Clinging Darkness recedes. When they reenter Aufstrag proper they roll for the Clinging Darkness as if they were fresh to the tower.

The Stone-brow is over 2000 feet high, to fall down it is to die.

### **SLAVE WARDEN**

The galleir broadens considerably as it passes before the slave wardens. The road itself is 50 feet wide and runs in front of a complex of rooms, 800 feet long and 100 feet high.

**The road opens before you, expanding into a clean cobbled street. It runs abreast of a massive six story complex of apartments stacked one on top of the other. Made of a curious red mud brick, the complex stands out from the normal gloom. It seems a hive of sorts, built into the side of a mountain. Yawning doorways, narrow and squat, open to an inky blackness. Walkways, thin ledges worn smooth by countless feet, lead to steps that cling to the side of the complex like vines to a tree. These cross up and down the complex, allowing one easy access to the various ledges and rooms. All along the ledges are countless thousands of droppings, excrement from some flying beasts. The droppings range from the floor to the 4th level of the complex.**

A successful wisdom save (CL 3) reveals the nature of the droppings as belonging to the hordes of bats and vimnel that occupy the complex.

There are hundreds of rooms in the slave wardens. They were once occupied by the socjuwa, those mindless slaves of the Gallery. When occupied, the socjuwa crawled into a room and sat waiting for the call of their masters. They did not eat, nor drink, nor take any comfort in their housing. The wardens were only places that allowed the socjuwa to stay out of the way, for those who did not, usually became the play thing of devils, a fate that even the mindless feared.

The complex rises from the floor some 100 plus feet and abuts the east wall of Aufstrag. There are six layers of apartments in the complex, with some 30 rooms on each layer. The complex is made out of mud bricks smoothed over with plaster and the countless tread of many thousands of feet for many hundreds

of years. The brick is very dry and, if a determined effort is made to tear it down, can be broken up. Indeed, there are holes in the walls of some of the apartments, dug out by one creature or the other.

### **THE ROOMS**

Each room is roughly the same in size and height, about 20 feet x 20 feet and 8 feet high. There are no windows or any furnishings to speak of, only the main doorway that leads to the room. As noted, these were home to the socjuwa, humans bound to hell who possessed only an echo of their former selves. Many of the rooms bear scratches where fingers dug into the brick until nails were broken and blood stained the ruins. Scribbles of the mad and damned line some of the rooms, as some houseless memory found expression upon the walls of hell. Others still are splattered with blood and feces, expressions of minds utterly unhinged. Here, the socjuwa dwelt, slaves of a law the true horror of which they did not understand.

Exploring these rooms runs the risk of rooting out spiders or other creatures below, or vimnel higher up and the bats in the very highest of the levels. The complex is home to giant spiders, hundreds of vimnel and thousands of bats. The spiders generally dwell on all levels. The vimnel range in packs from 1-8 and occupy rooms on the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> level. The bats nest on the 4<sup>th</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup>, and 6<sup>th</sup> levels.

Break any exploration of the area up with small encounters, whether startling bats out of a room, stumbling on a huge spider, disturbing a nest of vimnel, the mad paladin (see below) or a similarly devised encounter.

### **GIANT SPIDERS**

The spiders are monstrous affairs. They force their bulbous bulk through a door, nesting in a room. They range out to hunt, usually dragging paralyzed prey into the nest to devour it. There they sit, fat and loathsome, grotesque apparitions of hell. When not out hunting, they wait and watch, keeping a look out for an easy meal, whether a denizen of hell or an interloper, they care not.

**SPIDER, LARGE** (*These neutral evil creatures' vital stats are HD 7d8, AC 13, HP 50. Their primary attributes are physical. They attack with a poisoned bite for 1d4 points of damage. Anyone bitten must make a constitution saving throw or suffer a further 1d6 points of damage per round for 1d4 rounds.*)

### **THE BATS**

The bats come out in hordes, roughly as the sun is setting outside, flying out and into the corridors and rooms, most heading for the stacks that allow them access to the upper levels of Aufstrag, which allows them to range out of the tower and hunt the Grausumland beyond. Others head for the gibbets and fly out through the many doors there. When the hordes begin to move, the noise is deafening as thousands of leathery wings batter the wind and the squeaking of tens of thousands of voices drowns all else out. Upon their return, it is the same.

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### VIMNEL

The bats have developed a symbiotic relationship with the vimnel who have come to occupy the lower floors of the complex. These foul, winged, humanoid creatures are creations of the Klarglich high above. Evil humans who pass into the land of the dead and are found wanting, find themselves in Aufstrag. Here, for whatever reason, some are fed to the Klarglich, the forges of Unklar, and their blackened souls are twisted with pain and suffering and morphed into beasts possessed of a singular cruelty.

Like many products of Aufstrag, they despise the living and the dead and hunt them out whenever they can. Scores of these creatures have taken refuge in the slave wardens, living in small packs that roam out from time to time, hunting for prey. They inadvertently keep the bats safe from most predation. Creatures such as carrion worms, large spiders and the like, would endlessly feed upon the bats if they could, but they must pass over or by the dens of the vimnel, and these creatures kill them for cruelty or sport. They do the same to the bats from time to time, but in general, they leave the bats to their own machinations.

**VIMNEL ENCOUNTERS:** The Castle Keeper should develop an attack if desired, allowing one group of the vimnel to spy the party. However, if the party begins climbing up and into the various apartments they will inevitably come across one of the vimnel's dens.

The vimnel hunt in small packs of 1-8. They do not endlessly watch the road before the complex, though it is possible that some are perched up on a ledge watching for signs of movement. If a pack spies a group passing beneath them, climbing the complex or taking a similar action, they attack it, attempting to feed upon them. Other vimnel do not take notice, unless the battle gets extremely noisy. The more noise the more vimnel packs come out of their dens to investigate.

After the second loud noise (as determined by the Castle Keeper), there is a 25% chance that another pack will be roused by the commotion and attack. For every loud noise after the third loud noise the chances of drawing the attention of more vimnel increase 10% for each noise. On the fourth loud noise 35%, on the fifth, 45%, and so on. Furthermore, for each group of vimnel that join the fray the percentage increases by a further 10% for another group to take notice and join the fray.

**FOR EXAMPLE:** A pack of vimnel spy an adventuring party and attack. During the battle, characters begin shouting, a *fireball* spell detonates with a loud explosion. There is a 25% chance another pack hears the commotion. The CK rolls a 23 on the d100. This sound catches the attention of another hunting pack, it begins coming out and flying down to the attack. The characters *lightning bolt* this group. This is the fourth loud sound and the chances of summoning another group, a third in this case, is 35%, plus 10% for the second group that has already joined the fray, for a total of 45%.

In all there are 140 vimnel in this complex

**VIMNEL, 1-8** (These chaotic evil creatures' vital stats are HD 4d8, HP 23, AC 15. Their primary attributes are physical. They attack with 2 claws for 1d4 points of damage each and a bite for 1d4 points of damage. They are able to use weapons, but don't often do so. The vimnel is able to emit a howling of despair and anyone who fails their wisdom save suffers a -4 from all dice rolls.)

The vimnel hunt the living and the dead and bring them back to their lairs. The treasure they collect is kept in their den.

**TREASURE:** Roll for treasure found on Treasure Type 4.

### THE MAD PALADIN

Some time ago Rufuin of Maine came to Aufstrag. A group of nine entered, and all were slain or lost on the hard roads. Rufuin, separated from his people, wandered the halls alone for many weeks until the Creeping Darkness drove him mad. He dropped all arms and armor, tore his clothes from his body and ran wild through the halls. Eventually he crawled up through the Slave Wardens to the uppermost layer and there squatted in the dark, broken in terror. A minor devil came to him then, whispering mad thoughts in his ear until he at last convinced Rufuin to cut off his face and stick it to the wall, there to talk to himself until death should overcome him.

**Within, you see a man, naked to the world, sitting in the corner of the room. He is wild, blood spattered, tangled hair stuck in mats to a face bloodied and horribly maligned. He holds a shard of brick in his bloodied hands and sits looking at the wall next to him. There his wild eyes are set upon an image plastered to the wall. The image seems to be the face of a man, though it is bloodied, wrinkled and looks old. He talks to the face and touches it almost lovingly, and it is then that you realize that the face is his own, cut from his head and stuck to the wall.**

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The devil is still in the room, clinging to the ceiling in a pool of darkness. It tries to stay hidden, but if discovered will attack with the sole purpose of escaping. If it does escape, it will hound the party so long as they remain in Aufstrag or they slay it.

**IMP** (*This lawful evil creatures' vital stats are HD 1d8, AC 15, HP 7. Its primary attributes are physical and mental. It attacks with a bite for 1d4 points of damage and a stinger for 1 point of damage. It is able to turn invisible, has an SR of 3 and regenerates 1 hit point per round. Its stinger has a poison barb that can cause a further 2 points of damage for 4 rounds.*)

There is nothing salvageable of Ruftuin, even if a *heal* spell is placed upon him. His mind is consumed by the creeping darkness. For his soul to find its way onto the Arc of Time, he must be buried in hallowed ground.

### THE TUNNELS

Many of those bound in Aufstrag were petty creatures and lesser men. The torments of hell drove them mad, but the fire within them was such that death did not come easily. So Ousmane concocted some greater sport of suffering for them.

He set his army of slaves to hollowing out the Tunnels, a sprawling series of halls and rooms with ceilings only four feet high, but corridors 2 feet wide. These were walled off from the rest of the Gallery and only a few doors set in the area to allow entry. It amused him to send humans into the Tunnels, for they could not walk upright, but were forced to bend their backs and necks, or to squat, to move down the corridors.

There was no food in the Tunnels. The only water was the moisture that clung to the walls. Those who went in, went in with their flesh only. The darkness, the hunger, the thirst, the narrow confines, the inability to stretch out but in repose, eventually drove those in the Tunnels mad and they fell upon their fellows like feral dogs. Eventually they mutated or bred and evolved, but their limbs became disjointed and they crawled on all fours. At times they are as a normal human, at others they are twisted, with backs and arms and legs all askew.

In short order the Tunnels became a place of insane nightmares. Dark corridors filled with the raving mad, twisted and bent, hungry for flesh and bone.

The Tunnels have seen no new inhabitants for many years, however many remain from the days of old, their lives leached out impossibly long from the horrors of Aufstrag. These crawl through the darkness, on spindle-like legs and arms, crooning as they hunt in the dark tunnels.

### ENTERING THE TUNNELS

Access is gained through one of the many doors or through the stacks in the northern sector of the Tunnels. The doors are short, four feet high, wooden with iron bands. Most of the doors (1 in 6 chance of being open) are shut and locked (pick locks CL 5). Breaking them down requires a successful strength check (CL 7).

It is difficult to fight in the tunnels for the ceiling is so low. No overhand or side swung weapons are possible, only missile and thrusting weapons are useful.

**BENT BACKS:** Any person taller than the hallway of the tunnel suffers from increasing pain so long as they are in the Tunnels. They are required to make a constitution save every hour they are in the Tunnels, if they fail they temporarily suffer a -1 on all physical attribute checks. After the second hour they suffer a similar penalty from mental attributes. After a third, another penalty on physical attributes and so on until a max -5 is reached in all attributes.

Those who venture into the Tunnels will eventually run into one or more of the feral humans, when they do that creature begins a low crooning, as if a person in great mental anguish. But the moment a living creature gets near them they leap upon them and attempt to tear out their throat with their teeth.

**GENERAL DESCRIPTION:** The Tunnels are much like an ant warren, cut from rough rock, but worn smooth through countless years of traffic. Because of the peculiar nature of the feral humans here, the walls and ceiling are worn as smooth as the floor. There is little sign of habitation for the occupants eat everything that hits the floor, flesh and bone, clothing, excrement, hair, in short, anything that is edible.

The air is rancid and thick, for there are no wind currents to move it and the filth of unwashed human bodies permeates the walls and floor and ceiling. It batters the senses, making one feel as if they are underwater and in desperate need for air.

### ENCOUNTERS

Because easy access to the Tunnels is blocked off, there are few creatures here other than the feral humans. Other encounters might include devils who have entered to torment the damned, but few come here now. Roll encounters every 100 feet. On a roll of 1 on a d4, a feral human is encountered, clinging to the wall or ceiling, or crouching in the darkness.

**FERAL HUMAN** (*These evil creatures' vital stats are HD 3d8, HP 8, AC 14. Their primary attributes are physical. They attack with a bite for 1d4 points of damage. They have exceptionally good hearing with a +5 on all listen checks and darkvision of 60'. They are exceptionally quick, move 40 feet per round.*)

**TREASURE:** Though the feral humans eat all the bone and flesh of those they kill, even lapping up the blood spilt, they have no interest in anything else, so there are many items lying about the Tunnels. Anyone crawling through the Tunnels has a 10% chance of finding a mangled body, a backpack or sack on the floor. If something is found consult the treasure tables in **Monsters & Treasure** to determine what, if anything, of value is discovered. Check every 4-500 feet or as deemed prudent.

### LAKE MUREAAL

In the early days of Aufstrag, the Gallery of Souls sported an arena. Burrowed 80 feet into the floor, near to the ceiling of

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the Acre below, wide and spacious, the arena sported benches of stone that sat thousands. Columns adorned the arena, and multiple doors led to cells beneath the bleachers. Here the sport of death was constant and many a denizen was tortured, maimed, or devoured on the arena's sandy floor.

But that ended in the 3<sup>rd</sup> century of Unklar's rule when Ectethelian of Aachen was hauled into the arena. There, he and his companions fought hell's torments until all were slain but for Ectethelian. A druid of Wenafar, he laughed off his tormentors for his death would come with a price. He could see water in many things, and he knew that near to the arena a large pipe carried water from on high. Calling upon the primeval power of the world he unmade himself, flesh and bone fell away to dust and many of his tormentors were killed and maimed. The ceiling above collapsed as did the southern wall of the arena. This tore a gash a dozen feet long in a pipe in the wall that channeled water from on high. The arena filled slowly, for there was nowhere for the water to go and soon the arena was a lake.

Ousmane, Lord of the Gallery, was much amused and let the lake stand. At first, the water ran down the southern corridor and flooded portions of the lesser dungeons, but Ousmane ordered the walls pulled down and in the chaos of ruin, the water was redirected to flow through fissures in the rubble of the southern corridor, out into a balconied chamber and on to the swamps far below.

So Lake Mureaal came to be.

In time, creatures crawled into the water and set seed in it, and they spawned a race of mermaids both beautiful and evil. These sirens dwell in the still cool waters, calling to the dead with melodious voices, but drowning them, once attended.

**You stand upon terraced bleachers, that climb down slowly into a huge, broad lake whose black waters show hardly a ripple. Clearly an arena of some type, now flooded, only the top two tiers of bleachers remain above the water. The ceiling is cut high above and lit with lamps that burn a soft, green light. The light seems reflected in the water's surface, casting back perfect pictures of the greenish hue. The water is deadly still, without a ripple and wrinkle to mar its mirrored surface. The air is less heavy here, free of disease and death and the stench of evil, it is gentle and cool, soothing senses aggrieved with so much horror. Beneath the water, lights begin to pop up, only a few, but they catch the glint of gold and treasures untold beneath the cool lake's water.**

There are several entrances to the lake, all of them at the top of the bleachers. The northern entrance has a boat tied off from it. Across the lake is a second entrance/exit. Here, the bleachers have collapsed, creating a channel, that seems to lead away from the lake, but this is not so, for the channel simply ends. The boat easily fits down the channel. However, the hall beneath this channel is collapsed; to escape the lake this way requires swimming beneath the surface (see channel below).

There are also several doorways that lead into the maze.

The boat is 30 feet long and seats five people; it can hold more in a pinch. It is not used often for many know the nature of the sirens and avoid the lake unless absolutely necessary.

The lake itself is 80 feet deep at the center, but has spread out over most of the bleachers, leaving the top levels exposed. The walls of the original arena sport many friezes of Unklar and his folk. All are in remarkably good condition as are the stone bleachers and columns that now lie above and below the water. The mermaids live in prisoner cells at the bottom of the lake, drifting in timeless beauty, waiting to visit the horror of some nightmare upon the unsuspecting. Large, leafy plants grow in the lake, though never above the surface, allowing cover for the mermaids should some creature or the other enter the water.

The moment any living creature enters the room and comes out on the top of the arena/bleachers the mermaids are alerted. Some swim to investigate, while others linger in the deep parts of the lake. Eventually one of the sirens will reveal herself, exposing her upper torso, keeping the lower beneath the water. She sings to whoever she chooses to charm, hoping to bring them into the water and devour them.

**SIRENS** (These chaotic evil creatures' vital stats are HD 4d8, HP 32, AC 19. Their primary attributes are physical. They attack with a bite for 1d12 points of damage. They have siren call and are able to charm their victims with song. Upon hearing a siren's charm, the victim must make a successful charisma saving throw or fall under the siren's spell. They are able to transform as well, at will, as many times a day as they desire, turning their upper torsos into that of wide-mouthed fish, the form that allows them to bite their victims. They can sense almost any creature underwater, whether invisible or magically hidden.)

Anyone who dives for treasure has the chance of retrieving gold, gems, or magic. Of course to do so sends the sirens into a feeding frenzy, and they attack en masse.

**TREASURE:** Roll as needed on Treasure Type 4 in the **Monsters & Treasure**.

### THE CHANNEL

On the western bank of the lake is a long corridor, part of an exit built above the bleachers in days of old. The corridor is flooded, but the upper portion remains above the water, allowing one to take the boat down the tunnel. However, the tunnel comes to a dead end after a hundred feet or so, in a collapsed ruin. The water gently laps up against the rocks and masonry that lies heaped in the way.

If someone takes the time to look at the water here, they may notice the slight current (CL 4). The water is being pulled down into the rocks below, indicating an exit.

There is a small fissure that one can navigate to escape the tunnel. Anyone exploring under water at the end of the tunnel discovers the narrow fissure that allows them to pull/swim their way out of the tunnel. It is 80 feet of underwater swimming before one comes out on the other side.

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Anyone can attempt to swim the distance and escape. Consult the **Castle Keeper's Guide** for the necessary rules concerning holding one's breath, drowning, etc.

The fissure comes up in the ruined floor of a room that connects to the corridors behind the lesser dungeon. The room is open to the outside with a solid balcony looking over the eastern swamps, just to the left of the gibbets. The water from the lake flows out here, spilling out across the floor to fall 300 feet to the swamp below.

### THE MAZE

To be banished to the maze by the Lords of the Gallery was a death sentence. Those sent into its corridors were eventually slain by the ghosts within.

The maze corridors are tall, some 30 feet high, and vary in width. At the top of the walls, plain for all to see, is a small gap between the wall and ceiling. Climbing the walls is possible on a successful climb check (CL 8). The walls are smooth enough that even rangers and rogues must make a successful check to climb them. The walls are four feet thick and almost impossible to break through. Any attempts to do so inevitably attract the attention of the ghosts that haunt the corridor.

**LIGHT:** The maze is lit with an ambient light that seems to emanate from the very air. Due to this, there is no need for a light source when wandering around the maze. However, the light dies when one of the many ghosts in the maze passes through a corridor. When a corridor falls dark, it is the most certain way to know a ghost is there. A ghost affects 60 feet of corridor, 30 feet in front of it and 30 feet behind. This effect carries through the walls as well. Note that even ghosts that are on the other side of a wall can dim the lights of torches and magical blades.

**NOTE:** Light carried by anyone entering the maze is not extinguished when a ghost passes near, however it does flicker and dim to one half its normal power.

**BONES:** Many have died here, unnaturally aged until their bodies fall away. Their brittle bones lie on the floor. Any cleric or druid that finds such a body can determine upon a successful wisdom check (CL 10) what killed the creature. The bones may or may not have treasure upon them. It has, however, been a long time since Aufstrag saw a steady flow of people into the maze, so the bones are less common than they once were. Roll random on a d8 every hour. On a roll of 1, a body is discovered.

There are a number of ghosts in the maze, and they actively hunt anyone who enters, attempting to kill them and banish them to the ranks of the discarnate.

Roll for ghostly encounters, on a roll of 1 in 8, a ghost is near. Roll for encounters once every 30 minutes.

**GHOST** (These lawful evil creatures' vital stats are HD 10d8, AC 20, HP varies. Their primary attributes are mental. They attack with a slam for magical affect. Any successful hit ages the victim: humans and half orcs 10 years, halfling 1d6 decades, and dwarves and gnomes 3d6 decades. Elves are immune. They also utter a frightful moan that, unless a wisdom save is made,

*anyone who hears it is subject to a fear spell. They are incorporeal and use telekinesis.)*

### SANCTUARY ROOMS

There are four separate special rooms in the maze. Each of these acts as something of a refuge for those lost in the maze. The ghosts cannot enter them as they are sanctuaries, small churches built in honor of the gods Durendale and Gloriana.

Long ago a paladin was consigned to the maze, and he fought the ghosts as best his wits allowed. An old knight of tremendous power and with the ear of the gods, he was able to hold off the ghosts time and again. Though fleeing the maze was impossible, for certain death lay in that direction, he devoted his remaining energies to creating sanctuaries, hallowed ground, blessed by the holy gods of war, Durendale and Gloriana. Four times he succeeded, two such sanctuaries for each of the gods. His energy spent, the ghosts consumed him, but found themselves barred from the sanctuaries.

The Lords of the Gallery never enter the maze and remained ignorant of the existence of the sanctuaries, from that day to this.

**EFFECTS OF THE SANCTUARY:** Within each room is a fountain that runs clear, cool water. The ground is *hallowed* as per the spell. There is a *cure disease* spell placed on each room, which relieves anyone entering it of the effects of the Clinging Darkness.

**TREASURE:** Scattered randomly about the maze are any number of bodies. They are generally freshly slain as the rats have not had a chance to devour them. But their treasures lie where they fall. Four such are marked on the map.

Each body possesses gear that any adventurer would carry: backpack/satchel, a week's worth of food, water flask, 50 feet of rope, sleeping gear, flint and tinder, 5 spikes/small hammer, 12 feet of string, chalk, 5 torches or one lantern. They have 10-100gp in various coin.

**BODY 1:** The first body is a warrior class. He wears a suit of expert ring mail, and has a +1 *longsword* in one hand and +3 *battle axe* in the other. His helm is non magical but in good condition as are his clothes and heavy wool cloak. His pouch has a signet ring in it worth 50gp.

**BODY 2:** The second body is that of a rogue. Her skeletal remains lie slumped against the wall, still wearing a +1 *suit of elven chain* and holding a +1 *short sword* in her right hand and a gem in the left. The gem is an *elemental gem* that summons a water elemental when crushed.

**BODY 3:** The third body is of a gnome, who wears his death shroud thrown up and over his head. It is a *robe of eyes*. He holds in his one good hand a *wand of negation*. A hidden pouch beneath this belt contains 40pp and 35gp.

**BODY 4:** The fourth body is a human, lying face down, a scroll unraveled beside him. The scroll is one of many stuffed into a large leather satchel. Each of the 12 scrolls contains a spell of the CK's choosing.

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### THE LESSER GALLERY

In the early days of Aufstrag, the prisons filled rapidly. Men, women, and children of all races were carted into the tower and judged. Many were slain and their bodies set to feed the carrion. Others were enslaved, but still others were made to suffer and these swelled the dungeons. The Gallery of Souls, built for just this purpose, quickly filled to capacity and the prisoners began to pile up, jammed into cells, the damned crowding each other such that their tormentors could not easily hound them.

So Ousmane built the Lesser Gallery.

Laid out on a grid pattern the Lesser Gallery consists of blocks of cells set in halls. Each hall was cordoned off from the next by bars and gates. Three floors of cells meant three blocks per hall. Thus, room was made for a thousand more to sit in sufferance and painful waiting for their release, whether to freedom or in death. Each hall has a common area on the ground floor with a large pit in the middle

One hall (see **The Garden** below) is occupied, otherwise the whole area is like a metal tomb, for little dwells in the cells but rodents of various sizes and bats that cling to the ceilings far above. The CK should roll for random encounters.

### CELL

Each cell is identical. Three walls of stone and one of bars, they are 12 feet wide by 20 feet deep. Each has four bunks attached to either wall by a chain. A metal bucket was provided for the inmates for their waste. Beyond that, they were provided with little or nothing. The door to each cell slides on rails, opening like any common prison.

The cells are in decent shape, though everything shows signs of age. Nothing has been cleaned for years, the paint flakes off the metal, and the metal itself shows signs of corrosion. Patches of rust eat away at the bars and handles, hinges are swollen with decay and yield to movement reluctantly and with a great deal of noise. The locks are all working, and there are rings of keys everywhere on pegs on the walls, but nothing works easily; only with a great deal of force will the locks respond and turn as they should.

Within each cell the metal slabs that serve as bunks are in reasonable shape, though here and there the chains that hold them upright have rusted and broken and the bed itself fallen against the wall, held by the hinges only. There are some buckets in the room, but as often as not they've been carted off or tossed over into the common area.

**Noise:** Doing anything with the doors generally causes a great deal of noise. Sliding one open or closed grinds the metal wheels against the metal tracks, creating a loud grinding and creaking noise. Anything in the area hears the unusual noise and comes to investigate. If any such noise is made, make an immediate roll for wandering monsters on a d6. If a 1-3 is rolled there is an encounter. Roll on the wandering monster chart.

### THE COMMON AREA

Each hall has three floors of cells, each floor called a block. The three blocks share a common area on the first floor. The common area possessed whipping posts and racks where prisoners were tied off and tortured. Here, all could see from the blocks above as one or the other was beaten to death or simply made to suffer.

The posts are metal and fashioned into the floor and as such are still in relatively good shape with four chains attached to rings at the top of each post. The chains end in manacles. There are four per common area. Also each common area has two racks designed to hold the head and hands in place while the backside was tortured.

### THE GARDEN

In times past the Lesser Gallery was flooded by the waters of Lake Mureaal. These waters have served to feed the fungus, mold, and other flora that grow in dark and damp places. These in turn died and in their death gave home to seeds tracked in by various sources which eventually took root and grew. These continued the spiral so that in a time of years a wilderness of wild plants grew in the abandoned galleries. The whole back half of the lesser gallery is home to a wilderness.

**NOTE:** The south window stair that begins in the Bone Pit ends in a balcony overlooking the swamps. This in turn leads to a ladder that ends in a secret door. This secret door opens up in the southern wall of the lesser dungeons, behind the curtain of vines. The secret door opens on the first floor, below the devils living here.

**Rows of empty cells, rusted doors, and grinding metal give way to a wondrous sight. A veritable jungle blankets the hall. The common area, covered in a thick loamy moss offers anchorage for the manifold plants that twist around posts and bars, climb up the walls, spilling into cells before climbing again to the next floor and into the blocks and rows and on to the ceiling high above. Vines with broad, yellowish leaves and multi-hued flowers send tendril-like roots into every crevice of the porous iron. Short stemmed, leafy plants mingle with the vines and cling to them, the whole hanging like curtains from the top of the hall to the bottom.**

The jungle is home to a pack of horned devils. They have settled in the Garden, building their lair in one of the cells on the second floor, hidden beneath the curtains of vines. Here, they drag captured souls and torment them, hounding them with fire and whip.

As the party enters the hall, the horned devils take note. First, they pin the undead spirits to the wall of their treasure trove and then crawl out into the bramble and vines, spreading out behind the curtains in order to attack the party from all sides.

It is not easy to see the horned devils as they move behind the vines. They are only seen on a successful spot check (CL 12), or listen check (CL 12). However, any number of detection spells would work, such as a paladin's *detect alignment*, provided of course the paladin is in range.





NOTE: Adjust the number of horned devils as needed.

**DEVIL, HORNED X 8** (These lawful evil creatures' vital stats are HD 6d10, HP varies, AC 28. Their primary attributes are physical. They attack with 2 claw for 1d4 points of damage or a bite for 1d8 points of damage. They prefer to use a weapon, usually a trident, spear, glaive or similar item. They have the ability to impale their victims with such a weapon. Upon a successful roll of 18-20, they impale the victim, inflicting 4d4 points of damage. They are able to nuance any spear-like weapon they pick up, giving it a magical +2 bonus. Horned devils have and SR 2.)

**TREASURE:** The horned devil's lair lies in a cell on the second floor of the hall. Here, they have their worldly and spiritual wealth stored. There are 30,000gp in assorted coin, gems, and jewelry. There are 4 magic items (CK's choice or roll). There is a *cure serious wounds* healing potion. They also have four damned souls in their treasure room.

**THE DAMNED:** There are four tridents stuck to the wall, pinning four different souls/spirits in the cell. The spirits are lost in disbelief, writhing in pain as they struggle to break free of the tridents. Each of them is evil, men whose deeds sent them to Aufstrag, there to suffer until the Gonfod should come. A cleric or paladin can see the spirits; for anyone else, it requires powerful magic such as that found in a *gem of true seeing*. If the tridents are pulled out, the spirits are freed and immediately flee the area. If the spirits are successfully turned (against a HD 1) they are destroyed, until they reform a few weeks later, stuck in the same spot they are now.

## THE GIBBETS

On the southern flank of Aufstrag are a series of open doorways that overlook the swamp below. Each doorway sports a pole that extends out from the lintel of the door several dozen feet. These are the gibbets. Here victims were strung up as punishment. Some were pulled back in, others left to die, others served as food for the wyverns or other flying creatures that rose from the Gray Pools below. The gibbets cover an extensive part of the wall, some 200 feet high and about 200 wide.

To access the gibbets from within Aufstrag, one must pass through the lesser dungeons to the outer wall. There, they come upon a broad, open hallway with scores of small separate stair cases built into the wall. These narrow, very steep stairs each lead to a door cut into the wall. The door gives way to a tunnel some 30-40 feet long. Here, one can clearly smell the swamp outside. Each tunnel leads to a very narrow ledge over which hangs a gibbet.

Each gibbet is made of an iron pole that extends from 10 to 50 feet out from Aufstrag and over the swamp. There are several hundreds of them, on the wall, each with their own doorway. Each are spaced 5-10 feet apart, like pegs in a wall. The lowest is 200 feet above the swamps, the highest even with level 4, The Red Fort above, about 300 feet above the swamp. A small crank case, pulley and chain system, located just inside each door, allows victims to be brought in and sent back out on the gibbets. Many of the crank cases are rusted so thoroughly that they do not work, and many of the chains that held the victims have rusted away and fallen into the swamps.

The very skilled, or the very foolish, can attempt to climb from one landing to the next until they get to the level above, where an entrance to the Red Fort exists. Those wishing to go down, can do so, working their way to within 200 feet of the swamp below.

**CLIMBING THE GIBBETS:** Climbing is the hard part, for the poles are always wet from the swamp below. However, they are pitted and scored by time, allowing some firm grip. Anyone climbing up or out on them must make a successful dexterity check to climb them (CL 5). The character should make a check every 10 feet they go up, down or out. If they fall, they plummet to the swamp below and to certain death.

## CUNALRUR

A pack of cunalrur have made the gibbets their home. They perch on the upper most gibbets, watching the swamp and hunting the Gallery and surrounding layer. Anyone coming out of any one of the doors draws the attention of the cunalrur, and they begin leaping from pole to pole, climbing down to the door in question, to attack.

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**CUNALRUR** (These lawful neutral creatures' vital stats are HD 5d8, AC 14, HP varies. Their primary attributes are physical. They attack with 4-6 claws for 1d6 points of damage or a bite for 1d8 points of damage. They are able to climb as a ranger, are unaffected by illusions, and can see invisible creatures. They are telepathic, projecting images to one another. They have a rake attack that if they successfully bite or strike with two claws, allows them, in the following round, to automatically hit with 4-6 claw attacks. They have exceptional vision. See **Monsters & Treasure of Aihrde**.)

### GALLERY OF SOULS: THE DUNGEONS

When evil consumed the world, the wages of defeat were paid first by the Aenochians. They were carted to the prisons of Aufstrag by the thousands and that grim tower welcomed them. Many were taken to the torture gardens and brutalized or slain, but countless others were hauled to the lesser dungeons or the Yard. For any who knew the layout of Aufstrag the lesser dungeons, with their packed cells, filth, squalor and daily privations were desired spots, a light in the darkness when compared to the Yard, what men later called the Gallery of Souls. There they were either condemned to the hook or condemned to the post.

The Yard was a massive chamber, wide and long and tall. The ceiling was lined with thick buttresses of stone from which hung chains of varying lengths, thousands of them. At the end of each was a long, thin, metal, barbed hook. These barbed hooks were called Unklar's Love, for they held the damned on high for all to see. Devils of Aufstrag gathered those so condemned, impaled them on the hooks, through their torsos, arms, legs, necks, whatever extremity was marked in the torture gardens above and hoisted them on high. There they hung, in shouted cries of pain and agony.

Those condemned to the hook the fortunate ones. Others were condemned to the post. The floor of the Yard was like a forest of tall posts, shaped to dull nubs on their upright ends. Metal rings were set in the floor around each. Those sent to the post were lifted by a pack of screeching devils and set upright upon the post, tied to the rings and slowly, over many long days, pulled down and impaled.

This was the Gallery of Souls.

Over time, the decaying rot of so many bodies began to cover the floor. Lesser devils, wights, harpies, and other vermin came to dwell in the Gallery, feasting upon the dead. The filth created by all this covered the floor in a thick, gray-black, viscous sludge that clung to feet and hands. Eventually blood worms came to infest the filth, feeding upon the waste of so many lives.

The stench became palpable, clouding the minds of those who entered.

The black sludge caught on fire at times, often set by the devils

themselves to keep the vermin at bay, for the blood worms would eat flesh and bone, caring little for who or what they devoured.

The Gallery, however, is not wholly intact. During the Battle of the Tree, the knights of the west breached the Acre below, and in the giant square called Eharuk-Mons their battle came to a climax. Such power was unleashed that it tore the room asunder, slaying hundreds, but the force of it broke the ceiling of the Mons, which was the floor of the Gallery. A portion of this gave way, collapsing into the Acre. When the floor was torn away, the sludge covering the Gallery seeped into the room and below.

**NOTE:** The Gallery is still used, but rarely. There may be living creatures still hanging from hooks or the bodies of people impaled in the forest of the Yard.

A huge arched doorway leads into the Gallery. It is covered by a permanent *silence* and *darkness* (CL 75) spell cast by Unklar. The spell blocked the sight of the horrors within and the sounds of the condemned.

Once the doors are opened, read or paraphrase the following:

**The darkness of sorcery gives way to an unbelievable horror. A foul stench of rot and excrement washes over you. It assaults your senses, filling your lungs and polluting the very blood in your veins. As you reel from it, you spy a veritable forest of stakes, huge, iron posts designed for only one use: impaling. They are stained black and rooted in a bog of sludge which writhes in places, moving as if some unseen hand disturbs it. But above, upon the high ceiling are thousands of chains, each appended with massive barbed hooks. From many hang the mangled corpses of those who suffered their last moments in Aufstrag. Below, in the black sea of filth, fires burn here and there. Chunks of the sludge are slowly seeping into the floor, coursing down a wide hole torn here many years ago.**

The room is a menagerie of madness, from the stink, to the harpies, devils and blood worms.

**STENCH:** Anyone entering suffers from the stench. After the first round, all attributes checks are made at a -1. After one round, they must make a successful constitution save (CL 10) or begin retching. If they fail, they are incapacitated for 1d4 rounds as they vomit. Characters can take actions to block the stench, by putting garlic, rosemary, etc in their nose. If they do so, they avoid the worst of it and do not suffer the penalties.

**THE SLUDGE:** The sludge clings to anything it touches. Unless magical precautions are taken, movement rates are halved while moving through the sludge. Also, after every 100 feet dexterity checks are made at a -1. It burns exposed flesh for 1-2 points of damage. The damage is cumulative, so if a character walks through the sludge bare foot, then both feet take 1-2 points of damage. If they are largely naked, roll for arms, legs, torso, chest, head, etc.

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### THE HOLE

As noted, there is a large hole in the room where the floor gave way to the large courtyard of Eharuk-Mons on the 2<sup>nd</sup> level, The Horned God's Acre. For details of that room, see that section. However, from above, the floor's twisted iron supports hang down (most of it covered in sludge), allowing one to crawl and climb down some 10-15 feet into the room below which leaves them hanging about 80 feet above the floor. There is a large statue of Unklar there, however, whose head is only 10-20 feet from the iron supports. Jumping to his shoulders, head, and neck are possible on a successful dexterity check (CL 10).

**BLOOD WORMS:** There are colonies of blood worms everywhere, though they are easy to spot for the sludge writhes wherever they are. A colony is seen on a successful spot check (CL 4). They can be avoided, however, if someone passes within 20 feet of a colony, the worms begin moving toward them.

**BLOOD WORMS x 60** (These neutral evil creatures' vital stats are HD 1d8, AC 10. Their primary attributes are physical. They attack by latching onto any victim that comes within reach, striking out much as a snake does to bite a victim for 1 point of damage. Thereafter they begin draining a victim's blood for 1 point of damage per round. After they latch on to a victim, they inject toxins into the victim's body. See **Monsters & Treasure of Aihilde** for the full description.)

The buttresses are roughly 70 feet above the floor, and these are home to a flock of harpies whose stench, general filth, and overall foul disposition only adds to the chaos of the Gallery. They pay little attention to anyone who enters unless something

draws them, such as horse flesh, magical gems and the like. The CK should use their own judgement in determining what might draw their attention. They generally feed on the sludge below, enjoying the blood worms as a dessert.

However, when they do spy something they like, they fly down from their perches, landing on the chains and hooks and stakes to squawk out their rage at any interlopers.

**HARPIES** (These chaotic evil creatures' vital stats are HD 3d8, HP 23, AC 13. Their primary attributes are physical. They attack with two claws for 1d3 points of damage each or with a battle axe for 1d8 points of damage. They are also able to employ a captivating song and charm an opponent.)

There is also a pack of sauld devils here. They came to the room in the early days and spent many years tormenting the wretched people cursed into the Gallery. These devils dwell upon the chains, perched like monkeys in a tree. They are lesser devils and little aware of anything beyond their own desire to torment the living. Any sauld devils that happen to be near any interlopers will begin to swing from chain to chain, headed in that direction.

They will follow people moving through the room, calling in their strange voices for other sauld devils, until they outnumber the party. It is at this point that they attack by leaping down from the chains to the stakes and then to the floor and back up again as needed.

**NOTE:** As with the harpies and blood worms, the sauld devils are numerous but not every devil in the room will come in to attack. Most remain where they are, perhaps watching the battle unfold,

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but not participating. If perchance the battle rolls over them or the characters come too close, they might then attack.

**DEVIL, SAULD** (*These lawful evil creatures' vital stats are HD 3d8, HP Varies, AC 12. Their primary attributes are physical. They attack with 2 claws for 1d4 points of damage each, a bite for 1d4 points of damage, and a barbed tail for 1d6 points of damage. They have darkvision 60 feet, twilight and deep vision as well as all attributes possessed by a devil. They have animal intelligence. They can jump up to 20 feet landing on their intended target, and they can shape change. For more see Monsters & Treasure of Aihrede.*)

**TREASURE:** The Gallery is littered with treasure of all kinds, however it is difficult to extract from the sludge without running afoul of the room's many occupants. Roll for random treasure every 2-300 feet, using Treasure Type 3. Allow the treasure to be in back packs of fallen adventurers or in similar circumstances.

### GALLERY OF SOULS ENCOUNTER

A group of knights entered through the maw in the Bone Pit about three months past. They numbered 7 men and women, armed and armored. Their intent was to purge as much of Aufstrag as their might in arms allowed. They fought their way to the Torture Garden high above but were slaughtered by giants and bone devils. Only one survived, a knight of New Aenoch and Crusader of the Empress, Lord Karl-Uwe.

He was taken by his captors and put to the rack for many weeks, until they grew bored and carted him down to the Gallery. There, his captors flew into the room and scattered the harpies and sauld devils and set him to the hook, pinned through his arm and chest. His howls of pain went unheard.

He has hung thus for many days, waiting for death, but in the strange confines of Aufstrag, it has not come.

When anyone enters the room he looks up and upon spying them calls for aid or death, either one to rid him of the suffering.

Karl is located about 500 feet in from the door and hangs on a hook 40 feet above the floor. Around him are a host of old corpses and bones clinging to the hooks from years past.

His rescue brings both reward from the empress and glory in the lands of New Aenoch. These should fit the Castle Keepers campaign.

### THE RED FORT STAIR

The great stair is a huge stair case built into the wall of Aufstrag. It winds up several switch backs until it opens up in the Red Fort above. The stair itself is open from top to bottom with no guard rails and as one climbs they can see the floor several hundred feet below.

### THE BULWARK

In the 7<sup>th</sup> century of Unklar's rule, Megerein Punchthroat was brought to Aufstrag. In chains, she was dragged into the Torture

Gardens and made to suffer as all there suffered. A slow death was her sentence, and she was sent to the Yard, there to hang on hook and chain. For many weeks she suffered, her life's blood running into the sludge of the Yard. She refused death however, for Megerein was as iron. Her name alone carried the tale of blood. As a young rogue, she was taken in the throat by the sharp blade of a guisarme, but she lived, though her voice was like gravel ever after.

Megerein was an unkind woman, hard and cruel to those who crossed her and unforgiving to those who turned on her. She suffered many to die in slow agony. She was, however, always an enemy of Aufstrag, and she hated all the folk of the Horned God. She hounded them, stole their treasures, and murdered their emissaries. Many, she tortured.

But Megerein would not yield to the agonies of the Yard and eventually made good her escape. Lifting herself from the hook, she fled the hall and into the Gallery to hide in the shadows. In the shadows, she excelled, and she ranged over all the First Ward, murdering, stealing, and wreaking havoc where she could. In time, her power was such that she turned on her masters. Freeing a host of slaves from the Lesser Gallery and the Hall of Cages, she waged war on them.

The battles were long and hard and many died, but Megerein managed to carve a kingdom for herself out of the Gallery, and she named it the Bulwark. In this she was aided by other powers in Aufstrag, for they saw in her a counter to Ousmane's control of the Gallery, and they fed her power so that he could not easily overcome her.

For over 400 years Megerein ruled the Bulwark and has since earned her place as a Lord of Aufstrag. Thus it remained until the war and blight destroyed the power of Unklar, and Aufstrag became a hell without a head. After the fall of Unklar, her position in the ranks of Aufstrag changed immensely. She took her host of devils and undead and joined them to Coburg the Undying. She abandoned the Bulwark and joined Coburg in the Third Ward. It has since remained a fort within the confines of Aufstrag, slowly decaying, but powerful nonetheless.

The Bulwark is not unoccupied, however. Devils of many stripes have climbed into the nets overlooking the glaxis, and the trench is filled with the corpses of long dead creatures who, once disturbed by the presence of the living, wake from their slumber.

### THE FORT

The Bulwark lies in the northwest corner of the Gallery of Souls. The whole area has been hollowed out, both above and below. The ceiling has been raised 70 feet, just a score or so below the 4<sup>th</sup> level, the Red Fort. A huge glaxis, counterscarp, and trench stand before the steep scarp, that leads up to the parapet of the curtain wall and bastion.

The fortifications were designed to hold off the armies that Ousmane sent against the Bulwark. They consist of the nets, inner and outer fortifications, and a keep.

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A wide veranda opens before you, but beyond it stands an impressive array of fortifications. A glacis, the outer fortification, slopes upward with smooth stone to a low four-foot-high wall. A gate breaches the glacis offering passage through to the inner works. Beyond the glacis stands two bastions flanking a large curtain wall, all crowned with battlements. Beyond this second wall, stands a keep, her black-stone bricks set in perfect symmetry as it rises 20 feet above the fortifications. But above all the glacis and first wall huge iron nets hang, some 20 feet above the surface. They are suspended from the ceiling high above, stretching all across the fortification, from Aufstrag's outer wall to the greater dungeons. There are a series of them, set in parallel lines every 20 feet.

### THE NETS

Megerein knew that many of her attackers would come from the air. So, to impede their assault, she hung huge curtains of metal nets, lined with spikes and razor sharp edges from the ceiling and attached to the walls of the Gallery on the one side, and the outer wall of Aufstrag on the other. However, since Megerein's departure the nets have become home to a number of bearded devils. They have climbed to the high roof above, where they hang in the iron mesh, watching creatures that wander into the Bulwark, snatching them for torment or death as the devils desire.

These curtains hang from the ceiling every 20 feet, beginning at the edge of the glacis and ending just shy of the parapet on the counterscarp.

Anyone passing up the glacis or to the outer gate draws the attention of the devils. They are not easy to see from below, hidden as they are in the shadows above. However, it is important to note that they are only 40 or 50 feet above the glacis, so certain detection spells such as a paladin's *detect alignment* reveals the devils. If they are spied, they attack. If they are not seen, they wait until most of the party has passed up the glacis. Using their *freedom of movement* ability to scurry down the barbed nets, they leap to the ground where they attempt to snatch victims and leap back into the net where they devour them.

**NOTE:** Use as many bearded devils as desired, some may or may not choose to attack.

**DEVIL, BEARDED x 20** (These lawful evil creatures' vital stats are HD 6d10, HP Varies, AC 19. Their primary attributes are physical. They attack with 2 claws for 1d4 points of damage, a tail for 1d6 points of damage, or a beard attack for 2d4 points of damage. Their preferred method of attack is with a guisarme for 2d4 + 3 points of damage. They have heightened initiative of +1 and the following spell-like abilities: *bane* (1x day), *freedom of movement* (constant), *haste* (1x day with no ill effects). They have an SR 3.)

### THE OUTER FORTIFICATIONS

The outer fortifications were designed to break an attacking army before it reached the inner bastion and wall. There is a tunnel cut into the glacis that allows entry and exit.

**THE GLACIS:** The glacis consists of a broad slope, 60 feet wide, that leads up to a short wall and the counterscarp. It is set with magical stone laced with rune spells, and in all respects acts as an *anti-magic shell* spell. Attackers were forced to climb this long slope in the face of the defenders on the counterscarp. The glacis can be overcome by passing through the glacis entrance or climbing up the counterscarp. The trench beyond is filled with the dead.

**GLACIS ENTRANCE:** The outer-facing entrance consists of a latticed, iron gate set 10 feet into the glacis. It is closed but not locked. Its rusty pulley system is still operable but requires a successful strength check (CL 9) to lift it. Five feet beyond the iron gate is a large iron-bound, wooden door. This gives entrance to the tunnel that passes beneath/through the glacis. The tunnel is 10 feet x 10 feet.

A second gate and iron-bound door stand 10 feet inside the glacis from the trench side as well. Both gates and doors are locked, requiring a successful pick lock (CL 12). The iron is protected from spells by the same *anti-magic shell* runes. They can be battered down, but it will take time and effort. Each door has 20 hit points per square foot.

The gate to the inner fortifications stands in the bottom of the trench. After passing through the tunnel beneath the glacis, one comes to the trench. On the far side, is a large iron gate and door set in the scarp.

**THE COUNTERSCARP:** The counterscarp consists of a four foot wall and firing step for crossbowmen on top of the glacis. Anyone climbing the glacis risks fire from the counterscarp. If the wall is breached, defenders flee down ladders, into the trench, to the main gate through the curtain wall (see below).

There are still several ladders leaning against the counterscarp, allowing easy access to the trench.

**THE TRENCH:** The trench is 20 feet wide and 20 feet deep when approached from the counterscarp, but from the scarp (where the curtain wall stands) it is 40 feet deep, for that wall looms higher than the counterscarp. To mount the scarp, you must navigate the trench, climbing the walls beyond.

Read or paraphrase the following:

As you climb over the parapet, you step into a wave of stench that drenches you like sweat. The filth of decay, the grind of slow rot and excrement fill your every pore. Below you, in a trench 20 feet deep or more, you see bodies piled and heaped. Huge waves of blue-black flies lift up from the feast of dead flesh to engulf you in yet more carrion from the trench below. Beyond lies the scarp of the inner fort, but before that you must cross the nightmare of rot.

**FLIES:** Unless driven off with magical means, the flies follow the characters so long as they are within the confines of the

## A15: GALLERY OF SOULS

inner fort from the trenches to the keep. Everyone suffers a -1 to all dexterity checks.

The trench is filled with bodies. These are the remains of the many victims of the bearded devils. They cover the whole floor of the trench, from one end to the other and are about 2-3 feet deep. If any living creature passes within 10 feet of any one of the dead, they begin to rise. One after the other, they begin clawing at the living, seeking to pull them down and devour them.

**ZOMBIES x 100** (*These neutral evil creatures' vital stats are HD 2d8, HP 8, AC 11. They have no primary attributes. They attack with one claw that does 1d8 damage plus possible rot grub infestation. If more than 8 zombies surround a victim they gain a swarm attack, dealing 1d2 damage per round per zombie.*)

**TREASURE:** The trench is filled with treasure as well as bodies, for the bearded devils have cleaned the glacia after each killing, tossing all the waste into the trench. The treasure is buried in a particularly deep heap of bodies near the wall of the Gallery of Souls. There, they have piled bodies 8 feet deep and placed the treasure beneath it. The Castle Keeper should roll on the Treasure Type as desired or needed. Included within are 4 magic items, including weapons, armor, 3 potions, 4 scrolls, and 5000gp worth of coin and gems.

### INNER FORTIFICATIONS

The inner fort consists of two huge bastions and a curtain wall overlooking the trench. The main gate is set in the scarp. The bastions and curtain wall consist of a scarp mounted by a parapet and a firing step. The bastions are set so that they allow firing down on anyone approaching the gate or attempting to scale the curtain wall.

**SCARP:** As noted the scarp is 40 feet high from the bottom of the trench. There are no ladders or steps. It is designed to keep attackers from climbing it, so doing so is difficult, requiring a climb check (CL 9) for every 10 feet. The scarp is mounted by a wall and firing step.

**PARAPET AND FIRING STEP:** On top of the scarp is another wall, again four feet high and a firing step allowing defenders to fire down on those in the trench, the counterscarp, or glacia.

**THE GATE:** The gate breaches the curtain wall between the two bastions. The trench is 12 feet wide at the bottom and consists of one large iron portcullis set into the wall. This allows defenders to pour burning oil or throw stones upon any attempting to enter. As before, the portcullis is protected by magical runes that act as an *anti-magic shell* spell. Five feet beyond the portcullis stands a large iron-bound wooden door.

Once the gate, wall, or curtain are breached one comes to the inner courtyard and Megerein's lair, the keep.

### THE KEEP

The keep is octagonal, 40 feet high, and possesses only one entrance: a large iron door set at the top of a flight of steps 12 feet high. There are no battlements and only one arrow slit set in the side of the keep facing the fortifications. From here, Megerein watched the many assaults that rolled against the Bulwark.

The door is locked. It is magically enchanted with runes that act as an *anti-magic shell*. To pick it is extremely difficult as the lock consists of three successive locks (CL 8 on each lock). Once the lock is picked, the door opens to an austere circular chamber roughly 40 feet in diameter.

### LOWER CHAMBER

The front half of the chamber is cobbled, but where the cobbles end there is nothing. The walls and floor surround an emptiness that begins in the back half of the chamber. A set of steps stand in the middle of the room and end over the emptiness. They fall shy of the ceiling above. If one were to walk up the steps and jump off they would fall into the emptiness.

**STEPS:** There are 13 steps, and they end 20 feet shy of the ceiling above. The steps are not connected to the wall in any way. At the top is a magical portal that allows one to step through to the room above via a *teleport* spell.

The portal is only visible from the top of the steps. Once there, the viewer can see a slight shimmer in the air in the vague shape of a doorway. Within the door way is a faint fog, not thick enough to obscure the wall behind it. If one steps through, they must make a successful intelligence check (CL 10) to trigger the teleport and step through to the room above.

Those who fail their intelligence check fall off the steps and into the emptiness below. They are immediately consumed by it, vanishing and passing to the Empty Pools (see the **Codex of Aihrede**). To retrieve them requires a great deal of magic.

### UPPER CHAMBER

This room is simple and unadorned. The only thing in it is a fountain.

**The room is empty. Its black gray stone blocks show no signs of habitation and sit in gloomy silence as if abandoned all these years. Only a fountain shows signs of life. Here where the wall is slightly inset, water flows from the top to the bottom in a vertical fountain. It pools, for a moment, in a trough before it gurgles down a drain to vanish in some subterranean pipe or to be recycled and sent back through the wall fountain, none can say.**

This chamber served as the private room for Megerein. From here, she ruled the Bulwark. She left no treasure nor guard behind her when she left. She did, however, set magic within the fountain. Casting runes upon the wall behind the water, she

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created a mirror through which she could see and hear any and all that enter her chambers.

Unless they are magically protected through invisibility or a similar spell, anyone entering is seen by Megerein. She does not immediately return to the room, but rather watches and listens, storing the knowledge away for future use.

The water is pure, cool, and good to drink. The runes on the wall are minute and only detected upon close examination and with a successful wisdom check (CL 6). The fountain does radiate magic. If the runes or magic are discovered, one may determine what kind of magic it is upon a successful wisdom save (CL 12). If the runes are detected the person who discovers this knows they are being scried.

Megerein does not attack the party. She may dispatch several imps to track them, never knowing what knowledge may be useful.

### KARA NUEL

The tower of Kara Nuel rises from the Bone Pit, up through the Acre and ends here in the Gallery of Souls. From top to bottom, it is roughly 300 feet high. It was established long ago by the master of the lower wards, a captain of sorts, set to watch over the three first levels of Aufstrag. The post was filled routinely by all manner of creatures until the civil strife, after the fall of Unklar, at which point the post and tower was abandoned.

Here Nectanebo the False carved out her own realm. For more information on Nectanebo the False see **The Horned God's Acre**.

### KA16 NECTANEBO THE FALSE'S CHAMBERS

The third and highest part of the tower lies here. A simple stair winds its way up to the tower to the door of her chambers. She dwells within.

A true devotee of Unklar, Nectanebo the False has long grown out of the shell of her human form. As with many of the priests of Unklar, they shed their forms and assume that of a multi-eyed witch orb, a perversion of the flesh. Since the fall of Unklar, her power has been broken, and she lives now steeped in an amalgamation of hate and fear. She hoards her magic and slays any who enter her quarters.

The stairs end in a door that is unlocked though closed.

**The door opens to a fetid stench of rotten fruits. It is gray-dark in the room, with little light but for that cast by a small lantern on the wall. The room is littered with wreckage. Destroyed furniture, soiled rugs and drapes, clothing rotted and rat chewed, candelabra, cookware,**

**and other debris litter the area. All is untouched and ignored by the floating monstrosity in front of you. A round, dingy-green spore of some plant, 3 feet in diameter, hovers in the air. Eyes, big and small, sprinkled in the bulbous flesh that seems to crawl of its own accord, open and close looking with a cunning only the cruel possess. All the while the tissue of it splits, emitting small traces of gas, forcing the creature to float higher or shift left and right. Soft whispers, as of voices, touch your mind, calling you to embrace her.**

Sitting in the rafters of the tower, above the ruin of her room are her two remaining allies, aghul devils that even now sit in quiet attendance to the False Nectanebo.

Nectanebo the False prepares to cast *flame strike* if she hears any noise outside her door. She strikes whoever enters the room first, when she does, the devils leap to her aid.

**WITCH ORB** (This lawful evil creature's vital stats are 10d10, AC 12, HP 82. Her primary attributes are mental. She has no physical attacks. She possesses all around vision and cannot be surprised. She is able to fly 30 feet per round and has an SR 1. She is able to cast cleric spells as a 10<sup>th</sup> level cleric with an 18 wisdom.

Her spells are as follows: 0 level: detect alignment, detect magic, detect poison, endure elements, light. 1<sup>st</sup> level: bless, protection from alignment, fear x 2, sound burst. 2<sup>nd</sup> level: aid, hold person x2, silence, spiritual weapon. 3<sup>rd</sup> level: cause serious wounds x 3, blindness. 4th level: wounding circle x 3, life drain. 5th level: cause critical wounds, flame strike.)

**DEVIL, AGHUL, TUSKED** (These lawful evil creatures' vital stats are HD 7d8, AC 17, HP 61, 54. Their primary attributes are mental. They attack with 2 tusk attacks for 1d8 points of damage or they use the knoglen blade for 1d10 points of damage. They have all traits common to devils as well as Reg 1, SR 3, twilight vision, immunity to elements and spell-like abilities. They cast the following as 10<sup>th</sup> level casters: air/water walk, animate dead, control wind, detect thoughts, glyph of warding, magic circle, speak with dead, spiritual weapon. The knoglen blade is a +3 magical weapon that upon a successful hit where a 19 or 20 is rolled, pieces of it flake off into the wound. They cause rot after four rounds, at which point the limb or portion of the body struck becomes numb and useless. Unless treated, the rot causes 1d10 points of damage per day until the victim dies. There is no saving throw.)

**TREASURE:** Amidst the room is a large trunk filled with wealth. It holds what is left of a once proud hoard. 1000pp, an *arrow of slaying* (wizards) wrapped in unsoiled linen, a silver cup that if used to drink any liquid cures disease, blindness, and other afflictions, there is a scroll with *dismiss* on it, a ring of protection +2, and a iron-headed black mace nine lives stealer.



# A16 THE RED FORT



*he Red Fort housed the main garrison of Aufstrag. It was named in copy of the Val Eahrakun Ornduhl's mighty fortress upon the Wretched Plains. The Hosts of Darkness dwelt here, his armies and lesser Captains. But others dwelt here as well, men, giants, orcs, goblins, evil dwarves, hounds and other hunting beasts. Their quarters were greatly set to their own standards, some in order, others in disarray.*

**The Red Fort** is an adventure module designed for 3-5 characters of a variety of levels. It is the 16<sup>th</sup> adventure in the "A" series, or Umbrage Saga, adventure modules. The adventure is designed to be part of a series that begins in distant lands and ends in the mountainous dungeon of Aufstrag. For more details on this, please read "Involving the Player Characters" below.

**The Red Fort** housed the main garrison of Aufstrag. It was named as a mockery of the Val Eahrakun Ornduhl's mighty fortress upon the Wretched Plains. The hosts of Unklar dwelt here, his armies and lesser Captains. It is here the ungern built their barracks and dwelt in massive hosts. Clean and orderly, without purpose other than to serve their lord, the ungern kept the Red Fort a bastion. Others dwelt here as well, however: men, giants, orcs, goblins, evil dwarves, hounds, and other hunting beasts. Their quarters were great and set to their own standards, some in order, others in disarray.

All those who dwelt here died in the many long campaigns of the Winter Dark Wars, the last fed to the Gray Pools in the Battle of the Tree. Now the Red Fort is empty of the hosts, haunted by the ghosts of its past.

All manner of creatures dwell here. Any that have crawled or wandered into the halls, seeking shelter within Aufstrag or seeking treasure left behind by the captains and soldiers have made it their home. Some greater powers also call this realm their home, but their domains are small and bound to the Red Fort itself

## INTRODUCTION

This is the 4<sup>th</sup> level of the First Ward of Aufstrag. It is called the Red Fort, or the Yoke, for here the legions of Aufstrag had their home, and the yoke was their lot. "Yoke" referenced Unklar's pledge, carved upon the gates of hell: "The Yoke Shall Set You Free." Belial, a powerful lord of the Wretched Plains (who early joined Unklar when he called for allies in those long ago days) ruled the Yoke and commanded Aufstrag's legions.

Beli was of the Val Eahrakun and, in the Days before Days, he earned a name for himself for his mind was keen, though he could see little beyond his own thought. For this reason, he unmade many wonderful things, taking them in hand and reshaping them into forms he thought more pleasing. In this, he earned the enmity of Wenafar, for of all the gods her mind was bent toward the shaping of the land and the plants upon it. Therefore, she hounded him with stave and rod and drove him to the darkness beneath the mountains.

In time, Ornduhl (the Red God) split the Maelstrom that lies beneath the world and hollowed out a cavity in it. This bowl

became a plane of madness and despair, and it called to many of the Val Eahrakun, Beli not the least. He crawled from the darkness and into the chasm, passing into those Wretched Planes and there made a home for himself. He built a mighty city upon plains of fire and housed it with the tormented dead. It served no purpose but torment, and it was named the town of Yial, which is "without meaning" or in the Aenochian, "worthless". Thus lesser creatures were drawn to him and became servants of Beli of Yial.

Ornduhl came as well, however, and the Red God demanded his obedience. There were none that could withstand Ornduhl. To undermine Beli, Ornduhl twisted his name and called him Belial, for which he was known ever after.

Thus, Belial rose in the estimation of many and commanded armies of the Red God. When Ornduhl ruled Aihilde, Belial commanded a great region and took joy in the torment given to others. Consequently, his realm became one of horrors where the innocent were tortured for the love of pain, and Belial relished it all. Ever after men associated Belial with pain and suffering, and his name was a curse.

Ornduhl's realm did not last, however, and he was hounded from Aihilde along with his many servants. Belial suffered the particular wrath of Wenafar and she smote him with a golden sword so that his face bore the scars ever after. She followed him into the Wretched Plains and pulled down his city of Yial, leaving it in ruins.

For many years, Belial remained a shadow, hidden from all. In time, however, his courage returned, and he grew in power once more. Hence, when Unklar called for servants to join him in the conquest of Aihilde, Belial was of those first to join him. He was known ever after as a "tvungen" which means "fettered of Unklar" and refers to the devils of Aihilde.

Unklar saw in Belial a deep power and a malicious nature that he might use in terror. He saw, too, that Belial was narrow of focus and knew this might serve him on the field of battle but keep him from greater ambitions. So he set the mantle of command upon him and gave him lordship over the garrisons of Aufstrag. The greatest of these he housed upon the 4<sup>th</sup> level, the Red Fort.

There Belial ruled for many centuries and when war came, he commanded his master's legions in all the battles in and around Aufstrag. It was his hand that quashed the rebellion in the Trench Wars. He commanded the legions that kept the east at bay and laid waste to the Luneberg, even before Kain. Belial fought the civil strife that raged through Aufstrag time and again for every time his master was drawn afield, it was Belial's hand that kept the minor powers at bay.

As is known, Unklar was at last banished from the world of Aihilde, his power broken. With that came the many wars within hell and the waning of the powers of the legions. A fear grew within Beli. In his second master's fall, he saw the end of his own power, and he feared to return to the shadows. So, he crawled into a hole and there made a tomb for himself, hoping that the day might change.

With his retreat, the Red Fort fell into ruin. His legions, those few that survived, scattered to die upon the bandit's road or serve some lesser master. Some few stayed, but for the most part the Red Fort stood empty and abandoned. Though, in truth, Belial was of the Val Eahrakun, and his power was great. Thus, the stink of his fear and misery spread through the Yoke and infected everything there.

Creatures came to the Yoke in after days, and they wandered in wild abandon to hunt one another and torment the damned. As a result, the Yoke became a place that weighed upon the spirit of the living as well as the dead, and it was shunned.

### USING THE YOKE

Belial ordered the Red Fort as a military post. It was built in a uniform, orderly fashion. It was well lit, for many of his soldiers were humans and could not see in the darkness. The streets within were given names. The doors were set in uniform design without locks. Many of the halls were open, allowing for easy passage for men, beasts, and chariots. Though the uniformity remains, the halls now stand empty and have stood so for many years. Water has crept into many places, seeping through weak mortar, pooling here and there, weakening the walls and ceiling so that plaster peels, masonry is cracked and falling away, tiles dislodged, and so on. Much of this water comes from the Hall of Chains above, creeping down through the crevices of the super structure.

All this has led to a giant fungus bloom. The fungi take many shapes and sizes, some of them sentient. The damned have found their way here as well. Many restless souls and spirits wander into the Yoke and become lost in their torments, for there are few here that harvest them for the joy of suffering. Outcasts from Aufstrag, whether a wizard cast out of the Paths of Umbra or a cleric from the Nebians, find their way into the Yoke to nurse wounds and gather power.

**CONSTRUCTION:** The walls, floor, and ceiling are all set with uniform stones, each block cut and set as the next. These were covered with a thick, gray plaster. There are precious few wall murals, decorations, or statuary. Such luxuries were saved for the other halls. However, the plaster is wasted in many areas, washed away, corroded, cracked, chipped, fallen to the floor due to neglect and moisture. The fallen plaster often heaps and becomes a base for some long, spindly-armed fungal plant to grow.

### LIGHTING

The halls were lit by stones set in the ceiling every 60 feet. These stones once cast a pale glow whenever someone approached within 60 feet. In this way, one could walk through halls of the yoke and the way was lit before them. The power of the stones lay in Belial himself, and he used them to watch his halls and know all that went on. It kept light in the darkness and banished shadows, for few could pass beneath the stones that they did not light up and Belial himself become aware of it.

However, when Belial set himself in his tomb, the light of the stones died out, and darkness permeated all. At times, Belial stirs and the stones (all, some or only one) flicker with light and then go out again.

**BELIAL'S STONES:** The stones themselves are magical, about 12 inches in diameter, and can be removed from the wall or ceiling. Anyone who possesses one can draw out its light with a *knock*, *read magic*, or similar spell. They emanate evil, however, and when the light is active, there is a 5% chance Belial will see through it and try to possess the wielder.

**NOTE:** If Belial is roused to the point that he returns to conquer the Red Fort, he can, at will, light all the stones that remain in the halls.

### FEAR

Belial reeks of fear, and it has seeped into the very walls of the Yoke, so that the whole place has an unnerving effect on all but the most stalwart. Anyone entering the Yoke must make a charisma check (CL 13) or suffer a -1 on all attribute checks while in the Yoke. Paladins and lawful good clerics gain a +5 to their attribute check. Anyone traveling with a paladin or lawful good cleric gains a +2 to their attribute check.

### ROOM DESCRIPTIONS & ENCOUNTERS

The Yoke has several distinct areas. They are essentially dungeons within the level. These are each described in brief below. Because the Yoke has no head to its governance, and Aufstrag is a living dungeon, the areas are not fleshed out with monsters and treasure. This is left to the Castle Keeper. Even the individual room descriptions are left to the CK.

However, eight separate "encounters" are fleshed out below. These are designed such that they can occupy any area of the CK's choosing. Use them randomly, place them as desired, allow them to move or be reused, or use them to occupy a section of the Yoke that the characters may have already cleaned out.

Each is assigned a number and can be randomly rolled on the chart below. Otherwise, the CK may simply assign them to an area as they see fit.

If the CK wishes to occupy the area with something of their own devising, they should feel free to do so, saving the encounters below for a later date.

## A16: THE RED FORT

### AREA ENCOUNTER CHART

- 1 **PACK OF BONE DEVILS:** Like scavengers, these devils hunt the wilds of Aufstrag.
- 2 **FUNGAL FOREST:** A forest of growth has sprung up in the area, creating all manner of dangerous plants.
- 3 **MAD UMBRIAN WIZARD:** Outcast and alone, this wizard is well versed in the machinations of Aufstrag, but he is mad as a hatter.
- 4 **FIRE GIANTS:** A wandering band of giants has taken up residence in the halls.
- 5 **ERINYES DEVILS:** These devils have laid a deadly trap to lure in prey with their crafty sections.
- 6 **ROOM OF THE DAMNED:** An uelrich devil has created a pocket dimension to store the souls that he has devoured.
- 7 **MIRROR OF LIFE TRAPPING:** This magical device lies upon the floor, discarded and forgotten. To look in it is to enter and cast out one of the inhabitants.
- 8 **THE WITCH STALK:** Lonely, waiting for the return of its master, the witch stalk stalks the darkened corridors.

### WANDERING MONSTERS

The Yoke is a very active level, with many monsters in it. Some, as noted, live in certain rooms. Many simply wander the halls and rooms, hunting for food, water, souls, or whatever it is that drives them on.

See **Appendix C: Wandering Monsters**.

### ENCOUNTER AREAS

Each area is noted on the map. The area descriptions should be combined with the descriptions about construction and light as noted above.

#### ARENA

In the northeastern section of the Yoke stands the Arena, or as the locals called it, the Track. The Arena is cut about 30 feet down into the floor below the regular level of the Fort. Two rows of bleachers were set above, circling, the entire arena, allowing spectators to watch the training going on. The central series of rooms were reserved for the captain and his training officers. Access to the arena floor was gained by a ramp and set of stairs.

Men brought both chariots and beasts here to ride in training or contest. Many were killed in the training, sometimes purposely, sometimes accidentally.

#### ARENA FLOOR

The arena track is 60 feet wide and several hundred feet long. The whole floor is covered in fine, tightly compacted sand several feet deep. It served to ease the stress on the legs of horses, wolves, and other beasts that trained here regularly. The walls of the Arena are 30 feet high, capped by angular stones that serve as a wall for the bleachers above. The walls are not plastered and climbing them is possible with a successful climb check (CL 5).

In many places, the Arena floor is wet, water dripping from above, or condensing from the air. In places, water has pooled in the sand to create a type of quick sand. There is a 1 in 12 chance that anyone who walks on the arena floor will step into this quicksand. Roll for every 100 feet they move.

**QUICKSAND:** The unlucky individual sinks into the sand immediately, however, they only sink a few feet before hitting the floor beneath. It is thick, clingy sand that does not allow one to escape easily. Pulling free requires a successful strength check (CL 8). If they cannot escape, something will eventually find them, usually stirges.

#### BLEACHERS

The bleachers consist of two rows of stone benches accessed through one of several entrances. They look down on the arena 30 feet below or across to the column of stone that makes up the central rooms. The bleachers are sectional, allowing occupants to move about.

#### HANDEL HALL

The central rooms housed the captain of the Arena and his staff. It consisted of a few smaller bedrooms, a large dining room, and a small prison. There were three areas that allowed entry: the ramp, the stairs, and the covered walkway.

#### HH1 HALL OF PROMOTION

The large octagonal room in the center of the central rooms, served as the dining hall and conference room. Here the captain gathered young trainees and promoted them to rank or for accomplishment. Once, a small wooden stage stood in the room. This allowed the captain to stand above and speak to those he offered reward to, but it is long gone, consumed in the cooking pits of some creatures' fire.

The room itself is without decoration, the walls being plastered over and smooth. For the most part, the plaster remains, only cracking in a few places.

There are several entrances/exits here. There is a stair case that leads down to the arena floor, a hall that leads to the covered walkway, and another hall that leads to the living quarters and prison. Each of these are in decent shape.

#### HH2 COVERED WALKWAY

The covered walkway extends over the Arena floor, connecting the smithies with the Arena itself. It is wide, lined with stone benches and windows that overlook the arena beneath. From here, occupants could watch the training or competitions as they unfolded. The windows are open, and it is a simple 30-foot drop to the arena below. There is a window every 15 feet on either side of the walkway.

#### HH3 DINING HALL

This long room offered the captain and his men a place to dine or meet with dignitaries. A long, wooden table stands in the

middle, but it is much maligned and damaged from swords and axes. Whatever chairs served the table are long gone, but a large fire place set in the eastern wall offered the room warmth and light (and probably consumed the chairs). The fire place chimney is easy to access, and leads one into the stacks that lead up to the fifth floor.

#### HH4 CAGES

This room has six cages in it, each open to the next. They are accessed through a door that has a lock set in it (not padlocks). The keys have long since vanished. Opening the locks requires a successful pick lock check (CL 6). Three of the rooms have skeletal remains in them.

#### HH5 ROOMS

The other rooms served as quarters for the captain and his soldiers. What was in them has long since been destroyed. Each room is supplied with a working water faucet and a small sink, though the sinks are busted or cracked, some leaking, others holding together. The water is fresh, if brackish.

#### SMITHY

The smithy consists of a short series of rooms to the south of the Arena. Five small rooms served as tool rooms and storage. A larger room housed the master smith and his apprentices. The forge itself stood off a little and ended in a half-circle wall.

#### S1 STORAGE ROOMS

These rooms once housed innumerable tools and raw materials from hammers to pig iron. All were under lock and key, so that these doors, unlike many in the Yoke, were able to lock. The locks still work, though few (if any) are locked now.

Many of the tools have been carted off, but a number still remain, lying in the debris of broken masonry, plaster, fungus, and other dungeon detritus. If the area is searched, the players may find one or more of the following items:

1	Hammer	6	File, large
2	Tongs	7	Backsaw
3	Crowbar	8	Pliers
4	Chisel	9	Punch
5	Rock Bar	10	Pick

One room has 45 bars of pig iron in it. These bars are each 2 x 2 x 18 inches long. They are very heavy.

#### S2 SMITH'S CHAMBERS

This large, rectangular room housed the smith and his apprentices. It was without decoration. Whatever furnishings were in the room were long since removed. Fresh water is available from a small fountain in the room.

**SECRET CHAMBER:** Beneath the fountain are several loose stones that, if removed, reveal a small tunnel, 3 feet x 3 feet. The tunnel extends 20 feet into the wall and comes to a small room.



The room is rough-cut from the rock and is roughly 6 feet in diameter. There is a pit in the center of the room about 4 feet deep and filled with water. At the bottom of the pit is an iron chest, locked and trapped. If someone attempts to pick the lock without disabling the trap, they are lanced with a needle that has Type V poison on it. To find or remove the trap requires a successful check (CL 8).

The iron box has several symbols carved upon it, all representing the Nebian order or Unklar. Within the box is a small amulet, a phylactery, that holds the undead spirit of the Lich who dwells in the Yoke (see "Encounters" below).

#### S3 FORGE

The forge consists of a large furnace set at the end of the room. There are a number of stone work benches and tables lining the north and south walls. Some tools lay scattered about. A large bin sits next to the bellows, half filled with coal.

The furnace itself is filled with ash and coal dust. It hasn't been lit in a great long while. It can, with some effort be fired up again. A huge vent above it leads to the stacks.

#### FORECOURT

This series of rooms served the captain of the Arena as a reception area for those coming to see his progress in the Arena itself. Like much of the Yoke, the rooms were sparsely decorated, and what they were decorated with was movable, usually wood, and has long since been consumed. No doors remain, indeed, if they ever existed, except to the large reception hall at the forecourt's rear.

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Much of what remains in the rooms is rubbish brought here by others that have set up shop or passed through. Each of the smaller rooms are roughly identical in purpose, a network of rooms where people visited, discussed various deals, soldiers or equipment were put on display, and so on.

Several wall-fountains in the forecourt offer warm, though drinkable water. The larger rooms have a fire place in them, usually large enough for a small creature to climb up and into the stacks above.

### RECEPTION HALL

The largest room in the Forecourt possesses large brass doors. One of these is wide open, but the second is jammed  $\frac{3}{4}$  of the way shut. They are heavy but the one door moves freely, if noisily on its hinges. The jammed door is blocked by a broken floor and before it can be closed or opened, the floor must be dug out. Doing so takes 5 hours of labor if tools are used, -1 hour for each individual that participates.

The hall itself is simple, with no furnishings to speak of. The floor is dirty, with debris scattered about.

**FIREPLACE:** The room sports a giant fireplace on the northern wall and a raised dais in the southern alcove. The fireplace is 8 feet across and 4 feet high. It is made of simple, unadorned stonework. It has not been used in some while, however a creature has dug out the flue, allowing quick and easy access to the stacks above for human sized and smaller creatures. This, of course, has created an easy avenue of entrance to the Yoke from creatures in the stacks.

### STONE-BROW STAIR

A massive stair case that climbs from the Gallery to the Devils Mess, the 16<sup>th</sup> level of Aufstrag. Built inside a shaft 100 feet wide, the stair winds its way up into the infernal darkness above. It grants access to all the levels of Aufstrag from the 3<sup>rd</sup> to the Devils Mess. The stair itself is well constructed and elaborately built. Stone buttresses, interspersed with columned windows hold up the stair case itself and as one winds further up or down they are able to see into the central shaft. Every few hundred feet a columned alcove, built on a platform that overlooks the central shaft, allows weary travelers the chance to sit and rest.

**NOTE:** For more detail on the Stone-Brow Stair see **Gallery of Souls**, "Stone-Brow Stair".

### LONG HOUSE

Where the Risen Road climbs through the Red Fort stands the long house. A barracks of gigantic proportion, the long house spanned 80 feet from top to bottom. There are three levels interconnected with bridges and ladders. The barracks was occupied by orcs in the days of Aufstrag's glory.

**NOTE:** The map depicts one level of rooms and bridges. There are three levels to the barracks, each mimicking the design on the map. The bridges span the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> levels of the room.

### BARRACKS

The barracks was huge, hundreds of feet long and wide and 80 feet high. Rooms carved into the living rock housed a veritable host of orcs. Each room held up to 8 occupants, crowded in with equipment, furnishings and whatever other impedimenta orcs need to live. The rooms are all uniform, though they are in horrid shape. The orcs themselves rarely took care of the barracks, pulling down the plaster using it in cooking pots or to chew upon, carved lewd images everywhere, dug holes in the walls, and left their waste piled in corners and heaps.

For this reason, the barracks is in deplorable shape. Everything is in ruins. Mold grows on the walls and floor, clinging to any damp surface it can find. Portions of the ceiling have fallen in, and rubble lies everywhere.

Access to the rooms is gained by ladders that climb to each level but also by walkways and bridges that span the distance from one side to the other. Two ramps at the ends of the barracks also give quick access up and down. The orcs used all these to come down from their rooms quickly and burst out upon the Risen Road.

**WALKWAYS:** The walkways span the room, from one side to the other. They are supported by long, metal cables attached into the stone of the roof overhead (or the bridge above it). There are 8 cables on each bridge.

Everything is decayed, particularly the mooring where the cable is attached. If more than 300 pounds of weight crosses a bridge, roll to determine if a cable breaks. Roll once for every two cables. A cable's primary attribute is strength. Roll a strength check (CL +1 for every 50 pounds over 300) to determine if it breaks. If one cable breaks the CL increases by 3 for any other cables. If one or more cables break everyone on the cable must make a dexterity attribute check (CL 4, +1 for each broken cable) or suffer falling off the bridge.

**CISTERNS:** Two cisterns supplied the orcs of the long house with water. Each cistern was very large and roughly 20 feet deep. They are fed by large pipes built into the walls, water draining from on high to keep the cisterns filled. They still contain water. It is foul, for nothing uses the water regularly and it has stagnated into pools of filth. A thick, oily substance floats on the surface. If disturbed it puts off a foul odor.

### CAPTAIN'S CHAMBER

The orcs were led by a pit fiend of some power. This creature dwelt in a room that overlooked the Risen Road and abutted the barracks. From here, the fiend could unleash his wrath.

**NOTE:** This room has an encounter built into it.

The room itself is large and covered in fine, ash-white dust. The walls are stone, uniformly constructed as is the rest of the Yoke, except the back wall.

The back wall is dominated by a frieze of the skeleton of a giant, bat-like creature. Its spine is fused with the wall, its large bat-like wings unfolding to the corners of the room.

Arms and hands rise up to hold the ceiling aloft and feet stand firmly on the floor. The head, a toothy snout, looks down upon the door (and any who enter) with hollow eyes. The wall is not visible within or behind the skeletal statue, rather it is an inky-black, palpable.

Here, the fiend harvested torment. The damned were brought to him, living, dead, or undead, and he spent his days torturing them with fire. He burned them, whipped them, and scorched their bodies and minds. He did this until they were turned to ash, at which point he devoured their souls so that ever after they dwelt in his bowels in horror and misery.

The pit fiend dwells here still and sits in the darkness of the wall (see below), relishing the suffering of the damned in his bowels. He watches any who enter the room and determines whether he shall attack them or let them come to him. Generally, he will not attack immediately, but rather watches creatures struggle with the ash. If someone gets close to the wall and tries to look in, he'll approach, staring out at them. If they try to enter, he explodes into the room in a rage of fire. Otherwise, he attacks whenever he feels he can win. If any battle turns against the fiend, he flees back into the darkness of the wall.

#### THE ASH

As noted, the room is covered in a layer of ash. These are the physical remains of the damned. Walking on the ash disturbs it, and it rises in thin columns up and around the feet and legs of whoever passes through. Within one round, it begins to cling to them, slowing their movement until they are held still. As the ash settles, it pulls whoever is caught down into the ash to be devoured. The ash acts as a *slow* spell (reverse of *haste*). A successful constitution save (CL 13) negates the effects of the ash.

Movement is slowed by half each round someone is in the ash, and they fail their save. When the individual's movement rate drops below 1, the ash begins pulling them down. They are pulled into the ash (like quicksand) suffering 8 points of fire damage per round until they are killed, becoming part of the ash themselves.

The ash can be counteracted by *dispel magic*, *wish*, *haste*, or any similar spell.

#### THE WALL

The skeleton itself is a statue, but it serves as a door way into an extra-dimensional space where the pit fiend dwells. No light, magical or otherwise, can penetrate the darkness. Only a *true seeing* allows one to see what is beyond the wall. Touching the wall is like touching a thick, cold liquid. But doing so disturbs the damned and they leap for whoever touches it. The individual hears a violent and sudden scream, coming from within themselves and see an image of some poor soul twisted in terror and pain, reaching out for them. If they continue to touch the wall, they must make a successful wisdom save (CL 13) or suffer 1d4 points of damage.

**NOTE:** Anyone reduced to below 10 hit points and touching the wall is subject to a *magic jar* attack from the roused spirit. If they succumb, the spirit possesses their body (CL random, 1-10).



It clings to the character's hand for a moment, before it snaps back into the wall. If someone attempts to step through the doorway and into the space, they can do so with a successful intelligence check (CL 13), passing into the pit fiend's domain.

**HEALING:** Passing into the dimensional space, and through the wall casts a *heal* spell on any lawful evil creatures. For any lawful good creatures passing through, the wall causes *harm* (CL 13).

#### THE LAIR

Beyond the wall is a world of inky darkness. It is impossible to see within the room without magical light. However, even light does little to dispel the darkness for it is deep and expands in all directions, hundreds of feet. There is a mote at the far end of the room, a grayish area, which breaks the darkness. This is the *saint's mace* the fiend has in his treasure hoard.

**DEVIL, PIT FIEND** (This lawful evil creature's vital stats are HD 13d8, HP 80, AC 23. Its primary attributes are physical. It attacks with a weapon or by claw for 1d6, bite 1d12, or tail for 1d4 points of damage. It has powers common to all devils, as well as leap up to 20 feet, infernal combustion as an attack dealing 1d4 points of damage per round and an SR 15. It regenerates 3d6 points of damage per round on its home plane. It has the following spell-like abilities: fireball, fire storm, flame strike, wall of fire, and command. These can all be cast once per day. The pit fiend is also constantly surrounded by an unholy aura per the spell {holy aura}. See *Tomb of the Unclean* for more.)

**TREASURE:** Dimmed, but not darkened, is a *saint's mace* that the pit fiend took from a paladin long ago. It lies upon the floor next to a small mound of treasure and other items the fiend

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has taken from his victims. The treasure includes 2000gp in assorted gems, a +1 *small, iron helm*, a *stone of alarm*, and a *tome of understanding*.

### REFORMATORY

Those soldiers in need of discipline were taken to the reformatory, punished, shamed, re-educated, or executed. Most who entered the reformatory never returned, and their haunts linger there still, and those who did return were creatures wholly different than before, malformed and bent toward the service of their master and the governors of Aufstrag.

### ANNEX

Those brought to the reformatory were brought into the annex first. Here they were stripped, hung from chains on the ceiling, cleansed through fire and the whip and then sent on to the Hall of Shame.

The room is unadorned but for a dozen, heavy, black chains suspended from the ceiling. All of the chains end in both manacles and curved shark-hooks. The victims were hung by their wrist or pinned with a hook. The floor is stained with dark stains, the echo of blood and excrement of a thousand of victims.

### HALL OF SHAME

After leaving the annex prisoners were brought into the Hall of Shame. Here, a host of minor imps and devils fell upon them, tearing at them, mind, body, and soul. The torments lasted until the prisoner was broken. After that they were taken to the House of the Learned.

The hall is broad and open, with a deep seated ledge running the length of it, near to the ceiling. Here the imps were housed, crammed and packed into the tight space, crawling over each other like worms in the dirt.

**LEDGE:** The ledge is 18 feet up from the floor, about 2 feet from the ceiling. It is 2 feet wide and wraps around the entire room. Within the ledge is an alcove that extends 2 feet into the wall, allowing for that many more imps to dwell in and around it.

**THE ROTUNDA:** The large columns are each fashioned from yellowed marble, smooth and cold to the touch. They are structural more than decorative, holding the beautifully crafted dome on high. The dome is decorated with a painting, now much chipped and weather beaten, of Unklar and a court of devils, judging some unfortunate human figure. Anyone with legend lore or a similar ability may discern the likeness of King Robert Luther of Kayomar (see **Codex of Aihrde**) (CL 6).

**NOTE:** It is of course a fabricated image as the king was slain by Unklar in a test of arms and never stood in judgment before Unklar.

**EXECUTION CHAMBER:** Beyond the columns are 10 short, half-columns, each is served by a set of steps. The columns are hollowed on the top and stained dark with the blood of

countless executions. Those not sent upon the Cold Walk were hauled up the steps and made to lean over the hollowed columns. They were executed and their life's blood made to spill into the bowls of the columns. The imps fed upon or it was used for one vile purpose or the other.

There are almost always spirits of the dead in the Hall of Shame, regardless of any other encounter. They are discarnate drawn here for the suffering of those who came before. They linger in and around the columns, on the ledge and shadows.

**DISCARNATE** (*These neutral evil creatures' vital stats are HD 1d8, HP 7, AC 10. They have no primary abilities. They have no attack form. They are able to engulf and deliver a powerful poison for 1d4 points of damage per round. A successful constitution save reduces the damage by half. A victim can break free from a discarnate with a successful dexterity check.*)

### COLD WALK

This long, broad hallway ends in a chute that leads to the outside. Those condemned to execution were sent down the hall and forced into the chute. The chute sent them down a steep, wet grade and out of Aufstrag, from whence they plummeted some 400 feet to the ground below. Few, if any, survived.

The hall itself is magical, emanating a permanent *push* spell, cast by a 15<sup>th</sup> level wizard. Anyone entering the hall must make a strength check (CL 15) or be pushed 10 feet forward. Every 10 feet they are allowed another strength check until they are forcefully evicted from Aufstrag. Any number of spells will counteract the push. It does not affect lawful good creatures, nor anyone protected by a *protection from evil* spell. *Dispel magic* will disrupt the power of the push spell in the area of effect of the *dispel magic*, 1 round for each level of the caster.

### HOUSE OF LEARNING

The rest of the reformatory was dedicated to those who survived the annex and the Hall of Shame and were not executed. They were sent to the House of Learning, there to be re-educated through the use of fire and the whip, until such time as their behavior was more acceptable to Belial and his captains.

Some of the rooms served as housing for the governors of the house, others still have the long cold slab tables or several "dental" chairs where those unfortunates were questioned or taught lessons.

The rooms are filthy and much decayed, for few, if any, come here. There is fresh water located in several wall fountains, fireplaces in the back rooms.

**LEARNING HALL:** The largest of the rooms is the Learning Hall. Four thin, straight columns dominate the room, and a huge fire place on the western wall offers light and warmth to any who can find something to burn. Like all such devices, it offers access to the stacks above, this time through a larger flue, 4 feet wide and 2 high.



**STAMNU**

The Stamnu, or Stem, is a gigantic shaft that transfixes Aufstrag, from the Red Fort to the Deadpans (the 9<sup>th</sup> level). It is over 200 feet x 200 feet and flanked by towers, whose windows overlook the vast cavity. It begins some 60 feet below the Red Fort, abutting, in truth, the ceiling of the Gallery of Souls. It climbs through the murky darkness for hundreds of feet. Bridges span it upon every level and these are clearly seen from below or above.

**THE FLOOR**

The floor of the Stamnu is covered in rocks and bones. Creatures are forever falling from one of the bridges and landing on the hard floor below. There they are devoured by hordes of rats and gigantic insects and spiders that crawl from the heaps of ruin that cover the floor, and the many holes and crevices that line the walls. Any who willingly explore the floor invite the swarm of creatures that lurks in the darkness.

Anyone landing on the floor of the Stamnu draws the attention of the creatures who dwell there. The first to come are rats. In the first round only a few crawl up from the debris and rocks. In the next round a few more, but starting on the 3<sup>rd</sup> round 10 rats per round show up. On the 5<sup>th</sup> round large insects, about the size of a man's hand, begin crawling from walls and crevices in the floor. On the 10<sup>th</sup> round the swarm will include scores of rats and hundreds of large insects; at that point they begin attacking anything living or otherwise.

***SWARM** (These neutral creatures' vital stats are HD 8d100, AC 10, HP 800. Their primary attributes are physical. They attack with a bite for 1-2 point. They hit any AC automatically. They are able to attempt to trip an opponent every 4 rounds. If they successfully trip a creature the damage increases to 4-12.)*

**WALLS**

The walls of the Stamnu are much as the rest of the Yoke, even cut blocks of stone set in a very uniform wall. They are generally wet, due to the amount of moisture in the air, so that climbing them is slightly more difficult than normal walls. It requires a successful dexterity check (CL 5) to climb up the walls. Rogues and rangers can climb without a check.

**TOWERS**

The corner shafts of the Stamnu are stair towers that climb the length of the Stamnu. Unless noted on the map, these towers have only a window that opens into the Stamnu. The windows are 3 feet high and 1-foot-wide, so that climbing through is a possibility, assuming one can get to it.

Within, the towers consist of flights of stairs that climb to the levels above, often with floors built into the tower, some in the original design, others with wood and beam taken from some ruin or the other and built after the fall.

Roll normal random encounters in any of the towers.

**ELEVATOR:** The only tower that does not have floors or stairs is the elevator. Here a giant pulley, built into the car, through the

roof and up to pulleys high above allowed the occupants of the elevator to lift or lower it by hand power. In the days of yore hill giants occupied the car and did the heavy lifting. It is abandoned now and requires a combined 40 strength to lift the car at all. It makes a horrid grinding noise, unless the pulleys, top and bottom, are oiled. The car travels as high as the Dead Pans.

**THE FORTS**

The Yoke housed thousands of soldier. They were housed in the many barracks and rooms sprawled all across the level. There were three special forts built, each designed after the other and given over to elite hlobane orcs. Each fort had a name: Pund, Rasmussen, and Monru. They each came complete with housing, mess hall, officer's quarters, stables, kitchens, forge, armory, practice yard, and cell block. They were simple affairs, but defensible.

Each fort was built in a hollowed out cavity of Aufstrag, like a house in a cave. The ceiling was 60 feet above the fort itself and the fort's walls some 20 feet from the cavities' walls. A moat was set around the fort. Both of these features kept creatures from easily accessing the fort through tunnels.

The walls of each fort are 12 feet high and can be climbed if one is able to get across the moat. The cells are covered with a roof, but the tunnels/streets are not.

**NOTE:** For reference, it is possible that someone could fly over the fort, from one side to the other.

Of all the orcs the hlobane orcs are the most organized and disciplined. They follow a strict hierarchy of commanders and accept the rule of law without question. For this reason, they can live in tight quarters with little rancor, keeping their areas generally clean and orderly. Each cell in the forts housed 4 hlobane orcs, putting a garrison of 384 orcs per fort, with officers, cooks, armorers, and others the garrison consisted of roughly 450 orcs.

Each fort is laid out in a similar pattern. Use the brief descriptions below for any one of them. Refer to the individual fort for specifics on that fort.

**CONDITION:** The forts are in relatively good condition, though not maintained. The plaster on walls peels or is gone. Water stains everything. Mold grows freely. The halls are dirty, dark and dank. Debris lies about the floors, marking the passage of many wandering monsters and creatures. Bones are not uncommon, drug there by some feral beast, or left there after some hard fought battle. In all they are damp and dark, blackened and stained.

**MOAT AND BRIDGE**

Each of the forts is surrounded by a moat. The moat is broad, some 20 feet wide and 30 feet deep. Standing upon the far edge of the moat one could look at the fortress walls and see high above in the cavity of the ceiling. When active, water was channeled down from on high and flooded the moat, blocking easy access by anyone. Undine (see **Monsters & Treasure of Aihrde**) were set in the water to warn the garrison and slay any foolish enough to attempt to cross over.

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The moats are now filled with brackish standing water, the depth of which should be planned or determined with a random roll on a d20+5. The water is passable, but not drinkable. It is dark, covered in a slimy oil and is a likely home to Water Foul.

**UNDINE** (*This neutral evil creatures' vital stats are HD 3d8, AC 14, HP 21. Its primary attributes are physical. It attacks with a slam for 1d6 points of damage. It is able to hide in the water, gaining a +4 to surprise rolls. It can change its shape at will. It has improved grab, forcing anyone struck to make a successful strength save or be consumed by the water foul. Anyone so grabbed can be pulled into the water and drowned, requiring a successful strength save to break free. It can animate water within 10 feet, tripping anyone near. The victim is allowed a dexterity save.*)

**NOTE:** Other creatures of the CK's design can turn each of the moats into a wild, challenging ride.

### BARRACKS

Each fort has a barracks area. The barracks consisted of the gate, courtyard, sleeping cells and the officer's quarters.

**MAIN GATE:** The main gate led from the street into the quarters of the fort, offering the only known access to the barracks area. Each of these gates is made of iron, bound to the wall with thick I beams and hinges. The hinges are somewhat corroded and make a loud grinding noise if opened or closed, however a little oil can fix that. They are locked with an iron brace that is pulled out of the wall and I beam, through two brackets on each door and into the far wall and its I beam. This reinforced metal bar is almost impossible to break, requiring a successful strength check (CL 48). If attacked, the doors, 8 feet high and 6 across, have 300 hit points (each) and an AC of 32.

**CELLS:** Each cell is 10 feet x 10 feet with a door to the outside street. They housed 4 hlobane orcs in their day. Two beds have metal legs resting on the floor, two more are suspended above them from chains. Personal belongings were kept in small trunks, or bags hung from the beds. Many of the doors to the cells are open, marking the passage of the curious.

**CORNER CELLS:** The corner cells were reserved for the officers. These too had four beds, but each of these housed the officers for the units on hand. The beds are all set against a wall, their metal frames and bands marking an austere lifestyle. Some mattresses still remain, stained dark from some fluid of long ago, chewed on by vermin and damp to the touch. Officers were given trunks to hold their gear. If some of these remain, they are rummaged through, their contents little more garbage. Each of the officer's rooms contained a small drinking fountain. Weapon and armor racks are built into the walls.

**COURTYARD:** The barracks courtyard is paved in heavy, scarred cobbles. Here the ranks gathered for assembly to listen to daily orders, lectures or be extolled by the priests of Unklar. Several wells mark each, giving the fort a source of fresh water.

### OUTER FORT

Outside the barracks but connected to it were the mess halls, kitchens, practice yard, armory and forge.

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**MESS HALL:** The mess hall served to feed the garrison. Here, long stone tables, rooted to the floor, were flanked by stone benches. The orcs gathered to eat, but little else. The tables show long signs of use, being chipped, stained and scarred. The floors of the mess halls consist of unusually large flagstones. The room is normally lit by torches set in sconces all around the room.

**KITCHEN:** The kitchen consisted of long flat ovens built into the wall. These huge iron affairs cooked mountains of flat bread for the garrison. There are also floor to ceiling shelves with mountains of dishes and cookware on them. Almost everything here is pewter, much of it still in the same stacks it was left in years ago. Some lies scattered about the floor, knocked there by some unknown scurrying beast or some looter's hand. Coal bins, barrels and casks mark the kitchen's once prodigious supplies, however, all this dried up long ago. Some work is required but the ovens can be fired up and made ready to cook again.

**PRACTICE YARD:** The large practice yard is covered in sand and served the garrison as a training ground. Recruits were taught, small units practiced, drill conducted, and overall training of the fighting hlobane took place here. The sand admits to no growth from mold or other wild plants and remains largely dry.

**ARMORY:** Long looted and abandoned the armory housed the fort's heavier weaponry. Ballistae, pavis shields, pole arms, heavy crossbows and other implements not normally carried by the hlobane. Much of this was taken to the Battle of the Tree and lost in and around the gates (where many of the hlobane from the three forts fell), and now lies beneath the fetid morass of the inner causeway. Now only remnants of what was here remains, and much of it in poor shape.

**FORGE:** A massive furnace set in the center of the room allowed a half dozens smiths to toil away on all manner of manufacture. Tables line the walls, hooks and chains hang from the ceiling, all part of what was once an always active forge. Coal still remains in the bins and all manner of half made weapons, metals, iron bars, ingots and the like are stacked here and there. Some lies scattered on the floor, some on the tables, all in various stages of workmanship. The floor of the forge consists of sand, the ceilings are high and an access to the stacks exists in a chimney above the furnaces.

### FORT RASMUSSEN

Fort Rasmussen was the first of the forts constructed. It housed the 1<sup>st</sup> cohort of the Hlobane Legion. These orcs were particularly fierce and prideful and their coat of arms, crossed axes over skull, are mounted in a stone frieze over the gate and again over the mess halls and courtyard. The cohort was almost utterly extinguished in the battle of the tree, only a few returning to the fort. These fortified the far corner and they remain their still. The fort however has suffered tremendously for lack of care. The ceiling above has developed many fissures and water drips constantly to the ground below, making it seem as if it is raining. Small ponds of water are everywhere, the infrastructure is much degraded and continues to fall apart, fungus abounds, and the practice yard, once soft dirt, is not a field of mud.

The orcs have fortified the main gate and it can only be opened with a *knock* or similar spell. However, there is a small chance that orcs will send out a foraging party and be caught coming or going. Of course the moat can be crossed and the walls climbed.

The orcs are very smart, keep a vigilant watch and fight together.

**ORCS, HLOBANE x 12** (*These lawful evil creatures' vital stats are HD 2d10, AC 16, HP varies. Their primary attributes are physical. They attack with weapons with a +1 to hit or damage. They prefer cleaving weapons, such as axes, bardiches, and halberds. They are very organized and never act independently, always working to support the troop with which they go to battle. The orc leader has a gold armband worth 125gp. Otherwise each hlobane carries 2-12 gold and 5-20sp.*)

### **FORT PUND**

Fort Pund was constructed to house the 2<sup>nd</sup> cohort of the Hlobane Legion. Like the 1<sup>st</sup> cohort the 2<sup>nd</sup> were fierce and fought together for long years. Their coat of arms is carved into a frieze over the gates to the barracks: an upright wolf with weapons in each paw and wide open profiled snout and jaw. The 2<sup>nd</sup> cohort was driven into the swamps around Aufstrag, and it is unknown if any of her soldiery survived. The fort does show signs of recent occupation, though this could be any number of a host of creatures.

Pund is in better shape than her sister forts. The walls still stand, and the area is largely dry, keeping the water damage at a minimum. The whole is a dreary place, stained with time and the tell tale markings of passing beasts and creatures.

### **FORT MONRU**

A great battle unfolded at Fort Monru. Once the home of the 3<sup>rd</sup> cohort of the Hlobane Legion, this mighty bastion was abandoned after those orcs attempted to hold it against a marauding band of humans and their bone devil masters. The devils tore the iron bar from the door and allowed their minions entry. The orcs, however, did not yield and fought to the bitter end.

Signs of the battle are everywhere. Bones, many still in armor with weapons to hand, lie singly, in pairs or in heaps. Some of the halls are cluttered with debris, marking makeshift walls torn down or breached during the battle. More bones lie in and around the wreckage. The emblem of the cohort, once an iron fist, has been cast down and lies broken in the courtyard. One section of the outer walls was torn down as well, toppled into the moat. Clearly a breach was made here.

Thoroughly looted, the fort has long lost its original inhabitants.

### **OTHER PLACES OF INTEREST**

There are several large, complex sets of rooms open to the CK's interpretation. They should be fleshed out as desired and as best fits the campaign. Below are the place areas and a brief description of the original purpose of each and its history.

### **CASTLE FURTH**

These fortifications cling to the outside of Aufstrag, overlooking the southeastern swamps. Here, high walls with battlements ring in a courtyard that surrounds a central tower. This allowed the occupants to see out and beyond, to enjoy the air (for what that was worth), and weather, the sun, moon and stars. Built by the Horse Lords, commanders of the Legion it was last occupied by Albrecht, who later rose against Unklar's rule and carved out a kingdom for himself in the lands of Aufstrag. Albrecht kept the fortification clean and sparsely decorated.

The battlements still stand strong against the winds and rains, and the apartments of the tower are abandoned by their last master. Many creatures have come and gone, settling in the deeps of the tower. It is a favored haunt of the undead knights of Old Aenoch, for they are immortal creatures and the oldest of them can remember the lands of Al Liosh before the rise of Unklar and the dread tower of Aufstrag. They come to Castle Furth to look out and remember, perhaps in some melancholy way, the lands of their youth in all its glory and beauty, before the ruin of Aufstrag ever began.

### **THE KENNELS**

These housed the worgs of the Red Fort. Hundreds of the beasts dwelt here, fed by countless prisoners and slaves driven into the kennels. The worgs were particularly large and fierce beasts and vaguely intelligent. They have since scattered about Aufstrag and haunt its many levels, though no doubt some of the creature return to this their lair to feast and revel as such beasts are prone to do.

### **GOBLIN CHAMBERS**

Few of the goblins turned on the Red God to serve Unklar, but some were bound to him by sorcery. These Belial took under wing and gave them pride of place in his armies (for he, too, had served the Red God). He gave them worgs to ride and allowed them chambers of their own. Here they made their barracks and stood aloof of the other ranks of Unklar's soldiery.

They were some of the first to rebel, joining the ranks of the dwarves and other slaves. They descended into the Trenches beneath Aufstrag and waged a bloody war against their old masters. Few made it out and fewer still had reason to return to the halls of their confinement. But who can say, for they dwelt there for many years. What treasures they left behind and what comforts they wished to return to no one but they know. And there were fountains in their old barracks that they built with their own hands, and these were always loved by the goblin folk.

### **HALL OF GIANTS**

The Red Fort housed a small host of giants, at times up to 200. These fire giants twisted the stone, shaping it to their desires. They made pools and filled with them with molten rock. They carved rooms to hide their treasures and made altars to their gods. The area remains blistering hot, the walls are blackened, shaped jagged by the countless hands of the giants. Soot hangs in the air and is

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easily dislodged from the walls and floor. No vegetation grows here, or can ever grow here, for the area is burnt to the core.

The average temperature here lies between 90 and 110 degrees Fahrenheit. The floors and walls are always hot and the air stifling.

### **UNGERN BARRACKS**

These were the pride of Unklar's eye for they were fashioned of his flesh. These fierce beasts served in disciplined ranks on the field, but once off the field they became reckless and slothful, fighting amongst themselves as much as doing service to their master.

Their barracks reflect that. When occupied by the ungern there was disorder, for they took little care of their belongings or their homes. The years since have left it in far worse a state. Ransacked, burnt out, looted, reoccupied by other creatures, and ransacked again. It is a wasteland of darkness and littered debris.

### **MASTERS HALL**

The armies' field commanders were housed in the master's halls. The rooms here were more opulent and comfortable, supplied with baths, small kitchens and larders, along with the quarters of the commanders. These soldiers answered directly to Belial. It has fallen into ruin like all else in the lower quarters and it has been sacked a few times, but the wealth of it remains. Tapestries hang disjointed on the walls, rugs, torn now, and stained, remain on the floor. Braziers light upon command, though some have been spilled over, their contents adding to the ruin. Decorations on the walls and pillars reflect the arms of Aufstrag. Weapons, shields, armors, and other trophies hang upon the wall, or lay upon the floor discarded. The furnishings are degraded but intact.

There are more of the disconsolate and damned that wander in here, seeking their masters and guidance in the half-life that is the afterlife.

### **HOUSE OF SILKS**

These rooms were set aside for the entertainment of all the creatures of the Red Fort. Drinking, feasting, pleasures of the flesh (whether male or female), gambling, and debauchery. All were conducted in the House of Silks.

The rooms were lit with magical braziers and portable bars and kitchens were set where they were needed. There were fire pits, torture chambers and the like. Long rods suspended from the ceiling held silk curtains allowing walls to spring up across rooms. Cushions for chairs stood in mounds around the fire pits that roasted flesh of all types. Perfumes covered the sickly smell of corruption, death, and excrement that accompanies all the halls of hell.

This was a favored haunt of the greater devils that lusted for its pleasures. Many return, hunting memories of a time when they ruled the world.

The House of Silks is in ruins, her curtains hang from on high, torn, spoiled, grimed with years of filth. The cushions are

spoiled, rotted through with decay. The carpets and tapestries, those that remain, are merely remnants of their former selves.

Despite all that, a peculiar smell hangs in the air, like flowers laid upon a rotting corpse.

### **HORSE BARRACKS**

Aufstrag was able to field several troops of heavy and light cavalry, and they housed them in these barracks and stables (these were the germ of the forces that later founded the Kingdom of Augsburg). The horses, specially bred for life in Aufstrag, were small, tough creatures and able to navigate the many evils of the tower. The cavalry were always humans, and they were well trained and disciplined. The barracks reflected that and they were meticulously cleaned, with fresh water made available in many troughs.

But the horsemen left many years past, and the barracks fell into disuse. Few creatures come here, for there was little value in them, the stables offer too much open space and the rooms are made for humans.

Much of it remains intact, though greatly damaged by water, fungal growth and time.

### **LOWER BARRACKS COMPLEX**

These barracks housed a host of soldiery. It ranged from humans to orcs, sometimes gnolls, or even ungern. Whatever fleshed out the common ranks of the legions were housed here. They came equipped with their own kitchens, mess halls, and the like.

They are in utter ruin now.

### **BELIAL'S TOMB**

As is known, Belial entombed himself in the Red Fort. He built a set of secret chambers and sealed the doors to them with magical spells of binding, and he set traps to guard the passages that led to his inner sanctum. Loyal servants, devils of some regard, he placed in the ante-chambers and tasked them with watching the doors and keeping all and sundry from molesting him.

He constructed the Hall of Worship and it was a herald to his own power. This, he hid behind walls of sorcery. He bored a room deep into one of the walls and sealed this room with a wall of iron, plain for all to see. The wall became a living thing and kept watch on his Hall of Worship, warning Belial of any and all who entered.

For his tomb, he built a pool, lined with well worked stone and set it on fire with the breath of his power. It burned for a great while but at last it died to embers and into these he settled, vanishing into the flame, hidden, but still in plain sight. From here, he watched, learned, and waited.

### **TB1 HIDDEN ENTRANCE**

Belial's tomb was once the center of a great thoroughfare. That changed, however, and he ordered it rebuilt to better hide his rooms and tomb. The entrance is now hidden in the walls, made

to look exactly like any other hallway in the Yoke. To find it requires a successful find hidden doors (CL 15). It is found by the discover of magical script set into the stone at the base of the wall/door. The script reads:

“Yield We Our Sovereignty to Governance.”

When those words are spoken in Aenochian, the double-door gate becomes visible in the wall. It is 10 feet tall and 8 feet wide. It is unadorned but for the crescent moon of Unklar's rule.

There is no key or handle. A successful dexterity check (CL 10) reveals the small pressure plates built into the baseboard that opens the door.

The doors close by themselves. They do so slowly. It takes four rounds for the door to fully shut and the secret entrance to be hidden again. They are difficult to hold open as they are so heavy, requiring a successful strength check (CL 14) each round they are held open.

#### **LOWER CHAMBERS**

The lower chambers comprise the small temples, Halls of Mist and Worship and the tomb itself. Here Belial set his minions to watch over him, though these have long since died.

Oil in braziers set every 50 feet springs to life as one comes within 50 of them. Fire ignites casting a pale, yellowish glow on the walls and floor.

#### **TB2 ENTRY HALL**

This long hall is adorned with two long tapestries; both depict Belial and his battles with the goddess Wenafar. They show the devil defeating the goddess, though anyone with any religious or legend lore ability knows that never happened (CL 3). The tapestries are huge, each one some 40 feet long.

They do radiate magic; hidden in the story are several sauld devils. They are noticeable to anyone spending at least 10 rounds looking at any one tapestry on a successful wisdom check (CL 3). These dog-like devils are watching any who pass by them. They are magically held in the tapestry and cannot come out unless called by the devil in the Temple of Belial.

**DEVIL, SAULD x 4** (*These lawful evil creatures' vital stats are HD 3d8, HP Varies, AC 12. Their primary attributes are physical. They attack with 2 claws for 1d4 points of damage each and a bite for 1d4 points of damage and a barbed tail for 1d6 points of damage. They have darkvision 60 feet, twilight and deep vision as well as all attributes possessed by a devil. They have animal intelligence. They can jump up to 20 feet landing on their intended target and they can shape change.*)

#### **TB3 ANTE-CHAMBER**

This chamber is largely empty, lavish carpets cover the floors and steps. Several wall hangings show the horned devil, Belial, with his ranseur in hand spearing or slaying other creatures.

#### **TB4 TEMPLE OF UNKLAR**

This small chamber contains a frieze of the Horned God on the wall opposite the entrance. Shelves of candles line the wall beneath the image, all used up to some capacity. Some have fallen to the floor and others burnt away to nothing.

Otherwise the room is unadorned.

#### **TB5 TEMPLE OF BELIAL**

Here a similar room to the Temple of Unklar depicts Belial in a frieze upon the wall. He sits upon an opulent throne, ranseur in hand with the tormented damned all about him. His face is twisted into a cruel smile and he seems to watch whoever enters the room.

Lying in the far corner of the room is the body of a priest of Belial, one of his loyal servants. He died of madness and suicide and lays upon the ground, a crumpled heap of bones. He is easy to spy, the red color of his vestments are somewhat faded but the glint of magical mail underneath is anything but. A black-headed mace hangs off his belt and a silver symbol of Belial upon his chest.

Anyone approaching within 20 feet of the fallen form wakens him from the dead, for the dead cannot leave hell willingly. He attacks whoever approaches. The moment he waken's the sauld devils exit the tapestries from room TB2 and stalk down the hall, heading toward their master.

**MEALSTRUTH** (*This lawful evil creature's vital stats are HD 10d8, AC 25, HP 72. His primary attributes are mental. He attacks with a +3 iron-black mace that upon a successful hit unleashes a wave of nausea inducing pain that cripples its victims, making them inoperative for 1 full round. A successful constitution save negates the effect but not the damage. He is able to regenerate 1 hit point per round and has an SR 2. He can cast circle of pain, blade barrier, and raise dead 1/day. He wears +4 splint mail.*)

#### **TB6 TRAPPED HALL**

The stairs that lead down to the Hall of Mist and Hall of Worship are trapped with a teleportation portal. A fine script is carved into the final step and on the walls to the left and right. Anyone stepping off the final step is immediately teleported into the Hall of Mist. The trap can be detected on a successful find trap (CL 4) or, if someone is being diligent, they may notice it on a successful wisdom save (CL 9). It can be dispelled with *dispel magic* or bypassed with a spell like *dimension door*.

#### **TB7 HALL OF MIST**

The Hall of Mist is nothing more than an empty room filled with a purple-tinted mist. The door itself is open and the mist begins upon the threshold. Any observation of the mist reveals the tell tale signs of human forms and faces within.

Entering the mist causes immediate disorientation to anyone who fails an intelligence save (CL 10). They feel as if they have moved to the astral plane and are lost, when in fact they are not moving at all. A successful save reveals the true nature of the room as a trap, and though damage is still taken as noted below,

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they can escape the room. Each round thereafter the individual feels as if they are fading and they suffer 1d8 points of damage unless they make a successful constitution save (CL 10). If they are reduced to 0 hit points they are consumed by the mist and they become one with it.

### TB8 HALL OF WORSHIP

This hall was built in a classic octagon, though one wall has been removed to make way for Belial's chamber. It is vaulted, some 30 feet high and with a ceiling that seems to open up on a clear, but dark, starlit sky. The rest of the room is dominated by the central column in the middle of the room. This column is only 20 feet high and flat on the top. It holds a secret treasure chamber.

But the room also has six tall, straight stone pillars in it. Each of these is mounted by a horned devil. The devils stand perfectly still, seemingly like gargoyles (detected on a successful wisdom save CL 7). They wait for a few minutes before launching their attack. When they do attack, they attack with a wild cry of abandon and calls for Belial to aid them.

**DEVIL, HORNED x 6** (*These lawful evil creatures' vital stats are HD 6d10, HP varies, AC 28. Their primary attributes are physical. They attack with 2 claws for 1d4 points of damage or a bite for 1d8 points of damage. They prefer to use a weapon, usually a trident, spear, glaive, or similar item. They have the ability to impale their victims with such a weapon. Upon a successful roll of 18-20, they impale, inflicting 4d4 points of damage. They are able to nuance any spear-like weapon they pick up, giving it a magical +2 bonus. Horned devils have an SR 2.*)

### TB9 SECRET ROOM

The door to this room is small, 4 feet x 2 feet, and is well hidden (CL 14). Within the small vaulted chamber lies Belial's treasure. A small imp guards it, opening the door to his master's call and keeping watch on the buried wealth. The imp does everything it can to hide and avoid being detected. It attempts to escape if it is found out.

**IMP** (*This lawful evil creature's vital stats are HD 1d8, AC 15, HP 7. Its primary attributes are physical and mental. It attacks with a bite for 1d4 points of damage and a stinger for 1 point of damage. It is able to turn invisible, has an SR 3 and regenerates 1 hit point per round. Its stinger has a poison barb that can cause a further 2 points of damage for 4 rounds.*)

Within are trunks of silver and platinum. There are the following: 12 trunks of silver coin of 85,000sp, 4 smaller trunks of platinum with 10,000pp in them, a mountain of plate, silver ware and goblets lavishly inlaid with silver and crusted with gems worth 10,000gp, a lute worth 1000gp, and several tapestries each worth 1000gp. There are 5 magic items kept here as well. The Castle Keeper should roll these and determine as needed.

The inner room holds a simple pedestal with a single eye upon it. This, the Eye of Thorax or Ornduhl, consists of living tissue. It seems to look around, peering into places here and there. See **Monsters & Treasure of Aihrde**.



### TB10 TOMB

The tomb is walled off by a magical wall of iron cast by Belial himself. It can be *dispelled*, *wished* away, or otherwise reduced as any normal magical wall of iron (as the spell).

Once beyond, the following scene unfolds:

The room is long and wide and ends in a half moon-shaped alcove where a large tapestry hangs. Lights spring up in several braziers, spilling yellow light into the room. The tapestry bares no form, but is red and lined in silver. In the center of the room there is a fire pit, its sides set with intricately carved stone work, each stone depicting a hand reaching out of the fire pit. Though there are no open flames the embers within the pit burn orange-red, releasing a wave of heat and a smell that brings to mind the reek of burnt flesh and bone.

The fire pit is, of course, the resting place of Belial. He is aware of any who enter the room, and has probably been aware, having heard the calls of his devil guards. He watches and waits, allowing the entrants to talk, so that he can determine who to strike first. When he does decide, he leaps from the embers in a wave of flame and turmoil. His passage summons six small fire elementals, and they join him in the attack.

**BELIAL** (*This lawful evil creature's vital stats are HD 27d10, AC 24, HP 154. His primary attributes are physical and mental. He attacks with a magical ranseur, named Malum, which grants him two attacks, one with the blade, the other with the point, for 4d4 points of damage for each. Upon any successful hit Malum*

*imparts a wave of nauseating pain through the victim. Unless they make a successful constitution save they suffer a further 1d10 points of damage per round for 4 rounds. Belial can cast symbol of pain as well as summon other devils. He has an SR 15. He has the following spell-like abilities: cause light wounds (5/day), cause critical wounds (2/day), harm (1/day). It requires a +2 or better weapon to hit him. He is a supra-genius.)*

**NOTE:** Belial was horribly wounded by the golden weapons of Wenafar. If he is struck by any gold item or weapon it causes triple damage.

**ELEMENTALS, FIRE x 6** *(These neutral creatures' vital stats are HD2d8, AC 15 and HP 16 each. Their primary attributes are physical. They attack with slam for 2d6 damage and burn 1d4 damage. They possess all the properties of a fire elemental as presented in Monsters & Treasure.)*

**KILLING BELIAL:** Belial cannot be killed. He can be overcome, defeated and slain but his spirit remains houseless in Aufstrag for 10-100 years. After that time, he can reform and assume his body again. He can, of course, be bound or imprisoned.

### **TB 11 HALLS OF PAIN**

Passing up the narrow, winding stair brings one to a landing that looks out upon steps that lead down into a room. The walls here are darkened black with the images of faces etched in it. It is almost as if frescoes once adorned the walls and were burnt in some wild conflagration. But it is not so. The faces are the damned who have been devoured by Belial and cast out again, shaped into the stonework of the walls themselves.

As soon as a living creature passes into the first room, the air fills with a low moan, the voices of the damned calling out to the living. The sounds come from all about, though a cleric or paladin may determine where they come from exactly with a successful wisdom check (CL 9). Once someone passes down the first flight of stairs, the wailing increases in volume and it begins to hypnotize anyone listening. Everyone in the area must make a successful intelligence save (CL 10) or become entranced with the wailing. Once entranced, they travel deeper into the room.

After the third round in the room the wailing begins to cause those listening severe pain, inflicting 1d4 points of damage (constitution save CL 10 for half). Every round thereafter the wailing causes 1d6 points of damage (save for half) to whoever is in the room and listening. Each failed intelligence save draws the individual further into the room and the CL increases by 2. Eventually, they are drawn up the stairs and into the deeper rooms where the wailing is so loud one cannot hear their own thoughts. All damage is doubled after the second (long) flight of steps is reached.

When a person dies here, their body is unmade. They are then drawn into the wall, adding their voice to the suffering.

There is nothing of value in the corridors or rooms. Welcome to hell.

## **ENCOUNTERS**

The encounters below are not fixed to any one local within the Red Fort. They can be placed before hand, chosen randomly, or set aside for future use, whatever best fits the CKs game.

### **1 PACK OF BEARDED DEVILS**

With Belial's fall, many of his soldiers scattered. There were some, however, who had no thoughts that did not come from their master, and they were set adrift as if a ship without sail or rudder. It was such with these bearded devils. Already possessed of a pack mentality, these devils gathered in a large band, broken up into several packs. They roam about the fort, weighed down by the fear of their master, seeking some comfort that hell cannot provide.

When they occupy an area, they generally scatter, breaking up into the smaller packs, spreading throughout a number of rooms. These usually consist of 2-6 devils. They are not mindless and have some modicum of understanding, but they lack any kind of motivation. With no drive, they sit upon their haunches, climb the walls, sniff about, get into anything they find. Some crawl up the stacks, others squirming into tight holes. They are much akin to rats, though their movements are slow and deliberate.

Their one preoccupation is to mark the walls with the ruins of whatever they kill, blood, mucus, feces, it does not matter. The symbols have no meaning other than they alert the learned to their presence. These markings always begin before their den, so whatever section of Aufstrag they occupy should be marked with strange geometric symbols before the den itself (on the entrance way, walls of hall leading up to the entrance way, etc).

The scribbling does not remain long after the bearded devils disappear, for it is washed away in moisture, devoured by flies, roaches and other insects or covered in fungus.

**DEVIL, BEARDED x 36** *(These lawful evil creatures' vital stats are HD 6d10, HP Varies, AC 19. Their primary attributes are physical. They attack with 2 claws for 1d4 points of damage, a tail for 1d6 points of damage, or a beard attack for 2d4 points of damage. Their preferred method of attack is with a guisarme for 2d4+3 points of damage. They have heightened initiative of +1 and the following spell-like abilities: bane [1x day], freedom of movement [constant], haste [1x day with no ill effects]. They have an SR 3.)*

If one of the lesser packs is encountered and engaged, they do not call for help. Even if they did, other devils would not be inclined to come to their aid.

**TREASURE:** The treasure generally consists of whatever they have recently killed. The devils do not care to hoard what they take and often leave it behind. Treasure should be rolled separately for each pack. Consult the **Monsters & Treasure**.

### **2 FUNGAL FOREST**

A recent onrush of water, coming from above, left the area damp and ripe for fungus to grow. It sprouted on the walls, in the



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dampened debris of old furniture. Mushrooms at first, but these became heavy with deep roots that tore more plaster and mortar from the walls. Eventually, other fungal plants grew, stretching long, spindly, root-like arms into every nook and cranny. Still, others grew atop those and soon a thin lair of slimy soil hosted a small forest of fungus that spread from room to room.

But such things are not meant to last in Aufstrag. It has already begun to die, the ichorous mess of its death has created small pools of gray ooze, walls coated in green slime and other creatures that grow besides.

Distribute these monsters as best fits the layout of the area. They can be thick in one room or spread out. Slimes and ooze can grow in close proximity. Place as many ooze, slimes, vordoag's etc as necessary to make the encounter challenging.

### OOZE

The ooze is infected with the evil of its house and it has grown to understanding that few other plants have possessed. It is aware of the souls of the damned, but these do not feed it, so that it lusts for the living, seeking anything alive and worth eating.

The fungus grows in all the rooms, covering the walls, floors and, in some cases, the ceiling. It emits a variety of powerful odors. Some are horrid, causing nausea; others, however, are pleasant. The smells should be considered mixed in each room, so that a constitution save is required in each new room someone enters.

**NAUSEA:** The area requires a constitution check (CL 3). Anyone who fails the check becomes nauseous. The nausea drains the character of 1 point of strength until they leave the room.

**OOZE, GRAY** (*This creature's vital stats are HD 3d10, AC 5, HP 21. Its primary attributes are physical. It attacks with an acid attack for 1d8 points of damage. It moves slowly at 10 feet per round. It is very difficult to see, and if it is lying still, it cannot be seen by any creature over 5 feet distance. If a creature approaches an ooze, it is allowed a wisdom save to spot it at a -6 penalty.*)

**Treasure:** Whatever treasure the ooze has lies buried in the half rotted fungus that grows about it.

### GREEN SLIME

As the fungal forests dies, the clustered roots that cling to ceilings and lintels are rotting into a thick, viscous slime that often becomes animated, seeking to feed upon whatever comes near it. These green slimes are little more than muck and are found throughout the area.

**GREEN SLIME** (*This neutral creature's vital stats are HD 4d8, HP 31, AC 10. It has no primary attributes. It does not attack, only reacts to being contacted. When touched, it converts any organic material into green slime within 1-4 rounds or 10 minutes for wood or metal; stone is unaffected. It can be killed by fire, cold, or a cure disease spell.*)

**TREASURE:** Green slimes have no treasure.

### OTHER MONSTERS

Crawling about or dwelling in the shadow of the toadstools and other fungi are the vordoag, a type of small crustacean. They are aggressive, evil, and always hungry.

**VORDOAG** (*These neutral evil creatures' vital stats are HD 1d4, HP 3, AC 13. Their primary attributes are mental. They attack with a bite for 1d4 points of damage, however they are able to swarm. As soon as a victim is bitten and blood is drawn, any other vordoag in a 100 ft. area attacks that same victim. For more see **Monsters & Treasure of Aihrde.***)

The large orbut also grows in these forests, usually spread out or in pairs. These large, translucent creatures wait for a victim to come near and then attempt to swallow them whole.

**ORBUT** (*These neutral creatures' vital stats are HD 2d8, HP 12, AC 12. Their primary attributes are mental. They attack with an acidic bite for 1d4 points of damage. However, on a roll of a natural 20, they are able to swallow any man-sized or smaller victim whole. Anyone so swallowed suffers 1d6 points of damage until they die. They can cut themselves through by attacking the creature from within, at -3 to all damage rolls but with an automatic hit. Orbut's have a +5 on all hide checks.*)

**TREASURE:** Any treasure they may have is found beneath them, in the ground where they grow.

### 3 TELERVO THE UMBRIAN

Telervo is an Umbrian mage. He is young for a mage, in his mid 40's, but he has served the Umbrians since an infant. Snatched from his family in the Punj, he was carried to the town of Grafika and sold to the Umbrian order. He served an elder for some time and traveled through the northern realms until he was given the rank of celibate (1<sup>st</sup> level) and allowed to wear the robes and insignia. He continued to travel with the elder until it was learned that he had a knack for the hidden meaning in words. Through listening to others he could unravel the nature of their sorcery and detect their secrets and lies. This ability was thought to be of great value to the Umbrians in their ongoing struggle in Aufstrag.

They brought him in secret to that place and he first arrived in the Sanctuary (see **The Horned God's Acre**) for a further apprenticeship. He served the order there for awhile and was sent deeper into the bowels of Aufstrag. All the while, his own power grew, and he achieved the rank of elder. But by then his mind began to slip. The whispered deceit of so many creatures left an impression on him, and his voice failed so that he spoke in many tongues at once. His sorcery failed him, for either it utterly faltered or had unintended consequences.

There was no cure that the Umbrians could offer and they eventually drove him from them, banishing him to the tower.

Alone, he fled into the darkness. There, the creeping madness took him, but his power was such that he could stand against many and could flee those whom he could not kill.

He at last came to the Red Fort, where he has taken up residence. Half mad, he wanders the halls, cloaked in shadows.

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He has come to hate the Umbrians and all that serve that order. He will actively work to destroy them if he can, though in truth he has been gone so long that he knows little of their order.

Telvoro is quiet, largely keeping to himself. He sets up small camps in abandoned rooms, eating anything from fungal plants, to rats, to human flesh. He gets water from various fountains. He does attempt to hide his presence, setting up camp in smaller rooms and using fireplaces instead of open fires.

He is not wholly mad, but close to it. He goes through periods where he talks constantly, and others where he is quiet and gloomy. He talks to himself, and his speech is mostly incomprehensible words strung together. At other times, however, he is more lucid. He has a little knowledge on the whole level, giving bits and pieces to the players as the CK desires. The CK should also determine what, if any, knowledge he has.

**SPELL BOOK:** Telvoro has an extensive spell book, but he rarely carries it on his person. When he sets up a new campsite, he hides the book in an alcove, under some rubble, or anywhere he is certain that no one can find it. Once hidden, he casts *secret chest* upon it, hiding the book within the chest and the chest within the rubble. Because he is in Aufstrag, the book is not sent to the ethereal plane, but rather cloaked like a similar spell cast by an illusionist.

**TELORO** (*This lawful neutral human's vital stats are level 8, AC 18, HP 41. His primary attributes are intelligence, wisdom, and charisma. His significant attributes are strength 17, intelligence 18, wisdom 15, charisma 14 and constitution 15. He carries a +2 dagger of rending that upon a successful score of 18 (modified) or better causes double damage. He has a +3 ring of protection and an arm band that grants him a base 15 AC. He has a cloak of shadows that allows him to hide in shadows as a rogue of the same level.*)

**TREASURE:** All that he carries on him above. He also has a spell book with all spells from 1<sup>st</sup> through 5<sup>th</sup> level in it. He carries a small pouch of 50 rubies, each worth 25gp. He uses these to bribe devils when he is able.

### 4 FIRE GIANTS

Aufstrag is generally hot. Gases rise from the mired detritus from the trenches below, clawing their way up the many holes and crevices in the misshapen rock that is the foundation of the tower. Fire pits belch flame and smoke that joins the noxious gases, augmented by random fires, burning sludge, the rage of devils, stakes set afire, and all the other myriad sources of heat and smoke. All this heat is trapped in the tower and lingers, making the whole a miserable hell for most creatures who walk or crawl. For the fire giants, however, it is a home, a world where the flame's labor brings comfort and some amount of joy . . . if giants of an evil bent can know such emotions.

This particular band of fire giants is ranging through Aufstrag, seeking a home within their home. Driven from on high, they gathered what goods they could and tramped into the Red Fort hoping to fortify some section of the old barracks and make it

their home and a base from which they can build a realm of their own and plunder others.

The band numbers a dozen adult fire giants, led by the massive, hulking Taman and a half dozen younger fire giants. There are nine hell hounds that linger around the band, though these are only loosely bound to the giants.

Their present lair is hotter than the rest of the level, for they have set many piles of stones alight, melting them into heaps of smoldering lava.

One room should be picked as the giant's temple, where they have created a trench of fire and molten rock. This is where they worship the flame and where Taman can usually be found.

The rest of the area should be set aside as their sleeping chambers, a slaughter house, treasure room etc.

**GIANT, FIRE, TAMAN** (*This lawful evil creatures' vital stats are HD 15d8, AC 27, HP 80. His primary attributes are physical. He attacks with 2 fists for 2d8 points of damage or by weapon, a large sword, for 5d6 points of damage. He can throw rocks 450 feet for 2d10 points of damage. Taman is powerful enough that he can melt rock with his touch. It requires one full round to turn a rock into a molten bolt. If he is successful, the damage from any hurled stone is doubled. He has full immunity to fire but suffers double damage from all cold based attacks. Taman carries a heavy +3 small iron shield [medium for medium-sized creatures].*)

**GIANT, FIRE x 12** (*These lawful evil creatures' vital stats are HD 12d8, AC 23, HP 61. Their primary attributes are physical. They attack with 2 fists for 2d8 points of damage or by weapon for 5d6 points of damage. They can throw rocks 450 feet for 2d10 points of damage. They have full immunity to fire, but suffer double damage from all cold based attacks.*)

**HELL HOUND** (*These lawful evil creatures' vital stats are HD 8d8, AC 16, HP 46. Their primary attributes are physical. They attack with a bite for 1d6 points of damage. Any successful bite inflicts a further 1d6 points of heat damage. They have a breath weapon that inflicts 1 hit point of damage per hit dice. They are immune to fire based attacks and have darkvision.*)

**TREASURE:** They have gathered a mound of food, mostly carcasses of others they have slain and not eaten yet. They have also brewed barrel beer, a rather nasty tasting brew that, when drunk, burns the throat and stomach, but heals whoever drinks it for 1d8 points of damage upon a successful constitution save (CL 10). If they fail their save, it causes 1d4 points of damage. The CL increases by 2 with each successive drink in a 4 hour period. The barrel has at least 100 helpings. The giants also have a mound of treasure (roll as Treasure Type 12 in the **Monsters & Treasure** and multiple by 5 for the number of giants).

### 5 ERINYES

Up to a dozen of these beautiful devils have taken up residence in a large room with an adjacent room for their storage and treasure. They have decorated it with all manner of opulence.

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A huge bed covered in silk sheets and finely woven cotton blankets dominates the room. A canopy hangs over it; braziers offer a soft light and a singular, flowery smell. A table laden with well cooked meats and fruits lines one wall. Rugs cover the floors in heaps, and the air is fresh and cool.

The room is designed as a trap. One of the erinyes lies upon the bed, bound and tied, hidden from clear view by anyone entering. Two others are tied to the wall in each corner behind the bed. They assume the form of a woman, however the one on the bed takes the form of a man or woman (depending on who enters the room). She does so with her polymorph self ability and can only be spied by someone very quick witted (wisdom, CL 13). The rest linger in the corners, ceiling or otherwise hidden, each in her gaseous form. The damsel on the bed casts herself as the injured party and claims a devil has bound her and her companions here and only recently left to fetch she knows not what. She implores the characters to rescue her.

They each attempt to seduce the one who rescues them. Once seduced, they lure them with food and comfort, claiming the devil will be gone a long while. They are only waiting to strike at whoever they have lured here and feast upon them.

**NOTE:** They do not take their true form unless they enter battle.

If a careful examination is made of the room (CL 10), the façade somewhat falls apart. The sheets are old and stained, the bed dilapidated, the food is not wholesome, all are only made to appear so. There is also blood upon the floor, dried and stained.

**ERINYES** (*These lawful evil creatures' vital stats are HD 6d8, AC 18, HP varies. Their primary attributes are physical. They attack with a dagger for 1d4 points of damage, but anyone struck must make a constitution save or fall into a stupor for 2-36 rounds, at which point they slay the victim, usually maiming them first. They have superior intelligence. They can move, flying or on foot, 30 feet per round. The erinyes can seduce their victims. Such is their beauty that any who listen to them and look upon them for more than 3 rounds must roll a successful charisma save or fall into a charm-like trance (as the charm person spell). They can detect invisible objects, locate objects, assume a gaseous form, polymorph themselves as well as possessing all powers common to devils and an SR 7.*)

**STORAGE AND TREASURE:** Whatever room was chosen for the storage is locked (CL 5). Within are heaps of half eaten corpses, some hanging, others lying upon the floor. Body parts, arms, legs, torsos, heads are everywhere. The room is foul beyond reckoning and filthy. In the midst of all this, however, lies the erinyes' treasure. Roll in the **Monsters & Treasure**.

## 6 ROOM OF THE DAMNED

An uelbrich, or harvester devil (see **Appendix B New Monsters**), has taken up residence in the room. It has settled into an extra-dimensional space beneath the floor of the room. There, it has set a trap (much like an ant-lion) for any who wander into the room, both living and damned.

**The room is dark and plain of ornament, though the walls are scarred with tendrils of black, seemingly soot rising from the floor. It is particularly cold in the room and your breath shows as you enter. The floor is dark, so much so that it seems to absorb any light cast upon it. In fact, the light seems almost reflected in the darkness . . . either that, or it spills into the inky wash to depths unknown.**

Beneath the floor, in a house of his creation, lies the uelbrich devil. A massive creature that dwells in the filth created by its own habits. He watches on high, seeking for souls to torment, for any who enter the room draw its attention and the attention of the damned host about him. He has cast *mirage arcane* on the floor in order to hide his pocket dimension.

The uelbrich sits and waits. When a soul wanders by, the uelbrich sends a host of his servants and drags the dead to its embrace where it devours the spirit. Within, the creature is consumed with torment and the pain tears at the soul's psyche until it is twisted beyond what it was. At that point it is passed out of the uelbrich to join the ranks of the damned who serve the devil. These servants linger in the shadows about the uelbrich and wait for his call.

When the servants attack, they rise in mass up through the space and through the floor, reaching and grabbing for any they can get their hands upon. Once they have latched on, they pull them into the pocket dimension and down to the uelbrich, who in turns attempts to devour them.

**DETECTING THE POCKET DIMENSION:** It is possible for any magic using class to detect the pocket dimension. Allow them a primary class check (CL 8). If they succeed, they see that the floor is in fact not a floor but the ceiling of some other space. They can banish the illusion with a *dispel magic* or similar spell. If successful, the floor vanishes and the uelbrich is plain to see, some 30 feet beyond. Its servants are also revealed, and they rise to attack, pulling the prey to their master. Anyone else can overcome the illusion with a successful intelligence check (CL 15).

**DEVIL UELBRICH** (*This lawful evil creature's vital stats are HD 15, AC 28, HP 90. Its primary attributes are mental and physical. It attacks with two tendrils for 1d8 points of damage or a bite for 2-24 points of damage. It has all powers common to devils. It is able to create a pocket dimension similar to the rope trick spell. It can cast mirage arcane 2/day, hypnotic pattern 1/day, and hallucinatory terrain 2/day. The uelbrich commands an army of 10-100 zombies who obey its every command. They attack en masse and act as one attack roll of the uelbrich, attempting to grab prey in order to pull them to the uelbrich. A successful hit roll allows the undead to take hold and begin pulling them to the devil, 10 feet every round. A successful strength check is required to break free. Captured targets can generally fight back. These undead can be turned, killed or otherwise destroyed, though the uelbrich suffers no damage for it.*)

**TREASURE:** The uelbrich has been feeding for awhile and has snared many in his pit. Amongst the tar-filth, and tormented vomit of his excreted souls lies a host of treasure. Coins, gems, items both magical and mundane. Roll as Treasure Type Type 15

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in **Monsters & Treasure**. Of particular value is a *Tolvar's Key of Magical Binding* that locks any door with a door lock. It cannot open it, but it can lock it. The key works on padlocks as well. Any lock enchanted by *Tolvar's Key of Magical Binding* can be unlocked normally (CL equal to its regular difficulty).

## 7 THE BROKEN MIRROR

A horned devil perches upon a high wall, waiting for some creature to come into its view. It has recently escaped from a *mirror of life trapping*. The mirror itself is also in the room, leaning against the wall at such an angle that it reflects more of the ceiling than the room or those in it. The mirror is presently full, the devil having been released when some other creature looked in it.

The devil attacks immediately.

**DEVIL, HORNED** (*This lawful evil creatures' vital stats are HD 6d10, HP varies, AC 28. Its primary attributes are physical. It attacks with 2 claws for 1d4 points of damage or a bite for 1d8 points of damage. It prefers to use a weapon, usually a trident, spear, glaive or similar item. It has the ability to impale its victims with such a weapon. Upon a successful roll of 18-20, it impales, inflicting 4d4 points of damage. It is able to nuance any spear-like weapon it picks up, giving it a magical +2 bonus. Horned devils have an SR 2.*)

The mirror is intact, though it does not automatically trap a soul. Anyone who looks at it will see not their own reflection but the image of a creature - the creature that made the mirror.

The image in the mirror seems to move. Its alabaster in color, its skin flaky, as if some type of dried powder or even flour. Its childlike face is without distinct features, but the tell-tale sign of blood courses beneath the skin. The creature looks back at you, out of the mirror,

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reaching out plaintively, touching the glass. It seems sorrowful as if it is bound forever within the mirror.

Looking at the creature activates the magic of the mirror and whoever looks in must make a wisdom save (CL 12) or be instantly pulled into the mirror. When they do so, the mirror ejects one occupant, who almost certainly attacks the party. To determine what that creature is, consult and roll randomly on the wandering monster table in Appendix C.

In order to free someone trapped in the mirror, the command phrase must be used. The command phrase is "By Unklar's Will I Release/Bind Thee". There is no way to know this without some sort of divine intervention, such as a *wish* spell.

## 8 THE WITCH STALK

As is well known, the high priests of Unklar evolved over time, morphing into creatures both strange and terrifying. These were the *cunam-liath*, the "Eye Above." They were called witch stalks by the common people and they served Unklar in many capacities. When the Unklar fell, they were left without a master. Highly intelligent and motivated, some set about creating their own realms in the halls of Aufstrag and in the wide world beyond.

A broad, ball-shaped mantle, or hood, serves as the witch stalk's head. Nine long tentacles hang from the hood, each ending in small knobs of thick, muscular flesh. Eyes ring the stalk's hood, allowing it to see in all directions. Nothing remains of the skeleton it once had, and the creature is entirely amorphous, allowing it to squeeze into the tightest of places. Stranger, still, are the gills, wide open vents that ring the creatures' hood. These gills inhale and exhale continually, giving the stalk its ability to float, but also giving the creature a signature sound as it approaches.

The witch stalk has taken up residence in a room far from the tramp of others. It lingers in the shadows, floating high above the floor or hidden behind some debris or column, waiting for a sign or some indication that Unklar's return is to come. The witch stalk watches any who come in its area, listening to them and attempting to understand who and what they are. Any lawful good creatures or knights of the west are attacked. It uses surprise as best it can.

**NOTE:** The witch stalk is highly intelligent and does not generally throw its life away for a common scuffle in some dark hall or the other. If any battle goes against it the stalk attempts to flee, with a mind for vengeance later.

**WITCH STALK** (*This neutral evil creatures' vital stats are HD 18d12, AC 22, HP 140. Its primary attributes are mental and physical. It has no natural attack. It has all around vision, clairaudience/clairvoyance, true seeing, and flight (40 feet a round), regenerate 3 hit points per round, and an SR 12. It casts divine cleric spells as an 18<sup>th</sup> level caster with a 21 wisdom. It has a full complement of spells at any given time. Treat them as 12<sup>th</sup> level wizards. See *Monsters & Treasure of Aihride* for more.)*

**TREASURE:** The witch stalk has no need for treasure, nor are they possessed by greed. Their whole purpose being bent toward the worship of Unklar. If a treasure is desired, it should be scattered. Roll on Treasure Table 18 in the **Monsters & Treasure**.

# A17 HALL OF CHAINS



*he Hall of Chains served as both prison to those who were in the eye of Darkness and as quarters to the many creatures who served Aufstrag as torturers. Chains hang from almost every ceiling, be it a room or hall. The unfortunate victims were bound to these chains by hooks and barbs so that the Halls always stank of blood, feces, and other filth.*

**Hall of Chains** is an adventure module designed for 3-5 characters of a variety of levels. It is the 17<sup>th</sup> adventure in the “A” series, or Umbrage Saga, adventure modules. The adventure is designed to be part of a series that begins in distant lands and ends in the mountainous dungeon of Aufstrag. For more details on this, please read “Using the Hall” below.

**The Hall of Chains** served as both prison to those who had gained the attention of Unklar and as quarters to the many creatures who served Aufstrag as torturer. Chains hang from almost every ceiling, be it a room or hall. The unfortunate victims were bound to these chains by manacles, pins, bolts, hooks, and barbs. The moans of the many damned who hung here carried through the halls and even into the Red Fort below. Those who dwelt in the Hall of Chains relished the sound, calling it “Unklar’s Symphony”. The Halls always stank of blood, feces, and other filth as the dying gave up all manner of fluid, and the dead rotted into hanging coils of viscous flesh. Hosts of black-eyed flies dwelt here and it is in these Halls that the Captain King Beelzelbub, Lord of Flies, reigned supreme.

A great many lesser devils and captains made their abodes here as well, either to serve the Lord of Flies, or to attend Unklar, for it was Unklar’s habit to visit the Hall of Chains to torment those who he thought needed his particular attention. The Hall of Chains served as a forge for many evil devices of lesser make and had an unusual number of chimneys, allowing easier passage to and from it for those who used the stacks.

There are many creatures, devils, tormented spirits, the undead, shadows, and more that dwell here. In particular, are the large herds of the undead that roam the halls.

## INTRODUCTION

This is the 5<sup>th</sup> level of Aufstrag. It is called the Hall of Chains because it served the lords as a prison and torture chamber. It is one of the few levels that housed Unklar on a regular basis and for this reason a series of rooms were devoted to his pleasure and comfort. It is called the Hall of Chains, or more often, the Choir, a reference to Unklar’s Symphony of the damned. Acheron, the most beautiful of all the Val Eahrakun was set to rule over the Choir.

Acheron came to Aihilde before the fires of the All Father’s desire lit the heavens. He wandered the wastes alone and unafraid, for it was always his gift to see himself as unconstrained. He dwelt in the darkness with no purpose, seeking neither glory, power, nor wealth, but rather a desire to mock and torment all those weaker than himself.

In time, he spied Wenafar and was smitten with her beauty. He followed her and called out to her. She, however, was of the

named Val Eahrakun and paid him no heed until such time as he sought to block her passage with his form.

“You are beautiful, Acheron, but you hold no interest for me. Your form is hollow and you have no purpose but vanity and cruelty.” Acheron was taken aback. In his mind, such was his worth that he thought she did not see it clearly enough. He placed his hand upon her breast to stop her in her movements. She smote him such a blow across the brow that he was shattered and fell away into countless parts. The parts took shape, appearing as malformed birds. They were tiny, with six legs, multiple wings, and bulbous eyes. They hung in the air like a great cloud, and she passed through them, scattering them in her wake.

Acheron strove to pull himself back together, but the power of Wenafar was greater than any he ever knew. As such, the process took many long years, and he was never wholly healed, for parts of him flew off and into the wilds. These were the fathers of the flies, and they populated the whole world with their seed. Their offspring were short lived; they hounded the living and feasted upon the dead. The fathers, those parts of Acheron that lived, were immortal, and they roam the world still, seeking to rejoin Acheron.

Ea-Raena had scorched the heavens many times with her passage when Acheron became whole again. He joined himself to Ornduhl for a long while and served him as a messenger, for though the named Val Eahrakun could see beyond his beauty, few others could. Thus, Acheron rose in power and ruled over kingdoms in Aihilde. When the War of the Gods came, however, he was cast out and driven to the Wretched Plains. His master was defeated and pinned to his throne with the spear of Corthain, and Acheron fled. Even so, he was found by servants of the Slayer of Gods and brought before him. Corthain sat in judgment over Acheron. He pleaded his case and sought to use his unearthly beauty for mercy, but there are no powers in all the world who can sway Corthain. He stripped Acheron of his beauty and revealed his nature in a new form, that of a giant fly, and drove him out.

So Acheron ruled as lord over the dead in the Wretched Plains, reveling in the stench of their rot and hounding their blackened souls for his pleasure.

Thus it was that when Unklar came to the world and called upon the Val Eahrakun to join him, Acheron readily did so for he saw through the Horned God an avenue that led back to Aihilde and out of the Wretched Plains. He took the form of a man of such beauty that none could look away from him, and he called upon Unklar’s Court and offered his services. Unklar saw in him a tremendous power and a brow long used to command. He saw the marks of Wenafar and the binding chains of Ornduhl and saw them all as strengths or weaknesses

## A17: HALL OF CHAINS



he might use to his own purpose. He saw, too, that Acheron was not driven by a desire for power, but rather by his own sense of pleasure and lust. So he gave him vast and splendid halls to rule over and made him Inquisitor of Aufstrag, sending all and sundry prisoners to him for processing. He devoured them and grew drunk upon their anguish.

Thus, Acheron ruled in his halls for many years, and they were called the Hall of Chains. In time he commanded Unklar's armies in the long wars that brought him the rule of Aihrde. His was a power few could match and Unklar awarded him a vast realm to rule beyond Aufstrag. All the west was given to him, and he built a tower of filth there to rule over its people. The tower became a hall of dark lust, where death never walked alone but came in the company of anguish and suffering. Flies came to the den, and it became a filthy place of nightmare and Acheron was called by a different name, Beelzelbub, Lord of Flies. He was also called Lord of Sorrow, too, for he remained the Inquisitor of Aufstrag.

In time however, Unklar, was unmade, and his servants scattered across the wide world. Acheron led the greatest of his master's hosts into the far west but was defeated there. His armies annihilated, he fled (for more see below.) The Hall of Chains, the Choir, fell into disuse, and its many inhabitants scattered.

But Acheron always held a lust for Aihrde, and his mind is ever upon it. He returns now, coming to Hell from the Wretched

Plains, as a fly, usually huge, fat, green and carrying with him such a stench that few can withstand it.

**NOTE:** Destroying or defacing the statues almost always draws the ire of Acheron. His love for himself knows no bounds. Anyone who mars a statue invites an immediate encounter, consult **Appendix C: Wandering Monsters**. There is a 5% chance it will be Acheron himself.

### USING THE HALL

The Halls are not uniform in design or decoration. They were built and rebuilt over time by Acheron or his lieutenants and reflect their ever-changing desires. They are long abandoned and few keep up any pretense now. The halls are unlit, possessing no natural or magical light as is found in the Red Fort and other areas of Aufstrag.

### CHAINS

The rooms are dominated by chains. Some have singular chains, others multiple. They may be attached from the ceiling, the walls, the floors, left loose, or connected to a huge, heavy, iron ball. Generally, these are not magical chains, but they do range in size from small links to huge links several inches thick, depending on what prisoner was held. They have all, for the most part, rusted through and are weaker than normal. Breaking any chain requires a successful strength check (CL 2-15, depending on size). Allow any attempt that involves two or more persons to include all strength bonuses. They often have locks, though not always. These are generally picked at CL 4-10. There are skeleton keys for the locks.

It is, however, haunted by the never ending moan of the Choir of the Damned and Unklar's Symphony.

### UNKLAR'S SYMPHONY

So many suffered at the hands of Acheron and his master that the hall heard no end to the calls of the suffering. Tormented, whether they were on the rack or not, their moans carried through the Halls, morning, noon, and night. Shrieks of sheer agony from those fresh to the rack carried out and into the other rooms. When they did, those bound in suffering lifted their own voices, memories of their own torture coming fresh to mind, and their muffled moans became a chorus to the songs of the rack bound. They were called Hell's Choir, and their song dubbed Unklar's Symphony.

For all the long years of Unklar's rule this continued, so much so that the voice of the chorus became part of the Hall and its echo carried in the shadows.

The sound of the chorus is barely audible. It is difficult to hear normally, and is actually only detected if one stops and listens intently, or if one is in complete silence. At such times, the listener hears a muffled moaning as if someone just beyond a thick wall is groaning. It is filled with suffering, want, desires unfulfilled, and pain. Even those who cannot or do not actively hear the chorus, are subject to it. The sound permeates their subconscious like any background noise that one does not focus upon.

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Anyone, aside from a lawful good cleric or a paladin who passes into the Hall of Chains suffers from the chorus.

After six hours in the Hall, the sound creates a tension headache located in the back of the head and upper neck, spreading down to the shoulders and into the arms. Unless a successful constitution save is made (CL 1) they suffer a -1 from all attribute checks. The headache can be cured with a *cure disease* or *remove curse* spell.

After 12-24 hours (roll independently for each character) in the hall the headache begins to cloud the sufferer's vision, and they begin to see forms in the shadows. The forms dart from one shadow to the next, always staying just beyond their reach. This headache induced fear becomes palpable and summons the dark memories of some past victim of the Halls, the shadows taking on the shape of a soul thief, who pursue and attempt to devour the person whose fear gave them shape. The soul thief appears 1-4 hours after the headache begins to cloud the sufferer's vision.

**SOUL THIEF** (*This lawful evil creatures' vital stats are 5d8 HD, 19 AC, 22 HP. Its primary attributes are mental. It attacks with 2 claws for 1d3 points of damage and a bite for 1d4 points of damage. It can become incorporeal, is able to camouflage itself, and uses an improved grab to cause energy drain. See **Monsters & Treasure of Aihrde** for more detail.*)

The soul thief can only materialize once per character while in the Halls. Once it is killed or banished, the headache passes and the character's fear becomes less palpable. They can still hear the Chorus, but it is faded now and has no power over them.

### THE DIVIDE

Whether by design or accident the Hall of Chains was split into two very distinct levels. The southern section of the Halls stands about 80 feet higher than the southern. It is marked by a winding white line on the map. A series of steps, ladders, and other devices bridge the gap. Several waterfalls tumble over the cliffs as well. This has made traversing the level different than the other, more stable levels of the citadel. It has also led to an area in the Halls that has, over the years, filled with water, turning the whole area into one vast swamp.

### THE HALLS

Like much of Aufstrag, almost all the available space was used. The halls of the Choir were no exception. Everywhere wall chains hang from on high. Some are occupied, some are empty. They are set every 20 feet, in all the halls, designed to allow a human to hang 4 feet off the floor and a few feet from the ceiling. These people were tormented by everyone, the living, the dead, the undead and the living dead.

### A NOTE ON THE DEAD

As has been pointed out, Aufstrag is Hell. It is here that the evil dead are consigned by the gods. When a lawful evil creature or person dies, they pass to the Arc of Time to wander that road

to the Endless Pools. The very evil are gathered up by Heth and other servants of Toth and sent on the road to Aufstrag or delivered in person. These are the damned, the fallen in common parlance. They shall spend eternity in Aufstrag, or at least until the Gonfod, which is the end of days.

Those delivered to Aufstrag are delivered as a living body, having passed to the afterlife. These are the living dead. Their body possesses a soul and all the emotions and feelings that it did when the creature or person was alive. It is this body that is brought into Aufstrag and sent whither it is. Many come to the Hall of Chains.

There are others, actual living creatures and persons, who come to Aufstrag to serve the devils in hell, or are brought here, captured and taken to the tower and so on. These are treated no differently by the devils than the dead who have passed into the afterlife. To them, particularly the whispering devils who harvest the souls and flesh, they are one and the same, fodder for Aufstrag.

**Note:** It is difficult for a layman to recognize one from the other. But clerics, druids and paladins all can see the living dead and undead, knowing them for what they are. Others must look more closely. This requires a successful wisdom check (CL 7) to tell the living from the living dead and undead.

When Unklar ruled, there was order to Aufstrag. Souls and bodies, the living, the dead, undead, all were processed, judged and sent to various places in hell. Many, as noted, were sent to the Hall of Chains. Since his fall, however, there has been much disorder in the world. Before his rise, the evil dead were sent to the Wretched Plains. After, the lawful evil dead were sent to Aufstrag. Now there are none to govern whither one should go, and the servants of Toth send some this way and others that. Some are left to wander the Arc and some others are left in Aihrde where they haunt cemeteries, gallows, dungeons, and the like.

Those who are brought to Aufstrag are often set adrift, wandering the halls alone or in groups. These are eventually trapped, scooped up, and devoured by some greater devil, made to serve one purpose or the other. Those unlucky enough to find their way into the Hall of Chains or Devil's Scullery are harvested, their bodies tortured, souls flayed from the flesh, and so on.

The Hall of Chains works much as it was designed to, however, it is a shadow of its former self and has little or no governance or organization. In short, Hell is in ruins.

## WANDERING MONSTERS

The Hall of Chains is a very active level, with many monsters in it. Some, as noted, live in certain rooms. Many simply wander the halls and rooms hunting for food, water, souls, or whatever it is that drives them on.

See **Appendix C: Wandering Monsters**.

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**THE DOMINION OF ACHERON**

The Dominion held Acheron's chamber, the Hall of Acheron, the barracks for his guard, the Pool of Rejuvenation, the Posts of Wenafar, and other quarters. Here, the Lord of Sorrow ruled over his realms, that in Aufstrag and in the distant west. Few were allowed in the Dominion without his express permission. It was held together, much like his shattered beauty, by many illusions, these have since fallen away.

The Dominion is haunted by a fixed encounter, that in no way interferes with any encounter the Castle Keeper may design for the region.

As noted below, an elf lord has been bound in the transept before the throne. This was Acheron's last victim, and he remains in the chains that devil lord bound him in. An imp comes from the Pool of Rejuvenation daily and bathes the elf, healing him of his wounds. The imp does this mindlessly as this was the task he was set. The elf has been bound thus for many long years.

The CK should have the characters enter at any time they desire, while the imp is in the pool or bathing the elf, or anywhere between. Read below for more on the encounter.

**THE HALL OF ACHERON**

This gigantic hall was Acheron's throne room. The hall itself reeks of death, of the stench of putrid flesh. A slight buzzing noise engulfs any who enter the hall as millions of flies crawl in cones upon the ceiling. These break free in great swarms from time to time and hound whatever creatures, living or dead, they can.

**THE WALK OF ACHERON**

Hundreds of feet long and a hundred feet wide, with its high, vaulted ceiling towering 60 feet above, the hall dwarfed any who entered it. As is well known, Acheron loved himself more than ought else, and he set each of the 50 pillars that held the ceiling up in the likeness of himself. Each of the statues depicts Acheron in some pose. All are nude and show his beauty from all angles.

From each of the statues' right hands hangs a long chain, 50 feet from the ceiling. Each ends in barbed manacles. These were used to decorate his hall with the suffering prisoners that caught his eye. In the days of his rule, they were replaced almost daily, so that the suffering was fresh and never dulled with time or death.

**POOL OF REJUVENATION**

The cleansing pool was used to clean and heal any who were brought into the Hall of Acheron to be bound upon the chains of the statues. Those slated for the Hall were placed in the water where thousands of tiny green creatures came to devour the suffering of their flesh. It heals anyone put in the water for 1d8 points of damage per round they are in the water.

The pool itself is rather clear and green tiles beneath it reflect any light cast in. If any living flesh is put into the water thousands of tiny creatures, barely half an inch long, swim from the deep corners of the pool. They have the upper torso of a human, but the lower half of a fish. They relish the taste of

suffering and will fall upon any open wound or sore and draw the hurt from it, healing it.

For the magic to work, the wound must be under the water.

There are innumerable imps that dwell in the rafters above the pool. They attend any who come to the area. They approach them, undress them, and usher them into the pool to be cleansed. Anyone who struggles against the imps sends them scattering back to the rafters. If they are pursued with magic or spells, they will retaliate. There are 12, and if they are slain, they return after a few hours.

**IMP x 12** (These lawful evil creatures' vital stats are HD 1d8, AC 15, HP 7. Their primary attributes are physical and mental. They attack with a bite for 1d4 points of damage and a stinger for 1 point of damage. They are able to turn invisible, have an SR 3 and regenerate 1 hit point per round. The stinger has a poison barb that can cause a further 2 points of damage for 4 rounds.)

**TRANSEPT**

In the transept, Acheron's court gathered; pit fiends in his employ, human clerics or magi unaffiliated with the Nebians or Umbrians, his guard, personal priests and so on. These watched as individuals were brought before him and cast at his feet to suffer his punishment.

The floor of the transept, just before the apse, is set with a highly intricate frieze of Acheron looking up and holding two iron rings, both set in the floor. Two mighty chains extend from the rings. These were called by him the Chains of Hope. They still hold his final victim, an elf lord.

**Lying upon the floor, upon a frieze carved into the stone, is a figure. He is bound with two large, golden chains. His clothes are ragged and his hair long and unkempt. The figure is emaciated, his bones protruding from flesh made brittle with exposure. He is covered in small sores where flies have gnawed upon his flesh. His skin is pale, almost translucent. He is clearly an elf.**

The elf's name is Savia. He is a 13<sup>th</sup> level knight. He is a mist elf of the Shelves of the Mist, and he has been bound in Aufstrag for several hundred years. He was brought forward to Acheron for the devil lord became distraught at the many defeats his master was suffering, particularly in the valleys of Kayomar. So the elf was brought before him, and Acheron sought to break him to learn what he might tell. However, Unklar called on Acheron to lead his hosts in the west, and he left that moment and has not returned. Savia remained, bound to the floor and at the mercy of the imps of the pool.

If the elf is approached within a few hours of his bathing, he is able to speak relatively clearly and calmly. If he is approached many hours after his cleansing, then he is groggy and weak, overcome with the heavy darkness and the Symphony of Unklar. Regardless, his mind is much twisted and wasted. He remembers things of his youth, the snow covered hills of the Shelves of the Mist, his queen and his comrades. He remembers being captured by giants, slaying

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two, being bound in chains, and set in the Hall of Chains for a time he has no way of measuring. Beyond that everything is a blur of darkness and pain.

**THE INQUISITORS CHAINS:** The chains are unbreakable by mortal hands. Only a +5 *vorpal blade* can cut the metal and even then, only on a critical hit of 15 or more. There is no lock to pick for Acheron held the key in his verbal commands. Any sorcery used must overcome Acheron's hit dice (CL 30). Apart from that a deal must be struck with Acheron, and to do that he must be summoned.

Savia can be killed, but he does not wish it, hoping against hope, that his freedom may be gained.

### APSE

The apse holds the throne of Acheron. Here he sat and determined the punishment of those sent before him. The throne itself consists of white marble, laced with gold veins. It is plain, for he would suffer nothing to take one's eye from his beauty. It is immovable and made as if part of the floor. It remains in immaculate condition.

On either side of the throne are two statues, one of the goddess Wenafar and the other of the god Ornduhl.

**STATUE 1:** A beautiful goddess is being held down, her head and shoulders to the ground, with Acheron above her, his naked foot in the nape of her neck. The goddess looks up, her face turned to Acheron. Once, the face had a look upon it, as if asking for mercy, however, someone has chipped the face away.

**STATUE 2:** In the other, Ornduhl kneels before him, chains binding his arms and neck and held by a naked Acheron. The Red God looks up at Acheron imploringly.

### POSTS OF WENAFAR

Acheron never forgot the insult Wenafar gave him, and he created a special room for those who followed her. He constructed a large altar stone, built of the bones of birds ground to dust and made into a form of concrete. The altar bore images of Acheron in all his beauty and his devils hounding men and women who bore the priestly garb of Wenafar.

The altar itself is white but stained black from the blood of the many who died here. Four squat, smooth marble pillars stand on the corners of the altar with heavy black chains set in rings upon them. The chains end in manacles. All are still connected to the pillars but lie upon the floor as no victim is upon the altar.

Those brought to the posts were manacled and stretched upon the altar. There, they suffered the torturer's knife, the butcher's cleaver, or the assassin's dagger. Acheron is known to have feasted upon the living more often than not.

### CHAPEL OF ACHERON

The chapel sits apart from the rest of the Dominion. Here, priests came to make sacrifice to Acheron and to ask for his

blessing. A statue of the devil lord, 18 feet tall, stands in the apse, looking down upon any who enter. His hands are held out, palms facing upward as if asking for a gift. He smiles. As with all of his statues, Acheron is nude and beautiful in shape and form.

Dishes of all shapes and sizes sit upon the steps before the statue. Sacrifices were placed in these dishes and set before the altar. Many are stained red with blood, but others hold simple things, from coins to bones. Many of the sacrifices are fresh, as Acheron (Beelzelbub to those in Auftrag) is still worshiped by creatures great and small.

One dish in particular holds three fingers. These are fresh cut from the hands of a human, only a few hours old when discovered. They are set in a plain golden bowl about 6 inches across and very shallow. A silver chain is threaded through the flesh and bone, allowing one to wear the fingers as a necklace. They were placed here by a priest in hopes that Acheron would bless them. He shall return in a few hours to take them up again.

The necklace is cursed. Anyone who wears it and is not lawful evil suffers a -1 to all combat rolls and attribute checks.

**NOTE:** The CK should tailor this encounter as best fits their game, allowing the priest's level to be challenging for the party.

### BARRACKS

These rooms housed Acheron's personal guard. His guards consisted of Megel, devils that were half bat, half human female. Within each room is a highly carved ornate rod that runs from one end to the other and hangs 8 feet off the floor. The Megel hung here, as would any bat, their long wings coiled around them, waiting for the call of their master.

These creatures were created by Acheron and as such they worship him. They serve him in all capacities, feeding him of their own flesh if need be, lying with him, bringing him sacrifice and so on. They are foul minded creatures, conceived in his vanity. All bare a strange likeness to him.

The rooms are now empty as all but four of the Megel went to war with Acheron. The remaining four lingered in the area for many years but have since scattered into the wider Hall of Chains, always on the hunt for fresh meat. They do return to the Dominion frequently, seeking their master or to rest. If resting they take up residence in one of the rooms, roosting upside down as is their want. Otherwise they go to the chapel and lay at the feet of their creator. Their presence there is marked by a crooning noise that sounds much like water tumbling down rough stone.

The treasure they carry is always in the ornamentation upon their bodies. They wear chains of all sorts, some stretching from their nose to the ear, crowns of chains, links hanging from their pierced bellies, their wings, from their toes and so on. The chains are almost always gold, though occasionally silver. They use them to attack their victims. The chains are not representative of their own servitude, but rather the bindings of their master's many victims.

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**MEGEL, DEVIL** (These lawful evil creatures' vital stats are HD 10d8, AC 26, HP 65. Their primary attributes are physical. They attack with two claws for 1d4 points of damage. They are able to unhinge their jaws biting for 1d6 points of damage. They can attack with claw and bite attack in the same round. They have SR 3 and a ½ damage reduction. The Megel are able to summon a magical chain that strikes and acts in all respects like iron bands of binding. Any creature struck is bound by the chain. It requires a successful strength check to break free. For more on the Megel, see Appendix B New Monsters below.)

### ACHERON'S CHAMBERS

These are Acheron's private chambers. He retired here to rest in the quiet. The floor to the room, where the void is, is a gateway to the Wretched Plains. Acheron came here and lay upon the marble bed and slept and pursued whatever lusts the devils of hell entertain themselves with.

Beyond the double doors is a balcony. Steps lead down to a landing that overlooks an emptiness without shape or color. Two ramps adjacent to the stairs lead into the emptiness as well. Across the Void lies a broad ledge with a huge, marble bed upon it. A frieze of Acheron is set into the wall behind the bed. In the floor, next to the bed is set a huge iron ring with four chains attached to it. The chains hang in and vanish into the emptiness.

There are stones floating in the Void, creating a path to the ledge and Acheron's bed.

### THE GATEWAY

As noted there is no actual floor beyond the landing. Looking at it is like looking into an infinite expanse of air. There is no peculiar smell, nor any indication of color or movement. There is however an echo of sound. If one concentrates on the floor and rolls a successful wisdom check (CL 6) then the muffled sounds of cries of terror (different from the Symphony of Unklar) carry through the emptiness.

Falling into, or stepping into the emptiness is much like quicksand. One sinks into it, vanishing as they go. It takes 2-5 rounds before the interloper slips through. When they do, they fall some 40 feet to a dusty red plain of sand and burnt grass. The sky is cut in shades of red and yellow but there is no source of light, no sun or moon. Flames burn here and there. In the distance a herd of naked people is being tormented by flying creatures, demons of the Wretched Plains. Allow anyone a primary class check to determine what the plain is (CL 5). If successful, they know they have crossed from Hell to the Wretched Plains.

Anyone doing so may draw the attention of demons. There is a 1 in 6 chance that they are spied and attacked by a flock of vrock. There is also a chance that Beelzelbub may take notice as well. Roll a second time on a d10. On a roll of 1 the Lord of the Flies comes to see who has passed through his old chambers.

Anyone on the Wretched Plains is stuck there unless they have some mode of returning. They can use the Wretched Chains if they are aware of them and can spy them some 30 feet overhead.

### THE WRETCHED CHAINS

The four chains attached to the ring cross over into the Wretched Plains. At times, Acheron bound prisoners here and lowered them into the Plains, allowing the demons to feast upon the flesh of his victims. After, he pulled them up or left them hanging as he desired. It is possible to climb up and down the chain, passing back and forth through the planes.

**NOTE:** The chains are of course magical and are designed to cross through the gate. Mundane items, such as rope, will not remain through the gate. If hung through, they are severed on the other side, after 1 round.

**TREASURE:** There is a hidden compartment behind the bed, built into the frieze. It holds the Spear of Feathers. A long, 8 foot golden spear, the Spear of Feathers, is one of Acheron's prized possessions. It is a +4 weapon that has no weight and has perfect balance. Anytime it is used in battle, any natural roll of 18-20 acts as a critical hit. Any time the weapon is used in battle there is a 10% chance Beelzelbub notices.

### IRON BANDS

The Iron Bands are the forges of the Hall of Chains. Here the many chains and manacles were created or repaired. Any number of hooks, barbed spear points, stakes, posts, and all manner of devices were made to pin the damned in place. It consists of rooms filled with rolls of chains and manacles, the bellows room, cooling room, and other areas necessary for the manufacture of the bindings of Aufstrag. Next to Klarglich, these small forges were the most used in all of Aufstrag.

### ROOMS F

These are the forge rooms, where the chains and manacles were fashioned. Each consists of a giant fire pit filled with coal and dust, a massive furnace set to heat the burning embers, and a smattering of anvils where links were pounded into shape. A host of tools line each of the walls. They include gavels, hammers, wedges, pins and so forth, all used to make whatever restraint was called for. Many of these lie on the floor or have been taken to other parts of the tower, but by and large there are all the tools necessary to work the forge.

### THE COAL ROOM

Here, coal was (and is still) stored. Heaps of the material lie upon the floor, fed by chutes that rise to the level above. A chain hangs from the ceiling by the door. It is attached to a bell high above, alerting those above to send down a fresh batch of coal to feed the fires of the forges.

### STORAGE ROOMS

These are filled with iron ingots, links to countless sizes of chains, manacles, chains of lengths from 1 foot to 60, some as small as a pencil, others as large as a man's arm. They are set on spools, in boxes, barrels, or thrown haphazardly about the floor.

Rare for the Hall of Chains, these rooms do not smell of blood and excrement, but rather of iron and coal. They offer anyone a

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safe haven from the nightmare that is the Hall. As such, however, they tend to attract other creatures, seeking a similar safe haven.

### ACHERON'S GARDENS

Acheron remembered the world of his youth, when the green days of spring were young. Though his mind was twisted and without purpose, and he relished the suffering of others more than anything else, he dreamed of those long gone days and thought to bring a hint of them to Aufstrag. To this end, he built a large garden. He thought to people it with wild plants and good earth, but as with all things he touched it was foul in the conception and worse in the application.

The earth he set upon the floor was poisoned and little would grow there but for giant worms, thick and full of blood and rot. Four pillars were set as the cornerstone of an arbor, but the vines withered under his gaze, becoming dried, blackened husks that were soon infested with the larvae of the flies that ever followed Acheron. The vines grew nonetheless, and dropped seeds. What followed were a host of thick, blood-filled assassin vines, clinging to the walls and ceiling, the pillars of the arbor and all else.

A bath was built here, the size of a large pool. Here Acheron or his guests bathed in waters warmed by the stacks that passed underneath. The vines do not grow upon the pool but grow up to and around it. The moisture from the pool creates the humidity in the room.

The room itself is humid and hot, a consequence of the heated bath. It is thickly grown over with vines and thick, leafy plants that cling to the ground. The vines are almost all assassin vines. Little comes to this room for fear of the vines and those who do serve to feed this nest of evil creatures, allowing it to grow, becoming ever more dangerous. The water in the pool attracts various devils from time to time, or other creatures seeking to immerse themselves in the warm waters.

**ASSASSIN VINE x 10** (*These neutral creatures' vital stats are HD 5d8, HP 29, AC 15. Their primary attributes are physical. They attack with vines doing 1d4 damage each, with a failed strength save by the victim indicating constriction. Constriction means the victim blacks out in 3 rounds and will be strangled to death in 3 more if not freed. Their special abilities are constrict, improved grab, camouflage, and resistance to cold and fire.*)

### HALL OF CHAINS

The heart of the level remains the Hall of Chains where the suffering awaited the attention of the Lord of Sorrow. The hall is some 50 feet high and hundreds of feet long and wide. Unlike much of Aufstrag, the stone walls are covered in a fleshy paper that teems with life and torments the damned. Its floors are made of broad stones with trenches cut in the mortar between them. The ceiling consists of hundreds of beams set in a gridded system, interlocking for support and holding the many thousands of chains on high.

Here, thousands were brought and hung upon barbed hooks extended from the ceiling by long chains. Some were

brought from the Devil's Scullery where their souls had been extracted. Others were brought to the Hall and hung, their souls clinging to the husk of their bodies in terror. These latter might be bound for the Scullery, or some other horror, for few but Acheron knew the reasons why the dead, dying or living undead were brought to the various halls.

The chains are clustered together, hanging only a few feet apart. They hang almost to the floor, so that the damned hung only a foot or more from the surface. Their life blood spilled out, trickling down to the floor beneath to run in the grooves between the floor stones, eventually soaking into the very stone and structure of Aufstrag itself.

It was the walls, however, that offered (as they still do) the greatest torment. Built of stone but covered in thick layers of flesh brought over from the harvester pits and flooded with the twisted souls of the fallen the walls are living things. At first glance it seems nothing more than old, discolored, wrinkled wall paper, bunched up in waves or in whatever design time and the elements shaped it into. It is, in fact, the repository for the souls of the fallen. As those on the chains died, their souls clung to the corpse (to be sent to the Scullery) or broke free. Some wandered free in Aufstrag, if anything like freedom exists there. Others were snared by the wall, seeing in it an illusion of happiness. They approached and were consumed, trapped in the flesh of the dead, ever seeking, but never knowing, their elusive happiness. They move and squirm, pushing out on the wall, their faces appear at times, arms and hands reaching out to any who may aid them; but none ever do.

When the living come within 30 feet of the wall, the wall comes to life. Slowly, at first, the ripples and waves move, twisting around themselves until the astute can see shapes in them, faces, limbs, bodies, all straining to break free. In a few short minutes, hands begin to reach out, voices carry to the living, and calls for aid in almost every language are clear, for any who listen, to hear.

The sound is much akin to the banshees keening. Those who hear it for longer than four melee rounds begin to suffer from the keening of the damned. All the horrors of loss and misspent lives wash over them. Any living creatures within 30 feet of the wall must make a successful charisma save, or they age 1-4 years for every 10 minutes they are in the room. Those who make their save do not age, but automatically lose their next initiative roll due to its lingering horror.

The wall cannot be permanently damaged. The fleshy paper is a foot thick and any wounds delivered to it are absorbed into the whole and covered over with other flesh. It is held together by the souls of the fallen, and so many have died in the Hall of Chains that it is thick with them.

### THE BRIDGE

A long bridge extends over and across the hall. It passes through the jungle of chains, allowing one to walk almost eye level with the suffering damned who hang here. It is some 20 feet wide and suspended from the ceiling by huge, thick chains, firmly secured to the bridge itself.

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Any who pass across the bridge draw the attention of those hanging on the chains. They shout and call out to the passersby, asking for aid, relief, or death.

#### **ENCOUNTERS IN THE HALL**

The Hall of Chains attracts all manner of creatures. They come here to climb the vine-like jungle of chains and roost on high, waiting for they know not what to pass beneath them so they can hunt it and torment it and kill it if they so desire.

#### **THE VINEYARD**

The Vineyard is a huge swamp that dominates the Hall of Chains. It's hemmed in by rough walls some 30 feet high, filled with crevices and caves, many of which dribble water into the swamp all year long. The swamp ranges in depth from a few inches to a dozen feet, depending on where the ground has given way. The topography changes continually as creatures come to the hall and die, pieces of the ceiling or wall give way and fall into the water, vegetation heaps and piles in thick layers of muck, or some is wasted away by a sudden deluge of water.

The stacks beneath the marsh heat huge portions of it, causing a fog-like steam to rise and blanket the whole swamp. This fog comes with a stench for it passes through the filthy water, which is awash with flesh, both putrid and fresh. Breathing the fog stings the eyes and burns the lungs.

Much of Acheron's work ended in heaps of gelatinous flesh and goo. It flooded his chambers and filled his nostrils with stink. He plotted a home for the remains of his victims and designated a whole swath of the Hall of Chains devoted to a yard of flesh and bone, of blood and excrement. This, his people called Acheron's Vineyard.

It was crafted as a pit for the morass of the dead and in the early days the mutilated corpses were pulled here by chains and left in heaps and piles. The vile sludge of decomposing flesh soon flooded the pit, but later water began to leak into the chamber, turning the whole into a vast swamp. Plants soon began to grow, feeding on the filth. Despite this the evil design of the room was not lost and it poisoned all, the water, the air, the soil. Anything in the Vineyard is the afterthought of a suffering death.

To make matters worse, chains were hung from the ceiling and bodies suspended from them. At first, these were the dead, left to rot and add to the filth below. Later, however, the living were added to it, and they died on the barbed hooks or were consumed by the ever growing marsh below.

#### **STREAMS**

The Vineyard drains through a number of small streams that flow out and over the edge of the Divide. These streams follow their course until they spill out of Aufstrag on the eastern flanks of the tower. The stream caves can be followed. They are generally 2-5 feet deep with about 2 feet clearance above the water. However, sometimes that clearance shrinks to nothing as Aufstrag, like any mountain, shifts and changes.



The stream bed narrows after the Iron Bands, becoming snared in deeper pools. At that point the passage rises a little and the trip is much drier, only a few inches deep. Occasionally here the traveler must spelunk. The two exits put one 540 feet above the Grausumland Swamps. They have very narrow ledges and few hand holds.

**NOTE:** The devils are aware of the stream beds and often hunt in them.

#### **FLORA & FAUNA**

The muck, which started as flesh and sinew, is now more plant based as a wide variety of flora have taken root here. Saw grass, brought up from the Grausumland, grows in patches so thick that to pass through it leaves the flesh torn and bleeding. Assassin vines from Acheron's Garden have found their way here. A broad-leafed flowering bush, the metilla, whose silver flowers emit a peculiar smell of rotten vegetation grow where the water is shallow. Broad, floating pads, some as wide as six feet with roots a dozen feet long, grow where the water is deep.

A small bush grows throughout the swamp, wherever the ground is dry. These bushes possess multiple small limbs covered in long briars. They particularly grow in and around the earthen mounds (see below). They are ideal for firewood.

Into this morass a small host of giant toads, foul yellow creatures, dwell. Snakes wind their way through the grasses and all manner of fish and insects. The flies are the worst. They are large, blue and green, black-eyed creatures and cross the swamp in swarms, their buzz noticeable from far away.

But the swamp is not home to flora and fauna alone, for it is the home of the dead. Many creatures cursed by their evil deeds were, and are, never able to break free of their mortal coil. This

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gift of Aufstrag has given birth to a host of the undead, and here in the Vineyard they travel singly and in herds. When one rises up, for whatever reason or to whatever call, others tend to follow, lifting themselves from the filth. These zombies wander through the Vineyard or out and into the greater halls, falling upon any living flesh they find. Many flee from them, devils and men, for to fall into their midst is to invite certain death.

The Vineyard has also become home to thul devils. They dwell and hunt in the water, swimming or writhing their way through the thick morass on the hunt for souls to devour or for living victims to torment and slay. They are swift swimmers, but can run as a man. They have no eyes, but rather their skulls possess a broad "sail" that extends down their back and into a tail that snakes out behind them. This sail can be retracted or opened at will. When expanded, a thin membrane connects the various spikes. Through this membrane the thul can detect heat and hunt their prey.

Like all devils, they are able to shape shift and often take on the visage of a man or woman in distress, hoping to attract something to come and rescue them or feed upon them. It is then that they pounce.

### WANDERING MONSTERS

There are host of monsters that may be encountered in the Vineyard. The CK should double the frequency of wandering monster checks. Use the stat blocks below for fixed encounters or consult the wandering monster chart in Appendix C.

**ZOMBIES** (These neutral evil creatures' vital stats are HD 2d8, HP varies, AC 11. They have no primary attributes. They attack with one claw that does 1d8 damage plus possible rot grub infestation. If more than 8 zombies surround a victim they gain a swarm attack, dealing 1d2 damage per round per zombie..)

**TOAD** (These neutral evil creatures' vital stats are HD 4d8, HP 21, AC 16. Their primary attributes are physical. They attack with a bite for 1d4 points of damage. They have twilight vision and are able to swallow their victim whole. Upon a successful strike, the victim takes damage and, if small of size, is swallowed; if medium, it takes two full rounds for them to swallow. A strength check allows the target to escape. Any creature swallowed suffers 2d8 points of damage per round.)

**DEVIL, THUL** (These lawful evil creatures' vital stats are HD 8d8, HP 45, AC 21. Their primary attributes are mental. They attack with two claws that do 1d6 points of damage and a bite for 1d4 points of damage. When their sail is unfolded, they are able to detect heat signatures. It acts as a very effective deepvision. It works both above water and underwater. They are able to swim as quickly as they walk, and can leap up to 30 feet. They generally inhabit water. The thul can shape shift and often take the guise of a beautiful man or woman to fool their intended victims. They are able to drown a victim. With a successful bite, they flood the victim with water to the point that their cells feel as if they are bursting. On the 3<sup>rd</sup> round after a successful bite, the victim suffers 4d8 points of damage. They are allowed a constitution save for half.)

### FORTIFIED MOUNDS

There are six fortified mounds in the swamp. These are built a dozen feet above the swamp and consist of stacked stone mortared

together. They were built long ago by a species of troglodytes that came to inhabit the swamp. They have served any number of humans, devils, or others that are on the run for one reason or another. In the past they have been the scene of tremendous battles as rebels fortified them against the powers of hell.

Each has a bowl at the top with rough battlements built into it. The bowl is roughly 20 feet wide and 6-10 feet deep. Several of the mounds have been dug out, and small rooms exist beneath the bowl.

These mounds are surprisingly difficult to climb as they are covered in a thick algae that is very slick. Climbing them requires two successful climb checks (CL 8) to get to the top. Rangers and thieves can climb them normally.

The mounds are a favored roost of the Megel devils that dwell in the barracks region of the Dominion (see above). They sit upon the rough hewn battlements waiting for some unlucky creature to pass by before they swoop in and snare them with their chains. They often hunt the thul devils. Whenever these two encounter each other, they fight.

### HARVESTER PITS

The harvester pits consisted of four circular chambers and some smaller rooms. Here the dead or near dead were harvested. They were gutted, boiled, skinned and their flesh woven into cloth used by the lords of Hell for any variety of reasons.

#### ROOM 1 THE BLEEDING PIT

This room has chains enough to hang 8 full grown men. Here men were hung and bled and gutted, their entrails pulled from their bodies and tossed into large iron vats.

The walls, ceiling and floors are smeared with black stains. Patterns of blood splatter are easy enough to see (CL 2) for anyone who cares to look. Some bones remain on the floor, and here and there an arm or leg still dangle from the chains on the wall. The room has a very peculiar strong odor of stale blood and urine in it. It permeates the stone.

The room has a drain in the center of the floor, where blood was allowed to pass from the room and into some subterranean pipe system.

Several vats, huge iron affairs, with wheels remain in the room.

#### ROOM 2 CARVING PIT

The dried bodies were taken from the bleeding pit to the boiling pit. Here, they were laid out on the floor and devils set upon them, filleting their flesh. It was cut in long, narrow strips, until the face or other areas were reached. These were preserved as best as possible. There is no drain here, but the floors are covered in countless cut and slashes.

**FOUNTAIN OF VISIONS:** Between Room 2 and 3 there is a pillar with four fountains around it, one facing each direction. The fountains each have a small bowl before them where the water trickles into and through. The water is cold and has a metallic taste to it. It quenches the thirst but anyone who drinks of it must make a successful constitution save (CL 4) or begin having sudden visions of the victims, chained to the walls and being

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tortured and gutted. These visions come periodically, but are generally more common during times of stress, such as combat. The vision will only happen 1-2 times per stressful incident. The visions completely stop any action, whether casting a spell or swinging a weapon. Only a *remove curse* will stop the visions. Paladins and lawful good clerics are not affected by the fountain.

### ROOM 3 DRYING PIT

Long bars are hung from the ceiling, attached with chains. The flesh from the cleaving pit was hung here, left to dry. The room is particularly hot, as some chimney from below passes beneath it. The heat kept the air dry and allowed the flesh to dry all the faster.

The bars are still intact and often play host to stirges, bats or other creatures who may find them a suitable roost. There are no remains of the flesh of bygone days hanging here, that has long since been devoured or disintegrated.

### ROOM 4 ANTE-CHAMBER

This small room has boxes of chains and manacles in it. A few random cleavers and cutting knives lie upon the floor. All are stained with blood. A heavy door blocks entrance to the weaving pit.

To open it requires a successful lock pick (CL 5) or it must be broken down with a successful strength check (CL 9). It has not been opened in a long while.

### ROOM 5 WEAVING PIT

This room was set aside to gather the flesh from the other pits and weave it into long strands and bundles. There are four spinning wheels along the walls and a huge loom sits in the middle of the room. It is built such that four can sit at it at a time and work the horrible strings that come from the spinning wheels.

The room is covered in long strips of what seems to be silk. They hang from the 20 foot high ceiling, dragging the ground. Each is a foot wide and 21 feet long. They are old, tattered, and have many holes in them. They are constantly moving, even in the still air, for they are covered with small figures, the plestuba.

The plestuba are creatures, human in shape, though sexless who have risen from the shredded souls of the Hall of Chains. They are about an inch high, though have no facial features but for wide, black eyes. These creatures know no purpose but are attracted to flesh, seeking to fill some hollow space in their pointless lives. For this reason, many have drifted to the weaving pit and cling to the long dried skins that hang from the ceiling.

There are rolls of flesh, dry and brittle, stacked by the looms, boxes of it in strips next to the spinning wheels and even more set in various shapes upon the loom itself.

Anyone who attempts to wear or take any of the flesh suffers the indignities of the damned. Within 1-4 hours visions of the horror, the suffering and pain of the victim floods their minds even as they begin to experience the suffering itself. They suffer -1 attribute point, from their primary attribute, every hour the flesh touches their person. When they are reduced to zero, they must roll versus insanity (CL 12), if they fail, their alignment is switched to the opposite alignment permanently. Their attributes then heal and they can wander the halls as before.

**INFESTATION:** Anyone entering the room also attracts the attention of the plestuba. These small creatures leap and crawl their way to the character at 1 foot per round. As soon as they make contact, they climb into clothes or armor, seeking the flesh beneath. Once they have found living flesh, they bite into it (no damage) and slowly merge with the host. The flesh around the wound becomes swollen and red, emitting a thick pus as the body tries to drive off the creature. It takes 1-4 hours for the plestuba to merge with the host, or rather for the host to absorb the plestuba. When that happens the wound splits open and becomes infected. The stench is appalling and the wound filled with a black, viscous pus. The infected suffers 1 hit point of damage per day, per plestuba that infects them. Furthermore, the stench attracts all manner of creatures, doubling the likelihood of an encounter. It can only be cured by a *cure disease* or *remove curse* spell.

### UNKLAR'S HALL

This long hall served as the private audience chamber for Unklar whenever he came to the Hall of Chains. Here, the suffering damned were brought before him, cast at his feet in chains, and made to suffer his gaze. His evil and the dark thoughts of his design permeate the hall. Entering it is like passing through water, it is stifling, heavy, and slow.

The hall is long and wide with a vaulted ceiling. The many balustrades that prop up the 50 foot high roof are carved of massive blocks of red marble. The floor is lined with the marble as well, and the ceiling itself set in a deeper red. The marble is laced with spidery black veins, giving it an aged appearance.

A broad balcony and ledge lines the walls, some 30 feet off the ground. Statues of demons, leering, pointing, laughing, and mocking stand along the balcony, one set every 20 feet. These statues are in the mixed shapes of horned and bone devils.

The clean marble floors and walls, the high ceiling and the statues all echo the sounds of anything passing through the chamber. Footsteps seem twice as loud, breathing carries further than ever it should, the clink and clatter of arms and armor like nothing you've heard before. But it does not seem to hold it, but rather captures it, amplifies it, and then it falls dead. The room was designed as such to capture the screams of the suffering and the mirth of the Horned God. It is only augmented by the unnatural darkness.

The room is normally lit by large braziers that hang from the ceiling. Twelve of the massive things hang there still. When lit, they dispel the darkness that blankets the room (see below). Two of the braziers lie upon the floor, their chains heaped up around them. Anyone passing through notices that there was a way to light the room. All the braziers still work, including the two on the floor. If oils are placed in it and set to light it dispels the darkness in a 30 foot diameter sphere.

### TIME

Time seems to slow as one enters the room, everything moving in slow motion, as if under water. Though this is just an illusion broken with a successful intelligence check (CL 12), it makes the stifling nature of the room seem far worse to the weak. This too is an aspect of the lingering presence of Unklar. Anyone who fails their intelligence check moves at half speed. Paladins



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and lawful good clerics gain a +7 on their attribute checks. Anyone standing next to a paladin or lawful good cleric gains a +2. It does not affect any devil with a hit dice greater than 10.

### UNNATURAL DARKNESS

The room is blanketed in a *darkness* spell (CL 10), it is the remnant of Unklar's presence. It has faded with time, fraying at the edges, but in the center, from the steps leading into the room to the back wall, and some 30 feet up from the floor, the sorcery is intact. The reverse of *darkness*, *daylight*, will cut through the darkness in the room, though only in its normal 50-foot radius.

### STIFLING AIR

The air itself is heavy with the suffering of the damned. Broken and shattered spirits were unmade here and their remains linger, poisoning the air. Anyone who enters the room must make a successful wisdom check (CL 10) or have their breath drawn up short. It has no immediate impact but after 1d4 rounds it creates a pain in the chest and begins to slow oxygen to the brain. Every 10 minutes thereafter they lose 1 point of constitution. The loss is temporary, recovered at 1 point every 10 minutes spent outside the room. Paladins and lawful good clerics gain a +7 on their attribute checks. Anyone standing next to a paladin or lawful good cleric gains a +2. It does not affect any devil with a hit dice greater than 10.

### THRONE OF THE HORNED GOD

The throne sits at the far end of the hall, up a set of broad steps. It is a massive, black marble seat, this one laced with red veins, in contrast to the walls and floor. Unklar sat here and passed judgment or enjoyed the entertainment of his hall.

Eight sets of manacles are set in the floor before the throne. Here the suffering were put in irons before the throne and left to hear his judgment or suffer his mockery.

**HOOF PRINTS:** There are also two large hoof marks in the stone, ground by Unklar's rage for he leapt from the throne once, long ago, and where he landed burned the stone. Anyone with any stone working ability or knowledge can see that the hoof marks are unnatural (CL 4). They show a creature very heavy, and about 18 feet tall. The hoofs are about 12 inches wide.

More so than the room, the throne is pregnant with the power of Unklar. As one of the Val Eahrakun that power cannot be trifled with, nor matched by mortals. The following sequence of events occurs, even if they sit on the throne for a moment. All effects are cumulative until healed with a *heal* spell.

ROUND	EFFECT
1-4	A cold creeps through the person.
5-8	The cold becomes biting, hurting all the way into the bone. -1 to all combat actions.
9-12	Vision becomes murky and fleeting images of men and women appear before the person. -1 to all attribute checks
13-16	The images change, their faces begin to show pain and terror. -1 to all attribute checks.
17-19	The pain becomes unbearable, and the images hound the person constantly. They feel as if their body and mind are being torn to shreds.
20	Roll an intelligence check against insanity (CL 35). Failure means the character is permanently insane. It can only be healed by <i>heal</i> , <i>greater restoration</i> , <i>limited wish</i> , <i>distort reality</i> , or <i>wish</i> .

There are no hidden entrances or exits to the room. Unklar teleported using his own natural abilities, arriving where desired.

### THE DEVIL'S SCULLERY

This large room is dominated by a set of cages suspended from the roof by long chains. From floor to ceiling is 50 feet, and the cages hang on 20 foot chains. Nearly all are interlocking and are themselves 10 feet tall and 10 x 10 feet wide. Within each cage are more chains and manacles. The damned were suspended here, usually upside down.

As is known by the wise, a body can live without its soul. Sometimes this is by design, sometimes by chance. Sometimes the body withers and dies. In the scullery separating the soul from the body became an art. Creatures brought here were housed in cages. These were suspended from the high ceiling by chains. Whispering devils attended the room and all those in the cages. They took the damned and hung them in the cages, and tormented them with fire and rod. When at last they felt them ripe for plucking they opened the cages and unleashed a hellish lash upon them. Barbed ethereal chains rent through flesh and snagged the soul and it was pulled out piece by piece. Such is their purpose that the soul remains in tact, if horribly mutilated, torn and shredded.

Once it was free of its mortal coil the devil set it loose to wander the halls of hell, delivered it to some greater devil, used it as currency in some bargain or paid it to the tax collectors of hell.

The room now is haunted by the lost souls, the half shredded creatures that have hung here for years without count and the haunted memories of a millennia of torture. Some whispering devils remain, coming to tend those who Heth brings, though since the fall of their master many are lost on the Arc of Time, the Wretched Plains or wander Aihilde still, haunting tombs and cemeteries.

The possibility of a whispering devil in the Devil's Scullery is very high. They cling to the darkness on the floor, like pools of black shadow. These creatures naturally assume anything that enters the room has come here to be soul-rent. Some of the whispering devils fall upon the party unless they have some magic to deflect the devil's attention. Once the attack begins other devils ignore it, watching their own filth as they are want to do.

**NOTE:** Any encounter here should include 1-6 whispering devils, whatever makes the encounter challenging for the party.

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**DEVIL, WHISPERING** (*This creatures' vital stats are HD 7d12, HP varies, AC 21. Their primary attributes are mental. They attack using 2 barbed lashes that deal 1d6 points of damage. They bite for 1d10 points of damage. They emanant a darkness within them and are able to rend a victim upon a successful bite for 6d6 points of damage. The victim is allowed a constitution save for half damage. They can draw out a target's soul as well with their barbed chains. The victim is allowed a charisma save to keep their soul intact. See Appendix B New Monsters for more details.*)

#### **CAGES**

Some of the cages are empty; some have fresh bodies in them; in others, there are nothing more than bones. Each cage opens from the bottom, so some of them are hanging open, others closed. None of them are locked, nor is there any way to lock them.

The occupants are in any state of living or undead. Many have the possessions they carried in life so that any type of treasure or happenstance can be found there. Others are stripped or their belongings have fallen to the floor.

The Castle Keeper should create any encounter they desire, from a rescue (see encounters below) to undead creatures clinging to the cage that it now considers its home.

#### **THE FLOOR**

Those brought to the scullery are hung by their heels in the cages above. Their belongings often fall to the ground. Those who die, or are gnawed upon, or are severely beaten tend to disintegrate, chunks of them falling to the floor below. They bleed and defecate, polluting the floor and air with their waste. All this, joined by the rot of the upended bodies brings rats, roaches the size of a hand, and flies to the Scullery. They feast on the waste on the ground or make their way to the high ceiling above and down the chains.

All of these carrion creatures avoid the pools of shadow that are the whispering devils. It is one way the wise in Aufstrag know that the devil is there, for its shadow is sacrosanct to the carrion creatures of its domain.

There are also chains upon the floor, 20-30 foot-long chains, that end in a grapple hook. These are used by the lesser devils and imps to grab bodies, living or dead, and take them to the Vineyard. The chains are not magical, but are extraordinarily well made and the hooks are such that any used as an actual grappling hook grant a +1 on any attempt to gain purchase.

#### **PALACE OF RIBS**

The whispering devils take a particular liking to rib cages. These resemble their exposed chest and the whip-like chains that rise from them. So when bodies linger long enough to fall apart and the flesh is gnawed away, if the rib cage is in particularly good shape, the devils take them up and bring them to the south east corner of the room. There they pile them in mounds. A great heap of them stands there now, 40 feet high and 50 or 60 feet wide.



Other creatures, lesser devils and the like, make their home in the mound of cages, living there until driven out by the whispering devils.

#### **CASTLE FURTH**

These fortifications cling to the outside of Aufstrag, overlooking the southeastern swamps. Here, high walls with battlements ring in a courtyard that surrounds a central tower. This allowed the occupants to see out and beyond, to enjoy the air (for what that was worth), and weather, the sun, moon and stars. Built by the horse lords, commanders of the legion, it was last occupied by Albrecht who later rose against Unklar's rule and carved out a kingdom for himself in the lands of Aufstrag. Albrecht kept the fortification clean and sparsely decorated.

The battlements still stand strong. Many creatures have come and gone, settling in the deeps of the tower. It is a favored haunt of the undead knights of Old Aenoch, for they are immortal creatures, and the oldest of them can remember the lands of Al Liosh before the rise of Unklar and the dread tower of Aufstrag. They come to Castle Furth to look out and remember, perhaps in some melancholy way, the lands of their youth in all its glory and beauty, before the ruin of Aufstrag ever began.

#### **THE CARNIVAL**

Here Acheron and his minions were entertained by the suffering of those consigned to his care. Two huge galleries overlook three separate courtyards. A central hall divided the galleries and served as a dining hall and a place to entertain. A tower, built into the bed rock rising up above the Carnival was used as the personal quarters of the devil and his entourage or guests.

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The Carnival earned its named for the horrid treatment of the prisoners brought here. They were decorated in outlandish clothes, painted, or marked. After that they were brought into the courtyard and mocked and ridiculed for who they were beyond the walls of Aufstrag and what they had become. They were teased with visions of the suffering their damned souls would undergo and made to act out all manner of maddening scenes with never fulfilled promises of forgiveness or a place in power.

The mockery ended with death by impaling or fire, or they were consigned to the Hall of Chains or the Devil's Scullery or some other hole in hell.

### GALLERIES

These are both open above and allow a clear view of the courtyards beneath them. They were once opulently decorated but have since fallen into disuse and ruin. The velvet lined, golden chairs are scattered about and broken, many spoiled with stains of blood and excrement. Several have been broken up and burned in small fires. The curtains that hung along the gallery's edge are heaped upon the battlements, torn from the rods over head. Tables are upended, carpets spoiled and stained, and any dishes that were here are scattered.

### COURTYARDS

The three courtyards are wide and covered in loose sand. There are a number of iron stakes set in various places where the victims were impaled or burned. There are also many chains set into rings beneath the sand where people were locked up to be tormented or slain.

### THE HOSPITAL

This four story tower served Acheron as a pleasure palace and a place of repose. He slept and dined here frequently for he loved the entertainment provided by the Carnival. In truth, it was a chamber of horrors, for each level's room had different devices set to torture any brought here. He would sit in chairs of wondrous design and watch the suffering, feed upon it, and eventually devour the flesh and souls of the damned.

The door on the first floor leads into the stairs; it is always locked. Runes set into the door lock it as soon as it closes. Picking it is difficult (CL 14), dispelling the runes nearly impossible (CL 36 as they were set by Acheron himself). For this reason, the tower is largely undisturbed. Some few have passed into it, but most avoid the horror of it; the rest could never master the lock.

### GENERAL DESCRIPTION

The walls of the stairs, rooms and halls are made of stone that was once covered in a light green tile, much like a hospital. The tile proved easy to clean and repair, though no one repairs the Hospital now. The tiles have faded with time, becoming a discolored yellow. Grime and mold has followed the grout lines and water stands where it has no place to go. It is a dark, dismal place, where the air is humid and heavy with a septic scent of old chemicals and death.

The furnishings are all decayed though still largely intact. Broad lounge chairs, divans, tables for decanters and glasses, foot stools, and the like are in the various rooms. Mirrors set in walls and cabinets with various instruments and chemicals offer the beastly devils who occupied the Hospital with plenty of material to deliver all manner of pain.

Beyond this, the rooms contain metal tables and chairs with straps on them. Several breaking wheels are in the rooms as well as a head crusher. The Scavenger's Daughter was used to compress the body. There is also a Judith Chair and a rack. All these offered entertainment for the lords of hell and suffering for the damned.

Most of these devices are in workable shape though they have not been used in years.

### THE GALLERY OF CHAINS

These two gigantic halls mimicked the Hall of Chains to the south. They are set deep in the stone, 20 feet down from the walk ways that flank them. They are carved from the rock with no cobbles or wall stones. The sides and bottom of the galleries consist of jagged and fractious rock. They were designed to inflict a different type of suffering upon the occupants.

Here, the fallen were bound in manacles to the floor. When Aufstrag was in her full power, the floor of each hall was awash in bodies. They huddled, one next to the other, filling the space with their piteous moans, cries for help, unwashed stink, their blood, and matted hair. The living mingled with the dead and the living dead, for those who succumbed to the suffering simply died and were more often than not, left to rot.

Winged devils flew above them, admonishing them with the lash and with fire. They howled their torment and terrorized those bound to the floor. Like elsewhere, the fallen knew little of what was going on beyond them, other than the sheer terror of the nightmare that had engulfed them.

In a seemingly disparate system, manacles are everywhere, bound to rings in the floor. There are hundreds of them, set every two feet, in all directions. Each manacle is only 36 inches long so that once one was bound with them, they could never wholly stand up, for the chains would not allow them to. So they sat there, huddled in masses, and suffered. Every now and again one would rise up, pulling on the manacles, but it would not yield, and he could not stand up straight. The floors, too, were a torture. Jagged rocks that chipped easily, ripped and tore at the flesh of the fallen. Blood stains the floor everywhere.

The floods only added more torment.

### FLOODING VALVE

On the northern wall of the northern gallery, is a large valve and door set into the top wall of the gallery. This is connected to a large body of water (see map). When opened, it could flood the galleries, passing through grates in the walls that separated them. The water was, and remains, very cold. It takes six hours to flood both galleries. When flooded, it filled only about 3 feet, allowing those chained to strain forward, standing as best they could to avoid drowning.

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The valve has not been opened for many years; it has since rusted shut. Opening it requires a great deal of strength (CL 12). As with any strength check, several people can try at once, and everyone's strength bonuses are added to the attempt. Once it is open it is difficult to shut until the galleries are flooded. At that point, the level of the lake has dropped below that of the pipe and valve. It can be closed easily.

Passing through the pipe is possible. The entrance is 3 feet in diameter, and the pipe itself slightly larger. Doing so brings one into the Lake of Kos.

There are several imps who man the valve. These creatures open and close the valve to drain the Lake of Kos. They come and go, sometimes are slain, but always return to follow their purpose of draining the lake. If, for some reason, they are kept from the task, the Lake of Kos begins to flood and spills up the hallway and into the Carnival.

Once the gallery is flooded, it slowly seeps through the floor to parts unknown. It takes about 10 hours to drain.

#### **CELLS**

Between the two rooms are a series of cells, each accessed from either side. Chains on the center of the floor offer special rooms for those whom the powers that be felt were in need. The cells are solid, the chains in the floor of a magical nature, but vents in the north and south wall allow water to pass through, flooding the cell as well as the galleries.

#### **OCCUPANTS**

Though not as crowded as in the past, there are still some bound to the floor chains of the gallery. These are pitiable creatures, some living, some the living dead. They react to any living creature as almost all the fallen do, with cries of pain and a begging for mercy.

They are hounded by horned devils, a host of whom cling to the ceiling high overhead. These periodically descend and fall upon the bound and beat or terrorize them. They do not necessarily attack every living creature that enters the cavern, but may watch curiously. On the other hand, they may fall upon any good or non-evil character who enters.

**DEVIL, HORNED** *(These lawful evil creatures' vital stats are HD 6d10, HP varies, AC 28. Their primary attributes are physical. They attack with 2 claws for 1d4 points of damage or a bite for 1d8 points of damage. They prefer to use a weapon, usually a trident, spear, glaive, or similar item. They have the ability to impale their victims with such a weapon. Upon a successful roll of 18-20 they impale the victim, inflicting 4d4 points of damage. They are able to nuance any spear-like weapon they pick up, giving it a magical +2 bonus. Horned devils have an SR 2.)*

#### **LAKE OF KOS**

This lake is natural, being fed by fissures in the wall of Aufstrag as well as by water from above. The lake bed itself is dark, but the water is clear and light passes through to the bottom (about 30 feet down) with ease.

The lake is periodically drained into the Gallery of Chains (see above).

#### **ENCOUNTERS**

As with the Red Fort there are only a few fixed encounters in the Hall of Chains. The Castle Keeper should allow for many random or wandering encounters. Below is a list of possible encounters that are more likely in the halls than elsewhere.

#### **ACHERON/BEELZELBUB**

As noted, the Hall of Chains was Acheron's seat of power in Hell. He ruled from his throne in the hall that bears his name. Unlike many of the devils in his master's service, Acheron's power was absolute. He answered only to the Horned God himself. He commanded one of the greatest of Unklar's armies during the Winter Dark Wars. He was defeated, however, and his army destroyed. Such were his wounds that he could take his shape only with great effort. His new form reflected his hollow soul: a large beast with the body of a man but the head of a fly. He himself fled Aihrde to his old abode in the Wretched Plains.

He was not welcome there, however, for a thousand years had passed and the Plains had come under the dominion of demons, mad with chaos and a lust for ever greater, senseless carnage. As he sought to return to Aufstrag, the news of his master's banishment came to him, and he stayed his hand. He waited and saw that indeed Unklar was defeated and the thousand years of his rule were unmade. So Beelzelbub, as he was styled by almost all who treated with him, set about relieving his poverty.

He spent years fortifying his old castles and dungeons. He peopled them with the tattered remnants of Unklar's armies. So, too, were its walls and towers built anew and traps laid for his many enemies. He set guards against the wild chaos of other planes and was drawn into the ever growing wars between the demons of that abyss and the devils of hell.

None of this was or is to his liking. He longs for his power in Hell and he returns to Aufstrag whenever he can. He has little power over the denizens of the Tower, however, for his cohorts were destroyed, scattered, or wage the war against the abyss. Only a smattering remain. The power of Aufstrag lies with others. For him, this is but a temporary thing, and in his mind it is his lot to assume the mantle of the Horned God and rule Aihrde as his master had done.

So Beelzelbub takes the shape of a huge, bloated, green fly. In this form he returns to Aufstrag, either through the prayers of some supplicant and their summoning, or, on rare occasions, he manages to bring himself to Aufstrag through his old chambers, crawling up the chains that lead to his old bed.

#### **ENCOUNTERING BEELZELBUB**

Anytime Beelzelbub comes to Aufstrag and encounters a party of outsiders, he follows them, usually at a safe distance. He does not attack them unless forced to, but rather sizes them up to determine if he can, in some way, use them to his own purpose. More often than not this would be to explore the further reaches of Aufstrag, learn its secrets and perhaps kill one creature/person or the other.

In such instances, he takes the form of Acheron and uses that name. Anyone with a legend lore or similar ability can make an attribute check (CL 4) to determine if they recognize the

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name and who he really is. In this form he attempts to woo them and bring them into line with his thinking. He will attempt to ensnare any he can with gifts, or promises of gifts.

If he is forced to fight, he takes the form of the Lord of Flies and wields all the weapons at his disposal. He shows no mercy but will attempt to capture foes as opposed to slay them, seeking to bind them in chains and hang them from some wall or the other.

For a complete write up of Acheron/Beelzelbub see **Tome of the Unclean**.

### UNDEAD HORDE

The number of creatures who died in the Hall of Chains is countless. For a thousand years, many of those who were sent here, or who fell here, found their way into the Hall, bound or barbed. When the souls were pulled from their bodies, the bodies fell into disuse and eventually died. These bloated, half mangled corpses were hauled into the Vineyard or left to rot where they hung or lay.

At times, one of these corpses animates, driven by some evil machination, to rise and wander the halls of Hell. When one does, others around it tend to do the same. They gather together in hordes and stumble the halls in search of life, any life, for they seek to be a part of it. These hordes are deadly dangerous to the unwary, for they can overwhelm one before they know their true danger.

There are 10-110 zombies. For every 10 zombies there is one wight, and for every 4 wights there is one wraith.

The horde attacks until the last of them is destroyed.

**WIGHT** (These lawful evil creatures' vital stats are HD 4d12, HP 32, AC 15. Their primary attributes are mental. They attack with claws for 1d6 points of damage, and a successful hit drains the victim of one level of experience. Its special abilities are create spawn, energy drain, and dark vision 60 ft.)

**WRAITH** (These lawful evil creatures' vital stats are HD 5d12, HP 37, AC 15. Their primary attributes are mental. They attack with incorporeal touch for 1d6 points of damage, and a successful hit drains the victim of one level of experience. A wraith is incorporeal and can only be hit by a +1 or better magic weapon. Animals fear wraiths and will not willingly approach within 30 feet of them. They can create spawn from any that they slay with their energy drain ability.)

**ZOMBIES** (These neutral evil creatures' vital stats are HD 2d8, HP varies, AC 11. They have no primary attributes. They attack with one claw that does 1d8 damage plus possible rot grub infestation. If more than 8 zombies surround a victim they gain a swarm attack, dealing 1d2 damage per round per zombie.)

### FLESH OF HIS FLESH

Nikolaev Volkv came to Aufstrag many years ago. He and his brother, Orlov, climbed the walls of the tower, slipped in through the gibbets in the Gallery of Souls, and began seeking loot. For weeks they wandered, until Orlov fell into the hands of a seere devil who bound him in irons. Nikolaev fled in terror, abandoning his brother to his fate. For a full day, he fled until he came to the Hall of Chains and there wandered wild in the dark.

Eventually, he came to the harvester pits and learned that the door was locked. This he picked, hoping that within he could find a safe haven. He did, of sorts, for no exits led from the weaving room, and he used it as a place to rest and recover. He learned to pick the lock with such ease that he was able to fashion a rough key for it. Though he was appalled at the flesh upon the racks, this passed, in time. As his clothes became more ragged and threadbare, he took up the flesh of past victims and made a cloak from it.

The flesh of men enveloped him, and he bore their faces upon his chest; this slowly drove him mad. What good remained in him failed, and he became evil in all his thoughts and deeds. The flesh became a part of him, a living cloak, transforming him into a golem of sorts.

Now, he haunts the corridors of the Choir, mad as a hatter, and guarded by a golem of flesh.

When encountered, he appears as a flesh golem, a creature of bound and stitched flesh. He attacks as the flesh golem until it is killed. Once it is killed, the flesh falls away exposing the man underneath. His magic *ring of protection* does pass its AC on to the flesh golem aspect.

**NIKOLAEV** (This 6<sup>th</sup> level, lawful evil, human rogue's vital stats are HP 36, AC 15. His primary attributes are dexterity, wisdom, and intelligence. His significant attributes are dexterity 17 and constitution 15. He has few possessions to speak of, but he does carry a +2 dagger of venom and a +2 ring of protection.)

**GOLEM, FLESH** (This creature's vital stats are HD 7d10, AC 20 and HP 49. Its primary attributes are physical. It attacks opponents with two fists for 2-8 points of damage each. It can be struck only by magical weapons with a +2 bonus or better. It is immune to nearly all magic; see **Monsters & Treasure** for specific details)

**TREASURE:** Aside from the cloak of flesh, which will have the same effect on anyone who wears it, he has a some treasure he has picked up from Aufstrag. Inside is a flask of water, a set of silverware, and a ball of matted strings. These last are *threads of law* from the **Monsters & Treasure of Aihrde**. He has a *dagger of venom* and +2 *ring of protection* on his person. He also has a key that opens the door to the weaver room in the harvest pits.

### THE BOATMAN

This encounter is specifically designed for the Vineyard. A very powerful seere devil has taken up residence on a skiff in the Vineyard. He spends his time poling through the marsh seeking unattached souls, which he harvests by devouring them, adding them to the army of undead he is able to summon from his limitless gut.

The boatman spies the characters from afar and begins to pole his boat toward them. He alters his form to that of an old man, with shades of beauty about him. His charisma at this point is a 17. When at a safe distance, about 100 feet from the party, he calls out to them, offering to give them a ride through the swamps. If asked who he is, he lies, but only subtly. He explains that he is a masterless beast, cursed by the fall of the Horned God. He now wanders this marsh in search of a soul he fears is long devoured by another. In this way, any *true seeing* or *detect lie*

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spell reveals that he is telling the truth. He attempts to stick to this tale as much as possible.

If asked why he is offering them kindness, he says that he is not, he is offering them a ride for payment. This too is true, for their payment is their lives.

He offers to give them a ride to wherever they want to go and answer their questions, if they should have any, if they give him 50 golden coins.

Once in the boat, he takes them slowly across the marsh, explaining to them the stories of its history and purpose. When he has them far out and lulled into any sense of security, he attacks them.

**DEVIL, SEERE** (*This lawful evil creatures' vital stats are HD 13d8, AC 24, HP 78. His primary attributes are physical. He attacks with a bite for 1d12 points of damage or his essunk spear for 1d10+3 points of damage. He has dark and deep vision, spell-like abilities, SR 11, swallow, true seeing, and twilight vision. Through his spear, he can summon 1d4 wights each time he strikes the ground. He can do this 1d20 times. Any successful strike with the spear requires a constitution save or the target becomes blind. A second strike makes the target deaf. He casts as a 12<sup>th</sup> level caster confusion, darkness, insect plague, symbol, summon undead, and vision. See Monsters & Treasure of Aihrde for more.*)

**TREASURE:** Roll randomly from Treasure Table 12 in the **Monsters & Treasure**. The skiff is in good shape.

### THE POSSESSED

In the Hall of Chains, the souls of those bound to Hell were rent from the body, always with great effort and pain. The corpses were allowed to hang, rot, fall to the ground, hauled off to the vineyards, sent to the harvester pits, or simply left to wander. In the madness of Aufstrag there seemed no order to things. There always was an order, however, for this was the domain of Unklar.

Those soulless bodies that were left to wander became houses for the lesser devils, those creatures seeking to engineer their own advancement or visit some horror on other denizens of Hell. Luciel was such a person. A murderess in life, she came to Aufstrag upon the wings of Heth, and he left her upon the doorstep. Ushered to the Devil's Scullery, her soul was rent from her body with barbed lashes and sorcery. Her body was spared the indignity of the Hall of Chains, but was set to wander the halls.

There, a mirrored devil found her and stalked her. As with all such soulless houses, Luciel was aware of her surroundings; she lived, even without a soul. She saw the devil and fled, but it tormented her, hounding her for a great while until at last she fell and cut her leg. The wound festered, and the mirrored devil breathed upon it and infected it with his foul purpose. This opened a door into her, thus the mirrored devil possessed the woman, and she became its house.

It now wanders the hall in quiet, hiding in shadows, seeking to commit some great deed to bring attention to itself from the greater devils in Aufstrag. When it spies the party, the mirrored devil seeks to cast itself, in the guise of Luciel, as a helpless creature in need of assistance. It attempts to get taken in, it

then chooses the weakest member of the party, befriend them, cull them from the group and slay and possess them.

**MIRRORED DEVIL** (*This lawful evil creatures' vital stats are HD 8d8, HP 64, AC 23. Its primary attributes are mental. It attacks with 2 claws for 1d2 points of damage. It can unhinge its jaw and rend flesh with a wicked bite for 2d6 points of damage. Anyone bitten by the mirrored devil must make a constitution saving throw or suffer 1d6 points of poison damage. The creature is able to turn its eyes black, and when it does, it emanates a protection from good spell. It is able to vomit an acidic bile that burns anyone in the immediate vicinity for 1d12 points of damage, dexterity save for half. The mirrored devil is able to turn any joint in any direction, allowing it to quickly turn around and climb any surface.*)

### THE LIVING DEAD

As noted, there are the living, the dead, the undead, and the living dead in Aufstrag. These latter are those who have died in Aihrde, and their souls were damned to Aufstrag. When first they enter Hell, it is like any creature who enters the afterlife; they have a living body that houses their living soul. The body is consigned to the afterlife, however, and can never pass through to Aihrde and the land of the living.

These living dead are set loose, bound in the Hall of Chains, or placed in the Scullery to be separated, body and soul.

Those set loose wander Aufstrag, lost and without direction, only vaguely aware that they are caught up in a nightmare. They live in a constant state of unease and fear. One such creature wanders into the party's encampment.

**A figure stumbles into view.** For a moment, its pale, almost translucent skin captures your light, but this is quickly lost as the skin assumes a yellowed tone. Its clothes are ragged, spattered with black blood around the collar and chest. A stench of excrement and fear rises from the creature. Its neck is long, stretched unnaturally, and its head hangs at a slight angle as if disjointed. It looks much like a man hanged. His mouth bears the same black stains as his shirt and as he opens it to speak, a moan escapes, revealing the tongue has been bitten off.

Any successful intelligence check (CL 2) reveals that the man looks exactly like one punished with hanging. The creature is mindless, seeing only the living in front of it. It attacks, reaching out with grasping hands and a grinding moan of terror and fear.

**GHOST** (*This lawful evil creatures' vital stats are HD 10d8, AC 20, HP 62. Its primary attributes are mental. It attacks with a slam for magical effect. Any successful hit ages the victim: humans and half orcs 10 years, Halfling 1d6 decades, and dwarves and gnomes 3d6 decades; elves are immune. It also utters a frightful moan that, unless a wisdom save is made, anyone who hears it is subject to a fear spell. It is incorporeal and uses telekinesis.*)

If they cast *speak with dead*, or in any way attempt to determine who the man was, the party learns that his name was Grimp Silverstone, and he was a murderer, having killed several kidnap victims for a ransom he thought was too small. Beyond that, they learn little but that he was a carpenter by trade and that he was arrested by the sheriff and sentenced to hang by the neck by his lord. He hails from the Rhuneland.

## THE DUNGEONS OF AUFSTRAG 115

# APPENDIX A - NEW MONSTERS

## DISCARNATE

**NO. APPEARING:** 1-100

**SIZE:** S-L

**HD:** 1-8 (d8)

**MOVE:** 10 ft.

**AC:** 12

**ATTACKS:** See below

**SPECIAL:** Blend, Engulf,  
+1 or better weapon to hit

**SAVES:** None

**INT:** None

**ALIGNMENT:** Evil

**TYPE:** Undead (Common)

**TREASURE:** Nil

**XP:** 5+11, 2+29, 3+60, 4+120, 5+240, 6+360, 7+405, 8+775

The discarnate are lost souls, shadows of their former selves. They linger in the infernal planes as a wisp of pale, gray smoke. Much like the smoke from any fire the discarnate are tangible, but not so. They cling to any living tissue they come into contact with, coalescing in coils of evanescent smoke. The discarnate are cold, to pass through him draws the warmth from living tissue, but they are mindless and see little beyond their own suffering.

The discarnate are the souls and spirits of those who died in hell and were trapped there, their bodies left to rot, unburied. The discarnate cannot leave hell for the weight of that dread place bares down upon them. Lost in fear they shed what they were and became nameless voices of despair, lost in the nether world. There they gather like some foul gas, congealing into a noxious poison, often settling in pits and deep holes where they become a mass of twisted fear.

The discarnate are barely cognizant of anything around them, though living creatures attract them as a haunting memory of what they once were. They naturally drift toward them, hoping to engulf them in order to make themselves whole again. Of course they cannot, and all they manage to do is choke to death the person with whom they sought to join.

**COMBAT:** Any living creature that is within 20 feet of a discarnate attracts its attention and the discarnate drifts toward it. If and when they encounter the living creature they begin to moan softly and engulf the victim.

**BLEND:** Each discarnate moves very slowly, 1 foot per round. To the casual observer it is difficult to tell if it is moving at all, and it looks more like natural air currents are carrying the gaseous form along with them. They hide as a 10<sup>th</sup> level rogue.

**ENGULF:** When a discarnate encounters an opponent they begin to engulf and cling to the living. They do not have to strike to hit, but deliver 1d4 points of damage to the victim, a successful constitution save reduces the damage by half. A victim can break free from a discarnate with a successful dexterity check. If more than one discarnate engulfs a character the saving throws must be made for each discarnate, once per round. Effects are cumulative.

## HERIN

**NO. APPEARING:** 1-4

**SIZE:** Medium (5-6')

**HD:** 3d8

**MOVE:** 30ft.

**AC:** 17

**ATTACKS:** Claw (1d4)

**SPECIAL:** Powers common to all devils,  
Animate dead, Displacement, Rot, SR 1

**SAVES:** M

**INT:** Average

**ALIGNMENT:** Evil

**TYPE:** Extra planar

**TREASURE:** 4

**XP:** 13+1

The herin is vaguely humanoid with two spindly arms that serve as legs, the long fingered hands serving as feet. The arms sprout from where it legs should be, and two open, gaping wounds mark where the creatures' arms should be. The wounds bleed all manner of filth and house disease and rot. Its torso is gaunt, the bones of its ribs protruding through flesh too thin to contain them. Some bones sprout like antlers from its spine, and these leave gapping wounds in the flesh. Its head is stove in, the forehead concave. Its beady eyes set deep in the skull just beneath the skull. A wide mouth hangs open, a dislocated jaw, locked in place. Rotted teeth and a mangled tongue mark the beast with the signs of its own suffering torment.

The herin are souls of evil creatures twisted with such torment that even the memory of who or what they were is gone. But the echo of it leaves a hunger in them and a desire to impart their own suffering on others. They haunt the reaches of the wretched planes and hell seeking those weaker than themselves. The seek to unmake them with the rot of their putrid existence.

They are favored by none in hell or out of it, for their deeds in life left no lasting mark and their role in hell is a minor one. They are more often than not driven off by other denizens of the nether planes, beaten or devoured, to be spit out again in the same state they were before. For this reason the herin do not often move, preferring to find a spot to sit, hidden, until some unfortunate should cross their path.

**COMBAT:** The herin is not particularly powerful, but it is able to set a rot into the flesh of its victims with a single swipe of one of its clawed hands. They often sit, using their powers of displacement to hide themselves.

**ANIMATE DEAD:** The herin is able to animate the bones of the dead around it. The herin can animate up to three times its hit dice in bones, so long as there are bones enough to do that. They can animate one creature at a time, but can do so every four rounds. If an animated skeleton is killed the herin must wait four rounds to raise another creature. The bones can be mixed bones.

**DISPLACEMENT:** When the Herin sits absolutely still it creates a displacement field around it, making it virtually invisible. It can only be seen on a successful intelligence save (CL 12).



**ROT:** Upon a successful hit with the claw the victim must make a successful charisma save or the skin around the wound begins to rot. It rots at 1d4 hit points per round. The rot continues to spread for four rounds or until stopped with magical healing, cleric spells such as *bless*, *cure disease*, etc.

## MAZTHEUL

**NO. APPEARING:** 1

**SIZE:** Large

**HD:** 15 HD

**MOVE:** 50ft.

**AC:** 27

**ATTACKS:** 4 Claws (1d8),  
Bite (2d6)

**SPECIAL:** Darkvision 60 ft., Immunity to Elements, Immunity to Weapons, Poison, Speak with the Dead, Spell-like Abilities, Spin Web, SR 4, Summon Ghoul, Vanity

**SAVES:** P

**INT:** High

**ALIGNMENT:** Lawful Evil

**TYPE:** Devil

**TREASURE:** 15

**XP:** 13,400 X 15

Maztheul is a minor devil lord who reigns in hell. He is tall, with a frog-like head and body, though he stands upon two webbed feet. His eyes are large and black, and his skin a deep red with mottled black patches on it. The devil glistens for he constantly secretes a poisonous resin. His arms and legs are long, thin, and tubular in shape. He has no joints or muscle, and moves his limbs in whatever direction desired. Unlike most of the greater devils, Maztheul is incapable of taking a beautiful form, for he is so taken with the color and texture of his skin that he refuses to do so.

Maztheul dwells in hell and commands a small army of ghouls. These creatures serve him like mindless slaves, coming at his call and bringing him all manner of sacrifice. He sits in a throne-like web, ruling his corner of hell and delivering pain and suffering on all who are brought before him.

He is singularly evil and relishes torturing any creature, living or dead. He binds them in webbing before him and watches as others roast, boil, lash, cut or gouge the victim. When the victim dies, or in the case of the dead has suffered all that the devil lord can deliver, he unhinges his jaw and devours them. Within a few rounds, the soul is regurgitated and set to wandering the halls of Maztheul's realm. These are his ghouls.

**COMBAT:** He uses no physical weapons in battle, but leaps upon his foe, wrapping his arms and legs around them, coating them in the poisonous ichor that covers his skin

**IMMUNITY TO ELEMENTS:** All cold and fire-based spells do automatic half damage; a successful save reduces by a further half.

**IMMUNITY TO WEAPONS:** Maztheul can only be hit by a +1 weapon or better.

**POISON:** Upon four successful claw attacks Maztheul wraps his arms and legs around a victim, smearing poison on them. The afflicted takes the damage from the claw attacks as well as the poison. The victim must make a successful constitution save

or suffer 1d8 points of damage per round for four rounds. The poison cannot be neutralized.

**SPEAK WITH DEAD:** Speaks with dead as the spell.

**SPELL-LIKE ABILITIES:** Once a day Maztheul can cast the following spells as a 16<sup>th</sup> level wizard: *cloud kill*, *shout*, *spider climb*, *stinking cloud*.

**SPIN WEB:** Maztheul is able to create a *web* as the spell. This is a permanent ability, however, he can take no other action while spinning the web. It is important to note that though he may be immune to the web's effects, his own minions and other creatures are not.

**SUMMON GHOUL:** Summon 4d8 ghouls every 4 rounds.

**VANITY:** If characters are clever and compliment the devil enough they can attempt a charisma check to keep Maztheul from attacking.

## MEGEL

**NO. APPEARING:** 4-12

**SIZE:** Medium

**HD:** 10d8

**MOVE:** 30 ft.

**AC:** 26

**ATTACKS:** 2 Claws (1d4),  
Bite (1d2)

**SPECIAL:** Binding Chain,  
½ Damage Reduction, Paralysis  
Powers Common to all Devils,  
Spell-like Abilities, SR3

**SAVES:** P

**INT:** Average

**ALIGNMENT:** Evil

**TYPE:** Extra Planar

**TREASURE:** 10

**XP:** 5100 + 10



The Megel devil is a large creature, half human and half bat, where the one starts and the other begins is difficult to tell. The feet are clawed and the toes long, allowing it to grip as any bat would. Its arms are wings and its torso covered in short, thick, coarse hair. The head rides its shoulders like any person's would but the face is a twisted distortion of a bat's snout and fanged maw. It has multiple teats, six in all. Its loins are lost in thick hair. A long tail ends in a thin, sharp stinger. Its thighs are hairless, though muscular.

The megel serve Acheron Lord of Chains, a Lord of Hell, who created them of his own flesh. They worship him in all capacities and dwell near him if they can. When they are away from their master, which is more often than not, they inhabit lonely places, old barns, castles and the like. They hunt fey most of all, hating those creatures more than all else, these they actually devour. Elves too are a favored target of the Megel devils. They travel in small flocks. Their dens are often decorated with their many victims, bound in chains and made to serve their delight in torture.

These devils have little love for anything or anyone that is light or beautiful. They mar whatever they can, be it a painting they happen across, a grave stone, even a wall. They leave their mark in one way or another. They generally hate other devils and minions of the Wretched Planes, having only thoughts of Acheron. They

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take great pleasure in binding people in chains and torturing them.

The treasure they carry is always in the ornamentation upon their bodies. They wear chains of all sorts, some stretching from their nose to the ear, crowns of chains, links hanging from their pierced bellies, their wings, from their toes and so on. The chains are almost always gold, though occasionally silver. They use them to attack their victims. The chains are not representative of their own servitude, but rather the bindings of their master's many victims.

Once one is bound they are at the mercy of the binding chain and the devil. As soon as someone is bound the megel attempts to stab them with their tail and paralyze them. Afterward they carry them off to their lair, tying them to some high point, where they alone can get to them. They torture them by removing their bones, slowly at first, but later, as the victim begins to die, much faster. It generally takes 1-12 months to kill someone in this way. The bones are fused and recast as golden links by the megel and a new chain made to hang upon them.

**COMBAT:** The megel do not fight openly often as their minds are always bent toward torment and suffering. They prefer to bind their foes with their binding chains and leave them for Acheron or drag them into some hole somewhere and torment them. To this end they cast *hold person* on their victim and then summon the binding chain to hold them.

**BINDING CHAIN:** The megel are able to summon a magical chain that strikes and acts in all respects like iron bands of binding. Any creature struck is bound by the chain. It requires a successful strength check to break free. The megel can use this ability a number of times equal to her victims, usually 1d20 times, but much older devils may have far more victims bound to them.

**DAMAGE REDUCTION:** All damage inflicted on the megel devil by any weapon, to include magical and magically enchanted weapons (as if by *bless*), is reduced by 50%.

**PARALYSIS:** Megel devils have a poisonous stinger on their tail. Anyone struck by the tail takes no physical damage but must make a constitution save or be paralyzed for 24 hours. Megel devils continually paralyze their victims, day after day, in order to torture them or hold them for Acheron.

**SPELL-LIKE ABILITIES:** The megel can cast *hold person* 6 times a day, once per round. They can take no other action while casting this spell.

## MENDICANTS

**NO. APPEARING:** 1

**SIZE:** Medium

**HD:** 6 (d10)

**MOVE:** 30 ft.

**AC:** 17

**ATTACKS:** 2 Claw (1d4 each)

**SPECIAL:** Infestation, Shout, SR 3

**SAVES:** M

**INT:** Average

**ALIGNMENT:** Evil

**TYPE:** Extra Planar

**TREASURE:** 6

**XP:** 990 + 6

The mendicants are minor devils, the souls of evil merchants caught in the snare of the nether planes. They appear as men or women, hunched over carts of equipment. Their backs are often bent with age, their skin is pale, drawn and brittle. With raspy voice they call to any and all to come and shop their wares. They are most marked by a lantern hanging from a pole over their cart, or some carry bells, some few carry both. The mendicants emit a foul smell of mildewed cloth. If unclothed their flesh is red and raw, covered in sores and pustules.

The mendicants wander all the reaches of hell and the wretched planes, they are not bound by any alliance or service, but made to suffer in continual want and desire. In life they cheated and broke oaths to customers and clients, in death they are captured in the snare of that evil. That evil manifests in a host of parasites that forever chew and devour the mendicant's flesh. Beneath the ragged cloaks, shirts and pants are hosts of the creatures. They cling and crawl, burrow and chew and devour the mendicants causing them to itch terribly and wince in pain when a fresh nest, lying beneath some boil, bursts and a whole new generation of the creatures infests their flesh.

The mendicants suffer in quiet, but their mood is always foul and beneath the evil merchant's thin smile is deception, for they are made to believe that if they but make an honest deal, and play the part of the good merchant, then they will be redeemed. But there is little redemption for evil and their deals in hell almost always go afoul.

Their carts are filled with refuse, bags of broken pottery, dull weapons, bent cutlery, bags of offal, rotten food, foul water and so forth. They have little worth selling but see value in all things, so they gather it up and heap it upon the cart, all in hopes of striking some deal with a passing creature. Some devils traffic with them, leaving the vomit of their own evil in the cart and taking suffering from the mendicant through use of a lash or iron bar.

If slain the mendicant's soul is driven to some far corner of Aufstrag only to reform and return to his cart and trade.

**COMBAT:** The mendicant always approaches one with the intent to sell something from their cart. They call out and ring the bell or shake the lantern to draw attention to themselves. When approached they stop and begin offering things from their cart. If someone does not purchase something they become wrathful and begin grumbling about cheap customers and evil intent. This increases in tempo until the mendicant curses them and then lashes out. They attack with a raving, spittle filled scream, followed by tearing the clothes off and leaping naked upon their victim. The parasites embedded in the mendicant's flesh flood the victim, infesting them as well.

**NOTE:** If something is purchased from the cart the mendicant does not attack, but payment must be made in some ruined thing, garbage, offal, etc, otherwise the mendicant thinks he is being ripped off and attacks as above.

**DECEPTION:** The mendicant's voice is raspy and dry but holds a certain charm to it. Anyone listening to the mendicant speak, before he attacks, is compelled to listen to them. A successful intelligence check negates the charm. The affect lasts for 1d4 rounds and anyone

charmed is vaguely aware of it, however they view the mendicant as a sad, sorry soul lost in hell, a creature deserving of pity.

**INFESTATION:** Upon a successful strike the mendicant unleashes a wave of parasites. The parasites are extremely aggressive and immediately begin crawling their way into and under armor and clothes. The round following the infestation the parasites begin to burrow into flesh causing 1 point of damage. For each round they infest the victim their numbers grow exponentially. In the second round the victim takes 2 points of damage, in the 3<sup>rd</sup> they take 4, then 8, then 16, then 32 and so on until they are utterly devoured. The infestation can be cured with a *remove disease* spell or ability, any healing spell that cures more than the previous round's damage, a paladin's lay on hands (no matter the damage), *restoration*, *remove curse*, *dismissal* or similar spell.

**SHOUT:** The mendicant's shout is loud and echoes his pain wracked existence. Anyone within hearing distance must make a successful constitution save or suffer 1d8 points of damage and be stunned for 1d4 rounds.

## MIRRORED DEVIL

**NO. APPEARING:** 1

**SIZE:** Medium

**HD:** 8d8

**MOVE:** 30ft.

**AC:** 23

**ATTACKS:** 2 claw (1d2),  
Bite (2d6)

**SPECIAL:** Acidic Bile,  
Climb, Powers Common to  
All Devils, Poison, Posses-  
sion, Protection from Evil

**SAVES:** M

**INT:** Average

**ALIGNMENT:** Lawful Evil

**TYPE:** Extra-Planar

**TREASURE:** Nil

**XP:** 2100 + 7



The mirrored devil is a beastly creature, unformed and unfinished in all respects. It crawls swiftly, but unnaturally, upon arms and legs, much like a man that acts like a dog. Bone thin with little flesh and long fingers, its limbs are disjointed, and twist and turn as need dictates. Its torso is twisted around, so its back is where the front should be and vice versa. Its spine is oddly misshapen too, jutting from its flesh in a cacophony of twisted bone that drags the ground while it crawls along. The creatures' head is large and its lower jaw larger than the head allows. It hangs low, lined with wicked teeth and an indolent tongue that drags the ground as often as it laps the postulating bile that coats the creatures' body. Indeed, all over the beast its thin flesh secretes a loathsome pus that gathers in small pockets here and there. The beast smells of excrement and other bodily waste.

The mirrored devil is a lonely hunter, whether on the Wretched or Material Planes. Its purpose is to find a victim and possess them and use them to find another host. They do not linger in one place, but rather roam far and wide, rarely over the same area twice. They are predators and look for targets of oppor-

tunity. It can only possess a victim through an open wound, delivered through its bite. The wound suffers rot, corrupting the flesh of the victim so that within a matter of a few months of being possessed the victim's form is lost in the twisted form of the mirrored devil. It is for this reason that the mirrored devil is forever looking for new victims.

Its singular mindset drives the creature in all that it does. It seeks prey to possess and nothing else. It is rarely used by the Lords of Hell for its mind is not bent toward service or any greater struggle, but always on possessing and passing through the world as something that it is not, and can never have. The mirrored devil cannot shape shift as other devils can. It lives by transferring its soul from host to the next. When it possesses a host, it imprisons the soul of its host and uses its body. Those possessed souls are subject to a nightmare of enslavement, where their spirits live out the afterlife in a box of a room, curled up on a bed with little light and nothing but the tormented dreams of the mirrored devil who possessed them.

**COMBAT:** The mirrored devil seeks to bite its victim and use the open wound to possess them. To this end it is able to unhinge its jaw and rend flesh with a wicked bite for 2d6 points of damage. Anyone bitten by the mirrored devil must make a constitution saving throw or suffer 1d6 points of poison damage. Once bitten the mirrored devil attempts to pass into the creature and possess it.

**ACID VOMIT:** They are able to vomit an acidic bile that burns anyone in the immediate vicinity for 1d12 points of damage, dexterity save for half. They can use this ability once every four rounds. The vomit covers a ten square foot area directly in front of the creature.

**CLIMB:** The mirrored devil is able to turn any joint in any direction, allowing it to quickly turn around and climb any surface. It climbs as a 10<sup>th</sup> level rogue.

**POISON:** Anyone bitten by a mirrored devil must make a constitution save or suffer 1d6 points of damage from its poisonous bile. A successful save negates the damage. A failed save exposes the creature to possession, the wound begins to rot, emitting a foul smell within 1d4 rounds. The devil is able, in the round following the bite, to attempt to possess the victim.

**POSSESSION:** When the mirrored devil attempts to possess its subject, it does so by breathing upon an open wound. This is the only action it can take that round. The corrupted breath is the devil's essence and it is trying to make a lodgment in the target. The target is allowed a charisma saving throw, if they fail, the devil enters their flesh, passing from its present host and entering the new. The target's soul is immediately enslaved to the devil, bound in a place of abject horror, unable to act on its own. The devil often torments the soul, trying to twist information out of it. The devil now has possession of the target's body and takes over its form. It is able to speak with the victim's voice and assume some of the victim's mannerisms. These will always be incomplete and off as the devil cannot know all the nuances of the target's personality. This allows others to become aware of the possession. The devil is able to manipulate the target's body even as its own. Driving the devil out requires a successful turn check. Note that the devil's previous host, if on the material plane, immediately dissolves as it takes

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possession of the new host. If it is turned it is driven back to the Wretched Planes where it begins its journey again.

**PROTECTION FROM GOOD:** The creature is able to turn its eyes black, when it does so it emanates a *protection from good* spell.

### OUSMANE, LORD OF SOULS

**NO. APPEARING:** 1

**SIZE:** Large

**HD:** 180 HP (16 d10)

**MOVE:** 30 ft., 40 ft. (fly)

**AC:** 27

**ATTACKS:** 2 Claws (1d10), Crowbill (1d6+8), Breath weapon

**SPECIAL:** Breath Weapon, Heightened Senses, Powers common to all devils, Rend Soul, Spell-like abilities, +2 or better magic weapon to hit, Soul spawn, SR 4, Superior vision, Swallow Soul

**SAVES:** P & M

**INT:** High

**ALIGNMENT:** Lawful Evil

**TYPE:** Extraplanar

**TREASURE:** 20

**XP:** 24,580

Ousmane is a greater devil who rules upon the 3<sup>rd</sup> plane of hell. In his youth he was rage and formed of the filth of ash coated water. He saw the gods and sought to mimic their form but his vision was always narrow and he could not see clearly, so the form he took was misshapen and abhorrent. His legs are ungainly things and double-jointed so that they bend backwards at the knee, making his walk staggered. His torso is muscular, but round, his chest like a barrel with the ribs protruding. Arms sprout like twigs from the trunk and they end in long, thin-fingered hands. His head is unnaturally large with a broad tooth-filled maw, crowned by one giant eye that protruded from the skull, allowing Ousmane the ability to see to the left or right far better than others. His skin is dry and patched, constantly flaking and shedding like a serpent.

Ousmane holds his human form with great difficulty, but when he assumes it he is always a beautiful, human male. He wears no clothes, taking great pride in his beauty, carrying only his crowbill. He has only one eye however, on the left side of his face. The other is smooth flesh, an area he keeps covered with a patch.

He makes his lair on the 3<sup>rd</sup> plane of hell where he has built a great hall and filled it with the treasures of his conquests. He is not an ambitious devil, but rather dwells in the shadows of greater creatures than himself. Those who serve him however, know the lash, for what he lacks in ambition he makes up for in cruelty. His mind is peculiarly bent and he derives great comfort and joy from the pain of others. For this reason, his halls are filled with those damned to an afterlife of torment.

He has no great lusts or greed but the lash delivered in unkind strokes. His true lust lies in the souls of men, a commodity he harvests with glee. He devours those brought before him and vomits them back up, allowing them to take a new, more hide-

ous form. Those who suffer his gullet become his slaves and are doomed ever after to serve that particular devil and his desires. For this reason he is called Lord of Souls.

He is quick to anger, but careful in a fight, for he does not wish to lose his life's hard road and all that that has brought him.

**COMBAT:** Ousmane is quick to wrath and favors his crowbill in battle. He begins battle by blasting his fetid breath at the closest opponent and follows that with a rending attack from his crowbill. He will attempt to swallow whole any soul rent, unless there is a serious threat to his person, in which case he continues fighting until he is able to safely swallow an opponent. He summons devils if he is even marginally pressed.

**HEIGHTEN SENSES:** Ousmane cannot be surprised. He has heightened senses and can detect motion within 100 feet of his person. Though his vision is poor and he cannot see far, he does have a heightened peripheral vision due to the extruding eye which gives him an even greater awareness of creatures approaching from the flank.

**BREATH WEAPON:** He is able to breathe a wash of fetid breath from his gullet. The breath extends up to 40 feet from his mouth in a cloud that affects an area a dozen feet in diameter. Anyone caught in the blast suffers 2d12 points of damage, halved if they make a successful dexterity check. The stench smells of the rot of an opened stomach and disorients anyone caught in the blast, and failed their saving throw, for 1d4 rounds. Anyone disoriented suffers -2 from all attribute checks and combat rolls.

**REND SOUL:** Any successful blow with Ousmane's Crowbill causes 9 points of damage, but the recipient of the blow must make a successful constitution check, if they fail their spirit, or soul, is temporarily rent, or pulled, from their physical body. The victim can do nothing for one full round, at which point the soul/spirit rejoins with the physical form. During that round Ousmane may attempt to swallow the soul.

**SPELL-LIKE ABILITIES:** He has the following spell-like abilities: *charm* (3/day), *true seeing* (perm), *soul bind* (1/day), summon up to 10 HD devils (3/day).

**SOUL-SPAWN:** Ousmane can vomit up the souls he has desired. He can pick and choose which he desires, and there is no limit to the number of souls he can keep in his gullet. Those that he chooses to return to the world are coughed back up and assume the form of a wraith. If the soul's physical body is still alive, they immediately lose 3 levels and all abilities accompanying those levels. This is a permanent loss until the person is reunited with their soul. If the soul spawn is turned, it is banished to Ousmane's gullet there to begin the process again.

**SWALLOW WHOLE:** Anytime Ousmane rends a soul from a body he can, in the following round, attempt to swallow it whole. This can be his only action during that round and he must gain a successful strike in order to swallow the spirit/soul. If he misses the soul returns to the body from which it was torn. If successful he swallows the soul, devouring it whole. Anyone who suffers their soul being devoured is stunned for 4 rounds and can take no ac-

tion. Though some can live without a soul, those devoured by Ousmane suffer continually. A soulless person loses all purpose and direction, any action, no matter how great or small, requires a successful wisdom check (CL 7), failure means they do not take the action. Once set lose in hell a soul is difficult to find and if not devoured will appear as a ghost somewhere. Returning it to the body requires both soul and body to be present and use of a *heal*, *greater restoration* or similar spell. If killed they cannot be resurrected nor reincarnated. The souls are freed if Ousmane is destroyed or if he is bargained with (though he cherishes little).

## RITHKIN

**NO. APPEARING:** 10-100

**SIZE:** Medium

**HD:** 2(d8)

**MOVE:** 20 ft.

**AC:** 14

**ATTACKS:** Howl (1d4)

**SPECIAL:** Climb, Darkness, Howl, Know Alignment, SR 1

**SAVES:** P

**INT:** Low

**ALIGNMENT:** Lawful Evil

**TYPE:** Extra planar

**TREASURE:** 3

**XP:** 37 +2

The rithkin possess humanoid bodies, but are faceless, with no hair or sexual organs. They have no ears either. Their skin is smooth, pinkish in color, but mottled blue as if bruised. Their arms and legs are thin, long and capped with fingers and toes that are padded like a frog's, allowing them to climb vertical surfaces and cling to ceilings.

The rithkin are spent souls of evil men who died in the service of their craft. Their souls are cast into hell and harvested by one of the many lords of those planes. Once within, they are hounded, tortured and devoured by the greater devils. They wander in constant fear and terror of all things but their own kind, and for this reason they tend to group together in packs and spew their fear in webs of thick darkness. They are called the rithkin, a word used by dwarves to describe the filth of untreated wounds. They are despised by all.

They do not sleep, nor eat or drink, but meander in small groups (gathering in larger if they encounter their own kind), stumbling about in a confused herd, "feeling" for the living and the undead. They have no normal senses, they cannot see, hear, smell or taste, they can however sense the aura of creatures by detecting their alignment. They cannot see or in any way detect true neutral creatures.

The rithkin often create nests of darkness, gathering together in groups or packs.

**COMBAT:** The rithkin never attack alone, being fearful of everything. When they attack they attack in groups of 5 or more. They attack by closing with their victims and begin howling at them, leaping back and forth, attempting to avoid any blows,

pooling the darkness that follows them and combining with other howls to kill their enemy.

**CLIMB:** The rithkin are able to climb any surface as if walking on a horizontal one. To do so they must have use of at least two of their limbs.

**DARKNESS:** When engaged in battle the rithkin secretes a cloud of filth and darkness that grows one foot each round to a maximum of 20 feet. The darkness acts as the spell of the same name as if cast by a 1<sup>st</sup> level cleric, however the darkness is pungent, and the stench almost palatable. It gets worse the more rithkin that are about as the dark clouds over lap. If there are more than three rithkin whose darkness overlaps any magic light is extinguished. If the rithkin moves or is slain the darkness dissipates after one round. More often than not they leave trails of darkness behind them as they move about.

**HOWL:** A rithkin's howl causes anyone within 10 feet of the creature to suffer 1d4 points of damage, in this way they damage victims that they aren't actually engaging. After the rithkin is slain the damage of the howl heals 1 hit point per round. If someone falls below zero hit points the rithkin keeps howling for 3 rounds. If they are driven below -10 the victim dies.

**KNOW ALIGNMENT:** A rithkin sees creatures through seeing their alignment, for this reason they know the alignment of any but true neutral. It does them little good for they do not care for the living or the dead.

## SHADOW GUARDIANS

**NO. APPEARING:** 1-10

**SIZE:** Small

**HD:** 1 (d6)

**MOVE:** 40 ft. (fly)

**AC:** 12

**ATTACKS:** See below

**SPECIAL:** All powers common to a devil, Incorporeal attack, +1 or better to hit, See spiritual creatures, SR 1

**SAVES:** M

**INT:** Inferior

**ALIGNMENT:** Evil

**TYPE:** Extra Planar

**TREASURE:** 1

**XP:** 38+1

The shadow guardian is a small creature, only a few feet tall. It appears as a wisp of smoke with arms and long clawed fingers. Its face is formless, but for the eyes and the gapping maw of its mouth. Its torso trails off into a long wisp of smoke that writhes about as if with a life of its own. It smells of damp charcoal.

Shadow guardians are minor devils. Their minds are peculiarly bent toward servitude and they latch themselves to devils or men, whichever they happen upon first. They do not think for themselves, and because of this develop a fierce loyalty to whomever they serve. They are used as guardians for this reason, for they report to their masters all they see or think they see.

Though they do not have particularly good vision, they do see

## APPENDICES

beyond the material world. Spirits, ghosts, disembodied souls, all of these are plain to see for the shadow guardian. They cannot see invisible, or similarly hidden creatures. They fear magical light. When confronted with anything like a *light* spell they invariably hesitate for 1-2 rounds before taking any action.

The guardians do not eat or drink and need nothing beyond the comfort of their own service. When they are encountered outside the service of a greater creature the guardians tend to settle in a quiet, dark area resting in coils of their own evil intent.

**COMBAT:** The shadow guardian attacks by reaching out with its long-fingered claws and cutting through an enemy. Their incorporeal nature leaves no open wounds, the clawed attack passing through the flesh and bone, but it stains the victim's psyche, leaving the individual in doubt and confusion.

**INCORPOREAL ATTACK:** Upon a successful hit the shadow demon drains 1d4 hit points from the victim. If a successful constitution save is made the damage is reduced by half.

### WHISPERS, WHISPERING DEVIL

**NO. APPEARING:** 1-20

**SIZE:** Large

**HD:** 7 (d12)

**MOVE:** 40 ft.

**AC:** 21

**ATTACKS:** 2 Barbed Lash (1d6 each), Bite (1d10)

**SPECIAL:** Darkness, Powers Common to all Devils, Rend, Soul Rend, SR 5

**SAVES:** M

**INT:** Average

**ALIGNMENT:** Evil

**TYPE:** Extra Planar

**TREASURE:** 9

**XP:** 1755 + 7



The whispering devil is as much a shadow flesh. The core of the creature is a rib cage, huge and split wide, ribs shaped like the fangs of a jaw. From these ribs flesh grows in abundance, spreading up and off the creature into a voluminous cloak that serves the creature as wings. The cowl of the fleshy cloak covers a head that seems strangely disembodied from the rib cage below, though it sits where a normal man's would. Beady eyes glare from the folds of flesh that envelop the head and long fangs hang in the darkness beneath the eyes. The beast has no arms nor legs, no lower torso to speak of, only the flesh that hangs off the creature like some giant cloak, trailing the ground in pools of darkness.

Whispering devils dwell in most any regions of the abyssal planes or hell. They gather in small companies and hunt the damned, seeking to tear their souls from their bodies. They cluster in large rooms or caverns, waiting for their victims to come

to them. They are rarely encountered wandering from one place to the other, for they are driven by the purpose of torment.

The whispering devil's great purpose is to separate a creature from its soul, though it does not desire the process to be fast, nor painless. On the contrary it delights in the suffering, knowing that the tormented soul is worth more as currency for other devils, or food for itself. It uses its barbed lash to pull and rend the soul, piece at a time, until it is ripped from the flesh.

Its peculiar name derives from the whispering sound that follows it wherever it goes. These are the screams of the damned, and they echo in the creatures' constant babble. It speaks a jumbled mixture of words from its many victims. The whispering is in a host of languages and is utterly incoherent to all but the most able linguists, and even they pick up only bits and pieces of phrases. They have a peculiar liking for rib cages, often piling and heaping them into house-like structures.

**COMBAT:** The whispering devil sits idle for the most part, collected in pools of its own shadow and flesh waiting for a victim to be brought to it or pass it by. When it spies a victim it unleashes its lash, tearing the soul from the flesh.

**DARKNESS:** Beneath the cloak of flesh there is only darkness. This area acts as a darkness spell. If magical light is shined upon it, the darkness reveals little but long barbs of naked bone, broken and sharp.

**REND:** The creatures' ribs are very much like a huge jaw, the bones sharpened into long fangs. The creature is able to bite down on an opponent, enveloping it in the darkness of the cloak and rend it. In the round following the bite, the whispering devil tears the victim apart, scoring an automatic hit for 6d6 points of damage, constitution save for half.

**SOUL REND:** The devil wields two barbed ethereal chains, that rise from its wing-like cloak of flesh and darkness. They act as physical and metaphysical weapons, rending flesh for 1d6 points of damage, but also through latching onto a victim's soul. When pulled back the barbs cling to bits and pieces of the soul, ripping them from the body. With each successful hit the target must make a successful charisma save. If they fail they suffer their soul being torn apart. Each failed saving throw and the target suffers the loss of one charisma point. When they reach 0, their soul is pulled from their body and bound to the whispering devil. If the devil is killed at any point in the process the soul's tattered pieces drift back to the body, but the victim suffers a permanent loss of 1d4 points of random attribute(s). A soulless person loses all purpose and direction, any action, no matter how great or small, requires a successful wisdom check (CL 7), failure means they do not take the action. Once set loose in hell a soul is difficult to find and if not devoured will appear as a ghost somewhere. Returning it to the body requires both soul and body to be present and use of a *heal*, *greater restoration* or similar spell.

## APPENDIX B - NEW MAGIC ITEMS

**DAGGER OF SACRIFICE:** If this dagger draws blood from a victim, and an oath is exacted, then that victim's soul is tied to the spot the blood was drawn. Once the victim is slain, the soul attempts to return to the spot where the blood oath was made. In many cases this is not possible, and the spirit wanders the world in abject misery and sorrow.

**Value:** 500gp    **EXP:** 1250

**DEVIL'S WHIP:** The devil's whip is a pole arm of sorts. It consists of a long haft, about 8 feet long, split into many thin shards, or strands. The strands are whip-like and used as such. The haft is made of a seere devil's long leg bone. It is a +3 weapon, deals 2d4 points of damage. If struck, a victim must make a constitution saving throw or they 'see their own death.' If they fail, they become unnerved for 1d6 rounds and suffer a -2 on all attribute checks or combat rolls including damage.

**Value:** 1000gp    **EXP:** 1500

**FLAGON & BASIN:** The flagon and basin are magic items that only work in concert. When the flagon is held over the basin, water pours out in a small trickle. The water is drinkable, but warm. If one is broken, the magic is lost. Both are made of stone. The flagon is 18 inches tall and the basin is 2 feet in diameter.

**GLADUS BUDS:** Buds of the gladus flower, grown and nurtured by elves, release a beautiful scent that uplifts the spirit and calms the nerves. Anyone within 20 feet of the buds gains a +1 against all fear or fear like effects. If under the effects of a *fear* spell already, the scent of the buds allows them another check with a +1.

**GRAPPLE OF NEVER MISS:** This grapple hook rarely misses its target. Anytime it is thrown with a 50 foot rope or less it catches hold of its target on anything other than a natural 1. The target must first have something to catch hold on.

**Value:** 1000    **EXP:** 250

**PEDESTAL OF WISDOM:** The pedestal is used by clerics to memorize spells. Anytime a cleric uses it as the focus of their study, they are able to cast spells one level higher than their actual level. For instance, a 4<sup>th</sup> level cleric can memorize and cast spells as a 5<sup>th</sup> level cleric. This includes both the number of spells they can cast as well the level, if applicable. The pedestal is heavy, about 145 pounds, and 4 feet tall.

**Value:** 10,000    **EXP:** 2500

## APPENDIX C - WANDERING MONSTERS

Roll a d8 once an hour, day and night for a wandering monster. If a roll of 1 occurs, a monster is encountered. How it reacts is entirely up to the monster, what it is doing, and the Castle Keeper. To determine what monster roll a d6 for List 1, 2 or 3. Then roll a d20 to determine the encounter. Adventuring parties, Nebian clerics and Umbrian wizards can range in level, size and composition.

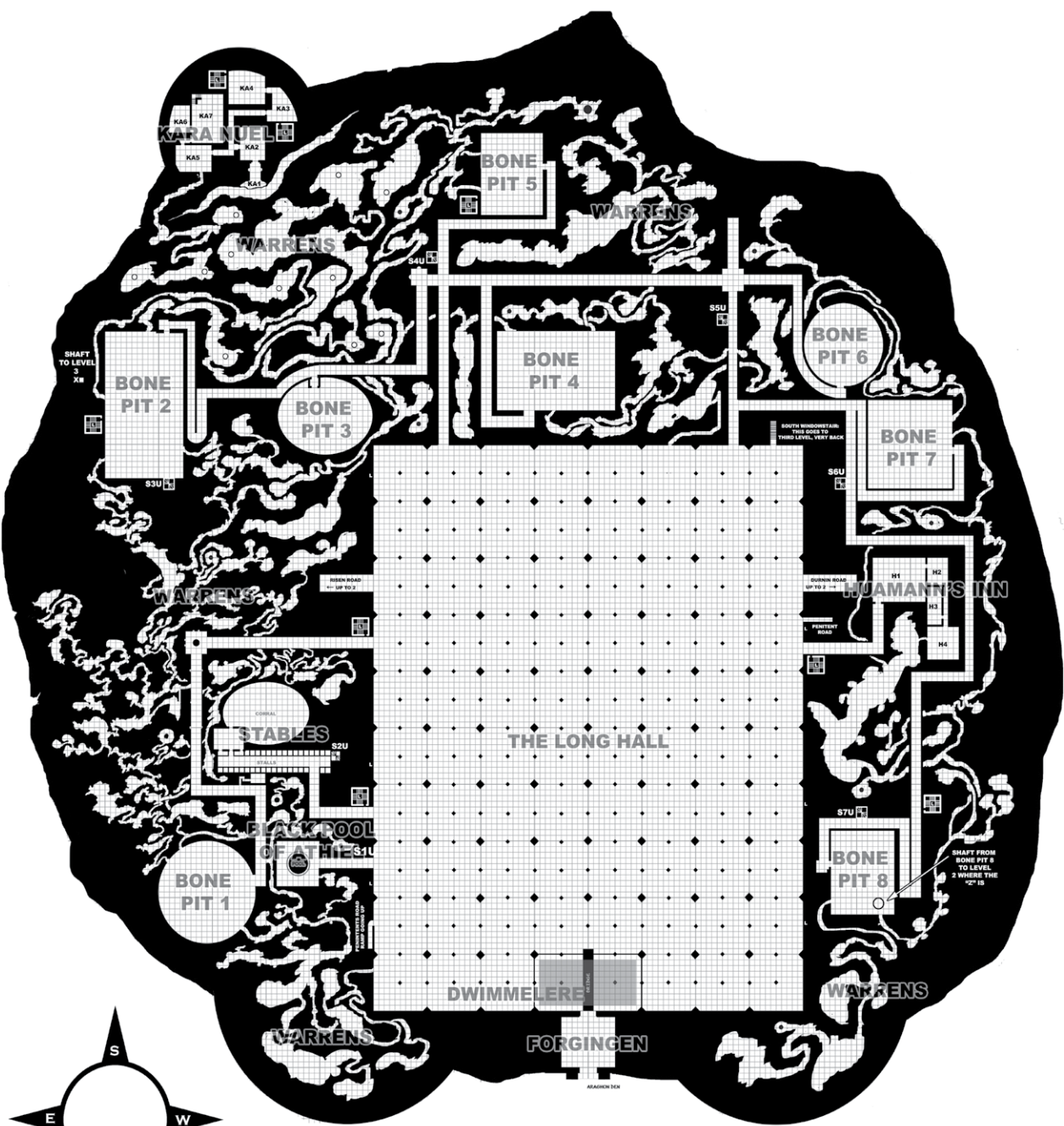
LIST 1	LIST 2	LIST 3
1 Adventuring Party	1 Harpies (MT)	1 Rust Monster (MT)
2 Aghul, Devil (MTA)	2 Herin (A)	2 Sauld Devil (MTA)
3 Baggers (T)	3 Hobgoblin (MT)	3 Seere Devil (MTA)
4 Bats (MT)	4 Horned Devil (T)	4 Skeletons (MT)
5 Bearded Devil (T)	5 Imp (MT)	5 Shadow Guardians (A)
6 Belker (MT)	6 Kain's Henchman (MTA)	6 Spectre (MT)
7 Blake Pudding (MT)	7 Megeil Devil (A)	7 Spider, Large
8 Bone Devil (T)	8 Mendicants (A)	8 Spider, Medium
9 Cunalrur (MTA)	9 Mirrored Devil (A)	9 Spider, Small
10 Discarnate (A)	10 Mongrel	10 Soul Thief (MTA)
11 Dragon, Boned (MTA)	11 Nebian Clerics(s)	11 Umbrian Wizard(s)
12 Elishia (T)	12 Naga, Dark (MT)	12 Ungern
13 Erder Wrym (MTA)	13 Nupperibo (T)	13 Vimnel (MTA)
14 Eridu (T)	14 Ochre Jelly (MT)	14 Whispering Devil (A)
15 Erinyes (T)	15 Orbut (MTA)	15 Witch Orb (MTA)
16 Fire Giant	16 Orc (MT)	16 Witch Stalk (MTA)
17 Ghost	17 Orc, Hlobane (MTA)	17 Wriath
18 Goblin	18 Pit Fiend (T)	18 Wright
19 Goblin, Eldritch (MTA)	19 Rats (MT)	19 Yellow Mold (MT)
20 Gray Ooze (MT)	20 Rithkin (A)	20 Zombie



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THE BONE PIT

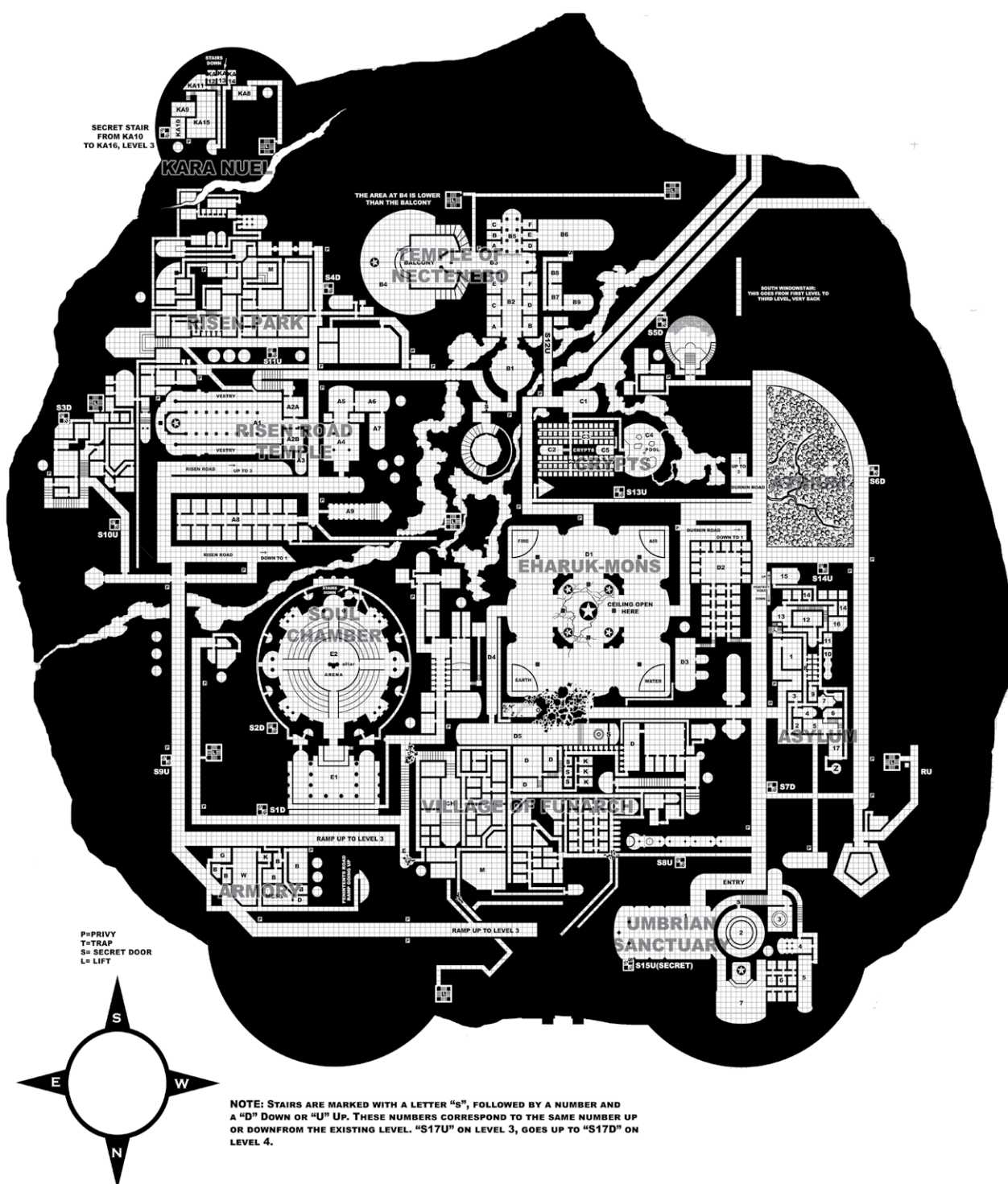




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## THE HORNED GOD'S ACRE



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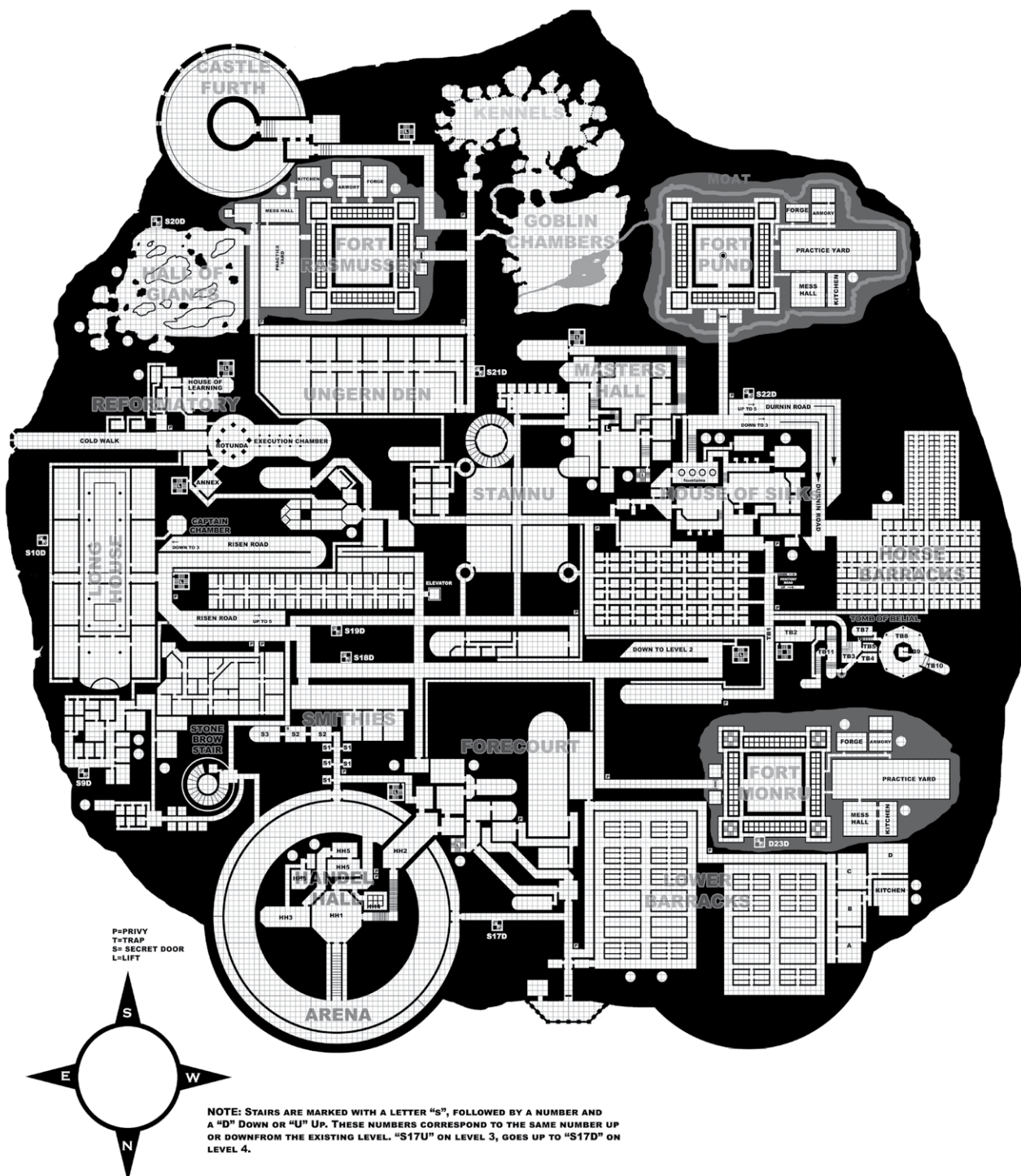
# GALLERY OF SOULS



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# THE RED FORT

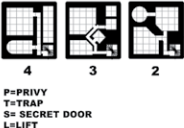
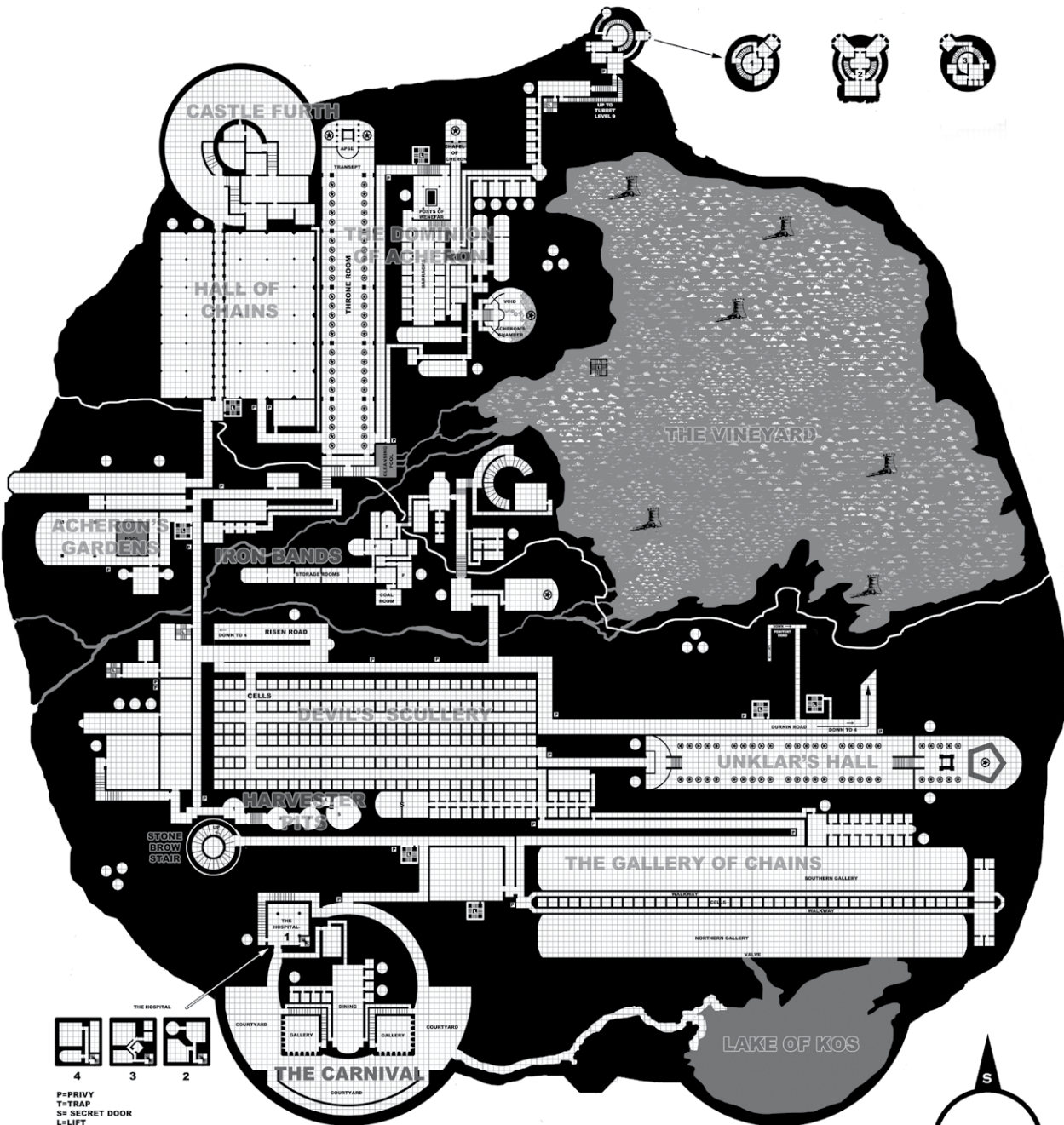
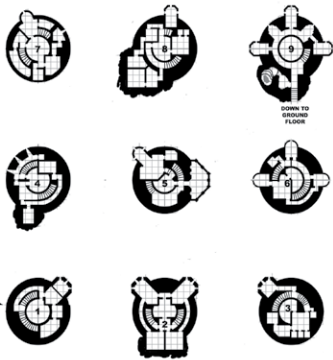




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# HALL OF CHAINS



NOTE: STAIRS ARE MARKED WITH A LETTER "S", FOLLOWED BY A NUMBER AND A "D" DOWN OR "U" UP. THESE NUMBERS CORRESPOND TO THE SAME NUMBER UP OR DOWN FROM THE EXISTING LEVEL. "S17U" ON LEVEL 3, GOES UP TO "S17D" ON LEVEL 4.



# CASTLES<sup>®</sup> CRUSADES

## THE DUNGEONS OF AUFSTRAG

Aufstrag is the iron will of evil. It is a house of terror where dwell the shadows of Darkness, named the Fell Beast, Unklar, the Horned God. From that bastion he ruled the world of Aihrde for a thousand years. Those long centuries saw Aufstrag grow into an edifice like to a mountain and one filled with all the nightmares and shadows of his, nay, the world's despair.

Over three thousand feet tall and a thousand wide, it is a catacomb of unbelievable dimensions. Torn from the ruins of glorious Al Liosh, lifted on high by his very might, it stands a heap of slag, dominating the sprawling swamps that cover the ruins of the old world. Aufstrag is a tower of fortresses but so great its size, it is more like to a city than ought else. But there dwelt the Horned God for his long reign and to it came the damned and he housed them in dungeons of horror and madness. And thus men call it, more than the pit of the Horned God, or his city, or his throne, men call it Hell, and so it is.

The Dungeons of Aufstrag, Umbrage Saga Part 3 is a multi-level dungeon/city complex that is both huge and ever changing. It is designed for use for any level of play, though low-level characters may suffer a higher mortality rate than higher level. Within The Dungeons of Aufstrag you will find 5 of the 21 levels: The Bone Pit, The Horned Gods Acre, Gallery of Souls, The Red Fort and Hall of Chains.

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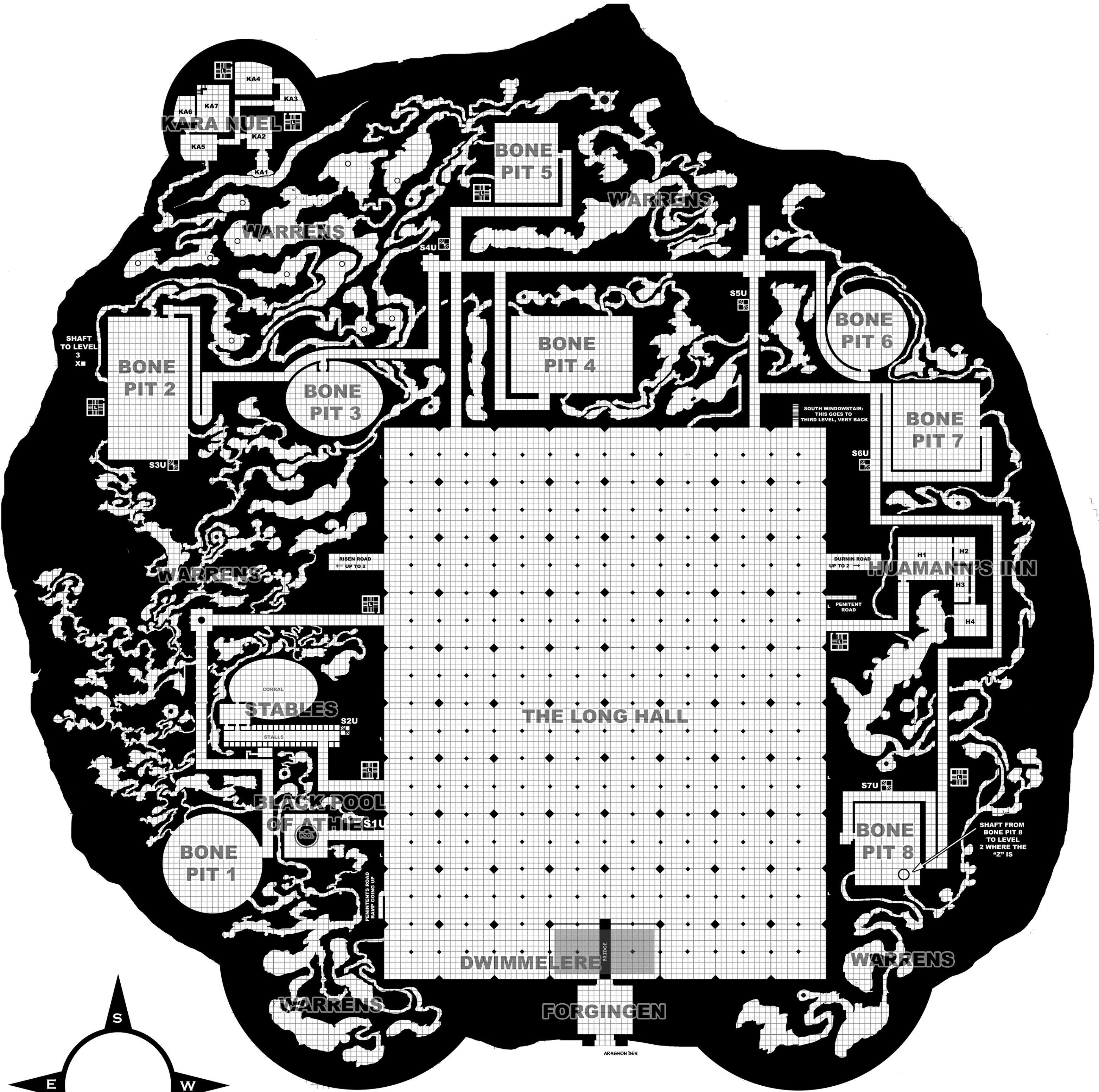
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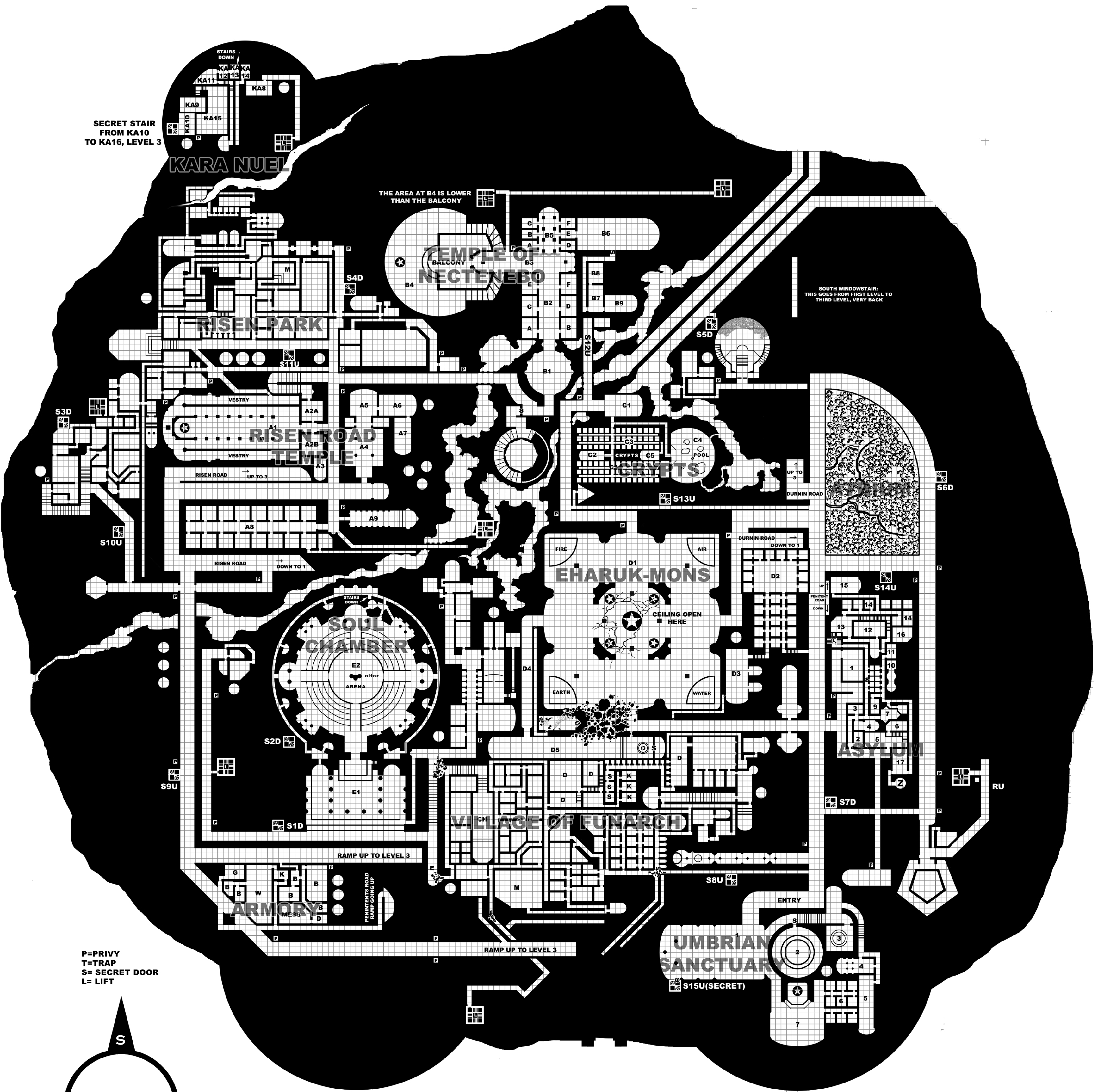


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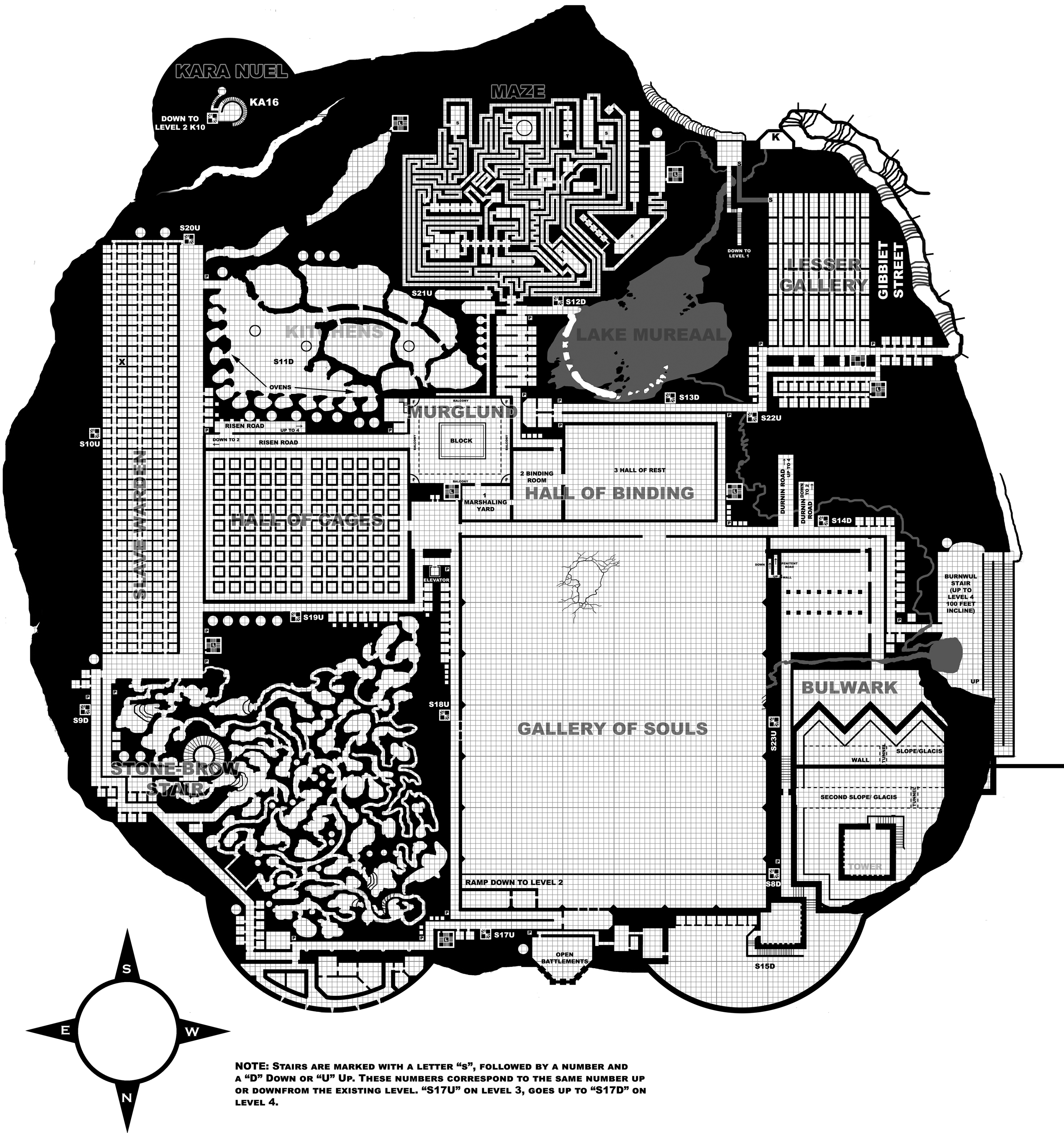




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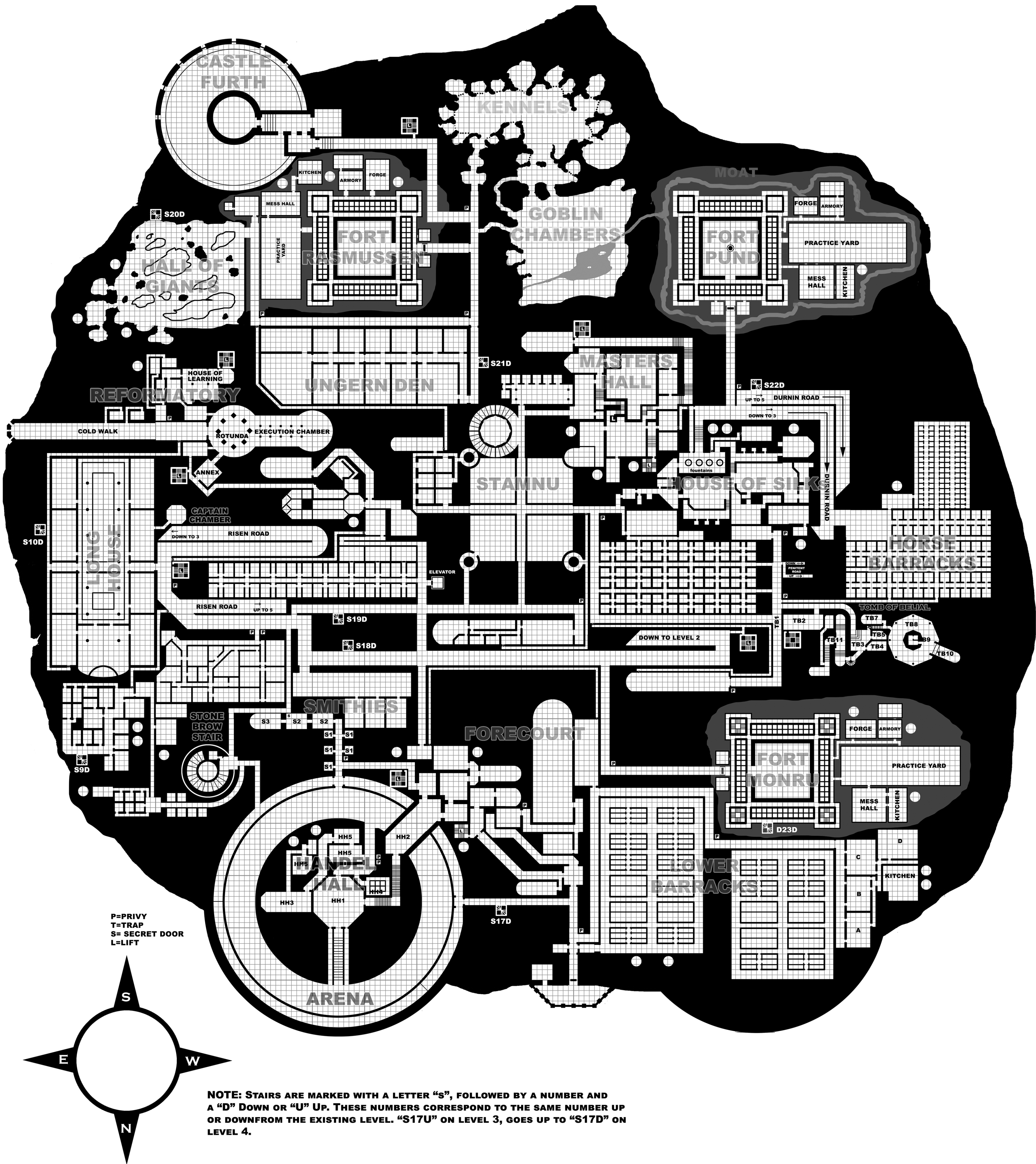
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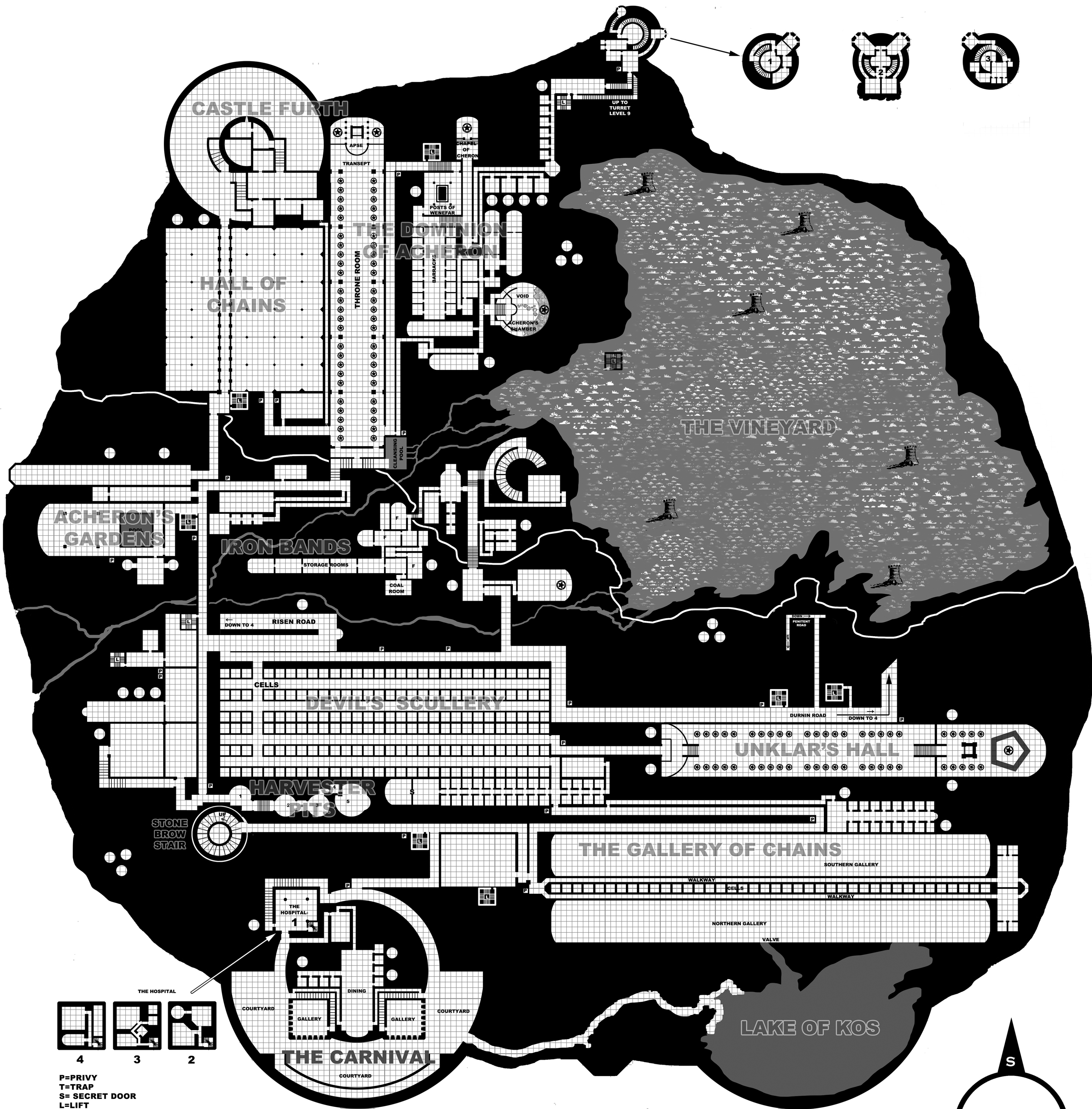
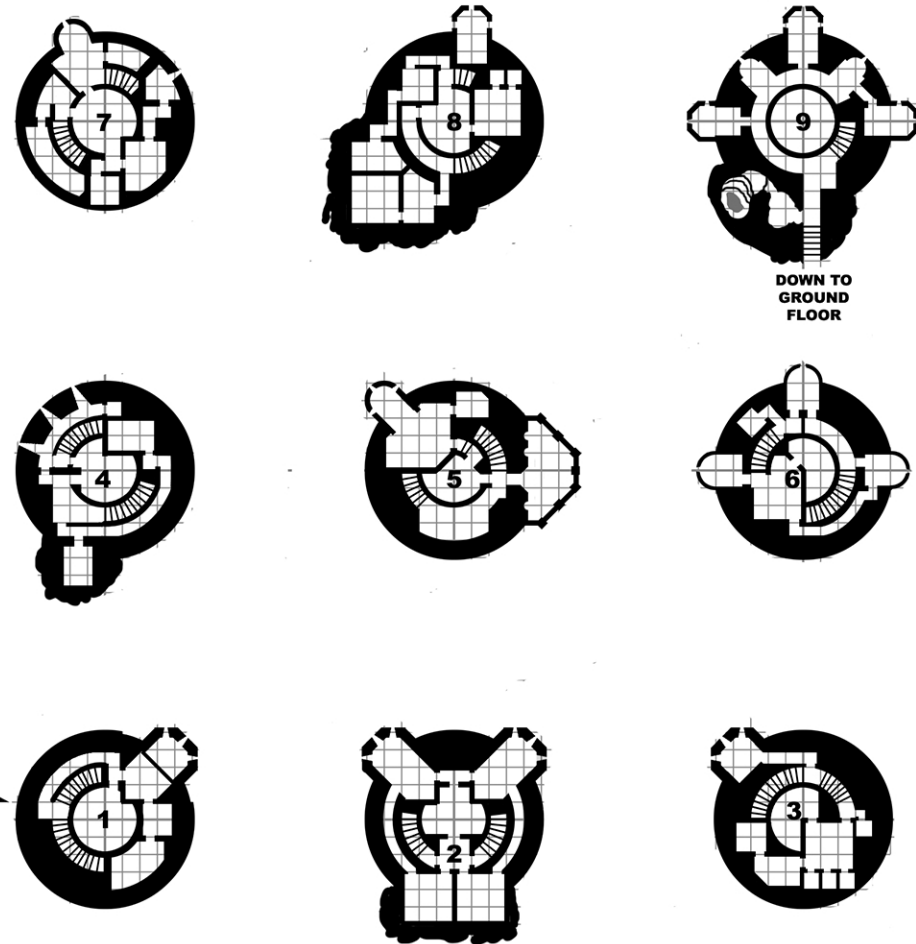




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