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SECRETS OF THE WORLD HARVESTERS



COMPATIBLE WITH
**DCC
RPG**

G. Scott Swift

A LEVEL 1 ADVENTURE



A DCC ADVENTURE FOR LEVEL 1 CHARACTERS



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COMPATIBLE WITH
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TABLE OF CONTENTS

| | |
|---------------------------|----|
| WORLD HARVESTERS..... | 4 |
| OSARG..... | 5 |
| SERPENT PEOPLE..... | 6 |
| ADVENTURE BACKGROUND..... | 7 |
| STARTING THE ADVENTURE.. | 13 |
| APPENDIX..... | 41 |

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INTRODUCTION

A fallow planet awakens from an ice age...

Secrets of the World Harvesters is an adventure of discovery for the players and one of opportunity for the DCC Judge. The players will discover a portion of the forgotten past of their world and chance upon the advanced technology of the ancient race known as the World Harvesters. DCC Judges will have a plausible background to use this adventure as a jumping point into any world or setting they desire.

This adventure will not place the characters into direct contact with the World Harvesters, but it will lead them to a long-abandoned cosmic portal. With the knowledge gained while adventuring, the characters can utilize the cosmic portal to enter new worlds—any world the DCC Judge desires—be it fantasy, Weird West, post-apocalyptic, sci-fi, or any other established or imagined DCC or MCC setting.

Secrets of the World Harvesters is designed as a 1st level adventure but could easily be converted into a level-zero funnel. This adventure includes setting information about the world of Osarb (the starting planet) to be used if the players choose not to enter the cosmic portal at the adventure's climax or return later to continue their adventures on their homeworld. Additionally, an adventure hook is presented to allow players to travel to the Serpent Moon that orbits the planet to confront another nemesis from their distant past—the Serpent People.

THE WORLD HARVESTERS

Nigh to nothing is known about this ancient alien race on most planets, yet their influence ranges across galaxies. Setting themselves up as gods, they instill a love of precious metals (used to power their technology) in the infant societies they help to create. Mining is a slow and tedious process, even for the technologically advanced. The World Harvesters learned long ago that a large labor force was a way to speed up the process. Their own world had limitations, so they sought out other habitable planets, either colonizing them with slaves or fostering the natives, thereby creating a network of unwitting mining enclaves.

The World Harvesters then travel via cosmic portals to the more established worlds to collect their fuel. Often leaving worlds for thousands of years to allow the accumulation of precious metals over time, they eventually return to demand gold and silver either through tribute or by force. This intermittent approach has kept societies ignorant and unprepared for violent resistance of the magnitude necessary to ever challenge the Harvesters.

Most worlds have not seen the World Harvesters for so long that their existence has been forgotten completely or lives on only through legend. Inhabitants have no idea that they owe their language, early advancement, mining skills, and fondness for gold and silver to this ancient race though often elaborate religions and customs have evolved based on ancient recollections passed down through millennia.

COSMIC PORTALS

These large, circular portals tap into the power of wormholes to connect the extensive intergalactic network of worlds controlled by the World Harvesters. They are located on or near a planet's surface, usually in close proximity to mining operations, and are well-hidden when not in active use by the World Harvesters. They are large enough for transport vehicles to carry massive quantities of ore through them. A console with a colligation crystal (see below) the size of a human fist embedded in the surface and six dials, each offering the same six exotic symbols, is located near the portal. To operate the cosmic portal, the dials are tuned to the destination, and a button is pushed,

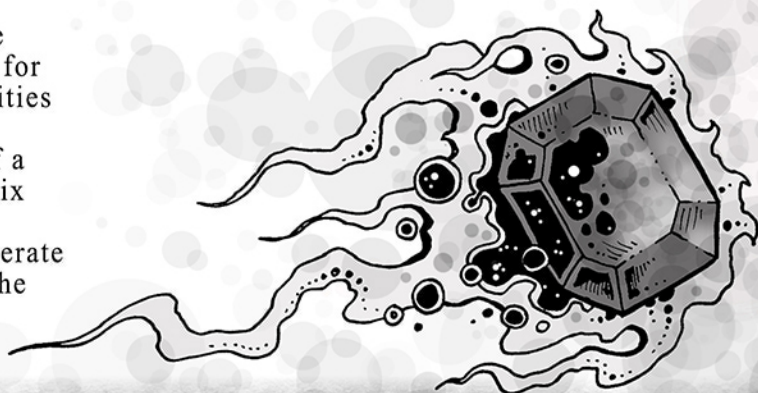
activating it for a period of five minutes.

Anyone wishing to embark on a journey to a new world simply needs to walk through the now-shimmering portal. The journey seems to take only an instant, and the travelers will find themselves exiting an identical cosmic portal on a new planet. (Of course, how far they have traveled will not necessarily be immediately obvious to such travelers.)

COLLIGATION CRYSTALS

A colligation crystal is a technological device consisting of dark matter encased in a carbon polymer, diamond-shaped shell. The collection of dark matter is difficult and dangerous, and thus, colligation crystals are rare. They are used to amplify power sources, and in regards to cosmic portals, the crystal intensifies the power enough to generate a wormhole between two portals. The dials on the control panel act as a frequency tuner, aiming the wormhole directly at the destination portal.

The sending portal requires a colligation crystal embedded in the control panel, but the receiving portal need not have one. In most cases, a colligation crystal will either be in the control panel of the receiving portal or present somewhere on the destination planet, for the crystal used to activate the portal cannot be taken with travelers exiting through a portal. (A cosmic portal will deactivate the moment the colligation crystal is removed.) The exception would be if a colligation crystal was taken off planet by conventional space travel or a spell such as *planar step*. If PCs exit a cosmic portal that lacks a colligation crystal, they are stuck on the new world until they find the colligation crystal, a suitable alternative, or a different means of interplanetary travel. There are many possible quest lines here: the search for the original crystal, finding and fashioning a substitute from a new material, gaining the aid of a powerful wizard to magically imbue a common gem, etc.



LANGUAGES

The World Harvesters teach their mercantile language to all new societies brought into their fold. The language is the equivalent of Common, and dialects of it will be spoken on all worlds connected by cosmic portals. Other languages can be found on each world, and some societies and intelligent monsters may not speak Common at all. However, for gameplay purposes, the common thread of language will make for an easier transition from world to world for the DCC Judge and players. The mercantile language is a secondary tongue for the World Harvesters, for they do not teach their secret native language to their subjects. Writings discovered in World Harvester facilities should be considered unreadable except by magical means unless Common was intentionally used in specific circumstances to communicate with their subjects. For the wizard spell *comprehend languages*, the secret language of the World Harvesters should be considered beyond terrestrial, falling under the category of supernatural for spell check purposes.

CURRENCY

Worlds linked by cosmic portals may have a dearth of gold and silver depending on how much time has passed since previous harvests (per Judge's discretion). For gameplay purposes, most economies are on a silver standard (Osarb included). All equipment in the DCC core rulebook should be priced in silver pieces rather than gold pieces. Thus, if an item is listed as 10 gp, in this setting, the price should be 10 sp. Gold is rarer than silver, so the ratio of 10 sp:1 gp remains the same. Pre-generated character starting funds should be adjusted accordingly. Other forms of currency and barter systems may be present on various worlds to compensate for the lack of precious metals. Other metal exchanges are as follows: 1,000 cp = 100 sp = 10 gp = 1 pp.

A NOTE ON HUMANOID MONSTERS

Humanoid monsters (e.g., orcs, goblins, trolls, etc.) in the World Harvesters setting are not confined to a single set of statistics. To open up possibilities, the DCC Judge may assign higher levels and classes to humanoid monsters, elevating them from the status of low-level fodder. It should not be uncommon to find a shaman, priest, or spellcaster among warbands of humanoids, who may also be led by a fierce leader with improved abilities.



Osarb is an ancient world dotted with the ruins and remnants of civilizations past, great and small. Tales only begin to scratch the surface of the history of bygone eras. Survival, not the preservation of knowledge, has been the priority of Osarb's current inhabitants, and the greatness of past kingdoms has been all but lost. What remains are sparks of innate abilities, the occasional fantastical artifact, and mostly indecipherable etchings on crumbling walls and delicate tomes.

The current ice age was not the first witnessed by sentient beings; it was one of many that have caused the fall of civilizations. Osarb entered a period known as the Great Thaw some fifty years ago. Snowcaps have receded, and streams have grown as wide as rivers with the warmer clime. Just recently, the landscape has begun to reveal the remnants of ancient civilizations previously buried beneath thick layers of ice.

• SERPENT PEOPLE •

Approximately 4,000 years ago, after centuries of visiting Osarb, the World Harvesters began experimentation to create a human-snake hybrid race in a bid to increase mining production. The indigenous humanoids were rebellious and prone to lose interest in precious metals with time, so the World Harvesters sought to create a race of adjunct overlords, a race that would keep the inhabitants mining and also bear the brunt of any local ire. Snakes were chosen for both their cold hearts and their cold blood, for Osarb was in the midst of a tropical age, and the oppressive heat enlivened the reptiles.

The experiment worked wonderfully. The Serpent People were bred into existence, raised with a superiority complex, and set loose to lord over the humanoid inhabitants of Osarb. They retained close approximations of the utilitarian limbs and prehensile hands of humans yet kept the scaled skin and serpentiform heads of snakes, only with forward facing eyes. Some possess a venomous bite, for different species of snakes were used in the experiments, creating subspecies among the Serpent People. Rarely, genetic mutations favored either human or snake, creating atypical specimens more closely resembling one species or the other, or even powerful abominations.

The Serpent People were ruthless and effective. For centuries they reigned, collecting the fruits of the slave labor and willingly handing it over to their creators at a tribute site: the concealed entrance to the underground base containing a cosmic portal. The World Harvesters returned many times to collect their bounty, but when the harvests started to dwindle, they stopped coming altogether. After countless generations had passed, their former masters became mere legends and myths. Only written accounts of the World Harvesters remained, and those accounts were lost with time. The conceit of the Serpent People led many to believe the World Harvesters never existed at all.

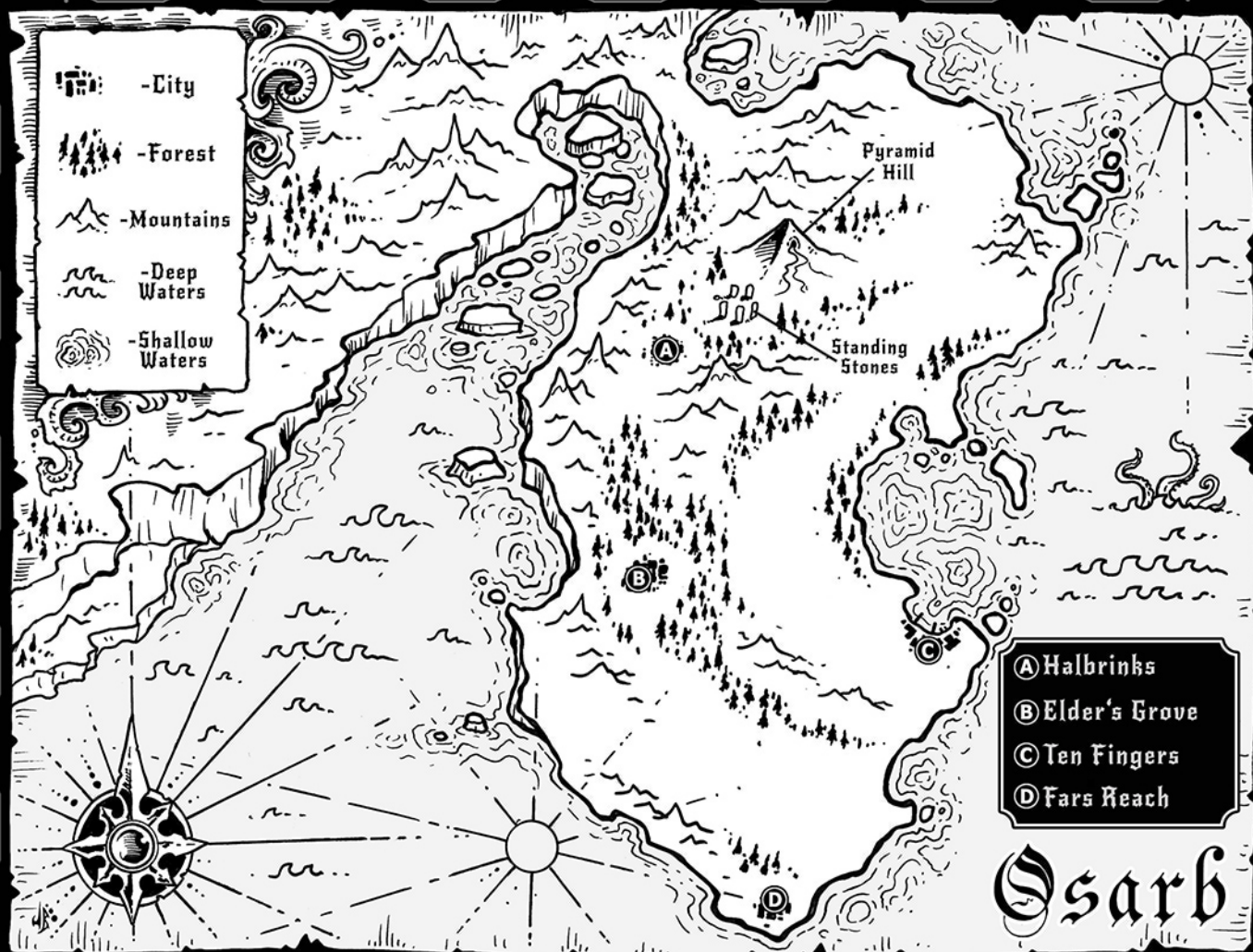
With the loss of belief in their former gods, the Serpent People were spiritually bereft. That was when the goddess Takisaka, the Mother of Serpents, reached out to them through visions, and they devoted themselves to her.

As they evolved, the Serpent People developed biotechnology powered by the life essence of their humanoid slaves. By physically connecting probes into the spinal cords of humanoids, the serpentine overlords could generate power for lighting and other technologies, living in comfort at the horrifying expense of their slaves. Several more centuries passed. Then the unpredictable happened—a sudden ice age struck the planet. Unable to thrive in the icy climate, the cold-blooded slave masters feared for their very existence.

Their priests and sages worked furiously on a means of survival without success as the temperatures became progressively colder. It was when High Priest Sekumvar meditated for seven days straight without eating that a vision came to him. The Serpent People were to build a massive pyramid dedicated to Takisaka on a specific location—the former tribute site of the World Harvesters. Without delay they built the pyramid to the specifications in the vision, pushing their slave labor to the limit with many deaths. They had passed the test of devotion and pleased Takisaka. They also, unknowingly, sealed the entrance to the World Harvester complex, helping to ensure the alien race would never reclaim Takisaka's followers from her. She rewarded High Priest Sekumvar with a further vision. He saw that she had imbued the central column of the pyramid with teleportation magic. They needed only to attach a biotechnology device to the column and, with it, sacrifice one humanoid life in order to beam one living being, or a similar quantity of inorganic material, to the warm and verdant moon that orbits Osarb. And thus, the exodus began.

They found the moon's environment most hospitable and soon brought their technology, resources, and many of their slaves, leaving behind temples and other structures. These later fell to ruin from neglect or were destroyed by encroaching glaciers. The Serpent People now inhabit the Serpent Moon with the means, but no desire, to return to the icy planet. Two millennia have passed, and they, too, have all but been forgotten on Osarb.

*Note: The Serpent People speak Common when dealing with their slaves but have developed their own sibilant language called Serpentalia, which they use for writing and communicating amongst themselves. For the wizard spell **comprehend languages**, Serpentalia should be considered terrestrial for spell check purposes.*



ADVENTURE BACKGROUND

The village of Halbrinks lies in the northern half of a peninsula long protected from the dangers of the mainland by the icy tundra brought about by Osarb's last ice age. Since the Great Thaw began, wildlife not seen for generations has returned to the land and so have forgotten dangers, now that the land bridge to the mainland is passable.

The inhabitants of Halbrinks find their peaceful isolation upended by migratory monsters and humanoid raids from the North. Though the climate is overall warmer, winter approaches. Larger hunting parties are sent out as a form of protection as the villagers try to adapt to the new dangers and prepare for the harsh season to come.

Note: All DCC races can be found in the village and the peninsula, having learned to live in harmony during the cold and relatively peaceful era of the ice age.

(See Appendix for maps, details, and adventure hooks for the major villages of the peninsula.)



ADVENTURE OVERVIEW FOR THE JUDGE

In this adventure, two conjoined twin ogres, one an ogre-mage, have discovered that below the nearby Pyramid Hill, an actual pyramid of the now-absent Serpent People exists. The twins traveled to the site with a small retinue of goblins, gaining entrance by excavating the side of the hill. By studying the ancient texts and hieroglyphs within, the ogre-mage has discovered how to connect humanoids to the ancient devices therein. This powers the inner workings of the pyramid, including a chair that can transport a single person at a time to the Serpent Moon at the cost of the entire life force of the humanoid victim. The ogre twins have used their goblin minions to raid the local area, seeking test subjects for the chair. The ogre-mage has yet to try the chair himself as he is still studying the hieroglyphs and texts discovered, but he has sent two (or more) goblins to an unknown fate. He is also obsessed with the third level of the pyramid and a mysterious light that glows from the floor there. (Surviving captives and the ogre's notes reveal this.) The third floor was once completely flooded, and the goblins are afraid to cross a small, stream-fed pond that remains between the entrance to the level and the strange bright light that glows from a chasm in the back of the large chamber.

If the PCs investigate the glow, they discover that an earthquake has exposed an ancient underground base of the World Harvesters. The glow is from overhead lights in a short corridor. The base was mostly destroyed by earthquakes ages ago, and the corridor leads to all that remains. The cosmic portal, deeper in the base, remains unharmed, along with a few relics and a celestial prisoner, immune to the effects of time, who can provide the party with valuable information about the World Harvesters.

At the conclusion of the adventure, the PCs will have a few options: they can return to their village as heroes and continue their adventures on Osarb, they can use the chair teleporter to confront the Serpent People on the Serpent Moon, or they can activate the cosmic portal and enter an unknown world limited only by the Judge's imagination.





THE OGRE TWINS

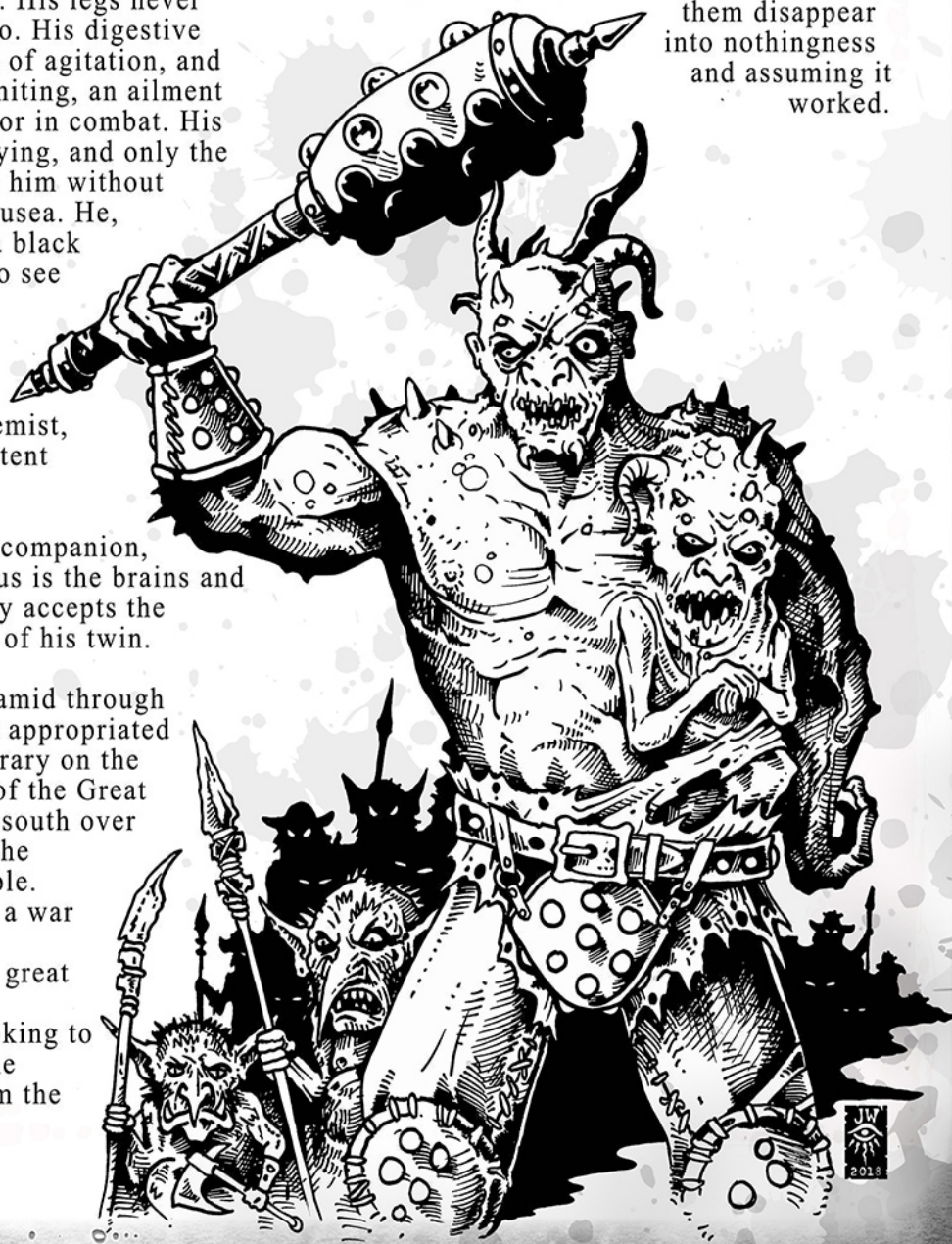
Gwordo is essentially your average ogre—huge, dumb, and strong. He carries a massive war club for bashing skulls in and is quite an effective fighter. His story could have been that of any ogre, but he was born for greatness. His greatness does not lie within him, but upon him, for he was born conjoined to a twin, Cygnus—a rare ogre-mage. Cygnus's circulatory system is abnormal, pumping extra blood to his skin and brain and a deficient amount to the rest of his body. His brain received enough nourishment to render him a genius, and his skin outgrew his withered body. Loose flesh led to droopy eyelids and a drooling mouth. Unable to properly close his lips, his teeth began to rot. His tiny hands are weak but functional. His arms are too short to have ever practiced hygiene. His legs never quite separated from Gwordo. His digestive system is in a constant state of agitation, and he is prone to projectile vomiting, an ailment that he has turned to his favor in combat. His overall appearance is horrifying, and only the strong-willed can look upon him without experiencing debilitating nausea. He, at times, covers himself in a black gauze veil that allows him to see out but keeps others from seeing him until it suits his purpose. He has spent his life studying magic and is a formidable wizard and alchemist, able to make a variety of potent potions.

Gwordo, his ever-tolerant companion, realized long ago that Cygnus is the brains and he is the brawn. He willingly accepts the sometimes-outlandish plans of his twin.

Cygnus learned of the pyramid through studying an ancient tome he appropriated by force from a wizard's library on the mainland. The coincidence of the Great Thaw allowed him to travel south over the land bridge to seek out the pyramid of the Serpent People. Along the way, he recruited a war party of goblins from the Snowblynd Clan, promising great rewards in return for their servitude. He, in part, is looking to find a patron in Takisaka, the Mother of Serpents, to whom the pyramid is dedicated.

Since entering the pyramid, Cygnus has spent his time studying the hieroglyphs on the walls and two ancient books (written in the secret language of the Serpent People) he found within by casting *read magic* and *comprehend languages*. Cygnus has learned that the Serpent People left for the Serpent Moon long ago because of the ice age. He has also learned to operate some of the biotechnology left behind, successfully using captured humanoids as a power source.

He has just begun to scratch the surface, but he has already learned how to power the lighting by using the biotechnology and has begun experimenting with the teleportation chair. He has used the chair on two goblins (or more per the Judge's discretion), watching them disappear into nothingness and assuming it worked.



Each activation has used up the entire life force of a village hunter, and a number of lifeless husks (equal to the number of goblins teleported) will be found in the chamber. Though Cygnus does not know this for sure, he was successful in sending the goblins to the Serpent Moon. They are currently trapped in a large stone room with an identical chair. (See The Serpent Moon Trap for further details.)

Cygnus is obsessed with the Serpent People and is compelled to learn more of their secrets, but he is further drawn to a mysterious bright light that glows from a crevasse in the floor on the 3rd and (apparently) lowest level of the pyramid. He has found nothing mentioning a lower level and is convinced some great secret lies below. Thus far, he has been unable to convince, or threaten, his goblin henchmen into investigating the glow, for they fear what lurks in the dark waters of the pond which separates the entrance from the crevasse.

THE SNOWBLYND CLAN

The Snowblynd Clan's lair is just northwest of the land bridge leading to the peninsula where the village of Halbrinks lies. The clan is the dominant goblin tribe of the local mountain chain known merely as High Peaks. The goblins of the Snowblynd Clan have thick grey-white fur (an adaptation resulting from millennia living in the cold), and they have one other characteristic that sets them apart from standard goblins—vile spittle. They have turned their chronic sinusitis into a combative edge that has placed them on the top of the goblin hierarchy—the foul creatures will spit an acidic phlegm into the faces of their enemies, often producing a debilitating effect.

The clan chief, Bilkris, sent an envoy to greet the ogre twins when his scouts discovered them passing through his territory. With the promises of treasure and humanoid slaves, it was not a hard decision to spare them a warband. The goblins of the warband, once separated from the clan, now follow the twins out of fear rather than out of duty to their chief.



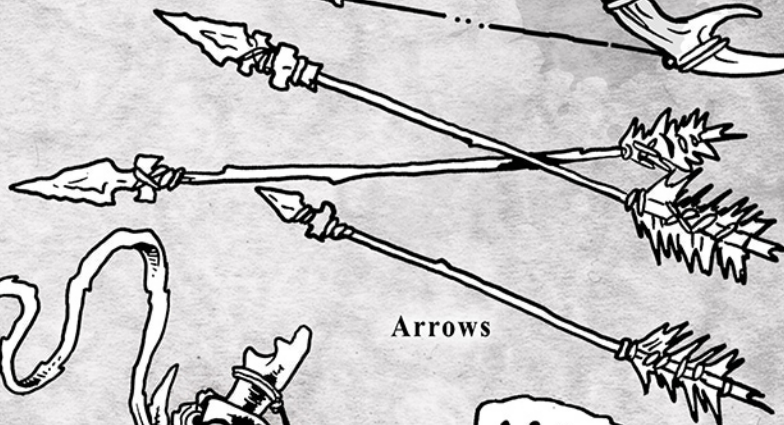
-COMMON SNOWBLYND EQUIPMENT-



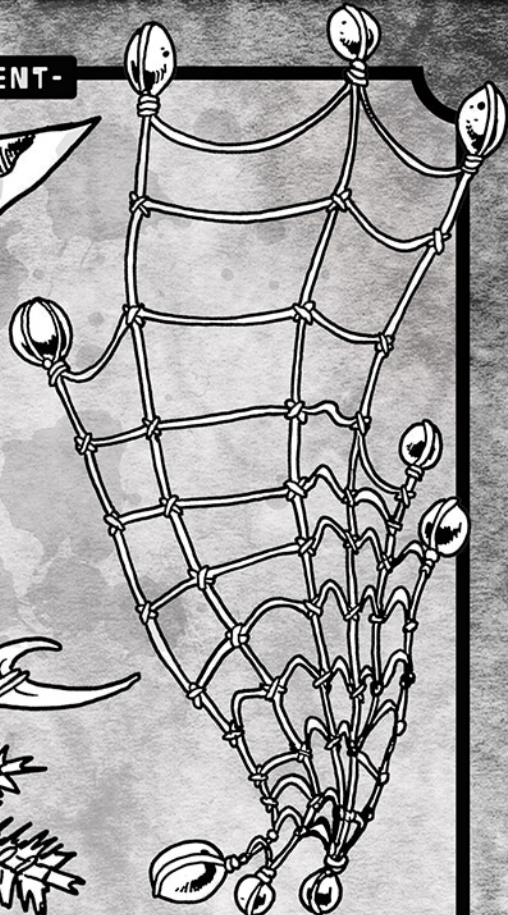
Short Sword



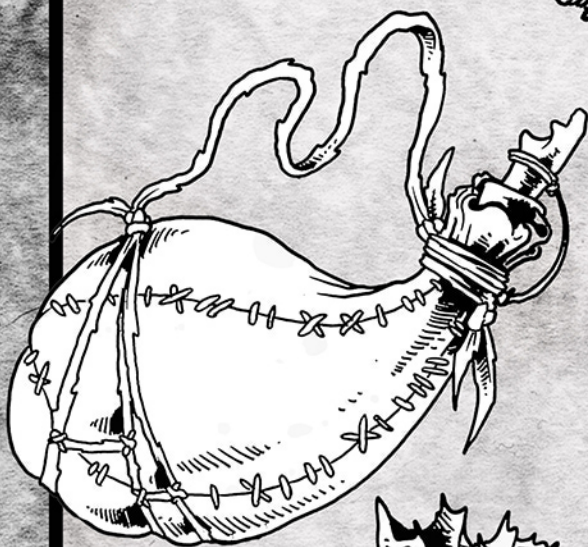
Short Bow



Arrows



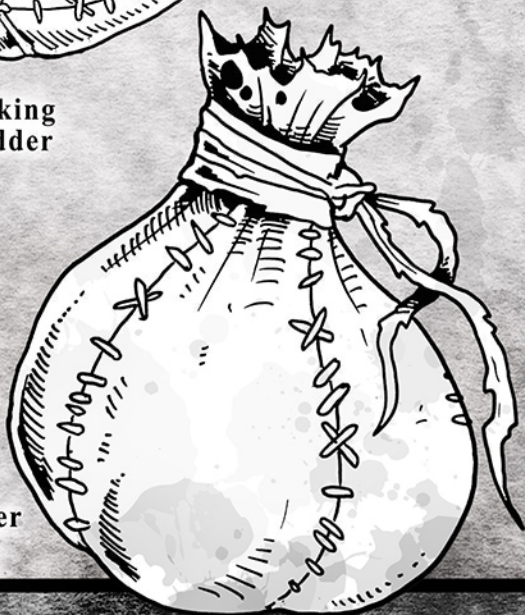
Net



Drinking Bladder



Leather Belt



Leather Sack

What's in that stinky sack?

(Apply Luck modifier to d6 roll)

| | |
|----|--|
| 1 | Stank and rot. Player must make a DC 10 Fortitude save or vomit, losing any benefits from recent consumables, and lose 1d3 Str for rest of day (on save finds 1 silver piece in filth) |
| 2 | Stinky meat. Player must make a DC 10 Fortitude save or vomit, losing any benefits from recent consumables |
| 3 | A gnawed upon humanoid appendage (Judge's choice of appendage) |
| 4 | Half-eaten rat carcass |
| 5 | Flint rock, length of sinew, and a few tattered scraps of leather |
| 6 | 2d3 silver pieces and a length of sinew |
| 7+ | A shiny trinket worth 1 gold piece (or, if preferred, simply a single gold piece) |

STARTING THE ADVENTURE





THE VILLAGE OF HALBRINKS AREA 1

The characters should be residents of the village of Halbrinks, with an emotional attachment to the village and its inhabitants. They should be level 1, having survived a funnel (or freshly generated), and just beginning to become familiar with their newfound abilities.

The Serpent Moon shines bright green in the clear night sky. The villagers of Halbrinks are celebrating a decent harvest, hopeful, yet fearing the coming winter as always. The Great Thaw has been both a boon and a bane. Warmer weather has brought better harvests but also great dangers from migratory monsters and humanoid raiders. This is a night of merriment. Tomorrow will be spent preparing for winter if you and your fellow villagers wish to survive until spring.

Suddenly, screams and tense chatter fill the air, radiating from the village center.

There is a crowd gathered around a village hunter. Pale, bleeding from a gash above his left eye, clothes soiled and torn, he stammers out a cry. "Goblins! They attacked us. Captured the whole hunting party. Down the old eastern hunting trail, near the Standing Stones," he sputters before succumbing to his wounds, his dying efforts invested in the welfare of his village.

The man is Tamrin, one of the best hunters in the village, well-liked by all. He has nothing of value on his person. He cannot be saved by a cleric's Lay on Hands as his death comes mere seconds after his warning.

There is little time for mourning. Village Chief Larson pleads for volunteers to seek out the goblin raiders and retrieve any hunters still living.

Note: See map of Halbrinks on page 52.

THE STANDING STONES AREA 2

The two-hour travel through the forest to the Standing Stones is uneventful. The clearing containing a circle of 10' tall stones is a common waypoint for villagers hiking or hunting. The menhirs are ancient, with crude depictions of humans hunting and, in places, killing large snakes. Today, the carnage of battle is obvious (even in the darkness). Three dead goblins with long grey-white fur, arrows peppering their corpses, have been abandoned to the elements. No hunters can be found, but it doesn't take a trained tracker to see a trail in the snow-covered path leading northeast towards Pyramid Hill.

On the far side of the stones, gnawed human bones litter the ground near the remains of a campfire, enough to account for one missing hunter.

Optional Encounter:

If running this as a one-shot adventure or at a convention, it is recommended to skip this encounter for the sake of time.



Shortly after arriving at the Standing Stones, a horn blast pierces the cold darkness, nearby and from the evergreen forest to the south. One round later, a horn blast answers from the north, a bit farther off. After two more rounds, four goblins and two wolves burst from the southern forest to attack the party.

The wolves charge straight at the party, goaded by their two handlers, who have nasty short swords at the ready. The other two goblins wield nets, swinging them overhead. These goblins also wear short swords at their sides, which they will use after tossing the nets.

One round later, an identical group (four goblins, two wolves) sweeps in from the north, flanking the party. They wish to capture them, if possible, but are not above killing them. If more than half the goblins fall, the rest flee, making a looping path through the forest toward Pyramid Hill but not directly to it. (Note: Any retreating goblins can be used by the Judge to attack the PCs from the rear once they enter the pyramid. The goblins will not enter the pyramid before the PCs for fear of being followed, a rule they follow strictly per Cygnus' threats of death.) The goblins belong to the Snowblynd Clan and are part of the retinue that has been hired out as mercenaries to Gwordo and Cygnus.

Wolf:

Init: +3

Atk: bite +2 melee (1d4)

AC: 12

HD: 1d6

MV: 40'

Act: 1d20

SV: Fort +3, Ref +2, Will +1

AL: N



Snowblind Goblin:

Init: 0

Atk: bite +1 melee (1d3)
short sword -1 melee (1d6)

AC: 12

HD: 1d6-1

MV: 20'

Act: 1d20 + Vile Spittle every third round

SP: Vile Spittle, Infravision 60'

SV: Fort 0, Ref +2, Will -2

AL: C



Special Attacks:

Net: Net attacks ignore AC bonuses from armor, save for the +1 bonus provided by shields. The attacker rolls a base attack vs. AC 10 + shield bonus +/- Agility modifier. If the roll is successful, the number rolled becomes the DC target for the defender's Reflex save to avoid becoming entangled by the net. If the Reflex save is successful, the net misses completely. If entangled, the victim must make a DC 15 Agility check to escape. This can be attempted once each round until free. Netted victims are considered prone (+4 to hit) if attacked. An ally can spend two full actions to remove the net without any checks.

Vile Spittle: Once every third round as an additional free attack, the goblin can produce enough spittle to hawk a loogie. As an affront and legitimate means of gaining an advantage, the goblin will spit the vile, stinging phlegm at the face of an opponent. The odor and taste are so foul that most victims will suffer at least some disadvantage. The range is five feet. As with the net above, the goblin must roll a base attack vs. AC 10 + shield bonus +/- Agility modifier. The judge may allow a -2 penalty to the attacker if the target is wearing a helmet. If the roll is successful, the number rolled becomes the DC for the defender's Reflex save. Success means the spit misses completely. In the case of a failure, roll on the Vile Spittle chart below.

Vile Spittle Chart

(Roll d7, modified by Luck modifier, and consult the effect below)

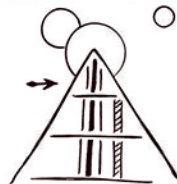
| Roll | Location | Effect |
|--------------|---------------------|--|
| 7+ | Just on the cheek | DC 10 Will save or give up one attack to wipe off spittle |
| 6 | Corner of the eye | -2 to all attack rolls for 1d3 rounds |
| 5 | On the lip | DC 15 Will save or give up one attack to wipe off spittle |
| 4 | Up the nose | The irritation swells the mucous membranes, and a brief insanity takes hold. The PC attacks a random nearby target (roll for random friend or foe). Duration is one attack. |
| 3 | Straight in the eye | -2 to all attack rolls & -2 penalty to AC for 3d6 hours, unless the PC flushes the eye with water for 3 rounds, forgoing all other actions. The eye flush must be initiated within 2 rounds. |
| 2 | In the open mouth | DC 15 Will save or vomit for 1d3 rounds, unable to attack. Also, will drink (no saving throw) a random liquid in possession (water, potion, oil, etc.), to beneficial or harmful effect, in attempts to rid the taste, the mind too clouded to make a rational choice. |
| 1 or less | In both eyes | -4 to all attack rolls & -4 penalty to AC for 3d6 hours, unless the PC flushes eyes with water for 3 rounds, forgoing all other actions. The eye flush must be initiated within 2 rounds. |



PYRAMID HILL AREA 3

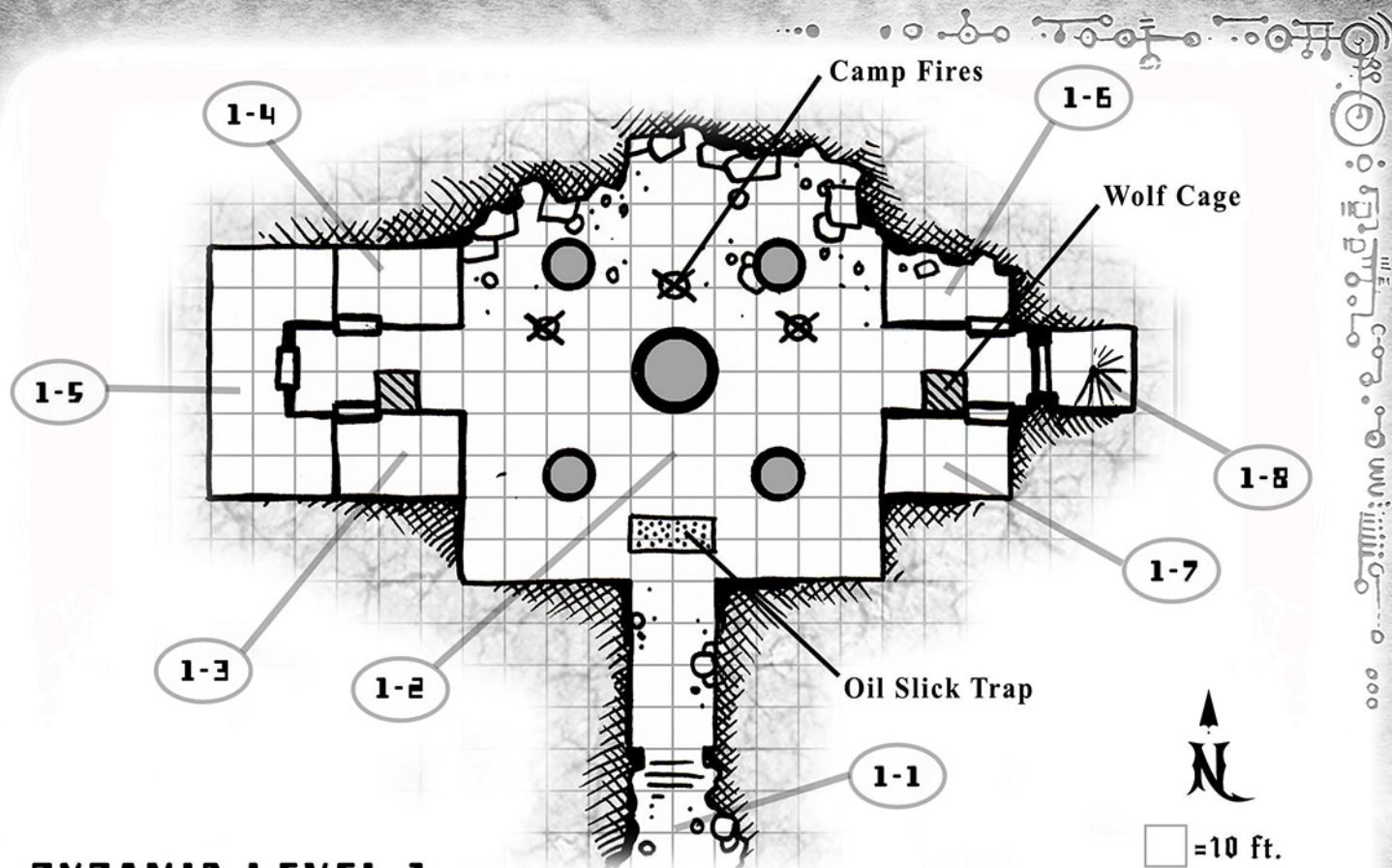
Mud and occasional blood peek through the thin layer of snow as unashamed goblin footprints lead northeast through the evergreen forest. Following the winding trail takes a little over an hour but eventually comes to the edge of a clearing dominated by Pyramid Hill. The massive pyramid-shaped

hill, a landmark well known to the villagers of Halbrinks, is climbed by hunters to scope out prey and hikers wishing a grand view of the surrounding landscape. Visits to the hill have decreased drastically since humanoid raids began a few years back, and it is suprising to see how much the snowcap has receded each time someone visits it anew.



Unbeknownst to any for over a millennium, Pyramid Hill is actually a real pyramid once inhabited by the Serpent People. It has been forgotten with time and covered in soil, vegetation, and later, ice. The Great Thaw has made it accessible; the ogre-mage, Cygnus, discovered its existence and ordered its excavation.





PYRAMID LEVEL 1

AREA 1-1: ENTRANCE

From the concealment of the forest, you can see two hairy goblins with crude bows in their hands peering outward from inside a newly formed cave mouth in the southern side of the hill, just below the snowcap. Freshly excavated soil cascades down the hill from the opening.

The goblins are sentries protecting the entrance to their master's discovery—the pyramid of the Serpent People. The cave mouth lies 120 feet from the forest edge.

The two goblin sentries are rather stupid and emboldened from the recent successful raid on the hunters. It is possible to sneak up on them from the opposite side of the hill (roll for surprise) then attack them from above, or simply take them out before they are able to respond. They will notice anyone approaching directly from the forest edge, first releasing a volley of one arrow each. Then, one retreats farther inside, while the second continues to loose arrows at the approaching party. If either is wounded or killed, the survivor(s) runs deeper into the pyramid yelling for their comrades and joining them in an ambush in Area 1-2.

Snowblynd Goblin:

Init: 0

Atk: bite +1 melee (1d3)
short bow/short sword -1 melee (1d6)

AC: 12

HD: 1d6-1

MV: 20'

Act: 1d20 + Vile Spittle every third round

SP: Vile Spittle, Infravision 60'

SV: Fort 0, Ref +2, Will -2

AL: C

The goblins carry 12 and 14 arrows respectively and one short sword each.

Inside the cave mouth, the dirt gives way to rubble, which in turn gives way to a dark hallway with carved stone walls, approximately 20 feet wide and 60 feet in length. This opens into a larger room lit by a flickering light source. Attentive PCs may notice intricate carvings on the walls of snake-headed humanoids lording over humans, dispersed with other scenes of lavishness at the expense of the human slaves. The thick dust on the floor, although disturbed by fresh goblin footprints, speaks to the ancient age of the structure.

AREA 1-2: CENTRAL CHAMBER

The hallway opens into a huge chamber illuminated by three sputtering campfires, the scent of burnt hair and flesh intermingling with the heavy smoke. A large 20' diameter central stone column extends from floor to ceiling and is surrounded by four smaller support columns. The back wall consists of crumbled masonry and rocks interspersed with ancient soil. Twenty-foot-wide side hallways lead away to the east and west.

This is the main campsite of the Snowblynd goblin raiders. Here, they rest up between hunts for more villagers and eat any they accidentally kill. Just out of sight of the entry hall, two large cages, one in each side hallway, house one wolf each. A goblin wolf handler sleeps and generally stays near each cage, keeping the animals calm or at the ready as required. The rest of the goblins sleep on mats or socialize in the back of the chamber. Today, they are celebrating their recent big haul—the Halbrinks hunters.

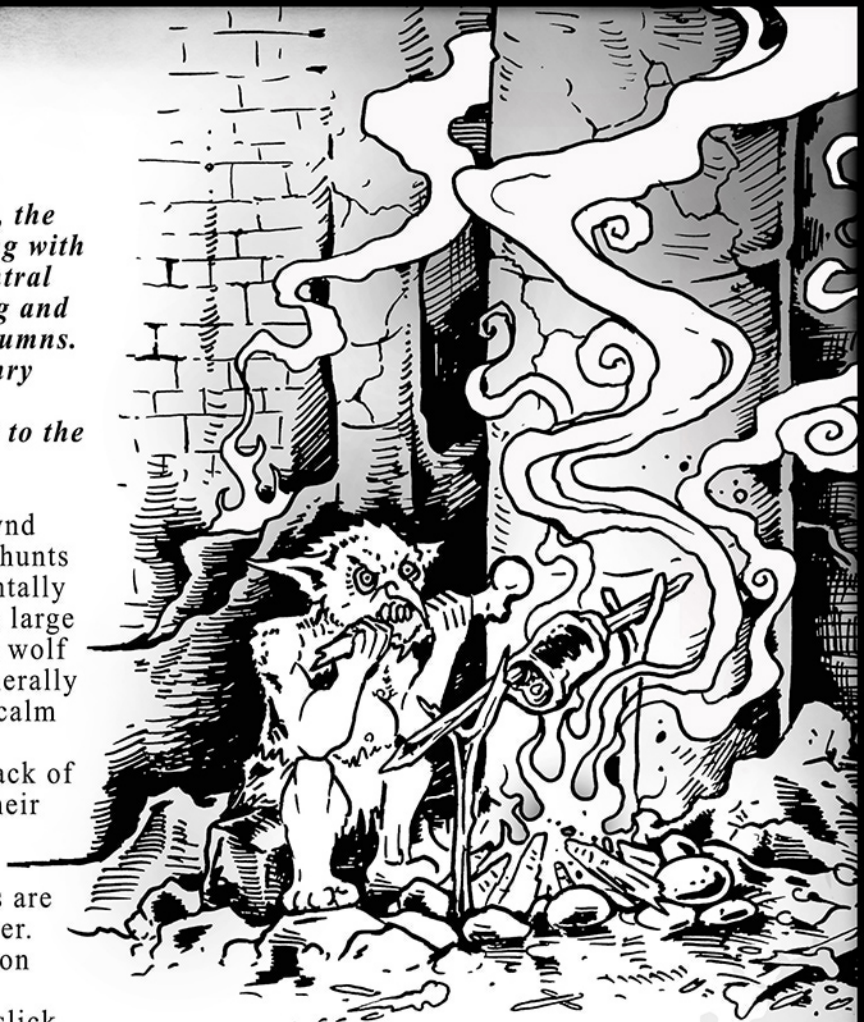
If forewarned by the sentries, the goblins are ready with bows, using the columns as cover. The goblins speak a broken form of Common and will do their best to goad hesitant adventurers into the room. There is an oil slick trap (see below) at the end of the hallway, just inside the central chamber. Regardless of the effectiveness of the oil slick trap, once the party enters the chamber, each of the wolf handlers releases his wolf. The handler in the eastern hallway then runs east through the open archway and down the stairs in an attempt to warn the ogre twins. If for any reason he does not make it, other goblins will try the same route.

Oil Slick Trap: Oil has been laid on thick and then covered with dust to disguise it. Any PC running into the central chamber must make a DC 15 Agility check or fall, losing any remaining actions that round (DC 10 if walking). Fallen creatures are at +2 to be hit with melee weapons, -2 to be hit with missiles, and at -1d to attack until able to stand (DC 7 Agility check, may try once per round). Some of the goblins rush in with short swords to attack those on the ground, and the released wolves do the same.

Adventurers searching in good light might [DC 12 Find Traps] see footprints diverging from the center of the hallway to the sides. The goblins enter the central chamber on the edge of the hallway and step diagonally in, but they have done their best to disguise this with careful brushing of the dust.

If the sentries were unable to warn their comrades, there is a chance that the goblins can be taken by surprise. However, no surprise is possible if there was more than minimal noise involved in dispatching the sentries. If there was just minimal noise, pick 3 random characters in the party and have them roll under their Luck score. If all 3 succeed, then the goblins are surprised; if any fail, the goblins are not surprised. If surprised, the goblins will do their best to execute the same strategy as above.

There are 8–12 goblins and one goblin sub-leader in the room (depending on party size to provide an appropriate challenge). This includes the two wolf handlers.



Snowblynd Goblin Sub-Leader:

Init: +1
Atk: bite +2 melee (1d3)
short sword +2 melee (1d6)
AC: 12
HD: 2d6-1
MV: 20'
Act: 1d20 + Vile Spittle every third round
SP: Vile Spittle, Infravision 60'
SV: Fort +1, Ref +2, Will +2
AL: C

Snowblynd Goblin:

Init: 0
Atk: bite +1 melee (1d3)
short bow/short sword -1 melee (1d6)
AC: 12
HD: 1d6-1
MV: 20'
Act: 1d20 + Vile Spittle every third round
SP: Vile Spittle, Infravision 60'
SV: Fort 0, Ref +2, Will -2
AL: C

Wolf:

Init: +3
Atk: bite +2 melee (1d4)
AC: 12
HD: 1d6
MV: 40'
Act: 1d20
SV: Fort +3, Ref +2, Will +1
AL: L



There is no loot except the crude weapons that the goblins carry, including 106 arrows between them. The bedrolls are infested with bugs, and the food is not palatable. There is plenty of water in waterskins for anyone willing to drink after a goblin.

*Optional loot: Some of the goblins carry a leather sack tied to their belts. See the **What's in that stinky sack?** chart on page 12 for contents.*

AREA 1-3: TOOL STORAGE ROOM

The stone door to this 20'x30' room opens easily, its craftsmanship lasting the ages. Large urns line the back wall, and the goblins have stashed their simple excavation tools here in a messy heap.

The urns are lidded, and ropes smelling of formaldehyde can be found within. These are strong, 77' long ropes used ceremonially by the Serpent People. The (5) ropes are unaffected by the degradation of time and will fetch 5 sp each. The goblin tools consist of eight shovels (1d3 damage), two pickaxes (1d4+1 damage), ten buckets, three hammers (1d3 damage), several iron spikes, and one rusty handaxe (1d6 damage).

AREA 1-4: GOBLIN LATRINE

This 20'x30' room is mostly empty. The back wall is severely cracked. Judging by the smell and the nearly full buckets along the walls, the goblins use this room as a latrine, its former purpose unknown.

If the cracks are examined closely, a single gold coin with a snakehead on one side and a pyramid on the other is found, lightly covered by wet soil. A goblin discovered it amongst the rubble and hid it here, the only place he could go that wouldn't cause suspicion. Note: a dwarven PC can smell the gold coin through the scent of goblin dung.

AREA 1-5: PRIESTS' CHAMBER

This large C-shaped room is filled with 2" of water, which appears to be seeping in from cracks in the west wall and draining out slowly through a crack in the floor in the northwest corner. The water is very cold, suggesting it might be from the melting snowcap outside. Carvings on the walls appear to honor a great serpentine deity or perhaps a pharaoh in a serpent mask. The room is empty, save for debris.

This was a sleeping chamber for the priests of the pyramid. Close inspection of the walls will reveal indentations above three different representations of the serpentine deity. An Intelligence check [DC 12] will make the PC almost certain there was a gem inside the indentations at one time (any jeweler will know this without a check). Otherwise, the goblins have left this room largely untouched, the ice-cold water making it inhospitable even by their standards.

AREA 1-6: SPIDER-INFESTED CHAMBER

This 20'x30' room is empty other than the rubble that was once the north wall. Whatever caused the cave-in in the central chamber affected this room also. A few chunks of indecipherable wall carvings are littered amongst the larger rubble.

If the adventurers do a quick look and leave, nothing happens (though dwarven PCs will get a whiff of a gem amongst the rubble). If they inspect the rubble, some of it once comprised the wall and has partial carvings upon its flat surfaces, including portions of the serpent deity seen in Area 1-5. They will also notice a few

holes between the larger rocks. If they peer in one particularly large hole with a light source, a shiny green glint about an arm's length down the spiderweb-covered hole catches their attention. Immediately, a rather large, venomous crimson spider will emerge from the hole to attack, seeking to protect her nest (check for surprise).

The spider, lurking in the recesses of the haphazard stones, will attack with surprise on 1-4 on a d6. Its body measures 1.5' long and 8" wide, and its leg span is 3' across.



Crimson Spider:

Init: +3
Atk: bite +5 melee (1d4)
AC: 12
HD: 1d6
MV: 30'
Act: 1d20
SP: Poison (DC 14 Fortitude save or extra 2d3 damage and loss of 1 STR until healed by antidote or magically)
SV: Fort +1, Ref +3, Will +0
AL: N

Crimson spiders are known to be venomous by the inhabitants of Halbrinks.

The bulk of the rubble is too large to be moved by manual efforts though smaller pieces can be moved away from the hole from which the spider emerged. The green glinting object can only be retrieved by a skilled hand as it is misshapen and will need to be deftly manipulated to get it out of the hole. Any PC wishing to stick a hand inside the hole will discover a lacework of webs that leads to a larger opening within. If the area is probed with fingers, a medium-sized gem, still encased in a chunk of rock, can be grasped and pulled out of the hole. Unfortunately, the crimson spider has given birth to a cluster of spiderlings who now reside in the open area within the rubble.

The spiderlings swarm over the hand, biting and injecting their immature venom. The PC will need to make a d10 +5 roll and will suffer 1 point of damage per point rolled over the PC's Luck score. A burning torch inserted into the hole (or some other precautionary measure) kills all of the spiderlings, allowing for a safe search. The gem is an emerald and was part of the wall etching that was destroyed when the wall collapsed; it is worth 15 gold pieces.

AREA 1-7: SNOWBLYND GOBLIN LEADER ROOM

This chamber is 20'x30'. A goblin-sized makeshift bed is tucked into the corner, and a lantern sits upon two stacked crates.

All the pleasantries that a goblin warband leader would want can be found here: a gnawed human shank, 3 pieces of silver in a small leather bag, a small cask of mead, a corked pot of oil, a leather whip, a signaling horn, and two pairs of cured leather restraints, presumably for captives. The small leather bag is tucked under the bed. The lantern contains enough oil to burn for two hours. The pot of oil holds enough to burn for eight more hours of light.

AREA 1-8: STAIRWAY

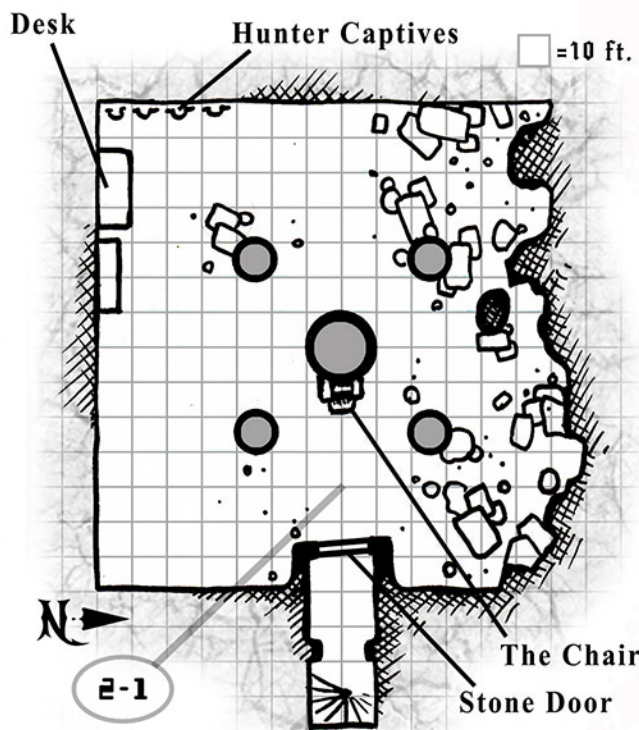
An open archway at the end of the hallway leads to a worked-stone spiral stairway leading down. It is dark and quiet below.

The stairs lead to both the 2nd and 3rd levels of the pyramid. They lead down 77 feet before coming to a landing with a large stone door (the 2nd level). The door is open slightly, and soft yellow light pours out. The stairway continues down another 77 feet and ends at a second landing (the 3rd level). The door exiting that landing is identical to the stone door to level 2, but that one is closed and locked, a large keyhole upon its surface. The door can only be opened by magical means, a DC 20 Pick Locks check, or a large stone key found in Area 2-1. No amount of physical exertion can open the locked door.

PYRAMID LEVEL 2

This level is where the conjoined ogre twins spend most of their time. Cygnus, carried around by an obedient Gwordo, experiments and studies the texts and pictographs here. The captured hunters await their fate, and a squad of Snowblynd goblins delights in tormenting them.

Cygnus is powering the overhead lighting of Level 2 of the pyramid with a biotechnological device that connects directly to the circuit; the attached hunter powering the light still lives and could possibly be saved by a skilled healer. The teleportation chair is the only other biotechnological device uncovered thus far. Cygnus has attached a hunter to the chair so that he can pull the lever to transport himself and Gwordo, he believes, to the Serpent Moon as a last resort if things go badly. He doesn't believe anyone would be crazy enough to follow him, and he prefers the unknown to certain death. (See Area 2-2: The Serpent Moon Trap.)



AREA 2-1: TRANSPORTER ROOM

The heavy stone door to this room is slightly ajar, and a soft yellow glow pours forth.

The door to the level is nearly 10' wide and made of thick stone. There is a loose barricade of rubble placed to slow, but not prevent, entry through the doorway. Three people may push simultaneously—a combined Strength of 30 and a full round of actions is required to budge it.

The door leads to a short hallway that ends at an archway opening to a large central chamber, much like the one on Level 1, but proportionally larger. The hallway sticks out into the room, allowing prepared enemies to hide around the corners of the end of the hallway.

Once the party enters the central chamber (regardless of any warning), read the following:

A huge chamber opens up before you, lit from above by softly glowing yellow orbs, the light waxing and waning slightly. The 20' diameter central column, four surrounding support columns, and the ruined northern wall are as they were on the first level of the pyramid. A large metallic chair with a metal lever attached to the right armrest sits empty with its back to the central column. A shimmering tube connects the neck of a village hunter, seated on the floor nearby, to the chair's base. He sits motionless, his eyes fixed straight ahead. More village hunters are bound and gagged against the west wall. They squirm with fearful excitement when they see you enter the room, their cries muffled and unintelligible through their gags. Yet another villager sits slumped against the south wall staring into nothingness, also with a shimmering tube inserted in the back of her neck, this time connected to the wall. Two lifeless humanoid husks, perhaps hunters, have been discarded towards the rubble side of the room.

Several goblins stand at the ready with spears or axes in hand, and one waits near the bound captives brandishing a large dagger. A huge ogre is positioned not far from the central column and the chair. A curious large lump sticks out of his left side and is covered with a black gauzy sheet.

The ogre speaks without moving his lips. "Welcome. Before you rush to your deaths, put away your weapons and consider my proposal. I have a job for you that will bring you riches, and if you refuse, your friends will die. My goblin has instructions to start cutting their throats at my command."

If the PCs stop, he offers to hire them to investigate the glow coming from the crevasse in the floor of Level 3, promising to free the hunters and share any loot if they complete the contract. If they take the job, he betrays them when they return and after they have shared the knowledge they have gained.

Or, if they are like most players, they will attack him mid-sentence...

Roll initiative!

Combat: Ogres Twins, 1 Snowblynd Goblin Warband Leader, 6-9 Snowblynd Goblins (Judge's discretion to challenge the party, suggest 2 goblins per PC, counting the leader.)

If the ogres have been warned:

Four Snowblynd goblins are hidden in the nooks to the sides of the archway, two on each side, allowing them to attack from behind once the PCs enter the room. Cygnus has taken a sip from his Mindflux Potion (giving him an additional +2 to his spell checks).

If the ogres have not been warned:

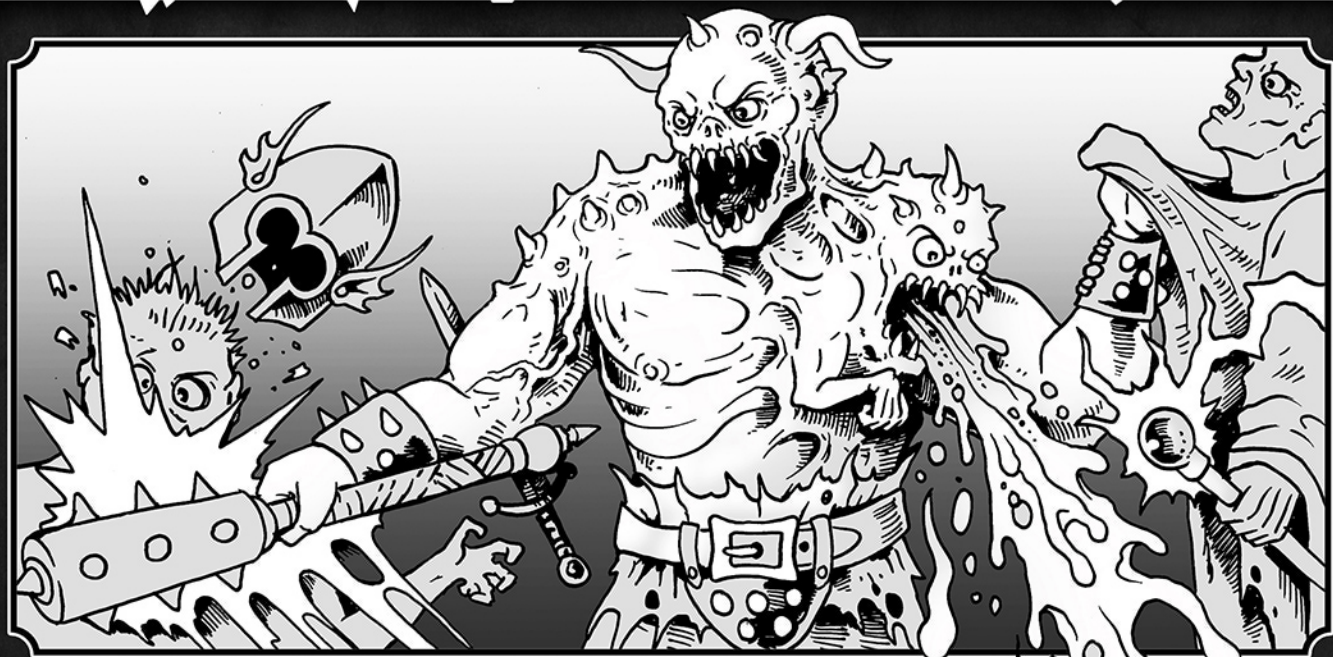
They have heard the commotion of the door opening and in no way will they be surprised. However, they will be less prepared. The Snowblynd goblins have not had a chance to hide behind the corners of the hallway, so all of them are standing at the ready in front of the door. Cygnus has had no chance to drink his potion.

At the start of combat, Gwordo takes a position near the transportation chair, and Cygnus orders the knife-wielding goblin to kill the hunters. (The goblin will be able to kill one per round until stopped.) The Snowblynd goblins (except any waiting to ambush the PCs) take up ranks beside Gwordo. Gwordo waits for the adventurers to rush him, in hopes that they will have their backs to any hiding goblins. Hidden goblins get +2 to their first attack. When the PCs close the distance, Cygnus rips off his veil and uses his Horrifying Visage ability (see below).

Cygnus follows up by casting spells or using his Stinging Vomit as tactically appropriate. If he or Gwordo gets severely wounded, Gwordo attempts to plop down in the transportation chair and pull the lever. This transports them to the Serpent Moon (see Area 2-2). The ogres work on separate initiatives, so coordinating their plans can be a challenge for the Judge (which reflects the challenge the ogres themselves face!).

The goblins converge on the PCs, spitting and attacking with melee weapons, their warband leader shouting instructions as he joins the fray. They fight until the ogre twins are defeated then quickly surrender unless they have the upper hand.

Note: The Judge should have at least 3 goblins surrender towards the end of the fight so the party will have the option to use the chair to pursue the ogre twins (if they used the transportation chair) or simply experiment with the chair.



Gwordo:

Init: +3
Atk: war club +5 melee (1d8+4)
AC: 16
HD: 4d8+4
HP: 29
MV: 20'
Act: 1d20
SV: Fort +4, Ref +2, Will +1
AL: C

Special Attacks:

Horrifying Visage – Any character making visual contact with Cygnus must make a DC 10 Will save (repeated each round until successful) or be unable to act due to nausea and vomiting.

Stinging Vomit – Cygnus can target an individual up to 10 feet away or do a fanning area of effect attack at all characters in front of him within 5 feet. The direct attack requires him to make a range attack (at +1 to hit) against the target's AC. The area of effect attack will spray everyone nearby unless they make a DC 10 Reflex save. If either form of attack is successful, those in contact with the bile will take 1d3 acid damage and must make a DC 14 Will save (repeated each round until successful) or begin vomiting and be unable to act. He can make this attack only twice per day and must wait one round between the attacks.

*If either Cygnus or Gwordo is killed, the other will bleed to death slowly (2 rounds for Cygnus, 3 rounds for Gwordo).

Cygnus:

Init: +2
Atk: none
AC: 16
HD: 2d8+4
HP: 14
MV: per Gwordo
Act: 1d20
SP: Horrifying Visage
Stinging Vomit
Spells: (spell check +5 for level 2 and 18 INT):
*read magic, comprehend languages,
flaming hands, choking cloud*
SV: Fort +4, Ref +2, Will +1
AL: C

Snowblynd Goblin Warband Leader:

Init: +2
Atk: bite +3 melee (1d3)
 short sword +3 melee (1d6)
AC: 14
HD: 3d6+1
MV: 20'
Act: 1d20 + Vile Spittle every third round
SP: Vile Spittle
 Infravision 60'
SV: Fort +1, Ref +3, Will +3
AL: C

Snowblynd Goblin:

Init: 0
Atk: bite +1 melee (1d3)
 spear/handaxe -1 melee (1d6)
AC: 12
HD: 1d6-1
MV: 20'
Act: 1d20 + Vile Spittle every third round
SP: Vile Spittle
 Infravision 60'
SV: Fort 0, Ref +2, Will -2
AL: C



After the Battle:

Any surviving hunters are grateful for their release. (The Judge may elect to offer them as zero-level PCs.) They tell of Cygnus' plans, or what they could glean of them in their state. Between that and the ogre's notes, the PCs should be privy to the following information:

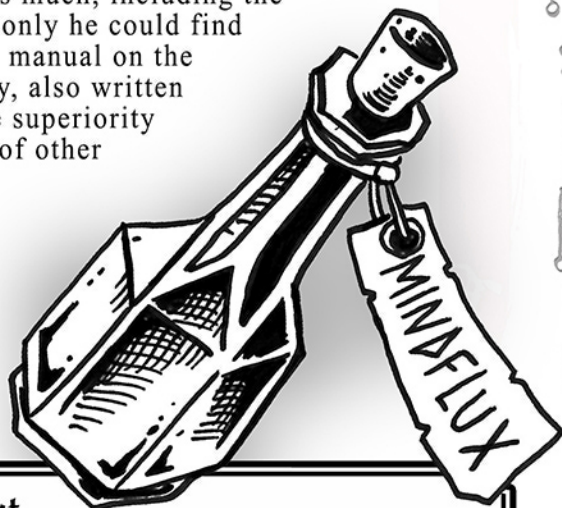
- ✦ The Serpent People once ruled over humans and goodly humanoids as slaves.
- ✦ They left to the Serpent Moon using the chair transporter due to the ice age and being unable to survive the cold.
- ✦ The method to attach the biotechnology apparatus to the craniovertebral junction.
- ✦ Odd references to the ancient gods and the coming of the new Serpent God, Takisaka, to whom the pyramid is dedicated.
- ✦ The ceremonial steps required to begin a bond with Takisaka.
- ✦ Cygnus was keenly interested in exploring the third level of the pyramid and the mysterious light coming from the floor there, but the goblins refused to cross the stream to get to it.

The hunter powering the lights, and the one attached to the transportation chair (if it wasn't used), can be safely detached if proper care is taken. The device has a button in the back that, when depressed, removes the needle piercing the spinal column. To remove it without killing the attached person, a character must pass an Intelligence check [DC 15]. A cleric can perform a Lay on Hands check and only requires 1 die of healing, but death will occur on a failed check (and disapproval is possible). Any hunters saved in this fashion will be incapacitated for days during the healing process. Any PC reading Cygnus' notes will get a +3 to the Intelligence or Lay on Hands check when removing or inserting the biotechnology device.

Treasure:

Gwordo carries two small keys in his pocket that open the two chests in the room (see below). Three ancient tomes lie upon a wooden desk along the south wall. The first is a history of the Serpent People as told by the great human scholar Aritatis. She did not experience the Serpent People firsthand but compiled the knowledge through research just 150 years after they departed the planet. The book was in the collection of the wizard Cygnus killed and is the impetus of his current research. The second tome, bound in human flesh, is a compendium of ceremonies involved in the worship of Takisaka and is written in Serpentalia. Cygnus found it in the pyramid and has been studying it in an attempt to form a bond with the reptilian goddess. His notes will reveal as much, including the ceremonial steps an adherent must take to form such a bond if only he could find the sacrificial statue of Takisaka. The third tome is a technical manual on the creation, operation, and practical applications of biotechnology, also written in Serpentalia, floridly enhanced with side notes espousing the superiority of the Serpent People while pointing out the inferior qualities of other species of sentient beings.

A crystalline bottle sits upon a table near the books and is labeled "Mindflux". It is nearly full, containing approximately 6 out of 8 ounces of deep-blue liquid. The effects are as per the table below and should only be revealed through experimentation. Cygnus can make this potion from herbs and other reagents, but his recipe isn't written down, except at his home far away.



Mindflux Potion Chart

(Roll d3 and add how many ounces of the potion were drank, then consult the effect.)

| Roll | Effect |
|-----------|--|
| 2 or less | Feeling Good: Next spell check is at +1. |
| 3 | Superiority Complex: Next spell check is at +2. |
| 4 | Sick with Power: Next spell check is at +3 and a random Mercurial Magic effect occurs (reroll results of 41-60). This Mercurial Magic effect supersedes any previously assigned effect for this casting only. |
| 5 | Nothing Can Stop You: Next spell check is at +4 and a random Mercurial Magic effect occurs (reroll results of 41-60). The Mercurial Magic effect is now permanent for this spell, superseding any previous Mercurial Magic effect. |
| 6 | Things are Getting Weird: Next spell check is at +5 and a random Mercurial Magic effect occurs with this casting and every future casting of same spell (reroll results of 41-60). Thus, the Mercurial Magic effect will be different each casting unless the same result is rolled. |
| 7 | What Have I Done: Next spell check is at +6 and caster suffers automatic Minor Corruption (roll on Minor Corruption chart). |
| 8 | Someone is Watching: Next spell check is at +7 and caster suffers automatic Major Corruption (roll on Major Corruption chart). |
| 9+ | You've Angered a Patron: Next spell check is at +8 and caster suffers automatic Greater Corruption (roll on Greater Corruption chart). |

There are two chests against the west wall of the chamber:

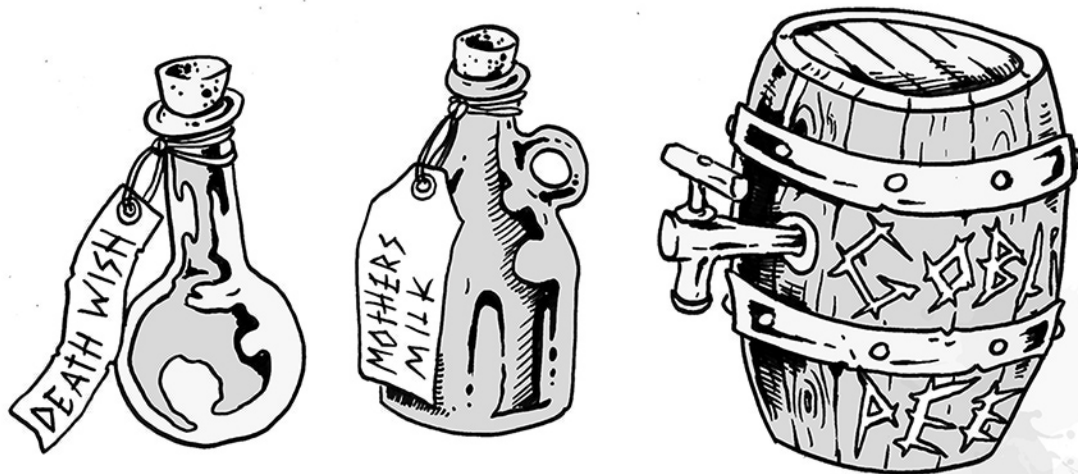
Locked metal chest – Key on Gwordo or DC 12 Pick Locks. Contains 23 gp, 105 sp, and 3 emeralds worth 15 gp each. Three of the gold pieces have a serpent head stamped on the front and a pyramid on the back, and the rest are of common currencies currently in use upon Osarb. Cygnus' spellbook is also inside and contains all of his known spells. The large stone key necessary to open the door to the 3rd level of the pyramid is within as well.

Locked wooden chest, velvet lined – Key on Gwordo or DC 10 Pick Locks. Contains 3 liquids, intentionally mislabeled by Cygnus.

“Death Wish” – This clear, stoppered flask contains a healing potion that heals 1 HD (by class) +1. Aqua color, neutral scent, mild effervescent flavor. The bottle holds 12 oz. Each dose is 6 oz. The first PC to drink gets a permanent point of Luck for being adventurous.

“Mother’s Milk” – This amber, stoppered flask contains poison, 1d10 hp damage per dose, DC 15 Fortitude save for half. Milky color, lightly sweet, odorless. The bottle holds 8 oz. Each dose is 4 oz. Drinking the whole bottle will require two saves as above.

“Goblin Pee” – This small ironbound, wooden cask has a pouring spigot. It contains a thick, dark, bitter, herbal suspension dreamed up by Cygnus that produces mixed results. The first drink of the day, bitter but surprisingly refreshing, heals 1d2 hp. The second drink of the day requires a DC 8 Fortitude save. If successful, heals 1 hp; if fails, vomiting, lose d3 Strength remainder of the day. The third drink of the day requires a DC 15 Fortitude save. If successful, nothing happens, but imbiber knows not to drink again; if fails, -2 to hit rest of day. Any further drinking beyond 3 doses will automatically result in incapacitation for 3d5 hours. Fifteen 4 oz. doses are contained in the cask.



AREA 2-2: THE SERPENT MOON TRAP

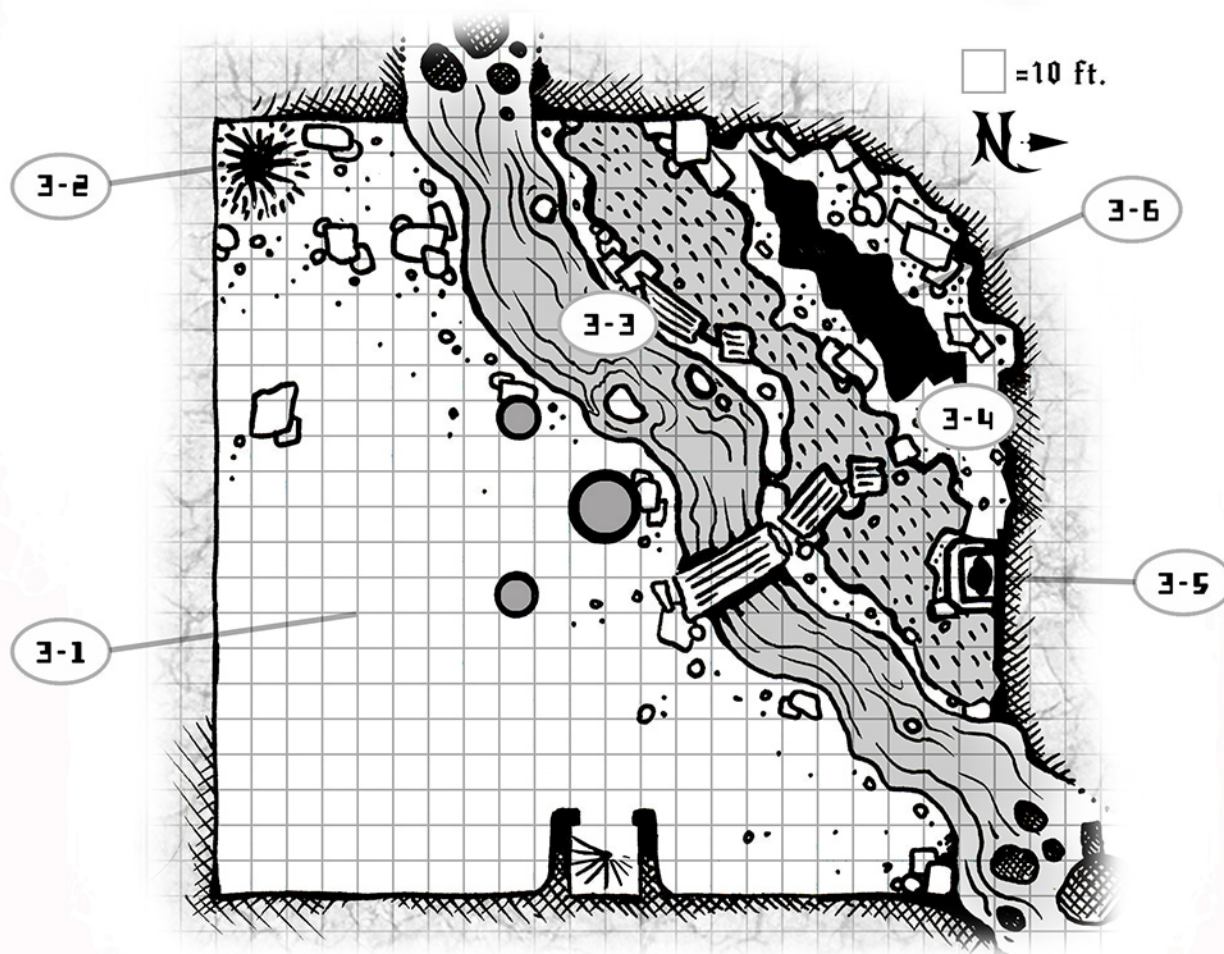
The teleportation chair does indeed take those who activate the lever to the Serpent Moon if a living humanoid is properly attached with the biotechnology device. The goblins that Cygnus sent previously are here, though in a weakened state, despondent and hungry (adjust stats -1d shift on the dice chain to all rolls). The Serpent People sealed off this room long ago, after the last of their people made the journey. They only ever intend to return to Osarb if the climate warms enough. Their moon civilization is prosperous, and they brought an ample quantity of humanoid slaves with them.

The room is identical to the Transporter Room, Area 2-1, on Osarb, minus the earthquake damage. Outside of the columns and chair, it is empty. It is part of a greater pyramid, one that mirrors the one on Osarb. The warm, windowless room is locked from the outside, and the door is made of very thick stone. Short of magical means, there is no escape, save one. Any PCs who have taken the chair ride to the room will have the opportunity to subdue one or more of the goblins in the room and hook them up to the chair. [DC 10 Intelligence check if the character has previously attached the device, or DC 15 if this is the first time used]. Pulling the lever will then transport the PC back to the pyramid on Osarb, extinguishing the goblin’s life. It takes one round to attach a humanoid to the chair and one round to arrive on the moon (for combat purposes). Characters that find themselves in the room with no other living creatures to power the chair, and with no one willing to rescue them, are considered as good as dead for purposes of a convention adventure.

PYRAMID LEVEL 3

The massive stone door swings as easily as any you've opened, a testament to its superior masonry and balance. The enormous chamber before you has suffered structural damage sometime long ago. A wide stream flows from southwest to northeast, the water gathering into a deep pond adjacent to and north of the stream. Across the pond, in the northwest corner, a bright white glow emits from a rough crevasse torn into the floor. The walls beyond the crevasse are rubble, save a short section with a statue carved into the wall. The bright light casts a shadow from it: eerie, but it is too far away to make out the details. On the southern side of the chamber, bits of driftwood are scattered about, and a large pile of the stuff can be seen in the southwest corner. The large central column is here, but only two surrounding columns are intact, the northeast column having collapsed, now forming a bridge over the stream, the northwest column broken and half-submerged in the pond. The watermarks on the walls indicate this entire floor was flooded at one time.

This level was completely flooded in the past, and everything previously occupying it has been washed away by the stream that bisects the large open level. An ancient earthquake ripped the crevasse in the northwest corner. A statue of the snake goddess Takisaka remains beyond the stream. River rats and cave frogs wait to potentially ambush PCs. The Snowblynd goblins absolutely refused to cross the bridge, fearing what lurked beneath the murky waters.



AREA 3-1: SOUTH SIDE OF LEVEL 3

The south side of the chamber is relatively empty except for a thin layer of dried mud intermingled with scattered driftwood. The pictographs on the walls were mostly washed away from when the entire chamber was flooded many years ago. A large nest of driftwood can be found in the southwest corner.



AREA 3-2: RAT'S NEST

A large nest, made of driftwood and other odds and ends, occupies the southwest corner of the room.

The river rats that reside within are able to enter and exit the pyramid, using the stream with some effort, when it suits them. They are aggressive, attacking anyone who approaches their nest. They will join any melee that occurs in the chamber, their animalistic aggression fueling their frenzy. There are approximately seven giant river rats in and about the nest. They are proficient swimmers but keep mostly to the stream, being cautious of the larger creatures in the pond.

Giant River Rat:

Init: +4
 Atk: bite +2 melee (1d4+1 plus disease)
 AC: 13
 HD: 1d6+2
 MV: 30' or climb 20'
 Act: 1d20
 SP: Disease (DC 7 Fort save or additional 1d3 damage overnight)
 SV: Fort +4, Ref +2, Will -1
 AL: N

AREA 3-3: STREAM AND POND

The stream is shallow and slow flowing, and a long swath of it feeds the pond on its north side. The pond is of indeterminable depth, but its dark waters indicate it isn't shallow. An imperfect rock bridge that crosses both the stream and pond appears to have formed when the northeast support column collapsed. Overflow from the pond flows along the bridge towards a brightly lit crevasse on the far side, and you can hear the soft sound of water falling into the fissure.

Crossing the narrow, uneven, wet rock bridge is easy enough [DC 5 Agility check if carefully walking or DC 10 if running], but there is a chance of falling in, especially when under duress. Three cave frog abominations swim in the darker areas of the pond, silently enough not to be heard. Bobugbubilz sent them to the pyramid when he sensed that someone (Cygnus) was attempting to form a bond with one of his rivals, the Serpent Goddess, Takisaka. Takisaka has been forgotten on Osarb for two thousand years. With no worshipers, her influence has all but disappeared—a god's power is in direct proportion to the number of her followers in a given area. Bobugbubilz is worshiped on Osarb, and he'd prefer to keep his opposition confined to the Serpent Moon. The frogs will attack anyone attempting to cross the bridge, for the statue necessary to form a bond with Takisaka rests on the other side. The statue is the only thing on this level that survived the flooding as it is carved from the stone that makes up the wall. Any cleric of Bobugbubilz that strikes a frog will receive 1d3 points of disapproval instantly. All others involved in combat with the frogs, whether the frogs initiate combat or not, will have angered the amphibian god and will perhaps feel his vengeance sometime in the future (but not by the end of this adventure).

Cave Frog Abominations:

Init: 0

Atk: tentacle tongue +4 melee (1d2)
bite +4 melee (1d8)

AC: 13

HD: 3d6

MV: jump 30' or swim 30'

Act: 1d20

SP: Tongue Grab 1d2, Camouflage (+10
to Hide checks when in water)

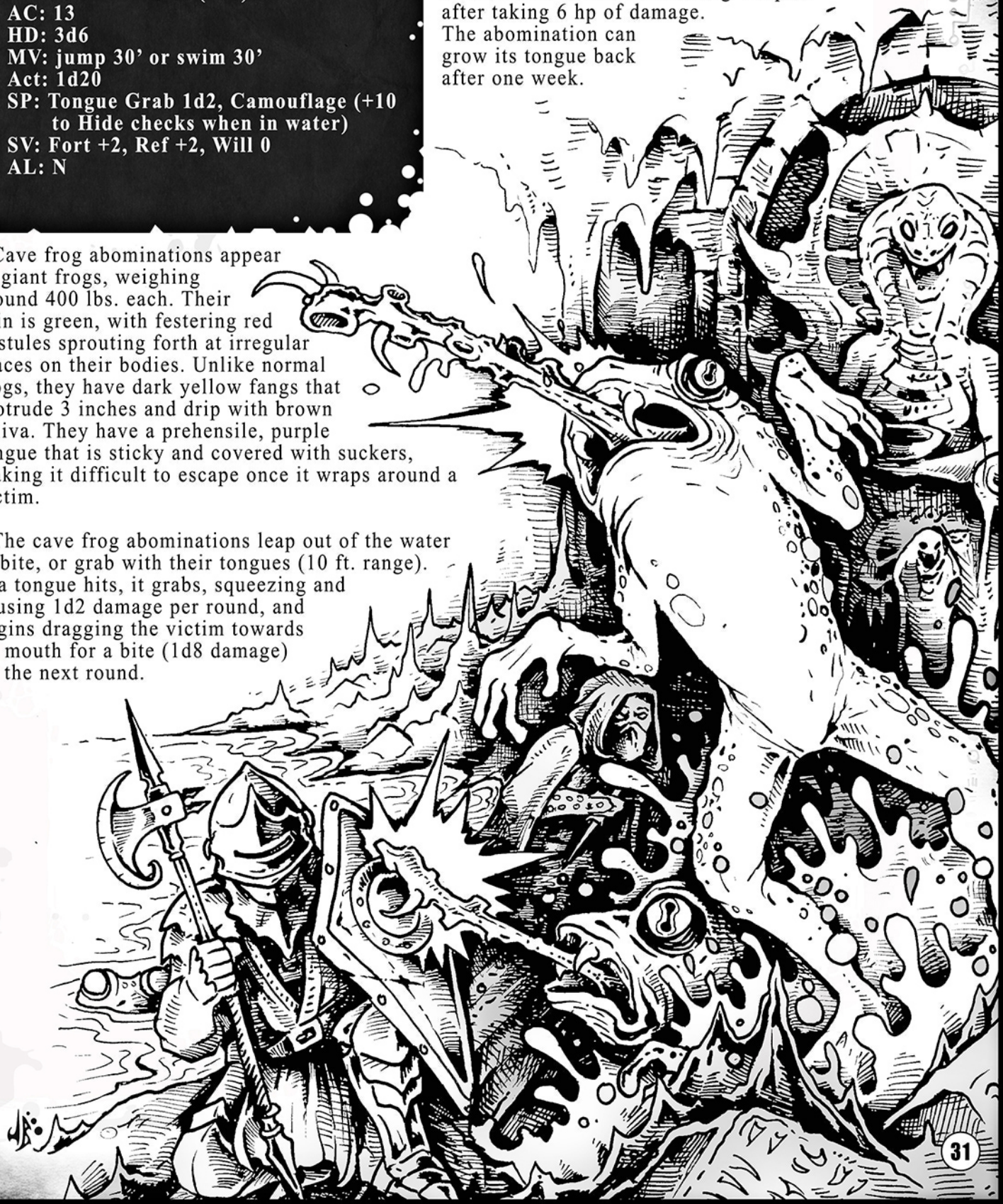
SV: Fort +2, Ref +2, Will 0

AL: N

A critical hit (19 or 20) from a bite will swallow the victim whole and begin digestion (3 damage per round until freed). A DC 11 Strength check is required to resist the tongue pull, and a DC 16 on same roll will break free. If the Strength check fails, the bite is an automatic hit. The tongue can also be severed with a slashing weapon after taking 6 hp of damage. The abomination can grow its tongue back after one week.

Cave frog abominations appear as giant frogs, weighing around 400 lbs. each. Their skin is green, with festering red pustules sprouting forth at irregular places on their bodies. Unlike normal frogs, they have dark yellow fangs that protrude 3 inches and drip with brown saliva. They have a prehensile, purple tongue that is sticky and covered with suckers, making it difficult to escape once it wraps around a victim.

The cave frog abominations leap out of the water to bite, or grab with their tongues (10 ft. range). If a tongue hits, it grabs, squeezing and causing 1d2 damage per round, and begins dragging the victim towards its mouth for a bite (1d8 damage) on the next round.



AREA 3-4: NORTH SIDE OF LEVEL 3

Two features dominate this corner of the chamber: the bright white glow emanating from a massive crevasse in the floor and the still-intact nearly 15' tall statue of a serpentine figure. A humming noise can be heard coming from the crevasse which intensifies when approached.

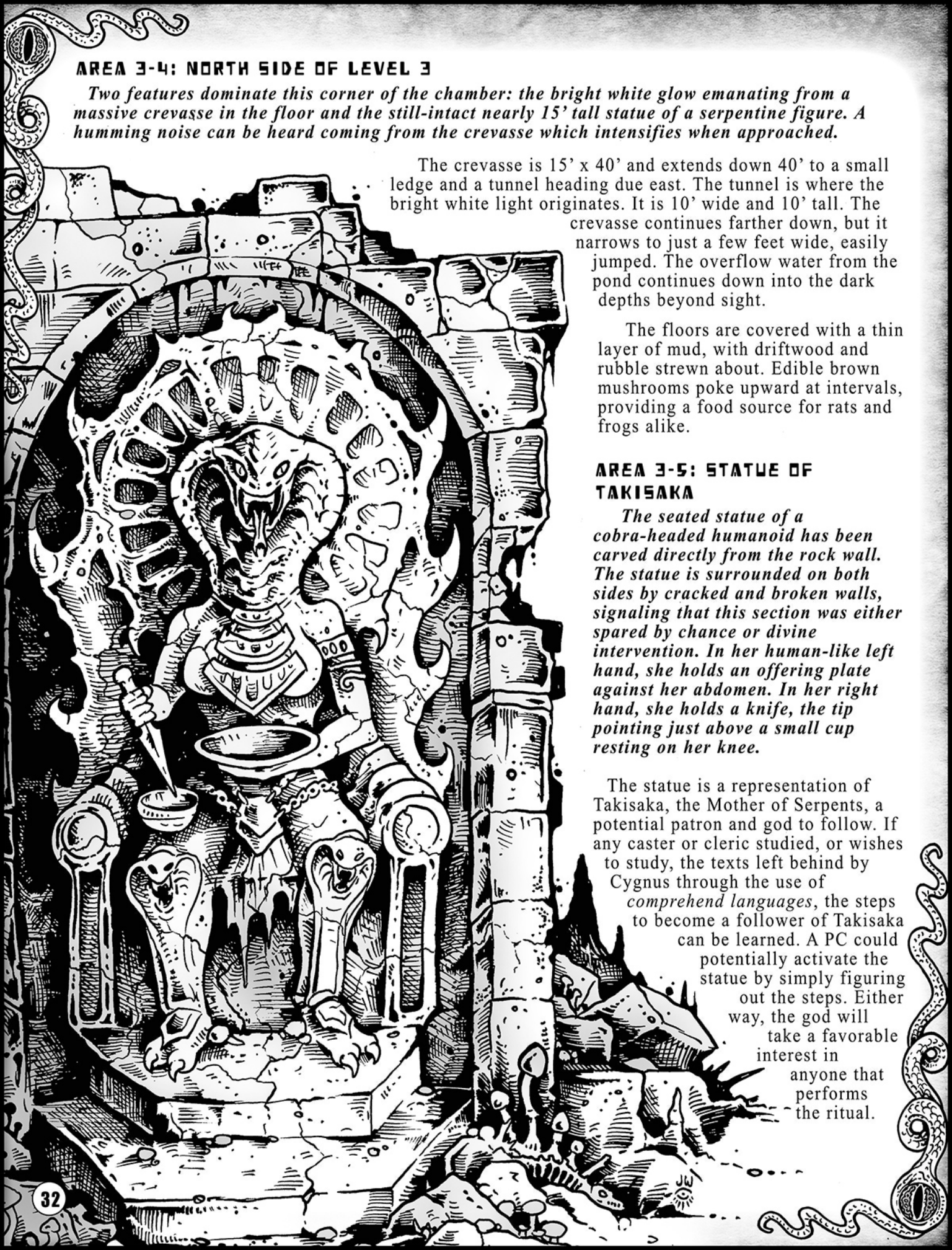
The crevasse is 15' x 40' and extends down 40' to a small ledge and a tunnel heading due east. The tunnel is where the bright white light originates. It is 10' wide and 10' tall. The crevasse continues farther down, but it narrows to just a few feet wide, easily jumped. The overflow water from the pond continues down into the dark depths beyond sight.

The floors are covered with a thin layer of mud, with driftwood and rubble strewn about. Edible brown mushrooms poke upward at intervals, providing a food source for rats and frogs alike.

AREA 3-5: STATUE OF TAKISAKA

The seated statue of a cobra-headed humanoid has been carved directly from the rock wall. The statue is surrounded on both sides by cracked and broken walls, signaling that this section was either spared by chance or divine intervention. In her human-like left hand, she holds an offering plate against her abdomen. In her right hand, she holds a knife, the tip pointing just above a small cup resting on her knee.

The statue is a representation of Takisaka, the Mother of Serpents, a potential patron and god to follow. If any caster or cleric studied, or wishes to study, the texts left behind by Cygnus through the use of *comprehend languages*, the steps to become a follower of Takisaka can be learned. A PC could potentially activate the statue by simply figuring out the steps. Either way, the god will take a favorable interest in anyone that performs the ritual.



To activate the statue, one must place a food desirable to snakes upon the plate (a dead river rat will do) and bleed into the cup from a self-inflicted wound (1d3 damage, for it must be impulsive and heartfelt, not a surgically precise wound). If just the food is placed, the PC is compelled to cut himself and bleed in the cup—a flash of intuition leading to a compulsion that can only be resisted by a DC 15 Will save. Completing both steps of the ritual reawakens Takisaka's presence on Osarb and begins the bond between adventurer and god, for good or ill. The bond will take time to foster, but any who complete the ritual will receive +1 Luck immediately. (See Takisaka section in Appendix.)

AREA 3-6: CREVASSE

Getting down into the crevasse and to the tunnel is rather simple. The ceremonial ropes found on Level 1, or any other ropes, can be used to climb down the 40' descent to the small ledge. Due to the wet walls, the adventurers must make a DC 5 Agility check or fall 10–40 ft. After failing the Agility check, if they roll under their Luck, they have fallen 10 ft. and take 1d6 damage. If they fail the Luck check, they have fallen 20–40 ft. (1d3+1 x 10') and take 2d6–4d6 damage. If anyone attempts the climb without ropes, the Agility or Climb Sheer Surfaces check is DC 15.

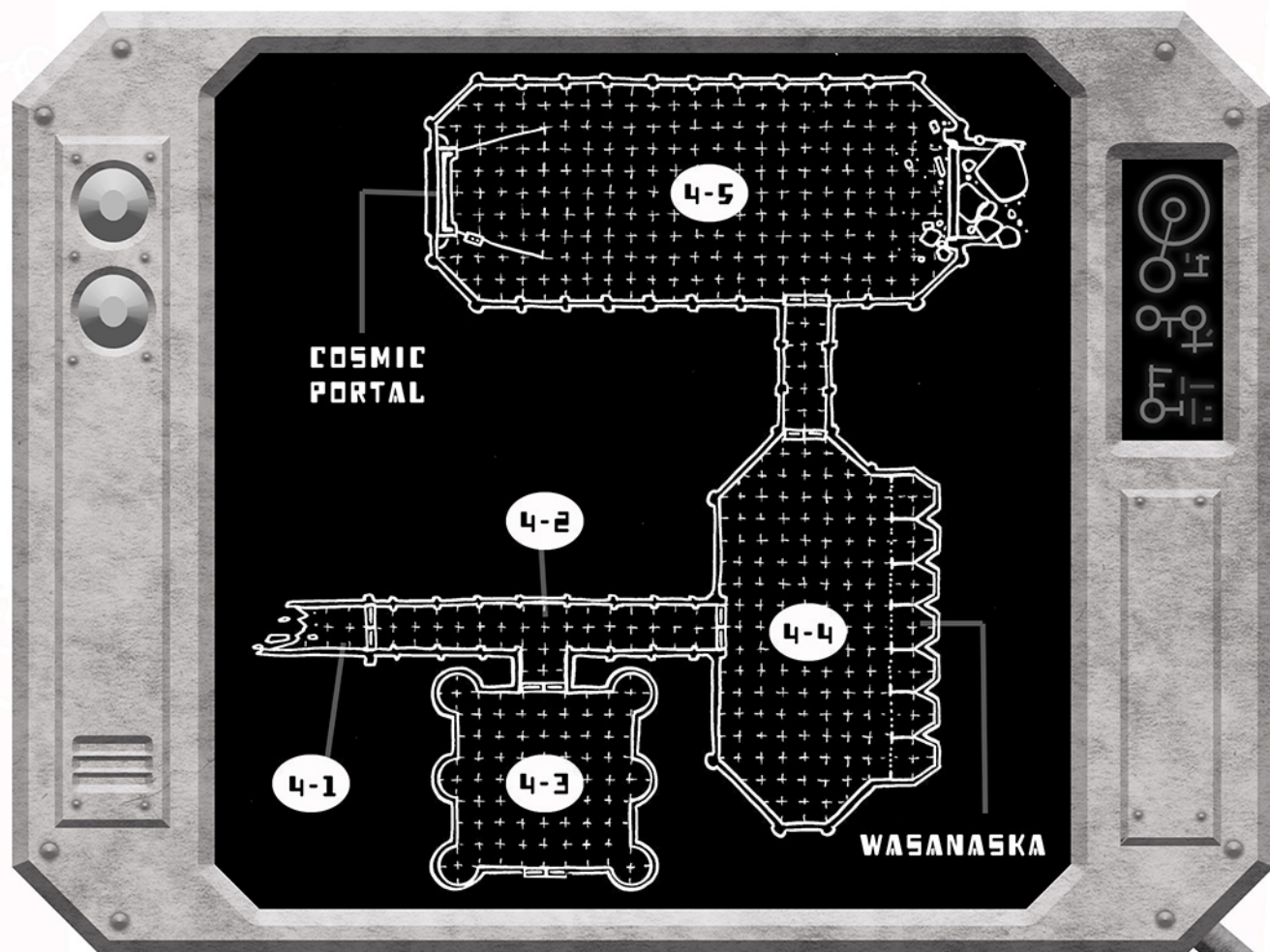
At the bottom, it is plain to see that one is no longer in the original pyramid complex. There is solid bedrock all around, except for the brightly lit tunnel. The earthquake did the most damage here. Whatever structure was connected to the west side of the tunnel collapsed downward into an enormous natural cave centuries ago, sealing the entrance forever.

The humming noise gets louder as the PCs get closer to the tunnel, until it becomes an irritating throbbing, loud enough to induce headaches and certainly loud enough to make speech difficult.



WORLD HARVESTER COMPLEX

The ancient complex of the World Harvesters was one of countless aggregating and refining centers found on habitable planets throughout the known universe. Generally operating in secret from their subjects, the World Harvesters built this complex deep underground. Gold and silver ores were transported to the entrance, taken to a refinery to remove impurities, and then transported through the cosmic portal, usually to the homeworld of the World Harvesters. The refinery room has been lost to the earthquake as has the original entrance to the complex. The earthquake generated enough force to destroy the nearly indestructible infrastructure of the complex. All attempts to damage doors, walls, and other hardware are nearly futile, only powerful magic can even mar their surfaces. The sections unharmed by the earthquake include the cosmic portal chamber, a few hallways, the power center, and a jail. The walls, doors, and floors are made of an advanced metal-polymer nanocomposite and shine like chrome although they do not create reflections.



AREA 4-1: TUNNEL TO THE COMPLEX

It appears as if a titan reached from above and ripped off the western side of this tunnel. Jagged metal walls and flooring, shining like quicksilver, have been bent askew like a small tree splintered by lightning. Beyond the damage lies a 30' hallway, perfectly constructed of the same shiny metal and lighted from above by long cylinders of pure white light. It ends at a closed doorway. A small plate, chest high to a human, is embedded in the wall to the right side of the door. Upon the plate, a green circular gem-like protrusion is affixed to the top, a red protrusion to the bottom. The humming sound seems to be originating from behind the door.

The tunnel is the only remaining entrance into the complex; all others were violently sheared off long ago or packed closed with unmovable earth and stone. The western entrance to this tunnel would have been locked, but the locked door to the destroyed section of the tunnel lies buried forty feet down under rock and dirt. Opening the door is simple; pressing the green protrusion opens it, and pressing the red protrusion closes it. This technology should be foreign to the PCs, but intuitive to the players.

The humming noise is too loud for any resting here.

AREA 4-2: TUNNEL

The tunnel continues on to the east, ending at another door with the green and red protrusions. A short hallway intersects the tunnel, leading to another door 10 feet to the south. The humming sound is particularly annoying here, and the whole hallway vibrates softly.

The door opens to another easterly tunnel, lit from above by the same cylinders of light. Thirty feet ahead, a 10' wide corridor leads south to another doorway (Area 4-3). Continuing east another 30 feet, the tunnel leads directly to a door to the jail (Area 4-4), a facility used to punish disobedient slaves and, rarely, to imprison enemies of the World Harvesters. This tunnel was part of an offshoot from the main entrance tunnel to the complex. The jailers used this tunnel to escort prisoners and slaves directly to the jail so they could not observe any of the inner workings of the facility.

The humming noise is too loud for any resting here.

AREA 4-3: POWER CENTER

The same green and red protrusions will open and close this door, allowing you entry.

Multiple enormous ingots of metal fill this room, the same metal that comprises the walls and floor, each emitting a loud hum which verges upon being painful. They are placed in an orderly fashion with narrow footpaths between them. There is at least one circle engraved into each ingot. A smaller circular depression is carved into the center of each circle. You note a set of double doors, buckled a bit, on the southern wall. The 50' x 50' room

is immaculately clean, offputtingly so to those accustomed to living off the land.

This is the power center of the complex, fortune having left it intact. The cuboids (ingots) within vary in size, but most measure approximately 3' H x 5' L x 3' W. No amount of fiddling will either turn on, turn off, or affect the power sources in any way; they are virtually indestructible with regard to the damage capacity of the PCs. Poking a piece of metal inside the smaller circular depression will cause 1d10 energy damage [DC 15 Fort save to half] to the perpetrator; poking a finger in the depression will cause 1d4 damage [DC 15 Fort save to half]. The circular depressions are sockets that the World Harvesters plug computers into when wishing to operate their machinery. The computers are rarely left in the abandoned bases, yet another safeguard to keep their enemies from learning their technology. The room is otherwise empty. The double door on the southern wall is permanently jammed from the effects of the earthquake. The party has entered through the secondary emergency exit. The machines are usually silent, but the tremors from the earthquake caused some to fall out of balance, creating internal friction resulting in the humming noise which plagues this section of the complex. The functionality of the machines has not been affected.

The humming noise is too loud for any resting here. Staying in this room too long produces a headache and may impair characters at the Judge's discretion.

AREA 4-4: JAIL

The door opens with a near-silent hiss, disappearing into the frame above. The room is large, 50' wide by 70' long. A shiny metal altar occupies the center of the room; a myriad of gem-like protrusions alight and blink randomly upon its upper surface. A pair of cabinets hang on the south wall, and on the north wall there is a large closed door with the now-familiar green and red protrusions on a plate to the right side. On the far wall, seven barred cells span from floor to ceiling, all empty save for one. The center cell not only has bars, but also a field of yellow energy encompassing all six sides. Imprisoned within the transparent energy field is a tall, thin, blue-skinned humanoid creature with large eyes and no teeth, hair, or fingernails. It looks at you through its dark, void-like eyes, attempting to wordlessly communicate while rising from a meditative sitting position.

Immense metal constructs glide effortlessly about the room upon angular bases. The moment you open the door, their red beaming eyes turn toward you. One barks out an order in Common, "Return to your workstations, slaves."

This is the final combat encounter. The number of sentrybots (metal constructs) should be adjusted by the Judge to provide a

life-threatening challenge to the party (suggested 2-3). The combat should

be worthy of remembering, for the prize is great.

Beyond this room, the PCs will find a means of intergalactic travel.

The sentrybots were left behind by the World Harvesters to guard a very important prisoner—Wasanaska, a being that lives between the spiritual and physical realms. He has been left here for one reason only: the energy field

that contains him would be disrupted if it passed through the cosmic portal, and he would escape. Thus, he has spent eons in quiet meditation with only the cold, detached sentrybots to keep him company. The sentrybots have managed to preserve their power for such a long time by shutting off almost all of their auxiliary functions. They have been programmed to activate immediately when any door to the room opens.

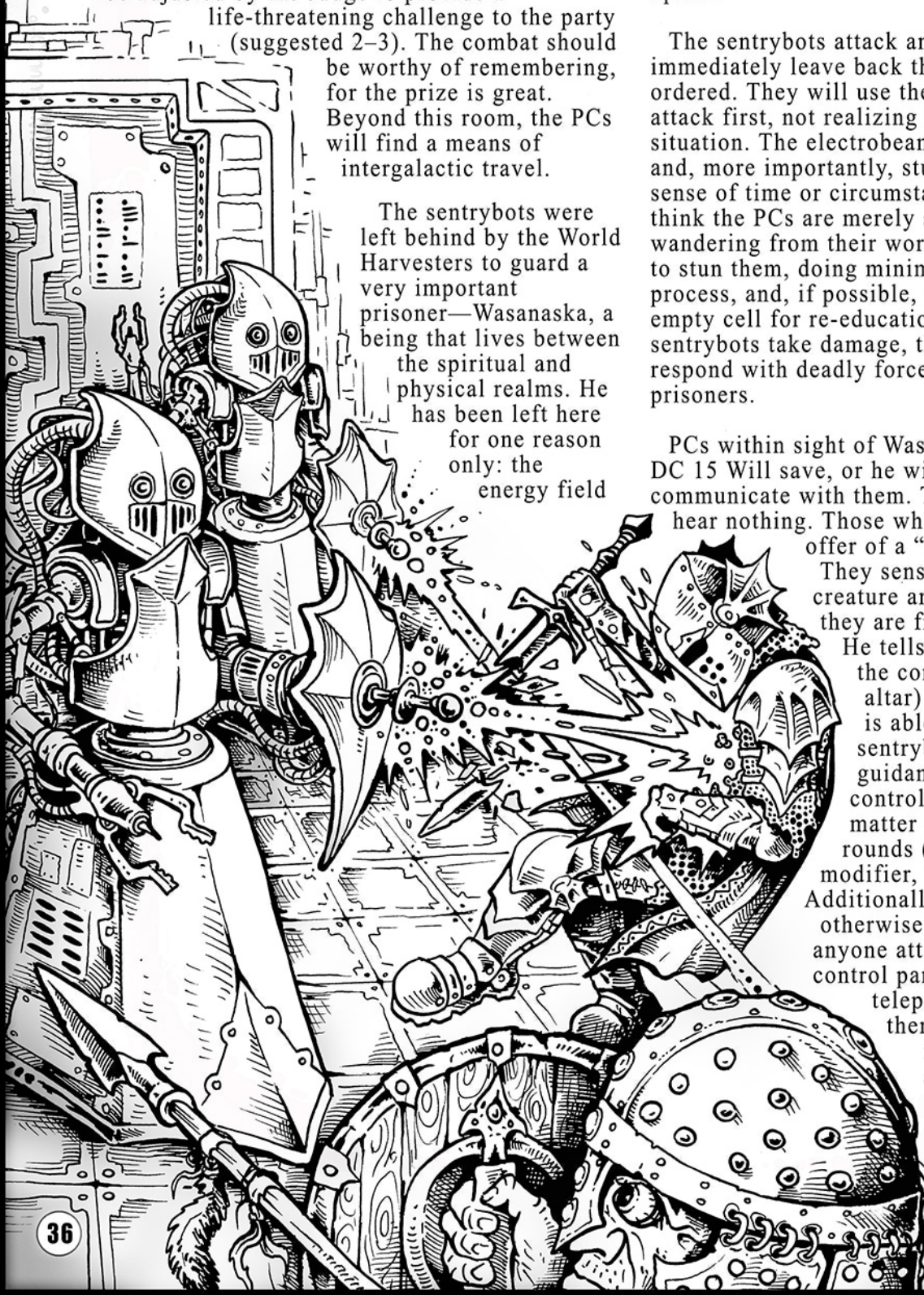
The sentrybots attack any PCs that do not immediately leave back the way they came, as ordered. They will use their electrobeam ranged attack first, not realizing the gravity of the situation. The electrobeam does a bit of damage and, more importantly, stuns. Having no true sense of time or circumstances, the sentrybots think the PCs are merely slaves being lazy and wandering from their workspace. They attempt to stun them, doing minimal damage in the process, and, if possible, throw them into an empty cell for re-education later. If any of the sentrybots take damage, they are programmed to respond with deadly force and will take no prisoners.

PCs within sight of Wasanaska must make a DC 15 Will save, or he will telepathically communicate with them. Those making the save hear nothing. Those who fail the save hear his offer of a "great reward for help."

They sense that he is a fatherly creature and speaks the truth, but they are free to do as they please.

He tells them how to operate the control panel (the central altar) to free him and that he is able to destroy the sentrybots. Even with his guidance, operating the control panel is a complicated matter and will require 1d3+2 rounds (adjust for Intelligence modifier, but minimum 3 rounds). Additionally, the sentrybots, if not otherwise engaged, first target anyone attempting to operate the control panel. Wasanaska also

telepathically shares that there are powerful weapons in the cabinets on the south wall. Inside the unlocked cabinets, two laser rifles are loaded and ready for use.



Wasanaska can teach the use of the weapons [allowing proficiency] telepathically over 1 round if the receiver is willing.

Once the proper code has been entered on the control panel, the energy field instantly disappears, freeing the otherworldly creature. If freed during combat, Wasanaska becomes effectively incorporeal, flying his body directly through center mass of the nearest sentrybot. He automatically hits, and he disables each bot that he passes through. He can disable one sentrybot per round, which should soon end the combat. He cannot be harmed in this state.

Sentrybot:

Init: +5

Atk: claw +1 melee (1d8)
electrobeam +3 missile (1d3+stun)

AC: 16

HD: 3d10

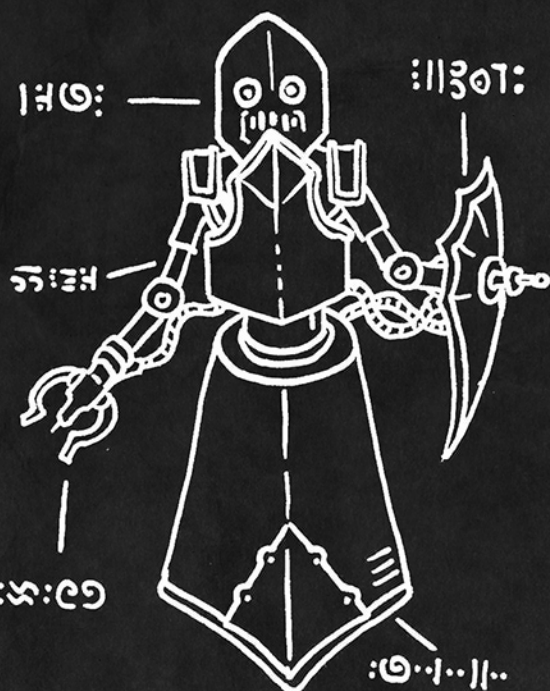
MV: 40' hover

Act: 1d24

SP: Electrobeam – living targets make a Fort save DC 12 or be stunned for 1d3 rounds

SV: Fort +8, Ref +2, Will 0

AL: L

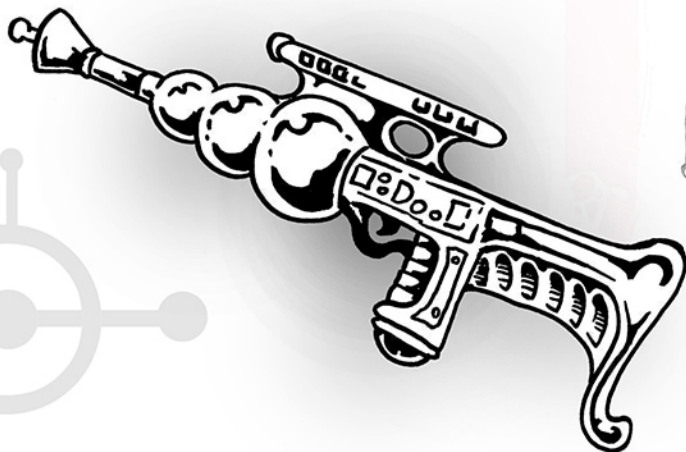


*Sentrybot stats have been borrowed (and slightly modified) with permission from Reid San Filippo from *Crawling under a Broken Moon* from Shield of Faith Studios, LLC.

The humming noise is too loud for any resting here.

Treasure

Two laser rifles hang in the unlocked cabinet. Any adventurer willing to receive telepathic instructions from Wasanaska automatically becomes proficient in their use within one round. Each laser rifle is loaded with a small power cell and is immediately ready for use. There are 2 additional small power cells in the cabinet.



Laser Rifle – Damage 1d10; Range 100/200/300. Can fire up to 3x/round, but Action Die goes down one on the die chain each shot, i.e., 1d20 for the 1st shot, 1d16 for the 2nd shot, 1d14 for the 3rd shot. Each time the laser rifle is fired, the player must also roll a d30; this is the Ammo Die. Every time a 1 is rolled on the Ammo Die, the power cell goes empty. This prevents the need to count ammo (other than power cells) and should average out to be 30 shots per power cell. There is no way to recharge a power cell in this adventure, but future World Harvester adventures will introduce methods for recharging. Alternatively, the Judge can assign a fixed number of shots per power cell. Note: The World Harvesters recharge their power cells by converting gold and silver into energy, requiring refining first and then conversion from solid to energy. *You can reference Critical Hit and Fumble tables for firearms in Reid San Filippo's *High Caliber Hijinks* from Shield of Faith Studios, LLC or make up your own.

There are also 3 unlabeled metal flasks containing clear oil. The sentrybots use these for internal lubrication when needed. The oil can be used in a lantern. If drunk, a DC 10 Fortitude check is required, or the imbiber will lose 1 point of Stamina permanently.



Wasanaska

After the battle, Wasanaska appears as a transparent shimmering being, unable to be harmed by the PCs. He shares his story telepathically:

Thousands of years ago, he felt a disturbance in the universe. It was caused by the unrighteous genetic hybridization experiments carried out by the World Harvesters—the fusing of humans and snakes. When he arrived to provide counsel to the beings responsible, the World Harvesters attacked him. Failing to injure him, they imprisoned him with energy beams, leaving him in the cell for the last 4,000 years. Wasanaska is a Nourisher, a race of rare cosmic beings that lives between the spiritual and material realms. They spread knowledge to budding sentient organisms throughout the universe and provide guidance, sometimes overtly and sometimes secretly, to more-established civilizations. Due to the vastness of the universe, Wasanaska had never encountered World Harvesters before and was caught off guard by their technology, which they were able to use to capture him. While imprisoned, he witnessed great atrocities against his fellow captives and was able to interact with his captors at times, mostly while being interrogated, gleaned what he could by reading their thoughts. All that he learned impressed upon him that the World Harvesters were irredeemable. He now, regrettably, seeks their destruction, for they only peddle misery, traveling from planet to planet, enslaving the natives and stealing as many resources as they can before moving on to the next victims. They pass themselves off as gods to the native populations, teach them their trade language for convenience, and instill a love of precious metals (that they use to power their technology). They harvest what is easily available and then leave the world for hundreds, sometimes thousands, of years to allow the natives to accumulate more precious metals, only to return and demand what has been stockpiled. He is unsure as to why they have left Osarb alone for so long; perhaps most of the precious metals have already been harvested.

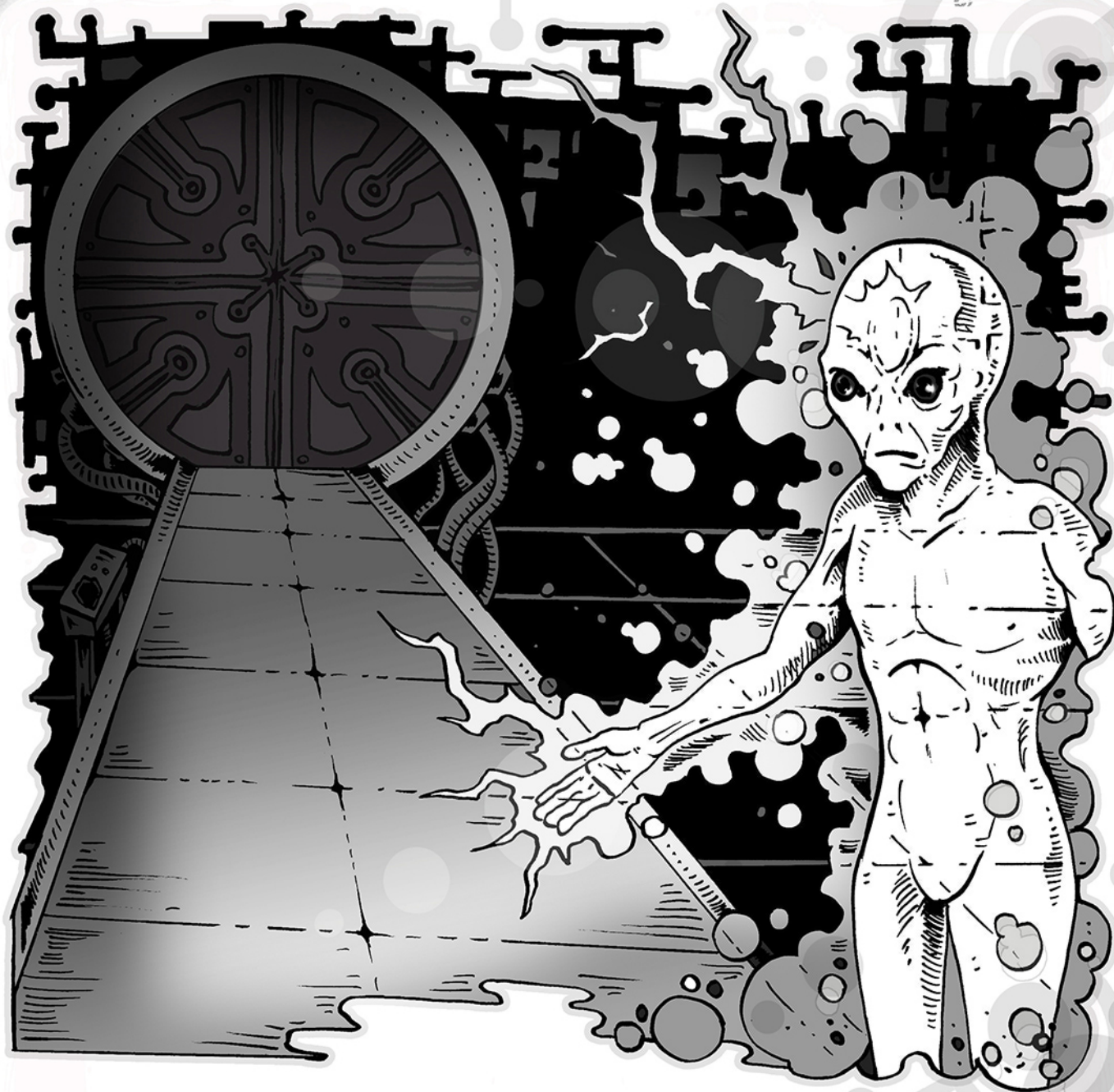
He beckons the PCs to follow him through the northern door, gliding unhindered through the closed door.

AREA 4-5: COSMIC PORTAL CHAMBER

Wasanaska leads you down a long hallway that ends with a set of doors leading into a vast chamber. Inside, a grey metallic circular structure—the cosmic portal, he explains—nearly reaches the 30-foot ceiling. A short altar stands next to the base of the portal, a fist-sized translucent crystal embedded near six circular, pointed knobs upon its surface. The knobs can be turned to point to six different symbols, each knob having the same six symbols. A large circular protrusion is set below the 6 knobs. Six of these exotic symbols are carved into the metal of the altar in a row along the top border. A huge door is set within the eastern wall; it is buckled as is the adjacent wall near the ceiling.

Wasanaska explains the operation of the cosmic portal. The knobs must be turned to a series of symbols (coordinates) that will direct the portal to open into a new world. The portal, once activated by pressing the large protrusion, must simply be walked through, allowing almost instant transportation to a new planet. Wasanaska does not know where any symbol combination will lead but does know that the six symbols engraved into the altar will return the PCs to Osarb, their current world. He also informs the characters that the crystal embedded in the altar—the colligation crystal—is necessary to activate the portal. The crystal is easily removed, but the portal will not operate without it (or a similar item as determined by the DCC Judge).

Wasanaska must go to warn the other Nourishers about the World Harvester danger. Though much time has passed, he does not know if his kin are aware of the threat to the order of the universe. He beseeches his liberators to explore the worlds beyond the portal in hopes of finding the homeworld(s) of the World Harvesters. “Destroy them wherever you find them. Liberate their slaves. You will be doing the whole universe a service.” He notes that the worlds will contain breathable air, for the characters and the World Harvesters require the same basic necessities for life. He further explains that they will most likely be able to communicate (in Common) with the inhabitants of the other worlds as Common is the language taught to the slaves of the World Harvesters.



Before leaving, Wasanaska offers the reward promised upon first seeing the PCs enter the jail. Anyone willing to approach him to receive the “Gift of the Nourishers” will receive a permanent point of Luck and another permanent non-Luck ability point of the player’s choosing (max 18). The gift is transferred to the character when Wasanaska touches the recipient upon the brow, his hand becoming incorporeal and passing gently into the brain to impart the newfound ability. When all who are willing have received the gift, his entire body becomes a white beam of light which shoots straight up through the ceiling and disappears through the solid metal.

The huge eastern door is hopelessly sealed by the buckling of the structure. If it were to be opened through herculean or magical means, the PCs would only find a wide, impassable rock- and earth-filled tunnel. This was the bay door that allowed transportation of refined precious metals into the chamber and then through the cosmic portal, heading to the World Harvester homeworld or other colonies in need of resources.

CONCLUSION

The players may choose to continue to explore Osarb or venture forth to the Serpent Moon, but it is hoped that curiosity will lead them to enter the cosmic portal. A fresh earthquake (compliments of Bobugbubilz) or a malfunctioning door could trap the players within the World Harvester base, giving them only one exit (the cosmic portal) if the Judge wishes to go that route. If the characters choose to dial up coordinates and enter a strange new world, they will initially walk into a very similar cosmic portal chamber. The world beyond will be any world the DCC Judge can imagine. The cosmic portals are meant to be a tool for the Judge to introduce new settings and genres to the players. The *Secrets of the World Harvesters* adventure allows the Judge to seamlessly integrate the characters into any existing DCC campaign or rule system. Get gritty in the Weird West, get funky in the far future, get glowy in the post-apocalypse, or charge into the depths of your mind to create new settings to unleash upon your players. Will the characters exit through a cosmic portal missing its colligation crystal? Will they enter a land where the living are vastly outnumbered by the dead? Will they enter a world reeling from a recent nuclear cataclysm? Will they be bewildered by a technologically advanced society? Will they eventually find the home planet of the World Harvesters? You decide, or grab the next *Secrets of the World Harvesters* adventure from Purple Pirate Games!

APPENDIX



-TAKISAKA- THE MOTHER OF SERPENTS

BY DANIEL J. BISHOP

On a far distant world, it is said, a serpent nurtured an egg. That egg grew and grew, until its leathery shell was too great for the world to hold, and it drifted into the sky. At first the egg orbited the world where it was laid as an oblong black-brown moon, but even before hatching, the cosmos called to the egg's twin inhabitants, and it drifted into the deep black between the stars.

After many aeons, the egg hatched, and Takisaka emerged. She came into the world already pregnant, and ready to give birth to her own young—both live and in the egg, of humanoid form and serpentine—for she had been impregnated by her twin within the leathery shell even before she was hatched. And prior to her hatching, she had consumed him to fuel the life growing within her.

Certain philosophers claim that the influence of immortal powers (whether gods or patrons) upon any given world are limited by the presence of mortal agents upon those worlds. It is certainly true that the influence of Takisaka has waned upon Osarb when her followers fled to the Serpent Moon. The Mother of Serpents yearns to rebuild her influence but has few methods of reaching potential followers. One of these, and perhaps the last, is the statue on Pyramid Level 3. Her ages-long feud with Bobugbubilz, who is still active on Osarb, has made converting new agents even more difficult than it would otherwise be.

The Mother of Serpents' agents upon Osarb were the Serpent People before they fled. Now, she is willing to offer aid and knowledge to human and elf in exchange for supplication. She appears most often as a bare-breasted woman with a cobra's head, but she can also appear snakelike from the hips downward, sporting a long serpentine tail rather than legs. In some cases, she may even choose to don a beautiful human face, but there is always something ophidian about her features, and in such a guise, she still retains a cobra's hood or a simulacrum of a hood through a headdress or elaborate hairstyle. She can, of course, appear as a serpent of any size.

Takisaka needs followers to manifest on Osarb, so no patron bond attempt higher than a natural "1" fails, instead bringing about the minimum level of success. During the patron bond ceremony, the wizard painfully sheds his skin, being "reborn" in the service of the Mother of Serpents. This procedure causes 1d5 points of temporary Stamina damage, which may, in fact, result in a "stillborn" bond. Such a creature is not lost to Takisaka, arising 1d3 nights later as a ghoul with spellcasting ability equal to that of the unfortunate wizard, but it is lost as a PC. Descriptions of the ritual to bond with Takisaka describe the painful shedding and rebirth, but not the damage or the chance of true failure. Those who spellburn too much may therefore pay the ultimate price.





INVOKE PATRON CHECK RESULTS:

| | |
|-------|---|
| 12–13 | Takisaka's attention is elsewhere. Her power manifests in the caster as a reptilian regeneration, restoring 1d3 hp per Caster Level. |
| 14–17 | One of the caster's arms is transformed into a serpent. The ophidian member does 1d3 damage and has a venomous bite (1d6 damage, Fort save equal to spell check or suffer 2d6 additional damage). The caster can use his own Action Dice to control the serpent arm, or can allow it to strike of its own accord with a 1d14. The transformation lasts 1d6 + Caster Level rounds. |
| 18–19 | Poison fills the bloodstream of the caster's most dangerous opponent within 50'. The opponent takes 1d6 damage and must make a Fort save equal to the spell check or take an additional 3d8 damage. |
| 20–23 | Takisaka calls forth the latent reptilian powers of the caster and his allies within 50'. Each regenerates 1d5 hp per round for 1d6 rounds (roll separately for each) and gains a +1d shift on the dice chain to melee attack and damage rolls for CL turns. Spell checks and skill checks during this time—for all but the wizard invoking Takisaka—suffer a -1d shift on the dice chain as each character's reptilian hindbrain is given a boost. This regeneration cannot bring a character back from the dead but is considered magical healing for characters dropped to 0 hp. |
| 24–27 | Serpents erupt from the ground over a 30' square area, striking at the wizard's foes with venomous fangs. The snakes attack only the wizard's enemies for 1 minute and then turn into pungent smelling vapor. Snake swarm: Init +0; Atk swarming bite +2 melee (1d6 plus venom); AC 12; HD 4d20; MV 30'; Act 1d20; SP swarm traits (attack all in space, half damage from non-area effect attacks), venom (Fort DC 20 or take 1d6 damage); SV Fort +2, Ref +2, Will +0; AL C. |
| 28–29 | The caster or a single ally (chosen by the caster) within 50' is healed for 1 HD per level, recovers up to 1d5 points of temporary ability score damage (but not Luck), and can heal up to 1 point of permanent ability score damage (except Luck). In addition, the recipient of this healing can regrow one lost body part (or similar permanent injury), chosen by the caster, over the next hour. |
| 30–31 | One of the caster's arms is transformed into a serpent, which can extend to strike opponents up to 60' away, doing 2d6 damage per strike and requiring a DC 20 Fort save to avoid an additional 4d6 damage from venom. The ophidian arm can be used to strike or cast spells, once each round, and grants the caster an additional d16 Action Die for this purpose. The caster may, of course, choose to use her own Action Dice with the arm. The arm lasts until the caster wills it away, or the caster fails an hourly DC 20 Will save to retain it. |
| 32+ | The caster is immobilized for 1d7 rounds, after which he sheds his skin, arising completely healed of all damage (including temporary and permanent ability damage, lost or broken limbs, organ damage, etc.). Age falls away, restoring the caster to the prime of life. All poisons and diseases are flushed from his body. This rejuvenation has only two limitations: (1) Luck cannot be recovered in this way, and (2) ability score reductions due to patron taint are not restored. Once this result is rolled, no damage to the caster matters until the caster sheds his skin—even if he is decapitated, burnt, and the ashes are scattered on the winds, he will arise again whole. |



PATRON TAINT: TAKISAKA, THE MOTHER OF SERPENTS

Those who serve the Mother of Serpents become more snakelike over time, but they must also deal with the rivalry between Takisaka and Bobugbubilz and their patron's incessant need for more agents. When patron taint is indicated for Takisaka, roll 1d6 on the table below. Unlike most patrons, there is no end to the number of times the caster must roll because there is always a chance that Takisaka demands new converts!

| | |
|---|--|
| 1 | Serpentine: The first time this patron taint is rolled, the caster's eyes become lidless and snakelike, and his tongue becomes forked. The second time it is rolled, the caster's spine is able to move with a preternatural flexibility, increasing his Agility by 1d3 points (to a maximum of 18). When this patron taint is rolled a third time, the ophidian odor of the caster affects all around him, permanently reducing his Personality by 1d3 points. Ignore any further rolls of this patron taint. |
| 2 | Cold Blooded: When this taint is first rolled, the caster's skin becomes noticeably cool and dry to the touch. When it is rolled a second time, the caster can no longer regulate her body temperature effectively, taking a +1d shift on the dice chain for any damage caused by heat or cold. When this is rolled a third time, extremes of heat and cold that would be uncomfortable for a normal human can become deadly to the wizard—a DC 10 Fort save is required for each hour of exposure to avoid taking 1 point of temporary Stamina damage. Ignore further rolls of this taint. |
| 3 | Gifts of the Mother: Takisaka offers her agents three gifts. Each gift is offered only once, and acceptance of each gift permanently reduces the caster's Personality by 1 point. It is up to the wizard to determine if the gift is worth the price. Roll 1d3 to determine which gift is offered; if the result has already occurred, no gift is offered at this time: (1) infravision 60' (or +30' if the caster already has infravision), (2) poison resistance (+1d shift on all saves vs. poison or venom, with a successful save always indicating no damage is taken), or (3) the ability to speak the language of serpents, including Serpentalia (in addition, snakes and snakelike creatures must make a DC 15 Will save to be hostile to the caster unless provoked). Once all gifts have been offered, ignore further rolls of this taint. |
| 4 | Change is Unchanging: Each time this patron taint is rolled, the caster begins to shed her skin within 2d24 hours. Shedding skin takes 1d5 days, with a -1d penalty on the dice chain to all rolls for each day she has been shedding (cumulative). Once she emerges from her old skin, all penalties are removed, and she gains an additional 1 HD of healing per Caster Level. There is no limit to how many times this taint may be rolled. |
| 5 | From Bobugbubilz, With Love: Bobugbubilz knows that destroying the agents of Takisaka will remove the Mother of Serpents' influence from this world. When this patron taint is rolled the first time, the demon lord of amphibians sends a devil frog to slay the caster, arriving in 1d4 hours. The second time, a barbed salamander is sent, arriving in 1d4 turns. Finally, a minor toadfiend is dispatched, arriving in 1d3 rounds. In all cases, the demon will do all within its power to slay the agent of Takisaka. Statistics for these creatures are found on page 402 of the DCC core rulebook. Once three demons are dispatched, ignore further instances of this patron taint. |
| 6 | Her Influence Spreads Like a Cobra's Hood: Each time this patron taint is rolled, Takisaka demands that the caster gains additional converts equal to his level in either numbers or Hit Dice/levels. Each new convert who submits to a patron bond spell is counted twice. The wizard has a fortnight (fourteen days) to achieve this, or one of the following penalties will apply (roll 1d5): (1) slower healing (all healing, including magical healing, is halved), (2) caster cannot use <i>invoke patron</i> or patron spells, (3) caster's range of critical failure increases by 1 (so that a 1–2 is treated like a natural "1", etc. This effect can stack if rolled multiple times before the penalty is removed), (4) the caster's highest level spells take a -1d penalty on the dice chain for their spell checks, or (5) any snakelike creatures encountered automatically target the caster in preference to all others. These penalties go away once the necessary converts have been acquired. There is no limit to how often this patron taint may occur. |

PATRON SPELLS:

TAKISAKA, THE MOTHER OF SERPENTS

TAKISAKA GRANTS THREE UNIQUE SPELLS, AS FOLLOWS:

LEVEL 1: POISON IN THE BLOOD

LEVEL 2: FORM OF THE MOTHER

LEVEL 3: PASSAGE BETWEEN WORLDS

SPELLBURN: TAKISAKA, THE MOTHER OF SERPENTS

When the caster utilizes spellburn, roll 1d4 and consult the table below, or build off these ideas to create unique events for your campaign.

| Roll | Spellburn Result |
|------|---|
| 1 | Communion with Takisaka brings the caster in contact with her divine venom (expressed in Strength, Agility, or Stamina loss). Resistance to poison does not modify this damage. |
| 2 | The caster does not take damage immediately, but painfully sheds her skin 1d10 minutes later. This process results in Strength, Agility, or Stamina loss equal to the spellburn used, and takes 1d5 rounds to complete. |
| 3 | The caster is granted up to 6 points of spellburn without cost, but must recruit one new follower to Takisaka's cause within the next seven days for each point of spellburn granted. Failure results in Takisaka taking twice the spellburn granted (max 12) at an unpredictable time on the following day, with each point coming randomly from Strength, Agility, or Stamina. If the caster dies as a result, she arises as a ghoul (as if slain by Stamina damage from casting <i>patron bond</i> to the Mother of Serpents). |
| 4 | The caster communes with the alien mind of the Mother of Serpents, gaining momentary insight into the cosmos but blasting his mind and soul. Spellburn comes in the form of Intelligence and Personality loss only, but each point of Intelligence spellburned adds a +2 (rather than a +1) to the spell check. The maximum bonus is still +10. |



POISON IN THE BLOOD

Level: 1
(Takisaka)

Range:
Caster

Duration:
1 Turn

Casting time:
Action

Save:
None

| | |
|----------------------|---|
| General | The caster's blood becomes poisonous to others. The effects of this poison vary by spell check result. |
| Manifestation | See below. |
| 1 | Lost, failure, and patron taint. |
| 2–11 | Lost. Failure. |
| 12–15 | The caster's blood becomes mildly poisonous to other creatures. Any creature making a successful bite attack against him must succeed in a DC 10 Fort save or take 1d5 points of damage from the poison. |
| 16–17 | The caster's blood becomes poisonous to other creatures. Any creature making a successful bite attack against him must succeed in a DC 20 Fort save or take 2d6 points of damage from the poison. Any creature making a non-bite natural attack that draws blood—such as with claws or talons—must make a DC 15 Fort save or take 1d6 points of damage. |
| 18–21 | The caster's blood becomes very poisonous to other creatures. Any creature making a successful bite attack against him takes 2d6 damage, and must succeed in a DC 20 Fort save or take an additional 2d6 damage from the poison. Any creature making a melee attack that draws blood—including an attack with any edged or pointed melee weapons (except spears, polearms, and the like)—must succeed in a DC 15 Fort save or take 2d6 damage from contact with the blood. |
| 22–23 | The caster's blood becomes extremely toxic to other creatures. Any creature making a successful bite attack against the caster takes 4d6 damage from the poison and must succeed in a DC 20 Fort save or die. Any creature making a melee attack against the caster which draws blood—including most pointed or edged melee weapons, except spears, polearms, and the like—takes 2d6 damage from contact with the blood and must succeed in a DC 20 Fort save or take an additional 2d6 damage. |
| 24–26 | The caster gains all the effects from 22–23 above. In addition, he gains a venomous bite attack that inflicts 1d4 damage and requires a DC 20 Fort save to avoid taking an additional 4d6 damage. |
| 27–31 | The caster gains all the effects from 22–23 above. In addition, he gains a venomous bite attack that inflicts 2d7 damage and requires a DC 20 Fort save to avoid an additional 3d8 damage. The caster can choose to spit venom as a ranged attack up to 60' away, causing 1d6 damage on a successful hit and requiring a DC 15 Fort save to avoid an additional 3d6 damage. |
| 32+ | The caster gains all the effects from 27–31 above. In addition, the caster's poisonous aura becomes so great that it causes 1d5 damage each round to all creatures within 30' of him (no save). |

FORM OF THE MOTHER

Level: 2
(Takisaka)

Range:
Caster

Duration:
1 Turn or more

Casting time:
1 Round

Save:
None

| | |
|----------------------|--|
| General | The caster sheds her skin, taking on the form of a serpent, choosing any result equal to or less than the spell check result. The caster can end the effect at will, taking 1 round to shed her skin again and transform to her normal mortal form. Regardless of the form this spell grants, the caster is still able to cast spells as normal. |
| Manifestation | See below. |
| 1 | Lost, failure, and patron taint. |
| 2–11 | Lost. Failure. |
| 12–13 | Failure, but the spell is not lost. |
| 14–15 | The caster emerges as an emerald green snake, 1d3' in length. In this form, the caster has AC 14, MV 30' or climb 30' or swim 30', and gains a +3 bonus to Reflex saves and attempts at stealth. In this form, the wizard may cast spells but has no effective melee attacks. |
| 16–19 | The caster emerges as a poisonous serpent. In this form, the caster has AC 16, MV 30' or climb 30' or swim 30', and gains a +4 bonus to Reflex saves and attempts at stealth. The caster may cast spells or bite for 1 damage plus venom. Roll 1d3 to determine venom type: (1) adder, (2) asp, or (3) viper. Poison effects are found on page 446 of the core rulebook. |
| 20–21 | The caster emerges as a large cobra. In this form, the caster has AC 16, MV 30' or climb 30' or swim 30', and gains a +4 bonus to Reflex saves and attempts at stealth. In addition to a venomous bite doing 1d3 damage, the caster can also spit venom up to 10' away. For poison effects, see page 446 of the core rulebook. |
| 22–25 | The caster may maintain the effects of any lower result for a full hour or may take the form of a giant boa constrictor (see page 428 of the core rulebook). In this form, the caster takes the better of his own hit points and save modifiers, or those of the new form. |
| 26–29 | The caster may maintain the effects of any lower result for a full hour or may take the form of a giant cobra (see page 428 of the core rulebook) with the ability to spray venom once per hour. In this form, the caster takes the better of his own hit points and save modifiers, or those of the new form. |
| 30–31 | The caster may maintain the effects of any lower result for a full hour or may take the form of a giant two-headed viper (see page 428 of the core rulebook). In this form, the caster takes the better of her own hit points and save modifiers, or those of the new form. She is granted an additional Action Die which can only be used to make bite attacks. |
| 32–33 | The caster may maintain the effects of any lower result for a full day or may take the form of a giant (roll 1d3): (1) boa constrictor, (2) spitting cobra, or (3) two-headed viper, as indicated by the above results 22–25, 26–29, and 30–31). These giant serpents also gain the magical ability to use an Action Die for a gaze attack with a 90' range. Those struck by this gaze must succeed in a DC 20 Will save or be instantly petrified. This attack may be used once every three rounds. |
| 34+ | The caster may maintain the effects of any lower result indefinitely. However, the caster must succeed in a Will save (DC = number of days serpent form is maintained) in order to revert to her normal form. Only one save can be made each day to revert. |

PASSAGE BETWEEN WORLDS

Level: 3
(Takisaka)

Range:
Special

Duration:
1 Hour or longer

Casting time:
1 Turn or longer

Save:
None

General

The cosmic science of Takisaka imbues the caster with a form of genius. The caster is able to make a device capable of allowing instantaneous travel to one or more worlds in the multiverse. These worlds are always ones which have been touched by both Takisaka and the World Harvesters. Casting this spell requires costly materials, as indicated below, priced in core rulebook values. The caster may always choose a lesser result on a successful spell check.

The creator must be at least aware of a world to designate it as a target although he need not have actually travelled to that world in the past. A character, creature, or object cannot partially enter the gate and then withdraw. Once any part has entered the gate, the rest is instantly pulled through. There is always a 20% chance that anyone using the gate arrives in a dangerous manner, resulting in 1d4 damage.

The gate remains present on the destination world as a shimmering field for the duration of the spell. During this period, it is possible to return through the gate by simply entering the field. Creatures native to the destination world are equally capable of using the gate to enter the starting world.

If the caster does not designate a world, the gate goes to any world the judge desires. Several Goodman Games products are set on the Purple Planet. The world of Madkeen is described in *The Dread God Al-Khazadar*. Mezar-Kul is described in *Against the Atomic Overlord*. Several worlds are described in *The 998th Conclave of Wizards*. The Terra A.D. of *Mutant Crawl Classics* could also be used as an alternative world. Other possibilities may be found in *Crawljammer* (and its related materials), *The Gong Farmer's Almanac*, and *Drongo: Ruins of the Witch Kingdom*. The resourceful judge will surely be able to come up with others.

Manifestation

The created device always appears as an enclosed geometric shape with 1d7 sides (a 1-sided shape is a circle). The gate field itself, when activated, appears as an opaque shimmering area of (roll 1d5): (1) green, (2) blue, (3) silvery, (4) white, or (5) reddish hue.

1

Lost, failure, and patron taint.

2-11

Lost. Failure.

12-15

Failure, but the spell is not lost.

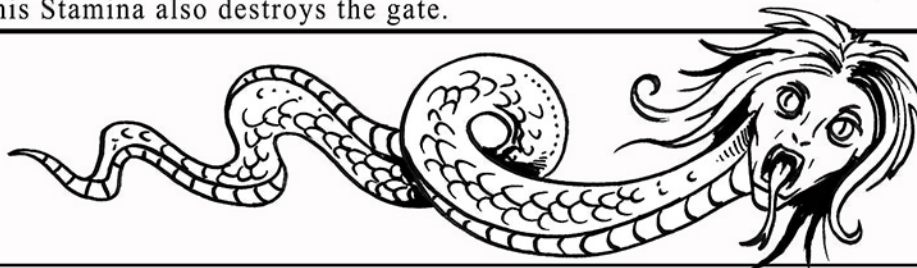
16-17

The device is no more than 5' in diameter, and allows passage with a single step to a nearby body, such as a moon. The gate lasts no more than 1 day and then ceases to function forever. The caster may designate the target world with 90% accuracy, if desired, when the gate is created. Creating such a gate requires 200 gp worth of materials, which are destroyed when the gate ceases to function.

18-21

The device is up to 10' in diameter, and allows passage to another world within the same solar system. The caster may designate the target world with 90% accuracy. The gate remains operative for up to 1 hour. The caster may shut the gate down to conserve duration from either side of the gate, but the gate can only be reinitiated from the sending side. The caster may designate the target world with 80% accuracy when the gate is created. Creating the gate requires 500 gp worth of materials, which are destroyed when the gate's duration is used up.

| | |
|-------|---|
| 22-23 | Casting time is 1 hour. The device is up to 10' in diameter. The caster can designate a single target world within the same solar system with 100% accuracy, or up to three worlds within the same solar system, with an 80% chance of accuracy per world. Changing the target world (for gates with multiple targets) requires the caster to be present at the sending point and requires 1 turn. The gate remains functional for up to 1 day before it is destroyed, and the caster can shut the gate down to conserve duration, but the gate can only be reinitiated from the sending side. Creating the gate requires 1,000 gp worth of materials, half of which is destroyed when the gate's duration ends, and half of which may be salvaged to use as material components for future castings of this spell. |
| 24-26 | Casting time is 1 hour. The device is up to 10' in diameter. The caster can designate a single target world within the same galaxy with 80% accuracy. The gate remains functional for up to 1 week before it is destroyed, and the caster can shut the gate down to conserve duration, but the gate can only be reinitiated from the sending side. Creating the gate requires 1,500 gp worth of materials, half of which is destroyed when the gate's duration ends, and half of which may be salvaged to use as material components for future castings of this spell. |
| 27-31 | Casting time is 1 day. The device is up to 20' in diameter. The caster can designate a single target world within the same galaxy with 90% accuracy, or up to five worlds within the same galaxy, with a 75% chance of accuracy per world. Changing the target world (for gates with multiple targets) requires the caster to be present at the sending point, and requires 1 turn. The gate remains functional for up to 1 week before it is destroyed, and the caster can shut the gate down to conserve duration, but the gate can only be reinitiated from the sending side. Creating the gate requires 1,500 gp worth of materials, half of which is destroyed when the gate's duration ends, and half of which may be salvaged to use as material components for future castings of this spell. |
| 32-33 | Casting time is 1 week. The device is up to 20' in diameter. The caster can designate a single target world anywhere in the universe with 80% accuracy. The gate remains functional for up to 1 month before it is destroyed, and the caster can shut the gate down to conserve duration, but the gate can only be reinitiated from the sending side. Creating the gate requires 2,000 gp worth of materials, half of which is destroyed when the gate's duration ends, and half of which may be salvaged to use as material components for future castings of this spell. |
| 34-35 | Casting time is 1 month. The device is up to 30' in diameter. The caster can designate a single target world anywhere in the universe with 100% accuracy, or up to seven worlds anywhere in the universe, with an 80% chance of accuracy per world. Changing the target world (for gates with multiple targets) requires the caster to be present at the sending point, and requires 1 turn. The gate remains functional for up to 1 year before it is destroyed, and the caster can shut the gate down to conserve duration, as well as reinitiate the gate from either side. Creating the gate requires 2,000 gp worth of materials, half of which is destroyed when the gate's duration ends, and half of which may be salvaged to use as material components for future castings of this spell. |
| 36+ | Casting time is 1 year. The device is up to 50' in diameter and is of permanent duration unless somehow destroyed. The caster can redirect the gate to any target world desired with a 90% degree of accuracy, including worlds in other universes. This requires the caster to be present at the sending point, and requires 1 hour. The caster can shut the gate down and reinitiate the gate from either side. Creating the gate requires 5,000 gp worth of materials and permanently reduces the caster's Stamina by 1. Any action that restores this Stamina also destroys the gate. |



SHEDDING YOUR SKIN

There are several elements in Takisaka's patron entry that may cause the caster to shed his skin. When this happens, the emergent caster may be altered by the experience. Roll 1d7 and consult the following table:

| 1d7 | Effect |
|-----|---|
| 1 | Eye color changes. Roll 1d3: (1) right eye color changes, (2) left eye color changes, or (3) both eyes change color. For human eyes, roll 1d5: (1) brown, (2) hazel, (3) green, (4) blue, or (5) grey. If the caster has serpent eyes, roll 1d4: (1) yellow, (2) green, (3) red, or (4) bronze. |
| 2 | Hair color changes. Roll 1d7: (1) black, (2) brown, (3) sandy, (4) blond, (5) red, (6) white, or (7) grey. |
| 3 | Skin tone becomes darker or lighter, with equal chance of each. |
| 4 | Height changes by 1d4 inches, with equal chance of becoming shorter or taller. |
| 5 | Build changes, with an equal chance of becoming broader or thinner. |
| 6 | Gender changes. Roll 1d7: (1-3) males become females and vice versa, genderless or hermaphroditic characters become male or female with an equal chance of each; (4-6) character becomes hermaphroditic, with characteristics of both genders, or (7) character loses all gender characteristics. |
| 7 | One random corruption is removed. if the character has no corruption, one minor corruption is gained. This has no effect on patron taint. |



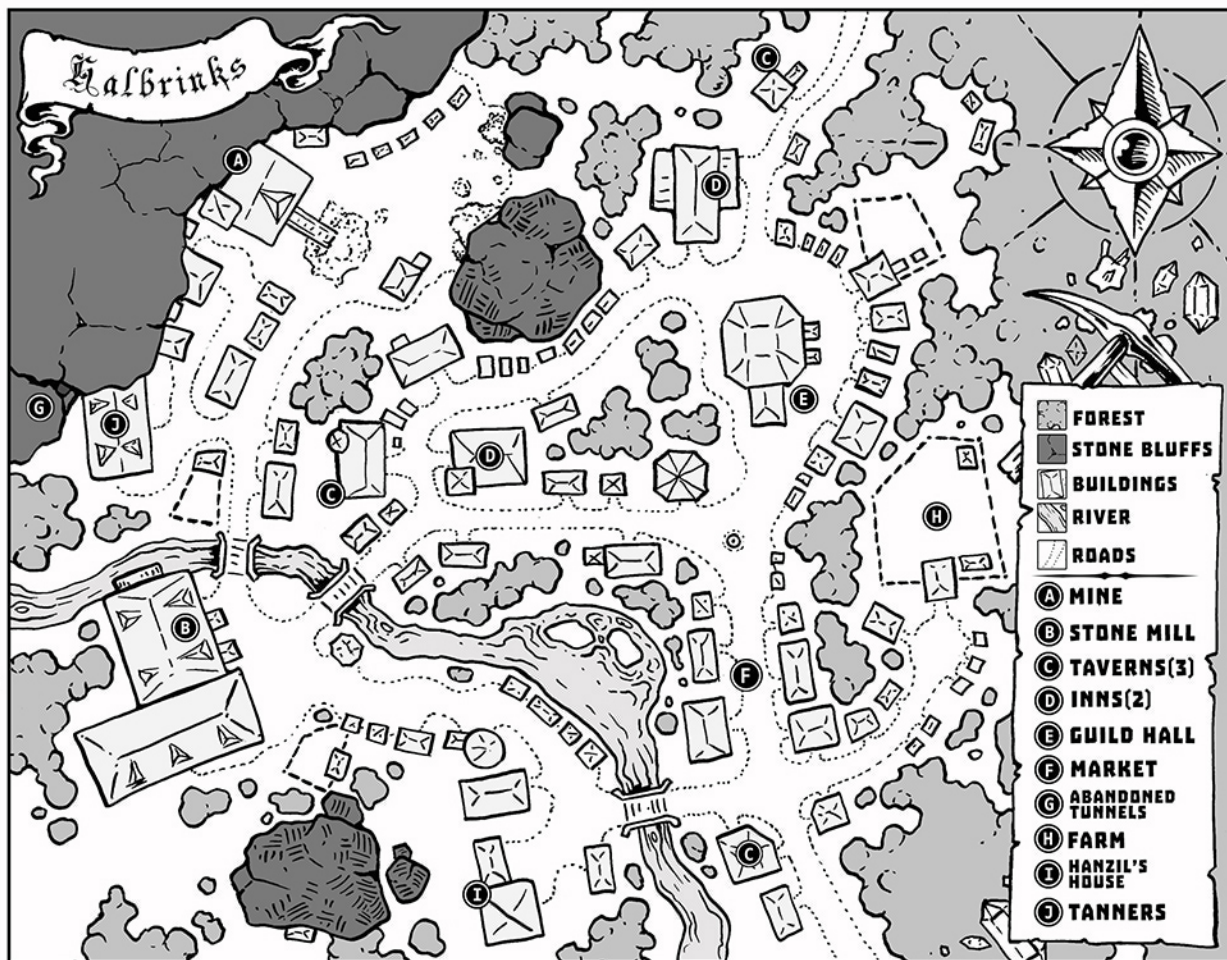
-Halbrinks-

Population: 621

Primary Industry: Hunting, Mining

Halbrinks subsists on hunting and mining deep ancestral mines for the veins overlooked by generations past. The villagers trade meats, furs, ore, and metalwork goods with the other large villages, individuals, and the smaller clans of dwarves in the mountains and foothills to the west and elves in the surrounding forests. The population consists mostly of humans and a significant number of halflings. A few of the smaller clans of dwarves live in nearby dry mines and are close enough and involved enough to be considered part of the community. There are two inns and three taverns with minimal boarding options, two blacksmiths, tanners, a general store, an armorer, a weaponsmith, and an organized hunter's guild in the village.

Hanzil, the weathered old village sage, has a collection of tattered and crumbling tomes and parchments from the ancestors. One book, however, is in pristine condition but written in an unknown language (a spellbook). His apprentice has not returned from an errand for Hanzil to collect a subterranean mushroom from an abandoned mine to the west. Hanzil is distraught and will refuse to discuss anything until his apprentice has safely returned or been proven dead.



-Elder's Grove-

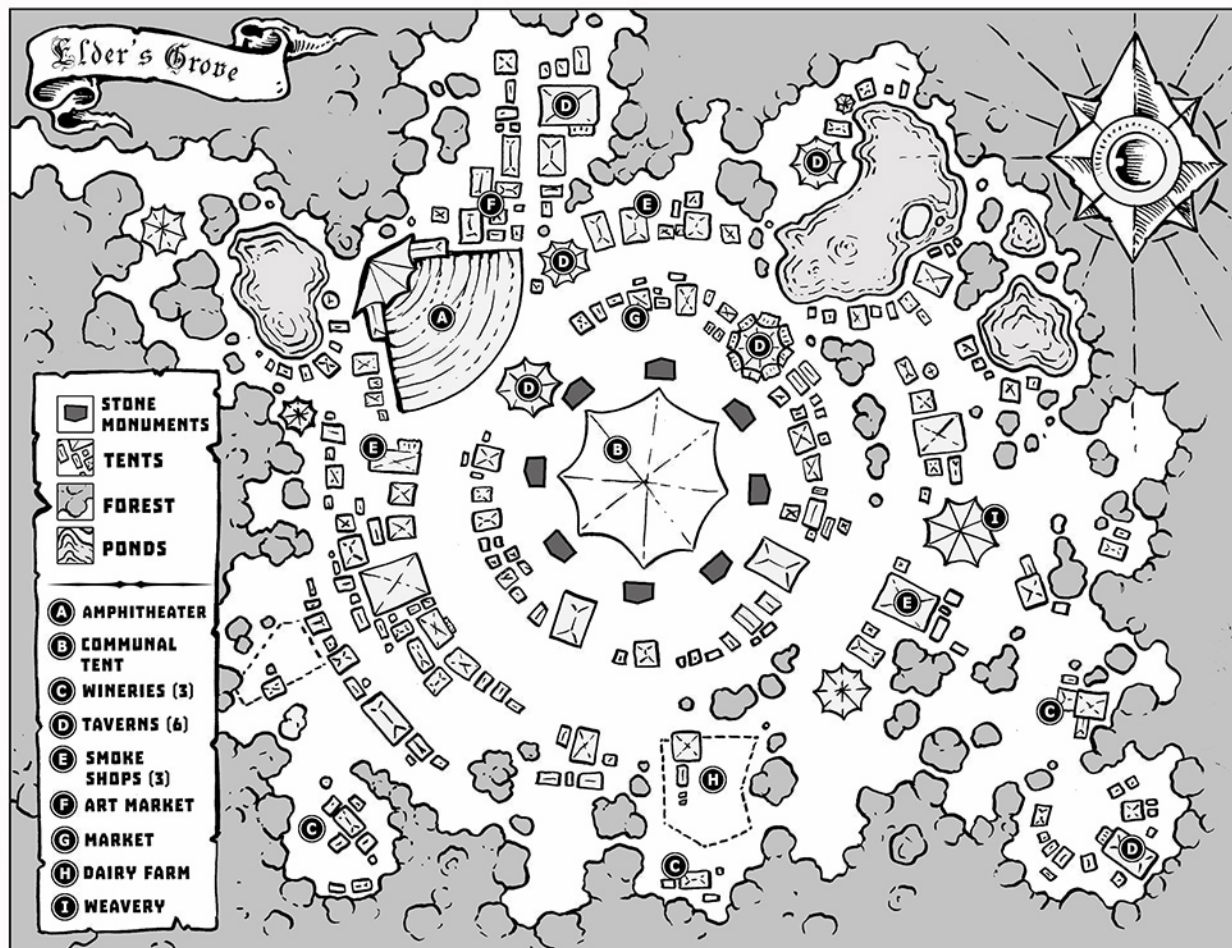
B

Population: 832

Primary Industry: Agriculture, Winemaking

Despite the harsh winters of the last ice age, the ground surrounding Elder's Grove has never frozen, allowing fruit trees to thrive year-round since time remembered. The most peaceful of the villages, Elder's Grove remains free from the humanoid invaders farther north. The villagers live a carefree, hedonistic life, working minimally and trading their harvests of fruits, vegetables, and pipeweed for other needed goods. Halflings, elves, humans, and even dwarves live in harmony, having given up their traditional homelands to join a communal society amidst ancestral stone monuments whose origins have been lost to time. Most structures are simple tents woven from a cottonlike material that grows in the vicinity and include wineries, an amphitheater, six taverns, three smoke shops, and a huge tent where travelers can sleep on sleeping mats in the open space of the tent or outside under the stars.

A local song has been sung for generations foretelling that the yellow tail finch will return to the grove one day to herald the dawn of a new age. Three have been sighted in the last month, just before the arrival of a strangely dressed man and woman who have traveled from the mainland proclaiming that the Summer Goddess has finally awakened from her slumber. They seek the Essence of Summer, an artifact rumored to be the source of the unnaturally warm climate in Elder's Grove but unknown to the current inhabitants.



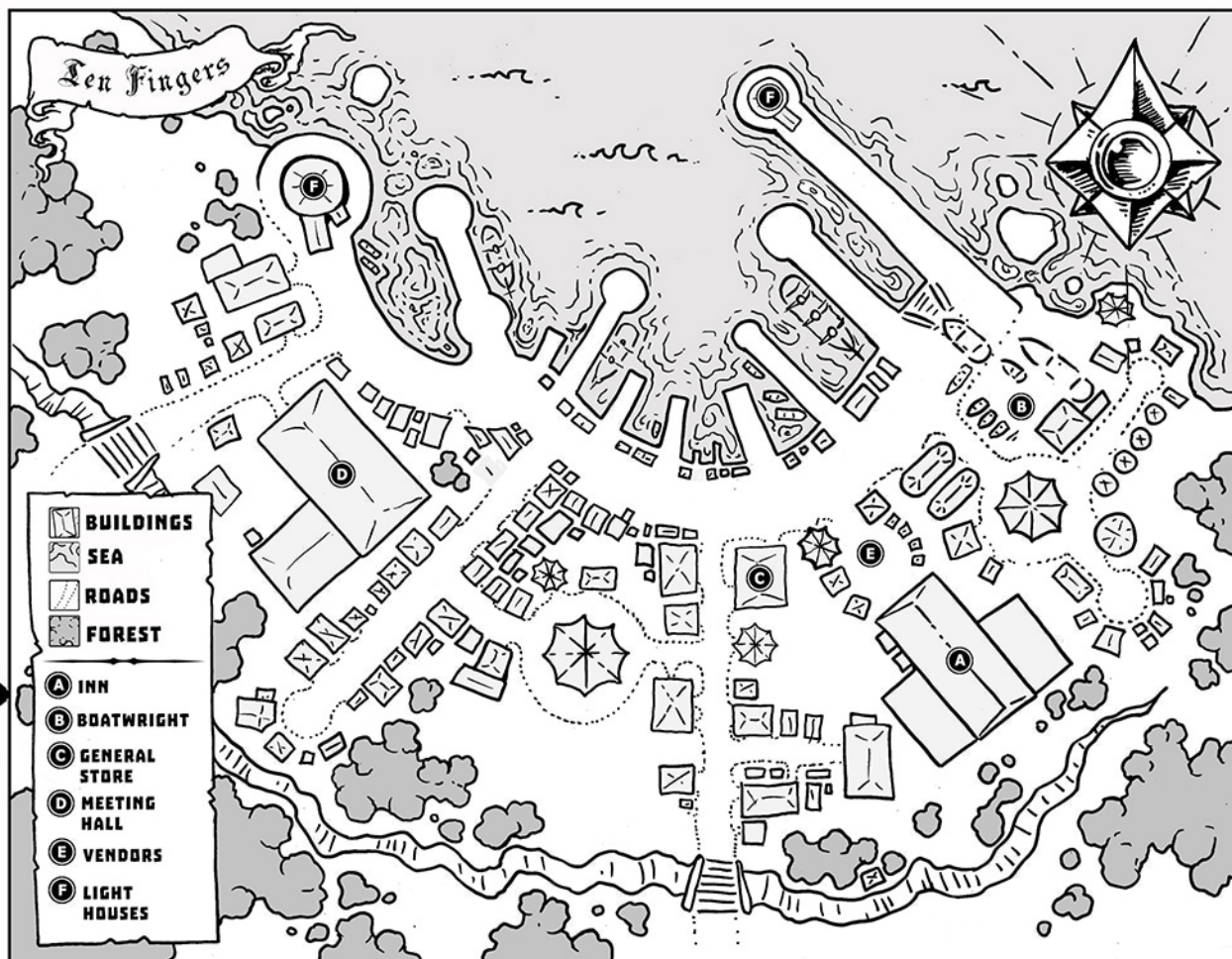
-Ten Fingers-

Population: 358

Primary Industry: Fishing, Forestry

Ten Fingers, named for the massive single-stone structure of ten docks jutting out into the ocean, was once a port for huge sailing vessels heading east in a time now forgotten (before the first visit from the World Harvesters). Most of the docks are too tall for the coastal fishers that ply the waters in current times. What giants used such ships in the past, no one knows. The structure itself is a masterpiece of engineering as are the unbroken streets and a few grand buildings that remain. Many structures seem to be missing, and now, simple wooden structures with sealskin roofs top smooth slats of the ancient stone. Woodworkers, fishmongers, bowyers, fletchers, a boatwright, a general store, and a single inn (built within a large unblemished stone structure) comprise the merchants of the town.

The red stone from which the port, roads, and structures were carved has not been seen elsewhere on the peninsula, until recently. A large sculpture of a heavily muscled goddess made of the same stone has peeked through the melting ice high atop a nearby mountain. Minimal digging revealed that the sculpture lies atop an unexplored building.



-Fars Reach-

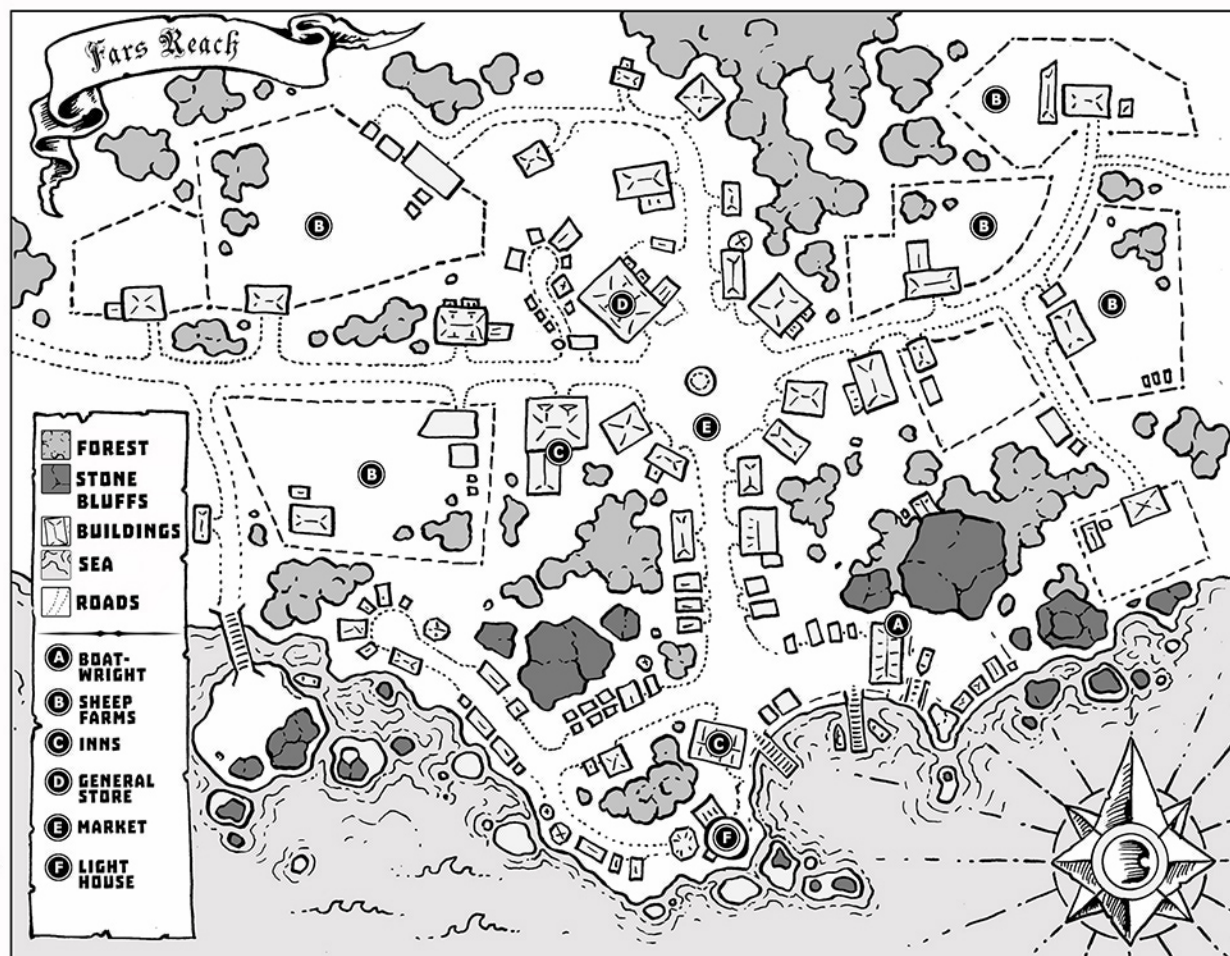
D

Population: 540

Primary Industry: Fishing, Sheep Farming

Fars Reach is the southernmost point of the peninsula and warmest. Much of the nearby coastline consists of large, sharply angled rocks unsuitable for mooring though it has a small bay that allows for fishing boats. Sheep farming has flourished in the warmer clime, and the villagers trade in wool, milk, cheese, and meat, all provided by the sheep. Small farm houses dot the land, and huts line the bay for the fishermen who fish from both the coastline and in small fishing boats. The village includes a boatwright capable of making coastal vessels, two small inns, a general store, and all the trades one would expect from a fishing and sheep farming community.

The chill waters that lap upon this timeless village have warmed to lukewarm since the Great Thaw. The fish have multiplied in recent years, and following their new migration, scaly manlike creatures have emerged from the waters for the first time in a lifetime. They gurgled unintelligible noises and attacked with tridents, killing a few before being beaten back into the ocean by the hardened villagers of Fars Reach. They have returned on each full Serpent Moon, when the tide is highest, for the last three months. The village elder has put a bounty on their heads and will reward any who can end this menace for good.



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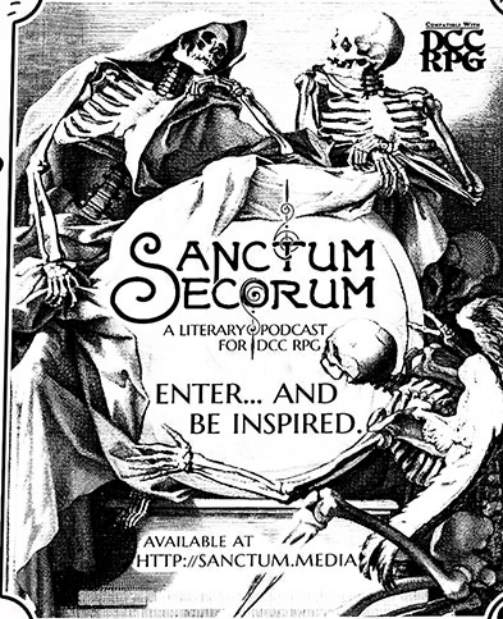
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3 Shillings
for a lump
of



*A curse be upon ye
if ye be stealin'
this property!*



*May yer scurvy,
thievin' heart be
filled with loneliness,
sadness, and regret
from a life unfulfilled*

*The curse can only be
lifted by repentin' and
buy'n a legitimate copy.*

WE BOY RATS!
Dead or Alive!!!

1/4sp

Cheers
me mateys!

From:

TO ALL THOSE WHO HAVE
HELPED MAKE THIS A REALITY

Scandalous
Scott

Teresa
Amaranthine

A
Thank you
round
to all our
Kickstarter
backers...

...And a
double to our
**Senior
Crew Members:**

Chris Zank
Jeffrey Olesky
Doug Keester
Austin "Ozz" Barta
Kevin A Swartz, MD
Jack Badashski
Ian 'Judge Dredd' Wilcox
Matthew R. Krempski, Discordian Laureate

Just Brother Tom
Nathan Groon
Bryant T. S. Biek
Michael G. Palmer
Jordan Estreito
Lucky Lance Hodge
Ben Grimes

Lesser Gnome
Ed Possing
Tom Colley
Blake Spade
Eric Betts
Alberto "Chiclán" Cintrón
Heather Shinn(peg boy)
Mr. Dr. Michael Jones
Christopher Patarazzi
Kirk Grentzenberg
"Cabin boy" Talon
Jodi Pink

Adam Wohr
Jim Schubert
Jason Menard
Kevin Morrell
Lisa Wright
J.M.Woiak

Welcome
To the Purple Pirate crew



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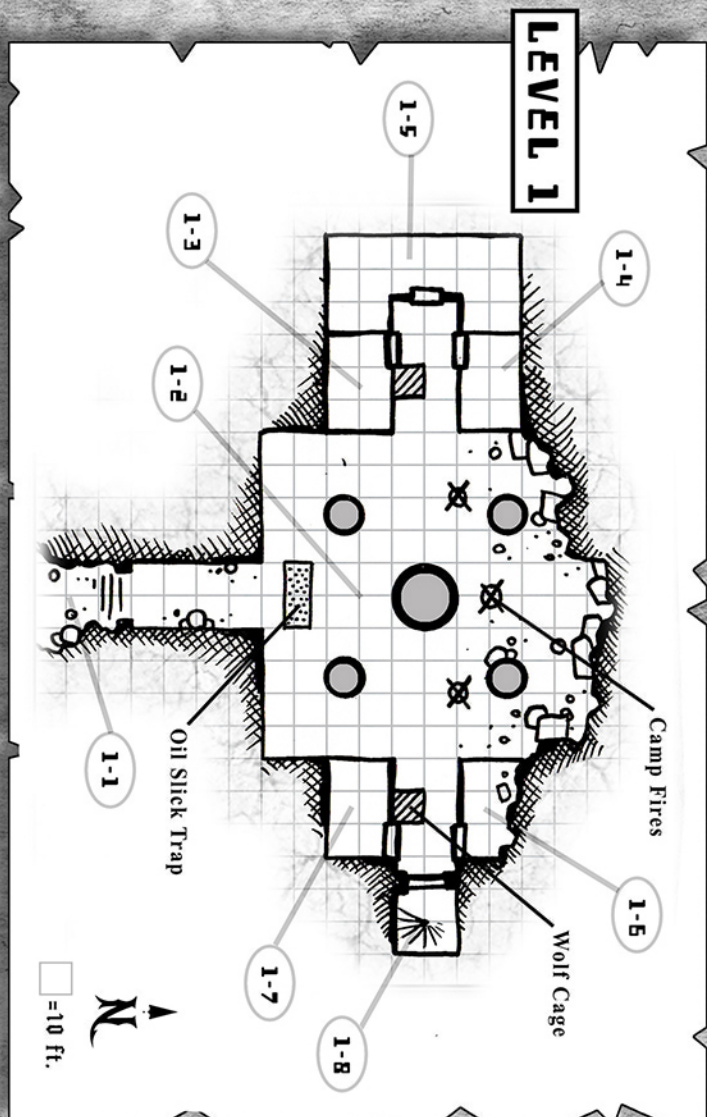
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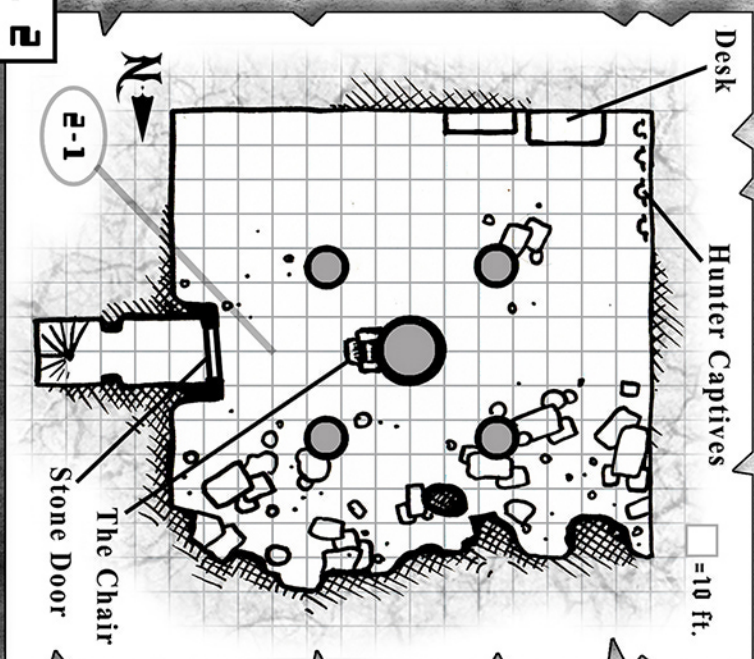
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