

SPELLJAMMER™

Official Game Adventure

Wildspace

by Allen Varney





THE HIVE'S MURALS

Here is a description of the giant stone murals found in Room 1, the central sphere, in the asteroid complex known as the Hive. This material relates to the description of Room 1 given in Chapter 4 of this adventure. Read the adventure to that point before consulting this description.

VIEWING THE MURALS

To view a stone panel that is up to one mile tall and one-half mile wide, the PCs must move to a distant vantage point: at least the center of the chamber, and probably at the far side. If the PCs are afoot, they can view a mural only from the opposite area of the chamber.

This becomes important in two circumstances. First, the PCs' previous adventures may have left potential adversaries in some part of the central chamber, perhaps enemies who have followed them out of the smaller rooms. Or the DM may wish to introduce a random encounter in the central sphere. The quest to view a particular panel may draw the PCs within range of this enemy.

Second, the gigantic *minor globe* crystal floats in the passage between this chamber and Room 12. The crystal's area of effect does not reach far into the central sphere. But if the PCs want to view the murals on the far end of the sphere from that passage, they must sail or travel within range of the crystal's magic-neutralizing area. Its ill effects on a spelljamming ship are described elsewhere in this module.

The PCs can see the murals. Can they make sense of them?

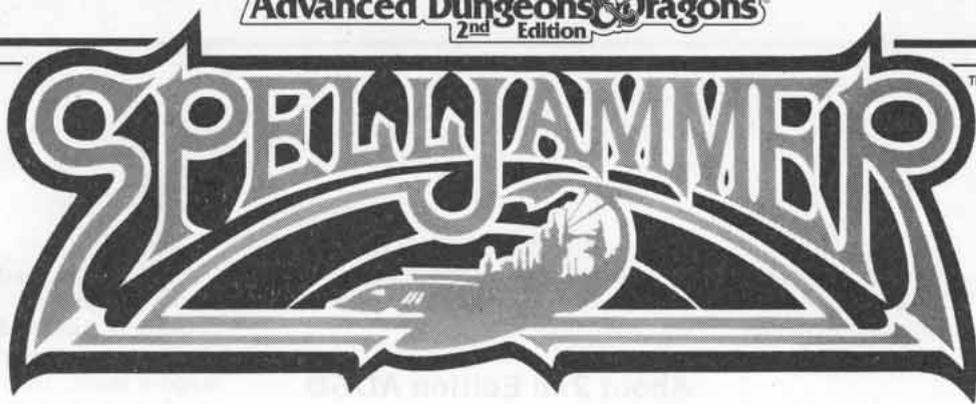
The murals' style: These are artworks of an alien species. Try to convey the alien quality in the descriptions of these murals. Works from foreign human cultures can serve as examples. For instance, when describing the murals, consider showing the players Mayan hieroglyphics or rongorongo script from Easter Island. A good encyclopedia offers many such "alien" works.

There are some features of the Sazaur mural style that are standard regardless of the approach taken:

1. All the murals are carved in very high relief. From close up, the murals look like ranges of hills cut with odd channels and box canyons.

2. All the figures depicted look odd to human eyes, as though the artists tried to show not just the front of each figure, but part of the back as well. A beholder perceives more than the conventional 180-degree view of an object facing it; with its wide-set eyestalks, it sees perhaps 190 or 200 degrees of nearby objects. For humanoids, it would be like viewing an object from one position, shifting over five feet to a new perspective, and then combining them into one view.

3. The Sazaur beholders used 11 arbitrary symbols to represent the different powers of their eyes, in the same way we use symbols for natural phenomena (for example, lightning is often depicted as a jagged line). Each symbol starts at a beholder's eye and leads to a target (usually another beholder; see below for descriptions of the murals).



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INTRODUCTION

"While far into the vast unknown
the strong wing'd Eagles bend/
Their venturous flight in Human
forms distinct; thro' darkness
deep/
They bear the woven draperies; on
golden hooks they hang abroad/
The universal curtains & spread
out from Sun to Sun/
The vehicles of light. . . ."

—William Blake, *The Four Zoas*
"Vala: Night the Second,"
lines 150-154 (1797)

DM NOTES

It's waiting out there. To those below, trapped in the ring of the horizon, it promises only vast black emptiness. But it waits, and in time they arrive. The brave and foolhardy, the lucky and unfortunate, all these visitors discover its secret.

The void is not empty. Life teems in its reaches; armadas navigate its depths. Million-mile vistas of eerie beauty lie unseen by human eyes. Treasures that dwarf worlds hide in distant gulfs. Only the strongest and bravest can traverse the immense distances that guard these treasures. For the strong and the brave . . . Wildspace waits.

About This Module

Wildspace is the first AD&D® game adventure for the SPELLJAMMER™ campaign setting. The SPELLJAMMER boxed campaign set is necessary to play.

This adventure is designed to fit any existing ground-based campaign, launching the player characters (PCs) into the vast realms beyond their world. A DM can also use it to start a new space campaign. The adventure works best for four to six characters of levels 6-8.

This entire adventure is for the DM's eyes only. **Players should NOT read any further!**

Wildspace works with any campaign world. No adjustment is necessary. The characters leave their world in the first scene and don't return until the last . . . if they ever do! At story's end the PCs might have their own spelljamming

ship and a base of operations. They may choose to remain in space for further adventures.

About 2nd Edition AD&D game rules

This adventure is written using the terminology and rules of the 2nd Edition AD&D game. Those who use the original game materials can still play it easily.

Some noticeable differences are name changes. The term "magic-user" has been replaced by "wizard" or "mage." The "cleric" character class is now the "priest" class, though members of that class are often still called clerics.

Monsters are presented in a new format. The monster descriptions in this adventure's appendix use the format of the *Monstrous Compendium* series. The information has been expanded and reorganized, but nothing from the original *Monster Manual* format is omitted. The pages of new monsters can be photocopied and inserted in the *Monstrous Compendium* binder.

Ability checks: Occasionally, this adventure calls for PCs to make an ability check. Roll 1d20 and compare the result with the character's appropriate ability (Strength, Dexterity, etc.). If the roll is equal to or less than the ability score, the action succeeds. If the roll is greater than the ability score, the action fails.

Adventure Layout

This adventure is presented in chapters. Each chapter includes *events* which happen regardless of the PCs' locations and actions. Some chapters also include *encounters* keyed to a given location or action. Only if the PCs enter that location or perform that action does the encounter take place.

Any text that appears in a box is meant to be read aloud (or summarized) for the players. All other information is for the DM. Reveal it only in response to PC actions.

The chapters describe the intended flow of the story. PCs have great freedom to deviate from the intended course. Therefore, read the entire module before play begins. That way,

the DM will be ready for anything the players might do.

Staging Advice: From time to time, the adventure offers notes on how to stage a scene; that is, how to pace it, create an appropriate mood, and produce certain dramatic effects. The DM can use this advice to create a vivid, memorable adventure for the players.

STORY BACKGROUND

This adventure centers on the space-borne race of beholders. Many subspecies of beholders exist, all with the same monstrous features and powers, but varying in skin color and texture, configuration of eyes, and so on. The assumption is that beholders in different environments evolve through very rapid genetic deviation and drift.

As described in the SPELLJAMMER boxed set, these differences produce deep racism among beholders. Generally, beholders hold few ideals higher than destroying each other. The subspecies organize into "nations" that wage cold war on one another.

Most beholder nations number only 20 to 40 individuals, the complement of one or two Tyrant Ships. But about 1,200 years ago, in a distant crystal sphere far across the phlogiston, different natural laws allowed the beholder nations there to grow to enormous size, over ten thousand strong. These nations were more racist than any other nation.

The Sazaur

One such nation, the Sazaur, made great headway in its wars. Led by a Hive Mother (or Queen) of astounding power, the Sazaur virtually exterminated other beholder nations from their sphere. However, when the Queen died in battle, the Sazaur nation's fortunes went into eclipse.

The Sazaur ruling caste resolved to regain their supremacy. But how? Their dramatic solution: They would attempt to create an artifact. Using the eyes of the deceased Queen as their template relics, the Sazaur focused their entire nation's resources and enlisted the mysterious Arcane in a task that would tax a god.

Over the next two centuries, the Sa-

zaur hollowed out an asteroid to create a huge "incubator" called the Hive. Since the creation process called for the lives of a billion creatures, the Sazaur also made their asteroid Hive a shelter for a weapon of wholesale slaughter: the Ravager.

The Sazaur never got to create their artifact, but they managed to use their ultimate weapon—once. In a massive ritual, they first animated the Ravager. The weapon immediately began its course of destruction by engulfing and destroying the entire Sazaur nation. Some speculate that the Arcane arranged this fate, for fear that the Sazaur would grow too powerful to remain trustworthy customers.

Without its controlling beholders, the Hive drifted through space on a random course. It passed from the Sazaur's crystal sphere and was soon lost in the phlogiston.

The Ravager

The weapon was sighted at sporadic intervals over the next millennium in many different crystal spheres. Wherever it was seen, disaster followed. The Ravager evidently could operate automatically and showed no preference for killing beholders over other victims.

The Hive could not move independently. It simply drifted on a slow, straight course, passing through crystal sphere walls by the powerful magic of the Queen's Eye relic. But the weapon contained in the asteroid, the Ravager, could move freely. It swept down on dozens of worlds, leaving total destruction behind. Meanwhile, whole armadas perished against the Hive's defenses.

The legend grew, especially among the beholder nations. Each realized that if it could control the Ravager, it would achieve supremacy. The weapon's position provoked constant and intense speculation.

In the last recorded incident, the Hive took extensive damage from rival fleets of beholder Tyrant Ships. Any of the fleets could have finally defeated the Hive, but with victory in sight, they turned on each other and destroyed themselves.

Though breached, the Hive drifted

on. It has now reached the home sphere of the player characters.

Shazogrox/Tobart

One beholder mage, a monstrous wizard, has deduced the Hive's current course. The beholder mage, named Shazogrox, now hopes to bring the monstrous killing machine under his control. The key to success: the Queen's Eyes. The relics have slowly grown in power over the centuries, strengthened by the Ravager's kills. They do not yet form a true artifact, but they come very close.

The Queen's Eyes bestow titanic power; but until they achieve true artifact status, they remain fragile and can be destroyed.

By controlling the Ravager, the ambitious Shazogrox hopes to slaughter all rival beholders in this sphere.

The beholder mage is motivated by revenge. He was outcast from his nation due to (for lack of a better term) his political beliefs. Now *polymorphed* into human form, Shazogrox journeys across space in the guise of a spelljamming privateer named Jon Tobart.

Tobart/Shazogrox, as evil as any beholder, plots revenge for his exile. He has planned an audacious scheme to sneak aboard the Ravager, take the Queen's Eyes, and command the Ravager himself. Then he will wipe out beholders everywhere, and perhaps declare himself emperor for good measure. The slaughter may endow the Eyes with enough spiritual energy to give it true artifact status, some two centuries ahead of schedule!

But to invade the Hive, Tobart needs help. And that is where the player characters enter the picture.

ADVENTURE SUMMARY

Jon Tobart, the disguised beholder mage, captains a *polymorphed* crew who were once animals, on his spelljammer ship called the *Skyrunner*. Tobart needs this crew, as well as the PCs, to take him to the Hive. Once there, he needs them to provide a diversion and, if necessary, combat support.

Tobart stops at the PCs' home city for supplies. The PCs can stow away

aboard his ship, or he can recruit them from their grounding home to serve as crew. On the mission to the Hive, the PCs learn about fantasy space and spelljamming. In an encounter with a beholder scout ship, they learn about spelljammer combat.

The PCs eventually learn of their captain's strange nature. Probably they gain control of the *Skyrunner* themselves.

In any case, they eventually encounter, enter, and explore the Hive asteroid. This part of the adventure works as a traditional dungeon adventure; but in this case, the dungeon rooms measure two miles on a side! The PCs literally sail their ship through the stupendous chambers of the Hive.

Against the Ravager

Unbeknownst to the PCs, Jon Tobart has re-activated the Ravager. When they find out, the PCs must follow the Ravager and stop it before it annihilates their homeworld!

The Ravager is a gigantic armored construct shaped like a beholder. Jon Tobart is inside it, guiding its path. The PCs can fight the Ravager ship-to-ship in their spelljammer, or they can infiltrate the huge weapon's interior. Inside the Ravager, the PCs must confront Jon Tobart, who is armed with the powerful Queen's Eyes, and find ways to destroy the beholder, the Ravager, and the artifact. (Then they have to get out before the Ravager collapses!)

If they survive this great final battle, the PCs can attempt to use the Queen's Eyes (if the Eyes survive) to stop the Hive in its course. If they succeed, they have a ship, a base, and a whole new kind of fantasy adventure in space.



CHAPTER 1: LADDER TO THE SKY

In this chapter, a spelljamming ship, the *Skyrunner*, recruits the PCs for a mission. The PCs learn about fantasy space travel, meet the crew of the ship, and make a few surprising discoveries about its captain. The mission remains mysterious.

The captain of the ship, the *polymorphed* beholder mage calling himself Jon Tobart, has learned that many of the Hive's defenses are specifically designed to defend against beholders. This made Tobart's few beholder allies nearly useless. Knowing that he will need crew members of races other than his own, he searches for adventurers whom he can dupe into aiding his attempt to seize control of the Ravager.

EVENT 1: A PIN DROPS

The adventure begins in a crowded, open area in any village or city. A marketplace or bazaar works well.

The PCs have just completed another adventure. Now they wander the town, perhaps buying supplies or looking for work.

Start the adventure by reading the following aloud:

You hear a distant whistle. It starts low, but very quickly becomes higher-pitched and louder. It's coming from overhead.

You look up and see something far above, a dark speck that quickly grows bigger. Something large is falling out of the sky, straight toward this area!

People around you also see this. A few panic and scatter. But most of them just stand, staring upward as the object hurtles down.

The PCs have only moments (one round) to act. They should rescue NPCs, restrain panicking animals, and otherwise act like heroes.

When does the object actually hit? Have the players roll for individual initiative. Determine when the object falls by making an unmodified initiative roll. "Count down" to impact by calling out the initiative order and letting the PCs act in their turn. Play up the tension of the scene. When the object's

turn comes, the action continues. Read this aloud:

Suddenly the object hits the ground about 50 feet away with a tremendous *thoom!*

Broken wood and shards of pottery fly into the crowd. People scream and run away.

The collision kicks up a big cloud of dust. When it settles, you see that a merchant's cart has been totally demolished by a huge ship's anchor. The anchor seems to be made of iron. It must weigh at least a ton.

A thick, gray rope stretches from the anchor straight up into the air as far as you can see. You can't see anything else overhead.

What do you do?

They examine the rope and anchor, of course. These are from the spelljamming ship *Skyrunner*, now floating at anchor several miles overhead.

The subsections that follow outline the PCs' likely actions and possible outcomes. When the PCs are finished looking at the rope and anchor, move on to Event 2.

The anchor: The *Skyrunner's* massive anchor is shaped like its earthbound counterparts. It is roughly ten feet long, measures eight feet across its two huge, curved spikes, and weighs about two tons. On a cross-piece atop the anchor, the rope is tied with a complex knot.

The anchor is cast of an iron alloy with tiny flecks of a silvery metal. Any character who examines it gets an Intelligence check. Characters with the Sailor or Shipwright proficiencies or secondary skill make this roll with a +2 bonus. Those who succeed notice that the anchor shows no signs of corrosion nor any evidence that it has been employed at sea.

The rope: The rope is a new magical item called an *infinite rope* (see the "New Magical Items" appendix for details). Normally, the rope is stretched by playing it out in coils. In this case, it was simply knotted to an anchor. When the anchor was thrown overboard, the rope stretched to the necessary length.

The rope is about three inches thick; surprisingly thin, considering the weight of the anchor. It is woven of sev-

eral strands of smaller cord about one-quarter-inch thick. Closer examination reveals small metallic threads running through the rope.

A *detect magic* spell reveals strong magic on the rope and on the large knot used to tie it to the anchor.

Likely Actions

Untying the rope: A *wizard lock* has been cast on the knot, making it very difficult to untie.

Untying the knot without damaging the rope is possible but difficult, requiring a Dexterity check with a penalty of -5. Each attempt takes one turn. Characters with the Rope Use proficiency may make an unmodified roll in half the time.

If the characters get the rope loose, it swings back and forth overhead, dropping low enough on every third or fourth pass to knock the wind out of some innocent bystander or do incidental property damage.

Remember that this is a very long, three-inch-thick rope whipping around; there is a lot of force behind it! So much, in fact, that a character who tries to grab hold is swept right up into the air. It takes another anchor or something the size of a fully-loaded cart to pin it down again. Most likely it dangles loose until the *Skyrunner's* sailors come to fix it (see Event 3).

Cutting the rope: Although thin, the rope has the strength of hardwood. What's worse, the rope sways when struck, making it difficult to cut. For these reasons, the rope can take 30 hit points of damage before breaking.

Cutting the rope destroys the enchantment and causes it to start shrinking back to its normal size. If the PCs try to grab on as it zips skyward, they must make Dexterity checks. Any who succeed are pulled into the heavens with a wrenching force and dizzying speed. Roll as you would for an attempt to climb the rope (see below) with a -3 penalty for complete lack of preparation. If the PC fails either of these rolls, calculate distance and damage as outlined below.

If the PCs cut the rope, Tobart and his crew still come down as described in Event 4 below, on a duplicate *infinite rope*, held safely out of the PCs' reach.

EVENT 2: CLIMBING THE ROPE

This has many drawbacks. The major obstacle for the PCs is the sheer length of the climb. Making the ascent under their own power is really not feasible, since the rope goes two miles straight up with no good handholds. When PCs get up a few hundred feet, the sway of the rope that seemed so gentle from the ground is violent enough to throw off all but the strongest characters. Precautions such as safety ropes reduce the chance of disaster, but do not guarantee safety.

If the PCs want to try the climb, have them make an Intelligence check. If anyone makes it, the DM should point out that they have no idea how long the rope really is. If anyone makes the check by 2 or more, they realize just how brutal the swaying rope would be.

Even so, reckless PCs may still attempt the climb. Have them make Strength and Dexterity ability checks with a bonus or penalty from -3 to +3 for preparation or lack thereof. Anyone who fails either check falls, despite any precautions they took (safety ropes snap, characters tied together go down together, etc.). Thieves may make a Climb+Walls roll to counteract the effects of a failed roll, saving them from almost certain doom. As for the rest of them . . .

Falling: To determine the height of the character when he falls, roll a d10 four times and multiply the results together. This is the distance fallen in feet. (For example, rolls of 5, 3, 8, and 7 give a height of $5 \times 3 \times 8 \times 7 = 840$ feet.)

Damage is 1d6 for every 10 feet fallen, to a maximum of 20d6 (terminal velocity). Since the average fall calculated by this method is about 915', it is safe to assume terminal velocity. If a character sustains this kind of damage, remember the massive damage rule (*Dungeon Master's Guide*, page 75): If a character takes 50 or more hit points from any single attack, he must save vs. death or die.

Magic: If the characters have the proper spells or items, they can *fly* or *levitate* upward alongside the rope. They might have difficulty avoiding the swaying rope; require a Dexterity

check (more if you feel they are warranted). A failed check means the rope hits the character for 1d4 points of damage.

Success: If they reach the top of the rope, the PCs find themselves on the main deck of the *Skyrunner*. Go to Event 4.

EVENT 3: WAITING

Especially cagy or torpid PCs may refuse to have anything to do with the rope. They might decide to wait to see what happens. Or perhaps they make time-consuming preparations before a climb, such as procuring supplies. Maybe they just dither.

During the next few hours, everyone in town comes to look at the rope and anchor, first from a distance, but gradually drawing closer. Eventually, they crowd around the rope, and then a child tries to climb it. One hundred feet up, he falls and hurts himself. This brings in the city guard.

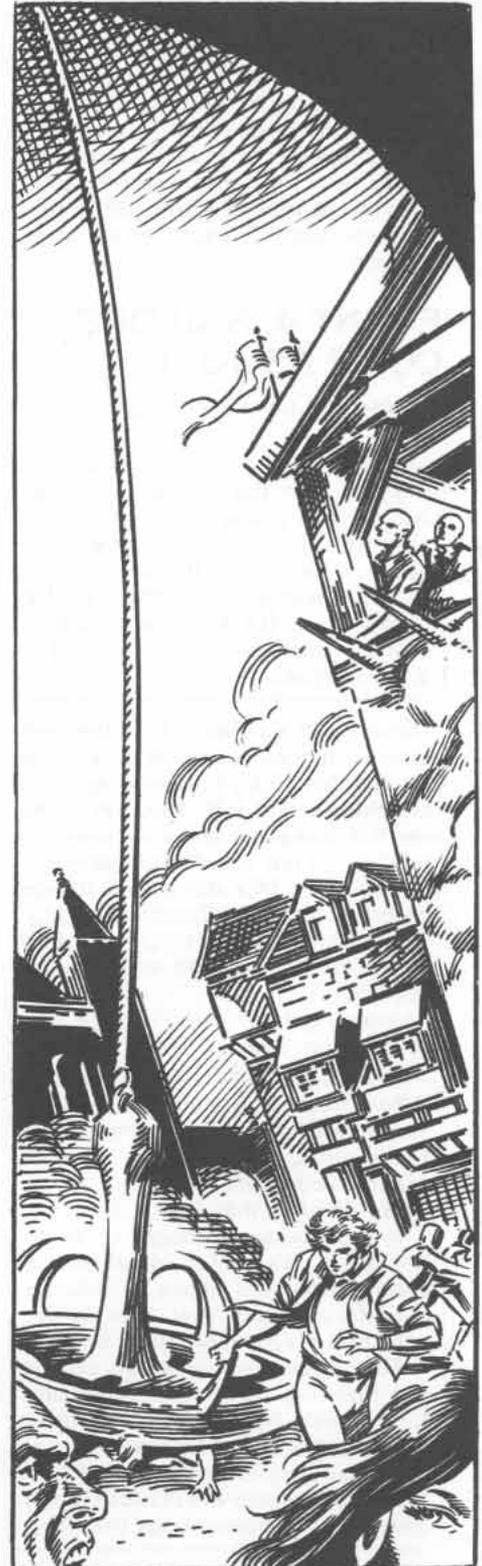
The guardsmen cluster around the base of the rope, warning off the citizens. Shortly thereafter, city officials and politicians show up; the closer it is to the next election, the faster they appear, and the longer the speeches they make when they arrive.

Also arriving will be jongleurs, minstrels, and lunatics with passionate speeches for social reform, all exploiting this ready-made audience. Around the anchor, an impromptu carnival springs up.

Within half an hour, resourceful merchants in the marketplace are hawking improvised "tie-in" ropes, cords, strings, and bootlaces. "The rope extends from heaven! Carry a small piece of heaven with you from this blessed square! Only six—excuse me—eight coppers a yard!" Every time someone buys one, the price goes up another copper.

Meanwhile, sages and elderly gentlemen gather to debate the nature of the rope. Some say it indicates that the gods, too, use ships just as humans do; others theorize that perhaps someone wishes to lasso the moon to the world, thus locking them together and stopping the annoying problem of tides.

The PCs can interrupt and do something at any time, though now they



may have to get past 2d4 city guards (AC 4, 9 hp, F1, long sword, mace, dagger, alarm whistle). The guards are not expecting trouble, but trickery or negotiation still work better than brute force. If the PCs attack the guards, the guards raise the alarm, and the sailors from the *Skyrunner* arrive just in time to rescue the PCs from certain arrest and trial.

EVENT 4: SAILORS COME ASHORE

If the PCs keep watching, read this aloud:

An hour after the anchor crashed to the ground, you spot a strange contraption sliding slowly down the rope. It looks like the crow's nest lookout platform from the top of a ship's mast. It's about a thousand feet up. It should reach the ground in a few minutes.

Give the PCs a chance to make preparations. If they ready an attack, the city guardsmen try to discourage this: "attacking is our job," they say. (However, the guards are seasoned veterans, and they do not attack without provocation.) If the PCs still attack the oncoming object, see "Troubleshooting."

Meanwhile, the other citizens faint or flee, just as they did when the anchor fell.

Assuming the PCs don't attack, read the following aloud:

After three or four minutes, the contraption stops about 15 feet above the ground. It's a strange circular platform about 20 feet across, made of something that looks like oak. The rope passes through a hole in the platform's center. Metal braces reach below and above it, holding cylindrical guides that encircle the rope and keep the platform steady.

Four large wooden beams extend out from the platform's edges, like long minute hands on a clock face. At the end of each beam is a big copper float shaped like a hot-air balloon. Underneath the platform hang several large burlap bags that look

like they are filled with something.

Four men stand on the platform. Two are outfitted like sailors: sleeveless shirts, tight leggings, and a kerchief around the neck. The third man is really big, almost a giant. He carries no weapon, but wears plate armor.

The fourth human is a tall man with reddish skin and a heavy beard. He wears chain mail, high boots, and a red halfcloak. A broadsword hangs from his belt.

This man casts a rope ladder over the side of the platform. It reaches the ground. He starts to climb down.

This contraption, called an "anchor hoist," transports crewmen from a spelljamming ship to the ground when landing the ship is undesirable. Though uncommon among spelljamming ships, due to the fragility of the central rope, the anchor hoist is the fastest way to and from a ship, with the exception of jumping.

The hoist can carry up to a dozen normal-sized beings, or more if they don't mind crowding. It travels downward by means of a windlass device connected to a complicated arrangement of ratchets and gears. When the passengers pump the windlass, the gears pull the hoist down the rope at a movement rate of two yards per round.

The ballast bags beneath the platform are filled with ordinary sand, weigh 200 pounds each, and are tied to the platform with plain hemp rope that is one inch thick. The rope ladder is also completely ordinary.

The hoist ascends through magical levitation; each of the four copper floats carries a permanent *levitate* spell. When the ballast bags are cut, the floats carry the hoist platform up the rope at a rate of eight yards per round.

The Crew

If the players want to examine the humans more closely, read the following aloud:

The tall, bearded man with the halfcloak stands about 6'6" tall. From the roughness of his beard, he must

shave with his broadsword. His eyes are bright blue, like the sky overhead. He moves gracefully, as though floating.

This is Shazogrox, the *polymorphed* beholder mage in his human form of Captain Jon Tobart. His eye color changes during the adventure, whenever he casts a spell or reverts back to beholder form. For more information, see "Non-Player Characters" and the beholder mage description in the appendix.

The huge man must be over seven feet tall. He wears full plate armor, along with an enormous shield strapped to his back. His face looks like something pushed it in and stepped on it. He walks stiffly, and he smells of heavy perfume. He hasn't said anything.

This is Stonecrop, a flesh golem that Jon Tobart employs as a bodyguard. Stonecrop obeys only Shazogrox/Tobart. Though unarmed now, Stonecrop sometimes carries a mace because his master orders it; however, the golem cannot use it. The perfume, of course, masks the odors of earth and flesh, but not too well. Any PC can detect them with a successful Intelligence check, and animals always detect the odors.

This unlikely disguise cannot fool players for long. Jon Tobart tries to keep up the pretense in front of the crowd while he delivers his appeal (see below). After he recruits the PCs, he cares little about the pretense. However, the DM can provide comic relief by having Tobart maintain the thin charade, even after the players recognize Stonecrop as a golem, that this is the *Skyrunner's* "first mate."

The two normal-sized sailors wear simple sailor's clothes. The first is a little bald guy in a green shirt, breeches, and bare feet. You can see thin webs of skin between his toes. He has fat jowls and a big stomach, and he walks slightly hunched. His eyes are green and bulging.

The second sailor has heavy eye-

brows and a long, thin nose. He's good-looking, but he seems confused. He's very lean, and his leather armor hangs loosely on him. But he moves with unusual grace, placing each step carefully.

These are two of the 24 animals that Tobart has *polymorphed* into human form. The first is Gulug, a transformed toad; the other, Ralgir, was once a wolf. They can talk, but don't have much to say. Gulug spends most of his time staring hungrily at flying bugs. Ralgir tends to be easily startled by sudden noises.

Tobart employs these transformed beasts as crew, since they can follow simple orders. More importantly, he uses them to lend authenticity to his role as ship's captain. Both of these disguises are more convincing than Stonecrop's, fooling the PCs at least until the mission is underway.

Many other *polymorphed* crew members remain aboard the *Skyrunner*. Four crew members are described fully in the "Non-Player Characters" appendix.

Captain Tobart climbs down the ladder. Showing his empty hands and smiling, he draws the crowd back, then recites his prepared lie:

Tobart's Story

"Hear me! I am Captain Jon Tobart of the good ship *Skyrunner*. I have sailed here from a far-off land to warn you of grave danger, a threat to your very lives, that will come from the skies to destroy your home. An ancient and powerful menace called the Ravager is approaching. Something must be done, or you are all surely doomed! Are any among you brave enough to help me fight this monster?"

As might be expected, the crowd reacts with a mixture of panic and skepticism. None of the NPCs come forward, so the PCs must make the first move. If they do not, Tobart elaborates on the vast power of the "monster from the heavens." If this doesn't work, he spots the party in the crowd and tries to hire

them. Tobart offers the PCs 1,000 gp each and a share of the creature's treasure, which, he assures them, is vast.

Of course, the PCs may well oblige, either joining the captain right away, or (more likely) trying to get more information from him.

Tobart claims to be from a distant land to the north. He travels in a ship that sails the sky; "I bought it from the elves," he says. In the last port he visited, he heard of a titanic monster, the Ravager, capable of devouring whole cities. The monster dwells on a floating island, and he has learned the island is drifting toward this very city!

Tobart says nothing about spelljamming at this point, since it might scare off possible recruits. He claims that the journey, to "distant lands," should take a few days (a blatant lie). He acknowledges that the Ravager is dangerous, but he can fight it with "special weapons, whose nature I have sworn to keep secret for now" (another fabrication).

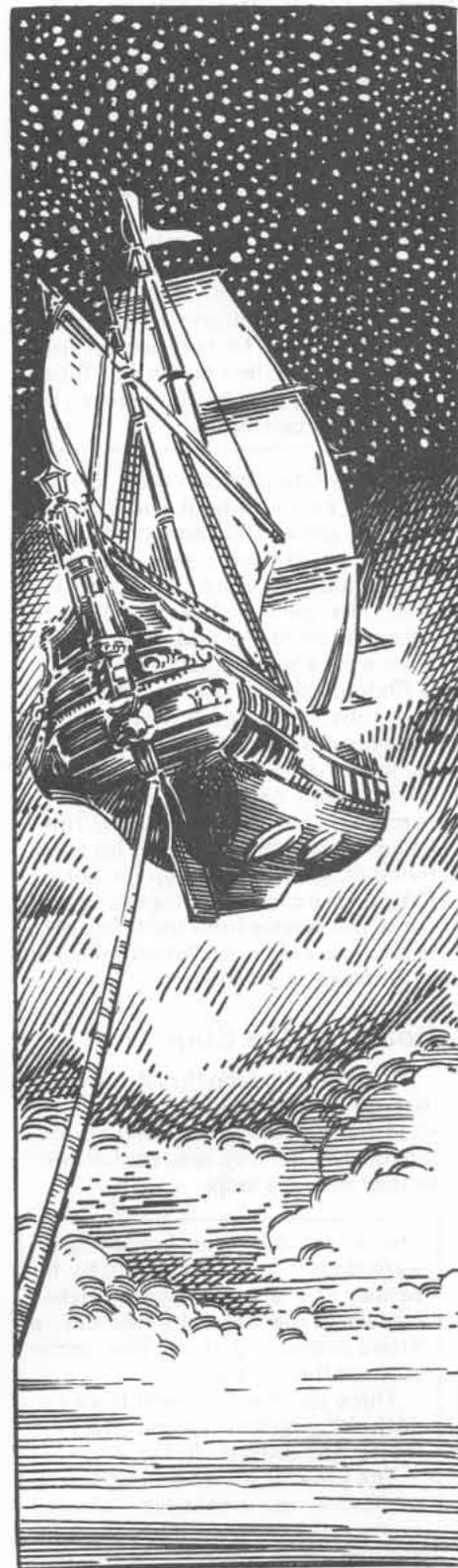
If the PCs ask strange questions, Tobart improvises, always maintaining the appearance of altruism. To this end, Tobart has cast a *delude* spell on himself, in case the characters cast *know alignment* on him. Though casting this is ordinarily quite rude, Tobart encourages it, "to prove my good intentions." The spell shows his alignment to be lawful neutral; the same as the crew member Ralgir, the *polymorphed* wolf.

Tobart, a genius, can act kindly for the duration of this conversation, despite his alignment of neutral evil.

EVENT 5: ALL ABOARD

Presumably, the PCs agree to take the challenge of the Ravager, and they join Tobart. If they refuse, see "Troubleshooting," below. (They may also have climbed the rope and reached the ship themselves; if so, skip to the section "Boarding the Ship," below.)

Tobart grants them up to half an hour to purchase supplies, but he is eager to depart. However, he carefully avoids rudeness or domineering behavior—for now.



Once you climb aboard the anchor hoist, Tobart says, "Grab onto the rail, and be ready to rise fast when I cut the ballast." He shouts over the side, "You below, stand away!"

He draws his broadsword and cuts through a rope stretched across the platform. You hear catches giving way and a thud as the ballast bags strike the ground. With a sudden wrench, the platform rises quickly up the rope. The two normal-sized sailors fall to their knees, but Tobart and the big man hardly seem to notice the acceleration.

The levitating anchor hoist rises two miles in about an hour and a quarter. The air grows thin and cold. Tobart seems not to notice, and can answer more questions from the PCs as they rise. The golem slows slightly; the other sailors shiver and draw blankets from a pack on the platform.

Should the PCs attack for any reason, Tobart commands Stonecrop and the sailors to protect him, all the while asking for a truce. If personally threatened, Tobart casts *dimension door* to reach the ship before the PCs. There, he has all his weapons ready for the arriving PCs, or (if they stop the hoist or jump off) he can waylay them and press them into service from the safety of his ship. In no case does Tobart reveal his true nature as a beholder.

Boarding the Ship

The PCs will reach the *Skyrunner* either as Tobart's recruits, or as uninvited guests who (magically) climbed the rope. Either way, read the following as they near the ship:

The sky is a deep blue, lightening toward the horizon. Clouds drift by, far below. The anchor rope stretches upward to the stern of a fine ship, a broad-beamed galleon like those that sail the oceans.

Three tall masts extend from the deck. Rigging runs up and down the masts. The sails are furled.

The prow of the ship is carved to resemble a beautiful winged woman. Her arm stretches outward,

extending the bowsprit of the ship like a queen's scepter. A name is painted across the bow in gold letters: *Skyrunner*.

The large color map details the *Skyrunner's* layout. The "New Spelljamming Ships" appendix describes its game statistics.

Once you are familiar with this, continue the action according to the PCs' method of entry.

Recruits: The anchor hoist rises to within a few feet of the hull. Tobart pronounces a word ("solonto") that causes the hoist to slow and stop. Crewmen lower a rope ladder, and all but Stonecrop climb up.

At Tobart's orders, Stonecrop climbs the rope and, alone, pulls the enormous anchor hoist onto the main deck. There, crewmen detach the guides from the rope and roll the hoist down into a cargo hold. Proceed to the next chapter.

Uninvited intruders: The PCs, on their way up the rope, meet the anchor hoist on its way down. They can avoid collision and detection through magic; otherwise, Tobart spots them, halts the hoist, and asks them to come aboard. He can send Stonecrop to climb down under the hoist to fetch the PCs, if necessary. Tobart makes his plea for help right there, regardless of the number of miles up in the air.

If the PCs evade Tobart, they can sneak aboard the ship while he and his three sailors are gone. The animal crew members may spot the intruders, but they lack the initiative to attack. Instead, they run and hide. The PCs can explore the *Skyrunner* at their leisure.

However, the DM should prevent the players from discovering the secrets of the ship described in the next chapter. To this end, Tobart and the anchor hoist may return unexpectedly, in order for Tobart to fetch an item he forgot. He will discover the PCs. Though angry at first, Tobart abruptly softens, then makes his plea for aid. Continue as before.

Eventually, the PCs join Tobart. Then it's time to set sail; and the players realize that their mission takes them to a land that is very far off indeed.

TROUBLESHOOTING

Here are a few ways to get the adventure back on track if the players do something completely unpredictable.

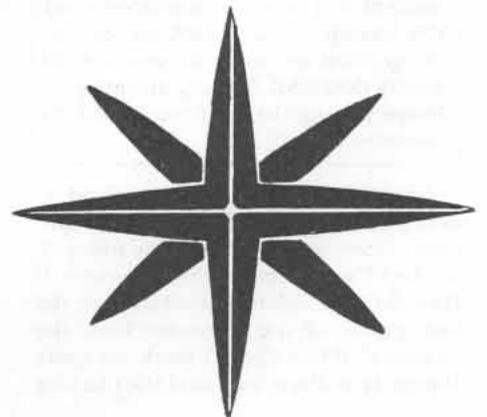
PCs attack anchor hoist: Tobart cuts one ballast bag, levitating the hoist quickly out of hand-weapon range. From the cover of the platform he shouts his peaceful intentions. The crowd yells at the PCs to stop acting like lunatics.

Peer pressure should make the PCs more willing to listen to Tobart's speech before randomly slaughtering everyone. And the attack certainly spotlights the PCs as potential crew.

PCs refuse to join Tobart: Prepare another adventure, or at least the pretext of one. As the party travels through the wilderness on that expedition, the *Skyrunner* lands. Tobart uses powerful magic to subdue, knock out, and shanghai the PCs. They wake up in deep space, where they may be more willing to listen to his proposal.

PCs try to kill everything that moves: An alignment adjustment may be in order. The city guard sends soldiers at the PCs until the sheer weight of numbers finally brings them down. In the city jail, they get stern prison sentences for assault and malicious mischief. They also get stern lectures from the DM, in the person of the local magistrate, on proper conduct in civilized areas.

As penalty, the magistrate sentences the PCs to serve aboard Tobart's ship for the duration of his mission. (Not that the magistrate believes Tobart's story, but this is clearly a good way to run the murdering PCs out of town.)



In this chapter, the PCs get to explore their spelljamming ship and the near reaches of Wildspace. They discover some surprises about the ship, its crew, and its captain. The players also learn basic information about spelljamming and the nature of fantasy space.

THE SKYRUNNER

The beholder mage had his galleon built for this voyage based on what he knew about the ships of the characters' homeworld. It is a spelljamming craft designed to *look* like a grounding ship, not an actual seagoing vessel.

Therefore, characters with the Sailor or Shipwright proficiencies who succeed in an Intelligence check notice some oddities. Make these rolls secretly when the PCs first board the ship, then once per day during the voyage. When a PC makes a roll, give one of the following facts:

1. Although the ship has a rudder, it doesn't move, and there is no wheelhouse to control it. It is merely a carved extension of the keel that seems to serve no useful function.

2. Strung with thin lines and secured with unusually slender belying pins, the ship's rigging is insufficient for strenuous use. It would come apart in a high wind or storm.

3. The keel is too small to stabilize a normal galley of this size. (This is due to the streamlining that has reduced the weight of the craft; see below.)

4. The hull of the ship is too thick for a mere merchant ship. This is a dead giveaway that the *Skyrunner* is a warship; it is obvious that the additional thickness is meant to act as armor.

The many other subtle differences all arise because a spelljamming ship is driven by magic. For example, the sails serve as a focus for the spelljammer, so they are filled by magic. They still must be adjusted to make use of the spelljamming mage's power, but this is a ritual that harnesses the magic, not a physical restriction.

Tobart feigns ignorance about these structural inconsistencies. He claims that "the elves who sold him the ship" never explained how it worked, and since it *did* work, he never bothered to ask. Pressing the matter forces him to

improvise. If the PCs are clever, they may be able to catch him in a lie.

Secrets of the Ship

Before proceeding, first read the overview of the *Skyrunner* in the New Spelljamming Ships appendix and consult the large color ship map and read the location key.

This section discusses the secrets in some of the rooms on the *Skyrunner*.

Main Deck

6. **Secret Room:** The door to this room is hidden behind a tapestry. Like the entrance to the captain's cabin, it is made of iron-bound wood with an inset lock. It is *wizard locked* at all times. This lock is complex and well made, requiring a Pick Locks roll at -10% that takes double the normal time.

Shazogrox keeps this room under a *vacancy* spell. This makes the room appear empty and unused, covered in cobwebs and a fine layer of dust. The things in the room are rendered invisible. Only forceful contact with cloaked items, *dispel magic*, *true sight*, or the equivalent allows the characters to see the room as it really is.

What is actually here: A pedestal stands in the middle of the room, three feet in diameter and four feet high, bearing a silk cushion. The beholder uses this as a bed.

The walls, floor, and ceiling of the room are painted red. Each wall bears a bizarre, impressionistic mural painted in black.

On the ceiling, carefully painted in black and gold, is the map. The PCs' homeworld is a gold sphere marked with a black X; the Hive is depicted as a gold eye. There are small pots of black and gold pigment on the floor beside the pedestal, along with several paintbrushes of various sizes.

A trapdoor on the far side of the room is secured with a padlock. Attempting to pick the lock triggers a *magic mouth* spell. With a flash of amber, the image of a slitlike mouth lined with a double row of fangs appears above the trap door. It speaks with a strange accent: "Go no further if the safety of your homeworld is important to you. You have been warned."

With that, the hideous apparition

vanishes. The warning is a feint, and there is no danger in opening the trapdoor. If and when the padlock is removed, the trapdoor reveals a ladder going down. This ladder leads to Room 4 on the Cargo Deck.

Cargo Deck

4. **Secret Room:** As explained on the map key for Room 3 (the brig), the "door" on the cargo deck is a fake. This room may only be reached via the ladder from the secret room on the main deck, directly above.

The room is featureless, without doors or windows. A ladder extends from the trapdoor above, and another trapdoor is in the center of the floor.

A flesh golem stands watch on this trapdoor, with orders to kill anyone who sets foot on the ladder. Since Tobart can float down as a beholder, he can easily bypass the guardian. Shazogrox obtained both this creature and Stonecrop from the Sazaur ruins where he learned of the Ravager.

Flesh golem: AC 9, HD 9, hp 40, THAC0 11, Dmg 2-16/2-16; Str 19; SD fire and cold-based spells only slow it for 2-12 rounds. Once it has begun an attack, it does not stop until it is killed, unless Tobart gives it a direct order. The golem climbs up after its opponents if necessary.

Unfortunately, this creature is not completely under the control of its beholder master. On every round of combat, the golem has a 10% cumulative chance to go berserk, wreaking havoc on anything in its path. If this happens, Tobart helps the PCs destroy it.

The trapdoor in the floor is unlocked and can be opened easily, revealing another ladder, identical to the one above it, that leads to the steerage deck.

Steerage Deck

1. **Secret Room:** Searching this room is time-consuming; there is much to see, and the contents are arranged in no order. The room contains scores of scrolls and books, most in alien languages and most useless, save the few that refer to the Ravager.

One of these is a parchment version of the map located in the secret room on the main deck. If the characters have the facility and spend time to translate the reference works in this

room (a project that takes several days), they discover the following facts:

- * Tobart's destination is some kind of floating rock that has been sighted in many different places over a period of several hundred years. The rock is referred to as "the Hive" in most of the texts that mention it.

- * The Hive is home to some kind of creature called the Ravager that leaves its lair to destroy inhabited worlds.

- * The Hive also contains devices called "Queen's Eyes" that give their wielder great power.

- * From the notes that Tobart has left, it seems obvious that he is after the Queen's Eyes. And whatever the Ravager is, its home is on a direct course for the PCs' homeworld.

More information is contained in the material, but it is more covert and would require extensive research.

Among the papers is a scroll with a rough sketch of the Hive that shows a crack in its surface marked with an X. This is a map to the "back door" left by the Arcane that was revealed during one of the few attempts to penetrate the asteroid.

Note: The PCs **must** find this map at some point before reaching the Hive. As described later, Tobart could decide to show the map to the PCs. However, if the PCs discover Tobart's secret identity and kill him (or he flees) before he shows them the map, the DM must find a way for them to discover this map.

Secreted about the room are several useful magic items that Tobart has brought along to help fight beholders. There are six *arrows of beholder slaying* hidden behind a panel in the wall; the panel has been *wizard locked*.

A secret bottom in one of the desk drawers holds a wizard scroll with the following spells: *stone to flesh* (x2) and *reincarnation*.

Inside a large vase is a vibrant purple prism. It is an *ioun stone* that can store up to 12 spell levels. It currently contains a *raise dead* and a *resurrection* spell. Tobart may use these items as appropriate during the adventure.

3. Orb Room: The entrance to this room is a brass door sealed with a heavy bar, secured with a padlock with three keyholes that require three separate keys. Because of the way the locks

are built, it is impossible to tell which way is locked and which way is unlocked, so the only way to pick the locks is by trial and error.

When encountered, the lock positions will be locked/unlocked/locked. As a thief picks each of the locks, simply note the change in position until he hits upon unlocked/unlocked/unlocked. A *knock* spell changes two positions from locked to unlocked, so the padlock opens unless it was triple locked at the time.

As you open the door, a strange smell like burning fish assaults your senses. Peering into the darkness, you see that the room is a labyrinth of strange devices. In the center is a sphere of a dark, crusty substance. Many glass tubes are connected to it.

A bubbling sound comes from the sphere. From within the orb, a sickly green luminescence illuminates the chamber, giving it a bizarre, otherworldly appearance.

Gliding smoothly, a creature rises up out of the orb's cavity. The creature's pale body is spherical with a gnarled hide like that of old leather. A single blind eye stares blankly at you, and ten atrophied stalks quiver atop its head. It opens its gaping mouth to show a double row of fangs dripping with yellow slime. A sudden smell of vinegar fills the air. Gurgling, the creature spits a puddle of bile onto the floor.

This is the Orbus beholder that has been powering the ship for most of the journey. It is blind and unusually weak for its kind, so it presents no threat to the PCs. (The bile is harmless.)

The devices in this room are the spell-jamming equipment that the Orbus uses to pilot the ship. They are useless to anyone but another Orbus. Twelve large wooden kegs are filled with the rotted meat that Tobart/Shazogrox has been feeding his prisoner.

Note: Although it is unlikely that the PCs will find this room before setting sail, try to prevent them from killing the Orbus beholder: it is Tobart's only method of powering the ship!

EVENT 1: SETTING SAIL

Pick up the adventure where it left off at the end of Chapter 1, just as the PCs arrive aboard ship. Using a large windlass, Stonecrop draws up the *infinite rope*, while Jon Tobart pronounces the rope's word of contraction ("intro-larias"). The rope shrinks as the golem draws it aboard. Though it is slow work, eventually the anchor is decked.

Tobart uses the waiting time to show the PCs around the ship, if they desire (omitting the secret areas described above); to tell the new recruits about the ship's routine (see below); and to serve them a bland but filling meal from the galley.

What Tobart neglects to mention is that the ship gets underway before the anchor is fully retracted. The crew have their orders; they set forth while the PCs are below with Tobart. The PCs come above deck to a rude surprise; see the next subsection for details.

Leaving Home

Tobart wastes as much time as he can with the PCs below deck, while the *Skyrunner* pulls away from their home planet and into Wildspace. He does everything he can to stall them, so that the Orbus can put some distance between the characters and their home.

When they finally get back on deck, the ship is well underway. Read the following section aloud:

Looking out over the rail, you are shocked to see not clouds and blue sky, but darkness. In the void hang the stars you have seen all your lives, but they seem brighter, thrown into sharp contrast by the black sky. Despite the darkness, the air is no longer cold, but as warm as a spring day.

In the distance, you see a bright orb of blue and brown covered in wisps of white like cotton. With a shock, you realize that it is your homeworld.

In the few moments it takes for this to sink in, the land of your birth continues to shrink, becoming no more than a speck in a much larger realm.

Astute players probably realize that it is now too late to do much about this. But some PCs might take this turn of events badly, and they may insist that Tobart turn back. He claims that once they are underway, they cannot change course as the magic of the ship has already been set in motion.

This confrontation could get ugly. Tobart treats the PCs as mutineers, subduing (with the help of Stonecrop) those who refuse to "do their duty." These PCs may have to sit a day or two in the brig. The DM should ensure that the brig can hold them! But Tobart lets them out if they promise to cooperate.

EVENT 2: UNDER WEIGH

Once he has everything under control, Tobart apologizes for the deception, claiming that he feared the PCs would not accompany him if they knew the truth. He doubted they would even believe him.

If the characters seem suspicious, he claims that he tried to recruit a party in another town, but when he told them about Wildspace, they thought him mad and drove him out. (False.)

Assuming things settle down, Tobart explains his objective. The Ravager, he says, is a monster that dwells in space. It can annihilate entire planets, and it is heading toward the PCs' homeworld. But it has been weakened by earlier battles, Tobart says. If they attack it, the *Skyrunner's* crew can defeat it before it heals itself.

If the PCs ask about earlier battles, Tobart launches into a long discourse about the various races of space (conveniently omitting beholders), their ships, and their armaments. He moves lightly into exposition about the principles of spelljamming: helms, gravity planes, air envelopes and so on.

This serves two purposes. First, it conveys the basics of fantasy space. Second, it diverts the PCs' interest from several troublesome points that Tobart would rather not discuss, such as the exact nature of the Ravager.

The Ship's Routine

The journey, Tobart says, will take slightly more than one week. (This is

true.) During this time, the PCs become more familiar with the *Skyrunner*, her crew, and the process of running a spelljamming vessel.

The day is divided into three watches of eight hours, arbitrarily designated day watch, evening watch, and night watch. The change is signalled by ringing a large bell. Hourglasses keep time. Although there is no difference between day and night in Wildspace, the crew still follows a terrestrial schedule instinctively.

Stonecrop keeps all three watches. Because he is an automaton, he needs no sleep. If the PCs are paying attention, they notice this. Tobart is evasive about his first mate, but if forced, he finally admits that Stonecrop is a golem. He says, "I bought it from the elves."

The PCs are assigned to one or more watches. A cook to work the galley detail would be welcome, as none of the crew can cook. When they are not busy at these tasks, Tobart keeps the PCs busy learning the ropes (literally) and swabbing the decks.

Day watch starts with breakfast in the galley for everyone who is not on watch duty. When the first bell is rung, everyone is expected to rise except those who were on night watch. Breakfast is taken out to those on watch.

Gulug and Baragor pull day watch, as they prefer the early hours. The others are nocturnal and are sleepy and sluggish on early watch.

About midday comes lunch, a sparse and pedestrian meal of hardtack and fruit. The crew views lunch as a necessary evil.

Evening watch signals dinnertime, the largest meal of the day. As with breakfast, the whole crew gathers, save those who served the last watch (who sleep) and those currently on duty.

Night watch is just like other watches; after all, it is always night in Wildspace. Skraal and Ralgir have nocturnal habits, so they prefer this watch.

The Crew

Without the PCs, the *Skyrunner* has a crew of 20, a number below normal for a vessel of this size. Tobart is owner and captain. He makes all of the decisions and is responsible for the *Skyrunner* and her crew.

Stonecrop is technically first mate. This position would normally mean that he is second in command, taking over in Tobart's absence. Of course, the golem cannot make an independent decision, so Tobart remains sole authority on the ship.

Baragor (the former boar) is in charge of maintenance, much to his chagrin. He would rather care for the weapons, but he lacks the intelligence needed for the task.

Gulug is supposedly the spelljammer. Since he was a frog until very recently, he has no actual talent in this capacity. His role merely conceals the existence of the Orbus.

Skraal, formerly a rat, is quartermaster, charged with looking after ship's supplies, save the food rations kept in the secure hold. Tobart has the only key to this hold.

Ralgir maintains the weapons, including all three ballistae and the weapons of the crew, which he sees to daily. He is becoming quite proficient at cleaning and sharpening and offers to care for the PCs' weapons during the voyage.

Peculiar behavior: As described in the entries for each crew member, each has his own peculiar habits. Play up these eccentricities where appropriate. Improvise along the lines suggested by the behavior of the animals they once were. For instance, Skraal scurries everywhere. Baragor snorts and grunts. Gulug hops in and out of the spelljamming helm. On night watch the PCs encounter Ralgir on deck, howling into the darkness.

Feeding practices: Tobart does not eat with the rest of the crew. He always prepares his own meals and takes them to his cabin, where he eats them alone. If the PCs try to spy on him to see what he is cooking, they see him take some of the meat and vegetables, but he does not cook them. When asked about this, he falls back on his "werebear" story (see Tobart's description in the appendix for this information).

Stonecrop, of course, does not need to eat. The PCs never see him in the galley, but Tobart claims that he takes his meals properly. Other crew members eat like animals. Improvise suitably vulgar table manners for a transformed pig, frog, rat, and the rest.

The Captain

When the PCs first encountered him, Tobart was friendly and very persuasive. But once in space, he grows stern and condescending. The beholder mage views the PCs as a lesser race and cannot treat them as equals.

Like his crew, Tobart has some peculiarities that become evident after a day or two. These include:

Frequent absences: Although Tobart is the sole authority on the ship, he spends a lot of time in his cabin. This is because he has only a two-hour duration on his *polymorph self* spell and must retreat to his quarters to renew it. He also finds the human form repugnant and uncomfortable, so he spends as little time as possible as Tobart.

When he goes to his room, he slips on his *ring of invisibility*. When he shifts back into beholder form, the ring stays with him, and he remains invisible. While invisible, he uses his magic to renew his *polymorph* spell. He then removes the ring and goes back on deck. When he is resting, he goes to his secret room, turns invisible, and sleeps.

Changing eye color: When Shazogrox casts spells, Tobart's eyes change color to match the spellstalk he is using; each stalk has a different color.

Since the beholder finds the human form repulsive, he does not use a mirror and has not discovered this flaw in his disguise. Any time he casts a spell, PCs get an Intelligence check to notice the change. Since Shazogrox does all of his spellcasting in private, they will not be able to link the color change to spellcasting at first, but it must make them suspicious nonetheless.

Odd attitudes: Should conversation turn to beholders, Tobart grows vehement in hatred, ranting on and on about these monsters and how much he despises them.

If asked why he hates them so, he adapts his werewolf story, claiming that a beholder cursed him. If the PCs know that beholders cannot do this, he tells them it was a beholder mage, assuming they know of such creatures. If the PCs ask him what a beholder mage is, he is forced to explain, giving them a subtle clue to his true identity.

Ways to discover Tobart's nature: If *detect magic* is cast upon Tobart, he ra-

diates strong magic, since he's a beholder mage. If PCs confront him with this, he gives his standard werewolf excuse. If they cast *dispel magic* on him, it removes the *polymorph self* spell, causing him to revert to his true form.

There are many other ways to discover Tobart's true identity, from piecing it together from various clues, to following him to his room and using *detect invisibility*. No matter how the PCs discover Tobart's identity, it will lead to violent confrontation.

Fighting Tobart

If the PCs find out what Tobart really is, they probably attack. When this happens, he drops his facade, reverts to beholder form, and tears into them with everything at his disposal. Unfortunately for Tobart/Shazogrox, the spells he has stored in his spellstalks are more defensive than offensive.

In the first round of combat, he casts the following spells on himself: *blink*, *fire shield*, and *stoneskin*. If any of these spells falter during the fight, he simply casts them again. He attacks using *polymorph other*, turning his opponents into slugs and snails. If anyone gets close enough, he also bites.

If the PCs lose: Shazogrox imprisons them. He does not bother to restore those who have been *polymorphed*. If any PCs remain conscious, he gloats over them:

"Foolish humans. You should not have crossed me. Now you will learn the error of your ways. I am Shazogrox, the greatest sorcerer of my kind. The beholder nations have also flouted me, and for that they will pay dearly.

"I spoke the truth about the threat to your homeworld. The Ravager can devour entire cities. It resides in the rock that is our destination. You were to help me master the creature. Now I will control the Ravager without you.

"Your world is doomed."

With that, he locks the PCs in the brig. From outside, he returns them to their natural forms. He then turns invisible and hides in the mechanics on the steerage deck.

This leaves his crew free. Without a captain, they turn to the PCs for leadership. Eventually, the crew frees them, leaving the PCs to their own devices.

Shazogrox still needs the PCs to get into the Hive. He hopes that they will find a way in so that he can slip in with them while invisible.

If the PCs are winning: Tobart tries to escape to make trouble later. The following spells help him escape: *fly*, *haste*, *wraithform*, and *dimension door*.

The rest of the crew quickly agrees to serve the PCs. They know little more than what the PCs have been told. See the appendix for details of what they know. The beholder hides in the steerage deck, as above.

In the unlikely event that the PCs kill Tobart, try to make his death uncertain. If this is impossible, the crew encourages the PCs to throw the beholder's body overboard; they are frightened of it. The scout ship in the next chapter will find the body and carry it back to their armada to be resurrected, so that the beholders can find out who has killed one of their number. The resurrected Tobart, no friend of the other beholders, escapes to make further trouble for the PCs.

TROUBLESHOOTING

PCs try to kill everything that moves: Crew members won't try to fight. As the helpless victims run and hide, encourage the players to stop and think. If they continue in senseless slaughter, an alignment change may be in order. Tobart subdues and imprisons the PCs to give the players time to think about rational behavior.

If Tobart flees or is killed: Once the PCs are in charge of the ship, they need to know what powers it. If they have not discovered the Orbus beholder, arrange for them to find it. They must also realize that it needs to be fed, or it will die in 1d3 days, with the ship travelling progressively slower. If the PCs have already killed the Orbus, or kill it upon discovery of it, or it has died of starvation, one of the PCs must take over the minor helm. Gulug has no spelljamming powers; he was merely a facade to hide the Orbus. See Chapter 3, Event 1 for notes regarding a PC's first attempt at spelljamming.

In this chapter, the PCs get their first taste of spelljamming combat. A beholder scout ship, lightly armed and staffed but still formidable, discovers the *Skyrunner* as it enters the area of Wildspace around the Hive. This leads to a battle; the PCs' influence is decisive. Then the PCs enter the Hive, the mysterious home of the Ravager.

EVENT 1: ARRIVAL

After a week of traveling through Wildspace, the *Skyrunner* nears its destination. The exact condition of ship and crew depends on what has occurred during this time.

Tobart most likely still commands his ship, but he may have been killed or driven off, leaving the PCs in charge. If the PCs took charge of the ship, they will have found the charts Tobart keeps in his secret room or workshop and learned how to use the spelljamming helm. This should not be difficult, since its use comes instinctively to those with the necessary power.

In any case, tell them how much time has passed and read the following section aloud:

According to the chart, your journey is over. As the ship slows gradually, you peer into the infinite reach of Wildspace, straining for some sign of your destination.

After a few tense moments, you spot several large objects floating one-half mile off to starboard. They are grey and black orbs, each nearly half as large as the *Skyrunner*. They look more like pods or growths than drifting rocks.

The mysterious objects were part of the Hive's defenses; they have been overcome over the years in past attacks. These devices were ships of a sort, each powered by an Orbus sealed into it during its creation, armed by the Arcane with powerful destructive enchantments to repel unwanted visitors.

The Orbi are all dead, and the ships are destroyed. But *detect magic* still reveals lingering magic of great power.

If Tobart is present, he nervously orders his men to shoot a ballista at one of the orbs. After a couple of tries, he is convinced they are inactive and orders

the ship to approach. If asked about them, he says nothing more than, "I think they are guardians of some kind."

If the *Skyrunner* approaches, it becomes obvious that the objects are damaged. The four in this area are rough and grey; the black spots are actually scorch marks. Two of them have ruptured, leaving the outer hull cracked and split. A pinkish tendril has oozed out of one of these cracks, the dangling appendage of a long-dead parasite.

What to do next? It seems that the charts were either inaccurate or misread, or that something has happened to the Hive. If the PCs are in charge, they most likely search the area or continue on their previous heading. Either way, they find the Hive.

If Tobart is alive, he frantically paces the deck like a caged animal, shouting orders. He works himself into a rage and demands that all hands search in concentric circles from the point they thought was their destination.

This is madness. The obvious solution would be to triangulate, but this does not occur to Tobart, whose judgment is now seriously impaired. He cannot be dissuaded from his search, and if the PCs insist that he abandon hope, he goes berserk and attacks them. If they humor him and allow him to make a meticulous search, he eventually finds the Hive by sheer luck.

Read the following aloud:

Suddenly, out of nowhere, a wall of rock shimmers into view, as if coalescing out of the nothingness of space. You realize that this is not a wall, but part of an immense object that has appeared directly in your path.

It's an asteroid: a rocky sphere as big as a mountain. From here, it looks ordinary.

But it's drifting through the darkness, slowly spinning end over end. And you're on a collision course!

As part of its defenses, the Hive was concealed by a powerful *invisibility* spell that renders anything inside its area of effect invisible to anyone outside the area. As the *Skyrunner* approached, no one could see the Hive; but when the ship entered the area of

effect, it suddenly became visible.

The Hive is moving at one hex per turn. It never changes direction. It tumbles through a full circle rotation every half hour.

Its appearance, shocks and alarms those on board. Pick up the pace of the story. If Tobart is still in charge, he barks orders for a full stop. Ask everyone for their intentions as if running combat. Though the crew must hustle to avoid a collision, they are in no real danger.

When the crisis is over, the PCs can question Tobart. At this stage, he is willing to tell them a bit more about the Hive. He does not tell them about the nature of the Ravager or the Queen's Eyes, but he does say that the asteroid is home to the Ravager, the creature that threatens their homeworld.

Tobart also says they will be entering through a secret entrance. He produces the map that shows its location (see the description of the *Skyrunner's* steerage deck, Room 2). **Important:** Tobart must convey this information, for it is crucial to the PCs' success once Tobart is gone.

During this conversation, the captain comments that the approach has seemed too easy so far. If questioned on this point, he says that from what he has learned about this place, he was expecting more active guardians.

Allow the PCs a few minutes to talk, then read them this:

While you are talking, the rock continues to drift toward you. As it moves forward, it turns end over end. Something comes into view over the top of the asteroid. It's a huge dome, a hemisphere of brass or metal of some kind—and over a mile across!

Slowly, the dome comes around to face you, like a mammoth, unblinking eye.

Incoming!

While the *Skyrunner* has been approaching the Hive, two beholder scout ships have been doing battle with its remaining defenses. One of the ships has been destroyed by the device, which was subsequently destroyed by the

second ship. This ship has continued on its course around the asteroid, only to encounter the *Skyrunner*.

These ships are the advance scouts for an expedition by the Greshtharx beholder nation, Shazogrox's former allies. The expedition's goal: to gain possession of the Queen's Eyes.

If Tobart is present, he senses the beholder ship before it is actually visible. He frantically orders the crew to battle stations. If anyone questions him, he becomes furious and shouts at them to do as he says. After this outburst, the scout ship becomes visible beyond the asteroid.

When he actually sees the beholder scout ship, Tobart goes absolutely berserk with hatred. He distributes six magical arrows of slaying that work against beholders; these are the arrows described in the Steerage Deck, Room 2, of the *Skyrunner*. Prompt the PCs to wonder how Tobart got such powerful magic. They may even need to use the bolts against him!

Neutralized!

When they spot the *Skyrunner*, the beholders use the *twelfth eye*, a device built by the Arcane that briefly neutralizes some beholder powers and abilities (see the section titled New Magic for details).

This weapon has two major effects. It renders the *Skyrunner's* Orbus inactive, freezing the ship in space, and it triggers Tobart's transformation back into his beholder form, Shazogrox. Read the following only if Tobart is still aboard the ship:

In the distance, the strangely-shaped vessel turns to face your ship. From some orifice, a beam of pure white light lances at you through the darkness. Instantly, the light's power washes over the ship, blinding you with its intensity.

Your vision clears, but the light remains, clinging to everything. It is a brilliant aura that moves with you. As quickly as it came, the glow fades and is gone—but not from Captain Tobart. He's blazing with it!

Screaming in agony, the big man clasps both hands to his head, as

though trying to keep it from bursting. Tobart drops to his knees, and you see the skin stretch tight over his face. His skull expands to huge proportions as his body withers.

Blood trickles from between Tobart's fingers as they fuse with his scalp. His hands fall away, leaving his fingers projecting from his swollen, orb-like head: ten tentacles, with an eye that opens at the end of each! The skin rips between the eyes on his face. Underneath you see a single, cyclopean eye as big as your head.

As his body disintegrates, Tobart's head grows into a sphere nearly five feet across. It's covered in tough grey plates that harden even as you watch. The creature that was Tobart opens its mouth, tearing the skin as it reveals a grotesque double row of fangs that drip a yellowish slime.

With an inhuman cry of fury, the monster turns toward the distant ship and flies off through the darkness.

Tobart/Shazogrox, rabid with hatred of his former colleagues, has launched himself away from his ship to attack the scouts. The PCs may decide to attack him. If so, the beholder quickly comes to his senses, creates a *dimension door* to the hold, turns invisible, and waits for the PCs to get into the Hive. He will follow them in at a safe distance.

If the PCs let the beholder go, Shazogrox gets about halfway to the Tyrant Scout before he realizes he is hopelessly outnumbered. Wasting himself in a barbaric, futile attempt to take out a whole ship brings him no closer to his goal. Seeing the folly of his ways, he creates a *dimension door* and hides as described above.

Options

For the first time, the PCs get to make a real decision. If they were not in charge at the start of this encounter, they certainly are now: The transformed animals gladly accept them as new leaders.

Though the situation appears dire, the PCs still have several options:

* **Head for the asteroid:** Because the beholders are coming from the side, the Hive is less than half the distance of the scout ship, so beating them there is not a problem. If the PCs follow the map that shows the secret entrance, they can gain immediate entry.

Terrified of the horrors that they believe await their kind within, the beholders refuse to follow them, except Shazogrox, who follows invisibly. Go directly to the next section.

* **Battle the beholders:** The *Skyrunner* is obviously larger than the Tyrant Scout and seems better armed. If the PCs attack, they get a free shot at the scout; go to the next Event.

* **Flee:** PCs may not yet know that Gulug, the alleged wizard, has no spelljamming ability. If they can figure this out before the scout ship engages them, any PC wizard or priest can use the minor helm at the stern of the ship to move it through space and away from the beholders.

DM Note: If this is the first time a PC actually uses the helm, don't neglect this exciting moment. In staging this, give the player detailed sensations of spelljamming, according to the information given in the boxed set.

Unfortunately, learning how to use the helm takes a certain amount of time. If the PCs try to run away, the beholder ship chases and catches them, getting a free shot before combat begins. Battle ensues; go to Event 2.

EVENT 2: TO BATTLE BEHOLDERS

This event takes place if the *Skyrunner* fights the beholder ship. The first part of the battle is a spelljamming duel between the two ships. If the PCs destroy the Tyrant Scout, it opens up and the six common beholders inside approach to battle individual PCs.

Duel in Space

For a description of the beholder Tyrant Scout, consult the "New Spelljamming Ships" appendix.

Use the blank star-map from the box set. The beholders enter near the top right-hand edge; the PCs can enter from the left or bottom, anywhere

within eight hexes of the lower left corner. The entire right side of the map is an arc, part of a circle 33 hexes (about ten miles) in diameter, that represents the Hive.

None of Tobart's shapeshifted animal crew understand the use of missile weapons, so they are of little use in long-range battle. Even so, the "crew" can make up half a ballista crew, as long as one PC is present to give orders. The PCs' own missile weapons and the *Skyrunner's* ballistae prove the key to victory.

The beholder ship closes to three hexes so it can bring its weapon to bear. During the fight, it tries to maintain this range, so it can fire while staying just out of range of the heavy ballista.

If the PCs destroy the enemy ship, read the following aloud:

Your last salvo seems to rock the smaller ship. Shuddering, it does not return fire. Steam escapes from the sides of the vessel as it opens like a mechanical mouth. From inside, six orbs rise and glide toward you, forming a spherical formation as they press the attack. Apparently, the battle has only begun.

The Beholders Attack

Four to six PCs must fight six beholders. Dead PCs, right? Not necessarily.

First, the PCs have the arrows that instantly kill beholders. Second, the Tyrant Scout is a full three hexes away (1500 yards). Beholders have a movement rate of only 3, so it takes them several rounds to reach the *Skyrunner*. During this time, the PCs can pick them off with the ballistae, or possibly (since their ship is no longer neutralized) get the ship underway and outrun the stranded beholders.

Beholder tactics: When they first emerge, the six beholders array themselves in a group of four in a square and the other two at top and bottom, "back to back to back," with eyes facing outward in all directions. This creates a complete anti-magic zone for 140 yards around them. The magical slaying arrows become normal arrows that

do only normal damage.

Once the formation is broken, the slaying arrows work as intended if they can be fired from an angle not covered by any beholder's central eye.

When the larger formation is broken, surviving beholders pair off. Two float with their undersides touching, allowing them maximum eye coverage no matter what approach their opponents take.

Outcomes

If the PCs lose, go to Event 3. If the PCs win and no beholders survive, the PCs are ready to enter the Hive; skip directly to the next section. If the PCs win but some beholders survive, keep reading.

If the PCs have killed two or more beholders with *arrows of slaying*, the surviving beholders try to bargain for their lives or, if absolutely necessary, surrender. These captives speak the PCs' language flawlessly and can give the PCs clues, listed below. Do not volunteer this information, but give it if the players ask.

Although these beholders have come in search of an artifact contained within the Hive, they do not mention this unless forced. If pressured into speaking of the artifact, they can only guess that it is a powerful weapon, which would explain the presence of "the outcast" (Tobart), but they have no idea what it might be.

Regarding their mission and the armada:

We are advance scouts for the Greshtharx nation—death to our inferior rivals! Two ships were sent ahead. As we neared the Hive—that rocky asteroid—a sphere about half the size of your vessel leapt to life and destroyed our sister ship and all those within before we could kill it. Apparently, this place has defenses of its own.

The rest of the armada will arrive within hours. Two more scout ships and two Tyrant Ships are expected. You would be wise to surrender yourselves to them. We will speak to them. Perhaps they will spare your lives.



This is all true. The beholders can describe a Tyrant Ship, and the PCs should realize that the *Skyrunner* would be very heavily outclassed in battle with them.

Regarding the Ravager:

Our information is vague at best. We know it is some kind of powerful killer that lives in this asteroid. It is hundreds of years old and has drifted from sphere to sphere destroying anything that it encounters. We think it was built by the Arcane.

Unfortunately, there is nothing more we can tell you, except that the creature likely outmatches all our ships put together, and then some.

If the PCs don't yet know about the Arcane, the beholders can tell them about this mysterious race. The beholders recognize certain features of the *Skyrunner* as "Arcane work."

Regarding Tobart/Shazogrox:

The outcast of whom you speak is Shazogrox. Though I hesitate to admit it, he is one of the Greshtharx. Shazogrox is a renegade who sought to unite all the beholder nations, forging a single empire. Treason! When we ousted and blinded him he swore vengeance against all our peoples. I fear that is why he is here. And since he appears able to use the unclean human magic, he must have achieved magery.

These beholders know little about beholder magi, except that they are blind, carry different powers in their stalks, and are often perverse (by beholder standards).

When they have finished questioning the prisoners, the PCs must decide what to do with them. Options include killing them, setting them free, and locking them in the brig. Since these creatures are truly evil and attacked the PCs first, anything they decide to do should be just. If they free the prisoners, the beholders coldly thank the PCs and fly off in search of the armada.

EVENT 3: PRISONERS

If the beholders overcome the PCs, they break off combat and say, "We don't want you, just *him*—the traitor!"

The beholders have no interest in slaughtering the PCs or the crew. They come from an arrogant and superior race who care little to waste their power exterminating the PCs. (They explain this with appropriate venom.) They want the renegade beholder, who may hold the key to the ancient secrets that lie within the Hive.

They tell the PCs what they know about Tobart, as given in the previous section. Then they command the PCs to go into the Hive and fetch him. This confirms what players may have guessed: Tobart isn't dead.

The beholders will not enter the Ravager themselves, for reasons that they will not discuss. They appear frightened, a sight probably without precedent for the PCs!

If the PCs refuse this task, the beholders resume the attack until they kill another character, at which time the PCs again have the option to obey orders. This goes on until the PCs either submit or die.

INTO THE HIVE

The Hive's brass dome proves impenetrable, as though permanently enchanted with a *wall of force*.

With the help of Tobart's map, the PCs can find a "back door," a secret tunnel built by the Arcane when they provided this asteroid to the Sazaur. They gain entry to the vast complex, first encountering the last remaining defenses and a workshop left behind by the Arcane.

The Back Way

The last battle with the Ravager in a distant Crystal Sphere damaged it considerably, exposing this formerly hidden entrance. Tobart learned of this entrance when researching the Hive. He intends that the PCs use it, and made certain to tell them of it earlier in the adventure.

From a distance, the gash that revealed the entrance seems to be a mere scratch on the surface of the great

rock. But as the *Skyrunner* approaches the Hive, the PCs realize that the rift is nearly 600 feet across. It is simple to maneuver the ship inside.

DM Note: Elsewhere on the asteroid, the second of the Tyrant Scouts lies grounded, shattered by the last guardian sphere. However, the PCs should not see this now. They can use the scout as a last-ditch replacement vessel to leave the Hive in the last chapter of the adventure. (See Chapter 6.)

Once inside, everyone on board sees a huge set of double doors set in a circular frame. The doors are nearly 200 feet in diameter! Crafted of black basalt, they are carved with rows of runes. The doors also bear a high-relief carving of a single eye surrounded by ten smaller ones.

Tobart/Shazogrox feared this entrance. It is magically protected against the intrusion of non-Sazaur beholders, for the Sazaur feared invasion by rival nations. However, when the *Skyrunner* comes within 50 feet, the doors open with an ominous rumbling sound. (The Arcane ensured that humans could enter unmolested; the Sazaur did not know this, but Tobart discovered it. The reason is explained below.)

While the door is open and the protection is down, Shazogrox invisibly flies in behind the PCs. Using his *haste* and *fly* spells, he flies past them and starts his search for the Queen's Eyes as explained at the beginning of Chapter 5.

The rugged black tunnel, wide enough to accommodate the ship, winds inward through darkness to a cavernous antechamber. Traversing this distance takes over an hour, since the ship must go slowly through the dark.

Play up the scale and spookiness of the tunnel. Record the passage of time in five- or ten-minute increments, asking players frequently if they care to continue. If they ask how far in they have gone, tell them that it is hard to tell because of the twists and turns.

At the end of this passage, the tunnel opens on the Antechamber.

The Antechamber

This chamber is one of the few natural caverns that existed within the asteroid before the Arcane began their work. Unwilling to create a weapon of the Ravager's magnitude over which they had no control, they sealed the tunnel that led to the surface with a concealed door and built another tunnel into the side wall of Room 2.

Nearly 300 feet across, this cavern is lined with stalagmites and stalactites as large as temple columns. Free-floating globes of *continual light* illuminate the entire room. Huge and empty, this antechamber serves only as the back door into the Hive. The Arcane figured that, if necessary, they could use the cavern as a staging ground from which to launch an attack.

At the far end of the room is another door, identical to the entrance, but cast in bronze. On the door is a message (written in runic letters, but in the common tongue):

If you are reading this message, that which we feared has come to pass. For reasons of our own, we created a powerful weapon for the Sazaur nation. From the onset, we feared it would grow beyond even our control. We devised a way to neutralize the project, but we will not do this ourselves. That is not the way of the Arcane.

You cannot have bypassed our defenses if you are of the Eye Tyrants. Therefore, you are their enemies . . . or should be. Know this, then: The weapon we have created, the Ravager, depends on the energies of the Queen's Eyes. The ten lesser eyes dwell each in their own domains within this Hive. The greater eye sees all, but none can reach it.

Go forth into the complex we created. Locate and destroy the ten lesser eyes. Only this can end the menace of the Ravager.

We have admitted you. For the brave, this is enough. There is nothing for you here. Go forward.

There is still plenty of room to pilot the ship. Similar to the entrance, the inner doors slide open to let the ship pass when the ship comes within 50 feet of

them. These doors open on Room 2, as described in the next chapter.

STAGING NOTES

The players should think they're starting on a routine dungeon expedition. This cavern, though large, could fit in any underground complex, and everything leads the PCs to suspect there are others like it in this asteroid.

Actually, the passage from this antechamber leads to one of the "small" rooms of the Hive, a colossal cubical chamber over two miles on a side. When they reach Room 2, the players will gasp in astonishment, thinking, "Wow, this is really it!"

After exploring this room, they find the passage leading to the Hive's central sphere, a chamber nearly five miles across, with ten other rooms the size of Room 2 leading from it. The effect should be of wonder piled upon wonder.

TROUBLESHOOTING

PCs desert the ship during combat: They can get away undetected, but where will they go? In a lifeboat or a makeshift vehicle, they can't get far. Eventually they must investigate the Hive, if only to look for supplies.

PCs refuse to approach the Hive: The two Greshtharx Tyrant Ships show up ahead of schedule, capture the PCs easily, and force them to enter the Hive, as above.

PCs crash their ship: They land on the Hive asteroid and make their way over its canyons and through its gullies to the secret entrance. They cannot get through the brass dome. When the PCs need to leave the Hive in Chapter 6, they can use the crashed beholder scout ship.

PCs kill everything that moves: Not a problem in this section or from this point on.



In this chapter, the PCs explore the interior of the Hive. The Sazaur beholders (aided by the Arcane) tunneled out this asteroid with their disintegration rays, creating a series of colossal interior chambers. The rooms work as a dungeon of sorts, suited to the large scale of outer space: Each room measures over two miles on a side!

A large color map included in this module depicts the giant asteroid dungeon and offers an overview of the complex.

The Hive served as a combined construction site and temple, where the Sazaur beholders built the Ravager and also enacted magical rites vital to its construction. Since the original beholder nation perished, the Queen's Eyes have increased in power, so much that they have developed a limited sentience. Now they exist as "Incarnations," NPC embodiments of their original powers.

The PCs can explore the Hive to learn about the Ravager and its purpose. Each room also provides a mini-scenario involving its unique Incarnation. And while the PCs adventure in the Hive, Jon Tobart is trying to restore the Hive's ancient functions and control the Ravager.

This chapter includes room-by-room descriptions of the Hive. The next chapter describes events that ensue once the PCs enter the Hive.

A LOOK AT THE ROOMS

Each smaller room of the Hive contains one of the ten small eyes of the Sazaur Queen.

All the smaller rooms are the same size, just over two miles on a side. Since each surface is a "floor," this means that each room offers about 25 square miles of surface area.

Each room has a unique environment. Given the intensity of magic in each room, the environment may have unpredictable effects on PCs' spells and items. Each room's description lists these effects, if any.

The Crystals

In each room, the light source and the focus for the room's sympathetic

magic is a giant, glowing crystal that hovers in the middle of the room. The crystal is shaped like a decahedron (a ten-sided die, in gaming terms) and measures 50 yards from point to point. The crystals were created by the Arcane.

Function: Each crystal focuses and purifies the sympathetic magic in its room, then relays it to the Queen's Eye in that room. The light is an intentional byproduct of the magic. At its strongest intensity, a crystal gives light equivalent to that of the Sun on a bright summer day. Sometimes a crystal may cast a different light; see the individual room descriptions for details.

The giant crystals also serve as parts of the Ravager. As shown in Chapters 5 and 6, the Ravager's shape is that of a giant beholder. When the Ravager assembles, the inner sleeve of the tunnel to each room detaches and turns into a giant eyestalk. Each eyestalk grasps the crystal decahedron in its room, and the crystals become the Ravager's ten smaller "eyes." For more information, see the next chapter.

Composition: The crystals are made of what appears to be diamond. Unusually strong and sturdy, the crystals save as rock crystal on the Item Saving Throws table (*DMG*, Table 29, p. 39), except that their saving throw vs. Crushing Blows and Falling is 3. A failed saving throw cracks and destroys one of the crystal's ten facets, producing 1d10 x 10 fragments of (apparent) jewel quality.

But this clear, gem-like substance has no commercial value; even if PCs could move the gigantic crystals, they turn to glass when removed from the Hive or the Ravager for more than one hour.

The Incarnations

Each room holds one of the Queen's Eyes. Each eye has a particular beholder power. Each room was designed to augment that power to artifact status (in theory).

But in the eight centuries or more since the Ravager destroyed the beholders that created it, the process of making the artifact has gone slightly awry. Each of the smaller eyes has gathered so much magical energy that

it has organized itself into a self-aware intellect. These "Incarnations" function as obstacles to the PCs in their attempts to defeat the Ravager.

Each of the following room descriptions (except the last) features one unique Incarnation that controls its room. This section discusses the features they share in common, and it starts with a brief description of the process of sympathetic magic in the Hive.

Sympathetic magic: This well-known principle of magic maintains that "like produces like." That is, a small effect can produce a larger but similar magical effect.

Many of the material components of spells use sympathetic principles. For example, the basic *light* spell requires a firefly or a bit of phosphorescent moss, both light-generating objects. When harnessed to a magical spell, these small objects produce a much larger magical light, by the principle of sympathetic magic. (For details see "The Nature of Magical Fabrication," *DMG*, p. 84.)

In the Hive, the master wizards among the Arcane designed and constructed each room to produce powerful sympathetic magic on a colossal scale. Nearly everything in a room was planned to produce a given emotion, frame of mind, or spell-like effect. The room's atmosphere, its "aura," pervaded the room's central crystal. The crystal purified the enchantment created through sympathetic magic, then transmitted it to the room's eye. The eye thus gained the magical aspect of that room's environment.

Self-awareness: Since the Hive's creators did not survive to supervise this process, it has gone awry and created an unforeseen effect: The smaller eyes have gradually evolved intellects of sorts. Each has become an elemental Incarnation of its power: for example, the fear eye has become an embodiment of fear, and it exists only to feed from fear.

In this way, the sympathetic magic process perpetuates itself ever more strongly. The original enchantment powers the eye; the eye's Incarnation actively furthers the conditions of the room toward more extreme embodiments of its power; this increases the



power of the room's sympathetic magic, creating a vicious circle. Since the eyes came from a beholder (an evil being), their Incarnations are all evil by nature.

Each eye's Incarnation has unique spell-like abilities keyed to the eye's original power. The individual room descriptions list these powers, along with details of the Incarnation's particular personality.

Abilities: The Incarnations share several common powers and weaknesses. First, all of them are material beings, and each Queen's Eye is physically incorporated in its Incarnation's

body. The Incarnation can be killed, and this destroys the Queen's Eye in that room.

On the other hand, each Incarnation can *polymorph self* freely, in order to more effectively achieve its desired effect of sympathetic magic. However, the Queen's Eye is always obvious and can be attacked, regardless of the form the Incarnation takes.

Each Incarnation communicates telepathically, as though wearing a *helm of telepathy* (DMG, p. 171). The only differences are that this ability cannot be detected magically, and it al-

lows the Incarnation to communicate with any sentient being, ignoring language barriers.

Fighting the Incarnations: In each room, the PCs' task is to find and recognize the Incarnation (sometimes not an easy task), defeat it, and destroy the eye. This may produce a calamity in the room. The individual room descriptions note the effects, if any, of destroying their Incarnations.

For saving throws, THACO, etc., treat each Incarnation as a 20th-level wizard, unless the individual Incarnation description notes otherwise.

ROOM 1: THE CENTRAL CHAMBER

This spherical room, about five miles across, is the formation chamber for the Ravager. The great device assembles itself for each mission of destruction, then disassembles itself to distribute its newly-acquired magical energy to the various Queen's Eyes.

Since this is the biggest and the centrally located room, it is numbered 1 for convenience. Actually, the PCs have already explored some other room before entering this one, probably Room 2 (see its description in this chapter).

ENTERING THE ROOM

In staging this entrance, make sure the players have already appreciated the tremendous size of the previous room they have explored. That makes this room's greater size even more stunning.

This section assumes the PCs are heading into Room 1 down one of the tunnels described earlier in this chapter. If this is not true, adjust the description accordingly. Read this aloud as the players head toward the central chamber:

Ahead, you see a cloudy grey sky. At least it looks like the sky, and you can make out thin white clouds in front of the grey background. There seems to be sunlight; the air feels warm and smells fresh.

An illusion? Some kind of interdimensional gate? When the PCs actually enter the chamber, read this:

You're in a room that makes the last room look tiny. This one is a gigantic sphere. What you thought was grey sky is really the surface of the sphere.

You can't tell how big this room is. But there are clouds high overhead, and you see other patches of cloud floating above other parts of the sphere. You can make out lakes and streams above you. The room looks like part of a continent, the way you saw it from space when you left your homeworld.

Light comes from a huge white crystal set into the wall of the sphere. No, you look again. The crystal is actually floating in the center of a large circular hole, like a pupil in the iris of an eye. The hole looks at least a mile wide.

Along the inner surface of the sphere you see weird terrain: huge brown slabs of different shapes; gaping circular pits at regular intervals; and open plain filled with silvery-grey vegetation of some kind.

Some of that vegetation stands nearby. The plants look like tall silver weeds, or the stalks of weeds. Actually, they look dead.

Gravity in this chamber pulls outward. No matter where the PCs stand in the sphere, they always feel they are at the bottom looking up, as though in an enormous fishbowl.

The light source is the Hive's major crystal decahedron, the one attuned to the principal Queen's Eye. The crystal hovers in the passage between this room and Room 12. Because of its position, the sphere's light varies between the intensity of noon (at the opposite end of the sphere) and sunset (near the crystal's passage). For half a mile around the passage itself, the crystal cannot be seen, and its light lends only a twilight dimness to the area.

The crystal and the passage are both described in the section for Room 12.

The crystal also casts a longer-range version of the beholder's *anti-magic ray*; its radius is one mile. However, because of the diluting effect of this tremendous range, the anti-magic effect is reduced to that of a *minor globe of invulnerability*. This functions like the power of the primary Queen's Eye; for details, see the "New Magic" appendix.

The pits are the tunnels to the smaller rooms, as described at the beginning of this chapter. The huge brown slabs are murals that depict the history of the Sazaur, the Queen's Eyes, and the Ravager. The silver stalks are the dead remains of the silver slimes that maintained the asteroid. The dead stalks smell like burnt gunpowder.

The slimes are explained later. The murals are described on the inside of this module's cover.

DESCRIPTION

The central chamber is just under five miles across. Its 25 murals each measure roughly one mile by one-half mile. Passages to other rooms are 100 yards across; the great passage to Room 12 measures 1.7 miles from side to side and tunnels one-tenth of a mile into that end of the sphere. The crystal that lights the room is 100 yards in diameter.

For all its stupendous size, this room is essentially empty—right now. Except for the details which follow and appear on the adventure cover, there is no sign of the Ravager nor any occupants, and there are no random encounters in this room. But why is the air so fresh? Why is the room so clean?

The silver slimes: The answer lies in these odd fungus-like maintenance monsters, described in the appendix.

The amoeboid blobs scavenge the area for all trash and organic material. In their plant-like "sporangia" phase they photosynthesize, absorbing the central crystal's light and cleaning the air.

Now that nothing has occupied the central sphere for a long time, most of the silver slimes have died in this room. Their only remains are the stalks that the PCs find between the murals. Living colonies still survive in the smaller rooms. This only adds to the mystery facing the PCs.

Many slimes survive in this chamber in their long-lived "macrocyt" stage. The DM can introduce these as desired; they become important in the adventure's last chapter. For more information, see the monster description in the appendix.

The murals: The beholders carved these with their disintegration rays, as part of the magical rituals involved in the creation of the Hive. The huge stone panels show scenes from the history of the Sazaur and the Hive. The murals are so large that PCs can't dis-

cern their details except from across the chamber. The module cover describes procedures for examining the murals.

In fact, these murals are really the armor plating of the Ravager's central sphere. When the weapon is assembled, the function of the murals becomes clear; see Chapter 5.

Now read the inside covers of this adventure for descriptions of the murals. Then return here.

STAGING HINTS

At all times, try to emphasize the Hive and this chamber in particular as the product of an alien culture. The Sazaur held different values from the PCs and used different symbols in their culture. Properly emphasized, this produces both mystery and tension during the adventure. In this way, the trip through the Hive becomes more than a giant-sized dungeon crawl, and the Ravager becomes a more believable menace in the next chapter.

ROOM 2: A CHARMED LIFE

This room is the domain of the Queen's Eye Incarnation embodying the beholder's *charm person* power. This is the first room of the Hive that the PCs visit after the antechamber in the last chapter. This room introduces the PCs to the Incarnations and the interior construction of the Hive.

ENTERING THE ROOM

The entrance from the chamber of the Arcane opens on this huge chamber, the first of its kind that the players will encounter. A *permanent illusion* spell hides this entrance from the room's natives and from the PCs once they are inside.

The great doors open to reveal a vast expanse. As you move forward, your vessel pivots forward so it rises through the frame that surrounds it. Before your eyes, the doorway fades out of existence, giving way to lush green vegetation.

Although you expected another

room, it seems you have entered another world. You see a forest and a range of rolling hills. But at the horizon, the sky is the same color green as the hills. And there are lines rising in the sky, and—

—And then you realize you're looking at a wall. It's miles away, miles tall and wide, and covered with forests. And there are others like it all around you. You're in the biggest room you've ever seen, bigger than you can comprehend.

Looking up, the first thing you see is a huge crystal, hovering in the sky, as bright as the sun. Above this, where you might have expected to see blue skies, you see yet another green wall. This is a cube of titanic proportions, miles on a side, with the crystal at its center.

The crystal periodically brightens and dims in a day-night cycle. It also radiates a special anti-magical effect that negates any magic used to resist *charm*

effects. A *wall of force* protects the crystal.

EXPLORING THE ROOM

This room is a beautiful tree-filled realm. Music plays everywhere, but it is impossible to determine its origin. The tune is light and lilting, and apparently played on many lutes. Pleasant herbal smells drift on the breeze, accompanied by another unrecognizable odor. In time, the PCs identify the sweet fragrance of the lotus flower.

From their spelljamming ship, the PCs see only the trees that cover all sides of this room. The only clearing, that of the Monolith, marks the exit. The Monolith is described below.

The PCs probably land and explore on foot. Soon, they meet the room's natives, also described below.

Charming: Magic permeates this charmed realm. When the PCs begin their journey, make a secret saving throw vs. spell for each character.



Those who fail succumb at once to a *charm person* spell that drains their will, leaving them susceptible to anyone who cares to command them. The NPC crewmen succumb automatically.

Those who successfully save delay this effect one turn for every point by which the save was made. For instance, making the save by three resists the *charm* for one-half hour. If a character plugs his ears, he can resist the *charm*. Plugging the ears of someone who has already succumbed has no effect.

Exploration reveals a beautiful forest with flora and fauna from many worlds. Describe creatures from the PCs' homeworld, but change important details: Tiny wolves, pink frogs, giraffes with short necks, and furry purple lizards are all good examples.

A huge variety of alien plants bear flowers or fruit. Smelling the flowers or eating the fruit requires an immediate save vs. spell. Failure means that the character is *charmed*.

Slaves of Peace

The natives of this room are the descendants of slaves, humans from a distant crystal sphere who were captured by the Sazaur to help build the Hive. Now their descendants are fair-haired, golden-skinned, diminutive folk who call themselves the Anari. They wear loose silken robes of white and gold.

Generic Anari: AC 10; MV 12; HD 1; hp 6; #AT nil; 0-level normal (although short) humans; AL LN.

These idle people dance lazily, sing, and tell stories about a "Crystal-Eating Serpent" that comes out of the Monolith and "takes the light away." These stories parallel the "Snake That Eats the Sun" legend in Room 8 of the Hive. PCs can solve this mystery when the Ravager forms.

The charm has left the Anari simple-minded, scatterbrained, and useless. They babble endlessly about the trees and the music and what a nice day it is. When asked about their robes or the ever-present music, the Anari say that the "Lord of the Dance" provides all. They don't know where to find him and can't remember what he looks like. *Charmed* PCs find the Anari fascinat-

ing and feel compelled to dance and sing as they do.

The Monolith

Directly opposite the secret door through which the PCs entered the room is a huge, black monolith. This is actually the tunnel sleeve that leads to the rest of the Hive: an enormous five-sided pillar, 100 yards across, standing just over 500 yards tall. At the top, it narrows to a hole 50 yards wide.

On closer examination, the monolith appears to be crafted of smooth, unweathered basalt. The opening at the lip, to the tunnel beyond, is large enough for the *Skyrunner* to pass through easily. See the map for a description of the Hive's tunnels.

At the base of the monolith is a Sentinel suit. (See appendix for details.) Like all the Sazaur armor suits, it is currently empty. This particular suit has corroded and is covered in moss and vines. Draw attention to this suit when the PCs first investigate the Monolith. When the PCs leave the room, it will be gone; see below.

EVENT 1: LORD OF THE DANCE

When the PCs have all fallen under his spell, Horan, the Incarnation of the *charm eye*, appears.

A golden light just ahead grows brighter and brighter, until you can't look directly into it. There is a flash, and the light fades, leaving an amber glow that settles all around you. It surrounds you with a glittering aura.

It also surrounds a tall, handsome man in white robes lined with gold. You feel that this man is the closest friend you have in your world or any other. He smiles angelically and opens his upper robe, above the belt. Embedded in his pale chest is a huge, red, withered eye.

This is Horan. Now that the PCs are under his power, he tells them what he wants:

"I am Horan, Lord of the Dance, foremost of the Incarnations. When my creators passed, I awakened. Rejoice, for I have chosen you to serve me in the greatest of tasks.

"Go forth into the world beyond, and find the nine other eyes. Bring them here, and they too shall dance to my song. With your assistance, I shall fulfill my glorious destiny and bring order to the universe!"

Horan can answer general questions about the Incarnations, but he doesn't know their exact identities or powers or the details of the rooms in which they reside. Then Horan sends the PCs forth to do his bidding. He remains in the clearing until his servants return.

THE INCARNATION

Horan: AC 5; MV 12; HD 9; hp 45; #AT 1; Dmg 1-8; SA see below; SD see below; AL LE; THAC0 11.

Appearance: The Lord of the Dance is a handsome man, of light build and narrow features. Long golden tresses frame an aristocratic face. His blue eyes are clear and gleam with an inner light. His regal bearing and graceful movements are those of a confident nobleman.

His robes, luxurious white silk and gold-embroidered velvet, act as magical armor, protecting him like chainmail. Under Horan's robes, embedded over his heart, lies the Queen's Eye. A narrow, silver blade hangs from one hip in a gem-studded scabbard.

Personality: Horan is a charismatic leader; not a bad sort, as long as everyone treats him as lord and master.

Motivation: A megalomaniac, Horan has never encountered any person he could not control. He is instinctively aware of the other Incarnations and assumes he can rule them as well. Unfortunately, he and the Anari can't leave the room to find them, so he plans to send someone to lure the other lords into his grasp.

Powers: Horan can use these spell-like abilities three times a day: *charm person*, *command word*, and *suggestion*. He can use the following once per day: *mass charm*, *domination*, and *mass suggestion*. These work only on humanlike targets. Horan himself is immune to all charm effects.

One of Horan's primary powers is the ability to *teleport without error* effortlessly, anywhere in his forest. Doing this requires a full turn, however, so if the PCs surprise him, they have ten rounds to fight him before he can get away.

In hand-to-hand combat, Horan uses his sword and any one of his spell-like abilities every round. He can fight while preparing to teleport.

Identifying Quote: "Charmed, I'm sure."

EVENT 2: LEAVING THE ROOM

When the PCs are ready to leave, most likely under Horan's influence, they return to the Monolith and notice

that the Sentinel suit is missing. A pile of vines and moss lie where it stood, but no tracks lead away. (Tobart, using his *fly* spell, lifted it to the lip of the tunnel, then assumed his true form and entered the armor. The PCs meet Tobart in the suit in Chapter 5.)

As soon as the PCs enter the tunnel, the *charm* spell is broken: Horan's powers don't extend beyond his domain. Clever PCs can sneak back in and ambush Horan. The self-styled overlord is overconfident; he never thinks his servants could resist his divine imperative, so he is unprepared for their return.

If they destroy Horan, his Queen's Eye withers and dissolves. The Anari, free of his spell, continue to live in the room, but they can now achieve true happiness rather than lassitude. A few may join the PCs, but they lack useful skills or powers.

TROUBLESHOOTING

PCs aren't charmed: Horan eventually attacks by surprise with *mass charm*. If he cannot charm all the PCs on the first round, he tries to escape, using the Anari as human shields to interfere with the PCs' return attacks.

PCs don't notice the Sentinel: Restage the same encounter in another room. First, establish the Sentinel, then note later that it has disappeared.



CHAPTER 4, ROOM 3: OF ALL WILD BEASTS

"Of all wild beasts preserve me from a tyrant."

—Ben Jonson, *Sejanus*, Act 1 (1603)

This room is the domain of the Queen's Eye Incarnation representing the beholder's *charm monster* power.

BACKGROUND

The Sazaur beholders built this room to help replenish the air supply of the Hive, turning it into a miniature tropical rain forest. Because a forest withers without animal life, the Sazaur stocked this room with a variety of animals. Finally, to keep the flora and fauna in check, and to further the power of the artifact, they used this room to house the *charm monster* Queen's Eye.

After the death of the Sazaur nation, the Queen's Eye developed into an incarnation known as the Beastmaster, lord of this jungle domain. The Beastmaster personifies many of the features of the creatures he controls, in particular, the whimsical and contentious nature of animals.

ENTERING THE ROOM

You emerge from the tunnel, and the temperature jumps about 40 degrees. The air feels as humid as if you were in a swamp. Instantly you begin to perspire. Within moments, your armor grows so uncomfortable that you wish you could remove it.

You hear a deafening clamor of animal roars and the screeches of birds.

Before you stands a huge figure in bronze armor.

This is a Sentinel (see the appendix for its description). The PCs should quickly see (if they don't fire at once), that the suit stands empty, silent, lifeless. Its metallic skin is covered with moss and green oxidation.

Visibility is just a few feet at the entrance. The room is steaming with humidity. Birds squawk and screech; animals bellow, trumpet, and howl; monsters scream and moan. This room

teems with life. The PCs can barely make out the sound of a waterfall somewhere in the distance. The noise is deafening, forcing the PCs to communicate by shouting.

When the PCs venture farther, read this aloud:

Moving onward, you can make out the other walls of the room. The far wall must be two miles away! Inside the room is a primeval jungle. From all six walls, trees grow hundreds of feet high. A river winds through the jungle, somehow turning the corners at the edges of the cubic room.

At the center of each wall of this room stands a large building. From here, they look like amphitheaters. The largest building stands on the wall opposite the entrance.

In the far corner of the vast chamber, you see a colossal waterfall, cascading into a moat that completely encircles the largest building. What magic allows water to fall from the floor of one wall to the floor of another? Which way is up?

Details of These Sights

The waterfall: The river is part of the room's irrigation system. The waterfall, caused by a permanent *telekinesis* effect, speeds up the river, keeping it fresh and flowing.

Though the jungle is hot, the water of the falls is bitterly cold. Steam obscures vision in the vicinity of the falls. In addition, the land around the waterfall is rocky and slick. PCs who enter the area must make a Dexterity check. Failure means the PC slipped into the icy cold water. Anyone who falls in is swept into the moat, which is filled with deadly creatures.

The buildings: These are the arenas of the Beastmaster. In these five arenas, he pits creature against creature for his own amusement. On occasion, as the PCs probably learn, he even takes part in the fun himself.

The beasts willingly fight for him, since he has *charmed* virtually every creature in the room. By this exercise of the magic, the Master maintains the sympathetic magic that strengthens him.

INCARNATION

The Beastmaster: AC 0/8; MV 12; HD 12; hp 90; #AT 2; Dmg 2-12/2-12; SA see below; SD see below; THAC0 9; AL LE.

Appearance: The Beastmaster is over six feet tall and hugely muscled, a fact he makes no effort to conceal; he wears only a loincloth and a large amulet affixed to his chest. The amulet contains the beholder's eye, which has grown roots deep in the Master's chest.

The Beastmaster's face is florid, his expression constantly changing, mirroring an emotional makeup that could generously be called "unpredictable." His smile is innocent and infectious, but rarely lasts more than a moment. The expression that replaces it could be terrible rage or utter indifference.

His face is framed by unruly black hair. In fact, his entire body is covered with hair. Is this man or beast?

Personality: The Beastmaster is completely animalistic and as unpredictable as a kitten. His mood swings are awesome and terrifying. Players who think they've figured him out and befriended him learn (the hard way) that they're wrong. The Beastmaster is not easily read or manipulated.

Motivation: The Beastmaster wants to find someone who can best him in combat. If he can fill the stands of his arenas with cheering crowds, so much the better: the *polymorphed* animals who make up his usual audience hardly appreciate his prowess.

Powers: The Beastmaster can use any of the following spells at will: *charm monster*, *speak with animals*, and *speak with monster*. He may also *polymorph other* once per turn.

In combat, this Incarnation's catlike agility and combat prowess give him AC 0 against any opponent he can see. He can also parry weapons with his bare hands twice per round, deflecting any successful hit against him with a save vs. paralyzation (7 or better); success means he takes no damage. If he fails to deflect the weapon, he takes damage normally.

Because of these abilities, the PCs' only hope is teamwork. The Beastmaster is AC 8 from behind and cannot parry attacks he can't see coming.

Identifying Quote: "You'll make fine sport!"

EXPLORING THE ROOM

This is a primeval jungle filled with creatures like elephants, lions, and monkeys; use the *Monstrous Compendium's* terrain encounter tables for Tropical or Subtropical Forest, Plain, Rough, and Swamp. However, replace all listings for intelligent beings with silver slimes, which maintain this room and seal fractures in the bedrock. (See the appendix for the slime's description.)

The PCs' encounters in this room depend on their mode of travel.

Aboard ship: Maneuvering a ship through the jungle is impossible at ground level, but above the trees travel is easy. At this point, the PCs can fly straight for the waterfall or one of the arenas.

However, unusual animals or dwindling supplies might entice them to land. Flying creatures could attack and make off with supplies; this would force a landing for hunting and foraging. Luring the PCs to the ground is left to the DM's discretion.

Afoot: On foot, the PCs force their way into the jungle. In the thick underbrush, without discernible paths or trails, they soon lose all sense of direction. Vines and branches snap and twist as if they had a life of their own (though they never actually attack). The PCs are forced to cut their own path with swords and magic.

Clearly, this room is a good place to stock up on supplies. Water and game animals are plentiful. At the DM's discretion, wizards can procure strange ingredients suitable for material components or potions.

The Arenas

Eventually, the PCs will arrive at one of the Beastmaster's arenas, either by accident or by design.

Four of the arenas are little more than open-air amphitheaters, each designed for a different kind of combat. The differences among them are few: One is covered with a mesh screen, allowing aerial combat; another is flooded, for aquatic combat; one is flat

and open, with a dirt floor, suitable for land combat; another contains a maze of stone walls.

The last arena, the one in the wall opposite the entrance, is entirely different. It dwarfs the others, and seems designed for all manner of combat.

Locations: Consult the map included in this supplement. On Face A of the cube stands the aerial arena; on Face B, the aquatic combat arena; Face C, the ground combat arena; Face D, the catacomb arena; and on Face E is the main arena, the Beastmaster's pride and joy. Face F, the entrance from the Hive's central sphere, has no arena.

Common features: Each of the four small arenas resembles a Roman Colosseum. Thirty feet of open ground separate each small arena from the jungle. The circular amphitheaters are 100 feet in diameter and stand 30 feet tall. Fifteen-foot archways lead inside.

The grandstand terraces are cut from solid rock. A four-foot wall separates the seats from the field. Four wooden gates spaced evenly around this wall lead onto the field.

Looking around, the PCs notice that the grandstands look wrong. Rather than seats, the stands consist of 5' wide shallow depressions in the stone. They were, in fact, designed for crowds of beholders. The Sazaur used the amphitheaters for entertainment, pitting various beasts against each other or against prisoners.

The four small arenas are all deserted. They were clearly used at one time, but have fallen into disuse: the aerial arena's netting has holes, the aquatic arena's water is stagnant and fetid, etc.

The Main Arena

This two-story building is circled by a 20-foot-wide moat fed by a cascading waterfall. The moat is filled (as all good moats must be) with carnivorous creatures. Beyond the moat, a clearing 100 feet wide leads to the jungle.

In general, the main arena is laid out like its smaller cousins. It's much bigger and measures 200 feet across. Like the small arenas, it has 30' walls and 15' archways.

There is, however, one difference.

On the ground floor, as the PCs pass through the archways, the stench becomes almost unbearable. On the ground beneath the seats stand dozens of large cages filled with all kinds of jungle animals. All of the creatures look crazed and wild-eyed from hunger, fear, and long captivity.

Within, a large field contains an area designed for each combat type: aerial, ground, aquatic, and "subterranean."

MEETING THE BEASTMASTER

Eventually, the Beastmaster and his minions locate the PCs. This should occur after the PCs have had a chance to explore the main arena. If the players show no interest in the buildings, capture them quickly to keep the plot moving.

Long before they see anything, the PCs hear his approach:

The jungle noise grows to even greater levels. Then the underbrush parts and silence descends; eerie, unnatural silence. You see a man. At least you think it's a man.

The figure is very tall and is covered head to foot in thick, matted, black hair. He's dressed only in a loincloth. A bronze amulet is affixed to his chest. The amulet contains a withered red eye, so large that it must be a beholder's.

All around him are the beasts of the jungle. Specifically, the party is surrounded by over a dozen huge apes, who watch the characters keenly.

The Beastmaster shouts out, "Ho, new creatures in the forest! What fine sport you'll make! Come, let's go to the arena and I will allow you to fight for your freedom."

Four huge apes grab and carry each PC. They lope easily through the jungle toward their destination: the main arena.

Apes (12-24): AC 6; MV 12 (9 in trees); HD 5; hp 34 each; #AT 3; Dmg 1-4/1-4/1-8; SA if both claws strike on the same round, victim takes an additional 1-8 damage; SD +2 bonus to surprise roll; AL N; THAC0 15.

Prisoners of the Beastmaster

The apes strip the PCs of weapons, clothes, and other possessions, then throw them roughly into the pens beneath the main arena. Each PC gets his own pen, and the characters are widely separated. No conspiring to escape!

The squalor and filth are even more overpowering than before. The cages have clearly never been cleaned in the hundreds of years of their existence. Starved, crazed-looking animals of all types occupy the pens around the characters. Occasionally, a predator snaps at the bars separating him from a potentially tasty PC.

Escape is all but impossible. The cage locks are imbued with the anti-magic power of the beholder, and thus are immune to *knock* and similar spells. The guards, four huge apes per PC, are too stupid to trick and too strong to overpower.

If the PCs fail to escape (there is almost no chance of them escaping), they sit in their ill-smelling cages for approximately one hour. Then the Beastmaster appears, flanked by ape guards who bear the PCs' possessions.

"Don your armor," the hairy man says. "Wield your weapons skillfully and you may live." He turns and heads for the field. "Perhaps these are the ones to best me," you hear him mutter. Then his laughter echoes throughout the stadium.

In Glorious Battle

The PCs must fight the Beastmaster in order to accomplish their mission and leave this chamber.

The Beastmaster fights in straightforward fashion. He picks one opponent as the most dangerous, and remains on guard against him. At the same time, he picks another opponent

as the weakest, and does his best to kill that opponent outright. He fights this way because his main concern is the sport. If the battle goes poorly, or if the PCs somehow taunt him into anger, he stops playing and tries to kill the toughest enemies first.

The Beastmaster is hard to overcome, but clever teamwork can carry the day. Alert players might catch on to the Beastmaster's strategy and turn it to their advantage. Many dirty tricks are possible; these do not offend the Beastmaster, since all is fair in Nature. But one thing he does not tolerate is cowardice; all exits to the arena are guarded, and the Beastmaster goes after fleeing foes before all others.

If the PCs slay the Beastmaster, the central crystal remains lit, but the entire domain goes (so to speak) wild. Every creature turns on the others, and the animals soon slaughter themselves. The PCs must escape the arena and the room, avoiding the rampaging animals.

ROOM 4: PLEASANT DREAMS

This room is the domain of the Queen's Eye Incarnation representing the beholder's *sleep* power.

BACKGROUND

The Sazaur constructed this room to provide long-term storage of supplies, prisoners, or whatever struck their fancy. This chamber uses the sleep power of the Queen's Eye to keep its occupants docile, while other magic prevents aging and decay.

The eye later developed into the Incarnation called Zhangzhala. This creature feasts on the dreams of others, and he seeks new minds to enshroud in his timeless mists.

THE CHAMBER OF DREAMS

A soft, indirect light fills the air. The temperature is warm, warm as a soothing hot spring. No sound dis-

turbs the peace of this place save the whisper of a breeze barely felt. The air is heavy, like perfume. Vapors waft on the constant, balmy breeze. A comforting mist surrounds you.

At first, the aroma seems fresh and appealing. But the longer the PCs remain in this room, the more cloying the scent becomes.

The Floor

Walking gingerly, the PCs soon find that the entire floor is covered with a soft, springy substance. The mist that covers the floor cannot be blown away, so they can't tell what's down there. (In fact, this is simply more mist, thick enough to walk upon.)

If a character stands still for any length of time, he begins to slowly sink into the floor. The longer he remains stationary, the faster he sinks.

A character who has sunk into the floor below his knees can begin moving again with little difficulty. As he

sinks deeper and deeper, however, he needs more and more help to get out, until at waist-level or deeper, the character must be pulled out by others.

The deeper a PC sinks, the more lethargic he becomes. The other character's voices seem to fade. The mists start to take on vague, shadowy shapes: shapes the PC's free comrades cannot see, of course. These shapes become clearer as the character sinks deeper into the mists of dream.

INCARNATION

Zhangzhala is a dream master. He can draw dreams from the subconscious of his victims or cause them to dream whatever he wants. He is effectively immune from attack, and so he has no game statistics. For the method of his defeat, see below.

Appearance: The dream master looks different to each PC. Play this up as much as possible. To a human male, he might seem the most ravishing of women; to a priest, a deity incarnate;

to a lover of horses, the finest magical steed; and so on. Whatever he looks like, however, the beholder's eye remains fixed on his forehead.

In actuality, Zhangzhala is the thick mist that covers the floor.

Personality: Zhangzhala is somewhat ethereal, lightheaded, easily distracted, very persuasive, and beguiling in his (feigned) innocence.

Motivation: Naturally, Zhangzhala wants to add the PCs to his collection of dreamers. The more dreamers he has, the more power he gains.

Powers: Within his dream world, Zhangzhala has absolute power. He can give his victims sweet dreams or horrifying nightmares. He can also draw monsters and other creatures out of his victims' imaginations, much as a *phantasmal killer* spell cast by a 20th-level wizard.

Zhangzhala also has dream-related abilities like *sleep*, *charm person*, and *charm monster*. The DM can add other appropriate abilities; they are irrelevant to the method of his defeat.

Identifying Quote: "I can bring you peace, joy, love—whatever you desire. You have but to embrace me."

ENCOUNTERS IN DREAMTIME

If a PC sinks all the way out of his friends' reach, he awakens standing on a featureless white floor, beneath a low ceiling of thick, white clouds. The fog is still present, but seems clearer somehow.

All trace of drowsiness is gone, and the PC is free to move around. However, he's moving in his dreams, not in reality. If the character has some physical tie to the party (such as a rope), he can move freely and tug on the rope as he likes, but the other party members notice nothing. Communication with them, too, is imaginary.

In this realm of dreams, each PC has three very short encounters. Take each player aside and run him through the encounters individually. Even if the PCs all sink into the mists next to each other, each is alone in the realm of dreams and must face his challenges separately.

The Carrot

After the character has had a few minutes to get adjusted to his new environment, he sees a figure approaching out of the fog. As it nears, the character recognizes it as that person or creature who is most dear to him: a parent, lover, sibling, lord, deity, totem, etc. The figure approaches the PC and embraces him. Read this to the player:

"Welcome, my love. Welcome to the Dreamworld. All that you have ever desired will be granted to you here. Come with me and we will fulfill your greatest wish." The figure stretches out a hand and beckons.

The PC almost certainly realizes that this couldn't be the person it appears to be; especially dense PCs get an Intelligence check. The PC also gets a Wisdom check to withstand the temptation. If the *player* realizes what is going on and refuses the offer, that character automatically does so as well.

If the PC takes the outstretched hand, he is led away into a paradise beyond his wildest dreams. Unfortunately, he also slips into a deep coma from which he may never recover (see below).

If the PC refuses, his loved one gives a silent scream of pain and rage and bursts into flames, vanishing within moments.

The Stick

Soon another figure approaches out of the mists, this time much faster. This creature is the object of the PC's deepest fear or loathing. By the time the character recognizes the shape, the creature is almost upon him, charging full-steam into battle!

Like the first encounter, this monster is not what it seems. The creature appears to attack, but it always misses. Conversely, the PC always hits, and always causes a serious wound.

If the PC wounds his foe three times, the monster dies. Suddenly, the PC is surrounded by a cheering mob, who raise him up on their shoulders and



carry him away into a town that appears out of the mists. The character is given everything he wishes and is revered as a hero; but again, he is trapped forever in the realm of dreams.

If the character refuses to strike at his enemy, the creature attacks three times. Each attack looks fiercer than the one before, and each comes closer to hitting, but each misses. After the last attack, the creature bursts into flames just as in the first encounter.

The Payoff

Read this aloud to the player:

Though you see nothing but fog, an eerily soft voice speaks, seeming to come from all directions at once. "Congratulations, mortal. You have done well, and bested me in my two challenges. Your reward is the granting of a single wish. Choose wisely, and tell me: What is it you most desire?"

There are two right answers. If the PC asks to be awakened, he abruptly shoots straight up through the cloud ceiling, appearing at the spot where he

entered the dreamland. This character never again sinks into the mists and is forever immune to the power of Zhangzhala.

If the PC says that his greatest desire is to see the Dreamlord destroyed, that wish, too, will be granted. Zhangzhala is bound by very few things, but this is one of them. See below for what happens next.

Any other request will be "granted," but not in the way the PC wants. The character receives the wish, but is not allowed to leave the dreamtime. Even if pulled back through the clouds, the PC remains in a coma.

AFTERMATH

If Zhangzhala is destroyed: A deep rumbling noise, audible to everyone awake or asleep, fills the air. The fog and clouds explode in a burst of fire, doing 1d8 damage to everything in the room and stunning the characters.

When the PCs recover, the mists are gone and the central gem has gone dark. If they stay to investigate the room, they find tons of debris scattered around the walls. They also find several intelligent creatures (DM's choice),

alive, but completely and irreversibly mindless, their intellects long since sucked dry by Zhangzhala. (At the DM's discretion, one or more of these beings can be restored to awareness to serve as replacement PCs or allies.)

Any character who spent less than a day under the control of Zhangzhala returns to his original condition, fully awake.

If Zhangzhala survives: Each PC in a coma loses 1 point from each ability score every hour he remains in the room, even if he is pulled out of the clouds. If the character is taken out of the room, he ceases to worsen, but does not improve or awaken. A *restoration* spell or similar healing magic ends the coma, awakening the character and restoring all lost abilities.

STAGING ADVICE

Play New Age music very softly. Speak in a voice as smooth as velvet. Slow the pace of delivery to a crawl. Slow . . . soft . . . even. If the players are normal, this will drive them wild with frustration. That's the whole point.

ROOM 5: RICOCHETS

This room is the domain of the Queen's Eye Incarnation embodying the beholder's *telekinesis* power.

BACKGROUND

The Arcane constructed this giant room in the following fashion: First, they engraved the walls with *telekinesis* runes the size of buildings. Next, they enchanted each wall with a permanent *wall of force* and protected the central crystal with another impenetrable *wall of force*. Then they released thousands of 5,000 pound stone spheres into the room and plugged the tunnel with a *repulsion* spell that only affects stone. Last, they placed the eye in the room.

All of this served to create an environment absolutely crackling with telekinetic magic, the better to nourish the eye's growing power. As the

spheres touched the runic symbols, they vaulted high into the air via *telekinesis* magic, ricocheted off one another, and occasionally touched the central crystal, thereby transferring their accumulated magic to its eye.

The eye developed self-awareness more slowly than its counterparts in other rooms because of the lack of intelligent beings here. Nevertheless, this Incarnation is as deadly as the rest.

ENTERING THE ROOM

Before the PCs enter, read the following aloud:

One of those tall armor suits stands near the tunnel exit. As you approach, a round shape whisks across the tunnel mouth, very fast. It's gone before you recognize it.

This is one of the stone spheres. The Sentinel suit is empty. When the PCs look into or enter the room, read this:

Another giant room. This one looks like a cube with bare grey walls, but it's hard to get a sense of scale. Every face of the cube is carved with an orderly array of pale green symbols, all alike. It looks like there are about 100 symbols on each wall.

You look up, and the face overhead is like the others. Again you experience vertigo and the sensation that you're standing upside-down above the ground.

A bright light drifts slowly through the middle of the room. Shadows like dots move along the walls as it goes. The shadows are being cast by many, many round spheres that are flying straight across the room, as though shot

from slings. They move in all directions. You can't see one close up, but at the rate they're travelling, you guess you'll see one soon.

Details of the Room

The crystal: This ten-sided, 50-yard crystal is protected from collision damage by a permanent *wall of force*, but it still recoils from collisions. It drifts randomly around the room at variable speed, usually 2-8".

The drifting crystal causes bizarre, twisting shadows that can distort perception. Characters making missile attacks may suffer -1 to -3 penalties at the DM's discretion.

The spheres: About 10,000 of these 20', 5,000 pound globes of hard brown rock fly in straight paths in all directions at a rate of 24". After 800 years of ricochets, the giant spheres remain intact, because all are protected by *Otiluke's Telekinetic Sphere* spells. The spells also reduce the sphere's effective weight to about 350 pounds.

The PCs' ship has one or two close shaves while sailing through this room. When a sphere is about to collide with them, allow the spelljamming wizard or priest to make a Dexterity check to evade the sphere. PCs on foot also receive this check. Failure means collision and 2d4 points of hull damage (to the ship) or 3d6 hp to characters.

The runes: All the runes in this room look alike. They are 600' tall and wide. Each face of the room shows 81 runes in a 9x9 array, separated by 600' gaps. The gaps are elevated, contoured slopes that send spheres on a slow roll toward the rune "valleys."

A rune casts *Otiluke's Telekinetic Sphere* on any object (or PC!) that touches it. Then it shoots the object up at a rate of 24" in a random direction. Unknown to the PCs, one rune is improperly made, so that one time in 100,000 its spell is badly cast: The target sphere rises, but it shatters in a collision. This has produced the room's rubble and drifting debris.

The PCs have seen this alien style of rune on the Room 1 murals and perhaps on the undead landscapes of Room 11, the *death ray* room.

Gravity: In this room, as in most of the others, gravity pulls down on each face, making every wall a floor. But here, the Arcane have neutralized each wall's gravity at an altitude of 200 feet. Above that invisible plane, objects have only their own gravity planes, just as in open Wildspace.

So the spheres that rise above the 200' mark drift onward until they encounter another wall's gravity. PCs above 200' drift slowly in a random direction until they cross a gravity boundary and then fall like rocks.

Meeting Corundum

Among the thousands of smooth spheres drifting through the room, one stands out: an agglomeration of small boulders and rubble, 20' in diameter. If the PCs' ship approaches the central crystal, give each PC an Intelligence check to perceive this single, irregular sphere amid the others. In the vast gulf of air, this is like spotting a marble in a marketplace; but the sphere is also seeking the PCs, making detection more likely.

This collection of rocks and pebbles marks the surface of an *Otiluke's Telekinetic Sphere* cast by this room's Incarnation, Corundum. Corundum dwells in the center of this hollow sphere, periodically expanding it to gather floating debris. Once he collects it within the sphere, Corundum keeps the detritus pressed against the sphere's wall.

When the PCs encounter his protective shell, Corundum draws back the rubble on both sides of a hemispherical line, so that the rocky surface seems to open like an eyelid. Inside floats a tiny sphere less than a foot across: Corundum.

The eye spends a round or two examining the PCs and their ship. Suddenly, the ship starts to vibrate; it's flying apart! The masts pull up, planking peels back like banana peels, and ropes unravel into individual fibers. (Living beings and magical items are untouched.) This inflicts 1 hull point per round until the PCs can escape, attack, or negotiate with Corundum.

INCARNATION

Corundum: AC 1; MV FI 24; HD 7; hp 36; #AT 1; Dmg special; SA see below; SD immune to all bludgeoning and collision damage; AL NE; THACO 15.

Appearance: Corundum has had no exposure to anything but rock and runes. When the PCs appear, he draws from them mental pictures of close friends, animals, and objects, especially those related to collisions, such as bighorn rams or hammers. Then Corundum shifts ceaselessly among these various forms, never looking like the same thing twice.

Personality: Corundum treats the PCs as more things to be manipulated. He has no compassion or remorse, but enjoys having power over the PCs.

Motivation: Take things apart and put them together in new ways.

The Incarnation is fascinated with the ship and wants to disassemble it. Once Corundum reduces the ship to component boards and nails, he'll put it back together again in a different way. He might even return it to the PCs if they grovel, flatter, and wheedle.

Powers: Corundum can cast *telekinesis* or *Otiluke's Telekinetic Sphere* at will. He can dispel his spheres without speaking. Corundum is immune to damage from collisions or bludgeoning blows.

Identifying Quote: "This is some kind of conveyance, this collection of items? I will dismantle them now. No, you cannot stop me, so don't bother to try."

Fighting Corundum

Once per round, Corundum tries to envelop one or more PCs in a sphere. To do this, he must drop his own protective sphere. If the attack succeeds, he hurls his victim(s) toward the current location of the room's glowing crystal. Beyond 200' away, the sphere vanishes, leaving the victim to either float or fall. If no PC is left to bother him, Corundum goes back to dismantling the ship.

If the PCs inflict any damage on Corundum, he restores his protective sphere, spends several rounds gather-

ing rubble as camouflage, and then retreats at top speed toward the glowing crystal. He will not confront the PCs again.

TROUBLESHOOTING

Corundum destroys the ship: Corundum (assuming he survives) can reassemble the ship from a distance,

then says "Leave my domain and bother me no more!"

If Corundum is dead, the PCs can salvage the helm and construct a ramshackle raft, or even attach the helm to a sphere and fly on that. The *repulsion* spell on the tunnel mouth won't interfere with the spelljamming sphere.

If that doesn't work, surviving PCs can climb the monolithic tunnel en-

trance and return to Room 1. In their explorations afoot, they stumble on the wreck of a small Wasp spelljamming ship (see the campaign set). This is the ship that crashed and stranded the nixies who now inhabit Room 9 (see that entry for details). A generous DM can allow the PCs to repair the ship.

ROOM 6: THE GRIND CANYON

This room is the domain of the Queen's Eye Incarnation representing the beholder's *flesh to stone* power.

BACKGROUND

The Sazaur beholders originally intended this chamber not only to house the *flesh to stone* Queen's Eye, but also to house livestock to feed the Hive's inhabitants.

To the first goal, the Sazaur stocked the room with medusae, cockatrices, basilisks, and other stoning monsters. To the second goal, the beholders stocked it with hardy goats and hardier goatherds: stone giants, tough enough to survive the rigors of the asteroid's routine, but dull-witted enough for the beholders to keep them in line. Or so the beholders thought.

After the death of the Sazaur nation, the eye developed into an Incarnation calling itself Stenor. Stenor metamorphosed into a beholder-like being with traits of the stoning monsters in this chamber.

Stenor's power gradually saturated all the stone in this chamber, giving it an unusual enchantment. Though Stenor could turn flesh to stone, the stone in this room could turn inanimate objects to stone, temporarily. Brief contact with stone turns any inanimate object into rock for a few seconds. Extended contact turns objects into stone for several minutes, or even permanently.

Stenor's Onslaught

For a short time after the death of the Sazaur, the stone giants simply bred their goats and lived primitive,

carefree lives. Then Stenor emerged from the canyons below and began to terrorize them, turning many giants and goats to stone.

The stone giants fought back. Slow-thinking but not stupid, they created defenses against Stenor.

They quarried huge, flat pieces of stone, shaped them into giant shields, and imbedded lead crystal windows in them. The shields stopped Stenor's *flesh to stone* ray. Because Stenor is noisy, the giants usually heard it before it floated within range. They had time to bring the cumbersome shields to bear.

The giants learned to fight in formation, with a shield giant protecting a rock-laden missile giant. Their fierce throwing attacks could never kill Stenor, but they hurt it enough to prevent it from flying into the giant camps with impunity.

Stenor retaliated. It began playing tricks with boulders and gravity. Hundreds of tons of stone, ranging in size from small pebbles to huge boulders, floated through the chamber. The stone giants couldn't prepare for these stones; sometimes they would crush a house or palisade wall. With this floating camouflage, Stenor could drift motionless among them, striking suddenly from ambush.

For a dozen generations, an uneasy balance has existed in the chamber. The giants are good at eluding the monsters and Stenor. But many giants, goats, and intruders from outside the asteroid become lonely statues trapped forever in this room.

EVENT 1: ENTERING THE ROOM

This is a gigantic, roughly spherical chamber. It is approximately one and one-half miles across. A glowing crystal in the center illuminates it like a sun. The ground is covered with rocks in many places, but green grass and scrubby trees and bushes grow elsewhere.

Stones float through the air all over the chamber. Some are small pebbles no bigger than sling stones. Others are giant boulders as large as a palace. The air is thick with them. You think you could sail through them, but even the best pilot can't miss all of the small rocks.

The ground is split with a deep canyon that runs along the floor, beneath you, to port and starboard, fore and aft, and above you. The canyon is one-quarter mile deep at its shallowest point and much deeper elsewhere. In many places, swaying ropes and wooden bridges cross the canyon.

Below, on the grassy hillsides, you can see small villages surrounded by wooden walls. You see men tending flocks of goats. On closer inspection, these "men" are either very huge, or the goats are very small. The men have gray skin. Some of them see you and wave, while others run toward the little villages.

PCs who examine the canyon closely can see that it descends to a flat stone floor, and that this chamber is actually a cube two miles on a side; it is built up with stone so it looks spherical, but the

canyon shows its true dimensions.

Choose a PC who is wearing armor and read the following to him.

You hear a "ping" off the side of your helmet, and your helmet immediately becomes heavier. Looking around, you realize that a small floating rock has hit you.

When you take off the helm, you see that the top of it has been turned to stone! But as you watch, it gradually turns back to normal. The effect wasn't permanent.

As the characters continue, their ship, equipment, and even flesh are occasionally hit by flying stones. When equipment is hit, it turns partially to stone but returns to normal one round later. When the ship hits small stones, the same thing happens; but when it hits large boulders, the effects last one full turn before dissipating.

When the rocks hit flesh, nothing happens. (Make sure that some PC's skin is hit by the stones so the players realize it isn't dangerous to them.)

Stones and Shields

When a floating, dropping, or thrown stone hits an inanimate object, it petrifies its own weight's worth of the object. For instance, if a five-pound rock hits 30-pound hide armor, then five pounds of the armor turns to stone, starting at the point of impact. This transformation lasts one round.

When an inanimate object is hit with stones weighing ten times as much as the object within one round, it is turned permanently to stone. For example, if a four-pound long sword is hit in one round by one 40-pound boulder or four 10-pound rocks, it becomes stone permanently.

Stone weapons do 1d4 damage and break on any hit roll of 5 or below. If a magical item is turned permanently to stone, its enchantment is ruined.

The giants' stone and lead-crystal shields do not provide absolute defenses against stoning gazes and attacks. If the shield-bearer crouches behind them so no part of him is exposed, he gets +8 to saving throws vs. stoning attacks. When not used this way, the shields are useless.

EVENT 2: TALKING TO GIANTS

The PCs probably try to speak to the stone giants. Whether they cruise over to a village or confront one of the solitary goatherds, one stone giant steps out in front with hands empty, while two others (or more, near a village) stand back with a stone in each hand.

Stone giants: AC 0; MV 12; HD 14+2; hp 53; #AT 1; Dmg 1-8 or by weapon (2-12+8); SA hurl rocks for 3-30; SD catch rock missiles 90% of the time; AL N; THAC0 7.

The first giant the PCs talk to is named Kolto. If none of the PCs speaks a giant language, then Kolto speaks a coarse dialect of the common tongue.

Kolto is amiable but cautious. He asks questions and answers them. He provides the following answers:

Dangers: Yes, there are many dangers here. There are medusae, gorgons, basilisks, and cockatrices in this land. The horrid Stennor rules all those monsters, and there is "the Snake that Steals the Sun."

Kolto says the giants know how to fight all these things, but they are sometimes ambushed by treacherous monsters.

Stennor: Kolto describes Stennor as huge, like a sphere five yards in diameter. It has a great eye and an ugly wide gash of a mouth. Many pythons grow like hair on its scaly scalp. It coughs up boulders that turn unliving things to stone, and its eye projects a ray that turns living things to stone. (See the description of Stennor, below, for more details.)

Stennor floats through the cavern, sometimes emerging to terrorize the giants and goats, sometimes floating among the boulders in ambush.

The Snake That Steals The Sun: Every few months or years, a giant serpent emerges from the hole that the characters' ship just emerged from. The serpent seizes the sun from the middle of the sky and carries it away. This makes things dark and gives the medusae and other enemies better opportunities to stone the giants. The darkness lasts for a few hours or days.

DM Note: This reference, to the sliding sleeve in the room's tunnel, should



totally bewilder the players until the events of Chapter 5. The PCs encountered a similar legend among the Anari in Room 2.

How the giants fight the stoning monsters: Kolto shows the PCs the giants' stone shields, which allow the giants to weather the stony attacks of all these monsters, usually. The stone shields require a minimum Strength score of 18/00 to use, which makes them useless to most PCs. But if the PCs want to fight Stennor and the stoning monsters, the giants happily offer their assistance.

How many giants: Kolto says there are about 100 giants and many thousands of goats living in this chamber. He estimates there are 30 to 40 stoning monsters.

EVENT 3: HUNTING STENNOR

The PCs may converse with the giants as much as they please, either from their ship or on the ground. (Grass and soil do not turn their shoes to stone; only hard rock has that effect.) The giants grudgingly invite them to share their skimpy meal (skimpy by giant standards): goat meat cooked over a wood fire, goat's milk, and fresh spring water.

If the PCs want to attack and destroy Stennor, they may. The problem is that no one knows where the Incarnation is. To flush him out, the PCs must sail through its lair, the narrow canyon that wanders across this chamber.

Once the PCs decide to hunt Stennor, they can sail in any direction they choose. They do not find Stennor right away. Instead, things run into them.

Falling Rocks: Rocks fall from the cliffsides of the canyon and crash onto the ship's deck. As usual, they turn deck planking and other inanimate objects to stone, temporarily. They also "attack" PCs at THAC0 16, and hit to do 1d6 damage.

One rock plummets to the deck every turn; roll 1d6. On a roll of 1, the rock is falling toward a PC; on 2, an NPC; and on 3-6, the empty deck. Whenever large boulders hit the deck, sections of deck turn to stone, and the spelljammer has a harder time control-

ling the ship; make all control checks at a -2.

Cave Creatures: Once per hour of searching, one of the stoning creatures attacks, either by springing from a concealed cave or by floating in on a boulder and dropping onto the deck.

At least one greater medusa, one gorgon, one basilisk, and one cockatrice attack the characters before the search is finished. The gorgon cannot ride boulders; it can only spring from a cave. The basilisk can only peer out of a cave; it is too sluggish to jump at the PCs. Use the statistics for these monsters from the *Monstrous Compendium*.

EVENT 4: STENNOR

Stennor has pulled a boulder up into a cave mouth and is holding it there telekinetically. When the PCs pass, Stennor heaves the boulder at them, slamming it into them or the ship for 3d8 damage. Stennor then floats out and attacks.

Incarnation

Stennor: AC 2; MV Fl 3 (B); HD 12; hp 75; #AT 5; Dmg 2-16/2-8/2-8/Special/Special; SA *flesh to stone*, *stone to flesh*, *ESP* four times per day, *telekinesis* (unlimited, as a 20th-level wizard, but only works on stones); SD one-quarter damage from stone attacks; AL CE; THAC0 9; XP 13,000. Stennor has no treasure.

Appearance: Stennor resembles a huge (15' diameter) beholder, except that instead of eyestalks, it has rock-pythons (exactly as a medusa has lesser snakes for hair); and it is covered with bronze-colored, reptilian scales. Its small central eye is obviously one of the Queen's Eyes.

Personality: Stennor is not clever or subtle. It enjoys ambushing enemies, mainly because of the fear this inspires.

Motivation: Stennor does not eat its dead prey; its cruelty is just a leftover beholder personality trait. It is lazy and prefers to let stoning monsters do most of the damage in this room. Stennor unconsciously recognizes that it gains no power when it petrifies a victim, but only when the monsters do.

However, it does not bypass an easy ambush.

Powers: In addition to the slow levitation of real beholders, Stennor can cast *ESP* four times per day and *telekinesis* once per round, in lieu of any one of its normal attacks. Its two special attacks are its *flesh to stone* ray from its central eye (identical to the usual beholder attack), and the special rock it coughs out of its mouth.

Each round, Stennor coughs out either a one-pound *inanimate object to stone* rock (identical to the ones floating in this cavern, but as effective as if it weighed 300 pounds), or a *stone to flesh* rock identical to the normal *stone to flesh* spell. It can spew either rock to a range of 30 yards.

The second rock turns one entire object (statue, suit of armor, weapon) into living flesh or unliving leather if the object doesn't save vs. petrification.

Finally, Stennor can bite once per round for 2d8 damage, and any two of its snake-hairs can bite once per round for 2d4 damage each.

Identifying Quote: "Flee! Freeze! Die! All Same!"

Tactics: Stennor's favorite fighting method is to move in close, biting in all directions. Each round, it tries to use its central eye to turn one enemy to stone.

Stennor also likes to cough up an *inanimate object to stone* rock to hit a character's armor or weapon, turning it to stone; and on the subsequent round, it coughs up a *stone to flesh* rock to hit the same target, turning it to leather.

Imagine a PC's shock when his prized magical sword turns into something like a leather belt, or his *plate mail* +3 becomes non-magical hide armor! This is a handy way to get rid of excess magical treasure accumulated by the characters.

Resolving Combat

Conduct the battle normally. Once Stennor drops below 20 hit points, it flees. First, it floats away along the cavern, but the faster PCs have no problem keeping up. Finally, Stennor floats into a tunnel mouth, forcing pursuers to leave their ship and follow on foot. Fortunately for the PCs, it chooses a dead-end corridor. But it fights vi-

ciously when it is injured and trapped.

When Stenor is dead, its central beholder eye cracks and falls out of its body cavity. Fortunately, nothing disastrous happens upon the Incarnation's death. In fact, the many victims it has petrified over the centuries revert to normal. The giants' goat herds suddenly grow immensely larger.

At the DM's discretion, one or several stone giants can join the PCs' party. They can be replacement PCs or NPC muscle. In some of the other rooms, the PCs need it!

TROUBLESHOOTING

PCs try to destroy the central crystal: The giants are very unhappy, and try to warn the PCs against this. They know that with the sun destroyed, the grass will die, the goats will die, and then *they* will all die. If the PCs succeed, the giants try to exact revenge.

PCs carry away the chamber's stones: With Stenor dead, the stoning rocks lose their magic within a day. Twenty-four hours later, they become ordinary rock.

PCs want shields of their own: An anti-stoning shield made to human size takes four times as long to manufacture as an ordinary shield. It weighs 50 lbs. and requires Strength 18/01 or better to wield. Instead of granting +8 to saving throws vs. stoning attacks, it grants only +4 because of the reduced size and thickness.

ROOM 7: EMPTIER THAN EMPTY

This room holds the Queen's Eye embodying the beholder's *disintegrate* power. Unlike the other small rooms of the Hive, however, no Incarnation rules this room. In fact, there is hardly anything left here at all.

BACKGROUND

When they started building the Hive, the Sazaur constructed this room first. Then, after depositing the Queen's Eye here, the Arcane enchanted the walls with gigantic, permanent *disintegrate* fields. Thereafter, the Sazaur disposed of the rubble and waste material of construction by throwing it into this room. Not only did the disintegration process tidy up the workplace, it augmented the room's sympathetic magic and strengthened the eye's power.

But this room alone of the ten suffered badly when the Sazaur beholders were annihilated. With no further flow of material to disintegrate, and no stable ecosystem to provide sympathetic vibrations, the eye stagnated.

The eye still possesses unusual power, absorbed from the other eyes during its crystal's tenure as part of the assembled Ravager (see next chapter). But without a nurturing sympathetic environment, the eye did not develop into an Incarnate personality.

This room is the equivalent of the "empty rooms" in conventional dungeons, with one difference: This room is dull, but still dangerous.

ENTERING THE ROOM

For a moment you think you must have sailed out into space again. But this is another colossal cubic room, each square wall as big as the countryside surrounding a large city. But there are no cities here and no countryside. All you see are blank, black walls.

In the center of the room floats a crystal like the ones you've seen in other rooms. Its light shines very brightly, bright enough to pick out the borders where one black wall meets another.

Looking back, you see the monolithic tunnel entrance you emerged from. This wall is also dead black. The outside of the tunnel looks shinier than usual.

You see nothing else in this room.

Anything touching the walls of this room is instantly *disintegrated*. However, a *wish* or other powerful magic can restore the destroyed object.

The tunnel sleeve is protected from disintegration by a permanent *wall of force*. Should PCs somehow dispel this field, the *disintegration* spell instantly eats away the 500-yard monolith of the tunnel sleeve. Assuming they are airborne, the PCs can still exit through the remaining tunnel section beyond the field. When the Ravager assembles in the next chapter, it cannot use the *disintegrate* crystal, even if the crystal and the eye survive.

ENCOUNTER

The only encounter in this room involves the eye itself. The tiny object orbits the central crystal, absorbing what feeble magic it can; when the PCs enter the room, the eye instantly senses and zooms toward them at 24" per round.

The eye, about the size of a soccer ball, *disintegrates* everything in a straight line ahead of it (save vs. death magic at -2 to negate all damage). In this respect, treat it as a *sphere of annihilation*; however, it cannot be influenced, and it can be attacked. The eye picks no single target but tries to turn the PCs' ship into Swiss cheese.

The eye: AC 0; MV 24; HD 4; hp 19; #AT 3; Dmg see above; SD immune to *disintegrate* magic and all mental powers; AL N.

The eye has no real intelligence beyond a rudimentary survival instinct. If damaged, the eye retreats at full speed toward the crystal. If the PCs trap or corner it, the eye fights to the death.

AFTERMATH

If the PCs destroy the eye, the central crystal explodes, doing 4d8 hp damage to everything in a 100' radius and 2d8 within 1000'. This plunges the room into darkness. PCs can make their way out by targeting the light at the end of the tunnel leading to Room 1.

If the explosion looks likely to send the PCs hurtling to the walls of the room, say that the crystal's destruction dispelled the walls' *disintegrate* fields, leaving only bare rock. Whew!

ROOM 8: VILLAGE OF THE DAMMED

This room is the domain of the Queen's Eye Incarnation representing the beholder's *fear* power.

BACKGROUND

When the Arcane constructed this room, they found its eye difficult to accommodate. It required subjects that it could frighten. Unsure what subjects would best suit the eye's needs, the Arcane created great pools of "holomire," a mud-like substance that the eye could form into any shape it pleased. Brown holomire could be used to form inanimate objects; the more precious grey holomire could achieve a magical life of its own.

As the Eye developed into a full-fledged Incarnation, its need to experience others' fears also grew. The Incarnation, now calling itself I'kok after a dimly remembered beholder monarch, created many humanlike creatures from the grey holomire. (As a beholder relic, it regarded humans as a suitably inferior race to terrorize.)

The creatures instinctively built their own community, where they continue to live and work to this day. I'kok secretly dwells among them, inflicting random acts of terror to bask in their fearful reactions.

INCARNATION

I'kok: AC 0; MV 12, FI 3; HD 9; hp 54; #AT 1; Dmg 2-8; SA radiates *fear*; SD *anti-magic ray*, *polymorph* at will; MR 50%; AL CE; THACO 12.

Appearance: Unlike other Incarnations, I'kok frequently changes form, *polymorphing* as necessary to keep the Reps (see below) from suspecting his true identity. He typically changes form every few days.

I'kok always assumes a form that mingles unnoticed among Rep society. Usually, I'kok takes the form of a humanoid, but he sometimes takes the shape of a dog or other common animal. Regardless of his shape, what distinguishes I'kok from the genuine Reps are his blood-red eyes, which glow dully in the dark.

I'kok's favorite shape is that of an overweight human, about six feet tall and weighing nearly 300 pounds. Like the Reps he resembles, I'kok's flesh is

lumpy and coarse, grey in color, and smells faintly like rotten fish. He has no facial features, except for his beady red eyes and a wide slash for a mouth that seems to divide his head in half.

Like the Reps, I'kok wears simple clothing made from the fibrous sajj plants that grow freely on Face 1 of this room. Unlike the Reps, he always wears a cowl or hood to conceal his eyes. When in an animal form, his eyes are concealed by thick ridges or long, hairy projections. The Reps are totally unaware of I'kok's existence, and he goes to great lengths to make sure that they do not discover him.

Motivation: Over the centuries, I'kok has grown dependent on experiencing the fears of the Reps. If I'kok isn't able to experience the fear of the Reps at least once every hour (preferably every half hour), he weakens and dies.

I'kok is not particularly intelligent, but he takes care not to drive the Reps to suicide, reduce them to catatonia, or scare them to death. He needs them alive for later scares. Any threat to the well-being of the Reps would not sit well with I'kok.

Powers: I'kok has the ability to mentally shape the holomire into any shape he wishes. But he must be within 10 yards of a holomire pool or a construct and concentrate for one minute.

I'kok's holomire constructions are seldom more complex than simple buildings, trees, and other innocuous items. These items are permanent unless I'kok destroys or alters them.

By concentrating, I'kok can alter existing holomire creations in any way he wishes; for instance, he can cause a building to abruptly grow legs and stomp through the village, or a tree to sprout arms and grab a Rep. Controlling the holomire is I'kok's primary way of generating fear among the Reps.

I'kok attacks with a chilling touch that drains 2-8 hp from victims; victims also take damage if they touch his flesh, but can save vs. paralyzation for half damage.

I'kok also radiates an aura of *fear* at will, extending to a radius of 60 yards. The effects are similar to those of the 4th-level *fear* spell; victims within 0-20 yards of I'kok make their saving throws

with a -10 penalty (if this penalty reduces their chance of success to 0 or less, they are automatically affected by the aura), those within 21-40 yards make their saving throws at -6, and those within 41-60 yards receive a -2 penalty.

I'Kok's Servants

Reps: AC 10; MV 12; hp 5; #AT nil; Dmg nil; SD immune to all magical *fear*; AL N.

The Reps are artificial life forms created by I'kok from the holomire. They are humanoid in shape, resembling men and women of all ages, with lumpy grey skin smelling of rotten fish. A Rep is hairless and featureless, except for a wide, toothless slash that nearly divides his head in half, and two small indentations that serve as eyes. A Rep has no eyeballs; his indentations provide him with rudimentary vision, and he sees his world in shadowy outlines. Reps wear crude clothes such as smocks and sack dresses, all made from the red fibers of the sajj plants.

Unlike the creations made from the brown holomire, the Reps are capable of free action and independent thought. However, they aren't very bright (Intelligence 4) and their reactions are mostly instinctual. They are dull-witted and extremely timid; the slightest disturbance sends them screaming in fear. The Reps are completely unaware of I'kok's existence since they are immune to I'kok's *fear* aura, and consequently have no idea of what is happening to them or why.

The Reps cannot attack. Their response to any threat, real or imagined, is to panic and run for cover. All types of physical attacks affect them, but they are especially vulnerable to water and other liquids; just a few drops of liquid causes them to shrink into a hard lump of mud resembling a chunk of coal. Likewise, if a Rep is reduced to 0 hp, he shrinks into a mud lump. However, a Rep never really dies; a mud lump Rep swells into his original form within a decade after his "death."

The Reps maintain a simple village on Face 1 (see below) made up of crude holomire shacks either directly provided by I'kok or made from holomire trees (also provided by I'kok). Though

not strictly alive, the Reps go through the motions of eating and sleeping and carry on daily life much the same as a primitive tribe of humans.

ENTERING THE ROOM

The air in this gigantic room is as warm as a spring day. A gentle breeze carries the pungent odor of rotting fish.

The room is a perfect cube; you guess it might be over two miles on a side. The side of the room from which you entered contains a small village surrounded by lush forests and large pools of brown mud. The four adjacent faces appear to be nothing more than immense shimmering mirrors. A dense jungle fills the sixth face.

A crystal decahedron floats in the center of the room. It furnishes light for the room, dimming for 12 hours, then shining for 12 hours to provide a day and night cycle. The crystal also bathes the room in a special anti-magic ray that nullifies the use of *detect magic*, *true seeing*, *ESP*, and similar scrying spells, as well as magical devices that duplicate these effects.

The crystal is permanently enchanted with a *wall of force*, but if the PCs manage to destroy it anyway, the walls of Faces 2-5 collapse (see Encounter 2). If this happens, proceed to the Outcomes section below.

ENCOUNTERS

Refer to the large color map.

Face 1: The Village

A cluster of crude, brown buildings fills an area in the center of this face about one and one-half miles in diameter. Hundreds of grey-skinned humanoids wearing red clothing mill about the village. A forest of red and silver vegetation surrounds the area.

1a. Entry: The PCs entered this room here. Next to the monolithic entryway is a towering, inert Sentinel.

1b. Clearing: These areas are relatively free of vegetation. The PCs could safely land here; there is sufficient cover, so the ship can't be seen from the village (area 1f).

1c. Brown Pools: These pools are 50-100 yards in diameter and are filled with brown holomire. The holomire is thick and rubbery, with an overpowering stench of rotting fish. It is dense enough to walk on (with a successful Dexterity check). The holomire is harmless, but useless to the PCs; only I'kok can mentally mold it.

1d. Grey Pit: This is an empty pit about 50 yards in diameter and about 10 feet deep that formerly contained grey holomire. I'kok used it all to create the Reps. A few flecks of the rubbery grey substance still line the bottom of the pit. Like the brown holomire, it has the odor of rotting fish and is useless to the PCs.

1e. Forest: This forest contains hanging vines and brown holomire trees made by I'kok and used by the Reps to construct buildings. Bushes with bright red fibrous flowers are sajj plants; the Reps use the fibers to weave clothes and the stems to make "food." Small colonies of silver slime in its various phases maintain the wall (see the appendix).

1f. Village: Dozens of brown buildings stand arranged in clusters across a barren plain of brown dirt. Most of the buildings are square, but a few have domes, and others look like crude log cabins. The buildings are an average of 20-40' wide and 10-20' high. They are featureless except for circular openings that serve as doors and windows.

Tall, leafless trees surround the village. The buildings and trees have the texture and density of dried clay and smell of, yes, rotting fish. All are made of holomire, as is the "dirt" plain.

About 2,000 Reps resembling men, women, and children crowd the village, along with many brown birds, dogs, cats, and other common animals. The Reps shuffle like zombies, some cutting down holomire trees to build more shacks, others carrying armfuls of sajj plants, still others sitting motionless on the brown ground and staring blankly into the sky.

Some Reps operate simple spinning wheels to make clothing from the sajj



fibers. Others knead sajj flowers into a pasty dough to make "food" for the villagers. (Reps "eat" by stuffing the dough in their mouths, chewing it a few times, then letting it dribble down their chins.) PCs note a lack of water and all liquids in the village.

The Reps occasionally mumble a few low words but are usually quiet. They never leave the village, fearful of the surrounding forest and terrified of getting too close to the crystal dams (see Encounter 2).

I'kok, in the form of a Rep, also dwells here, constantly terrorizing the villagers (see the Random Encounter section below). The Reps are completely unaware of his presence. I'kok can mentally control the holomire buildings, trees, animals, and ground from anywhere in the village.

To stay healthy, I'kok must experience the fear of a Rep at least once per hour; he must be within 100 feet of a terrified Rep to receive full benefits from this "fix" of fear. Because the Reps are vital to his existence, I'kok is careful not to kill them, though he makes occasional exceptions when inspired to a particularly terrifying effect.

If the PCs fly their ship over the village, the Reps panic, running in every direction while shrieking at the top of their lungs, diving into random buildings to hide. These reactions continue as long as the Reps can see the ship. I'kok also sees it, thus becoming aware of the PCs; see the Random Encounters section below.

If the PCs explore on foot, the Reps react to them by shrieking, running, and hiding. If the PCs corner one of them, the Rep trembles and cries until he faints from fright; the PCs cannot talk with a Rep. If the PCs explore less openly, they can observe the Reps undetected. Plenty of trees and buildings provide cover.

Unless the PCs have been alerted to I'kok's existence, it is unlikely that they can distinguish him from the other villagers. However, if they somehow manage to expose I'kok, go to the Outcomes section.

Random Encounters: The more time the PCs spend in the village, the more bizarre phenomena they observe. I'kok creates these to terrorize the Reps. If I'kok becomes aware of the

PCs, he directs some of these incidents to them; I'kok would love to experience the fear of humans again.

Whenever the action slows down while the PCs are in the village, they either observe an incident or experience one themselves. Feel free to change the frequency of the incidents, select particular ones, or make up new ones. In no case does I'kok create an incident that draws attention to himself. Only occasionally does he create one that inflicts damage; his main intention is to scare his victims. Treat all attacks as 5 HD monster attacks (one attack per round, and 1d4 hp damage).

Use imagination in creating incidents. Aim for the grotesque and creepy. Some suggestions:

- * A 10' tentacle springs from the ground, a tree, or a building and rapidly wraps itself around a character's throat. The tentacle makes a quick squeeze, then disappears (no damage).

- * A giant hand erupts from the ground, a tree trunk, or a wall. It slaps a PC to the ground (Dexterity Check to avoid being knocked down).

- * A building suddenly sprouts 2d4 long legs and stomps through the village at a rate of 36". It kicks at random characters before resuming its normal shape. Each stomp inflicts 1d4 damage.

- * A monstrous face suddenly appears on the side of a building, a tree trunk, or on the ground. The face screams loudly at a character, then disappears.

- * A tree drops its branches, its top forms into a razor-sharp point, and it dives for the nearest crystal dam (see Encounter 2). The tree swerves at the last moment, missing the dam, then turns to dust. Since the Reps live in fear that a dam will break, this is particularly terrifying.

- * A brown Rep in the shape of a child or adult suddenly explodes. This isn't a real Rep (note the color), but a fake created by I'kok. The explosion causes no damage.

- * A chicken or other common animal made of brown holomire suddenly attacks a random PC. Its head swells to an enormous size (10' wide or more) as it snaps at its victim. Then the animal disappears.

Faces 2-5: Crystal Dams

When the PCs approach Face 2, 3, 4, or 5, read the following:

A clear crystal resembling a gigantic window covers this entire face. The roar of a raging ocean grows louder as you approach. Surging waves of greenish water constantly splatter against the crystal, as if trying to burst free.

The crystal serves as an immense dam, restraining millions of gallons of raging ocean; it is as if the crystal is one side of an immense aquarium, about half-filled with water. The Arcane created these dams to strike terror into any sentient creature on Face 1. This happens because the gravity here differs from the other rooms of the Hive. Instead of pulling down, gravity pulls toward Face 1; if the crystal breaks, water spills down on that face.

The crystal is AC 4. If the crystal suffers 25 hp of damage, a crack appears that gradually widens from the pressure of the water inside. Within 30 minutes, the crack runs the length of the crystal, and all of the water spills out over Face 1 (this takes about 15 minutes). There is enough water behind the face to fill the room to a depth of about 1,000 feet; therefore, the water behind all four crystal dams would fill the room to about 4,000 feet.

If the PCs instigate such a flooding, proceed to the Outcomes section below.

Face 6: Ceiling Forest

A dense forest of thick red, green, and silver vegetation fills the entire face. Vines and gangly tree limbs hang down, as though reaching for the village miles below. Even if the gravity would enable you to land here, there is no clearing large enough to land a ship, and penetrating the hanging gardens on foot appears to be impossible.

PCs must use flight or cling tightly to the vines to avoid a long, long fall to the village below. Exploration of the forest turns up silver slimes, sajj

plants, a variety of exotic plant life of no particular interest, and absolutely nothing of use to the PCs.

However, if they hide and wait for 1d6 hours, I'kok transforms into a balloon-like creature and floats upward toward the hanging trees. He comes here to harvest fresh sajj for the Reps, since they cannot climb the slick walls of the dams. This is one good way of flushing out I'kok, though it requires patient PCs.

OUTCOMES

There are several possible outcomes to the PCs' adventures in this room:

PCs leave before confronting I'kok: Even if the PCs learn about I'kok, they may decide it's not worth the trouble to confront him. Or the PCs may not know how to expose him. I'kok's power remains undiminished, and the Ravager can use its *fear* eye in the adven-

ture's climax (see Chapter 6).

PCs uncover I'kok's identity: If his identity is revealed, I'kok tries to escape, losing himself in the crowd or *polymorphing* into a digging creature to burrow into the ground or into a bird to disappear into the forest (area 1e). If the PCs catch him, I'kok fights to the death, shaping the holomire into giant fists and tentacles to attack the PCs.

PCs attack the village: If the PCs deduce that the Reps are the source of I'kok's power, they may try to destroy as many of the Reps as possible. This is fine with I'kok; the PCs' spree of destruction terrifies the Reps.

However, if the PCs slaughter more than half the population, I'kok reveals himself and attacks, continuing until death or until the PCs retreat (then he tries to hide again in the village).

PCs break open one or more crystal dams: This is the best way to flush out I'kok and destroy the Reps. Within min-

utes, the entire village is flooded and all of the Reps are reduced to mud lumps.

The panicky I'kok flies to the nearest broken dam and immediately forms the holomire into dozens of tentacles hundreds of feet long. Each tentacle has a paddle on the end. I'kok orders the tentacles to hold the ripped dam together and scoop the water back inside. It's a totally futile effort.

If the PCs approach I'kok, he attacks them, but he is panicked and distracted, his concentration focused on holding the dam together. The PCs can continue to attack if they wish; otherwise, I'kok succumbs to an anxiety attack and plummets into the water, sinking to the bottom. A few moments later, the withered and destroyed beholder eye floats to the surface.

During the next few months, the water will subside, and the Reps will reform and start a new colony. But I'kok is gone.

ROOM 9: SHELL GAME

This room is the domain of the Queen's Eye Incarnation representing the beholder's *slow* power.

INCARNATION

Gruhl-Ghohruh: AC 8; MV 3; HD 12; hp 70; #AT 1; Dmg 1-12; SA breath causes victims to *slow*; AL CE; THAC0 9.

Appearance: Gruhl-Ghohruh is a giant slug, 150 feet long and nearly 40 feet thick, with pale grey skin whose texture resembles gelatin. He has two 30' antennae that hang limply over his featureless face. Rows of razor-edged teeth line his lipless mouth.

Gruhl-Ghohruh has no eyes, but he can sense movement and body heat up to one mile away; so acute are these senses that he can determine an intruder's physical form, his precise location, and an approximation of his actions. For example, if a man with a long sword was approaching, Gruhl-Ghohruh would be able to detect the presence of a humanoid form with a

bladed object; Gruhl-Ghohruh would also know the man's exact location and every movement.

Personality: Gruhl-Ghohruh lives in the center of an immense spiral-shaped seashell that drifts aimlessly beneath the surface of the faces of his room (see "Entering the Room," below). Centuries of inactivity have left him a virtual invalid. Every movement requires enormous effort, so Gruhl-Ghohruh does little more than lie on his belly and sift the water that washes through his teeth for nutrients.

Motivation: The passage of time has dulled Gruhl-Ghohruh's mind (his Intelligence is now 4). Whatever plans and aspirations he once had are now only vague memories that are too much trouble to act upon.

He once had a grand plan to surround himself with intelligent creatures who shared his outlook and affinity for sluggishness, but he lacked the ambition to recruit them and the imagination to lure them. A few acceptable creatures dwell with him in

his shell, but these are little more than dumb animals left for his amusement by the Arcane.

In all the years he's been here, Gruhl-Ghohruh has managed to acquire and corrupt only one group of intelligent creatures and transform them into his own image. About 300 years ago, a band of nixies arrived in the room, the only survivors of the Ravager's attack on their spaceborne home. The nixies intended to begin a colony on one of the room's faces.

In those days, Gruhl-Ghohruh had enough energy to put the nixies to *sleep*. Then he stole their life forces and transformed them into slug-forms (see below). It would greatly please Gruhl-Ghohruh to add to his collection of intelligent subjects, but since the arrival of the nixies, no other likely prospects have ventured into his room.

Powers: Gruhl-Ghohruh isn't much of a fighter. His muscles have all but atrophied, and he can do little more than drag his bulk around in a slow crawl.

He can bite for 1d12 hp damage if a victim comes close enough.

Three times per day, Grull-Ghohruh can breathe a cloud of green mist 50' in diameter. Anyone contacted by this cloud is subject to the effect of a *slow* spell. Those affected move at half their normal rate, take an AC penalty of +4, take a THACO penalty of -4, and all Dexterity combat bonuses are negated. The effect persists for 1-4 turns. To avoid this effect, the victim must save vs. poison at a -4 penalty.

Grull-Ghohruh can mentally control his seashell to move anywhere he wants, but it's too much work. He'd rather lie back and let the shell drift.

Identifying Quote: None. Talking is too much work.

ENTERING THE ROOM

Refer to the large color map.

The faces of this room measure over two miles per side. Each is a slimy, turgid ocean of yellow-green water, 400 feet deep and covered with moss. Dozens of oblong grey islands, each about 150 feet long and 20 feet wide, drift in the oceans. The islands are barren, but glisten as if covered with slime.

The PCs enter the room through the hole (area 1a) on Face 1. Inside this entryway is a towering, inert Sentinel.

The crystal decahedron in the center of the room continually bathes the room in amber light, like a perpetual sunset. The crystal also emits a special anti-magic ray that nullifies the use of *dispel magic* and similar spells. The crystal is permanently enchanted with a *wall of force*, but if the PCs manage to destroy the crystal, the room is plunged into darkness.

The ocean smells like burning wood. Aside from its odor and color, it is normal water. The PCs can swim in it, and although it tastes bitter, they can drink it without harm.

Strange Islands

The islands are actually the transformed nixies. They are now featureless, slug-like creatures existing in a state of *temporal stasis*. Use the same

statistics as Grull-Ghohruh, except the transformed nixies have no *slow* power, and are AL N.

The islands/nixies are covered in cold grey slime, a thin gelatin that smells like wet tobacco. There are no obvious signs that the islands are alive. Even if the PCs figure out that they're actually living creatures, the slug-nixies are incapable of normal communication.

If a PC remains in physical contact with an island for a full round, such as by standing on or touching it, he hears a single word in his head: HELP. The proximity to another intelligent being stimulates the nixie sufficiently for limited mental communication.

If the same PC remains in contact for a second round, he hears another word, US; a third round, OPEN; a fourth round, BLACK; and a fifth round, SHELL.

If the PC continues to touch the nixie, the message repeats itself, one word per minute. If the PC breaks contact, then resumes, the message starts again from the beginning.

All nixies broadcast only this message, actually two sentences: HELP US and OPEN BLACK SHELL. They are trying to tell the PCs to open the black shell containing their spirits. See "The Chamber of Grull-Ghohruh," below.

Looking for Grull-Ghohruh

No black shell is visible on the surface of any wall's ocean. If the PCs have some method of surviving underwater, let them take the search into the fetid, slimy waters. There, pit them against Grull-Ghohruh's servants in one or two random encounters. These servants are listed later.

Only slime is found on the floors of the oceans. The area is so huge that the PCs would have little chance of finding Grull-Ghohruh's lair, if not for the fact that he is also searching for them. While the PCs are underwater, the shell looms beneath them, then launches to the surface with them on top of it! Go to the next section.

Grull-Ghohruh Arrives

Use this option if the PCs have no way to survive underwater.

About 30 minutes after the PCs enter the room, the waters on Face 6 surge. An immense seashell suddenly crashes through the waves and settles on the surface. The spiral-shaped shell is nearly 700' in diameter and about 70' thick. It appears to be smooth, pink stone. Its sides glisten with a grey gelatin like that on the islands.

Near the base of the seashell, just above the surface of the ocean, is a circular opening about 20' in diameter. A rush of water abruptly spews from the opening, as if the shell were emptying itself of liquid. The water spews for several minutes, then dwindles to a trickle before stopping completely.

The seashell is the home of Grull-Ghohruh. He detected the PCs and has risen to greet them. He hopes the PCs will explore his shell, so he can turn them into slugs.

INTO THE SHELL

The interior of the shell is a spiraling cylinder about 70' in diameter; the total length to the central chamber is about 5000'. The interior is pitch black. About three feet of standing water remain in the shell.

The walls have 30 hp; inflicting that much damage creates a breach wide enough for one PC to pass. This cuts the length of the journey by a variable amount (1d100 x 10 feet on the outer turns of the spiral, 1d100 x 5 or 1d100 feet further inward). But it certainly attracts Grull-Ghohruh's minions, who roam inside the shell.

Grull-Ghohruh has ordered his servants to kill the PCs and bring their bodies to his quarters (see below). There, he'll store their spirits in a black seashell and transform the bodies into slug creatures.

Once they are transformed, Grull-Ghohruh will expel the PC/slugs into the ocean where they will grow in size, becoming identical to the nixie/slugs in about one year. If the surviving PCs locate Grull-Ghohruh's chamber, defeat him, and open the black shell, the spirits of any "killed" PCs are freed and return to their bodies; the PCs revive with all of their hp intact.

Random Encounters: As the PCs explore the shell, roll 1d6 every turn. If

the roll is 1 or 2, roll 1d6 and consult the table below for a random encounter with Grull-Ghohruh's minions. All minions were normal creatures at one time, but the Arcane modified them as follows:

1. They are covered with grey slime. This slows their physiological functions to such an extent that they can live for thousands of years. It also allows them to breathe water as well as air. (This slime has no effect on PCs or outside this room.)

2. They react very slowly. They have an attack penalty of -2, their movement rates have been reduced as indicated, and their opponents always have initiative.

3. They no longer have wills of their own, and they fight to the death for Grull-Ghohruh, pursuing if necessary.

Minion Encounters

1. **Modified Giant Leech (1-4):** AC 9; MV 1, Sw 2; HD 3; hp 18 each; #AT 1; Dmg 1-4; SA drain blood (lose 1 hp per HD of leech per round as long as leech is attached; anesthetizing saliva usually prevents bite and blood drain from being felt until victim has lost 50% of hp); AL N; THAC0 18 (reduced from 16).

2. **Modified Aquatic Constrictor (snake):** AC 5; MV 3; HD 6+1; hp 38; #AT 2; Dmg 1-4/2-8; SA constriction; AL N; THAC0 19 (reduced from 17).

3. **Modified Giant Crab:** AC 3; MV 3; HD 3; hp 22; #AT 2; Dmg 2-8/2-8; AL N; THAC0 18 (reduced from 16).

4. **Modified Giant Crayfish:** AC 4; MV 2, Sw 3; HD 4+4; hp 27; #AT 2; Dmg 2-12/2-12; AL N; THAC0 17 (reduced from 15).

5. **Modified Giant Pike:** AC 5; MV Sw 12; HD 4; hp 30; #AT 1; Dmg 4-16; AL N; THAC0 17 (reduced from 15).

6. **Modified Marine Eel:** AC 6; MV Sw 3; HD 6; hp 40; #AT 1; Dmg 2-8; SA electric shock at a 15-foot range (victims less than five feet away suffer 6-36 hp of damage, all others suffer 2-12 hp of damage; shocked victims must save vs. paralysis or be stunned for a number of rounds equal to the damage sustained by the electric shock; victims 5-10' away get a +1 bonus to their saving throw; victims 11-15' away get a +2 bonus); AL N; THAC0 15 (reduced from 13).

The Chamber of Grull-Ghohruh

At the center of the shell lies a circular chamber 100' wide. It looks smooth and curved, as one would expect a shell's center to look. Its resident is not so conventional.

Grull-Ghohruh is fully aware of the PCs' approach. He is coiled around a 30'-diameter black seashell resembling a clam. This shell contains the spirits of the nixies (as well as the spirits of PCs that Grull-Ghohruh's minions have killed). The shell is completely concealed beneath his coils.

Grull-Ghohruh attacks the PCs with his three *slow* clouds at the earliest opportunity, but he does not leave the black shell; he hopes the PCs will eventually give up and leave his chamber, giving his minions another chance at them.

If Grull-Ghohruh loses half his hit points, or if the PCs seem to be on the verge of discovering the shell, he uncoils, exposing the shell, and attacks random PCs with his bite. Once Grull-Ghohruh uncoils, one or more of his minions appears every 2d4 rounds thereafter (roll on the Random Encounter table or choose specific minions). If the PCs leave the chamber, the minions pursue. However, Grull-Ghohruh does not leave his chamber.

The black seashell has AC 0. If it suffers 25 hp of damage, it cracks open. A blur of ghostly figures streams from the shell, vanishing through the walls of the chamber an instant later. These are the spirits of the nixies, on their way to reunite with their physical bodies.

RETURN OF THE NIXIES

If the PCs crack open the black shell, the freed spirits fly directly to the nixie/islands. The moment they make contact, the nixies return to their original forms, their memories, minds, and hit points intact.

Nixies (80): AC 7; MV 6, Sw 12; HD 1-4 hp; #AT 1; Dmg by weapon; SA charm; AL N; THAC0 20.

The nixies appreciate the PCs' efforts, but they want to *leave*. It takes the transformed nixies about an hour



to get their bearings and make sure all of their companions are accounted for. During this time, the PCs can speak with them.

The nixies can tell the PCs what happened to them, but they have no other relevant information, aside from one important detail about Room 11: "There are pods shaped like bells at the entrance," they say. "Rub the syrup on your bodies, or the undead will kill you."

The nixies won't elaborate. This is secondhand information: they haven't actually been to Room 11 themselves. The nixies have no other information for the PCs.

The nixie band then heads for the

tunnel, whether or not the PCs want to take them there. A few may be willing to join the PCs, or can even become replacement PCs in a pinch.

Optionally, to avoid the logistics of a rescue mission or the potential unbalancing factor of 80 additional NPCs, assume that each nixie has bought from the Arcane a special belt that allows them to *teleport without error* to get home, wherever that is. These belts function only for nixies.

TROUBLESHOOTING

PCs don't contact the islands/nixies to hear their message: The PCs hear vague, indecipherable messages when they near an island, growing louder as they get closer. That should tempt them.

PCs hesitate to explore the giant seashell: Add another sentence to the island/nixies' message, such as IN BIG SHELL.

There is no penalty if the PCs don't help the nixies; they simply won't get the clue about Room 11, and they probably won't learn exactly what's been going on in Room 9.

—ROOM 10: THE GNARLED, BAD CAVERNS—

This room holds the Queen's Eye Incarnation representing the beholder's *cause serious wounds* power.

BACKGROUND

The makers of the Hive built this room well. Despite the destruction of the Sazaur nation and the ravages of time, this chamber has functioned perfectly, swallowing up all who enter it and letting none, except the silver slimes, escape.

The Sazaur filled this chamber with incalculable tons of sharp-edged obsidian stone. Then the Arcane enchanted it with powerful magic. All the obsidian combined to form a single being, a construct called Valkor.

Valkor may be this crystal sphere's largest obsidian golem, or at least half of it. From head to waist, he is roughly human-shaped, like most other golems. But he is 40' tall; if he were fully human-shaped, he'd stand 80' tall. He is attached at the waist to the obsidian that makes up most of this chamber. He controls the stone; he knows everything that is within it, and can make it move, slowly and imperceptibly.

In this chamber, the Sazaur released piercers, the stalactite-shaped creatures that cling to cave roofs and drop to impale people beneath (*Monstrous Compendium*, Volume One). Piercers are adept at natural camouflage, and

those in this chamber have taken on the color and texture of obsidian.

By inflicting damage on victims gradually, with sharp obsidian surfaces and piercers, Valkor simulates the damage done by *cause serious wounds* spells and brings magical power to himself.

Those who survive as far as the room's central chamber are usually ragged, bloody messes, and Valkor has no problem defeating them with his upper body.

ENTERING THE ROOM

The exit from the tunnel is open, but unlike many other tunnels, no light shines out from it. It is utterly dark and silent within. The characters must light their way with torches and the ship's lamps to continue.

The light cast by the torches and lamps reveals a new tunnel, as big around as the current one, but formed from blackish, sharp-edged stone: obsidian. The tunnel stretches farther than the light cast by the torches.

Detect magic indicates strong magic in this chamber. (It is a clue that characters can detect magic through all this stone; stone as thick as this should block the spell. Therefore, the stone itself is magical. Don't tell the player if he doesn't realize it himself.) The casting character cannot determine the

sphere or type of magic, because it is alien to the PCs.

The characters require about one hour to travel the winding, twisting caverns. Once every 15 minutes, they suffer one of the types of encounters described in Events 1 and 2. If they are still alive and mobile after one hour, they emerge into Valkor's central chamber.

EVENT 1: WALLS LIKE KNIVES

The ship has no problems maneuvering into the hole or sailing down the first stretch of the tunnel. The tunnel walls look wicked; the PCs know they wouldn't like to walk along them. But they should believe it safe to float along the middle of the tunnel.

After the first bend in the tunnel, once the characters are out of sight of the room's entrance, play these incidents, one by one:

1. **Scraping bottom:** The PCs hear something scraping along the bottom of the keel, from bow to stern. When they look over the rail, they see that a large chunk of obsidian, shaped like a stalagmite, has scraped at the ship's hull, scarring the wood.

The lookout in the bow can swear that no such obstacle existed ahead in the tunnel. It must have just appeared. While the PCs watch it, that stalagmite

does not move or do anything unusual.

2. Narrow passage: At another bend in the tunnel, the PC who is standing nearest a rail receives a $2d8 + 1$ wound to his side nearest the wall. He didn't see it coming. When he looks, he sees that the ship has passed too close to the wall, and a spiky projection of obsidian hit him. While he watches that projection, it does nothing unusual.

If someone attacks it, he's attacking a hunk of rock; it demonstrates no magic or movement abilities, and they may destroy it. They may also destroy their own weapons by hammering at it.

3. Gravitational swings: At some point while sailing along, the ship abruptly lists sharply to port. This brings the port side of the ship dangerously close to the walls. The tops of the masts graze the side of the tunnel and the whole ship shudders. A random NPC screams and falls over the rail; he hits the wall, is cut to ribbons, and dies before he slides to a halt at the bottom of the tunnel.

Before the ship's unexpected maneuver is done, it has rotated 90 degrees to port. It is obvious to the characters that they've entered an area of the chamber where gravity comes from a new direction, and the ship just righted itself naturally. This is a new menace the characters may have to face from time to time.

These three events are "filler" encounters. The more dangerous moments are still ahead. But the DM can repeat any of these events if the adventure begins to drag, both now and during the upcoming stretches of the characters' progress.

EVENT 2: VISITORS DROP IN

The ship passes through a larger chamber, large enough to turn the ship around and loaded with stalactites above and stalactites (not stalagmites; these are pointed) below.

Two piercers in the ceiling drop down upon the ship. Ask every character (including NPCs) to roll $1d20$; the two lowest rollers are attacked.

Obsidian-Colored Piercers: AC 3; MV 1; HD 3; hp 15; #AT 1; Dmg 3-18;

SA surprise; AL N; THAC0 17; $4\frac{1}{2}'$ long.

After this initial encounter, the piercers continue to plague the characters. DM Note: Not all piercers cluster among stalactites in larger caverns. Some creep into flues and fissures at the top of tunnels and drop like darts out of a blowgun at their targets. In such cases, only one piercer attacks at a time.

EVENT 3: VALKOR

After an hour of sailing (and at least four damaging encounters of the types described above), the PCs enter the central cavern of this room. Read this description:

Up ahead, the tunnel is lit. It turns to starboard, and you can tell that there is a bright light around the turn. You can extinguish your torches and lamps if you wish; the tunnel is bright enough to see without them.

You sail around the bend into dazzling light. The tunnel opens up into a much larger cavern.

The cavern is cubical, 100 yards on a side. Like the rest of this cavern system, its walls are obsidian. In the exact center of the cavern is the glowing crystal sphere providing the illumination.

Below the sphere is something that looks like a huge obsidian statue of a handsome man. It's 40 feet tall from head to waist, and the waist is the statue's base. The legless statue is carved from obsidian, with sharp corners everywhere. It shows a man with crossed arms and a curious expression on his face. A beholder's eye is affixed to his forehead.

The statue moves. With a noise of grinding rock it uncrosses its arms, looks at you on the deck, and speaks. Its voice is a hollow roar, like a high wind in a deep cavern: "Greetings, doomed champions. I congratulate you. Few mortals ever last long enough to see me. I imagine the ship helped you. But now, prepare for slow and painful death."

INCARNATION

Valkor: AC 0; MV 0; F 12; HD 10; hp 60; #AT 2; Dmg 2-16+ $1\frac{1}{2}$ -16+1 or special; SA, SD see below; AL LE; THAC0 10.

Appearance: As described above.

Powers: Valkor can use these spell-like abilities: *spell immunity* (unlimited, as the 4th-level priest spell) to *stone to flesh* and *lightning bolt* spells.

Personality: Valkor is the golem equivalent of a little boy who loves to dissect frogs to see how they work. He's very calm and curious. He inflicts agonizing pain because it is his nature, but he tries to learn from it; he is especially interested in how flesh and blood creatures function.

Valkor speaks to the characters throughout the fight, talking about his scientific curiosity, analyzing their performance in getting to the chamber, and so forth.

Motivation: Valkor knows what he must do to survive; he must inflict agony and kill all visitors by inches, the better to support the *cause serious wounds* magic of this room. Accepting that, he looks on his actions as an art form. He inflicts agony artistically. He tries to make the injuries decorative as well as functional. For instance, he may try to spell out his name on the *Skyrunner's* hull with scraping damage (see below).

Identifying Quote: "You should feel honored. Live, and you are but mortals. Die at my hands, and you are Art."

Fighting Valkor

Valkor can strike with both his sharp, pointy hands each round. They do $2d8 + 1$ damage each, exactly the same as a *cause serious wounds* spell.

In lieu of any strike, he can swing his arm and hurl small, dartlike obsidian chips at distant enemies. These flying obsidian darts also do $2d8 + 1$ damage at a maximum range of 30 yards (-1 THAC0 penalty per 10 yards of range).

On any round, Valkor can forego normal attacks and instead make one special attack. With both fists, he strikes the ground. Pieces of sharp obsidian rain down on the entire chamber. This shower hits every character (except those below deck in the ship)

for 1d4 damage. Unless a character is within 10' of a surface he can duck beneath, no evasion is possible. If a character succeeds in a Dexterity check to leap under the surface, he takes no damage.

If Valkor is brought to 0 hp, he looks down at his shattered body and says, "How interesting. Something new to experience." Then he collapses into a million pieces of stone. The beholder's eye drops out of his forehead and shatters on the floor of the cavern.

Aftermath

After Valkor's death, there is a great rumbling in the ground, and the tunnel

beyond this cavern's exit writhes and twists. It is now a straight shaft that heads directly to the tunnel out of the room.

The caverns are now still; no sharp projections or rocks appear to harm the ship. The piercers are so alarmed by this commotion that they do not attack the characters as they depart.

The cavern's "sun" crystal exhibits no unusual behavior after Valkor's death.

TROUBLESHOOTING

PCs try to escape before confronting Valkor: This won't work. When the PCs try to return the way they came,

the tunnels don't look familiar. They twist around in different directions. And all paths lead to Valkor's chamber.

PCs fall against the wall or to the floor: A PC hitting the wall takes four separate attacks as, he slides to the ground. Each successful attack (THAC0 20) inflicts 2d8+1 damage from the sharp obsidian edges. Note that the heavier a character's armor, the likelier it is he reaches the ground intact.

Once on the ground, the PC takes no damage from walking in heavy leather boots; in lighter footwear, he suffers 1 hp damage per round. Barefoot PCs suffer 2 hp damage per round.

ROOM 11: DEAD AIR

This room is the domain of the Queen's Eye Incarnation representing the beholder's *death ray* power.

BACKGROUND

Room 11 was used as a cemetery for the beholders who died of natural causes back when the Hive was under construction. This room's Incarnation, Xuu, is the caretaker, a job he takes seriously.

As part of their funeral customs, the beholders smooth a special blood-red salve over the bodies of their deceased comrades. The salve hardens into a tough, leathery shell that supposedly keeps the dead beholder's spirit contained and protected. (These beholders have no concept of an afterlife; instead, they believe their spirits remain asleep in their bodies, dreaming pleasant dreams for all eternity.)

This room is filled with the corpses of beholders encased in these blood-red shells. The corpses of commoners and workers are set out on Face 3, while the corpses of the beholder aristocracy reside in a special mausoleum on Face 6 (see the Encounters section below).

Within the last century, Xuu has noticed that some of the corpses' shells have begun to crack and chip. Xuu has dutifully patched them; there's plenty

of red salve in the room for this purpose. But Xuu considers this to be menial work, beneath his dignity; after all, he's a supervisor, not a mere worker. He's ordered some of the undead that roam this room to take care of the repairs, but they do a sloppy job and Xuu invariably has to finish the job. Xuu longs for an intelligent creature to join him in the room and take charge of making the repairs.

INCARNATION

Xuu: AC 4; MV 12, FI 24 (B); HD 6; hp 42; #AT 1; Dmg 1-6; SA energy drain; enveloping a victim causes death unless negated by save vs. death magic; SD vaporous form; immune to *sleep*, *charm*, *hold*, *death*, and cold based spells, as well as *raise dead*; hit only by silver or +1 or better magical weapons; AL LE; THAC0 15.

Appearance: Xuu exists in two forms and can change between these forms at will. His primary form resembles that of a wraith, a blue cloud vaguely shaped like a 30-foot diameter beholder with glowing red eyes. As with wraiths, Xuu has no true substance. All of the statistics given above apply to Xuu in this form. He has Intelligence 7.

Xuu can also take the form of a thin, shapeless blue vapor about 2 1/2 miles in diameter, nearly large enough to fill

Room 11 entirely. Xuu can't attack or be attacked in this form, nor does he have any control over his movement; he isn't able to do much but drift from place to place. However, he retains his consciousness and all of his senses in this form, enabling him to monitor all of the activity in his domain.

Motivation: Find a job replacement; see above.

Powers: In his wraith form, Xuu attacks with a chilling touch. Any victim he completely envelops for one full round must succeed in a saving throw vs. death magic or die. He can only envelop one victim at a time. Xuu can't attack in his mist form, but he is also immune to all attacks.

Identifying Quote: See below.

ENTERING THE ROOM

This is a colossal cube, so large you can hardly see it all. It may measure over two miles on a side. A thin blue mist floats through the grey sky of this room. The air is cool and still. All is darkness and shadows.

The wall you entered is a bleak landscape of grey ash and hundreds, maybe thousands of corpses arranged in huge runic symbols. Some of the corpses are active, stumbling aimlessly across the landscape.

The adjacent walls are similarly bleak: one is identical to the first, another is filled with grey mud, a third contains hundreds of immobile globes the color of blood, and the fourth is a featureless black plane, as smooth as glass. The sixth wall, directly overhead, looks like this one, except that an immense pyramid of glowing red stone stands in the center of the wall.

No sooner do you get your bearings, than you hear a soft, pleading voice in your heads: "Come to the light . . . come to the light . . ."

The voice belongs to Xuu, who tries to lure the PCs to the glowing red pyramid. There, he intends to recruit them, voluntarily or otherwise, as his assistants in the beholder cemetery. The voice repeats the message for about a minute, then fades.

A black crystal decahedron floats in the center of the room. The crystal produces a continuous, dull blue light for the room and also nourishes the undead who dwell here. It bathes the room in a special anti-magic ray that nullifies the use of *protection from evil*, *invisibility to undead*, *hold undead*, *control undead*, and similar spells, as well as any magical devices that duplicate these effects. The crystal is permanently enchanted with a *wall of force*, but if the PCs manage to destroy it, the room is plunged into darkness.

Next to the entryway is a towering, inert Sentinel.

Garlic Syrup

Surrounding the entryway are tangles of leathery, black vines about ten feet thick. Bell-shaped white pods five feet long grow thickly from the vines. The pods and vines smell like garlic.

The beholders used these plants to fend off the undead, preventing them from interfering with funeral rituals. The odor of the plants keeps most of the undead docile and harmless.

The PCs may have heard about these bell-pods if they rescued the nixies in Room 9. The bell-pods open easily; each contains a thick syrup, milky white in color, that the PCs can rub on their bodies (as suggested by the nixies).

None of the undead listed in the Random Encounters section below comes near a PC with the bell-pod syrup on his body. If such an encounter is indicated, the undead approach the PCs, are repulsed by the syrup, then stumble away. The beholder zombies on Face 2 and in the mausoleum on Face 6 are similarly affected.

Xuu, however, is not affected. Also, once the syrup is removed from a bell-pod, it loses its potency in one hour. If they like, the PCs can return to the entrance area to get more syrup. The syrup soon loses its potency if removed from this room.

Random Encounters

The PCs can explore any of the walls. Also, for every 30 minutes spent in the room, roll 1d6. On a roll of 1-2, a random encounter occurs; roll 1d6 again and consult the following table. Feel free to alter the frequency of random encounters or to choose specific encounters from the table.

Some of the encounters can only occur if the PCs are exploring the room on foot; if they aren't, roll for another encounter or treat the result as no encounter. Note that random encounters do not occur in encounter areas 3 and 4 (Faces 4 and 5).

All the undead are extremely vicious and will fight to the death, pursuing if necessary. They normally receive their nourishment from the central crystal, but they would welcome the chance to feast on the PCs.

Random Encounters:

1-2 Voice: All PCs hear a soft, pleading voice in their heads: "Come to the light . . . come to the light . . ." This is identical to the voice they heard upon first entering the room. Xuu is continuing his efforts to lure them to the pyramid. The voice persists for a minute, then fades.

3 Wight: AC 5; MV 12; HD 4 +3; hp 25; #AT 1; Dmg 1-4; SA energy drain; SD immune to *sleep*, *charm*, *hold*, and cold-based spells; immune to poison and paralysis attacks; AL LE; THAC0 15.

4 Ghouls (1-6): AC 6; MV 9; HD 2; hp 12 each; #AT 3; Dmg 1-3/1-3/1-6; SA paralysis; SD immune to *sleep* and *charm* spells; AL CE; THAC0 19.



5 Zombies (1-6): AC 8; MV 6; HD 2; hp 10 each; #AT 1; Dmg 1-8; SA energy drain; SD immune to *sleep*, *charm*, *hold*, *death magic*, and cold-based spells; immune to poison; AL N; THAC0 19.

6 Skeletons (1-12): AC 7; MV 12; HD 1; hp 6 each; #AT 1; Dmg 1-6; SA energy drain; SD immune to *sleep*, *charm*, *fear*, *hold*, and cold-based spells; edged and piercing weapons do half damage; AL N; THAC0 19.

ENCOUNTERS

Refer to the large color map.

1. Faces 1 and 2: Aimless Dead.

There are many clear areas on these faces of the room, if the PCs wish to land their ship and explore them on foot. The grey ash is only a few inches deep and doesn't impede the PCs' movement. The corpses arranged in the shape of runes are in various states of decomposition; most are humanoid, but a few are unrecognizable alien races. *Speak with dead*, *resurrection*, or similar spells have no effect on these corpses.

The runes are meaningless to the PCs. *Comprehend languages* reveals the runes to represent some type of prayer.

Hundreds of undead wander aimlessly through the runes. Unless a random encounter is indicated, they ignore the PCs.

2. Face 3: Red Spheres. This face is similar to those described in Encounter 1, complete with corpse runes, wandering undead, and grey ash.

However, hundreds of six-foot diameter red spheres are nested in the ash, spaced about 100 feet apart. These are beholder corpses enclosed in their protective funeral shells. About every fifth shell is chipping and cracking; Xuu hasn't repaired them yet.

There are many small pools of thick, red liquid on this face. This is the salve used to cover the beholder corpses and repair their cracked shells. It has no other function. The salve is pasty to the touch and smells like sea water.

Assume a 20% chance that any given beholder corpse has a cracked or chipped shell. If a PC comes within ten feet of one of these beholders, it rises from the ground and pursues him. The

beholder doesn't attack the PC; it just wants the PC to repair its cracks.

Beholder zombie: AC 7; MV Fl 3 (B); HD 4; hp 20; #AT 1; Dmg 2-12 (*chilling touch*); AL N; THAC0 17.

A beholder zombie pursues for 2-12 rounds, after which time it gives up and settles back into the ash (although its eyes are no longer functional, the beholder zombie can sense the presence of the PCs). If the PCs repair its cracked shell (this takes 2-20 rounds), it also settles down.

If the PCs attack it, it attempts to bump into them; an active zombie beholder can activate its *chilling touch* at will, with each touch inflicting 2-12 hp of damage (the victim may save vs. spells for half damage). An attacking zombie beholder continues to attack until it is destroyed or until its victims have fled at least 100 feet. At that point, the zombie beholder becomes inactive again.

If the PCs examine a beholder corpse whose shell isn't cracked, the corpse remains inactive. However, if they damage the shell in any way, it becomes a zombie beholder and attacks as described.

3. Face 4: Black Doom. Random encounters do not occur on this face of the room.

This entire face is a smooth, hard surface with the density of black diamond. The plane is a physical manifestation of the essence of death permeating this room.

When a PC is within 100-200 yards of this face, he will begin to feel nauseated and shaky. If he comes within 50-100 yards, he suffers 2-8 hp of damage unless he makes a successful save vs. death magic. Within 10-50 yards, he suffers an additional 3-18 hp of damage (save for half damage). Within 10 feet of it, he must save vs. death magic or die; if the roll succeeds, he suffers an additional 6-36 (6d6) hp of damage. There is nothing of interest on this face.

4. Face 5: Muck Pool. Random encounters do not occur on this face of the room.

A pool of thick muck resembling grey mud fills this entire wall. The muck is odorless and about 3 feet deep. The PCs can walk through it, though their movement rates are reduced by 75%.

The muck actually conceals a patchwork of small conduits leading to another plane of existence. As a PC makes his way through the muck, he has a 25% chance of stepping into a conduit; then he begins to sink as if in quicksand. The PC sinks at a rate of two feet per round. There is a 25% chance that he can clamber out of the conduit himself before he slips away. Otherwise, any PC can pull a sinking PC free of the sucking conduit with a Strength Check at a -2 penalty. Any two PCs working together can pull him out with no problem.

If the PC sinks below the surface, he can still be rescued as long as his companions can feel around and find him. However, the PC continues to sink at a rate of two feet per round. If he isn't rescued before he sinks out of reach, he is never seen again.

5. Face 6: Red Pyramid. This face is similar to the one in Encounter 1, complete with corpse runes, wandering undead, and grey ash.

Centered in the face is a tall, red pyramid. About 200 feet per side at the base, the pyramid is made of red granite blocks and has a single 20-foot square doorway on one side. Do not check for random encounters when the PCs are inside the pyramid.

The interior is enchanted with permanent *continual light* spells that radiate a soft red glow. About 100 red spheres line the walls. Each is about six feet in diameter and is colored blood-red.

These are beholder corpses. About one-fifth of them are cracked and chipped. If the PCs come within 10 feet of a cracked sphere, the corpse becomes an active zombie beholder (see Encounter 2 for details). However, these zombie beholders do not leave the pyramid.

There are many small cisterns of thick, red liquid in this room. This is the salve used to cover the beholder corpses and repair their cracked shells (see Encounter 2).

Xuu's Arrival

After a PC enters the pyramid and looks around, a blue fog rushes in. A moment later, Xuu appears in the doorway in his wraith form. He looks over the PCs. "You have come to the light," he says. "You have been chosen for a great honor." Xuu explains that the PCs will spend eternity under his command, helping to care for the corpses of a mighty beholder empire. "You can begin by repairing these."

If the PCs resist, Xuu warns them to cooperate or join the walking dead roaming the walls of ash. If the PCs continue to resist, the offended Xuu attacks, intending to kill them all for their insolence.

Once the fighting begins, a new zombie beholder joins the battle every three rounds thereafter. Though the zombie beholders won't leave the pyramid, Xuu will. He pursues the PCs relentlessly, although he won't leave Room 11.

If the PCs cooperate with Xuu, he tells them to scoop up handfuls of the red salve and patch the cracked shells of the beholders. No matter how carefully the PCs do this, Xuu won't be satisfied with their efforts. After a few attempts, Xuu becomes angry. "You are no better than the zombies!" Then he attacks as outlined above.

TROUBLESHOOTING

PCs are dying like flies: This is an extremely dangerous room. Use fewer random encounters and reduce the frequency of the zombie beholders. If necessary, give the thick red salve bizarre healing powers when used on living things; but it will not work outside this room.

PCs don't investigate the pyramid: Xuu broadcasts urgent mental messages to them, perhaps along the lines of "There is little time to waste, and much is at stake!" The messages become louder and more frequent when the PCs approach Face 6. He's completely shameless.

ROOM 12: RITUAL GONE WRONG

This room, a ceremonial chamber for the Sazaur, holds the Queen's central eye with its *anti-magic* (or, to be precise, its *minor globe*) power. The room lies beneath the brass dome the PCs saw from space.

Unlike the previous ten rooms, this description offers clues that tie directly into the story. Though the PCs probably do not discover this until later, this is the domain of the greatest of the Queen's Eyes.

DESCRIPTION

To get here, PCs probably must pass through the passage from the central chamber. See below for a description of that passage. If they didn't go through it, adjust the following read-aloud passage accordingly:

You're standing on a vast, perfectly flat, open plain. The passage you came through is close at your feet, gaping like a pit. The shining crystal in its center is the only light in this room. Below the crystal, you see distant brown rectangles, the murals of the central chamber. From here, they look similar to cultivated fields seen from high overhead.

The sky is the color of brass. Why does it look so shiny? Finally you re-

alize that this is the dome you saw from outside the asteroid.

The dome is a slightly curved canopy of metal. Its bright reflection of the light below makes it hard to judge distances, but you suppose it can't be more than a mile overhead. But it extends outward to a horizon that must be two or three miles away.

On the horizon, the dome meets the floor. The floor is some kind of grey stone. When you look down, you notice peculiar curved channels carved in the floor.

Examination shows that the channels form a strange hierarchy of circles within ever larger circles. For details, see the next subsection.

This room is a perfect circle that measures about two and one-quarter miles across. The passage to the central sphere, in the floor in the exact center of this room, gapes like a pit.

The dome is indeed only one mile overhead. A successful Intelligence check lets a PC perceive a very thin line running straight across the middle of the dome, from horizon to horizon. When the Ravager leaves the Hive, the dome opens along this line, and its two halves arc back to allow unobstructed passage.

The Circles

This room's arrangement of circles aided the Sazaur's rites that created the Ravager. A similar ritual circle helped them create the Queen's Eyes relics; this ritual is depicted on the murals in the central chamber. This section describes the circles in detail.

The 10,000 circles, one for each member of the Sazaur nation, are arranged in a hierarchy of ever-larger circles, as follows. (Note that all measurements are approximate. The Sazaur, predictably, did not use yards and miles.)

The smallest circles measure about five feet across, just large enough for one beholder to float in place.

Ten of these small circles lie equally spaced five feet apart around the perimeter of a larger, "second-order" circle; its perimeter measures about 100 feet, and its diameter about 35 feet.

Ten of these second-order circles lie equally spaced about 35 feet apart around the perimeter of a third-order circle. Its perimeter measures almost 700 feet, its diameter around 225 feet. A third-order circle contains 100 small circles.

Ten third-order circles lie equally spaced 225 feet apart around the perimeter of a fourth-order circle. It measures almost 4,500 feet around the

perimeter (over three-quarters of a mile) and about 1,435 feet across. This fourth-order circle contains 1,000 small circles.

Finally, each of ten fourth-order circles is spaced equally around the room's central pit. Spaced 1,435 feet apart, they make a perimeter of 28,700 feet (5.4 miles) and a diameter for the pit of 9,140 feet (1.7 miles).

A clue among the circles: Though this room offers no action or opponents, one object among the circles can provide clues to the origin and methods of the Ravager.

Amid the flat expanse of circles, the item stands out prominently. However, there is so much room here that PCs must actively search in order to avoid overlooking the clue: a partly disintegrated stone beholder!

Only part of the central sphere and a few eyestalks remain of this Sazaur. Around its fragmentary body are scatterings of fine, grey dust. Close examination of the other circles reveals a film of grey dust in each of them. The silver slimes refuse to eat or clean up this dust.

This beholder indicates the fate of the entire Sazaur nation. In this room, the Ravager, once assembled for the first time, turned all the beholders to stone, *telekinesed* them into its interior, and disintegrated them. Then, having sucked out their life forces to power the Queen's Eyes, the Ravager spewed out the dust of its creators.

This single beholder managed to escape that first wave of death, but all it accomplished was to meet its end outside the Ravager, rather than inside with the rest of its nation.

The dust does not detect as magical, and it is not useful to the PCs.

The DM can also introduce other clues in this room, including clues to the contents of the other rooms.

The Passage

The passage to the central chamber, 1.7 miles wide, is a mere 500 feet long. Otherwise, it resembles the tunnel passages between the central sphere and

the smaller rooms (see the tunnel description at the beginning of this chapter).

Gravity works to hold any foot traveller to the side of the passage, no matter what his orientation. The black basalt is carved with the same mystical gravity-creating symbols as the other tunnels. However, spelljamming ships can sail through the passage as though through empty space . . . or they could, if it weren't for the giant crystal that neutralizes all magical helms.

The Giant Crystal

Illuminating both this room and the central chamber, this giant crystal floats in the center of the passage between them. It is 100 yards in diameter and reaches within 100 feet of either end of the passage. However, it is small compared to the passage's diameter, much like the eye's pupil in its iris. (Emphasize the large-scale resemblance to a beholder's eye in order to spook the players.)

Appearance: The crystal glows white, as brightly as a powerful lighthouse flame. Staring at the crystal results in blindness for 1d4 turns. If the PCs want to examine the crystal, they must use magic or cleverness to avoid being blinded.

The crystal's facets are carved with strange symbols, the same power symbols used in the central chamber's murals (see the description of Room 1).

Inner chamber: One of the power symbols conceals a hidden entryway leading inside the crystal. It is so well concealed that the PCs cannot discover this except in truly extraordinary circumstances. Jon Tobart has learned of the entryway and the inner chamber in his studies. He enters the crystal in the next chapter.

The angular, 60-yard entryway leads to the center of the crystal, where the Arcane hollowed out a 30' long, decahedral room. Its walls are polished to a mirror finish. In the center of this chamber rests the central, the largest, the primary Queen's Eye relic, the *anti-magic ray* eye of the Sazaur Queen.

The Queen's Eye

For a description of the eye, see the New Magic appendix.

Why is this eye inside the crystal? For one reason, it directly receives the energies that the Ravager transmits into the crystal.

But the main reason is security. The Sazaur beholders could reach it, since the ray does not neutralize a beholder's levitation power; but few others could bridge the mile-wide gap from the passage "floor" to the crystal.

Though PCs may want to try this, it should be practically impossible for 6-8th level characters. Low-level magic attempted in the light of the crystal is neutralized, as though by a *minor globe of invulnerability*. Only a six-inch thickness of lead or a greater thickness of stone stops the ray's effect.

Resourceful PCs could stretch their ship's *infinite rope* across the passage, then climb to the center from one side. This necessitates a one-mile climb as difficult as the one in Chapter 1. Other approaches are possible; reward cleverness with information, without actually letting the PCs into the crystal. That comes later.

TROUBLESHOOTING

PCs find their way into the crystal: Something has gone terribly wrong. But the situation is not hopeless; assume that Jon Tobart/Shazogrox has already made his way inside. He is waiting there, already in his Sentinel suit and armed with the Queen's Eye relic.

Tobart probably repels the PCs easily; if so, he immediately forms the Ravager as described in the next chapter. If the PCs manage to fight, go to Chapter 6 to stage the final battle with Tobart.

The last chapter described the Hive; this chapter tells what happens there. Jon Tobart gains control of the central Queen's Eye and forms the Ravager. The PCs witness at least part of this sequence, learn of Tobart's dark purpose, and set out in pursuit of the huge weapon. Or they may have no need to pursue: They may already be inside it!

TIMELINE

While the PCs are exploring the Hive's rooms, Jon Tobart/Shazogrox has entered the Hive as well. He grabs a Sentinel armor suit, activates it, then makes his way slowly across the Hive to Room 12 and the primary Queen's Eye.

Tobart hopes to take control of the Eye and form the Ravager. Once he has created the weapon, he will pilot it outside to destroy beholders.

The Ravager requires no pilot. Tobart knows that, and originally he had no intention of entering the Ravager. The encounter with the beholder scout ship (Chapter 3) changed his mind. Rather than allow the survivors of that battle (or the Tyrant Ships for which they scouted) to escape, Tobart intends to guide the Ravager straight to the fleet. Otherwise, Tobart believes the Ravager might overlook them and head for the PCs' homeworld.

Tobart can't allow that to happen; a beholder's hatred for rival nations runs too deep for that!

The Approaching Fleet

Meanwhile, the beholder scout ship has either returned to its armada and reported; or it hasn't, and the fleet has grown suspicious.

The armada of the Greshtharx nation has followed Shazogrox's trail to locate the Ravager, and now they're preparing to attack. The PCs probably learn nothing about this until the beholders arrive in the next chapter.

Pacing

To regulate the story's pace, before running this adventure, decide how much of the Hive the PCs should be able to investigate. If they should see all of it, nothing in this chapter commences before they do.

However, this may allow the PCs to destroy all the Incarnations, making the assembled Ravager essentially powerless. The DM may commence the events of this chapter after the PCs have visited any number of rooms.

The DM might want to run a particular room's mini-scenario, but finds that the PCs don't appear inclined to head down that room's tunnel until late in the story. In this case, plan the listed room's description and replace it with another room. The players will never know the difference.

This can also prevent PCs from destroying too many vital Incarnations. If the Ravager needs, for instance, both *telekinesis* and *flesh to stone* powers to provide a challenge in the climactic battle, the PCs simply never stumble on the *telekinesis* and *flesh to stone* rooms before the events of this chapter begin.

But Jon Tobart is presumably assembling the Ravager as fast as possible. How to rationalize the amount of time the PCs need to look around the Hive?

The answer: Delay Tobart. For example, Tobart might make a side trip to the Arcane antechamber in search of a useful device; but it turns out the item is missing. Perhaps one of the PCs has it, and Tobart wastes additional time waiting to ambush the character. Or Tobart must commence an elaborate ritual to activate the Queen's Eyes; this can take as long as needed.

EVENT 1: OMINOUS RUMBLING

Whenever this chapter's sequence of events is ready to begin, read this aloud, regardless of where the PCs are in the Hive.

Suddenly, without warning, you hear a low rumble like distant thunder. Abruptly, the walls of the room begin to vibrate. The air seems to resonate as though this entire complex were shaking like a tuning fork.

This rumbling occurs when the mural plates on the walls of the central sphere begin to loosen and detach, as described in the next Event.

The miniature earthquake may have different effects on the PCs, depending on their circumstances. If they are in the air, in most cases they have no problem.

But if they are on the ground at the time of the earthquake, each PC must make a Dexterity check to avoid falling. This has obvious ramifications in combat, while climbing, and so on.

Negotiation is another situation affected by the earthquake. Enemy NPCs may regard the rumbling as a sign from the gods to attack the PC intruders. On the other hand, if the PCs are attempting to trick opponents when the earthquake strikes, a wizard can improvise and say he caused it!

After an eternity (at least thirty seconds), the shaking stops. But the rumbling continues. It comes from the central chamber. Encourage the PCs to return there as soon as possible.

EVENT 2: THE FIRST DREADFUL SIGN

Read the following aloud when the PCs first return to the central sphere of the Hive. This directly follows Event 1 if they are already there.

A black line is moving across the sky of the central chamber, leaving total darkness behind it.

You look from one end of the spherical room to the other, and at last you understand what's happening. One of the gigantic murals nearby has pulled loose from the ground.

A mile-long, half-mile-wide, hundred-foot thickness of solid rock floats ponderously upward. As it passes between you and the crystal light source, its shadow casts darkness around you.

The mural slab's underside is currently a dozen feet above the ground and rising at a rate of ten feet per turn. The underside is carved with a rough pattern resembling the scales of a beholder; the sides of the slab are rough, irregular cliffs.

PCs can try to leap aboard the slab, either from their ship or from the ground. Magic flight works; the slab

CHAPTER 5: THE BEHEMOTH AWAKENS

blocks the *anti-magic ray* from the crystal. A character could also climb rapidly up the decayed stalk of a sporangium, then leap and grab hold of the roughened mural (Dexterity check for success).

Whether or not they try to ride a slab, continue reading:

Elsewhere in the sphere, the other murals are also pulling loose from the ground. Clouds of rock dust fall away from their edges. Real clouds break up and evaporate as the murals strike them. Bizarre rectangular shadows spread over the ground, twisting over the sphere's surface.

On the slabs, you can see many glints of silver.

Actually, not all the slabs are moving. The ones closest to the passage to Room 12 remain on the ground, for reasons that become clear in Event 5.

PCs who get a good vantage point or use magic can see that the tough silver globs, the slime macrocysts, are breaking up. From them, the slimes are flowing out like quicksilver.

Make a point of establishing the presence of the silver slimes aboard the slabs. These slimes are the maintenance creatures for the Ravager as well as the Hive. The PCs must face the slimes if and when they enter the Ravager (see the next chapter).

Flying Murals

After they detach and float upward, the mural slabs accelerate toward the center of the sphere. Their speed varies according to the plot's requirements, as follows.

If the PCs want to do a lot of pointless stuff before taking action, such as imbibing potions or going back to a room to fetch something, the slabs move slowly. On the other hand, if the PCs are in the way of an oncoming slab, or if they're standing and watching, the slabs move quickly. Adjust the speed for maximum drama.

Evading a mural slab: A giant mural stone presents obvious dangers to a spelljamming ship in its path. Treat this as a ramming attack with a THACO of 19. If successful, the PCs' ship must make a crash check. If they avoid the

crash, the slab inflicts only 10 points of blunt ramming damage, due to its slow speed. The ship "lands" (to put it politely) on the mural's inner surface.

If the ship is totally destroyed, the PCs are trapped inside the Ravager as it assembles.

The mural slabs drift inward through the haze of dust at a gradually quicker rate. It looks like they'll all collide in the center of the sphere, but suddenly they slow down two miles above the surface. Slowly they move together. They jostle one another with deep grinding sounds like thunder, then settle into position.

The bands of mural slabs around the wall of the chamber now make up solid bands in the center of the room. They are forming a gigantic globe.

The Ravager is taking the form of a huge beholder. Each sequence of murals (actually armor plates) forms one half-mile-wide band of a globe. The third mural sequence joins into an equatorial band, the last sequence forms a cap at the bottom, and so on.

The top remains open, for the murals at that end of the room haven't yet moved.

If this is unclear, reread the mural description on the inside cover of this module to see how the murals are shaped to produce a globe.

The globe measures about one and one-quarter miles in diameter and four miles in circumference. It is made of black basalt 100 feet thick and is practically indestructible.

Observant PCs note (with a successful Intelligence check) that the stone plates overlap, leaving gaps between them. This will be handy later, if and when the PCs want to enter the Ravager.

EVENT 3: EYESTALKS

If the PCs are watching this from a tunnel entrance, they feel a sudden shifting under their feet. Otherwise, begin this Event with the following:

Suddenly you hear a deafening noise: deep scraping and cracking sounds, like the start of an ava-

lanche. As you watch across the chamber, a black tube appears out of one of the circular tunnels.

No, that's wrong: the tube is the tunnel itself, a rock sleeve that you assumed was the tunnel wall. It seems to be sliding back and forth, pulling loose. Then it slides all the way down the tunnel and disappears. Behind, the larger tunnel now shows a grey rock wall.

Around the chamber, the noise grows as sleeves scrape out of the other nine tunnels.

At this moment, the sleeves are sliding into the smaller rooms to grab the central crystals that light them. The narrow end of each tunnel is perfectly sized to hold the 50-yard-diameter crystals. This happens every time the Ravager forms, providing the stone giants' legend of the "Snake That Swallows the Sun" in Room 8.

If the PCs are near a tunnel, make a point of mentioning that many silver slimes remain in it. Others are crawling in as fast as possible. As explained in the previous event, the silver slimes are part of the Ravager's internal maintenance system. See the next chapter for more details.

Riding a Tunnel

This scene works best if the PCs are actually in a tunnel as it starts to move. In this situation, the players act on one of two ideas:

"The tunnel is moving! Get out!": PCs on foot take no damage from leaping off the end of the slow-moving sleeve, for it is only four feet thick. What's more, they have a minute or so to decide while the sleeve moves out to attach its crystal.

PCs floating in a ship can easily sail it out of the tunnel. Or they can ignore the movement of the sleeve, of course, for a minute. Then the sleeve, having attached the crystal, starts sliding back, and now the other end is blocked by the crystal.

Careful piloting can keep the ship moving just ahead of the crystal, until the tunnel sleeve slides into place on the globe (see below). Call for a control check when appropriate.

“The tunnel is moving! Climb in!”:

As above, the PCs can easily climb aboard the slow-moving tunnel sleeve. Piloting a ship into it is no problem, either, but then the ship faces the same control problems outlined above.

In a tunnel sleeve, gravity works just as it did in the tunnel. PCs can walk normally around the inside of the sleeve. Floating ships are not affected by this magical gravity.

The grinding noise from the tunnels suddenly stops. Then, after a moment of dreadful silence, it starts up again as the sleeves slide the other way, into the central room.

They move out of the tunnels, faster and faster, and then they slide completely free. You see that these huge, black pipes of stone, each four feet thick and 1,000 yards long, are segmented at a few points along their length.

The pipes bend and flex, as though experimenting. You can't see anything connecting the pieces.

In fact, the pieces are not connected by anything but magic. Each tube has two joints, allowing it to move to face different targets in the manner of a beholder's eyestalks.

At the outer end of each sleeve, where it narrowed as it entered its outer room, you see a bright light. You realize that the tunnel has seized the crystal that illuminated its room. There's something familiar in the sight of that large crystal affixed to the end of its tube.

The tunnel sleeves float inward, just as the slabs did. Each of them is heading toward the newly-made globe, toward the holes in the trapezoid-shaped murals. The holes look just large enough to accommodate the tunnel sleeves.

In fact, they are large enough, as you see when the sleeves contact the globe and slide in with a harsh grating noise.

The globe now has ten long tubes sticking from it in two rows of five at two different latitudes of the globe. With the glowing crystals at the ends

of the tubes, the whole arrangement looks like—you don't even want to think it.

Tell any player who hasn't grasped these events that the arrangement of tunnels on the globe exactly resembles the arrangement of eyestalks on the beholders depicted in the murals.

The new “eyestalks” are each about 1,000 yards long. In proportion to the central globe, the entire Ravager closely resembles a Sazaur beholder.

If the PCs remain outside the Ravager, go to Event 5. If the PCs have climbed into the Ravager, go to Event 6.

EVENT 4: WHAT'S GOING ON

This is actually an offstage event; behind-the-scenes detail for the DM but not for the players.

Jon Tobart, inside the huge crystal that lights this room, has achieved control of the primary Queen's Eye. He reached the crystal by reverting to his beholder form of Shazogrox, then levitated up to the crystal; not even the *anti-magic ray* can neutralize a beholder's levitation power.

There, he made his way into the crystal's central chamber, took control of the Queen's Eye, and turned off its *anti-magic*. He went back out to fetch his Sentinel armor suit, returned, and with a few simple command words, started the formation of the Ravager.

The weapon is almost complete. Next, Tobart must pilot the *anti-magic* crystal, the Ravager's power source, inside the globe. Then he will once again activate the *anti-magic ray*, complete the globe with the last remaining mural slabs, and launch the Ravager.

EVENT 5: LAUNCH (Outside View)

Use this Event if the PCs are outside the Ravager after it forms.

The crystal between the central sphere and Room 12 dims drastically, allowing the PCs to see its details. Tobart, in beholder form in his Sentinel

suit, appears astride the crystal. In the suit's armored hands, he holds the central Queen's Eye. Tobart currently carries no other equipment and does not have his spellbooks. If the PCs are nearby, he flies out of their reach.

However, if the PCs are miles away across the central chamber, they won't see this. But using a minor power of the Queen's Eye, Tobart can locate the PCs wherever they are in the room.

He sends the PCs a message using his *improved whispering wind* spell, a new third-level spell described in the appendix of this adventure. This spell lets him speak with the PCs and understand them over a distance of miles, for seven rounds. He begins the conversation as follows:

“I am most happy you've survived to witness my triumph. I have this fine suit of armor; I have the Queen's Eyes; and now, after so many years of study and searching, I am about to achieve control of the Ravager itself. I could not have done it without your kind assistance, and of course I thank you.

“Now enjoy the fruits of your labors: Watch as I take the Ravager forth to obliterate my enemies.”

Tobart is willing to answer the PCs' questions as long as the answers glorify his own efforts and show his erudition. For instance, he happily tells them about the “neo-artifact” status of the Queen's Eyes, and how the Ravager's forthcoming trip to the PCs' homeworld should give the relic enough life energy to achieve genuine artifact status. Use this opportunity to solve remaining mysteries, but not to hand the PCs vital clues to the Ravager's defeat.

Rather than ask questions, however, the PCs are more likely to threaten and taunt Tobart. He basks in the PCs' empty bluster for a short while, then ends the spell.

The Final Step

When the conversation ends, Tobart pilots the huge decahedral crystal from Room 12 inward; the crystal enters, and the whole central chamber dims. The Ravager glows with energy.

From around the wide passage, the triangular murals float inward, gently colliding and forming a cap for the sphere. The cap drifts closer, closer, then strikes the other slabs like a fall of boulders. The crystal's light is blocked, and at once you are in total darkness.

No, not quite total. From the wide passage you can make out a dim glow: starlight. There is a hollow, metallic screech as the dome in the far room splits along a seam and opens wide to the black sky of Wildspace.

The globe's eyestalks bend inward, one row forward, the other row back. In the starlight, you see the colossal weapon, hardly more than a black silhouette, drift toward the passage. It blocks out the starlight, eclipsing it. Then the black shape is gone, and only the open portal to space shows that it was ever here.

The Ravager is on its way.

Tobart/Shazogrox is taking the Ravager to attack the oncoming beholder armada, and from there to attack the PCs' homeworld. If the players haven't yet grasped this immediate menace, consult the Troubleshooting section.

The PCs are now in the dark. Go to the next chapter.

EVENT 6: LAUNCH (Interior View)

Use this Event if the PCs get inside the Ravager while it is forming.

For long moments, you're in darkness. The air is slightly cool and smells of dust. As your eyes adjust, you see the globe around you, only slightly smaller than the chamber from which it was formed.

And just as the chamber had a wide passage at one end, this globe is still open at one end. A circular opening, maybe half a mile wide, looks as thin at its edge as a sheet of paper. Through that opening you can see the walls of the sphere outside. A dim, brownish light shines in.

The light intensifies, and then the

chamber's light crystal appears in the opening. It drifts inside like a dandelion seed floating inside a globe of the world. Its light is dim.

Standing atop the globe is one of the giant suits of armor you have seen guarding the rooms. This suit carries a huge brown beholder eye.

Let the players act. If they try to attack Tobart in his Sentinel suit, they discover he has cast all of his defensive spells on himself. However, he has not yet summoned the smaller Queen's Eyes to join their larger companion; he can do this at any time (see the description in the New Magic appendix).

If attacked, Tobart quickly retreats inside the crystal. He does not retaliate until the Ravager is assembled and underway. Since the crystal is invulnerable, PC attacks are probably futile. Continue reading:

Beyond the floating crystal, you hear the slabs of the last mural sequence detach from the chamber's walls. They drift inward, gently colliding and forming a cap for the sphere. It moves in, closer, closer. It blots out the view of the outer chamber, and you wonder if you will see that view again.

Then, with a noise like a falling mountain range, the cap strikes the other slabs and completes the globe.

The air grows warm, and you hear a distant humming. The hairs on your hands prickle and stand up. Suddenly, beams of light appear in the darkness!

These light beams connect the central crystal with the subordinate crystals at the ends of the giant eyestalks. The beams travel down the length of each tunnel sleeve and strike the central crystal with many colors. Dust motes in the air render each beam clearly visible.

These energy beams are deadly. For more information about them, see the next chapter.

Getting Underway

Once inside, Tobart activates the crystal's *anti-magic ray*. Its influence

extends everywhere inside the Ravager. If the PCs are aboard their spell-jamming ship, this probably requires a crash check, though this is left to the DM's discretion.

For a description of the Ravager's interior, see the next chapter. That chapter also discusses the likelihood of a stealthy approach toward Tobart as he finishes the assembly of the Ravager.

If Tobart spots the PCs, he retreats to the safety of the crystal's inner chamber. From there, he sends forth his *improved whispering wind* spell. If Tobart fails to spot the PCs, he sends out the same spell into the central sphere. He speaks his message and hopes it reaches the PCs (who, he assumes, are outside the Ravager). The PCs overhear it.

Either way, read the players Tobart's gloating message from the previous Event. If the PCs can respond, Tobart answers some questions, especially those that convey danger and a goal to the players.

With Tobart's gloating completed, he sets the Ravager underway with a sharp lurch. Go to the next chapter.

TROUBLESHOOTING

PCs deactivate all of the Ravager's crystals and defeat Tobart: Hats off to them; proceed to "Rewards" at the end of the next chapter. Actually, before the Ravager is assembled, it is amazingly unlikely that the PCs can destroy all ten of the smaller Queen's Eyes and then gain the central eye from Tobart. The DM should make it clear that the players have done spectacularly well!

Flying stone slabs destroy the PCs' ship: Inflict as little damage as possible on the characters themselves. The survivors cling to the slabs and end up aboard the Ravager.

Players don't appreciate the Ravager's menace: With the tunnel sleeves gone, perhaps an inhabitant from one of the rooms can emerge and inform the PCs about the imminent peril in no uncertain terms.

The source of the NPC's knowledge? A long-ago conversation with a survivor of an expedition to the Ravager, who was intimately familiar with the weapon's deadliness.

In this chapter, the adventurers alone must defeat a weapon that has already defeated entire planets. The PCs may have to chase the Ravager. In any case, they must destroy it before it destroys their homeworld. Meanwhile, a beholder armada makes life more complicated.

The deciding factor may be how well the PCs fared against the Incarnations in the Hive. The more they destroyed there, the weaker the Ravager is in this finale.

Use the first three Events only if the PCs aren't inside the Ravager. If they are, start this chapter with Event 4.

EVENT 1: GETTING OUT

First, the PCs must get out of the darkened Hive. In a spelljamming ship, this should not be a problem; they see starlight through the open dome and can sail for that. However, the low light is less helpful to PCs afoot. They need torches or magic to light their painstaking way. Fortunately, large stretches of ground are clear now that the slabs are gone.

If the players are still floundering, have the asteroid tumble slowly until the sun comes into view, lighting the Hive interior.

If the PCs have no ship: They can make an expedition to one of the rooms that includes suitable vehicles and find a ship there. One might be hidden in the Arcane antechamber. If they can salvage their ship's spelljamming helm, virtually any object can become a ramshackle spacecraft.

The Ravager, in destroying the beholder armada as described in Event 3, may neglect to destroy all the ships completely. Instead, it pulls out the normal beholders and the hive mother, then tosses the ship and its Orbi back toward the Hive for later destruction. The ship crashes on the asteroid's surface as the PCs reach the open dome.

Can the PCs persuade an Orbus to fly them to the Ravager? An interesting role-playing challenge.

Chasing the Ravager

The PCs eventually follow the Ravager with all speed. As an exercise in

staging, the DM can build tension during the PCs' pursuit: "Your masts are cracking under the strain; smoke is rising from the overstressed helm."

Actually, reaching the Ravager is not a problem. It moves rather slowly through space due to its awesome size; the exact speed is left unspecified, since it is dependent on the story's progression.

The PCs may try to move ahead of the Ravager to warn their homeworld. A laudable idea, but unfortunately, they run straight into the approaching beholder armada.

The Greshtharx Nation

The Greshtharx number 52 normal beholders plus a dozen Orbi and the Hive Mother. This amazing population explosion has recently forced them to purchase a second Tyrant Ship and several scouts.

The Hive Mother has budded a replacement queen, and it is now incubating in the second ship. Soon, the second ship will establish a new colony, and within a generation, if history is a guide, this will be a different nation altogether, violently hating and hated by its Greshtharx progenitor.

All this affects the PCs only insofar as they face the Greshtharx armada in this scene. Still closely allied, the two Tyrant Ships and their two scouts (or perhaps one surviving scout, depending on the outcome of Chapter 3's space battle) regard the PCs as inferior enemies suitable for extirpation.

The beholders may take time to threaten, but they do not negotiate; they assume the PCs must be with Jon Tobart, hated renegade from the Greshtharx. This armada is an insuperable obstacle, and the PCs cannot escape it. They are caught between two foes. Encourage them to choose the devil they don't know: the Ravager.

Approaching the Ravager

The Ravager floats in emptiness, a black void against the star-filled void behind it. The bright crystals atop its eyestalks look like artificial constellations. Even from a great distance, you feel a chill as you

watch the worldkiller move slowly and purposefully toward your homeworld.

Beyond the Ravager, in the extreme distance, you see something silhouetted against a red dust cloud: four bright specks. They could be ships. The Ravager is headed toward them.

Unsuspecting PCs may want to rush ahead to warn these ships, the approaching Greshtharx beholders. But give the players Intelligence checks to spot these Tyrant Ships long before they get into firing range.

Once here, the PCs can fight the Ravager from outside (go to Event 2), or try to get inside the Ravager (go to Event 3).

EVENT 2: FRONTAL ASSAULT

If the PCs start attacking this monstrous globe, it becomes obvious that conventional attacks are futile. The Ravager simply ignores them, or Tobart decides the Greshtharx are a higher priority.

For a space battle, the PCs need the special anti-beholder *bolts of slaying* that Tobart brought aboard the *Skyrunner*. Assuming the PCs can somehow neutralize the central crystal's *minor globe* effect, such as by tricking Tobart into turning it off, the magical bolts work on the Ravager, though not as well as on ordinary beholders.

Each strike from a *bolt* neutralizes one of the Ravager's eyestalks. If the PCs have already destroyed five Incarnations, those eyestalks are useless, and the PCs can fire their *bolts* to destroy the other five stalks. This neutralizes all the Ravager's weaponry except the central *minor globe* crystal. Then Jon Tobart, in his Sentinel armor and bearing the Queen's Eyes, emerges from the ruined Ravager to battle the PCs on the deck of their own ship. See below to stage that battle.

What can the PCs do if they don't have suitable weapons? If all else fails, a generous DM can give the Ravager a single flaw in its armor. PCs can assault that flaw, hoping to send a missile or other weapon inside and strike a crucial component within the weapon. If

desired, the DM can draw parallels with other popular space fantasies.

If the PCs win, see "Rewards" below.

EVENT 3: INFILTRATION

In the course of events, Tobart sends the Ravager against the Greshtharx Tyrant Ships, ignoring the PCs unless they do something spectacular.

The encounter between the Ravager and the beholders is not a battle; it's a slaughter.

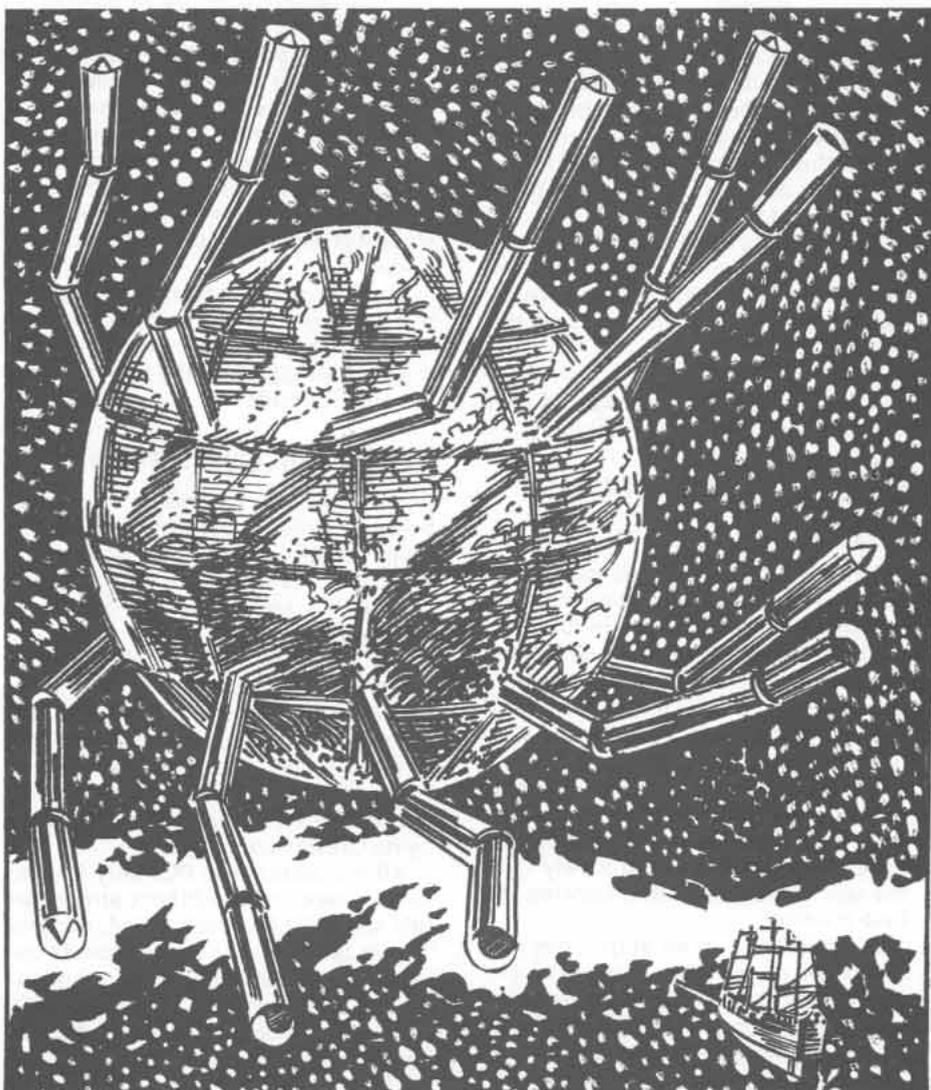
You watch the Ravager slow down and drift toward the two Tyrant Ships. For all the ugliness of its shape, the weapon is still an impressive sight, like a dragon in flight. Almost beautiful, in its own way.

As you watch, the crystals at the ends of its eyestalks glow more brightly. Around one, there is a sudden buildup of energy, and blue-white lightning crackles around its tip. Across the depths of space, you can't hear anything, but the light is so bright you can't stare at it long.

Then, in the blink of an eye, the lightning strikes out and hits one of the Tyrant Ships. A Tyrant Ship that size could beat three ships like yours, but when the Ravager's bolt hits, the ship bursts into pieces. They look like walnuts, and this one has cracked.

The battle continues in this way. First, the Ravager demolishes or disposes of the four beholder ships; then it disables the individual beholders and the Hive Mother (but not the Orbi); then it petrifies the beholders, telekinetically draws them into its enormous mouth, and the PCs don't see them again.

Adjust the details of the defeat according to whatever damage the PCs have already inflicted on the Ravager. For each Incarnation they defeated in the Hive, the Ravager lacks that particular power. For more about this, see below.



The Approach

PCs can sneak up to the Ravager while it's busy eating Tyrant Ships. Once they are close, they are too near and too small for Tobart to detect them. They can infiltrate unnoticed.

PCs could conceivably tunnel their way through the 100-foot thickness of the globe, or the four feet of rock around each eyestalk. But there are three likelier methods of entry:

Globe: The PCs can slip in between cracks in the globe's armor plating. These stony cracks are about 10 feet

wide, irregular, and dark. This method forces the PCs to leave their ship.

Eyestalks: More accessible cracks lie at the joints along the eyestalks; these canyon-like joints are easily large enough to accommodate the PCs' ship.

However, the spelljammer must make a crash check to avoid being pinched as two segments of eyestalk move against each other. Success means safe entry; failure means the ship crashes. The PCs should survive undamaged if the DM desires, so they

can continue the adventure on foot.

Mouth: The globe does not have a mouth proper. But if the PCs observe the battle with the beholders, they note that one of the lower trapezoidal panels of the globe swings down, as though hinged. The Ravager draws its petrified victims into the hole with its *telekinesis* power. If the PCs have destroyed that eye, Tobart carefully maneuvers the Ravager to slide its mouth over the victims as they hang in space.

Brave or foolhardy PCs can sail into this open mouth. In fact, they can enter without physical danger; the peril lies in detection by Tobart, who is watching this mouth closely.

If the PCs are very clever or invisible, Tobart doesn't see them enter. Failing that, Tobart certainly notices this method. He takes one of two actions (DM's choice):

1. From his vantage astride the central crystal (see below), Tobart instantly *disintegrates* the PCs' ship. However, this creates a huge cloud of debris, and the unharmed PCs can hide or escape elsewhere inside the Ravager. Tobart does not suspect that they survived.

2. Tobart retreats inside the central crystal and commands the Ravager's silver slimes to combine into a huge slime and battle the PCs. The next section describes this opponent.

Assuming that the PCs make it inside, go to Event 4.

EVENT 4: INSIDE THE ENEMY

Start this chapter here if the PCs have entered the Ravager during its assembly.

This is the most effective way to fight the Ravager. Inside, it can't attack, and Tobart cannot spot the PCs easily. The problem is that the central crystal, at times, radiates its *minor globe* everywhere inside, and during those times the PCs can use no magic.

Read this when the PCs make their way into the central globe:

The Ravager's interior: By now, you're used to colossal spheres. This one is dark, so you don't have to gasp in awe.

The globe echoes with the sounds

of lightning; sharp cracks when the crystals fire. The air here smells of rock dust and ozone and soot. It's very warm, and a brisk wind is blowing into each eyestalk.

The crystals in the eyestalks cast weird, twisting shadows inside as the eyestalks move. The other light here comes from the giant central crystal, which floats, one endpoint up, in the exact center of this globe. It's much dimmer now, and you can make out symbols carved into its ten facets.

Thin beams of light, each about one inch across, connect the central crystal's facets with the eyestalks. All the lights are different colors.

The following sections tell more about the Ravager's interior and explain ways to defeat it.

THE RAVAGER

Built by:	Arcane/Sazaur
Used Primarily by:	Itself
Tonnage:(millions)	Unknown
Hull Points:	Not applicable
Crew:	None
Maneuverability	
Class:	F
Landing: Land	Yes
Landing: Water	No
Armor Rating:	0
Saves as:	20th-level wizard
Power Type:	See below
Ship's Rating:	1
Standard	
Armament:	See below
Cargo:	None
Keel Length:	5,400 feet
Beam Length:	7,400 feet
Cost:	Not for sale

Consult the map inside the module cover.

The gravity inside the Ravager lets PCs walk upright on any inner surface.

Propulsion

Space: When its *minor globe* is turned off, the Ravager's giant central crystal, built by the Arcane, works as a lifejammer for most purposes.

The Arcane created this unique crystal to store the life force drained from

the creatures the Ravager killed over the centuries. It also uses this stored energy to propel itself through Wildspace. However, because of the Ravager's tremendous mass, its speed through space is considerably slower than a conventional ship's.

In addition to the low Ship's Rating and Maneuverability Class, the Ravager covers only 50 million miles per day (about two million miles an hour) through deep Wildspace: half the speed of a spelljamming ship.

Because of its slow speed, the Ravager always loses initiative in combat.

Also, the Lifejammer crystal requires the central Queen's Eye within it to function. Most importantly, just as the Queen's Eyes are not yet true artifacts and are thus still breakable, this "Artifurnace" is not indestructible either. If the Queen's Eyes are destroyed, the Artifurnace crystal cracks, darkens, and within 1-2 rounds shatters into powder.

Land: The Ravager's bottom row of five eyestalks double as landing braces and even ground transport. They can draw their crystals from the eyestalk tips inward, protected by the tunnel sleeves; then the Ravager can walk spider-like on up to five stalks. Because of its awesome mass, it does not levitate like true beholders.

Standard Armament

External: Each crystal dodecahedron in its tunnel sleeve is the equivalent of a hugely powerful beholder eyestalk. Each has a range of 3000 yards (six hexes; cut this in half within a planetary atmosphere). At maximum range, its beam measures 100 yards across.

The Ravager can fire one eyestalk each round. After firing, an eyestalk cannot fire again until the next turn, when it has "recharged." To determine whether it can bring a given eyestalk to bear on a target, use the same rules as those for regular beholders.

Against NPC opponents, the eyestalks function like those on a Tyrant Ship with 20 common beholders in its power circuit. Reduce these values in attacks against the PCs' ship, to a strength of one beholder in the circuit per PC. Or give the eyestalks the

powers of the Queen's Eye artifact (described in the "New Magic" appendix).

Note that the crystals do not have the same abilities in the Ravager that they do in their individual rooms. Outside, the Arcane's sympathetic magic no longer bestows those abilities.

Interior defenses: Inside the Ravager, the crystals cannot attack. The only defenses it has are the central crystal's *minor globe*, which is turned off when the Ravager moves or fights; the lightbeams between the crystals (see the next section); and Jon Tobart in his Sentinel suit.

Also, the silver slimes, when inside the Ravager, can function not only for maintenance but as guardians (see below).

Connections among the eyes: The beams of light carry life energy from the central crystal to the eyestalks, and also allow Tobart to activate the eyestalk powers.

The colors of the lightbeams are the decision of the DM, but each eyestalk crystal has a lightbeam of a different color. A defunct crystal has no beam leading to it. Each beam originates from a different facet of the central crystal, the facet bearing that power's symbol.

These lightbeams are deadly. Any character who intercepts one must save vs. magic or take 4d6 damage; a successful save still inflicts 1d6 damage.

Attempt to have an NPC, such as one of the animal crewmen, hit one of these beams first. This not only warns the PCs of their intense energy; it may trigger an inspiration. The PCs can divert the beams of light using mirrors or magic. If they direct the diverted beam against the Ravager's armor plate, the light carves through it like butter.

With a successful Dexterity check, a PC can guide the beam adroitly to cut off an eyestalk, attack Tobart, etc. A failed check means the PC must save as though entering the beam.

At the DM's discretion, the PCs may divert the beam back onto the central crystal. This results in the destruction of that facet. The PCs will not suffer damage, but they will have alerted Tobart to their activities.

The Ravager's attacks: As hinted in Event 4, the Ravager likes to use the following sequence on its victims: *slow*

or *charm* opponents; turn them to stone; suck them into its mouth with *telekinesis*; suck out their life forces with its *death ray*; and finally *disintegrate* them into a fine, white powder. (PCs found that powder all over the Hive; it's the residue from the Sazaur beholders.) The victims' life energy powers the Queen's Eyes and the Ravager alike.

The Ravager drives lesser opponents away with *fear* or puts them to *sleep*.

Other attack methods: If the PCs played well exploring the Hive, they found the Incarnations of several of the smaller Queen's Eyes and destroyed them. In this battle, therefore, the Ravager lacks the powers of those missing eyes. This rewards clever players.

The Ravager has alternate methods of destruction, however. If it's missing both *flesh to stone* and *disintegrate*, for instance, it simply uses *death ray*. Without *telekinesis*, Tobart first demolishes all opponents, then carefully maneuvers the Ravager to swallow the victims. Or the Ravager can cause *fear* in an opponent, in order to drive it into another vessel.

If desired, the Ravager can simply ram. Though it is slow, something that big is hard to avoid.

The Silver Slimes

By a subtle effect of the Arcane enchantment on the Ravager's interior, the slimes acquire an additional mission and an extra life-cycle stage when inside it.

The silver slime plasmodia not only seal cracks in the walls and absorb dust; they work as antibodies against invaders. The slimes acquire an acid touch that inflicts 1d6 damage on intruders. This should surprise the PCs, since the slimes were so benign earlier. What's more, once one slime discovers an intruder, suddenly 1d10 slimes converge on that location each turn!

Nonetheless, these hardly present a major threat to the PCs; the slimes move too slowly. Hence, the new stage in the life-cycle.

Megalium: AC 7; MV 12; HD 8+1; hp 40; #AT one per PC; Dmg 4-24; SA as dun pudding; SD pudding immunities; AL N; THACO 13.

The silver slime's "megalium" stage

is not described in the creature's listing in the appendix. PCs trigger this stage by damaging the Ravager, or Tobart can trigger it to fight the PCs while he's busy destroying Tyrant Ships.

The megalium is a giant aggregate of all the plasmodia aboard the Ravager. A dark grey blob about 100 feet in diameter vs. ships, it is only elephant-sized versus PCs afoot. The megalium can extend many tendrils over a wide area, so it can attack each PC once per round.

Treat the amount of megalium facing each PC as a single dun pudding (*Monstrous Compendium*, Volume 1, "Puddings, Deadly"). However, stage its corrosive effects as the torches and other devices that the silver slime can produce (see its description in the appendix). If a PC can beat the slime/pudding, the character has cut through the monstrous blob and escaped. If all the PCs defeat their pudding equivalents, the megalium is destroyed or has retreated.

FIGHTING THE RAVAGER

Since previous battles have weakened the Ravager and the PCs may have devastated its powers in Chapter 4, the weapon isn't necessarily unbeatable this time. Here are some combat options:

1. **Energy flow:** As the Ravager munches on Tyrant Ships, this produces a dangerous flow of life-energy as the petrified beholders are turned into dust. This shows up as greater intensity in the lightbeams connecting the crystals. This can produce atmospheric effects, increase the damage from intercepting the beams, and so on.

2. **Destroy the slime:** If the PCs can destroy the megalium, this devastates the Ravager's internal maintenance mechanism. If the DM then inflicts some suitable catastrophe on the armor, such as a tremendous collision with several Tyrant Ships, the resulting cracks won't be sealed.

As the battle continues with the beholder ships, the cumulative destruction eventually can break apart the Ravager. Since it lacks drama for the

ultimate death machine to simply break down, have it explode in a glorious fireball.

3. **Defeat Tobart:** This is the most challenging option. On the other hand, the PCs have to face him eventually. See "From Large to Small," below.

From Large to Small

Once they defeat the slimes, cut off some eyestalks, or just explore the Ravager's interior, the PCs can find their way into the central crystal. There, they can confront and possibly even surprise Jon Tobart/Shazogrox, who has been distracted by the battle with the Greshtharx.

A narrow passage leads deep inside the giant crystal. It bends at sharp angles in every direction, and it seems to have no floor. The passage was not built for creatures with feet.

The tunnel ends in a large, ten-sided chamber. It looks like the outer crystal, with each facet a different bright color. But the facets here are polished to a mirror finish; you see yourselves reflected endlessly, extending into infinity.

You also see Jon Tobart reflected endlessly. The beholder wears the huge power armor suit you saw him in earlier. He's holding a withered beholder eye that's the size of a small keg. The brown, vein-covered eye stares right at you. And so does Tobart.

"You never should have come here," he says.

Interesting features of the room: Each internal facet has its own gravity. Since the room is barely 30 feet from end to end, a PC can leap up, do an acrobatic flip (with a successful Dexterity check), and land "upside-down" on another facet. This promotes surprise tactics for getting behind an opponent, unusual ricochet shots, and so on. Tobart, in his beholder suit, does this once or twice to give the PCs the idea.

Tobart's tactics: Tobart has no equipment and no spells other than the ones stored in his spellstalks. Since he feels unstoppable now, Tobart eschews his usual defensive tactics unless damaged. He uses one round of combat to

summon the smaller Queen's Eyes from their rooms in the Hive; they appear in ten tiny flashes of light, orbiting him with a whizzing sound.

If damaged, Tobart casts *stoneskin* or *wraithform* on himself; otherwise, he toys with the PCs using the tremendous powers of the Queen's Eyes. Tobart hasn't had much chance to use it yet, so he wants to test it; he tries to keep his victims alive long enough to use all the powers. For a description of these powers, see the appendix.

Defeating Tobart

In a constricted space, it's the PCs against an armored beholder mage who wields a neo-artifact. This is an incredibly difficult battle. Is there any way for the PCs to win? A few:

Mirrors: The walls are crystal, polished to a mirror finish, so Tobart can be confused and fire his attacks at a PC's reflection. This may cause deep cracks in the crystal, giving a convenient excuse for the whole thing to break down in the finale (see below).

Secret weapons: If the PCs retain the magical weapons from the *Skyrunner*, it would be poetic justice for Tobart's own *bolt of beholder slaying* to destroy him. However, the missile does not affect Tobart until the PCs have already defeated his Sentinel suit. Once he ejects from the suit, he becomes fair game for the bolts.

Distraction: "Hey, look over there!" This does not work, but a more clever tactic might distract Tobart long enough for the PCs to grab the central Queen's Eye from him. This requires a Dexterity check; assess penalties according to circumstances. Once Tobart loses the Eye, the other eyes go with it and he cannot use their powers.

With the Eyes, the PCs can destroy Tobart with impunity as well as the other beholders. However, if he suspects PCs have a chance to get the Eyes, Tobart may destroy the Eyes (and himself?) rather than let this sacred relic fall to mere humanoids.

Tobart's psychology: Tobart is monstrously vain and arrogant, and PCs could play on that to manipulate him. They could also recall his rabid hatred of other beholders. The PCs might even try to convince him that more Ty-

rant Ships are arriving, or they could create illusory beholders so Tobart wastes shots on them, since he always shoots at beholders in preference over other targets. In the mirror-bright room, he would see endlessly multiplied beholders; the sight could drive him berserk.

Cavalry charge: If Tobart is mopping up the PCs, the surviving beholders may intervene, since he's their enemy as well as the PCs' enemy. The rationale is that Tobart is distracted in his battle with the PCs, so the monstrous survivors can arrive in a dramatic last-minute rescue. Then Tobart and the Greshtharx beholders can destroy each other in final melee. Use this only as a last resort, since it steals the limelight from the PCs.

Also, if any *polymorphed* animal crewmen are along, they may revenge themselves at last on their former captain, throwing themselves at him in a suicide attack. This can distract Tobart during a crucial moment.

Victory and—Escape?

Defeating Tobart brings one of two outcomes. The choice depends on whether the PCs still have an intact ship of their own.

1. **No ship:** When the Ravager is defeated, the central crystal overloads, creating a wave of force that destroys everything outside of its inner chamber. However, those inside remain safe, as though in the eye of the storm.

The crystal still holds the necessary energies for spelljamming and it can be used by anyone. The PCs can use it to get home as described below.

2. **Intact ship:** The DM should engineer the battle with Tobart so that he or the PCs damage the central crystal. It cracks, the cracks spread, and soon the entire crystal shatters. Without it, the whole Ravager begins to shake, building energies for a colossal explosion.

The PCs, of course, must get out beforehand. With proper staging, such as frequent references to tumbling debris, collapsing mural slabs, and gigantic crystals randomly discharging their energies, the escape can be an exciting scene. Stage sudden reversals, split the party up and force one half to re-

CHAPTER 6: MICE AGAINST A MOUNTAIN

turn for the rest, pose unusual problems, and so on.

Ideally, the PCs escape by the skin of their teeth. Nice work!

How to Get Home?

The PCs' ship may have been destroyed by now. With the Ravager gone, they are stranded in its air envelope in deep space, with no way to reach home and no one to save them.

No problem.

The solution lies with the central crystal of the Ravager. When the Ravager is destroyed, the crystal's stored power begins to fade. Any PC can use what remains to propel the massive crystal through Wildspace, taking the party home or back to the Hive. Since the crystal is much smaller than the Ravager was, it propels itself at tremendous speeds, taking the PCs home in a fraction of the time it took them to reach the Hive.

Shortly after their return voyage, the crystal runs out of power, burning out and turning a smoky quartz color.

EVENT 5: CONTROLLING THE HIVE

In the aftermath of battle, the PCs can try to halt the Hive's drift and use it as a base. They may have learned of this possibility from Tobart's rantings, from a resident of the Hive, from surviving Greshtharx beholders (if any), or they may figure it out themselves.

Without the Queen's Eyes and the central crystal, the PCs have no chance of halting the Hive, unless the DM allows it to "coast to a stop" or to collide with something that stops it. Or a priest could ask his or her deity for a really big favor.

But the Queen's Eyes offer the only practical method.

Procedure

A wizard or priest can attempt to use the main Queen's Eye like a spelljamming helm. The principal eye must be in its central crystal, just as it was aboard the Ravager; the other eyes are not important.

First, the PC must move the crystal back to the Hive, as described above. Then, once the crystal is installed in its former position in the wide passage, the PC can attempt to move the Hive.

This experience is unlike the feeling of a conventional spelljamming helm. The character feels his awareness expand to tremendous proportions, embracing everything in the Hive out to the surface of the asteroid. The passages and rooms become his eyestalks—yes, eyestalks. The PC feels like an enormous beholder drifting through space.

To halt the drift, the PC must do the following:



1. Succeed in both Constitution and Wisdom checks. The first check musters the stamina to withstand this expanded awareness; the second prevents the character from snapping under the strain. Give a bonus to the Wisdom roll if the other PCs help the spelljammer with supportive talk, etc.

2. Succeed in the save vs. magic to avoid being transformed into a beholder, as explained in the Queen's Eyes entry in the appendix. If this save fails, the other PCs must battle the re-sulting beholder. If they kill it, the Hive still stops, so the PC's sacrifice was not in vain.

3. At this point, the Hive stops. The central crystal darkens, cracks, and shatters explosively. The PCs in the central chamber have one round to escape or take 4d6 damage. (A successful Dexterity check allows half damage.) The Queen's Eyes are cut to pieces and become useless.

Note that in any case, the PCs using the Queen's Eyes secretly turn lawful evil in alignment. Take the player aside and ask him or her to conceal this until a dramatic point in a later adventure. *Remove curse* and similar spells restore the PC's original alignment.

If all attempts to stop it fail, the Hive drifts out of this Sphere within 1-2 weeks. Anyone can try to stop it during that time, as long as the Queen's Eye holds up. (DM Note: The eye should not survive long after the Hive is stopped. Otherwise, PCs may try to move the base everywhere, making it the largest vehicle in known Wildspace.)

If and when the Hive is finally halted, the PCs should explore their new base and face the problems caused by the Ravager's destruction.

Everything's Dark!

With the Ravager and its crystals destroyed, most or all of the rooms of the Hive have no light source. This could spell disaster for its inhabitants (many of whom are innocent victims), except for two things:

1. The Ravager's destruction dispels the defensive spells that prevent room inhabitants from leaving. Many can travel through the darkness into the tunnels, and from there into the central

sphere. Once there, starlight shows them the way out.

The weapon's destruction also dispels such enchantments as the nixies' transformation into slugs in the *slow* room (see the Room 9 description).

2. Some crystals may not be extinguished. In rooms where the PCs defeated the Incarnation but the crystal survived, the crystal *still* survives. It continues to float and to give light eternally. Any other enchantments on it, such as *wall of force* or various antimagic effects, are dispelled.

This may lead to a great migration of various populations between rooms. If the PCs make the Hive their new base in Wildspace, this obviously presents enormous story possibilities.

TROUBLESHOOTING

PCs fail to get inside Ravager: Tobart finally spots them and orders the Ravager to inhale the PCs' ship and disintegrate it, without (note!) first petrifying or otherwise harming the ship. Tobart wants to make the PCs suffer more, or he doesn't want to waste energy on them. Either way, see the next paragraph.

PCs' ship gets demolished on entry: Describe the shattering of the ship, but don't shatter the characters. They should be thrown free of the crash, perhaps suffering minor falling damage, but otherwise unhurt. The adventure proceeds well enough without their ship. And at the end, see "How to Get Home?" above.

PCs deactivate but don't destroy Ravager: If the central Queen's Eye remains intact in its crystal, it returns (what's left of) the Ravager to the Hive automatically. There the Ravager disassembles itself for the last time. The Queen's Eyes soon disintegrate without a steady flow of lives to maintain them. Then the crystals shatter into worthless shards. The PCs have succeeded in their mission.

REWARDS

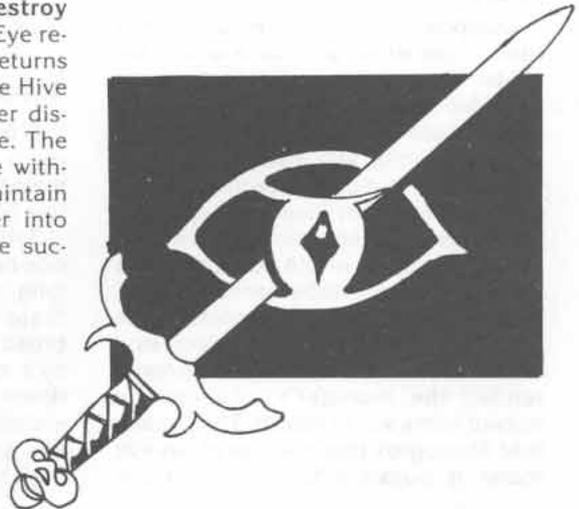
Experience: Award experience points using the specific guidelines given in the *DMG*, Chapter 8, with special attention to the individual experience awards for role-playing and clever play.

An easier alternative for rewards is to defer XP until the end of this adventure, and then make a bulk group award. The award should be large enough to raise at least one PC by one level. For example, if the party includes a 7th-level bard, the DM could award each PC up to 30,000 XP, which would raise the bard to 8th level.

Of course, adjust the XP awards to reflect personal play style and the needs of the individual players.

The Hive: If they can stop its drift, the PCs can use the Hive. The Queen's Eye soon self-destructs, of course; nothing that powerful should remain in the PCs' hands.

But the Hive's other riches, such as spare spelljamming ships and Arcane treasures, still can be found with diligent search and cleverness. This is more than a base; it is a source of many new adventures, as the magic within those enormous rooms mutates to meet new conditions . . .



NON-PLAYER CHARACTERS

JON TOBART (Shazogrox), 7th-level beholder mage

As Tobart: AC 2; Str 16, Int 18, Wis 16, Dex 12, Con 15, Cha 10; hp 80; AL NE. Equipment (as Tobart): *chain mail +2, shield, broadsword +1/+2 vs. magic-using and enchanted creatures, ring of invisibility.*

Spells known: *Color spray, enlarge, hold portal, light, mending, message, continual light, darkness 15' radius, fog cloud, knock, levitate, magic mouth, rope trick, shatter, whispering wind, wizard lock, blink, delude, explosive runes, fly, haste, improved whispering wind, tongues, wraithform, dimension door, fire shield, Otiluke's Resilient Sphere, polymorph other, polymorph self, stonesskin, vacancy.*

Spells Stored: Usually *blink, delude, fly, haste, wraithform, fire shield, dimension door, polymorph other, polymorph self, stonesskin.* When he enters the Hive, Tobart has stored *improved whispering wind* in place of his *blink* spell, to ease communication in the giant structure.

Shazogrox is a beholder, born to the Greshtharx nation. During his youth, through some genetic flaw or perversion, Shazogrox grew dissatisfied with the beholders' senseless, perpetual race wars. Why not unite the beholders and conquer all the spheres' lesser races?

Outspoken in his beliefs, Shazogrox tried to gather support for a united beholder nation. Unfortunately, the rival beholder Hive Mothers, taking a dim view of these "subversive activities," captured Shazogrox and made an example of him. They put out his central eye and banished him from Greshtharx space.

Maimed and alone, the outcast drifted in Wildspace. But as fate would have it, a passing Arcane probe sensed Shazogrox's plight and transported the wounded beholder to the probe's creator.

For unknown reasons, the Arcane tended the monster's wounds and nursed him back to health. The Arcane told Shazogrox that the loss of his eye made it possible for him to learn

magic. The beholder, yearning for revenge, readily accepted the offer. The Arcane asked nothing in return. Perhaps the mysterious alien was satisfied with the knowledge the experiment offered.

An able student, Shazogrox became an accomplished wizard within a few decades. All the while, he searched the rare tomes in his master's library for a means of vengeance against the Greshtharx nation. Eventually, he found a reference to the Hive. Armed with what little information he could extract from his master, the beholder mage headed in search of the Hive.

After further decades of exploration, Shazogrox discovered the ruined home sphere of the Sazaur. In the ruins, Shazogrox unearthed ancient manuscripts that described the Queen's Eyes and the Ravager that had been created to empower them. The sorcerous beholder ascertained that the Queen's Eyes could not yet be a true artifact. But they could control the Ravager, a potent weapon.

The Sazaur records showed him the Hive's simple course. After years of plotting, Shazogrox was finally ready to put his plan into action.

Aware of the special protections against beholders that had been placed on the Hive, the outcast decided to find a crew who could enter the asteroid. Shazogrox returned to his Arcane master to obtain a spelljamming ship and special equipment. Now, in the guise of Jon Tobart, he hopes to trick the PCs into achieving his goals: the Queen's Eye, the Ravager, and total conquest of the beholder race!

Tobart

Shazogrox becomes Tobart by casting a *polymorph self* spell, so he can maintain human form only for about two hours at a time.

Tobart is a large man, nearly six and one-half feet tall, with ruddy skin and long, dark hair held back in a single braid closed with a brass ring. His broad face is deeply lined and framed by a rough beard that has been hacked down to a manageable shape. He wears a chain shirt over a heavy leather jerkin, soft leather leggings tucked into high boots, and a red halfcloak. From

his broad belt hang a broadsword and a brass horn.

The only inhuman feature of Tobart's appearance involves his eyes. They change color when the beholder mage casts any spell. In the early stages of the adventure, this subtle change usually occurs offstage, and PCs may not notice it.

To all appearances, Tobart is a very serious man of solitary nature, well-meaning and honorable despite his grim demeanor. He uses these traits to explain the frequent absences required by the *polymorph* spell.

Shazogrox is aware that Tobart's gloomy personality and periodic disappearances provoke suspicion. He has constructed a cover story to explain these antisocial traits. If necessary, Tobart takes one or more of the PCs "into his confidence." He tells the sad (but fictitious) story of his curse: He is a were-bear, doomed to live a double life as man and beast.

If the PCs require a demonstration, he can fake the transformation into a bear using his *polymorph* spell already in effect, since *polymorph self* allows unlimited changes throughout its duration.

Personality

Tobart/Shazogrox is not clear-headed, even when compared to his fellow racist beholders. Intellectually, he knows the principles of leadership. Yet the genetic hatred and intolerance of beholders run deep.

The beholder happily welcomes servants or allies in his cause, such as the PCs. But inevitably, some slight incident, such as a disagreement over sailing technique or a question about an order leads Tobart to view the newfound ally as "not sound" or even "disloyal."

The relationship worsens steadily from there, and ultimately, Tobart punishes the malefactor, refuses to speak to him, or even banishes him. This often-repeated cycle proceeds for the PCs as the adventure gets underway. It should reach a climax in Chapter 3, just as the Hive and the rival beholder scout ship are sighted. The resulting battle aborts whatever punishment Tobart was about to inflict on the unfortunate PCs.

STONECROP

Flesh golem: AC 9; MV 8; HD 9; hp 40; #AT 2; Dmg 2-16; SD only hit by magic, slowed by fire or cold, healed 1 hp/die by electrical attacks; AL N; THACO 11. Equipment: plate mail, shield slung on back, footman's mace (never used).

Tobart/Shazogrox "liberated" Stonecrop and another golem from the Sazaur ruins. The other golem is hidden below deck, but Tobart has dressed this construct as a human, hoping to fool his PC recruits into thinking the golem is a big, quiet man. Tobart keeps this creature around for extra muscle. The creature is totally reliable, for it only answers to Tobart.

Stonecrop appears to be a huge man, dressed in full plate that has been darkened to an uneven greyish-black color. He wears a heavy cloak of undyed wool over all, with the hood down. He carries a heavy mace and wears a kite shield strapped to his back.

Any character who comes into close contact with the immense bodyguard can make an Intelligence check. If successful, the character smells a faint, peculiar odor not unlike dead flesh.

If someone discovers that the strong but silent Stonecrop is actually a lumbering mass of reanimated tissue, Tobart tries to fake his way out of it by acting as surprised as everyone else—not the best plan, but sometimes one must improvise.

In combat, treat Stonecrop as a standard flesh golem, except that it is AC 1 (full plate armor). It never uses the mace; the weapon is just there for show. In a fight, the golem charges in unarmed, but far from defenseless!

THE CREW

When Tobart was preparing to recruit the PCs, he decided to manufacture a false "crew" to run the ship and allay his new recruits' suspicions. But he was unwilling to employ anyone he could not trust completely.

The beholder mage landed on the PCs' homeworld before the adventure began and cast *polymorph other* on several dozen animals it found. Some died in the process; most remained animalistic; but 20 transformed entirely,

becoming humans in all respects except for a few "minor" quirks.

Tobart told these new humans that he had rescued them from a wizard who had transformed them into animals. Killing this evil mage had broken the spell, allowing them to "regain their rightful forms." When he asked them to join his crew, the former beasts agreed out of gratitude. Tobart's crew is understandably loyal, but most are confused about why they cannot remember their past lives.

The captain has taught the animals their shipboard duties and the basics of weapon use. However, Tobart himself has only learned the use of weapons recently. He has not had time to learn missile weapons, a serious problem in Wildspace. He hopes the PC recruits can remedy this obvious deficiency.

When any crew member is slain, it reverts to its original form. *Detect magic* cast on any crew member reveals strong alteration magic. A successful *dispel magic* against Shazogrox's 7th-level *polymorph* removes the enchantment and turns the subject back into a (confused) animal.

Here are a few important crew members among the 20 that crew the *Skyrunner*. Create others as necessary, basing their appearances and personalities on other common animals.

Baragor: AC 7; MV 12; F2; Str 17, Int 7, Wis 8, Dex 9, Con 16, Cha 8; hp 18; AL CN; THACO 19. Equipment: ring mail, spear.

Until recently, Baragor was not a bore or a boor, but a boar. Now he is a big, imposing man with a massive girth. His hair, short and dark, stands out in rough bristly patches. Sadly, he is as ugly as a . . . well, as a boar.

None too bright, Baragor tends to communicate in grunts and snorts. He is temperamental and slow-witted, but quick to anger when he understands an insult, or what he thinks is an insult. In combat, he is a savage warrior, attacking with vicious bloodlust.

Gulug: AC 10; MV 12; 0-level human; Str 10, Int 8, Wis 9, Dex 10, Con 12, Cha 8; hp 5; THACO 20; AL N. Equipment: rusty dagger.

Gulug was quite content as a frog. Though Tobart uses him as a fake spell-jammer, Gulug has not taken well to the skies, and he longs for the day

when he can return to the water.

A short, heavy man, this squat little fellow is balding, with no facial or body hair and precious little atop his shiny dome. Dressed in a green peasant shirt and breeches, he waddles around barefoot and looks uncomfortable.

Skraal: AC 6; MV 12; R1; Str 9, Int 11, Wis 8, Dex 16, Con 11, Cha 7; hp 5; AL N; THACO 20. Equipment: leather armor, dagger.

This ex-rat made the mistake of nibbling the wrong pack. But once the initial shock passed, the new human delighted in his enhanced stature. This slight, wiry man is gaunt to the point of sickness. Two beady eyes peer out from a narrow face adorned with a long, straggly mustache. He wears well-tended clothes of soft leather, with a hardened jerkin for protection. Most of this is obscured by a voluminous cloak of frayed grey-silver silk.

Skraal is a sneaky, avaricious, craven scoundrel whose ways have changed little since his transformation. A cunning thief, he desires only to add "sparklies" to his collection. He is not concerned where or how he gets them.

Ralgir: AC 6; MV 12; F2; Str 11, Int 12, Wis 11, Dex 15, Con 12, Cha 13; hp 13; AL LN; THACO 19. Equipment: Studded leather, shortsword.

From the moment this former wolf "awakened," he knew something was horribly wrong. When Tobart asked him to join his crew, his instincts screamed out against it, but he had to know what was happening. Since that time, he has developed a healthy distrust of Tobart and a burning curiosity about his motives.

Ralgir is a roughly handsome character with tight-fitting studded leather armor and a shortsword sheathed at his hip. He looks wild-eyed, like someone who has just made it back to town after being lost in the deep forest.

NEW SPELLJAMMING SHIPS

TOBART'S SHIP

Name:	<i>Skyrunner</i>
Tonnage:	40 tons
Hull Points:	40
Crew:	20/40
Maneuverability	
Class:	D
Landing: Land	Yes
Landing: Water	Yes
Armor Rating:	8
Saves As:	Thick Wood
Power Type:	Orbus or Minor Helm
Ship's Rating:	1/as for spelljammer
Standard	
Armament:	2 Medium Ballistae 1 Heavy Ballista
Cargo:	10 tons
Keel Length:	130'
Beam Length:	30'

The *Skyrunner* is a galleon with increased Thickness that has been stripped down, producing a maneuverable craft with reasonable defenses.

The main difference between this ship and a standard galleon is that the *Skyrunner* is usually propelled by an Orbus beholder hidden in a secret compartment below deck. The minor helm located on the sterncastle is functional, but Tobart uses it only in emergencies. He mistrusts the unfamiliar device.

Although the *Skyrunner* appears to be a seagoing vessel, it is barely sufficient for this purpose. If set down in wa-

ter, the ship can stay afloat unless it encounters rough waters. Its keel is neither large nor heavy enough to stabilize a craft of this size. The sails and rigging, not designed for mundane use, propel the ship at only half the speed of a normal groundling galleon.

In a storm, the ship will most likely be lost. Strong winds either rip the sails, snap the rigging, or capsize the vessel.

As unlikely as it seems, the *Skyrunner* is more at home on land than at sea. A complex mechanism fills most of the steerage deck. The mechanism extends supports from the sides of the ship; these braces allow it to land upright, and they lock into place when the landing is complete.

TYRANT SCOUT SHIP

Name:	Tyrant Scout
Tonnage:	13 tons
Hull Points:	13
Crew:	8/10
Maneuverability	
Class:	B
Landing: Land	No
Landing: Water	No
Armor Rating:	2
Saves As:	Stone
Power Type:	Orbus
Ship's Rating:	2
Standard	
Armament:	Special
Cargo:	5 tons
Keel Length:	120'
Beam Length:	90'

The beholder scout ship, fairly common in the Known Spheres, carries only six ordinary beholders and two Orbi, which propel the ship.

Tyrant fleets employ these ships for scouting and exploration when they do not want to risk a Queen or large investment of effort. The Arcane produce these smaller vessels at a lower cost than Tyrant Ships, so they make a cheap alternative to larger craft.

The Tyrant Scout is a smaller variation on the Tyrant Ships. Like their larger brethren, they are shaped like almonds and open to reveal a cavity for each crew member. The ship's functions are built into its body and mentally controlled by the crew. The armor has been stripped and streamlined, reducing its effectiveness but allowing unusual maneuverability.

Scout ships do not use a Queen, so they do not have the offensive capabilities of Tyrant Ships. Instead, they use a device that projects small bolts of power similar to *magic missiles*. This weapon may be fired once per round, requires a crew of two common beholders, and has a maximum range of three hexes (1,500 yards). It inflicts 2d8 hp or 1d3 - 1 Hull Points.

Every time this device fires, it generates three bolts. Roll to hit separately for each (THAC0 13). A spelljamming ship can save vs. magic against every bolt that hits and inflicts damage. Success means the attack does no damage.

NEW MAGIC

Improved Whispering Wind

(Alteration, Phantasm)

Third-level wizard spell
Range: 1 mile/level
Components: V, S
Duration: Special
Casting Time: 1
Area of Effect: 6' radius
Saving Throw: None

Shazogro developed this improved version of the second-level *whispering wind* spell. It functions like that spell, except that once the wind arrives at the

target(s), the caster can converse with the targets freely (though in a whisper) for as many rounds as the wizard has levels of experience.

Infinite Rope

XP value: 2,000

Many versions of this useful item appear throughout the spheres. An *infinite rope*, since it can be nearly any length needed, proves valuable to climbers, miners, and spacefarers.

Only the rarest *infinite ropes* are truly infinite length. The great majority (99%) reach only a finite length. Usu-

ally, a rope can stretch to a maximum of slightly over one mile for each foot of its original length. However, wide variation among ropes is possible.

Depending on the manufacturer of the item, the rope can be of many different varieties, from thin cord to a six-inch thickness. Very rarely the rope has other properties; elven rope and combination *infinite* and *climbing* ropes are obviously useful. The initial length of the rope also varies considerably, from one- or two-foot "pocket models" to the standard 50-foot coil.

Each rope stretches when the user speaks a unique command word and

pulls. When the command word is spoken a second time, the rope stops stretching and can be anchored and used normally. The speaker must be touching the rope when using the command.

Speaking a second unique command word causes the rope to return to its original size, shrinking 10' per round. The shrinking can be halted by speaking the second command word again. If the rope has been tied, it automatically unties itself unless the knot is secured with a *wizard lock* or other magical protection. It is risky to use the rope in long-term applications.

The rope cannot be used to compress or crush. If it is kept from retracting, the rope stops at the length where it met the resistance. The rope must then save vs. crushing blow; if it fails, it snaps and is destroyed. When the command word is spoken again, it tries to retract again. It keeps doing so every time the command word is used until the resistance is removed.

The *Skyrunner's* rope uses the word "extrolarias" to stretch and "introlarias" to retract. Jon Tobart uses the rope solely as a mooring hawser for the ship's anchor.

THE QUEEN'S EYES

These 11 eyes are the surviving relics of the Sazaur Mother who led her nation in glorious genocide of other beholder nations. The eyes' innate powers have grown enormously in their 800 years within the Hive.

The Sazaur Queen, evidently a mutation, was enormous even by beholder standards. The size of the eyes illustrates this: The central eye measures three feet across, and the smaller ones are the size of soccer balls. All are leathery in texture like mummy skin, tan in color like aged parchment, and wrinkled with thick, ropy veins. The irises of the eyes are faded red.

Configuration

All of the Queen's Eyes together compose a single powerful item on the verge of true artifact status. Until it achieves that status, the eyes can be destroyed like any magical item.

When the wielder of the primary eye wills, the ten smaller eyes *teleport* to its location. The small eyes orbit rapidly around the central eye. The more

power the item exerts, the faster the small eyes revolve.

The wielder can summon some eyes and not others. The small eyes teleport back to their previous locations when the wielder desires. No small eye can summon the other eyes.

In their special rooms in the Hive, the smaller eyes have developed self-aware Incarnations and unique powers. But when summoned, they temporarily lose this consciousness and revert to ordinary items with the powers listed below.

Minor Powers

The effects of the ten small eyes can be used as often as the wielder desires, except that only one power per round can be used. The wielder can do nothing else while using the power. These powers work only when the small eyes are orbiting the primary eye.

When the wielder's spell-casting level becomes important, treat the spell as if it were cast by a 20th-level wizard. All these powers have a maximum range of 100 yards.

1. **Charm person:** This eye casts *mass charm*. The spell works only against targets allowed by a *charm person* spell.

2. **Charm monster:** This eye casts *mass charm*, but works against any living, non-humanlike creature.

3. **Sleep:** This eye generates a *symbol of sleep*. This symbol, and the others below, appears on some body part of the potential victim(s).

4. **Telekinesis:** This eye projects *Otiluke's Telekinetic Sphere*.

5-6. **Flesh to stone ray, disintegrate ray:** As the beholder powers, but the target must save at a -2 penalty.

7. **Fear:** Generates a *symbol of fear*.

8. **Slow:** As the beholder power, but the target must save at a -2 penalty.

9. **Cause serious wounds:** As the beholder power, but this eye inflicts 3d6 hit points of damage on the target.

10. **Death ray:** This eye generates a *symbol of death*.

Major Powers

The *anti-magic ray* of the central eye affects the entire area for one mile around, in all directions. The direction of the eye's pupil is irrelevant. However, it works only as well as a *minor globe of invulnerability*. Only six inches

of lead or several feet of stone can block this effect.

The ray is active all the time, unless the wielder specifically wills it to deactivate. If the wielder loses consciousness or control of the eye, the ray reactivates.

The item's powers inflict especially great destruction against beholders. Beholders receive no saving throws against any of the minor powers above. This makes the Queen's Eyes all the more fearsome and desirable to the beholder nations.

Dangers

In addition to the usual corrupting effects of any artifact (or neo-artifact, in this case), the Queen's Eyes have several disadvantages.

Alignment change: The wielder becomes lawful evil as soon as one of the central eye's major powers is used. The wielder attempts to conceal the alignment change (if any) until all who knew his or her former alignment are dead. The wielder happily tries to expedite this.

Fragility: A wielder using the powers risks "shorting out" the relic. Until they achieve true artifact status, the Queen's Eyes remain fragile, especially outside the Hive. At dramatic points in the adventure, one of the smaller eyes malfunctions as the wielder tries to use it; most likely, as Tobart tries to vaporize the PCs. The eye burns away into worthless ash, destroyed by the powerful energy coursing through it.

Thereafter, each of the other small eyes disintegrates at an appropriate time. If the PCs gain control of the Queen's Eyes, the characters can use them to wipe out a few leftover Tyrant Ships in the adventure's finale. But the deterioration process continues inexorably. This gives the DM a handy excuse to take this powerful device out of the PCs' hands after they have achieved the goal of the adventure.

Transformation: Every time a non-beholder wielder uses any power, the DM makes a secret saving throw vs. magic for the character. The first time, the roll is unmodified. Each subsequent time, the wielder incurs a cumulative -1 penalty to the saving throw. If and when the wielder fails a saving throw, he or she is permanently *polymorphed* into a beholder!

Beholder Mage

CLIMATE/TERRAIN:	Space
FREQUENCY:	Very rare
ORGANIZATION:	Solitary
ACTIVITY CYCLE:	Any
DIET:	Omnivore
INTELLIGENCE:	Genius (17-18)
TREASURE:	As beholder
ALIGNMENT:	Neutral evil

NO. APPEARING:	1
ARMOR CLASS:	0
MOVEMENT:	Fl 3 (B)
HIT DICE:	40 hp + 5/lvl
THACO:	11
NO. OF ATTACKS:	1
DAMAGE/ATTACK:	2-8
SPECIAL ATTACKS:	Magic
SPECIAL DEFENSES:	Nil
MAGIC RESISTANCE:	Nil
SIZE:	M (3'-5' diameter)
MORALE:	Fanatic (18)
XP VALUE:	11,500 + 500/lvl

Though beholders are exceptionally intelligent, they have found little success in learning magic. Most have contented themselves with the natural abilities of the eye tyrant.

Why can't beholders manipulate the magic that flows so freely through their bodies? The reason is their central eye, that produces the anti-magic ray. Its energies effectively "short circuit" the creature's magical potential.

A beholder can learn magic if its central eye does not function. The first beholder magi were born blind in this eye and learned magic to compensate. Others ruthlessly put out their own eyes, though these fanatics are nearly always outcast from all beholder nations.

Combat: Like human wizards, beholder magi learn their art gradually and gain different power levels. For a random determination of a beholder mage's level, roll on the chart below. Note that although the percentages of low level mages are much higher, these numbers reflect those likely to encounter an adventuring party.

Like all beholders, the spellcasting variety focus their magical energies through their eyestalks. Projecting spells through an eyestalk changes the focus of that eye so that the original power is lost forever. Of course, the mage may learn a spell that duplicates the lost ability.

When creating a beholder mage, determine which eyestalks have become spellstalks. Most beholders change their eyestalks into spellstalks in the following order: *charm person, sleep, slow, fear, cause serious wounds, charm monster, flesh to stone, telekinesis, disintegrate, and death.*

Once an eyestalk has become a spellstalk, the beholder mage "stores" in it any one spell that it knows. Storing a spell requires the same time a human wizard would need to memorize that spell from his book. Once a spell is stored in an eyestalk, the beholder mage may use it as often as desired, in the same way it uses the innate powers of its other eyestalks.

Once a beholder mage knows a spell, it no longer requires a book. It is still limited to the maximum number of spells allowed by its Intelligence. The maximum spell level it may learn is determined by its level, as shown on the chart below:

Roll	Lvl	Spellstalks	Max. Spell Lvl
01-10	1	1	1
11-28	2	2	1
29-50	3	3	2
51-70	4	5	2



71-85	5	7	3
86-94	6	8	3
95-00	7	10	4

The choice of spells is limited by several factors:

First, the beholder mage's inability to gesture or manipulate materials limits it to spells that can be cast in less than one round, unless the spell's only component is verbal.

Second, they may not take any spell that affects spell capacity or other spells. Spells like *Rary's Mnemonic Enhancer* and *extension* are unavailable to them.

Third, and most important, all beholders are more limited in their understanding of magic than are humans. So beholder magi may learn spells from only one school of magic. Even so, they receive none of the benefits of a specialist wizard.

Beholder magi can use only the number of eyes that a common beholder may use, as explained in the *Monstrous Compendium*. When rolling for the eyes that may be used, substitute spellstalks for the eyestalks they replaced.

Like ordinary eyestalks, spellstalks can be severed. The beholder mage loses that eye's stored spell until the stalk can regenerate. A spellstalk grows in "blank," and the beholder mage must relearn the spell to store in it.

Habitat/Society: Beholder magi are more solitary than their spacefaring companions. In temperament, they resemble the avaricious grounding beholders detailed in the *Monstrous Compendium*. However, they are less aggressive and more prone to negotiation, or better said, trickery.

Beholder magi who have dispensed with their *telekinesis* power cannot manipulate their spell books or other magical devices. Therefore, they sometimes employ *charmed* servants to turn pages and carry possessions.

Ecology: Some potions use the eye of a normal beholder as an ingredient. Substituting the spellstalk of a beholder mage produces unpredictable, sometimes bizarre results. Roll on the Potion Compatibility table on page 141 of the *DMG*.

In all cases where only one of the two potions being mixed functions, the potion being created is the one that works. When it states that both potions function, the second effect is that of the spell stored in the spellstalk when it was removed.

Silver Slime

CLIMATE/TERRAIN:	The Hive
FREQUENCY:	Common
ORGANIZATION:	Special
ACTIVITY CYCLE:	See below
DIET:	Waste food and minerals
INTELLIGENCE:	Nil
TREASURE:	Nil
ALIGNMENT:	Nil

NO. APPEARING:	1
ARMOR CLASS:	9
MOVEMENT:	1
HIT DICE:	10
THACO:	18
NO. OF ATTACKS:	1
DAMAGE/ATTACK:	3-24 (3d8)
SPECIAL ATTACKS:	Welding torch, etc.
SPECIAL DEFENSES:	Nil
MAGIC RESISTANCE:	Nil
SIZE:	S to L (3-8')
MORALE:	Average (10)
XP VALUE:	100

An artificial life form created by the mysterious Arcane, this oozing slime maintains the Hive. Its extraordinary three-phase life cycle serves different functions within the asteroid complex. These three phases are as follows:

Amoebas: In its basic form, the silver slime is a colony of 10-20,000 inch-long blobs, each weighing about one ounce. These bright silver blobs, or amoebas, scavenge the area in a 1,000' radius, eating all organic waste and small mineral particles. The small slimes can be destroyed easily and represent no harm to anything larger than a sand particle. This cleaning phase lasts for one week or until the area is clean, whichever is longer.

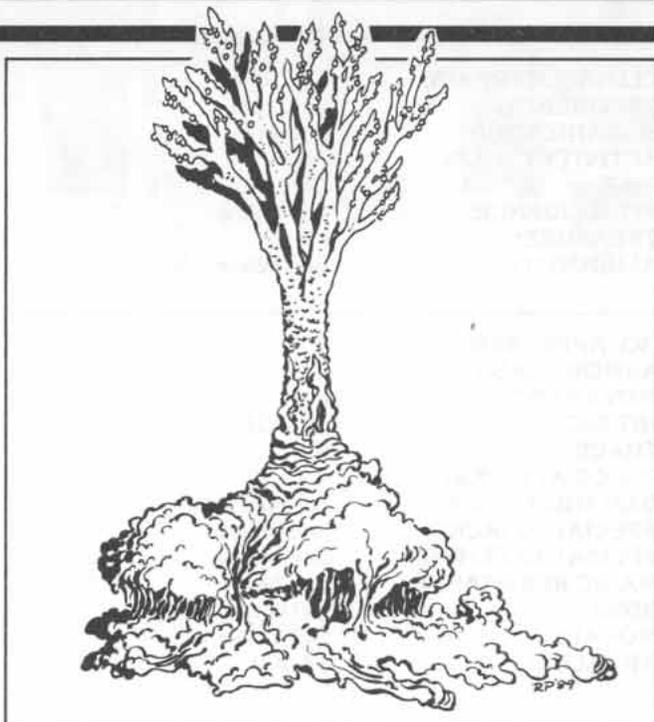
Plasmodium (slug): Once the cleaning phase ends, the colony of small slimes draws together over a period of two days, gradually growing into a single large blob, colored dull silver and weighing 500-800 lbs. This slug-like aggregate, called a "plasmodium," crawls around within an area of one square mile for one week, fixing leaks and repairing breaks.

The plasmodium has the magical ability to form repair tools from its silvery bulk. When it encounters a crack in some object, the creature extends a pseudopod. The pseudopod transforms into the tool needed to fix the crack.

For metal cracks, the pseudopod becomes a welding torch: a flaming wand that burns hot enough to melt and seal metal. For cracks in stone, the pseudopod turns into a trowel, and brushes part of its own substance onto the crack. The slimy material dries hard, sealing the crack. Once the task is complete, the plasmodium reabsorbs the tool.

Sporangia (fruiting bulbs): After one week, or when it has used half of its substance sealing cracks, the plasmodium halts and extrudes a central stalk. The stalk is a light, wood-like substance similar to cork. The slime colony climbs the stalk, extending it and branching as the climb continues, until the stalk resembles a stately tree 20 feet tall. The slime colony becomes 100-400 silvery spheres about 1" in diameter, each hanging from the end of a branch. Each sphere is called a "sporangium."

For one week, the immobile colony photosynthesizes, taking in carbon dioxide and exhaling oxygen and so refreshing the asteroid's air. Then the papery sporangia burst, expelling a cloud of spores 18' in diameter. The cloud dissipates in two rounds, and the spores drift on air currents to new locations.



There they land, turn into amoebas, and the life cycle begins again.

Combat: The silver slime can be harmed by all attacks, and it inflicts no special damage. The amoeba phase of the silver slime's life cycle represents no threat to adventurers.

The plasmodium has hit points according to its size, like a deadly pudding. (See "Pudding, Deadly" in the *Monstrous Compendium*, Volume One.) The plasmodium is not aggressive, but PCs might throw themselves in the path of its repair tools and, by singleminded effort, take damage from it.

The sporangia are not deadly, but they expel their spores when attacked, and PCs caught in the radius of effect breathe the spores if they fail to save vs. poison. This inflicts 2d4 damage, but has no other ill effects.

Because the silver slime is benign, the XP award for its defeat is low for its size.

Habitat/Society: The Arcane created the silver slime specifically for the Ravager's asteroid complex. It is found nowhere else, unless the DM decides that an amoeba drifted away from the asteroid, hitched a ride on a passing spelljammer ship, and started a new life cycle elsewhere.

Ecology: The silver slime, a weird collective life form, functions as scavenger, repairman, and air refresher. The colony subsists on organic waste and mineral breakdown products. However, it does not eat the fine stone powder left from the Ravager's disintegration process.

The slime colony requires a fairly constant temperature, moist conditions, and light no stronger than that in the asteroid complex. In extreme cold or heat, or in dry or bright conditions, the colony aggregates into its plasmodium form, then forms a thick, hard outer covering (AC4). This "macro-cyst" stage preserves the colony's life for up to one century. When conditions return to optimum, the macrocyst coat dissolves and the colony resumes activity.

This slime's remarkable life cycle is modelled on a real slime mold called *Dictyostelium discoideum*. For details, look in a good encyclopedia under "Slime Molds."

Sentinel

CLIMATE/TERRAIN:	The Hive
FREQUENCY:	Very rare
ORGANIZATION:	Solitary
ACTIVITY CYCLE:	Any
DIET:	Nil
INTELLIGENCE:	See below
TREASURE:	Nil
ALIGNMENT:	See below

NO. APPEARING:	1
ARMOR CLASS:	4
MOVEMENT:	6
HIT DICE:	16 (60 hp)
THACO:	5
NO. OF ATTACKS:	1
DAMAGE/ATTACK:	2-20 (2d10)
SPECIAL ATTACKS:	See below
SPECIAL DEFENSES:	See below
MAGIC RESISTANCE:	See below
SIZE:	L (18' tall)
MORALE:	See below
XP VALUE:	14,000

These golem-like creations are actually animated suits of armor crafted for the Sazaur beholders by the Arcane. The suits were meant to help the Sazaur guard against unwanted intrusion into the Hive complex. Similar in construction to iron golems, these mighty weapons consist mostly of bronze with sinews of steel and other, more esoteric compounds.

Sentinels look like huge suits of bronze armor, three times the height of a man, and weigh more than 5,000 pounds. Angular and severe in design, the armor has many projecting spikes and overlapping plates. Sentinels carry huge tridents, also crafted of bronze. Carved with line after line of intricate runework, these terminate in three cruel backbarbed prongs that crackle with power.

Although it is not obvious from the outside, the helmet is hollow. A beholder can ride inside, peering out through the visor. A device in this chamber functions something like a spelljamming helm, turning the magic powers of the beholder pilot into motive force. While the beholder controls the Sentinel, it may make no other action, for all of its abilities are channelled into the armor. This is tiring work for the pilot, and it must leave the armor after 1d8+7 hours for at least eight hours of rest.

Combat: Unlike golems, the Sentinel has the exceptional intellect of the beholder controlling it. The automaton-suit has a Strength of 23 for the purposes of lifting, throwing, or breaking objects.

In addition to the Armor Class conferred by the bronze plating, Sentinels are immune to any normal weapon that does not have a +1 or better enchantment. These constructs do not have the vulnerability to electricity possessed by iron golems, but they are not healed by fire, either.

While animated by a beholder, the suits have spell resistance equivalent to that provided by a *minor globe of invulnerability*.

The Sentinel has two basic attack forms. Its trident strikes



for 2d10 damage. Also, the beholder pilot can project its power through the three prongs of the trident. The Sentinel points the weapon and projects three beams of black energy at its chosen target (maximum range 60 yards). A successful hit inflicts 2d6+1 damage; also, the victim must save vs. death magic or drop unconscious for 1-4 rounds.

Habitat/Society: The Sentinels were created for the Sazaur nation of beholders to guard the Hive. They have no life or animation without a beholder to power them. While uninhabited, the suits stand motionless, awaiting a pilot.

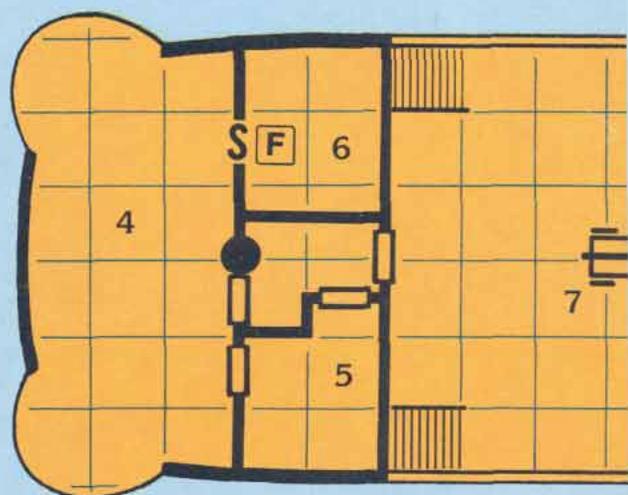
Ecology: Sentinels are more like armor and equipment than living things. Although they do not eat or sleep, the beholders in them do, so they cannot provide the eternal vigilance of a golem unless manned by beholders working in shifts. Only the Arcane know the spells needed to repair damage inflicted to them, so any wounds dealt them are permanent.

Controlling Sentinels: Ordinarily, only beholders can control these constructs. Optionally, the DM may allow a PC wizard or priest to attempt control of a suit by climbing inside its helmet. This can be fun for players and allows some memorable role-playing scenes. However, a Sentinel suit makes PCs very powerful, and control of the suit should be sharply restricted.

For example, using the suit may require an Intelligence or Wisdom check every turn or every round during combat. Magical "feedback" may inflict hit point damage on the occupant or temporarily reduce his ability scores. Particularly strenuous work or work over a long period may cause the suit to break apart.

Finally, the DM may say that the Sentinel suits are enchanted so that they cannot leave a particular section of the Hive. Beyond that invisible line, they simply fail.

THE S



Main Deck

The sails: The ship has three masts. The mizzenmast is at the stern, the mainmast near the center, and the foremast at the bow. Square-rigged, these masts support crossbeams, called yards, from which the square sails hang. The mizzenmast has one yard, the mainmast three, and the foremast has two.

The *Skyrunner's* rigging consists of the shrouds, which are lines used to stabilize the masts; the lines that run from the yards to the deck; and the ratlines the crew use to go aloft. An experienced sailor can move from mast to mast or yard to yard fairly quickly

cluttered. There are two lifeboats, numerous lifelines, and dozens of vices needed to maneuver the ship.

The rail at the edge of the main deck is studded with scores of belay pins. Many of the lines used to trim sails are tied around these pins, which can be removed to release key lines in an emergency.

Every ten feet, a windlass is attached to the rail. These winches, turned with a crank, are used to move heavy objects or tighten lines.

Lifeboats and lifelines: There are two small rowboats, one on each side of the main deck. Each is sufficient large to hold three normal sized men

swing on these lines from the rigging to any point aloft, on the deck, or to either castle with a successful Dexterity check. Failure means a fall and 2d6 damage. Since there are numerous nets and safety lines strung amidst the rigging, a second Dexterity check reduces the damage by half.

Furling and unfurling the sails are strenuous tasks that require several crewmen. They must climb into the rigging and lean over the yard, a precarious position at best and dangerous in a high wind.

At sea, the yards are turned in order for their sails to catch the wind. When spelljamming, they are turned in the direction of travel, as though there were a wind blowing in that direction. Crewmen do this using lines that run down to the deck, secured with belaying pins that anchor the ropes to the main deck's rail.

To adjust the position of the sails, which is called trimming the sails, the lines that run from the yards are freed by removing the belaying pins that hold them fast, loosened or tightened as necessary, and belayed once again. Since several lines are required for each adjustment, this process is complex and requires several strong men who know the lines very well.

Deck fixtures: To the untrained eye, the deck of the *Skyrunner* looks

dangerous. The rowboats are rigged with a pivoting framework and quick release lines to facilitate a fast launch.

Close examination reveals that the boats are crafted of unusually thick hardwood, marked with rows of small runes along the outer rim. These rowboats are actually space-worthy lifeboats, as explained in the SPELLJAMMER® box set.

Every ten feet along the main deck, a 100' coil of rope is fastened to the rail. The other end is tied to a grapnel hook on the rail. These lifelines are used in emergencies or to ease boarding.

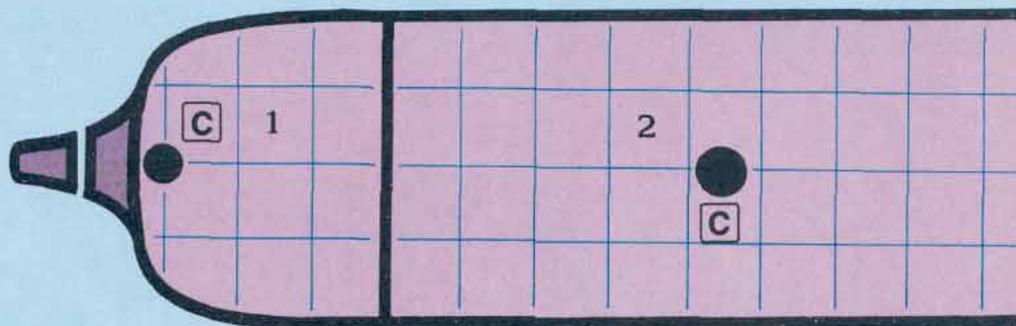
1. Rope, Line & Anchor Storage: This is where the *infinite rope* and large anchor are deployed. A large windlass draws up the rope when it is extended. A mundane rope wound around a castan post is used in emergencies. Several long boards provide a ramp where the anchor hoist is transferred to a hold from the main cargo hold.

2-3. Forward Staterooms: The PCs will stay in these two rooms. The doors close tightly, but have no lock or hasp with which to secure them.

Each stateroom accommodates three guests. Each guest has his own bed and chest, which do double duty as footlocker and endtable. Each cabin also holds a small table and two chairs. The furnishings are spartan but serviceable.

Nearly identical, these rooms were

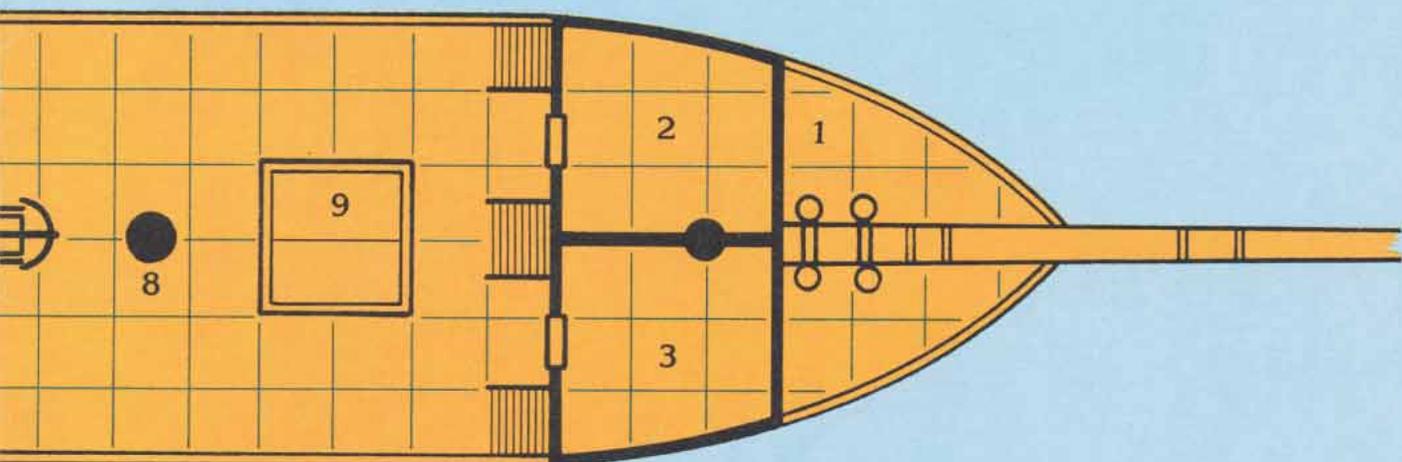
STEERAGE



SKYRUNNER

Scale: One square = 5 feet

MAIN DECK



outfitted by Tobart according to what he thought human guests might need. These rooms do seem to have everything, but some things are not quite as they should be. He slightly misinterpreted little things.

For example, the beds are square rather than traditional rectangles. The footlocker lids are not hinged; they lift off, and they have no lock. All the furniture is a bit large for a person of average build, and the cloak hooks are all the way up the wall, well out of a normal man's reach.

4. Captain's Cabin: The door to this room is iron-bound hardwood with an inset lock and a brass plate bearing

one of the larger tapestries (see the Room 6 description). His workshop is even further removed, on the Steerage deck.

5. Chart Room: A small room, this chamber has a large table filled with scrolls, books, and loose sheets of parchment scrawled with various mysterious-looking marks. Dozens of maps are tacked to the walls, and many more are stacked in the middle of the table.

Tobart stole these books, maps and charts from the PCs' homeland, so they are most likely maps of places the PCs have already been. None have any bearing on their current location, their des-

tae on the forecastle mounted on static pivots stands on a platform grooved metal wheels, like a cart. Hand brakes keep the platform stationary.

Operation requires a Two crank the ratchet wheel on the side of the weapon to cock a third loads it with bolts and spears; and the last aims on its pivot mount. Load three rounds, so the weapon is fired only every fourth round. The ammunition is kept in two large baskets fixed to the platform, one on each side.

the room, the secret room that lies beyond, or any of the rooms below, a *wizard lock* holds the door. He removes it when he leaves to avoid provoking suspicion if someone detects it.

Unlike the rest of the ship, this room is well-appointed, with handsome furnishings and decorative hangings. Twin windows near the back offer a breathtaking panorama of Wildspace.

A large desk, made of carved wood trimmed in gold leaf, dominates the room. Two small chairs face the high-backed throne behind the desk. All three are of darkly stained wood upholstered in red velvet. There is a four-poster bed to port and a wardrobe starboard. Several decorative tapestries of gold and crimson cover the bare bulkheads.

Since Tobart is actually a beholder mage, this room is just part of his disguise. A search reveals nothing of use, but PCs who succeed in an Intelligence check notice that all of the furniture in the room is brand new. Dust has settled on the bed sheets, and the velvet seat of the Captain's chair shows no wear. The desk's token assortment of inks, quills and parchments are all unused. The wardrobe holds four identical outfits, which match what Tobart wore the first time the PCs saw him.

Tobart/Shazogrox actually takes his rest in the secret room that lies behind

Several obscure instruments of brass and crystal are scattered about the room. Most feature eyepieces and weird lenses, all lined up with complex measuring devices.

The instruments are used for navigation in Wildspace. From time to time, Tobart strides the deck with one of them, taking measurements. He does not discuss these devices with the PCs.

If cornered, his story is that the devices are magical and that he was taught how to use them by "the elves" on the condition that he keep this knowledge a secret. The devices are not magical, however. Tobart shrewdly wants to ration knowledge of space navigation as long as possible.

If asked about the maps in the chartroom, Tobart says he needs no maps as long as he has his "elven compass." This is a complete fabrication, intended to dissuade the PCs from getting their hands on the *real* map, located in his secret workshop below. He believes that as long as he is the only one who can get the characters back home, they will be reluctant to do away with him.

6. Secret Room: For a description of this room, see Chapter 2.

7. Heavy Ballista: A huge crossbow, this fearsome weapon is larger than most catapults. Unlike the ballis-

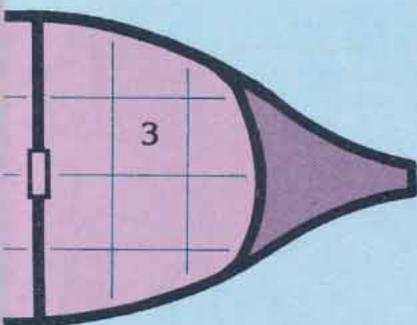
Damage:
Crew:
Loading Time:
THACO:
Crit Hit on a:

3-50
3-6 H

8. Mainmast: This is the three masts, composed of sections joined with metal and supported by shrouds that hang from the mast, bearing the sails on the ship.

Atop the mainmast, just below the topmast, is a small wooden structure called the crow's nest. It is the highest point on the ship, reached by special ratlines. The crow's nest is a 5' diameter circle on the mast, with a wooden door and a gap for entry. A ladder hangs from a hook in the ceiling.

9. Cargo Doors: A huge set of doors on the cargo deck. When open, the doors slide into the floor, so the space on deck. They can be locked with two padlocks, but this is not recommended. The anchor hoist is stored on a roller and down on its track in area 1.



Steerage

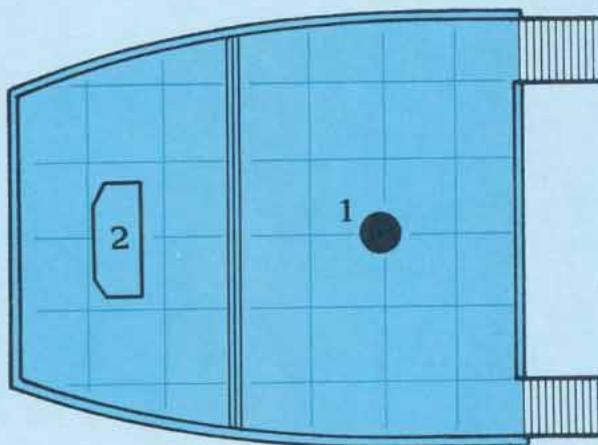
1. Secret Room: Only accessible by the ladder in the secret room above, this is Tobart's workshop. There are several small tables, a desk, and shelves along the walls filled with various odds and ends. For more information, see Chapter 2.

2. The Works: This area is filled with the mechanics necessary to ex-

tend the landing legs as well as the counterweights, and raise or lower any of the counterweights. The legs are in use causing the ship to collapse, toppling the ship.

3. Orb Room: For a description of this room, see Chapter 2.

STERNCASTLE



Sterncastle

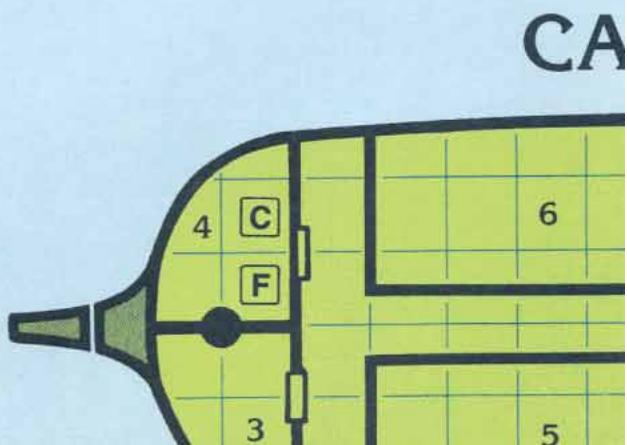
1. **Mizzenmast:** Like the foremast, this small mast is made up of two sections joined with metal braces and supported by shroud lines. Only one yard hangs from this mast, bearing a

single sail of good size.

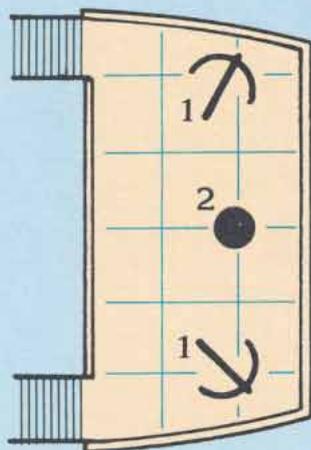
2. **Minor Helm:** Although this is seldom used, Tobart seats Gr the polymorphed frog, here. Tobal leges that this frog, "a novice wiz actually does the spelljamming.

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FORECASTLE



Forecastle

1. **Ballista:** Each of these is a medium ballista on a swivel mount with a basket of 40 bolts on the deck beside it.

Range: 4 Hexes (2000 yards)

Damage: 3-18 Hit Points

1-3 Hull Points

Crew: 2

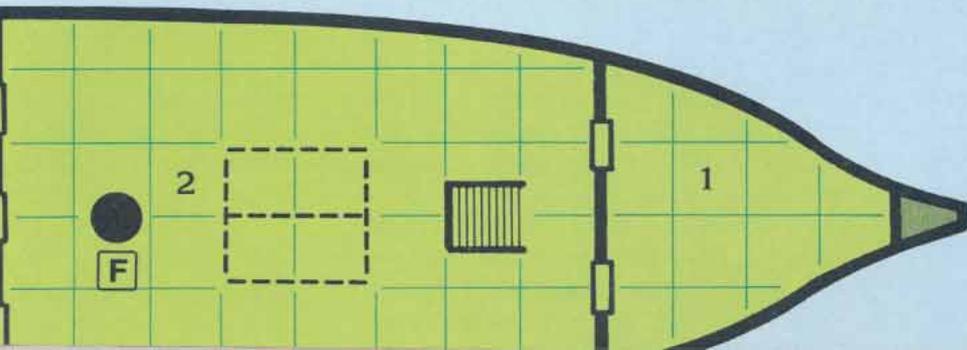
Loading Time: 1/3

THACO: 14

Crit Hit on a: 20

2. **Foremast:** Second largest of the three masts, it comprises two sections joined with metal braces and supported by shrouds. This mast has two sails of roughly the same size.

ARGO DECK



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Cargo Deck

Bulkheads, portholes and gangplanks: Unlike the outer hull, the bulkheads on this level are thinner than normal. This saves weight so the ship can move faster. But the unusually weak walls can be smashed with brute strength (and a successful Bend Bars/Lift Gates roll). The bulkheads in the brig and the secure hold are specially reinforced and are not subject to this rule.

Every five feet along the hull, between (but not including) the brig and the secure hold, there is a porthole one-and-one-half feet in diameter. These openings let air and light into the ship, but they can be closed with a hatch that swings over and closes with a simple latch.

The set of double doors to port are locked and barred until the ship lands, when the crew extends a gangplank to the pier or shore. The gangplank comprises several sections that can be added or removed to adjust the plank's length. When not in use, its disassembled pieces are piled neatly beside the doors.

1. Secure Hold: Valuable cargo is kept in this secure area, set off from the rest of the deck by a heavy bulkhead with two iron-bound doors. The doors are very sturdy and can be secured with padlocks. The doors can be barred, but this is seldom necessary; the idea is to keep people out, not seal them in. But it makes an excellent spare brig.

The room is empty, except for the foremast column. A few hooks and shelves facilitate storage. Food is stored here at this time. Scores of crates, kegs, and sacks fill the room, enough provisions for a voyage much longer than the PCs have been led to believe.

Alcohol, usually a staple of sailing

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als, is noticeably absent. Tobart
s this was an oversight. The fact
had no idea that humans would
expected alcohol, so he obtained
s of barrels of water instead.

Main Hold: A large open area
for storing secondary equipment:
nchor hoist, ten 100' lengths of
20 belaying pins, a barrel of 60
um ballista bolts, a stack of
ing used for repairs, two barrels
ch, four lanterns, and a large urn
p oil.

massive crates stacked to one
old some equipment unusual for
: lengths of track, like that used
nes. These are for the heavy bal-
whose grooved wheels work best
acks. These sections are obvi-
temporary, since they are built
k together with simple dovetail
and have no holes for rail spikes.
arge barrel contains 30 oilcloth
es. Crates hold 40 heavy ballista
and complete rappelling gear for
more. This equipment is for use in
ive. If questioned about it, Tobart
sive, saying only that "it might
in useful" at their destination.

ors and gangplank lie to port. A
wheel, starboard, extends the sup-
races for landings on solid ground.
Brig: Externally, this room and
secret room appear identical. The
ence is that the door to this room
ctional, where the "door" to the
t room is a facade. Both doors are
rddy, iron-bound hardwood set in
rced frames. On each door there
vo padlocks and a bar that can
e padlocked.

de, the dreary brig is empty, ex-
or a simple stool. Manacle rings
oltd to the bulkhead, but the
acks the proper equipment to put
n in irons, so this is for show.
are no windows, so the room is

totally dark when the door is closed.
The locks and hinges are on the out-
side. There is no opening through
which meals may be passed, so food is
either locked in with the prisoner for
the duration, or the door must be
opened periodically to bring more food
and water.

4. Secret Room: For a description
of this room, see Chapter 2.

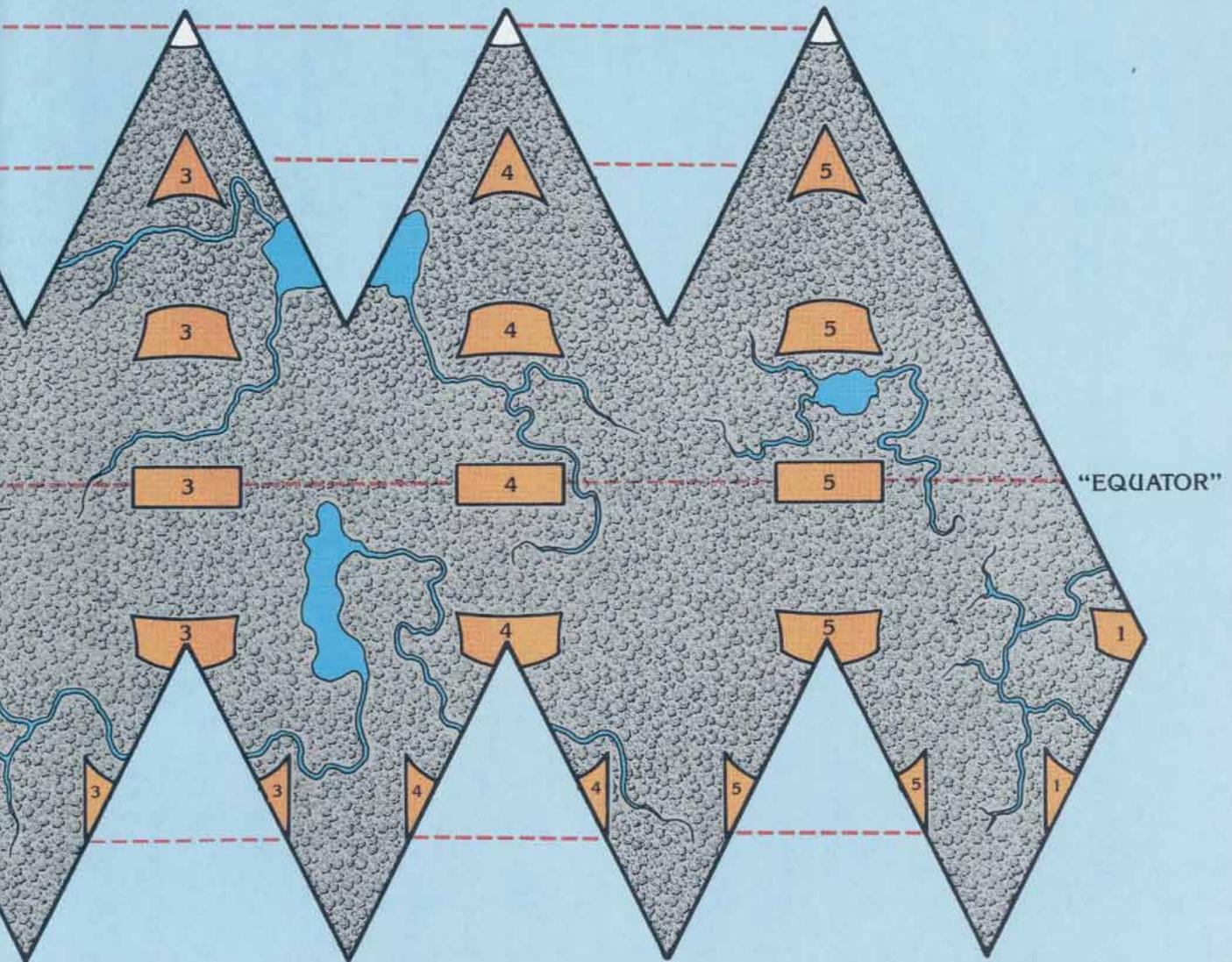
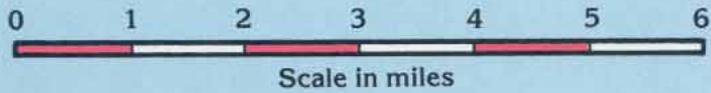
5. Galley: There is a large brick
oven aft; its chimney extends through
the ceiling out above the main deck,
where its smoke disperses harmlessly.
A small pantry holds the usual cooking
gear and enough food for three days at
a time to minimize trips to the secure
hold.

6. Crew Cabin: Though large, this
room is not quite large enough to house
the entire crew. Fortunately, Stonecrop
never sleeps, so he needs no quarters.
Because of the cramped conditions,
Ralgir usually sleeps curled up on deck
or in the main hold. The others dwell
here when they are off duty.

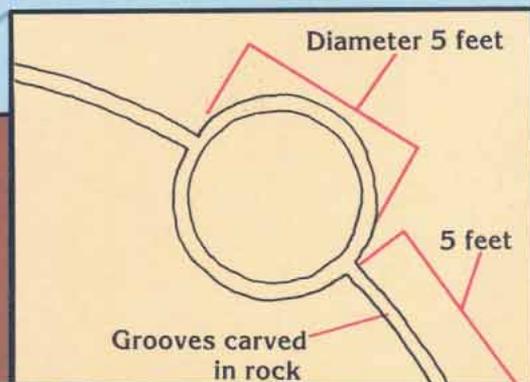
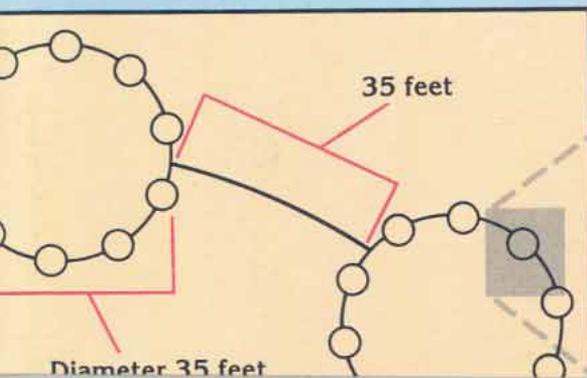
The room is a mess. The sleeper
compartments and hammocks are
draped with dirty clothes and waste.
Though there are trunks for personal
possessions, most of these are empty,
their contents strewn about the room.
As with Tobart, the crew members
have a change of clothing, but both
outfits are identical.

In one corner is a mound of refuse
that Skraal uses for a bed. In this
mound, he keeps various things he has
pilfered. Since he never throws any-
thing away, this pile grows and mold-
ers as the days pass. Eventually, the
stench drives the others out of the
room, and (unless the PCs take the ini-
tiative and throw Skraal out) the entire
crew begins sleeping in the hold.

R



For Mural descriptions, see the inside covers of the adventure.

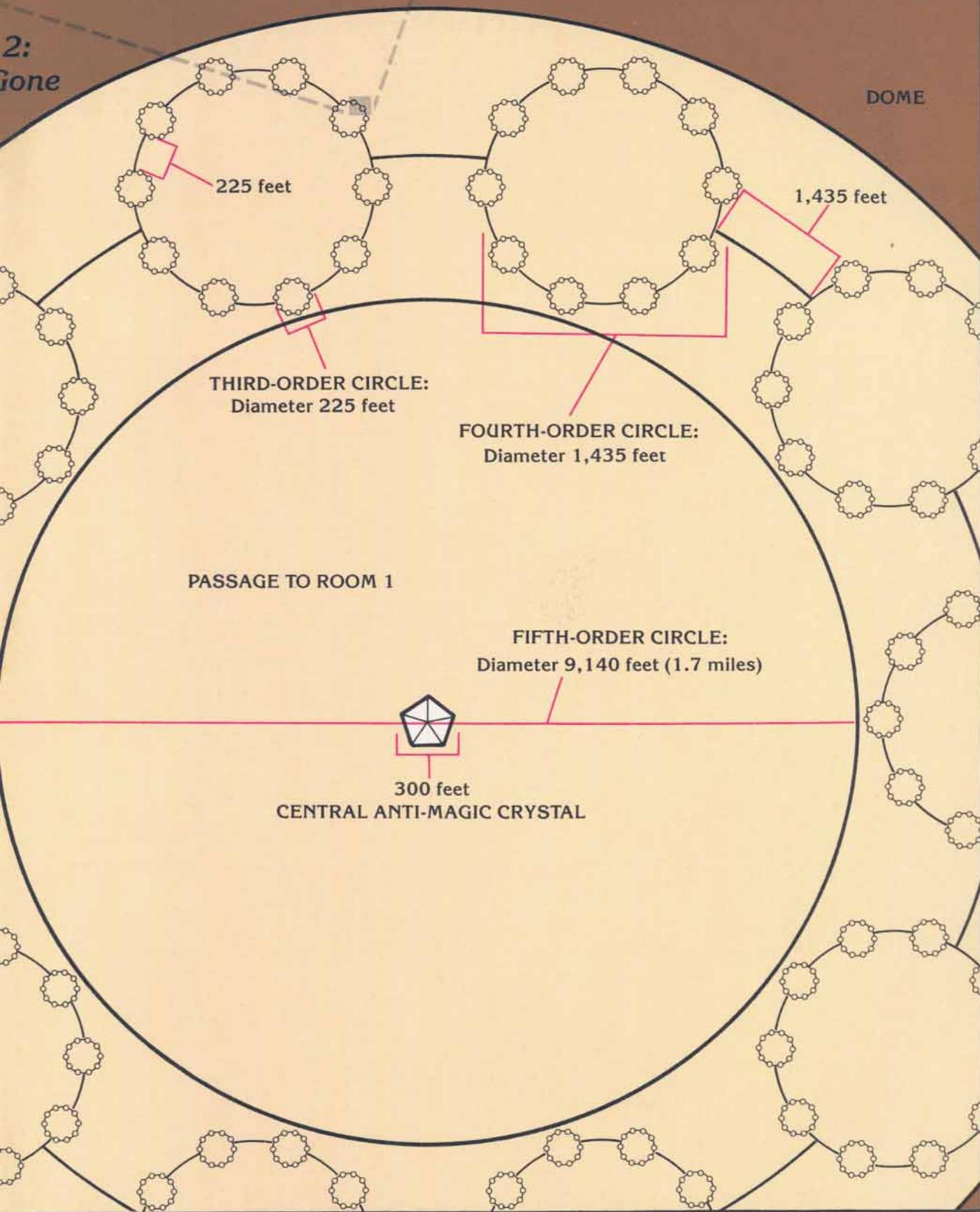


COND-ORDER CIRCLE

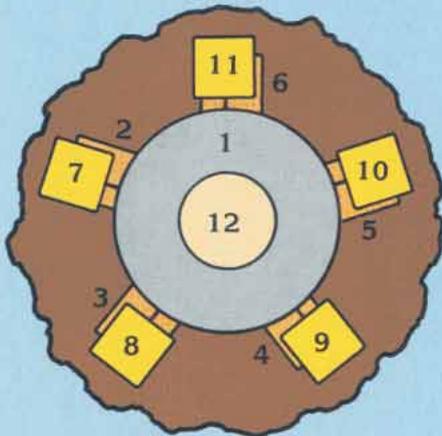
FIRST-ORDER CIRCLE

2:
Gone

DOME



VIEW FROM ABOVE (CUTAWAY)



1 mile

ROOM 1: THE CENTRAL CHAMBER

PASSAGE TO ROOM 12

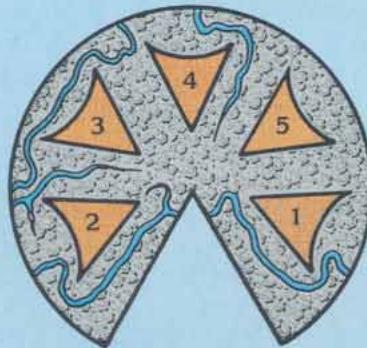
FIRST MURAL SEQUENCE

SECOND SEQUENCE

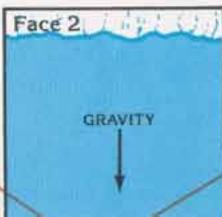
THIRD SEQUENCE

FOURTH SEQUENCE

FIFTH SEQUENCE

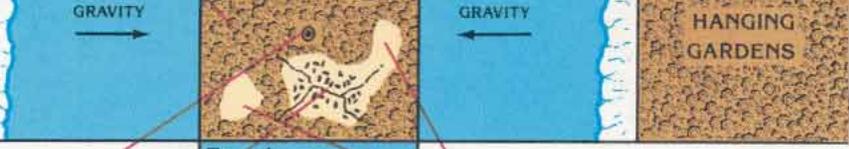


"SOUTH POLE"
OPPOSITE ROOM 12

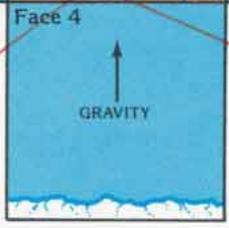


EMPTY GREY
MIRE POOL
BROWN FOREST

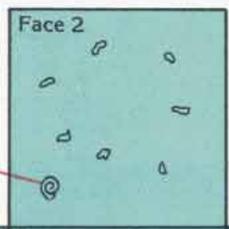
1C. BROWN HOLOMIRE POOLS



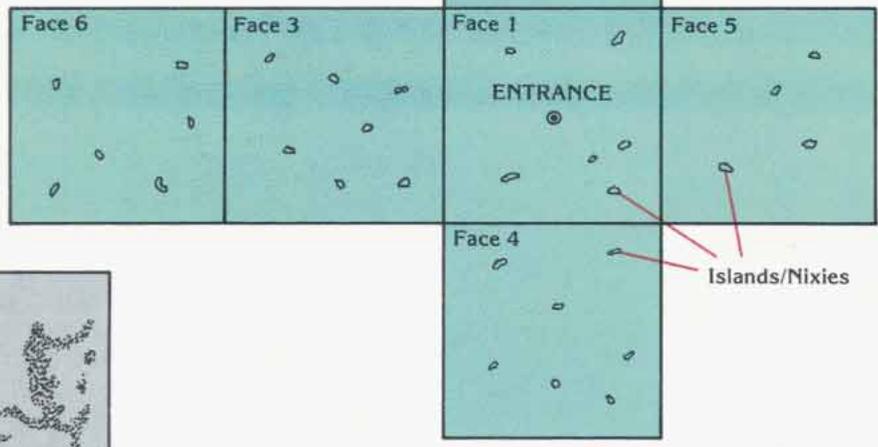
1A. ENTRANCE
1F. VILLAGE



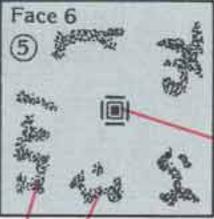
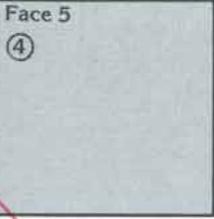
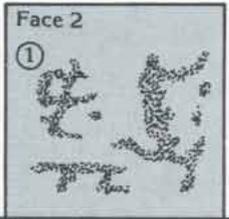
1B. CLEARINGS



**Room 9:
Shell Game**



OLDER ZOMBIES

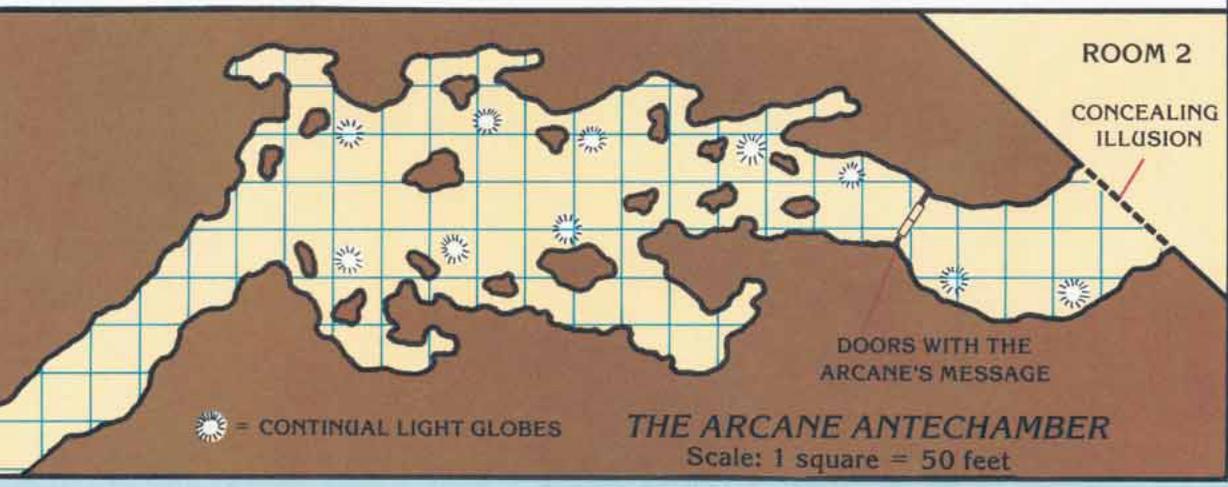


**Room 11:
Dead Air**

PYRAMID OF XU

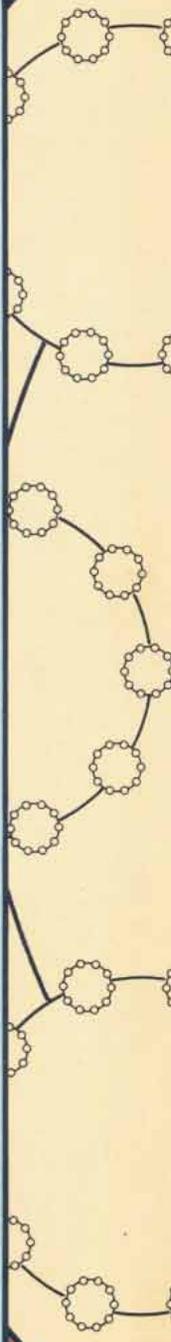


SYMBOLS ARE HUGE NUMBERS OF UNDEAD
ARRANGED ACROSS LANDSCAPE
③ = ENCOUNTER AREA

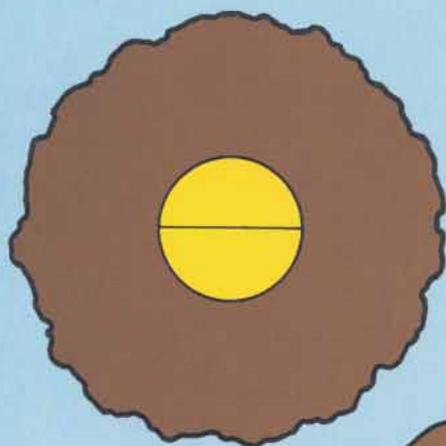


THE ARCANTE ANTECHAMBER
Scale: 1 square = 50 feet

**Room
Ritual
Wrong**

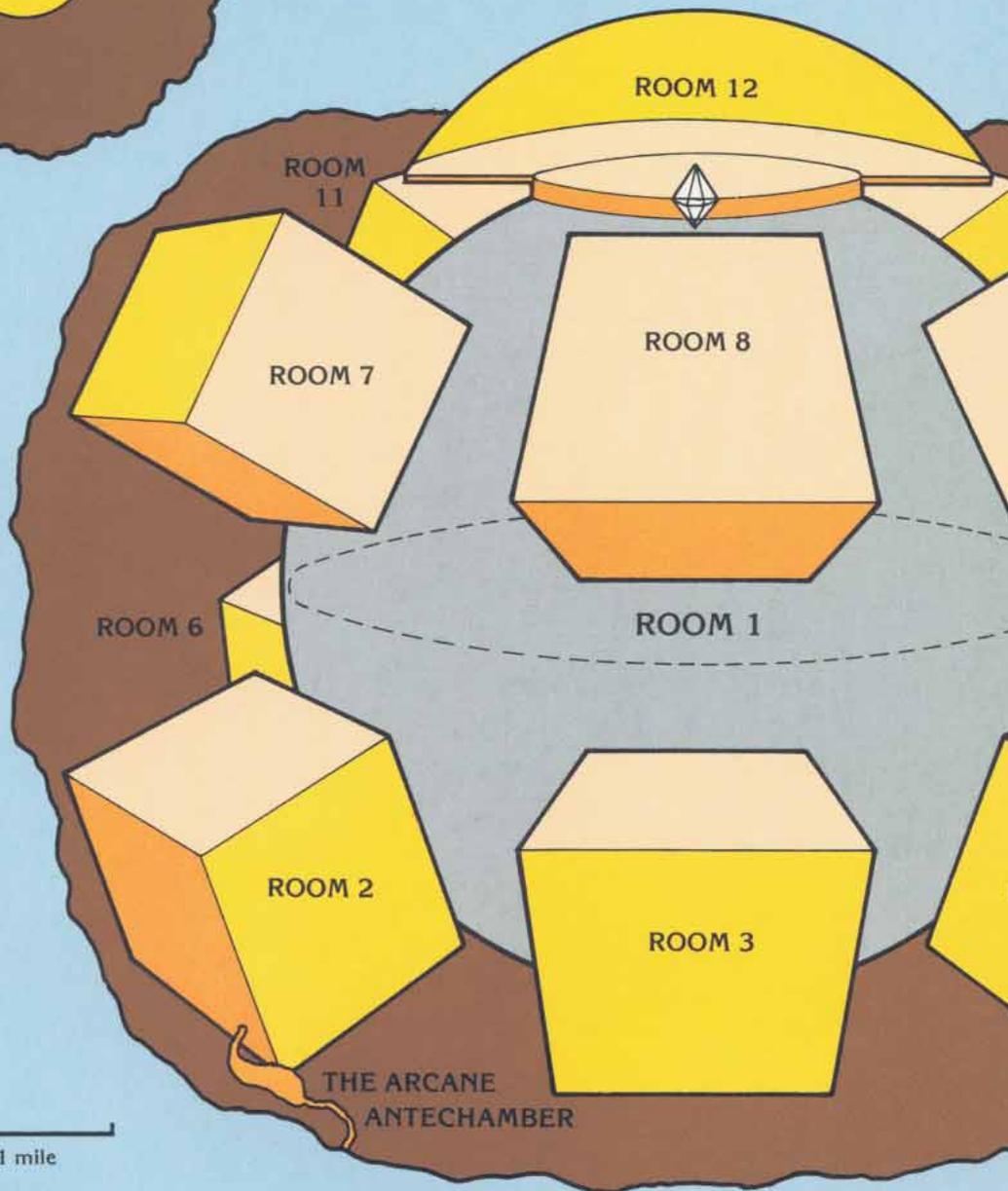


VIEW FROM ABOVE



1 mile

THE ASTEROID CUTAWAY VIEW



PCs stand
 the tunnel.
 on sail nor-
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 the outer
 vity pulls
 ward the
 PC could
 el sleeve;
 he room;
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he sleeves
 destroyed
 (DMG, p.

roglyphs
 ment that
 ty in the



THE SMALLER ROOM

Scale: 1 inch = 2 miles

ENTRANCE FROM ARCADE ANTECHAMBER
(CONCEALED BY ILLUSION)



THE HIVE

OVERVIEW

The Hive asteroid measures about ten miles in diameter. The chambers inside, though, total about 300 square miles in area!

Gravity: The discrepancy arises because gravity pulls "down" on each surface of the rooms, making all surfaces inhabitable. Walls and ceilings do not exist here; every surface is a floor.

Gravity in the Hive does not generally interfere with spelljammer piloting. The only effect comes when a ship "turns a corner," floating from one surface over to a perpendicular one. Gravity tends to pull the ship gently upright relative to the surface.

This should never lead to danger or confusion; it should only make the immediate landscape look more familiar, in contrast to the bizarre overall setting.

Atmosphere: The entire Hive is filled with fresh, unusually sweet, breathable air. Near surfaces, the pressure is normal, but in the empty spaces at each room's center the air becomes quite thin, about the same as on a high

course, either on foot or by spelljammer. But the tunnels also form the eyestalks of the Ravager.

How? Though it is not apparent to the PCs, a thick sleeve lines each tunnel. The sleeve extends beyond the walls and into the air of the smaller room. When the Ravager assembles itself into a gigantic beholder (see Chapter 5), the sleeves slide loose from their tunnels, move into the central sphere, and attach themselves to the Ravager's spherical body.

See the map for an explanatory diagram.

Size: Each cylindrical tunnel measures about 100 yards in diameter and extends 1,000 yards.

The sleeve inside the tunnel is four feet thick and extends another 500 yards, thrusting into the room like a pillar. (See the map diagram.) Near the end of its length, the sleeve abruptly narrows like a funnel. The funnel opening is only 50 yards across; still plenty of clearance for a spelljamming ship.

ity inside the sleeves l
upright on any surface
Also, spelljamming ship
normally up the tunnel in a
just as in space.

The gravity manip
works inside the tunne
surfaces of the sleeves
"downward" normally
planes of the rooms. S
walk out to the brink of a
stand looking outward
crawl over the brink; an
plummet 500 yards alo
of the sleeve!

Emphasize these s
tions. They help crea
strangeness as the PC
Hive.

Damaging the sleeve
are ordinary rock and ca
or damaged like rock cr
39, Table 29).

At the DM's option, t
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maintains the peculiar

...ity in that
...t in line with
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...unnel extends
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...however, the en-
...ended to prevent
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...ed by consec-
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...o the tunnel,
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...smaller rooms
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....)
...Ravager was
...l the beholder
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...stand inert.
..., or they may
...f the Sazaur.
...cept for one.
...he Hive, Jon
...inel suit and
...the Queen's
...s climax, the
...n his Sentinel
...e Chapters 5



**Room 3:
Of All Wild Beasts**



BEASTMASTER'S
MAIN ARENA

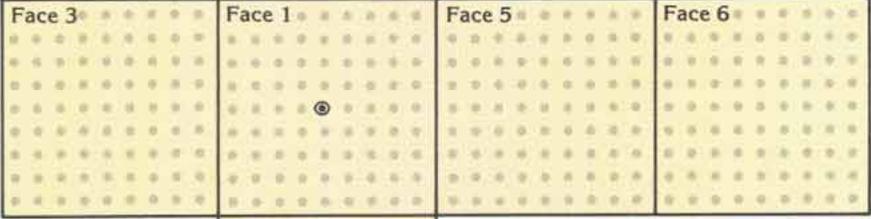
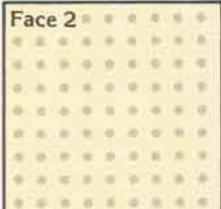
AERIAL WATERFALL

LAND ARENA

SUBTERRANEAN

AERIAL ARENA

AQUATIC ARENA



**Room 5:
Ricochets**

● = RUNE



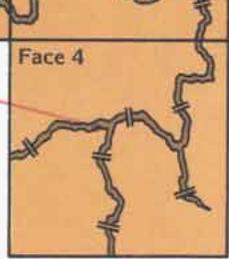
**Room 6:
The Grind Canyon**



STENNOR'S LAIR

≡ = ROPE BRIDGE

STONE GIANT
VILLAGE



The air remains fresh because of the recycling ability provided by a maintenance creature, the silver slime. PCs encounter this new life form frequently in the Hive. It is described in the appendix to this adventure.

Temperature: Inside the asteroid, the air is always cool. Next to surfaces, it is as warm as a brisk autumn day. The air becomes colder at the center of each room, where characters can see their breaths and may shiver a bit.

Light: Most of the asteroid complex is well lighted by means described below. Individual room descriptions note differences from the norm.

Size and Layout

If the arrangement of the sphere and ten connecting tunnels brings to mind the arrangement of a beholder's body and ten connected eyestalks, that's exactly right. Each of the ten smaller rooms serves as home for one of the Queen's Eyes and as the construction area for one giant eyestalk of the Ravager, a creature shaped like an enormous beholder.

By sympathetic magic, each room imbues its Queen's Eye with a power resembling the corresponding eyestalk on a real beholder: *charm person*, *slow*, *fear*, and so on. Each room's imbuing mechanism is described in Chapter 4.

Connecting the central sphere and each room are round tunnels about 100 yards wide. For a description of these tunnels, see below.

The final chamber, Room 12, holds the largest of the Queen's Eyes, the neo-artifact. Once this ritual chamber held thousands of beholders, the entire Sazaur nation. But the Ravager destroyed them on its first mission, and now the room is empty. Empty, that is, until Captain Jon Tobart deserts the PCs, makes his way there, and gains control of the Eye! (For a timeline of this and other events, see Chapter 5.)

TUNNELS

Cylindrical passages connect the central sphere and the smaller rooms. These tunnels, dark and empty, actually serve two purposes. They allow the PCs to pass between the rooms, of

assembled. For more information, see Chapter 5.

Appearance: All of the tunnels look alike. None are lighted, except by the lights at each end. Read this generic description the first time the PCs enter a tunnel:

This is a gigantic cylindrical tunnel, maybe a hundred yards wide. It's so large that sounds don't even cause echoes. The air here smells very fresh.

The tunnel stretches in a straight line as far as you can see—which isn't far, because it's dark. But you can clearly make out a circle of white light at the far end. When you hold your hand at arm's length, you can just about cover the circle with your thumbnail. It might be a hundred yards away or a mile.

In the light from the entrance you can see that the tunnel's wall is made of some kind of black stone with glints of silver and grey. It seems to be heavily carved with pictures or symbols.

The tunnel sleeve is black basalt, a hard, dense rock. The silver glints, delicate traceries in the stone, indicate repairs of fractures by the Hive's maintenance creatures, the silver slimes. (See their description in the appendix.) The slimes also keep the air fresh.

Every tunnel is densely carved throughout its length with petroglyphs, stone carvings in high relief made by the Sazaur beholders and the Arcane. They depict abstract, hieroglyphic-like shapes: circles, cubes, beholder silhouettes, and above all, eyes. These represent the Queen's Eyes, of course.

During tunnel journeys, the DM may wish to stage encounters with the silver slimes in their blob and plasmodium stages. The small blobs scavenge the tunnel for dust and waste, and the large ones repair cracks.

Gravity in the sleeves: The Arcane manipulated the gravity planes inside the Hive to allow easy travel through the tunnels. Because of this, the grav-

itate or change the g area, perhaps bringing the gravity plane of the area. Since the effects according to the PCs' local effects are left to the DM.

Protective Wards

Each smaller room's entrance into the room, as described in its room, has a protective ward. From inside its room, the entrance is magically warded so that the room's inhabitants are protected.

From the interior of the tunnel, the tunnel entrance is guarded by protective layers of permanent spells, placed by the Arcane when the Hive was constructed. These spells work only on the intended inhabitants, not on outsiders (such as beholders or PCs). PCs may never even be able to pass these wards, unless they are able to turn a room's inhabitant into a beholder.

In order of approach, the spells are *forget*, *charm person*, and *repulsion*. All work as though cast by a 20th-level wizard.

Densely-populated rooms have additional wards on their entrances. These are left to the DM. Use these spells as needed. Why residents have remained in the room for eight centuries is another matter.

The Sentinels

Each of the Hive's smaller rooms once held a last-ditch defense. Its inhabitants inside: a golem-like suit of armor of the Sazaur's large beholders. (These are described in the adventure's appendix.)

However, when the Hive was first created, it destroyed the occupants of these suits. The rest of the Sazaur nation, these golem-like suits. They may spook the PCs. They offer clues to the fate of the Hive. But they aren't active, at least not yet. Shortly after he enters the Hive, Tobart activates a Sentinel. He heads out to search for the Queen's Eyes. At the adventure's end, the PCs must battle Tobart and his suit. For more details, see Chapter 6.

1. The Queen lying on its side, eyes closed. Behind it, a field of tally marks: A 10x10 array of squares, each square comprising a 3x3 array of 9 tally marks. This represents the Queen's death by natural causes after 900 years (a long life for a beholder, though not uncommon).

2. A small group of Sazaur beholders surrounded by many large enemy beholders casting power symbols at them. The Sazaur without their Queen, the mural seems to say, are defenseless.

3. The Queen on its side, eyes now blank circles, with a row of 11 eyes above it. Above these eyes are the Sazaur beholders in an array of rows and columns. (The Sazaur have removed the Queen's Eyes for their rituals.)

4. The beholders, carved very small on this mural, arranged in a "circle of circles"; that is, ten beholders are grouped in a small circle; ten of these circles lie on the circumference of a larger circle; and ten of these larger circles form a still larger circle. In the center of this largest circle are the 11 Queen's Eyes.

This shows the rituals that the Sazaur enacted to turn the eyes into relics. Their ceremonial area actually embraced a still larger order of circles, as shown in Room 12's description. But this largest circle would not fit on the mural!

5. The 11 Queen's Eyes, now floating freely with their various power symbols radiating from them, as in murals 3-4 of the first sequence. In the background, the Sazaur beholders watch. (The eyes have become relics.)

The third sequence: This sequence depicts the construction of the Hive. These murals are perfectly rectangular, though curved inward due to the curvature of the sphere.

1. A rough, ordinary looking asteroid surrounded by beholder Tyrant Ships.

2. To the left are the Sazaur beholders with a grotesque, caricatured Arcane wizard (for the Arcane's appearance, see the boxed campaign set). To the right are many beholders focusing their disintegration rays (thin dotted lines) against a rough arc representing the surface of the asteroid.

3. A circle surrounded by a geometric array of 11 squares and a semicircle, all within the rough arc of the asteroid. Of course, these are the rooms of the Hive. But the mural's layout need not bear a resemblance to the actual layout.

4. The dome of the asteroid, shown as a great eye with its lids slightly parted. Inside are an iris and pupil, symbolizing the central Queen's Eye that will be placed in Room 12.

5. Enemy beholders fleeing the asteroid, which is now shown with the dome eye. From the asteroid radiate many symbols, indicating the defenses that, until recently, protected the Hive from attack.

The fourth sequence: This sequence depicts the placement of the smaller eyes in their own rooms. The rooms' sympathetic magic is indicated symbolically. This entire sequence should bewilder the PCs until they have explored one or two of the smaller rooms.

Like the murals of the second sequence, these are trapezoidal, but their short sides point away from the passage to Room 12. Also like those of the second sequence, each of these has a 100-yard-wide hole in its center.

Each mural shows two large squares (except for the last, which shows three). Inside each square is a beholder eye and one of the power symbols described in the previous section. For example, the first mural shows two large squares. Inside the first is a beholder eye and a *charm person* symbol, a row of circles around the eye. Inside the second is an eye surrounded by linked circles, the *charm monster* symbol.

The fifth sequence: Though PCs should not figure this out, this sequence depicts the construction of the Ravager. Compounding the enigma is the depiction of the Ravager in the same way the first mural sequence depicted the Queen. These murals, like the first sequence, are triangular, but their apexes point away from the passage to Room 12.

1. The Queen (or so it appears) is depicted, larger than the surrounding array of beholders. The Queen (actually the Ravager) is shown without eyes; the central eye and the ends of the eye-stalks are blank.

2. The 11 Queen's Eyes, one large and ten small, are lined up parallel to a line of 11 mandalas, one large and ten small. In the center of each mandala is a five-pointed design like that of a ten-sided die seen point-on.

In fact, each mandala represents a crystal in the smaller Hive rooms. The mandala design arises from the perceptions of the beholders, who see the ten-sided crystals from several angles at once. This mural equates the Queen's Eyes with their governing crystals.

3. The "Queen" from the first mural in this sequence, but with the mandala designs substituting for eyes. (The crystals are implanted in the Ravager shell.)

4. The "Queen" next to a large circle with continental outlines sketched in: a world in space. Various power symbols emanate from the mandalas.

5. The "Queen" as before, but the world is now drawn as a blank circle surrounded by a dotted line. Alert players will remember that in the first mural sequence, this represented death.

MONSTER SUMMARY TABLE

This table presents the vital statistics for some of the monsters featured in this adventure. Use it for handy reference during play, and refer to the *Monstrous Compendium* volumes for details.

Name	AC	HD/hp	THACO	#AT	Dmg	MV	Remarks
Anari	10	1/6	Nil	Nil	Nil	12	0-level humans
Apes	6	5/27	15	3	1-4/1-4/1-8	12 (9 in trees)	Rending damage
Aquatic Constrictor	5	6+1/38	17	2	1-4/2-8	3	constriction
Basilisk, Greater	2	10/56	11	3	1-6/1-6/2-16	6	
Beholder	0/2/7	hp 45-75	5-11	1	2-8	Fl 3 (B)	magic, anti-magic ray
Beholder zombie	7	4/20	17	1	2-12	Fl 3 (B)	chill touch
Cockatrice	6	5/20	15	1	1-3	6, Fl 18(C)	petrification
Crab, Giant	3	3/22	18	2	2-8/2-8	3	
Crayfish, Giant	4	4+4/27	17	2	2-12/2-12	2, Sw3	
Eel, Marine	6	6/40	15	1	2-8	Sw3	electric shock 15'
Ghoul	6	2/12	19	3	1-3/1-3/1-6	9	paralysis, immune to <i>sleep</i> , <i>charm</i>
Giant, Stone	0	14+1-3/53	7	1	1-8/weapon	12	hurl rocks (3-10)
Gorgon	2	8/52	12	1	2-12	12	turns victims to stone
Leech, Giant	9	3/18	18	1	1-4	1, Sw2	drain blood
Medusa, Greater	3	8/50	13	1	1-4	12	petrification, poison
Nixies	7	1-4 hp	20	1	by weapon	6, Sw12	<i>charm</i>
Orbus	10	5/24	Nil	Nil	Nil	Fl 3 (B)	anti-magic ray
Piercer	3	3/15	17	1	3-18	1	surprise; 4 1/2' long
Pike, Giant	5	4/30	17	1	4-16	Sw12	
Rep	10	hp 5	Nil	Nil	Nil	12	immune to <i>fear</i>
Sentinel	4	16/60	5	1	2-20	6	Str 23, hit by +1 wpns, <i>minor globe</i>
Silver slime	7	8+1/40	13	one/PC	4-24	12	treat as dun pudding
Skeleton	7	1/6	19	1	1-6	12	energy drain, undead
Wight	5	4+3/25	15	1	1-4	12	energy drain, undead
Zombie	8	2/10	19	1	1-8	6	as wraith

The Crew of the *Skyrunner*

Jon Tobart/Shazogrox (beholder mage):

As Shazogrox: AC 0; MV Fl 3 (B); hp 80; #AT 1; Dmg 2-8; SA magic; AL NE; THACO 11.

As Tobart: AC 2; MV 12; Str 16, Int 18, Wis 16, Dex 12, Con 15, Cha 10; hp 80; AL NE; THACO 11. Equipment (as Tobart): *chain mail* +2, shield, *broadsword* +1/+2 vs. magic-using and enchanted creatures, *ring of invisibility*. Spells stored: *Blink*, *delude*, *fly*, *haste*, *wraithform*, *fire shield*, *dimension door*, *polymorph other*, *polymorph self*, *stoneskin*. In the Hive, *improved whispering wind* in place of *blink*.

Stonecrop (flesh golem): AC 9; MV 8; HD 9; hp 40; #AT 2; Dmg 2-16; SD golem abilities; AL N; THACO 11.

Name	AC	Class/Level	hp	Str	Int	Wis	Dex	Con	Cha	Remarks
Baragor	7	F2	18	17	7	8	9	16	8	AL CN
Gulug	10	0-level human	5	10	8	9	10	12	8	AL N, rusty dagger
Ralgir	6	F2	13	11	12	11	15	12	13	AL LN, short sword
Skraal	6	R1	5	9	11	8	16	11	7	AL N, dagger

Incarinations:

The Beastmaster (charm monster): AC 0/8; MV 12; HD 12; hp 90; #AT 2; Dmg 2-12; AL LE; THACO 9. *Charm monster*, *speak with animals*, *speak with monster* at will, *polymorph other* 1/turn. AC 0 vs. attacks from front, AC 8 behind. Parries 2/round on roll of 7+ (1d20).

Corundum (telekinesis): AC 1; MV Fl 24; HD 7; hp 36; #AT 1; Dmg special; SD immune to all bludgeoning and collision damage; AL NE; THACO 15. *Telekinesis*, *Otiluke's Telekinetic Sphere* at will.

Disintegrate eye: AC 0; MV 24; HD 4; hp 19; #AT 3; SD immune to *disintegrate* magic and mental powers.

Gruhl-Ghohruh (slow): AC 8; MV 3; HD 12; hp 70; #AT 1; Dmg 1-12; SA *slow cloud* 3/day; AL CE; THACO 9.

Horan (charm person): AC 5; MV 12; HD 9; hp 45; #AT 1; Dmg 1d8; AL LE; THACO 11. *Charm person*, *command word*, *suggestion* 3/day; *mass charm*, *domination*, *mass suggestion* 1/day. Immune to all charm effects.

I'kok (fear): AC 0; MV 12, Fl 3 (E); HD 9; hp 54; #AT 1; Dmg 2-8; SA radiates *fear*; SD anti-magic ray, *polymorph* at will; MR 50%; AL CE; THACO 12.

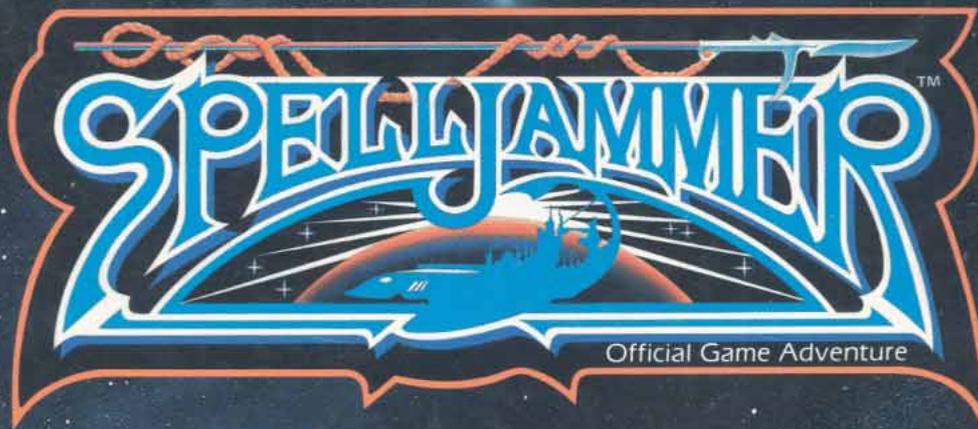
Stenor (flesh to stone): AC 2; MV F 13 (B); HD 12; hp 75; #AT 5; Dmg 2-16/2-8/2-8/Special/Special; SA *flesh to stone*, *stone to flesh*, *ESP* 4/day, *telekinesis* (unlimited on stones); SD 1/4 damage from stone attacks; AL CE; THACO 9.

Valkor (cause serious wounds): AC 0; MV 0, F12; HD 10; hp 60; #AT 2; Dmg 2-16+1/2-16+1 or special; AL LE; THACO 10. Immune to *stone to flesh* and *lightning bolt*.

Xuu (death ray): AC 4; MV 12, Fl 24 (B); HD 6; hp 42; #AT 1; Dmg 1-6; SA energy drain; enveloping a victim causes death unless negated by save vs. death magic; SD vaporous form; immune to *sleep*, *charm*, *hold*, *death*, *raise dead*, and cold-based spells; hit only by silver or +1 or better magical weapons; AL LE; THACO 15.

Zhanghala (sleep): No combat statistics (see Room 4 description).

Advanced Dungeons & Dragons
2nd Edition



Wildspace

by Allen Varney

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