

# The Grinding Gear





# AUTHOR'S NOTES

Is it OK to have a reasonable expectation for failure in a fantasy role-playing adventure?

I created this adventure in the early days of 2008, and I thought at the time it was just another week's adventure. After running *The Grinding Gear* for two different groups, I see it as something a little unusual, and that is why it is in your hands now.

Both groups failed to find the treasure that is the ultimate goal of the adventure. Yes, they escaped with their lives to adventure another day, but they didn't succeed in this quest. And there are multiple chances in this thing to really rip a party to shreds. The very first location, with the statue, has a real possibility of slaughtering a party. In the first level of the dungeon, there is a magic-user with a Sleep spell waiting to use it on the PCs. And there is a possibility that if the party carries a light load of equipment and buys too much into the fake map, they could starve to death on dungeon level two. How harsh is that?

None of my players' characters died in any of those obvious kill-zones. Yes, we had a few PC deaths up in the attic, but that setup was so obvious that I consider those to be mercy killings.

So I don't expect this to be a slaughterhouse dungeon, but the possibility is very real that the players will think that the entire thing is one big cruel waste of their time with no rewards. Are you prepared for that?

This adventure rewards careful observation and attention to detail, and perhaps true resource management, in addition to the usual battle savviness and puzzle-solving. "Old school" proponents often claim player agency as one of the main advantages of this style of game, and perhaps this adventure was written to highlight that very thing. It somehow loses its sting if players are allowed to make die rolls to be reminded of things encountered in the game that they decided were not important enough to either remember or write down.

I strongly recommend you schedule sufficient time with your group to complete this adventure in one session. Spreading it out over multiple sessions would be almost unfair due to the nature of the final puzzles, and encouraging the players to take notes would give it all away.

You probably don't create adventures and locations like this in your game. Although this adventure is now yours to do with as you please, I ask that you consider not changing those elements which most clash with your gaming style. This is one of the very purposes of using published materials, to take on different perspectives and styles than you would have on your own. And while this adventure may tax your players, the in-game rewards are certainly there, and plentiful, for those clever enough to find them. And on a meta-game level, perhaps your players will start paying more attention to the background scenery in the future.

... and right about now I'm looking at the preceding paragraphs and I realize the adventure isn't all that cruel. Both my groups successfully conquered the entire adventure, save for one room (that happened to be the final room), so it's not like this adventure is a master class of player disempowerment or an outrageous display of more-clever-than-thou or anything of the sort. I guess I just spend too much time online reading people whine about their cruel GMs and worry it might be those people that will be next to experience *The Grinding Gear*.

The truth is I've had great fun presenting *The Grinding Gear* to my players, and I do believe that they had fun playing the adventure. Especially the one guy that, weeks later (in real time!), thought to go back to the dungeon and search the final sarcophagus more carefully. Ghostcutter was found! I'd like to hear about your group's experiences with *The Grinding Gear*. Send me an email at [lotfp@lotfp.com](mailto:lotfp@lotfp.com), or post on the LotFP message board.

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October 17, 2009  
Helsinki, Finland

# REFEREE INTRODUCTION

This adventure is designed for a party of three to eight characters of first to fourth level. Parties should be a good mix of classes, ready for exploration, combat, and especially problem solving.

This adventure will run a bit different than most. While there is some combat, perhaps more than the PCs can handle, the primary challenge of the adventure comes from an NPC who specifically wished to challenge adventurers. Players will have to use their heads in order to find the treasure.

Referees are encouraged to strictly enforce light source durations and encumbrance from the very start of the adventure, especially where it concerns carrying great amounts of food. At one point, the PCs will very likely become trapped in an area from which it may take them some time to escape. If a referee has enforced these oft-ignored guidelines, it may be seen as bad form or being unfair to the players to suddenly make them important only when it is to their disadvantage. Follow the rules when they do not seem important, and there will be no cause for complaint once they are.

This is not to say that the adventure should be used as a hammer to bludgeon players with. Players who come up with creative solutions to problems should be rewarded with success. If players completely avoid some obstacle or situation which this adventure seems to assume will happen, then more power to the players! This module is merely a static location, and it is intended that players will completely wreck it. Let them.

One last note: Obviously “St. McIver” is something of a joke name. It was originally used just to be easily memorable. If using that name would create a tone incongruous with a referee’s campaign, it should be changed. If the established pantheon of an individual campaign does not use saints, just change it. McIver can go by any name, and can be a fully-fledged deity if a referee so chooses without changing the substance of the adventure at all.

## Placing This Adventure in Your Campaign

The Grinding Gear takes place in and under an abandoned inn. It should be someplace close enough to civilization for an inn to be plausible, but far enough off the beaten track that no one kept the place open when the last owners left, far enough out that adventurers would have once frequented the place and to be visited at least fairly often by goblins now. One suggestion is that the inn was on the road to a frontier mining town that has since depleted its vein, making its existence no longer essential.

## Adventure Background

Garvin Richrom was a man that both loathed and respected adventurers. Running an inn in a remote location, he saw enough of them.

He admired their courage and how it was often they, despite their only motivation often being greed, who dealt with dangers that the legitimate authorities never could. He was disgusted when his daughter became enamored with one and ran off with him. Four months later he received news that she had died within some ancient tomb in some far-off land, a victim of a deadly trap.

Himself a dedicated tinker and engineer, not to mention a master of cruel practical jokes, Richrom went to work to plan both his revenge on foolish adventurers and a reward for the clever ones. He listened closely to all the stories traveling adventurers told him, and applied this knowledge in order to make life a living hell for those exploring his own tomb.

Construction was done in secrecy - Richrom would hire crews to dig out one room, then fire them and hire another crew for the next room. He even had unnecessary rooms built, and then collapsed, just so crews couldn't get together after the fact and come up with a reliable map.

After basic construction was completed, Garvin did most of the intricate interior work himself. Truly the blessings of his patron saint, Anderson McIver, were with him. He completed the project mere months before he died. His surviving children placed his remains as per his exact instructions, set the last traps, and destroyed the remaining evidence.

And some time later, the player characters enter the area...




# Surface Area Map

The Inn, Level 4

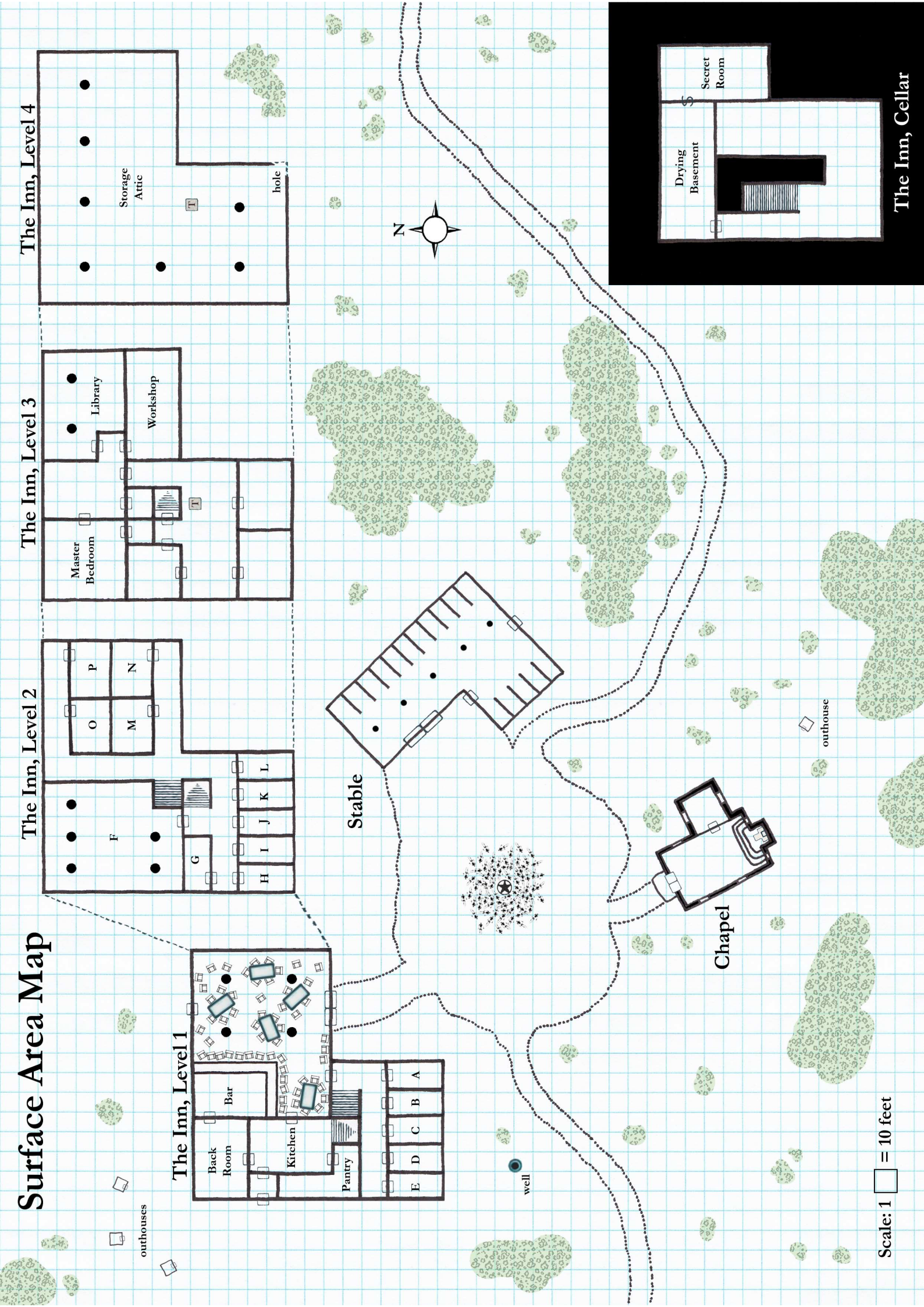
The Inn, Level 3

The Inn, Level 2

The Inn, Level 1

Scale: 1  = 10 feet

The Inn, Cellar



Stable

Chapel

well

outhouse

outhouses

Drying  
Basement

Secret  
Room

Storage  
Attic

hole

Library

Workshop

Master  
Bedroom

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# THE SURFACE AREA

The immediate surroundings of The Grinding Gear are fairly wild, and various untamed beasts and other undesirables may come into the area. There is a 1 in 6 chance every hour that this will happen. Note that all of these creatures will be wandering around outside, with the exception of the mosquito bats (which can be found inside the Inn proper). The goblins will tend to avoid the place due to the body pile but will investigate any obviously mundane source of loot - PCs included. The Wily Rogue will be uninterested in engaging anyone and will just try to steal as many valuables as he can through stealth. The Bandits will be as bold as their numbers allow them to be; two will sneak and steal, while a dozen may attempt to hold up the PCs by force. The Lone Wanderer will be interested in getting food from the PCs, but not interested in joining with them, suffering their foolishness, or paying for what they give him.

Human opponents will only be interested in getting what they want; killing will not be on their mind if they face no resistance. Note that pack animals or equipment left outside will be fair game for any wandering creature.

Roll	Encounter
1	2d4 Mosquito Bats: HD 1+1, Armor As Leather, Flies 1.5x the speed of unencumbered human movement, One Proboscis Attack, Damage d4 + blood drain d4 every round thereafter, Attacks as 3HD Creature.
2	2d4 Wild Dogs: HD 1, Armor as Unarmored Human, Moves 1.5x the Speed of Unencumbered Human, One Bite Attack, Damage d4
3	3d4 Goblins: HD 1-1, Armor as Leather, Moves the Speed of Unencumbered Human, One Spear Attack, Damage: d6
4	1 Wily Rogue: Thief Level d6, Leather Armor, Longsword, Sling, Miscellaneous Equipment
5	2d6 Bandits: Level 0 (led by Fighter Level 1), Leather Armor, Longsword, Dagger, Short Bow, Miscellaneous Equipment, 25% chance of Riding Horses
6	Lone Wanderer: Fighter Level d6, 50% chance of Leather and 50% chance of Chain plus Shield, Battle Axe, Miscellaneous Equipment, d6 x 50gp in treasure

The Grinding Gear is composed of three unconnected buildings: The Inn itself, the stables, and a small chapel. The center courtyard between the three buildings is paved with cobblestones, and in the center is a statue.

All of the buildings are in a state of minor disrepair, but are all structurally fully intact, save for a corner of the main building's roof. Naturally there hasn't been any maintenance done in some years, so windows are cracked or broken, weeds sprout from between the cobblestones, and there is the stink from the number of corpses laying about...

However, observant PCs may notice that there are no small animals about. No rats can be found in or around the complex, nor squirrels or rabbits. There aren't even any bugs flying about, and there is a lack of cobwebs anywhere as there is no prey for spiders.

## The Statue

In the center of the courtyard is a ten foot tall copper statue of a well-to-do man in formal attire, standing on a five foot marble block. There is a plaque that reads "Garvin Richrom" on the marble.

Surrounding the statue to about twenty feet out in every direction are bodies of goblins and orcs and even a few wolves. They are in various stages of decay, but close examination will show that they all have deep puncture wounds. There is one rather fresh human on the pile, and he has two rather ominous puncture wounds close together on his neck... All of the bodies have been stripped of weapons and armor and useful equipment except for the human, who is still clad in chain mail.



The statue holds the entrance to the dungeon. By pressing the plaque inwards, one side of the marble base swings open. This releases a sleeping gas that covers a 20' radius area, and all within that area must make a poison save or sleep for d4 turns. The opening will automatically close after one minute. After two rounds the gas has sufficiently dispersed as to pose no danger.

The panel may be opened from the inside merely by pushing it. The trap is set off every time the door is opened (from either side!). The gas trap may only be disarmed from the inside.

Since the inn was abandoned, the area has become infested with mosquito bats. There is a nest of them in the inn's attic, and when they smell the sleep gas in the air, they know it's feeding time! d4 rounds after the gas discharges, d10 mosquito bats will converge on the area, most from out of the attic but some from the general surroundings, and d6 more will arrive every round. They will attack any sleeping characters first, but any character or beast that is outdoors is fair game. They will not pursue anyone inside a building unless the door is left open.

Mosquito Bats: HD 1, HP 5, Armor as Leather, Flies 1.5 times the speed of unencumbered human movement, One Proboscis Attack, Damage d4 + blood drain, d4 every round thereafter, Attacks as 3HD Creature.

## **The Stables**

While the place is in generally awful condition, there are five riding horses, in good health, stabled here. They have full tack, and the troughs have been filled with feed and water for them. Their saddlebags are empty.

## **The Chapel**

This place, dedicated to McIver, patron saint of inventors, engineers, tinkerers, and blacksmiths, is a complete wreck. The altar, which was a sizeable and intricate puzzle box, has been smashed to pieces.

The chapel has already been generally ransacked and picked over, but two items of possible interest remain: A wooden carving of St. McIver, with the top of its head worked into a key shape, and a broken urn, ashes spread everywhere, engraved with the phrase:

“My dear sweet AnnabelMarie, taken too soon.”

## **The Inn**

The main entrance of the inn has two large decorative gears above the door. A third has fallen to the ground.

Most of the rooms in this building have been emptied in an orderly fashion, with the exceptions described below. There will be random bits of debris and animal refuse here and there of course, but this is not a fully-furnished structure by any means.

## **The Bar**

Above the bar is a sign that says:

“Notice!”

The sign is broken just below the word so whatever announcement the sign was supposed to make has been lost.

Behind the bar are dozens of beer steins. In one of them is a scrap of paper, upon which is scrawled: “The third one is false.” There is also a small locked safe. If it is cracked (whether physically or with an Open Locks roll), it will be empty except for a receipt that notes, “All valuables have been moved from our premises to your

designated underground area.” It is signed, “Logan, Munroe, and Summers Moneychanging and Merchant House.”

## **Guest Rooms**

The guest rooms are labeled A through P, and all of the doors to the rooms are locked, as are all of the interior closets.

The rooms themselves are empty.

## **The Library**

Dozens of empty bookshelves are here against the walls, in various states of disrepair. The brass shelf labels are still there, however. The bookshelves are labeled:

“Physical Sciences”

“Construction, Excavations, and Engineering”

“Riddles, Jokes, and Gags”

“Feeding and Care of Dragons”

“Adventurer Journals”

## **Workshop**

The room is full of workbenches and long-rusted craftsman’s tools. Some of the benches have been turned over or broken. Beneath one of these benches is a curious pair of items:

One of them is a small iron cage with a dead, rotted sparrow inside. The bottom of the cage is lined with shredded paper, but also one intact sheet of transcribed musical notes labeled “My Bonny Lass (She Don’t Look So Good).” Connected to this cage by a gold thread is a small machine made up of many gears and a crank. Turning the crank creates a charge that will travel up the thread and electrify the cage. At this late date, doing so will set the bird on fire.

Hidden in a cabinet is a spool of gold thread worth 50gp.

## **Master Bedroom**

Here are a bed, a nightstand, and some chests. The bed and pillows are torn, all the chests are open, etc.

Behind the bed is a journal. It is mostly blank, but the first page has some writing on it. It is obviously continued from another, not-present journal (and is dated just a few years before the present time). The relevant information:

“Father’s prime architect, Grant Tarkenton, has reportedly broken his contract and sold part of the tomb plans to unknown tomb robbers. Have taken steps to deal with both Tarkenton and track down the receiving party. In the meantime, security around the Inn has been increased to prevent entry to the tomb and theft of its treasures.”

Stuck in the journal are many receipts and contracts for labor work, mainly excavation and masonry, with all work paid in gold coin.



## **Drying Basement**

This is the area where the inn staff stored and cured meat. The entry to this room is airtight, and a small whiff of air will rush out when it is opened. It is noticeably cooler than the rest of the building. A number of great hooks hang from the ceiling, and barrels with just hints of the salt and brine stand around the room.

There is a secret annex. In this annex are five sets of shackles hanging from the wall, and bloodstains all over that wall and the floor below it.

Along the wall is a large rusting iron box. Inside the box are a series of knives and chopping blades, all bloodstained and also badly rusted.

## **Storage Attic**

The entrance to this area is a pull-down set of folding stairs in the third-floor hallway.

All sorts of spare furniture - beds, tables, chairs - as well as piles of linens, are stacked in this room. Much of the furniture has drop cloths over it so the exact contents of the room will remain hidden until a thorough search can be made. There is a decent hole torn in the side of the wall facing the center courtyard.

When first coming up through the hatch, characters can catch the glint of gold here and there. The first visible one is fifteen feet from the hatch.

This attic is the nest of fifty-two adult mosquito bats (with dozens more harmless immature bats, not to mention the hundreds of eggs...). 5d10 of the adults will be in here at any one time, and if combat occurs, the buzzing will attract d6 more back every round until the full complement of creatures is present.

Any character actually entering the attic will be attacked when they are approximately ten feet from the hatch. The mosquito bats will not attack immediately because their first instinct is to hide from intruders, hoping they'll go away and ignore the nest. Because the hatch is so narrow, it will take one round per person in the attic to get down the stairs before the folding staircase can be closed, and in that time d6 mosquito bats per round will fly past characters into the hallway below.

Mosquito Bats: HD 1+1, HP 5, Armor As Leather, Flies 1.5x the speed of unencumbered human movement, One Proboscis Attack, Damage d4 + blood drain d4 every round thereafter, Attacks as 3HD Creature.


If the mosquito bats are dealt with, the attic can be properly searched. They are attracted to small shiny objects much as crows and magpies are, and they collect them when possible. Stashed around the attic are 2,463cp, 858sp, 308gp, 63pp, an oriental topaz worth 750gp, and a gold necklace worth 250gp.

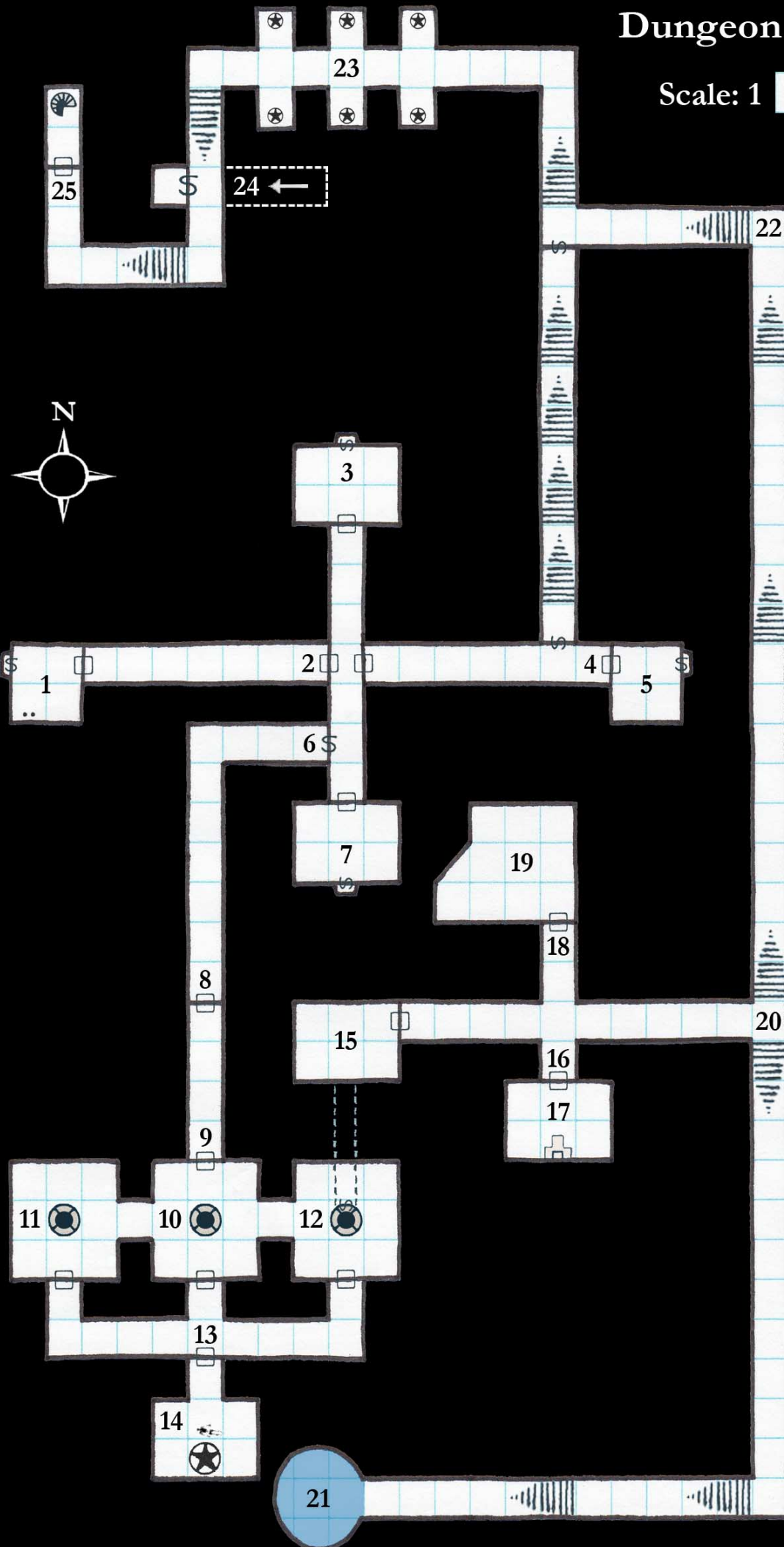
## **The Roof**

If anyone climbs up on the roof of the main building (there are no interior access methods), then they will be rewarded by finding a pattern, inlaid in silver (worth 25gp total if gouged out and collected), that spells out the following message:

“Follow the sun. Ignore the moon.”

# Dungeon Level One

Scale: 1  = 10 feet





# DUNGEON LEVEL ONE

All of the hallways (not the rooms) on this level have 1' x 1' holes along the ceiling at ten foot intervals. They lead to a network of tunnels in which all sorts of vermin breed. Some of them drop out of the holes and end up in the hallway. There is a 1 in 6 chance every three turns that the PCs encounter the results of this. Also note along the floor (again, in the hallways only), grooves are cut against the walls so any slime can drain away.

## Roll Encounter

- 1 3d4 Giant Rats: HD ½, Armor As Leather, Moves the speed of unencumbered human, One Bite Attack, Damage d4, 5% chance of disease every bite
- 2 2d4 Dead Giant Rats (10% of rot grub infestation)
- 3 2d4 Giant Centipedes: HD ½, Armor as Unarmored Man, Moves 1.25x the speed of unencumbered human, One Bite Attack, 0 damage + poison save at +4 or die.
- 4 d6 Giant Ants: HD 1. Armor as Plate, Moves 1.5x the speed of unencumbered human, One Bite Attack, Damage d6
- 5 Green Slime on Ceiling
- 6 Green Slime on Floor
- 7 1 Huge Spider: HD 2, Armor as Leather + Shield, Moves 1.5x the speed of unencumbered human, One Bite Attack, Damage d6 + Poison Save at +1 or Die, Surprise 5 out of 6
- 8 d4 Giant Beetles: HD 1, Armor as Chain + Shield, Moves the speed of unencumbered human, One Bite Attack, Damage 2d4
- 9 Foul mist creeps down from the hole, and all passing through must make Poison save or be -2 to hit and to damage for 3d6 turns
- 10 The smell of cherries permeates the area

## 1. Entrance Room

This room is completely empty except for a small plaque on the north wall. It says:

“Mark Well Your Passage, You Would-Be Robber, For the Clever Observe Closely and Only the Clever Will Win the Day.”

The secret door in this room hides a small hidden compartment, in which is a lever in the down position. If all such levers (in rooms #1, 3, 5, and 7) are placed in the up position (not necessarily simultaneously), there will be a deep rumbling and the door at location #6 will open.

## 2. Trapped Door

The door has a sign above it (on the west side) that says:

“Family Crypt - Do Not Enter”

The door is unlocked, but anyone opening the door must make a poison save or his hand will be jabbed by a needle. Within two rounds, the entire hand will turn deep blue, and the effect lasts for 24 + d% hours.

## 3. Our Time in the Sun

Hanging from the ceiling here is a candle surrounded by a glass bulb. The candle is of course not lit, and is half-burned. The bulb magnifies the appearance of anything within it, and is also a specially made crystal (worth 100gp) that filters light. The candle's wick has been specially prepared, so if this (and only this) candle is lit inside the bulb, then specially treated stones inside the room will spell out the following message on the floor:

“Richrom Dares You.”

The secret door in this room hides a small hidden compartment, in which is a lever in the down position. If all such levers (in rooms #1, 3, 5, and 7) are placed in the up position (not necessarily simultaneously), there will be a deep rumbling and the door at location #6 will open.

## 4. Door

This is a normal door, but it has been barred from within by the occupants of location #5. Listening at the door will reveal whispered voices, although too quiet to understand.

## 5. The Other Adventurers

A group of adventurers has already come down here and started to explore. Unfortunately for them, they haven't figured anything out, nor have they discovered any secret doors.

Unfortunately for the PCs, the group is quite frightened: They have just lost their fighting man to the mosquito bats on the surface, and had previously lost another warrior and their cleric last week to treachery from greedy adventurers (is there any other kind?) they had met on the road. They will not be inclined to trust the PCs, figuring they are dead if they do.

The survivors are the mage Djeserit and the rogues William O'Slattery and Ronald Monaghan, all human. If the PCs attempt to parley through the closed door, Djeserit will do all of the talking, and try to convince the PCs that he has a small army inside the room. It will take an extraordinary show of goodwill and contrition on the PCs' part to convince these men to open the door.

If the PCs begin bashing down the door (because it is barred, it can not be lockpicked), these three will prepare for their last battle. Djeserit will be in the northeast corner, prepared to throw his sleep spell as soon as there is a big enough hole in the door to a group of targets. O'Slattery will be in the southeast corner, sling at the ready, and Monaghan will be just beside the door, ready to backstab the first person through. While they are very scared, they are neither stupid nor merciful. They will fight to kill and disabled foes will have their throats slit and equipment looted.

Djeserit: Magic-User 1, HP 4, Unarmored, Three Daggers

Spell: *Sleep*

Extraordinary Stats: Dex 14, Con 15

William O'Slattery: Thief 1, HP 4, Leather Armor, Sling (with 25 bullets), Short Sword, 3 Daggers

Ronald Monaghan: Thief 1, HP 4, Leather Armor, Sling (with 12 bullets), Long Sword, 2 Daggers

Extraordinary Stats: Dex 17

In the southwest corner of the room is the group's collection of equipment and loot: 87 days' worth of iron rations, six backpacks, six large sacks and four small sacks, two dozen iron spikes, ten oil flasks, two sections of 50' rope, two dozen torches, a 10' pole, a heavy crossbow with sixteen bolts, and a battle axe. There is a lit lantern sitting near the pile. Their treasure includes a 100gp set of gold earrings, a carved ivory statuette of a hippopotamus worth 250gp, and a small gold carving of St. McIver worth 50gp. Djeserit's spellbook contains *Detect Magic*, *Read Magic*, *Shield*, *Sleep*, *Floating Disc*.

The secret door in this room hides a small hidden compartment, in which is a lever in the down position. If all such levers (in rooms #1, 3, 5, and 7) are placed in the up position (not necessarily simultaneously), there will be a deep rumbling and the door at location #6 will open.

## 6. Triggered Door

While the secret door here may be found by searching, it can not be opened without arranging the levers in location #1, 3, 5, and 7 in the proper configuration. Magical solutions such as *Knock* will of course work, but



otherwise, the door will not open.

## 7. A Moonlight Serenade

This room is painted as if it was the night sky, dark and full of stars. In the center of the ceiling is the moon, large and shining. The moon is actually made of phosphorescent paint, so it will glow in the dark. Anyone closely examining the moon will see odd details, almost too small to see. If this image is somehow magnified (such as with the bulb in location #5), then the image of a man playing an organ on the surface of the moon will be visible. The man will be dressed exactly as the statue in the courtyard. Below the image will be the following phrase:

“What is my favorite song?”

The secret door in this room hides a small hidden compartment, in which is a lever in the down position. If all such levers (in rooms #1, 3, 5, and 7) are placed in the up position (not necessarily simultaneously), there will be a deep rumbling and the door at location #6 will open.

## 8. Shelf

Beside the door on the north side is a shelf carved into the wall. On the shelf is a small stone statue of St. McIver.

## 9. Door

This door is locked, and the key is long lost. Beyond the door can be heard violent growling (the troll in #10).

## 10. Troll Pit

In the center of this room is a ten foot wide, fifteen foot deep pit. In this pit is an angry, snarling troll. The edge of the pit is just out of its reach and so it has been down here for years.

The pit is lined with a huge amount of paper and parchment. The troll doesn't care enough about the paper to have ever shredded it, but it is thoroughly stained with troll waste. Anyone concentrating on figuring out what the papers are will determine that the writing on them is obviously magical. If the paper is somehow gathered and cleaned and studied, and a *Read Magic* spell is cast, the reader will discover that these papers are the working notes of a mage researching a first-level *Cook Food* spell. Enough of the writing will be permanently lost to the troll excrement that anyone wishing to learn this spell would need to conduct further research, but all time and costs would be reduced by 50% due to the head-start.

In the base of the pit are numerous mouse holes which were installed when the rest of the pit was constructed. This allows the troll to feed on various vermin that wander in when the troll is silent.

Troll: HD 6+6, HP 40, Armor as Chain + Shield, Moves as an unencumbered man, 2 Claw + 1 Bite Attacks, Damage d4+4/d4+4/2d6, has Trollish Regeneration

## 11. Pudding Pit

In the center of this room is a ten foot wide, fifteen foot deep pit. Inside this pit is a pulsating and stretching mass of pitch-black goop. It can reach most of the way up the pit, so if someone is reaching into the pit for whatever reason (or sticking something in), it will be subject to attack. The sides of the pit are made of polished crystal to which the blob can not cling. If this crystal is at all damaged, cracks will run around the edges and down the length of the surface, and the pudding will then be able to ooze up the pit and escape its confinement.

If all the crystal is gathered, it will weight twenty pounds and be worth 1gp per pound, half that if it is exposed to fire (from lighting the pudding on fire, for example).



Pudding: HD 10, HP 53, Armor as Leather + Shield, Moves half as fast as an unencumbered man, 1 Touch Attack, Damage 3d8, has acidic effects.

## 12. Ghoul Pit

In the center of this room is a ten foot wide, fifteen foot deep pit. It has a mass of paper at the bottom with magical writing on it (which will be revealed as the research notes to a first level mage spell *Perfectly Coiffured Hair*). Trapped in the pit are three ghouls.

At the base of the pit is a secret door that reveals a two-foot high, three-foot wide tunnel, coated with what appears to be algae, to the north.

Ghouls: HD 2, HP 13, 10, 9, Armor as Leather + Shield, Moves 3/4th the speed of an unencumbered man, 2 Claw + 1 Bite Attacks, Damage d3/d3/d6, Has paralytic touch and undead immunities.

## 13. Trapped Door

A plaque affixed to the wall above the door (on the north side) says:

“Do Not Enter - Private Chapel”

This door has an obvious lock on it, but is not locked. However, opening the door normally will trigger gears in the floor which will raise the pits in locations #10, 11, and 12, freeing their occupants.

Using the proper key (the wooden carving from the Chapel on the surface), disarming the door mechanism as a trap, or getting through the doorway without opening the door (in gaseous form, for one example) will prevent the raising of the pits.

## 14. Chapel of St. McIver

This room is a simple, if large, shrine to St. McIver. In the center of the south wall is a large brass statue of St. McIver, surrounded by burnt out candles. The room is carpeted and there are many prayer pillows strewn about the place, some of them torn open with stuffing all over the floor.

In the center of the room is a decapitated skeleton - not a shred of flesh on it - of a small, misshapen man. The figure is clad in leather armor (not nearly as decayed to suggest the body had enough time to decompose to a skeletal state) and a backpack, with a sword fallen at its side. In the backpack is the Player Handout Map of level two.

## 15. Entrance Two

There is a batch of green slime on the ceiling and wall above the opening on the south wall. When the first character passes through (or large object is pushed forward - ten foot poles and sword-tips won't do it), the slime will drop. Actually, there are two batches of slime up there, so the second person through the passageway will be attacked as well! The stone where the slime lives is covered in some odd lacquer, immune to the slime itself but something that actually attracts the stuff.

The room and all its contents are coated with what appears to be algae. It appears to be a bit wet and sticky but is not harmful to touch (or taste, or...).

The room is empty except for a small wheeled cart in the center. On the cart is a small stone statue of St. McIver.



Here is the map I promised you.  
I expect payment as arranged.  
- Grant

The true tomb here.  
Minor personal effects  
on body. Please, do not  
disturb. The real  
treasure is near  
the false tomb.

Complicated trap rooms!  
Bring an experienced thief.  
Others besides myself designed these.  
Diabolical, so I am told!

Secret Treasure here  
Not with the body!

Star Room:  
Don't look at the walls  
Magical hypnosis traps!

False Tomb:  
Do not be fooled!  
No treasure!





If the algae is gathered in any great amount, it will of course behave as green slime.

The door leading from this room is stuck, as it is airtight.

## **16. Trapped Door**

This door is painted with the image of a mountain on it. It is not locked, but if opened before disarming the trap, darts will shoot out of the wall. All within the 10' space in front of the door must make a petrification save or be hit by the darts and be infected with a tropical fever.

There will be no effect for 24 hours. At that point, and every day thereafter (for 5d4 days), the character must make a poison save or lose one constitution point. Remember to subtract any lost constitution bonuses, or apply constitution penalties, on a character's current hit points. If a character's constitution falls below three, he falls into a coma. If it falls to zero, he dies. If a one is rolled on any daily poison save, that day's constitution loss is permanent. Constitution points return at a rate of one per day of complete rest after the disease has taken its course.

## **17. Paper, Rock, Scissors**

In the center of the southern wall is a great altar made out of paper. Upon this altar is a large (12" tall) origami idol of St. McIver. Also on the altar are two candles.

The candles will ignite when the door is opened. The character first through the door must check for surprise, and only if the dice do not indicate surprise will he see the candles lighting.

Hanging above the altar is a large rock, about 5' in diameter. It hangs by a chain from the ceiling, about five feet above the altar.

On either side of the altar are giant blades on pendulums, held back by leather thongs. If the thongs were loosened, surely the blades would slide right through the altar and idol...

When the door is opened, a ticking sound will be heard from the walls, the candles will burn down quickly, the leather thongs on the blade will seem to loosen ever so slightly, and the rock's mooring will dislodge just a little bit. Time is running out!

There will be just enough time to run to the altar to snatch the idol if a character so chooses. But the character will have to make four saving throws to rescue the idol: There is no time for deliberation or hesitation, it's GO or not, and if the answer is GO, then the character is committed.

A breath weapon save to avoid the fireball when the candles burn down and the altar (composed of a more explosive sort of flash paper) goes up with a bang. 2d6 damage if the save is failed.

A petrification save to avoid the falling boulder. d8 damage if the save is failed.

A paralyzation save to avoid each blades. d8 damage for each failed save.

The "paper idol" is merely a shell containing a slightly smaller but otherwise identical stone idol inside. It will not be harmed by either the fire, stone, or blades.

## **18. Trapped Door**

This door has the painted image of a flame on it. The door is not locked, but if opened without the trap being disarmed, will cause an explosion (the opening of the door causing sparks to fly, igniting the material around the door frame) doing 2d6 damage to anyone in the 10' in front of the door (breath weapon save for half damage). The blast will destroy the door.

## 19. A Fireplace for Hounds

The surfaces of this room are painted. The ceiling depicts the sky, the floor grassy ground. The east side shows several men, including one that greatly resembles the statue in the courtyard, mounted on horses and pointing at the west side of the room. The north and south sides show a number of hunting dogs running towards the west side of the room. In the background of the northern wall can be seen the Grinding Gear.

The west wall is a cottage that is on fire, with the depressed alcove depicting the inside of the burning cottage.

In the southwest corner is a stone idol of St. McIver carved out of the solid wall.

## 20. Intersection

Lairing in this immediate area are two ghouls who somehow escaped the ghoul pit. They will of course attack any living creature.

Ghouls: HD 2, HP 12, 11, Armor as Leather + Shield, Moves 3/4th the speed of an unencumbered man, 2 Claw + 1 Bite Attacks, Damage d3/d3/d6, Has paralytic touch and undead immunities.

## 21. Water Pool

This pool of water takes up the entire floorspace, and is 50' deep. The bottom of the pool connects to a series of underwater streams, with no opening greater than twelve inches across. If a character starts tooling around in the water, he will attract the attention of an albino underground fresh water snake which will attack. There are effectively an infinite number of available snakes so anyone continuing to play in the water will attract more and more snakes. The snakes will not leave the water.

Hanging above the pool is a ten-foot wide iron chandelier with all its candles long burnt out. In the center of the chandelier is a rather large iron statue of St. McIver.

Snake: HD 3, HP 14, Armor as Leather, Moves at 3/4th the speed of an unencumbered man (swimming speed), 1 Bite attack, Damage d2 + poison save or die.

## 22. Trapped Stairs

The entire 10'x10' area at the top of the stairs here is on a pressure plate. When it is stepped on (or has at least 25 pounds of pressure put on it), a section of the east wall will spring out and shove characters down the stairs for 2d6 damage (paralyzation save for half), and then retract and reset. Only by crawling on one's belly (kneeling or being a halfling is not enough) will avoid the trap.

## 23. Alcoves

Each of these six alcoves has a man-sized granite statue of St. McIver. Also in one of the alcoves (roll randomly to determine which) is a gelatinous cube.

Cube: HD 4, HP 17, Armor as Leather, Moves at 1/2 speed as unencumbered man, 1 blob attack, Damage 2d4, paralyzing touch, surprises 50% of the time, various spell immunities.

Inside the cube are 11gp, 18sp, and 26cp.

## 24. Sliding Wall

The dotted portion of the map is a giant stone block which will move across the passageway when the stairs at location #25 are stepped on.

The secret door here is actually a folding wall which allows the stone block to completely seal the passage with

no opening at all. If the secret area is discovered before the trap is sprung, a button will be found in the west wall of the alcove. If this is pressed, the stone block will instantly close. If anyone was pushing that button by hand, they will be crushed to death. Anyone else in the way must make a paralyzation save or take 2d10 damage. The block will then slowly retract back to its original position.

If the wall is triggered by the stairs, the wall will only slide back to its original position when the body of Garvin Richrom is discovered (location #18 on level two). Otherwise, there is no method of moving the block.

## 25. Door and Stairs

The door is locked and is absolutely soundproof. It is also self-closing and the lock mechanism will re-activate whenever the door is closed unless the lock is specifically destroyed. This will mean that the stone block will not be heard if everyone is on the near side of the door once someone starts down the stairs...

The door has a plaque on it (on the south side of the door) that reads:

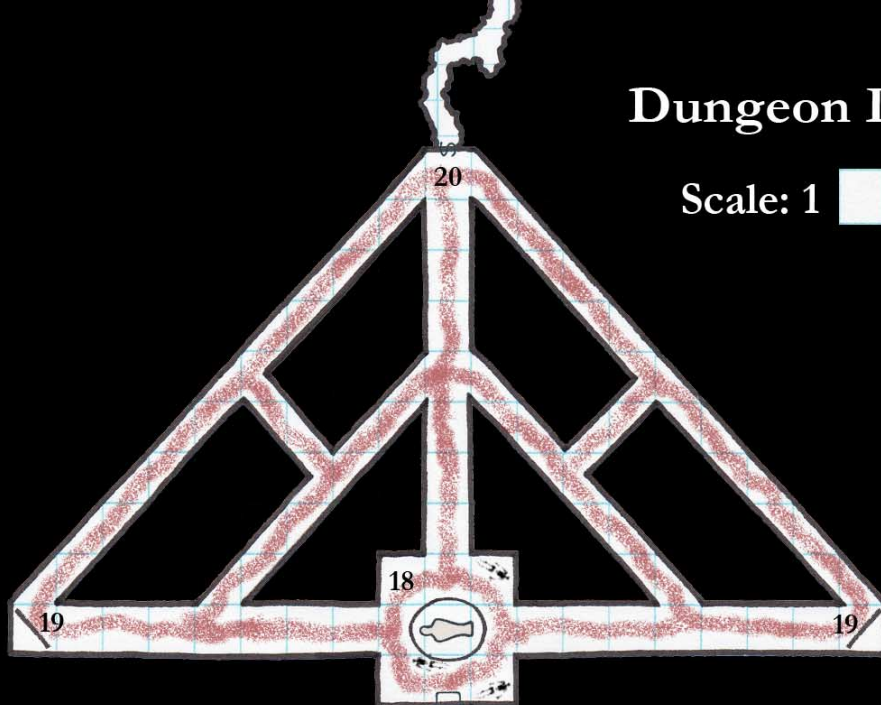
“You’ve Come So Far, But the True Test of Your Skills Has Just Begun!”

The stairs are a stone spiral staircase down to Dungeon Level Two. Stepping on the stairs will trigger the stone block at location #24, and from that point on anyone on this side of the block will be trapped.



# Dungeon Level Two

Scale: 1  = 10 feet



Door



Statue



Secret Door



Remains



Secret Compartment



Sarcophagus



Stairs Down



Sliding Block



Spiral Stairs



Altar



Underfloor Passage



Organ



Collapsed Passage



Chairs



Open Pit



Mirror



Water



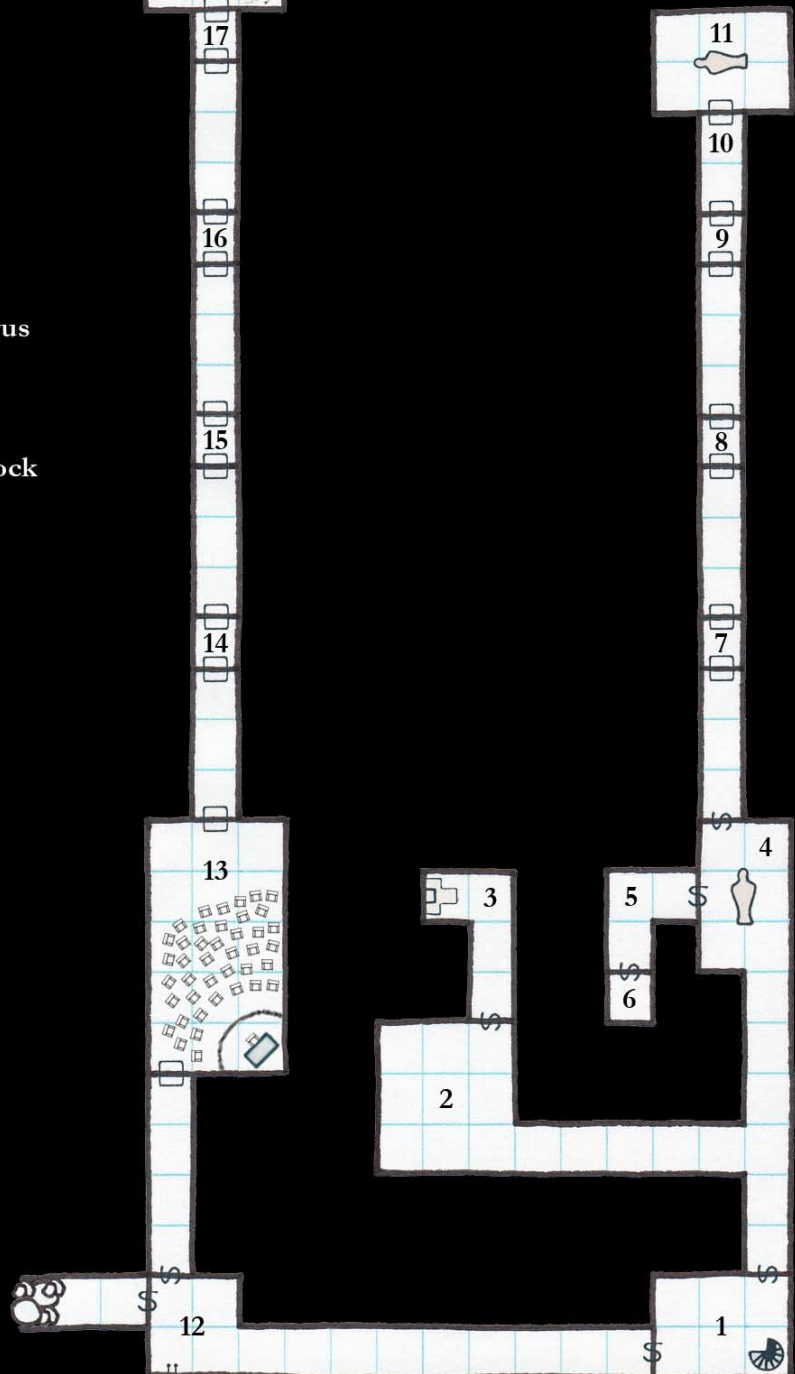
Blood Trail



Natural Cave



Levers





# DUNGEON LEVEL TWO

If the Sliding Wall has been triggered (see Level One locations #24 and 25), then characters will be trapped. Careful management of light, food, and water resources should be done by both players and referees.

If the characters have the map from Level One location #14, then any secret doors listed there have twice the chance of being found by any search.

There are no wandering monsters on this level.

## 1. The Empty Room

Aside from the staircase leading up, this room is completely featureless.

## 2. Decorated Room

This is an empty room, but the walls have been painted to portray the Grinding Gear during the different seasons: The south wall depicts winter, the west wall summer, the north wall autumn. The east wall depicts the statue in front of the inn, one side of the marble base sticking out (as it does when the plaque is pressed) and the inn burnt to the ground.

The floor and ceiling are both painted to look like the night sky, full of stars (a companion piece to room #7 on level one). The ceiling has the familiar sky patterns, but the floor has a completely different set that characters will not recognize.

## 3. Altar of Offering

Against the west wall is a plain altar on which is a plain offering plate. Above it is a plaque mounted on the wall that says:

“Clever You Are, But I Am Not Done - Make An Offering If Again You’d Ever See the Sun”

Putting even a single coin (or any pressure of any kind) on the plate or altar will cause a great rumbling sound to rise up. People in this room will hear it come from the southeast, but it is actually coming from east of location #7. If items placed are retrieved, the same noise will occur.

## 4. A Tomb?

In the center of this room is a simple unadorned sarcophagus. A name plate at its base says simply:

“Garvin Richrom - Father, Husband, Inventor”

The sarcophagus has a long-decayed corpse within, dressed in standard funeral attire.

## 5. Plundered Treasure Room

This secret passage looks to have been the treasure vault for the tomb. One problem: It’s been picked over.

Half a dozen treasure chests are smashed, tipped over, and generally vandalized. The tops are broken in, the bottoms have been cut open as if to search for secret compartments, and the locks are broken. If anyone checks, each chest looks to have been fitted with a (now expended) poison needle trap.

Also in the room are many broken casks and coffers and other containers which have been bashed in. Debris is scattered around the room.

Searching through the mess will reveal 5sp and 2cp that had been missed by whoever looted the place.

## **6. Secret Treasure Room**

Against the south wall is a treasure chest. It is locked and fitted with a poison needle (poison save or die if not disarmed). The chest is absolutely stuffed with coins: 10,000cp.

## **Solved Puzzle Rooms**

Locations #7, 8, and 9 all have an identical setup, so that will be described here and only the unique elements of each room will be described under their individual location numbers.

The doors are all made of stone, and are very slightly open already. The doors do not lock if closed.

The inside of the room (including ceiling, floor, walls, and the inside of the doors) are lined with iron bars forming a cage of sorts inside the room.

On the inside of the south door is a plaque which will have a question written on it. Along the west wall are a number of possible answers written on the wall, with a slot under each answer.

Each slot will fit a sword (or dagger) blade. Iron spikes, arrows, or similar items can also fit, but a flat blade will be an immediately obvious match. These slots are inert and nothing will happen if anything is placed within them.

## **7. Puzzle Room**

The question on the inside of the south door:

“How Many Toes Does My Son Have?”

There are 14 slots along the west wall, labeled 0 through 13.

## **8. Puzzle Room**

The question on the inside of the south door:

“What is the Secret Ingredient in My Wife’s Funnel Cake Surprise?”

There are seven slots in the west wall, and they are labeled Banana, Blueberry, Brownie, Cherry, Parsley, Pudding, Stirge Legs

## **9. Puzzle Room**

The question on the inside of the south door:

“When the King Graced the Grinding Gear With His Presence in the Year of the Long Solstice, How Many Retainers Did He Have in His Entourage?”

There are 100 slots along the west wall, labeled 0 through 99.

## **10. Formerly Trapped Door**

This door is hanging off its hinges, with a large hole in the center of the door. It looks as if something inside the door exploded outward into the passage, and the surface of the passage have blast marks emanating from the doorway.

## 11. The Tomb of Garvin Richrom

The center of the room has a large sarcophagus on a raised platform, its lid broken and laying in pieces inside. Several sockets around the base have obviously had items pried from them. The skeleton at rest within is complete, but broken; its fingers and neck have been severed and it is missing a few teeth.

## 12. Another Empty Room

This room is completely bare, except for a series of three levers (all in the down position) and three buttons on the westernmost side of the south wall. The levers have three positions: Up, level, and down, and the buttons can be pressed (and return to their original position if pressed again).

Every time a button is pressed or a lever moved, there is a sound of rumbling and grinding stone through the south wall.

If the levers are in the following position: Down, Up, Level, and the buttons are in the following pattern: Pressed, Unpressed, Pressed, then the secret door on the west wall will open. The passage there has collapsed, any if for some reason characters spend time digging it out, they will find that the passage ends suddenly after 150'.

## 13. Organ Room

This room is set up like a small concert hall, with a raised stage in the southeast corner with an organ on it. The organ's pipes run into the walls and disappear into the ceiling. A number of chairs on the floor face the organ.

The wall over the door on the north side of the room has pipes (which look the same as the organ pipes) running from the ceiling down around the door frame, and over the door is also (on the south side of the door) a plaque which reads:

“You’ve Come This Far and Myself You’ve Almost Found, But to Pass This Door You Must Play the Proper Sound”

The door is not actually locked or trapped in any way. Characters are free to pass through with no challenge or trouble.

If the piano is played, ask the player to sing or hum the melody the character is playing, roll a d6, and then consult the following chart for the results:

### Roll Result

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| 1 | An ear-piercing shriek rings throughout the room. Everyone inside must make a death save or go deaf for 2d12 hours.  |
| 2 | A brilliant flash of intense light goes off inside the room. Everyone inside must make a petrification save or be blinded for 4d12 turns.  |
| 3 | Gas pours out from around the organ. Everyone inside the room must make a poison save or sleep for 2d12 hours.   |
| 4 | Holes in the ceiling open up and rot grubs rain down on the room. Everyone in the room must make a paralyzation save or be struck by d3 grubs  |
| 5 | Foul liquid gunk spews forth from the walls and everyone inside the room must make a poison save or be so overcome with nausea that their strength and constitution are halved for 2d6 hours. Also, projectile vomiting.                                 |
| 6 | The organ explodes! Everyone in the room takes 6d6 damage - breath weapon save for half damage. If one save is successful, roll another, a success indicates damage halved again, and if a third such save is successful, the character takes no damage. |

The player should believe that the melody played has a direct influence on the result. To achieve this effect, the referee should make several rolls beforehand so the players do not realize they are being subject to a random effect.

If the song *My Bonny Lass (She Don't Look so Good)* is played (and *of course* the answer to, "Can my character read sheet music?" is "Yes!"), d3 of the effects will occur simultaneously.

## The Puzzle Rooms

Locations #14, 15, 16, and 17 all have an identical setup, so that will be described here and only the unique elements of each room will be described under their individual location numbers.

The doors are all made of stone. All doors open towards the north. The south doors are easily opened and closed, but the north doors are firmly locked by a mechanism that can not be seen (and therefore can not be opened by a thief).

The inside of the room (including ceiling, floor, walls, and the inside of the doors) are lined with iron bars forming a cage of sorts inside the room.

On the inside of the south door is a plaque which will have a question written on it. Along the west wall are a number of possible answers written on the wall, with a slot under each answer.

Each slot will fit a sword (or dagger) blade. Iron spikes, arrows, or similar items can also fit, but a flat blade will be an immediately obvious match. If the appropriate object is placed in the correct slot (or sequence of slots), there will be an escalating hum, a crackling sound, then the north door will swing open. If an appropriate object is placed in the wrong slot, there will be an escalating hum, and then an explosion as electricity surges through all the iron bars and jumps and arcs throughout the room. The person placing the object takes d6 damage and anyone else in the room takes d3 damage. A magic wands save applies for everyone, and success indicates half damage.

Although the electricity is not a magical effect, protections against spells should work, and one electrical jolt should be considered the equivalent of a *Magic Missile* spell for these purposes. Standard electrical protection, or holding a non-conducting material between the placing hand and the object being placed in a slot will not help - the characters do not know the properties of electricity in a fantasy game world, and the room is specifically constructed to amplify the jolt. If a character wishes to hire a sage and figure out a scientifically sound way of insulating himself from a trap that's obviously already been set off, they may do so. However, while they are here, characters will shove something in the right hole or they will take damage or they will not move forward.

The slots will only operate if an object with a metal tip is placed inside. If there is a sequence of slots that must be used, then objects must be inserted into the proper slots consecutively, not simultaneously, and characters must wait for the humming and crackling from one slot to stop before placing something in another slot will have any effect. If multiple slots must be selected, and a wrong slot is chosen at any point, then the entire sequence from that room must be started from the beginning. Slots are not active, and placing objects within them will have no effect for good or ill, unless both doors of the room are firmly shut.

If a *Knock* spell (or other means that a good referee can not rightfully disallow, such as someone having giant strength and forcing a door) is used to open a northern door, then all incorrect slots will simultaneously discharge, causing 99d3 damage to everyone in the room if it is a numerical puzzle, or 25d3 if it is an alphabetical puzzle. Saving throws apply as usual. And the door will open.

There is no other way to open the northern doors, so once the party passes through, if the doors close behind them they can not go back. The doors automatically close after one turn unless stopped by some means.



Note that the electricity mechanism isn't just a trap, it is the same thing that allows the northern door to open. If the trap is somehow disarmed, then the door to exit the room will not open.

## **14. Puzzle Room**

The question on the inside of the south door:

“What Is My Wife’s Name?”

There are 26 slots along the west wall, labeled A through Z. The correct sequence is A-N-N-A-B-E-L-M-A-R-I-E.

## **15. Puzzle Room**

The question on the inside of the south door:

“What Is My True Full Name?”

There are 26 slots along the west wall, labeled A through Z. The correct sequence is G-A-R-V-I-N-R-I-C-H-R-O-M.

## **16. Puzzle Room**

The question on the inside of the south door:

“How Many Guest Rooms Are Inside the Grinding Gear Inn?”

There are 100 slots along the west wall, labeled 0 through 99. The correct slot is 16.

## **17. Puzzle Room**

The question on the inside of the south door:

“How Many Idols Of Saint McIver Are In My Tomb?”

There are 100 slots along the west wall, labeled 0 through 99. The correct slot is 12.

## **18. The True Tomb**

Echoing sounds of scratching from the walls and the sound of a constant water drip are obvious once the final puzzle door is opened. The sounds permeate this room and the entire final “maze” area.

In the center of this room is a raised sarcophagus, with its heavy stone lid fallen to one side of the platform and broken in half. The ceiling is vaulted (30' high) and hanging from the ceiling along the walls are eight golden curtain rods (weighing 100 pounds each and worth 500gp intact - half that if broken). There used to be tapestries hanging from these rods, but they have been torn down and are in shreds on the floor.

Also in the room are three goblin corpses. They are not rotted, but look shriveled and somehow preserved, as if the life had just been sucked out of them. They are all wearing severely torn leather armor (stripping the bodies will also reveal stabbing blade wounds), and have suffered savage claw wounds. Their short swords lie beside them.

Bloodstains cover the floor (not touching the sarcophagus or the bodies!) and lead off into the maze area.



The inside of the sarcophagus appears to be empty, with its silk lining torn to bits and bloody claw marks all over the inside of the casing and (fallen) lid.

The sarcophagus has a false bottom (detect as if a secret door), and if lifted out will reveal the true resting place of Mr. Richrom. The Exit (location #20) will open (as will the sliding wall at location #24 of level one), and characters present will hear the sound of grinding stone coming from the north, when this false bottom is removed.

The body is well-decayed, ruining the fine burial clothes and silk lining of the true crypt. His bony hands are clutching a scroll case. If opened, the scroll inside reads:

“I Gave My Riches to the Poor, You Thieves! Ha Ha!”

Around Richrom’s ankles, wrists, and neck is odd, bulky jewelry made of lead.

There is a second hidden compartment under Richrom’s body. It too must be found as if a secret door, but in order to have any chance of finding it, a seeker must climb inside; two coffin-depths are too deep to just reach in and search around.

If someone climbs in before taking Richrom’s body, including the jewelry (which serves to carefully weigh the body), out, the false bottom will collapse. While this makes the compartment obvious, the crystal tiger will be smashed and worthless, the potions and scrolls will be ruined and there is a 25% chance each that the wand and the staff will be broken as well. If the body is removed, then one completely unencumbered person (certainly not wearing chain or plate armor!) can search within the sarcophagus without endangering the treasure.

The treasure:

A plaque attached to the floor of the space:

“Congratulations!”

*Ghostcutter*: Longsword +0, +2 versus undead. Can also be used to hit non-undead creatures which may only be hit by +1 or greater weapons. The downside is that anyone carrying this weapon can never hide from undead - they will sense the sword automatically if they are within 30’.

A large crystal tiger worth 5000gp

*Wand of Paralyzation* (12 charges)

*Staff of Healing* (6 charges)

Potions: *ESP*, *Fire Resistance*, *Gaseous Form*, *Growth*, *Levitation*

*Scroll of Protection from Undead*

Magic-User Scroll: *Mirror Image*, *Wizard Lock*

Magic-User: *Shield*, *Knock*, *Protection from Normal Missiles*

Cleric Scroll: *Neutralize Poison*

Cleric Scroll: *Bless*

## 19. Mirrored Corners

Each of these corners is fitted with a diagonal mirror so that at a distance, until one is actually at the corner, it looks as if the passage continues straight instead of turning.

## 20. The Exit

In this corner is a mirror identical to those in the locations #19, but behind the mirror is a secret door. This door is completely indistinguishable from the surrounding wall and only an elf has any chance of finding it, and only a 1 in 6 chance at that. However, there is no opening mechanism here.

The trigger for the door is in the sarcophagus. If and when the compartment with the weighed-down body is found, the door will slide down (the mirror must still be moved/broken to see the passage) revealing the exit passage. The tunnel gradually slopes up and comes to the surface about a mile away from the inn.

## EPILOGUE

Five days after the party leaves via The Exit, or six weeks after The Sliding Wall has been triggered, Garvin Richrom, The Old Trickster, will return to reset the traps and replace all of his carefully planned clues and decoys. And clean up any mess. The traps, puzzles, and final treasure will not be the same as before. And if the adventurers discovered the final treasure, he will know them, and he will remember them. And he will test them again.

Oh yes. He will test them again.



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# The Grinding Gear

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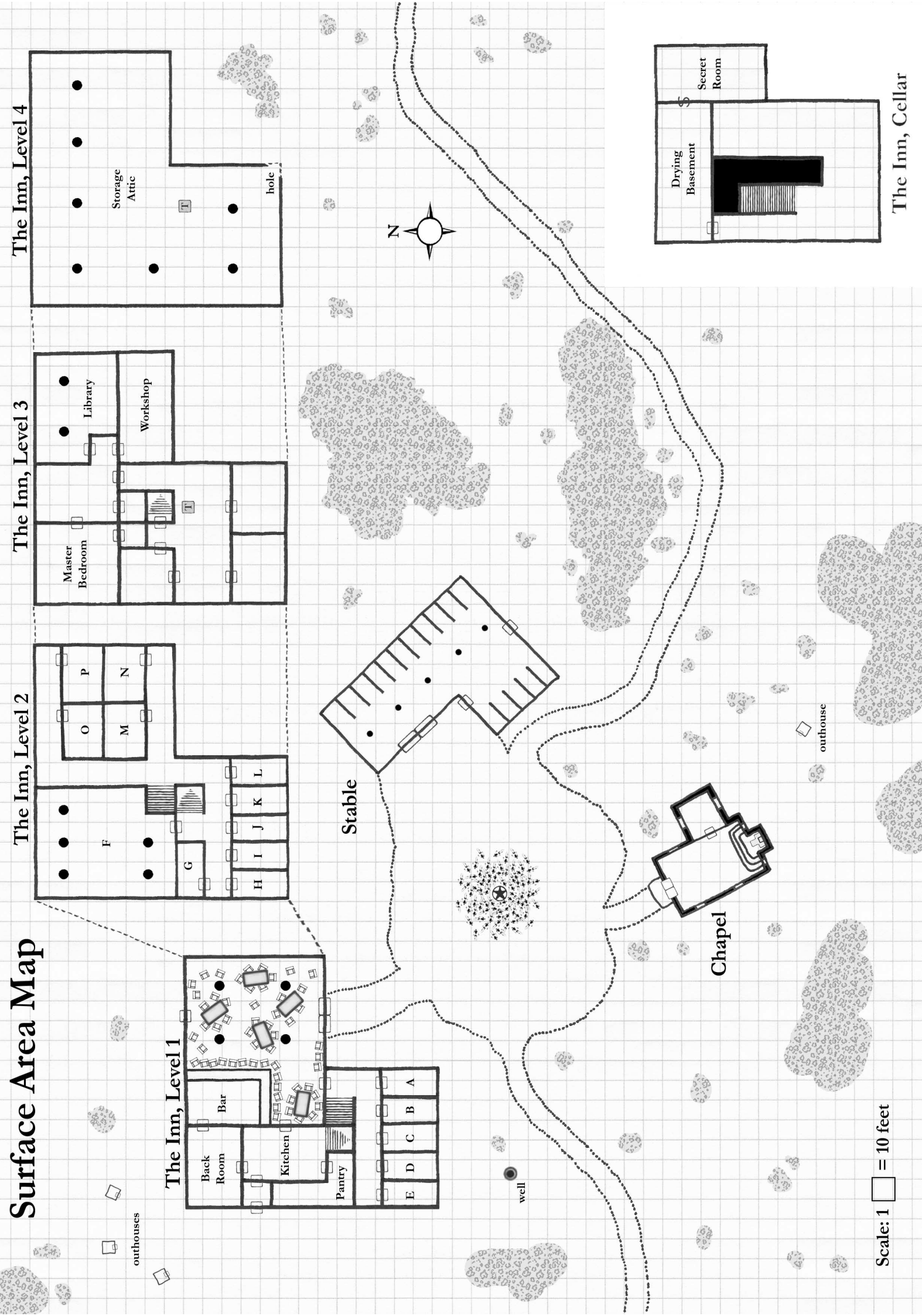
# Surface Area Map

The Inn, Level 2

The Inn, Level 3

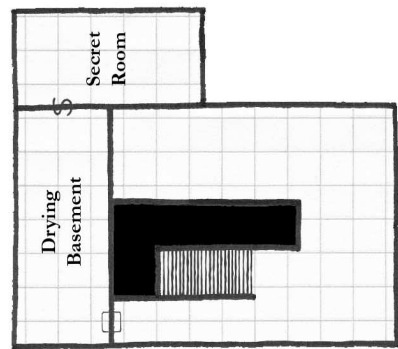
The Inn, Level 4

The Inn, Level 1



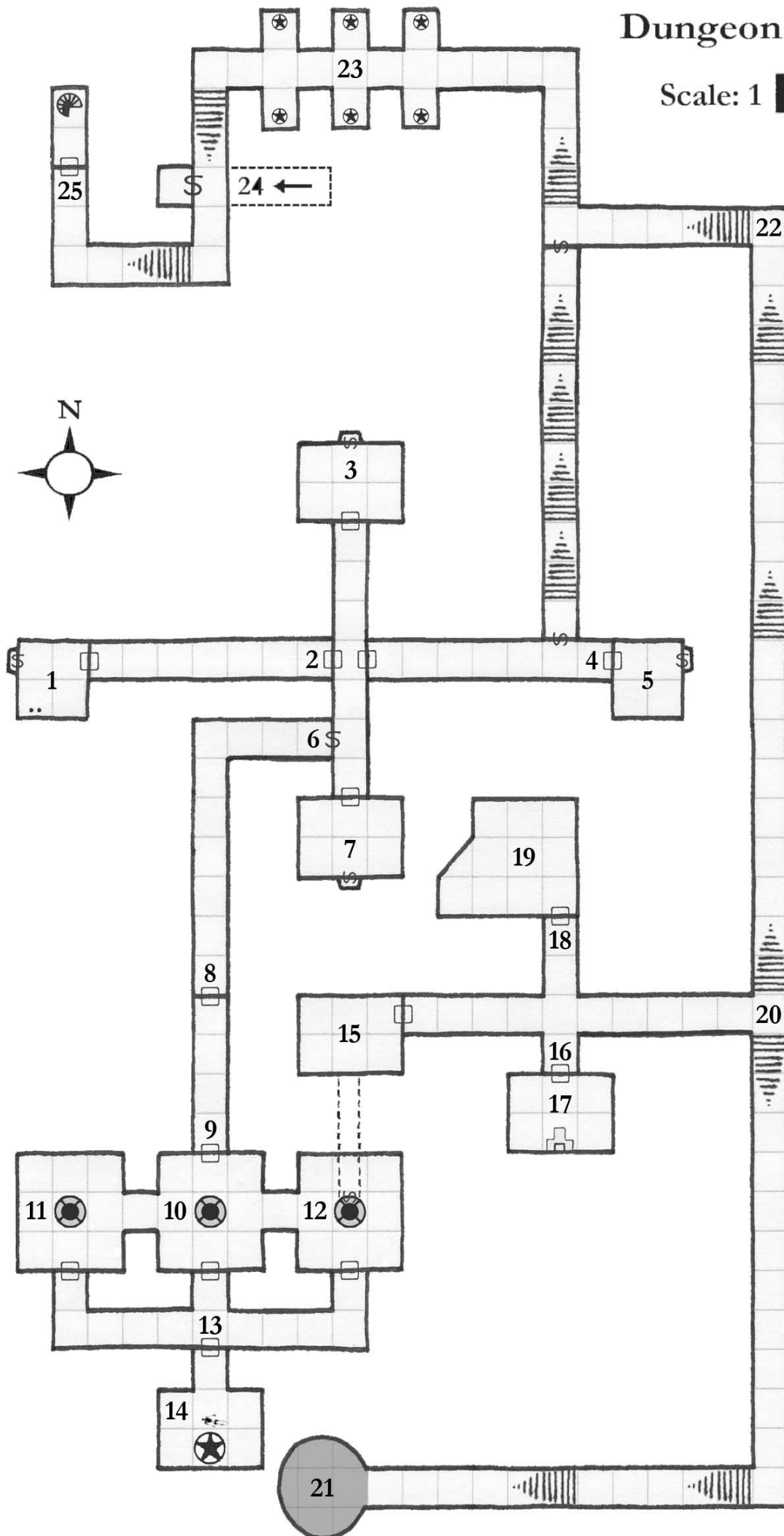
Scale: 1  = 10 feet

The Inn, Cellar



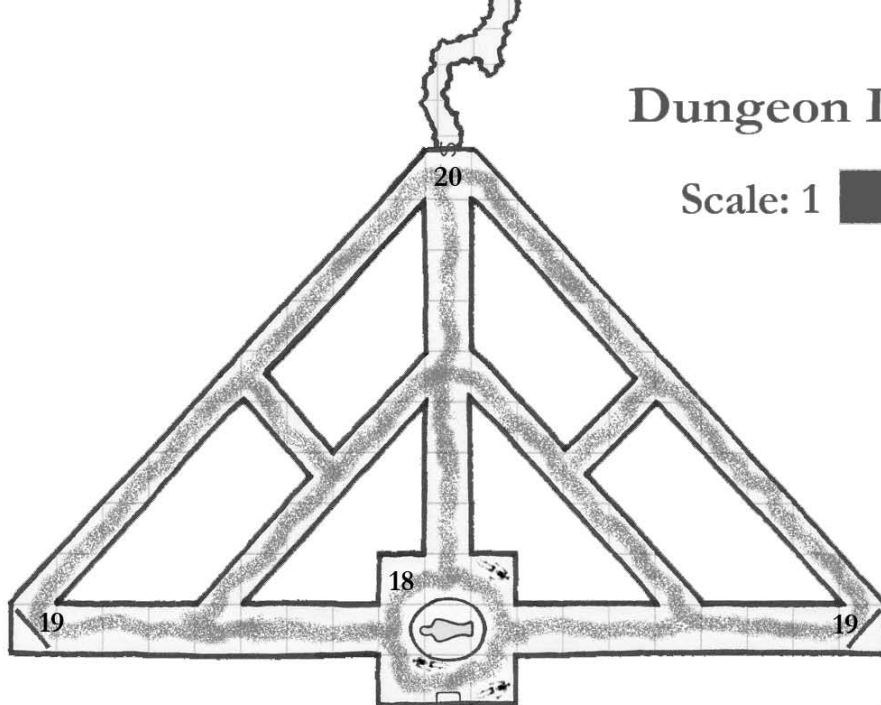
# Dungeon Level One

Scale: 1 ■ = 10 feet



# Dungeon Level Two

Scale: 1  = 10 feet



Door



Statue



Secret Door



Remains



Secret Compartment



Sarcophagus



Stairs Down



Sliding Block



Spiral Stairs



Altar



Underfloor Passage



Organ



Collapsed Passage



Chairs



Open Pit



Mirror



Water



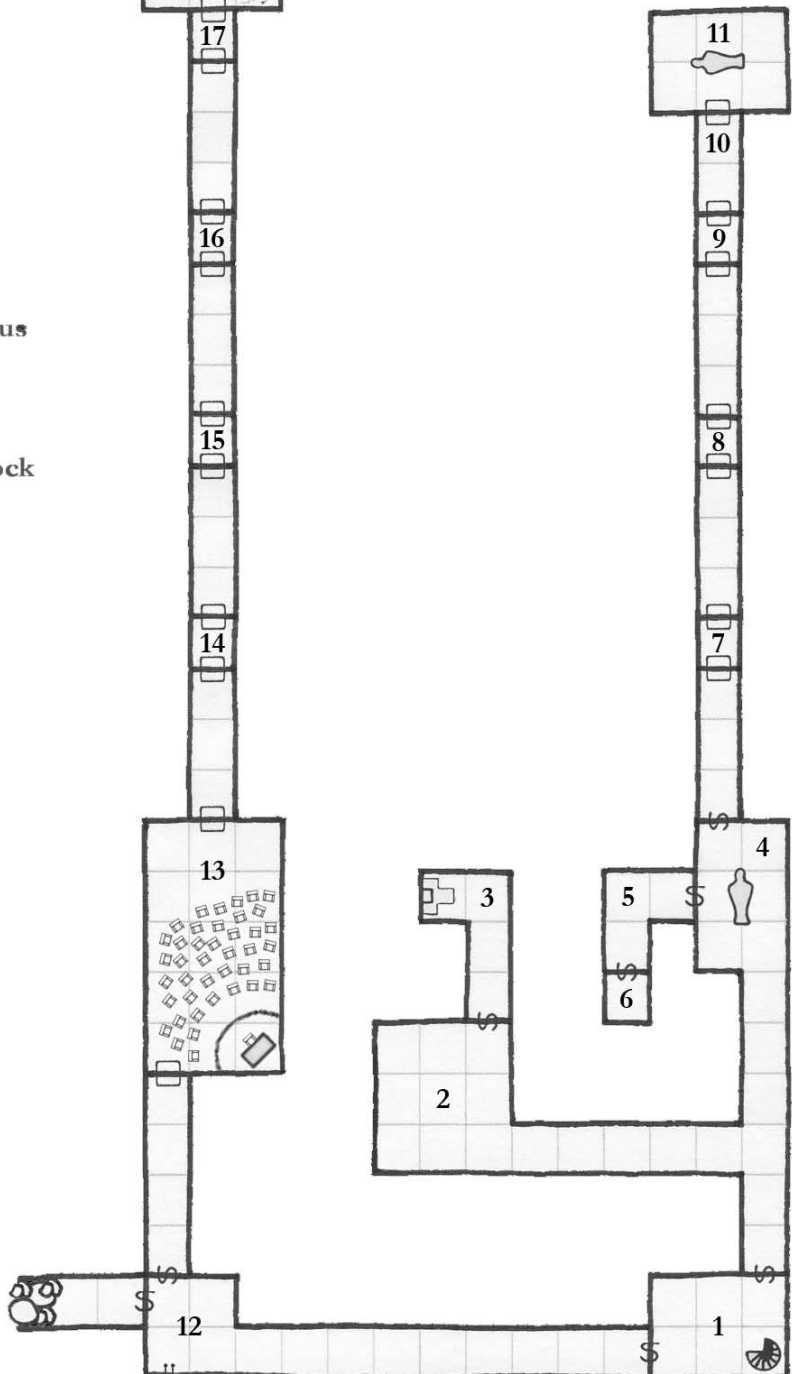
Blood Trail



Natural Cave



Levers





Here is the map I promised you.  
I expect payment as arranged.  
- Grant

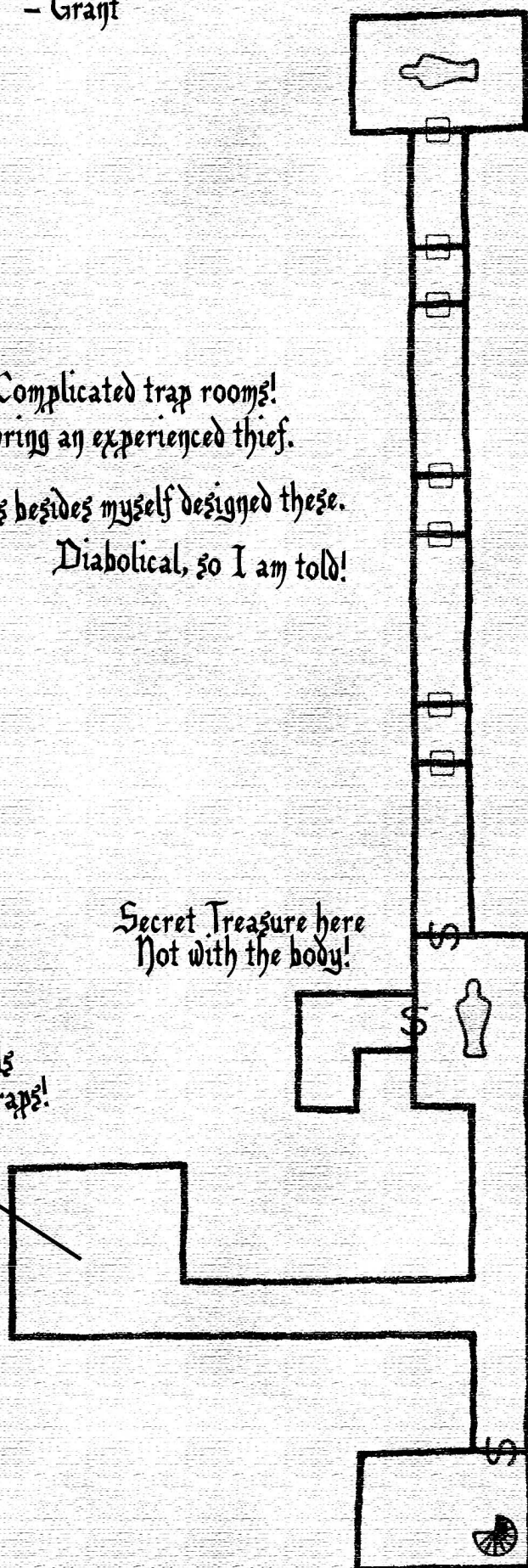
The true tomb here.  
Minor personal effects  
on body. Please, do not  
disturb. The real  
treasure is near  
the false tomb.

Complicated trap rooms!  
Bring an experienced thief.  
Others besides myself designed these.  
Diabolical, so I am told!

Secret Treasure here  
Not with the body!

False Tomb:  
Do not be fooled!  
No treasure!

Star Room:  
Don't look at the walls  
Magical hypnosis traps!



# THE CHEAT SHEET

The original plan was just to describe the dungeon and let it be a nonsensical and seemingly random funhouse dungeon, but some referees may want to know the interior logic behind the madness. So here it is.

## The Surface Area

### **Statue + Storage Attic**

The sleep trap was never intended as a deathtrap; it was merely a deterrent for the time after the completion of the dungeon when the inn was still in business. After everything was closed and abandoned, the mosquito bats moved in.

The bodies have been stripped by looters who happen by the carnage after the fact.

### **Stables**

The horses of course belong to the adventurers in Dungeon Level One. Those men are the first adventurers to make it inside the dungeon, which means if the PCs find the first secret door, they will have gone deeper into the dungeon than anyone ever has since it was completed.

### **Chapel**

This was intended to stay intact, but wandering monsters happen.

### **The Bar**

The sign above the bar is complete. It wasn't any sort of "no shoes no shirt no service" notice, but merely a command: "Notice!" As in, "Be observant!"

### **Drying Basement Secret Room**

This is where the goblin bodies from Dungeon Level One, location #14, and Dungeon Level Two, #18 were prepared.

### **Workshop**

The cage and generator is a model of the mechanism that powers the puzzle rooms on Dungeon Level Two. The sheet music is a plant designed to encourage playing of the organ in Dungeon Level Two.

### **Master Bedroom**

The journal is a plant to give credibility to the map located in Dungeon Level One location #14, as well as inform any random wanderer that there is indeed a tomb and treasure somewhere on the premises.

## Dungeon Level One

### **Location 2**

The trap was designed to identify vandals and robbers while the inn was still operating, and has no further effect beyond the coloring.

### **Location 5**

The adventurers' gold carving was looted from the surface, and so is not counted among the idols in the tomb for the purposes of certain questions...

### **Location 7**

Richrom wants so much for the organ on Dungeon Level Two to be played. By making it a hidden clue, he figures interlopers will be convinced it is vital to play the song.

### **Location 9**

Richrom doesn't consider himself a murderer of random travelers. Up to this point, everything is accessible by any harmless clever person, but getting through this locked door requires either illicit skill or the willingness to vandalize to get treasure from a tomb. No guilt for what comes after that.

### **Locations 10 - 12**

Garvin Richrom wants you to know that ghouls aren't that hard to find, and puddings and trolls can be captured one tiny bit at a time and then nurtured to full size.

### **Location 14**

The skeleton is actually that of a goblin, with its head removed to prevent easy identification. The map is a planted decoy designed to discourage and delay explorers who reach the next level.

### **Location 15**

Discovering the slime-attracting lacquer was a source of great income for Richrom, as he sold the secret to a number of wizards over the years.

### **Location 17**

Tell an adventurer that time is running out, and chances are he'll jump at anything, whether it is necessary or not. Richrom's favorite trap because it endangers fools so pointlessly!

## **Dungeon Level Two**

### **Location 3**

The offering plate is a farce, with the altar being carefully weighted to trigger turning stone gears in the earth east of location #7. The noise is there to fool intruders into thinking something is happening; creating that noise is the only purpose of the gears.

### **Location 4**

This is actually Richrom's daughter's body. He needed a human corpse to create a proper tomb, but felt bad about using a servant's body for a decoy. He figured that when his time came, it would be much easier to put his own flesh-and-blood's body here, instead of beyond so many more carefully-constructed traps, to cause despair in the sort of people that he feels killed his daughter.

### **Locations 5 - 6**

These locations play further into Richrom's ruse. Location 5's purpose is to make it look like the planted treasure map existed because someone had already explored and looted the place, and location 6 is supposed to make looters think they've found the treasure. Richrom entertained the idea of painting the copper pieces gold, but thought better of it as that would make it obvious that the treasure is merely a trick.

### **Locations 7 - 9**

Richrom is just having fun. Because these are on the planted treasure map, explorers would undoubtedly find these before the real puzzle rooms. By placing questions with answers not able to be discovered up in the inn, Richrom hoped to cause total panic once the real puzzle rooms were found. The correct answers, not that it matters, are "10," "Blueberry," and "15."

## **Locations 10 - 11**

Of course this just continues the charade of the tomb already being looted.

## **Location 12**

If someone makes it this far, they are obviously on the right track. The levers, buttons, and purposefully-collapsed passageway are there to distract attention away from the real secret door to the north.

## **Location 13**

This is just cruelty. People getting this far are obviously determined and clever, and Richrom figures this is the one last chance to eliminate the real fools.

## **Locations 14 - 17**

Richrom despised people who did not take the time to notice their surroundings, considering poor perception to be a worse personal quality than stupidity or poor manners. He also noticed that the least noble of adventurers often are those that just want to hack and loot, and the honorable and clever sort were the ones to carefully plan and research their expeditions. Richrom wants so desperately only the “right kind” of person to find the loot.

The first level’s idols are not there to express devotion to St. McIver, they are there to be ignored as background dressing, and thus forgotten. And those that forget such things will pay for it here.

## **Location 18**

This entire setup is designed to make grave robbers think Richrom has risen from the dead and is wandering the halls. The scratching and dripping is due to shafts being built around the ceiling giving rats and other vermin access, and it is their noise, and an underground stream whose flow has been amplified by the construction, that is heard here. The dead goblins were defeated raiders that were then dried out in the inn’s basement. The corpse in the sarcophagus is one of the inn’s most cherished caretakers who died some years before Richrom did.

## **Epilogue**

No further “official” follow-up on the activities of Garvin Richrom will be released. Make use of him in your campaign as you wish without fear of later being contradicted by published material.