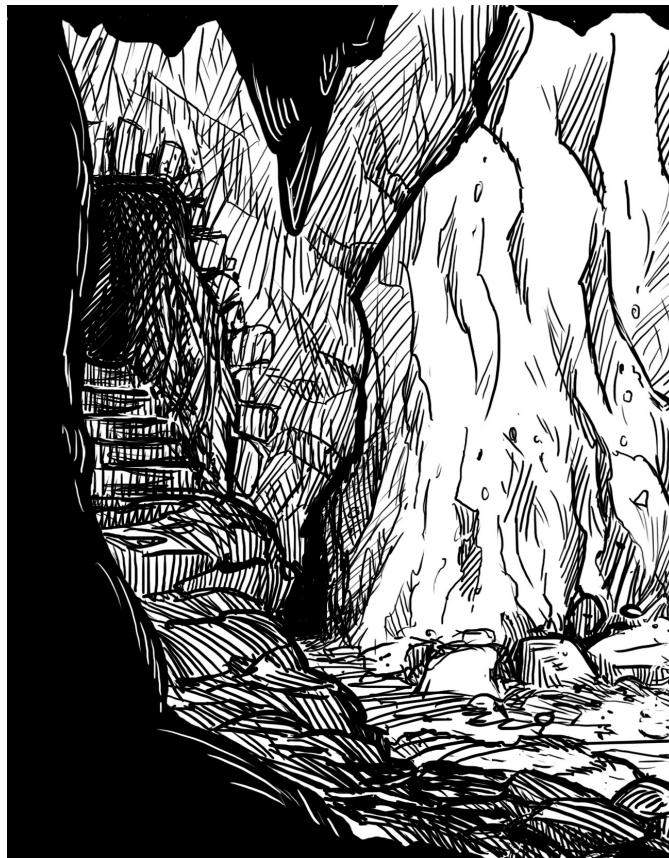


The Pilgrimage of Hunger



*A small network of caverns
for “Veins of the Earth”*

Fanwork-to-Share by Gregorius217778

V1.3

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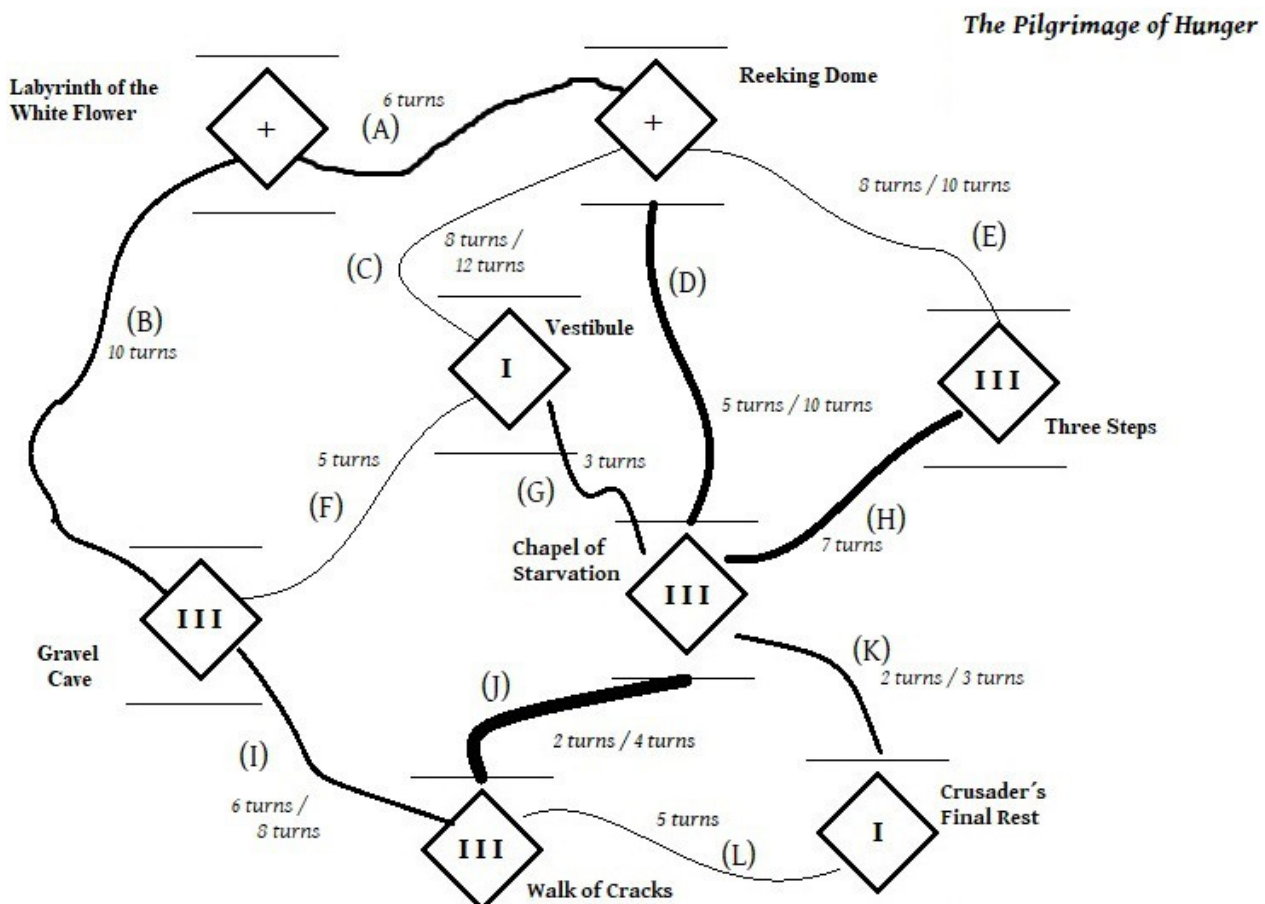
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How to use this place:

Insert this small cave system into your game of *Veins of the Earth*. I constructed it around the *Chapel of Starvation*, and later named it **the Pilgrimage of Hunger**. The idea behind the chapel is that it came into being in response to the hunger of the living, sentient minds and souls of the *Veins*. Whenever it is the creation of cruel and dark gods, of a devil or demon, of something from the Outer Dark or of some strange underworld Godling of hunger that has devoured its own name is up to you. It is assumed that the existence and rites of the chapel are known to at least a few dwellers of the *Veins* in the wider area, and that those in the know make regular “pilgrimages” to the chapel (for the sake of survival).

To integrate **the Pilgrimage of Hunger** into your own game world, you have to add a few entries into to it. This step was deliberately omitted, as you will know yourself what is best for your game. Still, I want to suggest to use the **Gravel Cave**, **Labyrinth of the White Flower** and/or **Reeking Dome** as entry points.

The game inside the Pilgrimage:

Darkness (Hungerpath): The darkness here is hungry and erratic . It pays attention to everything that moves and to each possibility to go this way and that. It is restless and jumps away from the light, but jumps back just when it passed.

GM: Describe the darkness as *unsteady, nervous and moving constantly when a light is present. Movement inside of it will be noticed before shapes and numbers, and numbers before shapes. Light drives it into the cracks and openings of tunnels and caves, where it converges and thereby gives away any exits. Periphery vision suffers, those who stay on guard will be unable to perceive details, those that focus on details will suffer from tunnel vision.*

Smell: unless mentioned otherwise, the air smells of dust, and like the smell the own hand after it had been quickly moved over a stone surface. A bit of staleness and a hint of cold sweat mixes in as well.

Touch: The stone is mostly smooth, but dry and with a hint of a grainy feel when it comes into contact with the bare skin. Sometimes surfaces are cracked or seem to be segmented: layers and layers of the same stone pressed onto another. In the light, it ranges from sepia to ocher in color, with darker parts sandwiched in.

Paths on the map differ from the map key introduced in *Veins of the Earth*:

The thickest lines (three of them, connecting the *Chapel of Starvation* to other caves) are **large shafts or natural tunnels**. They are more than 7 feet wide or high, and are easy to walk in.

The thinnest lines are **crawls and chimneys** (there are no squeezes on this map).

The remaining passages are **shafts or walks**. Some of them are narrow or low, and thereby not easy to cross.

Every passage has a “travel time” noted next to it (those leading up or down have two numbers accordingly) as well as a letter for the entry about their details. A Referee that feels that detailed passages would be “to much” should feel free to ignore those details.

Random Encounters:

This place is not teeming with life, but as it is frequented regularly there is a chance for random encounters in the **Pilgrimage**. At certain intervals, roll a d6. A “1” means an encounter with a *Predator*, “2” means one with *Pilgrims*.

Check first for a random encounter after 3d6 turns, then after 2d6 turns, and then every 1d6+2 turns. An encounter “resets” these intervals. During any visit their should not be no more than two encounters with *Predators* and/or two further encounters with different groups of *Pilgrims*.



Labyrinth of the White Flower:

Upon coming closer to the cave the PC will notice a wet tang to the air, and some may hear a distant drop of water now and then. There is a faint glow some where in the center of the place).

The cave is oval in shape, vast and of wet limestone. The floor and the ceiling (which is shrouded by darkness) are covered in thick stalagmites and stalactites. They are often as large as a small tree and the space between them is akin to winding, curving paths. Climbing them is hard, as the stone is smooth and wet. It takes at least four turns to move from one end of the Labyrinth to the other.

Its connections to the larger cave system are:

[A] a 4 feet wide opening to a walk in the southern wall, about 7 feet above the ground. The cave wall forms a steep, smooth and rather slick slope here.

[B] a 3 feet wide opening into a walk in the western wall, about 2 feet above the ground and easily accessible. The surrounding wall forms a gently sloping funnel towards it.

It is easy to follow the glow, and doing so leads right to the center of the cave. After about a turn (still not at the center, but closing in on the glow), the characters may hear a thin, male voice (speaking French) before they will eventually find an old and haggard man, pale and naked but for a few rags and the long hair and beard that covers most of his body. The man wears a constantly shining amulet around his neck (and above his beard). Those who come close to him will recognize a sweet, flowery smell about him. He talks to himself constantly.

The Eremite of the White Flower will at first believe that the characters are a hallucination. He will simply give them a nod and a smile, but no further reaction. When PC attack him, he will be surprised and shocked. His first attempt is to run for his life, only if this fails will he try to fight (Level 0 Specialist; 4 hit points; Unarmed and Unarmored). He knows this pseudo-Labyrinth like the back of his hand, and thereby may run at full speed without any penalties or risk of stumbling or falling.

If the PC continue to talk to him, he will at some point realize that "...oh...you are real.. yes, you ARE real.." (in French; he speaks no other language). He will smile friendly, but will be at loss at what to do. His name he cannot remember, but "I believe it was Luis... or perhaps Emile"

The Eremite has spent decades here. He knows that he and his friends wandered down here, in search of riches "but found non. No.... we lost another and ourselves instead". He now tends to the White Flower, so "tending" means that he picks palm sized bugs from its petals (harmless vermin), and eats both the petals and the bugs. **Notable stats:** INT: 8 CON: 8 STR: 8

The amulet (a gilded locket with a next-to-faded painted portrait of woman) is under the effect of a *Continual Light* spell that never fades. Asked about it, the Eremite will at first not understand what the characters are talking about, and will be confused. Later, he will act like the item is totally knew to him, before he seems to remember and says that "it was a gift... a long time ago... from somebody who loved me". When it is taken from him, it lights fades after 1d6 rounds.

The White Flower is at the center of the cave, and the Eremite will gladly lead the characters there. At first it looks like a truly gigantic water lily (with a bloom 8 feet high and 14 feet in diameter) that grows out of a water filled hole in the ground. The flower is so large that it dominates most of the water's surface.

Upon inspection the petals turn out to be slightly translucent and seem to have veins running through them. They feel like soft skin or a membrane. The smell is sweet and rich without being sickening. Those who stay near the plant (and breath its odor) for more than a few rounds will come under the effect of a *Charm Person* spell (if the according Save is failed). Those charmed will feel at ease, become peaceful and non-aggressive. In fact, taking a violent cause of action when there is any other option left calls for a *Save Magic Devices*. Those who fall under the spell must make a further Saving Throw immediately, with a +5 bonus. If this Saving Throw is failed, the character will strip naked and crawl into the bloom's center, where the White Flower will swallow him or her (the character is GONE then).

The White Flower is a thing not from this earth. It is neither a plant nor is it an entity, at least not as humankind coins these terms. The petals are edible, thin membranes of flesh. Any character that the White Flower swallows will be absorbed, and it may create a copy of it that will serve it in removing parasites from its skin, and in turn allow it to eat some of its petals. The copies lag memory and are in a dream-like state. The Flower never generates more than one copy, and none of them is able to fight. The Eremite is such a copy. The petals are each the equivalent of a meal, and rob the Flower of 1d3 hit points (max hit points: 40). Eating the petals (or the flesh of the Eremite or of a different copy) has the same effect as the odor of the plant. When destroyed, the flower just shrivels and disappears into the water.

The water in the hole is drinkable, and the hole itself is very deep (and actually leads to another plane).

Reeking Dome

When a **Predator** is encountered here, it means an attack by 2d6 **Deepcave Bats**.

There is a slight gloom, a light that is more akin to a haze than a shine. It is likely that a certain smell is noticed long before this faint left-over of light. A sharp smell, biting but with an earthy undertone. A mixture of guano stench, the smell of rodents and stale air.

The cave is very large and reminds of a conical flask with a neck that seems to extend upward forever. The diameter of said neck is far more than a dozen yards, its bottom is more than twice the size. It is a 9 yard drop from the end of the round shaft to the bottom of the cave.

Light shines down the shaft! It is a six feet diameter beam down the middle of it, and lands right on a huge heap of guano. While it is not very bright, to any cave dweller this ray should be a pure miracle from heaven... or a vision of hell.

Its connections to the larger cave system are:

[A] a 5 foot wide opening to a walk, 20 yards up in a northern wall of the neck of the cave (and thereby 24 yards above the floor of it).

[C] a 4 feet wide entry to a 4 feet high crawl in the east of the cave. Its a hole that is partially in the wall and partially in the floor, with a steep decline at the start. **This crawl will beckon any starving (or worse) character that perceives it.**

[D] a hole in the ground of the cave, next to the edge of the guano heap (see below). It is about 8 feet in diameter: a shaft that snakes and winds down into the darkness.

[E] another 4 feet high and 5 feet wide crawl in the west. It is just a foot above the ground and easily accessible.

The rock looks different in this cave. It is dark, almost black-brown in color and has a rough, torn and porous surface that provides plenty of hand-holds, but some of the stone is brittle and gives when weight rests upon it. In many places the walls of the shaft are covered with strange, organic structures that cling to the wall. Some are dry (dried guano and bat piss; brittle), others are slick and stinky (rather fresh guano and bat piss).

Right below the shaft, the bottom of the cave is covered by a huge guano heap that spreads about a yard into every direction. Little green-leafed plants grow at its top: in the center of the light and besieged by lichen and fungal growth which claims the rest of the heap's

surface. The floor as well as the heap itself is dotted with stone flakes and little rocks.

The higher parts of the shaft are the roost of a swarm of **Deepcave Bats** (a total of 29 bats, which is a lot for the meager hunting grounds). When the characters draw attention towards themselves they will attract a small group of them which will attack (or harass) as long as they are further up in the shaft. Otherwise the creatures will only be attracted by wounded characters.

In the lower 15 yards of the shaft the characters may discover the **remains of old climbing gear**: rotten and torn remains of rope that dangle from rusted climbing hooks in the wall.

The dung heap is very large, and covers the broken body of a dwarf that dropped to its death as it tried to climb the shaft. To uncover the body, a large amount of bat guano needs to be removed. Digging through the heap will take 3 turns without any proper tools. This is not only filthy, but dangerous work as it contains a mix of parasites that are much too small to be noticed, and the dust that will fill the air contains fungal spores that may lead to an infection. *Save vs. Poison*; working with a spade in hand and a piece of cloth in front of the mouth gives a +2 bonus, working with the bare hands and without any possibility to clean them leads to a -3 penalty.

A character that fails the *Save* will **catch an infection(d6)**; either through the exposure to the fungus spores (1-3), due to parasites (4-5) or both (6). The fungus infection sets in after 1d4+1 hours, the parasites will make the life of the PC miserable after about a day. The fungus will give the character bouts of fever and nausea (-1 on all rolls) until two *Saving Throws* in a row are passed (one per day). The parasites will reduce the characters maximum hit points by 1 after the first day and by another 1 after the second. This effect resets only when three *Saving Throws* in a row are passed (one per day).

The corpse of the dwarf is clad in the remains of leather clothes and climbing gear. The head of a pick-ax is found nearby, the handle has rotten away. The skin is green with fungus, and the body looks mummified but not rotten. Not even the broken bones that stick out of the limbs do. After it has been at least partially uncovered, the corpse will begin to moan and its eyes will snap open. It is a **Panic Attack Jack (p.96)**, but will only come to live when it has been dug out. Looting the corpse and searching the dung heap will produce 37cp that are now green with patina, the broken remains of a lantern, the rotted remains of a backpack and bedroll, other items that have long rotted beyond recognition and a little flask of lamp oil that (somehow and against all the odds) is still intact. It holds enough oil to fuel a lantern for 16 turns.

Vestibule

The irregular shaped cave has a high ceiling (12 feet) but is only between 6 and 8 feet wide. Its shape reminds of a double-S or winding snake. One end is in the northeast, the other in the south. Its about 25 feet long in total, one end of it cannot be seen from the other.

Its connections to the larger cave system are:

[C] a 4 feet wide entry to a 4 feet high crawl in the northern wall. The opening is six feet above the ground in a next to vertical wall in the northern end of the cave. From what can be seen, the crawl has an upward tilt.

[F] a opening somewhere in the middle of the winding cave. It is roughly circular, about 5 feet in diameter and leads westward. The walk has a recognizable, but manageable downward slope.

[G] a wide, crack in the southern end of the cave, 7 feet high and about 5 feet wide. It narrows towards the upper and lower end, and the path leads downward in a steep but manageable angle.

Every character that is *starving* or worse will feel allured to move to the southern end of the Vestibule (and to follow the crack found there).

A random encounter has to be rolled for the Vestibule, regardless of the current encounter interval. As *Pilgrims* usually do not stay long inside of the Vestibule, a *Predator* will be encountered instead.

Three Steps

The cave looks akin to a natural imitation of three steps of a giant spiral stair. The upper "step" is about 16 x 22 feet, with a rough and partially crumbling edge along its long side. 23 feet deeper begins the next step, triangular in shape and 15 x 23 x 20 feet (each side). The 20 feet side edges to another, lower and final step: 15 x 20 x 20 feet again. Its 5 yards from the ceiling to the first "step", 4 yards from the upper step to the middle one, and another 4 yards from the middle one to the ground. Accordingly, the ceiling is 13 yards above the ground of the lowest "step".

The descend (or ascend) of each step leads over a vertical wall with a crumbling edge. Numerous smaller stones at the foot of each testify that some of it may give.

Its connections to the larger cave system are:

[E] a hole in the ceiling, about 4 feet in diameter . The opening is over the edge of the first step. A character that jumps down from there may trip and fall to the next "step" unless a *Save vs Paralyze* is passed. To reach this opening from below, a character would have to climb up the cave wall and along an overhang.

[H] a large opening into a natural tunnel in the western wall of the last step. The floor declines, the tunnel is between 7 feet and 9 feet in diameter.

Gravel Cave

The gravel cave would look like a very large ax wound from above, cut from north to south. Its profile is oval, 9 feet at its highest point and 5 feet along its border. From one end to the other it is about 20 yards wide while it is 9 yards at its widest point (at the middle) and 3 yards at its the northern and southward ends.

Its connections to the larger cave system are:

[B] a 3 feet wide opening into a walk in the wall near the northern end, about 4 feet above the floor but accessible over a slope.

[F] a roughly circular opening in the last southward third of the eastern wall, 4 feet in diameter and 7 feet above the ground. **Any starving (or worse) character that perceives it will feel beckoned by it.**

[I] an opening in the north into a 12 feet wide and 6 feet high natural tunnel. The faint dripping of water can be heard from inside of it.

At the center of the cave, at its deepest point, a large patch of gravel fills up the depression. It is not of the color of the surrounding rock, but light gray. When the characters pass through the cave they will suddenly hear movement on the gravel. Once.

GM: give the players a moment to freak out about it. Let them do something. Then wait a while and have this happen again, have them freak again/inquire more before...

They hear the sound again, but this time the complete gravel patch moves. It retracts its edges towards its center and piles up on its own. After a few seconds there stands a roughly humanoid shape of gravel, large and wide. It has no face or feet or hand or other details. The depression it covered is now revealed, as is an assortment of bones (a small humanoid).

What the characters face is a minor stone elemental. It is sentient, not very intelligent but harmless and even friendly. But it is completely clueless.

The bones the characters see are the remains of a dead halfling (or similar humanoid). It traveled the Pilgrimage alone and was attacked by a predator near this cave. **The Gravelmental** followed the sound and its presence scared the predator away. Not fully realizing that the little fellow was dead already, he picked it up and brought it to its place. It looked at it, tried to interact with it but eventually just went to snuggle with it (and thereby covered it up). It now knows that it is dead, and knows that the characters are alive and likely to be intelligent. The Gravelmental is very excited, but unsure what to do now.

When the characters do not move, it will not move. When they move away, it will follow by turning into a flowing gravel patch (which makes LOTS of noise) and will flow into a humanoid form again when the characters stop moving. If a character makes a motion towards it, it will try to imitate it a second later. If it would be a child, it would laugh and chuckle but it cannot communicate.

The Gravelmental will follow the characters around for 2d6 hours, which means that they are accompanied by something that makes lots of noise when it moves. It will continue to mimic certain actions, but will not do anything harm- or helpful. After it lost interest, it will simply return to the Gravel Cave.

It moves as *heavily encumbered*. The characters may run from it, and it will stop following them if it lost "sight" of them for at least 3d6 turns. It has no real sight but a mystical equivalent sense with a reach of several yards, and counts as "blind" for the Initiative rules of VotE.

The Gravelmental is a HD:4 creature with AC:16 that will not attack. It is immune to mundane sources of damage, but may be destroyed by *Dispel Magic*. Due to its magical nature it counts as Chaotic.



Walk of Cracks

A very large cave with the outlines of a kidney and the rough shape of a deep bowl in cross section. It measures 10 yards at its longest point and between 14 and 8 yards in width. While the upper part of the bowl has smooth walls, the lower half and its slopes are rough and jagged. Its bottom is an assortment of irregular stones with many cracks and open spaces between them. Numerous rotting bones (human) lie scattered down in the bowl. The ceiling is 9 feet above the ground there. At its high edges, it is only 5 feet.

Its connections to the larger cave system are:

[I] an opening in the north into a 12 feet wide and 5 feet high natural tunnel. The faint dripping of water can be heard from further inside.

[J] a large, jagged opening at the rough center of the ceiling (in the "deep of the bowl"), about 6 feet in diameter. It leads up into vertical fault whose craggy walls provide numerous holds for climbing.

[L] a 3 feet high and 5 feet wide crawl in the eastern wall, located half way up the slope towards other end of the cave (which is a dead-end). The rock is smooth.

The vertical crack in the middle of the cave (J) had split it in half, and the floor at this spot is an assortment of wedged rocks that fell down and blocked another. While it is stable enough to walk on, there still is plenty of free space in the form of gaps between all the rocks, and these gaps are occupied. A small **swarm of carnivorous, white beetles** nests there. While each of them is only the size of a fingernail, they have powerful mandibles, act as a swarm and may crawl vertically. The heat of an open flame is something they shy away from (it "blinds" them when they come within a few inches of it), but only for 1d4+2 rounds before they attack again. They spend most of their time in near-hibernation but become active once they sense vibration.

Upon entering the lower section of the cave the characters should check for *Surprise* after a couple of rounds. If they fail, they will notice the insects only as the ground is already filling with them. When they succeed, they will notice the first bugs, as well as more of them coming up from the gaps and cracks. Fighting the little buggers is next to futile. The bugs themselves will do 1 or 2 points of damage each round (d6: 1-5 = 1; otherwise 2; shift this ratio by one point for every round that the characters do not flee).

The characters may flee when they hurry, but will likely have to deal with 2 or 3 rounds of bug bites anyway.

Crusader's Final Rest

Any encounter in this cave will be with the Anti-Pilgrim.

The cave is small and smooth, its walls are uneven but not ragged. It is roughly 8 feet in diameter and the ceiling is between 3 and 5 feet high. The floor is covered in small rocks and declines towards the southern half, where a 1 foot wide gap is centered. An orderly placed assortment of bones as well as weapon and armory rest against the eastward wall.

Its connections to the larger cave system are:

[L] a 3 feet high and 5 feet wide crawl in the eastern wall. The rock is smooth.

[K] a 4 feet wide fault in the ceiling forms a shaft whose rough surface makes it an easy climb.

The remains are that of a paladin who went into *the Veins* on a quest to bring light into the godless depths, to seek out evil and to find absolution for a murder he had committed due to imprudent behavior and misplaced zeal. After a long journey, the paladin found *the Chapel* during a visit of a large group of pilgrims. He fought bravely, but was outnumbered. With a fighting retreat he fell back to this cave. The pilgrims did not followed him further, but feasted on their slain comrades. Later, they tried to collect his dead body as well, but failed (see below).

The bones have been arranged against the wall. The skull rests in the middle, on a rusty and ripped but orderly folded piece of chain armor. In front of it rest a helmet and sword. The ribs have been placed against the wall, left and right, followed by bones of arms and fingers. Those of the legs and feet form a semicircle in front of the remains.

The ghost of the paladin still lingers, and attacks every non-lawful being that touches his remains or stays in their presence for a turn or more. It appears as a glowing yellow-white phantom made up only of its upper body and sword. It is insubstantial and able to fly, but its "touch" weakens the mind (1d4 Wisdom damage; regained at a rate of one point per day unless *starving* or *dying*). As it may wield its phantom blade without any regard to the physical confinements of the cave it may attack with wide swings that may hit a second target (see below). The phantom itself is immune against non-magical attacks and counts as a 4th level fighter in combat.

AC:14 Hit Points: 18 Movement: will not leave cave

Wide-swing: if an attack is successful, the GM subtracts 2 from the attack roll and treats this as a second attack against an opponent next to the original target.

The bones and the remains of weapon and armor have been arranged in the current way by *the Anti-Pilgrim* (see Encounters), in an attempt to give a honorable warrior an at least somewhat dignified resting place.

The helmet is rusted, the padding is rotted and it is thereby unlikely to fit a character. It may be sold as scrap metal (if the PC know a more civilized place with a forge).

The sword is a long sword which blade was shortened by breaking off much of its top. After the act the paladin dubbed it "Penance", and during his quest for absolution it turned into a +1 magical weapon. It deals 1d6+1 damage when there is enough space to wield it properly, but in cramped spaces (like a crawl or squeeze) it may only be used to thrust for 1d3+1 damage

Only a character with a sense of honour may wield *Penance*. To any other character that picks it up it is a (-2) *cursed* weapon.

The chain mail has been shortened as well, and now only covers the upper body and shoulders. It is ripped and rusty, the undergarment is rotten and houses the dried husks of dead insects. If worn on person the armor will provide AC:15 (as leather and shield), but every attack that deals 4+ damage in one blow will decrease the armor value by one as more and more of it rips and gives. Without proper undergarment, a character suffers from an increased risk of hypothermia (see "Veins of the Earth")



Chapel of Starvation

The cave is large and of nearly rectangular, 10 yards from north to south and 20 yards from east to west. The ceiling is very high, more than 14 feet, and begins to arc at about half the height of the walls. A few small stalactites hang down from it, and there are stumps of larger ones that broke off.

Its connections to the larger cave system are:

[D] a hole in the ceiling, about 8 feet in diameter, next to a broken-off stalactite. A shaft gently winds up into the darkness.

[G] a wide crack in the middle of the southern wall, 7 feet high and about 5 feet wide. It narrows towards the upper and lower end, and the path leads upward at a steep but manageable angle. The lower end of the crack touches the floor.

[J] a large, jagged opening at the rough center of the western half of the floor, about 6 feet in diameter and with jagged edges. It leads down into a vertical fault whose cragged walls provide numerous holds for climbing.

[K] a 4 feet wide and 6 feet high horizontal fault in the eastern corner of the southern wall leads deep into the surrounding rock. It narrows like an ax wound at the upper and the lower point, and the path declines sharply.

[H] a large opening into a natural tunnel 8 feet up in the eastern wall. The opening is about 6 feet high and 4 feet wide. Examination reveals a visible ascent and overall increase in size of the tunnel as it continues.

Nobody could look at this place without recognizing what it is meant to be, at least nobody who is familiar with the concept: a chapel. Four broken off stalactites have been arranged as pews left and right of an altar located a few feet away from the southern wall. The altar is a large, rectangular basalt block that looks like it has been worked by a mason and polished to perfection. Behind it, a crude picture of a church window adorns the sheer wall, painted in broad strokes and with brown-red color (dried blood). The same "color" has been smeared all over the walls in a height between one to five feet. Under the "church window" somebody engraved words into the wall:

ASK FOR WHAT YOU NEED
HUNGER I WILL FEED
FLESH TO THE BONE
MY COMMONION

A hungry character that approaches the altar must pass a *Save vs Magic* or will become *starving* within a moment.

A starving (or dying) character that places a bone onto the altar (even a dry one with no marrow left in it) and prays for food for at least a turn has a [X] in 8 chance of being answered. In that case, meat will suddenly and rapidly "grow" on the bone, so that after a round the bone is fully enclosed by it. The flesh will be carmine red and juicy, like a raw steak. The bone will be gone. What kind of bone it was does not influence the flesh that grows on it, only its amount: The meat on a finger bone will only be an appetizer, the meat on a human underarm will be enough to feed one person while the meat on the bones of a rather complete human (or humanoid) skeleton will be equal to a slain foe or comrade.

After the flesh manifests, the detrimental effect of the altar on "hungry" characters stops for an hour.

The [X] mentioned above is the number of sentient beings present in the chapel who pray for food plus the number of consecutive hours spend pleading and praying. If a "8" comes up on a roll, all present sentient beings that pray for food must *Save vs. Magic Devices*. Those who fail experience how their hunger worsens, just like they would have spend another day without nourishment. There is no limit on how many times a roll may be made in any given amount of time (it is up to the one leading them in prayer), but the Chapel rewards those that spend time (hours) in hunger and desperate reverence. Those who die while praying will waste away within moments, their flesh and skin will shrivel and then turn to dust. All that will be left of the victim are the dried out bones.



The Routes between the Caves

[Route A]

From both ends the route is an easy walk for the first two turns, with a comfortable ceiling that only once in a while forces the characters to assume a bent over posture for a couple of minutes. Later the adventurers will face a 60 degree slope (up when coming from the Labyrinth, down when coming from the Reeking Dome), and thereby a "Level 2 Climb" that will take them 2 turns. The part of the route near the Dome will have the PC encounter bat droppings as well as the one or other chirping bat that will fly away from them.

[Route B]

When the characters encounter a Predator here, it will be the Gigaferret.

The route winds on like the path of a snake. Its height ranges around 7 and 5 feet for most of the journey, but its width constantly shrinks and grows between sections that are only 2-3 feet high. At two different points it becomes so narrow that the characters will have to literally squeeze through it sideways. A roll with a d20 decides if a character is able to slip through. If the result is equal to or above the character's Dexterity, everything is fine. Otherwise the same result is compared to the other attributes in the order of the following table. The first further fail result (lower than the stat) is applied. If none other applies, the character was able to somehow wiggle through after a tense moment.

| STAT | FAIL |
|------|--|
| CON | Nasty scrapes right above the ribs. Rest needs 1 extra turn |
| STR | Pulled muscle. 1D3 points of STR damage |
| INT | If the character wears armor, it must be cut loose and won't protect till repaired |
| WIS | PANIC! Save vs. Device or attract RAPTURE (p.107 Vote) |
| CHA | Whines, wimpers and sobs. Does not move, others have to PUSH (1d3 damage) |

[Route C]

The crawl describes a long, downward (from the Dome) curve. After about (1 turn from the Vestibule; 5 turns from the Dome) the curve tightens abruptly and declines (from the Dome) more sharply before it turns into a 70 degree slope. A part of 20 feet tilts by 90 degree (Level 2 Climb; followed by a Level 3 Climb).

[Route D]

The shaft that connects the two caves is wide and vertical. When there is a light below or any sound louder than a whisper, anyone standing at the upper end will hear it. Abseiling is possible, but the shaft is more than 100' feet deep. Characters may thereby climb down (Level 3 Climb) or have somebody set up the ropes till a suiting ledge is found, have somebody use it for abseiling, and then prepare the next part of the route. This route should take more than just one roll for climbing. (two or three are advised).

[Route E]

The crawl has a slow but steady decline from the Dome towards the Steps. The walls are smooth and at the middle part, water drips from the ceiling and forms small puddles in ditches. A tiny, pale-pink blind salamander will flee up the wall as the characters come closer. After about 6 turns (from the Dome; two turns from Steps) the decline sharpens and becomes a steep slope. The last section is a vertical climb to the opening which leads to the Steps.

All parts are only Level 1 or 2 Climbs as the crawl is narrow enough to secure oneself by pressing limbs and/or the back against opposite walls. The Referee may even forgo all rolls on a trip from the Dome towards the Steps. If any rolls are failed, the D20 result is increased by 3 when compared to Dexterity to reflect the wet surface.

[Route F]

The walk has an all over comfortable height, and while the walls are close they never grow close enough to have a character actually become stuck. The path is curvy at the beginning (west as well as east), but after a turn it straightens and allows a clear line of sight. At the middle of the route a crack separates the two halves from another. It is about 4 feet wide, its upper end is visible about 8 feet above but the lower end is out of sight. Cool, wet air wafts up from below, accompanied by the barely audible sound of rushing water.

[Route G]

Any encounters here will be with Pilgrims.

The openings to this crack are narrow (5 feet each), but it quickly grows till it is wide and high enough to allow three man to stand next to another, would it not be for the diamond shaped profile of the route. It narrows to a small crack towards the floor and the ceiling, the characters will have to walk on the downward slopes to the left and right. Combat is awkward in here (-1 to attack rolls) and it is next to impossible to keep a closed front line (unless the character doing so accepts a -2 penalty to AC).

[Route H]

When a **Predator** is encountered here, it will be the **Calcinated Cancer Bear** (1-3) or **Spotlight Dogs** (4-6).

The natural tunnel is easy to pass, there are no large obstructions. To the north, the wall "sweats" water along the middle of the route, a feature that might go unnoticed due to the smell: soot, ash and chalk. A little later, the first bones may be found. The further the characters continue, the more of them will litter the floor. Humanoids (Feral Halflings make up half of those), and that of smaller beasts and monsters. Somewhere at this point of the route, another tunnel opening is found near the floor, going down and deeper into the dark. The smell of sooth and chalk is strong there. It is a crawl for a character and a squeeze for a Calcinated Cancer Bear. Characters that search the bones may find some larger ones that were not cracked and crushed entirely, as well as the skeletons of two things that look like a mix of monkey and wolf. Their skulls cannot be found anywhere. Aside from this, lots of crystal shards are scattered between the bones. They reflect any light brightly and may help in building a better lamp (5d6 x20sp per shard, a total of 5d6x 3 shard may be found, 2d6 per turn that is spent searing for them). If any character carries at least one of these shards, the next encounter with *Predators* will be with *Spotlight Dogs*.

[Route I]

The natural tunnel is quite wide and comfortable to walk through. The dripping of water may be heard in the distance and the air is damp. Later, the characters will find a small body of dark water (perhaps 6 x 12 feet) that has gathered in a recess at the feet of a more than 10 feet high cliff that covers the width of the tunnel (characters coming from the Gravel Cave will be at its top, otherwise in front of the water at its feet). The water is next to black and the result of a constant dripping from a wet spot above it. The mix of dirt and minerals in it makes it unhealthy to drink unless it is filtered. The ditch below the water is 4 feet at its deepest point and 3 feet at the edges. Characters that don't want to wade through the water may try to climb up the sides of the tunnel (Level 4 Climb).



[Route J]

Behind the respective entrances, the fault narrows quickly while it also turns into a vertical crack through the rock. The walls are cragged, provide many holds and are close to another, so that a PC may use the full body to support itself. Thereby, it is only a Level 2 Climb. The vertical part is reached after about a turn. Somebody has hammered a large iron hook into the upper ledge and secured a thick chain to it, both covered in rust. When the chain is used, no roll for Climbing is necessary for the vertical part. But the hook has a 1-in-8 chance of coming loose halfway, or 3-in-8 when the character in question carries heavy equipment. Any character a sturdy lever may pry the chain loose and take it (counts as two items).

[Route K]

When a **Predator** is encountered here, it will be the **Anti-Pilgrim**.

The vertical fault, that ends in the ceiling of the Final Rest and starts in the eastern part of the Chapel, is jagged and rough, which allows for an easy downward climb. However, a few overhangs make it more difficult to ascend through it (Level 2 Climb).

[Route L]

The long crawl is strenuous. Not because it is difficult, but it forces the characters to remain on their knees, hands or elbows for about an hour while they make their way inch by inch. The ground is smooth, and strangely cold. The GM may want characters to check for the first stages of Hypothermia after they passed the crawl(p.327). They will at least be exhausted and in need of a turn of rest.

Pilgrims & Other Encounters

Within the **Pilgrimage**, most encounters will be random, as the area is only populated by few resident inhabitants but frequented by both *Predators* and regular *Pilgrims* from different areas/roving groups in the Veins. The former added this territory to their hunting grounds due to the latter. Of course, Pilgrims are unlikely to be encountered EVERY TIME that the PC stop by, but the area would be less interesting without an encounter. If the PC pay a visit to this cave system on a regular basis, the GM should consider to roll a d6 before each visit and only have any Pilgrims there (or arriving shortly after) on a result of 1.

Check first for a random encounter after 3d6 turns, then after 2d6 turns, and then every 1d6 turns. An encounter “resets” these intervals. During one visit their should not be more than two encounters with a *Beast* and no more than two encounters with different groups of *Pilgrims*.

Roll a d6: A “1” means an encounter with a *Predator*, “2” with a number of *Pilgrims*.

Predators, contrary to *Pilgrims*, don’t visit the *Chapel* at its center. They prey on the *Pilgrims* instead, in one way or another. Some are beasts and monsters, other are intelligent humanoids and some qualify for both categories. As the Anti-Pilgrim frequents the place the most, it has an encounter slot in both categories.

[Pilgrims; d6]

- #1 The Ghastly Ones
- #2 Cholerids
- #3 Knotmen
- #4 Shepherd, the Aelf-Adal "Guide"
- #5 Feral Halflings
- #6 The Anti-Pilgrim

[Predators; d8]

- #1 Gigaferret
- #2 The Eigengräu
- #3 Calcinated Cancer Bear
- #4 Knotmen
- #5 Spotlight Dogs
- #6 The Anti-Pilgrim
- #7 Deepcave Bats
- #8 Olm Hunters

The Ghastly Ones

“ (...) I have seen you eat your own. I'm the cycle of pain, of a thousand year old reign (...)” [“Unholy” by KISS].

A long time ago, *the Ghastly Ones* used to be adventurers from the surface. They were a group of six, had regular names and spoke like others speak. They even were jolly good fellows.

All of this, the five that remained have left behind a long time ago. They now belong here, into the Veins. They joined the monsters, *changed* because it felt like the right thing to do. The Chapel became the focal point of their journeys and adventures now, as the hunger always drives them back to this place.

All of them are pale, wear only rags and small, worn and patched leather backpacks. Aside from Ceezru, their pupils have dilated permanently. All of them hunger for silence and no longer recognize their own racial nature (see entry 22; 33-34 & 58-59 on p. 326 *Vote*). They have changed their names to match their new appearances and chosen life in the Veins. Further individual changes are named in the description of each NPC and refer to the entries of the table mentioned above.

Ceezru (3rd level Elf; 12 hit points; DEX 14) has long, absurdly-shiny gold-blond hair that she wears in a bun on top of her head, secured by three sticks made from sharpened bones (1d4-1 damage as a weapon, will break when they deal more than 1 damage). Her skin turned nearly translucent, all the blood vessels and veins are clearly visible. Her eyes are yellow-orange and see in thermal vision now, the teeth at the front of the upper jaw are broken, the remaining are yellow and brown.

Ceezru is clad in a ragged banner (of a barony above, a gift and sign of respect from past deeds) that she wrapped around her hips and loins. Once beautiful, her cheeks and eyes are now sunken in and her breasts look like little empty sacks of skin. A blackened, silver-coated steel dagger (1d4) is her weapon, her armor is her agility (AC: 14). Her small backpack holds a *ration**, ragged furs (goat; bedding); a pouch with numerous finger bones; a sewing kit (bone needles, dried intestines for threat, scraps of thin leather) and a small water skin. She will have prepared the following spells:

Blood Into Rope (*Vote* p.308); Heat Ghost (*Vote* p.310); Web (*LotFP* PCB p.150)

Liho (3rd level Specialist; 9 hit points; CON: 5, STR: 7) has a pale skin covered in dark freckles and looks much older than he truly is. His hair he twists and rips out of his scalp on a regular basis, leaving it raw and covered in a few patches of short stubbles. His skin is scabby, as he always scratches and scrapes at it when not focused.

Different ropes are tied over his body: two cross his chest and back, one is bound around the waist. He still wears worn climbing boots and leather trousers but is unarmored (AC: 12) and holds no weapon, but the groups most prized possession: an Aelf-Adal Candle Lamp (*Vote* p.194). A climbing pick is fasted to his hip. His backpack holds a *ration**; a small water flask, about a doze rib bones; flint and steel (wrapped in a piece cloth); a flute made of bone and a small, rusty jaw trap. Aside from his special skills Liho has a special, involuntary trick: there is darkness in his belly (entry 52-53).

Architecture: 3 in 6
Climb: 2 in 6

Bushcraft: 4 in 6
Languages: 3 in 6

Long (3rd level Fighter; 18 hit points; CON:15 STR: 14 DEX: 13) looks like a nightmare-devil from the depth of darkness. He is about 7 feet tall (if not taller) but his body is unnaturally thin while his limbs are longer than that of a man should be (VotE p.327; entry 65-67). His black hair still grows long and is filthy and checkered with chalk, dust and grime. The hairline has receded, the high forehead is now adorned with five knobby pieces of horn (or is it bone?..) that protrude from the skin, lined by blood-brown encrustations. They form a circlet above the brow, far over the eyes that have sunken deep into the skull. The fingers have grown hook-like (entry 37-38) but they are still good to hold the shortened boar-spear he carries (1d6+1 damage).

The leather of his trousers is torn at the legs in many places, the Gambeson he wears (AC:14 against attacks with d6 or lower) is fastened around his thin figure with two leather belts whose buckles have been blackened. His backpack contains a ration*; two small water skins made from abnormally large fish bladders, 1d4 partially smashed skulls (small beasts and humanoids), 1d6+3 jaw bones (small beasts and humanoids); flint and steel (wrapped in a piece cloth); a worn bear fur (black bear), two spear tips (one made of iron, one made from bone) and a biface (a stone used as a tool).

Rowa (3rd level Specialist; 12 hit points) stopped wearing clothes, and she stopped shivering as well. Hypothermia will not effect her as long as she is not wet or in ice-cold conditions. While her head and neck are completely hairless, the rest of her body is covered in thick silver-white body hair. She was not an albino at birth, she became in the Veins. Her eyes now have a slight red gleam in the light. The movement of air on her hair and skin tells her so much now, as she learned how to listen to it (entry 29-30). Nobody sneaks up on her anymore. Never is she unaware of her surroundings, never does not she know where the opening to the next cave is or what it is like. She became a scout for her group down here, and a hunter. Her nails have grown into claws (1d4), and oh does she know how to make use of them. She wears nothing, what little she calls her own Wyrms carries for her.

Climb: 3 in 6 Sneak Attack: 3 Stealth: 3 in 6
Survival: 3 in 6

Wyrms (2nd level Specialist; 9 hit points; CON: 15) eats everything. Even shit. Even things other would not eat as it is harmful. To Wyrms, it stopped being harmful. Perhaps he ate something strange. He used to have a pointy nose, but it broke and flattened. As it healed, he broke it again and again himself, till it was a flat piece of meat against his face that forced him to breathe through the mouth all the time. Wyrms likes warmth, but all is so cold. He lost his hair, all of it. His belly is swollen, his neck is swollen, even his head and face look

swollen, but his limbs are not. He is not hungry, never, but he wastes away when he does not eat proper. And he always eats when he may do so, although he is never hungry. He became quiet strange. His joints he may bend in ways the others cannot, where they need to squeeze through, he worms through. He does not bleed like others. His blood is viscous and seals the wound. He does not feel pain, but shivers anyway when a wound is deep. His body heals, better than that of the others, and he is always content and at ease. Funginid Slaves want to hug him, even when he starts to eat them (which he will). He understands Funginid, but cannot speak it. No natural-born Veins dweller will eat Wyrms unless starving: they sense that he is entirely unwholesome.

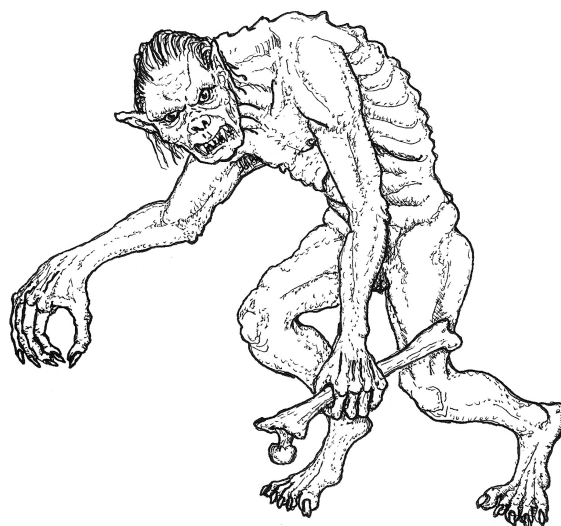
Wyrms carries a femur for a club (1d4 damage, breaks on an even number) and wears an assortment of dried alga like a poncho. They cause an allergic reaction to everyone who touches them (itchy swelling). Sometimes, he eats bits of them. His limbs and feet are wrapped in rat furs and he carries the largest backpack of all of the Ghastly Ones (but not a LARGE backpack).

*All items marked with a double-asterisk** belong to Rowa.*

A large waterskin, several dried turds (his own) wrapped in fur and hair, with different fungus growing on them; a fist sized rock of salt**; a few bones (from small animals); more bones (humanoid limbs)** a ration*, another ration**, a rusting set of lock-picks, a silver hand-mirror**; coiled rusty metal wire, a sturdy-but-rusty scissor, a wet-stone, some hand drills, 3d6 rusty iron nails; [Something from the I SEARCH THE BODY table on p.282]**

Search: 4 in 6 Sneak: 2 in 6 Tinker: 3 in 6

***They Hunger:** Roll a d6 when the Ghastly Ones are encountered. The numbers 1-5 indicated which of the five (Ceezru; Lihu; Long; Rowa; Wyrms) is out of rations (and thereby has none in the backpack). On a 6, -all- of them are currently out of rations.



Cholerids (Vote p.38)

A small colony of them migrated to a nearby cave, perhaps 12 or 14 hours of travel from the Chapel. Most of them suffer from tuberculosis, a few have the flu and/or tetanus. When the hunger grows to strong and there is nothing left to eat, they draw straws... When all is done and the hunger staved off for a while, three of them are sent to the Chapel with a burlap sack with the remaining bones. The journey is very strenuous to the ill wretches, so they rest a day after they arrived in the Chapel. Then, they put the remains of their erstwhile colony brethren onto the altar and begin to murmur their chants, interrupted by shattering loud coughs.

To them, this is an act of solemn worship to their second god. Their first is, and always will be, the diseases they keep. They don't love their gods, because they are cruel to them and cruel is the service they demand. But they know that it must be. It is the only way, their own fatalistic faith that keeps them from deliverance. They are wasting monks that spend their lives in delirious piety.

None of the three Cholerids is ever armed or carries anything else but their own burlap rags: even the predators shy away from them. They will gladly talk to everyone and invite them to their colony, the act alone gives their disease the chance to spread more. The colony has a well-guarded treasure: their cauldron does not need fire. They found out that it will magically boil-by-itself when they fill it with water and the remains of a once sentient being. It even provides heat then, and the PC will be invited to join them for *The Supper Us Given*, as they call it.

Knotsmen (Vote p.73)

The PC will encounter 1d4+1. One of the Knotsmen will be a Weeping Knight, clad in Chainmail and armed with a Harpoon bow. One or three (depending on the number encountered) will be Usurers: one will carry ropes, climbing gear, provisions and a large leather pouch (that contains something to start a fire and bones inscribed with the name of another Knotsman, see the *Boneown* spell). If there are more, they will each carry a Quilted Lead Truncheon and a backpack with a bundle of bone-made skewers, something to make a fire and some more rations (but not as many as the first one, as he carries them for next to all of the group). One will also hold a torch or lamp of sorts (which is otherwise the duty of the one and only Usurer of the group, too). If there are more than four Knotsmen in the group, the last one will be a Father, armed with Clawed Chains.

While there are much better uses for the bones collected due to a Boneown spell, even a Bailiff has to eat.

The group is there to "exchange" the bones for meat at the altar, which they will roast on the spot before they will bring it back to their master. When a father is present, he will lead the prayer and will do so for two hours. Otherwise, an Usurer will have to do (and will often try his "luck" much earlier than that). The Weeping Knight is only there to guard the group.

When they meet the PC, the Weeping Knight will be on guard and wish for nothing more than for the PC to leave them alone. Any attempt of fraternization will be cut short by him: he has his orders he is bound to, and sees the characters as a threat to his current assignment. He will fight to his death if he has to, and so will the Usurers as long as the Knight is still alive. Once he is dead they will surrender, but will still plead for their lives and want to return to their master (for obvious reasons).

The tone of an encounter changes when a Father leads the group. While the Knight's attitude will not change, the Father outranks him and will be willing to talk with the PC on a Random Reaction of *Indifferent* or better. He will even reveal minor secrets or helpful knowledge to them, either in exchange for the same or just to make sure that "you owe me something". To him, this otherwise lofty saying is a hard metaphysical currency that he may trade with a Bailiff.

Shepherd, the Aelf-Adal "Guide" (Vote p.156)

"(...I'm on your side / Sincerely / I am the only one who cares (...)" ["Gimme" by Alice Cooper]

"A stranger. Welcome" If he is asked for his name, he calls himself **Shepherd**. The Aelf-Adal appears as a being clad in monk robes, complete with a piece of rope for a girdle. His features are fine and beautiful, the eyes a little too large and the smile much too dead to be friendly, in a way that even stands apart from the fact that he seems to be a being fully made of contrasted, light-reflecting substantial darkness. He carries an Aelf-Adal Candle Lamp. A ragged, haggard, dirty, rag-clad and utterly afraid man or woman is with him. Every time, it is a different one. All only have two things in common: they may have never eaten their own kind before and they are starving. When Shepherd is not met in the Chapel but somewhere else, another man or woman is waiting in the Chapel already, somebody very much like the one that Shepherd is currently guiding.

The Aelf-Adal counts as a 5th Level Elf with 15 hit points, DEX: 14 and AC:13. He is unarmed and carries nothing on his person but the lamp. While the Chapel was not the work of the Aelf-Adal, Shepherd somehow admires it, as the very essence and nature of the place (man devouring man) "speaks and appeals" to him. He somehow infused himself with the Pilgrimage and is now able to bring himself and a willing sentient being here, akin to a special version of the "Teleport" spell.

He may only use it to enter one of the caves and passages that make up the Pilgrimage of Hunger, may never appear right inside of the Chapel, and may only do so when he takes one (and only one) willing other person along that has never been in the Pilgrimage before.

Shepherd acts like he is a friendly, helpful guide that wants to “show a way to those who hunger”, but is fully aware of the fact that NOBODY will ever fall for this act. He still keeps it up, for it is part of what this Aelf-Adal is. His personal little nightmare game is easy. He created a spell that allows other (who must at least be Hungry, as everyone within the Veins always is) to summon him (1st Level Spell: *Summon the Shepherd of the Hungry*), and made sure that it spread in the Veins. While the spell undergoes all the regular procedures of a summoning spell, he is never subjected to any kind of Domination on the part of the summoner, but plays the part by nicely offering “a guidance to repletion, as soon as the time is right”. When he finds another one who is willing to accept such an offer (by summoning him or if he meets a fitting candidate during his own journeys through the Veins), the time is right. Using a *Caught echo of the Summoning* spell, he appears to the (willing and waiting) erstwhile summoner. One after the other, he brings both of them to the Chapel. The first he will leave waiting. In the Chapel When both are there, he will explain the Chapel, the Altar and the Ritual, and still keep the poise and tone of a well-meaning friar. From that point on, he trusts human nature to set the gears into motion he had set up, and when his plan bears fruit he will step back and watch the happenings with the kind of sadistic delight only uttermost hatred may breed. When all is over, the ritual performed and the meal consumed, he will approach the survivor again and ask “Do you want to confess your sins?” No matter what the reaction is, Shepherd will just burst into cruel laughter (and casts a “Cause Fear” Spell this way).

When he meets the characters, Shepherd will greet them friendly. He will freely explain that he and his charge are on “a Pilgrimage to Repletion”. Any further questions asked will earn a “Do you -wish- for me to tell you?” as the first reply. The answer has no effect, not on him nor the character, but it is the way that he acts, and likes it. He will not give away anything about the Pilgrimage, will not protect his charge (and says so frankly if asked, unbothered by the reaction of the one that is with him) and will not be averse to the characters joining them along (or being guided instead, if they killed his erstwhile charge).

If attacked, Shepherd will fight back with his spells or try to flee when this is not enough to deal with the characters. He will never lose the poise and behavior of a seemingly benevolent friar, save for a smile much to dead to be friendly.

The following spells will be (still) memorized and ready by the Aelf-Adal. Please take note he is not restricted by the usual Cleric/Magic-User restriction of spells (as no being of manifest nightmare should be).

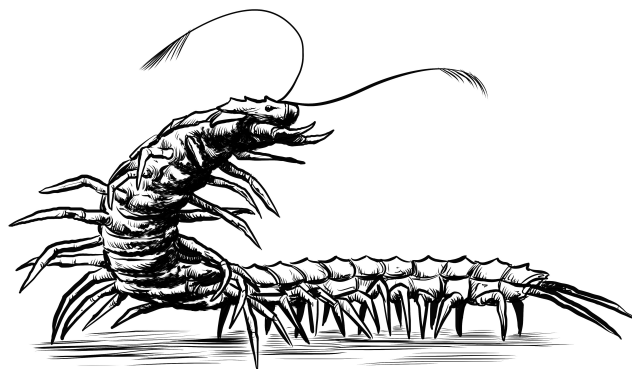
Cause Fear; Magic Missile; Phantasmal Force (which creates a being that a PC knows); Gaseous Form (for escape. The shape is that of smoke with a faint touch of brimstone).

Feral Halflings

“(…) Moving through the darkness / I am a creature of the wild / Sneaking up behind you / Hunting in a pack / Attacking out of nowhere / Always from the back”
[“Predator” by ACCEPT]

These Halflings belong to a small nomad tribe whose origin is long lost to time and darkness. None of them has ever seen the sun and all have degenerated all the way right back to the stone age. Their pupils are permanently dilated, all of them are albinos. Their breathing is silent and all of their hunters sharpen their teeth. The tribes speaks its own language that is related to that the characters speak, but not enough for more than a recognition of the roots. Some of them once became witness to the rituals of the Chapel, and later taught it the tribe.

The characters will encounter 2d4+1 1st level Halflings, armed with knives made from the sharp teeth of large monsters (1d3 damage; Minor weapon). They are wrapped in furs and crude leather (AC: 14 when not surprised; otherwise AC: 13; 10 hit points). One in three carry a blow gun made from a hollowed bone. They use it to shoot poison darts harvested from bonefish in a lake they know and frequent on their journeys: Save vs Poison or become paralyzed after 1d4 (+CON bonus) rounds. Their natural aptitude for stealth has only increased in the Veins (2 in 6 when moving; 3 in 6 when hiding). One of them carries a small bundle of long bones in a bag that seems to have been made from the stomach of a HUGE creature, as well as a Cancer Fulgens (VotE p.195)



The Anti-Pilgrim (Vote p.141)

It saw the Chapel. It understood what it was all about and made a decision: this will end. The wrongness of this "chapel" was a grave insult to all it stands for, and it will not tolerate this. While it cannot raze it nor guard it all the time, it comes around as often as possible, ready to slay all vile *cultists* it encounters. This decision was only reinforced after it found the Crusader's Final Rest. This has been a kindred soul, it felt. Somebody to honor, and so it does every time it patrols the cave system.

Its light source: a symbiotic fungus that grows on its back and the cracks and joints of his carapace. It glows faintly yellow, with the strength of candle light (Light Strength: 10).

Its weapon: a morning star (1d8 damage; ignores shields)

Its heraldry: Manifold claw-marks over its carapace that are filled with soot, ash and chalk (it likes to grapple with Calcinated Cancer Bears, to test its own strength).

Its deeds here so far: it was able to confront and slay a group of Cholerids, which bodies it disposed at the Walk of Cracks, so that the beetles there may cull their unworthy carcasses from the Veins!

It fought in direct combat with the local Calcinated Cancer Bear and made it flee.

It confronted a band of the despicable Knotsmen and drove them off, not without sustaining a deep (but now healed) wound.

Gigaferret (Vote p.30)

The Eigengräu (Vote p.50)

Calcinated Cancer Bear (Vote p.32)

Knotsmen (Vote p. 73)

When encountered as *Predator*, there will be 1d6+1 in total: Fathers and Weeping Knights, usually more of the first than the latter. Those are on the hunt for slaves that they may bring back home or sell at the next market. The Fathers will be armed with Shining Bill-Hooks and Barbed-Wire Nets while the Knights will be armed with bolas and Harpoon Bows.

Spotlight Dogs (Vote p. 123)

This pack counts 13 beasts. They already clashed with the Calcinated Cancer Bear, but it was able to escape into a narrow hole they could not get it out of. Should their number be reduced to less than 6, they will never return to the Pilgrimage again.

The Olm Hunters (Vote p.90) are regular hunting parties from a nearby "colony" of them. They know that this place must be special to other dwellers of the Veins, but do not understand why. They do not understand how it comes that there is this scent of flesh in that one cave at this stone block. Others seem to know why, the Olms would like to learn why. A Random Reaction roll determines if the Olm will treat the PC as somebody to meet and greet (Good or better)... or to hunt for food. A Charisma bonus is not considered, but they are unlikely to attack superior numbers.

There will be 2d4+1 Olm, armed with slings and stones, small ax-like clubs made of large bones with stones wedged into them (1d6 damage) and knives made of sharp teeth or edged bones (1d3 damage). One out of four will carry a large mace that was made out of a bone that must have belonged to a HUGE creature (1d8 damage). Such Olms are *Ageless Braves*, but the d4 to determine their level may only "explode" once.

New Monster: Deepcave Bats

Deepcave Bats are a sub-species of cave bats. They have evolved differently: the largest have a body equal to the fist of an adult man with matching wings to carry them. Their eyes have become blind, their fur is pale or even white, and pale is their skin as well. They do not leave the underground realm of caves and chasms anymore, and as prey is not bountiful in this environment they are not found in large swarms either. They are scavengers as much as hunters, and while their echolocation is still their prime sense they have developed a keen nose and are able to smell a decaying carcass or fresh blood from far away. When they encounter a carcass, or wounded prey that is much larger than themselves, they will call out in infrasonic to signal others of their roost to feast (or to gather for an attack on the weakened prey).

Hit Dice: 0

Damage: 1d4-2

Alignment: Neutral

Moral: 6

Hit Points: 1 or 1d3

Armor: as unarmored

Save: as level 0 Fighter

Numbers Encountered: 1d3 / 2d6

Sharp Teeth/Claws: even if a successful attack does not cause hit point loss, it will cause a bleeding cut.

Filthy: any character that received a bleeding wound from a Deepcave Bat must pass a Saving Throw vs. Poison. On a failure, the wound is infected and will fester (effects: up to the GM).

Strength in Numbers: if a small number is encountered, but not dealt with (one way or the other) the characters are likely to encounter 2d6 on them during the next 1d4 turns (as those they met called in the rest of the roost).

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