

The Cavern of the Damned

A *PATHFINDER ROLEPLAYING GAME*™ compatible adventure for a party of 1st level characters

Written by David Flor



DARKLIGHT
INTERACTIVE

© 2016, Darklight Interactive – All Rights Reserved

The Cavern of the Damned

Written by David Flor

DESIGN, DEVELOPMENT AND WRITING

David Flor

CARTOGRAPHY

David Flor

SPECIAL THANKS

To the former staff of Trapdoor Technologies,
who found this to be worthy of publication in the first place:

Chris Matney
Evan Newton
Rachael Bowen

THE CAVERN OF THE DAMNED

© 2016, Darklight Interactive – All Rights Reserved

Reproduction of this book in any manner without express
permission from the publisher is prohibited.

DARKLIGHT
INTERACTIVE

<http://www.dlimedia.com/>

“OMNE IGNOTUM PRO MAGNIFICO”

ADVENTURE BACKGROUND

For as long as anyone in the village can remember, Wildwood has lived under the constant grip of fear. Merran Algeris, a powerful elven wizard whose family was once deeply offended by the elders of the village, vowed that someday he will return to exact his revenge on the people of Wildwood.

Merran offered the village a challenge: if the village can prove its worth by entering what he referred to as his “gauntlet” and reach his inner sanctum, no harm will come to the village. No one knew how long the village had, but the village decided to take up the challenge and try to best his “gauntlet”. They gathered their best heroes – locals and from afar – and sent them in to the gauntlet. None returned.

Over time the choice of who would enter the gauntlet came to include anyone, not just seasoned adventurers. At first it was entirely voluntary, with many preparing themselves for months before entering the gauntlet, but as the number of seasoned adventures dwindled the village’s options became more... drastic. The selection switched from being voluntary to being a form of lottery, where the lucky few would be selected at random in the hopes that they have whatever special skill may be necessary to best the gauntlet. And it wasn’t just limited to adventurers... anyone – from seasoned combat veterans to farmers, be they man or woman, or even children – were subject to selection by the lottery.

After some incidents where those chosen would not carry out the mission asked of them, the chamber directly before the gauntlet entrance was sealed off by magic; those that went in could not come out. The only way to exit the cavern would be to enter the gauntlet and come out the other side, wherever that may be; you either succeeded, died trying, or starved to death in the cavern.

This became a sort of tradition, one that went on for decades without anyone even knowing if Merran was even a threat any longer. Without knowing when it all started, no one was even sure if Merran was still alive or not, of if the threat against the village was real or not, but the lottery had become such a tradition every month that no one gave it much thought. After all, Merran hadn’t attacked yet... As far as the village was concerned, so long as people entered the gauntlet the village remained safe.

Lucky for the village, there were times when they got visitors, seasoned adventures that could possibly stand a chance in the gauntlet. In these times, these adventurers were treated like kings until they were offered the opportunity to enter the gauntlet and save the village. If the adventures refused to enter out of their own free will, the villagers would find... other ways... to convince them.

ADVENTURE SUMMARY

The players, having found themselves to Wildwood, were chosen to enter the gauntlet in the hopes of protecting the village. For whatever reason, the party chose not to accept the quest... so they were somehow subdued, their memories of the past few days wiped, and they were transported in to the cavern where they would have no choice but to enter the gauntlet to win their freedom.

Unfortunately, the party doesn’t remember any of this; shortly after they were captured, their recent memories were wiped clean

to remove any trace of Wildwood or their reluctance to assist the village.

RUNNING THE ADVENTURE

The adventure is a fairly typical dungeon crawl, divided up into three sections:

The Gauntlet: One large trap room, which has claimed the lives of numerous adventures that have been sent here – some willingly, some not – by the people of Wildwood.

The Elemental Halls: Merran designed this second level just in case someone miraculously made it through the gauntlet. The only way through this level is to acquire the four elemental stones (Air, Earth, Fire and Water) and use them to open the exit portal.

Merran’s Inner Sanctum: Merran’s residence and laboratory. If anyone can make it here alive, they have earned their freedom and the village of Wildwood will be spared.

LOST MEMORIES

As the adventure progresses, the party may begin to recover bits and pieces of their memories and their experiences with Wildwood and its residents. Besides some specific memories the party remembers collectively at certain points and due to certain stimuli, this will give both the GM and the players the opportunity to be a little creative with their character’s backgrounds and how they fit in to the GM’s world. What happened when they arrived in the village, what conversations took place with the elders, how they were subdued, and other aspects of how they arrived in this predicament are not set in stone and up to interpretation and definition by everyone involved in the adventure. At specified points in the adventure the GM and the players can collectively piece together their memories into their own story, and if they do manage to gain their freedom at the other end of the gauntlet they can use these memories to decide how they are going to deal with the village and their betrayal.

TREASURE

All the treasure listed in this adventure, except for specific items that are considered “quest” items, is up to GM’s discretion and can be changed to better fit the speed at which you want the characters to gain treasure. Feel free to change anything you give the players as a reward for their efforts.

PLAYER DEATH

This adventure is arguably painful and difficult for a 1st level party, so it is conceivable that one or more PCs may not survive.

If a player dies, it’s as simple as rolling a new character (or using the same one with subtle differences) and reappearing in the entry cavern. As the original party, they will have no memory of what transpired before, but can happily join the party and press forward in the hopes that they’ll make their way through to the exit.

THE INNER SANCTUM

If the party manages to get through the dungeon – the areas referred to by Merran and the others in the cavern as the “gauntlet” and later the “elemental halls” – they will arrive in Merran’s inner sanctum. From there, they would be expected to not only confront Merran but gain their freedom and escape the dungeon.

Because the thought of Merran exacting his vengeance on the village has existed as long as anyone could remember, no one is exactly sure how long it has been. It could have been decades or even hundreds of years, but either way it has exceeded Merran's life expectancy. Merran, lying dead within his own inner sanctum, is no longer a threat to the village; the village has been safe all this time, and the need for sending volunteers or captives to their deaths within the gauntlet has not been necessary for decades. All that remains in Merran's inner sanctum are a few of his magical creations left there to live forever, involuntarily guarding a small amount of magical items and treasure. With Merran no longer a threat, the party can simply walk out the front door and back to the village... where they can tell the village any story about Merran's demise they like.

INTRODUCTION

Read the following to get your players started.

As you slowly open your eyes the world seems out of focus. The room dips and sways sharply as you raise yourself up off the ground, your arms shaking under the weight of your own body. As the blur twists and bends in reaction to your ear-splitting headache, you sense the taste of dried blood and dirt on your lips.

The chamber comes in to better focus as you stagger to your feet, and you frantically spin around to see your possessions scattered about you, discarded as if they had no meaning. You are bathed in a light from above that burns brighter than the sun, causing you great pain as you look towards it.

You struggle to clear your mind and try to remember how you came to be here, but that's just the problem: your mind is already completely clear, blank even, and you have no memory of what brought you to this strange place.

As you look past the circle of light in which you stand and into the darkness that surrounds you, as the ringing in your ear subsides, one thing is certain.

You are not alone.

The players find themselves within the dark cavern that precedes the gauntlet. They have absolutely no memory of how they got here, or anything within the past several days, due to the magic used by the villagers to get them in the cavern. Besides the massive doors that lead to the gauntlet, there is no other way out of the chamber.

PROLOGUE: THE CAVERN OF THE DAMNED

Every month for the past several decades the village has sent in a handful of people – some volunteers, some not – in to the cavern. Many have entered the gauntlet never to return, while others have remained in the entry cavern. Those that have been unafraid or unwilling to enter the gauntlet risked starvation in the main cavern, and many have died as a result. As a result, the cavern reeks of death and decay.

A little under a year ago a wizard who actually decided to volunteer to enter the gauntlet brought with him a magical device that had the power to cast the *create food and water* spell several times a day, which allowed a few dozen people to survive rather

miserably for several months. These people live in horrible conditions huddled in the dark surrounded by the bodies of the others sent in to the cavern and sustaining themselves with the little food the device created every day. Some of the survivors eventually went mad, or eventually gave up on this life and risked entering the gauntlet... never to return.

Currently there are eight people alive in the cavern: five men, two women and one child. They lie in wait within the darkness just outside of the circle of light the players arrived in. They are extremely malnourished, barely able to speak any more than a harsh whisper, too weak to barely move. The child is probably the best one of the group due to the adult's sacrificing their own well-being to keep him at his best. They continue to hope that someone would come to save them.

When the players arrive, they can sense that there's something out there in the dark but may not be able to identify it. A DC 10 Perception check will reveal something moving around in multiple locations amidst the dark, and of the Perception check beats a DC 15 they will be able to tell that it's something vaguely humanoid-shaped. They will not be able to tell either way whether the entities are hostile or not.

Due to the uneven lighting outside of the circle the players stand in, anyone with low light vision gains a +4 bonus to the Perception check. Anyone with darkvision will be able to see the survivors clearly, humans huddled up in the dark afraid of the players, and be able to immediately tell they mean no harm and are cowering in fear.

REACTION

How the scene proceeds is up to how the player's react to the movement in the dark.

HOSTILE

If the party chooses to attack the darkness, use your judgment on whether any attacks they make hit or not. Spells like *magic missile* will undoubtedly find some target in the dark.

The captives that are hiding in the dark are weak and defenseless, so any direct hostility will likely end badly for them; a single attack will down them, and whether it outright kills them depends on the nature of the attack.

If one of the captives is injured, the others will immediately try to reach out and convince the party to stop, probably by forcing themselves into the light and surrendering. If the party continues the assault, it could be considered extremely heartless and cruel once they know their targets are defenseless captives left inside this cavern to rot.

PEACEFUL

If the party shows that they mean the captives in the dark no harm, they will slowly approach and try to make contact. They will not enter the lit area as their eyes have already acclimated to the dark, but they will remain at the edge of the darkness, where they can be reasonably seen. They will look to be in really sorry shape, filthy and depraved, covered in dirt and bruises, malnourished.

If the players manage to communicate with the others in the cavern, the others will be eternally grateful that the players have arrived in the hopes that they can be "saved".

If interrogated, the captives will offer up one and only one piece of information regarding the gauntlet and the rooms beyond, rolled randomly from the list below. Because the captives have not gone in to the gauntlet themselves, they cannot confirm or deny the authenticity of the information, but with a successful **DC 15 Sense Motive** check the players may be able to tell how confident they feel that their information is accurate or not. For example, on a successful save the captive will seem confident true statements are actually true, and would feel rather unsecure of their information on statements that are false.

Roll a d20 on the table below:

d20	Rumor
1	"There is a hidden room on the left side of the chamber beyond" (true; references the four secret rooms in the gauntlet, areas 1-6a to 1-6d)
2	"Some say the pits in the gauntlet are bottomless." (false; the bottomless pit is actually in the Hall of Air, area 2-10)
3	"There is a small area near the entrance to the gauntlet where you are safe." (true; references the "safe area" at the gauntlet entrance)
4	"The spirits of those who died in the gauntlet can steal your soul!" (false, unless the GM wants it to be true...)
5	"Only with fire can the flames be stopped." (true; references the fires in the gauntlet, areas 1-3a)
6	"The guardian of earth cannot be trusted." (false; references the earth mephit in the Hall of Earth, area 2-4, which does not lie about the information he provides)
7	"There is a demon that demands an offering of blood." (true; he stands in the Hall of Fire, area 2-11)
8	"The wizard will surely kill you the second you pass his gauntlet." (false; Merran's been dead for some time. If anything kills the party, it's what he left behind)
9	"You must find four keys that are not keys." (true; references the four elemental stones needed in the Portal Chamber, area 2-1)
10	"Some have made it through the gauntlet, only to wander thee elemental halls for all eternity." (false, unless the GM wants it to be true...)
11	"The wizard that built this place cannot be killed." (the captives believe this to be true, although it isn't; references Merran, who in reality has been dead for some time)
12	"There is an enormous treasure vault somewhere beyond the gauntlet." (false)
13	"There is a jail deep within the elemental halls that is dangerous to enter." (true; references the jail cells in area 2-9 and the trap securing one of its entrances)
14	"To escape this place, you need two silver keys." (false; only one key is needed: the silver key from the study, area 2-7)
15	"I've heard rumors of magical books that can fly!" (true; references the animated books in the library, area 3-2)
16	"There is a treasure that floats above an endless pit." (false; references the illusory chest in the Hall of Air, area 2-10)
17	"To escape, you must break a magical seal." (true; references the magical seal on the exit door in area 3-7)
18	"Only the wizard himself can show you the way out." (false; the exit doors can be opened with the silver key or by dealing with the spheres in area 3-7)
19	Roll twice on the above list
20	Roll three times on the above list

If the party rolls a natural 19 or 20 on their Sense Motive check, the captives are even more helpful; make an additional roll on the above list.

THE LIFEGIVER

On the western side of the cavern is a statuette about three feet in height made of stone. The status is of Erastil, which could be

identified by anyone who worships the deity, follows any one of his domains (animal, community, god, law and plant) or succeeds in a **DC 15 History (Religion)** skill check.

This idol is what they call "the lifegiver", and is what they use to keep themselves alive in these horrid conditions. Three times a day it can be used to cast the *create food and water* spell simply by placing one's hand on the statue's head for about ten seconds. The idol's magic is localized to the cavern, and if the party attempts to take it from here the statue will become inert once it sees the light of day

The statuette is what has kept the people inside the cavern alive for several months, and although they're not exactly happy about their living conditions they cannot imagine living without it. Therefore, any attempt to take the statue from them will be met with harsh resistance. The captives in the cavern can't put up a fight, but they will be very vocal about their dependency on the statuette. Once they express their concerns, unless an adequate substitute is provided, taking the statuette could be considered an evil act and its removal would represent direct harm against the helpless captives in the cavern.

PART ONE: THE GAUNTLET

The room known as "the gauntlet" is what Merran has devised to torture the people of Wildwood. As far as Wildwood knows, if anyone makes it through the gauntlet alive they will be rewarded and the village will be spared Merran's wrath.

So far no one has made it through... Yet.

1-1: FOYER

Features of the area:

- This small domed room is forty feet wide and only fifteen feet deep. The ceiling is twenty feet high at its apex.
- There are two urns on either side of the room, each with a brightly burning fire.
- Another large set of double doors are on the opposite wall from where you entered. There are glyphs etched into the wood.

The words on the door are in Abyssal and say "survive the test herein and your people shall be spared".

The fires in each urn are magical in nature, similar to an *everburning torch* or a *continual flame* spell, except that they actually do give off heat and can be used to ignite objects. These fires can be used to light the urns near the center of the gauntlet to stop the elemental fires (see area 1-3a).

1-2: THE GAUNTLET (CR 4)

Features of the area:

- This room is extremely large, at least sixty feet wide and eighty feet long. The ceiling is twenty feet high.
- There is a ten foot ledge on the north and south ends of the room, and three ten foot wide walkways – one on either side of the room and one directly down the center, connect the north and south ends.
- In between the walkways is a pit covered in darkness; it is not apparent what the pit's depth is.
- In the center of the middle walkway is a slightly larger platform twenty feet wide. In the center of the platform

there is a stone column fifteen feet in height, and at each of the four corners of the platform is a stone urn.

- Midway down each of the two side walkways is another stone column fifteen feet in height. The columns are offset from the path's center, and there is a small alcove behind them in both the western and eastern walls.
- At the four corners of the room there are stone urns, each one with a bright fire lit inside of it.
- There are bodies in various states of decomposition everywhere in the room.

This is the “gauntlet”, Merran’s pride and joy designed to inflict as much pain and death on any hapless adventures the villagers sent in after him.

With a successful DC 15 Perception skill check or when they get within twenty feet of it, the party will notice a hole in the wall near the northeast corner of the room that is surrounded by rocky debris. This is what remains of one of the four secret doors in the room.

***NOTE:** The gauntlet isn’t considered one single trap, so determining the XP reward for it may be hard to figure out. To simplify things, if the party manages to escape the gauntlet, treat it as if they beat a combat encounter that is a CR 4 (1,200 XP).*

RUNNING THE GAUNTLET

So long as all party members remain in the “safe zone” marked on the map, they are not subject to any attacks from the elemental fires.

Once anyone steps out of the area in to the gauntlet, they enter a turn sequence that should be handled like a combat encounter. In other words, each turn all the players take their turns, then after they are done the gauntlet takes its turns. You can optionally roll initiative, but this might further complicate the action sequence.

When it comes time for the gauntlet to act, it will attempt the following actions in order:

1. If any elemental fires are still active, one of them will make a random attack (see area 1-3a).
2. If any elemental fires have been deactivated by lighting the pyres on the central platform, roll a d20. If the result is a natural 19, one random fire goes out and that elemental fire can make an attack the following turn. If the roll is a natural 20, two random fires on the center platform go out.
3. If anyone is at the bottom of either Pit of Despair, roll a d6. If the result is a 1, they are at risk of suffering the effects of a form of *insanity mist*. See area 1-3c for more information.
4. Roll another d6. If the result is a 1, a loud howling sound will begin as magical winds begin to flow in to the Pits of Despair. Anyone immediately adjacent to either pit must succeed in a DC 12 Reflex save or be pulled in and take 1d6 falling damage. See area 1-3c for more information.

1-3: TRAPS IN THE GAUNTLET

There are three hazards in the gauntlet: the elemental fires, the three spike-laden pressure plates and the winds of the Pit of

Despair. The first two traps can be disabled and the third need only be avoided.

1-3A: ELEMENTAL FIRES

At each corner of the chamber is a bright elemental fire that is hovering about a foot above a stone basin. These fires are similar to a permanent *continual flame* spell and cannot be extinguished by anything short of epic level magic, and despite being magical in nature they do seem to generate heat and can burn and ignite flammables.

On the gauntlet’s turn to act, if anyone is outside of the starting “safe area” and within line of sight of any elemental fire, one and only one elemental fire will make a +5 ranged touch attack against one random target in the chamber and not within the “safe area”. On a successful hit, the target takes 1d6 fire damage. The elemental fires will not attack anyone who is at the bottom of the Pit of Despair, within any of the secret rooms or within the “safe area”.

On the center platform there are four stone basins similar to the four on the outer edges of the chamber. Each of these basins contains a small pyre of sticks and loose twigs but is currently unlit. While a pyre is lit (with either conventional or magical flame), the matching elemental fire in that corner of the room cannot make any attacks. If all four pyres on the center platform are lit, none of the elemental fires can make an attack.

***NOTE:** If anyone attempts to lite these fires at range, they are considered to have an AC of 10 and automatically fail any Reflex saves. So long as a spell effect can deal fire damage, it can be used to ignite the pyre (for example, an everburning torch cannot be used).*

A spark spell can also be used to ignite the pyres at range; when this spell is used, assume it works without need for a Fortitude save.

1-3B: PRESSURE PLATES

Along each of the three walkways (see position on map) are 10’ x 10’ areas that form a pressure plate. Although they are reasonably hidden and can only be detected with a DC 15 Perception check, anyone looking at the area will notice that there seems to be a higher concentration of bones and other remains around these areas.

When more than 50 pounds of force is applied to the plate, several dozen spikes shoot up from the ground. Anyone unaware and stepping across the area must make a DC 15 Reflex save or take 1d6 piercing damage and become staggered until the end of their next turn. The spikes automatically retract at the end of the player’s turn and cannot be triggered until the end of the following turn.

Once they are detected, each plate can be disabled by an adjacent player succeeding in a DC 18 Disable Device check. All three can be disabled by the lever in the northwestern or northeastern secret rooms (rooms 1-6b or 1-6c; see below).

1-3C: THE PITS OF DESPAIR

The area between the walkways is a 10’ deep pit filled with dark smoke and a considerable amount of bodies and skeletal remains that have met their untimely fate in the gauntlet. Anyone falling in or getting pulled in (as part of the gauntlet’s actions) will take

1d6 falling damage. Climbing out of the pit is a fairly easy DC 10 Climb check.

On the gauntlet's turn, if the GM rolls a 1 on a d6 a powerful magical wind will start up and try to pull anyone that is adjacent (within 5' of the edge) to the pit in. Those subject to the winds must succeed in a DC 12 Reflex save or be pulled in to the pit and take 1d6 falling damage. Anyone in the "safe area" is not affected by the winds.

If on the gauntlet's turn someone is already at the bottom of the pit and the GM rolls a 1 on a d6, everyone at the bottom of the pit must succeed in a DC 15 Fortitude save or be afflicted with the effects similar to *insanity mist* (save DC 15 Fortitude, frequency 1/round for 6 rounds, effect 1d3 Wis damage, cure 1 save). Once they succeed in a save, they are immune to any further effects of the smoke within the pit.

If the bones and other remains at the bottom of the pits are searched, despite the black smoke obscuring most of the pit they will find several dozen unused and serviceable torches (which can be used to light the fires on the central platform; see area 1-3a), some flint and steel that can be used to ignite said torches, and a total of 2d4x10 gp in mixed coins amongst the bodies and remains. If they succeed in a DC 15 Perception check they will also find a *potion of fire resistance* (resist energy 10 against fire damage for 10 minutes) on one of the bodies.

1-4: SIDE COLUMNS

At the middle point of the eastern and western walkways is a recessed area in the wall where a large stone column stands. On the side of the column facing the wall is a lever, which at first glance is in the "down" position.

When the lever is moved to the "up" position an audible clicking sound, like that of a clock, will begin to emanate from the column. Only if both side levers are in the "up" position at the same time, when the lever in the central column is moved to the "up" position it will remain in place and unlock the exit doors to the north.

When moved to the "up" position each of the side levers will remain in that position until the end of the player's next turn, when they will automatically reset themselves to the "down" position. If both levers are moved to the "up" position and the center lever is moved to the "up" position as well, all three levers will lock and the magical wards blocking the exit to the north will be released, allowing the party to exit the gauntlet.

Anyone standing in the recessed area behind the column can use the column to grant them partial cover (+2 to AC, +1 to Reflex saves; see *PATHFINDER CORE RULEBOOK* pages 195-196) from attacks made by the elemental fires (see 1-3a).

1-5: CENTER PLATFORM

In the middle of the center walkway is a platform that contains one large column and four stone basins at each corner.

Each of the stone basins contains a small, unlit pyre and corresponds to the elemental pyre in that far corner of the room. If they are lit, the corresponding elemental fire stops making attacks; see area 1-3a above for more information.

On the northern side of the column is a lever similar to the side columns (see 1-4). The lever is normally in the "down" position. If moved to the "up" position it will only remain locked in the "up"

position is if both of the side levers are also in the "up" position at the same time.

NOTE: *In other words, it generally takes three people (or two, if one of them is really fast) to exit the gauntlet; both side levers must be raised, then the center lever must be raised before the side levers reset. Once all three levers are "up", all three lock in place and the wards securing the northern doors fade, allowing the party to exit.*

1-6: SECRET ROOMS

Near the four corners of the chamber are secret doors that, for the most part, are fairly well hidden: anyone within ten feet of one of the doors can detect each door with a DC 15 Perception check. After the first door is detected, any attempt to look for the other doors gains a +4 circumstance bonus to the skill check.

The northeastern secret door has collapsed into rubble, revealing an unobstructed passage to the room beyond. Anyone who comes within ten feet of this door will be able to tell that it was once also a secret door, and if they continue to search for more doors they get the same +4 circumstance bonus to the check.

The doors, once found, can be pushed open with little effort. After one minute, the doors will slide shut on their own.

1-6A: RUINED ROOM

The ceiling of this small chamber has collapsed into a massive pile of rubble that fills the chamber.

Partially visible under the rubble are the aged skeletal remains of an adventurer. Several large boulders have crushed the upper torso of his body; those large rocks can be moved with a DC 15 Strength check. If successful, moving the rocks will reveal the adventurer's belongings: a small bag with 12gp in it and a *potion of cure light wounds*.

If the Strength check fails by more than 5, the roof will collapse further. Anyone in the room must succeed in a DC 12 Reflex save or take 1d6 bludgeoning damage.

1-6B: SECRET ROOM, NORTHWEST

In the center of this room is another stone column with a lever currently in the "up" position. Pulling the lever down will disable the three spike traps in the main chamber (areas 1-3b).

1-6C: SECRET ROOM, NORTHEAST

The secret door that once blocked entry into this chamber has collapsed into rubble (see 1-6 above).

In the center of this room is another stone column with what remains of a lever, but the lever has been broken and is nothing more than a small stub.

The level can be repaired with successful DC 20 skill check in an applicable Craft or Profession skill (use GM's judgment whether a given Craft or Profession skill can be applied) or by using a spell such as mending or make whole. If the lever is repaired and moved to the "down" position it will disable the three spike traps in the main chamber (areas 1-3b) in the same manner as the working lever in room 1-8b does.

1-6D: SECRET ROOM, SOUTHEAST

The southeastern secret room contains an assortment of rotting crates in the southeast corner and a desk along the eastern wall. Sitting on top of the desk is a locked chest.

If the crates are searched the party will find several dozen unused torches and several sets of flint and steel, both of which can be used to ignite the pyres on the central platform to stop the elemental fire attacks (see area 1-3a). On a successful **DC 15 Perception** check they will also find one *everburning torch* (see *PATHFINDER CORE RULEBOOK*, page 160), which actually can't be used to ignite the pyres but may prove beneficial later on in the adventure.

The chest is locked and can be opened with either a **DC 20 Disable Device** check or by bashing open the lid (*hardness 5, hp 15, break DC 23*). Inside the chest is a treasure hoard equivalent to a CR 2 medium

1-7: EXIT DOORS

Two massive stone doors lead out of the chamber. The doors are magically sealed and impervious to any form of circumvention (such as using the *knock* spell).

So long as the lever on the center column is locked in place (see areas 1-4 and 1-5), the magical seal on the door will not be in effect and the doors can be opened. Two people can push the doors open easily, but if one person alone attempts it they must succeed in a **DC 15 Strength** check to move the door at all.

Once opened the doors will remain open for no more than one minute, after which the center column lever will reset, the magical seal on the door will reactivate and the door will slam shut. The only apparent way to open it would be to go through the motions with the levers once again, but a successful **DC 15 Perception** check while searching the opposite side of the door will reveal a secret panel with a lever inside it. Pulling this lever will unlock the door in the same manner as the center column would.

The passage leading north from the door leads to the Elemental Paths (area 2-1).

PART TWO: THE ELEMENTAL HALLS

Merran knew that there was the possibility – albeit remote – that someone might actually make it through his gauntlet sooner or later. So, as a second layer of protection and for personal amusement, he built another challenge for those trying to save their village to navigate through: the Elemental Halls. The way he saw it, if one or more adventures could do what it takes to best the Elemental Halls and enter the Inner Sanctum, the village deserved to be spared.

Surprisingly enough, no one ever made it through the gauntlet in time.

General Features of the Area:

- Walls are rough stone, and all the rooms and hallways have been carved out of solid rock.
- Unless otherwise indicated, the ceilings are 10-feet in height.
- All doors are standard wooden doors.

- Except for the entry chamber (area 2-1), the study (area 2-7), the arcane circle (area 2-8) and the Hall of Fire (area 2-11), the area is unlit and dark.

ARRIVING IN THE ELEMENTAL HALLS

As soon as the entire party makes it through the gauntlet, they are hit with their first memories in the form of visions or dreams.

Read to the party:

You suddenly get a vision of standing before a large group of people. The large crowd appears to be cheering at you, but as soon as you address them the crowd falls silent. Something is wrong, but you still have no memory of what it may be.

Mixed in between the main vision are quick flashed of places you don't remember visiting: a tavern, a general store, an inn... fragments of a place you're sure you've been to but have no memory of.

The memories are from their arrival in Wildwood, where they stood before the crowd and were offered the opportunity to enter the gauntlet and save them. But, for whatever reason, the party openly told the village that they would not do what they asked, and the village turns on them.

NOTE: *You are free to embellish the above in any way you wish. If you want to throw in fragments of them getting beaten up by villagers, getting incapacitated and dragged through the village streets, passing out after consuming a free beer... that is up to the discretion of you and your players.*

RANDOM ENCOUNTERS

The area is fairly low on combat encounters so as not to overburden a 1st level party, but if either the GM or the players want additional encounters to justify a faster level increase you can roll a d8 against the following table:

d8	Creature
1	1d4 dire rats
2	1d4 fire beetles
3	1 rat swarm
4	1 spider swarm
5	1 giant spider
6	1d6 human skeletons
7	1d4 giant centipedes
8	1 small elemental (either air or earth)

2-1: PORTAL CHAMBER

Features of the area:

- The room has a high domed ceiling that is twenty feet high at its apex. It is forty feet wide and almost fifty feet long.
- On either side of the room are two hallways, each five feet wide. Between each of the two hallways is a stone urn with a *continual flame* spell cast within it.
- At the northern end of the room is a raised circular platform fifteen feet wide. On either side of the platform is a nondescript stone column ten feet in height.
- There are hallways, one extending east and on west, on either side of the platform.

The platform and the columns radiate powerful conjuration magic, while each of the four hallways radiates an assortment of powerful auras, mostly abjuration and evocation.

Looking down each of the four central hallways will reveal a nondescript statue holding an offering plate at the end of it, but getting close enough to the hallways entrance to see each of these statues will activate its elemental wards; see areas 2-1a to 2-1d below.

The platform is the center point of a portal Merran has designed to gain access to his Inner Sanctum (area 3-1). In order to activate it, the party needs to acquire the four elemental stones (Air, Earth, Fire and Water) and place them at the end of the appropriate hallway. See area 2-1e below for more information.

THE ELEMENTAL STONES

Scattered throughout the dungeon are four magical stones, referred to as Elemental Stones. Each stone is a smooth oval-shaped rock about three inches in length that has faint traces of various types of magic. The stones themselves cannot be destroyed.

The four stones are:

The Air Stone: A pale white stone that is noticeably lighter than the others. It can be acquired after crossing over the endless pit in the Hall of Air (room 2-10).

The Earth Stone: a dark brown stone that's rougher than the others. It can be acquired from inside one of the pillars in the Hall of Earth (room 2-4).

The Fire Stone: a stone formed from hardened lava that is warm to the touch. It can be acquired by making an offering to the demon's statue in the Hall of Fire (area 2-11).

The Water Stone: an extremely smooth stone that is cool to the touch. It can be acquired from the pool of water in the Hall of Water (area 2-6).

Only with the four stones can the portal to Merran's Inner Sanctum (area 3-1) be opened.

For each stone the party acquires, grant them an XP reward equivalent to a CR 2 encounter (600 XP).

2-1A TO 2-1D: THE ELEMENTAL PATHS

Leading out from this chamber are four hallways. Each hallway is about fifteen feet in length and has a statue at the end of it that holds an offering plate before it. As the hallways are approached, each one will reveal its elemental nature.

2-1A: PATH OF FIRE

As soon as anyone comes within five feet of the entrance to this hallway, the entire hallway will be consumed by fire. The fire, although magical in origin, does in fact give off an intense heat and deal damage; anyone entering the flames unprotected will take 3d6 fire damage (no save) each round they are exposed to the flames. The flames fill the hallway all the way up to the statue at the end.

Whoever is holding the Fire Stone in their hand will not feel any heat from the flames, and if they attempt to pass through the fire they can do so without taking any damage, as if the flames were some sort of illusion.

At the end of the hall is a nondescript humanoid statue holding an offering plate. If the Fire Stone is placed in the plate, the fires

subside. Once all four stones are placed, the portal to the inner sanctum (2-1e) will open.

2-1B: PATH OF EARTH

As soon as anyone comes within five feet of the entrance to this hallway, a rumbling sound similar to an earthquake will begin to echo through the chamber as a massive amount of rock, dirt and mud will begin to form in the hallway, blocking it entirely in seconds. Any attempt to dig through it will make little advancement as whatever is removed is quickly replaced by more earth appearing from seemingly out of nowhere. It fills the full length of the passage all the way up to a few feet before the statue at the end of the hall.

Whoever is holding the Earth Stone in their hand can pass through the obstruction as if it was some sort of illusion and walk unabated to the end of the hallway.

At the end of the hall is a nondescript humanoid statue holding an offering plate. If the Earth Stone is placed in the plate, the obstruction will crumble away to dust and disappear, unblocking the hallway. Once all four stones are placed, the portal to the inner sanctum (2-1e) will open.

2-1C: PATH OF ICE

As soon as anyone comes within five feet of the entrance to this hallway, a chilling wind will form as the entire hallway is slowly encased in a massive block of ice, blocking the entire hallway entirely in seconds. Any attempts to damage or melt the ice will be to no avail as the ice will quickly reform almost as fast as it is destroyed. Anyone who comes in direct contact with the ice takes an immediate 2d6 cold damage (DC 12 Fortitude save for half damage).

Whoever is holding the Water Stone in their hand can pass through the ice as if it was some sort of illusion and walk unabated to the end of the hallway.

At the end of the hall is a nondescript humanoid statue holding an offering plate. If the Water Stone is placed in the plate, the ice will quickly melt and no longer block the hallway. Once all four stones are placed, the portal to the inner sanctum (2-1e) will open.

2-1D: PATH OF AIR

As soon as anyone comes within five feet of the entrance to this hallway, a powerful wind will begin to blow outward from the hallway. Anyone attempting to enter must succeed in a DC 15 Strength check each turn or be violently pushed out of the hallway and take 2d6 bludgeoning damage (DC 12 Reflex save for half damage). Even if they make a successful save, the winds will intensify further down the hallway to such force that it makes it impossible to reach the end of the hallway.

Whoever is holding the Air Stone in their hand will not feel any force from the winds, and if they attempt to enter the hallway they can do so unabated as if there were no winds at all, as if the winds were some sort of illusion.

At the end of the hall is a nondescript humanoid statue holding an offering plate. If the Air Stone is placed in the plate, the winds subside. Once all four stones are placed, the portal to the inner sanctum (2-1e) will open.

2-1E: PORTAL PLATFORM

This is a raised platform flanked by two nondescript columns. The platform and the column emit a powerful conjuration aura.

When all four of the elemental stones are placed in their respective locations (see 2-1a through 2-1d), a shimmering blue portal will appear between the two columns. Anyone stepping through the portal will be transported to the entry area of Merran's Inner Sanctum (area 3-1), where an identical portal will allow them to return at will. So long as the four stones remain in place the portals will remain open indefinitely.

When the party successfully opens the portal, grant them an additional XP reward equivalent to a CR 2 encounter (600 XP).

2-2: RUINED HALLWAY

The door that leads into this hallway has a large sign with the words "CAUTION" and "DO NOT ENTER" written in Abyssal (for his own amusement, Merran chose Abyssal instead of Common so that if his laborers died not obeying the sign it was their own fault).

This narrow hallway was intended to lead into an entirely new set of rooms designed by Merran but while it was being tunneled out the roof collapsed and killed several of the laborers involved, so the project was abandoned.

TREASURE

Searching through the rubble will discover the remains of several humans crushed underneath the collapse. Searching the bodies that can be seen will reveal:

- Several serviceable work tools, such as shovels and picks
- 1d10 sp and 2d10 cp.
- Several damaged weapons which have been crushed under the rocks, but there are two heavy picks and one flail that could still be of use.
- One *potion of create water*.
- One slightly damaged suit of leather armor (-1 to the normal AC rating, but it can be repaired fairly easily during a rest or in town). The body that is wearing it is pinned by a large boulder which can be moved with a DC 12 Strength check; on a successful check not only can the armor be retrieved but it will also reveal a coin pouch containing 3d8 gp. If the Strength check fails by more than five, part of the tunnel collapses further and anyone in it must succeed in a DC 15 Reflex save or take 1d8 bludgeoning damage.
- On a successful DC 15 Perception check, double the amount of coins they discover and they also find a *potion of bull's strength* amongst the rocks. If the same Perception checks beats a DC 20, triple the amount of coins found instead.

2-3: DOOR ROOM (CR 3-5)

This 15' square room has four doors leading away from it. The southern door leads to the entry area (area 2-1) and the western door leads further in to the Elemental Halls, both of which are unlocked and can be opened without incident. The northern and eastern doors are false doors that contain a trap.

Inspecting the doors with a successful DC 15 Perception check will detect some odd inconsistencies with how the door is designed,

hinting at the fact that there may be something solid behind it. Attempting to slide something underneath it won't go very far as it will hit the solid wall, and any attempt to look through the keyhole will reveal nothing but darkness.

Each of the false doors is locked and requires a relatively easy DC 10 Disable Device check to unlock, but the door is also trapped with a *fire trap* spell (as if cast by a 5th level wizard) that will engulf in flames everyone within 5 feet of it.

FIRE TRAP – CR 3

Type *magic*; Perception DC 25; Disable Device DC 25

EFFECTS

Trigger *touch*; Reset *none*

Effect *fire trap* spell (1d4+5 fire damage, DC 16 Reflex save for half); multiple targets (all targets within 5-ft. of door)

The trap is extremely hard to detect, requiring a rogue to succeed in a difficult DC 25 Perception check to detect the trap itself and a DC 25 Disable Device check to disable it. It can also be detected as abjuration magic with a successful *detect magic* spell.

2-4: HALL OF EARTH (POSSIBLE CR 3)

Features of the area:

- The room is approximately fifteen feet wide and twenty feet in length.
- There are nine identical pillars arranged placed in a 3x3 arrangement. Each pillar is a rectangular column about three feet wide and seven feet tall, leaving between three and four feet of clearance between it and the ceiling overhead. The pillars are made of hardened stone and brown dirt, and all the pillars are identical.

The Earth Stone, which is necessary to open the portal to the Inner Sanctum (see area 2-1) is embedded deep inside one of the nine pillars. When the party enters the room for the first time, pick one of the pillars at random (you can roll a d10, re-rolling if you get 10 as a result) for the stone to be located.

THE GUARDIAN OF EARTH

When the party steps into the room, read:

As you enter a small, winged creature jumps up atop the pillar nearest the entrance. "You've come for the stone..." it says in a deep, dull voice. "Good luck with that."

The creature is an **earth mephit** (see *PATHFINDER BESTIARY*, pages 202-203). It is dull, humorless and not exactly talkative, and will not willingly give up the location of the Earth Stone. The creature doesn't exactly know what the Earth Stone does except that it is within one of the nine stone pillars in the room; it knows which one, but upon first meeting the party it doesn't have a real reason to tell them. The mephit has little information on the rest of the dungeon, and cannot help the party in recovering any memories they have yet to uncover.

There are a few ways it could be coaxed into revealing the location of the Earth Stone: either through diplomacy or through its surrender upon attack. If the players choose to ignore the mephit, it will gladly get out of the way and stand in a corner while the party deals with the pillars.

Once the Earth Stone is retrieved from the column that contained in, the mephit will vanish, returning back to where it came from on the Plane of Earth.

DIPLOMACY

The creature starts off as indifferent towards the party, but with a successful DC 17 Diplomacy check can become friendly. While friendly, it won't tell the party where the Earth Stone is but will identify five pillars where the stone is *not*. It will also offer to cast the *soften earth and stone* spell (see *PATHFINDER CORE RULEBOOK*, page 345) on one pillar of the party's choosing; it will make no indication whether the pillar the party chooses is correct or not, but it will cast the spell on demand anyway in the hopes it won't be bothered any further.

If the Diplomacy check beats a DC 22, the mephrit will become helpful and not only tell the party which pillar the Earth Stone is, but it will offer to cast the *soften earth and stone* spell it knows to make its retrieval easier.

If the Diplomacy check fails to beat a DC 12, the mephrit will become unfriendly and offer no assistance at all.

If the Diplomacy check fails to beat a DC 7 or is a natural 1, the mephrit will become hostile and attack; when it attacks in this matter, it will do so until it is destroyed since it doesn't exactly have an easy way of fleeing the room.

HOSTILITY

If the mephrit is attacked, it will defend itself at first... likely by first attacking with its breath weapon. If it sees it doesn't stand a chance of survival, it will attempt to surrender and offer to tell the party which pillar the stone is in.

If it surrenders, it will not make the party aware that it can cast the *soften stone and earth* spell on its own, but if anyone mentions the mephrit's ability to do such a thing (either through a Knowledge check or through a player's personal knowledge) it will offer to cast the spell on the pillar with the Earth Stone in it.

INSPECTING THE PILLARS

All nine pillars are identical, and without any help from the mephrit it's nearly impossible to determine which pillar contains the Earth Stone.

Some spells can be used to simplify the process:

command: If the command spell is cast successfully on the mephrit, it can be instructed to not only reveal which pillar the stone is in but will cast its *soften earth and stone* spell on it to gain access to the stone.

detect magic: Casting the spell will highlight the correct pillar with a faint hint of magic deep inside it. Cracking open that pillar will reveal the Earth Stone.

soften earth and stone (which the mephrit can cast) will turn a pillar into a pile of mud that will disappear in a matter of seconds. If the Earth Stone was contained within that pillar, it will be left behind in the pillar's place.

Other creative spell options are up to GM's discretion.

BREAKING THE PILLARS

Each pillar is made of hardened stone and earth, making it extremely durable. Unless it is softened up by the mephrit's magic or a spell similar to the soften earth and stone spell, the only way to penetrate it is to destroy the pillar (*hardness 5, hp 60, break DC 25*). With sufficient bashing away at a pillar it can be broken apart, but it's an exhausting process; anyone who chooses to simply

attack the pillar until it breaks must succeed in a DC 15 Fortitude save or become exhausted for 1 hour or until their next long rest.

If a pillar is completely destroyed, it will collapse into a pile of rubble that will magically disappear in a few seconds. If the pillar contained the Earth Stone, the dark brown stone will be the only thing left on the ground in the pillar's place. When the party acquires the Earth Stone, grant them an XP award equivalent to a CR 2 encounter (600 XP).

2-5: STORAGE

Features of the area:

- This cramped room is fifteen feet long and ten feet wide.
- To the left of the door are several sealed crates, the largest one at least four to five feet on each side.
- The rest of the room is occupied by several large barrels.

The barrels were of wine, Merran's special reserve that he cultivated long ago before he moved to the mountains, but it's been decades since they've been brought here. The casks are sealed extremely well, but the wine inside has gone rotten long ago, and the toxic vapors have collected inside of them; on a successful DC 15 Perception check, the party will not only be able to tell the age of the barrels but swelling and discoloration in some of the casks, indicating that whatever is inside has gone foul.

If any of them are open it will release a cloud of noxious vapor that quickly fills the room. Everyone in the room must make an immediate DC 15 Fortitude save or suffer the effects of the poisonous cloud:

POISONOUS CLOUD

Type poison (inhaled); **Save** DC 15 Fortitude

Frequency 1/round for 4 rounds

Initial Effect 1 Con drain and nauseated for 1 hour; **Secondary Effect** 1d2 Con damage; **Cure** 1 save

The cloud dissipates after 5 minutes.

The crates contain various personal effects, including some fine linens and formal articles of clothing, which in total has a value of around 100 to 150gp. At the bottom of the larger crate is also a collection of various small to medium-sized mundane weapons: daggers, short swords and the like. Searching them with a DC 15 Perception check will discover at least one *masterwork* weapon of DM's choosing, such as a dagger, short sword or longsword.

2-6: HALL OF WATER (CR 3)

Features of the area:

- The room is thirty feet in length and fifteen feet wide.
- In the center of the room there is a rectangular basin of water twenty feet long and five feet wide. The basin is bordered by a stone rim about three feet in height, and the inside of the basin is no more than two or three feet deep. The water inside the basin is crystal clear.
- Near the far corner of the room is a small pile of rocky debris around a narrow tunnel leading in to the northern wall.

Anyone analyzing the pool of water and succeeding in a DC 15 Perception check will notice nothing more than a small white stone in the water near the far end of the pool. If the same player beats a DC 20 in their Perception check, they will also notice the water appears to be moving seemingly randomly even though there is no

wind or external force in the room that would cause it to do so. A *detect magic* spell will detect residual traces of conjuration magic.

Inside the pool of water are two **small water elementals** (see *PATHFINDER BESTIARY*, page 126) that guard the Water Stone in the water. They will immediately attack the nearest creature if the water is disturbed in any way, and will continue to do so until destroyed.

Since the water elementals are in a very shallow pool and the rest of the party is likely to be on solid ground the creatures are at a significant disadvantage (elemental takes a -4 penalty to attack rolls and damage if either the water elemental or its target is not in the water), so in order to try and even the odds they will attempt to first put out any light sources the party may have and, if successful, attack the party in darkness.

When the party acquires the Water Stone, besides any XP gained from defeating the water elementals grant them an XP award equivalent to a CR 2 encounter (600 XP).

2-6A: ESCAPE TUNNEL

One of the prisoners that was held in the jail (area 2-9) painstakingly dug a narrow tunnel from his cell all the way to the Hall of Water. This tunnel is extremely narrow, no more than two or three feet wide, and although small-sized creatures might be able to fit through the opening medium-sized creatures would have a harder time.

If a medium-sized creature attempts to crawl through the opening, they must succeed in either a DC 15 Dexterity to wriggle their way through or a DC 15 Strength check to power through the debris. A small-sized creature gains a +10 circumstance bonus to the skill check.

If either skill check fails by more than 5 (fails to make a DC 10), the tunnel collapses dealing 2d6 bludgeoning damage to anyone caught inside it. That person would then be pinned, unable to move, and would have to be pulled out from either end by an ally. Once they are pulled out, the whole tunnel collapses and cannot be used further.

Anyone crawling through the tunnel and entering the jail for the first time will circumvent the traps on the eastern door, but the dire rats at the western end of the chamber will immediately sense their presence and move to attack. See area 2-9 for more information.

2-7: STUDY

Features of the area:

- This room is twenty feet square.
- A long wooden desk extends almost the full length of the northern and eastern walls. A lone chair stands in front of the northern section.
- Two lit candelabras, one at either end of the L-shaped desk, illuminate most of the room.
- There are numerous papers, scrolls and other documents scattered about most of the desk.
- On the northeast corner of the desk is a large chest.
- In the middle of the eastern section of the desk is a wooden platform three feet wide and a four inches high. In the middle of the platform is an ornate silver medallion with a blue gem in its center.

The candles in the candelabras have a continual flame spell cast upon them; they will never go out.

DOCUMENTS

When the players inspect the documents on the desk, read:

Most of the documents have faded and are illegible, but one large sheet stands out: it is a large map of a village with several major points of interest marked. The inn, the town hall and at least two taverns are marked, as well as several locations on the outskirts of the village that bear what appear to be residences marked with the occupant's name.

On the southwest corner of the map, nestled in what appear to be mountains, is a star painted in red. From there, several paths are drawn heading in to the village from various different angles.

On the bottom right corner of the map is what you can assume is the village's name: Wildwood. As you read that name... Wildwood... you have the feeling that you have been there before, that the village has some personal importance, but you cannot recall what.

Anyone who has ranks in the Profession (Soldier) or succeeds in a DC 15 Knowledge (Geography) check will realize that the lines drawn from the star in the mountain appear to be plans of attack, as if whoever was marking up the map was planning a full scale assault of the village.

The names indicated on the map are the residences of important members of the village council, which Merran planned to kill first if he ever decided to assault the village. You are welcome to make up any names that you want, and if you do you may want to keep track of these names should the party ever return to Wildwood, but for now the names will have no meaning to any member of the party.

NOTE: *These documents are similar in nature and effect to the documents found in Merran's laboratory (area 3-6). If those were somehow found first, these will not reveal any additional information.*

THE SILVER KEY

The object on the eastern table is a silver hexagon about six inches wide with a deep blue gemstone in its center. It is in fact extremely valuable, and if the party somehow manages to exit Merran's lair with it in hand they can sell at any jeweler for no less than 400 gp.

The silver key is actually needed to switch off the arcane locks on the doors leading out of Merran's underground lair and back to the surface. See area 3-7 for more information.

TREASURE

The chest in the northeast corner is not trapped but is locked and requires a DC 20 Disable Device check to open. Inside the chest is:

- A spellbook with three random 1st level wizard spells in it (GM's discretion).
- Two dozen sheets of parchment
- A signet ring. The emblem on the ring matches a symbol on the map, indicating it is from the village of Wildwood. It is a ring normally held by the village elders of Wildwood which Merran somehow acquired. In Wildwood, it is

considered a historical antique, and could be sold there for 40gp.

- A magnifying glass worth 100 gp. If the chest is opened violently (for example, if it is broken open by force), the magnifying glass will be shattered and worthless.

2-8: ARCANES CIRCLE (CR 1-3)

Features of the area:

- The room is approximately twenty-five feet long and fifteen feet wide.
- There are two doors leading out of the room; one in the northeast corner and one in the southwest corner.
- In the center of the room, etched into the floor, is an arcane circle. The circle extends almost the entire width of the room, leaving a gap about a foot wide on either side. The circle has several runes repeated along its perimeter, and the entire ring glows brightly in a pale blue light.
- In the center of the circle is a large wooden chest.

ARCANE CAGE

The arcane circle has a powerful evocation aura around it, which can be easily detected either with a *detect magic* or by any spellcaster succeeding in a **DC 25 Knowledge (Arcana)** check (casters disciplined in the school of abjuration gain a +5 circumstance bonus to the check). The runes along its circumference are not in any known language, but are commonly used in abjuration magic.

If the party wants to attempt to squeeze by on either side of the cage, they can attempt a **DC 15 Acrobatics** check. If they fail by any amount at all, they cross the circle's edge and activate it. If the barrier is already activated, they simply won't be able to squeeze through.

The arcane circle was put in place by Merran, a 10th level wizard at the time. So long as it has not been triggered a rogue can successfully disable the arcane circle with a successful **DC 25 Disable Device** check. If the skill check fails by more than 5, the circle triggers activates as if the rogue entered the circle's bounds.

If any living creature enters the bounds of the arcane circle, the circle immediately activates. Everyone who breaches the circle's edge must succeed in a **DC 18 Reflex** save or be pulled in to the center. If they fail the Reflex save by more than 5, they are actually hit by the barrier as it manifests itself and take 1d8 bludgeoning damage before being violently thrown inside the circle.

Regardless of whether anyone is trapped inside it or not, an almost impenetrable barrier of light will form along the circle's entire perimeter. The barrier functions similar to a *forcecage* spell (see *PATHFINDER CORE RULEBOOK*, page 285) or *wall of force* spell (*PCR*, page 365), except circular along the bounds of the circle. The barrier is has a hardness of 20 and 100 hit points, but otherwise functions identically to the *forcecage* spell as if cast by a 10th level wizard. The barrier will also remain in effect for one full hour before automatically dispelling, which is a considerably longer time than the *forcecage* spell. The only way out of the cage is to destroy it, wait an hour or find the means to disable it within the chest.

CHEST (CR 1-3)

The chest is a standard chest that is not locked, but it is trapped with a *summon monster* spell.

SUMMONING TRAP

CR 1

Type *magic*; Perception **DC 25**; Disable Device **DC 20**

EFFECTS

Trigger touch; Reset none

Effect summons 1d4 fiendish stirges

When the chest is opened, it will summon 1d3 **fiendish stirges** (see *PATHFINDER BESTIARY*, page 260, for the common stirge and *Appendix A* of this adventure for the full stat block) that will attack the first living creature they see, which is likely to be anyone stuck inside the arcane cage.

Inside the chest there are assorted mundane items (GM's discretion) and 2d6x10 gp worth of coins in mixed gold, silver and copper pieces. There is also a 1 in 4 chance that there is one minor magic item; either choose an item appropriate for the party or roll randomly on the tables in the *PATHFINDER CORE RULEBOOK* (starting on page 461).

Inside the chest there are also three black obsidian rocks, each about one inch in diameter. Each of the stones has an extremely faint abjuration aura around it. If any of these rocks makes contact with the barrier surrounding the chest, they detonate in a shower of sparks and the barrier takes 50 hp of damage (ignoring hardness). Therefore, two stones striking the barrier is sufficient to destroy it and free anyone inside.

2-9: JAIL (CR 1-3)

Features of the area:

- A long aisle extends westward around 25 to 30-feet. To either side, except for a gap along the northern side, are several 5' x 5' jail cells.
- Each cell's entrance is made of thick iron bars fashioned into a door. Some of the jail cell doors appear slightly opened, while the others are locked tight.
- In one of the cells along the southern wall there is a tunnel that leads into the Hall of Water (see area 2-6a), which is only visible directly when standing inside or directly in front of the cell. This cell's iron door is unlocked and slightly ajar.

While Merran was using labor to build the Elemental Halls and his sanctum, he used this area to torture and imprison those that did not follow his instructions. It has since been abandoned, but some of the security measures still remain.

RATS (CR 1)

Scanning the area with a **DC 15 Perception** check will reveal light movement in the cells near the far end of the hallway to the west.

There are 2 **dire rats** (see *PATHFINDER BESTIARY*, page 232) skittering about the open cells at the western end of the room. Due to their keen sense of smell, they will detect any enemies within 30 feet of their location and will move to attack immediately. If the crossbow traps are triggered (see below), they will come out in to the hallway and attack the first thing they see.

CROSSBOW TRAP (CR 1)

The eastern doors to this room are set to trigger a set of crossbow traps at the far end of the hallway leading to the west.

CROSSBOW BOLT TRAP**CR 1/2****Type** *mechanical***Perception** DC 20 each, or DC 25 for both; **Disable Device** DC 20 each, or DC 25 for both**EFFECTS****Trigger** touch; **Reset** none**Effect** crossbow bolt; atk +5 ranged (piercing 1d8/19-20)

The first crossbow will fire as soon as the eastern door is pushed so much as an inch; if the door is only pushed slightly open, this will likely cause the bolt to strike the door itself and penetrate it, not causing any damage to the players. The second crossbow bolt is set to fire as soon as the door is opened wide enough for someone to get through it. If the door is swung open quickly or kicked open, both bolts will fire immediately.

The fact that there's a trap can be discovered with a DC 20 Perception check, and if the same Perception check beats a DC 25 it will reveal that there are actually two traps on the door. Once discovered, the trap can be disabled with a DC 20 Disable Device for each of the traps, and if the Disable Device checks beats a DC 25 both traps are disabled simultaneously.

If the party first enters through any of the other entrances – either the northern doorway or the tunnel in one of the cells (see 2-6a) – they will be able to easily detect the crossbow trap aimed at the eastern door. If the traps are seen from this side of the door, the party gains a +10 circumstance bonus to disarm them.

CELLS

Only four cells are unlocked; two that contain one dire rat each, one with an escape tunnel (see 2-6a) and the easternmost one on the northern side. Every other cell is locked and, since the key has been lost long ago, can only be opened with a DC 20 Disable Device check.

Some of the locked cells still contain the remains of those that were left in there to rot, but do not contain anything of value.

2-10: HALL OF AIR

Features of the area:

- This room is twenty-five feet in length and fifteen feet wide.
- In the center of the room is a deep pit about fifteen across.
- Floating in the center of the pit is a stone platform five feet across. On top of the platform is a wooden chest.
- At the far end of the room, where there is a little over five feet of clearance between the far wall and the pit's edge, is a stone altar. There does not appear to be anything on top of the altar.

The pit appears bottomless, but it is actually only several hundred feet deep. There is a powerful magic spell (with a strong conjuration aura) cast in the pit where anything that falls in to the pit and falls for more than thirty feet is instantly teleported to the eastern side of the room. If this is a living creature, the effect is actually quite traumatic; the target must succeed in a DC 16 Will save or take 2d6 nonlethal psychic damage. If the same living creature falls in a second time, they still need to make the save

but gain a +4 circumstance bonus due to having experienced the effect before.

The chest in the middle platform is actually an illusion created by a *permanent image* spell (as if cast by a 10th level wizard; see *PATHFINDER CORE RULEBOOK*, page 319).

As soon as a living creature steps foot on the center platform, a powerful whirlwind of air begins to flow violently over the pit and around the platform. Anyone on the center platform is not affected, but any attempts to cross over the pit take a -10 penalty on all skill checks, and anyone attempting to cross over the chasm at this time – regardless of whether their actions require a skill check or not – must succeed in a DC 16 Reflex save or get battered around by the winds and take 2d6 bludgeoning damage. The whirlwind effect lasts for 10 minutes before dying down, and when it dies down it will pause for only 1 full round; if a living creature is still on the center platform by then, the whirlwind will once again start.

If the party attempts to avoid the center of the platform and cross the pit around it, they will not risk triggering the whirlwind. It is, however, fifteen feet across and requires a DC 15 Acrobatics check to cross.

If a player fails any skill check or saving throw by more than 5 while trying to cross over the pit, they fall in and take psychic damage as above, ultimately teleporting back to the eastern platform.

As soon as any player successfully gets across the pit and stands before the stone altar, the Air Stone will materialize on top of the altar for the player to take. When the party acquires the Air Stone, grant them an XP award equivalent to a CR 2 encounter (600 XP). Once the stone is retrieved, the whirlwind dies down and will not reappear.

2-11: HALL OF FIRE

Features of the area:

- As soon as anyone enters, they will be hit with an uncomfortable heat. Anyone wearing metallic armor will begin to feel it rising in temperature almost immediately.
- The room is over 30-feet long and fifteen feet across most of the way. Near the eastern end it widens to be twenty-five feet wide.
- A narrow walkway extends east towards a statue of a demon. The statue is at least ten feet tall, made of dark red volcanic rock and depicts a large, muscular demon with horns, a tail and a large set of wings.
- Just in front of the statue is a three foot tall stone altar, formed from a single volcanic rock. Sitting atop the altar is a black urn.
- To either side of the walkway, ten feet below the walkway's edge, are two pits of molten lava.

The lava pits are ten feet deep and contain real superheated lava; anything that comes within a few feet of the surface takes 2d6 fire damage (See *PATHFINDER CORE RULEBOOK*, page 444). Anything falling in will be quickly consumed, and players that fall in do not stand a chance of surviving (20d6 fire damage for the next 1d3 rounds).

The entire chamber is extremely hot due to the exposed lava, and anyone wearing metallic armor will begin to feel extremely uncomfortable while in the chamber. If they continue to wear the armor, after three rounds their armor will begin to heat up as if

under the effects of a *heat metal* spell (as cast by a 5th level wizard; see *PATHFINDER CORE RULEBOOK*, pages 294-295). One round after the environment will affect armor, shields and anything else metallic in the same manner.

After the third round of exposure, unless they remove the armor it will become glowing hot and start dealing damage to the wearer until removed. The following round weapons and shields will have the same effect; anyone still holding those will take damage in the same manner. Magical armor, weapons and shields get a **DC 16 Will** save to resist the effects.

THE DEMON'S OFFERING

A **DC 20 Knowledge (Planes)** check will identify the creature as a **balor** (see *PATHFINDER BESTIARY*, page 58), one of the most powerful demons in the Abyss. The statue appears to be made of volcanic rock, which gives it its reddish tint, but otherwise the statue is nondescript and not magical.

The urn in front of the statue is filled with several dozen black coals. A **DC 15 Perception** check will detect hints of dried blood in the urn as well as the top of the altar. A *detect magic* spell will detect traces of transmutation magic in the urn and amongst the coals.

No matter what the party attempts to use, the coals cannot be ignited in any way until an offering of blood is made. If so much as a drop of blood is placed on top of the coals while they are still in the urn, the coals will immediately ignite in a burst of magical flame and burn away until a single reddish stone remains within the urn: the Fire Stone.

When the party acquires the Fire Stone, grant them an XP award equivalent to a CR 2 encounter (600 XP).

PART THREE: MERRAN'S INNER SANCTUM

Once through the Elemental Halls, the party enters Merran's actual base of operations and lair, which has fallen into some disrepair due to Merran's demise decades ago.

General Features of the Area:

- The entire area is noticeably higher quality. The walls and floor are smoother, there is less debris, and even the air feels cleaner.
- The hallways are also much more ample than in the Elemental Halls, ten feet wide with a twelve foot high ceiling.
- Walls are smooth stone, and all the rooms and hallways have been carved out of solid rock.
- All doors are wooden reinforced doors, much stronger than those found in the Elemental Halls.
- Except for laboratory (area 3-6) and the main entrance (area 3-7), the area is unlit and dark.

NOTE: *If the party has not accumulated enough experience points to reach level two yet, you might want to consider letting them level up right now anyway. This is also a good point to take an extended rest or have a break in the session.*

RANDOM ENCOUNTERS

The area is fairly low on combat encounters so as not to overburden a 1st or 2nd level party, but if either the GM or the players want additional encounters to justify a faster level increase you can a roll against the following table:

d8	Creature
1	1d6 dire rats
2	1d6 fire beetles
3	1d6 human skeletons
4	1d6 human zombies
5	1 spider swarm
6	1 giant spider
7	1 small elemental (air or earth)
8	1 mephit (air, earth, fire or magma)

3-1: ARRIVAL CHAMBER

Features of the area:

- A raised platform and two stone columns – identical to the platform in the Elemental Halls (area 2-1e) – is on the southern end of the room.
- There is a single door in the northeast corner and a wide hallway in the northwest corner.
- A pair of closed double doors are in the center of the northern wall. The doors are flanked by statues of soldiers in full plate, swords at attention.

So long as the four stones remain in place in the Elemental Halls (area 2-1), there will be an identical portal here that leads back there. There is no apparent way to control the portal's presence from this side; once the portal is closed, there is no way to open it from here.

3-2: LIBRARY (CR 2)

Features of the area:

- The room is thirty feet wide and twenty feet deep. The ceiling is fifteen feet high.
- Three aisles extend westward from the doorway. Each aisle is flanked by bookshelves that are ten feet high.

This library has been neglected for decades, and a combination of time and humidity has caused almost all the books to corrode and crumble to dust. Those books that are relatively intact appear blank, their inks long faded over time.

Hidden amongst the shelves are 3 **animated books** (see *Appendix A*), which are dormant until the shelves are disturbed. They are here to protect what's left of the library, and will try and attack anything that threatens it. The books can fly perfectly by flapping their covers, so they can easily fly above the bookshelves and out of reach of those at ground level.

If the threat to the books withdraws from the room, the books will once again return to the shelves and hide until they are reactivated.

TREASURE

Searching the shelves and succeeding in a **DC 15 Perception** check will uncover a scroll containing a random 1st level wizard spell. If the same DC beats a **DC 20**, the party will find a second scroll of a random 1st or 2nd level wizard spell (GM's choice).

3-3: MERRAN'S CHAMBER (CR 2)

Features of the area:

- Upon entering, the smell of decay and death is almost overwhelming.
- This is a very well decorated bedroom, but the accumulated dust and cobwebs indicates that it hasn't been entered in a very long time.
- A dressing table and chair stand against the southern wall.
- Two wardrobes stand against the western wall. To the left of the wardrobes is a chest.
- At the northern end of the room is an ornate king sized bed flanked by two nightstands. The bed is covered in high quality silk sheets and linens.
- Lying on top of the bed are the skeletal remains of a human, still wrapped in the tattered remains of a wizard's robe.

The skeleton is what remains of Merran, who died here in his sleep decades ago. The body shows no signs of trauma, and a successful **DC 12 Heal** check will reveal the body is of an elderly male that seems to have died of natural causes.

TREASURE

Searching the bed will discover a *wand of burning hands* (CL 3rd) with only 5 charges remaining.

The sheets on the bed are very high quality linens which are normally quite expensive, but with Merran having died on them and remained on top of them for decades they're ruined and nobody in their right mind would buy them now. Searching the sheets and succeeding in a **DC 15 Perception** check will discover a small key nestled between the sheets. The key can be used to unlock both chests in Merran's laboratory (area 3-6).

The wardrobe, dressing table and nightstands contain miscellaneous personal items and mundane clothing, all of which has been ruined over the years. None of it has any value. Searching the dressing table and succeeding in a **DC 15 Perception** check will discover a fragment of a slip of paper that only has the letters "istria" written on it. The paper is actually a fragment of a larger document that has crumbled over the years, and the word is actually the latter part of the name "Calistria", goddess of trickery, lust and revenge (see *PATHFINDER CORE RULEBOOK*, page 43).

The chest in the southwest corner is seemingly unlocked but trapped with a *burning hands* spell.

BURNING HANDS TRAP

CR 2

Type magic; **Perception** DC 25; **Disable Device** DC 25

EFFECTS

Trigger location; **Reset** manual (when chest is closed)

Effect spell effect (*burning hands*, 2d4 fire damage, **DC 11 Reflex** save for half damage); multiple targets (all targets in a 15-ft. cone)

Once the chest is opened the trap will trigger, but if the word "Calistria" is spoken aloud anywhere in the room the chest will emit an audible clap and the trap will be disabled for one hour, allowing the chest to be opened without incident.

Inside the chest there is:

- A *potion of protection from good*
- Two scrolls, each of a random wizard spell of 2nd level or lower (GM's choice). If the *burning hands* trap is

triggered, there is a 1 in 4 chance that one of these scrolls will be incinerated.

- A *masterwork dagger*
- 3 flasks of *alchemist's fire* (see *PATHFINDER CORE RULEBOOK*, page 160)
- 92 gp, 102 sp and 312 cp

3-4: TORTURE ROOM (CR 0-1)

Features of the area:

- The room is approximately twenty feet square in size.
- There are doors in the center of the northern and eastern wall.
- In the northwest corner, recessed into the western wall, is a stone table. Lying on top of the table is an animated skeleton, its hands and feet chained down to the table with short restraints. It begins to flail around wildly, trying to release itself.
- Against the south wall are two large cages made of iron bars. Each cage is about six or seven feet square. Inside the cages are more animated skeletons, one in each cage, that are attempting to reach out through the bars.
- There is a small chest in the northeast corner of the room.

This small room is where Merran brought any subject that disobeyed or irritated him to be jailed, tortured or killed. It also served as a holding cell for any subjects that were to be sacrificed in his magical rituals or offered to any powerful creatures he summoned.

There are 3 **human skeletons** (see *PATHFINDER BESTIARY*, page 250), one bolted to the table and one in each cell. These are the servants that managed to avoid being locked in the barracks (area 3-5) with the others. They were restrained here – two locked in the cages, one bolted to the table – when Merran decided to go to sleep... and never woke up.

The skeletons are armored but have no weapons so all they can do is use their claw attack. The skeletons in the cells will try to reach out through the bars at anyone who enters the room; anyone who comes within five feet of the cage is subject to swipes from their claws.

NOTE: Because the skeletons are weaponless and restrained when the party enters, they are not much a challenge to the party and should not reward XP if destroyed in this condition.

Upon seeing the party, the skeleton on the table will try to break out of its bonds. The bonds have become rusty over time and have weakened, so there is the possibility of the skeleton freeing itself. As soon as the party enters the room start making Strength checks each round for the skeleton to free itself. If it succeeds in a **DC 20 Strength** check, the bonds are broken and the skeleton will spring from the table and attack with its claws.

TREASURE

The chest in the northeast corner contains various strange tools and weapons used for torture. Almost all of them are rusty and broken to the point of not being usable, but amongst all the debris can be found one unused *healer's kit* (see *PATHFINDER CORE RULEBOOK*, page 161) On a successful **DC 15 Perception** check the party will also uncover one *masterwork dagger* all the way at the bottom of the chest beneath a pile of rust and broken tools.

3-5: BARRACKS (CR 2)

Features of the area:

- There are five beds along the western wall, arranged side by side with little space between them. The beds are moldy and the sheets are in tatters.
- At the foot of each of the beds is a closed chest.
- There are wardrobes against the far wall on either side of the doorway.

This sleeping chamber was once used by Merran's servants and minions, but after a disagreement Merran locked them into the room to rot. Unfortunately, some of the servants have remained and eagerly await the opportunity to escape and get revenge on the living.

Inside the barracks are 5 **human skeletons** (see *PATHFINDER BESTIARY*, page 250), former servants and minions of Merran that were left here to die after disagreeing with him and not obeying orders. As soon as any attempt is made to move the barricade blocking the door (see 3-5a below), they will slowly move in to position and wait for the door to open, then attack the first living creature they see.

TREASURE

All of the weapons and armor worn by the skeletons is too rusty and aged to be of any value or use.

The five chests and the wardrobes are all unlocked, and collectively they contain:

- Two suits of scale mail in serviceable condition
- Four short swords, one longsword and one mace
- 3 light wooden shields and 1 buckler
- 45 gp, 32 sp and 82 cp
- A *thunderstone* (see *PATHFINDER CORE RULEBOOK*, page 160)
- Other miscellaneous basic clothing and personal items

Searching the room fully and succeeding in a DC 15 Perception check will discover two amethysts carefully hidden within one of the mattresses, each worth 100 gp.

3-5A: BARRICADE

When his servants disobeyed him Merran placed a large barricade blocking the door out of the barracks, sealing his staff in to die a slow, miserable death.

The barricade consists of wood fragments and sandbags, all of which can be moved aside with five minutes worth of effort (no skill check necessary), but unless actions are taken to do it quietly the skeletons inside will be well aware of the movement. They will form around the door, waiting for it to open so that they can pounce on any intruders.

The skeletons inside the barracks aren't moving around very much and don't speak, so anyone trying to listen at the door would have to beat a difficult DC 25 Perception check to detect any movement inside the room.

3-6: LABORATORY (CR 3 OR MORE)

Features of the area:

- This large chamber is almost fifty feet long and twenty-five feet wide.

- There is a long L-shaped table taking up the northwest corner. There are numerous documents spread across its surface, and in the middle of the northern section is an alchemical lab set up.
- Next to the table, on the northern wall, are two chests.
- There is a large opening in the ground in the northeast corner of the room. The opening is about eight feet wide and contains a pool of bubbling magma.
- In the center of the room, on a raised ten foot wide platform, is a pentagram etched in to the ground. In front of the pentagram is a raised platform with a stone altar, and on top of the stone altar are two candelabras and an open book.

This is Merran's old laboratory, where he conducted his experiments by summoning and trying to control elemental creatures.

Merran's familiar, a **magma mephit** (see *PATHFINDER BESTIARY*, page 202), is lying in wait in the lava pit in the northeast corner. It has been trapped on this plane since Merran's demise so many decades ago; as a result, it has gone borderline insane and is extremely angry. As soon as it senses anyone approaching it will take on its magma form and attempt to summon another magma mephit from the Plane of Fire (25% chance of success).

When any living creature comes within 30-feet of the lava, it will attack and will do so until it is destroyed. The original mephit will try to remain within the lava pool, using its breath weapon and switching in and out of magma form as needed. If it successfully summoned a second mephit, that second mephit will charge out of the magma pool and assault the party with its breath weapon and sharp claws.

If the original mephit is destroyed first, the second mephit may attempt to summon yet another magma mephit to its side (25% chance of success). There will never be more than three mephits in total.

DOCUMENTS

The documents on the desk are almost identical in nature to those found in Merran's study (area 2-7); they include a marked up map of Wildwood and other miscellaneous documents regarding the village. If the players discover these documents before discovering those in the study, they will rekindle the same memories of Wildwood. See area 2-7 and, if applicable, read the read-aloud text to the players.

If the players had already discovered the documents in the study, these documents will not contain any new information.

SUMMONING CIRCLE

The book on top of the altar contains several pages written in Abyssal. If a player who comprehends the language analyzes it and succeeds in a DC 20 Spellcraft check, they will determine that the ritual is some sort of summoning ritual which is bound to the pentagram in the room. If the same skill check beats a DC 25, they will determine the ritual is specifically designed to summon creatures elemental in nature.

The book can function as a spellbook except for the six pages that take up the summoning ritual, and it can be sold to a merchant dealing in arcane materials for 50 gp.

PERFORMING A SUMMONING

A player can attempt to cast the ritual in the book by making a DC 20 Spellcraft check. If they succeed, a **small elemental** of a random type (air, earth, fire or water) will materialize within the pentagram and be under the player's control. While the elemental is under the player's control, the player must make a DC 15 Spellcraft skill check every hour in order to keep control of it; on a failed check, the elemental is free and will attack the party. The player can also choose to not make the skill check at all each hour, after which the elemental will be immediately dispelled and return to its appropriate plane of existence; only on a failed check will the elemental turn on the party.

Either way, after 6 hours pass the elemental will be automatically dispelled and return to its original plane of existence.

If a player fails the DC 20 Spellcraft check to summon the elemental, the elemental will still appear but not be under the player's control. If the check failed by 4 or less the elemental will immediately disappear and return to its plane of origin. If the check is failed by 5 or more, the elemental will immediately turn hostile and attack anyone in the room, preferring to kill the spellcaster that summoned it in the first place.

The summoning ritual will only work on the pentagram in this room; attempting the ritual elsewhere will have no effect.

TREASURE

On the table there is a spellbook that contains the following spells: *expeditious retreat*, *false life*, *levitate*, *mage armor*, *magic missile* and all the wizard cantrips. Next to it is a small pouch containing enough spell components to cast each spell in the spellbook twice.

Both chests are locked and require a DC 20 Disable Device check to open. They can also be unlocked with the key found alongside Merran's body in his chamber (area 3-3).

The chests contain Merran's stash of valuables, which contains:

- 8 pp, 107 gp, 112 sp and 312 cp
- A +1 dagger
- Assorted gems and jewelry worth 300 gp
- 2 *potions of cure moderate wounds*, one in each chest
- 2 flasks of *alchemist's fire* (see *PATHFINDER CORE RULEBOOK*, page 160), one in each chest
- One minor magic item of no more than 1,500gp in value (GM's discretion)

If the chests are open by force, have the party roll one d20. If the result is a natural 10 or lower, the flask of alchemist fire in the chest in question detonates (see *PATHFINDER CORE RULEBOOK*, page 160). If the result is a natural 5 or lower, the blast destroys the *potions of cure moderate wounds* in that chest as well.

3-7: MAIN ENTRANCE/EXIT

Features of the area:

- A large pair of reinforced double doors stand in the center of the north wall. The doors are glowing in a pale blue light.
- On either side of the doors are stone columns about three feet in height. On top of each of the columns is a crystal sphere about two feet wide that is glowing brightly in a blue light.

- Against the southern wall, directly in front of the double doors, is another stone column three feet in height. There is nothing apparent on top of the column, but upon close inspection there is a hexagonal indentation embossed into the top of the column that is about six inches wide and an inch deep.

The door and all three pillars radiate powerful abjuration magic. The doors are under the influence of a powerful spell similar to *arcane lock* (as if cast by a 10th level wizard) which is powered by the two crystal spheres. The door is immune to all form of attacks so long as the lock remains in place.

The crystal spheres can be destroyed by weapon attacks (*hardness 2, hp 30, break DC 25*) but immune to any direct magic effects. If a crystal sphere is shattered, it explodes in a powerful shockwave of force; every creature within 15' of the sphere takes 3d6 damage (DC 15 Reflex save for half damage).

Dispel magic will have no effect on the door so long as the crystals are active, but a *dispel magic* spell used on a single crystal (and succeeding with the DC 21 skill check *dispel magic* requires) will disable that crystal alone. Casting a *knock* spell on the door instantly detonates both spheres, resulting in a combined explosion that would deal 6d6 damage to everyone within 15' of the door (DC 15 Reflex for half damage), which also unlocks the door.

Each crystal sphere can be deactivated by a rogue succeeding in a DC 20 Disable Device check. If the skill check is failed by more than 5, the sphere detonates as above.

Once both spheres are destroyed the door is unlocked and can be opened, allowing the players to exit.

USING THE SILVER KEY

If the silver key from the study in the Elemental Halls (area 2-7) is placed within the indentation on the southern pillar, it will lock into place and instantly dispel the arcane lock securing the northern door. Once the silver key locks in place there is no easy way to remove it without damaging it; if the pillar is damaged, the key will shatter and it becomes almost worthless. The only chance to cleanly remove it is if a rogue attempts a DC 25 Disable Device check; on a success, the key unlocks and can be safely removed from the pillar. Any form of failure seriously damages the key, and only if the check fails by 4 or less can the key be removed.

If the key is removed but damaged, it can be repaired with a successful *mending* spell cast upon it. If it not repaired, a damaged key is only worth its weight in silver, which is no more than 15 or 20 gp.

EXITING THE DUNGEON

If the party manages to get the doors open and leave, grant them an XP bonus equivalent to a CR 3 encounter (800 XP). If they opened the doors by using the silver key, increase the bonus to a CR 4 (1,200 XP).

Once the party opens the doors and steps through the hallway, they will arrive at the main entrance to Merran's lair, which is a tunnel hidden in the mountains overlooking Wildwood.

CONCLUSION: RETURNING TO WILDWOOD

When the players see the village, read:

As soon as you lay eyes upon the village in the valley below, a flood of memories return to you. You recall how you arrived at the village, how you were treated like heroes and saviors the moment you entered the village, and how you turned their request for help away.

Then you remember bits and pieces of your time in the village, and you get the sensation that the village is the reason you were brought to this wretched place.

RESCUING THE REMAINING DAMNED

When the party first arrived in the cavern, there were a few people that were still there. If they are still alive at the end of the encounter (assuming the party didn't kill them, for example), the party can choose to escort them out of the cavern by walking them through the entire area. At this point, assuming that the gauntlet has been disabled (see Part One) and the portal is still open (see areas 2-1 and 3-1), it should not be more than a long walk to go back and save them.

If there are still survivors and the party remembers to save them, grant them an XP bonus equivalent of a CR 3 encounter (800 XP).

If the party returns to Wildwood and manages to get a chance to talk to anyone there, once the people of Wildwood are aware that there are still survivors they may take it upon themselves to try and save those people using the same magic that imprisoned them in the first place. But this is assuming that the party gets the chance to talk to someone of importance in Wildwood before exacting their revenge.

EPILOGUE

Now is the opportunity for the GM and the players to use their own imaginations and fill in the blanks. Some of the questions that need to be answered, either by you or by the collective ideas of the party:

- Why did the party refuse to help the village? Was the reward too little? The risk too high? Was the village lying about what needed to be done? Were they keeping something from you?
- How did you get subdued? Were you poisoned at the tavern? Subdued in your bed at the inn? Clocked over the head while walking the streets?
- Do these people deserve punishment for tricking you and imprisoning you in that cavern? Do they deserve mercy for doing what they thought was necessary to save their village, even though the threat no longer existed? What must be done so that this does not happen ever again?
- What of the survivors still in the cavern? Can the village do something about rescuing them, or must the party do that on their own?
- What of the numerous bodies that remain in the gauntlet? Do they have family members still alive that might worry about what happened to them, or perhaps seek closure through a proper funeral?

APPENDIX A: NEW MONSTERS

ANIMATED BOOK

CR 1/2

XP 135

N Tiny construct

Init +2 **Senses** darkvision 60, low-light vision; Perception -5

DEFENSE

AC 18, touch 14, flat-footed 16 (+2 Dex, +4 natural, +2 size)

hp 5 (1d10)

Fort +0, **Ref** +2, **Will** -5

Immune Construct Traits; **Vulnerable** fire

OFFENSE

Speed 10 ft., fly 30 ft. (perfect)

Melee slam +1 (1d2-2)

Special Attacks cantrip

STATISTICS

Str 6, **Dex** 14, **Con** -, **Int** -, **Wis** 1, **Cha** 1

Base Atk +1 **CMB** +1 **CMD** 9

Skills Fly +16, Stealth +10 (+14 when dormant in a bookshelf)

SQ construction points (additional movement [fly], faster, flammable)

ECOLOGY

Environment any

Organization solitary, pair, or group (3-12)

Treasure none

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Cantrip (Sp) Each animated book knows one and only one 0th level cantrip (as a 1st level wizard; +3 attack, DC 11 save) from the following list: *acid splash*, *dancing lights*, *daze*, *flare*, *ray of frost* or *touch of fatigue*. It can cast the cantrip once every 3 rounds.

STIRGE, FIENDISH

CR 1/2

XP 200

N Tiny magical beast

Init +4; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision, scent; Perception +1

DEFENSE

AC 16, touch 16, flat-footed 12 (+4 Dex, +2 size)

hp 5 (1d10)

Fort +2, **Ref** +6, **Will** +1;

Resist cold 5, fire 5; **SR** 6;

OFFENSE

Speed 10 ft., fly 40 ft. (average)

Melee touch +7 (attach)

Space 2-1/2 ft. **Reach** 0 ft.

Special Attacks blood drain; *smite good* 1/day (swift action, +Cha bonus to attack, +HD bonus to damage; persists until target dead or creature rests).

STATISTICS

Str 3, **Dex** 19, **Con** 10, **Int** 1, **Wis** 12, **Cha** 6;

Base Atk +1; **CMB** +3 (+11 grapple when attached); **CMD** 9 (17 vs. trip)

Feats Weapon Finesse

Skills Fly +8, Stealth +16

SQ diseased

ECOLOGY

Environment temperate and warm swamps

Organization solitary, colony (2-4), flock (5-8), storm (9-14), or swarm (15-40)

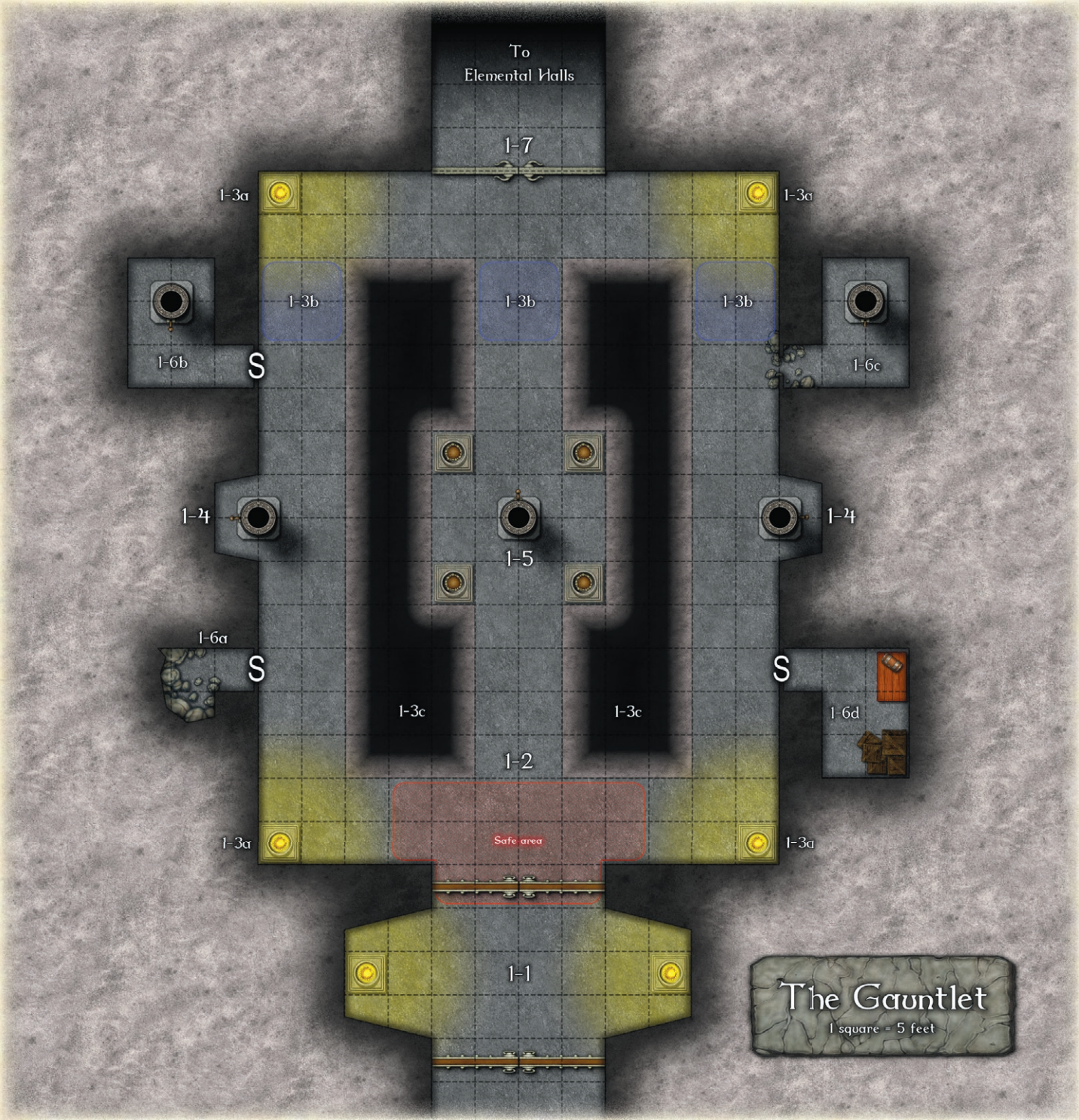
Treasure none

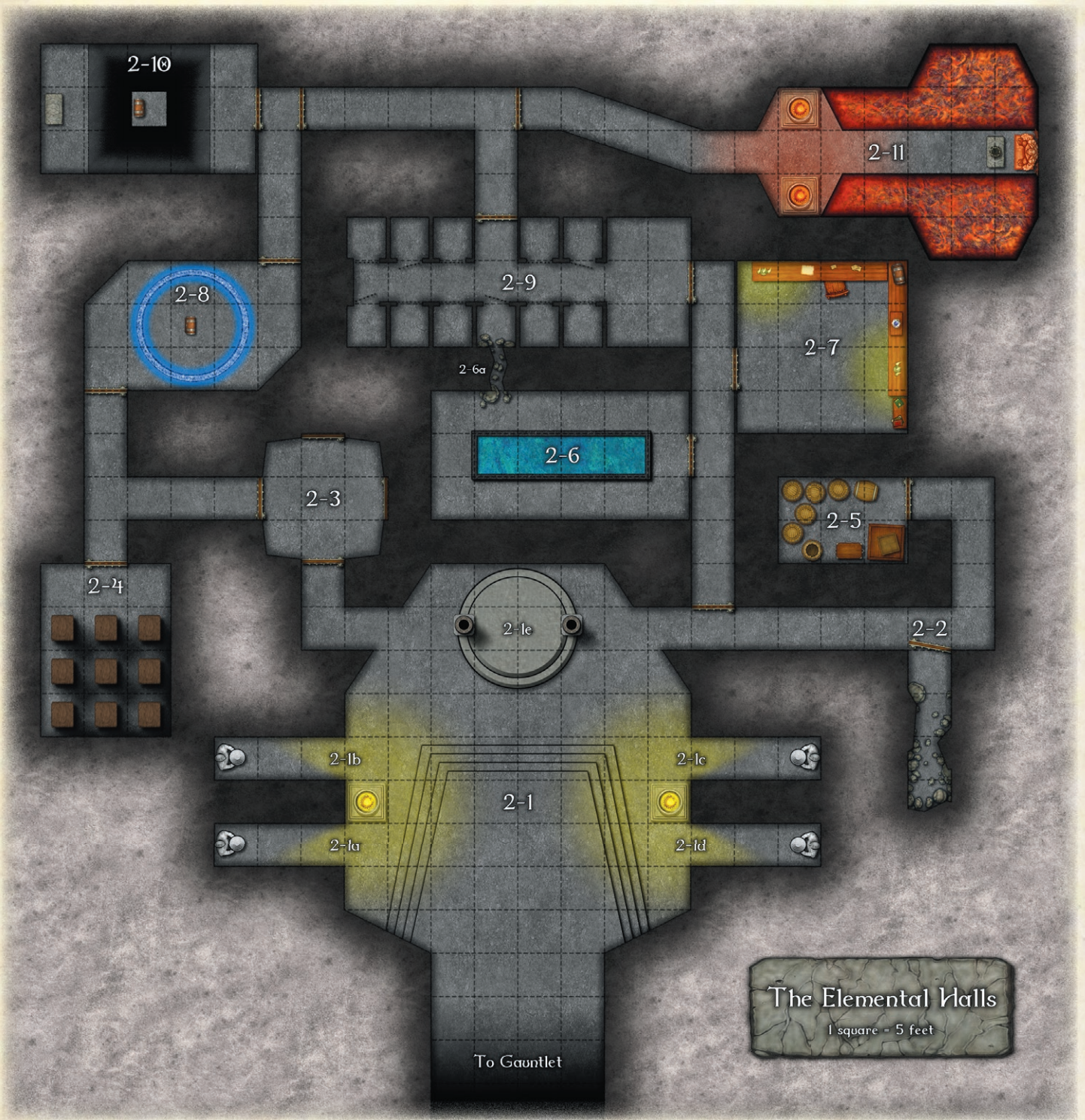
SPECIAL ABILITIES

Attach (Ex) When a stirge hits with a touch attack, its barbed legs latch onto the target, anchoring it in place. An attached stirge is effectively grappling its prey. The stirge loses its Dexterity bonus to AC and has an AC of 12, but holds on with great tenacity and inserts its proboscis into the grappled target's flesh. A stirge has a +8 racial bonus to maintain its grapple on a foe once it is attached. An attached stirge can be struck with a weapon or grappled itself-if its prey manages to win a grapple check or Escape Artist check against it, the stirge is removed.

Blood Drain (Ex) A stirge drains blood at the end of its turn if it is attached to a foe, inflicting 1 point of Constitution damage. Once a stirge has dealt 4 points of Constitution damage, it detaches and flies off to digest the meal. If its victim dies before the stirge's appetite has been sated, the stirge detaches and seeks a new target.

Diseased (Ex) Due to the stagnant swamps in which they live and their contact with the blood of numerous creatures, stirges are harbingers of disease. Any creature subjected to a stirge's blood drain attack has a 10% chance of being exposed to filth fever, blinding sickness, or a similar disease (*PATHFINDER CORE RULEBOOK*, page 557). Once this check is made, the victim can no longer be infected by this particular stirge, though attacks by different stirges are resolved normally and may result in multiple illnesses.







OPEN GAME LICENSE v1.0a

The following text is the property of Wizards of the Coast, Inc. and is Copyright 2000 Wizards of the Coast, Inc. ("Wizards"). All Rights Reserved.

1. **DEFINITIONS:** (a) "Contributors" means the copyright and/or trademark owners who have contributed Open Game Content; (b) "Derivative Material" means copyrighted material including derivative works and translations (including into other computer languages), potation, modification, correction, addition, extension, upgrade, improvement, compilation, abridgment or other form in which an existing work may be recast, transformed or adapted; (c) "Distribute" means to reproduce, license, rent, lease, sell, broadcast, publicly display, transmit or otherwise distribute; (d) "Open Game Content" means the game mechanic and includes the methods, procedures, processes and routines to the extent such content does not embody the Product Identity and is an enhancement over the prior art and any additional content clearly identified as Open Game Content by the Contributor, and means any work covered by this License, including translations and derivative works under copyright law, but specifically excludes Product Identity; (e) "Product Identity" means product and product line names, logos and identifying marks including trade dress; artifacts; creatures; characters; stories, storylines, plots, thematic elements, dialogue, incidents, language, artwork, symbols, designs, depictions, likenesses, formats, poses, concepts, themes and graphic, photographic and other visual or audio representations; names and descriptions of characters, spells, enchantments, personalities, teams, personas, likenesses and special abilities; places, locations, environments, creatures, equipment, magical or supernatural abilities or effects, logos, symbols, or graphic designs; and any other trademark or registered trademark clearly identified as Product Identity by the owner of the Product Identity, and which specifically excludes the Open Game Content; (f) "Trademark" means the logos, names, mark, sign, motto, designs that are used by a Contributor to identify itself or its products or the associated products contributed to the Open Game License by the Contributor; (g) "Use", "Used" or "Using" means to use, Distribute, copy, edit, format, modify, translate and otherwise create Derivative Material of Open Game Content; (h) "You" or "Your" means the licensee in terms of this agreement.
2. **THE LICENSE:** This License applies to any Open Game Content that contains a notice indicating that the Open Game Content may only be Used under and in terms of this License. You must affix such a notice to any Open Game Content that you Use. No terms may be added to or subtracted from this License except as described by the License itself. No other terms or conditions may be applied to any Open Game Content distributed using this License.
3. **OFFER AND ACCEPTANCE:** By Using the Open Game Content You indicate Your acceptance of the terms of this License.
4. **GRANT AND CONSIDERATION:** In consideration for agreeing to use this License, the Contributors grant You a perpetual, worldwide, royalty-free, non-exclusive license with the exact terms of this License to Use, the Open Game Content.
5. **REPRESENTATION OF AUTHORITY TO CONTRIBUTE:** If You are contributing original material as Open Game Content, You represent that Your Contributions are Your original creation and/or You have sufficient rights to grant the rights conveyed by this License.
6. **NOTICE OF LICENSE COPYRIGHT:** You must update the COPYRIGHT NOTICE portion of this License to include the exact text of the COPYRIGHT NOTICE of any Open Game Content You are copying, modifying or distributing, and You must add the title, the copyright date, and the copyright holder's name to the COPYRIGHT NOTICE of any original Open Game Content you distribute.
7. **USE OF PRODUCT IDENTITY:** You agree not to Use any Product Identity, including as an indication as to compatibility, except as expressly licensed in another, independent Agreement with the owner of each element of that Product Identity. You agree not to indicate compatibility or co-adaptability with any Trademark or Registered Trademark in conjunction with a work containing Open Game Content except as expressly licensed in another, independent Agreement with the owner of such Trademark or Registered Trademark. The use of any Product Identity in Open Game Content does not constitute a challenge to the ownership of that Product Identity. The owner of any Product Identity used in Open Game Content shall retain all rights, title and interest in and to that Product Identity.
8. **IDENTIFICATION:** If you distribute Open Game Content You must clearly indicate which portions of the work that you are distributing are Open Game Content.
9. **UPDATING THE LICENSE:** Wizards or its designated Agents may publish updated versions of this License. You may use any authorized version of this License to copy, modify and distribute any Open Game Content originally distributed under any version of this License.
10. **COPY OF THIS LICENSE:** You MUST include a copy of this License with every copy of the Open Game Content You Distribute.
11. **Use of Contributor Credits:** You may not market or advertise the Open Game Content using the name of any Contributor unless You have written permission from the Contributor to do so.
12. **INABILITY TO COMPLY:** If it is impossible for You to comply with any of the terms of this License with respect to some or all of the Open Game Content due to statute, judicial order, or governmental regulation then You may not Use any Open Game Material so affected.
13. **TERMINATION:** This License will terminate automatically if You fail to comply with all terms herein and fail to cure such breach within 30 days of becoming aware of the breach. All sublicenses shall survive the termination of this License.
14. **Reformation:** If any provision of this License is held to be unenforceable, such provision shall be reformed only to the extent necessary to make it enforceable.
15. **COPYRIGHT NOTICE**
Open Game License v1.0a Copyright 2000, Wizards of the Coast, Inc.
 System Reference Document. Copyright 2000. Wizards of the Coast, Inc.; Authors: Jonathan Tweet, Monte Cook, Skip Williams, based on material by E. Gary Gygax and Dave Arneson.
PATHFINDER RPG CORE RULEBOOK. Copyright 2009, Paizo Publishing, LLC; Authors: Jason Bulmahn, based on material by Jonathan Tweet, Monte Cook, and Skip Williams.
ADVANCED PLAYER'S GUIDE. Copyright 2010, Paizo Publishing, LLC; Author: Jason Bulmahn.
THE CAVERN OF THE DAMNED, Copyright 2016, Darklight Interactive, inc.; Author: David Flor.

THE CAVERN OF THE DAMNED

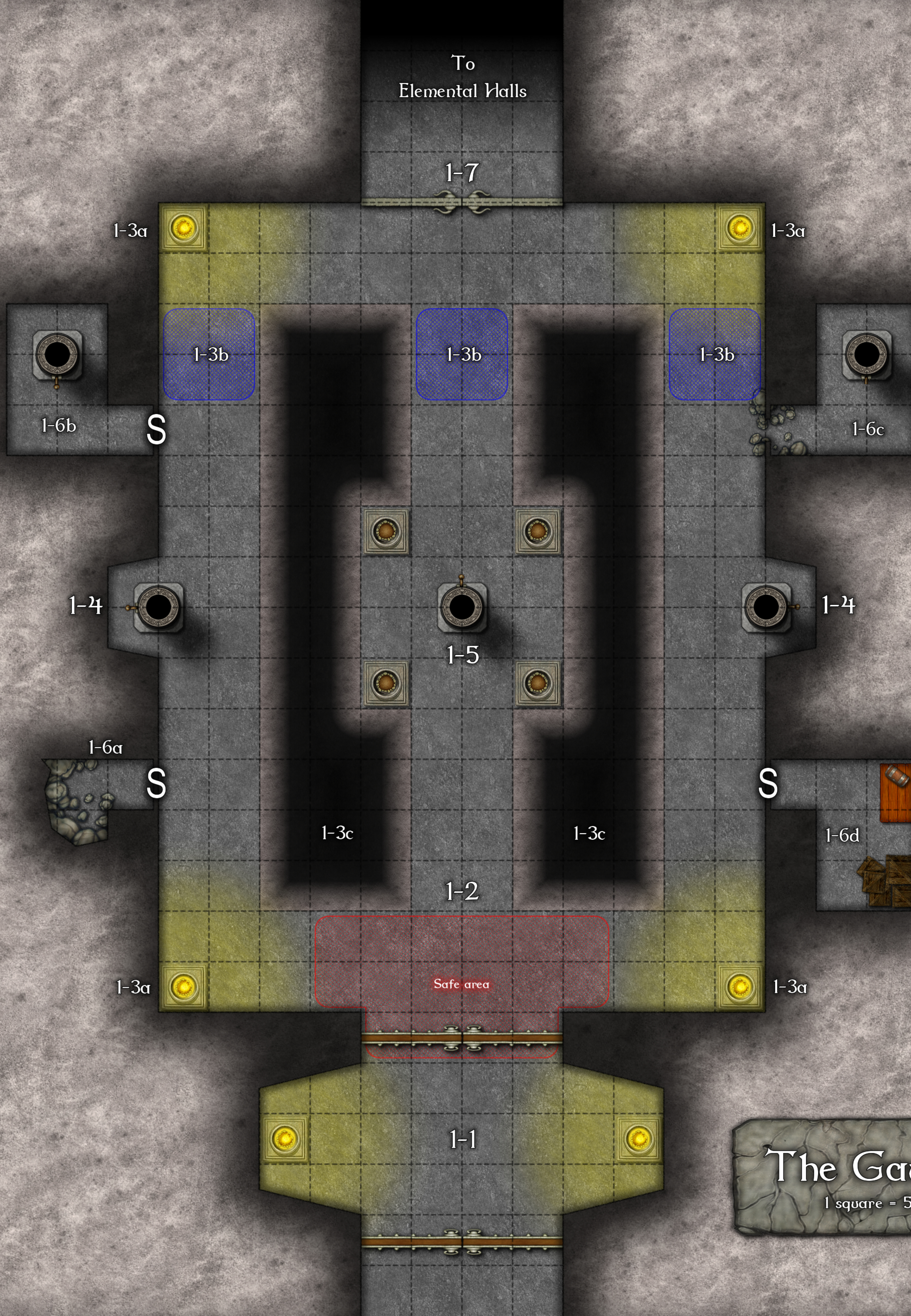
© 2016, Darklight Interactive – All Rights Reserved

Reproduction of this book in any manner without express permission from the publisher is prohibited.

DARKLIGHT
INTERACTIVE

<http://www.dlimedia.com/>

"OMNE IGNOTUM PRO MAGNIFICO"



To
Elemental Halls

1-7

1-3a

1-3a

1-3b

1-3b

1-3b

1-6b

S

1-6c

1-4

1-5

1-4

1-6a

S

S

1-3c

1-3c

1-6d

1-2

1-3a

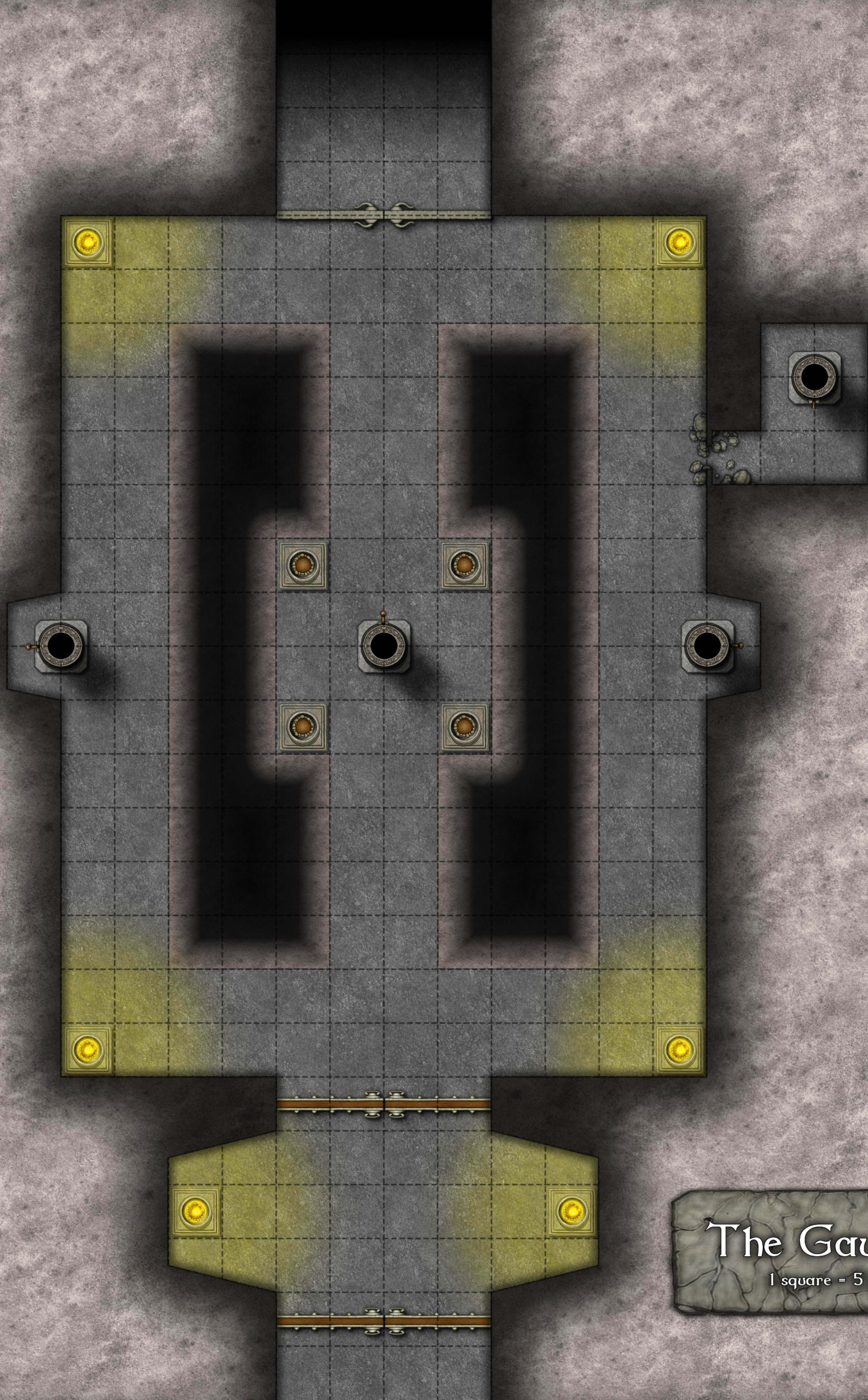
1-3a

Safe area

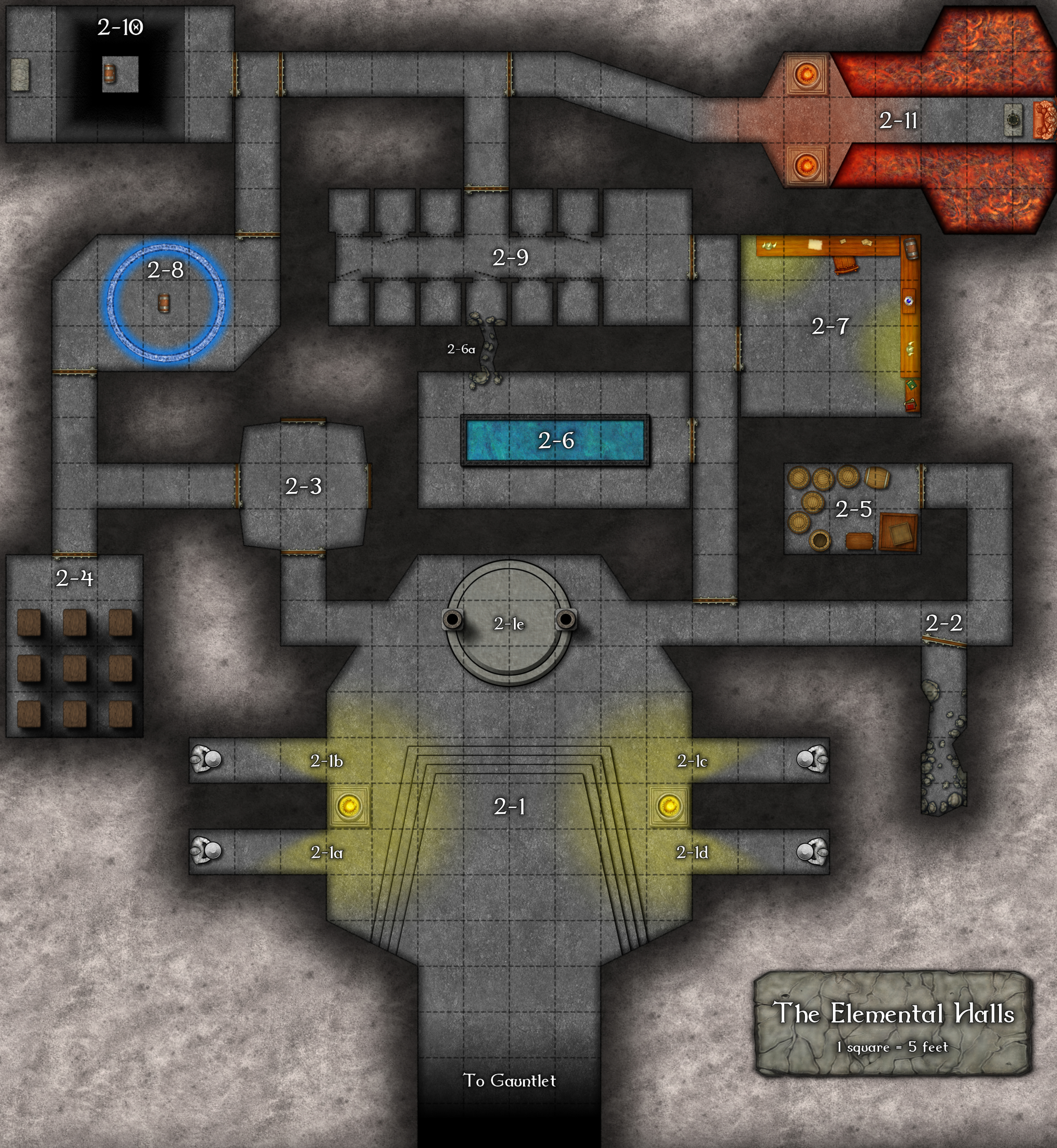
1-1

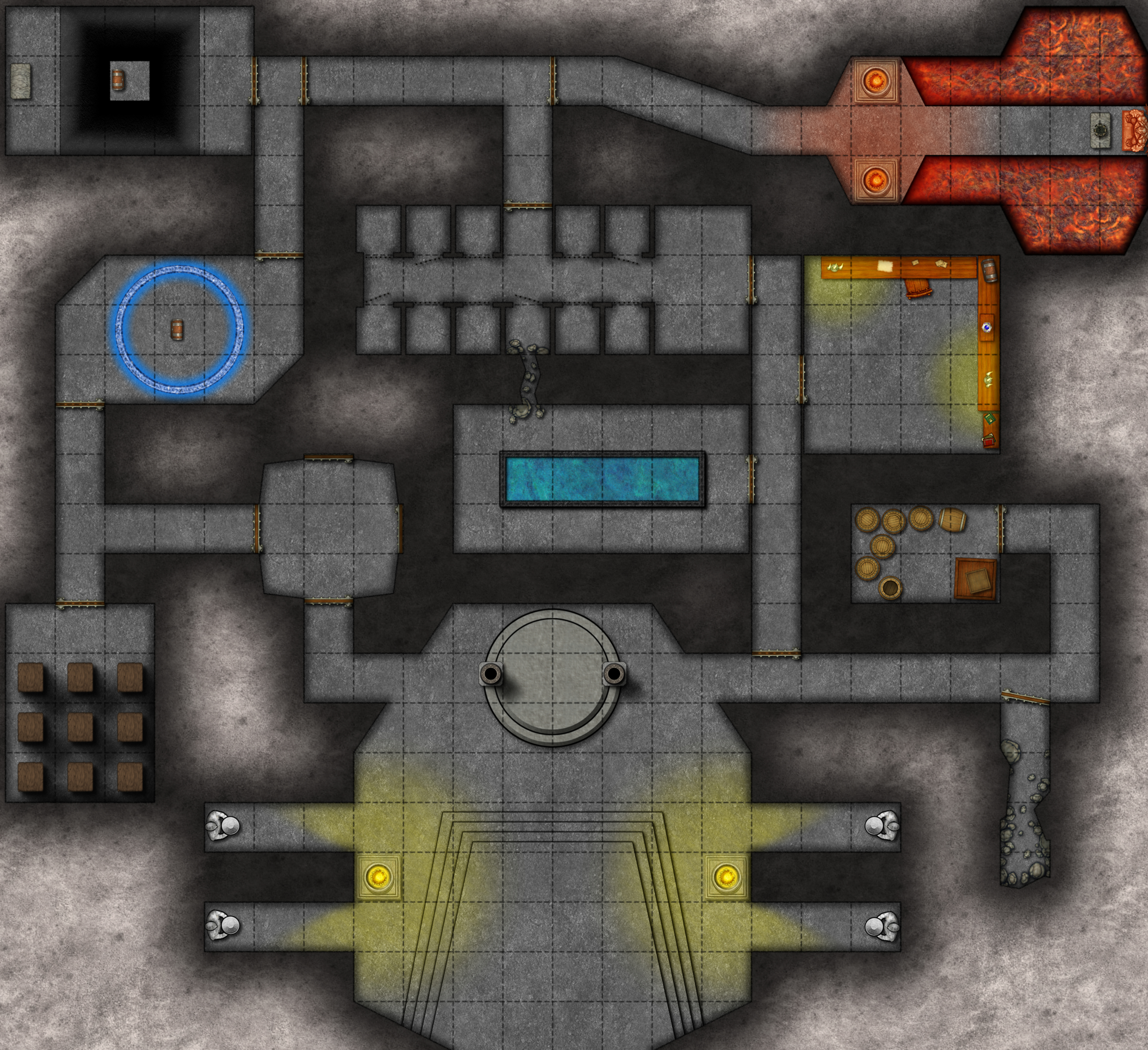
The Gauntlet

1 square = 5 feet



The Gauntlet
1 square = 5 feet





The Elemental Halls

1 square = 5 feet

To Outside





The Inner Sanctum

1 square = 5 feet