



ZEITGEIST Adventure Number 4 Add-On

Crypta Hereticarum

A Fantasy
Role-Playing
Mini-Adventure by
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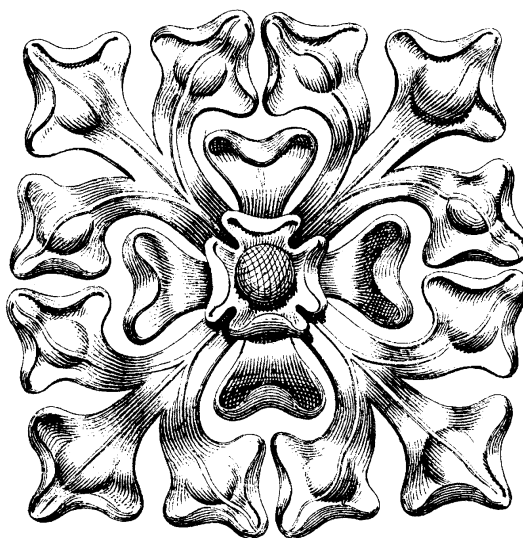
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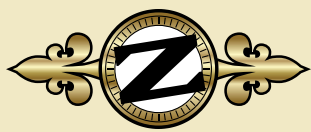
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CRYPTA HERETICARUM: The Vault of Heresies

EVIL LIES TRAPPED WITHIN THE CRYPTA HERETICARUM—the Vault of Heresies. The Clergy believes that true evil cannot be destroyed, and that killing an unholy disciple or destroying a cursed item will only free its malevolence to wreak havoc elsewhere in the world. For centuries, whenever the priests and godhands of the Clergy collected dangerous items, captured evil acolytes, or rescued afflicted innocents whose curses they could not break, they placed them in the vault, built beneath the desolate isle of Odiem, off the coast of the city Sid Minos.

After the Great Malice, the Clergy fell into disarray for years, and those responsible for maintaining the vault had more pressing issues. They sealed it, tried to erase knowledge of it, and used their divine power to compel all those who had drowned in the rocky seas nearby to rise up and slay any intruders.

Many still tried to plunder its treasures—indeed, in the default version of events, it's already picked clean by the time the PCs arrive in Adventure Four, *Always on Time*. But these dungeon delvers are drawn not only by the promise of rare riches and powerful magic, but by the mysterious temptation of the vault's greatest prisoner,

Ashima-Shimtu.

Ashima-Shimtu.

Known as the Lady of the Forked Tongue, the demoness Ashima-Shimtu has lived on this world for thousands of years. She served as seneschal to the rulers of the vile Demonocracy, which the Clergy overthrew in their liberation of the mortal races a millennium ago. The Clergy captured her, but dared not kill her, for she alone knew a secret that the Clergy feared could never be released. Only a handful know the nature of that secret, but in her thousand years of imprisonment, the Last of the High Fiends has only ever told the knowledge in full to two intruders. Within a year one great civilization had collapsed, another fell into chaos for decades, and the world was forever changed.

Using This Dungeon.

Should you desire to give the party a full-fledged dungeon crawl during Adventure Four, *Always on Time*, we present this more-detailed Vault of Heresies, one which has not been so thoroughly ransacked.

Alternately, you might run the dungeon as a stand-alone adventure for a party of 6th-level PCs. The PCs might be a group of priests heading in to fix things after some disaster breaks most of the trapped monsters loose, a team of heretics determined to learn the most precious secret held by Ashima-Shimtu, or simply adventurers with a contact in the Clergy who can provide the necessary spell to get them out—after they get as much treasure as they can carry. Or you might make it so the only way to get out is to use a *water breathing* spell and go through the well beneath the final chamber.

The ZEITGEIST adventure path returns to the Crypta Hereticarum in Adventure Eight, *Diaspora*. In that adventure, the party will have the *Crown of the Lost Arc*, an artifact that can make events from the past manifest; this item provides the perfect excuse to include horrors that weren't here the first time around. To make this dungeon a viable challenge for characters of 13th–14th level (the levels appropriate for Adventure Eight), you can advance the monsters using the rules in the **PATHFINDER ROLE-PLAYING GAME BESTIARY**.

At any level, the nature of the dungeon prevents simply withdrawing to heal and regroup. The vault chambers become progressively more horrific and unfair the deeper the party progresses. Though we include sacred fonts as a way to keep an ill-prepared party from dying due to hit point attrition, careless PCs *will* stumble into traps or curses and die.

If you're afraid of killing your party mid-campaign, you can simply tone down the lethality—for example, instead of perishing, a PC who is “killed” is instead possessed by a demon that keeps his body functional despite blood loss and broken bones. If the character manages to get out of the crypt, the demon exits his body, leaving him horribly injured but stable.

CURSED ITEMS GALORE.

Many of the chambers of the vault have a cursed item the PCs can come across. Some might have niche uses, so don't be surprised if the players try to take lemons and make lemonade.

Forces at Work.

Though Ashima-Shimtu is the most notable prisoner, two other figures hold power inside the vault. The first is **Giovanni the Painter**, a magic-using artist from the pre-Malice era who could create small pocket dimensions in his paintings. He was accused of debauched violence and sex in these worlds, which he ruled like a petty god. When the godhands came to arrest him, he hid in a massive painting and refused to emerge. The painting was carted into the vault and bound so Giovanni could never escape.

Giovanni shared his knowledge with generations of intruders who became stranded in the dungeon, and over time they converted many of the paintings in Giovanni's chamber into more pocket dimensions where these new prisoners could find food and slake all their carnal thirsts. His chamber has effectively become a constant bacchanalia.

The other figure of note, in Chamber Seven, Damned Souls, is the bearded devil **Belcamp of the Golden Chain**, a squad leader in a long-forgotten devil army that tried to conquer this world ages ago. Belcamp joined with the Demonocracy and eventually rose to a modest position. He freed and gathered the various evil spirits in the dungeon, and occasionally recruits foolish treasure hunters to join his "legion." Mostly he just broods, since there is little to do other than squabble with Giovanni for turf.

Those who join Belcamp's legion wear chains of lead—Giovanni possesses the only gold in the entire vault. These chains take away both their free will and their daily need for food or rest.

Both figures wish to leave, but in several centuries neither has. Only one intruder has ever made it into Ashima-Shimtu's final chamber: the lunatic godhand **Gene Javerto**. Gene went mad from a lifetime of facing evil and believed if he freed Ashima-Shimtu he could rule the Clergy. His assault on the vault killed dozens of priests and broke many of the seals that held the evil here in place.

He bargained with Belcamp, trading a spell that restored the devil's leaden chains to gold in exchange for a collection of lead sheets that had once been golden mirrors. Then he performed a blood rite to enter the final chamber and was never seen again.

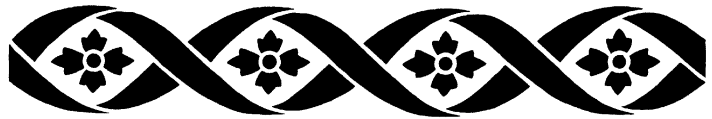
With no prospects of escape, Belcamp and Giovanni are motivated by the wholly pointless and petty desire to overwhelm each other, and any new intruder is seen as a possible tipping point in their conflict.

Architecture of the Damned.

Except where otherwise noted, the subterranean vault is unlit. The halls between chambers are 15 feet wide and tall—wide enough for some of the massive cursed items to be carted in. Though depicted as straight on the map, they actually curve and split with numerous small cubbies and side rooms that contain minor heresies like piles of defaced holy symbols. These pose no threat, but were stored here for political reasons.

Religious carvings dot the stone walls, flecked with bits of gold dust that makes teleportation out of the vault impossible. A Passwall ritual or similar stone shaping magic would work, but the layout of the vault makes such shortcuts of little use for escaping, though they can bypass the curses on the doors at the entrance of certain chambers.

The floors consist of a layer of thin concrete mixed with crushed bones from generations of priests who chose to be interred here. Beneath that is rusted iron grating, and under that a shallow channel of red-tinged seawater. Beneath that is bedrock, though centuries have caused the island to shift somewhat. Combined with the rust, in some places the floor has simply collapsed and flooded.



Heavy bronze doors mark the entrance and exit to the various chambers. All are unlocked, except the door to Chamber Nine, which is bound by a spell. Normally only someone who has passed the seven trials of virtue (see below) can open the door to the final chamber.

Infinite Hallways.

Chamber One leads south to Chamber Two. Once a person passes through the south door of Chamber One (Area I on the map), he is affected by the leaden curse. Subtle teleportation magic worked into the hallways cause them to feed back into each other. Trying to head north from Chamber Two leads to the southern doors of Chamber Eight, and vice versa. Likewise, heading east from Chamber Six leads to Chamber Four, and vice versa. Other scattered traps teleport explorers, which can cause groups to become scattered and dispersed among hostile areas.

When the leaden curse falls upon a character, any gold the character carries is transmuted to lead, leaving them vulnerable to the teleportation curses of the vault. (Priests would carry gold rings with them inside extradimensional spaces, then put those rings on after coming inside.) This spell is effectively a curse each person that functions as caster level 20. If the curse is dispelled, that person's gold is returned to normal, and he can then leave the vault by the normal exit in Chamber One.

Seven Trials of Virtue.

Short of casting a very lucky *remove curse* or *break enchantment* spell, a character can be freed from the curse if he "passes the seven trials of virtue." This is just a flowery way of saying that a character must drink from the holy water fountains in Chambers Two through Eight. At that point he can either open the door to Chamber Nine or leave through Chamber One. In the eyes of the designers of the crypt, anyone who chooses to speak with Ashima-Shimtu must be corrupted and cannot be trusted to leave the dungeon. Once a character enters Chamber Nine, none of the holy water fountains function for him anymore, and any holy water the character tries to drink evaporates on his lips.

GOLDEN WARD. LEADEN CURSE.

In ZEITGEIST, rings of gold block teleportation. This element is critical to the design of this dungeon. The stones in the walls are laced with gold, preventing creatures from teleporting out. But the dungeon relies on teleportation magic within to make the hallways a sort of infinite loop. Normally a creature wearing a gold ring could bypass this and just walk right out the front door, but the vault also has a special curse laid upon it, which causes gold on any creature that enters the vault to turn to lead.

The leaden curse was only known to a few who crafted the vault, and none today are aware of it except those already trapped inside. Supremely cautious or prepared characters might dispel the magic along the threshold of the vault that turns lead to gold, or have the right magic to break the curse, but they likely fall prey and become trapped within.

Three ways out are likely: smuggle in gold rings inside an extradimensional space like a *bag of holding*, take the gold chain from Belcamp in Chamber Seven, or ignore the leaden curse altogether and exit by gaining Ashima-Shimtu's favor.

Foyer.

Stairs lead down from the Odiem lighthouse to the centuries-old vault. The foyer once provided a place of worship and reflection. Warnings in an archaic language cover the walls, but most have been defaced. A pair of bronze doors hangs open, warding sigils scraped and melted off. A makeshift iron door-bar leans against the wall, formed from three swords melted together, sufficient to bar oneself inside the vault to keep out the drowned dead.

A feminine voice speaks into your minds. "Religious magic marks this crypt forbidden, but visitors may find shelter, wisdom, and wealth below, if such they seek. But more precious by far is the chance of escape, for at the center of the Vault of Heresies, its greatest prisoner offers freedom from the curse of the Isle of Odiem. These strangers are bidden to enter, lest in the grasp of the dead they shall drown by dawn."

This is the voice of Ashima-Shimtu. She has been trapped here for centuries, and the whole island's purpose was tied to her, so she has gained the ability to telepathically contact any creature here, though she does so sparingly. Her nature is reserved, and while she is prepared to find opportunities to escape, she is normally content to wait silently in her prison until someone sufficiently interesting comes along.

SKELETAL PRIESTS.

Throughout the vault, whenever blood spills on the ground (a living creature is first reduced to half HP in an encounter, or someone intentionally spills blood), a sacred skeleton animates within 30 feet, rising up from the bone dust on the floor, and acts immediately. Normally these skeletons attack indiscriminately. Mark the space where the blood fell. Further blood shed there will not animate more skeletons.

Sacred Skeleton

CR 1/2 • XP 200

NE Medium undead

Init +6; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; **Perception** +0

Defense

AC 14, touch 12, flat-footed 12 (+2 Dex, +2 natural)

hp 6 (1d8+2); fast healing 1

Fort +2, **Ref** +2, **Will** +2

Defensive Abilities channel resistance +4, deathless; **DR** 5/bludgeoning;

Immune cold, undead traits

Offense

Speed 30 ft.

Melee 2 claws +2 (1d4+2)

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 1st; concentration +2)

1/day—*command* (DC 13)

Statistics

Str 15, **Dex** 14, **Con** —, **Int** —, **Wis** 10, **Cha** 14

Base Atk +0; **CMB** +2; **CMD** 14

Feats Improved Initiative

Special Abilities

Deathless (Su) A sacred skeleton is destroyed when reduced to 0 hp but returns to unlife 1 hour later at 1 hp, allowing its fast healing thereafter to resume healing it. A sacred skeleton can be permanently destroyed if it is destroyed by positive energy, if it is reduced to 0 hp in the area of a *bless* or *hallow* spell, or if its remains are sprinkled with a vial of holy water.

Drinking Vessels.

When anyone steps through the doors into Chamber One, they hear a clatter behind them: seven conjured gold drinking vessels fell to the floor because the stands meant to support them were long ago stolen. Each vessel can hold a pint. They last until the next sunrise and then disappear.

Chamber One: Vault Entrance.

Water drips in the darkness, and puddles splash as the party walks. The walls show signs of being slashed and burned long ago, but this evening nothing stirs. The chamber is basically empty, but the party can become familiar with its general layout; all chambers are arranged similarly.

A. Main Gallery.

Inscriptions on the wall describe the purpose of each chamber. The inscriptions are damaged and vandalized, but the general gist of the remaining pieces is that this vault houses creatures, items, and people that contained evil, and that rather than destroying them and releasing their evil back into the world, the Clergy entombed them here. The inscriptions warn that those who enter must be strong in the seven virtues, and that they must resist temptation of the seven vices, for those who enter will be judged, and those found impure will never be able to leave.

The doors leading to area F have bronze plating over a rotted wooden core, and they scrape the ground, requiring a Strength check (DC 20) to push open as a move action, making an ear-wrenching screech. They are embossed with the names of the nine chambers:

1. Main Gallery.
2. Heretical Texts.
3. Unholy Arms & Armor.
4. Blasphemous Artwork.
5. Accursed Items.
6. Afflicted Innocents.
7. Damned Souls.
8. Beasts of the Infernal Horde.
9. The Prison of Ashima-Shimtu, Lady of the Forked Tongue, Last of the High Fiends, Seneschal of the Demonocracy, Keeper of the Secret Which Must Not Be Lost.

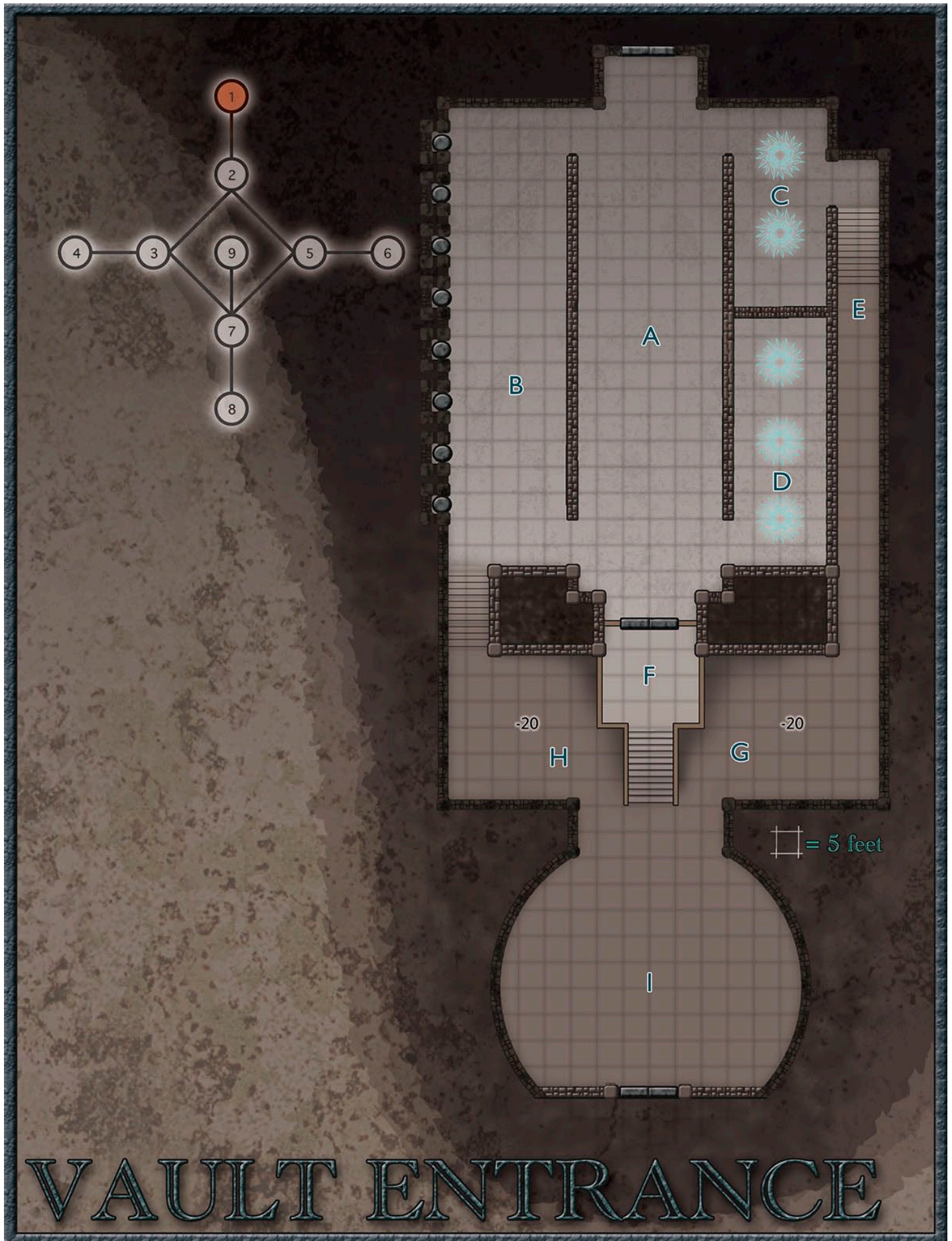
VIRTUES AND VICES.

The walls briefly detail the Clergy's seven virtues.

- + **Honesty.** Purity of word and thought.
- + **Temperance.** Restraint and moderation.
- + **Charity.** Generosity and self-sacrifice.
- + **Diligence.** Zealous, steadfast, and careful worth ethic.
- + **Mercy.** Resolving conflicts with peace.
- + **Humility.** Modest and selfless behavior.
- + **Bravery.** Courage to undertake dangerous tasks for the good of others.

And then its seven vices.

- + **Hubris.** Ambition and a sense of superiority.
- + **Gluttony.** Obsession with physical pleasures.
- + **Greed.** Rapacious want of material possessions.
- + **Sloth.** Failure to do as one is required.
- + **Wrath.** Uncontrolled hatred and anger.
- + **Envy.** Bitter desire to deprive others and take what they have.
- + **Melancholy.** Lack of joy toward life.



B. Statuary.

Cracked and toppled statues here depict seven saints of the Clergy who embodied the saintly virtues, as well as a statue of the hierarch who commissioned the vault.

C. Lesser Exhibits.

Two binding circles sit here, glowing dimly. If a creature enters one of these circles (or those like it throughout the dungeon), he must succeed an Intelligence, Wisdom, or Charisma check (DC 20) or else be trapped. Outsiders take a -10 penalty to this check. A trapped creature cannot leave the circle or affect the circle, and can neither attack anyone outside the circle, nor use any sort of magic that goes beyond the circle. A creature can attempt another ability check as a free action once per round to try to escape. The creature can be released via forced movement, or by damaging the circle.

Each circle here has a pedestal supporting some item of note. One supports a book on a stand, sitting open to a story about a cat that taught mankind fire. An illustration actually moves as if it is a portal into another world, showing a small cookfire next to a tiny house in the woods, though there's no sign of the cat. Beside the pedestal lies a long-decayed human corpse that looks like it was mauled. The text, *The First Spellbook of Giovanni the Painter*, contains guidance for creating extradimensional spaces, and includes the *rope trick* spell.

Anyone touching the book summons Agunn, Giovanni's vicious white house-cat familiar, which has the strength of a tiger. He attacks anyone who does not treat him properly, but can tell of his master if sufficiently flattered. Giovanni survives in Chamber Four, Blasphemous Artwork.

The other circle contains an enchanted helm of ivory whose only power is to grant the wearer the ability to speak and understand the language of demons.

D. Greater Exhibits.

Three binding circles here contain the *Legex Diaboli*, a lawbook of the old Demonocracy; the *sword of remorse*, which if the wielder ever releases it, it will teleport and stab the nearest other creature; and a simple length of gold chain, each link of which is inscribed with a holy verse asking for mercy.

E. Hall of Wisdom.

Down the side stairs, scripture and religious doctrine line both walls, though most has been defaced.

F. Pious Mount.

This rise overlooks the Keystone Exhibit (Area I), and despite the best efforts of previous looters, its hallowed enchantment remains. A mosaic resembling the flag of Crisillyir lies here: a hand wrapped by a thread and fishhook. A character might recall (Knowledge (religion) DC 18) a ritual this set-up suggests.

A person who cups a bit of holy water from the nearby font (Area H) in one hand, then places his other hand upon the hand in the mosaic, then drinks the water, is effected a blessing. First, he heals 3d8+5 hit points. Second, he gains a +1 morale bonus to saving throws until he leaves the vault, or for 24 hours, whichever is sooner.

The blessings from Pious Mounts in other chambers are cumulative. A character can only benefit from a given Pious Mount once per day (which includes the healing effect).

G. Trial Room.

Originally priests would come to the vault and undergo tests of their piety. Three skeletons in tattered priestly robes lie here, each burned with a single hand-print that seared cloth and bone.

H. Blessing Room.

Broken and rotted benches here face a podium once used for organized prayer. The bones of at least a dozen people have been arranged around the podium, some of them showing partially burnt hand-prints. In one wall, a cracked stone basin still drips holy water.

I. Keystone Exhibit.

The vaulted ceilings of this seemingly empty chamber rises up 40 feet. Magical darkness shrouds the ceiling, and the moment anyone crosses the middle of the room or attempts to examine the ceiling, this chamber's prisoner plummets, screaming. Then her descent snaps to a stop just at eye level, as she reaches the end of her chains. Six golden chains descend from the ceiling, ending in silver hooks that dig into her arms, legs, and back. Sinewy and starved, she thrashes and screams again, reaching out desperately. Blood stains her feathered wings the color of rust, and her eyes have sunken so deep they appear to be black pits.

The prisoner, **Linia**, has lived on this world for thousands of years after finding long ago that some magic prevented her from returning to her homeland of gods and angels. She helped Triegenes defeat the Demonocracy and found the Clergy, but after his death she began to speak out against some of the decisions of the hierarchs, who chose personal profit over the welfare of all. For centuries she was a thorn in their side, until they finally staged her death and used it as an excuse to launch the First Victory.

Though as an angel she needs no food, centuries of imprisonment have left Linia feeble and mad. All she can do is wail and beg for death, but mighty enchantments on her chains render her immune to physical harm. Weapons simply bounce off as if she were stone. The hierarchs feared in death she might somehow escape and report their betrayal.

All she can offer the PCs is insane warnings.

"He travels in your breath, on your words, in the rustle of your hair in the breeze. You are not possessed. Don't believe the voices in your ears. Believe only the voice in your head. You have no torches. You'll go blind. You'll die of thirst, but drink with the left hand! Please leave now and beg them to cut me down. I'll agree to their lies. I'll call them gods. Please let me die."

There is nothing the party can do for her now, but she will be freed when the Obscurati complete their ritual at the end of Adventure Nine, which weakens the spells holding her.

The Leaden Curse.

Characters who pass through the doors to the south are affected by the leaden curse. The curse converts all gold to lead, effectively trapping the characters here by subjecting them to teleportation traps. It also simultaneously teleports any of the exhibits that were in this room back to their pedestals, unless they were carried in an extradimensional space.

Make sure the players notice the effects of the curse. If the PCs try to head back north into Chamber One, they end up entering Area I of Chamber Eight, where they're in for a nasty surprise.

Haunted Hallways.

Encounter Level 9.

While the chambers themselves hold the majority of treasures, many of the greatest dangers lie in the hallways between them. Each hallway is roughly 400 feet long, with cubbies and side tunnels that just lead to minor chambers. The party encounters the following challenges as they go from chamber to chamber.

- ♦ **1 to 2 (or 2 to 8).** Radiant curtain and invisible stalker.
- ♦ **2 to 3.** Infinite hallway and möbius wind.
- ♦ **3 to 4.** All disabled.
- ♦ **2 to 5.** Flooded sump.
- ♦ **5 to 6.** Stone pillar drop.
- ♦ **4 to 6.** World's biggest portable hole.
- ♦ **3 to 7.** Pacifism penance.
- ♦ **5 to 7.** Spear fraises.
- ♦ **7 to 8.** Teleportation scatter trap.

Hall One to Two (or Two to Eight).

In this hallway lurks a free-roaming prisoner, the invisible stalker **Maensha'il**. Wholly evil, it derives joy only from mayhem and suffering. It would far prefer to drive a party to fight each other rather than engage them in combat, so it tries never to make itself known (Perception DC 44).

When the PCs are 300 feet in—100 feet from the next chamber—the character farthes away from the next chamber hears a voice whispering in some demonic tongue. This is Maensha'il, speaking from just outside the area of the radiant cascade trap. It hopes to split the party up and confuse them when the trap triggers.

Maensha'il

CR 7 • XP 3,200

Invisible stalker

N Medium outsider (air, elemental, extraplanar)

Init +8; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; **Perception** +12

Defense

AC 20, touch 14, flat-footed 16 (+4 Dex, +6 natural)

hp 80 (7d10+42)

Fort +13, **Ref** +11, **Will** +4

Defensive Abilities natural invisibility; **Immune** elemental traits

Offense

Speed 30 ft., fly 30 (perfect)

Melee 2 slams +12 (2d6+4)

Statistics

Str 18, **Dex** 19, **Con** 22, **Int** 14, **Wis** 15, **Cha** 11

Base Atk +7; **CMB** +11; **CMD** 25

Feats Combat Reflexes, Improved Initiative, Lightning Reflexes, Weapon Focus (slam)

Skills Acrobatics +14, Bluff +10, Fly +22, Knowledge (planes) +12, Perception +12,

Sense Motive +12, Stealth +14, Survival +12

Languages Auran, Common

SQ improved tracking

Special Abilities

Improved Tracking (Ex) An invisible stalker takes no penalty to Survival checks when tracking and moving at any speed.

Natural Invisibility (Ex) This ability is constant—an invisible stalker remains invisible at all times, even when attacking. As this ability is inherent, it is not subject to the invisibility purge spell. Against foes that cannot pinpoint it, the invisible stalker gains a +20 bonus on Stealth checks when moving, or +40 when standing still—these bonuses are not included in the statistics above.

Radiant Cascade Trap

CR 5 • XP 1,600

Type magic; **Perception** DC 29; **Disable Device** DC 29

Effects

Trigger location; **Reset** automatic

Effect spell effect (*wall of fire*; 2d4 fire damage within 10 feet, 1d4 fire damage within 20 feet, 2d6+10 fire damage passing through); multiple targets (15-ft. long wall appears 100 feet away, moves 10 feet closer each round)

After the party gets past this trap, Maensha'il waits for the curtain to finish its path, then flies easily through the hole in the top of the door. It continues to follow the party throughout the dungeon, using *whispered madness* occasionally to cause them to strike each other during combat (this is especially nasty in Chamber Six), or moving valuable objects nearby a particular PC, as if to imply that the character is unconsciously taking them himself. If detected, it might try to throw a PC into harm's way, but then it flees. The stalker is just an option available to you to make the dungeon eerie, and to make an easy encounter have a sudden spike of danger.

Hall Two to Three.

A malfunctioning teleportation trap makes this path seem impassable. About a hundred feet down the hallway, a beheaded statue of a priest lies at the juncture of a T-intersection which slopes uphill to the left and downhill to the right. As the party approaches, the severed stone head of the statue slowly rolls from left to right down the hall. If they wait about a minute, it returns, rolling past again, just as it has for centuries.

Either direction proceeds for an apparent distance of 100 feet before returning back to the same T-intersection. Originally several mechanical traps filled these side halls—falling spears, scythes that slashed feet, and such—but previous tomb raiders disabled them, and their components lie shattered on the ground. The hall is now harmless, but a seeming dead end.

The statue at the T-intersection stands in front of a secret recessed handle (Perception DC 30). If pulled, the statue is supposed to animate and step aside, and then the T-intersection would transform into a straight hallway. While the statue is missing its head, though, the conflux of teleportation magic goes awry if the handle is pulled.

Möbius Wind.

The walls rumble, and the left hallway seals shut, but the right one flickers: half closed, half open. The air of the room starts to stir in a sudden gust that spins in a ever-swifter loop through the malfunctioning portal. After a round, the statue's head is picked up and carried with the hurricane force wind. Any creature within 15 feet of the statue is in danger.

Each creature in the area takes 4d6 nonlethal damage and is pushed 10 feet toward the right hall. A successful DC 16 Fortitude save reduces the damage to 2d6 nonlethal and negates the push. A creature pushed into the right hall is teleported back beside the statue and takes an additional 2d6 damage from unstable shunting.

This recursive wind ends if the head is placed on the statue (Dexterity DC 18 to catch it in mid-air), or if the handle behind the statue is pulled again.

Hall Three to Four.

Various traps once existed here, but Giovanni's people have disabled them all. Sitting in the middle of the hallway is a mock ironic "guard dog," a *cursed watchful hound*.

Cursed Watchful Hound

This foot-tall magic statue depicts a wise hound carved from granite. Its eyes move to watch anyone who approaches.

Aura faint abjuration; **CL** 3rd

Slot —; **Weight** 2 lbs.

Description

The owner of this item can say a command phrase – “buono cani” – which familiarizes the statue to a given creature within line of sight. Otherwise, the statue barks at the sight of any creature it isn’t familiar with. (Obnoxiously, it keeps barking even as you try to familiarize it.) The statue has darkvision 60 feet. Several times each day, if no one is watching the statue, food will disappear within 30 feet, leaving behind mysteriously torn and chewed containers or packs. Shortly thereafter, foul-smelling dog droppings appear beside the statue.

Hall Two to Five.

The stone here settled and cracked, and the middle 200 feet of this tunnel flooded. The original trap that was here rusted away, so now all the party needs to do is bypass the sunken area. Bear in mind that they probably cannot use light sources other than torches, forcing them to swim blindly.

Hall Five to Six.

At twenty spots along this 400-foot tunnel, stone pillars are rigged to fall from the ceiling, possibly crushing intruders. Each pillar is 5 feet square, and falls either on the left, right, or middle of the hall.

Every 20 feet the character in the lead effectively has a one-in-three chance of picking the wrong spot. Have the lead character make Perception checks (DC 26; see the stat block) every 20 feet until she succeeds, and each time she fails roll 1d3; on a 1, she triggers the trap. Obviously once the character triggers a trap, she can easily avoid it in the future, but if a character is running in a hurry you might call for a Wisdom check (DC 13) to recall all their locations.

Falling Pillar Trap

CR 6 • XP 2,400

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

Effects

Trigger location; **Reset** automatic (5 minutes)

Effect Atk +15 melee (5-ft. stone pillar; 6d6)

Hall Four to Six.

This hallway has a very simple trap, easily bypassed by an intelligent creature. The floor is covered in an old tarp that has been painted to resemble a pit, as wide as the hallway and 30 feet long. Indeed, a creature that steps onto the apparently solid surface falls into the tarp’s painting, plummeting 50 feet (taking 5d6 damage; Reflex DC 20 negates).

The solution to bypass this is to shift the tarp slightly to create a pathway. It’s heavy, requiring a standard action to clear one 5-foot square. Unseen servants will reset the trap five minutes later. Moving the whole tarp requires at least a dozen people.

Hall Three to Seven.

Every 5 feet a character walks down this hallway, each weapon he is carrying deals him 1 point of damage as each strikes him suddenly. The magic is precise, though, and it won’t hurt a character if he just throws his weapons, walks a few feet, then picks them up and throws them again. Extradimensional spaces also work fine.



Hall Five to Seven.

The original traps here were disabled. Now Belcamp’s legion has placed obvious and easily-avoided fraises of bone and stone spears pointing toward Chamber Five, intended to deter incursions by the rust monsters there. A character that enters one of these spaces takes 1d6 damage unless he moves slowly. The rust monsters are too big and stupid to avoid the spears, so they just don’t come through here.

Hall Seven to Eight.

Belcamp’s legionnaires keep their doors sealed tightly just in case the beasts in Chamber Eight start roaming. Additionally, the halfway point in this hallway is marked by a 30-foot stretch of carvings of priests along the walls, facing each other. If a creature is already in that stretch of hallway and another creature enters the same area, both of them must make a Will save (DC 16). If both succeed, they are teleported to the edges of the area. If either fails, he is teleported to the doorway of a random chamber in the vault (roll 1d8+1 to determine which).

Hall Seven to Nine.

The approach to the final vault has no traps. Normally the only way to open the door to the final chamber is to perform the ritual atop the seven Pious Mounts throughout the dungeon, but if you want to let the party bypass that, you can include Gene’s ritual (detailed in Adventure Four, *Always on Time*), which calls for a character to place a hand in the center of a ritual circle and expend a use of channel energy or take damage equal to a quarter of the character’s maximum hit points, which will open the doors.

Chamber Two: Heretical Texts.

Encounter Level 7.

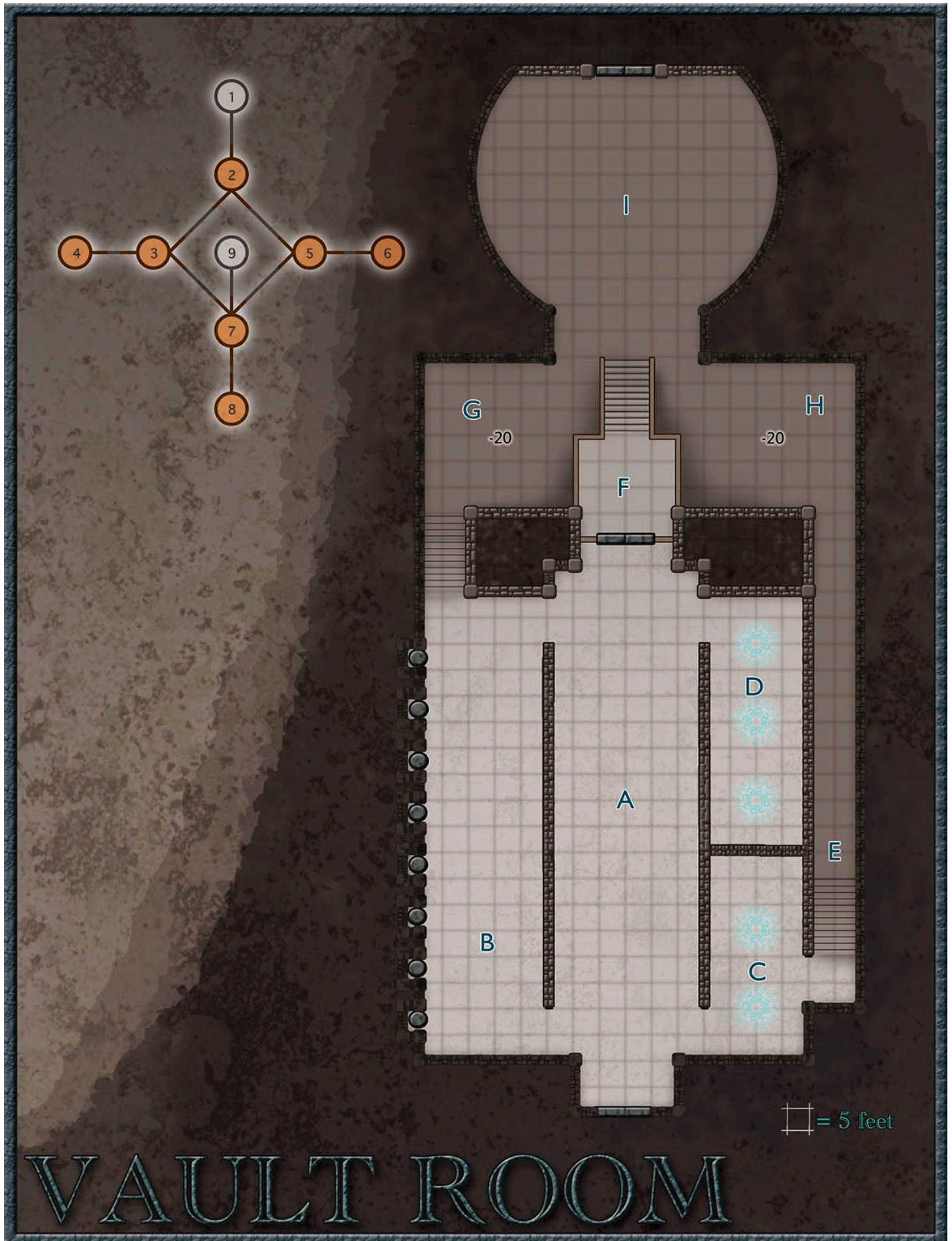
The first PC to enter this chamber has a moment to see that the layout is similar to Chamber One, and that creatures of some sort lurk in the dark. But then he is immediately teleported onto a pyre in Area I, arriving chained to an iron stake, standing upon a pile of books. The room is pitch black for a moment, but then a fire kindles on all sides at the base of the pyre, threatening to consume him. Any cries for help do manage to carry all the way across the chamber, alerting the rest of the party of the danger.

A. Main Gallery.

Dozens of books that were stored in this area have been vandalized, torn apart, and scattered across the floor. A half-dozen minor demons—dretches—sit among the clutter, holding onto pieces of book like they’re reading them. At the sight of intruders they run for the greater exhibits, where one reads a scrap of paper. The PCs hear a snarling voice recite, “And there was no light but *fire!*” And then, for the next twenty-four hours, no light sources of the party will function, forcing them to either rely on torches or lanterns, or to walk in the dark.

Light from the trap outside might shine in for a bit, and it should become obvious that there’s a fire brewing in Area I. Also, the dretches’ eyes glow fiery red in the dark, so if the party has no torches handy, they can still at least see well enough to stumble toward rescuing their friend.

If slain, the dretches’ demonic essences flow like smoke into a nearby creature’s lungs, trying to possess it. They remain there until the creature dies, and a few days thereafter reform in Chamber Eight. The dretches can be purged with spells like *protection from evil*, freeing the character of possession, but they cannot be destroyed permanently.



B. Statuary.

The statues here, mostly toppled, depict people holding books in various unpleasant scenarios. Some plunge into toothy maws of hell. Others have their flesh peeled from their skulls for looking at a text. One is being eaten by his own book.

C. Lesser Exhibits.

The binding circles here have been destroyed. One cracked podium has a nameplate that reads, "Scroll of the Gods," but it has gone missing.

D. Greater Exhibits.

These binding circles are also destroyed, but one noteworthy book page is tacked to the wall. This is a sheet from the *Book of Lorem*, which can tell no lies.

E. Hall of Wisdom.

This hall is thick with paper scraps, dangerous only if someone runs too fast. The walls that once held sacred wisdom have been carved with quotes from the heretical books the dretches tore to pieces.

Vault Dretch

CR 2• XP 600

CE Small outsider (chaotic, demon, evil, extraplanar)

Init +0; Senses darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +5

Defense

AC 14, touch 11, flat-footed 14 (+3 natural, +1 size)

hp 18 (2d10+7)

Fort +5, Ref +0, Will +3

DR 5/cold iron or good; Immune electricity, poison; Resist acid 10, cold 10, fire 10

Offense

Speed 20 ft.

Melee 2 claws +4 (1d4+1), bite +4 (1d4+1)

Special Attacks gorging evil

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 2nd; concentration +2)

1/day—cause fear (DC 11), stinking cloud (DC 13), summon (level 1, 1 dretch 35%)

Statistics

Str 12, Dex 10, Con 14, Int 5, Wis 11, Cha 11

Base Atk +2; CMB +2; CMD 12

Feats Toughness

Skills Escape Artist +5, Perception +5, Stealth +9

Languages Common, Abyssal; telepathy 100 ft.

Special Abilities

Gorging Evil (Su) When a vault dretch is reduced below 0 HP, its body collapses into a cloud of smoke, which attempts to enter the mouth of a nearby living creature within 30 feet. The creature must make a DC 13 Will save or be possessed by the dretch.

Multiple dretches can possess the same creature, and indeed they try to focus all on one victim, because each dretch alone has trouble keeping control of a creature it has possessed. The first time each encounter a possessed creature is reduced below half of its maximum hit points, it must make a DC 13 Will save or be dominated by the dretches. A dominated creature can attempt a DC 13 Will save at the end of its turn each round to end the domination effect and purge one dretch from its body. A possessed creature takes a –1 penalty to all saves regarding this effect for each dretch possessing it.

When a dretch is purged from a creature's body, the cloud of smoke emerges from the victim, flees to Chamber Eight, and reforms into the dretch in a few days.

This is a possession effect and can be blocked by spells like *protection from evil*. The save DC is Charisma-based and includes a +2 racial bonus.

Scrap of the Book of Lorem

This sheet has a dramatic illustration and appears to have been torn from an old holy book. Text on one side reads, "And there was no light but fire." The back says, "But that flame only strengthens his resolve."

Aura faint abjuration and evocation; CL 3rd

Slot —; Price 2,600 gp; Weight —

Description

Once per day as a standard action, the bearer of this item can read the front of the sheet aloud. All light sources other than fire within 100 feet are extinguished. Creatures within that area are limited from producing light for 24 hours, except through fire. Any non-fire light effects only last for a single round at most. If a character who holds this scrap of the book of Lorem would be affected by a charm effect or be dominated, the page bursts into flame, ends the effect, and makes him immune to being charmed or dominated for three minutes.

Construction Requirements

Craft Wondrous Item, darkness, protection from evil; Cost 1,300 gp.

F. Pious Mount.

The dretches applied accursed glue from elsewhere in the vault to the doors between areas A and F. A creature that touches the door is stuck fast (Strength check or Escape Artist DC 13, 18, or 23 depending on how much contact they made with the doors).

The mosaic at the top of the stairs functions the same as in Chamber One. It also affords an excellent view of a PC who might be burning alive on the pyre.

G. Trial Room.

This room is empty.

H. Blessing Room.

A seventh dretch normally waits here, and as soon as it realizes they are intruders, it flees out the doors of Area I to warn its master, Belcamp, in Chamber Seven. The holy water font works here, but it doesn't produce nearly enough water to put out a campfire, let alone a bonfire.

I. Keystone Exhibit.

The mound of books here is 20 feet across and 10 feet high. The first round a PC is trapped here, there are only harmless flames at the edge of the pyre. On the second round the outer squares begin to burn, and any creature that enters or ends its turn there takes 1d6 fire damage. On the third round and onward, the whole pyre is burning. The character will likely burn alive in about a minute unless rescued.

Three options present themselves. First, the trapped character (or an ally) can attempt a Strength check (DC 25) as a standard action to break the chains holding him to the iron stake. Second, an ally can attempt to break the chains (AC 15, hardness 10, 30 hit points).

Third, the lashed character is oriented so that if he looks up he can see, carved into the walls above him, the following phrase:

"I recant my heresy. I ask forgiveness. Let me burn in this life so I will not burn in the hereafter."

If the bound character says that phrase, the fire damage increases to 3d6 per round, but it cannot reduce the character below 1 hit point. Once he is at 1 hit point, the fire is suddenly snuffed.

Otherwise, the pyre continues to burn for half an hour, filling the chamber with choking smoke, making it impossible to rest here. However, enough scraps of books lie scattered about that the party can assemble torches before they press onward. Outside the south doors, the hallway splits into two paths. Right leads to Chamber Three, left to Chamber Five.

Chamber Three: Unholy Arms & Armor.

Encounter Level 9.

A carving above the entrance door reads, “Let your labor aid your fellow man. Thy task is to create, not destroy.”

This chamber is overseen by **Hilde**, an evil and intelligent suit of full plate armor adorned with a wolf motif, who sees the world through a veinous black eye in the center of her helm. She telekinetically controls any loose weapon within 30 feet of herself, and can be a deadly opponent if angered. Though evil and desiring bloodshed, she loyally serves Giovanni the Painter, whose chamber she guards.

She lies inert against the wall in the statuary hall, able to listen to the PCs. If she suspects they are agents of Belcamp or will try to harm her master, she calls out, “Identify yourselves. Only friends of Giovanni may pass, and I know all of Giovanni’s friends.” (Make sure to clarify that this woman’s voice is not the same as the voice the party heard upon entering the vault.)

She’s willing to briefly talk with intruders, but won’t speak if anyone is within sight of the armor, but clever parties can locate her if they figure out that they don’t get responses while standing in the statuary. Hilde asks if they’re willing to fight Giovanni’s enemies, the legion of Belcamp. If they seem at least interested, she’ll let them pass. If they decline or hesitate, she rises up and attacks them, shouting that the only way they’ll get out of this pit is if they give in to their bloodlust and show that they’re true warriors.

Terrain.

Each area of this chamber has various scattered weapons which Hilde can animate and attack with. Whenever she animates a weapon, decide which of the weapon types it is (see Unholy Animated Weapon, below).

- ♦ **A. Main Gallery.** Eight weapons.
- ♦ **B. Statuary.** Four weapons.
- ♦ **C. Lesser Exhibits.** Two weapons.
- ♦ **D. Greater Exhibits.** Two weapons. Hilde’s helm was originally trapped here, and one of the binding circles is broken.
- ♦ **E. Hall of Wisdom.** Five weapons, but all are daggers.
- ♦ **F. Pious Mount.** No weapons. Its magic functions like in the other chambers.
- ♦ **G. Trial Room.** Seven weapons.
- ♦ **H. Blessing Room.** One weapon.
- ♦ **I. Keystone Exhibit.** Twelve weapons. A boulder sits in the center, with bent steel rings that once held in place a massive sword. When the Clergy was sealing the vault, the last entombed item was this item—one of the fallen swords of the slain goddess Srasama. Belcamp had it brought to his chamber, where he uses it as a torture rack.

Also present are discarded and broken implements and bits of armor that play no mechanical role in the battle. Most of the binding circles are active, and shoving Hilde into one is the best way to defeat her quickly.

The doors beyond Area I lead to Chamber Four, and as long as there’s no battle it’s easy to hear faint music coming from down the hall.

Tactics.

Hilde is linked to all the weapons throughout this chamber, and can telekinetically move and attack with any weapon within 30 feet of her. She can sense through these weapons, even if she doesn’t have line of sight to them. Attempting to harm her directly is somewhat futile because of how resilient she is, but attacks against the weapons injure her and reduce her arsenal. As she loses weapons, she moves to other rooms to rearm. Once reduced to one-quarter her normal hit points she abandons her armored torso and limbs, and her helm flies away toward Chamber Four.



Hilde

CR 9 • XP 6,400

Female unique phantom armor

NE Medium undead

Init +6; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; **Perception** +16

Defense

AC 21, touch 11, flat-footed 20 (+10 armor, +1 Dex)

hp 105 (10d8+60)

Fort +8, **Ref** +5, **Will** +12

Defensive Abilities channel resistance +2; **DR** 10/—; **Immune** undead traits;

Resist cold 10, electricity 10, fire 10; **SR** 20

Offense

Speed 30 ft.

Melee 2 slams +12 (1d6+5)

Special Attacks blasphemous eye, unholy steel

Statistics

Str 20, **Dex** 14, **Con** —, **Int** 14, **Wis** 16, **Cha** 20

Base Atk +7; **CMB** +12; **CMD** 24

Feats Improved Initiative, Improved Natural Attack (slam), Iron Will, Power Attack, Toughness

Skills Intimidate +18, Perception +16, Ride +7, Spellcraft +15, Stealth +15

Languages Abyssal, Common

SQ freeze (suit of armor), helm flight

Special Abilities

Blasphemous Eye (Su) As a standard action, Hilde can focus the gaze of the living eye at the center of her helm on a living creature within 50 feet. The creature must make a DC 19 Will save or become convinced that its weapons will turn against it. The creature immediately drops any weapons or offensive items it is holding, such as scrolls or wands, and will not draw or use any such items while under the effects. The creature can attempt a new Will save each round at the end of its turn to remove the eye's effects. If it fails its first save against this effect, the creature further believes its clothing has come alive. It must spend a move action each round if possible to disrobe. If the creature is wearing armor, it takes a cumulative –1 penalty to AC each round, up to the maximum bonus granted by its armor, until it takes the time to don the armor properly again. A single save ends both of the effects of the blasphemous eye. This is a mind-affecting compulsion effect.

Freeze (Ex) Hilde can hold herself so still she appears to be a normal suit of armor. She can take 20 on her Stealth check to hide in plain sight, disguised as normal armor.

Helm Flight (Ex) When Hilde is reduced below 25 HP, every part of her armor but her helm collapses to the ground. She becomes Tiny-sized and gains a fly speed of 30 feet (perfect), but she can no longer make slam attacks.

Unholy Steel (Su) As a free action, Hilde can animate unattended weapons within 30 feet of her. She can have up to four weapons animated at a time. They act independently of her on her initiative count, but use her base attack bonus for their attacks. If Hilde moves more than 30 feet from a weapon, it falls inert, but she takes no damage. Any damage dealt to a weapon also deals half as much damage to Hilde.

Unholy Animated Weapon

CR — • XP —

N Small construct

Init +1; **Senses** darkvision 60, low-light vision; **Perception** –5

Defense

AC 16, touch 12, flat-footed 15 (+1 Dex, +4 natural, +1 size)

hp 20 (2d10+10)

Fort +0, **Ref** +1, **Will** –5

Defensive Abilities hardness 5; **Immune** construct traits

Offense

Speed 20 ft.

Melee slam +8 (1d8/19–20 and special strike)

Statistics

Str 10, **Dex** 12, **Con** —, **Int** —, **Wis** 1, **Cha** 1

Base Atk +7*; **CMB** +6; **CMD** 17

SQ haunted

Special Abilities

Haunted (Ex) An unholy animated weapon takes damage from positive energy as if it were an undead creature.

Special Strike (Su) Each unholy animated weapon has an additional effect from the list below. Most weapons here are swords. Try not to reuse the other effects until the whole set has cycled through.

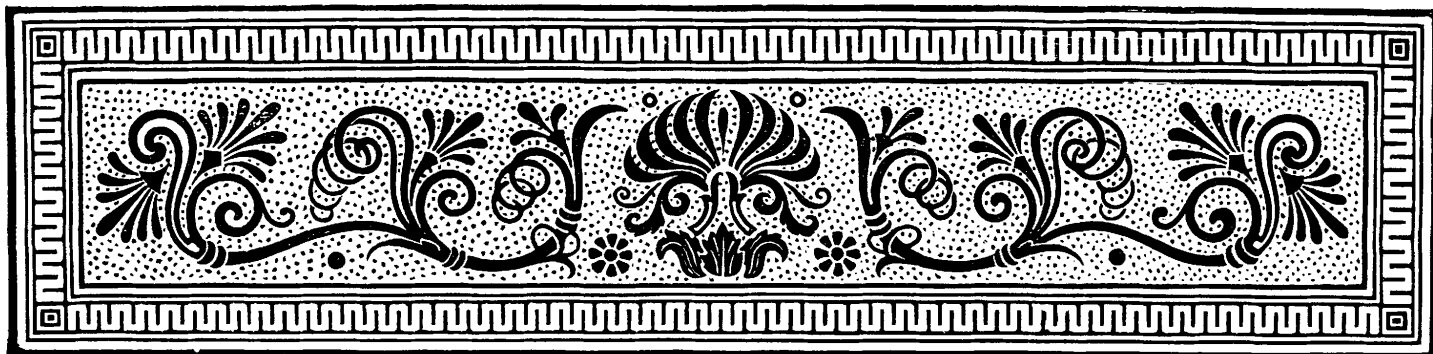
- ♦ **Unholy Sword:** The target takes a –2 penalty on saves and attack rolls for 1 round.
- ♦ **Hellspear:** The target is subject to a bull rush attempt. If it is moved adjacent to a wall, it is automatically grappled by the weapon. Each round the weapon maintains the grapple, it automatically deals 1d8 damage to the target.
- ♦ **Abyssal Scourge:** The target is subject to a trip attempt.
- ♦ **Maggot-Skull Mace:** The target must make a DC 11 Fortitude save or be blinded and take 1d6 piercing damage a round for 1d4 rounds.
- ♦ **Stirge-Dagger Swarm:** For 1 round, any ally that starts or ends its turn next to the target takes 1d6 piercing damage.
- ♦ **Sticky Shield:** The target is entangled until the weapon is destroyed.

Chamber Four: Blasphemous Artwork.

Encounter Level 7.

Of all the chambers in the crypt, only this one is well-tended and neat. The front door glides open with nary a creak. The statues all stand unbroken. Torches illuminate dozens of paintings that hang along the walls, though a few along the Hall of Wisdom (Area E) are draped with tattered black cloth. Fiddle music and gay laughter filter through the air, but at first glance there seems to be no one here. Then the party can hear the distinct vigorous sounds of sex coming through the cracked doors to Area F.

Nearly every painting here is a portal to a small demi-plane, where the



images depicted in the painting come alive. Three dozen beings live in these paintings, relying on the food within and only occasionally returning to the real world when they need to visit a different painting, or for the intermittent parties thrown in Area I, in front of the grand painting of Giovanni. No one here is physically a threat to the party, and if attacked they flee into paintings and then seal them so no one can follow.

When sealed from within, these paintings require a password to enter. Close examination of the frames reveal that they've been rubbed with numerous layers of blood and carved with ritual symbols pledging the souls of the creators to evil entities. Anyone who damages a painting or its frame is struck by lightning from Giovanni's painting (see below).

Every item of art here somehow offended the Clergy. Some of note:

- ♦ **A. Main Gallery.** A series of paintings depict six of the seven vices in lurid detail: Sloth, for instance, shows a pile of bones in a farmer's outfit in the middle of a vineyard, with a copper nameplate reading, "Take from nature. Work not to fill your masters' coffers." (Melancholy is in Area E; see below.)
- ♦ **B. Statuary.** Statues depict numerous elaborate sexual positions, many involving pairs of nuns, or elderly priests with young boys.
- ♦ **C. Lesser Exhibits.** A large painting here is alive with a constant orgy, including dozens of men and women among leashed beasts and a handful of devils.
- ♦ **D. Greater Exhibits.** A collection of jewelry and clothing with vulgar depictions of saints, or skulls impaled on fishhooks (the Clergy's traditional icon), is stored here.
- ♦ **E. Hall of Wisdom.** Various damaged or ruined paintings are stored here. Some have torn canvas; others were just demi-planes that were plundered and burnt from within.

One particular painting, that of the vice Melancholy, has a veil that flutters in a constant light breeze. A character that enters a space adjacent to the painting might be sucked in by a sudden vacuum. If this happens, all creatures within 5 feet of the painting must make a DC 15 Fortitude save or be pulled into a black void 20 feet across. The creature falls prone and takes 5d6 damage each round it remains in the painting.

- ♦ **F. Pious Mount.** Giovanni has decreed that two people must have sex atop the Pious Mount constantly, even to the point of injury and exhaustion, so he can watch. He calls this "performance art."
- ♦ **G. and H. Blessing Room and Trial Room.** Paintings hanging here depict cities burning, torture chambers filled with illusory angels, a skeletal orchestra playing a constant cycle of music, and a series of five island landscapes where stone monuments praise Giovanni as a god.
- ♦ **I. Keystone Exhibit.** In front of the exit door stands a 20-foot high painting of a stormy landscape. Standing boldly in the foreground is the aged but muscular Giovanni, who towers over all who approach but never moves except to speak. None can enter his painting, and he can never emerge. Invulnerable and omnipotent in his own domain, Giovanni is still trapped by old Clergy spells.

Painting Defenses.

While a painting is sealed, anyone who attacks it or attempts to remove it from its mount takes 1d6 lightning damage, plus 2d6 more lightning damage each round it carries the painting. Giovanni can also unleash bolts of lightning from the front of his painting at will as a standard action, though he can only strike targets he can see from his immobile position (in Areas F, G, H, or I). He can attack up to three creatures each round, dealing 5d6 electricity damage to each (DC 14 Reflex for half).

Festival of Endless Delights.

If the party isn't immediately hostile, as soon as Giovanni sees them, he invites them to rest and share wine with his people. Revelers emerge from paintings all around, offering wine, fruit, and succulent meats. A naked woman dances by with a censer that releases floral incense, and the couple atop the Pious Mount call down for the PCs to join in.

The party is welcome to rest here, and Giovanni boisterously engages them in conversation, but if they dally for more than ten minutes, the incense begins to have an effect on them all. Each character in the area of the incense must make a DC 14 Will save or be compelled to engage in acts of lust and gluttony for the next two hours. At the end of this time the character falls unconscious for six hours, after which he wakes with the benefits of having rested for one night. Upon waking, the character must immediately make another save against the effect.

The festival is *mostly* harmless, except to the characters' sense of decency. Time is likely sensitive for the PCs, however, so any character who resists the temptation can try to snap his fellows out of it by striking them. Any damage allows them to make a saving throw to break free of the compulsion, with a bonus equal to the amount of damage dealt.

Dour Discussions.

If the PCs decline to party, or if they attack the other revelers, Giovanni glowers, but makes them an offer. He sees they're talented warriors, and he wants them to rescue one of his people, a lillend lyrist named **Somnia**, whom Belcamp has taken prisoner. In exchange, he'll have his people prepare a "tame meal," a feast nutritious enough to heal their wounds without delaying them. Mechanically this meal grants anyone who eats it the benefits of a night's rest after one hour of dining.

Alternately, if the party can capture Belcamp and bring him here so he can be tossed into one of the prison paintings, Giovanni will give them a whole painting of their own. Though hardly an easily-carried bit of adventuring gear, the possible value of a perpetual portable pocket dimension are vast. Each painting demi-plane is only 100 feet in diameter (anything outside that area is just an illusion on an invisible wall), but Giovanni will give them any from the chamber that they desire, other than his own of course.

Giovanni shares all he knows about Belcamp and the rest of the vault, and warns that there are numerous traps near Chamber Seven which change regularly, but usually involve fire, acid, and steel. But if they lose a fight, he'll disavow having met them, since he doesn't want open conflict with Belcamp's warriors.

Battle.

Should the party manage to get the drop on Giovanni's revelers, the three dozen people try to flee to various paintings and seal themselves in. None are trained warriors, but usually they have enough warning of approaching enemies to hide before a fight occurs.

Harming Giovanni himself is problematic, but if the party gets the *cursed rod of negation* from Chamber Five, then uses it on the painting, that expels Giovanni—he's actually just a normal man, not the titan depicted in his portrait. Scandalized, and in agony at being returned to a fleshly form, he cannot defend himself. When he dies, however, every painting in the chamber turns into a vacuous portal, like the one in the Hall of Wisdom above, and intense sucking air currents pull creatures toward the deadly traps.

Each round, a creature must make a DC 15 Fortitude save at the end of its turn or be pulled 2 squares toward the nearest painting. A creature that manages to exit the chamber is no longer in danger.

Cursed Item.

If a fight occurs, one of the many prisoners who can be slain is a fiddle-player. He drops this wretched item.

Obnoxious Fiddle

Someone stained this fine fiddle a ghastly bright pink. It shows signs of having been stabbed and bashed, but somehow never broke. When you touch it, a childish voice chuckles and says, "You're not a good person."

Aura faint divination; **CL** 5th

Slot —; **Weight** 2 lbs.

Description

The fiddle itself grants no particular bonuses. Indeed, it telepathically talks to whoever owns it, encouraging them to be honest in all things, and getting upset if they don't adhere to a childish sense of right and wrong. The only real power of the fiddle is that it's nigh-indestructible. The owner can never dispose of the fiddle, and cannot tell any lies while he owns it. The GM is encouraged to be as obnoxious as possible in roleplaying this thing.

Chamber Five: Accursed Items.

Encounter Level 8.

This chamber has no doors; their metal was rusted away and devoured long ago. Nearly everything of value here has either been stolen by loot-ers or destroyed by the two bear-sized rust monsters, known as rust lords, that lair here. Belcamp and his legion never come here, since the monster's magical powers can dissolve any metal, even their leaden chains. This frustrates Belcamp, because he believes a *rod of negation* made of bone still lies somewhere in this chamber, and such an item would let him defeat the defenses of Giovanni's paintings and finally slay the painter's followers.

Terrain.

The whole floor is covered in a patina of rust, with a few piles of silvery powder filling scattered squares (four dozen in the Main Gallery, one or two in each other room, and ten in the Keystone Exhibit room). These are the remains of dissolved magic items that still crackle with unstable energy, which fills the chamber with dim light. A creature that enters a space adjacent to this powder must make a DC 15 Reflex save or take 1d6 cold, 1d6 electricity, and 1d6 fire damage. A creature that says adjacent or move away from a pile is safe; it only unleashes its dangerous energy when a creature comes close.

The binding circles in this chamber are all nonfunctional.

Tactics.

One rust lord lairs among the Statuary, on a pile of broken sculptures. The other nests in the Blessing Room. They sleep most of the time (Perception +2 while asleep), but if a PC comes within 50 feet of a rust lord while carrying metal items, it will awaken and attack hungrily. If a metal item is thrown in front of one, it'll spend a standard action eating it as long as it hasn't been attacked in the past round. Getting through this chamber without a fight could be possible with a sufficient collection of metal items, such as the arsenal in Chamber Three.



Rust Lord

CR 6 • XP 2,400

N Large aberration

Init +3; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., metalsense 100 ft.; **Perception** +12

Defense

AC 22, touch 12, flat-footed 19 (+3 Dex, +10 natural, -1 size)

hp 95 (10d8+50)

Fort +9, **Ref** +8, **Will** +8

Resist fire 10; **SR** 16

Offense

Speed 40 ft., burrow 20 ft., climb 20 ft.

Melee 2 antennae +12 touch (rust or bloodrust), bite +14 (1d8+8)

Space 10 ft.; **Reach** 5 ft. (15 ft. with antennae)

Special Attacks bloodrust, rust

Statistics

Str 27, **Dex** 17, **Con** 19, **Int** 2, **Wis** 13, **Cha** 8

Base Atk +7; **CMB** +16; **CMD** 29 (33 vs. trip)

Feats Great Fortitude, Lightning Reflexes, Multiattack, Skill Focus (Perception), Toughness

Skills Perception +12, Stealth +7

SQ metalsense

Special Abilities

Bloodrust (Ex) A brush from a rust lord's antennae against flesh or thin clothing instantly draws forth the iron and other metallic minerals inside a creature's blood, tearing through the skin in a fine mist and causing 1d4 points of Constitution damage.

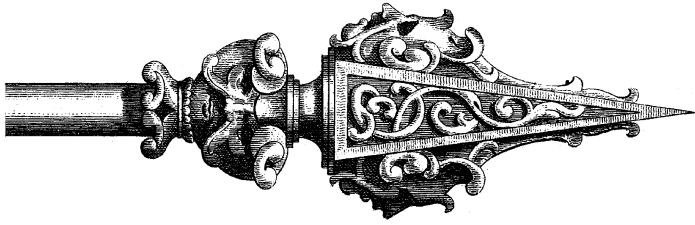
Metalsense (Ex) A rust lord can sense the twisting magnetic fields around metal objects to such a fine degree that it can perfectly discern the location of any metal object or creature with metallic blood (such as most humanoids) as if it could see it clearly, out to a range of 100 feet. Stone, wood, invisibility, and magical barriers are incapable of blocking this sense, and only an object containing significantly more metal, placed between the rust lord and its target, provides concealment or total concealment for this sense. For example, a man hiding behind a suit of discarded full plate has concealment, and one hiding behind a wall of iron has total concealment, though the rust lord might still be able to see him with its darkvision.

Rust (Ex) A rust lord that makes a successful touch attack with an antenna causes the target metal to corrode, falling to pieces and becoming useless immediately. The touch can destroy up to a 10-foot cube of metal instantly. Magic armor and weapons, and other magic items made of metal, must succeed on a DC 19 Reflex save or be dissolved. Against creatures made of metal, a rust lord's antennae deal 6d6+10 points of damage. The save DC is Constitution-based. A metal weapon that deals damage to a rust lord corrodes immediately. Wooden, stone, and other nonmetallic weapons are unaffected.

Treasure.

Stashed in the blessing room, under a pile of cracked and gnawed bones, lies an unblemished rod made of ivory that gleams pristine and white. This *cursed rod of negation* was once the chamber's keystone exhibit, because once used it is nearly impossible to be rid of, with deadly consequences.





Cursed Rod of Negation

You grasp the three-foot long, intricately carved ivory rod, and are acutely aware of your own pulse beating in the veins of your hand.

Aura strong varies; **CL** 15th

Slot —; **Weight** 5 lbs.

Description

This functions as a standard *rod of negation*, but once a creature activates the rod, he can never be the recipient of any beneficial magic. Hostile effects still function normally (unless he counters them with the rod), but the cursed victim cannot be healed magically, granted any bonuses from spells, or even have this curse broken by magic. No other creature can use the rod's powers until the cursed wielder dies. Whenever the wielder uses the rod's powers, he takes damage equal to one-quarter of his maximum hit points. The ivory of the rod is stained with brilliant crimson, spreading from the handle, until it is completely red when the wielder no longer has hit points. When he dies, the rod returns to pristine white.

The rod itself can be destroyed by snapping it in half. This breaks the curse, but unleashes all the magic the rod ever thwarted in a 30-foot-radius spread. All creatures and objects in the area take 15d6 damage (DC 17 Reflex for half). There may be other consequences of the negated magic being restored, at the GM's discretion.

Additionally, when each rust monster dies it dissolves into a pile of crumbled metal, with a glowing golden egg in the center. These two eggs can briefly summon a new rust monster.

Rust Monster Egg

You throw the egg to the ground, and as it shatters a rust monster appears.

Aura moderate conjuration; **CL** 11th

Slot —; **Price** 2,250 gp; **Weight** —

Description

When the egg is crushed, smashed, or broken (a standard action), a rust monster appears as if summoned by a *summon monster* spell. The rust monster is under the control of the creature that broke the gem. It remains for eleven rounds or until it is destroyed.

Construction Requirements

Craft Wondrous Item, *summon monster* V; **Cost** 1,125 gp

Chamber Six: Afflicted Innocents.

Encounter Level II.

Once this chamber contained dozens of people in magical stasis, holding at bay various curses or possessions that the Clergy was unable or unwilling to defeat. Most of those poor people were slaughtered, or released and joined either Belcamp or Giovanni. Now only the keystone exhibit remains: **Ennio Adolini**, the architect of the crypt.

As the crypt's construction neared completion, several chambers were yet unstocked, and the Clergy hierarchs saw an opportunity to ensure the secrets of the traps and defenses were never spoiled. They arranged for Adolini to become possessed by an ice devil, then held a swift trial and dragged him to the vault, where he has remained—trapped in a pillar of fire—for nearly a thousand years.

Vestige Demons.

Carved into the lintel above the entrance door is the admonition, "Let none cause harm to these afflicted innocents. Show them mercy."

A dessicated corpse lies just inside the doors, hands to its head as if it clawed at its face as it died. It wears a distinctive helmet, and if removed the PCs can see the man has only a single eye in the center of his forehead.

Cyclops Helmet

The ivory helmet is solid where eyes would need to look out, but has an opening over the center of the forehead.

Aura moderate necromancy; **CL** 12th

Slot —; **Weight** 3 lbs.

Description

When placed upon the head, this item's curse immediately takes effect (Will DC 15 negates). On a failed save, the target's head is agonizingly reshaped, removing his normal two eyes and replacing them with a single central eye which throbs with black veins and a red iris. Whenever the character reduces a creature below 0 hit points, he must spend a standard action as soon as possible to mutilate the body and remove its eyes before he regains control of himself.

A hush hangs over this chamber, but fire light flickers under the doors at the end of the Main Gallery. As the party explores, small burning motes float like embers through the air, but they follow the party as if with intent. These are the remnants of demons that possessed people who were entombed here. Their hosts died, and now they float seeking a new body to claim as their own. A use of channel divinity can drive the motes away for five minutes, but it's nearly impossible to destroy them.

If any character deals damage to another creature in this chamber, a mass of motes try to fly down his throat, punishing him for transgressing the commandment of mercy. He must make a DC 15 Will save or become possessed by the demon, as per the dretches in Chamber Two (see the vault dretches' *gorging evil* power on page 10).

This is of course an excellent place for Maensha'il the invisible stalker to panic the PCs into attacking one another.

Vault Architect.

Ennio Adolini has long since stopped screaming. A broken shell of a man, he whimpers at his plight as the fire perpetually burns his flesh, but he will not beg for release. He knows that the fiend within him would harm people were he released, and he does not wish to be party to that. If addressed he can talk, though he cannot move or be moved from the pillar of fire in the center of the Keystone Exhibit (Area I).

Adolini warns the PCs not to try to free him. Any creature that touches the flaming pillar takes 5d6 fire damage and, in any case, the PCs have no way to move Adolini's body.

Salving the Tortured Soul.

Speaking to Adolini with friendship or pity can earn the party his trust. He longs for human contact, and though he knows he has been trapped far longer than a normal man's life, he still hopes justice will find those who trapped him here. If the PCs convinces him that they are good people, and if they agree to share his story when they get out, he asks them to prove their purity by undertaking the ritual atop the Pious Mount, drinking the holy water and being blessed. If they all do, he will offer them the knowledge that will let them escape.

First, he tells them the secret chant, "*Noli me tangere, fratris. Saepi cum fide, nobiles.*" Spoken or whispered, it will cause any sacred skel-ton in the same chamber to ally with the party.



Second, he explains the nature of the leaden curse and the teleportation magic that makes the vault seem to have no borders. But if they've met Belcamp and seen his golden chain, the PCs might realize they could take it from him and fashion it into gold rings so the teleportation wouldn't affect them, allowing them to leave by heading north through Chamber One.

Third and finally, he explains that it might be possible to swim through the well beneath Ashima-Shimtu in the final chamber. Though the tunnel is nearly 500 feet long, and is specifically enchanted to dispel shape-shifting and water-breathing magic, if they could make that distance they would emerge just off the coast of the island.

If Adolini should somehow be released, the ice devil inside him awakens and immediately takes full control. Its first priority will be to escape, but it wouldn't mind eradicating a mortal or two on the way out if it can. On the other hand, if Adolini is released pursuant to a bargain, the ice devil will endure a short period of servitude (see "Counter-Offer," below).

Devil-Possessed Adolini

CR 11 • XP 12,800

Male ice devil

LE Large outsider (devil, evil, extraplanar, lawful)

Init +9; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., see in darkness; **Perception** +23

Aura fear (10 ft., DC 20)

Defense

AC 26, touch 14, flat-footed 21 (+5 Dex, +12 natural, -1 size)

hp 141 (14d10+84); regeneration 5 (good weapons, good spells)

Fort +11, **Ref** +10, **Will** +8

DR 10/good; **Immune** fire, cold, poison; **Resist** acid 10; **SR** 20

Weaknesses atrophied

Offense

Speed 40 ft.

Melee +1 frost spear +17/+12/+7 (2d6+10/x3 plus 1d6 cold plus slow), bite +10 (2d6+6), tail +10 (3d6+3 plus slow)

Space 10 ft.; **Reach** 10 ft.

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 9th; concentration +14)

At will—*cone of cold* (DC 20), *ice storm*, *greater teleport* (self plus 50 lbs. of objects only), *persistent image* (DC 20), *wall of ice* (DC 19)

Statistics

Str 23, **Dex** 21, **Con** 22, **Int** 25, **Wis** 22, **Cha** 20

Base Atk +14; **CMB** +17; **CMD** 32

Feats Alertness, Cleave, Combat Reflexes, Improved Initiative, Iron Will, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (spear)

Skills Acrobatics +18, Bluff +18, Diplomacy +18, Fly +9, Intimidate +15, Knowledge (planes) +20, Knowledge (arcana, history, religion) +17, Perception +23, Sense Motive +23, Spellcraft +17, Stealth +14, Survival +19

Languages Celestial, Common, Draconic, Infernal; telepathy 100 ft.

Special Abilities

Atrophied (Ex) Centuries of imprisonment has significantly reduced this ice devil's powers. It is currently suffering from four permanent negative levels. Its natural armor and spell resistance are also lower than a typical ice devil's, and it does not possess the ability to summon bone devils. This reduces the creature's CR by 2.

Slow (Su) A hit from an ice devil's tail or spear induces numbing cold. The opponent must succeed on a DC 21 Fortitude save or be affected as though by a slow spell for 1d6 rounds. This effect comes from the devil in the case of its weapon; it is not a quality possessed by the spear itself. The save DC is Constitution-based.

Counter-Offer.

When Adolini finishes sharing this knowledge (or when it becomes clear the party isn't going to earn his trust), the ice devil takes over his body and growls out an offer of his own: free him, and he'll carve a path to the exit.

If the deal is accepted, and the pillar of fire is dispelled (such as with the *cursed rod of negation*), Adolini wails as the ice devil within him takes full control. Though he maintains his normal human body, a shell of ice forms around him in the shape of the fiend. It is obliged to serve the party for a time, though its appreciation is fickle.

Chamber Seven: Damned Souls.

Encounter Level 11.

Two legionnaire guards stand in front of both the front and back doors to this chamber. All the legionnaires have leaden chains wrapped around their chest like double bandoliers, as well as various adornments of lead either worn or pierced through their flesh. They have no interest in socializing, and if addressed will direct visitors to speak with Belcamp. If attacked they roar to sound the alarm.

A total of twenty-three legionnaires reside here—two each at the front and back, four each in the Main Gallery, Statuary, and atop the Pious Mount, two torturing the lillend Somnia in the Trial Room, and five in the Keystone Exhibit room, serving as a throne for Belcamp. Most were afflicted innocents or other damned souls, though a few were adventurers who got stranded.

A trio of dretches also live here, serving as jesters for Belcamp when he's in an excitable mood. Normally they just sleep.

Door Traps.

The handles of all doors in this chamber have been shaped and sharpened so they have jagged teeth, then coated with sassone leaf residue poison (Perception DC 25). A character touching one of these doors is subjected to the poison. The doors can be opened safely if one has thick enough gloves and knows to be careful.

Sassone Leaf Residue

Type poison (contact); **Save** Fortitude DC 16

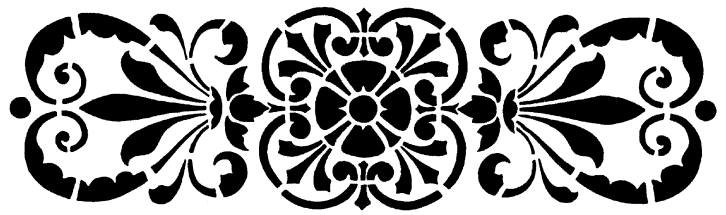
Onset 1 minute; **Frequency** 1/minute for 6 minutes

Initial Effect 2d12 hp damage; **Secondary Effect** 1 Con damage; **Cure** 1 save

Commander of the Leaden Legion.

The bearded devil Belcamp (his beard even larger than normal on account of his massive chin) once lead soldiers for the warlord Egal the Shimmering, who attempted to conquer this world thousands of years ago. When he was captured and brought here his golden regalia turned to lead, but he eventually traded with the lunatic godhand Gene to receive the only gold chain in the entire vault. It's only 3 feet long, a pale imitation of his former splendor, but it gives him some of the power he once wielded. He tore apart a fellow prisoner—a chain devil—and uses the leaden chains to adorn his followers, freeing them from the need to eat, drink, or sleep.

Belcamp doesn't realize that he could simply walk out of the vault if he took his chain and fashioned a ring to protect himself from being teleported in an infinite loop. Instead, he has convinced himself he's the ruler of the crypt, and spends most of his time brooding and planning how to destroy Giovanni and his followers. Of late he has found some entertainment in the torturing of the lillend Somnia, captured from Giovanni's flock.



Hostile Negotiations.

Belcamp is willing to make a few offers. He'll let the party join his legion, which grants them resist fire 10 and an effect similar to a *ring of sustenance*. In exchange, though, they must follow his orders, or else take 1d6 damage every time they try to refuse. With extra forces, he'd be willing to try attacking the rust lords and recovering the *cursed rod of negation*.

Alternately, he'd be willing to trade the lillend Somnia for the rod, and let the PCs use the Pious Mount to receive their blessing. He claims he just wants the rod to defend his people, but within hours of getting it he would launch an assault.

Finally, he might be cowed into handing over the lillend if the PCs threaten him with the rust monster eggs. Belcamp doesn't realize the summoned creatures are so fragile, and he's afraid of a fight.

Combat & Tactics.

The legion, despite its name, has pitiful military training. If forced into a fight they swarm and try to force PCs into the binding circles. Belcamp stays beside as many of his allies as possible to protect them. The sheer number of enemies here is probably too much for the party to handle.

Leadene Legionnaire

CR 1 • XP 400

LE Medium outsider (devil, evil, extraplanar, lawful)

Init +0; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., blindsight 60 ft.; **Perception** +0

Defense

AC 12, touch 10, flat-footed 12 (+2 natural)

hp 5 (1d10)

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

DR 5/good or silver; **Immune** fire, poison; **Resist** acid 10, cold 10

Offense

Speed 20 ft.

Melee spear +2 (1d6) or 2 claws +1 (1d4)

Statistics

Str 10, **Dex** 10, **Con** 10, **Int** 3, **Wis** 11, **Cha** 4

Base Atk +1; **CMB** +1; **CMD** 11

Feats Weapon Focus (spear)

Skills Acrobatics +4, Climb +4

Languages Infernal

Gear spear

Dretch

CR 2 • XP 600

CE Small outsider (chaotic, demon, evil, extraplanar)

Init +0; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; **Perception** +5

Defense

AC 14, touch 11, flat-footed 14 (+3 natural, +1 size)

hp 18 (2d10+7)

Fort +5, **Ref** +0, **Will** +3

DR 5/cold iron or good; **Immune** electricity, poison; **Resist** acid 10, cold 10, fire 10

Offense

Speed 20 ft.

Melee 2 claws +4 (1d4+1), bite +4 (1d4+1)

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 2nd; concentration +2)

1/day—*cause fear* (DC 11), *stinking cloud* (DC 13), *summon* (level 1, 1 dretch 35%)

Statistics

Str 12, **Dex** 10, **Con** 14, **Int** 5, **Wis** 11, **Cha** 11

Base Atk +2; **CMB** +2; **CMD** 12

Feats Toughness

Skills Escape Artist +5, Perception +5, Stealth +9

Languages Common, Abyssal; telepathy 100 ft.

Belcamp

CR 7 • XP 3,200

Male bearded devil fighter 2

LE Medium outsider (devil, evil, extraplanar, lawful)

Init +7; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., see in darkness; **Perception** +10

Defense

AC 21, touch 14, flat-footed 17 (+3 Dex, +7 natural, +1 dodge)

hp 90 (8d10+42)

Fort +13, **Ref** +8, **Will** +3; +1 vs. fear

DR 5/good or silver; **Immune** fire, poison; **Resist** acid 10, cold 10; **SR** 16

Defensive Abilities bravery +1

Offense

Speed 40 ft.

Melee glaive +15/+10 melee (1d10+9/x3 plus infernal wound), or 2 claws +14 melee (1d6+6)

Space 5 ft.; **Reach** 5 ft. (10 ft. with glaive)

Special Attacks beard

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 12th; concentration +11)

At will—*greater teleport* (self plus 50 lbs. of objects only)

1/day—*summon* (level 3, 1 bearded devil or 6 lemures, 50%)

Statistics

Str 23, **Dex** 17, **Con** 21, **Int** 10, **Wis** 12, **Cha** 8

Base Atk +8; **CMB** +14; **CMD** 27

Feats Cleave, Dodge, Improved Initiative, Intimidating Prowess, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (glaive)

Skills Climb +17, Intimidate +18, Perception +12, Sense Motive +10, Stealth +14

Languages Celestial, Common, Draconic, Infernal; telepathy 100 ft.

Special Abilities

Beard (Ex) If a bearded devil hits a single opponent with both claw attacks, it also lashes at the same target with its spiky, filthy beard. The victim takes 1d8+3 points of damage and must succeed on a DC 19 Fortitude save or contract devil chills. The save DC is Constitution-based.

Devil Chills: Disease—*injury*; save Fort DC 19; onset 1d4 days; frequency 1/day; effect 1d4 Str damage; cure 3 consecutive saves.

Infernal Wound (Su) The damage a bearded devil deals with its glaive inflicts persistent wounds that cause 2 points of bleed damage. Bleed caused from an infernal wound is particularly difficult to stanch—a DC 17 Heal check stops the damage, and any attempt to heal a creature suffering from an infernal wound must succeed on a DC 16 caster level check or the spell does not function. Success indicates the healing works normally and stops all bleed effects on the victim. The infernal wounds caused by a bearded devil are a supernatural ability of the devil, not of the weapon.

Aftermath.

If the party rescues the lillend Somnia, she can perform a song that puts the rust monsters or the beasts in Chamber Eight to sleep for five minutes. The song doesn't work on intelligent creatures.

The torture rack used for Somnia is a 15-foot long mithral blade, which deals 1 fire damage per round to any creature that touches it. Though seemingly far too large to ever use in battle, it draws the attention of any eladrin or any Vekeshi Mystic who sees it. If an eladrin or Vekeshi Mystic grasps its hilt, it transforms into an appropriately-sized blade.



First Blade of Srasama (Minor Artifact)

In your hands you hold a sliver of a goddess. The gleaming mithral weapon transforms to a blade of fire or back at a thought. In your mind's eye you feel the presence of Srasama's first aspect, that of the warrior-maiden.

Aura strong divination and evocation; **CL** 20th; **Weight** 4 lbs.

Description

This +1 *flaming transformative mithral longsword* can only be bonded to one creature at a time, and typically only an eladrin or someone who follows eladrin philosophy and religion. Only the bonded wielder can use the weapon's powers.

The bonded wielder can teleport the weapon to her grasp as a swift action from any distance across the world.

The bonded wielder gains a +5 competence bonus on Acrobatics checks.

The bonded wielder knows the status and location of all women within one mile, and if she has met them before, she also knows their identities. If this power is ever used to harm innocents, the wielder immolates, taking 5d6 fire damage each round until the flames are extinguished (DC 15 Reflex save as a full-round action). The sword teleports away and will never serve her again.

Destruction

If an eladrin matriarch who witnessed Srasama's destruction willingly plunges the blade into her heart, both she and the blade are incinerated, leaving behind nothing but ash.

Chamber Eight: Beasts of the Infernal Horde.

Encounter Level 11.

The party ultimately only has one reason to go here: to perform the ritual on the Pious Mount. The monsters here are horrendous and deadly, but avoidable if the party has a few skeletons courtesy of Ennio Adolini, has the ice devil on their side, or can get Somnia to sing and put the beasts to sleep. If the party insists on fighting here, they get what they deserve.

Vault Hell Hound

CR 3 • XP 800

LE Medium outsider (evil, extraplanar, fire, lawful)

Init +5; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., scent; **Perception** +7

Defense

AC 16, touch 11, flat-footed 15 (+1 Dex, +5 natural)

hp 30 (4d10+8)

Fort +6, **Ref** +5, **Will** +1

Immune fire

Weaknesses vulnerability to cold

Offense

Speed 40 ft.

Melee bite +5 (1d8+1 plus 1d6 fire)

Special Attacks breath weapon (10-ft. cone, once every 2d4 rounds, 2d6 fire damage, Reflex DC 14 for half)

Statistics

Str 13, **Dex** 13, **Con** 15, **Int** 6, **Wis** 10, **Cha** 6

Base Atk +4; **CMB** +5; **CMD** 16 (20 vs. trip)

Feats Improved Initiative, Run

Skills Acrobatics +8, Perception +7, Stealth +13, Survival +7

Languages Infernal (cannot speak)

Bloody Juggernaut

CR 11 • XP 12,800

Variant inverted giant

CE Huge humanoid (giant)

Init +6; **Senses** blindsight 60 ft.; **Perception** +9

Aura fear aura (60 ft., DC 21)

Defense

AC 25, touch 10, flat-footed 23 (+2 Dex, +15 natural, -2 size)

hp 152 (16d8+80)

Fort +15, **Ref** +7, **Will** +7

Defensive Abilities rock catching; **Resist** cold 10, electricity 10, fire 10

Weaknesses vulnerable to positive energy

Offense

Speed 20 ft.

Melee bite +19 (2d8+9 plus grab), 2 claws +19 (1d8+9 plus bleed)

Space 15 ft.; **Reach** 15 ft.

Special Attacks bleed (1d6), grab (Large), rock throwing (120 ft.), swallow whole (2d8+13 bludgeoning damage, AC 17, 15 hp), vomit gore

Statistics

Str 29, **Dex** 14, **Con** 20, **Int** 9, **Wis** 11, **Cha** 16

Base Atk +12; **CMB** +23 (+27 grapple); **CMD** 35

Feats Awesome Blow, Cleave, Critical Focus, Improved Bull Rush, Improved Initiative, Iron Will, Power Attack, Vital Strike

Skills Climb +17, Intimidate +11, Perception +9

Languages Abyssal, Giant (can't speak)

SQ blood absorption, flayed man

Special Abilities

Blood Absorption (Su) As long as the bloody juggernaut is within 30 feet of a foe suffering bleed damage from its claw attacks, the blood that flows from the victim writhes through the air into the juggernaut's maw, healing the juggernaut by an amount equal to the amount caused by that round's bleed effect.

Flayed Man (Ex) The bloody juggernaut has had the flesh torn from its body and its feet removed. It crawls on hands and knees, constantly scraping its bloody muscles across the rough floors and walls. Four sacred skeletons follow the juggernaut and fight the enemies it targets. If any are destroyed, at the end of the juggernaut's turn enough animate from the ground to get to the full amount of four. (If commanded by Adolini's chant, the skeletons turn on the juggernaut.)

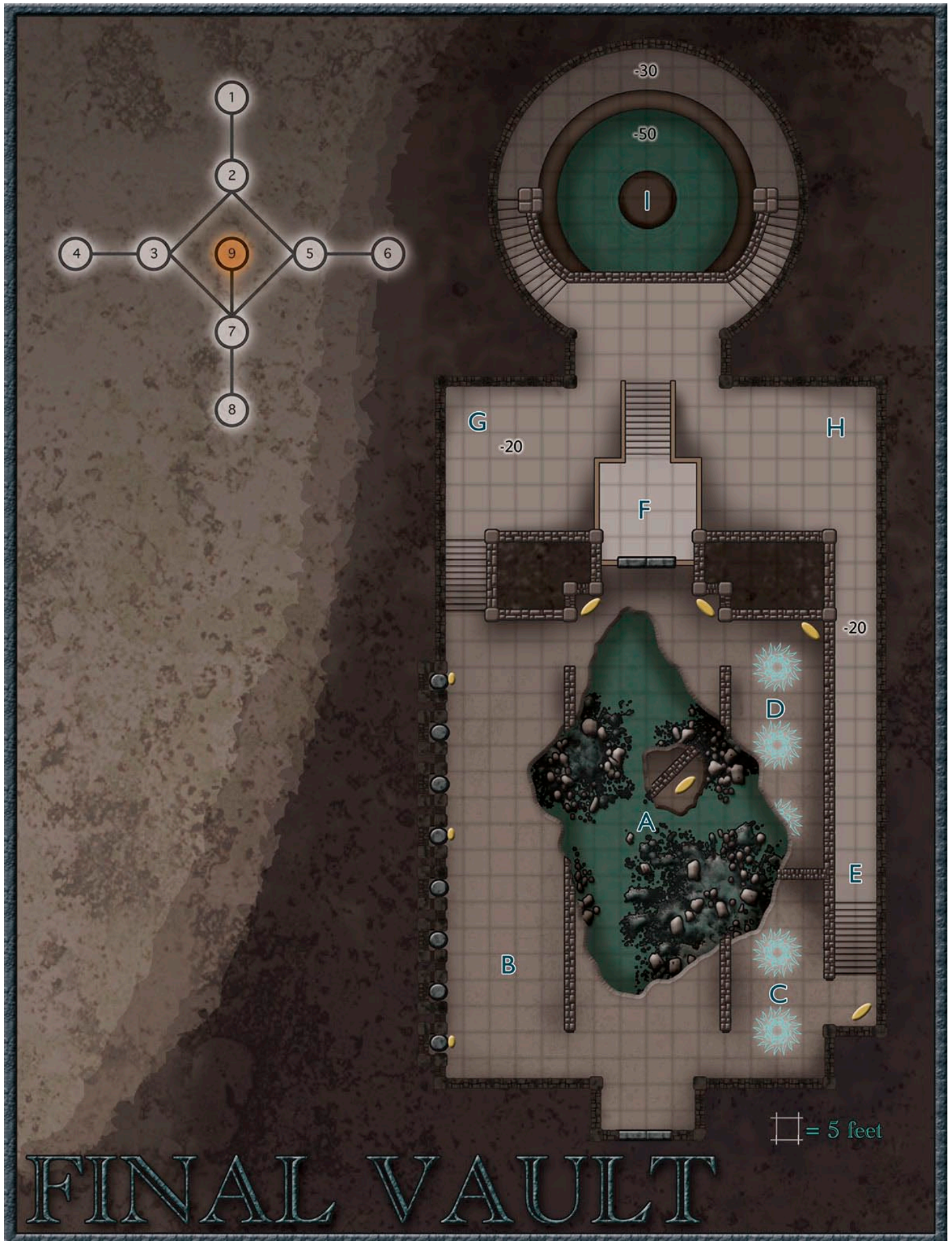
Vomit Gore (Su) Three times per day, the bloody juggernaut can spit a blast of blood and gore in a 20-foot cone that deals 6d6 points of damage (DC 23 Reflex save for half). The slippery blood coats the ground in the area for 2d4 rounds, functioning as a grease spell. The save DC is Constitution-based.

Vulnerable to Positive Energy (Ex) If any form of healing from positive energy is granted to the bloody juggernaut, its skin starts to grow back, overwhelming the creature. Instead of regaining hit points, the juggernaut takes damage equal to one and a half times the amount of healing and is staggered for 1 round.

Treasure.

A steel decanter has been placed beneath the holy water font in the blessing room (Area H), and sits in an eternal flame created where the heartsblood of a hellhound was spilled. The decanter effectively serves as a tea kettle for the mixture of holy water and hellfire.





Cursed Tea

Despite the flames, the steel decanter is cool to your touch, and the water within smells like fine tea.

Aura moderate transmutation; **CL** 5th

Slot —; **Weight** 2 lbs.

Description

Upon command, this decanter fills with either holy water or excellent tea. Each effect can be used only once per day. A creature that drinks the tea heals 2d8+5 points of damage. Whenever a creature drinks the tea, he is filled with heartwarming memories of a friend or loved one, then feels a sudden chill and emptiness in his heart. That friend or loved one becomes unfriendly and uncaring toward the drinker, and spurns him for no discernible reason. It tends to affect people farther away first, so that the drinker isn't aware of the effect immediately. Drinking enough of his cursed tea will leave the drinker bereft of any who care for him.

Chamber Nine: Final Vault.

If you are using these chambers when the party returns in Adventure Eight, *Diaspora*, that adventure occurs before Gene ever entered the vault, so the PCs find this chamber empty save for relics detailing the history of the Demonocracy and the atrocities committed or directed by Ashima-Shimtu. The meeting with the Lady of the Forked Tongue is detailed in that adventure.

If you're running this dungeon as part of Adventure Four, *Always on Time*, or as part of a stand-alone dungeon crawl, the party must fight past Gene the lunatic godhand (Gene's stats are reprinted on this page for your convenience).

If you're running this dungeon as a stand-alone adventure, what happens when the party meets Ashima-Shimtu depends on how generous you're feeling. She most likely finds them unworthy of her attention and leaves them to their own devices, which means they probably drown trying to swim out or stay trapped here forever.

If you don't want a downer ending, she might direct them to a *limited wish* scroll Gene possesses that can break the leaden curse, allowing them to exit the way they came in, albeit with a chance the ritual itself kills them. Or if the party consists of priests sent in to set things right, Ashima-Shimtu asks only for a blessing that she might find forgiveness for her sins, then allows them to leave.

Gene, Lunatic Godhand

CR 7 • XP 3,200

Male human monk 6

LE Medium outsider (augmented humanoid, human, native)

Init +7; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., **Perception** +20

Defense

AC 20, touch 12, flat-footed 18 (+2 armor, +1 Dex, +1 natural +1 dodge)

hp 70 (6d8+36); **Fast Healing** 5

Fort +10, **Ref** +10, **Will** +9

Defensive Abilities evasion variable resistance; **DR** 10/magic; **Immune** disease, poison, aging

Offense

Speed 40 ft.

Melee unarmed strike +11 (1d8+6) or flurry of blows +11/+11/+6 (1d8+6)

Special Attacks ki strike

Statistics

Str 18 **Dex** 17, **Con** -, **Int** 10, **Wis** 18, **Cha** 2-

Base Atk +4; **CMB** +10 (+12 when disarming); **CMD** 20 (22 vs. disarming)

Feats Alertness, Combat Reflexes, Dodge, Improved Disarm, Improved Initiative, Improved Lightning Reflexes, Improved Unarmed Strike, Lightning Reflexes, Mobility, Power Attack, Step Up, Stunning Fist, Toughness, Weapon Focus (Unarmed Strike)

Skills Acrobatics +6, Bluff +13, Climb +7, Escape Artist +6, Fly -3, Heal +7, Intimidate +11, Perception +20, Ride -3, Sense Motive +20, Stealth +5, Swim -2

Languages Common


SQ high jump, ki defense, maneuver training, purity of body, slow fall 30 ft., still mind

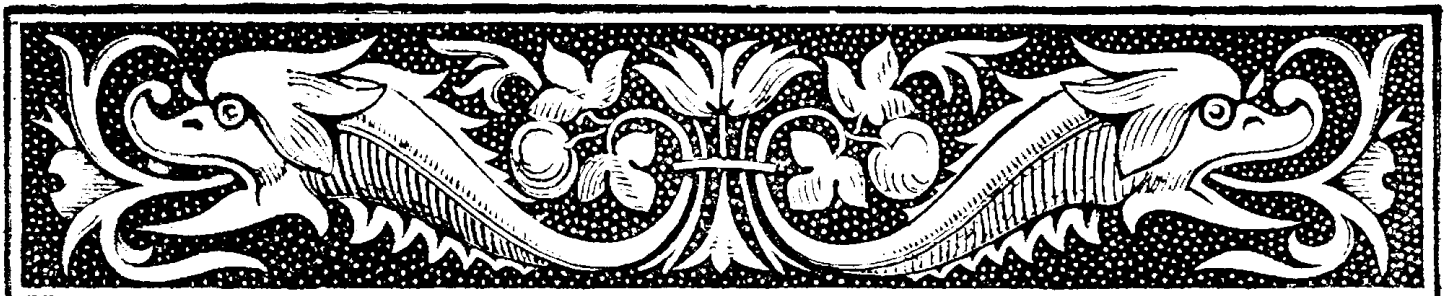
Other Gear bracers of armor +2, hands of heaven and hell (see Adventure Four)

Special Abilities

Demon's Souls (Su): Gene is possessed by various demonic spirits which have given him immortal life. In many respects, and as such, Gene does not possess a Constitution score, but relies on his Charisma score for all Constitution related saves and abilities.

Variable Resistance (Su): Anytime Gene is struck by elemental damage during combat, he gains resist 10 to the triggering damage type until the end of the encounter.

We suggest having the bloody juggernaut chase the PCs relentlessly from Chamber Eight to the entrance of the final vault. When they open the doors they have to deal with Gene, the golden doppelgangers, and the juggernaut, but if they can get the juggernaut to follow them to the well beneath Ashima-Shimtu, they can goad it into charging and falling into the holy water, killing it. 



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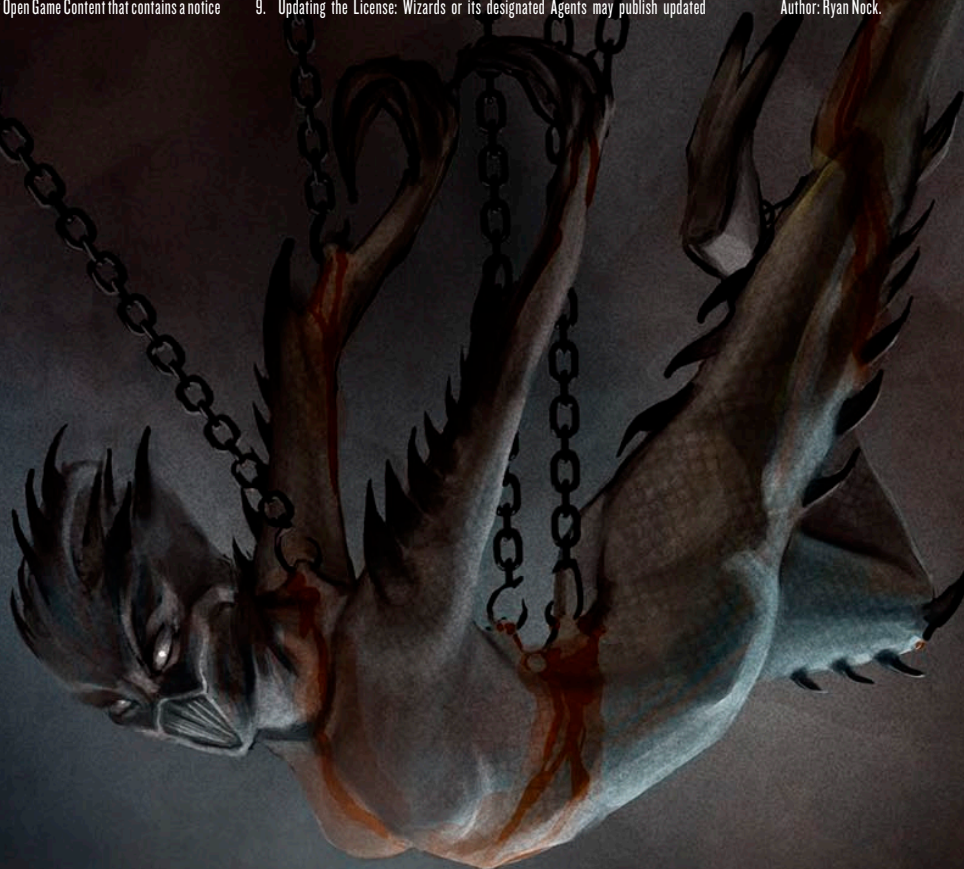
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