An adventure for four 7th level PCs THE BUR LEAD IN A CONTRACT OF THE POINT OF THE

by Mike Franke



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A FANTASY ADVENTURE



SUITABLE FOR FOUR 7TH LEVEL CHARACTERS



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ADVENTURE BACKGROUND

Valeran Imperial Marshall Carridoc Kastellan is a man with a dangerous secret. 200 years ago he was Emperor Arcosti I of Valera, and one of the most powerful men in all the Seven Cities. Unfortunately, his ambition was too great and when his rule collapsed, and his enemies closed in, he had no choice but to hide in an elven magic mirror used to imprison enemies and rivals. Recently, Arcosti emerged from the mirror and found the world changed. The throne was now occupied by a 13-year-old whelp, Loki V, and Valera was much reduced in stature. Arcosti fashioned a new name and life for himself as Carridoc Kastellan and immediately set about ingratiating himself with Loki V to secure a position of power in the young emperor's government. Today only the emperor is more powerful, and if Kastellan has his way that may soon change.

Kastellan knew that somewhere in the ruins under Valera was the answer to his problem. He hid the Regalia of Valera in his ancient palace before retreating into the mirror. The Regalia include a powerful magic scepter that will allow him to gather followers and perhaps one day usurp the throne. Unfortunately, 200 years of ruin and re-building have obscured the location of Kastellan's former treasure trove. Kastellan bides his time, watching for any opportunity to usurp the power of the emperor.

Several days ago that opportunity arrived. An earth tremor shook Valera and opened a sinkhole under one of the city's popular bathhouses. Investigation of the sinkhole revealed underground chambers uncovered by the collapse. A bathhouse employee descended into the chambers and returned with several ancient items before he was suddenly yanked back below, screaming in terror. The recovered items led Kastellan to believe that his ancient palace is located beneath the bathhouse and his treasure lies within.

A DVENTURE SUMMARY

The characters are summoned to a meeting with the second most powerful man in Valera, Lord Marshall Kastellan. Lord Kastellan reveals to the characters that the recent earth tremor has opened up a sink hole underneath the popular bathhouse, the "Stick and Sponge", revealing a previously unknown underground complex. He wants the characters to clear the complex of dangerous creatures and recover for him an important artifact of ancient Valera, the Regalia of Valera.

After meeting with Kastellan, the characters descend into the half flooded underground palace. Once below the characters must contend with the dangerous creatures that have taken up residenceand the dangerous condition of the palace itself, which is close to collapse. Investigation of the palace also reveals some unexpected information regarding Kastellan himself, as frescoes in the palace bear a striking resemblance to Lord Kastellan. It eventually becomes clear that there is more to the Lord Marshall than meets the eye and perhaps he wants the Regalia of Valera for himself. In the throne room of the buried palace the characters must confront an undead priest of Mavros that believes itself to be the emperor, and then they can claim the Regalia of Valera.

When the characters return to the surface they are confronted by the Lord Marshall and his guards. Kastellan demands the Regalia and the characters must make a choice. : provide the powerful magic to Kastellan or attempt to escape with the Regalia and become the most wanted fugitives in Valera?

ADVENTURE HOOKS

At the beginning of this adventure, the characters should be well known in Valera and possibly members of the Valeran Delvers Society, a society of adventurers and explorers dedicated to exploring the ruins of Valera. The characters are summoned to a meeting with Lord Marshall Kastellan who explains to them his desire that they descend into the buried palace and recover the Regalia of Valera.

Other motivations might include:

The characters are agents of young emperor Loki V. He knows of Lord Kastellan's plan and wants the characters to recover the Regalia for him.

The Valeran Delvers Society asks the characters to investigate the newly uncovered ruins underneath the Stick and Sponge.

The Stick and Sponge hires the characters investigate underneath the bathhouse, clear the area of dangerous creatures, and return if possible with the body of the slain employee. MIKE FRANKE CONSIGNATION OF THE CONSIGNATIANE OF THE CONSIGNATION OF THE CONSIGNATION

INTRODUCTION

This adventure takes place in the ruins underneath the city of Valera. The characters descend into the buried palace at the request of the Lord Marshall of Valera in search of a powerful magic item. In the process they find themselves embroiled in the secret but growing conflict between young Emperor Loki V and Lord Marshall Kastellan. The adventure begins with a summons from the Lord Marshall.

PARTONE: SUMMONS

1. \mathcal{D} ELVING IN \mathcal{V} ALERA

If you're using a hook for the party, assume they have gathered in a favorite spot between expeditions to relax or discuss future opportunities.

A man wearing the livery of the Lord Marshall of Valera separates himself from the crowd and approaches you. After checking your identities, he bows and hands you a parchment bearing the seal of the Lord Marshall before clearing his throat and speaking in a deep, clear voice. "The Lord Marshall of Valera, Carridoc Joderik Kastellan, requests your presence on a matter of import to the city of Valera."

The parchment provided by the messenger gives directions to an upscale bathhouse, the "Stick and Sponge", often used by government officials for meetings and relaxation. It indicates the Lord Marshall will meet the characters there and that they should come prepared to work immediately. If asked further questions, the messenger states that Lord Kastellan will answer all questions, including those having to do with payment. Assuming the characters agree to the meeting, proceed to "A Meeting with the Imperial Marshall."

2. A MEETING WITH THE IMPERIAL MARSHALL

When the characters enter the bathhouse it is apparent that their arrival is anticipated. They are quickly ushered into a meeting room occupied by several people wearing the uniforms of the staff as well as a hawknosed, middle-aged man of imposing bearing. A DC 15 Knowledge (Local) check identifies this man as Lord Marshall Kastellan (human fighter 5/Cavalier 5). He motions for the characters to be seated.

Kastellan's bright green eyes command your attention as he speaks. "I have asked you here today because the recent tremor has opened a hole under this bath house. Normally this would not be the concern of men such as yourselves; however, initial attempts to repair the damage have led to the discovery of underground chambers that are apparently occupied. One member of the staff here has already been lost to whatever creatures lurk below. Are you willing to investigate the chambers and clear them of danger so the repair of the bathhouse may proceed?"

The characters will want to know more, including what they will be paid and perhaps why someone as important as Lord Kastellan is involved. If they indicate they are willing, Lord Kastellan dismisses the others in the room to have a private discussion with the characters.

You may be wondering why someone of my station is involved in this matter. I have dismissed the others so that we may speak without this information becoming public. There is more at stake here than damage to a popular bathhouse. As you may know, Valera is an ancient city that has been re-built several times over the centuries. Because of this, the city sits on extensive underground ruins. Information in the palace indicates that the palace of a former emperor of Valera is likely under this site. I want you to clear out the area and recover any objects of historic import. Specifically, I want you to search for the Regalia of the Emperor.

BEREFERENCE THE BURIED PALACE

The characters likely have more questions at this point. Inform them that Lord Kastellan will pay them 1,500 gp each to undertake this mission. They may keep anything of value they find other than the Regalia of the Emperor. When asked about the regalia Lord Kastellan responds:

The Regalia consist of a crown, orb, and scepter. They are traditional symbols of the office of the emperor that were lost several hundred years ago. It would be an important political coup for the young emperor to have these items before celebrating his majority in a few years.

Lord Kastellan (Bluff +14) is not lying but there is a lot that he is leaving out. He knows about the regalia is because he is the former emperor and the regalia was his. He hid it before entering an elven magic mirror to escape his enemies. He doesn't want it for the young emperor, he wants it for himself.

Development: Once the characters have finished asking questions, the Lord Marshall recalls the bathhouse employees and shows the characters to the sinkhole. Proceed to "The Broken Bath".

3. THE BROKEN BATH

The room before you is dominated by the remains of an empty , coldwater bath. The water that should have kept the bath supplied from the city aqueducts spurts from a grate in the side of the bath and flows instead into a 10-ft-wide hole in the tiled floor of the bath. After disapearing from sight into the depths, the water can be heard splashing in the darkness below.

Once the characters provide a light source they cansee the floor of the room below, approximately 40 ft. beneath them. The hole in the bath pierces the ceiling of a large, barrel-vaulted room. A large pile of stone rubble is directly beneath the hole. The floor of the room is covered in water of an unknown depth. The characters must either lower themselves on ropes, or find some other way of transporting themselves to the room below. Climbing down without the aid of ropes or magic requires a DC 30 Climb check.

CONDITIONS IN THE BURIED PALACE

The Buried Place has been underground for hundreds of years. Time, and the recent earth tremor, has made many areas of the palace dangerous to traverse. Several specific areas of the palace are close to collapse, as detailed below. However, all parts of the palace and catacombs are likely to collapse if subjected to certain conditions.

If the characters utilize damaging area effect spells, or magic devices such as a horn of blasting, immediately subject the occupants of the room where this occurs to a partial ceiling collapse. A DC 15 Knowledge (Engineering) or DC 20 Knowledge (Dungeoneering) check will tell the characters the buried palace is a highly unstable place and actions such as those described above are likely to cause a collapse.

Partial Ceiling Collapse (CR5) Type mechanical; Perception DC 20; Disable Device none; Trigger damaging spells or effects; Reset immediate; Effect Attack +15 melee (6d6); multiple targets (all targets in the room or hallway).





PART TWO: THE BURIED PALACE

1. THE WATERFALL ROOM (CR7)

As the characters descend into the buried palace, or after they have reached the floor of the room, the characters see the following:

Water rains down on you from above as you descend into the large room below. The light reflects crazily off the mistfilled air, slick walls, and water sloshing below. The entire floor is covered in muddy water except for a large pile of stone rubble directly below the hole in the ceiling.

When the characters reach the floor they note the following:

The murky water covering the floor is approximately three feet deep. A large archway leads into a room to the west that is also partially filled with water. A short flight of submerged stairs lead up to a large archway in the eastern wall. Water spills out over the top of the stairs and into the room beyond.

Because of the water covering the floor, medium characters must treat this room as rough terrain and are limited to half speed. Small characters must swim to move. A hungry black pudding lurks in the water, and due to the murky water and lighting conditions, the pudding is especially difficult to spot (Hide +10). The pudding is waiting in the southwest corner of the room and it senses characters as soon as they enter the room.

BLACK PUDDING

CR 7

XP 3,200

N Huge ooze

Init –5; Senses blindsight 60 ft.; Perception –5

DEFENSE

AC 3, touch 3, flat-footed 3 (-2 size, -5 Dex) hp 105 (10d8+60) Fort +9, Ref -2, Will -2 Defensive Abilities split, ooze traits

OFFENSE

Speed 20 ft., climb 20 ft.

Melee slam +8 (2d6+4 plus 2d6 acid plus grab) Space 15 ft.; Reach 10 ft.

Special Attacks constrict (2d6+4 plus 2d6 acid), corrosion

STATISTICS

Str 16, Dex 1, Con 22, Int—, Wis 1, Cha 1 Base Atk +7; CMB +12 (+16 grapple); CMD 17 (27 vs. bull rush, can't be tripped)

Skills Climb +11

SQ ooze traits, suction

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- Acid (Ex) A black pudding secretes a digestive acid that dissolves organic material and metal quickly, but does not affect stone. Each time a creature suffers damage from a black pudding's acid, its clothing and armor take the same amount of damage from the acid. A DC 21 Reflex save prevents damage to clothing and armor. A metal or wooden weapon that strikes a black pudding takes 2d6 acid damage unless the weapon's wielder succeeds on a DC 21 Reflex save. If a black pudding remains in contact with a wooden or metal object for 1 full round, it inflicts 21 points of acid damage (no save) to the object. The save DCs are Constitution-based.
- **Corrosion** (Ex) An opponent that is being constricted by a black pudding suffers a -4 penalty on Reflex saves made to resist acid damage applying to clothing and armor.
- **Split (Ex)** Slashing and piercing weapons deal no damage to a black pudding. Instead, the creature splits into two identical puddings, each with half of the original's current hit points (round down). A pudding with 10 hit points or less cannot be further split and dies if reduced to 0 hit points.

Suction (Ex) The black pudding can create powerful suction against any surface as it climbs, allowing it to

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cling to inverted surfaces with ease. A black pudding can establish or release suction as a swift action, and as long as it is using suction, it moves at half speed. Because of the suction, a black pudding's CMD score gets a +10 circumstance bonus to resist bull rush, awesome blows, and other attacks and effects that attempt to physically move it from its location.

ECOLOGY

- **Tactics:** The pudding mindlessly attacks any organic creature that enters the room.
- **Morale:** The pudding will attack until all organic creatures or metallic objects in the room are dissolved, or it is killed.
- **Treasure:** Hidden by the water are many objects of historical significance. A DC 15 Perception check will locate ceramic pots, ivory combs, statuettes, and other items worth a total of 550 gp. Finding all of these items requires 15 minutes and, at the GM's discretion, triggers a role on the Wandering Monster Table. However, the chance of a wandering monster encounter in this room is only 10%, as monsters must get by the golem in area 4 before entering this part of the buried palace.

2. FALSE EXIT (CR5)

This room appears to have once been an entrance chamber. The walls are covered in the patchy remains of frescoes depicting court life. Through the water you can make out a red and gold tile path leading to an archway in the far wall. The archway is blocked by a large pile of broken tile and stone created by a partial collapse of the ceiling.

This room is very unstable. A DC 15 Knowledge (Engineering) or DC 20 Knowledge (Dungeoneering) will tell the characters the ceiling is likely to collapse if the room is disturbed. If the characters attempt to dig through the rubble blocking the archway they will cause a partial collapse of the ceiling. Continued efforts to dig through the rubble will continue to drop rocks from the ceiling.

Falling Block Trap (CR5) Type mechanical; Perception DC 20; Disable Device DC 20; Trigger location; Reset automatic after 1 round; Effect Attack +15 melee (6d6); multiple targets (all targets in the 10 - ft. square before the archway)

3. $\mathcal{D}^{\text{EEP}} W^{\text{ATER}} (\mathbb{CR}^{-})$

This small room is filled with three feet of water like the waterfall room behind you.

This room is not what it seems. The muddy water hides the collapsed floor in the middle of the room; it hasformed a 20'deep water-filled pit. Any character entering the middle of the room sinks to the bottom of the pit unless they can successfully swim back to shallower ground.

Underwater Pit trap (CR-) Type mechanical; Perception DC 25; Disable Device DC 20; Trigger location; Reset automatic; Effect 20 ft. deep waterfilled pit (targets must make DC 10 Swim checks to stay afloat); multiple targets (all targets in a 10 ft. square area) Treasure: If a character searches the bottom of the pit, a DC 20 Perception check finds a construct channel brick (APG p. 303) buried in the mud.

4. THE CRYSTAL COLONNADE (CR8)

At the top of a short flight of stairs can be seen a grand colonnade that extends to the very end of your vision. Pillars of crystal, reminiscent of trees, complete with delicate branches hold up the high ceiling. Multiple archways exit both sides of the colonnade, the far end of which is buried under a collapsed ceiling. Water spilling from the water fall room covers the floor to a depth of several inches.

The water covering the floor makes movement difficult due to the slippery tiles. Any character attempting to double move, run, or fight in this room must succeed on a DC 10 Acrobatics check or fall prone. A DC 20 Perception check will allow observant characters to note that a slight current moves the water toward areas 7 and 8. About halfway down the colonnade, one of the crystal trees is a glass golem. It is programmed to attack anyone

BORDER STREET PALACE

CR 8

not wearing the livery of Emperor Arcosti I, a red tabard featuring a golden sun above a large fish, or accompanied by someone in said livery.

GLASS GOLEM

XP 4,800

N Large construct

Init –1; Senses darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision; Perception +0

DEFENSE

AC 21, touch 8, flat-footed 21 (-1 Dex, +13 natural, -1 size)

- hp 96 (12d10+30)
- Fort +4, Ref +3, Will +4

Defensive Abilities reflect spells; DR 5/adamantine; Immune magic, construct traits

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee 2 slams +16 (2d8+5 plus bleed)

Space 10 ft.; Reach 10 ft.

Special Attacks bleed (1d8), dazzling brightness

STATISTICS

Str 20, Dex 9, Con—, Int—, Wis 11, Cha 1 Base Atk +12; CMB +18; CMD 27

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- **Dazzling Brightness (Ex)** A glass golem in an area of bright light dazzles any creature within 30 feet that sees it (Fortitude DC 16 negates). Once a creature makes its save against this ability, it is immune to that golem's brightness for 24 hours. The DC is Constitution-based.
- **Immune to Magic (Ex)** A glass golem is immune to any spell or spell-like ability that allows spell resistance. In addition, certain spells and effects function differently against a glass golem, as noted below.
- * A shatter spell damages a glass golem as if it were a crystalline creature.
- * A keen edge spell affects all of a glass golem's slam attacks as if they were slashing weapons.
- * A magical attack that deals cold damage slows a glass golem (as the slow spell) for 3 rounds (no saving throw).
- A magical attack that deals fire damage ends any slow effect on the golem and heals 1 point of damage for each 3 points of damage the attack would otherwise deal. If the amount of healing would cause

the golem to exceed its full normal hit points, it gains any excess as temporary hit points. A glass golem gets no saving throw against fire effects.

Reflect Spells (Ex) As a free action once every 1d4 rounds, a glass golem can align its internal structure to enhance its resistance to magic for 1 round. During this time, the golem reflects spells (even spells that function differently against the golem as described in its immune to magic ability) as if under the effect of a spell turning spell.

ECOLOGY

- **Tactics:** The golem attacks anyone that moves more than 20 ft. into the colonnade. The golem will not pursue characters beyond this room.
- **Morale:** The golem attacks as long as characters remain in the colonnade or until it is destroyed.



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5. $\mathcal{D}^{\text{ANGEROUS}}$ CEILING (CR5)

This room is unstable, and the ceiling is about to collapse. If the characters enter and search this room they set off the "trap".

Falling Block Trap (CR5) Type mechanical; Perception DC 20; Disable Device DC 20; Trigger location; Reset never; Effect Attack +15 melee (6d6); multiple targets (all targets in the 10 – ft. square before the archway)

Development: After the loose piece of the ceiling collapses, the room stabilizes and the trap will not reset.

6. RUBBLE FILLED ROOM

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The ceiling of this room must have collapsed at some point, filling the room with rubble. The hindquarters of some massive insect can be seen protruding from under the rubble.

There is nothing is this room except for stone rubble and the squashed corpse of a giant insect. A DC 12 Knowledge (Nature) check will identify it as a giant, red ant.

7. THE FUNGUS AMONG US (CR5)

The water from the colonnade room can be seen slowly flowing down a narrow, six inch wide crack that stretches across most of this room's floor. Two man-sized, purple mushrooms sit near the crack on beds of thick tentacular roots.

8

## VIOLET FUNGUS

CR 3

#### XP 800

N Medium plant

Init -1; Senses low-light vision; Perception +0

#### DEFENSE

AC 15, touch 9, flat-footed 15 (-1 Dex, +6 natural) hp 30 (4d8+12) Fort +7, Ref +0, Will +1 Immune plant traits

# OFFENSE

Speed 10 ft.

Melee 4 tentacles +4 (1d4+1 plus rot)

Space 5 ft.; Reach 10 ft.

#### STATISTICS

Str 12, Dex 8, Con 16, Int—, Wis 11, Cha 9 Base Atk +3; CMB +4; CMD 13

#### SPECIAL ABILITIES

Rot (Ex) A creature struck by a violet fungus's tentacle must succeed on DC 15 Fortitude save or the flesh around the point of contact swiftly begins to rot away, exposing raw bone with shocking swiftness. This hideous affliction causes 1d4 points of Strength damage and 1d4 points of Constitution damage. This is a poison effect. The save DC is Constitution-based. Tactics: The violet fungi can reach everywhere in the

room with their tentacles, however, they prefer to wait until characters enter an adjacent square before attacking to draw in as many victims as possible. The violet fungi can and will move to attack the characters if they don't approach, or attack from range.

**Morale:** Violet fungi are unintelligent and driven by instinct. They move to attack characters once aware of them and do not stop attacking until destroyed.

**Treasure:** If the characters have not already spotted the jewel, a DC 15 Perception check will find a rubyhandled, ceremonial dagger worth 850 gp hidden among the "roots" of the violet fungus. A DC 10 Perception check locates several decaying giant ant corpses (DC 12 Knowledge (Nature)) in the back corner of the room.

#### ECOLOGY

**Development:** The crack in the floor leads down to Area 23, however, only a size tiny or smaller creature can navigate the narrow confines of the crack down to the catacombs below.

# BORDER STREET PALACE

A DC 20 Perception check notes the gleam of a blood-colored jewel nestled among the roots of one of the large mushrooms.

# 8. A WAY DOWN

The water from the colonnade room can be seen flowing quickly down a 5 ft. wide hole in the north-western corner of this room. A dirt-streaked fresco on the wall of the room depicts a regal, robed man wearing a crown and bearing a rod. Other well-dressed men and women stand in attendance, as if the man with the crown is holding court. Many figures are dressed in red, with a golden sun over a large fish device prominently displayed.

The hole in the floor of this room opens into the ceiling of area 17 in the catacombs. The floor of area 17 is approximately 20 ft. below. Characters may take time to clean and study the fresco, but it has degraded over the years and the figures aren't specifically recognizable beyond their general appearance. A DC 15 Knowledge (History) check or DC 20 Knowledge (Local) check identifies the clothing portrayed in the fresco as being in fashion 200 years ago and the livery as being the livery of former Emperor Arcosti I.

**Treasure**: With a DC 15 Perception check, the characters discover that the eyes of the central figure in the fresco are actually emeralds worth 200 gp each.

# 9. EMPTY ROOM

Unlike most of the nearby rooms, this room is free of rubble. The remains of a large wooden desk and iron table can still be seen within.

This room is the safest spot on this level for a party to rest. The golem won't pursue into the room and the ceiling is stable. A resourceful party can utilize the iron table to block the archway and keep out wandering monsters, or the violet fungus from area 7. A DC 15 Perception check locates the crumbling remains of a book in one of the desk drawers.

Most pages of the book are illegible, or so water damaged they crumble on contact. However, a few pages may be handled and read. They appear to be entries from a diary or pages of correspondence to an unknown recipient and discuss "fleeing to the mirror" to escape. A DC 15 Knowledge (History) check identifies the writer of the diary, from the circumstances, as former Emperor Arcosti I. A DC 20 Knowledge (History) check allows a character to recall that Emperor Arcosti disappeared under mysterious circumstances as forces opposed to Valera closed in on the city.

# LETTERS OF EMPEROR ARCOSTI I

"I send you this message because you are the only one I can trust. My enemies close in from every direction. There is no normal means of escape at my disposal ... once inside I will not be able to free myself, for the mirror is a prison. No matter how long it takes, you my trusted friend must come to Valera and ..."

# 10. RUBBLE FILLED ROOM

The ceiling of this room must have collapsed at some point, filling the room with rubble.

There is nothing is this room except for stone rubble.

# 11. RUBBLE FILLED ROOM

The ceiling of this room must have collapsed at some point, filling the room with rubble.

There is nothing is this room except for stone rubble.



This former temple is occupied by an army ant swarm. It attacks anyone who enters the room. The hole in the floor leads down 20 feet to Area 26.

| ARMY ANT SWARM (GIANT)                            | CR 6 =      |
|---------------------------------------------------|-------------|
| XP 1,600                                          | ~~~~~~      |
| N Diminutive vermin (swarm)                       |             |
| Init +1; Senses darkvision 60 ft., scent; Percept | ion +4      |
| DEFENSE                                           |             |
| AC 18, touch 20, flat-footed 18; (+4 size, +1 Dev | x, +3 NA) 1 |
| hp 71 (11d8+22)                                   |             |
| Fort +9, Ref +4, Will +3                          | L           |
| Defensive Abilities swarm traits; Immune wea      | pon ł       |
| damage                                            | I           |
| OFFENSE                                           | t           |
| Speed 30 ft., climb 30 ft.                        |             |
| Melee swarm (4d6)                                 | ť           |
| Space 10 ft.; Reach 0 ft.                         | L           |
| Special Attacks cling, consume, distraction (D    | C 17)       |
| STATISTICS                                        |             |
| Str 5, Dex 13, Con 14, Int—, Wis 10, Cha 2        |             |
| Base Atk +4; CMB—; CMD—                           |             |
| Skills Climb +10, Perception +4; Racial Modifie   | ers +4      |
| Perception                                        |             |
| SPECIAL ABILITIES                                 |             |
| Cling (Ex) If a creature leaves an army ant sw    |             |
| square, the swarm suffers 1d6 points of dam       | nage f      |

square, the swarm suffers 1d6 points of damage to reflect the loss of its numbers as several of the crawling pests continue to cling tenaciously to the victim. A creature with army ants clinging to him takes 4d6 points of damage at the end of his turn each round. As a full-round action, he can remove the ants with a DC 16 Reflex save. High wind or any amount of damage from an area effect destroys all clinging ants. The save DC is Dexterity-based.

**Consume** (Ex) An army ant swarm can rapidly consume any creature it swarms over. Against

10

**Tactics:** The army ant swarm considers anyone entering the temple to be a threat to the hive in area 26. The swarm attacks as long as anyone remains in the Temple. Combat lasting 5 rounds or longer attracts the ants from areas 25 and 26 if they are still alive.

#### ECOLOGY

**Morale**: The army ant swarm attacks until destroyed. **Treasure**: A DC 20 Perception check locates a platinum and ruby holy symbol of Mavros worth 1,500 gp buried in the rubble near the edge of the hole in the floor.

## 13. THE EMPERORS THRONE ROOM (CR10)

A DC 20 Perception will locate a secret door behind the upright statue next to the throne. The door is locked, but may be opened with a DC 25 Disable Device check. Unfortunately, the statue in front of the secret door is also a trap. If the door is tampered with the statue sweeps its sword through the area before the secret door.

Sword of Mavros Trap (CR7) Type mechanical; Perception DC 25; Disable Device DC 25; Trigger location; Reset automatic; Effect Attack + 20 melee (large scythe; 2d6+6/x4) The statue of Mavros' sword blade sweeps in a circle attacking all targets within 5 ft.

After the characters enter the room and the False Emperor becomes aware of their presence, read the following.

The form on the golden throne suddenly straightens and its head swivels toward you. Inside its cowl you see not a face, but a squirming mass of ants and other insects. It raises a bejeweled scepter and while its chittering voice is barely understandable, its intent is clear. "Kneel before the Emperor of Valera!"

CR 10

| FALSE EMPEROR |  |
|---------------|--|
|---------------|--|

#### XP 9,600

Human cleric 9 (Mavros) (worm that walks variant) NE Medium vermin (augmented human)

Init + 5; Senses blindsight 30 ft. , darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +13

#### DEFENSE

AC 25, touch 15, flat-footed 24 (+10 armor, +1 Dex, insight +4)

**hp** 85 (9d8 + 45)

Fort +11 , Ref +9 , Will +11

**Defensive Abilities** worm that walks traits; DR 15/-; Immune critical hits, disease, paralysis, poison, sleep

#### OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

- **Melee** +1 shock flail +9/+4 (1d8+3 plus 1d6 electricity/ 19-20)
- **Special Attacks** channel negative energy 5/day (DC 14, 5d6), discorporate, grab (large), squirming embrace
- **Domain Spell-Like Abilities** (CL 9th, concentration +13)
- 7/day—Battle Rage (+4), Strength Surge (+4)
- 9 rounds/day—Might of the Gods +9, Weapon Master
- Divine Spells Prepared (CL 9th; concentration +13)

5th—Domain: (flame strike), spell resistance

4th—Domain: (divine power), freedom of movement, poison, unholy blight

- **3rd—Domain:** (magic vestment), cure serious wounds, dispel magic, invisibility purge, protection from energy
- 2nd—Domain: (bull's strength), cure moderate wounds, hold person, silence, sound burst, spiritual weapon
- Ist—Domain: (magic weapon), command, cure light wounds, divine favor, sanctuary, shield of faith

0 (at will)—detect magic, stabilize, guidance, light

#### Domains Strength, War

#### STATISTICS

Str 14, Dex 16, Con 18, Int 8, Wis 18, Cha 10 Base Atk + 6; CMB +8; CMD +21

Feats Armor Proficiency (heavy), Craft Magic Arms and Armor, Extra Channel, Improved Initiative, Lightning Reflexes, Toughness, Diehard (bonus feat)

Skills Diplomacy +4, Heal +8, Knowledge (religion) +8, Perception +13 , Sense Motive +16 , Spellcraft +8, Stealth +8

Languages Common

Combat Gear +1 full plate, +1 shock flail, +1 cloak of resistance, rod of rulership

Tactics: The creature on the throne believes itself

to be the emperor. It will begin by using its rod of rulership to demand obedience from the characters. If the characters don't comply it will begin combat by casting spell resistance, and then continue with ranged spells such as flame strike, or enter melee as appropriate. In melee it will attempt to utilize domain spelllike abilities as well as grab and squirming embrace.

#### ECOLOGY

**Morale**: The False Emperor spends free actions to call for guards (there are none) and otherwise seems put out by being assaulted in "his throne room", but he does not retreat or surrender.

- **Treasure**: The False Emperor wields the Scepter of Valera, a rod of rulership, and one of the objects sought by the Lord Marshall. Although an extremely powerful magic item, the Scepter of Valera is an elfmarked item and likely not useable by the characters themselves. Although the throne shines like solid gold it's only covered in gold plate. If the characters spend several hours scraping they may salvage 500 gp worth of gold from the throne.
- **Development:** The frescoes in this room are the clearest in all of the ruins, amazingly preserved despite hundreds of years in the ground. A DC 15 Perception check reveals the central figure portrayed in the frescoes bears a striking resemblance to the Lord Marshall, right down to his bright green eyes. A DC 15 Knowledge (History) check or DC 20 Knowledge (Local) check identifies the man in the frescoes as the former Emperor of Valera Arcosti 1 and a DC 20 Knowledge (History) check allows a character to remember the mysterious circumstances under which the Emperor disappeared.
- This information, combined with the information found in the paperwork in area 9, should be enough to get many players wondering about the Lord Marshall and whether or not it is a good idea to provide him with a powerful magic item such as the Scepter of Valera.



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# 14. FALSE EXIT (CR5)

This narrow hallway ends in an archway filled with stone rubble from a partially collapsed ceiling.

This room is very unstable. A DC 15 Knowledge (Engineering) or DC 20 Knowledge (Dungeoneering) will tell the characters the ceiling is likely to collapse if the room is disturbed. If the characters attempt to dig through the rubble blocking the archway they will cause a partial collapse of the ceiling. Continued efforts to dig through the rubble will continue to drop rocks from the ceiling.

Falling Block Trap (CR5) Type mechanical;
Perception DC 20; Disable Device DC 20; Trigger location; Reset automatic after 1 round; Effect Attack +15 melee (6d6); multiple targets (all targets in the 10 – ft. square before the archway)

## 15. TREASURE CHAMBER

This small room is empty except for a large chest along the rear wall and a plethora of dead ants littering the floor.

The chest is locked but may be opened with a DC 25 Disable Device check. Inside the chest is a gold crown worth 950 gp and crystal orb worth 450 gp covered in a carpet of dead ants. The rod described by Imperial Marshal is not here.

# 16. EMPTY TREASURE CHAMBER

Through the gaping hole in the wall you can see book shelves covering every wall of this room. The shelves now stand crumbling and empty. The only item in the room is a small bronze cauldron sitting in a corner.

A search of the room (DC 10 Perception check) finds numerous bits of paper but nothing intact or recognizable. The cauldron has a hole in it and is generally valueless.

# 17. DEATH MIST CHAMBER (CR.6)

Water rains down from a hole in the ceiling, filling this roughhewn chamber with thick mist, before pooling on the floor and streaming out of the room down a short passage to the east.

This room is the home of three vampiric mists that recently squeezed their way up from even deeper caverns via the vortex in area 22. They are tired of ants and excited to feast on juicier prey. A DC 10 Perception check notes the desiccated husks of several giant ants pilled in the south-west corner of the room.

# VAMPIRIC MIST (3) CR 3

#### XP 800

NE Medium aberration (air, water)

Init +8; Senses darkvision 60 ft., sense blood;

Perception +8

#### DEFENSE

AC 14, touch 14, flat-footed 10 (+4 Dex) hp 30 (4d8+12) Fort +4, Ref +5, Will +5 Defensive Abilities amorphous; DR 5/magic

Weaknesses vulnerable to fire

#### OFFENSE

Speed fly 50 ft. (perfect) Melee touch +7 (bleed and blood siphon) Special Attacks bleed (1d6)

#### STATISTICS

Str—,Dex 19, Con 16, Int 7, Wis 13, Cha 10 Base Atk +3; CMB—; CMD— Feats Improved Initiative, Weapon Finesse Skills Fly +12, Perception +8, Stealth +11 Languages Aklo SQ blood overdose, misty form

#### SPECIAL ABILITIES

**Blood Siphon** (Ex) A vampiric mist drains blood with each melee touch attack dealing 1d3 points of Constitution damage. Every time a vampiric mist damages a creature in this way, it heals 1d8 hit points. Hit points healed in excess of its maximum are gained as temporary hit points, to a maximum amount equal to its Constitution score. These

BORDER BURIED PALACE

temporary hit points last for 1 hour.

- **Blood Overdose (Su)** When a vampiric mist gorges on blood to an extent that it gains temporary hit points, it moves much more quickly. It gains a +2 haste bonus to its Armor Class and on Reflex saves, and can take one additional move action each round.
- **Misty Form (Ex)** A vampiric mist's body is composed of a semisolid red mist similar in consistency to thick foam. The vampiric mist does not have a Strength score, and it cannot manipulate or wear solid objects. This form grants it the amorphous defensive ability, and allows it to move through areas as small as 1 inch in diameter with no reduction to its speed. The creature can speak in a hissing voice. A vampiric mist cannot enter water or other fluids, and is treated as a creature two size categories smaller than its actual size (Tiny for most vampiric mists) for the purposes of how wind affects it.
- **Sense Blood (Ex)** A vampiric mist can immediately sense the presence of warm-blooded creatures in a 60-foot radius as if by scent. It can detect exposed blood within a mile.

#### ECOLOGY

- **Tactics**: Due to their sense blood ability, the vampiric mists will likely be aware of the approach of the characters. They will take advantage of the misty environs of the room (Stealth check +14) and attempt to surprise the characters when they descend from above.
- **Morale**: The vampiric mists are famished for humanoid blood and won't pass up this opportunity to feed. If two of the mists are killed, the third will attempt to flee to area 22 and escape down the vortex.

# 18. CATACOMB HALLWAY

A long hallway stretches for over a hundred feet before ending in collapses at both ends. Numerous burial niches line both sides of the hall but the bodies and contents within have mostly rotted away, leaving only a few worthless trinkets. A stream of water flows out of a large hole in the west wall and into a breach in the east wall. A closed iron door can be seen about halfway down the corridor. This hallway provides access to areas 20, 21 and 22. Characters will need to pass through either area 21 or area 22 to reach the next catacomb hallway, area 23.

## 19. END OF THE ROAD

The catacomb passageway ends in a deadfall of large stones. The collapse does not look recent but the ceiling groans occasionally and dust sifts down from above.

The pile of stones blocking the passage is relatively stable and digging will not provoke another collapse (DC 15 Knowledge (Engineering)). Unfortunately, digging won't get the characters anywhere, as the entire passage beyond has collapsed. Let characters attempt to get by the blockage if they desire, however, extended digging is sure to attract wandering monsters.

# 20. MAUSOLEUM (CR7)

A heavy iron door blocks entry to whatever is beyond. The door was at one time engraved with a message, but time and rust have obscured its meaning.

The door to the mausoleum is locked but can be opened with a DC 20 Disable Device check. Even then, the door is rusted to its frame and a DC 15 Strength check is required to force it open. If the characters open the door read the following.

The metal of the door shrieks loudly in protest as you force it open. Inside you see a room empty except for three stone sarcophagi. As you take in your surroundings a translucent form rises through the lid of the center sarcophagus. It opens its mouth and emits a moan so terrifying it freezes your very blood.

#### 

CR 7

| ~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~ |
|-----------------------------------------|
| GHOST                                   |
|                                         |

#### **XP** 3,200

Human ghost aristocrat 7

CE Medium undead (augmented humanoid,

incorporeal)

Init +5; Senses darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +18

#### DEFENSE

AC 17, touch 17, flat-footed 15 (+1 Dex, +1 dodge, +5 deflection)

**hp** 73 (7d8+42)

#### Fort +7, Ref +6, Will +7

**Defensive** Abilities channel resistance +4, incorporeal, rejuvenation; Immune undead traits

#### OFFENSE

Speed fly 30 ft. (perfect)

**Melee** corrupting touch +6 (7d6, Fort. DC 18 half) **Special** Attacks frightful moan (DC 18)

#### STATISTICS

Str—, Dex 12, Con—, Int 10, Wis 11, Cha 20

Base Atk +5; CMB +5; CMD 22

Feats Dodge, Improved Initiative, Iron Will, Lightning, Reflexes, Toughness

Skills Fly +9, Knowledge (history) +10, Knowledge (nobility) +10, Perception +18, Sense Motive +10, Stealth +9;

Racial Modifiers +8 Perception, +8 Stealth

#### Languages Common

#### SPECIAL ABILITIES

- **Corrupting Touch (Su)** All ghosts gain this incorporeal touch attack. By passing part of its incorporeal body through a foe's body as a standard action, the ghost inflicts a number of d6s equal to its CR in damage. This damage is not negative energy it manifests in the form of physical wounds and aches from supernatural aging. Creatures immune to magical aging are immune to this damage, but otherwise the damage bypasses all forms of damage reduction. A Fortitude save halves the damage inflicted.
- **Frightful Moan (Su)** The ghost died in the throes of crippling terror. It can emit a frightful moan as a standard action. All living creatures within a 30-foot spread must succeed on a Will save or become panicked for 2d4 rounds. This is a sonic mindaffecting fear effect. A creature that successfully saves against the moan cannot be affected by the

same ghost's moan for 24 hours.

**Tactics**: The ghost begins combat with its frightful moan ability and then moves into melee.

**Morale**: The ghost hates all life and will attack until destroyed, pursuing characters as long as they remain in the catacombs.

#### ECOLOGY

Treasure: A DC 15 Perception check discovers an unlocked coffer inside the left sarcophagus. It contains 150 gp, 300 sp and an emerald worth 850 gp. A DC 25 Perception check finds a false bottom underneath the bones in the central sarcophagus. It contains a +1 flaming heavy flail and a scroll containing burning hands and icestorm.

**Development**: The noise created by forcing the door of the tomb automatically attracts a wandering monster. It arrives 1d8 rounds after the door is opened.



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## 21. THE ANT WAY

Unlike the stone construction of the catacombs, this low, four foot high, earthen, tunnel appears to have been freshly dug.

Medium characters must crawl through this tunnel and large characters must squeeze.

## 22. THE DRAIN

Water drains into this low, narrow, earthen, tunnel from the hallway. The tunnel bends sharply down and around a corner after only a few feet, preventing you from seeing into its interior. If the PCs enter the tunnel read the following:

The sound of water is loud in this small tunnel. It rushes by, covering the floor to a depth of 1 foot in most places. After you move beyond the first turn, it is apparent that water is entering the tunnel from both ends and converging in the middle where a small vortex can be seen syphoning the water into the unknown below.

The passage is quite slippery and characters attempting to move through the tunnel must succeed on a DC 15 Acrobatics check or be pulled off their feet by the current and sucked into the vortex. The vortex is created by numerous small holes and isn't big enough to suck down a character; however, a character sucked into the vortex plugs it and causes the water level in the tunnel to rise 1 ft. per round.

# 

The tunnel can fill nearly all of the way to the roof before the water reaches the level of the surrounding catacombs and begins to spill out, thus, a character could drown if stuck for enough time. A stuck character may free herself with a DC 17 Strength check but must make a DC 10 Acrobatics check to safely exit the tunnel and avoid being sucked back into the vortex.

Treasure: A DC 20 Perception check discovers a rusty gauntlet wedged in a crack, under the water, near the vortex. This is actually a gauntlet of rust.

23. CATACOMB HALLWAY (CR.5)

A long hallway stretches for over 100 feet before ending in collapses at both ends. Numerous burial niches line both sides of the hall but the bodies and contents within have mostly rotted away leaving only a few worthless trinkets. Water showers down from a crack in the roof near the midpoint of the hallway pooling on the floor before running into a large hole in the western wall. An iron door can be seen crumpled on the ground at the north end of the hallway.

# VIOLET FUNGUS (2) CR 3 PATHFINDER BESTIARY (SEE AREA 7)

- Tactics: The violet fungi attack any character within reach—and they have enough reach to block the entire hallway. These violet fungi have gorged themselves on ants for several days now and do not move to chase characters that do not come within reach.
- **Morale**: Violet fungi are unintelligent and driven by instinct. They attack any creature within reach and attack until destroyed.
- **Development**: The crack in the ceiling leads up to Area 7, however, only a size tiny or smaller creature can navigate the narrow confines of the crack up to the palace above.

## 24. THE PRIEST'S TOMB

The heavy iron door leading into this room has been torn off its hinges, as if by some great force. Inside the room is dominated by a stone sarcophagus. Even from the doorway you can see that the lid has been opened and thrown to the side. Ants swarm in and out of a multitude of cracks in the floor.

The ants are harmless, normal ants. The sarcophagus is empty, the priest having arisen as the Ant that Walks and moved on to the Throne Rome (area 13) where it spends its time thinking it is the Emperor. A DC 15 Perception check reveals the writing on the sarcophagus lid.

With a DC 15 Linguistics check a character may translate the somewhat obscure, 300-year-old dialect. It tells the story of a priest of Mavros who singlehandedly fought off a lizardman attack on a caravan traveling from Melana to Valera. After succumbing to his wounds, he was buried here, with honors, near the temple.

# 25. COLLAPSED HALLWAY (CR6)

Although this catacomb hallway was at one time likely much longer, it has suffered a drastic collapse. Forty feet of passage remain passable and large holes are apparent in both the west and east walls. A group of giant ants quickly approaches as soon as you enter the hallway.

If combat in this area lasts for more than 5 rounds, the army ant swarm from area 26 will join the fight.

# **THE BURIED PALACE**

# 26. THE HIVE ( $CR_6$ )

This irregularly shaped cave is dominated by the large earth mound at its center. A massive, rectangular, red-flecked, slab of granite is imbedded in the side of the mound. What looks to be a section of the palace can be seen through a 10-ft.-wide hole in the ceiling 20 feet above.

This room is the home of an army ant swarm. If it has not already been fought in area 25, the swarm boils forth from the mound to attack any intruders. A knowledge DC 15 Religion check identifies the block of stone as an altar to the god Mavros. The altar apparently fell through the ceiling from area 12 above. A DC 25 Perception check of the altar locates a secret compartment.

# GIANT ARMY ANT SWARM CR 6 PATHFINDER BESTIARY (SEE AREA 12)

**Tactics**: The army ant swarm considers anyone in the hive room a threat and fights until all intruders are killed or it is destroyed.

**Morale**: The army ant swarm attacks until destroyed. **Treasure**: The giant ants of the catacombs have

| GIANT ANT (4) | CR 2 |
|---------------|------|
|               |      |

#### XP 600

N Medium vermin

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

DEFENSE

AC 15, touch 10, flat-footed 15; (+5 natural) hp 18 (2d8+9) Fort +6, Ref +0, Will +1 Immune mind-affecting effects

#### OFFENSE

Speed 50 ft., climb 20 ft.

**Melee** bite +3 (1d6+2 plus grab), sting +3 (1d4+2 plus poison)

#### STATISTICS

Str 14, Dex 10, Con 17, Int —, Wis 13, Cha 11 Base Atk +1; CMB +3 (+7 grapple); CMD 13 (21 vs. trip) Feats Toughness **Skills** Climb +10, Perception +5, Survival +5; Racial Modifiers +4 Perception, +4 Survival

#### SPECIAL ABILITIES

**Poison (Ex)** Sting—injury; save Fort DC 12; frequency 1/round for 4 rounds; effect 1d2 Str; cure 1 save

#### ECOLOGY

- **Tactics**: The giant ants attack anyone that in area 25 or area 26. They continue to attack until destroyed or all intruders are killed or driven off.
- **Morale**: While defending their hive the ants are fearless and will not retreat for any reason.

pilled a collection of objects here for use in building the hive. A DC 20 Perception check locates the following: a masterwork silver dagger worth 225 gp, a bunch of gold wire worth 150 gp, tattered and rotten silk burial garments worth 5 gp, a dirt covered ivory bust worth 75 gp, vaguely recognizable as a man, and 580 gp of ancient coins.

- If the altar's secret compartment is discovered, the party finds 2 scrolls of greater restoration, 3 vials of holy water, and a rare holy text of Mavros worth 1,500 gp to the right buyer. A DC 25Knowledge (History or Religion) check recognizes the text as one stolen from the Seat of Mavros several hundred years ago and sought by the clergy of Mavros ever since.
- Development: If the characters take time to clean off the ivory bust or succeed on a DC 20 Perception check they note the bust appears to be of a hawknosed man. An inscription on the base of the bust has mostly worn away, however, the letters ACSI are still recognizable.



# PART THREE: RETURN TO THE SURFACE

# 1. THE BATHHOUSE AGAIN (CR.13)

As you pull yourselves one by one out of the darkness and back into the light of the bathhouse, you can see that the room is no longer occupied by a few bathhouse attendants watched over by a government bureaucrat.

A full squad of soldiers wearing the livery of the Lord Marshall, a full moon over a fish on a field of red, surrounds the bath, watching you very closely. Their heavy armor shows the wear of repeated combat and their wizard captain holds his wands at the ready.

A young man in the dress of a government messenger runs from the room at your appearance and a few moments later the Lord Marshall himself enters the room and looks down at you from the lip of the bath.

This is a very dangerous encounter for the PCs. Make sure to spend time describing the number of guards and their appearance as capable veterans.

The Lord Marshall questions the characters about what they found in the Buried Palace. Feel free to ask the players any questions regarding the state of the palace and the dangers found within. Eventually, however, the Lord Marshall attempts to get the characters to talk about the frescoes. He knows that there is art in the place with his face. He doesn't know if any of it survived or is recognizable after hundreds of years. He could ask questions such as:

Is there any art or architecture of historic significance in the palace? Or

Did you find anything related to previous rulers that we should attempt to preserve?

This can be a dangerous exchange for the characters for, if the Lord Marshall believes they have figured out his true identity, he will become a lifelong enemy and plot their quiet elimination as soon as possible. However, the Lord Marshall will not simply kill them out of hand as long as the characters keep their bargain with him. Turining on his own agents for no apparent reason could lead to questions about the buried palace and further investigation into its secrets by agents of the Emperor.

Finally, after the discussion is finished, the Lord Marshall asks the characters to turn over the Regalia of Valera per their agreement. Unless the characters have stated that they put the Regalia away, or are hiding it, you can assume the Lord Marshall sees it. If the characters turn over the crown, orb, and scepter, there is no problem and the characters are rewarded per their agreement with the Lord Marshall and allowed to leave.

If the characters refuse to turn over the regalia, the Lord Marshall gives them one chance to change their mind before ordering the soldiers to attack. The Lord Marshall doesn't enter combat and withdraws if attacked or if the fight appears to be going poorly for his men. If the characters attempt to deceive the Lord Marshall, the Lord Marshall is a cagey observer (Sense Motive +14). If the Lord Marshall sees through the deception he give them one chance to remedy the situation before ordering the guards to attack.

| VALERAN GUARDSMEN (5)                                                              | CR 3        |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------|
| <b>XP</b> 800                                                                      |             |
| Human warrior 5                                                                    |             |
| N Medium humanoid                                                                  |             |
| Init +0; Senses Perception +4                                                      |             |
| DEFENSE                                                                            |             |
| ${ m AC}$ 19, touch 10, flat-footed 19 (+9 armor)                                  |             |
| hp 37 (5d10+10)                                                                    |             |
| Fort +5, Ref +1, Will +0                                                           |             |
| OFFENSE                                                                            |             |
| Speed 20 ft.                                                                       |             |
| Melee mwk guisarme +9 (2d4+4/×3) or spik<br>+8 (1d4+3) or sap +8 (1d6+3 nonlethal) | ed gauntlet |
| Space 5 ft.; Reach 5 ft. (10 ft. with guisarme                                     | )           |
| STATISTICS                                                                         |             |
| Str 16, Dex 11, Con 12, Int 8, Wis 9, Cha 10                                       |             |
| Base Atk +5; CMB +8 (+10 bull rush); CMD                                           | 18 (20 vs.  |
| bull rush)                                                                         |             |
| Feats Alertness, Improved Bull Rush, Intimic                                       | dating      |
| Prowess, Power Attack                                                              |             |

# BORRED PALACE

| Skills Intimidate +10, Perception +4, Sense Motive +4                                                    |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Languages Common                                                                                         |
| Combat Gear tanglefoot bags (2); Other Gear +1 half-                                                     |
| plate, masterwork guisarme, sap, spiked gauntlet                                                         |
| VALERAN CAPTAIN CR 5                                                                                     |
| XP 1,600                                                                                                 |
| Human evoker 6                                                                                           |
| N Medium humanoid                                                                                        |
| Init +6; Senses Perception +6                                                                            |
| DEFENSE                                                                                                  |
| AC 16, touch 12, flat-footed 14 (+4 mage armor, +2 Dex)                                                  |
| hp 33 (6d6+12)                                                                                           |
| Fort +3, Ref +4, Will +5                                                                                 |
| OFFENSE                                                                                                  |
| Speed 30 ft.                                                                                             |
| Melee dagger +2 (1d4–1/19–20) or                                                                         |
| wand of shocking grasp +2 touch (1d6 electricity)                                                        |
| Ranged dagger $+5$ (1d4 $-1/19-20$ )                                                                     |
| Special Attacks intense spells +3                                                                        |
| Arcane School Spell-Like Abilities (CL 6th;                                                              |
| concentration +9)                                                                                        |
| 6/day—force missile (1d4+3)                                                                              |
| Wizard Spells Prepared (CL 6th; concentration +9)                                                        |
| 3rd—dispel magic, fly, haste, fireball (2) (DC 17)                                                       |
| 2nd—flaming sphere (DC 16), glitterdust (DC 15),                                                         |
| mirror                                                                                                   |
| image, protection from arrows, scorching ray (DC 16)                                                     |
| 1st—burning hands (DC 15), color spray (DC 14),                                                          |
| expeditious                                                                                              |
| retreat, mage armor, shocking grasp                                                                      |
| 0 (at will)—dancing lights, detect magic, light,                                                         |
| message                                                                                                  |
| Prohibited Schools enchantment, necromancy                                                               |
| STATISTICS                                                                                               |
| Str 9, Dex 14, Con 12, Int 17, Wis 10, Cha 13                                                            |
| Base Atk +3; CMB +2; CMD 17                                                                              |
| <b>Feats</b> Combat Casting, Craft Wand, Defensive Combat                                                |
| Training, Improved Initiative, Scribe Scroll, Spell                                                      |
| Focus (evocation)                                                                                        |
| Skills Craft (Armor) +10, Craft (Weapons) +10, Fly +11,                                                  |
| Knowledge (arcana) +12, Knowledge (engineering) +7,                                                      |
| Knowledge (arcana) +12, Knowledge (engineering) +7,<br>Knowledge (geography) +7, Knowledge (history) +7, |
| Perception +6, Ride +6, Spellcraft +12                                                                   |
| Languages Common, Draconic, Elven, Giant                                                                 |
| SQ arcane bond (wand)                                                                                    |
| <b>Combat</b> Gear scrolls of fly (2), invisibility (2), minor                                           |

image (2), wand of magic missile (CL 5, 50 charges, arcane bond item), wand of shocking grasp (50 charges), tanglefoot bags (3);

**Development**: If the characters fight and defeat the Lord Marshall's soldiers they may escape, however, they will quickly find that they are now wanted men. They have earned the enmity of the Lord Marshall and he will have them arrested on sight in Valera. MIKE FRANKE BOORDERSERVERSERVERSERVERSERVERSERVERSERVERSERVERSERVERSERVERSERVERSERVERSERVERSERVERSERVERSERVERSE

# CONCLUDING THE ADVENTURE

What begins as a straightforward delve into the ruins under Valera with the sponsorship of the Lord Marshall has the possibility of throwing the characters into the middle of a political firestorm. Information from the Buried Palace can identify the Lord Marshall as the mysteriously-missing, former Emperor Arcosti I. This information, combined with the obvious power of the Scepter of Valera, may convince some characters to renege on their deal with the Lord Marshall. If the characters return the Scepter of Valera to the Lord Marshall they will be handsomely paid and earn his gratitude while at the same time moving him one step closer to his ultimate goal of re-taking power in Valera. If the characters choose to oppose the Lord Marshall, they become wanted fugitives in Valera and earn the enmity of a man who may someday be emperor.

# WANDERING MONSTERS

The Buried Palace is just a small part of a massive underground world of catacombs, ruins, and natural caverns buried beneath the current city of Valera. These rooms and passages connect the surface with the world beneath the surface and as such sometimes become the home of strange creatures from the depths.

Monsters are encountered at the GM's discretion whenever the party is spending too much time in an area (resting, etc.) or making a large amount of noise such as extended fighting, digging, triggering collapses, or using loud evocation magic. Every time the party does one of the above there is a 25% chance of a random encounter.

### WANDERING MONSTERS

- 1. Xorn (CR 6, Pathfinder Bestiary)
- 2. Army ant swarm (CR 5, Pathfinder Bestiary)
- 3. 3d4 stirges (CR ½ Pathfinder Bestiary)
- 4. Gray Ooze (CR 4 Pathfinder Bestiary)
- 5. 1d4 giant ants (CR 2, Pathfinder Bestiary)
- 6. Slithering Tracker (CR 4, Pathfinder Bestiary II)
- 7. 3d4 ghouls (CR 1, Pathfinder Bestiary)
- 8. Mohrg (CR 8, Pathfinder Bestiary)

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