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# WRATH OF THE SEA GOD KHULK-XU



Wrath of the Sea God Khulk-Xu is an adventure locale designed to be dropped into a campaign setting. This is not so much a dungeon as a location. In brief this is a bath house frequented by extra dimensional beings and as such can be a very dangerous place to be. The bath house has not been balanced in any way and is not necessarily suitable for one character level or another. The studious GM should use the map, descriptions and some of the stats as a jumping off point and alter the challenge and the purpose of the adventure to suit their campaign.

All text in *italics* can be read straight to the players. I have not included descriptions of the position of corridors etc as these can be described from the map by the GM without my input. I do give a back ground but this is entirely optional but worked well in my campaign.

All stats for monsters are given in the form used by Astonishing Swordsmen & Sorcery of Hyperborea from North Wind Games. It is a simple matter to convert these numbers to any old school (or even new school really) system of choice.

Finally this adventure was written for a sword and sorcery adventure, but it could easily be ran in a early part of the last century setting in the style of The Moon Pool by Abraham Merritt.

## Background

*The culture of the Ancient Atlanteans, now lost to the dull memory of the earth and waters, must surely have been an exuberant one, for what few ruins and strange relics remain speak of a socialite pleasure now lost to mere mortals. Thus often do the magi on the steps of the forum intellectualise each other. Not far to the north on the Sloj'h islet chain, hidden betwixt the dense foliage of those shores are some remains of that once proud culture.*

*"It was a bath house, or at least that is what I speculate having read the texts of Ariston." The Mage Tygrippa tells you. He sits, worn of limb, long of beard, and keen of eye in his rich wood chair looking out over the hazy sea. "I would pay each of you 5gp on departure and a further 5 more on your return if you would investigate and map the site in detail. Furthermore I will pay handsomely for any artifacts of the site you are able to bring back. In particular I am interested in a stone tablet marked with stars. What say you?" said Tygrippa. He sits back reclining in his chair awaiting your response.*

If the party agrees, he will hand one of them a small dark fragment of stone with silvery enamel script upon it. "This is but a fragment of the tablet I seek," he says.

If questioned further on;

**Payment for items;** Tygrippa will inform the players that it depends on the condition of the items

**Dangers;** he notes that pirates do prowl the seas and poisoned snakes lie beneath many an old stone. He sees no specific threats to the party though.

**Transport;** they are told that the coaster (a small sail ship) has a crew of 10 that will deliver them to the islet and pick them up 3 days later. Their food and board will be supplied as part of the venture.

**Tygrippa; level 5 Magic User (not many spells)**

Eloquent of speech, learned, Old.

Motivations; desire for knowledge

Weakness; competition with his rivals

**GM background;** There is indeed an ancient bath house on this indelible islet, but whilst the empire that built it may have long been swept beneath the waters it is far from abandoned. It is the folly of man to think that he can gain great knowledge through his wisdom alone. The Atlanteans knew this and sought many of the darker paths. The bath house was built for the use

of the god Apollos, but their studies of the stars and dark arts, brought forth the wrath of the sea god Khulk-Xu.

### **The adventure;**

#### **On the Sea**

The party have two days in which to prepare for departure, however they will not be paid until they are on board the Coaster Sterlios and have put to sea.

They will be at sea for 2 days before they reach their destination. There is a 20% chance that they will encounter a pirate carrack in this time. Should such an encounter happen use the rules for water borne combat for your system of choice. The pirate ship should have a crew of level 0 or 1 characters to the number  $5+2d6$  and a ship fitting such a crew. They will be lightly armoured with hand weapons and javelins.

#### **On the Islet;**

*To the north a line of perhaps a dozen small emeralds sit calmly on the benevolent ocean. As you tack nearer they grow to islets of no more than two leagues long and covered with impenetrable greenery.*

*Your small ship hits the golden sand beach as the aged sun waxes late in the sky. Vericia the ship's captain has her crew unload the expeditions supplies and then promptly puts back to sea before the sun has completed its departure.*

The islet is no more than half a mile long and a quarter wide. It is ringed by a band of yellow sand and a thick leafy vegetation covers much of it. The only location of interest is a bath house complex that lies in the centre of the island.



The following wandering creatures table details the wildlife of the island;

1	Aqualine Turtles; D10	These turtles lay eggs on the beach and have a sharp bite.	AI N, SZ, S, Mv 10(Sw 40), DX 6, AC 7, HP1, Att 1, Dmg, 1d3, Sv 16, Mrl 4
2	Legion Crabs; 2D8	Territorial blue crustaceans object to your camp	AI N, SZ, S, Mv 15, DX 4, AC 8, HP1, Att 1, Dmg, 1d3, Sv 17, Mrl 7
3	Noon Snakes; D4	Named for the sun bathing late in the day, annoyed if provoked these green 3ft serpents have a poisonous bite.	AI N, SZ, S, Mv 20, DX 6, AC 7, HD1, Att 1, Dmg, 1d4, Sv 17, Mrl 8
4	Marmots; D6	Live amongst the scrub in family groups, these brown rodents	AI N, SZ, S, Mv 30, DX 9, AC 9, HP1, Att 1, Dmg, 1d3, Sv 18, Mrl 3
5	Western Tums; D8	White sea birds that scavenge the beach	AI N, SZ, S, Mv 15(fly 50), DX 12, AC 8, HP1, Att 1, Dmg, 1d3, Sv 17, Mrl 2
6	Ochre Jelly Fish; D6	Large reddish mess of tentacles and briny tripe. Imobile on the sands but but poisonous	AI N, SZ, S, Mv 10(Sw 20), DX 4, AC 9, HP1, Att 1, Dmg, 1d3, Sv 18, Mrl 12

Sooner or later the players will hopefully discover the bathhouse near the centre of the island. If the party decides not to immediately investigate the bathhouse but sit tight and observe from a distance or search the surround island they will learn the following;

An overgrown trail with the occasional coal fragments on it leads from the north side of the bathhouse to a beach on the north side of the island. Should the players loiter long enough a small group of Atlantean island tribesmen will land in a weeks time and bring coal from their rafts down this trail. If questioned they will be ignorant of any serious information about the bath house simply stating that they perform this task as a generation long ritual to their sea god Khalk-Xu.

Watching the bath house itself will reveal occasional glimpses of its occupants. There is a 25% chance every 12 hours that a pair of smilodon men will be seen on the flag stone terrace at 14

on the map below. Every four hours there is a 30% chance that a being from table 1 will cross between rooms 1 and 16.

The following table details the visitors or customers of the bathhouse and should be treated as a random monster table. These beings from worlds and dwellings unknown frequent the bathhouse to partake in its various pleasures. It is advised that you should not roll on the table until the players have entered the bathhouse and began exploring. The element of surprise, or rather shock can make this much more fun.

Table 1

Name (s) / d30 roll	type	Stats	Description
Naa Hosh / 1	Demon	AI C, SZ, L, Mv 30, DX 11, AC 1, HD7, Att 2, Dmg, stab 1d8/ claw 1d6, Sv 12, Mrl 10, XP 1500	A muscular 8ft being of dark purple skin blotched by black veins. His head is of a ravenous lizard. He sports 4 arms, two of which are topped by great bone blades. He will slay all who do not grant him honour.
Kulijn / 2 - 3	Demon	AI C, SZ, L, Mv 30, DX 7, AC 3, HD10, Att 6, Dmg, scratch 1d6 / (20% swallow), Sv 14, Mrl 8, XP 1700  If grabbed a player may be swallowed, save vs avoid	Like a giant silver millipede but with a gaping maw at either end and human like hands for his 100 legs down his 12m length. Kuljin is in fact calm and entirely disinterested in the mortals of this realm, he may by accident eat a passerby however. If attacked, his hunger will become insatiable .
Gerrark The Star Eyed/ 4-5	Demon	AI C, SZ, M, Mv 30, DX 8, AC 0, HD5, Att 2, Dmg, tendil lash 1d6/ star ray beam 2d6 , Sv 13, Mrl 8, XP 1500	Appears as a cloud of fine tendrils of countless colours. From within the tendrils jewel like eyes are often seen. It will seek to ensnare and consume the minds of all whom ponder the stars.

The Masses / 6	Demon	AI C, SZ, L, Mv 30, DX 6, AC 3, HD9, Att 3, Dmg, bite 1d8 , Sv 14, Mrl 9, XP 1500	A fleshy mass of mouths and orifices that shuffles along the ground. It will smell and attempt to consume any humanoid that wanders within 3m of it.
The Jasrdei / 7-8	Alien, No. appearing D6	AI N, SZ, M, Mv 30, DX 12, AC 1, HD1+2, Att 1, Dmg, punch 1d4 or magic missile 1d6, Sv 16, Mrl 9, XP 80	the proportions of a rotund man with lilac scaled skin and the many prised eyes of a fly. These beings have no mouth but a neck gill, and three fingered hands. They wear dust brown robes when not in the water and wield black wands in combat.
The Armosh 9-10	Alien, No. appearing D8	AI C, SZ, L, Mv 40, DX 15, AC 4, HD1, Att 2, Dmg, claw 1d6/1d6, Sv 17, Mrl 10, XP 80	These 7ft Praying Manti turn transparent when they touch water, but otherwise shift colours depending on their mood. If they turn red, they are aggravated by inferior life forms.
A Lory Spirit 11-13	Spirit, No. appearing D6	AI L, SZ, M, Mv 30, DX 10, AC 6, HD2, Att 1, Dmg, peck 1d6, Sv 17, Mrl 6, XP 50	Great multi coloured (purples, reds, and blacks) ethereal parrot. These spirits oft sing together and will happily converse with any Pc about the nature of the universe in Celestial language.
Solistice 14-15	Spirit, No. appearing D4	AI N, SZ, M, Mv 30, DX 11, AC 4, HD1, Att 1, Dmg,shriek 1d4, Sv 17, Mrl 5, XP 40  Can cast sleep	A pale gray female form that it is difficult to see in focus with the human eye. These solitary ladies will shriek if disturbed or cast sleep and flee.

Motafa 16-20	Spirit, No. appearing D4	AI N, SZ, M, Mv 30, DX 13, AC 2, HD1, Att 1, Dmg, Choke 1d6, Sv 15, Mrl 7, XP 50	A drifting wisp of white fog that takes human form when settled, or another form as a practical jest. The Motafa can form any shape and appear solid to the eye. When threatened they will either disguise themselves as pillars, or vases, or attempt to engulf their oppressors.
Ancient Atlantean Spirits 21-23	Spirit, No. appearing D6	AI N, SZ, M, Mv 30, DX 11, AC 3, HD1+1, Att 1, Dmg, Punch 1d3, Sv 15, Mrl 9, XP 50	An ethereal visage of a taller build of atlantean man or woman. These beings talk amongst themselves in a strange dialect of Hellenic. They will ignore the players and are immune to non magical attacks.
Destructoid 24-25	Construct	AI N, SZ, M, Mv 40, DX 7, AC -2, HD3, Att 2, Dmg punch 1d6, laser 3d6, Sv 17, Mrl 9, XP 200	this 8ft tall man of iron moves slowly and with mechanical precision. He, she, IT, has the frame of a man, but cruder with armour for skin and a mask of steel for a face.
Giiyratrix 26-30	Construct	AI N, SZ, M, Mv 30, DX 5, AC -2, HD2, Att 4, Dmg backhand slap, 1d6,, Sv 14, Mrl 10, XP 150	A stone golem but only 5ft tall and with 6 arms attached to a weathered statue of a torso, these creatures guard ancient palaces on rain ruined worlds.

\*Note, each named individual (the demons) can only appear once, so reroll duplicates.

I suggest that you roll for each room you would expect to find a guest in after room 2 with a 25% chance of it being occupied. Furthermore the portal in room 14 will bring forth new threats on a regular basis. Read that rooms description.

There are two other wandering monsters in the Bathhouse and the surrounding grounds;

## Smilodon Men

Are the guards of the bathhouse. Each stands as an 8ft tall humanoid clad in bronze scalemail, thick boots and gloves, and a mailed helm that covers the face. From behind the veil of chain two great fangs can be seen. Each Smilodon Man is equipt with a 8ft long glaive. There are a total of 10 of these creatures in and around the bathhouse. At any given time upto 7 can be asleep in the small round cubicles off room 1. At other times they patrol the area. It is not obvious what they eat. When asleep they can oft take D3 turns to wake even in disturbance.

AI C, SZ, M, Mv 40, DX 11, AC 4, HD2, Att 1, Dmg glaive 1d8, Sv 16, Mrl 10, XP 100

Every 5 turns the players are in the bathhouse there is a 30% chance a pair of guards will find them. If the guards are alerted roll for a 30% two more arrive every turn. They are quite militaristic and will normally attack on site.

## Minions

These are small dwarf sized metallic constructs garbed in thick black overalls and leather masks depicting laughing faces. These creatures are of a docile nature and are only found in the coal stores, furnace room, and underground areas. They will react if attacked but will otherwise carry on with their tasks oblivious to what is happening around them. If cut down the innards of these creatures reveal a mesh of fine metal parts, cogs, hinges spokes and rivets. There are 12 of these beings in total.

AI N, SZ s, Mv 20, DX 08, AC 5, HD1, Att 1, Dmg punch 1d4, Sv 17, Mrl 6, XP 30

**The Bathhouse from the outside;** *"The pale yellow stone of a classical bathhouse rises before you. Its brickwork is home to vines and nests in places but is clear and smooth as they day it was laid in others. Dull red tiles cover the roof showing a series of patchwork rooms around a central courtyard. To the north west smoke gently rises from two eroded chimneys, the south is a low circular building, and in the south west a disheveled stone house sits alone."*

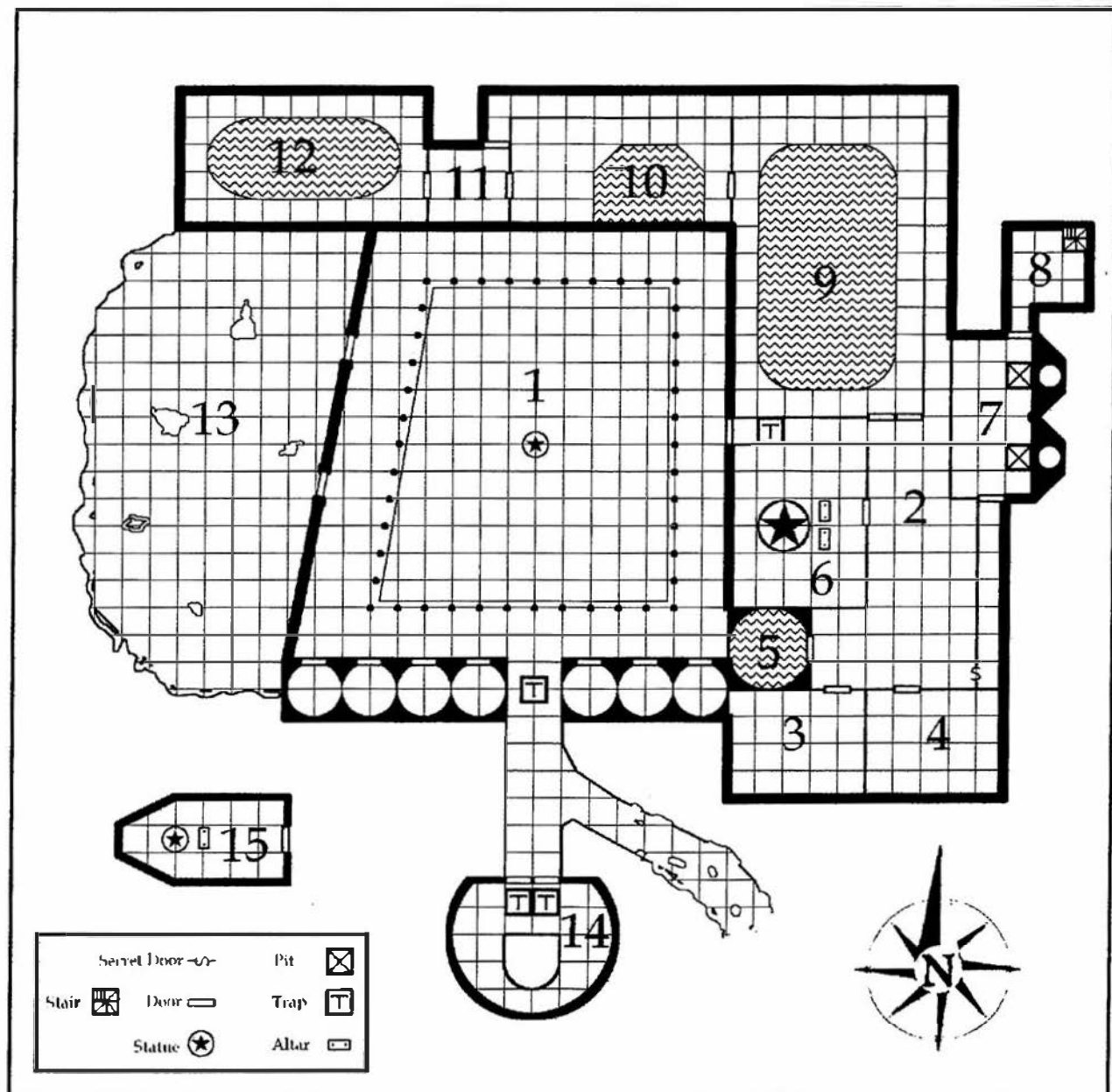
### A general description;

Unless stated otherwise, the walls are always of a pale yellow rock, cut in smooth large blocks, any lights are brass oil lanterns of a simple elegant design, doors are of dark wood, unworn by age, doorways are arched with pillars either side. Geometrical descriptions of rooms are usually not given as you can describe positions of doors etc from looking at the map. All of the ground floor rooms have a lantern attached to a wall unless another light source, or lack thereof is stated.

**Traps;** Traps on the maps are indicated a square with a T in. Each trap in the bathhouse takes the form of a square metal plate some 2 by 2 meters on the floor of varying properties. They can

balance against the wall. A save vs device will oft avoid the worst effects of the trap. Each time a trap is encountered, roll on the following chart;

Table 2	Appearance	Effect	effect if saved
1	Polished copper	Your Strength wanes and you collapse under the weight of your own bulk. Str reduced to 0 and effect as paralysis until you are pulled off the trap	You recover enough strength to pull yourself off after 2 turns
2	As a smooth area on the stone floor	Excessive heat pours through the victim and in particular the metal objects they possess. D6 damage inflicted	D3 damage
3	Corroded Steel	A strong magnet pulls at all the iron on you. Heavily armoured characters are paralyzed bar a feat of strength. Metal objects can be discarded	Any metal objects in hand are dropped but the individual gets off the trap.
4	Black bronze	Your head pounds and an acidic taste chums in your throat, you vomit losing D6 hp. If food and drink is not taken within the next 2 rounds you will lose strength.	your stomach chums and you expel your last meal.
5	A mirror	The players eyes are drawn down and they see themselves transforming, their skin shades to a glaucous colour and their eyes either pale to grey or yellow. You have become an Atlantean.	Your eye colour has changed to yellow or gray (roll).
6	Liquid mercury	contact with the skin brings on mercury poisoning as described in room 5.	you feel nauseous but escape



A skilled climber might cross the roof and scramble over the loose tiles. Such a player might find part of the roof gives way beneath them at a 20% chance per 5m scrambled.

The Rooms of the ground floor;

### 1. The Palaestra

*Smooth flag stones walk the perimeter of a wide courtyard ringed with pillars. In the courtyard, which is neither quite rectangle, nor trapezoid, is a statue of a muscled man holding aloft a*

*child, around his feet, and across the whole open space is a fine grey ash, that smells faintly of burnt flesh.*

Should the players inspect the statue more closely they will see that whilst the man is idealised perfection, the babe is much deformed with hands where there should be feet and pot belly and a disfigured near alien face. Any player with weak wisdom might throw up should a die roll permit it.

There are seven doors along the south wall of the palaestra. Each of these leads to a small round cubicle with a feathered floor. There is a 50% chance that any given cubicle is occupied by a sleeping Smitodon man. Should there be a disturbance these guards will begin to awaken and respond to the incursion.

## **2. Entrance foyer**

*A corridor opens out into a well lit room, through framed gaps in the roof above. Benches of worn white stone line the walls and sit in rows across the floor, clearly this was a waiting room.*

A secret door exists on the east wall at the south corner. This door can be found by any player examining the stone work in this area. They will notice that two blocks sit perfectly atop one another revealing a door some 4ft high that leads to a corridor heading to room 7.

## **3. Sulphur room**

*Four little holes puncture each of the dirty beige tiles on the floor, upward from each drifts a pale brown gas that exudes a strong rotten smell. The heat in the room is intense and the far walls are barely visible through the haze.*

Any player that enters the room must hold his or her breath or suffocate. A save vs poison should be made every turn in the room. Sulphur when in gaseous or powdered form can be highly explosive if lighted and will be here.

## **4. The Massage room**

*In the centre of this blue tiled room is a stone bench. Behind it sits what appears to be a masseuse.*

The Masseuse; AI C, SZ, L, Mv 40, DX 14, AC 4, HD5, Att 2, Dmg; claw 1d4, bite 1d6, Sv 15, Mrd 10, XP 500

*The Masseuse is a 10ft long Naga with the head of a wizened old man and four arms each sporting a 6 fingered webbed hand.*

The Naga will go for the characters throats with its hands and attempt to batter them with its tail. Should the players search the room, they will find a small box with 5d10 gold pieces and a ruby worth 185gp behind the massage bench.

## **5. The Mercury Pool**

*From the door the steps of this room descend into a shimmering pool of still liquid metal. The circular walls of the room are mirrored reflecting odd the pool out infinitely by also odd abrasions of the party across their curved surfaces.*

(consider having one of the monsters in table 1 rise from the pool).

Contact with the mercury requires an immediate -2 save vs poison, if ingested a -4 save is required.

Mercury is a potent neurotoxin which over the course of a few days will cause degradation of muscles, blotching of the skin, loss of hair, increased salivation and sensitivity to light. The afflicted loses -1 str per day until dead. No non magical cures exist.

## **6. The shrine of Khaik-Xu**

*The floor and walls of this room are a dark grey stone covered with bubbles as if the stone were set in an instant from a boiling liquid form. In the centre of the room is a dais with a statue atop it. The statue is of a siamese conjoined Cuttlefish with their tentacles wrapped around the dais and their heads pointed upwards releasing a bubbling flow of orange water which overflows down the statue and into a drain around the base of the dais. Each of the cuttlefish eyes gleams in the flickering oil lanterns (if inspected by a thief, they are sapphires worth 125gp each).*

Removing the sapphires will invoke the wrath of Khaik-Xu. In my campaign this started a countdown to the arrival of a tsunami (D10+2 turns). Your game might prefer a less devastating consequence.

## **7. Furnaces**

*Thick smoke belches up from two open square pits, the stone work is a grubby burnt black in many places and three squat little creatures in black smocks shovel coal.*

Each of the pits contains a blazing furnace, mortals should not survive entry.

D6 minions will be shoveling coal in this room. These creatures are uninterested in any being that doesn't attempt to disrupt them.

## **8. Coal store and down stair**

*A square room with a low ceiling, and no light sources, the dark floor is littered with coal.*

If the the north wall is searched a metal hatch can be found that if rotated allows coal to be dropped in from outside. Some light will leak through the rusted fittings.

A stairway curving down is located in the northeast corner of the room but is not easily visible behind the piles of coal.

## **9. Main pool**

*The centre of this room is filled with a pool nay a meter or so deep, a dozen long and a handful wide, filled with gently rippling water. The base of the pool is a mosaic in blues and blacks depicting a great battle between a galleon fleet and a titanic man wading through the briny depths, hewing ships in his path.*

If the players enter the water they will find that their skin glows ever so slightly when they re-emerge. They will be cured of and now immune to any skin based diseases or afflictions they had.

If the players examine the mosaic closely they might learn that this battle took place near the Filiot Isles if they can decipher Atlantean script.

## **10. Hot pool**

*Steps descend from north to south in this steaming pool of bubbling water. Amongst the bubbles the faint glint of gold can occasionally be seen beneath the waters.*

The pool is boiling hot, any player that enters must make a save each round or be scolded for D3 health. Searching the floor of the pool will turn up 4D6 gold and a brass ring inset with an agate eye. The ring of dusk allows its wearer to see in ultraviolet and low light conditions, but whilst worn makes sleep difficult, causing the wearer to wake every D3 hours.

## **11. The lounge**

*This small square room has padded reclining couches around its walls all in a state as if they had never been used nor seen the worm or rot. In the centre on a small stand sits a rosewood harp with silver fittings and horsehair strings.*

The Harp of Forbidden Knowledge. This harp is described in the AS&SH referees manual as a Lute. In brief if played by a non Bard character they could be afflicted with madness. The hands of a Bard however it can be used to cast a number of spells including divination and contact otherworldly being. A low level Bard would take time to play it, and learn of its properties.

## **12. Marine blue pool**

*This oval pool appears to be no more than a meter deep, but the flat plain bottom is indistinct almost out of focus beneath the water.*

Should a player enter the pool and touch the bottom they will become disorientated and begin to fall through the bottom of the pool. As they sink their centre of gravity will rotate and they will find themselves rising through this permeable membrane and into the temple of a god that dwelleth deep in Underborea. (this is really another entrance to the next area of my campaign and should be considered optional in your game).

## **13. The shattered terrace**

*Vines and thistles break up the loose flagstones of this once grand terrace. A shattered sun dial lies in a pile of rubble near the centre of area.*

On closer examination it will be noted by the players that the sundial, although tilted and at the wrong angle to the sun still drops a shadow at the correct time.

If the players can break the bronze top of the sundial off from the stone fragments its attached too it weighs 2kg (it will weigh 15 with the stone still attached). This sundial is detailed in ancient Atlantean script and always casts a shadow at the correct time regardless of the light source and is worth 420gp.

## **14. The portal room**

*The gates to this room are polished bronze and inset with vertical bars, The over semi circular building itself is of a different darker brown stone and construction to the other buildings. Inside is a semi circular pool of liquid metal of some unknown form. Blue and green colours flitter across its surface. Curved around the walls is a mural in two tone pastel paint, black on yellow, of a many tentacled sea creature rising out of a great wave the size of a mountain and*

*swallowing many island cities. A lone archer with his feet on the clouds flees the on coming maelstrom.*

A player with knowledge of history, or a worshiper of either Khalk-Xu or Apollos might recognise elements of this mural. It depicts Khalk-Xu's triumph over many of the Islands of the Ancient Atlantean nation. The lone Archer fleeing is Apollos.

The portal itself will burn any mortals who touch it. A knockspell however will cool its surface and allow players to enter for a period of one turn. Where they end up on the other side of the portal, well your guess is as good as mine.

Roll on table 1 once the players have been in this room 2 or more turns and then roll again on the roll of a 10% for each consecutive turn.

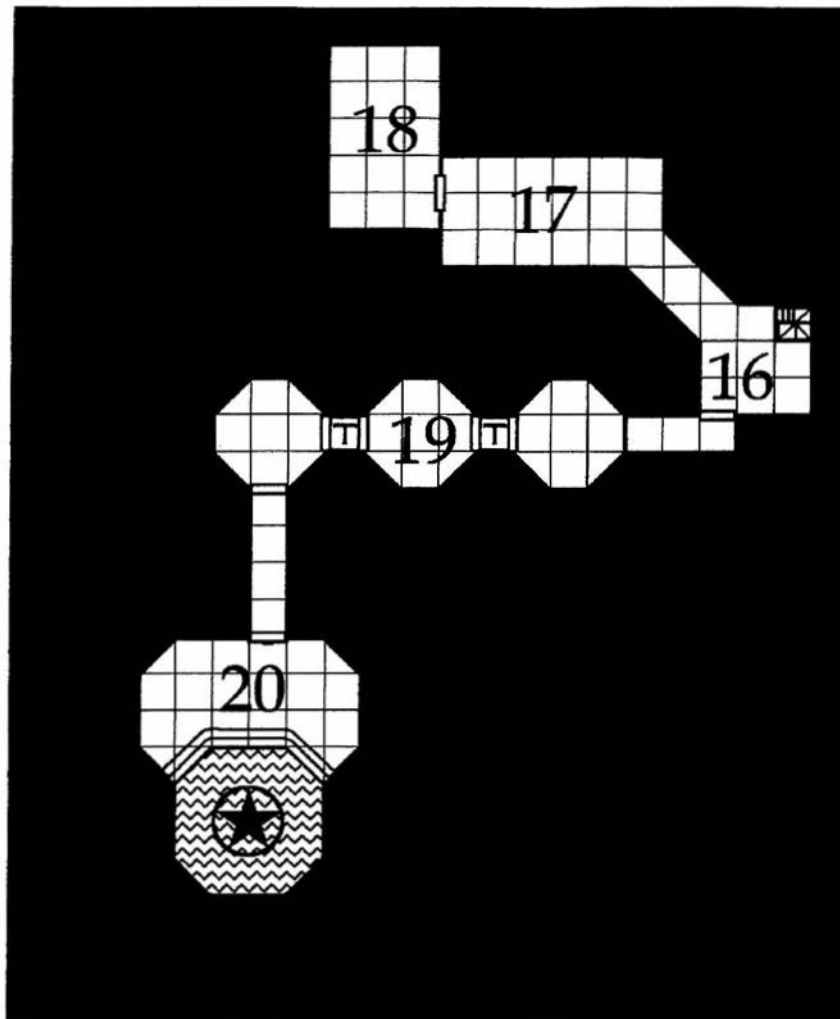
### **15. Shrine of the Water Nymph**

*The floor and walls of this small elongated stone building are a patchwork of multi coloured, browns, indigo, blues, greens and pale yellow, tiles now faded with age. A score of cracks and small holes in the arched brick ceiling cast shafts of dull light upon the room. A rusted empty candle holder hangs listlessly. From far wall water splashes from the gaping mouth of a stone elderly female statue, running down its body and seeping into cracks on the floor. The expression on the statue is one of a rancid grin. Before the statue sits an eroded limestone altar with four discoloured copper pieces sitting on it.*

Should a player put a copper coin on the altar the statue will turn toward them and spit a soaking jet of water healing D6 wounds. Should they take a coin it will not be water spat, but acid.

## **THE UNDERGROUND.**

Unless otherwise stated this area is devoid of light, else the general descriptions of the bath house above apply here.



**16. The Basement** - through rooms 18- 16 there is a 80% chance of encountering D6 Minions.

*The stairs descend into a dim square flag stoned room. Faint light eschews from a passage heading to the north west. Fragments of coal lie about the floor  
In all other respects this is an empty room.*

#### **17. The workshop of the minions**

*This room is lined by two long benches against the north and south wall respectively. These benches are beset with machinery and mechanisms of strange function. Cogs, crude metallic arms, spindles supporting a web of wire threads and numerous small cutting implements clutter the room. Beneath the benches are many boxes fine black metallic parts, small hinges the size of a finger, cogs, latches, rivets and other forms.*

A closer inspection of the apparatus in the room will reveal little to persons whose intelligence is less than extraordinary for it is beyond the ken of primitive man. Some deduction might however suggest that these machines are used to build and maintain the minions.

If the boxes beneath the shelves are searched a metallic blue bladed short sword can be found. This sword is in fact a mechanical knife inset with diamonds for rending metals. Its hilt is of dull black metal shaped in harsh right angles, and its blade is sharp on one side and has an angled tip. It deals +2 damage to metallic enemies and has a +1 to hit against such foes. A good outfitter might pay 500gp for such a prize.

## **18. The Store of Stones**

*This room is awash with many coloured stones of various cuts and qualities. Three small wooden boxes sit next to the door part full.*

Each turn the players search amongst the stones they will find D4 coloured Zircons worth 20gp each. After 10 turns only valueless stones will remain.

These stones power the Minions and so any remaining minions should be found in this room. Where as the minions are usually fairly docile they will not tolerate pilfering of these stones.

## **19. Sunken chambers**

*This corridor (and its three small chambers) is inundated with briny water to the height of one's knee. The walls are greened with lichen and slippery to touch.*

There is a slow descent as one moves toward room 20. Roll for the two traps as per table 2, but given that there is no light in this area and the presence of the water only a very cautious party would notice their presence before hand.

## **20. - The desecrated statue of Apollos**

*The wetted floor extends toward a set of three steps leading to a small pool with a statue rising from it. The statue, armless and tilted is a chiseled man of marble mid stride. At the base of the statue lies a shattered dark stone tablet (6 pieces, 1kg each) covered with minute atlantean script, sigils, star constellations and signs in silvery enamel. A foul smell of rotten fish permeates the room.*

If the briny pool is inspected it is found to be full of cuttlefish bones.

If the stone tablet is assembled (all 7 pieces) and translated by an intelligent individual with a knowledge of Hellenic language it describes the fall of a star known as icarus into the ocean.

Star charts are given in detail telling its progress across the stars and its fall into the briny depths.

The tablet is worth 2000gp, but only to an educated individual who can properly assess it, and such a person may try to pay the players less. A street vendor or other ignorant would pay closer to 500gp.



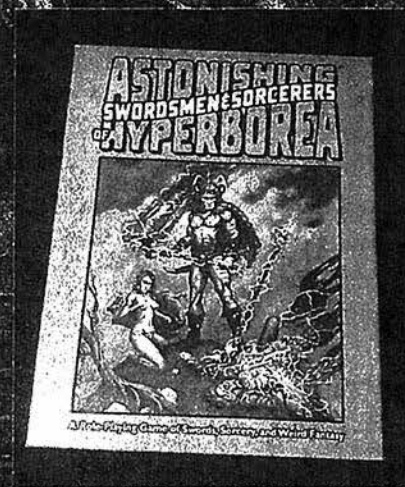
# ASTONISHING SWORDSMEN & SORCERERS OF HYPERBOREA™



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## Scorpioids of Xin

No. Enc.: 1d4 (10d4)      AL: CE  
 Size: L                      MV: 50  
 DEX: 16                     AC: 4  
 HD: 5                        #ATK: 3 (claw/ claw/  
                                  sting or wpn./ wpn./  
                                  sting)  
 DMG: 1d4/ 1d4/ 1d4 or    SV: 14  
 wpn./ wpn./ 1d4  
 ML: 9                        XP: male: 300, low-level  
                                  female: 350, high-level  
                                  female: 475  
 TC: Male: None. Female: N, Q R, and S, T, or X  
 by class. Lair: F, I

The Scorpioids of the Xin Plateau are giant scorpions with humanoid, almost human foreparts. This human torso is mostly covered in hard, black chitin, though obviously mammalian breasts are observable on scorioid females. The mystic and alien scorioid society is matriarchal. Male scorioids are brutish fighters, possibly only semi-intelligent. They fight with claw and stinger or use two weapons without penalty. Typical weapons are scimitars, war picks, and javelins, all made from the scorioid's molted chitin.

Female scorioids wield whips, daggers, falcatas, hooked throwing knives, and bolas as appropriate for their class (see below).

Scorioids are associated with Aurorus. How they serve this chaotic god is unknown, but haunted-looking travelers have told of witnessing their inhuman rites and revels on nights when the auroras light the sky above Xin. Scorioids have been known to tolerate and even train human monks, though it is unknown what makes them do so.

Infant and immature scorioids cling to their mothers' bodies, up to six at a time. Some proportion of scorioid births are aurora scorpions (q.v.). It is possible that these are from the coupling of female scorioids with actual giant scorpions during the nights of the aurora; it is possible they have stranger origins. It would be the unwise adventurer who inquired of the scorioids what the truth might be.

Scorioids have their own language of clicks, keens, and whistles; it is highly likely that many meaning-carrying parts of this language lie outside the realm of human senses. Scorioid females are also likely to speak any of the Hellenic and Thracian dialects of Hyperborea and the Common speech. Their complex mouth parts and the resonant chambers within their chitin do not impart inflection to human words.

Scorioids are native, or at least concentrated only in Xin, where they commune with Aurorus as

strange lights shake the skies. They might be found elsewhere in Hyperborea in subterranean mazes or even in dim Khromarium, seeking after mysteries and other private, alien business. It is even possible they might make use of adventurers to further their plans.

- *The scorioid stinger delivers a powerful venom akin to that of the giant scorpion: victims must save versus death or paralysis sets in in one round followed by death 2d4 rounds later. Females scorioids can intentionally lessen the concentration of this venom; in this case, a failed save results in deathlike catalepsy for 2d6 turns.*
- *If a scorioid hits with both claws, its stinger attack is made at +2 on the "to-hit" roll.*
- *Scorioids are immune to the fear effect and killing wail of banshees; scorioid lairs are often found near the haunted zones of a banshee.*
- *As giant scorpions, when sorcerous ultraviolet vision is in effect, scorioids take on a violet glow, and all attacks against them are then at +1 "to hit."*
- *Almost all female scorioids assume a class: (1d10) 1-4: illusionist, 5-8: witch, 9-10: monk. Roll 2d6+6 if needed for relevant ability scores, but note Dexterity above. Sorcerous scorioids do not use spell books. Instead, their known spells are etched upon their chitin with acidic venom, and they "read" these incantations by passing their claws over the raised eldritch signs.*
- *The whips and bolas of female scorioids are made of the articulated stingers of males killed in various rituals. They are coated in a weak poison. Anyone struck by one of these weapons must make a saving throw versus death or be dazed and confused for 2d4 rounds, unable to do anything but defend (and making all further saving throws at -2 for the duration).*

# BEYOND THE ICE FALL

Writing, illustrations & cartography by  
Joseph D. Salvador

In the village of Askibakken, the winter has been harsh and wolves have crept into the village stockades to take livestock. Now, the heavy snowfall has cleared and the fine days of spring lie ahead. The village chieftain has called upon young hunters to end the depredations of the wolves, but this endeavor leads the huntsmen into a mysterious adventure.

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This adventure is for a party of 3-6 characters of levels 1-3. Though the game mechanics are derived from *Astonishing Swordsmen and Sorcerers of Hyperborea™*, the tale takes place in the *Sagas of Aber-sol Campaign Setting®*, of my own design. It is easily adapted to any setting which includes tribesmen, clansmen, barbarians or other viking-like humans. As provided, the adventure assumes characters are residents of the village, though this is not a necessity of the tale and is easily changed to suite the referee's needs.

## CHARACTER INVOLVEMENT

The introduction above offers one scenario that the referee may use to involve the party in this adventure - they are sent out to hunt wolves and stumble upon the wrecked ship and a weird adventure. In essence this is a location-based adventure and can be started in any manner that suits the referee's purposes. Some possibilities include:

- The party is sent to find the missing ship which was expected in Maljenfjord before the snow storm.
- The party is on the ship, lost in the storm, when they hear the Frost Maiden's song.
- The Frost Maiden has been terrorizing the local villages and preying on ships. The party has answered a summons to seek out her lair and destroy her.

## THE VILLAGE OF ASKIBAKKEN

This village of less than one hundred souls rests atop a hill and consists of a number of family houses and barns surrounding a large central hall, the abode of Chief Geirmund Hawk-Beak. The village grounds are cleared for crops and pasture, but the surrounding region is thick boreal forest and peat bogs. The people keep sheep and goats, but only a handful of horses and cattle, and take salmon from a small lake nearby. Central to the religious life of the villagers, as well as the people of the surrounding area, are three massive and ancient ash trees believed to be sacred to the gods. Growing at the center of the village, the trees form a rough triangle around a single carved-stone idol, representing the god Frey.

A second village, Maljenfjord, is a few miles away on the coast of the fjord and houses a small population of fishermen and sailors loyal to Geirmund, as well as his single small longship, beached for the winter.

## BACKGROUND FOR THE REFEREE

Before the snow storm began, the people of Maljenfjord were expecting the arrival of a trade ship from Fyrkat, bringing foodstuffs and supplies. That small ship was captained by Hallstan the Wayfarer, a well known visitor to the town. The ship never arrived. In fact, the ship was lost for more than a day in the storm when the sailors heard the song of the Frost Maiden. Entranced, Hallstan and his men sailed their ship directly onto the rocky coast of the fjord several miles north of Maljenfjord, tearing a gaping hole into the side of the knarr. Most hands drowned long before the wreck, having leapt overboard in their eagerness to reach the maiden. Only Hallstan and two other men survived and followed the maiden's song into the wilderness and to her abode. They have been turned into her *Frost Thralls*.

The *Frost Maiden*, Hvitviss by name, is a unique otherworldly creature, cousin to dryads and sirens, with magical abilities and a love of charismatic and comely mortals. She uses her powers to woo men to her lair, turning those

who displease her into frost thralls, while charming any who are especially handsome and appealing. She keeps these unfortunates for her pleasure until she tires of them, at which point they are also turned into her slaves. Over the centuries she has amassed a small fortune in her lair.

#### NOTABLE NPCs

##### Chief Geirmund Hawk-Beak

Chief of the immediate lands around Askibakken and Maljenfjord, Geirmund is an aging Norseman, grizzled but wise, with long gray hair and a rotund physique. His justice is fair but firm. He has ruled here and performed the holy rites at Askibakken for many years, but has no sons to follow him as heirs. Consequently, his two daughters are the focus of many suitors. Geirmund is allied to the powerful Jarl of Fyrkat.

##### Hallstan the Wayfarer

Hallstan is well-known among the people of Maljenfjord and other coastal towns as a jubilant man and fair tradesman. Hallstan is in his early middle age, with a large physique, brown hair and a forked beard. His wealthy abode is in the fortified town of Fyrkat, many miles to the east. He has been wooed by the Frost Maiden and turned into a frost thrall by her kiss, but if he is rescued (see **Frost Maiden** entry), he would reward his rescuers accordingly.



#### BEGINNING THE ADVENTURE

After three days of heavy snow, during which wolves had broken into the village's animal enclosures and taken chickens and sheep, the weather has finally turned better. The winter has been quite hard and food is running low, but the coming spring promises better times. Chief Geirmund has summoned the village warriors to the hall and requests that hunters, trappers and fishermen take to the forests and streams in an effort to resupply the food stores temporarily. He particularly wants the depredations of the wolves to end and promises a handsome reward for any wolf pelts returned to the village.

If the party does not care to take part in this expedition, another option may get them into the adventure. Geirmund wants to send a group to visit Maljenfjord, simply to check in after the storm, assess any damage and perhaps to bring back any of that village's surplus food. From there they may hear that a ship was expected to arrive a few days before, in the middle of the storm, but has not arrived. The fjord is choked with ice and dangerous for boats, if the party investigates they must go afoot.

Assuming the party decides to do some hunting, the referee can adjudicate this in whatever manner he or she chooses, refer to **Map 1: Askibakken Area**. After some wandering, the party of hunters comes upon reasonably fresh wolf tracks and taking up the trail are led towards the sea shore. There, looking out from the tree line, they find a wrecked ship, presumably lost and run aground in the storm. A number of wolves can be seen moving about the beach nearby.



### KEY TO MAP 1: ASKIBAKKEN AREA

**AREA A: Shipwreck.** Lying on its side partially on the rocky beach and partly in the shallows, is a 50-foot knarr with a gaping hole rent into its hull. The single mast is snapped and is keeping the ship propped on its side. Six wolves are feasting on the frozen corpses of several Norse sailors. They will protect their feast if molested and will attack anyone coming within 20 feet of their grizzly prizes, but will not fight to the death.

**Wolf (x6):** AL N; SZ S; MV 60; DX 11; AC 7; HD 2+1 (hp 12, 10, 9, 8, 8, 6); #A 1 (bite); D 1d6; SV 16; ML 7; XP 35.

The shipwreck is strange. A trail of human tracks leads away from the wreck to the north, evidently survivors, but no supplies or valuables seem to have been gathered.

If the ship and corpses are searched, the party will find a **bronze arm-ring** (20 gp), a **silver ring** (40 gp), a **copper torc** (40 gp), a small sack of **hack-silver** (100 gp), 3 short spears, a battle axe, 5 daggers, 2 hand axes, a large shield, an iron helmet, 4 winter blankets, 2 sheep-hide cloaks, a sealed cask of pickled fish, as well as 100-feet of cordage, 2 tarps and other shipboard equipment. All other trade goods are lost.

The tracks leading away from the wreck are not difficult to follow in the snow, and are less than twenty-four hours old. They are the tracks of the only three survivors. A skilled tracker may discern that there are three individuals, moving hurriedly, even carelessly. Their tracks slip regularly and there are places where the men go through difficult terrain when an easier passage is readily available.

**AREA B: ICE FALL.** The trail leads north along the coast before entering the forest, eventually meeting a frozen stream. From there, the tracks follow the creek upstream, gradually leading into the interior uplands. The trail comes to a 90-foot high waterfall (**Area B**), frozen solid in cascades of ice. Only a small amount of water trickles down the falls. The trail leads the party onto the frozen stream and to an icy corridor between the frozen cascades (#1).

### KEY TO MAP 2: ICE CAVES

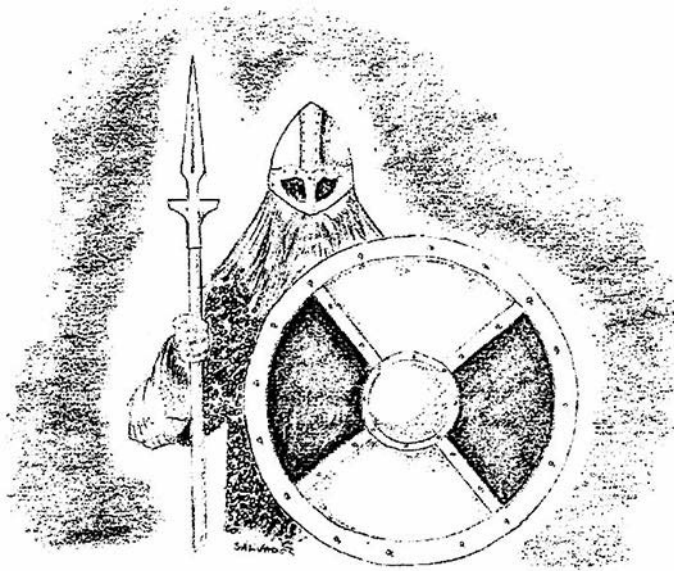
Upon entering the ice cave the party has unwittingly crossed into the Otherworld. The place is accessible only during certain times and if the Frost Maiden is slain it will be closed forever. However, there is no danger that they might be trapped inside, though such could be inserted by the referee. If Hvitviss is slain the walls and floor will slowly start to melt and once the party exits a cave-in will permanently seal the entrance (likewise #2 will be inaccessible).

The temperature in the caves, unless otherwise noted, is a steady 20 degrees Fahrenheit.

**Walls** within the cave system are rock encased in up to 18-inches of ice. Similarly, ceilings are ice-covered rock and often have heavy icicles hanging from them like stalactites. Unless otherwise noted, ceilings are 10-feet high and slightly arched.

**Floors** are covered in thick ice which makes traversing the caves tricky. Running, charging or otherwise moving quickly on the icy floor requires the character to make a *test of dexterity* to remain upright, failure indicating that the character falls and slides 1d6+4 feet in the direction he was moving. This causes the character to lose any actions for the round. Several **slopes** are present in the dungeon and likewise require a *test of dexterity* to navigate at any speed, failure indicating the character falls and slides to the bottom.

**Lighting** within the cave system is provided by a weird luminosity that scintillates throughout the ice and bathes everything in an otherworldly, bluish light.



**#1: ENTRANCE.** The ice of the frozen waterfall reveals several narrow openings. The sailor's tracks lead into these. These pathways twist inward about 20-feet before opening to an ice-cave.

**#1a: HALLWAYS.** The hallways of the dungeon are patrolled by 3 frost thralls. They should be used and encountered in whichever manner the referee chooses.

**Frost Thrall (x3):** AL N; SZ M; MV varies; DX 10; AC by armor; HD 2 (hp 12, 9, 7); #A 1 (weapon); D by weapon; SV 16; ML 10; XP 28. *Special:* Immune to cold and ice; fire vulnerability causes +1 damage per die; can traverse snow and ice without penalty.

- The first is a wood elf, with copper hair, scale armor, longsword, dagger and short bow (HD 2 [7 hp], AC 6, DR 1, MV 30).
- The second is a hulking, brown-bearded, wild-haired Hybernian (analogous to a Germanic barbarian) wearing an antique vest of bronze ring mail, and wielding a rude iron great axe (HD 2 [12 hp], AC 6, DR 1, MV 40).
- The last is a thick-limbed, black-haired, slant-headed Pict, with strange tattoos down both arms. He is armed with a bronze short sword, a bronze dagger, a small shield and wears hide armor (HD 2 [9 hp], AC 6, MV 40). The Pict also wears a twisted copper arm-ring worth 5 gp.

**#2: CLIFFSIDE BALCONY.** Some 70-feet above the valley floor, this natural balcony looks over the area. From here the waterfall and nearby valley are clearly visible, but those below have a difficult time spotting the balcony, due to its natural camouflage (1-in-6 chance or 2-in-6 if actively searching). The Frost Maiden sings her siren-song from this lookout, but she is never present here during daylight hours.

**#3: ANTECHAMBER.** This room is particularly cold, well below freezing temperature. A cave gapes at the top of the north wall and from this descends a frozen cascade of ice, akin to the waterfall. The icy wall can be climbed with pitons and rope or with a successful *climb walls* check. All climb checks suffer a -2 penalty.

One frost thrall can usually be found here. He will investigate any sounds coming from the hallway.

**Frost Thrall (1):** AL N; SZ M; MV varies; DX 10; AC 6; HD 1 (hp 7); #A 1 (weapon); D by weapon; SV 16; ML 10; XP 16. *Special:* Immune to cold and ice; fire vulnerability causes +1 damage per die; can traverse snow and ice without penalty.

- This thrall, a red-haired sailor from the knarr, wears no armor (only heavy wool clothing), but is armed with small shield, battle axe and dagger (HD 1 [7 hp], AC: 8, MV 40).

**#3a: TRAPPED HALL.** Thin ice in this hallway has been formed over a 10-foot deep pit. The ice trap covers a 10-foot square area and has a 3-in-6 chance of collapsing every time a character walks upon it. Roll for each character. Characters caught in the trap can make an *avoidance* save to keep from falling. Those who fall take 2d6 damage when landing upon the icy shards in the pit. The trap can be avoided by walking within a few feet of the north or south walls. It should be noted that characters who fail to traverse the slope immediately north of the trap will slide directly onto it.

**#4: HERO'S HALL.** This long, kidney-shaped cavern has a 15-foot high ceiling covered in icicles. The ice of the south wall is formed into two broad steps upon which sit some 30 ornate vases, urns and the like, all collected by the Frost Maiden. Their bases are secured in the ice of the shelves, resulting in a 2-in-6 chance of breakage if the party attempts to chip them out. Each is finely crafted and worth 1-6 gp.

Two 3-foot high ceramic vases are placed near the north wall and flank the dominant feature of this room - the corpse of a mighty Norseman, encased in ice. The warrior has red hair and beard, finely made clothing and has a handsome nobleness about him. His face is frozen in fury, mouth agape as if uttering a battle cry. His sword arm is upraised and he appears to be swinging the weapon down, frozen mid-action. He bears the sword **Aldenadr** and the winged **falcon helm** is upon his head (see APPENDIX II for descriptions of these magic items). Additionally, he wears a normal chain hauberk and an **elaborate belt** decorated with gold leaves and bronze bears (100 gp). The warrior's clothing includes a red tunic, embroidered at the cuffs, fur boots, woolen pants and a wolf-skin cloak. He is behind 3-feet of ice that would take 4+1d10 turns to chip away. Tampering with the large vases or the Norseman will cause a deadly **snow cobra** to slither from one of the vases and attack.

**Snow Cobra (1):** A 6-foot long, white-furred, hooded snake capable of spitting venom. AL N; SZ S; MV 30; DX 15; AC 7; HD 1 (hp 7); #A 1 (bite); D 1; SV 16; ML 7; XP 43. *Special:* Once per day can spit venom to range of 15 into opponent's eyes; if venom hits, victim must make death (poison) save or be blinded (eyes appear to be covered in frost). Cure blindness restores sight. Great helm blocks venom on 3-in-6 chance. Bite injects venom twice per day; victim must make a death (poison) save or die in 1d6+6 turns, the blood freezing in their veins.

Two frost thralls are always present here and may investigate sounds from nearby areas.

**Frost Thrall (x2):** AL N; SZ M; MV varies; DX 10; AC by armor; HD 1 (hp 8, 7); #A 1 or 2 (weapon); D by weapon; SV 16; ML 10; XP 16. *Special:* Immune to cold and ice; fire vulnerability causes +1 damage per die; can traverse snow and ice without penalty.

- One is a brown-haired Kelt, unarmored and shirtless, who dual-wields a battle axe and a hand axe (two attacks per round -2 "to hit" with battle axe, -3 "to hit" with hand axe) (HD 1 [8 hp], AC 8, MV 40, DX 13).
- The other is a blonde-haired, bearded Norseman from the knarr. He is in his 40s with a graying beard, wears a coat of plates and is armed with a large shield, short spear and battle axe (HD 1 [7 hp], AC 5, DR 1, MV 40).

**#5: DOMED CHAMBER.** This roughly circular chamber has a domed ceiling covered in large icicles. The ice walls are intricately carved with roses and vines. Half-circular pillars of ice are located at intervals around the wall; these reach from floor to ceiling. The icy stalactites of this room have been weakened to fall on those who enter. There is a 1-in-6 chance per person entering the room that the ceiling collapses causing 2d4 damage. A successful *avoidance* save allows for one-half damage. Loud noises in this room increase the chance to 2-in-6 or greater.

**#6: INTERSECTION.** This intersection is dominated by an ice-carved statue of the Frost Maiden. It is harmless. Two

sets of stairs lead away from the intersection; that to the south leads down 10 feet, while that to the north leads down 50 feet to **#8**. Corridors lead away to the east and west.

**#7: SNOW CAVE.** At the center of this room is a spectacular tree of ice, with each leaf intricately crafted from ice. Faintly glowing ice particles drift in the air (they are harmless). The floor is covered in snow drifts of approximately 2-foot depth. This room has the strange effect of increasing the potency of magic, causing all spells cast within to have the maximum effect. A narrow passage, 3-feet wide, leads out of the rear of this chamber.

**#8: THRONE OF THE FROST MAIDEN.** The long stairs descending from **#6** empty into this large cavern. The ceiling is 30-feet high and below is a yawning abyss which drops immeasurable distances into weird currents of swirling color not unlike an aurora. At the center of the cavern, seemingly floating in space is a huge bluish-white iceberg.

Two narrow (5-feet wide), fragile-looking ice bridges connect the iceberg to a narrow walkway that runs along the outside edge of the abyss. Traversing these bridges at speed or in combat requires a *test of dexterity*. Failure indicates that the character has slipped and may fall over the edge (the referee may allow an *avoidance* save to catch the edge). Those slipping over the edge will find themselves falling through misty clouds of strange colors and will disappear below. [These unfortunates are not necessarily slain. At the referee's discretion they may be transported into one of the Nine Worlds, such as Jötunheim, Hel or Niflheim. Alternatively, they may be transported to some other world or to another place on the same plane.]

Sub-zero temperatures persist within this cavern.

The "iceberg" is the throne of **Hvitviss the Frost Maiden** and she lounges there upon an icy divan halfway up the front side. Two frost thralls guard her, one of whom is **Hallstan the Wayfarer**. Both are positioned in front and below her. The iceberg has stairs and pathways leading up, down and around it. In the lower rear portion is a small ice cave in which the maiden keeps her hoard:

- 900 gp
- 2,400 sp
- 3 50-gp gems
- 3 10-gp gems
- 2 gold rings (50 gp each)
- Bronze torc, with dragon faces at the ends (100 gp)
- 2 matching silver bracelets, engraved with knot-work (100 gp each)
- *Clerical scroll* (cure light wounds, delay poison)
- *Potion of giant power*
- *Boreal Boots*

**Frost Maiden (1):** AL N (Evil); SZ M; MV 40; DX 15; AC 6; HD 5 (hp 28); #A 1 (pummel); D 1d4 (+ special); SV 14; ML 10; XP 425. *Special:* See **APPENDIX I**.

**Frost Thrall (x2):** AL N; SZ M; MV varies; DX 10; AC by armor; HD 3 (hp 18, 15); #A 1 (weapon); D by weapon; SV 15; ML 10; XP 47. *Special:* Immune to cold and ice; fire vulnerability causes +1 damage per die; can traverse snow and ice without penalty.

- One is a golden-haired Norse shieldmaiden who wears a finely crafted, but antique, chain hauberk and a bronze helmet. She carries a *small shield* +1, short spear, longsword and a hand axe (HD 3 [18 hp], AC 3, DR 1, MV 30).
- The second guard is **Hallstan the Wayfarer** (see **Notable NPCs**). He wears finely crafted clothing in the current style, as well as studded leather armor and a steel spangenheim. He carries a finely forged great axe (HD 3 [15 hp], AC 6, MV 40).

## APPENDIX I: NEW MONSTERS

### FROST THRALL

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No. Encountered:	3d4
Alignment:	Neutral
Size:	M
Movement:	By armor
Dexterity:	10
Armor Class:	By armor type
Hit Dice:	1-3
No. of Attacks:	1 or 2 (weapon)
Damage:	By weapon
Saving Throw:	16 (1-2 HD)/ 15 (3 HD)
Morale:	10
Experience Points:	16 (1 HD) 28 (2 HD) 47 (3 HD)
Treasure Class:	--

---

**Frost Thralls** are mortal men and women that have suffered the curse of the **Frost Maiden's** kiss. Their skin is a pale blue, the color of sea ice, and their eyes are cloudy gray and dead-looking. The curse is one of undying servitude and it is possible that many frost thralls encountered in a Frost Maiden's lair may be centuries old, as evidenced by their ancient arms and accoutrements. All are entirely under the Frost Maiden's command.

Frost thralls are not dead and may be freed from their curse by slaying the Frost Maiden or by means of natural fire. A frost thrall struck by *normal* fire (such as a torch) makes an immediate *sorcery* save, success indicating that he crumples to the ground with a moan, unconscious, and slowly revives, his skin turning from its pale blue color back to its natural flesh over 2+1d4 rounds. Revived victims retain no memory of their time of servitude, but will recall the beauty of the maiden's icy kiss and bear a permanent mark of frost burn upon their lips.

#### Special:

- Frost Thralls are immune to cold and ice-based attacks.
- Fire Vulnerability, all fire attacks against the frost thrall inflict +1 damage per die. Additionally, fire may free the thrall from its curse, forcing it to make an immediate *sorcery* save as related above.
- Frost Thralls can traverse snow and ice without penalty.
- When slain, or released from their curse, the frost thrall's skin gradually changes from icy blue back to their natural skin color.

### FROST MAIDEN

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No. Encountered:	1
Alignment:	Neutral (Evil)
Size:	M
Movement:	40
Dexterity:	15
Armor Class:	6
Hit Dice:	5
No. of Attacks:	1 (pummel)
Damage:	1d4 (+special)
Saving Throw:	14
Morale:	10
Experience Points:	425
Treasure Class:	D,X

---

The **Frost Maiden** is a magical, supernatural being who resides in the shadowy Otherworld that lies just beyond the pale of mundane existence. It is unknown how many of these creatures exist, it may be that the maiden is unique, but legends suggest that they were sired by Ymir. The Frost Maiden woos mortal men and women to her lair with a haunting and irresistible song, much like a siren. These she curses with thralldom (see **Frost Thrall**), while she keeps those who please her most for her entertainment, at least until such a time that she grows bored with them. Then, they too are transformed into frost thralls.

A Frost Maiden has snowy white skin, almost radiant, and long bluish hair with eyes of a piercing glacial blue. Frost Maidens go about naked or wearing only the thinnest gossamer veil as a dress. Their unnaturally perfect features are a beauty to all who behold them.

**Special:**

- The Frost Maiden is immune to cold and ice-based attacks.
- Fire Vulnerability, all fire attacks against the Frost Maiden inflict +1 damage per die.
- The Frost Maiden can walk atop snow and ice without penalty and without leaving tracks.
- The Frost Maiden employs a siren-like song to charm victims within 90 feet. A *sorcery (mind-influencing)* save is allowed to resist the charm. Failure indicates the victim is affected as per the *charm person* spell and is drawn to the Maiden no matter the difficulty. She will turn unattractive victims of her charm ability into thralls (see below), but will keep comely mortals (Charisma 14 or higher) for her pleasure for a time.
- The Frost Maiden may *choose* to turn a living person into a frost thrall with her kiss. Victims must make a *transformation* save or be altered into a frost thrall with Hit Dice equal the victim's current level (max 3).
- The Frost Maiden's physical attacks are treated as the *chill touch* spell, dealing an additional 1d4 hp of freezing damage. The victim must also make a *sorcery* save or be weakened, suffering a -1 penalty "to hit" and damage for one turn.
- The Frost Maiden has the spell-casting ability of a 3<sup>rd</sup> level witch and has the following spells memorized (1<sup>st</sup>-level: *influence normal fire*, *protection from good*; 2<sup>nd</sup>-level: *cause blindness*)
- The Frost Maiden can employ the following spell-like abilities:
  - *Icicle* – a long icicle hurtles spear-like from the maiden's hand with a range of 60-feet, successful attack roll (+1 "to hit") deals 1d8 damage.
  - *Winter's Breath* – thrice per day, the Frost Maiden may open her mouth and breathe a blast of freezing air and jagged ice particles in a 10' square area dealing 3d6 damage to all in the area; a successful *sorcery* save allows for half damage. Victims slain by this power are frozen in a block of ice.
  - *Ice Form* – once per day, the Frost Maiden has the unique ability to create ice from nothing and shape it anyway she pleases. She can shape 1 square yard of ice per round for up to five rounds. Any created ice must be attached to existing ice or snow (such as any icy floor or wall).

## APPENDIX II: NEW MAGIC ITEMS

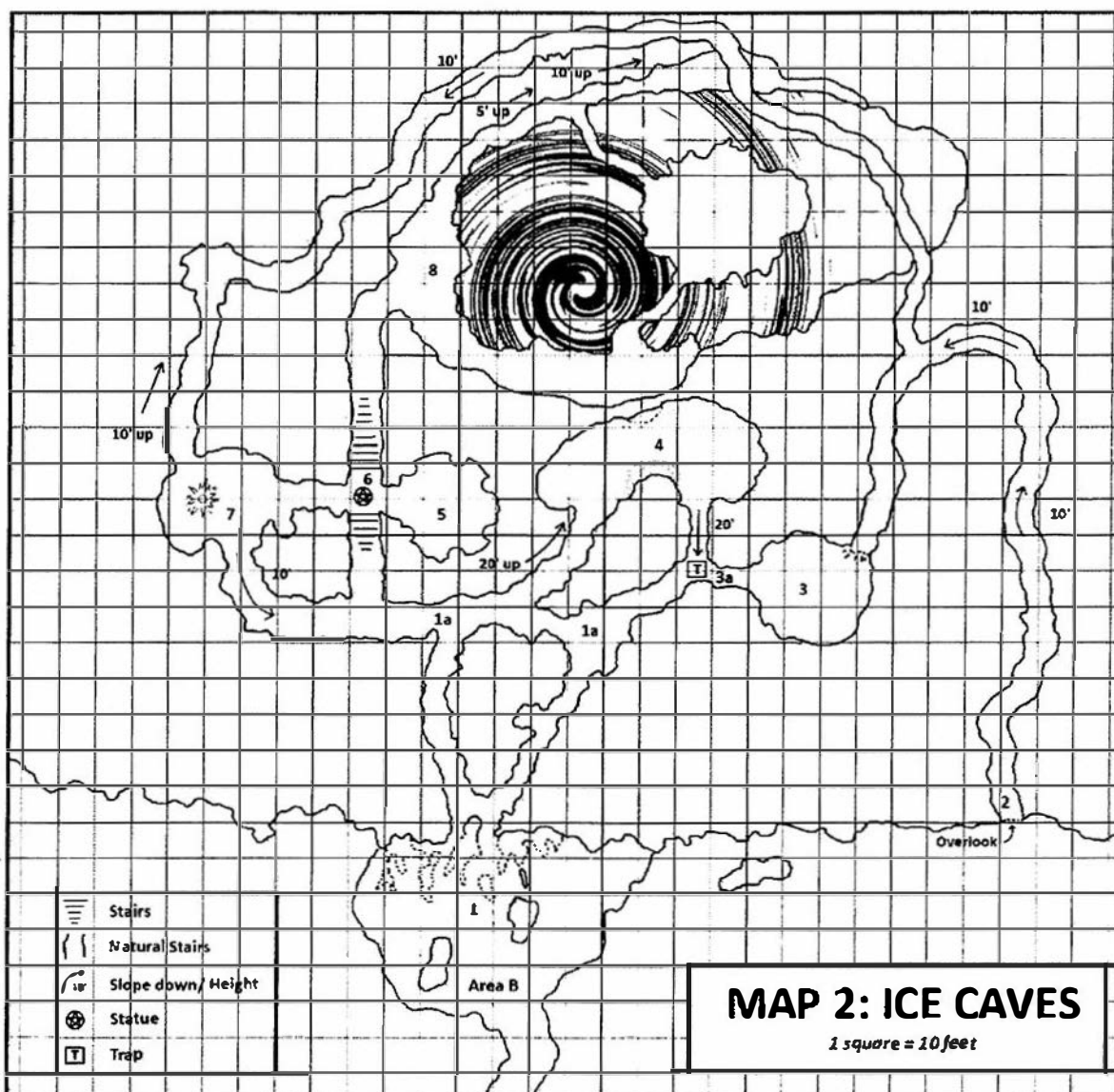
**FALCON HELM:** (1,200 xp, 6,000 gp) This helmet of antique design is an iron spangenhelm with bronze trim and nasal protector. Falcon's wings are attached to the sides of the helm and the nose guard is in the shape of an eagle's face. The wearer of this helmet gains a +1 improvement to AC and can understand the speech of falcons, hawks and eagles, but has no ability to speak to them.

**ALDENADR (Old Snake):** (4,000 xp, 40,000 gp) This ancient magical sword was forged in forgotten ages by the troll, Findel, who lost a bargain with Old Queen Gefjun. It is broad-bladed and has a hilt of silver engraved with intricate knot-work. Unlike most magical swords, Aldenadr, the "Old Snake," operates differently depending on the level of the wielder:

- For fighters and fighter subclasses of levels 1-3 (and for all other classes



- regardless of level) the sword acts as a normal *longsword* +1.
- For fighters and fighter subclasses of levels 4-6, Old Snake is a *longsword* +2, which can (once per day) create the venom of a serpent. The victim of the next successful attack with the sword must make a *death (poison)* save or suffer an additional 1d6 hp damage and 1 hp damage per round for 3d4 rounds. Even if the save is successful, the victim suffers the ongoing damage.
  - In the hands of fighters and fighter subclasses of levels 7-9, the sword becomes a *longsword* +2/+3 *versus giants* and their kin, and retains the venom power.
  - When wielded by fighters and fighter subclasses of 10th level or higher, Aldenadr retains the benefits mentioned above and also severs an extremity on a natural attack roll of 20. However, at this level, the sword also bestows the curse of unluck. All saving throws and ability checks made by the owner of Aldenadr are penalized by 2, even if he is separated from the weapon. Additionally, it is said that the sword will cause strife in the owner's life and lead to his suffering.



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## Two Military Executions By Ambrose Bierce

In the spring of the year 1862 General Buell's big army lay in camp, licking itself into shape for the campaign which resulted in the victory at Shiloh. It was a raw, untrained army, although some of its fractions had seen hard enough service, with a good deal of fighting, in the mountains of Western Virginia, and in Kentucky. The war was young and soldiering a new industry, imperfectly understood by the young American of the period, who found some features of it not altogether to his liking. Chief among these was that essential part of discipline, subordination. To one imbued from infancy with the fascinating fallacy that all men are born equal, unquestioning submission to authority is not easily mastered, and the American volunteer soldier in his "green and salad days" is among the worst known. That is how it happened that one of Buell's men, Private Bennett Story Greene, committed the indiscretion of striking his officer. Later in the war he would not have done that; like Sir Andrew Aguecheek, he would have "seen him damned" first. But time for reformation of his military manners was denied him: he was promptly arrested on complaint of the officer, tried by court-martial and sentenced to be shot.

"You might have thrashed me and let it go at that," said the condemned man to the complaining witness; "that is what you used to do at school, when you were plain Will Dudley and I was as good as you. Nobody saw me strike you; discipline would not have suffered much."

"Ben Greene, I guess you are right about that," said the lieutenant. "Will you forgive me? That is what I came to see you about."

There was no reply, and an officer putting his head in at the door of the guard-tent where the conversation had occurred, explained that the time allowed for the interview had expired. The next morning, when in the presence of the whole brigade Private Greene was shot to death by a squad of his comrades, Lieutenant Dudley turned his back upon the sorry performance and muttered a prayer for mercy, in which himself was included.

A few weeks afterward, as Buell's leading division was being ferried over the Tennessee River to assist in succoring Grant's beaten army, night was coming on, black and stormy. Through the wreck of battle the division moved, inch by inch, in the direction of the enemy, who had withdrawn a little to reform his lines. But for the lightning the darkness was absolute. Never for a moment did it cease, and ever when the thunder did not crack and roar were heard the moans of the wounded among whom the men felt their way with their feet, and upon whom they stumbled in the gloom. The dead were there, too - there were dead a-plenty.

In the first faint gray of the morning, when the swarming advance had paused to resume something of definition as a line of battle, and skirmishers had been thrown forward, word was passed along to call the roll. The first sergeant of Lieutenant Dudley's company stepped to the front and began to name the men in alphabetical order. He had no written roll, but a good memory. The men answered to their names as he ran down the alphabet to G.

"Gorham."

"Here!"

"Grayrock."

"Here!"

The sergeant's good memory was affected by habit.

"Greene."

"Here!"

The response was clear, distinct, unmistakable!

A sudden movement, an agitation of the entire company front, as from an electric shock, attested the startling character of the incident. The sergeant paled and paused. The captain strode quickly to his side and said sharply:

"Call that name again."

Apparently the Society for Psychical Research is not first in the field of curiosity concerning the Unknown.

"Bennett Greene."

"Here!"

All faces turned in the direction of the familiar voice; the two men between whom in the order of stature Greene had commonly stood in line turned and squarely confronted each other.

"Once more," commanded the inexorable investigator, and once more came - a trifle tremulously - the name of the dead man:

"Bennett Story Greene."

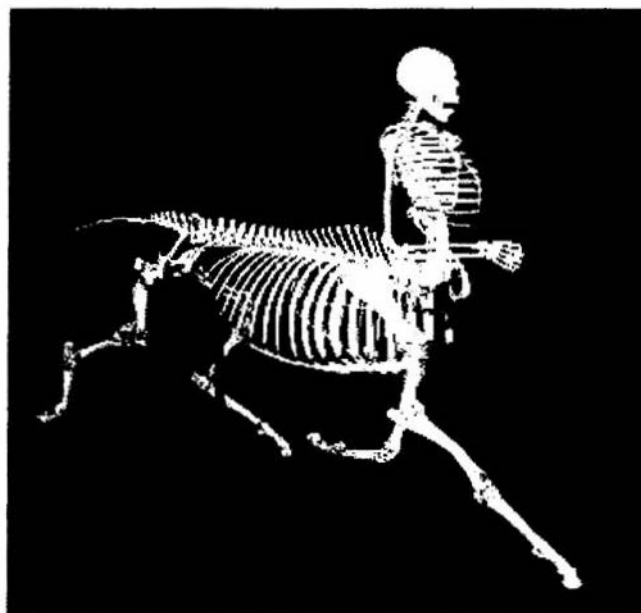
"Here!"

At that instant a single rifle-shot was heard, away to the front, beyond the skirmish-line, followed, almost attended, by the savage hiss of an approaching bullet which passing through the line, struck audibly, punctuating as with a full stop the captain's exclamation, "What the devil does it mean?"

Lieutenant Dudley pushed through the ranks from his place in the rear.

"It means this," he said, throwing open his coat and displaying a visibly broadening stain of crimson on his breast. His knees gave way; he fell awkwardly and lay dead.

A little later the regiment was ordered out of line to relieve the congested front, and through some misplay in the game of battle was not again under fire. Nor did Bennett Greene, expert in military executions, ever again signify his presence at one.



# CELESTIAL PHENOMENA TABLE FOR WEIRD FANTASY WORLDS

By Ben Ball

The sky above a weird fantasy world is rife with such significant celestial phenomena as eclipses, comets, meteors, aurorae, and kindred uncanny omens. Why not use these things to torment your players? Celestial phenomena can either be added to a regular encounter table or rolled separately (probably no more than a 1-in-12 daily chance, because some of these are pretty nasty). When a celestial phenomenon is indicated, roll 3d6 on this table – and hope for the sake of your players that you don't get **Uncanny Vertigo** or **The Stars are Right**.

## CELESTIAL PHENOMENA TABLE (3d6)

**03 – Uncanny Vertigo**

**04 – Weird Vibrations**

**05 – Accursed Moonbeam**

**06 – Shining Mist**

**07 – Star Stone**

**08 – Meteor Shower**

**09 – Stellar Conjunction**

**10 – Aurora**

**11 – Falling Star**

**12 – Lights in the Sky**

**13 – Mocking Star**

**14 – Lunar Eclipse**

**15 – Planetary Alignment**

**16 – Comet**

**17 – Wind from the Gulfs**

**18 – The Stars are Right**

**Accursed Moonbeam:** Night hours only. One randomly-selected PC is lit by a sickly beam of pale moonlight. Even if the PC takes shelter indoors, this insidious ray somehow find its way inside in 1d3 rounds. While lit by the moonbeam, the PC cannot sleep, cannot hide in shadows or move silently, is considered to be two levels lower for purposes of spell effects and turning undead, and can be attacked at +2. The sinister moonbeam fades away in 7 hours or at dawn, whichever comes first.

**Aurora:** Brilliant streamers of red, green, and purple light the sky above for 1d6 hours. There is a 25% chance that the party meets some otherworldly entity (demon or alien) during this period.

**Comet:** A dazzling comet burns across the sky for 5d4+10 days. There is a 50% chance that all magic-users are 1d4 levels higher for purposes of spell effects during this time; otherwise, they are 1d4 levels lower (minimum level of 1). There may be other effects (e.g., interference with certain spells, or additional otherworldly encounters) at the referee's discretion.

**Falling Star:** A single meteor flashes across the sky. Each player should roll d20; the high roller spotted the falling star and is considered to be under a *bless* spell for the next 24 hours.

**Lights in the Sky:** 1d12 lights of various colors are seen dancing in the sky for 1d3 turns. At the end of this period, there is a 50% chance that an otherworldly entity (demon or alien) is met.

**Lunar Eclipse:** A dread shadow falls across the moon. During the 1d3 hours of the eclipse, all magic-users are considered to be at +2 levels for purposes of spell effects.

**Meteor Shower:** A dazzling array of meteors light up the sky, an omen of great significance. The PC with the best save vs. spells must roll it. If the saving throw succeeds, all members of the party are under a *bless* spell for 24 hours; if the saving throw fails, all are under a *blight* spell for the same period.

**Mocking Star:** One randomly-selected PC becomes aware that a particularly unwholesome star is leering and winking at him. The PC must save vs. spells or lose one point each of INT and WIS for

the next 12 hours, at which time the mocking star ceases to bedevil him.

**Planetary Alignment:** Planets are in a conjunction of unholy geometry and profound occult significance. During the 1d3 hours of this alignment, all magic-users are considered to be three levels higher for purposes of spell effects.

**Shining Mist:** An area of shining white mist 1d6 miles across appears, centered on the PCs and lasting 1d8 days. Effects on vision are the same as a *fog cloud* spell. Movement is halved and the chance of becoming lost is doubled. All random encounters within the mist are with otherworldly entities (demons or aliens). When PCs leave the mist, they are 25% likely to have been transported 1d10x10 miles in a random direction from the point where they entered.

**Star Stone:** A meteorite is seen plunging to earth 1d4 miles from the PCs. If recovered, the star stone is worth 1d12x1d10 thousand gold pieces at a major city; however, sorcerers, madmen, and otherworldly entities pursue the PCs as long as they have the stone.

**Stellar Conjunction:** A cryptic alignment of significant stars lasts 1d3 hours. During this time, all magic-users are considered to be one level higher for purposes of spell effects.

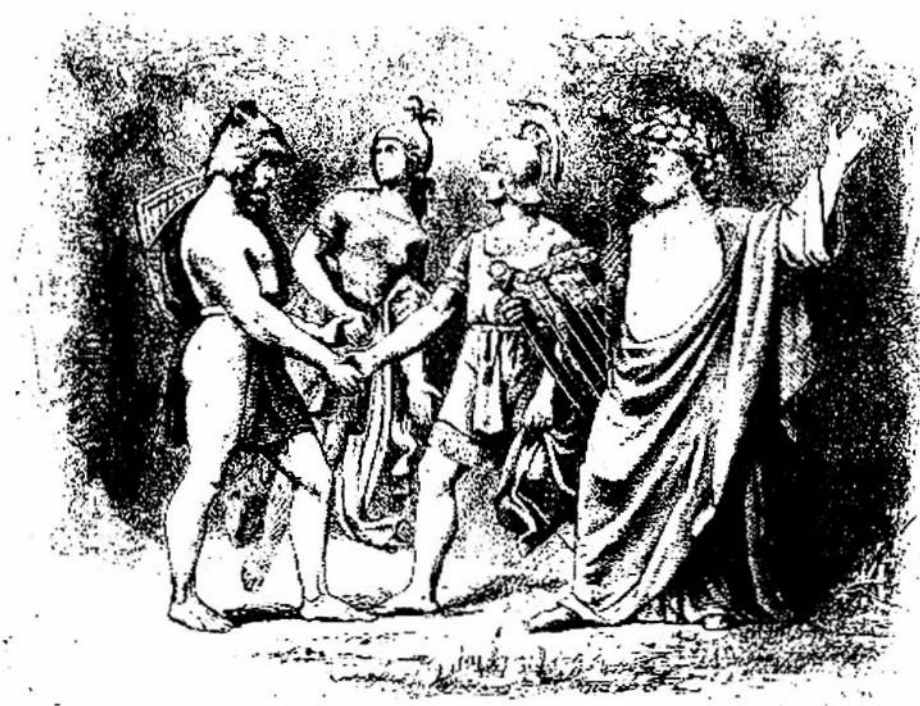
**The Stars are Right:** All the stars in the firmament align in an eons-delayed pattern of monumental occult significance, the effects of which last 1d20 days. Evil magic-users (only) have their level doubled for purposes of spell effects, undead and demons cannot be turned, and all random encounters are with otherworldly entities (demons or aliens). There may be additional game-changing effects at the referee's option (e.g., Cthulhu rises from his watery grave and ravages the earth).

**Uncanny Vertigo:** The entire party becomes sickeningly aware that they dwell on a tiny island of light in the midst of limitless black gulfs of space. Each PC must save vs. spells or be left retching and incapacitated for 1d6 hours. If the roll on this saving throw is a 1, the PC actually falls off of the world and plunges into the outer dark.

**Weird Vibrations:** The entire party is assailed by cacodaemonic melodies and the music of unholy spheres for 1d6 hours. All PCs are at -2 levels for purposes of spell effects and turning undead, -2 to hit and damage, and -2 on saving throws. In addition, each PC must save vs. spells each hour or lose 1d3 points of INT and WIS. Any PC who falls below 3 in either INT or WIS goes violently insane until the demonic music stops. When the vibrations cease, INT and WIS are regained at the rate of 1d3 points per turn, but any PC who went temporarily insane must save vs. spells or suffer 1d3 permanent insanities.

**Wind from the Gulfs:** Outdoors only. A demonic freezing wind blasts down on the party from directly above for 2d6 hours. The entire party is considered to be under a *blight* spell during that period, and all attempts to turn undead are at two levels lower. Any PC who fails to seek sturdy shelter (i.e., a cave or stone building) must save vs. death ray every hour or suffer 1d20 points of damage. At the referee's discretion, something may arrive from the outer dark during this time.

**Note:** The referee can and should alter any and all effects to suit a particular campaign.



## ULVA THE PURLOINER

*'Perhaps it was the heat of the fires, the gyrating of her tattooed body to the drum and the flute, or impossible positions, acute and phobic, that she forced her body into, but you can barely recollect how long you were in the tent, nor how you came to misplace the ring of Carce.'*

Ulva is an Esquimaux (Eskimo) NPC of the Purloiner class for the Astonishing Swordsmen & Sorcerers of Hyperborea rule set first published in AFS Magazine Issue # 4.

She moonlights as an entertainer, a dancer and contortionist. Really she is something far more sinister. A devotee of Xathoqqua since she was abducted by the circus as a child she has won favour with the slumbering god. She acquires the rare and treasured possessions of her audience for the lord of Sloths purposes. In return he has gifted her with two spells and a necklace of dimensional slip.

Ulva's body is a script of tattooed ink. What might seem decorative or ritual is in fact the words to her two spells; Enthral and Darkness (see AS&SH player manual, although other fantasy rulesets have similar spells). In addition to this she is an accomplished climber, acrobat and contortionist capable of reaching most places any human might consider.

The necklace of dimensional slip sits in a pouch on her belt. To the ignorant it is but a horse hair thread with hieroglyphed brass beads of odd sizes dotted along it. However should one put their hand or anything else though it, they would see it disappear as it enters a realm of Xathoqqua's choosing. Ulva uses this portal that she carries on her person, to dispense of the objects that Xathoqqua desires. Further, if Ulva were in a threatened situation, where no dark recess can be hidden in, or stone wall climbed to safety she likely will raise the necklace over her head and slip out of this realm through it.

### Stats

AI; Chaotic Evil, Sz; M, Mv 40, Dex; 15, AC 8, HD 3, Attacks; 2 butterfly knives (D4),

Level 3 Purloiner with the following attributes

Female Esquimaux 5'2, slender, athletic,

Str 6, Dex 15, Con 7, Int 9, Wis 13, Cha 9. Spells; Enthral, Darkness.

# THE PURLOINER

## A New Thief Subclass for AS&SH™

By Jeff Talanian and Colin Chapman

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The following concept was presented to me by veteran game designer Colin Chapman, whose contributions to the *Astonishing Swordsmen & Sorcerers of Hyperborea™* game have served to enhance game play for many AS&SH enthusiasts. Keep an eye out for a much larger AS&SH project by Colin in the near future. What follows is a new subclass for the AS&SH game, followed by a mini-adventure for 0<sup>th</sup> level characters that might aspire to take up this class. Note that all table and header references point to the AS&SH game proper, as this new subclass and its various features are specific to that system; however, it is easily adaptable to traditional forms of the world's most popular fantasy RPG and its modern simulacra, such as *OSRIC™* and *Swords & Wizardry™*.

**PURLOINER (Thief):** Oft dedicated to a deity of larceny, the purloiner is a thief who practices the divine sorcery of a cleric. Whether in service to a mystery cult seeking to appropriate rare artefacts, serving a thieves' guild as its spiritual leader, or double-dealing as a thief for one organization and a priest for another, the purloiner combines the expertise of a thief with the sorcerous abilities of a cleric. In Hyperborea, such divine thieves inevitably pay homage to Rel, "The God of Thieves", though it is not unusual for purloiners to worship Xathoquua.

*Attribute Requirements:* Dexterity 12, Wisdom 12

*Prime Attributes:* Dexterity, Wisdom

*Hit Die Type:* d6

*Alignment:* Any non-Lawful

*Armour Allowed:* Light

*Shields Allowed:* Small

*Favoured Weapons:*

Axe (hand), bow (short), club (light), crossbow (light), dagger, dart, flail (horseman's), hammer (horseman's), mace (horseman's), pick (horseman's), sling, sword (short, falcata, long, broad)

*Saving Throw Modifiers:* Avoidance +2, Death +2

### Purloiner (Thief)

Level	Experience Points	Hit Dice	Fighting Ability	Turning Ability	Casting Ability	Spell Levels		
						1	2	3
1	0–2,749	1d6	1	—	1	1	—	—
2	2,750–5,499	2d6	1	—	2	1	—	—
3	5,500–10,999	3d6	2	1	3	1	1	—
4	11,000–21,999	4d6	3	2	4	1	1	—
5	22,000–43,999	5d6	3	3	5	1	1	1
6	44,000–87,999	6d6	4	4	6	1	1	1
7	88,000–175,999	7d6	5	5	7	2	1	1
8	176,000–351,999	8d6	5	6	8	2	2	1
9	352,000–527,999	9d6	6	7	9	2	2	2
10	528,000–703,999	9d6+2	7	8	10	3	2	2
11	704,000–879,999	9d6+4	7	9	11	3	3	2
12	880,000+	9d6+6	8	10	12	3	3	3

### Purloiner (Thief) Class Abilities:

*Agile:* +1 AC bonus when unarmoured and unencumbered.

**Backstab:** An attack from behind with a class 1 or 2 melee weapon (see table L43.) with which the purloiner is skilled. If the target lacks vital organs (e.g., automaton, skeleton, zombie) or a discernible "back" (e.g., black pudding, green slime, grey ooze, ochre jelly, otyugh, purple worm), this ability is ineffective. The target must be unaware of the attack; this may be the result of *hiding* or *moving silently* (qq.v.). The attack is made at +4 "to hit". Weapon damage dice are multiplied according to the purloiner's level of experience (1<sup>st</sup> to 4<sup>th</sup> levels = ×2; 5<sup>th</sup> to 8<sup>th</sup> levels = ×3; 9<sup>th</sup> to 12<sup>th</sup> levels = ×4). Other modifiers (strength, sorcery, etc.) are added afterwards.

**Clandestine Tongue (Thieves' Cant):** The secret language of thieves; a strange pidgin in which some words may be unintelligible to an ignorant listener, whilst others might be common yet of alternative meaning. This covert tongue is used in conjunction with specific body language, hand gestures, and facial expressions. Two major dialects of thieves' cant are used in Hyperborea: one by city thieves, the other by pirates; commonalities exist betwixt the two.

**Detect Secret Doors:** Find a secret door on a base 3-in-6 chance.

**Magic Item Use:** Can utilize magic items normally restricted to clerics.

**Scribe Scroll:** To scribe a familiar spell onto a scroll, creating a single-use magical device, at a cost of 500 gp + 100 gp per spell level. Materials vary; some purloiners engrave thin tablets of stone, whilst others use vellum or parchment, a fine quill, and sorcerer's ink, such as sepia. Scribing a scroll requires one week per spell level and must be completed on consecrated grounds, such as a shrine, fane, or temple.

**Sorcery:** Purloiners memorize and cast spells, but they do not maintain spell books; rather, they might bear the scriptures of their faith in prayer books, sacred scrolls, or tablets. They begin their careers with knowledge of two level 1 spells, sacred mysteries revealed upon initiation into a sect, cult, or religion. These spells are drawn from the Cleric Spell List (see table IL3.). A purloiner develops two new spells at 3<sup>rd</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup>, 8<sup>th</sup>, 9<sup>th</sup>, 10<sup>th</sup>, 11<sup>th</sup>, and 12<sup>th</sup> levels. Typically these are acquired via spiritual revelation, piecing together abstract theologies, or otherworldly favour. Such spells are automatically learnt, with no need of qualification rolls. To learn a new spell outside of level training, refer to VOL.II, SPELLS, *acquiring new spells*. Purloiners of high wisdom cast a greater number of spells per day (see ATTRIBUTES, *wisdom*).

**Turn Undead:** At 3<sup>rd</sup> level, a purloiner of Good or Neutral alignment can exert control over the undead and some dæmonic beings, causing them to flee and/or cower. Evil purloiners covet the submission and service of these foul creatures. In either case, the purloiner must stand before the undead and boldly speak the commandments of his faith, displaying his holy symbol whilst doing so. At 3<sup>rd</sup> level the purloiner has 1st-level *turning ability* (TA 1); at 4<sup>th</sup> level he has 2<sup>nd</sup>-level *turning ability* (TA 2); and so on (see VOL.III, COMBAT ACTIONS, *turn undead*).

**Stronghold:** At 9<sup>th</sup> level, a purloiner who establishes suitable headquarters (building, dungeon, tower, etc.) will attract a band of reprobates: 1d12+12 thieves of 0<sup>th</sup> level (1d4 hp, each with a smattering of nascent thief skills) who serve without pay; in fact, they will tithe up to 50% of their earnings to him. The headquarters might be in a city, town, or village. If said headquarters are part of his stronghold, castle, or fortified manor, with a 5- to 10-mile radius of control, the purloiner is also eligible to attract a small body of men-at-arms, 0<sup>th</sup>-level fighters of 1d8 hp each. Here follows a typical troop:

- ★ 10 infantrymen (*chain mail, small shields, light crossbows, long spears, short swords*)
- ★ 10 halberdiers / pikemen (*splint armour, halberds or pikes, hand axes*)
- ★ 10 shortbowmen (*studded armour, short bows, short swords*)

Attracted units include one officer, a 3<sup>rd</sup>-level fighter responsible for the unit and for communication betwixt the lord and his men. If the reputation of the lord is favourable, further troops may be attracted. Men-at-arms receive 10 gp per month for their service, plus 100 gp for the officer. Common inhabitants of the purloiner's domain provide 5 sp in taxes per person per month. Once control and reputation are established, the purloiner attracts 1d2 apprentice purloiners (0<sup>th</sup>-level) who petition him for learning. *N.B.:* If the purloiner's headquarters are established in the vicinity of a thieves' guild, and the purloiner is not tithing an agreed percentage of all earnings to said guild, then he is guilty of subversion; severe repercussions are likely.

**Progressive Thief Abilities:** The following thief abilities progress as the purloiner advances in levels of experience. By the 12<sup>th</sup> level, the purloiner has achieved his full potential in these abilities (see table L13.).

**Climb:** To ascend or descend sheer cliffs or walls without need of climbing gear. If vertical, the surface must be rough or with cracks. At least one check must be made per 100 feet of climbing. Failure indicates the climber has slipped and fallen at about the midway point of the check (see VOL.III, DAMAGE, *falling damage*).

*Decipher Script:* To translate texts otherwise not understood—maps are interpreted, instructions decoded, and so forth. Ancient and alien languages, however, may remain unintelligible, lacking any basis for comparison.

*Discern Noise:* To hearken at a door and detect the faintest of noises on the other side, perceive the distant footfalls of a wandering monster, or distinguish a single voice in a crowd. Six rounds (one minute) of concentrated listening are required to potentially achieve success.

*Hide:* To hide in shadows, camouflage oneself, or flatten one's body to a seemingly impossible degree—all whilst remaining still as a statue. Only the slightest of movement is permissible (unsheathing a blade, opening a pouch, etc.). Hiding is impossible in direct sunlight, or if the purloiner is actively observed.

*Manipulate Traps:* To find, remove, and reset traps both magical and mundane. Separate checks must be made to accomplish each facet of this skill: *find*, *remove*, *reset*. Also, a new trap may be built if the mechanism is simple and the parts available; anything more complex will require the assistance of an engineer. Thieves' tools are required when practicing this ability.

*Move Silently:* To move with preternatural quiet, even across squeaky floorboards, dry leaves, loose debris, and the like. This skill is executed at half the purloiner's normal movement rate.

*Open Locks:* To pick locks or disable latching mechanisms both magical and mundane. Thieves' tools are required. Picking or dismantling a lock may be attempted but once; if the attempt fails, the purloiner cannot try again until he has gained another level of experience. Most locks require 1d4 minutes to pick; complex locks might necessitate 3d6 minutes.

*Pick Pockets:* To filch items from a pocket, pouch, backpack, or garment using sleight of hand and distraction. Failure by a margin of 3 or greater indicates the attempt has been observed, though not necessarily by the victim. If successful, the referee determines what has been procured. If a purloiner attempts to pick the pocket of a higher-level thief (or legerdemainist or purloiner), a penalty equal to the difference in levels must be applied to the check. This skill also covers the gamut of "sleight of hand" trickery the purloiner might employ to deceive onlookers.



Iberr.

# HAUNTED RUINS OF CASTLE MOLD-A-VAY



**Cartography:** original map design by "RFlowers" with bluing by "Fingolwyn"

**Contributors:** "dark grey"(rooms: 2,3,8,11,13-20,22,28); "Distorted Humor" (hook; rooms: 21, 27, 32, 33, 52); "Scalydemon"(area outside dungeon; rooms: 1,4-7,9,10,12,23-26,29,30, 31,34-45,46-51,53-57)

A beer & pretzels style adventure designed for a foolhardy adventuring party, levels 3-6. Note, the Castle proper fell some 500 years ago felled by a raiding party of Mongrels and was razed to the ground. Now it is a pile of sun-bleached rubble surrounded by dead grass and bushes, and circled by buzzards and crows. The dungeon entrance is a rusty trapdoor amidst the rubble at one time painted red. Footprints can be found leading to and from the trapdoor.

**Hook:** Mold-a-vay the Magnificent, a bizarre wizard of some note, ordered the creation of the Castle. After moving in, he was never seen again. The Castle's treasure and evil is famous across the land.

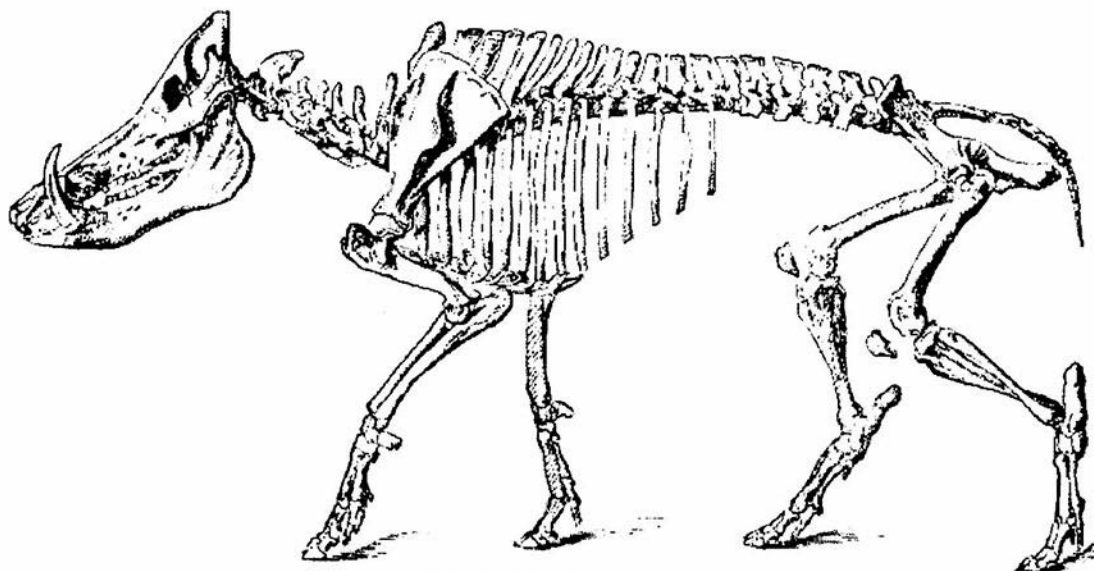
**Rumours:** The Castle ruins are haunted by a bloodthirsty Vampire named Octavius.

A rare jewel, the fabled 'Heart of Saturn' is entombed beneath the Castle grounds. It may be guarded by a powerful golem or construct.

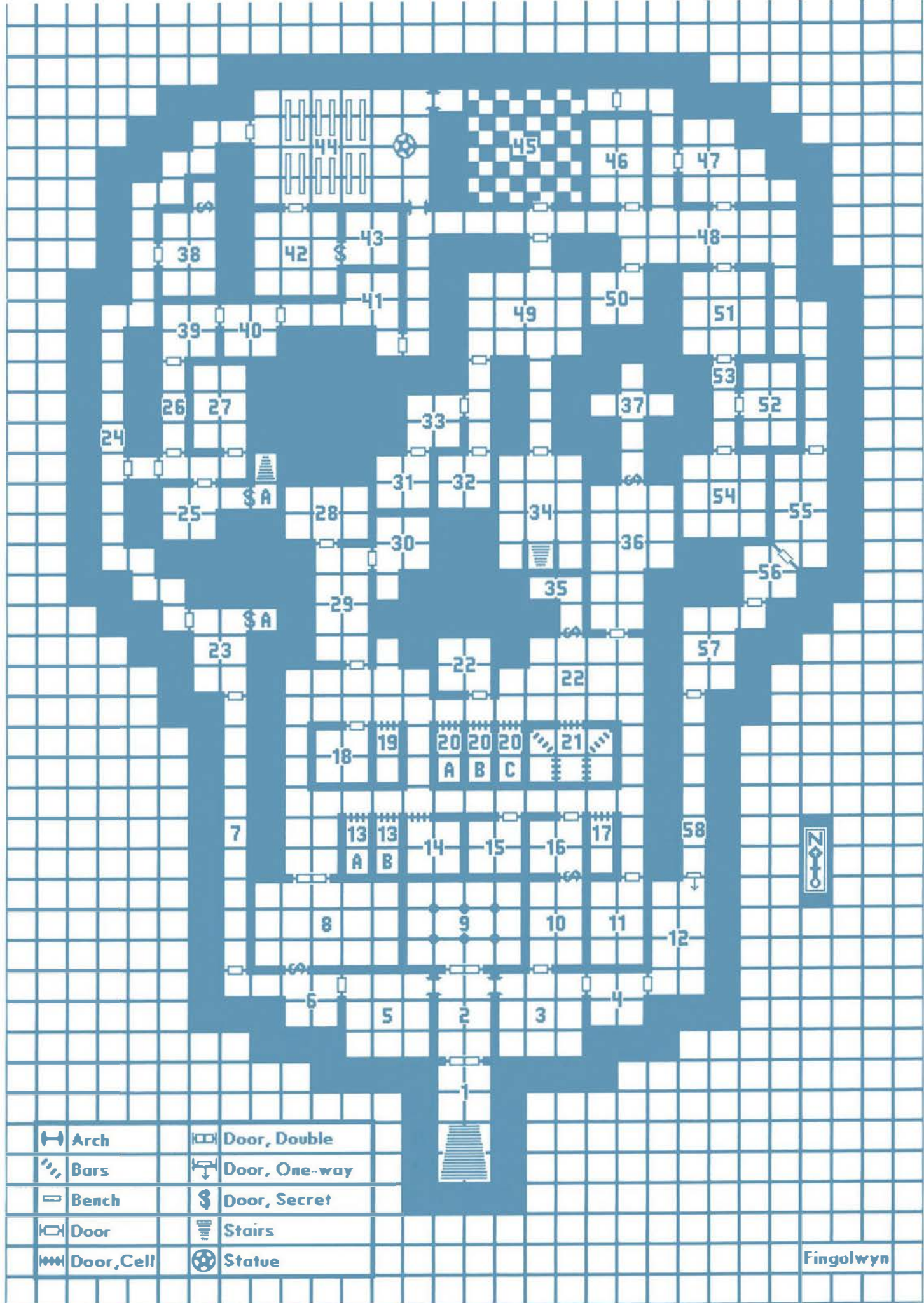
**Area outside dungeon:** A convenient bivouac area with a fire pit is located just outside the castle ruins. If the party camps here, there is a 4 in 6 chance of an encounter with 2d6+2 **Wild Boar Skeletons** (HD 2, AC 6, HP 8, DMG 1d6, turn as ghouls. Pointed or piercing weapons do ½ dmg)

### **LEVEL 1 WANDERING MONSTERS: (ROLL 1D6)**

1. Giant snake (1)
2. Owlbear (1)
3. Rust monsters (3)
4. Goblin Worg riders (4) & Worgs (4)
5. Bugbears (4)
6. Derek Smalls - the Hill Giant (1) - carries a large club and is drunk and hungry (fights at -2 penalty, may be bribed with a minimum of 10 gp & no less than 1 weeks quality rations. Derek will seek to negotiate with the party, but always backed up with vulgarity and threats of real violence. (HD 8, AC 4, HP 52, DMG 2d8). Greasy long black hair, Large nose.



SKELETON OF WILD BOAR.



	Arch		Door, Double
	Bars		Door, One-way
	Bench		Door, Secret
	Door		Stairs
	Door, Cell		Statue

Fingolwyn

1. Broad well-worn stone steps lead down to a landing, and a set of massive, verdigris-stained, bronze double-doors. The doors are locked (but the keys hang on a rusty nail next to the door). Above the doors is the mounted head of an antlered deer. The head speaks to those who approach the door. Its lips move, and each round it says something different:

1. Certain death awaits you!
2. Retreat!
3. You're too young to die!
4. This is a bad idea...turnaround now...
5. Go back...go back...gooooo baaaackk...
6. I am warning you...

2. The entrance doors slam shut behind the party when it enters this room. A magic mouth appears on the east wall, and asks in a booming voice "DID GARY SEND YOU?" The double doors to the north and south remain Wizard locked, and the archways to the east and west stay blocked by invisible walls of force until the party responds. No matter what they say, the voice will answer: "OH WELL. NEVER MIND THEN."

3. A goblin with a brush and a bucket of water scrubs at some graffiti on the wall. All that can be read now is "BEWA \*\*\*\*\* ATM". The goblin has no idea what the writing said, just that he is supposed to clean it off.

4. 14 kobolds ( 3 hp each), carrying crossbows and hatchets, lair in this guard post. As soon as anyone enters the room, one kobold blows a shrill whistle, and another yips out commands. The kobolds take cover behind an 8' long, overturned table in front of the south wall; a further barrier of boulders and debris has been piled before the table. The kobolds can shoot their crossbows from behind the table with a -4 bonus to AC. After two rounds of missile fire, half of the kobolds charge to attack with hatchets. Each kobold carries 2 sp in a rat skin pouch tied to its belt.

5. Empty room (smells of burning hair)

6. Two bales of moldy hay form archery targets. There is a pile of five small crossbows, and a dead cat by the south wall.

7. A teleport trap teleports anyone stepping across the midway point of this 10' wide corridor to the south end of the corridor at 58.

8. This is the goblin/kobold barracks: goblins on the east side of the room; kobolds on the west side. Bunks line the east and west walls, goblins and kobolds lounge in and around them. The 30' section in the middle of the room is completely empty.

The 4 goblins (3hp) and 4 kobolds(2hp) do their best to run away, moving towards the doors opposite the one entered by intruders, and only defend themselves if attacked. They are armed with brooms, mops, and brushes that cause 1 hp damage, and have a 50% chance to blind victims with dirty water or dust for 1d4 rounds. They don't know anything.

9. Six yellow pillars reach from floor to ceiling in this rectangular room. If a creature steps into the area between the pillars, each pillar shoots a crackling electrical bolt at it (attacks as a 4 HD monster, 1d6 damage (save vs. wands for ½)). The trap immediately recharges when the victim steps back out of the area.

10. A rusty chandelier hangs from a vaulted ceiling, sconces line the walls, and an oil painting on the east wall depicts a man transforming into a werewolf. Behind the painting is a 1' square door, and behind the door is a compartment containing a vial of flowery perfume (worth 5 sp), a potion of levitation, and a vial of poison which smells of garlic.

11. The door to this room reads "John Peppercorn Dry Goods". Inside the room is a middle aged man behind a counter. Shelves of goods line the walls. The man will hold up a sign saying "Special today wool gloves 10 sp, leather gloves 20 sp, wooden cross 10 sp, silver cross 10 gp, bulbs of garlic 1 gp". There is a 50% chance he will have any item on the standard equipment list in stock, at 110% of standard cost. He will be able to procure any item from the standard equipment list in 1d4 days for 120% of standard cost. He may also (10% chance) have a random potion to sell the PCs for 50gp. The PCs will have to determine what the potion is after they buy it.

12. An 8' tall mangy-looking Wookiee (HD 3+1, AC 6, 17 hp, large flail 1d8+1) mans an arbalest (1d12 dmg, R.O.F. ½) anchored to the floor in front of the door in the north wall. The Wookiee has a small leather satchel containing 20' of hemp rope, a dull knife and 30 gp. He will flee after discharging his weapon (possibly encountered later)

13. An orc leans his chair against the east wall. A full helmet covers his face, and he wears leather armor and a cloak. He smells strongly of alcohol, and is sleeping soundly (he will be like this even if the goblins and kobolds did leave room 8). He has a sheathed broken sword, a dull dagger (1d4-1), 6cp, and a key that fits absolutely nothing. He is extremely difficult to wake up.

A) Empty chains hang from this cell's walls.

B) Skeletons in chains hang from this cell's walls; an ancient, wrinkled goblin is slowly dusting them. He ignores the PCs.

14. The graffiti, in many languages, on the wall outside this cell reads "Quiet! Do Not Disturb!" and an old tapestry hangs over the bars of the cell door. If the PCs peek in they see a green dragon staring back at them. They also see a wild boar, a wolf, a bear, a crow, a giant rat, and a man in peasant's clothes doing something to the mouth of a cat. If the PCs observe for a while they will realize that all of the creatures are stuffed. If the PCs open the cell door (unlocked) or call to the man, he looks up startled, glares at the party, and asks them what they want. If they complement his work, he becomes friendly, and offers to sell the cat to them for 5 gp and claims it to be magical. The cat (HD 2; hp 10; Att 1; dmg 1d4) will defend the PCs next time they are attacked before falling apart at the end of combat. He also mentions that his brother John has a store nearby if they need supplies. If they are rude he asks them to leave.

If they attack the man, the green dragon will breathe a cloud of sawdust at them which will force them to fight at -4 for 1d6 rounds due to impaired vision. It will then attack (HD 8; hp 35; Att 3; dmg 1d4/1d4/1d12). The "dragon" cannot use its breathe weapon again, and will not leave the room. The man will try to escape in the confusion.

15. Ten drunken orcs (HD 1; hp 8; Att 1; dmg 1d8; -1 to hit due to drunken state) loiter in this room around a high round wood table drinking bottles of bad, straw colored ale. They will attack on sight, and fight to the death. One orc vomits violently each round(roll 1d10 to determine which); it is unable to attack normally, instead puking over any PC it is fighting.

A puked-upon PC must save vs. poison or also begin puking, and be unable to attack that round. If an orc's number is rolled again, in a later round it passes out. The orcs wear leather armor, and wield swords. They have a total of 13 gp, 22 sp.

16. This room is filled with empty crates and casks and smells of yeast.

17. Two mules in this makeshift stable are being tended to by a kobold. He tells the PCs that the mules belong to Master Peppercorn, and gestures towards room 11.

18. An orc passed out in the doorway props the door to this guardroom open.

Against the north wall is a weapon rack full of rusty, poor quality weapons in it (each weapon has a 50% chance per hit of breaking, and is -1 to damage).

The west wall has chains attached to it, and the east wall has a large tapestry which depicts a royal court. Someone has drawn mustaches on all of the people.

Next to the south wall is a large ogre (AC 5; HD 4+1; hp 27; Att 1; dmg 1d10) sleeping on a pile of old cloaks, dirty rugs, and a bear skin. The bearskin is actually the ogre's pet owlbear (AC 5; HD5; hp 27; Att 3; dmg 1d6/1d6/2d6). He carries 26gp and a large chunk of rough cut amethyst (150gp value)

19. An old man dressed in ratty-looking robes is chained to the wall of this cell. Light grey skin tone, appears clean shaven, (which is odd). Actually a doppelganger, the "old man" claims to be a low level mage, unable to currently cast spells due to a blow to the head when captured. He is quite well spoken and business-like polite and introduces himself smoothly as 'the esteemed Doctor Requin'. The doppelganger (Were-Shark) does his best to help the party get out of the dungeon, but once clear will do his best to rob them blind before escaping.

Armor Class: 3 Hit Dice: 6 Attacks: 2 (bite, clawed arms)

Damage: 2d6, 1d4, 1d4

20.

A) Empty chains hanging from this cell's walls.

B) Ten lifeless bodies hang from chains on this cell's walls. If anyone enters the cell to examine them, the zombies slip their wrists through the shackles and attack. (AC8; HD 2; ATT 1; dmg 1d8)

C) A lone goblin is sweeping out this cell. He takes the trash and dumps it in area 21.

21. Lying in the garbage is a metal wand. The wand is a foot-long, about two inches in diameter, with one end slightly larger than the other. It detects as magic, but has an odd aura. It is heavy, and can be used as a club for 1d4 damage. If the slightly larger end is twisted, light shines from the wand like

a lantern that is hooded for just one direction. The wand has magical power to last 1d12+6 turns. It cannot be recharged.

22 (West) A Green Slime oozes down the back wall of this room. Even if the party destroys it, they will always find another one oozing down the back wall when they enter the room.

22. (East) This room has many phallic and pornographic images painted on the walls and floors, but is otherwise empty. (Former pleasure chamber)

23. In the SW corner of the room is a large locked wooden chest with rusty iron bands. Opening the chest causes a spring-loaded jester's head to pop out. After one round the head explodes for 1d6 dmg, fills the room. The chest has a false bottom. In the compartment beneath is a pouch with a small red gem (35 gp) and a silver letter opener (10 gp)

24. This long corridor is a treadmill trap. Heading north or south the party will walk and walk, and never get past halfway.

25. Along the west wall of this dusty, dark room is a large, battered, wooden bookcase, and two broken chairs. Most of the books are charred beyond legibility. One readable book entitled "Beginners Guide to Trollspeak" can be found after a search. A person with an intelligence of ten or more who studies it for a week can learn to speak Troll. Also in the debris is a small pinky ring (fit for a slender Elf) which is a ring of X-Ray vision.

26. The unlocked southern door to this room is made of black slate, though it has a normal doorknob. Faded chalk writing on the door reads: "Mold-a-vay was here". The door in the north wall is a false door.

An alert party may notice a hole with a 24 inch diameter in the ceiling directly above them near the room's south entrance. The hole appears empty.

The room's varnished hardwood floor boards run north/south. Next to the south door is a kobold skeleton, javelin at its side, three gold pieces strewn on the ground, and a black bowling ball. At the north end of the room are 10 white bowling pins.

Any party member may attempt to roll a strike by making a DEX check at -6. If a strike is made, a gold piece falls from the hole in the ceiling and clatters to the floor. For any result besides a strike, a giant wasp emerges from the hole in the ceiling to attack.

The bowling pins reset every 3 rounds.

27. Water mysteriously drips from the center ceiling into a raised bowl (5' diameter). Under the water in the bowl is a smooth black stone. The rock radiates magic. It is a black luckstone, +1 to saves vs posion.

28. The door to this room is locked. This "empty" room is actually a maze constructed of invisible walls through which the party will have to move single file. A "young woman" (actually a ghoul) is

curled up in the north-west corner. Once the ghoul paralyzes someone it will crawl over the body to attack the next person.

29. This room is empty save for a pair of dirty trousers lying in a heap in the room's center. If disturbed immediate attack by AMERICAN TROUSER SNAKE, HP2, AC 8, ATK BITE FOR 1PT DMG + SAVE VS POSION AT -2 OR DIE. FLESH COLORED, ABOUT 1' LONG.

30. This room is empty save for a pair of old smelly Orc boots leaning against the south wall. Some flies buzz about. Each boot contains a potion of healing hidden within.

31. A set of curved benches, carved from an exotic dark wood, form an 8' diameter circle; in the middle of the circle is a pentagram drawn with black chalk. It contains an arrangement of cone-shaped rocks, and pebbles. Five stubby black candles lie on the ground nearby. Moving the rocks, pebbles, or candles has no effect. (This would be a good time for the DM to take a beer or smoke break)

32. On the door of this room is the warning: "This room is DEATH". Inside the room is a large chest on top of a pedestal. A lurker above drops on to anyone who steps into the room. A trapper attacks those who walk a further 10' into the room. All of the walls are stun jellies.

The chest is trapped with a poisonous dart (save or die; 1d4+1 damage for a successful save). Inside the chest is a mimic disguised as a chest. Beneath the mimic are two parchments. One is a note that says "I did warn you. Also, do not read the other parchment unless you want to be wise". The other is a cursed scroll that causes blindness, but increases the wisdom of the reader by one.

33. There are two beds in this room: one contains a rotting corpse; in the other sleeps a villager's abducted daughter named Beatrice. Anyone who lies down in these beds will fall into a deep sleep, and be unable to wake unless dragged from the bed. Beneath a loose stone under the abducted daughter's bed is 100 gp. Dispel magic would also cancel the effect.

34. In the center of this spacious room is a dark grey, stone sarcophagus. The walls are lined with dark violet, velvet curtains. The curtains on the east wall are open, revealing a 3' x 3' oil painting flanked by a set of empty sconces. The painting depicts a fanged vampire and a glowing, yellowish, full moon in a star-filled night sky (value: 100 gp to the right buyer). Inside the sarcophagus is a Pale skinned Vampire with his arms crossed. He will awake and attack immediately stating, "How dare you interrupt the slumbers of Count Octavius!". Beneath him is a trapdoor & set of stone stairs that lead down into inky darkness...( look out for dungeon level 2, "the heart level", in a future AFS publication). VAMPIRE: Octavius, HD 9, HP 62, ATK: Touch 1d10 + drain 2 energy lvls. AC 2, immune to sleep, charm, hold. Only hit with magical weapons). Around his neck Octavius wears a heavy braided gold necklace with a black onyx pendant encrusted with small diamonds. Gaudy, but valuable, worth 8000 gp.

35. A chair and a plain, oval-shaped, wooden desk stand in the western portion of the room. On the table is a copy of the magazine "Space Gamer" (written in common).

36. Four ghouls (12 hp each) haunt this debris-strewn room. An unholy symbol (upside down cross) is nailed, at its center, to the middle of the north wall. Inverting the symbol (physically turning it)

reveals the glowing outline of a secret door in the wall. Amongst the debris are 2 sp and a gold-plated letter opener (10 gp value).

37. This cross-shaped room smells of age-old must, and old cobwebs hang down from the ceiling. In the center of the room is a stone sarcophagus. Prying the lid off the sarcophagus reveals a Mummy (hp 39) with glowing black skull for a head. In an echoing deep voice, it says "Who dares interrupt the eternal slumber of the Marquis de Sade?" and then attacks. Inside the sarcophagus is a +2 two handed sword and a large palm sized red gem, this is the fabled 'Heart of Saturn' worth 15,000gp. Gives off a bright red eerie glow on a full moon.

38. A 14' long, 8' wide wooden table set with 14 chairs dominates this large, rectangular room. A female hill giant, Helligah (HD 8, AC 4, hp 41; dmg 2d8), sits at the head of the table, eating a leg of roast hobbit. On the table is a fine silverware set (50 gp value), and a medium-sized burlap sack which contains two large boulders; a pouch sewed into the lining of the sack contains 117gp, and a chunk of raw carnelian (320gp value). Helligah is looking for her husband (Derek from the wandering monster table), and is in a foul mood. If the party has not seen Derek, she will attack with her giant machete.

39. By the west wall of this room is a burnt-out fire. In the ashes are a kobold femur bone, and a burnt copper piece.

40. In the southern portion of this room, a large rusty blade (dmg 1d8 + 3% chance of random disease) drops from the ceiling and scythes across the room from west to east. On the floor, in its path, is a rotting kobold corpse. The corpse has 3 sp in a rat skin purse, a javelin and small, round, wooden shield with a black hand design. The trap's trigger is a hidden metal switch on the floor near the body.

41. By the east wall are a small pile of six-sided bone dice, a human knuckle bone, and 12 sp.

42. Against the west wall are two large wooden wardrobes. Between them is a bureau with a large vanity mirror. The bureau is empty save for a pair of brown cotton socks, and a gaudy gold necklace with a rainbow-shaped pendant (value 150gp). The wardrobes contain brown, green and white robes. An inner pocket sewn inside one of the green robes contains a small emerald, 40 gp, and a gold coin that depicts an alien sun (+1 on saves for the day, useable once per person per year).

43. In the north-west corner of the room is a 20' deep, spiked pit trap (dmg 2d6) covered with a grey tarp.

44. Old wooden church pews are arrayed in front of a 12' tall golden statue of a large-bellied man who sits cross-legged, and holds out before him a large bowl. The statue's eyes are multi-faceted red gems. The bowl is 6' above the floor, and contains 50gp. Removing any of the coins, or attempting to pry out the gems animates the statue (AC 3; HD 8; hp 40; Att 2; dmg 1d12; SD only harmed by +1 weapons or better). If the statue is destroyed, the gem eyes can be pried out (value 500 gp each).

45. Alternating black granite and white alabaster tiles, each 5' x 5' in size, form a chess board. The black tiles in the first row will shock anyone who enters for 1d4 dmg. In the second row the white tiles cause shock damage. This alternates through the rest of the rows.

46. 11 giant rats (2 hp each) nest in this stinking, debris-filled room. The debris (soiled clothes, bones, broken furniture, and old dirty straw) is 2' deep in places. The rats do not attack unless the party enters the room and starts poking round.
47. Spider webs hang over the eastern half portion of the room, and its three shadowy alcoves. Six large spiders (9 hp each) scuttle amongst the webs and attack intruders immediately. A search of the webs reveals 12gp and a +1 short sword that glows blue when within 10' of orcs or goblins.
48. Four kobolds (4hp; dmg 1d4) are loudly arguing as they play a game that involves tossing human bones into a circle drawn on the floor. They surrender if outnumbered. Each kobold carries a hatchet, and a small wooden shield with a black hand painted on it.
49. Two metal levers are on the west wall, both in the up position. If the left one is pulled, a large stone tile falls from the ceiling above (attacks as a 4HD monster; 1d4 dmg). The right lever is stuck, and breaks off if forced.
50. An empty room, save for a large, heavy, wooden chest. The chest is locked and trapped (poison needle), and contains a large sack containing 2500 cp, and a potion of healing.
51. A large metal birdcage, hanging from the center of the room, contains a large crow. The crow taunts and insults the party e.g. "You call yourselves adventurers? What a bunch of nancys...", "You'll all be dead when you get to the next room...", "Polly want a dead Dwarf?". Inside the cage are 3 gp and a silver ring worth 10 gp. If the cage door is opened, the crow will try to fly away.
52. Water drips mysteriously from the center ceiling into a raised bowl (5' diameter). Under the water in the bowl is a small Black Ooze.
53. Halfway down this short corridor is a covered 10' deep pit trap (1d6 dmg). There are shards of broken pottery, and a giant rat skeleton at the bottom of the pit. When more than 50 lbs drops into the pit, it activates a pressure plate that causes a large, stone ceiling-tile to fall into the pit (1d12 dmg).
54. The door to this room is stuck (open door check). In the middle of the room is a hovering, round, brick-colored creature with flailing tentacles and beady lucid eyes. This is a gas spore. On the east side of the room, a locked medium-size wooden chest, with rusty iron bands, contains a shimmering, dark purple cloak (cloak of displacement), and a 10 inch long, black wand with a silver band in the middle (wand of magic missiles, 23 charges).
55. In the south-east corner of the room is a simple, square, wooden table and a chair. On the table is a sheet of parchment on which is written the names of all the party members who are present. One random name has a line drawn through it.
56. A bearded, black-haired, swarthy man is chained to the west wall. He has the key in his pocket. This is Mohammed, a sixth level thief (AC 5; hp 19; AL LE; DEX 17). He wears +1 leather armor, and has a +2 short sword. He will pretend to be a prisoner, and ask that he be freed and allowed to join the party for protection. He will keep to the back of the group, then try to pickpocket a party member and sneak off.

57. On the west side of this foul-smelling room stand two 8' tall, white stone columns. At the top of each is a bird nest. Perched in the nests are two harpies (15hp each) that try to charm and kill intruders. The nests contain a total of 10 p, 18 gp, and 25 sp; one also has a potion of extra healing.

58. Halfway down this 10' wide corridor is a pressure plate. Stepping on the plate sets off a poisoned dart trap 3' up on the east wall (save or die; if success, 1d4 dmg).



# THE HUNTSMAN

*A New Fighter Subclass for Astonishing Swordsmen & Sorcerers of Hyperborea*

by Jeff Talanian

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**HUNTSMAN (Fighter):** The huntsman is a warrior who roves the hoary wilds of Hyperborea in search of formidable game. He might hail from a barbaric tribe whence he is celebrated for his impressive conquests, or from within the walls of civilization whence he is admired for his astonishing trophy heads. Some huntsmen glory in subduing and taming the most feral of beasts, whilst others pride themselves as werewolf hunters, purging Hyperborea of its dreaded lycanthropic curse. No matter what their aims or origins, all huntsmen share an insatiable thirst to dominate that which lesser men rightly fear and loath.

*Attribute Requirements:* Strength 9, Dexterity 9, Wisdom 9, Charisma 12

*Prime Attributes:* Strength, Wisdom

*Hit Die Type:* d10

*Alignment:* Any

*Armour Allowed:* Medium

*Shields Allowed:* Any

*Favoured Weapons:* Any

*Saving Throw Modifiers:* Death +2, Transformation +2

## Huntsman (Fighter)

Level	Experience Points	Hit Dice	Fighting Ability
1	0–2,249	1d10	1
2	2,250–4,499	2d10	2
3	4,500–8,999	3d10	3
4	9,000–17,999	4d10	4
5	18,000–35,999	5d10	5
6	36,000–71,999	6d10	6
7	72,000–143,999	7d10	7
8	144,000–287,999	8d10	8
9	288,000–431,999	9d10	9
10	432,000–575,999	9d10+3	10
11	576,000–719,999	9d10+6	11
12	720,000+	9d10+9	12

## Huntsman (Fighter) Class Abilities:

**Alertness.** Reduces by one (–1) the party's chance of being *surprized* on a d6 roll.

**Attack Rate.** 1/1 melee attack rate from 1<sup>st</sup> to 6<sup>th</sup> levels; 3/2 melee attack rate from 7<sup>th</sup> to 12<sup>th</sup> levels. *Weapon mastery* (q.v.) can further increase attack rate.

**Climb.** To ascend or descend sheer cliffs or walls without need of climbing gear, if lightly armoured or unarmoured, as a thief of equal level. If vertical, the surface must be rough or with cracks. At least one check must be made per 100 feet of climbing. Failure indicates the climber has slipped and fallen at about the midway point of the check.

**Hide.** When outdoors, if lightly armoured or unarmoured, able to *hide* as a thief of equal level, lurking behind bushes, trees, rocks, and the like. The huntsman can camouflage himself, or flatten his body to the ground whilst remaining still. Only the slightest of movement is permissible (unsheathing a blade, opening a pouch, etc.). Hiding is impossible in direct sunlight, or if the huntsman is actively observed. In non-wilderness areas (cities, dungeons, etc.), his chance-in-twelve for success is penalized by -2.

**Move Silently.** To tread softly, moving with preternatural quiet as a thief of equal level. Must be lightly armoured or unarmoured. This skill is executed at half the huntsman's normal movement rate.

**Predator.** From his youth, the huntsman is trained to hunt and kill animals both fleet and robust. He inflicts +1 hp damage per level of experience when combatting normal and giant animals: amphibians, birds, crustaceans, dinosaurs, insects, mammals, and reptiles. The *predator* ability does not apply to constructs, dæmons, elementals, fungi, giants, humanoids (intelligent), magical beasts, moulds, oozes, otherworldly and alien beings, slimes and jellies, and undead. Sometimes the referee must simply use discretion: Is the target animal- or beast-like or not? For example, a referee might rule that *primitive* ape-men are "beast-like", whilst *advanced* ape-men are intelligent; similarly, vhuurmis (beast-men) are more akin to animals, whilst snake-men are of advanced intelligence. When the *predator* ability is used in concert with the *hide* ability, the initial attack is made at a +4 "to hit" bonus.

**Subdue Animal.** To subdue and tame an animal of equal or lesser HD. To succeed, the following steps must be completed:

- ★ Through combat, physically reduce the target animal to half its hp or less. This damage must be rendered by the huntsman alone; the beast must know its aggressor.
- ★ Restrain the creature via an *unarmed combat* attack. This requires a d20 attack roll (strength "to hit" modifier applies). If hit, the creature is allowed an *avoidance* saving throw to escape restraint. Small-sized animals suffer a -1 save penalty. Large-sized animals gain a +1 save bonus. *N.B.:* Many huntsmen use a bola, lasso, net, or whip to make *prone* his subdual target before attempting to restrain it.
- ★ On the round following restraint, the huntsman attempts to assert dominance. A d% must be rolled. The percent of success is the sum of the huntsman's strength, wisdom, charisma, and level; e.g., a 3<sup>rd</sup> level huntsman with 14 strength, 10 wisdom, and 14 charisma has a 41% chance of subduing his target. Failure indicates the animal is impossible to tame and may continue attempting to break free. Success indicates the animal is defeated (subdued); the huntsman must continue to restrain the creature for a period of 1 turn (10 minutes), kneeling on it, commanding it, forcing submission. Afterwards, he can free it and it will be docile.

A defeated animal can be tamed to complete loyalty (ML 12) after a month of training. The animal can be trained to attack, guard, hunt, fetch, track, and perform other tasks. Multiple animals can be trained – even working in flawless synchronization, if they are reasonably compatible – but their total hit dice can never exceed that of the huntsman, and the months of training are cumulative.

**Track.** To stalk prey, tracing physical signs and scenting as a predator. A huntsman can track at the below suggested probabilities:

- ★ **Wilderness:** A base 10-in-12 chance of finding, identifying, and following fresh tracks outdoors or in natural caverns. If the tracks are not recent, or have faded due to weather or other circumstances, the chance might be reduced to 8-in-12 or worse.
- ★ **Non-Wilderness:** A base 5-in-12 chance to discern tracks in a dungeon, castle, city street, or like setting. If the tracks are not recent, the chance might be reduced to 3-in-12 or worse.

Furthermore, the huntsman can identify the tracked animal type (or even exact species) through examination of its spoor, including size, weight, rate of movement, etc.

**Weapon Mastery.** Mastery with one weapon (+1 "to hit", +1 damage, increased attack rate, etc.). The huntsman must select an appropriate hunting weapon – axe (hand), bola, boomerang, bow, club (light), crossbow, dagger, dart, javelin, knife, lasso, net, sling, spear (long or short), trident, or whip. Additional weapons may be mastered at 4<sup>th</sup>, 8<sup>th</sup>, and 12<sup>th</sup> levels but are limited to the list noted above.

**Werewolf Slayer.** When men suffer the curse of the beast, huntsmen rise to stamp them out. When wielding silver or magical weapons versus lycanthropes, huntsmen gain all the benefits of the *predator* ability, regardless of the advanced intelligence of the afflicted.

**Wilderness Survival.** Hunting, trapping, fishing, boating, shelter building, fire building (including tribal smoke signals), logging, woodworking, raft building, and so on. These are performed without need of a check; they are simply the huntsman's province. Under adverse conditions, the referee may assign a reasonable probability of success. Whether a chance of failure applies is at the discretion of the referee, as reflected by the prevailing conditions and abilities of the huntsman.

**Wilderness Traps.** To set a wilderness trap, including pits, deadfalls (falling logs / rocks), snares, and spring traps. The huntsman is also adept at finding and removing such traps. The huntsman performs these tasks as a thief of equal level performs his *manipulate traps* skill, but he has no special skill with mechanical and/or magical traps.

**Wilderness Fortress.** At 9<sup>th</sup> level, a huntsman who establishes a wilderness fortress is eligible to attract **40 longbowmen** (*studded armour, longbows, short swords*), 0<sup>th</sup>-level fighters of 1d8 hp, and **10 hunters** (*studded armour, longbows, long spears*), 0<sup>th</sup>-level huntsmen of 1d8 hp, each possessing a smattering of huntsman abilities. These warriors include one officer, a 5<sup>th</sup>-level huntsman or fighter responsible for the unit and for communication betwixt the lord and his men. If the reputation of the lord is favourable, further troops may be attracted. Longbowmen and hunters each receive 10 gp per month for their service, plus 200 gp for the officer. Common inhabitants of the huntsman's domain provide 5 sp in taxes per person per month.

## NEW WEAPONS

**Lasso.** A looped rope, usually 20 to 30 feet long, designed to be thrown over a target (within 20 feet) and tightened when pulled. It is typically used to herd animals or to pull a man off a horse. The lasso is made of stiff or weighted rope so that the noose stays open when cast. The ensnared is effectively *prone* (+4 "to hit", no dexterity or shield bonus to AC, if applicable) so long as the lassoeer continues to exert pressure. An *extraordinary feat of strength* can break the lasso; otherwise, 1d2 rounds of cutting will sever it. Lassoed targets cannot be controlled if they weigh twice as much or more than the lassoeer, but a lassoeer on horseback may add the weight of his steed when roping an animal. If a skilled lassoeer rolls a natural 20, the target's neck is lassoed, causing 1d3 hp of strangulation damage per round (unless the target wears a great helm). A master lassoeer can achieve the same result on a natural 19–20.

**Net.** A circular, 10-foot diameter mesh net weighted at the ends with balls of lead. A drawstring rope loops through the perimeter of the mesh. The user wraps both ends of the drawstring rope around his casting arm. He then lashes the net (within 10 feet), attempting to enwrap his target, which must be Medium-sized or smaller. If a hit is scored, the target must roll an *avoidance* save or become enmeshed and thus effectively *prone* (+4 "to hit", no dexterity or shield bonus to AC, if applicable). An *extraordinary feat of strength* can rip open the net, or 2d4 rounds of cutting will open an escape hole; otherwise, unless the rope is held taut, intelligent targets of average dexterity (9–12) can escape in 2d6 rounds, or 1d6 rounds for dexterity (13–18). When using a net to *disarm* (an *advanced combat action*), the net's "to hit" modifier is –1.

#### New Melee Weapons

WC	Type	Cost	Weight	Damage
5	Net (‡)	5 gp	7	–
6	Lasso (+,‡)	3 gp	3	–

(+) = A "true" two-handed melee weapon; must be wielded with two hands.

(‡) = A dexterity-based melee weapon; use dexterity modifier (if applicable), not strength modifier.

