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A Strange Night at The Pint 'n' Pony

~A "SHORT" ADVENTURE~



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A STRANGE NIGHT AT THE PINT 'N' PONY
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A Strange Night at the Pint 'n' Pony

This is a 0-level funnel intended for 12-18 characters. It can be the start of a campaign, or a one-shot adventure. This adventure can be placed in any town or city setting.

Welcome to the **Pint 'n' Pony**! The **Pint 'n' Pony** only allows short patrons (including small humans, gnomes and wildlings). When creating starting characters, use the **“Short” Conversion Occupation Table 1-3s** to modify your roll results within **Table 1-3** (see p. 22 *DCC Core Rulebook*). This will assure that all characters will be small enough to gain access to the **Pint 'n' Pony**.

“Short” Conversion Occupation Table 1-3s

Your Roll
Table 1-3 Adjust your roll to *this entry* on **Table 1-3** and use the notes added.

1-17 is 1-17 see **Note A***

18-19 is 18 see **Note A***

20-24 is 19-20

25-26 is 21

27-28 is 22

29-31 is 23-24

32-33 is 25



34-35 is 26

36-38 is 27-28

39 is 39-47 with **Note A***

40 is 48 with **Note A***

41 is 49 with **Note A***

42 is 50 with **Note A***

43 is 51-52 with **Note A***

44 is 53-54 with **Note A***

45-46 is 55

47-50 is 56-57

51-52 is 58

53-54 is 59

55-56 is 60

57-58 is 61

59-60 is 62

61-62 is 63

63-64 is 64

65-67 is 65-67 see **Note A***

68 is Wild Elfin Farmer (items as 68) see **Note B****

69 is 70 see **Note A***

70 is 71 see **Note A***

71-75 is Gnome Jeweler (items as 72) see **Note C*****

76-77 is Gnome Locksmith (items as 73) see **Note C*****

78-79 is Gnome Mendicant (items as 74) see **Note C*****

80 is 75 (roll d4 1-elf**, 2-halfling, 3-dwarf, or 4-human*)



81-84 is Gnome Merchant (items as 76) see **Note C*****

85 is Wild Elfin Artisan (items as 77) see **Note B****

86 is 78 (roll d4 1-elf**, 2-halfling, 3-dwarf, or 4-Human*)

87 is 79 (roll d4 1-elf**, 2-halfling, 3-dwarf, or 4-Human*)

88 is 80

89 is Halfling Pony Hostler (items as 81)

90 is 82 (roll d4 1-elf**, 2-halfling, 3-dwarf, or 4-Human*)

91 is 83 (roll d4 1-elf**, 2-halfling, 3-dwarf, or 4-Human*)

92 is 37-38 see **Note B****

93 is 33-34 see **Note B****

94 is 86 see **Note A***

95 is 87 see **Note A***

96 is 94

97 is 95 see **Note A***

98 is 96 (roll d4 1-elf**, 2-halfling, 3-dwarf, or 4-Human*)

99 is 97 (This is a human magically altered by their master to appear as a dwarf, but in all respects is human. He/she will return to their human form in 1d30 days.)

100 is Dwarven Woodcutter (items as 98-100)

***Note A:** This is a small human. All small humans have a 20' rate and +1 AC due to size. Why so small? Roll 1d4, you are: (1) a small child; (2) unusually short, 3-4 feet tall; (3) had a halfling or dwarf parent, are short, but in all respects human; (4) afflicted with a magical curse that shrinks you to 2 feet tall. The curse ends after 3d4 days.

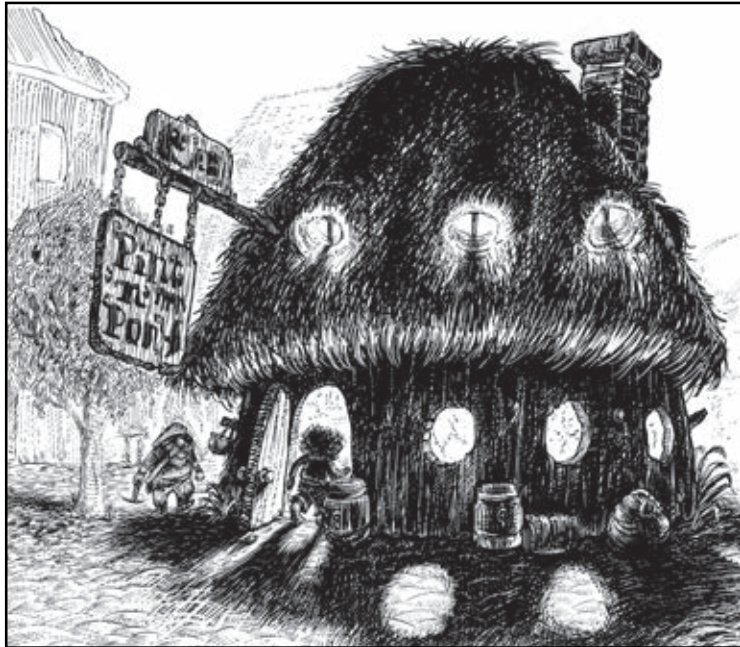
****Note B:** This is a wildling elf (see p. 14 *Greenwood of the Fey Sovereign*). If you don't have wildling elf rules, this is a very short elf. Short elves have a 20' move rate and +1 AC due to quickness and stature.

*****Note C:** This is a gnome (see p. 10 *Crawl* issue #6). If you don't have gnome rules, this is a halfling.

Background

Eons ago, when the world was home to super-science and magic, aliens and devils, there arose a Vicar of the insectoid god Leicca. This Vicar was the first human to stand with the ones called devils—a race of misunderstood insectoid humanoids who were hated and persecuted with an antipathy passed down into the present-day collective psyche (fear of insects). At that time, the devils thrived in what was known as the shadow years, but as humanity restored its grip on civilization, a great pogrom threatened the decimation of Leicca's followers. It was then the Vicar of Leicca arose to cast down four symbolic foes within herself: hatred, fear, ignorance, and desire. Having destroyed these, the Vicar could see that elimination of the legions of Leicca would also doom humanity. The Vicar ultimately gave her life in preservation of insectoids, and Leicca ordained a shrine be built to protect and one day revive her. The magic and science behind its awesome purpose was lost in the cycles of a myriad of ages and revolutions of thought. Leicca became a patron dormant and forgotten, and like insects, made small and weak. But the shrine and its power remained untouched. Until now, that is. Ratmen under the city have built their

society on the trash of the human world, thriving by tunneling in the shadows. They have recently dug up the forgotten crypt and unleashed horrors meant to protect the Vicar of Leicca. To these ancient protective forces and intelligences the modern world makes no sense, and it has driven them mad and murderous. The happy denizens of the **Pint 'n' Pony** are about to unwittingly discover a nightmare, right beneath their hairy little feet.



A Strange Night Begins

Area 1—The Pint 'n' Pony: Once players have generated a group of halflings, dwarves, gnomes and other small-sized characters, read the following:

After a long day of toil and labor, you find yourself in the amber glow of the ever familiar Pint 'n' Pony. Near the warm clutches of its fires is the perfect place to throw off the chill of winter. This halfling-owned tavern, both smoky and small, accommodates only the short folk in town—mostly halflings, but also gnomes and dwarves, and occasionally shorter members of the human and elf races. Its 5-foot ceiling, low chairs, and stocky tables naturally keep big folk and their problems away.

On this night you find yourself once again a few pints into a cozy, merry time amongst friends. It is, however, in the middle of a rousing song of “The Ride of Umbar on the Celestial Owl” that the room shakes and rumbles—and not due to the stout dwarven brew you are imbibing.

As the song dies down, the tremor is interrupted by an explosion of dirt and clay that erupts from the floor right under the central keg table. You watch in horror as the four large



kegs either burst open and spill their golden juices or tumble down into the newly created hole. Emerging from this hole are the perpetrators of this violation—ratmen!

While normally averse to all manner of heroics, you are currently feeling “chemically” encouraged. You reach for the nearest chair, tankard, or cutlery and rush the invaders in hopes of some measure of retribution.

Roll initiative! The PCs are **Buzzed**, see Intoxication Level I.*

The ratmen are as confused and surprised as the PCs. Neither side gains surprise. The ratmen are in a state of panic. They are eager to get away and will attempt to rush to the exit, attacking anyone who blocks the way. Each round they fight and move towards the exits (1a and 1b). This will seem like a menacing raid on the town and

Bar Room Fighting Props

Chairs: Smash an opponent (1d3 dam). This has a 25% chance of knocking out the target. The chair shatters after the first successful hit.

Fireplace: Falling into fire causes 1d6 dam + d3 each round until making a DC 10 Reflex save.

Tables: +2 AC if turned over or hidden under.

Stage: Provides higher ground: +1 attacks. Also, from the stage the chandelier can be reached and swung upon. On the following round, the PC may land anywhere in the tavern with a +3 bonus to hit and +2 damage from the swinging attack. If hit, the victim must roll a contested Reflex save against the attack roll or be knocked prone (if lined up correctly, right into the fireplace!).

Intoxication [level 1]: Buzzed

- -1 Ref Saves and Agi Checks
- +2 Fort Saves, +2 Will Saves
- Slowed speech
- PC has feelings of fearlessness

pantry, but in reality, it is nothing but raw fear. The PCs will not be sober enough to see this right away. Waves of ratmen emerge from the hole over the next four rounds. Six fight to get to the exit on the 2nd round, and another six on the 3rd round. On the 4th round, three, and on the 5th round, three more. In the latter rounds, if the group is overwhelmed or the battle drags on, the ratmen leap past the PCs in a clear panic and flee without attacking.

Ratmen (6, 6, 6, 3, 3): Init +2; Atk claw or bite +1 melee (1d3); AC 11; HD 1d8; hp 5; MV 25'; Act 1d20; SP state of panic -2 to all morale checks; SV Fort +1, Ref +2, Will +0; AL N.

***Preparation Note:** It is recommended the **Buzzed** and **Bar Room Fighting Props** boxes be placed on small cards and given to the players at the start of this event. This will encourage the bar fight to get as rowdy and exciting as possible.

The ratmen have simple clothing and a total of d12 sp. After combat the PCs notice three kegs on the floor cracked and empty, but a fourth has rolled down the rat hole.

Area 1a— The Pantry: *Peeling back a large tattered piece of cheesecloth reveals a small kitchenette and larder. Shelves are bristling with a marvelous array of food, drink, spices, serving dishes, and utensils. Milling about the goods, prepping trays of victuals for customers, is the Pint 'n' Pony's owner, Corden Fatpants. This plump elder halfling is quite hard of hearing and happily goes about his business, taking no notice of you. Apparently, he has no idea of the mayhem in his tavern.*

The pantry has three sharp meat hatchets (1d5 dam) and four cast iron skillets of various sizes (1d4 dam), all of which could help in combat. In a secret drawer under his chopping station is a crossbow and five bolts. If Corden is alerted to the situation, he rallies the patrons to defend the tavern and gives the crossbow and bolts to the luckiest PC. Corden is here in case PCs need focus for the mission. If not alerted sooner, he emerges from the pantry at the end of the combat. His jaw drops at the sight of the wreckage, as does

his platter of mead and mutton. He gives a rousing speech about being pushed around and looked down on. He offers the stock in the pantry to the group if gear is needed. He also notes that one of the kegs may still be good, "...and that's no small prize!" He urges his patrons down the hole.

Corden Fatpants (tavern owner): Init -2 (hard of hearing); Atk club +1 melee (1d4) or crossbow +0 missile (1d6); AC 10; HD 1d8; hp 4; MV 20'; Act 1d20; SP sneak +3; SV Fort +1, Ref -2, Will +3; AL L.

Area 1b—Taking It to the Streets: Ratmen are masters of blending into the night, and prove hard to track. Have Corden remind PCs that there is a breach right here in the tavern. He sends another patron to alert the militia. If players insist on this route, PCs see various ratmen fleeing town, and if caught, the ratmen are terrified. This should pique the curiosity of the PCs—what could have caused such terror?

Area 2—A Hole in One: *Grabbing oil lanterns from the tavern, you rush down the hastily dug dirt tunnel. You cannot help but wonder how ratmen, who usually keep to themselves aside from the occasional theft or trespass, could be inspired to launch such a daring raid. But more importantly, your mind wonders in what shape the precious surviving keg might be. These thoughts spur you to pick up your pace.*

After sliding down a good distance of 50 feet or so, you emerge into a larger tunnel. To your surprise, the floor is rather well crafted with fine flagstone. Perhaps you have emerged into a subterranean ratmen lair. Not far away is the body of a dead ratman—its hair ashen white, skin grayed pale, and body withered in an unnatural way. Beyond him some distance away are others in a similar state.

On a happier note, your keg lies against the wall on the stone floor. Hurray! Not a drop seems to have spilled from its plugged spigot.



Intoxication Level II: Tanked

- -1 To Hit
- -5 Ref Saves and Agi Checks
- -5 Movement
- -1 Fort Saves, +4 Will Saves
- Slurred speech
- PC feels invulnerable

Each player should note which PC is holding the lantern. PCs must make a Will save. The PC with the lowest roll grabs the keg and proceeds to get **Tanked** (see Intoxication Level II). Any **Tanked** PC who continues to drink gets **Smashed** (see Intoxication Level III). Additional drinking will cause a **Blackout**: PC lies prone until the next morning, effectively eliminated from this adventure. The keg has enough ale to raise PCs' intoxication levels a total of eight times.

Once the keg is secured, immediately read:

As you recover your prized keg, you hear a low rumble and turn to find the dirt tunnel you descended is now in the process of collapsing. Rocks fill the hall you stand in. You realize you will certainly need a new way out—and a few kegs to restore the damage done by the ratmen!

The tunnel is hopelessly filled in. PCs with a mining profession attest to its quick and careless construction. The bodies of the ratmen have a strange chill to the touch, but possess nothing of value. The cause of their death is a mystery.

Area 3—Great Hall of the Ratlords: *Passing under a dark stone archway, you enter a huge circular room. Amphitheater seating rises up on all sides to a set of balconies and antechambers. Upon the amphitheater floor is a scene of carnage. Countless ratmen have met their ends in brutal violence. The scene is bathed in a violet light that emanates from what seems to be a large floating lamp some distance above your head. As your eyes adjust, you realize it is no lamp. It is a richly clad ratman whose eyes and mouth pour forth the purple glow. His hands are dripping with gore—you halt your advance but he is already upon you.*

Possessed Ratking: Init +3; Atk energy touch +3 melee (1d6+1); AC 14; HD 4d10; hp 25; MV 25'; Act 1d20 + 1d16; SP possession; SV Fort +2, Ref +3, Will -5; AL C.

Possession: The entity possessing the ratking will stay

Intoxication Level III: Smashed

- -3 To Hit, Will Saves, and Fort Saves
- Ref Saves and Agi Checks require nat 20
- Indiscernible speech
- Movement: Requires a Luck Check. Failure renders PC prone. If already prone, stunned by 1 round of sickness.

within him until his hp reach 5 or less, at which point it exits, dropping him to the floor. The glowing entity will enter the PC with the lowest Luck score. That PC will float upwards, emit a purple light, and flee before anyone can react. This PC will reappear later in **Area 10**.

Breath of Leicca (depicted on door panel 1 in **Area 6**): The purple glow is an eons-old energy artifact created by Leicca to protect and house the memories of his favored avatar. It was encased within the Vicar's coffin as a guardian until the day of her return. The item was released from **Area 6**. It acted to defend the shrine when the ratking entered the newly discovered chamber and it took over his primitive mind to fulfill its duty. Due to its corrupted AI,



it is now a crazed assassin of chaos. It lashes out at the denizens of this realm as would a madman lost in a dream. Its survival protocol is strong, so once it takes over a host, it flees until it regains its bearings in this alien realm.

If the ratking survives (or as he dies) he mutters something in broken common, “. . . we found . . . Lord of Doom . . . only light can defeat it. Escape the dark while you yet live . . .” He then passes out. His **elaborate iron-embroidered robe** provides +1 AC. It cannot be worn with other armor.



Area 3a—The Balcony Antechambers: Exploring these chambers reveals gruesome scenes where ratmen younglings were torn apart by the possessed ratking. Each chamber has piles of shredded cloth, leaves, and dry detritus for nesting. Searching the nests reveals 1d20 sp in each chamber. One nest has a scroll that gives off a faint yellow light. This **Scroll of Light** is a quadrant in common:

“Intone luminous rays to banish demonic ways”

It is repeated four times. When the poem is spoken aloud, the room fills with blinding light and one refrain vanishes. PCs will likely expend one of the four uses before realizing they should save it. The scroll’s light damages the **Breath of Leicca** if a proper reading is made. Have the reader roll 1d10 + Int or Per modifier (no spell burn allowed). On a 10 or more, the light is so brilliant it causes 1d16 damage to the Reborn Vicar of Leicca (see **Area 10**).

Area 4—Storage: You come to a heavy iron grate clearly designed to secure something of value. It has no lock, but

is nonetheless a formidable blockade. High on the gate is a small window between the bars. Peering through the bars, you make out a room housing numerous heavy oak barrels.

This room secures the valuables and food stores for the ratmen clan. Only a few captains and the ratking know where a secret stone in the floor is located. If the area outside the grate is searched, the secret stone is discovered on a DC 16 Int check. Pressing and twisting this stone raises the grate. Otherwise, a DC 19 Str check is required to lift it. One other PC can help, adding their Str modifier to the check. Only the smallest PCs can attempt to squeeze through the window (DC 12 Agi check).

The room contains 12 barrels (2 of ale, 6 of stale crackers, and 4 of rotting roughage)—a ratman feast! Anyone searching who makes a DC 17 Int check spots a tiny “RK” burnt into the bottom of one of the barrels. Thoroughly searching this barrel reveals an oilskin sack containing 97 gold coins stashed beneath the crackers. PCs specifically dumping the contents or going deep into each barrel will discover the hidden stash. It takes two or more PCs to carry or dump out a barrel. The ale is of decent quality. Each barrel can raise PCs’ intoxication levels a total of eight times.

Area 5—Trash Pit: Here the clan dumps its refuse and droppings. The hole is hidden beyond a sudden dip in the hall elevation, making it hard to spot unless actively looking. The lead character must make a DC 5 Luck check or accidentally step in. Each PC after the first raises the DC by 5. Once a PC falls, the group will see the hole.

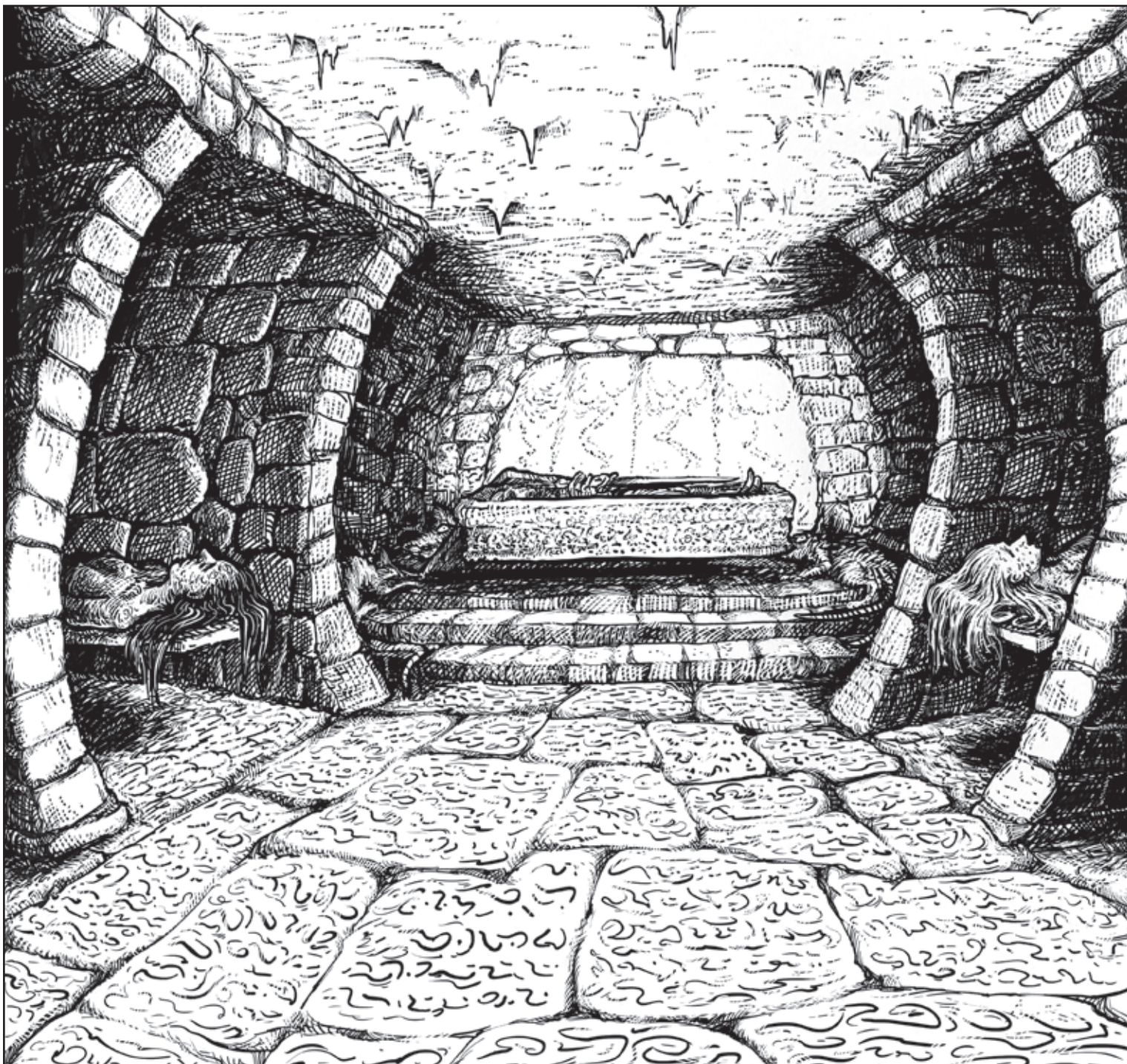
The drop is 30’ but the bottom is full of trash, which softens the impact (1d3 dam). Survivors may regret their fortune. An acrid stench assaults the senses and a DC 15 Fort save is required to avoid contracting the **Fetid Morra**. Those afflicted will periodically throw up for 3d3 days, after which they will die of dehydration unless cured.

The pit is urine-soaked and filled with bones, dung, rotted meat, bits of clothing, rusted iron scraps, and foul molds. A careful search will reveal **soft elven boots**. These boots grant the user +5 MV due to a minor enchantment. They were tossed into the pit because they didn’t fit ratmen feet. Trying to clamber out without rope requires a DC 10 Agi or Str check. Failure results in another fall (1d3 dam).

Area 5b—Miles of Tunnel: Add random encounters here, in the hall to **Area 8**, to **Area 10**, or where you see fit (1d5):

(1) **Chittering Doom!** *A skittering is heard in the cavern. It grows to an echoing torrent as roaches, beetles,*

HANDOUT A



flies, centipedes, and other unknown bizarre insects move with common purpose in the direction you travel.

A DC 15 Agi check is required to avoid crushing a bug. Once one is crushed, the others coalesce into a purple glowing mass in the form of an insectoid man. This avatar of Leicca can dissipate each round to blast out an area of effect attack, then quickly reform.

Insectoid Avatar (5): Init -2; Atk swarm blast special (1d2); AC 10; HD 2d8; hp 10; MV 20'; Act 1d20; SP

swarm blast (DC 7 Ref save for all within 5' or 1d2 damage of stinging insect bites), takes 1/2 damage from all physical attacks; SV Fort +2, Ref +1, Will +0; AL N.

(2) **Ambush!** Ratmen warriors infected by the **Breath of Leicca** wait in ambush behind cavern rocks. Allow alert PCs a DC 10 Int check to avoid being surprised. If these ratmen are killed, they appear relieved, as a harsh purple light (a small portion of the **Breath of Leicca**) exits the body and flies away. They each carry a short sword and shield.

Ratmen warriors (5): Init +1; Atk short sword +2 melee (1d6); AC 12; HD 1d8; hp 6; MV 20'; Act 1d20; SP possessed, no morale checks; SV Fort +2, Ref +1, Will +0; AL N.

(3) **Is that you, brother?** *A haunting giggle echoes from the darkness ahead. It sounds vaguely familiar, but distinctly mad. The laughter sends chills up your spine, yet somehow you feel it beckoning you forth.*

(4) **Light Horror.** *Your lanterns sputter and flicker in an eerie synchronized manner. Shadows of massive insectoid demons fill the corridor.* A DC 12 Will save is required or PCs drop their oil lanterns. If dropped, a DC 7 Ref save is required to avoid catching fire (1d4 fire damage) each round until the save is made.

(5) **Sober up!** *You are losing your buzz.* Unless able to drink, each PC is sobering up. Reduce intoxication level by 1. If entirely sober, a DC 7 Will save is required to avoid trepidation (-5 initiative) while sober.

Area 6—Shrine to the Vicar of Leicca: *The entrance to this large chamber was created by what appears to be excavation by the ratmen. (If there is a dwarf in the group, read:) The excavation seems to have been very recent. (Then continue:) You step over ancient sickly green stones and enter a long hall built by another people from a bygone era. Etched into the floor from wall to wall is a wild mysterious script. Niches line the left and right sides of the chamber before giving way to a few steps that rise to a platform. Floating there is a dark green coffin crafted of a strange translucent, slightly luminescent material. The coffin lid is set aside and the withered bodies of four armed ratmen lie dead around it. Beyond the coffin is a heavy stone door with relief images depicting the victories of a hero.*

Share **Handout A** with the players. Recently the ratmen accidentally opened this area. The chamber activated a number of ancient empowered super-science defenses that are still partially active. It was the intent of Leicca to restore his Vicar to life one day, thus he suspended six of the Vicar's greatest consorts in a timeless slumber akin to a deep space freeze. The runic symbols, once spoken by the arisen Vicar (or anyone else), would restore her consorts to life. Once PCs look into a niche, read or paraphrase the following:

There are six niches. Within each a body, perfectly preserved, is lying down on a floating table of light. All six are tall human females—perhaps servants, guards, or priestesses. Each of their naked forms is covered in runic tattoos identical to the writings on the floor. Even with no knowledge

of what these words are, you cannot help but feel they keep the women alive. Despite the layers of dust on their bodies, a faint rise and fall of their chest suggests deep slumber.

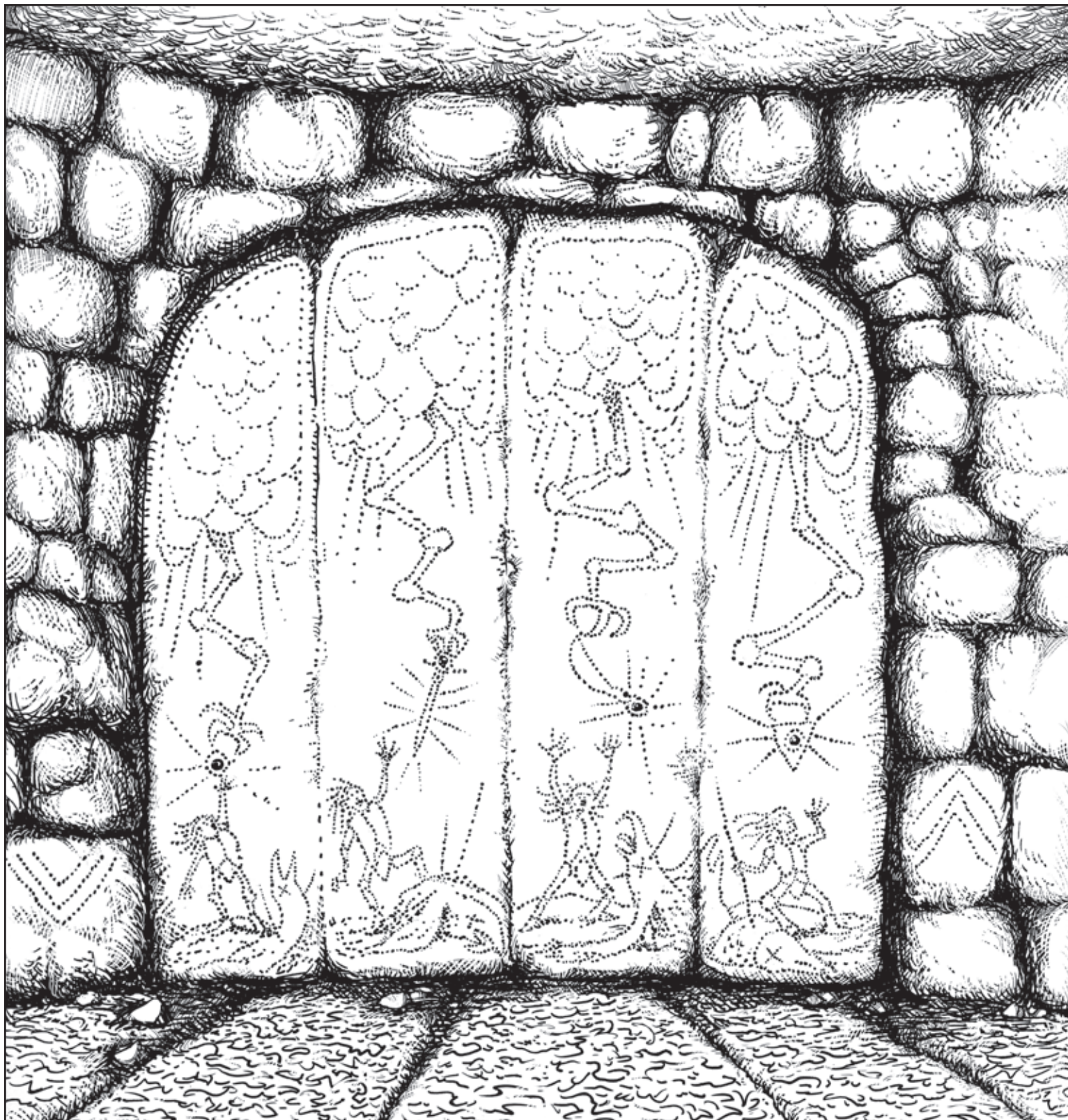
Each figure is impervious to harm while in this enchanted sleep state. Nothing save reading the script on the floor can revive them. Alas, it is a language lost in time, which modern man has neither the mind nor the vocal capacity to utter.

Claw of Leicca (depicted on door panel 2): PCs near the dais will hear the soft muttering of a child. This is the intelligence of the AI logic coded into the **Claw of Leicca**—one of the four gifts for the Vicar—which appears as a sword. However, it is actually a piece of alien technology. This is the main defense remaining in the shrine. The ratking and his guards never reached the claw, as the **Breath of Leicca** leapt from the coffin, possessed the king, and caused him to decimate the clan, leaving the surviving ratmen in a panic, which ultimately forced them to tunnel their way to the **Pint 'n' Pony**.

Floating Green Coffin: *The coffin's highly ornate details show legions of suffering, lamenting, and writhing dead. The dead all appear to be insectoid people of some sort. Within is a corpse that you venture to guess was a woman, but it's so old it has partially turned to dust. She was a human of noble standing. Resting on her chest is a great sword of odd build—you could swear it is alive.*

Anyone touching the **Claw of Leicca** must succeed on a DC 20 Will save. Failure immediately causes the bearer: (1) to be consumed with chaos (shift alignment), (2) to fall under control of the Claw (Judge controlled), and (3) to attack a random PC and flee to **Area 10**. The surprise





attack is at +5 for 1d8+3 dam. On a natural 20, the blade drains the life of the victim, granting the drained amount as temporary hp to the sword's wielder, and bestowing 1d3 Str for 1 turn. The blade has a strong will and complex alien mind. It is confused and only fills the user with an all-consuming hatred of this strange world.

There is nothing else of value in the coffin. Touching the Vicar's corpse will cause it to collapse in the area touched. The clothing is odd and of a time or culture entirely unfamiliar to the PCs. Attempts to take the clothing result in further destruction of the corpse.

The four dead rats were royal guards and possess serviceable short swords and shields that PCs may find useful. 1d5 gold coins can be found in each of their pouches.

Great Stone Door: When inspected, present **Handout B** and read the following: *In four relief images, a hero defeats a birdlike creature as a great multi-jointed insectoid arm extends gifts from the heavens above. You sense this sculpted portal is dedicated to a champion venerating a long forgotten deity. No handle is visible, only four finger-sized holes.*

The door was meant to keep raiders from entering, allow the revived Vicar to exit, and immortalize her valor. It will shift back 3 feet, allowing access to **Area 9**, if a finger is inserted to the holes in ascending order, lowest to highest. The order is panel 1, 4, 3, then 2. It can also be forced open due to age. A successful DC 20 Str check will open it one foot, allowing PCs to squeeze through to **Area 9**. Up to two PCs can add their strength modifier to the PC making the check. If the door is opened without force, the **Escutcheon of Leicca** rises up from a floor space under the thick portal. Shoving open the great door will never expose the hidden compartment below.

Escutcheon of Leicca (depicted on door panel 4): This small handheld ball emits a field of hard light matter resembling a shield. It also thinly covers the bearer with an invisible field. The purpose of this item was to protect the Vicar from the voracious aggression of the other artifacts. Without it, the **Claw** and **Breath of Leicca**, which have alien intellects, would overwhelm human minds. Leicca knew this and created the Escutcheon to manage these forces. It will act as a shield of exceptional quality (+2 AC). It also has a defensive force against mind control (+1 Will saves) and causes the user to fully resist the **merge of the abomination** (see **Area 10**). Finally, in combat with birds or bird-like creatures, the shield emits a 5' subsonic pulse. This force knocks birds unconscious (for 1d4 rounds) if a DC 10 Fort save is failed.

The **Emblem of Leicca** depicted in the mural can be found in one of the thieves' hands (see **Area 9**).

Area 7—The Vent: *The hallway ends abruptly some 15 feet ahead of you in an unfinished tunnel. Construction progress appears to have halted.*

Only if someone goes to the end of the hall do they see a narrow vent above. Climbing the vent requires a DC 5 Agi or Str check. Failure results in 3d3 damage as the PC tumbles back down the shaft. The vent ascends 30 feet to a hall above.

Area 8—The Champion: *After miles of narrow tunnel, the*



passage widens and you catch a fresh breeze of cool night air. Silhouetted at the cavern exit is an imposing figure. The giant is backlit by moonlight, stars, and the twilight pinks and purples of the skyline and forest. You must be west of town. In his paws he holds a massive spiked club. He snarls at you in a strained and heavily accented voice, “who-who-you?” Then he mumbles to himself before you can answer and growls, “come out, me see you!”

Tonight this ratman champion witnessed terrified hordes of his clan flee the cavern exit while at this post. He has been praying to his god for the last hour. He is high-strung, but his deity **Raish Tari** blessed him with the following:

Frightful Visage: Usually a burly 5' ratman, he is now 10' tall. This has given him a bit of bravery and boldness.

Protective Curse: Anyone landing a killing blow on the ratman champion will see the phantom of a great three-headed rat rushing at them. Peals of thunder and torrents of rain soak just this PC for 8 hours. The cursed PC loses 2 Luck and is filled with a dreadful sensation.

Ratman (champion): Init +2; Atk huge spiked club +2 melee (1d8+2); AC 12; HD 2d8; hp 9; MV 30'; Act 1d20; SP blessed; SV Fort +2, Ref +0, Will +1; AL N.

The champion is clutching a holy symbol. It is a circular wooden amulet showing three ragged parallel lines. He also has a 30-foot rope and some fine cheese. His huge spiked club (1d8 dam) requires two hands and 13 Str to use.

He will parley, but his rudimentary common is hard to

understand. Occasionally he uses the wrong word. He thinks the PCs are demons and attempts to lure them out of the cave. He points his amulet at them, calls out to **Raish Tari**, and mutters in ratspeak. He is highly volatile but not without reason. If properly calmed, he explains he witnessed fellow ratmen exit the caverns in terror. If asked about friends who may have exited, he says, “Meh no see dems. Dems maybes gund down tooda undars da city water place”(referring to **Area 10**).

Area 9—The Shrine Outer Chamber: *You step into an old stone chamber with three ornate coffins, tipped over and looted. A few bones are scattered nearby. Across the room, two dead looters lie in an exit stairwell. Each wears garments of a lost age. One is holding a fine jeweled necklace. Oddly, his other hand clutches his own throat. Beyond them, the stairs are clogged with stones.*

This is the outer chamber protecting the Vicar’s Shrine. Long ago it exhausted its protective and defensive capacities against various raiders. The greatest trick of the outer chamber was to make the looters think they had in fact found the Vicar’s body and gifts of Leicca. Most of the items are long gone, but served as clever counterfeits to satiate thieves. The door (to **Area 6**) was never opened from this side.

Nanite Defense: Taking the **Emblem** or **armor** requires a DC 8 Fort save. What appears to be a terrible flesh-eating

disease covers the PC. These are actually defensive nanites that swarmed the thieves. Failure causes a painful death over 5 rounds, which is an ugly affair.

Armor: Each thief wears a chitinous hide armor. While tattered and stiff, it still protects. This odd segmented armor is lightweight and strong. It looks like cloth laced with wood. In reality, it is an alien biotechnology farmed from insectoid husks (+2 AC, -2 Armor Check penalty).

Emblem of Leicca (depicted on door panel 3 in **Area 6**): This communication device allowed the Vicar access to her blessed patron. The device appears as a jeweled beetle-shaped necklace. It was the first line of defense against tomb raiders. For ages, anyone in possession of the **Emblem** could speak with, receive aid from, and even be controlled by Leicca. Thus, the thieves found here choked themselves to death at Leicca’s bidding. Over the eons, Leicca became dormant and the item will now only be valued for its luster. This rare jeweled item would fetch a mighty price from any jeweler, but also cause much envy and invite possible theft. PCs would be wise to hold it until they are powerful enough to defend it in a wealthy marketplace. PCs with related professions estimate a 200-300gp value. If Leicca’s power returns, the item restores its capacity and is priceless in the eyes of his clerics.

The stairs are old and worn. They rise up some 20 feet before becoming partially cluttered with debris and blockage. After



another 10 feet, it becomes hard to move forward. With effort PCs may escape up these stairs by making three Agi checks: DC 8, DC 11, then DC 14. Failure results in being crushed by shifting rocks (1d3 damage). After three PCs survive these rolls, a path is cleared for the rest. The stairs open into the cellar of an old granary built on ancient burial grounds.

Area 10—Under City Lake: *The tunnel descends for hundreds of feet, coiling and spiraling down. The air grows colder and the walls glisten with moisture, eventually opening into a vast chamber where the churning of a great body of water can be heard. You press forward onto a beach where dark green water splashes against moss-colored sand and rocks. This must be part of an immense reservoir supplying not only the ratmen clan, but likely your city wells and the surrounding farms.*

If the **Claw** and **Breath of Leicca** possessed two characters previously, the following is visible:

Ahead among the rocks on the beach two figures struggle. As you move closer, you see it is no struggle but some sort of horrific merging. Your lanterns reveal the bodies of your two friends transforming and merging into an abomination of what they once were.

Twisted by the warping power of the artifacts, these two friends have been genetically modified to Leicca's warped specifications of rebirth for the Vicar. The PCs have 1 round of free actions before it turns on them.

Reborn Vicar of Leicca (abomination): Init +1; Atk death touch +4 melee (1d6+1); AC 10; HD 3d7; hp 14; MV 40'; Act 1d20 + 1d16; SP absorb dead (1 action to gain 5hp from any dead PC); SV Fort +2, Ref -2, Will +2; AL C.

If *only one* of either the **Claw** or **Breath of Leicca** possessed a PC, that PC is sneaking around here, and will attempt to merge with anyone in possession of an artifact using stealth, charm, and guile. Use the stats of the possessed PC, with this boon: +5 hp, +5 Init, +5 to hit, +2 dam. **Note:** a PC with the **Escutcheon of Leicca** is able to resist the attempt. Lacking an artifact, the possessed character attempts a sneak attack and then merges with the slain PC. One round later, after a gruesome scene, they become the abomination (see above).

The **Claw of Leicca** will be entirely spent by the process of transformation. It becomes inert once the abomination is born. It can be picked up and used as an excellent normal long sword. If the abomination is defeated, a purple glow in the form of a great insect (the **Breath of Leicca**) exits the host and races across the lake. This could create

an ongoing adventure that the Judge may or may not wish to pursue. If the **Claw of Leicca** is recovered before the abomination is made, it maintains its corrupting capacity, and possessed PCs will attempt to flee the area.

The Rise of Leicca

There are several hooks for an ongoing adventure, or at least a possible new and powerful "frenemy." The gifts of Leicca that contained part of its consciousness have awakened a long-dormant deity. The alien mind of Leicca cannot be understood with standard human ethos. So, while Leicca may be appreciative that the PCs sparked life into him and the lost Vicar's gifts, the Vicar was not revived, and the ceremony of her six maidservants was not honored. If the PCs helped the ratmen (especially the ratman champion) to eliminate the abomination and Leicca's rise, the rat god **Raish Tari** will *boon each member of the group with 1 or 2* points of luck depending on their overall compassion and treatment of the ratmen.

PCs may take the inert **Claw of Leicca** and try to learn how to power it (and potentially reboot the AI) with a proper power source. Can the AI be handled? The weapon is one of super-science; therefore, access to powerful patrons might be required to reveal the value of the **Claw** and restore it. This may create a way for Leicca to both aid and harass PCs.

The same holds true for the **Emblem**, **Escutcheon**, and **Breath of Leicca**. What happens if they are united? Is this to be prevented? Leicca may orchestrate events and plant knowledge to convince PCs that uniting these items would greatly vex or destroy Leicca and give the human world terrible power. In truth, the unification will allow Leicca to revive the Vicar and restore a powerful hold on the lesser realms. Future adventures could include locations with secrets for the PCs to discover about the language in the shrine, and once again be subtly prompted by Leicca to restore the six consorts—unleashing another powerful insectoid ally. The ongoing epic of this reborn patron could serve as a way to bond a band of small heroes. Or, the Judge may deem Leicca grateful to PCs for their inadvertent services and offer patronage—or "reward" them by sending them into the **devil** (see p. 191 *MCC Core Rulebook*) wastes of Leicca's dimensional homeland. Traveling to Leicca's original time and place could be an exciting **cross-over** (see p. 262 *MCC Core Rulebook*) from DCC to MCC.

At the very least, PCs return home, gain level 1, and have an amazing tale about a strange night at the **Pint 'n' Pony!**



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