



Danger in the Deep!

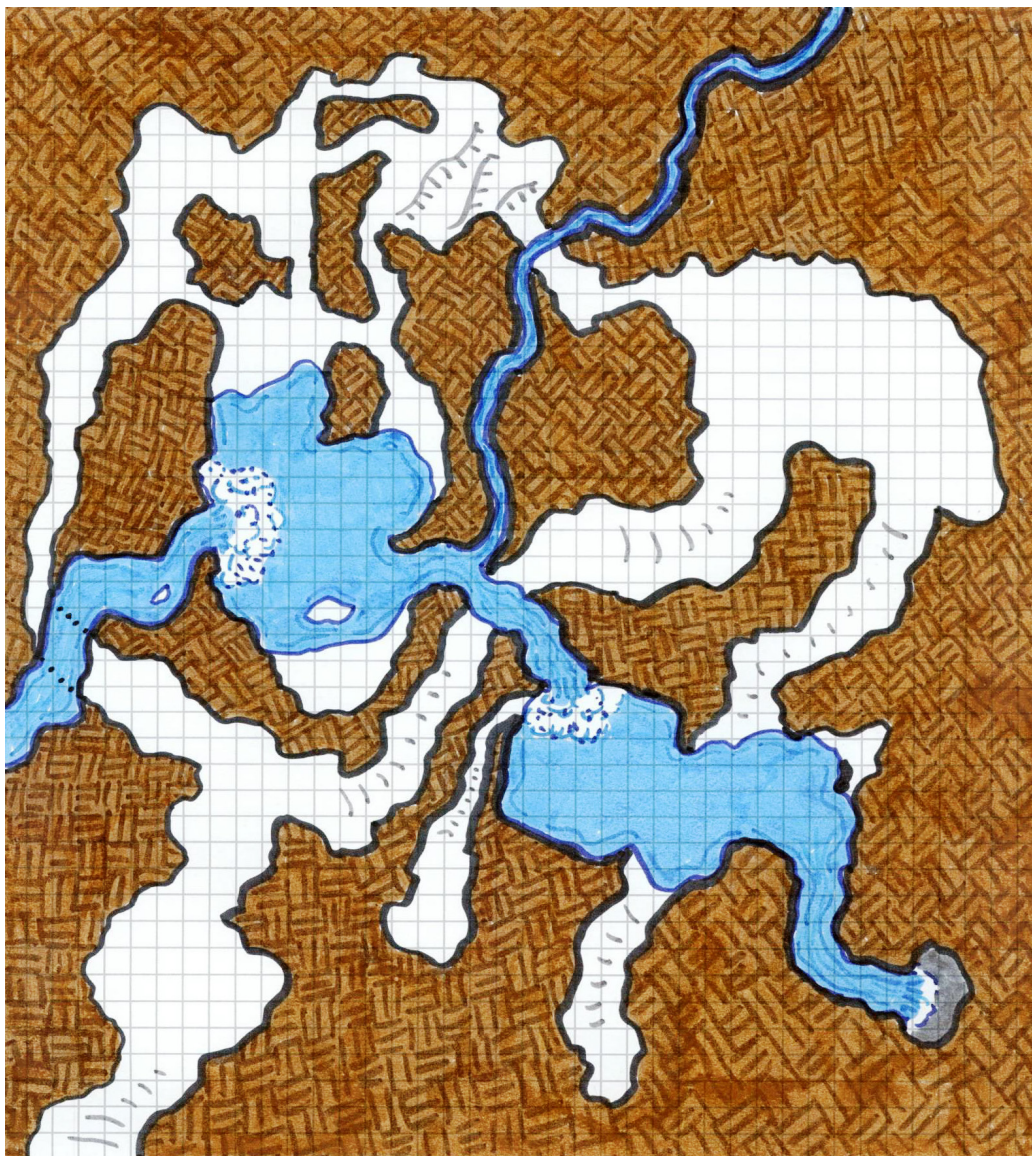
by Daniel J. Bishop



For 2nd Level



Player Map



by Daniel J. Bishop

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Introduction

Danger in the Deep! is an adventure module for the *Dungeon Crawl Classics Role-playing Game* intended for a party of 4-8 Player Characters averaging 2nd level each. This product offers part of a cave system to explore, which can be linked with other adventures of the judge's devising. Many of the creatures herein are designed to facilitate role-playing opportunities. If the PCs choose to talk before they draw swords, things will go easier for them.

Adventure Hooks

There are several reasons that PCs might be tempted to explore the cavern complex:

- They may be seeking to gain either *Cold Stone* or *Running Water*.... or both.
- Stories of a vast hoard by an underground lake, guarded by an enormous beast, might tempt the greedy.
- A local prince (or PC family member) has fallen ill, and his doctors say that only the “blue flower of the deep” can save him.
- An enemy of the PCs gains enormous vitality from potions brought back from the caves – can the PCs cut off the source?
- The caverns lead down to another place the PCs want to get to, possibly a “back door” into another adventure location they wish to explore.

Random Encounters

There is a 1 in 6 chance of a random encounter every 30 minutes (3 turns) of game time, and every 1 hour of real time. If a random encounter is indicated, roll 1d5 and consult the following table. The judge is reminded that not every encounter needs to be with a living creature; some may be with dead creatures, the tracks of living creatures, or other signs of their passage.

1d5	Encounter
1	Ambulating fungus: Init -2; Atk touch +0 melee (1d3 from cold); AC 7; HD 3d8; MV 20'; Act 1d16; SP fungus, immune to mind-affecting, cold aura, healed by heat- or fire-based attacks, double damage from cold-based attacks; SV Fort +6, Ref -2, Will +0; AL N. This 4' high pale yellow fungus "strolls" about with jerky movements on six thin multi-jointed stalks. It consumes heat from creatures and warm objects; anything generating heat within 10' of the fungus must succeed in a DC 10 Fort save or take 1d3 damage from the cold.
2	Gelatinous slime mold: Init -4; Atk drop +5 melee (1d3 points of temporary Stamina damage; Fort DC 10 for half); AC 7; HD 1d8; MV 10' or climb 10'; Act 1d20; SP surprise 1 in 5, attach, ongoing damage, attacks against it damage host, vulnerability to clerical magic, immune to mind-affecting and cold; SV Fort +5, Ref -4, Will +0; AL N. This is a mobile orange-red slime mold, about 2' in diameter. It is an ambush predator, moving along ceilings and dropping down onto potential prey. Once it lands on a creature, it cannot be removed until slain, and does automatic damage each hour. Attacks that harm the slime mold also cause half-damage to its host, including spells, although 3 HD of clerical healing will make it dormant for 1d5 days (it remains attached, but does no further damage) and a <i>neutralize poison or disease</i> spell with a result of 16+ will cause it to dry out and flake away, killing the mold.
3	Giant centipede: Init +3; Atk bite +6 melee (1d6 plus poison); AC 14; HD 3d6; MV 60'; Act 1d20; SP detect thoughts 500', poison; SV Fort -1, Ref +2, Will -1; AL C. As per the core rulebook, pages 398-399. Poison is Fort DC 12 or suffer 1d12 damage.

4	Land bats (1d3): Init +4; Atk bite +0 melee (1d2-1, minimum 0); AC 15; HD 1 hp; MV 20' or climb 10'; Act 1d14; SV Fort -2, Ref +6, Will -2; AL N. Land bats are small bats whose wings have atrophied into tiny legs. They are not typically dangerous to the PCs individually, but if a third land bat encounter is rolled, it is instead a swarm (use the statistics from Area 2 in this adventure). Individual land bats may attack the fallen, get into food bags, etc.
5	Large slug: Init +0; Atk none; AC 6; HD 2 hp; MV 5' or climb 5'; Act none; SV Fort +0, Ref -8, Will -5; AL N. This is a 1d3' long phosphorescent blue slug that gives off a glow equivalent to candlelight. It eats microorganisms that grow in the cracks of the rock, and which are carried by water as it passes through the minerals. Roasted slowly over a fire it tastes surprisingly good...almost like rubbery-textured almond-stuffed trout.

Encounter Areas

1. Entrance: *The mouth of the cavern is 45' wide at its farthest point, rising to a height of 100' or more like a great inverted V. Beyond the entrance, the cleft can be seen descending at a sharp angle and to the right. Where the sunlight reaches inside the cave mouth, thick mosses grow...but the central path is worn clear, as though it has seen heavy usage.*

Bats roost in the high spaces of the cave entrance. There are thousands of them, and they leave the cave at dusk, and return at dawn, in great swirling clouds – falcons which prey on the bats circle in the sky before nightfall. There is a great deal of guano and mud in the passage. The tunnel height drops drastically, until it is only 20' high where it enters **Area 2**.

There is enough brushwood, stunted but strong, near the entrance to tie a rope. Otherwise, the mud and guano in the entrance tunnel make traversing this way difficult for those who go on two feet – Agility checks must be made to go down (DC 5) or up (DC 10) without slipping, per 20' travelled. Failure means the character slips and slides 1d3-1 x 10' down the slope toward (or into) **Area 2**. Armor check penalties apply. Thieves may add their bonus to climb sheer surfaces, and any character may crawl to gain a +1d bonus on the dice chain to this check.

Crawling or sliding through mud and guano is unpleasant. It smells abominably, announcing the character's presence to anything with a nose until he has had a chance to clean himself properly. Worse, the guano crawls with vermin – roaches, white crickets, and the foot-long centipedes which feed on them. Each time a character ends up in close contact with the muck, he must succeed in a Luck check or take 1d3 points of temporary Agility damage due to vermin in his clothing and/or armor. This damage is restored immediately upon stripping and removing the vermin. Finally, if the first Luck check is failed, a second Luck check must succeed or the character is bitten by a centipede (Fort DC 14 or suffer 1d3 points of temporary Strength damage, and the area of the bite is red and swollen).

This tunnel descends 120' into the ground.

2. Fungal Cavern: Note that characters may well slide into this area after slipping down the entrance tunnel. Those who do automatically trigger fungal spores, as described below. This should be resolved before the cavern description is read.

The tunnel comes abruptly into a large cavern, where bioluminescent fungi shine in the chilly darkness with cold blue and pale orange lights. Narrow paths, whether from some small animals or as a result of the pattern of the growths themselves, thread their way through this cavern. The ceiling is some 40 to 60 feet above the uneven floor, judging by the spots of pale light shining aloft like distant stars.

Characters who move through the cavern heedlessly, or who slide into the cave from **Area 1** automatically trigger fungal spores in a 20' diameter cloud. Otherwise, a DC 10 Agility check allows characters to move through the cavern without triggering spores (halflings use 1d24). In combat, a random character must make a Luck check each round, or trigger a spore cloud.

This cavern is home to land bats, whose wings have atrophied into spindly legs. Normally they consume insects and similar vermin, which feed off the guano in **Area 1**, but their teeth are sharp, and they are capable of draining blood. The land bats attack as a swarm; reducing them to 0 hp doesn't slay them all, but does disperse the swarm, ending the attack. Creatures in this cavern can be attacked again by a swarm with half hit points, although the swarm will then only attack wounded creatures, and even then only if they are small or alone.

Land bat swarm: Init +2; Atk swarming bite +3 melee (1d4 plus disease and vampire drain); AC 10; HD 4d8; hp 17; MV 20' or climb 10'; Act special; SP bite all targets within 20' x 20' space, half damage from non-area attacks, vampire bite (any target wounded by the swarm takes an additional 1 damage per round until entire swarm is killed), disease (see below), immune to effects of fungal spore clouds; SV Fort +2, Ref +4, Will -2; AL N.

These bats carry withermight, a deadly wasting disease that is difficult to contract but potentially deadly. At the end of a combat, each creature damaged by the bats must succeed in a Fort save (DC equal to damage taken). Those who fail this save suffer 1 point of temporary Strength damage after an incubation period of 1d3 days. Thereafter, each day the character suffers an additional 1d3 points of temporary Strength damage unless they succeed on a DC 15 Fort save. **This disease does not heal naturally.** Either magical healing is required, such as from a cleric, or the diseased individual must consume one of the blue flowers of the deep (see **Areas 18** and **19**), which can be picked no more than 3 days prior to consumption. These flowers allow a single DC 10 Fort save, per flower, to end the disease (which does not cure the damage done).

If a spore cloud is triggered, roll 1d7 and consult the following table:

1d7	Spore color	Effect
1	Black	This thick cloud obscures visibility, causing characters (but not the land bats) to suffer a -2 penalty to attack rolls for 1d5 rounds.
2	Pale yellow	These spores explode from the fungus, embedding themselves in the skin of those who fail a Luck check. For 1d3 rounds, they cannot distinguish friend from foe – the judge should describe attacking humanoids or demons, and if the PC attacks them, a random ally is the target.
3	Rich yellow	Anyone who breathes these spores takes a -1d penalty on the dice chain until they can consume at least half a water skin of water, as the spores dehydrate the characters, leaving them parched and disoriented. Quick-thinking characters (i.e., those who immediately announce that they hold their breath) can avoid breathing with a DC 10 Reflex save.

4	Orange	Those who breathe these spores recover 1 HD worth of hit points as the alien fungus grows to replace damaged tissue. However, each time a character is so healed, their Personality is permanently reduced by 1. This is a consequence both of the spores growing within the character's brain and the appearance of strange growths on his body. Anything that removes the Personality damage also does 1 HD of permanent damage to the character, on a 1 point per 1 HD basis. Quick-thinking characters can avoid breathing with a DC 10 Reflex save.
5	Light blue	These spores embed themselves onto the skin and gear of anyone in their cloud. After 1d3 rounds, they begin to glow with a soft light equal to candlelight, and continue to do so for 1d5 hours. Metallic items (including weapons drawn in the spore cloud) are partially consumed – for every hour they glow, armor loses 1 point of AC protection, and damage done by weapons is reduced by -1d on the dice chain. Metallic creatures take 1d3 damage per hour. The judge must determine the effects on other gear. There is no save.
6	Dark blue	Fort DC 10 to avoid a sneezing fit that causes the character to lose his next action. Quick-thinking characters can avoid breathing with a DC 10 Reflex save.
7	White	These deadly spores force those breathing them to make a DC 20 Fort save or suffer 1d3 points of temporary Stamina damage for 1d5 rounds. Quick-thinking characters can avoid breathing with a DC 15 Reflex save.

Characters may intentionally cause the fungi to spore, in hopes of gaining a specific spore type. Allow a DC 10 Intelligence check to gain the desired spores. Note that the land bats are immune to all of these effects.

3.Under the River: *The passage begins to slope downward, and you can hear a muffled rushing sound overhead- moisture seems to seep from many cracks in the stone.*

The passage here goes under the underground river. Characters can hear the rushing waters above as they pass under, and water drips through tiny cracks in the ceiling (20' above) to create a fine mist, which can be felt 30' away from where the river passes over the tunnel. The mist is not enough to put out torches, but it is enough to make footing treacherous. Running characters require a DC 10 Reflex save to avoid falling, and falling characters require a

Luck check to avoid taking 1d3 damage as they hit the stone.

4. Natural Steps: *A terrace of natural steps leads downward here, and you can easily hear the roar of moving water below you. The ceiling begins to grow lower overhead, and is dotted here and there with small spider-webs.*

The ceiling height starts at 20', but lowers to 10' by the time **Area 5** is reached. There are many small webs down this way; they are the creations of light blue spiders with darker mottled patches, the spawn of the Spinwoman at **Area 6**. They seem to regard the PCs with unwonted intelligence, and can speak the language of spiders. The PCs are much too large to consider prey (for now), so they only wish to satisfy their curiosity and ensure their own safety. AC 12; 1 hp each.

5. Running Water: *The path ahead is cut by a channel of darkly running water, 10 to 15 feet across. It flows from the northeast to the southwest, without about a foot of clearance over the water where it cuts into or out of the rock. You can hear the roaring of a great cataract echoing through the river tunnel – it seems louder to the southwest.*

This water is fast and deep (6'). Jumping across requires a DC 15 Strength check, and armor check penalties apply. A running jump is possible, reducing the check to DC 10, but even success requires a DC 10 Reflex save to avoid falling prone on the far side. See **Area 16** for potential consequences of this.

A character who fails falls into the river and is swept away. A single DC 20 Reflex save is allowed to grab the mouth of the tunnel to the southeast. A DC 5 Strength check is required to hold on each round (and, again, armor check penalties apply). Without help, such a character cannot escape the pull of the river. Those who fail the Reflex save, or a Strength check to hold on, are swept 40' downriver over the course of a single round, and then fall 60' down into **Area 20**, taking 6d6 falling damage as a result (DC 10 Reflex save for half damage; those who succeed will not suffer broken bones).

6. Why They Might Run: *The passage ahead narrows as it descends, but the ceiling ascends into a natural chimney, with a large pile of tumbled stone beneath it, impeding your easy progress further.*

Travelling north from **Area 3**, the tunnel narrows until it is only 10' across, but the ceiling draws away until it reaches a height of 35'. At the area marked

with the “6”, there is a tumble of loose stone, fallen from above, that must be scrambled over to continue. The mound is 4’ high, and it marks an area where the ceiling draws upwards 40’ in a natural chimney. Within the chimney dwells the Spinwoman, an enormous intelligent spider the size of a horse. She can squeeze herself into very small spaces, though only by moving at half her normal speed. When characters clamber up the debris, she drops one of her thick webs, attacking (usually with surprise) with a +6 bonus to hit and ignoring all armor. If the attack hits, the target is caught.

Caught targets may spend an Action Die to attempt a DC 18 Strength check to pull free. Any attack against AC 12 that does 8 or more points of damage can sever the web; damage that fails to sever the web, though, is lost. In the case of a successful Mighty Deed to cut the web, double the Deed Die roll to determine damage done. She can haul a caught target upwards 10’ per round using an Action Die. She can attack any character that has been drawn a total of 50’ upwards with her bite, and can snare up to 4 characters at a time.

The Spinwoman has a +4 bonus to AC while in her chimney, and can only be attacked by missile weapons from atop the tumbled stones. Only if she fails to gain a victim, and the potential targets are no longer on the mound of debris, does she emerge to attack directly.

The Spinwoman is a smooth-bodied spider, deep blue in color, with mottled patterns of black and red. She speaks the languages of spiders and goblins as well as the common tongue. She gloats over her prey with a high, creaking feminine voice. Her bite administers a deadly venom that does 1d5 damage and requires a DC 13 Fort save to avoid an additional 1d5 Strength damage. Those she catches, if they do not die from her venom, she winds in her wrappings (her “shawls” she calls them), hauling them up into her chimney to save for later.

The Spinwoman: Init +3; Atk bite +5 melee (1d4 plus venom) or web +6 ranged (capture); AC 17; HD 5d8+5; hp 27; MV 40’ or climb 40’; Act 1d20; SP infravision 120’, venom, webs; SV Fort +5, Ref +5, Will +5; AL C.

Climbing up to the Spinwoman’s chimney is difficult (DC 15), but once in the narrow space only a DC 10 check is needed to climb further. Among the dried carcasses still hanging here is a body wearing usable chainmail; the longsword still sheathed at his side is in worse shape (1d7 damage, and



automatically breaking on a natural 1 or 20, in addition to other effects, when attacking). The judge may choose to have a living being found here, if a replacement PC is needed.

7. Stalactite Gallery: *This long cavern has a ceiling that is lost in the darkness above, but the many dagger-sharp points of needle-like stalactites glisten in the damp air. They hang from the distant ceiling until they are no more than 12 feet or so above the head of a tall man. There are thousands here, dripping with the occasional plunk to the damp ground below, and the shards of fallen stalactites lie*

among the stumps of broken stalagmites on the ground. The only standing stalagmites are near the walls, and some of these have joined with the stalactites to form emaciated stone columns.

The ceiling is 40' overhead. There is a thin seam of gold on the ceiling – this is worth 1,000 gp if the time and skill were available to work it, but it is maddening to dwarves who can smell (but not reach) it. The last stalactite that fell has been lying here for centuries. Something bulky, however, has been preventing stalagmites from growing – this is Plaghorn, the giant slug from **Area 10**, who comes here to rasp fungi growths from the stalagmites every decade or so.

8. The Stone Bushes: *Here the ceiling of the cavern dips down to a mere 4 to 7 feet, so that everyone save halflings and dwarves must at times stoop or bend to move. The ceiling and floor have been swept clean of formations, although you can see humps of stone where they once were. The strangest thing about this cave is that, to the north, several bushes seem to be growing...but they are bushes made of stone!*

The “bushes” are not alive, but are calcite formations which look similar to small gnarled trees. They are fragile, and easily broken.

9. The Sunless Shore: *There is a roaring in the air, which is damp with the spume of water. To the south, this cavern gives way to an underground lake, fed by a waterfall which drops from a dark tunnel in the western wall, some 50' or so above the surface of the water. All is dark and glistening here, and small lichen-like growths of grey fungi grow on the walls.*

The spume in this area is damp enough to douse torches on a 1 in 7 chance when the cave is entered. Lanterns are unaffected. The chill dampness in the air hampers infravision, obscuring creatures and objects more than 30' away.

Prolonged loud noises and light may attract the attention of Plaghorn (see **Area 10**). As the water drains to the southeast, it is relatively calm near the beach. The water is shallow enough to wade in for 10' or so, and then drops off to a depth of 12', requiring a DC 7 Strength check to swim in so long as the characters do not approach the waterfall, or go more than 30' to the south. Thereafter, see **Area 10**. Entering the water always attracts the attention of Plaghorn after 1d3 rounds.

10. Upper Lake: *The dim reaches of the lake fed by the waterfall spread out before you as the water grows ever deeper. To the east is a shallow beach covered in strange growths. A small island stands in front of a glittering beach- and something dark swims nearby...*

The chill dampness in the air from the waterfall's spray hampers infravision, obscuring creatures and objects more than 30' away. At its deepest point, where the waterfall hammers at the rock, the upper lake is 30' deep. In general, apart from the calmer waters around **Areas 9** and **12**, a DC 12 check is required to swim here; in the line between the waterfall and the water's exit to the east there is an undertow where the DC rises to 15.

Creatures failing to swim against the undertow are swept past **Area 15** into **Area 5** in one round. A character may attempt a DC 15 Strength check to pull himself into **Area 15** instead, but doing so is likely to lead to his demise. A character who reaches **Areas 5** or **14** is treated as though they failed to jump the water; see these areas for details.

The Upper Lake is the home of Plaghorn, an ancient giant slug who has dwelt in this pool for centuries untold. Plaghorn is intelligent, and it has learned some magic over the long years. It can speak the languages of goblins, giants, orcs, nagas, and undercommon. It is sometimes visited by the other intelligent denizens of the cave system – they are not dangerous to the giant slug, and it doesn't truly appreciate their potential dangers to others. It eats very little, making his rounds from one cave to another every few decades to eat what interesting fungi may be growing there. Plaghorn's knowledge of the entire cave system is very comprehensive, although its perspective is definitely inhuman. It does not consume intelligent beings, unless forced into combat as a matter of self-defense. Like all of its kind, it is both male and female.

Plaghorn: Init -4; Atk acidic touch +3 melee (1d4 plus slime) or spit acid +5 ranged (1d6) or spell; AC 18; HD 5d6; hp 16; MV 10' or swim 30'; Act 1d20; SP infravision 60', amphibious, slime, spells; SV Fort +5, Ref -6, Will +4; AL N. Spells (+3 bonus to spell check): Charm person, chill touch, magic shield, sleep, and shatter.

Plaghorn's slime is both hallucinogenic and magically active. A character who comes into contact with it sees strange visions, and is incapacitated for 1d4 rounds unless he succeeds on a DC 15 Will save. If the character succeeds, he may use the slime to spellburn as indicated below:

- The amount of spellburn possible is equal to the rounds of potential incapacitation.
- Each round, the amount of spellburn possible is decreased by 1, until it is no longer active.
- The character need take no ability damage to use this spellburn.

Plaghorn's slime is of value to the snailtaur potion masters, who sometimes send representatives to bargain for it. See **Area 17**.

There is an island in the lake, a lump of bare rock that rises 3' from the water's surface, just north of **Area 11**. Plaghorn sometimes pulls itself up out of the lake in order to perch here and contemplate its treasures, for which it has no actual use.

11. Plaghorn's Treasure: Because the spray from the waterfall mutes infravision, it is unlikely that the PCs will discover this hoard easily, although a dwarf could smell the gold and gems from **Area 12**. The treasure consists of:

- 5 pearlescent snail shells, each 3' long, forming a narrow spear-like cone damasked in silver filigree and small freshwater pearls (value 250 gp each).
- 1 cup of hammered gold (value 50 gp).
- 3d30 assorted gemstones worth 1d50 each.
- 2 tin buckets (1 gallon each).
- 1 silver candle snuffer (value 5 sp).
- 1 crystal decanter carved with images of one-horned snails (value 150 gp) and six crystal goblets (5 are worth 25 gp each, but one is cracked and worth only 5 gp).
- 1 copper anklet with six lucky charms, each of which can be burned exactly like spending a point of Luck (the charms are lost when used) (apparent value 2 sp).
- 1 gold medallion with an image of five interlocking rings (value 15 gp).
- 1 ivory rod, 3 feet long and 6 inches thick, with a slight curvature. The bearer, if holding it in one hand, passes over concealed pit traps without triggering them. Apparent value 50 gp.
- 6 silver rings with various bird devices (parrot, pelican, penguin, partridge, ptarmigan, and pigeon). The wearer of each ring can understand the language of (and be understood by) the type of bird indicated (Apparent value 15 gp each).

- 1 gold and silver coffer, bejeweled with small flakes of ruby. The inside always contains one serving of pears in syrup, which never spills and never goes bad (apparent value 250 gp).
- A statuette made of a greenish, stone with a soapy texture, depicting a snail-like creature with batwings and a beard of tentacles beneath its four stalked eyes. Value 15 gp.

These treasures have all been gifted to Plaghorn by the snailtaur potion masters, who greatly desire quantities of the eldritch slug's magically potent slime for their craft. If the judge wishes to include a special treasure or a quest item (apart from **Cold Stone** and **Running Water**), this is a good area to place it.



Plaghorn has no use for these treasures, but it does understand their value, and it expects some form of service in return – perhaps some of the tasty fungus found in **Area 19**? As part of a larger campaign arc, Plaghorn may wish something that cannot be found in this Adventure Location, causing PCs to engage in another adventure and then return if they wish to avoid combat with the arcane slug.

12. Footstickers: *The passage widens out to form the stony shore of some dark body of water. The pool or lake is larger than what you can see here, for the rushing fall of water echoes out of the darkness and the air is damp with spray. The floor and lower walls of the passage, up to about 20' from the water, and up to 5' up the walls, are coated with green-grey barnacles ranging in size from a fingernail to a fist. They make the footing here treacherous, and surfaces sharp.*

A dwarf can smell gold and gems from **Area 11** if they approach the shore.

Not all of these barnacles are whole – the smaller ones near the northern edge are occasionally preyed upon by land bats, and larger barnacles are prey to grunkles (see **Area 13**). Even the grunkles go no more than 10' into the patch, as anyone who stops to examine the barnacles can clearly see – those beyond this range tend to be larger and unbroken.

Any creature going more than 5' into the barnacle patch are attacked by the creatures, which extrude hardened feeding tubes. Creatures must succeed in a Fort save or take 1 point of temporary Agility and 1 point of temporary Stamina damage as blood and flesh are consumed by multiple bites. Creatures with metal leg and foot protection are immune. For others, the DC starts at 5, but increases by +2 for every 5' deeper into the patch the character proceeds. A new save must be made each round. The judge may adjust the die used for the save, up or down the dice chain, if a character has unusually good (or poor) leg protection.

The barnacles closest to the shore are the largest, and the enchantment from Plaghorn's slime is concentrated within them. There are 3d6 such perfect specimens here, and one can be harvested per round. These superior barnacles can be dried and smoked for later consumption, allowing each barnacle consumed to add +1d3 to an arcane spell check within the next turn. The chance of the magic being uncontrolled is also higher – treat any natural roll equal to 1 + the number of barnacles consumed as though it was a natural "1". I.e., if four barnacles were consumed, a natural roll of 1-5 would indicate the spell

is lost, with possible corruption, misfire, or patron taint. The snailtaur potion masters (see **Area 17**) are willing to pay up to 10 silver shells per perfect barnacle.

13. Cavern of Ledges: *This cave descends from west to east in a series of steep ledges, each at least 10' down and made difficult with impressive trceries of brittle-looking flowstone, glittering damply in your torchlight.*

From west to east, the ledges drop (at their easiest point) 12', 10', and 15'. Climbing is DC 15, made more difficult due to the wet flowstone. Failure by 5 or more indicates a fall. Ropes held by spikes require a Luck check when used to avoid being pulled free. Multiple characters relying on the same spike must each pass their check for the spike to hold, but each spike allows a separate check so that multiple points of contact can greatly reduce the danger. Armor check penalties apply.

Near the northern wall between the middle and eastern ledge can be found a human skeleton, long since despoiled and gnawed clean. Nearby, along with rusted iron buckles and bootnails, can be found a massive club called **Cold Stone** (see below).

Snailtaurs passing this way simply walk on the ledge walls. A similar method is used by the grunkles – rocky-carapaced lizard-things that live hidden in the flowstone. Grunkles are about 6 inches to 1' long, and are harmless if left alone. Molested, the larger ones can deliver a nasty venomous bite.

Grunkles (24): Init +0; Atk bite +0 melee (venom); AC 16; HD 2 hp; MV 10' or climb 10'; Act 1d20; SP infravision 30', camouflage (+6 to hide in rocky terrain), venom (2d4 temporary Stamina damage, taken at a rate of 1 point per turn, plus DC 12 Fort save or 1 point is permanent); SV Fort +3, Ref -3, Will +0; AL N.

Cold Stone

Cold Stone is a +3 heavy war club. Its head is a chunk of quartz with blue and green inclusions making it appear almost like ice...and, indeed, the stone is always cold to the touch. It is fastened to a handle of almost-petrified prehistoric rhinoceros femur. Any who grips the weapon feels the bleak despair it emanates – the only communication the ancient weapon is capable of.

The club does a base 1d5 damage due to its sheer massiveness, and can only be used with two hands by any creature with less than a 16 Strength. On a critical hit, in addition to any other effects, the club does an additional 2d7 points of cold damage. Any spells relating to cold and darkness cast while holding **Cold Stone** gains a +4 bonus to the spell check. In addition, the wielder of **Cold Stone** can gain an extra +2 bonus to these spell checks if he uses even 1 point of spell-burn.

Whosoever uses **Cold Stone**, either in melee or to boost spellcasting, is doomed to die within 90 days. For the first 30 days, the character merely has twice the normal chance of having an encounter (if random encounters are used), and is targeted abnormally often. For the second 30 days, the character experiences these same problems, but also has a -1d penalty to all saving throws and makes any attempt to recover the body with 1d24. For the final 30 days, the character has a minimum of one potentially life-threatening encounter per day – even if he attempts to hide in bed! He rolls all saves at a -2d penalty, all attacks against him have their critical range increased by 1 (i.e., from 20 to 19-20, etc.), and their crit die increased by +1d on the dice chain. Finally, any attempt to recover the body is rolled on 1d30.

The character need not continue to use the weapon to suffer these effects; a single use is enough to trigger this doom. A remove curse of 34+ can break the effect of **Cold Stone** on a user once. Should that user ever wield the club again, the gods turn their back on the fool. In addition to all other effects, the character cannot benefit from idol magic until some major quest of atonement is performed.

It is said that **Cold Stone** was created by a worshiper of Gul, a pre-historic god of gloom, night, and dead things. It is said that Gul put some of His own power into the club in the ancient days when men still remembered who He was. Once a user manages to survive **Cold Stone** for 90 days, the weapon is forever bound to him, and acts as a -3 cursed weapon in the hands of any other. All negative effects (except the possible inability to benefit from idol magic) are removed. The user is also automatically bonded to Gul, as with a *patron bond* spell at its maximum result (treat as “Cast on Self” or “Cast on Other” depending upon the class and nature of the club’s wielder). Patron information for Gul can be found in Appendix A. Information

on researching *Cold Stone* can be found in Appendix B.

14. Narrow, Swift Water: *The passage here is cut by a deep channel. 5' below the passage floor, a narrow watercourse rushes from the southwest to the northeast. It is impossible to tell how deep the dark water is from where you stand.*

Although the crevice is only 4' wide, those proceeding from **Area 13** to **Area 17** don't have the space to make a running start. A DC 10 Strength check is required if the character starts at **Area 13**; the DC is 5 otherwise. The corridor slopes steeply towards **Area 17**, but not so steeply as to present a hazard.

The water is 8' deep, swift, and cold. Swimming in it requires a DC 15 Strength check to move 10' upstream or 50' downstream. Characters failing their check or not attempting to swim move 1d5 x 10' downstream. After 70' downstream, the ceiling lowers to water height. The stream continues on for another mile or more...unless the judge wishes it to wash into another cave complex of her own creation.

There is nothing to hold on to that isn't slippery, cold, and worn smooth. Climbing up from the river without aid (such as a thrown rope) is DC 20.

Armor check penalty applies to all of these checks.

15. The Water Chute: A character being pulled by the undertow from **Area 10** can make a DC 15 Strength check to pull himself into this narrower, faster waterway as he is swept past. This may prove fatal, for 15' within the channel, and invisibly from the opening, the water reaches ceiling level. With a DC 15 Strength check it is possible to swim 10' against the flow, or 50' with it. Armor check penalties apply. Those who fail (or do not try) are swept 1d5 x 10' to the north.

The channel is approximately 140' long before it reaches **Area 14**. A character can hold his breath for Stamina rounds, and then suffers 1d3 temporary Stamina damage each round. Any round a character is in the water chute and fails to make a check to swim, he must succeed in a DC 10 Fort save or the amount of time he can hold his breath is reduced by 1d3 rounds as he slams into the stone. Any Stamina damage taken from drowning is recovered with even a few minute's access to air.

Small, slimy creatures – like a mixture of leech, lamprey, slug, and sponge –

cling to the surfaces of the water chute, feeding off tiny amounts of organic matter carried by the flow. They are harmless to the PCs, but this may not be immediately obvious. Lightly sautéed, they taste like muddy garlic.

16. The Conch of Psychedelic Doom: Going from **Area 5** toward **Area 17**, the corridor widens out and slopes downward, at first gently and then in a series of wide, low stone “steps”, until they reach **Area 17** some 30’ below the level of the river at **Area 5**. Walls, floor, and ceiling are broken by narrow cracks in the rock, which seep moisture onto the floor. Most of these cracks are no more than a finger’s breadth wide, but one (where **Area 16** is marked on the map) is a good foot wide. Lodged far down in this crack is an enormous land conch, which crawled into it for shelter ages ago, and which is now so large it cannot budge its shell at all.

The land conch can extrude its stomach on a fleshy tube which glows with strobing psychedelic colors. It can reach anywhere within 60’ of its crack. A character making a running jump (Strength DC 10) to cross **Area 5** must succeed in a DC 10 Reflex save to avoid falling prone. A prone character who fails a Luck check tumbles 1d6 x 5’ down the slope...and, if the character tumbles more than 10’, he falls within the conch’s reach.

Any creature struck by the conch’s stomach, or which comes into direct contact with its flesh, is subject to its slime’s hallucinogenic effect. Unless a DC 15 Will save succeeds, the character sees creatures pour out of the cracks (see below). No matter how many of the creatures a PC sees, he is only subject to 3 attacks per round (attack +3 melee for 1d3 damage; the judge should note this damage separately). The creatures are AC 10, and any successful attack destroys a hallucinatory creature, which disappears in a burst of colors. There are always more. Damage by these hallucinatory creatures is temporary, recovering at a rate of 1 hp per minute, but a character can be knocked unconscious thereby. The conch is then able to consume unresisting prey.

Hallucinations last for 1d5+2 rounds. Collected slime can be used to cause a similar effect, but dries out and becomes non-potent after 2d3 minutes away from the conch. Different PCs may hallucinate different creatures. Because the hallucinations cause temporary damage, knowing that they are hallucinations does little good to the affected characters. A character cannot die from this temporary hit point loss, even if it would combine with real damage to reduce him to 0 hp.

Because the conch’s main body cannot be reached, when it is reduced to 0 hp it is not slain, but merely forced to withdraw. It heals over the course of 1d6+7 days before becoming dangerous again (at half hit points).

The conch zeroes in on prey by sensing movement and sound (120’ range). Silent thieves (or others) may bypass the creature.

Giant conch stomach: Init +0; Atk extended stomach +2 melee (1d3 plus slime); AC 12; HD 4d6; hp 14; MV 0’; Act 1d20; SP detect sound and motion 120’, hallucinatory slime, cannot be killed; SV Fort +10, Ref +3, Will +0; AL N.

Hallucinations: *Suddenly, a multitude of [creatures] come pouring out of cracks in the walls. Their bodies ripple with opalescent waves of fluorescent colors. They surge forward, attacking with [weapons].*

1d12	Creatures	Weapons
1	Cats with glowing green eyes	Claws and fangs
2	Fish who fly through the air as shimmering scales	Their sharp-toothed maws
3	Short, squat humanoids	Black thorny clubs
4	Tall, skeletally gaunt humanoids	Filthy broken nails sharpened to claws
5	Roosters and hens	Iron-hard beaks, talons, and spurs
6	Ribbon-like worms, each as long as a man	Circular toothed apertures
7	Hooded vipers	Venom-dripping fangs
8	Hideous crabs with almost-human features	Sharp clattering claws
9	Ravenous weasels	Needle-like fangs
10	Ants, each the size of a small dog	Shearing mandibles
11	Moths the size of dinner plates	Fluttering mouthparts
12	Swarms of thumb-sized cockroaches	Hundreds of tiny pinprick bites

The judge is encouraged to tailor hallucinations to specific PCs. If they have an enemy, or something they fear, allow the randomly generated hallucina-



tion to also incorporate elements therefrom.

17. Snailtaur Potion Masters: *The passage enters into a large cavern, stretching beyond what torches can reveal, with a ceiling so high up that only the ends of stalactites are visible, sparkling with reflected light. The air is damp, and the floor and walls are slick with moisture. You can hear a constant dripping in the musky-scented air.*

Where **Area 17** is marked on the map, there is a shaft going straight down into the earth, a quarter mile or more. This is where the snailtaur potion masters come from; their own home is far beneath the surface lands. The judge may create a continued path into the deep earth through this sinkhole, or may declare it impassable by those who cannot walk on walls.

Each time the PCs enter this cavern, there is a 1 in 6 chance that 1d3 snailtaur potion masters and their snailtaur guards (1d8 per potion master) are encountered. These creatures visit this system to collect various items for their potions (see below) and are knowledgeable about the dangers of the cave system.

Snailtaurs have a sluglike humanoid torso growing from a long soft body with four mantis-or grasshopper-like legs. Their upper torsos have two arms, ending in soft, flexible hands with three main digits and two opposing “thumbs”. Their eyes grow on long stalks, but their wide friendly mouths reveal an herbivore’s oversized grinding teeth. Shells sprout from their backs, giving cover to both torso and body – these shells contain extradimensional spaces in which snailtaurs can store goods and equipment without fear of robbery or loss. If a snailtaur is slain, these spaces disappear, along with anything they contained.

Snailtaurs can leap up to 30’ by using an Action Die, and can walk on walls or ceilings with ease. Snailtaur guards can leap and attack with a single Action Die, gaining a +2 bonus to his attack roll and causing +1d8 damage if successful. This reduces the snailtaur’s AC by -2 until his next action. Snailtaurs use 1d10 for their Fumble die.

Snailtaur guard: Init +1; Atk spear +1 melee (1d8); AC 14; HD 2d6; hp 7 each; MV 40’ or climb 40’; Act 1d20; SP infravision 60’, leap 30’, leap attack, walk on walls or ceilings, extradimensional spaces in shell, 1d10 Fumble die; SV Fort +4, Ref +2, Will +2; AL N.

Snailtaur potion master: Init +0; Atk dagger +0 melee (1d4) or potion vial +2 ranged (special); AC 12; HD 1d6; hp 4 each; MV 40' or climb 40'; Act 1d20; SP infravision 60', leap 30', potions, walk on walls or ceilings, extradimensional spaces in shell, 1d10 Fumble die; SV Fort +3, Ref +3, Will +6; AL C.

Snailtaur potion masters have up to three potions which can be thrown up to 30' away as weapons. When a potion is thrown, roll 1d5 to determine the effect: (1) a cloud of greasy yellow smoke, 10' radius, causes 1d3 damage to all non-snailtaurs within it each round; (2) acidic green fluid does 1d6 damage and reduces the value of armor worn by -1d3 points of AC; (3) glowing pale blue liquid requires Fort DC 6 or paralysis for 1d5 minutes; (4) crimson powder explodes for 2d6 damage to all in 10' radius, Fort DC 10 for half; or (5) thick black tarlike substance drops target's Action Dice by -1d on the dice chain for 1d5+1 rounds, Will save DC 10 or the drop an additional -1d on the dice chain.

The judge should keep in mind that the snailtaurs desire trade. If possible, they will subdue intelligent foes and attempt to negotiate with them. If a guard is slain, they expect a weregild to be paid (50 gp or equivalent) as a sign of good faith. If a potion master is slain, the snailtaurs seek to kill or escape their foes.

Snailtaurs use delicate metal-plated shells as money – both gold and silver. The snailtaurs view them as being worth twice the value of equivalent human coins. Because of their delicacy and low metal content, shells are worth half as much as normal coins in human markets. A jeweler might be able to enhance them to be worth 10 times the equivalent normal coins, but will expect to keep half the profit from doing so.

What the potion masters want...

Item	Location	Value
Pale yellow spores	Area 2	2 silver shells per dose
Rich yellow spores	Area 2	1d3 silver shells per dose
Orange spores	Area 2	1d5 gold shells per dose
Light blue spores	Area 2	1 silver shell per dose
White spores	Area 2	1d7+2 gold shells per dose
Blue flowers of the deep	Areas 18 and 19	1d3 gold shells per bagful

Plaghorn's slime	Area 10	3d7 gold shells per dose
Perfect barnacle	Area 12	1d6+4 silver shells
Fresh conch slime	Area 16	1d3+4 gold shells per dose

What the potion masters can sell....Roll 1d3+3 times for each potion master present.

1d14	Potion	Appearance	Effect	Cost per dose
1	Waters of the Pyriphlegethon	Clear water in glass bottle; never freezes	Explodes in contact with air; 3d6 damage at point of explosion, 2d6 up to 10' away, 1d6 up to 30' away; Reflex DC 15 for half.	70 gp
2	Sweat of Ambrosius	Yellowish clear liquid; smells and tastes like dirty feet	Grants a +2 bonus per dose to a single arcane spell check made within 1 turn.	80 gp
3	Liquescent Breath of Eels	Clear vaporous blue fluid	Allows imbiber to breathe water for 3d6 turns.	50 gp
4	Elixir of Scars	Light green liquid with coppery taste	Heals 1d3 HD of damage (can heal wounds only, max HD equal to HD/level of imbiber).	75 gp
5	Blood of the Minotus	Deep red fluid without odor but tastes like iron rust	Immediately heals 1d7 points of temporary Stamina damage; Luck check to heal 1 point of permanent Stamina damage. Elves take 1 point of temporary damage instead.	100 gp
6	Miraculous Mycenaen Medicine	Brownish-white paste smeared over stump	Causes the regeneration of one lost body part over period of 1d3 months.	300 gp
7	Mixture of Eros and Ludus	Purplish wine with bitter-sweet flavor	Love potion; imbiber falls in love with first potential mate seen after drinking; Will DC 20 negates. Effects are permanent.	75 gp

8	Philter of Remembrance	Colorless, odorless, tasteless; bottle appears to be empty	Imbiber becomes younger by 2d6 years per dose.	100 gp
9	Remedy of the Caterpillar	Viscous dark green oily substance; smells like pine sap	Coats up to 1 square foot, causing 1' of hair to grow on organic surfaces. If swallowed, Fort DC 15 or 2d5 temporary Stamina damage (normal healing applies).	25 gp
10	Lich Tonic	Thick black liquid that smells like rotting meat and rich loam	Poured into dead creature's mouth, grants <i>speak with dead</i> (result 22-23, see page 290 of the core rulebook); subject retains its own memories and personality. No effect if imbiber is alive (although, if imbiber dies within the next hour, the potion takes affect!).	75 gp
11	Tears of Dust	Coagulated white liquid that needs to be stirred before imbibing	Imbiber does not suffer aging effects (including visible signs of aging) for the next 3d10 decades.	300 gp
12	Brew of the Open Mind	Clear yellow sugary liquid with the consistency of honey	Imbiber becomes extremely suggestible for the next hour; DC 15 Will save is required to avoid answering questions or taking actions as directed. The judge should modify the die rolled on these saves if actions are in accordance to imbiber's natural inclinations.	75 gp
13	Concoction of Addersbane	Opaque grey liquid with a slightly greasy smell and feel	Allows an immediate additional save against poisons, using 1d30. This can undo the effects of a failed save if taken within 30 minutes... even apparent death!	50 gp

14	Feverall Fluid	Foul-smelling and tasting dark green syrup	Imbibor suffers immobilizing high fever for 1d3 turns, after which all current diseases are removed (although their effects may take time to heal).	50 gp
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The snailtaur potion masters typically have 1d5 doses of any available potion on them. Judges will note that these potions are far cheaper than similar items that PCs might create using the *make potion* spell, but the judge has complete control over when and how the PCs may contact the potion masters in their games. The potion masters do not usually sell their personal defense concoctions, but the judge can rule otherwise.

18. Passage of Flowers: *The tunnel passes downward, its gentle angle broken by numerous shallow stone steps. These appear to be natural, but if not are so worn as to have come from an unimaginably distant past. Along the path, to either side, small deep blue flowers grow. What sustains them is not clear, for all here is damp stone and darkness.*

The flowers here are known to the snailtaur potion masters as “blue flowers of the deep”. Consuming a single fresh flower allows a DC 10 Fort save, per flower consumed, to end any single disease. The flowers remain fresh for three days after picking. There are enough flowers in this corridor to fill 6 bags, requiring 1d3+3 x 10 minutes of work to fill each bag. Each additional helper after the first reduces the time needed by 5 minutes.

It takes 1 month for a bagful of flowers to regrow, but if all of the flowers are picked the area will be barren for an additional 1d3 x 1d5 months before new flowers grow.

19. The Blue Star: The presence of this area can be inferred by the glow from the blue star, as it causes a portion of the lake in **Area 20** to shimmer with reflected light.

A triangular spur of cave, some 20' to a side, rises up out of the lake at a 20 degree angle. The floor of this cave is covered with small deep blue flowers and large fungi with long caps, striped almost like a tiger's fur in orange and red. The entire area is lit by a glowing blue stone wedged into the far corner of the cavern, a soft blue star some seven feet across.

The flowers are the same as in **Area 18**, except that they rejuvenate 1d3 weeks faster per month, and that there are only enough flowers to fill 3 bags here. The mushrooms are edible, and taste something like medium rare steak even when uncooked...these mushrooms are dear to Plaghorn (see **Area 10**), and they will bargain with their treasure for a good supply of them. There are currently 5 pounds of the mushrooms here; they grow at a rate of 1d5 pounds per month until their 5 pound maximum for this area is reached.

The blue star is a massive stone, 7' across but going back an additional 15' into the rocky cave wall. If it is somehow damaged or removed, it ceases to glow and becomes a normal stone. It is the radiation of the blue star which feeds the blue flowers of the deep and the mushrooms in this encounter area. If it is destroyed, both mushrooms and flowers die in 1d7 hours and are not restored. The snailtaur potion masters will be aghast at such desecration, and raise their prices by at least double. At the judge's discretion, some arcane rite of atonement may be able to restore the stone's mystic connection to the cavern.

If the judge has access to **CE 6: The Crimson Void**, the blue star caps another access to the titular interdimensional Void. Damaging or removing the stone may allow creatures from the Void additional access to the world we know. Certainly, Kala Môr would become aware of the breach, and send Her clerics to seal it (if possible) and punish the transgressors.

20. Lower Lake: Characters hear the thunderous waterfall as they approach this area. The descriptive text assumes that the characters approach from **Area 18**.

The passage ends at the shore of an underground lake, filling a large cavern with a stalactite-needled ceiling vaulted to a height lost in the blackness above. A glimmering blue light shimmers from the left across the water; you can just make out another cave in that direction. This light, shining palely on the water droplets of the stalactites above suggests that the ceiling must be at least 60' above the lake, and possibly a good deal higher. A waterfall thunders off to the right, echoing in the chamber – it may be an louder echo, or there may be another falls somewhere off to the left.

Characters reaching this area from the waterfall drop 80' into the lake, taking a maximum of 8d6 damage. This damage may be ameliorated by trying to turn the fall into a dive (DC 15 Reflex save; damage is reduced to 8d3, a total

save of 20+ negates all damage.) or through sheer endurance (Fort DC 10; damage is reduced to 4d6). Both cannot be attempted by the same character. Each “6” indicates a broken bone, as with the normal falling rules.

The depth of this lake varies from 40’ at the east end to 120’ at the west end, where the force of water has eroded the stone for millennia. Within 30’ of the waterfall, swimming requires a DC 10 Strength check; otherwise a DC 5 check is sufficient. Armor check penalties apply.

The lake is home to blind, semi-transparent eyeless white fish (from half an inch to 3 feet long), tiny pale crustaceans like brine shrimp, and deep-dwelling yellow sponges that filter-feed off the arcane slime that enters the water from Plaghorn’s lake (**Area 10**) and from *Running Water* in **Area 21**. The few predators are large, feathery-gilled blind newts. These are harmless to the PCs, but they grow to 3’ in length so an encounter with one in the water might be alarming (AC 9, 3 hp).

The narrow passage to **Area 21** is obscured by the mist from the waterfall, and is located 10’ above the surface of the water (Climb sheer surfaces DC 15). It takes a DC 10 Intelligence check to notice it – elves and dwarves gain a check even by coming within visual range; all others must actively search.

Anyone coming within 30’ of the outlet to **Area 23** can easily hear the roar of water from within.

21. Running Water: The narrow passage leading to this area is 10’ above the water surface in **Area 20**, and requires an Intelligence check (DC 10) to note the passage beyond the waterfall’s obscuring mist. Elves and dwarves gain a check even by coming within visual range; all others must actively search. Climbing to the passage is a DC 15 Strength or Climb sheer surfaces check. A trickle of water streams down the cliff side from the passage.

The passage starts out claustrophobically narrow, but slowly widens as it climb upward. The low ceiling is only 5’ overhead when the passage begins, but reaches a height of 12’ before entering a larger space. Water trickles down the floor of the passage, making it somewhat slick.

The passage ends in a rough cavern, perhaps 20’ wide and at least 30’ deep. There seems to be an alcove or a passage to the right, at the far end of what torchlight can show. A trickle of water splashes down from stone beyond your sight – al-

though you can hear the music of it falling – to run down the passage you just traversed.

In the alcove to the southwest, there is a single natural shelf of stone, upon which sits **Running Water**, an ancient book bound in brontosaur hide and composed of sheets of hard crystalline material that bends rather than breaking. The book is constantly wet, and, unless completely submerged, generates 1 pint of pure water every turn. Magical guards once protected the cover from the dampness, but the volume's antiquity is so great that these are beginning to fail and the leather shows signs of rot. The book is written in the tongue of serpent-men. It hails from the dawn of time, long before the ancestors of men were born. See below for more information.

Running Water

A character with access to **Running Water** can use it to research the following spells:

1st Level: *Animal summoning, charm person, find familiar, magic shield.*

2nd Level: *ESP, monster summoning.*

3rd Level: *Consult spirit, water breathing.*

These spells always have an aquatic or reptilian theme, i.e., summoned creatures must be aquatic or reptiles, *charm person* uses a snake-like gaze, *magic shields* are made of water, etc. The judge is encouraged to alter mercurial magic and/or manifestation to better fit these themes.

The character must be able to either read the language of serpent-men or must have another translate it; translation increases the DC to learn a spell by +1 to +5, depending upon the quality of the rendition.

If the character knows the language, he gains the further ability to cast spells directly from the tome itself. **Running Water** is a large, heavy volume and needs two hands or a lectern to hold it for this purpose. Spells cast directly from the book gain a special corruption effect if the spell fails by enough to normally lose the spell; this may stack with ordinary corruption, patron taint, or misfire if the spell check is a natural "1". See below.

Finally, there is no way to keep *Running Water* dry, and there is no way short of complete submersion to prevent it from generating water. Regardless of external conditions, this water is always generated at a warm (but not hot) temperature; approximately normal human body heat. Generated water may thereafter freeze or evaporate is normal, if conditions permit. This volume would be invaluable to people living in a desert.

Special corruption results are determined by rolling 1d7 + Luck modifier and consulting the chart below. No special corruption can be gained twice. If the same number comes up twice, ignore the result.

1d7 + Luck modifier	Result
0 or less	The character's mind is transformed into that of a serpent-man. He immediately becomes an NPC under the judge's control.
1	The character becomes disquieted by the presence of mammalian comrades. If a normal, mammalian creature is within 20' of him, he takes a -1d penalty on the dice chains to any roll that is not hostile to the mammal, except saving throws.
2	The wizard's reptilian behavior alienates others, resulting in the loss of 1d3 points of Personality.
3	All of the character's hair falls out over the next 1d5 weeks.
4	From now on, each time the character gains a level, he must shed his skin. This is a painful process which takes 2d16 hours to complete. The character has a -1d penalty to all rolls while shedding. No benefits of the new level are gained until this is completed.
5	Character's tongue becomes forked and his speech becomes a sibilant hissing.
6	Character's eyes become unblinking serpent eyes. The character gains 120' infravision.
7	Character's skin hardens with scales, granting a natural +2 to AC. This does not stack with armor.

8	If the character could not speak serpent-man (i.e., he is using <i>comprehend languages</i> or similar to use the libram), he now can.
9 or higher	The memories of a serpent-man from the dawn of time are overlaid on the wizard's mind. If the character could not speak serpent-man, he now can. The wizard gains access to 1d3 random 1st level spells. These are in addition to those the character can know on the basis of Intelligence. This may grant additional benefits as determined by the judge.

Information on researching ***Running Water*** can be found in Appendix C.

22. Further Adventures in Darkness: *Beyond the lake, this passage rises from the water, and then plunges steeply down into the darkness. A series of irregular stone steps, either natural or so ancient that they appear to be so, make the area traversable.*

This passage may lead to another level, either more caverns or areas of worked stone, as the judge desires. It may lead, through a number of twists, to the outside if the cavern is located in a region of elevated karst. If any PCs are swept down the waterfall in **Area 23**, this area may lead to a cavern where bodies can be potentially recovered.

Alternatively, if the judge does not wish to expand the adventure, this leads to a dead end.

23. Darkness Falls: *At the eastern end of the lake, a passage leads southward, where water flows swiftly but only knee-high, leaving a good six feet of clearance from the surface of the water to the stone ceiling. The water here is powerful, but there are sufficient handholds to allow you to walk cautiously upright in the passage, if you so choose. The air is damp here, making any open flame splutter. The area echoes loudly with a rushing thunder of water, making speech impossible.*

30' into the passage there is an enormous giant blind salamander, similar to those in **Area 20**, which feeds off material being swept into this passage. Unlike the salamanders in **Area 20**, it is about 6' long and dangerous to the PCs. Hidden in the water, it has a 1 in 3 chance of achieving surprise.

If the salamander hits, it holds on to prey, knocking the victim prone and doing automatic damage each round, unless a DC 15 Reflex save succeeds. A greater peril lies in not being grabbed – in this case, a Reflex save (DC 10 + damage done) must succeed or the target is knocked prone and pulled by the current towards the falls. They gain one more Reflex save (DC 15) to stop their progress 1d3 x 10' later. This potentially puts victims 60' into the passageway, as noted below.

Giant salamander: Init +3; Atk bite +2 melee (1d5 plus hold); AC 12; HD 2d8+2; hp 14; MV 10' or swim 40'; Act 1d20; SP surprise, hold, knock prone; SV Fort +4, Ref +3, Will +0; AL N.

60' into the passage, the tunnel begins to slant downward. A character on his feet must succeed in a DC 10 Reflex save to avoid falling and being pulled into the waterfall. A character who has managed to save himself after being swept away from the salamander (i.e., if a "3" came up on the 1d3 x 10') will need to succeed in a DC 15 Strength check (DC 5 if a rope or similar aid is available) to escape back to where the tunnel is safe. Armor check penalties apply, and failure means getting swept down the waterfall.

The waterfall drops down 80' (8d6 damage). Where it emerges, and what the conditions are where it emerges, are left to the judge's determination. See **Area 22** for more information. If the judge does not wish to expand the adventure, characters swept down the waterfall are lost forever.

Ending the Adventure

The adventure "ends" when characters leave the cave system, either having found what they sought, or having passed on into deeper realms beneath the earth. Either way, the judge is left with several elements that may be reused in an ongoing campaign. These are the snailtaur potion masters, a new patron, and *Cold Stone* and *Running Water* themselves.

The section of caves described herein also contains some unique substances, many of which are renewable resources that the PCs may return to collect time and again.

Appendix A: Gul, the Old Darkness

Gul is an ancient Chaotic god of gloom, night, the dead, and hidden things which creep forth at night to devour women and men. His symbol is a dark blotch. He arose in the dimness of prehistory and has long been forgotten by men. As technologies improved, people lost their fear of darkness itself. No longer did the sabre-toothed cat or the dire wolf prey on them so easily. Fire, strong walls, and iron weapons have given men and women courage against the night. Although weakened by the loss of human fear and faith, the Old Darkness still remembers us, waiting for a chance to rise again. And we still remember it.

Those who would bond themselves to Gul must do so in a place of exquisite cold and dark, such as the depths of a cave system. They may use no fire during the ceremony, instead giving themselves up to the terror of the dark. There is good reason to fear – those who fail to perform the ceremony to Gul's satisfaction are taken by the Old Darkness, and are never seen among the living again.

Invoke Patron check results:

12-13	Your feeble plea can barely be heard through the darkness of ages. Gul loans you a mantle of fright, so that all creatures targeting you with weapons or spells (including those which target the area you are in) take a -1d penalty on the dice chain to their spell checks and attack rolls for 1d5 rounds.
14-17	Flames flicker, and even the sun seems to go dim as though it had passed behind a cloud. The Old Darkness stirs in the deeps. A wave of cold washes out from the ground, in a 50' radius around the caster. All within this radius, except the caster, suffer 1d6 damage from the cold (Fort DC 10 for half).
18-19	Every non-magical flame within 100' of the caster goes out, and magical flames have a 1 in 3 chance of being extinguished. Above ground, the light of sun and moon are dimmed. Despite this, the caster and his allies can see as though in bright daylight. Any human who dies within this radius rises 1d3 rounds later as a zombie under the control of the caster. The effect lasts 1 turn + Caster Level rounds, and zombies so created collapse at the end of this duration.

20-23	Every flame within 100' of the caster goes out. Darkness and cold roll out of the ground, in a 50' radius from the caster, doing 2d6 damage (Fort DC 15 for half) to all in range except the caster. This magical darkness lasts 1d3 turns, making it impossible to start a fire within its radius and suppressing magical fire- or electricity-based effects as though the spell check were cast at -6 (changing effects, but not the actual result of the spell check). Any human killed by the initial burst of cold is transformed into a free-willed ghoul, which is friendly to the caster and his allies. These ghouls remain friendly to the caster, and his allies at the time of their creation, but do not remain to serve once the darkness ends. The darkness does not impair the vision of the caster and his allies.
24-27	Every flame within 200' of the caster goes out. Darkness and cold roll out of the ground, in a 100' radius from the caster, doing 3d6 damage (Fort DC 15 for half) to all in range except the caster and his allies. This magical darkness lasts 1d3 turns, making it impossible to start a fire within its radius and suppressing all magical fire- or electricity-based effects within its radius. Any human killed by the initial burst of cold is transformed into a zombie, which remains in the control of the caster until destroyed. Technology is suppressed, so that crossbows and similar mechanical devices will not function in the darkness, and the Fumble Die of all metallic armor is increased by +1d on the dice chain. The darkness does not impair the vision of the caster and his allies.
28-29	Gul grants the caster the power to strike blind up to 2d6 + CL targets within line of sight. This blindness takes the form of blackness covering the eyes, and is permanent unless dispelled by magic or clerical healing. There is no save against this effect. Each of these targets takes 4d6 cold damage (Fort save for half). Further, blinded targets which fail a DC 20 Will save take 2d5 points of temporary Intelligence and Personality damage as primitive engrams attempt to bring their consciousness back to that of their ancestors in the Old Stone Age. Targets whose Intelligence or Personality falls below 3 become mindless beasts until both ability scores are recovered to at least 3.
30-31	Every flame within 500' of the caster goes out. Darkness and cold roll out of the ground, in a 200' radius from the caster, doing 3d6 damage (no save) to all in range except the caster and his allies. This magical darkness lasts 1d3 hours, making it impossible to start a fire within its radius and suppressing all magical fire- or electricity-based effects within its radius. Any human killed by the initial burst of cold is transformed into a ghoul, which remains in the control of the caster until the darkness ends, or until destroyed. When the darkness ends, any remaining ghouls become free-willed, but are friendly to the caster and his allies. Technology is suppressed, so that crossbows and similar mechanical devices will not function in the darkness, and the Fumble Die of all metallic armor is increased by +2d on the dice chain. Finally, one Beast of the Old Darkness is released per Caster Level (see below); these beasts only attack enemies of the caster, and disappear when the darkness ends (or they are destroyed). The darkness does not impair the vision of the caster and his allies.

32+	Every flame within 1 mile per caster level goes out. Within this radius, magic focused on darkness, cold, and the dead is cast at +1d on the dice chain for CL days, and magic focused on heat, light, flame, electricity, divination, or healing is cast at -2d on the dice chain. Within this area, Beasts of the Old Darkness appear equal to CL x 3 (see below). These are free-willed, appearing in areas of darkness, and existing until destroyed. Although they will not attack the caster or his allies (unless first attacked), any other creature is fair game.
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Darkness and cold roll out of the ground, in a 500' radius from the caster, doing 5d6 damage (no save) to all in range except the caster and his allies. This magical darkness lasts 1d3 days, making it impossible to start a fire within its radius and suppressing all magical fire- or electricity-based effects within its radius. Any human killed by the initial burst of cold is transformed into a ghoul, which remains in the control of the caster until destroyed or dismissed, so long as the caster provides 1 human body (or equivalent) per 5 ghouls per day. Unfed ghouls become completely free-willed, and slink off to feed themselves. They remain friendly to the caster, but not necessarily his allies. This darkness does not impair the vision of the caster and his allies.

Technology is suppressed in the field of darkness, so that crossbows and similar mechanical devices will not function in the darkness, and the Fumble Die of all metallic armor is increased by +2d on the dice chain.

In addition, the caster can choose one target within line of sight to strike permanently blind, without a save.

Beast of the Old Darkness

Beast of the Old Darkness: Init +4; Atk attack +5 melee (1d7+3 plus special); AC 18; HD 5d8+20; MV 40' or climb 20' or swim 30'; Act 2d20; SP infravision 500', at one with darkness, special attacks; SV Fort +10, Ref +8, Will +12; AL C.

Beasts of the Old Darkness cannot be seen, for they are at one with the darkness. Even when viewed with infravision of magic that could otherwise pierce the veil (such as detect invisible), all that can be seen is an area of deeper darkness – and perhaps reflected eyes – green, red, or yellow. These creatures have a rank odor reminiscent of the musk of reptiles, large cats, birds of prey, wolves, and bears. The wounds they cause seem to be by sabre-like teeth, sharp talons, great clawed paws, venomous fangs, or even suckered tentacles.

Its calls are a mixture of roars, yowls, screeches, and hissing. A Beast of the Old Darkness is all of the fears of early mankind rolled into a single being. So great is their oneness with darkness that even upon death, a Beast of the Old Darkness cannot be seen. It becomes one with the shadows, leaving those who encountered it forever unsure of what form the creature took. The difficulty of hitting such a creature is already factored into its Armor Class. When a Beast of the Old Darkness succeeds in an attack roll, in addition to the base damage, roll 1d7 + the target’s Luck modifier, and consult the following table:

1 or less	Venom! Fort DC 10 + 1d6 or (1d6): (1) die, (2) 2d3 permanent Stamina damage, (3) 1d5 temporary Strength damage, (4) 1d12 damage, (5) 1d3 temporary Agility damage, or (6) blindness for 1d4 turns.
2	Grabbed! The Beast gains automatic damage against the target each round, for each Action Die it spends. An opposed Strength check vs. +3 escapes.
3	Pulled! The Beast pulls the opponent towards it, gaining a free extra attack using 1d24. An opposed Strength check vs. +3 prevents this.
4	Tossed! The Beast flings the target 1d3 x 10’ away in a random direction. The character suffers 1d6 falling damage per 10’ thrown, with each “6” indicating a broken bone. An opposed Strength check vs. +3 prevents this.
5	Knocked prone! The target is knocked prone unless a DC 15 Reflex save succeeds.
6	Torn and bleeding! The wound causes 1 point of damage every round until an Action Die is spent to staunch to wound.
7 or more	No special effect occurs.

Patron Taint: Gul

Gul is the personification of the Old Darkness, from the ancient times when ancient humans (or their ancestors) huddled in the night with (at best) only a fire to protect them. Gul hates fire and technology, as he hates light and the sun. He is a being of cold, darkness, fear, and proximity to the kingdoms of the Dead. Those who serve Gul become like him in time, shadowy ancient things which shun the light and “modern” conveniences in favor of the Old

Ways. Once a taint has been gained at all levels, further rolls of that taint have no effect. Once all taints are gained at all levels, there is no reason to roll further on this table.

Roll	Result
1	Primitive: Gul is from the time of the Old Stone Age. Each time this taint is rolled, the caster becomes more primitive. The first time it is rolled, the caster gains +1 hp per level (including past levels), but gains a beetling brow like that of a Neanderthal. The second time it is rolled, the caster takes a permanent -1d shift on the dice chain to all Intelligence-based rolls except spell checks. The third time it is rolled, the caster must roll all new mercurial spell effects on the Prehistoric Mercurial Magic table on pages 48-58 of <i>The Tribe of Ogg</i> and the <i>Gift of Suss</i> , which is available for free on the <i>Mystic Bull</i> website (https://mysticbull.blogspot.com/2015/08/from-great-sky-gods-falls-gift.html). If the judge does not have this resource, the caster instead takes another permanent -1d shift on the dice chain to any Intelligence-based rolls except spell checks.
2	Shadow-kin: When this patron taint is first rolled, the caster's skin and hair become coal grey over the course of a month, reducing the caster's Personality by 1 when complete. The second time this is rolled, the caster gains infravision to a range of 60' (or doubles his range if he already had infravision), and his eyes glow in the dark with a lambent green light. When this taint is rolled a third time, the caster's infravision is extended by 100', but the caster also takes damage when exposed to direct sunlight (1d5 immediately, and 1d7 per turn thereafter).
3	Among the Dead: When this patron taint is first rolled, the caster grows cadaverous. The second occurrence causes the caster to smell of the grave, and takes a -1d penalty on the dice chain to all Personality checks made to influence normal folk. However, at this point most un-dead no longer target the caster, unless the caster targets them first. Only powerful and intelligent un-dead, such as liches and vampires, realize that the caster still numbers among the living, although they are likely to see her as an ally rather than a threat or victim. The third and final time this patron taint is rolled, the caster takes on the stiffness of the grave, permanently losing 1d3 points of Agility.

4	Aversions: This patron taint can be rolled up to 5 times. Being connected to Gul makes the caster averse to certain conditions and substances. Each time this patron taint comes up, until the 5th and final time, roll 1d7. The caster takes a -1d penalty to the dice chain on all rolls under the condition indicated, and the effects are cumulative if the same condition comes up more than once. Roll 1d7: (1) outdoors under full sunlight, (2) within 30' of an open flame, (3) within 30' of any sort of clockwork or gear system, including a crossbow windlass, (4) within any man-made surface dwelling more elaborate than a hovel, (5) within 10 minutes of an electrical discharge within line of sight, including lightning flashes, (6) within an hour of noon (11 am to 1 pm), whether indoors or outdoors, or (7) within one hour of eating cooked food.
5	Ancient of Days: When this patron taint is rolled the first time, the caster appears to age 1d10 years. When rolled a second time, the caster appears to age 1d30 years. When rolled a third time, the caster appears to age 2d24 years. None of these changes affect the caster's statistics.
6	Against Fire and Lightning: In ancient times, Gul was the enemy of Suss, the God of the Sun, Light, and Fire. He was also opposed to Tahor, God of Lightning, who (it is prophesied) in days to come will entirely destroy Gul when men learn to tame the lightning and use it to make night into day. When this patron taint is rolled, Gul demands that his follower undertake a mission against the forces of fire, heat, and technological advancement. Possible missions might be snuffing a sacred flame, destroying a lightning-blasted oak before its heartwood can be harvested, or destroying a mill wheel, dam, aqueduct, or other technological marvel. The first time this result is rolled, the mission is relatively simply, requiring no more than 1d4 days of travel, and mandating the defeat of a foe who is 1-2 levels (or Hit Dice) below the caster. The second time this is rolled, the mission is more difficult. It may require 1d4 weeks of travel, and the greatest foe is equal in level (or Hit Dice) to the caster. If this result is rolled a third time, the mission requires 1d4 months of travel, and the foe has 1d4 more levels (or Hit Dice) than the caster. Failure at a mission focuses the anger of Gul on the errant vassal. Until such time as proper amends are made, Gul may send beings of cold, death (or un-death) and darkness against the character to remind him of his failure.

Patron Spells: Gul

Gul grants three spells, as follows. Each is cast as the clerical spell of the same name, without any penalty to the spell check. A natural “1” always results in loss, failure, and patron taint. A result of 2-11 results in spell loss and failure.

- Level 1: *Darkness*.
- Level 2: *Word of command*.
- Level 3: *Animate dead*.

Spellburn: Gul

When a caster utilizes spellburn, roll 1d4 on the table below, or build off the ideas presented therein to create an event specific to your home campaign.

Roll	Spellburn Result
1	Darkness swims before the caster’s eyes, making it difficult to see. Spellburn must be taken from Agility. The darkness fades as the Spellburn heals. The ability to see through darkness, or magic removing blindness, have no effect until the darkness has passed.
2	Cold seeps into the caster from the Old Darkness. This manifests as Strength, Agility, or Stamina loss.
3	As a long-forgotten god, Gul hungers for sacrifices! The caster may gain up to 6 points of Spellburn now, without cost. In return, the caster must ritually sacrifice 1 HD worth of sentient creatures per point of Spellburn to Gul beneath the next dark moon. Failure to fulfill this oath causes Gul to take twice the Spellburn given immediately upon the sunrise, with each point coming randomly from Strength, Stamina, or Agility. Note that sacrifices can be willing or unwilling, but creatures slain in combat are <i>not</i> considered.
4	The caster’s flesh withers, manifesting as Strength, Agility, or Stamina loss. As the Spellburn heals, the caster’s appearance returns to normal.

Judges familiar with *The Tribe of Ogg* and the *Gift of Suss* (a free funnel adventure available through the [Mystic Bull Games](#) website) might recognize Gul as one of the “Gods of Prehistory” in that adventure.

Appendix B: Researching Cold Stone

Characters with appropriate backgrounds may have heard of *Cold Stone*, as it has been around longer than recorded history. Judges are encouraged to use other means of research, such as consulting sages, using oracles (for instance, see *The Black Goat* or *The Seven Deadly Skills of Sir Amoral the Misbegotten*), or using scraps of lore as rewards in other adventures.

Two methods are supplied for the judge. One is a simple Intelligence check (using 1d20 for characters with applicable occupations, or 1d10 for others). The other is series of small story seeds, lore which can be discovered over the course of play. These should be altered to better fit the judge’s milieu. Optimally, the judge will use both.

Intelligence Check

Result	Learned
5	Nothing.
10	You have some vague memories of hearing about a magic club in really old stories.
15	Not only do you recognize the club as <i>Cold Stone</i> from old stories, but you know that no one who has wielded it has survived more than 90 days.
20	Not only do you recognize <i>Cold Stone</i> , and know that it is cursed so that none who wields it has ever survived 90 days, but you know one of the following pieces of lore, plus one per point your Intelligence check exceeded 20.

Legends of Cold Stone

1d12	Lore
1	The Seven-Day King bore a magical club in his campaign to conquer the Southlands, before succumbing to an assassin’s poison.
2	The club was found intact among the bones of mammoths and red elk by Myldur Silver-Eye. Nearby was an ancient and crumbling subhuman skeleton, its skull pierced by sabre-like fangs.
3	Kaisan the Strong, who fought for two months against the Islanders with a club that may have been <i>Cold Stone</i> , fell from his horse. His foot caught in his stirrup, and he was dragged to death.

4	A series of tribal warlords claimed ownership of this weapon in the forlorn lands to the north. Each time their tribe was overrun, only for the club to appear in the hands of the victorious chieftain.
5	Zelana the Prophet once declared that, should any dare use <i>Cold Stone</i> and survive its curse, an ancient god would reappear.
6	Waldrune the Otter-Son found the weapon, but forbore to wield it when the Reverend Quint declared it cursed. The Otter-Son threw it down a deep hole, and thought it forever lost.
7	Moonhawk the Doomed used <i>Cold Stone</i> to defeat the Wyrms of Cocksmoore. He died shortly thereafter in the Siege of Clire.
8	Not long before his untimely demise from dysentery, Otto the Belcher found the weapon useful against skeletal dwellers in the Crypts of Durdarian. The club was bequeathed to his son, who was slain by troglodytes, and <i>Cold Stone</i> was lost.
9	It is said that <i>Cold Stone</i> spent a full month on the Black Galleys which sail upon the Glass Sea, until ill luck, the deaths of captains, and the wreck of ships forced the weapon to be sent again to the land.
10	Nattack the Lucky bore <i>Cold Stone</i> against the Sky Demons of Ky-roth for almost three months before they dragged him to Hell.
11	The sword-master Panderson swore to break the curse by hiding for three months in his Nordale mansion. Unfortunately, he died in the Great Nordale Fire, which burned three quarters of the town to ash, two days before the last month ended. The club somehow survived.
12	The club was presented to Algar the Odious by his servitor ghouls, who had found it cast deep within the earth. It was taken by Algar's henchman, Obb of Xiamark, on a punitive expedition against the Lich-Lord Salmarrian. Neither Obb nor the legions he commanded returned.

Appendix C: Researching Running Water

Using methods similar to those in Appendix B, characters can also research *Running Water*.

Intelligence Check

Result	Learned
10	Nothing.
15	You have heard stories of a magical libram which is never dry, which is said to be bound in the hide of a long-extinct beast from ages before the time of humankind.
20	The arcane tome, <i>Running Water</i> , is said to have been written by serpent-men sorcerers, and bound in brontosaurus hide. It is never dry, and, unless completely submerged, will continue to generate water. In addition, you know one of the following pieces of lore, plus one per point your Intelligence check exceeded 20.

Legends of Running Water

1d12	Lore
1	The wizard Ecvan Ellairs kept the tome on a marble plinth in his water gardens, and would cast spells directly from its pages.
2	Vos the Spell-Thief long sought the secrets of the Serpent-Men's tongue so that she could utilize this volume. She still seeks the whereabouts of the wizard Paskalune, who commissioned its theft.
3	Raiders from Skaaheim once found this book floating in a pool of fresh water atop an iceberg.
4	If the ancient leather that protects <i>Running Water</i> have started their slow journey towards rot, one can blame the witch Tulnich, who sought to break the mighty spells protecting the volume for her own ends.
5	For a long time, <i>Running Water</i> was kept in the Caliphate of Zuul, where its power to create fresh water was considered a blessing. In the end, it was stolen by a pair of foreign thieves, Ragland and Yorba Linda, who desired it for their own ends.
6	The vagabond-mage Mudtrop swore that he had never held the volume, but when he was slain outside of Arwich Town, the book was found on his person.

7	There is a cave in Harhasan Valley where <i>Running Water</i> rested so long that a spring formed, which continues to flow to this day. The pirate captain Mevail met his grisly and glittering end there, it is said, but his crew stole away with the book.
8	<i>Running Water</i> was once kept locked in the Church of Ulesh in Portsmouth, along with a dozen other forbidden toms. When the Church was abandoned, so too was the guardianship, and the books that were once hidden away are not loose in the world.
9	The Grey Wizard Who Turned White once cautioned his one-time mentor, the Sour Man, against using the volume because of its prehuman origins.
10	The elf sorcerer Thomlin hid <i>Running Water</i> on a world orbiting Procyon in Canis Minor, until it was recovered by a demon of the Outer Dark, summoned by a rival elven warlock named Rava the Pardoner.
11	The libram has been traded several times in Golden Shanthopal, both among the sorcerous denizens of that city, and to and from creatures dwelling upon other words who seek them out.
12	<i>Running Water</i> was one of several volumes the Blue Circle of the East is actively seeking. Its agents may pay a considerable reward.

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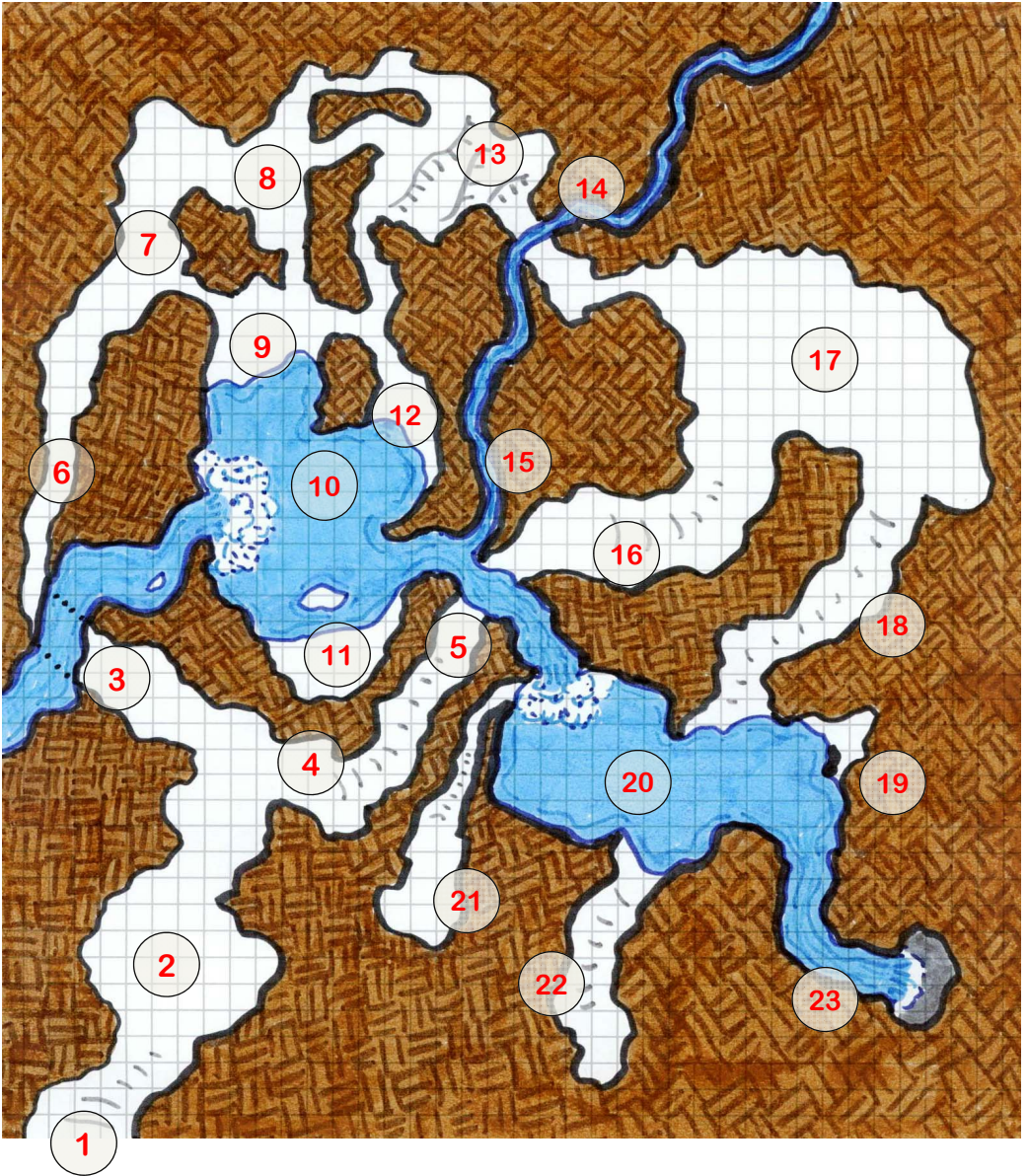
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Judge Map



by Daniel Bishop