

DUNGEON CRAWL CLASSICS

LAIRS OF LOST AERHART



#91.2: CREATURES AND LAIRS AT THE CENTER OF AERETH
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LAIRS OF LOST AGHARTA

CREATURES AND LAIRS IN THE CENTER OF AERETH

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ages will aver that the denizens of the underworld are, by necessity, alien to surface dwellers such as ourselves. Few will ever stand on the ink-black shores of the Lost Agharta, and even fewer will return to tell the tale. Those that do report creatures transmuted by their deadly environs and the weird gloom. These creatures of legend owe no allegiance or kinship to the beasts of our lit-realms, and woe to the adventurer who mistakes them for familiar foes.

Collected herein are thirteen of the stranger beings explorers may encounter upon their arrival at the very center of our hollow globe. This is certainly not an exhaustive list, if such a thing could even exist – for the underworld is vast, and our knowledge is slight.

FOR JUDGES



his collection is intended to serve as a stand alone product, or as a supplement to a Center of Áereth campaign. If the former, no adjustment is necessary.

If the latter, and the judge is referencing the random encounter and exploration tables from Journey to the Center of Áereth, use the following tables any time a random encounter roll in DCC 91 results in “no encounter.”

And of course, the judge should always regard the tables as mere suggestions. Entries can be altered, marked out, or built upon as it serves your setting. You are the first and final arbiter of your game.

RANDOM ENCOUNTERS



oll for random encounters once each day and night, modified by the sum of the PCs’ single best and worst Luck modifiers. (So a party comprised of a warrior with a +3 Luck modifier, and a thief with a -2 Luck modifier, would add +1 to their encounter rolls.)

In general, higher rolls result in distant encounters, allowing the PCs to determine the rules of engagement (or avoid the encounter altogether). Lower rolls tend to offer less opportunity for a safe withdraw or can even result in a surprise attack by a monster – possibly resulting in more burned Luck, and worse modifiers on future encounter rolls, as the denizens of the underworld sense the weakness of the PCs and circle in for the kill.

Encounters are listed alphabetically below, followed by the collected monster entries and lairs.

Four of the results are the unique “marooned mortals,” characters like the PCs who have found themselves trapped in Lost Agharta. After an encounter with a marooned mortal, the judge is encouraged to roll up another character to take the NPC’s place on the random encounter tables. See Appendix A for tables and a information on creating more stranded NPCs.

THE CENTER OF AERETH IN BRIEF



he lands at the center of Áereth are home to scores of shining city-states scattered along the bleak shores of a great sea. Bands of slave giants roam the blood-soaked heaths, doing battle for the pleasure of their obscene, ageless masters, while sentient, sooty clouds swirl about the smoky sun that hangs above the black sea.

The Aghartan underworld cycles between 8-hour periods of shadowed gloom and absolute darkness. During the “day,” the smoky orb hovering above the central sea flares in intensity, mimicking the long shadows cast in the surface realms at sunset. The air is sweltering and thick with the smell of the sea.

After eight hours, the sun dims and dies, leaving the underworld in absolute darkness. Temperatures drop precipitously, and the frothing sea rolls inland, swamping the Bleak Shores. Come dawn, the waters recede, leaving the bloodied shores and battlefields scoured clean.

The majority of the lands are made up of three principle environs:

Bleak Shores: The “beaches” of the Aghartan underworld are naught but stone slabs rising from the water. Scoured by eons of rolling waves, the slabs are slick with slime and the weird pale algae that inhabits the sea. The waves roll in to the shores with curious – almost sinister – irregularity, and the more powerful waves threaten to swamp unlucky souls and suck them into the deeps.

At night, the black waters rise precipitously, swamping the shores with powerful, icy waves. Strange creatures are washed ashore, riding the waves inland in hunt of prey, then slithering back into the depths.

Spine Ridges: Towering ridges of broken stone run to the shores from the arching cliffs, bisecting the shores like long, ragged cairns, or fallen, cyclopean walls. While offering shelter and a place for PCs to hide, the ridges are also home to underworld monsters that emerge in the night to stalk the heaths.

Blood Heaths: Saturated with the remains of the dead, churned underfoot by the sandals of a thousand armies, the loamy heaths have served as the Aghartan’s battlefields since time immemorial. The “soil” of the heaths is composed of sand worn down from the ridges, bone fragments, and shards of metal and wood shorn from the harness and weapons of fallen Aghartans.

Sages, over-curious wizards and foolish explorers can find more detail on the environs of Lost Agharta in *DCC 91: Journey to the Center of Áereth* and *DCC 91.1: Lost City of Barako*.

Spine Ridges Encounter Tables

Roll (3d6)	Day
3 or less	The Oracle
4	Falchiona
5	Tu-Alak, inside Slave Scout Hollow Man
6	Maleves (close)
7	Cave moulder
8	Firmata (close)
9	Clusterfish scout
10-11	No encounter
12	Memoesparks
13	Firmata (distant)
14	Maleves (distant)
15	Clusterfish lair
16	Tu-Alak (distant)
18	The Oracle
19+	No encounter

Blood Heaths Encounter Tables

Roll (3d5)	Day
3 or less	Ki Le Ba
4	Tu-Alak, inside Slave Scout Hollow Man
5	Xan Na-Kaddix
6	Maleves (close)
7	Firmata (close)
8	Clusterfish scout
9	No encounter
10	Cave moulder
11	Maleves (distant)
12	Quartz-Reapers (distant)
13	No-men (distant)
14	Firmata (distant)
15+	No encounter

Bleak Shores Encounter Tables

During the nighttime hours, the shores flood to a depth of 1d10+5 ft.

Roll (3d5)	Day	Roll (1d8)	Night
3 or less	Ki Le Ba	1 or less	Firmata (close)
4	No-Men (close)	2	Maleves (close)
5	Un-death Oyster	3	Clusterfish scout
6	Maleves (close)	4-5	Un-death Oyster
7	Quartz-Reapers (close)	6+	No encounter
8	Clusterfish scout		
9	No encounter		
10	Maleves (distant)		
11	Quartz-Reapers (distant)		
12	No-men (distant)		
13	Firmata (distant)		
14+	No encounter		

ENCOUNTERS

Cave moulder: The lead PCs happen upon a rock outcropping – not realizing its true nature. If the PCs exercise caution (by their declared actions), there is a chance of recognizing the beast before it attacks. However, if the PCs fail to recognize the potential threat, the cave moulder is granted a surprise action.

Clusterfish lair: The PCs spot a distant clusterfish scout return to its lair. Brazen souls daring to follow the scout uncover the clusterfish lair at the back of a rock outcropping.

Clusterfish scout: The PCs are attacked by a single clusterfish scout. Attacking the scout draws the attention of a clusterfish swarm in 3d6 rounds.

Falchiona: The PCs spy the fallen avenger picking her way along the ridges. 1d100 yards distant, it is left to the PCs whether they choose to announce themselves, track the warrior back to her lair, or avoid the encounter entirely.

Firmata (close): A blazing dragonling leaps from hiding, targeting the smallest PC! Call for an initiative roll, granting the firmata +5. If the firmata beats all the PCs, it achieves a surprise round. Once the surprise round is resolved, roll initiative again, per the firmata's normal -1 modifier.

Firmata (distant): The PCs spy a large dragon-like beast, crouched atop a blazing lava vent, some 1d20 x 10 yards distant. If the PCs reveal themselves, the firmata cautiously inspects the PCs, closing to within pounce range (30') and attacks. If attacked from a distance it retreats into the ridges.



Ki Le Ba: The PCs spy the ruins of Ki Le Ba's funerary raft, and are free to investigate or ignore.

Maleves (close): A dark, vulture-like creature dives at the PCs from the darkness! Call for an initiative roll, granting the maleve +5. If the maleve beats all the PCs, it achieves a surprise round, in which attempts to carry off a PC. Once the surprise round is resolved, roll initiative again, per the maleve's normal +2 modifier.

Maleves (distant): The PCs spy an ill-favored bird, perched atop an outcropping some 1d5 x 100 yards distant. If the PCs take care, they can escape unnoticed. However, if the PCs reveal themselves (or simply fail to take basic precautions like concealing light sources) the maleve takes to wing and tries to snatch away one of the PCs.

Memoesparks: The PCs happen upon a volcanic vent that offers warmth in the dark, underworld nights. 1d2+1 memoesparks hover in the air like embers buoyed aloft by the heat.

No-Men (close): The PCs mistakenly pass too close to a hidden no-man tunnel. 1d10+4 insectile humanoids leap from concealed passages, attacking the unfortunate characters.

Call for an initiative roll, granting the no-men +5. If the no-men beat all the PCs, they achieves a surprise round. Once the surprise round is resolved, roll initiative again, per the no-men's normal +3 modifier.

No-men (distant): The PCs spy stick-thin figures, 1d100 x 10 yards distant. Consult the table under no-men for activity.

Quartz-Reapers (close): PCs are approached by a troupe of 1d4 performers and 1d4+1 servants. The quartz-reapers hope to lure the PCs back to their lair.

Quartz-Reapers (distant): The PCs spy a troupe of performers returning home to their lair. It is left to the PCs whether they care to follow, or avoid the encounter entirely.

The Oracle: During the night, PCs moving through the Spine Ridges feel the gentle tug of their precious metals, pulling them towards the cave of the Oracle. Whether they ignore the lure or investigate is left to the PCs.

Tu-Alak (distant): The PCs see the lone figure of a slave scout seemingly vanish into a cliff wall. If they investigate, they discover the illusion that cloaks Tu-Alak's lair.

Tu-Alak, inside Slave Scout Hollow Man: The PCs are stalked by Tu-Alak and a band of 1d5+5 Aghartan scouts. The preternaturally stealthy scouts have a 1-in-3 chance of surprising the party (unless extraordinary precautions dictate otherwise). If the scouts succeed in tracking down the PCs, Tu-Alak waits for the chaotic cover of battle, and then tries to steal away with any of the PCs' magic items.

If the PCs carry the battle, Tu-Alak reveals that he is not one of the slaves, in an effort to win the PCs' trust.

Slave Scouts: Init +3; Atk spear +3 melee (1d8+3) or +0 ranged (1d8+3); AC 12; HD 3d8; hp 16; MV 30'; Act 1d20; SP immune to enchantment / charm magics, 30' dark vision, stealth, deafening clamor; SV Fort +4, Ref +1, Will +5; AL C.

Un-death Oyster: If encountered during the day, the PCs risk falling down the into the oyster's chamber (see entry and lair). In encountered during the night-gloom, the PCs are attacked outside of the oyster's lair.

Xan Na-Kaddix: Outside one of the palace-cities where she makes her home, Xan Na-Kaddix is hidden within a troop of 4d12+10 Aghartan slave soldiers. The warband is 1d4 miles distant and tracking the party; unless the PCs are on the move or take pains to conceal their location, the warband runs the PCs to ground within the hour.

Xan uses her influence in an attempt to safely capture the PCs. (Her allegiance is just as easily lost, if the PCs fail to follow her orders.) In the march back to their palace-city, Xan attempts to glean information about the PCs route to Agharta. If she becomes convinced that the PCs can help return her to the surface lands, she betrays the warband, freeing the party.

Slave Giants: Init +2; Atk grab +5 melee (1d6+6 plus victim is pinned) or great cleaver +5 melee (1d10+6); AC 14; HD 5d8; hp 20; MV 25'; Act 1d20; SP immune to enchantment / charm magics; SV Fort +5, Ref -1, Will +5; AL C.

CAVE MOUTHER



Cave mouters are sly, burrowing beasts whose rock-like appearance make them masters of camouflage. These sightless creatures resemble corpulent worms covered in thick, stubby, vestibular hairs, and are capped with a devastating maw. Adult specimens will grow up to 7-feet in length and 4-feet in diameter, weighing up to 1,600 pounds upon reaching maturity.

The cave mouter hunts by leveraging the squid-like, shifting gray colors of its rubbery hide as camouflage, and hiding in plain site as a rock formation. The beast then uses heightened sensitivity provided by its hide hairs to detect movement of nearby prey, and deliver an initial devastating bite attack to creatures that pass before it.

As they are slow-moving, cave mouters are relatively easy to overcome once they've been exposed, but most creatures native the underdark rarely survive the initial attack, and thus avoid the beast.

Despite the danger it represents, the cave mouter is often hunted by brash underdark denizens for its gall bladder, for the mouter's bile is a base ingredient for creating *underdark invisibility* potions. When consuming such a potion, the imbiber's skin takes on the mouter's shifting-gray colors rendering them virtually invisible for 1d4+1 hours. Typically, there is only enough bile in an adult cave mouter for 1 potion, but if a thief attempts the extraction (and makes a successful DC 15 *handle poison* check) they can siphon enough bile to create up to 3 potions.

Cave Mouter: Init +2; Atk bite +6 melee (1d8+4); AC 15, HD 5d8; MV 30'; SP surprise attack, camouflage; Atk 1d24; SV Fort +4, Ref +1, Will +1; AL N.

- *Surprise attack:* Initial attack delivers 4d8+4 damage if successful.
- *Camouflage:* +10 bonus to hide checks.

CAVE MOUTHER LAIR



□ = 10 ft.

⊗ = Cave Moulder Location

S.S. Compton '17

CLUSTERFISH



clusterfish, fist-sized spined orbs dotted with suction cups and gashed mouths, fly individually through the underground skies as scouts deployed from the hive. Characters might encounter these creatures anywhere with vast stretches of air beneath the surface of Aereth. Clusterfish are hunters, seeking the most powerful prey they can find, signaling the swarm when a suitable target emerges.

A single clusterfish attaches itself to a living creature like an oversized burr caught on an exposed sleeve. The victim will likely wish to remove this unwanted, hideous orb, and the amount of force applied to the clusterfish acts as a telepathic signal to the hive, with greater force signaling a more substantial response from the swarm. The more damage dealt to the single scout clusterfish (magnified even more if magic is used) the larger the swarm that arrives to disable and capture the prey, bringing the victim back to their hive for sustenance (see the table below to determine the size and power of the swarm).

The swarm of clusterfish, moving like a single organism, arrives 3d6 rounds after the scout clusterfish is damaged or destroyed. If the scout clusterfish is removed and contained without violence or magic – imprisoned within a sealed sack affixed to a post, or locked inside a wooden box, for example – the swarm is not alerted and the lone clusterfish shrivels and dies in 10d6 hours. Removing a scout clusterfish without damaging it is not easy; a DC 20 Agility check can detach it but the character will take 1d4 damage from the spines unless suitable hand protection or proper tools are used.

A clusterfish swarm is notable not just for its potent offensive and defensive capabilities, but also for the way the linked clusterfish shift their collective form to visually display their aggressive or defensive intent. When attacking, the clusterfish swarm resembles a giant wide-toothed behemoth, when defending, it shifts appearance to that of an umbrella-like floating jellyfish. The passive telepathic communication of the clusterfish swarm allows these creatures to identify shapes that would intimidate their prey, so the judge may adapt the transformations to suit the previous experiences of the party (mimicking prior adversaries or frustrations as applicable). If the hit points of the swarm are reduced to zero, the swarm disperses and flees back to the hive, leaving a handful of fallen clusterfish behind. The swarm will not attack a party that has defeated it until 24 hours has passed and memories of the conflict have been forgotten by the semi-intelligent clusterfish.

The attacking clusterfish swarm attempt to bite and incapacitate whichever character damaged the scout most recently. A “swallowed” and immobilized victim of the swarm who survives the initial attack will be lifted back to the nest-like hive 3d100 feet above ground level.

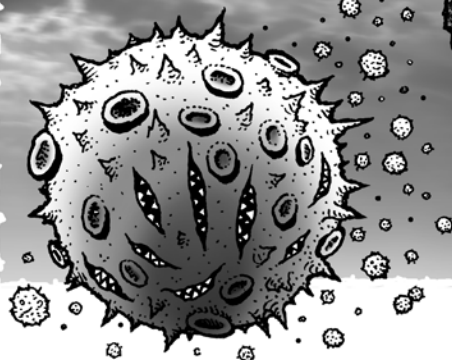
Clusterfish Scout: Init +2, Atk special, AC 12; HD 1d4; MV fly 40'; Act 1d20; SP spines deal 1d4 damage to anyone who touches the clusterfish without protection; SV Fort +1, Ref +2, Will -4.

Clusterfish Swarm: See the table below.

CLUSTERFISH LAIR

SIDE VIEW OF LAIR

Individual
Fist-Sized Clusterfish



Area A

Lair is at least 100 ft.
above the "Floor" of Cavern.

Clusterfish Swarm

TOP DOWN VIEW OF LAIR

Area B

Overhang

■ = 5 feet

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Clusterfish Swarm

Shift the result to the next highest level if magic is used on the clusterfish scout

Damage dealt to clusterfish scout	Number of clusterfish in swarm	Clusterfish swarm abilities
1-2	20	Init +3, Atk bite +3 melee (1d8 + special), AC 14; HD 4d8; MV fly 40'; Act 1d20; SP successful bite "swallows" victim, incapacitating it for 1d6 rounds unless a DC 15 Fort save is made; SV Fort +3, Ref +1, Will -2.
3-4	30	Init +4, Atk bite +4 melee (1d12 + special), AC 15; HD 5d8; MV fly 40'; Act 1d20; SP successful bite "swallows" victim, incapacitating it for 2d6 rounds unless a DC 15 Fort save is made; SV Fort +4, Ref +2, Will -1.
5-10	50	Init +5, Atk bite +6 melee (1d12 + special), AC 17; HD 8d8; MV fly 40'; Act 1d20; SP successful bite "swallows" victim, incapacitating it for 4d6 rounds unless a DC 20 Fort save is made; SV Fort +6, Ref +2, Will +0.
11+	100	Init +6, Atk bite +10 melee (1d12 + special), AC 19; HD 10d8; MV fly 40'; Act 2d20; SP successful bite "swallows" victim, incapacitating it for 4d6 rounds unless a DC 20 Fort save is made; SV Fort +10, Ref +0, Will +0.

Clusterfish Lair: The clusterfish hive is always located at least 100' above a cavern floor, embedded within a found cave or rock-outcropping. The most typical hive is 50' deep, with a feeding area dug into the back of the cave, **area A**, where young clusterfish spinelings (finger-sized spiked worms that will mature into clusterfish within the month) feast off the prey brought back to the hive. Any victim who survives the journey back to the hive will take 5d10 damage per round while being devoured by the spinelings in the feeding area.

The spinelings will shrivel and die if 12 or more damage is dealt to them, or if any extreme fire or cold is deployed. If combat occurs within the hive, a swarm of 100 clusterfish will emerge from **area B** to defend its lair. If this swarm is defeated within the hive, the dispersed clusterfish will abandon the hive permanently, abandoning its spinelings and seeking a new lair.

A search of the feeding area reveals the remaining possessions of former meals: 3d100 gp, 6d100 sp, 2d4 random mundane items, and 1d4 random mundane weapons. If at least 10 spinelings (living or dead) are collected and crushed, a paste can be created that – when applied to edged weapons – can paralyze a hit victim for 2d4 rounds unless a DC 15 Fortitude save is made.

FALCHIONA, THE "NOW-FALLEN"



Cs traveling one of the many spurs of the Spine Ridges may come upon a lone, pitiable figure - Falchiona, "Avenger of the Emirates," a fallen templar from the desert empires. Once noble of bearing and steadfast of purpose, she now appears scarred, filthy, part-crippled and spirit-broken. She is clad in rag strips. The bleached skeleton of some riding beast is lashed to her body as a penitential weight. In one hand she holds the bottom half of a broken, single-edged, curved sword - the legendary Djinn-crafted "Feyd'Hyaadisar."

Back on the surface, Falchiona captured a Ythothian slaving expedition's sky ship. Falchiona found a vizier to pilot the ship and flew with righteous fervor to Agharta. But once there, Falchiona was defeated and thrown into the arena. There she was recognized by one of her nemeses, the visiting Arch-Efreet Iar'n Di'Etim. Iar'n Di'Etim soul-possessed Falchiona's vizier companion and descended in to the arena to slay her. On their first pass he focused a tendril of pure chaos against a flaw in Falchiona's legendary blade and it shattered. The magical shockwave threw her all the way into the peaks of the nearest spur of Spine Ridges. There she lay crippled and barely clinging to life until her companion-steed found her and gave its life force to heal her and its very flesh to sustain her.

When the PCs meet Falchiona, she has only left her stony refuge a few times. She is eager to ally herself with any who oppose the slave lords. She can offer the PCs her sky-ship as a means of egress from Agharta. However, she will not reveal its location until she has retrieved the shattered pieces of her blade, which were scattered across many miles of the Aghartan landscape.

Unbeknownst to Falchiona, Iar'n Di'Etim survived Feyd'Hyaasidar's sundering. But the magics released by the breaking of the sword trapped the Arch-Efreet's spirit in the body of the vizier, a body now disfigured by corruption - a side effect of the sword-breaking. Iar'n Di'Etim is already searching the Spine Ridges for Falchiona, consumed by a need for vengeance that burns hotter than the ebon-flames of his ever-burning realm!

Falchiona: Init +0; Atk broken sword +d5 deed die (1d5+deed die) or dagger +0 melee +d5 deed die (1d4+deed die); AC 13; HD 6d10; hp 33; MV 20'; Act 1d16 and 1d14; SP mighty deed, crit d30 on table V with threat range 19-20, turn unholy with d20+5 (1/2 level + Pers modifier; no Luck modifier), wields Feyd'Hyaasidar's Hilt; SV Fort +2, Ref +2, Will +4; AL L.

Feyd'Hyaasidar's Hilt: Intelligence 4, communicates with simple urges, +2 enchantment, cast *Holy Sanctuary* 1/day with a d20 spell check (intact sword conveyed a magical +3 to AC) cast *Locate Object* 1/day with a d16 (only works to locate pieces of its shattered blade). The intact sword had a +3 enchantment, conveyed a +3 to AC, could Detect Evil, Dispel Magic and could cast *Banishment*.

Iar'n Di'Etim: Init +4; Atk crooked talons +4 melee (1d3); AC 16; HD 8d8; hp 48; MV 30'; Act 1d20 (+6 to spell checks); SP wizard spells: 1st level – *choking cloud, enlarge, flaming hands, magic shield*; 2nd level – *invisibility, mirror image, strength*; infravision, immune to mind-affecting spells and mundane and magical flame and immune to non-magical weapons and attacks from creatures with 3 or fewer HD, half damage from electricity, acid and gas; SV Fort +4, Ref +1, Will +4; AL C.

Magical feedback from the breaking of Feyd'Hyaasidar trapped Iar'n Di'Etim inside the body of the wizard he had possessed. While this fusing caused a net reduction in the efreet's power, he retained some of the powers of an elemental demon and the spellcasting abilities of his host body. Iar'n Di'Etim appears as a short-statured but feral-looking, olive-skin human devoid of hair with a severe red rash covering his body. Swaths of fine metal shards are embedded in his face, the front of his neck, his palms and the underside of his forearms and these shards continuously glint from an internal light source. He wears a short, belted tunic, loincloth and sandals – all fashioned from the loose folds of skin of an Aghartan slave, turned a greenish-brown by the tanning process.

LAIR OF FALCHIONA: THE NOW FALLEN



FIRMATA



cattered throughout the underdark are volcanic vents. These chimneys continuously spew scalding smoke and ash into the air, and have forged a unique ecosystem for freakish and dangerous creatures. One such terror is the firmata—grotesque reptiles many Aghartan sages consider distant relatives to both the legendary phoenix as well as flame-spewing dragons. The firmata is an 8-foot long lizard whose body can absorb heat from steam vents, and then repurpose the energy through gills on its underbelly enabling short bursts of fiery flight. The firmata use this ability to pounce on prey from afar—typically high ledges—scorch nearby enemies, and evade attacks when overpowered.

In addition to its ravenous bite and powerful claws, the firmata also poses the additional risk of blasting all those nearby with an exploding heat bladder when the beast expires.

As the firmata needs to stay close to the heat vents to refill their bladders, they never stray farther than 2 miles from a heat vent, and will return to the vents to warm their heat bladders once every 1d3 days.

Firmata (giant flying flame lizard): Init -1; Atk bite +5 melee (3d4), flame pounce +7 melee (1d8 + trapped; 30' range); AC 17, HD 3d8; MV 30', jump 30'; SP immune to fire, *flame pounce*, *flame jump*, *heat bladder rupture*, vulnerable to cold; Atk 1d20; SV Fort +4, Ref -1, Will -2; AL N.

- *Flame pounce:* By shooting a torrent of fire from its flame gills, the firmata is able to perform a leaping pounce attack from up to 30' away. The victim of a pounce takes 1d8 crushing damage, before becoming pinned under the firmata, taking an additional 1d4 heat damage for each round spent trapped underneath the creature (DC 12 Strength check to escape).
- *Flame jump:* The firmata can also use its flame gills to escape immediate danger by rocketing itself up to 30' away. Anyone within 8' of the firmata when the creature initiates the flame jump must make a DC 12 Ref save or suffer 1d6 flame damage.
- *Heat bladder rupture:* Upon reaching zero hit points, the firmata's heat bladder will rupture releasing all its stored energy in a violent blast. All PCs within a 15' radius when the creature expires must make a DC 12 Ref save or take 2d8 heat damage from the resulting explosion.

FIRMATA LAIRS



= Steam Vent

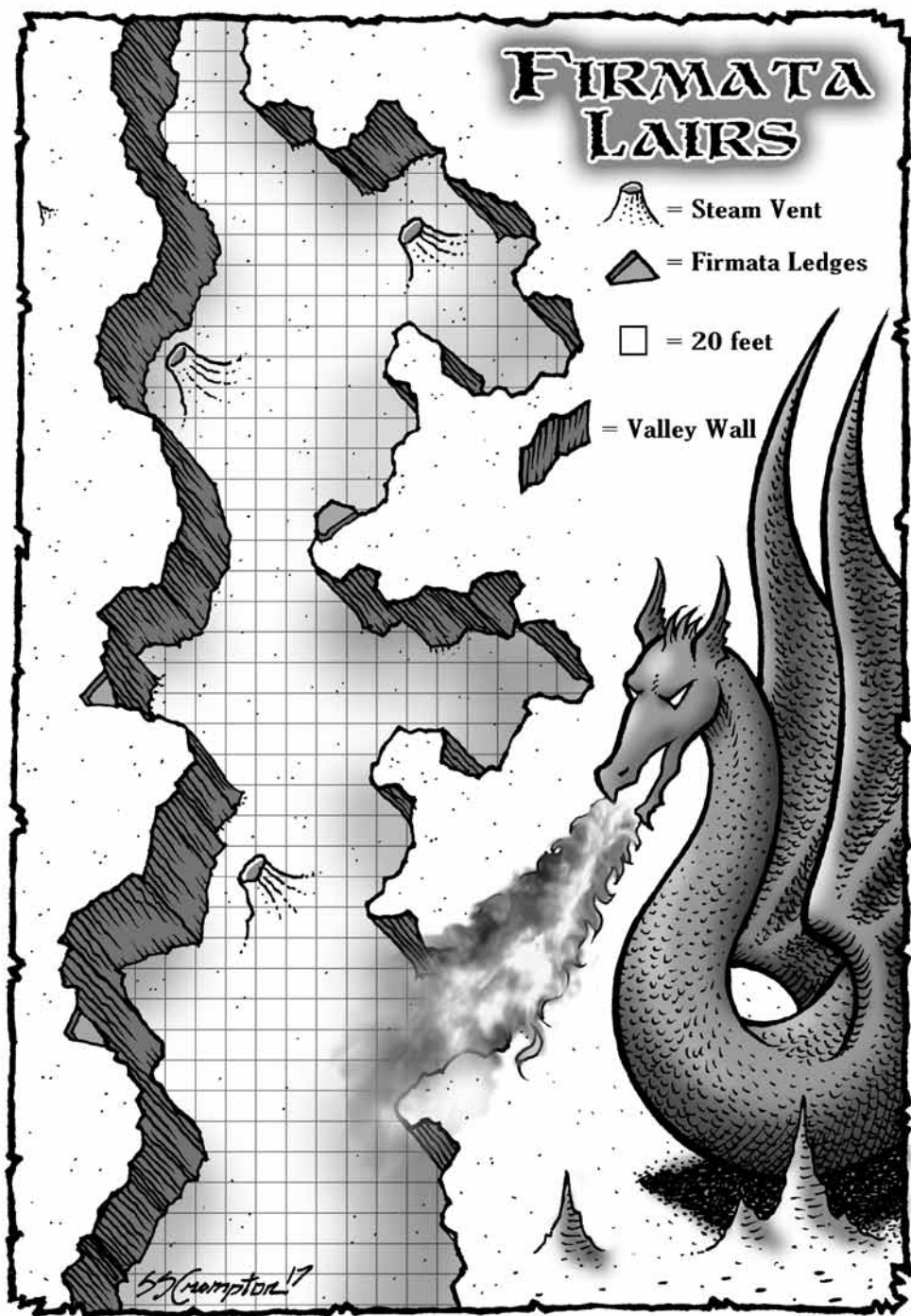


= Firmata Ledges



= 20 feet

= Valley Wall



KI LE BA



i Le Ba was a warlord-emperor who died and received a grand funeral. His corpse, his riches and his closest, still-living retainers were sealed into floating boat-caskets and set adrift in the Sargasso Occultus - believed to be a gate to the afterlife. Ki Le Ba awoke in Agharta. He did not know if he was alive or dead; what he *did* know was that if the strange, twilight place he found himself in was the Land of the Dead, then the priests had divined its nature *most* incorrectly.

The retinue's first encounters with Agharta's denizens were deadly affairs. So Ki Le Ba had his people lash together their caskets into a large raft and set sail on the inner sea. The easily-observed raft drew forth the armies and arcane agents of slave lords, but the crafty warlord evaded their assaults through superior seamanship. Eventually the lords themselves ventured forth against Ki Le Ba, but inexplicably their psionics had no effect on Ki Le Ba or his people.

But Ki Le Ba knew he was slowly losing a war of attrition: ultimately either the sea's terrible leviathans would destroy his people, or the slave lords would. So he sought to negotiate, ruler to ruler, with any slave lord who would receive him. On a whim, one lord offered him a devil's bargain - at intervals, Ki Le Ba would have to tithe a few of his people to the Aghartan master; eventually, all of them would become slaves. Ki Le Ba agreed, hoping to buy time to find an escape from Agharta or to outwit the slave lords. He succeeded at neither. Now only Ki Le Ba remains unbonded, and only because it amuses the slave lords.

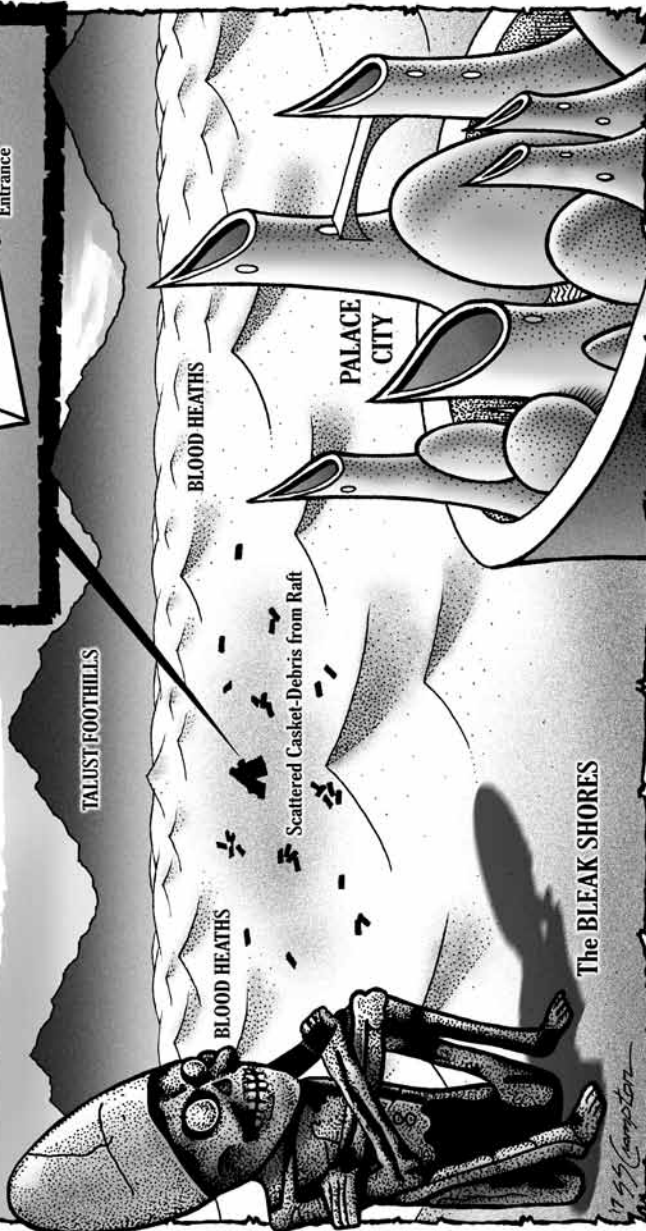
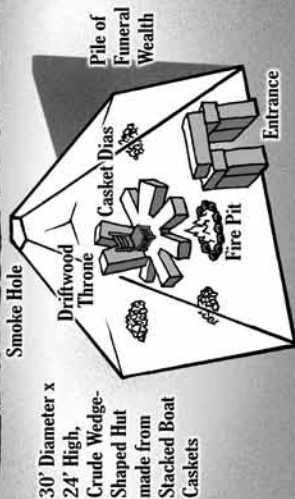
Ki Le Ba can be found amongst the ruins of his raft, amongst the loamy dunes that form the border between the Bleak Shores and the Blood Heaths. The ruins are just out of view of the palace-city of the lord who treated with him. As the PCs approach, first they find a few scattered boat-caskets, then denser piles of them and then, finally, a large jumbled heap of caskets constituting a large, crude hut.

Ki Le Ba sits inside, half-starved among piles of funereal wealth. He will not attack if approached peacefully. If beset, he will go into a berserk state that makes him powerful despite his generally poor health. He wields a polearm carved from leviathan bone with a crude mace head and a harpoon-pointed butt spike.

He is half out of his mind with shame and regret. He is obsessed with the idea that some of his retinue escaped their fate and constantly interrupts conversations by asking after this retainer or that retainer, and intermixing his questions with stories of those individuals' time at court. But the PCs can get valuable information if they can heal his tortured spirit. If healed, Ki Le Ba will come to his senses. His strongest desire then will be self-exile. He will ask for help with rebuilding the raft so he can sail to the very center of the inner sea. He will trade valuable information for the PCs' assistance. He can:

- Reveal his immunity to psionics. Through successful spellcraft, the PCs can divine the reason for this immunity and can duplicate it - partially if not fully - as an enchantment.

DESERT OF PALACE OF KI LE BA



- Notice that the Dragon Scepter – a magical artifact and symbol of his reign - is missing. He will describe the scepter, its powers (TBD by Judge) and reveal its word of activation.
- Show them the kelp he subsists on, which possesses unique beneficial properties (TBD by Judge).
- Provide intel from his visits to the nearby palace-city. He knows the location of guard posts, the contents of key rooms and routes through the city.

The hut can be a short-term PC refuge - it has been declared off-limits by the nearby slave lord and Ki Le Ba's immunity to psionics manifests as an aura that conceals the presence of nearby creatures. However, as the nearest slave lord sends soldiers monthly to bring Ki Le Ba to the palace so he can provide an evening's entertainment observing his suffering. PCs at or near the hut during these summonings risk detection.

“Spiritually Bereft” Ki Le Ba Init +2; Atk polearm head +2 melee (2d6-1); AC 12 (piecemeal enameled banded mail); HD 6d12; hp 32; MV 25'; Act 1d20; SP crit d20 on table V, go berserk for 2d4+4 rounds, immune to mind-affecting spells and spell-like abilities; SV Fort +1, Ref +2, Will +4; AL C.

“Berserker” Ki Le Ba: Init +4; Atk polearm head +4 melee (2d6+4) and barbed point +3 melee (2d4+4 plus free grapple attack); AC 15; HD 6d12; hp 50 (loses 18 hit points when state ends); MV 35'; Act 1d20 + 1d6 deed die and 1d14; SP mighty deed, crit d30 on table V, immune to mind-affecting spells and spell-like abilities; SV Fort +4, Ref +4, Will +6; AL C.

“Spiritually Healed” Ki Le Ba: Init +3; Atk polearm mace +3 melee (2d6+2) and barbed point +3 melee (2d4+1 plus free grapple attack); AC 13; HD 6d12; hp 48; MV 30'; Act 1d20 + 1d6 deed die and 1d14; SP mighty deed, crit d30 on table V; SV Fort +2, Ref +3, Will +4; AL L.

Ki Le Ba has amber-tinged skin and eyes with an angled aspect akin to the peoples east of Punjar.

In combat, if Ki Le Ba hits with the barb on his polearm, he also rolls a free grapple attack (+4 if berserk, otherwise +2). If the grapple succeeds, his target is caught on the barb and automatically takes 2d4 damage in each subsequent round until freed. To free himself, an opponent must succeed at either an opposed grapple roll, a mighty deed, or shatter the weapon. If an opponent is attached to his polearm, Ki Le Ba cannot strike with the mace head. However he receives a +1 on his deed die to perform an appropriate mighty deed against an attached opponent.

MALEVES



These dark, ill-favored birds seem almost reptilian, with patches of leathery flesh and bare wing membrane lying naked amid their oily bedraggled feathers. Large enough to carry a man in full armor, they brood upon nests built on plinths rising high above the curved surface of the inner Aereth, or perch upon outcrops of rocks, seeking victims to share their esoteric lore.

Maleves snatch sentient creatures, taking them to remote spots where they can whisper weird knowledge long forgotten on the surface world...truths better for having been lost...and then allow their victim to escape as best he can, blasted by eldritch knowledge. This whispering takes 1d6+3 turns, regardless of the outcome.

A maleve can grab when attacking with its claws, and may attack at any point during its flying move. They target lone creatures, stragglers, sleepers, the distracted, and those engaged in combat – whenever surprise might be achieved – and then bring them swiftly aloft, where escape means a potentially fatal fall. An opposed Strength check vs. +2 escapes their clutches, or damage equal to or greater than half the maleve's current hit points.

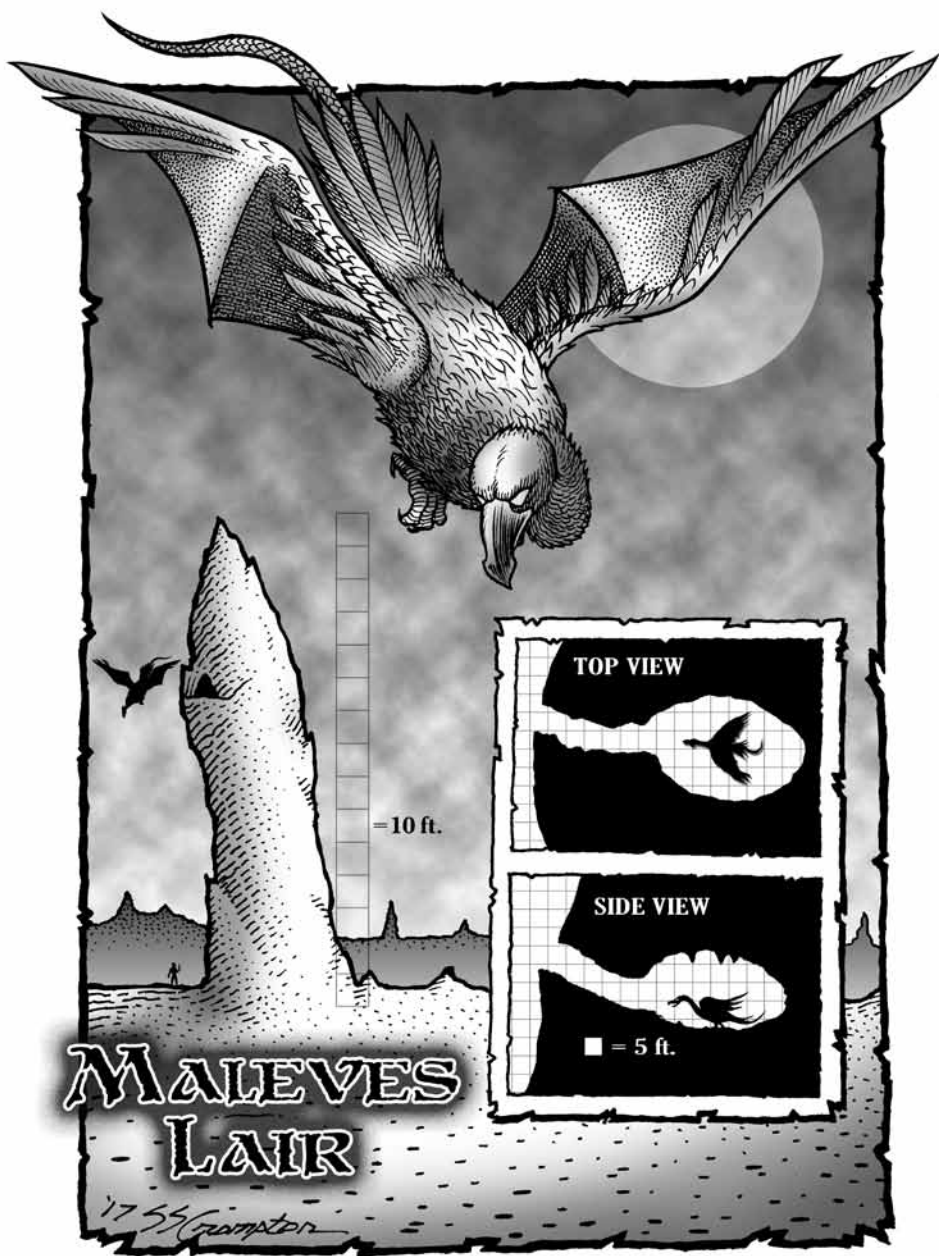
When reduced to 0 hp, a maleve's skin collapses like a punctured bladder, leaving an empty rubbery mass. Somewhere in the center of Aereth, a fungal growth appears – the immortal maleve, creating its new body. Maleves not necessarily seek those who destroyed a previous body, but they do delight in victims learning of their survival. A maleve grows a new body in 1d7+3 days. Sometimes half-formed maleves are encountered growing in hard-to-reach places.

Any who listen to a maleve's whispering must roll 1d24 + Luck modifier and consult the following table for Maleve whispering effect (see next page). If the victim succeeds in a DC 20 Will save, he may add +5 to the roll.

Maleve: Init +2; Atk peck +1 melee (1d3) or claws +5 melee (grab); AC 12; HD 2d8+4; MV 10' or fly 40'; Act 1d20; SP infravision 200', grab, whisper, immortality; SV Fort +2, Ref +3, Will +8; AL C.

THE LAIR

A pinnacle of rock rises for 120' from the Blood Heaths like a stone finger pointing in the general direction of the inner world's "sun". 80' up the rock is a dark hole, leading to a 15' diameter chamber filled with old fish bones and oily feathers. Climbing up the spire requires a DC 15 check per 20'. Climbing down is easier (DC 10 per 20'). There is no treasure here – only the maleve's dark wisdom.



1d30	Maleve Whispering Effect
1 or less	Sanity blasted! The victim's hair turns white, and he permanently loses 1d5+2 points of Personality as he babbles and whispers to himself. If the victim is "slain", his body collapses as does a maleve's, and he is reborn as a maleve somewhere in the center of Aereth. A successful remove curse (spell check 24+) can prevent the fallen adventurer from being reborn in this way.
2-3	Sanity blasted! The victim's hair turns white, and he permanently loses 1d3 points of Personality. Worse, he must succeed in a DC 10 Will save or take 1d3 points of temporary Personality damage every time (roll 1d7): (1) he smells roses, (2) he is touched by a purring cat, (3) he tastes alcohol, (4) he is outside under a full moon (and each hour outside under a full moon after the initial damage), (5) he hears the call of a whippoorwill, (6) he sees lightning, or (7) he touches a dead body.
4-6	Sanity shaken! The victim's hair turns white, he ages 2d5 years, and he takes 1d3 points of temporary Personality damage. Thereafter, he has a permanent aversion to, and suffers a -1d penalty on the dice chain for rolls concerning (roll 1d12): (1) dogs, (2) cats, (3) cattle, (4) halflings, (5) horses, (6) catfish, (7) frogs, (8) ravens, (9) owls, (10) cephalopods, (11) potatoes, or (12) dice. He knows their awful secret, a horror that he will take with him to the grave.
7-12	Sanity shaken! The victim's hair gains streaks of white, he ages 2d3 years, and he takes 1 point of temporary Personality damage. Thereafter, he has a permanent aversion to, and suffers a -2 penalty on die rolls when, (roll 1d8): (1) swimming, (2) dealing with fire, (3) riding a horse, (4) using spellburn, (5) wearing armor, (6) within the walls of an inn, (7) crossing a bridge, or (8) completely alone. He sees below the surface order to the swirling Chaos beneath.
13-17	Shaken. The victim gains streaks of white in his hair, and ages 1d3 years, but cannot remember clearly what the maleve told him.
18-20	Barely shaken. Save for a few white hairs, the victim is unchanged. He cannot remember what the maleve told him.
21-22	Insight! Although much the maleve told him is forgotten, a few useful bits of information remain in the form of strange intuition. Three times the player may ask the judge a simple question (one that can be answered in a single sentence), and the judge will answer it honestly 75% of the time. The other 25% of the time, the answer is true but misleading.

1d30	Maleve Whispering Effect
23-24	Great insight! The character gains insight into a random wizard spell of level 1d3. If the character already knows this spell, he now casts it at +1d on the dice chain. Otherwise, he can cast this spell using 1d16 + Intelligence modifier for the spell check, or his normal spell check (whichever is higher). This spell does not count against spells known.
25 or higher	<p>Cosmic insight! The character gains a unique opportunity. Roll 1d3:</p> <p>(1) Bond with a patron of the judge's choice, using 1d10+20 for the patron bond spell check. This takes no longer than any other time a maleve whispers to its victim.</p> <p>(2) If the caster is not a wizard or an elf, he may gain the spellcasting ability of a 1st level wizard. Thereafter, his spellcasting ability increases when his level increases, to that of a 2nd level wizard, a 3rd level wizard, and so on. If the caster is a wizard of an elf, he gains one additional random spell of level 1d3+2, which can be cast at the character's normal spell check and does not take up one of his available known spells.</p> <p>(3) The character gains insight into the underpinnings of the universe, effectively gaining 1d3 points of Luck, a permanent +2 bonus to AC, and 3d6 permanent additional hit points. Further, the character gains a permanent +4 bonus to saves against spells and magical effects.</p> <p>If the character chooses to take this opportunity, when he is reduced to 0 hp, his body collapses as does a maleve's, and he is reborn as a maleve somewhere in the center of Aereth. The character cannot be saved by magical healing, and the body cannot be recovered. No mortal power can prevent the fallen adventurer from being reborn in this way. The player does not know this cost when he decides whether or not to take the opportunity. Once this result is rolled, no maleve ever targets that PC again.</p>

MEMEOSPARKS



Adventurers seeking respite against the bitter cold of the underdark unwittingly put themselves at risk when they warm themselves near the fiery underground lava pits. Exploiting this survival instinct is the virus known as memeosparks. Memeosparks are virtually indistinguishable from the small, bright specks of fire and ash which bubble up continuously from the pits. Memeosparks thrive and multiply by leeching the memories of intelligent creatures and their associated electrical energy. They flourish in areas trafficked by intelligent beings, and therefore, tend to swarm near the lava pits where they prey on travelers who stop to warm themselves. The attack of the memeospark is particularly insidious, as rarely do PCs realize they have become a host and are having their memories stolen.

Typically, 2 or 3 memeosparks will be loosely clustered in their lair hovering near a lava pit.

Memeospark: Init special; Atk Special; AC 9; 1 hp; MV Fly 30'; SP *memory/intelligence drain*, immune to heat and electrical attacks, vulnerable to cold, vulnerable to *cure disease*; SV Fort -2, Ref -2, Will +5; AL N.

Memory/Intelligence Drain: The memory drain attack begins when a PC spends 3 or more rounds within 30' of a memeospark. The attack requires the PC to make an opposed Intelligence check (+4 Int check for the spark). Once a spark has made a successful memory drain, it will be sated for 1d4 days.

If the PC fails, make a Will save and see reference below. The most dramatic effect is that the PC is less "sharp" from adventuring resulting in penalized initiative rolls. In addition, the judge should reward the PC who roleplays the condition with interesting results (forgetting or giving away items, wandering off alone, etc.)

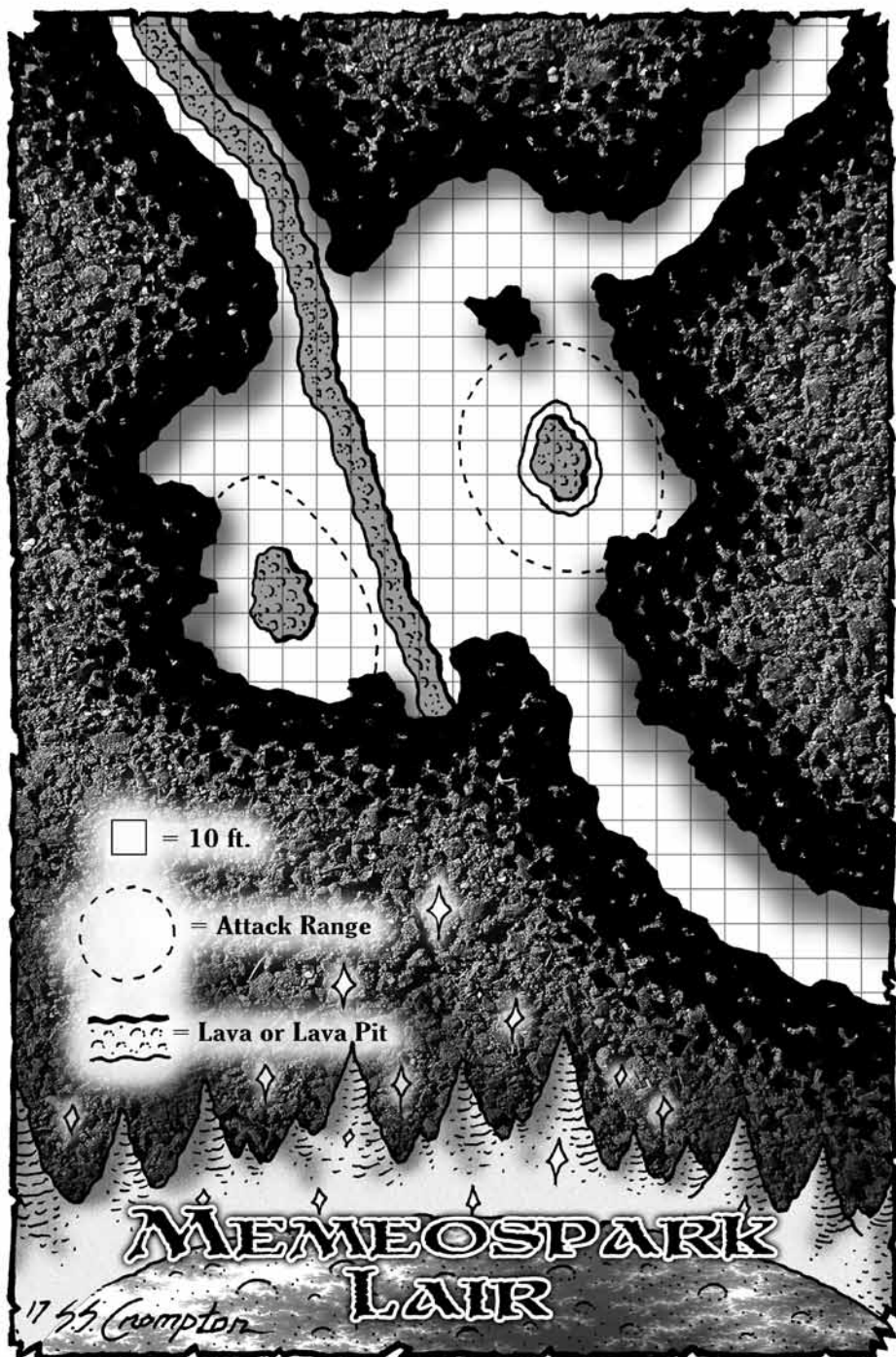
Will Save Roll	Memeospark Drain Result
0-3	<p>The PC is dramatically affected. Permanent loss of 1 point of Intelligence. If PC is a spellcaster, they <i>permanently</i> forget how to cast 1 spell.</p> <p>In addition, PC suffers traumatic short and long term memory loss – unable to remember childhood, difficulty remembering names, tasks, and are easily distracted. These symptoms wear off in 1d6 days. -2 penalty to Init rolls during this time.</p>
4-8	<p>The PC is seriously affected. The PC temporarily loses 1 intelligence point and one concentration-based class ability (e.g., spellcasters lose 1 spell, thieves lose ability to detect traps, etc.)</p> <p>In addition, PC suffers short-term memory loss and distraction resulting in -1 Init penalty.</p> <p>All effects last for 1d4+1 days.</p>

Will Save Roll	Memeospark Drain Result
9-11	The PC is moderately affected, suffering from short-term memory loss and distraction resulting in -1 penalty to spellchecks and Init checks for 2 days.
12-14	The PC is somewhat affected, suffering from short-term memory loss and distraction resulting in -1 penalty to spellchecks and Init checks for 2d6 turns.
15-17	Some trivial memories are siphoned, but with no adverse effects.
18+	The warped mind of the PC overwhelms the memeospark; the spark flickers out of existence after witnessing the horrors of the PC's past experiences.

Detecting Memeosarks: Memeosarks are easy to dispatch, but hard to detect. They can be detected via spells (*cantrip*, *detect magic*, or *detect evil*) or a thief's *find traps* (DC 15). Elves are automatically granted an opportunity to detect nearby sparks (DC 10).

"Catching Fire": Wizards who are not afraid to engage in the shunned practice known as "catching fire" or "huffing sparks," will seek out the virus to harvest them for their hallucinatory and telepathic effects. If a memeospark can be detected (see above), then they can be bottled and smoked. PCs attempting to harvest stolen memories by huffing sparks must make a successful Luck check and then the judge rolls to determine an effect from the table below or improvise something similar:

D5	Result
1	PC retrieves memories of ancient underdark explorer; memories enable PC to fill in previously unexplored map area.
2	PC gains the memories of a thief who concealed property from the rest of her party. The cache of gems is within a day's walk and worth 100 gp.
3	PC absorbs the memories of a former wizard and gains the ability to perform a one-time casting of <i>flaming hands</i> (spellcheck d20+4).
4	PC picks up the memories previously harvested from an elf and is able to perform a one-time <i>invoke patron</i> to the King of Elfland (likely at his or her peril!); spellcheck d20 +4.
5	PC retrieves the memories of a quasi-intelligent underground ape who travelled through the area months before. The PC can perform a one-time <i>monster summoning</i> (spellcheck d20 +4) to summon underground apes for aid (use jungle ape-man in core rulebook for stats).



NO-MEN



These stick-thin, insectile humanoids lead a skulking existence on the fringes of the Bleak Shores. They wear great grey hooded cloaks, their pale features cloaked and muffled. They may be encountered scavenging the dead for food, but often seem to be doing nothing but staring in the direction of some Aghartan city. Perhaps they have some sharper senses to spy on what occurs there. Perhaps they are in telepathic communion with some creature. The No-Men will not say. They can sometimes be enticed to speak of the vile Under Lords which dwell between the Center of Aereth and its outer crust, but it is uncertain if they view the Under Lords as feared enemies, or as admired superiors. In any event, no creature (except, perhaps, their unknown masters) can read, or even detect, their minds. They are hidden to all magic and psionic powers, and gain a +6 bonus to any attempts at hiding or moving stealthily.

If reduced to 0 hp – even if decapitated – no-men gain 1d5 rounds of frenzied activity known as their “death dance”. During this time they gain an extra Action Die and make attacks with a +2 bonus to both the attack roll and damage.

The No-Men live in tunnels carved out of the Bleak Shores, with a hundred cunningly hidden entrances. So carefully are these concealed that they require a DC 20 (or higher!) check to find. Within the tunnels, stone benches serve as both seating and uncomfortable beds. PCs could potentially gain refuge, a way to travel unseen, or even be sent on missions by the No-Men...but secrecy is their watchword, and they kill those who learn too much.

No-men are usually encountered singly, but there is a 10% chance that 2d3 are encountered together. When no-men are encountered, roll 1d14 to determine what they are doing:

1d14	The No-Men are....
1-7	...staring across the water toward an Aghartan city.
8-9	...contemplating the ground as though in silent communication with some unseen entity.
10	...making disturbing patterns on the ground by piling and moving stones. The signs seem asymmetrical at first, but the longer a PC watches, the more he becomes convinced that there is a hidden symmetry.
11	...attacking. The PCs are too close to one of their secret tunnels.
12	...dancing. Their strange capering lasts 2d5 rounds, unless disturbed. After this time, roll 1d14 to determine what they do and consult this chart again.
13	...vanishing. Searching the area may uncover a secret entrance to a No-Man tunnel complex. If the PCs follow immediately, they are attacked. If they wait, the vanished No-Men have gone elsewhere within the tunnel complex when they enter.
14	...cutting themselves. No one knows why they do this, and the No-Men do not tell. When a No-Man reaches 0 hp, it enters the “death dance”, targeting the nearest creature each round without regard for what it is.

NO-MAN TUNNELS

New
Primary
Tunnel

Tunnel goes
for 7 Miles

Tunnel goes
for 900 feet

Tunnel goes
for 6 Miles

Tunnel goes
for 2 Miles

Tunnel goes
for 2 Miles

New
Primary
Tunnel

New
Primary
Tunnel

Tunnel goes
for 1 Mile

Bench

Tunnel goes
for 4 Miles

Tunnel goes
for 800 feet

17
64 Compton

No-Man: Init +3; Atk bone dagger +2 melee (1d3) or bite +3 melee (1d3-1); AC 12; HD 1d6+3; MV 30'; Act 1d20; SP infravision 60', blank minds, stealth, death dance; SV Fort +4, Ref +3, Will +5; AL N.

THE NO-MEN LAIR

A large boulder on the Bleak Shores contains a secret door, where a section of the rock can be pressed in and upwards once a hidden catch is located, pivoting on recessed hinges at the top of the door. The boulder seems of one piece until the catch is found; only a dwarf or elf can discover the seam, although the door could be discovered by other means. The typical check is DC 20, although the judge may allow circumstances to reduce this.

Beyond the secret door is a steep and narrow flight of stairs, leading downward to a hallway which stretches to the left and right as far as can be seen. The hallway is 12' wide and 8' high, with stone benches placed every 1d8 x 10' along either wall. There is a 5% chance that any bench contains one or more No-Men. Each time No-Men are indicated, roll 1d5: (1-3) a single sleeping No-Man, (4) a single sitting No-Man, or (5) 1d3 sitting No-Men conversing in their own weird language of clicks, popping noises, and hand gestures. If the PCs are detected, the No-Men attack immediately.

As soon as the last PC enters the tunnel, the removal of pressure on the stairs causes a section of rock to slide over the exit to the stairs. If the PCs mark this location, they can rediscover (and open) the secret door with a DC 10 Intelligence check. Otherwise, a DC 20 check is required.

This *primary tunnel* goes on for 3d6 x 100' in either direction before coming to a dead end. Secret doors are hidden on either wall of the tunnel, but neither end. These secret doors lead either to (roll 1d5): (1-4) *secondary tunnels* or (5) exits. Exits are similar to the entrance to the lair, although the secret doors leading into them may be hidden in any way the judge deems fit.

Secondary tunnels are a mere 5' wide and 7' tall. They run 1d7 miles and end in secret doors which lead to (roll 1d5): (1-4) an exit or (5) another primary tunnel. When entering or exiting a secondary tunnel, and for each mile travelled along a secondary tunnel, there is a cumulative 5% chance of encountering 1d5-2 No-Men (minimum 1). These No-Men have an equal chance of attacking or ignoring the PCs, unless molested. If the No-Men are travelling in the opposite direction of the PCs, then the PCs will have to backtrack in order to avoid an attack by non-aggressive No-Men. As soon as they enter a primary tunnel, however, they are attacked.

The No-Men must have lairs where they manufacture the cloth for their garments, their weapons, and the tools required to create and maintain their tunnels. Where these lairs may be, and what may be found there if they are discovered, is left to the judge's imagination.

QUARTZ-REAPERS



Magically-devolved escaped former slaves of the Agarthan masters, the pinkish-purple humanoid quartz-reapers babble incoherently in a tongue not dissimilar from the common language of the surface world. Long-lived but relatively frail, they have established a home beneath the black stone slabs of the bleak shores in which they enact a mockery of the courtly life they once served. The rusted shackles and broken chains that were once their bondage remain as tokens of their new hierarchical structure in which the most disfigured among them carry the burdens of the most bonds of imprisonment and are thus decreed as “lords” of the court.

The lesser among the quartz-reapers, the “servants,” might only have a single chain link pierced into their skin. The quartz-reaper performers are the more talented among the servants, and their performances consist of wailing in horrible song, dancing as if in spasms of pain, or enacting pantomime. Small traveling bands of 1d4 performers and 1d4+1 servants wander the outer banks of the bleak shores, acting as ambassadors for their quartz-reaper lord and lady. The ambassadors will attempt to impress victims with their performances and lure them back to their court where the guests can participate or become casualties of the mad ceremonies within.

In their courtly lair, quartz-reapers claw at the ground with jewel-encrusted hands, scraping wiggling food from the sand and stone as their only regular sustenance, breaking from their mock-courtly pantomime at times, when bored or hungry. When encountered in their lair, there is a 1-in-10 chance that the servants in the outer area are fighting amongst themselves, ignoring intruders unless attacked. The other 90% of the time, the quartz-reapers hold court in the presence of strangers, with the lord and lady of the stone slabs sitting on crude coral-and-driftwood thrones while the performers dance for their pleasure and servants carry delicacies (worms and grubs) on platters (flat, jagged stones).

PCs who play along with mock-courtly manners and act as distinguished guests from another land may each make a DC 15 Personality check and three or more successes (out of the first five attempts) will result in a boon for the party (see the table below – only one boon per month will be granted to any one party), but if the quartz-reapers become offended (more than three failures out of five or more attempts) the quartz-reapers will lash out with their razor-sharp hands and fragmented magical effects. They haven’t survived this long without being able to kill anything unwanted that intrudes on their domain.

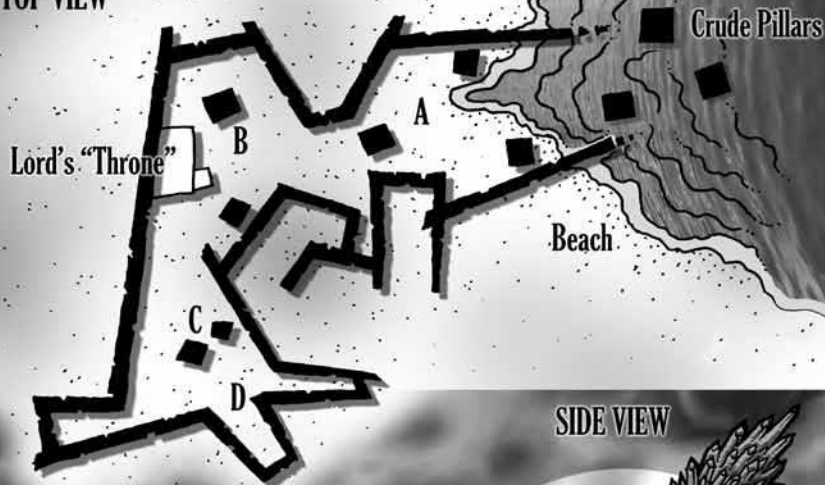
If severed from the body, a jeweled hand of a quartz-reaper may be used as a melee weapon dealing 1d12 damage and adding +1d6 to any crit table result.

Quartz-Reaper Servant: Init +1, Atk claws +3 melee (1d12+special), AC 14; HD 1d8; MV 30'; Act 1d20; SP +1d6 to any crit table result if a natural 20 is rolled to hit; SV Fort -1, Ref +1, Will -1.

QUARTZ REAPER LAIR



TOP VIEW



SIDE VIEW



THE REAPERS: A dark, quartz
mockery of courtly life.

17 SS Grompton

Quartz-Reaper Performer: Init +3, Atk claws +5 melee (1d12+special), AC 16; HD 2d8; MV 40'; Act 1d24; SP +1d6 to any crit table result if a natural 20 is rolled to hit; SV Fort +1, Ref +3, Will +0.

Quartz-Reaper Lord/Lady: Init +3, Atk claws +2 melee (1d12+special) or special, AC 16; HD 3d8; MV 20'; Act 1d20; SP +1d6 to any crit table result if a natural 20 is rolled to hit, lingering magical energies allow them to cast *color spray* at a +7 to the spellcheck until the spell is lost for the day; SV Fort +2, Ref +0, Will +2.

Quartz-Reaper Courtly Boon	
Roll 1d6 if three successful DC 15 Personality Checks within the first five attempts	
1	The lord calls a performer to the throne, severs both of the servants hands, and presents the hands as gifts to the PC with the lowest Personality score
2	The lady sings to the PCs in a screeching wail for 1 turn, but if they listen to the entire song, the magic in her voice grants them each an additional 1d6 hp.
3	The most hideously disfigured performer dances with the PC with the highest Personality ability score and becomes a loyal, affectionate companion to that PC as long as it lives.
4	A servant holding a stone “platter” covered with worms and grubs dumps the foul creatures on the ground and reaches into a crevice to pull out a small sack embroidered with a flame-ringed eyeball. The sack is filled with seventeen dull crystals and three glittering diamonds. Each diamond may be swallowed to recover 1 point of Luck previously spent by the PC.
5	The lady shrieks at two servants who immediately bow to the PCs and begin digging at the edge of the water. They unearth a small, water-damaged chest and present it to the PCs. Inside the chest is a silver flute which, when played, will provide a -1d penalty to all checks or attacks of anyone within 50’.
6	The lord offers his driftwood-and-coral throne to the PC with the lowest Personality ability score. If the PC sits in the throne, the lord attacks the PC, and if the PC defeats the lord in single combat, he or she becomes the new lord of this court and will have the complete obedience of all quartz-reapers in this area as long as he or she remains seated on the throne. The quartz-reapers will treat him or her as a stranger if the PC leaves the lair.

Quartz-Reaper Lair: The court of the quartz-reaper lies beneath a series of black stone slabs precariously perched atop strangely unnatural trapezoidal black pillars on the edge of the bleak shores. Water flows to the edges of the “grand hall” in **area a**, a space occupied by 2d6 quartz-reaper servants. The stones and pillars that form the structure are too heavy for the quartz-reapers to have moved by themselves, though a DC 25 Strength check would cause any pillar to topple. If two pillars in the same area are knocked over, the entire lair will collapse, dealing 8d10 damage to anyone inside.

The mock-courtly festivities occur most prominently in **area B**, where 1d6 servants, 1d4 performers, and the lord and the lady quartz-reapers gather. The lord and lady sit atop thrones of foul-smelling coral and withered driftwood, on a half-buried stone slab rising up above the dark sands of the floor. **Area C** is occupied by 1d6 servants preparing meals (digging for worms and grubs in the sandy floor and at the edges of the black stones). **Area D** is a series of hibernation nooks where the edges of the stone slabs overlap, with 2d6 sleeping performers and 1d4 sleeping servants resting, for months at a time. If a quartz-reaper lord or lady is killed (outside of a boon), the performers and servants will be awakened to avenge their master and one of the performers will replace the slain lord or lady at a disgustingly inelegant ceremony within the week.

THE ORACLE



In the cold dark of Aghartan midnight, those travelling the Spine Ridges note that their precious metals (silver, gold, electrum, platinum, mithril, adamantine, etc.) are gently tugged in the same direction, until dawn. Following this force leads to a large cave that smells like burned flesh. Black dust covers walls, floor, and ceiling, though light sources reveal small shiny flecks within the coating. PCs searching for evidence of habitation might find humanoid tracks (DC 13 Intelligence check, +1d for dwarves, trappers, hunters, etc.); a result greater than 19 reveals that the cave has been repeatedly collapsed and rebuilt. There are no signs of predators lairing here (no corpses, traces of fur, etc.) despite the cavern's suitability.

Those releasing their metallic coins, treasure, etc., see them fly and adhere to an invisible object hovering in the chamber's center. The metals liquefy and cover a giant, humanoid head. It is 6 feet tall and almond-shaped, with two large circular eyes, a sharp eagle-beak nose, and a forward-cresting forehead. The PCs have found The Oracle.

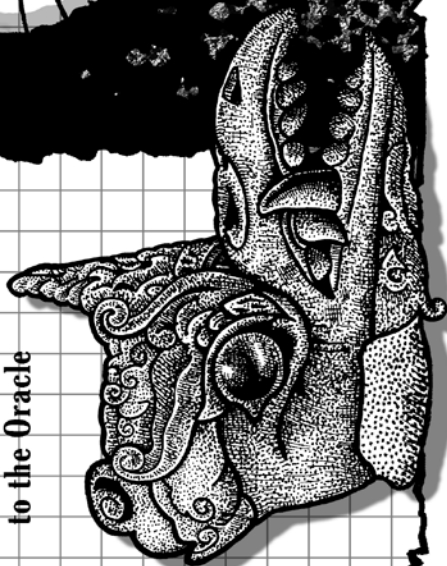
The Oracle is an ancient, weakened god seeking refuge in the Bleak Shores to die. Discovered by an Aghartan master, it is imprisoned in this cave to be used for prophesy. The spectral being feeds on precious metals, gaining powers of foresight across time and space. When the PCs first discover the Oracle it is weak and malnourished, but gains strength from each donation. In return, it grants the PCs knowledge of things to come, hints for a quest, etc. The judge may improvise, or use the Donation Table below. The Oracle suggests what can be gained, and at what cost, e.g., "If you give twice as much, I will reveal something you don't know about your past."

THE ORACLE'S LAIR

□ = 10 ft.

CAVE ENTRANCE

Long shallow
stairs descend 40 ft
to the Oracle



Oracle



Donation Table (value, not actual coinage)

100 gp	“I will help you reach your destination. You must seek...”: The oracle describes one image (landmark, building, sign, etc.) helpful for the party to reach their desired destination. It’s ok, as judge, to ask the players where they’re trying to go. Of course, the Oracle knows, but you may not.
500 gp	“I will reveal something you don’t know about your past.”: Describe a past event recognizable to the PCs, but with an unexpected twist. For example, the Oracle describes a battle they had, but includes a participant, observer, etc., that the party didn’t know was there. Perhaps a merchant swapped a real item for a false one during a transaction. Give the players something new to consider.
1000 gp	“You will face this foe soon. Be prepared.”: The Oracle correctly predicts the next random encounter the PCs will have. Roll it now and remember it.
5000 gp	“You must speak this, when the time is right.”: The Oracle gives an important word or phrase. This could be a command word for a magic item, a correct choral sequence from Barako’s Akashic library, a password for entry, etc.
10,000 gp	“I lend you my sight. Until the next dusk, you will see new possibilities.”: Until the next dusk (recall that days and nights are each 8 hours long), the supplicant gains a +1d bonus to all rolls (and a -1d “bonus” to Luck checks).
50,000 gp	“I will answer a single question truthfully, but only with ‘yea’ or ‘nay.’”: This can be tricky for a judge, but use the ambiguity of language to your advantage. Consider the question’s unintended meanings, and perhaps answer those. Smart PCs will ask specific questions of limited scope rather than broad, destiny-probing ones. Feel free to secretly roll a Luck check for the PC to decide how deceptive the Oracle will be.
100,000 gp	“Free me, and I will reveal the tablets of time.” The supplicant is affected by the maximum result (32+) of the <i>second sight</i> spell. The Oracle’s transfer of knowledge imprints the spell upon her mind. If she is a cleric, elf, or wizard, she automatically learns the spell without it deducting from the number of spells she can know. If she already knows the spell, she gains +1d to cast it. If she is not a spell caster, then she may cast the spell with a d14 spell check, though corruption, deity disapproval, etc., is still a risk. A donation of this size frees the Oracle, see below.

Once the Oracle has its vision, it absorbs the liquefied metals, burning a bit of itself away and blasting the cave with hot, charred spectral flesh (soot). Those within must pass a DC 10 Fortitude save or take 1 point of damage. If the supplicant passes a Luck check, then among the dust are nuggets of raw blue-silver Aghartan metal, one for every 1000 gp donated. Once the Oracle has received at least 100,000 gp from the PCs, it breaks its bonds and escapes. Whether it dies peacefully or wreaks its revenge upon the Bleak Shores is up to the judge.

If the party wishes fight a god, albeit a dying one, then combat details follow. It discourages this, however, since it needs the PCs' precious metals to break free. With that being said, its patience is limited. The Oracle is difficult to hit, since it generally knows where a PC will attack before she does. It mentally crushes the bodies of targets, expels them from the cave, or collapses the cave for massive damage; it uses one action to restore the cave after collapsing it. The Oracle can be forcibly freed from its bonds by a DC 32 spell check result with *banish*; this kills it.

Oracle: Init +10; Atk mind crush +10 ranged (3d6, 500' range); AC 22; HD 20d8; hp 147; MV 0' (imprisoned) or fly 100'; Act 5d30; SP spectral expulsion (DC 20 Will save or target removed from cave, affects everyone in cave, once per round), cavern collapse (5d10 damage, DC 20 Reflex save for half, once per round), immune to non-magic weapons, critical hits, and mental attacks; SV Fort +27, Ref +27, Will +27; AL N.

TU-ALAK THE HOLLOW SPAWN



Tu-Alak is a Hollow Spawn (see DCC core rules pg. 418) of the Silvered Robe, the spawn-sect devoted to unravelling the secrets of the multiversal nature of Existence. Tu-Alak was caught spying on the 10,008th Conclave of Wizards and in his haste to escape capture he misplotted the course of his Cross-Dimensional Chariot. He crashed *inside* Áereth, in the peaks of one of the spurs of the Spine Ridges that line the Aghartan coast, doing serious damage to his vehicle and killing his Hollow Man host body.

Tu-Alak was able to jury-rig a makeshift surgery center in the cabin of his vessel. This enables Tu-Alak to operate on Aghartan slave-scouts, creating a cavity in their bodies which he can inhabit. Unfortunately, the warped consciousness of the slave-scouts does not produce the synergy between spawn and host that facilitates wizardry and thus Tu-Alak cannot spellcast. The makeshift nature of the surgical process also puts a strain on the slave host bodies which causes them to wear out quickly.

Tu-Alak uses the cover of scout host bodies to travel Lost Agharta with scout patrols. He seeks a way to repair his damaged vessel and will take an interest in any powerful outsiders, especially if they evidence possession of advanced magical lore, or powerful magical or technological artifacts (there is no difference between

the two as far as Tu-Alak is concerned – both manipulate quant-u-mystical realities). Because of his Hollow Spawn nature – manipulative and secretive – he is most likely to try to steal magical artifacts from parties of PCs while they are in combat. He is also likely to try to incapacitate a PC and spirit that individual back to his chariot to become his next host body. However, he may lend aid to an entire party of PCs if he thinks an alliance will facilitate them helping him make significant repairs to his Cross-Dimensional Chariot. He will definitely reveal his true nature and attempt to parley if he is in danger of being slain in a fight with the PCs.

Tu-Alak's Cross-Dimensional Chariot has a camo-cloaking feature that still functions. So his vessel is hidden by an illusion that makes it appear as part of a cliff-side. But his vessel's techno-magical wards cannot block a pin-point psionic scan or magical divination, so he takes great care in keeping the vessel's precise location secret.

Tu-Alak (Hollow Spawn): Init +0; Atk tentacle +6 melee (1d6); AC 16; HD 2d8 (in addition to host body); MV 30'; Act 1d20; SV Fort +6, Ref +2, Will +1; AL L.

Tu-Alak lacks a Hollow Spawn's usual spellcasting abilities. If he were to surgically implant himself in the host body of an intelligent humanoid it would restore his ability to cast spells as a fourth level wizard. (As a Silver Sect spawn, his spell knowledge focuses on summoning, trans-location and time distortion). The imperfections of his jury-rigged surgical equipment means that a host creature's body will begin to experience the failure of all of its internal organs in 3d4 days. Once organ failure begins, the creature must make a Fort save every four hours. The first save is DC 10, but the difficulty of each subsequent save increases by one.

Slave Scout Hollow Man: Init +3; Atk spear +3 melee (1d8+3) +0 ranged (1d8+3); AC 14; HD 4d8+4; hp 24; MV 35'; Act 1d24; SP 30' darkvision, stealth, thief skills; SV Fort +6, Ref +2, Will +2; AL L.

Slave scouts are 7' tall but preternaturally stealthy despite their height. They carry a brace of five short spears that serve as both melee and ranged weapons. Normal scouts have been blinded but the surgical procedure that turns a scout into a host body for Tu-Alak provides him with limited visual perception (-1d for skill checks requiring visual acuity). Scouts have the ears and inner ears of giant bats grafted on to them, giving them a keen, radar-like sense which Tu-Alak can utilize to its full potential. Scouts suffer no penalty for their blindness but zones of silence reduce their actions by -1d. Tu-Alak's scout host bodies cannot contribute to the cacophony of clicks that scout patrols use against their foes. However, in addition to their natural stealthiness, Tu-Alak's scout host bodies have the skills of a 3rd level lawful thief.



UN-DEATH OYSTER



cattered along the Bleak Shore, there are beds of pale algae that bubble. Beneath the slime, a slick tunnel descends below ground. PCs falling down the chute, either by failing to climb (DC 15) or by stepping into it (DC 7 Intelligence check to notice bubbling algae) suffer 1d3 damage per 10' fallen (see table below), as they plunge into a burrowed chamber. PCs that enter during the day find a closed pair of rock-hard shells resting at the back. This is the un-death oyster. Roll 2d4 on the table below to determine the age and statistics of the creature, as well as its pearl.

Un-Death Oyster Age and Pearl Table

All have the following stats: MV 0' or swim 20'; un-dead traits; they do not eat, drink, or breathe. As un-dead, they are immune to *sleep*, *charm*, and *paralysis* spells, as well as other mental effects and cold damage. AL C.

2d4 result

2 **Very Young:** 2' diameter shell; lair tunnel 20' long; Init +2; Atk acid spray +2 ranged (1d3, 20' range) or shell clamp +4 melee (1d6, DC 4 Reflex save to avoid); AC 16; HD 4d8; Act 2d20; SP fungus infection (DC 12 Fortitude), shell hold (shell clamp victim must pass DC 12 Strength check to escape); SV Fort +2, Ref +2, Will +2.

Pearl: 2" diameter. Bearer gains a +2 bonus to one roll, once per day. Daily 2% chance for un-dead attack.

3 **Young:** 4' diameter shell; lair tunnel 30' long; Init +3; Atk acid spray +3 ranged (1d4, 30' range) or shell clamp +5 melee (1d8, DC 5 Reflex save to avoid); AC 17; HD 5d8; Act 3d20; SP fungus infection (DC 13 Fortitude), shell hold (shell clamp victim must pass DC 13 Strength check to escape); SV Fort +3, Ref +3, Will +3.


Pearl: 4" diameter. Bearer knows tidal patterns of any large body of water, and has above powers from younger pearls. Daily 3% chance for un-dead attack.

4 **Young Adult:** 6' diameter shell; lair tunnel 40' long; Init +4; Atk acid spray +4 ranged (1d6, 40' range) or shell clamp +6 melee (1d10, DC 6 Reflex save to avoid); AC 18; HD 6d8; Act 4d20; SP fungus infection (DC 14 Fortitude), shell hold (shell clamp victim must pass DC 14 Strength check to escape); SV Fort +4, Ref +4, Will +4.

Pearl: 6" diameter. Bearer gains 4 hp to his maximum, and has above powers from younger pearls. Daily 4% chance for un-dead attack.

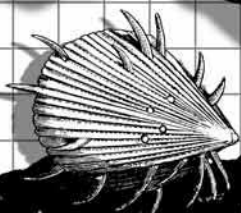
5 **Adult:** 8' diameter shell; lair tunnel 50' long; Init +5; Atk acid spray +5 ranged (1d8, 50' range) or shell clamp +7 melee (1d12, DC 7 Reflex save to avoid); AC 19; HD 7d8; Act 5d20; SP fungus infection (DC 15 Fortitude),

LAIR OF THE UN-DEATH OYSTER

 = 2 ft.

Bubbling
Algae

Diameter and
length of tunnel
depend on the
Un-Death
Oyster's age.



17 SS *Compton*

shell hold (shell clamp victim must pass DC 15 Strength check to escape); SV Fort +5, Ref +5, Will +5.

Pearl: 8" diameter. Bearer may breathe underwater for 1 hour per day, and has above powers from younger pearls. Daily 5% chance for un-dead attack.

- 6 **Old:** 10' diameter shell; lair tunnel 60' long; Init +6; Atk acid spray +6 ranged (1d10, 60' range) or shell clamp +8 melee (1d14, DC 8 Reflex save to avoid); AC 20; HD 8d8; Act 6d20; SP fungus infection (DC 16 Fortitude), shell hold (shell clamp victim must pass DC 16 Strength check to escape); SV Fort +6, Ref +6, Will +6.

Pearl: 10" diameter. Bearer may converse with marine creatures for 1 hour per day, as a 20 spell check *Comprehend Languages*, and has above powers from younger pearls. Daily 6% chance for un-dead attack.

- 7 **Very Old:** 12' diameter shell; lair tunnel 70' long; Init +7; Atk acid spray +7 ranged (1d12, 70' range) or shell clamp +9 melee (1d16, DC 9 Reflex save to avoid); AC 21; HD 9d8; Act 7d20; SP fungus infection (DC 17 Fortitude), shell hold (shell clamp victim must pass DC 17 Strength check to escape); SV Fort +7, Ref +7, Will +7.

Pearl: 12" diameter. Bearer may cast *chill touch* with a d20 spell check (or +1d if already known), and has above powers from younger pearls. Daily 7% chance for un-dead attack.

- 8 **Ancient:** 14' diameter shell; lair tunnel 80' long; Init +8; Atk acid spray +8 ranged (1d14, 80' range) or shell clamp +10 melee (1d20, DC 10 Reflex save to avoid); AC 22; HD 10d8; Act 8d20; SP fungus infection (DC 18 Fortitude), shell hold (shell clamp victim must pass DC 18 Strength check to escape); SV Fort +8, Ref +8, Will +8.

Pearl: 14" diameter. Bearer suffers -1d penalty to all rolls during the daytime, and has above powers from younger pearls. Daily 8% chance for un-dead attack.

The un-death oyster is a nocturnal hunter. The inner sun's rays hurt its shells, thus it lairs during the day. The creature rapidly burrows its resting place using acid secretion, and returns to the Inner Sea by using an evening tide that floods its chamber. Any lair encountered during the evening is empty.

Un-death oysters have iridescent pearls with age-dependent size (see table). These treasures impart powers upon the bearer, and are extremely valuable. However, getting the pearl is not easy. The only way to get an oyster to voluntarily open is by dripping humanoid blood into its shells' hinge. For each hp the oyster has, one must feed it 1 hp of blood or 1 spellburned ability point of blood (STR, AGI, or STA), only then will it open its shell. PCs attempting to forcibly break or pry the oyster's shell must reduce the animal to zero hit points while enduring its acid and shell clamp attacks. Should a clamp attack hit, the oyster may choose to hold the victim, or it may release to clamp another.

When the creature's un-dead flesh is exposed, either by blood or brawn, the pearl may be taken. However, the flesh explodes fungus spores into the air as soon as the prize is removed. A skilled thief may note the danger (DC 20 Find Trap), and may trick the flesh by quickly swapping in a sphere of similar size and weight (DC 20 Pick Pocket). Otherwise, any PCs in the lair must pass a Fortitude save or become infected with a rapidly growing fungus (see table); PCs incur a -1 penalty to the save for each 10 points of blood given. The supernatural disease may only be cured during the day, with a 4 HD lay on hands, or a *Neutralize Poison or Disease* spell check of 20 or more. Infected PCs become comatose in the evening, with their skin hardening like stone, and rise the next day as psychically-controlled fungus zombies.

Fungus Zombie (PC): Stats as PC, but with un-dead traits (see above) and a +4 bonus to AC (rocky skin). See generic stat block below for special abilities.

Fungus Zombie (Generic): Init -2; Atk slam +3 melee (1d7+1); AC 15; HD 2d8+4; MV 20'; Act 1d20; SP death throes (fungus spores erupt from mortal wound; all within melee range must pass a DC 6 Fortitude save or become fungus zombies themselves), un-dead traits; SV Fort +3, Ref -2, Will +1; AL C.

Most believe the shells' fleshy center is the beast, but its un-dead essence is in the pearl! The pearl psychically controls its fungus slaves, whose only goal is to reclaim the pearl and walk it into the inner sea (which dissolves the fungus, and kills the hosts). Even if one avoids the fungus zombies, the pearl continuously calls to un-dead. Each day, a pearl bearer has a percentage chance to be attacked by summoned undead. Ancient lore hints at a ritual to exorcise the spirit from the pearl, but such an act may put its powers at risk.

PCs must be mindful of the tide. The Inner Sea's irregular waves could flood the chamber and drown them, especially if there is no light to see the way out. A merciful judge may allow a Luck check for a character to find the chute in the dark flooded cave. PCs take 1d6 Stamina damage per round as they drown, and die if reduced to 0 Stamina. Lost Stamina rejuvenates 1 point per round while breathing air.

XAN NA-KADDIX, "ONCE-DENIED"



Xan is an Ur-Lirean. She was one of the priestesses (called the Progenae in her native tongue, or “daughters”) of Kaddix Titanus (aka Cadixtat, the legendary Champion of Chaos). She was sent, along with a warband of Sons of the Second Age, to investigate lore hinting at a possible connection between Agharta and Lirea, the ancient, long-sunken homeland of the Progenae. She made the long, deep delve to Agharta successfully, but her force proved less than a match for the Aghartan slave lords and their armies. Xan’s warriors were slain outright or died in the gladiatorial arena. Eventually only Xan remained, deeply embittered by the conviction that she had been sent on a suicide mission. She vowed to cast down the Daughters of Cadixtat and their temple.

By shaving her head and affecting both a slouch and a lumbering gait, Xan was able to use her 11+ feet of height to pass as an Aghartan slave soldier. She hides among the armies of the slave lords seeking a way back to the surface. Thus, Xan can be encountered as an infiltrator in any company of slave soldiers. She will take an interest in surface dwellers her unit discovers. She has lost her subtlety, and is unable to transcend the deep contempt of the “men” of this Third Age ingrained in her by her culture. So, in the midst of a combat, she is apt to pin, and then violently interrogate, one or more party PCs. She will then slay PCs with no more thought than a farmer gives to wringing the neck of a stewpot hen. However, if PCs are able to see through her disguise and make her suspend her rage and bitterness, they may convince her to help them avoid capture or death.

She has considerable knowledge of several slave lords, palace-cities and troves of treasure and Akashic lore. But she will only barter her knowledge for significant assistance in returning to the surface and help enacting retribution. Her affect will always be imperious. She will expect her commands to be followed without question. She will constantly behave as if she suffers the PCs as fools and she will exhibit great annoyance at anything she is required to explain. She will oft refer to the PCs as “Third Age savages” or “devolved nigh-men.” She will go on incessantly about the perfection and primacy of the Ur-Lineans and will promise the PCs to “uplift” them into “risen men” using “the font” before she throws down the temple at Stylos.

Secreted in the waistband of Xan’s girdle is her most prized possession: a dented metal flask containing a few drams of the Hel-Ooze of Cadixtat – enough for three draughts. This far from its source the “ooze” is a thin, watery, yellowish liquid but it retains a transmutative effect on mortals. A PC who imbibes the ooze must make a DC 15 Fort save or take 3d8 damage as his bones wrack and twist within his frame. If the save is failed, the PC must roll a DC 10 Will save or be driven mad by the pain. However, if the second save is successful the PC metamorphoses, growing ½ foot in height per round (and adding proportional mass) for 4d3 rounds. Each ½ foot of added height alternately increases the PC’s Strength and Stamina

XAN NA-KADDIX'S LAIR

(GARRISON OF 16 SCOUTS
& 80 SOLDIERS)

XAN LIVES IN
HIDING PLACE
IN STORAGE
ROOM

WATCH TOWER

NOURISHMENT
NOOK

OFF-DUTY
PODS

DOOR TO
PARAPET

*PODS SLIDE
MECHANICALLY
IN BOTH DIRECTIONS
INTO POSITION
OVER CHUTE.

RIGHT
GATE

CHUTE TO
GROUND LEVEL

DOOR
TO CITY

LEFT
GATE

XAN NA-KADDIX

1997 Compton

by one point and gives the PC an additional 2 hp. While the PC is growing, the pain and unfamiliarity of the transmutation causes him to suffer a -1 penalty on all die rolls. While transformed, the imbiber is highly susceptible to the influence of Daughters of Cadixtat, treating the priestesses as revered leaders – like the effects of a potent *Charm Person* spell. A transmuted PC reverts to his original physical form 4d6 hours later, requiring another successful DC 15 Fort save to avoid suffering 3d8 damage from the reversal. The reversion can be prevented by taking another draught of the ooze (no saves required). If Xan finds herself in a desperate situation while allied with the PCs, she will surprise one or more allies, pinning them and forcing them to transmute to increase their combat prowess.

Xan Na-Kaddix, “Once-Denied” (Daughter of Cadixtat): Init +3, Atk grab +12 melee (1d6+6 and target is grappled and pinned) or great cleaver +18 melee (2d6+8 plus weapon-breaking); AC 16; HD 12d12; hp 80; MV 40'; Act 1d24; SP crit on 20-24; SV Fort +12, Ref +7, Will +14; AL L.

In combat, Xan can forego an attack on a target and instead attempt to break that opponent's weapon. Xan's attack roll suffers a -2 penalty as she tries to force her opponent to parry. However, if the attack hits, her opponent must make a DC 18 Ref save. If the save is failed her opponent's weapon has taken the full force of her attack and breaks.

(Note: Xan can be a “hook” to get the PCs to the 8th level adventure: DCC #76 *Colossus Arise!* The PCs' current adventures in Agharta, their return trip to the surface and one or more adventures required to reach Stylos can be the means by which the PCs attain the eight levels in their adventuring class necessary for them to be ready to take on DCC #76.)

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APPENDIX A: MAI GENERATION

Roll	NPC (d24)	Condition (d20)	Mental State (d24)	Method of Ingress (d20)	Reason For Entering Agharta (d12)	Been in Agharta... (d6)
1	Seam Dwarf Surveyor	Hale and hearty	Paranoid or suspicious	Native-born or slave-born	Perform an assassination	Hours
2	Praying Mantis-Monk	Disheveled	Optimistic (falsely?)	Magic portal or similar trap	Exploration	Days
3	Outcast Hybrid-Fiend	Wounded	Fascinated	Dimensional teleport or inter-dimensional rift	Divine quest	Weeks
4	Corruption-Wracked Abomination	Dehydrated	Aggressive	Underground river	Tracking Ythothian slavers	Months
5	Hyperborean Halfling-Hag	Starving	Hallucinating or delusional	Underground passage	Rescue someone lost or enslaved	Lost count
6	Moleman Warren-Whelp (on Walkabout)	Ill, with fever	Lonely	Machine or vessel	Unintentional / accidental	Doesn't remember
7	Multi-Podal. Sentient Slime-Sage	Corrupted	Desperate	Magical artifact	Tracking an individual/group	

DOOMED MORTALS

ION TABLE

Method of Avoiding Capture (d14)	Disturbing Thing Done to Survive (d16)	Current Goal (d20)	Special Knowledge (d20)	Treasure (d30)	Companion (d20)
Divine protection	Cannibalism	Revenge	Way out of Agharta	Akashic Ioun stone	Mischievous imp or quasit
Hiding place or refuge	Sacrificed companion to evade capture	Rescue a comrade	Vulnerability of a particular slave lord	Lore-filled journal	Mantisman
Camouflage through craft or magic:	Exchanged “favors” with a truly deplorable monster or denizen	Escape Agharta	Location of a refuge	Enchanted ornamental coif (Akashic)	Small, bipedal, predatory dinosaur
Disguise through craft or magic	Lived in utter filth, eg ate entrails, hid under rotten corpses	Redemption	Survival lore/ skills: hunting, tracking, herb lore, etc.	Aghartan alchemical substance	Rideable, quadrupedal, herbivooous dinosaur
Invisibility	Sold immortal soul or made a demon-pact	Exploration and documentation	Lore about the Akashic record	Mechano-mineral machine	Mute mushroom
Looking valueless or pathetic	Mass murder	Send a warning, message or knowledge home	Hiding place of its own treasure	Mithrifoil mind-shield skullcap	Another marooned mortal
“Playing possum”	Betrayal of a blood-brother or sword-sister	Remember something	Healing lore sourced in Agharta’s unique environment	Map of an exit route to the surface	Slave-scout (somewhat independent-thinking)

Roll	NPC (d24)	Condition (d20)	Mental State (d24)	Method of Ingress (d20)	Reason For Entering Agharta (d12)	Been in Agharta... (d6)
8	Shadow-Walking Elf-Shade	Crippled/ maimed	Ennui	Swal- lowed by a disaster (eg whirl-pool, earthquake)	Curse	
9	Soulless Sycophant of Sezrekan	Disfigured	Suicidal	Passed through the gates of death	Entered accidentally or uninten- tionally	
10	Dark-Lov- ing Zvart Recluse	Blind or part-blind	Agitated	Reincarna- tion	Suicide-by- delve	
11	Scarab Hive-Noid Scout	Gangrenous	Inquisitive	Phlogiston distur- bance or wild effect of spell duel	Following legends and lore	
12	Phase-Shift- ed Analog Refugee	Leprous	In the mood to barter	Magical banishment	Doesn't remember	
13	Troglodyte Sneak-Thief	Nigh dead or comatose	Amnesiac	Price paid for a great sin		
14	God- Touched Worm Sha- man	Suffering from expo- sure	Enlightened	Price of failed bid for immor- tality		
15	Pioneering Phlogi- Physicist	Ill with dysentery	Resigned	Divine pun- ishment		

Method of Avoiding Capture (d14)	Disturbing Thing Done to Survive (d16)	Current Goal (d20)	Special Knowledge (d20)	Treasure (d30)	Companion (d20)
Native guide/ mate/ companion creature	Bartered a divine mystery or state secret	Find something lost	Alchemy sourced in Agharta's environment	Priceless art: Aghartan statue, vessel or tapestry	Slave-warrior (Somewhat independent-thinking)
Living the barest of existences	Whole-heartedly embraced savagery	Answer a question	Magic abilities sourced in Agharta's environment	Spell book	Sentient, ambulatory rock
No psychic aura	Enslaved another	Complete her/his quest/ mission	Hidden paths/ ways in a palace-city	Holy relic from the surface	Large talking crab wearing a hat
Symbiotic relationship with an Aghartan mega-predator	Freed a demon or Primal force of Chaos from Aghartan thrall	Find something to believe in again	Hidden paths/ ways in a region (eg the Blood Heaths)	Preserved brain of slave lord	Sentient solar flare from the central "sun"
Swore service to the agent of a slave lord	Used forbidden lore to spellburn another's flesh to power a spell	Survive/endure	Glimmer of understanding of the inner sun	Dust from an unknown, priceless gemstone	Dog wearing wizard's garb (purple robe & pointed hat)
Slave lord whim/ caprice	Tortured an innocent	Form an alliance with a slave lord	Location of a treasure vault	Akashic mystical hologram	Eagle-sized cyclopean bat with lizard tail
Doesn't remember	Recanted a sacred belief or foreswore a sacred oath	Reach the sunken city	Defense against an Aghartan threat or power	Coins minted from an unknown priceless metal	Huge, pacifistic, algae-eating Leviathan
	Gave super weapon (magical or technological) to a slave lord	Defeat a nemesis	Method of further amplifying under-Aereth increases to physical attributes	Chunk of Akashic "Rosetta stone" tablet	Anthropomorphized tournament gear (eg face painted on helm visor)

Roll	NPC (d24)	Condition (d20)	Mental State (d24)	Method of Ingress (d20)	Reason For Entering Agharta (d12)	Been in Agharta... (d6)
16	Featureless Primordi-Person	Cursed	Righteous	Sorcerous banishment		
17	Geas-Gotten Ki-Knight	Deaf	Treasonous	Lab accident		
18	Succubus-in-Distress	Mute	Despondent	Curse		
19	Phase-Fixed Eternal Champion	Drug-addicted	Raving	Mental transference to current body		
20	A Wondrous Warlock	Amplified or augmented	Resolute, purposeful	Doesn't know or remember		
21	Hell-Delving Love-Lyricist or Hope-Bard		Clear-headed			
22	Vibration-Surfing Proto-Psion		Welcoming			
23	Would-Be Conqueror (in exile)		Indifferent			
24	"Exceptional Every-man" type Adventurer / Explorer		Shifting, in constant flux, Mercurial			
25						

Method of Avoiding Capture (d14)	Disturbing Thing Done to Survive (d16)	Current Goal (d20)	Special Knowledge (d20)	Treasure (d30)	Companion (d20)
	Doesn't remember	Acquire a great treasure or power	Location/operation of magical artifact	Leviathan "scrimshaw"	Sentient Akashic head-in-a-box
		Understand Lost Agharta	Lore or visions of the sunken city	Exotic fossil	Telepathic tortoise
		Death (but cannot bring her/himself to actively commit suicide)	Political rivalries between slave lords	Vial of Hyperborean Lotus Blossom (DCC #91 pg. 47)	Pixie-sized analog of self
		Punishment by a legitimate moral authority	Knowledge can only be communicated in riddles	Trophy from an Aghartan monster hunt	Idol/fetish or maginary
		Prove a theory	Knowledge is buried in subconscious	Exotic musical instrument from a palace-city	Elephantine bastard half-breed
				Top-quality slave(s)	
				Ichor Truffles from the Blood Heaths	
				Crys-steel mined from the Spines	
				Symbiotic algae that grants host special ability	
				Camouflage paste made from dust of exotic stone	

Roll	NPC (d24)	Condition (d20)	Mental State (d24)	Method of Ingress (d20)	Reason For Entering Agharta (d12)	Been in Agharta... (d6)
26						
27						
28						
29						
30						

Method of Avoiding Capture (d14)	Disturbing Thing Done to Survive (d16)	Current Goal (d20)	Special Knowledge (d20)	Treasure (d30)	Companion (d20)
				Platinum locket containing a silhouette portrait	
				Primeval artifact-weapon: stone spear-head enchanted to slay Aghartans	
				Intercepted tribute intended for a slave lord: artisanal crafts, money, or raw materials	
				Exotic cosmetics used by slave lord courtiers	
				Leviathan jar (DCC #91, pg. 46)	

APPENDIX A: MAROONED MORTALS

GENERATION TABLE

Roll	NPC (d24)	Condition (d20)	Mental State (d24)	Method of Ingress (d20)	Reason For Entering Agharta (d12)	Been in Agharta... (d6)	Method of Avoiding Capture (d14)	Disturbing Thing Done to Survive (d16)	Current Goal (d20)	Special Knowledge (d20)	Treasure (d30)	Companion (d20)
1	Seam Dwarf Surveyor	Hale and hearty	Paranoid or suspicious	Native-born or slave-born	Perform an assassination	Hours	Divine protection	Cannibalism	Revenge	Way out of Agharta	Akashic Ioun stone	Mischievous imp or quasit
2	Praying Mantis-Monk	Disheveled	Optimistic (falsely?)	Magic portal or similar trap	Exploration	Days	Hiding place or refuge	Sacrificed companion to evade capture	Rescue a comrade	Vulnerability of a particular slave lord	Lore-filled journal	Mantisman
3	Outcast Hybrid-Fiend	Wounded	Fascinated	Dimensional teleport or inter-dimensional rift	Divine quest	Weeks	Camouflage through craft or magic:	Exchanged "favors" with a truly deplorable monster or denizen	Escape Agharta	Location of a refuge	Enchanted ornamental coif (Akashic)	Small, bipedal, predatory dinosaur
4	Corruption-Wracked Abomination	Dehydrated	Aggressive	Underground river	Tracking Ythothian slavers	Months	Disguise through craft or magic	Lived in utter filth, eg ate entrails, hid under rotten corpses	Redemption	Survival lore/skills: hunting, tracking, herb lore, etc.	Aghartan alchemical substance	Rideable, quadrupedal, herbivorous dinosaur
5	Hyperborean Halfling-Hag	Starving	Hallucinating or delusional	Underground passage	Rescue someone lost or enslaved	Lost count	Invisibility	Sold immortal soul or made a demon-pact	Exploration and documentation	Lore about the Akashic record	Mechano-mineral machine	Mute mushroom
6	Moleman Warren-Whelp (on Walkabout)	Ill, with fever	Lonely	Machine or vessel	Unintentional / accidental	Doesn't remember	Looking valueless or pathetic	Mass murder	Send a warning, message or knowledge home	Hiding place of its own treasure	Mithrifoil mind-shield skullcap	Another marooned mortal
7	Multi-Podal. Sentient Slime-Sage	Corrupted	Desperate	Magical artifact	Tracking an individual/group		"Playing possum"	Betrayal of a blood-brother or sword-sister	Remember something	Healing lore sourced in Agharta's unique environment	Map of an exit route to the surface	Slave-scout (somewhat independent-thinking)

Roll	NPC (d24)	Condition (d20)	Mental State (d24)	Method of Ingress (d20)	Reason For Entering Agharta (d12)	Been in Agharta... (d6)	Method of Avoiding Capture (d14)	Disturbing Thing Done to Survive (d16)	Current Goal (d20)	Special Knowledge (d20)	Treasure (d30)	Companion (d20)
8	Shadow-Walking Elf-Shade	Crippled/maimed	Ennui	Swallowed by a disaster (eg whirl-pool, earthquake)	Curse		Native guide/mate/companion creature	Bartered a divine mystery or state secret	Find something lost	Alchemy sourced in Agharta's environment	Priceless art: Aghartan statue, vessel or tapestry	Slave-warrior (Somewhat independent-thinking)
9	Soulless Sycophant of Sezrekan	Disfigured	Suicidal	Passed through the gates of death	Entered accidentally or unintentionally		Living the barest of existences	Wholeheartedly embraced savagery	Answer a question	Magic abilities sourced in Agharta's environment	Spell book	Sentient, ambulatory rock
10	Dark-Loving Zvart Recluse	Blind or part-blind	Agitated	Reincarnation	Suicide-by-delve		No psychic aura	Enslaved another	Complete her/his quest/mis-sion	Hidden paths/ways in a palace-city	Holy relic from the surface	Large talking crab wearing a hat
11	Scarab Hive-Noid Scout	Gangrenous	Inquisitive	Phlogiston disturbance or wild effect of spell duel	Following legends and lore		Symbiotic relationship with an Aghartan mega-predator	Freed a demon or Primal force of Chaos from Aghartan thrall	Find something to believe in again	Hidden paths/ways in a region (eg the Blood Heaths)	Preserved brain of slave lord	Sentient solar flare from the central "sun"
12	Phase-Shifted Analog Refugee	Leprous	In the mood to barter	Magical banishment	Doesn't remember		Swore service to the agent of a slave lord	Used forbidden lore to spellburn another's flesh to power a spell	Survive/endure	Glimmer of understanding of the inner sun	Dust from an unknown, priceless gemstone	Dog wearing wizard's garb (purple robe & pointed hat)
13	Troglodyte Sneak-Thief	Nigh dead or comatose	Amnesiac	Price paid for a great sin			Slave lord whim/caprice	Tortured an innocent	Form an alliance with a slave lord	Location of a treasure vault	Akashic mystical hologram	Eagle-sized cyclopean bat with lizard tail
14	God-Touched Worm Shaman	Suffering from exposure	Enlightened	Price of failed bid for immortality			Doesn't remember	Recanted a sacred belief or foreswore a sacred oath	Reach the sunken city	Defense against an Aghartan threat or power	Coins minted from an unknown priceless metal	Huge, pacifistic, algae-eating Leviathan
15	Pioneering Phlogi-Physicist	Ill with dysentery	Resigned	Divine punishment				Gave super weapon (magical or technological) to a slave lord	Defeat a nemesis	Method of further amplifying under-Aereth increases to physical attributes	Chunk of Akashic "Rosetta stone" tablet	Anthropomorphized tournament gear (eg face painted on helm visor)

Roll	NPC (d24)	Condition (d20)	Mental State (d24)	Method of Ingress (d20)	Reason For Entering Agharta (d12)	Been in Agharta... (d6)	Method of Avoiding Capture (d14)	Disturbing Thing Done to Survive (d16)	Current Goal (d20)	Special Knowledge (d20)	Treasure (d30)	Companion (d20)
16	Featureless Primordi-Person	Cursed	Righteous	Sorcerous banishment				Doesn't remember	Acquire a great treasure or power	Location/operation of magical artifact	Leviathan "scrimshaw"	Sentient Akashic head-in-a-box
17	Geas-Gotten Ki-Knight	Deaf	Treasonous	Lab accident					Understand Lost Agharta	Lore or visions of the sunken city	Exotic fossil	Telepathic tortoise
18	Succubus-in-Distress	Mute	Despondent	Curse					Death (but cannot bring her/himself to actively commit suicide)	Political rivalries between slave lords	Vial of Hyperborean Lotus Blossom (DCC #91 pg. 47)	Pixie-sized analog of self
19	Phase-Fixed Eternal Champion	Drug-addicted	Raving	Mental transference to current body					Punishment by a legitimate moral authority	Knowledge can only be communicated in riddles	Trophy from an Aghartan monster hunt	Idol/fetish or maginary
20	A Wondrous Warlock	Amplified or augmented	Resolute, purposeful	Doesn't know or remember					Prove a theory	Knowledge is buried in subconscious	Exotic musical instrument from a palace-city	Elephantine bastard half-breed
21	Hell-Delving Love-Lyricist or Hope-Bard		Clear-headed								Top-quality slave(s)	
22	Vibration-Surfing Proto-Psion		Welcoming								Ichor Truffles from the Blood Heaths	
23	Would-Be Conqueror (in exile)		Indifferent								Crys-steel mined from the Spines	
24	"Exceptional Every-man" type Adventurer / Explorer		Shifting, in constant flux, Mercurial								Symbiotic algae that grants host special ability	
25											Camouflage paste made from dust of exotic stone	

Roll	NPC (d24)	Condition (d20)	Mental State (d24)	Method of Ingress (d20)	Reason For Entering Agharta (d12)	Been in Agharta... (d6)	Method of Avoiding Capture (d14)	Disturbing Thing Done to Survive (d16)	Current Goal (d20)	Special Knowledge (d20)	Treasure (d30)	Companion (d20)
26											Platinum locket containing a silhouette portrait	
27											Primeval artifact-weapon: stone spear-head enchanted to slay Aghartans	
28											Intercepted tribute intended for a slave lord: artisanal crafts, money, or raw materials	
29											Exotic cosmetics used by slave lord courtiers	
30											Leviathan jar (DCC #91, pg. 46)	



A JOURNEY TO THE CENTER OF AERETH

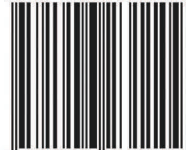
Sages will aver that the denizens of the underworld are, by necessity, alien to surface dwellers such as ourselves. Few will ever stand on the ink-black shores of Lost Agharta, and even fewer will return to tell the tale. Those that do report creatures transmuted by their deadly environs and the weird gloom. These creatures of legend owe no allegiance or kinship to the beasts of our lit-realms, and woe to the adventurer who mistakes them for familiar foes.

Collected herein are thirteen of the stranger beings explorers may encounter upon their arrival at the very center of our hollow globe. This is certainly not an exhaustive list, if such a thing could even exist – for the underworld is vast, and our knowledge is slight.



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