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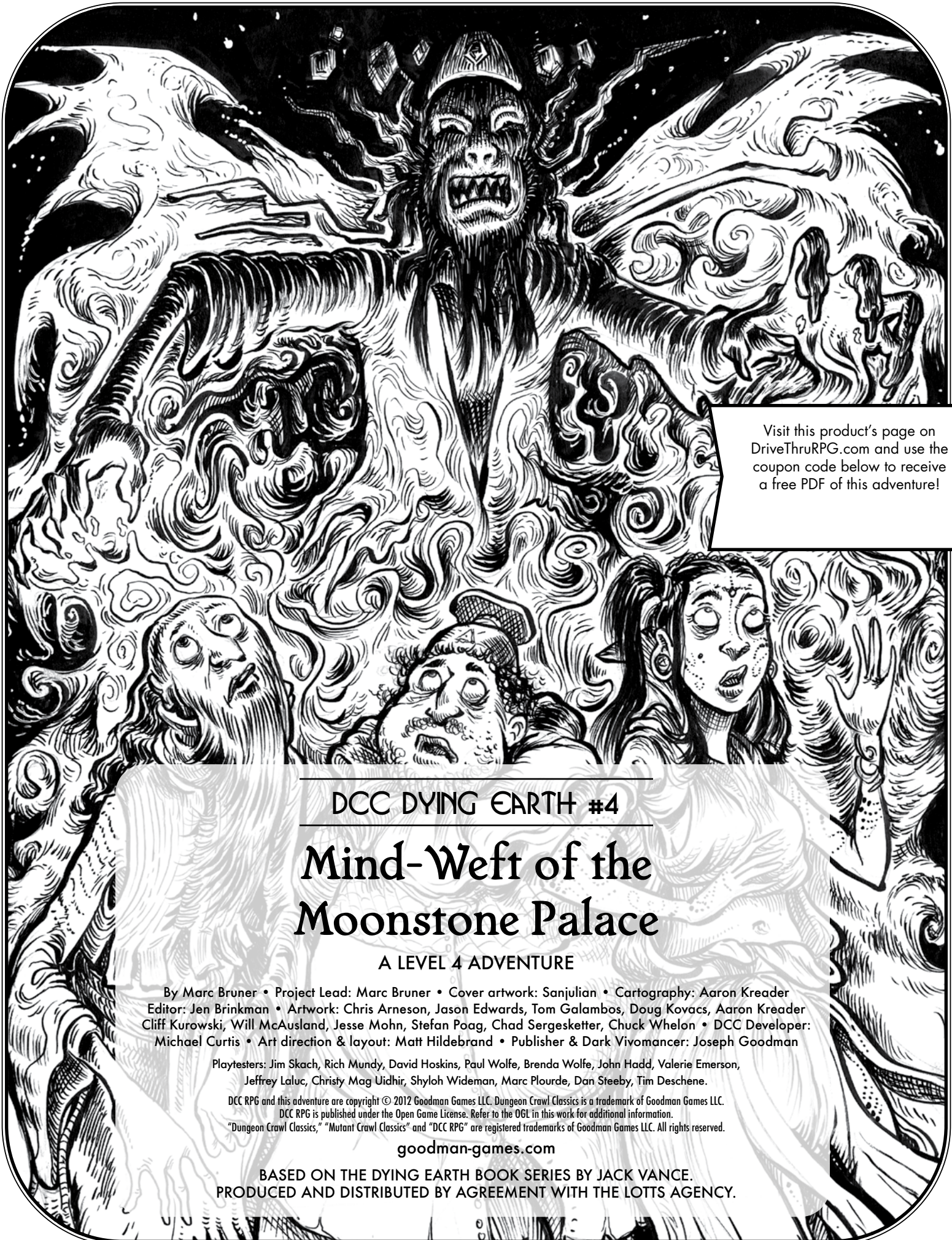
DYING EARTH

MIND-WEFT OF THE MOONSTONE PALACE

DCC DYING EARTH #4:
A LEVEL 4 ADVENTURE
BY MARC BRUNER

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DCC DYING EARTH #4

Mind-Weft of the Moonstone Palace

A LEVEL 4 ADVENTURE

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INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the world of the Dying Earth, a multifarious setting that evokes the distant twilight of Earth as a dim red sun sheds its last life; a world filled with the whimsical and the curious, the evil and monstrous, where magic and science are one and the same. Based on the singular works of the Dying Earth novels by Jack Vance, DCC Dying Earth gives players and judges new adventures inspired by the Dying Earth stories. With these instruments, you can play in Cugel's and Rhialto's world, seek the mighty Pandelume, or fall to an indifferent grue while searching for scintillant baubles among the ensorcelled remains of the ancient Earth!

Mind-Weft of the Moonstone Palace is a DCC Dying Earth adventure for up to four 4th-level characters, and is designed for experienced players of the DCC Dying Earth setting. In this adventure, the PCs confront a powerful arch-mage returned from his aeons-long exile in the underworld, journeying into the distant past of the Dying Earth itself to discover the lost secrets needed to defeat him.

ADVENTURE BACKGROUND

Aeons ago, the magician-philosophers of Grand Motholam wrought magic in a time unrivaled before or since. Sorcerers of every description swarmed the land, constructing seats of power from which they commanded terrible spells and attempted to vibrate and twist the very principles which governed the field. The highest of their order was Phandaal, a master mathematician, and said by some to be the greatest sorcerer who ever lived. As they grew in knowledge and ability, though, so did their excesses and the rumors of their links to other, darker, entities. The age of the arch-mages ended when Pontecilla the Pious, then ruler of Grand Motholam, put Phandaal to torment, and after a terrible night, killed Phandaal and outlawed sorcery throughout the land. The remaining wizards of Grand Motholam fled and much gathered lore was dispersed and forgotten.

One of these magicians, the arch-mage Mael Lel Laio, retreated to his stronghold, a magnificent palace carved from a single enormous moonstone, and warded with spells encasing it beyond the reach of Pontecilla's fanatic host. From there he watched the fall of Grand Motholam and the rise of the fractious and superstitious kingdoms in the after-epochs

that followed, all the while vowing revenge against those who usurped his place. He turned to those strange entities from the underworld to achieve it, seeking to master their dark sorceries. It was said that demons whispered at his ear when he wrought magic, and that he even dared to employ the force of the lesser daihaks themselves, twisted gods that could only be bent into service by the most powerful of sorcerers. With these allies, he grew in power to rival that of even the great Phandaal, and gained swift dominion over the surrounding lands, which threatened to rend the world in a new age of strife and war.

Fearing Mael Lel Laio's growing power, a cabal of magicians gathered to oppose him, and in a war that devastated the earth for leagues around, finally overthrew the arch-mage, breaking his hauntingly beautiful palace into shards that were flung across the now-stricken land. Mael Lel Laio had grown so great in might, however, that the cabal was unable to utterly destroy him; instead, they bound his spirit to the

DRAMATIS PERSONAE

Arch-mage Mael Lel Laio, formerly one of the most powerful magicians of Grand Motholam and the Eighteenth Aeon

Aerh, a minor member of the Temuchin—an association of magicians—who contacts the PCs and asks them to investigate the moonstone palace

Preceptor Belawor, leader of the Temuchin; one of the three surviving members of the original cabal that defeated the arch-mage Mael Lel Laio; knows the second part of Mael Lel Laio's true name

Imire the Maugifer, one of the three surviving members of the original cabal that defeated the arch-mage; knows the third part of Mael Lel Laio's true name

Foshd'ar, one of the three surviving members of the original cabal that defeated the arch-mage; knows the first part of Mael Lel Laio's true name

Lairc, a sandestin indentured to Mael Lel Laio in aeons past who is both a deadly foe and potential ally for the PCs

underworld with great magics where they hoped he would be consumed by the very forces he undertook to wield. As a precaution, the cabal divided the knowledge of the magics of Mael Lel Laio's durance among themselves, fearing that any single member would be tempted by the power of the arch-mage to hold the complete key to his release.

For aeons, Mael Lel Laio's restless spirit roiled in its confinement, becoming corrupted in the process. Forgotten by his captors, eventually Mael Lel Laio found a means of escape through dark pacts with the ruler-divinities of the demon lands themselves. He returned to a dying Earth of the 21st Aeon, discovering all but three of his greatest rivals long dead and all that remained of the once mighty order that defeated him were its lesser squabbling descendants. Mael Lel Laio set about his plans for revenge, rebuilding his moonstone palace, its once-beautiful entablature now pitted and cracked, using it as a means to channel the power of the underworld and enthrall his enemies through a twisted magic, and intent on eliminating the knowledge of any who know his secrets.

Now the PCs are drawn into the battle between the rival magicians and the underworld, and must thwart Mael Lel Laio before it is too late.

ADVENTURE SUMMARY



The cabal who defeated Mael Lel Laio aeons before confined him to the underworld using his true name, binding him in his prison. Suspicious of their own nature, the cabal divided knowledge of the name among themselves so that no single mage would have the entirety of the key to release Mael Lel Laio.

Two months ago, the moonstone palace suddenly re-appeared. Fearing Mael Lel Laio had escaped his confinement, the three remaining members of the original cabal—Preceptor Belawor, Imire the Maugifer, and Foshd'ar—traveled to the Plain of Gray Shades to confront him once more. Confident in their ability to restore his exile, they began the ceremony to re-bind Mael Lel Laio, but before it could be completed, the former arch-mage activated his mind-weft, a powerful squalm that enthralled the three magicians, drawing them into the palace where Mael Lel Laio now has them confined. There, the effects of the curse began erasing their minds, including any memories of the part of Mael Lel Laio's true name they carried.

The three magicians have not been heard from again. Since that time, the effect of the mind-weft has grown, spreading throughout the nearby lands, and more magicians have gone missing, among them the most powerful of the association of magicians that Belawor, Imire, and Foshd'ar were part of in the present day.

At the start of the adventure, the PCs are recruited by Aerh—a lesser member of the association, and one of the last not enthralled by Mael Lel Laio's magic—to travel to the moonstone palace and discover what happened to his companions.

KEYS TO DEFEATING MAEL LEL LAIO

- In the present, the returned Mael Lel Laio is a shadow of his former self, but has drawn on the power of the underworld to corrupt the underlying pattern of magic near the moonstone palace. The resulting mind-weft acts like a magical curse, affecting those who use magic in an inverse fashion where the more powerful the caster the more readily they succumb to its effects.
- Belawor's, Imire's, and Foshd'ar's minds are caught in Mael Lel Laio's mind-weft, but depending on when the PCs find them, they may still be resisting its effects and can potentially relate the events that led to their capture and give clues as to where the keys are to defeating the arch-mage. They cannot directly help, though, as all knowledge of the piece of the true name they once possessed has been erased from their minds.
- Aerh recruits the PCs to find the palace, discover what happened to Belawor, Imire, and Foshd'ar, and help them escape. He knows they have not been killed or completely enthralled, for certain protective magics they control would no longer be in place in each of their manses if that were the case. Aerh also gives the PCs an artifact to aid them: the *Pastille of Perolved Antecedents*. He instructs them to activate the device once they find the missing magicians.
- The PCs must figure out how to use the artifact to return to key points in the past to discover the means to defeat Mael Lel Laio in the present, and return to complete the ceremony started by Belawor, Imire, and Foshd'ar to bind the arch-mage once more.
- Once alerted to the PCs' presence and intent, Mael Lel Laio sends his agents scouring the past to destroy the evidence hidden by the three magicians, and seeks to hinder the PCs as they travel.
- The actions of the PCs in the past may shape the final encounter. As they succeed or fail in undermining Mael Lel Laio in the past, his powers similarly wax or wane in the present.

Erased from the memories of the three magicians, the keys to Mael Lel Laio's confinement are now spread across the aeons. Belawor, Imire, and Foshd'ar each once held a part of Mael Lel Laio's true name, and only once their knowledge is restored can the ceremony to re-bind the former arch-mage be completed. To stop the arch-mage, the party must travel back in time, revisiting the very origins of the moonstone palace itself and succeeding events to recover the hidden knowledge before the mind-weft grows too powerful and erases all remaining knowledge of magic!

SUMMARY OF ADVENTURE TIMELINE

Era	Related Timelines	Events
Early 18th Aeon	A	The golden age of sorcery of Grand Motholam; arch-mage Mael Lel Laio begins constructing his magnificent palace out of a single moonstone.
Late 18th Aeon	-	The fall of Grand Motholam and the scattering of the remaining wizards; Mael Lel Laio retreats to his palace and grows in power through his pacts with dark entities.
End of the 18th Aeon	B	A cabal of magicians led by Belawor, Imire, and Foshd'ar confronts Mael Lel Laio and binds him to the underworld; afterward, they destroy the moonstone palace.
19th-21st Aeon	C	The shattered ruins of the moonstone palace lay among the Plain of Gray Shades, picked over by scavengers.
2 months prior to the adventure start	-	Mael Lel Laio frees himself with the aid of the ruler-divinities of the demon-lands; the moonstone palace rises once more.
1 month prior to the adventure start	-	Belawor, Imire, and Foshd'ar leave Old Romarth to investigate the moonstone palace and fail to return. The three magicians started the ceremony to re-bind Mael Lel Laio, but were enthralled before they could complete it.
Last few weeks	-	Additional magicians disappear as the mind-weft spreads and begins to affect the surrounding area.
Adventure Start	Present	The PCs arrive in Old Romarth and meet with Aerh, who tasks them with traveling to the moonstone palace to determine what happened to the missing magicians.
+8 days	-	Foshd'ar succumbs to the mind-weft, the area of which has grown to encompass the entire Plain of Gray Shades.
+10 days	-	Imire succumbs to the mind-weft, the area of which has grown to encompass Old Romarth and the surrounding villages.
+12 days	-	Belawor succumbs to the mind-weft, the area of which has grown to encompass the entirety of the lands beyond the Falling Wall.
+15 days	-	Mael Lel Laio's return to power is complete.



ADVENTURE HOOKS



Mid-weft of the Moonstone Palace is designed as a mid-level adventure for the DCC Dying Earth setting, and therefore is intended to occur after the start or even in the middle of the PCs' careers. While the judge is encouraged to tailor an introduction to suit his specific campaign, here are some potential hooks to introduce the adventure:

- While playing a game of Skax, the PCs hear rumors of local magicians having gone missing. In lieu of payment of their winnings, one of their opponents offers the location of a seemingly abandoned household nearby in Old Romarth where there are magical baubles for the taking. Aerh finds the party skulking about his manse after returning from investigating the moonstone palace, and offers the PCs a series of exquisite tortures or the chance to enter his service by traveling to the palace and finding the missing members of his order.
- The PCs' magicians and witches have heard rumors of a strange plague affecting spellcasters and are told to seek out Aerh, a local mage of known repute, to find a cure.
- While drinking burning flagons of arrak at a local inn, the PCs hear rumors of the return of the moonstone palace and the vast wealth it contains. Deep in their cups, they vow to knock on the door of a nearby magician's manse to seek more knowledge.
- PC animus: The judge can incorporate a PC's starting animus to draw them into the adventure. For example, a PC marked as a Bauble-thief or as having Devoured [a] wizardly morsel may have deprived Aerh's association

VANCIAN GLOSSARY

Adumbrated: represented faintly or in outline.

Audiarium: a salon or oratory chamber.

Chronoplex: the time continuum binding past, present, and future events used by powerful practitioners of magic.

Hoodoo: eroded pillars of stone, particularly found in the Plain of Gray Shades.

Parquetry: inlaid work of blocks of wood arranged in a geometric pattern, especially in furniture and flooring.

Pleasances: a source of pleasure.

Peregrine: a foreign or outlandish object or creature, particularly as related to a magician's manse.

Salver: a fine serving tray, typically wrought from precious metals.

Skeel: a hard black wood similar in strength to steel.

Variegated: varied in color, particularly as marked by patches or spots.

of a valuable magical artifact, and the magician enforces acceptance of the task as repayment. A PC known as a Rakehell may be enticed to an urgent need for coin to ward off collectors scouring Old Romarth for payment. A PC cursed with an Untoward star may be compelled by the alien parasite entity to cure the ailment afflicting magic-users before it spreads to the entity's homeworld.

ADVENTURE START



The adventure begins with the PCs having recently arrived in Old Romarth, a village beyond the Lands of the Falling Wall on the Szonglei River. They have arranged, or otherwise find themselves in, a meeting with Aerh, a minor member of the Temuchin, an association of magicians led by Preceptor Belawor. Several weeks ago, Belawor called a conclave of the association to discuss the strange rumors of the return of the moonstone palace, and afterward departed with two other senior members of the association, Imire the Maugifer and Foshd'ar, to personally lead the investigation. Aerh begged off joining due to having contracted an unfortunately-timed case of sandestin flu, a malady known to affect many a magician in times of stress. Now as one of the only remaining members of the association, he seeks to send the PCs to investigate the palace to discover what happened to the missing magicians.

Aerh is a small and bespectacled man seemingly of middle age with a short dark beard that is starting to streak with gray. Despite his bookish appearance he has an aura of power, and the PCs notice several small colorful stones orbiting his head. Any magicians making a DC 12 Intelligence check recognize the objects as the rare and mysterious IOUN stones. Aerh is pleasant in demeanor, but commands a deep and powerful anger if roused. The tone of the meeting will vary depending on how the PCs were introduced to him and whether he considers them vagabonds or even thieves. Regardless, though, he sets the same proposal before the party.

Aerh tells the PCs that he has only been able to discover limited information about the palace:

- The moonstone palace re-appeared two months ago on the Plain of Gray Shades, a barren landscape absent of habitation a day's journey south of Old Romarth. For years, the vast waste has been known to attract scavengers following rumors of treasure and ancient buried crypts.
- The original palace once belonged to an arch-mage named Mael Lel Laio, once a powerful sorcerer of Grand Motholam. The palace was destroyed aeons ago in events lost in the fog of history.
- Three senior members of his order—Preceptor Belawor, Imire the Maugifer, and Foshd'ar—seemed particularly disturbed by news of the palace's reappearance. Even the usually unflappable Belawor appeared nervous and

held a number of whispered discussions with her two colleagues.

- A month ago, Belawor, Imire, and Foshd'ar left to investigate the palace and have not been heard from since.
- Since then, more magicians have gone missing, including some of the more powerful warlocks and wizards in the order.
- The palace has a strange power, unlike anything he has seen or experienced. He believes it has some type of luring effect on those who use magic, and the more powerful their command, the stronger the pull. That is why he thinks the party will be unaffected by the palace, or at least not in the same way as the magicians of the order.
- The palace lies in the center of the plains, and will take a full week to reach by foot.

In addition to any other motivations based on how the PCs came to meet with him (such as sparing their lives), Aerh is prepared to reward the PCs 10 golden centums each—1,000 terces—if they can discover what happened to the other members of his order. They are, of course, also free to take anything of value they find in the palace.

PCs may attempt to negotiate with Aerh for a higher fee or additional magical assistance. At the discretion of the judge, Aerh may offer up to an additional five golden centums to the party as payment in advance. Additionally, a successful wayfarer rhetorical deed will convince Aerh to offer the services of a surly porter named Utho to travel with the party. A failed apprentice of the association, Utho presents a long list of employment requirements after his hiring is finalized. A failed rhetorical deed roll insults the great magician, whose prickly nature marks the party for a nettlesome revenge once their task is complete.

After the PCs agree to undertake the task, Aerh gives them a curious-looking small, lozenge-shaped stone. Aerh tells the PCs that his divinations have identified three keys to releasing the missing magicians: Mael Lel Laio's lost libram of spells, a scroll from the time of Grand Motholam, and a fragment of moonstone from the palace. Unfortunately, he does not know the location of the three objects, but he has placed a magical geas on the stone such that, once swallowed, it will direct the PCs toward them. However, it will only work if the object is nearby, so he admonishes the PCs not to use it until they are within the palace.

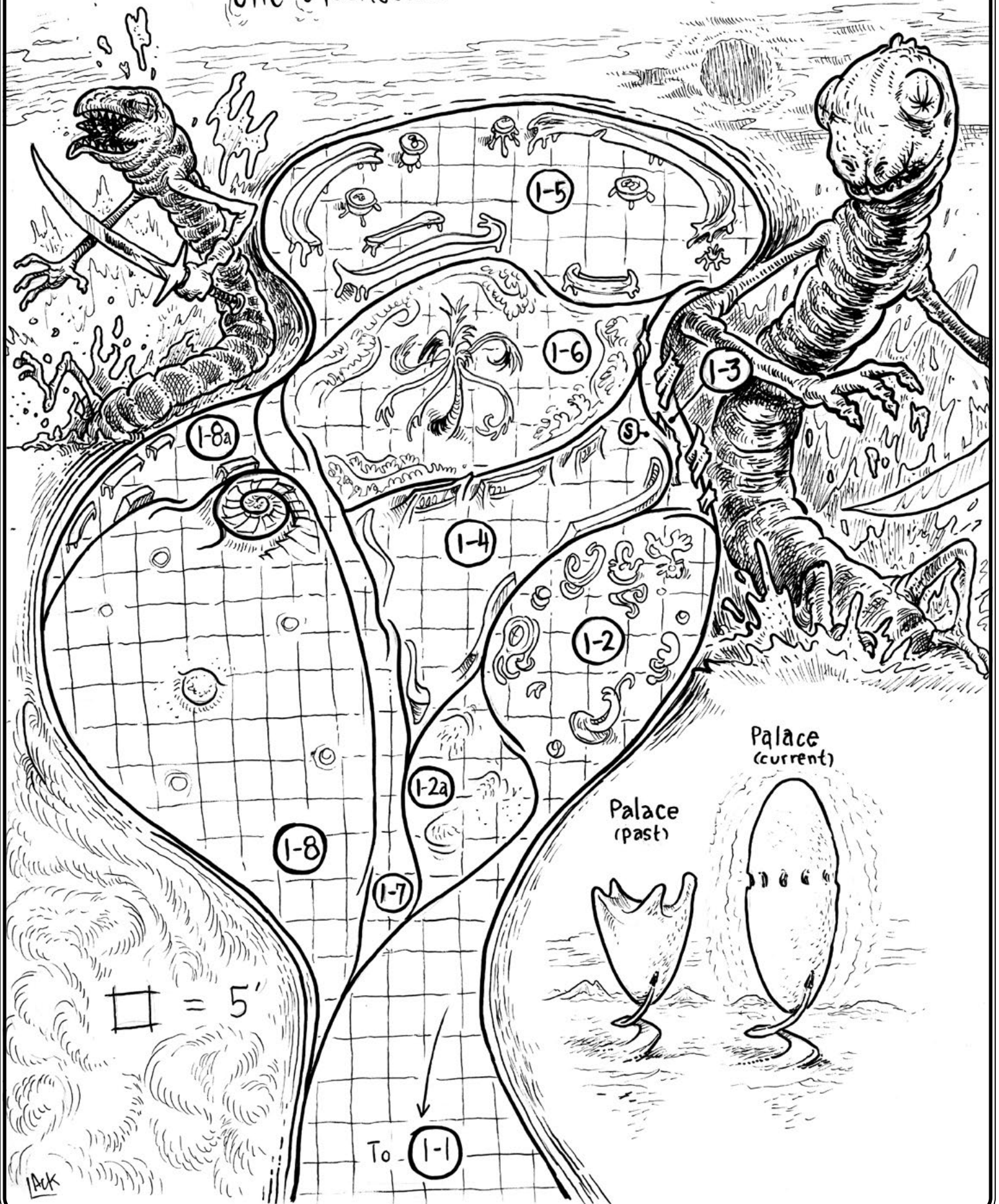
Unbeknown to the PCs, the stone is a powerful artifact that Aerh found while exploring Preceptor Belawor's manse "just to make sure everything was kept safe while she was away." When swallowed, it will behave as he describes, drawing the PCs toward the location of the nearest of the three objects. However, while the artifact needs to be near *where* the object is in order to function, it is not concerned about *when*, and once activated, will send its user and his companions hurtling into the past to a time when the object was last nearby, regardless of which aeon it appeared in. Aerh hopes that by journeying to the palace, the PCs can discover what happened and potentially prevent its occurrence by finding the objects and returning with the informa-

tion to the present. See the section on the *Pastille of Pervolved Antecedents* below for more details on its use.

LOCATION OF THE THREE KEYS

- The "keys" needed to defeat Mael Lel Laio are the three parts of his quintessence, or true name, that bind him to the sub-world entities he both serves and draws power from. At the end of the Eighteenth Aeon, the cabal used the arch-mage's true name to cast him from the Earth into the sub-world.
- The first part of Mael Lel Laio's true name is contained in one of his lost librams and can be found in the arch-mage's dormer (Area 2-4) in Timeline A during the time before he was confined to the underworld. Foshd'ar, who is being transformed into one of Mael Lel Laio's enthralled in the tanks in Area 2-7, holds this information.
- The second part of Mael Lel Laio's name is found on a scroll in Area 4-1 in Timeline B on the fallen body of one of the magicians of the cabal who originally defeated the arch-mage. Belawor found the dying magician, who passed Belawor the second part of the name before expiring. Belawor then took the place of the fallen member of her order in the ceremony to bind the arch-mage. The scroll is used as part of the ceremony to re-bind Mael Lel Laio to the sub-world.
- The third part of Mael Lel Laio's name is inscribed on a fragment of the moonstone palace and can be found in Timeline C. Imire carved the name into the stone after the battle that destroyed the palace, safeguarding the knowledge against the arch-mage's return. In the epochs afterward, it was picked up by a mother flantic as a decoration for her nest, from which the PCs must win it. Imire, who is held captive in Area 1-6, holds this information.
- The PCs may also discover information that leads them to information about the keys by using Mael Lel Laio's divination equipment in Area 1-8a or by accessing the audiarium in Area 2-3. Additional information may be gleaned from Lairc in the past, depending on whether the PCs choose to aid his release.
- Finally, the underworld entities Mael Lel Laio serves have gone to great lengths to erase knowledge of the arch-mage's true name, even from the very patterns of magic itself. Attempts at divination or using the divine spell *true name* return muddled or incomplete information at best, with a successful spell check of 24 or greater allowing the caster to learn only that there are three parts to the name and potentially the locations of the keys to that knowledge as above, but no further details.

The Moonstone Palace - Level 1





If the PCs refuse, despite the promise of wealth: While Aerh is one of the most minor of the magicians of his association, his command of magic and array of supernatural servants make him more than a match for the PCs. If they refuse his offer, he directs his sandestins to employ a variety of subtle encouragements until they change their mind.

PASTILLE OF PERVOLVED ANTECEDENTS

This small, lozenge-shaped, rune-inscribed stone is a powerful artifact that allows the user to travel to the location of a particular object, regardless of when that object existed. To use, the bearer must swallow the stone and makes a spell check, triggering an effluxion of time-light filled with chrono-potentialities that they and up to four companions are sent through. As with any spell check, remember that non-spellcasters use a d10 for the check.

While ingested, the user is subject to abdominal cramps that intensify if they do not move toward the specified object, causing them to suffer a -1d penalty to all attack rolls, spell checks, and saves. These effects also occur if the object is not located within 500' of the user's location, making the Pastille quite painful to use if the location of the object is not known with some precision. Once the user comes into physical contact with the object, they eructate the stone in a series of spasmodic coughs and they, along with any com-

panions, are returned to the point in time in which the stone was swallowed.

The stone can be removed prior to locating the object by successfully casting *remove curse* on the user with a result of 18 or greater, or potentially by ingesting a sufficiently strong purgative (per judge). In addition, whenever the user suffers a critical hit, they must make a DC 10 Fortitude save or expel the stone in a series of retching heaves. Finally, the stone can also be cut out of the user's abdomen with a sharp dagger or knife, doing 1d6 points of damage in the process. In all cases, if the stone is removed prior to finding the object, the user is immediately transported back to the present and loses one point of Stamina permanently.

Targets sent back in time always appear in the same spot relative to when the device was activated, though as that location appeared in the past. A knowledgeable spellcaster or user can 'pre-set' the stone to locate a particular object or objects by activating hidden runes on its surface. Understanding the runes to use the stone in this manner first requires a successful casting of *read magic* with a spell check result of 24 or higher, allowing the caster to decipher which objects (if any) the Pastille is currently set to locate, after which an adept can set the runes to a new object with a successful casting of *runic alphabet, fey* with a spell check result of 24 or higher. The Pastille can be set to locate at most three separate objects at a time.

Table 1-1: Pastille of Pervolved Antecedents Effects

Spell check	Result
1	Lost in time! When swallowed, the stone transports the user to a random point in time. Roll 1d10 on Table 1-2, adding the user's Luck modifier.
2-11	The user is transported to within 1d6 years of a point in time when the object existed. If a version of the object is located within this time, then the stone works as detailed above, otherwise the user must wait for the object to appear in this time-stream or attempt to return to the present by prematurely removing the stone.
12-13	As above, but the user is transported to within 1d6 weeks of the desired point in time.
14-19	As above, but the user is transported to within 1d6 days of the desired point in time.
20-21	As above, but the user is transported to within 1d6 hours of the desired point in time.
22+	As above, but the user is transported to within 1d6 rounds of the desired point in time.

Table 1-2: Pastille of Pervolved Antecedents Fumble Effects

d10	Result
1 or less	Localized time torsion. The user blinks out of existence and back into the present, having revisited their origins and subtly altered them (per judge, but suggestions include rolling for a new occupation, birth augur, or changing alignment).
2	Time loop. The user is sent back in time 1d6 rounds. Each time they return to the point in time where the stone was activated, they are looped again, potentially causing multiple versions of themselves to exist concurrently. The loop only ends once the stone is removed.
3	The user pervolves into a separate timestream. For the next 1d6 rounds, they move backward in time. The PC is able to take actions that potentially affect the "present". At the end of the effect, they catch up to the present as if time had proceeded normally.
4	Age of Glow. The user is sent back to aeons before the time of Grand Motholam.
5	14th Aeon. The user is sent back to the time of great Zahariot, encountering a company of knights who take them and their companions for demons.
6	16th Aeon. The user is sent to the age of the Final Kingdom where a Bohul battle-gang leading a pack of memrils conscripts the party into their war against the King of Kings.
7	18th Aeon. The user is sent to the age of Grand Motholam to the origins of the moonstone palace. See Timeline A below.
8	Late 18th Aeon. The user is sent to the time of the doom of the moonstone palace. See Timeline B below.
9	Early 20th Aeon. The user is sent to the Plain of Gray Shades where the rubble of the palace extends across the wastes. See Timeline C below.
10+	The user is sent back to the point in the timeline when they first encountered Aerh and accepted his charge, potentially allowing the party to regain several days before the mind-weft overtakes the local area, though at the risk of altering their own timestream.



Table 1-3: The Plain of Gray Shades

Roll	Search Results
1 or less	Wind storm. The party loses a day of travel and supplies as they dig in. Those attempting to push through the storm take 1d6 points of damage from the scouring wind and must make a Luck check to not lose any pack animals that are carrying supplies.
2-3	<p>A band of rock goblins hiding behind a nearby gray hillock ambush the party.</p> <p>Rock goblins (10): Init +5; Atk terrathasmic stone +2 missile fire (1d6, range 40'/80'/160'); AC 16; HD 1d6+3; hp 7 each; MV 30'; Act 1d20; SP quickmud (once per encounter, range 20'), camouflage (+10 to hide in rocky environs), rockwise (use 1d100 for saves vs. petrification or earth-based attacks), boulder roll (requires multiple goblins concentrating, 2d10 damage per ten goblins, DC 14 Reflex save for half damage, once per three rounds), infravision 100'; SV Fort +3, Ref +0, Will +2; AL C; Crit III/d6. (See Chapter IV of <i>Intimate Anatomy of Several Creatures and Personages of the Twenty-First Aeon</i> for further details.)</p>
4-5	<p>The party stumbles upon an old crypt occupied by a pair of asperous erbs. Among the remains of several creatures within are an assortment of random bric-a-brac. There is also an odd-looking box shaped like a tetrahedron made of rare purple trunk wood (contents as per judge's discretion; if the party needs additional hints to the locations of the three keys, the box contains a partial account of the battle with Mael Lel Laio from a member of the original cabal).</p> <p>Erbs (2): Init +1; Atk claw +5 melee (1d6+2) or bite +5 melee (1d3 plus paralysis) or hurled spine +4 missile fire (1d7+2, range 30'); AC 12; HD 2d8+2; hp 11 each; MV 20' or climb 20'; Act 1d20; SP paralysis (DC 10 Fort save or paralyzed for 1d4 rounds), olfactory acuity, detachable spines, ursine effluxation, magical hybrid traits; SV Fort +5, Ref +3, Will +6; AL C; Crit DN/d4. (See Chapter IV of <i>Intimate Anatomy</i> . . . for further details.)</p>
6-10	<p>That night while the PCs encamp, they can hear the chilling moan of a visp in the distance. If this result is rolled a second time, the party is attacked by a visp that has tracked them through the wastes.</p> <p>Visp: Init +6; Atk arm-bludgeons +4 melee (2d7+6); AC 14; HD 6d8+6; hp 33; Act 2d20; SP melancholy moan (all hearers within 100' must make DC 18 Will save or suffer -1d penalty to all attacks), bloodsucking (on successful attack victim is punctured by the maxillae, 1d4 Stamina loss per round until freed with DC 20 Strength check), infravision 200', immune to surprise; SV Fort +6, Ref +2, Will +4; AL N; Crit M/d12. (See Chapter IV of <i>Intimate Anatomy</i> . . . for further details.)</p>
11-16	No encounter.
17-19	The PCs find a wandering teratoid in the wastes. Roll on the teratoid tables in Chapter IV of <i>Intimate Anatomy</i> . . . for its traits and disposition.
20-21	The PCs come across a natural spring fed by an underground reservoir where they can refresh their supplies. A search of the nearby area uncovers a silver chalice from the 18 th Aeon buried in the sand and worth 50 terces. Quaint scenes along the exterior of the cup commemorate Pontecilla the Pious purging magicians from Grand Motholam, depicted as beetles fleeing from a divine blaze.
22+	The PCs discover an ancient crypt with a minor artifact. Roll 1d4: (1) <i>aeolus</i> ; (2) quampics; (3) 1d3 <i>crystallized dreams</i> ; (4) live boots. See Chapter III of <i>Intimate Anatomy</i> . . . for details on each.



THE PLAIN OF GRAY SHADES (PRESENT)

The Plain of Gray Shades is a vast ashen wasteland a day's journey south of Old Romarth. Reaching its edge, the PCs see a barren landscape filled with eroded hoodoo pillars and dry alien-looking dendrons extending far to the horizon.

The moonstone palace lies in the center of the plains, requiring a full week of travel by foot to reach. While in the plains, PCs must rely on the supplies they have brought, as there are no ready sources of fresh sustenance. Every day spent in the plains without food, or for each hour without water, causes a PC to temporarily lose 1 point of Stamina, which is only regained once they have access to proper supplies and refreshment again.

In addition, each day they are in the plains, have the PC with the highest Luck make a check by rolling 1d20 on Table 1-3, adding their Luck modifier to the result (wayfarers use their current Luck die for the check). PCs enticed by the promise of long-buried crypts can choose to spend a full day searching among the various ruins and outcroppings instead of journeying closer toward the palace. Parties that do so make the check with a +1d bonus.

During the last day of the PCs' journey, the moonstone palace rises in the distance like a polished ovoid stone, gleaming in nacreous shades of white, gray, and amethyst. As the PCs approach, magicians and wizards feel a strange enticing pull that intensifies as they get closer. This is the palace's mind-weft, which has an enthralling force on magic users within its area of effect.

The mind-weft is a magical curse originating from the palace, and growing in strength each day. At the start of the adventure, the mind-weft affects the wastes surrounding the palace to a distance of 1000', doubling in extent every 24 hours. Magicians and vat-things entering the mind-weft

must make an Intelligence check, beginning at DC 1 at level 1, to avoid having their mind-pattern become re-aligned with the hostile mosaic of alien magic that is being channeled from the underworld. Due to its sub-world nature, the strange under-power emitted by the palace works in direct proportion to the target's command of magic, cumulatively increasing the DC of the Intelligence check to resist the effects by each additional level of the caster above 1st. Thus, a level 2 magician would make a DC 3 (1+2) Intelligence check, a level 3 magician would make a DC 6 (1+2+3) Intelligence check, a level 4 magician would make a DC 10 (1+2+3+4) Intelligence check, etc.

Those who fail the Intelligence check fully succumb to the effects of the weft, lured by the entreaties of the sub-world entities promising keys to hidden power. Affected spellcasters will not voluntarily leave the area of the weft and suffer near-madness from the constant presence of the entities, losing 1d3 points of Intelligence per day as their mind (and memory) slowly ebbs away. Each day, the target may attempt a new Intelligence check or continue to suffer the effects. Upon reaching 0 Intelligence, the target is drained of all memory, and becomes a hollow, mindless shell incapable of further resistance. If freed before then, the target recovers any loss of Intelligence per the standard recovery rules for ability loss: 1 point with a good night's rest, and 2 points with a day of bed rest. Targets can be freed of the mind-weft if they are removed from the area of its effect or by completing the ceremony to rebind Mael Lel Laio in Area 4-2.

Even if the Intelligence check succeeds: Magicians entering the mind-weft find themselves surrounded by flitting adumbrated entities from the demon-lands only they can see, who whisper dark secrets and entice the spellcaster to journey to the moonstone palace with promises of terrible power to be unearthed. As a result of the constant babble, all concentration checks made by those affected spellcasters while within the area of the mind-weft are made with a -1d penalty.

THE MOONSTONE PALACE

The odd gem formation has been carved into a beautifully strange demesne. The interior appears like the inside of a semi-translucent milky jewel and each room is shaded a different hue from dark blue to pearl white. The walls of the rooms, while only a few fingerbreadths thick, are as strong as steel, and smooth and cold to the touch. Unless otherwise specified, the halls and rooms are 12'-15' high and lit by a glowing ambient light captured from the dim red sun as it refracts throughout the structure. The unusual properties of the palace remain luminous even after the sun sets, giving off a faint illumination that resembles the light of the long-departed moon.

Within the palace, the rooms are strangely multifarious in style and appointments, the former arch-mage having an eclectic taste reflected in a collection spanning multiple aeons. Throughout the structure there are few doors except where marked; the passageways connecting the rooms are formed by narrow interstices that follow natural fracture-

lines in the stone, requiring man-sized PCs to squeeze through the openings single file.

Area 1-1 - The Entrance: *The palace rises before you, gleaming with a milky opalescence in the dim red light of the dying sun. A single tall spire sweeps upward in a graceful curve, soaring hundreds of feet above the flat expanse of the surrounding plain. Despite its striking appearance, fine cracks mar the structure's otherwise flawless surface. A single crevasse-like opening at the base of the edifice extends inside beyond your sight.*

The moonstone palace towers above the party, its delicate-seeming stone pockmarked with small holes and fissures, like a vase that has been plastered back together after shattering with several missing parts.

High above, a number of faceted natural oriels break the otherwise smooth surface. PCs attempting to climb to the openings find the outside of the palace impossibly smooth and frictionless, leaving no ready means to find purchase.

PCs that manage to find other means to ascend to the ledges enter the palace at Area 3-1.

The ground-level opening exposes the banded layers of color in the interior walls. Two of Mael Lel Laio's enthralled—former magicians fully bound by the power of the mind-weft—lay buried in gray sandpits in front of the entrance and will crawl out to attack anyone that approaches. Unless the PCs are taking precautions to examine the sand, they are surprised by the hidden guards.

Enthralled (2): Init +0; Atk bite +4 melee (1d8+2); AC 15; HD 4d6; hp 21 each; MV 20'; Act 2d20; SP rote spellcasting 3/day (first enthralled: *Rhialto's Green Turmoil* [16]; second enthralled: *scorching ray* [16]), immune to mind-altering spells; SV Fort +5, Ref +0, Will -2; AL L; Crit M/d10.

Enthralled are mindless living automatons completely drained of their former memories by the mind-weft and twisted into worm-like forms to mimic Mael Lel Laio's servants of old. The transformation leaves the enthralled without any real consciousness, making them immune to *sleep*, *charm*, and *paralysis* spells, as well as other mental effects. The two enthralled guarding the entrance to the palace appear as 6'-long crawling worms with humanoid faces bearing dull blank eyes. Each bears sinewy arm-like appendages molded from the plasm of their worm-shaped bodies.

During its transformation, each enthralled has had its mind reshaped to channel the pattern of a specific spell it knew in its former existence as if cast with a spell check of 12+HD. Unlike magicians, enthralled may cast the spell that has been burned into its mind up to three times per day.

Area 1-2 - The Greeting Hall: The exterior opening crack extends 50', narrowing to the point where the largest party members must crawl sideways for the last portion before coming to a large chamber:

Passing through the narrow crack, the entryway opens into an immense vestibule filled with rich trappings of wealth. You recognize a variety of curios and designs spanning several aeons.

There is a 1 in 6 chance that Mael Lel Laio is here to greet his "guests" accompanied by the three enthralled guards from Area 1-2a (see Defeating Mael Lel Laio, below, for stats for Mael Lel Laio in the past and present). This chance increases to 1 in 3 if the PCs have already visited a time in the past where they have previously encountered the arch-mage. Mael Lel Laio will attempt to subdue any wizards or magicians in the party and kill any other PCs, teleporting himself away to Area 4-2 if his guards are destroyed or he is reduced to less than half his hit points, leaving any remaining enthralled to deal with the intruders while he recovers.

Area 1-2a - Guard Room: *The floor of this small antechamber is covered in sand where several large shapes can be seen 'swimming' just beneath the surface. As you approach, three worm-like creatures with human faces emerge, brandishing rapiers.*

A side room holds three enthralled guards below the sand floor, who will respond to any sounds of disturbance throughout Level 1 and attack any PCs entering the guard

room. PCs who spend a full turn digging in the sand floor may make a Luck check to find a minor bauble (roll once on the Thaumaturgical Curios table [see the *Player's Libram*, Appendix A]).

Enthralled (3): Init +0; Atk bite +4 melee (1d8+2) or rapier +4 melee (2d3+4); AC 15; HD 4d6; hp 21 each; MV 20'; Act 2d20; SP rote spellcasting 3/day (first enthralled: *Felolun's Second Hypnotic Spell* [16]; second enthralled: *invisibility* [16]; third enthralled: *mirror image* [16]), immune to mind-altering spells; SV Fort +5, Ref +0, Will -2; AL L; Crit M/d10.

Area 1-3 - Passageway: *A smooth narrow passageway slopes slightly up. Gold-threaded tapestries depicting various historical scenes decorate the hallway.*

The passageway is currently empty. Depending on the timeline, the tapestries depict various historical scenes, starting with the era of Grand Motholam, through the casting out of the wizards, eventually including a number of works illustrated with images of various sub-world entities. Hidden behind the set of tapestries on the west wall is a fissure that leads to Area 1-4.

Area 1-4 - Library: *Beyond the opening is a large room that once was clearly a library that must have held a vast collection of books, but now only contains rows of empty shelves.*

Mael Lel Laio's library was once filled with rare volumes collected from across the aeons. In the present the shelves are bare, awaiting the arch-mage's full return to power. If the PCs enter the room in Timeline A and spend an hour searching through the collection, they can find a strange-looking tome among the stacks of histories and treatises: the *Compendium of Universal Knowledge* (see Chapter III of *Intimate Anatomy* . . . for further details).

Area 1-5 - Salotto: *This room is appointed with numerous pleasures: rich rugs woven with threads of silver and diphany, large cloth-bound couches, and an ornate tabouret holding several bottles of dark wine on a polished salver. A curious low humming can be heard in the surrounding air.*

The drawing room is where Mael Lel Laio entertains envoys from the sub-world. The source of the humming is a gleft, an invisible servant of the arch-mage that delights in causing mischief with visitors when its master is not present.

PCs taking the time to rest in the lounge find their every spoken and unspoken desire for hospitality addressed by unseen hands—a smoking pipe placed in their mouth already lit, fresh plates of fruits and viands served on delicate plates, rich sounds of music playing from golden instruments held by no one. As the PCs grow comfortable, the salver appears next to them with goblets of dark red wine already poured. PCs smelling the liquid find it redolent with heavy spices.

The wine has been tampered with by the gleft, who hopes to amuse itself in its otherwise tedious duties. Anyone drinking the proffered wine finds the room around them growing suddenly larger as they are transformed, along with any clothing and equipment worn, into a minuscule version of themselves the size of a twk-man. Imbibers remain in this

state for the next 1d3 days, after which time they quite suddenly grow full-sized again, preferentially at a most awkward moment.

Following a PC's transformation, those listening closely notice the strange humming seems to grow somewhat louder, sounding almost like laughter. Though invisible (found only via spells such as *detect magic* or *detect invisible*), the gleft is otherwise defenseless. If it is somehow captured by the PCs, it will agree to restore the PCs turned into minuscules to their full-size in exchange for its freedom. (Even captured, the gleft still plays one final prank: restored PCs must make a DC 15 Intelligence check to notice they are actually 1d3 quarter inches shorter than before their transformation!)

Gleft: Init +6; Atk N/A; AC 16; HD 3d8+2; hp 20; MV fly 40'; Act 1d20; SP invisibility at will; SV Fort +2, Ref +2, Will +4; AL C; Crit M/d8.

Area 1-6 – Pergola: A rich odor of vegetation and soil fill the passageway leading to this room. The chamber beyond is overrun with a garden of exotic and peregrine plants layered upon multiple terraces reaching to the ceiling. Centered among the pathways, a twelve-foot-tall alien dendron towers, its crimson-leafed vines wrapped around a humanoid shape. On the far side of the room, past the rows of plants, lies a narrow opening.

This arbor contains a variety of vegetation—pulses, rampion, and sphade—which Mael Lel Laio turns into pap to gestate and feed his enthralled. An immense alien dendron rises from the middle of the room, its twisted branches and vines wrapping around a humanoid shape. Imire is trapped here, enthralled by the mind-weft, and acting as a source of nutrients for the plant.

Alien dendron: Init -2; Atk raking vines +5 melee (1d6+4 plus grasp, range 20'); AC 16; HD 8d10; hp 48; MV 0'; Act 2d20; SP grasping limb, vulnerable to fire; SV Fort +6, Ref +0, Will +5; AL N; Crit M/d14.

The alien dendron is a species of tree native to far Canopus with long, whip-like thorny branches covered in crimson leaves. When attacking, it lashes out with its vines, wrapping them around targets and using them to draw victims in to be slowly bled dry. Upon a successful attack, it grips its target and begins drawing them in at a rate of 10' per round to entwine them inside its trunk. Grasped victims can attempt to break free with a DC 15 Strength check as they are being dragged, but once they are fully entwined, can only be freed with outside assistance. The alien dendron is particularly vulnerable to flames, taking double damage from fire-based attacks. However, any entwined victims suffer normal damage as the surrounding vegetation catches fire.

If the dendron is killed, and the PCs arrive before he is completely enthralled (see Summary of Adventure Timeline), Imire can be convinced to reveal that he inscribed his part of Mael Lel Laio's true name on a fragment of moonstone in the Plain of Gray Shades, giving the PCs a clue to its location in the past (see Timeline C). If he is rescued, Imire is pleasant, but otherwise quite absentminded and unhelpful. He will take the first opportunity to retire to the lounge in Area 1-5, complaining of a bad headache.

Area 1-7 – Hallway: This narrow passageway extends thirty feet. Adorning the walls on either side are dozens of floor-to-ceiling canvas portraits, each depicting a different faceless robed figure.

If encountered in the past, the passageway is richly appointed, but contains no portraits.

The portals depict magicians of the cabal whom Mael Lel Laio has marked for revenge. Depending on when the PCs enter the viewing area, only the last three canvases still have faces, which PCs will recognize as Belawor, Imire, and Foshd'ar if they have previously encountered them. As each magician succumbs to the effects of the mind-weft, their portrait simultaneously fades and loses its features.

Area 1-8 – Divinatory: You enter a broad room with variegated gray walls, illuminated by several dozen small spheres sparkling with a frosty blue light. A large circular stone platform etched with unfamiliar markings is set in the center of the chamber. On the far side of the room is an open arched doorway leading to a small alcove. A spiraling set of stairs ascends toward the ceiling in the northeast corner.

In the center of the room is a large stone plate set in the floor, embedded with a pattern made of a ribboned skeel. The stone is a conduit to the underworld, a means for Mael Lel Laio's demonic visitors to more easily travel to the palace.

The stone can be activated by standing on the platform, causing the ribbon to glow with a faint blue aura. Any object or person standing on the stone during the round after activation disappears and travels to the demon-lands where an underworld messenger stands ready to relay messages from Mael Lel Laio. If the PCs activate the stone and do not use it, or send an object through the conduit, the messenger arrives on the stone 1d4 rounds later to investigate.

While expecting the arch-mage, the underworld messenger does not automatically attack the PCs as it is used to Mael Lel Laio occasionally sending servants in his stead. If the PCs travel to the demon-lands after activating the stone, they can easily allay the messenger's suspicions with any convincing story and a success DC 10 Personality check, with a failed roll causing the messenger to immediately detect their subterfuge and attack the party (wayfarers may also choose to use their rhetorical deed die for the roll, with a fumble result equivalent to a failed check). If the messenger encounters the PCs in the tower, the DC of the check is raised to 15, as the messenger is mistrustful due to the unusual activity.

Underworld messenger (type II demon): Init +2; Atk claw +6 melee (1d12 plus grapple); AC 16; HD 6d12; hp 39; MV 30'; Act 2d20; SP demon traits (infravision, *darkness* [+8 spell check], immune to non-magical weapons or natural attacks from creatures of 3 HD or less; half-damage from fire, acid, cold, electricity, gas; can teleport back to native plane at will as long as not bound or summoned; expanded critical threat range [19-20]), mucilaginous smothering (if opponent is grappled, the victim loses 1d4 Stamina per round as they are filled with slime); SV Fort +4, Ref +6, Will +5; AL C; Crit DN/d6.

While outside of the demon-realms, the messenger suffers a -2 penalty to all attacks as it is partially blinded by the sur-



GOOBA GHOSTHOWL ENGAGES
IN A DIALOGUE WITH A
DEMONIC UNDERWORLD
MESSENGER!



Table 1-4: Divination Effects

Spell Check	Result
1-11	The mirror briefly illuminates then fades, alerting Mael Lel Laio to the PCs' presence, if not already aware of them.
12-15	The PCs see an image of one of the three magicians in their current location, adjusted based on whether they have become fully enthralled or freed. Roll 1d3: (1) Preceptor Belawor, encased in a moonstone chrysalis (Area 3-2); (2) Imire the Maugifer, entwined in the alien dendron (Area 1-6); (3) Foshd'ar, immersed in the creation vats (Area 2-6).
16-19	The PCs see an image of one of the keys. Roll 1d3: (1) Mael Lel Laio's lost libram, in Area 2-4 in Timeline A; (2) the scroll, in Area 4-1 in Timeline B; (3) the inscribed stone, in Area C-1 in Timeline C.
21+	The PCs see an image of a yellow- and orange-striped object like a long thin snake. Magicians will recognize the creature as a chug with a DC 12 intelligence check. This is Lairc's chug, which is located in a safe-box behind one of the mirrors in Area 2-5 in Timeline A.

rounding earth-light. The platform may also be used by the PCs to recover material of the demon-realms to access the barrier in Area 4-1.

Area 1-8a – Workroom: *This small room is walled with blue tile, roofed with a tall cupola carved out of the surrounding stone. Several benches made in a parquet pattern of rare woods line the walls, along with shelves that hold various instruments and components of an undeterminable nature.*

A prepared mixture raptogen is in a vial on one of the shelves. It can be identified by witches or those with an alchemical background making a DC 12 Intelligence check. When released, it forms a 5' sweet-smelling cloud that lasts 1d4 rounds. Creatures inside the cloud must make a DC 15 Fortitude save or fall into a state of apathy.

On the benches and shelves are equipment Mael Lel Laio uses in his divinations, including a large mirror of polished moonstone. PCs may attempt to use the mirror with a spell check on Table 1-4: Divination Effects.

LEVEL 2

The stairs between each of the palace levels ascend in a spiral for 100 feet, illuminated by the faint glow emanating from the stone structure of the palace.

Area 2-1 – Processing Chamber: *A redolent odor greets you when you enter the room. Several large snail-like creatures move among piles of rotting vegetation, expelling a pungent pap-like substance into a pool behind them.*

The snails are masticating the raw materials used to feed the enthralled, digesting it into a nutritive pap that is conveyed to the feeding room beyond. Trained to recognize the enthralled, they assume the PCs are food and push toward the opening with their wide maws.

Pap snails (4): Init -1; Atk bite +5 melee (1d8 plus maw grab); AC 20; HD 5d8; hp 26 each; MV 20'; Act 1d20; SP masticate; SV Fort +6, Ref +0, Will +4; AL N; Crit M/d10.

Pap snails attack using their wide mouths to swallow huge mouthfuls of food into their corrosive digestive system. Any target successfully attacked by a pap snail must make a DC 10 Reflex save or have a limb grabbed in the pap snail's maw. Targets failing the save take 1d8 damage automatically each round until freed. There is a 50% chance a pap snail grabs the target's arm, in which case, the target may choose to drop their weapon or any other carried object to automatically free themselves.

Area 2-2 – Feeding Room: *Several worm-like creatures are suckling from tubes connected to large reservoirs. As you enter the room, they turn to face you, blank expressions on their otherwise human faces, but do not halt their feeding.*

This room is where the enthralled are fed a purulent material made by the pap-snails in Area 2-1. There are currently half a dozen enthralled feeding off tubes, four smaller creatures along with two larger worms. They will not attack the party unless they are forcibly disconnected from their tubes or otherwise attacked. If left undisturbed, Mael Lel Laio can later call upon the enthralled as additional guards to seek out the PCs as needed.

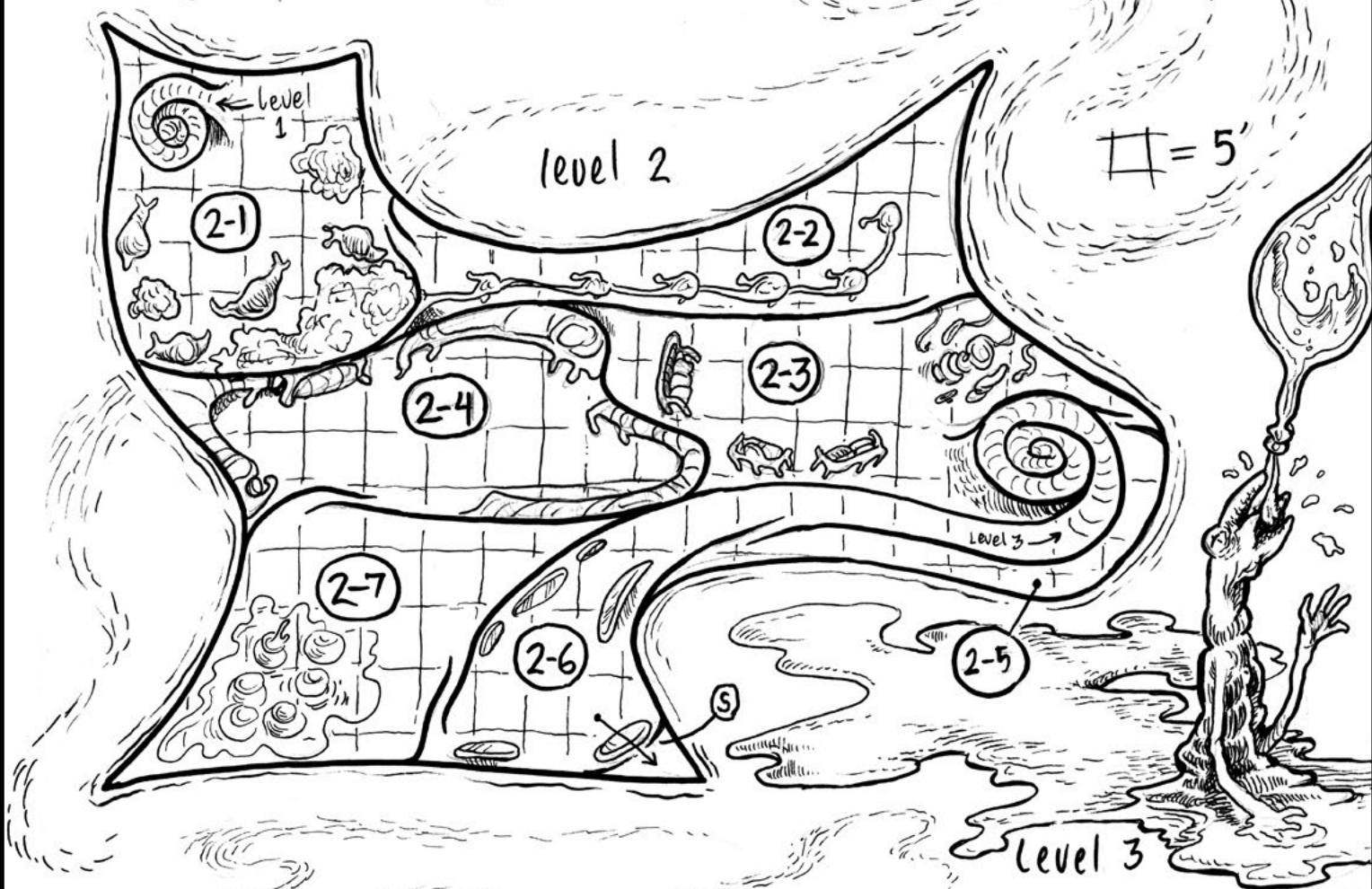
Enthralled, small (4): Init +0; Atk bite +2 melee (1d8); AC 15; HD 2d6; hp 10 each; MV 20'; Act 1d20; SP rote spellcasting 3/day (first enthralled: *color spray* [14]; second enthralled: *Houlart's Visceral Pang* [14]; third enthralled: *Lugwiler's Dis-mal Itch* [14]; fourth enthralled: *sleep* [14]), immune to mind-altering spells; SV Fort +5, Ref +0, Will -2; AL L; Crit M/d8.

Enthralled, large (2): Init +0; Atk bite +6 melee (1d8+4); AC 15; HD 6d6; hp 28 each; MV 20'; Act 2d20; SP rote spellcasting 3/day (first enthralled: *Phandaal's Gyrator* [18]; second enthralled: *Spell of Internal Effervescence* [18]), immune to mind-altering spells; SV Fort +5, Ref +0, Will -2; AL L; Crit M/d12.

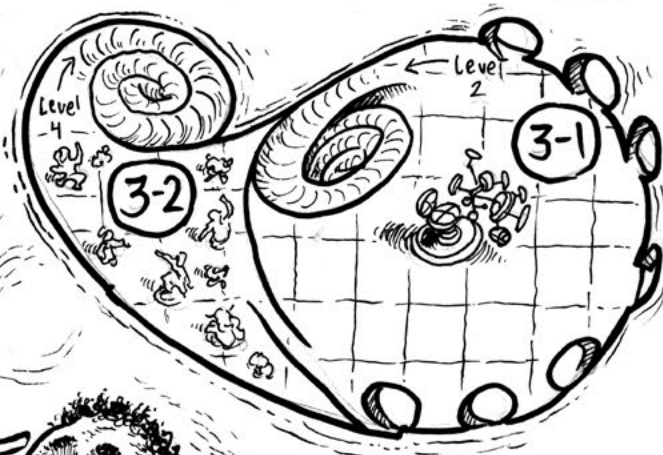
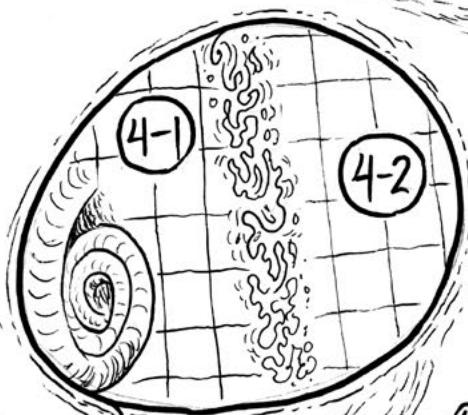
Area 2-3 – Audiarium: *This room contains several comfortable looking chairs and couches. On the far end is a small alcove accommodating a strange artifact consisting of a number of gold disks connected by glass tubes.*

The Moonstone Palace

Upper levels



level 4



The device holds the memories of the enthralled magicians, to be listened to at Mael Lel Laio's pleasure. If the device is activated, the chamber is filled with sibilant whispers relaying the mundanities, squabbles, and desires of the former spellcasters, most of it useless babble or cries filled with pain and longing. If the PC activating the device succeeds on a Luck check, they hear an utterance from one of the three remaining members of the cabal. Roll 1d3: (1) Preceptor Belawor speaking to an unseen companion who whispers an inaudible word to use in the ceremony to bind Mael Lel Laio; (2) Imire shooing away a circling flantic from the Plain of Gray Shades as he inscribes a shard of moonstone; (3) Foshd'ar boasting to other members of the cabal of how he glimpsed the libram by disguising himself as a chug.

On a natural 20 on the Luck check, the device breaks with a loud crash, summoning the enthralled from Area 2-2.

Area 2-4 – Dormer: *A large sleeping chamber lies in the room beyond the passage. Several large sedans and lacquered wooden sideboards veiled by diaphanous hangings furnish the bedchamber.*

This room is Mael Lel Laio's sleeping chamber. If he has not already been encountered by the PCs in Area 1-2, there is a 1 in 6 chance the PCs encounter the arch-mage here alone. He will act to intervene against the party, retreating to Area 4-1 if reduced to half his hit points as describe above.

The sideboards contain mostly worthless curios. PCs searching among the brummagem find an unusual stone veined with a matrix of an unfamiliar substance. The stone is material from the demon-realms, and can be used to access the barrier in Area 4-1.

See Timeline A for details of this room in the past.

Area 2-5 – Passageway: *This narrow passageway is unadorned, leaving the variegated natural patterns of the stone visible in its entirety.*

Area 2-6 – Hall of Distortions: *You enter a high-domed chamber with the light of the dying sun reflected in subtle shades throughout. Several large mirrors containing a vitreous-like sub-*



stance are hung on the walls, transforming your images into distorted shapes.

The mirrors are quite harmless if left alone, but PCs examining the glass-like material discover that it can be passed through by applying a small amount of force. If stepped "into", the PC emerges from a random mirror, their plasm temporarily altered by the distorting effects. PCs entering a mirror roll 1d10 on Table 1-5 to determine how they are altered, the effects of which wear off after 1d6 hours.

Table 1-5: Mirror Plasm Distortion

d10	Effect
1	The PC's ears enlarge into large flaps like that of a drogger.
2	The PC's nose elongates to a length of two feet.
3	The PC grows corpulent, doubling in weight. The weight gain imposes a -2 penalty to Agility and the character's speed is reduced by 5'.
4	The PC stretches into an abnormally thin and tall shape twice their original height.
5	The PC is flattened and compressed into a squat barrel-shaped form half their original height.
6	The PC is contorted with parts of their body bloating, and others thinning.
7	The PC's legs extend to twice their length, increasing the character's speed by 10'.
8	The PC's legs shorten to half their length, reducing the character's speed by 10'.
9	The PC emerges with an enormous head characterized by a hydrocephalic prominence of their brain.
10	The PC emerges with a shrunken head atop their otherwise normally-proportioned body.

Behind one of the mirrors in the southeastern corner is an empty alcove. In Timeline A, the alcove contains a safe-box with Lairc's chug. The alcove can be accessed by walking into the mirror directly in front of it, with the passage imparting the same transforming effects as listed above.

Area 2-7 – Transformation Vats: *Half a dozen bubbling vats line the wall of this small chamber, surrounded by a pool of opaque, viscous liquid.*

Approaching the pool or interacting with the tanks in any way causes a swarm of half-humanoid, half-worm forms to emerge from the pool and crawl to attack the PCs.

Proto-enthralled (12): Init +0; Atk bite +0 melee (1d6); AC 13; HD 1d6; hp 5 each; MV 20'; Act 1d20; SP immune to mind-altering spells; SV Fort +3, Ref +0, Will -2; AL L; Crit M/d6.

Proto-enthralled are half-transformed creatures in the midst of their transition. Unlike the enthralled, they do not have spellcasting abilities.

The vats contain magicians in various stages of their transformation. The last tank holds Foshd'ar, undergoing transformation into one of Mael Lel Laio's enthralled. If the PCs arrive before Foshd'ar has been fully subsumed by the mind-weft (+8 days), his partially transformed body can be extracted from the vat, though what faculties of his remain have left him with a simple, child-like demeanor and little memory of his prior life. If pressed, he recalls memories of a book, and chuckles if the word "chug" is uttered, but does not otherwise know the importance of those two items.

If the PCs arrive after his memories are completely wiped by the mind-weft, he appears alongside Mael Lel Laio in Area 4-1.

LEVEL 3

Area 3-1 – Observatory: *Arched portals line the walls of this ovoid room, in the center of which rests a cushioned chair on a circular dais. Next to the chair is an intricate linkage of mirrors and lenses, seemingly made of the same gem-like material as the rest of the palace, the purposes of which are not immediately comprehensible.*

The glass device is a type of *farvoyer*, employed by Mael Lel Laio to observe distant and even nearby events. When used properly, it can be manipulated to observe a location, near or far, as directed by the operator.

In its simplest application, it acts as a viewing lens. If directed toward one of the windows, the device can be manipulated by properly aligning the various lenses to direct the regulatory beam toward the viewer, magnifying a scene up to 100 miles distant.

With proper manipulation; however, the apparatus can also be used as a type of scrying device to observe *any* location familiar or known to the user. A character may attempt to activate the device by sitting in the chair and adjusting various levers that adorn its edge and making a spell check. With success, the image of a distant scene desired by the caster is displayed in miniature.

Spell check	Result
1	Fumble! The lens-device gyrates in an accelerating circular motion. The user operating the device is thrown free and must make a Luck check to avoid being cast out one of the open archways. PCs failing the Luck check can still attempt a DC 15 Ref save to grab onto the ledge around the oriel before plummeting to the ground 200' below, or act quickly to stop their fall using spells such as <i>feather fall</i> or <i>fly</i> ; otherwise such defenestrated PCs fall the full distance, taking 20d6 falling damage. Any user succeeding on the Luck check still takes 2d6 damage as they are slammed against the interior wall.
2-5	With a loud series of clicks, the lens-device shudders to a halt and lays inert and motionless. It may not be activated again until repaired. Fixing the device requires a successful casting of <i>mending</i> with a spell check result of 30 or higher. At the discretion of the judge, a PC with a relevant background such as artificer or similar skill may also be able to repair the complex apparatus with a DC 20 skill check.
6-11	The lens fails to activate.
12-15	A scene of the user's choosing is displayed, though no sound accompanies the images. The location must be familiar to the user, and the vision will not penetrate magical wards or other devices that prevent or impede scrying. The image lasts one round.
16-19	A scene of the caster's choosing is displayed, along with sound. The location must be familiar to the user. The user can also designate a specific person or creature well-known to the user, and the <i>farvoyer</i> will display the immediate surroundings of the target's present location. The attempt does not penetrate magical wards or other devices which prevent or impede scrying. The image lasts 1d6 + Luck modifier rounds or until dispelled.
20+	A distant scene of the user's choosing is displayed, accompanied by sound. The location or person must be known to the user by name or description, but the caster need not have had personal experience with the target. The <i>farvoyer</i> will penetrate magical wards that are less powerful than the spell check result. The image lasts 1d6 + Luck modifier turns or until dispelled.

Area 3-2 – The Trophy Room: *A number of statues made of the same luminous stone as the rest of the palace stand in this room, each of a different bizarre creature, including many forms you do not recognize. One of the statues is only half-encased in the stone, the upper half that of a person.*

Mael Lel Laio keeps his most prized object d’art in this room for display and contemplation, including creatures he has gathered from the surrounding Plain of Gray Shades and distant lands. Preceptor Belawor is being kept here, her body undergoing encasement in its moonstone chrysalis in preparation for display.

If approached, Belawor wakes up and addresses the PCs. Belawor is pleasant and courteous, and if asked, will inform the PCs that the scroll they seek can be found on the body of a dead associate in the ancillary chamber on the floor above, though she has no memory of this happening in the past. If shown the Pastille, this kindles a recognition in Belawor, with her cognizance providing a +1d bonus to PCs when attempting to use the artifact to travel to the correct window of time where the scroll is located. Finally, if asked about the barrier in Area 4-1, she also has a memory of holding an unusual fragment of dark stone, but cannot recall any further specific details.

Despite her appearance, she says she is quite comfortable in the chrysalis, though she would like to be able to get out and move about occasionally, and she will gratefully accept any help the party offers to free her.

Freeing Belawor from the stone is not simple. The moonstone chrysalis is a semi-sentient magical entity that entraps creatures and slowly grows to fully encase them, but can react with an alarming speed if attacked or it senses a new victim is nearby. PCs attempting to chip away at or who touch the entity activate it, causing it to spread toward them.

Moonstone entity: Init +6 (surprise); Atk engulfing flow +6 melee (special); AC 20; HD 8d10; hp 50; MV 30'; Act 1d20; SP engulfing flow, immune to non-magical weapons; half-damage from fire, acid, cold, electricity, gas; SV Fort +10, Ref -2, Will +10; AL N; Crit M/d14.

As an action, the moonstone entity will attempt to flow over a target, beginning with whatever part of the target it can reach, such as its legs. Any target successfully struck by the entity becomes trapped, and can only be freed if the entity is destroyed. Each subsequent round a target is trapped, it becomes further encased as the entity spreads over the rest of its body, with trapped targets becoming fully encased after 1d4 rounds. The moonstone entity’s viscous nature allows it to spread itself over an area up to 15’x15’, entrapping any number of victims in that range. Trapped targets are immobilized, but may still take their normal actions until they are fully engulfed.

LEVEL 4

Area 4-1 – Ancillary Chamber: *The stairs end in a platform. A shimmering ‘wall’ cuts off the far side of the room.*

This platform is where the culmination of the battle between the cabal and the arch-mage occurred in the past. The shimmering curtain is the sub-world barrier to the mind-weft room in Area 4-2. It can only be passed through by those entities whose nature is aligned with the demon-realms or by those possessing some material from those realms.

Area 4-2 – Mind-weft Room: Unlike the rest of the rooms in the palace, this room is not carved from moonstone, but

a dark substance veined with a matrix of the demon-realms. The mind-weft is a result of a conjunction orchestrated by Mael Lel Laio that causes a sympathetic vibration with the sub-worlds. In effect, the entire room exists in a multitude of places at once. It is this conjunction that also causes the mind-weft to emanate waves that affect magic users in this realm. As Mael Lel Laio directs the juxtaposition into further alignment, the waves grow in strength. The only means to stop the mind-weft is to rebind the arch-mage to the demon realms, severing his tie to this world and causing the alignment to dissolve.

Regardless of whether he was previously encountered, Mael Lel Laio is present in the room adjusting the coils of sub-world material that focus the ongoing conjunction. Unlike the other areas of the palace, this room does not exist in the past. See Defeating Mael Lel Laio, below, for details on this encounter.

JOURNEYS TO THE PAST

Whenever the PCs use the *Pastille of Pervolved Antecedents* to travel to the past, they appear in the same location it was activated, e.g., if activated in one of the rooms inside the moonstone palace, they would appear in that same room in the past or in the place where the room *will be* depending on whether the palace exists in that particular time period. (In some circumstances, this may even lead to the PCs appearing in mid-air as the palace is not fully present in all timelines!)

The first time the PCs use the device, they are transported back to the time period where the closest of the three objects last existed in the past, relative to where the PCs are currently located. The judge should determine which of the three objects is closest based on where at the party is in the present. Unless the PCs are traversing the Plain of Gray Shades when they first activate the Pastille, the closest objects are likely to be Mael Lel Laio’s libram or the scroll, with the scroll only being closer if the PCs activate the Pastille on either Level 3 or Level 4 of the palace.

The last locations in time and space of the three objects are as follows:

Object	Location in Time	Location in Space
Mael Lel Laio’s libram	Timeline A	Area 2-4 – Dormer, protected by Lairc, Mael Lel Laio’s indentured sandestin.
The scroll	Timeline B	Area 4-1 – Ancillary Chamber, on the body of a fallen magician.
The moonstone shard	Timeline C	Area C-1, the mother flantic nest one day’s journey east from the palace.

The Pastille has been pre-set to the three objects, and cannot be used to find another object unless re-set. Once an object is found, the Pastille is no longer bound to that object.

The actions that the PCs take in the past can have a limited effect in the future, changing the “present”. It is unlikely, however, that Mael Lel Laio can be stopped by the PCs in the past, as he is much more powerful then. In addition, if he is killed any time after his return but is not defeated by those knowing all three parts of his true name, his body re-forms and emerges from the demon realms after a day due to his powerful alignment with the sub-world. This merely delays his return and the ultimate encompassing of the mind-weft, but does not stop it. The mind-weft can only be halted by confining him to the sub-world once again.

Mael Lel Laio’s knowledge of the PCs changes based on when he previously encountered them. If the PCs find Mael Lel Laio in the present before activating the Pastille, he does not recognize them and treats them as common intruders, and will strive to capture any spellcasters to drain them using the mind-weft and turn them into his enthralled. If he has observed the PCs sometime in the past and subsequently encounters them, he begins sending his minions to find the PCs wherever or whenever they are to destroy any evidence of his true name. Thereafter, whenever the party travels to the past, they encounter 1d4+2 enthralled sent by Mael Lel Laio. The judge should choose an appropriate time to have the enthralled attack the PCs, ideally taking place when the PCs are close to finding the information they seek.

If PCs use the Pastille to travel to a time not detailed below: The areas below do not detail all of the conceivable locations that the PCs could use the Pastille to travel to, but they are the areas that have a direct effect on stopping Mael Lel Laio in the present. If the PCs accidentally travel to a different era not detailed below, they should realize that the Pastille is not functioning properly as the PC that ingested it will be wracked by abdominal pains that are not relieved no matter which direction they travel. There is nothing stopping the PCs from potentially mastering the artifact and choosing to travel to a different era, however, and the judge should consider allowing players that come up with solutions to stopping Mael Lel Laio to explore them in the spirit of a “yes, and...” style of play, possibly helping direct the narrative where appropriate for parties that get off track by hinting that the Pastille has limited charges or introducing other conditions that provide a reason to stop Mael Lel Laio in the present.

If PCs use the Pastille before reaching the palace: The device does not relocate in space, only time and at a point relative to itself. The PCs will find themselves in the same location as they left in the present with possibly a long journey ahead of them to reach the palace. It is conceivable that they even encounter themselves in the past under some circumstances! Such encounters are not detailed within the module, and the judge is encouraged to explore the various possibilities in the spirit of the players that make up their particular campaign.

If the PCs “miss” the target time: The results of the Pastille’s spell check could cause the PCs to miss the target time by days, weeks or even years. In the context of this adventure,

it should not affect any of the PCs’ attempts to locate either Mael Lel Laio’s libram or the moonstone shard as their locations are relatively ‘fixed’ in the preceding timestream; however, the scroll is not, as it only arrived at its current spot within the immediate past during its timestream, when the mage who was carrying it fell in battle with Mael Lel Laio. If the PCs reach Belawor, she can provide this information and assist the PCs with using the artifact to travel to the correct window of time.

TIMELINE A: THE ERA OF GRAND MOTHOLAM

The PCs have been transported three aeons into the past at the height of Grand Motholam’s power. The mostly-excavated moonstone palace rises next to a winding river, towering over an unrecognizable rich valley illuminated by a bright yellow sun. PCs can find a youthful Mael Lel Laio overseeing the shaping of his palace by minuscule work gangs. In this time, Mael Lel Laio is curious about strangers visiting his palace, but has little patience for thieves.

General features:

- The moonstone palace rises only partially completed, with all but Level 3 and Level 4 of the structure in place and partially appointed. During this timeline, the room descriptions of Level 1 and Level 2 of the palace are identical to that of the present with the exception of references to the three magicians of the cabal.
- As a general guideline, convincing Mael Lel Laio to allow the PCs to enter the palace can be achieved with a DC 20 Personality check. A wayfarer may choose to add their rhetorical deed die to the roll, with the consequences of failure as determined by the judge, but generally marking the PCs as con artists at best.
- If the PCs are caught sneaking into the palace, Mael Lel Laio seeks to confine the PCs until they reveal their intentions. If they speak of or mention the Pastille, Mael Lel Laio will attempt to take it for his own study, even if that means the death of the PC who ingested it.

Using the Pastille: Reaching the correct point in time when Mael Lel Laio’s libram exists requires a spell check result of 12 or higher.

Locating the key: The first part of Mael Lel Laio’s true name can be found in his libram in his sleeping quarters in Area 2-4. In this timeline, the libram is always guarded by Mael Lel Laio’s sandestin Lairc. If the party attempts to enter the arch-mage’s sleeping chamber, Lairc appears as a fox-eared youth in a savant’s livery, floating in the air several feet above the ground. With a nonchalant yawn, he admonishes the PCs for going into a private area of the palace and warns them to leave before disappearing.

Lairc, indentured sandestin: Init +6; Atk bite +1 melee (1d3); AC 14; HD 6d8; hp 29; MV special; Act 1d20; SP invisibility, immune to magical attacks, sandestin abilities, spells (+12 spell check); SV Fort +2, Ref +2, Will +2; AL N; Crit M/d12.

Lairc will not engage in direct conflict with other creatures, preferring to use his magical nature to evade opponents. With an action, Lairc can effect a number of magical spell-like effects, including turning itself invisible, teleportation, and flight. Lairc can cast any level 1, 2, or 3 spell as a wizard with a +12 spell check.

Mael Le Laio's libram cannot be removed from the palace so long as Lairc is bound to Mael Le Laio; however, any PC examining the libram can find the information they seek with a full turn of study. Lairc is quite bored from his long years of service, and though bound by Mael Le Laio to guard his property, the sandestin is eager to find any means to escape his indenture. Lairc can be enticed to allow the PCs time to study the libram, as while he has been ordered to not allow the libram to be taken, the command does not say anything about looking at it. To grant access, Lairc will seek assurances that the PCs will reduce his indenture or aid him in some other means.

The libram is a bound white leather book with the following spells written in ink only visible under the light of a glowing moonstone: *The Excellent Prismatic Spray*, *magic missile*, *magic shield*, *Panguire's Triumphant Displasms*, *read magic*, and *Rhialto's Green Turmoil*.

Each spell contains the same provenance: the caster is enveloped in a soft luminal glow that lasts for 1d6 turns. While enveloped, the caster and their allies can see up to 20' as if by the light of one of Earth's missing moons. Removing the libram from the past weakens Mael Le Laio in future conflicts, as detailed in Defeating Mael Le Laio, below.

As an alternative to directly confronting Lairc, the party can also attempt to discover the location of his chug, the creature binding him to the arch-mage. If the PCs steal the chug from its hidden location in Area 2-6 and show it to the sandestin, a horrified Lairc agrees to allow the PCs to access the libram. If the chug is ever destroyed, Lairc instantly recognizes that he is no longer bound to Mael Le Laio, and gleefully departs to his home world of La. If freed, Lairc makes for a potential powerful NPC that the PCs can call on in the future, though his services may not come cheap.

TIMELINE B: THE END OF THE EIGHTEENTH AEON

The moonstone palace dominates a transformed valley where the scene of a recent battle is evident. The bodies of fallen magicians and creatures from the underworld are seen everywhere as the cabal seek to break the tower and overthrow Mael Le Laio.

General features:

- During this timeline, the layout of the full-shaped palace is identical to that of the present; however, all the rooms are gutted and burned from the effects of the battle.
- Entering the palace during the raging battle, the PCs risk engagement between the various forces.
- The ongoing battle rages between the cabal and Mael Le

Laio, forcing the PCs to evade or overcome forces from both sides as they pass through the palace. While the smoke and fires from the battle help conceal the combatants, each time the PCs travel outside the palace or enter a level of the palace, the PC with the highest Luck must make a Luck check. With a failed check, they encounter 1d6 minions summoned by the cabal or servants of Mael Le Laio who attack the PCs.

Battling minions (1d6): Init +3; Atk claw +5 melee (1d8+3) or longsword +5 melee (1d8+3); AC 16; HD 6d8+5; hp 35 each; MV 30'; Act 2d20; SP harmful spell 2/day (2d6 damage at a range of 50', DC 11 Will save for half damage); SV Fort +6, Ref +3, Will +8; AL Varies; Crit M/d12.

Using the Pastille: Reaching the precise point in time when the scroll can be taken requires a spell check of 20 or greater. Arriving any time before a few hours of the timeline means the PCs have arrived before the battle, and will have to recast the spell or be quickly captured by the arch-mage, who sends regular patrols of enthralled to capture any intruders as spies as he prepares to defend his palace.

Locating the key: PCs using the Pastille to find the scroll are drawn to Area 4-1 and the body of a fallen wizard. Entering the palace during the battle where magic is being sent back and forth between the two sides is fraught with peril for the PCs. Once the PCs reach the scroll, it can be recovered from the body and read using *read magic* (a spell check result of 20 succeeds). PCs without the means to understand the magical writing may also take the scroll to any member of the association who has not been fully enthralled. The scroll is required to complete the ceremony to cast the ensorceler into the sub-worlds once Mael Le Laio is overcome (see the section on Defeating Mael Le Laio, below).

TIMELINE C: PLAIN OF GRAY SHADES (PAST)

The PCs travel back to the aeons after the fall of Grand Mortholam where the Plain of Gray Shades is filled with the rubble of the palace. Overhead, strange long-necked creatures soar on thin webbed wings.

The ruins of the palace lay scattered across the plain, picked over by scavengers and wayfarers searching for baubles and artifacts from the great magician's manse.

Using the Pastille: Reaching the appropriate time simply requires a non-fumble spell check using the Pastille, as the stone exists in the flantic nest, untouched, for multiple years.

Locating the key: After the palace was destroyed, Imire seared his part of the true name on the underside of a fragment of the tower. The marked shard was later carried away by a mother flantic to decorate her nest in a nearby cliffside a day's journey away.

Journeying to the nest in the mountains east of the ruins of the palace requires a full day by foot. The judge should roll once on Table 1-3: The Plain of Gray Shades. As a reminder, the PC who ingested the Pastille is wracked by pain until they are within 500' of the stone.



Area C-1 – Flantic Nest: The nest is located on a sheer cliff 200' above the plain. PCs either have to climb (DC 18 Climb Sheer Surfaces or Strength check) or find a means to descend from above. Navigating the steep trails lining the ragged hills requires another half day of careful climbing, which may result in additional random encounters.

The nest is occupied by a mother flantic and four hungry nestlings. Winged creatures with grotesque man-like heads that are a precursor of the pelgrane, the mother flantic attacks any creatures attempting to steal from its nest.

Flantic: Init +4; Atk biting claws +4 melee (1d6) or battering wings +3 melee (2d6+2); AC 16; HD 7d10; hp 40; MV 30' or fly 50'; Act 2d20; SP lifting hold (may ascend 50' per round with the victim if two claw attacks hit the same target in a round, DC 16 Strength check to break free, speaks language of the 21st Aeon; SV Fort +5, Ref +8, Will +5; AL C; Crit M/d14.

Flantic nestlings (4): Init +0; Atk claws +2 melee (1d3); AC 14; HD 3d8; hp 15 each; MV 10'; Act 1d20; SV Fort +1, Ref +1, Will +2; AL C; Crit M/d6.

DEFEATING MAEL LEL LAIO

How the battle with Mael Lel Laio in Area 4-1 transpires depends heavily upon the actions of the PCs up to this point.

First, Mael Lel Laio is accompanied by several guards from the demon-realms, adjusted as follows:

- If the PCs avoided Mael Lel Laio in the past: -2 sub-world entities.
- If the PCs become known to Mael Lel Laio in the past: +2 sub-world entities.
- If the PCs stole Mael Lel Laio's libram in the past, the magician loses access to the following spells, which are taken off his list of memorized spells: *magic shield*, *Panguire's Triumphant Displasms*, *Rhialto's Green Turmoil*.

In addition, if the PCs arrive after the enthrallment of Foshd'ar and Imire (based on the total number of days that have passed since the adventure start), the enthralled magicians also appear alongside Mael Lel Laio.

- Finally, for *each* of the three parts of his true name known by the PCs, Mael Lel Laio suffers a cumulative -1 penalty to all saving throws against spells cast against him by the party, in addition to the modifiers below:
- Any attempt by a PC to magically sway, dominate, or dismiss the arch-mage (*banish*, *binding*, *charm person*, *lo-*

tus stare, *word of command*, etc.) gains a cumulative +1 bonus to the spell check.

- If all three parts of his name are known, all other spell checks made against him enjoy an additional +1 bonus.

Mael Lel Laio (Present): Init +2; Atk dagger +2 melee (1d4); AC 12; HD 6d6; hp 28; MV 30'; Act 1d20+1d14; SP memorized spells (as CL 6, see below), *force of will*; SV Fort +5, Ref +3, Will +3; AL C; Crit I/d12.

Rote memorized spells: (level 1) *Arnhoult's Sequestrious Digitalia* [21], *chill touch* [17], *choking cloud* [19], *enlarge* [22], *flaming hands* [14], *magic shield* [19], *Panguire's Triumphant Displasms* [15]; (level 2) *Rhialto's Green Turmoil* [17], *shatter* [18]; (level 3) *Spell of the Omnipotent Sphere* [20].

Sub-world entities (6): Init +2; Atk claws +4 melee (1d10); AC 15; HD 3d12; hp 19 each; MV 30' or fly 40'; Act 2d20; SP demon traits (infravision, *darkness* [+4 spell check], half damage from non-magical weapons and fire); SV Fort +3, Ref +5, Will +5; AL C; Crit DN/d4.

Enthralled Foshd'ar: Init +0; Atk bite +6 melee (1d8+4); AC 15; HD 6d6; hp 30; MV 20'; Act 2d20; SP rote spellcasting 3/day (*Felojun's Second Hypnotic Spell* [18], *Houlart's Visceral Pang* [18]), immune to mind-altering spells; SV Fort +5, Ref +0, Will -2; AL L; Crit M/d12.

Enthralled Imire: Init +0; Atk bite +6 melee (1d8+4); AC 15; HD 6d6; hp 25; MV 20'; Act 2d20; SP rote spellcasting 3/day (*Lugwiler's Dismal Itch* [18]; *scorching ray* [18]), immune to mind-altering spells; SV Fort +5, Ref +0, Will -2; AL L; Crit M/d12.

Defeating Mael Lel Laio while holding knowledge of the three parts of his true name allows the PCs to use the scroll to permanently cast the arch-mage back to the sub-worlds.

Whenever encountered in the past, Mael Lel Laio has the following stats. He is also always accompanied by his sandestin Lairc (unless he has been freed, per Timeline A).

Mael Lel Laio (Past): Init +2; Atk dagger +4 melee (1d4+2); AC 18; HD 9d6; hp 49; MV 30'; Act 2d20; SP memorized spells (as CL 9, see below), indentured sandestins, *force of will*; SV Fort +6, Ref +5, Will N/A; AL C; Crit I/d16.

Rote memorized spells: (level 1) *Arnhoult's Sequestrious Digitalia* [23], *chill touch* [19], *choking cloud* [19], *enlarge* [24], *flaming hands* [20], *magic shield* [23], *Panguire's Triumphant Displasms* [15]; (level 2) *Rhialto's Green Turmoil* [19], *shatter* [18]; (level 3) *dispel magic* [22], *Spell of the Omnipotent Sphere* [24]; (level 4) *Spell of Forlorn Encystment* [18]; (level 5) *Spell of Temporal Stasis* [18].

Judge's note: In the books, Mael Lel Laio is depicted as one of the most powerful sorcerers in history, alongside names such as Amberlin I, Dibarcas Maior, and great Phandaal himself. As such, he should be a near-impossible foe for PCs to directly challenge while in the past. The included stat block can serve as a guide for judges when interacting with the arch-mage, but the judge should feel free to modify his abilities as needed to reflect his capacity to shrug off attacks or spells from the party.

CONCLUDING THE ADVENTURE

If the PCs managed to recover all three parts of Mael Lel Laio's true name and defeat him in the present, he is once more bound to the underworld. Given the possible variables with time travel, the PCs may find other creative solutions to defeating the arch-mage, including using the Pastille to return to the time before the mind-weft was activated, possibly preventing the subsequent events from unfolding! Either way, the PCs have a remarkable knowledge that both gives them a power over a once-great arch-mage, yet will also make them a target of many rival magicians. Aerh gives the party their promised reward and the association soon returns to its petty infighting as the surviving members quickly place the events of the recent past behind them.

Once the mind-weft artifact is destroyed, those magicians that were enthralled by its effects are released from its hold. If they have not been freed yet from their various confinements, before he releases Belawor, Imire, and Foshd'ar, Aerh demands payment from them in the form of IOUN stones, a situation that may lead to the three magicians asking the PCs for further help in the future once they are freed.

Even in defeat, Mael Lel Laio resumes his machinations. He departs to the underworld to marshal his strength, waiting for the time he can return to seek revenge on the PCs—perhaps even aeons into the future.



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