

Man-Bait for the Soul Stealer

A LEVEL 2 ADVENTURE

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shield maiden's statue begs for liberation! Will the party brave the steaming pits of Odag, her elemancer master, and kill him to free her? His island lair is guarded by elemental monstrosities, but Odag's treasure awaits one brave enough to claim it. Will the PCs save the stone damsel, or become man-bait for the soul stealer? A judge can easily run this adventure in 4-6 hours. A party of 4-8 2nd-level PCs, with each of the four core classes, is recommended.

BACKGROUND

Odag the elemancer is dying...again. For centuries, he's used a phylactery to transfer his soul to new bodies. Despite his potent sorcery, Odag's current body has little time left. He lairs within the steaming Blood Smoke Island, mining a buried meteor of Shanatium, one of phlogiston's 716 elemental decompositions. Assisted by a summoned horde of extra-planar creatures, Odag smelts its ore. His guardian, Senuna, one of Sezrekan's fifty shield maiden daughters, tires of her centuries-long servitude (most masters live a few lives at most). Suspicious of betrayal, Odag transformed her into a statue on the island's shore, and commanded her to lure bodies into his lair. Although she's compelled to obey, Senuna plans to end her service once and for all...

ENCOUNTER TABLE

Area	Type	Encounter
1	C	Boneshredders (6)
2	C	Strain 1100
3	T	Slippery slope trap
4	C/T	Skeletal hexapods (5), pressure plates
5	C	Mud spewers (4), smoke horror
6	C	Gangue servants (3), mud spewer
7	C	Odag, gangue servant, winged firegoat, mist spittersnake
8	P/T	Phylactery, poison gas trap, sword key

PLAYER INTRODUCTION

You stand on the shore of the lake surrounding Blood Smoke Island. As you gaze, a statue on the island seems to look back at you. Crimson steam billows up from the rocky island. You've heard rumors of the island hiding a dragon, or a demon, or even a mad wizard, but all accounts have two things in common: treasure and glory. Two rowboats are moored to a nearby dock.

This introduction gets the party into the action quickly; by taking the boats to the island, PCs begin the adventure. However, the judge may expand the introduction for campaign play. The breastplate, shield, halfling, and Mar-noj Thickskull (in areas 2, 4, 5, and 8) provide "hook-able" dressing for expository reference. In playtests, one judge hooked the party to the lake by having Senuna (see below) appear to a PC in a dream.

AREAS OF THE MAP

Area 1 - The Statue: *A grimy statue of a shield maiden grows into view as her island belches steam and red smoke. The white shore crunches as the boat floats in. It doesn't sound like sand. These are bones: teeth, knuckles, claws, and countless fragments of parts unknown.*

When the party disembarks, the bony fragments form man-sized whirlwinds. These guardian boneshredders attack! Note that the shredders' roar is so loud that PCs cannot hear each other. The judge is encouraged to impose this restriction upon the players at the table.

Boneshredders (6): Init +2; Atk shred +2 melee (1d6+1); AC 13; HD 2d8; hp 14, 12, 11, 9, 8, 7; MV fly 40'; Act 1d20; SP whirling roar (PCs cannot hear one another; DC 14 Will save or -1d to spell checks); critical lift (on natural 20, victim is lifted into the air then propelled to the ground for 1d8 damage), immune to mental effects; SV Fort +0, Ref +2, Will +0; AL N.

Once the boneshredders are defeated, read the following.

As the last bone whirlwind dies, a woman's voice calls out. The statue is speaking! "Hail, seekers of gold and glory! I'm the shield maiden Senuna, abandoned by my master, Odag, and trapped in this statue. I beg for release! I've been serving him for centuries because he never truly dies! Odag lairs within this island, smelting metal from an ancient meteor. He's an accomplished elemancer with potent spells, but you defeated his bone servants, so you can defeat him. Enter, kill him, and shatter his body-swapping soul gem. This is the only way I can return to the phlogiston. You needn't be heroes; I need slayers! My father, Sezrekan the Elder, THE SEZREKAN, will reward you generously. If that means nothing to you, then consider that Odag has treasure ripe for plunder. What say you?"

When roleplaying Senuna, remember that she is hedging her bets. As a bound servant, she's compelled to lure the party to Odag, but she reveals the soul gem in hopes to be freed. She doesn't know where the gem is, but knows it's a large diamond. Although she seems like a "damsel-in-distress," Senuna is not an innocent, unjustly-wronged maiden. Odag imprisoned her because she wants to end her service with his death. She's asking for murder.

If the party agrees, Senuna tells them about the secret door at area 1B (otherwise DC 15 Intelligence check to find). Alternatively, the party may choose to look for other entrances. Area 5, which has slow billowing steam escaping, qualifies. Other passages of steam and smoke are too small to enter.

Area 1B - Entrance: *Gusts of steam escape this previously concealed portal, revealing a dark tunnel. The air is thick and humid, with odors of rotten eggs mixed with something worse.*

With the exception of areas 6, 7, and 8, the chambers and tunnels are dark, and sometimes obscured by steam.

Area 2 - Strain 1100: *A damp, orange-red powder covers this oblong chamber. A rusted, gold-inlaid breastplate lies on the ground, similarly covered. Curiously, the powder is blackened in*

the few places it touches the gold. Echoes of bubbling liquid come from the dark gated tunnel beyond. Two large, quartz-like, upside-down fists reach through the rusty gate and dump glassy stones onto the floor. They retract, and a creature's silhouette fades into darkness, walking along the ceiling instead of the floor.

Exposure check: DC 7 Fortitude save with armor check penalty or 1 hp.

A gangue servant has just deposited slag for consumption (see below) and returns to area 6 via area 4. It ignores PCs unless they try to stop it. If a stat block is needed, see area 6.

If the party disturbs the breastplate, touches gold to the powder (even a gold piece), or if they touch the rusty gate to area 3, the powder coalesces into flying, spiky spheres, and attacks. Note that these are not individual whirlwinds, as in area 1; the spheres compose a single, large swarm. This extreme heat life-form, "Strain 1100," feeds on metallic corrosion. Odag has brought the strain here to devour his slag from smelting (the glass-like stones). The powder is unaffected by mundane fire, and is somewhat resistant to magical flame. However, it abhors the painful touch of gold. Flinging a handful of gp at the swarm does 1d6 damage, and forces a Willpower save, DC equal to gold damage done. If it fails, it falls inert for 24 hours. If PCs make other gold-based attacks, e.g., a warrior releasing an entire sack of gp at the strain, the judge should modify damage accordingly via the dice chain.

Strain 1100 (spiky-sphere swarm): Init +1; Atk swarm spikes +1 melee (1d3 plus spores); AC 12; HD 3d8; hp 15; MV fly 25'; Act 1d20 special; SP attacks all targets in area 2 and 10' beyond, spores (DC 5 Fort save or 1d3 temporary Stamina damage), half damage from non-area attacks, gold vulnerability (Will save vs. damage done or inert for 24 hours), immune to mundane flame, magical fire damage reduction 2/die; SV Fort +0, Ref +2, Will +0; AL N.

The breastplate is mostly ruined, but confers +1 AC, -1 to checks, and d8 fumble to those unarmored or wearing padded armor. Its gold content is worth 50 gp.

The passage leading to area 3 is blocked by a locked, rusted, iron-barred gate (DC 12 pick locks or DC 14 Strength check to open).

Area 3 - Slippery Slope Trap: *Sounds of bubbling liquid echo in this downward-sloping steamy passage, as rotten-egg breezes gently gust from within. The tunnel's surfaces are wet and slick.*

Exposure check: DC 10 Fortitude save with armor check penalty or 1 hp.

The three main obstacles in this passage are the slippery surfaces, the steam, and the hole in the floor. The steam rising from area 4 is so thick that one cannot see the floor's opening. Proceeding from area 2 requires a DC 10 Reflex save to avoid slipping down and sliding through the hole. The victim falls to area 4's pool, taking 3d3 falling damage plus 1d4 scalding damage. Clever players may slide something down the passage (such as area 2's slag), and hear the splash of their fallen probe. Or, they may use rope to anchor themselves to area 2's gate. Climbing along the tunnel requires a DC 14 check. A cleric may employ divine aid (DC 12) to temporarily clear the steam and see the hole.

Area 4 - Prismatic Pool: *A steaming, 40'-wide pool fills this chamber; faint mining sounds come from the far side's door. Most of the pool is a churning turquoise that bubbles as hot mist rises through the ceiling. The five feet nearest either shore is calmer, however, and gently transitions from turquoise to green to yellow to orange; no steam rises from this region. A narrow rock shelf lines one side of the cavern, connecting the shores. A metallic, star-shaped shield and strange skeletons are visible beneath the bubbling waters.*

Exposure check: DC 12 Fortitude save with armor check penalty or 1 hp.

The chamber's west door is unlocked, but the east door to area 6 is not (DC 12 pick locks or DC 16 Strength check to open). Bashing it down provokes attack from area 6's denizens.

Although the pool bubbles, it is not boiling; there are gasses rising from deep below. Nonetheless, the turquoise region is scalding hot. PCs take 1d4 damage per round of exposure (unless protected by a cleric's *resist cold or heat*, a wizard's *fire resistance*, etc.). Armor check penalties make unassisted escape more difficult. The water five feet from either shore is quite warm, but not damaging. The pool's walls are steep; it is 10-15' deep, even around the edges, although a central hole descends to hotter depths.

EXPOSURE CHECKS

The heat and poisonous gasses pervading Odag's lair are harmful, and become more dangerous as the party descends. When PCs enter a numbered area, they must make an exposure check: a Fortitude save (detailed in each area), but modified by armor check penalties. Failure incurs 1 hp damage. If the failing PC holds an extinguishable light source, then it goes out. Reward a +1d bonus to the save if a PC takes preventative measures (such as improvising a breathing mask).

As an option for stronger parties, instead of 1 hp damage, a failed save results in temporary ability damage equal to one plus the PC's armor check penalty. Thus, an unarmored wizard takes 1 point, whereas a chainmail and shield laden warrior takes 7 (1+5+1). The PC may distribute this damage among Strength, Agility, and Stamina however they choose. Remember that a cleric's *lay on hands* cannot restore ability damage.



The raised rock shelf (3' wide) along the chamber's northern edge provides passage around the pool. However, it is trapped. There are two pressure plates along the shelf (see map); depressing either causes iron rods to protrude from the wall, doing 1d6 damage and pushing the victim into scalding water. A wary thief may detect and disable the plates (DC 12 to find and disable trap), though they may be simply stepped over and avoided.

Some PCs have to drink from any pool they find. If one gulps down scalding water, award him with 2d4 damage. If one drinks from the cooler waters within five feet of either shore, they consume bacteria (which colors the water and absorbs its heat). Have the PC make a Luck check; on success, the bacteria heals them for 2d3 hp. A given PC may only be healed once by the pool's waters.

The star-shaped shield is made of unknown metal and provides +2 to AC with a -1 check penalty. It radiates a slight magic, and negates 2d3 critical hits, after which it turns to dust. Disturbing it, unfortunately, animates its alien six-legged skeletal guardians, who climb out of the pool and attack. Skeletons that fall victim to *turn unholy* retreat into the water and lay in submission. We leave it to the judge to decide whether these creatures came from above, below, or beyond.

Skeletal Hexapods (5): Init +0; Atk claw +1 melee (1d4); AC 10; HD 1d8; hp 8, 8, 4, 3, 2; MV 40'; Act 1d20; SP un-dead, boneblast death throe (slayer must pass DC 15 Ref save or take 1d6 from bony shrapnel), half damage from piercing or slashing; SV Fort +1, Ref +1, Will +0; AL C.

Area 5 - Mudpots: Gurgling white mud comprises this chamber's floor, looped by a narrow wooden walkway originating at the door. Arcane symbols encircle the room, chiseled into the walls. Steam rises and escapes through a hinged grating about five feet off the floor. A partially-eaten, mineral-encrusted halfling lies below, half sunken, with a sword hilt protruding above the muck. Mining sounds echo from another tunnel, just as a 10'-long serpentine creature scurries out of it and into the mud!

Exposure check: DC 10 Fortitude save with armor check penalty or 1 hp.

The door from area 3 is locked (DC 12 pick locks or DC 16 Strength check to open); bashing it down results in immediate attack from the mud spewers (below). PCs entering area 5 from the outside alternative entrance must get through the locked grating (DC 12 pick locks or DC 14 Strength check to open). Moving through the tunnel between area 5 and the island's exterior requires an exposure check due to the tunnel's concentrated steam. Stepping into the hot mud requires an exposure check per round.

Wizards and elves recognize the walls' arcane symbols as useful for summoning creatures from the elemental plane of mud. Damaging or defacing the symbols causes 1d6 shock damage to the vandal (DC 18 Intelligence check to detect), but weakens the mud spewers (each takes 2 hp damage).

The halfling corpse has 2 silver short swords (useful against the horror, see below). One is easily visible and retrievable, but PCs must remove the body from the mud to find the other.

If PCs approach either tunnel opposite the door, or disturb the mud (e.g., by removing the halfling's body), the mud spewers attack! Mud spewers are elementals that resemble a 10'-long sinuous worm with 10 legs in its middle (enabling it to stand U-shaped), and a sharp-toothed mouth on each end. A peculiarity of the mud spewer is that it bleeds black smoke. When it dies, smoke rises into the air, forming part of a creature. When four spewers have died, the smoke coalesces into an un-dead smoke horror! Warn players that as each spewer dies, more of a smoky creature is forming. If even one spewer is defeated by non-lethal means (*sleep*, subdue w/ -1d to damage, etc.), the horror does not appear.

Mud Spewers (4): Init +1; Atk bite +2 melee (1d4) or mud-bile +2 missile fire (1d3 plus mud-eye, range 30'); AC 13; HD 1d10; hp 9, 8, 5, 3; MV 30'; Act 2d20; SP mud-eye (DC 10 Ref save or -1d to attacks for rest of encounter), bleeds black smoke, smoke horror death throe (smoke rises forming one-fourth of an un-dead smoke horror); SV Fort +0, Ref +2, Will +1; AL N.

Un-Dead Smoke Horror (1, only if 4 mud spewers have died): Init +3; Atk choke +2 melee (1d4 temp Stamina damage); AC 10; HD 4d8; hp 16; MV fly 30'; Act 1d20; SP life-stealer (seeps into 0 Stamina victim, who dies on third round; horror emerges fully healed unless exorcised), un-dead traits, immune to mundane iron-based weapons (including steel); SV Fort +1, Ref +1, Will +2; AL N.

The smoke horror focuses on one PC, trying to reduce her Stamina to zero. If successful, it flows into the victim's mouth, and kills her after two rounds; the horror regains all lost hp, and exits the body to attack again. To save the PC, one must exorcise the horror; this may be done using clerical abilities (turn unholy, 3 HD *lay on hands*, DC 15 divine aid, *bless* spell check 20), touching the victim with *chill touch* (spell check 20 or more, though the victim suffers the associated damage), or most simply, by pouring holy water down her mouth. Exorcised horrors behave as if turned for 4d12 hours.

The mud spewers use the tunnel to area 6 to assist the gangue servants (see below). PCs may also use this tunnel to descend, but it is slippery (DC 15 climb check or slide to the bottom). Sliding PCs take 1d6 falling damage upon entering area 6.

Area 6 - Gangue Servants: *An alien-looking red rock dominates this chamber, partially excavated, and illuminated by the walls' torches. Three quartz-like humanoids chip at the ore, each using a pick-ended appendage that curves from its back over its head, like a scorpion's tail. One stands on the floor, one on a wall, and one on the ceiling. A pale worm-like beast descends from a tunnel, and stands in a U-shape. Both its ends spew white muddy bile, softening the rock where the ore is being mined.*

Exposure check: DC 12 Fortitude with armor check penalty or 1 hp.

Odag's creatures mine Shanatium from the meteor; the spewer's acidic mud-bile softens the rock for the gangue servants' picks. If PCs enter quietly through the locked door from area 4 (DC 12 pick locks or DC 16 Strength check to open), they may possibly sneak past (DC 10 move silently or Agility check for each PC, armor check penalties apply!). If a single PC is detected, the creatures attack. The door to area 7 is unlocked.

Gangue servants are elementals created from the unwanted mineral deposits surrounding the meteor. They have two large rocky hands and arms (which the party saw in area 2), as well as a pick-ended appendage. They attack with fist and pick, and can heal themselves using materials from fallen gangue servants. Scoring a critical hit on one may break a mundane weapon.

Gangue Servants (3): Init +2; Atk bash +3 melee (1d6) and pick +3 melee (1d8); AC 13; HD 3d8; hp 19, 12, 11; MV 30'; Act 2d20; SP weapon-breaker (after a critical hit on a gangue servant, PC must pass d30 Luck check with attack's total damage added to the roll, otherwise mundane weapon shatters), corpse-user (may sacrifice both action dice to use pieces of a dead gangue servant to heal itself for 2d6 hp), rock-walker (may walk on any rocky surface, even defying gravity); SV Fort +3, Ref +0, Will +0; AL N.

Mud Spewer (1): Init +1; Atk bite +2 melee (1d4) or mud spray +2 missile fire (1d3 plus mud-eye, range 30'); AC 13; HD 1d10; hp 5; MV 30'; Act 2d20; SP mud-eye (DC 10 Ref save or -1d to attacks for rest of encounter), bleeds black smoke, smoke horror death throe (smoke rises forming one-

fourth of an un-dead smoke horror); SV Fort +0, Ref +2, Will +1; AL N.

PCs may try to mine the ore, but normal iron or steel tools are too soft, and dull or break with repeated use. However, there are a few loose chunks of ore in a half barrel waiting for transport to area 7. Note that the ore must be smelted to extract the metal for forging.

Area 7 - Smelting Chamber: *The air ripples like a mirage, thick with heat and gasses, causing the room's torches to burn in unnatural colors. Blood-red smoke gushes out of tall pipes and escapes through holes in the ceiling. Nightmarish creatures tend a huge furnace crackling with arcane energy. A rocky humanoid with a scorpion-like tail slowly inserts ore at one end, while a winged fiery goat and a green misty snake breathe flame and acid into open apertures; these latter two each stand in pentagrams marked with five candles burning black flame. At the far end, a young man, with grayish skin and bloody heat blisters, inspects glassy slag and red metal ingots.*

Thanks to his magic mirror (area 8), Odag knows the PCs are coming. Regardless, give the first two in marching order a Luck check, granting a surprise action for either that succeeds. However, they must be quick and decisive; there is no time for "what should I do" discussions at the table. After resolution, read the following.

The young man notices you, unsheathes an engraved sword, and shouts in an unexpected elderly voice, "Ah, my damsel-in-distress has sent me new bodies. Attack the intruders!"

Exposure check: DC 15 Fortitude save with armor check penalty or 1 hp.

Odag and his creatures interrupt their smelting to attack. The gangue servant engages in melee. The winged firegoat and mist spittersnake remain in their 10'-diameter pentagrams, though their breath weapons reach any in the room. Even though Odag wants to die and possess a new body, the vessel must be worthy of his greatness; thus, he fights with everything he has. If the party passed through area 6 undetected, have a random PC make a Luck check each round of combat; upon failure, the denizens of area 6 hear the commotion and come to aid their master.

The firegoat and spittersnake are dispelled if all five candles of their respective pentagrams are snuffed or destroyed. While this task would be trivial in a peaceful situation, it is not so trivial with an elemental breathing down one's neck. Each candle is AC 7 with 1 hp. Although five successful basic attacks snuff a pentagram's candles, one high-powered casting of *magic missile* could destroy them simultaneously. A mighty deed performs similarly; the number of candles destroyed is equal to the deed die's result plus one; thus, a successful mighty deed eliminates a minimum of four (3+1) candles. The candles are immune to their elemental's attacks.

Spellcasting near Shanatium: The presence of pure Shanatium ingots twists arcane energies; all arcane spell checks are at +1d, but those with a natural 6 or less result in both misfire and minor corruption.



Gangue Servant: Init +2; Atk bash +3 melee (1d6) and pick +3 melee (1d8); AC 13; HD 3d8; hp 17; MV 30'; Act 2d20; SP weapon-breaker (after a critical hit on a gangue servant, PC must pass d30 Luck check with attack's total damage added to the roll, otherwise mundane weapon shatters), corpse-user (may sacrifice both action dice to use pieces of a dead gangue servant to heal itself for 2d6 hp), rock-walker (may walk on any rocky surface, even defying gravity); SV Fort +3, Ref +0, Will +0; AL N.

Winged Firegoat: Init +2; Atk fire-breath +3 missile fire (2d4 fire damage, range 50') or flameburst (DC 12 Ref save or 1d4+1 fire damage, all within 5' radius); AC 15; HD 3d8; hp 21; MV 30' or fly 20'; Act 1d20; SP immune to fire, double-damage from water/ice; SV Fort +1, Ref +1, Will +3; AL C.

Mist Spittersnake: Init +2; Atk acid-breath +3 missile fire (2d4 acid damage, range 50') or bite +3 melee (1d6 plus poison); AC 17; HD 3d8; hp 15; MV 30'; Act 1d20; SP poison (DC 15 Fort save or paralysis for 1 hour), immune to acid; SV Fort +1, Ref +3, Will +1; AL L.

Odag: Init +2; Atk longsword +3 melee (1d8+1) or flame missiles or rock breath; AC 13; HD 5d4; hp 16; MV 30'; Act 1d20; SP flame missiles (1d3+1 missiles, 2d4+2 fire damage each, DC 14 Ref save for half damage, 50' range, 3x/day), rock spray (2d6+4 damage, DC 14 Ref save for half damage, 10' range, 1x/day), tough skin (increased AC), willful mind (d30+5 save vs. sleep, charm, and paralysis); SV Fort +3, Ref +3, Will +5 (see also SP, willful mind); AL C.

For ease of play, Odag is given spell-like abilities, rather than being "statted" as a wizard. If a PC wishes to spell duel (or the judge prefers a DCC wizard), treat Odag as level 5 with +6 to spell checks, using the following spells: *magic missile* (flaming manifestation), *freezing hands* (reversed *flaming hands*), *invoke patron* (Sezrekan, +1, 2x/day), *fire resistance*, *scorching ray*, *sword magic*, *shield maiden* (cannot be used while Senuna lives), and *phylactery of the soul*. Note that play-

ing Odag as a level 5 wizard may increase the odds of a TPK.

When Odag dies, the party sees a tiny globe of darkness (his soul) rise from his corpse and speed through the door to his bedroom, area 8 (to the phylactery). If a PC searches his body, she finds the key to unlock this door. His sword is engraved on both sides with the phrase, "The Blade is the Key to Knowledge." The weapon appears mundane, but it serves as the key to open his bedroom's secret door.

There are 3 ingots of Shanatium expelled by the furnace, as well as more slag. One ingot may be forged into a dagger, two into a short sword, and three into a longsword. As stated above, the metal provides +1d to arcane spell checks, but misfire and minor corruption occur for any arcane spell check's natural roll of 6 or less. Each ingot is worth 500 gp, but PCs should be encouraged to quest for crafting them into weapons.

There is a collapsed tunnel at the north end of the chamber. The judge is encouraged to place a portal there, leading to another adventure, or even continue the tunnel into uncharted territory.

Area 8 - Odag's Room: *This stone bedroom is wonderfully cool and comfortable, and soft magical light radiates from the ceiling. The floor has names and dates burned into it. To the left, a mirror hangs on a wall above a desk, which is littered with sheets of writing. A bulging pouch hangs on a chair's back, and a glass jar of icy powder beads with condensation on the floor. Opposite the door is a simple bed. On the right wall, opposite the desk, a longsword sits on a rack. The sword's metal is silky brown, and its pommel is set with a large diamond that scintillates as inky smoke swirls within.*

Exposure check: None required; the room's climate is magically regulated.

The door from area 7 is locked (Odag's key, DC 12 pick locks or DC 16 Strength check to open).

The floor's names and dates are the victims of Odag's possessions. There are about fifty entries ranging a span of 200 years. Next to the dates are phrases like, "good strong body," "skin takes abnormally long to burn," and "kind of a weakling, but I'll make do." The judge is encouraged to improvise for entertainment's sake. The last name on list, "Marnoj Thickskull," has a date two years old. The judge may tell PCs that they recognize this name as a missing person.

The jar on the floor is cold to the touch, and is enchanted to keep its contents cold, regardless of external temperature. It currently contains snow. Once the snow is taken out of the jar, it melts as normal.

The mirror (on the north wall) appears to be normal, although it is slightly magical. PCs note melted ice at the mirror's base. If exposed to cold (such as the jarred snow), the mirror shows the island's exterior near Senuna's statue. If the viewer succeeds on a spell check roll of 5 or more (non-casters use a d10 for spell checks), then she can view anywhere on the island, and any of the lair's chambers. A failed check renders the mirror unusable for a day, and causes minor corruption upon the viewer.

The desk's writings are lab notes and journal entries. They mention recent success at smelting the meteor's ore after centuries of failure. They describe Shanatium as a metal harder than diamond, and one of 716 elemental decompositions of phlogiston. There is a coded passage (DC 15 Intelligence check, DC 13 read languages for thieves) that explains the metal's magical properties (see area 7). Finally, Odag writes that he suspects Senuna desires to be released from service, so he imprisons her in stone.

The belpouch holds 50 gp. The bed along the east wall is nondescript.

The longsword hanging on the south wall is made of adamantine and provides a non-magical +1 to attacks and damage due to the hardness of its edge. However, the sword is considered magical as long as its diamond pommel is intact. This is Odag's phylactery, which contains his soul. The PC who touches the sword must immediately make a DC 8 Willpower save. If he fails, his soul is expelled as Odag inhabits his body; the displaced soul is imprisoned somewhere in the phlogiston (a future quest!). Upon possession, the body's skin becomes gray and tough, speaks with Odag's elderly voice, and gains Odag's spell-casting abilities. The judge may decide that Odag immediately attacks, or that he tries to bide his time, dismissing his sudden physical changes. If the judge decides the latter, pull the affected player aside and confirm that he agrees to roleplay the deception.

If the PC passes the Willpower save, then he knows that something tried to rip him from his body. The saving throw repeats each week one holds the sword, and the DC increases by +1 each week that Odag remains in the phylactery (DC 15 after seven weeks). The phylactery is destroyed by either placing the sword in the smelting oven (which destroys the entire sword), or by shattering the diamond (which saves the sword for later use). Only Shanatium is hard enough for this, and PCs can use an ingot, or bash the pommel against

the ore in the meteor. If PCs do break the phylactery, read the "Ending the Adventure" section below. Enterprising PCs may wish to find a magical way to expel Odag; we leave this to the judge, but it should be very difficult (spell check of 30+). Opportunists that survive the Willpower save may think they can sell the sword with diamond intact, but this too, should be tough. Merchants could not afford it, and if they could, they'd be suspicious as to why it's being sold. Without the diamond, the sword is worth 200 gp.

The south wall contains a trapped secret door. It is a DC 17 Intelligence check to find, and is locked, but there's no keyhole; it must be forced open (DC 17 Strength check). It is trapped with a poison gas trap (DC 16 find trap), and may be disabled (DC 16) by plugging gas holes underneath the sword rack. If the trap is triggered, everyone in the room must make a DC 7 Fortitude save or die; those passing take 2d4 poison damage.

A safer way to access the chamber is to use Odag's engraved sword from area 7, the one that says, "The Blade is the Key to Knowledge." If one places this sword on the sword rack (removing the adamantine sword), the door opens automatically and safely.

The secret chamber contains some of Odag's spells, fire-etched into white dragon scales. They are: *patron bond* (Sezrekan), *magic missile* (flaming manifestation), *freezing hands* (reversed form of *flaming hands*), and *sword magic*. There is a small sack with 200 gp, and one pouch with 50 gp.

ENDING THE ADVENTURE

If the PCs destroy the phylactery, then Odag's screams are heard as his black soul dissipates. Tremors shake the chamber, with small pieces of ceiling falling. Odag's magic stabilized his lair, and fades with his true death. Let this be a dramatic way to get the PCs on their way, but do not collapse the lair on top of them. The tunnels collapse just as the PCs exit, either via the way they came, or by another passage (perhaps utilizing the optional tunnel in area 7).

If they did not destroy the phylactery, the PCs emerge with a 7-pointed star branded on their foreheads. This marks them as enemies of Sezrekan, and they feel his wrath as they each lose a point of Luck (thieves and halflings drop their maximum Luck by one). They do have a nice magical sword, however. Regardless, for campaign play, the judge should ensure that the party's choice has long-term consequences.

If the party destroyed the phylactery, upon their exit they are greeted by Senuna's specter, who thanks them for her freedom, and offers her father's gratitude. Each PC gains 2 points of Luck, and has a +1d bonus to casting *patron bond* to Sezrekan. Additionally, she gives them a small wooden figure of a shield maiden. If they burn it, either she or one of her 49 sisters will come to their aid for the duration of a month, or until death (result 22-25 for *shield maiden*, p. 340 of DCC RPG rulebook).