

SKY OV CRIMSON FLAME



COMPATIBLE WITH
**DCC
RPG**

A 0-level Adventure
by Thorin Thompson

SBP

Includes bonus 1-level Mini-Campaign **Blights ov the Eastern Forest**

Owl Knight Publishing
presents

SKY OV CRIMSON FLAME



A 0-level Adventure
by Thorin Thompson
v.2.0

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FROM THE AUTHOR

Thank you for purchasing Owl Knight Publishing's first adventure module! Much of the artwork and corresponding 1st level mini-campaign would not have been possible if not for the support of 420 Kickstarter Backers. Thanks to their contribution this adventure is a larger and deadlier affair.

The inspiration for *Sky ov Crimson Flame* comes from the very first (totally off the cuff) session I ran for DCC-RPG. This version has been much embellished, but I think it still holds that raw gonzo spirit of my first game night. I hope you and your players enjoy running both *Sky ov Crimson Flame* and *Blights ov the Eastern Forest* as much as I've enjoyed devising ways to kill them!

INTRODUCTION

Sky ov Crimson Flame is a *Dungeon Crawl Classics* adventure designed for 12-16 0-level characters. Remember that players should have at least 3-4 characters each to prepare for the inevitability of unspeakable death that surely awaits them! For larger parties, Judges should raise the attack bonus and hit points of the enemies.

A majority of this adventure finds the characters exploring a foul and ancient keep whilst battling reanimated horrors in the hopes of unraveling the mysterious disappearance of their fellow villagers and the lovely Belesa. At its climax this adventure pits the characters against a newly devout witch and, if things really go awry, a powerful resurrected necromancer in the nexus between worlds!

Due to the length of this adventure it may take up to two sessions to complete. Play-test games had an average death toll for cautious parties and TPKs for the careless and foolhardy! Most play-tests concluded with the party battling the necromancer for good or ill though one lucky group managed to stop the ceremony and kill the witch before the ritual was complete!

BACKGROUND

Hundreds of years prior to the night of this adventure, a necromancer known as Balrothhariid took residence in a long forgotten and ruined keep hidden deep within the dreaded forest East of the small farming village Reed. Hidden away, the Necromancer was free to practice his dark arts uninhibited by curious eyes and moral standards. Every blue moon someone from the village would disappear; never to be seen or heard from again. For decades this pattern ensued and aways the villagers assumed some bogey or demon from the Eastern Forest had gobbled the poor soul up!

One cold night, when the moon showed its horns, the sky became ablaze with an anomalous kaleidoscopic beam of light that rose howling out of the forest and towards the heavens! Many of the Reed's residents were fearful, but there were still a few brave souls that dared ventured into the forest for answers. They arrived at the Ancient Keep



just as the fantastical light receded. Timidly they searched and discovering it abandoned fled to live in blissful ignorance vowing never again to return to that dreadful place, nor speak a word of what they had seen.

Today, most of the inhabitants of Reed remember only the vaguest legends concerning the Ancient Keep and the eldritch light. As of late though, strange occurrences have taking place. A young woman named Belesa recently went missing and in the ensuing weeks more villagers began to disappear until at last the children were stolen away from their beds in the dark of night!

These events have lead to the inevitable resurrection of Balrothhariid. For tonight, a Horned Moon shall rise, blood will be spilled and the Necromancer will return anew!

THE NECROMANCER

The origins of Balrothhariid are a mystery, though some believe he hailed from the desert lands far beyond the Crying Sea. In the end it matters little for his soul was long ago given to Chaos and his mind bent on furthering his power.

His quest for the unspeakable knowledge of the multiverse led to the discovery of the Other Worlds, spirit realms that lay just beyond the veil of space and time. It is said that one can only enter these Other Worlds through dreams, but Balrothhariid built a means. He constructed a magical chamber that would divide his soul and project the pieces across the veil into the multiple realms. To anchor himself to this reality, he left one sliver of his soul in the form of a living dagger called *Atma-khanjr* (see page 18).

The other five incarnations of the Necromancer grew powerful within the Other Worlds as they each conquered the lands and its peoples through magic and brutality. If just one of these incarnations were to return it would be the awakening of a new dark age, where all but the mighty would fall sway to his evil.

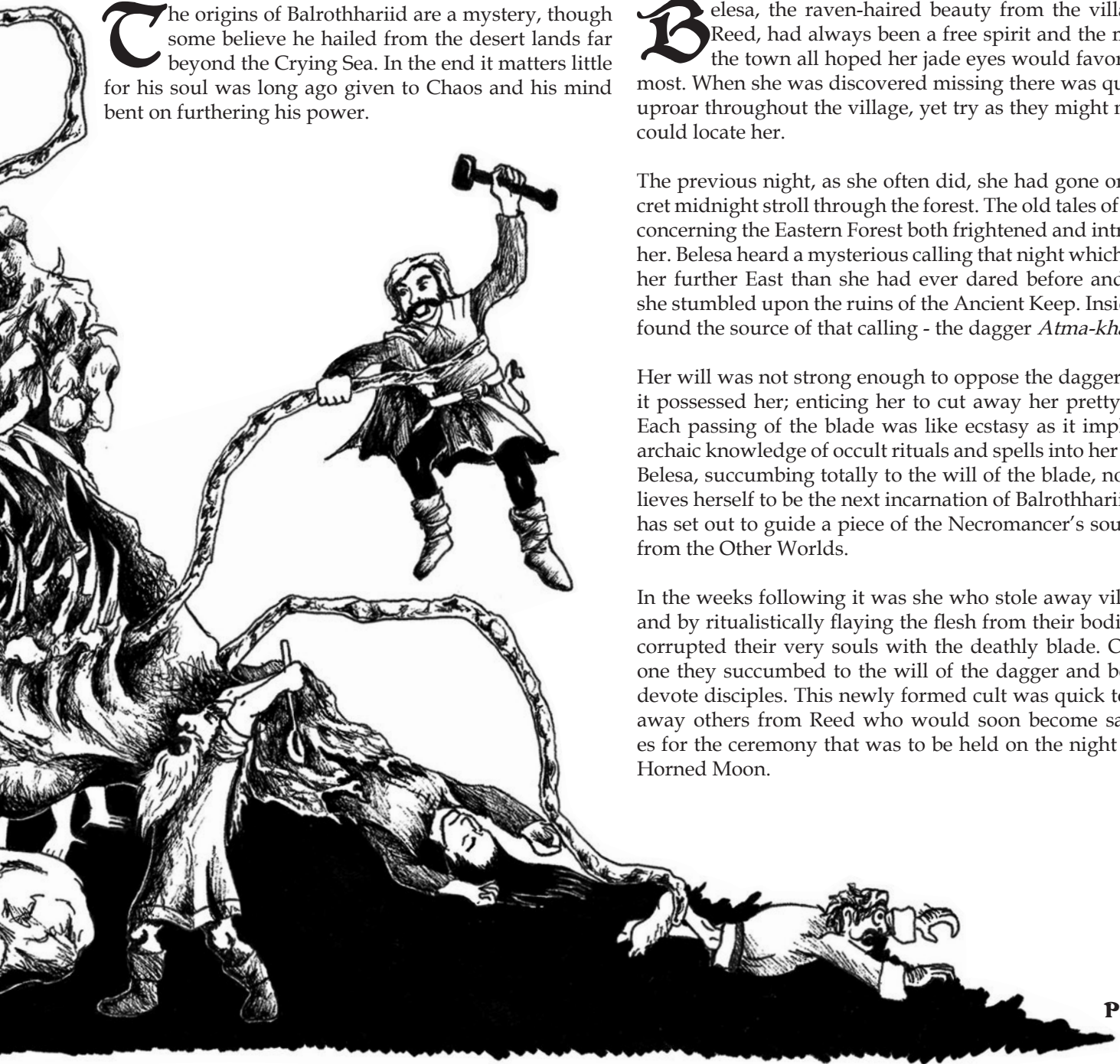
THE WITCH

Belesa, the raven-haired beauty from the village of Reed, had always been a free spirit and the men of the town all hoped her jade eyes would favor them most. When she was discovered missing there was quite an uproar throughout the village, yet try as they might no one could locate her.

The previous night, as she often did, she had gone on a secret midnight stroll through the forest. The old tales of dread concerning the Eastern Forest both frightened and intrigued her. Belesa heard a mysterious calling that night which drew her further East than she had ever dared before and soon she stumbled upon the ruins of the Ancient Keep. Inside she found the source of that calling - the dagger *Atma-khanjr*.

Her will was not strong enough to oppose the dagger's and it possessed her; enticing her to cut away her pretty flesh. Each passing of the blade was like ecstasy as it implanted archaic knowledge of occult rituals and spells into her mind. Belesa, succumbing totally to the will of the blade, now believes herself to be the next incarnation of Balrothhariid and has set out to guide a piece of the Necromancer's soul back from the Other Worlds.

In the weeks following it was she who stole away villagers and by ritualistically flaying the flesh from their bodies she corrupted their very souls with the deathly blade. One by one they succumbed to the will of the dagger and became devote disciples. This newly formed cult was quick to steal away others from Reed who would soon become sacrifices for the ceremony that was to be held on the night of the Horned Moon.



A LOVE LETTER

Before her disappearance, Belesa wrote a Love Letter to one of the PCs. Give **Handout A** to the player whose PC has the highest Luck score. This letter can be used as motivation for the party, but clever players will be able to compare the handwriting on the letter with the Parchments Pieces (**Handout C**) found in the Library (area 2-2), thus concluding that Belesa has become the cult's leader.

My Dearest,

I have so enjoyed our moonlit walks through the forest and still do not understand why the village elders fear the place so. Yes, the trees have grown wild, but none-the-less lovely, and the nightingales sing so beautifully, though I sometimes find their songs mournful and strange. At least the elders' superstitions aid in keeping our walks secret until the time comes when we can confess our love openly.

- Forever Yours!

- Belesa



ENCOUNTER TABLE

Area	Type	Encounter
A	C	6 Wretched Villagers
B-1	C	1 Cherub Head-Bat 2 Adult Head-Bats 5 Optional Cherub Head-Bats
B-2	T	Falling Statues/Bridge Collapse
C-1	C	6 Cherub Head-Bats 2 Adult Head-Bats
C-2	C	3 Cherub Head-Bombs
2-1	T	Collapsed Stairwell
2-2/4	C	Corrupted Flesh
2-4	C	2 Cherub Head-Bats
2-5	T	Soul Chamber
3-2	C	Butcher Cultist
3-4	T	Cherub Fusion
3-5	C	Ghost of Sir Anatos
D	C	Shambling Flesh Mass
E-1	T	Crumbling Steps
E-2	C	Witch
F	C	Balrothhariid

JUDGE'S NOTES

Throughout *Sky ov Crimson Flame* you will find text boxes highlighting tie-ins for the following 1st-level mini-campaign *Blights ov the Eastern Forest*. These tie-ins will be items your players can discover that can either be used as adventure hooks, or to simply aid in cleansing the forest.

If you're using this adventure as a one night session and don't wish to boggle down the funnel then simply ignore the tie-ins presented. After all, if the characters survive they can always return to explore the Ancient Keep further.

ADVENTURE START

Once each player has rolled up their 0-level characters and the Love Letter (**Handout A**) has been given to the character with the highest Luck score, read or paraphrase the following:

It began with the disappearance of Belesa - the raven-haired beauty with jade colored eyes. Then others began to vanish! One by one, friends, loved ones, and finally the children screamed out in the night and were lost... In vain you helped in the search, but no trace nor track could be found.

Now as the Horned Moon rises a thunderous sound ripples across the night sky and in its wake a Crimson Star ignites in the East! Remembering the legends of screaming witch-lights that blazed and dance across the sky the village elders have determined those stolen must have been taken to the Ancient Keep - a place of dread that lies hidden within the dark boughs of the Eastern Forest.

You here are the only brave souls the village of Reed could muster. It is up to you to save those who have been taken and stop whatever evil now dwells within that accursed structure of yore. Together you steel yourselves as you enter the Eastern Forest.

If any players wish to proclaim some preparations their characters may have made now is the time. Otherwise continue to **area A**.

Area A - Eastern Forest

The pines sway eerily in the waning moonlight and from their branches hail strange bulbous shapes that whine and flutter over the treetops in a queer fashion. Suddenly, a herd of deer rush past, heading in the opposite direction. So stricken with panic were the creatures that they paid you little heed!

Have the PC with the highest score roll a Luck check. If successful, the party hears the scuffling of feet fast approaching from within the dense forest. Failing, the entire party is surprised and attacked by a band of Wretched Villagers, read or paraphrase the following:

From between the trees emerge several staggering figures! Their bodies gleaming wet and black in the moonlight.

The Wretched Villagers are some of the first poor souls stolen away from Reed. They have been subjected to the dagger's corruption, but had just enough willpower to reject its effects and fled from the Ancient Keep of their own accord. Having undergone the cult's ritualistically flaying their flesh has been cut from their bodies and they are all maddened from the ordeal. At times memory of their former lives resurface and they plead for death while uncontrollably attacking the party.



If captured they babble incoherently, "witch... resurrection... flames... Atma-khanjr... sharp... sweet... burning!"

Wretched Villagers (6): Init +0; Atk claw +0 melee (1d3); AC 10; HD 1d4+2; hp 4; MV 30'; Act 1d20; SV Fort +0, Ref +0, Will -3; AL N.

If this encounter was too easy for the PCs or you wish to make their trek through the Eastern Forest even more dreadful then choose a random encounter from the **Bestiary for the Eastern Forest** (p. 54) for the party to battle. This encounter could help spur a further campaign by the PCs to cleanse the forest of evil.

Area B-1 - The Bridge

Heading further East in the direction of the fiery red star the forest soon thins out stopping at the edge of a cliff. Here two flayed forms hanged crucified at the threshold of a natural stone bridge. Some horridly obese bat lands on one of the corpses and begins to happily gnaw away at the still dripping muscles.

The stone bridge is roughly 50ft across and leads to a rocky mount that forms the foundation on which an Ancient Keep looms. Its stone walls weathered and scarred with the erosion of time. Atop its highest standing tower you spot a silhouetted figure dancing in the crimson light of the falling star. Chanting voices carry over and echo in the valley below.

The "obese bat" is actually a Cherub Head-Bat that will take offense and attack any PCs that try to knock it down. Depending on how the party is fairing the Judge may wish to send out 5 more Cherub Head-Bats from the forest to attack the PCs.

Cherub Head-Bats are severed child heads infused with dark magic. They glide on wings constructed from stretched skin stitched to the sides of their heads and attack by chomping

down on a target wherever they can. Once they have successfully bitten a target they continue to chew on them each round dealing 1d3-1 damage until thrown off (DC 8 Strength check) or the target dies. Once the target is dead the Cherub Head-Bat will be content to happily gnaw on its treat.

Crucified Corpses: These were villagers that refused the dagger's corruption and have instead been put on display. If anyone disturbs the bodies the heads will shoot off into the air with the spine still attached and wail horribly as their faces rip in two forming wings on which the Adult Head-Bats fly.

Adult Head-Bats prefer to use their protruding half spine to impale targets. On the following round after a successful spinal attack the Adult Head-Bat will attempt to bite the impaled target until ripped out (DC 10 Strength check). Any PCs that attempt and fail to rip out the spine suffer a permanent 1d3 Stamina loss from worsening the wound. If the spine is broken (DC 10 Strength check) the Adult Head-Bat automatically dies.

Rock Bridge: The rock bridge is 50ft in length and can be crossed two a breast. It is structurally sound, but if any PCs are knocked off (DC 13 Reflex save) they will plummet to the jagged rocks below, dying instantly. Any dwarves, stone masons, or similar can easily determine the bridge is sound.

Cherub Head-Bat: Init: +0; Atk chomp +0 melee (1d3-1); AC 10; HD 1d4; hp 2; MV fly 30'; Act 1d20; SP un-dead traits, chew; SV Fort +1, Ref +1, Will +0; AL C.

Adult Head-Bats (2): Init: +1; Atk bite +1 melee (1d3) or spinal spear +1 melee (1d4); AC 10; HD 1d6+1; hp 4; MV fly 30'; Act 1d20; SP un-dead traits, impale; SV Fort +1, Ref +2, Will +0; AL C.

Area B-2 – The Gate

The edges of the bridge here have crumbled away slightly. A grand and rusted iron portcullis stands closed flanked by 40' square towers. Beyond the portcullis is a set of massive wooden doors. High on the battlements above, two large stone stag-headed gargoyles leer down at you with craned necks. From the other side of the gate rhythmic drumming begins followed by bloodcurdling screams of agony and a woman's maniacal laughter!

Keep's Gate: The iron portcullis is shut tight and no amount of strength can open it. If any PCs come within touching distance of the gate they will hear a scraping sound and must succeed a DC 10 Reflex save or be crushed by falling gargoyles.

Additionally, the weight and velocity of the falling statues will fracture the cracked bridge causing it to collapse. All PCs standing within 10ft of the gate must succeed a DC 12 Reflex save in order to catch the ledge below (**area C-1/2**) or fall to their deaths. Any PCs looking up afterwards will spy two flying cherub head-bats giggle and flee behind the battlements.

The rusted portcullis can only be opened by the pulley system within the Courtyard (**area D**).

Crumbled Section: Dwarves, stone masons, or similar with can determine this area of the bridge is sound unless a great amount of weight is forced upon it. Looking below the bridge will reveal a narrow ledge that winds around both sides of the keep's rocky foundation. Descending carefully onto the ledge is an easy feat requiring no checks.

Keep's Walls: The stone walls are 40ft high, requiring a DC 10 Strength check to scale. Halfway up the wall a flock of 6 Cherub Head-Bats and 2 Adult Head-Bats (the same that might be encountered in **area C-1**) will fly over the battlements and attack the climbers. Anyone bit must succeed a DC 10 Reflex save or fall suffering 1d6x10' falling damage.

If by some chance the party makes it over the wall they will have interrupted the ceremony early. In that case, proceed to **area D**, but start the **Ritual Countdown** (p. 18) 4 rounds after their arrival instead of 1. PCs must still face the Fleshly Mass and any amount of Head-Bats from **areas C-1** and **C-2**. The Butcher Cultist from **area 3-2** will appear in 1d3+1 rounds.

Area C-1 – Left Ledge

The narrow ledge leaves barely any room to walk and you must proceed in single file. Descending carefully around the rocky edge you hear a faint whimper from above accompanied by a fleshy flapping. Looking up you spot a swarm of child-size heads gliding down on outstretched flaps of skin. Sharp teeth protruded from their slack-jawed faces. Leading this flock are two larger free falling heads with protruding spines whipping behind them. The heads wail horribly as their faces suddenly rip open down the middle to form horrid wings and glide straight for the party!

Roll for initiative!

Due to shallow footing and loose rocks, any PCs fighting with two-handed weapons must attack rolling -1d on the dice chain. PCs that fumble their rolls may fall off the ledge unless a DC 13 Reflex save is rolled. PCs running along the narrow ledge or trying to swap positions with other PCs must succeed a DC 12 Agility check or risking falling off the ledge.

If the head-bats already attacked the party at **area B-2** there will be no encounter. The ledge slopes downward and rounds a bend where it widens into **area C-3**.

Cherub Head-Bats (6): Init: +0; Atk chomp +0 melee (1d3-1); AC 10; HD 1d4; hp 2; MV fly 30'; Act 1d20; SP un-dead traits, chew; SV Fort +1, Ref +1, Will +0; AL C.

Adult Head-Bats (2): Init: +1; Atk bite +1 melee (1d3) or spinal spear +1 melee (1d4); AC 10; HD 1d6+1; hp 4; MV fly 30'; Act 1d20; SP un-dead traits, impale; SV Fort +1, Ref +2, Will +0; AL C.

Area C-2 – Right Ledge

The narrow ledge leaves barely any room to walk and you must proceed in single file. Descending carefully around the rocky edge you hear a fluttering sound like wet parchment and the jingling of glass. Spiraling down from the sky are three severed child heads on outstretched flaps of skin. Tied and dangling from the horrid things are several small bottles, each with a burning strand of rope that feeds into them.

Roll for initiative!

Attached to these head-bats are small bottles filled with an explosive black powder. The PCs have 2 rounds to shoot the creatures down before they descend on the party. On the 3rd round the Head-Bats will explode causing 1d10 damage each (DC 13 Fort or Reflex save for half). Any PCs that survive the explosion will find a crevasse has opened in cliff side revealing **area 1-2**.

Due to shallow footing and loose rocks, any PCs fighting with two-handed weapons must attack rolling -1d on the dice chain. PCs that fumble their rolls may fall off the ledge unless a DC 13 Reflex save is rolled. PCs running along the narrow ledge or trying to swap positions with other PCs must succeed a DC 12 Agility check or risking falling off the ledge.

The ledge slopes downward and rounds a bend where it widens into **area C-3**.

Cherub Head-Bomb (3): Init: +0; Atk exploding bottles (1d10 + DC 13 Fort or Ref save for half); AC 10; HD 1d4; hp 2; MV fly 30'; SP un-dead traits, explosive; SV Fort +1, Ref +2, Will +0; AL C.

Area C-3 – Widened Ledge

Around the bend the ledge widens. You now face the back side of the rocky foundation, far below Ancient Keep. The once loud and present chanting now sounds faint and distant. High in night sky, between the moon's horns the red star blazes, growing ever wider. Set into the side of the rock is a rusted iron barred grate.

Grate: The rusted grate can be pried off with a successful DC 10 Strength check. Looking through the opening with a proper light source will show a 6ft square stone chute descending into a dungeon cell roughly 20ft below. In the center of the cell is a single wooden chair bolted to the floor with leather restraints attached to the arms and legs. Without a proper light source PCs will only see stone walls falling into darkness and have no knowledge of how deep it descends.

Climbing through the open grate and down the 20ft wall without the aid a rope, requires a DC 10 Strength check. Failure means a 20ft drop suffering 2d6 damage. PCs that believe they can climb the cliff to the tower (over 100ft) are delusional.



Area 1-1 – The Dungeon

A shaft of moonlight barely pierces the darkness of this small cell. In the center is a single wooden chair bolted to the floor with leather restraints attached to the arms and legs. A dark brown stain circles the chair. The cell door is shut and clinging to the center most bars is a putrid yellow phlem.

The cell door is locked (DC 10 pick locks).

Yellow Film: Long before the Necromancer inhabited this place these cells were simply used for holding prisoners. The chair bolted to the floor was placed by Balrothhariid and used to strip *pure* flesh from his victims as well as his own corrupted flesh.

The putrid yellow phlem that covers the bars is from his Corrupted Flesh which now haunts **areas 2-2 - 2-4**. The phlem is still wet and any PCs that touch it will find it to be acidic suffering 1 hp damage. Strangely, the acidic nature of this film burns *only* flesh.

Read or paraphrase the following when looking through the cell door with an adequate light source: *A narrow hall lined with four cell doors on either side extends for roughly 30ft. At the end of the hall is a stout iron banded wooden door. About 6ft from your cell door is a melted and mutilated form in tattered robes. A pool of gore and yellow phlem surround the slumped form. Beside it lies a dagger, a broken lantern, and a keyring.*

Keyring: Getting the keyring will require some finesse with a long weapon, or other similar item. There are four unique keys on the keyring: a large square cut iron key (unlocks all the doors in **area 1-1**), a long bronze key (unlocks all the doors in **areas 2-2 - 2-4**), a strange oval disc-shaped key (unlocks the false back to the wardrobe and secret door in **area 2-3**) and a heavy thick iron key (unlocks the wooden doors at the gate in **area D**).

Slumped Form: PCs inspecting the robes and slumped form will find the gore to be dry, but the yellow film still sticky. PCs touching the robes, dagger, or lantern must succeed a Luck check or suffer 1 hp of acidic damage from accidentally touching the yellow phlem.

All the remaining cell doors are unlocked and either contain skeletal remains or are empty. The stout wooden door at the end of the hall stands ajar. Beyond the door is a stairwell that ascends to the **area 2-1**. Elves, or other perceptive characters (Luck checks), will notice sparse droplets of yellow phlem (a couple drops every 5ft) leading from the door and up the stairs. Following the droplets will lead them into the Library (**area 2-2**).

Area 1-2 – Hidden Catacombs

The description that follows assumes the PCs find this area via the explosion at **area C-2**. If the party finds the secret door in **area 2-1**, change the description as needed.

Read or paraphrase the following: *Ears ringing and clothes scorched the black smoke finally clears. The cliff side is splattered with all manner of brains and blood. A charred skeleton slides out of a newly opened fissure, plummeting to the valley below. Looking inside, you spot other skeletal remains lying in carved alcoves. On a stone bier in the center lies a malformed skeleton.*

Exploring the catacombs will find that all the skeletal remains were once garbed in fine silks and furs that are now rot with age. There is 25gp worth of jewelry to be found among the dead.

Read or paraphrase the following when the PCs inspect the stone bier: *A deformed and misshaped skeleton lies wrapped in what were once fine furs and is crowned with a simply forged iron crown. Its bony fingers clutch the handle of a long sword with a hilt sculpted into the antlers of a stag. Carved into the steel are a series of runes.*

Sword of the King: The skeleton is that of old King Roulreed the Just; who met an ill fate at the hands of three warlock brothers. The runes carved into the steel are of a long forgotten tongue. A wizard's apprentice, or similar occupation, with a DC 13 Intelligence check can decipher the runes as: "*Silvallum, Blade of Roulreed, Slayer of the Yss'sak and King of the Eastern Wood.*" The sword has a +1 to all attacks and will glow faintly with the light of sun when near any chaotic aligned souls. The sword can also be used by the Lawful to *Turn Unholy* (see DCC-RPG rulebook p. 30)

Silvallum, relic, +1 longsword: Int 10; AL L; bane: Chaotic beings (+2 Atk against bane); communication: n/a; special purpose: destroy the silver medallion; special powers: glows faintly when near chaotic beings; improved crit range (19-20).

To the back of the catacombs is a narrow passage with steps that wind up to the backside of a secret door which exits into **area 2-1**.

Area 2-1 – Corridor

You enter a plain corridor constructed from smooth stone and mortar. To the right is a pair of double doors with bronze handles. To the left the corridor continues straight disappearing into the darkness. Hanging from the walls are several moth-eaten tapestries.

Double Doors: These doors are locked. The bronze key found in **area 1-1** will unlock the doors (DC 15 Strength to break, DC 12 pick lock).

Tapestries: Many of the tapestries have been worn down from centuries of neglect and age. Most are merely threads barely held together, but a few can be deciphered if studied with a keen eye. What follows are descriptions for each tapestry still intact:

1) *A portrait of a king with long locks of blonde hair like the mane of a lion. His trimmed beard hangs in curls and sitting upon his brow is a simple iron crown. The lettering is in an archaic script but can be read as: Roulreed, King of the Eastern Wood.*

2) *A portrait of a sad young woman with fair features. Black thread has been sewn over her eyes. The fabric that once held her name has been completely worn away.*

3) *This final tapestry has three panels. The first shows the King with three sages dressed in black robes who whisper secret counsel to his ear. The second panel shows the King and his army riding off to war with the three sages. The third panel shows the King surround by dead knights while the sages cast a spell upon him that corrodes his body.*

Other tapestries can be found throughout the Eastern Forest. Each tapestry tells a portion of the King Roulreed's story. Who wove the tapestries and what further prophecies they hold is for the Judge to decide. Perhaps the PCs will find themselves in one such tapestry.

Secret Door: Located behind the third tapestry is a false wall that leads down to the Hidden Catacombs (**area 1-2**). The mechanism to open the door is a faux brick at the bottom that flips in revealing a foot pedal. When the pedal is pressed the door unlocks swinging outward to reveal narrow steps winding into darkness. To find the door the players must state that they are searching that area of the corridor or succeed a DC 13 Intelligence check.

Collapsed Stairwell: There was once a stairwell at the end of the corridor leading up to **area 3-5** that is now a pile of rubble. Any PC that touches the pile will start an avalanche of stones, crushing anyone within 10ft (DC 13 Reflex save). A Dwarf, stone mason, or similar with a DC 10 Intelligence check will surmise that moving the stones could result in them falling.

After the first avalanche the PCs can spy a small opening that at the top. Anyone climbing the rubble must succeed a DC 12 Agility check or cause another avalanche that break-away even more of the structure. Anyone within 20ft must succeed a DC 13 Reflex save or be crushed. Afterwards the rubble will be save to climb.

Area 2-2 - Library

The double doors creak open revealing a wide octagonal room. Embedded in the center of the floor is a large metal plate. Bookshelves on the left side of the room are arranged in a semi-circle. The shelves appear to be filled with tightly wound scrolls, dusty books, bottles of various shapes containing a multitude of colorful fluids, bone fragments and other miscellaneous items.

On the right side of the room stands a long table cluttered with various items. Towards the back of the library red tinted light filters through a set of glass doors that bang open as the wind whips up from the valley.

Due to the shelves the PCs will not see the wooden door leading to **area 2-3** until they further explore the room.

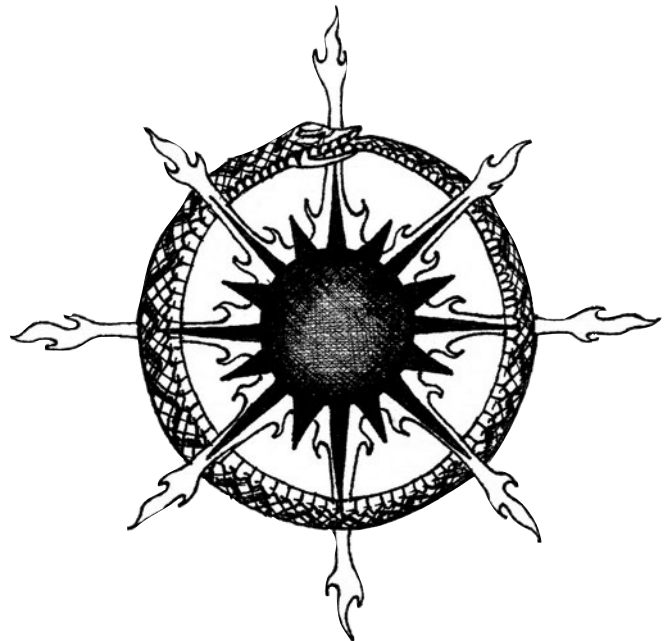
Corrupted Flesh: If found here, the Corrupted Flesh aimlessly wanders around; picking up and replacing books or scrolls in a mechanical fashion.

Metal Plate: This plate serves as a conduit for any souls emerging from the Soul Chamber (**area 2-5**) below. Carved on the plate is Balrothhariid's seal: *a dark sun and a serpent devouring itself as it swims between the rays of light.*

Dwarves, stone masons, or similar will note the plate was installed long after the keep was originally constructed. If any PCs decide to look at the ceiling while inspecting the metal plate they will spot the exact same metal plate attached to the ceiling, but angled towards the glass doors at the back of the library.

Shelves: Most of these items are not to be used lightly (if at all) by simple peasants from a farming village. Regardless of how many PCs search the shelves allow only 2 rolls total on the Library Items List (p. 12-13). After rolling twice on the table PCs will find the rest of the shelves contain nothing of value. Scrolls and books disintegrate to the touch. Bottles are either empty or contain nauseous potions. Judges are encouraged to roll for corruption, or kill off any foolish PCs that would consume such liquids or attempt to read from these ancient tomes.

Table: Among the items described below, allow PCs only 1 roll on the Library Items List (p. 12-13) when searching the table. Other items are as follows: *a wooden box with hinged lid, pieces of parchments written in a dark reddish-brown ink, quill and ink (blood), scraps of leather made from human flesh, large sewing needles, twine and many other fetishes of bone and feather.*



Wooden Box: The box has a simple hinge and no lock. Inside is a drying piece of flesh: a face with a scalp of raven hair still attached. All PCs would recognize the face as belonging to Belesa. The PC carrying the Love Letter must succeed a DC 15 Will save or permanently lose 1d3 Intelligence for such a ghastly discovery!

Parchment Pieces: The parchments are written in a dark reddish-brown ink and include several passages of interest (**Handout B**). If compared to the Love Letter (**Handout A**) players will discover they are both written in Belesa's hand. Reading from the parchments will reveal the following:

I became lost as I walked amongst the pines one evening, vaguely aware of the sweet song that beckoned me further. Soon I found myself deep below a cold stone structure and it was here I discovered a power that could be quelled no longer! A blade of suffering that gifts knowledge and release!

The disciples have been chosen. Though not willing at first, Atma-khanjr showed them the folly of their ways, guiding them to a glorious rebirth!

The swine must be gathered for the time of resurrection is nigh at hand! As the Horned Moon rises so will the Crimson Star fall! Bringing with it the dawning of a new era!

Leather Scraps: PCs inspecting the leather discover, to their disgust, the pieces of human flesh have been sewn together to form a "pair of pants." Vagrants of the party may wish to wear the flesh pants, which will provide +1 to their AC, but will fuse forever with their own flesh after 1 hour; resulting in a permanent -3 point Personality loss and the shunning of many folk.

Area 2-3 – Bedchamber

The room appears in disarray. Papers, candles and other items are scattered about the floor. To the right is a bed with a wooden frame carved into the likeness of great antlers. A dark wet stain of yellow phlem drips from the edge of the mattress. Hanging above the bed is a tattered tapestry.

On one side of the bed is a large wooden wardrobe and on the other side a night stand. Set into the opposite wall is a broad stone hearth in which hangs an iron cauldron.

On the far wall, faint moonlight filters through a small oval window just above a wooden desk where a chair has been knocked over. Wax remnants of burnt down candles cling to the flat surfaces throughout.

Corrupted Flesh: If found here, the Corrupted Flesh will be sitting on the bed "staring" at the fireplace. Yellow phlem drips down from where it sits to pile on the stone floor.

Bed: A crest carved into the head board depicts a regal stag. The bedding and hay are very old and a stain on the end of the mattress is soaking wet with yellow phlem (1 hp acidic damage if touched).

Tapestry: This tapestry is like the others found in **area 2-1**. It depicts a young man receiving a blade of shining light from a beautiful woman in flowing red robes. A slender gray tower stands behind them.

Nightstand: Burnt down candles drip over the edge, but otherwise there is nothing of interest.

If you are planning to run *Blights of the Eastern Forest* then sitting on the night stand may be a rolled up piece of goat skin. Unrolling the skin will reveal: *a weathered illustration of an ancient map. This map highlights the Keep and several locations within the surrounding forest.*

Hand a copy of the **Map of the Eastern Forest** (p. 32) to the PC who has made the discovery.

Wardrobe: The wardrobe houses moth-eaten robes, worn boots and a pouch with 3d10cp and 2d6sp. Checking behind the robes reveals a concave metal circle with indentations cut into it. Placing the disc-shaped key found in **area 1-1** and turning will open a false back revealing: two small vials, a pouch containing dried black lotus leaves and a scroll containing a randomly determined 1st level spell.

Inside both vials is a coarse black powder. Any PC with the appropriate occupation (i.e. alchemist, wizard's apprentice, etc) may with a DC 12 Intelligence check know the black powder is combustible and will deal 1d10 damage if lit.

Hearth: The cauldron contains a solidified slop. At the back of the hearth is a carved seal: *a dark sun and a serpent devouring itself as it swims between the rays of light*. Dwarves, stone masons or similar will note the plate was installed long after the keep was originally constructed.

Inspecting the seal closely will note indentations in the dark sun. Placing the disc-shaped key into the sun and turning will release a hidden mechanism that slides the entire seal away revealing a set of steep and narrow carved steps that spiral downward.

Desk: Read or paraphrase the following: *Candles, papers, writing feathers and more are either broken or scattered about the desk and floor as if there was previously a struggle. An open ledger catches your eye.*

If anyone inspects the ledger show them **Handout C** then read or paraphrase the following: *You pick up a ledger bound in dark brown leather engraved with a dark sun and a serpent devouring itself as it swims between the rays of light. Inside are pages upon pages of faded notes scrawled in a spidery hand. Flipping through you first notice the archaic speech; which is at first difficult to read. It is obvious these notes were written centuries ago.*

Reading from the ledger will reveal the following passages (**Handout D**):

THE CORRUPTED FLESH

A horror roams **areas 2-2 - 2-4**, the withered husk of corrupt flesh the Necromancer cut from himself for "fresh" skin. Magically infused, the Corrupted Flesh survived and reformed. Angered at being abandoned, the thing attempted to kill the Necromancer while he slept, but failed and was promptly locked away and the dungeon charmed against its escape. The charm's power faded over the long centuries, yet it remained until recently when a cultist ventured too far and awoke it. The thing escaped, sliding through the cell bars to consume the man; hoping it would become whole once again. Instead, the acidic fluids which it secretes (the putrid yellow phlem) melted flesh and bone alike until nothing was left except a pile of slop.

Later the Corrupted Flesh attacked Belesa in the bedchamber, but because it fears the dagger *Atma-khanjr* she managed to escape its grasp and ordered the stairwell (connecting **area 2-1** and **area 3-5**) sealed off. Now it continually wanders about, mimicking actions the Necromancer once performed (i.e. reading a book, sitting at a desk, etc) while leaving a subtle trail of yellow droplets wherever it goes.

When the PCs enter **area 2-2**, roll 1d3 to determine the whereabouts of the Corrupted Flesh: (1) Bedchamber, (2) Library, (3) Balcony. After every turn, roll again to see where the thing heads next until the PCs encounter it or leave the area.

The Corrupted Flesh appears as an extremely feeble bearded old man, completely nude with lumpy deformed skin covered in dripping sores. Being only a husk of hollow skin, it has no eyes and cannot see nor hear, but can sense heat and therefore will detect warm bodies or torches. It generates no heat itself and cannot be seen with infravision. Unless the party is intently listening for anything (Luck checks) they will not hear the quiet shuffling of the Corrupted Flesh which will creep upon them in a surprise attack.

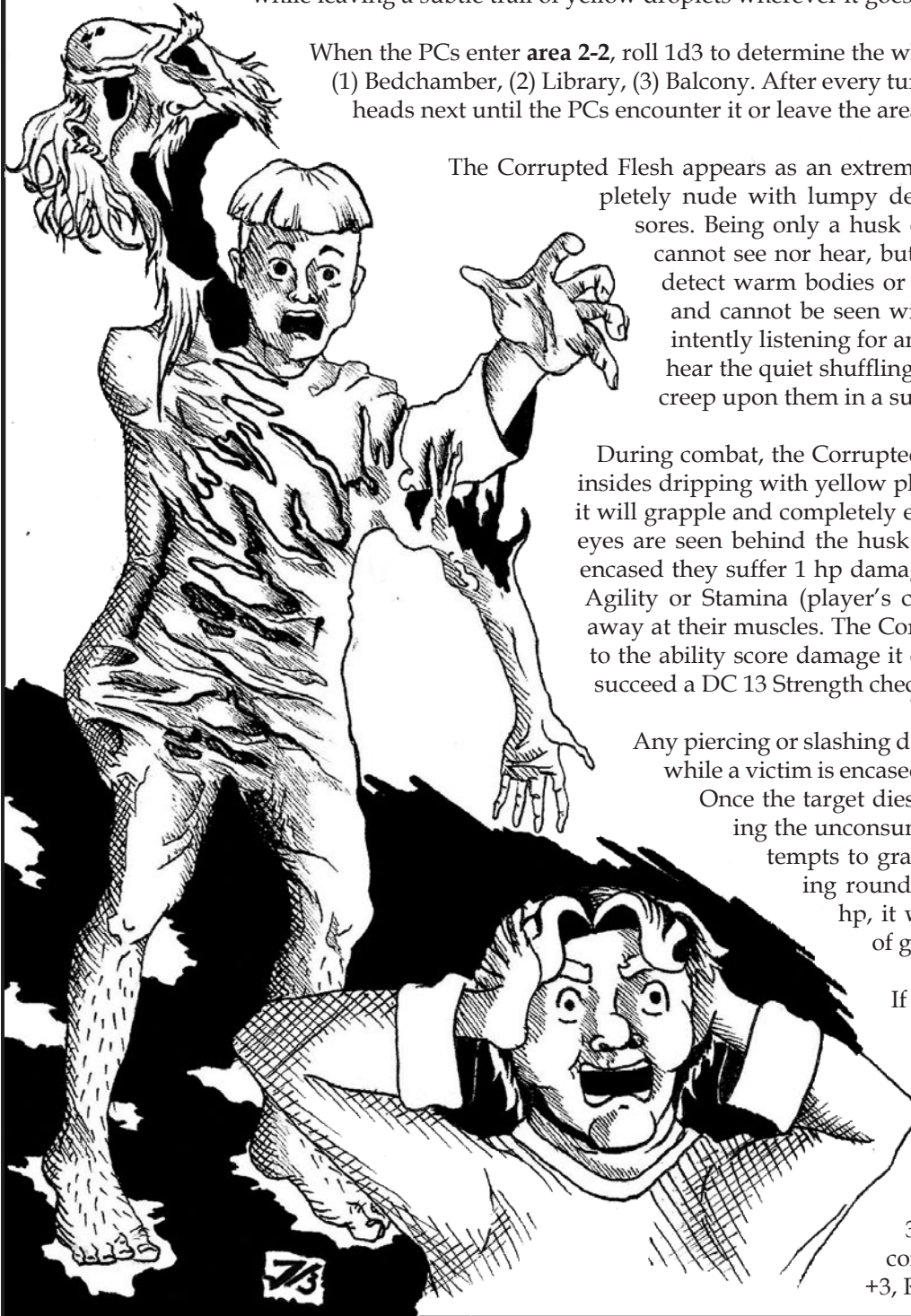
During combat, the Corrupted Flesh splits itself open, revealing insides dripping with yellow phlem. Upon a successful attack roll it will grapple and completely encased its victim so that only their eyes are seen behind the husk of flesh. Each round the target is encased they suffer 1 hp damage plus a permanent 1d3 Strength, Agility or Stamina (player's choice) loss as the acidic film eats away at their muscles. The Corrupted Flesh regenerates hp equal to the ability score damage it causes. To escape, the victim must succeed a DC 13 Strength check.

Any piercing or slashing damage dealt to the Corrupted Flesh while a victim is encased will be split evenly between both.

Once the target dies the monster will split open, spilling the unconsumed remains onto the floor as it attempts to grapple another target on the following round. If the Corrupted Flesh reaches 0 hp, it will dissolve into a disgusting pile of gore only to regenerate in 2d4 turns.

If a PC survives being consumed they must succeed a DC 15 Fort save or suffer a bout of Minor Corruption.

Corrupted Flesh: Init +3; Atk consume +2 melee (see special); AC 10; HD 2d10+10; hp 20; MV 30'; Act 1d20; SP un-dead traits, consumption, regeneration; SV Fort +3, Ref +1, Will +1; AL C.



LIBRARY ITEMS LIST

Have the PCs roll 1d6 to determine what item(s) is discovered while searching either the shelves or table in Area 2-2.

1. *You pick up a glass decanter containing a slimy phallic thing that wriggles slightly; stirring up bubbles amidst the noxious fluid.*

If this fluid is consumed, the character's veins will bulge as their muscles grow into absurdity and their skin takes on a leathery grayish quality. A successful DC 15 Fort save must be made or the physical stress of the change is too much and they continue to bloat into a hulking lifeless blob of quivering muscle and blood.

The potion increases the drinker's Strength 1d4+1 points for 6 rounds. After the potion wears off, the character's body returns to normal except they'll forever have folds of loose gray leathery skin (-1 to Personality).

2. *A gold medallion covered with strange inscriptions catches your eye. Embedded in the center is a bright orange jewel that shines and flickers as if made of flames.*

This medallion is called The Eye of the E'linbub and is used to summon creatures from the pits of Hell. If the medallion is put on before speaking the right incantation, a circle of flames will erupt around the wearer and several ossified demonic arms will reach out to drag them down to Hell! There is no escape from this fate and once the last of the wearer is engulfed, the portal will close, leaving only the medallion in the center of a burnt circle.

(Note: It would take months if not years to figure out the right incantation; though legend states there is a half-breed desert dweller whose mother was a succubus and father a sultan who may possibly be able to decipher the piece.)

3. *You pick up a book bound in black feathers clasped shut with a small silver hinge. It shakes violently in your hands.*

Opening the book will release a torrent of black crows that cause havoc for 1d4 rounds. The crows swirl around the book in a diameter of approx 20ft. Anyone within range must succeed a DC 13 Reflex save each round or suffer 1 point of damage from the birds tearing beaks and talons. After the last round, the birds will return to the book and it will clasp shut on its own accord. The Wrook (p. 52) may trade (or kill) for this book...

4. You discover a hefty scroll bound with an unbroken wax seal imprinted with unusual hieroglyphs. The first glyph shows a nude woman standing before a dog-headed figure with outstretched wings. The second depicts the dog-headed figure wrapping its wings tightly around the woman in a strong embrace.

If anyone breaks the wax seal, read or paraphrase the following:

The scroll unravels and wraps tightly around you! You scream out, but your voice turns to a dry rasp as your life force is drained. The wrappings encase your head to toe and you fall limp to the floor.

Unless the PC succeeds a DC 18 Fort save they will have succumbed to the effects described and perish. Others peeling off the wrappings find them to be sticky and upon unraveling them discover a dried mummified corpse.

If the save was successful the PC temporarily loses 1d4 Stamina points for 1 week, however 1 point is never fully recovered.

5. A crystal ball shimmers and catches your eye. When you stare into it a vision appears... You're looking down upon yourself standing on a plane of endless blue and white squares. Suddenly, a gigantic hand picks up your paralyzed form and places you beside a ghastly beast made of stone, yet painted to appear real. There's a tremendous rumbling as enormous geometric shapes slam down around you! One of the shapes reveals a single digit and a thunderous moan echoes from the heavens. The bestial form moves knocking you prone as a blanket of darkness covers your eyes and the vision fades. Coming to you find yourself on the floor, mind reeling, as the realization that your entire life and world are meaningless, only the playthings of cruel omnipotent beings!

PCs must succeed a DC 15 Will save or suffer a permanent 1d4 Intelligence loss.

6. You find a plain iron lantern. Glowing from within is a continuously swirling cloud of green gas.

The lantern produces a green-tinted light source of up to 10ft. If any curious PCs open the lantern they will be struck with a foul stench and any character within 5ft must succeed a DC 10 Fort save or temporarily lose 1 point of Stamina and collapse for 1d3 rounds.

After the initial escape of gas, an imp rockets out of the lantern, propelled by its flatulence to hide amongst the shadows of the ceiling. Every couple of minutes a demonic poot escapes accompanied by a faint glow. If the imp can be captured and placed back into the lantern it will resume its glowing within several minutes.



A waking dream whilst under the influence of the black lotus hath revealed strange realms where the people both worshiped and feared me as their god! I know this was no dream, but a vision! I must find a means of transcending to these... Other Worlds.

It seems I have discovered a use for those farmers in the village West of here. Their flesh is not tainted and mine corrupt... a thing dreadful to behold. In order to continue my work I must be rid of it.

Though I cut away the foul flesh; the horrid thing still lives! Last night it attacked me whilst I slept and try as I might there appears to be no means of destroying it. Fire does little to harm it and in time it will grow anew. Therefore I have locked it away in the dungeons where it will must surely rot over the long centuries.

The chamber below is nearly complete and my precious instrument, my blade Atma-khanjr, forged of my soul, you will be my anchor. Soon many will know and fear the name Balrothhariid!

If PCs have yet to encounter the Corrupted Flesh, now would be an opportune moment.

Area 2-4 – Balcony

The glass doors swing inward. A balcony, its stone railings half fallen away, looks out over the horizon and the valley below. A large metal plate identical to the one in the library is embedded on the balcony floor and angled out towards the sky.

A couple of startled head-bats take flight from the railings into the open night sky where the Crimson Star is a swirling torrent of flames bathing the land in red. Watching the head-bats flight you notice candlelight flickering from an open window some twenty feet above.

Corrupted Flesh: If found here, the Corrupted Flesh is standing by the balcony railing “looking” over the horizon.

Again, players will note the plate was installed long after the keep was constructed. The climb to the window is fairly easy with a grappling hook and rope (DC 10 Agility check to secure), otherwise PCs must succeed a DC 10 Strength check; failure means a 10ft fall to the balcony taking 1d6 damage, or if Judge is feeling ruthless a deadly fall to the valley below.

Area 2-5 – Soul Chamber

Show **Handout E** to the players then read or paraphrase the following: *The narrow stairs lead into a circular shaped chamber dug out of the living stone. Large chunks of translucent rock clutter the floor. In the center two metal arms, hands open with palms up, protrude from a raised platform.*

A brass ring set into the floor encircles the arms with eight brass lines pointing out up the walls. Each line terminates

in an arrow pointing towards a large metal plate set into the ceiling.

This chamber was constructed by Balrothhariid in order to split his soul and transcend from this realm to the Other Worlds. The dagger *Atma-khanjr* was also forged in this chamber from a sliver of the Necromancer’s soul as he transcended.

Crystal Chunks: Inspecting the crystal chunks with a clever eye (DC 13 Intelligence check) will find bits of bone embedded inside. It is impossible to determine their origin and breaking the crystal will only shatter the bone fragments further.

Activating the Soul Chamber: Anyone who stands on the center platform and places both hands on the open metal palms will activate the chamber. Read or paraphrase the following:

The metal fingers quickly tighten, digging into the tops of your hands, as a magical fire erupts around the brass ring encircling the platform. The flames appear to warp the very fabric of your being before crystallizing and encases you. A blinding kaleidoscopic beam of light flashes out from the crystal to splash against the metal plate embedded above as a howling hurricane of screams fills the chamber. The crystal abruptly bursts; sending fragments flying in all directions!

Anyone in **area 2-2** above will see the same rainbow beam exit the metal plate on the floor, bounce off the angled plate on the ceiling and exit through the glass doors to bounce off the metal plate on the balcony and finally into space. Anyone standing in the way of the rainbow beam must succeed a DC 20 Fort save or instantly disintegrate. Anyone in the room when the crystal shatters must succeed a DC 13 Reflex save or suffer 1d3 damage.

The soul of the PC that activated the chamber has transcended to another realm completely and only fragments of their bones embedded inside the crystal shards remain. For all intensive purposes they are dead.

Area 3-1 – Discard Room

Candles burn poorly on the window seal and as you climb through your senses are assailed by the hot stagnant air of death. The floor is covered in scattered bits of body parts and intestines. An endless sea of flies swirl over the putrid carnage.

Across this blood soaked room is a closed wooden door and from beyond you here a muffled scream emanate, “No! Gods, no!” Followed by a harsher voice, “Shh... Quiet now. Enjoy your becoming. Your purpose has been set. You are to aid in the master’s arrival.”

The door is bolted shut from the other side and none of the keys found in **area 1-1** will work (DC 13 Strength to break/ DC 10 pick lock). Failure to open or unlock the door on the first attempt results in the Butcher Cultist swinging the door

open and surprising the party.

The Butcher Cultist is a burly brute of a man with a chaos sigil branded into his forehead. His white robes are filthy and blood stained, not only from the skinning of villagers, but from his own lack of flesh. Large exposed muscles coil and bulge under his robes.

On a successful attack with his skinning knife, the target suffers 1d4 damage. The Butcher Cultist then rolls 1d3 and if the result is a 3 he has also flayed a piece of flesh off the target who permanently loses 1 point of Stamina.

If successfully attacking with his bare hands, the target suffers 1d3+1 damage. The Butcher Cultist then rolls 1d3 and if the result is a 3 the target suffers a permanent 1 point loss of Strength or Agility (player's choice) as the Butcher Cultist snaps their bones like twigs.

Butcher Cultist: Init +1, Atk skinning knife +2 melee (1d4 + flaying) or fists +3 melee (1d3+1 + break bones); AC 12; HD 2d8+2; hp 10; MV 30'; Act 1d20; SP flaying, break bones; SV Fort +3, Ref +0, Will +1; AL C.

Area 3-2 – Flaying Room

Once the engagement with the Butcher Cultist has ended, read or paraphrase the following: *Flickering candle light dimly illuminates the macabre scene as an onslaught of flies buzz about, emphasizing the stench of the drying flesh that hangs from cords strung wall to wall.*

Chained nearby are three nude villagers. Their clothing lies scattered about the room. On the far wall are poorly constructed tables covered in scraps of flesh, gore and twine. In the center of each wall is an open passageway from which chanting faintly resonates.

Saving the Villagers: The key to unlock the chained villagers hangs from a leather cord tied around the Butcher Cultist's neck (DC 15 Strength break chains/DC 10 pick lock). The villagers can be used to replenish any PCs the players have lost in the course of this adventure. The players should roll up new 0-level characters per the standard rules (see DCC-RPG rulebook p.16); however, the new PCs will have no weapons, equipment or coin unless they succeed a Luck check for each category in question (Judge's discretion).

Sewing Tables: Searching the tables will find scraps of human flesh sewn together, a roughly drawn diagram of how to craft head-bats and 2 pairs of rusty shears that deal 1d3 damage.

Area 3-3 – Cultists Quarters

Piles of bloodstained hay and ragged blankets cover the stone floor. The rotting stench of death hangs heavy in the air.

Here is where the cultists have dwelt. There is nothing of value in this room.

Area 3-4 – Witch's Chamber

A short corridor leads to a battered wooden door that barely hangs from the hinges. Beyond is a messy chamber with makeshift furniture. A sweet choir of babbling baby noises comes from the open window as a grotesque thing squeezes itself through the hole!

This horrid creature seems to be a fusion of several children rolled into one ghastly ball of rolling eyes and mouths that each squeal and cry and whine at once as it floats through the air like a buoy in water.

This disgusting fusion of heads and limbs is able to attack multiple targets by rolling -1d for each target flanking it starting with 1d20. Listening to its multitude of noises is enough to induce temporary insanity and any PCs within earshot must succeed a DC 10 Will save or suffer madness for 1d3 rounds. Maddened characters suffer a -1d penalty to their attack rolls and can only move at half their speed.

When the creature is destroyed its body spontaneously breaks apart in magical bursts. PCs within 10ft must succeed a DC 10 Fort save or suffer Minor Corruption (see DCC-RPG rulebook p.116).

Cherub Fusion: Init +0, Atk bite +1 melee (1d4), AC 10; HD 4d4; hp 15; MV 15'; Act 1d20; SP un-dead traits, flanking attacks, induces madness, death throes; SV Fort +0, Ref -2, Will +0; AL C.

A thorough search of the room will reveal soiled and blood stained clothes that once belonged to Belesa. In one corner of the room are chunks of dried scraps of flesh from her own self flaying. If the box with her face from **area 2-2** wasn't found it can be retrieved here.

Area 3-5 – South Corridor

The corridor is dark, the chanting faint, but the drumming echoes down the stone passages, pounding against the beating of your heart. The passage splits three ways.

Heading straight leads the to the collapsed stairwell. Both the left and right passages gradually slope upwards and eventually lead to **area D**.

Heading left, the PCs will encounter the ghostly apparition of Sir Anatos, a knight who served King Roulreed until the King's untimely demise and thereafter swore a new vow to protect the King's Tomb and his keep. The magical forces currently surrounding the keep have brought the knight's spirit back into the realm of the living. Read or paraphrase the following:

As the party approaches a disembodied voice shouts, "Slay-ers! Ravagers! Begone with thee," before the faint form of an old knight in half plate armor, emblazoned with the crest of a regal stag, shimmers into being. Without warning the ghost swings at you with a glowing blue mace!

If the PCs present *Silvillum*, the Sword of King Roulreed, the knight will kneel saying, "My Liege! Forgive me! I knew not it was you." PCs can try to convince the knight to fight with them on a DC 12 Personality check, otherwise the phantom fades away. PCs fleeing the ghost knight will only be chased by rebukes concerning their valor and courage.

Ghost of Sir Anatos: Init +2; Atk phantom mace +2 melee (1d6 + 1d3 Stamina drain); AC 15; HD 2d12; hp 12; MV 30'; un-dead traits, immune to non-magical weapons; SV Fort +1, Ref +3, Will +3.

Area D - Courtyard

Here begins the climactic battle and a race against time! After the 1st round has passed, the PCs have a total of 6 rounds (see **Ritual Countdown** on page 18) to defeat the witch and stop the resurrection of Balrothariid (see **Stopping the Ceremony** on page 19).

You emerge from the corridor below to the sky ablaze. A swirling torrent of crimson flames that slowly descends towards the Keep's largest standing tower. As your eyes adjust, a terrible scene unfolds! Severed limbs, intestines, and mutilated body parts lay in strewn in a crude circle. Eight cultists, dressed in bloodstained robes, chant and sway, or pound on drums of stretched human flesh. In their hands-jagged blades gleam menacingly in chaotic red light.

From atop the highest tower a figure stops. With dripping muscles glistening she points a wavy edged dagger towards you and croaks through the sliced mouth of her human face mask, "INFIDELS! Watch as your petty world burns! Disciples! Show them the power of the flesh!"

The robed fiends turn, staring at you through macabre face-masks of villagers you once knew. In unison they raise and run their blades across their throats. As the blood gushes from their severed jugulars they drop to their knees and as if magnetically pulled slither towards the ghastly quivering pile of body parts to form a repulsive shambling obese shape! This new horror wobbles towards you on multiple hands and feet as eight whipping entrails lash about wildly!

Roll for initiative!

The Shambling Flesh Mass is a demonic fusion of whatever loose body parts and organs were around at the time of its summoning. The creature's eight whipping entrails are positioned around the circumference of its body and reach roughly 30ft in all directions.

Any target hit by one of these entrails is automatically entangled; suffering a temporary 1d3 Stamina loss by strangulation. The target suffers another temporary 1d3 Stamina loss each round until either the entrails are severed (AC 10, hp 2) or they break free (DC 12 Strength check). The entrails can only be severed by edged weapons and will grow back after 1 round. Any loss of entrails reduces the creature's action dice until it regenerates the loss.





Any target held by the entrails for 2 rounds has been slowly dragged towards one of the creature's makeshift maws of broken and jagged bones and begins taking bite damage. On the following round the target may attempt a DC 13 Strength check to break loose or be bitten each round until the check is made, they are rescued, or killed.

Shambling Flesh Mass: Init: -1; Atk entrails +2 melee (-1d3 Stamina) or bite -1 melee (1d6); AC 8 (body) AC 11 (entrails); HD 4d10 (body); hp 20 (body); hp 2 (entrails); MV 10'; Act 8d20; SP regeneration of entrails, un-dead traits; SV Fort +1, Ref -3, Will +0; AL C.

On the tower, the Witch (Belesa) will lob *magic missiles* (in the form of fiery serpents) at the party before stepping into the pool of blood on the following round (see **Ritual Countdown** p. 18)

Area E-1 – Tower Steps

The red light of the falling star burns through the cracks and crevasses of this decaying facade where the rotten wooden beams seem barely capable of holding the structure up. Steps set into the wall spiral 60ft to the battlements above.

PCs can only ascend the steps in single file. The first PC to make it halfway up must succeed a DC 12 Reflex save as the brittle stone stairs crumble away. A failure indicates a fall suffering 3d6 damage. Any PC behind the falling character can make a one time DC 15 Agility check to successfully catch them by the scruff of their neck, but now must spend the following round pulling them back to the safety of the steps. Afterwards any PCs can easily jump the gap and continue to the tower's top.

Area E-2 – Tower Battlements

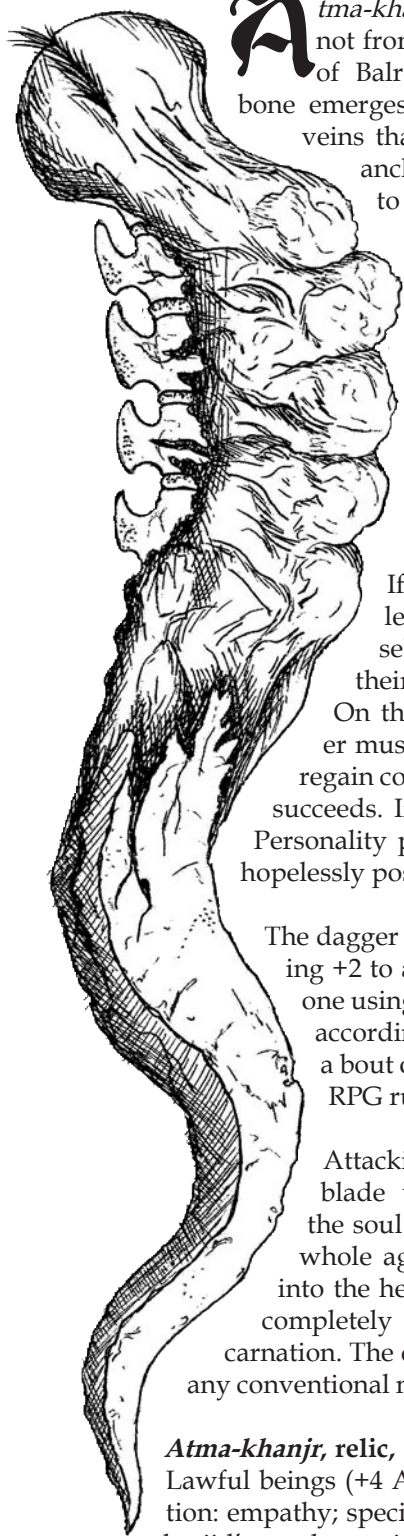
Judges should paraphrase the following description according to the current round via the **Ritual Countdown**: *The enormous red star slowly descends upon the tower! Eight impaled villagers, the flesh torn from their bodies, squirm in agonizing pain as their combined blood pools at the center.*

The flayed woman stares with bright jade colored eyes through the horrid mask of some poor man's face. Wisps of raven hair still cling to her scalped head. Grasped tightly in her hand is a peculiar wavy blade of flesh and bone.

Belesa, the once beautiful village girl from Reed, has been corrupted by the power of the Necromancer's dagger *Atma-khanjr* and believes she will become the next incarnation of Balrothhariid when the ritual is complete. Unless the PCs are overly cautious Belesa casts *magic missile* at the first character emerging from the tower before initiative is rolled.

Belesa (the Witch): Init +3; Atk *Atma-khanjr* +2 melee, +4 melee against bane (1d4+2); AC 11; HD 3d6+2; hp 16; MV 30'; Act 1d20; SP spell +4: *magic missile*, *summon head-bats* (1/day, 1d4+4 head-bats arrive on the following round); SV Fort +1, Ref +2, Will +4; AL C.

THE DAGGER



Atma-khanjr is a powerful relic, forged not from steel, but from the very soul of Balrothhariid. Its wavy blade of bone emerges from a sleeve of flesh with veins that pulse and quiver. It is the anchor that ties the Necromancer to this world.

Being an extension of Balrothhariid, it possesses a high intelligence and a will of its own. PCs wielding the dagger in combat must roll a Will save according to their alignment (see table below) every 1 round + Personality mod or attack an ally.

If there is no ally within melee range they will harm themselves; stripping away pieces of their flesh (-1d4 Personality loss). On the following round, the wielder must succeed another Will save to regain control or continue until the save succeeds. If the wielder loses half their Personality points in this fashion they are hopelessly possessed by the blade.

The dagger can be used as a wand providing +2 to all spell checks; however, anyone using it thus must make a Fort save according to their alignment or suffer a bout of Minor Corruption (see DCC-RPG rulebook p. 116).

Attacking the Necromancer with the blade will deal double damage as the soul within the blade desires to be whole again. If the dagger is plunged into the heart of the Necromancer it will completely drain the soul, killing the incarnation. The dagger cannot be destroyed by any conventional means conceived on this world.

Atma-khanjr, relic, +2 dagger: Int 18; AL C; bane: Lawful beings (+4 Atk against bane); communication: empathy; special purpose: anchor for Barothhariid's soul; special powers: possession (alignment DC Will save), improved crit range (18-20), soul drain (-1d3 Personality on crit), increased spell check +2 (alignment DC Fort save or minor corruption).

RITUAL COUNTDOWN

On the tower, the witch (Belesa) will continue the ritual which at this point only requires her presence. It takes 6 rounds (starting 1 round *after* the PCs enter Area D) to complete the ceremony, enables Balrothhariid's return. The descriptions below should be adjusted depending on the events that unfold each round and according to what the PCs see or hear at the time.

Round 1: *The Witch (Belesa) steps into the pool of blood which begins to boil.*

Round 2: *The impaled villagers begin to twitch violently and scream in unison as rays of eldritch light shoot out from their eyes and mouths; drawing the swirling red star closer.*

Round 3: *The Witch (Belesa) laughs maniacally as the crimson flames descend upon the tower. The roaring winds threaten to deafen you if they don't blow you away first! Pieces of the ancient structure break away to join the torrent of flames.*

Round 4: *The blood bubbles wildly as it crawls up her naked frame. Her laughter is echoed by a deeper and menacing masculine laugh that appears to come from within the swirling flames that slowly shrinks towards the center of the tower.*

Oppressing winds swirl around the tower! All PCs must roll -1d when attempting any actions and -2d for ranged weapons. Any PCs that fumble are blown off the tower and land in the courtyard suffering 4d6 falling damage.

Round 5: *Suddenly the Witch's (Belesa's) composure changes and she cries out in agony! Her legs smoke as the creeping blood eats away at the muscles. She buckles, falling into the muck!*

All PCs must now roll -2d when attempting any actions, -3d for ranged weapons. Any PCs that fumble are blown off the tower and land in the courtyard suffering 4d6 falling damage. Belesa's AC is reduced to 10; she will continue to fight.

Round 6: *The swirling fire dislodges the impaled villagers, sending them flying high into the air. The Witch (Belesa) looks at you with pleading eyes as the blood slowly creeps over her face. The menacing laughter from the red flames echoes all around.*

All PCs must continue to roll -2d when attempting any actions, -3d for ranged weapons. Any PCs that fumble are blown off the tower and land in the courtyard suffering 4d6 falling damage.

Alignment	Law	Neutral	Chaos
DC	10	12	15

STOPPING THE CEREMONY

To achieve this, the PCs can either kill Belesa, drag her from of the boiling pool of blood *before* the end of Round 6, or show the possessed girl her own face from the wooden box found in **area 2-2** *before* the start of Round 5.

Dragging Belesa from the boiling pool of blood: PCs must succeed a contested Strength check (+3 for Belesa's rolls) as the boiling blood will cling to her body and pull against the characters. Any number of PCs present can assist by adding their Strength modifiers to the roll. Belesa, still possessed, will continue to lash out with the dagger.

Showing Belesa her face from the box: Belesa must succeed a DC 15 Will save in order to free herself from the dagger's possession. The PC presenting the face can use their positive Personality or Luck modifiers lower the DC. If successful, this stops the ritual as there is no longer a human anchor for the necromancer's soul. Belesa will instantly begin to wail as the pain from her exposed muscles is no longer numbed by dark magic. She has no idea where she is or what has transpired.

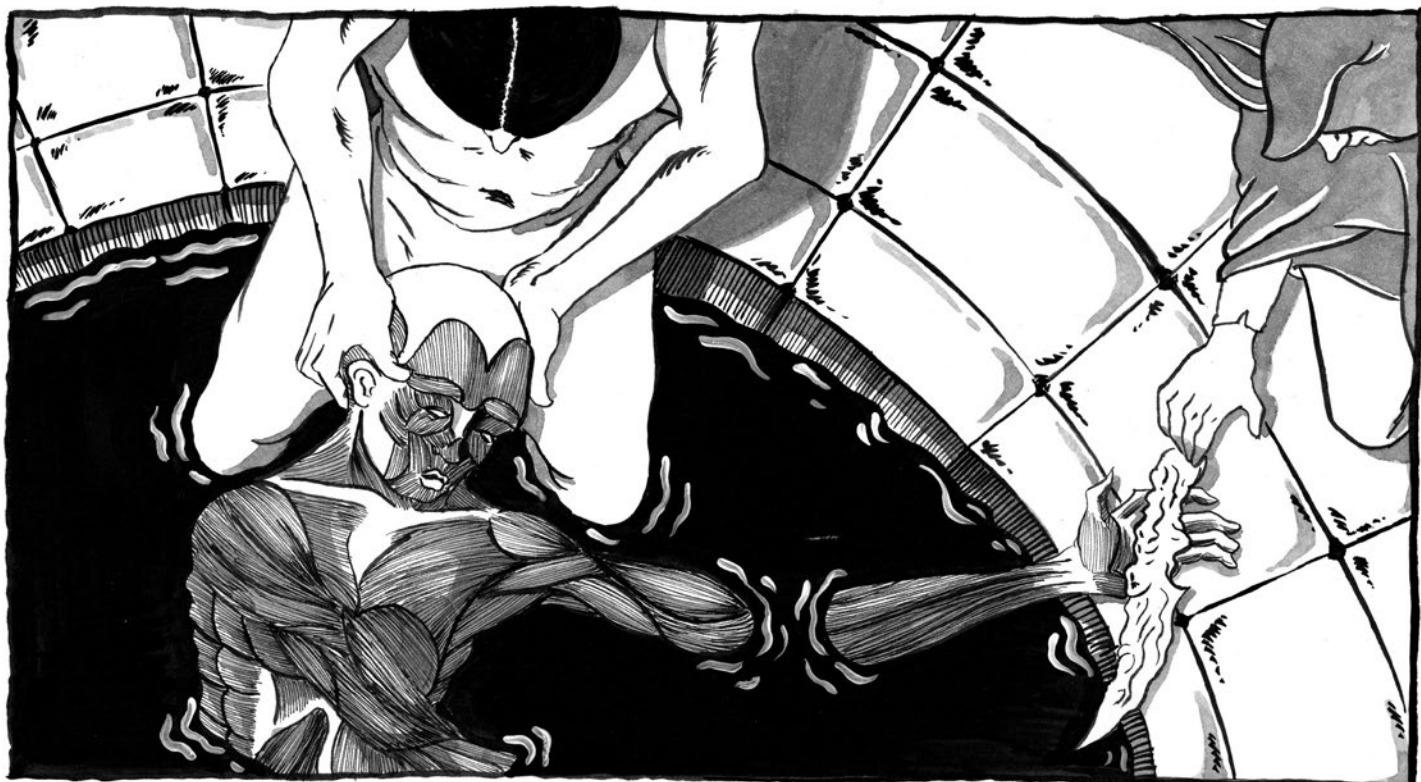
In many play-tests the players noticed the strange light projecting from the impaled villages was reeling the Crimson Star closer and attempted to knock them down (DC 10 STR) or kill those impaled. If this happens reward them by adding 1 more round to the Ritual Countdown for every 2 impaled villagers knocked away.

If the ceremony is stopped, read or paraphrase the following: *A disembodied scream of anguish echoes from the swirling star of eldritch red flames which fizzles out completely revealing a beautifully clear night sky.*

To any PC near Belesa, read or paraphrase the following: *Belesa looks at you, tears streaming down her flayed face. "Where... Where am I? My... my face! Where's [PC with Love Letter]?" The light fades from her jade colored eyes as a final breath escapes her lungs. Slipping from her grip, the strange wavy edged blade clatters on the hard stone.*

The PCs may not have saved her life, but they saved her soul. Reward them with 1d3 Luck points. If any PC picks up the dagger see **Picking up the Blade** on the next page.

If the ceremony isn't stopped by the end of Round 6 read or paraphrase the following: *Thick black blood edges around her neck. Her cries of pain become inaudible gurgles as the steaming fluid fills her mouth and covers her entirely. She collapses, splashing into the pool. The crimson flames swirl faster and faster, expanding in a thunderous boom that splits the tower asunder and sends you all flying! Brilliant flashes of blinding light strobe all around and there's suddenly a sense of weightlessness. The last thing you hear is deep echoing laughter.*



Memo 76

THE NEXUS BETWEEN WORLDS

All the characters have been sucked into the Nexus between their Realm and the Other Worlds that Balrothhariid has traveled. Their presence disrupted the ritual causing a phlogiston disturbance which opened the Nexus as well as parallel worlds and time lines that have now collided causing unforeseen events.

Each round, roll 1d20 on the **Nexus Disturbance Table** (page 22) to discover what happens while in the Nexus. This is the characters last chance at stopping the Necromancer.

Read or paraphrase the following: *You're suddenly flung across a flat circular plane of stone surrounded by a swirling miasma of atrocious colors. Horrified, you stare as a shape emerges from the bubbling pool at the center of the plane. The shape forms into a tall, long limbed, muscular man with oily midnight black skin. His terrible eyes gleam with malice and demoniac exultation. Licking at his brow is a crown of red flames.*

His hand grips the wavy edged blade you last saw the witch (Belesa) wield. In a voice dripping with malice he declares, "Slaves... Kneel before your new god, Balrothhariid!"

Roll for initiative!

This incarnation of Balrothhariid is 7ft tall and attacks with the dagger, *Atma-khanjr*, either in melee or using a power called *dagger missile*. When using *dagger missile* Balrothhariid sends his dagger flying through the air: roll 1d20+1d3. The d20 determines the AC hit while the d3 determines the number of PCs (determined randomly) hit within that AC range. Afterwards the dagger returns to the hand of its master. PCs may use their round (if after the Necromancer's) in an attempt to grab the dagger in mid flight (DC 15 Agility check). Grabbing the dagger will result in a Will save (see **The Dagger** on p. 18).

Balrothhariid can also cast the following spells with a +4 modifier: *force manipulation* (DCC-RPG p. 143), *magic missile* (DCC-RPG p. 144) and *splinter souls* (p. 21).

Nexus Platform: The top of the tower came into the nexus with the characters. It is a circular stone platform roughly 30' in diameter. Anyone falling off the platform will merge with the sea of swirling chaos that surrounds them, never to be seen again.

Balrothhariid: Init +2; Atk *Atma-khanjr* +2 melee, +4 melee against bane (1d4+2) or spell; AC 13; HD 5d6+5; hp 35; MV 30'; Act 1d20/1d14; SP spells +4: *dagger missile*, *force manipulation*, *magic missile*, *splinter souls*, half damage from fire; SV Fort +3, Ref +2, Will +4; AL C.

If the Necromancer is defeated, read or paraphrase the following: *The final blow opens a wound that drips with liquid fire. He staggers back, erupting into a fiery whirlwind of crimson screaming, "I WILL RETURN!"*

The whirlwind continues to expand as you're flung high into the air! Lights flare before your eyes and suddenly you're racked against cold unforgiving stone. Dawn breaks, casting warm sunlight over the rubble of the Ancient Keep, its largest tower crumbled. A clattering breaks the silence and just out of reach is that accursed blade of flesh and bone.

Picking up the Blade: If any PCs handle the dagger, read or paraphrase the following: *A sensation runs up your arm like fire. Emotions of lust, anger, and hatred radiate like waves through you as you feel the weapon's craving for blood and souls. It beckons for its true master, calling into the void, and though you dread to believe it, deep down you know that somewhere out there he returns the call...*

To be concluded in... **Seekers of the Other Worlds**



Splinter Souls

Level: 3

Range: Touch

Duration: Varies

Casting Time: 1 round

Save: Will vs check

General: With an open palm touch a necromancer can splinter the soul of one target. The caster must spellburn at least 1 point when casting this spell. On a successful casting, the wizard may choose to invoke any effect of equal to or less than his spell check, allowing a range of options with every successful casting to produce a weaker but potentially more useful result. Upon the caster's death all temporary Personality points drained in a previous combat session will return to the victim.

Manifestation: Roll 1d4: (1) from the caster's hands ejects a physical ripple through the fabric of reality that sends the target flying in the opposite direction; (2) the caster's hands take on a phantom appearance as they reach through the target's chest and pull out an egg of golden light which is then smashed in the caster's palm; (3) the caster releases a siren wail of brightly colored circular sound waves that ripple over the victim; (4) the caster raises his hands as if conducting a symphony, the target's soul flies from their mouth as the caster directs it to smash against a nearby hard surface.

Corruption: Roll 1d8: (1) the caster's body withers until it has a skeletal appearance; (2) the caster's eyes, the window of the soul, dissolve so that only black pits remain; (3) an aura of darkness forever surrounds the caster, sucking in all light; (4-5) minor corruption; (6-7) major corruption; (8) greater corruption.

Misfire: Roll 1d3: (1) ghostly shards erupt in front of caster causing 1d3 Personality damage; (2) the soul resists and lashes back at the caster dealing 1d4 Personality damage; (3) the spell backfires splintering a piece of the caster's soul causing 1d4+2 Personality damage.

- | | |
|-------|---|
| 1 | Lost, failure, and worse! Roll 1d6: (1-2) corruption + misfire, (3-4) corruption, (5-6) misfire. |
| 2-11 | Lost. Failure. |
| 12-13 | The caster splinters an eighth of the target's soul. The target temporarily loses -1 Personality points. |
| 14-17 | The caster splinters a sixth of the target's soul. The target temporarily loses -1d3 Personality points. |
| 18-19 | The caster splinters a fourth of the target's soul. The target temporarily loses -1d6 Personality points and must succeed a DC 10 Will save before they may take an action on the following round. If this results in all the target's Personality points being lost the target begins the next round prone. |
| 20-23 | The caster splinters half of the target's soul. The target temporarily loses -1d8 Personality points and the target must succeed a DC 13 Will save in order to move again. If this results in all the target's Personality points being lost the target begins the next round prone. |
| 24-27 | The caster shatters three-fourths of the target's soul. The target temporarily loses -1d10 Personality points, begins the next round prone and must succeed a DC 15 Will save in order to move again. Additionally, the caster gains all the stolen Personality points which may replenish any hit points or ability points lost through spellburns. |
| 28-29 | The caster completely shatters the target's soul. The target temporarily loses all Personality points. The caster gains all the target's stolen Personality points which may replenish hit points or ability points lost through spellburns. Additionally, if the target has survived the ordeal they are now the soulless minion of the caster; who is able to fully control the target until their death. |
| 30-31 | The caster completely shatters the target's soul. The target permanently loses all Personality points and dies. The caster can either use the target's stolen Personality points to replenish hit points or ability points lost through spellburns or form gossamer armor from the soul shards adding +3 to the caster's AC. |
| 32+ | The caster completely shatters the target's soul. The target permanently loses all Personality points and dies. The caster can use the target's lost Personality points to replenish hit points or ability points lost through spellburns or create a phantom which the caster controls. |

Soul Phantom: Init +1; Atk deathly breathe +2 ranged (1 hp + 1d4 Stamina loss); AC 14; HD 1d6; hp 6; MV 30' fly; Act 1d20; SV Fort +0, Ref +1, Will -1; AL N.



NEXUS DISTURBANCE TABLE

Roll 1d20 each round to discover what happens while in the Nexus.

Roll	Event
1-3	<i>A bubble of lightning bursts forth with strangers clad in bizarre armor!</i> 1d3 Purple Warrior-priests have appeared! Their appearance is the exact likeness of the PCs. The Priests are devoted to Balrothhariid in one of the Other Worlds. They attack the PCs on the following round. Pick any PC(s) from the group and copy their stats for: Initiative, Attack, AC and add +1 to each. For HD add an additional hit die. For weapons determine what type of weapon the PC's 0-level weapon equates to.
4	<i>A blubbing mucus floats through the air like ink poured into water.</i> The PC with the lowest Luck score must succeed a DC 12 Reflex save or their head is covered in the sticky mucus! Each round the PC suffers a temporary 1d3 Intelligence loss until the mucus is pulled off (DC 13 Strength check).
5	<i>10,000 abhorrent eyes open from all around the void as a clamoring of distant voices rattle from beyond!</i> All PCs must succeed a DC 13 Will save or suffer complete madness for 1 round. Maddened characters can do nothing but scream!
6	<i>The corner of a stone chamber materializes. Huddled within is a ghostly apparition of Belesa. She giggles insanely while slowly cutting away her face with the demonic blade of Balrothhariid!</i> Have all the PCs make a Luck check. Failure meaning they witness the apparition and lose their action this round. The apparition cannot be touched or harm the PCs.
7	<i>A bright twisting ribbon of energy passes across the platform!</i> All PCs must succeed a DC 13 Fort save or age 1d4x10 years; lowering their Strength, Stamina and Agility by 1 point for every 20 years aged.
8	<i>An entire chunk of the sky turns to glass and shatters! Shards rain down in a hail storm revealing a cosmic horror the mind of man can barely fathom!</i> The shards deal 1d4 damage (DC 13 Ref save for half). In addition, the hole in the sky reveals a truth too horrible to even describe. Any PCs failing a DC 15 Will save gain some cosmic understanding of the greater universe, gaining 1 point to their Intelligence score, while also losing hope in humanity's future, suffering a permanent 2 point loss of Luck.
9	<i>A man clad in strange garments, wearing a monstrous helm with dark eyes and an elephantine trunk, climbs out from a trench that has suddenly appeared. He lobs a stick that produces a blast of fire in the middle of the battle.</i> Everyone must succeed a DC 12 Reflex save or suffer 1d8 damage.
10-11	Roll 1d4 to determine the Shade's color: A [color] shade in the likeness of Balrothhariid rips through a tear in the fabric of space-time. Shade of Balrothhariid: Init +1; Atk shade dagger +1 melee (1d3); AC 10; hp 10; MV 30'; Act 1d20; SP determined by colour; SV Fort +0, Ref +1, Will +0; AL C. 1) Sickly Yellow: If hit, the target must succeed a DC 13 Fort save or become blinded for one round. 2) Neon Green: If hit, the target must succeed a DC 13 Fort save or suffer an additional temporary 1d3 Stamina loss. 3) Insipid Violet: If hit, the target must succeed a DC 13 Will save or become possessed by the Shade for 1 round. Possessed characters attack their fellow party members on the next round. 4) Heinous Blue: If hit, the target must succeed a DC 13 Ref save or is attacked a second time in the same round (d14 attack die).

12	<i>A colossal black cube slides into the void as a godly voice echoes within your skull, "You must fight on, O Sons and Daughters else your world burn and become like unto the Others!"</i> This voice empowers the PCs and they may add +2 to their attacks this round while Balrothhariid subtracts -2 to his attacks.
13	<i>A luminescent landscape materializes, its surface pitted and dusty. On the horizon, a spiraled cityscape sparkles as if out of a dream. A shimmering creature, like a bizarrely twisted feline with rainbow-hued skin, leaps from the strange vista to land gracefully before you. It gazes at you with eyes like two burning suns as a low throaty vibration quiets your fear. The Cat-Thing turns to join you in the fray!</i> Cat-Thing: Init +2, Atk +2 claws melee (1d3) +3 bite melee (1d4); AC 11; hp 10; MV 30'; Act 1d20; SP phasing, calming presence; SV Fort +1, Ref +3, Will +2; AL L. The Cat-Thing can perform a phasing move after a successful attack by rolling a d3. On a result of 3 the Cat-Thing has phased past its target and may attack a second time that round (-1d per phase). All PCs within the presence of the Cat-Thing gain +1 to all attacks.
14	<i>Belesa appears before the PC carrying the Love Letter. If the PCs no longer have the letter she appears before the PC with the highest Luck score (roll under to break ties): <i>Belesa materializes before you; her former beauty restored! Her gown flows as if underwater and her whole body radiates light. She reaches out to kiss you then slowly fades into oblivion.</i></i> Have the PC roll 1d4+1 and add the total to their current hit points. Hit points may not exceed the maximum allowed.
15	<i>A prism of dazzling rainbow colors phases into being. The strobing light restores your vitality.</i> The light of the prism aids the Lawful and hinders the Chaotic. All Lawful entities increase their action die +1d and all chaotic entities reduce their action die by -1d (including PCs). The Neutral are unaffected. The prism has 10 hp and if reduced to zero will shatter; ending its effects.
16	<i>The ground bursts open as eight wailing impaled villagers rise from the fissure to surround the Necromancer!</i> The impaled souls cause Balrothhariid to lose his action this round.
17	Determine a PC at random: <i>You have a strong sense of deja-vu like this has all happened before and will again until the end of time...</i> The warping of time and space in the Nexus has caused a schism in the PC's mind. For an instant they see multiple timelines unfold and for 1 round within the next 3 rounds, at a point of their choosing, the PC may either: re-roll an action or damage die, spend 1d6 Luck at no cost to their own score, or re-roll for another PC.
18-19	<i>A fetus in a bubble floats nearby and pops! The slimy thing slaps the ground in a wet mess and rapidly begins to grow in an erratic twitching manner. In seconds it matures into a child, an adolescent and finally a fully grown adult. To your surprise you recognize this person!</i> One of the PCs that died earlier in the adventure has returned fully restored, but with no weapons or armor. This PC hails from an alternate reality and something about them isn't quite right. Maybe they have crusted eyelids that when peeled open shoot deadly laser beams or sneezes that can fold space. Perhaps they only speak in bizarre guttural noises or have cat heads for feet. Discuss with your players what the difference is or decide for them.
20	Pick a Lawful PC with the highest Luck score and read or paraphrase the following: <i>A child clothed entirely of light hovers down from above. The child hands you a glittering silver dagger, saying "This is Rjnahk-amta, the Blade of Law. Foe to his brother blade." Sunlight envelops the child and when you open your eyes again he is gone, but the blade remains.</i> Both the child and dagger are from a parallel universe representing the exact opposite of Balrothhariid. When the two opposing blades clash there is a consecutive +10% chance each round of Phlogiston Disturbance (see DCCRPG rulebook p. 103, Table 4-7). Rjnahk-amta, +2 artifact: Int 18; AL L; bane: creatures of Chaos (+4 against bane); communication: empathy; special purpose: to defeat its brother blade; special powers: Beacon of hope; allies within 30' engaged in battle against bane gain +2 bonus to all saving throws and morale checks.



HANDOUT A

My Dearest,

I have so enjoyed our moonlit walks through the forest and still do not understand why the village elders fear the place so. Yes, the trees have grown wild, but none-the-less lovely and the nightingales sing so beautifully, though I sometimes find their songs mournful and strange.

At least the Elders' superstitions aid in keeping our walks secret until the time comes when we can confess our love openly.

- Forever Yours!

Belesa

HANDOUT B

I became lost as I walked amongst the pines one evening, vaguely aware of the sweet song that beckoned me further. Soon I found myself deep below a cold stone structure and it was here I discovered a power that could be quelled no longer! A blade of suffering that gifts knowledge and release!

The disciples have been chosen. Though not willing at first, Arma-khanja showed them the folly of their ways, guiding them to a glorious rebirth!

The swine must be gathered for the time of resurrection is nigh at hand! As the Horned Moon rises so will the Crimson Star fall! Bringing with it the dawning of a new era!

HANDOUT C



HANDOUT D

A waking dream whilst under the influence of the black lotus hath revealed strange realms where the people both worshiped and feared me as their GOD! I know this was no dream, but a vision! I must find a means of transcending to these... Other Worlds.

It seems I have discovered a use for those farmers in the village west of here. Their flesh is not tainted and mine corrupt... a thing dreadful to behold.

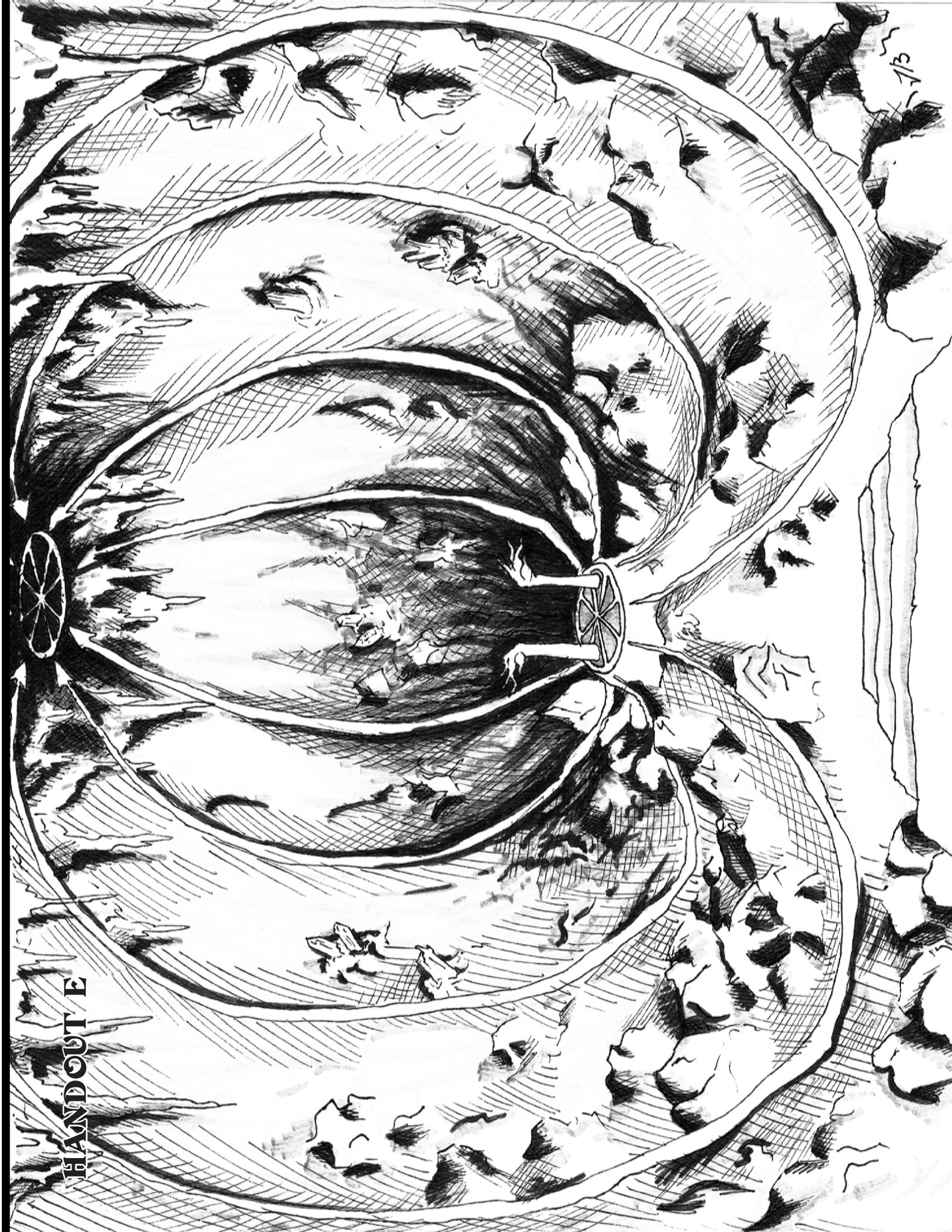
In order to continue my work I must be rid of it.

Though I cut away the foul flesh; the horrid thing still lives! Last night it attacked me whilst I slept and try as I might there appears to be no means of destroying it.

Fire does little to harm it and in time it will grow anew. Therefore I have locked it away in the dungeons where it will must surely rot over the long centuries.

The chamber below is nearly complete and my precious instrument, my blade Atma-khanir, forged of my soul, you will be my anchor.

Soon many will know and fear the name *Barothharid*



HANDOUT E



Name

Title

Occupation

Class

Alignment

Speed

Level

XP

Combat Basics

Initiative: _____

Action dice: _____

Attack: _____

Crit die: _____

Crit table: _____

Armor
Class

Hit Points
Max: _____

Weapons

Equipment

Treasure

Armor

Notes

Strength

Modifier: _____

Agility

Modifier: _____

Stamina

Modifier: _____

Personality

Modifier: _____

Luck

Modifier: _____

Intelligence

Modifier: _____

Ref
Save

Melee Attack

Melee Damage

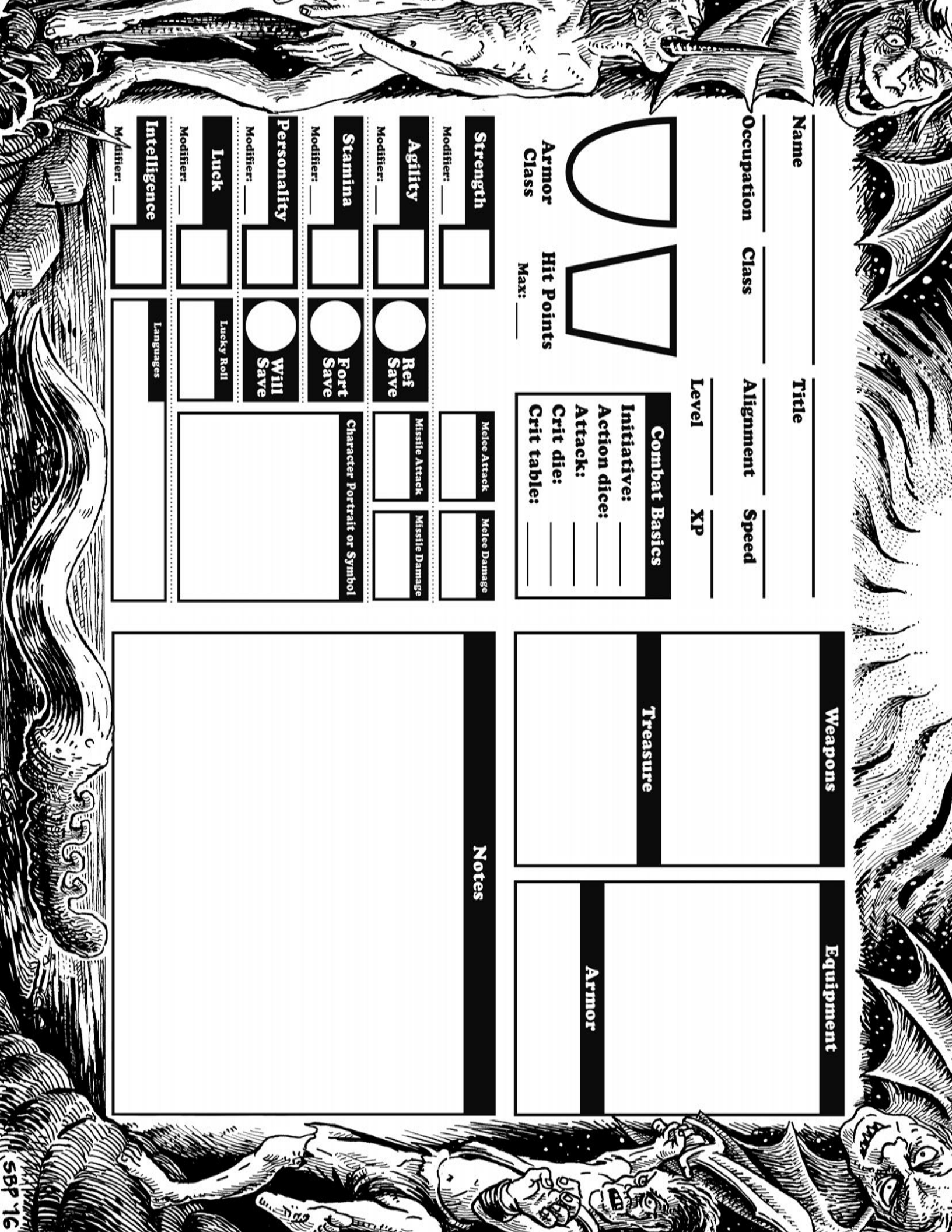
Fort
Save

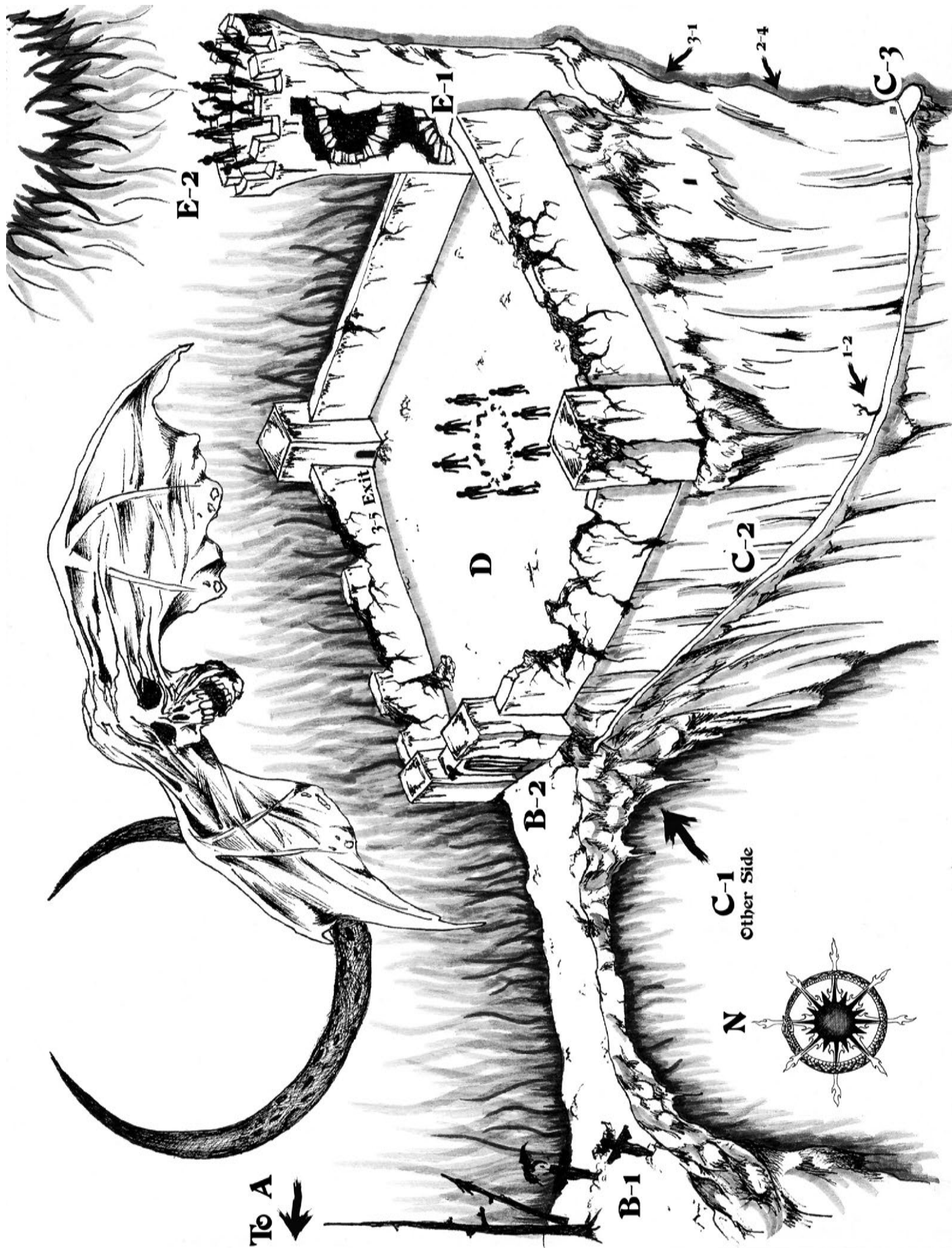
Character Portrait or Symbol

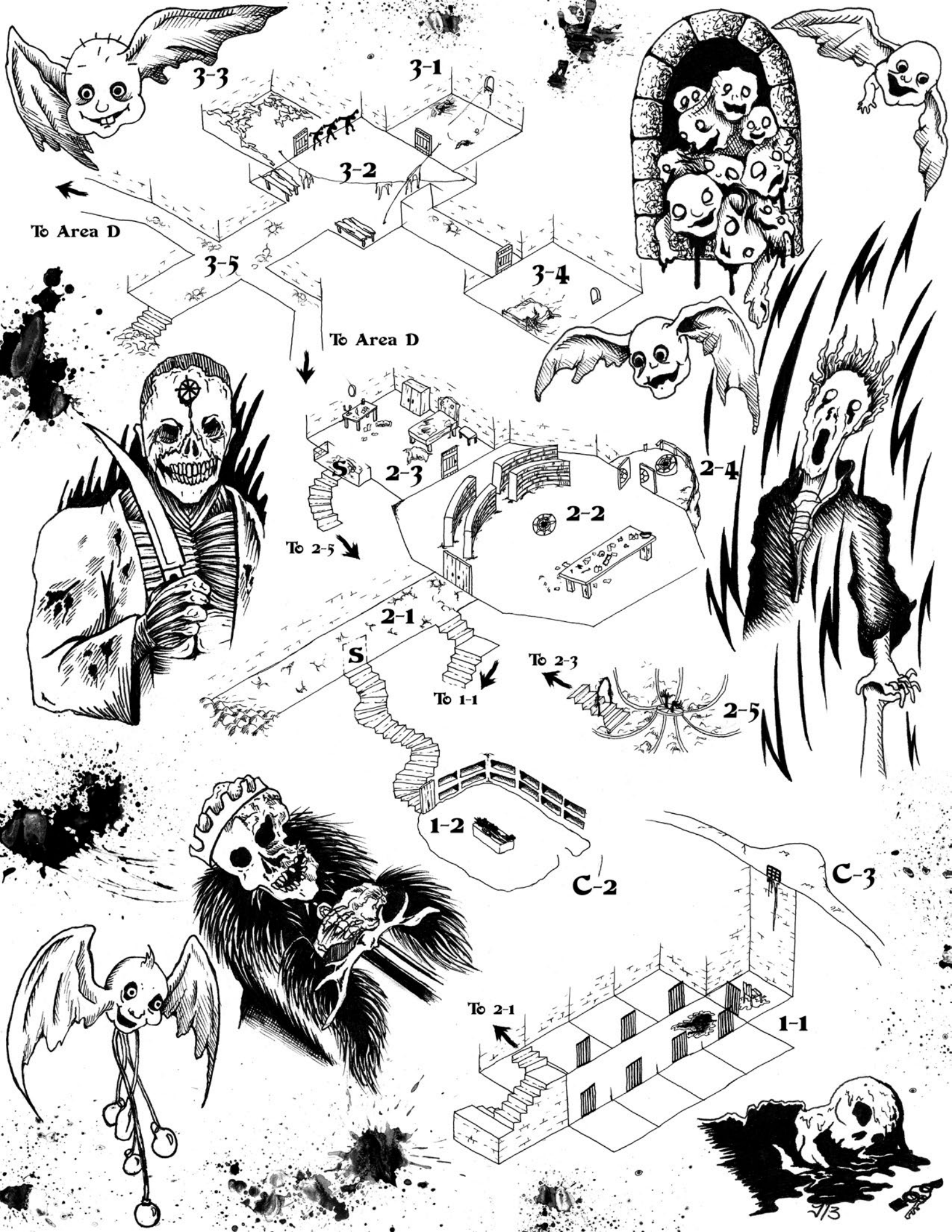
Will
Save

Lucky Roll

Languages







The Eastern Forest

A

Lair
of the
Wss'sak

B

Hellspring
Hollow

A

The
Ancient
Keep

C

Tower
of the
Coo'ng

D

Thumbii
Beyr
Glen

E

Sanctuary
of the
Sightless
Sisters

F

The
Ulrook's
Hut

The
Village
of Reed

scale: 2 miles per hex

SBP 2017

Owl Knight Publishing
presents

BLIGHTS ov the EASTERN FOREST

A 1-level Mini-Campaign
by Thorin Thompson
with Clint Bohaty

Interior Artists: Thomas Harkness, Jim Magnusson, Benjamin Marra, Stefan Poag, Paige Reitterer, Karl Stjernberg
Cartography: Jim Magnusson, Thomas Novosel, Stefan Poag, Karl Stjernberg
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INTRODUCTION

"There's an evil that lies over those woods. It sours the soil so that the trees grow wild and twisted; the animals rabid and the air plagued."

- Glorflump the Goat-milker

Blights ov the Eastern Forest is a 1st level mini-campaign designed for DCC-RPG and features several locations of varying difficulty. Unlike other adventures, there is no particular plot to follow and Judges are encouraged to take the material within and make it their own.

This adventure assumes the current adventuring party has finished the previous 0-level adventure *Sky ov Crimson Flame* and carries with them either *Atma-khanjr*, the dagger of the Necromancer Balrothhariid (de-

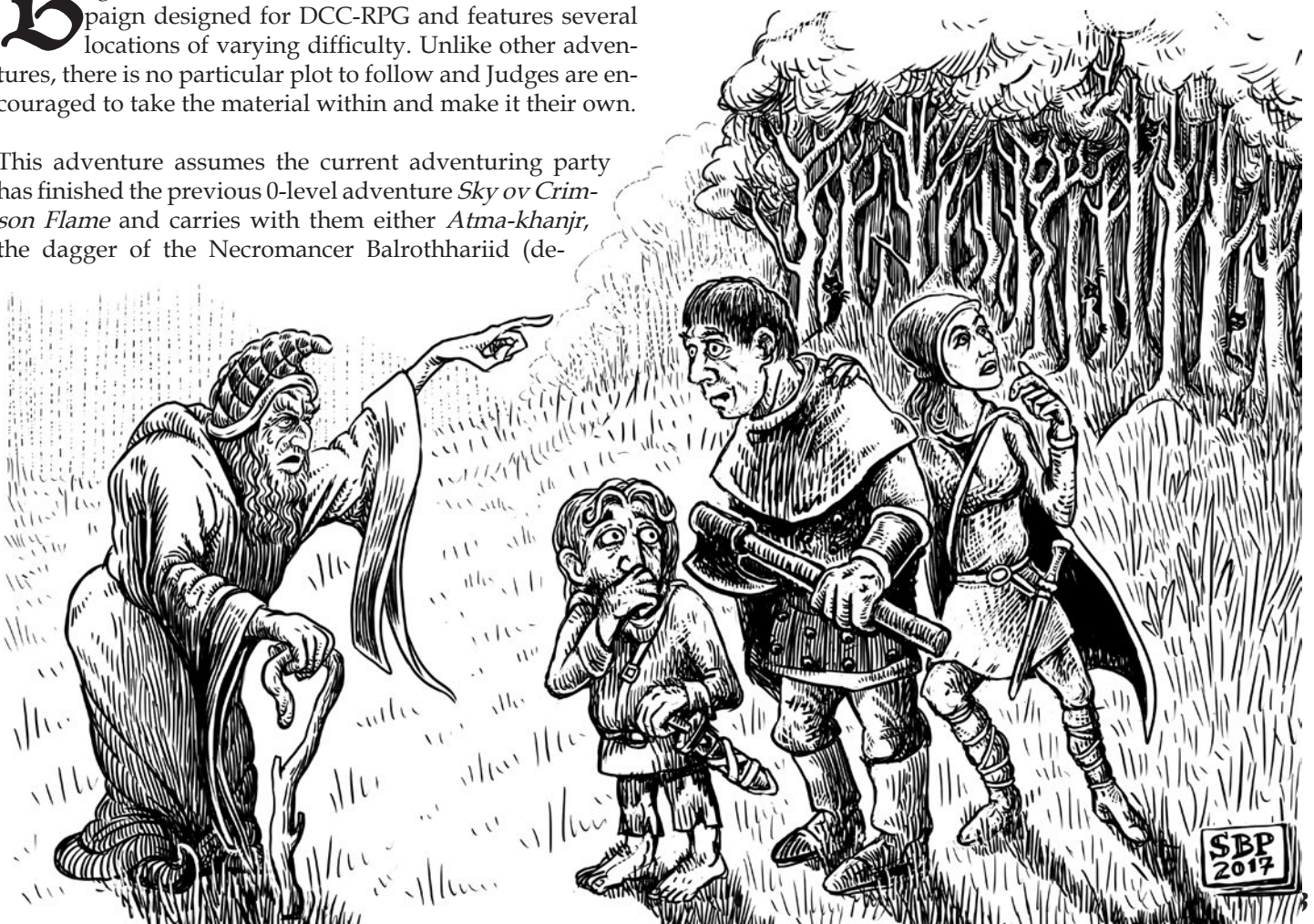
tails on p. 18) as many of the denizens of the forest may desire such a powerful weapon and/or *Silvallum*, the Sword of King Roulreed (details on p. 8) as it can be used to great effect while purging the evil from the Eastern Forest. This adventure can of course be played without the acquisition of either weapon.

The Map of the Eastern Forest as seen here can be found whilst exploring the Ancient Keep in *Sky ov Crimson Flame*, handed to the victorious adventurers from the village elders upon returning to Reed, or hidden from the players all together!

BACKGROUND

Deep within the dark bowers of the Eastern Forest horror and chaos await in its many forms. Since before the reign of King Roulreed the Just, who spent his entire life attempting to restore the balance, the forest has been a blighted land. Creatures and plant life alike have succumbed to evils that hold sway here.

What follows are several areas of interest as seen on the map. While campaigning through the forest the Judge is encouraged to embellish the gloomy nature within. This is a land sickened by evil, where the very air is choking and the shadows threatening. In no way should this journey be a pleasurable romp, but instead a grueling and miserable endeavor. To further add to the danger, a table of random encounters is provided on page 54.



LAIR OF THE YSS'SAK (A)

"The Beast of the East, known in the old tongue as the Yss'sak, is more than a mere fairy tale. It is a creature older than the forest itself that once reigned over man's domain. I fear the evil that has befallen lately will awaken this foul beast from its torpor."

- Eornrad, Elder of Reed

BACKGROUND

The Yss'sak is an ancient foe of mankind. As legend has it there was a great feud between the Yss'sak and a young warrior whom, with an enchanted sword, struck a mighty blow against the beast, mortally wounding it. Having saved the land the young warrior was crowned Roulreed the Just and spent the rest of his days as Protector and King of the Eastern Forest.

Unbeknownst to the young king, the Yss'sak was not slain and slunk away to bury itself in a deep cavern where it has laid hidden in torpor for ages. The foul events and black magic conjured recently at the Ancient Keep has stirred the Yss'sak from its slumber and in time it may again wreak havoc on the surrounding lands.

PLAYER START

Area A1-1 – Cavern of the Beast

The Yss'sak's lair is a lightless and damp cavern hidden in the Northeastern regions of the Eastern Forest. Read or paraphrase the following when the PCs find and venture into the lair:

(1) *Hidden amongst the unyielding shadows of dense foliage, and behind an overgrowth of vines, lies the mouth of a cave from which a pervasive stench lingers.*

(2) *Inside the naturally formed cavern the air is hot, stagnant, and damp. A heavy, shallow breathing echoes from beyond the darkness, but soon stops, and there is a stillness for a moment before a deep booming voice whispers, "My my... Here's something I did not expect. Who treads into my domain unannounced? Be these guests brave or be they foolish I wonder?"*

The Yss'sak lies in the very back of the cave (60ft from the entrance) within a darkness that no light, save that of magical origin, can pierce. When, or if, the Yss'sak slinks out of its hiding read or paraphrase the following:

A cyclopean eye ignites like a torch piercing the darkness as a great weight shifts against hard stone. Heavy hoofs echo as something slowly approaches. From out of the shadows emerges a twisted and enlarged human face with sickly yellow skin. A deep gash runs across the beast's face blinding one of its eyes. Large hoofed legs pull its woolly serpentine body forward.

The Yss'sak is a large serpentine creature with a pelt striped purple and blue. Two front limbs, akin to that of bovine, pull its slender frame forward. Peeking out from its woolly exterior is a perverse yellow face that appears all too human. The deep gash that runs through a dead eye and down the length of the beast's face is from the wound it received while battling the young warrior Roulreed. Large pointed ears stick out on either side of its head.

The Yss'sak is a cunning foe and fluent in many languages of man and beast, though its dialect be of an ancient strain. In its current state the beast is vulnerable and will not lash out at the party, preferring to parlay with the hope of tricking them. However, if the Yss'sak spies *Silvillum*, be it by a warrior flaunting the sword, or merely carrying it in plain sight (remember the sword glows near chaotic creatures), the beast will be taken by a terrible rage and attack the party until slain.

THE YSS'SAK'S CUNNING

Before the Yss'sak battled the young warrior Roulreed, the Wrook (see p. 52) stole the beast's Silver Medallion. The medallion, though simple to look at, was forged by Chaos and radiates a harsh light when worn by the Yss'sak; both protecting and strengthening the creature.

When first met the Yss'sak will appear cordial and feign weakness (unless maddened by the sight of the *Silvillum*). It will attempt to persuade the party into believing it's an innocent creature of nature, wrongfully accused of centuries-old crimes, and will speak of how a young warrior nearly killed it for merely existing.

The Yss'sak will plead with the party to retrieve a treasure stolen by a demon that calls itself the Wrook, *"A despicable creature with eyes of gold. Always desiring what isn't his. Long ago this demon stole from me a silver medallion. A simple thing really, but oh how I treasured it and long for its return. If you could retrieve it for me I would be most grateful. I shall even leave the forest if it is what you so desire!"*

If the party refuses the Yss'sak: The beast will slink deeper into its lair, disappearing into the darkness, and wait for the the party to foolishly pursue it. However, if the party leaves the lair, the Yss'sak will eventually emerge to find their trail and stalk them, waiting for the opportune moment to strike.

If the party believes the Yss'sak and returns with the Silver Medallion: The Yss'sak will ask them to place it around its neck. Doing so will completely rejuvenate the beast. Read or paraphrase the following:

The beast rises on its hooved forelegs. A low droning hums steadily from the silver medallion and causes an aching in your very bones. Soon a harsh light, like the rising sun, blazes from the medallion and the horrid eye of the creature glows as it peers down upon you. "You were foolish to trust one as ancient as I. Now you and all your filthy kind will be slaves of the Great Yss'sak!"

Roll for Initiative!

Yss'sak (destroyed medallion): Init +0; Atk hooves +3 melee (2d6) or tail whip +3 melee (1d8 + Ref save or prone); AC 13; HD 4d12; hp 24; MV 30'; Act 1d20; SP spells +2: *darkness* (automatically cast if in lair); SV Fort +2, Ref +2, Will +2; AL C.

Yss'sak (sans medallion): Init +2; Atk hooves +3 melee (2d6) or tail whip +3 melee (1d8 + Ref save or prone); AC 14; HD 5d12; hp 30; MV 40'; Act 1d20 + 1d14; SP spells +2: *darkness* (automatically cast if in lair), *hypnotic sight*; SV Fort +3, Ref +2, Will +3; AL C.

Yss'sak (with medallion): Init +3; Atk hooves +3 melee (2d6) or tail whip +3 melee (1d8 + Ref save or prone); AC 15; HD 6d12; hp 36; MV 50'; Act 1d20 + 1d16; SP spells +3: *darkness* (automatically cast if in lair), *hypnotic sight*, bone-aching presence (opponents suffer -1d action die); SV Fort +4, Ref +3, Will +4; AL C.

With a glowing evil eye the Yss'sak can hypnotize any character with similar effects as one of the following spells: *charm person* (DCC-RPG p.131), *sleep* (DCC-RPG p.155), *scare* (DCC-RPG p.191).

Along with the beast's hypnotic sight, the power of the Silver Medallion will radiate a bone aching presence causing all characters within a 50ft range to suffer a -1d penalty to their action die. Any PC wielding the sword *Silvallum* can negate this effect.

THE SILVER MEDALLION

This silver medallion has a diameter of 8 inches, bares no markings and is quite unremarkable. Casting *Detect Magic* on the medallion will reveal only that it is imbued with some dark enchantment.

The Silver Medallion is the sole property of the Great Yss'sak and can only be used by the beast. All other earthly creatures (excluding the Wrook) who wear the medallion must succeed a DC 15 Fort save once per day or suffer a temporary 1d3 Strength loss. After a 12-hour period the medallion causes aching in the bones of all characters in its presence. PCs must succeed a DC 12 Fort save or suffer -1 penalty to all future rolls until either they are no longer in the presence of the medallion (50ft range) or it is destroyed.

There is a magical connection between the Silver Medallion and the sword *Silvallum* as one cannot exist without the other. Only a mighty swing from *Silvallum* can fully destroy the medallion. Doing so will forever weaken the Yss'sak, forcing the beast to slink away and lay hidden in its cave.

With the Silver Medallion destroyed *Silvallum's* purpose is served and the sword reverts into a non-magical weapon.



HELLSPRING HOLLOW (B)

“People tweren’t always fearful of the forest, but after the Reign of the Eastern King was cut short, evil again enveloped the land and whatever settlements once stood were lost.”

- Pinky Harefoot, Brewer of Reed

BACKGROUND

Imprisoned in a tomb, for reasons known only to the ever-twisting minds of the Chaos Lords, Lord Urkdaakeous’ powerful heart continued to beat; producing pure Chaos that flows like a river. In this way he continued to serve beyond life. For eons the tomb drifted through the swirling voids of Primal Chaos. Then by chance, following the great dissemination of Form, the tomb was snared in the framework of this earthly realm and subsequently buried.

For eons the strange capsule lay below the surface until a hamlet, isolated from the outside world and thriving under the eaves of the forest, found itself in need of a new well-spring. The villagers dug deep into the ground until they hit what was first believed to be bedrock; however, upon further investigation they found strange runes carved into the rock and heard not only the familiar sound of rushing water, but a faint pounding noise.

Curiously the people broke open a hole in the rock and, to their dismay and utter shock, a geyser of blood shot forth from the opening; drowning the men and sending their limp corpses flying from the hole! For three days blood rained down on the hamlet and transformed the surrounding forest into an abomination of nature where carnivorous trees, with bark more akin to callus wart-ridden flesh, grew uninhibited and even move freely about. Eventually the people perished and the hamlet was forgotten as time crept by, but even now blood flows out from that seething corpse that lies deep beneath the earth.

PLAYER START

Area B1-1 – Flesh Eating Forest

Steep hills rise before you. The forest’s sickly leaves thicken, locking out the light, until only a dull gloom remains. Here the trees are encased in hard flesh; riddled with warts and pus-dripping sores. What little breeze penetrates the forest is filled with whispers and sorrowful moans as fleeting shadows slide in and out of focus. Serpentine roots weave under foot in tight clumps, as if attempting to hinder your progress.

The sickness spawned from the Hellspring has infected the land, turning the trees sour and misshapen. While crossing this section of the forest have each character roll a Luck check. For each character that fails the check roll 1d4 on **Table B.1** to determine the outcome.

The flesh-eating trees will not attack any PC wielding *Silvalum* who succeeds a DC 13 Personality check. The trees will completely avoid any PC in possession of *Atma-khanjr* as they sense the kindred chaotic spirit of the dagger.

Area B1-2 – The Hellspring

Tight clusters of trees and creeping vines hide the remnants of stone foundations that at one point belonged to a set of meager hovels. Amongst these remains is an outcropping of jagged monolithic stones that rise roughly 9ft high. Thousands of roots from the nearby trees creep through to drink from puddles of ruby liquid that dribble down the stones in steady pulsating intervals.

Table B.1

Roll	Event
1	<i>You place a hand against one of the trees to keep your balance when a horrid maw of jagged teeth, dripping with ruby syrup, opens!</i> The PC must succeed a DC 12 Ref save or suffer 1d4 damage as the tree’s maw clamps down! The tree will continue to bite the PC each round unless the PC escapes with a DC 12 Strength check. Each round the PC does not escape the tree will draw them in deeper and on the 3rd round the PC will be swallowed whole and chewed to a pulp! Afterwards, the tree will stop fighting and completely reseal as if it nothing happened. If a PC fumbles any check while trying to escape, or while attacking, their limb(s) will be bitten off resulting in a permanent -1d3 Strength or Agility score loss (player’s choice). Flesh-Eating Tree: Init -3; Atk branch pummel +1 melee (1d6); maw bite +0 melee (1d4); AC 5; HD 5d10; hp 25; MV 5’; Act 2d20; SP half damage from bashing weapons, double damage from fire, spew syrup (DC 10 Ref save or 1d3 acidic damage), swallow whole; SV Fort +3, Ref +0, Will +0; AL C.
2	Silent roots move to trip the PC! DC 12 Reflex save or they tumble down a hill for 1d6 damage.
3	A branch swings out to pummel the unexpected PC! DC 12 Ref save or suffer 1d4 damage and be knocked prone.
4	Vines reach down to strangle the PC! DC 12 Ref save or suffer a temporary 1d3 Stamina loss.

Bleeding Stones: These monolithic stones came jutting out of the earth when the people of the hamlet broke open the burial mound. The stones are directly connected to the underground canal, pumping the blood of the Chaos Lord up, poisoning and transforming the land. Consuming the blood will cause 1 hp damage and Minor Corruption (DC 15 Fort save to avoid, see DCC-RPG p.116).

The Well: The 4ft wide hole is a vertical drop that leads directly into the canal below. Many roots have tangled together over the top of the hole, preventing any passage. It takes 15 points of damage to chop through the thick bleeding roots. A PC in possession of the *Silvallum* and succeeding a DC 13 Personality check can force the roots to subside. Chopping at the roots will bring 2 Flesh-Eating Trees in 1d4 rounds, to attack the PCs.

Beyond the entanglement more roots lead down the well shaft (DC 8 Strength check to climb). Failing will result in a plunge down the shaft suffering 1d3 damage as they bounce off the sides before falling into the river of blood.

Area B2-1 – Canal of Blood

A ruby-tinged light radiates from the hole at the bottom of the well shaft as the sound of rushing water and a great pounding grows louder. The roots continue through the hole to suckle at the churning river of blood. A canal of stone arches from one side to the other with two shallow ledges on either side that run along the canal a foot about the river's surface. Archaic runes carved upon the stone walls pulsate like burning embers and in a wave of sickly tangerine light that flows in the same direction as the river.

River of Blood: The river is 15ft wide and flows in one direction. Its current is strong enough that PCs must succeed a DC 12 Strength check or higher to swim against it. The blood comes from the still-beating heart of Urkdaakeous the Forsaken. The blood, the stuff of pure Chaos, is semi-sentient and will reach out with tendrils to grab hold of any nearby PCs (DC 10 Reflex to avoid) and pull them into the canal.

A PC equipped with *Silvallum* and succeeding a DC 13 Personality check can turn the tendrils for 1d3 turns. A PC carrying *Atma-khanjr* may do this same with a DC 13 Personality, but Lawful or Neutral characters will suffer automatic Minor Corruption (see DCC-RPG p.116).

For every 3 rounds a PC is swimming or submerged in the river they will suffer Major Corruption (DC 15 Fort save for Minor Corruption). Fumbling the save will result in Greater Corruption (see DCC-RPG p. 116-119). Any PCs caught in the river's current and unable to swim against it for 3 rounds will be dragged to the Whirlpool of Doom (area B2-2).

Wall: The stone is imbued with pulsating chaotic symbols. Any character that can read Chaos or Demonic languages with a DC 13 Intelligence check may make out the following words: "*Urkdaakeous*," "*Forsaken*," "*Ever Flowing Well*," "*Gate*," or "*Opening*," "*Destructor*." The glowing runes are synchronized with the pumping of Urkdaakeous' great and

rotten heart.

Ledge: Heading 300ft in one direction from this area leads to the Whirlpool of Doom, while 300ft in the other direction leads to The Chaos Lord's Tomb. Though the canal is primarily straight neither area is visible in the low light. The ledge's shallow footing and slippery nature makes running difficult and PCs doing so must succeed a DC 12 Agility check or slip into the river (DC 12 Reflex save to catch the edge).

Roots: The chaotic river of blood has mutated the trees and the surrounding environs into the hideous perversions of nature they currently are. Only by stopping the flow of blood can the forest be forever healed.

Area B2-2 – Whirlpool of Doom

The river of blood roars to life as the canal dead ends and quickly turns into a hellish whirlpool. Thunderous noises belch from the vortex as strange flashes of light reveal the faces of damned souls, gnashing teeth, and cries of eternal dismay before disappearing again amongst the waves.

The Whirlpool of Doom is extremely dangerous. No living creature that has fallen in has ever been seen again. River tendrils, as described earlier, will continue their attempts to pull PCs into the canal.

Madness: Apart from falling, or being pulled into the river, merely looking down the swirling vortex is enough to temporarily send a character into a madness wherein all life is rendered devoid of meaning given the cosmic horror that surrounds everything. Players looking into the vortex must succeed a DC 13 Will save or go temporarily insane. Compare insane character's intelligence score with the results on **Table B.2** below to determine the character's reaction.

Any character who succeeds their first Will save after looking into the vortex will have gained tremendous knowledge of the struggles between Chaos and Law. Upon completion of this area that character gains an additional 4d4 XP.

Falling into the Whirlpool: Any characters about to be pulled into the whirlpool must succeed a Luck check in order to grasp the ledge. Failing, the PC will merge with the swirling blood. Party members have 2 rounds to intervene before the fallen PC is sucked down, never to be seen again.

Is the whirlpool a gateway to the Chaos plane, a black hole that empties into nothing, or a vortex in time/space? These questions are left for the Judge to answer.

Table B.2

Intelligence Score	Insanity Result
3-6	Dives head first into the Whirlpool of Doom (see Falling into Whirlpool above). Nearby characters may attempt Luck checks to catch insane character.
7-9	Based on alignment, the PC will attack opposite aligned characters for 1 round. Afterward DC 10 Will check in order to cease fighting and regain their senses.
10-12	Feels compelled to add their blood to the swirling torrent! PCs harms self losing half their weapon damage in hp. DC 10 Will save or continue to harm self each round.
13-15	Sprint in opposite direction of Whirlpool! DC 12 Agility check (DC 10 Ref save for nearby PCs) or fall/pushed into river. Insane PC will not stop running until they reach the center of area B2-1 .
16-18	While mentally unhinged, the PC stands immobile for 1d3 rounds.

Area B2-3 – The Chaos Lord’s Tomb

The glowing sigils carved into the walls of the canal brighten. A heavy wet pulsating sound, like the pounding of a hundred war drums, becomes ever more prevalent as you draw closer. Soon you approach a waterfall of blood. Steps leading to a higher level have been carved into a nearby ledge. Atop the next level is a great stone bier where upon lay the festering remains of some gigantic and grotesque thing. Beyond the metallic tines of what you can only assume to be the creature’s ribcage beats a great black heart.

Chaos Lord: Read or paraphrase the following when the characters inspect the remains: *The mere look of this thing, that is neither man-shaped, nor the shape of any creature you have before laid eyes upon, repluses every fiber of your of your core and you feel that you must soon look away or go completely mad. Behind the thing’s rusted metal ribcage a blackened, pulsing heart beats with the heavy padding of thunder. With each pump a ridiculous amount of blood spews forth to cascade down the bier and into the canal.*

Horried at the unearthly sight the PCs must succeed a DC 12 Will save or remain in a state of shock, unable to react until the save is passed.

Rib Cage: In order to destroy the heart and stop the corrupting blood flow the PCs must first crack open the tightly woven metal rib cage. Inspecting the rib cage will find a series of inscriptions. Any character that can read Chaos or Demonic languages with a successful DC 13 Intelligence check may decipher the following:

*“Urkdaakeous the Forsaken,
Flowing Wellspring of the Ever Gates,
Black beats the drums of your destruction,
Red flows the plague of your device,
Black beats the wings of the Guardian,
Red flows the river of Apocalypse.”*

Should any of the PCs strike to break the metal ribcage (DC 15 Strength check/DC 13 with *Silvillum*) a Guardian will arrive from the whirlpool (**area B2-2**) and attack the party in 1d3 rounds. A new Guardian will arrive every time the ribcage is struck until it is broken open.

Guardian: Init +1; Atk barbed tentacles +2 melee (4d3); AC 12; HD 2d8; hp 12; MV 60’ fly; Act 1d20; SP brain scrambling; SV Fort +1, Ref +2, Will +1; AL C.

The Guardians are spawns of Chaos that appear as floating red octopuses with veiny folds of skin, akin to batwings, stretched between their four tentacles. Each tentacle ends in a razor sharp barb. Their heads are set behind their tentacles and appear as a wrinkled, bulging masses of flesh that sends out waves of psionic energy. These waves can scramble primitive minds into seizures that may trigger strokes or comas.

Whenever a Guardian uses its brain scrambling attack, a contested Willpower check must be made between the Guardian and the target. If the Guardian wins determine how many points higher its roll was and consult **Table B.3**. If a critical is rolled the opponent’s brain explodes resulting in death (DC 20 Fort save to collapse from a stroke followed by a permanent 2d3 Intelligence loss.) If a tie is rolled nothing happens.

Table B.3

Roll Result	Effect
05 or less	1 hp damage + temporary -1 INT loss
+05	1d3 hp damage + temporary -1d3 INT loss
+10	1d3 hp damage + stroke resulting in permanent -1d3 INT loss and character starts next round prone
+15	1d3 hp damage + temp. coma resulting permanent 2d3 INT loss + character is unconscious for 1d3 hours

The Blackened Heart: The giant heart will continue to pump until pierced with a weapon held by a character of Lawful or Neutral alignment. Afterwards any Guardians attacking the party will flee back to the Whirlpool of Doom as the entire canal begins to cave in on itself. The PCs have approximately 2d10x10 rounds to climb out of the Hellspring before its ultimate collapse. River tendrils will continue to lash out at them during their escape. Once the Hellspring has collapsed in on itself all sentient trees in the surrounding area, lacking the precious blood, will wither into dried husks.



B1-2

B1-1

B2-3

B2-1

B2-2

DOMAIN OF THE COO'NG (C)

"Many old tales speak of men that have been turned to beasts through foul sorcery and dealings with entities better left be. No livin' soul can recall what the Coo'ng actually is, nor why tis named thus."

- Hans, Gongfarmer of Reed

BACKGROUND

The Coo'ng is a dreadful plague-ridden creature that dwells in an abandoned tower which lies toward Northern edge of the forest. It stalks and kills any unfortunate creature or person that enters into its domain. Over time, and with the current resurgence of evil throughout the land, the Coo'ng has grown bold and is venturing further from its tower. It is only a matter of time before it begins preying on the villagers of Reed. For more information on the Coo'ng refer to page 54.

PLAYER START

Area C1-1 – A Desolated Region

The forest suddenly stops at an open expanse of desolate land littered with fell trees, briars, and brush. Sitting at the center of this 2 mile region, upon a slanted cropping of rocks, are the remains of a slender grey tower.

The PCs have now entered the Domain of the Coo'ng. During daylight hours the Coo'ng remains inside its tower (**area C2-4**). At night the Coo'ng takes flight; preying on any living creature within the borders of the Eastern Forest. There is an 80% chance that any random encounters (see p. 54) rolled within in this region will be an attack by the Coo'ng.

Due to the fell trees and brush that comprise the majority of this area, it is extremely difficult to traverse and will roughly take 2-3 hours to reach **area C1-2**. For every hour of in-game time spent traveling the each PC must succeed a Luck check. A failed check could indicate any one of the following: a temporarily 1 point loss of Stamina from exhaustion, a lost item, a torn coin purse resulting in -2d10gp, or any sort of minor inconvenience the Judge deems relevant.

Though initially a bane this brush can also be used to hide from aerial attacks by the Coo'ng. Each PC will receive a +2 advantage to successfully hide in this area.

Area C1-2 – Rock Foundation

After what feels like hours of scratching thorns and tangled underbrush you finally emerge before the slender tower that leers triumphantly as a testament against time. A blanket of lichen covers the mottled cropping of rocks that form the foundation on which the tower rests.

The moss covered stones reach 40ft in height and roughly twice that in width. Climbing the stones requires a DC 10 Strength check with a fall resulting in only 2d6 damage due to the thick brush beneath.

Hidden through expert craftsmanship and woven with charms is a stairway that easily leads to **area C2-1**. Any dwarves or elves searching the stones will find the hidden stair with a DC 5 Intelligence check; all other classes must succeed a DC 15 Intelligence check. The stairway is narrow with shallow footing and loose gravel requiring careful navigation.

Area C2-1 – Tower Entrance

Upon reaching the top it becomes clear this weather-worn tower was once opulently jacketed with white marble, but has since crumbled leaving only grey stone and mortar. The tower itself appears to lean vicariously as if a great gust of wind might at any point force the structure toppling over. Wooden doors hanging half open on rusty hinges partially reveal the gloomy interior beyond.

A balcony at the top of the tower is roughly 75ft from this area and leads into the Coo'ng's nest (**area C2-4**). Any brave PCs wishing to climb the exterior of the tower in order to reach the balcony must succeed several DC 10 Strength checks with a maximum fall resulting in 8d6 damage.

Area C2-2 – Cluttered Chamber

As your eyes slowly adjust to the dim light you find the chamber is choked with dust and debris. Years of accumulated sand and furniture are heaped against the curving walls or scattered across the stone floor. Strands of cobwebs flutter in the slight breeze of the open doorway. Steps set into the wall circle up to the next level.

There is nothing of value in this room, but there is a chance that any PCs digging through the broken furniture will cause one of the piles to topple (Luck check). If the party is exploring the tower during daylight hours and this occurs the Coo'ng will certainly be aware of their presence leading to a surprise attack in **area C2-4**.

Area C2-3 – Workshop

This second chamber is in a better state of preservation than the first. In the center is a long table covered in an assortment of oddly shaped glass vessels and instruments. Beyond the table is a small alcove that houses a rickety old desk on which many dusty scrolls and leather bound books are heaped. A foul stench wafts down from the steps that lead to the next level.

Table: Wizards or PCs with occupations of alchemist or similar with a DC 10 Intelligence check, will have some knowledge of the nature of the oddly shaped glass vessels and instruments and may, at the Judge's discretion, find some needed ingredients or spell components.

Desk: Many of the scrolls and books have already, or will when immediately touched, disintegrate into brown powder. At the Judge's discretion, any wizards or elves searching the desk with a successful Luck check may find a useful spell amongst the clutter.

Any PC searching the desk finds a moth eaten tapestry: *The frail cloth barely remains stitched as you inspect the illustration sewn. A young warrior with a sword of radiating light battles a strange serpentine beast with the forelegs of deer and the yellow face of a man.* The tapestry refers to the story of Roulreed and the Yss'sak (p. 34).

Searching the Chamber: Lucky PCs may find a loose tile in this area that houses a corked bottle of some concoction that is in fact a *Potion of Invisibility* (see DCC-RPG p. 172).

Area C2-4 - Coo'ng's Nest

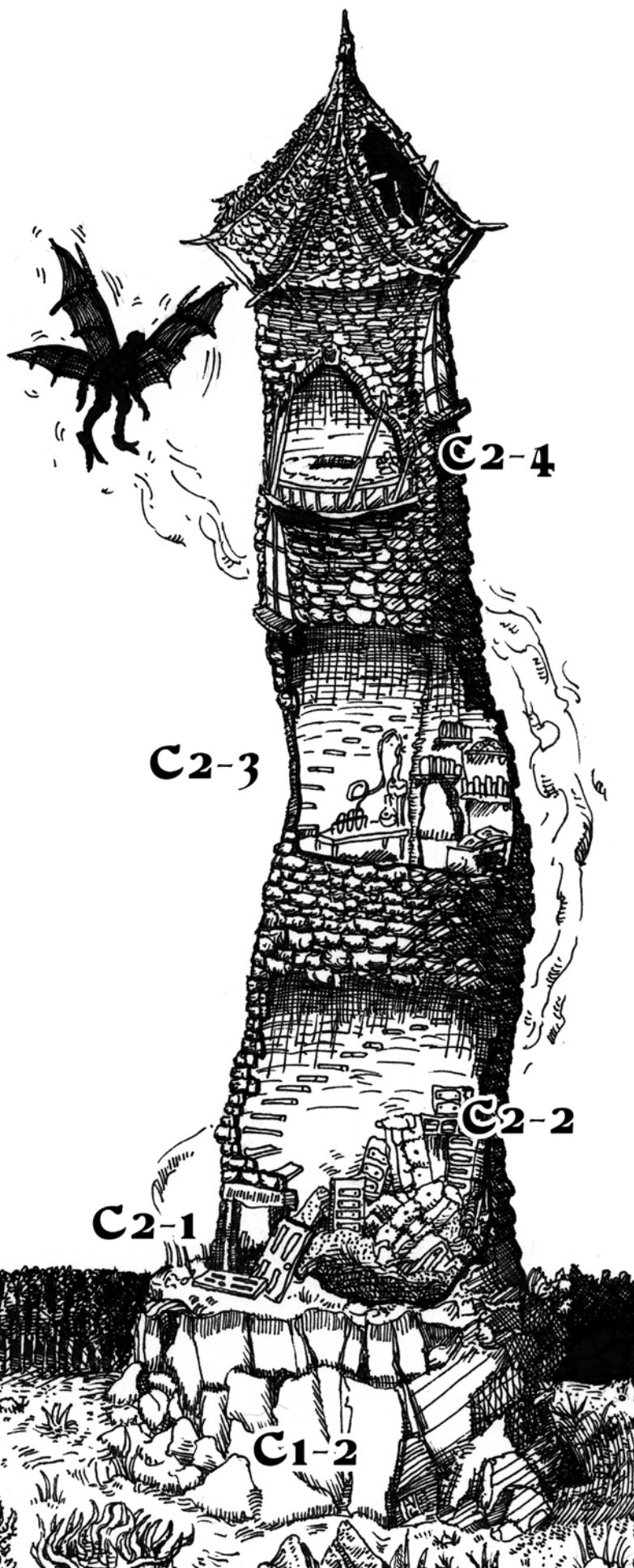
The wind howls as it continually blusters through the open balcony opposite the stairs. Here the stench of fecal matter and death assail the senses. Bones gouged with bite marks, decaying animal remains and clumps of hair litter the floor.

During the daylight hours the Coo'ng will be found nesting in the rafters. If the party has been relatively quiet while exploring the tower, and while entering this area, then the creature will be unaware of their presence. However, if the party has clumsily carried on, the Coo'ng will drop down on whomever it thinks is the weakest (or whichever PC has the lowest Luck score) in a surprise attack. Read or paraphrase the following:

A faint noise like the sweet cooing of a babe is accompanied by the creaking of wooden beams directly above you. The sweet sound grows into a kind of purr and as you look up you spot two swirling blue eyes just before the flash of long claws reach out towards you.

If the party has been exploring the tower by night there is a 30% chance each turn that the Coo'ng has returned to the tower via the balcony. Stats for the Coo'ng can be found on p. 54.

Searching the Area: A majority of the bones and hair are animal in origin, but 9 human skeletons can be accounted for. Clinging from the rafters near the Coo'ng's nest is a tattered and faded red dress.



JHUMBII-BEYR GLEN (D)

*"Dangerous & daunting, Horrendous & haunting,
Ferocious & frightening, We sing out this song,
Marching along, As gloom fills the air!"*

*Jhumbii-Beyrs,
Bouncing here and there with much despair,
All adventurers best beware,
The coming of Jhumbii-Beyrs!
The doom of Jhumbii-Beyrs!"*

- Gusto, Scribe & Poet to King Roulreed

BACKGROUND

Eons ago, a meteorite fell from the heavens to land in a once tropical forest. The impact drove the cosmic rock deep below the surface, where a sentient multi-colored protoplasm crawled out to find a host. Over the centuries this Jhumbii-Overmind has multiplied by converting living creatures into kindred Jhumbii beings. Each Jhumbii is sentient in its own right, but all are connected through a collective consciousness with the Jhumbii-Overmind. The first human to see one of these creatures and survive was King Roulreed's scribe Gusto. He was walking through the forest one evening for inspiration when he was chased by a band of brightly colored bear cubs.

The region known as Jhumbii-Beyr Glen is the spawning place of all the Jhumbii-Beyrs that inhabit the Eastern Forest. There is a 75% within the Glen of all random encounters (p. 54) being a band of Jhumbii-Beyrs.



PLAYER START

Area D1-1 - Jhumbii Stream

A serpentine stream gently trickles through a narrow valley with looming hillsides. Warped roots, like the arms of the damned, reach out from the nearby trees to lap at the running water. Both the stream and valley gradually slope downward.

Jhumbii-Beyr Ambush: If the PCs are traveling with caution and care, allow for a Luck roll in order to determine whether or not they are surprised when the Jhumbii-Beyrs attack. Read or paraphrase the following:

Six gelatinous brain-covered blobs of varying colors ooze out from holes in the sides of the valley, or drip down from overhanging branches. They land with a wet splat before instantly bouncing into the shape of 4ft tall bear cubs. Before you realize what's happening, they spring into action; bouncing off tree trunks, grassy mounds, and rocks with menacing intent!

For Jhumbii-Beyr stats refer to p. 56.

Area D1-2 - Jhumbii Tree

After following the stream a little ways through the valley, a mammoth oak tree rises up in the distance. The winding stream forks between the tree's bulging roots. Its twisted and knotted branches bear no leaves; instead an array of colorful slime drips ever so slowly to puddle on the earthen ground, or slip away further down stream. A worn path upon the grassy knoll between the streams leads up to a large split in the trunk.

Tree Slime: The slime which drips from the branches is harmless to the touch and tastes extremely sweet, making it a delight to eat. If consumed, see **Jhumbii-Metamorphosis** on page 57.

The Stream: The slime drips (and sometimes crawls) into the stream from which many animals drink, eventually changing them into Jhumbii-Beyrs. Any character drinking from the stream as it flows away from the oak tree must succeed a DC 13 Fort save or suffer a metamorphosis of the body (see **Jhumbii-Metamorphosis**, p. 57).

Trunk Split: This opening is roughly 4ft tall by 3ft wide. Peering inside will find a 4ft wide hole with a seemingly endless drop. The hole is slick with slime and any PC failing a DC 10 Strength or Agility check will slip, sliding down the hole and landing harshly on the hard slimy surface below (1d6 damage).

Damaging the Tree: Any damage that befalls the tree will cause the 2d4+2 Jhumbii-Beyrs from **area D2-2** to bounce out and attack the PCs within 1d3 rounds. Destroying the tree (hp 100) will only temporarily purge the forest of Jhumbii-Beyrs as the true threat lies far beneath the surface.

Area D2-1 – Slimy Cavern

A combination of slime and mud cover the floor of this deep underground cavern. There is a constant flow of water that trickles down the earthen walls while strings of colorful slime crawl up from the floor towards the opening high above. Another slime ridden tunnel descends into the unknown.

The tunnel must be crawled through and due to the tight curves (designed for and by gelatinous bodies), bulky items and long weapons (10' poles, spears, etc) cannot pass. These tunnels have a distance of roughly 20ft and lead into the buried meteorite.

Area D2-2 – Hive Chamber

Crawling through the slippery tunnel, you soon emerge into a crystal-laden cave that instantly illuminates. The glowing crystal walls appear formed rather than cut into honeycomb shaped cavities that rise in a dome like fashion towards the 20ft high ceiling. A majority of these cavities houses a quivering brain suspended in a jelly-like substance of a seemingly random hue. Carved into the center of the floor is a bizarre circular pattern.

Jhumbii-Brains: There are at least 2d4+2 brains currently suspended in separate honeycombs. All the brains will spring into Jhumbii-Beyrs and attack if damaged or disturbed. If that occurs, read or paraphrase the following:

The brains convulse violently before plopping out of their honeycombs to bounce about the cavern, instantly transforming into gelatinous bear-like forms!

For Jhumbii-Beyr stats refer to p. 56.

Circular Pattern: This hatch can be opened by tracing a hand along the carved pattern. Hissing, the hatch will bloom inwards revealing another tunnel that leads to **area D2-3**.

Secret Tunnel: Once emptied of jelly brains, a tunnel is revealed in one of the lower honeycombs. The tunnel is covered in slime and slopes downward towards **area D2-4**.

Area D2-3 – Stasis Chamber

The crystal that forms this cavern begins to shimmer and glow as you enter. The cavern curves sharply, making it difficult to determine how far it extends. Running along one side of the wall are several silhouetted figures suspended in what appears to be a thick chunk of jelly.

Here the Jhumbii-Overmind keeps a collection of species from throughout the eons. Each has been kept alive in a suspended stasis while continually being probed and cataloged by the jelly substance which encases it. Each specimen is utterly mad and will go into a frenzy if set loose. The only exception is the human encased in Chamber 5 who may be coaxed out of their madness.

To release one of the specimens, a PC may simply reach in and pull it out with a DC 10 Strength check. A successful DC 13 Intelligence check for any character examining the chamber will lead to the discovery that certain crystals nearby are actually controls. Manipulating the controls will melt the jelly, which spills to the floor, freeing the species inside.

Chamber 1: *A tall form with clawed, muscular limbs and an elongated neck.*

Serpent-man: Init +1; Atk bite +3 melee (1d6 + poison DC 14 Fort save); AC 12; HD 1d10+2; hp 8; MV 30'; Act 1d20; SP paralyzing poison (2d3 rounds on failed save); SV Fort +2, Ref +1, Will +2; AL C.

Chamber 2: *A short, stout form covered entirely in fur.*

Primate: Init +1; Atk bite +3 melee (1d4+2) or slam +4 melee (1d6+2); AC 13; HD 2d8; hp 8; MV 20' or climb 30'; Act 1d20; SV Fort +6, Ref +3, Will +1; AL N.

Chamber 3: *A brutish man-shaped form of shorter stature.*

Neanderthal: Init +2; Atk fists +2 melee (2d3+1); AC 12; HD 2d12; hp 12; MV 30'; Act 1d20; SV Fort +3, Ref +2, Will +0; AL N.

Chamber 4: *A round and hairy bestial form.*

Bear Cub: Init +0; Atk bite +3 melee (1d4) or claw +2 melee (2d3); AC 12; HD 1d8; hp 4; MV 20' or climb 10'; Act 1d20; SV Fort +2, Ref +1, Will +1; AL N.

Chamber 5: *A human-shaped form of average build.*

Human: Init +0; Atk fists -1 melee (1d4-1); AC 9; HD 1d4; hp 3; MV 30'; Act 1d20; SP madness (temp. HD 2d4 & 2d4-1 damage); SV Fort -1, Ref -2, Will -1; AL N.

Here is a human from the village of Reed. It is possible that this could be a long lost relative of one of the PC's who disappeared some 40 years prior! With a DC 12 Personality check a PC can calm the person from their stasis madness. Once their wits have returned they may join the party as a 0-level character (see DCC-RPG rulebook p. 16). Otherwise they will remain maddened and attack until slain.

Chamber 6: *This chamber is empty.*

Area D2-4 – Navigation Chamber

The crystalline spires, all aimed towards the center of this cave, come alive and pulse with light. A liquid substance begins floating at the apex of the spires to form spherical shapes of varying sizes - several smaller liquid spheres orbit a larger and brighter sphere.

Any characters with the occupation of astrologer, sage or wizard's apprentice who succeed a DC 13 Intelligence check may accurately surmise they are viewing some sort of constellation or planets. After a moment the image changes:

The brightest sphere flares up in a shock wave that destroys the smaller spheres; creating a chaotic scene and leaving in its wake only a scattering of floating debris. The glowing spires die out, leaving the room in complete darkness. After a moment, the crystals pulse back to life as a dim glow fills the cavern. On the opposite side, standing in a newly opened passageway, is a slim figure who quickly disappears before you can react.

The figure seen was the Jhumbii-Overmind. The characters will not be able to catch up to it before it changes form and disappears in **area D2-5**. The new passageway starts as a narrow 4ft high passage, but soon shrinks into a 2ft wide tunnel the PCs must crawl through in order to continue.

Area D2-5 – Crystal Control Room

Crawling through the tight passage, you emerge into a greater cavern. Thick, ankle-deep muck stretches from one end to the other. In the center is a spherical rock with several cylinder-shaped crystals jutting up from it. Waves of electrical static of various hues constantly shift between the crystal cylinders. Something buried within the crystal quivers violently!

The Liquid: Like its spawn, the Jhumbii-Overmind is primarily made of a strange protoplasm. It will lay in wait, studying the PCs until they get close enough to the crystal control center before taking form:

The liquid beneath your feet pulls away towards the edges of the cavern and forms into six vaguely humanoid shapes. In a bubbling voice the six speak in unison, almost as if their voices rattle inside your very skull, "I have been awaiting ones such as yourselves. You will be the vessels upon which I shape this primitive world. Assimilate with me and become more than yourselves."

The Jhumbii-Overmind will attempt to assimilate each of the PCs by first covering and immobilizing them with its gelatinous body (DC Reflex save vs +2 Atk roll). If successful, on the following the round the Jhumbii-Overmind will attempt to overpower the PC using opposing Willpower saves. Failing the save, the PC will go through an Accelerated Jhumbii-Metamorphosis (see below). If the PC succeeds, their power of mind over matter causes the Jhumbii-Overmind to melt away as if its hp were reduced to 0.

Like its Jhumbii-Beyr spawn, the Jhumbii-Overmind can bounce away from an attack without penalty. Each of the 6 incarnations present are 1 of the 6 color variants (see Jhumbii-Beyr Colors p. 57 for more details).

If one of its humanoid forms is reduced to 0 hp, it will dissolve into a sticky puddle of jelly and reform 3 rounds later. To permanently destroy the Jhumbii-Overmind, PCs must destroy its brain (see below).

Accelerated Jhumbii-Metamorphosis: Unlike the metamorphosis from the consumption of Jhumbii-Beyrs or the slime, the Jhumbii-Overmind is a concentrated pure strain which causes physical metamorphosis within minutes. Each round the PC fails a DC 13 Fort save, a part of their flesh turns to slime (permanent -1d3 STR, AGI and STA loss). On the 3rd failed Fort save, the majority of their bones and organs (except the brain) begins to dissolve and a new humanoid form of the Jhumbii-Overmind is formed.

Only a magical healing of three dice or more (see DCC-RPG p. 30-31) can stop the change. Lastly, it is possible during the final stage of transformation that the victim can attempt one last DC 20 Will save in an attempt to keep control of their mind. If successful, they have taken over their new Jhumbii form and will have all the knowledge of the Jhumbii-Overmind, including how to unlock the crystal compartment containing the Overmind's brain and the proper self-destruct sequence.

Crystal Control Center: The cylindrical crystals at the center of the cavern can be manipulated like dials or levers. Encased in a hidden compartment beneath the crystals is the brain of the Jhumbii-Overmind. Finding the compartment will require a Luck check or 25 points of damage to the crystals. Any PC manipulating the crystals has a 50% chance (25% chance if breaking with a weapon) of accidentally setting off a self destruct sequence.

Self-Destruct Sequence: *The crystals hum and pulse a bright red as a repetitive chiming echoes from all around!*

The PCs have 10 rounds to escape the Glen before the meteorite buried beneath explodes; leveling the area and killing everything. The Jhumbii-Overmind in its multiple forms will attempt to stop the sequence. If unsuccessful after 3 rounds the Jhumbii-Overmind goes berserk:

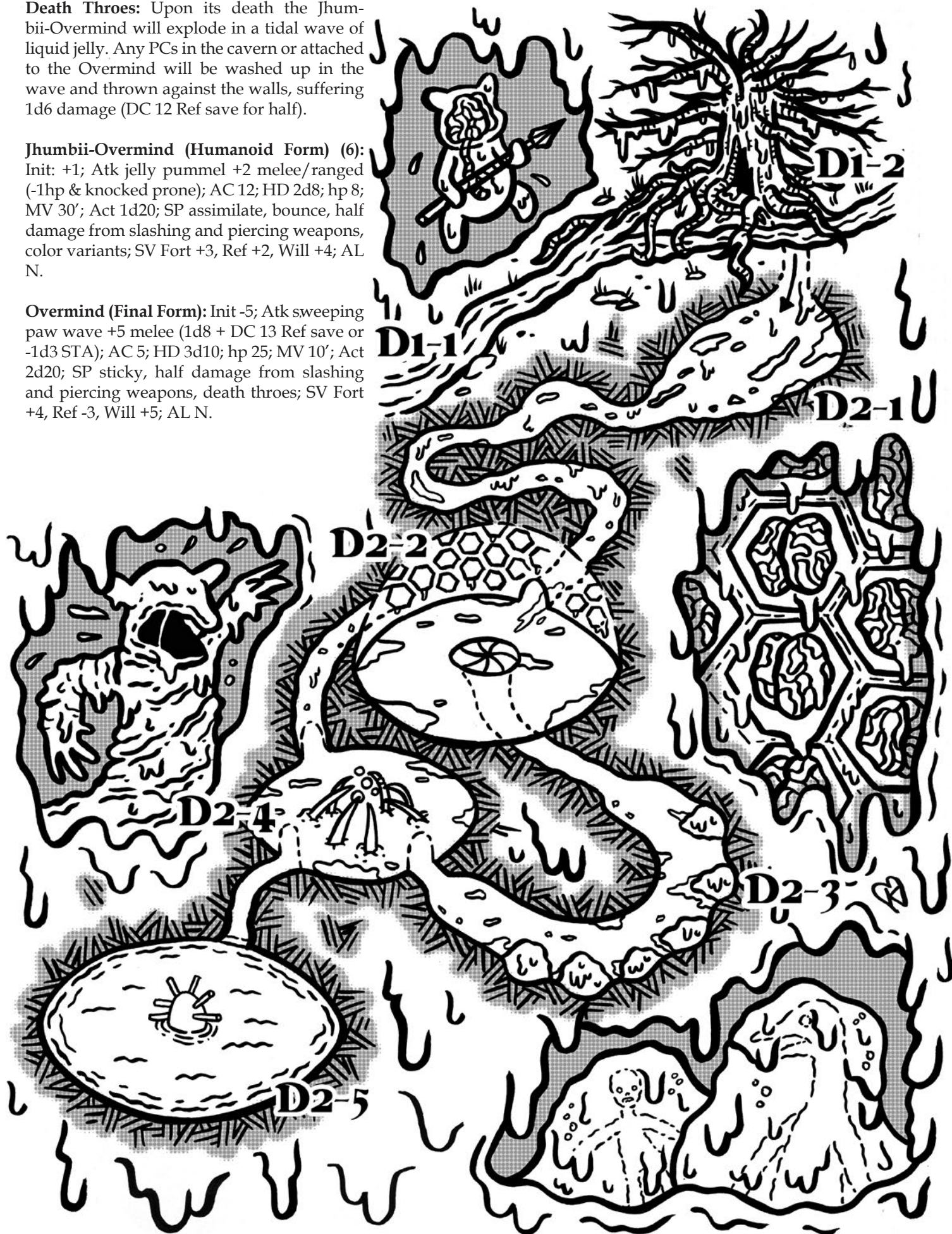
The multiple entities scream in unison and rapidly change forms as if they no longer have control of themselves. They soon merge into a tidal wave of jiggling liquid that reaches to the cavern's ceiling as it forms into one gigantic bear shape of swirling colors!

Unable to fathom how such primitive beings will ultimately end its existence, this enormous bear-shaped entity has chosen fight over flight. With huge sticky paws it sweeps over the cavern in a violent tidal wave. Any PC hit suffers damage and must swim against the current (DC 13 Ref save) or become submerged and begin drowning (-1d3 Stamina).

Death Throes: Upon its death the Jhumbii-Overmind will explode in a tidal wave of liquid jelly. Any PCs in the cavern or attached to the Overmind will be washed up in the wave and thrown against the walls, suffering 1d6 damage (DC 12 Ref save for half).

Jhumbii-Overmind (Humanoid Form) (6): Init: +1; Atk jelly pummel +2 melee/ranged (-1hp & knocked prone); AC 12; HD 2d8; hp 8; MV 30'; Act 1d20; SP assimilate, bounce, half damage from slashing and piercing weapons, color variants; SV Fort +3, Ref +2, Will +4; AL N.

Overmind (Final Form): Init -5; Atk sweeping paw wave +5 melee (1d8 + DC 13 Ref save or -1d3 STA); AC 5; HD 3d10; hp 25; MV 10'; Act 2d20; SP sticky, half damage from slashing and piercing weapons, death throes; SV Fort +4, Ref -3, Will +5; AL N.



SANCTUARY OF THE SIGHTLESS SISTERS (E)

"To stifle rumors that his love for Margaret went beyond that of a sister, King Roulreed the Just had her banished to the Eastern Forest. It was a decision he regretted and at the end of his life, fever dreams of his sister haunted even his waking hours. We applied damp cloths to his forehead, holding them on as he screamed for Margaret and confessed to a weakness of the heart."

- Dillard Swoon, Royal Courier from Histories of the Eastern Realm

BACKGROUND

In the beginning of his reign, King Roulreed was often scrutinized for the close relationship held with his older sister Margaret. Margaret, who was blinded as a child during swordplay with Roulreed, was always at the King's arm for physical guidance. In turn, the King, with deep affection for his sister, sought her calm wisdom on stately matters. Looking back, many historians hold Margaret's sound advice responsible for the decades of peace under Roulreed's reign.

It is speculated that his guilt for her injury is what made their relationship so strong. Unfounded, but delicious rumors spread throughout court that the King took advantage of his sister's blindness by appearing late at night to her chambers as an unnamed gentleman admirer. These rumors led to friction within the walls of the keep and cracks for those wishing to topple the King. To put end to the gossip The King had his sister banished from the kingdom and into surrounding forest where she and her six most loyal handmaidens set up an encampment.

Over time their camp became a destination for injured travelers and men-of-war, but not once did the King visit his exiled sister. A permanent sanctuary was being constructed when Margaret became suddenly ill and was taken by the Gods. Named a Saint, her body was entombed in the new sanctuary.

The Sightless Sisters, as they were later known, gained fame for performing cleansings and surgeries under mandatory blindness, as Margaret felt it improper for an unwed maiden to view the nakedness and sin of man. Her six handmaidens were required to wear eye-caps, while any apprentices or devotes underwent permanent blindness in a bonding ritual to the sanctuary.

The neutral position of the sanctuary eventually led to its downfall when three Warlock Brothers, serving the whims of Chaos, attacked! Together the Warlocks slaughtered all, apprentices and soldiers alike, except the Sightless Sisters who chose to take their own lives by cutting their throats before these servants of Chaos could have their way. It was this fateful attack that marked the beginning of the corruption that spread through all the Eastern Forest. The Sanctuary, forever cursed by the evil perpetuated within its walls, has sat abandoned in ruin for centuries.

PLAYER START

Area E1-1 - Statue of Margaret Roulreed

Damp lichen and brittle cobblestones crack underfoot as you come upon a towering statue of a robed woman who stands as if blessing your approach. The black canopy breaks around her crown; bathing the lifeless forest floor at her base in purpled tinged light. Chained to the legs of the statue is a knight and his squire; both in rusted armor and tattered clothes. At its base is an open entryway with a twisted iron door.

Statue: *The statue is 65' tall and constructed from white marble. Its face is young, but carries a sadden expression. Two black gemstones, with centers glowing white, are socketed in the statue's eyes.*

The statue is built in the likeness of King Roulreed's sister Margaret. In paintings and tapestries Margaret is always depicted with black eyes to symbolize her blindness. Any PC who inspects the statue and has a knack for history can identify her; otherwise PC's must make a DC 15 Intelligence check to recognize the forgotten figure. Alternatively, if the PCs have encountered the Forlorn Spirit (p. 55), they will instantly recognize the face, but may not know the name.

Statue's Eyes: The statue's black eyes are uthorite gemstones - a rare type of stone whose alchemical value lies in its unique ability to radiate cold when applied to heat. Often times uthorite stones are dropped into boiling potions to reduce their heat in an instant, causing the stone to flash white from the heat. Behind the socketed gemstones are two pipes blowing flames and adding to the illusion of pulsing white centers. Any thief who removes the stones (DC 10 Strength check for each) must make a DC 15 Reflex save or else suffer 1d6 damage as a searing blast of heat hits their face. The thief must also make an DC 8 Agility check or fall, suffering 6d6 falling damage.

Knight & Squire: Read or paraphrase the following: *Bound to the statue by the wrappings of a silver chain are the near-lifeless bodies of a knight and his young squire. On their tunics is a crest depicting a stag. The bodies are perfectly preserved as if they only began dying moments ago - even though their armor is obviously ancient and rusted. The chain rattles slowly as they draw belated breaths. Small runic symbols are carved upon each link of the silver chain.*

Any PC who previously survived the Ancient Keep may recognize the crest as that of King Roulreed the Just. Inspecting the bodies reveals several sword wounds and dried

blood staining the statue's surface. Although not un-dead, the Knight and his Squire are bound to the moment of their deaths as an eternal torture by the Warlock Brothers.

To grant them the gift of death, the enchanted chain that binds them must be broken. In a hoarse breath, the Knight whispers in an archaic common (DC 10 Intelligence check to interrupt), *"Only the King's blade will break the curse,"* hinting that the chain can only be broken with the sword *Silvillum* (DC 12 Strength check).

As soon as the chain is broken, the bodies fall free, rapidly decaying until only a plume of dust strikes the earthen floor. The PC responsible for their release gains 1d3 Luck as ghostly apparitions levitate towards the heavens saying, *"Thank thee my Lord King!"*

Breaking the chain by any other means (i.e. a *knock* spell with a spellcheck of 13+ or using the dagger *Atma-khan-jr*) will transform the Knight into a Reverent Knight (p. 58) while the Squire's flesh quickly rots away until only a walking Skeleton remains (DCC-RPG p. 426)

Doorway: The entryway to the sanctuary is partially blocked by a twisted iron door. To enter, the PCs will have to crawl upon their hands and knees in single file. Halflings may enter as normal. Inspecting the door reveals that its hinges were once broken, but time and rust have seized them shut (DC 15 Strength check to break). Failing a Strength check results in the stonework around the entryway toppling. Any PCs directly in front of the entryway must succeed a DC 13 Reflex save or suffer 1d8 damage from falling stones. If collapsed, the entryway allows for normal passage.

Pool: Read or paraphrase the following if PCs explore behind the statue: *The statue's gown flows away from the base creating a shallow pool of murky water roughly 10ft long, 6ft wide and 3ft deep. Scattered within the eerily motionless pool are discarded sets of rusted armor and weapons. Suspended on the surface, as if held immobile by the water's tension, are fallen branches and dry leaves. A trickle of water quietly runs from somewhere.*

Any PC who visually inspects the pool with a DC 15 Intelligence check will discover a fine layer of barbed webbing suspended slightly above the water's surface. A DC 10 Intelligence check or higher will spot a large golden shield in the water at the pool's center.

The only safe way to clear the webbing is by setting it aflame. Once ablaze, the webbing will quickly dissipate - making the water safer to enter. Any PC who tries to clear the webbing by brushing it away with a weapon, pole, or branch will lose the object as it is reeled into the water. The PC must make a DC 10 Reflex save to avoid being thrown off-balance and falling into the pool.

Any PC who steps or falls into the pool without first clearing the webbing will become entangled. Crawling from under the discarded armor appears four goat-sized Eastern

Cray-creepers that quickly reel their entangled prey into the shallow water to drown.

Eastern Cray-creepers (4): Init -2; Atk mandibles +2 melee (1d4+2) or bite +1 melee (1d6 + DC 12 Fort save or suffer 1d3 acidic damage from bile); AC 15; HD 2d8+2; hp 10; MV 20' or climb 10'; Act 1d20; SP 25% chance to surprise, entangling silk web; SV Fort +2, Ref -1, Will -3; AL N.

The Eastern Cray-creepers have hook-shaped bodies covered with a thick yellowed carapace where thirty-seven eyes gleam from bulbous black patches on either side of their head. They creep about on eight legs, two of which work as both mandibles and spinnerets. The creature's silk gland that produces their gossamer webbing is found near the hinge of their jaw. Their mouths are filled with bile, four short tongues and rows of barbed teeth.

At any point, the Eastern Cray-creeper can spit out a strand of gossamer webbing (DC 13 Ref save to avoid) with the same potency as casting the 2nd level wizard spell *spider web* with a spellcheck of 15 (DCC-RPG p. 196).

Removing the golden shield from the center of the pool reveals a small cache of rubies, gemstones and valueless shiny objects (total worth of 1d20sp) which the Eastern Cray-creepers have buried into a mud nest. Also within the nest are 1d4 eggs worth 1d100sp each to any royal or nobleman cook.

The golden shield depicts a large bird feeding and nestling in the struggling body of a man. The shield holds a value of 2d8gp in its current condition. The shield's value is doubled if the players can find a collector who knows its ill-fated history.

Eastern Cray-creepers (4): Init -2; Atk mandibles +2 melee (1d4+2) or bite +1 melee (1d6 + DC 12 Fort save or suffer 1d3 acidic damage from bile); AC 15; HD 2d8+2; hp 15; MV 20' or climb 10'; Act 1d20; SP 25% chance to surprise, entangling silk web; SV Fort +2, Ref -1, Will -3; AL N.

Area E2-1a - Healing Ward

You descend into a high ceilinged chamber whose putrid smell of rotting flesh crawls into your nostrils as the air stirs again for the first time in ages. Strewn across the blood-stained floor are splintered wooden cots, scraps of bloody linens and piles of rotting human corpses. Four pillars, each decorated by dozens of shields depicting noble crests, stand at each corner of the room. On the western wall are two open archways leading into a smaller room. On the eastern wall is a closed wooden door. Framing the northeast corner of the room is a stairwell which leads deeper into the sanctuary.

Suddenly your ears are pierced by the agonized screams of pain heaved forth from a hundred dry mouths. The corpses raise into five large mounds that push towards you!

When the Warlock Brothers stormed the sanctuary they slaughtered all of the injured troops and piled their corpses into five massive piles. As a curse against all those willing to

set aside allegiance for self, especially those once in league with Chaos. They infused necromantic life into each of the masses, ensuring that any future men who entered the sanctuary for healing would be killed and added to the atrocious mass. Over time, the Rotting Flesh Golems have grown to such size that they are quite slow and unable to leave the healing ward.

Golems of Rotting Flesh (5): Init -6; Atk bashing body-parts +3 melee (1d8+2) or flying body parts +1 ranged (see description); AC 8; HD 4d6; hp 12; MV 5'; Act 1d20; SP undead traits, immune to *sleep*, *charm*, *paralysis* spells, ranged weapons deal only 1hp damage; Fort +5, Ref -6, Will +2; AL C.

The golems can chuck body parts. Anyone hit will suffer -1 hp damage each round from the choking grasp of a severed hand, or the biting teeth of a decaying head, etc., until the body part is torn off (DC 10 Strength check). A target can be hit with multiple body parts during combat, stacking the damage. Once removed the body part will attempt to reform with the golem.

Any PC killed by one of the golems will be swept up into the pile, adding 1 HD to the creatures current total based off the PC's HD. Afterwards, if defeated, the fallen PC can still be rolled over as per Recovering the Body rules (DCC-RPG p. 93).

At the center of each golem is a single "control" heart. An ingredient valued by wizards, when fed into the mouth of a dead character, it will temporarily increase their luck score by +3 for the purpose of recovering the body. Every few days afterwards, the character will experience haunting visions of the Warlock Brothers responsible for the golems and must permanently lower their Intelligence score by -1 point until they succeed a DC 15 Will save.

Any player who wears the eye-caps found in **area E2-3** will not be attacked by the golems, as the dead of which they are comprised have a lingering affection for the Sightless Sisters. Any PC attacking while wearing the eye-caps must roll with a -2d penalty to hit.

The Shielded Pillars: Soldiers who sought healing from the Sightless Sisters were required to set-aside their allegiances while they recovered from their wounds. In a symbolic ritual of peace, they hung their shields upon the pillars during their recovery. The shields of those who passed while in the ward's care were left up as sign of eternal peace. Those who did recover often willingly cast aside their armor and shields into the pool above (**area E1-1**) in a vow to never raise arms again.

Any player who thoroughly searches the mounted shields and succeeds a Luck check will find one that is loose. Removing it will reveal a dented copper flask and a wooden tablet. Whatever was once in the flask has sat for so long that it is now poisonous. Drinking from the flask will cause no harm to the PC initially, but whenever they attempt an

action of any sort that requires a roll, they immediately feel weakened and must roll with a -2d penalty until they have had a week's worth of rest or magical healing. Carved into the wooden tablet is the immodest image of a buxom dwarf.

Area E2-1b - Healing Supply Closet

This disheveled small room contains collapsed shelves of crusted medicine jars and ruined gauze wrappings. An open wooden box upon the floor contains a dozen white linen robes.

PCs searching the closet will find 1d4 jars of salve that have not been contaminated. Each jar has one use and heals 1d8 hp. PCs will also discover a pair of strange, crabapple-sized, platinum, round cups. The circular edges of the hallowed cups are extremely sharp and both sides are dimpled. These are a replacement pair of eye-gouging scoops used in the blindness ritual (**area E3-1**).

Area E2-2 - Dormitory of the Blind Daughters

This barren room was the dormitory for the blinded daughters and contains only six simple, now decrepit, bunk beds. Three small mummified corpses wearing plain ceremonial gowns lay collapsed upon or next to the bunks. Towards the eastern wall is a stairwell descending to a lower level.

Sinful noblemen who wished to restore their standing with the gods would exchange the lives of their virginal daughters to the sanctuary for favorable standing in death. The daughters were first required to pass a test of faith by willingly blinding themselves before being accepted as apprentices to the sanctuary.

Searching the mummified corpses reveals gouged out eyes and torn holes in their gowns from multiple stab wounds. Any PC with the occupation of healer, or similar, or a PC succeeding a DC 13 Intelligence check will note that their missing eyes were from an older wound than the stabbings.

Area E2-3- Dormitory of the Sightless Sisters

You enter a circular chamber with six alcoves. In each alcove is a full-sized four-poster bed with torn silk canopies. Laying cross-armed upon each bed is the dry and leathery corpse of a woman dressed in a gold embroidered ceremonial gown.

Sightless Sisters: Upon closer inspection of the corpses, the PCs will find that each of them wears a pair of goggles with black translucent gemstones cut in the shape of staring eyes. These translucent goggles were the symbolic sacrifice of their vision since the sisters retained their sight to perform complex surgeries. Each goggle is worth 25gp. The skin around their throats has been cut. If PCs think to check around the bed, they will find a dagger near each. Branded above each of their bosoms is a unique rune of unknown origin.

Waking the Sisters: Though the Six Sisters are dead, their lives may be restored if a PC willingly sacrifices their sight in the Ceremonial Chamber (**area E3-2**).

Area E3-1 – Chapel of Patrons

You descend the slick stairs, entering a dimly lit chamber echoing with the sound of cascading water. At the center is a stone sarcophagus surrounded by a curtain of falling water. On the eastern and western walls are eight shallow alcoves wherein sit a different statue and offering bowl. On the far wall is an entryway that leads into a smaller chamber.

The dim light filling the chamber comes from the flames leaking out of gaps in the small pipes lining the ceiling and is related to the waterfall trap defending Margaret's Tomb.

Statues: *There are eight small statues in total; each dedicated to a different patron. One statue is carved from stone and depicts a large toad whose tongue strangles a snake held within its maw. The second statue is carved of blackwood and depicts a miniature oak tree in magnificent detail; the veins of the fingernail-sized leaves are gilded in gold. A third statue of bone depicts an insect with sixteen pincers capped by small rubies and its chitin forms the shape of a grinning horned demon.*

While the entry chamber was dedicated to healing the wounds of the body, this lower level was designated for healing the weaknesses of the spirit. Those in the process of healing would descend the stairs each morning to place an offering of coin, blood, or oath before the statue of their chosen patron. This gesture not only brought comfort, but at times was met with miraculous recovery!

The remaining five statues are of equal or higher quality. If any PC is specifically searching for their patron, they will discover a dedicated statue. Depending on the patron and their rituals, proper offerings from the PCs will be accepted and rewarded. Those who make an offering in full respect can roll a d6 and compare their result on **Table E.1**.

Within each of the offering bowls can be found 5d10gp. Any PC who removes the coins of an offering bowl has a 50% chance of suffering that patron's corruption. This same punishment can be applied to those who break a given oath. Unlike normal patron corruption, this will heal slowly over the course of a 1d4 weeks. If whole statues are taken the PC(s) may find themselves accosted by minions of the patron(s) in question or cursed.

Waterfall: Surrounding the tomb on all four sides is a thin waterfall emitting from a series of pipes and channels on the ceiling. Upon inspection, a thief or dwarf with a successful DC 10 Intelligence check (DC 13 for other classes) will determine the water is being drawn down from the pool above (**area E1-1**), through the four pillars in **area E2-1a** and finally spread out by a series of channels into this room. Shallow iron grates surround the tomb where the water disappears underground and is slowly pumped back into the pool. Casting *detect evil* on the water will generate a dark aura.

Tomb of Margaret: The PCs view of the tomb will be obscured by the waterfall unless it is crossed or the trap is triggered and the water runs out. Read or paraphrase:

This stone sarcophagus is of the finest dwarven craftsmanship and is decorated by silver filigree. A plate in old common reads: Saint Margaret Roulreed. Scenes along the sides depict milestones of Margaret's life: teaching her young brother the kindness of kings, her banishment from the Keep, setting up camp in the Eastern Forest and healing her first lost and injured soldier.

The carved lid of the sarcophagus is identical to the Margaret statue standing at the sanctuary's entrance. Two small black uthorite stones are socketed in the eyes of the relief.

The tomb's lid is sealed shut by a contraption made up of many iron bolts and cogs. The only way to properly open the tomb is to use the baptismal fount found in **area E3-2**. When a pair of fresh eyes have been drawn by the fount, the lid of Margaret's Tomb will shift downward, allowing a glimpse of Margaret for two minutes. In times of yore, the nobleman that sacrificed his daughter's eyes would take this time to pray to the saintly body, but it was also customary to add a coin to her tomb for good luck.

Waterfall Trap: Breaking open the lid of the tomb requires a DC 25 Strength check (any number of PCs may add their Strength modifier to the roll) or a DC 22 pick locks check. Failing either, or attempting to keep the lid open when it shuts, will result in the tomb sinking a half inch into the ground while the pipes in the ceiling release jets of fire. The waterfall instantly changes to scalding steam, burning all those standing under it or passing through it for 1d8 damage. Those outside or inside the canopy are momentarily safe from the damage. Those who stay within the canopy for an additional round will take 1d4 damage with the damage die increasing +1d each round thereafter. On the fourth round, the damage will begin affecting anyone within the

Table E.1

Roll	Effect
1-2	No effect.
3-4	A feeling of comfort passes over them as if they sat before a fire on a cold night. The PC gains a +2 bonus to their next Will check or save.
5	A feeling of great rejuvenation trickles throughout their body as if gently dipped into a icy cold pond toes first and slowly pulled back out. The PC heals 1d4 hp.
6	For a brief second, the PC catches a voyeuristic glimpse of their patron as they conduct duties beyond the understanding of mortals. At the last moment before the vision dissipates, the patron looks directly through the PC. The PC is stunned momentarily, but otherwise unchanged. FOR THE JUDGE: The next time the PC engages in combat, the Judge should secretly select a spell from the PC's patron spells list. Along with the PC's planned attack, they are assisted by the rolled spell. The PC must use the spell at that moment or lose it for the rest of the day.

chamber beginning again with 1d4 damage before increasing +1d each round after.

Disabling the steam trap requires a thief to succeed a DC 25 disable traps check. Alternatively, the PCs can wait 1d10+5 rounds for the steam trap to run out of water. Triggering the steam trap and allowing it to fully run its course will boil the Eastern Cray-creepers in **area E1-1**, creating a delicious seafood feast.

Inside the Tomb: *With the clanking of metal rods and the grinding of gears, the stone lid hisses open revealing the sanctified remains of Margaret Roulreed. Though obviously ancient, the mummified remains still hold some of the beauty portrayed on the exterior of her tomb. Her lavish robes are embroidered with a rainbow of gems. A bedding of copper, silver and gold coins surrounds her body. On her head is a simple silver circlet and in the hollows of her eyes sit two sparkling sky-blue jewels shaped like eyeballs.*

Raiding the tomb will recover: 158cp, 143sp, 76gp, jewels and gemstones worth 150gp, a silver circlet worth 100sp, eye jewels worth 150gp each and a scroll of *Blessing*. Taking any of the items will result in the Six Sisters rising as wights to enact revenge.

Area E3-2 – Ceremonial Chamber

You enter a small semi-circular stone room where six stone skulls are displayed on the far wall, each with a different rune carved into its forehead. In the eye-sockets of five of the six skulls is a pair of dried human eyes. On a raised dais at the center of the room is what appears to be a baptismal fount.

When Margaret died it was said that she came to each of her handmaidens in their sleep with words of comfort and direction. For their loyalty they were promised eternal life as long as they fulfilled two requirements: the sanctuary must stay open to all those seeking aid and at least one who serves the sanctuary must be physically blinded as a reminder of mortality and virtue. The sisters all agreed and, after constructing the wondrous exterior statue and water-canopied tomb, they quickly spread word of an apprenticeship program which promised a favorable afterlife to any nobleman who offered his virginal daughter to the sanctuary.

In this chamber, the noblemen would bind their daughters to the sanctuary. The Binding Ceremony was quite involved, but always ended with the daughter permanently losing her eyesight.

Unknown to all except the Six Sisters, the binding ritual forced upon the apprentices had a sinister function beyond proving loyalty. Each blood sacrifice breathed a little more life into the aging women and aided them in continuing their pietist efforts no matter the moral cost. Now in death, the Six Sisters await one of pure heart to redeem their souls.

Six Stone Skulls: The skulls are magically bound in ritual to each of the Six Sisters. A different rune carved into the fore-

head of each skull matches one of the brands found upon the bosoms of the Six Sisters.

Baptismal Fount: Carved into the stone fount is an archaic brand of the common tongue, which if translated (DC 10 Intelligence check) reads: *In the wisdom of St. Margaret and the Sisters Six, you that serve the sect must sacrifice thy sight to the Gods. Only then can thee heal the sins of men.*

The bowl of the fount is stained copper from blood, but is otherwise empty. Within is a hidden mechanism (DC 15 find traps) that, when pressed by the forehead of the sacrificed, quickly releases two sharp metal scoops that take out the victims eyes in a bloody, yet meticulously surgical, fashion. Afterwards, the victim’s bloody eyes will magically appear in the eye-sockets of one of the stone skulls.

If one of the PCs willingly sacrifices their vision, the curse upon the Six Sisters lifts and the forest area surrounding the sanctuary is restored. The newly awakened Sisters will gift the blind PC with the sky-blue jewels from Margaret’s Tomb, placing them within the PC’s empty sockets and restoring their vision ten fold. The PC will now have infravision up to 100ft and the ability to *detect evil* with sight alone equivalent to a spellcheck roll of 12-13 (DCC-RPG p.255). The restored Six Sisters can *Lay on Hands* as a 3rd level cleric (DCC-RPG p30).

If the PCs force an unwilling victim to sacrifice their vision or steal from the Six Sisters or Margaret’s Tomb, the Six will rise as wights to attack the party. Read or paraphrase: *Six pale, withered figures hover down the steps. Their hair and tattered gowns billow about their horrid forms.*

Sister Wights (6): Init +1; Atk lay on wounds +3 melee (see below); AC 13; HD 3d6; hp 10; MV 30’ flight; Act 1d20; SP un-dead traits; SV Fort +1, Ref +2; Will +3; AL C.

In life the Six Sisters were healers, but as the un-dead they only can only bring death. Whenever a Sister Wight attacks she invokes a power that is the exact opposite of a Cleric’s *Lay on Hands* ability: opening old wounds until the target in question bleeds out and dies.

For each attack consult **Table E.2** below comparing the PC’s alignment with the attack roll to determine the amount of damage inflicted. For PCs that succeed a Fort save against the attack roll the damage is halved (rounding up). Any PCs slain by a Sister Wight will rise as a Ghoul (see. DCC-RPG p. 414) in 1d4 rounds.

Table E.2

Attack Roll	Law	Neutral	Chaos
10+	2 dice	1 die	1 die
11-15	2 dice	2 dice	1 die
16-19	3 dice	2 dice	2 dice
20+	4 dice	3 dice	3 dice

THE WROOK'S HUT (F)

"My grandfather once told me to never trust the word of a crow. They are mischievous deceivers and servants of the Wrook of the Woods. In all my younger wanderings I never once crossed paths with this being, but I was told that it desires two things from this world: gold or a man's soul..."

- Eornrad, Elder of Reed

BACKGROUND

From where the Wrook originally hailed, or what exactly he is, none with any certainty can say. Many surmise he is an exiled demon trapped within the forest's perimeter. Others say he was once a hermit turned vile by the sickness of the forest. In any case, this demonic creature with midnight black skin and two golden orbs for eyes claims the entirety of Eastern Forest as his domain. Trespassers, as he calls them, should they be unlucky enough to cross his path, must pay a steep toll in precious metals, jewels, or anything else the old fiend desires at that particular moment. Failure to pay his toll and he will make certain to take that which you cherish most... Your soul!

Whether the PCs stumble across or are searching out the Wrook's Hut, he will be most displeased with the inconvenience.

PLAYER START

Area F1-1 – Feathered Fiends

Here, the leaves seem to shift strangely under the dark shadows of the heavy foliage and soon enough you become aware of thousands of beady black eyes gleaming from hundreds of large crows nesting in the branches above. Silently these fiendish birds watch your every move and wait.

The Wrook has command over all the crows that nest in the Eastern Forest. They are his servants and guardians. The crows form a circumference around the Wrook's hut starting from 500ft away. For the first 250ft, the crows will merely watch the approaching party with a silent menace. As the party continues closer to the hut, the branches become ever more crowded with crows who begin to squawk erratically or swoop to intimidate the PCs.

When the party reaches a halfway point, the murder of crows forms a noisome choir warning the Wrook of their approach. There is a 50% chance the Wrook will be in his hut. If not, it will take him 1d3 turns to return after the crows sound their alarm.

Area F1-2 – Hut Exterior

The noisy crows continue their constant cawing as you spot a clearing beyond the trees. In the center of this clearing is a simple hut formed of banded wood and mud caked walls. Plumes of smoke rise from a hole in the thatched roof. Leather drapes hang loose before an open doorway.

While continuing to make a ruckus, the crows will now attack any PC that steps foot in the clearing, swooping down from the branches to tear at their flesh or gouge out their eyes!

Any critical hits rolled will result in the loss of the target's eye and possibly a permanent ability score loss (Judge's discretion). There is an infinite amount of crows present and no way, and PC must determine a clever means of averting harm. The crows will not follow PCs into the hut.

The hut is roughly 60ft away from the edge of the tree line and the crows will not follow the party into the hut. If the Wrook is currently home, he will emerge to attack the trespassers and prevent them from entering.

Murder of Crows: Init +3; Atk pecking beaks +1 melee (1d3+1); AC 10; HD infinite; hp infinite; MV fly 40'; SP, improved crit 19-20, gouge eyes on critical hits; SV Fort +0, Ref +5, Will +1; AL C.

Area F2-1 – Den

Inside the hut has a diameter of roughly 25ft. In the center, a fire pit dug into the earth smolders and sends up black smoke that exits through the hole in the roof. Piled around the edges and half buried in the soil are various treasures of gold and silver. Cups, jewelry, and other fine items are haphazardly tossed about the otherwise dank and grubby lodging. Opposite the front entrance hangs the hide of some beast, beyond which is another room.

Treasures: The loot piled around is everything the Wrook has confiscated from those unfortunate travelers that crossed his path. If the characters had something taken from them by the Wrook during the course of the campaign there is a good chance of it being recovered now.

This treasure hoard is worth 300gp and will certainly require many mules or a wagon in order to carry the entire load. It is left up to Judge to determine exactly what the PCs will find. There is a 10% chance per PC of finding an exception piece of treasure, be it a magical item or something to further the campaign through the Eastern Forest. For instance if the PCs never found *Silvallum, the Sword of Roulreed* in the Ancient Keep (see p. 08), then perhaps it is buried amongst the Wrook's hoard.

Arrival of the Wrook: If the Wrook returns when the PCs are raiding the hut, read or paraphrase the following:

A black cloud of feathers and smoke swirls down through the hole in the roof, gathering momentum as it continues to

circle round and round. For an instant, you think the entire hut may collapse on top of you before this torrent morphs into a bizarre and hideous creature with midnight black skin.

Set wide on its elongated face are two golden orbs that it must use for eyes. It sports a long leather coat and an overly large silver medallion which swings low from its neck. The thing hops around on large bird legs, squawking with its terribly wide mouth, "Intruders! Vagrants! Thieves!"

Whether the party has had dealings with the Wrook in the past or not, he no longer cares. His only goal now is to defend his roost!

For the Wrook's stats refer to p. 60.

Area F2-2 - Wrook's Nest

The floor is covered in feathers, twigs, and straw forming a large nest that completely fills this area. Thirteen smoky and translucent black eggs, each roughly 2ft in height, sit nestled throughout. At random, each egg quivers momentarily, as something inside swirls in the murkiness.

Here in his nest are the Wrook's most prized possessions: the Soul Eggs. The Wrook will begrudgingly barter with the PCs if he feels his eggs are threatened, perhaps giving up his

second most precious item, the Silver Medallion. However, if not slain and randomly encountered later, he will attempt to kill the party, taking his treasure back along with their souls.

Soul Eggs: Like its namesake, each egg contains the poor soul of a lost traveler who could not pay the Wrook's toll. Each egg is roughly 2ft tall, 3ft wide, and weighs 100 pounds. Looking into the dark translucent shell, a PC may glimpse a tormented face swimming amidst the churning black smoke. Breaking the eggs will release what remains of the tortured souls: *A black yoke that slowly spills out of the egg and levitates up through the air.*

If unhindered, the black yoke will continue to rise, squeezing through the smallest cracks in the roof and disappearing into the sky. It is possible to collect the yoke in a glass container in the hopes of healing the soul, which itself is a quest the Judge must devise. The "yoke" could also be used as a spell component that would definitely cause a wizard, or elf of low moral standards, to suffer instant corruption.

If a PC's soul has been stolen and laid in the nest, the party must first find the right egg, crack the shell, and then attempt to spoon the "yoke" into the husk of the soulless PC. Once revived the PC will be forever hindered in the form of a permanent -2d3 Personality loss.



BESTIARY FOR THE EASTERN FOREST: NEW ENCOUNTERS FOR A BLIGHTED LAND

For those brave souls willing to travel under the dark eves of the Eastern Forest, they are bound to find no shortage of loathsome creatures and dreadful entities wishing for nothing more than to feast on the sweet flesh and juicy innards of their soft and frail bodies. However, not all encounters within the forest are purely malevolent, as some are merely wayward souls eternally searching for sweet release from the bonds of this world, while others are the by-products of an environment turned sour.

The Eastern Forest is a large and vastly uncharted territory. The creatures presented in this bestiary are by no means the only entities to be encountered. As stated previously, Judges are encouraged to take the material presented and make it their own.

For every hex traveled during the day, there is a 1 in 6 chance of a random encounter. At night, that chance increases to 2 in 6. Whenever an encounter happens, roll 1d20 on the table provided or pick an encounter at random.

CHERUB SPIDER HORROR

Cherub Spider Horror: Init +3; Atk bite +1 melee (1d4) or trample +2 melee (2d6); AC 11; HD 3d8; hp 12; MV 40'; Act 3d20; SP 50% chance to surprise, intestinal web, spider climb, un-dead traits, death throes; SV Fort +1, Ref +2, Will +1; AL C.

The escaped by-product from the short lived cultists of the Ancient Keep, this abomination treads the upper canopies of the forest on eight spindly limbs composed of several human arms fashioned together through black magic and twine. Its body is a patchwork of swollen bellies sewn together, while its head is that of an adorable baby with sharp venomous fangs.

When attacking, the Cherub Spider Horror will either bite or trample a target. From a sphincter on its backside the monster can spew a writhing strand of sticky intestines (DC 13 Ref save to avoid) that will drag a target into melee range. Alternatively, a spewed strand can lay a target prone (DC 13 Ref save to avoid/DC 13 Strength to break).

Upon the horror's demise, its swollen body will

Roll	Encounter
1-2	Olde Applehead or The Wrook
3-5	Reverent Knights of Roulreed
6-7	Cherub Spider Horror
8-10	The Coo'ng
11-12	No Encounter
13	Eastern Hare
14-15	Gno-Mads
16-17	Pygies
18	Whisperer in the Flame
19	The Forlorn Spirit
20	Hound O'the Wood

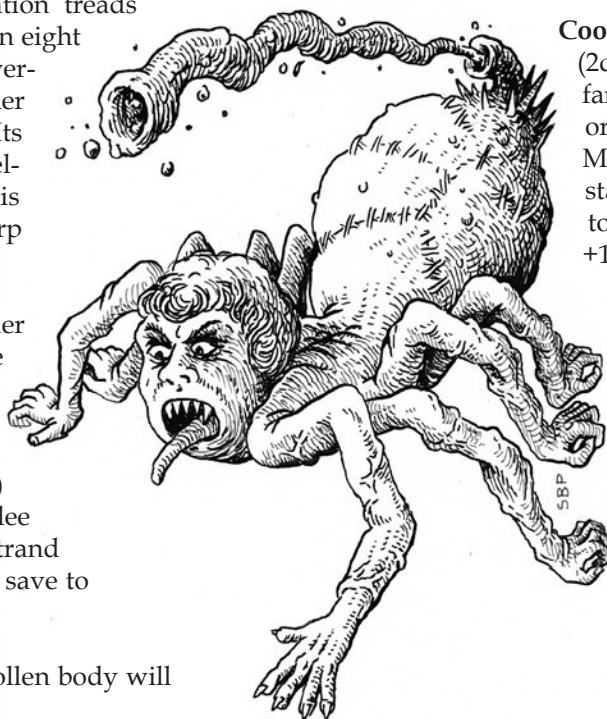
burst, spewing its belly of sticky intestines 10ft in all directions and effectively covering the area in gore (DC 15 Ref save to avoid). If hit, the stench on the PCs will cause the next living creature encountered to go into a frenzy, effectively doubling their attack.

If the PCs failed to recover *Silvallum* from the Ancient Keep (p. 08) and choose to return to the structure they will surely find it inhabited by the Cherub Spider Horror, which will stalk the PCs in the dark, picking them off one by one and taking them back to its lair in the dungeons.

COO'NG, THE

Coo'ng, The: Init +4; Atk claws +3 melee (2d4 + DC 12 Fort save or diseased) or fangs +2 melee (1d6 + DC 12 Fort save or diseased); AC 13; HD 4d12; hp 25; MV 30' or fly 30'; Act 1d20; SP back stab +2, spells +3: *charm person*, 50% to resistance to spells; SV Fort +3, Ref +1, Will +3; AL C.

Once a sorceress of some renown, it is said she had a hand in the making of King Roulreed; her name has long been lost in the folds of time as her body slowly succumbed to the corrupting effects of magick. Soon after, her mind slipped until she became nothing more than the stalking predatory beast known today as the Coo'ng.



Her appearance is that of humanoid shaped creature with a hide of thick pale skin and mottled patches of fur that becomes luminescent in the moonlight. Long black claws protrude from her hands and with nimble, powerful muscles, she strikes down prey with one swift attack from behind.

The Coo'ng flies with dual sets of wings that grow from its back, resembling an unholy union between the moth and the bat. Below an antennae brow, saucer-shaped eyes shimmer an iridescent blue and two sharp fangs protrude from human lips.

Her claws and fangs are diseased-ridden and any PC hit must succeed a DC 12 Fort save or suffer the effects of a temporary -1d6 Stamina loss.

The Coo'ng is named because of the sweet natured tune it makes when lulling its prey into a state of ease. The cooing sound combined with the creature's glowing blue eyes allow it to hypnotize any creature of its choosing, akin to the 1st level Wizard's spell *charm person* (see DCC-RPG rulebook p. 131). If encountered randomly in the forest, the Coo'ng fights until it hypnotizes a character, then attempts to flee with its prize, flying straight back to her Tower (**area C**).



EASTERN HARE

Eastern Hare: Init +2; Atk grapple +1 melee (bashing 1d6 or strangulation 1d3 Stamina loss); AC 10; HD 2d8+2; hp 10; MV 30'; Act 2d20; SP festering insects, un-dead traits; SV Fort +2, Ref +2, Will +1; AL N.

When first encountered, the Eastern Hare appears as an overly large, wounded rabbit with matted, blood-stained fur and deep aberrant cuts in its sides. When its prey ap-

proaches the hare will not run, but begins breathing erratically. Once its prey is within 5ft, 1d6+2 locks of dark hair spring out from the aberrations, eye sockets, and mouth of the creature to quickly wrap around any near by prey. At the same time, a swarm of insects spills out of the hare to bite and sting anything within a 10ft radius for reducing all actions -1d.

A grappled target will either be bashed against a hard object or strangled as thick strands of hair slowly inch down their throat. In order to break free, the target must succeed a contested Strength check (+2 for the Eastern Hare). Each lock of hair can be hacked through with 2 points worth of damage. On the following round, 2 more strands of hair will spring out of the creature to attack. This will continue every time a strand is cut, until the Eastern Hare is slain or turned by a Cleric.

FORLORN SPIRIT, THE

This visage of King Roulreed's sister Margaret appears before daunted or wounded souls that travel the Eastern Forest. When first spotted from afar many may believe her to be a mirage or some foul trick of the forest, but for to many she appears quite angelic, like sunlight reflecting off the early morning dew. Although she is indeed a spectre, for all appearances she is completely opaque.

Her appearance is that of a young woman with a melancholy disposition and bright blue eyes. The PCs may believe the girl to be lost, but her formal manner and tone will prove otherwise. She will tell them of a refuge not far from their current location where they can find peace and heal both their bodies, minds, and souls. If any of the PCs carries *Silvallum, the Sword of Roulreed*, the girl will act as if that character is her brother who, "*must finally be weary from battling all these long years...*"

If the PCs agree, she will lead them through the forest, which soon becomes shrouded in thick mist. After a while, the mist recedes and they will have arrived near Area E - The Sanctuary of the Sightless Sisters.

Once they arrive, the girl turns, revealing empty eye sockets and says, "*Here is the Sanctuary of the Sightless Sisters. I'm sure you'll find peace here [Brother/Sister] in this Elysium with others such as yourself.*" She walks towards the structure, disappearing in to the ether.

If the PCs ever become violent, the spirit will instantly fade away, but will remember nothing of the incident if met again. Completing Area E and restoring the sanctuary will bring the spirit to rest and she will no longer roam the forest. Any rolls on the random encounters table for the spirit thereafter will result in no encounters.

GNO-MADS

Gno-mads (6 per character): Init +2; Atk tiny weapons +1 melee (1hp each); AC 12; HD n/a; hp 2 each; MV 5' or fly 40'; Act 1d20; SP 80% chance to hide, *color spray*; SV Fort +0, Ref +2, Will +1; AL C.

Gno-mads are a tribe of malevolent, tiny fey people that ride on the backs of birds, never settling as they travel from one end of the forest to next. Roughly 8 inches tall, these ruffians want nothing more than to steal food and cause some trouble. In short, they're jerks!

A PC carrying rations and successfully attacked by 5 or more Gno-mads will find the little buggers have swiped 1 day's worth. After stealing the rations, that particular group of Gno-mads will fly away with the goods.

Gno-mads as a combined effort can use their action to cast the spell *color spray* (DCC-RPG p.135). For each Gno-mad that aids in casting, add +1 to the spellcheck.

When randomly encountered, there is a 1 in 12 chance the PCs have stumbled upon a rather large Gno-mad tribe that consists of 50. In such large numbers the Gno-mads feel an instinctive rage to protect what is there's and will bitterly fight to the death until only 10 are left and, only after failing a morale check, the Gno-mads ride off.

HOUND O'THE WOOD

Hound O'the Wood: Init always surprises; Atk bite +3 melee (1d4); AC 12; HD 2d8; hp 8; MV 40'; Act 1d20; SP vanish at will or when hp reaches zero; SV Fort +3, Ref +2, Will +2; AL L.

When encountered, read or paraphrase the following: *In the distance, lying amidst shallow roots and dead leaves, is a great wolf with a stark white pelt and red flame-tipped ears. Whimpering and growling, the wild beast bares its long fangs, but makes no motion to move and you soon discover that it is caught in a thicket of sharp thorns.*

If the PCs are brave enough to approach the growling animal and help it out of its current predicament, the wolf, once freed, will stand to stare at them with icy blue eyes before running off and disappearing. Chasing after the creature is a hopeless endeavor as it seems to simply vanish into thin air. Some time later, when the PCs are in dire need the Hound O'the Wood will return to aid them.

If the PCs attempt to harm the wolf, it will simply vanish in a puff of white smoke as a chilling howl echoes from all around. The entire party will then suffer a loss of 1 Luck point while the ones who intended to harm the animal suffer -1d3+1 Luck point loss. Afterwards, whenever the Hound O'the Wood is encountered, it will attack the party until it reaches 0 hp and vanishes, only to be found later, healthy and bloodthirsty again.



JHUMBII-BEYRS

Jhumbii-Beyrs (1d5+1): Init +2; Atk crystal tipped spears +1 melee (1d6) or bounce & pin +2 melee (see below); AC 13; HD 2d6; hp 6; MV 30'; Act 1d20; SP 50% chance to surprise, half damage from slashing and piercing weapons, color variants; SV Fort +2, Ref +3, Will+2; AL C.

Many believe Jhumbii-Beyrs to be mere legends used to scare children and keep them from entering the Eastern Forest. In truth, these creatures roam from one end of the forest to the other, hunting animals for assimilation.

Jhumbii-Beyrs are translucent, gelatinous entities that come in a variety of colors (see below) and usually take the form of bear cubs no more than 3 to 4 feet in height. Sometimes, skeletal remains or organs of previously assimilated creatures float around in their jelly bodies, but there is always a brain and spinal cord intact.

Jhumbii-Beyrs lie in wait inside the hollows of trees or in high branches; when a victim crosses their path, they spring out to attack with primitive crystal-tipped spears or by bouncing and pinning the target to the ground (opposing Strength check to break free). If a victim remains pinned on the following round, the Jhumbii-Beyr will attempt to force its sweet tasting form down the target's gullet. To resist, the target must succeed on an opposing Strength check. Failing that, the target will have consumed some of the Jhumbii-Beyr, which is so sweet they must now succeed a DC 13 Will save in order to resist eating more. Every time the Jhumbii-Beyr is fed to a target, it loses 1d3 hp. If over half

its hp is consumed, the target will be infected (see Jhumbii-Metamorphosis below). PCs succumbing to the urge of consuming an entire Jhumbii-Beyr will suffer diabetes, death and approximately 28,235 calories.

Jhumbii-Beyrs can choose to bounce away from an attack without penalty.

Jhumbii-Beyr Colors: Along with their regular abilities, each color variant has a unique power. Roll 1d5 for each Jhumbii-Beyr encountered to determine its color.

Roll	Color
1	Green: Attacks cause Minor Corruption (DC 8 Fort save).
2	Orange: Acidic touch, additional 1d3 damage plus 50% chance of weapon or armor melting.
3	Red: Blob Lobber +2 ranged (Ref save vs Atk roll or stuck). DC 10 Strength to break free.
4	Blue: Swallow whole +1 melee (Suffocation equaling 1d3 Stamina loss). DC 10 Strength to break out.
5	Purple: Resists up to 50% damage from all magical attacks.
6	Yellow: Brutish, Dual welding crystal spears +2 melee (2d6); Act 1d16/1d16.

Jhumbii-Metamorphosis: If the essence of a Jhumbii-Beyr is consumed it will, over the span of 1d4 weeks, cause a

metamorphosis of the body (DC 18 Fort save each week to cease). Flesh will turn to slime while the majority of bones and organs (except the brain) dissolve (permanent 1d4 STR, AGI and STA loss per week of transoformation, player's choice). Only clerical/magical healing of three dice or more (see DCC-RPG p. 30-31) can stop the change. Lastly, after the transformation time has ended, the slime then takes command of the brain and a new Jhumbii-Beyr is formed unless the victim can succeed at one final DC 20 Will save in an attempt to keep control of their mind. If successful and with practice, the PC is able to form into a humanoid shape not unlike their original body. Until then, well... their fellow kinsmen may need to carry the PC's jelly-covered brain in a jar.

Jhumbii-Brains: Wizards, alchemists, shamans, or similar occupations that succeed a DC 15 Intelligence check will know there is a gland (1 in 10 chance) within the brain of a Jhumbii-Beyr that, if concocted into a potion, will provide unlimited Strength (STR 18) for a limited time (6 rounds).

OLDE APPLEHEAD

Olde Applehead: Init +4; Atk projectile heads +2 ranged (1hp + DC 13 Ref save or knocked prone) or swallow whole +3 melee (1d4 per round); AC 16; HD 6d12; hp 70; MV 50'; Act 3d20; SP induce fear, swallow whole; SV Fort +3, Ref -3, Will +1; AL C.



Olde Applehead is an unstoppable chaotic force of brutal strength that rampages from one end of the forest to the other. Its body is one gigantic ugly head mounted on four squat, vein-bulging muscular legs. Sprouting from stalks on the sides of its mass are several smaller human heads that constantly weep or scream in agony. The creature will launch these heads in an attempt to knock fleeing targets prone. New heads are continually birthed from the stalks. Olde Applehead can launch up to 3 heads per round. When within range, Olde Applehead will attempt to swallow one target whole. If successful, the swallowed target will slowly be digested, suffering 1d4 damage each round.

Olde Applehead and its many stalk heads will loosen a frightening battle cry that can induce fear in even the mightiest of warriors. Whenever a PC spots Olde Applehead for the first time or hears its battle cry, they must succeed a DC 15 Will save or stand petrified with fear for the next round.

The monster can never attempt a surprise attack, as its wailing heads and trampling feet can be heard over a great distances. Wise characters will immediately look for a hiding place, as Olde Applehead hardly stops to survey its surroundings. Attempting to out maneuver the monster will call for a contested Agility check (+5 for Olde Applehead).

If the PCs slay Olde Applehead, read or paraphrase the following: *In its final death spasm, layer after layer of shrived skin peels away from the grotesque head, revealing a slimy, clear sack wherein a dull light pulsates and soon swells bright and burning. The sack melts away as spectres made of pure light fly forth to dance about the scene before taking to the sky in a fit of laughter.*

All the wayward souls Olde Applehead consumed over the many years have been released. Reward the PCs with ample XP and 3 points of Luck each.

PYGSIES

Pygsies (1d4+1): Init +1; Atk tearing tusks +2 (1d4+1); AC 11; HD 1d8; hp 4; MV 30' fly; Act 1d20; SP combustible feces, diseased saliva; SV Fort +2, Ref +1, Will +0; AL N.

Your mother may have weaved bedtime stories of happy exhibitionist fey folk that pranced gaily through the forest, helping lost travelers find their way. Well friend, these were just tall tales to keep you from the truly horrible fey-beasts known as Pygsies. These unclean, diseased-ridden, flying swine-things are atrocities that gleefully attack travelers on sight!

Flying into battle on tiny gossamer wings that defy any rational physics, the Pygsies will attempt diving maneuvers in order to rip apart their targets with brutally sharp tusks. Since they are constantly salivating, there is a 30% chance that on a successful attack the target may have contracted some type of disease, resulting in a daily 1 point loss of Stamina. Unless the disease is treated using some form of



magical healing the Stamina loss will continue. Furthermore, while diseased, no food consumed can be kept down and no hit points will heal naturally.

In addition to their repulsive nature, the Pygsies will, once per turn, expel their combustible bowels, with a 10% chance per Pygsie of landing on an open flame and producing a small blast. This blast can harm any target within a 10 foot radius for 1d6 fire damage.

REVERENT KNIGHTS OF ROULREED

Reverent Knights (2d3): Init: -1; Atk rusty weapons +1 melee (1d6); AC 10 (9 against PCs wielding *Silvallum*); HD 1d12; hp 6; MV 20'; Act 1d20 (1d14 against PCs wielding *Silvallum*); SP un-dead traits, immune to *sleep*, *charm*, *paralysis* spells, crit on 19-20, 1d3 Luck drain on crit; SV Fort +1, Ref -1, Will +2; AL C.

Reverent Champion (1): Init: +0; Atk enchanted weapon (see below); AC 12 (10 against PCs wielding *Silvallum*); HD 2d12; hp 12; MV 20'; Act 1d20 (1d16 against PCs wielding *Silvallum*); SP un-dead traits, immune to *sleep*, *charm*, *paralysis* spells, crit on 18-20, 1d3 Luck drain on crit; SV Fort +2, Ref +0, Will +2; AL C.

Once some of the best knights in King Roulreed's court, these unfortunate men met an ill fate on the day their King fought against three Warlock Brothers. As the tale goes, Roulreed was in mad pursuit of these fiends for seven days and nights while the Warlocks used their magic to hinder his passage through the forest. Finally, weary and tired from their pursuit, the King and his men rested only to be ambushed by the Brothers, now magically multiplied into many!

During the battle, many knights were slain and the King suffered a strange illness from the Warlocks' cursed blades that mutated his very bones. Suffering wounds themselves, the Brothers fled, never to be heard from again. However, not all those that perished that day remained dead and the forest has been as a tomb they are cursed to forever wander.

For every hex entered by a PC carrying *Silvillum, the Sword of Roulreed*, there is a 25% chance that a group of Reverent Knights, along with one Reverent Champion, will sense the King's sword and come searching for him. Though loyal in life, these un-dead knights have been completely twisted from the evil that envelops the forest.

In life, the Reverent Champions were the bravest warriors in Roulreed's court. Now un-dead, their weapons are infused with chaotic energies. When first encountered, roll a 1d12 on the table below to determine the type of weapon a Reverent Champion wields and, on any critical hits, add the weapon's effect to the damage. If defeated the weapons will revert to the rusted relics they truly are.

Roll	Weapon Type
1-2	Spear of Minor Corruption - (1d8) The target suffers a bout of Minor Corruption (DCC-RPG p. 116), no save.
3-4	Blade of Necrotizing Fasciitis - (1d6) Failing a DC 15 Fort save, the target acquires a flesh-eating disease which permanently eats -1pt of STR, AGI, or STA (player's choice) each day until magically healed.
5-6	Bow of Chaos - (1d6) The target suffers a spasm of pain that courses through their veins like molten serpents. The target remains prone for 1d4 rounds.
7-8	Axe of Solace - (1d10) Failing a DC 13 Will save, the target is filled with an emptiness like none other. The will to live has been drained from their soul and they kneel before the Reverent Champion in the hope of Death's sweet embrace. The PC must make a DC 13 Will save the next round in order to regain their senses.
9-10	Flail of Fleeing - (1d6) The flail appears to extend beyond the reach of its chain and knocks the target prone 15' away on a failed DC 13 Fort save. Any other PCs in the direct path of the target will be knocked prone if they fail a DC 10 Ref save. On the following round, the target must succeed a morale check or flee from combat.
11-12	Warhammer of Wraith - (1d8) The ground beneath the target's feet splits open. If they fail a DC 12 Ref save they tumble into the newly blazing hellfire for an additional 1d6 damage (DC 10 Strength check to climb from fissure).

If destroyed by *Silvillum*, the soul of a Reverent Knight is released from its wicked bondage and finds redemption at long last. The player wielding the sword gains 1 Luck point.

SKUBBLERS

Skubblers (2d6): Init +0; Atk acidic touch +1 melee (1d3); AC 8; HD 2d4; hp 4; MV 15'; Act 1d20; SP orifice invasion; SV Fort -1, Ref +1, Will +0; AL N.

These sentient bubbles cling to the bones of the deceased, traveling through the forest in shambling packs of varying shapes and sizes. These packs attack any living creature in order to multiply their numbers. On a successful attack, a Skubbler's outer shell of bubbles pop, burning away the flesh of its victim.

While in melee combat, a Skubbler can also invade any orifice of a target (DC 12 Reflex save to avoid). If successful, the target will suffer 1d10 damage (DC 15 Fort save for half) as the bubbles worm through, burning away the victim's flesh and organs from within. Each Skubbler can attempt this feat twice before burning itself out completely. If the target is slain, they raise the next round as a new Skubbler.

WHISPERER IN THE FLAME

Have you ever heard a strange voice whisper your name in the dark of the night and wake only to find the flickering flames of your campfire? What did this voice say or more importantly what did it promise? Do you still believe it was just a figment of your imagination?

The Whisperer in the Flame is a sinister spirit that only manifests within the borders of the Eastern Forest and can only communicate with the material plane through fire. The Whisperer takes on no outward appearance and will usually only speak with one person at a time, preferring that person to have a lower Willpower so as to easily manipulate them. The Whisperer will attach itself to torch flame, lamp light, or camp fire and then proceed to implant its ill will upon its chosen victim. The victim must succeed an opposing Willpower check with the Whisperer having a +4 modifier to the roll (alternatively the Whisperer may roll a d24). If the



Whisperer is successful, the victim will inherently believe whatever is said and will attempt to keep whatever flame the Whisperer spoke through burning, attacking friends and foes alike who attempt to snuff it out. No other Willpower saves can be attempted while the victim is under the sway of the Whisperer until the flame is out.

Here are a few examples of the Whisperer's manipulations:

- The Whisperer convinces its victim that if they head in a certain direction a great hoard of treasure can be found. Doing so will either lead the party into great danger or simply astray.
- The Whisperer convinces its victim that they should be in possession of an item one of the other characters carry.
- The Whisperer convinces its victim of betrayal within the party and that one or all of the characters are secretly against them. The victim will then see things as the Whisperer chooses, as if they were under the effects of a *charm person* spell (DCC-RPG p. 131).

WROOK, THE

Wrook, The: Init: +3; Atk talons +2 melee (2d6); AC 15; HD 6d10; hp 30; MV 15' or fly 60'; Act 1d20; SP lay chicken spawn, summon or transform into murder of crows, death throes; SV Fort +2, Ref +3, Will +4; AL C.

The Wrook is a demonic creature with midnight black skin, crow's legs and a freakishly wide mouth always curled into a smile. His most prominent feature (aside from his feet) are his bright golden orb eyes set wide in his face. He wears a long leather jacket and an overly large silver medallion which swings low around his neck. The Wrook gets around by hopping on his bird legs, but can also transform into a murder of crows that disperses in all directions.

When encountered, the Wrook will demand a steep toll from *'trespassers'* wandering through *his* forest. This could be anything from gold pieces (10 x the number of PCs) to a single magic item.

Combat: Though the Wrook prefers not to engage in combat, he will fight the PCs if pushed, using his talons or disgusting ability to lay Chicken Spawn. When laying Chicken Spawn, the Wrook will use his action to hop away from the PCs. Each time he hops away (1d3+1), he squats and lays a golden egg that instantly hatches into a terrible, headless, molting chicken thing, with a gaping flopping neck hole filled with gnashing teeth and dripping bile.

Chicken Spawn (1d3+1): Init +3, Atk gnashing neck hole +1 melee (1d3), AC 9, HD 1d4, hp 3, MV 15ft, Act 1d20, SV Fort -1, Ref +0, Will -2, AL C.

Soul Stealing: PCs trying to leave the forest without paying the *'toll'* are instantly met by the Wrook. With a great sucking breath, he will attempt to draw out the PC's soul (DC 18 Will save), and if successful will later lay a black soul egg in his nest (**area F2-2**). The soulless PC will be a mere husk, unable to move until their soul is returned. If the Wrook is slain before the egg is laid, the PC's soul is forever lost.

Death Throes: If the Wrook is defeated, his body liquefies into a gory mass of black tar and feathers, leaving behind the two golden orbs that once served as his eyes. Each orb is inscribed with archaic runes of an unknown origin. Do these orbs hold the key to the Wrook's power? Are the orbs cursed and will any in possession of them become akin to the Wrook? Or are they puzzle boxes to be opened where further treasure or hellish torment awaits? The decision is up to the Judge. Each orb is worth 200gp to the right buyer.

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