

F3

For Use With
1st Edition AD&D®

Dungeon Module F3

Many Gates of the Gann

by Guy Fullerton

AN ADVENTURE FOR CHARACTER LEVELS 3-5



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For use with 1st Edition Advanced Dungeons & Dragons®

Barbarous hyena-men who raid villages and kidnap girl-children? Bah! Unremarkable in our world! But when these raiders retreat safely past ancient sculptures that vaporize intruders, into heretofore unopened vaults believed to hold a weapon of primal terror, and past the gates that guard ancient treasures never beheld by man? Aye! Now these are rumors worthy of adventure! What bold souls will dare pass into centuries-old chambers protected by the Many Gates of the Gann?



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AN ADVENTURE FOR CHARACTER LEVELS 3-5



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INTRODUCTION

Before the age of humans, a traveler known as the Gann came to this world to hide a weapon of tremendous destructive power, capable of demolishing an entire kingdom in one punishing onslaught. So the Gann devised a subterranean fortress that would prevent the world's burgeoning intelligent races from acquiring the device. But for reasons known only to himself, the Gann also desired living guardians. After lengthy biological and social experimentation, he concocted a means of sentient protection for the weapon: Modified primate servitors who are only as intelligent and willful as necessary for their role as the fortress's caretakers.

Over the centuries the outer gates have, with planned regularity, opened for brief periods, allowing for necessary upkeep and automatic replenishment of the servitor apes. On rare occasions, intelligent creatures have dared to enter through the gaping outer door. Most died or fled, but two notable groups endured. The earliest was an evil spirit named Ashkasar and his diabolic familiar; they continue to call the complex their home to this day, satisfying their cruel urges through sadistic binges every century or so. The second, some 250 years ago, was a group of adventurers in search of plunder and power. The only surviving member of this expedition decided to invoke a magical stasis implement she had discovered, so as to remain in the fortress and help protect the Gann's weapon.

Recently, a series of earthquakes shook the region, creating subterranean fissures that now connect the deepest reaches of the Gann's complex to the vast network of tunnels roamed by horrible underground races. A group of zerpanaktes – giant snakes that merge with their humanoid thralls – discovered the rifts, explored part of the Gann's complex, and found a way to open the outer gates ahead of schedule. After striking bargains with other despicable factions, the zerpanaktes now send forth their hyena-man allies into human towns to procure stock suitable for their bizarre symbiotic breeding practices.

Three months ago, an exploration party entered the complex, but was captured and delivered to the zerpanaktes. Still the outer gates remain open; still the hyena-men raid towns and caravans, returning to the complex with riches and captives. The time is ripe for an intrepid party to pass beyond the gates in search of wealth, revenge, or the Gann's weapon itself...

NOTES FOR THE DUNGEON MASTER

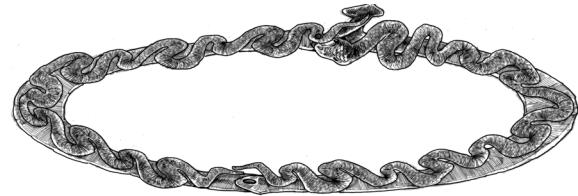
Player Character Levels: Many Gates of the Gann is suitable for five to seven characters of 3rd to 5th level. By no means are all the possible encounters herein intended to be “appropriate challenges” in combat; groups that think, sneak, and parley will do better than those that always draw steel. Recognizing when to flee and cut losses is also very important.

Starting the Adventure: Although there is a backstory to the locations, creatures and situations described this module, no specific plot should be forced upon those who play it. The players should be free to interact with the environment as they see fit, allowing their own goals to arise naturally.

The characters can begin with the teaser information on the front cover (q.v.). Here are some additional rumors (of mixed veracity) and hooks to help draw the characters to the adventure site:

1. Diviners speak of a potent weapon controlled by an obsidian ring somewhere deep below the gates of the murdering ape eyes.
2. Local legend says the ape heads devour anyone who approaches the entrance during the day.
3. During a raid, several hyena-men wore serpent-shaped iron collars.

4. The ape head portal has existed for over a millennium. Some believe the caverns within hold artifacts from a world that begat our own.
5. The hyena-men are rumored to be hunting for a very specific girl-child, and they won't cease their raids until they find her.
6. Three months ago, the foreign thaumaturgist Samuel-of-the-Loam solicited nearby towns for apprentices, all the while boasting of his knowledge of rare spells. With no takers, he instead hired a gang of mercenaries and set off in the direction of the ape head door.
7. A local merchant-lord's adult son is believed to be among the captives taken in a hyena-man attack. His rivals want to surreptitiously organize an expedition to ensure the son's death within the hyena-man lair. (You must decide where the son is within the complex and whether he is already dead.)



GENERAL FEATURES

Most of the Gann's complex appears to have been constructed in a seamless fashion, as if the entire place was tunneled within a single cyclopean chunk of granite. Most surfaces have areas that are naturally cracked, pitted, or otherwise slightly irregular.

The seamless granite is impervious to damage from anything less than 5th level spell effects, +4 weapons, or similar, thanks to the arcane methods of construction used by the Gann. Naturally, this prevents iron spikes from being hammered into the granite!

Ceilings generally dome to 15' high, or vault to the same height in hallways and long, narrow rooms.

Doors are constructed of very sturdy, 5" thick petrified wood beams, reinforced with steel bands, bars, and fixtures of superlative craftsmanship. Doors feature neither locks nor keyholes. All exceptions are noted in the area descriptions.

One-Way Doors (*Important!*): The complex contains many one-way doors, indicated on the map as a half-thickness door protruding from only one side of a wall. You may have seen this symbol used in other modules to represent false doors, but in this module they are not false doors! These one-way doors work as follows:

1. From the “door side,” a one-way door looks like and can be opened like any normal door. While opened, it allows passage from one side to the other, appearing as a normal door from both sides.
2. While closed, there is no door on the other side (i.e., the “wall side”) – it's just a blank wall. It can be detected from the “wall side” as though it were a secret door, perhaps due to a telltale scratch in the floor, a partial footprint emerging from the wall, or similar.
3. No amount of poking, prodding, or knock spells cast from the “wall side” will cause a one-way door to open, because there is no door on that side. In the Gann's complex, however, it would be reasonable for a chime of opening to succeed where a knock spell fails, but only because the Gann is fond of musical theoruy!
4. One-way doors close automatically after 1 turn unless forcibly held open in some manner.

KEY TO THE UPPER LEVEL

WANDERING MONSTERS

Check every three turns, with a 1-in-6 chance of an encounter. If an encounter is indicated, roll d12:

- 1: 1-4 servitor apes (MM p. 7, and see sidebar). Use normal apes instead if the encounter occurs between the outer entrance and the portcullises; 10% chance these are carnivorous apes.
- 2-3: 1-10 gnolls (MM p. 46) & 50% chance of 1-4 flinds (FF p. 39).
- 4: 1 goblin slave (MM p. 47), escaped from the flinds/gnolls. If this occurs near the outer entrance, 50% chance it's a goblin war party of 4-24 individuals instead.
- 5: 1 zerpanax (see new monster section), possibly one of the individuals described in areas 10, 76, or 109.
- 6: 1 smoke para-elemental (MM2 p. 98) of 8 or 12 HD.
- 7: 1-3 grimlocks (FF p. 48).
- 8: 2-5 shadow mastiffs (MM2 p. 82).
- 9: 1 sandling (MM2 p. 106).
- 10: 2-8 giant centipedes (MM p. 14).
- 11: 2-8 giant rats (MM p. 81).
- 12: 1-6 giant fire beetles (MM p. 9).

1. STONE SENTRYES

Two massive stone ape heads are set into the hillside, flanking an open stone door. The statues are 10' tall, with a stern expression, and fulvous eyes rolled up into their heads. The rolled-up eyes indicate their inactive/off state; when activated/on (see area 2) the eyes glow, seem to observe any nearby creature, and shoot vaporizing beams at any creature outside to a range of 80' (one per eye, or four total each round, save vs. wands or be disintegrated).

The plain stone door is 8' square and stands agape, swung outward toward the hillside, with a large, obvious keyhole in the center.

There's a 25% chance 1-3 normal apes (not servitor apes) observe the statues from a distance of 100' away on the hillside, having come here because they "heard a calling." There's a 1-in-6 chance an ape enters the complex.

Apes (1-3): SZ M; AC 6; MV 12"; HD 4+1; hp 19, 14, 26; #AT 3; THAC0 15; Dmg 1-3/1-3/1-6; SA rending; AL N; XP 225; MM p. 7.

SERVITOR APES

These apes are easily distinguishable from normal apes via their vacant expressions and the notable lack of habits one would characteristically attribute to apes: Scratching, vocalization, chest beating, and communicative facial gestures.

Servitor apes are created from normal apes through a quasi-magical surgery that alters their psychological state, such that they become dedicated caretakers of the Gann's complex. This process makes them somewhat placid and lacking in spontaneity. As servants of the complex, they respond in "programmed" ways to various stimuli:

1. ULTRASONIC DISCORDANT WHEEZE: Frenzy – violently attack non-apes, thrash nearby objects, and scream ferociously.
2. FLAT, LOW-PITCHED WARBLING: Proceed to the stasis block (area 24) and enter an available cell.
3. PLEASANT G# TRIAD CHORD: If a normal ape is nearby, apprehend it, operating portcullis winch controls as necessary to allow contact, and bring the captive to areas 54 and 55 for surgery.

2. ENTRANCE INTERIOR

The rear of the stone door features a pair of sliding steel bars that can be used to secure the door. Additionally, every time the door is swung closed from the open position, a connected inlet and airflow system causes the whistle pedestals at areas 23 and 50 to produce sound.

At shoulder-height on the south side of the hallway is a 4" diameter circular shaft that leads 3' straight into the granite. A square-ended steel beam protrudes from the back of the shaft; it is 2' long and thus ends about 1' inside the opening of the shaft. The beam is centered within the shaft, and the squared end is 2" on a side. Thoughtful inspection of the shaft reveals a thin (and quite deep) seam that goes completely around the inside of the shaft, 6" from the opening. A slight difference in the granite's texture on either side of the seam suggests, perhaps, that each side was crafted from different blocks of granite.

The steel beam and the seam are actually part of a trap. Because of its squared end, the steel beam can be turned; one obvious way being to reach into the shaft, grasp the beam, and turn. (It requires 30 lbs. of force to turn, so an **unseen servant** is not strong enough.) But turning the beam 90° in either direction triggers a scything blade that forcefully slices through the seam; anyone reaching into the shaft automatically takes 1d6 damage and must save vs. breath weapon or their arm is completely severed!

In addition to housing a trap, the shaft serves a second, more important purpose: It's the activating/deactivating mechanism for the vaporizing beams in area 1. If one of the steel, T-shaped implements that can be found elsewhere in the complex (see areas 40 and 99) is inserted into the shaft's full 3' depth, it fits snugly, and can then be turned by the handle formed by the "top" of the T-shape; this actually rotates the inner section of granite beyond the seam. Turning the implement clockwise rolls the ape head eyes into their normal position, thus activating the vaporizing beams; counter-clockwise deactivates the beams.



4. SIGHT OF NORMAL APE: Blow an ivory whistle, if one is carried. This is intended to be one which produces a pleasant G# triad chord (see above).
5. MIDDLE C PITCH: Operate winch handle to open a portcullis near the source of the sound.
6. GREEN PULSING LIGHT: Assist convalescent apes to the dens (areas 22 and 26).

NOTE: The above stimuli are listed in order of priority, so if multiple stimuli are present, lower-numbered items take precedence over higher-numbered items. Servitor apes also perform other reasonable and mundane tasks appropriate for their role as caretakers.

Carried Items: 25% of servitor apes carry ivory whistles via a leather neck cord; they produce the pleasant G# triad chord mentioned above. 50% of them carry, and periodically play, a frosted glass whistle that produces a shrill oscillating fluting; this sound is eerily attractive to normal (non-servitor) apes, and also somewhat pleasurable to servitors.

3. THOROUGHFARE

Dirty, clawed footprints from gnolls, flinds, and a few apes lead all around the room, though most travel from the stairs toward the door on the south wall.

Clawed handprints of dried blood dot the east, west, and southern walls, left by the gnolls and flinds after successful raids.

4. CRANIUM DOOR

The frame around the western door is carved to depict a hairy scalp and jowls, with ears jutting out to the sides, suggesting that the door could be the face completing the head – though the door isn't actually decorated as such.

5. BRAIN MAP

The walls and ceiling are etched with a depiction of gray matter, divided into portions and labeled with archaic runes: Prefrontal Cortex, Cerebellum, Temporal Lobe, Limbic Cortex, and so on. The depiction is abstract, so the arrangement of zones does not match the layout of a real brain. Read magic, read languages, and similar abilities are all sufficient to decipher the runes, as well as the other archaic runes elsewhere in the complex.

The northern door passes through the portion of the diagram labeled "Temporal Lobe."

A buzzing, endlessly-churning cifal is trapped here, unable to open the doors due to its lack of intelligence. It aggressively moves toward any source of food.

Cifal: SZ M; AC 6; MV 6"; HD 8 (and 2); hp 50 (and 9); #AT 1; THAC0 12; Dmg 1-12; SD reduced damage from edged weapons; AL N; XP 1980; FF p. 19.

6. PSYCHE MAP

The walls and ceiling are etched with irregular zones representing various intellectual qualities of sentience, labeled with archaic runes: Subservience, Anger, Willingness, Restraint, Responsiveness, Lust, Instinct, Satisfaction, and Greed.

An **invisible backpack** rests at the apex of the ceiling, defying gravity due to the **orb of rarified heights** stored within it; when inflated as it is currently, this lead-membrane bladder has a magically negative weight (-20 lbs.) that causes it to fall upward or float, depending on how much additional weight it bears. Also within the backpack are 10 pp, a mother of pearl tobacco case worth 340 gp, a copper flask (**potion of frost giant strength** with a strong liquor smell), a hardwood pipe, a tinderbox, a small towel, and four days of iron rations.

7. INFESTED REFUSE

Two empty stone basins (3' tall, 5' diameter) sit on either side of the west door. A stone slab (2' high, 2' deep) runs the length of the east wall.

Copious debris, offal, and rubbish are scattered here, including two normal ape carcasses. Searching reveals a dulled steel scalpel and an iron collar in the form of an undulating serpent.

20 giant rats infest the filth and react badly to the presence of other creatures, fleeing to the opposite side of the room as best they can. If any are attacked, they attempt to flee in a frenzy, attacking any creature blocking their exit from the room. Give characters a chance to stand aside; the rats attack any who choose to continue blocking an open exit, but attempt to flee past after one round of combat.

Giant Rats (20): SZ S; AC 7; MV 6"; HD 1/2; hp 2 each; #AT 1; THAC0 20*; Dmg 1-3; SA disease; AL N; XP 10; MM p. 81.





8. ALCOVES AND FOUR HEADS

Each of the six alcoves hosts a pedestal (4' high, 1' diameter) that seamlessly projects from the floor.

On each of the three north wall alcove pedestals rests a stuffed and preserved ape head, with its eyes, mouth, nostrils, and ears stitched closed, as well as miscellaneous other stitched incisions on the cranium. Deep within the stuffing, each head contains a sizable carnelian stone worth 200 gp.

The western alcove pedestal holds an ape head-sized bundle wrapped in tight leather, which is actually a vargouille disguising itself with its wings. It waits until a character is particularly vulnerable before attacking, such as when someone attempts to “unwrap” it.

Vargouille: SZ S; AC 8; MV 12"; HD 1+1; hp 4; #AT 1; THAC0 18; Dmg 1-4; SA permanent hit point loss; AL NE; XP 130; MM2 p. 123.

9. OUTER LAIR

Many large snake droppings (4' long, liquid-like with a whitish cap) lie in the northeast corner near several humanoid bones. The zerpanax in area 10 can easily hear noises coming from this area and will prepare an ambush.

10. BLIND ZERPANAX LAIR

Three lines of archaic runes are inscribed on the south wall:

Disregard the body –
its many forms deceive
Follow the eyes –
they unerringly shepherd the mind

This is a clue to the interpretation of the wall carvings in area 58 and area 83, as they relate to the polymorph effect at area 72.

A blind, savage zerpanax lurks here. It was birthed through the dead grimlock female in area 45, and thus has sightless eyes, charcoal-hued scales, and a deep desire to kill. Because of its deformities, the other zerpanakes disowned it. Though not entirely unintelligent, it knows no languages and is essentially feral.

Zerpanax with Grimlock Traits: SZ L; AC 5; MV 15"; HD 5; hp 21; #AT 1; THAC0 15; Dmg 1-3; SA poison (paralysis); SD 10% magic resistance, immune to visual effects; AL NE; XP 353; see new monster section and FF p. 48.

11. EAR TRUMPET STATUE

This life-size ape statue wears a peculiar doublet and holds an ear trumpet to each of its ears. It seamlessly protrudes from the floor.

If someone produces, by instrument or voice, a specific series musical notes while in front of the statue:

F - E - E - D - A - B - A - D - E - G - G

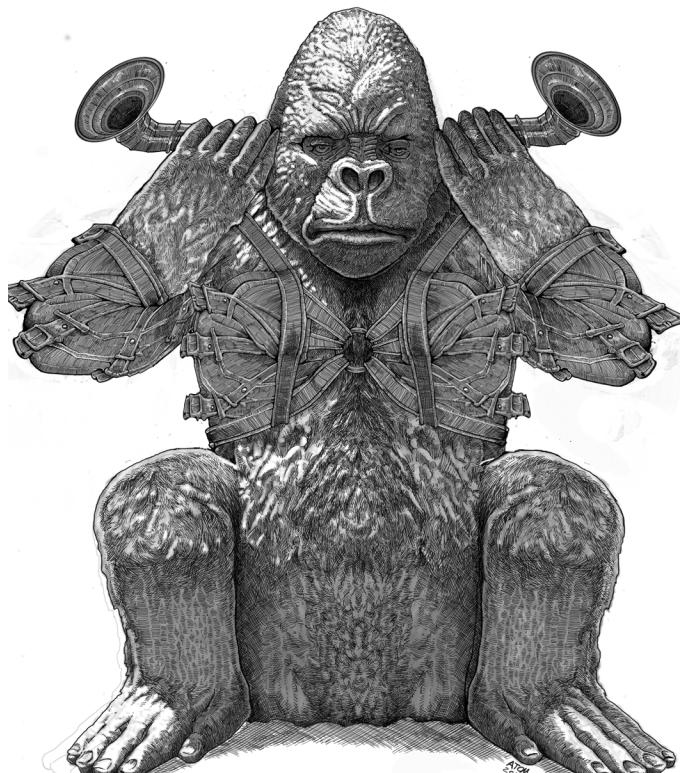
... the statue grins (via something akin to a **magic mouth**) and the adjacent one-way door opens for one turn, allowing passage to the west.

Similarly, if someone produces another series of notes:

E - G - A - D - A - D - E - A - D - F - A - C - E

... the statue winks and the one-way door into area 12 opens for one turn.

Note: This puzzle is intentionally very hard to solve, even with the clues from areas 38 and 48. To make it slightly easier, if someone says one of the two phrases (“Feed a bad egg!” or “Egad! A dead face!”), the statue can respond by frowning disapprovingly, then producing a granite piano key from within its doublet, and hurling it at the speaker.



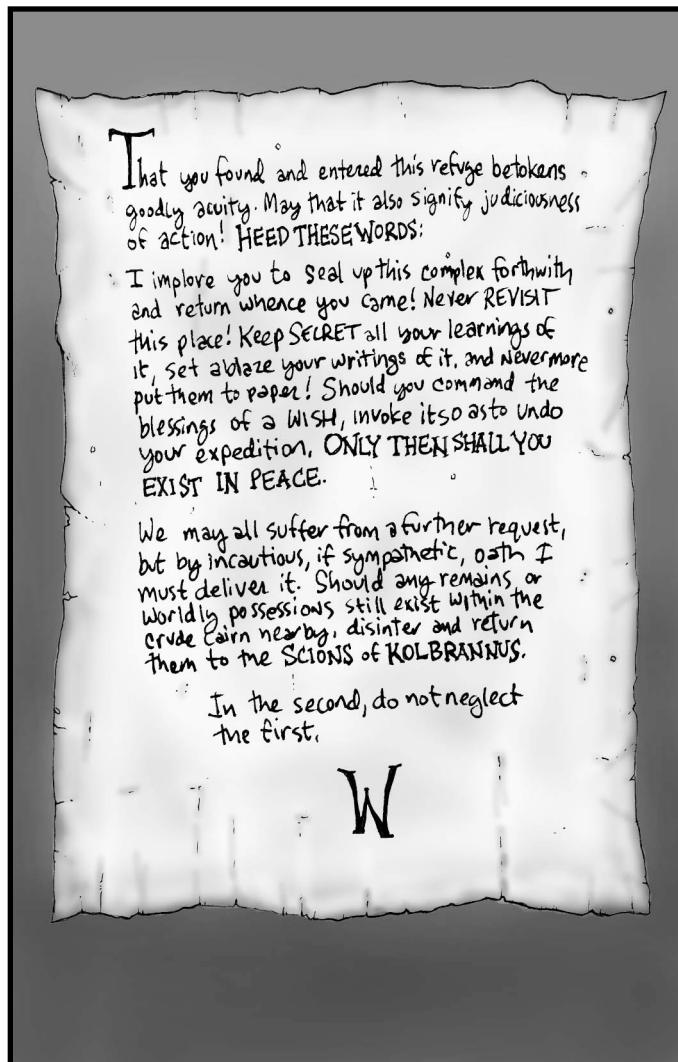
12. SECRET WATCH POST

The west wall is magically altered to be a two-way mirror, allowing this room's occupants to spy into area 30 and beyond. It radiates strong illusion magic.

In the center of the room, a small circle of stones surrounds a low pile of cold gray ash. A limestone cairn, large enough to cover a human-sized creature, is built against the south wall. Near that, a brittle sheet of parchment (see illustration) rests on a fractured slab of limestone and held in place by a pair of ape jawbones set atop it.

Dismantling the cairn reveals the corpse of a 250-year-dead human. The corpse's banded mail shows some rust, but the gold and topaz rings on either hand are pristine (worth 700 gp each), as is the ornate footman's mace alongside the body. The mace's flanges are each in the form of a six-legged horned lizard. This **mace of temerity** is a +2 weapon, adjusts morale and reaction situations by 10% in the holder's favor (including morale of enemies in combat), and allows the use of **charm person** once per day.

Any party returning the human remains, the rings, and the mace to the proper persons (as described by the parchment and interpreted as you see fit for your campaign) will receive a reward of 500 gp. Returning some, but not all, of the items results in no reward and considerable questioning as to where the returned item or items were found. Anyone impudent enough to overtly possess an item, but not return it, will be followed upon leaving, and will eventually be targeted by hired thieves, assassins, an invisible stalker (MM p. 55), an aleax (FF p. 11), or similar.



13. COMMUNAL ROOM

Two long, low granite tables (30' long, 5' wide, 18" high) run from north to south; their legs seamlessly join with the floor.

14. REFUSE PIT

A square aperture (2' on a side) in the floor opens onto a fusty, 40' deep sinkhole. The hole averages 8' in width and ends in detritus and gravel. Pulling a hidden stone lever on the aperture's west-underside opens the secret door into area 15.

15. OBSERVATION CHAMBER

Magnifier peepholes in the some of the shorter (20' length) walls allow observation of the three adjacent dormitory-style rooms. A low, broad desk constructed of fine electrum piping and glass panes stands against the south wall; it's worth 300 gp intact, or 100 gp as salvaged electrum. Resting on top of the desk are a stack of book-sized glass panels, an electrum stylus with a tiny diamond tip (worth 120 gp) for etching glass panels, and a cracked and bent copper whistle that produces an ultrasonic discordant wheeze that causes servitor apes to frenzy (see Servitor Apes sidebar on page 3).

Three of the glass panels are already etched with archaic runes. The first contains notes about the sleeping habits of elves, pixies, and other fey immortals. Another offers statistical evidence that six out of ten dwarves would claim unattended valuables as their own. The last is a list of terminal diseases.

16. INTERMENT CHAMBER

Each of these rooms features a stuffed and preserved ape lying on a burial shelf set into the diagonal wall. All their orifices are stitched closed. Hidden within each chest stuffing is a hand-sized, crescent-shaped hunk of moonstone worth 300 gp.

17. DORMITORY

Each such room contains a petrified wood bed frame and slats.

The southernmost of these rooms has a tiny hole on its eastern wall that allows a viewer in area 15 to spy on this chamber. The hole is concealed within an area of natural pitting in the wall.

18. REFUGE

The door to this room held fast by a **wizard lock** spell cast by Samuel-of-the-Loam (see area 109).

A rotting servitor ape carcass lies on the floor in the southwest, obviously killed in melee and still stiffly clutching an ivory whistle (pleasant G# triad chord, see Servitor Apes sidebar on page 3). A 10' pole lies across the petrified wood bed frame near the south wall, and various mundane supplies are stacked onto the bed's slats:

- Large, soggy sack containing two weeks' spoiled rations.
- Three full wineskins.
- Dented tin scroll tube containing ten sheets of blank parchment and a writing quill.
- Small crate with three changes of mundane clothing, a pair of leather boots, and a dagger.
- Small sack holding soap, a silver comb (worth 5 gp), a mirror, an empty flask, and vellum-wrapped stick of incense.

A concealed hole in the south wall allows an observer in area 15 to spy on this chamber.

19. ABANDONED LAIR

A petrified bed frame lies crushed and splintered in the southeast corner next to a 20' long molted snake skin. Many rat and goblin bones litter the floor.

A concealed hole in the east wall allows an observer in area 15 to spy on this chamber.

20. EVIDENCE OF CONFLICT

At this point in the hallway, splotches and streaks of dried blood blemish the floor and the north wall. Rusty metallic residue forms the outline of a circle (3' diameter) near the deeply-gouged southeastern door. The bottom few inches of the nearby portcullis are charred and blackened.

21. PORTCULLIS WINCH #1

The cross-shaped steel winch handle on the north wall raises and lowers the nearby portcullis, requiring one minute to raise or lower completely. The winch has no built-in means of locking in a particular position, so the portcullis lowers automatically if the winch handle is left unattended.

22. SERVITOR DEN

Presently, each of these two dens is home to six servitor apes, but this number can increase if more are created via surgery or released from stasis. A servitor ape from either of these rooms will respond to an appropriate whistle request to open the portcullis next to area 21.

Near each room's curved wall, a small square aperture (1' square) leads to a deep, narrow sinkhole. Contact with the waste therein is 50% likely to expose an inquisitive character to a disease.

Servitor Apes (6): SZ M; AC 6; MV 12"; HD 4+1; hp 24, 21, 22, 17, 16, 26; #AT 3; THAC0 15; Dmg 1-3/1-3/1-6; SA rending; AL N; XP 225; MM p. 7.

23. UPPER WHISTLE PEDESTAL

A pedestal (4' high, 1' diameter) seamlessly projects from the center of the hallway floor. Short, flattened, tube-like projections ring the circumference near the top. These projections are whistles whose airflow system is connected to the complex's main outer door (see areas 1 and 2) as well as the similar pedestal on the middle level (area 50).

When the outer door is swung closed from the open position, the whistles produce a flat, low-pitched warbling sound that draws servitor apes into the stasis cells at area 24. (See Servitor Apes sidebar on page 3.) The noise can be heard as far as the servitor dens (areas 22 and 26) even with the intervening doors closed. Three turns later, the stasis cell doors close automatically.

24. STASIS BLOCK

This hallway leads to nine small (10' x 10') adjoining cells with slate-colored enamel interiors. The door to each is made of stone and has a built-in window. These doors and their stone fixtures are amazingly form-fitting, to the point that no irregularities or gaps are apparent. Each windowed portion appears to be fused with, and as thick as, the door itself; this is a permanent **glassee** effect.

Each of the small cells marked with 'e' is empty, with the door open, having been swung outward into the hallway. The rest have closed doors, and each contains 5-7 servitor apes standing motionless near the walls.

The cells are stasis chambers. As long as a cell door remains closed, the creatures therein are affected by an imperfect form of **temporal stasis** that ages the creature one day for every month that passes. Opening a cell door ends the stasis until it is once again closed.

Servitor Apes (many): SZ M; AC 6; MV 12"; HD 4+1; hp 19 each; #AT 3; THAC0 15; Dmg 1-3/1-3/1-6; SA rending; AL N; XP 225; MM p. 7.

25. SERVITOR FODDER

A simple wall fountain fills a shallow stone basin in the northeast corner of the room. The fountain is fed by an outlet from a deep underground river, and drains into the surrounding groundwater through a hole in the basin.

Just to the south of the basin, the wall is etched and sculpted to depict a maternal ape holding forth an empty shallow bowl. The bowl itself juts completely out of the wall and radiates both faint divination and moderate alteration magic. Beings of low intelligence (only) may scoop from the bowl and come away with magically-created, nutritious kibble. The magic of the bowl ensures that no creature may draw forth more food in one day than it reasonably ought to eat.

26. ANOTHER SERVITOR DEN

This area is identical to the earlier servitor dens (area 22), except it is home to only four servitor apes. One of these is notable for its extensive collection of old battle scars and a missing left hand; this particular servitor ape is actually a dwarf fighter (6th level, 46 hp, S 16, Co 17, AL LG) who was polymorphed into ape form and converted to a servitor. His personality and mentality switched many centuries ago to that of an ape.

Servitor Apes (4): SZ M; AC 6; MV 12"; HD 4+1; hp 46*, 15, 14, 14; #AT 3; THAC0 15; Dmg 1-3/1-3/1-6; SA rending; AL N; XP 225; MM p. 7. *The 46 hp ape is the former dwarf fighter.

27. PORTCULLIS WINCH #2

The cross-shaped steel winch handle on the west wall raises and lowers the nearby portcullis (the one blocking the north passage, not the one blocking the east passage), requiring one minute to raise or lower completely. The winch has no built-in means of locking in a particular position, so the portcullis lowers automatically if the winch handle is left unattended.

28. LARGE INTERMENT CHAMBER

Three granite slabs cover three cavities in the floor (5' wide, 6' tall, 4' deep), each of which contains a stuffed, preserved, and stitched ape carcass. All three apes' chests conceal a blushing pearl worth 100 gp.

The ape in the cavity nearest the door is swollen and musty due to the yellow mold that has infested its stuffing and eaten almost entirely through its hide. Touching the ape is 50% likely to cause the yellow mold colony to release its spores by bursting through the carcass.

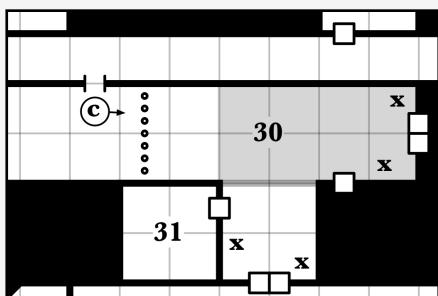
A hidden burial shelf is set into the southwest wall, concealed by plaster that precisely matches the surrounding granite. Within lies a fourth stuffed, preserved, and stitched ape, whose chest hides a blushing **pearl of wisdom**.

29. DEPOSITORY

Each of these two rooms contains supplies for repair of the doors in the complex: Beams of petrified wood as well as steel fittings and hardware.

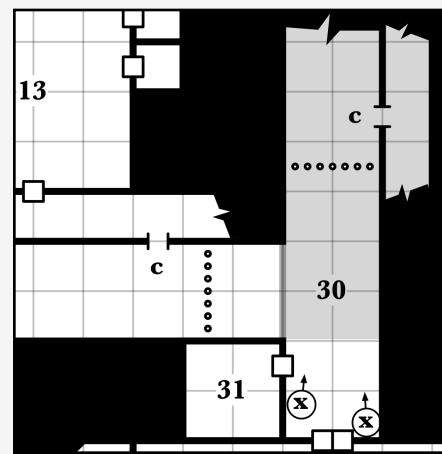
REFLECTED HALLWAY (AREA 30)

VISUAL EXAMPLES



VIEW FROM THE WEST

When looking eastward, the character (the 'c' arrow) would think he's seeing two gnolls (at the 'x' marks) directly to the east. But those gnolls are actually to the south, around the corner. The gray area represents the image seen via the magical reflection.



VIEW FROM THE SOUTH

When looking northward, the gnolls (the two 'x' arrows) can see the character at the spot marked with the 'c'. The gray area represents the image seen via the magical reflection.

30. REFLECTED HALLWAY

This diagonal wall is a magical, quasi-reflective surface allowing creatures to see around the bend, but does so in a way that makes the hallway appear to travel only straight ahead instead of bending. Only within 10' of the diagonal wall is a viewer able to perceive the actual layout, including the diagonal wall and its mirror-like sheen. The entire diagonal wall radiates strong illusion magic.

Gnoll gatekeepers stand watch near the double doors, observing the western hallway while remaining safe from direct targeting by attacks and spells.

Gnolls (2): See sidebar. They always wear serpent collars.

31. PORTCULLIS WINCH #3

The cross-shaped steel winch handle on the west wall raises and lowers the nearby portcullis, requiring one minute to raise or lower completely. The winch has no built-in means of locking in a particular position, so the portcullis lowers automatically if the winch handle is left unattended.

A large sack in the center of the room contains a wheel of piquant cheese, half a loaf of bread, a worn human doll dressed like a princess, and 15 cp.

32. NAVE AND CHANCEL

Columns help support the 30' vaulted ceiling here, with an apex that runs along the north-south axis. Nooks in the wall, roughly every 10', contain grimy, ages-old remnants of candle wax. These are surrounded by inscribed archaic runes of various phonetic grunts, or by primate-themed reliefs, though many are the former are vandalized with painted gnoll curses, and the latter with plaster additions to make the reliefs appear somewhat canine.

Several sub-areas require additional description:

- BARRICADE:** Crates filled with heavy rocks and dirt are stacked against the door here, preventing it from swinging outward. Any loud noise provokes the wights in area 33, who snarl and try to escape by scratching at and thumping against the door.

- ARCHERY RANGE:** Four makeshift humanoid-shaped archery targets fashioned of wood, leather, and hide stand against the wall, with dozens of arrows lodged in each. Countless broken arrows litter the floor at the base of the wall, but there is nary a scratch or nick in the wall itself.

- ENCAMPMENT:** A small contingent of gnolls makes its lair here.

Gnolls (6): See sidebar.

- PLATFORM:** A series of 2' tall steps lead up to a semi-circular chancel whose surface is 10' higher than the rest of the floor in area 32. Ancient rusty stains sully the floor near the southern exit.

33. BLIGHTED TOMB

The two ape carcasses that once lay on burial shelves here have become ape-wights, and are able to create half-strength wights by draining other apes (but not humans). They were not stuffed and preserved prior to their interment, but nevertheless each wight's head contains a marble-sized jasper stone worth 50 gp.

Also here, shoved to the sides of the room, are three moldering gnoll corpses, a large wooden shield, two ransieurs, and a broken battle axe. One gnoll corpse's purse contains 5 sp and a fish-shaped gold key worth 55 gp.

Wights (2): SZ M; AC 5; MV 12"; HD 4+3; hp 19, 17; #AT 1; THAC0 15; Dmg 1-4; SA energy drain; SD hit only by silver and magic weapons, undead immunities, immune to cold; AL LE; XP 645; MM p. 100.

34. GANG'S QUARTERS

A large group of gnolls lives here, along with a goblin slave whom the gnolls sometimes relegate to the adjoining 10' x 10' room. They use stolen crates as stools and tables, and keep six hens in a particularly large crate in the northwest corner.

Gnolls (11): See sidebar.

Goblin: SZ S; AC 6; MV 6"; HD 1-1; hp 2; #AT 1; THAC0 20; Dmg 1-6 or by weapon; AL LE; XP 14; MM p. 47. Unarmed.

FLINDS & GNOLLS

BACKSTORY: Several months ago, a company of flinds discovered the open complex doors and moved in, using part of the upper level as a base from which to stage their raids.

Soon afterward, they were faced with demands for tribute from both Ashkasar (posing as a mummified dog-man) and the zerpanaktes. To Ashkasar, they must supply human meat and treasure. To satisfy the zerpanaktes, they are currently tasked with capturing live human females. In addition, the flinds and their newly-recruited gnoll mercenaries must show allegiance by wearing collars provided by the zerpanaktes; these are forged from iron into the shape of undulating serpents. None of the hyena-men like the collars, so they wear them only when at risk of encountering their zerpanax lords.

TACTIC NOTES: The flinds attempt to organize assaults from multiple directions at once, which is challenging given that the gnolls tend to join combat impulsively. Gnoll archers greatly enjoy sniping at fools who carry light sources into their territory.

TYPICAL STATISTICS:

Flinds: SZ M; AC 5; MV 12"; HD 2+3; hp 12 each; #AT 1 or 2; THAC0 15; Dmg 1-6 or 1-4(x2); SA disarming; AL LE; XP 71; FF p. 39. They wield clubs or flindbars, and carry a serpent collar; plus either 8 gp, 120 sp, or a silver dagger.

Gnolls: SZ L; AC 5; MV 9"; HD 2; hp 9 each; #AT 1; THAC0 16; Dmg 2-8 or by weapon; AL CE; XP 46; MM p. 46. They wield long swords plus either a halberd or a long bow and 12 arrows. They carry 5 sp and 5 gp, and 50% also own a serpent collar.

35. GNOLL DEN

The center of the west wall features a cross-shaped steel winch handle that raises and lowers the portcullis in the western hallway, requiring one minute to raise or lower it completely. The winch has no built-in means of locking in a particular position, so the portcullis lowers automatically if the winch handle is left unattended.

Because this room was originally intended as a living area for servitor apes, the floor near the curved wall has a small square aperture (1' square) that leads to a deep, narrow sinkhole.

A group of gnolls and their flind sergeants monitor the western hallway.

Flinds (2): See sidebar. They always wear serpent collars.

Gnolls (4): See sidebar. They always wear serpent collars.

36. STOCKADE

Four flinds occupy this room, typically playing dice games or torturing rats with a cleaver while sitting at a repaired oak table. Three extra flind bars, two tethered clubs, and a traveler's cloak hang from wall pegs that seamlessly protrude from the north wall.

At least one flind keeps a watchful eye on the doors to the two smaller adjacent rooms, each of which contains a pair of recent captives manacled together. In the north cell are Snifermaker, a male halfling (2 hp, AL LG), and Kowlee, a female half-orc (Thf 3rd, 12 hp, D 15, AL N) who the flinds assumed was male. The south cell holds Selano-Selano, a eunuch (4 hp, AL LN), along with Mort, a man-at-arms (6 hp, AL LG).

Flinds (4): See sidebar. One carries the iron key for the captives' manacles.

37. FLIND LEADER

Hoogurill, the leader of the hyena-men, lives here along with trusted members of his company. Their furniture consists of stacks of petrified wood beams, padded by and covered with tarps, blankets, and bedrolls.

The company's treasure is gathered within five durable backpacks positioned on a shelf inset into the north wall so as to be quickly donned if the company needs to leave in haste. The contents of the packs are as follows, in order from left-to-right:

- Velvet-lined ebony box with gold filigree (worth 650 gp) containing six eye agate stones (worth 10 gp each) and palm-sized silver pentagram charm set with a peridot (worth 1000 gp), plus mundane clothing as padding for the box.
- Giant otter pelt (worth 2400 gp), carefully folded and wrapped in a section of tarp.
- Assortment of electrum implements with platinum grips, wrapped in pillow cases: Two scalpels, a small saw, two pairs of forceps, a mallet, wide calipers, and two narrow chisels. Each implement is worth 900 gp.
- Ten fox pelts (worth 25 gp each).
- 30 lbs. of roughly cut electrum rods (worth 150 gp), a small pouch containing eight citrine stones (worth 50 gp each), and another small pouch containing 58 cp.

Another similar, though shorter, shelf inset into the west part of the south wall holds a variety of items that the company found here but does not presently consider valuable:

- Broad, glass-stoppered jar containing a human-size brain suspended in pungent preserving fluid.
- Three similar fluid-filled jars containing smaller brains with evidence of incisions and suturing. The fluid within one of these jars has become the equivalent of five full **potions of esp**, though drinking it requires a save vs. poison or the imbiber retches for one round before the magic takes effect.
- Abacus made of steel and petrified wood beads.
- Set of steel manipulative puzzles that require both manual dexterity and intelligent strategy in order to remove bars and rings from their companion pieces.
- Stack of four ape skull upper hemispheres.

Flinds (6): See sidebar.

Flind Leader – Hoogurill the Wretch: SZ M; AC 4; MV 12"; HD 3+3; hp 21; #AT 2; THAC0 14; Dmg 2-5(x2); SA disarming; AL LE; XP 126; FF p. 39. Wields a flindbar and carries a large shield with a custom handle allowing it to be used by someone who lost their hand. (Though this flind still has both his hands.)



38. APE FLAUTIST

This life-size ape statue seamlessly protrudes from the floor. It wears a peculiar doublet and holds a long flute flat against its chest. If touched, it seems to speak with sudden distress via a permanent **magic mouth**: "Egad! A dead face!" This is a clue for the operation of the statue at area 11.

39. SLAVES

A pair of lizard men live here and work at the poorly-constructed petrified wood table or next to an iron stew pot on a makeshift rock stove. Because of the lack of a chimney, the ceiling is black with ash and the room smells strongly of burnt wood.

Though they are slaves of the flinds, these lizard men have proven their obedience, and are free of bonds so that they may better perform their duties – cleaning, cooking, repairing, and so on. They do not actively seek to escape, but could be convinced to work toward it if presented with a simple, understandable plan.

Lizard Men (2): SZ M; AC 5; MV 6//12"; HD 2+1; hp 6 each; #AT 3; THAC0 16; Dmg 1-2/1-2/1-8; AL N; XP 46; MM p. 62.

40. CASTOFF HOARD

Lewd and suggestive carvings of female apes adorn the walls. A granite slab (7' square, 3' high) with a slightly concave top seamlessly projects from the center of the floor. Stacked on and around it are piles of junk collected here by the flinds and gnolls as they cleared the area they now control.

Most of the objects are worthless – tin plates, half-rusted lantern stands, petrified beams, empty bottles and jars, and similar. But a few items are potentially interesting: A 15' long molted snake skin, steel bone saws suitable for butchering, and a 4' long T-shaped steel implement made from a pair of steel cylinders fused together.

This implement is a key for activating/deactivating the vaporizing eye beams of the enormous ape head statues that guard the outside of the complex; see areas 1 and 2 for specifics. The main cylinder is 4' long, 4" in diameter and hollow, and the leading 2" of the unadorned end show considerable abrasions, as though heavily used. The fused orthogonal cylinder at the opposite end is only 1' long and 1" in diameter.



41. CONDITIONING ROOM

The flinds and gnolls rejected using this room due to the two noisy devices it contains. Make a wandering monster check every time one of the devices is activated.

The first device is a cross-shaped steel winch handle, identical in design to those that lift the portcullises, situated on the north wall below a set of three small slits (4" wide, 1/4" tall) that radiate faint alteration magic. 1-3 minutes after a visible creature approaches within 3' of the handle, the slits emit a middle C pitch repeatedly until the handle is rotated clockwise ten full revolutions; if the handle is not fully rotated, the pitch stops sounding after 10 minutes. If someone rotates the handle at any other time, it delivers an electrical shock (1 damage) to anyone touching it.

The second device, at the center of the south wall, is three small slits above a row of three colored glass stones (purple, orange, green) embedded in the wall alongside a fourth indentation where a similar

stone obviously used to be. The area radiates faint alteration magic. Shortly after a visible creature approaches within 1' of the stones, the slits emit one of four random sounds; roll 1d4:

- 1 – low buzzing (green)
- 2 – modulated grunting
- 3 – clapping (purple)
- 4 – white noise (orange)

The rolled sound continues for 10 minutes or until someone touches the corresponding parenthesized colored stone. If the correct stone is touched or if 10 minutes passes, the sound pauses and another randomly rolled sound starts. If an incorrect stone is touched, it delivers an electrical shock (1 damage) to whomever touched it. After producing ten sounds in a row, the device becomes inoperable for one hour. Because of the missing stone, it's likely that each operation of the device will last a significant amount of time.

42. FLIND BARRACKS

Four bed-sized slabs, seamlessly adjacent to the west and south walls, have dark bloodstains within their ape-shaped impressions, as well as short inset handles positioned to enable ropes or straps to secure whatever might have once lain on them. On the ceiling directly above each slab is a 1' diameter, slightly concave impression; one of these has tiny cracked fragments of white crystal embedded within it.

Several flind warriors guard a portion of the company's stolen goods, which are stacked on the slabs next to various other scavenged items:

- Tied-closed blanket containing a side of smoked pig.
- Lidless barrel with four long swords and two footman's maces standing inside.
- Crate of yams (40 lbs.) and onions (10 lbs.).
- Small coffer with a broken lock, containing 18 sp and 161 pp.
- Six haphazardly bundled tarps, lashed with 80' of rope.
- Half-empty barrel of mead worth 30 gp.
- Keg of fine fermented cider worth 50 gp.
- 13 carved wooden bowls with curved lips for drinking.
- Five crudely-straightened electrum rods with sheared ends; 10 lbs. total, and worth 50 gp.
- Ivory-handled bathing brush with no bristles, worth 205 gp.
- Parchment-sized glass panel etched with archaic runes: "Beyond-visible oscillation is successful! Beams are focusable so as to transform and rearrange without piercing or breaking cranial matter. Further experimentation shall reveal whether stone implantation remains crucial."

Flinds (5): See sidebar.

43. GNOLL ARCHERS

Stained bedrolls and old satchels containing gnoll personal effects cover most of the floor here. Seven crates are stacked against the north wall; five of these contain 108 arrows each, tied in bundles of 12. Pegs protrude seamlessly from the wall at shoulder height every 3' along the east and west walls; three ransieurs lean against these. Four barrel-sized, circular mildew stains mar the floor near a particularly pitted area in the southwest corner.

A gnoll mercenary cohort lives here. They specialize in archery and are led by a slightly taller, gray-muzzled gnoll.

Gnolls (9): See sidebar. All have long bows and arrows.

Gnoll Leader – Gragritt: SZ L; AC 5; MV 9"; HD 2; hp 16; #AT 1; THAC0 16; Dmg 2-8 or by weapon; SA attacks as 3 HD; AL CE; XP 46; MM p. 46. Carries long sword, long bow with 12 arrows, 35 gp, and a calfskin and teak tambourine ornamented with gold jingles (worth 40 gp).

44. CREMATORIUM

Two large, rectangular stone troughs (20' long, 4' wide, 4' deep) rest here, one each against the north and south walls. They each contain a 2" depth of charcoal and ash. Greasy soot covers the insides of the troughs, the adjoining walls and ceiling, and a considerable portion of the floor. Three petrified wood handles for some kind of long tool – about the size of a shovel – lie near the west wall, with splintered ends that suggest the functional part of each tool has broken off.

45. TWOFOLD-TOMB AND HATCHERY

A female grimlock corpse slumps against the west wall, apparently having died while pregnant; her womb and abdomen appear to have burst open violently, staining the surrounding floor with ichor. Her back has a pair of large, partially-healed puncture wounds, one each on either side of her spine, just above her hips.

Many small, white-capped, liquid-like droppings soil the floor, and there are a dozen molted snake skins here ranging from 4' to 10' in length.

A stuffed, preserved, and stitched ape lies on the floor near the southwest wall, likely having been pulled from the burial shelf in that wall. Its body has many paired puncture holes of varying sizes. Its chest stuffing conceals a hand-sized, crescent-shaped chunk of moonstone worth 300 gp.

46. IMPROVISED SANITARIUM

The walls are covered with crude charcoal drawings, most of which depict something akin to a centaur without legs. The rest of the drawings resemble a slightly smaller humanoid creature in a supine position.

A servitor ape cowers in fetal position against the wall. It has fallen into madness after witnessing a zerpanax slaughter another servitor ape on the middle level. It violently attacks anyone entering the room.

Servitor Ape: SZ M; AC 6; MV 12"; HD 4+1; hp 25; #AT 3; THAC0 15; Dmg 1-3/1-3/1-6; SA rending; AL N; XP 225; MM p. 7.

47. FUNERARY URN

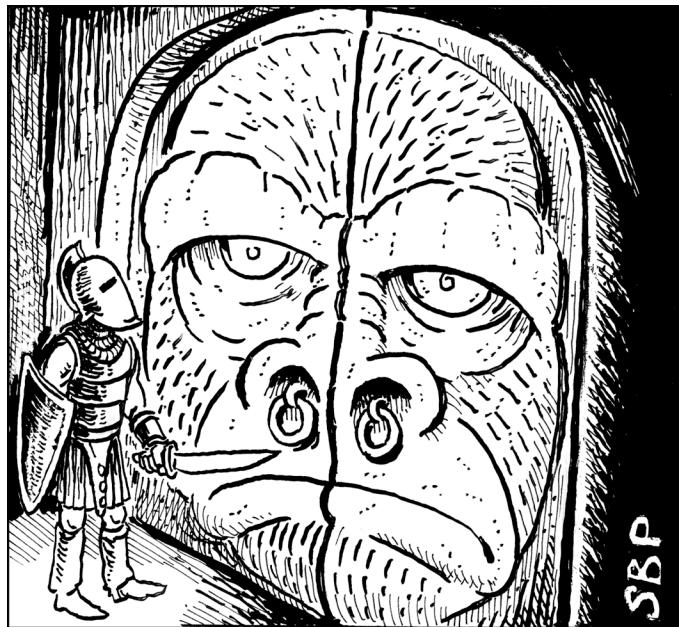
Each of these four identical chambers holds a lidless stone urn (4' tall, 3' diameter) filled with the ashes of cremated apes. Within the urn in the northermost (only) of these four chambers is a cylindrical electrum whistle worth 130 gp. When blown, it produces a middle C pitch. (See Servitor Apes sidebar on page 3)

A smoke para-elemental considers all four of these identical chambers to be its home. There is a 25% chance of it resting within the urn in any given chamber, and it tries to drive off or destroy anyone who disturbs it.

Smoke Para-elemental: SZ L; AC 3; MV 6/18"; HD 12; hp 56; #AT special; THAC0 9; Dmg 2-16; SA double damage in fog form, blinding smoke; SD hit only by magic weapons; AL N; XP 3660; MM2 p. 98.

48. ANOTHER APE FLAUTIST

This life-size ape statue seamlessly protrudes from the floor. It wears a peculiar doublet and holds a long flute flat against its chest. If touched, it seems to gruffly deliver an order via a permanent **magic mouth**: "Feed a bad egg!" This is a clue for the operation of the statue at area 11.



49. STONE PORTALS

Both sides of these oversize stone doors are inscribed from top to bottom to depict a stern primate face, not unlike the enormous ape head sculptures that guard the exterior entrance to this complex. Despite their weight, the doors pull open easily to reveal the stairs beyond, which descend 60' before reaching area 50.

KEY TO THE MIDDLE LEVEL

WANDERING MONSTERS

Check every three turns, with a 1-in-10 chance of an encounter (there is less activity here). If an encounter is indicated, roll d12:

- 1: 1-3 servitor apes (MM p. 7, and see earlier sidebar), possibly bringing a normal ape to the surgery rooms (area 54).
- 2-4: 2-8 grimlocks (FF p. 48).
- 5: 1-2 ghouls (MM p. 43).
- 6: 1-3 zerpanakes (see new monster section), possibly one or more of the individuals described in areas 10, 76, or 109.
- 7: Ashkasar (see area 61).
- 8: 2-7 shadows (MM p. 86).
- 9: 2-5 shadow mastiffs (MM2 p. 82).
- 10: 1-2 cifals (FF p. 19).
- 11+: 1-6 giant fire beetles (MM p. 9).

50. LOWER WHISTLE PEDESTAL

A pedestal (4' high, 1' diameter) seamlessly projects from the center of the hallway floor. Short, flattened, tube-like projections ring the circumference near the top. When sounding its flat, low-pitched warbling, this whistle pedestal can be heard as far as the surgery rooms (area 54) even with the intervening doors closed. See the upper whistle pedestal description (area 23) for further info.

The staircase to the south leads up 60' to area 49.

Successful tracking attempts reveal no traffic to or from the east, but to the west there is evidence of ape footprints and various humanoid boot or shoe prints.



51. MURAL

An intricate painting on the west wall depicts five life-size humans stalking on all fours, like tigers, through fruit-bearing mangroves toward a gluttonous lord and lady relaxing in a clearing, picnicking on a golden and cobalt blue quilt. Every so often one of the depicted figures' eyes appears to glance at someone in the area and then quickly look away. All the eyes radiate faint illusion magic.

The tiny holes on the southern wall that allow observers to spy from area 60 into this chamber and beyond are especially difficult to detect due to the mural.

52. WATERY PIT

This bottom of this 30' deep pit contains 2" of standing water. Completely submerged at the west end are four fake, worthless diamonds. Toward the east end are three giant fire beetle carcasses and an 80' length of rope made of wiry hair.

53. GRIMLOCK HEARKENERS

The normal door on the north wall features a steel deadbolt-style knob just below the handle, though the door does not actually have a deadbolt. Turning the knob in either direction temporarily unlatches the secret door here, such that it may be pushed open from either side; the secret door re-latches after one turn. While latched, the secret door cannot be opened from either side.

Grimlocks and their trained subterranean lizard lurk here, listening for creatures approaching from the west or north. They try to stay out of sight, tucked into the triangular alcoves, with the lizard in the northwestern corner of the chamber. As necessary, one of the grimlocks heads to area 81 to alert the rest of their clan. They and their clan know how to unlatch and operate the secret door, and will use it to outflank enemies.

Grimlocks (4): SZ M; AC 5; MV 12"; HD 2; hp 11 each; #AT 1; THAC0 16; Dmg 1-6 or by weapon; SD immune to visual effects, saves as 6th level fighter; AL NE; XP 46; FF p. 48. They wield broad swords and carry 6 gp each. See the Grimlocks sidebar on page 18.

Subterranean Lizard: SZ L; AC 5; MV 12"; HD 6; hp 26; #AT 1; THAC0 13; Dmg 2-12; SA double damage on natural 20; AL N; XP 512; MM p. 61.

54. SIMIAN SURGEONS

Each of these two rooms operates identically. A 10' square section of stone separates these two rooms from one another; the east and west faces thereof (marked with 'a' on the map) both feature a standing ape-shaped impression around which is an inscribed depiction of a taller ape with arms extended as if ready to hug a creature standing within the impression. Fused into the "head" part of each impression is a

coin-sized, faceted crystal that shimmers with every imaginable color. The entire 10' square section of stone radiates very strong alteration and enchantment/charm magic, as well as moderate evocation magic.

When a sentient creature stands – or is forced to stand – against the impression, the "surgeon" springs into action. The arms of the large inscribed ape become stony appendages that restrain the creature, while the faceted crystal emits precisely tuned invisible rays into various parts of the subject's brain. Over the course of a full turn, this turns a normal ape into a servitor ape, with no save allowed. Other sorts of creatures are affected as per **feeblemind** unless they save vs. spells.

Upon completion of the process, the stony appendages retract, the subject is released, and the faceted crystal pulses with green light for one minute. This last effect is a signal for any attending servitor apes to assist their newest member to the dens on the upper level in order to recuperate for a few days (see Servitor Apes sidebar on page 3).

The faceted crystal is as impervious to damage and other effects as the rest of the stone in the complex. In addition, any attempt to damage the crystal is met with a retributive blast equal to a **lightning bolt** cast by a 12th level caster.

55. SCRUB VATS

Four stone vats (2' tall, 4' diameter) seamlessly protrude from the floor. Each is filled nearly to the brim with sharp-smelling, slightly effervescent antiseptic fluid. At the bottom of each tub rests a loose chunk of porous chalk that radiates faint conjuration magic; these magically produce the antiseptic fluid at the rate of one drop per day.

Hanging from a wall projection near each tub is a set of long, bone-handled brushes and combs. There are nine of these in total, and each is worth 5 gp.

When servitor apes bring a subdued normal ape here prior to surgery, they use the implements and antiseptic to clean the head and shoulders of their captive.

56. EMPTY VAT

An empty stone vat (2' tall, 4' diameter) seamlessly protrudes from the floor near the north wall. The floor of the vat is a pressure plate; placing at least 80 lbs. of weight onto it causes the entire western wall to slide upwards, revealing the small secret chamber beyond. Removing the weight, or reducing it below 80 lbs., causes the wall to forcefully slide back down.



57. BOX OF WHISTLES

On the floor of this secret chamber rests a clear glass box with five long rectangular compartments inside. Two of the compartments are empty, but the other three hold a cylindrical electrum whistle (worth 130 gp, produces a middle C pitch), a cylindrical silver whistle (worth 10 gp, produces a low-pitched warbling), and a meerschaum tobacco pipe with a hidden whistle in its stem. (See Servitor Apes sidebar on page 3 for the effects of the whistles.)

While the pipe is used, it produces a very quiet sound that nearby elves and demons find subtly pleasant, improving reactions by 20% in peaceful situations. The pipe is only worth 5 gp for its workmanship, but can be sold for up to 1000 gp if its effects are known.

58. BRAIN & EYES

5' above the floor on the west wall is a life-size etching of a brain with connected eyes. The etching is from the profile, with the eyes looking toward the door. In conjunction with the runes in area 10, this is a pointer to the location of the polymorph effect at area 72.

59. DINING HALL

An elaborately carved, 30' long formal banquet table and nine matching chairs are neatly arranged in the western portion of the room. They are constructed of cherry wood, with many tooled embellishments. Unfortunately, they all suffer from patches of rot, signs of past termites, and sundry dings and scratches, so the set is worth only 60 gp. The table itself separates into six different 5' long sections for ease of transport.

Simply pushing the correct 3' wide, 7' tall section of the east wall is sufficient to pivot open the secret door to the peephole closet. The room is otherwise uninteresting.

60. PEEPHOLE CLOSET

Ashkasar's Imp familiar typically rests on an electrum perch (worth 310 gp) and monitors the long eastern passage via a set of magnifier peepholes in the wall. Because of its telepathic link with Ashkasar, the Imp's strategy can vary based on its master's impression of the situation; see area 61 for more details.

From inside the closet, the 3-foot wide secret door is quite obvious due to a steel pull-bar.

Imp: SZ S; AC 2; MV 6/18"; HD 2+2; hp 12; #AT 1; THAC0 16; Dmg 1-4; SA poison, suggestion 1/day; SD 25% magic resistance, only hit by silver and magic weapons, regenerate 1 hp/round, immune to magical cold/fire/electricity, considered 7 HD vs. magical attacks; AL LE; XP 308; MM p. 54. Can polymorph into a raven and a goat.

61. ASHKASAR'S SANCTUARY

The eastern wing of this room is arranged as a sitting area with a sadistic motif. Four tall-backed, cushioned chairs of exotic design (each worth 20 gp) are thoughtfully arranged alongside a collection of torture devices: A rack, stocks, a block with headsman's axe atop it, and a hanging cage with a 9' stand. Between them all is a low, foreign coffee table (worth 20 gp) that displays a choke pear, long pliers, several short branding irons, a heretic's fork, and crocodile shears.

Three standing screens obscure the southern wing. Beyond these is a sleep and study area furnished with a variety of antiques:

- Author's desk (worth 25 gp) sits against the east wall. Atop it rests an iron candlestick, a small golden pear-shaped thurible with "Tempestulu" engraved on the bottom (ostensibly worth 320 gp, but actually a **censer of summoning hostile air**

elementals), and a covered crystal dish (worth 15 gp) containing three sticks of **incense of meditation**. Within one drawer is a ring of four steel keys (one for each cell door in area 64) atop a spell book (containing all the magic-user spells Ashkasar currently has memorized – see below – plus **find familiar** and **read magic**). A second drawer contains two pots of indigo ink, a hollow wing bone pen, and a small wooden cube that glows brightly with a **continual light** spell. The last drawer holds a hinged ebony box (worth 490 gp) containing two fine porcelain plates (130 gp each) and two elaborate platinum cutlery sets inscribed with dread-stricken faces on the handles (750 gp per set).

- High double bed (worth 40 gp) with jungle-themed embellishments, outfitted with two thick down mattresses, equally fluffy pillows, and a clean bedspread. Folded at the foot is an exquisite cobalt blue quilt stitched with gold fibers (worth 800 gp).
- Trunk (worth 12 gp) containing several changes of ostentatious clothing in varieties appropriate for both sexes. Beneath the clothes are a porcelain tube containing a clerical scroll (**remove fear** x2, **find traps**, **snake charm**, **remove curse**, **cure serious wounds** x2), and eight wax-stoppered ceramic flasks; two contain unholy water, four contain thickened blood, another holds purple liquid that smells of licorice (**potions of flying**), and the last holds a clear glutinous fluid with small eyeballs suspended inside (**potions of clairvoyance**).

This chamber is the domain of Ashkasar, a kind of flesh-bound evil spirit generally referred to as a rakshasa. Note: You won't find that "r" word listed anywhere else in the module. This should help you remember not to say it, which in turn makes Ashkasar a more formidable adversary. The players may suspect Ashkasar to be some kind of devil, or perhaps an NPC magic-user, and that's just fine. Your goal, which mirrors Ashkasar's desires and precautions, is for the players to be flummoxed by his resiliency and fearful of his power. Not even his Imp familiar knows the truth, because he does not want his Achilles heel to be exposed. And I'm not telling you what his Achilles heel is, either. Go look it up if you've forgotten! But if the players manage to figure out and exploit the truth, more power to them!

Ashkasar's sadistic career of creating ghoul "pets" through forced cannibalism is secondary to preserving his own life; he is quite willing to flee the complex for an extended period of time. Even so, Ashkasar is keenly aware of his considerable power, and he will make efforts to apprehend any humans who intrude upon his domain, so that they may be compelled to acknowledge the "pleasures" of anthropophagy. To this end, he prefers to capture instead of kill. Because of his immortality, Ashkasar is exceptionally patient, and he simply rests here during the complex's long closure periods.

If his ESP reveals that the party has had peaceful (or at least non-violent) dealings with servitor apes, Ashkasar is likely to take on that guise with the party. Alternatively, he may appear as a former associate of the party, an innocent captive (perhaps "trapped" within the hanging cage), a useful underling, or anything else that makes sense given the characters' goals within the complex.

Ashkasar: SZ M; AC -4; MV 15"; HD 7; hp 38; #AT 3; THAC0 13; Dmg 1-3/1-3/2-5; SA ESP, illusions, spells; SD unaffected by spells under 8th level, only hit by magic weapons, half damage from weapons +2 and below; AL LE; XP 1177; MM p. 81. He carries a **double-sided ape face amulet**, which can operate the portcullises at each area 62 via simple presses of the eyes. He has the following spells memorized:

- First Level: **cause fear, charm person, command, hold portal, magic missile, sleep**
Second Level: **audible glamer, web**
Third Level: **fireball, hold person**

62. PORTCULLIS TRAP

There are two such areas on the map and each operates identically, though independently. Each trap is comprised of a pair of stout portcullises and a pressure plate.

Of each pair, the "inner" portcullis is the one nearer to area 63; this begins in the down position. The "outer" portcullis is further from area 63, and begins raised; it is grayed on the map as a reminder. The pressure plate is a 5' long, 10' wide section of floor just before the "inner" portcullis, though still between the two. (That is, none of the plate extends into area 63.) Any significant weight on the pressure plate – 10 lbs. or more is sufficient – causes the "outer" portcullis to slam down, followed by a speedy rise of the "inner" portcullis, thus forcing victims to contend with the ravenous undead in area 63.

Note that Ashkasar wears an amulet that can be used to raise or lower any of the portcullises individually.

63. LODGE FOR ERSTWHILE CANNIBALS

The floor here is completely free of debris.

Each of the short adjoining passages contains a standing, naked humanoid statue that seamlessly joins with the floor. Starting from the south and continuing to the north and east, the statues depict a gnome, a nixie, a dwarf, an elf, a lizard man, an annis (hag), and a hill giant. All of the statues' eyes are buttons; if all 14 are depressed simultaneously, the secret door behind the annis statue opens, sliding upward to allow access into area 65. A steel handle on the bottom edge of the secret door allows it to be pulled down and re-closed.

A large pack of ghouls and ghosts waits within the short hallways until they hear the promise of new victims. The ghosts initially only allow a single wave of ghouls (1-4 of them) to scramble toward any intruders, hoping to draw early fire, and then the rest of the pack converges.

The ghosts keep a few trinkets hidden behind the elf statue: A large tin ring (worthless), a silver waist chain (worth 20 gp), and a small porcelain horse statuette (worth 3 gp).

Ghasts (3): SZ M; AC 4; MV 15"; HD 4; hp 14, 22, 20; #AT 3; THAC0 15; Dmg 1-4/1-4/1-8; SA paralysis, stench; SD undead immunities; AL CE; XP 262; MM p. 43.

Ghouls (12): SZ M; AC 6; MV 9"; HD 2; hp 8 each; #AT 3; THAC0 16; Dmg 1-3/1-3/1-6; SA paralysis; SD undead immunities; AL CE; XP 83; MM p. 43.



64. INITIATION CELLS

In the center of the room rests a 3' deep, lidless rosewood box large enough for two people to comfortably lie inside side-by-side. Fresh, live earth fills the box nearly to the brim; worms and small insects visibly burrow near the surface. Buried within the box are a number of cleanly severed human body parts in various stages of decomposition, including the head of an adolescent girl.

Four petrified wood doors with durable locks and barred, rectangular windows open onto the adjoining 10' square cells. The cell marked with 'b' on the map contains a pseudo-ghoul; this former human has been forced into cannibalism, and has traveled part-way down the path of becoming a true ghoul. Only **restoration** or a **wish** can restore his humanity.

Pseudo-ghoul: SZ M; AC 6; MV 9"; HD 2; hp 10; #AT 3; THAC0 16; Dmg 1-3/1-3/1-6; AL NE; XP 62; MM2 p. 102.

65. ALCOVES AND INCONGRUOUS HEADS

Each of the eight alcoves hosts a pedestal (4' high, 1' diameter) that seamlessly projects from the floor. Upon each pedestal rests a stuffed, preserved, and stitched head. From the southwest and proceeding clockwise, the heads are from an elf, a dwarf, an annis (hag), a nixie, a lizard man, a gnome, a hill giant, and a neanderthal.

Archaic runes etched on the entire surface of each pedestal contain methods of research on the behavior and mental functioning of the race of the head presently resting upon it. Following the designated methods on a given pedestal takes 4-6 months; during this time, both 500 gp worth of materials and one fresh cadaver of the given race are required for each week's study. Upon completion of the research, the runes become indecipherable. From then on, any member of the particular race suffers a -4 saving throw penalty against any enchantment/charm spells cast by the researcher, and the researcher receives his choice of either a +20% or -20% reaction modifier when dealing with the race.

Within the stuffed lizard man head is a pale green prism that floats in the air – an **ioun stone**. The annis head stuffing contains a floating lavender ellipsoid stone – another **ioun stone**. Each of the others contains a large emerald worth 1500 gp.

The emerald within the neanderthal head is the **magic jar** vessel of a ghost, who attempts to possess a likely subject from among those who disturb the head.

Ghost: SZ M; AC 0 or 8; MV 9"; HD 10; hp 51; #AT 1; THAC0 10; Dmg age 10-40 years; SA aging and fear on sight, magic jar; SD while ethereal can only be attacked by ethereally or telepathically, only hit by silver and magic weapons, half damage from silver weapons; AL LE; XP 4680; MM p. 43.

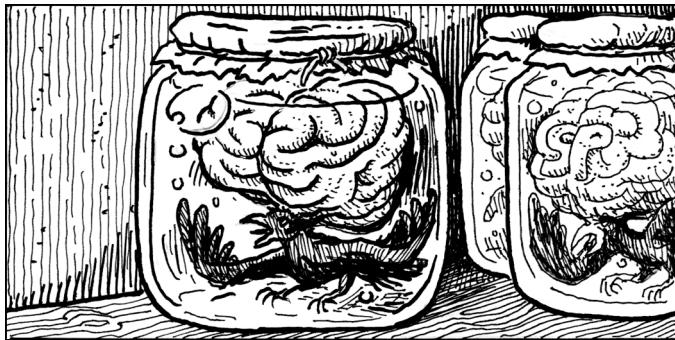
66. TOOTHY APE

Two giant fire beetle carcasses lie near several slabs of limestone arranged in bench-like shape against the west wall. Charcoal scrawling low on the northeast wall reads, "Pass right, only singly – doomed is the flock!" Small lumps of charcoal are scattered about. The center of the east wall features an oversized ape-head relief; its eyes, ears and nostrils are depicted as though stitched closed, but its mouth is agape and conspicuously toothy. It radiates faint alteration magic.

Placing precious stones worth at least 100 gp into the mouth of the relief triggers a **magic mouth**-like effect whereby the teeth crush the stones into worthless powder. Following this, the secret door into area 67 swings outward. There is no other affordance for opening the secret door from this side.

67. SECRET SKELETON

Skeletal human remains lie on the floor here, clutching a leather front cover torn from a tome. The inside contains a hastily scrawled message: "Fuel the Tempestulu, and self-sequester so might I commune with thee!"



68. SPECIMEN STORAGE

Two rows of glass shelves supported by stone protrusions line the walls of this room, though most on the north wall lie shattered on the floor, mixed with other chunks of cracked glass that appear to have been part of a sizable container or bottle.

Four large, fluid-filled glass jars (15" diameter & tall) on the western shelves each contain a dead, preserved crow with a swollen and hideously-oversized brain that appears to have expanded or exploded out of the crow's skull. Each brain is now roughly the size of a human's. The pungent preservation fluid radiates moderate alteration magic.

On the shelves immediately below these rest two sets of steel forceps and an oval-shaped steel tray (2' wide).

Any crow removed from its preservation fluid grotesquely expands and morphs into a grell, taking one round to do so. Freed grells instinctively recognize the significance of the contained crows and attempt to smash any other preservation jars and free their brethren; they may use some of their tentacles to smash jars simultaneously with using other tentacles to attack an enemy.

Grells (up to 4): SZ M; AC 4; MV 12"; HD 5; hp 27, 18, 25, 19; #AT 11; THAC0 15; Dmg 1-4(x10)/1-6; SA paralyzation; SD immune to lightning; AL NE; XP 952; FF p. 46.

69. JUNCTION AND CELLS

Both of the nearby steel cell doors are locked. The gaps between the bars are 4" wide.

Within the cell on the west side of the junction stands a stuffed and preserved ape with no evidence of stitchery. Its drab eyes are open, and it wears an ancient and cracked leather coat. Though its hands are empty, it is posed so as to clutch something rod-shaped against its chest.

The eastern cell contains a stuffed and preserved ape that is identical, save that its pose and a depression on its coat suggest a book was once held against its chest.

A pack of shadows lurks here, often hiding within the cells, waiting to slip out and overtake an unsuspecting victim from behind.

Shadows (7): SZ M; AC 7; MV 12"; HD 3+3; hp 21, 18, 12, 20, 13, 15, 9; #AT 1; THAC0 16; Dmg 2-5; SA strength drain; SD undead immunities, only hit by magic weapons, unaffected by cold; AL CE; XP 291; MM p. 86.

70. ALCOVES AND EIGHT HEADS

Eight stuffed, preserved, and stitched ape heads rest on pedestals in the alcoves. Within the stuffing, each head contains a preternaturally large and lustrous white pearl worth 1000 gp.

71. GALLERY

Enormous murals on the north, west, and south walls realistically depict an orgy of humans practicing gruesome acts of cannibalism on one another. Every so often one of the depicted cannibals' eyes appears to glance at someone in the room and then quickly look away. All the cannibals' eyes radiate faint illusion magic.

A stepladder fashioned from steel and petrified wood stands in the northeast corner near an open ebony box (worth 580 gp) containing 16 sealed paint jars and three long, silver paintbrushes (175 gp each) embellished with intricate designs of leeches and maggots. One of the paint jars contains a translucent gray fluid that is actually an **oil of slipperiness**. Another is a magical white paint (worth 300 gp) that causes any eyes painted with it to sporadically glance back at the viewer; there is enough paint left to render 20 more eyes. The balance contain mundane colorants.

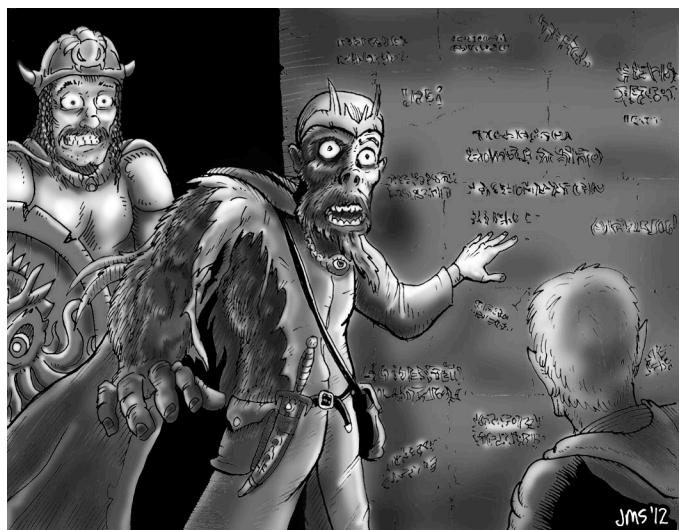
72. SCRIPTURA-MORPHU

The eerie designs covering the walls radiate strong alteration and divination magic. As the designs are viewed by intelligent creatures, they shift and reshape into words and paragraphs in all languages known by those creatures.

Only diminutive letters are formed, so a distant observer gleans but vague notions of their significance. In fact, the words tailor themselves to the desires of the viewer, so that one character might notice phrases about finding lost love, whereas another might perceive suggestions for satisfying revenge or procuring wealth.

To fully comprehend these messages, which are actually fraudulent in content, the reader must be within arm's reach of the wall, but by doing so he becomes subject to the magic of the designs. He must save vs. spells or be transformed into a normal ape, as a **polymorph other** spell, including the requisite system shock roll and chance of personality/mentality change. Characters that save necessarily recoil from the wall, shield their eyes, or similar; further attempts to intuit the messages require more saves.

Servitor apes will, of course, attempt to subdue any ape-form characters and take them for surgery.



73. SCULPTURE OF THE EMBRACE

The stairs to the north descend 60' before arriving at area 111.

Four unfinished granite statues rise nearly to the top of this 40' tall chamber, bending at the waist and intermingling disproportionately-long arms into a tangle that occludes sight to the chamber's upper half. Though obviously humanoid in form with slender torsos, the statues do not yet feature fine details that would allow an observer to recognize the race the sculptor intended to depict. Their feet seamlessly join with the floor stone.

A grell lurks within the tangle of arms. If a light source is used here, the shadows improve the grell's chances of surprise to 3 in 6, possibly allowing enough time to grab an unfortunate character and retreat back into the tangle.

Grell: SZ M; AC 4; MV 12"; HD 5; hp 20; #AT 11; THAC0 15; Dmg 1-4(x10)/1-6; SA paralyzation; SD immune to lightning; AL NE; XP 952; FF p. 46.

74. GIBBERING HEADS

Many bloodstains discolor the floor. Several dismembered bestial limbs lie near the east door, and copious bits of teeth, bone, and withered flesh are scattered about.

Pedestals in the alcoves each hold a stuffed, preserved, and stitched ape head, although neither the eyes nor mouths are sewn closed. Their eyes bulge and seem to stare at anyone who enters. If someone reaches the center of the room or touches one of the heads, the heads begin hollering gibberish, causing **confusion** in any non-apes within 40' that fail a save vs. spells. The clamor ends when no living creatures are in the room, or when the heads are destroyed; each has 5 hit points. The heads are magical objects, not creatures, so they are not possible targets for confused creatures' attacks.

Destroying a head with a violent blow may ruin the precious stone within it. Two heads contain oblong chunks of amber (100 gp each), the third contains a cracked diamond (350 gp), and the last contains a torus-shaped carnelian stone (ostensibly worth 100 gp) that is actually an empty **ring of spell storing** capable of holding **audible glamer**, **wizard lock**, and **protection from normal missiles**.

Any pandemonium here may arouse the cruel curiosity of the nearby zerpanax (area 76) or a group of grimlocks from areas 53, 80, or 81.

75. RUBBISH ROOM

Heaps of worthless detritus have been strewn here: Broken glass shelving, crumbling statuary, bent steel fixtures, soiled textiles, smashed door beams, bones, crushed fire beetle shells, and so on. The refuse continues to the west, into the space beyond the archway, which is the lair of a dozen giant fire beetles.

Giant Fire Beetles (12): SZ S; AC 4; MV 12"; HD 1+2; hp 6 each; #AT 1; THAC0 18; Dmg 2-8; AL N; XP 33; MM p. 9.

76. ESVET'S LOBBY

Thick, leafy vines completely obscure the walls in the east and northwest portions of this chamber, growing out of dozens of pots made from fire beetle shells, and climbing up the walls onto some parts of the ceiling. The densest masses of these darkly-colored vines sprout short beans. These plants are not native to the surface world, and have been cultivated by the zerpanakes.

A pair of 5' tall alabaster snake statues stand near the middle section of the west wall, one looking to the east, and the other looking to the northwest — toward the thickest concentrations of vines on the



respective walls. The statues depict very stout snakes with man-sized heads, closed mouths, and wide-open eyes. Their eyes emit strong ultraviolet light (only visible to creatures with ultravision) via a variant of a **continual light**, which enables the vines to thrive here. Because they are somewhat worn and chipped, the statues are only worth 325 gp each as art objects. Each statue weighs 250 lbs.

Hundreds of ape hand impressions decorate the west walls. On the east walls, the vines hide three separate sections of inscribed archaic runes:

North Section: "The Gann's eternal gifts bless us with vision that spans epochs. We enjoy our boon until he returns to discharge us."

Middle Section: "Contained within obsidian, the mighty seed remains dormant. So shall it be until the Gann comes to reclaim it."

South Section: "We serve loyally as no others can serve. Neither our mother nor our father, the Gann is nonetheless equal in our conception."

The zerpanax Esvet cares for the room's vine gardens, occasionally using a goblin thrall (see area 77) for tasks that require hands. Much of the time he rests, coiled among the pots in the northwest corner of the room.

Esvet is eager to acquire a stronger and more capable thrall, of an appropriate size of course, but he's both cautious and opportunistic. He would gladly assail a lone individual, and even prey on outlying members of a group distracted by other foes. But if faced with the entirety of a strong party, Esvet flees northward into the natural caverns.

Zerpanax – Esvet: SZ L; AC 5; MV 15"; HD 4; hp 21; #AT 1; THAC0 15; Dmg 1-3; SA poison (paralysis), thrall; SD 10% magic resistance; AL NE; XP 262; see new monster section.

77. ESVET'S DEN

A nest of eight great griffon-hide pillows (50 lbs. and 30 gp each) in the southeast corner contains scraps of molted snake skin. Two broad, shallow cone-shaped alabaster bowls (40 lbs. and 95 gp each) sit next to the nest. One is filled with fresh water, the other with a mixture of short beans and crumbled fungus.

Esvet's goblin thrall lies unconscious on coarse mats in the northeast corner. He has a pair of fang puncture wounds on his lower back.

Goblin Thrall: SZ S; AC 6; MV 6"; HD 1-1; hp 3; #AT 1; THAC0 20; Dmg 1-6 or by weapon; AL LE; XP 14; MM p. 47. Wields a long sword.

78. BROAD HALL

Both sides of the oversize stone doors to the north are inscribed from top to bottom with a glowering primate face. Though quite massive, they are well balanced and swing open easily.

East of the door on the south wall is a fireplace-like niche (2' square) in the form of an upward-looking ape head relief with mouth wide open. The 160' tall shaft that rises from within the niche is so cramped that only a halfling-sized or smaller creature can fit within. Small steel rungs start at the 20' mark and lead upward to the top.

Between the 50' and 70' marks, the shaft is choked off with old, but still thick, spiderwebs. Within is a web-wrapped, desiccated sprite corpse clutching a druidic scroll of **create water**. Clearing the webs with fire will destroy the scroll and cause the sprite corpse to fall before burning completely, likely colliding with anyone in the shaft.

The shaft ends in a steel hatch with a circular handle and lock that opens onto the exterior hillside. Until the hatch is opened, it's nigh-undetectable from the outside due to the earth and vegetation atop it.

79. GRANITE PHILOSOPHERS

Two ape statues seamlessly protrude from the granite floor, each twice as tall and broad as a normal ape. Each wears a peculiar doublet. The western statue clutches a writing quill to its chest with both arms; the eastern statue clutches an oversized tome. The statues provide clues for the invocation of the etching in area 100.

Whenever the west statue is touched, a permanent **magic mouth** causes it to utter one of these phrases:

- “Never odd or even.”
- “Draw, O coward!”
- “Drab as a fool, aloof as a bard.”
- “Rise to vote, sir.”
- “Was it a cat I saw?”
- “Flee to me, remote elf!”

Whenever the east statue is touched, its permanent **magic mouth** verbalizes one of the following:

- “knock-knock”
- “shush”
- “quack”
- “clang”
- “boom”
- “sizzle”

Any noise here, including statue speech, alerts the marmosets in area 102.



80. GUARDED FOUNTAIN

At the north point in the circular section of the room, a large simian-motif fountain mask, fed by an outlet from a much-deeper underground river, spews from the wall into a 40' deep drainage shaft. The bottom of the reservoir ends in a pile of boulders, through which the water drains. A stone lever hidden in the mask's mouth causes the secret door to open by way of water pressure.

Seven male grimlocks live here to guard the fresh water source for their clan. Their trappings include lizard-skin bedrolls and iron cutlery. One of their number always keeps “watch” with an ear against the western door.

Grimlocks (7): See sidebar.



81. GRIMLOCK WARRIORS

Three bed-sized sections of the chamber along the west wall are 2' higher than the surrounding floor and feature broad humanoid-shaped depressions.

The grimlocks lounge around the raised sections and bicker when not otherwise occupied. They can easily hear disturbances through the portcullises up to area 88, and they aggressively react to summons from other locations.

Grimlocks (10), Females (2): See sidebar. Females are armed.

Grimlock Leader – Hazteh’z: AC 4; HD 3; hp 17; XP 91; otherwise as normal grimlock. Wields a two-handed sword and carries 15 gp.

82. BLOCKED PASSAGE

Steel bars run from floor to ceiling here, with only 3" gaps between them, effectively blocking passage to the north. There is no mechanism for opening the bars.

83. OCCUPIED RESERVOIR

The circular portion of the room hosts a 60' deep reservoir, with nearby groundwater keeping the shaft full up to 1' below the lip. Two water weirds occupy the reservoir.

5' above the floor on the center of the south wall is a life-size etching of a brain with connected eyes. The etching is from the profile, with the eyes looking toward the west wall. In conjunction with the runes in area 10, this is a pointer to the location of the polymorph effect at area 72.

This room contains no mechanism for opening the secret door.

Water Weirds (2): SZ L; AC 4; MV 12"; HD 3+3; hp 17, 14; #AT 1; THAC0 13; Dmg 0; SA drowning; SD sharp weapons cause only 1 damage, resistant/immune to many attacks, disrupts instead of dying; AL CE; XP 436; MM p. 100.

GRIMLOCKS

BACKSTORY: The zerpanaktes brought the grimlocks to the complex and granted them tenancy in exchange for the clan's promise to bring an unharmed human back from every raid into the surface world and deliver it to the zerpanaktes. However, the grimlocks have not yet been permitted to raid the surface, due to the zerpanaktes' similar agreement with the flinds.

It has been more than a generation since this grimlock clan has hunted humans in the surface world, and their patience is running short. They are contemplating an assault against the flinds, and will consider cooperation with any group that has similar aims. In fact, the current chieftain, E'yaru, would even listen to a proposal to turn against the zerpanaktes; but if E'yaru is killed, the successor will not be so bold. Of course, if the grimlocks do overcome the zerpanaktes, E'yaru will measure his chances against the player characters!

Note that the grimlocks' intense lust for human meat may complicate parley with any group that includes humans.

TACTIC NOTES: While defending their lair, these grimlocks will not flee unless their leaders or champion also flee, or are slain. Grimlock senses allow them to ignore a variety of common defenses: Invisibility, cloaks of elvenkind, mirror image, hiding in shadows, etc.

TYPICAL STATISTICS:

Grimlocks: SZ M; AC 5; MV 12"; HD 2; hp 11 each; #AT 1; THAC0 16; Dmg 1-6 or by weapon; SD immune to visual effects, saves as 6th level fighter; AL NE; XP 46; FF p. 48. They wield iron long swords or broad swords. They carry either 18 sp and 4 gp, or 17 ep, or a small hematite stone (5 gp).

Grimlock Females: AC 6; HD 1; hp 4 each; THAC0 19; otherwise as normal grimlocks. Generally unarmed. If armed, they wield iron battle axes or hand axes.

Grimlock Young: AC 6; hp 1 each. Noncombatants.

84. ALCOVES AND PROGENY

The alcove pedestals here are empty, having already been looted by the grimlocks. Presently a large group of grimlock young live here, overseen by a half-dozen females.

Grimlock Females (6), Young (18): See sidebar.



85. GRIMLOCK HOST

Many grimlocks live here, along with a domesticated subterranean lizard that rests just into the north hallway. This is also a central eating room for the clan; flayed and butchered cuts of troglodyte and goblin lie on leathery serving mats, next to clumps of edible fungus and moss.

Grimlocks (12), Females (3), Young (5): See sidebar. Females are armed.

Grimlock Leader – Chr'ta: AC 4; HD 3; hp 12; XP 91; otherwise as normal grimlock. Wields a two-handed sword. Carries 10 sp, 12 ep and 8 gp.

Grimlock Leader – Saa-Firn-Uuw: AC 4; HD 3; hp 15; XP 91; otherwise as normal grimlock. Wields a two-handed sword. Carries 4 hematite stones worth 10 gp each.

Subterranean Lizard: SZ L; AC 5; MV 12"; HD 6; hp 28; #AT 1; THAC0 13; Dmg 2-12; SA double damage on natural 20; AL N; XP 512; MM p. 61.

86. COLD FORGE

Grimlock smiths craft and repair weapons on the three anvils here, hammering, folding, snipping, and rolling without the use of heat. Also present are a sharpening wheel, countless implements on racks, a loose pile of copper ore (400 lbs., worth 20 gp), a barrel of iron scrap (220 lbs., worth 11 gp), a dozen finished iron broad swords, and a cracked wooden chest containing 15 iron collars shaped like undulating serpents.

Grimlocks (5), Females (2): See sidebar. Females are armed.

87. CHIEFTAIN AND CHAMPION

At the south wall opposite the door, two mottled black eel-man corpses hang from trestles, splayed-open and dripping, with flesh-slicing knives on the floor beneath their dangling feet. Toward the center of the chamber, muscular grimlock warriors lounge with their women on scaly mats, savoring vinegar-soaked entrails from ceramic bowls.

E'yaru, the chief of the clan, reclines on his wide iron throne against the east wall, with his champion leaning close by. Before them, much like a footstool, rests a circular iron chest. Several lengths of chain and three padlocks secure its lid. Within the chest are:

- Shrunken head of a white-haired grimlock.
- Three thin sheets of copper, stippled with the names of 253 grimlock ghosts that will, according to the writing, seek vengeance upon whomever might purloin the clan's treasure.
- Lizard-gut bag containing three large tourmaline stones (200 gp each), two small tourmaline stones (65 gp each), and three carnelian stones (50 gp each).
- Folded parchment showing the location of some other adventure site in your own campaign.
- 170 gp and 10136 sp.
- 395 lbs. of pure silver ore, worth 10 sp per pound.

E'yaru believes the parchment to be a map of some value, but such a diagram is incompatible with grimlock senses, so he is unable to act upon it. He may offer it as barter for other services or goods.



In combat, E'yaru uses his wand to blind enemies, so his warriors can slay with impunity.

Grimlocks (6), Females (4): See sidebar. Females are armed.

Grimlock Leader (Chieftain) – E'yaru: AC 3; HD 3; hp 17; XP 91; otherwise as normal grimlock. Wields a two-handed sword and a **wand of illumination** (62 charges; made of magnesium alloy in the shape of a gigantic sewing needle; command word is “eye”). Wears a closed-faced, iron helm without eye slits and set with 15 bloodstones (worth 900 gp). Carries three iron keys for the chest padlocks.

Grimlock Champion – Cskurr: AC 3; HD 4; hp 30; THAC0 15; XP 157; otherwise as normal grimlock. Wields a **two-handed sword +3, Frost Brand**.

88. CROWDED HALLWAY

Young grimlocks play here under the supervision of a few females. They can easily hear combat or other loud noises in adjoining areas, even as far as area 81, and will alert the rest of the clan.

The passage to the south is blocked by steel bars that run from floor to ceiling, with only 3" gaps between them. There is no mechanism for opening the bars.

Grimlock Females (3), Young (12): See sidebar.

89. LABOR ROOM

Grimlock females and young are cramped here performing various chores amidst sleeping pallets and unsavory edibles.

Grimlock Females (18), Young (10): See sidebar.

90. MENACING JUNCTION

Standing at the back of the short western offshoot is a hulking monster – a 9' tall humanoid reminiscent of both a crocodile and a rhinoceros, poised and ready to charge with its crystal horns. Though lifelike, it is simply a stuffed and very well preserved specimen from another world. It radiates moderate alteration magic thanks to a permanent **Nystul's magic aura** spell.

The door to the east is secured by a **wizard lock** cast by the Gann at 15th level of ability.

91. INHABITED CLOCKS

An enormous brass-framed sand clock, 10' tall and nearly as wide, hangs from the east wall by a brass spindle that goes into a hole in the wall. Another, somewhat smaller (5' tall) sand clock is similarly suspended from the south wall. Roughly half of the large clock's sand has already fallen into its lower globe, and the slow trickle makes it difficult for an observer to estimate how much time remains. The smaller clock's sand is entirely within its lower globe.

Close inspection of the sand clocks reveals a pentacle frosted into each of the four glass bulbs, as well as small, light blue quartz stones (5 gp each) within the sand. There are 4 of the latter within the small clock and 34 within the large clock; the stones are large enough and the sand is fine enough that the stones do not clog the flow.

Further, the masses of sand inside the large clock appear to be comprised of vaguely humanoid forms, folded and intermingled about one another. This sand is actually a group of ten sandmen. The smaller clock holds a single sandman, curled up within the lower globe. Though currently all dozing, the sandmen will wake in response to noise or flipping of the clocks. The pentagrams prevent them from



breaking free of their own containers, so they try to bargain for release. In exchange, they can only offer meager wealth (their quartz stones) and information; they know details about the origin and purpose of the Gann's complex. Once released, their presence can cause sleep; they may take advantage of their liberators' susceptibility, putting more to sleep with touches if necessary, and stealing any available gemstones before leaving.

There are presently 50 years of flow remaining in the large clock. When it finishes, a connected counterweight mechanism inside the wall causes the clock to flip about the spindle to begin a new measure of time. The clock can also be flipped manually, though it is extremely heavy. Each time the large clock flips, the connected mechanism causes the smaller sand clock to flip, causes the outer doors of the Gann's complex to open (area 1), and causes three random stasis cell doors to open (area 24), thus beginning a new maintenance phase for the complex.

The smaller clock's flow takes 10 days to finish. Upon completion, its counterweight mechanism causes the outer doors to close, which in turn triggers the whistle pedestals at areas 23 and 50. Like the larger clock, the smaller one can be flipped manually.

With some effort, the small sand clock can also be pulled away from the wall slightly, causing the secret door in the north wall to pop open.

Sandmen (11): SZ M; AC 3; MV 9"; HD 4; hp 18 each; #AT 1; THAC0 15; Dmg sleep; SA sleep; SD 20% magic resistance, protection from normal missiles; AL N(E); XP 287; FF p. 77.

92. STASIS CLOCK

A hand-sized sand clock with a brass frame rests in the leftmost of three nooks in the north wall. If this **clock of unearthly preservation** is broken or smashed, its potent magic takes effect; all creatures and other living organisms within a 5' radius are held in quasi-ethereal stasis, appearing ghostly and unmoving, and only able to be harmed by attacks that affect ethereal creatures. Creatures are restored to normal when their translucent form is touched by the flesh of another creature. When used in a mundane fashion, the clock's flow completes in 5 minutes and 11 seconds.

There is no affordance inside this room for opening the secret door.

93. TRAPPED ALCOVES

Both alcoves feature the usual pedestal, but only the west pedestal hosts a stuffed, preserved, and stitched ape head. Within the stuffing, the head contains a violet garnet worth 610 gp.

The pit trap triggers upon lifting anything off of the pressure plate at the top of either alcove pedestal, dropping anyone in the indicated area into the 50' deep pit. The pit door swings closed again a few seconds after opening. A ghast who had fallen into the trap some time ago now waits at the bottom – hungry for a companion. Also at the bottom of the pit are a section of furry scalp, bits of smashed skull, and a badly cracked violet garnet worth 20 gp.

Ghast: SZ M; AC 4; MV 15"; HD 4; hp 22; #AT 3; THAC0 15; Dmg 1-4/1-4/1-8; SA paralysis, stench; SD undead immunities; AL CE; XP 262; MM p. 43.

94. EMPTY PEDESTAL

The alcove pedestal is empty but radiates faint alteration magic. Placing an undamaged and un-looted preserved ape head onto the pedestal causes the one-way door near area 95 to open for 1 turn.

95. WIZARD LOCKED DOOR

The door to northwest is held fast by a **wizard lock** spell cast by Samuel-of-the-Loam (see area 109). Opening it triggers a **magic mouth** as described in area 107.

96. LABORATORY

Running along the west wall is a long worktable crafted from electrum piping and glass panels, worth 600 gp intact or 200 gp as salvaged electrum. On top of this rest an electrum suturing needle (10 gp), a pair of large electrum tweezers (50 gp), and four platter-sized glass dishes with tall lips.

A long electrum cage (420 gp) rests against the east wall, and contains the shriveled remains of eight black cats. Close inspection of the carcasses reveals a healed incision running lengthwise on each cat's belly. Stacked near the door of the cage are nine ceramic feeding bowls.

At the north point of the room, a petrified wood stool rests before an electrum and steel device reminiscent of a spinning wheel (80 gp). Next to it is an electrum spool (10 gp) wound with 380' of strong thread spun from cat intestines.

97. DISSECTION

A coal-black sabre-tooth tiger carcass lies here, now time-withered, and apparently abandoned during dissection, with its midsection neatly opened up, and various organs pushed aside. Its large maxillary canine fangs, its front claws, and its heart have all been removed.

98. ETHEREAL FOLIAGE

Note: The dotted line on the map is an illusory wall. From the door, the room appears to be 30' deep.

Ghostly, translucent vines and creepers dangle from a high, petrified wood trellis that starts just inside the door and continues to the far “wall” 30' away. They grow from earth-filled granite troughs arranged in a U-shape. Dozens of the creepers dangle down the “tunnel” formed by the trellis, touching the floor in many places, such that only the smallest of creatures could navigate the room without touching the foliage.



These ghostly plants are actually a single bloodthorn plant, presently in stasis, existing halfway between the ethereal and prime material planes. In this state, the bloodthorn cannot be harmed except by attacks that can affect ethereal targets; in fact, the plant remains hanging even if the trellis or troughs are destroyed. Any creature touching the ghostly bloodthorn simultaneously reanimates it and shifts it fully back to the prime material plane, usually allowing the bloodthorn to make at least one attack.

Bloodthorn: SZ L; AC 4 (tendril), 3 (trunk); MV 0"; HD 20; hp 77; #AT 2-5; THAC0 15; Dmg 25% max hp; SD 8 tendrils have 7 hp each, separate from trunk hp; AL N; XP 3950; MM2 p. 18.

99. LOCKER

Beyond the illusory wall, the Gann's guardian familiar stands atop a peculiar, almost organic-looking, 5' tall locker positioned against the south wall. This extraordinary black cat defends the locker against any disturbance.

The locker is made of a tar-colored synthetic resin, with ridges and bone-like lumps along the edges, as well as patches of short hairlike growths on the surfaces. One ridge projects near a C-shaped seam, allowing most of the locker's front to be swung open. Within the locker are the following items:

- A 4' long, T-shaped steel implement made from a pair of steel cylinders fused together. This is a key for activating/deactivating the vaporizing eye beams of the enormous ape head statues at area 1.
- A quadruple-tubed, 5' long wind instrument reminiscent of an oboe, and constructed of hardened resin with three platinum valves. This is actually a **staff of command** with 9 charges; each of its three functions is activated by playing it with one of the valves depressed.
- Tall glass panel etched with archaic runes explaining that although fey lifespan is well suited to the caretaker role, their propensity toward recalcitrance and resistance to magic both strongly oppose any reprogramming recipe applied to their cerebrum; the caretakers shall therefore be selected from among the larger primates present on the world.
- Another tall glass panel etched with archaic runes – research notes on two forms of stasis. The first form, being large in scale, is suitable for arbitrary caretakers, but it is imperfect in that slow decay befalls those so affected. The second form is personal in scale and correctly prevents all aging and deterioration; the remaining sand and glass will allow the creation of three stasis-ethereality clocks whose effect can be ended via touch of the flesh.

- A third, shorter glass panel etched with archaic runes comprising just one note: “Annihilation Seed: black = dormant; red = energized.”
- Two resilient and flexible garments made of thin, gold-mithral alloy, which when worn together form head-to-toe suit with no openings to see from. The suit is worth 680 gp.

Guardian Familiar: SZ S; AC 8 to 0; MV 12” to 28”; HD 1 to 9; hp 4 and more; #AT 3; THAC0 19 to 12; Dmg 1-6/1-6/1-4 and more; SD 75% magic resistance, nine lives; AL LN; XP 2286; FF p. 49.

100. ERUDITE SLAB

A bed-sized, transparent slab of glass sits in the center of the room. A humanoid-shaped depression in the top would generously fit even a burly, 6' tall man. The head part of the depression is oriented toward the west wall, and features an olive green, rounded serpentine stone (200 gp) embedded at the nadir.

The stone has a strong alteration aura as long as it remains embedded in the glass slab. Anyone lying within the depression feels comfortable and inclined to sleep for a full, normal cycle. Doing so causes the sleeper to experience mind-enhancing dreams. Roll d20 when the character wakes; if the result is higher than the lower of the character's Int or Wis, add one point to either stat (the character's choice). The stone functions three times before crumbling into worthless grit.

Covering most of the north wall, an enormous, striped sabre-tooth tiger skin hangs with its great fanged-head looking downward, seemingly gripping the wall via its rear claws. It is worth 1750 gp.

Hidden from sight behind the sabre-tooth tiger skin is a life-size wall etching of a pair of apes facing mostly away from the viewer. The scene depicts the left ape using a quill to draw a picture of a closed wooden door in the open book held by the right ape. Each wears a peculiar doublet.

If someone in this room concentrates on the etching and pronounces any phrase which is both a palindrome *and* onomatopoeia, the one-way door in the north wall springs open for 1 turn. (Examples include, “pop,” “peep,” and “toot.”)

101. SILVERY GATES

Two silver wall sculptures depicting life-sized framed doors hang from the northeast and northwest walls, apparently affixed via a dozen silver rivets through the frame of each. Though seemingly art objects worth 500 gp each, they radiate strong alteration magic and are actually functional doors that lead to other adventuring sites (of your own choosing). The doors are permanently affixed to the walls and cannot be removed, except through a **wish** or similar magic.

102. MARGOYLE SENTINELS

This 30' high cavern of raw, unworked stone has many irregular surfaces, natural fissures, and narrowing crevices.

Standing near the northeastern exit, at the point marked ‘c’ on the map, is a 10' tall, 18” wide hammered-bronze bell supported by a stout wooden frame. The bell’s shape is that of an enormous snake, rearing and glaring downward at what one might imagine to be human-sized prey. Because of the bell’s fine craftsmanship and intricate detail – every scale, wrinkle and fold has been carefully wrought – it is worth 2000 gp. When struck, it sounds much like a gong, though with a denser reverberative quality that makes it easily heard up to 300’ away.

Three margoyle hide among the crevices. As allies of the zerpanaktes, they are tasked with ensuring intruders are forced to meet with the

zerpanaktes before passing through the area. They wait for northward-moving groups to pass into the larger cavern before revealing themselves. The margoyle summon the zerpanaktes with a single strike of the bell.

Because they are accustomed to the passage of grimlocks, they are only 25% likely to stop such a group. Under no circumstances do the margoyle harass a passing group that includes a zerpanax.

If forced into battle, the margoyle sound the bell repeatedly as both a warning to and request for help from the zerpanaktes, falling back to their hidden shelf (see area 103) as necessary.

Wedged in a narrow, twisting crack in the deepest part of the west offshoot (past the ‘d’ on the map) is a **ring of delusion**, made of meteoric iron and featuring a clover design. It is almost completely out of sight, though magical detection would certainly betray its presence.

Margoyle (3): SZ M; AC 2; MV 6/12”; HD 6; hp 30, 24, 26; #AT 4; THAC0 13; Dmg 1-6(x2)/2-8(x2); SD 80% undetectable against stone, hit only by magic weapons; AL CE; XP 512; MM2 p. 83.

103. EASTERN SHAFT

Stalactites descend from the 50' high ceiling, and the dim glow from sparse growths of phosphorescent fungus reveals little more than the extents of the cavern.

A ring of carefully crafted obsidian is mortared as a lip around a 20' diameter roughly-worked, deep hole in the ground. This shaft descends 160' to a horizontal rift, opened by a recent earthquake, that runs downward at a slight angle for 1/4 mile before connecting to subterranean caverns of your own devising.

Three thick rope ladders, each 200' long, are anchored into the granite near the obsidian ring. 75% of the time, these are drawn up into heaping coils. Otherwise, one or more ladders descend into the shaft, enabling a party of grimlocks to return from their hunt in the passages below.

At the point marked ‘c’ on the map is a high cave, 30' above the floor. The cave is impossible to spot from ground level due to a jutting lip and its low (4' high) ceiling. Vertical cracks riddle the walls within the cave. Stuffed within one of the cracks is the margoyle’s treasure, carefully wrapped in several layers of cloth: A magnificent emerald (5000 gp), an irregular violet garnet (370 gp) and six black onyx stones (65 gp each).



104. ZERPANAKTES' CAPTIVES

Cells to the east and south appear to be an excavated expansion of a natural cavern. Each 10' square cell is blocked by floor-to-ceiling iron bars with a built-in door constructed of similar materials. All the cell doors have locks, but none of them are conventionally locked. The following three occupied cells are secured by **wizard lock** spells cast by Samuel-of-the-Loam (see area 109):

- g. This cell holds a human, Newluck Psalt (Ftr 2nd, 6 hp of 12 max, AL N). He is a henchman of Keshler (see area 109), and he witnessed the zerpanaktes take both Keshler and Samuel-of-the-Loam as thralls after their party became overmatched and surrendered.
- h. The zerpanaktes keep a mated pair of death dogs here that they captured but have so far been unable to tame.

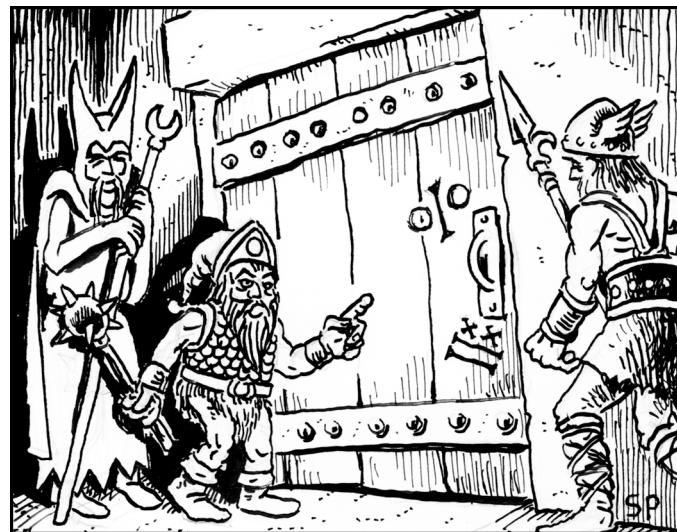
Death Dogs (2): SZ M; AC 7; MV 12"; HD 2+1; hp 9, 13; #AT 2; THAC0 16; Dmg 1-10/1-10; SA bite delivers disease, knock down on natural 19/20; AL N(E); XP 135; FF p. 23.

- i. A recently deceased human corpse lies face-down just inside the cell door, with badly infected puncture wounds on his back. This was Ferd Whistler, a man-at-arms employee of Keshler.

105. OCCLUDED PASSAGE

Bent and torn remnants of bolted steel framing at each end of this passage suggest that gates may have once restricted access here. Dozens of long strips of translucent molted snake skin hang from ceiling to floor here, limiting clear sight to 5'.

Halfway down the passage is a door on the north wall. Scratched into it are the standard runes for Halt and Private.



106. OSTENSIBLY PRIVATE ROOM

Two gas spores (90% chance to mistake these for beholders) hover over a distended, decomposing minotaur corpse in the center of the room. Broken and crooked electrum tubes lie amidst cracked and broken glass shelving around the perimeter. In total, the electrum tubes weigh 50 lbs. and are worth 250 gp.

The zerpanaktes set up this room and the runes on the outside of its door to tempt and kill any would-be thieves.

Gas Spores (2): SZ L; AC 9; MV 3"; HD n/a; hp 1; #AT 1; THAC0 20*; Dmg nil; SA infestation, explodes for 6-36 damage, save vs. wands for half; AL N; XP 33; MM p. 42.

107. FUNGAL GARDEN

Phosphorescent fungus on the loamy floor and the 20' high ceiling illuminate the entirety of this natural cavern with a soft viridescent glow. Odd, waxy mulch lies in and around a variety of moss and toadstool beds. Ten of the toadstools are nearly man-sized. A passage leading northwest out of this cavern slopes up steeply. (It gains 30' in elevation over 40' of distance.)

Several of the toadstools are actually violet fungi and shriekers. Careful fertilization keeps all of them within 10-15' of the eastern wall. Intentionally cautious travel along the west side of the chamber is the only way to stay out of their range. Close inspection of the "mulch" reveals it to be shredded pieces of molted snake skin.

The door to southeast is protected by both a **wizard lock** (cast by Samuel-of-the-Loam (see area 109) and a **magic mouth** that lustily announces the following when the door is opened:

"And lo! Visitors in attendance! As you please, you may partake of the toadstools and lichen, but the tubers are reserved for the host!"

This is loud enough to alert the nearby zerpanaktes and trigger an extra wandering monster check.

Violet Fungi (3): SZ M; AC 7; MV 1"; HD 3; hp 14, 16, 8; #AT 1-4; THAC0 16; Dmg nil; SA flesh rot; AL N; XP 189; MM p. 42.

Shriekers (2): SZ M; AC 7; MV 1"; HD 3; hp 14, 12; #AT 0; SD noise; AL N; XP 114; MM p. 87.

108. WESTERN SHAFT

Extensive colonies of phosphorescent fungus on the 70' high ceiling provide dim light sufficient to identify a creature's basic form, but not enough to recognize a specific individual. The light also spoils infravision, of course. The wide opening to the west is 30' up the wall of this chamber; the opening itself is plainly visible due to the illumination, but it is dark beyond.

A shaft with a 25' diameter obsidian lip – similar to the shaft in area 103 – descends 240' to the point where it becomes flooded, and continues another 50' underwater. A seismic rupture at the bottom of the shaft leads to subterranean rivers of your own design. Any disturbance of the water is 25% likely to arouse the curiosity of a pair of giant octopi that hunt these depths.

At the end of the eastern offshoot marked with 'f' on the map, a knee-high pile of rubble covers the floor, apparently having broken from the ceiling during the recent earthquake. Poking or prodding the offshoot's ceiling causes more rubble to fall; anyone within the offshoot takes 2d6 damage.

Giant Octopi (2): SZ L; AC 7; MV 3//12"; HD 8; hp 26, 40; #AT 7; THAC0 12; Dmg 1-4(x6)/2-12; SA constriction; SD ink cloud, camouflage; AL N(E); XP 910; MM p. 75.

109. ZERPANAX DEN

The irregular ceiling averages 20' in height. Both exits from this cavern descend; the southeast passage slopes down 30' over 40' of distance, whereas the wider opening directly to the east overlooks a sheer face that drops down the same amount.

This is the shared lair for three zerpanaktes and their thralls.

Zharuss's immense bed of smooth, flat stones fills most of the north cul-de-sac, along with an iron platform for his thrall, Samuel-of-the-Loam. Laid out nearby is a lantern (lit only when necessary), three flasks of oil, a tinder box, and Samuel-of-the-Loam's spell book,

which contains all the spells he presently has memorized, plus **comprehend languages**, **feather fall**, **magic mouth**, **read magic**, **locate object**, **wizard lock**, and **dispel magic**.

Ovizs and Najathii keep beds in the southern end, of cultivated earth and shredded wood, respectively. Near Ovizs's bed is a set of creaky planks for his thrall, Keshler, plus a short bow, a quiver with 13 arrows, two short swords, and a bowl containing dark fungus.

Zerpanax – Zharuss: SZ L; AC 5; MV 15"; HD 6; hp 35; #AT 1; THAC0 13; Dmg 1-3; SA poison (paralysis), thrall; SD 10% magic resistance; AL NE; XP 562; see new monster section. Uses the following thrall:

Human M-u 7th – Samuel-of-the-Loam: SZ M; AC 10; MV 12"; hp 26; #AT 1; THAC0 19; Dmg by weapon; SA spells; AL NE; S 11; I 15; W 12; D 7; Co 15; Ch 13; XP 960. Has **dagger +1**, **potion of extra-healing**, **potion of polymorph self**, magic-user scroll (**magic mouth**, **fear**, **time stop**), and spell components. He memorized the following spells:

First Level: **detect magic**, **protection from evil**,

shocking grasp (x2)

Second Level: **levitate** (x2), **rope trick**

Third Level: **lightning bolt**, **phantasmal force**

Fourth Level: **ice storm**

Zerpanax – Ovizs: HD 6; hp 23; THAC0 13; XP 562. Uses the following thrall:

Elf Ftr/Thf 4th/5th – Keshler: SZ M; AC 4; MV 12"; hp 20; #AT 1; THAC0 18; Dmg by weapon; SA +1 to hit with bows & swords, back stab x3; SD 90% resist sleep/charm; AL N; S 9; I 10; W 14; D 15; Co 8; Ch 14; XP 395. Has **leather armor +2**, large shield, long sword, **wand of magic missiles** (41 charges; mahogany stick with gold leaf spiraling; whisper to activate), and a **ring of fire resistance**. He has the following thief abilities:

PP 55; OL 37; F/RT 40; MS 45; HS 31; HN 25; CW 90; RL 25.

Zerpanax – Najathii: HD 5; hp 24; THAC0 15; XP 353.

ZERPANAKTES

These zerpanaktes are primarily interested in acquiring female human (or human-like) thralls of breeding age, and they are bold and aggressive when afforded the chance to do so. If the potential mate is an adventurer of obvious power, they gladly sacrifice their present thralls and use up any available magic items to aid in the effort.

If combat appears imminent, they take advantage of the higher ground provided by their den, as well as their knowledge of the connecting caverns, preparing ambushes, flanking maneuvers, and distance attacks, as appropriate.

When joined with Samuel-of-the-Loam and staying out of sight, Zharuss may use **levitate** to neutralize a melee-oriented foe prior to any engagement. **Phantasmal force** can be used to create an illusion of a naturally silent creature (perhaps a spectre or wraith) in order to distract multiple foes at once. The **fear** scroll is also a good option, but **time stop** is risky and would only be used in an emergency. Of course, he may decide his direct damage spells are his best recourse.

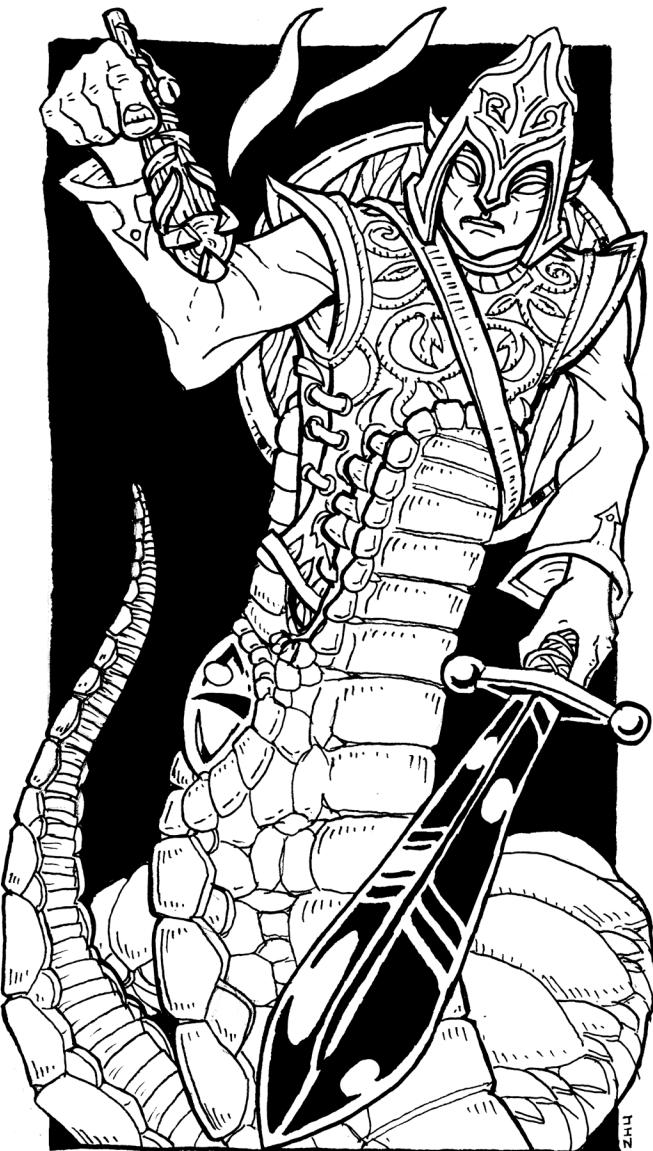
Once engaged in melee, any zerpanax without a joined thrall concentrates on paralyzing as many enemies as possible. They can also summon their morgoyle allies from area 102.

110. VERDANT VAULT

Hanging by an iron spike at the northwestern point of the cavern is a 4' diameter alabaster sculpture of a wide-eyed medusa's face, complete with hair-snakes looking in every direction. Each of the eyes on the sculpture emits ultraviolet light (via a variant of **continual light**, and only visible to ultravision) that helps abundant underground vegetation grow throughout the cavern. The sculpture weighs 200 lbs. and is worth 450 gp.

Dozens of varieties of uncommon herbs, mosses, vines, and tuberous plants grow within piles of soil, cling thickly to walls, sprout from molted snake skin mulch, or spill out of squat ceramic pots. At the east end of the cavern, several dense growths of leafy tendrils continually writh; this may give the impression of dangerous sentience, but these plants are both harmless and non-intelligent.

Many of the plants have medicinal or alchemical uses, and are recognizable by druids or other relevant specialists; these 220 lbs. of valuable specimens are worth 8 gp per pound. Additionally, some of the potted plants rest on, grow over, and totally hide a damaged bookcase made of bent electrum rods and cracked glass panes (worth 200 gp for the 40 lbs. of salvageable electrum).



KEY TO THE LOWER LEVEL

WANDERING MONSTERS

This section of the complex is not occupied – not conventionally, anyway – and is well-protected, so there are no wandering monsters here unless the ape-flesh golems are freed from their cells (as described later) or unless some of the protections are removed.

For each ape-flesh golem that is released, roll d6 every three turns. For each 1 rolled on a die, one of the ape-flesh golems is encountered. So if three golems have been released, you would roll 3d6; if two of those dice show a 1, then the characters would encounter two ape-flesh golems simultaneously. Alternatively, you could roll just 1d6 at a time, but increase the frequency of checks as more ape-flesh golems are released.

Furthermore, if the main door to this level (area 111) is left open and the vaporizing beams are somehow neutralized, the middle level's wandering monster table should be used on this level. This is in *addition* to the possibility of encountering freed ape-flesh golems!

STEEL BARS

The map of this level shows a number of portcullises / gates blocking access to hallways and small cells. Each is actually a series of 3" thick, steel bars that extend into holes in both the ceiling and floor. There are 4" gaps between the bars, so only fairly small creatures can squeeze through.

Some of the sets of bars can be opened; these are covered explicitly in areas A1 - A4. The other sets of bars on this level do not move, and there is no mechanism for opening them.

A1 - A4. APE-FLESH GOLEM

Each of these four cells is blocked by a set of thick, vertical steel bars, which can be raised up into the ceiling holes via the winch in the correspondingly-numbered W room. (So the winch in area W1 raises the bars at A1, the winch in W2 raises the bars at A2, and so on.) The bars are counterweighted and can also be raised by brute force, but this requires 2000 lbs. of lifting power. The bars will not stay up, not even if raised via the winch, unless they are somehow held or propped up.

An ape-flesh golem stands within each cell. Each creature is a patchwork of thick, brawny body parts from the most massive ape specimens of past millennia. Variations in fur and hide coloration clearly betray the fact that these are amalgam creatures.

While within its cell, an ape-flesh golem is largely passive, merely surveying anyone approaching with its wide eyes. If attacked, it becomes enraged, taking advantage of a sudden surge in strength to heft up the bars and charge from its cell. An ape-flesh golem also leaves its cell if the bars are raised by the corresponding winch.

Once out of its cell, an ape-flesh golem patrols the level, destroying any creatures it finds – other than the Gann and other ape-flesh golems, of course. It wanders about the level, moving from room to room, even using the teleporters and taking advantage of the “healing” electricity in area 113. But it never travels west of the main door to the level (at area 111), nor beyond the secret door at area 118. Finally, it does not pass through any doors displaying a rune of Fire or Cold; there is one such door on this level, at area 117.

Ape-Flesh Golem (1 per room, 4 total): SZ L; AC 9; MV 8"; HD 8+4; hp 40 each; #AT 2; THAC0 12; Dmg 2-16/2-16; SA structural damage; SD hit only by magic weapons, unaffected by most spells, fire and cold cause slowness, electrical restores lost hp; AL N; XP 2380; MM p. 48.

D1 - D4. DESTINATION

The floor in each of these four small rooms is somewhat more dingy than the rest of this level, due to the dust, dirt, and other bits of debris that has been brought here via the correspondingly-numbered teleporter room.

T1 - T4. TELEPORTER

Each of these rooms is pristinely clean, as though it has never been soiled or dusty. The walls, ceiling and floor radiate strong alteration magic.

Anything or anyone that is entirely within this room and touches the walls, ceiling or floor is instantly teleported to the correspondingly-numbered D room, along with any clothing or equipment carried. So for example, a creature that steps into area T3 is teleported to area D3.

W1 - W4. WINCH

Each of these four rooms features a cross-shaped steel winch handle on one wall – the north wall in W1 and W3, the east in W2, and the south in W4 – that raises the bars blocking access to the corresponding ape-flesh golem cell.





114. CONCEALED CAVITIES

Two burial shelves are hidden here, one in each of the diagonal walls, concealed by plaster that matches the granite. Within each is the ancient skeletal remains of an elf with precisely drilled holes in its skull. Each shelf also holds a cursed magic item: In the northwest, a **cursed scroll** that transforms the reader into brown mold (MM p. 71) as a **polymorph other** effect; in the southwest a crudely polished carnelian **stone of weight (loadstone)**.

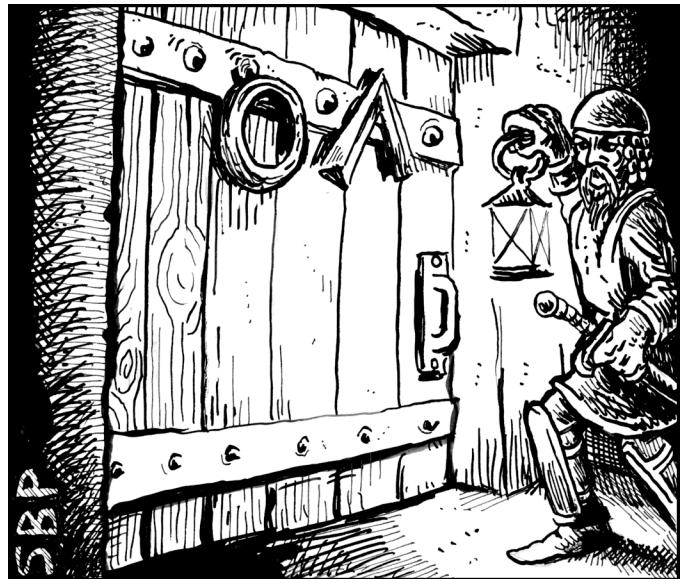
115. DEAD END

A 50' deep pit trap in the floor opens when at least 30 lbs. of weight passes the midway point of the trapped area. The pit door pivots closed again a few seconds after opening.

The corpse of a human henchman lies at the bottom of the pit, having fallen to his doom 250 years ago. His chain mail armor and large shield are still intact, but his long sword is broken. His backpack contains glass shards from four broken glass vials, long-spoiled rations, a ruptured waterskin, 100' of stiff rope, and a steel scroll tube containing a charcoal rubbing on large parchment. The rubbing matches the dimensions of some of the inscribed glass panes found elsewhere in the complex, and shows the same sort of archaic runes; it discusses how a particular smoking pipe appears to affect more than just elves – summoned manes, for example, react just as favorably when the pipe is used in their presence.

116. LOOTED CAVITY

Plaster litters the floor here, having been pried away from the northeast wall, revealing a burial shelf containing smashed elf bones. Dark brown bloodstains speckle the east wall and floor, and four splintered arrows lie in the southwest corner.



117. RUNE-WROUGHT DOOR

Runes for Fire and Cold are affixed to this door, formed of steel and welded onto one of the door's reinforcing bands. So long as the runes are visible, ape-flesh golems will not pass through this door.

118. SECRET DOOR

The entire wall pivots toward the south if the rightmost steel bar at area A1 is pulled in a downward direction with 200 lbs. of force.

111. DEEP SENTRYES

Two massive ape head statues flank the square stone door here. The dour visages are identical to those guarding the exterior entrance to the complex (area 1), and their fiery, glowing eyes dart back and forth as they look for creatures to vaporize with their eye beams. (80' range, four beams total per round, save vs. wands or be disintegrated.) The statues can only vaporize creatures they can see, and their eyes only illuminate a 20' radius. Note that unlike the similar sentries at area 1, there is no mechanism for deactivating these eye beams.

The 8' square door opens westward, but its plain stone face offers no handle. Worse, the east side of the door features six separate sliding locks, so a single **knock** spell will not grant access to the space beyond.

112. FALSE VAULT

Set into the floor is a 10' diameter, 5' deep granite shaft circumscribed with polished obsidian. This is covered and tightly sealed by a massive plug made of translucent quartz.

Lying at the bottom of the shaft are a **rod of lordly might** (no charges remaining), an illegible, worm-eaten libram, a helm-sized pile of completely inert mineral dust, and three delicate crystal vials containing the **reagents of unstoppable life** (if these three different acerbic liquids are mixed together and the concoction is consumed in its entirety, the imbiber cannot be killed for a period of 52 days, regardless of any harm done to his body).

The quartz plug weighs 2000 lbs., so accessing the shaft may prove to be a challenge. Breaking the plug is an option, but falling chunks could damage the items within the shaft.

113. HAZARDOUS ATMOSPHERE

Billowing gray clouds churn and crackle with electricity, utterly obscuring all vision within this room. Anyone inside has a 50% chance per round of receiving a severe shock equivalent to a **lightning bolt** cast by a 12th level magic-user. (This restores hp to ape-flesh golems.)

119. GUARDED PASSAGE

The pit trap in this hallway opens when 30 lbs. reaches the eastern half of the trap, dropping anyone on it to the bottom, 50' below. Moments after opening, the pit door automatically closes.

The door to the east is protected by a **fire trap** spell cast at 15th level.

Before the door is a ghostly, translucent flock of 32 bluejays, seemingly frozen in time as they were taking flight, almost completely filling the hallway. On the floor below them is a scattering of sand and a broken sand clock with a brass frame.

The flock is in semi-ethereal stasis and cannot be hurt except by effects that affect ethereal creatures. Any creature touching one of the ghostly bluejays simultaneously reanimates it and shifts it fully back to the prime material plane. This likely causes a chain reaction of reanimations as the first bird careens into others.

One of the bluejays is actually Wanssowe, a form-changed druid, and a member of the adventuring party who came to this complex 250 years ago. She intends to prevent the removal of the annihilation seed from the complex, using deadly force if necessary. After being freed from stasis, she lands and observes, changing back to human form and taking other actions as appropriate, potentially waiting until she understands the intentions and powers of any would-be thieves.

Human Drd 8th – Wanssowe: SZ M; AC 7; MV 12"; hp 43; #AT 1; THAC0 16; Dmg by weapon; SA spells; SD saves at +2 vs. fire and lightning; AL N; S 10; I 12; W 13; D 14; Co 14; Ch 17; XP 1516. Has **leather armor +1**, a **staff of striking** (24 charges, command word is "gash"), a half day's food and water, plus spell components. She memorized the following spells:

First Level: **detect magic, entangle (x2), faerie fire**

Second Level: **charm person or mammal, chill metal, fire trap, heat metal**

Third Level: **plant growth, summon insects (x2)**

Fourth Level: **cure serious wounds, dispel magic**

120. VAULT OF THE ANNIHILATION SEED

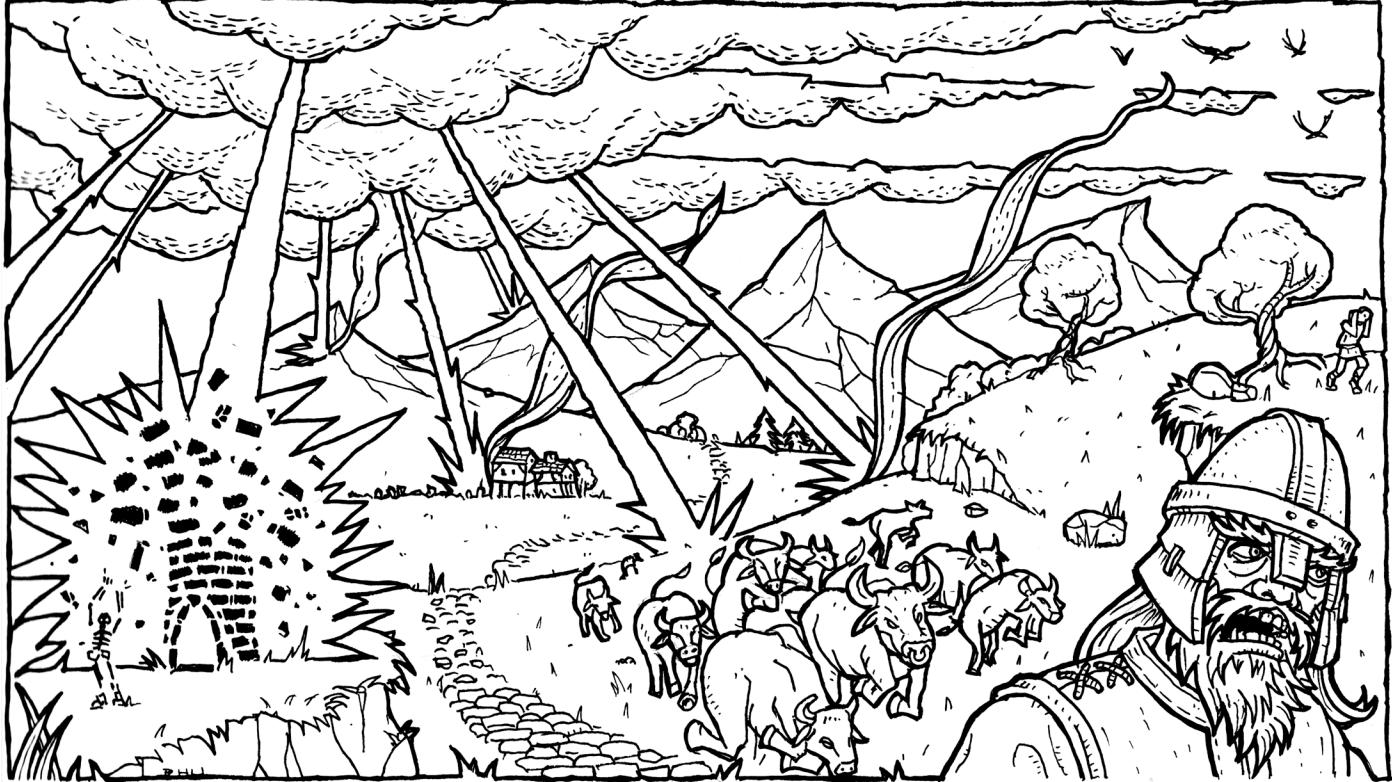
Sitting on the floor in the center of this circular chamber is a 2' tall, cone-shaped block of obsidian. Surrounding the block are standard runes for Truth, Dangerous, Fire, Death, Irresistible, Destructive Power, and Warning, each repeated several times. At the center of mass within the obsidian block is the Gann's weapon:

Annihilation Seed: This scarlet-hued kernel is small enough to fit comfortably in the palm of one's hand, but weighs 200 lbs. due to its extreme density. The seed empathically reveals its powers to anyone touching it.

When struck by a violent blow, this powerful magical device seeds the sky to rain down plasmic fire and white-hot lightning for five leagues in all directions. No man-made surface structure can withstand the day-long onslaught, which also caves in underground structures to a depth of 100'. Creatures within the area are burnt to black ash unless they have a spell or magic item that can withstand the blistering scorch (and be consumed or worn out in the process). Any item or spell sacrificed in this way only protects as long as the referee allows (1d6 rounds or turns are both fair), so anyone attempting to flee the area must either be swift or well-laden with protections!

The seed can be made dormant by encasing it within obsidian, thus allowing it to sustain jolts and impacts without triggering its terrible power.

The entire floor of this vault is a very sensitive pressure plate. Presently, there is exactly 500 lbs. of weight on the floor: 200 lbs. for the annihilation seed plus another 300 lbs. for the obsidian encasing it. If the weight on the floor is changed (whether by persons walking on the floor, by the obsidian block being removed, or any other reason) and is not restored to exactly 500 lbs. within one turn, the whistle pedestals at areas 23 and 50 begin producing an ultrasonic discordant wheeze, sending servitor apes into a violent frenzy. The wheeze does not cease until three full days have elapsed.



NEW MONSTER – ZERPANAX



FREQUENCY: Rare
NO. APPEARING: 2-7
ARMOR CLASS: 5 and see below
MOVE: 15"
HIT DICE: 4-6
% IN LAIR: 50%
TREASURE TYPE: E
NO. OF ATTACKS: 1 or thrall's attacks
DAMAGE/ATTACK: 1-3 or thrall's damage
SPECIAL ATTACKS: Poison (paralysis) or see below
SPECIAL DEFENSES: Nil
MAGIC RESISTANCE: 10%
INTELLIGENCE: Average to High
ALIGNMENT: Neutral evil
SIZE: L (20-30' long)
PSIONIC ABILITY: Nil
Attack/Defense Modes: Nil
LEVEL/X.P. VALUE:
4HD: 190 + 4 per hit point
5HD: 240 + 5 per hit point
6HD: 400 + 6 per hit point

Zerpanaktes (singular: zerpanax) are a race of intelligent serpents whose venom gives them a form of domination over humanoids. Zerpanaktes are dependent upon humanoids for reproduction; their parthenogenetic process requires a humanoid host womb.

On the initial bite, a zerpanax's poison causes paralysis for 1-6 turns, allowing the zerpanax to partially swallow an affected humanoid and plunge its fangs into precise locations on the subject's lower back. A zerpanax's hit dice determines the approximate size of creature it can partially swallow: 4 HD: 3-4' tall; 5 HD: 4-5' tall; 6 HD: 5-7' tall.

While "joined" in this way, the humanoid becomes the zerpanax's thrall, allowing the zerpanax to control its mind, body, actions, and attacks. All the thrall's knowledge is accessible (through empathy), including spell casting abilities. However, clerical and druidic spell casting beyond the lowest level spells (1st & 2nd) may not be possible unless the zerpanax's outlook is congruent with the thrall's religious ethos.

When joined together, the zerpanax and the thrall are considered to be a single creature, using the thrall's attack table and saving throws if they are better than the zerpanax's normal values, or vice-versa. The joined thrall does not count as a "person" or "humanoid" for effects such as **hold person** and **charm person**.

Damage is usually applied to the thrall's hp total first, since zerpanaktes try to orient themselves so enemies' attacks hit the thrall's body, but exceptions may exist at the referee's discretion. For example, attackers that can reach the zerpanax's tail may attack it at AC 5 and inflict damage directly to the zerpanax's total. A successful saving throw versus an area effect spell generally indicates that the zerpanax was able to shield its own body from the damage and thus the damage is applied only to the thrall's hit points; otherwise split the damage equally between the two sets of hp.

A detached thrall is weak and helpless for a full day, or until rejoined with a zerpanax.

Zerpanaktes sometimes enter combat without a thrall, even if one is otherwise available, in order to take advantage of their paralytic poison.

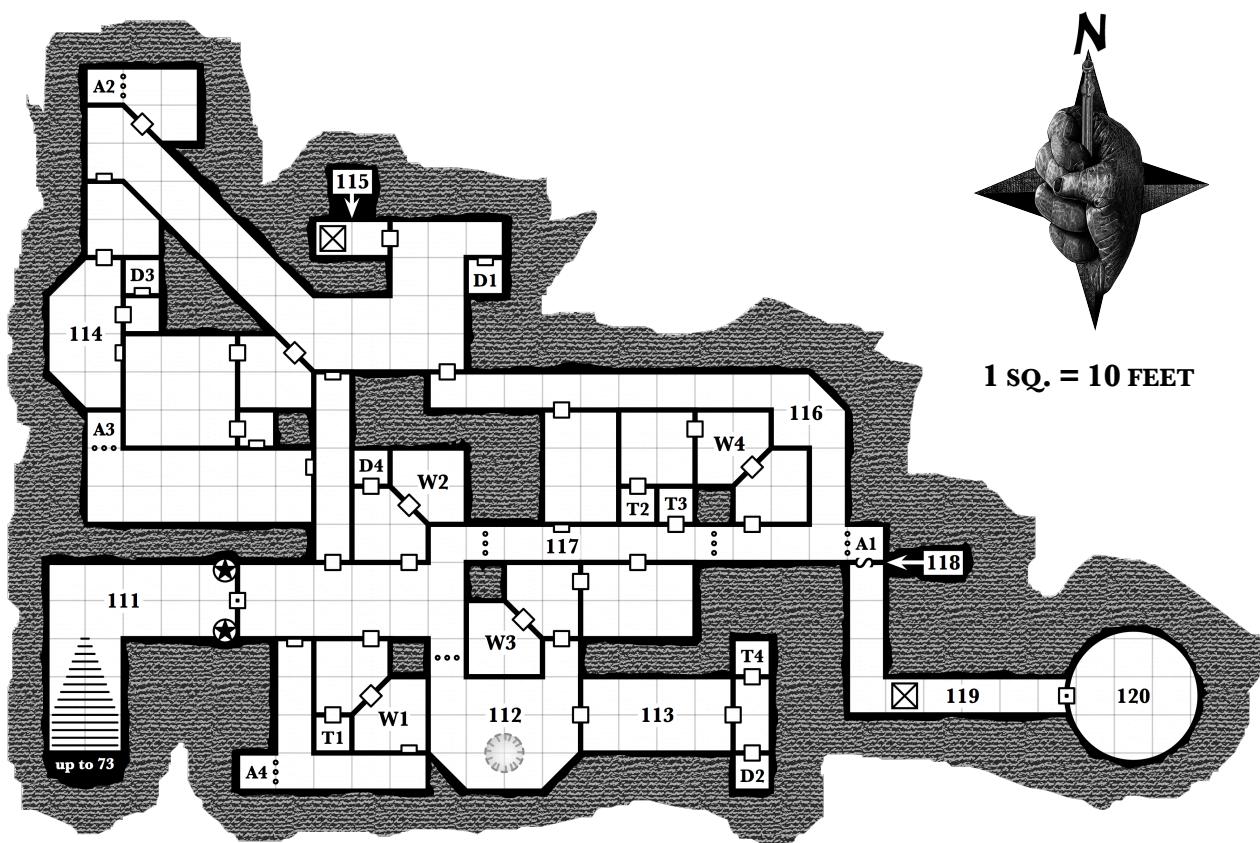
AFTERWORD

If my playtest group is any indication, this module is very challenging. As of this writing, nine different characters (roughly 4th/5th level) have entered the complex. Of those, one scouted alone and was captured by Ashkasar, two more died in combat (one from friendly fire), another lost a hand to the trap in area 2, and yet another was vaporized by ape head eye beams. And because the party hasn't discovered that the various stitched ape heads and carcasses contain loot, they don't have much xp to show for their efforts! But the players keep coming back, so the challenge appears to be enjoyable.

If your group's characters manage to survive the hazards of the Gann's complex and find the true vault, they will have an extremely potent – possibly campaign changing – weapon at their disposal. I used to be wary of enabling these situations as a referee, but I'm no longer so concerned; for me, half the fun of refereeing comes from watching the players try to alter the campaign in dramatic ways through their characters' actions. If the characters acquire the annihilation seed, give them the freedom to use it!

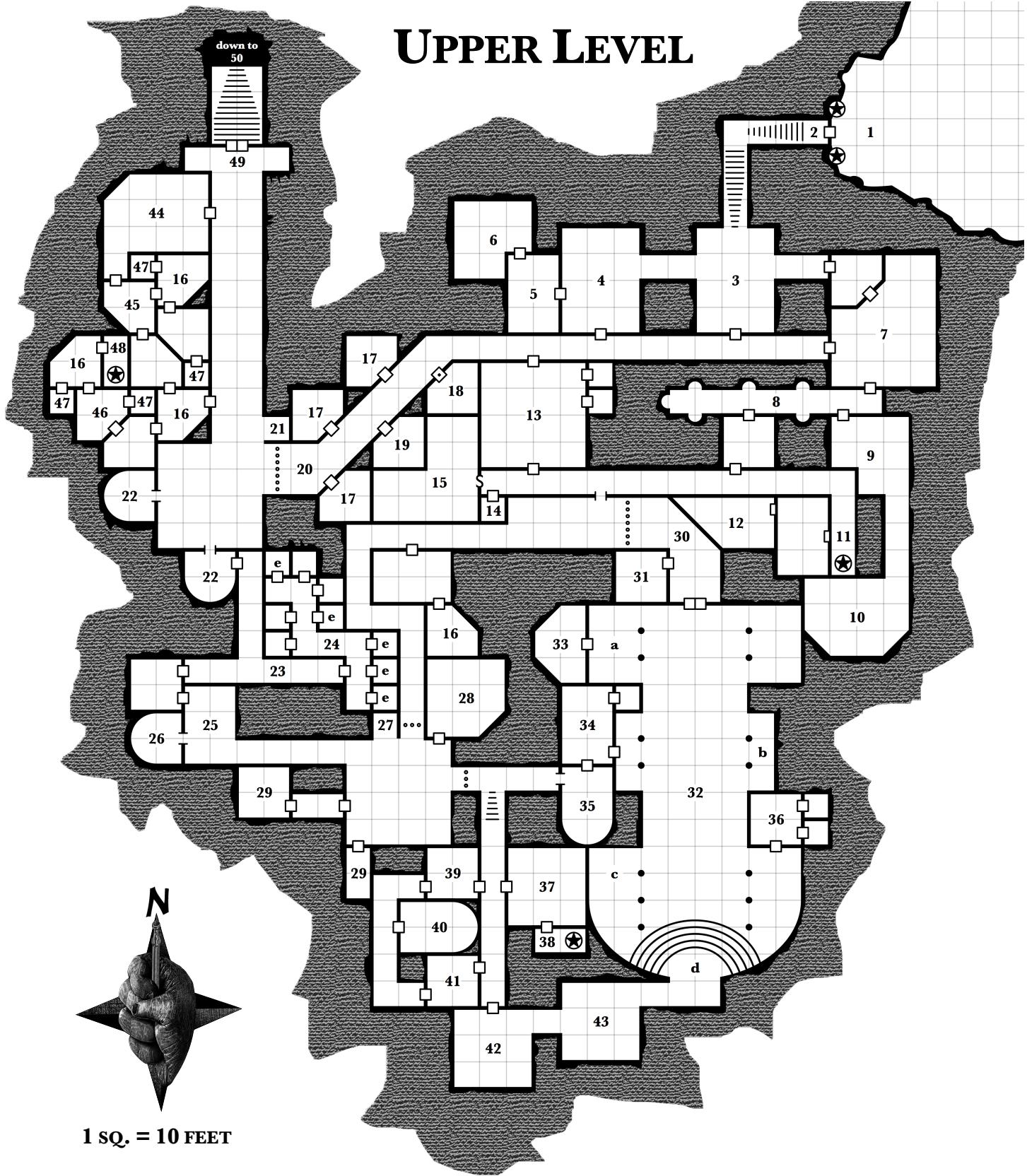
Thank you for buying this module, and I hope you and your players enjoy it!

LOWER LEVEL



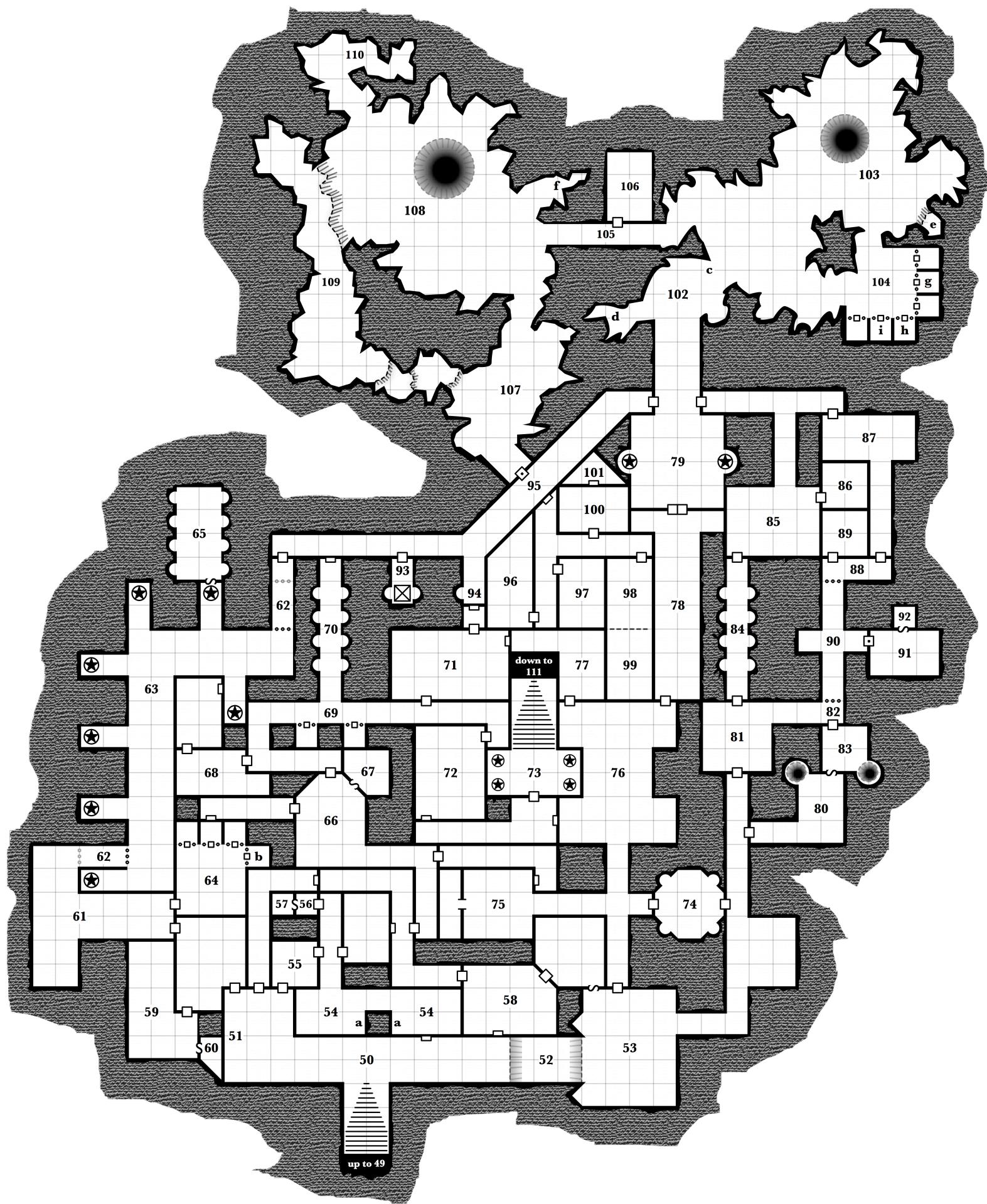
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UPPER LEVEL



MAP KEY

| | | | |
|-------------------------|--------------------|---------------|-------------------|
| Door | Archway | Statue | Vertical Shaft |
| Special Door (see text) | Bars or Portcullis | Pit Trap | Ledge or Slope |
| One-way Door | Cell Door | Illusory Wall | Stairs |
| Secret Door | Column | Alcove | Steps to Platform |



MIDDLE LEVEL



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