



FIFTH EDITION COMPATIBLE

THE SINISTER STONE OF SAKKARA



Written by **MATTHEW SKAIL** and **ALEXANDER MACRIS**

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A READY-TO-PLAY 5E ADVENTURE FOR CHARACTERS LEVEL 1-4

BY MATTHEW SKAIL AND ALEXANDER MACRIS

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INTRODUCTION

AX1: The Sinister Stone of Sakkara is a ready-to-play adventure scenario presented for use with the Fifth Edition of the world's most popular fantasy role-playing game (5E). It is also compatible with other fantasy role-playing games built on the same core mechanics, such as *Labyrinth Lord*, *Lamentations of the Flame Princess*, and our own *Adventurer Conqueror King System*.

The adventure is intended for four to six characters of 3rd to 5th level, with a combined total of 12 levels of experience in the party when the adventure begins. The encounters in the adventure should carry your party to mid-way through 5th level. In the tradition of classic TSR adventure scenarios such as *The Keep on the Borderlands* and *The Village of Homlet*, *The Sinister Stone of Sakkara* features a detailed starting base and small wilderness sandbox in addition to a dungeon. The adventure takes place in the Autarch's campaign world, the Auran Empire, but can be easily adapted to your own game world.

If you have already played or run adventurers set in the Auran Empire feel free to skip ahead to the adventure itself. If this is your first experience with the Auran Empire setting, read on. The Auran Empire setting was inspired by the collapsing empires of earth's Late Antiquity (250 – 750 AD), a turbulent era in which ancient glories were drowned in a torrent of violence. However, in the Auran Empire setting, the horror of civilization's imminent collapse is worsened by the existence of nightmarish evils lurking in the world's dark places, threatening to strike mankind at its weakest moment. The established leadership is too preoccupied by the empire's political and military downfall to take these shadowy threats seriously, leaving them to be handled by adventurers, fortune-hunters, and would-be heroes. The adventurers' success in dealing with such threats is, however, what garners them the fame, wealth, and strength they need to take power and restore order. Of course, the adventurers are not certain to win; indeed, the odds are stacked against them.

These premises of the Auran Empire setting are evident throughout *The Sinister Stone of Sakkara*, most notably in its backstory. The adventure begins with local hamlets and villages suffering from humanoid raids because the troops that ought to be protecting them have been sent to stem an invasion at another border. With the local military barely able to garrison its strongholds, it falls to the adventurers to deal with the monstrous threat. If they do not, no one else will, until it is too late. The setting premises are also evident in the design of the dungeon itself. The upper level of the dungeon was inspired by real-world ancient architecture, and the brigands and beastly barbarians that populate it would not be unfamiliar to any Late Roman centurion (albeit the barbarians who menaced Rome were only *figuratively* beastly). Conversely, the lower level of the dungeon is a warren of weird horror wherein lurks an insidious evil that is far more threatening than mere humanoids. The dungeon thus represents the Auran Empire setting in microcosm – visibly endangered by mundane threats, appallingly imperiled by hidden horrors.

We hope that this overview improves your understanding of this adventure, and that you and your players find *The Sinister Stone of Sakkara* an exciting, challenging, and rewarding experience.

GAMEMASTER'S BACKGROUND

Over a millennium ago, when the borderlands were in the dark grip of the Zaharan Empire, the empire's sorcerer-priests erected a profane temple on a steep hill within the Viaspen Forest. The temple housed a strange artifact known as the *Stone of Sakkara*. Using the *Stone*, the sorcerer-priests could birth monsters and abominations with frightening ease and magically command the loyalty of chaotic creatures. The *Stone* brought its evil masters great power throughout the fell empire.

Such a terrible artifact could not be left to corrupt all of mankind. During the Emyrean War that toppled Zahar, the clerics of Law unleashed a cataclysm that buried the temple housing the *Stone* beneath a dome of rock. The *Stone* fell silent, denied the sacrifices and devotion needed to power it. For centuries the *Stone* lay dormant and forgotten.

Two years ago an earthquake shook the hill, tearing open a great crack in the rocky dome and allowing entrance to the buried temple within. The *Stone*, silent for so long, awoke with a single throbbing beat. Its power called out, and creatures with dark and twisted souls heard and answered. Several ragged groups of thieves and brigands came first, then some nearby humanoid scouts, then entire warbands of humanoid. Eventually, the *Stone* touched a truly malevolent mind: a Zaharan ruinguard named Zakiti.

Zakiti claimed the buried temple as her own and, styling herself as “The Lady Below,” quickly subjugated the various warbands that had gathered there. At her command, these warbands began to raid the nearby hamlets and villages for sacrificial victims that could power the *Stone's* birthing pools again. If left unchecked, The Lady Below will eventually be able to build an army of abominations and threaten the entire borderlands region.

However, The Lady's raids have alerted Legate Uland Valerian, commander of the nearby stronghold of Türos Tem. Valerian is suspicious that there is a greater threat than mere humanoids, but his garrison is so understrength that it cannot even guard the border, let alone handle the threat of the *Stone*. This sets the stage for the adventurers' involvement.

ADVENTURER'S BACKGROUND

For over a century, the stronghold of Türos Tem has guarded the borderlands from the monsters of the wild lands beyond. Now, despite the ever-watchful eye of Türos Tem's guards, humanoid raiders have somehow gained a foothold in the Viaspen Forest to the north, from which they have begun striking at the nearby settlements. Local farms and hamlets have been sacked and pillaged, and entire families have gone missing. Even the regular merchant caravans from the nearby town of Siadanos have come under attack! The number and frequency of these occurrences point to a threat beyond a simple nomadic group of humanoids. Legate Uland Valerian, commander of Türos Tem, already has too few men to patrol the border; he has none at all to hunt down humanoids hidden in the dense forest. He has offered a reward of 750gp to any adventurers who can uncover the

nature of the threat and end it. The adventurers have come to Türos Tem to claim this prize through their bold deeds.

ADVENTURE MOTIVATION (OPTIONAL)

The scenario assumes that the adventurers have come to Türos Tem seeking fame and fortune. If such motives do not inspire the adventurers, the GM can use the table below to help encourage them to take action. The GM can choose or roll for one motivation per adventurer, select one motivation for the entire party, or a mix.

Adventure Motivation Table	
1d6	Motivation
1	The adventurer hails from a local village that was destroyed by humanoids while he was away in the fields. Having returned home to find his village burned and neighbors slain, the adventurer has sworn vengeance.
2	1d4+1 members of the adventurer's family were kidnapped during the most recent humanoid raid. The adventurer promised his remaining family members that he would rescue their kin – or avenge them.
3	For weeks, the adventurer has been dreaming of a bloody red heart beating ceaselessly in a pool of darkness. (If the adventurer is good, the dream fills the character with righteous anger; if neutral, with dread; if evil, with lust for power.) He implicitly knows that his dreams are somehow related to the humanoids raids.
4	The adventurer is the apprentice or squire of a retired hero. His mentor is alarmed by the ferocity of the recent humanoids raids. Now too old to handle the situation personally, the adventurer's mentor has tasked him with investigating the threat.
5	The adventurer is the scion of a patrician family with holdings in the borderlands. Duty and honor dictate that he take action to defend his family's clients and lands.
6	The adventurer's family is ruinously in debt. Claiming the legate's reward by putting a stop to the humanoid raids is the adventurer's only hope of preserving his family's position.

RANDOM RUMORS

Before setting out into the Viaspen Forest, the adventurers may gather rumors and legends from non-player characters (NPCs) in Türos Tem. On a successful DC 15 Charisma (Persuasion) check, most NPC in Türos Tem will share one rumor from the Random Rumor table. In addition, adventurers proficient with the History skill should begin play knowing one rumor themselves, which they may share with their party members if desired. The GM may award characters with certain Backgrounds with additional knowledge. For example, a character with the Criminal background might know rumor #8 (about the brigand Drusus).

Random Rumor Table	
1d12	Rumor
1	Elves still live in the forests of Southern Argollë, but they've gone feral, and crave nothing more than the flesh of man. (False)
2	There is a place in the Viaspen Forest so evil that the gods sealed it beneath a mountain of rock. (True)
3	Legate Ulrand Valerian can't be trusted. It's no coincidence bad things are happening under his watch. (False)
4	Southern Argollë has become a much more dangerous place since the Tarkaun stripped the local garrisons of soldiers to fight his wars in the west. (True)
5	Behind the humanoid raiders is an elven wizard-lord, bent on revenge against the Empire. (False)
6	Ever since the earthquake a few years ago, the humanoids raids have been getting worse and worse. (True)
7	When a dragon's scales turn purple, that means the beast is diseased and near death. (False)
8	The brigands in these parts are led by a scheming warrior named Drusus. He's not to be trusted. (True)
9	Ulrand Valerian doesn't expect to ever pay the bounty he's offering – he knows no one's coming back. (False)
10	The Black Fang and Red Eye bugbears are the toughest of the humanoids warbands in the area. (True)
11	The dwarves of Azen Radokh are to blame for these problems. They've been driving the humanoids from the mountains down into our land. (False)
12	A trio of adventurers that ventured into the Viaspen Forest last week never returned. (True)



TÜROS TEM

The adventurers are assumed to begin the adventure by arriving at the primary gatehouse of the Auran stronghold of Türos Tem. They are aware that Legate Uland Valerian has been actively soliciting for help in dealing with the humanoid raiders in the area, but have not yet become acquainted with him or the other inhabitants of the stronghold.

Türos Tem makes an excellent home base for an adventuring party, should the GM wish to run further scenarios in the imperial borderlands after the *Stone of Sakkara* has been dealt with. See Further Adventures in the Borderlands on p. 59 for some ideas. Alternatively, if the GM has relocated the adventure to another campaign setting, he can replace Türos Tem with a stronghold or settlement of his own devising.

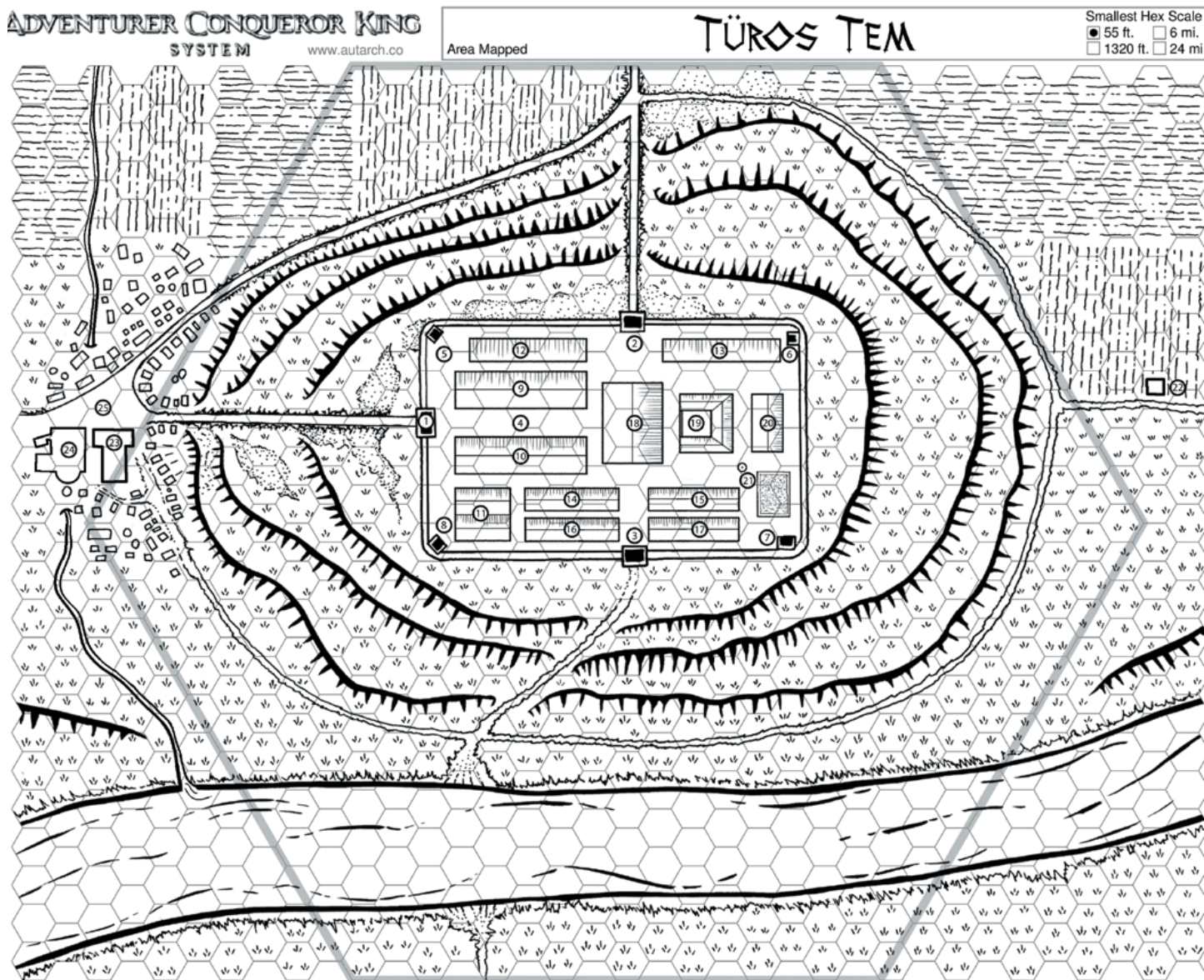
OVERVIEW

Türos Tem (“castle fort, keep”) is part of a line of forts built 150 years ago by Tarkaun Audarius XI Ulkyreus to provide a forward defense against humanoid invaders from beyond the Dark Wall. It sits atop

a sheer-walled 150’ tall tor between the Krysvor River and Viaspen Forest, overlooking a 110’-wide ford across the Krysvor. A track of leveled earth winds down from the fort’s southern gatehouse (building 3 on the Türos Tem Map) to the ford, while paved roads descend sharply from the northern (building 2) and western gatehouses (building 1). All three roads connect with an earthen path that circumscribes the tor.

Rising from the tor, Türos Tem’s curtain walls stand 10’ in height and thickness, and are surmounted with battlements 5’ tall and 3’ thick. Wall-walks, paved with stone slabs, run along the top of the curtain walls behind the battlements. The wall-walks are accessed by wooden stairs found in the mural towers (buildings 5-8) at the fort’s four corners. The curtain walls were built with local limestone, but have been rendered and white-washed, such that they gleam brightly by day. In this way, the fort symbolically reflects the glory of the Winged Sun.

The curtain walls enclose a five-acre area of packed earth containing the dozen buildings that house the garrison (buildings 9-20). Except







where otherwise noted, all of the interior buildings (as well as the inn and bathhouse outside the walls) are constructed of rendered and white-washed limestone and furnished with sloped roofs of red tile. Their interior walls are of plastered and white-washed wattlework, while interior flooring is cement.

A small village nestles around the western edge of the tor. Other than the inn and bath house (buildings 23 and 24), the village's buildings are largely of half-timbered construction, using oak frames infilled with wattlework, with earthen floors. Like most villages which spring up around border forts, it is populated by a mix of camp followers, shop keepers, craftsmen, merchants, prostitutes, and retired soldiers. Traders arrive here along the paved road from Siadanos and Türos Luin, typically staying just long enough to sell supplies to the fort, before departing along the northern road for Türos Aster.

From Türos Tem, Legate Urand Valerian governs a legature of about 5,000 square miles and 18,500 people. His personal demesne includes Türos Tem and the adjoining village plus hexes 1209, 1308, 1309, 1408, and 1409 while the rest of his legature is administered by subordinates.

GARRISON

At the time of Türos Tem's construction, the borderlands were defended by 25,500 infantry and 6,000 cavalry from the Auran legions. Tem and the other border forts were each meant to continuously house two companies of cavalry (120 horse) and four companies of infantry (480 troops), with the capacity to temporarily hold thousands of troops if needed. For over a century the border remained well-defended, but two years ago most of the borderland legions were re-deployed to fight in a war on the Empire's western borders. This has left Türos Tem and its sister forts dangerously understrength should the humanoids again become a serious threat.

Though it has room to house 600 troops comfortably, Türos Tem is currently garrisoned by just 90 troops:

- **12 imperial cataphracts** with shortbow, 20 arrows, lance, longsword, shield, breastplate, and warhorse with chain mail barding
- **18 imperial horse archers** with shortbow, 20 arrows, longsword, leather armor, and warhorse
- **45 imperial legionaries** with spear, shortsword, shield, and chain shirt
- **15 scouts** with longbow, 20 arrows, shortsword, and leather armor

The rest of the legate's troops are stationed in the various fortlets, watchtowers, and estates of his legature. Given one week to muster his vassal troops, the legate could field a total of 30 cataphracts, 30 horse archers, 90 legionaries, and 30 scouts. Given three weeks, the legate could field twice that number (still not enough to fill up the fort). Calling his vassals to Türos Tem would leave the rest of the legature almost entirely undefended, however, so the legate makes do with his small force.

If you are interested in the mechanics of domain-level play, be sure to check out our Adventurer Conqueror King System products, which have expansive rules for ruling realms, building strongholds, and waging war.

BUILDINGS

1. Gatehouse: See the Gatehouse Map. Access from the village into Türos Tem is controlled by means of this two-story stone gatehouse, 20' high, 30' wide, and 20' long, with 5' thick walls. The ground story (1a) has two thick timber doors, one on the interior and one on the exterior wall, which provide ingress and egress to and from the fort. Sandwiched between the doors is an iron portcullis suspended on chains from a ceiling pierced with murder holes. The windlass used to raise and lower the portcullis is mounted near the outer wall of the second story (1b). The second story is also furnished with a second set of timber doors, set perpendicular to the exterior walls, which open onto the walkways that run along the curtain walls. A **ballista** is stationed between the doors, able to fire outward through a large embrasure in the exterior wall. To confound intruders the gatehouse is designed without means of direct ascent from the first story to the second. The guards ascend at the mural towers (5-8) or via ladders stored on the adjoining ramparts.

The second story of the gatehouses is manned by **two imperial legionaries** by day, and by **one imperial legionary** at night. If necessary, these guards can crew the ballista. The guards keep the gate open between dawn and dusk, and characters who approach peacefully with weapons sheathed will be admitted to the avenue (4) without issue.

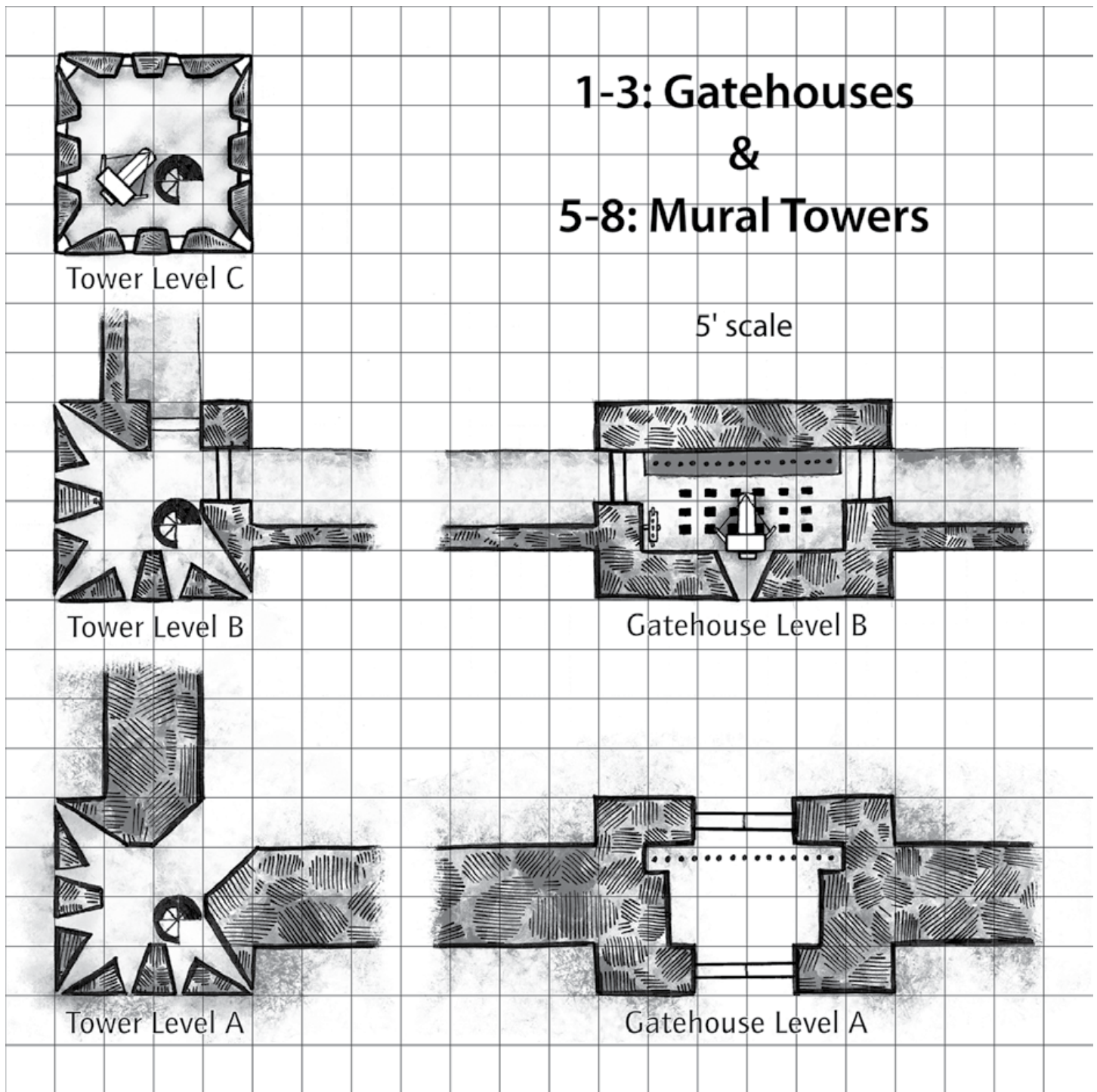
After dark the gate is closed, and opened only for members of the garrison. Persuading the night guard to open the gate requires a successful DC 15 Charisma check. Depending how the adventurers handle the conversation, either Persuasion, Deception, or Intimidation skill might apply to the check. However, if Intimidation skill is applied and the check fails, the guard will sound the alarm.

Were Türos Tem's garrison at full strength, each of its gatehouses would be manned by four legionaries and two scouts at all times.

2-3. Secondary Gatehouses: See the Gatehouse Map. These buildings are of identical construction to the primary gatehouse (1), except that they are emplaced in the center of the fort's northern and southern walls. The secondary gates are opened only to allow troops to sortie in and out. The secondary gatehouses are not manned due to a shortage of troops, and do not have ballistae.

4. Avenue: A 300' long by 55' wide paved avenue runs from the primary gatehouse (1) to the headquarters building (18). During the day, one of the two subalterns (platoon commanders) is stationed here. Roll 1d6: 1-3 Subaltern Lynara Miren, 4-6 Subaltern Peleos Methori. See Inhabitants, p. 25 for more details on these NPCs. In addition to the subaltern, a work crew of **2d8 commoners** will be found in the avenue during daylight hours, performing building maintenance, courier duty, and other labor.

The subaltern on duty demands a name and purpose of each visitor to Türos Tem, which is recorded in a wax tablet for later delivery to the annalist's office (18e). Adventurers who inquire about the legate's call for help in dealing with the humanoid raiders are directed to the headquarters building (18). Mounted visitors are directed to dismount and stable their horses in the unoccupied stable-barracks block to the south (10) before heading further in.



5-8. Mural Towers: See the Mural Tower Map. At each of Türos Tem's four corners stands a small stone tower. Each tower is 30' tall and 20' square, with 5' thick walls. The first story (a) is open to the rear, allowing passage between the tower and the fort's interior. From there, a wooden staircase ascends upward, reaching the second story (b) after 10', where thick timber doors open onto the walkways that run along the curtain walls. The stairs ascend 10' more to the third story (c), where a **mangonel** is stationed behind a wide embrasure. Each story is pierced by arrowslits along its exterior walls.

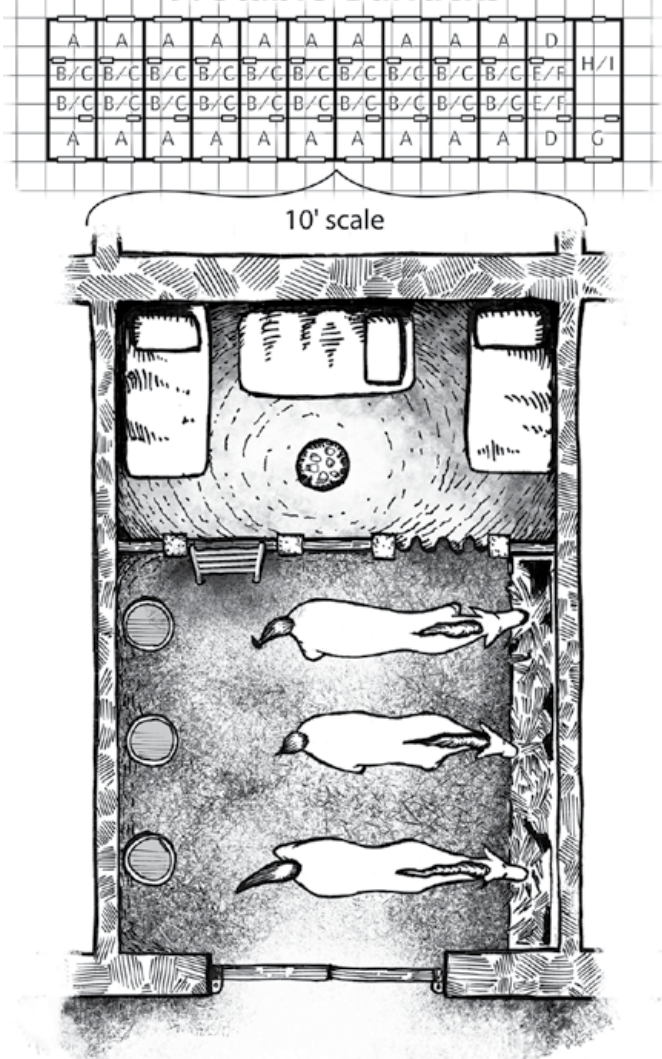
The two southern towers (5 and 6) are manned by **one scout** and **one imperial legionary** at all times. The scout is typically stationed on the second story, while the legionary patrols the walls. The northern

towers (7 and 8) are unmanned unless the alarm is sounded, due to troop shortages, though they do have ballistae.

9. Stable-Barracks Block. See the Stable-Barracks Block Map. The stable-barracks block is 200' long, 50' wide, and 15' tall. The block is built to house one company of 60 cavalry, along with four subalterns (platoon commanders) and one tribune (company commander), collectively spread across the block's twelve rows.

Rows 1-11 are each sub-divided lengthwise into two 24' wide sections. Each of these two sections consists of an inner living quarters (16' wide, 9' long, and 8' tall) connected by wooden doors to outer stables (16' wide, 15' long, and 10' tall) that open up to the outside. Ladders rise from the stables to hay-lofts (16' wide, 9' long, and 7' tall) that

9: Stable-Barracks



A typical horse eats 20lbs of hay per day. A bale of hay weighs 45lbs. (The hay loft's 120 bales of hay is thus 5,400lbs, or enough for 3 horses to eat 20lbs per day for 90 days.) Each bale costs 115sp, so it costs $(115\text{sp}/45\text{lbs} \times 20\text{lbs}/\text{day} \times 7 \text{ days})$ 3.5gp per week to feed a horse. It takes 0.5gp per week to feed a trooper. 60 troopers with their mounts thus cost $[60 \times (3.5\text{gp} + 0.5\text{gp})]$ 240gp per week. In Autarch's Domains at War the supply cost of a 60-strong cavalry company is 240gp per week.

sit above the living quarters. Each section of rows 1-10 is intended to quarter three troops and their mounts (3 troops per section $\times$ 2 sections per row $\times$ 10 rows yielding 60 troops). Each section of row 11 is intended to quarter two cavalry subalterns (four total)

Row 12 is set aside for the cavalry company's tribune. It consists of a single section with a large living quarters (16' wide, 35' long, and 8' tall) surmounted by an overhead loft (16' wide, 18' long, 7' tall) connected by wooden doors to outer stables (16' wide, 15' long, and 10' tall) that open up to the outside.

Currently, the southern section quarters **18 imperial horse archers** and **12 imperial cataphracts**, along with their **30 warhorses**. Subaltern Lynara Miren lives in row 11 of the southern section. Rows 1-11 of the northern section, and row 12, lie empty. During the day, the stable-barracks block is largely deserted, as the troops are on duty at the parade ground (21). At night, the troops and mounts will be asleep herein.

9a. Cavalry Stables: The northern sections' stables are all empty. The southern sections' stables contain water barrels and feed troughs for three horses. At night, there will be three sets of cavalry kit, each including military saddle, bit and bridle, and two saddlebags, hanging on the walls.

9b. Cavalry Quarters: The northern sections' quarters are all empty. In the southern section, the living quarters are furnished with three sleeping couches, arranged around a portable brazier. Under each couch is a wooden trunk containing a cavalry trooper's personal kit, including a set of traveler's clothes, a backpack, a set of carpenter's tools, a mess kit, a small tent, two wool blankets, and a waterskin. Horse archers have 2d8sp and 2d20cp each in their trunks, while cataphracts have 5d10sp each.

9c. Cavalry Hay Lofts: The hay-lofts in the northern section are empty. Those in the southern section contain 120 bales of hay (each worth 115sp and weighing 60lbs), sufficient to feed three horses for a season.

9d. Subalterns' Stables: The northern subaltern stables are empty. The southern subaltern stables contain a water barrel and feed trough for Subaltern Miren's horse. When she is off duty, her cavalry kit (as above) will be hanging from the stable walls.

9e. Subalterns' Quarters: The northern subaltern quarters are empty. The southern subaltern living quarters are furnished with a pair of sleeping couches and a portable brazier. Only one of the couches has a mattress and covers; the other is unmade. Under the made bed is a wooden trunk containing Subaltern Miren's personal kit (as above, but with 1gp and 20sp in coin). At night, Subaltern Miren will be asleep here.

9f. Subalterns' Hay Lofts: The northern hay loft is empty. The southern hay loft contains 40 bales of hay, enough to feed Subaltern Miren's horse for a season.

9g. Tribune's Stables: As there is no cavalry tribune residing at Türos Tem, these stables are empty. Were a tribune present, the stables would be furnished with water troughs, ditches, and cavalry kits for up to three mounts.

9h. Tribune's Living Quarters: This room is empty. If it were occupied, this room would be well furnished, as the position of a cavalry tribune is a distinguished one. In addition to a sleeping couch, a portable brazier, a chamber-pot, and a wooden chest for the tribune's belongings, there would be three banqueting couches, a low wooden table, and several wicker chairs and folding stools for receiving guests.

9i. Tribune's Loft: The tribune's loft is empty. If a tribune were in residence, it would contain as much as 120 bales of hay (each worth 115sp and weighing 60lbs), sufficient to feed three horses for a season.

It would also house the tribune's valet, responsible for grooming his horse, cooking his meals, and other services.

10. Unoccupied Stable-Barracks Block: This building is of identical construction to the occupied stable-barracks block (9) to its north. Since the borderlands legions were re-deployed to the west, it has been largely unoccupied. The stables in the northern section are kept stocked with water and hay, so that extra mounts can be boarded there. Regular work crews keep the block in good repair despite its empty state. At any given time the section holds a total of 1d8 mules, 2d4 riding horses, 1d4 draft horses, and 1d3 warhorses. The quartermaster (18d) can be persuaded to loan these mounts to the adventurers with a successful DC 20 Charisma (Persuasion) check. Characters caught stealing mounts will be whipped, branded as thieves, and fined the value of the stolen goods. Characters branded as thieves have disadvantage on Charisma checks with lawful and neutral creatures.

11. Hospital: See the Hospital Map. The hospital is 75' square with a 25' square interior courtyard (11a) that is open to the sky. The courtyard is surrounded by an inner set of rooms, themselves connected to an outer set of rooms by a 5' wide arcade between them (11b). The arcade of rooms contains a total of 10 wards (11c-l). Up to four patients can be treated in each ward (40 total). At each of the outer corners of the arcade are a pair of 10' × 10' rooms, one for meditation (11m-p) and the other for sleeping (11q-t). At each of the inner corners of the arcade are 5' × 10' storerooms for medical supplies (11u-x). All of the rooms in the hospital have large open windows, facing either the exterior courtyard of Türos Tem or the interior courtyard of the hospital depending on their arrangement on the arcade, allowing the patients to enjoy fresh air as they recuperate.

11a. Courtyard: At the center of the open-air courtyard stands an 8' tall marble statue of Mityara, the Noble Lady, holding up an ever-burning torch. (The torch is kept continuously aflame by an ingenious mechanism that pumps lamp oil from a reservoir inside the statue onto the torch-head.) Stone prayer-benches, garlanded with flowers, sit catercorner to the statue. The remainder of the courtyard is planted with medicinal herbs such as birthwort, comfrey, goldenrod, and woundwort.

The courtyard is *hallowed*. Fiends and undead can't enter the area, nor can they charm, frighten, or possess creatures within it. Creatures which worship good-aligned gods can't be frightened while in the area.

Priestess Genelen can be found here from sunup to sundown. When not attending to patients or leading prayers, she tends the garden. The courtyard is usually empty at night, though every seventh night Genelen and her hospitalists will be found here maintaining a night-time vigil before the ever-burning torch. See *Inhabitants*, p. 25, for more details on Priestess Genelen.

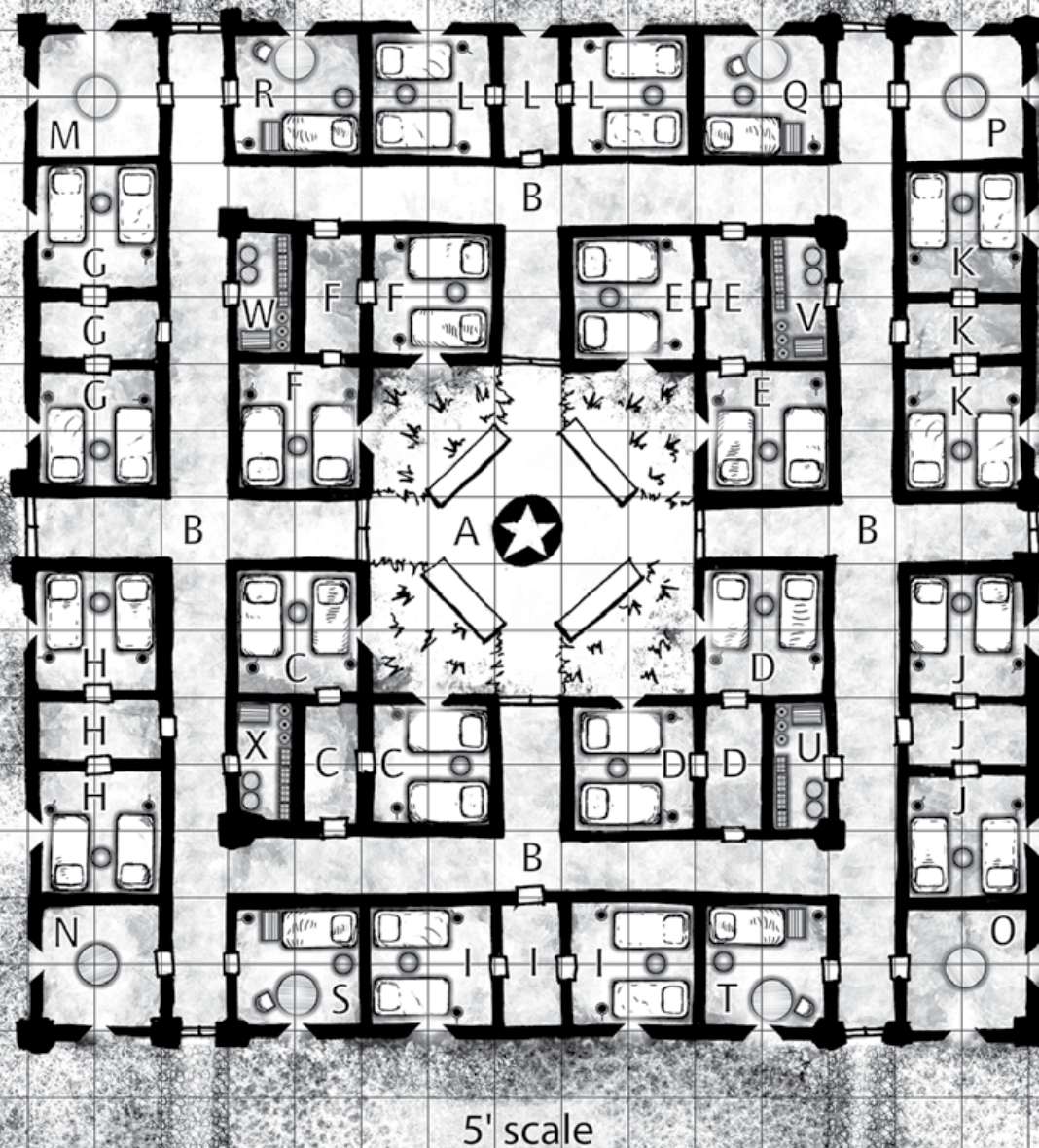
11b. Arcade: Each time the characters enter this hallway, the GM should roll a d20. A random encounter with 1d3 acolytes occurs on a roll of 14 or higher during the day, or 18 or higher during the night. The **acolytes** are all lawful good novices of Mityara. Each wears a white silk chiton with gold silk sash and carries a wax tablet and stylus, a holy symbol of Mityara (alabaster statuette on bronze chain), a storeroom key, 1d3sp, and 1d12cp.

When encountered, acolytes will inquire as to the characters' purpose in the hospital. Characters who request healing, or ask after Priestess Genelen, will be directed to the courtyard (11a) during the day. Characters who seek to buy healing potions or other equipment will be escorted to the nearest storeroom to peruse the available inventory and transact. If the characters are carrying stolen goods from the storerooms, the acolytes will politely excuse themselves and head directly to the legate to report the theft.

11c-l. Wards: Each ward consists of a pair of 10' × 10' patient rooms connected to the arcade by a 5' × 10' antechamber. All of the antechambers are adorned with frescoes of Mityara, though many are faded or peeling with age. Each patient room is furnished with a pair of simple sleeping couches facing large windows. The sleeping couches are accompanied by small tables with cupping vessels (for blood drawing) bedside, and chamber-pots at their feet. A portable brazier stands between the beds.



11: Hospital



Each time the characters enter one of the wards, the GM should roll a d20. On a roll of 18 or higher, a patient will be resting in the bed. Patients have an equal chance of being **commoners**, **legionaries**, or **scouts**, but have no equipment and suffer from a random lingering injury.

11m-p. Meditation Rooms: The outer walls of these rooms are pierced with large open windows that circulate fresh air. The unwindowed walls are painted with faded mosaics of Mityara engaging in acts of healing and mercy. In the center of each of the meditation rooms, a small three-legged table holds seven white candles in earthenware holders and a scroll written in Classical Auran. Each scroll contains 1d4 meditations of the philosopher-emperor Gaius Tavus. Choose or roll for which on the Random Philosophical Meditations table, below.



A character who spends 10 minutes of game time here reading from the meditations of Gaius Tavus gains inspiration.

Random Philosophical Meditations Table	
1d12 Gaius Tavus writes....	
1	"Waste no more time talking about great men and how they should be. Become one yourself!"
2	"Look well into yourself. There is a fountain of strength which will always spring up if you will but look."
3	"Do not act as if you were going to live ten thousand years. Death hangs over you. You are but a little soul carrying around a corpse."
4	"It is a shame on your soul to falter on the road of life while your body still perseveres."
5	"When you arise in the morning, think of what a precious privilege it is to be alive, to breathe, to think, to enjoy, to love."
6	"It is not death that a man should fear. No, he should fear never beginning to live."
7	"Just because your own strength is unequal to a task, do not assume the task is beyond the powers of man. But if any task is within the powers of man, believe that it is within your power as well."
8	"Even those who blazed like bright stars in the firmament and became the stuff of legend fade away and are soon buried in oblivion. For the rest, as soon as clods of earth cover their corpses, they are forgotten. So what is left living for? This alone: Justice in thought and goodness in action."
9	"A gem cannot be polished without friction; a sword cannot be tempered without fire; a man cannot be perfected without trials."
10	"My enemies think they can harm me. I laugh at them. They do not know who I am. They do not know what I think. They cannot even touch what is really mine."
11	"The greater the difficulty, the more glory in surmounting it. Skillful pilots gain their reputation from sailing through storms and tempests."
12	"It may be that a man has treated you poorly. That is upon him. However he may have treated you, you must treat him rightly. That is upon you."

11q-r. Acolytes' Quarters: Each of these rooms is furnished with a sleeping couch, a portable brazier, a chamber-pot, a wooden chest, a three-legged wooden table, and a folding stool. A set of seven white candles in earthenware holders are arranged in ascending height order on the table. The wooden chest holds the hospitalist's vestments and personal effects, including 2d6 gp. During the day, the dormitories are unoccupied. Most nights, an **acolyte** will be found asleep herein, though every seventh night they maintain a vigil from dusk to dawn before the ever-burning torch in the courtyard (**11a**).

A typical daily ration for the fort's soldiers is 2lbs grain (2cp), 8oz smoked pork (2.1cp), 1.5oz lentils (0.1cp), 1.5oz olive oil (2cp), 1.5oz salt (0.8cp), and 1oz cheese (0.4cp), costing 7.4cp and weighing 2lbs 13½oz total. A week of food thus costs (7.4cp × 7 days) 51.8cp or 0.5gp. In Autarch's Domains at War, soldiers cost 0.5gp per week each to supply.

11t. Priestess's Quarters: The door to this room is locked. Priestess Genelen carries the key to it on her person. The interior is furnished like the other dormitories (see above). However, the seven white

candles are in silver holders (25gp value) rather than earthenware. Resting on the table is a bronze scroll-box containing a series of seven parchment rolls written in Classical Auran with gold and red illumination. The scrolls are her copy of *The Seven Radiant Scrolls*, the holy book of the Empyrean faith. While not itself magical, Genelen's copy of *The Seven Radiant Scrolls* has been inscribed with the following divine spells (one per each of the seven scrolls): *bless, detect evil and good, continual flame, augury, magic circle, divination, and raise dead*. The wooden chest holds the priestess's vestments and personal effects, including 45gp, 110sp, and 180cp. During the day, the room is unoccupied. At night, Priestess Genelen will be asleep here unless she is maintaining her weekly vigil in the courtyard (**10a**).

11u-x. Medical Storerooms: The doors to the storerooms are locked. The keys are held by Genelen and her three hospitalists. Within, each storeroom contains 8 healer's kits, 8 herbalism hits, 5 flasks of holy water, 5 flasks of antitoxin, and 5 *potions of healing*. Each minute that the characters lingers by or in a storeroom, the GM should roll a d20. A random encounter with an **acolyte** occurs on a roll of 14 or higher. Acolytes who catch the party looting a storeroom will politely excuse themselves and head directly to the legate to report the theft (as above).

12-13. Granaries: The granaries are 180' long, 30' wide, and 10' tall. The wood planked floors of the granaries are raised 3' off the ground in order to keep the grain dry and to allow air to circulate easily, while a steeply pitched roof helps shed rainfall. Loading bays ascend to the raised floor at either end, terminating in large oak doors. The doors are locked and chained; the legate (**19l**) and quartermaster (**18d**) have keys.

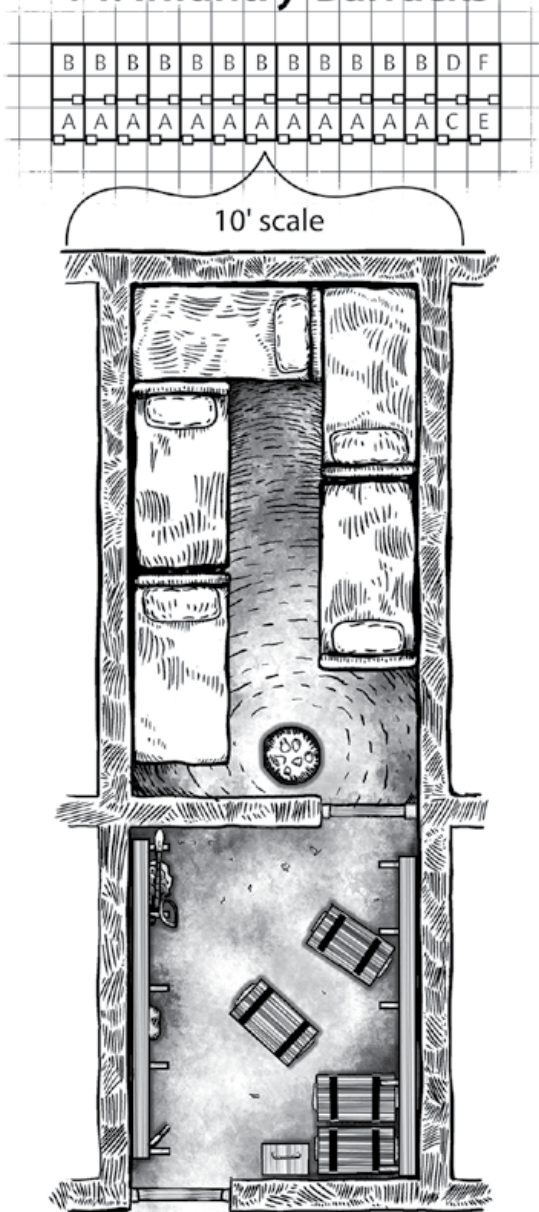
Despite the name, the granaries actually hold considerably more than just grain. The granaries were built to hold 6,500 bales of hay (7500gp value, 146 tons); 3,500 bushels of grain (1,750gp value, 105 tons); 440 barrels of smoked pork (2,200gp, 26 tons); 190 bags of dried lentils (95gp, 5.7 tons); 110 amphorae of olive oil (2,200gp value, 3.4 tons); 1,275 bricks of salt (850gp value, 5.1 tons) and 1,350 wheels of smoked cheese (405gp value, 3.4 tons), totaling 15,000gp of supplies each. When supplemented with the maximum 5,280 bales in the 44 hay-lofts in the two cavalry stable-barracks blocks (6,000gp value), the fort holds as much as 36,000gp worth of supplies, enough to supply 480 infantry and 120 cavalry for a year.

At present, each granary contains 1,000 bales of hay (1,150gp value, 22.5 tons); 530 bushels of grain (265gp, 15.9 tons); 70 barrels of smoked pork (350gp, 4.2 tons); 30 bags of dried lentils (15gp, 1800lbs); 18 amphorae of olive oil (350gp, 1575lbs); 225 bricks of salt (150gp, 1800lbs), and 240 wheels of smoked cheese (72gp, 1200lbs), for a total of 2,352gp each. An additional 2,640 bales of hay (3,036gp value) are kept in the two cavalry stable-barracks blocks, so the fort has a total of 7,740gp worth of supplies.

Characters caught stealing from the granaries will be whipped, branded as thieves, and fined the value of the stolen goods. Characters branded as thieves have disadvantage on Charisma checks with lawful and neutral creatures.

14. Infantry Barracks Block: See the Infantry Barracks Block Map. The infantry barracks block is 140' long, 30' wide, and 10' tall. The block is divided into fourteen rows of double rooms, each row

14: Infantry-Barracks



consisting of a larger inner room (9' wide by 18' long) connected by a wooden door to a small outer room (9' wide by 12' long) that opens up to the courtyard of the fort.

An infantry barracks block is built to house one company of 120 infantry. Rows 1-12 are intended to quarter 10 troops each, row 13 is set aside for the company's four subalterns (platoon commanders), and row 14 for the company's centurion (company commander). Due to the fort's depleted garrison, the barracks block is only half full. Rows 1-12 quarter just 5 troops each. Subaltern Peleos Methori occupies row 13, while Centurion Axios Ilarion dwells in Row 14. See Inhabitants on p. 33 for more details on these characters.

14a. Infantry Storage Rooms: The outer rooms of rows 1-12 hold ten weapon racks and storage trunks each. Half the storage trunks contain soldiers' kit, including a set of traveler's clothes, a backpack, a set of carpenter's tools, a mess kit, a small tent, two wool blankets, and

a waterskin. Legionaries and scouts also have 2d20cp each in their trunks.. All the weapon racks will be empty by day; at night, half are hung with arms and armor.

14b. Infantry Quarters: The inner rooms of rows 1-12 are furnished with five bunk-beds each, arranged around a portable brazier. As with the stable barracks block (9), the infantry barracks block is largely deserted by day while the troops are on duty. At night, 4-5 troops will be asleep herein (half the bunks are empty).

14c. Subalterns' Storage Rooms: The outer room of row 13 is furnished with four weapon racks and storage trunks. One of the storage trunks contains Subaltern Methori's kit (as above, but with 1gp, 2sp, and 25cp in coin). All four weapon racks will be empty by day; at night, one is hung with Methori's arms and armor.

14d. Subalterns' Quarters: The inner room of row 13 is furnished with four sleeping couches encircling a large, portable brazier. Only one of the beds is made. A chamber-pot is tucked in the corner. By day, the subalterns' quarters are typically empty. At night, Subaltern Peleos Methori will be asleep here.

14e. Centurion's Atrium: The centurion's atrium is used for official meetings with junior officers and enlisted men, as well as informal gatherings. The room is furnished with a set of three banqueting couches arranged in a horseshoe around a portable brazier. The centurion's valet (LN human male **commoner**) can typically be found working hereabouts, or sleeping on one of the couches at night. The valet is responsible for washing his clothes, cooking his meals, and cleaning his quarters.

14f. Centurion's Quarters: The centurion's living quarters are well-appointed, as befits an Imperial company commander. A sleeping couch with several wool blankets rests near a portable brazier, while a chamber-pot is available in the corner. A wooden chest sits at the foot of the bed. A low three-legged table and folding stool rest opposite it. The chest holds the centurion's personal effects, including two pairs of traveler's clothes, a backpack, a mess kit, a small tent, two wool blankets, a waterskin, and a coin purse with 30gp, 30sp, and 50cp. At night, Centurion Axios Ilarion will be asleep here.

15-17. Unoccupied Infantry Barracks Blocks: These blocks are of identical construction to 14 (above), but since the borderlands legions were re-deployed to the west, all three have been unoccupied. It is a cause of some resentment among the troops that they live in cramped quarters in barracks block while three others go empty, but the legate believes dispersing the men would be bad for unit cohesion. Regular work-crews keep the blocks in good repair despite their empty state.

18. Headquarters Building: See the Headquarters Building Map. The headquarters building stands 125' long and 85' wide, with 5' thick walls, and is divided into three parts. The front half is an open colonnaded courtyard (18a), 45' square, surrounded by a 15' wide, 15' tall veranda. Beyond the courtyard is a cross-hall (18b), 25' wide and 75' long, with a 25' roof. Behind the cross-hall lies an elevated shrine (18c) flanked by a pair of offices (rooms 18d-g) on either side. The three central rooms (18c, 18d, and 18e) are separated from the cross-hall by gated bronze fences that allow free view into the cross-hall and courtyard. The outermost rooms (18f and 18g) can only be entered from the offices.

18a. Courtyard: Various bulletins and official notices are posted along the walls of the courtyard. Of interest to the adventurers are the following posted missives:

By order of Legate Ulrand Valerian, a reward of 750 gold pieces shall be paid to whoever puts a stop to the humanoids raids that have plagued our territory as of late. Adventurers seeking to claim this reward should bring evidence of their success before the Legate at his Office in the Villa.

The Guild Merchant earnestly seeks word of the whereabouts of two of its members, Daros Thenes and Odysios Panas, gone missing along the highway to Siadanos. Those with knowledge of their whereabouts should speak to Aeropos Karanos at the Forum in town.

Join our band! The Fierce Brethren, captained by the legendary Quintus the Rager, Vestus the Unlikely, and Zaira the Beautiful, are recruiting bold comrades for expeditions into the Viaspen Forest! Find us at the Traveler's Inn in town.

Wanted: The brigand Drusus for desertion, drunkenness, kidnapping, manslaughter, mayhem, murder, robbery, and other outrages against the Empire! 250gp shall be paid by the Quartermaster to whomever brings this outlaw to Imperial justice, dead or alive.

Soldiers accursed by nightmares should seek sleep draughts or prayers of rest from Priestess Genelen at the Hospital. Sleeplessness is no excuse for dereliction of duty!

The courtyard is heavily trafficked, making it a good place for adventurers seeking to recruit hirelings to post notices of help wanted and hand out fliers. Up to 1d6 unskilled hirelings (such as porters, torchbearers, or stablehand) and 1 skilled hireling (such as a mercenary guard, healer, or scribe) can be recruited per game day. Unskilled hirelings costs 2sp per day and skilled hirelings cost 2gp per day to hire.

18b. Cross-hall: A 10' high dais rises from the western end of the cross-hall. The dais is mounted by a flight of steps on its northern end. There is sufficient room in the courtyard and cross-hall for up to two units (240 men) to assemble at once. At sunrise each day, all the troops of Türos Tem (save those on guard duty) muster in the cross-hall to receive the orders of the day from Legate Valerian.

18c. High Shrine: The high shrine is the most sacred room in the fort, and it is guarded at all times. Two **imperial legionary veterans** stand outside its bronze gate by day, and **one imperial legionary veteran** stands watch at night.

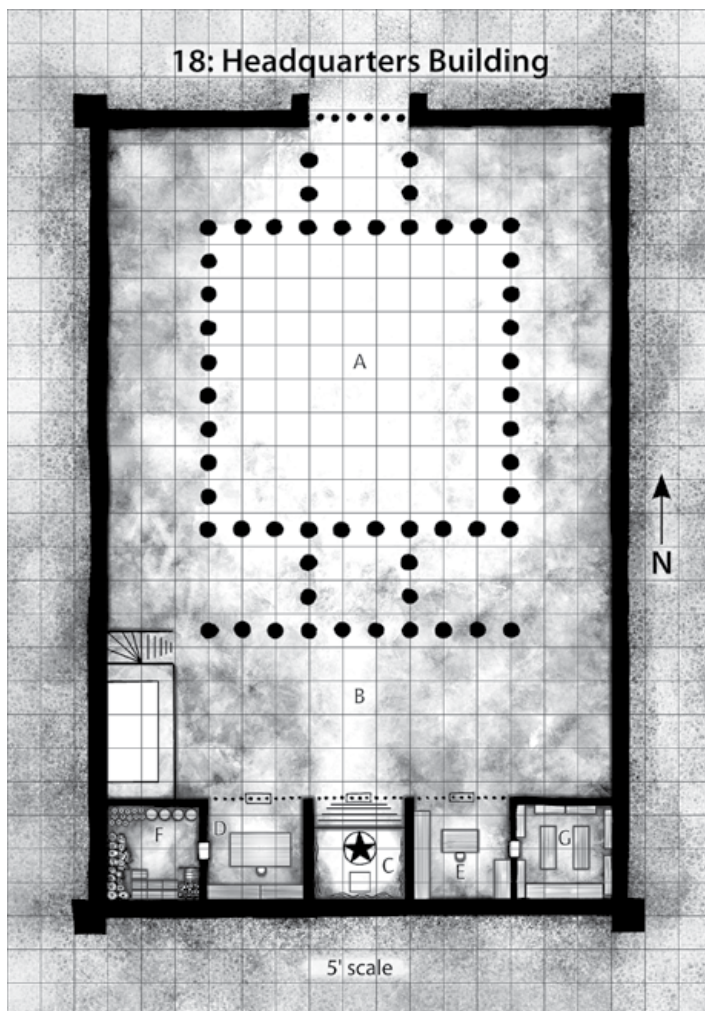
The gate is kept locked at all times, with only the legate (in **19l**), the centurion (in **14f**), and the quartermaster (in **18d**) having keys. Beyond the gate, white stairs rise upward 5' to the elevated floor of the shrine. At its center is an 8' tall bronze statue of Ammonar, god of law and light. The statue stands directly opposite the entrance to the building, proudly visible to anyone entering or passing by the headquarters. The statue is surrounded on three sides by red shields adorned with the winged sun of Aura. Six 2' × 2' company pennants (for one cataphract, one horse archer, one scout, and three legionary companies) hang above the shields from walls painted in red, gold, and purple, with a seventh flag, a 6' × 2' banner on a bronze pole, in the middle. Characters caught stealing the pennants from the high shrine will be executed for treason.

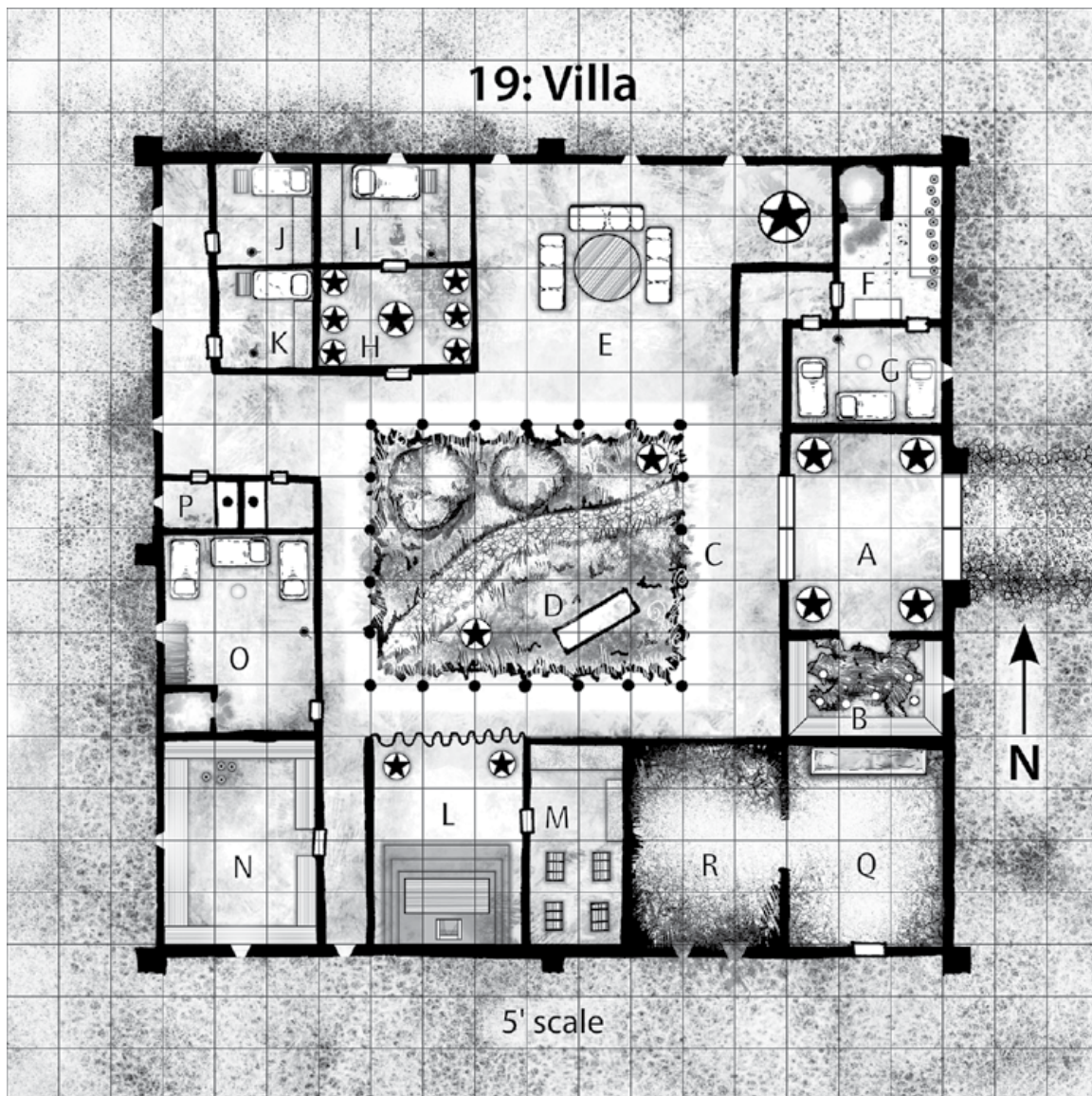
The soldier's savings and the fort's paychests are kept in a storeroom hidden below the shrine's floor. The storeroom can be entered via a locked trapdoor (DC 15) behind the statue of Ammonar. Within the storeroom, nine ironbound wooden chests are bolted to the floor. Four

chests hold 2,000cp each; three chests hold 2,000sp each; and the last two chests are partly filled with 1,500gp each (total value 3,840gp). All of the chests are locked (DC 15). Only the legate, centurion, and quartermaster have the keys to the storeroom and its chests.

18d. Quartermaster's Office: This room is furnished with a low cedar table and folding stool. A pottery lamp sits on the table, alongside a stack of wax tablets, several ink pots, and scattered scrolls. Behind the table are a pair of red-painted closable wooden cabinets with shelves for scroll rolls. During daylight hours, Quartermaster Koinos Thales can be found here (see *Inhabitants*, p. 25). Thales oversees the fort's provisions and dispenses equipment, rations, and wages to the troops. He also controls access to the fort's commissary (**18f**), which is adjacent to his office.

18e. Annalist's Office: This room is furnished with a tall oak table surmounted by a pottery lamp, a wax tablet, a stylus, a bundle of quills, several ink pots, and a stack of parchment sheets. On either side of the table are wall-shelves stacked with scroll rolls and codices. Behind the table is a wickerwork chair. During daylight hours, Annalist Hometri Socolo will be seated there, attending to his duties (see *Inhabitants*, p. 25). As the fort's annalist, Socolo keeps an administrative file for each soldier detailing his history, training, medical examinations, commendations, promotions, term of duty, and pay records. He is also responsible for recording an official history of the fortress and advising the legate on historical matters. These files are kept in the adjoining archive (**18g**).





18f. Commissary: The door to the commissary is locked (DC 15). The quartermaster and the legate (in **19l**) have keys. Within are kept stores prior to their weekly dispersal to the troops. The commissary currently holds 20 bushels of wheat (12gp value, 1200lbs); 2 barrels of smoked pork (10gp value, 240lbs); 1 bag of dried lentils (0.5gp value, 60lbs); 1 amphora of olive oil (20gp value, 90lbs); 8 bricks of salt (12gp value, 65lbs); 8 wheels of smoked cheese (25sp value, 40lbs); 10 chain shirts, 10 shields, 10 spears, 10 longbows, 200 arrows, and 10 sets of soldier's kit, each consisting of a set of traveler's clothes, a backpack, a set of carpenter's tools, a mess kit, a small tent, two wool blankets, and a waterskin.

18g. Archive: The door to the archive is locked (DC 15). The annalist and the legate (in **19l**) have keys. The walls of the archive are lined with red-painted floor-to-ceiling closable wooden cabinets with shelves for scroll rolls and codices. The cabinets hold the voluminous written records (almost 6,000 volumes) generated by the garrison, dating all the way back to Türos Tem's construction 150 years prior.

Characters who search the archive for one or more hours may learn something useful. After a character searches the archive for an hour, the GM should secretly make a DC 15 Intelligence (Investigation)

check on his behalf. If a check fails, the character learns nothing but may continue searching. If the check succeeds, the character finds a valuable piece of information. The first time a check succeeds, the character discovers a pattern in the garrison's patrol reports suggesting that the humanoid raids have been slowly increasing in frequency over the last two years. Prior to that, the frequency of raids was consistently low. The second time a check succeeds, the character discovers records of two major events both occurring around 24 months prior – an earthquake shook the region, and the Empire re-deployed the majority of the fort's troops to the west.

19. Villa: See the Villa Map. As the domicile of a high-ranking Auran noble and his family, the 75'-square villa is quite luxurious. At its center is an open-air peristyle garden (**19d**) bordered by a colonnaded arcade (**19c**) which grants access to the villa's various rooms, including a formal dining room (**19e**), reception room (**19l**), and private shrine (**19h**).

19a. Atrium: The doors to the atrium are massive oak constructions, 10' wide and tall, studded with bronze adornments. By day the doors are kept open to receive visitors, but at night thick shafts bar them securely. The atrium's floor is a tiled mosaic mapping the extent of the

Auran Empire as it stood under Ulkyreus. Many of the tiles have been scuffed and broken through the years, such that the map has been reduced to a fractured and chaotic result. 6'6" marble statues of the Empire's great captains stand at each corner of the atrium – clockwise from the northwest, Valerian Bellēsareus, Malantavius, Cincanus, and Audarius Tarkaun. The walls behind the statues are hung with curtains of red, gold, and purple. Two **imperial legionary veterans** guard the atrium during the day. They direct visitors to the waiting room (19b) to await the legate's availability.

19b. Waiting Room: A large, u-shaped pine bench, upholstered with blue linen and scattered with red wool pillows, encircles a huge dire-bear skin carpet. Wicker foot-stools are arranged atop the carpet. From the 2nd to 7th hour of each day, **2d4 commoners** from the local villages will be here, waiting to speak with the legate. Usually petitioners ask the legate's intervention in matters of law or business, but the recent humanoid raids have caused widespread worry, and most petitioners now come with calls for aid and protection. An adventurer who strikes up conversation with a petitioner and succeeds on a DC 10 Charisma (Persuasion) check learns a random rumor from the petitioner (see p. 4).

19c. Arcade: The roofed arcade circumscribes the open-air garden (19d) and is the main artery for traffic through the home. Each time the characters enter the hallway, the GM should roll a d20. During the day, a roll of 14 or more indicates that 1d3 **commoners** are encountered

doing housework. During the night, a roll of 18 or more indicates that **one imperial legionary veteran** is encountered.

19d. Garden: The heart of the villa is the garden, an open-air lawn adorned with small laurel trees and flower-beds edged with boxwood. The garden is surrounded by white stucco columns clad with ivy, which collectively support the encircling veranda roof, from whose gutters rainwater flows down pipes hidden in the columns and into the fort's cisterns. A path of crushed river pebbles winds between benches of white marble and posed statues of deer.

During the day **Lady Celena Valerian** will be found here reading or tending the flowers (see Inhabitants, p. 25). She will always be accompanied by her bodyguard (LG male human **imperial legionary veteran**), her maidservant (LG human female **commoner**), and her prized pet peacock, which the legate imported at great expense from Somirea as a gift to her.

19e. Dining Room: This room is splendidly furnished with three plush banqueting couches around an elaborately carved bronze table. Hypocaust heating connected to the hearth (in 19f) keeps banqueters pleasantly warm even during cool evenings. The western and northern walls are painted with a pattern of bright red and gold. A panoramic fresco of Tarkaun Audarius XI Ulkyreus's victory over the Somireans at the Battle of Trikala adorns the walls of the eastern alcove. Standing in the alcove, positioned as if surveying the battlefield, is an 8' marble



Extravagant Imperial Banquet Table		
1d12	Appetizers	Drinks
1	Baked chicken breast with chopped nuts and garlic	Celdorean mint cordial mixed with white vinegar and lemon juice
2	Baked chickpeas with almonds	Corcanosi raisin wine mixed with honey
3	Boiled chickpeas with grated cheese	Krysean mulled dry red wine spiced with saffron and cinnamon
4	Boiled lentils with coriander	Nicean honeyed ambrosia
5	Pickled olives and capers	Opelenean plum wine mixed with rose water
6	Poached eggs in fish sauce	Tirenean brandy and apple juice with almonds and cinnamon
7	Pureed hazelnuts with coriander and cheese	Tirenean dry white wine mixed with honey
8	Raw leek, olive, celery, and garlic salad	Tirenean dry white wine with wormwood and saffron
9	Salted chickpea pancakes	Tirenean dry white wine flavored with black myrtle berries
10	Soft-boiled eggs in pine-nut sauce	Tirenean sweet sparkling rose wine mixed with honey
11	Spiced honey-sweetened cheese	Tirenean sweet white wine with pepper, saffron, and cinnamon
12	Wheat bread with goat cheese and mint	Tirenean sweet white honey-mixed wine scented with rose petals

1d12	Main Course	Accompaniments
1	Boiled duck with spiced gravy	Artichokes braised in wine and rosemary
2	Boiled goose with spiced olive oil and fish sauce	Baked grape leaves stuffed with mackerel and cheese
3	Boiled mackerel fillet with leeks	Boiled carrots in cumin sauce
4	Boiled veal with fermented fish sauce	Boiled leeks wrapped in cabbage leaf
5	Fattened goose liver with butter	Boiled turnips drizzled with vinaigrette
6	Minced pork stew with apples and honey	Fried cucumbers drizzled with honey
7	Roast boar stuffed with blood sausage	Fried green beans in fish sauce
8	Roast boar with sesame sweet wine sauce	Goat cheese in honey and black pepper sauce
9	Roast duck with spiced plum sauce	Raw radishes with vinegar
10	Roast hare with white sauce and onions	Steamed green beans in coriander sauce
11	Roast tuna with olive oil and lemon	Steamed radishes in fish sauce
12	Rustic pork sausage with field mushrooms	Sweet chestnut stew with lentils

1d12	Dessert	Entertainment
1	Baked custard with cinnamon and pepper	Charmed animal show performed by itinerant elven enchanter
2	Dry goat cheese with fresh grapes	Comedy <i>Tarkaun Means Big Bird</i> performed by itinerant thespians
3	Honey-drizzled figs and dates	Epic poem <i>The Bellësareus</i> recited by Hometri Socolo
4	Honey-drizzled fried milk bread	Exotic dance performed by itinerant Opelenean dance troupe
5	Honey-soaked wheat cake	Gladiatorial battle fought between legionary veteran and captured goblin
6	Honey-sweetened milk custard	Gladiatorial battle fought between legionary veteran and convicted criminal
7	Nut-stuffed dates in honey	Games of <i>kyrpeges</i> played between diners
8	Pear-and-honey soufflé	Martial dance performed by itinerant bladedancer troupe
9	Plum fruit tarts	Melodic flute and lyre recital played by itinerant musicians
10	Souffléed elderberries with fish sauce	Display of life-like automatons presented by itinerant Dwarven machinist
11	Sweet buns with raisins	Prestidigitations and transformations cast by Malyn
12	Sweet egg omelets with honey	Tragedy <i>Ulkyreus in Winter</i> performed by itinerant thespians

statue of the great emperor himself. The grand effect is sadly marred because Ulkyreus's arms are broken and missing.

During lunch and dinner hours, Ulrand Valerian and Lady Valerian will be dining here. There is a 25% chance Hometri Socolo will also be present, and a 10% chance for each of the other named characters to be present. A **commoner** will attend each diner as a servant.

Adventurers who succeed in any of the tasks set out in the courtyard (18a), or who gain the favor of the legate's wife, will be invited to an extravagant banquet, during which a servant will wash their feet, massage their muscles, serve their many courses, and otherwise attend to each diner's needs. Roll 1d12 six times on the Extravagant Imperial Banquet table to determine the appetizer, main course, side dish, drinks, dessert, and entertainment. The banquets have a convivial atmosphere that is conducive to forming friendships, so the

characters have advantage on Charisma checks when interacting with any NPC attendees. They may re-roll Charisma checks with NPCs they re-encounter at banquets (see p. 25).

19f. Kitchen: The kitchen is an open courtyard with a pounded-earth floor. A large masonry stove surmounted by a grill and a bronze wine-mulling apparatus stands over a crackling fire in the northwest corner. A cook-pot sits amidst the flames. A long worktable equipped with bronze flatware and terracotta bowls, cauldrons, cook-pots, kettles, pans, and jars runs along the east wall. Cutlery racks and roasting-spits hang from the wall above the table. Storage shelves along the south wall hold grain, oil, spices, herbs, and wine in terracotta amphorae. Stationed nearby is a rolling trolley-table laden with fine red-gloss pottery and silverware used to serve banquets.

From sunup 'til sundown, the cook (LE human male **commoner**) will be found here. A burly soot-stained thug with greasy locks, the cook churlishly terrorizes the other servants, but his roast boar with sesame-thickened sweet wine sauce is tasty enough to earn him forgiveness for these faults.

19g. Servant's Quarters: These dormitories are furnished with three bunk-beds arranged around a single portable brazier. A pair of hemp sacks tied at the foot of each bed hold the servants' meager belongings, including tunic and pants, cheap sandals, and 1d3 cp. By day this room is unoccupied as the servants are working. At night, there will be **six commoners** asleep here.

19h. Shrine: This is a private shrine for the legate to worship the Empyrean gods. In the center of the shrine stands a 6'6" bronze statue of Ammonar, the Lord of the Dawn. Ordered along the west wall are similar statues of Tūras, Marshal of Justice; Istreus, Master of Secrets; and Naurivus, Lord of the Winds. Standing on the opposite wall are statues of Mityara, the Noble Lady; Calefa, Mother of Mourning; and Ianna, the Lioness. A skylight in the ceiling above illuminates the shrine with natural light by day. At night, brass lamps are hung from ceiling-hooks on the skylight's frame. If the legate is sleeping in his bedroom (19i) an **imperial legionary veteran** will be on watch here.

19i. Legate's Bedroom: In the center of this room stands a cedar-framed sleeping couch with bronze legs and fittings. Upholstered pillows of

red and gold linen sit neatly by the carved headboard. At the foot of the couch is a chest, decorated with raised bronze studs, which holds various toiletries – mirror, combs, strigils, razors, and various linens. Along the east wall is a cupboard with full-panel doors which contains the legate's wardrobe of variously-colored togas, tunics, cloaks, capes, belts, boots, and sandals. Along the west wall is another cupboard, this one holding small wax busts and statuettes of the legate's ancestors. A glass-paned window above the sleeping couch keeps the room bright by day, while brass lamps atop the cupboards can be lit during the hours of darkness. At night Legate Ulrand Valerian will be asleep here.

19j. Lady's Bedroom: The door to this room is locked. The legate and the lady each have a key. Inside, a sleeping couch bedecked with linen pillows sits adjacent to a full-paneled cupboard which holds the lady's wardrobe of tunics, chitons, stolas, veils, sandals, and slippers. Atop the cupboard is a pair of brass lamps. At the foot of the couch is the lady's toiletries chest, stocked with perfumed oils, cosmetics, mirrors, combs, hair pins, and other personal items. A glass-paned window in the north wall allows in natural light. At night Lady Celena Valerian will be asleep here, with her maidservant (LG human female **commoner**) at her feet.

19k. Guest Bedroom: This room is furnished similarly to the lady's bedroom (19j), but the wardrobe and chest are empty. Imperial envoys, nobles, and high-ranking military officers are hosted here during their time at the fort.





19l. Office: A curtain of translucent yellow linen screens the office from the garden to the north. The office within is designed to awe and intimidate petitioners and supplicants. To either side of the entrance are 6'6" tall bronze statues of Ianna, goddess of war. A red-painted cement dais rises 2' above the floor over the southern half of the room. The dais is surmounted by a marble table with bronze legs in the shape of lion's paws, behind which sits the legate's bronze throne. The wall behind the throne has been painted with a map of the borderlands as they were during the time of Ulkyreus (150 years ago).

During daytime hours, Urand Valerian will be receiving petitioners here (see *Inhabitants*, p. 25). As befits a legate of Aura, Urand is accompanied at all times by his bodyguard (LG male human **imperial legionary veteran**).

19m. Vault: The iron-reinforced door to this room is locked (DC 15). Within the vault are four ironbound wooden chests, all bolted to the floor, which hold the legate's personal treasure. Two chests hold 2,500cp each; one chest holds 2,500sp; and the last chest holds 1,500gp (total value 1,800gp). All of the chests are locked (DC 15). Only the legate (**19l**) has the keys to the vault and its chests.

19n. Hot Room: The hot room is kept warm and dry year-round by hypocaust heating from the furnace in the servant's quarters (**190**). The hot room is primarily used for cleansing sweat baths. Long oak

benches along the walls allow bathers to relax. Above the benches are wall hooks where towels, linens, and tunics can be hung; below them are boxes with oils and strigils for scraping off perspiration. During the coldest days of winter, the legate sometimes relocates his office here, in which case it will be kept somewhat cooler and temporarily furnished as above (**19l**).

19o. Servant's Quarters: These quarters are furnished similarly to the servant's quarters by the kitchen (**19g**). However, a 5' square masonry furnace has been built into the south-west corner. Adjacent to the furnace is a stack of firewood, tall as a man and half as wide. The furnace keeps the hot room (**19n**) warm, and its fire is tended all day long by **one commoner**. At night, **six commoners** will be asleep here.

19p. Latrines: Marble and maple-wood benches are built over an underground water channel that flushes waste into the Krysvor River. Buckets near the latrines are furnished with sponges on sticks, with which the lavatory user can clean himself.

19q. Stable Yard: The stable yard is open to the air and covered with a loose layer of straw. A pair of urine ditches and water troughs serves the needs of the horses in the neighboring stable (**19q**). The stable-door in the south wall is kept closed and barred to prevent the horses from running off.

19r. Stable: The floor here is covered with a thick bed of straw. A large hay rack is attached to the wall in the northwest corner, adjacent to a row of buckets for feed and water. Hanging on the south wall are two sets of cavalry kit, each including military saddle, bit and bridle, and two saddlebags. The legate's warhorse and riding horse are stabled here. The warhorse, Unconquered Sun, is a swift, tough, and clever 12-year old palomino that has survived over a decade of battle with Ulrand. The riding horse is a 4-year old blood bay stallion named Hunter. The horses are cared for by a stablehand (NG human male **commoner**), the son of one of the household servants.

20. Chapterhouse: See the Chapterhouse Map. The 85' long, 45' wide, and 10' tall chapterhouse is the residence of the fort's staff officers and arcane specialists, along with their assistants and servants.

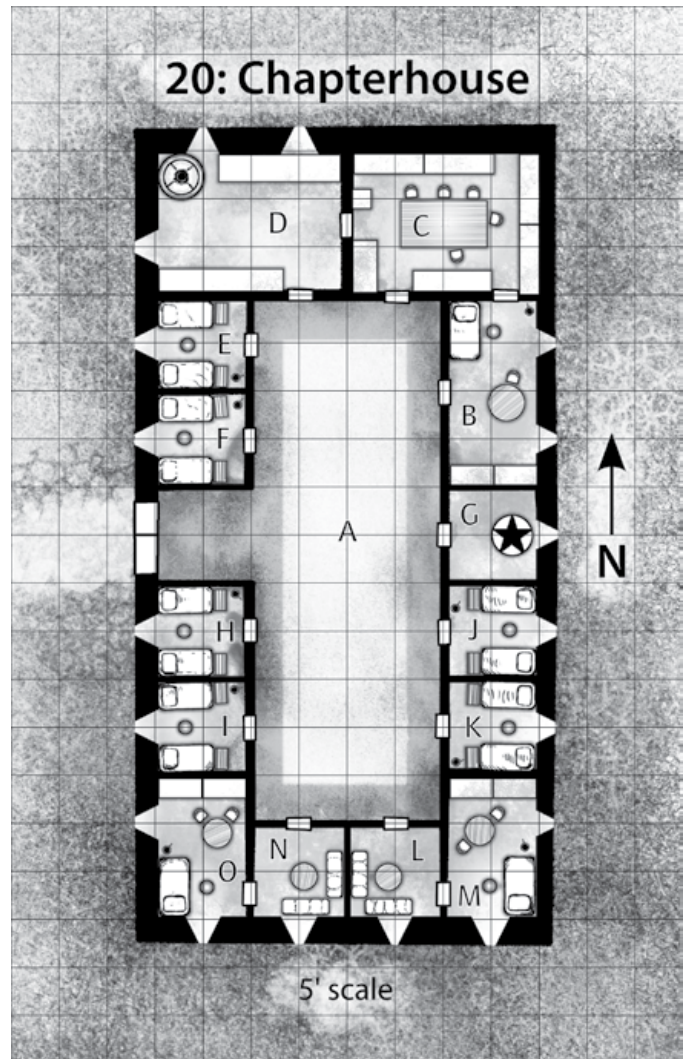
20a. Courtyard: Due to the valuable library and workshop maintained within, the sturdy, iron-reinforced oak doors to the chapterhouse are always kept closed and locked (DC 15). The annalist (18e), mages (20b-f), quartermaster (18d), legate (19l), and legionary veterans (20h-k) have keys. Past the doors, a short corridor leads to a 55' long, 20' wide open-air courtyard. A veranda overhangs the courtyard on all sides by 2'6", creating a covered walkway to all of the rooms.

20b. Mage's Quarters: The door to this room is locked (DC 15). Only Malyn has the key. Inside, a heavily padded sleeping couch is stationed by a large, well-tended portable brazier that keeps the 10' x 25' room quite warm. A set of two closable wooden cabinets stands against the south wall. One cabinet holds Malyn's wardrobe of robes, cloaks, gloves, belts, boots, and sandals. The other holds his personal wealth (200cp, 80sp, 50gp) and his spellbooks. These are written on rolled papyrus and kept inside bronze book-boxes; an Auran traditionalist, Malyn eschews the use of parchment codices that is now in vogue. Next to the cabinets are a three-legged wooden table and stool. A wax tablet and stylus rests on the table, alongside a brass lamp. A chamber-pot sits in the corner; it is almost always full, as Malyn is so enfeebled as to be incontinent and unable to move the heavy pot without assistance or magic.

During the day, Malyn is virtually always in his quarters, either working or catching small fits of sleep (see Inhabitants, p. 25). In the early evening he may (50% chance) be joined by Subaltern Miren. At night, he will not be present due to his nocturnal wanderings. Malyn will only meet with adventurers if they are introduced by Legate Valerian, Subaltern Miren, or his apprentices.

20c. Library: The 20' x 15' library is dominated by a large pinewood table surrounded by five wickerwork stools with thick upholstery. The table is a mess of ink stains and paperwork with wax tablets, styluses, quills, ink pots, and unrolled parchment scrolls haphazardly strewn about. A glass orb on the table has been enchanted with *continual flame* and illuminates the room brightly. The walls around the table are lined with floor-to-ceiling closable wooden cabinets, whose shelves are laden with arcane scroll rolls and codices. Characters in the library have advantage on Intelligence checks to resolve the Research downtime activity.

Characters who receive permission (from Malyn) may peruse the library for clues to the humanoid raids. After a character studies the library for an hour, the GM should secretly make a DC 15 Intelligence (Investigation) check on his behalf. If a check fails, the character



learns nothing but may continue searching. If the check succeeds, the character discovers an excerpt from the book *Fallen Empires of the Known World* by Matthius Scale:

"Suetonius relates a legend of a Zaharan temple within the present-day Viaspen Forest containing evil so foul that it corrupted all who dwelled within. As with most of Suetonius's tales, there is no way to verify the claim, as he conveniently explains that during the Emphyrean War the clerics of Law unleashed a cataclysm which buried the temple forever beneath a dome of rock. Whatever the truth of the legend, my own explorations of the Viaspen found no sign of such a place, though a natural dome of black granite did hint at the basis of the myth..."

During the day, **1d4 apprentice wizards** will be present here, engaged in research for their master, Malyn the Misshapen. An adventurer who strikes up conversation with an apprentice and succeeds on a DC 15 Charisma (Persuasion) check learns a random rumor from the apprentice (see p. 4). If the adventurer succeeds on a second check with the same apprentice, the apprentice will offer to introduce the adventurer to his master, Malyn.

20d. Magical Workshop: Malyn and his apprentices use this 20' × 15' workshop to brew potions and the inks needed to scribe scrolls. In the northwest corner stands a large masonry stove heated by a crackling

At the GM's discretion, powdered gargoyle horn could be a magical ingredient for a potion of poison resistance; doppelganger hide for a hat of disguise; wraith ectoplasm for dust of disappearance; and preserved troll heart for a periapt of wound closure.

fire, with a brass cauldron amidst the flames. Running along the north wall is a long worktable covered with arcane implements – a charcoal-heated bronze athanor, a pair of glass alembics, an earthenware aludel, three copper retorts, a large earthenware crucible, a mortar and pestle, a pair of incense sticks, a silver censer, a score of candles, and various colored inks and pigment. Characters in

the magical workshop gain advantage on to ability checks made with alchemist's supplies, herbalism kits, or poisoner's kits.

The southwestern corner of the room is lined with storage shelves which hold a variety of amphorae, gourds, earthenware jugs, and other containers for magical ingredients to be used in crafting magic items. The workshop's available magical ingredients are: 2 powdered gargoyle horns (50gp each); 2 flayed doppelganger hides (50gp each); wraith ectoplasm (200gp); and a preserved troll heart (2000gp).

During the day, **1d4 apprentice wizards** will be present here, engaged in research for their master, Malyn the Misshapen. They can be interacted with as above.

20e-f. Apprentices' Dormitories: A pair of Malyn's apprentices lives in each of these 10' × 10' dormitories. The rooms are furnished with a pair of sleeping couches arranged around a portable brazier. A chamber-pot sits in the corner. A wooden chest rests at the foot of each couch. Each wooden chest holds the apprentices' robes, sandals, personal effects, and spellbook, as well as 1d6 gp. During the day, the dormitories are unoccupied, as the arcanists will be in either the library (**20c**) or workshop (**20d**). At night, the **two apprentice wizards** will be asleep here.

20g. Shrine of Secrets: Standing in the center of this 10' × 10' room is a 6'6" tall bronze statue of a bearded scholar clad in a voluminous cloak. The face of the statue has no eyes. (DC 15 Religion: The statue is a representation of Istreus, Empyrean god of knowledge, learning, and magic, who plucked out his own eyes after glimpsing the Logos so that he might never thereafter gaze on imperfection.)

20h-k: Guards' Dormitories: These 10' × 10' rooms are furnished identically to the apprentices' dormitories (**20e-f**) but they collectively house the eight legionary veterans that protect the headquarters (**18**) and villa (**19**). The wooden chests contain soldier's kit, including set of traveler's clothes, a backpack, a set of carpenter's tools, a mess kit, a small tent, two wool blankets,

A soldier needs 1 gallon of water per day, while a horse needs 7 gallons of water per day. Türos Tem was designed to sustain 600 men and 120 horses for a year, requiring (600 × 1 × 365) 219,000 gallons of water for the men and (120 × 7 × 365) 306,600 gallons for the horses, for a total of 525,600 gallons per year.

a waterskin, and 2d4 gp. By day these rooms are empty. At night, **1d3-1 imperial legionary veterans** will be asleep herein (some of the guards are on duty at night), their spear, sword, shield, and banded plate armor neatly stacked by the door.

20l: Annalist's Atrium: The door to this room is locked. Only Hometri Socolo has a key. Inside the 10' × 10' room, a pair of banqueting couches are arranged against the walls with a low three-legged table in between them. During evening hours, **Socolo** can sometimes (25% chance) be found here if he is not dining with the Legate and Lady or carousing at the inn.

20m. Annalist's Quarters: This 15' × 10' room is furnished with a sleeping couch, a low cedar wood table, and a pair of wickerwork chairs. A full-paneled cabinet, which holds the annalist's wardrobe, is stationed against the north wall. A locked bronze strongbox (DC 15) bolted to the bottom of the cabinet holds Hometri's savings of 50cp, 35sp, and 11gp. (Hometri has the key.) A brass lamp, a wax tablet, and a stylus rest on the table, alongside a bronze book-box holding the 23 scrolls of *The Bellësareus* (100gp value), Hometri's favorite epic poem. (*The Bellësareus* recounts the epic of Valerian, greatest of the Auran heroes during the Empyrean War, starting with his unsheathing of the fiery sword *Bellësar*, and ending with his funeral pyre after his final battle against the Zaharan ruinguard Acherib on the Fields of Morgot.) At night, Socolo can be found here, asleep.

20n: Quartermaster's Atrium: The door to this room is locked (DC 15). Only Koinos Thales has a key. The interior is furnished similarly to **20l**. Sitting on the table is a cedar game board with carved pieces of ivory and ebony (250gp). This is Thales' prized *kyrpeges* set. During evening hours, Thales can sometimes (15% chance) be found here if he is not dining with the Legate and Lady or carousing at the inn.

20o. Quartermaster's Quarters: A sleeping couch, a low table, and a pair of wickerwork chairs furnish this 15' × 10' room. On the table are a brass lamp, a quill, an ink bottle, and a stack of transaction records from the commissary. A full-paneled cabinet against the north wall holds the quartermaster's wardrobe. A locked wooden trunk under the couch holds 100cp, 20sp, and 10gp, and a small collection of board games with wooden boards, bone pieces, and carved dice (15gp value). At night, Thales can be found here, asleep.

21. Cistern: The ground around this 60' wide and 40' long catchment of porous brick slopes gently downward, ensuring a steady flow of rainwater. The rainwater seeps through the porous brick into the 30' deep storage tank, lined with cement and held up with tall columns, which has been excavated below. The storage tank can hold 540,000 gallons (72,000 cubic feet) of water. Rainwater is only sufficient to provide 92,000 gallons per year, so one of the most common fatigues assigned to soldiers is to carry water to the cistern from the river during the dry seasons.

22. Parade Ground: A large wooden podium has been erected here. The podium was once painted bright red and gold but rain and age have left it a faded pink and dun. Around the podium, the grass and scrub has been trampled flat by the daily tread of scores of men. From mid-morning to early afternoon, the soldiers of Türos Tem can be found here performing battle drills under the watchful eye of Centurion Axios Ilarion and either Subaltern Peleos Methori or Subaltern Lynara Miren (the other subaltern will be on duty at **4**). In a typical day they are drilling

1d8+10 imperial cataphracts, 1d8+10 imperial horse archers, 3d8+15 imperial legionaries, and 3d4+1 scouts.

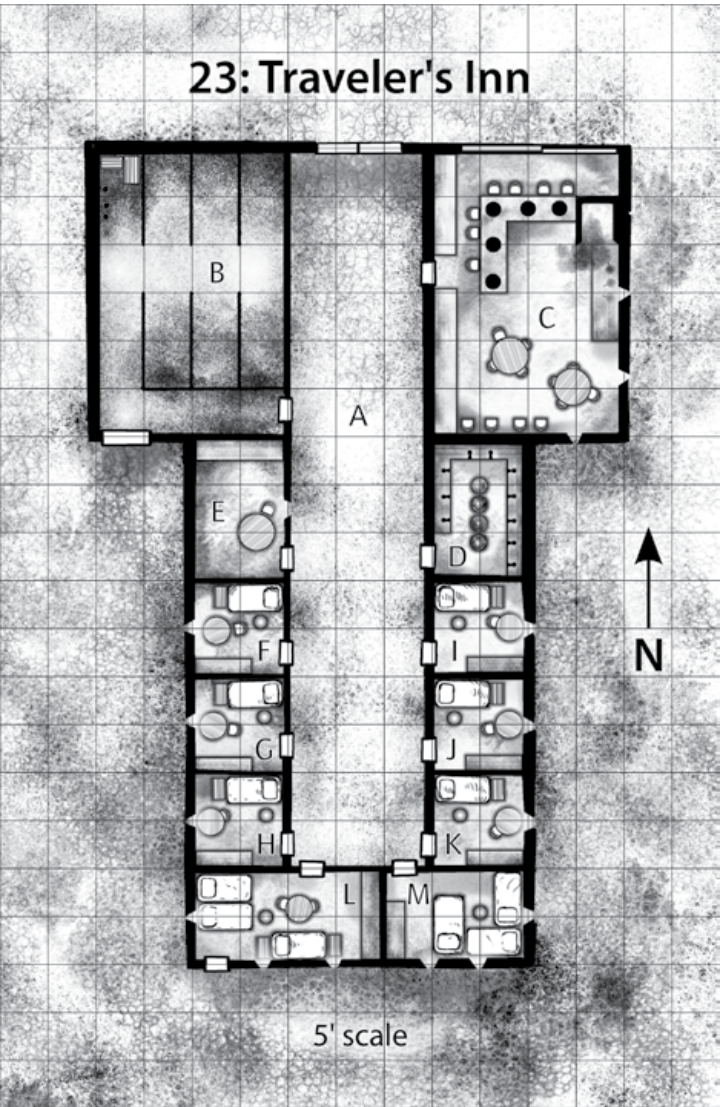
Characters might come to the parade ground to recruit troops with the permission of Legate Valerian (191). If so, one-fourth of the troops of each type (rounded down) will be potentially interested. A successful DC 15 Charisma check persuades the interested troops to serve as mercenary hirelings. For 2gp per day, the troops will serve as wilderness escorts, camp guards, and porters. However, they will not accompany the adventurers into the dungeon. A successful DC 20 Charisma check persuades the interested troops to accompany the adventurers into dungeons in exchange for a half-share of treasure each.

If the party consists of less than four characters, having some troops join them on the adventure can help the party tackle challenges that otherwise would defeat them. However, if the party consists of four or more characters, it will probably slow down play to bring troops into the dungeon and they should be reserved for use as porters and guards.

23. Traveler's Inn: See the Inn Map. The inn is 85' long, 35-55' wide, and 10' high. A garishly-painted sign outside the door proclaims it as the Traveler's Inn. The inn was initially built by the Empire to house those traveling on Imperial business. With the borderlands increasingly abandoned by the bureaucracy, its clientele is now made up primarily of traders, merchants, and soldiers. At any time, there will be **2d4-2 commoners** staying in the inn, each occupying a guest room.

23a. Courtyard: The 75' by 15' open-air courtyard is encircled on three sides by guest rooms and facilities. The fourth (northern) side ends in large, oak double doors, kept open by day and barred shut after sunset. New arrivals to the inn are called over by the gruff-voiced innkeeper in the lobby (23e).

23b: Stables: The 30' x 20' stables are divided into six stalls, each covered with a thick bed of straw. Along the western wall runs a row of buckets for feed and water, as well as grooming supplies. A large stall door to the south is kept open during the day to allow easy traffic to their mounts by the inn's guests. At any time the stables hold a total of 1d2 donkeys, 1d3-1 mules, and 1d2-1 light riding horses, as well as a stablehand(N human female **commoner**) who grooms, feeds, and washes them.



23c. Eatery: Inn guests can enter the 30' x 20' eatery from the courtyard (23a) to the west, while sliding doors to the north open onto the forum (25) to allow passersby to enter for a quick meal. Orders are placed and picked up at an L-shaped stone countertop pierced with five recesses, each of which contains a large, insulated pottery jar filled with ready-to-eat food and wine. A round masonry hearth built in to the eastern tip of the countertop heats a stovetop where pots and pans simmer with food. Along the east wall, a long shelf is laden with grain, oil, spices, herbs, and wine in clay jugs. Along the west wall, clay flatware and dishware are arranged across a pair of wooden tables. Between,

Item	Cost	Item	Cost
Bran bread loaf (11b)	1cp	Boiled greens with fish sauce	1cp
Wheat biscuit with honey	1cp	Pickled beets	2cp
Wheat toast with salt, olives, and fish sauce	2cp	Boiled lentils with almonds	3cp
Wheat toast with cheese, onions, and ham	2cp	Dried figs with honey	3cp
Wheat meal porridge, one bowl	3cp	Vinegar and water	1cp
Pair of hardboiled eggs with fish sauce	1cp	Barley water and honey	1cp
Pair of fried eggs with salt and pepper	1cp	Milk and honey	2cp
Blood sausage with egg, onion, and pepper (4oz)	2cp	Watered local wine	2cp
Fresh-cooked spicy pork sausage (4oz)	3cp	Warm spiced Krysean wine	5cp
Fried mullet fish	5cp	Honeyed Tirenean wine	1sp

stools are scattered around the countertop for customers, while to the south a pair of round dining tables are open to regulars and inn patrons. The menu is chalked above the west wall.

The inn's resident cook (N human male **commoner**) works here from sunup to sundown. He is an olive-skinned handsome Nicean with a fine singing voice and often entertains patrons with bawdy songs as he cooks.

During meal times there will be 3d4 patrons at the eatery. At other times there will be 1d4 patrons. Most will be commoners. In the early evening, the patrons will typically be soldiers, and some named NPCs may be present. Centurion Ilarion, Quartermaster Thales, and Subaltern Methori are each 75% likely to be present; Annalist Socolo is 50% likely to be present; and Subaltern Miren is 25% likely to be present.

23d. Communal Latrine: Inn patrons can relieve themselves in the 20' × 15' latrine. A u-shaped set of wooden benches is built over a channel of water that flushes waste away to the Krysivor River. Sponges on sticks are kept in buckets for the patrons to wipe themselves. They are not always clean.

23e. Lobby: The innkeeper (LE male human **commoner**) sits on a tall stool overlooking the courtyard in this 15' × 10' room. He perches a wooden plank on his knees, and has a variety of parchments spread across it, where he records the room assignments and tallies debts. The far wall has shelving with records from the inn and extra keys to the room.

The innkeeper is a fat lout, crooked to his core, toadying to those of higher status and tyrannical to those below him on the social ladder. Depending on how the adventurers present themselves, he will either obsequiously or rudely inform them that a private room costs 5sp per night, lodging in the courtyard costs 1sp per night, and stabling costs 2sp per night for donkeys and mules, 5sp for horses. Food and drink is available between sunrise and sunset in the eatery (**23c**).

If the adventurers inquire as to the whereabouts of the Fierce Brethren (the adventuring company soliciting assistance in **18a**) he will mutter, "Friends of yours, are they? Well, they left this for you!" and present the party with a bill for 7gp, 4sp, and 2cp, left unpaid by the Fierce Brethren prior to their departure four days ago. A successful DC 15 Charisma check allows the adventurers to avoid actually having to pay for the bill, but paying the bill will result in the innkeeper sharing a random rumor (see p. 4). The Fierce Brethren had previously stayed in Rooms **23f-h** but left behind nothing to indicate their destination or plans. (The three adventurers are currently prisoners in the Buried Temple, Area 6, Room 71.)

23f - k. Guest Bedrooms: The doors to these rooms are locked (DC 15). The innkeeper dispenses keys to guests. Inside the room, a wood-frame sleeping couch with wool blankets and pillows is placed alongside a full-paneled cupboard for the guest's use. Nearby, a pottery lamp sits on a low wooden table. At the foot of the couch is a chest for personal items. During winter months, a portable brazier is provided for warmth. A small window is set high in the wall opposite the door.

23l. Family Quarters: This room serves as the quarters for the innkeeper along with his wife and 12-year old daughter (both N human female **commoners**). Inside, it is furnished with three sleeping couches

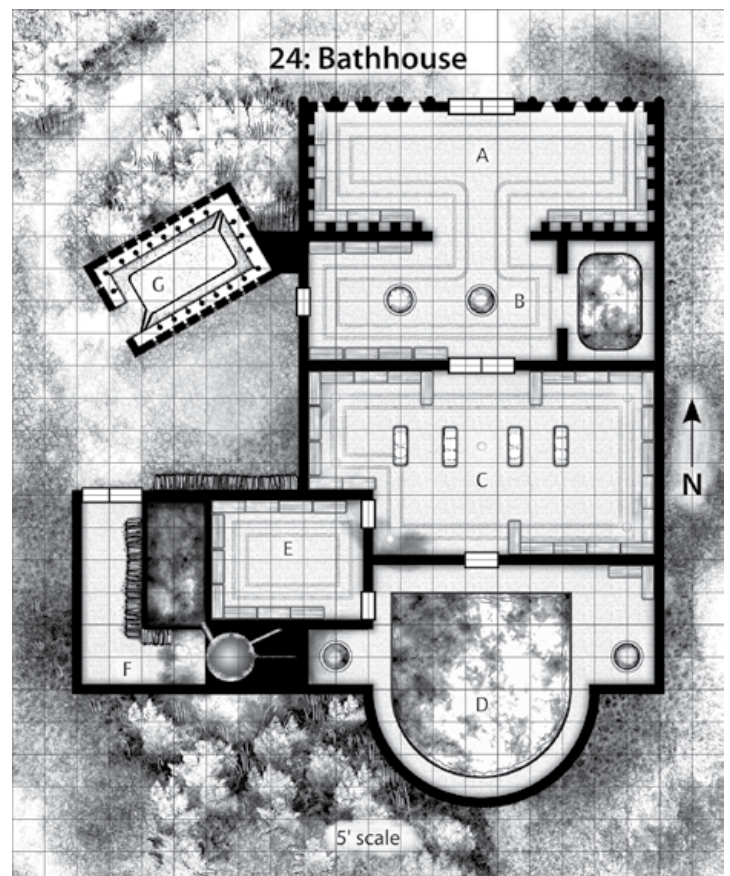
(identical to those in the guest room), a full-paneled cupboard, and a pair of chests with sundry personal items. A pottery lamp sits on a wooden table. A window is set in the south wall. During the winter, a portable brazier will be alit.

Bolted to the floor beneath the innkeeper's couch is a bronze-reinforced strongbox that holds the inn's funds, totaling 1,050cp, 220sp, and 150gp. The strongbox is locked with a sturdy padlock (DC 15); the innkeeper has the key.

23m. Servants' Quarters: The servants' quarters are furnished with three crude bunk-beds. A pair of hemp sacks tied at the foot of each bed hold the servants' meager belongings, including tunic and pants, cheap sandals, and 1d3 cp. By day this room is unoccupied as the servants are working. At night, there will be six household servants asleep here – the cook, the stablehand, and four domestics (all **commoners**).

24. Bathhouse: See the Bathhouse Map. Auran culture is renowned for its cleanliness, and everywhere the Aurans go, they construct bathhouses. Türos Tem's bathhouse is relatively small, though still luxurious by the standards of barbarians. Although outside the fort's walls (for safety reasons), the bathhouse is the center of the fort's social life. The Auran officers and soldiers spend much of their free time here, bathing, exercising, eating, and talking.

The bathhouse is open to both sexes and all social classes from morning to night every day. However, by custom, certain groups patronize the bathhouse at certain hours: lower-class women in the early morning; upper-class women in the late morning; lower-class men in the early



afternoon; and soldiers and upper-class men in the late afternoon and early evening. During the late morning, Priestess Genelen or Lady Valerian might be present. During the late afternoon, Legate Valerian, Centurion Ilarion, Annalist Socolo, Guildmaster Aeropos Karanos, Quartermaster Thales, Subaltern Miren, and Subaltern Methori might be present. Roll 1d10 for each NPC: 1 Atrium, 2 Cold Room, 3-4 Warm Room, 5 Hot Room, 6 Dry Room, 7 Latrine, 8-10 Absent.

The bathhouse has a convivial atmosphere, so the characters have advantage on Charisma checks when interacting with any NPC patrons in any room of the bathhouse except the latrine. The characters have disadvantage on Charisma checks when interacting with NPC patrons there, because no one likes being bothered on the toilet.

24a. Atrium and Changing Room: Entering patrons are greeted by an attendant who collects the entrance fee (2cp) and admits them to the changing area. There, wooden benches arranged around the room's perimeter afford a place to relax before and after bathing. Niches in the walls hold thick-soled sandals and garments for the patrons to wear while bathing. 1d6+4 patrons will be found here.

24b. Cold Room: This unheated room incorporates a series of cold-water wash basins and a large cold plunge bath. Patrons begin the bathing sequence here with a dip in the plunge bath to invigorate themselves. After visiting the warm, hot, and dry rooms, they return here to rinse off and close their pores before departing. 1d6+4 patrons will be relaxing here during daylight hours.

24c. Warm Room: The warm room is kept at a comfortable temperature midway between that of the cold and hot rooms. In between the more invigorating phases of the bath, bathers are found here partaking in conversation, exercise, and massage. Wooden benches line the edge of the room, while four massage couches stand in the center. 1d4 **commoners** carrying scented oils, bronze strigils, and linen towels are available for hire at 3cp per hour. When the bathhouse is open, 1d10+10 patrons will be present here.

24d. Hot Room: This steam-filled room is equipped with a cold-water fountain and a large hot plunge bath. Patrons visit the hot room to work up a cleansing sweat (cooling off at the fountain as necessary) before returning to the warm room for relaxing massage. 1d6+4 patrons will be bathing here throughout business hours.

24e. Dry Room: The dry room is as hot and arid as the desert summer. Some patrons relax here before bathing in the hot rooms, others after a massage in the warm room; a total of 1d6+4 will be present.

24f. Boiler Room: A large wood-burning furnace here keeps the dry, hot, and warm rooms at their appropriate temperatures. An attendant (as above) keeps the fire stoked from sunup to sundown every day.

24g. Public Latrine: A row of marble seats is built over a channel of continuously-flowing water, which flushes waste away to the nearby Krysivor River. A second, shallower, water channel in front of the seats is furnished with sponges on sticks, with which patrons can wipe themselves if needed.

25. Forum: This plaza at the center of the village serves as a marketplace for local and itinerant traders. The forum is active six days out of

every seven. Most of the local establishments specifically cater to the fort's needs, either by supplying raw materials and equipment needed to maintain the stronghold and its garrison, or by offering entertainment and services to the soldiery. The traveling merchants work the trade route that runs between Siadanos and Türos Tem, and from Türos Tem to the other forts along the Krysivor River.

Though it has a small population, Türos Tem has a thriving market due to its position as the hub between Siadanos and the other forts along the Krysivor River. Adventurers in the forum can purchase weapons, armor, adventuring gear, tools, mounts, vehicles, and trade goods here.

The Guild Merchant maintains a public weights and measures table at the center of the forum, where it collects fees from traders in exchange for ensuring fairness in the market. Guildmaster Aeropos Karanos can be found here from mid-morning to early afternoon (see p. 27).

INHABITANTS

A handful of named non-player characters (NPCs) inhabit Türos Tem. These characters are described below, along with their game characteristics and the locations where they can be encountered throughout the day.

Should the adventurers petition one of the named NPCs for information or assistance in handling the humanoids threat, resolve the interaction with a Charisma check using the table provided for each NPC. Depending how the adventurers handle the conversation, either Persuasion, Deception, or Intimidation skill might apply to the check. The party can normally make only one Charisma check per NPC initially. A new check can be made only if the adventurers re-encounter the NPC at an extravagant banquet (see p. 18) or at the bathhouse (see p. 24) or as noted below.

LEGATE ULRAND VALERIAN

Ulrand Valerian (LN male human **imperial legate**) is a 45-year-old professional soldier from a junior branch of the great Valerian house. He stands just over 6', and has muddy green eyes, an aquiline nose, and salt-and-pepper hair combed forward over a proud forehead. Since the borderlands legions were called away two years ago, Valerian has lacked the manpower to truly protect his legature. Now unlikely to rise further in the Empire's service, Valerian nevertheless takes his responsibilities seriously and strives to maintain peace and security within his legature. In private, he is prone to brooding on the decay of the Empire, and is oblivious to his wife's discontent.

Valerian's day begins at dawn, when he issues the orders of the day to his assembled soldiers at the cross-hall in the headquarters building (**18b**). Thereafter, he typically receives petitioners at his villa office (**19l**) for most of the day, possibly breaking for lunch in the dining room (**19e**) if important guests are present. In the late afternoon, he

visits the village bathhouse (24), and then joins his wife for a formal meal in the dining room (19e) before retiring to his quarters (19i).

DC	Legate's Reaction to Charisma Check
5	The Legate dismisses them from his presence. Any future Charisma checks to influence the Legate have disadvantage.
10	The Legate reiterates the information in the Adventurer's background (p. 3).
15	The Legate shares one rumor from the Random Rumors table (p. 4).
20	The Legate shares two rumors from the Random Rumors table and gives them a scroll authorizing them to recruit volunteers at the Parade Ground (22), explaining "More than a few of the troops have lost family to the humanoid raids. There might be some who want to settle their blood-debts. This scroll will direct Centurion Ilarion to call for volunteers to join you." He also offers to introduce them to Malyn.

Valerian will demand evidence of success before paying his promised reward to the adventurers. Since the legate is unaware of the existence of the *Stone*, he will only learn of it if the characters tell him; he might therefore pay out the reward for putting a stop to the raids based on other evidence. For instance, characters who bring him the wyrm Idimmu's head as evidence that the dragon was leading the humanoids might persuade him that the threat is over. When the raids continue, however – as they will, until the *Stone* is destroyed – Valerian will insist that adventurers who took his reward money “finish the job,” and arrest them for desertion if they do not.

If Valerian learns of the *Stone of Sakkara*, he will demand it be destroyed. If the characters seem incapable or unwilling to do so, he may take up the task himself. He will expect that the Fragments which remain after its destruction be handed over to the Empire's clerics. See p. 59 for more details.

LADY CELENA VALERIAN

The wife of the legate, Lady Celena Valerian (LN female human noble) is a beautiful 32-year-old woman with chiseled cheekbones and haughty demeanor. Ambitious and privileged, she had expected that the legate's assignment here would end with a triumphant advancement to palatine in a more prestigious province, and is bitter that he was overlooked when the army was called west two years ago. She has placed the couple's two children with guardians in the capital so that they do not grow up in the backwater of the borderlands.

Each morning, Celena refreshes herself at the village bathhouse (24). At lunch and dinner time she hosts guests in the villa dining room

(19e). Otherwise, Celena can be found reading in the villa gardens (19o) during the daytime and resting in her chambers (19d) at night.

Celena received a classical education in the capital of Aura and, when not overseeing the household, delights to converse on the great writers and philosophers of the Empire. Adventurers proficient in Arcana or History have advantage on Charisma checks to interact with her.

DC	Lady Valerian's Reaction to Charisma Check
5	Lady Valerian is offended and banishes the adventurers from her presence. Any future Charisma checks to influence either her, her husband (the Legate), or Socolo have disadvantage.
10	Lady Valerian is bored. Any future Charisma checks to influence her have disadvantage.
15	Lady Valerian shares one rumor from the Random Rumors table (p. 4).
20	Lady Valerian shares two rumors from the Random Rumors table and invites the adventurers to join her at an extravagant banquet at the villa as her guest. Any future Charisma checks to influence Hometri Socolo have disadvantage.

Celena's banquets have a convivial atmosphere that is conducive to forming friendships, so the characters have advantage on Charisma checks when interacting with any NPC attendees. They may re-roll Charisma checks with NPCs they re-encounter at banquets.

Celena enjoys the flattery and attention she gets from admirers such as Hometri Socolo. She would never stoop to an affair with an individual of lower social station, but she enjoys playing her supplicants against each other at dinner parties, hoping that jealousy might stir in her husband a renewed ambition for greater things.

PRIESTESS GENELEN

Priestess Genelen (LG female human priest) administers the hospital within Türos Tem, where she and her staff care for sick and injured soldiers and civilians alike. Genelen is 50 years old, and beginning to show her age: Her face is careworn and her hair thinning and white. She conceals her frailty with the voluminous white mantle and shawl of her order. A priestess of Mityara, goddess of civilization and mercy, she has been chaste and celibate her entire life; in spite (or because) of this, she is an incorrigible flirt capable of making even salty Centurion Ilarion blush.

Genelen begins each day at dawn with prayers in the hospital courtyard (11a), cleanses herself at the village bathhouse (24), then spends the morning doing rounds of the hospital wards (11c-1) checking on her patients. In the afternoon she may run errands or meet with visitors; otherwise she tends the flowers in the courtyard. At dusk she ends her workday with prayers, then retires to her quarters (11f) for supper and sleep. Every seventh night, she maintains a vigil from dusk to dawn before the ever-burning torch in the courtyard, and consequently rests for most of the next day.

In recent weeks, a large number of local villagers and soldiers have been complaining to Genelen of bad nightmares. She has tended



to their suffering with sleeping draughts and *herbal remedies* but is growing concerned that some curse or dark power is at work.

DC	Genelen's Reaction to Charisma Check
5	Genelen refuses to assist the adventurers. Any future Charisma checks to influence Genelen have disadvantage.
10	Genelen authorizes the sale of goods from the storeroom to the adventurers.
15	Genelen offers her spellcasting services to the adventurers at 50gp per spell per level. level. She shares one rumor from the Random Rumors table (p. 4).
20	Genelen offers to freely cast her spells to assist the adventurers without charge. She shares her concerns regarding the nightmares that have plagued the local residents as well as one rumor.

If Genelen learns of the *Stone of Sakkara*, she will call for its immediate destruction, and will undertake any risks necessary to do so (traveling to its location, or personally striking the blow, for instance). She will, likewise, insist that the Fragments which remain after its destruction be handed over to her order. See p. 59 for more details.

MALYN THE MISSHAPEN

Once a promising noble scholar at the Tower of Knowledge in Aura, Malyn (CN male human **crippled wizard**) was left hideously crippled and deformed by a magical experiment gone awry. His self-imposed exile to the borderlands has allowed him to leave behind all who knew him in his promising youth. A spiteful and brooding man, Malyn tends to take his personal misery out on everyone around him, subaltern Lynara Miren the sole exception.

During the day, Malyn rarely leaves the chapterhouse (20). When receiving visitors he uses *alter self* to conceal his disfigurement and *unseen servant* to perform tasks he is too weak to handle. At night, Malyn suffers from insomnia. Rather than sleep, he wanders the domain while *invisible* or *skinchanged*, using his *medallion of ESP* to read the minds of its sleeping inhabitants. The unpleasant truths he learns only contribute to his dark personality.

Because of his nocturnal prowling, Malyn is aware that the fort's annalist, Hometri Socolo, has intentions on the Lady Valerian. He has not yet decided whether to use this information to blackmail Socolo, blackmail the Lady, inform the Legate, or to simply enjoy the inevitable drama.

Malyn will only meet with adventurers if they are introduced by Legate Valerian, Subaltern Miren, or his apprentices first. When the adventurers meet Malyn, resolve the interaction with a Charisma check using the table below.

DC	Malyn's Reaction
5	Malyn refuses to assist the adventurers and banishes them from his presence. Any future Charisma checks to influence Malyn have disadvantage.
10	Malyn refuses to assist the adventurers.
15	Malyn offers his spellcasting services to the adventurers at 50gp per spell per level. level.
20	Malyn offers to freely cast his spells to assist the adventurers without charge. He permits the adventurers to use the library (20c) and workshop (20d) in the fort.

Malyn's insomnia is driven by constant and horrible nightmares of a bloody red heart beating ceaselessly in a pool of darkness. He has not

yet deduced that the *Stone of Sakkara* is the source of these dreams, but their frequency and intensity has convinced him they have a magical cause. If he learns of the *Stone*, he will covet it for himself, seeing hope within its transformative powers for his own wretched condition. The GM should adjust Malyn's alignment to chaotic evil and unleash him as an antagonist!

CENTURION AXIOS ILARION

A grizzled professional soldier of 15 years' service, 33-year-old Axios Ilarion (LG male human **imperial centurion**) has the stout build, dark olive skin, and curly black hair of a native Krysean. Though gruff and somewhat harsh, Ilarion is a patriotic and devout Auran citizen. He has served under the legate for more than a decade and obeys him without question.

Having survived more than one battle due to clerical intervention, he has a deep reverence for the clergy, and his salty demeanor dissolves into a sheepish awe in their presence. He wears a holy symbol of every Empyrean god (all seven of them!) at all times. Good-aligned clerics have advantage on Charisma (Persuasion) checks to influence the centurion.

Every morning, Ilarion marches his men to the cross-hall in the headquarters building (18b) to receive the orders of the day. During the day he can typically be found at the parade ground training soldiers (22). In the late afternoon he cleans up at the village bathhouse (24) then usually visits the local inn (23) before returning to his quarters (16a) in the infantry barracks block. He sometimes dines with the legate and lady (19e) but usually eats in his own quarters.

DC	Ilarion's Reaction to Charisma Check
5	Ilarion gruffly dismisses the adventurers from his presence.
10	Miren has no time for another band of hapless adventurers.
15	Ilarion shares one rumor from the Random Rumors table (p. 4).
20	Ilarion shares two rumors from the Random Rumors table and encourages them to seek the blessing of the Empyrean gods before they head out, saying "In my years of soldiering I've seen more than my share of mercenaries and expeditionaries head out on adventures. Most haven't come back. The difference, often as not, comes down to the will of the gods." Adventurers who take his advice gain inspiration.

MERCHANT GUILDMASTER AEROPOS KARANOS

41-year-old Aeropos Karanos (N male human **noble**) seems to enjoy a blessed life: Tall, good-looking, wealthy, well-spoken, husband to a beautiful wife, father to a multitude of healthy children. In truth, he is a man on the brink of despair. Once rich from supplying the military garrisons along the Krysvor, Karanos fell on hard times when the legions were called west two years ago. In order to maintain his profligate lifestyle, he took a large loan from the crime syndicate in Siadanos. That debt has been hard to repay with humanoids constantly raiding his caravans. Things have come to a head with the disappearance of his best men, Daros Thenes and Odysios Panas, on the road. The other traders in his employ are refusing to transport goods until Thenes and Panas are rescued and the humanoids are dealt with.

Karanos has posted a reward for the missing merchants in the headquarters bulletins at 18a. Characters who ask about the reward, or make it known that they are striking back against the humanoids, will be informed that the pair went missing a week ago while traveling north

from Türos Tem. He will offer a reward of 100gp each for their return alive and well, or 25gp each for recovery of their bodies for funerals. (The merchants are captives in Room 65 of the Buried Temple.)

As merchant guildmaster, Karanos can assist the adventurers in storing their plunder, securing loans, and changing gems, jewelry, or copper coin for gold or silver. The terms he offers will depend on his reaction to the party. During the day Karanos can be found in at the Guild Merchant's table in the forum (25). In the late afternoon he cleans up at the village bathhouse (24) then usually visits the local inn (23) before returning to his home.

DC	Karanos' Reaction to Charisma Check
5	Karanos offers to securely store the adventurers' wealth at no charge. Should the place any wealth into his hands for safekeeping, he absconds with it to Siadanos.
10	Karanos offers to securely store the adventurers' wealth at no charge provided the funds are left for at least a month (10% fee for premature withdrawal). He offers to loan them funds, against collateral, at an interest rate of 10% per month. He offers to change gems, jewelry, or coin for gold or silver at a 10% fee.
15	Karanos shares one rumor from the Random Rumors table (see p. 4). He offers to securely store the adventurers' wealth at no charge provided the funds are left for at least a month (10% fee for premature withdrawal). He offers to loan them funds, against collateral, at an interest rate of 5% per month. He offers to change gems, jewelry, or coin for gold or silver at a 5% fee.
20	Karanos shares two rumors from the Random Rumors table. He offers to securely store the adventurers' wealth at no charge. He offers to loan them funds, against collateral, at an interest rate of 3% per month. He offers to change gems, jewelry, or coin for gold or silver at a 3% fee. He asks them for help with his "situation" in Siadanos.

ANNALIST HOMETRI SOCOLO

30-year old Hometri Socolo (NG male human **imperial annalist**) has a storybook hero's handsome features and magisterial voice. He is somewhat portly, as he favors too much rich food and fine wine, but carries the weight with a dignified bearing befitting an Imperial annalist. Socolo has risen in the Imperial service through talent and cunning, and is proud to be a historian of the greatest civilization history has ever recorded.

At dawn, Socolo assembles at the cross-hall in the headquarters building (18b) to receive the orders of the day. Thereafter he works in his adjacent office (18e). In the late afternoon he joins the other soldiers socializing at the village bathhouse (24). From there he either visits the village inn (23) or joins the legate and lady for a formal dinner (19e) before returning to his quarters in the chapterhouse (20).

Socolo is secretly in love with the Lady Celena Valerian and takes every opportunity to call on her. He justifies the attempted adultery to himself with reference to the passionate love affairs of legend and song. Provided the adventurers neither offend nor win the favor of the Lady, Socolo will usually be helpful to them. Because he speaks Ancient Zaharan and is proficient in Arcana, History, and Religion,

he can be helpful in explaining the significance of carvings and frescoes found in the Buried Temple (see p. 48). He has begun to suspect that Malyn may be following him invisibly at night, and may invite friendly adventurers to lay a trap for the mage.

DC	Socolo's Reaction to Charisma Check
5	Socolo refuses to assist the adventurers and orders them out of his office. Any future Charisma checks to influence the annalist have disadvantage.
10	Socolo offers to identify items, decipher scrolls, interpret frescoes or sculptures brought to him, and answer other questions of history or lore at a cost of 40gp per question.
15	Socolo offers to identify items, decipher scrolls, interpret frescoes or sculptures brought to him, and answer other questions of history or lore at a cost of 20gp per question.
20	Socolo shares one rumor from the Random Rumors table (see p. 4), offers to allow the adventurers to peruse the archive (18g), and offers to freely answer any questions of history or lore they may have. He also mentions his concerns about Malyn.

QUARTERMASTER KOINOS THALES

Quartermaster Koinos Thales (LG male human **imperial quartermaster**) has a round, slightly misshapen head with big, slightly lopsided eyes and droopy lips. The oafish face disguises a sharp mind and keen tongue. When off-duty, the 30-year-old Thales enjoys *Kyrpeges* ("the wargame"), an Auran game of strategy. His favorite opponent is the legate, but Thales can often be found playing for coins in the Traveler's Inn against strangers who underestimate him. (*Kyrpeges* can be replaced with a similar boardgame of the GM's choice from his own setting; Thales is proficient in it.) Any characters who first challenge and defeat Thales to a boardgame match has advantage on Charisma checks to influence him.

At dawn, Thales assembles at the cross-hall in the headquarters building (18b) to receive the orders of the day. Thereafter he works in his adjacent office (18d). Before sundown he joins the other soldiers socializing at the village bathhouse (24). From there he either visits the inn (23) or joins the legate and lady for dinner (19e) before returning to his quarters in the chapterhouse (20).

DC	Thales' Reaction to Charisma Check
5	Thales refuses to assist the adventurers and orders them out of his office. Any future Charisma checks to influence the quartermaster have disadvantage.
10	Thales refuses to assist the adventurers.
15	Thales offers to sell equipment to the adventurers from the commissary (18f) or stables (10) at normal prices.
20	Thales shares one rumor from the Random Rumors table and offers to loan the adventurers equipment from the commissary or stables if they pledge to return it or repay for losses. (He will record any such transactions on a papyrus scroll and file them away so they are not forgotten!)

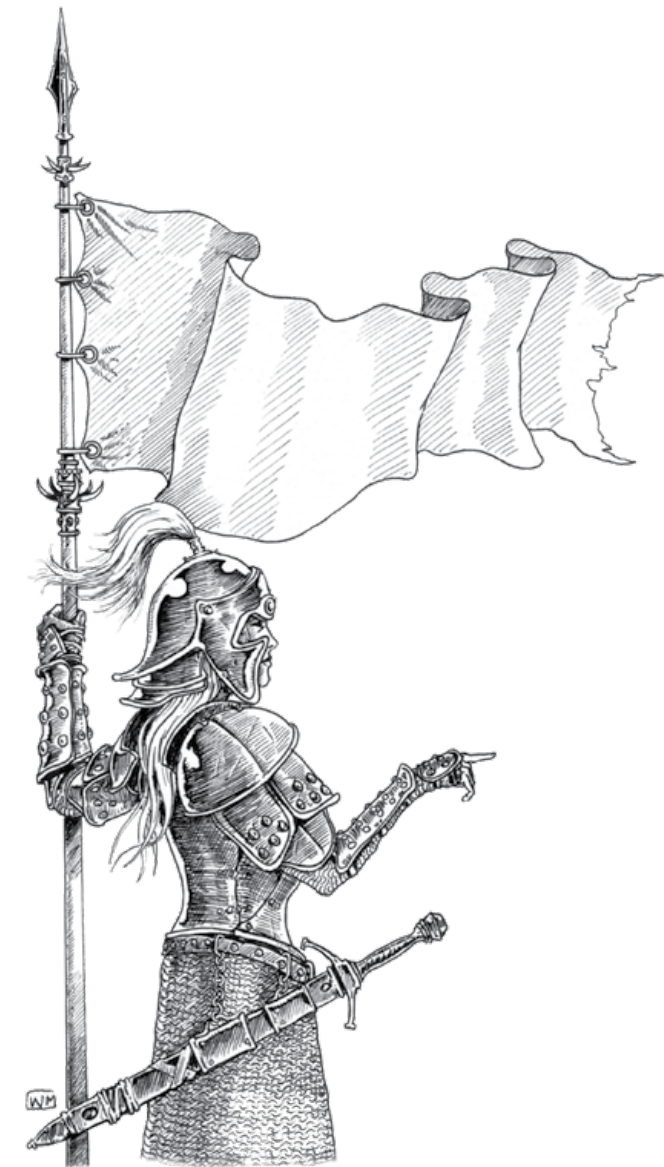
SUBALTERN LYNARA MIREN

Young, charismatic, and vivaciously healthy, Subaltern Lynara Miren (LG female half elf **imperial subaltern**) has golden skin and slightly pointed ears that betray hints of Argollëan ancestry. She is not especially cut out for the life of a soldier, but her father and grandfather both served in the Auran legion and, lacking any siblings, she felt compelled to maintain the tradition. Miren is naturally gregarious,

but finds little pleasure in the company of soldiers (especially not thuggish Subaltern Methori), and distinctions of social class leave her at unease with her superiors. Her best friend in the fortress is Malyn, who amuses her with his magical tricks and tales of the white city of Aura.

Like the other soldiers, Miren assembles each sunrise at the cross-hall in the headquarters building (18b) to receive the orders of the day. During the day, she is either stationed in the avenue (4) to supervise the main gate, or she leads the cavalry on maneuvers at the parade ground (22). In the late afternoon she visits the bathhouse (24). Thereafter she occasionally carouses at the inn with the other soldiers (23), but usually visits Malyn at the chapterhouse (20) before returning to her quarters (9e) in the cavalry barracks block.

DC Miren's Reaction to Charisma Check	
5	Miren is offended by the adventurers and disparages them to Malyn. Any future Charisma checks to influence either her or Malyn have disadvantage.
10	Miren has no time for another band of hapless adventurers.
15	Miren shares one rumor from the Random Rumors table (p. 4).
20	Miren shares two rumors from the Random Rumors table and offers to introduce them to her friend Malyn.



SUBALTERN PELEOS METHORI

Subaltern Peleos Methori (LE male human **imperial subaltern**) is a balding, ugly, dull-eyed man in his late 20s with several missing teeth and a badly broken nose. What he lacks in charm or wit he makes up for in burly strength, raw speed, and insensitivity to pain. Methori enjoys bloodshed, whether it be slaying humanoids or whipping recalcitrant legionaries, and is very good at his work. Centurion Ilarion considers him a useful, but limited tool.

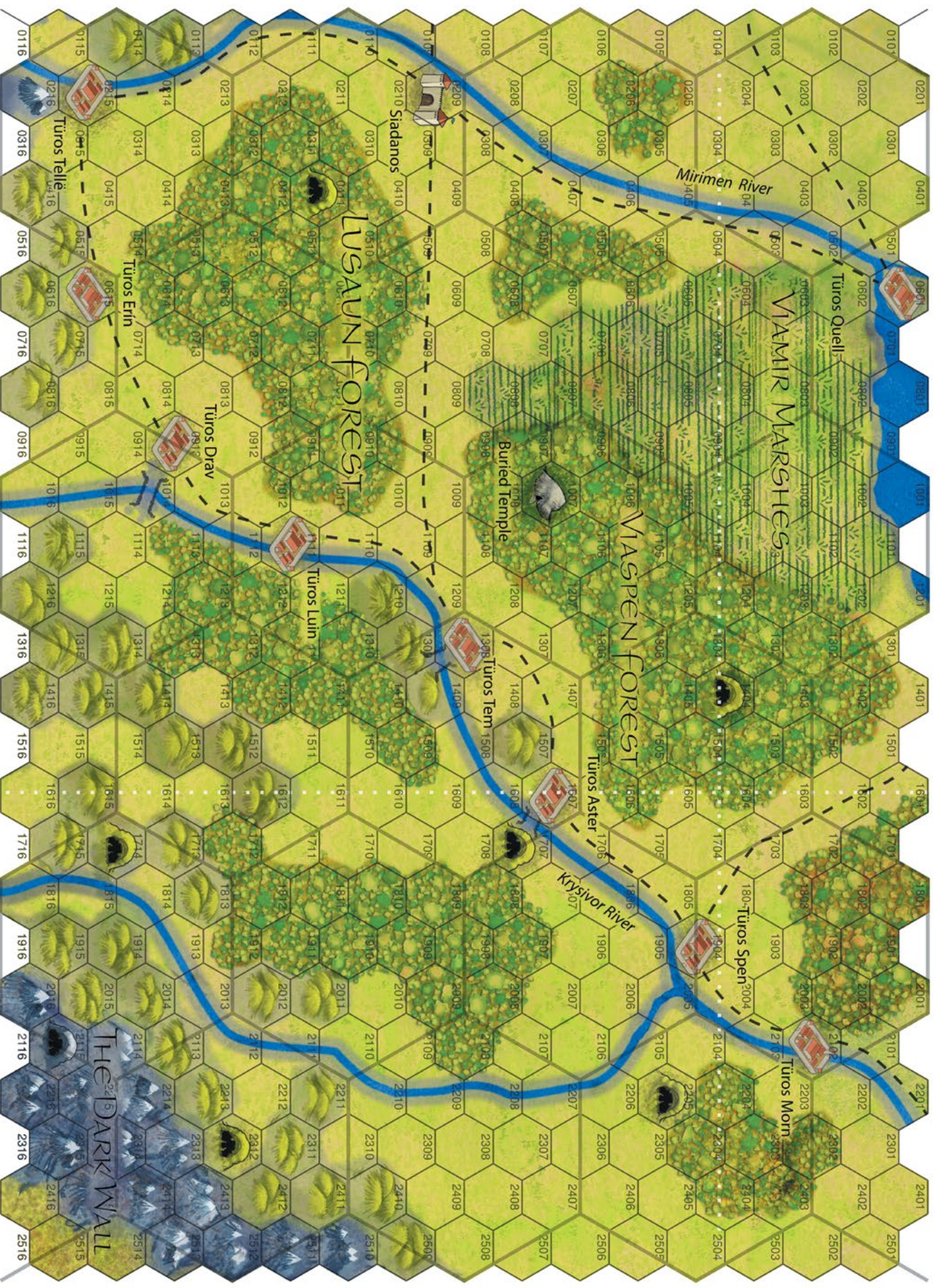
At dawn, Methori assembles at the cross-hall in the headquarters building (18b) to receive the orders of the day. During the day, he is either stationed in the avenue (4) to supervise the main gate or he drills the infantry at the parade ground (22). In the late afternoon he cleans up at the village bathhouse (24), then usually visits the inn (23) before returning to his quarters (14d) in the infantry barracks block.

Methori served for many years with Drusus, the brigand king (see p. 64), and the two men once considered each other blood-brothers, though they have fallen out of touch since Drusus' desertion. If he learns that the characters seek to collect the reward for capturing or slaying Drusus (posted in 18b), he will attempt to dissuade them – “Drusus will eat you up and spit out your remains like seeds.” If the characters capture or slay Drusus, Methori immediately becomes hostile, and he will either attempt to free the brigand or take revenge on his killer(s).

DC Methori's Reaction to Charisma Check	
5	Methori spits at the adventurers and calls them cowards.
10	Methori mocks the adventurers and warns them they will die if they venture into the borderlands.
15	Methori shares one rumor from the Random Rumors table (p. 4), then immediately claims he made it up just to mess with them.
20	Methori shares one rumor from the Random Rumors table.

A NOTE ON THE FORT NPCS

It's up to the GM how much time and energy to spend on the machinations of the fort's NPCs. If the campaign focuses on killing and looting, it's easy to use them as backdrops in a straightforward dungeon crawl. On the other hand, the hooks are there if the GM wants to spin plots worthy of HBO's Rome miniseries. The ambitious Lady Celena Valerian will likely be at the center of such plots. It is easy to imagine her maneuvering to claim the adventurers' glory for her husband in the hopes that it earns him a promotion. Celena might hire some brigands to waylay the adventurers, then find some reason to get her husband out in the field towards Sakkara while the ambush is taking place so that the Legate becomes the hero. She might involve the thuggish Subaltern Methori in such a plot; given his relationship to Drusus, he'd be more than willing to waylay the characters. Or perhaps an offer of cash and a pardon conveyed through Methori might persuade Drusus to betray the Lady Below, with the Legate painted as the hero of the whole affair. Of course, Drusus and Methori would have to be assassinated to close the loop on that...



THE VIASPEN FOREST

The Viaspen (“lily forest”) is a primeval forest of cedar, yew, and oak trees situated between the Mirmen and Krysivor rivers. In the north it transitions into the Viamir Marshes which border the shores of Lake Laman. The Viaspen Forest was managed when the elves ruled the region, but under Auran rule it has grown wild and dangerous even as it has been slowly whittled down.

On the Region Map, Türos Tem lies in hex 1308. The adventurers know that the humanoid raiders have been attacking from the Viaspen Forest, about nine miles to the north-west. Reaching the Viaspen will require between 2 hours 15 minutes and 4 hours 30 minutes of long-distance movement (depending on the party’s travel pace) through lightly-settled farmland.

The Viaspen is a thick forest so adventurers cover only half the normal distance per hour of movement. The buried temple that the adventurers are unknowingly seeking lies in hex 1007, nine miles deeper into the forest. Since they won’t initially know this, the party will have to search the Viaspen for tracks or other evidence that might lead them to the humanoids’ lair.

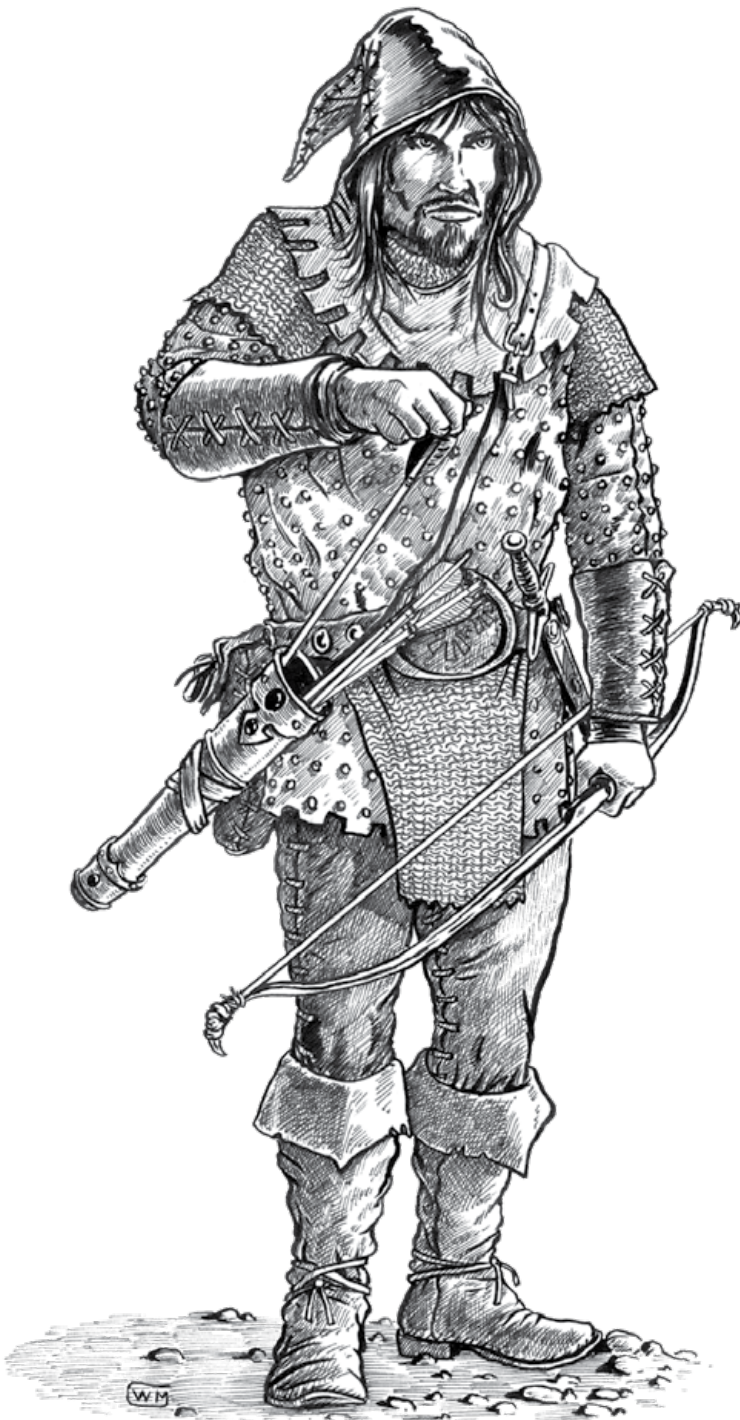
After each hour of searching, the GM should roll 1d20. On a roll of 18 or more, the party has a wilderness encounter. When this occurs, roll 1d6 on the table below. Note that some wilderness encounters may lead the party to the buried temple without further searching. After resolving the encounter, the GM should secretly make a DC 20

Intelligence (Nature) check on behalf of the party (using the highest bonus of any character). If the check succeeds, the adventurers uncover tracks or evidence leading to the buried temple. If the check fails, the search is fruitless.

1. **Orc Raiders:** This group of **six orc warriors** is lurking in the woods hoping to ambush peasants. Since the adventurers are not peasants the orcs do not immediately attack. A successful DC 15 Charisma (Deception) check persuades the orcs that the party are brigands coming to serve the Lady Below. The orcs will even give directions to the buried temple if the party plays this up. The orcs have 1d6sp and 1d4gp each. Astute characters may note that the coins are antiques dating to the Zaharan era.
2. **Rabid Beast:** A **dire wolf** warped by drinking the corrupted waters from the Stone’s birthing pool. It has mangy fur and bone spikes growing through its skin. It is highly aggressive and will attack upon sighting the party.
3. **Ambush Site:** Ten bodies lie on a forest trail, littered with arrows or grievous wounds. Two of the dead were merchants, while the remaining eight were their guards. Nothing of value remains. However, any character who searches the underbrush and succeeds on a DC 10 Intelligence (Nature) check uncovers a set of tracks that leads to the temple.



4. **Stirges:** The party sees a prone figure spasming on a dusty trail. When they approach, they realize it is a body being drained by **four stirges**. The corpse is a scout. It is wearing leather armor. A normal short sword and longbow with 13 arrows lay nearby.
5. **Dwarven Furriers:** The party crosses paths with a party of 12 dwarven furriers (scouts) traversing the forest to trade with distant kin. They will be wary, but not aggressive unless threatened or attacked. The dwarves are carrying 10 bundles of deer furs (150gp and 450lbs total), which they will gladly sell or trade. If asked about the humanoid raids, they will say they have seen humanoids entering and exiting a cave on a rocky hill nearby. They can give directions to the characters that will, in a couple of hours, lead them to the temple.
6. **The Wagon:** A battered wagon, pulled by four draft horses, winds its way through the woods. Six men on riding horses surround the wagon, while a seventh man drives the wagon and an eighth man, heavily armed and armored, sits alongside the driver. The wagon appears to have recently been in a battle, as there is dried blood splattered across its wheels and frame.



The six men on horses and the man driving the wagon are all chaotic evil human **brigands**. The heavily armed and armored man is their leader, Antonius (a CE male human **imperial subaltern**). The original merchants and their guards are dead (see encounter 3, *Ambush Site*, above). The brigands will play the role of merchants, passing off the damage to the wagon (if a party gets close enough to see it) as from an earlier attack they drove off. If the party is small, or looks weak, the brigands may lure them in and attack them. If the party looks strong and well organized, they will do their best to play the role until the party leaves.

Any character with a local background (such as Folk Hero), or who succeeds on a DC 15 Intelligence (Nature) check, realizes that the wagon is not heading towards any human settlement or road. In fact, it's heading away from the most likely route merchants would travel. The brigands are moving towards their camp to await contact from the humanoids in the temple. They plan to trade the goods in the wagon for stolen coin. If questioned, Antonius thinks he knows where the humanoids are lairing and would trade that information for his freedom (or if pressured into doing so). He points them to a nearby rocky hill (as in encounter 5, *Dwarven Furriers*, above).

The brigands carry 2d4sp each. Antonius carries 15gp in a pouch. The wagon holds a chest with 200sp, 2 jars of Tیرهanean red dye (50gp value and 75lbs each), 2 bags of loose tea imported from Uttar (75gp value and 75lbs stone each), 25 bottles of honeyed Argollëan wine (5gp value each), 1 cord of oak logs (5gp and 120lbs), and 1 barrel of fish sauce (5gp and 120lbs) (total value 405gp, total weight 630lbs).

Once the party has located the buried temple, they can travel to and from it without need to search the Viaspen. The 3-hex (9 mile) journey from the edge of the Viaspen to the buried temple will take anywhere from 4 hours 30 minutes to 9 hours depending on the party's travel pace. Total travel time from Türos Tem to the buried temple is 6 hours 45 minutes at fast pace, 9 hours at normal pace, and 13 hours 30 minutes at slow pace.

THE BURIED TEMPLE (DUNGEON LEVEL 1)

CONSTRUCTION

Built at the summit of a steep and rocky hill, the temple was once a freestanding stone-and-brick structure, 380' wide, 500' long, and 12'6" tall (50' tall at the apex of the ziggurat). Today, the entire structure is buried beneath a dome of black granite dropped by a magical cataclysm. The structure ought to have been destroyed by the impact, but the Chthonic gods had placed the location under their protection. As such, the structure is largely intact, though submerged beneath an impressively thick dome of rock soaring 350' overhead.

Individuals exploring the temple will initially be unaware of the fact it was originally built upon the surface of the hill. Some portions of the former temple were open to the air, however, and in these places the characters might realize they are moving through a building beneath a vast dome of rock (depending on light sources). The discovery of various windows along the perimeter walls of the temple opening onto black granite might also clue them in (or leave them scratching their heads).

To get a sense of the temple's appearance when it was a freestanding structure, look for images of the Assyrian palace of Sargon and the Sumerian palace of Mari.

Enterprising adventurers might realize they can clamber *up* the walls of the open-air portions - a mere 12'5" climb requiring a DC 10 Strength (Athletics) check or Dexterity (Acrobatics) check. From there, the party can travel across the roofs of the enclosed temple building until they find another open-air area. The following rooms can be exited and entered in this manner: **13, 18, 19, 42, and 61**. When the adventurers are traveling along the rooftops, the only random encounters should be with giant rats or stirges (disregard other encounters). Since the humanoids do not travel along the rooftops, it is a relatively safer method of movement.

WALLS

The walls and ceiling of the temple are made of splotchy ochre stone joined together with asphalt mortar, sometimes covered with a veneer of carved stone, glazed brick, or painted stucco. The floors are composed of fired brick embedded in asphalt mortar. The majority of passages are 10' wide with 10' tall ceilings. All rooms have 10' high ceilings except where noted.

DOORS

The doors are made of thick planks of old-growth hardwoods and reinforced with green-patinated bronze. Single doors are hinged on the interior left, while double doors are hinged on the interior left and right; all doors push inward from the hallways or courtyards into the



rooms. Time and pressure have sealed many doors shut. The temple's denizens have worked out secret knocks to move through their own area, but doors should generally be assumed to be stuck when adventurers first encounter them. Opening a stuck door requires a successful DC 10 Strength (Athletics) check. In some areas, where doors were absent or had rotted away, the new occupants have hung curtains. These are generally made of stitched beast hides tacked against the head of the door frame.

FRESCOES, MOSAICS, AND CARVINGS

In ancient days, the temple was a glorious and profane cathedral to dark and Chthonic gods. As such, nearly every wall sports evidence of once-great carvings, frescoes, and mosaics depicting the majestic darkness of the Zaharans and their deities. While the brick-work is now cracked and damaged with age, and the paintings have faded, the GM should stress that this was once a center for human activity and it shows in how the temple looks. This place was not built to be a humanoid lair; it was a place of worship and religious practice.

Certain rooms are noteworthy for having particularly large or intact frescoes, mosaics, and carvings. These are described in the room key as they would be seen from the point-of-view of the average adventurer. The additional information listed in parenthesis next to each piece of lore should only be made available to characters who succeed on an ability check with the skill noted in the parenthetical entry. GMs who are not using the Auran Empire campaign setting should, of course, substitute their own setting's lore for that of the lost kingdom of Zahar.

EMPTY ROOMS

The temple is quite large. There are many rooms that are bare of monsters, treasure, or traps. This is intentional. They provide a reasonable buffer between the territories, which lends a sense of verisimilitude, and are places that a party of adventurers might reasonably hide and rest. An enterprising GM can also use them to add encounters of his own design.

AREAS

The various tribes that have answered the *Stone's* call have settled into different areas of the temple. There are six different areas in total. While the temple was not originally designed with this in mind, there were enough defensible choke-points built into its architecture that the tribes have plenty to work with.

Though the creatures within this complex are all humanoids and/or aligned to Chaos that does not mean that they get along. They fight amongst themselves as much as The Lady Below permits, and a clever group could exploit that. Few of the humanoids on the first level will attack a stranger outright (depending on reaction roll) unless given a reason to do so. They may demand tribute if they catch a wanderer in their turf or perhaps ask for news if they think the characters have travelled from an enemy's territory. They know that The Lady Below has called more allies, so it is reasonable the party could be recruits.

Groups assaulting the temple might eventually realize that the various inhabitants already struggle against each other for better territory and might be able to use this to their advantage. Groups such as the brigands will readily give this information to the adventurers if it might save their lives!

REPLACEMENT OF CASUALTIES

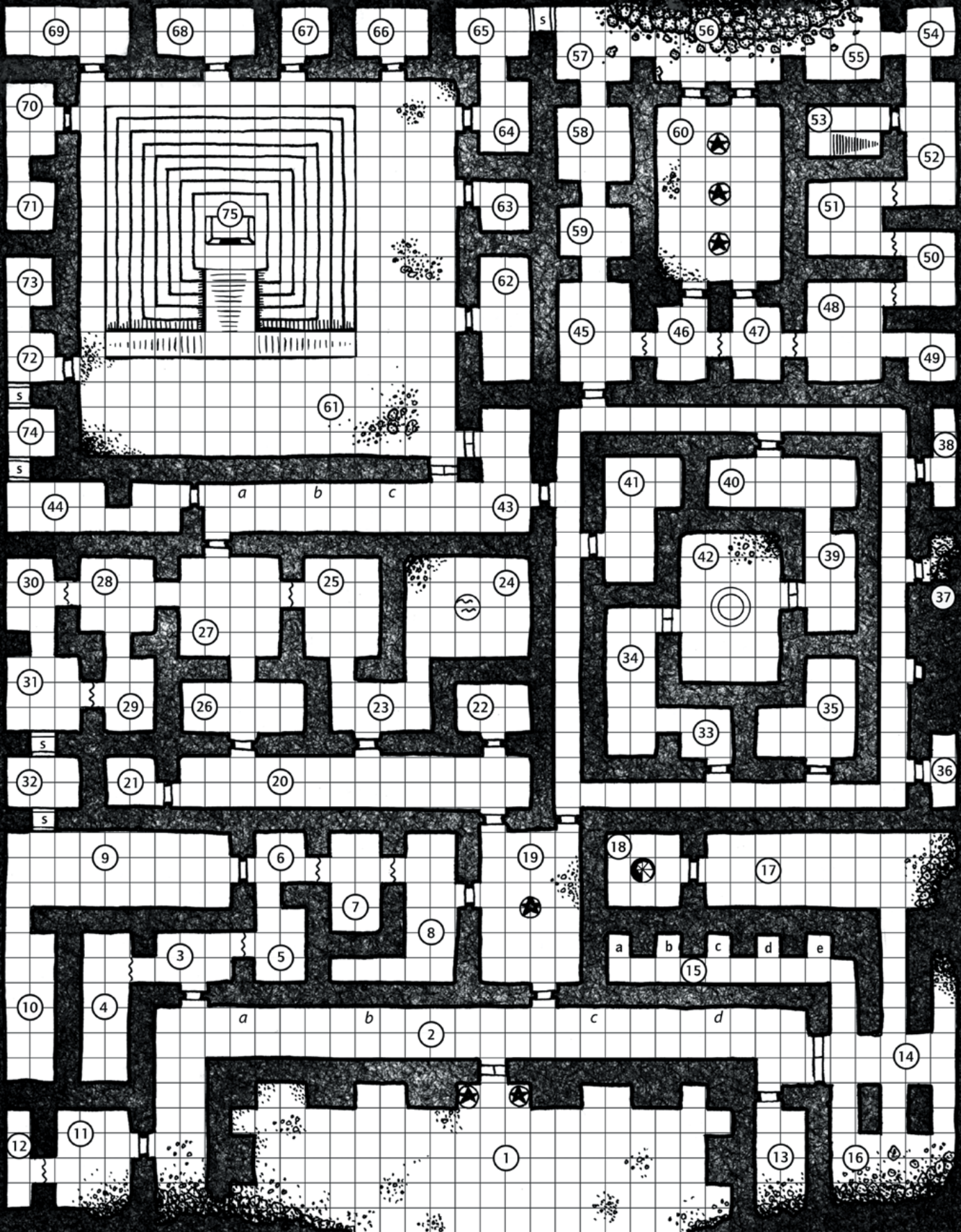
So long as The Lady Below continues to control the *Stone of Sakkara*, the temple's human and humanoid "tribes" will slowly replace lost members with new monsters attracted by the *Stone*. Each week, the GM should roll 1d20 for each room that has been cleared of monsters. On a roll of 11 or higher, the humanoid tribe that controlled the room will gain 1d6 members to replace its losses (often in the room the former occupants inhabited, though the group will act intelligently and move members where they seem best suited if the group is regularly under assault). Unique monsters not part of the tribes (such as the possessed giant spider) are not replaced, however.

RANDOM ENCOUNTERS

Random encounters can occur anywhere within the buried temple. Roll a d20 once per thirty minutes of game time, or anytime the party makes a large amount of noise. An encounter occurs on a roll of 18 or higher. Roll a d8 and check the Buried Temple Random Encounters table to determine what the characters encounter. The GM can use the suggestions below to add flavor to the wandering encounters. Otherwise, the monsters encountered can be assumed to be performing some basic task for their tribe/group, such as spying or patrolling.

1. **1d4 Brigands:** These brigands have stepped away from their comrades in order to privately indulge in a fine bottle of unmixed Krysean wine. The brigands may drunkenly attack, warn them off, or invite them for a drink. The brigands have 1d10sp in mixed coinage each and one bottle of fine wine (12gp).
2. **1d6+1 Giant Rats:** This pack of giant rats are beginning to merge into a single mass due to the hideous effects of the *Stone* (see p. 51). The rats have hideously conjoining body parts, swollen tumors, and grotesque malformations. The rats are in terrible pain and attack instantly.
3. **1d3 Orc Warriors:** These orcs are speaking in hushed tones about whether the Lady Below would reward them with power if they were to eliminate one of the other factions, as she did with the Red Eye bugbears. If the orcs catch the adventurers eavesdropping on them, they will automatically be hostile. They carry 1d4sp each.
4. **1d6+1 Kobold Warriors:** These kobolds are carrying skewered rats back to their tribe's soup pot in Area 1, Room 4. Being kobolds, they will assume anyone they encounter is intent on stealing their food, and will warn off approaching "thieves" with howls and brandished weapons. The kobolds carry 1d4 skewered rats and 1d4cp each.
5. **1d6+1 Stirges:** These stirges surround the corpse of a goblin. The goblin was killed in earlier fighting with the hobgoblins (see Area 4), and most of its blood has already dried. The stirges have had just enough to whet their appetites, and attack immediately upon detecting the adventurers.
6. **1d4 Goblins:** These goblins are only recently arrived in the temple. They were seeking their tribal kin and have only just discovered that the goblins lairing in the temple were butchered (see Area 4). Depending on the party's actions, the goblins may blame them for the crime, skulk away in fear, or ask for their help in getting revenge. Each goblin carries 1d4sp.

THE SINISTER STONE OF SAKKARA ~ THE BURIED TEMPLE



7. **1d3 Hobgoblin Warriors:** This gang of hobgoblins has been sent by their chief, Thethamun (Area 5, Room 60), on a patrol to assess the relative strength and weakness of the other factions. The hobgoblins are seeking allies, and be easily persuaded with a DC 10 Charisma (Persuasion) check to join forces with the party. Each hobgoblin carries 1d3gp.
8. **1d2 Bugbear Warriors:** This small gang of bugbears from the Red Eye tribe is looking for “tribute” from the lesser humanoids on this level. Unless there is obvious evidence otherwise (prominent holy symbols of Law, etc.) the bugbears will assume the PCs are new recruits in the service of the Lady Below and begin to bully them, confident in their place in the pecking order. The bugbears carry 1d8gp each.

AREA 1 (KOBOLD TERRITORY)

The kobolds’ territory encompasses the entry way to the buried temple and most of its southwestern corner. The more powerful creatures that dwell in the temple are happy to allow the kobolds to be the first creatures to have to fight intruders and mostly leave the little lizard-dogs alone. The kobolds themselves are not enthusiastic about fighting and typically just charge a small tribute to anyone who seeks to pass through their territory. However, their chief is keen to gain the favor of the Lady Below, and may attack, betray, or even conspire with the adventurers if he deems it likely to win her approval.

1. Entry Way: A great 130’ wide and 30’ high crack has been torn open in the side of the plateau here, giving access to the ruined temple. During daylight hours, light from the outside streams onto the decorated south wall of the temple, where tall columns carved in the shape of serpents flank a pair of massive bronze doors. On either side of the columns, a 10’ wide glazed-brick mosaic depicts a two-headed winged serpent encircling the earth. (DC 15 Religion: The Chthonic goddess Sakkara is depicted as a two-headed winged serpent in the *Canticle of Xisuthros*, a set of religious hymns in praise of the Chthonic powers.)

There are **six kobold warriors** on guard by the bronze doors, passively watching the area (Perception 8). The guards will challenge anyone approaching the entry unless they are already known. Approaching adventurers can talk their way in if they avoid attacking first and succeed on a DC 15 Charisma check. Depending how the adventurers handle the conversation, either Persuasion, Deception, or Intimidation skill might apply to the check.

If attacked, two of the kobolds will head for the Kobold Guard Room (3) to warn their comrades of the danger, while the remainder hold the door until reinforcements arrive. It will take two rounds for the kobolds to reach the guards in 3 and another two rounds for those guards to join the encounter.

2. The Great Hall: This 20’ wide hallway runs 270’ wide west to east, forming a main artery between the territory of the kobolds (Area 1), brigands (Area 2), and orcs (Area 3). The north wall of the great hall is surfaced with stucco and decorated with a magnificent series of sequential fresco paintings, shown on the map as “a”, “b”, “c”, and “d”. From west to east, these are:

2a. First Fresco: A cracked and broken fresco of human slaves, led by a lean, brown-skinned man with a very long head, rising up against their lizardman masters. (DC 15 History: The fresco depicts the

Zaharan rebellion against the Thrassians in 1060 B.E. Prominently depicted is Uragasi, conqueror of Thrassia and first sorcerer-king of Zahar. At the start of his tyrannical reign he was considered a liberator by mankind.)

2b. Second Fresco: A fresco of three slender, dark-haired, brown-skinned kings, with accoutrements of a warrior, a mage, and a priest. (DC 15 History: The three figures are sorcerer-kings of Zahar: Uragasi, conqueror of Thrassia; Djarghul, creator of the humanoids; and Mentu, the death priest, who ruled at the apex of Zaharan power.)

2c. Third Fresco: A fresco of several red canals flowing into a temple, above which an incomplete, broken figure sits. (DC 15 Religion: The figure does not resemble any of the known iconography of the Zaharan religion.)

2d. Fourth Fresco: A fresco of impaled prisoners languishing in agony while demons and Zaharans dance in the rain of their blood. (DC 15 Religion: The image depicted is from the *Canticle of Xisuthros*, a set of religious hymns in praise of the Chthonic powers.)

3. Kobold Guard Room: This 30’ wide and 20’ long room contains bedding for the kobolds, a round one-legged table, and a pile of gnawed animal bones. It is occupied by **six kobolds warriors**. The two largest of the creatures are tormenting the smallest one by tossing its money pouch (containing 50cp) over its head, while the other three enjoy the spectacle. These diversions have left the kobolds distracted, and characters attempting to sneak up on or past the kobolds gain advantage on their Dexterity (Stealth) checks. If a fight breaks out here, the kobolds in the Kobold Quarters (4) will join the fight after three rounds. If alerted by the kobolds at the Entry Way (1) the kobolds here will rush to join that fight, arriving after two rounds.

4. Kobold Quarters: This 20’ wide and 60’ long chamber, once a dormitory for temple guests, now serves as the sleeping quarters for the majority of kobolds. A dozen rough “beds” of rags and refuse have been formed in a checkerboard pattern along the room’s length. At any one time, there will be **2d6+2 kobold warriors** asleep here. If a fight starts in the Kobold Guard Room (3), the kobolds here will wake up, grab their weapons, and come through the curtain to help in three rounds. Otherwise, they will be dozing here when the party enters. Scattered amongst the kobolds’ bedding are a total of 20cp, 8sp, and 5gp. Any character who searches the southern wall and succeeds in a DC 10 Wisdom (Perception) check discovers a red tourmaline (100gp) hidden in a small crack in the southern wall.

5. Empty Chamber: This 20’ wide and 30’ long antechamber is currently empty except for some desiccated rat skins and a smashed clay bowl.

6. Chief’s Guards: This 20’ square chamber holds **four kobold champions** that stand guard outside their chief’s audience chamber. Burning braziers stand on either side of the door into the Chief’s Chamber (9), and the guards both carry two flasks of oil. If the guards hear fighting in the Kobold Guard Room (3) or Kobold Quarters (4), they will pour their flask of oil on the ground to cover the area between 5 and 6 with oil. When intruders approach, they will topple the braziers to alight the oil, then retreat into 9. When lit, the oil burns for 2 rounds and deals 5 fire damage to any creature that enters the area or ends its turn in the area. The kobold champions are

actively watching the area, so any Dexterity (Stealth) checks here should be resolved as a contest against their Wisdom (Perception) checks.

7. Carnal Chamber: The frescoes on either end of this 20' wide, 40' long room suggest it was once dedicated to the most carnal of purposes. The fresco on the north wall depicts a bloody and decadent orgy. (DC 15 Religion: Such orgies are common in the religious rites of Nasga, Mistress of Pain, the Unchaste, Chthonic goddess of seduction, lust, and pain.) The fresco on the southern wall depicts various couples engaged in a dozen different erotic acts. (DC 15 Religion: The twelve acts depicted are known as the Twelve Erotic Arts of Nasga. They are proscribed by the Temple of Ianna because they are feared to be so depraved as to instantly debauch anyone who experiences them.) Both frescoes are painted in lurid colors that remain shockingly vivid despite the passage of years.

8. Lounge: This L-shaped room is 20' wide and 60' long, with a 30' long leg extending westward from the southern wall. It was once a relaxation and meditation lounge. A set of ten chair-sized stone basins, caked with very ancient dried blood, line the south wall.

9. The Chief's Chamber: This 90' × 30' room's original purpose is lost to time. A stone bench at the western end of the chamber serves as a makeshift throne. Behind the bench, three windows in the west wall open onto the black rock that buries the temple. Similar windows pierce the south walls every 10'.

Seated upon the throne is Chief Urza (**kobold chief**). He is guarded by Athak (**kobold champion**), and attended by **eight kobold warriors**. Urza will, if approached non-violently, demand a small tribute from a group for safe passage through his territory, merely 10gp a head. If it is paid, the kobolds will leave the party alone, even on subsequent visits.

Any character who searches the north wall and succeeds on a DC 20 Wisdom (Perception) check discovers the secret door to the Hidden Treasure Room (32). The door is easily opened once detected simply by rotating it around its center axis.

None of the kobolds are aware of the secret door. However, Athak is aware that there is a gem hidden in room 4 (he put it there to avoid having to turn it over to his chief) and will offer up this knowledge to save his own life if possible. The only treasure in the room is on the bodies - Urza wears a serpent-headed copper torc (25 gp), and Athak has a tarnished silver ring (10 gp).

10. The Chief's Treasure: The western wall of this 20' wide, 60' long room is pierced with windows opening into the black stone. Various items, largely stolen from local caravans, are piled in bags and containers throughout the room. Easily discovered are 10 weeks of moldy food, 6 jars full of water, 6 jars with weak beer, and 7 bottles of wine gone to vinegar, all worthless. Scattered amongst the worthless goods are 250cp; 4 rolls of red-dyed cloth (10 gp value and 60lbs each); 4 bone fetishes (30 gp value each); a red-gloss porcelain vase depicting the city of Aura (250gp and 15lbs); 2 agates (25gp each); and



7 Opelenean tapestries with abstract, colorful patterns (25 gp and 75lbs each). Hiding amongst the sacks is Urza's beloved pet, Emush, a **giant poisonous snake**. Emush has advantage on Dexterity (Stealth) checks against characters who are searching the pile of sacks.

11. Abandoned Room: The southeast corner of this 30' wide by 40' long room has collapsed into rubble. Apart from rubble, the room is empty of anything but a dusty skeleton wearing clumps of white rags, sprawled just south of a tattered curtain in the western doorway. Any character that investigates the skeleton and succeeds at a DC 10 Intelligence (Investigation) check realizes that the rags are in fact thick webs holding freshly-lain spider eggs. The eggs were laid by the giant spiders found in the Old Storage Chamber (12).

12. Old Storage Chamber: This narrow chamber is 10' wide and 40' long. Some 200 clay jars line the west wall, below a series of windows that open onto black granite. All but 10 of these jars broke during the earthquake which unsealed the temple; the 10 intact jars hold old incense, oils, and perfumes. Each is worth 25gp and weighs 15lbs. A pile of desiccated corpses - three kobolds and two goblins - lies in the northern end of the room. One of the goblins has a large azurite worth 100gp.



Two giant spiders lurking on the ceiling above the corpses. They will drop on any player characters that stop to investigate the bodies. If the adventurers failed to discover the spider eggs in **11** then the spiders have advantage on their Dexterity (Stealth) checks to surprise the player characters.

13. Old Garden: This 20' wide, 40' long room was once an open-air garden shrine. It is now just bare earth. There is no "roof" save the dome of rock 20' above. The characters see the collapsed rocks looming up from the southern wall into the vast dark above them.

AREA 2 (BRIGAND TERRITORY)

A group of brigands, led by the notorious Drusus, have claimed the south-eastern section of the temple. Unlike the other denizens of the temple, the brigands do not have darkvision, so they keep the areas they control well-lit (as noted in the rooms). The brigands will happily induct the party into their number if the characters appear to be "their sort of people". If the characters are assaulting the place, the brigands will defend their territory as best they can, well aware that if they are captured it's the hangman's noose for them... at best.

14. Brigand Guard Room: This 50' × 40' room was once a glorious chapel appointed with four gold-plated statues to the rulers and prophets of Zahar. The statues remain, but the gold was long ago stripped off and the figures are no longer distinguishable, despite the light from smoky torches that have been precariously perched on each figure. Past the statues, on the east wall, a pair of windows reveals black rock.

A gang of **six brigands** lurks in this room, keeping an eye on the double doors to the west while variously daring each other to piss on the statues of the "dead gods." They will challenge any interlopers who enter. Approaching adventurers can talk their way in if they avoid attacking first and succeed on a DC 15 Charisma check. Depending how the adventurers handle the conversation, either Persuasion, Deception, or Intimidation skill might apply to the check. If a fight starts, the brigands here will be reinforced by their comrades in the Recreation Room (**16**) in two rounds and the Sleeping Alcoves (**15**) in three rounds.

Any character examining the statues who succeeds on a DC 20 Wisdom (Perception) check notices that the northeastern statue is mounted on a hollow base. Moving that statue off the base requires a DC 10 Strength (Athletics) check. The hollow base contains a cache of hidden gems placed there long ago by now-dead priests. The bag holding the gems has rotted away, but there are 10 banded agates worth 10gp each lying amid the decaying cloth.

15. Sleeping Alcoves: This 90' long hallway is punctuated every 10' feet with a 10' square meditation cell (**a – e**). The cells have been furnished with pallets to serve as the sleeping quarters for **2d4+1 brigands**. If not otherwise roused, the brigands will be asleep if anyone looks into the alcove. If a fight starts in the Brigand Guard Room (**14**), the brigands here will wake up after one round, arm themselves in the second round, and join the fight in the third round. If a fight starts here, the brigands will be reinforced by comrades from **14** in two rounds and from **16** in four rounds.

16. Recreation Room: The south-eastern portion of this 30' × 50' room has collapsed, filling almost half the floor with thick chunks of stone and rubble. The remainder of the room has been turned into a make-shift kitchen/recreation room. Planks from a captured wagon have been turned into a long table, while some of the larger stone chunks have been adopted as stools. A pair of pottery lamps set on the table keep the room lit. Scattered among the rubble are 5 bags of grain (6sp and 60lbs each) and 20 bottles of vinegary wine (1gp each). There are always **2d4+1 brigands** here, eating, drinking, and tossing knives. If a fight starts here, the brigands will be reinforced by comrades from the Guard Room (**14**) in two rounds. They will respond to a fight in the **14** in two rounds and in **15** in four rounds.

17. Lair of the Brigand King: This large chamber is 100' wide and 30' long, entirely faced with glazed brick veneer. The northern wall is adorned with a mosaic of figures. Unfortunately, the mosaic is badly broken and cracked, and it is impossible to make out what the figures are or what they are doing. The western wall contains a door (to room **18**) that has been boarded and spiked shut. The eastern wall has collapsed into rubble, spilling brick, limestone, and granite inward about 15'. Amidst the rubble stand a barrels of fine liquor (200 gp and 240lbs) and a crate of glassware (100 gp and 75lbs).

The rest of the room is taken up with furniture. A dozen pallets are arranged in a semicircle by the crates and barrels. A pair of 20' long wooden tables run lengthwise through the room's center. A set of ten pottery lamps stationed on the tables illuminates the room. The tables are surrounded by a series of benches and folding stools, with a large high-backed wicker chair on the western edge. This is the seat of Drusus, the **brigand king**. In addition to Drusus, there are also **eight**

brigands working with him to plan their forthcoming assaults on the borderlands for The Lady Below.

Drusus is a scheming man, and quick to make an alliance if it might benefit him (even if some of his men have been killed by party already). Before taking up brigandage, he was a subaltern in the legions if he learns that the party hails from Türos Tem he will inquire after the health of his blood-brother, Peleos Methori (p. 29). He dislikes most of the humanoid tribes in the area and would love to expand his territory using the characters as cat's paws. He is familiar with the nearby areas, though he has never been below (except once, and that blindfolded), and he knows the goblin tribe recently fell to the hobgoblins.

A locked chest sits behind Drusus' seat. Drusus keeps the key to the chest on his person at all times. The lock can be opened with the key or picked with a successful DC 15 Dexterity check using thieves' tools. Unsuccessfully picking the lock triggers a poison needle trap. The character picking the lock takes 1 piercing damage and 11 (2d10) poison damage, and must succeed on a DC 15 Constitution saving throw or be poisoned for one hour. A successful DC 15 Intelligence (Investigation) allows a character to notice the trap's presence from alterations made to the lock. A successful DC 15 Dexterity check using thieves' tools disarms the trap, removing the needle from the lock.

Drusus' chest holds 100gp and 250ep. It also contains a carefully wrapped trinket of shells (50gp value), three glass prisms (50gp value each), and a bone case containing a *scroll of protection (aberrations)* written in Ancient Zaharan.

18. The Stair: The door into this room from the adjoining room (17) has been boarded and spiked shut. Several weeks ago, undead wandered up from the staircase and killed several brigands, so they have kept the door barricaded ever since. The door can be forced open with a successful DC 24 Strength check or bashed down with weapons (AC 15, 18hp). The room beyond is 30' wide and tall, roofless, with the granite dome 350' above the character's heads (beyond torch range). In the center of the room, a circular stone staircase winds into the darkness of level two, 50' below (area 29).

Two desiccated, hacked-up human corpses, clad in rags, lie a few paces from the staircase. On the west wall is a broken fresco of Zaharan soldiers defeating a rag-tag band of men carrying Empyrean iconography. (DC 15 History: The battle depicted dates to the 7th century B.E., when the Aurans were just beginning their religiously-inspired rebellion against the last sorcerer-king, Sebek.)

19. The Crossroads: This courtyard runs 40' wide and 60' long. It was built open to the air, and the granite dome that is now 350' above is beyond torch range. A chiseled marble statue of a cruel-looking sorcerer-priest with an elongated head stands in the center of the courtyard. (DC 15 History: It is a statue of Uragasi, conqueror of Thrassia.) All of the walls are covered with glazed brick veneer. Just north of the statue, the glazed brick of the east wall has collapsed onto the floor, exposing the splotchy ochre limestone beyond. As the courtyard links into many areas, roll for a random encounter each time the party enters or re-enters this room.

AREA 3 (ORC TERRITORY)

Orcs have taken control of this set of rooms in the center of the western portion of the temple, from which they guard the way to the inner temple and ziggurat (Area 6). Though vicious and greedy, the orcs are loyal to The Lady Below, having seen her strength on several occasions. They might be amenable to clever characters moving through their area, but will demand a toll of at least 20gp per person.

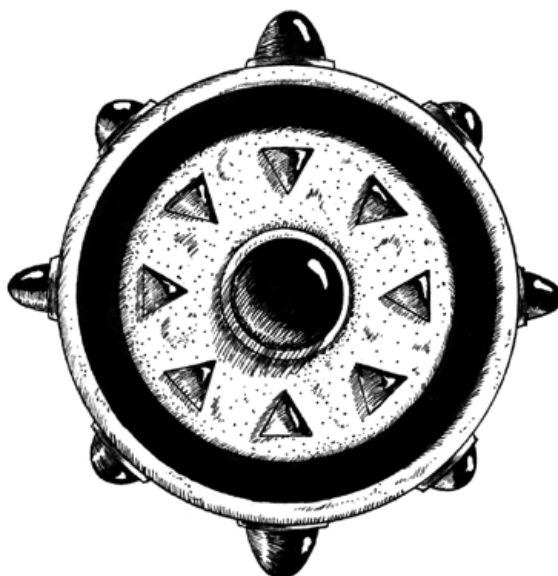
20. Long Hall: This 20' wide hall runs for 140' west to east. The northern wall is punctuated by a set of three doors at 40' intervals. The southern wall is adorned with a mosaic of colored bricks set into a curiously disturbing maze-like pattern. (DC 15 Religion: The maze-like pattern is symbolic of Nargund, Chthonic god of predators and hunting. He is associated with mazes and minotaurs in some myths.)

21. Old Store Room: The orcs have trapped the entrance to this room with a large pile of heavy copper urns balanced precariously on a ledge above the head of the doorframe. When the door is opened, the urns come crashing down and the hapless adventure who opened it must succeed on a DC 15 Dexterity saving throw or suffer 2d6 bludgeoning damage. Setting off the trap will alert the guards in the Guard Room (23) and the Toll Road South (26) that someone is here. The room itself is a 10' square storeroom, with various shelves and ledges lining the walls, but empty of anything save dust.

22. Old Store Room: This 30' wide, 20' long former store room is lined with empty shelves. The ceiling was slightly fractured in the earthquake a few years prior, and here and there fragments of rock litter the floor.

23. Orc Guard Room: This 40' wide and 20' long room is bare and unfurnished. **Four orc warriors** guard the entrance from the Long Hall (20).

24. The Pool: All of the walls of this 50' wide × 40' long room are decorated with glazed blue bricks. However, the brick veneer has broken off in the northwest corner, and lays scattered across the floor. In the center of the room is a drowning pool used for sacrifices long



ago. The pool is 6' in depth and 10' in diameter, lined with stone, filled with still, salty water, and circumscribed with a 2' rim of carved blue brick. Chthonic magic still lingers here. Any character who drinks the pool's water must roll 1d10 and consult the Chthonic Pool table below to see the effect. Characters may drink from the pool's water repeatedly, but each subsequent drink after the first imposes a -1 penalty on the die roll. Water taken from the pool becomes normal, stagnant water after one round.

Chthonic Pool Table	
Roll	Result
1 or less	Slain: The creature must succeed on a DC 12 Constitution saving throw. On a failed save, it is slain. On a successful save, it takes 6 (1d12) poison damage.
2	Poisoned: The creature must succeed on a DC 12 Constitution saving throw. On a failed save, it takes 6 (1d12) poison damage and is poisoned for 24 hours. On a successful save, the creature takes half damage and isn't poisoned.
3	Baned: The creature must make a DC 12 Charisma saving throw. If the creature fails this saving throw, then whenever it makes an attack roll or saving throw it must roll a d4 and subtract the number rolled from the attack roll or saving throw. The bane ends when the creature takes a long rest.
4	Misfortunate: The creature has disadvantage on its next saving throw against an effect cast by a hostile creature.
5	Visions of Horror: The creature must succeed on a DC 12 Wisdom saving throw or immediately loses inspiration. If the creature has no inspiration, it becomes horrified until it takes a short rest. While horrified, it has disadvantage on attack rolls and saving throws.
6	Visions of Enlightenment: The creature immediately gains inspiration. If the creature already has inspiration, it may give inspiration to an allied creature of its choice.
7	Fortunate: The creature gains one luck point (to a maximum of three).
8	Blessed: Whenever the creature makes an attack roll or saving throw, the creature can roll a d4 and the number to the attack roll or saving throw. The bless ends when the creature takes a long rest.
9	Healed: The creature regains any lost hit points. If the creature had not lost any hit points, it gains 1d10 temporary hit points. Any remaining temporary hp are lost when the creature takes a long rest.
10	Empowered: The creature raises its lowest ability score by 1 point permanently.

25. Store Room: The orcs use this 30' wide, 40' long chamber as a store room for their guards. There are crates and boxes stacked about the room containing the following: 30 javelins, 10 greataxes, 10 daggers, 8 suits of hide armor, 4 chain shirts, and 1 suit of chain mail armor. All of the items are in bad repair and worth only 10% of their normal value if sold.

26. Toll Road South: This 50' wide and 20' long room and the adjoining northern room (27) form a linked "corridor" through orc territory. The orcs have decided to set up guards and charge tolls for those seeking passage into the temple complex. The **four orc warriors** here will attempt to parley (unless they have obvious reason not to) and demand a toll of 20gp per person wanting to pass. A successful DC 15 Charisma check persuades the orcs to admit the party without paying the toll. Depending how the adventurers handle the conversation, either Persuasion, Deception, or Intimidation skill might apply to the check. If the toll is paid or the orcs are persuaded

to step aside, they will allow the party to pass through both rooms. If attacked, the orcs will be reinforced by the orcs in the Toll Road North (27) after one round.

27. Toll Road North: This 40' square room is the northern side of the "toll road" through orc territory. The **four orc warriors** here behave similarly to those in the Toll Road South (26). If attacked, they be reinforced by the orcs in the Toll Road South (26) after one round and by the orcs in the Dining Room (28) after two rounds. The orcs keep a small chest here containing their current takings from the toll: 250cp, 100sp, and 75gp.

28. Orc Dining Room: The orcs use this as a common area and mess hall, and it is notably odorous due to many unpleasant food stuffs rotting within. Crudely-built tables and rickety chairs fill its 30' × 30' area. **Two orc warriors** with particularly foul table manners are eating here. If fighting breaks out here, the orcs will be reinforced by the worgs in the Kennel (30) after one round and by their comrades from the Common Quarters (29) after three rounds. If fighting erupts in the Toll Road North (27), the orc warriors here will join the fight after two rounds.

29. Orc Common Quarters: Two dozen pallets are strewn about this room, along with the filthy waste product of orc habitation. There are typically **2d3 orcs** sleeping here at any given time. If a fight starts in the Dining Room (28), the sleeping orcs will awaken in the first round, arm themselves in the second round, and move towards the fight in the third round. Any character who spends 10 minutes searching the pallets and succeeds on a DC 10 Wisdom (Perception) check discovers stashes of coin crudely hidden in the pallets, for a total of 300cp and 200sp.

30. Kennel: The orcs brought a **pair of worgs** with them when they moved in, and the beasts both lair here, growing fat on captives. The worgs will rush to join any fighting in the Dining Room (28) or Chief's Lair (31). The kennel is 20' wide and 30' long, with three rock-obstructed windows set into the west wall. Bones and gristle, mostly human, litter the floor. Any character who spends ten minutes searching the bones and succeeds on a DC 10 Wisdom (Perception) check will find a severed finger still encircled with a silver ring (100gp value).

31. The Orc Chief's Lair: Apsa, the **orc chieftain**, lairs here in an old library converted to a makeshift audience chamber. Apsa chose this place for the impressive-looking bas-relief sculpture of a glorious Zaharan warrior carved into the west wall. (DC 15 History: The warrior depicted is Sanakh, second sorcerer-king of Zahar, conqueror of Opeleneia and eastern Kemesh.) Beneath the bas-relief, the library's great oak bookcases have been toppled over and shoved together to form a crude dais, upon which is perched Apsa's "throne" (the old librarian's chair). Discarded and moldy scroll rolls spill out from the toppled bookcases.

Apsa surrounds himself with an honor guard of **three orc champions** (see p. 71). Apsa fancies himself a great war-leader (like his idol, Sanakh), and he and his champions are typically engaged in mock sword-play. If alerted to an attack by the party, he will gather the sleeping orcs in the Common Quarters (29) and the worgs from the Kennel (30) in order to make a last stand here.

Apsa has stored the majority of his toll-earnings and stolen goods in a large chest that sits under his “throne”. In it, he has: 5000sp; 400ep; 4 silver holy symbols of Sakkara, each of a two-headed winged serpent (25gp each); and 3 strange glass eyes (30gp each) featuring black sclera and irises with red slit pupils. (DC 15 Religion: Undead priests of the Chthonic gods would wear such ornaments in their eye sockets once their own eyes rotted away.)

Along the south wall are two crates of Tirenean glassware (200gp and 75lbs) stolen from local merchants. The crates block the secret door to the Hidden Treasure Room (32), of which Apsa and his orcs are utterly oblivious. Any character who searches the south wall and succeeds on a DC 20 Wisdom (Perception) check detects the fine seams of the secret door. The door is easily opened once detected simply by rotating it around its center axis.

Unknown to Apsa, the library’s bookcases also hide several treasures. Any character who spends at least 30 minutes searching through the toppled bookcases and succeeds on a DC 15 Intelligence (Investigation) check discovers an unmarked bone case holds a *spell scroll (color spray)* and a *spell scroll (command)*, both written in Ancient Zaharan. There is also an illuminated scroll of ancient Zaharan religious practices, worth 100gp to a collector.

32. Hidden Treasure Room: Once a secure vault for the priests of this temple, this room has lain undiscovered since the temple’s fall. Entrance to it is available only by means of secret doors (DC 20) hidden in the walls of the Kobold Chief’s Chamber (9) and the Orc Chief’s Lair (31).

Inside the undecorated 30’ × 20’ room are three chests, one painted copper, one painted silver, and one painted gold. Each chest is sealed with a built-in lock in its latch. A character who inspects any of the locks and succeeds on a DC 15 Intelligence (Investigation) check discovers that chest’s latch is connected by means of an intricate mechanism to some sort of trap located inside the chest.

Each chest can be opened safely by inserting the appropriate key (copper, silver, or gold) into the latch. If the key is not available, each chest’s lock can be picked with a successful DC 15 Dexterity check using thieves’ tools, but doing so does not disarm the chest’s trap. A separate DC 15 Dexterity check using thieves’ tools, if successful, disables the mechanism that connects the lock to the trap.

If the chest is opened or smashed before the trap is disarmed, the trap triggers. When this occurs, a cloud of poison gas erupts in a 20-foot radius around the chest. For the next ten rounds, each creature



entering or starting its turn in the area of effect must make a DC 15 Constitution save throw. On a failed save, the creature takes 10 (3d6) poison damage and is poisoned. On a successful save, the creature takes half that and is not poisoned. After ten rounds, the poison gas oxidizes into harmless smoke. Note that each chest is similarly trapped!

The copper-painted chest contains 3000cp wrapped in a set of priest vestments with rich golden thread (250 gp). The silver-painted chest contains 3000sp and 4 bloodstones (50gp each). The gold-painted chest contains 500gp, a golden brooch of a two-headed dragon (250gp), a *potion of necrotic resistance* (a corked vial with a greenish-yellow fluid smelling of bone and sulfur) and a *wand of secrets* (made of two worked bronze serpents intertwined to form a double helix). All of the coins in the chests are of ancient Zaharan mint.

AREA 4 (GOBLIN TERRITORY)

Until just a few days ago, the goblins controlled the center of the eastern half of the temple. Then a bloody conflict erupted between the goblins and the hobgoblins to their north. The goblins lost, and were wiped out. Because this area is now considered unclaimed territory by the other dungeon denizens, random encounters happen here more frequently. Roll a d20 once per thirty minutes of game time, and an encounter occurs on a roll of 14 or higher.

33. Entrance: This 20' square room was the goblins' guard chamber. Two stripped goblin corpses, black and bloated, lie on the ground here. Both have been decapitated; the heads are missing.

34. Goblin Common Room: Ten goblins were butchered in this 20' wide, 60' long room. Blood and gore smear the walls, and the bodies stink with rot. A single bloody handprint adorns the door in the north-east corner to the Dark Shaft (42), a reminder of the last gesture of a fleeing goblin. The goblins' pallets have been tossed about the room, as if looted.

35. Empty room: This L-shaped room is 20' wide and 40' long in either direction. The east wall is adorned with a faded glazed brick fresco depicting Zaharans bowing to a many-eyed, many-mouthed, amorphous monstrosity. (DC 15 Religion: The creature may be an avatar or demon of Kaleth, the Madness, Chthonic god of profanity, insanity, and oblivion.) Splinters of wood and scrapes in the floor suggest furniture was recently removed from the chamber. It is otherwise empty.

36. Storage Closet: Rotted brooms and pails and old tools are scattered about on the shelves of this 10' wide and 30' long room. There is nothing of value here.

37. Collapsed Storage Closet: Another 10' × 30' closet, long since crushed by time. The room is clogged with debris, and it would take at least 10 minutes to search through it. Any character who spends the required time and succeeds on a DC 10 Wisdom (Perception) check discovers a copper-painted key (for the copper chest in room 32) hidden beneath a crushed shelf.

38. Latrine: The latrine is 10' wide by 30' long and reeks faintly of waste. The floor of the room slopes slightly downward towards the east wall, where a series of small drain-holes serve to evacuate waste. A handful of normal rats will flee through the drain-holes when the party enters.

39. Goblin Chief's Lair: The goblin chief lived (and died) in this 20' × 40' room. Now, four dead goblins lie in a pile in its center. All the corpses are headless, and their bloated bodies show evidence of brutal torture. The room's walls are scarred by tools from a fruitless search for the chief's treasure.

Any character who searches the walls and succeeds on a DC 20 Wisdom (Perception) check discovers a secret compartment in the southeast corner of the lair. Here the chief stashed his loot: a jasper (50gp), two moss agates (10gp each), a bag of 150gp, and a *potion of healing* (a brown syrup that smells faintly of honey).

40. Goblin Guard Room: Five headless goblin bodies lie in a pile in the center of this 20' wide and 60' long room. All were slain a few days ago. Rot has set in to the corpses, so it is nauseating to remain in the room for long.

41. Abandoned Arena: The brick walls of this 20' wide × 50' long P-shaped chamber are marred by ancient sword-scratches and cracked by mace blows. The floor is black with ancient blood stains. Carved into the north wall is a bas-relief sculpture of a fanged, demonic figure with six arms, each carrying a backwards-curved sword. (DC 15 Religion: The figure is Bel, the Slaughterprince, Chthonic god of rage, violence, and war.)

42. Dark Shaft: This 40' wide, 60' tall courtyard is open to the cavernous ceiling 350' above. Unlike most rooms in the complex, the floor is earth, though no living things grow in the dirt. In the center of the dead soil is a 15' diameter brick-lined well. The shaft of the well descends downward 50' and northward 30' (a 60-degree slope) until it eventually opens into the ceiling of room 20 of the Catacomb level.

43. The Great Hall: This long, 20' wide hall runs 130' east-west, then turns and runs 30' north. The hall is quiet but smells like old smoke that has not aired properly. The northern wall is decorated with a series of orthostats (carved stone slabs) in various states of disrepair, shown on the map as "a", "b", and "c". From west to east, these are:

43a. First Orthostat: This stone slab has carvings depicting the dead rising from the grave. The carvings are accompanied by Ancient Zaharan text. (DC 15 Religion: The text is from 'The Book of the Awakening, a Zaharan holy book, and reads "*Upon the Awakening, those who swore to the gods of earth and darkness shall receive the promised bodily resurrection.*")

43b. Second Orthostat: The Ancient Zaharan script on this stone slab details the vast sacrifices given by a long dead high priest to Sakkara. (DC 15 Religion: The text, which reads in part "*Blood pleases them: Blood is the nectar of souls. Souls are the food of the gods,*" is from the Chronicles of the Mad, by the Zaharan sorcerer-priest Balthazar.)

43c. Third Orthostat: This stone slab has astrological drawings of the celestial spheres in various configurations, alongside an Ancient Zaharan verse. (DC 15 Religion: The verse, which reads "*a day shall come that has no sun, no dawn or shining or brightness or light,*" is from The Conjunction of the Outer Planes, a Zaharan astrological treatise linking future events to the alignment of the planes.)

The southern wall is lined with sconces for torches, upon which have been impaled eleven severed goblin heads. Horrifically, the goblin

heads have re-animated as **bodiless zombie heads**. Their dead eyes follow the party's movement through the hall, and their mouths soundlessly open and close as if in eternal hunger. If attacked, the zombie heads have AC 8, hp 7, and disadvantage on Dexterity saving throws; any attacks against a zombie head have advantage.

However, enterprising (if amoral) characters can use the zombie heads as improvised thrown weapons. As an attack a character can throw a zombie head at a target creature within 20 feet. On a miss where the d20 roll is a 1, the character clumsily allows the zombie head to bite his head, taking 3 (1d6) piercing damage and dropping the head. On a hit, the zombie head latches onto the target and deals 3 (1d6) piercing damage with its vicious bite. Thereafter, the zombie head will deal an additional 3 (1d6) piercing damage each round at the end of the target's turn until the head is destroyed.

44. The Ogre's Cave: An **ogre** has made its lair in this 50' wide, 20' long chamber. If disturbed, the ogre will demand meat or gold! No less than 100gp will keep it from attacking. The ogre has piled a mound of stinking furs along the west wall, below a row of granite-blocked windows. The mound of fur hides a bag containing 1,000sp and 100gp.

The ogre is unaware of the secret door to the Old Treasure Room (74) but any character who searches the north wall and succeeds on a DC 20 Wisdom (Perception) check detects the fine seams of the hidden portal. The secret door is easily opened once detected simply by rotating it around its center axis.

AREA 5 (HOBGOBLIN TERRITORY)

The hobgoblins control the north-east portion of the temple, including some of its most sacred areas. They are flush with wealth from recently wiping out the goblins; however, their numbers are reduced and their chief is badly wounded, and they are keenly aware of the position this puts them in. They will bluff and bluster to conceal their weakness, but ultimately would prefer to talk rather than fight. As a result, characters seeking to parley with the hobgoblins have advantage on Charisma checks.

45. Hobgoblin Guard Room: This once-lavish vestibule is 30' wide and 40' long. The northern portion of the east wall is still decorated with an orthostat carrying a depiction of a long dead king, engraved with Ancient Zaharan writing detailing his glorious deeds. (DC 15 History: The king depicted is Memnikare, third sorcerer-king of Zahar, conqueror of western Kemesh and eastern Somirea.)

The vestibule now serves as a guardroom for **four hobgoblin warriors**, who keep a wary eye on the door to the south. Due to the weakened state of their tribe, they will greet any interlopers with conversation if possible. A successful DC 15 Charisma check persuades the hobgoblins to take the party to their chief or pass untroubled. Depending how the adventurers handle the conversation, either Persuasion, Deception, or Intimidation skill might apply to the check.

If attacked, the hobgoblins will be reinforced by their comrades in the Hobgoblin Barracks (58) in two rounds.

46-47. Preparation Rooms: These 20' wide by 30' long rooms are where devotees prepared themselves before entering the nave of the temple (room 60). The only remnants of their prior purpose are a series of small basins, long dry, jutting from the south wall of each

room. The doors to the north are spiked closed from room 60. The door can be forced open with a successful DC 20 Strength check or bashed down with weapons (AC 15, 18hp).

48. Far Barracks: The hobgoblins originally used this 30' × 40' vestibule (the sister of room 45) to house some of their number. 10 pallets still lay here, arranged in orderly rows. They are empty now, and the room is bare save for the orthostat on the northern half of the west wall. The orthostat is engraved with writing in Ancient Zaharan alongside images of Zaharans battling Thrassians. (DC 15 History: The text describes how a sorcerer-priest named Uragasi led a Zaharan uprising against the degenerate Thrassian Empire in the 11th century B.E. Within fifteen years he had toppled the lizardmen and seized control of much of their former empire.)

49. Weapon Locker: This 20' × 20' chamber has a pair of windows on the east wall that look out onto the black granite of the dome that encompasses the temple. The other walls are adorned with wall-hooks and shelves, suggesting this room was once a sacristy. It now serves as an armory for the hobgoblins, who have stored 10 spears, 5 longswords, and 5 shields on the shelves. (The vestments that were once kept here have long since rotted.) All these weapons are in good repair and can be sold for 50% of their price.

50. Bombardier Beetle Nest: This 20' × 30' antechamber has three windows piercing its east wall, opening up to the black granite beyond. With the hobgoblin numbers depleted, a group of **five giant bombardier beetles** has moved in. The hobgoblins have left the beetles alone since losing one of their tribe to the creatures. The beetles have laid eggs in the rotted corpse of the hobgoblin.

51. Priest Room: Once a lavish bedroom for a high-ranked priest, this 30' square chamber has been stripped bare of all but the faded fresco on the west wall. The fresco depicts drunken revelers dancing under a full moon in a forest clearing, while lupine humanoids lurk at the tree line. (DC 15 Religion: Revels under the full moon were practiced by worshippers of Nargund, god of predators and hunting. Priests of Nargund were often lycanthropes, and would feast on the worshippers.) Any character who searches this room's walls and succeeds on a DC 10 Wisdom (Perception) check discovers a silver-painted key (for the silver chest in room 32) hidden below a loose stone near the northwest corner.

52. Long Hall: This 20' wide and 50' long hall is empty save for broken crockery and food scraps so yellowed with mold as to be unidentifiable. A row of five windows runs along the east wall, all revealing the black granite dome around.

53. Stairs: A stone staircase in this 30' wide, 20' long room leads down. The stairs are dusty and show little signs of traffic. The stairs descend in a reverse C-shape, traveling 20' east, then 30' north, then 40' west into room 18 of the Catacomb level, 50' below.

54. Forbidden Chamber: This 20' square chamber features windows to the black granite dome on the north and east walls. The floor is littered with seven rotting and partially-devoured corpses (four goblin and three human). These were dragged here by the possessed giant spider which lurks in the Old Reliquary (56). Some of the corpses were prisoners the hobgoblins deliberately fed to the crab spider, while others became the spider's prey by accidentally wandering

into this area. Any character searching the bodies finds 100gp, 50gp, a golden dish fashioned in the shape of a sun-disc (100gp), a silver goblet carved with rearing horses (25 gp), and a necklace of white pearls (250 gp), but the search alerts the spider nearby.

55. Old Guard Room: A millennium ago, when the temple flourished, the reliquary's guards were stationed here. Now the room is empty except for debris spilling in from the broken wall to the east. Any character investigating the debris who succeeds on a DC 10 Intelligence (Investigation) check concludes from the pattern of debris that someone or something has been dragged back and forth through the rubble between the Forbidden Chamber (54) and the Old Reliquary (56).

56. Old Reliquary: This 50' × 30' room feels cold and uncomfortable to be in. It once held the unholy relics of the temple, and the evil still lingers here. The room radiates as desecrated if *detect evil and good* is cast. The northern wall has collapsed into rubble, exposing the granite beyond.

The southwestern and southeastern walls are lined with orthostats that carry invocations in Ancient Zaharan. (DC 15 Religion: The verses are from The Book of the Awakening, a Zaharan holy book. The southwestern orthostat reads, "*Our day soon ends, but the day shall come again when those who dwell on the earth shall be seized with great terror, and their young kingdoms shall be laid waste and desolate.*" The southeastern orthostat reads, "*Blood shall drip from the rock, and there shall be chaos in all places; fire shall break out, and wild beasts roam beyond their haunts, and women shall bring forth monsters.*")

A **possessed giant spider** lurks camouflaged on the ceiling above the rubble. It will attempt to ambush any characters that enter the Old Reliquary. The spider has advantage on Dexterity (Stealth) checks against characters who investigate the orthostats before searching the rubble. If the adventurers stopped to loot the bodies in 54, or otherwise made a racket before entering this room, the spider will have had time cast *blur* and *false life* on itself.

57. Old Guard Room: Like room 55, this is an abandoned guard room. Visible on the north wall are the remains of a bas-relief sculpture of a fanged, demonic figure. Only the creature's face and left torso are intact. It has three arms, each carrying a backwards-curved sword. (DC 15 Religion: The figure is probably six-armed Bel, the Slaughterprince, Chthonic god of rage, violence, and war.)

The hobgoblins are unaware of the secret door in the west wall leading to the Prison Cell (65). Any character who searches that wall and succeeds on a DC 20 Wisdom (Perception) check detects the fine seams of the secret door. The door is easily opened once detected simply by rotating it around its center axis.

58. Hobgoblin Barracks: This 30' square room houses the remainder of the hobgoblin tribe. A dozen pallets are neatly arranged in two rows of six. There are **six hobgoblin warriors** gathered here, practicing manual of arms. If fighting erupts in the Hobgoblin Guard Room (45), they will rush to assist, arriving in two rounds.

59. Hobgoblin Common Room: This 30' × 20' room is used by the hobgoblins for dining. A dozen bags of grain (6sp and 60lbs each) are piled along the west wall, next to a stolen legionary's hand-

mill. A half-empty keg of hoppy beer (25sp and 60lbs) sits nearby, surrounded by a scattering of worthless earthenware. On the east side of the room, the hobgoblins have assembled fallen bricks from room 60 into a crude oven.

60. Hobgoblin Chief's Chamber: This large chamber, 50' wide and 70' long, has a vaulted 25' ceiling supported by three stone columns with hooded eyes and fanged mouths carved in patternless bas-relief. (DC 15 Religion: The carvings are symbolic of Kaleth, the Madness, Chthonic god of profanity, insanity, and oblivion.) The ceiling and walls are surfaced with glazed brick in a random pattern of ochre, amaranthine, and sepia. The brick has fractured off the southwestern corner of the room, and a portion of the west wall. A pair of bearskin rugs (50gp and 75lbs each), three barrels of Krysean beer (25gp and 90lbs each), and two barrels of salted fish (5gp and 60lbs each) are piled against the intact portion of the west wall.

The **hobgoblin chief**, Thethamun, lies on one of the bearskin rugs, recovering from a grievous wound sustained in the battle against the goblins. Because of his grievous wound, Thethamun must make a DC 15 Constitution saving throw whenever he attempts an action in combat. On a failed save, he loses his action and can't use reactions until the start of his next turn. If Thethamun receives magical healing, he recovers from his grievous wound immediately. Otherwise it will take 10 days of rest for him to recover.

The **hobgoblin witch doctor**, Abgal, nervously watches over the chief and prays for guidance from the gods. The witch doctor and chief are guarded by Hepteth and Shulgi (**hobgoblin champions**) and **four hobgoblin warriors**.

Abgal and Hepteth believe that the chief's wounds are a sign the tribe is disfavored by the gods and plan to make amends by offering him as a sacrifice to The Lady Below when she next calls on them. Shulgi has feigned agreement with this plan, but has secretly warned the chief what his treacherous minions are planning. If possible, Thethamun and Shulgi will ally with the adventurers against the witch doctor. Abgal, meanwhile, will attempt to rid himself of the adventurers as quickly as possible, offering them the location of "their other treasure room" (actually room 54), in the hopes that the possessed crab spider there will slay them.

Any character who searches the rubble in the southwest corner and succeeds on a DC 10 Wisdom (Perception) check discovers a locked chest hidden amidst the rubble. The chief wears the key to the lock around his neck. The lock can be opened with the key or picked with a successful DC 15 Dexterity check using thieves' tools. The chest contains the tribe's spoils from its battle with the goblins: 1000cp; 300 sp; 100gp; a twelve-sided brass die with Auran numerals (50gp); a hand-sized copper ballista on a cedar stand (50gp); a red-gloss porcelain vase depicting a trireme at sail, bearing the maker's mark of Ommador of Pyrgos (250gp and 15lbs); two strange glass eyes, featuring black sclera and irises with red slit pupils (30gp each); and four holy symbols of Ammonar, resembling winged suns (25gp each).





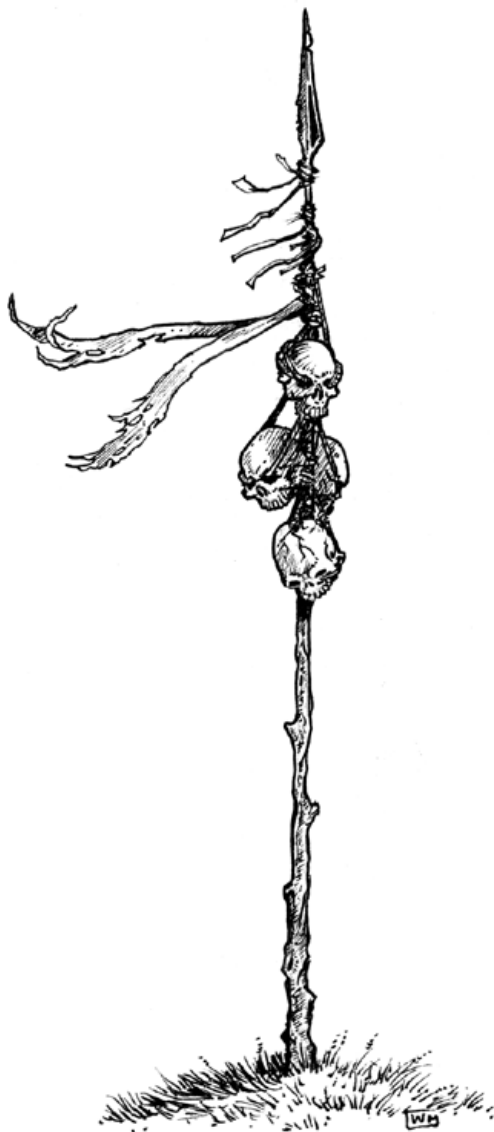


AREA 6 (THE ZIGGURAT)

This area is dominated by **Idimmu the Demonic**, an **abominable young dragon**. Once an ordinary green dragon, Idimmu has slowly been twisted by the chaotic aura of his new habitat into a fetid purple-skinned horror. The dragon's very breath now carries disease that slays living creatures, so little else lives in this place save a handful of kobolds he has terrified into his service.

61. The Courtyard: This 150' square courtyard is open to the dome of granite 350' above. From its sandy ground rises the 100' square and 40' tall ziggurat that was the ancient centerpiece of the temple. The walls around the courtyard are all veneered with glazed brick of black and purple. The ground of the courtyard is sandy and rock-strewn. Here and there, blackened and warped bones are strewn amidst the sands. (DC 15 Medicine: The bones were destroyed by necrotic damage.)

62. Refuse Chamber: The door to this 20' wide, 50' long room is partly open. Like the courtyard (61), the chamber's walls have a black and purple brick veneer. The room is filled with reeking refuse, debris, and chunks of rotted meat surrounded by dead flies.



63. Empty Room: This 20' × 20' room is empty. Its walls are surfaced with purple and black glazed brick. One of the bricks in the east wall is slightly loose. Any character investigating the bricks who succeeds on a DC 10 Wisdom (Perception) check finds a blood stain and broken fingernails on the mortar.

64. Guard Room: This 20' wide and 30' long room is guarded by **six kobold warriors**. Fear of Idimmu keeps the kobolds alert, but every few minutes, one of them wanders over to the adjoining cell (65) to taunt and torture the prisoners there.

65. Prisoners: This 30' × 20' room has a row of windows on the north wall, displaying the black granite beyond. The room stinks of piss and fear. Languishing here are four prisoners: Daros Thenes and Odysios Panas (N human male **commoners**), both merchants captured by Drusus; and Thorwell and Thorcigar (N human male **guards**), twin brothers hired by Daros and Odysios as mercenaries.

They are the last four captives alive, the rest having died to the dragon or humanoids. All four were blindfolded when brought in, so they are unfamiliar with the temple layout. They know a "purple dragon" lives in the ziggurat, and will attempt to warn their rescuers of this, but their fear and trauma is such that their warnings may not be taken seriously. If the merchants are freed and escorted to the safety of the Guild Merchant (Building 24 of Türos Tem), Aeropos Karanos will pay a reward of 100gp for each (or 25gp for their bodies). The mercenaries will gladly join the party in exchange for a share of treasure. The prisoners have only the clothes on their backs.

Neither the prisoners nor the kobolds are aware of the secret door in the east wall leading to the Old Guard Room (57). Any character who searches that wall and succeeds on a DC 20 Wisdom (Perception) check detects the fine seams of the secret door. The door is easily opened once detected simply by rotating it around its center axis.

66-69. Empty Rooms: As elsewhere in this area, the walls of these rooms are veneered with purple and black glazed brick. The north walls are pierced with windows onto black granite. All four rooms have been stripped clean of valuables and even former furniture.

70. Guard Room: This 20' × 30' room is guarded by **six kobold warriors**. The guards are engaged in a heated argument over which of the prisoners in room 71 they should feed to Idimmu when he awakens. The kobolds' vehement jabbering is very loud. Approaching characters have advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks to hear them and on Dexterity (Stealth) checks to sneak up on or by them.

71. Prisoners: Trapped in this 20' × 20' room are the three adventurers who once called themselves the Feared Brethren (see p. 3): Quintus the Rager (a CN human male **guard**), Vestus the Unlikely (a N human male **apprentice wizard**), and Zaira the Beautiful (a CG half-elven female **scout**). All three were captured while exploring the temple. They know little of the temple's architecture, having had the misfortune to stumble straight from the Entry Way (1) to the Great Hall (2) to the Crossroads (19) to the second Great Hall (43) and into Idimmu's clutches. They have no equipment save their clothing, and the casters' spellbooks are in the possession of the dragon. They will gladly become henchmen of any character that frees and (re-)arms them.

72. Bare Room: This 20' square room is emptied of valuables. Its walls are surfaced in purple and black brick, save for the southern wall, of naked limestone. The southern secret door to room **74** is unknown to any current inhabitants of the temple. Any character who searches that wall and succeeds on a DC 20 Wisdom (Perception) check detects the fine seams of the secret door. The door is easily opened once detected simply by rotating it around its center axis.

Normally this room is empty. However, if any characters' family members are being kept captive in the adjacent latrine (**73**), then there will be **six kobold warriors** here watching over them. The kobolds will carry javelins and short swords.

73. Latrine: This room is an old latrine built for the convenience of the temple goers. The floor of the room slopes slightly downward towards the west wall, where a series of small drain-holes serve to evacuate waste. On the wall above the drain-holes, a former occupant has written "*no one is coming*" in blood.

The latrine smells quite vile, though it is normally empty. However, if any of the PCs rolled motivation #2 (which dictated that 1d4+1 members of the adventurer's family were kidnapped) on the Adventurer Motivation Table at the start of play (see p. 4), then all but one of the adventurer's family members (**commoners**) will be captive here. The last will have been taken "to The Lady Below"...

74. Old Treasure Room: This room can only be entered by way of secret doors (DC 20) from rooms **44** or **72**. It stores a hidden and forgotten treasure of temple tithes and donatives. A weapon rack on the wall holds a *shield* +1 (round, with a spiked boss, and lacquered with a red maze-like symbol) and a quiver of 10 black-fletched *arrows* +1. Three jars of sacred oil (50gp and 15lbs each) are stationed at the foot of the weapon rack.

A large bronze chest sits adjacent to the weapon rack. The chest is locked and trapped with a poison needle. The lock picked with a successful DC 15 Dexterity check using thieves' tools. Unsuccessfully picking the lock triggers the poison needle trap. The character picking the lock takes 1 piercing damage and 11 (2d10) poison damage, and must succeed on a DC 15 Constitution saving throw or be poisoned for one hour. A successful DC 15 Intelligence (Investigation) allows a character to notice the trap's presence from alterations made to the lock. A successful DC 15 Dexterity check using thieves' tools disarms the trap, removing the needle from the lock.

The chest contains 1,500sp, 1,000gp, and 100pp of Zaharan mint. Laying on top of the coins are four golden holy symbols of Sakkara (100gp each), each formed in the shape of a winged two-headed dragon, and two bone scroll cases. The first scroll case holds a complete construction map of the temple, including the secret rooms (**32** and **74**). The second scroll case contains a *spell scroll (lesser restoration)* written in Ancient Zaharan.

75. The Ziggurat: The ancient centerpiece of the temple is the ziggurat, a 100-foot square edifice of fired brick that rises 40 feet high. A 20-foot wide, 10-foot long, and 8-foot high shrine is built atop the ziggurat, within which stands a sacrificial altar to Sakkara. The altar is a 6-foot wide, 3-foot long, and 1.5-foot thick slab of dark grey limestone, carved with a great draconic eye (a symbol of Sakkara). The slab rests on four 3-foot tall stone columns hewn in the shape of

coiled serpents, and it and its support columns are all blackly stained with ancient blood. On the far side of the altar is a staircase, which descends 10 feet down.

The altar radiates as desecrated if *detect good and evil* is cast. Any creatures that worship evil gods have resistance to radiant damage while within 60 feet of the altar. Physically smashing the altar (AC 17, hp 27, damage threshold 10) and then casting **bless** or pouring holy water on the broken remains will remove the effect. .

The staircase descends 10 feet down to a 20-foot by 20-foot vault below the shrine, filled with a sizable hoard of treasure. On the far side of the treasure pile, another staircase descends 35 feet to room **1** of the Catacomb Level. Idimmu the Demonic, an **abominable young dragon**, makes his lair within this the vault. Loud noise in the Courtyard (**61**), such as fighting with the kobolds, will rouse Idimmu from his lair after two rounds have elapsed. Otherwise, Idimmu will remain in the vault. Ostensibly, his job is to guard the staircase from intruders who threaten the *Stone of Sakkara*. Idimmu actually plans to seize the *Stone* for himself when The Lady Below dies (an imminent event, from a dragon's point of view). Provided the characters do not openly threaten the *Stone*, Idimmu can be persuaded to grant them access to the Catacomb level by offering a tribute of 100gp per adventurer or with a successful DC 15 Charisma check. (Depending how the adventurers handle the conversation, either Persuasion, Deception, or Intimidation skill might apply to the check.) If the characters seem to pose a threat to the *Stone*, however, Idimmu will attempt to destroy them – on their way down if necessary, but preferably on their way up, weak and laden with treasure.

Idimmu's hoard is sizable, as he has amassed many of the temple's ancient treasures as well as stolen goods from the humanoids. A pile of coins, 5000cp, 2500sp and 1000gp, of both Auran and Zaharan mint, takes up much of the floor. 15 mountain gazelle horns (2gp each) are scattered amongst the coins, as is a *gold-painted key* (to the gold chest in room **32**). Tossed atop the hoard are a *scimitar* +1 (its black backwards-curved blade has "death drinker" written in Ancient Zaharan along the length) and the *spellbook* of Vestus the Unlikely, the captive wizard in **71**. Vestus' spellbook, a 24" parchment codex bound in brass, contains *fire bolt*, *mending*, *prestidigitation*, *burning hands*, *disguise self*, and *shield*.

A roll of fine Somirean silk (400gp and 60lbs) leans against a patinated bronze and wood chest next to the coin pile. The chest holds a silver fox fur cape (500gp); a jade stone carved into the shape of a wyvern (500gp); a necklace of blood-red pearls (1,000gp); a *potion of growth* (a brown broth with a meaty scent); a *philter of love* (a pale amber fluid smelling of jasmine and vanilla); a *spell scroll (speak with animals)*, written in Elven; and a *scroll of protection (undead)*, written in Ancient Zaharan.

2007



THE CATACOMBS (DUNGEON LEVEL 2)

CONSTRUCTION

The catacomb complex below the temple consists of man-made rooms and corridors as well as natural caves and tunnels. The excavated portions of the complex are of hewn limestone, with floors of fired brick embedded in asphalt mortar. The majority of passages are 10' wide with 10' tall ceilings. All rooms have 10' high ceilings except where noted. The natural portions are of unworked limestone, smooth to the touch but punctuated with ledges, tiny holes, drooping stalactites, and thick stalagmites. Natural tunnels vary from 5' to 15' wide, and should be assumed to have ceilings of equal height except where noted. All caverns have 10' high ceilings except where noted.

If you need help visualizing the alien appearance of the catacombs, search the web for the real-life Cameron Village sewer blob. We must warn you that you will wish you did not.

INFLUENCE OF THE STONE

Because of the baleful influence of the *Stone*, many of the rooms and tunnels of this level are covered in thick fleshy “roots” or “vines” filled with bloody fluid. Here and there strange, pulsating growths of ichorous slime undulate on the walls; the very stone of the caves looks as though it is being converted into something organic. The air is hot and wet and smells of bodily fluids and filth. The whole resembles a sort of sinister birthing womb.

Several caverns within the catacombs contain *birthing pools* entirely filled with the *bloody fluid* created by the *Stone*. The *bloody fluid* can have powerful regenerative and mutagenic effects on beasts, fey, giants, humanoids, monstrosities, and plants if it enters their digestive system or blood stream. Each time an eligible creature that is wounded touches or is splashed by the *bloody fluid*, it regains 1d4 hit points but it must succeed on a DC 10 Constitution saving throw or suffer an abominable mutation. Each time an eligible creature drinks the *bloody fluid*, it regains 1d8 hit points but must succeed on a DC 14 Constitution saving throw or suffer an abominable mutation. Each time an eligible creature is fully immersed in a *birthing pool* for the first time on a turn, or ends its turn fully immersed in it, it regains 2d8 hit points but must succeed on a DC 18 Constitution saving throw or suffer an abominable mutation.

To determine the nature of the abominable mutation, roll on the Abominable Mutations table, below. If any of a creature's ability scores is reduced to 0 by mutations, it dies and a new abomination is born from the corpse 1d4 rounds later. (Abominations, being a type of aberration, are not themselves subject to the effects of the pool.) Once acquired, abominable mutations are permanent unless removed with magic. A *greater restoration* spell can remove one abominable mutation from a creature per casting.

REPLACEMENT OF CASUALTIES

So long as The Lady Below continues to control the *Stone of Sakkara*, she will slowly attract new monsters to replace those lost as casualties. Each week, the GM should roll 1d20 for each room that has been

cleared of monsters. Slain undead will be replaced with 1d6 similar undead on a roll of 11 or higher. Slain humanoids will be replaced with 1d4 similar humanoids on a roll of 7 or higher. Slain abominations will be replaced with 1d2 new abominations on a roll of 3 or higher. Unique or independent monsters are not replaced, however.

RANDOM ENCOUNTERS

Random encounters can occur anywhere within the catacombs. Roll a d20 once per thirty minutes of game time, or anytime the party makes a large amount of noise. An encounter occurs on a roll of 18 or higher. Roll a d8 and check the Catacomb Random Encounters table to determine what the characters encounter. The GM can use the suggestions below to add flavor to the random encounters. Otherwise, the monsters encountered can be assumed to be performing some basic task for their tribe/group, such as spying or patrolling.

1. **2d4 Brigands:** These brigands were ordered by Drusus to explore the Catacombs. They entered by way of the stairs in their area (**Room 18** above). When Drusus ordered the door to the stairs sealed to halt undead attacks, the hapless patrol was trapped below. Since then they have wandered the Catacombs in a state of growing terror. They want nothing more than to return to the surface and forget the horrors they have seen. If the party makes peaceful overtures, a successful DC 10 Charisma (Persuasion) check gains their alliance.
2. **2d4 Grimlocks:** These creatures have been called to the Catacombs by the Stone. Though they serve the Lady below, they hate all other members of the surface-dwelling races. They attack immediately and cannot be bargained or reasoned with.
3. **1d4+1 Orc Warriors:** This gang of orcs is in the Catacombs to raid the weakened Black Fang bugbears (**Rooms 8-9**). Depending on how the party approaches them, the orcs may attack, warn them off violently, ignore them, or even invite them to “join in the fun” of the raid.
4. **3d4 Kobold Warriors:** The kobolds are in the Catacombs carrying a message for the Lady Below from the abominable dragon Idimmu. Knowing their master to be second only to the Lady in the hierarchy of the temple, the kobolds are arrogant with vicarious power and will threaten draconic death and destruction if their important mission is interfered with. The message the kobolds are carrying should relate in some way to the prior activities of the party in the dungeon (e.g. warnings of intruders, notification that certain tribes have been destroyed, etc.)
5. **2d4 Zombies:** The zombies are the risen corpses of prisoners ritually sacrificed to the Stone of Sakkara. They are merchants, farmers, grandparents, children—all borderlanders, all recently slain by having their hearts ritually cut out. If any of the adventurers have still-missing family members (see p. 3 and 59), the family members might be found among these undead (GM's discretion).
6. **1d2 Ghouls:** The ghouls are hissing and clawing at each other in a ghastly skirmish for the corpse of a pot-bellied kobold. The arrival of fresh prey (the party) quickly brings

the skirmish to a close by affording all the ghouls a chance for a full and tasty meal.

7. **1d4+1 Hobgoblin Warriors:** The hobgoblins are deserters who refused to join Thethamun's attack on their goblin brethren. Exiled to the Catacombs, they are hungry, thirsty, and ready to return home. If possible, they will attempt to capture the party so that they can offer them as slaves to get back into Thethamun's good graces.
8. **1d3 Bugbear Warriors:** These Red Eye bugbears foolishly drank from the bloody fluid of the Bloody Shore (16) and have suffered mutations (roll randomly for each if desired). Now the gang is on its way to the Lady Below to beg forgiveness for their transgression.

CAVES AND CHAMBERS

1. Catacomb Entrance: The stairs from the ziggurat (**room 75** above) lead to this hewn stone room. Behind the staircase, a dozen large boxes and jars store old and moldy foodstuffs and rotted clothes (all worthless).

2. Prisoner Room: A dozen skeletons, captives of the ancient Zaharans, lay shackled to the walls of this 30' × 30' room. One of the skeletons has an odd-shaped torso and misshapen skull with an elongated muzzle. A character who investigates the skeleton and succeeds on a DC 15 Wisdom (Medicine) check concludes that the skeleton is that of a lizardman. (DC 15 History: The ancient Zaharans fought a long war against the Thrassian lizardman empire.) The chains binding the skeletons are rusted and easily broken.

3. Carrion Cavern: A noisome odor exudes from this tunnel, and the further one walks in, the worse the stench gets. About 55' up the tunnel, where the excavation of the Guard Room (**10**) almost cut through the southeast tunnel wall, the stone becomes exceptionally weak and thin. When the party passes the weak point, any character with passive Perception 14 or greater overhears the bugbears in **10** talking amongst themselves. A character who searches the wall and succeeds on a DC 20 Wisdom (Perception) check detects the weak point. The weak point can be broken down with a successful DC 24 Strength check or bashed down with bludgeoning weapons (AC 17, hp 18).

Past the weak point lies the source of the rank odor - a pile of unidentifiable remains in the rear of the tunnel. These are the victims of **two ankheg** that lurk here. Any character who searches the remains and succeeds on a DC 10 Wisdom (Perception) check discovers 20gp and a silver ring (50gp).

4. Torture Room: This 30' square hewn stone room is filled with ancient horrors. Shelves line the west wall, where a variety of rusty and blood-stained instruments of torture are collecting dust - a bundle of whips, a thick bronze cudgel, a four-clawed breast ripper, a pair of foot-roasting plates, a surgical saw, and a small hammer. Mounted on the west wall are a breaking wheel and a torture rack. Between the shelves, on the south wall, ancient (unanimated) skeletons lie chained to the walls. The warped and broken bones of the skeletons bespeak of terrible agonies.

5. Failed Assault: Four recently-slain bugbears lie at this cavernous crossroads. One of the bugbears has been beheaded, another has been cleaved in twain, and the last two were bludgeoned to death. All the bodies have been stripped of valuables. The bugbears were

slain during an attempted robbery of the ogres in the Ogre Den (7). Any character with passive Perception 11 or greater can hear the ogres bellowing and brawling from here.

6. Collapsed Tunnel: This tunnel was destroyed by the earthquake two years ago. Clearing the rubble would be a 20gp construction project. Where the collapsed tunnel leads is left to the GM's imagination.

7. Ogre Den: Two ogres live in this natural cavern. The pair are loud and boisterous, and enjoy arguing and wrestling; their noisy pastimes allow adventurers to approach them without risk of being surprised. Approaching characters have advantage on both Wisdom (Perception) checks to eavesdrop on the ogres and Dexterity (Stealth) checks to sneak up on them.

The ogres have stashed two bags of coins, one with 150gp and the other with 200gp, in the northeast corner of the room. The coins are a mix of Auran and Zaharan coinage. Other monsters will not come into this room for fear of the ogres, so a party can safely rest here without random encounters once the ogres are dealt with.

8. Bugbear Lair: The Black Fang bugbear tribe lives in these caverns, languishing out of favor with The Lady Below. A **bugbear champion** named Ulmash and **two bugbear warriors** guard this chamber. The humanoids are stationed in the narrow gaps between the massive floor-to-ceiling stone pillars that separate it from the hewn room to the east. Because of their tribe's unfavorable situation, Ulmash is open to negotiation. If the adventurers approach peacefully, a successful DC 10 Charisma check convinces the bugbear champion to take the party to meet his chief Ur-Shet in Black Fang Cavern (**9**). However, if fighting breaks out in this cavern, the bugbears here will be reinforced by their Black Fang brethren in **9** after two rounds.

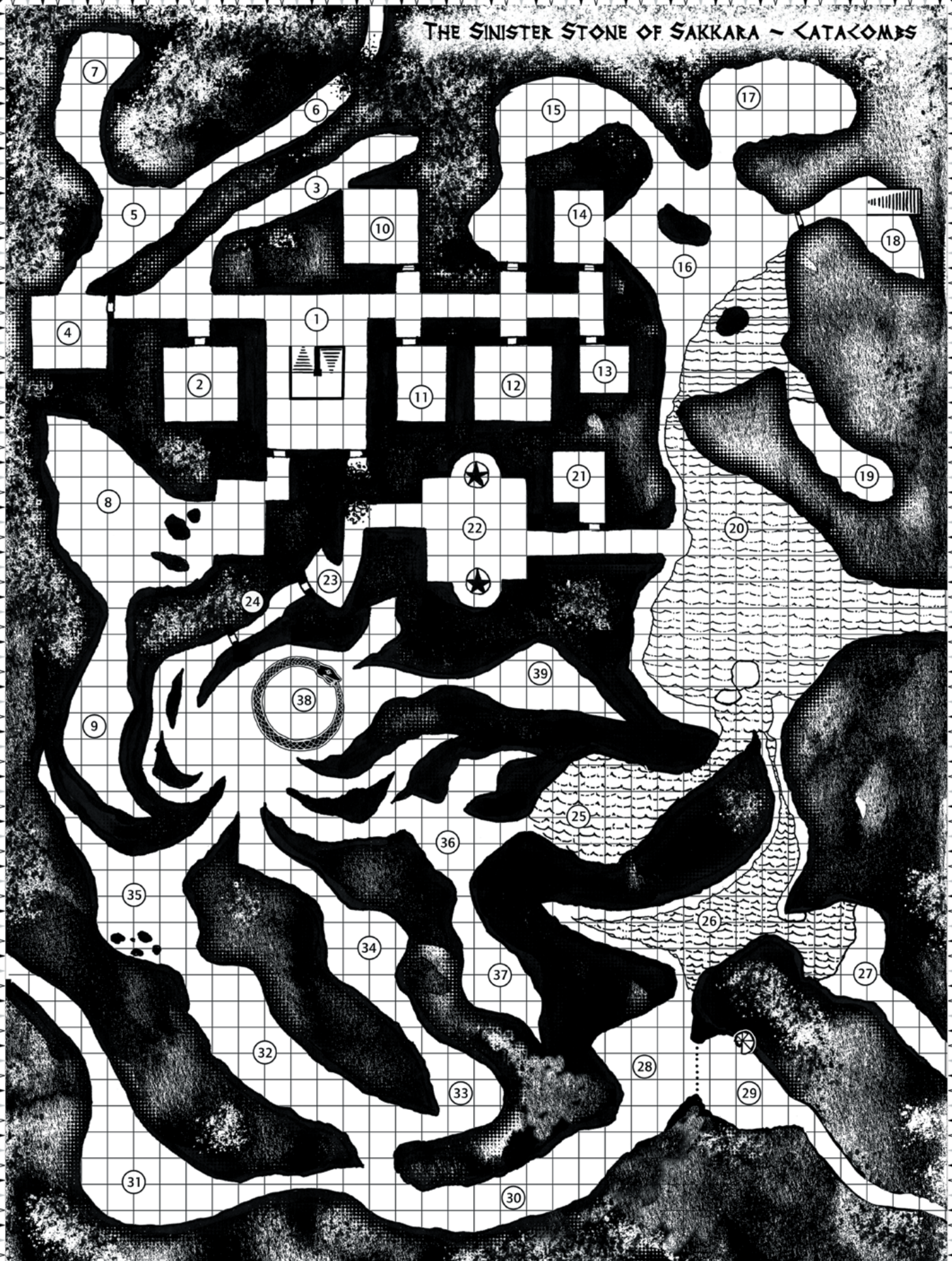
9. Black Fang Cavern: The rest of the Black Fangs reside here. The tribe was forced into exile by their more powerful rivals, the Red Eye bugbears, who are now blessed to tend the birthing waters. Only the **bugbear chief** and **two bugbear warriors** remain alive after their failed attempt on the Ogre Den (7). The chief, Ur-Shet, would happily partner with adventurers against either the ogres or the Red Eye bugbears. Any character proposing such a course of action who succeeds on a DC 10 Charisma check secures the chief's alliance.

The Black Fang's meager treasure is in a chest hidden behind a boulder in the southern tip of their cave. Any character who searches the cave and succeeds on a DC 10 Wisdom (Perception) check finds the chest. The chest holds 1,400cp, 500sp, and 100gp.

10. Guard Room: The Red Eye tribe guards the hallway from this 30' square hewn-stone room. The **three bugbear warriors** on watch keep the door open and demand any new arrivals announce themselves. If the adventurers parley, a successful DC 15 Charisma check convinces the bugbears to escort the party to meet Chief Hepsis in the Red Eye Cavern (**15**). However, characters accompanied by Black Fang bugbears will be attacked on sight.

11. Store Room: This 20' × 30' store room once contained supplies for the humanoids. It is now empty of useful goods, though humanoids spoor litters the floor. The bugbears across the hall have taken to using this chamber as a latrine.

THE SINISTER STONE OF SAKKARA ~ CATACOMBS





Hepsis is a bloody-minded and hateful humanoid. He and his minions attack the party on sight if they enter without introduction or, worse, in the company of Black Fang tribe members. If the adventurers are respectfully introduced to him by the bugbears from his Guard Room (10), Hepsis may be more helpful. A successful DC 20 Charisma check persuades Hepsis to have one of his bugbears escort the party to meet Ur-Namu in the Outer Fane (22).

The Red Eye bugbears store their loot in a large pile of bags and boxes along the north wall. These contain 1,000cp; 500sp; 250ep; a crate of Krysean pottery (100gp and 75lbs); 30 cattle horns (2gp each); and 12 bottles of fine Tirenean wine (15gp each).

16. The Bloody Shore: This roughly oval cavern is about 80' long and 50' wide, with a vaulted, stalactite-riddled ceiling about 25' above. A huge pillar of stone, 20' thick, rises from the center of the cave to the ceiling. Everywhere else the cavern floor is covered with reddish roots that seem to grow up from the stone itself. If cut, the roots leak a thick sap the color and smell of blood. At the back of the cavern is a large *birthing pool of bloody fluid*, a wet womb for the hideous creatures that dwell in the catacombs. Characters who drink, touch, or are immersed in the *bloody fluid* risk abominable mutations, described in p. 55.

A single **abomination** lurks in the 5' deep pool. The abomination cannot be detected from the surface except with magic. It will only surface if a character enters or touches the birthing pool. A character wading into the pool has disadvantage on his attack rolls, and attack rolls against the character have advantage. Any character in the pool who is paralyzed by the abomination becomes completely immersed and must succeed on a DC 18 Constitution saving throw or suffer an abominable mutation (see p. 55).

17. Slimy Chamber: The walls, floor, and ceiling of this humid cavern are thickly covered in damp green algae and lichen. If the party prods and searches the cavern, there is a 75% chance each round that the **green slime** on the cavern roof will drop on a random character. Because the green slime matches the color of the other mold and plant life, the party has a -3 penalty on its surprise rolls against the slime.

18. Entry Chamber: Dusty stairs descend from room 53 above into this 50' × 30' natural cavern. The door out is locked with an *arcane lock* spell. The passphrase to open the door is "Open in the name of The Lady Below" spoken in Ancient Zaharan.

19. Abomination Nest: Abominations periodically rest in this narrow, root filled cave, surrounded by the half-eaten corpses of their victims. **Two abominations** lurk here presently. A search of the bodies of the ten humanoids and humans they've killed discovers 250gp; three onyx stones (50gp each); a copper necklace bedecked with tiny bells (25gp); and a silver ring engraved "*To Medoria – Eternal Love*" (150gp).

20. The Lake of Blood: This great bean-shaped cavern is about 80' across, almost all of it filled with the same *bloody fluid* found in the Bloody Shore (16). The *birthing pool* here is shallow near the narrow ledge along the west wall, but quickly reaches a depth of 5' further in.

A vast, tumorous growth sprouts like a tree from the center of the red waters. Around the intestine-colored tree, pink fleshy tendrils of vein-like vines grow up into the stone and spread like rot across the

12. Store Room: This 30' square hewn-stone room contains potable food and drink stolen from farms and merchants. 40 bags of wheat (24gp value, 2400lbs) are piled in the south-east corner. Alongside stand 4 barrels of smoked pork (20gp value, 240lbs) and 10 barrels of Krysean beer (100gp value, 1200lbs). These supplies will sustain the creatures on this level for about one week.

13. Empty Room: The supplies once kept in this small 20' square storage room have been consumed by the rapacious humanoids. An empty beer barrel and a few hemp sacks, kernels of grain stuck in the fibers, are all that remain.

14. Moldy Room: This 20' × 30' hewn stone chamber has a 6' high, 8' wide gap in its east wall, where it opens up into a vast natural cavern. The gap is blocked by a pile of six wooden boxes covered in a hideous dun-colored mold. The mold is, in fact, **yellow mold**, and moving the boxes causes the mold to release its spores.

15. Red Eye Cavern: This cavern is controlled by the Red Eye bugbears, who tend the breeding vats for The Lady Below. There are **three bugbear warriors** here, led by the **bugbear chief**, Hepsis, a huge and shaggy monster whose left eye has been replaced by a glass orb with a red slit pupil in a black sclera and iris.

Construction projects are described on p. 49-50 of Autarch's Domains at War: Campaigns supplement. A 20gp construction project would take about 100 days of work for a typical laborer, whose labor is worth 2sp per day.

Abominable Mutation Table

1d20	Mutation
1	Living Cancer: The creature develops living masses moving beneath its flesh. Its Charisma score is reduced by 1.
2	Discoloration: The creature's skin changes to a sickly or mottled color (patchy grey, jaundiced green, etc.). The creature's Charisma score is reduced by 1.
3	Beast Eyes: The creature's eyes change to those of an animal, such as a wolf, owl, or cat. The creature gains darkvision 60 ft. If the creature already has darkvision, the range is increased by 30 ft. The creature's Charisma score is reduced by 2.
4	Fur: The creature's skin grows a thin pelt of black or dark brown animal fur. It gains damage resistance to cold. The creature's Charisma score is reduced by 2.
5	Scales: The creature's skin turns into heavy scales. It gains a +2 natural armor bonus to AC, but its movement rate is reduced by 5 ft. The creature's Charisma score is reduced by 2.
6	Claws: Thick black claws grow from the creature's hands. As an action, the creature can make a melee attack with its claws that deals 1d6 slashing damage (plus Strength modifier, if any). However, the creature suffers disadvantage on any rolls involving delicate work (like picking a pocket or disabling a trap), and its Charisma score is reduced by 2.
7	Distorted Muscles: The creature grows taller and wider as his muscles expand in ridiculous and unsightly ways. Its Strength score is increased by 1 (maximum 20) and it gains advantage on Strength (Athletics) checks. However, its Charisma score is reduced by 2.
8	Flexible Bones: The creature's bones take on a rubbery consistency, allowing it to move with disturbing grace. Its Dexterity score is increased by 1 (maximum 20) and it gains advantage on Dexterity (Acrobatics) checks. However, its Constitution score is reduced by 2.
9	Bulging Brain: The creature's brain expands, increasing its memory but hideously distorting its skull. Its Intelligence score is increased by 1 (maximum 20) and it gains advantage on Intelligence (History) checks. However, its Charisma score is reduced by 2.
10	Seductive Musk: The creature begins to emit pheromones that make it more likable, desirable, and persuasive. It gains advantage on all Charisma (Persuasion) checks. However, it suffers disadvantage on Dexterity (Stealth) checks due to its strong scent and the mood-altering effects of the pheromones cause its Wisdom score to be reduced by 1.
11	Fish Scales: The creature grows thin, fishlike scales over its body and a pair of gills on its throat. Its eyes become bulging and fish-like. The creature can breathe water and gains a swimming movement rate of 30 ft. However, its Charisma score is reduced by 2.
12	Tentacles: The creature sprouts a set of tentacles from somewhere on its body (usually its abdomen or chest, but the source could be anywhere the DM desires). These tentacles are as strong as the character is, but lack the manual dexterity of hands and arms. The tentacles cannot wield weapons effectively, but they could hold a torch or other objects, or hold the character up while his arms remain free. As an action, the creature can make a melee attack with its tentacles. A successful tentacle attack deals 1d4 bludgeoning damage (plus Strength modifier, if any). If the target is Medium or smaller, it is grappled and restrained until the grapple ends. The escape DC is equal to 8 + the mutant's Strength modifier + the mutant's proficiency bonus. The creature's Charisma score is reduced by 4.

Abominable Mutation Table

1d20	Mutation
13	Third Eye: The creature grows an unblinking, ever-watchful third eye in the middle of its forehead. It gains a +2 inherent bonus to its passive Perception and has advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on sight. It suffers disadvantage on any saving throws versus effects that rely on eye contact (such as a medusa's petrifying gaze). The creature's Charisma score is reduced by 2.
14	Crystal Body: The creature's body changes to living crystal. It gains a +3 natural armor bonus to AC, resistance to piercing and slashing damage, and immunity to the petrified condition. However, the creature's speed is halved and it suffers vulnerability to thunder damage. Its Charisma score is reduced by 4.
15	Arcane Eyes: The creature's eyes begin to glow a strange, frightful color (DM's choice; the specific color has no effect on the creature's vision nor does it actually provide light). It gains the ability to cast a single random wizard cantrip (permanently set when this mutation is gained) at will. The DM should feel free to reroll any cantrip he feels would be unbalancing. The creature's Charisma score is reduced by 2.
16	Wings: The creature sprouts a pair of monstrous wings. While the wings do not permit actual flight, they do allow the creature to make large leaps (as the <i>jump</i> spell) and glide from heights safely (as the <i>feather fall</i> spell). However, the wings do not function if the creature is wearing medium or heavy armor or carrying weight in excess of 5 times its Strength score. The creature's Charisma score is reduced by 2.
17	Corrosive Bile: The character's bodily fluids becomes acidic. It has advantage on saving throws against acid, and resistance against acid damage. The creature can spit corrosive bile in a 5 by 30 ft. line. Each target in the area of effect must make a Dexterity saving throw with a DC equal to 8 + the mutant's Constitution modifier + the mutant's proficiency bonus. A target of the corrosive bile takes 2d6 damage on a failed save, and half as much damage on a successful one. After the creature spits corrosive bile, it can't use its bile again until it completes a short or long rest. The creature's lips and teeth partially melt away from the corrosive bile in its saliva, reducing its Charisma score by 4 points.
18	Bubbling Skin: The character's skin becomes covered in hideous red boils and blisters. When heated, the blisters burst and coat the creature's skin with protective pus. The creature gains damage resistance to fire, but its Charisma score is reduced by 2.
19	Eye Stalks: The character's eyes sprout out of their head on long, fleshy stalks. Due to the mobility of the eye stalks, the creature cannot be surprised while it is conscious. It can look around corners or peek over walls with its eye stalks, enabling it to establish line of sight while maintaining total cover. The creature's Charisma score is reduced by 4.
20	Goat Legs: The creature's legs grow hairy and twisted, becoming like goat legs. The creature's walking speed is increased by 5 ft., and it can jump three times the normal distance, though it can't jump farther than its remaining movement would allow. It can no longer wear armor on its legs (reducing the AC bonus from worn armor by 1). Its Charisma score is reduced by 2.



roof of the cavern 30' above. The fronds extend into the tunnel all the way to the Outer Fane (22), from where a flickering fire-light radiates. Just above the 'tree' is the mouth of a shaft that ascends upward 50' and southward 30' (a 60-degree slope) until it eventually opens into the floor of room 42 of the first level.

The 'tree' at the center of the pool is a **birthing tree**, created by the *Stone*. The birthing tree will attack any characters who enter the room unless they are escorted by its caretakers, the Red Fang bugbears. In addition, **two abominations** swim in the red waters. They will rise up and attack any who harm the **birthing tree**. After three rounds of fighting, **two catechists** will arrive from the Unholy Fane (22) to protect the tree.

A character who enters the pool has disadvantage on his attack rolls, and attack rolls against the character have advantage. Any character in the pool who is paralyzed by the abomination becomes completely immersed and must succeed on a DC 18 Constitution saving throw or suffer an abominable mutation (see p. 55). Remember that the abominations' tentacles have 10-foot reach – long enough to allow them to attack characters standing on the narrow beach while they remain in the lake.

The bloody canal that exits this cavern to the east can be used to extend the catacombs if the GM so desires. Otherwise, the canal gradually narrows and lowers until eventually the bloody fluid is just a trickle into the earth...

The Priests' Quarters: This 20' × 20' dormitory houses the priests who serve The Lady Below. A set of five sleeping couches has been arranged around a small one-legged table. One of the couches is upholstered with linen, while the others have straw pallets. Sitting on the table are a sack of legionary-issue iron rations (two weeks supply) and a bottle of vinegary wine. Any character who investigates the upholstered couch and succeeds on a DC 10 Wisdom (Perception) check discovers a red spinel (100gp) and a pure black onyx (75g) hidden in its lining.

22. The Outer Fane: This 40' square chamber is a fane to Sakkara, chief goddess of Zahar. The whole room is lit by torches set in wall-sconces (10 total), the light of which can be seen from 20. The fane has a 10' radius apse on its northern and southern end. Stationed in each apse is a black marble statue of a dragon-winged woman with a swollen, pregnant belly. (The statues represent Sakkara in her incarnation as Mother of Monsters.) In the center of the room is an altar of red-striated marble covered in silver runes and golden inlays.

The altar radiates as desecrated if *detect good and evil* is cast. Any creature that worships good gods must make a DC 15 Charisma saving throw when it enters the Outer Fane. If the save fails, the creature is frightened until it leaves the area. If the save succeeds, the creature ignores the effect until it leaves the area. Physically smashing the altar (AC 17, hp 27, damage threshold 10) and then casting *bleed* or pouring holy water on the broken remains will remove the hallowed effect.



Ur-Namu (CE male human **cult fanatic** with *light, sacred flame, thaumaturgy, bane, command, detect evil and good, hold person, and zone of truth* prepared) tends the altar here along with his **four catechists**. Adventurers escorted to the fane by one of the Red Eye bugbears from room **15** will be greeted warmly and invited to offer their prayers to Sakkara at the black altar while he assesses their commitment using a *zone of truth* spell. Those who pass this test will be sent to the surface to capture prisoners as a “gift” to The Lady Below. Those who refuse or fail will be immediately attacked by Ur-Namu and three of the catechists. The fourth will run to alert Zakiti in the Inner Fane (**38**), reaching her in nine rounds.

If Ur-Namu hears a disturbance in the Lake of Blood (**20**), he will send two of his catechists to investigate after three rounds. If they do not return, he will send one of his catechists to **38** to alert Zakiti while he and the remaining catechist guard the fane.

Ur-Namu wears a silver holy symbol of Sakkara (a two-headed winged serpent) worth 25gp and carries a ceremonial mace worth 75gp value. The mace is of Zaharan make, with a bronze flanged head affixed to a leather-wrapped haft that terminates in a bronze double-headed serpent. It's not magical but it looks impressive!

23. Guarded Door: Lurking around the sharp bend in the tunnel here are **six zombies**. They guard the door to the southwest and will attack anyone not openly displaying a holy symbol of Sakkara. The door has been *arcane locked* by Zakiti. The passphrase to open the door is “Open in the name of The Lady Below” spoken in Ancient Zaharan.

24. Guarded Passage: Both doors into this passage are *arcane locked*. The passphrase to open the doors is “Open in the name of The Lady Below” spoken in Ancient Zaharan. A **pair of abominations** lurks in this narrow 5' wide tunnel. They will immediately attack anyone not openly displaying a holy symbol of Sakkara.

25. The Pool of Blood: This diamond-shaped cave measures about 40' × 55' across, with a vaulted ceiling about 20' high. A pool of *bloody fluid* fills the room (see p. 40). The pool is but a few inches deep where this cavern connects with the Abominable Chamber (**36**) to the west but it gradually deepens until it reaches a depth of about 5' where it abuts the Lake of Blood (**20**) to the east.

A small, foul growth rises from the center of the pool – a **birthing tree sapling**. Around it sprout pink fleshy tendrils that spread hideously all the way to room **36** and beyond. The growth is similar to that found in **20**, but somewhat smaller. The birthing tree sapling will attack any characters who approach within 5 feet of the *bloody fluid* unless they are escorted by its caretakers, the Red Fang bugbears.

26. Bloody Water: This cave's walls form a crescent approximately 100' wide, with smooth ceilings about 15' overhead. The cave is almost entirely filled, to a depth of 5', with the same *bloody fluid* found throughout the Catacombs (see p. 51). A narrow path, ranging from 3' to 5' in width, surrounds the pool on three sides. The cavern is otherwise empty.

27. Escape Tunnel: This beach leads to a tunnel that runs about 200' before ending in an (apparent) rock wall. Any character who searches the wall and succeeds on a DC 20 Wisdom (Perception) check detects the fine seams of the secret door. The door is easily opened once

detected simply by rotating it around its center axis. The door leads to the outside, far from the entrance of the temple above. Only The Lady Below knows of this escape route.

28. Ghoul Nest: This natural limestone cavern is some 35' across, with 15' high ceilings. **Four ghouls** lurk in the northeast corner out of sight of the eastern (**29**) entrance, amidst a filthy nest of bones and refuse. If they hear characters struggling with the bars in **29**, they will fall upon the party once it is split half-in and half-out of the bars. Any character who searches the ghoul's nest discovers four silver collars with brass clasps shaped like serpent heads (50gp each).

29. Spiral Stair: A spiral staircase (from room **18** of the Buried Temple level) descends into this 30' wide cave. A cave mouth to the west (leading to **28**) is blocked by iron bars. The bars are mortared to the floor and cannot be moved. They are too thick to be readily destroyed (AC. Slipping through the bars requires a successful DC 20 Dexterity (Acrobatics) check. Halflings have advantage on the check, while any creatures in scale mail, half plate, or any heavy armor have disadvantage on the check. It becomes easier to slip through the bars if they are bent to widen the gap (reduce DC by 5). Bending the bars requires a successful DC 20 Strength (Athletics) check. Note that the ghouls in **28** will attack once about half the party has slipped through the bars.

30. Oozing Corridor: A **grey ooze** hides along the floor of this damp tunnel, blending into the limestone surface. It will attack any creatures that enter the tunnel. Unless the characters are prodding the floor as they move, they will be surprised during the first round of combat with the ooze.

31. Slime Chamber: The floors and roof of this damp cave are covered with algae, fungus, and mold. Hidden among the flora are **three patches of green slime**. The tunnel beyond may be used by the GM to expand the catacombs if desired. Otherwise, it leads to an impassable cave-in after 60'.

32. Organic Chamber: The limestone walls of this 70' long, 20' wide tunnel are slowly transforming into the same fleshy, organic fronds found in the Lake of Blood (**20**). The walls ‘pulse’ with the flow of unidentifiable fluids. No central growth has yet emerged, and the fronds can be put to the torch without incident.

33. Chitin Walls: Chitin-like shells, resembling barnacles, grow from the limestone walls of this bean-shaped cavern. Occasionally the shells move, as if something is alive beneath them. The shells are harmless and can be easily destroyed, but they will simply regrow within 1d4 days if the *Stone* is not destroyed.

34. Skeleton Chamber: This 30' diameter semicircular cavern has chitin-like shells on its walls (similar to those in **33**). **12 skeletons** are standing at attention here facing southeast. The skeletons guard the Inner Fane (**38**) and will attack anyone not openly displaying a holy symbol of Sakkara. A battle here will draw the attention of The Lady Below from the Inner Fane after two rounds have elapsed.

35. Zombie Chamber: This 40' diameter cavern has fleshy tendrils growing along the full length of its walls. While the walls pulse with bloody fluid, **eight zombies** stand motionlessly facing southeast. The zombies will attack anyone not openly displaying a holy symbol of

Sakkara. A battle here will draw the attention of The Lady Below from the Inner Fane after two rounds have elapsed.

36. Abominable Chamber: Fleshy tendrils that pulse with foul liquids coat the walls of this limestone cave and lead back to the Pool of the Blood (25), from where a pair of **abominations** (see p. 62) have shambled. The abominations will attack anyone not openly displaying a holy symbol of Sakkara.

37. Bone Lair: The rear of this limestone cavern is filled with the skeletal remains of hundreds of humans and humanoids. The bones are piled into a macabre heap about 20' in diameter, reaching almost 5' high at the rear wall. All of the bones are broken and gnawed. A character who spends 10 minutes searching the bones and succeeds on a DC 20 Wisdom (Perception) check discovers the following items: a rotted pouch with 13gp; a silver ring (50gp); two gold teeth (1gp each); a pile of 27cp; and a *chime of opening* (a smooth bronze tube, unpatinated despite its age and pleasantly resonant).

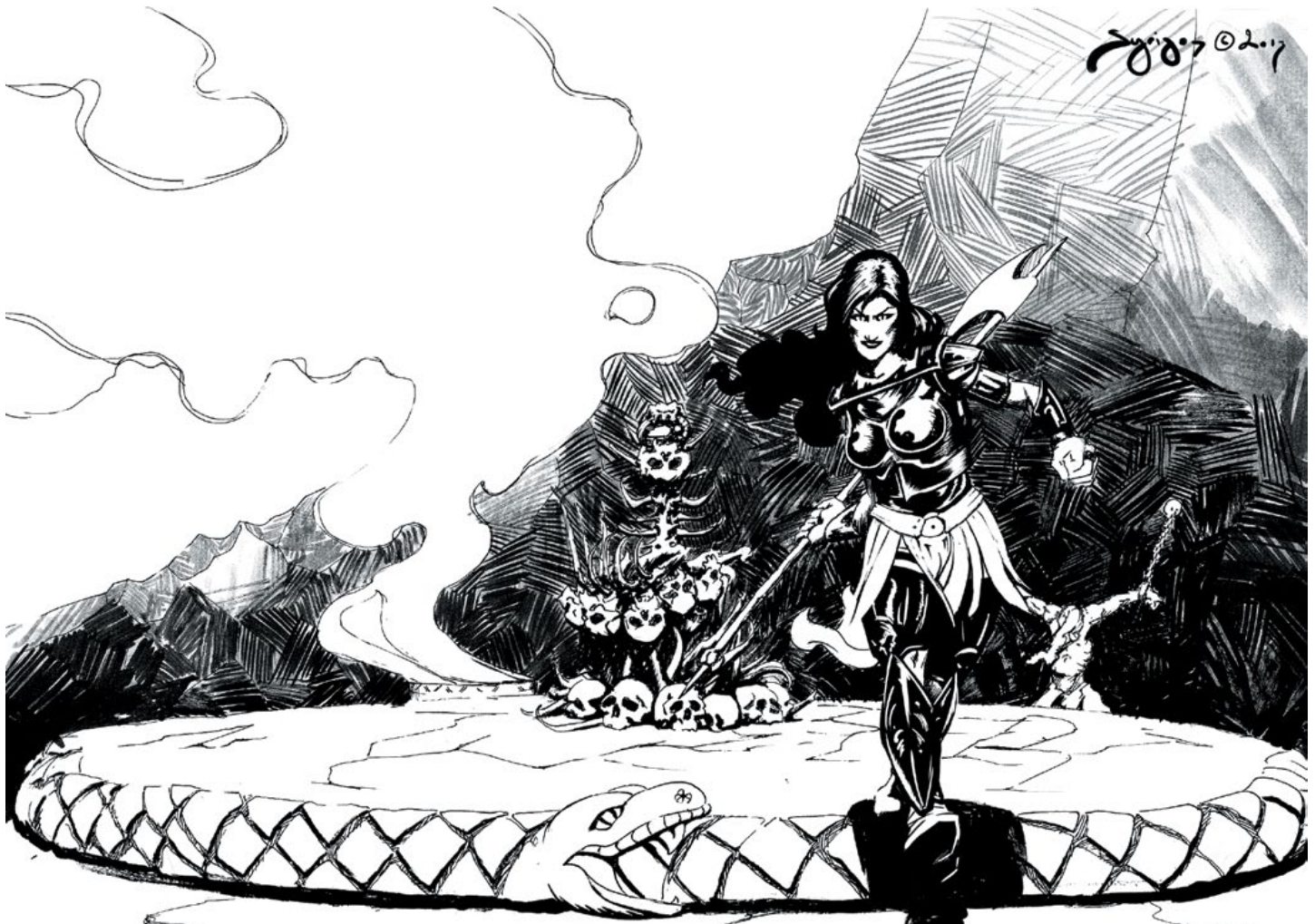
38. The Inner Fane: The *Stone of Sakkara* (see Magic Items, p. 74) sits atop an altar of bone that rises from an image of a massive serpent eating its own tail carved onto a dais in the center of this 70' wide, egg-shaped cavern. Veins and fleshy "roots" grow around and through the bones of this altar, knitting them together in a blasphemous whole. The tendrils spread across the floor, past a ring of burning braziers stationed around the altar, and grow up into the ceiling 25' overhead.

The altar radiates as desecrated if *detect good and evil* is cast. Undead within 60 feet of the altar have turn resistance (advantage on saving throws against turn effects). Physically smashing the altar (AC 17, hp 27, damage threshold 10) and then casting **bleed** or pouring holy water on the broken remains will remove the effect.

Zakiti, The Lady Below (CE female **Zaharan Ruinward**) spends most of her time here conducting sacrifices. At any time, there will be 1d3 naked prisoners (**commoners**) bound to the altar by the fleshy "roots" that permeate it. If any of the adventurers have still-missing family members (see p. 3 and 59), these family members will be found here, awaiting sacrifice. If Zakiti knows (or thinks) the adventurers have come for the prisoners, she will use them as hostages to demand a surrender, possibly using *charm person* to turn one or two against any would-be rescuers.

If Zakiti is warned of intruders by one of the catechists from room 22, or hears battle in rooms 34 or 35, she will cast *mirror image* on herself, then gather whatever undead servants remain to her (from 23, 34, and 35), and move to deal with the intruders. If Zakiti's minions have all been defeated, however, she will seize the *Stone* and attempt to flee the cavern complex by means of the escape tunnel (27), *arcane locking* its secret door behind her as she departs.

If she does confront the party, Zakiti will first cast *charm person* on the party's strongest fighter, attempting to sow discord, then wade into melee. If reduced to ½ hp, she may attempt surrender if the party



appears willing to accept it, even hinting that there is a bounty on her head if taken alive. (This is false, but once taken to a constable, she will be safe from angry adventurers. The Lady has allies powerfully placed within the Auran Empire, and she knows her release will be arranged in the future.) If she feels the party will simply kill her, or destroy the *Stone*, she will fight to the death.

39. The Resting Chamber: The Lady Below has made this cavern her bed chamber. She has had a well-made sleeping couch brought from the surface, along with a small three-legged table and a folding stool with purple upholstery. At the foot of her sleeping couch sits her treasure chest. The chest has a mechanical lock with a poison needle trap and is sealed with *arcane lock*. The passphrase to remove the *arcane lock* is “Open in the name of The Lady Below” spoken in Ancient Zaharan.

The mechanical lock can be opened with the appropriate key or picked with a successful DC 15 Dexterity check using thieves’ tools. (If the *arcane lock* has not been removed, the DC is 26.) Unsuccessfully picking the lock triggers the poison needle trap. The character picking the lock takes 1 piercing damage and 11 (2d10) poison damage, and must succeed on a DC 15 Constitution saving throw or be poisoned for one hour. A successful DC 15 Intelligence (Investigation) allows a character to notice the trap’s presence from alterations made to the lock. A successful DC 15 Dexterity check using thieves’ tools disarms the trap, removing the needle from the lock.

The chest holds Zakiti’s personal wealth, including 500sp, 300gp, 100pp, and three black jets (100gp each). Secreted amidst the coins is a freshly-drafted letter written in Ancient Zaharan. The letter is addressed to a “Lord of Secrets” and details the Lady’s discovery and use of the *Stone* so far. She offers herself and the *Stone*’s power, in service to the Lord’s “dark mission”. Whether the party desires to pursue this Lord of Secrets, and what its ultimate goals are, is up to them and the GM’s discretion. Details on the Lord of Secrets are beyond the scope of this module, and left for the GM to expand upon later.

The key to the chest is hidden below Zakiti’s sleeping couch. Any character who searches the couch and succeeds on a DC 10 Wisdom (Perception) check finds the key.

FURTHER ADVENTURERS IN THE BORDERLANDS

Adventurers who defeat the Lady Below will be richly rewarded. Not only will they have whatever spoils they have retrieved from the dungeon, they will receive the promised 2,000gp reward from the legate, and will be in possession of the *Stone of Sakkara* or its fragments. The long-term ramifications of using and keeping the *Stone* and/or its fragments are discussed in Appendix II, New Magical Items, p. 74.

For parties who seek further adventure in the borderlands the following points of interest, marked on the Regional Map, may serve as the seeds of further challenges.

Sinkhole of Evil (0411): Concealed within a shadowy dale of wild ash and twisted oak trees lie the ruins of a Zaharan shrine. Of the once-proud marble structure, all that remains is a black colossus of an ancient warrior-king standing on a stone tile floor. A gaping hole

punctures the stone tiles just in front of the colossus, from which an evil miasma emanates.

Shrine of the White Lady (1404):

Hidden in a secluded forest clearing is an ivy-covered shrine of white marble, sacred to Demara, the White Lady, built by the elves when they ruled Southern Argollë. The shrine is guarded by a **unicorn** (20 hp) who protects it from the monsters of the Viaspen Forest. Within the shrine is a pool

of crystal clear water. The waters of the pool carry a fey magic. Any good-aligned creature which drinks from the pool receives the benefit of *greater restoration*; in exchange for this boon, the creature receives a *geas* to destroy evil creatures in Southern Argollë. A creature can benefit from the pool’s waters work but once every 30 days.

Ruined Imperial Fortress (1707): This keep was constructed by the Imperial legions during the Argollëan War centuries ago to guard the east bank of the Krysivor River. The domain that the fortress protected has long since slipped from Imperial rule, and the fortress itself has largely fallen into ruin. It has lately been re-occupied by a tribe of bugbears led by a crusty war-chief.

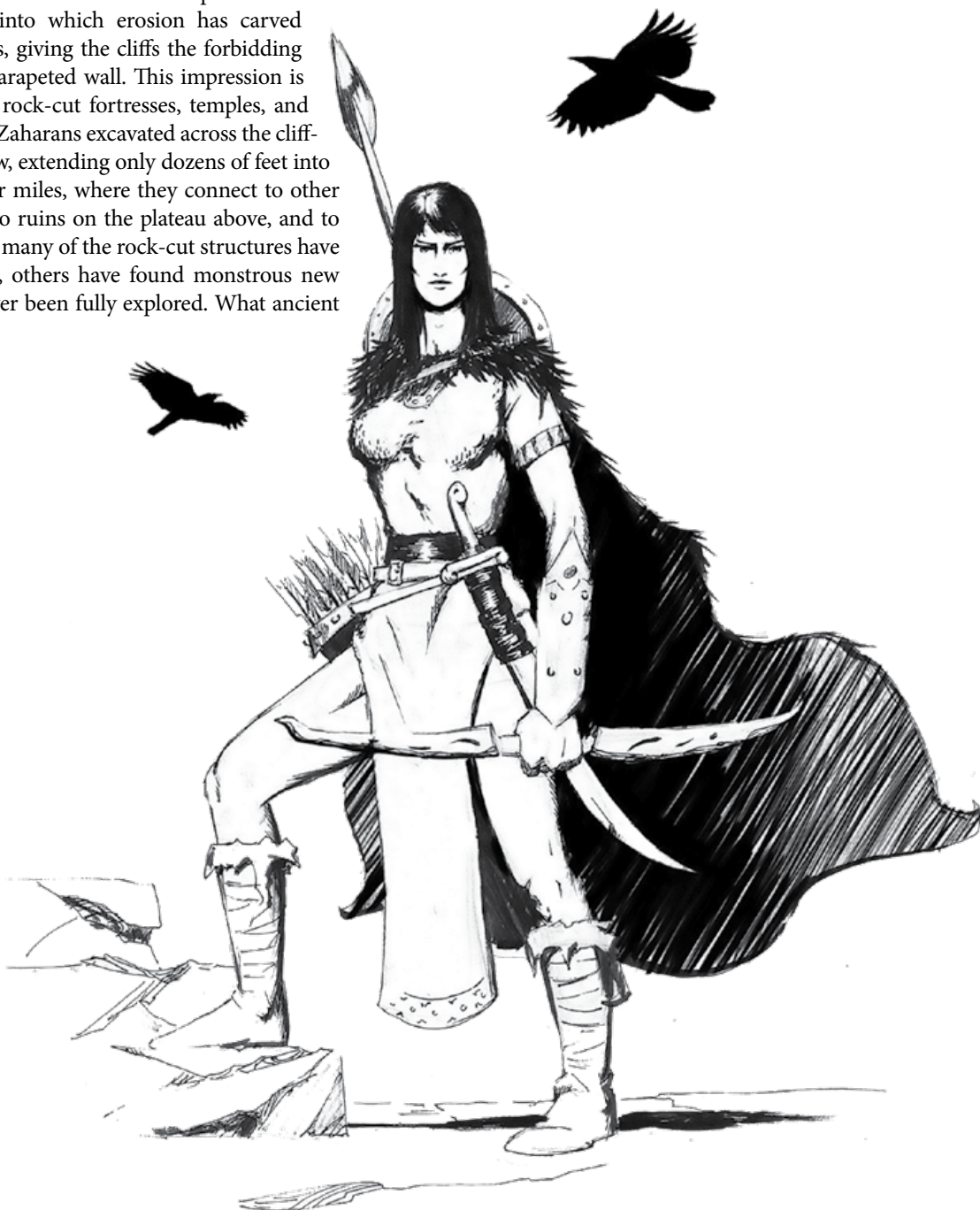
In case of necromantic emergency, be advised that an intact human skeleton occupies 2.5 cubic feet. Therefore a bone pile 10’ in radius with an average height of 3’ has a volume of 628 cubic feet – room for 251.2 skeletons.



Watchtower at Eammon Mór (1714): A ruined elven watchtower of white granite rises from Eammon Mór, a mighty tor that dwarfs the surrounding woody hills. Built after the elven victory in the Beastmen Wars (219 BE) to watch for invaders from the Dark Wall, the watchtower was abandoned when the elves lost control of Southern Argollë to the Aurans (166 IY). Today the watchtower and the bunkers beneath it have fallen under control of an ogre warlord who commands a warband of some 170 orcs.

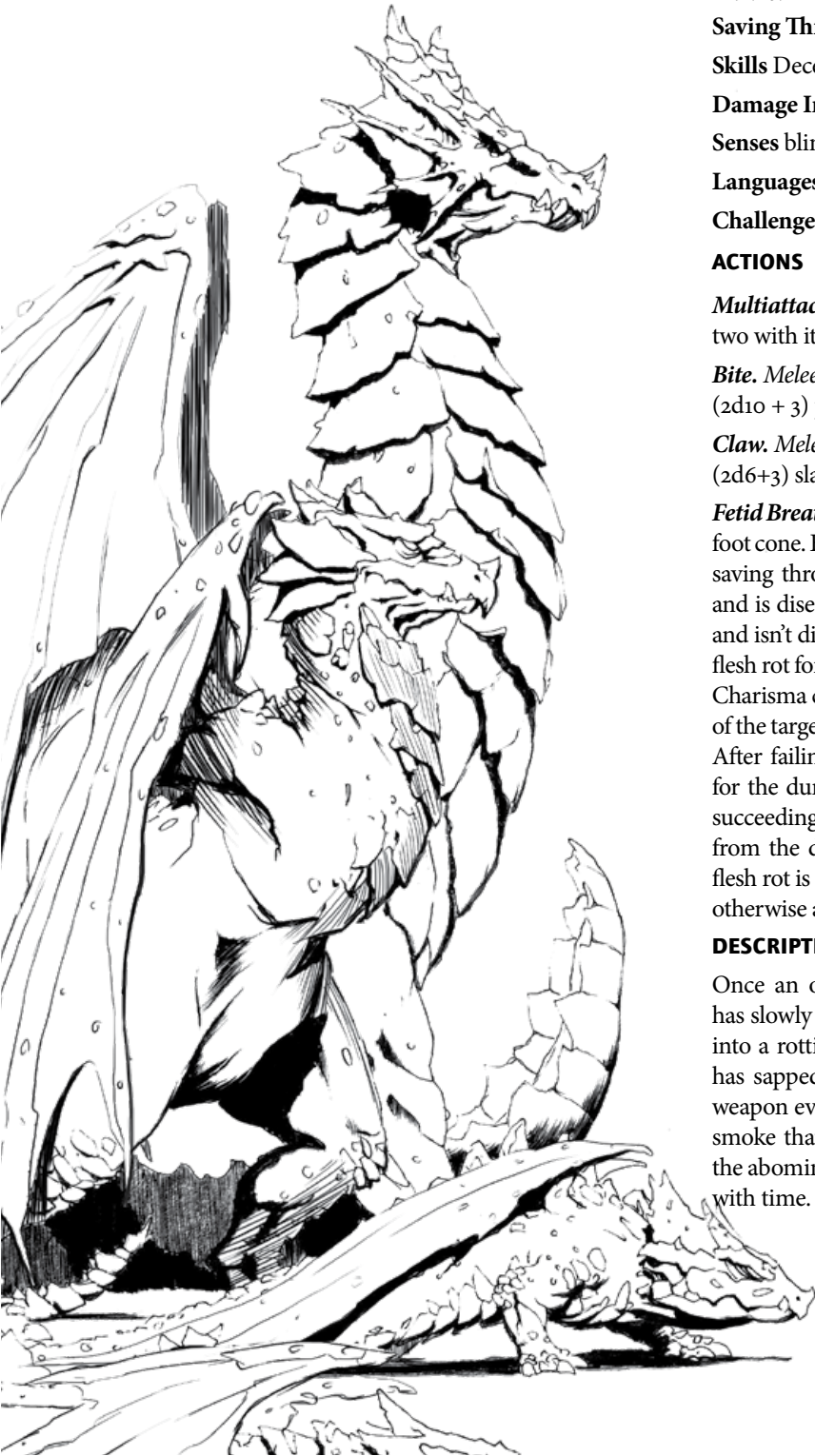
Ruined Monastery (2205): Nestled among the rocky hills here are the ruins of a Zaharan monastery. Most of the buildings have collapsed into rubble, but the underground complex below the ruins is intact and inhabited by humanoids and chthonic cultists.

The Dark Wall: The rolling hills here give way to a range of steep, rocky cliffs which mark the western edge of the high plateau from where the sorcerer-kings of Zahar ruled their empire. The cliffs are formed of black basalt, into which erosion has carved jagged defiles and stone ridges, giving the cliffs the forbidding appearance of an enormous parapeted wall. This impression is furthered by the hundreds of rock-cut fortresses, temples, and tombs that the Thrassians and Zaharans excavated across the cliff-faces. Some of these are shallow, extending only dozens of feet into the cliffs, but others stretch for miles, where they connect to other structures on the Dark Wall, to ruins on the plateau above, and to abyssal vaults far below. While many of the rock-cut structures have been pillaged and abandoned, others have found monstrous new occupants, and some have never been fully explored. What ancient secrets lie unplumbed within?



APPENDIX I - MONSTERS

The following monsters can found in either the SRD or one of the rule books of the 5th edition of the world's most popular pen and paper RPG: acolyte, ankheg, apprentice wizard, bugbear chief, commoner, cult fanatic, ghoul, giant poisonous snake, giant rat, giant spider, goblin, green slime, grey ooze, grimlock, guard, ogre, scout, skeleton, stirge, warhorse, worg, yellow mold, zombie. All other monsters in this adventure are detailed below.



ABOMINABLE YOUNG DRAGON (IDIMMU)

Large dragon, chaotic evil
Armor Class 17 (natural armor)
Hit Points 120 (16d10 + 32)
Speed 40 ft., fly 80 ft., swim 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
17(+3)	12(+1)	15(+2)	16(+3)	13(+1)	15(+2)

Saving Throws Dex +4, Con +5, Wis +4, Cha +5
Skills Deception +5, Perception +7, Stealth +4
Damage Immunities necrotic
Senses blindsight 30 ft., darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 17
Languages Draconic
Challenge 6 (2,300 XP)

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The dragon makes three attacks: one with its bite and two with its claws.

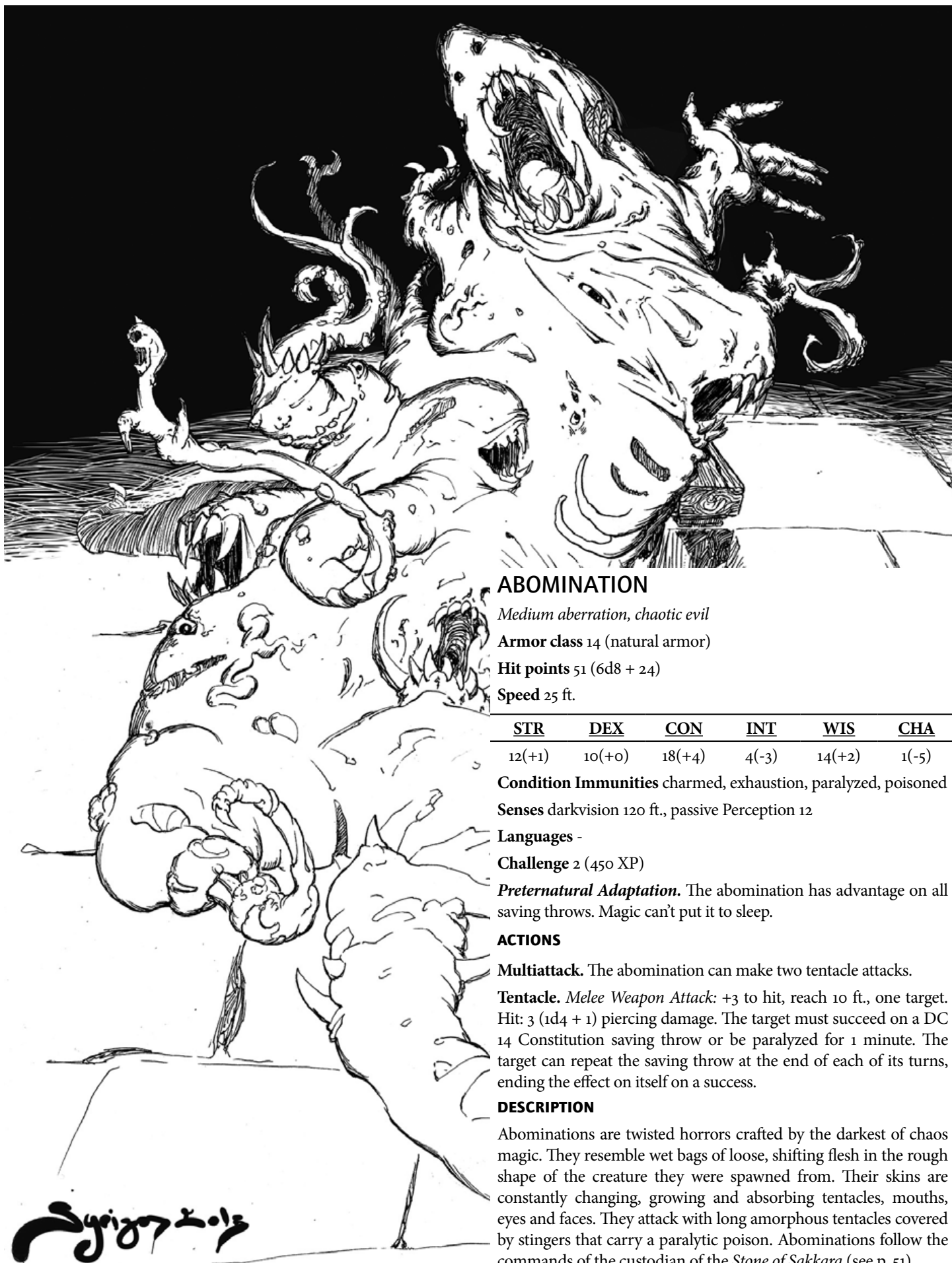
Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 14 (2d10 + 3) piercing damage plus 7 (2d6) necrotic damage.

Claw. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 10 (2d6+3) slashing damage.

Fetid Breath (Recharge 5–6). The dragon exhales fetid smoke in a 30-foot cone. Each creature in that area must make a DC 13 Constitution saving throw. On a failed save it takes 42 (12d6) necrotic damage and is diseased. On a successful save, it takes half as much damage and isn't diseased by the breath. A diseased creature is afflicted with flesh rot for 7 days. While diseased, the creature has disadvantage on Charisma checks and vulnerability to all damage. At the end of each of the target's turns, it must make a DC 13 Constitution saving throw. After failing three of these saving throws, the disease's effects last for the duration, and the creature stops making these saves. After succeeding on three of these saving throws, the creature recovers from the disease, and the creature stops making these saves. The flesh rot is a natural disease, and any effect that removes a disease or otherwise ameliorates a disease's effects apply to it.

DESCRIPTION

Once an ordinary green dragon, the abominable young dragon has slowly been twisted by the chaotic aura of the *Stone of Sakkara* into a rotting beast with putrid purple scales. The transformation has sapped its strength and constitution, but rendered its breath weapon even more frightening – for now the dragon exudes a foul smoke that rots the very flesh of those who inhale it. If left alive, the abominable dragon will become even more twisted and horrific with time.



ABOMINATION

Medium aberration, chaotic evil

Armor class 14 (natural armor)

Hit points 51 (6d8 + 24)

Speed 25 ft.

<u>STR</u>	<u>DEX</u>	<u>CON</u>	<u>INT</u>	<u>WIS</u>	<u>CHA</u>
12(+1)	10(+0)	18(+4)	4(-3)	14(+2)	1(-5)

Condition Immunities charmed, exhaustion, paralyzed, poisoned

Senses darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 12

Languages -

Challenge 2 (450 XP)

Prernatural Adaptation. The abomination has advantage on all saving throws. Magic can't put it to sleep.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The abomination can make two tentacle attacks.

Tentacle. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. Hit: 3 (1d4 + 1) piercing damage. The target must succeed on a DC 14 Constitution saving throw or be paralyzed for 1 minute. The target can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns, ending the effect on itself on a success.

DESCRIPTION

Abominations are twisted horrors crafted by the darkest of chaos magic. They resemble wet bags of loose, shifting flesh in the rough shape of the creature they were spawned from. Their skins are constantly changing, growing and absorbing tentacles, mouths, eyes and faces. They attack with long amorphous tentacles covered by stingers that carry a paralytic poison. Abominations follow the commands of the custodian of the *Stone of Sakkara* (see p. 51).

BRIGAND

Medium humanoid (human), chaotic evil

Armor class 12 (leather armor)

Hit points 17 (3d8 + 3)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
14(+2)	12(+1)	12(+1)	11(+0)	10(+0)	10(+0)

Skills Intimidation +2

Senses passive Perception 10

Languages Common

Challenge 1/4 (50 XP)

ACTIONS

Spear. *Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft. and range 20/60 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d6 + 2) piercing damage or 6 (1d8 + 2) piercing damage if used with two hands to make a melee attack.

Shortsword. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d6 + 2) piercing damage.

BRIGAND KING (DRUSUS)

Medium humanoid (human), chaotic evil

Armor class 16 (chain shirt and shield)

Hit points 45 (6d8 + 18)

Speed

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
17(+3)	12(+1)	15(+2)	16(+3)	13(+1)	15(+2)

Skills Intimidation +5, Perception +3

Senses passive Perception 10

Languages Common

Challenge 1 (200 XP)

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The brigand king makes one longsword attack and one shield bash.

Longsword. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (1d8 + 3) slashing damage.

Shield Bash. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d4 + 3) bludgeoning damage. If the target is a Medium or smaller creature, it must succeed on a DC 14 Strength saving throw or be knocked prone.

REACTIONS

Parry. The brigand king adds 2 to his AC against one melee attack that would hit him. To do so, the brigand king must see the attacker and be wielding a melee weapon.

BIRTHING TREE

Huge plant, chaotic evil

Armor class 14 (natural armor)

Hit points 102 (12d12 + 24)

Speed 0 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
18(+4)	6(-2)	15(+2)	7(-2)	16(+3)	6(-2)

Damage Immunities bludgeoning and piercing from nonmagical attacks, poison

Condition Immunities blinded, charmed, deafened, exhaustion, frightened, paralyzed, petrified, poisoned

Senses blindsight 60 ft., passive Perception 14

Languages -

Challenge 4 (1100 XP)

ACTIONS

Grasping Tendrils. The birthing tree can have up to six tendrils at a time. Each tendril can be attacked (AC 14; 10 hit points; immunity to poison and psychic damage). A tendril can also be broken if a creature takes an action and succeeds on a DC 15 Strength check against it. Breaking or destroying a tendril deals no damage to the birthing tree, but it takes an action for the birthing tree sapling to grow a new tendril.

Immobile. Attack rolls against the birthing tree (but not its tendrils) have advantage. The birthing tree has disadvantage on Dexterity saving throws.

Claw. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 10 (2d6+3) slashing damage.

Fetid Breath (Recharge 5–6). The dragon exhales fetid smoke in a 30-foot cone. Each creature in that area must make a DC 13 Constitution saving throw. On a failed save it takes 42 (12d6) necrotic damage and is diseased. On a successful save, it takes half as much damage and isn't diseased by the breath. A diseased creature is afflicted with flesh rot for 7 days. While diseased, the creature has disadvantage on Charisma checks and vulnerability to all damage. At the end of each of the target's turns, it must make a DC 13 Constitution saving throw. After failing three of these saving throws, the disease's effects last for the duration, and the creature stops making these saves. After succeeding on three of these saving throws, the creature recovers from the disease, and the creature stops making these saves. The flesh rot is a natural disease, and any effect that removes a disease or otherwise ameliorates a disease's effects apply to it.

Multiattack. The birthing tree makes three attacks with its tendrils, uses Choke, then uses Reel.

Tendril. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 50 ft., one creature. *Hit:* The target is grappled (escape DC 15). Until the grapple ends, the target is restrained and has disadvantage on Strength checks and Strength saving throws, and the birthing tree can't use the same tendril on another target.

Choke. Each creature grappled by the birthing tree must make a DC 15 Strength saving throw. After failing three of these saving throws, the creature becomes unconscious. The condition lasts until the end of its first turn after the grapple ends.

BIRTHING TREE ACTIONS (CONT.)

Reel. The birthing tree pulls each unconscious creature grappled by it up to 25 feet straight toward it. If this moves the creature into the *bloody fluid*, it is considered completely immersed. Apply the effects noted on p. 73.

Regrow (Recharge 5-6). The birthing tree grows one new tendril.

BIRTHING TREE SAPLING

Large plant, chaotic evil

Armor class 14 (natural armor)

Hit points 60 (8d10 + 16)

Speed 0 ft.

<u>STR</u>	<u>DEX</u>	<u>CON</u>	<u>INT</u>	<u>WIS</u>	<u>CHA</u>
16(+3)	6(-2)	15(+2)	7(-2)	14(+2)	6(-2)

Damage Immunities bludgeoning and piercing from nonmagical attacks, poison

Condition Immunities blinded, charmed, deafened, exhaustion, frightened, paralyzed, petrified, poisoned

Senses blindsight 30 ft., passive Perception 12

Languages -

Challenge 3 (700 XP)

ACTIONS

Grasping Tendrils. The birthing tree sapling can have up to three tendrils at a time. Each tendril can be attacked (AC 14; 5 hit points; immunity to poison and psychic damage). A tendril can also be broken if a creature takes an action and succeeds on a DC 14 Strength check against it. Breaking or destroying a tendril deals no damage to the birthing tree, but it takes an action for the birthing tree sapling to grow a new tendril.

Immoble. Attack rolls against the birthing tree sapling (but not its tendrils) have advantage. The birthing tree sapling has disadvantage on Dexterity saving throws.

Multiattack. The birthing tree makes two attacks with its tendrils, uses Choke, then uses Reel.

Tendril. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 25 ft., one creature. *Hit:* The target is grappled (escape DC 14). Until the grapple ends, the target is restrained and has disadvantage on Strength checks and Strength saving throws, and the birthing tree can't use the same tendril on another target.

Choke. Each creature grappled by the birthing tree must make a DC 14 Strength saving throw. After failing three of these saving throws, the creature becomes unconscious until the grapple ends.

Reel. The birthing tree pulls each unconscious creature grappled by it up to 10 feet straight toward it. If this moves the creature into the *bloody fluid*, apply the effects noted on p. 40.

Regrow (Recharge 5-6). The birthing tree sapling grows one new tendril.

Reel. The birthing tree pulls each unconscious creature grappled by it up to 25 feet straight toward it. If this moves the creature into the *bloody fluid*, it is considered completely immersed. Apply the effects noted on p. 40.

Regrow (Recharge 5-6). The birthing tree grows one new tendril.

BUGBEAR CHAMPION

Medium humanoid (goblinoid), chaotic evil

Armor class 17 (chain shirt, shield)

Hit points 45 (6d8 + 12)

Speed 30 ft.

<u>STR</u>	<u>DEX</u>	<u>CON</u>	<u>INT</u>	<u>WIS</u>	<u>CHA</u>
17(+3)	12(+1)	15(+2)	16(+3)	13(+1)	15(+2)

Skills Stealth +6, Survival +2

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 10

Languages Common, Goblin

Challenge 2 (450 XP)

Brute. A melee weapon deals one extra die of its damage when the bugbear this with it (included in the attack).

Surprise Attack. If the bugbear surprises a creature and hits it with an attack during the first round of combat, the target takes an extra 7 (2d6) damage from the attack.

ACTIONS

Morningstar. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 12 (2d8 + 3) piercing damage.

Javelin. *Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft. or range 30/120 ft., one target. *Hit:* 10 (2d6 + 3) piercing damage.

BUGBEAR WARRIOR

Medium humanoid (goblinoid), chaotic evil

Armor class 16 (hide armor, shield)

Hit points 27 (5d8 + 5)

Speed 30 ft.

<u>STR</u>	<u>DEX</u>	<u>CON</u>	<u>INT</u>	<u>WIS</u>	<u>CHA</u>
15(+2)	14(+2)	13(+1)	8(-1)	11(+0)	9(-1)

Skills Stealth +6, Survival +2

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 10

Languages Common, Goblin

Challenge 1 (200 XP)

Brute. A melee weapon deals one extra die of its damage when the bugbear this with it (included in the attack).

Surprise Attack. If the bugbear surprises a creature and hits it with an attack during the first round of combat, the target takes an extra 7 (2d6) damage from the attack.

ACTIONS

Morningstar. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 11 (2d8 + 2) piercing damage.

Javelin. *Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft. or range 30/120 ft., one target. *Hit:* 9 (2d6 + 2) piercing damage.

CATECHIST

Medium humanoid (human), chaotic evil

Armor class 12 (leather armor)

Hit points 16 (3d8+3)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
11(+0)	12(+1)	12(+1)	10(+0)	13(+1)	10(+0)

Skills Deception +2, Religion +2

Senses passive Perception 10

Languages Common, Ancient Zaharan

Challenge 1/2 (100 XP)

Dark Devotion. The catechist has advantage on saving throws against being charmed or frightened.

Spellcasting. The catechist is a 1st level spellcaster. Its spellcasting ability is Wisdom (spell save DC 11, +3 to hit with spell attacks). The catechist has the following cleric spells prepared:

Cantrips (at will): *light*, *sacred flame*, *thaumaturgy*

1st level (2 slots): *command*, *inflict wounds*

ACTIONS

Scimitar. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 4 (1d4 + 1) slashing damage.

CRIPPLED WIZARD (MALYN)

Medium humanoid (human), chaotic neutral

Armor class 10

Hit points 17 (5d8-5)

Speed 15 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
3(-5)	10(+))	9(-1)	18(+4)	10(+0)	3(-5)

Skills Arcana +7, History +7

Senses passive Perception 10

Languages Common, Ancient Zaharan, Classical Auran, Draconic, Elven

Challenge 1/2 (100 XP)

Horrible Scars. The crippled wizard has disadvantage on Charisma (Persuasion) checks and advantage on Charisma (Intimidation) checks.

Lamed. The crippled wizard's speed on foot is reduced by half to 15 ft. It falls prone after using the Dash action.

Spellcasting. The crippled wizard is a 6th level spellcaster. Its spellcasting ability is Intelligence (spell save DC 15, +4 to hit with spell attacks). The crippled wizard has the following wizard spells prepared:

Cantrips (at will): *mage hand*, *message*, *mending*, *prestidigitation*

1st level (4 slots): *comprehend languages*, *disguise self*, *identify*, *unseen servant*

2nd level (3 slots): *alter self*, *detect thoughts*, *invisibility*

3rd level (3 slots): *dispel magic*, *fireball*, *stinking cloud*

ACTIONS

Walking Stick. *Melee Weapon Attack:* -2 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 0 (1d6 - 5) bludgeoning damage.

GIANT BOMBARDIER BEETLE

Medium beast, unaligned

Armor class 15 (natural armor)

Hit points 19 (3d8 + 6)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
12(+1)	10(+0)	14(+2)	1(-5)	7(-2)	3(-4)

Senses blindsight 30 ft., passive Perception 8

Languages -

Challenge 1/2 (100 XP)

ACTIONS

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d8 + 1) slashing damage.

Acid Spray (Recharge 5-6). The beetle releases a 10-foot cone of acidic vapor. Each creature in that area must make a DC 12 Constitution saving throw. On a failed save it takes 7 (2d6) acid damage, or half as much on a successful one.

HOBGOBLIN CHIEF

Medium humanoid (goblinoid), lawful evil

Armor class 19 (splint mail, shield)

Hit points 32 (5d8 + 10)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
14(+2)	14(+2)	14(+2)	12(+1)	10(+0)	12(+1)

Saving Throws Str +4, Dex +4, Wis +2

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 10

Languages Common, Goblin

Challenge 2 (450 XP)

Martial Advantage. Once per turn, the hobgoblin chief can deal an extra 7 (2d6) damage to a creature it hits with a weapon attack if that creature is within 5 feet of an ally of the hobgoblin that isn't incapacitated.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The hobgoblin chief makes two longsword attacks.

Longsword. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (1d8 + 2) slashing damage, or 7 (1d10 + 2) slashing damage if used with two hands.

Rally (1/Day): Each creature of the hobgoblin chief's choice that is within 30 feet of it and can hear it regains 3 (1d6) hit points. The hobgoblin chief can then make one attack as a bonus action.

HOBGOBLIN CHAMPION

Medium humanoid (goblinoid), lawful evil

Armor class 18 (chain mail, shield)

Hit points 19 (3d8 + 6)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
14(+2)	12(+1)	14(+2)	12(+1)	10(+0)	10(+1)

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 10

Languages Common, Goblin

Challenge 1 (200 XP)

Martial Advantage. Once per turn, the hobgoblin champion can deal an extra 7 (2d6) damage to a creature it hits with a weapon attack if that creature is within 5 feet of an ally of the hobgoblin that isn't incapacitated.

Spear Volley. The hobgoblin champion has advantage when using a spear to make a ranged weapon attack.

ACTIONS

Spear. *Melee Weapon or Ranged Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft. and ranged 20/60 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d6 + 2) piercing damage or 6 (1d8 + 1) piercing damage if used with two hands to make a melee attack.

Longsword. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (1d8 + 1) slashing damage or 7 (1d10 + 2) slashing damage if used with two hands.

HOBGOBLIN WARRIOR

Medium humanoid (goblinoid), lawful evil

Armor class 18 (chain mail, shield)

Hit points 11 (2d8 + 2)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
13(+1)	12(+1)	12(+1)	10(+0)	10(+0)	9(-1)

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 10

Languages Common, Goblin

Challenge 1/2 (100 XP)

Martial Advantage. Once per turn, the hobgoblin can deal an extra 7 (2d6) damage to a creature it hits with a weapon attack if that creature is within 5 feet of an ally of the hobgoblin that isn't incapacitated.

Spear Volley. The hobgoblin warrior has advantage when using a spear to make a ranged weapon attack if at least one of its allies within 5 feet has already made a ranged weapon attack against the same target that round.

ACTIONS

Spear. *Melee Weapon or Ranged Attack:* +3 to hit, reach 5 ft. and ranged 20/60 ft., one target. *Hit:* 4 (1d6 + 1) piercing damage, or 5 (1d8 + 1) piercing damage if used with two hands to make a melee attack.

Longsword. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d8 + 1) slashing damage, or 6 (1d10 + 1) slashing damage if used with two hands.

HOBGOBLIN WITCH DOCTOR

Medium humanoid (goblinoid), lawful evil

Armor class 17 (chain mail)

Hit points 16 (3d8 + 3)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
13(+1)	12(+1)	12(+1)	12(+1)	12(+1)	10(+0)

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 11

Languages Common, Goblin

Challenge 1 (200 XP)

Martial Advantage. Once per turn, the hobgoblin champion can deal an extra 7 (2d6) damage to a creature it hits with a weapon attack if that creature is within 5 feet of an ally of the hobgoblin that isn't incapacitated.

Spellcasting. The witch doctor is a 3rd level spellcaster. Its spellcasting ability is Wisdom (spell save DC 11, +3 to hit with spell attacks). The witch doctor has the following cleric spells prepared:

Cantrips (at will): *guidance, resistance, thaumaturgy*

1st level (4 slots): *bane, command*

2nd level (2 slots): *hold person, spiritual weapon* (spear)

ACTIONS

Spear. *Melee Weapon or Ranged Attack:* +3 to hit, reach 5 ft. and ranged 20/60 ft., one target. *Hit:* 4 (1d6 + 1) piercing damage or 5 (1d8 + 1) piercing damage if used with two hands to make a melee attack.

IMPERIAL ANNALIST (HOMETRI SOCOLO)

Medium humanoid (human), any alignment

Armor class 16 (breastplate, shield)

Hit points 18 (4d8)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
13(+1)	10(+0)	11(+0)	14(+2)	13(+1)	16(+2)

Skills Arcane +5, History +5, Performance +5, Perception +4, Religion +5

Senses passive Perception 11

Languages Common, Classical Auran, Ancient Zaharan

Challenge 1/4 (50 XP)

ACTIONS

Shortsword. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 4 (1d6 + 1) piercing damage.

Inspiring Speech (3/day). The annalist offers rousing words to inspire his soldiers. Each creature of the annalist's choice that is within 30 feet of it, can hear it, and is not already affected by Inspiring Speech gains 3 (1d6) temporary hit points. The legate can then make one attack as a bonus action.

IMPERIAL CATAPHRACT

Medium humanoid (human), any alignment
Armor class 18 (breastplate, shield)
Hit points 20 (3d8+6)
Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
14(+2)	14(+2)	14(+2)	10(+0)	12(+1)	10(+0)

Skills Animal Handling +4, Perception +3
Senses passive Perception 12
Languages Common
Challenge 1 (200 XP)

Mounted Advantage. While mounted and not incapacitated, the cataphract has advantage on melee attack rolls against any unmounted creature that is smaller than its mount.
Mounted Lancing. While mounted and not incapacitated, the cataphract an extra 6 (1d12) damage when it hits with its lance against any unmounted creature that is smaller than its mount.

ACTIONS

Lance. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 8 (1d12 + 2) piercing damage.
Longsword. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (1d8 + 2) slashing damage.
Shortbow. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, range 80/320 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d6 + 2) piercing damage.



IMPERIAL CENTURION (AXIOS ILARION)

Medium humanoid (human), any alignment
Armor class 18 (half plate, shield)
Hit points 45 (6d8+18)
Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
16(+3)	12(+1)	16(+3)	10(+0)	12(+1)	12(+1)

Saves Dexterity +4, Wisdom +4
Skills Athletics +6, Intimidation +4, Perception +4
Senses passive Perception 14
Languages Common
Challenge 2 (450 XP)

Indomitable (1/day). The centurion can re-roll a saving throw it fails. It must use the new roll.
Spear Volley. The centurion has advantage when using a spear to make a ranged weapon attack if at least one of its allies within 5 feet has already made a ranged weapon attack against the same target that round.
Tortoise Formation. Ranged weapon attacks against the centurion have disadvantage if an ally equipped with a shield is within 5 feet of the centurion and isn't incapacitated.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The centurion can make two melee attacks.
Longsword. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (1d8 + 3) slashing damage, or 8 (1d10 +3) slashing damage if used with two hands to make a melee attack.
Spear. *Melee Weapon or Ranged Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft. and ranged 20/60 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (1d6 + 3) piercing damage, or 6 (1d8 +2) piercing damage if used with two hands to make a melee attack.

REACTIONS

Gruff Exhortation. The centurion shouts out some blistering encouragement to one ally that it can see within 30 feet as the creature makes an ability check, attack roll, or saving throw. The creature can add 1d4 to its roll provided it can hear and understand the centurion.

IMPERIAL HORSE ARCHER

Medium humanoid (human), any alignment

Armor class 15 (leather armor)

Hit points 20 (3d8+6)

Speed 30 ft.

<u>STR</u>	<u>DEX</u>	<u>CON</u>	<u>INT</u>	<u>WIS</u>	<u>CHA</u>
12(+2)	16(+3)	14(+2)	10(+0)	12(+1)	10(+0)

Skills Animal Handling +4, Perception +3

Senses passive Perception 12

Languages Common

Challenge 1 (200 XP)

Mounted Skirmisher. While the horse archer is mounted and not incapacitated, it can use its bonus action to take the Disengage or Dash action as a bonus action after it uses its action to make a ranged attack with its shortbow.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The horse archer can make two ranged attacks.

Shortbow. Ranged Weapon Attack: +5 to hit, range 80/320 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (1d6 + 3) piercing damage.

Shortsword. Melee Weapon Attack: +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (1d6 + 3) piercing damage.

IMPERIAL LEGATE (ULRAND VALERIAN)

Medium humanoid (human), any alignment

Armor class 19 (half plate, shield)

Hit points 52 (7d8+21)

Speed 30 ft.

<u>STR</u>	<u>DEX</u>	<u>CON</u>	<u>INT</u>	<u>WIS</u>	<u>CHA</u>
16(+3)	14(+2)	16(+3)	12(+1)	12(+1)	14(+2)

Saves Dexterity +5, Wisdom +4

Skills Animal Handling +4, Perception +4, Persuasion +5

Senses passive Perception 14

Languages Common, Classical Auran

Challenge 3 (750 XP)

Military Strategy. Each creature of the legate's choice that is within 30 feet of it and can see and hear it has advantage on initiative rolls.

Mounted Advantage. While mounted and not incapacitated, the legate has advantage on melee attack rolls against any unmounted creature that is smaller than its mount.

Mounted Lancing. While mounted and not incapacitated, the legate deals an extra 6 (1d12) damage when it hits with its lance (included in the attack) against any unmounted creature that is smaller than its mount.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The legate can make two melee attacks with its longsword.

Lance. Melee Weapon Attack: +6 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 9 (1d12 + 3) piercing damage.

Longsword. Melee Weapon Attack: +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (1d8 + 3) slashing damage.



IMPERIAL LEGIONARY VETERAN

Medium humanoid (human), any alignment

Armor class 17 (breastplate, shield)

Hit points 20 (3d8+6)

Speed 30 ft.

<u>STR</u>	<u>DEX</u>	<u>CON</u>	<u>INT</u>	<u>WIS</u>	<u>CHA</u>
14(+2)	12(+1)	14(+2)	10(+0)	12(+1)	11(+0)

Skills Athletics +4, Perception +3

Senses passive Perception 13

Languages Common

Challenge 1/2 (100 XP)

Spear Volley. The legionary veteran has advantage when using a spear to make a ranged weapon attack if at least one of its allies within 5 feet has already made a ranged weapon attack against the same target that round.

Tortoise Formation. Ranged weapon attacks against the legionary veteran have disadvantage if an ally equipped with a shield is within 5 feet of the legionary veteran and isn't incapacitated.

ACTIONS

Spear. *Melee Weapon or Ranged Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft. and ranged 20/60 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d6 + 2) piercing damage, or 6 (1d8 + 2) piercing damage if used with two hands to make a melee attack.

Shortsword. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d6 + 2) piercing damage.

IMPERIAL QUARTERMASTER (KOINOS THALES)

Medium humanoid (human), any alignment

Armor class 16 (breastplate, shield)

Hit points 21 (4d8+3)

Speed 30 ft.

<u>STR</u>	<u>DEX</u>	<u>CON</u>	<u>INT</u>	<u>WIS</u>	<u>CHA</u>
12(+1)	11(+0)	12(+1)	13(+1)	13(+1)	10(+0)

Skills Investigation +4, Insight +4, Persuasion +3, Perception +4

Senses passive Perception 14

Languages Common

ACTIONS

Shortsword. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 4 (1d6 + 1) piercing damage.

IMPERIAL LEGIONARY

Medium humanoid (human), any alignment

Armor class 16 (chain shirt, shield)

Hit points 11 (2d8+2)

Speed 30 ft.

<u>STR</u>	<u>DEX</u>	<u>CON</u>	<u>INT</u>	<u>WIS</u>	<u>CHA</u>
12(+1)	12(+1)	13(+1)	10(+0)	11(+0)	10(+0)

Skills Athletics +3, Perception +2

Senses passive Perception 12

Languages Common

Challenge 1/4 (50 XP)

Spear Volley. The legionary has advantage when using a spear to make a ranged weapon attack if at least one of the legionary's allies within 5 feet has already made a ranged weapon attack against the same target that round.

Tortoise Formation. Ranged weapon attacks against the legionary have disadvantage if an ally equipped with a shield is within 5 feet of the legionary and isn't incapacitated.

ACTIONS

Spear. *Melee Weapon or Ranged Attack:* +3 to hit, reach 5 ft. and ranged 20/60 ft., one target. *Hit:* 4 (1d6 + 1) piercing damage, or 5 (1d8 + 1) piercing damage if used with two hands to make a melee attack.

Shortsword. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 4 (1d6 + 1) piercing damage.

IMPERIAL SUBALTERN

Medium humanoid (human), any alignment

Armor class 17 (breastplate, shield)

Hit points 32 (5d8+10)

Speed 30 ft.

<u>STR</u>	<u>DEX</u>	<u>CON</u>	<u>INT</u>	<u>WIS</u>	<u>CHA</u>
16(+3)	12(+1)	14(+2)	10(+0)	12(+1)	12(+1)

Skills Athletics +6, Intimidation +4, Perception +4

Senses passive Perception 14

Languages Common

Challenge 1 (200 XP)

Spear Volley. The subaltern has advantage when using a spear to make a ranged weapon attack if at least one of its allies within 5 feet has already made a ranged weapon attack against the same target that round.

Tortoise Formation. Ranged weapon attacks against the subaltern have disadvantage if an ally equipped with a shield is within 5 feet of the subaltern and isn't incapacitated.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The subaltern can make two melee attacks.

Longsword. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (1d8 + 3) slashing damage, or 8 (1d10 + 3) slashing damage if used with two hands to make a melee attack.

Spear. *Melee Weapon or Ranged Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft. and ranged 20/60 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (1d6 + 3) piercing damage, or 6 (1d8 + 2) piercing damage if used with two hands to make a melee attack.

KOBOLD CHAMPION

Small humanoid (kobold), lawful evil

Armor class 13

Hit points 10 (3d6)

Speed 30 ft.

<u>STR</u>	<u>DEX</u>	<u>CON</u>	<u>INT</u>	<u>WIS</u>	<u>CHA</u>
7(-2)	16(+2)	10(+0)	8(-1)	8(-1)	10(+0)

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 9

Languages Common, Draconic

Challenge 1/4 (50 XP)

Sunlight sensitivity. While in sunlight, the kobold has disadvantage on attack rolls, as well as on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on sight.

Pack tactics. The kobold has advantage on an attack roll against a creature if at least one of the kobold's allies is within 5 feet of the creature and the ally isn't incapacitated.

ACTIONS

Dagger. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 5 (1d4 + 3) piercing damage.

Sling. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, range 30/120 ft., one target. Hit: 5 (1d4 + 3) bludgeoning damage.

KOBOLD CHAMPION

Small humanoid (kobold), lawful evil

Armor class 13

Hit points 10 (3d6)

Speed 30 ft.

<u>STR</u>	<u>DEX</u>	<u>CON</u>	<u>INT</u>	<u>WIS</u>	<u>CHA</u>
7(-2)	16(+2)	10(+0)	8(-1)	8(-1)	10(+0)

Skills Athletics +6, Intimidation +4, Perception +4

Senses passive Perception 14

Languages Common

Challenge 1 (200 XP)

Sunlight sensitivity. While in sunlight, the kobold has disadvantage on attack rolls, as well as on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on sight.

Pack tactics. The kobold has advantage on an attack roll against a creature if at least one of the kobold's allies is within 5 feet of the creature and the ally isn't incapacitated.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The subaltern can make two melee attacks.

Dagger. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 5 (1d4 + 3) piercing damage.

Sling. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, range 30/120 ft., one target. Hit: 5 (1d4 + 3) bludgeoning damage.

KOBOLD CHIEF

Medium humanoid (human), any alignment

Armor class 17 (breastplate, shield)

Hit points 32 (5d8+10)

Speed 30 ft.

<u>STR</u>	<u>DEX</u>	<u>CON</u>	<u>INT</u>	<u>WIS</u>	<u>CHA</u>
7(-2)	16(+3)	12(+1)	10(+0)	10(0)	12(+1)

Saving Throws Str +0, Con +3, Wis +2

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 10

Languages Common, Draconic

Challenge 1/2 (100 XP)

Sunlight sensitivity. While in sunlight, the kobold has disadvantage on attack rolls, as well as on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on sight.

Pack tactics. The kobold has advantage on an attack roll against a creature if at least one of the kobold's allies is within 5 feet of the creature and the ally isn't incapacitated.

ACTIONS

Dagger. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 5 (1d4 + 4) piercing damage.

Sling. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, range 30/120 ft., one target. Hit: 5 (1d4 + 4) bludgeoning damage.



KOBOLD WARRIOR

Small humanoid (kobold), lawful evil

Armor class 12

Hit points 5 (2d6 – 2)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
7(-2)	15(+2)	9(-1)	8(-1)	7(-2)	8(-1)

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 8

Languages Common, Draconic

Challenge 1/8 (25 XP)

Sunlight sensitivity. While in sunlight, the kobold has disadvantage on attack rolls, as well as on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on sight.

Pack tactics. The kobold has advantage on an attack roll against a creature if at least one of the kobold's allies is within 5 feet of the creature and the ally isn't incapacitated.

ACTIONS

Dagger. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 4 (1d4 + 2) piercing damage.

Sling. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, range 30/120 ft., one target. Hit: 4 (1d4 + 2) bludgeoning damage.

ORC CHAMPION

Medium humanoid (orc), chaotic evil

Armor class 14 (chain shirt)

Hit points 25 (3d8 + 12)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
7(-2)	16(+2)	10(+0)	8(-1)	8(-1)	10(+0)

Skills Intimidation +3

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 10

Languages Common, Orc

Challenge 1 (200 XP)

Aggressive. As a bonus action, the orc can move up to its speed toward a hostile creature that it can see.

Challenge 1 (200 XP)

ACTIONS

Greataxe. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 9 (1d12 + 3) piercing damage.

Javelin. *Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft. or range 30/120 ft., one target. Hit: 6 (1d6 + 3) piercing damage.

ORC CHIEF

Medium humanoid (orc), chaotic evil

Armor class 16 (chain mail)

Hit points 42 (5d8 + 20)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
18(+4)	12(+1)	18(+4)	10(+0)	11(+0)	14(+2)

Saving Throws Str +6, Con +6, Wis +2

Skills Intimidation +4

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 10

Languages Common, Orc

Challenge 2 (450 XP)

Aggressive. As a bonus action, the orc can move up to its speed toward a hostile creature that it can see.

Orcish Fury. The orc chief deals an extra 4 (1d8) damage when it hits with a weapon attack (included in the attacks).

ACTIONS

Greataxe. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 14 (1d12 + 4 plus 1d8) slashing damage.

Chief's Command. One creature of the orc chief's choice that is within 15 feet and can hear it can immediately use its reaction to make a weapon attack. If the creature hits, it deals an extra 4 (1d8) damage. The orc chief can then make one attack as a bonus action.

ORC WARRIOR

Medium humanoid (orc), chaotic evil

Armor class 13 (hide armor)

Hit points 15 (2d8 + 6)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
16(+3)	12(+1)	16(+3)	7(-2)	11(+0)	10(+0)

Skills Intimidation +2

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 10

Languages Common, Orc

Challenge 1/2 (100 XP)

Aggressive. As a bonus action, the orc can move up to its speed toward a hostile creature that it can see.

ACTIONS

Greataxe. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 9 (1d12 + 3) piercing damage.

Javelin. *Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft. or range 30/120 ft., one target. Hit: 6 (1d6 + 3) piercing damage.



POSSESSED GIANT SPIDER

Large monstrosity, chaotic evil

Armor class 14 (natural armor)

Hit points 39 (6d10+6)

Speed 30 ft., climb 30 ft.

<u>STR</u>	<u>DEX</u>	<u>CON</u>	<u>INT</u>	<u>WIS</u>	<u>CHA</u>
14(+2)	16(+3)	12(+1)	16(+3)	12(+1)	12(+1)

Skills Stealth +7

Condition Immunities charmed, exhaustion, frightened

Senses blindsight 10 ft., darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 11

Languages -

Challenge 3 (700 XP)

Innate Spellcasting. The possessed giant spider's spellcasting ability is Intelligence (spell save DC 13, +5 to hit with spell attacks). It can innately cast the following spells, requiring no material components:

Cantrips (at will): *chill touch*, *poison spray*, *minor illusion*

1st level (4 slots): *charm person*, *expeditious retreat*, *false life*, *jump*

2nd level (2 slots): *blur*, *darkness*

Spider Climb. The possessed giant spider can climb difficult surfaces, including upside down on ceilings, without needing to make an ability check.

Web Sense: While in contact with a web, the possessed giant spider knows the exact location of any other creature in contact with the same web.

Web Walker. The possessed giant spider ignores movement restrictions caused by webbing.

ACTIONS

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 7 (1d8 + 3) piercing damage, and the target must make a DC 11 Constitution saving throw, taking 9 (2d8) poison damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one. If the poison damage reduces the target to 0 hit points, the target is stable but poisoned for 1 hour, even after regaining hit points, and is paralyzed while poisoned in this way.

Web (Recharge 5-6). *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, range 30/60 ft., one creature. *Hit:* The target is restrained by webbing. As an action, the restrained target can make a DC 12 Strength check, bursting the webbing on a success. The webbing can also be attacked and destroyed (AC 10; hp 5; vulnerability to fire damage; immunity to bludgeoning, poison, and psychic damage).

DESCRIPTION

The possessed giant spider has fallen under the control of an ancient and evil intelligence that lingers in the temple. It is aware of the Stone of Sakkara and supports the efforts of Zakiti to feed its power, though it is not above "culling the weak" by occasionally eating a stray humanoid from time to time.

ZAHARAN RUINGUARD (ZAKITI)

Medium humanoid (Zaharan human), chaotic evil

Armor class 18 (mithral plate)

Hit points 47 (5d10 + 15), 20 temporary

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
17(+3)	11(+0)	16(+3)	14(+2)	10(+0)	16(+3)

Saving Throws Wis +2, Cha +5

Skills Intimidation +6, Religion +4

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 12

Languages Common, Draconic, Goblin, Orc, Ancient Zaharan

Challenge 6 (2300 XP)

Custodian of the Stone. Zakiti is the current custodian of the *Stone of Sakkara*. She gains 20 temporary hit points each time she takes a short rest. She can take legendary and lair actions (see below).

Inexorable. Zakiti has advantage on saving throws against being charmed, frightened, petrified, or paralyzed.

Ruinous Blows. When Zakiti hits a creature with a melee weapon attack, she deals an extra 9 (2d8) necrotic damage to the target (included in the attacks).

Spellcasting. Zakiti is a 5th-level spellcaster. Her spellcasting ability is Charisma (spell save DC 14, +6 to hit with spell attacks). She has the following spells prepared:

1st level (4 slots): *charm person*, *expeditious retreat*, *false life*

2nd level (2 slots): *arcane lock*, *mirror image*

ACTIONS

Multiattack. Zakiti can make two greataxe attacks.

Greataxe +1. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 11 (1d12 + 4) slashing damage plus 9 (2d8) necrotic damage .

LEGENDARY ACTIONS

As the custodian of the *Stone*, Zakiti can take 1 legendary action, choosing from the options below. Only one legendary action option can be used at a time and only at the end of another creature’s turn. Zakiti regains spent legendary actions at the start of her turn.

Blood Magic. Zakiti drains the life energy of nearby creatures. Each non-undead creature of her choice that she can see within 30 feet must succeed on a DC 15 Constitution saving throw or take 3 (1d6) necrotic damage. Zakiti regains hit points equal to the total damage dealt by the blood magic.

Horrific Visions. Zakiti inflicts nightmarish phantasms on her foes. Each creature of Zakiti’s choice that she can see within 30 feet must succeed on a DC 15 Charisma saving throw or become frightened until the end of its next turn.

Slavish Worship. Zakiti demands groveling submission from a creature within 30 feet that she can see and that can hear her. The target must make a DC 15 Wisdom saving throw. If it fails, on its next turn the target falls prone and then ends its turn.

LAIR ACTIONS

On initiative count 20 (losing initiative ties), Zakiti takes a lair action to cause one of the following effects. She can’t use the same effect two rounds in a row.

The Zaharans were a black-hearted human race that once ruled an empire devoted to chaos and evil. The ruinguards were an order of militant sorcerer-knights sworn to serve the Zaharan Empire. Zaharan ruinguards are presented in more detail in other Autarch products, but all of the mechanics necessary to run an encounter with a Zaharan ruinguard in 5E are presented in this book.

Hideous frond-like appendages erupt out of the *Stone*. One creature that is hostile to Zakiti and within 30 feet of the *Stone* must succeed on a DC 15 Dexterity saving throw or be grappled and restrained. Escaping requires a successful DC 15 Strength (Athletics) or Dexterity (Acrobatics) check. The fronds wither away when Zakiti uses her lair action again or if when the *Stone* is shattered.

A tremor shakes the lair in a 30-foot radius around the *Stone*. Each creature other than Zakiti on the ground in that area must succeed on a DC 15 Dexterity saving throw or be knocked prone.

Zakiti calls forth the spirits of creatures that were sacrificed to the *Stone*. These apparitions materialize and attack one creature that Zakiti can see within 30 feet of her. The target must make a DC 15 Constitution saving throw, taking 14 (4d6) necrotic damage on a failed save or half as much damage on a success. The apparitions then disappear.

DESCRIPTION

Zakiti, The Lady Below, is a pure-blooded Zaharan ruinguard of exceptional beauty. She has finely chiseled features with high cheekbones and a long, high nose. Her skin is dusky, her hair is long, straight, and black, and her eyes deep set and cat-like. Her cold smile betrays her ruthlessness and black heart. Her affect is sensual yet predatory, like a lioness toying with her prey.

Zakiti was secretly raised in the city of Aura by a chthonic cult that counts some of the highest nobility of the Auran Empire among its members. The cult is led by a dark master known as the Lord of Secrets, and its long-term goal is to resurrect the glories of ancient Zahar, either by corrupting the Empire from within, or by finding and awakening Zahar’s slumbering undead sorcerer-kings. Several years ago, Zakiti was sent to the Borderlands to explore its numerous Zaharan ruins in the hopes of making discoveries useful to the cult’s mission. The *Stone* certainly qualifies as such, and Zakiti ought to have already alerted the Lord of Secrets about her discovery. But under the *Stone*’s malign influence, Zakiti has come to believe that she has been personally “chosen” by the Chthonic gods to restore Zahar, so the letter in her chambers remains unsent. If Zakiti survives a defeat by the adventurers, she will likely return to her cult and gather allies to wreak vengeance upon the party.

Zakiti is equipped with **mithral plate armor** (black-lacquered plates with red and gold trim) and **greataxe +1** (a long steel shaft topped with a crescent-shaped blade of purplish-black hepatizon). She wears **periapt of health** (a silver amulet depicting a serpent devouring its own tail) around her neck.

Note that if she is encountered outside of her lair, or if she loses custody of the *Stone*, Zakiti’s challenge rating drops from 6 to 4.

APPENDIX II - MAGIC ITEMS

THE STONE OF SAKKARA

Wondrous item, artifact (requires attunement by a creature of evil alignment)

The *Stone of Sakkara* is a chaotic evil artifact created from a large fragment of the Tablet of Destiny. It appears as a smooth, blood red gemstone and is currently the size of a man's heart. Strange runes seem to have somehow been carved within the interior of the *Stone*.

Powered by Blood. The *Stone's* resilience, size, and power are based upon how much vitality it has absorbed from blood sacrifice. At its weakest, the *Stone* has 5 hit points and is about the size of a twenty-sided die. At the height of its power, it has 1,000 hit points and is about the size of a human torso. Each month, the *Stone* demands a minimum blood sacrifice of creatures with XP equal to five times the *Stone's* current hit points ($10 \times \text{hp}$). Failure to meet this minimum will cause the *Stone* to lose 5 hit points at the month's end, to a minimum of 5 hit points. Conversely, if the *Stone* receives twice the required sacrifice or more, its hit points will increase by 5. The *Stone* currently has 20 hit points and is the size of an adult human's heart. Any evil creature which makes at least one blood sacrifice to the *Stone* gains its favor for the month. A creature cannot attune to the *Stone* until it has gained the *Stone's* favor. The creature attuned to the stone is considered the stone's *custodian*.

EXAMPLE: Since the *Stone* has 20 hit points at the start of the month, the minimum blood sacrifice required to sustain it is 200XP. If it receives less than 200XP in blood sacrifices, the *Stone* will drop to 15 hit points at the month's end. If the *Stone* receives 400XP or more in blood sacrifices during the month it will increase to 25hp.

Regional Effects. The region surrounding the *Stone of Sakkara* is warped by the *Stone's* unnatural presence. As the *Stone's* hit points increase, so does its power over the surrounding area. While the *Stone* is active (i.e. above 5 hit points), it **taints** 4,186 cubic feet around itself per hit point each day (e.g. one 10-ft. radius sphere per hp per day). The taint spreads like a noxious, invisible cloud through air, water, and topsoil. It never extends more than 30 ft. into the air above a surface, mostly spreading laterally. If it has nowhere else to go, the taint begins to work its way through rock but at a much slower rate of 1 cubic foot per hit point per day. The taint cannot spread more than 24 miles from the *Stone*. The severity of the regional effects worsen with time.

One Week: After a week, animals of less than one hit die living within a tainted region will swarm together and merge into single masses that become the first **abominations** (see p. 62) in the area. Add the animals' hit dice together until they reach the normal hit dice for an abomination.

One Month: After a month, any water within a tainted region will become **bloody fluid** that causes mutations when drunk (see p. 40). The priests of the temple had to rely on *create food and water* spells. The toxic effects of the *Stone* on the water supply are one of the reasons it had to be kept isolated even in a society dedicated to Chaos

Six Months: After six months of a region remaining tainted, and every six months thereafter, a **birthing tree sapling** (see p. 64) will form in the largest available body of bloody fluid. At this point, the pool of bloody fluid can be used to create abominations at the rate of one a month. After an abomination is created, the water will simply be stagnant and non-potable, but will not create mutations. Attempts at creating more will simply drown the victim. Fronds also grow out of the tainted water, vein-like growths that spread across the tainted area at the rate of one foot in all directions per month.

One Year: After a year of a region remaining tainted, the first sapling will have grown into a full-size **birthing tree** (see p. 63), and other saplings will be growing in other available pools of bloody fluid. Fronds now grow at the rate of five feet per month, and tainted surfaces will begin to grow chitin-like surfaces on them. At this point, any number of abominations can be created beneath the birthing tree's undulating fronds by submerging and holding a creature under the water long enough for the complete change to occur. Humanoids of 1 HD or less that live in the area succeed on a DC 12 Con save each week or transform into abominations even if they never touch or go near the bloody fluid!

If the *Stone* is shattered (see below), the tainted region will revert to normal after 2d6 months have passed. If a lawful good cleric casts **hallow** at the point where the *Stone* was shattered, the region will recover in 1d3 hours. The birthing trees will rot and die, barnacles crack off, fronds wither, etc.

Sinkhole of Evil. The *Stone* radiates necrotic energy out to a radius in feet equal to its current hp (20 ft. at present). Any undead within this radius have advantage on saving throws against any effect that turns undead.

Sentience. The *Stone* is a sentient chaotic evil object with Intelligence, Wisdom, and Charisma scores of 16. It has hearing and blindsight to a range of 30 ft. In addition, the *Stone* can detect the presence of all evil creatures within 100 miles. Once per week, the *Stone* can send a message into the dreams of one sentient evil creature it detects. The creature will have a vision of the *Stone*, and awaken knowing the general direction and approximate range to reach it. Upon being messaged by or seeing the *Stone*, a sentient evil creature must succeed on a DC 15 Wis save or come under a *geas* to seek out the *Stone* and protect it to the death. The *geas* lasts until removed by *remove curse* or until the *Stone* is shattered. (Note that creatures under the *Stone's* *geas* are not bound to remain in the *Stone's* physical location, and can leave its presence so long as they think the *Stone* is safe.)

Favor of the Stone. Creatures that the *Stone* favors (e.g. those that have made a blood sacrifice to it in the past month) gain its assistance when undertaking certain **downtime activities** in the tainted region. The downtime activities the *Stone* favors include crating magic items, performing religious services, performing sacred rites, researching lore, and scribing spell scrolls. The more hit points the *Stone* has accumulated, the more assistance it provides. At 20hp, it reduces

the time and cost required for these undertakings by $\frac{1}{4}$. At 100hp, it reduces the time and cost required by $\frac{1}{2}$. At 500hp, it reduces the time and cost required by $\frac{2}{3}$. At 1,000hp, it reduces the time and cost required by $\frac{3}{4}$.

Custodian of the Stone. The custodian of the *Stone* has the favor of the *Stone* and many other benefits in addition. First, any abominations created by the *Stone*, and any creatures subject to the *Stone's* geas, treat the custodian as an ally and obey its spoken commands. Any undead creatures in the tainted region with a challenge rating of less than or equal to the custodian's level also fall under the custodian's command.

Second, the custodian becomes a legendary creature, capable of taking legendary and lair actions outside of its turn. The number of legendary actions available to the custodian depend on the current hp of the *Stone*. If the *Stone* has fewer than 20hp, the custodian cannot take any legendary actions. If the *Stone* has 20 to 99 hp, the custodian can take one legendary action each round. If the *Stone* has 100-499 hp, the custodian can take two legendary actions each round. If the *Stone* has 500-999 hp, the custodian can take three legendary actions each round. If the *Stone* has 1,000hp, the custodian can take four legendary actions each round. Whatever the *Stone's* current hp, the custodian can take one lair action on initiative count 20 if in a region tainted by the *Stone*. See the monster entry for *Zaharan Ruin Guard (Zakiti)* for a list of the legendary and lair actions provided to the *Stone's* custodian.

Third, the *Stone* increases the vitality and vigor of its custodian. Each time the custodian takes a short rest, it gains temporary hit points equal to the *Stone's* current hit points.

Finally, if the *Stone* is pleased by its custodian, it will “bless” the custodian with an *abominable mutation* (see p. 55) every 12 months. (This is how Zakiti gained darkvision.) Because of the protection of the *Stone*, the custodian does not suffer any loss to its ability scores from this mutation. However, if the *Stone* is displeased (usually if the custodian has not sacrificed more than the minimum number of XP to it), it will instead inflict a disfiguring abominable mutation (such as eye stalks) on its custodian, including ability score loss.

If the *Stone* is shattered, the custodian loses the ability to control creatures, any remaining temporary hit points, and its access to legendary and lair actions, but retains any mutations it has accumulated.

Nigh-Indestructible. Whatever its current hit points, the *Stone* is immune to slashing, piercing, fire, cold, poison, psychic, necrotic, and lighting damage. It is resistant to bludgeoning damage from non-magical weapons. It takes full damage from magical bludgeoning, radiant, thunder, and force damage. It is immune to all conditions.

Any damage to the *Stone* will alert all abominations and mindless undead within a range of (100 ft. $\times$ current hp). The creatures will move at full speed to the *Stone's* location and defend it to the death.

Should the *Stone* be reduced to 0 hp, it will shatter into three identical fragments. The *Stone's* corruption will disperse into a crimson cloud that fades in moments...but not before attempting to corrupt the *Stone's* destroyers. The creature that shattered the *Stone* must succeed on a DC 15 Con save or be permanently transformed into



an abomination. Each creatures within 5 ft. of the *Stone* when it is shattered must succeed on a DC 15 Con save or suffer a mutation on the Abominable Mutations table.

When the party destroys the *Stone*, they earns a special bonus of 20,000 XP shared between all participating characters. This award compensates for the perilous nature of the adventure!

Shattered Power. If the *Stone* is shattered, *three pure fragments of the Tablet of Destiny* will remain. Such fragments are essentially “frozen” magical power and are very useful to magic item crafters. Each fragment can be used as the exotic ingredient for one rare magic item, or all three can be used together as the exotic ingredient for one very rare magic item. Fragments of the Tablet are considered sacred by most Lawful-aligned divine casters, and their religious strictures will command them to turn over the fragments to their order. If a party turns over the fragments to a Lawful-aligned religious authority, each character is blessed by the gods with a *charm of heroism* as a reward. The fragments could be sold for 5,000gp each, but doing so this risks attracting the attention of thieves and evil cultists and the condemnation of lawful and good authorities.

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