

TEMPLE OF THE NIGHTBRINGERS



The anniversary edition of this best-selling introductory adventure for the world's greatest roleplaying game



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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

Temple of the Nightbringers is a fifth edition DUNGEONS & DRAGONS adventure for characters of levels 1-3, optimized for level 1. It is designed to be played in a single session. Although the adventure is set in the Forgotten Realms, it can be easily transported to any other setting.

To run this adventure, you need the fifth edition *Player's Handbook*, *Dungeon Master's Guide*, and *Monster Manual*.

ADJUSTING THIS ADVENTURE

This adventure is optimized for 5 characters of level 1. To determine whether you should consider adjusting the adventure, add up the total levels of all the characters and divide the result by the number of characters. This is the group's average party level (APL). To approximate the party strength for the adventure, consult the table below.

Determining Party Strength

Party Composition	Party Strength
3-4 characters, APL equals 1	Weak
3-4 characters, APL greater than 1	Average
5 characters, APL equals 1	Average
5 characters, APL greater than 1	Strong
6-7 characters, APL equals 1	Strong
6-7 characters, APL greater than 1	Very strong

BACKGROUND

A tribe of goblins known as the Bloody Mask Mob has been raiding caravans traveling on the Long Road, between Triboar and Longsaddle. The goblins recently abducted a young man from Triboar named Bran Whitborne. His wealthy family is willing to pay a handsome reward for his rescue.

GETTING STARTED

The adventure begins with the characters having accepted a commission and already plodding north on the Long Road. Read the following:

It's cold this far north—the sort of cold that sinks deep into your bones and makes you feel like you'll never be warm again. When the rain starts falling and the wind comes up, it feels like needles of ice are piercing your face.

A few days ago, you were in Triboar looking for an adventure when you were approached by a wealthy family, the Whitbornes. Their son, Bran, went missing on the Long Road two weeks ago, traveling north with a caravan. Everyone thinks the caravan was taken in a goblin raid.

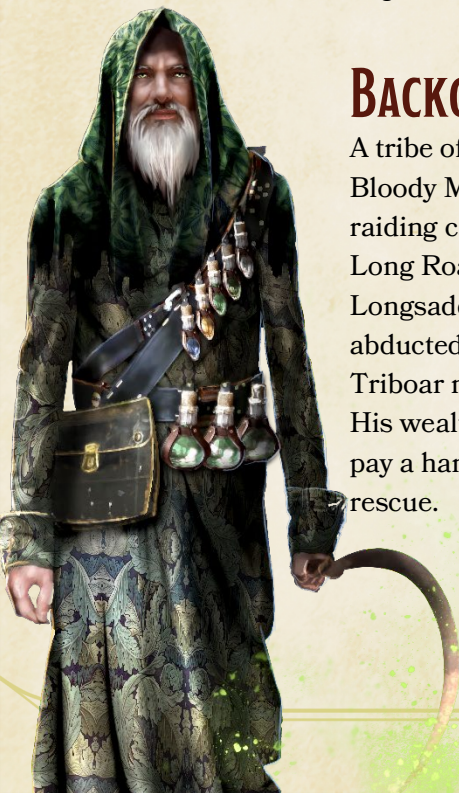
His family were desperate for news and had an augury cast at the local shrine, revealing that Bran is still alive but won't be for much longer. You accepted an offer of 200 gp to find him and bring him back home.

Have each of the players introduce their character. They should also explain how they first met the character to their left.

The Whitbornes heard that their son's caravan was last seen at a tiny village on the Long Road called Melton, which lies about midway between Triboar and Longsaddle. It is here that the action begins.

PROCEEDING TO CHAPTER 2

Once you have read the boxed text above and the characters have introduced themselves, proceed to chapter 2.



CHAPTER 2: MELTON AND BEYOND

Read the following:

After a few more miles trudging you find Melton—and maybe you wish you hadn't. To call it a “village” seems generous as it's really about a dozen primitive huts and one larger building, surrounded by a sturdy little palisade. There is mud everywhere.

MELTON FEATURES

Melton is a tiny village on the Long Road, midway between Triboar and Longsaddle.

Population. There are about 50 people in the village. Most of them are human, with a few gnomes and dwarves as well. All villagers are **commoners** unless otherwise stated.

VILLAGER NAMES

Typical villager names include Darrick, Cordelia, Kelsie, Lia, Varis, and Peren.

Government. The village elects a constable every year. Frida Crabapple has held the position for five years, and usually runs unopposed as no one else wants the job.

Commerce. The village has an inn called The Weary Knight. There is also a blacksmith, a butcher, a baker, and a carpenter—all of whom do good trade with passing caravans. The rest of the villagers are mostly hunters and trappers involved with the fur trade.

Construction. All the buildings in Melton have dry-stone walls and turf roofs. The single street through the village is dirt, while the surrounding palisade is 4-foot high and made of sharpened tree trunks buried in the ground.

THE GATE

The single gate into Melton is shut. When the characters approach, a grizzled face looks over the palisade and says in a raspy voice:

“I'm Frida Crabapple, constable of Melton. What's your business here?”

Once the characters have answered her question, have one of them make a DC 10 Charisma (Persuasion) check. On a successful roll, she lets them in. On a failure, she asks a question about some part of their story. Repeat this process until they make a successful check.

Frida is short and squat, with cropped gray hair and yellow teeth. When she finally lets the characters enter, she mutters, “We don't like adventurers here—they bring trouble.”

THE WEARY KNIGHT

The large building in the middle of Melton is the inn, which is called The Weary Knight. It is long and low, with eight shuttered windows facing the muddy street. Noise and firelight seep out from beneath the closed front door.

THE COMMON ROOM

When the characters enter, read the following:

The small common room is crowded with perhaps twenty people across half a dozen rough-looking tables. A huge fire roars in the corner. As you enter, all conversation stops. A wiry old man scowls at you from behind the bar. “Close the door—it's cold!” he snaps.

The innkeeper is Seth Grimhill, a short-tempered human with white hair. Ale is 5 cp per mug, goat stew is 1 sp per serving, and rooms are 2 sp per person per night. There are three rooms available.

VILLAGE CHATTER

Other people in the common room include:

- Flint Frostforge, a helpful dwarven blacksmith.

- Bryll Copperhold, an irritable human carpenter.
- Thorn Farwalker, a sleepy half-orc trapper.

Talking to the villagers reveals the following:

- A new tribe of goblins moved into the area about 3 months ago, known as the Bloody Mask Mob.
- Since then, they have attacked at least half a dozen caravans, preferring those that are weakly guarded.
- Survivors report that the tribe is led by an especially vicious goblin chief.
- A gnome hunter named Ellywick Bafflestone claims to know where the goblin hideout is. Anyone in the common room can point out where Ellywick lives.

CONCERNED CONSTABLE

At around this time, the constable, Frida Crabapple, enters the common room. She tries to dissuade the adventurers from their quest. Her reasoning is that the goblins have so far left Melton alone—any kind of attack might provoke a hostile response toward the village. Some of those present agree with her, others don't.

ELLYWICK BAFFLESTONE

Ellywick Bafflestone (**scout**) is a gnome hunter who lives with the butcher's family. Should the adventurers try to see her that night, the butcher tells them to come back the next day and refuses to unlock the door.

When they meet Ellywick in the morning, they find her to be cheerful and carefree, happily telling them what she knows. She was following an old game trail several weeks ago when she came across a cave in a small hill, and saw several goblins enter and leave it. She concluded this was their hideout.

The cave is about a day's travel east of Melton. Ellywick is happy to lead them to the cave but does not offer to accompany them inside

unless the party is especially weak. She suggests they begin the journey right away.

Should the adventurers want to talk to anyone else, they discover that most of the hunters and trappers (including Frida Crabapple) have left for the day.

THE OLD GAME TRAIL

Read the following:

Ellywick leads you out of Melton and into the light woods to the east of the village, following an old game trail. She sets a brisk pace, occasionally whistling and skipping as she goes.

WUZIG'S BRIDGE

They travel for about 5 hours without incident before coming across an obstacle. Read the following:

The trail is interrupted by a deep, rocky gorge with a chattering creek running along the bottom of it. A stout oak tree has fallen across the gap and provides a natural bridge.

There is an ugly old **bugbear** sleeping on the far side of the bridge. Ellywick tells them his name is Wuzig and he is a deep sleeper. She has crept past him many times before.

Sneaking past. Sneaking past Wuzig requires each character to make a DC 10 Dexterity (Stealth) check. On a failure, Wuzig awakens angrily and attacks the party.

Climbing down. The gorge is 25 feet across and 60 feet deep. Climbing either side requires a successful DC 12 Strength (Athletics) check.

ADJUSTING THE SCENE

Here are some suggestions for adjusting this scene:

- **Strong:** Wuzig has maximum hit points.
- **Very Strong:** Wuzig has a nearby mate, another **bugbear**, who emerges from the bushes to help 1 round after fighting begins.



CHAPTER 3: THE TEMPLE

After a few more hours of travel, Ellywick motions for everyone to stop, and whispers, “The hideout is up ahead.” Read the following:

A low rocky hill pushes up from the surrounding trees. A large natural cave is plainly visible near the base, and there are stairs just inside the entrance, hewn from the rock and descending into the ground.

The stone steps lead to area 1.

TEMPLE FEATURES

The goblins call themselves the Bloody Mask Mob. They are hiding out in an abandoned underground temple which was built by the Nightbringers, a depraved sect of Shar, goddess of darkness. See appendix B for a map of the temple.

Construction. Unless specified, the walls of the temple are made from large, smooth blocks of onyx, engraved with swirling, circular patterns. The floor is paved with black and purple tiles.

Ceilings. The ceilings are made from onyx blocks and are 10-feet high, except where specified.

Light. Narrow shafts to the surface fill the temple with a dim light during the day. It is much darker at night, though there are fires in most of the inhabited rooms due to the cold.

Noise. The corridors are long and the doors are thick, so fighting in one room is not likely to be heard from the others.

Resting. The goblins do not move about much—they are used to spending long stretches of time between raids just eating, drinking and sleeping. There should be ample opportunity for the party to take short rests when needed, and even a long rest.

GOBLIN NAMES

Members of the Bloody Mask Mob include: Gabox, Snox, Ket, Smakob, Gaxam, Sud, Trub, Noz, Boxug, and Xog.

1. FOYER

Read the following:

A large room lies at the bottom of the stone steps, full of dust and rubbish. The only other exit from the room is a wide corridor to the north, flanked on either side by dark statues.

A single **goblin** lies near the bottom step, snoring loudly. Her name is Pox and she is meant to be on guard duty, but she has fallen asleep. A successful DC 10 Dexterity (Stealth) check is required to sneak through the foyer without waking her. If she is woken, she runs toward area 4, screaming for help.

Questioning Pox. If captured, Pox is easily intimidated by the party. Under questioning, she reveals that the “big boss” is in a room up north, that there are many goblins in the temple, and that there is also lots of “bad magic” around.

Statues. The two statues flanking the corridor are nearly identical. They are 3 feet tall, made of



obsidian, and depict a fully cloaked humanoid with the face hidden by a cowl. The eastern statue has the left arm outstretched, while the western statue has both arms by its side.

The base of eastern statue is inscribed in common with the words, “Love is a lie.” On the base of the western statue, the inscription reads “Only loss endures.” A successful DC 15 Intelligence (Religion) check reveals that these phrases come from the dogmas of the goddess Shar.

TREASURE

Pox has 23 cp in a battered purse. The outstretched arm of the eastern statue can rotate. Pulling it down causes a small hatch to open in the base, revealing a cavity holding a *potion of healing*.

2. GUARDROOM

Read the following:

A short corridor opens out into a small room, reeking with the odor of refuse and animal fur. In the middle of the room, someone has created a den from smashed furniture and old linen.

There are 2 **worgs** in the den—enormous creatures with bristling gray fur and malevolent yellow eyes. They growl menacingly at the characters.

The worgs, whose names are Hrusk and Garoo, accompany the goblins on their raids but have no great loyalty to the tribe. They can be bribed with copious amounts of fresh meat, but otherwise are likely to attack.

ADJUSTING THE SCENE

Here are some suggestions for adjusting this scene:

- **Weak:** Remove 1 **worg**.
- **Strong:** Add 1 **worg**.
- **Very Strong:** Add 2 **worgs**.

TREASURE

Searching the room and making a successful DC 12 Wisdom (Perception) check locates a silver necklace worth 30 gp beneath a broken chair.

3. STOREROOM

Read the following:

It appears that this room has not been visited for a long time. A thick layer of dust hangs over the smashed crates, barrels and shelves.

The goblins trashed this room when they first moved in, searching for treasure.

TREASURE

Anyone searching the room and making a successful DC 12 Wisdom (Perception) check finds an obsidian disk under an old barrel, and some engraved text on the wall.



Obsidian Disk. This disk is about 18-inches wide and 1-inch thick. It is the key to the magical barrier in area 6.

Engraved Text. A few inches above the floor, the word HALFGLINT is neatly engraved on the south wall. Touching a letter causes it to glow faintly for a moment. Touching the letters in this order, NIGHTFALL, causes a small panel to swing open, revealing a tiny alcove containing a *potion of healing*.

4. DORMITORY

Anyone listening at the western door hears muffled voices within, seemingly in argument. When the characters enter the room, read the following:

This large chamber contains about a dozen stained and stinking bed rolls as well as a few benches and tables, and a large, open barrel. A fire burns in a heavy iron brazier in the corner, while bones and other litter cover the floor.

There are **3 goblins** loudly playing dice near the brazier. An unconscious halfling **commoner** named Harriet Hilltopple is chained to the south wall.

ADJUSTING THE SCENE

Here are some suggestions for adjusting this scene:

- **Weak:** Remove 1 **goblin**.
- **Strong:** Add 2 **goblins**.
- **Very Strong:** Add 4 **goblins**.

Eastern Door. The eastern door has been jammed shut with iron stakes, and the word “Danger!” in goblin has been scrawled across it using chalk. A successful DC 13 Strength check is required to force it open.

Questioning Harriet. The halfling, Harriet Hilltopple, has a bad gash across her ribs, and she is unconscious and near death. If untreated, she dies within the hour. A successful DC 14 Wisdom (Medicine) check is required to stabilize

her and bring her back to consciousness. Any healing magic restores her to full health.

If questioned, she reveals the following:

- She was part of a caravan traveling from Longsaddle to Triboar. The goblins attacked and she was captured. She doesn’t know how long she has been a prisoner.
- The goblins in this room have kept her as a servant. They have treated her badly, and today one of them sliced her with a dagger.
- The goblin boss wears a dark mask and is very cruel.
- She has heard the goblins say the word “Melton” more than a few times.
- Some of her fellow caravanners were locked in the room to the east and left to starve. They soon perished, but about a week after they died, a terrible thumping started coming from the room. The goblins were terrified and spiked the door shut.

TREASURE

Each goblin has an average of 15 cp and 5 sp on their person. The open barrel contains watery ale. Searching the room and making a successful DC 13 Wisdom (Perception) check locates a soft felt bag under a bed roll, containing 4 moonstones worth 30 gp in total.

5. LIBRARY

Read the following:

The walls of this room are lined with shelves, most of which have been smashed. In one corner lies a charred pile of books and scrolls. The rest of the floor is covered in dust, ashes, and scraps of parchment.

Standing in the middle of the floor are **4 zombies**, hideous undead monstrosities that despise the living, brought into being by a stray piece of necromantic magic. They stare at the

characters for a moment through diseased eyes, then shamle forward to attack.

ADJUSTING THE SCENE

Here are some suggestions for adjusting this scene:

- **Weak:** Remove 2 zombies.
 - **Strong:** Add 1 zombie.
 - **Very Strong:** Add 3 zombies.
-

TREASURE

The books are mostly perished, but there is one partially intact book of poetry titled *The Nightsinger*. It tells the story of Shar, goddess of the night, and her ongoing rivalry with her sister, Selûne, the goddess of the moon.

Anyone searching the room and making a successful DC 13 Wisdom (Perception) check finds a *spell scroll* (*inflict wounds*).

6. SANCTUARY

Both doors have the words “Danger!” and “Keep Out!” scrawled on them in goblin.

This long and high room is filled with evenly spaced stone benches. The walls are lined with dark marble and carved to depict scenes of perversion and depravity. An alcove in the northern wall contains a statue with a glittering medallion around its neck.

The arched ceiling in this room is 20-feet high. The statue in the alcove depicts a slender, robed figure, holding a wicked knife in one hand. A successful DC 12 Intelligence (Religion) check reveals that this is a statue of the goddess Shar.

Alcove. There is a permanent *wall of force* blocking the front of the alcove and preventing anyone from touching the statue. Anyone searching the area nearby and succeeding on a DC 12 Wisdom (Perception) check locates an indentation in the floor. It is 18 inches across and 1 inch deep. Placing the obsidian disk from area 3 into the indentation causes the *wall of force* to

dissolve. The wall reappears if the disk is removed.

TREASURE

Around the neck of the statue is a *medallion of thoughts*.

7. SUMMONING ROOM

A chalk message scrawled on the floor of the south corridor leading into this room says, “Stay Away!” in goblin.

A large stone pool, three feet high and a dozen feet across, dominates the center of this room.

The water glows with a flickering, green light while a pallid mist curls about the floor.

This room was used by the High Priest of Shar to summon infernal monsters. The pool is primed for a summoning now—anything that disturbs the surface of the pool causes an **imp** to materialize. If this happens, the pool immediately ceases to glow.

The imp is called Ibjiuq and, like most its kind, it is proud, lazy, and mischievous. Ibjiuq stares at the party for a few moments, expecting them to cast some sort of control magic upon it. If no such magic is cast, and if the party fail to make some sort of attractive offer, the imp turns



invisible, circles the room a few times, then attacks.

ADJUSTING THE SCENE

Here are some suggestions for adjusting this scene:

- **Weak:** The **imp** has minimum hit points.
 - **Strong:** The **imp** has maximum hit points.
 - **Very Strong:** Add 1 **imp**.
-

7A. MOSAIC NOOK

A tiled mosaic covers the entire north wall of this small alcove. It depicts a woman with ivory hair, dressed in robes of silver and blue, wrestling with a black-robed figure whose face is hidden by a cowl.

A successful DC 12 Intelligence (Religion) check reveals that the mosaic depicts Selûne, goddess of the moon, and Shar, goddess of the night.

Anyone standing here can hear the raucous noise coming from area 8.

8. DINING HALL

Smashed old chairs and tables are pushed up against the walls of this large room, and the middle has been covered with improvised bedding—straw, leaves and scraps of old canvas. There is an open barrel of beer in the corner, next to a broad hearth which houses a roaring fire.

There are 8 **goblins** here, drinking raucously. Two of the goblins are mounted on naked, filthy humans, and are racing them up and down the hall, spurring them on with improvised riding crops. The others are cheering them on.

Note. This is probably too many monsters for the party to face head on, and so a clever plan of attack is required.

ADJUSTING THE SCENE

Here are some suggestions for adjusting this scene:

- **Weak:** Remove 3 **goblins**.
 - **Strong:** Add 2 **goblins**.
 - **Very Strong:** Add 4 **goblins**.
-

The humans are Uthgardt from the Griffon tribe, and their names are Otilier and Jorg. Both are suffering from 4 levels of exhaustion, and neither of them speaks common. Using sign language, they try to indicate that the goblin boss can be found up the north passage.

TREASURE

Each goblin has an average of 10 cp and 4 sp on their person. Searching the room and making a successful DC 13 Wisdom (Perception) locates an old wine skin stuffed in a crack in the wall, containing a *potion of healing*.



9. KITCHEN

A bubbling cauldron full of dark, fleshy meat sits atop a hot fire in a recessed hearth. A large wooden table is weighed down by a partially butchered giant goat. There is a small well in one corner.

A dirty, naked human **commoner** cowers near the fireplace, clutching a ladle defensively in front of him, and not daring to look up. His name is Bran Whitborne, and the goblins have broken his spirit with their cruel treatment. They call him “Stink,” and this is now the only name he shares or answers to. Bran initially refuses to accompany the party but can be forced to do so

with a successful DC 12 Charisma (Intimidation) check.

HASTY EXIT

Having rescued Bran, the party may choose to leave the temple immediately. If they have not yet faced the goblin boss from area 12, and if you want to climax with a big fight, you could have her and her worg show up in pursuit just as the characters get to the temple exit.

10. INQUIRY CHAMBER

Rusty hooks, spikes, pinchers and other instruments of torment are hung about the walls. The center of the chamber is covered by a large and revolting pile of slimy goblin excrement. The smell is nauseating, and there are flies everywhere.

The goblins use this room as a latrine. It is a good place to set an ambush and whittle down the goblin numbers. For every 10 minutes the characters wait here, there is a 25% chance that a goblin from room 8 comes to the latrine. After 2 goblins have gone missing, a group of 3 come to investigate.

TREASURE

Anyone willing to spend 10 minutes searching through the revolting pile and making a successful DC 12 Wisdom (Perception) check finds a gold-plated anklet worth 25 gp.

11. PRIEST'S CHAMBER

This is a large sleeping chamber. Several iron-framed beds have been pushed against one wall, and some old tapestries lie in a heap in the corner. A fire blazes in a large hearth set in the north wall.

There are 2 **hobgoblins** sitting near the fire and talking quietly. Their names are Akglag and Snigyob, and they are working as bodyguards for the goblin boss in area 12.

Upon seeing the characters, they draw their longswords, offer a salute, and charge, crying "Honor bound, by glory crowned!" in goblin.

ADJUSTING THE SCENE

Here are some suggestions for adjusting this scene:

- **Weak:** Remove 1 **hobgoblin**.
 - **Strong:** Add 1 **hobgoblin**.
 - **Very Strong:** Add 2 **hobgoblins**.
-

TREASURE

Each hobgoblin has an average of 15 sp and 7 gp on their person, held in neat leather purses. Searching the room and making a successful DC 12 Wisdom (Perception) check uncovers 5 pp wrapped in a rag hidden under a bed.

12. HIGH PRIEST'S CHAMBER

This room is much cleaner and more richly appointed than any other part of the temple. There are oak-paneled walls, vibrant tapestries, a four-posted bed, and a carved fireplace. There is also a large strongbox in one corner.

A squat **goblin boss**, wearing a grotesquely carved ebony mask, stands before the carved



fireplace with an enormous **worg** sitting at her feet.

“Fools!” the dark figure hisses in a muffled, raspy voice. “I warned you to stay away—now you must die!” The boss and worg attack furiously. The boss also begins calling to her bodyguards (area 11) for help. If they are still alive, the hobgoblins from that room join the fight in the third round.

Once the fight is over, the characters can remove the mask, revealing Frida Crabapple, Constable of Melton! (Should the party have slain Frida in Melton, then they simply unmask a regular goblin boss).

ADJUSTING THE SCENE

Here are some suggestions for adjusting this scene:

- **Weak:** Remove the **worg**.
 - **Strong:** Add 1 **worg**.
 - **Very Strong:** Add 1 **worg** and 1 **hobgoblin**.
-

Questioning Frida. If the characters take Frida alive and question her, they can learn the following facts with a successful DC 14 Charisma (Intimidation) check.

- About a year ago, Frida discovered the temple and found the obsidian mask.
- She tried on the mask and found she desired to wear it as much as possible. It also seemed to make her a better hunter.
- As time went on, she found herself becoming more violent and more acquisitive, though she worked hard to hide this from her fellow villagers.
- One day she was ambushed by a small group of goblins. She managed to slay the boss and

subdue the others. She then realized this was the path to the riches she craved.

- She set up a hideout in the temple, recruited more goblins to the tribe, and began aggressively harassing caravans using the knowledge she gained from her position in Melton.

Strongbox Trap. There is a poison needle trap on the strongbox latch. Finding the trap requires a successful DC 12 Wisdom (Perception) check; once found, it can be disabled with a successful DC 12 Dexterity check with thieves’ tools. A character who opens the latch without first disabling the trap must make a DC 15 Dexterity saving throw. On a failed save, the character is pricked by the needle, takes 9 (2d8) poison damage, and is poisoned for 1 hour.

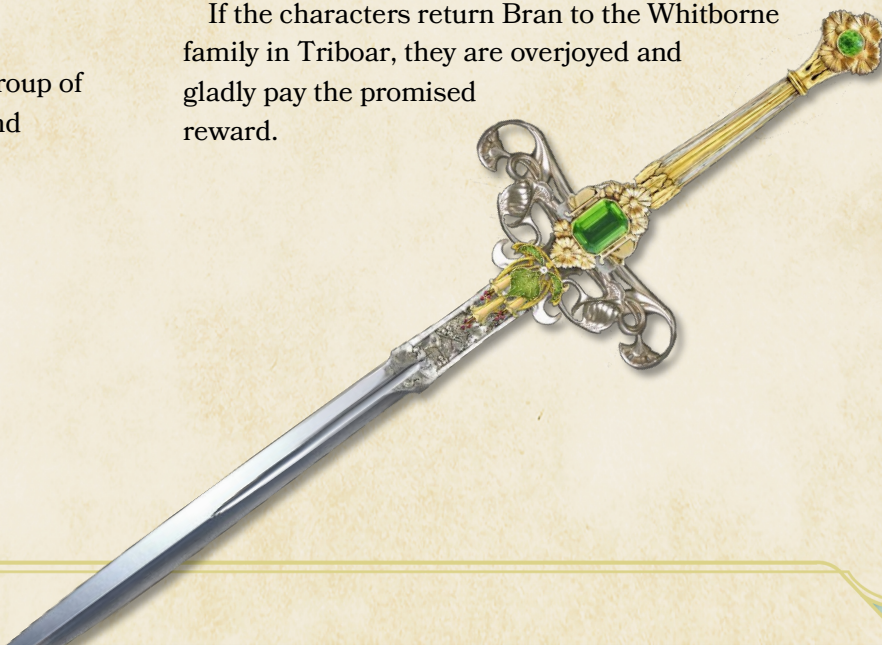
TREASURE

Inside the box are: 1100 sp, 150 gp, and 10 pp. There are also 4 bloodstones worth 25 gp each and miscellaneous jewelry worth 100gp total. The mask is a magic item called the *mask of the nightbringers* (see appendix A).

WRAPPING UP

The journey back to Melton is uneventful. The villagers are skeptical when they hear the news about Frida Crabapple, but grudgingly accept the story if confirmed by Ellywick. “Stranger things happen in Waterdeep,” they say, repeating a local aphorism.

If the characters return Bran to the Whitborne family in Triboar, they are overjoyed and gladly pay the promised reward.



APPENDIX A. MAGIC ITEMS

MASK OF THE NIGHTBRINGERS

Wondrous Item, uncommon (requires attunement)

This mask is made of ebony and has been carved to resemble a grotesque, frowning face. These items were created by the Nightbringers, a depraved sect of the goddess Shar, for the purpose of ensnaring people into their cult.

The mask has 10 charges. Upon wearing the mask, you expend a charge and gain a +1 bonus to attack rolls, saving throws, and ability checks. This benefit lasts for 1 hour.

When you expend the last charge, roll a d20. If you roll a 1 the mask is depleted, and you gain no further benefits from wearing it. Otherwise the mask regains 1 new charge at dawn the following day. The mask regains all 10 charges when a creature who has not used it before attunes with it.

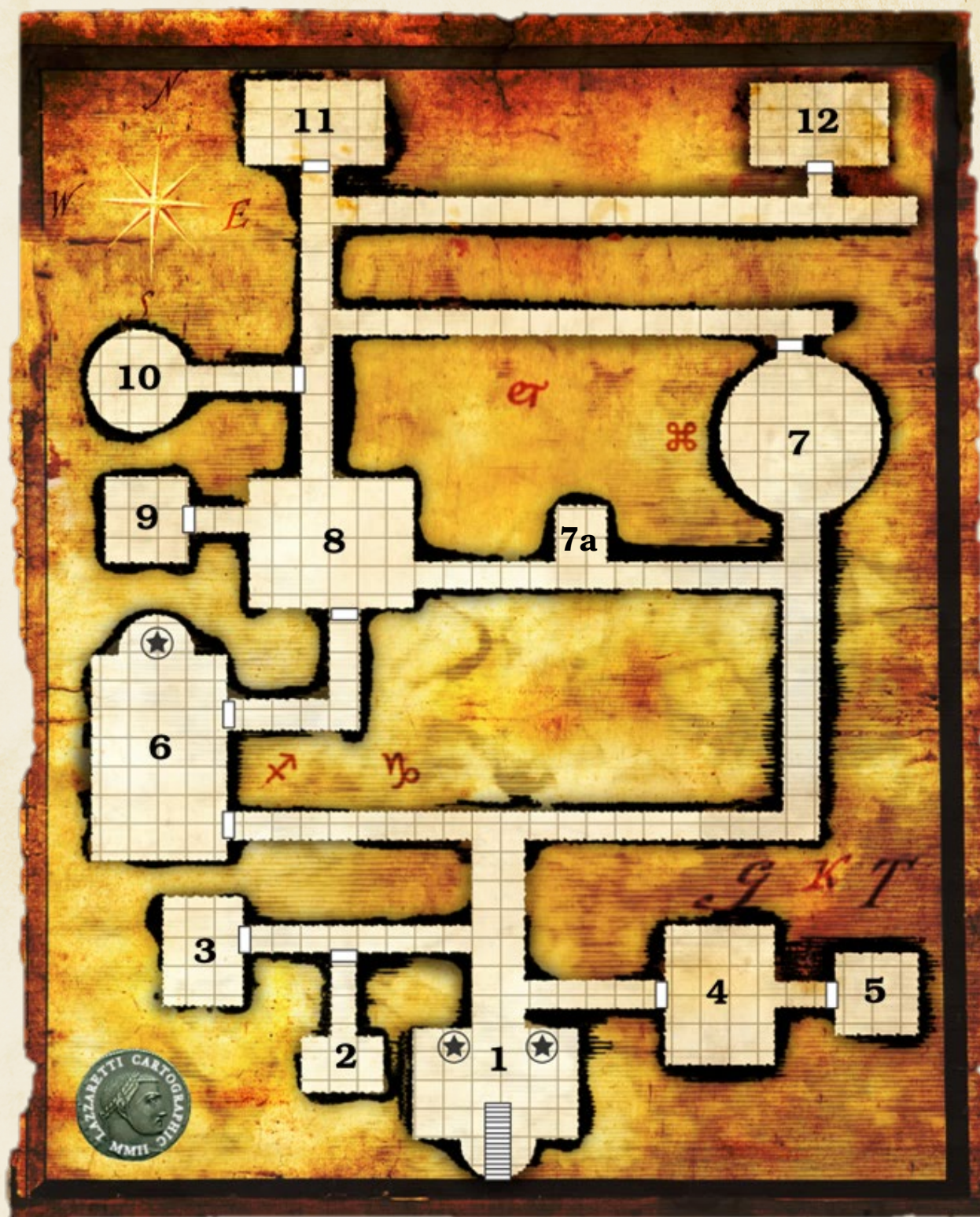
Curse. This mask is cursed. Attuning to it curses you until you are targeted by the *remove curse* spell or similar magic. As long as you remain cursed, you are unwilling to part with the mask, keeping it within reach at all times.

Each time you put on the mask you must make a DC 10 Wisdom saving throw. On a failure, your alignment permanently changes to neutral evil.

While cursed, if you go 24 hours without wearing the mask, you must succeed on a DC 15 Constitution saving throw or take 1 level of exhaustion. This exhaustion disappears as soon as you wear the mask again.



APPENDIX B. MAPS



1 SQUARE = 10 FEET

