

# UNDER FROZEN STARS

BY JASON NELSON





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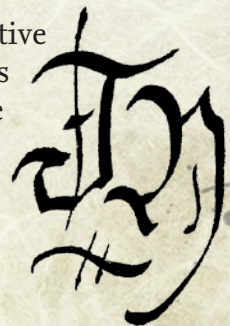
### WHAT YOU WILL FIND INSIDE UNDER FROZEN STARS (5E)

On an epic journey across the frozen wastes, your characters seek their destiny and that of the future empress. Yet at the top of the world, having overcome the ravaging storms and dark forces arrayed against them, you discover a marvel of legend, a ruined city both ancient and alien. Surely you cannot simply pass it by without exploring it and seeing what mysteries have lain untouched for time out of mind. Then again, if the caravan tales are true, perhaps others have come not so long ago, leaving behind a mysterious treasure that may be of great aid in claiming your imperial destiny in the eastern realms.

**Under Frozen Stars** is a 5th Edition adventure for 8th-level characters, which can be dropped into any campaign where the heroes are exploring the frozen reaches beyond the end of civilization, whether high atop an inaccessible mountain range or at the farthest polar reaches at the top of the world, especially if your campaign bridges traditional western fantasy with the mysteries of the far east. It is a classic lost city where magic and technologies ancient and alien lie buried in the ice, forgotten by the world beyond but still filled with mechanical marvels and deadly dangers your players will never forget.

The Legendary Games tradition is to combine rich story and background, innovative layout, beautiful aesthetics, and excellence in design that is second to none. This product is the latest in that tradition, and we hope you enjoy using it as much as we enjoyed making it. Game on!

- Jason Nelson



### ABOUT LEGENDARY GAMES

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# UNDER FROZEN STARS

*Under Frozen Stars* is an adventure set in a frozen and desolate arctic wilderness, where mid-level PCs (7<sup>th</sup>-9<sup>th</sup> level) encounter the ice-shrouded ruins of an ancient and alien civilization. The adventure does not provide enough experience in and of itself for the PCs to increase in level, but it provides a number of interesting challenges and rewards, especially if the heroes are leading an exploratory expedition to the far polar regions, or escorting a caravan journey across the arctic trade routes from a land of Western-style fantasy into the realms of the mysterious and fantastic Orient. The PCs may also be tracking down rumors of a legendary location at the literal end of the world, as well as a rare and powerful magical item with its roots in the far eastern lands towards which they journey. This item can increase their notoriety in future adventures once they reach those lands as well as being quite useful in their battles against the oni from the Far East.

## EXPERIENCE COUNTS

We feel these short adventures work best using the milestone method of rewarding experience and gaining levels. Instead of tracking each individual number, concentrate more on the story and just level up each character at the conclusion of each adventure. You are certainly welcome to reward experience points as you go, whatever you and your players will have more fun with.

## ADVENTURE BACKGROUND

The *White Peacock Crown* was the pride of the princes of Waj Khor, signifying their independence from the larger kingdoms around them. The kings claimed the crown gave them power to see and hear the truth, which allowed them to thwart the deceptions of rakshasas to the south and oni to the north who sought to inveigle their way into the favor of Waj Khor's ruling elite and thereby subvert the kingdom from within as they had done with countless other regimes. The rulers of Waj Khor were clever, however, and copies of the crown were made so that infiltrators never knew which crown was genuine and whom they could deceive until their schemes were revealed and their plots undone.

So it was for generations, until Waj Khor was undone by one of its own, a clever thief named Miriya who cared nothing for politics or the plots and machinations of the ruling class, and who knew nothing of their role in protecting the land from infiltration and subversion. She wanted only riches, and perhaps fame (or infamy) as the most daring thief in all the land, and through guile and dauntless luck she and a small gang of ninjas succeeded in the heist. Little did they realize they had stolen the true *White Peacock Crown*, but it was not long before oni and rakshasa alike began to enjoy great success in their subtle schemes. While Miriya and her band reveled, the rival outsiders rose up in power and contested with one another for control of Waj Khor. Brother was turned against brother, each enslaved by the rival powers, and the small kingdom tore itself apart in civil war. Within months, a kingdom that had stood for centuries was no more, its carcass soon to be swallowed up and forgotten by the kingdoms nearby.

Spent after their pyrrhic victory, the oni began seeking the mystic crown that had thwarted them, and began hunting down the ninjas of Miriya's clan as they did so. The clan master declared the crown accursed and summoned Miriya to carry it to the farthest reaches of the world, banishing her on pain of death. Accompanied by a faithful few friends, Miriya from place to place, seeking hiding and shelter in great cities and tiny villages, in brothels and for some months in a monastery where Miriya thought she could find peace or at least focus for her desperate frustration. Each time, though, shapechanging pursuers found her out. In the end, she journeyed far to the north, beyond the vast spirit-forests and the wild borderlands beyond, and even beyond the Wall of the Sky that marked the edge of the lands she knew even in stories. Beyond was only the endless expanse of the north. The oni had pursued them, nearly catching them once, and she and her surviving friends infiltrated a caravan heading into the lands beyond, covering their trail with a false sea voyage she hoped would divert her pursuers. Halfway across the endless arctic expanse, however, the oni caught her once again, slaughtering most of the caravan before they were driven off. Miriya and the surviving caravaners left the known pathways and lost themselves in the northern mountains where none could find them, wandering for weeks until they discovered a long-forgotten legend – a strange city of towers, midnight blue and gleaming silver and shattered glass, at once ruined and yet enduring from time out of mind. Approaching the outskirts and breaking into a low building at the foot of an impossible tower half a mile high, Miriya and her companions found strange crystals and metallic carvings and artifacts they broke loose to sell. Miriya, though, now half-mad, said she knew she had truly reached the farthest reaches of the world as she had promised, and here she would stay with the *White Peacock*



*Crown*, hidden forever where the oni would never find it. She took the crown down a long tunnel, impossibly straight and lit by lines of blue light, and Xam and Odashu, the last two surviving caravanners, sealed shut the door behind her.

Xam and Odashu were eventually able to make their way across the pole, leaving the strange blue city and their erstwhile companions far behind, arriving after a grueling trek in the ramshackle trade villages just below the high ice, which seemed like palaces of pleasure and ease after their ordeal. They kept their mysterious trade goods close but were free with parts of their tales, which were little believed but much enjoyed by the locals. After venturing farther south, they had plans to return in force to loot these ancient ruins, but they were disappointed to find little market for the oddments they had brought south. The strange relics of crystal and wire and tiny blinking lights seemed to have no purpose but decoration. Arriving in the trade-city of the Viking lords, they found more cosmopolitan merchants, however, who saw a profit in these strange things, but pressed them for details of their tale. Sadly, after traveling through the bleak polar midnight they were unable to accurately track their journey, and hope of a triumphant return at the head of their own caravan was lost. In despair and a drunken rage, Xam and Odashu fell into argument and Xam killed his partner, and was himself tried and executed for her murder.

Meanwhile, the hunting party of oni that had followed Miriya lost her trail and subsequently spent decades combing the arctic for signs of her or the crown. Honor-bound to recover the crown and unwilling to endure the disgrace of returning without it, they scoured the trade-towns and villages to no avail, eventually traveling to the subarctic lands of the west and seeking her in vain. However, they finally uncovered rumors about Xam and Odashu and followed the trail back across the pole to the blue city of the ancients. Evading the servants of the winter-witch, they made their way into the city, only to be detected by the clockwork spies Miriya had set against their return, for she too had endured these long years. Mere weeks after entering the blue city, she stumbled upon a barely sentient machine that sought to steal her mind and make her a thoughtless machine, but so strong was her urge to live that a spark of life yet remained within her. Half-woman and half-machine, she renewed her vigil and set about turning the strange living machines of the blue city to serve her purposes. When the oni found her at last, they were taken off guard by her yet-potent skills, but even more so at the horrifying machine that had given her life and now dealt death to the oni, only for them to rise again as cybernetic slaves. One oni only remained, trying to puzzle out where Miriya had hidden the crown and how he might recover it alone; while willing to die in service to his oaths, he would far rather return in glory.

## A JOURNEY TO THE EAST

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While this adventure can occur in any remote icy region, it is ideal for a campaign taking heroes on an epic journey from the Western lands of traditional fantasy to the Far East, crossing the arctic rather than the wide, uncharted oceans. To draw your heroes from West to the Orient, you can introduce a simple plot device: the Destined Empress, either a PC or a friendly NPC or a PCs who discovers she is a long-lost descendant of an imperial line in the Far East. Enemies of her family have found her in the Western lands and will never stop hunting her to prevent her from returning and claiming her birthright.

You can incorporate begin this journey in *Road to Destiny* and continue it in *The Baleful Covenant* into this epic journey, and can provide, but this epic journey may require assistance along the way from experienced travelers who know the way. These can be Whether existing NPCs or new allies made along the journey, of any class or race, they and can help connect the PCs to the story and the challenges that await them.

The Caravan Master is host and guide for travelers across the arctic. He knows the stories in the adventure background but does not believe them until a frequent traveler across the arctic who can provide transportation through the hostile frozen north. He is familiar with the stories told by Xam and Odashu, as described in the adventure background, though he believed little of the story until the PCs' arctic expedition discovers the strange blue city at the top of the world. Once there, the small details the Caravan Master remembers from the tale, from the impossibly tall towers, to the shape and color of the metal and glass, and the strange circling blue lights... it all fits. This really is the place!. With the notes he kept and the city in view, he is certain he can find the tunnel where Xam and Odashu left Miriya behind. Few have laid eyes on this legendary place and lived to tell the tale, much less brought back something worth selling. There is undoubtedly great wealth here to be found, whatever the madwoman's fate. Surely a quick visit could do no harm.

The Protector is a friend of the Destined Empress, an experienced scout and devoted bodyguard. She has heard of this lost city, and as an explorer she believes it would be a great thing to map at least a portion of it, for the knowledge of future generations, though her first priority is the security of the Destined Empress.

The Mystic Seer discovered the Destined Empress' hidden lineage and foresaw the attacks of her blood enemies. Her divinations and lore suggest the legendary crown she stole was not cursed but actually bears some great virtue against those hunting the Destined Empress, which is why they tried to destroy the crown and all who knew of it, lest it become a powerful weapon to help her reclaim her throne.





## THE ADVENTURE BEGINS

The adventure begins as the heroes approach a strange spire deep in the high ice. The adventure background assumes the heroes are crossing the arctic wastes at the pole, but the adventure could also be set amidst the glacier fields of an inaccessible mountain range or a desolate island locked in an icy sea.

### 1. DOORWAY TO MIDNIGHT

*A low bunker of blue-black stone protrudes from the ice. Dimly visible beneath a thick layer of frost is a faint tracery of silvery wire inlaid in a repeating star-like pattern encircling a hexagonal portal in the bunker's face. To the right of the portal is a hexagonal panel of milky-white crystal, spiderwebbed with cracks and smashed through in several places.*

This entire portal is covered in a layer of ice (AC 13, hp 20) which must be removed before the portal can be opened or the crystal panel accessed. If the ice takes more than 20 points of damage, any damage over this amount is applied as damage to the access panel. Once the ice is removed, the panel must be repaired using *mending* or *creation*, or 1 hour of work and a DC 20 Dexterity check can also repair 1d4 points of damage. The crystal panel begins with 10 hit points (subtracting any damage suffered from breaking through the ice) and must be repaired up to 20 hit points to function. Once repaired, several vertical slots can be accessed, one of which is sized for the pendant the Caravan Master owns, which allows the portal to be opened with a DC 15 Wisdom (Perception) check to figure out the right

sequence. The portal itself can also be broken or battered down (hp 100, DC 25 Strength check to burst).

### 2. ENTRY RAMP

*Beyond the portal is a ramp heading down. A bit down the hexagonal corridor, tiny pinpoints of blue light flicker into view, emanating from the floor at regular intervals.*

As PCs enter, tiny blue lights in the floor are triggered by their approach, spaced 10 feet apart, each shedding dim light as a candle. The ramp extends 200 feet, descending to 50 feet below ground, disgorging onto a 20-foot square platform lit by similar lights.

### 3. ANTECHAMBER

*The floors and walls in this chamber are covered in cracked tiles, smeared with some dark residue. To the left and right are the ruined remnants of what may have once been small chambers, though whether they were once closets, cells, or even sleeping chambers is impossible to tell. All that remains are the broken bases of interior walls and what may have been horizontal shelves or bunks. Directly ahead, a metallic jamb or frame holds fragments of a shattered glassine wall 10 feet wide. Beyond, steps drop down to a sunken catwalk.*

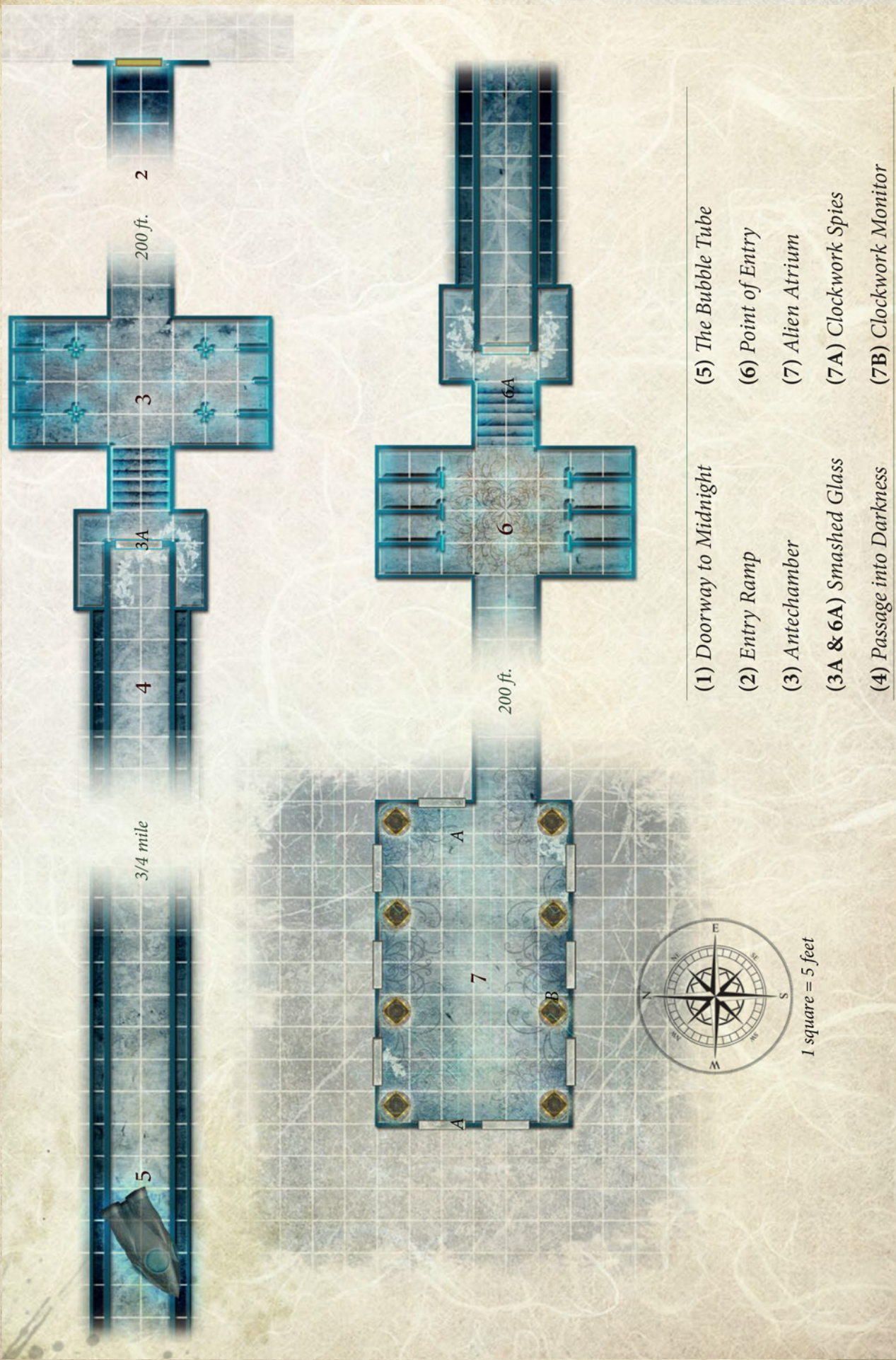
A search of the chamber reveals mostly useless rubble; however a DC 25 Wisdom (Perception) check uncovers a broken pendant similar to the one the Caravan Master possesses. If repaired with jeweler's tools, *mending* or similar means, it can be used in similar fashion. The Caravan Master can tell the PCs that this is as far as Xam and Odashu went when Miriya left them with the *white peacock crown*. At that time, the glass wall at A was intact and had a sliding door in the center of it. They closed the door and smashed the key here, then went back up the ramp and destroyed the mechanism that opened the outer door.

### 4. PASSAGE INTO DARKNESS (1,100 XP)

*A metallic grated catwalk that extends 10 feet along each side of a smooth-walled hexagonal tunnel leading off into the darkness.*

Unlike the ramp and platform above, the long tunnel is not lit. The tunnel is 10 feet wide along its flat bottom and ceiling, 10 feet high, and the tunnel walls angle outwards 3 feet on either side, forming a hexagon in cross-section. The tunnel is stone, cracked in many places, and slick with moisture, with patches of slimy residue congealing in many places. At irregular intervals, the cracks open into wider crevices, no more than a foot wide, leading into narrow, twisting cysts; the residue is always thicker in such places.







**Hazard:** This tarry black residue is dangerous to living flesh, dealing 21 (6d6) poison damage per round, and continually doing damage until removed with fire, cold, sunlight, or disease curing magic. A DC 15 Intelligence (Nature) check reveals the nature of this hazard. If not identified, a climbing or walking PC enters the slime automatically, while a flying or jumping PC can avoid a falling glob of slime with a successful DC 15 Dexterity saving throw. A creature being dissolved by the black slime begins glowing blue from the inside as its flesh is consumed.

**Note:** If using this adventure in conjunction with the Far East Adventure Path as your PCs cross the pole, contact or proximity to this residue could instead cause one of the disease effects described in the accompanying gazetteer article.

**Scaling the Adventure:** If PCs are higher level, double the amount of damage dealt by the slime. If PCs are lower level, halve the damage instead.

## 5. THE BUBBLE TUBE (9,000 XP)

*Ahead in the distance in this seemingly endless tunnel, you see a flickering blue light, guttering out and then after a brief span wanly returning before again going dark. Approaching closer, you see the battered hulk of a hexagonal metallic tube, with cracked bubble-like windows along both sides and at each end. Several bluish lights seem to be moving inside the hulk.*

The slightly crumpled tube is the remains of a transport vehicle that once moved to and from the city on a cushion of force. It has long since fallen to ruin, but the eldritch mechanism that generated its force cushion still sputters and throws off irregular waves of force. Strange degenerate beings that consume this force energy huddle around it from time to time, draining the field's energy each time it manifests. These force morlocks hate all creatures other than their own kind. While they flee from the clockwork monitors in the city above, they attack any other creatures on sight.

As you approach the wreckage, you see a half-dozen hunched, misshapen humanoids clutching long shards of metal. They are clad only in rags and sagging drapes of skin, and their flesh glows with a pale blue light, their eyes a baleful red.

### FORCE MORLOCKS (6)

*Medium aberration, chaotic evil*

**Armor Class** 15 (natural armor)

**Hit Points** 120 (16d8 + 48)

**Speed** 30 ft.



STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
13 (+1)	16 (+3)	16 (+3)	10 (+0)	14 (+2)	10 (+0)

**Damage Resistances** force

**Senses** darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 12

**Challenge** 5 (1,800 XP)

**Breathless.** A force morlock does not breathe and is immune to inhaled effects.

**Force Aura.** A force morlock is surrounded by a dull blue aura as bright as a candle that flares brighter when struck, dealing 3 (1d6) force damage to attackers who hit them with melee attacks.

**Sunlight Sensitivity.** While in sun light, the morlock has disadvantage on attack rolls, as well as on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on sight.

### ACTIONS

**Multiattack.** The morlock makes three attacks, only one of which can be a bite.

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

**Slam.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 12 (2d8 + 3) piercing damage.

**Developments:** The force morlocks will attack by swarming in pairs. If one of a pair is slain, the survivor will move to flank with others or to join with another lone survivor. If only one is left alive, it will flee toward the nearest crevice, 100 feet beyond the wreck.

**Treasure:** With one hour of work, the PCs can attempt a DC 15 Intelligence (History) check to salvage valuable artifacts from the wrecked vehicle. Each batch of artifacts is worth 1d10 x 100 gp worth of materials, weighing 1d10 x 10 lbs.

**Scaling the Adventure:** If PCs are higher level, you can increase the number of force morlocks.



## 6. POINT OF ENTRY

*After a long traverse of the hex-tunnel, passing occasional dripping crevices and black sludge-pools teeming with tiny white worms, but seeing naught else save for nearly transparent spiders and black-shelled arthropods with red-glowing eyes, you see a catwalk rise above you, and beyond it a ramp leading up. A metal jamb holds the remnant of a shattered glass wall, much like the one you passed at the tunnel's other end.*

This room is identical to area 3 but is in somewhat better repair, with the small cell-chambers on either side mostly intact. There are traces of the black residue here, but less than in the outer antechamber. The ramp here leads up, stretching 200 feet and rising 50 feet back to the surface and leading into a large atrium 30 feet wide and 40 feet long.

## 7. ALIEN ATRIUM (2,910 XP)

*This large chamber is crafted of stone, tile, and metal, with large windows now mostly broken. Strangely curved mosaics and carvings, looking almost half-melted, decorate the walls while vaguely disturbing statuary in an inhuman style stands at the foot of each pillar between the great windows. There are no obvious doors visible, though the empty steel window-frames offer ample egress into the unearthly cityscape beyond.*

The atrium is watched by a pair of clockwork spies (marked A) which observe intruders while clinging to the walls 15 feet above the floor (DC 26 Wisdom (Perception) check to notice). They watch all creatures that come and go, but are programmed to record when they encounter an aberration or an outsider. After recording and following a creature of those types, they will return to Miriya to deliver their jewel for a report. Other creatures moving through the atrium will be watched, and those leaving the atrium to go into the city will be followed by one clockwork spy while the other stays on station.

### CLOCKWORK SPY

CR0

XP 10

hp 5 (use homunculus stats from the 5E SRD)

Clockwork spies explode, dealing 3 (1d6) fire the round after they die. This can be prevented with a DC 15 Dexterity check.

These clockwork spies have been engraved with a Tiun\* pictogram in the dialect of Waj Khor for "white peacock" (DC 20 Intelligence (History) check to identify it). If a clockwork spy explodes, its pictogram cannot be found.

Most of the statuary is simply decorative, if alien in its appearance. However, the statue at B is a clockwork monitor, a construct currently in standby mode. It

activates if any offensive actions are taken within the atrium, including destruction of the building or objects within it. PCs prodding or striking the clockwork monitor also cause it to activate and attack. It begins by disarming the creature that provoked it and then any other creatures nearby, responding with lethal force if attacked. The clockwork monitor bears an identical pictogram to the clockwork spies.

### CLOCKWORK MONITOR

CR7

XP 2,900

hp 142 (use shield guardian stats from the 5E SRD)

**Treasure:** A destroyed clockwork monitor can be salvaged for parts as described in The Bubble Tube.

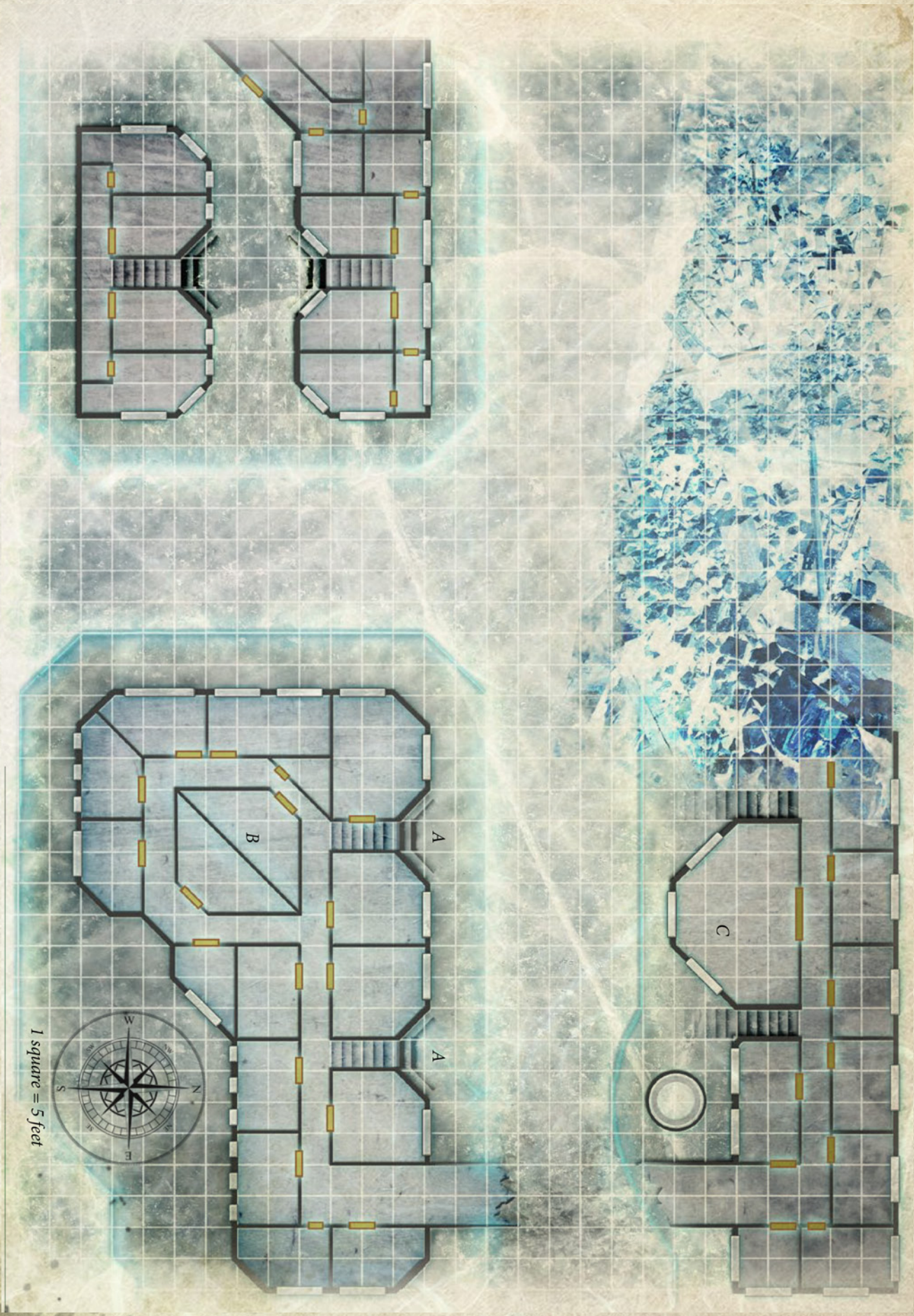
**Scaling the Adventure:** If PCs are lower level, the clockwork monitor could be malfunctioning (treat as having the poisoned condition). If PCs are higher level, a second clockwork monitor is present, with both constructs activating whenever either of them or the spies are disturbed.

## THE EMPTY STREETS

*Perhaps because the wind is buffered by the strange monoliths stretching in all directions, the polar chill is less intense here than beyond the bunker where you entered these ruins, though frost rimes every surface. The atrium opens onto a plaza, with narrow avenues extending in all directions between massive angular towers of metal, stone, and glass, much weathered and scarred by time and the elements. Here and there, large, twisted green plants twine up the sides of ancient buildings, and occasionally a whisper of movement is seen through the haze of bluish radiance shrouding the sky above.*

This section of the ancient ruins is approximately a mile across and is encompassed by a faint bluish energy field that functions like an enormous transparent *tiny hut* that sheds dim light throughout the ruins below. However, its power is sapped by failing mechanisms and by the constant gnawing of force morlocks below ground draining its force energy. While functioning, winds are reduced to calm and temperatures are increased by 70 degrees compared to prevailing outside temperatures. However, every hour there is a 10% chance that the field ruptures and collapses for 1d4 hours, exposing those in the ruins to extreme cold and severe wind conditions. Characters who don't have heat sources, cold weather gear, or magic to protect them are subject to the effects of extreme cold, as described in the "Weather" section in chapter 5, "Adventure Environments," of the DMG.





1 square = 5 feet



**Note:** If using this adventure in conjunction with the Far East Adventure Path, the powerful storms generated by the winter-witch in her tower increase this chance of rupture to 50% per hour until she is defeated.

There is no immediate indication as to where Miriya might have gone, unless PCs follow one of the clockwork spies back to its point of origin. PCs will most likely need to conduct a reconnaissance of the area to find traces of the passage of a female human's passage. Finding the first trace requires a DC 20 Wisdom (Perception) or DC 15 Wisdom (Survival) check, and the DC is reduced by 5 for subsequent checks. Each PC can make one check against one of these skills (player's choice) each hour. Once the PCs have accumulated a total of 12 successful checks, they are able to triangulate the probable direction of the traces and discern a usable trail leading back to Miriya's home. Each hour, however, the PCs also have a chance of an encounter:

**TABLE 3—1: RANDOM ENCOUNTERS (THE EMPTY STREETS)**

% ROLL	ENCOUNTER	SENSES	*1	DC
01-50	No encounter	-	-	-
51-60	1 clockwork spy <sup>2</sup>	darkvision 60'	10	12
61-70	1 clockwork monitor	darkvision 60'	10	9
71-80	1d4 force morlocks	darkvision 120', keen scent	12	12
81-85	2 chuul	darkvision 60'	14	10
86-90	1 corrupt treant	-	13	9
91-00	1 cloaker <sup>3</sup>	darkvision 60'	11	12

<sup>1</sup> Perception Check

<sup>2</sup> Clockwork spies, guardian monitors, and treants have a 75% chance to be hiding motionless, being detected only as a dormant clockwork, or a normal tree, respectively.

<sup>3</sup> A cloaker will be encountered only if PCs have been flying during this hour, attracted by creatures in the air; otherwise reroll, which may result in no encounter.

## CORRUPT TREANT

**CR9**

XP 5,000

hp 138 (SRD)

Chaotic evil

## CLOAKER

**CR8**

XP 3,900

hp 78 (SRD)

## CHUUL

**CR4**

XP 1,100

hp 93 (SRD)

Encounters typically occur in the street, but can just as easily occur if PCs are exploring the shells of mostly empty ruined buildings. No map is provided, as this portion of the adventure assumes wide-ranging exploration by PCs looking for clues. If combat occurs, the GM can create a simple encounter area in the street or inside a building. The main avenues of the city are usually 30-40 feet across, with raised concourses or plazas on either side 10 feet wide. Streets and concourses alike are often strewn with light or dense rubble or ice sheets.

If PCs explore the interior of buildings rather than the streets, checks to track Miriya gain disadvantage. However, PCs can also choose instead to make DC 15 Intelligence (History) or Wisdom (Perception) checks to salvage salable trade goods and artifacts, as described at area 5. If rolling an encounter while exploring the interior of a building, replace a result of 91-00 (cloaker) with the following hazards:

**TABLE 3—2: RANDOM HAZARDS (THE EMPTY STREETS)**

% ROLL	HAZARD	CR	PERCEPTION DC	DISABLE DC
91-95	building collapse	8	20	n/a
96-00	shocking floor trap	9	15	15

The signs of an impending building collapse can be noticed with a DC 20 Wisdom (Perception) check. Those in the building take 36 (8d8) bludgeoning damage, though those who notice the signs may make a DC 15 Dexterity saving throw to instead take half that much. Those who beat the Perception DC by 5 escape completely, taking no damage.

A shocking floor trap is the result of malfunctioning and neglected wiring, rather than deliberate malice. Noticing it takes a DC 15 Wisdom (Perception) check, and disarming it is a DC 15 Dexterity check on which thieves' tools apply. Anyone stepping on the electrified floor takes 18 (4d8) lightning damage.

## THE FALSE GUARDIAN (2,900 XP)

If PCs engage in combat with any wandering monster, there is a 10% cumulative chance per round of combat (20% if an area effect attack is used) that the fray attracts the attention of Liao Ku, the last survivor of the oni hunting party. Liao Ku flies invisibly, changing his shape to that of an elderly female Tiun\* and watches the PCs while keeping



his distance. If they approach Miriya's building, Liao Ku becomes visible and approaches them, attempting to impersonate Miriya (passive Deception 18) and speaking in heavily Tiun-accented Common.

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*A ragged crone approaches you from the shadows, dressed in furs and robes. A weathered bow is in her hands, an arrow nocked but not drawn. Though frail with age, a hard light is in her eyes. With a suspicious glare, she addresses you in heavily accented Common: "Who are you, strangers? What do you want? Cannot an old woman who has caused more misery than anyone should be left alone to die in peace... if I even can die here. That thrice-damned light has stretched my years too long already, I think. Either way, there is nothing here for you. Go, and be glad you did."*

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If PCs ask if she is Miriya, "she" feigns at first surprise and then anger. Play up "Miriya" as bitter and a bit snarky, bitter, and fatalistic, but with a touch of desperate longing if PCs show kindness and sympathy, as though this were "her" one last, best hope at redemption or at least vengeance.

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*That name no longer has any meaning for me! If you came here following tales of treasure, there is none, only desolation and loneliness. Maybe you heard I had something of great worth. You heard wrong. I had nothing. I am nothing. You should go while you still can. If you stay too long, the light will take hold of you. Have you seen those poor wretches that live below? That will be your fate is it surely will be mine. Maybe it will be sweeter to forget anyway.*

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If asked how she can fly or turn invisible (in case they spotted her earlier), she says the invisibility is a trick of the ninja order she learned in her youth, but that flight seems to be a side effect of the blue light that developed after she had been here over a year.

If the PCs press her about her identity or about the white peacock crown, "she" makes a show of resistance (have PCs make a Charisma (Persuasion) or Charisma (Intimidation) check, but the result is meaningless), hoping to draw out more information. "She" is very interested if they reveal the nature of the Destined Empress or the Five Storms oni.

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*It seems that we have enemies in common. Yes, Miriya, that was my name, and yes I stole the crown. Thought it would make me famous, and so it did, or infamous at least. Fate is not without a sense of humor, it seems, though I've never found it funny. I*

*was cast out and I ran, here and there, trying to hide it, let the world be rid of its curse, if cursed it truly was. I don't know. All I knew was fear, and I kept running all the way to the ends of the earth. Those merchants, Xam and Odashu, they helped me get here, but once I got here I was out of ideas.*

I sought for years for the perfect hiding place, knowing that someday the oni would catch me. I couldn't let them find it. I kept following the strange little metal spiders and finally found a great machine that seemed to build them and repair them and their kin. I sneaked inside the machine—I was trained in stealth, after all—and hid the crown inside, but something went wrong. The machine turned on, it sprayed something strange on me, dizzying, and as I stumbled away it stabbed at me with some kind of long arm. I got away, but not long after I started seeing a strange new creature in the ruins. It looked like me, or me as I was in my youth, but half flesh and half metal. Somehow it had drawn my thoughts out, and made weapons like I once used long ago. It was as if my body and mind had been turned inside out and poured in a mold. What came out was that THING. It watches me sometimes, I know it does, and it has stopped me from getting back into the machine to retrieve the crown, but it does not kill me. I don't know why. I've seen it kill many others, but that mercy is forever denied me.

---

"Miriya" offers to show the PCs where the great machine is, and even offers to draw out her metallic doppelganger so that they can destroy it, and then venture into the great machine itself. Perhaps their combined power can succeed where she alone could not, destroying the machine and recovering the crown and using it to overthrow the oni that plague the eastern lands the Destined Empress seeks to claim.

**Development:** Of course, Liao Ku simply wishes to manipulate them into destroying enemies too powerful for him to manage on his own. If they succeed, he asks to see the crown once more, snatching it and assuming gaseous form and fleeing with his prize. He also attempts to charm the Destined Empress and kidnap her as well, if he believes he can escape with her without endangering himself or his primary mission to recover the crown. If the party is heavily wounded after succeeding in their task of defeating or driving off the true Miriya, he may simply blast them with cone of cold as they emerge from combat and then try to slay them and take the crown and the Destined Empress by force. If the PCs see through Liao Ku's deception and do not seem inclined to do as he asks, he will attack if they appear weak or flee if they appear strong, attempting to lure them into strong foes (perhaps a corrupted treant) and waiting for his regeneration to heal any damage before hunting the PCs. Such an encounter is CR 10.



## LIAO KU

CR7

XP 2,900

Oni (SRD)

hp 110

In disguise as Miriya, Liao Ku will avoid melee but may shoot arrows:

**Shortbow.** *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, range 80/320 ft., one target. *Hit:* (1d8+7) piercing damage. Liao Ku may use his multiattack to make two shortbow attacks.

**Treasure:** In addition to his combat gear, Liao Ku wears a *ring of animal influence*. He also carries six small jade carvings (100 gp each) and 179 gp (Tiun coinage).

**Scaling the Adventure:** If PCs are lower level, Liao Ku could have started feeling the effects of the ruin's strange energies, and you could apply 2 levels of the exhaustion condition to him. Alternatively, you could bring the treant into the battle but have it turn on him. Of course, the treant is still no friend to the PCs, and if it survives it will turn on them if it survives combat with the oni, trying to snatch a victim and fly off with its meal.

If PCs are higher level, you could give him maximum hit points, or have the treant present to aid him from the outset of any battle.

## THE TRUE GUARDIAN (5,900 XP)

*The faint traces you have converge on this building with a wide, low steps leading up to shattered glass doors flanked by massive angled stone pillars. A similar doorway provides egress farther down the building's façade, but the nearer doorway, in the shadow of a collapsed sky-bridge overhead, reveals a curious lump of vaguely human metallic sculpture atop the remnants of a pedestal. Across a rubble and ice-choked boulevard the fallen bridge once spanned lies a companion building, blockier in shape and with what could be a long-empty fountain.*

Two clockwork monitors remain here on standby at all times, one at A and a second inside the building, near Miriya's chambers at B. Miriya herself is typically in the building across the plaza at C (Wisdom (Perception) DC 25). Miriya observes intruders, suspecting that any creatures entering the city are likely to be either oni or creatures under their control. If PCs attack the clockwork monitor(s), or

if they approach this building in the company of Liao Ku posing as an elderly Miriya, she takes this as confirmation of her suspicions and leaps into combat, beginning with a ki charge sneak attack and using vanishing trick after attacking to gain a sneak attack in the next round.

**Buildings:** The concourses are raised a foot above the avenue between, and the interior of each building is 10 feet above street level. The interior rooms have 10-foot ceilings, and the roofs above are mostly flat, though angled around the edges to be 25 feet above street level. Building It is a DC 15 Strength (Athletics) check to climb an exterior wall, or DC 20 for an interior wall. Most windows are cracked and easily destroyed if not entirely broken already (50% chance of either). A Medium or smaller creature can smash through a window as a bonus action taken during their movement with a DC 10 Strength check.

The buildings here are mostly deserted, save for Miriya and her clockwork allies. A search of the rooms turns up scattered shards of stone, metal, and glass, tatters of cloth, and occasional tangled bits of wire. A 1-minute search of each room has a 10% chance to uncover potentially valuable artifacts;





a DC 20 Wisdom (Perception) or Intelligence (History) check recovers salvaged goods as at area 5.

**Terrain:** The concourses and avenue between the buildings are icy and treated as difficult terrain. With her light steps ability, Miriya ignores this penalty. She will use her jumping ability to leap into and out of combat, using Stealth when able to move into cover and otherwise using her vanishing trick to become invisible.

If Liao Ku is with PCs, “she” will turn invisible when combat begins, stating that she is much too old for such fighting, and that she fears the clockwork monitors might try to seize her and take her back to the machine. Liao Ku will support them with arrows shot from cover if a PC seems in great danger.

## MIRIYA, LIFESPARK CONSTRUCT

*Medium construct, unaligned*

**Armor Class** 16 (natural armor)

**Hit Points** 136 (16d8 + 64)

**Speed** 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
22 (+6)	19 (+4)	19 (+4)	8 (-1)	18 (+4)	6 (+2)

**Damage Resistances** acid, cold, fire, poison; slashing, piercing, and bludgeoning from nonmagical weapons that aren’t adamantite

**Condition Immunities** charmed, exhaustion, frightened, paralyzed, petrified

**Senses** darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 14

**Challenge** 10 (5,900 XP)

**Jagged Machinery.** A creature that touches Miriya or hits her with a melee attack while within 5 feet of her takes 4 (1d8) slashing damage.

**Light Steps.** Miriya ignores difficult terrain, and jumps twice as far.

## ACTIONS

**Multiattack.** Miriya makes three shuriken attacks, each of which she can replace with a kusarigama attack.

**Shuriken.** *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +10 to hit, range 30 ft., one target. *Hit:* 13 (2d8+4) piercing damage.

**Kusarigama.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +10 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 15 (2d8+6) slashing damage.

**Development:** Miriya attacks in cold silence, as her ninja master taught her. However, if she sees the false “Miriya” with PCs she will curse at them in Tiun. “Fools! Slaves to evil! You will never have it, NEVER! Die with your foul masters!” She does not understand Common but was programmed to understand Aklo when she was reborn in the alien machine. If PCs stop attacking and attempt to converse with her in a

language she understands, including through the use of an intelligent weapon fluent in her language, they can attempt a DC 20 Charisma (Persuasion) check as an action to convince her to stop attacking. If they mention the Destined Empress, fighting against oni in general, or specific mention of the oni agents they have already defeated in the Viking lands and other kingdoms of the west, grant a +2 bonus to this check for each item that is mentioned.

If calmed, Miriya remains suspicious but commands the clockwork monitors to cease attacking and parleys with the PCs while remaining hidden and/or invisible, allowing a DC 15 Charisma (Persuasion) check to make her friendly, at which point she volunteers her true history. If PCs mention how this differs from Liao Ku’s tale as “Miriya,” the true Miriya states that the other is an imposter, an oni in disguise and the last survivor of the same hunting party that harrowed her path so many years ago, only just recently having found her here. Most of their number were destroyed by the machine that made her, but the last must be destroyed as well lest he carry word to his masters about the crown and now the Destined Empress alike.

If Liao Ku is present, he protests that this is a trick to get the PCs to let their guard down suggests renewing the attack. If PCs seem inclined to believe the genuine Miriya, he attacks if they are weakened from the battle, but otherwise tries to flee (seeking aid from nearby creatures if possible).

If Liao Ku is destroyed, Miriya thanks the PCs and becomes friendly, willing to show them to the great machine. She warns them of its power and that the other oni have been turned into deathless guardians. Her machine programming does not allow her to strike directly against the machine or its creations, but she will aid the PCs in their battle as she can. She is inspired by the Destined Empress and wishes to gift her with the *white peacock crown*, that it may help her shatter the oni yoke upon the lands of their birth.

**Additional Development:** If PCs fight and destroy Miriya, they may explore the interior of these building, with Liao Ku as their guide. However, within 1d100 minutes, a clockwork servant will arrive at the scene of the battle and begin repairing Miriya’s body, taking approximately 1 minute to restore her to full health (though PCs may have removed her gear after defeating her). She will try to follow the PCs and wreak her vengeance upon them, and especially upon Liao Ku if he is still with them.

## MIRIYA’S QUARTERS (450 XP)

*Within the building, sheltered by internal walls amidst the detritus of ages and the breezes in the outer corridors, you find a sparsely furnished chamber. A long metal table holds several scraps of cloth stretched across makeshift frames, showing faded patterns and*



embroidery in the Tiun style. Dozens of bottles of all shapes and sizes are arranged neatly, as are a collection of metallic and glass bowls holding strange powders and residues, alongside strange metal devices of uncertain function. A flat slab of stone, marred with many scratches, seems almost like a bed, with a gossamer veil surrounding it. Next to the slab is a metallic box. A metallic man bustles about the room cleaning and polishing the floor to a shine.

This chamber at area **B** has been Miriya's home of sorts. Though she does not sleep as she once did, she still seeks to experience the tropes of living and to recreate them as well as she can in this alien place.

**Treasure:** Miriya carries most of what she possesses that is of material value, having given Xam and Odashu her remaining coins and valuables in thanks for their aid in getting her here. However, the collection of bottles and metallic devices is an alchemist's lab and a set of smith's tools. The metallic box is unlocked and contains 47 gemstones worth 50 gp each, which are used as recording devices by the clockwork spies. It also contains a celadon-glazed teapot of masterful quality, decorated with cranes and plum blossoms (500 gp) and a silver prayer wheel and several scrolls bound up with red silken thread containing chants and prayers in the Tiun language. She also wears a *ring of protection*, and a *cloak of elvenkind*.

**Development:** The metallic man is an awakened clockwork servant which Miriya has named "Lin," after her favorite cousin. It addresses PCs in Tiun and asks if they require assistance, stating that Mistress Miriya is unavailable and that they apologize but ran out of tea 65 years, 10 months, and 2 days ago. If PCs attempt to take any of Miriya's things, Lin attacks.

Lin does not recognize Liao Ku as Miriya, which "she" dismisses as him being a machine and programmed to call her "metallic duplicate" the real Miriya. Some of these items she claims were stolen from her by the duplicate, and others things that she liked and that the duplicate must be collecting to try to imitate her.

## LIN, AWAKENED CLOCKWORK SERVANT (USE ANIMATED ARMOR STATS) CR2

XP 450

hp 33

Lin and other awakened clockwork servants have **Int** 10, and do not have **Antimagic Susceptibility** or **False Appearance**. Instead, they have the **Repair** action. They may use their **Repair** action to heal any adjacent mechanical being, cyborgs included, for 6 (1d10) hit points. They monitor and operate the clockwork spies that patrol the ruins, installing and removing recording gemstones from their observers.

# THE MANUFACTORY

*In contrast to the towering facades and monoliths around it, this building is comparatively low-slung, set into a natural rise with a metallic portal offering access to the upper level and a second set of metal doors at the foot of the slope allowing access to the lower level.*

## 1. UPPER ENTRANCE

*A metallic portal comprised of horizontal plates of metal 10 feet wide offers ingress to this blocky structure. A slotted crystalline panel lies inside a glazed cabinet set into the wall beside the door.*

If Miriya accompanies the PCs, she can open the door automatically. Without her, they must break the door or pick the lock (thieves' tools and a successful DC 20 Dexterity check to pick, Strength DC 20 to break, hp 150). Using the Caravan Master's access pendant (or the one found in area 3 of the tunnels) provides advantage on Disable Device checks. If the lock is picked or opened, the doorway slides into the floor, horizontal section by section, and remains retracted until the door reactivates. If the conveyor belt is activated, an alarm klaxon sounds and the entrance closes 1 round later.

## 2. UPPER LOADING DOCK (10 XP)

*As you enter this building, pale blue lights wink into view in the floor, walls, and ceiling. Halfway into the room you see a raised 5-foot-wide catwalk of metallic plates and mesh braced several feet off the floor, supported on a series of drums and wheels and with the catwalk seemingly wrapped underneath them as well. The catwalk passes through a low opening in the far wall only a few feet high, covered by a screen of metallic mesh. A rhythmic hum can be heard beyond the opening. Several crystalline panels are set into the far wall, which is solid metal up to shoulder height and opaque crystal above.*

This chamber was designed for loading things onto the conveyor (area 5). Each 5-foot section along the west wall (other than the one through which the conveyor passes) has a separate crystal panel. The northernmost and southernmost panels activate the adjacent secret doors onto the catwalk (Wisdom (Perception) DC 20, DC 15 Dexterity to disarm), while the panel adjacent to the conveyor turns it on and off (DC 20 Dexterity check to disable). When turned on, the upper surface of the conveyor moves westward at a rate of 20 feet per round.

The metallic mesh covering the upper portion of the conveyor is held rigid by a magnetic charge when the conveyor is not moving. It can be forced through (DC 20 Strength (Athletics) check) or squeezed under (DC 20



Dexterity (Acrobatics) check). When the conveyor is activated, the magnetic charge is released and the mesh becomes as supple as fabric; however, the narrow aperture still requires a DC 10 Dexterity (Acrobatics) check to fit through, and a Medium creature must be prone to fit. A small creature can fit through prone with a DC 5 Dexterity (Acrobatics) check, or crouching. A failed Strength or Dexterity check to get through the opening deals 1d6 points of damage to a creature.

**Creature:** A spider-like clockwork spy (see area 7, but these clockwork spies are not inscribed with Miriya's rune) lurks motionless just underneath the conveyor, adjacent to the west wall (passive Perception 10, Perception DC 12). It observes creatures entering the room. If Miriya is present or if PCs approach the conveyor belt, the clockwork spy touches the activation sequence for the conveyor belt and then hops onto it, riding into the building's interior.

### 3. LOWER ENTRANCE

This entrance is identical to area 1.

### 4. LOWER LOADING DOCK (10 XP)

This area is identical to area 2 but was designed to take things off the finished end of the conveyor (area 5). The clockwork spy here will likewise activate the conveyor if PCs investigate too closely or if Miriya is with them.

### 5. CONVEYOR

*This moving metallic walkway drops at an angle down to the floor 30 feet below, where it circles around a massive machine sitting astride a golden-glowing pit. Completing its circuit, the walkway circles back around underneath its slanting upper course, passing out through a narrow aperture in the lower south.*

Staying upright on the conveyor requires a successful DC 12 Dexterity (Acrobatics) when it is moving. Failure resulting in falling prone.

### 6. CATWALK AND UPPER WORKS (3,150 XP)

*A catwalk of metallic grates with pole-like railings mostly encircles a huge sunken workroom. A strange light wells up from strange moving machinery below, while untold numbers of cables, conduits, hoists, hooks, and pulleys hang from a vast network of girders above. A large open metal stairwell spirals down to the floor below, and just across it a hulking half-metallic humanoid stands armed with bow and blade. At each corner of the room stands a bank of strange devices tended by a vaguely human mechanical creature. Other mechanical creatures are moving below.*

The ceiling of this chamber is 10 feet above the level of the catwalk, 40 feet above the floor. Because of all of the hanging machinery, flying creatures treat the entire chamber as difficult terrain and Dexterity (Acrobatics) checks have disadvantage. However, creatures may use Strength (Athletics) to cross the chamber hanging from equipment; this requires a DC 10 Strength (Athletics) check using two hands (DC 15 using one hand).

**Creatures:** At area 6A is an oni cyborg, once one of Liao Ku's compatriots turned into a slave of the machine. In addition, at each corner of the room (6B) is a clockwork servant, though unlike Miriya's servant Lin these are not awakened.

### ONI CYBORG

*Large construct, unaligned*

**Armor Class** 17 (natural armor)

**Hit Points** 150 (20d10+40)

**Speed** 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
20 (+5)	18 (+4)	14 (+2)	1 (-5)	1 (-5)	1 (-5)

**Damage Immunities** poison

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

**Senses** passive Perception 5

**Challenge** 5 (1,800 XP)

### ACTIONS

**Glaive:** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 15 (2d10 + 4) slashing damage

**Shortbow:** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, range 80/320 ft., one target. *Hit:* 13 (2d8 + 4) piercing damage

### CLOCKWORK SERVANT (3)

**CR2**

**XP** 450 each

**hp** 33

The clockwork servants fight only if directly engaged. Otherwise, they manipulate the room's machinery to attack the PCs remotely. These attacks can target anyone in the chamber but gain advantage to attack rolls if a target is adjacent to the conveyor belt or the cyborg processor at area 7. The trap device they attack with each round is generated randomly:

Activating a trap takes a clockwork servant's entire turn. Destroying the clockwork servant's instrument panel (Break DC 25, AC 17, hp 40) prevents it from making trap attacks.









D4 ROLL	TRAP	ATK	TARGET	EFFECT
1	swinging arm	+4	10-foot line	1d8+1 damage (1-2, bludgeoning, 3-4, piercing, 5-6)
2	grabber	+5	one creature	moved 10 ft. towards cyborg processor
3	falling block	+6	5-foot square	21 (6d6) bludgeoning damage (DC 12 Dexterity saving throw for half)
4	sprayer	+5	one creature	condition for 1 round (01-20, blinded; 21-50, deafened; 51-80, grappled; 81-00, poisoned)

## 7. MANUFACTORY FLOOR (8,100 XP)

*This cavernous chamber is strewn with cables and machinery, including a long moving walkway descending from an aperture in the upper east wall and circling around a vast machine of alien manufacture in the center of the room before looping back under the upper conveyor and out through the south wall. The great machinedominating the chamber seems almost to squat over a golden-glowing circular pit, with small arms reaching out toward the encircling conveyor while a single metallic tendril writhes sinuously like a clawed hand and glaring eye in one. Two half-mechanical brutes dressed in armor of Eastern manufacture stand nearby on guard, while smaller mechanical beings scuttle over tumbled heaps of arcane circuitry.*

The cyborg processor is the mindless alien architect of

Miriya's present condition and the unwitting guarding of the *white peacock crown*. She sought merely to hide the device in this strongly held building but fell prey to the processor's imperative to convert organic life into mechanical life. Her continued existence and sentience in violation of its orders is a puzzle, and if Miriya falls into its clutches again it will attempt to reprogram her with additional nanite infusions. It will reprogram any creature that falls into its clutches, however, and those that resist its programming will be deposited into the arc foundry beneath it for destruction.

**Creatures:** The cyborg processor dominates the center of the room. While it can move very closely, it prefers to remain stationary. The oni prefer to engage in melee combat but will use bows if PCs remain out of reach. The clockwork



servants will attack if approached but otherwise will ready an action each round to heal the cyborg processor with their repair clockwork ability.

## ONI CYBORG (2)

CR4

XP 1,100 each

hp 150 each

## CLOCKWORK SERVANT (2)

CR2

XP 450 each

hp 33 each (SRD)

## CYBORG PROCESSOR

*Gargantuan construct, unaligned*

**Armor Class** 16 (natural armor)

**Hit Points** 200 16d20+32

**Speed** 5 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
24 (+7)	18 (+4)	14 (+2)	3 (-4)	3 (-4)	8 (-1)

**Damage Immunities** poison

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

**Senses** Darkvision 60 ft.

**Challenge** 9 (5,000)

## ACTIONS

**Multiattack.** The processor makes 2 tendril attacks.

**Tendrill.** *Melee weapon attack.* +11 to hit, reach 20 ft., one target. **Hit:** 20 (3d8+7) bludgeoning damage.

**Create Cyborg Zombie.** The processor bores tendrils into any restrained creature within 5 feet, dealing 11 (2d10) psychic damage. Roll 3d6: if the total equals or exceeds the target's Intelligence score, that score is reduced to 0. The target dies and one hour is raised as a zombie, but with the construct type rather than the undead type.

**Nanite Spray.** *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +8 to hit, range 30 ft., one target. **Hit:** the target must make a DC 16 Wisdom saving throw or must spend the next 1d6 rounds moving towards the processor, taking no other actions. When it reaches the processor, it is restrained until the effect expires.

**Hazard:** Any creature moving adjacent to the cyborg processor's initial position risks falling into the **arc foundry** beneath it, which it uses to melt down unsatisfactory devices into slag.

A creature adjacent to the foundry at the end of its turn must make a DC 15 Dexterity saving throw or fall in, taking 7 (2d6) falling damage. Escape requires a DC 15 Strength (Athletics) check. At the end of the creature's next turn, the foundry heats up, dealing 10 (3d6) fire damage, or half if they make a DC 15 Constitution saving throw.

**Treasure:** Once the cyborg processor has been destroyed, the *white peacock crown* can be retrieved from its hiding place inside a metal chest that Miriya placed inside its inner workings long ago. In addition, the cyborg processor contains 127 gemstones (50 gp each) used as recording devices for the myriad clockwork spies that roam the district. PCs combing through the wreckage of the machine can also attempt to salvage potentially valuable parts from its inner workings with a DC 15 Dexterity check. Each successful check finds 1d10 relics worth 100 gp, weighing 10 lbs. each.

## WHITE PEACOCK CROWN

**Wondrous Item, Rare (Requires Attunement)**

This ornate headpiece is crafted of white gold, inlaid with lapis lazuli and spangled with dozens of jewels. This item is bejeweled with enchanted stones that hold magical powers. A newly crafted white peacock crown holds 10 sapphires, 20 emeralds, 30 blue topaz, and 40 pearls. On this crown, one sapphire, three emeralds, four topaz, and six pearls retain their power, the rest having been expended long ago.

Sapphire: hypnotic pattern

Emerald: protection from evil and good (vs. evil only)

Blue topaz: zone of truth (DC 14)

Pearl: see invisibility

Until its jewels are depleted, the white peacock crown has the following magical properties:

The wearer can detect shapechangers at will. This functions as detect undead but reveals creatures with the shapechanger subtype.

Any damage you do with a weapon suppresses the regeneration of any oni for 1 round.

Once all jewels have lost their magic, the crown loses its powers and the gems turn to worthless powder. Removing a jewel destroys it.



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## EPILOGUE

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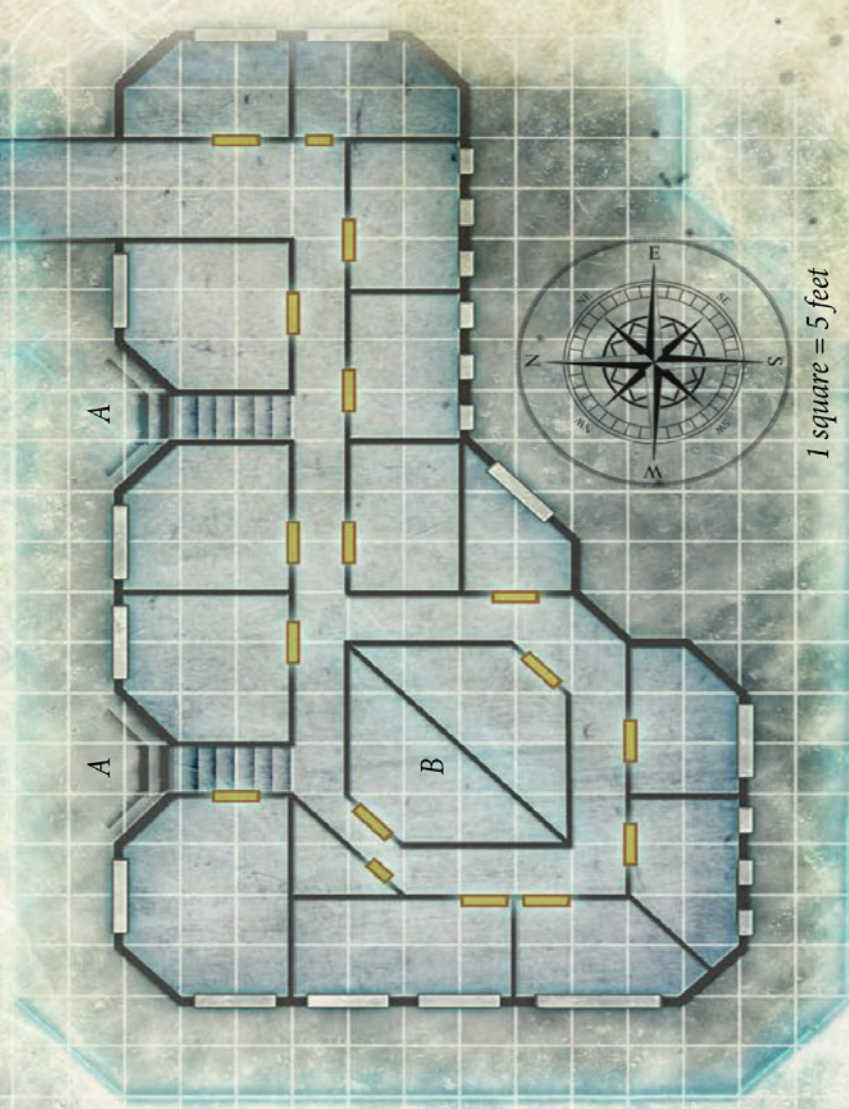
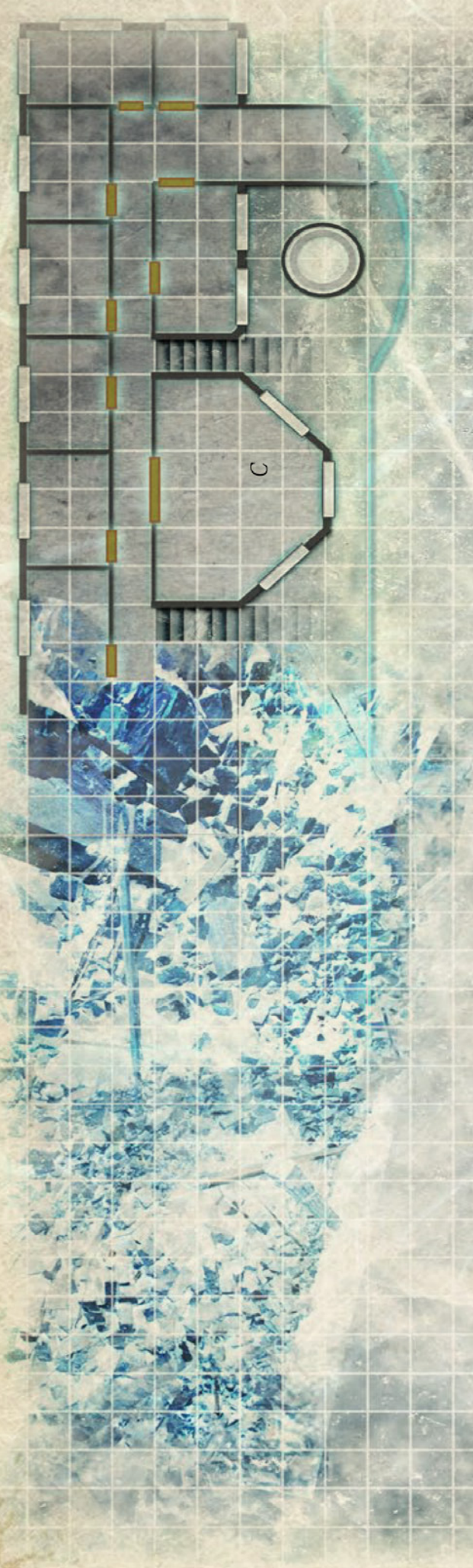
If Miriya has been destroyed, PCs may well proceed to the cyborg processor and destroy it, retrieving the *white peacock crown* themselves. Liao Ku will attempt to steal it and escape at his first opportunity, but he is willing to bid his time in disguise for as long as he needs to for the right moment. If he has gained the party's trust, he may simply wait with them until they sleep and then overpower whomever is left on watch (using *charm person*, *sleep*, or brute force) in order to acquire the crown and, if possible, the Destined Empress as well. Once Miriya's body has been repaired, she will try tracking the PCs to retrieve the crown, still believing them to be allies of the oni, or at least his pawns. She will track them even beyond the bounds of the city, pursuing them until she is destroyed or retrieves the crown, or until the PCs convince her of their good intentions (as noted above). If Liao Ku is traveling with them still, she insists the oni be destroyed. If the PCs have retrieved the crown but have already dispatched Liao Ku, they gain advantage on Charisma (Persuasion) checks with Miriya. If Miriya is destroyed outside the ruins, she is not repaired.

If she survives, Miriya is delighted that the PCs have taken up a crusade to break the power of the oni in the eastern kingdoms. She is still shamed by her failure, however, and wishes to remain in self-imposed exile. If the PCs attempt to persuade her to come along and lend her aid on their quest, she can be swayed to join them with a DC 15 Charisma (Persuasion) check. She gathers her few meager possessions and accompanies them through the tunnel and into the bunker beyond. However, once outside the city her cybernetic circuitry and mechanisms begin to decay. After 24 hours, she is treated as poisoned, and if under stress or in combat she has a 5% chance per round to behave as if *confused* (per the spell) for 1d4 rounds. After 2d6 days, her body simply stops functioning and she collapses, her flesh dissolving into pale, effervescent blue liquid that evaporates within moments and her mechanical parts corroding into uselessness. In her last moments, she has time only to express her thanks that oblivion has come at last, and to beg the Destined Empress to redeem her mistakes in life and to bring freedom to the nations of the east.

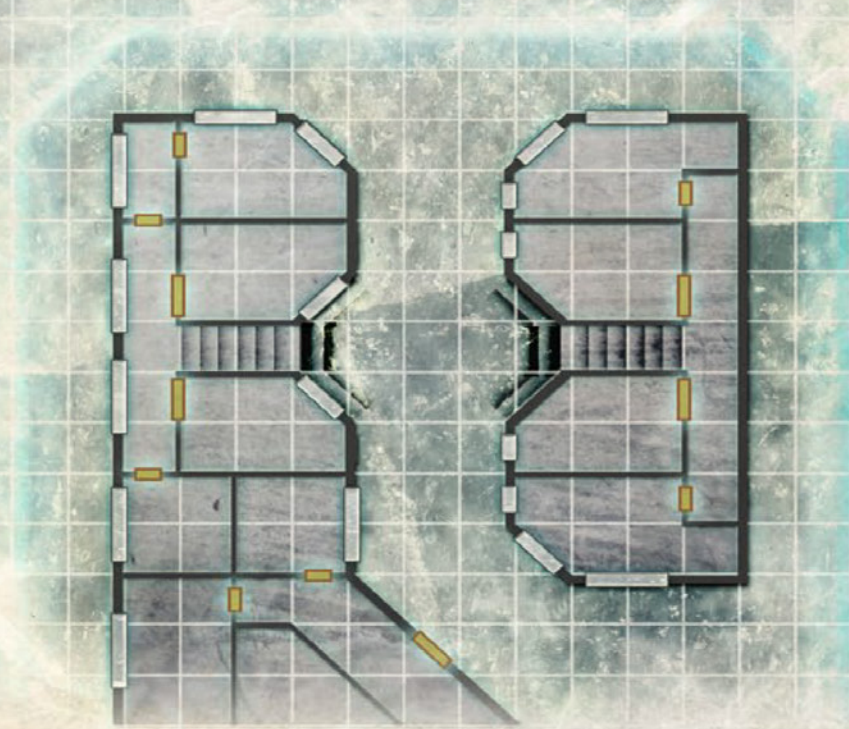
Regardless of Miriya's fate, the PCs have ventured into the blue city at the top of the world and lived to tell the tale, even having been able to retrieve some of its artifacts and map its outskirts. However, they have also learned something of its dangers. The fate of the Destined Empress lies before them, but should they return to the pole someday they may venture deeper into the alien ruins and uncover the untold secrets that no doubt lie within.



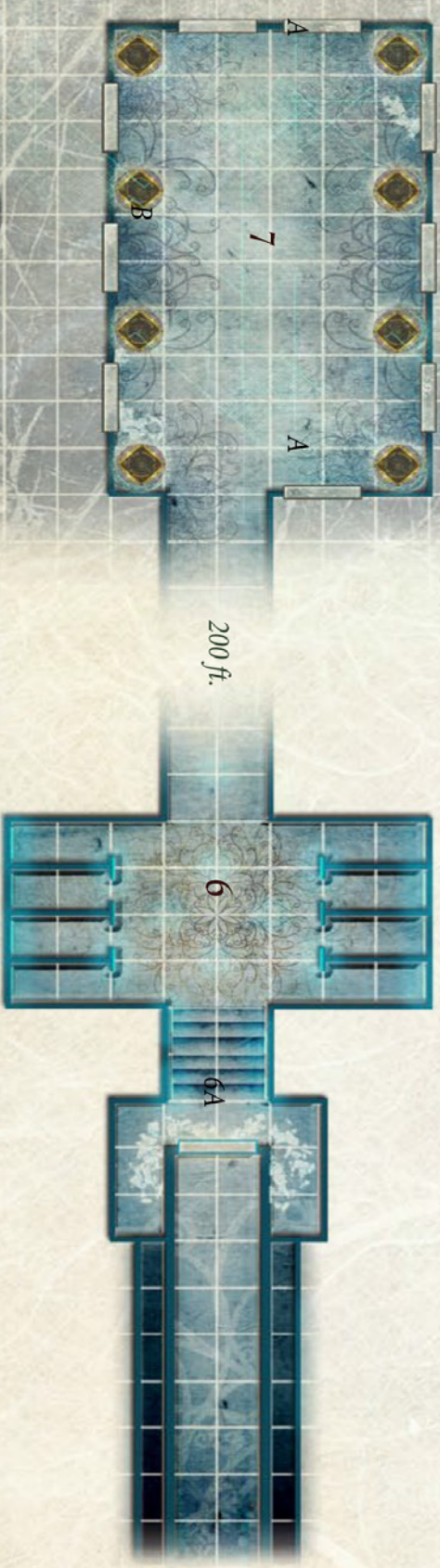




1 square = 5 feet

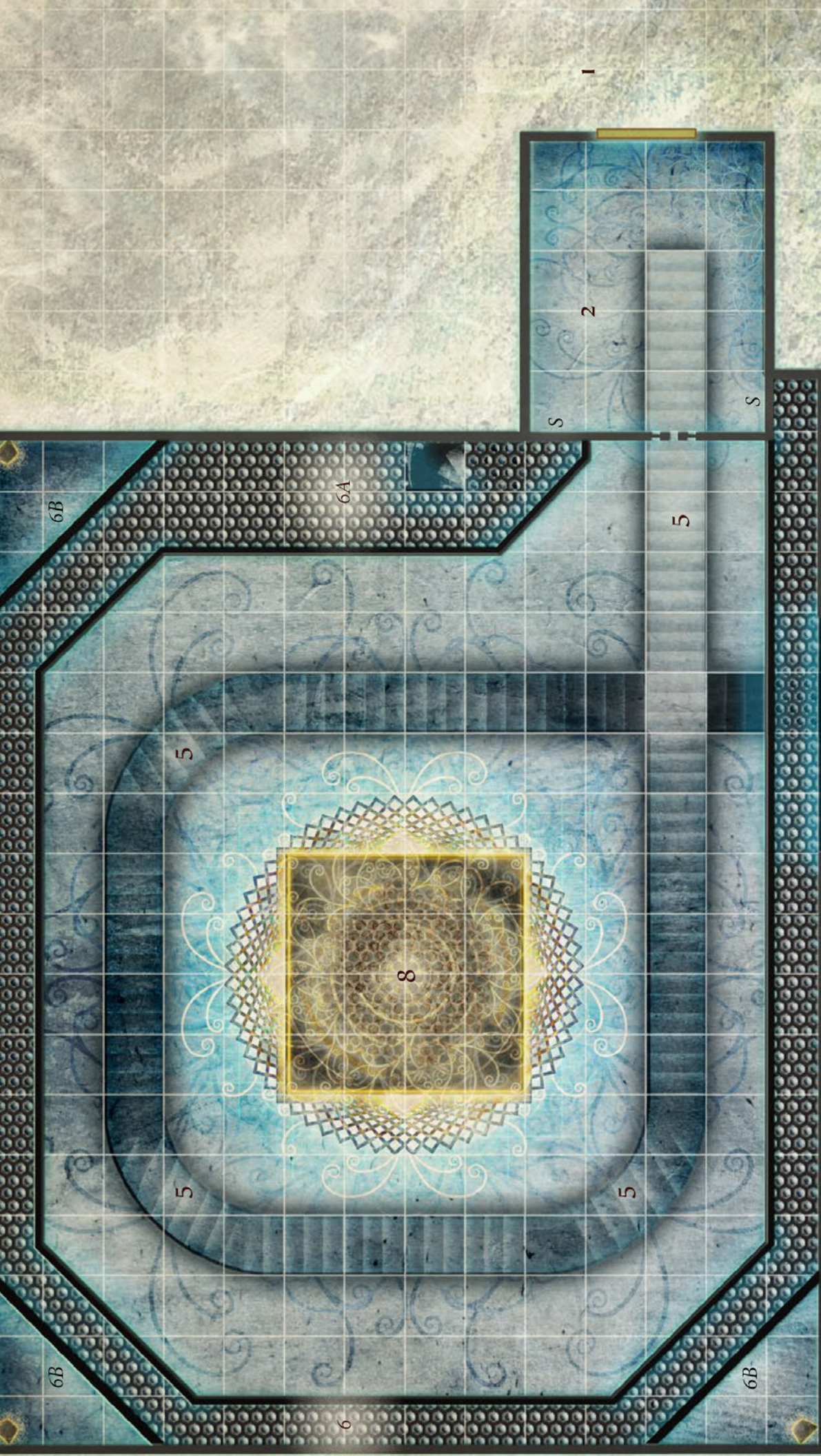






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|---------------------------|------------------------|
| (1) Doorway to Midnight   | (5) The Bubble Tube    |
| (2) Entry Ramp            | (6) Point of Entry     |
| (3) Antechamber           | (7) Alien Atrium       |
| (3A & 6A) Smashed Glass   | (7A) Clockwork Spies   |
| (4) Passage into Darkness | (7B) Clockwork Monitor |





- (1) Upper Entrance
- (2) Upper Loading Dock
- (3) Lower Entrance
- (4) Lower Landing Dock
- (5) Conveyor
- (6) Catwalk and Upper Works
- (6A) Oni Cyborg
- (6B) Clockwork Servant
- (7) Manufactory Floor
- (8) Cyborg Processor



1 square = 5 feet



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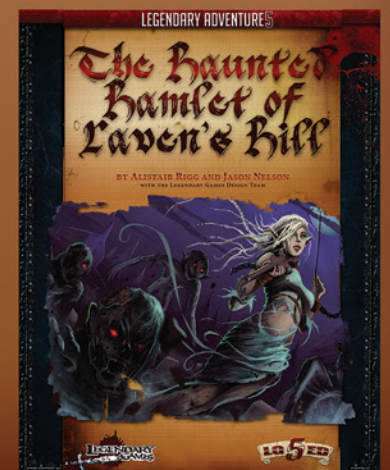
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