PLANESCAPE

ADVENTURE

RAPTURE

BY GREG JENSEN

RAPTURE

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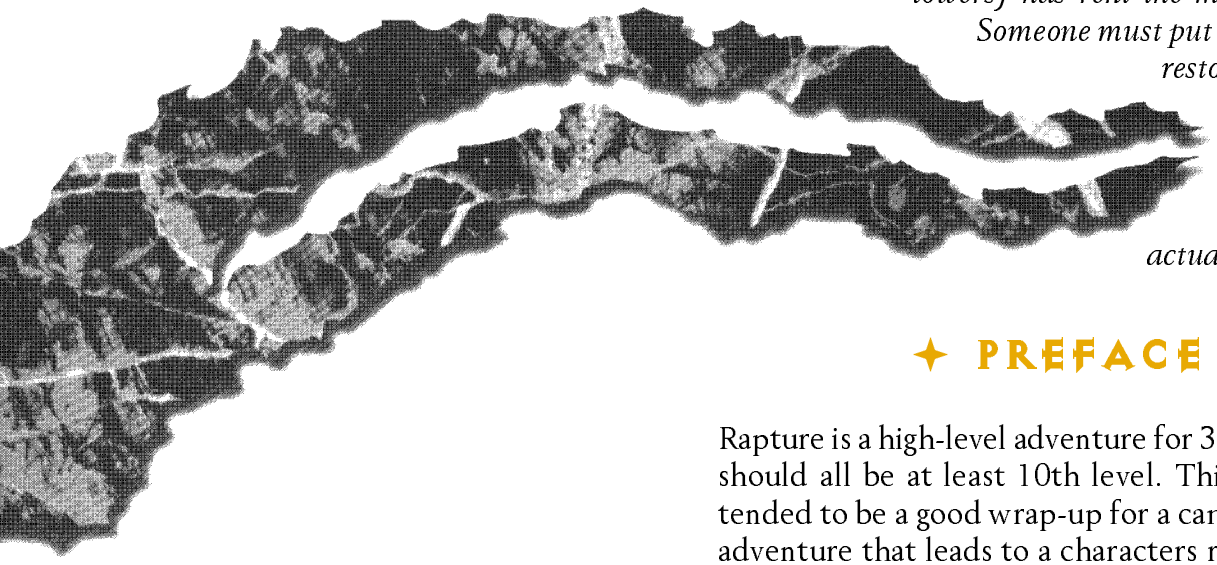
AN INTRODUCTION

We all know that occasionally a god goes mad with power. One need look no further than the being known as Tenebrous to see evidence of that. But what happens when a supposedly good god succumbs to the madness of raw power? Can a good god commit evil if he truly believes he is infallible? Wouldn't his followers notice? When reason takes a back seat to blind faith, is goodness ever really served?

These are all debates for philosophers and theologians to decide, and the arguments are far from over. However, a new player is about to increase the stakes. A god has gone mad with power, and his followers are too devoted to believe he can do anything wrong. Without even apparently realizing the harm he has been causing, this god (called simply "The Power" by his followers) has rent the multiverse asunder. Someone must put things right again, restore justice, and end this god's reign of terror. The only way to do this, however, may be to actually kill the god.



GOOD GODS COMMITTING
EVIL DEEDS?
GODS GOING INSANE?
AND YOU STILL TELL ME
IT HAS ANY MEANING?

—A PLANEWALKING
BLEAKER AFTER HEARING
THE NEWS

✦ PREFACE ✦

Rapture is a high-level adventure for 3 to 6 players. They should all be at least 10th level. This adventure is intended to be a good wrap-up for a campaign, the sort of adventure that leads to a characters retirement. It isn't mandatory that all characters retire. However, at least one PC should end up in the dead-book as a result of this adventure (as will be explained later).

Rapture deals critically with certain religious topics, and this should be taken into account by DMs. The intention of this adventure is not to offend players because of their beliefs, but to merely illustrate a critical point or two about organized religion. If the group includes players (not characters) who have deep religious beliefs, this adventure is probably inappropriate unless they are very open-minded and do not get easily offended by religious criticism. Remember the goal of gaming is to have fun primarily. If you accidentally learn something along the way, so much the better. The goal is not to offend players, however, and this would not make it fun.

Please note that this adventure was written pre-Faction War, and the events of Faction War are not taken into account in Rapture. It should be easy enough to write the factions out, however; just replace the Hard-

head guards with Sons of Mercy, and replace other factions with guilds.

✦ BACKGROUND ✦

Our story actually begins several centuries ago on the Prime. A lonely Prime world, cut off from the Phlogiston, endured a divine crisis. All the gods apparently abandoned this world, seeking followers elsewhere. All gods, that is, except for one. This god, known simply as "The Power", stayed due to his love for the people of this planet. A lawful and good god of Mt. Celestia, he believed his flock needed his moral guidance to make them better people. He taught them the virtues necessary to bring order, peace, and compassion to all corners of the world. Faith in the Power grew, and soon he literally ruled the entire planet.

The love the Power displayed made the faith of his followers all but unbreakable. Perhaps that is why they never noticed as the Power began going insane. His focus on this one Prime world warped his perceptions about the rest of the multiverse. He began to believe he was the only God that existed not only on this planet, but anywhere. The planes, he believed, were his playthings. So were his followers. If they didn't agree with his beliefs, the people must be evil. The Power believed he was the only possible source of morality that could possibly exist. If anyone failed to swear allegiance to him, they were irredeemably chaotic evil. Their actions meant nothing, only their faith. Humanitarians, heroes, and innocent humans were all sent unceremoniously to the Abyss for the unpardonable sin of skepticism. Violent zealots, witch hunters, and the benevolent faithful were all equally taken to the Power's realm on the sixth layer of Mt. Celestia, merely for being a part of the Power's organization. The Power, in his madness, refuses to see how any member of his faithful could be evil, or how anyone not a member of his church could be good. Because he brought a moral code to the Prime world he controls, he truly feels he is the only source of morality in the multiverse. He views the world in extremely black-and-white terms. Either one is with the Power (good) or against him (evil). His limited view of ethics also causes him to acknowledge only the planes of Mt. Celestia and the Abyss.

One would expect the followers of the Power to see the harm in his beliefs. However, this was not the case. They also came to believe as the Power does that there can be no compassion or goodness without the Power. Any who doubted the Power's mad beliefs were labeled as traitors, and sent to the Abyss. All, that is, except one. A tome archon and main proxy of the Power, Morningstar, had helped the Power come

to power on this Prime world. He had helped the Power maintain his presence on this world through the use of a powerful artifact, the Rod of Divinity. Morningstar truly believed his master to be a being of pure goodness. That is why he assumed he would be forgiven for questioning his master's motives. When the Power went mad and began sending innocent and good petitioners to the Abyss, Morningstar demanded an explanation. Instead, he was branded a traitor as well, and expelled from the Power's Prime world. Unable to help the people he was once responsible for, he instead fled to find a way to defeat the Power. Now an asuras, Morningstar believes he has found the answer…but he cannot do it. Instead, he must send some true heroes to end the Power's life, so the people of this Prime world can be truly helped and guided once again.

The Power is not the only source of morality, nor is he the only source of divinity in the multiverse. His mad actions have begun to cause problems on the planes. He has sent anyone who innocently enough questioned the supremacy of the Power to the Abyss. This is causing an inordinate amount of lawful, good, and neutral petitioners to flood the 523rd layer of the Abyss (where the Power sends the infidels). The beliefs of these petitioners still has power, and they are causing this layer of the Abyss to change alignment in the Outer Planar scheme of things. The boundaries between the Abyss and the neighboring planes are weakening. Carceri, Pandemonium, and the Outlands (especially around Plague-Mort) have been experiencing a record number of tanar'ri attacks, as they pass through the thinning planar boundary. (If the planes of cordance are known by the PCs, Perdition is also being swarmed with tanar'ri). Another place that borders the Abyss, as well as all other planes of existence, is Sigil. It, too is overrun with the chaotic evil tanar'ri due to the actions of the mad Power.

ADVENTURE ✦ SUMMARY ✦

In Chapter I, the characters return to Sigil from some previous adventure, only to find the Cage swarming with tanar'ri… even more than usual. Anarchy in the Birdcage ensues as the Harmonium is overwhelmed with trying to maintain the peace in the face of these monsters. After finding an ally of theirs has been killed in the violence that has come with the tanar'ri invasion, the players encounter some of the fiends intent on attacking them. The fiends seem to be disoriented, still believing themselves to be on the Abyss. When the PCs investigate further, they find themselves transported to the 523rd layer of the Abyss.

In Chapter 2, the PCs explore the Abyssal layer a bit more, and find more of the dark about it. They observe fiends tormenting petitioners, and battle petitioners and tanar'ri intent on killing them. They are aided by some of the petitioners, who prove themselves to be compassionate and heroic individuals. They inform the characters of the God of their home world, and that this is his punishment for lack of faith. Following a Deva who is disposing of petitioners on this plane, the heroes discover a portal to the Power's realm on Mt. Celestia.

In Chapter 3, the heroes find themselves on Mt. Celestia, but do not receive a friendly welcome. They are ordered to leave by celestials, and attacked by an evil inquisitor devoted to the Power. After the inquisitor's defeat, Morningstar appears before the heroes, and explains to them what they must do to stop the Power.

In Chapter 4, the heroes journey to the Prime to do what Morningstar has told them. While there, they encounter the zealous attitude and blind faith of the natives, and evoke the hostilities of the locals.

In Chapter 5, the heroes enter the ancient building where the Rod of Divinity is stored. The heroes must battle devoted celestials to reach the Rod, in a dungeon crawl with an uncomfortable twist: the "bad guys" in the "dungeon" are good but misguided, not evil cannon fodder.

A POWER WENT MAD, YOU SAY? SOUNDS GOOD ENOUGH FOR ME.

—ANNARACH, MEMEBER OF ATHAR

Finally, the heroes reach the Rod of Divinity and are able to kill the Power in the only way a mortal ever can kill a god: doubt. By causing the Prime world to doubt the Power's supremacy, the Power is killed. The character using the Rod of Divinity is also destroyed, as s/he is but a mortal.

PREPARING FOR PLAY

The Planescape Boxed Set is necessary for this adventure. Other possibly helpful products include *In the Cage: a Guide to Sigil*, *Uncaged: Faces of Sigil*, *Planes of Chaos* (for information on the Abyss), and *Planes of Law* (for information about Mt. Celestia). Not only should the DM make sure the right kind of players are involved in this adventure, but the right kinds of characters as well.

First of all, the overall alignment of the party is important. While evil characters would certainly jump at the chance to kill a good god, they are inappropriate for Rapture. This adventure is intended for good-aligned characters. The heroes should be motivated by a sense of compassion for the Power's victims, as well as a sense of justice. They are also expected to engage in a certain amount of self-sacrifice for the greater good. Furthermore, the irony and deeper implications of Rapture will be lost on a non-good party. Part of the point is to show the players how well-meaning faiths can be destructive if they allow intolerance and blind faith to rule. The moral questions about fighting good-aligned creatures play an important part of this adventure. It is highly suggested that Rapture be used on a predominantly (if not completely) good party. Law and chaos are less important, although chaotic characters would be more motivated to end the rule of the Power than lawful PCs.

Factions and faction beliefs may also be important considerations. While no two members of a faction act the same, many are similar enough to make a few generalizations and predictions about their reactions to the events in Rapture.

ATHAR: No faction is better suited for Rapture than the Athar. The Power's madness seems to verify all of the beliefs of the Athar. The Lost have long said that even good deities can be harmful, and that people should rely on themselves instead. Athar PCs should be more than willing to eliminate the Power for the good of the multiverse. They would also jump at the opportunity of leading a Prime world into a moral system devoid of gods. This is the best example of the Athar's belief that helping hands do better than praying lips.

BELIEVERS OF THE SOURCE: The Godsmen also see less of a distinction between gods and mortals, and would generally not be above holding a god responsible for his actions. This adventure presents an excellent opportunity for a Believer of the Source to explore the meaning of divinity in his attempts to ascend to godhood himself. Note that not even a Godsman can be reincarnated after using the Rod of Divinity, however.

BLEAK CABAL: Bleakers may see no reason to help the petitioners, but they see no reason not to, either. Actually, there is one compelling reason to involve the Madmen. The actions of the Power show how imposing an unnatural "meaning" on the lives of others can be destructive. The people of this Prime world would seem to be much better off looking inward to find meaning than to a mad god.

DOOMGUARD: Sinkers should also enjoy bringing entropy to a deity. This should provide evidence that nothing, not even the gods, can escape the inevitable entropy. It should especially appeal to good-aligned Doomguard, as proof that entropy and destruction are not always bad things. Sometimes, breaking down a structure (such as the Power's mad scheme) can help numerous people.

DUSTMEN: Just as not even the gods are immune to entropy, neither are they immune to death. Rapture should provide a unique opportunity to study death for a Dustman PC. Causing the death of a power should prove to gain the Dead more insight into what lies beyond the next step to true death. Not to mention that a Dustman may find the fact that petitioners are being denied their just rewards in the after "life" offensive.

Fated: The Fated think that, if the Power has the strength to send petitioners where he wants, that's his right. If the petitioners aren't powerful or smart enough to figure a way out of it, they get what they deserve. Then again, destroying the Power would perhaps be the best way for a Taker to display his strength. Most good Heartless aren't really as heartless as their name suggests, either. Many simply want to "help" people help themselves. How better, then, to help the Primes under the Power's yoke than to eliminate their source of oppression, and let them live and die for themselves?

Fraternity of Order: This faction is mainly concerned with discovering and maintaining laws. The Power is violating some of the laws of the multi-verse, and must be stopped before he wreaks further chaos. At the very least, Rapture should interest Guvners from a purely scientific point of view. Discovering why the Abyss is slipping, and how to kill a god, are worth the Guvners' time just for the sake of discovery.

Free League: Indeps usually mind their own business, and may be difficult to rally to action against the Power. The Power's total order would probably offend the Indeps, however. Indeps don't think you should stick solely with any outlook in life, but keep your options open. As the Power doesn't allow for other points of view, he opposes everything about Indep philosophy.

Harmonium: The primary motivation for the Hardheads is to maintain peace and order. The tanar'ri invasion has created chaos and violence, and must be stopped by any means necessary. However, it should be noted that the Power's outlook isn't too different from the Harmonium philosophy. Both believe that forcing people to believe one way is the best way to ensure peace and goodness. This adventure should force Harmonium to re-evaluate their own beliefs, as they are confronted with some of its flaws.

Mercykillers: As with the Hardheads, the Mercykillers should be forced to look at some of the flaws in their philosophy with this adventure. After all, the Power is the law on his Prime world, and he has given his followers laws against lack of faith. If they break this law, they deserve the punishment they get. Yet the petitioners do not seem to be treated fairly. Any members of the Red Death may have to choose between law and justice, as the two are not always the same. At any rate, the Power must also be held accountable for the crimes his actions have inadvertently caused, and many Mercykillers will jump at the chance to bring a god to justice.

Revolutionary League: The Anarchists hate power structures, including religions. This adventure is every Anarchist's fondest dream: the ability to bring down authority and rebuild an entire world from the ashes.

Sign of One: This faction has no special interest in this adventure, although the opportunity to prove the power of belief by "doubting" a god out of existence should prove intriguing.

Society of Sensation: Rapture offers Sensates many new experiences. Fighting celestials and destroying a god are experiences that few Sensates can boast. The opportunity to open up a whole multiverse of new experiences to a Prime world should also interest most Sensates.

Transcendant Order: Whatever you're going to do, shut up and do it now!

Xaositects: These cutters should enjoy the chaos being wreaked by the tanar'ri. However, they wouldn't mind bringing chaos to a lawful god's world, either. Then again, maybe not. Or perhaps pink elephants bargle goo.

Sects: None of the sects really have any special interest in this adventure. The only exception is the Order of the Planes-Militant. Being a sect of Mt. Celestia, these bloods will believe that the gods of their plane know best, and should not be questioned. They should oppose any plan to kill the Power, but would not be against trying to convince the Power to consider the alignment of his petitioners

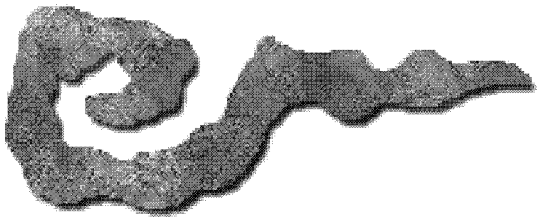
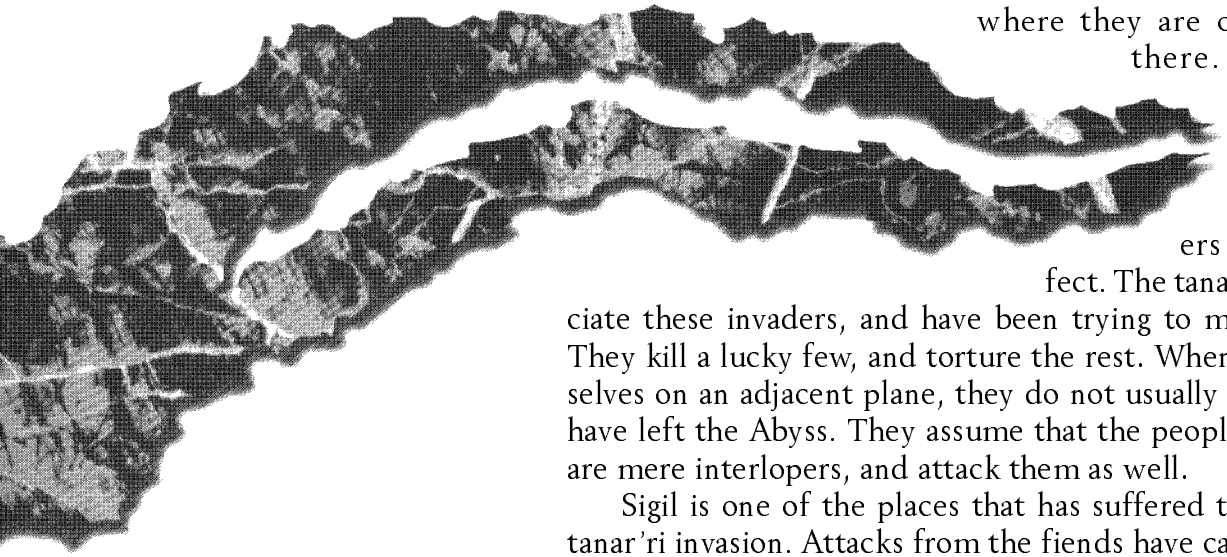


Image of Morningstar by an unknown Prime artist

Chapter 1: Tanar'ri Invasion



Rapture begins as the heroes return to Sigil from some previous adventure. While away, the situation with the 523rd layer of the Abyss reached critical mass. The boundaries between the Abyss and neighboring planes (including Sigil) has thinned to the point where tanar'ri have been crossing over into these other planes. If the previous adventure took place near Plague-Mort or on Pandemonium, Carceri, or Perdition, the DM should consider throwing a few random tanar'ri encounters into the adventure as foreshadowing. The rest of the planes have not yet felt any of the ripples of this situation.

As the 523rd layer of the Abyss has become less chaotic and evil, it has started to shift slightly to all neighboring planes. No actual shift has taken place, but the planar boundaries have thinned enough that many tanar'ri are finding themselves on the neighboring planes. Many of them do not know where they are or how they got there. All they know is that on their home plane, an invasion of interloping petitioners has been in effect. The tanar'ri do not appreciate these invaders, and have been trying to make them suffer. They kill a lucky few, and torture the rest. When they find themselves on an adjacent plane, they do not usually even realize they have left the Abyss. They assume that the people they encounter are mere interlopers, and attack them as well.

Sigil is one of the places that has suffered the effects of the tanar'ri invasion. Attacks from the fiends have caused massive destruction and many deaths. This state of emergency has kept the Harmonium extremely busy. The Hardheads have done an admirable job trying to quell the havoc, but they are fighting a losing battle.

As the PCs enter Sigil, read them the following:

WHAT ARE THEY DOING HERE?

—A PLANEWALKER AFTER RETURNING TO SIGIL

The world around you shimmers and fades, and finally starts to come together again. You smell the familiar acrid stench of good old polluted Sigil. Home, sweet, home. You await to hear the familiar sounds of Sigil: touts and tieflings hawking their services, the tramping of sedan chairs, the baying of aoskian hounds. You hear none of this. Instead you hear the sound of a pitched battle, and howls of pain. As you step into Sigil, your eyes grow accustomed to the light (or lack of it), and you see the source of the commotion. Several warriors in Harmonium colors are battling a furious Marilith. Her snakelike body and six arms seem more than a match for the unfortunate patrol. Several dead and wounded bodies lay nearby on the street; some are Harmonium warriors, others appear to have been innocent bystanders.

If the PCs ask, there are 4 dead Cagers (1 tiefling male, 2 human females, one bariaur kid), 2 dead Hardheads, and two mor-

tally wounded Hardheads (-6 hit points each). The wounded warriors can be saved within 4 rounds by healing magic (as per the "death's door" rules), but the rest are casualties.

The heroes are fresh from a previous adventure, and are probably weary and wounded, not to mention low on spells. However, it is obvious that the Harmonium patrol needs help fighting this monster. The heroes may either choose to help the patrol defeat the Marilith, or leave the scene and attend to other business. Both the fiend and the men are wounded, and the aid of the heroes can easily turn the tide of battle.

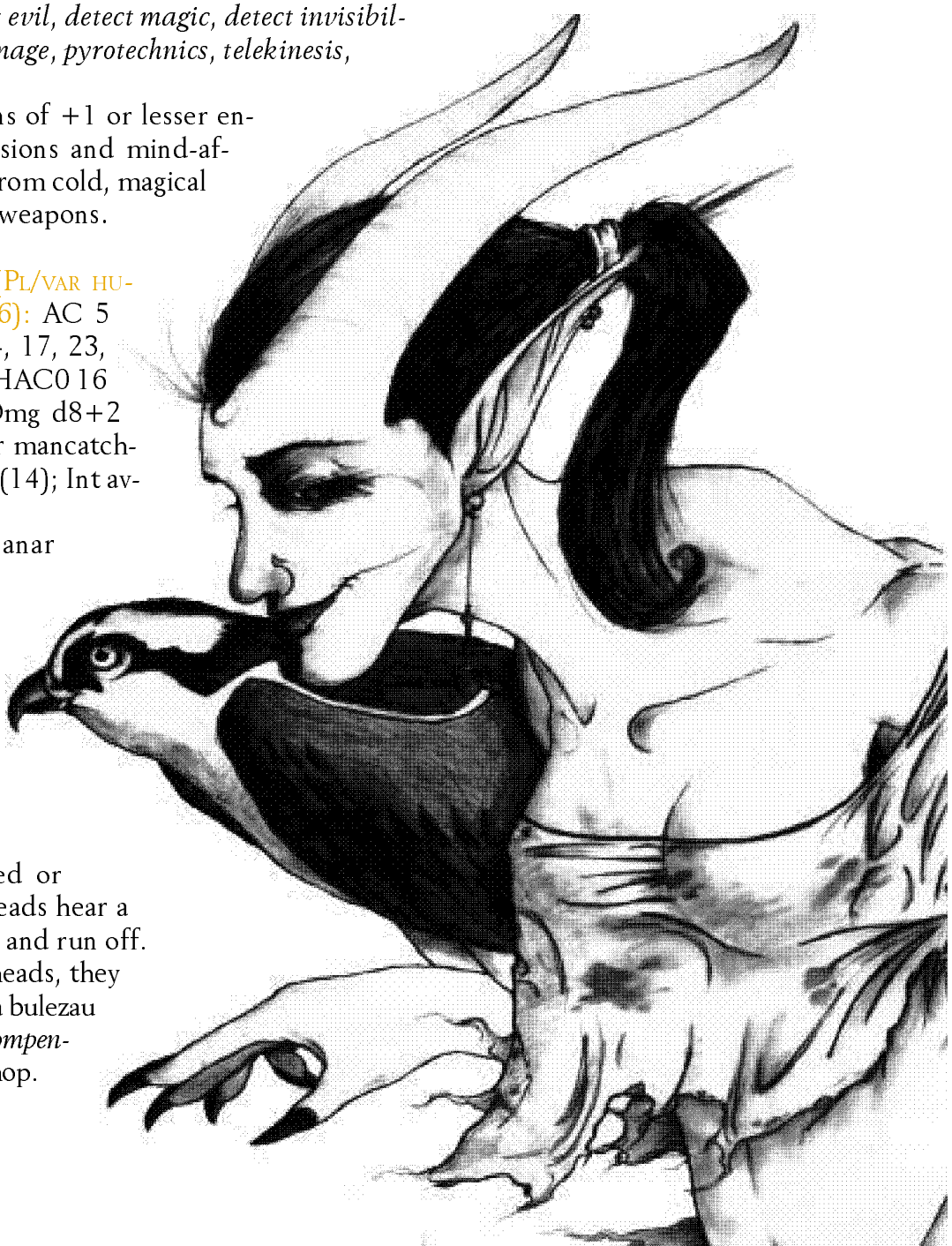
MARILITH: AC -9; MV 15; HD 12; hp 41 (out of 60); THAC0 9; #AT 7; Dmg 4d6 (tail)/d6+1 (6 +1 weapons: short sword, spear, spear, short sword, hand axe, club); SA Magical Weapons, Constriction; SD +2 or better weapons to hit, never surprised, spell immunity; MR 70%; SZ L (7' tall); ML Fanatic (17-18); Int genius (18); AL CE; XP 23,000

SA: Successful attack with tail automatically causes 4d6 points of damage/round, Con check each round or unconciousness, 10% chance per point of Str above 14 of escape per round; once per round can use *darkness 15' radius*, *infravision*, *animate dead*, *cause serious wounds*, *cloudkill*, *comprehend languages*, *curse*, *detect evil*, *detect magic*, *detect invisibility*, *polymorph self*, *project image*, *pyrotechnics*, *telekinesis*, *gate* (not effective in Sigil).

SD: Immune to weapons of +1 or lesser enchantment; immune to illusions and mind-affecting spells; half-damage from cold, magical fire, poisonous gas, or silver weapons.

HARMONIUM WARRIORS (PL/VAR HUMAN/F5/HARMONIUM/LG) (6): AC 5 (chain mail); MV 12; hp 14, 17, 23, 9, 16, 2 (out of 30 each); THAC0 16 (14 w/swords); # AT 1; Dmg d8+2 (longswords +2); SA planar mancatchers; SZ M (6' tall); ML elite (14); Int average (11); XP 175 each

Special Equipment: Planar Mancatchers (see *Planewalker's Handbook*), longsword +2



If the PCs help the Hardheads and survive, they are thanked quickly by any surviving Harmonium soldiers. Before any more thanks can be offered or questions asked, the Hardheads hear a whistle blow in the distance and run off. If the PCs follow the Hardheads, they find a similar group attacking a bulezau (*Planes of Chaos Monstrous Compendium*) destroying a pottery shop.

If the PCs refuse to come to the aid of the patrol, the Hardheads most likely perish in the line of duty. Unless the PCs have a pretty good reason for not getting involved (such as being far too weakened to be of any use), they should be penalized when it comes time to distribute experience points.

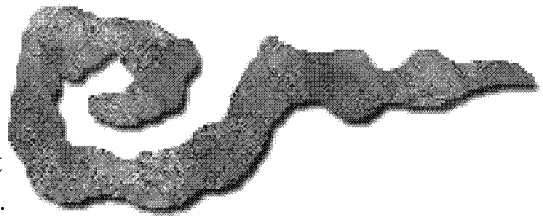
Either way, the PCs now probably have business to attend to (replenishing supplies, meeting employers, etc.), and will most likely wish to rest up until the next adventure.

RANDOM ENCOUNTERS

The PCs should not forget that Sigil is being overrun with tanar'ri. They certainly shouldn't be expected to fight them all, but they should see enough evidence of this as they complete their business in Sigil. The DM is encouraged to use one or more of the following encounters to show this point, particularly if the PCs had refused to aid the Harmonium soldiers above. If the heroes are still weak from previous battles, the DM is encouraged to tone down combat-intensive encounters

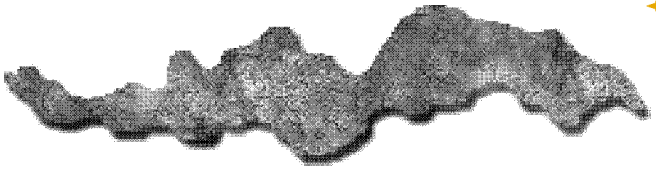
Tanar'ri encounters can include any or all of the following, as well as any the DM comes up with. Statistics for the fiends are not given, as combat is not expected in all situations. See PSMCI for more information:

- A balor is seen flying overhead, shooting a fireball at something beyond the PC's sight. Before they can react to his presence, the balor is gone.
- A wastrilith swims underneath a bridge the heroes travel over. It ignores the PCs unless they take any action to catch its attention (such as attacking it), in which case the fiend attacks.
- A young mother (pl/♀ human/Sign of One/0/NG) carrying her child screams and runs past the heroes. She is being pursued by a dozen manes.
- A group of bubbers outside of a tavern sing and celebrate loudly around the body of an armanite. If asked, they tell the heroes that this is one of many tanar'ri invaders in Sigil. This one was defeated by the warriors who frequent the pub.
- A pair of rutterkin harass a gnome merchant (pr/♂ gnome/0/Free League/LG). When they spy the PCs, they fly away. The gnome is grateful, but has little reward to offer (he can spare 5 gold pieces per adventurer).
- A woman cries over the body of her dead husband as a babau runs from the scene in the opposite direction of the heroes. Unless the heroes have some form of movement greater than the fiend's (15) and can follow a flying tanar'ri (he can fly at will as per the spell), the babau gets away. The widow (Pl/♀ tiefling/Thief 1/Xaositects/CG) is too poor to offer a reward, and is inconsolable.



I THOUGHT THE LADY WAS KEEPING THIS CITY SAFE FROM THEIR LIKES

—OVERHEARD IN A TAVERN



RUMORS

In addition to the above events, the heroes should also encounter rumors about the tanar'ri invasion everywhere they go. Of course, the biggest rumor is that hordes of tanar'ri are all over Sigil. This is true, as the encounters should prove. Other rumors and speculations also abound:

- The Lady of Pain is actually a rogue tanar'ri Lord, and is starting to go back to her roots. She may soon take the entire City of Doors into the Abyss (untrue).
- Nobody who has gone to or near Plague-Mort has been heard from. Tanar'ri are suspected (true).

- The Bleakers are in the process of rebuilding the Madhouse, their kip on Pandemonium, as it was recently destroyed by a tanar'ri attack (true).
- A faction of entropy is responsible for flooding the cage with tanar'ri, as they enjoy the destruction and chaos they cause. The Anarchists, Xaositects, and Doomguard are marked as the scapegoat according to the prejudices of the berk telling the rumor (untrue; in fact, even these factions want the tanar'ri to leave. They enjoyed the chaos they caused at first, but now oppose their random cruelty).
- A power of the Abyss has seized control of the multiverse, and is attempting to turn the entire great ring to chaos and evil (untrue. If the PCs participated in the "Out of the Darkness" adventure in Dead Gods, they should be worried about the possible involvement of Tenebrous).
- The tanar'ri in Sigil have no idea how they got here, and think that Cagers are a bunch of petitioners who are in the Abyss and don't belong there. They attack to get rid of what they see as invading petitioners (true, although tanar'ri don't actually feel they need an excuse like this to attack).
- The tanar'ri are attempting to take over Sigil as a fortress against the Baatezu, to give them an upper hand in the Blood War. If we wait long enough, the Lady will surely put a stop to this (untrue).

MAYBE WE SHOULDN'T HAVE PEELED THAT TANAR'RI LORD...

—A PLANEWALKER WONDERING ABOUT THE CAUSE OF THE INVASION

✦ TRAGEDY ✦

In the next scene, the DM must take into account some personal information about the heroes. While performing their errands upon their return to Sigil, the PCs should visit a friend or family member in the Cage. Any NPC the party has a relationship with would work: a family member of one PC, a romantic interest, an old friend, a trusted contact, a mentor, etc.

If no suitable NPC exists in the campaign, Utadas Tensar (Pl/♂ human/P10/Fraternity of Order/LG), the proprietor of Tensar's Employment Service, is suggested. Tensar is a kindly old blood, who has helped many cutters of integrity find employment in the Cage. Anyone who honors their agreement becomes a trusted friend of his. Odds are that one or more good-aligned PCs have found a job through Tensar at some point in their distant past, and Tensar always enjoys one of his clients and friends dropping in to let him know how things are going.

At any rate, as the heroes approach this NPC's kip, they notice something is terribly wrong. The building, be it a home or a place of business, looks like it has been partially destroyed. Dustmen comb the ruins for the bodies of the dead. The PCs notice that one of the casualties is their loved one.

Asking the Dustmen what happened can give the heroes a limited idea of what happened. This building and its inhabitants were the victims of a brutal tanar'ri attack. There have been many tanar'ri-related casualties lately. The Harmonium were unable to prevent it, and are too busy to do anything about it now. All that remains is to collect the dead.

This gives the heroes a more personal involvement in the events that transpire. It should be obvious that this is a serious situation. Real lives are at stake. The tanar'ri are causing far too much pain and death, and whoever has released them into Sigil is a party to their crimes. The invasion must be stopped. If the PCs are having trouble coming to this conclusion, the Dustmen collectors should put it into their heads, that many more are suffering as they are, and someone needs to discover the cause of the tanar'ri invasion and put a stop to it.

✦ SNEAK ATTACK ✦

The heroes should follow up on any leads they feel are pertinent to discovering the source of the tanar'ri invasion. However, before they can get very far, the answer finds them. As they near a corner or alley, a group of vrocks steps out and attacks the PCs. Read the players the following:

As you walk down the streets of Sigil, you are unnerved by the eerie silence, so unusual for the Cage. You hear nothing as you approach the end of the street. Suddenly, from behind you, you hear the hiss of a creature taking a rancid breath. Turning, you see several eight-foot tall creatures resembling a cross between a wiry human and a vulture. You have no idea where they came from, and you are sure they weren't there before. "Interlopers!" the first one screeches. "Kill them! Kill them all! Drive them from the Abyss!" With that, they launch a frenzied attack.

V'ROCK (SAME NUMBER AS PCS): AC -5; MV 12, Fl 18 (C); HD 8; hp 35 each; THAC0 13; #AT 5; Dmg 1d4/1d4/1d8/1d8/1d6; SA spell-like abilities, spores, screech, first attack, dance of ruin; SD +2 or better weapons to hit, never surprised; MR 70%; SZ L (8' tall); ML fanatic (18); Int High (13); AL CE; XP 19,000 each.

SA: Can use the following once per round: *darkness 15' radius, infravision, detect invisibility, detect magic, dispel magic, mass charm, mirror image, telekinesis, gate* 2-20 manes, 1-6 barlgura, or 1 nalfeshnee (useless in Sigil); spray of spores inflicts 1d8 damage on all within 5 feet, spores grow causing d2 damage per round for 10 rounds, spores killed with *bless, neutralize poison*, or holy water, slowed by *slow poison*; once per battle can screech to stun all within 30' for one round (Constitution check to avoid); always attack first in melee.

SW: Full damage from silver and cold-wrought iron weapons.

The vrocks give no quarter in this battle, and will not be taken prisoner. The DM may wish to decrease or increase the attacking number of fiends, depending on the party's strength. The fiends will not use their *dance of ruin* ability. They prefer to wade in fighting tooth and nail, and then release their spores. If the battle is going badly, they will use their screech and spell-like abilities to even things up.

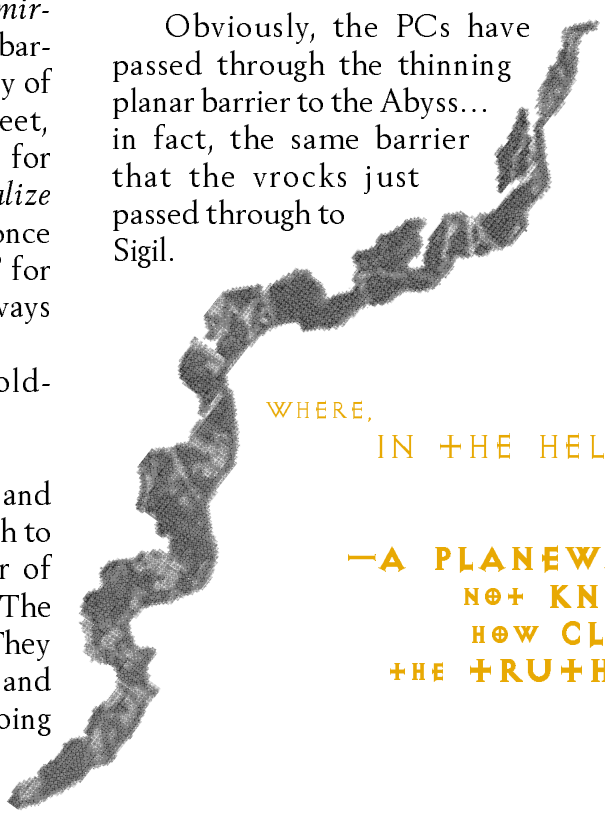
The heroes may either stand and fight or attempt to escape. If any heroes do run, move on to "I Don't Think We're in Sigil Anymore," below. If the heroes defeat the vrocks, they will either investigate the corner or alleyway they emerged from, or move on. The next scene happens as soon as the heroes leave the scene of the battle.

I DON'T THINK WE'RE IN SIGIL ✦ ANYMORE ✦

As the PCs move away from the area where the vrocks attacked, read the following:

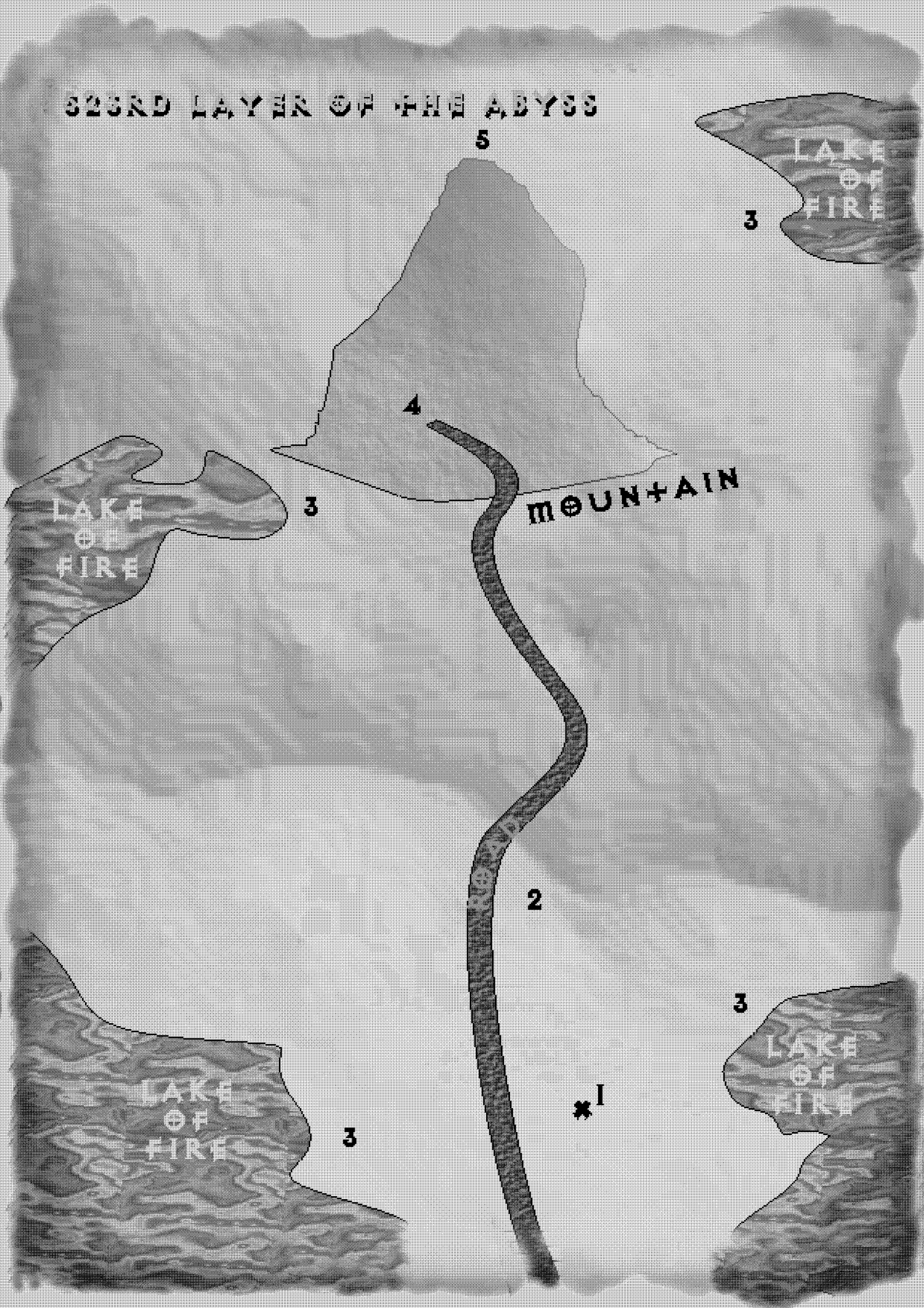
As you move around the corner, you see a barren mountain ahead of you. A sudden stench of sulfur wafts through the air. You also feel the heat from a nearby lake of liquid fire. The ground beneath your feet is that of a sandy desert. You look around for the familiar sights of Sigil as a red sun beats down on you, but there is no sign of the city at all. Everywhere you look, you see the same thing: a barren wasteland full of flame. A shudder goes down your spine as you realize you are no longer in a familiar place.

Obviously, the PCs have passed through the thinning planar barrier to the Abyss... in fact, the same barrier that the vrocks just passed through to Sigil.



WHERE, IN THE HELL, ARE WE?

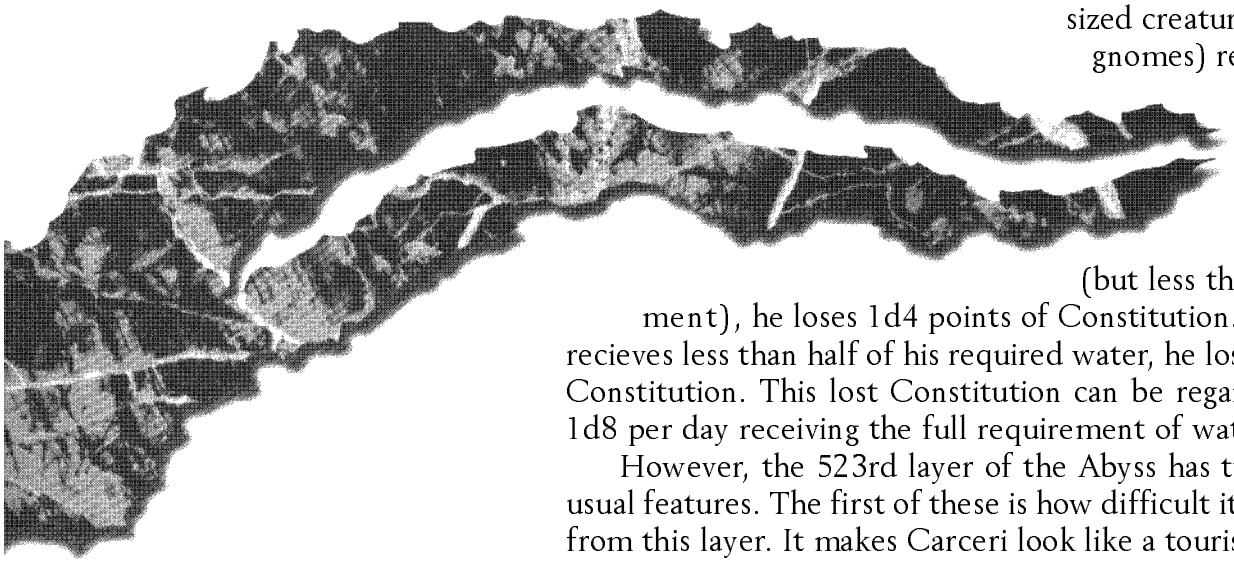
—A PLANEWALKER, NOT KNOWING HOW CLOSE TO THE TRUTH SHE IS


SECOND LAYER OF THE ABYSS
5
4
3
MOUNTAIN
LAKE OF FIRE
LAKE OF FIRE
LAKE OF FIRE
LAKE OF FIRE
3
3
3
2
1

Chapter II: In the Abyss

The heroes are now on the 523rd layer of the Abyss. The map of this place can be found on the page 13. Unless they have some magical means of determining where they are, this may not be immediately apparent. However, exploring around will soon allow the heroes to discover the dark of things. The heroes arrive at the point marked 1 on the map, facing the mountain.

This layer of the Abyss is mostly a rocky desert. Food and water are as rare as in a desert, and will present a problem for the party if they did not bring such supplies. A ranger specializing in desert survival would definitely make this chapter more survivable. This is primarily because they are better able to locate water. All man-sized characters must consume a gallon of water a day, doubled if they are encumbered. Large creatures, such as bariaur, as well as water genasi, require 4 gallons. Small-sized creatures (halflings and gnomes) require 1 a gallon. Every day a character goes with half or more of this required water (but less than full requirement), he loses 1d4 points of Constitution. If the character recieves less than half of his required water, he loses 1d6 points of Constitution. This lost Constitution can be regained at a rate of 1d8 per day receiving the full requirement of water.

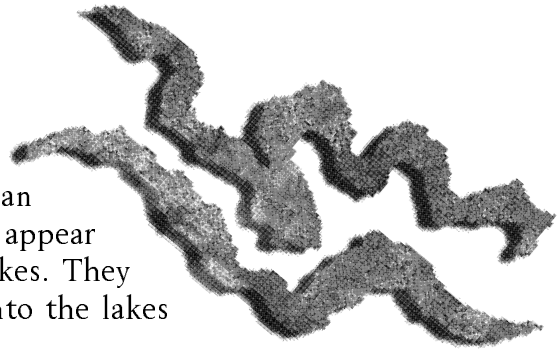


However, the 523rd layer of the Abyss has two far more unusual features. The first of these is how difficult it is to travel to or from this layer. It makes Carceri look like a tourist attraction. Before the planar boundary of this layer began to thin, the only way to or from this layer is via a natural portal. In fact, it is probably the isolated nature of this layer that kept it from slipping completely over into the adjacent planes. No plane-shifting magic will work in this layer. Magic items such as an Amulet of the Planes or a Cubic Gate will not function here. Tanar'ri may only gate in other creatures already on the layer.

The other unusual feature of this layer is the lakes of fire. Despite the arid conditions, the landscape of the layer, a number of kettle lakes dot the entire area. They are filled with what appears to be liquid fire rather than water, and the fire is undrinkable. Despite its appearance, this is not actual fire, but more of a spiritual flame. Characters can feel its heat, and touching it is painful, but it does not actually burn anything. It appears to burn the soul of the people immersed in it rather than their body, causing intense torment. Anyone immersed in the "fire" must make a saving throw vs. paralyzation or be incapacitated by the pain. Moving out of the fire requires a successful Constitution save, or the character collapses from the pain and is unable to move. Anyone who does come out of the fire must then make two successful Wisdom checks. If the first is failed, the character develops an intense phobia of fire;

"The eternal torment — I didn't believe it could be that bad"

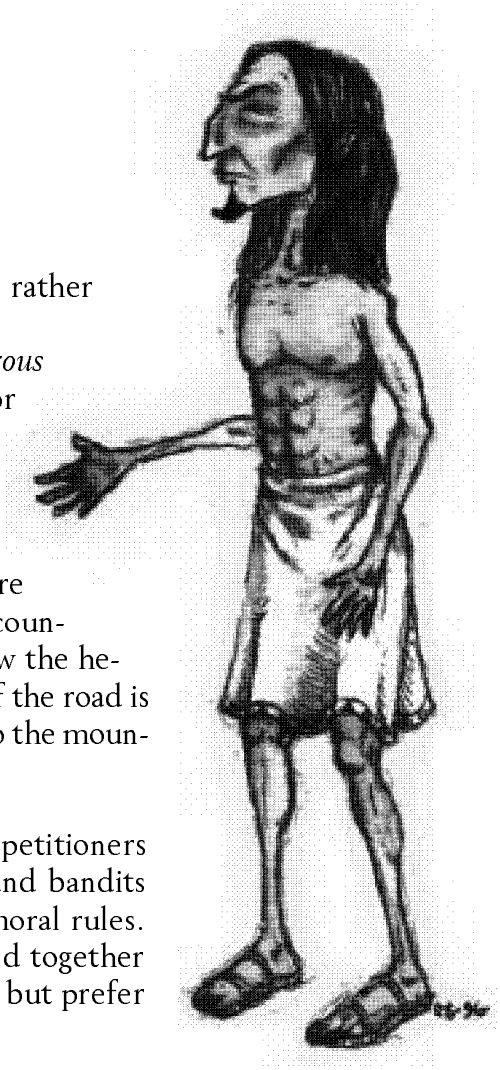
—A petitioner on the 523rd layer of the Abyss



and if the second is failed, the character develops an intense phobia of large bodies of water (such as a lake). When facing the source of these fears, the character will act as though an *emotion: fear* spell had been successfully cast upon him. Tanar'ri appear to be completely immune to the debilitating effects of the lakes. They enjoy tormenting the petitioners, however, by tossing them into the lakes and watching them suffer for years.

Like most layers of the Abyss, the 523rd layer is also the home to countless tanar'ri. Unlike most other layers, it is also home to countless petitioners of all alignments, due to the actions of the Power. Below is a list of random encounters for the layer. Every turn of travel presents a 20% chance for a random encounter. If a petitioner encounter occurs, assume 1-10 petitioners of randomly determined alignment (or else of neutral alignment). All will be 0-level humans, and will seek

2d10 roll	Encounter
2	Darkweaver
3	Varrangoin
4	Tiefling
5	Tanar ri, Rutterkin
6	Tanar ri, Bulezau
7	Tanar ri, Babau
8	Tanar ri, Hezrou
9	Tanar ri, Vrock
10	Tanar ri, Dretch
11	Petitioners
12	Tanar ri, Manes
13	Tanar ri, Chasme
14	Tanar ri, Maurezhi
15	Tanar ri, Cambion
16	Tanar ri, Bar-Lgura
17	Bebilith
18	Bodak
19	Tanar ri, Glabrezu
20	Tanar ri, Marilith



to avoid the PCs (not being sure if they are disguised tanar'ri) rather than fight.

See the entries for these creatures in the *Planescape Monstrous Compendium volume I, II*, or the *Planes of Chaos* expansion, for more details.

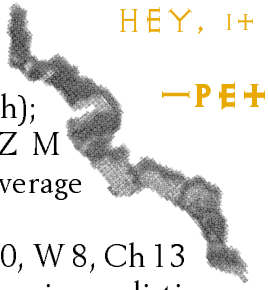
1. Arrival point: This marks the spot where the heroes arrive on the Abyss. They arrive facing the mountain. The landscape is described for them at the end of Chapter 1. If the heroes are not wounded very much, the DM may consider a random encounter at this point. Looking around for a short while should allow the heroes to notice the road in the distance. The southern portion of the road is blocked by large lakes of fire, and the road winds to the north to the mountain.

2. The Damned: This area is the territory of a vicious band of petitioners known as the Damned. The Damned are a group of thugs and bandits who abandoned the Power because they disagreed with his moral rules. Berks without honor or compassion, the Damned have banded together for mutual benefit. They quarrel and fight among themselves, but prefer

ambushing and killing other petitioners even more. They take whatever goods their victims have, and leave them for dead.

The tanar'ri despise all petitioners on the 523rd layer, but they are more tolerant of the Damned. This is perhaps because the Damned seem to hate other petitioners as much as the tanar'ri do. They have made a temporary camp at this spot, and will ambush anyone who comes within a mile of their camp. If the heroes travel along the road to the north, they will encounter a group of Damned.

The Damned are led by a brutal warlord named Nadim. Nadim is the strongest fighter, and all the other Damned follow his lead out of fear. The Damned do not have access to many weapons or armor of quality. They have managed to steal a few, but rely mainly on stone or bone weapons (on a roll of 1 with such a weapon, must make a save vs. crushing blow or be destroyed). Nadim has a silver sword he has stolen from Sanctuary (see #4, above).



Nadim (Pe/♂ human/F12/CE): AC 4; MV 12; hp 76; THAC0 9 (7 w/Strength); #AT 3/2; Dmg d10+3; SZ M (6'4"); ML elite (14); Int average (10); XP 2,000

S 18/62, D 17, C16, I 10, W 8, Ch 13

Personality: Cruel, aggressive, sadistic

Equipment: Studded leather armor, silver two-handed sword

Damned (Pe/var human/F3 or T5/CE) (5d4): AC 8 (leather armor); MV 12; hp 20; THAC0 18; #AT 1; Dmg 1d6 (bone club or flint spear); SA backstab (50%); SZ M; ML unreliable (4); XP 250 each

Thief Damned will attempt to sneak in and backstab before the warriors, led by Nadim, wade into melee. The Damned will use exceptionally cruel and cowardly tactics in the fight, targeting weaker members of the party first. The heroes should have little trouble fighting off these petitioners, as they were prepared only to fight poorly equipped petitioners as well. Nadim will take any attacks of opportunity on his own men who attempt to flee. It is important for the DM to portray the Damned as cruel and immoral creatures, who fit in well in the violent Abyss.

If questioned, the Damned know a little about where they are. They know of the Power, but think he is a weak god for his orders to treat others with kindness. They realize this layer resembles the mythological hell of their homeworld's religion, and assume they have died and are being punished here for their sins. However, they don't think it's all that bad. They must avoid tanar'ri, but otherwise here they are the law. Whoever is strongest rules. They know the lakes of fire are painful but not fatal, and they know of other petitioners who are not as aggressive as the Damned. Being belligerent in the extreme, the Damned will not part with any of this chant willingly.

3. The Lakes of Fire: This is another planned encounter. At any point when the heroes approach one of the lakes of fire, read the following:

The fire from the lake is blinding, and you must look away from time to time. You notice three rather large figures standing in front of the lake, as the wind howls eerily around you. The closer you get, you start to realize you are not hearing the wind howling, but voices. Hundreds of voices scream in absolute agony. The giant figures, fiends twenty feet high with apelike bodies and porcine heads, have a number of human captives. They eat an occasional one, but toss most into the lake of fire. The fear and pain emanating from this scene feels almost tangible. One of the fiends notices your group despite how well hidden you were, and flies on impossibly small wings towards you.

Nalfeshnee (3): AC -8; MV 12, Fl 15 (D); hp 57, 60, 71; THAC0 9; #AT 3; Dmg 1d4/1d4/2d4; SA Magical spray; SD never surprised, cold-wrought iron or +2 weapons to hit; MR 70%; SZ H (20' tall); ML fanatic (18); Int Godlike (21); AL CE; XP 17,000

Notes: The first nalfeshnee approaches the heroes and attempts to throw one in the lake of fire. As soon as the heroes present themselves as dangerous opponents, the nalfeshnee all attack, the other two attempting to flank the heroes. They remain apart, spreading the heroes' attacks out. They are intelligent and merciless

opponents who use their magic spray and gating abilities liberally.

SA: Magical spray 3/day, all in 60' take 15 hp damage (save vs. spell for half), save vs. spell with -2 penalty or struck dumb and wander for d10 rounds (cumulative 10% chance per round character will wander into lake of fire); following spell-like abilities at will: *darkness 15' radius, infravision, alter self, bind, call lightning, chill touch, detect invisibility* (always active), *distance distortion, ESP* (always active), *feeblemind, forget, giant insect, invisibility, know alignment* (always active), *mirror image, protection from good* (always active), *raise dead, slow, web, gate* in 1d6 babaus or 1 vrock twice per day 50%.

SD: Never surprised, immune to weapons of less than +2 enchantment except cold-wrought iron weapons; immune to electricity, nonmagical fire, and poison; half-damage from cold, magical fire, gas, and silver.

This encounter is meant to be extremely deadly, and the heroes are not expected to win. It is assumed the DM is using the "death's door" rules for characters below 0 hit points. If not, it should be used in this encounter, and at least half the party should be mortally wounded. If the party is too powerful for the fiends (including the new ones gated in), the gated fiends can also gate in more fiends. If this still isn't enough, a balor may also be attracted to the battle. If this is still not powerful enough, then the party is probably too powerful to be concerned. Remember the effects of falling into the lake of fire.

Balor: AC -8; MV 15, Fl 36 (B); HD 13; hp 81; THAC0 7; #AT 2; Dmg 1d12 (sword)/ 1d4+special (whip); SA Terror, body flames, death throes, explosion; SD +3 or better weapons to hit; SZ L (12' tall); ML Fanatic (18); Int Supra-genius (19); AL CE; XP 26,000

Notes: Like the Nalfeshnees, the Balor will use intelligent tactics and make use of his spell-like abilities and gating.

SA: Vorpal sword, anyone who picks it up takes 10d6 damage and must save vs. spell or die; whip magically wraps around victim who is drawn to bodily flames, takes 4d6 damage per round, save vs. half Strength to escape; fist attack does 2d6 damage and causes victim to save vs. spell at -6 or flee in terror (25% chance of fleeing into lake); explodes when slain causing 50 hp (save vs. spell for half) damage to all in 100' radius; spell-like abilities: *darkness 15' radius, infravision, detect invisibility* (always active); *detect magic* (always active); *dispel magic, fear, pyrotechnics, read magic, suggestion, symbol* (any), *telekinesis, tongues, gate* 1-8 least, 1-6 lesser, 1-4 greater, or 1 true tanar'ri automatically once per hour.

SD: Immune to all nonmagical attacks including weapons less than +3; never surprised.

If all goes as expected, the majority of the party should be incapacitated, and if any remain fighting, they should be losing badly. At any point when it is obvious the heroes need help, and if any of them are still conscious, read the following:

You realize with horror that the fiends are too strong, too powerful, and you will most likely never live to see Sigil again. You collapse from exhaustion, and possibly fear, though you would never admit it. A sudden volley of silver-tipped arrows slams into the tanar'ri you have been battling. The fiend falls back, and the death-blow you expected is stayed. With a piercing battle cry, dozens of human warriors rush out and attack the fiends with iron swords. Other humans tend to the wounded, and use ropes to pull unfortunate souls out of the lake of fire. The tanar'ri flee at the sight of these reinforcements. You are overjoyed at the sight of such compassionate behavior here on this evil plane. Your head spins as your exhaustion and wounds are too much to bear, and everything goes black…

The PCs wake up later, having received healing, at Sanctuary at site 4.

4. Sanctuary (see Map 2): The Damned are actually a minority in the petitioners on the 523rd layer. Most petitioners are not chaotic evil, but were sent here mainly for a lack of belief or worship of the Power. Most end up in the lakes of fire, but many more have banded together and formed their own communities. These communities are invariably short-lived, as a tanar'ri attack on any burg of petitioners is inevitable. One such temporary burg is Sanctuary.

Actually, Sanctuary is more of a camp of about 200 petitioners than a town or village. It differs from the many other settlements on this layer in its resources. The village itself is located within a large cavern in the side of a mountain. A hole at the top of the cavern allows smoke to escape, and a faint trail of smoke can be seen

escaping the mountain from a distance. Furthermore, a few veins of silver and iron have been found beneath the mountain. Sanctuary has turned into a mining community, as they create weapons out of the silver and cold-wrought iron mined from beneath the mountain. As most tanar'ri are vulnerable to these weapons, Sanctuary has lasted longer than most settlements on.

The leader of Sanctuary is Geledor. In life, Geledor was an activist devoted to bringing peace and human rights to all, regardless of their religious beliefs. He himself did not worship the Power, but claimed he owed allegiance to the force of goodness itself, which exists beyond the Power. Geledor was executed as a heretic back on the Prime. As a petitioner, he remembers little about his past life. However, he knows he did not do any great evil in life, and does not believe he deserves to be here. He is still devoted to the rights and well-being of others, and hopes the mines of Sanctuary will prevent further suffering at the hands of the tanar'ri. Geledor will most likely be found in the infirmary (B on the map), tending to the needs of those wounded defending against the tanar'ri or rescued from the lakes. He will be interested in hearing how the heroes ended up here and where they got their equipment. He will enjoy hearing about the rest of the planes, knowing there is a just reward for the good out there somewhere. In exchange, he will let the heroes know all he does about the situation. Most petitioners here will also know the same chant:

- All the petitioners here came from the same Prime world, where a monotheistic religion worshipping the "Power" is the dominant faith. A major precept of that faith is that all goodness comes solely from the Power, and those who do not worship the Power are evil. The faithful are taken to the realm of the Power, while the skeptics are sent to a realm of torment. This layer appears to be this realm.
- There are many other good petitioners on this layer in thousands of other settlements. They are periodically raided by the evil tanar'ri, and tormented or killed. Sanctuary will also be destroyed soon, but the petitioners hope they can gain some weapons to help others before this occurs. However, none of the inhabitants feel it will last much longer. They are mining as much silver and iron as they can before the tanar'ri force them to leave. They have been rescuing as many victims of the lakes of fire as possible as well. They are attracting more attention from the tanar'ri through these actions, and it is only a matter of time before a full-scale assault is launched on Sanctuary.
- A few strange people have been rumored to have appeared in the Abyss without knowing where they are. Some other people and fiends have disappeared completely. Nobody is sure what's going on.
- There is no known way off the layer.

GELEDOR (PE/♂ HUMAN/PAL 12/LG): AC 5 (chain mail); MV 12; hp 67; THAC0 9; #AT 3/2; Dmg d8+2 (silver longsword +2); SA spells; *turn undead* as level 10 cleric; SD +2 to all saves, *protection from evil 10' radius*; *lay on hands* for 24 hp; immune to disease; *cure disease* 2/week; detect evil intentions in 60'; SZ M (6'); ML fearless (20); XP 7,000.

Notes: Geledor does not worship any power or deity. He draws his spells and abilities from the good philosophy (as per *The Complete Priest's Handbook*).

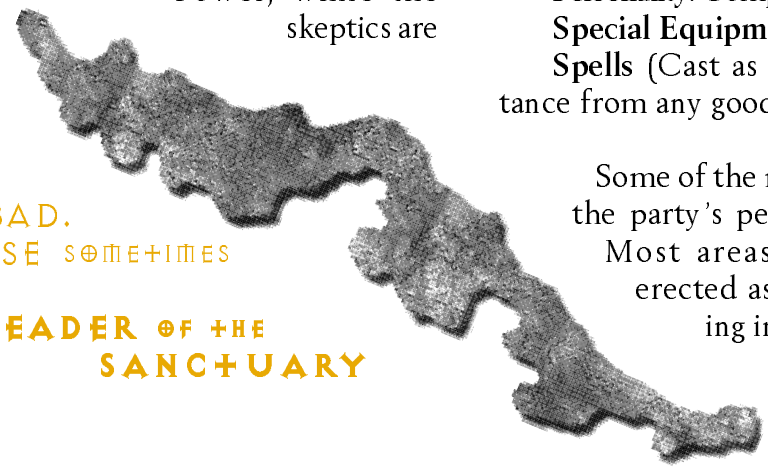
S 15, D 10, C 15, I 17, W 16, Ch 18

Personality: Compassionate, courageous, driven.

Special Equipment: silver sword +2

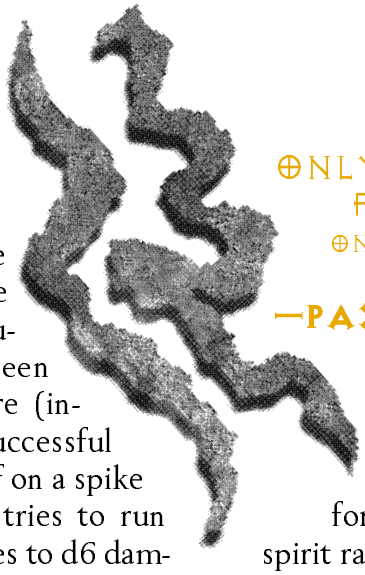
Spells (Cast as level 8 paladin due to distance from any good plane): none

Some of the more interesting areas from the party's perspective are listed below. Most areas are simply crude huts erected as residences for those staying in Sanctuary.



IT IS THAT BAD. EVEN WORSE SOMETIMES

—GELEDOR, LEADER OF THE SANCTUARY



ONLY BY TURNING AWAY FROM THE EVIL OF HERESY ONE CAN ESCAPE FROM THIS HELL

—PAXAL, LEADER OF THE SUPPLICANT ORDER

A. Guard Towers: These twin towers, built out of stone, are 30' high. Between them are a series of long, sharp silver spikes in front of the entrance to the cave. The spikes are spaced far enough apart for a human-sized creature to walk between them easily. A large-sized creature (including a bariaur) must make a successful Dexterity check or scratch himself on a spike (1d3 damage). If the character tries to run through the spikes, damage increases to d6 damage per 6" of movement, and the Dex check is made at -4.

Each tower houses a pair of guards armed with longbows and arrows tipped with cold-wrought iron. They also have silver swords for melee combat, but their main goal is to alert the camp to any danger, and hold off attacks until reinforcements can come.

If the PCs approach Sanctuary from the road to the mountain, the guards will order the party to stop while they summon Geledor. They trust Geledor's judgement of the characters (in part due to his ability to detect evil, which seems to even function here), but will not allow the heroes in before Geledor can be contacted. If the PCs kill any guards, they will not be allowed into Sanctuary. This will cause problems with the PCs being able to complete the adventure, and the most likely result will be that they die on the Abyss. The guards will summon 50 other guards, as well as Geledor and Nesiond, in 1d6 rounds if the party shows any signs of hostility.

Most adventurers will be asked to help out by serving as guards while staying in Sanctuary, unless they have special skills that are better applied elsewhere.

Guards (Pe/var human/F3/any G): AC 5 (chain mail); MV 12; hp 18; THAC0 18; #AT 1; Dmg 1d6 (bow or short sword); SZ M; ML Steady (12); Int average (10); XP 120 each

B. Infirmary: This is where Geledor is most likely to be found, doing his part to aid the wounded soldiers of Sanctuary and nurse the unfortunate victims of the tanar'ri back to health. If the heroes were involved in the battle against the tanar'ri at the lake of fire, they wake up here, with Geledor nearby and anxious to hear the heroes' tales. This is also a perfect opportunity to see how much Geledor truly cares for the less fortunate. The southern half of the infirmary is used to tend to the wounded. The northern half is used for caring for those with wounds of the spirit rather than physical wounds. Many petitioners have gone mad from the lakes of fire, and they are treated here. Any characters with healing abilities (whether spells or healing or herbalism proficiencies) are asked to help out here during their stay in Sanctuary.

C. Temple of Supplicants: Not all of the petitioners agree with Geledor's belief that they have done no evil deserving of the torture they have encountered in the Abyss. A small cult has formed from the Abyssal petitioners on this layer called the Supplicants. The Supplicants worship the Power in their life as a petitioner, even though they did not actively worship the Power in their true life. After experiencing the horrors of the Abyss, they became convinced that the Power was indeed right about all he said. They were willing to believe anything that gave them hope for a release from their suffering. They have formed a cult worshipping the Power as well as they can remember the church's rituals from life in an attempt to gain the forgiveness of the Power. They believe that if they do worship the Power correctly, the Power will take them to his realm on the Upper Planes. The fact that none of their flock has ever ascended does not change their faith, and they refuse to listen to any arguments that they may be wrong.

The rest of Sanctuary seems to have a rather low opinion of the Supplicants. After all, most petitioners blame their hardships on the Power, and take offense at someone singing praises to this god. Nevertheless, Geledor has declared that they have as much right to practice their beliefs as anyone else as long as they follow the laws of Sanctuary. Geledor shares the contempt the rest of Sanctuary has for the Supplicants despite his declaration, as he feels that they are merely toadying to the Power's strength rather than being honest about their feelings. Indeed, talking to a Supplicant reminds one of talking to

a Taker more than a priest. They believe the Power's might makes him right, and are more concerned with avoiding the Power's wrath than any of his religious practices.

The temple can be of aid to the PCs in learning more about the Power, as they have more knowledge of this than anyone else in Sanctuary. The cultists, especially the head priest Paxal, can tell the PCs any information they need to know about the Power. While the cultists will not use the terms "lawful good" or "Mt. Celestia," they will describe these things when describing the Power's moral system and realm. They will have no more idea how the heroes came to the Abyss or what happened to Sigil than any other petitioners, however. They will inform the heroes that the only way off the Abyss is to worship the Power (which is, of course, untrue).

PAXAL (PE/♂ HUMAN/P9/LN): AC 10; MV 12; hp 40; THAC0 16; #AT 1; Dmg d3 (unarmed); SZ M (5'6"); ML average (10); XP 950

Notes: as a Supplicant priest of the Power, Paxal receives no spells or special abilities.

S 11, D 13, C 15, I 17, W 12, Ch 12

Personality: stubborn, zealous, melancholy

D. ARMORY: Here is where the arms and armor not in use are kept. There are 5 suits of chain mail, 14 longswords, 17 short swords, 12 spears, 15 long bows, and 15 quivers of 10 arrows. All arms and armor are of silver or cold-wrought iron. Each has a 10% chance of having a +1 enchantment. Sanctuary will not part with any weapons unless they are traded a weapon or magical item of equal or greater value.

E. NESIOND'S FORGE: In life, Nesiond was an artificer who believed his creations aided his fellow man more than the worship of the priests ever did. For his pride, he was sent to the Abyss as a petitioner. He was rescued from a lake of fire by Geledor, and managed to remember a few of his former magical abilities. Together they found the mines beneath the mountain and founded Sanctuary. Nesiond is responsible for crafting the weapons and armor of Sanctuary. He doesn't remember much else about his former spells. He and his 4 apprentices work nearly round the clock, crafting new weapons and armor. Any heroes with the *Weaponsmithing*, *Armorer*, or *Bowyer/Fletcher* nonweapon proficiencies will be asked to help here during their stay in Sanctuary.

Nesiond is the sort of cutter any Indep would love. He doesn't like anyone telling him what to do, and believes in "live and let live." He works for Sanctuary out of a feeling of responsibility to others as well as respect and obligation to Geledor, but doesn't listen to any orders. He takes a great deal of pride in his work, and will not settle for quality any less than perfect. He can be heard shouting at his apprentices throughout a good portion of Sanctuary.

NESIOND (PE/♂ HUMAN/W (ARTIFICER) 8/CG): AC 9 (Dexterity); MV 12; hp 33; THAC0 18 (16 w/silver dagger +2); #AT 1; Dmg d4+3 (silver dagger +2, strength); SZ M (5'9"); ML elite (14); XP 2,000

Notes: Nesiond is an artificer specialist wizard as detailed in *Player's Option: Spells and Magic*. As such, he has several spells stored in his dagger, and cannot cast spells from the enchantment/charm and necromancy schools. He also has the Blacksmithing, Weaponsmithing, Amorer, and Bowyer/Fletcher proficiencies.

S 16; D 15; C 15; I 17; W 10; Ch 12

Personality: Independent, arrogant, responsible

Special Equipment: Silver dagger +2, with following spells stored in it: *ice storm*, *blur*, *haste*.

Spells (5/4/4/3): 1st—*magic missile*, *detect magic*, *chromatic orb*, *mending*, *color spray*; 2nd—*web*, *bind*, *ice knife*, *glitterdust*; 3rd—dispel *magic*, *item*, *Melf's minute meteors*, *minor globe of invulnerability*; 4th—*enchanted weapon*, *thunderstaff*, *wall of ice*.

F. MINES: This is the pasage to the silver and iron mines of Sanctuary. These areas are not mapped out, but the DM should feel free to map them out further if they are to be explored. It is here that the denizens of Sanctuary have discovered a few veins of silver and iron beneath the mountain. These are being mined to make arms and armor from the silver and iron, as these are substances the tanar'ri have some vulnerability to. Raw ore is brought to Nesiond's Forge (area E) to be made into usable items. Any heroes with skills applicable to mining (including most dwarves, gnomes, and earth genasi) will be asked to help out here during their stay in Sanctuary.

G. MUSHROOM FARM: This passage leads to a smaller cavern where a variety of fungus is grown

and harvested for consumption by the petitioners of Sanctuary. It is unknown if any petitioners can actually die of starvation, but they do get weary from hunger as much as a prime or planar character. At any rate, this is one of the few places on this layer the heroes will find any sustenance (aside from the rather unpalatable meat of slain tanar'ri), and should take advantage of this situation. As with the mines, this area is not mapped, but can be by the DM if the need arises. Any PCs with relevant proficiencies (perhaps *Agriculture* or *Herbalism*) will be asked to help in this area during their stay in Sanctuary. If the heroes expect any food or supplies while here, they should offer to help.

H. Central Plaza: This area is surrounded by high walls, but is open to the public. It occasionally has a central bonfire, although firewood is rare. This is the reason for the walls. Many petitioners have developed severe phobias of fire due to the lakes of fire, and the walls are to prevent panic at times when the bonfire is lit. A well is also located within the plaza, providing water for the community. PCs are welcome to fill their waterskins here, but if they want to stay in the good graces of the town they really should offer to help with some of the work while they are here (see other areas' descriptions for suggestions).

Every day the heroes spend in Sanctuary, a tanar'ri attack occurs. Randomly determine what type of tanar'ri attacks on the first day, and increase the power of the next day's attacking fiend each time until the village is attacked by a group of balors. This should show the characters that it is only a matter of time before they are overwhelmed, and expediency is important. The heroes should get all the information from Sanctuary they can before deciding they must search outside of the cavern for clues as to what is happening. If the heroes have trouble coming to this conclusion, Geledor can ask the heroes for help, explaining that their chance of survival are greater than the rest of the community's.

Any time after the heroes encounter Sanctuary, they should see the deva bringing petitioners to the Abyss. Whenever the DM feels it appropriate, and after the heroes have left Sanctuary, read the following:

You trudge on through the bleak wastes of this tanar'ri-infested desert, wondering if there could possibly be any hope for those so unfortunate as to be imprisoned here. That is when you see a winged figure in the sky above. An extremely handsome man with large birdlike wings soars above, carrying a petitioner. You recognize this beautiful creature as a deva, a servant of the upper planes. Your spirits are suddenly lifted at the sight of this deva rescuing the poor petitioner. The deva swoops down near the shores of one of the lakes of fire in the distance, drops the petitioner, and flies away. He wasn't rescuing the petitioner after all! He was depositing them here. A creature of goodness condemning this person to such torment does not seem right. Before you can investigate further, the deva soars away back towards the mountain.

If the heroes hurry on to the shores of the lake, they can rescue the petitioner (Pe/♀ human/0/TN) before any tanar'ri show up to torment her. The petitioner appears to be a young woman. She is recently deceased, and has no idea where she is or how she got there. Extremely disoriented, she will be of no use to the heroes. They can either leave her, take her with them, or bring her to Sanctuary. She has no useful combat or survival skills.

The deva flew back to the top of the very mountain which Sanctuary is located. It flew back through a portal to Mt. Celestia located at the top of the mountain. It flew away too quickly for the heroes to really follow it, but they should easily see what direction it headed. If the heroes wait long enough, they will see another deva come from and return to the top of the mountain, depositing another helpless petitioner on the Abyss. It should be obvious that the heroes need to climb the mountain to

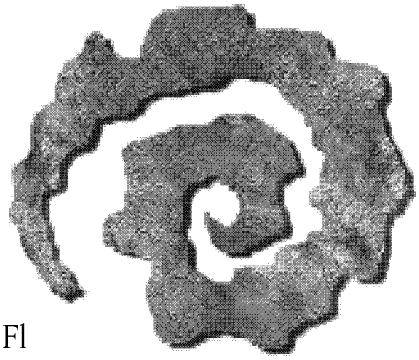
see where the devas are coming from. If they don't come to that conclusion, Geledor will mention it. He found Sanctuary by attempting to follow devas he saw in the Abyss. Now that he has so many responsibilities to his community, he cannot leave long enough to investigate, and will implore the heroes to investigate for him. He will offer them any weapons, food, and water they need, but has little else to offer. If this is not enough, Geledor will point out that there is no known way off the Abyss, and if the heroes wish to ever return home, they should investigate ways home for themselves as well as for others.

Climbing the mountain will take approximately 2 days, double that if the party does not have proper climbing equipment. Every hour of movement, each PC must make a climbing check or suffer a minor fall. Roll 2d6. This is the number of six-sided dice to roll for damage for each character who misses a climbing check. Every two hours, there is a 20% chance of a random encounter (see table on page 15), as well. DMs should also keep careful track of water requirements for each character.

As the heroes get close to the top of the mountain, read the following:

You have traveled for days, and can see for miles throughout this land. There is nothing but miles of desert waste everywhere you look, with the exception of an occasional lake of fire. The top of the mountain is within your sight, and you work to help your companions and yourself reach the top. The planar characters among you can see a portal in a stone arch at the top. Before long, all of you can see it as it begins to shimmer as an activated portal, and another deva rushes through. The deva is carrying a wide-eyed male petitioner, and pays no heed to you or the party.

The party will have to act quickly if they wish to get through the portal, and even more quickly if they wish to attack the deva. If the deva is attacked, it will drop the petitioner, which will result in the petitioner's death unless he is caught. The deva will ignore the party unless attacked, more intent on finishing its mission. The party will need to be able to fly or have quick missile attacks if they wish to engage the deva. Any character attempting to fight on the mountaintop must make a successful Dexterity check each round or fall for 10d6 damage. Obviously, this is not the recommended course of actions.

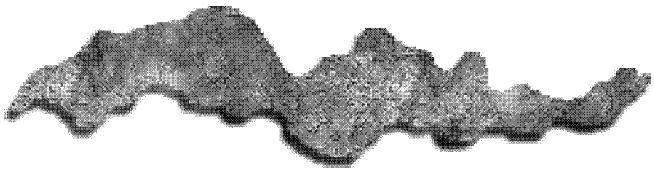


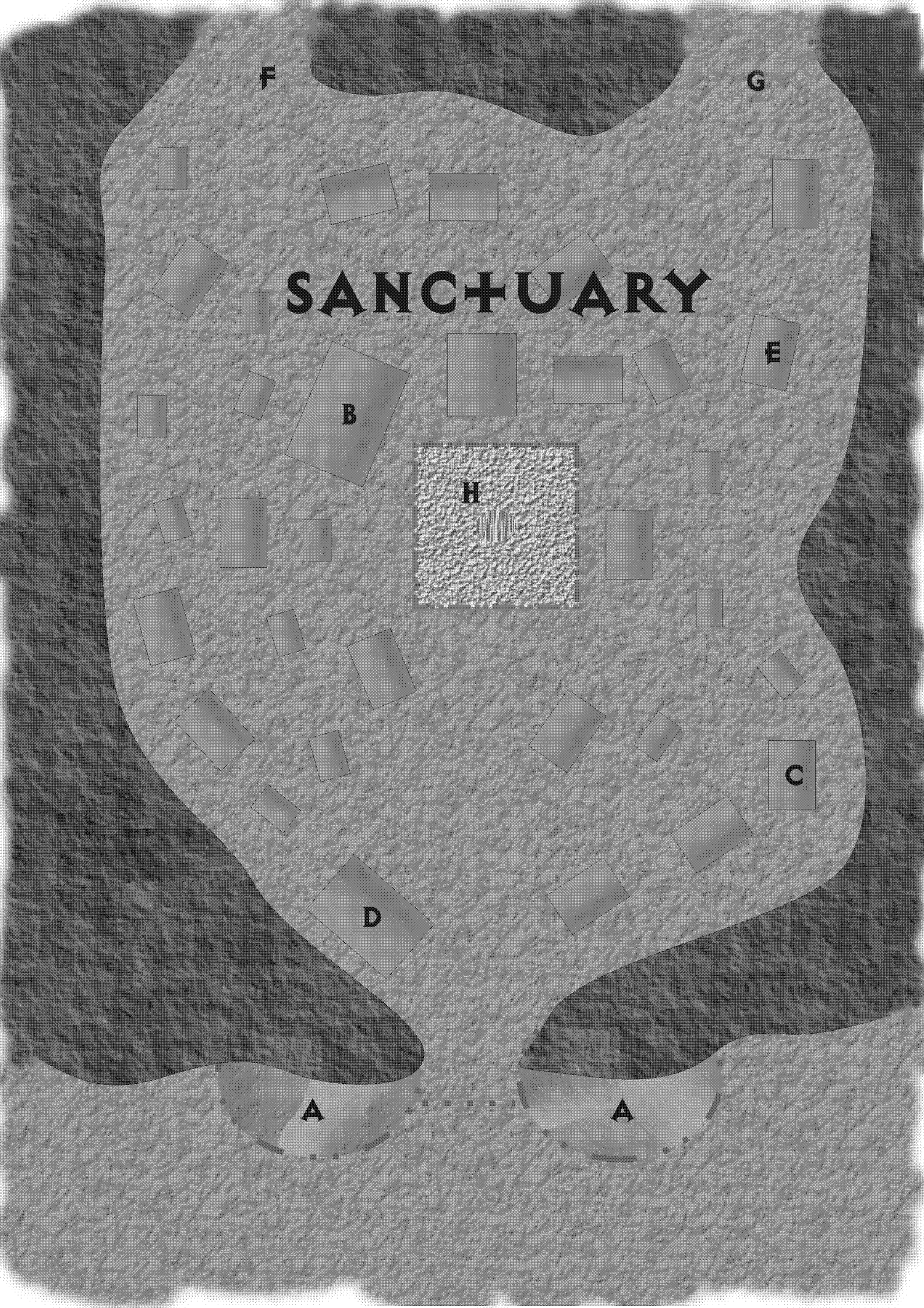
Astral Deva:
AC -5; MV 24, Fl 48 (B); HD 12; hp 60; THAC0 9; #AT 2; Dmg 3d6/3d6 (mace); SA Disruption; SD Spell immunity, protection, never surprised, +2 or better to hit; MR 70%; SZ M (7' tall); ML Fearless (20); Int Genius (17); AL LG; XP 15,000

SA: Mace attacks as +3 mace of disruption, any creature struck twice in same round must save vs. spell or fall senseless d12 rounds; following spell-like abilities: *aid, augury, change self, comprehend languages, cure serious wounds* (3 times/day), *detect evil, detect magic, know alignment, read magic, teleport without error, cure disease* (3/day), *cure light wounds* (7/day), *heal* (1/day), *detect lie, detect snares and pits* (7/day), *dispel magic* (7/day), *infravision* (always active), *invisibility 10' radius, light, polymorph self, protection from evil, remove curse, remove fear, tongues, blade barrier* (1/day), *detect invisibility*.

SD: Never surprised, immune to vacuum, level loss, death magic, cold, electrical, magic missile, petrification, poison, normal fire, normal weapons, gas; half damage from magical fire; vulnerable to +2 or better weapons only.

The portal will stay open for 2 rounds after the deva flies through it. This is the exact amount of time it will take the entire party to go through if they do not hesitate. Half the party can go through in a round. If they stop to attack or pursue the deva, they will not likely make it through the portal before it closes. The key to the portal is a deva (which is obviously not destroyed). The deva will return in one turn if unmolested (without the petitioner) to reactivate the portal for two more rounds. If not all party members made it through the portal this time, they may have to wait up to a week for the next deva. By now, all players should be through the portal and in Mt. Celestia.

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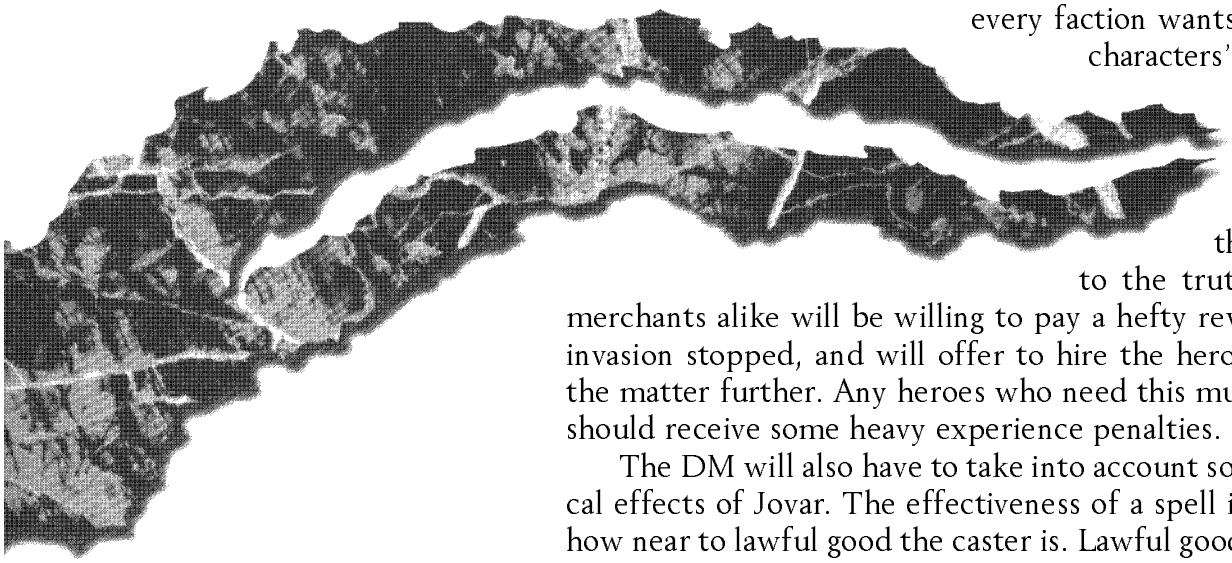
Chapter III: Mount Celestia



AHH... MUCH, MUCH BETTER NOW

—A PLANEWALKER AFTER LEAVING THE ABYSS

This entire chapter takes place in Jovar, the Glittering Heaven, the sixth layer of Mt. Celestia. This assumes that the heroes decide to stay and investigate matters further. Plane-traveling spells or magic items, such as a plane shift spell or cubic gate, could allow the characters to turn stag on the whole adventure and return to Sigil. Hopefully, the characters should have more than enough reason to stay and figure out what's going on. Their own lost loved one, the tanar'ri invasion of Sigil, and the suffering of the petitioners on the Abyss should all be incentive for any but the most dense and selfish of berks to stay on track. It is obvious that the key to the invasion and the petitioners on the Abyss lies in Mt. Celestia, where the deva's portal leads.

If the characters do decide to leave Mt. Celestia (and have the means), there are a number of ways to get them back on track. The tanar'ri invasion continues in Sigil, and every faction wants it stopped. The characters' factols will order the heroes to investigate, especially if they learn how close they already were to the truth. Factions and merchants alike will be willing to pay a hefty reward to have the invasion stopped, and will offer to hire the heroes to investigate the matter further. Any heroes who need this much hand-holding should receive some heavy experience penalties.

The DM will also have to take into account some special magical effects of Jovar. The effectiveness of a spell is determined by how near to lawful good the caster is. Lawful good characters have no change in their spells. Neutral good and lawful neutral characters have their spells fail 10% of the time. Lawful evil, chaotic good, and true neutral characters' spells fail 30% of the time. Neutral evil and chaotic neutral spellslingers fail 60% of the time, and chaotic evil characters have a 90% chance of failure. Divinations are always true on Mt. Celestia, and Wild spells always fail. Spells that encourage chaos, disruption, and evil also always fail, such as the chaos spell and all spells from the Chaos priest sphere. Life-enhancing necromantic spells work at double effect. Killing necromantic spells reverse and effect the caster at twice efficiency.

As the heroes enter Mt. Celestia, read them the following:

The other side of the portal feels like a refreshing blast of cool air as you escape the hellish heat of the Abyss. You barely see the deva in the far distance, flying towards a majestic city several miles away that radiates with a beautiful green light. There are more glittering stars in the sky, like jewels, as well as in the distance on the mountainside you now stand on. You seem to be on an enormous ledge of an even more enormous mountain...the largest you have ever seen. Above you, the mountain disappears into the clouds. Below you, it stretches on what seems like an infinity. As you gain your bearings

and adjust to this new environment, a winged, armored man who radiates light lands before you. "You seem to be in the wrong place, my friends," the archon states. "It is not wise for you to stay here. You must leave this realm at once."

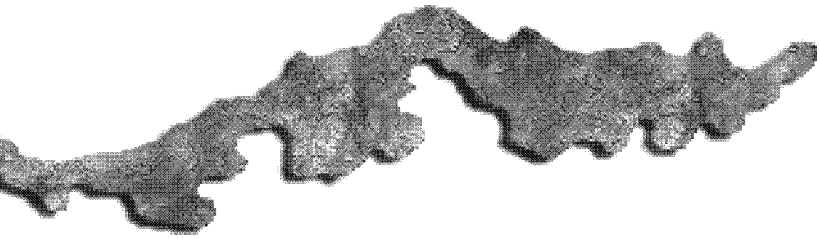
The archon does not appear threatening, and will not attack. He simply wishes for the heroes to leave. He can tell that they are not worshippers of the Power, and only the Power's chosen are allowed to enter his Celestial realm. The archon, like the Power's other celestial servants, do not wish any harm to outsiders, but do enforce the will of the Power in keeping them from entering the realm.

Throne Archon: AC -7; MV 15, Fl 36 (B); HD 12; hp 60; THAC0 7; #AT 2; Dmg 1d12/1d12; SA Vorpal sword, spell use; SD +3 or better weapon to hit; MR 50%; SZ L (10' tall); ML Fanatic (18); Int Genius (17); AL LG; XP 16,000

SA: menacing aura: save vs. spell at -4 or suffer -2 to attack rolls until successfully hit archon; 2 attacks per round with vorpal sword (attack as +5 weapon); cast spells from all priest spheres and wizard schools at 18th level of use.

SD: Hurt only by +3 or greater weapons

After giving his warning, the archon leaves. If attacked, he will defend himself, but does not otherwise seek to do the heroes any harm. He seems to be sincerely interested in their well-being in persuading them to move. He will not mention the Power unless specifically asked about him, in which case he will mention that he serves the Power. The archon will answer no specific questions about the Power, however.



Traveling in the Power's Realm

If the heroes decide not to heed the archon's warning and try to explore the Power's realm anyway, this gets them nowhere. However, the heroes have no way of knowing this. Due to the magic of the realm, nobody who is not devoted to the Power can ever approach the Power's main city. The heroes could walk for days, weeks, or even years without appearing to get any closer to the city than when they first arrived on this plane. Nothing, not even a wish spell, will change this.

While the city never gets any closer, the landscape does seem to change, as the heroes really are travelling through the realm. While moving around in the realm, the heroes will occasionally encounter various servants of the Power. All of them repeat the same warning the original archon gave the heroes. They will all act similar, too, not wishing to cause the party any real harm and not willing to give out information about the Power. The DM can use any encounters he wishes, or can check every mile traveled (a 20% chance), and consult the following chart:

2d6 roll	Encounter
2	Aasimon, Solar
3	Aasimon, Planetar
4	Aasimon, Deva
5	Aasimon, Agathinon
6	Warden Archon
7	Hound Archon
8	Sword Archon
9	Trumpet Archon
10	Aasimon, Light
11	Noctral
12	Tome Archon

The terrain of the realm is intensely beautiful and comfortable. The weather is always perfect, and while life of all sorts appears plentiful, there are no dangerous animals or plants. In fact, the utter tranquility of the realm will seem unnerving to any heroes expecting conflict, as none is to be found.

The Inquisitor

Sooner or later, the heroes will decide to leave the realm. Whether they do this because the archon warned them, because they are running low on resources (and hit points) after battling too many celestials, or just because they're out of ideas, they will encounter Torfel Kay shortly after leaving the realm. This encounter works best if it still occurs within Mt. Celestia just outside of the Power's realm. If the heroes leave the realm via a different route, this could create a problem. Some of the suggestions listed above can be used to persuade the heroes to return to Mt. Celestia. If all else fails, Torfel Kay can pursue the heroes wherever they go. This makes the meeting with Morningstar a bit more awkward, however, so it is best if Torfel Kay is encountered within Mt. Celestia.

Torfel Kay is an inquisitor (an alignement champion), a lawful evil priest. He is solely devoted to the Power, and feels any not also devoted to this god deserve no mercy for their crime of being different. He tortured and killed many infidels in his lifetime, and forced many more to convert to worship of the Power. After his death, he quickly rose to proxy status for the Power. At some point during the heroes' stay in the Power's realm, no matter how brief, Torfel Kay became aware of their presence. He is infuriated that infidels have entered his god's realm and seen his holy city (if only from a distance). He considers this occurrence to be blasphemous and abominable, and feels only the death of the heroes can put things right again.

Torfel Kay ambushes the party shortly after they leave the Power's realm. His cruel and sadistic nature should be noted by the DM, and he will use tactics accordingly. If possible, he will start by killing the party's henchmen and followers (preferably in a way that will allow the party to later find the bodies) one at a time before confronting the entire party. As a proxy of the Power, none of his spells are affected negatively by the nature of Mt. Celestia. He fights to the death.

Torfel Kay (Px/♂ human/Inquisitor 20/LE): AC -2 (bracers of defense AC0, dexterity); MV 12; hp 67; THAC0 8 (7 w/ Strength, 4 w/long sword of sharpness); #AT 1; Dmg 1d8+5 (plus special); SA Spells; sword of sharpness; *cause*

wounds (40 hp/per day); *fear 10' radius*; *mark enemy, gate*; SD *Detect enemies, detect lies* 6/day, *detect invisible*, magic items, spell immunities (Wisdom); SZ M (6'1"); ML Fearless (20); XP 22,000

S 18, D 16, C 14, I 17, W 19, Ch 18

Personality: fanatic, merciless, unyielding

Special Equipment: bracers of defense AC 0, sword of sharpness, ring of spell turning, ring of fire resistance, necklace of missiles (1 9-hd, 2 7-hd, 2 5-hd, and 2 3-hd missiles), cloak of elvenkind, boots of speed

Spells (12/11/10/10/7/5/2): *command* (x2), *curse, detect magic, dispel fatigue, emotion read, light, orison, protection from chaos, sacred guardian, sanctuary, thought capture/aid, augury, calm chaos, draw upon holy might, enthrall, find traps, hold person, mind read, silence 15' radius* (x2), *zone of truth/ bestow curse, caltrops, dictate, dispel magic* (x2), *locate object, prayer, remove paralysis, rigid thinking, strength of one/ abjure, compulsive order, defensive harmony, divination, free action, omniscient eye, recitation, tongues, unfailing endurance/champion's strength, commune, flame strike* (x3), *quest, righteous wrath of the faithful/blade barrier, command monster, legal thoughts, speak with monsters, spiritual wrath/ destruction* (reverse of *resurrection*), *holy word*.

Note: Many of the above spells are found in *Tome of Magic* or *Player's Option: Spells and Magic*. If these books are unavailable, substitute other spells.

If the party is relatively weak, Torfel Kay attacks alone. If the party is more powerful, he may have up to 30 0-level fighters attack with him. If this is the case, he will make use of many of his spells from the sphere of Law to enhance their overall combat abilities.

Torfel's Followers (Pe/var human/0/LE) (up to 30): AC 5 (chain mail); MV 12; hp 5 each; THAC0 20; #AT 1; Dmg 1d8 (long sword); SZ M; ML fanatic (19); Int Average (10); XP 65 each

HE USED TO BE GOOD, BUT NOW HE IS MAD WITH POWER

—MORNINGSTAR, SPEAKING OF HIS FORMER POWER

✦ MORNINGSTAR ✦

Assuming the party defeats Torfel Kay, an asuras named Morningstar arrives 1d6 turns later. He finds the party wherever they are. At this point, read the following to the players:

You see a fiery creature flying towards you as you survey the results of your battle with the inquisitor. It is humanoid, with birdlike talons for feet. The alabaster face of a handsome, bearded man is surrounded by wings, eyes, and hair of flame. You recognize it from tales you have heard of the wise asuras, a race of celestials rumored to be archons who have fallen from the grace of law, but no less benevolent than before. The creature approaches in a non-threatening manner, indicating it wishes to speak with you.

"At long last," it declares, "the arrival of true champions who can save a doomed world from a mad god! I have waited a thousand years for your arrival. Allow me to introduce myself. I am Morningstar. I was once the highest proxy of the Power now served by this cruel man you have defeated. I protected the followers of the Power from harm, healing them and teaching them to love one another as themselves. The Power responded to their devotion benevolently, but he grew mad with power at being the only deity of this world. He decided to inflict all who did not bow to him with eternal torment, both good and evil. Many innocent men and women now suffer in the Abyss for the simple crime of tolerance and keeping an open mind. I questioned the Power about this. After all, I had taught the people of this world with his blessing to have love and mercy for others and to forgive their enemies. The Power's edicts seemed pitiless and unjust. As a reward for my concern, I was cast out of the Power's realm and Prime world. I watched helplessly as the Power madly sent good people to the Abyss and evil people to his realm. This is against the very fabric of the multiverse, and the harm his insanity will cause is immeasurable. I have tried to end it all, but I cannot.

"I know of one way to stop this madness. The Power must die. I know of one way to do so, but I cannot go to the Prime world where the means to

this end is located. I have awaited true heroes willing to make the ultimate sacrifice to save a world, and possibly the planes as well. The key to the only portal to the Prime world is the blood of a saint…which you seem to have plenty of here. I can direct you to the holy place where a relic called the Rod of Divinity is located. This object is the key to defeating the Power, but it exacts a heavy toll on any mortal using it. I, however, cannot accompany you. I implore you, will you help me and the rest of the planes?"*

*Note: Morningstar is referring to Torfel Kay's blood.

The asuras speaks the truth. He will allow the party to discuss the pros and cons of this mission, and to rest first (and will also offer any healing or other aid he can give). He will do his best to persuade them to go, but will respect their free will and their right to refuse. He will remind them of the possible consequences of their refusal, however. Morningstar does not wish to battle the party in any case, and if he is attacked he will simply flee.

If the party agrees to help, they need to collect some of Torfel Kay's blood. Morningstar's blood will not do, as he is no longer considered a saint by the Power. A "saint" in this case refers to an individual of favored status by the Power, and obviously has nothing to do with the actual ethics of the individual in question. Morningstar will lead the party to an archway near the border of the Power's realm that serves as the portal.

If the party refuses to help or attacks Morningstar, the adventure essentially ends. This could mean disaster for the campaign. After returning to Sigil, the party finds the tanar'ri have essentially taken over, and are spreading throughout the planes. Factols will offer heavy rewards for a solution to this problem. Morningstar may also approach one of the more sensible (and less trigger-happy) PCs alone and plead his case, to persuade them to return. Characters who require this much incentive to help the entire multiverse, especially after all they have witnessed, should have some penalty when it comes time to distribute experience points.

If asked about the Rod of Divinity, Morningstar is very vague. Truth is, he's not exactly sure about all it is himself. He reveals as little information as he can about it, but what he knows is that this item somehow allowed the Power to become the only god of the Prime world it is located on. It can be used to kill the Power, but will also kill any mortal who uses it. It actually destroys the soul of any mortal who wields it, making any resurrection or reincarnation attempts automatically unsuccessful. This last dark is the one Morningstar will be most evasive about, as he needs to convince the heroes to go on this quest.

Morningstar gives the party a copy of map presented on page 33 before they activate the portal, and wishes them well.

MORNINGSTAR (ASURAS): AC –2; MV 12, Fl 33; HD 8; hp 62; THAC0 13; #AT 3; Dmg 1d10/1d10/1d10+2-4 (claw/claw/flame tongue sword); SA trumpet blare, burning wind, spells; SD spell immunities; MR 40%; SZ M (6'); ML Fearless (19); Int Genius (18); AL CG; XP 7,000

Personality: Compassionate, caring, persuasive, responsible

SA: Evil beings of 3HD or less must make morale check if trumpet is blared; create burning wind with wings which causes 2d10 damage upon evil beings only; Priest spells at 9th level of ability and 21 Wisdom; *polymorph self* twice/day.

SD: Wisdom immunizes against *charm*, *command*, *fear*, *forget*, *friends*, *hold person*, *hypnotism*, *ray of enfeeblement*, and *scare*; immune to illusions; *detect lie* at will; *true seeing* 3/day.

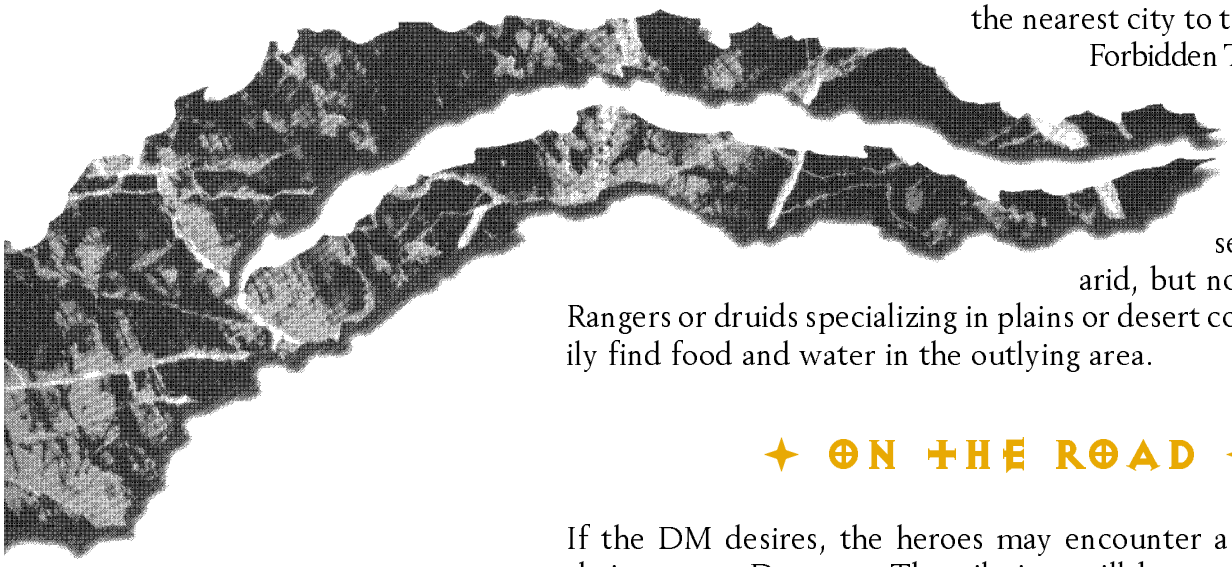
YOU MEAN YOU WANT US TO KILL THE POWER? YOU MUST BE MAD YOURSELF!

—A CIPHER RESPONSE TO THE MORNINGSTAR'S PROPOSITION

Chapter IV: Prime Concerns

The heroes finally know what's really going on, and have been provided with a way to the Prime to set things right. However, the heroes may question whether or not this is the right thing. After all, the Power is lawful good, even if he is delusional enough to think that he is causing no harm. Is killing him really the "good" thing to do? Is it truly the place of mortals to make such decisions? Do the ends justify the means? These are all moral quandaries the party may face. Roleplaying through these dilemmas should be encouraged by the DM. Each hero should answer all these ethical questions for himself.

Assuming the heroes take the portal to the Prime (the adventure won't continue very well if they do not), they walk underneath the archway to arrive on a Prime world. The portal takes them under a bridge on a road. A nearby sign shows that they are 3 miles from Dratsum, the City of Faith. This city also appears on the map, and is the nearest city to the portal and the Forbidden Temple. It is therefore the most likely next stop for the heroes.



The land itself here is slightly arid, but not quite a desert. Rangers or druids specializing in plains or desert conditions can easily find food and water in the outlying area.

✦ On the Road ✦

If the DM desires, the heroes may encounter a few pilgrims on their way to Dratsum. The pilgrims will be accommodating and friendly as long as the party shows no hostility. They will likely ask about the heroes' strange appearance, especially if non-human races are present. While suspicious of any stories the heroes may tell them about their reason for travelling here and their appearance, they will not push the matter, assuming they heroes must have their reasons. This may give the PCs the idea that it is a good idea to disguise themselves before entering the city to remain inconspicuous.

The pilgrims are eager to talk about their faith, and will answer most questions the heroes ask. Here is what they will say about most topics*:

- The Power: The pilgrims are fanatically loyal to the Power, and have nothing bad to say about him. Any PC who makes disparaging remarks about the Power is bound to offend the pilgrims. They truly believe the Power to be the one and only god, and feel that service to the Power is the best a mortal can offer.
- Morningstar: There is a 25% chance that any pilgrim recognizes this name. They know that he was a powerful servant of the Power who was destined to bring about the end of the world.

THE END OF THE WORLD
WILL COME FROM THE HAND
OF THE FALLEN SERVANT

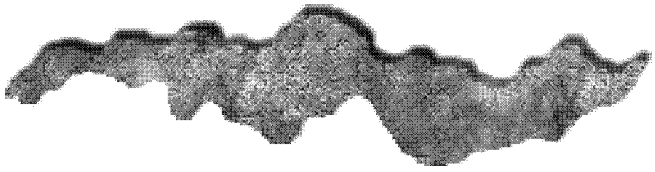
—ELADAN PROPHECY ✦

- The Abyss/Tanar'ri: The pilgrims believe that no good person who follows the power has anything to fear from the forces of evil. Rather, this is the just punishment of the wicked for their iniquity.
- Dratsum: The City of Faith is a holy city, near the Forbidden Temple. It plays a pivotal role in their religion as a place where the Power once dwelled. Their pilgrimage is specifically to Dratsum as a show of their devotion.
- Forbidden Temple: This site is, according to their faith, the site where the Power stood to drive away all false gods. It is off-limits to all but the chosen of their church. Many believe the power of the gods themselves dwells here.
- Torfel Kay: It is 25% likely that each pilgrim will recognize this name. Torfel was a man devoted to gaining followers for the Power by any means necessary. Though brutal, he dutifully served the Power, and is therefore considered a saint.
- The Planes/Sigil: The Pilgrims will have no idea what the heroes are talking about if they attempt to describe the Planes or Sigil. They believe that the righteous receive their reward in heaven (Mt. Celestia), and the wicked receive their punishment in hell (the Abyss). They recognize no other outer planes, and consider such beliefs blasphemous. Canny PCs should realize this is not a good topic to discuss.

*To make it easier on the players, the DM may assume that the natives of this prime world speak a version of the Planar Common tongue. If the heroes have access to spells or magic items that make communication possible (i.e. tongues, helm of comprehending languages), it is more realistic if the primes speak a language unknown to the characters.

Pilgrims (10-100): Pr/var human/0/LG: AC: 10; MV 12; hp 4; THAC0 20; #AT: 1; Dmg 1-6 (staff); SZ M; ML Average (9); Int Average-Very (9-12); XP 15 each

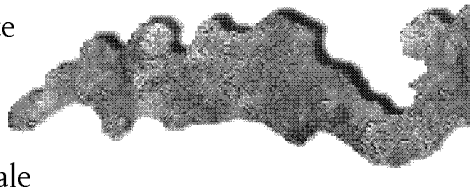
After travelling to within one mile of the city, the heroes should notice crow cages lining the road as a way to warn travelers what happens to those who do not respect Dratsum's laws. The crime of the convict is also displayed on a written plaque attached to each cage. They read: thief, heretic, murderer, heretic, heretic, adulterer, thief, heretic, etc. Various crimes are represented by the plaques, but heresy is by far the most common crime. If the DM wishes, one heretic named Mokes (Pr/♂ human/0/CG) may still be alive and begging for water. The pilgrims will try to stop the PCs from aiding the convicts in any way, claiming it is against the Power's will. The heretic is actually incarcerated for simply expressing doubt about the absolute divinity of the Power.



✦ DRATSUM ✦
THE CITY OF FAITH

Dratsum itself is meant to only be a convenient pit stop for the heroes. Of course, the heroes should be sure not to be too vocal about their opinions considering how many people are executed for heresy.

For the sake of saving space, Dratsum is not mapped out, although if the DM wishes to do so, this is definitely acceptable. Dratsum will contain most non-magical supplies and services regularly available at the prices listed in the *Player's Handbook*. This gives the PCs the perfect opportunity to stock up on supplies before leaving for the Forbidden Temple. Of special note is the high-quality stock of camels as riding animals and beasts of burden for sale here. As the Forbidden Temple still requires significant travel, these animals may well prove to be worth the price.



The townsfolk of Dratsum will be able to answer the heroes' questions just as well as the pilgrims could. They will not seem very cooperative in helping the PCs find the Forbidden Temple, however, as approaching it is considered blasphemous.

TRAGEDY

At some point within Dratsum, the following encounter should happen. A little girl was playing with her friends on top of an old building. Part of the building collapsed, and the child fell to the ground, badly injuring herself. The friends ran to the girl's parents, who collected their injured daughter, and ran frantically looking for help. Wherever the PCs are, the parents soon come nearby:

You are going about your business in Dratsum, when you hear sounds of a commotion, and a woman's screams for help: "Please, my baby, somebody help my baby!" Your attention piqued, you look to the source of the commotion. A woman is carrying a badly injured child, a girl about 5 years old. A man who appears to hold some form of authority here approaches the woman, and asks her what happened.

"She…she was playing…I didn't know…she fell off the building…oh, dear Power, look at her arm…the blood…" and begins sobbing uncontrollably. The man looks her over and speaks, to the woman and the crowd:

"There is nothing we can do for her now. Her life is in the hands of the Power. May the Power have mercy on her soul." The crowd then bows their heads and walks away, leaving the girl bleeding all over the street and her mother begging for help. You can see from your position that, while her injuries are serious, even the simplest of healing spells or potions would save her life. If nothing is done, she will surely bleed to death within a minute.

Obviously, the heroes are expected to take the initiative and offer the girl some assistance, saving the child from a painful death. While the mother and child are grateful for this, the crowd, as well as the man who addressed the crowd, will not be. The man, Ydde (Pr/♂ human/P(no spells) 5/LN), is especially outraged and confronts the heroes:

"By what right do you interfere with the wise and all-powerful will of the Power? If he wanted the child to be saved, she would have been saved. By what right do you wield such blasphemous power?"

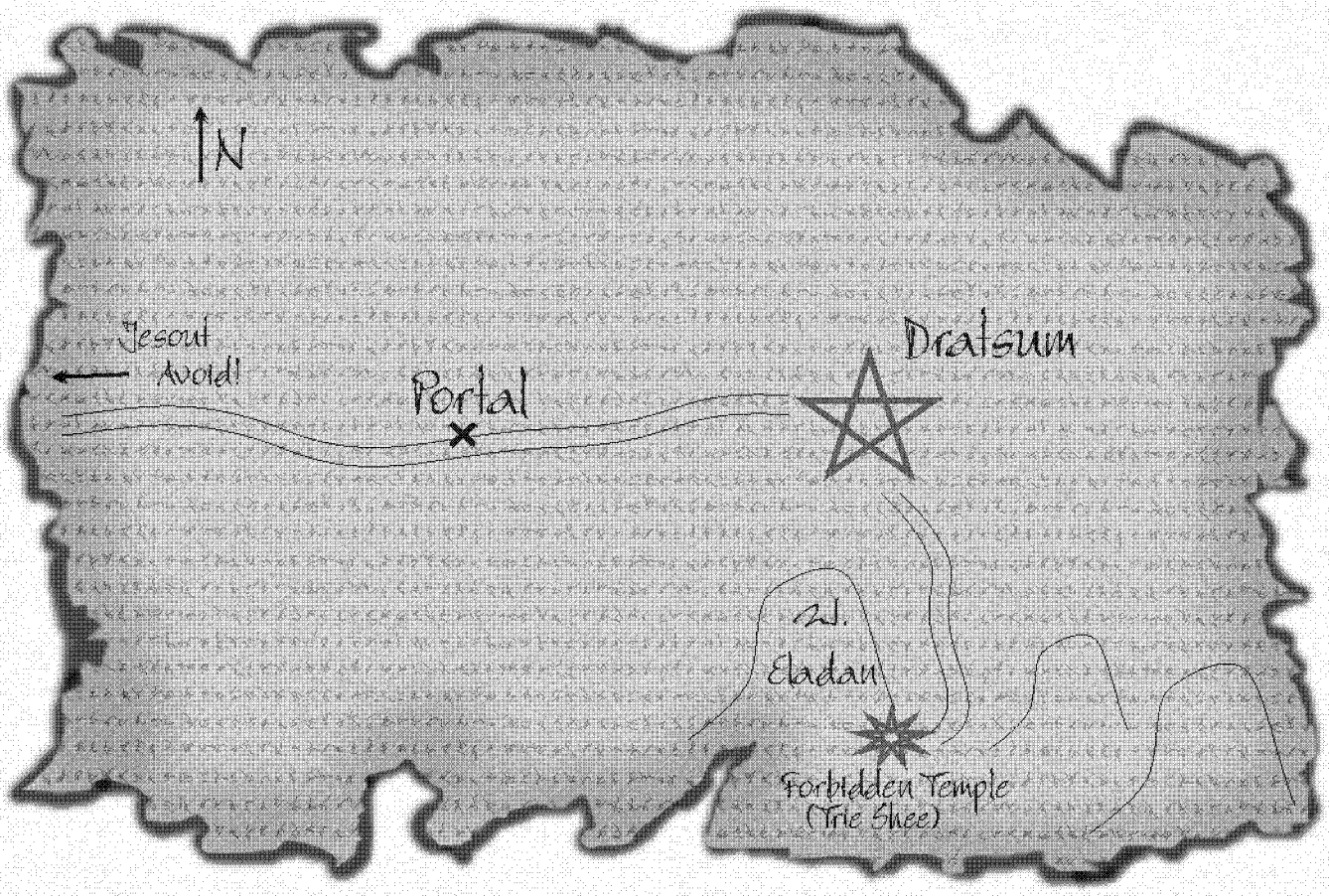
Any answers the PCs give are the wrong answers. If they claim to gain their healing abilities from a source other than the Power, they are considered heretics. If they claim the Power as their source, they are disbelieved, and branded as blasphemers. Ydde calls for the city guard, 3-18 of which arrive in 1d4 rounds. While they are not exceptional fighters, 1d6 more will appear every 3 rounds, eventually overwhelming the PCs. The only way to escape a bloodbath they cannot hope to win, the heroes should flee the guards. This should prove fairly easy, as they will wait for reinforcements before pursuing. However, it is no dark that Dratsum is no longer a place of refuge for the heroes, and they had best be on their way.

GUARDS (3-18 +1D6/3 RDS.): Pr/♂ human/F1/LG-LN): AC 5 (chain mail); MV 12; hp 6; THAC0 20; #AT 1; Dmg 1d8 (scimitar); SZ M; ML Steady (11); Int average (9); XP 35 each.

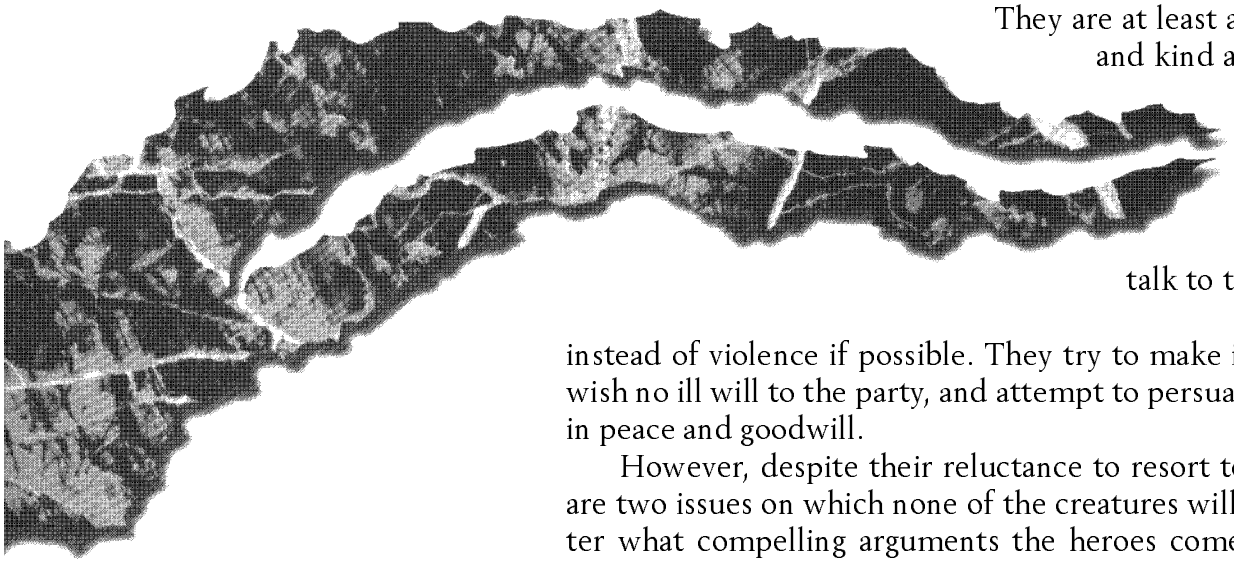
SLIPPING THE BLINDS: It is possible that the heroes decline to help the child, for whatever reason. Perhaps they had no healing spells, potions, or proficiencies among them (very strange for a group of adventurers). Maybe they anticipated the negative reaction they would receive, and decided not to risk revealing themselves. Maybe they just weren't concerned about the plight of one child. Whatever the reason, she dies, and this should be taken into account when experience is given out, as this is not an heroic choice of actions.

Neglecting to save the child should not interfere with the conclusion of the adventure, and hopefully it still serves to show the dangers the fanatic faith of the Power's followers have caused. It is yet one more in a list of innocents who have suffered needlessly as a result of the Power's madness. All that is left for the PCs now is to travel to the Forbidden Temple.

Morningstar's Map



Chapter V: The Forbidden Temple



It is time

—Morningstar while scrying planewalkers entering the Forbidden Temple

The final destination in this adventure is the Forbidden Temple. Approximately one day's travel (half that if riding) from Dratsum, the Forbidden Temple is built into the foot of a mountain. The PCs should have little difficulty finding it, and there are few encounters in this area (and, as such, none are presented; DMs should feel free to add any they feel necessary). As the heroes near Mt. Eladan, they see the entrance to the Temple, being guarded by a pair of warriors. Once past the guards, the heroes are ready to brave the dangers of the Temple.

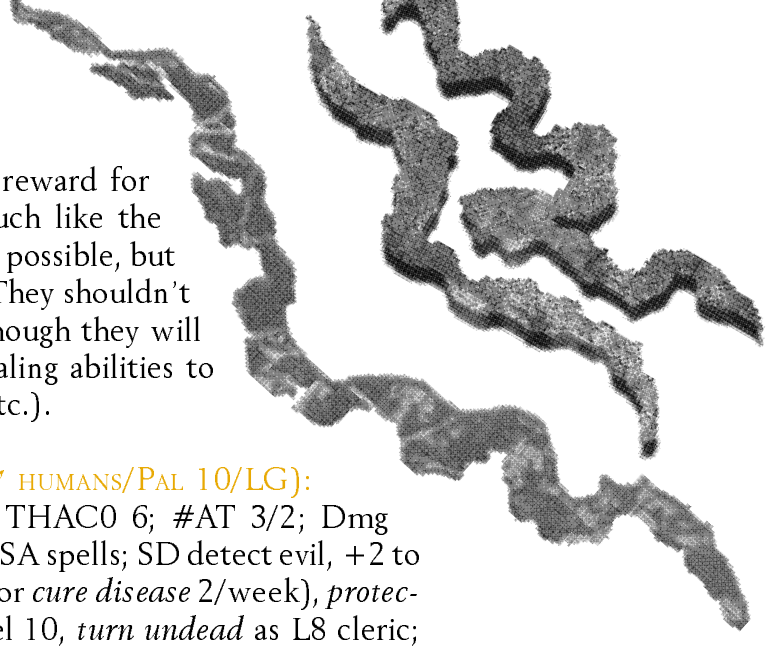
The Forbidden Temple is presented on the page 40 in a "keyed map" format of the traditional dungeon crawl. However, this "dungeon" has an unsettling twist that should not be forgotten. All of the creatures encountered here are of lawful good alignment, and are much more than evil cannon fodder. They are at least as compassionate and kind as the best of the PCs, if misguided. None of them want to fight, and all will attempt to talk to the party and use reason instead of violence if possible. They try to make it clear that they wish no ill will to the party, and attempt to persuade them to leave in peace and goodwill.

However, despite their reluctance to resort to violence, there are two issues on which none of the creatures will budge. No matter what compelling arguments the heroes come up with, all of them believe adamantly that 1) the Power is correct in His judgement, and 2) the heroes are not allowed in the Temple and must leave immediately. If the celestials will, regretfully, use lethal force if necessary to prevent the PCs from advancing through the Temple. If any PC agrees to leave, the celestials will gladly escort him out (with a stern lecture never to come back). Otherwise, if the heroes refuse to turn back, the celestials see no other recourse than violence. Fighting such obviously good creatures should prove unsettling to any good-aligned PCs. Such heroes will most likely have serious moral qualms against attacking and killing the celestials, but, like the celestials, see no other option.

✦ Watchers ✦

A small, meager campsite sits in front of the entrance to the Temple. A pair of warriors sit at the fire. These individuals are the Watchers. The watchers are a secret order of knights dedicated to the Power, and dedicated to protecting holy sites and artifacts. These two have been assigned to guard the Forbidden Temple, a duty they take very seriously. The Watchers live simply, having taken vows of pov-

erty. They have all the abilities of paladins as a reward for their devotion. Being lawful good, they act much like the celestials of the Temple: they will avoid combat if possible, but will die before allowing entrance to the Temple. They shouldn't give the heroes too much trouble physically, although they will use intelligent tactics in combat (using their healing abilities to support each other, attacking spellslingers first, etc.).



Watchers (Jonan and Idanin) (Pr/♀ and ♂ humans/Pal 10/LG): AC 7 (studded leather), MV 12; hp 66 each; THAC0 6; #AT 3/2; Dmg d8+5(scimitar; +10 vs. Chaotic evil opponents); SA spells; SD detect evil, +2 to all saves, immune to disease, *lay on hands* (20 hp or *cure disease* 2/week), *protection from evil 10' radius*, *dispel magic* up to level 10, *turn undead* as L8 cleric; MR 50% (w/sword); SZ M; ML Fearless (20); XP 4,000

(Jonan) S 13 D 14 C 15 I 16 W 15 Ch 17
(Idanin) S 15 D 10 C 15 I 15 W 17 Ch 18
Personality: loyal, steadfast
Special Equipment: Each has a scimitar +5, Holy Avenger
Spells: *cure light wounds*, *sanctuary* (each)

Once the Watchers have been defeated, the heroes may enter the Temple at area 1.

1. Entrance: This area is where the double brass doors to the Temple open up. Opening them requires a total strength of 25 or a successful bend bars roll. The air inside is extremely musty, and a thick coat of dust coats the floor. It is obvious nobody has been here in a long time. There is no illumination, so torches are necessary for normal sight.

As soon as the first PC enters, a magic mouth appears on the south wall and speaks angrily in a language strange to them. If any hero has the ability to decipher languages (such as from a comprehend languages) spell, the voice translates:

"You have angered the one true god of the Forbidden Temple. Turn back or perish!"

The mouth then utters a *power word, blind*.

2. Magic Mouth: At this intersection, a second magic mouth appears as soon as a PC passes it, and repeats the earlier warning. This time, however, it utters a *power word, kill*.

3. Corridor: As the PCs enter this room, they notice that this corridor is well lit, unlike the rest of the Temple. As they wonder about the source of this light, a swirling, glowing mist that shifts shape constantly rounds the corner. A voice forms in the heads of each PC, as they are filled with a strong sense of peace, and a desire to aid this light aasimon:

"Greetings, friends. I can see that you have good hearts, and I wish no harm to you. This area is sacred, and I must ask you to leave. I have been sent to guide you out of this temple and back to the safety of your homes."

If attacked, the light aasimon attempts to hold any good-aligned heroes, and uses its energy attack on any non-good PCs. Its energy attack is useless against good-aligned creatures, and all non-evil characters must save vs. paralyzation ev-

ery round they make an attack, or all attacks automatically miss. If no viable targets present themselves, the light telepathically fills the heroes with a sense of sorrow, and teleports away.

Light aasimon: AC –10; MV Fl 48 (A); HD 10; hp 45; THAC0 11; #AT 1; Dmg 1d12; SA spell-like abilities; SD +2 or better to hit, immune to all mind-affecting, trapping, or death spells; MR 50%; ML Fearless (20); Int very (12); AL LG; XP 10,000

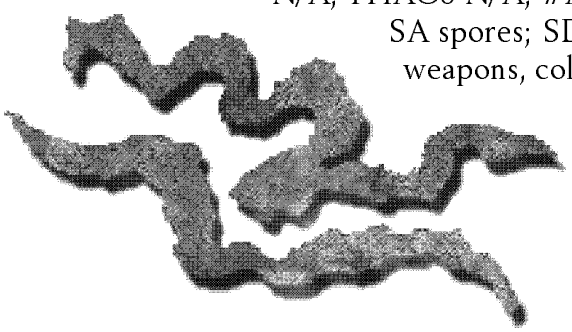
SA: *protection from evil* (always active), *aid*, *augury*, *change self*, *comprehend languages*, *cure serious wounds* (3/day), *detect evil*, *detect magic*, *know alignment*, *read magic*, *teleport without error*, *dispel evil* (3/day), *continual light* (7/day), *light*, *bless*, *hold person* (7/day).

4. False Rod: In this room, a 2-foot rod hovers 4 feet off the floor. This is not the rod of divinity, but a decoy. As soon as the rod is touched, the ceiling immediately collapses. If a hero is standing near a door, he can attempt a Dexterity check at –4 to jump clear. A strength check at –14 (!) can be attempted to try and stop the ceiling before it collapses. Otherwise, everyone in the room takes 10d6 damage. It will take d10 turns per person trapped in the rubble for anyone not crushed to free any survivors.

5. Mural: This room contains murals on each wall depicting the Power's origins and rise to power. Mold grows on some spots, and much of the mural is corroded. However, enough remains that the heroes can determine that the rod is being held by some man (the Power?) to destroy other deities. All other deities are portrayed as though they appear evil or demonic, although the PCs should recognize a few. If any priests are in the group, they should see their own god as one being attacked with the rod.

The northeast corner contains active russet mold spores. These spores will not harm the PCs unless they enter this corner.

Russet Mold: AC 9; MV 0; HD N/A; hp N/A; THAC0 N/A; #AT 0; Dmg 0; SA spores; SD Immune to weapons, cold, fire; SZ S; ML N/A; Int Non-(0); AL N; XP 35



SA: all within 3' radius take 5d4 from spores and must save vs. poison or contract spore sickness, paralyzed and die in 5d4 minutes unless cure disease, becomes mold man in 1d4+20 hours.

6. Old Watchers: Two skeletons can be found here, former Watchers who passed away during their duties. The source of their death, and why they are in the Temple, is unknown. The truth is, their curiosity killed them. The magic mouth trap killed them, and the celestials who were summoned by this appeared and laid them to rest here. Each wears a moldy suit of leather armor (unusable) and carries a scimitar +5, holy avenger.

7. Empty Rooms: Previously, these rooms were used either for storage or to house the clergy when the temple was active. Currently, they are empty.

8. Chapel: This room was long ago used to administer to the faithful. Rows of pews are rotted and falling apart. Sconces unused for centuries line the walls. An altar lies at the front of the room. As soon as the heroes enter, 6 hound archons gate in. While they also wish to avoid combat if possible, they are much less polite about it than the other celestials, hoping they can intimidate the heroes. Read:

As you enter the chapel, you see a light at the altar. Several humanoid figures form at the altar, each with canine heads. The first archon draws a sword and speaks: "We know why you are here, and we will not abide. Hard or easy, you will leave now!"

Hound Archons (6): AC 1; MV 15; HD 6; hp 55; THAC0 15; #AT 3 or 1; Dmg 1d4/1d4/1d8 or 1d8+1; SA shape change; SD +1 or better to hit, spell abilities; MR 10 %; SZ M; ML Fanatic (18); Int Average (9); AL LG; XP 2,000

SA: shape change into any kind of wolf or canine.

SD: aura of extreme menace forces attackers to save vs. spell or suffer –2 to each attack until successful; *continual light*; *detect evil*; *infravision*; *protection from evil 10' radius* (always active); *teleport without error*; *tongues* (always active)

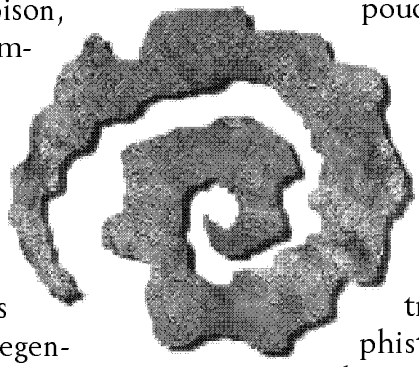
Special Equipment: each possesses a longsword +3 (forged in Mt. Celestia, currently +1)

Note: DMs should increase or decrease the amount of hounds in this attack, depending on the power level of the party.

9. High Priest's Chambers: This room, larger than the other empty rooms, once served as the chambers of the high priest when the Temple was active. It currently is also empty. If the heroes search the room and make a successful secret doors check, they will find a loose panel on the wall concealing 3 vials of holy water and 2 potions of extra healing. However, as soon as the heroes enter, a deva gates into the room. Like the previous celestials, the deva orders them to leave, stressing that it wishes no harm to come to the heroes.

Movanic Deva: AC –1; MV 12, Fl 30 (B); HD 8; hp 50; THAC0 13; #AT 2; Dmg d10+1 (sword); SA spell abilities; SD Parry, protection, never surprised, regeneration, +1 or better to hit; MR 40%; SZ M (6'); ML Fearless (20); Int Genius (17); AL LG; XP 14,000

SA/SD: *cure disease* (3/day); *cure light wounds* (7/day); *detect lie*; *detect snares and pits* (7/day); *dispel magic* (7/day); *heal* (1/day); *infravision* (always active); *invisibility 10' radius*; *light*; *polymorph self*; *protection from evil*; *remove curse*; *remove fear*; *tongues*; sword +1, flame tongue; can forfeit one attack to make parry against any attack; immune to cold, electrical, magic missile, petrification, poison, normal fire, and gas attacks; half damage from magical fire; +1 or better weapon to hit; may use any wizard spell from the Invocation/Evocation school 1/day each; *anti-magic shell*; *protection from normal missiles*; *spell turning*; double-strength *protection from evil* renders immune to less than +2 weapons; regenerates 2 hp/round.



10-12. Tests: In an effort to insure that no one of a wicked heart passes through the Temple to the Divine Chamber, three tests (four including the Throne Archon, see below) lie before the Chamber. Each room contains one test, each designed to test the goodness in the heart of the intruder. If the intruder shows signs of evil or selfishness, these traps will be sprung. If the PCs fail any test, the Throne Archon, Pusal, attacks while the heroes are still weak. While being a creature of lawful good and therefore honorable, he feels it in the interest of the greater good for the Power and all involved to end the conflict as soon as possible. If the heroes surrender, he will, of course, accept, and escort them out (possibly healing them if they act truly repentant). However, he feels if they have made it this far into the temple, they must be truly dangerous. He will therefore act accordingly, using extreme prejudice in his attacks, and fighting while they are still weak from the failed test.

10. Treasury/Avarice Test: The door to this room is locked. A successful open doors roll, knock spell, or open locks roll will open it. It leads into a room filled with treasures of all sorts. Gold and silver coins, gems and jewelry, all fill this room everywhere the heroes look. The treasure has a unique curse on it, however. If so much as one coin is taken from the treasury, all coins and gems on the character's person, including those not taken from the treasury, instantly weigh 200 lbs. each. This happens as soon as the character steps out of the room, most likely weighing him down so he collapses on the floor. If the character fails a Strength check, he takes 1d6 damage per round due to crushing damage (DM may reduce or increase this amount depending on how much treasure is taken). This renders the hero immobile unless he takes off all his equipment, including any armor, backpacks, and pouches. Kind DMs may allow the hero to keep a weapon. This also makes the hero particularly vulnerable to attacks from Pusal.

11. Pride/Wrath Test: This room appears empty at first. As soon as the whole party enters, the trap springs. It is a complex and sophisticated illusion that is triggered when all intruders enter the room. The door to the next test will not open to anything less than titan strength, or any spell short of a wish, until the whole party enters the room and springs the trap/test. When this happens, read:

You suddenly feel a sense of vertigo, as if you are falling, and the rest of the room disappears. You seem to be falling through a tube in the floor...a hole must have opened beneath your feet. You finally reach the bottom, landing softly enough, and pick yourself off the floor. This room appears to have enough lighting to see. You hear a strange noise behind you, and turn to see something that fills you with revulsion.

This sight depends on each individual character. Each character sees a number of creatures equal in number to the rest of the party that the character hates or finds disgusting. Possibilities include snakes, giant spiders, giant rats, undead, illithids, or any other creature to which the character has expressed strong dislike.

As stated, this whole sequence of events is in fact a complex illusion. All characters are still in the original room. The fall down the hole was an illusion, and the despised creatures are actually the other characters. All characters have their own illusions. This can be a complex encounter to run, and the DM must be careful not to give away what is truly happening. It is advisable for the DM to declare he will handle all combats at the same time, to coordinate time, but to give the impression all characters are in different rooms. Draw a brief diagram for each individual character to show where he or she is in relation to the "monsters." Have the players roll individual initiative, and go from highest to lowest. When a character attacks, pretend to be recording the results. Before the next character attacks, pretend to roll for the "monster," but in fact use the combat result rolled by the attacking character (who is the "monster").

This test is to weed out those who are filled with violent rage or self-absorption. The heroes must be very aware of their companions, and must be able to avoid killing the objects of their hatred. Otherwise, they will wound and/or kill their own friends. As soon as the combat ends, if the characters have been significantly wounded (or if any have been killed), Pusal (see below) attacks. After the trap has been sprung, the south door unlocks.

12. Empathy Test: The door in the south wall is locked, and cannot be picked, knocked, or forced open. A pit in the center of the floor contains a lever that opens the door and disarms the trap in front of the door. Another illusion is in the pit. When the heroes enter, read:

This room contains a pit about 15 feet deep in the center, covered by a steel grate. You hear a baby crying coming from the pit. When you look in, you see an emaciated family (a father, a mother, two small children, and one infant) shackled in the pit. When the father sees you, he hoarsely says "No time. Do not worry about us, my friends. Please, go end this. He is past the south door."

The family is an illusion. If the heroes do as the father says, the door remains shut. Further, giant blades spring from the wall, floor, and ceiling, causing 6d10 damage to anyone within 10 feet of the door (save vs. breath weapon at –4 for half damage). If, however, a character feels enough empathy for the family to help them in spite of the man's protestations, they can disarm the trap. The grate weighs 200 pounds, so anyone who can press that much or more can move it. At the bottom, the man reaches his hand to anyone attempting to help him. As soon as a character reaches his hand and tries to help him, the illusion disappears as the hand now looks like a lever. When the lever is pulled, the door opens and the trap is disarmed.

If any characters are badly wounded or killed by the door trap, Pasul (see below) attacks.

13. Tome Archon: In this hall, a throne archon named Pasul guards the entrance to the Divine Chamber. If the heroes failed any of the tests leading to this hall, the archon attacks while they are still weakened. If they did not succumb to any of these traps, Pasul is impressed but still cautious. He speaks to the party as they enter the hall:

"I can see that you are truly heroes of great virtue and charity. That is why I am sure you will understand that you must leave this sacred place. Proceeding further will only cause great harm to you, my god, and all of humanity. I know you mean well, and hold no ill will towards you. Now, most honorable friends, allow me to escort you to the entrance, and may the trumpets herald your bravery."

This speech is the verbal component of a *mass suggestion* spell cast as an 18th level wizard. The saving throw for the spell is made at –1. Pusal will attempt other charm or suggestion spells during parley. He will, of course, die before consenting to allow the part past him. His first actions will be

to cast *stoneskin* and *mirror image* in combat, before attacking spellcast-ers with his sword. The agathinon in area 14 will hear the battle and prepare, but will remain guarding the Rod of Divinity rather than aiding Pusal.

Pusal, throne archon: AC –7; MV 15, Fl 36 (B); HD 12; hp 60; THAC0 7; #AT 2; Dmg 1d12/1d12 (sword, plus see below); SA Vorpal sword, spell use; SD +3 or better to hit, aura of extreme menace; MR 50%; SZ L (10 feet); ML Fearless (20); Int Genius (17); AL LG; XP 16,000

SA: Cast any wizard or priest spell as if 18th level; sword acts as vorpal sword, +5.

SD: +3 or better to hit; attackers must save vs. spell at –4 or suffer –2 to attacks until successfully hit.

14. Divine Chamber: This large room is empty except for several pillars, several agathinon (warrior aasimon), and a bronze rod floating several feet above a small shrine. The agathinon (twice the number of the members of the party), while open to talk and negotiations, attack immediately if anyone enters the room. Half of the aasimon stay with the rod instead of attacking to prevent a character from reaching it, although they will back their allies up with spells. Before an agathinon attacks, he changes to the form most feared by the hero (as in the Pride Wrath Test, room 11, above). This is their very last stand, and they fight to the death.

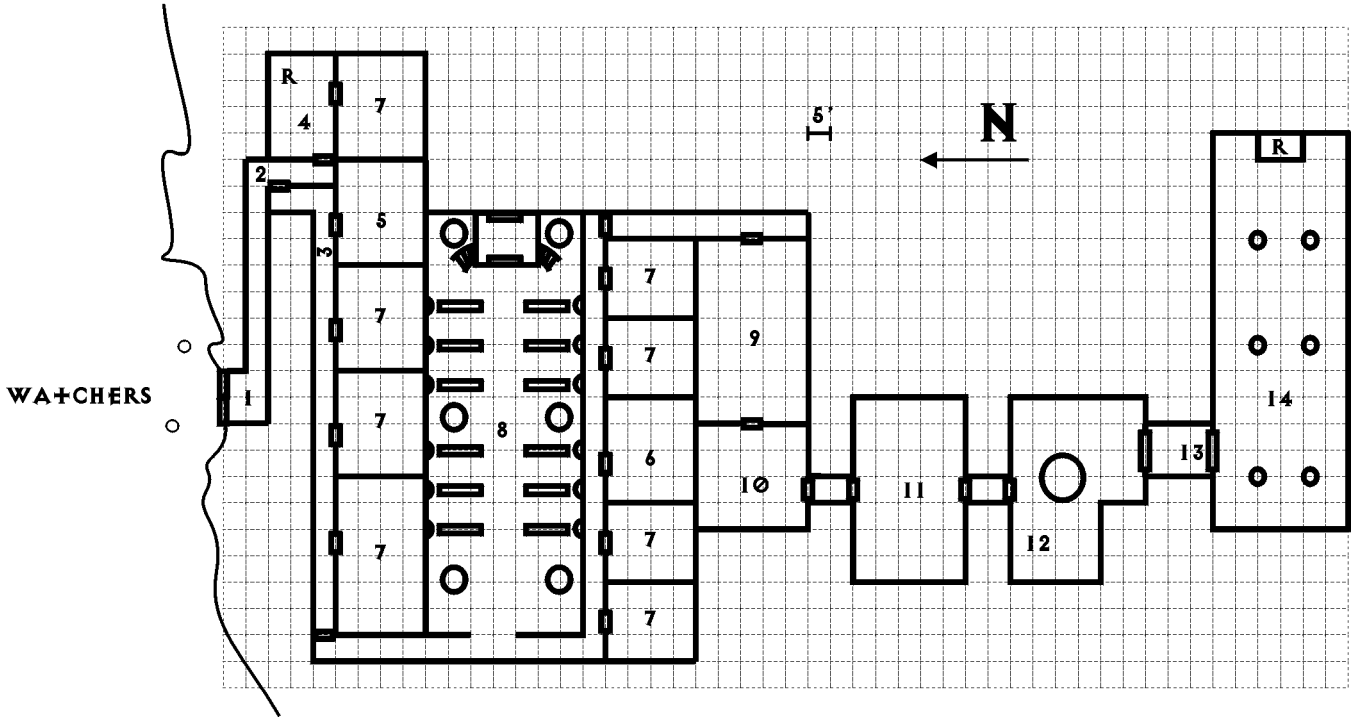
Agathinon (2x the number of PCs): AC 0; MV 15; HD 8; hp 40 each; THAC0 13; #AT special*; Dmg special*; SA spell-like powers, assume other forms; SD +1 or better to hit, immunities, save as 14th level priest; MR 20%; SZ special*; ML Fearless (20); Int exceptional (15); AL LG; XP 8,000.

SA: Spells (see below); *aid*; *augury*; *change self*; *comprehend languages*; *cure serious wounds* (3/day); *detect evil*; *detect magic*; *know alignment*; *read magic*; *teleport without error*; *clairaudience*; *clairvoyance*; *ESP*; *hold person*; assume another form with new form's attacks forms and spell-like powers

SD: +1 or better weapon to hit; immune to: gas, poison, life-draining spells, death spells, disintegration; Positive Energy; half damage from acid, cold, and electricity; save as 14th level priest.

Spells (5/5/3/2): *bless*, *command*, cure *light wounds* (x2), *sanctuary*; *aid*, *chant*, *enthrall*, *flame blade*, *silence 15' radius*; *continual light*, *dispel magic*, *prayer*; *abjure*, *cure serious wounds*

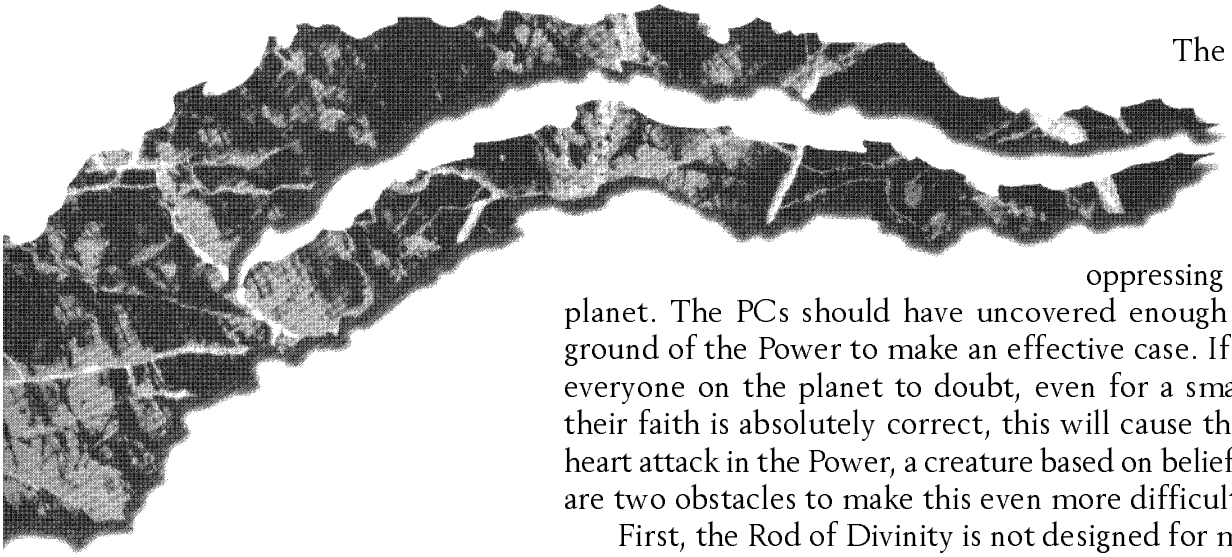
THE FORBIDDEN TEMPLE



As soon as any character touches the Rod of Divinity, an impenetrable shield erects around them. Nothing short of a power can break through this barrier, so they may not be attacked or aided. When this happens, read the following to the player of the character in possession of the Rod:

CONCLUSION

"As you grab the Rod of Divinity, you see a blinding light all around you. The pain is overwhelming, and you truly feel as though your head will explode. You slowly realize that you are hearing the thoughts and feelings of every single individual on this Prime world, and it is too overwhelming to deal with. Summoning more willpower than you were aware you even possessed, you manage to focus long enough to realize that you, too can project your thoughts to them...everybody all at once. The pain is too much to handle for very long, as you can feel your very soul being torn apart by the vast power of the Rod. You must act now."



The hero must argue mentally that the Power is not the only god, and is deceiving and oppressing the people of the planet. The PCs should have uncovered enough about the background of the Power to make an effective case. If the hero can get everyone on the planet to doubt, even for a small moment, that their faith is absolutely correct, this will cause the equivalent of a heart attack in the Power, a creature based on belief. However, there are two obstacles to make this even more difficult...

First, the Rod of Divinity is not designed for mortal use. Nothing short of a demigod can touch it and live to tell the tale, such is its power. It not only kills the poor hero, it utterly destroys his soul. No raise dead, reincarnate, or resurrection spells will have any effect. The hero must be prepared to make the ultimate sacrifice. This will happen in a number of rounds equal to the hero's Wisdom score, so the time to make his case is limited.

BUT IF THE POWER IS DEAD, THEN ANYTHING IS ALLOWED!

—DOISTOV, PRIME THEOLOGIAN

Second, as soon as the hero tries to make his case, the Power also butts into the "conversation." Having achieved this ability permanently long ago (from the Rod), he can also enter the minds of everyone on the planet at will. He will argue against the hero that he is the rightful ruler of this planet, the only true god and source of morality, and absolutely necessary.

The debate should be roleplayed out, with the DM taking the part of the Power. If the hero does not argue well enough, then enough people maintain their faith to sufficiently keep the Power alive, and the hero is destroyed. Another PC may try, with the debate starting over.

The Power will go through several stages in the debate, as he weakens. This will affect his argument style.

1. Fear: The power begins with a fear of his death, as he never dreamed this could ever happen. Wise cutters will use this to point out the Power's limitations. The Power will order the hero to stop, and order the faithful not to listen to these "lies." There will be a definite touch of desperation in his tone.

2. Denial: If the hero argues effectively, the Power moves on to the next stage in the following round. He gains some more confidence, and simply denies that the hero could possibly have any effect on him. After all, the hero is but a mere mortal, while he is the one true Power. He denies the truth behind all that the heroes say.

3. Anger: If the hero successfully argues against the Power's denial, the Power becomes outraged in the next round. He threatens the hero, and orders him to stop. He makes threats against the people of the planet, threatening to send all of them to the Abyss. Canny cutters will use this opportunity to point out the lack of justice in sending so many people to the Abyss.

4. Bargaining: If the hero argues convincingly enough past the Power's rage, the Power takes a new approach in the new round. He attempts to essentially bargain with the hero and the people. He agrees that maybe some of his actions were rash, and agrees to perhaps change them, as long as they agree that he is the only god. He attempts to make deals to "bribe" the people and the hero into conceding his arguments. If the hero agrees to these bargains, the Power soon forgets his promises (not due to malice; he simply believes he is doing the right thing and can do no wrong), and the 523rd layer of the Abyss continues to shift. The hero is still destroyed, even if he conceded.

5. Acceptance/Defeat: If the heroes realize they have the Power on the ropes at the bargaining stage and argue that his own admitted limitations prove that he is not all-powerful, then enough doubt has been generated to kill the Power. The Power accepts this defeat, and perishes.

The aftermath of the destruction of the Power leads to sweeping changes in this Prime world, and in the planes as well. All the Power's petitioners immediately

are teleported to the plane best matching their alignment, regardless of their faith. This prevents the Abyssal layer from shifting, and stops the tanar'ri invasion in Sigil. Events continue on the planes as if nothing ever happened.

The hero who used the Rod of Divinity, of course, is destroyed. If the hero defeated the Power with time to spare before his destruction, he has the unique opportunity to send a worldwide message to all the people on the planet. He can help the people, their faith shattered, rebuild the world from the ashes in his own image. The other heroes can help enforce this new vision of the rule of humans. Some things will be worse. Some will claim that without the Power, there is no reason to avoid immoral actions. Others will use this opportunity to look for new solutions to their problems. How this is played is entirely up to the PCs and the DM. They can guide this planet into a new era, or go back home and hope this world learns to solve its own problems.

YES, **ANYTHING**, INCLUDING REASON, TOLERANCE, AND PROGRESS. WHERE SHOULD WE START?

—UNNAMED HERO

FOR 4-6 CHARACTERS OF 10TH AND HIGHER LEVELS

RAPTURE

by Greg Jensen

**GOOD GODS ARE GOOD
UNLESS SOMETHING TERRIBLE HAPPENS
AND A GOOD GOD TURNS TO EVIL...**

If your power slowly changed his alignment and stopped being good, would you notice? No, unless you had been with it from its beginning... Or unless you are a planar.

Sigil suffers from the tanar'ri invasion, Carceri and Pandemonium are literally plagued by them. Petitioners from the Abyss suddenly appear in places where they shouldn't be. Outer Planes are trembling. The blind power is breaking the rules of the Multiverse. This can't end well, unless there is someone to stop it.

Rapture is an epic PLANESCAPE retirement adventure for four to six characters of 10th and higher levels. Harassed by fiends and celestials, the heroes must travel through hell and heaven to the Prime world, where the mad Power is wreaking havoc in the souls of mortals.

The PLANESCAPE *Campaign Setting* boxed set is required to run this adventure. The *Planes of Chaos Campaign Expansion* boxed set, the *Planes of Law Campaign Expansion* boxed set, *In the Cage: A Guide to Sigil* and *Uncaged: Faces of Sigil* are recommended as well.