

**E7**

**Compatible with the  
Swords & Wizardry™ game**

## Mini-dungeon Module E7

# The Cracked Lantern

by Matthew E Kline

**AN ADVENTURE FOR CHARACTER LEVELS 7-9**



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***The Cracked Lantern is part of a series of mini-dungeons designed to drop into existing adventures or campaigns. Use them as side quests or a way of getting in a quick adventure when you're short on time.***



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Dazegoneby

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Writing, design, layout: Matthew E Kline  
Jack Holliday provided the "Fortune Teller" for our cover and inside cover.

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# Dungeons of Dazegoneby

## Mini-Dungeon Module E7

### The Cracked Lantern

The party encounters a town shrouded in endless night. A fortune teller informs the group that the darkness originates from a cursed lantern which must be destroyed if the townsfolk have any hope of seeing the sun again. But the fortune teller isn't what she appears to be. And neither is the lantern...

#### About This Product

Although it can be scaled by the Gamemaster for groups of other sizes, The Cracked Lantern is designed for 4-6 adventurers of level 7-9. This product is part of a line of mini-dungeons designed as quick, drop-in adventures. They're ideal for use as short side quests, or for gaming sessions where you're pressed for time. You could even string them all together as a mini dungeon campaign.

Gamemasters should feel free to adjust this adventure to suit their group's style of game-play or level of difficulty.

It's recommended that the Gamemaster read through this product at least twice in order to familiarize themselves with the adventure prior to playing. They should also take note of any new monsters or magic listed at the end of the document.

This product requires the use of the *Swords & Wizardry* rules. More information can be found online at [www.swordsandwizadry.com](http://www.swordsandwizadry.com)

On the pages that follow you'll find boxes like the one surrounding this text. These boxes hold suggested descriptions of the rooms that can be read out loud to the players.

After most of the room descriptions you'll find one or more of the following symbols:



This symbol indicates that there's a monster or monsters in the room.



This symbol indicates there's treasure in the room.



This symbol indicates that there's a dangerous obstacle in the room.

A description of the monsters, treasures, or obstacles encountered follows after each symbol.

#### About Dungeons of Dazegoneby

I can remember a time in my distant past when I could head to the local mall walk into one of the two bookstores they had at the time, plunk down around five dollars, and walk out with a brand-new Dungeons & Dragons module. Our *Dungeons of Dazegoneby* line is a tribute to old school gaming, paying homage to a time filled with graph paper maps, wandering monster tables, hand-drawn character sheets, and lazy afternoons filled with adventure and wonder. We hope you enjoy playing these products as much as we enjoyed making them.

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### **Gamemaster's Eyes Only:**

The sleepy little forest side town of Moresly holds a secret. One of the villagers is a member of a secret order, dedicated to rounding up and destroying dangerous artifacts and cursed magic items. Or rather, he was a member until just recently, when Gregodan the Wise met his untimely demise.

Gregodan spent the last several years of his life hunting down a particularly sadistic rogue genie who made her home in a magic lantern, dispensing wishes to the unwary, wishes which always bore horrible consequences.

Gregodan finally managed to trap the creature in her lantern. Exhausted from his search he returned to his home in Moresly where he planned to lock the lantern away forever in a secret vault, hidden beneath an unassuming cottage. Before he could however, the genie managed to influence the vault's door, causing it to snap shut on the wizard, killing him and cracking the lantern in the process. The crack was only big enough for a little of her magic to escape, which she sent out of Gregodan's secret sanctum to seek aid.

Once safely away from the dungeon, and Gregodan's magic negating 'pets', this magic manifested itself as a human female. It bided its time in Moresly under the guise of Madame Calista, a traveling fortune teller. There it waited for a group of adventurers capable of besting the wizard Gregodan's defenses to come wandering along...

### **Set Up**

The party winds up at the small town of Moresly, either on their way to or heading

back from another adventure. They spend an uneventful night in the Shining Sun Inn, however they, along with the rest of the town, are shocked the next morning when the dawn doesn't break. The village, along with the surrounding area remains under a cover of darkness. The blanket of night never lifted.

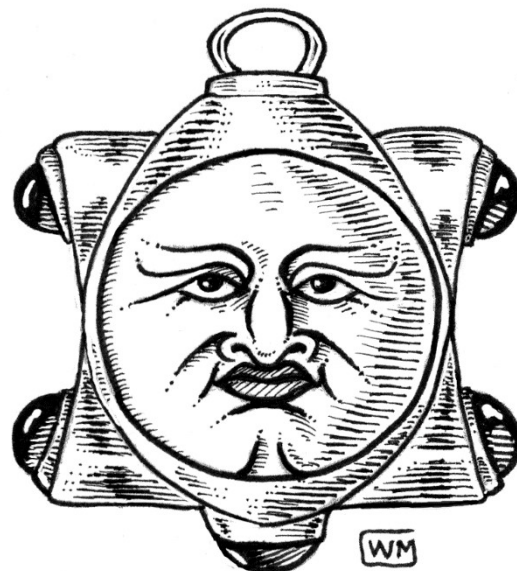
The guests at the inn are bordering on panic, when suddenly one of them, a fortune teller seated at a table in the inn's tavern, begins to speak...

### **A Note to the Gamemaster**

The set up described here is only a suggestion. Feel free to introduce this scenario to your group in any way you see fit.

Perhaps Gregordan's death triggered some sort of alarm heard by other members of his secret order and the players are hired to investigate.

Or "Madame Calista" could travel the realm in her gypsy wagon, actively seeking out the heroes it requires to destroy the lantern and free the rest of her.



## Darkness and the Shining Sun

The innkeeper and staff at the Shining Sun rush about, lighting candles, lamps and lanterns while trying to keep their guests calm. Outside, villagers carrying torches rush about in panic, some making holy gestures at the sky, pleading to their Gods for answers.

Suddenly the inn is filled with a warm glow. It emanates from a crystal ball, resting on a table in the inn's tavern before Madam Calista, a traveling fortune teller. Once she has the group's attention she begins to speak.

"This town hides a great evil. A wizard has made his home beneath the ground, far from the eyes of the good people of Moresly. He possesses an item, a cursed lantern with the power to block out the sun. His lair also contains the means to destroy this infernal object. You must defeat the wizard and destroy the lantern to restore the light to the day."



The innkeeper blurts out a name "Gregodan." He explains that the old man lives in a cottage at the edge of town. "He's always coming and going at strange hours, clutching bizarre items or odd-shaped bundles to him like the God's themselves were tryin' to snatch them from him." A serving girl chimes in with "And there's something strange about that house of his, never see no light from the windows nor smoke from the chimney. It's like he's not even living there." Madam Calista suggests that perhaps it's because he lives underneath...

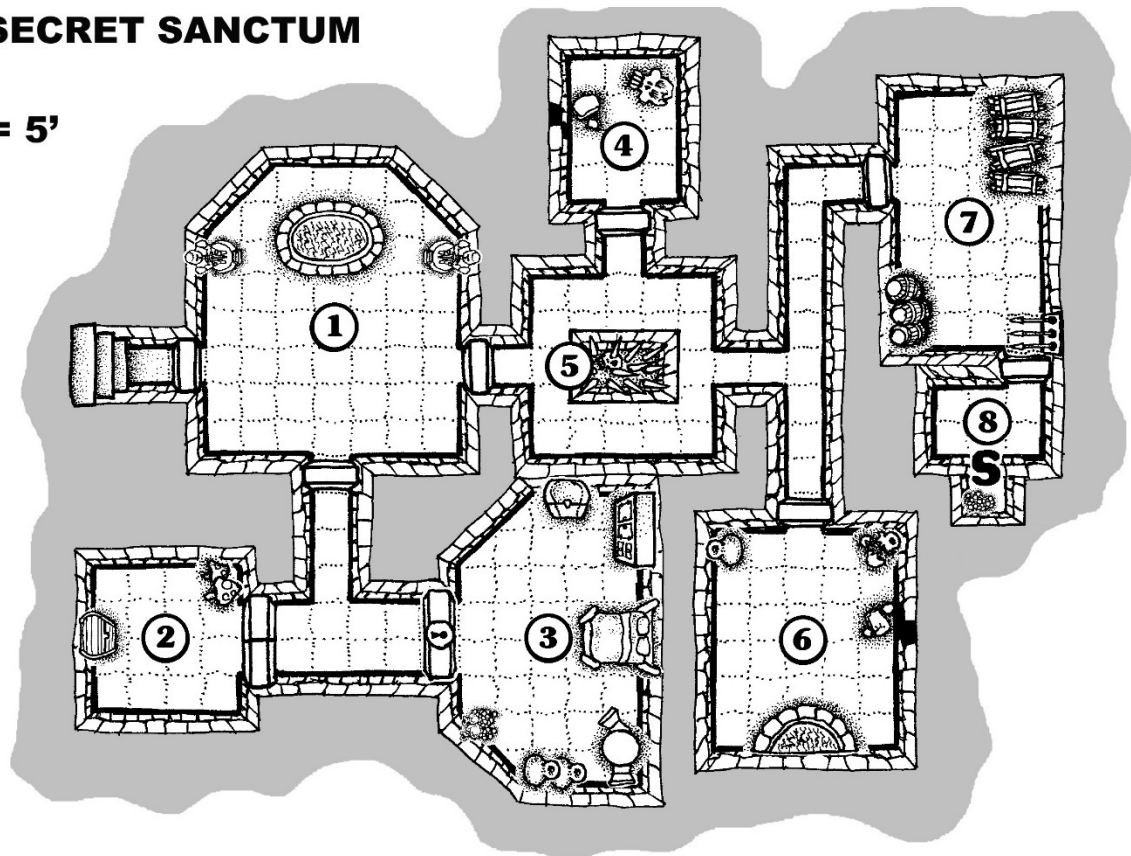
Hopefully this is enough to cause the party to investigate Gregodan's cottage, possibly accompanied by a few of the town's braver residents. If the party needs more incentive the mayor quickly takes up a collection among nervous business owners, startled residents, and panicked travelers, gathering together almost 1,000gp. He adds that if Gregodan's a wizard, he's bound to have valuable "wizard stuff" among his possessions...

Making their way to the cottage through the darkness the party finds that the serving girl's statements were true. The structure sits dark and silent, more tomb than home.

The door to the cottage is locked with a standard lock and the windows are all shuttered. The lock must be picked, or door or shutters forced open to gain entrance. Once inside the party will discover that the building is an empty shell, constructed to appear as a cottage from the outside. Its only contents are a set of stone stairs descending into the earth. If any of the braver townsfolk chose to accompany the party to the cottage their courage will give out now, replaced by whatever excuse they can find to leave quickly.

## THE SECRET SANCTUM

1SQ = 5'



### Key to the Secret Sanctum

The stairs descend 25' into the ground before ending in a short stone corridor with a simple wooden door baring the way east.



The door here is locked and must be picked or forced.

#### 1. Curse Negating Portal

This large chamber is lit by a dim blueish glow. An eight-foot-tall circular stone portal stands 10' away from the northern wall. Mystic energies swirl and crackle within its center.

Gregordan constructed this portal to deal with cursed items he brought back to his sanctum.

If a creature is currently cursed by an item they possess or have come into contact with, stepping through the portal's center will remove it. The energies will also suppress a cursed item's power long enough for the owner to remove the item if the curse was preventing them from doing so.

The portal will function once every 24 hours, its magic becomes temporarily shorted out by the curse during its removal or suppression.



Approaching within 10' of the portal without pronouncing the passphrase "Your master approaches" will cause the statues standing on either side of the portal to animate and attack.



Stone Golems, Weak (2): HD 7 (30hp); AC 5[14]; Atk 1 fist (1d8); Move 6; Save 3; CL/XP 8/800; Special: non-magic weapons deal half damage, immune to most magic.

## 2. The Chest and the Mimic

This small chamber is lit by a sickly green glow emanating from a two-foot-tall mushroom standing in the corner near the door. A wooden treasure chest sits against the far wall.

The chest here is a mimic. Its true nature will be revealed the moment a character attempts to interact with it.

The room's actual "treasure" is hidden in the mushroom, which is a container cleverly crafted to resemble a variety of giant fungus.



Mimic: HD 7; HP: 38; AC 6[13]; Atk 1 smash (2d6); Move 2; Save 9; CL/XP 8/800; Special: Mimicry, glue.



The mushroom is trapped to release a cloud of poison dust if tampered with. If this occurs all within 10' of the mushroom must save vs. poison or die. A thief can disarm the trap and unlock the "mushroom", finding surprisingly mechanical means for doing so.



Once the trap's been disarmed and the lock's been picked the top of the mushroom lifts like the lid of a treasure chest. It contains the following: *a bag of devouring*, a pair of *dancing boots*, a *robe of feeble-mindedness* and a *flaming*

*scroll case* (see New Magic.)

## 3. Bedchamber



The sturdy iron door to this room is securely locked and magically fortified, it will require three successful open door or open lock checks in a row to gain access. The key to the room can be found on Gregodan's body in **Area 8**.

This appears to be Gregodan's bedchamber. A large bed and wardrobe stands against the east wall. A table with two chairs sits in the south east corner and a wooden chest sits against the wall to the north.

This chamber served as the wizard's modest living quarters. The wardrobe here contains several sets of clothes, ranging from merchant's finery to simple peasant's clothes, along with a few spare wizard's robes. The clothing allowed the wizard to pose as an unassuming traveler while searching the realm for dangerous items.

Gregodan's journal sits on the table in the corner. The journal contains the secret passphrases needed to temporarily deactivate the sanctum's protection. They're listed in the following manner: Portal Guardians- "Your master approaches", Manticore Pit- "manticore spikes, do not strike", Scorpion Spears- "scorpion stay thy sting."

The journal also contains enough information to establish Gregodan as a force for good, describing his mission to round up malevolent items and bring them to his "Secret Sanctum" for safekeeping or destruction. There's also descriptions of the curse negating portal

in **Area 1** and the fire pool "disposal unit" in **Area 6**. Even a cursory skim of the journal's contents will paint a picture of Gregodan being more of an altruistic hero rather than the evil wizard the town and "Madam Calista" mistook him for.



A *decanter of endless water*, and a *decanter of finite foodstuff* (see New Magic) sit on the floor near the table.

Hanging on the wall in the southwest corner is a *Headly's handy hearth* (see New Magic.)

The chest against the north wall contains the following: A silver gem-studded coffer (worth 500gp) which holds 1,875gp and 6 gems worth 50gp each. The chest also contains a folded +2 *cloak of protection* and the key to the "mushroom" in **Area 2**.

#### 4. The Demon's Skull

This room is empty save for a giant skull, wearing a giant golden crown. It sits on a wide stone rune-covered slab.

The skull here belonged to a demon, killed during a visit to this plane. Those who touch it are gifted with a madness inducing glimpse of the hellish nightmare realm it once called home.

Gregodan learned of the skull and brought it to his sanctum, planning to store it here until he could find some way to destroy it (it's too big to drop in the fire pool in **Area 6**.) The slab it's resting on is enchanted to protect anyone coming into contact with it from experiencing the horrific visions it bestows.



The crown is firmly affixed to the skull and impossible to remove. Persistent players may decide to carry the 5' tall skull along with them until the means to separate the treasure from it can be found. Unfortunately, the crown is comprised of fool's gold and worthless.



If the skull is removed from the slab, any creatures in contact with it at the time must save vs. spell or else be driven mad by visions of the demon's hell. A character afflicted by this madness is controlled by the gamemaster until a cure to the madness can be found (if one even exists.)

#### 5. The Manticore Pit

A large pit lies open in the floor of this room. A 5' wide ledge runs around it, allowing access to the corridors leading north and east from the chamber.

The pit is relatively shallow, only about 8' in depth. The floor of the pit is lined with sharp iron spikes.



One minute after the door to **Area 1** or **Area 4** opens if there are any creatures within 5' of the pit, six of the spikes in the pit will shoot out, targeting creatures near the pit at random. Treat these spikes as though fired by a manticore. Each deal 1d6 damage if they hit. After the pit's been activated it will continue firing spikes each minute as long as there is a creature within 5' of the pit. The spikes can be temporarily deactivated by using the passphrase "manticore spikes, do not strike". Speaking this phrase near the pit will deactivate the trap for 1 hour. The pit contains a total of 100 spikes. The trap will cease to function once all its spikes have been fired.

## 6. The Fire Pool

The door to this room is made of iron and is warm to the touch.

Upon opening the door you're hit by a blast of hot air. A stone basin set in the room's southern wall appears to be filled with liquid fire.

Gregodan developed a way to quickly rid himself of troublesome minor artifacts; simply drop them into a small portal to the elemental plane of fire, where they would be immolated by the plane's living flames. The portal is housed within this room, appearing to be a basin holding fire the way others would hold water. Objects dropped into the basin are sent to the elemental plane of fire where they're permanently destroyed (or at least somewhere they can no longer cause harm.)



A creature that approaches the basin without some sort of protection against fire will take 5 points damage per minute at 20' away from it, 10 points at 15' away from it, 15 points at 10' away, etc. An *Urn of Wintertide* (see New Magic) sits by the door. A creature holding this urn may approach the basin without taking damage.

## 7. Kennel

Four large lizard-like creatures scurry about the room. They turn their huge eyes towards you as you enter.

The four lizard-like creatures are arcane sappers (see New Monsters.) Gregodan captured them and was training them in the same way one would train a dog for hunting. He sometimes took one or two of them along with him on missions to retrieve troublesome magic items. The arcane sappers are loyal to him, attacking anyone else on sight.

An arcane sapper will focus its gaze upon anyone who attempts to use a magic item or cast a spell. One will focus its gaze upon the first character who enters the room, maintaining its gaze if it senses magic.

Four large wooden "doghouse-like" structures stand along the east wall. The three barrels along the west wall contain fresh water, dried fish, and fist-sized biscuits shaped like a wizard in a pointed hat and robe. The biscuits will radiate magic if a *detect magic* spell is cast (they've been targeted by a mundane enchantment and have no special abilities.)



Arcane sappers (4): HD 8; HP 41,36,32,31; AC 3[17]; Atk 1 claw (1d4) or bite (1d6); Move 12; Save 11; CL/XP 8/800; Special: Magic negating gaze.

## 8. Hidden Vault



When the door to **Area 8** is opened it will trigger a trap, causing a group of spears to spring from the wall beside it. The spears deal 3d6 damage to anyone standing before the door. A struck target must make a successful save vs. poison or else become poisoned, taking an additional 6 points at the start of each round for the next 1d6+1 rounds. The passphrase "scorpion stay thy sting" will deactivate the trap for 1 hour, allowing the door to be opened without triggering it.

A secret door at the rear of this empty room stands partially open. The body of a dead human clad in wizard robes lies on the ground, pinned between the door and wall, jamming it open.

This room serves as Gregodan's vault, a place for storing recovered artifacts until the proper means to destroy them are discovered. At the moment his vault stands empty.

The secret chamber to the south of the vault is reserved for particularly nasty items. He planned on storing the trapped genie here, behind a secret door warded by powerful magics, until he could figure out a more humane way to deal with her. Unfortunately, the genie managed to use her magic to trigger the secret door's closing mechanism, causing it to slam shut on the wizard, crushing him to death.

The party will discover that the secret door can be pushed with some effort and locked into a fully opened position.

If Gregodan's body is searched, the key to **Area 3** can be found in one of his robe's many pockets. He also clutches a lantern tightly to his chest. Its comprised of a series of iron frames holding thick glass panes. There doesn't appear to be any way of opening it. The lantern has a noticeable crack in one of its glass panes.

## Wrapping Up

Once the lantern's been recovered the party will have to decide what to do with it. They were asked to destroy the lantern however they'll find it's impervious to normal damage. It took all the genie's magic along with the force of the shutting door just to crack one of the lantern's panes.

One possible method of destruction would be to dump it in the fire pool at **Area 6**. Passing it through the portal at **Area 1** could also disrupt the lantern's magic long enough to break it by normal means.

If the party returns to Madam Calista with the lantern they'll discover she wants nothing to do with it, insisting that the group find some way to destroy it. She'll state she senses the lantern's 'fiery end' lies within the sanctum (hinting at disposing of it by way of the fire pool.)

Destroying the lantern will free the genie, allowing her to return to bestowing havoc wreaking wishes on the denizens of the realm. She'll immediately reabsorb her "Madam Calista" avatar, causing the fortune teller to vanish, along with the continuous darkness which blanketed the town and its surroundings.

## Continuing the Adventure

Here are some suggestions for further adventures:

✕ The genie may reveal herself to the party, informing them that she was responsible for the darkness and that she used them to free her from her prison. She'll thank them, stating that she can now go back to "granting terrible wishes with terrible consequences." The party may seek to somehow re-imprison her.

✕ The curse negating portal requires upkeep, which it isn't getting now that Gregodan's no longer around. It starts releasing its energy, bestowing random curses upon random townspeople.

✕ The secret evil-artifact-retrieving order that Gregodan was a member of attempts to recruit the party to their cause. They won't take 'no' for an answer, possibly using a *geas* spell, cast by a high-level magic user, to secure their assistance.

✕ If party decides to keep the lantern for whatever reason they'll find that the darkness follows them, blanketing an area roughly one square mile in size with the lantern at its center. "Madam Calista" will appear to them in other guises as they travel, trying to convince them to destroy the lantern, possibly even suggesting the means to do so. Of course, the players might find the means to fix the lantern, in which case the genie will once again be fully imprisoned and "Madam Calista" will dissipate along with the darkness.

✕ A giant headless demon terrorizes the countryside. The party thinks they know where they can find its head. Or at least it's skull...

✕ Turns out the *decanter of endless water* found in **Area 3** is cursed. It's stopper breaks once it's removed from the sanctum. The players must find some way of stopping the flow of water before the realm is flooded, one gallon at a time...



## NEW MAGIC

### Decanter of Finite Foodstuff

This large container resembles a clay water jug with a simple clay stopper. When uncapped and tipped over, a quantity of food will pour from it like water, solidifying into its natural state upon hitting a solid surface. The jug can be used four times per day, producing enough food to feed two people for a 24-hour period each time it's used. The jug produces fruits, cheeses, bread, meats, etc. There's a 50% chance that the meats will be raw, requiring cooking prior to consumption.

### Flaming Scroll Case

This ivory scroll case bears a pair of red crystal endcaps, designed to look like spouts of flame. It will appear to empower scrolls placed inside it, causing the spells to deal more damage, if some means to identify magic items is employed. In truth this scroll case is cursed. A scroll placed within will gain an explosive property. After the scroll is used it will burst into flames dealing 2d6 fire damage to whoever's holding it at the time.

### Headly's Handy Hearth

This item appears to be a simple 3' high by 5' wide painting of a warm and inviting looking hearth. When hung upon a wall and an activation word is spoken the painting becomes an actual hearth. The fire within provides light, warmth and can be used for cooking. The hearth produces no smoke, venting it instead into an extradimensional space.

### Urn of Wintertide

This small urn is perpetually covered by a pattern of frost and bears an ornate stopper, crafted to suggest a cold wind blowing. Simply holding this urn protects the bearer from heat and flame. It does so by dealing the holder an amount of cold damage equal to the amount of fire damage they take, effectively negating the damage. The urn can prevent up to 500 points of fire damage before it has to be recharged. It's rumored that the recharging process involves convincing an adult white dragon to breathe into the unstopped urn.

Once per day the owner of the urn can also remove its stopper and speak a command word. Doing so will produce an effect similar to the *ice storm* spell, with a range of 5' from the urn. Each time this is used it removes 25 points from the number of points damage the urn can prevent before it requires recharging.



## NEW MONSTERS

### Arcane Sapper

These large dark green creatures can grow to be up to 6' feet in length. They resemble large salamanders and are often mistaken for basilisks at first glance. They even have a gaze attack similar to that of their more dreaded cousins, only instead of petrifying flesh their eyes temporarily negate magic items and spell effects.

A target's magic items will cease to function for as long as the target is held in the creature's gaze; weapons and armor lose their bonuses, potions become inert, wands lose their charges, etc. Any ongoing spell effects on the target are dispelled. Any attempt to cast a spell while targeted by an arcane sapper's gaze suffers a 100% chance of failure -5% per level of caster.

The good news is that holding a target in its gaze requires the arcane sapper to devote its full attention to the target, preventing it from engaging in combat and making it easier to hit (opponents gaining a +4 bonus to their attacks).



The bad news is that while it's negating a target's magic it becomes magically charged. A successful melee attack made against an arcane sapper while it's 'sapping' causes energy to arc out from the creature, dealing 2d4 damage to all creatures within 10' of it. It will also cause the creature to break its gaze attack. Magic possessed by an effected target will regain their properties 1d6 minutes after this. Ongoing spell effects on the target will begin to function once again provided their duration hasn't expired.

**Arcane Sapper:** HD 8; AC 3[17]; Atk 1 claw (1d4) or bite (1d6); Move 12; Save 11; CL/XP 8/800; Special: Magic negating gaze.

### Art Credits

We'd like to thank the following for providing great spot art at a low cost.

The 'Fortune Teller' on the cover and inside cover, were provided by Jack Holliday.

The Monster, Treasure, and Obstacle icons were made by Lorc. These are available on <http://game-icons.net>

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The "Urn of Wintertide" on page 10 was created by Sade.

The map for our "old school" Secret Sanctum was provided by Daniel F. Walthall. More of his work can be found at: [drivethrurpg.com/product/182383](http://drivethrurpg.com/product/182383), available under a CC BY 4.0 license: [creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/)

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