

# LARIUS FIRETONGUE'S SCHOOL OF SORCERY



A MAGIC SCHOOL SOURCEBOOK  
AND HEXCRAWL  
BY RAY CHAPEL



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# Table of Contents

Introduction.....3

## **Chapter 1, Class of 969: Character Creation for an All-Caster Party**

Ability Score Generation & Listing Racial Restrictions.....5  
Missing Roles.....6  
Sample Races.....7  
New Classes.....12

## **Chapter 2, Forbidden Ink: New Classes, Spells, and Rules for Magic School Campaigns**

Arcane Lore.....24  
Roll-Under Attribute: A Minimalist Skill System.....26  
Loyal Bonds.....27  
New Spells.....28  
Treasured Tomes.....42

## **Chapter 3, Hidden Flames: The Secrets of Firetongue Academy**

People of Firetongue Academy.....45  
Places Within Firetongue Academy.....53  
Wandering the Halls: Encounters in a Magic School.....56  
People, Places, & Plots in a Magic School.....59

## **Chapter 4, The Realm of Frelundia**

Desert of the Valiant Rose.....62  
Direblack Swamp.....65  
Foot of the Tyrant.....67  
Goldbloom Plains.....71  
Moonshade Forest.....78

## **Chapter 5, The Initiation Delve: a Sample Adventure.....88**

Artist Contacts.....96  
Writer Contacts.....97  
Open Game License.....98

## Introduction

For the past two years I have been heavily involved in writing ideas for a fantasy world set around a school of magic. I ran an eight month long campaign, I blogged about ideas for inserting related tropes into popular rulesets such as Dungeon Crawl Classics, and now I am even writing up a planned adventure path for Pathfinder and 5th Edition! The magic academy concept was a topic I felt passionate about, more so and for much longer than many other ideas I put down to paper and PDF. This inspiration drove me to compile my accumulated ideas into a part sandbox setting, part advice book for the *Swords & Wizardry Complete* ruleset.

In spite of being different than the standard adventure format of parties as traveling dungeon delvers, the magic school concept is a staple in many works of fiction, from the *Wizard of Earthsea* to *Harry Potter*. Even many settings for the world's oldest fantasy role-playing game had magical academies as notable locations PC spellcasters might graduate from before their careers.

The Magic School format has been one of the most rewarding campaigns I ever ran as a Game Master. It definitely has a non-standard formula, but it really opens a whole world of options. The set-up is tailor-made for recurring characters, and sticking to one location over the course of a campaign allows for the players to grow fond of and care for the school and its people. It also grants you the opportunity to insert light-hearted events such as school plays, parties, academic rivals, and forays into the Library's Forbidden Section which you might not often experience in typical fantasy games.

This is the reason for the creation of this product. Larius Firetongue's School of Sorcery is a sandbox mini-setting centered around the eponymous academy. In addition to providing sample locations in the typical hexcrawl style common to OSR adventures, this sourcebook discusses new rules and systems, general advice for a magic school campaign, and interesting characters and study classes within Firetongue Academy.

**Chapter One** discusses alternate character creation guidelines and advice for the dynamics of a party composed of spellcasters. **Chapter Two** reveals new rules suitable for a magic school campaign, such as the use of Arcane Lore to substitute in place of gold piece values for research, creation, and character advancement. **Chapter Three** outlines the notable people and places of Firetongue's School of Sorcery as well as their darkest secrets. **Chapter Four** details the land of Frelundia complete with a hexcrawl map, free for adventuring PCs to explore at their leisure. **Chapter Five** presents a sample introductory adventure in the form of a dungeon crawl obstacle course.

## Background Story

Twenty years ago a magician of no small skill named Larius Firetongue traveled the known lands. At great risk to life, limb, and sanity, he amassed a collection of forbidden knowledge and artifacts from unknown eras. Along his journeys he came upon something strange, a repeating pattern of rituals and dream-visions which only barely made sense on their own. Every major expenditure of spell power brought him a bit closer to uncovering the truth, and in turn fueled his obsession. Eventually it came to a point where Larius was growing old and might not be able to complete his research alone, and a central base of operations would be preferable over the vagrancies of adventuring. And so the wizard journeyed to the rural region of Frelundia, a rural realm which contained great eldritch power brewing beneath its surface. There he began construction on a tower of study, which eventually grew into a full-fledged school of magic.

In time the academy drew folks from various realms to serve as apprentices and teachers, coordinating their efforts to accomplish sorcerous feats which would have been impossible on their own. The work remained dangerous and life-threatening, but overall it was an age of growth for the Firetongue School of Sorcery. In five years' time the school turned into a community of its own, complete with multi-story towers and a surrounding wall and courtyards. They established a rapport with the nearby village of Tassilton: the mages would help out the townsfolk with tasks requiring a magical touch such as ghost sightings and cursed family heirlooms. In exchange the town provided trade goods and supplies to the school.

The PCs, be they natives of Frelundia or visitors from far-off realms, are new arrivals as apprentices. They have free room and board and access to magical materials, but in order to stay in the faculty's good graces must contribute with good grades and helping out teachers and peers with research projects and tasks. It is not uncommon for mages to leave the school on their own or as part of an errand, mostly to procure rare spell components and arcane lore from the surrounding countryside. Frelundia is home to many dangers and plots, which the PCs might stumble upon during their travels and which may or may not be related to schoolwork.

## Chapter 1, Class of 969: Character Creation for an All-Caster Party

### Ability Score Generation

It's common to use the 3d6 in order method in many OSR games, although in regards to an all-mage party this is less than ideal. Rolling 3d6 and assigning the results to the abilities of your choice allows for some freedom, but for groups who still want a sense of "dice superiority" should instead roll 2d6+6 for the prime attributes most pertinent to that class. In the case of the core rules this would be Intelligence for magic-users and Wisdom for clerics. This makes an acceptable range of 11-15 a much more common result, whereas even the lowest possible result of 8 only results in a below-average capacity rather than a hopeless one.

### Lifting Racial Restrictions

In standard Swords & Wizardry and other OSR games, the path of the cleric is often restricted to humans, and dwarf and halfling PCs are incapable of taking levels in magic-user. In the early days of the world's oldest role-playing game, humans were unlimited in their class choices to encourage the conventions of a humanocentric world. Demi-human races often had level caps in non-thief classes to balance the human's lack of racial abilities, such a dwarf's infravision or a halfling's uncanny ability to hide from view in wilderness settings.

It may go against established tropes, but more contemporary role-playing games allow for more freedom in character concepts as well as reflecting the high fantasy tropes common to magic schools. For example, dwarf magic-users might be possible but instead a rarity due to cultural taboos. This gives outlier PCs a good story hook for why they defied societal expectations and serves as a potential world-building tool.

Regarding humans, I suggest granting PCs belonging to this race a +1 bonus in two ability score of their choice to a maximum value of 18. That way, they are still an attractive option to pick even with the lack of being able to detect secret doors or see in the dark. I also recommend capping the maximum saving throw bonus one can receive from a race and class combination (such as dwarves and drow) to no more than +4 to avoid too large a change in probability.

## Missing Roles

In most other old-school retroclones, classes have strong role protection. This means that there is little variance in handling tasks unsuitable to them. Magic-Users cannot wear armor and cast spells at the same time; Clerics cannot reliably open locks or sneak around undetected unless they invest heavily in Silence spells; and certain races are locked out of particular classes entirely, such as the dwarf's inability to use magic at all!

There are several solutions to these problems:

**More Classes:** One is to look at various OSR self-publishers for increased material. There is a wealth of class-based sourcebooks already for sale at reasonable prices for more unorthodox races and magical traditions.

In Labyrinth Lord and other Basic "race as class" games, the Elf serves as a useful fighter-mage. Typically the Elf is able to wield better weapons than their Magic-User counterpart and can cast spells in light armor. Along with the ability to detect secret doors, see in the dark, and a long life-span, the Elf has a lot going for it as a class option. The only trade-off is fewer starting spells in the spellbook, a slower experience progression, and a lower maximum level.

[Barrel Rider Games](#) is a fine 3rd Party Publisher of Labyrinth Lord classes. The Undead Slayer is a good yet highly focused class specializing in killing all manner of unliving creatures; the Dark Elf is sort of a jack-of-all-trades racial class, not possessing the martial capacity of its surface world cousins yet making up for it with some thief abilities and spell resistance; Dwarven Rune-Smiths utilize sacred stones related to crafting, divination, and protection; Fairies can fly, craft magic arrows, and curse foes with bad luck forcing them to re-roll die results; Yule Elves both thrive on mischief and are good at remaining unseen. Although there are options to buy them individually, fifty of the company's classes are compiled into a single Class Compendium.

[The Complete Vivimancer](#) by Necrotic Gnome Productions presents a new class specializing in life-based magic. But unlike the traditional healer it has a more macabre bent, such as cellular manipulation, fungal growths, and mad science-style things such as cloning and mutations.

[Magical Theorums & Dark Pacts](#) by ZEROBarrier contains a variety of new casting classes such as the Unseen which functions as a fine mage-thief, the dilettante Merchant Prince, and representations of supernatural disciplines such as the Fleshcrafter and the Necromancer. In fact, the Unseen class has been converted to Swords & Wizardry use in this very book with the owner's permission!

Additionally, don't be restrictive on who qualifies as a spellcaster based on the spells-per-day format; if there's a class which can manipulate elemental energy, manifest spectral weapons in hand, or is otherwise capable of replicating clearly supernatural abilities, there is no reason they would not be studying alongside their wizardly and priestly peers!

Another solution is to broaden out some things which would ordinarily be class-restrictive. An illusion-focused mage might gain some thief skills like Hide in Shadows, or a cleric from a particularly martial culture might be able to use edged weapons.

## Sample Races

In Swords & Wizardry, the dwarf and elf have three unique racial traits each, with the half-elf and halfling two. Overall most races in OSR games have three iconic traits when they are not counted as classes, so in the creation of new races or adaption of existing ones you should think of three abilities which best exemplify them.

Below is a list of ten races to reflect a diverse student body.



Art by Gary Dupuis

### Beastfolk

Beastfolk come in all shapes and sizes, but all of them share some physical traits with a specific species of natural animal. Sometimes such features are subtle, such as almost-human beings bearing an extra pair of animal ears and tail. Other times they're more pronounced, such as fur covering their entire bodies. Use this race to simulate a broad variety of "animal people."

*Traits:* Beastfolk can deal 1d4 damage with an unarmed attack, representing either natural ferocity or an inborn weapon such as claws, fangs, etc. They have darkvision to a range of 60 feet, and can select one additional ability from the following list:

*Thief Bonuses:* +10% Hide in Shadows, +15% Move Silently

- A base Movement of 15
- Ability to breathe underwater and a Swim Movement of 12
- A natural Armor Class of 7 [12]
- Climb Walls skill of a Thief of equal level
- Track creatures as a Ranger of equal level

### Drow

Drow are the descendants of elves who journeyed deep underground after being exiled from the old kingdoms. The harshness of underground life makes them more warlike and socially darwinist than their surface kin, and they're quite fond of using vermin such as giant spiders as pets and beasts of burden.

*Thief Bonuses:* +10% Delicate Tasks, +10% Hide in Shadows, +5% Move Silently, +10% Open Locks

*Traits:* Drow are trained in the ability to use poison without error akin to the assassin class. They have darkvision to a range of 120 feet, and a +4 bonus on saving throws vs. spells.



Art by Vagelio Kaliva



Art by Brian Brinlee

## Gnomes

Gnomes are short folk who live in hilly burrows and forested mounds. It is believed that they have strong ties to the fey, and the ones who take up magical arts prefer spells of the subtler variety.

*Thief Bonuses:* +10% Delicate Tasks, +15% Open Locks

*Traits:* Gnomes gain a +4 bonus on saving throws vs. illusion spells and effects which would otherwise fool their minds or senses. They can also see in the dark up to 60 feet. Finally, gnomes have a 4 in 6 chance of understanding the purpose or workings of advanced technological and alchemical devices. “Advanced technology” tends to cover items of a post-Renaissance nature or things uncommon in typical fantasy settings, such as clockwork, gunpowder, steampower, and the like.

## Goblins

Goblins are small green-skinned folk known for their large numbers and being on a common war footing with dwarves, elves, and humans. Although looked down upon as being undeveloped, they are more than capable of adapting new technologies and magical traditions to their own ends.

*Thief Bonuses:* +5% Delicate Tasks (10% if not bugbear), +10% Hide in Shadows, +5% Open Locks (10% if not bugbear)

*Traits:* Goblins gain a +4 bonus on saving throws vs. poison and disease. They can see in the dark up to 60 feet and gain one of three traits listed below:

- -2 Armor Class bonus (+2 if ascending) vs. human-sized and larger foes (goblin)
- Can Move Silently as a Thief of equal level or +20% to the skill if already Thief (bugbear)
- A +1 bonus on attack rolls when using melee and unarmed weapons (hobgoblin)



Art by Matt Morrow

## Humans

Humans are a young race known for their diversity of cultures, large numbers, and short lifespans. Their quickness to adapt new ideas and technology makes them a powerful majority in countless Material Plane nations.

*Traits:* Humans gain a +1 bonus to two ability scores (maximum value 18) of the player's choice.



Art by Gary Dupuis

## Kobold

Kobolds are small dog-faced people (or lizard-faced if you prefer a “new school” touch) who live in extensive warrens. Their lack of size and strength forces them to rely upon mechanical and magical ingenuity for defense. As a result, some of the best trapsmiths are kobolds.

*Thief Bonuses:* +15% Delicate Tasks, +5% Hide in Shadows, +10% Open Locks

*Traits:* Kobolds gain a +4 bonus on saving throws vs. traps and magical devices. They can see in the dark up to 60 feet. Up to 3 times per day, with 10 minutes of preparation and 5 gp worth of materials can set up a jury-rigged trap in a single 10' square. The trap can have one of 3 effects (decided when built) on the next creature or set of creatures which trigger it:

- 1d6 points of damage on a failed save.
- Movement is halved on a failed save.
- -1 to attack rolls and Armor Class on a failed save.

## Naga



Art by Gary Dupuis

Naga are a race of beings with the lower body of a serpent and the upper body of a human. Visitors from another realm, they live in communes built around ley lines, prisons of fell entities, and other places in need of magical protection. Their warriors are known for their skill in fighting creatures from beyond the Material Plane, and those who steal from their sacred sites will be pursued to the ends of the world.

*Thief Bonuses:* +5% Delicate Tasks, +5% Hide in Shadows, +10% Move Silently, +5% Open Locks

*Traits:* Naga are capable of producing 3 doses of poison from their fangs per day. As part of a bite attack (1d4 damage) the target must roll a saving throw or suffer -2 to attack rolls and Armor Class for 24 hours. They can also see in the dark up to 60 feet, and when visiting an area of great divine or magical significance (temples, spell blighted wastelands, etc) can ascertain the features and purpose of such places on a 1-3 result of a d6 roll.



Art by Gary Dupuis

## Pixies

Pixies are tiny winged fey (around 2' tall on average) with a connection to the forests of the world. They seem possessed by boundless energy, are fond of entertainment of all sorts, and innately magical.

*Thief Bonuses:* +10% Delicate Tasks, +15% Hide in Shadows, +5% Move Silently

*Traits:* Pixies are small in stature and thus can only have a maximum Strength score of 11 (any amount rolled over this is treated as an 11 result). They can fly at a speed of 30 feet, but must rest for 1 minute for every 3 minutes they spend flying. Pixies can also sprinkle dust from their wings on weapons and ammunition once per day, which can inflict the effects of a *charm person* or *sleep* spell on a struck target with an effective magic-user level equal to the pixie's total class levels.



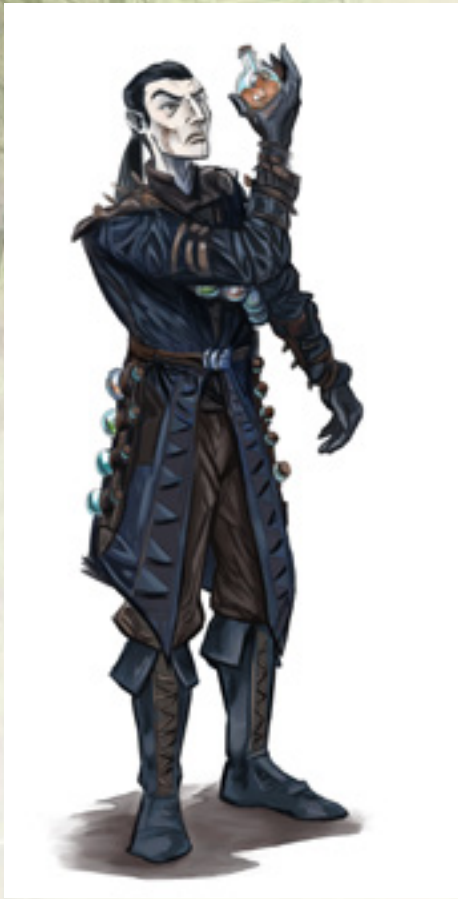
Art by Vagelio Kaliva

## Tieflings

Magocracies often make dangerous pacts with otherworldly entities as a measure of preserving power. Some of these pacts involve tainting unborn children with the spark of eldritch forces which manifest as demonic qualities in life. Tieflings are the descendents of these cursed children, feared as hellspawn and changelings in some lands yet revered by fiendish sorcerers and cultists for their potent bloodline.

*Thief Bonuses:* +10% Hide in Shadows, +5% Move Silently, +10% Open Lock

*Traits:* Tieflings gain a +4 bonus on saving throws vs. effects of an elemental nature, such as fire, ice, electricity, earth, and air. They have darkvision to a range of 60 feet, and can cast Darkness 15 foot radius once per day as an innate ability with an effective Magic-User level equal to their total class levels.



Art by Matt Morrow

## Vampires

Vampires are undead creatures who must subsist on the blood of the living. They are quite powerful as undead, retaining their intelligence and free will and capable of performing terrible abilities even if not a spellcaster.

*Thief Bonuses:* +5% Delicate Tasks, +10% Hide in Shadows, +10% Move Silently

*Traits:* Vampires do not need to eat, sleep, or breathe as undead beings, but they must subsist on a pint of blood every week or suffer the effects of starvation. They have a natural bite attack which deals 1d4 damage on a hit; a vampire can suck the blood out of a helpless or willing target healing 1 hit point of damage for every 2 points dealt via a bite. Vampires can also take the form of a bat or wolf as per polymorph self with an effective Magic-User level equal to their total class levels, although they're still treated as undead in this form as well.

**Note:** In typical OSR games, vampires come with a variety of powers and weaknesses beyond the template presented here. It is assumed that the vampire "race" above is a fledgling barely coming into their powers; as a result they still possess enough qualities from their old life to not worry about sunlight, garlic, and the like.

If this does not seem authentic, you can introduce this rule for vampire weaknesses: vampires in prolonged contact with hostile elements take 1d4 points of damage per round of contact. Vampires reduced to 0 hit points from this type of damage crumble into dust.

## New Classes

*Some Are More Equal Than Others?* If using the variant rule where certain classes need minimum ability score requirements, this is a list of guidelines for the new classes:

Bard: Dex 12, Int 12, Cha 12

Mage-knight: Str 14, Int 12

Unseen: Dex 15, Int 15, Wis 12



Art by Ryan Rhodes

### Bard

In some lands they are known as sha'ir, poets who communicate with spirits in exchange for knowledge and magical power. In others they are skalds, warriors who retell the deeds of legendary heroes to inspire their fellows in battle. And in the distant south they are griots, lorekeepers who pass down the history and traditions of their people. Whatever form they take, bards are learned folk who express their skills through performance and spell.

**Prime Attribute:** Intelligence and Charisma 13+ (a bard character gains a +5% experience bonus only if all of their prime attributes are 13 or higher)

**Hit Dice:** 1d6/level (a bard gains just one hp/level after 9th)

**Armor/Shield Permitted:** Bards can only wear leather armor and use shields.

**Weapons Permitted:** Bards can use any weapon they can get their hands on, although they need at least one hand free in order to play an instrument and cast spells.

**Attack Tables:** Bards use the Magic-User, Thief, and Assassin attack table.

**Table: Bard Advancement**

Level	Experience	Hit Die (d6)	Saving Throw	Class Abilities
1st	0	1	15	Spell Casting, Social Butterfly
2nd	2,000	2	14	Citizen of the World
3rd	4,000	3	13	Fascinate
4th	8,000	4	12	
5th	13,000	5	11	Thief Magic Items
6th	20,000	6	10	
7th	40,000	7	9	
8th	60,000	8	8	
9th	90,000	9	7	Establish College
10th	130,000	9+1 hp	6	
11th	200,000	9+2 hp	5	
12th	400,000	9+3 hp	4	
13th	800,000	9+4 hp	4	
14th	950,000	9+5 hp	4	
15th	1,100,000	9+6 hp	4	
16th	1,250,000	9+7 hp	4	
17th	1,400,000	9+8 hp	4	
18th	1,550,000	9+9 hp	4	
19th	1,700,000	9+10 hp	4	
20th	1,850,000	9+11 hp	4	

**Table: Bard Spells**

Level	Spell Level					
	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	5th	6th
1st	1	-	-	-	-	-
2nd	2	-	-	-	-	-
3rd	2	1	-	-	-	-
4th	2	1	-	-	-	-
5th	3	1	1	-	-	-
6th	3	2	1	-	-	-
7th	3	2	2	1	-	-
8th	4	2	2	1	-	-
9th	4	3	2	2	-	-
10th	4	3	3	2	1	-
11th	5	3	3	3	2	-
12th	5	4	3	4	3	-
13th	5	4	4	4	4	1
14th	6	4	5	4	4	2
15th	6	5	5	4	4	3
16th	6	5	5	4	4	3
17th	7	5	6	5	4	3
18th	7	6	6	5	5	3
19th	7	6	6	5	5	3
20th	8	6	7	5	5	3

## Requirements and Limitations

### *Musical Dependency for Spellcasting*

Bards can only work their magic when able to perform. They tap into the collective consciousness of mortal culture and emotion as expressed through song, tales, and all manner of art throughout the ages. Much like a cleric's holy symbol or a druid's mistletoe, a bard needs a musical instrument or performance to focus their spells. Singing, dancing, and similar performances are an exception to the requirement of an instrument, but require at least one hand to be free as the bard gesticulates for dramatic effect.

## Class Abilities

### *Spell Casting*

Bards cast spells from a specific list. Like magic-users they carry a spellbook known as a bardic journal which they use to prepare their spells each day. The spellbooks of bards and magic-users are cross-compatible yet limited; a magic-user can transcribe spells from a bardic journal provided that said spell is on the magic-user spell list, and vice-versa.

The contents of bardic journals appear much like a private diary, with haphazard notes, musical sheets, and all manner of trivia with little rhyme or reason.

### *Saving Throw Bonuses*

Bards gain a +2 bonus on saving throws vs. mind-controlling and sound-based effects.

### *Social Butterfly*

Whether they are warrior-poets, traveling minstrels, or esteemed spiritualists, bards find it easy to influence people. As long as they're in a settlement of at least 50 inhabitants, a bard can find basic accommodations at an inn or similar place of service for a party of five provided they entertain patrons.

Additionally, a bard can roll 1d20 once per day whenever they're in a similarly-sized settlement (magic schools, army camps, and the like count for this). If the result is less than or equal to their Charisma, they pick up a piece of information concerning latest gossip and upcoming events which folks might otherwise only volunteer to trusted friends and not complete strangers.

### *Citizen of the World*

Bards pick up many phrases, stories, and speech patterns of different lands as well as their written dialects. Starting at 2nd level a bard gains fluency in a bonus language, and another language at every even-numbered level thereafter.

### *Fascinate*

At 3rd level a bard's performance becomes mesmerizing, whatever form it takes. When outside of combat a bard is capable of entrancing  $2d4 + \text{bard level}$  in Hit Dice worth of spectators. Those with Hit Dice greater than or equal to the bard's own can roll a saving throw to resist, but those affected become distracted and unaware of their surroundings. This can allow thieves to sneak around or enemy soldiers to mount a surprise attack among other things.

This effect immediately ends if at least one member of the audience is attacked or killed in an obvious fashion, or if a person or event interrupts the bard's performance.

### *May Use Thief Items*

At 5th level, bards can use any magic items usable by Thieves, including magic weapons, armor (leather only), and shields.

### *Establish College*

At 9th level, the bard may establish or become leader of a bardic college. Such places act as centers of learning for new initiates, and contain much in the way of art, music, and culture. The bard will attract students and teachers over time seeking to learn by their example.

### *Bard Spell List*

Spells marked with an asterisk (\*) are detailed in the New Spells section of Chapter 2.

1st: Charm Person, Detect Magic, Good Cheer\*, Keen Ear\*, Read Languages, Read Magic, Sleep, Song of the First Era\*, Song of the Hopeful Knight\*

2nd: Cure Light Wounds, ESP, Magic Mouth, Phantasmal Force, Righteous Castigation\*, Song of the Stalwart Companions\*, Tongues\*

3rd: Crescendo\*, Fear, Invisibility, Knock, Mirror Image, Rope Trick, Suggestion

4th: Charm Monster, Confusion, Cure Serious Wounds, Danse Macabre\*, Legend Lore

5th: Charm Plants, Contact Other Plane, Quest

6th: Conjunction of Elementals, Feeblemind, Mass Charm, Song of the Last Great Hero\*



*Art by Dean Spencer*

## Mage-Knight

A mage-knight is a practitioner of a martial discipline who uses weapons known as spellrunes to both utilize and defend against magic in battle. It is said that they originated in an ancient magocracy to act as professional bodyguards and soldiers of noble archmages. Such figures needed people capable of protecting them and their assets, yet possessed more intelligence and quick thinking than bound and mindless servants. Some claim that the tradition originated among artisans who sought to find a way to channel ambient magic into weapons as a defensive measure.

Regardless of their origin, mage-knights make for both effective protectors of wizards and combatants against supernatural threats, their trademark blades capable of catching hostile spells and delivering them back at opponents.

**Prime Attribute:** Strength 15+ and Intelligence 13+ (a mage-knight character gains a +5% experience bonus only if all of their prime attributes meet these qualifications)

**Hit Dice:** 1d8/level (a mage-knight gains just 1 hp/level after 9th)

**Armor/Shield Permitted:** Mage-knights are able to use leather, chain mail, and ring mail

**Weapons Permitted:** Mage-knights are able to use any weapon effectively, but their spellrune ability isn't compatible with all weapon types (see below).

**Attack Tables:** Mage-knights use the Fighter, Paladin, and Ranger attack tables.

Table: Mage-knight Advancement

Level	Experience	Hit Dice (d8)	Saving Throw	Class Abilities
1st	0	1	15	Spellrune
2nd	2,500	2	14	Spell Casting
3rd	5,000	3	13	Interpose
4th	12,000	4	12	
5th	25,000	5	11	
6th	50,000	6	10	
7th	100,000	7	9	Deflection
8th	175,000	8	8	
9th	275,000	9	7	Establish Martial Academy
10th	550,000	9+2 hp	6	
11th	825,000	9+4 hp	5	
12th	1,100,000	9+6 hp	5	
13th	1,375,000	9+8 hp	5	
14th	1,600,000	9+10 hp	5	
15th	1,800,000	9+12 hp	5	
16th	2,000,000	9+14 hp	5	
17th	2,200,000	9+16 hp	5	
18th	2,400,000	9+18 hp	5	
19th	2,600,000	9+20 hp	5	
20th	2,800,000	9+22 hp	5	

Table: Mage-knight Spells

Level	Spell Level			
	1st	2nd	3rd	4th
1st	-	-	-	-
2nd	1	-	-	-
3rd	1	-	-	-
4th	2	-	-	-
5th	2	1	-	-
6th	2	1	-	-
7th	2	2	-	-
8th	2	2	1	-
9th	3	2	1	-
10th	3	2	2	-
11th	3	2	2	1
12th	3	3	2	1
13th	3	3	2	2
14th	3	3	2	2
15th	4	3	3	2
16th	4	3	3	2
17th	4	3	3	2
18th	4	4	3	3
19th	4	4	3	3
20th	4	4	4	3

## Class Abilities

### *Saving Throw Bonuses*

Mage-knights gain a +2 bonus on all saving throws against spells, including spells from magic wands and staffs.

### *Spellrune*

Mage-knights start play at no cost with a melee weapon of their choice engraved with runic carvings. Said runes are capable of absorbing the forces of ambient spells, both as a defensive measure and to store inside their weapons to unleash later as part of an attack. When filled with magic, a rune glows vibrantly.

If a mage-knight's runic weapon is empty and a spell fails to affect him (via a successful saving throw or missing his armor class), he can elect to absorb the ambient energy into his runes. As part of an attack, he can unleash the energy into a powerful blaze, dealing 1d6 points of extra damage per spell level. A mage-knight's weapon does not need to be drawn to absorb magic, merely physically present on their person.

A mage-knight can store only one spell this way, and can choose to harmlessly dissipate the energy as an action on his turn. A "full" runic weapon is incapable of absorbing spells. An allied caster or the mage-knight himself may voluntarily transmit a cast spell into the mage-knight's weapon by choosing the mage-knight as a target, with no check for resistance necessary.

Lost or broken runic weapons can be rebuilt, costing 150% the base value of the weapon.

### *Spell Casting*

Beginning at 2nd level, a mage-knight is capable of performing a limited array of spells. They cast and prepare spells just like a magic-user, including the use of a spellbook, albeit they can cast spells while wearing armor as heavy as chain mail and as long as they have one hand free.

The spellbooks of mage-knights and magic-users are cross-compatible yet limited; a magic-user can transcribe spells from a mage-knight's spellbook provided that said spell is on the magic-user spell list, and vice-versa. A starting mage-knight begins play with two level one spells in his spellbook, and automatically also has the spell *read magic* in addition to these two spells although he'll be unable to cast them until 2nd level.

### *Interpose*

Beginning at 3rd level, once per day a mage-knight may redirect a hostile spell affecting a target within 30 feet to target himself instead. The mage-knight is capable of absorbing the spell as usual, as per the *Spellrune* ability.

*Deflection*

Beginning at 7th level, once per day a mage-knight who successfully resists a hostile spell may choose to rebound it back at the caster instead of absorbing it. This can be done even if there's no room in the runic weapon, and the caster must resist as though he cast the spell upon himself.

*Establish Martial Academy*

At 9th level, a mage-knight may establish or become leader of a martial academy. Part fortress and part school, it is dedicated to training recruits in the arts of spell and war and will attract new squires and staff members seeking the mage-knight as a leader and mentor.

*Mage-Knight Spell List*

Spells marked with an asterisk (\*) are detailed in the New Spells section of Chapter Two.

1st: Detect Magic, Detect Poison\*, Magic Missile, Read Magic, Shield, Spider Climb\*

2nd: Bonefield\*, Darkness 15-Foot Radius, Detect Invisibility, Fleetness\*, Pyrotechnics, Water Breathing

3rd: Dispel Magic, Fireball, Haste, Protection from Normal Missiles

4th: Blade Barrier, Cloudkill, Delayed Blast Fireball, Disintegrate, Flurry of Projectiles\*



Art by Brian Brinlee

## Unseen

**Note:** This class was first found in *Magical Theorems & Dark Pacts for the Labyrinth Lord* system. Relevant portions have been converted to *Swords & Wizardry*.

The unseen are thieves who are more than just rogues and cutpurses – those who have an innate knack for magic but who have turned it to skulking, thievery and profit. The unseen are masterful spies and thieves, supplementing their own natural skills with a variety of illusions and lucky charms to help them stand above the rank and file thieves of most guilds and cities – in some cultures the unseen are known as ninja, magical assassins, or worse.

**Prime Attribute:** Intelligence and Dexterity 13+ (an unseen character gains a +5% experience bonus if both attributes are 13 or higher, +10% if at least 16 in Intelligence and 13 in Dexterity)

**Hit Dice:** 1d4/level (an unseen gains just 1 hp/level after 9th)

**Armor/Shield Permitted:** Unseen cannot use any shield or wear any armor

**Weapons Permitted:** Unseen can use any weapon.

**Attack Tables:** Unseen use the Magic-User, Thief, and Assassin attack tables.

Table: Unseen Advancement

Level	Experience	Hit Die (d4)	Saving Throw	Special
1st	0	1	15	Thief, Spellcaster
2nd	3,000	2	14	
3rd	6,000	3	13	Special Ability
4th	12,000	4	12	
5th	25,000	5	11	
6th	50,000	6	10	Special Ability
7th	100,000	7	9	
8th	200,000	8	8	
9th	360,000	9	7	Special Ability
10th	520,000	9+1 hp	6	
11th	680,000	9+2 hp	5	
12th	840,000	9+3 hp	4	Special Ability
13th	1,000,000	9+4 hp	4	
14th	1,160,000	9+5 hp	4	
15th	1,320,000	9+6 hp	4	Special Ability
16th	1,480,000	9+7 hp	4	
17th	1,640,000	9+8 hp	4	
18th	1,800,000	9+9 hp	4	Special Ability
19th	1,960,000	9+10 hp	4	
20th	2,120,000	9+11 hp	4	

Table: Unseen Spell Progression

Class Level	Spell Level					
	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	5th	6th
1st	1	-	-	-	-	-
2nd	2	-	-	-	-	-
3rd	2	-	-	-	-	-
4th	3	1	-	-	-	-
5th	3	2	-	-	-	-
6th	3	2	-	-	-	-
7th	4	3	1	-	-	-
8th	4	3	2	-	-	-
9th	4	3	2	-	-	-
10th	4	4	3	1	-	-
11th	4	4	3	2	-	-
12th	5	4	3	2	-	-
13th	5	4	4	3	1	-
14th	5	5	4	3	2	-
15th	5	5	4	3	2	-
16th	6	5	4	4	3	1
17th	6	5	5	4	3	2
18th	6	5	5	4	3	2
19th	6	6	5	4	4	3
20th	6	6	5	5	4	3

## Class Abilities

### *Saving Throw Bonuses*

Unseen gain a +2 bonus on saving throws against devices, including traps, magical wands or staves, and other magical devices.

### *Spellcasting*

Like wizards, the unseen carry spell books, which hold the formulae for spells written on their pages. An unseen can have any number of spells in a spell book, but can only memorize a certain number of spells that he can know off hand to cast at any time. This number increases as the unseen increases in class level. A starting unseen begins with two level one spells in his spellbook, and automatically also has the spell read magic in addition to these two spells.

### *Thief*

The unseen are thieves in their own right, although not as masterful as most who concentrate their abilities on thievery fully. As such, they gain progression in thieving skills equal to a member of the Thief class two levels lower, to a minimum of 1.

### *Special Abilities*

Beginning at level 3, and every third level thereafter, the unseen gains a special ability of his choice from the following list:

- *BackStab*: As the thief ability – if the unseen gains surprise on an opponent and attacks while the opponent is unaware or from behind, he gains a +4 to hit and deals double damage.
- *Extra Invisibility*: You have mastered the art of invisibility to the point of being able to cast it once per day without preparing the spell. This ability can be taken multiple times.
- *Greater Invisibility*: You are immune to the detect invisible spell and do not radiate as magical while invisible.
- *Phantom Blade*: Once per day you can produce a magical invisible short sword to strike with. This weapon remains until dismissed, dropped or for 1 turn per level. It is treated as a magical weapon with a +1 bonus. Each time this power is chosen you can manifest the blade one additional time per day, or increase the bonus by +1.
- *Scentless*: You produce no scent for guard dogs and others to detect and track.
- *Silent*: You gain a +25% bonus to move silently checks.

- *Truly Unseen:* You gain a saving throw against all attempts to detect you using magical means such as a crystal ball, ESP, clairvoyance, or detection spells. If you normally would get a save, you now get two.
- *Unseen Combatant:* When you attack someone while invisible you gain a +4 bonus on your attack roll. This can combine with the backstab ability.
- *Unseen Eye:* You can attune yourself to being invisible and gain the benefits of the detect invisible spell while invisible.

#### *Unseen Spell List:*

Spells marked with an asterisk (\*) are detailed in the New Spells section of Chapter Two.

Level 1: Detect Magic, Detect Poison\*, Disguise\*, Keen Ear\*, Read Languages, Read Magic, Sleep, Spider Climb\*

Level 2: Bonefield\*, Fleetness\*, ESP, Invisibility, Knock, Light, Protection from Evil, Phantasmal Force

Level 3: Clairvoyance, Confusion, Dispel Magic, Haste, Polymorph Self, Silence 15' Radius, Skinwalking\*, Unseen Coin\*

Level 4: Arcane Eye, Dimension Door, Disappear\*, Mass Disguise\*, False Image\*, Fluid Form\*, Remove Curse, Tongues

Level 5: Bad Luck\*, Concealing Fog\*, Flurry of Projectiles\*, Instant Summons\*, Mass Invisibility, Project Image

Level 6: Animate Shadows\*, Antipathy/Sympathy\*, Daggers of Nur\*, Teleport, Limited Wish

## Chapter 2, Forbidden Ink: New Rules for Magic School Campaigns



*Art by Jacob Blackmon*

### Arcane Lore

In many OSR games, experience is gained partly from outwitting and overcoming perils of battle, but mostly from coin and treasure. Over time player characters can amass great hoards of wealth to the point that they can buy and manage their own land, churches, and laboratories.

In magic school campaigns, the idea of adolescent spellcasters coming into inexplicable wealth over time can seem odd. In *Swords & Wizardry* scrolls and magic items do not have gold piece values for scribing and creation costs, but some other OSR games do. So in the standard style of gameplay, money translates into power and growth.\*

In this variant ruleset, there's a new type of metagame currency known as Arcane Lore. Arcane Lore is measured in numbers which translate into gold piece values on a 1:1 basis, but can only be "spent" for the purposes of gaining levels, creating magic items, the scribing of new spells into one's spellbook, or trading in exchange for such material. Below are sample tables for potential magical treasures, both new and existing.

Random Value:

Arcane Lore	Value
Cheap	1d6 x 20 gp
Costly	1d10 x 50 gp
Precious	2d10 x 100 gp
Priceless	1d6 x 1,000 gp

Types of Arcane Lore:

1d12	Cheap	Costly	Precious	Priceless
1	Cultist's Scribblings	Inquisitor's Journal	Memory storing	Crystal Dragon's Knowledge
2	Witch's Herbs	Elemental Salts	Earthshield Plates	Fey's Dreams
3	Tarot Deck	Alchemist's Lab Materials	Meteorite Metal	Unicorn Horn
4	Moonberries	Runic Stones	Sigil embroidered Cloth	Spirit Possessed Mask
5	Prayer Beads	Bardic enchanted Writings	Magical Hieroglyphs	Quill of the First Library
6	Barons's Library	College Library	Wizard's Library	First Era Library
7	Curio Shop Trinkets	Augury Bones	Demonflesh stitched Tome	Raw Souls
8	Weak Ley Line Location	Druidic Grove	Place of Spiritual Resonance	Geomantic Planar Crossroads
9	Household Shrine	Village Shrine	City Shrine	Holiest of Shrines
10	Gnomish Cookbook	Basilisk's Eyes	Dragon's Blood	Fur from the Wolf God
11	Bloodstone Crystals	Onyx Skull Gems	Leprechaun Gold	World Tree Flowers
12	Zombie gallbladder	Wight's teeth	Bottled Nightshade Spirit	Lich's phylactery

Arcane Lore, Magic Items\*:

Type	Value/Cost
Potions	150
Scrolls, Normal	100 per spell level
Scrolls, Protection	400
Scrolls, Cursed	250
Magic Armor/Weapon, +1 or cursed	1,000
Magic Armor/Weapon, +2 or +1/minor ability	2,500
Magic Armor/Weapon, +3	8,000
Unusual Weapon/Armor	16,000
Wand, Lesser	1,000
Wand, Greater	3,000
Rings, Lesser	2,500
Rings, Greater	10,000
Staves	12,000
Miscellaneous Items, Lesser	2,000
Miscellaneous Items, Medium	4,000
Miscellaneous Items, Greater	20,000

Sufficiently “rich” wizard PCs over time will pepper their lairs and laboratories with the flesh and bones of magical monsters, cauldrons brewing with liquid shadows, shelves lined with crystals mined from the deepest dungeon trenches, and a small library of tomes penned by archmages, legendary bards, and other folk touched by the otherworldly. As magic does not abide by the laws of the mortal realm, you might allow the PC to spend the gp value of treasures for the creation of otherwise-unrelated magic items. Perhaps the Basilisk’s Eyes (normally used for petrification and stone-related rituals) and a set of Wight’s Teeth can be used to make a Purifying Oil, as the inherent “curses” of such creatures’ essences overwhelm any latent magical debilitations on an applied person or object.

Quest-giving NPCs might grant the heroic adventurer things like access to a legendary forge worth an arbitrary amount of gold pieces for crafting the perfect blade in lieu of raw money. Adding such treasures, even if they are cheap things like creepy preserved monster fetuses from a curio shop, helps add a hint of eldritch wonder to one’s campaign.

**\*A Note on Magic Item “Prices”:** The listed numbers for magic items serves as both the Arcane Lore gained when finding them as treasure, and the cost to build/create said items. Generally speaking, a spellcaster needs the proper mundane tools and artisanship, along with appropriate magical knowledge. To create a flaming sword, a mage might need a proper smithy as well as knowledge of burning hands, fireball, or related spells in addition to the enchant item spell required for all magic item creation. There’s no hard and fast rules for this, more along the lines of whether or not it would make sense for the caster in question to be able to make such an object.

The trade-off in creating magic items is that saved up Arcane Lore which would be used for gaining levels is instead used on making more magic items. It is a trade-off of immediate benefits vs. overall power; if it seems too much to let characters make any magic item with enough Arcane Lore, perhaps restrict them to limited-use items (scrolls, potions, wands, etc) or impart a minimum experience level to craft in line with their overall power.

### **Roll-Under Attribute: A Minimalist Skill System**

It is common for most OSR games to dispense entirely with skill systems, relegating necessary abilities to race, class features, and spells. Still, a magic school campaign is likely to have more than a few challenges and tasks outside typical dungeon-delving. On the other hand, it can feel good to have your character’s background and attributes play a direct role. This rules variant builds upon the common “Roll a Wisdom check” used by GMs of all stripes, while giving guidelines for things advantageous to a character’s background and magical discipline.

**Mechanics:** A single twenty-sided die is rolled when a character must perform a certain task which doesn’t fall under the aforementioned rules, like studying for an exam, walking across a narrow ledge, or the like. They receive modifiers to the attribute number depending on the difficulty of the relevant task and potential background applications, and compare the final result to the attribute score most relevant to the task.

If the result is less than or equal to the attribute, the character succeeds at the task at hand. If the result is greater than the attribute, they fail and/or are unable to make any progress. This system is geared so that Player Characters can be broadly talented in a manner of tasks with a sufficiently high score in an attribute. True masters-of-all-trades are exceedingly rare, due to the very low chances of rolling high in all six attributes.

Generally speaking, most modifiers for difficulty should hover around -2 to +2, with up to -4 or +4 for exceptionally difficult or trivial tasks respectively. Dice should only be rolled when there's an element of risk; a druid should have no problem growing hardy crops on fertile land to sustain only himself, but if he is trying to grow volatile magical flowers which risk rotting away without attentive care, then the Roll-Under rules should come into play.

**Backgrounds:** A background is a relevant bonus in accordance with the life the PC has led, and treats any relevant attributes as being 2 points higher for the purposes of performing tasks relating to it. Backgrounds can range from typical medieval occupations to magical traditions and homeland. A worshiper of the death-god hailing from a nomadic desert tribe might apply her background bonus to proper burial and embalming techniques, but also on tasks for hot weather survival and proper hospitality measures between rival tribes of her people.

Backgrounds only ever apply once to a given roll and do not stack.

**Competitive Tasks:** The Roll-Under system is designed for PC use. Since NPCs do not have attributes, instead assign a modifier for the PC roll depending on how outclassed they are against the opponent.

**NPCs using Roll-Under:** Although this rules variant is made with PCs in mind, there might come a time when an NPC has to roll, most likely a hireling with a Loyal Bond. In this case, assume that the NPC has an average attribute (9-12) for most untrained rolls, a low attribute (5-8) for tasks involving their weak spots, and a high attribute (13-18) for rolls in which they're skilled.

### **Loyal Bonds: Variant Special Hirelings**

It is possible for adventuring parties to grow quite large in size, especially with high Charisma scores and money to throw around at 9th level onwards. In most games hirelings are generally minions acting as back-up fire, pack mules, and folk to guard your headquarters while the player characters go on the real adventures.

Given the social nature of school environments, and that money is often a secondary concern to arcane lore, this variant rule allows for a more personal touch: Loyal Bonds.

**Effects:** Loyal Bonds represent a strong level of trust and respect shared between a PC and an NPC. It's more than mere friendship; the NPC is willing to go out on adventures with the PC and will take risks to keep them safe. Beyond just good feelings is a sense of strength and courage when in the PC's presence: even if they led an otherwise non-violent life they'll find themselves able to follow their companions into dangerous dungeons and wicked places, and a willingness to protect them from monsters.

NPCs with a Loyal Bond still have free will and may disagree with the PC and won't needlessly throw their lives away, but in most reasonable circumstances they'll be happy to help with tasks. Under most circumstances they will not charge for typical services or a share of the loot, although gold and arcane lore spent on them (the latter in the form of magical study groups and the like) can keep them happy and grant access to better spells and equipment. PCs cannot gain a Loyal Bond from an NPC who is higher level than themselves or has more Hit Dice than their total levels.

Naturally, the number of Loyal Bonds a PC can have at once is limited by their Charisma score; those with strong forces of personality have a better time of awakening others' adventuring potential and instilling powerful feelings within them. It is still possible to develop close friendships with an NPC without gaining a Loyal Bond, but they will not be any more willing to become adventuring sidekicks otherwise.

Finally, if the group is fine with it, Loyal Bond NPCs can act as replacement PCs should a player's hero get killed, debilitated, or otherwise taken out of the game for a time. That way they can still play instead of sitting around doing nothing at the table.

**Gaining Loyal Bonds:** A Loyal Bond is gained when a PC accomplishes a task or set of tasks for an NPC reflective of this nature, usually a minor quest of some sort. They don't necessarily need to be dangerous, but should create for some good drama and have an element of challenge. Naturally, more powerful and renowned NPCs should have commensurately difficult challenges.

Think of Loyal Bonds as a reward beyond treasure, experience, and spells. It provides a great avenue of generating role-playing material. The following chapters detailing the lands of Frelundia provide sample Loyal Bonds for various named NPCs.

## New Spells

On the following page is a list of new spells for magic school campaigns. Some of them come from *Magical Theorems & Dark Pacts*, others from the *Complete Vivimancer*. Cantrips are a new type of spell which can be used an infinite number of times per day and receive their own special category. A few are unofficial conversions of spells from the *Pathfinder Role-Playing Game* as well as *Bill Webb's Book of Dirty Tricks*.

**Cantrips:** Cantrips are a special type of spell mastered by dabblers and apprentices before moving on to true magic. They require such a trifling amount of power that they can be effectively cast all day long without the spellcaster running out of magical energy (although physical exhaustion may set in far earlier!).

Any class with access to spells per day is capable of learning cantrips. They follow the rules of typical spells, except that once prepared they never run out and can be cast an infinite number of times. However, a spellcaster must still perform the regular rites of their class (spellbook study, prayer, etc.) every day to switch them out in favor of new ones, and they can only prepare a limited amount per day. Some cantrips can be prepared twice as though they were two different spells, granting greater effects in exchange for less versatility.



Art by Gary Dupuis

Spellcasters can prepare two cantrips at 1st level, three at 4th level, and four at 7th level. Magic-users and classes which utilize a spellbook begin play with two cantrips in their spellbook and can learn more over the course of play the same way with regular spells.

### **Flash**

**Duration:** 1 round

**Range:** 30 feet

This cantrip creates a burst of bright light equivalent to torchlight for a split-second. If conjured in an enemy's face, the target must make a saving throw or suffer a -1 penalty on all attack rolls for 1 round. This cantrip can be prepared twice to create overwhelming sensations of any of the four other common senses instead, being potentially able to effect blind and sightless creatures.

Note: This cantrip's use as a light source is inferior to the *light* spell in that its duration is too brief to allow for detailed study.

### **Ghost Sound**

**Duration:** 1 round

**Range:** 30 feet

This spell creates illusory sounds of the caster's choice within the range, although they cannot be any louder than a roaring lion or power saw (114 decibels). Evidence which proves the sound's false nature allows the victim a saving throw to disbelieve at the Referee's discretion.

### **Mage Hand**

**Duration:** Until concentration ceases

**Range:** 30 feet

This spell allows the caster to remotely lift and move a single object weighing up to 5 pounds within the range of the spell. If the spellcaster concentrates on the cantrip, they can move any such object up to 15 feet per round in any direction. Preparing this cantrip twice allows this telekinetic force to be precise enough to perform delicate tasks such as lock-picking and surgery.

### **Mage's Mark**

**Duration:** Permanent or until dispelled

**Range:** Touch

This spell allows you to inscribe your personal rune or mark on an object or person, which can consist of no more than six characters if a word. The writing can be visible or invisible. A *mage's mark* spell enables you to etch the rune upon any substance without harm to the material upon which it is placed. If an invisible mark is made, a *detect magic* spell causes it to glow and be visible, though not necessarily understandable. If a *mage's mark* is placed on a living being, the effect gradually fades in about a month.

*Mage's marks* are extremely hard to forge, even with illusions, and each one created is unique to that caster.

### **Manifest Shield/Weapon**

**Duration:** Until Dispelled

**Range:** Personal

This spell causes a shield or weapon made of transparent energy to materialize in the caster's hand, using the game statistics as said object. The equipment must be something the caster is proficient with and be aware of its existence. Should a spellcaster wish to use this cantrip to manifest two weapons in each hand or a shield and a weapon, they must prepare this cantrip twice. Two-handed weapons count as one cantrip for these purposes.

In spite of being a spell, manifested weapons do not count as magical for the purposes of damage resistance and immunity. Actual, permanent magic weapons are required for this.

### **Mending**

**Duration:** Instantaneous

**Range:** 10 feet

This cantrip makes minor repairs to objects of up to 5 cubic feet in size. It is capable of removing minor levels of rust, straightening out bends, fusing cracks and splits back together on small objects, and the like. It is up to the Referee's discretion on the extent of the repairs, but as a guideline it can equal the effort of an hour's worth of work by a trained artisan with proper tools or restore 1d4 hit points worth of damage to an object.

Repeated castings on the same equipment or piece of material have no further effect until at least 24 hours have passed.

### **Message**

**Duration:** 1 turn

**Range:** 100 feet

This spell allows the caster to whisper long-range messages to a single target within the spell's range and line of sight. You cannot carry a two-way conversation unless the subject also has this cantrip prepared. This cantrip can be prepared twice to affect as many targets within the spell range as the caster wishes.

### **Parlor Tricks**

**Duration:** 1 hour

**Range:** 10 feet

Upon casting, this cantrip allows the caster to perform minor harmless tricks. These can be all sorts of miscellaneous magical effects, but are severely limited in what they can do. Here are some guidelines:

Illusions are transparent and obviously unreal, and can only be 1 cubic foot in size or less.

Only 1 pound of material can be moved, cleaned, soiled, recolored, or have its temperature mildly changed.

Created objects can only weigh up to 1 pound and are too fragile and of poor quality to be used as proper tools or be passed off as the real thing.

The effects of this cantrip, be it creation, illusions, or alterations, only last for 1 hour.

### **Spellbolt**

**Duration:** Instantaneous

**Range:** 30 feet

The spellcaster's finger or held implement (holy symbol, wand, etc) fizzles with energy which can be used as a ranged weapon against a target within 30 feet. It deals 1d6 points of damage and its visual effects can be versatile (screaming skulls, acidic balls, etc), but it does not deal any special type of damage. Once learned, this form is always the same. If the spellcaster wishes to manifest different kinds of visual effects with every casting, they can prepare this cantrip twice.

### **Succor**

**Duration:** 1 turn

**Range:** Touch

This cantrip partially alleviates some pain in the target, granting them 1 hit point. This merely dulls the pain of wounds, and this hit point vanishes at the end of the cantrip's duration. Once cast upon a target, further uses of succor do not work until the previous casting's duration ends.

## **New Spells**

### **Animate Shadows**

**Level:** Unseen 6

**Duration:** 1 round per level

**Range:** 240'

This spell affects an area in a 40 foot radius around the target point. All shadows and darkness within that area animate and become hostile to all but the spellcaster. Anyone entering the area must make a saving throw or be immobilized by the grappling shadows, suffering a -6 on all attack rolls and a +4 penalty [-4 if ascending] to their armour class. Even those making the saving throw have their movement rates halves and suffer a -2 penalty on attack rolls while within the area of effect.

### **Antipathy/Sympathy**

**Level:** Mage-knight 4, Magic-User 8, Unseen 6

**Duration:** 2 hours per level

**Range:** 30'

The caster causes an object or location to emanate magical vibrations that repel or attract either a specific kind of intelligent creature or creatures of a particular alignment, as defined by the caster. The kind of creature to be

be affected must be named specifically, or specific alignment to be repelled must be named.

*Antipathy* - Creatures of the designated kind or alignment feel an overpowering urge to leave the area or to avoid the affected item. A compulsion forces them to abandon the area or item, shunning it and never willingly returning to it while the spell is in effect. A creature that makes a successful saving throw can stay in the area or touch the item but feels extremely uncomfortable doing so. This distracting discomfort reduces the creature's DEX score by 1 point per round, to a maximum of 4 points.

*Sympathy* - Creatures of the specified kind or alignment feel elated and pleased to be in the area or desire to touch or to possess the object. The compulsion to stay in the area or touch the object is overpowering. If a saving throw is successful, the creature is released from the enchantment, but a subsequent save must be made 1d6 turns later. If this save fails, the affected creature attempts to return to the area or object.

### **Bad Luck**

Level: Unseen 5

Duration: See below

Range: 60'

If the target fails his saving throw against this spell, every time he makes a saving throw in the future he must make two saving throws and take the worst result. This spell remains in effect until the target makes a number of saving throws equal to the caster's level.

### **Blood Biography**

**Level:** Cleric 3, Mage-knight 2, Magic-User 3, Unseen 3

**Duration:** Instantaneous

**Range:** Touch

You learn the answers to a specific set of questions about a creature so long as you have access to at least one drop of its blood. You can cast this spell on the blood of the living or the dead, but living or undead creatures are entitled to a saving throw to resist the spell. You can cast the spell on dried or fresh blood. Once you cast the spell the answers to the following four questions appear on any flat surface you designate (a wall, a piece of paper, and so on).

- Who are you? (The name by which the creature is most commonly known)
- What are you? (Gender, race, profession/role)
- How was your blood shed? (Brief outline of the events that caused its wound, to the best of the victim's knowledge)
- When was your blood shed?

These answers always appear in a language you can read even if the creature cannot speak that or any language.

### **Bone Field**

**Level:** Mage-Knight 2, Unseen 2

**Duration:** 1 minute per level

**Range:** 60'

Regardless of the material of the local floor or ground, it sprouts small fragments of bone that seem to push up through it. The spell affects a 5 foot by 5 foot area per level of the caster. Any time someone moves into an area affected by this spell or spends a round fighting while standing in such an area, they must make a saving throw against paralysis to avoid stepping on the bone fragments. Failure causes 1d4 physical damage (treat as a magic weapon).

### **Concealing Fog**

**Level:** Unseen 5

**Duration:** 2 hours

**Range:** 600' radius

A heavy fog settles over an area outdoors as indicated above. Within this area, visibility drops to 20', and all movement is divided by 2. This is otherwise treated as the magic-user version of *control weather*.

### **Confess**

**Level:** Cleric 3

**Duration:** 1 round per level

**Range:** 30'

You ask the target creature a single question. On the subject's next action, it must answer truthfully in the same language as the question or take 1d6 points of damage per level of the caster and take a -2 penalty on attack rolls and saving throws for the duration.

### **Crescendo**

**Level:** Bard 3

**Duration:** Instantaneous

**Range:** 30' radius

The caster produces a high-pitched note. Targets within range take 1d6 damage per level of the cast, and fragile objects with a low natural resonance (crystals, glass, etc) shatter. A successful saving throw means that the target takes only half damage.

### **Daggers of Nur**

**Level:** Unseen 6

**Duration:** 1 round per level

**Range:** 360'

This spell conjures a dancing cloud of tiny daggers, one per level of the caster. The caster immediately assigns the daggers to any opponents within range, dividing them up as he pleases. The daggers attack the round summoned and again each round thereafter. Each dagger attacks as the caster does with a +2 bonus, and deals

damage per attack. They will continue to attack each round, even once the target is slain. They move at a speed of 120' (as an unarmored human) to follow their target, but will not move more than 360' from the caster. The caster can take a round to reassign the targets for all the daggers.

### **Dancing Lights**

**Level:** Magic-User 1st Level

**Duration:** 1 round per level

**Range:** 0

A magic-user may create up to four lights that resemble lanterns or torches (and cast that amount of light), or up to four glowing spheres of light (which look like will-o'-wisps), or one faintly glowing, vaguely humanoid shape. The dancing lights must stay within a 10-foot-radius area in relation to each other but otherwise move as you desire. The lights have a Movement rate of 18. A light winks out if the distance between you and it exceeds 400 feet.

A magic-user can only have one dancing lights spell active at any one time. Dancing lights can be made permanent with a permanency spell. If you make this spell permanent, it does not count against the limit of one spell active at a time.

### **Danse Macabre**

**Level:** Bard 4th

**Duration:** Concentration or until dispelled

**Range:** 60' radius

This spell takes the form of a recited song or tale, taking 1 round to cast. Upon completion, all undead within range of the spellcaster feel an overwhelming compulsion to dance for the duration of the spell. Mindless undead are automatically affected, while intelligent undead can resist with a saving throw. Dancing undead have a 50% chance per round to fight or cast spells normally, otherwise they spend the entire round dancing. Regardless of the result, dancing undead can only move at half speed.

The caster can only affect a number of undead whose total Hit Dice is twice his own.

### **Detect Poison\***

**Level:** Mage-Knight 1, Unseen 1

**Duration:** 1 hour

**Range:** 60'

For the duration of this spell, the caster can see a magical glow on any item or creature within 60' that is poisoned, poisonous, or that contains poison. It also detects green slime and other hostile molds and fungi.

\*The version of this spell in *the Complete Vivimancer* differs slightly. It lasts 1 turn per level, has a range of 10', and has a 5% chance per level of detecting the exact type of venom.

### **Dimensional Anchor**

**Level:** Cleric 4, Magic-User 4

**Duration:** 1 turn

**Range:** 100'

A green ray springs from the caster's hand. A target hit by this spell is covered with a shimmering emerald field which completely blocks dimensional travel. Forms of dimensional travel include astral spell, dimension door, maze, rope trick, teleport, and similar spells and abilities.

A dimensional anchor does not interfere with the movement of creatures already in ethereal or astral form when the spell is cast, nor does it block extradimensional perception or attack forms. Also, *dimensional anchor* does not prevent summoned creatures from disappearing at the end of a summoning spell.

### **Disappear**

**Level:** Unseen 4

**Duration:** 1 turn or until dispelled

**Range:** 0

Unlike most spells, *disappear* can be cast in a mere instant – allowing the caster to perform other actions on the same round. This spell is identical to the invisibility spell except for the duration and casting time.

### **Disguise**

**Level:** Unseen 1

**Duration:** 2 hours

**Range:** Touch

This spell changes the appearance of the targeted creature to that of someone else of approximately the same size. If used to imitate a specific person, everyone seeing the illusion gets a saving throw to see through the illusion. Otherwise, the disguise can only be saved against by someone given a good reason to suspect that the target of the spell is disguised.

### **Elemental Beam**

**Level:** Druid 2, Mage-knight 2, Magic-User 2

**Duration:** Instantaneous

**Range:** 120'

The caster points their finger towards a target within range, doing 2d6 points of damage on a successful attack roll. When the caster prepares this spell, they must choose whether it takes the form of air, earth, fire, or water. If a creature is particularly weak to said element (an ice being getting hit by fire), they take 4d6 points of damage instead.

### **Enter Image**

**Level:** Magic-User 3, Unseen 2

**Duration:** until concentration ends

**Range:** 200'

You gain a dim impression of the activities around any object bearing your face or form and can also project your consciousness into one such object at a time, allowing you to observe or even interact with nearby creatures. This spell allows you to leave your body and subconsciously monitor the immediate area around any depiction of your image whether one, hundreds, or even thousands. Each such image has the full range of your normal senses (sight, hearing, smell, etc).

When you fill an image with your consciousness it gains a limited form of animation. Statues and similar three-dimensional representations can move their heads, make gestures, and talk, but cannot attack or leave their square without assistance.

Portraits or similar two-dimensional representations bearing your likeness can also talk and your image can move anywhere within the picture or even temporarily alter it (such as by picking a flower in the painting). You cannot use any spells or other abilities while within an image.

You may leave the image at any time, returning you to your body. Once your consciousness departs from an object bearing your likeness, it immediately reverts to the appearance it had before you entered it. If someone destroys or damages the image you return to your body unharmed.

### **False Image**

**Level:** Unseen 4

**Duration:** 1 hour per level

**Range:** 40' radius

Any divination (scrying) spell or device used to view or hear anything within the area of this spell instead receives a false response, as defined by the caster at the time of casting. As long as the duration lasts, the spellcaster can concentrate to change the image as desired. While not concentrating, the image remains static.

### **Fleetness**

**Level:** Mage-knight 2, Unseen 2

**Duration:** 1 turn per level

**Range:** Personal

This spell increases the caster's movement rate(s) by 50%.

### **Fluid Form**

**Level:** Unseen 4

**Duration:** 1 turn per level

**Range:** Personal

The caster and his equipment melt into a liquid form that has the same volume as his normal form. (A normal humanoid creature creates a 5 ft. square pool.) You become amorphous; gaining immunity to poison, sleep, paralysis, polymorph, and stunning effects. If already poisoned, *fluid form* does not prevent the poison effects.

### **Flurry of Projectiles**

**Level:** Mage-knight 4, Unseen 5

**Duration:** 1 round

**Range:** Personal

After casting this spell, the next projectile attack (thrown weapon or launched projectile) made by the caster is multiplied into a flurry of similar projectiles. The new projectiles are non-magical (so if cast and then throwing a magical dagger, the flurry will be of non-magical daggers). The spell creates an additional projectile per two caster levels. The caster can select different targets for each projectile as long as they are all within the normal range of the weapon.

### **Good Cheer**

**Level:** Bard 1

**Duration:** 8 hours

**Range:** 60' radius

After casting this spell, those resting near the bard find their spirits uplifted. When recovering damage naturally from uninterrupted rest, a character heals 1 hit point plus 1 hit point per level of the bard provided they remain within the spell's radius. For example, someone resting while under the benefit of this spell cast by a fifth-level bard heals 6 hit points per day.

### **Instant Summons**

**Level:** Magic-User 7

**Duration:** Instantaneous

**Range:** Infinite

The caster calls some nonliving item from virtually any location directly to his hand. First, the caster must place a mage's mark on the item. The item must not be more than roughly 3' long nor weigh more than 8 pounds. Then the spell is cast, which magically and invisibly inscribes the name of the item on a gem worth at least 5,000 gp. Thereafter, the caster can summon the item by speaking a special word (set by the caster when the spell is cast) and crushing the gem. The item appears instantly in the caster's hand.

Only the caster can use the gem in this way. If the item is in the possession of another creature, the spell does not work. The item can be summoned from another plane, but only if no other creature has claimed ownership of it.

### Keen Ear

**Level:** Bard 1, Unseen 1

**Duration:** 1 hour

**Range:** Touch

The subject gains the ability to hear sounds as a level 3 thief (4 in 6 chance). If the character already has the ability to hear noise at an exceptional level, this grants a further +1 better on a d6 chance on his hear sounds checks.

### Mass Disguise

**Level:** Unseen 4

**Duration:** 1 turn per level

**Range:** 30'

This spell changes the appearance of the targeted creatures within the area of effect (up to 2 creatures per level of the caster) to that of someone else of approximately the same size – each person takes on a different appearance as determined by the caster. If used to imitate a specific person, everyone seeing the illusion gets a saving throw to see through the illusion. Otherwise, the disguise can only be saved against by someone given a good reason to suspect that the target of the spell is disguised.

### Phantasmal Killer

**Level:** Magic-User 5

**Duration:** 1 round

**Range:** 100'

A magic-user may create a phantasmal image of the most fearsome creature imaginable to the victim. Only the spell's subject can see the *phantasmal killer*, a vague shape of doom. The victim first gets a special save to recognize the image as unreal. The victim must roll 3d6 and score under their intelligence attribute. If that save fails, the phantasm touches the subject, and another (normal) save must be made or the victim dies from fear. Even if the second save is successful, the subject takes 3d6 points of damage.

If the victim of a *phantasmal killer* attack succeeds in disbelieving and possesses telepathy, the beast can be turned upon you. You must then disbelieve it or become subject to its deadly fear attack.



Art by Matt Morrow

### **Phantom Trap**

**Level:** Magic-User, 1st Level

**Duration:** permanent or until dispelled

**Range:** Touch

A magic-user makes a lock or other small mechanism seem to be trapped to anyone who can discover traps. The spell is placed upon any small mechanism or device, such as a lock, hinge, hasp, cork, cap, or ratchet. Any character able to detect traps, or who uses any spell or device enabling trap detection, is certain a real trap exists. Of course, the effect is illusory and nothing happens if the trap is “sprung”; its primary purpose is to frighten away thieves or make them waste precious time.

If another *phantom trap* is active within 50 feet when the spell is cast, the casting fails.

### **Righteous Castigation**

**Level:** Bard 2

**Duration:** 1d6 turns

**Range:** 30'

The caster condemns the target for their shortfalls and misdeeds, real or imagined. If the target fails a saving throw, they suffer a +2 penalty (-2 if ascending) on Armor Class as they're rattled by the words. Mindless beings and those of pure evil, such as demons, have no shame or conscience and are immune to this spell.

### **Skinwalking**

**Level:** Unseen 3

**Duration:** 3 hours per level

**Range:** Touch

Through this spell, a person can take on a full semblance of someone they have slain. The caster must peel off the skin of the victim and then the target of the spell must wear it on his face when cast. The target gains a perfect visual disguise of the slain individual, in addition to their voice and intonation, tics, mannerisms and so on. The spell can be dispelled by the target by removing the skin. The skin, once removed from the victim, will be functional for this spell for 2 weeks.

### **Song of the First Era**

**Level:** Bard 1

**Duration:** Instantaneous

**Range:** Personal

This spell takes the form of a recited song or tale, taking 3 rounds to cast. Upon completion the bard makes an Intelligence roll in regards to recalling information, treating their attribute as 4 points higher for this purpose. If successful, a part of the performance provides an insightful piece of lore relevant to the situation at hand.

### **Song of the Hopeful Knight**

**Level:** Bard 1

**Duration:** Concentration or until dispelled

**Range:** 60' radius

This spell takes the form of a recited song or tale, taking 1 round to cast. Upon completion the caster and all allies within range gain a +1 bonus to attack rolls. This bonus persists for as long as the bard concentrates or until the spell is dispelled.

### **Song of the Last Great Hero**

**Level:** Bard 6

**Duration:** Concentration or until dispelled

**Range:** 30'

This spell takes the form of a recited song or tale, taking 1 round to cast. Upon completion a spectral spirit of 16 HD appears, who was a renowned mortal in their old life. The spirit obeys the cast only for as long as the caster concentrates on it, after which they will disincorporate and return to their home plane.

**Last Great Hero:** HD 16; AC 3 [16]; Atk Spectral weapon or spell ray (3d6); MV Fly 15; SV 4; AL Same as caster; CL/XP N/A; Special Undead Traits

### **Song of the Stalwart Companions**

**Level:** Bard 2

**Duration:** Concentration or until dispelled

**Range:** 60'

This spell takes the form of a recited song or tale, taking 1 round to cast. Upon completion the caster and all allies within the radius gain morale (if said ally is not a player character) and gain a +2 bonus on saving throws versus spells and effects which would cause fear or alter their mental state such as *charm person* and *confusion*. If any allies are under said effects when the spell is cast, they immediately gain a new saving throw to resist.

### **Spider Climb**

**Level:** Druid 1, Mage-Knight 1, Magic-User 1, Unseen 1

**Duration:** 1 round plus 1 round/level

**Range:** Touch

The subject can climb and travel on vertical surfaces or even traverse ceilings as well as a spider does. The affected creature must have its hands and feet free and bare to climb in this manner. Any objects weighing fewer than 5 pounds cling to the spell recipient's hands. This spell may be used on another being (touch required) with no saving throw.

### **Spore Blast**

**Level:** Druid 4

**Duration:** 1 round/level

**Range:** 240 feet

This spell conjures a cluster of fungal spores anywhere within range. The spores can be triggered to explode at any time in the spell's duration from the second round onwards (and will explode automatically once the duration ends), causing 1d6 damage to any creatures within 20'. Creatures in the blast radius must also make a saving throw (counts as poison for race and class bonuses) or die from choking in 6 rounds.

### **Swarm Transformation**

**Level:** Druid 4, Magic-User 5

**Duration:** Special

**Range:** Personal

Upon casting this spell, the caster instantaneously transforms into a swarm of spiders or insects. While in swarm form, the caster has Movement 8 and can choose to attack by engulfing victims in a 10' area who suffer 2 hp damage per round. The caster is immune to normal damage, but can be harmed by fire, spells, or area attacks. Victims can choose to forgo all other actions, including movement, to reduce the swarm's damage to 1.

The caster remains in swarm form as long as he wishes or until death. Any damage inflicted on the swarm is reflected on the caster's body when he returns to normal. Once the caster has returned to his normal form, the spell ends.

### **Tongues**

**Level:** Bard 2, Magic-User 3

**Duration:** 1 hour per level

**Range:** Touch

The target of this spell gains the ability to speak and understand any verbal language, but not to read or write it.

### **Unseen Coin**

**Level:** Unseen 3

**Duration:** Permanent

**Range:** Touch

After casting this spell on a gold coin, the unseen can give it to anyone. When the holder of the coin wishes to contact the unseen, they must throw the coin into the air and call out the name the unseen gave them. The coin vanishes, and reappears in the unseen's pocket, giving him a brief mental image of the person who wishes his services. No message may be conveyed by this spell.

**Water Walk**  
**Spell Level:** Cleric 4th Level; Druid 3rd Level  
**Duration:** 1 hour  
**Range:** touch

The spell-caster can tread on any liquid as if it were firm ground. Mud, oil, snow, quicksand, running water, ice, and even lava can be traversed easily, since the subjects' feet hover an inch or two above the surface. Creatures crossing molten lava still take damage from the heat because they are near it. The subjects can walk, run, or otherwise move across the surface as if it were normal ground.

If the spell is cast underwater (or while the subjects are partially or wholly submerged in whatever liquid they are in), the subjects are borne toward the surface at a Movement rate of 24 until they can stand on it.

### Treasured Tomes




*Art by Jacob Blackmon*

The written word is the pre-eminent source of information in a pre-industrial world, and settlements with access to libraries are capable of imparting many useful skills to the literate. Historical treatises, duelist's manuals, and almanacs are but a few such resources available to readers.

**Rules:** A treasured tome is capable of providing a substantial in-game benefit to a character who regularly consults its pages. As most adventuring parties travel regularly, a character must either have a treasured tome on their person or read it for at least 30 minutes once a day in order to retain its abilities. Unless otherwise noted, most of these books weigh 1 pound.

On the following page is a list of sample books for PCs to find and use. Feel free to use the following as guidelines in making your own!



**Aris Blackheart's Guide to the Spawn of Chaos:** This bestiary includes black-and-white illustrations accompanied by a monster hunter's notes on all manner of foul beings. Whenever encountering a new creature of Chaotic alignment, the reader has a 25% chance of recognizing the being's race as well as a single piece of relevant information about it (Referee's discretion). *Price:* 500 gold pieces.

**Chirurgeon's Textbook:** Specializing in the anatomy of humans, demihumans, and some humanoids, this anatomical guide is a boon to doctors and necromancers alike. The reader gains a +2 bonus on all rolls related to medical and harvesting activities with the aforementioned creature types, and can restore 1d4 hit points worth of damage to a subject once per day with an hour's worth of time. *Price:* 150 gold pieces.

An alternative is the **Veterinarian's Textbook**, which does the same except restricted to common domesticated animals and more than a few wild ones. *Price:* 60 gold pieces.

**Cryptography Guide:** Dedicated to the creation and deciphering of hidden messages. The reader has a 50% chance of uncovering the hidden meanings of codes if given at least two hours of time with a document of reasonable length (1 to 4 pages). Retries can be made, but consume more time. *Price:* 200 gold pieces

**The Doctrine of Law:** Dedicated to the extraplanar forces of justice, civilization, and holiness, this tome offers many lessons of wisdom to give the reader a solid moral footing. The reader gains a +2 bonus on all saving throws against spells and effects which would force her to commit evil acts via enchantment or possession. *Price:* 400 gold pieces


**Duelist's Manual:** Written by an expert in a certain weapon style, the reader is considered proficient in a single type of weapon. If the user is already proficient in said weapon, then she gains a +1 on to-hit rolls whenever using it in combat. *Price:* 400 gold pieces.

**Folk Charms & Hearth Wisdom:** A collection of village superstitions and herbal cures. The reader gains a +2 bonus on rolls related to treating and recovering from minor maladies and afflictions (aches and pains, hangovers, etc). *Price:* 75 gold pieces.

**The Hidden Gates of Avalon:** Claiming to be an escaped prisoner from a Seelie lord's castle, the author of this tome details the traits common to portals of the fey realms. The reader benefits from constant detect magic and see invisibility but only for the purposes of perceiving fey creatures as well as gateways and paths to Faerie. *Price:* 750 gold pieces.

**Hunter's Handbook:** This book details the behavior, biology, and habitats of animals and plants common to a region. The reader gains a +2 bonus on all rolls related to hunting and surviving in the wilds. *Price:* 100 gold pieces.

**Journeyman's Notebook:** This book details the knowledge needed to work a trade at a basic level. This covers all sorts of professions and whose names can vary, from cookbooks to agricultural almanacs. *Price:* 100 gold pieces.



**Secrets of the Pactmaster:** Said to be written by an archmage who commanded an army of Chaos beings, this tome touches upon extraplanar lore and the hidden desires of the entities of alien worlds. The reader gains a +2 bonus on all rolls related to bargains, negotiations, threats, and discerning the motives of otherworldly beings.

*Price:* 250 gold pieces.

**Translation Dictionary:** Dedicated to two languages, usually Common and another tongue, a translation dictionary allows for limited fluency in a language. The reader is capable of speaking in the language on a basic level with this tome on hand. *Price:* 100 gold pieces.

**The Wonders of Dwarven Architecture:** A collection of maps, geometry, and common underground building techniques. The reader can perform advanced mathematical equations with the mental speed of an abacus or electronic calculator. Additionally, they can make accurate judgements as to likely rooms inside buildings (“... ideally the latrine would be placed here, as the air currents in this section would prevent the smell from going around too much...”) *Price:* 500 gold pieces.

## Chapter 3, Hidden Flames: The Secrets of Firetongue Academy

This chapter details the layout of the school and the personalities of its denizens. Although the PCs have the opportunity to make their way in the world as they please, Firetongue Academy should serve as an attractive home base and place to conduct research and experiments among understanding peers. Beyond that, several plot hooks and locations within the school are provided to serve as an interesting place for adventures as well!

**Note on Stat Blocks:** Throughout this chapter and the rest of the book, certain characters have a stat block in the event such becomes necessary. Although made with *Swords & Wizardry* in mind, the intercompatibility of most OSR games means they should work with most others.

**HD** stands for Hit Dice, usually a d8 unless otherwise noted; **AC** is Armor Class, with the bracketed entry for games using the ascending system; **Atk** details attack forms usable by the creature and their damage entry in parenthesis; **Move** is movement rate, with 12 representing the speed of a normal unencumbered adult human; **Save** measures the creature's saving throw; **Special** details miscellaneous info; **AL** is alignment, or the creature's moral nature and/or allegiance to the cosmic forces of reality; **CL** stands for Challenge Level measuring an overall threat range, and **XP** for the amount of experience points gained upon overcoming the creature.

HD; AC []; Atk; Move ; Save ; Special: ; AL ; CL/XP

### People of Firetongue Academy

**Average Apprentice:** HD 1d4 hp; AC 9 [10]; Atk Spellbolt (1d6) or unarmed (1d3); Move 12; Save 17; Special: Spells or Cantrip; AL Any; CL/XP A/5

Most Firetongue students are adolescents just old enough to earn a trade, yet not old enough to master more than an inkling of arcane power. Most of them are only capable of casting a single cantrip or 1st-level spell if that, the latter of which can be determined randomly by rolling a 1d6 for Cleric or 1d10 for a Magic-User on the *Swords & Wizardry* Core Rules tables for class spells. In spite of the occasional rogue elemental or unraveled spell, most apprentices do not carry weapons or wear armor, trusting in their more experienced peers and teachers to handle any large-scale trouble.

**Golden Claw Member:** HD 2d6 hp; AC 8 [11]; Atk Spellbolt (1d6), unarmed (1d3) or by spell; Move 12; Save 16; Special: Spells or Cantrip; AL Any; CL/XP 1/15

Students who braved the dungeons beyond the Dark Gates number among Firetongue Academy's best-learned, and can be spotted by the golden emblems pinned to the front of their robes. Members of the Order of the Golden Claw usually have one or two 1st-level Cleric or Magic-User spells on hand and can be as high as 3rd level in a spellcasting class.

**Magical Helper:** HD 1d4 hp; AC 9 [10]; Atk strike (1d3); Move 9; Save 15; Special (choose two): Flight Move 12, Magic Resistance 20%, Polyglot (speak all languages), or Tiny (mouse-sized); AL Any; CL/XP A/5

From familiars to animated furniture, Magical Helpers are a broad category of sapient assistants who help out the Firetongue mages in their daily duties. They're unsuited to combat, instead specializing in things such as tome translation, courier services, on-hand call for classrooms, and the like.

**Parched Clan Necromancer:** HD 3d4 hp; AC 7 [12]; Atk Spellbolt (1d6), serrated dagger (1d4) or by spell; Move 12; Save 14; Special: Animate Bones, spells or cantrip; AL N or C; CL/XP 1/15

Necromancers of the Parched Clan are capable of speaking in their own language (Parched Tongue) and know of dark rites shared only among their kind. They usually have one cantrip and one 1st-level spell prepared, and are capable of animating tiny bones to scratch at and distract opponents, dealing 1d3 damage and imposing a -1 penalty on attack rolls and saving throws on a successful hit.

**Aldora Bentsen (Professor):** Aldora Bentsen grew up in a distant city by the sea. Her parents wanted her to take up fishing, but she wished to be an artist. Although her work was diligent and improved over time, she never made a comfortable living doing so. She had to work another job as a bricklayer, which cut into her creative time and atrophied her skill.

When it seemed that she would not be able to make it through the month, she went out to a tavern and spent her money on a particularly volatile, experimental cocktail drink brewed by an alchemist. In addition to getting drunk, she saw things...and when she focused, these things seemingly came to life! Aldora's magical talents awoken!

Realizing that she had little left for her in her hometown, Aldora traveled the lands. She heard tales of a distant academy of magic in Frelundia. After proving her worth to Larius' circle, she earned the role of Gem Spire's keeper!

Bentsen's teaching method goes more for inspiration and feel over rote memorization, although when it comes to summoning she's very insistent that the students are careful in who they call forth and to treat all entities with respect. She is absent all throughout the night, locked within her room in the tower's top, strange lights and sounds emanating from within.

**Aldora Bentsen:** HD 4; AC 7 [12]; Atk Dazzling Ray (1d8); Move 12; Save 13; Special: Artistry Spells, cast spells as 4th-level magic-user; AL N; CL 4/XP 60

**Dazzling Ray:** This is an attack with a range of 30 feet. Those struck must roll a saving throw or be disoriented, suffering a -4 penalty on attack rolls and tasks requiring manual dexterity or perception for 3 rounds.

**Artistry Spells:** Aldora's *phantasmal force* spell can be imbued into a work of visual art. This causes the artwork to seemingly come to life, lasting indefinitely or until dispelled.

**Goatmaster (Staff):** Emily Pointet was an affluent merchant who spent many a night playing games of all sorts at roadside inns, coffeehouses, and taverns. Her travels exposed her to many board and card games, and whenever she became too skilled at one she sought to find new games and variations to keep her mind sharp.

One day Emily earned the ire of a man she short-changed in a business transaction, and this man happened to be a sorcerer of no small talent. He changed her into a goat, and for the next several years she spent a miserable existence as the star attraction in a traveling circus' entourage. Emily was know known as the "goat who can play chess!"

When the circus came to Tassilton the mages of Firetongue Academy took a great interest in this goat and quickly determined her true nature. Although unable to find a way to reverse the spell, Emily found a welcome home at the school as the aptly nicknamed "Goatmaster."

**Goatmaster:** HD 1; AC 9 [10]; Atk Horns (1d4); Move 9; Save 17; Special: Master of Games; AL N; CL A/XP 5

*Master of Games:* the Goatmaster has almost never lost a competition involving mental skill. If a game is resolved via a die roll, then she should get a suitably high bonus (+4 for PCs with a d20 roll, or for players needing to roll a 6 if using the d6 method).



Art by Gary Dupuis

**Headmaster Firetongue (Headmaster):** Also known as Larius Firetongue, or simply Headmaster, Larius Firetongue is not even his true name but a self-imposed title so common among archmages and those with the arrogance to match. Hailing from a merchant city-state, Larius Firetongue specialized in the occult disciplines of geomancy, or magic in tune with the land.

During his days as an adventurer, Larius traveled to many places both wondrous and terrible. He noticed a common connection between locations of magical power, that in spite of their vast distances many were linked by invisible networks of flowing magic. After years of study and referencing of maps, Larius discovered a nexus point in the northern realm of Frelundia. It was there he journeyed, and there he saw fit to create a school for arcanists, clerics, shamans, and all practitioners of the magical arts. Once the school amasses a collection of talented spellcasters, Larius hopes to find and claim the nexus point and gain access to unparalleled arcane power.

**Larius Firetongue:** HD 9; AC 4 [15]; Atk flaming sword (2d6); Move 12; Save 7; Special: casts spells as 9th-level Magic-User; AL N; CL 9/XP 1,100

**Melsba (Staff):** At first the guardian of a pharaoh's tomb, Melsba found herself without purpose the day a demonic priest absconded with a sacred tablet and broke it, releasing a thousand years' worth of ghosts into the mortal world. She endlessly scoured for her quarry in the strange new world outside the tomb, knowing that her task was nigh impossible yet still clinging to it.

Larius met the sphinx during his travels and learned of her plight. It turned out Larius met and sealed away a hundred such souls in his many wanderings, far more than Melsba did so far. Feeling humbled, she asked him if he could teach her the ways of magic, and the rest is history.

Melsba acts as the custodian for the school's Circle Library. She is quite adept at her job, willing to lend a hand by flying to shelves too high and precarious for students to reach. She can be found lounging behind the counter, working on crossword puzzles in the school newspaper. Her duty is still ongoing, and sometimes a wary ghost will pass within Frelundia's border. On those days, she asks talented students to help her go "ghost-hunting."

**Melsba:** HD 8; AC 1 [18]; Atk 2 claws (1d8); Move 18 (Fly 24); Save 8; Special: Divination, Dispel Magic at 8th level (3/day); AL N; CL/XP 11/1,700



**Kazia Piontek (Professor):** The Piontek family always had a good relationship with the divine, or the "winged ones" as they called them. Serving as spiritual counselors for their village, their talents were borne from a particularly valuable crop of hallucinogenic plants which allowed people to see into distant planes. Although potentially anyone could do this, only a few souls could earn the respect and trust of the otherworldly entities, and Kazia Piontek's first meeting ended with her as a full-fledged celestial ambassador.

Although a cleric, Professor Piontek sees herself more as a beneficiary than an actual spellcaster, crediting her powers to the angels generous enough to grant them to her. She takes a syncretic view on cosmology, acknowledging that there are many entities out there to forge a bond with, not all of which are traditionally deities. On that note, she is careful to turn students away from what she sees as "dark roads," acting as a counselor as well as a spiritual guide.

In spite of her seeming integrity, Piontek has a dread secret. She has a brother by the name of Marcin in Darkwater City, a mercenary leader dedicated to a fallen angel of war and strife. She and the rest of her family are disgusted with his life choices, and pretend that he doesn't exist. However, Marcin recently learned of her job at Firetongue Academy and plans on making a visit to meet his "dear sister." Marcin knows better than to risk a fight in a mage's college, but if any students mouth him off or say that the Professor has no desire to reunite (PCs are likely contenders, of course), he and his band of goons will ambush them the next time they leave school.

*Art by Matt Morrow*

**Professor Piontek:** HD 5; AC 6 [13]; Atk twin short swords (2d6); Move 9; Save 11; Special: turn undead and cast spells and turn undead as 5th-level cleric; AL L; CL 5/XP 240

**Marcin Piontek:** HD 4; AC 4 [15]; Atk crossbow (1d8) or greatsword (2d6); Move 9; Save 10; Special: cast spells and turn undead as 3rd-level cleric, Weeping Rain; AL C; CL 5/240

*Weeping Rain:* When Marcin drops an opponent to unconscious status or kills them, a dark storm cloud 30 feet in radius appears, centered on himself for 5 rounds. Anyone who does not worship Marcin's patron deity takes 1 point of damage every round they remain within the cloud.

**Marcin's Mercenaries:** HD 1; AC 7 [12]; Atk shortsword (1d6) or crossbow (1d6); Move 9; Save 17; AL C; CL 1/15

**Rennar Yok (Professor):** Astrologist, diviner, and specialist in all things celestial, Professor Yok hails from a mountain tribe whose seers communed with the stars in exchange for insight and good fortune. One day he received a vision of death and magical calamities, but also great glory, should he travel to the "Free Land and find the Fire Tongue." When he came upon Larius and heard of his plan to start an academy for mages, he knew his journey was at an end.

Professor Yok comes off as a pleasant individual when people don't contradict him or prove him wrong, which given the vague subject matter of his specialized class does not happen often (he'll likely twist divinations and prophecies to fit his original interpretation). He has a high opinion of himself and often tells students that one day he'll be standing among Frelundia's greatest.

Many folk take this in good fun, but Professor Yok's ego has a dark side to it; he nurses private grudges against Headmaster Firetongue and the other teachers for urging caution and cooperation for risky rituals and ventures. It's only due to his seemingly limitless energy and divinations that he's not exiled from the school, but he's secretly gathering dangerous magic and fawning apprentices to help stage a coup against the school's leaders.

**Professor Yok:** HD 4; AC 6 [13]; Atk Dark Star (1d8); Move 9; Save 13; Special: Cast spells as 3rd-level Magic-User, Dark Star, Dire Astrology; AL C; CL 5/XP 240

*Dark Star:* Due to a pact with fell powers, Professor Yok can conjure a miniature sphere within 60 feet of himself containing the small portion of a destructive essence of a star. It generates a 5 foot radius for 1 combat round, and anyone within must roll a Saving Throw or take 1d8 damage. Dark Star is treated as a spell for the purposes of resisting effects, and Professor Yok can use it an unlimited amount of times per day.

*Dire Astrology:* Once per day Professor Yok can concentrate for one round, prophesizing doom for all who oppose him. Hostile opponents within a 50 foot radius of Professor Yok must succeed on a saving throw or suffer a -2 penalty on attacks and saving throws for 1d6 turns.

**Sebastian Wrenfeld (Professor):** Resident of Lich's Spire and one of Firetongue Academy's necromantic teachers, Sebastian hails from the Parched Clan. The hostile badlands in which they live are avoided by most civilizations for its lack of natural resources, but the tribes who make it their home know much in the ways of magic. He convinced Headmaster Firetongue to transfer many tribal apprentices to the Academy, where they now live under his guidance.

The necromancers studying under him are very loyal and studious, and have more of a close-knit bond between each other due to a shared homeland than the more diverse student body. As a result, the academy's necromancers are one of the largest unofficial power blocs of Firetongue Academy, much to the consternation of all those who fear their brand of magic.

Wrenfeld plans on taking several Parched Clan sorcerers and a few trusted outsiders to a rumored "monster graveyard" in Direblack Swamp. Nobody can confirm anything, but rumors among the student body allege that Sebastian wishes to resurrect the body of an elder beast from the first age.

**Sebastian Wrenfeld:** HD 4; AC 6 [13]; Atk; Move 12; Save 13; Special: cast spells as 4th-level magic-user, animate bones; AL N; CL 5/XP 240

*Animate Bones:* Like other spellcasters of his tribe, Professor Wrenfeld is capable of animating tiny bones to scratch at and distract opponents, dealing 1d3 damage and imposing a -1 penalty on attack rolls and saving throws on a successful hit.



Art by Gary Dupuis

**Sostrate (Student):** Hailing from a distant merchant city-state, Sostrate is a quiet and seemingly emotionless girl. She does not seem to have a clear understanding of social mores in general, which residents initially attributed to cultural differences before finding out that she also acts this way around other southerners. Regardless, she is a dutiful apprentice and quickly rushes to rescue her fellow students from dangerous spells gone awry, so she has the respect of many folk if not necessarily their understanding.

In reality, Sostrate is a clockwork golem powered by internal magic. Her appearance is that of a teenage human girl with olive skin and white hair, but her "blood" is pitch black and any grievous injury has a chance at revealing the cogs and gears beneath her flesh. Sostrate's true nature is something she does not wish to divulge, for fear that her creators may one day find and abduct her.

**Loyalty Bond:** Dr. Jeron ventured far to reclaim his "precious creation," and is none too pleased at the thought of Firetongue's mages discovering her secret. One night a trio of his clockwork spiders will infiltrate one of the towers and send a silent beacon to mentally command Sostrate. She will raise out of bed like a woman possessed and follow them out of the Academy.

Preventing her from leaving will merely cause the good doctor to redouble his efforts. If she's kidnapped, some investigation will lead the PCs to a secret base in Darkwater City home to Dr. Jeron's legion of mechanical soldiers. He will not give up Sostrate without a fight!

**Sostrate:** HD 4; AC 5 [14]; Atk Unarmed (1d8); Move 12; Save 13; Special: Golem; AL L; CL/XP 4/120

*Golem:* Sostrate cannot heal naturally, but spells designed to work on objects work normally on her such as mending. She is also immune to any abilities which specifically affect living creatures.

**Dr. Jeron:** HD 6; AC 6 [13]; Atk syringe (save vs. poison or take 1d8 damage); Move 12; Save 12; Special: Flamethrower, Gadgets; AL C; CL/XP 6/400

*Flamethrower:* Dr. Jeron can emit a 20 foot cone; anyone caught within the area must make a saving throw or take 2d6 points of damage. Unattended flammable objects automatically catch fire. The flamethrower is a piece of equipment, and only holds enough for 6 uses before needing to be refilled (50 gp worth of raw materials per refill).

If a PC desires to target the canister on Dr. Jeron's back, impose a suitable penalty (-3 on the attack roll is a good rule of thumb). Success ruptures the canister, causing it to explode in a 10 foot radius for 3d6 points of damage.

*Gadgets:* Dr. Jeron possesses several steampunk gadgets capable of replicating low-level spells, albeit with a mad science twist (magic missiles are ray guns, summoned monsters are pickled rapidly-growing lab specimens, etc). Dr. Jeron can "cast" up to 6 levels worth of spells per day in this manner. Three 2nd-level spells, two 3rd-level spells, etc

However, such spells take the form of bulky devices; if attacked in combat while casting, the gadget malfunctions and wastes the "spell."

**Clockwork Spider:** HD 2; AC 5 [14]; Atk Pincer-drill (1d4+2); Move 12 Climb 12; Save 16; Special: Golem; AL N; CL/XP 2/30

*Golem:* Clockwork Spiders cannot heal naturally, but spells designed to work on objects work normally on them such as mending. They are also immune to any abilities which specifically affect living creatures.

**Liam Monaghan (Student):** Liam is a member of the Forest Flame, a druidic sect dedicated to the study of alchemy as a better means of understanding phenomena in the natural world. This puts him at odds with his more traditionalist peers who regard the practice as the province of "civilization," although he's among mostly agreeable company at Firetongue Academy.

Liam has a passion for cooking and frequently volunteers at the Academy's herb garden in order to gain access to spices and flavorings for new dishes. He is fond of interrogating students from far-off lands about their local cuisine in hopes of expanding his culinary skill set. Some are more than happy to discuss the matter, although Liam's extreme curiosity can be off-putting to some.

**Loyalty Bond:** Liam is very concerned about the eternal rain over the Green Ruins in the Moonshade Forest. The journey is dangerous for a lone traveler, and most students are not willing to help him out in this endeavor. Should the PCs volunteer to help end the unnatural weather, they'll earn both the druid's respect and trust.

**Liam Monaghan:** HD 2; AC 8 [11]; Atk club (1d6); Move 9; Save 14; Special: casts spells as 1st-level druid, alchemy; AL N; CL 2/XP 30

*Alchemy:* Liam Monaghan has the training to perform the duties of an alchemist. Additionally, he is capable of creating a potion which can replicate the effects of a 1st-level spell, provided he has at least one week of work and 50 gold pieces worth of expendable raw materials. He might be able to concoct potions of a more powerful nature, but that is left to the GM's discretion.

**Midnight Dance Crew (Students):** Sometimes late at night, when the school's halls are empty and only the students of nocturnal races are awake in study, people speak of strange noises outside their dorm rooms. Investigation by staff reveals clear cases of minor sabotage. Painted graffiti, furniture re-arranged in inconvenient positions, rainbow-hued glitter which sticks everywhere, and pranks of a similar nature. Although rare and never dangerous, the messes left behind are not appreciated by staff who have to deal with it.

The culprits are a trio of pixie sisters by the names of Alice, Bellinda, and Lilly. They're students at Firetongue Academy who are enthusiastic at the ability to learn magic, but chafe under the exhaustion of routine labor and study. Their late-night pranks are a way to blow off steam, and often distract watchguards with supernaturally-irresistible dances if they stand a serious risk of getting caught.

The PCs may get involved with the fey trio in a variety of ways. First, they may wish to investigate the pranks themselves in hopes of garnering favor for catching the culprits. They may want to petition the Crew to act as a distraction or inconvenience a rival with their antics. Or they might receive an invitation to a Seelie lord's court and have to compete against them in a magic dance competition for prizes and favors!

**Midnight Dance Crew Member (3):** HD 1d6 hit points; AC 7 [12]; Atk unarmed (1d2); Move 9 (18 fly); Save 15; Special: flight, dance magic; AL N; CL 1/XP 15

*Dance Magic:* A member of the Midnight Dance Crew may perform a special kind of dancing attack. All those within 30 feet must roll a Saving Throw or be fascinated for one round, unable to take any action but to stand and watch. If more than one Dance Crew Member performs a dance in the same round, onlookers take a cumulative -1 penalty on the Saving Throw per dancer beyond the first one.

However, should a character choose to dance back at any point, they gain a +4 bonus on the Saving Throw. Additionally, Crew Members will feel compelled to compete and become distracted themselves.

## Places within Firetongue Academy

**Burning Truth:** On the bottom level of Elder Spire is a room dominated by a huge gnomish machine which smells strongly of iron and ink. Assembled at great expense by gnomes who sought a “more efficient means of disseminating the written word,” this advanced contraption is a primitive printing press capable of producing hundreds of pages a day. Medley Sixglow is the head writer for the Burning Truth, Firetongue Academy’s school newspaper, and has great faith in her device revolutionizing the world.

Still, progress is not easy; paper is at a premium, and although newspapers are recycled she is ever in need for more supplies. There is also the fact she needs to keep abreast of current events in the school and beyond, and she’d pay a pretty copper piece to those who tip her off to things of interest in Frelundia and beyond.

Finally, the scathing critique of rival students and prominent figures in Frelundia might push the envelope too much as the angered subject seeks to take their anger out on the journalist club.

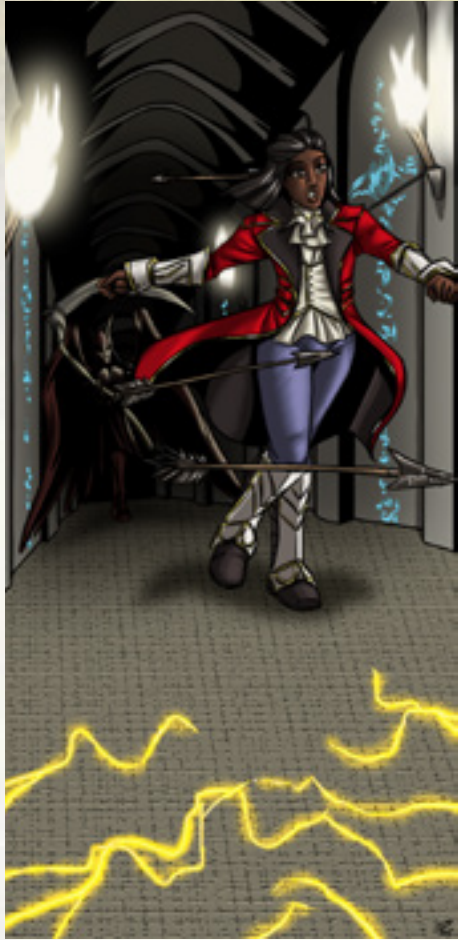
**Celestial Spire:** This white pillar is topped off with an onion-shaped dome at its roof. Home to much of the school’s clerics, the flighty Professor Piontek partakes in the imbibing of hallucinogenic herbs to help her “commune with higher powers.” Much of the tower’s classes involve divine and otherworldly magic, from summoning rituals to short-range teleportation and warding rituals.

Firetongue Academy sees many mages from various cultures and walks of life, yet there’s a continuing debate over religious expression. While Piontek prizes the secrets that can be gleaned from unheard-of divine powers, much of this knowledge is usually gained at a cost. There’s worry over the hidden whispers of malign entities poisoning the well of research.

**Circle Library:** Whatever form it takes, magic is a very cerebral art. Aside from personal spellbooks, Firetongue Academy procured a veritable collection of tomes pertaining to all manner of subjects. Located in the school’s Elder Spire, the Circle Library is so named for its spiral array of rooms whose bookcases gradually bend to the contours of the walls. When asked about this odd architectural design, Belinda the Seer maintains that this helps properly focus the books’ collected magic into a safe and productive alignment.

Those seeking unrivaled access to all kinds of magic will be disappointed; spell scrolls require the permission of one of the Professors or the Headmistress to copy, which is typically doled out to students via a combination of good grades, months or years in attendance, and good ethical behavior in the case of particularly dangerous spells. Outsiders are granted access to the library via a small fee, and rarely gain access to spell scrolls unless they perform some favor for the school. Headmaster Firetongue wishes to keep a tight lid on the accumulation of magical potency in Frelundia, and is not keen on letting potentially dangerous spells get adopted by miscreants and ending up with his Academy blamed for their release.

**Dark Gates:** Located in the northern section of school, a square portion of ground slopes downward to three sets of black adamantine gates. Beyond these gates is a sprawling catacomb of trapped rooms, monster-filled corridors, cursed ruins, and other dangers. The dungeon has a crystal motif in places, with said glowing minerals acting as torches, switches, handles, and other objects of note in areas. A few of them are capable of teleporting those who touch them, which the Headmaster’s inner circle uses to great effect.



*Art by Jacob Blackmon*

When it comes time to test the Firetongue's students, prospective mages line up at each of the gates and are sent off into the dungeons below to grab as much magical trinkets and treasure as they can, the more valuable pieces located in harder and more remote areas. Mages are graded in various ways, from number of conscious teammates, treasure retrieved, foes outsmarted or outmatched, and similar tests. The highest-ranking mages join the prestigious Order of the Golden Claw, whose resources are second to none when it comes to magical research.

Although the dangers are indeed real and not illusions, the Dark Gates' reputation and professor's encouragements of utmost discretion and preparation result in hardly any deaths. This only really applies to students who stay within the regulated zones and don't try anything rash, like ignoring warning runes and dispelling sealed doors...

**Earth Spire:** Seemingly shaped from a giant stalagmite and covered in viney growths, Earth Spire's classes specialize in magic pertaining to the physical world and its properties. Alchemist's labs sit next door to druidic gardens, the latter often supplying supplies for the former's experiments. Elementalists study the properties of matter to better find ways to alter and exploit them. Earth Spire's students tend to have a more practical attitude in the applications of magic, seeing it less as a gift from on-high and more a tool to change the properties of what already is.

The druidic students are more or less split into two groups. The first is the Forest Flame, an order which seeks to better understand nature through

the learning of alchemy and scholarly knowledge. The second group is known as the Preservers, folk who value the benefit of learning about other forms of magic but see it as a means to better counter its influence on the material world. Both agree that large-scale changes to the environment are best avoided, but where they differ is the place of non-druidic magic in the scheme of things. The Forest Flame are seen as either dangerous radicals or weak-willed moderates by their peers, whereas the Preservers are viewed as reactionary at best, anti-magic at worst.

**Elder Spire:** A dark piece of brutalist architecture which looks more at home in a border fortress than a school, the Elder Spire is Firetongue Academy's oldest building. While it used to serve as the school in its entirety, in current days it's a multi-purpose living quarters for staff and administration space, containing offices, financial records, and a rookery for carrier pigeons and a mailing room below one floor.

Larius Firetongue feels that its military aesthetic serves as a fine reminder to the new generation of the school's beginnings, and the dangerous circumstances many mages go through when establishing centers of power.

**Gem Spire:** This cylindrical tower is topped off with a huge, dizzyingly bright green gem. Many newcomers feel nauseated upon first setting foot inside, for the tower's environs are in flux and can appear in different locations seemingly at will. This is a combination of genuine illusion and teleportation magic, which can be bypassed via a protective charm from either Professor Bentsen or one of the other teachers.

Gem Spire's classes revolve around magic pertaining to illusion, space, and the planes. A combination of phantasmal art and extraplanar forces makes the rooms haphazard and wildly different from each other. A classroom filled with fungal gifts from the Domain of Yellow might sit next door to the Fountain Ring containing a portal to the Elemental Plane of Water.

Regardless of the tower's configuration, the central area always remains static. Here, a huge gray slab 50 feet wide on a side and 15 feet tall serves as the "Phantasmal Corner," capable of persisting illusions cast on it for days or even months. Professor Bentsen is lax with what can be put on the Corner, as long as it's not meant to threaten or inflict emotional suffering on passersby (technically abiding by an archaic form of Wil Wheaton's Law).

**Lich's Spire:** This tall, needle-like tower casts a long and narrow shadow across the school grounds. Bats and misshapen flying things swarm about its upper reaches, where the tower thins out and curves like an overgrown fingernail. The walls seem more carved and grown than built, and most students give the place a wide berth.

Necromancers, fleshwarpers, and other mages who delve into the magic of life, death, and undeath call Lich's Spire home. When Larius Firetongue sought a professor versed in death magic, he visited his old friend Sebastian Wrenfeld from the Parched Lands. By this time he was a tribal leader of no small skill, and Wrenfeld offered to become a teacher provided that apprentices from the Parched Clan accompanied him. He accepted, and ever since then the majority of the school's necromancers are drawn from this stock.

Necromancers of the Parched Clan dress in all black with skull, tears, and spider motifs on their clothes along with dark eyeliner and nail polish. They are insular and rarely smile except around close friends and family, making them the rumors of many dark deeds among the rest of the student body.

**Out of Service Restroom:** Sometimes it's nestled at the end of a crooked, cobwebbed hallway in Lich's Spire. Other times it's a mysterious extra door in the dorms. Some even swear they found it off-campus entirely! Whatever location it chooses, its form is the same: a humble door with a restroom runic carving and an "out of service" sign hanging from the doorknob.

The "Out of Service Restroom," as rumor mongering students call it, is a smelly, cramped room with a ghastly howling wind emanating from the hole in the floor. Sometimes a voice speaks from this hole, asking the visitor to bring it all manner of things with little rhyme or reason: a treasured necklace here, a dead animal there. Even those who know better find the voice strangely compelling, and must roll a saving throw or be affected as though by a suggestion spell. Those who give up an object of their own free will are rewarded with a clear vision of an important treasure or item and its relative location.

Who is the voice? Does the voice even really belong to someone, or is it some kind of lingering magical curse or prank? What happens to things tossed down the hole? All of these questions have yet to find an answer, but one thing's for certain: students who obeyed the restroom's advice were blessed with memories of stolen

homework, lost jewelry, and hidden stashes of silver pieces they'd have no means of finding out on their own. Each student met a violent fate as some coincidental force of nature or disaster killed or permanently crippled them. It can't possibly be related...could it?

**Ring of Thorns:** In the southeast corner of campus is a three-foot tall circular thicket where a single sunflower grows in the center of a grassy field. This place was created by members of the Forest Flame to provide magical adepts a safe means of training with potentially dangerous spells, although many students prefer to hold competitive duels and contests against each other.

The sunflower radiates an aura of magic up to the surrounding briar patches. If two or more people state their intent to duel within the circle, the sunflower recedes into the ground as a blue transparent dome shoots up from the thorn bushes. The participants state the terms of the duel, and only when a victor is clear does the dome recede and the sunflower emerges from the ground. While a duel is occurring, potentially lethal blows and spells capable of killing a target are automatically negated as though the attack missed. Such protection can be overcome by a skilled archmage or powerful spells, although this is beyond the means of most Firetongue students...most of the time.

### Wandering the Halls: Encounters in a Magic School

Whether they're aimlessly exploring, chasing or being chased, it's possible that the PCs will stumble into strange rooms and events which can only occur in an academy of the supernatural and otherworldly. Below are 20 sample encounters to spring on your players when you need to kick things up a notch.

**1: Accidental Pervert:** A boy student casts *detect magic* within vicinity of the girls' bathroom or dorm for innocent purposes (like finding a dropped magical trinket). A resident girl thinks he's trying to scry into the area and a fight breaks out.

**2: Aquarium:** A walkway over an expansive tank full of water-dwelling creatures. Might include dangerous mundane and magical animals (sharks, kraken, etc) or even a study room containing students of the aquatic races. Parallel walkways and buoyant platforms serve as terrain features in case of combat and other dramatic scenarios.

**3: Battle Challenge:** A cleric of the god of war, evoker mage, or member of a similarly pugnacious magical tradition challenges one of the PCs to a duel as part of training and/or honoring their patron.

**Battlemage:** HD 3 or equal to PC average; AC 4 [16]; Atk physical strike (1d6) or by spell; SV 14 or 17 minus HD; Special spells as 3rd-level spellcaster or equal level to PC's; Move 12; AL Any; CL/XP 3/60 CL equal to HD

**4: Chatty Specters:** A pair of ghosts are engaged in a vigorously vicious debate and ask the PCs to weigh in. They possess suits of armor to interact with the physical world and to fight each other; PCs who side with one ghost will have the other become hostile to them. For higher-level PCs, have the ghosts able to possess multiple suits of armor at once.

**Possessed Suit of Armor:** HD 1; AC 5[14]; Atk 1 (1d6); Move 8; Save 17; Special: Treated as undead; AL N; CL/XP 2/30



Art by Gary Dupuis

**5: Clean-Up Duty:** The academy's janitor is engaged in battle with a giant, mobile piece of slime. The janitor is ill-equipped to handle this threat (knows one 1st-level spell at best, if at all).

**Slime Monster:** HD 3; AC 7[12]; Atk 1 (1d4); Move 5; Save 13; Special: Blindsight, dissolve; AL N; CL/XP 3/60

*Blindsight:* the Slime Monster can sense its surroundings within 30 feet of itself via a biological sonar.

*Dissolve:* The Slime Monster can eat through any material softer than stone at a rate of 1 foot per round.

**6: Conjurer's Mist:** Room/hall is filled suddenly filled with strange orange fumes. People's breaths take the shape of airy monsters. Every round 1d3 hostile creatures manifest, and the only means of stopping this process is to have all parties hold their breaths or somehow drain the air out of the area.

**7: Defective Artifacts:** This room is chock-full of valuable-looking objects, some of which are stored in crates. These are defective magic items, a few of which are cursed and come to life to attack and disable nearby people.

**Animated Carpet:** HD 1; AC 9[10]; Atk 1 (no damage); Move 6; Save 17; Special: Grab; AL N; CL/XP 1/15

*Grab:* This version of an animated carpet attacks for no damage, but if the target is hit and fails a saving throw, the carpet holds the character, struggling, until a saving throw is successful.

**Animated Chair:** HD 1; AC 8[11]; Atk 1 bump (save or fall); Move 12; Save 18; Special: Knocks over; AL N; CL/XP 1/15

*Knocks Over:* This version of an animated chair bumps against its opponents, with a successful hit causing the target to fall to the ground and take 1 hp damage.

**8: Dreaming Dust:** The PCs stumble into (or accidentally imbibe) a room or container full of powerful hallucinogens. Those affected must roll a saving throw or be affected by phantasmal force effects for 2d6 minutes.

**9: Forest of Limbs:** Huge, near-skeletal hands reach up out of the ground like trees. Hands will grab at unauthorized people passing through (treat it as an attack by a 5 HD creature every round, a successful hit does no damage but target is unable to move for one round).

**10: Hostile Creation:** A summoned monster breaking its seal, an undead or artificial construct rebels against its master, and other maladies threaten students and faculty. Roll on a suitable random encounter table for the nature of the threat, preferably one which leans towards the otherworldly and strange.

**11: Light Mirror:** This roofless room has a giant moveable mirror in the center. At certain points of the day the sunlight reflects off of it, turning into shapes of solidified light such as steps, walls, and bridges. A person can manipulate the mirror to move and create such objects about the area for tactical and mobile advantages.

**12: Portal Prankster:** A mage cast hold portal on an entrance the PCs need to get through at an inconvenient time and is on the other side. Mage offers to dispel the spell if the PCs do some petty or silly task (answer a riddle, get them the cafeteria's last donut, etc).

**13: Risky Lesson:** PCs barge into a classroom as a student or teacher is performing a ritual requiring intense concentration and end up disrupting it, causing the spell to go off on the PCs unless they dodge or dispel in time.

**14: Room of False Doors:** The room has 2d4 identical, evenly-spaced doors among its perimeter. Subtleties in the environment (a tiny scratch, a discarded arrow pointing in one direction, etc) indicate the correct door. Entering the wrong door teleports the person to an identical room.

**15: Scavenger Hunt:** PCs find a box containing a detailed drawing of a piece of yellow licorice tied in an 8-shaped loop along with a message: "Find the box with the licorice for the next clue!"

The box was placed by a teacher as part of a lesson for the locate object spell. The lesson is meant to be cast over the period of several days to help narrow down the overall area. If the PCs take up the hunt, future boxes contain similar innocuous yet unique food items before ending in a minor magical item prize.



Art by Gary Dupuis

**16: Secret Meeting:** At certain predestined times, a student casts a rope trick spell to create a temporary clandestine location for themselves and a few trusted others. It's typical purpose is for activities to perform away from prying eyes. Such things may range from innocent activities like private parties or a lover's rendezvous, or deadlier pursuits such as forbidden magic and consorting with enemies of the school. PCs might be invited or find the portal rope by sheer luck, possibly catching people doing things they shouldn't be doing!

**17: Snooping Students:** A group of 1d4+2 students of a certain clique or social group are trying to break into, steal the contents of, or eavesdrop into a restricted place. If they notice the PCs, they'll panic and try to misdirect or disable them (summoned monsters, sleep spells, etc) but will stop short of murder.

**18: Summoner Fight Club:** Students are summoning monsters to fight on their behalf in a pseudo-tournament fashion, either as a proper lesson or an illegal secret club. The summoned monsters' fight gets out of hand and the PCs get caught in the crossfire. Alternatively PCs capable of summoning spells can enter the tournament for bragging rights and prizes.

**19: Target Practice:** Ideally set in an open area. A cocky elven student decides to test out some long-range spells on passing students, and the PCs will make perfect test subjects!

**Arcane Archer:** HD 5; AC 8 [12]; Atk spellbolt (1d6) or by spell; Move 12; Save 13; Special: cast spells as 5th-level spellcaster. Likely to have long-range and area of effect spells such as continual light, hold person, ice storm, pyrotechnics, and sleep; AL N or C; CL/XP 5/240

**20: Thief in the Night:** a burglar intent on raiding the school's supplies broke into the academy. Unless the PCs are taking pains to hide their presence, the thief might hear them and will try to hide and escape with whatever they stole.

**Thief:** HD 3; AC 5[14]; Atk shortsword (1d6) or crossbow (1d8); Move 15; Save 15; Special: Backstab, skills as 3rd-level Thief; AL N; CL/XP 3/60

### People, Places, & Plots in a Magic School

The following series of tables is meant to populate a magic school with all manner of adventure hooks and material beyond what's previously provided above. Roll randomly, pick and choose, or use the following information as a springboard for ideas of your own. Keep in mind that these section is not exclusive to Firetongue Academy and can work for occult schools of your own design as well!

Student Table:

D12	Magical Specialization	Clique/Subgroup	Special Effect	Complication
1	Alchemy	Artists	Knows all the hidden passageways	Views PC as rival
2	Alteration	Cultural Group*	Tattoos are their spellbook	Curious about PC's exploits
3	Creation	High-Class	Can swap minds with another	Infatuated with PC
4	Curses	Hipsters	Can summon 1d3 monsters 1/day	Spy from rival school
5	Divination	Jocks	Speaks all languages	PC's family are blood-enemies
6	Druidism	Magical Group**	Breath fire for 1d6 damage as ranged attack	Dangerously Paranoid
7	Enchantment	Religious Zealots	Eye stuns target on failed save 1/day	Sells herbal drugs to students
8	Evocation	Rural/Peasants	Teleport 30 feet via shadows	Thinks PC is harbinger of apocalypse
9	Illusion	Scholars	Touch revives dead plant life	Convinced PC is reincarnated hero
10	Necromancy	Slackers	Can see memories by eating corpseflesh	Wants to recruit PCs into cult
11	Runes	Troublemakers	Can see into future (AC 3, +4 on evasion saves)	Wants to learn spell from PC
12	Transmutation	Unaffiliated	Can steal another's luck 1/day (force target to reroll d20)	Wants to steal valuable object from PC

\*: This result covers tight-knit races and communities who'd be inclined to stick together instead of mingling with outsiders.

\*\* : Communities founded around common practitioners of the same magical tradition.

### MacGuffin Table:

The Person is the key figure in the adventure hook. Action describes their intentions regarding the treasure. The Location is where the Treasure can be found or is being held. The Treasure is the central plot point of the adventure hook, and serves as a possible reward.

D12	Person	Action	Location	Treasure
1	The new kid*	Is seeking	Catacombs beneath school	Magic blade
2	Adventuring party	Wishes to destroy	Shrine to an evil god	Elixir of Improvement*
3	Disgraced mage	Is taking by force	Abandoned fortress	Spellbook
4	Monstrous marauder	Wants to protect	Hidden village	Runic stone
5	Teacher*	Stole	Haunted forest	Dragon's skull
6	Temple inquisitor	Is offering	Castle dungeons	Destructive artifact**
7	Cult leader	Is creating	Misty bog	Writings of the Ancients
8	Knight errant	Hid	Underground city	Spirit trapped in object***
9	Student*	Is giving	Mysterious manor	Treasured tome
10	Summoned entity	Wishes to learn secrets	Mausoleum	Ley line wellspring
11	Bandit Leader	Seeks to absorb	Roadside inn	Fountain of Life****
12	Noble	Sacrifice to deity	Dragon's lair	Roll 1d20 on Remarkable Magic Items Table

\*Said to improve a personal attribute, such as youth, strength, wisdom, etc. Increases an appropriate ability score by 1 point permanently

\*\*capable of causing great calamity in the wrong hands

\*\*\*Spirit is a famous figure and/or extraordinarily gifted in a certain area.

\*\*\*\*Capable of bringing back one person from the dead with no level loss. But only once per person.

### Magical Classes Table:

D12	Subject	Teacher...	Mishap	Location
1	Abjuration/ Wards	Is a retired adventurer	Inter-student rivalry	School dungeons
2	Alchemy	Is an extraplanar being	Trapped monster breaks free	Domed building with frescoes
3	Alteration	Is from a fabled land	Room turns upside-down	Garden/ Greenhouse
4	Battle Magic	Is a harsh taskmaster	Furniture comes alive	Open-air court
5	Broomstick Flying	Is sharing body with a spirit	Entire class teleported	On the surface of a pool or lake
6	Charms	Actually a living painting	Harmful spell gains sentience	A doll-sized castle***
7	Divination	Has tattoos all over their body	The classic explosion	On the top of a tower, outside
8	Illusion	A kind, parental figure	Class called to trial by exarchs of Law	Architecturally impossible building
9	Necromancy/ Vivimancy	Prone to mishaps	Freak weather erupts indoors	At night, within student's dreams
10	Otherworldly Realms	Monster known for spellcasting*	Giant monster reaches through portal	Interdimensional Space
11	Pacts & Patrons	Is a spy from a rival school/ group	Outside "regulator" sits in**	Maze whose corridors shift daily
12	Supernatural Zoology	Is secret devotee of Chaos	Class turns into ghosts	Outside school proper, via teleportation circle

\*appropriate choices include djinni, dragons, efreeti, fey of all types, hags, liches, sphinxes, and vampires

\*\*said 'regulator' is part of an organization the school is not on good terms with but can't risk open conflict, such as government and religious institutions.

\*\*\*location has a way of allowing visitors to shrink to appropriate size

### Extracurricular Club Table:

Such clubs may be officially sanctioned electives or informal get-togethers of students with a shared interest.

D12	Club Activity
1	Archery
2	Art
3	Celebrity Fans*
4	Cooking
5	Dueling
6	Historical Reenactment
7	Literary Appreciation
8	Magum Exemplare**
9	Minority Rights***
10	Political Theory/Advocacy
11	Prankster/Troublemakers
12	School Newspaper

\*A fan club for a well-known individual, be they living or dead, or of local, national, or international fame.

\*\*A sort of honor society which seeks to encourage the proper ideals of the school/magical tradition/etc

\*\*\*a support group for students centering around issues related to a disenfranchised or non-dominant social background

### Club Social Structure:

D6	Result
1	Democratically-elected President
2	Chosen by headmaster/teacher
3	Rank determined by grades/merit points
4	Leaderless, majority-vote decisions
5	Every member takes turns at leadership
6	Unorthodox Social Structure*

\*Unorthodox results might be all major decisions determined by the rolling of dice, telepathic hive-mind consensus, using an ouija board to resolve disputes, and other strange methods of organization and resolution

## Chapter 4, The Realm of Frelundia: A Mage-focused Hexcrawl Environment

Frelundia is like many other iconic fantasy realms: a rural setting overseen by a feudal system of government in a temperate climate with many deep caverns and ruins of prior civilizations. It has a greater-than-normal amount of treasures and sites of interest to those versed in the magical arts, such as forgotten libraries, standing stones positioned over potent ley lines, forest glades blooming with valuable plants for spell components and the like. In fact, of most surprise to newcomers is Frelundia's strange terrain; there are few places in the world where an arid desert, lush forest, snowy mountain peaks, and boggy swamp are all within a day's travel of each other. The reason for this is due to the nexus of ley lines converging on one singular point. Being at a magical crossroads brings with it all manner of odd events, creatures, and weather on a rather frequent basis.

This is part of why Larius Firetongue established his school in this domain, so as to reap the bounty which would go unappreciated by unknowing minds. It is not uncommon for hunters and trappers from the Moonshade Forest to gather herbal ingredients to trade to the School in exchange for supplies and magical aid, and some of the more spiritually-minded students make pilgrimages to the Astral Rock. Although this environment has enough opportunity for adventurers of all stripes, it's been designed in mind with PCs who are academy students or have a similar inclination in accumulating magical lore.


**Note:** If you bought this book as a PDF, there are 3 variant maps available for the region as downloadable images as part of the download package; one with only Firetongue Academy and the village of Tassilton as marked features, another with all features save hidden locations, and a third with all the information and correspond location keys for the Referee's use.

An important thing to consider is that with a few exceptions, the majority of the region's interesting features are within one or two day's travel from Firetongue Academy. Not only does this allow for student PCs to return to class in a reasonable timeframe, it allows for a better chance at uncovering Frelundia's secrets without spending in-game weeks or months combing through vast tracts of featureless land.

### Regions

**Desert of the Valiant Rose:** It was said in times long past that the serpent-god Scain fell to earth, his impact eradicating all life in the surrounding realm. Many people believe that this was somewhere in northwest Frelundia, right next to the Foot of the Tyrant. Here a vast desert grows, yet is curiously infested with all manner of snakes, cobras, and other dangerous serpents. This region is known as the Desert of the Valiant Rose, where the eponymous mighty paladin ventured to seal a great evil.

The desert holds many caves, more than a few of them home to expansive tunnel systems with odd arcane runes carved into the floors, walls, and ceilings. Many point to this as evidence of Scain's imprisonment, or some other lingering evil. Whatever the truth, such findings attract religious devotees, scholars, crusaders, and all manner of folk seeking to find something within this scorched land.



**DV-1, City of the Lost Titans:** In the eastern desert, hugging the mountainous Foothills of the Tyrant, is an impressive city of marble and glass. Capable of housing tens of thousands, only a hundred humans and demihumans live within its walls. They are a close-knit bunch known as the Star-dancers, a mystical society who can summon up the spirits of the dead to possess their bodies through rhythmic dance. The Star-dancers chose to live in this ruined city to attend to the needs of the resident spirits, who they claim are the last titans.

Last year Tyrantor's forces attempted to invade the City, only to be repelled by powerful conflagrations of raw magic enacted in a ritual by the Star-dancers. Although victorious, summoning such power led to a spiritual imbalance in the area. More than a few Star-dancers met a grisly demise over the past months as evil spirits breached the veil of the afterlife to run loose in the metropolis' empty streets.

**DV-2, Domain of Scain:** Even those ignorant in the ways of magic would be able to tell that there is foul sorcery at work beneath the desert. Like the veins of a colossal beast, miles of narrow passageways snake around in dizzying directions. Sometimes they exit out into larger caverns, home to stone-carved cities with no occupants. The buildings are all spiral towers of grayish stone, and furniture and tools crumble at the slightest touch. There are runes and sigils everywhere, on the floors, the ceilings, and even in the rock itself if mined open. Attempts at translating them via magic reveal vague phrases and prophecies of dark design: "*beware the blinded tongues,*" "*the reaper walks the northern road,*" and "*your heart is a lie*" are but a few translations obtained by the librarians of Mede who managed to come back alive.

There are some relics here which can be found that do not turn into dust. But they bear the taint of Scain, and are always of a dangerous or macabre nature. Every time they are used or their magic is released into the world, a rune within the cavern disappears. When the last one vanishes, it is said that darkness will befall the world.

**DV-3, Library of Mede:** Within the Desert of the Golden Rose is a most peculiar feature: a huge walled complex upon the top of a plateau. Accessible via a network of trails, the building is a self-sustainable library complete with crops, cattle, and living space.

A devotee of Scain by the name of Mede founded this library as a means to house the research of the arcane runes within the desert's underground. Mede thought it best for her like-minded followers to establish a permanent base of operations in the region instead of risking the delicate task of transporting carved runes out of the desert and to far-away towns. It has been fifty years since Mede passed away, and against all odds her dreams of building a grand library within a holy desert is a reality.

Distrustful of letting these "sacred sites" fall into the hands of Firetongue's mages or the fascist soldiers of Tyrantor, the librarians do not allow travelers past the outlying village and into the complex proper without a sizeable fee.

## Random Encounters in Desert of the Valiant Rose:

1d100 Roll	Result
1-10	1d3+1 Centipedes, Giant (small, lethal)
11-15	1 demon, mane
15-35	1d3 gnolls
36-50	2d6+2 Jackals
51-70	Merchant Caravan*
71-80	1d4 Razor Wings
81-90	Ritualist*
91-100	1d4+1 Skeletons

**Giant Centipede (small, lethal):** HD: 1d2 hit points; AC 9 [10]; Atk 1 bite (0 + poison); Move 13; Save 18; Special poison bite (+4 save or die); AL N; CL/XP1/15

**Demon, Mane:** HD 1; AC 5 [14]; Atk 2 claws (1d2), 1 bite (1d4); Move 5; Save 18; Special: Half damage from non-magic weapons; AL C; CL/XP 2/30

**Gnoll:** HD 2; AC 5 [14]; Atk 1 bite (2d4) or weapon (1d10); Move 9; Save 16; AL C; CL/XP 2/30

**Jackal:** HD 1d4 hp; AC 7[12]; Atk 1 bite (1d2); Move 14; Save 18; AL N; CL/XP A/15

**Merchant Caravan:** A group of merchants is going through the desert to nearby cities for trade. There are 1d6 merchants with 1d4+2 human soldiers acting as guards. The caravan has 400 gold pieces worth of goods, usually of valuable material such as silk, spice, and gemstones.

**Razor Wings:** HD 1; AC 7[12]; Atk 1 beak (1d4), claw (1d4), or razor wing (1d6); Move 9 (Fly 12); Save 17; Special: Swoop attack; AL N; CL/XP 2/30

*Swoop Attack:* anyone acting after the bird's initiative is unable to engage it in hand-to-hand combat.

**Ritualist:** a scholar from the Library of Mede believes that this section of desert is home to a powerful ley line and hopes to draw out its power. Unfortunately said ley line is home to a sealed shadow, which will attempt to attack the nearest living entity. Saving the scholar's life will earn her gratitude and a safe way into Mede.

**Ritualist:** HD 4; AC 7[12]; Atk 1 unarmed (1d3); Move 12; Save 13; Special: cast spells as a 4th-level cleric; AL C; CL/XP 3/60

**Shadow:** HD 2+2; AC 7[12]; Atk 1 touch (1d4 + strength drain); Move 12; Save 16; Special: Drain 1 point str with hit, hit only by magic weapons; AL C; CL/XP 4/120

**Skeleton:** HD 1; AC 8[11] or 7[12] with shield; Atk 1 weapon or strike (1d6) or (1d6+1 two-handed); Move 12; Save 17; Special: Immune to sleep and charm spells; AL N; CL/XP 1/15

**Direblack Swamp:** Southwest Frelundia is home to marshland unsettled by the barony to this day. Whoever (and whatever) lives within the swamp's boundaries is more or less ignored by the outside world except when they cross into nearby lands. In spite of its danger more than a few humans and lizardmen live in crude stilt-villages, making a meager living in harvesting the land's natural resources. Alchemists, mages, and Firetongue Academy students are the only real visitors to Direblack Swamp, searching for potent herbs and fungi in the creation of potions and poultices.

### Locations in Direblack Swamp:

**DS-1, The Collector's Haven:** Eons ago, a terrible war swept the lands, one of the first examples of violence on such a scale. Genocide, desecration of holy spaces, and the sundering of runestones and cave paintings did irreparable damage to the losing tribes. Amid the planes of Law, one of the divine watchers despaired at this suffering. He entered the mortal world with one goal in mind; save as many as possible.

Ever since that day, this divine entity known as the Collector toured the mortal world in a wheeled ethereal fortress. His headquarters phased into the Material Plane when another species was threatened with extinction, when another group of people were at risk of being wiped out, when another library full of priceless irreplaceable books was about to be put to the torch. During these times the Collector's sentinels, giant angular figures wearing porcelain masks, storm out to retrieve the at-risk targets.

Although the Collector's motives are noble, many intelligent beings seized may not view their saviors as truly benevolent. Under no circumstances are 'saved' objects and beings released to their owners or hometowns; to the Collector this will only inevitably put them in harm's way again and make all the work for naught.

As of now the Collector's Haven is docked in Direblack Swamp. He realizes that the region of Frelundia holds much in the way of arcane knowledge, and his diviners speak of a fell presence looming over the lands. The fortress itself is a huge multi-story building with wheels the size of siege towers. Entire communities of long-lost people, libraries, and menageries of extinct animals can be found inside its halls.

Adventurers can get involved with the Collector in any manner of ways. For one, tracking down survivors of a massacred village might point to the Collector as the culprit of the kidnapped people. Perhaps the fortress' massive libraries and menageries hold some rare piece of lore or exotic creature useful in the creation of a magic item or spell ritual.

**Sentinel:** HD 3+2; AC 5[14]; Atk 1 slam or precision dart (1d8); Move 12; Save 15; AL L; CL/XP 4/120; Special: Spell Array

*Spell Array:* Depending on their function, a sentinel is equipped with three gemstones on its chest capable of storing and casting spell energy. Two of the gems can hold a 1st-level spell, whereas a third can hold a 1st or 2nd-level spell. The average sentinel has *magic missile*, *shield*, and *sleep* for combat retrieval purposes. Scouts are equipped with *detect evil (cleric)*, *detect magic*, and *esp*.

**DS-2, Shirosgul's Grove:** Within the heart of Direblack Swamp is a giant sentient treant by the name of Shirosgul. Witness to a thousand summers, she appears as a gnarled old weeping willow on the surface, but beneath the boggy waters and soaked soil are miles-long roots snaking throughout all of Frelundia and realms beyond. Poking up in odd places, from dungeons to settlements to the inner gardens of forts and castles, Shirosgul can sense things through her roots. She does this via the vibrations of sound and movement within a limited radius uprooted places. As a result she knows countless secrets of the world, especially things said by folk who think nobody else is listening.

Shirosgul is known as a wise seer to the druids and a few learned sages, both of whom seek her out for answers to questions of importance. "What is this Tyrannoran general planning?" "Is the baron's planned treaty signing genuine?" and so on and so forth. She gives away up to three answers freely to those who can reach her, keyword being reach. In reality the ruins and swampland surrounding Shirosgul's grove are filled with dangerous traps, ambient magic, and vicious predators who can threaten even mighty heroes. Shirosgul finds this an acceptable trade-off; otherwise all manner of curious ingrates would plague her with petty requests.

**Shirosgul:** HD 9; AC 2[17]; Atk 2 strikes (3d6); Move 6; Save 6; Special: Control trees, Rootways; AL L; CL/XP 9/1,100

**Control Trees:** All treants can "wake" trees within 60 ft, allowing them to walk at a rate of 3, and possibly to attack. (No more than two trees at a time can be awake at the behest of a single treant)

**Rootways:** Shirosgul's realms-spanning roots make her aware of all manner of affairs on this world. Once per day she can replicate the effects of a *Commune* or *Commune with Nature* spell.

### Random Encounters in Direblack Swamp:

1d100 Roll	Result
1-15	1d4 Clawed Fiends
16-30	1d3 giant killer frogs
31-50	1 normal crocodile
51-60	1d6 giant freshwater leeches
61-75	1 grick
76-80	1 sea hag
81-100	2d6 lizardmen

**Clawed Fiend:** HD 2; AC 7[12]; Atk 2 claws (1d8/1d8); Move 3; Save 16; Special: -1 to initiative, Reach; AL C; CL/XP 2/30

**Reach:** Clawed Fiends have freakishly long arms and can hit opponents in melee up to 8 feet away.

**Giant Killer Frog:** HD 1+4; AC 7[12]; Atk 2 claws (1d2), 1 bite (1d4+1); Move 3 (leap 15); Save 17; Special: Leap; AL N; CL/XP 2/30

**Leap:** All giant frogs can make a 100ft leap that reaches a height of 20ft.

**Normal Crocodile:** HD 3; AC 4[15]; Atk 1 bite (1d6); Move 9 (Swim 12); Save 14; AL N; CL/XP 3/60

**Grick:** HD 2; AC 4[15]; Atk 4 tentacles (1d3), 1 beak (1d2); Move 6; Save 16; Special: Immune to blunt weapons; AL N; CL/XP 4/120

**Giant Freshwater Leech (1HD):** HD 1; AC 9[10]; Atk 1 bite (1d4); Move 3; Save 17; Special: Sucks blood; AL N; CL/XP 2/30

*Sucks blood:* After they score a hit, a giant freshwater leech drains blood automatically at one hit point per hit die of the creature per round.

**Sea Hag:** HD 3; AC 6 [13]; Atk 1 bite (1d4); Move 6 (Swim 18); Save 14; Special: Death gaze, weakness gaze; AL C; CL/XP 5/240

*Death Gaze:* The hag can also cast an evil eye upon those she chooses to slay; but only three times per day. The range of this deadly gaze is 30 feet, and the hag's eye need not be met in order for death to occur (saving throw).

*Weakness Gaze:* These hags are so hideous that the sight of their faces causes weakness from fright and horror; if the victim fails a saving throw, his strength ability score is reduced by one-half for 1d6 full turns.

**Lizardman:** HD 2+1; AC 5[14]; Atk 2 claws (1d3), 1 bite (1d6); Move 6 (Swim 12); Save 16; Special: Breathe underwater; AL C; CL/XP 2/30

**Foot of the Tyrant:** This mountain chain runs along Frelundia's northern extremities. Beyond these peaks lie the realm of Tyrantor, a militaristic nation composed of humans and giants who pledge undying loyalty to the Shepherd of the Fatherland. The treacherous mountain pathways prevent Frelundia from suffering a full-scale invasion, but even then raiding bands and scouts patrol the region intent on exterminating any threat to their homeland and taking any wealth from outlying towns by force.

### Locations in Foot of the Tyrant:

**FT-1, Snowcap:** On the peak of Snowcap, the tallest mountain in the Foot of the Tyrant, is an odd feature. Albeit the peak is cloudy and icy cold, there is a ring of lush green just below it. Any climber who manages to make it this far will find the air plentiful and warm, with a community of simple huts and terraced farmland collecting melted snow from the top in mountain streams. Beyond the village at the peak itself is a towering observatory, whose telescope can gaze out to the entirety of Frelundia and southern Tyrantor.

The inhabitants of the mountaintop are the stormwardens, a race of humanoids with the innate ability to control the weather. Generations of selective channeling created a livable ring around the mountain, and the eldest among their number inhabit the observatory.

Sadly for the folk of Frelundia, the stormwardens are ruled by a cruel and vindictive order of warlocks living in the observatory. Their powers are enhanced by the observatory's magic, which they use to send down torrential downpours, unearthly heat waves, and other maladies to lowland villages and towns. They are careful not to

send such storms down to Tyrantor too much at risk of provoking them past the point of initial fear, but in regards to Frelundia their depredations are unrestrained. One of the warlocks is considering sending a messenger to outlying towns as a ransom collector for ensuring good weather.

Beyond the urge for altruism, those who raid the warlock's observatory find many wonders. Whatever magic they use to enhance their powers can be repurposed to other ends, should enterprising mages find out how they work.

**Stormwarden:** HD 3; AC 6 [13]; Atk Longsword (1d8) or longbow (1d8); Move 12; Save 14; Special: Conjure storm; AL C; Challenge Level/XP 4/120

*Conjure Storm:* Once per day, a stormwarden can create an effect similar to a *control weather* spell as cast by a 10th level magic-user, except that it affects an area in a 1,000-foot-radius circle and the weather effects are immediate rather than gradual. The effects last for 1 turn before the weather in the area returns to normal.

**Stormwarden Warlock:** HD 5; AC 6 [13]; Atk Longsword (1d8) or longbow (1d8); Move 12; Save 12; Special: Conjure storm, Spells; AL C; Challenge Level/XP 6/400

*Conjure Storm:* As above.

*Spells:* A stormwarden warlock casts spells as a 3rd-level druid or magic-user (50% chance either).

**FT-2, Tyrantor Border Village:** This small settlement on the northern side of the Foot of the Tyrant is but one of many such towns dotting the Frelundia-Tyrantor border. Although it has the local necessities of small gardens, cattle, and other fixtures of mountain villages, the preponderance of soldiers and siege towers gives it the appearance of a military garrison. The truth is that they're both.

The Tyrantoran government adheres to an ideology of collectivist nationalism which teaches that the world is divided into different civilizations of ethnic nation-states and tribes. It is the way of the world for said civilizations to war against each other for power and resources. The Tyrantorans must be stalwart against the tide of foreign aggression and act in unison for the betterment of their people, for if divided they will fall to their enemies. To that end, the borders see frequent military patrols and villagers are deathly afraid of foreigners, assuming them to be enemy scouts or spies.

The Border Village is a stable environment, and while traveling PCs may be quickly spotted by patrols and raise alarms. Those going in with stealth or scrying upon the town from afar will see the disturbing spectres of daily life. The town square and crop fields contain huge looming statues all portraying the same distinctive image of a beautiful, robe-clad male bearing a shepherd's crook. A pregnant couple viewing a blacksmith's weapons browse for the "perfect sword for their little soldier." Children play a modified version of hide and seek known as "kill the elf." At a dramatically appropriate time of the day, all the citizens convene at the town square to leave burning offerings in front of the Shepherd's statue before returning to their duties.

## Random Encounters in Foot of the Tyrant:

1d100 Roll	Result
1-5	1 giant eagle
6-30	2d6 goblins
31-40	1d2 harpies
41-50	1 hippogriff
51-65	1 ogre
65-75	Rockslide*
76-85	Shepherds
85-100	Tyranor Border Patrol

**Giant Eagle:** HD 4; AC 7[12]; Atk 2 talons (1d4), 1 bite (1d8); Move 3 (Fly 24); Save 13; AL N; CL/XP 5/240

**Goblin:** HD 1d6 hp; AC 6[13]; Atk 1 weapon (1d6); Move 9; Save 18; Special: -1 to hit in sunlight; AL C; CL/XP B/10

**Harpy:** HD 3; AC 7[12]; Atk 2 talons (1d3) and weapon (1d6); Move 6 (Fly 18); Save 14; Special: Flight, siren-song; AL C; CL/XP 4/120

*Siren-song:* A harpy's siren-song draws victims closer to the harpy, while her touch has the effect of a *charm person* spell. Saving throws apply to both.

**Hippogriff:** HD 3+1; AC 5[14]; Atk 2 claws (1d6), 1 bite (1d10); Move 18 (Fly 24); Save 14; AL N; CL/XP 4/120

**Ogre:** HD 4+1; AC 5[14]; Atk 1 weapon (1d10+1); Move 9; Save 13; AL C; CL/XP 4/120

**Rockslide:** A pathway the PCs are traveling on is very unstable. A PC who succeeds on a Find Traps roll, an active spell of *detect traps* or *detect snares and pits* active immediately notices this and can move to safety. Otherwise a sudden chunk of the ground breaks off as a whole piece and starts sliding down the mountain. PCs must make a saving throw (counts as a trap) or suffer 2d6 points of damage as the rock slides down the cliffside and crashes into the ground.

**Shepherds:** A group of 2d6 dwarves act as shepherds to a herd of 3d20 mountain goats. Although most dwarves live underground, a few remain on the surface in small villages to take advantage of resources unable to be found underground. Crops and surface world animals are their major commodities.

The dwarves are heavily armed for shepherds due to clashes with Tyranoran forces. If the party contains any dwarves or the PCs do something to earn the shepherds' trust, they'll recommend some safe passages to avoid the mountain's many dangers. For the next 24 hours the PCs avoid any random encounters.

**Dwarf:** HD 1; AC 4[15]; Atk warhammer (1d8) or sling (1d4); Move 6; Save 17; Special: Detect attributes of stonework; AL L; CL/XP 1/15



Art by Matt Morrow

**Tyranor Border Patrol:** Tyranor's border is heavily protected by wilderness-wise soldiers. Clad in black armor with helmets that look like leering gargoyles, they strike an intimidating figure.

Unless the PCs are taking pains to hide (*invisibility* spell, camouflage, etc), a single scout on a higher elevation will sound off a war horn. 1d3 rounds after this a Tyranoran officer and 1d2+1 soldiers will come down the pathway, their leader's booming voice declaring their intentions:

*"You unlawfully trespass upon the territory of the Fatherland! Turn back now or we shall sunder your spirits from their flesh!"*

The officer is not in the mood for conversation, and if the PCs ask him anything he'll wordlessly draw his blade as a warning, then attack one round later if they don't flee. If the PCs respond in kind, refuse his warning, or try to go around him, he'll order his soldiers to cut them down.

If the PCs turn back, combat will be averted but a pair of scouts will follow the PCs for 1d10 miles (spotted on a 5 or 6 on a d6) before going back to report any crucial information learned to the officer. This information is passed up the chain of command based upon its importance; if the PCs are obviously Firetongue students


or discuss interesting information among themselves (such as the location of a hidden treasure), it's likely that they'll meet Tyranor's soldiers again but deeper within Frelundia's borders.

**Tyranoran Officer:** HD 3; AC 5[14]; Atk battleaxe or longbow (1d8); Move 12; Save 14; Special: Rallying Cry; AL C; CL/XP 3/60

*Rallying Cry:* Once per round a Tyranoran Officer can give out a morale-boosting war cry. Allies under the effects of an enchantment or emotion-based spell or effect immediately gain another saving throw to resist. Tyranoran Officers are trained to spot spells of mental influence such as charm person; by looking into a person's eyes, they can automatically notice if that person is afflicted with such enchantment.

**Tyranoran Soldier:** HD 1; AC 7[12]; Atk 1 longsword or longbow (1d8); Move 12; Save 17; AL C; CL/XP 1/15

**Scouts** use the same statistics as soldiers, expect they can use camouflage when out of combat to blend in with the environment. They can only be spotted via mundane means on a 5 or 6 on a 1d6 roll. Certain magical spells are capable of detecting them normally.



**Goldbloom Plains:** Dominating central Frelundia from east to west, the Goldbloom Plains are so named for the fields of sunflowers which grow with surprising frequency along its environs. Local legends say that the children of the sun god came down to marry mortals, but their forbidden half-union would condemn them to the mortal world. Their eldest daughter defiantly claimed that their family would make the crude fields as beautiful as the sky, and so her children took the forms of sunflowers. The Plains are home to most of Frelundia's settlements, including Firetongue Academy and the village of Tasilton.

### Locations within Goldbloom Plains

**GP-1, Astral Rock:** Standing 100 feet tall with an unearthly orange-yellow color, this unnatural formation is a noticeable landmark in the Goldbloom Plains. Tales mention that it was a fragment of the home of the gods, broken off by a thief and taken to the mortal world. Others claim that it's the eye of the land itself, surveying all around it and sending wrathful spirits to hunt down evildoers.

What everyone can agree on is that the land surrounding Astral Rock pulses with eldritch might. Use of *detect magic* and similar abilities reveals a strong presence of magic suffusing the surrounding land and air, getting stronger the closer one goes to the rock. Those who place their hand upon its surface can sometimes hear voices in the back of their head speaking in unknown tongues.

*Detect invisibility* combined with means of detecting secret doors (elves, thieves, etc) discovers a door on the Astral Rock's underside. It's only reachable via the Ethereal Plane, but on a certain holiday (GM's discretion at an ideal time in the campaign) it opens up, letting out a chorus of ghostly monsters from the underworld. Such a doorway is immediately visible at this point and can be entered by Material Plane inhabitants...and exited if they can return before midnight.

**GP-2, Blade-Borne Village:** The Blade-Borne are a human ethnic group of Frelundians who disavow the divine right of kings and the legitimacy of all noble titles. They live in isolated walled villages and semi-nomadic tribes where disputes and governance is decided by majority vote moderated by the eldest warriors of the community. Every Blade-Borne is given a weapon at a young age, which they cherish almost as much as their own life; "the world is a cruel and dangerous place, and without strength of arms you will be dominated by others." Such weapons are referred to as a Blade-Borne's iron heart, and as long as they are wielded by their true owner they do not rust, bend, or fall to the ravages of nature and entropy.

The Blade-Borne have a conflicted relationship with Frelundia's other inhabitants. Their militaristic and anti-authoritarian culture makes subjugating them more trouble than it's worth as many nobles learned to their folly, and are more or less tolerated as long as they don't cause trouble for their neighbors. However, the Blade-Borne are not above lending themselves out as mercenaries or extorting coin and trade goods from villages in lean times. They scoff at complaints of banditry and injustice, telling folk that relying upon the protection of kings is useless if they can't fend for themselves.

Unbeknownst to most, Blade-Borne artisans and blacksmiths are divinely inspired with the ability to make arms and armor of superb craftsmanship. Spoken only among themselves, the artisans speak by a figure they refer to as "Chainbreaker," the spirit of their greatest warrior who repelled the Tyrannoran invasion 50 years ago. So long as the Blade-Borne continue to live without a king or a nation, their artisans will be able to forge such stellar equipment.

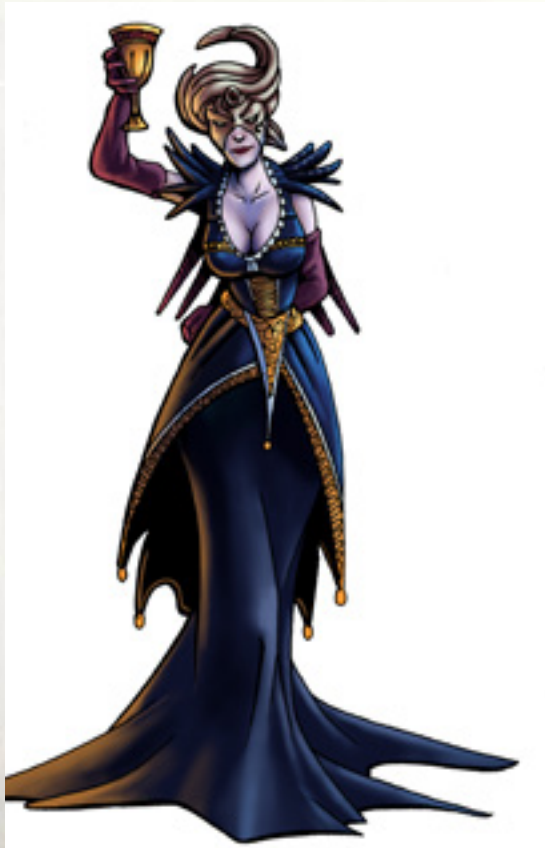
**Blade-Borne:** HD 2; AC 7 [12]; Atk weapon (1d8); Move 12; Save 15; Special: Iron Heart; AL N or C; CL 2/XP 30

*Iron Heart:* As long as it is wielded by its chosen, a Blade-Borne's signature weapon does not suffer deterioration from mundane effects.

**GP-3, Darkwater City:** This portside city in western Frelundia is an old settlement built upon the islands of a lagoon. Boatswain, fishermen, and river merchants ply their trade through canals, and many buildings have miniature wooden docks built onto their sides to accept waterbound visitors. Merfolk, sahuagin, and the inhabitants of undersea kingdoms venture to Darkwater to sell their rare wares to the surface world.

Sadly, Darkwater's government is ruled by Lord Coel, a demented old man whose greatest pleasure is to see others suffer. His mercenary forces serve as what passes for law enforcement, and are often charged with raiding the city's jails, poorhouses, and asylums for victims to toss into his Dungeon of Dreadful Delights. His equally wretched highborn peers place bets on who can survive the longest, and the few survivors who demonstrate skill and ruthlessness are often recruited to serve as his minions.

**Lord Coel's Guard:** HD 1; AC 5 [14, Ring Mail and Shield]; Atk spear (1d6) or light crossbow (1d4+1) ; Move 9; Save 17; AL C; CL 1/XP 15



Art by Gary Dupuis

**GP-4, Temple of Dreams:** This small building is out of place in the western shores of Frelundia. Light sources within the interior seem off, being brighter or darker than they'd otherwise be or emitting the wrong color. Sometimes it's not even in the same place, re-appearing dozens of miles north or south along the shoreline. As soon as one walks across the threshold of the front double doors does the temple's magic come into full effect.

The Temple of Dreams is actually a resonating element of a collective subconscious from the realm of dreams manifesting in the Material Plane. Events within here follow the strange and counterintuitive logic of dreams, and one's worst fears and greatest wishes can manifest as apparent realities inside. One of the few constants in the temple is the presence of a masked woman with impeccable dress carrying a cup said to be full of nectar of the gods in her right hand. She goes by the name of Namfor, the ruler of this temple, and often leads visitors on strange adventures. Namfor has the habit of calling people "silly sturgeons" when they ask a question or make a statement she finds amusing.

**GP-5, Firetongue Academy:** This location is fully detailed in Chapter 3.

**GP-6, Village of Tassilton:** A walled town of around a thousand permanent residents, Tassilton was an unremarkable community until Larius Firetongue bought a piece of land to build his school. Knowing that most folks would be immediately distrustful of a congregation of magicians in their backyard, the sorcerer and his allies earned the villager's trust by helping them out with problems best solved by magic. Ghosts were exorcised from homes, witches' family curses lifted, and blighted crops purified thanks to their efforts. As the academy expanded and drew new blood, the school and Tassilton's town council reached a mutually beneficial agreement where the mages would provide assistance in exchange for spell components and materials vital to magical research.

**Adventure Hooks:** Due to its proximity, the Firetongue mages are often called to investigate strange sightings. The teachers encourage students to lend a hand, both to sharpen their talents in the field as well as battling the stereotype of sorcerers as reclusive, sinister folk. This has been partially successful; some folk wonder if the hauntings are staged by the Academy itself, or why they don't enroll more villagers so they can better handle things on their own.

### **Dungeon Crawl: Haunted House**

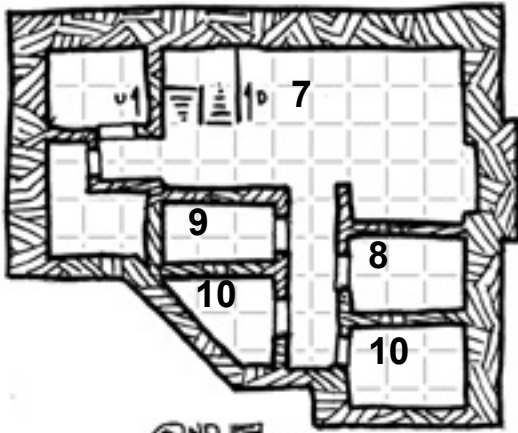
*Overall Challenge Level: 1*

**Background:** The Albrights are a small family of Tassilton landowners who no longer live in town. One day they just up and left, citing several strange accidents which nearly took their lives. There is no proof of foul play, although many villagers assume that there's a ghost or spirit on the premises and thus asked the School for help. The truth of the matter is that the Albright house has a mischievous occupant, not a ghost but an imp seeking to stir up chaos.

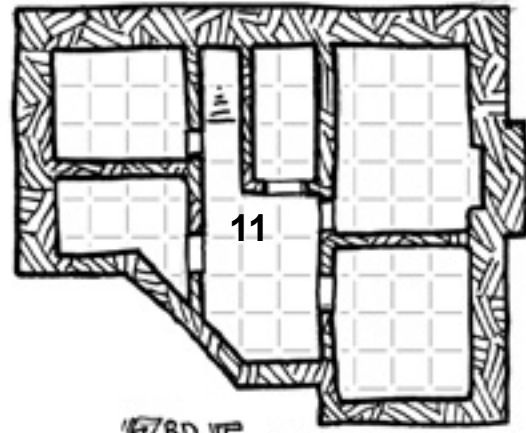
This is a good entry-level scenario for new PCs, as well as a place close enough to Firetongue Academy that the PCs can go there immediately. They might be dispatched by a teacher to test their abilities, beseeched personally by a villager, or just following up on rumors around town.

**Room 1:** The front entrance has a set of wooden stairs going up to the door with a slashed-up welcome mat. Various claw marks indicate the presence of vigorous use by an animal (in reality it's the imp's stinger). The raised walkway bends around the house, where one can peer through the windows into Room 3, 4, and 6. One of Room 4's windows is bloodied.

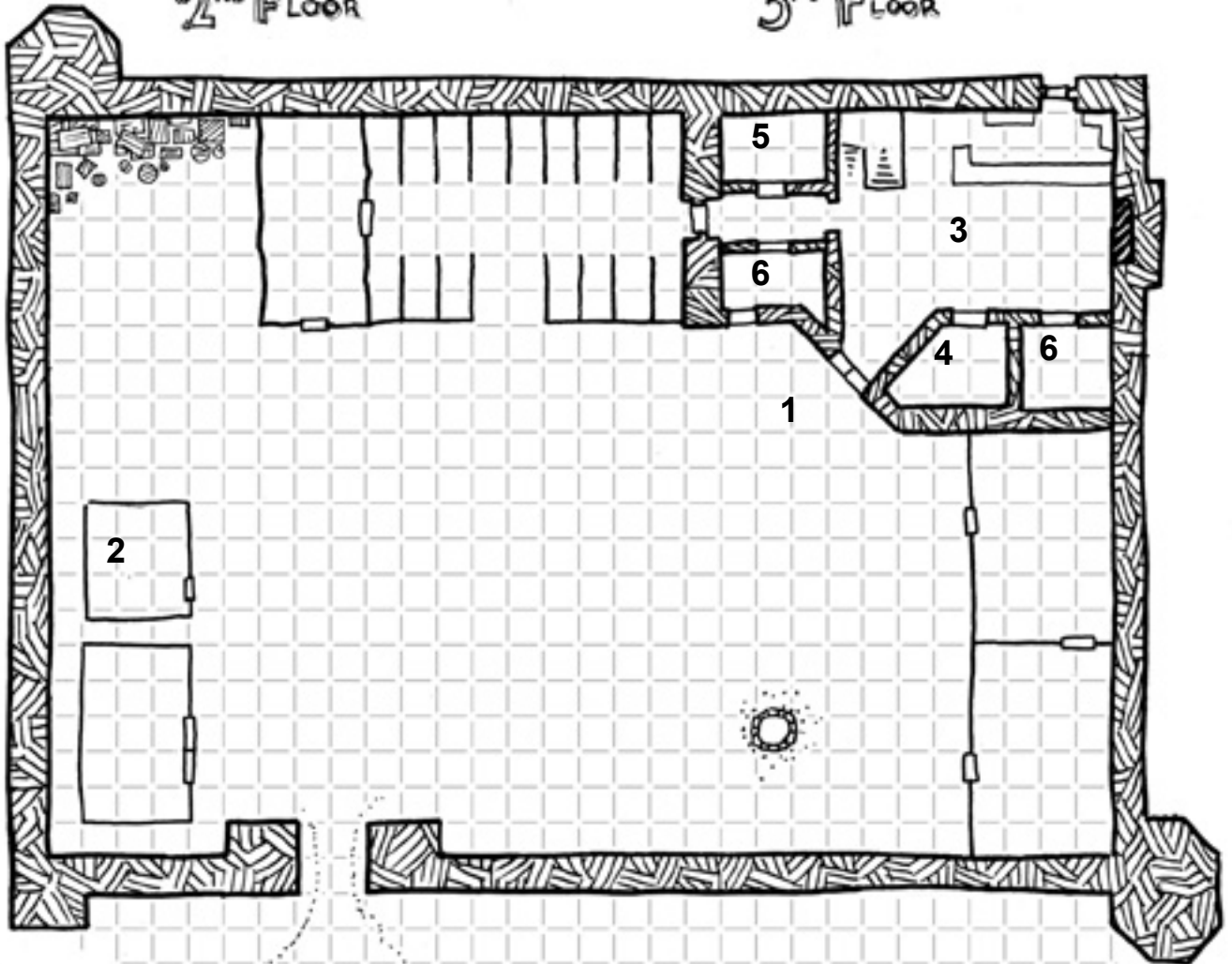
**Room 2:** The Albrights owned a fair tract of land in front of their house, along with some now-vacant stables. One of their outside raised platforms has a pair of tables and an awning to protect from the sun's rays during the summer months. A glass of spilled lemonade has been sitting out here for the past day, its sweet scent attracting flies. The imp tried to pour a glass of it himself but failed in the attempt due to his tiny frame. If asked about town, villagers will tell the PCs that the Albrights left over a week ago. PCs knowledgeable in the growing of crops (or have a sweet tooth or heightened sense of smell) will notice that the lemonade's too fresh to be a week old.



2<sup>ND</sup> FLOOR



3<sup>RD</sup> FLOOR



Map by Dyson Logos

**Room 3:** The atrium has a coat rack and a set of stairs leading up to the second floor.

**Room 4:** This room once served as the Albright's kitchen. One of the windows is broken, and a blood trail leads to the pantry, its door half-open. The imp has been flying out under the cover of night to hunt and kill small animals to bring back to the house. As a creature of the infernal realms it has no problem with eating rotten carcasses, and as such has been storing a grisly pile of dead animals in the closet.

The corpses are also injected by the imp's poison along with blasphemous rites, and can reanimate should someone come snooping about. They are unintelligent and thus possessed of single-minded rage; they will only give up chase should they be unable to pursue or locate their prey.

**Animal Zombies (4):** HD ½; AC 9 [10]; Atk bite or claw (1d2); Move 6; Save 18; Special: Undead Traits; AL C; CL A/XP 5

**Room 5:** The room by the stairs has a small hole at the bottom of the door, small enough for a cat to squeeze into. It is locked, and the imp threw away the key in the woods long ago to prevent human-sized intruders from disturbing his impromptu bedroom. A pile of shredded clothes on the floor serve as bedding; should the PCs think to match up the claw marks with the welcome mat, they'll notice that they're the same.

**Treasure:** Buried under the covers in the corner (and thus out of reach of a human hand grasping through the door) is one of the imp's most treasured possessions, a small black leatherskin notebook fashioned from the living bark of the infernal realm's Forest of Flesh. The book's "ink" is written in the imp's poison, but due to drying it's less potent (only 3 hit points of damage when coming into contact with unprotected flesh).

The book details the imp's journey from the Wailing Courts of Belzebug to make his way to the Material Plane, and the various lessons he's learned from close calls with priests, mages, and mortal authorities. Although low on the hellish hierarchy, the book is invaluable for peering into the mindset of a devil and thus is worth 400 points of Arcane Lore.

**Rooms 6:** These twin areas served as guest rooms, as evidenced by small couches and tables. There's 12 copper pieces wedged between the couch cushions in one of the rooms, along with one earring worth 30 gold pieces.

**Room 7:** The main room of the second floor contains a hallway running from north to south. Various black and white portraits hang upon the walls depicting scenic landscapes of Frelundia, from the dark and imposing Moonshade Forest to the snow-capped mountains on the northern border. Behind the portrait portraying Tassilton is a small brass key hanging on a string attached to the portrait's nail. This is the key for the lockbox in Room 10.

**Room 8:** This was formerly the bedroom of Grant and Lisa Albright, two young children of the family. It is home to two small beds, some stuffed animals, and a box of chalk along with a few polished pebbles arranged in a circular design. The kids were having fun with the pebbles before their parents spirited them out of the house.

**Room 9:** This used to be the bedroom of Clarence and Nancy Albright. On the nightstand at the side of the bed is a tiny wooden box containing the baby teeth of the Albright children (it's believed that local seers can better use beneficial magic with sympathetic connections to the targets).

**Rooms 10:** The doors at the end of the hallway is a storage space and still contains some useful tools (the Albright family packed light). Generally speaking a party should be able to find any small handheld object a medieval villager might reasonably possess. The one object of note is a lockbox in back, untouched and unopened due to the fear its power possesses.

**The Lockbox:** The lockbox is a family heirloom granted by a grateful wizard in days of yore. The past three generations of Albrights were instructed only to open the box in times of great need, when death and danger was imminent. When the imp first came, the family believed that the box was responsible and up and left.

The lockbox radiates an aura of magic, and if opened the form of a shadowy, indistinct knight will emerge in a whirling cyclone. He will announce that all "intruders and persons of ill intent leave the Albright homestead, or suffer the sword of justice!"

The Ghostly Guardian will not attack the PCs immediately unless they give him suspicion or incentive. He was bound 100 years ago and so does not know of Firetongue Academy or recent happenings in the area. He will aid the PCs in discovering the truth behind the flight of the Albright family and the presence within their home.

The Ghostly Guardian will automatically return to the confines of the lockbox within 24 hours.

**Ghostly Guardian:** HD 3; AC 6 [13]; Atk sword 1d6; Move Fly 9; Save 14; Special whirlwind attack; AL L; CL 3/XP 60

*Whirlwind Attack:* the Ghostly Guardian may make a single attack roll against all opponents within melee reach and compare the result to each target's Armor Class.

**Room 11:** The third floor is also the attic of the Albright Household. It is bare save for various disused furniture and knick-knacks. A mated pair of hawks made a nest within the area, and will caw and screech if the PCs disturb their home. They are not strong enough to prove a grave danger, but every round the PCs must make a saving throw or tumble into clutter, possibly losing a small handheld object in the process which must be searched for as though finding a secret door.

**Reward:** If the PCs solve the mystery of the Haunted House, award them with 300 experience points each.

The Albright family is currently living on the outskirts of Darkwater City. If the PCs tell them that their home is safe to return to and provide proof, they will be grateful and compensate them with a sum of 100 gold pieces and a place to stay in Tasilton.

## Random Encounters in Goldbloom Plains:

1d100 Roll	Result
1-5	1d3 Ants, Giant Worker
6-20	Blade-Borne Patrol
21-25	Ghoul
26-35	2d3 Gnolls
36-55	1d6+4 Horses, Riding
56-75	Humans, Bandits
76-95	Villagers
96-00	1d3 Zombie Ravens

**Giant Worker Ant:** HD 2; AC 3[16]; Atk Bite (1d6); Move 18; Save 16; AL N; CL/XP 2/30

**Ghoul:** HD 2; AC 6[13]; Atk 2 claws (1d3), 1 bite (1d4); Move 9; Save 16; Special: Undead, paralyzing touch; AL C; CL/XP 3/60

**Gnoll:** HD 2; AC 5[14]; Atk 1 bite (2d4) or weapon (1d10); Move 9; Save 16; AL C; CL/XP 2/30

**Riding Horse:** HD 2; AC 7[12]; Atk 1 bite (1d2); Move 18; Save 16; AL N; CL/XP 2/30

**Human, Bandit:** HD 1; AC 7[12]; Atk 1 weapon (1d8); Move 12; Save 17; AL C; CL/XP 1/15

**Villagers:** HD 1d6 hp; AC 9[10]; Atk 1 weapon (1d6); Move 12; Save 18; AL Any; CL/XP B/10

**Zombie Raven:** HD 1d6hp; AC 8[11]; Atk 1 bite (1d3); Move 1, Fly 6; Save 18; Special: Undead, immune to sleep and cold; AL N; CL/XP 1/15

**Blade-Borne Patrol:** A group of 1d3+1 Blade-Borne are traveling the plains. Upon sighting the PCs, they'll be non-hostile yet cautious. If there are any obvious warriors in the group, they'll issue a one-on-one duel to the strongest-looking one. If nobody in the party matches the description or declines the duel (a sign of cowardice to the Blade-Borne), they'll demand 20% of the party's coin and supplies "for passing through their lands" and attack if shown any resistance.

The duel will be to first blood (whoever hits first). A victorious PC will earn the respect of the Blade-Borne and experience for the party as though they defeated the Blade-Borne in combat. Losing carries no particular penalties, as the Blade-Borne will thank them for a good spar and be on their way.

**Blade-Borne:** HD 2; AC 7 [12]; Atk 1 weapon (1d8); Move 15; Save 15; Special: Iron Heart; AL N or C; CL 2/XP 30

*Iron Heart:* As long as it is wielded by its chosen, a Blade-Borne's signature weapon does not suffer deterioration from mundane effects.

**Moonshade Forest:** In times long ago this primeval realm was inhabited by strange spirits who spoke in tongues far older than even the elven language. Abiding by laws alien to the mortal world, human attempts at settlement met with disaster due to unintentional angering of various spirit-laws. Eventually a cabal of druids unlocked a reliable means of earning their respect, which they used to amass power and tribute from nearby clans on the condition of servitude to the new Green Gods. Today these clans are a shadow of their former glory, living in isolated villages deep within the woods and unknowing of the outside world's affairs.

### **Locations in Moonshade Forest:**

**MF-1, Green Ruins:** This region in the Moonshade Forest suffers from a most peculiar condition: dark storm clouds hover above it perpetually, sending a never-ending torrent of rain upon the woodlands. The fact that the storm clouds' radius is confined to the edges of the ruins lends significant credence that this supernatural phenomena originates within the former city's shrouded temples and plazas.

The druids and weather-seers fear that this will create long-term damage to the land, especially if it causes flooding as the forest soil becomes unable to hold anymore rain. Someone will need to go into the ruins and find the standing stones responsible for this anomaly...along with opportunity to recover the relics of the past for wealth and research material too!

### **Dungeon Crawl: Green Ruins**

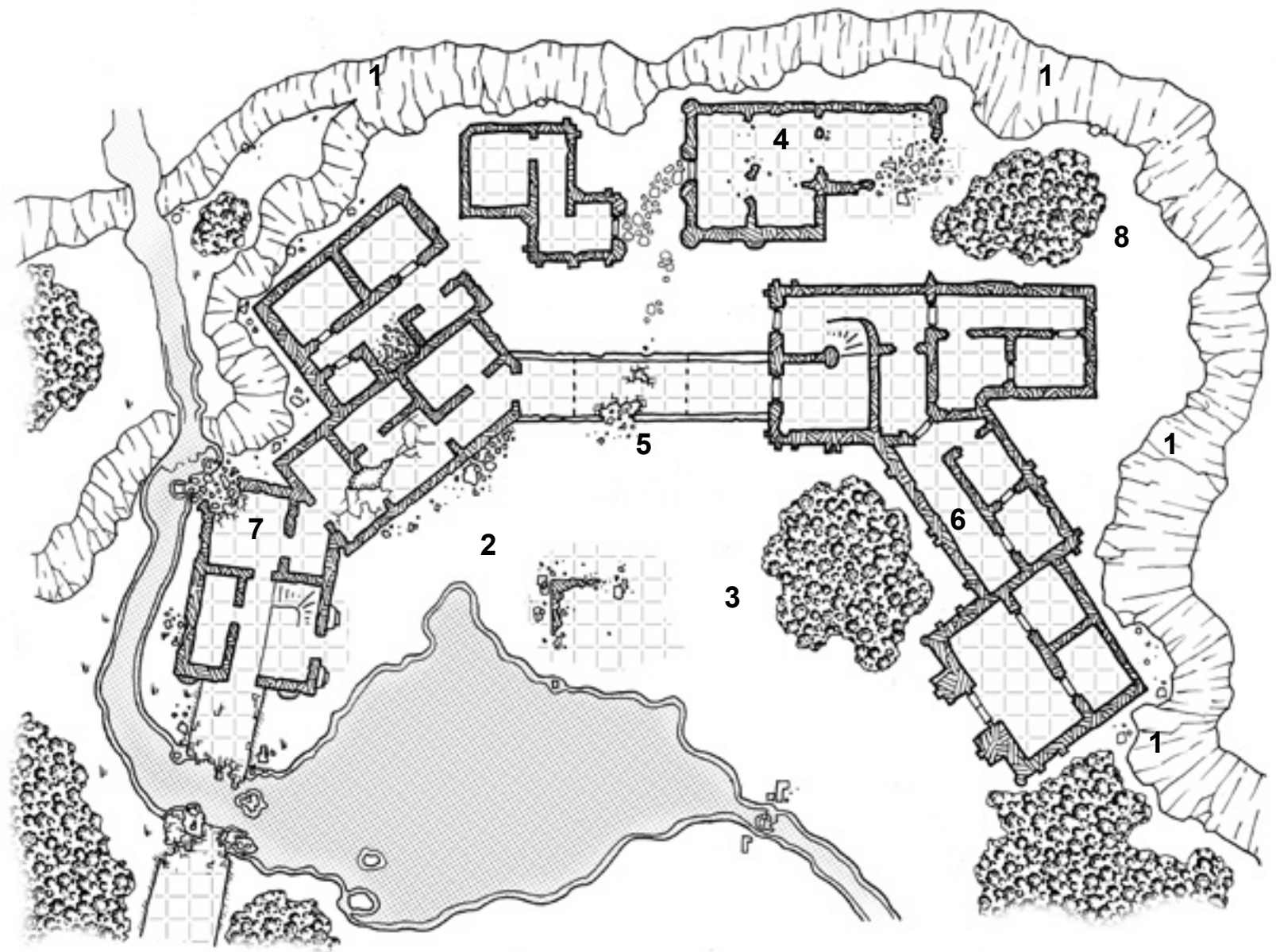
*Overall Challenge Level: 3*

The eternal storm poses a constant danger to travelers. The weather renders much of the ground muddy and uneven, and already many low areas are water-logged. Much of the ruins' lower levels are completely flooded, and the stormclouds make visibility equivalent to night at all times of day. This drew the attention of light-hating monsters who do not mind the rain.

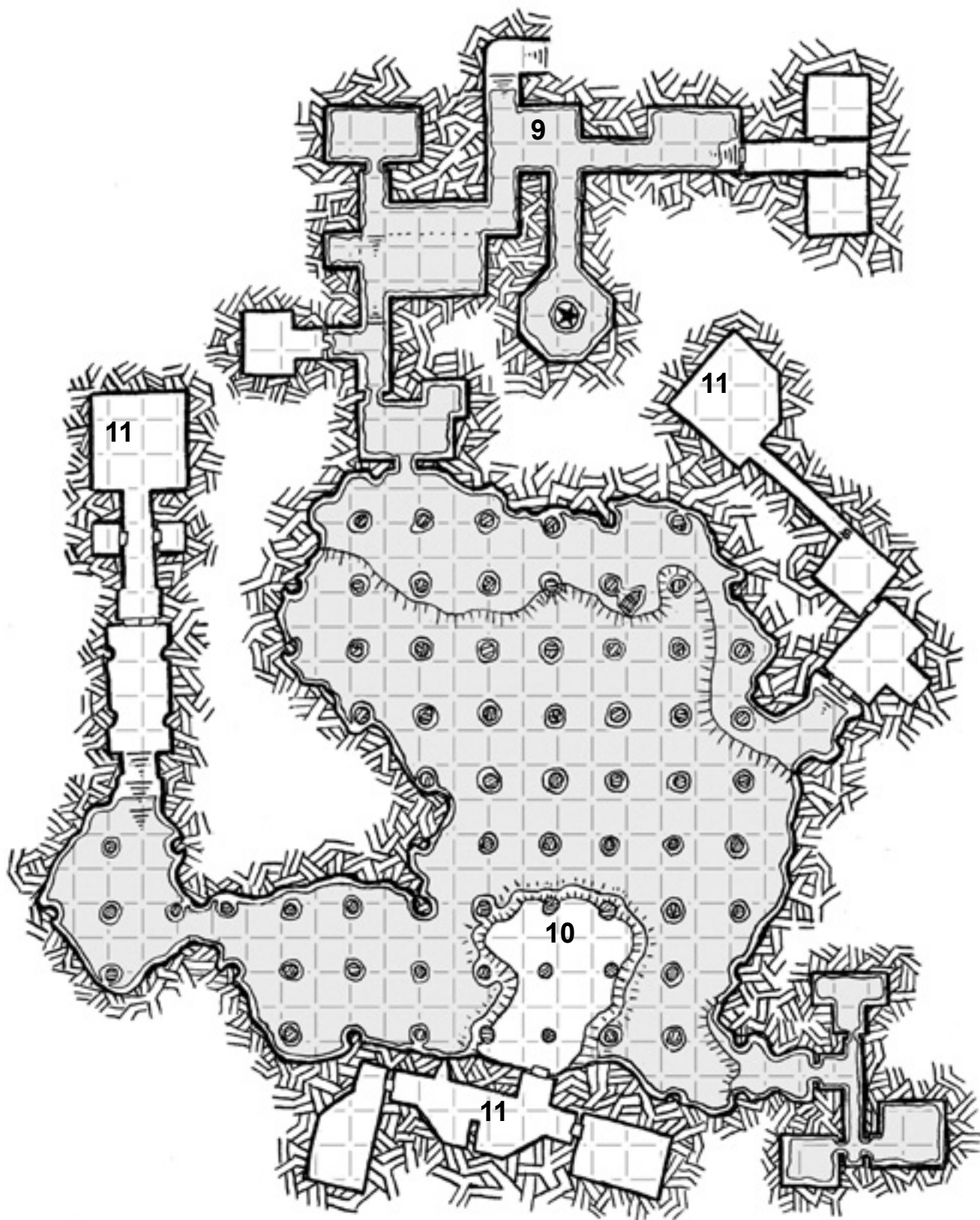
**Room 1:** The Green Ruins are located on the top of a hill. The former trail which led up to it is thoroughly demolished and washed over, meaning that approaches by land require a long, slippery trek up the hillside 60 feet up.

Call for a DC 13 Dexterity check if the PCs are ambushed by stirges or otherwise engaged in combat. Award a +2 bonus if the party finds means of achieving stable footing. Failure results in the PC falling prone and tumbling down the hillside. Druids of 2nd or higher level can ascend the slope normally as though it were non-magical undergrowth.

**Room 2:** At the top of the southern end of the hill is a runestone. Druids, spellcasters with read magic, or the Read Magical Writings Thief ability can decipher its meaning. Reading it aloud causes a giant leaf large enough to hold six people to materialize. Stepping on it allows safe travel up and down the hill as it effortlessly glides up and down the surface.



Map by Dyson Logos



Map by Dyson Logos

**Room 2, Continued:** A pair of stirges fly about at the hillside's top. They will follow any prey who is in the process of climbing up the hill (whether by foot or by magic leaf), but no further. It's likely that if a lone PC activates safe passage, then they might be trailing unexpected company on the way down!

**Stirge (2):** HD 1+1; AC 7[12]; Atk 1 proboscis (1d3); Move 3, Fly 18; Save 17; Special: blood drain (1d4), +2 to hit bonus; AL N; CL/XP 2/30

**Room 3:** Even in the beating rain the single sacred apple tree of a druidic grove still stands. Six of its fruit is red and ripe, and eating them has restorative properties (1d8 hit points healed per apple eaten).

A trio of spiderweeds, mobile plants maddened from the cursed weather, still perform their duties by patrolling the grove (as well as Rooms 4 and 5). Unfortunately they see any non-animal creature as a threat. They will use skirmish tactics, rushing out to strike a single target with their appendages then retreating through the small hole in Rooms 4 and 5.

**Spiderweed (3):** HD 2; AC 7[12]; Atk 2 thorn slashes (1d4 + sap); Move 6; Save 16; Special: Sap; AL N; CL/XP 2/30

*Sap:* This sap will stick to flesh and clothing unless thoroughly washed off. It inflicts no damage, but causes a very painful rash for 4d4 hours that imposes a penalty of -2 to all die rolls (saving throw negates). Goblins are immune to spiderweed rash.

**Reward:** the discovery of the apple tree's restorative properties nets 400 points of Arcane Lore to the party.

**Room 4:** The floor of this roofless one-story stone structure is covered in a layer of muddy, rain-soaked grass. Alcoves in the northern end contain a row of clay jars filled with seeds, thankfully sheltered from the rain. These seeds are blessed to grow into healthy crops in half the normal time, and their nature can be identified as such by any druid.

A crocodile is partially camouflaged by mud and plant matter in the northwest corner. It has a 3 in 6 chance of ambushing party members in this room. The crocodile will abandon the fight if reduced to half its hit points.

**Normal Crocodile:** HD 3; AC 4 [15]; Atk 1 bite (1d6); Move 9, Swim 12; Save 14; AL N; CL/XP 3/60

**Room 5:** The central dais in the middle of the ruins is on top of a three-story underground chamber. Written around the dais' exterior is script in the secret Druidic language: "water the sacred seeds in the room of stone and fire, and the path will open."

This refers to the seeds in Room 4 and the chamber in Room 7. Once opened a hole with steps leading into darkness will be revealed, leading to Room 9.

**Room 6:** This is the first floor of a two-story eastern structure which was once the living quarters of the Green Ruin's druids in prior eras. Now it is occupied by no one save a few woodland critters seeking shelter from the storm.

The personal belongings and food supplies of the druids have long become useless. A room in back contains a carving area for handheld runestones, some as small as pebbles and others as large as an adult human's fist. There are about fifty in total, most of them half-built and nonfunctional. But 1d3 are truly magical, functioning as scrolls containing 1 randomly-determined 1st level cleric or druid spells (determined by the GM).

**Room 7:** This is the eastern structure's second story. It is much hotter than the rest of the building, at a constant 90 degrees Fahrenheit (32.2 degrees Celsius) thanks to a long-lasting *heat metal* spell. An iron circle in the middle of the floor is the source of this heat, bearing a soil-filled bowl at its center. Coming in physical contact with the metal deals 1d4 points of fire damage, and the mechanisms used to cool down the circle to a safer temperature are long gone.

Placing the blessed seeds from Room 4 into the bowl along with some water causes a strong wind to rush through the area. With the four elements of nature in place, the dais in Room 5 slides open to the hidden catacombs.

**Room 8:** The northern grove is home to a lone dryad named Crenitti who's seen better days. The perpetual storm and the resulting environmental imbalance made her fall ill, and is unable to do much strenuous activity such as fighting or long-term labor (-2 on attack rolls, damage rolls, and saves for combat mechanics).

Crenitti will be apprehensive of any newcomers unless they convince her that they can help restore the balance. A curing or restoration-based spell can return her to good spirits for one week per spell level, but as long as the storm rages on it will be only a temporary solution.

If the PCs gained her trust, she will tell the party of the way to open up the dais in Room 5, and accompany them within the Green Ruins.

**Reward:** Grant the party experience if they heal Crenitti (temporarily or long-term) equal to the value they would normally gain via combat. They earn no experience for defeating her in combat, and this action is likely to earn the ire of any good-minded NPCs accompanying them.

**Crenitti:** HD 2; AC 9 [10]; Atk 1 wooden dagger (1d4); Move 12; Save 16; Special: Charm person (-2 save); AL N; CL/XP 3/60

**Room 9:** This is the basement level directly below Room 5's dais. Rows upon rows of what appear to be tombs line this long level's entirety, but they contain no corpses nor treasure, merely soil. Closer inspection reveals variations in their properties, as though taken from different climates. Each plot of dirt is actually taken from lands far and wide so that the druids can research their properties. The chamber is waterlogged, up to the waist height of an adult human on average and knee-deep in the shallower areas.

**Room 10:** This is the second basement level. Thick growths of foliage cover the majority of it, and many standing stones are positioned all throughout the water-logged chamber. The stones correspond to each of the four seasons and are alight with their respective colors. They are fall (glows red, northwest), winter (glows blue, northeast), spring (glows green, southeast), and summer (glows orange, southwest). The stones of spring and winter bear deep gashes, causing the surrounding weather to go awry and create perpetual rainfall.

A Guardian of the Grove is the sole creature in this level. A humanoid-shaped construct formed from gnarled wood, vines, and bearing a runestone in its chest, this formidable adversary views any outsiders as intruders and will attack mercilessly. Its produce flame spell is particularly deadly, having a 5 in 6 chance to ignite nearby foliage. The guardian will only listen to the words of a Druid of at least 5th level, and even then a reaction roll is called for to determine its disposition towards the party.



Art by Gary Dupuis

**Guardian of the Grove:** HD 4; AC 6 [13]; Atk Slam (1d6); Move 12; Save 13; Special: darkvision 60 feet, runestone magic; AL N; CL/XP 4/120

**Runestone Magic:** Bearing the rune of fire, this Guardian of the Grove can cast produce flame an unlimited number of times per day. The rune can be scratched out and rendered useless on an unmodified attack roll of 20, or if a character states their intentions of targeting it and hits the Guardian on an attack roll with a -4 penalty.

**The Stones:** The stones can be repaired, allowing the weather to return to its natural state. This requires the expenditure of magical energy in the form of a combined total of 8 levels worth of cast spells and a ceremony lasting 10 minutes. The casting of the spells do not need to be within the same day. Non-druids are capable in the aiding of this ritual, although druid spells and ones closely aligned with weather and the seasons (GM's discretion) count as being twice their effective level for these purposes.

**Rooms 11:** These tombs remain dry thanks to powerful magic. Within are the buried remains of arch-druids, their flesh almost bark-like in texture. If a druid or other spellcaster devoted to nature meditates for an hour in one of these rooms, they gain a one-time use of *commune with nature* spell and 300 points of Arcane Lore.

**Reward:** The Guardian's body can be salvaged for 200 points of Arcane Lore. Managing to restore the stones to their original function grants the party 600 experience points each. Additionally, back at school Liam Monaghan will be ecstatic at the news and thereafter be willing to help the party as a cohort. The Green Ruins might also serve as a useful headquarters or safe haven if repurposed properly.

**MF-2, Primordial Pyramid:** Millions of years ago the serpent folk ruled over much of the known Material Plane before a cataclysm wiped out their civilization. The survivors retreated into underground pyramids powered by self-sufficient magical rituals to shield them from the outside world. Some of these pyramids still continue to function, regardless of whether or not the descendants' occupants are even alive to continue maintaining them. Although more than a few present-day civilizations managed to find these pyramids, most remain untouched thanks to their potent abjuration magic.

Sometime during the campaign, a meteorite will fall onto the surface, leaving a huge trail cutting through the ground and partly into one such serpent folk pyramid. The meteorite is no mere coincidence of astronomy, but is in fact piloted by Zorken the Conqueror, an extraplanar entity who came to this land to feast on the inhabitants' brains for their power and knowledge.

Should the PCs investigate this area, they will find Zorken enmeshed in a battle with the serpent folk. The warlord may be outnumbered, but proximity to his meteorite blesses him with vast magical powers making a frontal assault impractical. Does the party help the serpent folk fight off this alien menace? Use the chaos to loot the pyramid for valuables and lore? Or perhaps try to cut a deal with Zorken in the hopes of staying his eventual wrath?

**Zorken the Conqueror:** HD 5; AC 6 [13]; Atk trident (1d8+3); Move 12; Save 12; Special: Meteor Blast, Telepathy; AL C; CL/XP 6/400

*Meteor Blast:* As long as his body is in contact with a comet, meteor, or similar extra-terrestrial object, Zorken the Conqueror can unleash a powerful blast of psychic energy as a 30 foot wide by 360 foot long beam. Those caught within the area of effect take 2d6 points of damage and are pushed to the beam's end.

A Saving Throw can be made to get out of the beam's radius if one is close by to a crevice, alcove, or similar hiding spot.

*Telepathy:* Zorken the Conqueror can establish mental contact with any creature within 100 feet capable of language. The amount of creatures Zorken can maintain contact with is unlimited, provided they are all within 100 feet.

**Random Encounters in Moonshade Forest:**

1d100 Roll	Result
1-10	Druidic Coven*
11-25	1d3 Giant Freshwater Leeches
26-35	1d2 Giant Lynxes
36-50	1d6 Mushroom-Men
51-60	Nixie Pond*
61-65	Pixie*
66-75	1d3 Spiderweeds
76-85	1d4 Stirges
86-00	1d3+2 Wolves

**Giant Freshwater Leech:** HD 1; AC 9 [10]; Atk 1 bite (1d4); Move 3; Save 17; Special: Sucks blood; AL N; CL/XP 2/30

*Sucks blood:* After they score a hit, a giant freshwater leech drains blood automatically at one hit point per hit die of the creature per round.

**Giant Lynx:** HD 2; AC 6[13]; Atk 2 claws (1d2), 1 bite (1d4); Move 12; Save 16; Special: Rear claws (2 more claw attacks with first 2 hit), surprise (5 in 6 chance); AL N; CL/XP 2/30

**Druidic Coven:** a group of four druids and their black bear companion are in the middle of a large clearing. Unless the PCs are taking pains to hide, the senior druid among their number will tell them to immediately stop walking. They explain that the ground is seeded with a series of magical fire traps. Three huge black scorch marks and the charred remains of their fifth member attest to this terrible fate.

There are 8 magical traps in the clearing in the form of slightly off-colored blades of grass. Stepping on or touching of any of these grass blades sets off the trap, dealing 1d6 fire damage in a 10 foot radius centered on the blade (Saving Throw halves damage).

The druids are too afraid to move and have yet to ascertain the traps' locations; all they know is that patches of the ground are enchanted to explode. If they're not saved or pointed out the out the location, the druids and bear will stay in the clearing for several days before risking escape. If this happens, 1d4 of those druids will die from the blasts.

If the PCs manage to free the druids, grant them 500 experience points. Grass blade traps which are "disarmed" can be harvested and sold for 50 gp each, either sold on the open market or used as craft materials for the purposes of fire-based equipment and magical items.

**Druid (3):** HD 1; AC 9 [10]; Atk sickle (1d6); Move 12; Save 17; Special: Spells as a 1st-level druid; AL N; CL/XP 1/15

**Senior Druid:** HD 3; AC 7 [12]; Atk sickle (1d6); Move 12; Save 15; Special: Spells as a 3rd-level druid; AL N; CL/XP 3/60

**Black Bear:** HD 4+1; AC 7 [12]; Atk 2 claws (1d3), 1 bite (1d6); Move 9; Save 13; Special: Hug; AL N; CL/XP 4/120

*Hug:* If a black bear hits with both claws, it hugs for an additional 1d8 hit points of damage.



Art by Forrest Imel

**Mushroom-Men:** Originally low in number, the Mushroom-Men tribe greatly expanded due to the eternal rain over the Green Ruins. Upon first meeting the PCs they'll be friendly, seeking to trade herbs and woodcraft objects in exchange for metal weapons and processed goods. They do not accept coin of any sort.

Additionally they can give advice on local areas within the forest if the PCs trade or earn their trust. If the PCs give any indication that they wish to stop the rain, the Mushroom-Men will regard them coldly and want nothing further to do with the party. If they already stopped the rain and make it clear that they're responsible, the Mushroom-Men attack!

**Mushroom-Men (1HD):** HD 1; AC 5[14]; Atk Fist (1d6) or weapon; Move 12; Save 17; AL N; CL/XP 1/15

**Nixies:** The PCs stumble upon a lake with a small clan of 3d4 nixies, who will regard the travelers warmly and ask if they would like to participate in a game. The game is a competitive swimming competition to the bottom of the lake (50 feet) where a magical glowing stone resides. The stone emits a series of bubbles every round which cause anyone who comes into contact with them to rise to the surface.


Although the nixies are natural swimmers, the bubbles have greater effect on their smaller sizes, so the PCs have a chance at winning. A person who grabs a bubble can throw it as a missile weapon with a 30 foot range. A hit target of halfling or human size rises 10 feet, but a nixie hit rises 50 feet. The nixies will be racing each other as well as the PCs, so they don't act as a unified force.

A PC who wins impresses the nixies enough that they grant them a reward: a pair of *gauntlets of swimming and climbing* (2,000 points of Arcane Lore).

**Nixie:** HD 1d4 hp; AC 7[12]; Atk 1 weapon (1d6); Move 6, Swim 12; Save 18; Special: Charm; AL N; CL/XP 1/15

**Charm:** One in ten nixies has the power to cast a powerful charm person (-2 penalty to saving throw) that causes the victim to walk into the water and join the nixies as their slave for a year. Casting dispel magic against the curse has only a 75% chance of success, and once the victim is actually in the water the chance drops to 25%.

**Pixie:** A lone pixie spots the PCs and decides to have some fun with them. She will fly up to a PC, grab an easily-removable item (pouch, belt, etc), and then fling it at another PC. In a high, childish voice she announces that she's a "powerful spirit of the forest" and that the party intruded into her land without showing proper respect. The pixie will demand that the PCs perform a series of increasingly ridiculous tasks to earn her favor: locking hands with each other while hopping on one foot, performing a puppet show with pinecones substituting for said puppets, quoting famous opera lines backwards, and jokes of a similar caliber.



If the PCs refuse to play along, she will try scaring them by invisibly cutting down tree branches and throwing rocks about, demanding that they apologize. If they steadfastly refuse she will get bored and leave to find more sporting victims. Should the PCs perform 3 tasks, the pixie will allow herself to become visible and thank the party for being good sports. As a reward she grants them a *luckstone* (worth 2,000 points of Arcane Lore, Pixie “got it from a leprechaun”).

**Pixie:** HD 1d6 hit points; AC 5 [14]; Atk 1 dagger (1d4) or arrow; Move 9, Fly 18; Save 17; Special: Invisibility; AL N; CL/XP 2/30

*Invisibility:* Pixies are naturally invisible, and do not become visible when they attack. After one round of attacks, the general location of the pixies may be discerned while they keep fighting, and they may thus be attacked (although with a -4 to the attacker’s die rolls to hit them).

## Chapter 5, the Initiation Delve: a Sample Adventure



*Art by Felipe Gaona*

This adventure is suitable for 4 to 6 1st or 2nd level PCs, set entirely within the confines of Firetongue Academy as a dungeon crawl. It can be used either as an entry point to the setting or as a later adventure for parties interested in gaining increased power and status at the school.

Firetongue Academy has a group of students known as the Order of the Golden Claw. By proving their skill at magic, they have easier access to a wider variety of research materials for their studies. However, membership is doled out only to those students who can make it through the Dark Gates, an underground series of rooms where students are divided into groups. The task is to make their way through the obstacles within, gathering colored tokens. The groups who make it to the end with at least 4 tokens total are declared winners and join the Order of the Golden Claw.

Read the following text as the adventure starts:

*The ground slopes down at a steady incline, appearing not unlike a square hole at a distance. You and several other students of Firetongue Academy stand before an imposing set of three obsidian doors, with you all [the Player Characters] forming the Western team, the others the Eastern team. The central doors are unused, as the teacher declared them to not comprise the test.*

*Professor Wrenfeld, a black-clad bald human male with pale complexion makes a speech as he walks behind each team. He reiterates things you've heard gossiped around the school before: about how students who take up the challenge must brave their way through an underground complex. Those skilled and lucky enough to collect enough treasure tokens and make it to the other side unscathed will join the Order of the Golden Claw. Although even a newcomer to Firetongue Academy has many learning opportunities when it comes to the magical arts, the Order's status grants them privileges in the form of access to more esoteric magic and lore.*

*As Professor Wrenfeld finishes the explanation, the Dark Gates open of their own accord to a shadowy hallway of stone and moss. The initiation delve has begun, and the other teams head past their own portals. Let's hope that you'll be the victorious ones today.*

Professor Wrenfeld will tell the PCs some basic information if asked ("No, you won't risk death, this is just a test." "No, you can't kill the other team members." etc.) but will be tight-lipped about the specifics of the challenges they will face. If they dawdle too long Wrenfeld will tell them that remaining outside the hallway for more than a minute forfeits their team.

**Room 1:** This room has a large raised square-shaped platform with stairs leading up on each of its four sides. At the top is a cylinder with small slits on each side, with the magic runes for abjuration, enchantment, illusion, and necromancy. Those who utilize a read magic spell to decipher their meanings will automatically recognize the runes on later encountered tokens, although this can be done with individual tokens as well.

These are where students are meant to insert the tokens corresponding to the appropriate school of magic. If one is inserted on each side, then a portion of the roof will open as the platform raises to take the team standing on it back to the surface world. Professor Wrenfeld will be waiting to congratulate the winning team...that is, if they managed to ascend by legitimate means. Otherwise they get detention for cheating on the test.

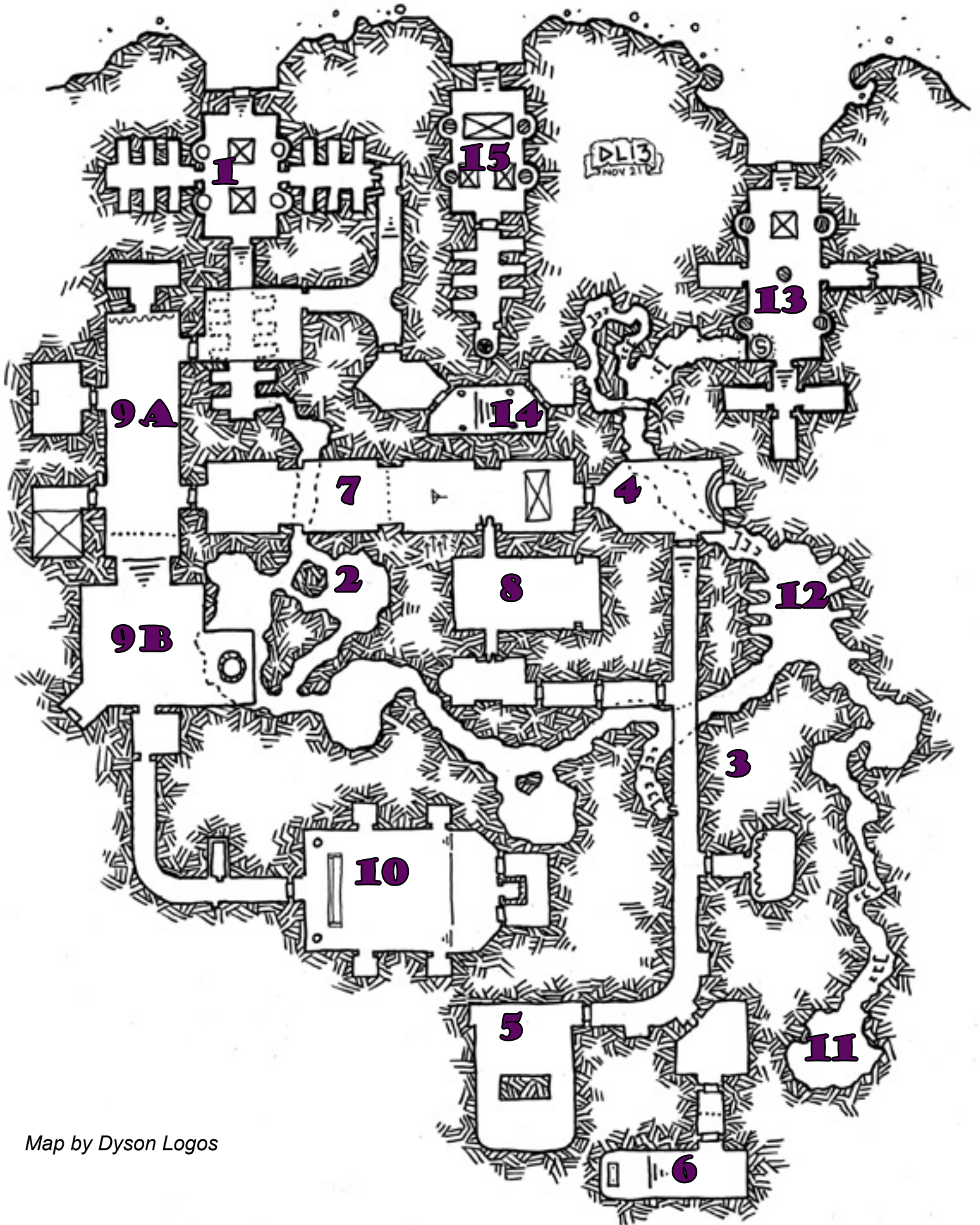
**Room 2:** A narrow ledge one foot wide spans over a water-filled pit. A soft blue light glows from an underhang at the center of the ledge. The source of this illumination is a medallion with the magic rune for 'abjuration' on it, and is one of the four required tokens.

A well in the southwestern section is slick and requires either a Climb Walls thief skill, *spider climb* spell, rope and grappling hook, or similar ability. It leads up to Room 9b. The well's passage is 40 feet tall.

A pair of floating eyes call this water home, and will use their hypnotic gaze on anybody crossing the ledge. Those who notice the fish must roll a saving throw or stare blankly at it for 1d6+1 rounds. If a PC is on the ledge, they will lose their footing and dive off into the water. Anyone subjected to this power within the water is still capable of remaining afloat and treading water.

**Floating Eye (2):** HD 1d6; AC 3[16]; Atk Bite (1d2); Move Swim 24; Save 18; Special: Hypnotic gaze, surprise on a roll of 1-5 on 1d6; AL N; CL/XP 1/15

*Reward:* Award the PCs the experience gained from defeating the floating eyes if they manage to claim the medallion without neutralizing them first.



Map by Dyson Logos

**Room 3:** This room has a fork in the road with an arrowed sign in the middle. The left-hand (north) path has a picture of an iron maiden, the right-hand (south) path has a picture of a huge pile of gold with a treasure chest on top.

**Room 4:** The room is a torture chamber full of all manner of painful-looking medieval devices from a stretching rack to a whipping post.

Anybody who touches any of the equipment in the room triggers a *magic mouth* spell: “those who seek the magic medallions will befall all manner of agony should they fail! There is no shame in retreating!”

This is a lie, of course, meant to test the resolve of students.

**Room 5:** This small 10 foot by 10 foot chamber has the entire floor covered with small medallions with the magic rune for “*illusion*” written on it. However, none of them glow, and only one of them is the true token. A detect magic spell or similar means of divination will discern the true token; otherwise it takes the party 1 turn to find, upon which it glows once grasped in a hand.

If the party takes at least 1 turn to find it, a pair of mites will enter the room via a hidden tunnel and attack the party.

**Mite, Common (2):** HD 1; AC 7 [12]; Atk Club (1d4) and bite (1d3) ; Move 9; Save 17; AL C; CL/XP 1/15

**Room 6:** This room contains a tomb on the far side of the wall, with an engraving of an elven maiden clad in mithral armor. The tomb is empty save for a smooth, glassy crystal surface portraying a castle shrouded in foggy mist. This is one of the Dark Gates’ many crystal-portals linking to lands far and wide; only those with proper space-time spells (such as *dimension door*, *teleport*, etc) can open the portals with a casting and manifest in the area. Otherwise the portal is unusable.

**Room 7:** This room is full of waist-deep stagnant water. Anyone wading through it begins to smell badly; this imposes a penalty on attempts at stealth (-10% if using appropriate thief skills and automatically detected by creatures with strong olfactory senses such as dogs). Casting *purify water* will remove its stagnant nature, making it safe to pass through the room. Alternatively buoyant equipment such as shields can be used to paddle across. The room’s south side contains a secret door leading to Room 8.

**Experience:** Reward the party with 120 experience points if they manage to traverse the room without getting tainted by the water.

**Room 8:** This room appears much like an interior greenhouse, with common forest shrubs and bushes growing all over the place. A single jaculi serpent sleeps coiled up. Hanging around its lower body is another token, a yellow medallion with the magic rune for ‘*enchantment*’ inscribed on it.

The room’s mossy patches contain hidden pockets of spores which will erupt if disturbed. A successful Intelligence or Wisdom check identifies that they’re purple moss and can put nearby living creatures to sleep.

Those within 10 feet of the moss' eruption will be affected as though targeted by a sleep spell; these particular specimens have been enchanted to not suffocate and digest creatures of halfling-size or larger. The jaculi is unaware of the patches, which can be used to the party's advantage.

**Jaculi:** HD 1; AC 4 [15]; Atk Bite (1d6); Move 12; Save 17; Special: Surprise on roll of 1-5 on 1d6; AL N; CL/XP 1/15

**Experience:** Reward the PCs with 125 experience points if they utilize the purple moss to their advantage, plus any experience gained from neutralizing the jaculi.

**Room 9a:** This room is long and rectangular; Above the southern curtain door is a stone carving of the face of a bearded man wearing a laurel wreath.

The carving is trapped to detect anyone who moves more than 15 feet north past the southernmost portion of the room. A fiery beam will shoot out of the statue's eyes; treat this as a ranged attack made by a 2nd-level fighter dealing 1d4 points of damage. It has an effective armor class of 10 [9] for those making ranged attack rolls against it, and dealing a total of 12 or more hit points worth of damage to the statue breaks it and renders it harmless.


Three side rooms containing nothing but odd arcane runes and glyphs are spaced around the chamber; these can be used as cover against the room's trap.

**Room 9b:** The only notable features in this room are the well which drops 40 feet to Room 2, and a blue-white crystalline door in the southwest. It has a circular indentation meant to accept a magically-charged crystal of *dispel magic*, after which the door will dissolve, leading further into the Dark Gates. The lower levels are beyond the scope of this adventure, and not part of the test.

**Room 10:** This room smells of death. Spiked chains dangle from the ceiling over four closed coffins fitted in grooves upon the floor. Upon one of the chains at the far north end of the room hangs the medallion token, this one with the magic rune for '*necromancy*.' Attempting to take it will cause the coffins to open and the skeletal occupants within to rise and attack. They will focus their efforts on the ones with the medallion, taking it back to the room if able to do so.

**Skeleton (4):** HD 1; AC 8 [11]; Atk 1 strike (1d6); Move 12; Save 17; Special: Immune to sleep and charm spells; AL N; CL/XP 1/15

**Note:** It is intentional that there is only one '*necromancy*' token in the entire dungeon. This ensures that only one team may pass the test.



**Room 11:** A gynosphinx by the name of Melsba passes the time in this room by flipping through pages of a botanist's catalog. She gave the eastern team the *'enchantment'* pendent she guarded in exchange for them solving one of her riddles. Melsba will tell the PCs that the challenge in this room's already completed, but will not divulge any other details about the dungeon (*"Wrenfeld strictly prohibited me from aiding your progress"*). If successfully charmed by a spell or good old-fashioned role-playing, she'll smile and say *"well maybe not now, but after this delve I can show you some interesting magical tricks. Think of it as a way of making up in case you fail the test."*

**Reward:** If the PCs get on her good side, Melsba will meet the most persuasive PC after class and offer to teach them in the powers of divination. The party gets 400 experience points and can add an appropriate 1st or 2nd level spell to their spellbook pertaining of an appropriate nature.

**Room 12:** This room's a narrow hallway with prison bars making up its walls. There used to be an *'abjuration'* token hanging upon the wall, but the western team already took it. Behind the prison bars are malevolent red eyes, charred black claws grasping out past the bars, and the faint scent of brimstone. Anyone versed in the infernal realms will recognize these to be demonic creatures.

A protection from evil spell causes the prisoners to recoil from the affected object. Attempting to climb the bars or walk through will expose said character to scratches from the prisoners, attacking as a 2 HD monster and dealing 1d2 points of damage on a hit.

**Room 13:** This room is virtually identical to Room 1. The PCs (and the eastern team) are more than welcome to insert their medallions into the slots on the cylinder to pass the test. All that matters is that they managed to collect the medallions, representing their ingenuity.

**Room 14:** This room's to the east of Room 9. It is incredibly foggy and cold, the ground covered in a light layer of frost. On the room's west end is a script in code which can be deciphered by a Thief's Read Magical Writings ability. Alternatively, a DC 14 Intelligence check and 10 minutes of work can discern it: "warm the four corners and a chest shall rise." Melting the snow in the room's corners will cause a hidden floor panel in the center to slide away, revealing a chest. Inside it is a medallion bearing the magic symbol for *'illusion.'*

**Reward:** Solving this room's puzzle grants 200 points of experience to the party.

**Room 15:** This room is not part of the test, but appears virtually identical to Rooms 1 and 13 save for the lack of any medallion elevator. Instead it has numerous sconces which hold not torches but crystal-tipped rods. An obsidian door in the back leads to a pool lined with gems worth up to 1,000 gold pieces in total value. This is one of the portals which leads to the lower levels of the Dark Gates. The gems are attuned to different levels of the complex and must be physically present in order to teleport passengers. School staff and members of the Order of the Golden Claw sometimes come here to delve into the unexplored levels in hopes of unearthing more treasure and lore.

## Rivals: The Eastern Team

The eastern team are first-years at Firetongue Academy and all good friends who know each other. They overslept the night before and barely prepared in time for the initiation delve. They have a strong sense of friendship and camaraderie, but their talent leaves much to be desired.

**Antonio:** Antonio would be a capable bard were he not a slacker. He only ever bothers studying at the last minute and prefers to wait for “inspiration” instead of throwing himself into his work. Despite this, he can pen a good song on his lute, and established a rapport with Aysel over their shared appreciation of the arts.

**Stats:** HD 1; AC 8 [11]; Atk unarmed (1d2) or rapier (1d6); Move 12; Save 15; AL L; CL/XP 1/15; Spells: Ghost Sound (Cantrip), Song of the Hopeful Knight, Succor (Cantrip). Equipment: backpack, ball of string, music note sheets, rapier, spell component pouch, torch

**Aysel:** Hailing from a southern sultanate, Aysel had a privileged upbringing among the nobility and her parents spared no effort in tutors of many skills. She found a passion for unarmed combat and magic, and sought out Firetongue Academy to further her skills. She’s more physically adept than most mages and is eager to prove herself.

**Stats:** HD 2; AC 6 [13]; Atk unarmed (1d6) or Spellbolt (1d6); Move 12; Save 15; AL L; CL/XP 1/15; Spells: Message (Cantrip), Protection from Evil, Spellbolt (Cantrip). Equipment: backpack, flint and steel, grappling hook, 50 feet of hemp rope, 5 iron spikes, spell component pouch, torch

**Zabli:** A dark elf girl on the cusp of womanhood, Zabli believes that the “sun-touched” are incapable of crafting an obstacle course capable of challenging her. As a result she put in the minimum preparations necessary for the test. Her life was saved by Antonio during an excursion to the surface, and as such he is one of the few humans she respects.

**Stats:** HD 1; AC 6 [13]; Atk unarmed (1d2) or dagger (1d3); Move 12; Save 17; AL N; CL/XP 1/15; Spells: Mage Hand (Cantrip), Parlor Tricks (Cantrip), Shield. Equipment: dagger, spell component pouch

**Activity:** The Eastern Team will not be idle during the dungeon delve. Depending on how long the PCs take results in the status of their progress.

**0 minutes:** Begin in Room 13

**2 minutes:** Room 12, Aysel casts Protection from Evil to retrieve abjuration token

**5 minutes:** Room 11, team solves Melsba’s riddle

**20 minutes:** Room 5, team has trouble finding illusion token and abandons search.

**22 minutes:** Room 2, team decides to grab abjuration token if not already taken by PCs

**25 minutes:** Doubles back to eastern side, Room 4, make way through water in Room 7.

**28 minutes:** team is pinned down by guardian statue carving in Room 9a. Aysel tries to use *spellbolt* but takes some blows (4 hp damage) before retreating for cover. Antonio uses *succor* to dull the pain, and Zabli activates *shield*. Zabli uses her shield to reach the other side and decides to continue forth without her teammates.

**30 minutes:** Zabli grabs for the necromancy token, only to be attacked by skeletons. Her screams cause Aysel to rush forth, risking hits by the guardian statue. Antonio is too scared to follow her.

**Interactions:** The Eastern Team is well-aware that the PCs are rivals to their success, and don't believe that there are multiple tokens in the complex initially. However they're not keen on fighting the PCs unless they have several tokens they don't have or it becomes clear that there's only one necromancy token in the complex. If the PCs meet them in a token room, Aysel will try intimidating them to "buzz off and choose another room," flexing her muscles for good measure. However, if the PCs help save them from a dire fate (such as the statue carving's trap in Room 9a or the skeletons in Room 10), they will be grateful; Zabli will insist that it's still a competition, but Antonio will suggest that perhaps Professor Wrenfeld will factor 'good moral character' into the final test results.

However, the Eastern Team will not fight to the death unless the PCs are obviously striking to kill them. In such a case, Aysel will tell Antonio and Zabli to flee and get Professor Wrenfeld for help as she holds back the PCs. Needless to say, the Professor will be incensed at any accounts of attempted murder on school grounds and expel them.

### Conclusion to the Adventure

If the PCs manage to find enough medallions to unlock one of the cylinders and thus ascend out of the dungeon, Professor Wrenfeld will be awaiting them with a fancy velvet-lined box containing golden claw-shaped pins (one for each PC) to mark their path of magical advancement.

Wrenfeld will commend their actions if the PCs shown selflessness or took risks to aid others, be it another team in danger or carrying the unconscious bodies of their own fellows to a safe place. If they acted in what appeared to be clear and present danger at the risk of sacrificing a medallion, Wrenfeld will give them a "merit point" which will grant that individual PC a pin even if their team does not make it out of the dungeon. If they left any companions to the mercies of the dungeon, Wrenfeld will chide them, expressing that a "divided team is easiest to defeat" and not award the cowardly characters any pins.

If the PCs failed to escape the dungeon, whether because they were unable to locate the required medallions, running out of resources to go any farther, or simply declaring their intention to give up unanimously, then Professor Wrenfeld will come into the dungeon to safely retrieve the party. He will mention that they failed to pass the test, but can try again next month.

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