

THE BANSHEE'S TOWER



View of a ruined tower of Caernarvon Castle, The British Museum

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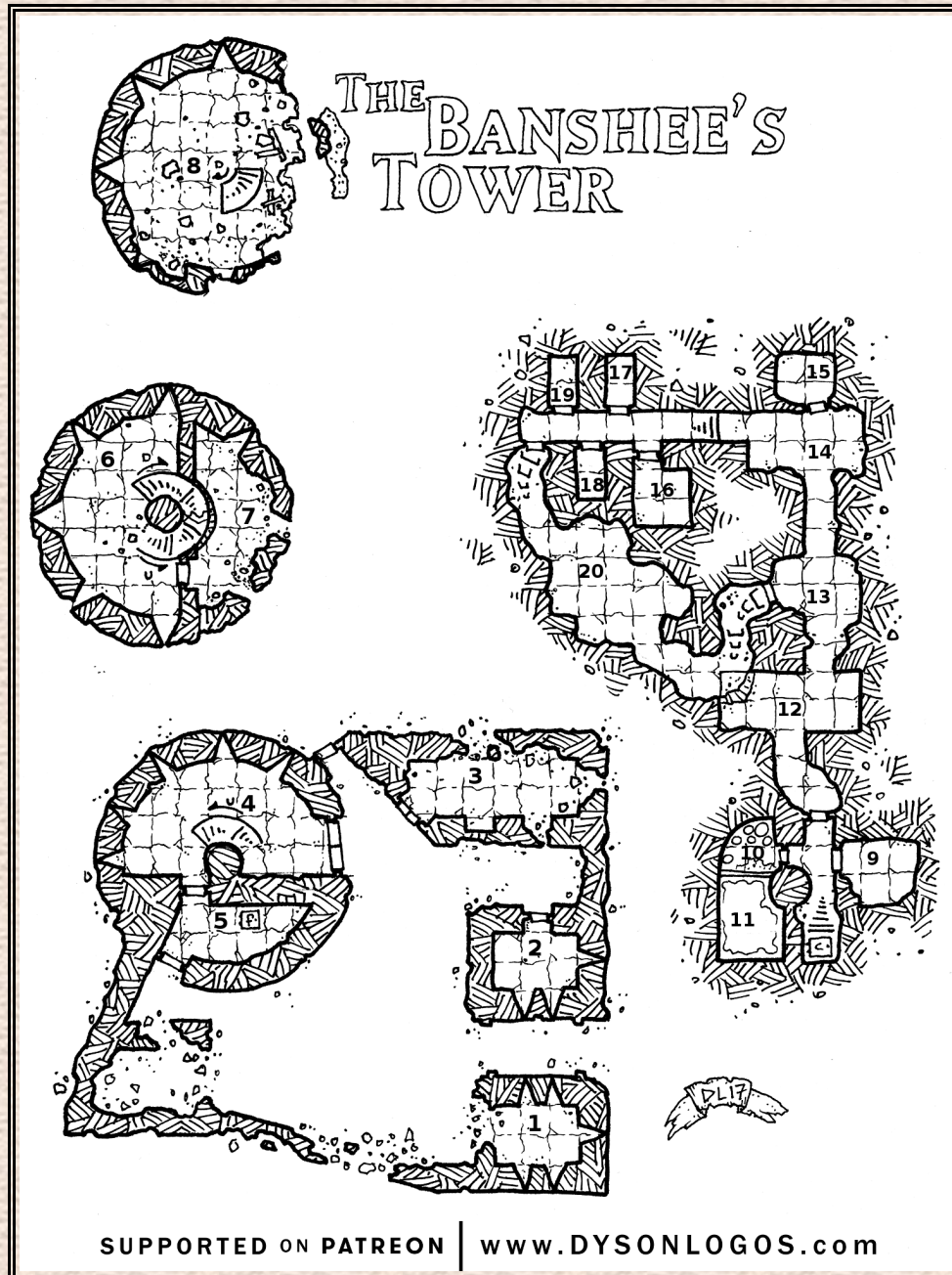
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The tower formerly known as Asher's Redoubt, served as a minor border fortress and occasional gaol. The tower helped secure the trade road and played host to caravans and couriers. Its captain, Per Yeren, was a popular commander and friend to the locals. During the war a decade ago known locally as the Outburst, the tower fell after a brief siege, its garrison slaughtered. After the hostilities passed, the locals returned from hiding in the fens, buried what remains they could readily recover, and left the place alone, a haunted monument to its defenders and the war.

The tower now stands, abandoned and decrepit. Its gates were broken down, the wood burned and trodden away. The walls were breached in multiple locations, and the third floor has partially collapsed into the second.

The Banshee's Tower (as it is now called) is further shunned by the locals for the haunting cries that have recently begun echoing over their fields and for the predations of their livestock.



1. A **bandit** has been left here as guard by the raiding party (4). They will fire one round from their crossbow and flee to the tower to warn their compatriots unless detained (8 gp, 15 sp, and an ornately carved bone whistle (15 gp)).

2. Tucked into the west arrow slot facing the gateway is an *Eldon's Alarum*, a gnome-built arcano-mechanical device used as a doorway ward. Some searching will be involved, but a curved silver mirror may be found among the detritus on the south side of the gateway. When the mirror is paired with the *Alarum*, the device creates a klaxon if a body crosses the line between the mirror and device. The two parts may be separated as far as 50 feet, as long as line of sight is maintained.

3. A **viper** has taken up residence in the partially-collapsed guardroom. The snake is hidden within fallen bricks and detritus, and will only attack if disturbed. It has taken up residence in an old leather bag that holds 87 gp, 92 sp, and a Chrysoberyl (120 gp).

4. There is a 25% chance that four **bandits** have just burst from the tower's cellar/dungeon (5) below. They are panicked and disoriented. They have lost a gang member and their leader, and are dragging a partially-paralyzed ally covered in odd filaments. They entreaty the party to aid. They say they were set upon by an undead horror. Although it seemed initially stunned by the light of their lanterns, it quickly recovered, paralyzing party members with cast webs.

5. A number of casks and other containers are scattered about, evidence of the bandit party's initial investigation and looting of the cellar. If the bandits have already fled, the trapdoor in the floor has been hastily bolted. If the bandits aren't encountered here or in 4, they are investigating the cellar. Listening at the trapdoor may reveal either sounds of poking about in the larder or the struggle with the 'wraith' (19).

6. The tower room is empty but for some debris blowing about. Near the door to the Captain's Quarters (7) hangs a small black dragon skull worked with silver (250GP). The nose of the skull is darkened by the hands of soldiery touching it for luck as they went on duty or mustered for defense.

7. The Captain's Quarters lies in damage and disarray. The ceiling has collapsed, and large bird droppings and shattered bones are scattered about. Half-buried under the collapse are the skeletal remains of the tower's second-in-command, Per Sevard. Sevard's remains are clad in rusted plate. In a waxed leather tube around his neck is the deed to the tower, releasing it to the Captain in reward for his duty, and wrapped around an amber signet ring (50GP) to verify the claim. Within one of Sevard's rotting boots is secreted a **+1 dagger**. The ruling family signified by the ring was on the losing side of the Outburst, so anyone bearing the piece will be questioned closely about its provenance. However, if it can be returned to one of the family's many cousins living quietly in the area, they will provide what assistance they can in quiet gratitude.

8. The partially-collapsed roof of the tower has become home to a **Harpy Eagle** (HD 3; AC 7 [12]; Atk 2 talons (1d4), 1 bite (1d6); Move 3 (Fly 24); Save 14; AL N; CL/XP 3/60). The eagle is the eponymous "banshee" of the tower, its calls heard over the valley. It is large enough to take prey of up to sheep size, and can carry off small humanoids (goblins, halflings) in its talons. Within the nest are two downy immature chicks. If captured alive, they may be of value to an austringer seeking a larger or more exotic hunting bird to train.

9. The former strong-room for the Tower once contained the payroll for the garrison, and was also used to temporarily store valuables or sensitive documents in transit. The lock is sprung, and room is emptied of all valuables. Unfortunately, its security device is still intact. A crossbow trap has 1d4 bolts remaining. The trap will fire each time the door is opened until it is disarmed, or out of ammo.

10. Storeroom: Most of the casks, crocks, and crates have been broken or spoiled, although a case of good wine (12 bottles, 25 GP each) remains intact and viable.

11. South of the larder, the floor steps down to a pool used as an emergency water source at the tower. Lurking within the water is a small (3HD) **Stun Jelly**. Poking around the pool will alert the jelly. It is translucent and exceptionally difficult to spot in the

water (surprises 5 in 6). The jelly will not pursue intruders past Room 10.

12. A dead bandit lies here, covered in tendrils, their head bashed in. A broken lantern is nearby.

13. This former storeroom is empty, although the walls and floors have a healthy growth of fungi. Rooms past this one will also have a fungal crop, a side effect of the moist environment and the current occupants of the cellars....

14. This room was used as a watchman's post when prisoners were held in the jail, but is empty and devoid of objects besides a broken stool and burned-out torch sconces.

15. This room has become inundated with naturally-accumulated gasses seeping through the walls. The gas will explode if the door opened and atmosphere is exposed to flame (2d6 dmg, 10' radius, save for half dmg). A PC attempting to listen at the door has a 2 in 6 chance of smelling the gas.

16. A room formerly used as a cell. Its door is locked. Within are the remains of Per Yeren. He escaped here, badly injured, but expired before being able to make his escape after the siege. He wears high-quality plate armor (2/3 weight, 250 gp), and bears his +1 *greatsword*. In his purse is 30 gp and a few loose aquamarine gems (120 gp total).

17. An immature **fungal wraith** (2HD, otherwise as fungal wraith, 19, below) is lurking in this cell. Because it is still metamorphosing/maturing, its paralysis effect may be saved at +2. It was formerly a local shepherd-boy who investigated the tower seeking the cause of the lost sheep.

18. A room formerly used as a cell is now empty. Its door hangs loosely on its hinges.

19. Fungal Wraith: Not a true undead, but a low-intelligence myconid-symbiote that possesses a live creature (HD 5; AC 6[13]; Atk 2 bash (1d6), paralyzing tendrils (below); Move 3; Save 13; AL N; CL/XP 6/400; Special: The wraith may be 'stunned' by a strong light source (e.g. lantern or magical) for one round (-2 to-hit)). The wraith can cast tendrils up to 20 feet to entangle and paralyze a victim for 1d6 turns (save vs paralysis). The 'wraith' reproduces by paralyzing a victim-creature and inoculating it with a fruiting body full of spores. A save vs disease (-2) will prevent implantation. 1d2 days later the creature will arise as a fungal wraith unless *cure disease* is applied prior to the transformation.

20. The lost bandit captain lies paralyzed and cocooned in filaments. There is a 40% chance that the **fungal wraith** is here instead of at 19. If the 'wraith' is present, it will be beginning the inoculation process, releasing spores onto the paralyzed victim.

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