

SF 8

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— Adventure 8: Pains of Scalded Glass —

By Gary Schotter & Jeff Harkness

**SWORDS &
WIZARDRY**



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This book is dedicated to the memory of Dustin “Lanky” Ray Cook, 1985-2009.

Special Thanks

Jeff would like to dedicate this book to Tammy, Kaitlyn and Alyssa. Gary would like to dedicate this work to Christina, Brooklyn, Kaden and Amberlyn. We also want to thank Greg Wilson for his wisdom and advice in solving many dilemmas and game mechanics issues.

And a special dedication to the 32 PCs who lost their lives during playtesting.



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ADVENTURES
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Splinters of Faith

— Adventure 8: Pains of Scalded Glass —

By Gary Schotter & Jeff Harkness

PCs journey deep into an abandoned mine to retrieve a special pane of glass. The glass is required to restore a temple's worship room. But insect worshippers inhabiting the mine have their own agenda — and it doesn't include interloping PCs. Plus, the mine's deep denizens are pushing upward to reclaim their home. The adventure is designed for characters of 7th to 9th level.

The land drops away into a 50-foot-deep, massive crater scarred by an active geyser field. Steaming water erupts upward from hundreds of openings scattered inside the volcanic caldera. A town sits perched on the edge of the cliff, some of the buildings no more than half a structure — the other half having fallen into the crater many years ago.

Sitting in the middle of the dangerous geysers, a delicate looking lotus-blossom shaped building rises into the air. Seven teardrop pools filled with bubbling water surround the structure. The stone walls of the temple are blasted and burned, pocked with pellet-sized holes.

A blast of superheated water erupts upward — straight from between the petal-like eaves of the flowering roof. The geyser hangs like a cloud above the temple, then the water droplets fall in a hot rain over the temple's grounds. Even from the crater's lip, the geyser

is spectacular, a natural wonder to behold.

The Lady of the Searing Waters

Location: Seismically active ground (mountainous).

Nickname: The Holy Water Spout, The Steam Maiden

Deity: Ninevah, Lady of Miasma; goddess of Water, Volcanoes

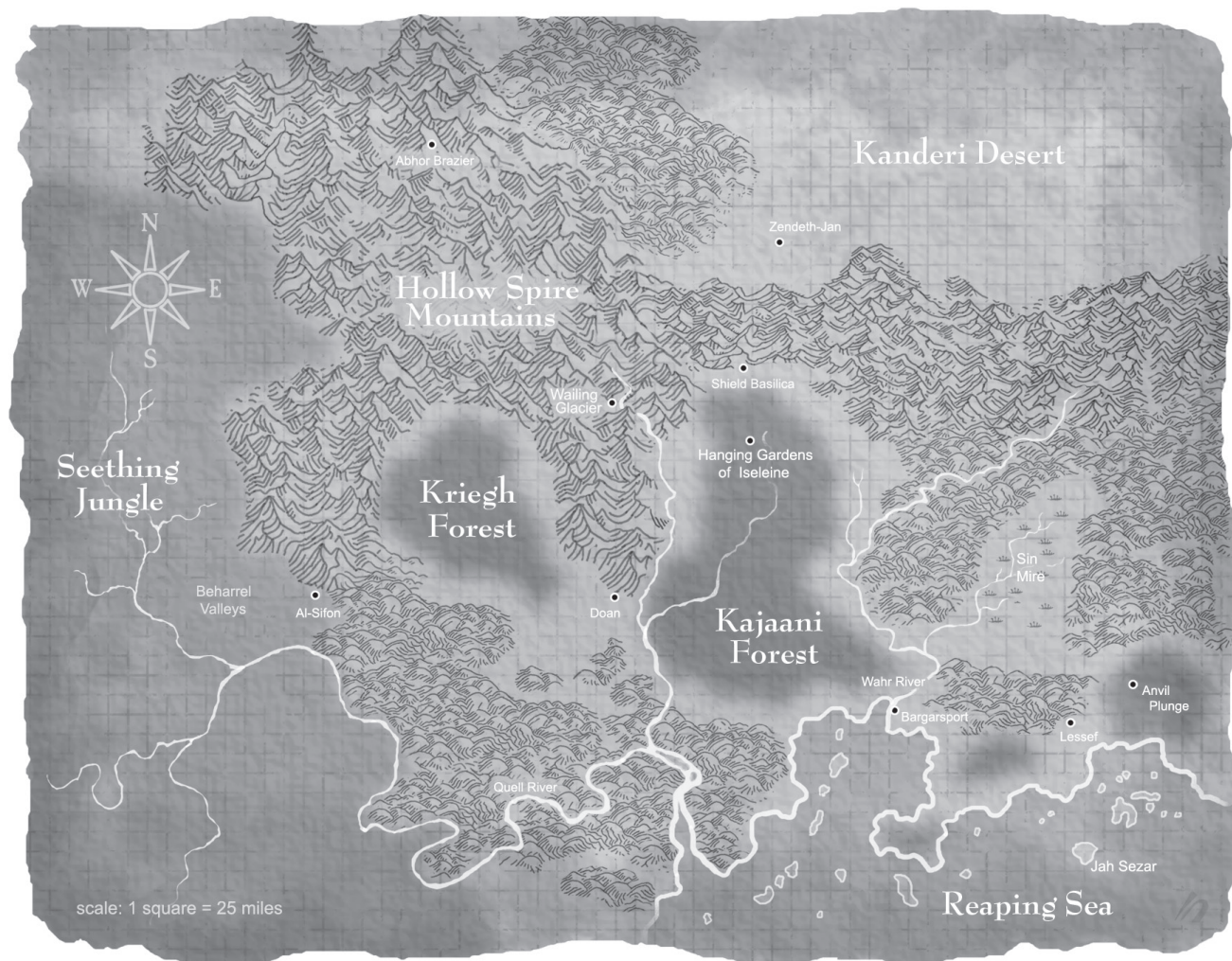
Worship Domains: Water, Fire, Earth

Leader: Chihule Evás the Scalded (Neutral male human Cleric 12)

Servants: 25 initiates (Cleric 2); 10 water-minders (Cleric 6); 6 under-priests (Cleric 9-11).

Dress: Priests wear woolen robes dyed a dark gray, with wispy lengths of blue and white silk draped atop it.

Unique characteristic: The Lady of the Searing Waters is built upon an active geyser, which erupts regularly through a special fun-



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nel built through the center of the temple's worship room.

How to Use This Adventure

This adventure is part of the *Splinters of Faith* campaign, which leads PCs to restore a broken scepter and destroy a reawakened death-priest named Akruel Rathamon. The first nine adventures require PCs to obtain a ritual to restore the relic. The final adventure finds the PCs and the reformed scepter facing off against the death-priest on his home turf. (For more information on the overall campaign, see *Splinters of Faith 1: It Started with a Chicken ...*)

At this point in the campaign, the relic – called the *Scepter of Faiths* – is equivalent to a +3 *adamantine heavy mace*, +5 vs. *undead* with the ability to cast *bless* and *cure serious wounds* (3/day) and *protection from evil* 10 ft. radius (at will). It can also *detect undead* (30-ft. radius) and is able to locate the death-priest Akruel with no range limits as long as the wielder and Akruel are on the same plane.

If you don't want to run the full campaign, don't worry. This adventure is complete on its own. Each adventure in the campaign follows a similar setup where the PCs visit a good temple, then are recruited/hired/asked to take part in an adventure before receiving the blessing they seek. The PCs must then travel to an "evil" temple to complete their mission.

If you plan to run the adventure without the others that precede it, you'll need to devise a way to get the PCs started. Since each adventure starts with a "good" temple, this could be as simple as having the temple elders request aid against the "evil" temple. Of course, the promise of gold, magic and the thrill of adventure also might not hurt.

Temple Background

The Lady of the Searing Waters sits in the middle of a one-mile wide volcanic caldera, with the village of Doan sitting on the rim of the cliff overlooking it. A safe road to the temple allows visitors to worship or watch the geysers erupt.

The temple is a new construction, built five years ago after a massive volcanic eruption immolated the temple and part of the village of Doan where the corrupt priests caroused. Rumors say the fallen priests had pushed the goddess Ninevah too far — and she destroyed them for it. The rest of the village was untouched, despite the force that collapsed the land in a massive volcanic caldera. Many buildings in Doan crumbled when the land fell away beneath them.

The new temple is built in the caldera's center, where the surviving priests toiled for long hours to appease Ninevah after their order's dalliances. The temple is built from the crushed and broken ruins of the destroyed village and pieces of the former temple, but despite this burned and battered construction material, the sanctuary is a magnificent creation, rising into a towering lotus blossom in the middle of the geyser field.

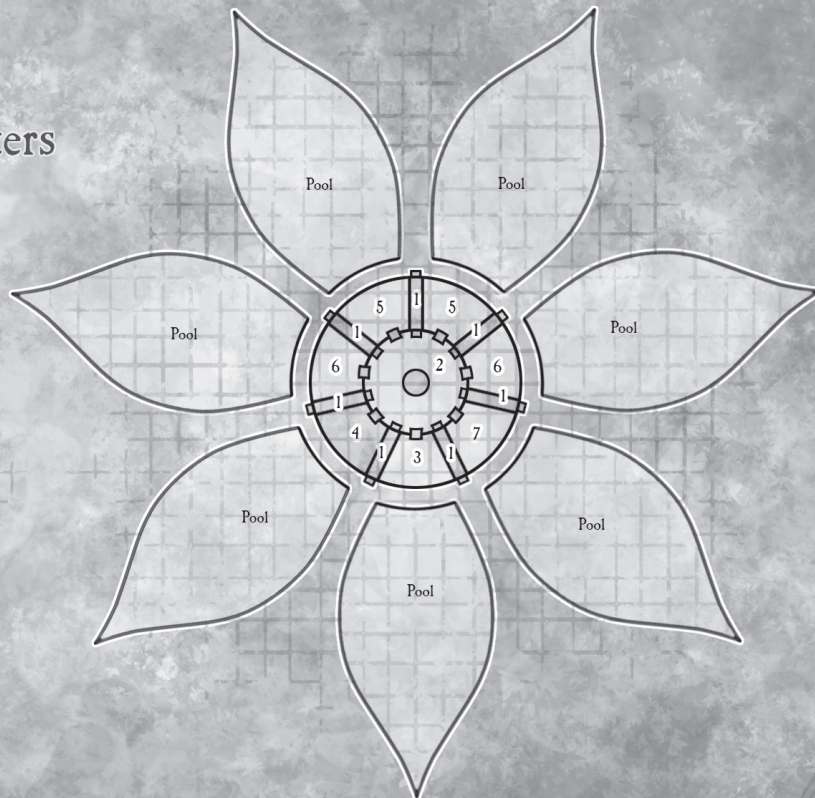
Area A: The Lady of the Searing Waters

The Lady of the Searing Waters is a lotus blossom-shaped temple with many gutters hidden in its ornate roofline. The building is built around a central column that allows the geyser's spume to erupt out of the apex of the temple where the roof "petals" converge. The gutters capture the water and then redirect it into pipes to provide hot

Area A:

The Lady of the Searing Waters

one square = 10 feet



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water to the temple priests.

Chihule Evás the Scalded (Neutral human male Cleric 12) leads the priests and watches every eruption personally. At night, he sleeps in a bedchamber on the second floor where a spyhole lets him hear the eruptions even as he slumbers.

The temple is a testament to Ninevah, Lady of Miasma. Many workers died in the scalding steam while building the central glass viewing area. Evás is one of the few remaining priests who actually helped build the temple. His body's many scars show the pain he suffered for his goddess during the construction of the holy site. He wears an eye patch over his left eye; he lost the orb when a blast of scalding steam caught him in the face.

CHIHULE EVÁS THE SCALDED (NEUTRAL HUMAN MALE CLERIC 12): HD 9+6; hp 49; AC 7[12]; Atk +3 *flaming war hammer* (1d4+4 plus 1d6); Move 9; Save 5; CL/XP 12/2,000; **Special:** spells (1—*cure light wounds, detect evil, detect magic, protection from evil*; 2—*bless, find traps, silence 15 ft. radius, speak with animals*; 3—*continual light, cure disease, locate object, speak with dead*; 4—*create water, cure serious wounds, neutralize poison, protection from evil 10 ft. radius*; 5—*commune, create food, dispel evil, raise dead*; 6—*find the path*). **Combat gear:** +3 *flaming war hammer*, woolen robes **Other gear:** *ring of protection* +2

Area A1: The Entries

Steam-scoured mahogany panels line these seven entryways. The priests placed these heavy planks atop the geyser during eruptions to direct some of the scalding water away from the builders. The boards were later collected to decorate the temple walls. The priests were amazed to find that each steam-and-water blasted plank showed beautiful scenes of Ninevah blessing her priests, healing the sick or standing amid the geysers.

A **greeter** (male human Cleric 4) waits on visitors.

GREETER, LAWFUL HUMAN CLERIC 4: HD 4; hp 20; AC 6 [13]; Atk *light mace* (1d4+1); Move 9; Save 12; CL/XP 4/120; **Special:** spells (1—*cure light wounds, detect evil*; 2—*bless*). **Combat gear:** ring mail, light mace.

Area A2: Viewing Room

Floor-to-ceiling panes of dark glass stand in the center of this worship chamber. Each pane is 10 feet wide and stands more than 20 feet tall, and is pushed against another to form an octagon around the geyser's upward blast. The glass is warm to the touch and steams after each eruption. The geyser erupts 12 times per day, once every two hours.

The priests who rebuilt the temple discovered these glass panes in the nearby Mines of Honn. Chihule Evás found by accident that the panes perfectly contained the scalding waters, but still allowed someone to see the steaming eruption through the dark glass.

Arranged around the central glass are rows of low wooden benches. Visitors line these seats during the eruptions to get a firsthand view of nature's fury in action. During a yearly festival, special guests are invited to witness the eruptions and participate in daylong prayers. Chihule always starts the festival with an opening prayer that culminates with the day's first eruption. The floor vibrates as the priest intones Ninevah's blessings and the geyser gathers strength below the worshippers. The room can hold up to just over 100 visitors, although this packs them shoulder to shoulder in the worship chamber. Not many visit the temple to witness the eruptions these days, however, so it is mainly priests in attendance.

The plumes of boiling water burst through the central glass chamber, then passes through an opening in the roof. It rises an additional 50 feet above the temple's roof in a blossoming spray. The falling water sluices into interior pipes where it feeds the temple's

needs and drains into seven shallow pools surrounding the building.

Area A3: Kitchen

Numerous pipes bring water from outside troughs into the kitchen. The priests take turns cooking meals, and the heated water greatly speeds up the process. The menu consists of lots of steamed vegetables, boiled potatoes and hot teas.

Derskin Millitus (Lawful human male Paladin 10), a former Shield Basilica commander, oversees the dining hall. Millitus provides bountiful meals for the faithful and all who come to witness the eruptions. Millitus is an imposing figure, despite getting on in years, with rings of scars down his arms from years battling the gnoll presence in the Kanderi Desert (See *Splinters of Faith 7: The Heir of Sin* for more on the Shield Basilica).

DERSKIN MILLITUS (LAWFUL HUMAN MALE PALADIN 10): HD 10; AC 1[18]; Atk *long sword* (1d8); Move 6; Save 7; CL/XP 10/1,400; **Special:** Paladin abilities. **Combat gear:** +2 *plate mail, shield, long sword*.

Area A4: Dining Hall

The priests take their meals here, seated at a massive scarred plank that serves as a table. The top of the table shows the myriad details of Ninevah's life and expectations of her priests. Low stone benches pocked by geyser blasts provide seating.

Area A5: The Baths

Pipes converge in two water chambers where priests bathe and relax. The rooms are steamy, and the water always hot, bordering on scalding. Separate rooms are maintained for men and women. The temple occasionally allows visitors to bathe, provided they are respectful of the blessed water during their bath. Water drains through grates, where it runs back into the geyser to be "cleansed" during the next eruption.

Area A6: Upper Access

Two steep staircases in these otherwise empty chambers allow the priests to climb to their bed lofts on the second floor.

Area A7: Relics of Ninevah

The priests store holy trinkets found in the geyser field in this chamber. The "icons" — blast-polished rocks, precious stones and assorted oddly shaped objects — are kept on shelves filling the chamber.

Area A8: The Loft, Inner Ring

Temple priests sleep closer to the center of the temple, in large rooms with viewing panels that let them look out over the geyser. The priests (Cleric 5-9) direct daily temple ceremonies and are required to attend at least one eruption service each day. The ceilings of the sleeping rooms are made of frosted glass so they may look up into the myriad "blossoms" of the roof and contemplate the messages written in the geyser's billowing steam.

Area A9: The Loft, Outer Ring

Initiates sleep in this massive communal loft. The younger priests



sleep closer to the edges and must crouch to get to their beds under the sloping roof. Visitors sleeping in the loft can listen to the water running down the roof tiles after each eruption.

Area Aro: Stairs

These steep stairs drop into Area A6 on the first floor. The stairs are pulled up to seal the upper loft when the priests sleep.

Area B: The Sinkhole

The caldera sinkhole is a 50-foot drop from the forest plateau to a seismically active field of geysers. The land dropped after a “supervolcano” eruption that destroyed the original temple and half of Doan. Instead of a normal cone-shaped volcano pushing through the earth, magma built under a one-mile-wide expanse, then exploded upward along natural fault lines. When the magma expended itself, the land dropped into the crater, forming the caldera. Doan barely survived; the former temple didn’t.

Since the eruption, Doan has become little more than a forest outpost overlooking the temple’s volcanic grounds. Stunted, sickly pines surround the sinkhole for a quarter mile, the trees suffering from the heavy sulfur and mineral concentrations dredged up by the geysers. Farther out from the sinkhole, the trees take on a more natural appearance.

Geysers erupt throughout the sinkhole, each plainly visible as a five- to 10-foot-wide hole in the ground. The ground rumbles and shakes two rounds before an eruption. Anyone within 50 feet of an exploding geyser suffers 8d6 points of damage from the steam and boiling water. Anyone within 100 feet suffers 1d6 points of splash

damage. Eruptions last two to five rounds. The priests maintain a safe road through the geyser field to avoid being injured.

Area C: The Stone Stairs

A stone staircase descends 50 feet from the upper rim of the sinkhole to the geyser-filled base of the caldera. The priests and Doan’s villagers built the stairs from cracked paving stones and broken foundations left over from Doan’s fall into the caldera.

Area D: The Safe Road

The Safe Road winds through the geyser field, its edges marked by 10-foot-tall poles. At night, initiates light candles placed in holders atop the poles to mark the path. Anyone staying within the Safe Road’s boundaries is safe from the spray of erupting geysers, although they may feel droplets of the blessed water strike them when the wind is up.

Area E: Village of Doan

Doan’s remaining structures sit in a half circle at the edge of the sinkhole. Half the town tumbled into the depression when the volcano erupted and collapsed, leaving the other half on the cliff face overlooking the geyser field. A wooden palisade forms a half-circle around the village, although there’s little that threatens the meager town.

Doan (village): Conventional; AL NG; 200-gp limit; Assets 8,000 gp; Population 800; human 80%, half-elf 15%, halfling 3%, elf 2%.

New Deity: Ninevah

Lady of Miasma, Goddess of Elements

Alignment: Neutral

Typical Worshippers: Humans, druids

Favored Weapons: Pick or spear

Ninevah is the goddess of elemental forces and usually associated with natural anomalies and disasters. She is the sustainer of life and characteristically appears as a semi-corporeal female composed of mist. Ninevah is peculiar in that she is most widely known as a goddess of fire, but typically represented by boiling water and steam. She is generally regarded as good, but her chaotic and random acts make her unreliable.

Temples to her are found around springs, geysers and in seismically active terrains. Her symbol is that of a tear-shaped drop of billowing clouds. Her priests normally wear colors of red, blue, white and brown, with red reserved for high priests.

Authority figure: Greda Piltar (Neutral female human Fighter 8, mayor).

Important characters: Simonis (Lawful female half-elf magic-user 9, educator); Karrisra (Lawful human female, tavern proprietor); Ethanie (Lawful female human Ranger 6, guide).

Area E1: Ninevah's Statue

A statue of the goddess Ninevah stands in the center of what's left of Doan. The statue is composed of mercury, and flows and changes its shape throughout the day. The most common form shows Ninevah standing atop a spur of rock, surrounded by an ever-changing cloud of steam and spraying water. A mysterious traveler arrived shortly after the caldera collapsed and "carved" the statue from a deposit of mercury seeping from the ground. The village adopted the statue after the artist vanished.

Area E2: The Common House

This hall was a warehouse. When the main inn fell into the sinkhole, the remaining villagers turned the building into a community center for dining, storytelling and gatherings. Wooden tables comfortably seat 70 people. A kitchen provides food and drink. A large fireplace awkwardly built along the far end provides heat.

Jonus (human male) cooks and care for customers. His daughter, **Jayne** (human female Exp3) serves, but really is the brains behind maintaining the aging facility.

JONUS (LAWFUL HUMAN MALE): HD 1; hp 4; AC 9[10]; Atk kitchen knife (1d4); Move 9; Save 17; CL/XP 1/15; Special: None.

JAYME (HUMAN FEMALE): HD 1; hp 2; AC 9[10]; Atk 1 fist (1d4); Move 12; Save 17; CL/XP 1/15; Special: None.

Area E3: Mayor's House

Mayor Greda Piltar (Lawful human female Fighter 8) is a retired adventurer who found her calling running the shrinking town. She inherited the job after the former mayor died when his home collapsed. Greda's home nearly fell into the pit, but somehow survived with one wing hanging precariously over the edge. She has since propped up the room with heavy oaken timbers hammered into

New Deity: Rachiss

Mogul of Parasites, Father Host

Alignment: Chaotic

Typical Worshippers: Evil druids

Favored Weapons: Scimitar, short spear

Few deities are lower in power and stature than the loathsome Rachiss, the deity of plagues and parasites. Feeding on the sweat and blood of others is the sustenance of Rachiss and his sparse followers. Those who follow Rachiss are opportunists who go to any lengths to achieve their insatiable goals. The god often appears as a huge, bloated leech with human-like features. Two massive arms protrude from the sides of the slug-like torso. Four fingers on each hand end in toothy sucking orifices.

Rachiss grants his druids powers over vermin and other invertebrates. His druids gain vermin companions and the ability to shape change into one vermin chosen at the time they begin serving him.

Rachiss' unholy symbol is a black silhouette of a mosquito.

the side of the cliff.

Greda is a tough woman who was raised in the wilderness and taught to fight by her father. She dislikes people trying to "pull one over on her" and likes to threaten to throw "cheats and sneak-thieves" into the sinkhole. Greda has wide shoulders and short-cropped brown hair. She looks more than capable of tossing people bodily over the ledge if provoked.

MAYOR GREDA PILTAR (LAWFUL HUMAN FEMALE FIGHTER 8): HD 8; AC 7[12]; Atk short sword (1d6); Move 6; Save 7; CL/XP 8/800; Special: None. Combat gear: short sword, leather armor

Area E4: Trader Gus

This dilapidated building is the town's trading post. **Old Man Gus** (Neutral human male) trades and sells most normal items. He has a keen eye and likes to haggle, starting his sales 1 1/2 times above normal prices. Gus is eager for tales of the road, and often makes deals for private storytelling sessions from adventurers passing through.

Area E5: The Traitors

Unbeknownst to the villagers, two worshippers of the insect lord Rachiss live in this house. They serve as the eyes and ears for the Pillar of Vermin temple to Rachiss deep within the Mines of Honn. The pair single out bums, the homeless and other travelers to be taken to labor in the Pillar to create armor for the vermin priests. **Ilban** and **Ethea** pose as husband and wife, but actually despise one another. They are good at their mission, however, and make sure to space their kidnappings apart and to only take the truly down-on-their-luck few who won't be missed. They often kidnap travelers, though, so as not to draw undue attention to themselves if villagers go missing.

ILBAN (CHAOTIC HUMAN MALE DRUID 9): HD 7; hp 39; AC 1[18]; Atk +2 sickle (1d6); Move 12; Save 5; CL/XP 10/1,400; Special: Druid of Rachiss abilities, spells (33322 1—detect magic, faerie fire, locate animal; 2—heat metal, insect summoning I, warp wood; 3—insect summoning II, heat metal, protection from fire; 4—dispel magic, insect summoning III; 5—insect plague, insect summoning IV) Combat Gear: +2 sickle, chitin plate armor 4[15], heavy insect-

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carapace shield, ring of protection +2.

Description: Ilban is strikingly handsome and confident. He resents this assignment and detests Ethea and her crude manners. Ilban prides himself on his appearance. He is served by a trained ankheg. Ilban normally shape changes into a giant praying mantis.

ILBAN'S GIANT PRAYING MANTIS FORM: HD 8; hp 39; AC 1[18]; Atk 1 grab (1d12); Move 9; Save 8; CL/XP 9/1,100; **Special:** Grab and bite. Other gear: *ring of protection +2*

TRAINED ANKHEG (7HD): HD: 7; hp 53; AC: 2[17] underside 4[15]; Atk: 1 bite (3d6); Move: 12 (burrow 6); Save: 9; CL/XP: 8/800XP; **Special:** Spits acid 5d6 (1/day, save for half) The ankheg remains in a burrow below the house that the druids live in within Doan. The broken land under the village allows it ample space to move around without being noticed.

ETHEA (CHAOTIC HUMAN FEMALE DRUID 7): HD 6; hp 35; AC 0[19]; Atk +3 *scythe* (1d6+1); Move 12; Save 7; CL/XP 10/1,400; **Special:** Druid of Rachiss abilities, spells (22211 1—*know weather, detect magic*; 2—*insect summoning I, warp wood*; 3—*insect summoning II, neutralize poison*; 4—*insect summoning III*; 5—*animal growth*) **Combat Gear:** +3 *scythe*, +2 *chitin full plate armor, ring of protection +1*

Description: This large woman constantly scowls. She persistently badgers and belittles Ilban and anyone else crossing her path. She is gruff and robust with an attitude and voice resembling a seasoned sailor. Ethea's vermin companion died during an unfortunate geyser eruption — which she still blames on Ilban. Ethea transforms into a giant scorpion.

ETHEA'S GIANT SCORPION FORM: HD 6; AC 3[16]; Atk 2 *pincers* (1d10), *sting* (1d4 + poison); Move 12; Save 11; CL/XP 8/800; **Special:** Lethal poison sting. Other gear: *ring of protection +1*

Area E6: Common Houses

Villagers live in single-story wooden dwellings. The buildings are small, with a couple of bedrooms and a living area around a fireplace. Most are in poor shape.

Area E7: Abandoned Houses

When the land fell away, a number of buildings collapsed into the sinkhole, leaving some with just half-rooms. Other houses have been cut completely in half, the remaining portion sitting atop the sinkhole ledge. The structures are abandoned, although an occasional rat or stray dog can be found within.

Area E8: Rubble and Ruin

Rotten wood, stone foundations and splintered beams lie in heaps at the base of the cliff. Doan's villagers scavenge the debris to make repairs on their surviving homes. Very little can be found in the mounds. The wood is unusable after sitting out for nearly six years, and has the consistency of stone.

Druids of Rachiss (Non-player characters)

The druids of Rachiss are evil men and women who worship the loathsome Mogul of Parasites and the blight the insect god brings to the world. Rachiss appears as a huge, bloated leech with human-like features. He has two massive arms that protrude from the sides of the slug torso. The druids have their own spell list incorporating spells from the druid and cleric spell lists, but overall prefer spells that involve insects. Their summoning spells all bring giant insects or worse. Druids of Rachiss cannot turn undead.

Druids of Rachiss are devoted to destroying life and promoting insects. Their holy symbol is any portion of an insect, such as a giant ant mandible, a black mosquito, or a jar of aphids.

Druids of Rachiss may use daggers and short swords, but prefer scimitars (1d6+1) and short spears. They shun metal armor and shields, instead preferring chitin versions created from giant insect carapaces. While wearable by druids, the armor does not protect as well as metal. Chitin armor (not shields) always provides an armor bonus of 1 less than metal armor of the same type. For example, full chitin plate armor is 4[15]. Any single attack of 25 or more points of damage completely ruins the armor.

Initiate Powers (2nd): At 2nd level the druid gains the following abilities; identify pure water, identify plants, identify insects, and pass through overgrowth.

Shape Change (6th): At this level, Druids of Rachiss may take the shape of an insect. The druid may shape change up to 3 times per day, but is limited to one type of insect (scorpion, ankhag, giant praying mantis, etc.) per day. The size of the insects the Druid shape changes into ranges from as small as a raven to as large as a small bear. Changing from one form to another heals the Druid of 1d6 X 10% points of damage previously sustained.

Insect empathy (6th): Druids at this level can communicate freely with any insect so that the insect reacts favorably to the druid and will do simple tasks if commanded. The insects see the druid as one of their own.

Druid of Rachiss Spell List

Level 1

1. Detect Magic
2. Detect Snares & Pits
3. Know Weather
4. Locate Animals (insects only)
5. Faerie Fire
6. Purify Water

Level 2

1. Cure Light Wounds
2. Heat Metal
3. Insect Summoning I
4. Obscuring Mist
5. Produce Flames
6. Speak with Animals (insects only)
7. Warp Wood

Level 3

1. Hold Animal
2. Insect Summoning II
3. Neutralize Poison
4. Protection from Fire
5. Pyrotechnics
6. Water Breathing

Level 4

1. Create Water
2. Cure Serious Wounds
3. Dispel Magic
4. Insect Summoning III
5. Hallucinatory Terrain
6. Produce Fire
7. Protection from Lightning

Level 5

1. Animal Growth (insects only)
2. Control Winds
3. Insect Plague
4. Insect Summoning IV
5. Raise Dead
6. Wall of Fire

New Spells

Insect Summoning I

Spell Level: D2

Range: N/A

Duration: 6 rounds (minutes)

A Druid of Rachiss can summon insect allies who serve him until slain (or until the spell ends). There is a 1 turn (10 minute) delay until the insects appear.

Die Roll	Monster Summoned
1	1d6 Giant Fire Beetle
2	Centipede Swarm
3	1d4 Giant Spider (1 ft. diameter)
4	1d6 Stirge
5	1d4 Giant Worker Ant (2 HD)
6	1d4 Giant Beetles (1 ft. diameter)

Insect Summoning II

Spell Level: D3

Range: N/A

Duration: 6 rounds (minutes)

A Druid of Rachiss can summon insect allies who serve him until slain (or until the spell ends). There is a 1 turn (10 minute) delay until the insects appear.

Die Roll	Monster Summoned
1	1d4 Giant Huhu Beetle
2	1d3 Giant Centipede (man-sized)
3	1d6 Giant Spider (4 ft. diameter)
4	1d6 Giant Wasp
5	1d4 Giant Warrior Ant
6	1d4 Giant Tick

Insect Summoning III

Spell Level: D4

Range: N/A

Duration: 6 rounds (minutes)

A Druid of Rachiss can summon insect allies who serve him until slain (or until the spell ends). There is a 1 turn (10 minute) delay until the insects appear.

Die Roll	Monster Summoned
1	1d2 Giant Spider (6 ft. diameter)
2	Giant Ant Queen
3	Giant Praying Mantis
4	Giant Scorpion
5	Rust monster
6	Giant Leech (6 HD)

Insect Summoning IV

Spell Level: D5

Range: N/A

Duration: 6 rounds (minutes)

A Druid of Rachiss can summon insect allies who serve him until slain (or until the spell ends). There is a 1 turn (10 minute) delay until the insects appear.

Die Roll	Monster Summoned
1	Ankhag
2	Giant Phase spider
3	Chuul
4	Giant Invisible Spider
5	Purple Worm
6	Remhoraz

Adventure Background

The Mines of Honn have a long history of misery and pain, from its early days when miners broke through its granite walls to delve its dark depths, to the recent visits by the priests of Ninevah who suffered its stale air to bring forth the great panes of black glass to rebuild their holy temple. For more than 100 years, the mines broke the backs and sapped the wills of the strongest men and dwarves.

When Ninevah's priests finally closed the mines for good, many who'd survived the deep pits and stifling tunnels thought their nightmares had been put to rest.

None realized the horrors that would soon infest the shuttered mines.

The latest "owners" of the ill-fated mines are a small sect of druid worshippers who venerate the loathsome parasite god Rachiss. Their leader, **Phyllox**, is intent on establishing an insect shrine to the Father Host within the deep mine on a natural stone column. Phyllox considers this column a holy site to Rachiss since it naturally bears myriad carvings of horrid insects. He claims visions sent from his god led him to the mines, and considers it his destiny to establish the vermin lord's dark temple.

But the remote locale of the mines is working against Phyllox's grand schemes. A lack of followers is further slowing his vision.

To that end, Phyllox sent two agents to Doan to gain potential converts if possible or to kidnap laborers if necessary. Phyllox uses these abductees as "volunteer acolytes" if they willingly convert to Rachiss or as slaves tasked with expanding the Pillar of Vermin if they don't. Phyllox eventually plans to march on Doan to enslave the city and force the populace into the mines to finish the temple. Phyllox also lured a band of bugbears into the mines from their mountain caves, promising them riches if they helped him.

The temple was beginning to take shape when Phyllox's workers ran afoul of the long-time denizens of the deep mines. A group of aboleths felt Phyllox was intruding on their domain and fought back, killing several druids before the druids were forced to retreat.

Phyllox knew his small band couldn't stand against the aboleths, so he summoned aid in the form of a derghodaemon named **Ssaracclak**. Phyllox thought he was getting an unstoppable weapon to use against the aboleths. What he got was a fugitive on the run from a life of drudgery and a powerful demon lord who didn't like losing his property.

Shortly after Ssaracclak arrived, the furious demon lord retaliated, sending a **retriever** into the mines to bring back his property. Now, the derghodaemon is on the run, trying to stay two steps ahead of the deadly retriever. The running battles through the mines between the derghodaemon and the retriever was the final straw for the frustrated bugbears, who rebelled after Phyllox ordered them to stop the retriever.

In the chaos, the aboleths made their move, pushing upward from the deep mines to expand their territory. Now, Phyllox is facing trouble on many fronts: a retriever wandering the mines, a derghodaemon that refuses to return to the lower planes but also refuses to fight, a bugbear rebellion and an aboleth invasion.

Phyllox's dream of a grand temple to Rachiss is quickly falling apart.

And the danger to the shrine isn't over: The damage caused by Ssaracclak and the retriever was extensive, especially near the Pillar of Vermin. Even worse, the retriever hasn't given up and is still intent on capturing its prey. It has been sealed away in the mines, but is already taking steps to get to the derghodaemon. Phyllox fears what might happen if the pair again face off in the mine.

All of Phyllox's plans are on hold until these new threats are dealt with. PCs will be walking into an abandoned mine filled with these warring factions.

Chaos at the Temple

An impurity in a glass pane holding back the geyser's steaming waters recently broke during morning worship, splashing the priests with burning water. Many died as the surge of superheated water engulfed them, while others were horribly burned. Doan's villagers rescued the survivors but many more priests died writhing in pain from their third-degree burns. Mysteriously, some of the priests who suffered only minor burns also died unexplainably after being pulled from the worship chamber. Villagers whisper that Ninevah must be punishing the priests again, just like the eruption that destroyed the temple in the past.

The villagers are completely off base this time, however.

Actually, many of the recent deaths were caused by an agent of Akruel Rathamon hiding among the priests. Several months ago, **Sivad-Uj'**, a member of a small group of Orcus worshippers known as the Dogs of Orcus, joined the Lady of the Searing Waters temple after dark visions "urged" him to do so. He awoke with vague memories of a goat-headed, bloated demon lord standing over a lotus-blossom temple, and then slowly grinding it into dust beneath his massive palm. After several nights of the same dream, Sivad-Uj' sought out the Lady of Searing Waters temple and joined it as an initiate. He quickly moved up through the church hierarchy after other initiates met "unfortunate" accidents. Many priests avoid Sivad-Uj', whispering that the quiet man is cursed.

They aren't far from the truth: Sivad-Uj' is actually an assassin sent to destroy the order of priests. All the while he was "serving" in the temple, Sivad-Uj' was waiting for the summons he knew must surely come. He didn't have to wait long.

Sivad-Uj' recently was contacted by Daznashal the Vicious (See *Splinters of Faith 2: Burning Desires* and *Splinters of Faith 10: Remorse of Life*) and told to eliminate the priesthood for the temple's role in creating the original *Scepter of Faiths*. Sivad-Uj' was devising a plan to poison the entire temple at dinner, but the glass shattering offered an irresistible opportunity that the assassin immediately seized upon. When the villagers rescued the priests from the burning water, Sivad-Uj' used the opportunity to move among the wounded, offering "healing prayers." Actually, he used the opportunity to administer lethal doses of poison to each survivor to finish them off.

If Sivad-Uj' is used, he is helpful and concerned – and readily reports any information about PCs to Akruel at the first opportunity he gets. He's not above accompanying PCs in their quest so he can learn more information to present to his master. Given the chance, he tries to slay one or all of the PCs before he flees. Sivad-Uj' has no connections with the Pillar of Vermin or the priest Phyllox. If the assassin escapes, Game Referees could use him again in *Splinters of Faith 10: Remorse of Life*.

SIVAD-UJ', DOG OF ORCUS (CHAOTIC HUMAN MALE ASSASSIN 6): HD 5; hp 28; AC 3[16]; Atk +2 *dagger* (1d4+2); Move 9; Save 8; CL/XP 8/800; Special: Assassin class abilities. **Combat Gear:** +2 *dagger*, +2 *leather armor*, *light crossbow*, 24 *bolts*, 5 *daggers* **Other gear** *cloak of displacement*, *amulet against scrying*, 5 *vials of poison*.

Description: Sivad-Uj' is a well-fed, seemingly jolly little man. He plays the part of a simple, pleasant friar who genuinely wants to bring peace to the world. In fact, he is just the opposite of what he seems. His cruelty and vengeance are matched only by his patience and dedication to Orcus.

Replacing the Glass

High Priest Chihule Evás was again fortunate enough to survive the scalding eruption that claimed so many of his brethren. He also escaped the lethal dose of “aid” administered afterward by Sivad-Uj’. But his heart is heavy at the destruction within his beloved temple. Each new eruption is a chance missed to worship Ninevah’s beauty. For PCs hoping to bless the *Scepter of Faiths*, the broken glass also means that the *Consecration of Water* ritual cannot be performed until the worship room is restored and again able to channel the geyser’s power.

Chihule beseeches PCs to journey into the Darikeer Peaks to the abandoned Mines of Honn to retrieve a replacement pane of volcanic glass. The temple builders found the panes in the coalmines, but the mines haven’t been entered in years. The high priest is sure that some of the panes must remain. As the panes are large and heavy, he offers the use of 2 oxen and a cart.

Journey to the Mines

The trail to the Mines of Honn leads through granite quarries into the Darikeer Peaks. Shale and granite cliffs surround the trail. The mine’s entrance sits approximately one day’s journey from the Lady of the Searing Waters.

Wandering Monsters

Use the following table to check for wandering monsters during the overland trek toward the mine entrance. Roll 1d20 for every six hours spent traveling.

d20 Encounter

- 1 **BRYM DRAY, ADULT BLUE DRAGON (10HD):** HD 10; hp 70; AC 2[17]; Atk 2 claws (1d6), 1 bite (3d8); Move 9 (Fly 24); Save 5; CL/XP 12/2000; Special: spits lightning.
Brym Dray is a wandering female blue dragon. Although she is not currently looking for a fight, she may feel like softening up adventurers with a flyby or two using her breath attacks before flying back to her lair at the edge of the Kanderi desert.
- 2 **BULETTE (1):** HD 9; hp 52; AC –1[20]; Atk 2 claws (2d6), 1 bite (3d12); Move 15 (Burrow 3); Save 6; CL/XP 11/1700; Special: Burrow.
Bulette: This landshark disturbed an iron golem that had gone dormant in a nearby forest. The bulette was struck repeatedly across the head, and now “swims” through the land in ever-widening circles. It can straighten its path to attack, but always tends to circle opponents as it fights.
- 3 **LOST AND VIOLENT IRON GOLEM (1):** HD 20; hp 80; AC 3[16]; Atk 1 weapon or fist (4d10); Move 6; Save 3; CL/XP 18/3800; Special: Poison gas, immune to all weapons +2 or less, slowed by lightning, healed by fire, immune to most magic.
This golem has ravaged the countryside for centuries, alternating between blindly attacking and then going dormant for decades. It is covered in vines and overgrowth from its latest dormant period. Its history and purpose are long forgotten. It was recently awakened by a tunneling bulette that got the worst of the encounter.
- 4 **MANTICORES (1d4):** HD 6+4; hp 47; AC 4[15]; Atk 2 claws (1d3), 1 bite (1d8), 6 tail spikes (1d6); Move 12 (Fly 18); Save 11; CL/XP 8/800; Special: Flies, tail spikes.
These manticores are flying away from their home in the

Kajaani Forest after a lightning strike caused a small forest fire. The manticores are angry and hungry.

- 5-7 **HILL GIANTS (2d4):** HD 8+2; hp 55; AC 4[15]; Atk 1 weapon (2d8); Move 12; Save 8; CL/XP 9/1100; Special: Throw boulders.
These angry hill giants have large lumps and bruises about their heads. They are tracking a group of trolls, seeking revenge and their stolen treasure. The dimwitted giants agreed to a game of “head bonk” with the trolls, but found their belongings gone when they woke up. Only then did they realize they’d been swindled after one of them remembered that trolls regenerate.
- 8-9 **OGRE MARAUDERS (2d6):** HD 4+1; hp 34; AC 5[14]; Atk 1 weapon (1d10+1); Move 9; Save 13; CL/XP 4/120; Special: None.
These ogres walked away from the Pillar of Vermin and the Mines of Honn to find easier treasure. They have no desire to return to the dangerous mines, and attack anyone they meet. They are little more than highway robbers these days.
- 10-11 **DWARVEN MINERS (7) (LAWFUL MALE DWARVES):** HD 1; AC 4[15]; Atk 1 war hammer (1d4+1); Move 6; Save 17; CL/XP 1/15; Special: Detect attributes of stonework. They are peaceful prospectors seeking treasure.
- 12 **TROLL GANG (1d4+1):** HD 6+3; hp 46; AC 4[15]; Atk 2 claws (1d4), 1 bite (1d8); Move 12; Save 11; CL/XP 8/800; Special: Regenerate 3hp/round.
These trolls are fleeing a group of hill giants that they cheated out of a large sum of treasure with a game of “head bonk.” The trolls carry 8,950 gp and a few bloodied rocks.

13-20 No encounter

Area F: The Mines of Honn

The Mines of Honn is an ancient abandoned colliery. For years, the mines supplied high-quality coal from the rich volcanic terrain. The volume and purity of coal was large enough that miners were able to stay closer to the surface compared with other mines. Anvil Plunge bought the most coal to fuel its prestigious forges.

During the War of Divine Discord, a seismic eruption destroyed the mines. Geysers of scalding water, collapsing ceilings and clouds of poisonous gases terrorized the miners, leading them to abandon the tunnels to a succession of dark denizens.

The mine’s upper level is dry and dusty, with stagnant and dangerous air filling some areas. Ten-foot-wide passages with 12-foot ceilings are hewn from the solid rock. Veins of coal still show in seams that lace the walls, floor and ceiling.

Wooden support columns and crossbeams line the halls at 10-foot intervals. Every 30 feet, extinguished empty lanterns hang from the beams. The mine is mostly dark and filled with choking coal dust.

The floors are hard, compact dirt with a stone floor two feet under the surface. A majority of the mine collapsed or is sealed off by recent quakes.

The druid cult of Rachiss claims the upper level. The druids and their insect minions roam the caverns, although not all areas are completely under their control. They seek to rid the lower mines of danger so they can claim that area as well.

Area F1: Mine Entrance

Deep gouges scar this rock-and-earth entryway, as if giant claws slashed the rock. The marks are ancient, left by miners slashing at the stone for luck before heading into the tunnels. Deep ruts mar the right-

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hand side of the 10-foot-wide passage as it slopes downward where heavy mining carts carved grooves in the hard-packed dirt floor.

Area F2: Junction Tunnel

This stone chamber broadens into a rough room with passages that extend into the mines. Scaffolding and a winch contraption dominate the 30-foot-tall chamber.

Ruined mining equipment lies in heaps along the stone walls. A few usable tools remain among the junk: 5 mining carts, a rowboat and two oars, 10 pickaxes, 8 sledgehammers, 5 shovels, 10 lanterns, 9 helmets (hardhats), 26 various spikes and chisels, a grappling hook, 13 10-ft. planks, 2 10-ft. poles, 32 support timbers of various lengths and a sack of 20 candles.

A ledge of rising steps runs around the edge of a great pit. The pit drops 300 feet into Area G10. A scaffold attached to a wooden 10-foot-wide bucket sits on the far side of the pit. The scaffolding is old, but sturdy. The bucket has a bench inside it to carry miners to the caverns below. Fungus and lichens encrust the scaffolding and bucket.

The winch and bucket are still operable. The bucket and rope provide stable transport for most of the distance down the mineshaft. However, the bucket and rope are a **huge animated object** that follows and remembers any order given in dwarven. The bucket's last order was to dump its contents 80 feet above the floor (Area G10). The bucket elevator can be operated normally until it reaches the 80-foot mark, where it tips by itself and the rope then returns it to the top of the shaft. A long-standing order allows the bucket and rope to defend themselves only in self-defense.

Guarding the winch room are **4 bugbears**. Each is relaxed and carefree, thankful for the "safe" guard duty they've drawn. The

bugbears do not immediately attack, but instead request information about PCs and their business visiting the Pillar of Vermin. They escort non-hostile PCs to Area F14.

ANIMATED ROPE AND BUCKET: HD 12; hp 88; AC 6[13]; Atk 1 slam (3d6); Move 15; Save 5; CL/XP 13/2,300; Special: **Constrict** (1d6).

BUGBEARS (4): HD 3+1; AC 5[14]; Atk 1 bite (2d4) or long sword (1d8+1); Move 9; Save 14; CL/XP 3/120; Special: **Surprise opponents, 50% chance.**

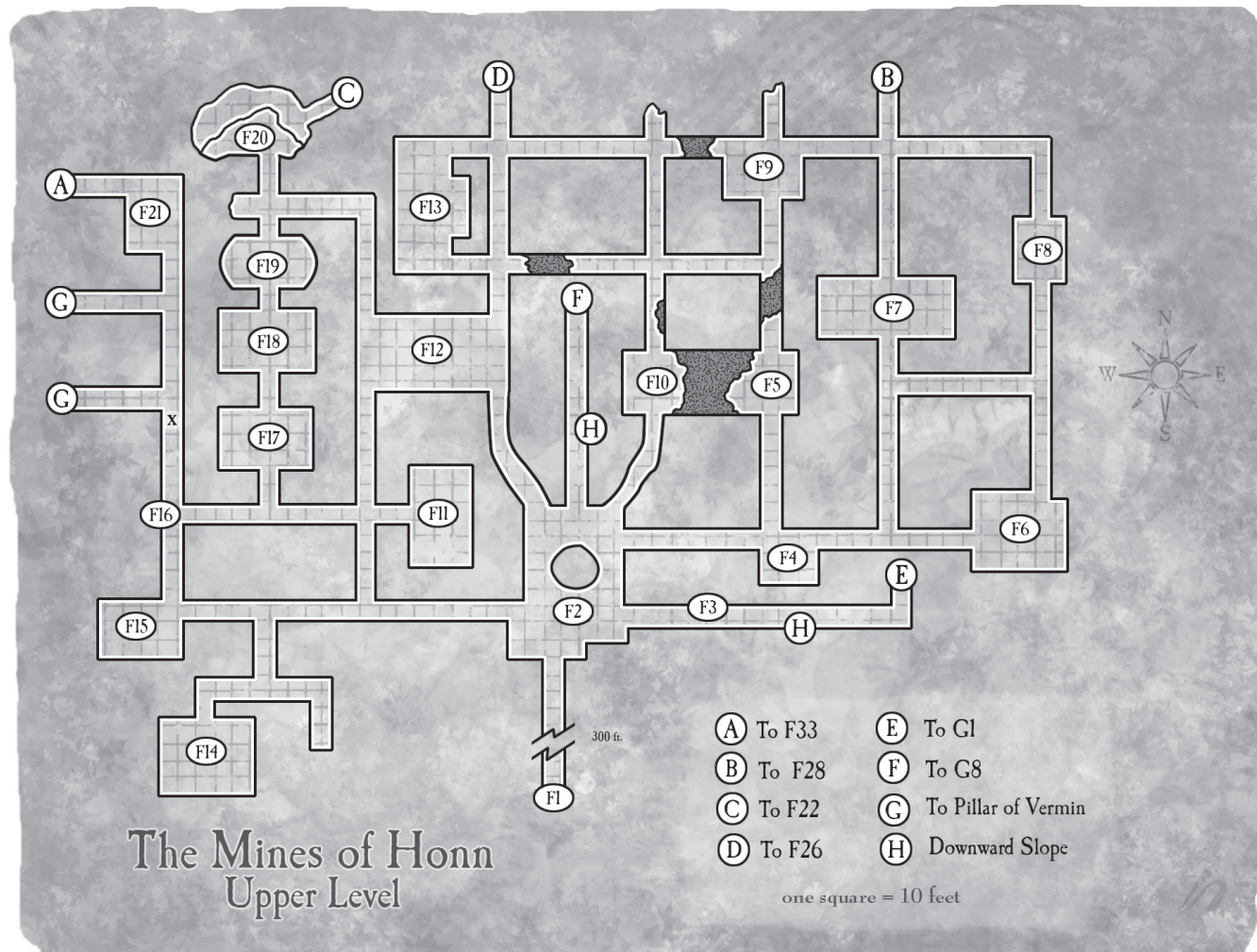
Area F3: Sloping Passage

This 900-foot-long passage slopes downward at a 30-degree angle, descending 300 feet to Area G1.

Area F4: Supply Room

The druids of Rachiss store twenty barrels of fresh water here along the walls. Two unmarked barrels, however, contain crude oil. Stationed here to guard against the return of the retriever are **4 frightened bugbears**. The bugbears are terrified and shaken (–2 to attacks and saves), and jump at noises and shadows.

BUGBEARS (4): HD 3+1; AC 5[14]; Atk 1 bite (2d4) or long sword (1d8+1); Move 9; Save 14; CL/XP 3/120; Special: **Surprise opponents, 50% chance.**



Area F5: Collapsed Room

The room lies in shambles, with destroyed support columns lying at odd angles. A rubble-filled passageway is impassable without a great deal of effort to clear the path. The druids sealed the passageway to try to contain the retriever after it entered the mines.

Area F6: Yellow Guard

Small mushrooms and thick feathery mold fill this 15-foot-tall room. Water drips from the ceiling into a pool in a depression in the center of the floor. Rocks and debris lie on the floor, covered in harmless moss.

The druids of Rachiss placed a guard here to alert them if the retriever should return. An exceptionally monstrous **large giant centipede's exoskeleton** covered in a layer of **yellow mold** waits on the ceiling. This beast is noticeable only if PCs actively scan the room before entering. The centipede was slain by the retriever and then animated by followers of Rachiss. The priests carefully cultivated the yellow mold on the centipede's shell, hoping it might have some effect on the retriever if it should return.

Each attack by the centipede releases a cloud of yellow mold spores. The spores fill a 10-foot area surrounding the gargantuan insect.

LARGE GIANT CENTIPEDE EXOSKELETON (40 FT): HD 8; AC 0[19]; Atk 1 bite (3d8); Move 18; Save 8; CL/XP 8/800; **Special:** Immune to turning, unaffected by sleep, hold, and charm, immune to non-blunt weapons.

YELLOW MOLD: HD n/a; AC n/a; Atk 1d6 damage + spore cloud; Move 0; Save n/a; CL/XP 3/60; **Special:** Poisonous spore cloud, killed by fire.

Area F7: Resting Chamber

Dilapidated wooden bunks surrounded by clutter are pushed against the walls, creating an open space in the center of the room. Scattered among the debris are chitin full plate armor (AC 4[15]), a scimitar, a *ring of protection* +2, a *potion of gaseous form*, and a *potion of fire resistance*. A small 1-foot-diameter ventilation shaft in the center of the ceiling leads to the surface. An iron grate covers the shaft at both ends. Leaves and rubbish now cover the upper grate, blocking light and air.

A **grey ooze** resides 50 feet up the shaft. It dines on unsuspecting inhabitants that wander into the room. The ooze shoved the furniture and junk aside when it occupied the room before it slid into the shaft. The ooze waits until it senses creatures below it and then drops out of the shaft.

GREY OOZE: HD 3; hp 23; AC 8[11]; Atk 1 strike (2d6); Move 1; Save 14; CL/XP 5/240; **Special:** Acid, immune to spells, heat, cold, and blunt weapons.

Area F8: Burnt Corpses

The druids lured the retriever to this room to exterminate the monstrosity. They failed horribly. Two **burned bugbear corpses** lie in the hallway, while a **human's body** lies face down in the chamber. The human corpse wears a shattered chitin breastplate and still grasps a +1 *short spear*. The man died of exposure to extreme cold. The bugbears and human appear to have been fleeing the room when they died.

The room contains the trampled and shredded remains of more humanoids, but it is impossible to tell if they were human, bugbear or something else entirely. Nothing else of interest can be found in the gory mess.

Area F9: Collapsing Room

Wooden beams supporting the ceiling of this room are gone, but the ceiling and walls remain intact. Two of the room's four exits have caved in. Lying beneath thousands of small stone insects are 2 **headless bugbear corpses**. The insects are the remnants of an *insect plague* spell cast in vain against the retriever. The druids used the bugbears as fodder as they cast the spell. The bugbears didn't last long enough for the druids to escape unharmed.

Buried in one of the collapsed corridors is a **petrified druid of Rachiss**.

Area F10: Sentries

Watching the room's northern entrance are 4 **bugbears**. The skittish bugbears are terrified after seeing the retriever slay many of their kin, and jump at the slightest noises. They attack intruders immediately. They are terrified (−2 to attacks, saves, skill and ability checks). They have no treasure and do not retreat if pressed. They plead for their lives if given the chance.

BUGBEARS (4): HD 3+1; hp 21; AC 5[14]; Atk 1 bite (2d4) or long sword (1d8+1); Move 9; Save 14; CL/XP 3/120; **Special:** Surprise opponents, 50% chance.

Area F11: Barracks

A platoon of guards is recovering in this chamber. They suffered major losses while fighting the retriever. Currently, 26 **bugbears** are here, most severely wounded from a recent battle in which they were sent to stop the tunneling retriever. They attack intruders, seeing PCs as easy prey compared with the hellish construct roaming the mines.

Scattered about the room are 1436 cp, 230 gp, and *potions of slipperiness* and *animal control*.

BUGBEARS (26): HD 3+1; hp 11; AC 5[14]; Atk 1 bite (2d4) or long sword (1d8+1); Move 9; Save 14; CL/XP 3/120; **Special:** Surprise opponents, 50% chance.

Area F12: The Great Antechamber

The original miners used to meet and eat here. The chamber currently serves as a guard quarters. **Vademn, a half-orc**, serves Rachiss loyally and is the only guard — mainly because other guards can't stand to share the room with the smelly half-orc. He commands the bugbears in the mines and keeps a close eye on the front tunnels and the driders in the adjacent room. He rides a **giant beetle** into battle and urges it to trample opponents. The beetle is his prized possession, and he fights to the death to protect his "baby." He often spends time polishing the beetle's carapace.

The only furnishings are a bedroll and a fire pit. Vademn's gear is in saddlebags carried by the beetle.

The beetle has difficulty squeezing through the smaller tunnels and generally stays in this large chamber. It wears a specialized saddle, and Vademn wields his long sword while charging. The long sword is fabricated from the mandible of a giant insect. Vademn attacks elves above all others.

VADEMNI (HALF-ORC): HD 8; hp 60; AC 3[16]; Atk +2 long sword (1d8+3); Move 12; Save 6; CL/XP 9/1,100; **Special:** Half-orc racial abilities
Combat Gear +2 long sword, +3 ring mail shirt, ring of fire resistance

Description Vademn is wild and untamed, the massive and enjoys cracking skulls. Vademn always wears a set of goggles made from the compound eyes of a giant insect. The goggles neither aid

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nor hinder the wearer aside from dust protection. A pair of fake antennae is attached to a leather helm he wears. Vademn bathes in the malodorous secretion emitted from the giant beetle's rear end. He claims it keeps his beetle calm and is a "bonding experience." Despite his nonconformity, Vademn is well respected and feared among the sect.

GIANT BEETLE (15 FT.): HD 10; hp 72; AC 1[18]; Atk 1 bite (3d6), trample (2d6); Move 9, Fly 6; Save 5; CL/XP 10/1,400; Special: None.

Area F13: Supplicants

Stringy webs cover the walls, draping like shrouds from the 30-foot-high ceiling. Long hallways lead off the room, but the sticky webbing is concentrated inside the chamber. Small spiders hang on nearly invisible threads about the room.

Three recent additions to the ranks of Rachiss are 3 **driders**. The driders traversed the horrors of the lower levels of the mines, losing their leader along the way. Although the druids do not fully trust the driders, they allow them to remain here until their loyalty is proven. So far, the driders are chaotic and unreliable. They viciously and mercilessly attack intruders — even lone druids of Rachiss.

Each drider carries potions of *extra healing* and *water breathing*. In addition, one drider has a *potion of invisibility* and a *ring of blinking*.

DRIDER (3): HD 7; hp 50; AC 3[16]; Atk 1 long sword (1d8); Move 18; Save 9; CL/XP 9/1100; Special: Spells, magical abilities.

New Magic: Potion of Water Breathing

A *potion of water breathing* functions as the magic-user spell of the same name.

Ring of Blinking

A *Ring of Blinking* allows the wearer to teleport short distances without error. Physical attacks against the wearer have a 50% chance of missing, or 20% if the weapon can strike a creature in the ethereal plane. While blinking, spells have a 50% chance of hitting the wearer, and the wearer takes half damage from area spells. The wearer also takes half damage from falling.

Area F14: Initiates' Chamber

Visitors and pilgrims are brought here to indoctrinate them into the cult of Rachiss. Several recruits are currently waiting in the room.

A pillar of stone carved into a woven pattern of insects and other less-savory vermin stands in the center of the room. Bedrolls, packs and personal gear surround the pillar. Lounging in the room are **Yeddo**, **Ovit**, **Lord Dunraith** and **Tunker**, and 3 **fighters** (human fighter 3). **Malden the Russet** leads the recruits.

The recruits are waiting to learn where Phyllox is going to send them to protect the Pillar of Vermin. They are eager to "mix it up" and the PCs are welcome targets if they come in acting tough. Malden is suspicious, but willing to talk to new arrivals before attacking. He will not disobey Rachiss, but he is beginning to doubt the mines as the best home for the vermin shrine.

BUGBEARS (10): HD 3+1; hp 5; AC 5[14]; Atk 1 bite (2d4) or weapon (1d8+1); Move 9; Save 14; CL/XP 3/120; Special: Surprise opponents, 50% chance.

MALDEN THE RUSSET (CHAOTIC MALE HUMAN DRUID OF RACHISS 8): HD 6+1; hp 35; AC 6[13]; Atk +2 staff (1d6+2); Move 9; Save 6; CL/XP 9/1,100; Special: Spells (1—*detect magic*, *detect snares & pits*; 2—*insect summoning I*, *cure light wounds*; 3—*insect summoning II*, *protection from fire*; 4—*dispel magic*, *insect summoning III*; 5—*wall of fire*, *insect summoning IV*)

Combat Gear: +1 leather armor (composed of layers of giant wasp wings), *ring of protection* +1, +2 staff.

Description: Malden suspiciously welcomes new arrivals without an escort. He answers questions in regards to Rachiss, but not about the mines or its inhabitants. PCs may bluff their way into his trust, but he immediately sends for reinforcements if things turn ugly.

MALDEN THE RUSSET (GIANT SPIDER FORM, 6 FT. DIAMETER): HD 6+1; hp 35; AC 4[15]; Atk 1 bite (1d6+2 + poison); Move 4; Save 13; CL/XP 7/600; Special: lethal poison, webs.

TUNKER (NEUTRAL MALE HOBGOBLIN): HD 6; hp 41; AC 2[17]; Atk +1 battle axe (1d8+1); Move 9; Save 11; CL/XP 6/400; Special: None.

Combat Gear: +1 full plate, heavy steel shield, +1 battle axe, bag of 256 gp.

Description: Tunker is a paid, semi-loyal bodyguard for Ovit. Tunker dislikes the bugbears and followers of Rachiss, but grudgingly agreed to follow Ovit here. If spared, he will work for 20 gp per day. Tunker is a brawny brawler who will jump into any scrap if he's been paid to do so — and sometimes just for the thrill of the fight.

LORD DUNRAITH (NEUTRAL MALE HUMAN THIEF 7): HD 4; hp 19; AC 6[13]; Atk +1 rapier (1d6+1); Move 12; Save 8; CL/XP 7/600; Special: Thief abilities.

Combat Gear: *bracers of defense* AC 6 [13], +1 rapier, *wand of fireballs* (8 charges), *potions of invisibility* and *extra healing*.

Description: Dunraith is extravagant and flamboyant to say the least. He is obsessed with his appearance and uses an overabundance of feathers in his ensemble. He is a master of infiltration and a manipulator who talks himself out of most situations. He is also an agent of Clandestine (see *Splinters of Faith 3: Culvert Operations*) and is currently on assignment to investigate the Druids of Rachiss' activities in the Mines of Honn. Dunraith immediately sides with PCs if they attack the druids. He knows little of the deep mines, other than that the cultists are fearful of going deeper into the dark tunnels.

OVIT (CHAOTIC MALE MAGIC-USER 7): HD 7; hp 35; AC 7[12]; Atk staff (1d6); Move 9; Save 9; CL/XP 7/600; Special: Spells (1—*charm person*, *detect magic*, *shield*, *sleep*; 2—*darkness* 15 ft. radius, *invisibility*, *web*; 3—*fireball*, *haste*; 4—*fear*)
Combat Gear: ash staff, *wand of magic missile* (10 charges)
Other gear *ring of protection* +2, 245 gp, *jade nose ring* (75 gp).

Description: Ovit is creepy, from his thin greased hair to his dirt-caked robes. Ovit joined the ranks of Rachiss at the behest of his peculiar familiar. The cult takes advantage of the wicked, but overly naïve, mage at every opportunity. Ovit employs Tunker as a bodyguard. Draheim, his familiar, always takes the form of a small centipede looped around his neck.

DRAHEIM (CHAOTIC QUASIT FAMILIAR): HD 3; hp 19; AC 2[17]; Atk 2 claws (1d2 + non-lethal poison), 1 bite (1d3); Move 14; Save 14; CL/XP 7/600; Special: Magic resistance (25%), non-lethal poison, regenerate (1hp/round), magical abilities.

DRAHEIM'S GIANT CENTIPEDE FORM (SMALL, NON-LETHAL): HD 3; HP 19; AC 9[10]; Atk 1 bite (0 + poison); Move 13; Save 14; CL/XP 1/15; Special: non-lethal poison bite (+4 save).

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YEDDO (CHAOTIC MALE HALFLING ROGUE 9): HD 5; hp 24; AC 5[14]; Atk +3 throwing dagger that returns to hand (1d4+3); Move 6; Save 6; CL/XP 9/1,100; **Special:** Thief abilities. **Combat Gear:** leather armor, bandolier with small throwing daggers (x12), +3 throwing dagger that returns to hand, ring of protection +2, potions of levitation, invisibility and slipperiness.

Description: Yeddo wanders the lands in search of chaos and bloodshed. He found the Mines of Honn and enjoys the current chaos in the mines as the various factions clash. After causing as much damage as possible, he will stalk PCs throughout their stay, attacking and retreating.

FEMALE THIRD-LEVEL CHAOTIC FIGHTERS (3): HD 3; hp 15; AC 2[17]; Atk long sword (1d8); Move 9; Save 12; CL/XP 3/XX; **Special:** None

Combat Gear: long sword, full plate armor, heavy steel shield

Description: These three youthful ex-soldiers hail from the Shield Basilica (See *Splinters of Faith 7: The Heir of Sin*). They tired of the constant male bravado and abandoned their posts within the Shield to seek their own fortune. Their only loyalty is to each other. A 100 gp reward for each woman is offered for their safe return to the Shield to face justice for desertion. One of the fighters was vain enough to steal the wanted poster and keeps it with her belongings.

Area F15: Carcass

The husk of an enormous beetle sits in the corner. The druids plan to animate the exoskeleton as a future guardian once they eliminate the retriever. The 10-foot-long shell is menacing, but completely harmless.

Area F16: Crawling Curtains

Four bulky wool curtains close off this passage. The miners hung these dividers to help contain the coal dust that billows through much of the mine. The curtains are black with grit.

One curtain (marked with an X) is the nest of a **centipede swarm**. The insects cling to the back of the curtain and swarm over any creature that touches the fabric. The insects were set here as a natural guard for the mine tunnels. The druids use candles that emit a soothing pheromone that allows them to pass through the curtain dividers without angering the insects.

CENTIPEDE SWARM: HD n/a; AC n/a; Atk 1 (1hp + non-lethal poison); Move 4; Save 18; CL/XP 1/15; **Special:** non-lethal poison.

Area F17: Infirmary

Lying on dirty skins on the floor are 15 **dying and wounded bugbears**. Just 10 of the wounded bugbears are capable of fighting, although they put up little resistance. Most simply tend to their comrades and ignore intruders. They have no treasure.

BUGBEARS (10): HD 3+1; hp 5; AC 5[14]; Atk 1 bite (2d4) or weapon (1d8+1); Move 9; Save 14; CL/XP 3/120; **Special:** Surprise opponents, 50% chance.

Area F18: Chieftess's Chamber

Salvaged mining tools and equipment pack this room. The bugbears use the tools to excavate abandoned areas. A mining cart filled with rags and furs serves as a bed for **Vormalguz**, the **bugbear chieftess**. Vormalguz is intelligent for a bugbear and concerned about her tribe's predicament.

She recently made a pact with the followers of Rachiss that she

thought would benefit her tribe. Instead, the druids have used her tribe as meat shields against the retriever. When the bugbears retreated, the druids slew the deserters to show their displeasure. Rumors of an uprising and revolt against her leadership eat at Vormalguz's thoughts. Diplomatic PCs may be able to make a pact with Vormalguz against the druids. She will quickly renege on any pact, however, if it is to her advantage.

VORMALGUZ (CHAOTIC FEMALE BUGBEAR CHIEFTAIN): HD 9; hp 66; AC 6[13]; Atk 1 bite (2d4) or +3 heavy mace (1d6+4); Move 9; Save 6; CL/XP 9/1,100; **Special:** Surprise opponents, 50% chance.

Combat Gear: leather armor, heavy wooden shield, +3 heavy mace **Other gear:** potions of heroism and extra healing, diamond pendent (500 gp).

New Deity: The Destroyer

Lesser god of chaotic slaughter

Alignment: Chaotic

Typical Worshippers: Ogres, bugbears, trolls, evil barbarians

Favored Weapons: heavy mace

Not much is known of The Destroyer, mainly due to his followers' inability to produce written scripture. His philosophy and history are passed down orally from generation to generation, each adding boastful details. The Destroyer has an insatiable lust for bloodshed and horrific sacrifice. His followers relish combat and seek out weak opponents to dominate.

The Destroyer appears differently to each group of followers. He typically has the common trait of appearing as an enraged, muscular version of the race in question. He rarely appears or grants requests, preferring to let the strongest survive as fate weeds out the weak.

Area F19: Spiritual Leader

Noxious incense and pungent herbs assault PCs' senses in this roughly oval-shaped chamber. White smoke smolders from a five-foot-deep fire pit. A cauldron suspended on a chain hangs into the pit. The wizened **Dungfie**, the **bugbear's shaman** and spiritual leader, lives here. A loyal follower of The Destroyer, Dungfie preaches through fear, forcing devotion and homage to his deity. He is determined not to let this uneasy affiliation with the druids interfere with his clan's devotion to "The Destroyer." He plots against Vormalguz in hopes of replacing her as chieftain someday. He sabotages her reputation and belittles her tactics whenever possible. So far, his deceptions have gone undiscovered.

DUNGFIE (CHAOTIC MALE BUGBEAR SHAMAN): HD 9; hp 63; AC 2[17]; Atk 1 bite (2d4) or +2 heavy mace (1d6+3); Move 9; Save 14; CL/XP 10/1,400; **Special:** Surprise opponents, 50% chance, casts spells as a 7th-level cleric (1—*cure light wounds*, *detect magic*; 2—*hold person*, *silence*, 15 ft. radius; 3—*cure disease*, *prayer*; 4—*cure serious wounds*; 5—*finger of death*) **Combat Gear:** full plate, +2 morningstar (1d6+2), +2 tower shield **Other gear:** ring of poison resistance

Area F20: The Falls Below

Earthquakes destroyed the floor here, creating a crack along the opposite wall that allows a stream to pour into a gaping crevasse. The crack is just 3 feet tall, but 60 feet wide. Water pours from the crack

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in a miniature waterfall that cascades across the floor before falling 300 feet into the crevasse and an underground lake (Area G12).

The bugbears throw victims into the crevasse to sacrifice them to The Destroyer.

Area F21: Disciple of Rachiss

This finished room is painted black and decorated with draping webs. Large garish elven text painted in red covers the walls. **Eris Militar**, a twisted and insane female elf, writes rambling tracts of indescribable evil on the walls, most of which involve her family and elven society in general. A cocoon-like hammock of silk rope in the corner serves as her bed. An easel holds an unfinished, but already nightmarish painting of demonic spiders feasting on elvish children. A nearby table holds brushes and oil paints. Eris is the cult's second in command. She can often be found here with her giant spider companion hanging from the ceiling above her.

Eris wears a *scarab of insanity* on a chain around her neck. The beetle amulet has a massive crack splitting it nearly in half that lessens its effectiveness. The damaged device forces all creatures with 6 or fewer hit dice within 30 feet to fall into a temporary insanity lasting 1 hour. Creatures with 8+ hit dice have a 1 in 4 chance to overcome the scarab's influence. Eris has been driven closer to permanent insanity from years wearing the corrupted scarab against her skin.

ERIS MILITARIS (CHAOTIC ELF FEMALE DRUID OF RACHISS 10): HD 8; hp 45; AC 7[12]; Atk +1 *scimitar* (1d6+2); Move 9; Save 4; CL/XP 10/1,400 Special: Initiate powers, shape change, insect empathy, spells (1—*locate animals*, *detect magic*, *faerie fire*; 2—*insect summoning I*, *obscuring mist*, *heat metal*; 3—*pyrotechnics*, *insect summoning II*, *hold animal*; 4—*cure light wounds*, *dispel magic*, *insect summoning III*; 5—*animal growth*,

control winds, *insect summoning IV*).

Combat Gear: +1 *scimitar*, *chitin ring mail* (from cicada abdomen, AC 7[12]) **Other gear** *ring of fire resistance*, *cracked scarab of insanity* (4 charges)

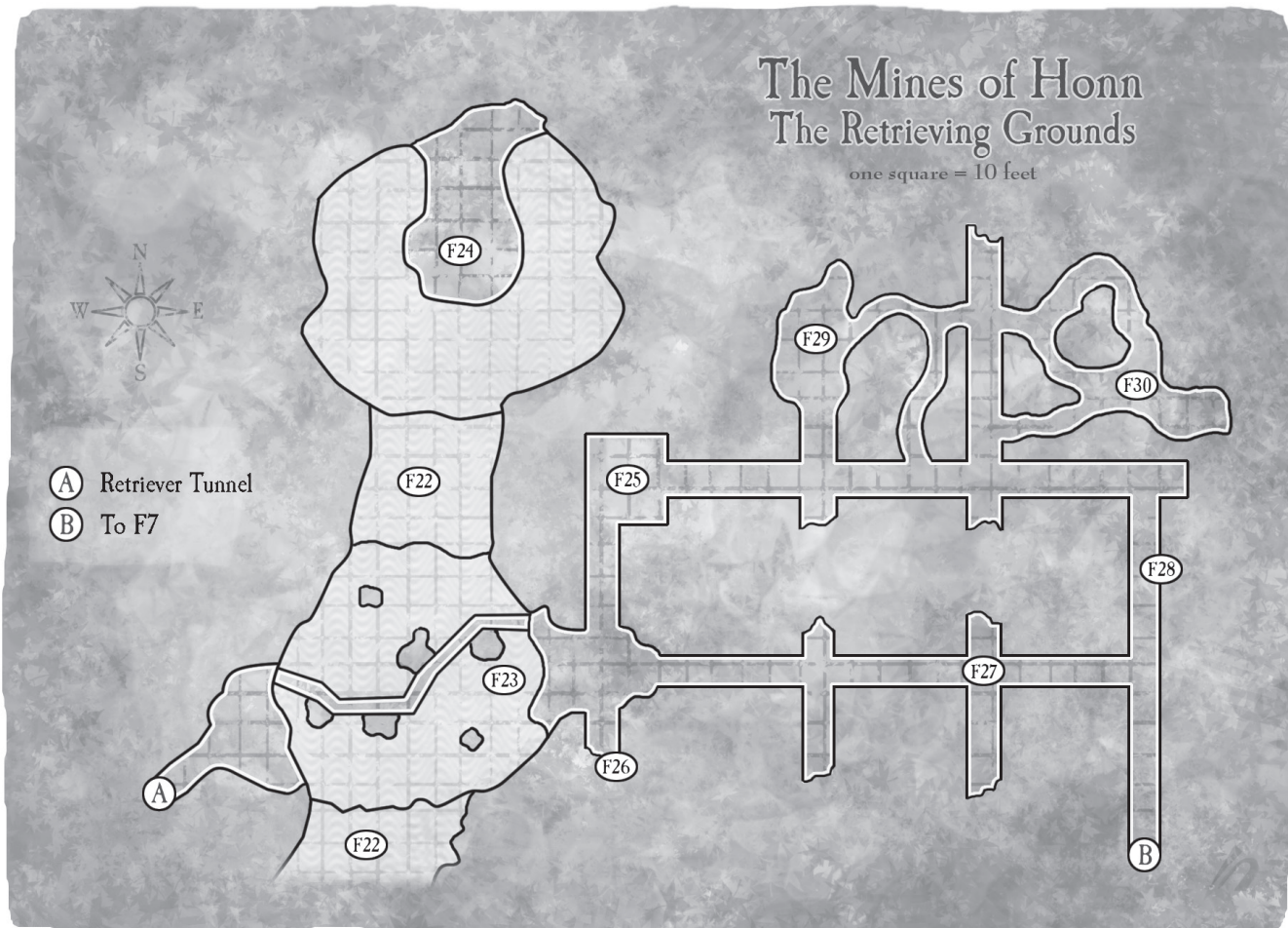
Description: As a surface elven child, Eris Militar was plagued by mental demons and corrupting delusions. Visions of horrific spider-like fiends filled her soul with hate. Unaccepted by the drow followers of the spider demoness, she turned to Rachiss for solace. Eris bleaches her hair white, and her skin is pale from years spent underground. She dresses in a revealing black leather tunic adorned with silver spiders and centipedes. Despite her appearance, her beautiful heritage still shows.

ERIS MILITARIS (GIANT SPIDER FORM, 6 FT. DIAMETER): HD 8; hp 45; AC 4[15]; Atk 1 bite (1d6+2 + poison); Move 4; Save 13; CL/XP 7/600; Special: lethal poison, webs.

GIANT SPIDER COMPANION (4 FT DIAMETER): HD 2+2; hp 16; AC 6[13]; Atk 1 bite (1d6 + poison); Move 18; Save 16; CL/XP 5/240; Special: lethal poison, 5 in 6 chance to surprise prey.

Area F22: Water-Filled Tunnel

The ceiling of the room slants down toward the water at both ends of the room, leaving water-filled tunnels that continue on under the stone. The steaming water travels through the 4-foot-high passages, passing slowly from Area F24 through this water-filled tunnel to Area F23, then on to Area F20 through another tunnel. From Area F20, the water pours through a 3-foot-tall crack and dumps into a natural crevice. Although the water does not pose a direct danger, the stench of sulfur remains on PCs who attempt to swim through either of the tunnels.



Area F23: The Retrieving Ground

A steaming aquifer splits this massive cavern. The air is filled with the stench of rotting eggs, caused by natural sulfur deposits carried up with the water. The underground pool bubbles and sputters as the sulfur releases, and the aquifer's stone banks are coated in the white, crusty mineral. Wide stone columns rise out of the water, connecting with the ceiling 50 feet overhead. Deep gashes mar the walls, floor and ceiling.

A 5-foot-wide wooden bridge winds around four of the stone pillars to the other rocky bank. Crystal mineral deposits crust the wooden planks, and steel spikes fasten the bridge to each rock spur. The wooden bridge is sturdy, despite being a bit wobbly. PCs must make a saving throw to cross the planks if they try to run.

The aquifer's water is hot, but not enough to cause serious injury. The sulfur stench, however, is powerful enough to sicken PCs. Anyone in the room must make a saving throw every round or become nauseated. The water exits under the wall and travels 20 feet before falling into a crevasse (Area F20).

PCs who cross to the opposite bank find themselves standing amid 20-foot-tall mounds of broken rock and coal debris. A 20-foot-wide opening in the wall between the massive piles of dirt and rock leads downward into stifling darkness. Digging sounds rise from the hole, and coal particles float out of the tunnel like a dark mist.

Soon after the druids summoned the **derghodaemon Ssaraclakk**, a **retriever** was sent to bring back the rogue daemon. The derghodaemon escaped, losing the retriever in the tunnels. The retriever was barely able to squeeze into the 10-foot mine corridors, but doing so put it at risk of being damaged by the druids of Rachiss. The druids, for their part, relentlessly attacked the creature, despite heavy losses. The monstrosity retreated to this sulfur-filled cavern to devise a new plan to get to the derghodaemon, even as the druids collapsed tunnels in the hope of sealing the creature safely away from the Pillar of Vermin.

Since the retriever cannot get to the derghodaemon using the mine's normal passages, it decided to skip the tunnels entirely and tunnel directly toward Ssaraclakk. The massive construct is currently 150 feet down a new tunnel it is hacking and gouging into the coal and rock. Occasionally, it carries chunks of rock out of the tunnel to clear room so it can continue. The retriever drops the chunks of stone onto the growing piles beside the tunnel entrance, and then returns to its work.

The piles of stone are composed of shifting, loose rocks. Climbing the rock piles is easy, but doing so dislodges loose rocks that roll down the stacks and alert the retriever.

RETRIEVER: HD 10; AC -1[20]; Atk 4 claws (1d8), eye-ray; Move 9; Save 5; CL/XP 12/2000; Special: Eye rays, crushing damage on natural 20.

Tactics: The retriever continues digging unless disturbed. Once it hears sounds in the cavern behind it, the creature stops to determine what is approaching it from behind. It moves toward the tunnel mouth to confront the intruders, using the floating dust from its digging and the darkness inside the coal shaft to conceal its presence. The coal dust hangs heavy in the air like a dark cloud.

Once the retriever deals with any threat, it immediately resumes digging. The retriever does not leave the chamber, and PCs can easily escape the creature if they turn and run. If they don't retreat, the retriever doesn't cut them any slack.



It attacks mercilessly, wanting nothing more than to return to its digging to get to the derghodaemon.

Area F24: Gloom Island

The floor of this chamber drops into a 75-foot-deep water-filled pit. The entrance tunnel arrives 5 feet underwater in the side of the pit wall. Water heated deep underground keeps the room filled with clouds of steam.

Glistening crystals cover the wall and 20-foot-high domed ceiling. An island formed of thick mineral deposits sits opposite the underwater entrance. A dormant **gloom crawler** that makes its lair on the island awakens if creatures enter the room. After 5 rounds, the hungry creature investigates any disturbance in Area F23. It is wary of the retriever and waits until the retriever has been defeated before entering and picking off the survivors.

The gloom crawler sits on leftovers of past meals. Below the huge beast are a *helm of reading magic and languages*, a *wand of monster summoning II* (8 charges), a +1 *bastard sword*, and a pair of *gauntlets of dexterity*.

GLOOM CRAWLER: HD 10; AC 3 [16]; Atk 10 tentacles (1d6 plus constrict); Move 9; Save 5; CL/XP 11/1,700; Special: Constrict, all-around senses, vulnerable to sunlight

New Monster: Gloom Crawler

Armor Class: 3 [16]

Hit Dice: 10

Attacks: 10 tentacles (1d6 plus constrict), bite (2d8)

Saving Throw: 5

Special: Constrict, all-around senses, vulnerable to sunlight

Move: 9

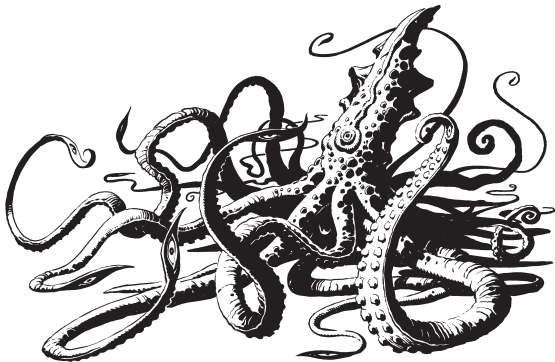
Challenge Level/XP: 11/1,700

Constrict: If the gloom crawler hits with an initial tentacle attack, it grabs the victim and constricts for automatic damage in the rounds thereafter until the creature is freed.

All-around senses: A gloom crawler's many eyes allow it to see in all directions at once. The creature also senses tremors in the land around it, allowing it to detect the location of anything within 60 feet that is touching the ground.

Vulnerable to sunlight: A gloom crawler takes 1d4 points of damage from natural sunlight.

Description: A gloom crawler resembles a giant squid with many extra-long tentacles. At the end of each tentacle is a small, round, lidless eye. While it resembles a squid, it lives on the land, moving through underground tunnels by pulling itself along with the suction cups on its tentacles.



Area F25: A Light in the Dark

A single candle lit with an ever-burning flame sits in this otherwise empty room. Fleeing druids of Rachiss left the candle. Before he left, Phyllox summoned a **shadow demon** to watch over the retriever. The demon uses *magic jar* to possess the strongest PC fighter. Once merged, the demon guides the party to the retriever or into other dangers. The shadow demon disdains physical combat and flees if discovered or confronted outside a PC's body.

SHADOW DEMON: HD 7; hp 52; AC 3 [16]; Atk 2 claws (1d6 plus cold touch), bite (1d8 plus cold touch); Move 20; Save 9; CL/XP 8/800; Special: Light vulnerability, incorporeal, resist cold/electricity/poison, spell-like abilities (at will—darkness 15 ft. radius, teleport; 1/day—magic jar); 50% to summon shadow demon (1/day).

New Monster: Shadow Demon

Armor Class: 3 [16]

Hit Dice: 7

Attacks: 2 claws (1d6 plus cold touch), bite (1d8 plus cold touch)

Saving Throw: 9

Special: Light vulnerability, incorporeal, resist cold/electricity/poison, spell-like abilities (at will—darkness 15 ft. radius, teleport; 1/day—magic jar); 50% to summon shadow demon (1/day).

Move: Fly 20

Challenge Level/XP: 8/800

Cold touch: The touch or bite of a shadow demon causes 1d6 points of damage.

Light vulnerability: Shadow demons are utterly powerless in bright sunlight.

Description: Shadow demons are incorporeal shades of pure evil. They are perfectly adapted to hiding in the shadows and bringing pain and fear to the world.



Area F26: Missing Floor

The floor collapses into a muddy, slime-covered pit. The crevasse is 50 feet deep and ends in a shallow, 5-foot-deep pool of stagnant water. The hall continues on the other side of the morass.

Area F27: Broken Statues

Broken statues stand in various combat poses. These bugbears and druids met their end in a somewhat less-gruesome manner than their compatriots. Scattered among the statues are other decomposing and burned body parts of various humanoids. The corridor reeks of decay. The jarring sound of hammering against stone comes from the corridor's far end (Area F23).

Area F28: Breakdown

Large rocks and crumbling gravel piles choke these passages. A narrow, excavated tunnel travels through the breakdown to the other side. The passage is stable, but requires a saving throw for creatures to squeeze through. Failing the check by 5 or more results in the PC becoming wedged in the tunnel, unable to move. Stuck PCs must be carefully dug out, which requires tools and 1d4 hours of labor.

Area F29: Refuse

Gnawed bones, scraps of armor and bloody remains litter the floor. A **behir** casts its leftovers into these tunnels.

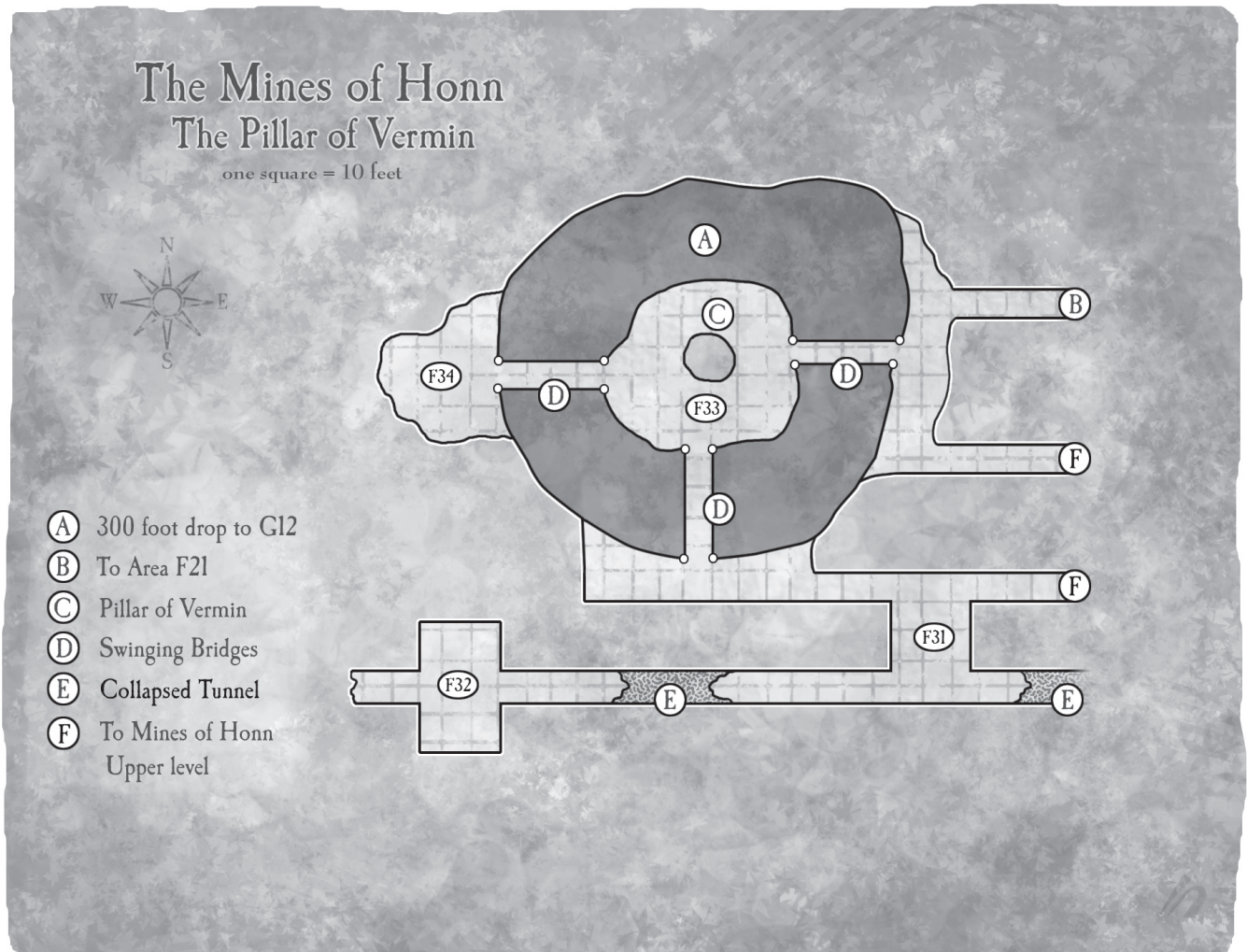
Area F30: Behir's Lair

Before the druids of Rachiss moved in, a **behir** named **Sympaltrist** ruled the upper levels of the Mines of Honn. The evil druids summoned fiendish insect companions to roam the tunnel and eventually forced the behir to hide just to survive the constant attacks. Scared and frightened, Sympaltrist is too nervous to attack outright because of a recent run-in with the retriever, which the behir mistakenly believes that the druids summoned specifically to get rid of it. The behir waits to see if PCs follow Rachiss before attacking. Calm PCs have a chance to talk with the behir and form an alliance to rid the mines of the druids of Rachiss. If the PCs are hostile or aggressive, the behir immediately attacks and fights to the death to defend its last safe haven.

Sympaltrist knows the evil cult worships a vile insect deity named Rachiss. It knows nothing of the lower levels and does not venture there under any circumstances. The behir wears a *ring of spider climbing* on one claw.

SYMPALTRIST (BEHIR): HD 12; hp 89; AC 4[15]; Atk 1 bite (1d8); Move 15; Save 3; CL/XP 13/2300; Special: Constrict and claw, lightning breath.

Tactics: Sympaltrist uses his prized ring to run along the ceiling to attack from above. The behir prefers to attack and retreat using hit-and-run tactics.



New Magic: Ring of Spider Climbing

This lesser ring allows a being to climb sheer walls with no chance of falling. The being can move his normal movement up walls and even across ceilings. Usable by: All Classes.

Area F31: Discarded Pane

An 8-foot-tall-by-4-foot-wide pane of volcanic glass leans against the wall in this dead-end room. A jagged crack runs down its center, making the pane useless for replacing the broken glass in the temple. The glass broke when it was originally brought out, and the miners left it behind. The right-hand passage is collapsed, although a hole visible through the rubble reveals a small room beyond.

Area F32: The Secluded Chamber

Without magic or 2d6 hours of excavation, this chamber is accessible only by small creatures. **Phyllox**, the great druid of Rachiss, uses the room as his resting quarters. It provides an out-of-the-way area where he can go and not be bothered.

The room's exits collapsed during the great cataclysm that closed the Mines of Honn. Meager furnishings fill the room. A mound of furs and blankets serve as bedding, and a table built from planks and rocks holds a few sheets of paper, bottles and dirty dishes. Softly glowing beetles cover the room's interior, a crawling mass of clicking insects that coats the walls. The majority of the thousands of immature fire beetles are too small to be any threat, but they coat the walls in a foot deep layer that hides the larger threats.

Hiding among the normal insects are: Phyllox in the shape of a fire beetle; Phyllox's **vermin companion**; and **16 fire beetles**. Phyllox is proud of his beetles and keeps them healthy and well fed. Unless called elsewhere to deal with intruders, Phyllox remains in his room.

The crude table contains papers detailing vile recruiting methods and a roster of current cult members. A scroll (*reincarnation*, but it reincarnates the recipient only as a ettercap, *astral spell* and *word of recall*; and *potions of gaseous form*, *invulnerability*, *slipperiness* and *extra healing* sit on the table. If PCs have not dealt with Ilan and Ethea in town (Area E5), the papers here are enough to convince the townspeople of their treachery.

GIANT FIRE BEETLE (5FT): HD 3; AC 3[16]; Atk 1 bite (3d6); Move 9; Save 14; CL/XP 4/120; Special: Light glands.

FLASH FIRE BEETLE VERMIN COMPANION (5FT): HD 6; AC 3[16]; Atk 1 bite (3d6); Move 9; Save 11; CL/XP 6/400; Special: Light glands, flash.

Description: A flash fire beetle is a variant form of the giant fire beetle. A flash fire beetle creates a bright flash of light once per hour that forces all creatures in a 15-foot-burst to make a saving throw or be dazed for 1d3 rounds.

PHYLLOX (CHAOTIC GNOME DRUID OF RACISS 12): HD 9+1; AC 4[15]; Atk *Staff of swarming insects* (1d8); Move 9; Save 14; CL/XP 12/120; Special: Spells (1—*locate animal*, *detect magic*, *purify water*, *faerie fire*; 2—*insect summoning I*, *cure light wounds*, *heat metal*, *warp wood*; 3—*hold animal*, *insect summoning II*, *protection from fire*, *pyrotechnics*; 4—*cure serious wounds*, *dispel magic*, *insect summoning II*, *produce fire*; 5—*animal growth*, *control winds*, *insect summoning IV*, *raise dead*)
Combat Gear: *staff of swarming insects* (70 charges), +2 full chitin plate armor (AC 2[17]), *cape of the mountebank*, *potion of*

extra healing (x2).

Personality: Phyllox is ancient, with weathered skin and coal-black eyes that reflect his hatred. Scrawny and frail, he never travels without his staff. Phyllox is dedicated to the ruination of civilization and the spread of pestilence. Clever and powerful, he often assumes the forms of a giant fire beetle or a monstrous centipede. The druid is hesitant changing into the 20-foot-long centipede shape he prefers unless there is space for the form to provide him with an advantage.

PHYLLOX, MONSTROUS GIANT CENTIPEDE FORM (20FT): HD 8; AC 0[19]; Atk 1 bite (3d8); Move 18; Save 8; CL/XP 8/800; Special: poison bite (+4 save or die).

PHYLLOX, GIANT FIRE BEETLE FORM: HD 1+3; AC 4[15]; Atk 1 bite (1d4+2); Move 12; Save 18; CL/XP 1/15; Special: Light glands.

New Magic: Staff of Swarming Insects

This twisted darkwood staff is covered in knots and nodules that resemble crawling insects. The staff allows the wielder to summon a swarm of insects similar to the spell *insect plague*, although it functions indoors as well. The wielder can direct the swarm.

Cape of the Mountebank

This bright red and gold cape allows the wearer to disappear in a cloud of smoke and reappear a short distance away once per day, as per the *dimension door* spell.

Area F33: The Pillar of Vermin

Miners hauled the richest coal from this chamber. The room is large, with a domed ceiling that rises 50 feet overhead. The floor collapsed during the cataclysm, leaving behind a 60-foot-diameter pillar of solid stone. The bottom of the chasm opens 300 feet below over a massive subterranean lake of steaming water (Area G12). The pillar's base rises out of the bubbling lake in a column of slick, scarred stone.

Three sturdy bridges made of fused giant vermin shells connect the top of the column to the remaining floor. The bridges are sturdy, although movement beyond a careful gait causes them to swing wildly, requiring a saving throw to hold on. A successful save lets the PC move at half normal speed. Failure means the PC cannot move for one round while he regains his balance. Failing the save by 5 or more results in the PC falling off the swinging bridge, although they can make another save to grasp the railing before falling (although they take 1d6 points of damage from the sharp insect mandibles incorporated into the railing). Falling PCs plummet to the bottom of the chasm (Area G12), taking 20d6 points of damage, and splash down in the heated lake below.

Recently, Phyllox summoned **Ssaracclak**, a **derghodaemon**, and ordered the beast to remain in this room to guard the slaves (Area F34). Ssaracclak abides by the demand for one reason: The derghodaemon is too scared of the newly arrived retriever (currently stuck in Area F23) to leave. Never before has the daemon known such fear as being hunted by the infernal automaton. Ssaracclak waits in the dead-end alcove (Area F34) opposite the entrance and attacks PCs entering the room. The creature waits until a PC is separated from the party before teleporting to attack. His favorite tactic is to wait until one PC

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crosses over the bridge, then teleport beside them and attack while the rest are struggling to cross the bridge. He attacks until two or more PCs reach his ledge, then teleports to attack stragglers still on the opposite rim of the chasm.

Resting on the center of the stone pillar is the true temple to Rachiss: a 30-foot-tall pillar of fused insect bodies that serves as a totem idol. The drone of a thousand locusts rises from the totem's core. A crimson radiance glows through the vermin husks, bathing the top of the pillar in garish red light. The pillar gives off an overwhelmingly evil aura.

The insect pillar is a gate worshippers of Rachiss can activate to summon demonic outsiders. Phyllox alone knows the incantations

to activate the pillar. The pillar has 300 hit points and an effective AC 4[15].

Trapped within the pillar is a **stirge demon**. The Pillar of Vermin feeds off the demon's spirit to power the gates for Rachiss' servants. Destroying the pillar destroys the summoning portal, but also releases the stirge demon. While trapped, the demon is powerless.

New Monster: Derghodaemon

Armor Class: 1 [18]

Hit Dice: 8

Attacks: 5 claws (1d6), or 2 claws (1d6) and 3 two-handed swords (1d10), 1 bite (1d6)

Saving Throw: 8

Special: Immunities, rend, see invisible, *feeblemind*, *telepathy*, spell-like abilities (At will—*fear*, *darkness* 15 ft. radius; 2/day—*teleport*, *sleep*); 40% chance to summon derghodaemon (1/day)

Move: 12

Challenge Level/XP: 12/2,000

Immunities: Derghodaemons are immune to poison and acid, and resist cold, electricity and fire.

Feeblemind: Twice per day, by clattering its mandibles together, a derghodaemon can affect all creatures within 30 feet as the spell of the same name.

Rend: If a derghodaemon hits with three claws, it grabs a victim and inflicts 2d6 points of automatic damage until the creature escapes.

Description: A derghodaemon is a bloated insect-like creature with five arms and three legs. Each of the creature's arms ends in a sharpened, clawed hand.



New Monster: Stirge Demon

Armor Class: 2 [17]

Hit Dice: 8

Attacks: 2 claws (1d8 plus wounding) and bite (2d4)

Saving Throw: 8

Special: Immunities; *fear* aura; see invisible; spider climb; wounding; spell-like abilities (At will—*darkness* 15 ft. radius, *dispel magic*, *teleport*, *telekinesis*); summon demon

Move: 9, Fly 18

Challenge Level/XP: 10/1,400

Immunities: Stirge demons are immune to poison and electricity, and resist cold, acid and fire.

Drone: At all times, save when using any spell-like abilities, the stirge demon drones and buzzes like a fly. All creatures within 60 feet must make a saving throw or fall into a comatose sleep for 1d4 hours.

Fear: Stirge demons radiate *fear* in a 20-foot radius.

Summon Demons: Once per day, a stirge demon can attempt to summon 2d8 dretches or another stirge demon with a 35% chance of success.

Wounding: A stirge demon's claw attack deals 1 point of Constitution damage from blood loss when it hits a creature.

Spider Climb: Stirge demons can walk on walls, floors, ceilings, and other such surfaces at their normal movement rate. This is an inherent ability and cannot be dispelled or negated.

Description: The creature is a cross between a human, a stirge, and an abyssal fly. It has four stirge-like legs and human-like forelimbs that end in chitinous claw-like fingers. It has the wrinkled wings of a stirge and its stirge-like head has human features topped with a bristled mane. Its tiny mouth is filled with fangs. It has a long, sharp nose used to pierce and draw blood like a mosquito.



ADVENTURE BACKGROUND

Phyllox stores magical treasure in the pillar: a +2 *spear*, *arrow* +4 vs. *plants*, *arrow* +4 vs. *giants*, a +1 *longsword* and a +2 *plate mail of silence* (allows wearer to move with complete silence).

SSARACCLAK, DERGHODAEMON: HD 8; AC 1[18]; Atk 5 claws (1d6), or 2 claws (1d6) and 3 two-handed swords (1d10), 1 bite (1d6); Move 12; Save 8; CL/XP 12/2,000; Special: Immunities, *rend*, see *invisible*, *feeblemind*, *telepathy*, spell-like abilities (At will—*fear*, *darkness* 15 ft. radius; 2/day—*teleport*, *sleep*); 40% chance to summon derghodaemon (1/day)

STIRGE DEMON: HD 8; AC 2[17]; Atk 2 claws (1d8 plus wounding) and bite (2d4); Move 9, Fly 18; Save 8; CL/XP 10/1,400; Special: Immunities; *fear* aura; see *invisible*; spider climb; wounding; spell-like abilities (At will—*darkness* 15 ft. radius, *dispel magic*, *teleport*, *telekinesis*); summon demon

Ratcheting up the Fight

If the PCs are having an easy time so far and you don't think the derghodaemon will provide enough of a fight, there's a dangerous option you can throw at them to increase the difficulty of the battle: the retriever.

If the PCs left the creature alive in Area F23, then it finally finishes its tunneling just as the PCs encounter the derghodaemon atop the column supporting the Pillar of Vermin. The retriever breaks through the ceiling above the column in a shower of dark stone and sparks and jumps onto the column. It focuses on the derghodaemon, but doesn't hesitate to strike at anyone who gets in its way.

If PCs slew the original retriever, the creature's death throes alerted

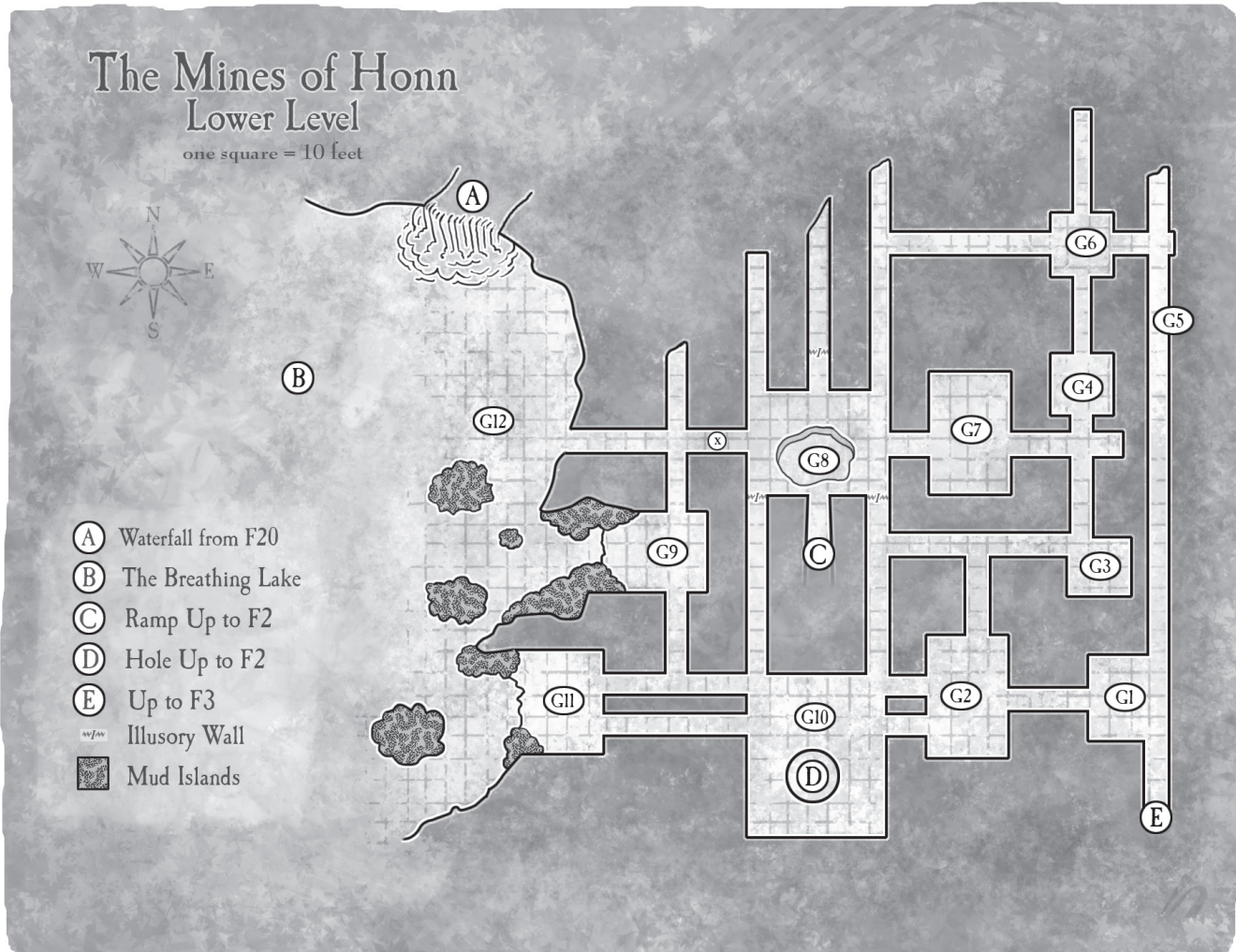
its master of its failure. Another retriever was teleported to the original retriever's position — and unfortunately trapped in Area F23 — but this time with two goals: find the derghodaemon first, then kill whoever destroyed the original creature for getting in the way of the demon prince's will. The newly arrived retriever immediately resumes digging the tunnel and breaks through the ceiling as noted above. In this instance, it target the PCs first, slashing at them and tossing them from the Pillar of Vermin, before turning its attention to capturing the derghodaemon.

Area F34: The Slave Camp

Slaves kidnapped from Doan sleep and work on this balcony that overlooks the Breathing Lake and the Pillar of Vermin. The slaves are haggard and undernourished, fed infrequently by the druids of Rachiss — if they are fed at all. The druids force the slaves to craft chitin armor from the shells and exoskeletons of dead insects. Various tools sit on benches, and half-finished armor rests on stands.

Currently, 20 villagers work here. The druids toss those who become too weak to work over the ledge into the Breathing Lake far below. The slaves are too weak to make it back through the tunnels on their own if freed.

HUMAN SLAVES (20): HD 1; hp 3; AC 9[10]; Atk 1 fist (1d4); Move 6; Save 17; CL/XP 1/15; Special: None.



Area G: The Mines of Honn, Lower Level

The mine's lower level is a completely different environment than the upper mines. Seismic activity created a great hot spring that floods much of the level with steaming water. The nauseating aroma of sulfur and other natural gases wafts throughout the tunnels.

The humid conditions and rich mineral growths provide an ideal ecosystem for subterranean mosses, lichens and mildews. Green moss glows with a soft light along the upper reaches of passages and rooms, providing ample illumination but bathing everything in a sickly green hue. White-and-red mineral deposits cake the lower third of the stone walls. The minerals are harmless and can easily be scraped off or broken.

Except where noted, 2 to 6 inches of water fill the passageways. The crystal-clear water is potable, but has a foul stench and tastes of sulfur. The water is also quite warm, but in most cases not hot enough to cause serious injury.

Surface-dwellers suffer from prolonged exposure while traveling in the lower mines. Impurities in the air force air-breathing creatures to make a saving throw every 12 hours or take 1 point of temporary Constitution damage. This damage is restored if the creature returns to the upper mines or the surface for a full day.

Area G1: The Druid's Guard

Phyllox summoned a **chuul** to guard this room against creatures coming up from the lower mines. The chuul is an adequate — if overly vicious — guard. The creature dug a 10-foot-deep depression in the back of the room, and then expanded its lair by dredging the short hallway leading to Area G2. The chuul hides in the water-filled pit and hallway. The creature regularly disturbs the muck and minerals so that the water remains murky.

If the chuul grabs a PC, the creature retreats to the poisoned waters of Area G2.

CHUUL: HD 10; hp 76; AC 2 [17]; Atk 2 pincers (1d6), bite (1d8), paralytic tentacles; Move 15, swim 12; Save 5; CL/XP 11/1,700; **Special:** Immune to poison; tentacle grab.

New Monster: Chuul

Armor Class: 2 [17]

Hit Dice: 10

Attacks: 2 pincers (1d6), bite (1d8), paralytic tentacles

Saving Throw: 5

Special: Immune to poison; tentacle grab

Move: 15; swim 12

Challenge Level/XP: 11/1,700

Tentacle grab: If a chuul hits a creature with both its pincers, it transfers the victim automatically to its mouth tentacles to hold them. The victim must make a saving throw or be paralyzed for 1d6 rounds. A creature caught in the tentacles automatically takes 1d8 points of damage each round from the chuul's mandibles. A victim that is not paralyzed can make a saving throw to escape the writhing tentacles.

Description: Chuuls are heavily armored, crustacean-like predators often found lurking near the surface of ponds. They prefer to burst out of the water to grab and paralyze their prey. They have massive chitinous pincers they use to guide victims to the paralyzing tentacles around their mouth.

Area G2: Sludge-Filled Room

The room is nearly impassable due to three feet of thick sludge and rock that cake the floor. Steam rises off the water, which is fed by a hydrothermal vent. PCs who enter the water are subject to **magmatic poison gas vapors** rising from the surface of the liquid (save or suffer 1d3 temporary Constitution loss). Crossing the room requires pushing through the thick mud hidden under the water. Movement is reduced by half. The chuul (Area G1) dredged the clinging mud into this room while digging its hiding spot. The hallway to Area G1 drops into a 10-foot-deep water-filled passage.

Area G3: Explosive Gases

A hazy cloud of explosive gases fills the chamber. The gas bubbles up through the mud-covered floor with a wet, gurgling sound. A thin layer of water coats the three-foot-deep soupy mud. Any torch or open flame brought into the area ignites an inferno that fills the chamber and sweeps up and down 40 feet of the passageways outside the room (8d6 points of damage, save for half).

Buried in the mud is a *ring of mammal control*.

Area G4: Thermal Vents

White tendrils of steam fill this passageway, creating thick clouds that seem to swallow anyone walking into the chamber. Vents in the floor bubble with boiling water, and the walls glisten with condensation. The water is extremely hot, dealing 1d6 points of scalding damage per round of exposure.

This room is home to 2 **belkers** that were drawn into the caverns years ago via a now-closed conduit.

BELKER (2): HD 7; hp 55; AC -1 [20]; Atk 2 wings (1d6), 2 claws (1d6), bite (1d8); Move 12, fly 18; Save 9; CL/XP 9/1,100; **Special:** Smoke form; smoke claws.

Tactics: The belkers allow PCs to enter the steam-filled room before settling over them and attacking with their smoke claws. The belkers are nearly invisible in their smoke forms in the steamy room.

New Monster: Belker

Armor Class: -1 [20]

Hit Dice: 7

Attacks: 2 wings (1d6), 2 claws (1d6), bite (1d8)

Saving Throw: 9

Special: Smoke claws, smoke form

Move: 12; fly 18

Challenge Level/XP: 9/1,100

Smoke claws: A belker in its smoke form can settle around a victim. The victim must make a saving throw or inhale part of the creature. Smoke drawn into the victim solidifies into claws that rip at the creature's innards, dealing 3d4 points of damage per round. A successful save each round is required to expel the smoky tendrils.

Smoke form: A belker can switch forms at will from a semi-solid air creature to a gaseous cloud (similar to gaseous form). It can assume this smoke form for up to 20 rounds.

Description: Belkers are from the Plane of Air and are composed primarily of smoke. Belkers are reclusive, but very territorial. A belker's winged shape gives it a demonic appearance.

Area G5: Burning Ooze

A flickering glow rises from this passage as a flaming **gelatinous cube** slides through the passages looking for meals. It appears to be a slow-moving wall of fire. Clouds of smoke and steam rise up before the cube as it pushes blindly down the hall. A frustrated drider (Area G6) ignited the cube with a *fireball* several days ago. Coal dust, oil and combustible gases that the cube has collected in its meanderings through the tunnels have altered the cube's exterior, making it highly flammable.

This cube recently enveloped a druid of Rachiss who was scouting the lower mines. The cube is slowly dissolving the man's body. Deep within the cube's mass is the man's *ring of fire resistance*, which now confers its benefits to the cube. The cube will burn for several more days before its contents and covering are depleted. The cube is not harmed because of the ring in its depths.

Anyone struck by the cube suffers an additional 1d6 points of fire damage from the burning residue covering its body. Anyone engulfed by the cube suffers the initial 1d6 points of damage, but no more damage from the fire once inside the ooze.

GELATINOUS CUBE: HD 4; AC 8[11]; Atk 1 (2d4); Move 6; Save 13; CL/XP 5/240; Special: Paralysis, immune to lightning and cold.

Area G6: Lone Drider

Water pours from the 20-foot-high ceiling and collects in shallow, silt-filled depressions on the floor. Lurking along the ceiling is **Tatisst, a drider commander**. The leader of a group of driders (Area F13), Tatisst stays here brooding over his predicament.

During a trek to the mines from the depths of the earth, the driders encountered the aboleths of the lake. The driders fled, but not before the aboleth's slime affliction overcame Tatisst. The drider's skin turned translucent, and Tatisst is forced to remain in this chamber to avoid suffering in the dry mines above. Tatisst is angry his underlings have not yet returned. Tatisst attacks anyone entering the room. He casts spells down the hallways at PCs if they remain outside the chamber.

TATISST, DRIDER COMMANDER: HD 10; hp 76; AC 3[16]; Atk 1 bastard sword (1d8+1), longbow (1d6); Move 18; Save 9; CL/XP 11/1,700; Special: Spells (1—*charm person*, *magic missile*, *shield*, *sleep*; 2—*darkness* 15 ft. radius, *mirror image*, *web*; 3—*haste*, *lightning bolt*; 1—*wall of fire*), magical abilities.

Area G7: The Enslaved

Two-foot-deep dirty puddles sit in this chamber. The aboleths' miserable slaves live here under a *phantasmal force* cast by an aboleth (Area G8) that makes them appear to be drow. They do not respond to combat in Area G8, unless commanded by the aboleth.

The slaves can breathe air, but willingly envelop themselves in the aboleth's mucus cloud if necessary to enter deeper water. The slaves generally do not get along, but the aboleth's *charm person* ability compels them to work together to defend their masters.

The room contains 6 **bugbears**, 4 **druids**, a **troll** and **Thiana**, a human female monk.

BUGBEAR (6): HD 3+1; hp 22; AC 5[14]; Atk 1 bite (2d4) or long sword (1d8+1); Move 9; Save 14; CL/XP 3/120; Special: Surprise opponents, 50% chance.

DRUIDS OF RACISS 7 (CHAOTIC HUMAN) (4): HD 6; hp 31; AC 5[14]; Atk 1 scimitar (1d6+1); Move 9; Save 7; CL/XP 8/800; Special: Spells (1—*detect magic*, *faerie fire*; 2—*insect summoning I*, *heat metal*; 3—*insect summoning II*, *pyrotechnics*;

4—*insect summoning III*; 5—*animal growth*).

Combat gear: Chitin chain mail (made of giant ant exoskeletons), scimitar (1d6+1) **Other gear:** 2d6 gp, holy symbol of Rachiss

DRUID ANKHEG FORM (6HD): HD 6; hp 31; AC 2[17] underside 4[15]; Atk 1 bite (3d6); Move 12 (burrow 6); Save 11; CL/XP 7/600; Special: Spits acid 5d6 (1/day, save for half)

TROLL: HD 6+3; hp 38; AC 4[15]; Atk 2 claws (1d4), 1 bite (1d8); Move 12; Save 11; CL/XP 8/800; Special: Regenerate 3hp/round.

THIANA (NEUTRAL HALF-ELF MONK 6): HD 3+1; hp 22; AC 1[18]; Atk 2 +2 *quarterstaff* (1d6+3); Move 9; Save 9; CL/XP 3/120; Special: Monk abilities.

Combat Gear: +2 *darkwood quarterstaff*, *bracers of defense* AC 2[17], *boots of leaping*, *ring of protection* +1

Description: Often mistaken for a wood elf, Thiana has sharp features and stands just over 5 feet tall. Her once-luxurious auburn hair lies in tangled clumps matted with filth. Her tanned skin is white and transparent due to the aboleth's slime affliction. Thiana hails from The Hanging Gardens of Iseleine (See *Splinters of Faith 4: For Love of Chaos*). She has been tortured and has seen horrors beyond imagining. Her once-peaceful heart and chaste demeanor are now irreversibly changed. The aboleths take turns charming the poor monk, giving her no chance of breaking free. If freed, she vows to aid her rescuers for life, whenever they need her. Thiana tumbles through opponents to attack spellcasters first as directed by the aboleth.

Area G8: The Younger Aboleth

The water in this chamber is clear and fresh. Beautiful crystal mineral deposits sparkle with green light cast from glowing moss that dangles from the ceilings and walls. Cool fresh air blows through the room from the outer passages.

The room is cloaked in a *phantasmal force* spell cast by an **aboleth** (marked with an X) that hides behind an illusory wall that is part of the spell. The room is actually a hot spring fed by a boiling lake (Area G12). A 30-foot-diameter hole spews superheated water approximately every 10 minutes (10% cumulative chance each round). If the geyser erupts, it deals 1d6 points of scalding damage to everyone in the room.

A sloping ramp from Area F2 ends at the edge of a 20-foot-deep pit filled with boiling water. PCs submerged in the blistering water take 10d6 points of scalding damage per round of exposure. PCs standing in the water who avoid the pit suffer 1d6 points of scalding damage per round from the boiling water. This is continual damage.

The aboleth's *phantasmal force* spell hides various exits behind illusory walls (marked on the map), including the hall it hides down. Opposite the sloping entrance ramp is an image of a lich-like undead figure. It emerges from the darkness of the tunnel as PCs enter the room. Behind the illusion lich is an *illusory wall* concealing the aboleth's *projected image*. The lich appears to cast spells, but everything is controlled by the hiding aboleth.

The aboleth retreats into the lake (Area G12) if threatened.

ABOLETH: HD 9; hp 55; AC 3[16]; Atk 4 tentacles (1d6 + slime); Save 6; Move 9 (swim 12); CL/XP 12/2000; Special: *Charm monster* (3/day), *Phantasmal force* (3/day), Mucus cloud in water (save or cannot breathe air for 3 hours), special disease upon successful hit (save or must be immersed in water every hour).

Area G9: Slime Worm

A muddy beach slopes into the darkness of a subterranean lake. The mineral-laden walls often collapse into the lake, and the pounding roar of a waterfall echoes from nearby. The thick mud halves movement 20 feet from the waterline.

Just 30 feet from shore dwells a submerged **purple worm**. The worm is the aboleth's prized slave and is immediately called upon to aid and protect any aboleth in need. The purple worm attacks anyone approaching the lake or disturbing the waters. A small tidal wave of water precedes the worm as it charges toward shore to devour PCs.

A fair amount of raw ore and gemstones sit in the worm's gullet: 14 uncut diamonds (500 gp each), a 25-pound gold nugget (2,500 gp) and a *figurine of the onyx dog*.

PURPLE WORM: HD 15; hp 101; AC 6[13]; Atk 1 bite (2d12), 1 sting (1d8 + poison); Move 9; Save 3; CL/XP 17/3500; Special: Poison sting, swallow whole.

Area G10: The End of the Hole

Huge mounds of mineral-encrusted coal, bones and chunks of volcanic glass sit in this chamber. Two feet of water fills the room, and piles of waterlogged mining equipment lie in shambles around the coal piles all encrusted in thick mineral deposits. Atop the junk are the decomposing bodies of five bugbears, all victims of the bucket. After the fifth bugbear plummeted, they became wise to the deadfall. A hole in the ceiling 60 feet overhead leads to Area F2 nearly 300 feet above.

Area G11: Elder Aboleth

An immense underground lake fills much of this room, with the muddy shore sloping into the warm water. Mounds of mud, stone and debris create small islands near the shoreline. The collapsing ceiling and walls created these islands when the lake formed centuries ago.

From the mound of mud closest to the shore juts a pane of black glass. The pane is stuck in the mire and requires 1d4 hours to carefully excavate it. Other panes are buried or submerged nearby at the Referee's discretion.

The large island 40 feet offshore is also the resting podium of an **aboleth**. From its island throne, it watches and directs its minions. If alerted to PCs, the aboleth slides into the water and uses *phantasmal force* to create an image of itself sitting on the island. The aboleth hides underwater until the perfect opportunity to strike presents itself.

Two enslaved stone giant bodyguards protect the elder aboleth.

The stone giants are under the *phantasmal force* spell so that they appear as bugbear zombies. The giants carry four large bladders filled with aboleth mucus. The giant throws the mucus-filled bladders onto intruders to cover them in the vile substance. Each bladder contains enough mucus to envelop one creature. PCs struck by a thrown bladder must make a saving throw or lose the ability to breathe out of water (as per the aboleth's mucous cloud ability).

If cornered or severely injured, the aboleth tries to escape by swimming into the depths of the Breathing Lake. It calls on the purple worm in Area G9 if threatened.

Buried in the mud of the island are an unlocked chest containing 3,256 sp, 2,973 gp, 1,273 pp, an ivory scroll tube (250 gp) with a scroll (*animate object*, *cure serious wounds*, *raise dead*), a wand of continual light (5 charges), gauntlets of dexterity, an arrow of direction and a +2 long sword.

STONE GIANT (2): HD 9+3; hp 65; AC 0[19]; Atk 1 club (3d6); Move 12; Save 6; CL/XP 10/1400; Special: Throw boulders.



ELDER ABOLETH : HD 9; hp 69; AC 3[16]; Atk 4 tentacles (1d6 + slime); Save 6; Move 9 (swim 12); CL/XP 12/2000; Special: *Charm monster* (3/day), *Phantasmal force* (3/day), Mucus cloud in water (save or cannot breathe air for 3 hours), special disease upon successful hit (save or must be immersed in water every hour).

Area G12: The Breathing Lake

The great earthquake that ruined the Mines of Honn opened a half-mile-wide gorge stretching for more than 5 miles. Hundreds of hot springs feed the lake, creating an ideal ecosystem for creatures and monstrosities alike.

The Breathing Lake is aptly named, for the lake's unusually high temperature creates windstorms and other weather phenomena normally associated with the surface world. Some local cultures residing on the lake's shores dub it "The Belching Lake" because of its strong sulfur odor. The smell has been likened to an ogre's morning breath after a night of feasting on pickled eggs and garlic mead.

Pockets of boiling water and erupting bubbles of poisonous gas are commonplace. Unique blindfish and other animals provide a stable food supply to most lake dwellers. The lake has many branches that inhabitants claim and fiercely protect. Several waterfalls also empty into the Breathing Lake from above. The base of the column supporting the Pillar of Vermin rises out of the lake to soar high above.

Concluding the Adventure

Once PCs return to the Lady of the Searing Waters temple with an intact glass pane, the priests can restore the temple's worship room within a week. After that time, Chihule gladly helps the PCs bless the *Scepter of Faiths*. The *Consecration of Water* requires that the *Scepter of Faiths* soak for one day in each of the temple's seven pools while the pools are replenished by the temple's central geyser. At the end of the seventh day, the *Scepter of Faiths* — and only the scepter — gains the ability to cast *resurrection* once per month. Other items submerged in the pools gain a +1 bonus to attacks and damage for one week. This enchantment can only be applied once to any weapon.

Once the ritual is finished, the PCs receive an urgent summons from Ayire Jaysa of the Theurgist Seminary of Thasizier. The master scholar requests an audience immediately to discuss the *Scepter of Faiths*. Chihule can direct PCs toward the island city of Jah Sezar and the location of the seminary.

The PCs are one ritual away from completing the Scepter of Faiths. In the next adventure, *Splinters of Faith 9: Duel of Fate*, PCs must travel to a mountain stronghold where the witches of Hecate await. There, they'll find the final requirement to restoring the weapon that can bring down the death-priest Akruel Rathamon.

Returning with the Glass

The panes of glass needed by the temple are massive, but can be maneuvered out of the mines with some difficulty. Fortunately, the priests hired the miners to cut some of the corners from the passages so the glass panels could be turned around corners.

The glass is as rigid as stone but is incredibly lightweight. Four PCs lifting at the corners can easily carry it. If PCs are careful, they should be able to get to the top of the mines with little difficulty. A pane has 150 hp, and shatters into unusable pieces if it takes too much damage. It's up to the Referee if the PCs have a safe return trip that won't jeopardize the sturdy glass.

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