

CASTLES[®] & CRUSADES

THE BURNING FIRMAMENT



DAVIS CHENAULT



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INTRODUCTION

This module is designed for 4-6 players of levels 4-6. Although any class is potentially useful in this adventure, a rogue, ranger and druid increase the odds of its successful or early completion. The adventure takes place in a city, tower, ruined monastery and the countryside and only occurs over a few hours 'in game time'. It is quick paced and involves chasing a thief. The Castle Keeper is encouraged to amend any or all encounters as necessary to insure there is adequate challenge for the PCs.

LOCATION

This adventure can be placed anywhere there is a conflict between warring cities, regions or peoples. A city is under siege at the beginning of the adventure and the walls are about to be breached. The PCs are caught in the city, though are not necessarily involved in the conflict (and preferably should not be). The adventure takes place during winter and a storm is gathering on the horizon. The snow storm commences shortly before the PCs leave the city.

In Inzae the town can be located in one of three places; on the southern reaches of Vindig river, north of Kreutzmark a dozen or so miles from the east or west bank of that river. It can also be located south and west of Halpveg on a road connecting Frisia to Halpveg or a little further afield in that direction. Regardless of the location chosen, the town is at the periphery of Bergholt, Isenburg, or Halpveg's sphere of influence.

OVERVIEW

The city of Oorerestberg has come under a pre-dawn surprise attack by a large war party of Zjerd. Though walled, Oorerestberg's defenses were not adequately manned when the attack started and the entirety of the city is facing immanent collapse. The city is in a panic and several portions of the city walls are about to be breached as the adventure begins.

A druid and thief, Gisella Von Gripp, has decided to take advantage of the disruption in the city to steal a book of potion concoction from an adversary, Stefan Adelbosrt. She is rushing to his tower while he is away fighting near one of the town gates. Upon seeing the PCs, Gisella decides it best to try and get some help to guard her against potential threats while purloining the book.

If successful in inducing the PCs to help her, Gisella takes the PCs inside Stefan's tower and uses them as distractions and guards while racing upstairs to get a book from Stefan's laboratory. Once there, she escapes the tower via a window and runs to a nearby gate, hoping to make good her escape from the city before it is overrun. She then races to a nearby ruined monastery during a snowstorm. There she intends to activate a portal and escape the area with the book.

The PCs should catch on rather quickly that they have been duped or an important theft has occurred and give

chase. Whether they succeed or not is of little importance; that they try reveals much about their character. Should they not give chase, the adventure becomes one in which the PCs simply try to avoid being slaughtered by the invading Zjerd army. In their chase or escape, the PCs encounter several obstacles along the way, primarily the troops of the invading army who are intent on pillaging the city and taking what they can from whomever.

As Gisella can be encountered in many places throughout the adventure, her stats are supplied here.

GISELLA (She is chaotic neutral, human, 5th level druid/rogue whose vital stats are HD 5d6, HP 22, AC 18, Her primary attributes are wisdom, dexterity and charisma. Her significant attributes are dexterity 14, wisdom 16 and charisma 16. She wears a cloak of charming humanoids, +2 laminar leather armor, +1 bracers of defense, a ring of chameleon power, carries a wand of lightning bolts with four charges left, a bowl of commanding water elementals, three therafund totems [see end of module], two throwing daggers, a +3 light flail that deals 4-11 (1d8+3) damage and 1500gp worth of coins and jewelry. Special abilities: resist elements and woodland stride. Spells memorized (4/3/2/1): 0 - Detect Poison*, Endure Elements*, Know Direction, Light*, Light. 1st - Calm Animals*, Entangle, Faerie Fire, Obscuring Mist. 2nd - Barkskin, Cure light Wounds, Summon Swarm*. 3rd - Meld into Stone. * indicates the spell has been cast.)



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Gisella is a worshipper of Toden, long ago disparaged in this area. She has been tasked by her superiors with coming to this area and reestablishing Toden's influence. She has been here for a decade or more and has had little success in doing so. She has intended to leave for quite some time and now, with the city about to be slaughtered and potentially herself along with it has finally decided to leave.

Gisella is a crafty person and kept her true form of worship to herself. She is mostly silent and often quite pensive. Her stay here has made her a little paranoid. Gisella is also a very attractive person and has used this to her advantage. Many people look kindly upon her, not knowing her true nature or intent. She could give a wit about any of them. Her only concern is her deity Vittam and her own personal safety.

One of her few adversaries in town is Stefan Adelborst. Though she tried her best to befriend and convert him, all her efforts failed. She did so in order to gain his trust and perhaps use his influence to sway the town and allow the worship of Vittam to return. Stefan became suspicious after a time and began cutting ties with Gisella. They became adversarial. Gisella knows that Stefan has some powerful magic in his tower and intends to take a book from him while he is engaged in combat.

PART ONE

The PCs find themselves in a city under siege. There is chaos in the streets as people run seeking a place to hide or avoid the many missiles and catapult shots coming over the walls. Several houses are burning while wounded and dying people huddle or clamber for cover. As the adventure begins, the PCs are located in a broad square with half a dozen or more roads coming into it. In the center of the square is a tall statue of a man holding a staff and looking up. The buildings around the square are tall, square, stone and wooden structures with the exception of one, a tower. The tower is all stone and is home to Stefan Adelborst. Before the PCs have any time to react further to their situation a woman comes racing into the square.

A woman, wearing stately attire, comes rushing into the square from one of the streets. There is clear panic on her face. She glances about quickly before resting her gaze on the party. She approaches hurriedly until coming to the party. "Please help me, I beseech you. I am in need of aid." She pants heavily, out of breath, and near tears."

Gisella explains that her master, Stefan Adelborst, is off fighting on the ramparts and needs a book of prayers from his library in order save the city from being overrun. She needs to retrieve this tome for him and bring it to him immediately. She only asks that the PCs guard her while in the tower and escort her back to her master. She informs them that they will be amply rewarded for their efforts. Should the PCs balk at the request or begin to waver in their desire, Gisella begins crying and invokes the *cloak of charm humanoids* to sway the group or the leader of the group to do her will.

THE TOWER OF CONCOCTION

The tower is square and constructed entirely of stone. It is around 70 feet tall with a conical blue slate roof. A brass door sits two stories above street level and is accessed by a narrow set of steps. No windows are to be found on the ground level but 2-3 windows are located on each floor with none on the roof. There appear to be five floors with an attic.

If the PCs agree to help, Gisella leads them up the steps to the second floor of the tower. Here is the only visible entry. She reaches in a bag and pulls out a ring with a dozen keys on it. She nervously fumbles through them, trying two before calming herself and selecting the correct key to open the door. The latter was an act. It takes three keys in sequence to open the door from the outside without igniting a fire trap (see below).

If Gisella cannot persuade the party to help her she goes into the tower alone. A short time after Gisella enters the tower, Leon (Stefan's servant, see below) comes running out of the tower screaming, "Thief thief!!! Help, thief." He implores the PCs to catch the thief and allows them to enter the tower. By the time they get there, Gisella has already left. Leon offers substantial reward for her capture. If the players do not pick up on these adventure hooks, please have a chat with them! Gisella has left the tower by a rope dangling from the tower's attic. The PCs should be able to see this if they round the building or investigate inside. Leon leads the PCs upstairs to show them how she escaped.

INSIDE THE TOWER

A familiar and Stefan's servant, Leon, are the only ones that occupy the tower. The familiar is in the basement and Leon is on the ground floor. Both are described below as they may be encountered at random times.

When Leon discovers the PCs in the tower, he approaches them incredulously and scared. He has only seen a few people in the tower and immediately thinks the PCs are thieves or worse. Leon informs the PCs that his master is a powerful wizard and will kill them unless they leave. Should the PCs bother to explain themselves and describe the woman they are with, he knows immediately what is going on and tells the PCs Gisella is a thief and adversary of Stefan's.

LEON

LEON (*He is a neutral good human whose vital stats are HD 1d6, HP 4 and AC 10. His primary attributes are intelligence and wisdom. His significant attribute is wisdom 14. He wears a cloak and smock, a +3 belt of defense that absorbs 1 point of damage from attacks, an Eye of Sight [see end of module], and wears 20gp worth of jewelry.*)

Leon is an aged man and appears even older than he is. A few dangling threads of long unwashed gray hair adorn his head. His face is wrinkled like a dried prune while wisps of hair protrude from various warts and skin ailments. Long arms and legs, thin as sticks, seem oddly attached to a really fat belly. Leon spends

an inordinate amount of time sleeping. He is deaf but can see really, really well.

Leon's duties are light as he is simply too old to do much more than make an occasional meal, sweeping and cleaning and undertaking various simple tasks for his master in the workrooms above.

He is loyal to his master but is quite unwilling to fight for Stefan. Leon had a troubled past and is quite gruff and honest in his assessments and responses to questions (leaving him few friends). Although loyal to Stefan, this loyalty is self-serving and really just allows him to be protected and fed. This loyalty can only be bought. Once bought though, it is bought. He is not a fighter, and knows it. He is wily and capable of 'disappearing into the crowd' so to speak.

FAMILIAR

The familiar is a cat and is not a true familiar anymore (nor ever was). Stefan acquired this 'familiar' on a trip years ago. Stefan can see through the cat's eyes if he so desires but must be concentrating to do so. However, the cat and Stefan had been together for such a long time and had grown so emotionally and mentally close that the two have been together ever since. They also still have a tenuous mental connection. The cat is old and near to the end of his days. It is thin and its mottled brown and white fur is thinning while graying around the face.

When the familiar makes its appearance, it does so slowly and with little concern for its well-being (it is used to being protected). Generally, it just watches the PCs and follows them around purring for food. Interestingly, when the familiar sees the PCs, Stefan senses them as well. This act frightens Stefan and distracts him during a spell he was casting. Failure to cast the spell in time allowed for an enemy spell caster to cast a spell and blow a hole in the city's wall and kill Stefan at the same time. The town is overrun because of the PCs – but they need not know that.

CAT (*This neutral animal's vital stats are HD 1d4, HP 2 and AC 16. It has no prime attributes and does not attack.*)

BASEMENT

The basement is used for storage and is the resting place for Stefan's familiar. Other than the familiar, most of what is in here is of mundane nature – though some valuable.

A solid wood stair leads down to a large chamber with brick and stucco walls and a slab stone floor. Boxes, crates, barrels, piles of furniture and other bric-a-brac of daily life are crammed into the basement. Much of the furniture is covered in dust and cobwebs but several of the barrels and boxes in front have very little dust on them.

As soon as the PCs enter the room the familiar/cat awakens (if he has not been awakened already). After a few moments and if the party does not appear violently disposed, it approaches the party to see what they are doing (see above for this interaction). It sleeps in a back corner beneath some crates.

The basement contains, 3 chairs, a broken table, a brass candelabra, some sheets, a clothes rack, some pans, a pile of broken glass, an old rug, 4 lanterns and a lamp. There are 10 boxes of various sizes. Half are open and none locked. They contain sheets, cloths, winter clothes, incense burners, vials of oil, candles and candle holders, a sheaf of clean papers, dried inks, pans, rotten fruit and other assorted used or forgotten household items. Inside one of the boxes is a smaller wooden box. It contains silver tableware valued at 200gp.

GROUND FLOOR

This room is used for sleeping. There is a single thin wall covering one quarter of the room that encloses the space where Leon sleeps. The remainder of the room is for Stefan. It is fairly sparse.

There is a large bed built into the wall by a window. Two drawers are below the bed and a curtain can be draped over the sleeping area. A brazier, full of hot coals, stands several feet from the bed. On the floor beside this is a bed warmer. A small lantern dangles from a hook in the ceiling. A table is placed against another wall. There are scissors, a shallow pan and shaving material on it. A mirror hangs on the wall behind the table. A bedpan is scooted into a corner. There is a staff leaning against a wall beside a stand for jackets. There are three long wool and fur coats here.

The drawers contain clothing for summer and winter. There is a pair of woolen socks in one drawer that imparts a protection from cold on the wearer (see *socks of warmth* at the end of the module).

There is a secret compartment above the bed. A lever that opens it can be found on the top sill of the window. Otherwise, the door above the bed is nearly undetectable (CL10). Within is one book (This book contains the intonations and instructions for six spells of levels 2-4 for a cleric. Spells cannot be cast from this book), several small sticks (one of which is a *wand of gust of wind* with 21 charges), and a *potion of gaseous form* (2 doses), 125 pure gold coins in a bag, and a bag of small gems valued at 1200gp.

Nothing but a bed and table are in Leon's chamber. He only owns clothes and a single knife. There is a ladder here leading up to the Access floor.

ACCESS FLOOR

The door from the outside to this room is locked. It has a triple lock on it and requires three separate keys to open. If opened from the outside (picked or forced) an *explosive rune* ignites. This causes 2-12 damage to all those on the landing. A successful CL5 dexterity save halves the damage to those on the stoop (2 at most) but an additional CL5 dexterity save must be made to avoid falling off the stoop. Failure indicates the PC has fallen for 1-6 damage. A dexterity save halves the falling damage. Once the door is closed, the trap is reset. The trap can only go off once though. After that it must be rebuilt by Stefan. It is not triggered when the door is opened from the inside.

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This floor is used for entertaining guests and as an entry chamber. There are valuable items in this room though none of a magical nature.

This room has a wooden floor and ceiling. A brass chandelier hangs from the ceiling. A narrow wooden staircase heads straight up to a trap door and another trapdoor is closed beneath the staircase. A couch is under the far window with a long low table in front of it. Two stuffed chairs are situated at the ends of the couch. Four silver candelabra are on the table along with some napkins, silverware and a plate of half-eaten food. A wine bottle has fallen over on the table and spilled. A cabinet with elaborately carved doors rests against another wall. A rack for coats and hats is by the door. Several pairs of shoes are on the floor. A large bureau sits against one wall and a chest against another.

The chest is unlocked and contains ceramic plates, wooden cups along with forks, knives and spoons. There are tin, brass and ceramic candle holders, incense burners and lamps. Napkins and candles of various sizes can be found here as well.

The cabinet contains some drinking glasses as well as two crystal goblets (50gp each) a silver chalice (100gp) two silver candle holders (1gp each, they are silver plate) two loaves of bread, incense sticks, one large knife stuck into a block of cheese and one jar of salted and dried meat.

There is a secret door on the floor (or well hidden) by the cabinet. This is a small one made for Leon. There is a ladder to the floor below that goes straight into Leon's chamber.

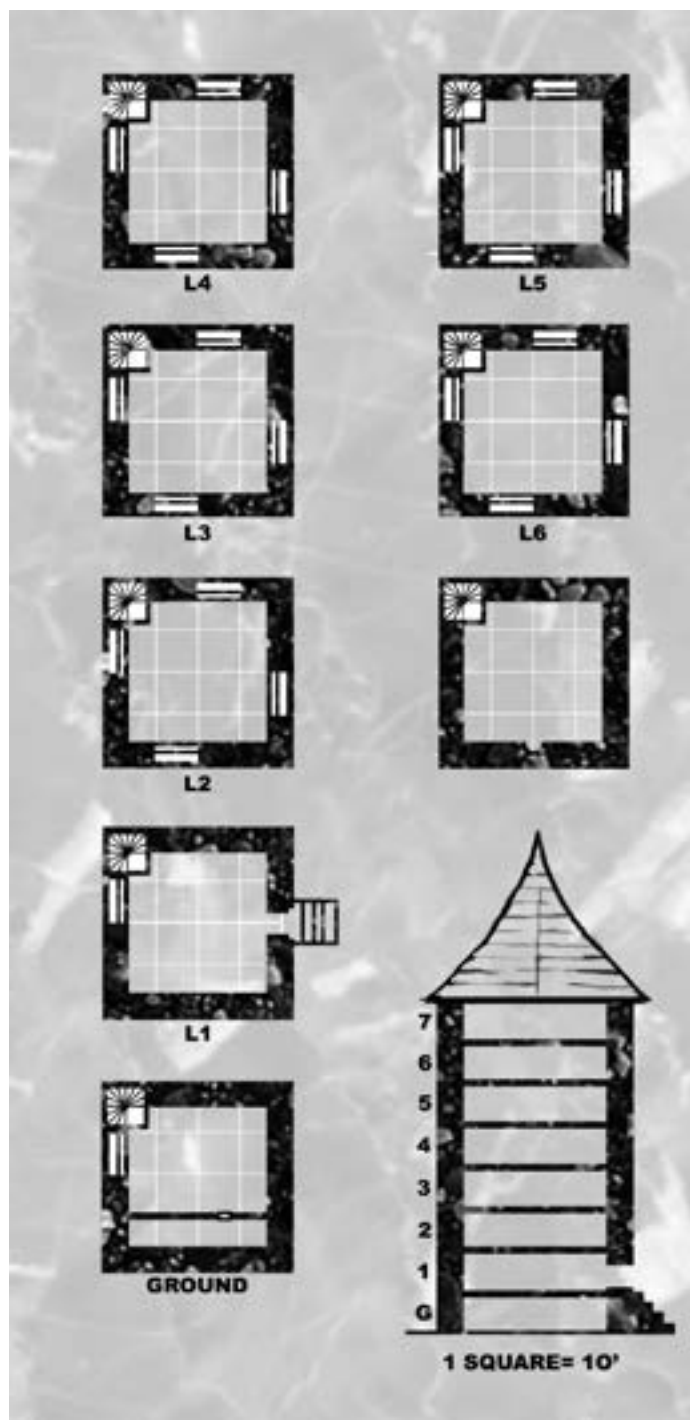
Once this room is entered it will take 7-12 rounds for Leon to notice dust falling from the ceiling into the room below. He then makes his way up the stair expecting to see his master. If the trapdoor is locked, he uses the secret door by the cabinet. That door does not have a lock. At the same time, once the familiar/cat hears Leon shuffling about, he makes his way to see what is going on and maybe get some cheese.

Leon confronts the interlopers cautiously at first thinking they were sent here by Stefan. It shouldn't take long for him to figure out that they are not here at the request of Stefan. He then confronts them, telling the PCs to leave or his master will come back and have them arrested or worse. He is stalwart in his demand. If given information about Gisella, he is, at first, confused. Then after a minute or two puts it together and tells the PCs she is a thief and adversary. If the PCs race upstairs, they find the trapdoor locked. Once they try the door, Gisella is alerted and makes good her escape.

At this point Leon will request the aid of the PCs, lacking any better ideas.

2ND FLOOR

This room is used for cooking and eating. Both Stefan and Leon spend a lot of time in here. This room is mostly devoid of any really valuable items.



The trapdoor opens onto a room with a large iron stove against one wall. A fire heats the stove making the room warm and a deep pan sits on top of it putting off steam and the smell of onion, garlic and cabbage. There are many shelves along the walls with various pots, pans, spoons, ladles knives and small jars. There are several vegetables laying out, some very old, others drying or hanging from hooks on tall shelves. A large table is in the center of the room with two chairs pushed up under it. A large bowl and two smaller bowls sit by the table with a round of bread and heap of butter. A stair leads up to a closed trapdoor.

This is the kitchen. There is quite a bit of dried fruit, jars of butter, jelly, preserves etc. in here. There is nothing of any real value in here other than the food. The trapdoor is locked from above.

3RD FLOOR

This room is where Gisella is headed. It contains several dozen books. Most are just theoretical books on arcane subjects, histories, languages and geographies. There are three volumes of value discussed below. This is Stefan's study.

The trapdoor to this floor is locked though only with a wooden beam. The beam holding the door shut must be broken or the hinge pushed out. The door has an AC of 5 and 40hp if the PCs try to bash it in. Pushing on the door in order to break the beam takes a combined strength of 40 to break or a strength check at CL +1 for every 5 points of strength under 40.

The door opens onto a warm room with a brazier in the room's center. Several lanterns hang from the ceiling. Beside the brazier is a large overstuffed chair with a blanket on it. A small reading table is in front of it and a book is propped open. The walls are lined with shelves containing many books and bric-a-brac, such as tiny lanterns, statues, little painting, vases, a miniature globe, shrunken head, bones, etc. The floor grabs your attention the most, for even though there are a lot of books on the shelves, there are a lot more on the floor. There is a stair leading up to an open trapdoor.

This is Stefan's library and study. There are dozens of books in here of great value. Should a book be taken its value ranges from 10gp to 100gp. None of the books on the floor or shelves contain spells though two have information useful to a wizard or cleric. They each contain histories and geographies etc.

An observant PC notes that the book stand in front of the chair is untouched. Gisella knows that the stand is actually a pet mimic that attacks any PC who touches the book.

MIMIC (This is a neutral aberration whose vital stats are HD 5d8, HP 34, and AC 14. Its primary attributes are physical. It attacks with a slam for 3-12 damage. Its special abilities are adhesive and crush.)

The book on the stand is real though. This is an exceedingly valuable book, easily fetching 1000gp to an antiquarian or collector. It contains little of any actual useful knowledge as it is only concerned with the lineages of noble houses in the vicinity. However, it is an old book and could be used by some to establish land rights, noble lineage, an inheritance, or more. The book could cause all manner of problems.

4TH FLOOR

This room is where Stefan carries out some experiments from his book of potions or those of his own make. There are potions in the room. It is also the room Gisella ransacked for information and a book.

The hatchway opens onto a room with several very large windows. A strong chemical smell and herb smell pervades the room. There are several tables, chairs and shelves lining the walls. Every surface is covered with glass and ceramic jars, bowls, spoons, measuring devices, small burners, notebooks, papers, quills and ink jars. There are herbs of various types hanging from the beams, rolled up in balls or just lying on the shelves. There is one shelf with a hundred or more small vials and ceramic jars on it. Each is labelled and all neatly aligned. A ladder leads up to a hatchway.

This room is a veritable cornucopia of potion making material. About any type of potion and spell making material can be found in here for any spell 6th level and below. However, it takes time to find them as Stefan's organizational scheme is lacking. Further, the labels he created for his jars and bottles are of his own make and not in any known language. Rather than list all the materials in the room, it should suffice to say that this is a complete potion making and research lab (for this technology anyway).

Breaking equipment is very easy to do in here, especially if the PCs are in a hurry, heavily armed or armored or carrying a lot of stuff. The chances of knocking something over in this case are very high. Each PC walking through here must make a CL8 dexterity check if they fall into either of the above descriptions. Moving carefully and slowly completely mitigates this effect. Failure indicates that some compounds were knocked over and mixed.

For the most part, if something is knocked over, nothing untoward happens. However, on a roll of 1 on a d20, the compounds mix in an odd fashion producing an effect. Please consult the table below for the reaction. Roll a d4.

TABLE 1: POTION REACTION TABLE

D4	REACTION
1	Explosion for 1-4 damage in 5 foot radius.
2	Gas causes stinking cloud, immobilizes anyone in room with a coughing fit for 2-8 rounds.
3	Acid spatter causing 1-4 damage to anyone in a 10 foot radius.
4	Billowing smoke fills the room obscuring vision and incidentally increasing the chances for someone else to knock over some equipment. Everyone in the room checks again.

Beneath the windowsill and behind a shelf is a false wall. It is easily found with a CL4 intelligence check if looking in that area. Behind this is a shelf with 6 bottles on it. These are magic potions. Each has 2 draughts in it. The potions are *neutralize poison*, *haste*, *spider climb*, *remove disease*, *tongues* and *water breathing*.

ATTIC

The attic is used solely for observing the stars. Stefan undertakes this as a hobby and for no other reason. His notes are poor, as his general concern is relaxation rather than inquiry.

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The trapdoor leading to the attic is open. This room only has a chair in it, a table with some ink wells, quills, papers scattered across it, a lamp and an astrolabe. There is a wooden stool beside a telescope. A pile of half eaten apples lies on the floor. One large window has been placed in the roof on the side facing away from the square. It is open. A rope runs through it and is attached to a rafter on the ceiling.

The rope dangling from the window and attached to the rafter is thin and rather old. It can hold about 120 pounds before beginning to give way and snap. Should over 120 pounds be on the rope, there is a chance it will snap. Roll a d20 during each round the rope is in use. On a result of 12 or better the rope does not snap. However, for every twenty pounds weight above 120, apply a -1 penalty to the die roll.

If the PCs look out, they can see the town and beyond the walls; fires are burning on several rooftops. The snow is falling thicker and faster and gray clouds are fast consuming the day. The clamor of battle and the wails of townspeople in a panic can be heard. They can also see Gisella making her way down a street towards a gatehouse with flames billowing out its roof.

At this very moment two sections of wall and one gatehouse in another section of town have been breached and invading troops are pouring in. The gatehouse Gisella is heading towards has been abandoned and invading Zjerd has just lit it on fire in an effort to stop anyone from leaving via that route.

PART TWO

CONFUSION AND PANIC

As the PCs exit the tower, the town walls and one gate have been breached. Panic has spread throughout the city. Groups of defenders and townspeople are moving about quickly seeking safety from the marauding soldiers. Shortly, pandemonium ensues.

Not a moment has passed since exiting the tower when several town bells begin ringing. The acrid smell of burning timber wafts heavily through the air with billowing clouds of swirling smoke as fires begin to rage in several parts of the city, mingled with the clamor of battle and cries of the wounded. A light snow has begun to fall amidst all this. The streets are damp and wet while townspeople race to and fro.

The PCs must now give chase through the city. It is fairly unimportant as to which route they follow. Presumably they saw Gisella running towards the nearest gate. If not, they should quickly pick up her trail if interested. If not, it would be in the PCs interest to flee the city. The nearest gate is the same one Gisella is heading toward. If they choose not to follow Gisella, this adventure is concluded with the exception of the PCs escaping a city overrun by Zjerd who are quite intent on slaughtering and looting as much as possible and then razing the city to the ground.

The city streets are crowded now with soldiers running pell-mell in one direction or another while townspeople scramble around in a state of panic. The holdouts are not located near here. Men, women and children are trying to escape the city. Cries of doom and despair can be heard on the wind. Should the PCs stop anyone, they are quickly told the walls and at least one gate is breached. Fires can be seen leaping into the sky, smoke is blotting out the light and a snow begins to fall more quickly.

Whichever direction the PCs go they see people fleeing and in quick order witness some invading Zjerd involved in looting, burning, fighting or killing townspeople. The PCs can opt to fight wherever they choose. This may spell their doom, but it is their choice. Please refer to the encounter chart below once every two minutes the PCs are in motion until they reach the gate. It should take no more than 10 minutes to reach the gate if the PCs are not bogged down in a fight or other activities. This does not include the one fight the PCs will have to have (see Dead End below).

Please refer to the following encounter chart while the characters head toward the gate. Roll a d20 for every street the PCs go down or every 2 minutes the PCs are travelling. See the map to track their progress. The CK is encouraged to ad lib the events underway in the city.

TABLE 2: CITY ENCOUNTER CHART

D20	ENCOUNTER
1-8	Townspeople, 5-10
9-10	Townspeople, 1-4 being attacked by 4-7 Zjerd troops
11-12	Friendly troops, 2-6
13-14	Zjerd troops, 2-6
15-16	Friendly troops with sergeant, 7-12
17-18	Zjerd troops with sergeant, 7-12
19-20	Fight between opposing troops, 7-12 per side

STATS

TOWNSPEOPLE (These are non-class NPCs of various races whose vital stats are: HP 1-6 and AC 10-11. They have no primary attribute or stats. They attack with a +0 to hit and cause 1-2 damage unless using a specific weapon and then damage is halved. They carry a variety of goods ranging in value from 1-20sp.)

ZJERD (These chaotic evil humanoid's vital stats are HD 1d6, HP variable, AC 13 and Move 30. Their primary attributes are physical. They carry short swords, small crossbows, wear reinforced leather armor and carry 1-6 gp worth of valuables.)

ZJERD SERGEANT (These chaotic evil humanoid's vital stats are HD 2d8, HP variable, AC 16 and Move 30. Their primary attributes are physical. They carry short swords, short bows, wear mail armor, shield and carry 2-10 gp worth of valuables.)

FRIENDLY TROOPS *(These are neutral, human 1st level fighters whose vital stats are: HP 6 and AC 12. Their primary attributes are strength, constitution and dexterity. Their vital stats are strength 13. They attack with short swords for 1-6 damage. They wear leather coats and shield and carry 1-8gp worth of coin.)*

FRIENDLY SERGEANT *(These are neutral, human 4th level fighters whose vital stats are: HP 24 and AC 14. Their primary attributes are strength, constitution and dexterity. Their vital stat is strength 14. They attack with maces for 1-6 damage. They wear leather armor and shield and carry 1-40gp worth of coin and jewelry.)*

REACTIONS FOR ENCOUNTERS

The townspeople are panicking and often seek the aid of the PCs as the events unfold. Townspeople can be of any race. They are also a good source of NPCs and replacement characters for the players should one die.

The scenes and encounters for the characters can be of various types. The Zjerd may be in the process of looting a cart, building or the dead. They could be drinking or just racing through the streets. This is best left up to the CK. The friendly troops are moving cautiously and toward a gate or place of escape. They avoid fights if possible but are willing to work with the PCs if they know them or realize they are friendly. Again this is best left up to the CK.

In the event the PCs come across a group fighting one another, they PCs are ignored unless they engage in combat. However, this random encounter is included so that the troops fighting one another have blocked the way the PCs are heading, forcing them to engage or turn around and start from a different direction for the gate and costing them valuable time.

DEAD END

Almost all of the wandering monsters can be avoided if the PCs act accordingly and run away or work to avoid confrontations. However, there is one case in which the PCs will not be able to avoid a fight: when they head down one street a huge fiery ball of flames lands on the roof of a house at the end of the lane. The ceramic oil bomb shatters, spattering flames everywhere, blocking the lane.

Charging down the street in the billowing snow along snow soaked cobbles, a fiery ball arcs through the sky leaving a trail of black bilious smoke behind it. The ceramic oil bomb hits the roof of a building exploding flaming debris all over and crumbling the upper floor onto the street. Buildings on both side of the street are quickly catching fire and the cobbled road is littered with burning timbers.

The PCs can go forward through the fire. This is dangerous though because the flames are large and the pitch makes it nearly impossible to extinguish the flames without consuming a lot of time the PCs do not have. Moving through the flaming debris requires a dexterity check. Success means the PC has

taken 1d4 points of damage from the heat. Failure indicates the PC has taken 2-12 points of damage and has suffered burns. Failing the check by five or more inflicts 1-6 points of additional damage. It also takes 2-4 rounds to pick one's way through the debris. During this time, the troops described below come around the corner and attack the PCs.

If the PCs are engaged with the fire on the street, a troop of Zjerd rounds the bend behind them. The Zjerd see the PCs and attack. All are unmounted except for one, the leader. The leader lingers back for a few rounds before attempting to enter the fray, looking for the most advantageous point of attack. If it appears that his troops cannot win the battle, the leader does not enter the fray and beats a hasty retreat.

ZJERD, 8 *(These chaotic evil humanoid's vital stats are HD 1d6, HP variable, AC13 and Move 30. Their primary attributes are physical. They carry short swords, small crossbows, wear reinforced leather armor and carry 1-6 gp worth of valuables.)*

ZJERD SERGEANT, 2 *(These chaotic evil humanoid's vital stats are HD 2d8, HP variable, AC 16 and Move 30. Their primary attributes are physical. They carry short swords, short bows, wear mail armor, shield and carry 2-10 gp worth of valuables.)*

ZJERD SUBCHIEF, MOUNTED *(These chaotic evil humanoid's vital stats are HD 4d8, HP 16, AC 16 and Move 30. Their primary attributes are physical. His significant attribute is dexterity 17. They carry short swords, short bows, wear mail armor, shield and carry 16 gp worth of valuables.*

COYOTE, MOUNT *(This creature's vital stats are HD 2d6, HP 10, AC 13 and Move 40. Their primary attributes are physical. They attack by biting for 1-4 damage. Their special abilities are trip and scent.)*

THE DEAD AND DYING

Should the PCs lose track of Gisella for whatever reason and attempt to find her, but cannot, have them accidentally run across a soldier pleading for help.

Lying propped up against a nearby wall is a soldier with a grievous wound to the head, chest and arm. His pain must be staggering by its nature. He coughs out as the PCs pass him, "Kill me please. Please end my misery."

If the PCs stop to dispatch the poor soldier, he asks for one favor. He requests, as a dying wish, that the PCs kill Mistress Gisella for having done this to him. If the PCs inquire as to her whereabouts, he points them in the right direction and explains that he offered her help and she beat him right then and there and left him for dead.

SCREAMING AND PANIC

As the PCs finally approach the gate, they come to a narrow street with no egress except down at the end. This leads directly to the town gate. Several of the buildings on the street are on fire. At the end of the street are some townspeople huddled

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together. The PCs have two choices; they can proceed down the street towards the townspeople and gate or turn back and start again. If the PCs turn back, the number of random encounters increases with a check every 1 minute. The streets are getting crowded. If the PCs proceed down the street, once they are halfway to the townspeople, a building behind them will collapse in flames, effectively blocking their way back.

A narrow lane stretches away before it turns and exits onto the square at the gate. The houses and shops are crammed tightly together as with much the rest of the town. Doors are thrown open and several buildings are burning. Fiery arrows arc overhead, racing through the snow to find random targets. Down the lane, a dozen or so townspeople have gathered and are animatedly discussing which way to go.

There are a dozen townspeople at the end of the street. They have gathered there because they cannot go any further and had not headed back into town to seek another way out. Enemy troops have gathered at the gate preventing any further movement. As soon as the PCs make their way down the street and do not move in a threatening manner, the townspeople gather around them imploring the PCs for aid. There are 3 adult males, 4 adult women and 5 children under the age of 15.

The townspeople gather around the PCs and implore them to help them leave the city before it is overrun and they are killed. They get in front of the PCs, grab them and in general beg and cry and yell and scream in panic.

If the PCs agree to help them, the townspeople get very close to them and follow them. The three men all pick up clubs or debris to use as weapons as soon as the PCs show up. Several of the women will do so as well. The children huddle at the feet of the PCs and the other adults. If the PCs choose not to help the townspeople and hurry past, they follow close behind.

The townspeople can cause a host of small irritating problems if allowed to do so. Since they hug so close to the PCs, movement is halved. They can also cause the PCs to drop items and not pay attention to their surroundings. Once on the move or when faced by enemy troops, the children literally grab the legs of their potential saviors causing them to have a -1 to all rolls to hit, damage and saving throws. Spellcasting is nearly impossible with children or others grabbing onto the spell-caster. If a spell-caster has someone in their way or is being held, grabbed or otherwise pestered, they must make a dexterity check to cast a spell if it requires somatic movements. A wisdom check is required if the spell requires verbal components.

But by far the most dangerous problem the townspeople could cause is if they scatter when faced by the Zjerd. If the PCs have not agreed to help them, the townspeople begin to scatter immediately after rounding the corner. In this case it is possible the PCs will try to save the townspeople and become scattered themselves, thereby making them easier targets.

TOWNSPEOPLE, 12 *(These are non-class NPCs of various races whose vital stats are: HP 1-6 and AC 10-11. They have*

no primary attribute or stats. They attack with a +0 to hit and cause 1-2 damage unless using a specific weapon. They carry a variety of goods ranging in value from 1-20sp.)

PART THREE

The townspeople in the previous encounter either travel with the characters or follow closely behind the PCs hoping to receive some protection from them. There is little the PCs can do to allay this short of killing or beating one of them. If the PCs agreed to help them, the townspeople literally huddle right beside the PCs, hampering their movement and slowing them down.

As the PCs round the bend in the street, they come upon a town square with a gatehouse at the far end. The gatehouse is half ablaze and there are a dozen or more Zjerd in the square. Six are pulling on a rope attached to a statue while the others cheer them on. There are several other streets that empty into the square. The doors to the gatehouse are open.

Rounding the turn in the road, the square in front of the gatehouse becomes visible. In the center of the square is a large statue of a man holding a spear up and pointing to the sky. There is a rope attached to the statue and six soldiers are yanking on the rope. The statue is teetering and looks likely to fall over. A gatehouse beyond is half ablaze. The ceiling, constructed of wooden planks is belching up flames and black smoke. Gathered around the square are half dozen or more soldiers.

There are 20 Zjerd in and around the square. Several of them are gathered around the statue with four of them yanking on the rope. Four Zjerd are looking up one street, one is mounted on a coyote and yelling obscenities into the gatehouse while four are in the gatehouse just having given chase to Gisella. Being focused on their current endeavors, none of the Zjerd is paying any attention to the PCs. One Zjerd, carrying a large staff with many feathers dangling from it is near the one on the coyote. He is the first to spot the PCs. The rest are placed as the CK desires.

The townspeople react to the situation in a variety of ways and depending on how the PCs act. At first they huddle with the PCs hoping to cross the square with them. If the PCs attack outright, the townspeople follow closely behind them hoping the fight ends quickly. This ends in disaster for some as the Zjerd turn to attack the townspeople as well as the PCs. Many then scatter while the children gather at the PCs feet. The men try to join in the fray but do nothing helpful other than absorbing blows and bringing the attention of the Zjerd upon themselves. Those who scatter quickly fall under the sword of one or the other Zjerd.

If the PCs make a break straight for the gatehouse, they avoid the attention of some of the Zjerd for a few rounds as they try to figure out what to do. Though the PCs are armed they do not appear to part of the city's defense. However, the Zjerd sergeant on the coyote near the gatehouse rounds on the PCs and calls for an attack, though he himself does not attack.

In the ensuing melee there should be a great deal of confusion. None of the Zjerd is prepared for an attack or fights at the moment and is preoccupied with other activities. This results in a rather disorganized attack on the PCs. Further confusing the situation is the role of the townspeople. By lingering, clinging, running about and other panic driven activities, they can distract or cause the PCs to scatter. The Zjerd also take advantage of unarmed townspeople and kill them.

Importantly, inside the gatehouse, Gisella has thrown down an amulet that has turned into a therafund (see monster at end of module). The therafund is currently attacking the four soldiers in the gatehouse. After the PCs act, within 5 rounds two of the soldiers come running out followed by the therafund who is aflame. The Zjerd sergeant on horseback, who will have turned as soon as the PCs engage in combat, will either go for the therafund or the PCs (50% for which one). The therafund randomly attacks whoever is closest and ravages anyone and everyone until killed.

ZJERD, 16 (These chaotic evil humanoid's vital stats are HD 1d6, HP variable, AC13 and Move 30. Their primary attributes are physical. They carry short swords, small crossbows, wear reinforced leather armor and carry 1-6 gp worth of valuables.)

ZJERD SERGEANT, 2 (These chaotic evil humanoid's vital stats are HD 2d8, HP variable, AC 16 and Move 30. Their primary attributes are physical. They carry short swords, short bows, wear mail armor, shield and carry 2-10 gp worth of valuables.)

ZJERD SUBCHIEF, MOUNTED (These chaotic evil humanoid's vital stats are HD 4d8, HP 16, AC 16 and Move 30. Their primary attributes are physical. His significant attribute is dexterity 17. They carry short swords, short bows, wear mail armor, shield and carry 16 gp worth of valuables.

COYOTE, MOUNT (This creature's vital stats are HD 2d6, HP 10, AC 13 and Move 40. Their primary attributes are physical. They attack by biting for 1-4 damage. Their special abilities are trip and scent.)

ZJERD SHAMAN (This creature's vital statistics are HD 3d8, HP 23, AC 16, and Move 30. Its primary attributes are mental. Its significant attribute is wisdom 13. He carries a mace, a +3 staff usable only by izdrid shamans that grants a +2 bonus to AC and deals 2-12 points of damage per strike, wears a chain shirt and has 25gp worth of gem and jewelry on his person. The staff has a value to collectors of 1000gp. Burning the staff as an offer to the firmin gains the person who decided to burn it 2000xp. He can cast as a 3rd level cleric. Spells (4/2/1): 0 – create detect magic, first aid, darkness x2. 1 – bless x2. 2 – hold person.)

THERAFUND (This neutral deeneert's vital stats are HD 5d10, HP 42 and AC 14. Its prime attributes are physical. It attacks with 2 hooves for 1-8 damage each and a bite for 4-16 damage. Its special ability is gnaw, sudden strike and guttural roar.)

GATEHOUSE

The gatehouse is a large square block. The lower portion is constructed of a stone exterior and wood interior. The upper floor is constructed entirely of wood. There are a few arrow slits on the upper floor. A central gate with doors flung wide open is framed by two wood block houses. The upper portion of the gatehouse is on fire.

The gatehouse is a large square building. The lower portion is constructed of stone and the upper of wood. The upper floor is engulfed in flame, brilliantly lit by a backdrop of white snow. The gates are flung open and black acrid smoke belches out of it like someone opened the gates of hell.

The gatehouse is described in greater detail below.

ROOM 1

This is the entry hallway. Large wooden doors are placed at both ends of it. These doors are now open. The hallway is nearly 200 feet long. Smoke is filling it.

The gatehouse hallway is large and open. The exterior walls are made of stone but the interior walls are constructed of wood. Both the gates to the hall are open. There is one wooden door on either side of the hall. Half a dozen bodies or more lie on the cobbled floor or are leaning against a wall while wails of the dying echo in the hall.

There is nothing in the hallway of interest other than the weapons of the dead. The doors along the walls lead to Rooms 4 and 5 respectively. Gisella has made her way out by the time the PCs get here. The heat from the burning gatehouse is increasing. The snow falling outside is highlighted at the entry and exit. Creaking timbers and crackling fire indicate that the gatehouse is in an imminent state of collapse.

ROOM 2

This room was used as a guard room. The upper portion was made of wood and is now on fire. The interior is just catching fire.

Timbers from the burning roof are falling into the room catching the floor ablaze. A table with bread and cheese on it, chairs, cups scattered on the floor and several bodies are in here.

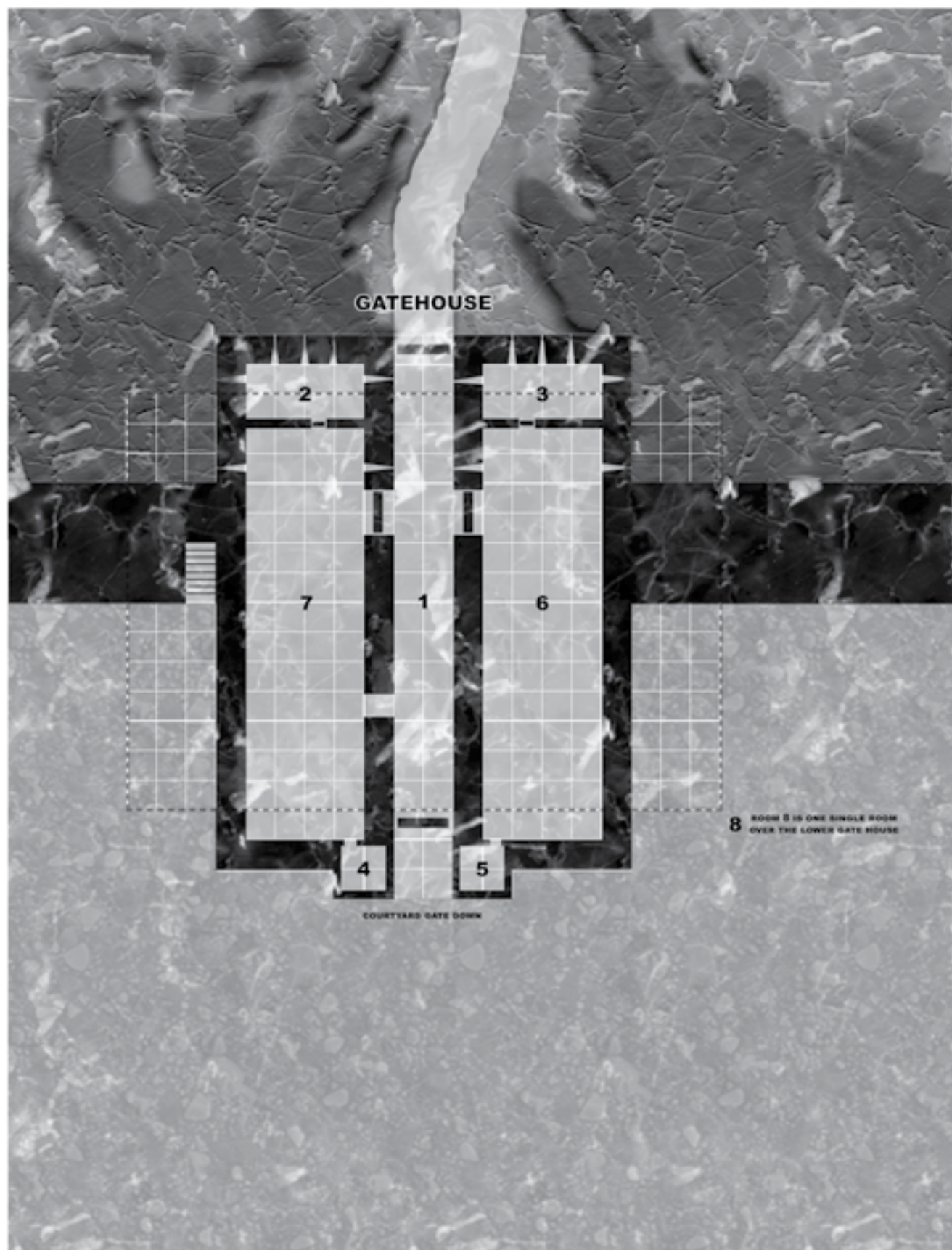
Guards sat in here during the day to watch the gates. A stash of polearms that hasn't yet caught on fire is against the far wall.

ROOM 3

This is a guard's room. No one is in here now.

The room is square with a stout wooden door broken off its hinge. An overturned table with a body slumped over it is in the middle of the room. The corpse is still holding a crossbow. A pile of bolts lies on the floor next to the body.

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Nothing in this room except normal living material such as cups, food, plates, jug of water, etc.

ROOM 4

This is a stone block house attached to the gatehouse.

This is a small stone blockhouse attached to the gatehouse. Four arrow slits are located in the walls.

This is a single story room. One body is inside on the floor. Three crossbows are lined against the wall and over 100 bolts can be found in a bucket. There is a cask of water in here as well.

ROOM 5

This room is identical to room 4 and Castle Keepers should use the room 4 description above for this room. However, the soldier in this room is alive. Young and scared, he is huddled against the wall pretending to be dead hoping to make an escape.

FRIENDLY TROOP *(This is a neutral, human 1st level fighter whose vital stats are: HP 3 (5 max) and AC 10. His primary attributes are strength, constitution and dexterity. His vital stat is dexterity 14. He attacks with a short sword for 1-6 damage. He wears bowman's smock and has 2gp on his person.)*

ROOM 6

This room was used to store weapons, house horses, sleeping and weapon's practice. The ceiling is about to collapse.

The doors to this room are open. Just inside the door are half a dozen corpses with blood pooling on the floor. Beyond is an overturned rack of polearms. A dozen cots and makeshift beds are lined against another wall. There are several small tables, overturned chairs, pots, pans and other accouterments of a soldier's life scattered about. Smoke puffs from between the boards of the ceiling. The heat coming from within is immense. The steps leading up to Room 8 are burned to a crisp.

The door is tall and wide enough to fit two horses. Both doors swing inward. The only things of value in this room are the polearms and the few pouches of coin left on the soldiers on the floor. The polearms are of various makes and types but generally falling into the guisarme family or fouchard hooks. Two of the soldiers have pouches on them. One has 12sp the other 21sp.

The ceiling is about to collapse. The heat and fire from upstairs, combined with a faulty crossbeam have made it such that the ceiling is very weak. Once a PC enters the room, give them 2-8 rounds before the ceiling collapses. If it collapses, the PCs inside must make a dexterity check or be hit by falling debris. Success indicates they have not been hit. Failure results in 1d6 points of debris damage and 1d6 points of fire damage. Further, there is a 50% chance that the beams fell across the doorway blocking the exit. Getting out requires a strength check to move the timbers and a dexterity save versus heat damage. Failure causes 1-2 points of damage.

ROOM 7

This room is used for eating, cooking, storage of confiscated goods, food and sundries. A small fire pit and anvil for blacksmith work is also located in here.

The doors to this room are open. Beyond is a very large, overturned table. Chairs are scattered about the room. A pile of boxes and crates are stored against one wall while at the other end of the room is a fireplace with bellows and an anvil. All about this are shelves and racks and stands for a smithy. Two dying soldiers are in the room, both crying out in pain. Steps located at the end of the room lead up to Room 8.

This room was used for eating, food storage and the smithy. There is nothing of value in here (that can be easily ported anyway). One of the crates at the end of the room contains jerky and another has big rounds of cheese in it. Both are fairly fresh and can be used as rations.

The soldiers crying out in pain are not mortally wounded, just severely hurt. If possible and if offered aid, they leave with the PCs. They go as far as the woods if the PCs allow, but will take some convincing to enter the monastery.

FRIENDLY TROOP *(These are neutral, human 1st level fighters whose vital stats are: HP 3 and 4 and AC 10. Their primary attributes are strength, constitution and dexterity. Their vital stats are constitution 14 and dexterity 14. They attack with short swords for 1-6 damage. They wear a bowman's smock and have 1gp on their persons.)*

ROOM 8

This room is primarily for look out and attacking incoming troops with missile weapons. It is nearly engulfed with flames.

This large room is nearly engulfed in flame. The roof is on fire, most of the walls and even the floor. Pieces of timber are cracking and falling off. Arrow slits can be seen on the walls facing into and out of the city. There is a rack of spears and a barrel of bolts by the steps which have not been touched by the flame.

If the PCs enter here through Room 7 they can grab the goods by the steps without any problem. Going much further into the room is deadly. The floor over Room 6 will collapse if it has not done so already. If the PCs decide to enter here, the ceiling and floor will collapse within 2-8 rounds. In that short time, if a PC peers out an arrow slit they can just catch the last glimpse of Gisella running into the forest's edge. Should the floor collapse, a CL5 dexterity check would need to be made. Failure indicates 3-30 points of damage with a save only halving that. It would take 3-60 rounds to extricate anyone from the debris during which time they would take 2-8 points of damage per round. Those extricating others from the debris would have to make a dexterity check every round. Failure indicates 1-3 points of damage.

PART FOUR

THROUGH THE SNOW

In this, the finale of the adventure, the PCs track Gisella to an abandoned monastery where she intends to cast a spell and open up a gate to another place and thus make good her escape with the book of potions. The PCs must track her through the snow, fight their way past a few guardians and navigate a trap or two. Once cornered, they must confront Gisella and defeat her, either by retrieving the book, killing her, or through other means the PCs may devise.

Once beyond the gatehouse, the snow falls in thick, huge, flakes in a swirling wind. It is almost blinding in its whiteness. The PCs can easily follow the tracks through the snow but must do so hastily or the tracks will be covered up. The tracks can be covered in about 10 minutes, becoming indistinguishable from the surrounding indentions and very difficult to follow.

Outside the city gate there is nothing but snow and wind. The swirling snow descends like a blanket in blinding and cold whirlwinds. Movement is difficult, not so much because of the snow, rather, due to the swirling winds and mass of soft mud beneath the snow. The mud becomes slippery as the snow piles faster than it can melt. The trail left in the snow is rapidly being buried.

Tracking Gisella is easy should the PCs give immediate pursuit. However, with the snow falling so quickly, swirling about and piling up, the PCs must act with haste. For each 10 minutes delay, a track check must be made at CL1 for rangers and CL3 for non-rangers. This is cumulative. If no delay occurs, the PCs can track Gisella's movement easily.

Within a few minutes, the sound of the clamor in the city fades with only the bells ringing in the wind. All that remains is the whirling of the wind and the crunching and sloshing of the PCs through the snow. At an average pace, in about 30 minutes, the PCs leave the fields surrounding the city and wander into the evergreen forest. The tracks lead on through the woods for about two hours until a barely discernible trail opens up. Once on the trail, Gisella's tracks show the direction she went. Within another mile, the PCs round a corner and come across the remains of a large stone structure.

MONASTERY OF TODEN

The monastery has not been used in the two centuries since the worshipers of Toden were obliterated and driven from the region. All that remains of their once popular worship is this crumbling edifice and the few creatures that have snuck back in recent years. Gisella is a secret worshiper of Toden and the creatures that live here now are loyal to her and obey her commands. Gisella is attempting to get into the lower room below the monastery. There, she attempts to open a portal to another area where the worshipers of Toden are more numerous and powerful.

Before you, blurred by swirling snow, is a series of massive and thick stone columns. At first they appear a little discordant and unorganized in nature but upon second glance a pattern emerges from the crumbling structures. They are placed in a radial pattern and spreading out toward the periphery. Most of the columns have been knocked over and are covered in vegetation and snow. Large slabs of rock are scattered on the ground where once was a stone floor. The wind blows in quiet whispers and is accompanied only the sound of a wood owl hooting his displeasure at the snow.

Unknown to the PCs, once they are within 200 feet of the monastery, they are spied by an owl. The owl is old and sits in the crook of a tree. It begins hooting as soon as it sees the PCs. The owl has effectively informed Gisella that someone else is in the complex or at least nearby. Though Gisella initially wanted to rest a night before casting her spell to escape, she assumes at this point that she is being followed (if she does not know already) and rushes to the well. The hooting also alerts other creatures living in or nearby the monastery who may come to the aid Gisella or investigate the disturbance. The longer the owl hoots the more creatures that come to Gisella's aid.

If the PCs search for the owl, it takes 2-6 rounds for rangers and druids to locate it. Other classes require 3-7 rounds. The owl is high up in a tree nestled between two branches. It is old and can barely fly anymore. For each round it hoots roll a d6 and consult the Toden Monastery Monster Chart below. That creature arrives within 7-12 minutes and attacks the PCs in the most advantageous manner possible, though in some cases they simply offer a distraction. Each wandering monster can only be used once. After all three are used, no more arrive.

OWL (This animal's vital stats are HD 2d4, HP3, AC 14. It has no primary attributes or attacks)

TABLE 3: TODEN MONASTERY MONSTER CHART

D6	ENCOUNTER	NO. ENCOUNTERED
1-2	Wolf	2-4
3-4	Bear	1-2
5-6	Zwetter rorer	1

WOLF, 2-4 (These neutral animals vital stats are HD 2d8, HP 2-16, AC 13 and Move 50. Their prime attributes are physical. They attack with a bite for 1-8 damage. Their special abilities are trip, scent, twilight vision and tracking.)

BEAR, 1-2 (These neutral animals vital stats are HD 3d8, HP 3-24, AC 13 and Move 40. Their prime attributes are physical. They attack with a bite for 1-8 damage and two claws for 1-6 damage each. Its special ability is hug.)

ZWETTER RORER 1 (This neutral animals vital stats are HD 5d8, HP 27, AC 15 and Move 40. Its prime attributes are physical. It attacks with a bite for 1-10 damage and two claws for 1-4 damage. Its special ability is rake.)

COLUMNS

The columns around the central structure are placed in a radial pattern much like the arms of a spiral galaxy. They converge on the monastery's main building. The few columns that are intact are roughly 60 feet tall and 6 feet in circumference. They are all covered in engravings, writings and glyphs often invoking the name Toden and portraying some mythical event. The vast majority of the columns have collapsed or been pulled over and marred when the monastery was attacked. The fallen columns offer quite an obstacle to movement.

If the PCs are still able to track Gisella, they can navigate the columns easily as she has paved a way before and been here many dozens of times. If not tracking Gisella, the PCs spend a lot of time figuring out how to get through the columns. This takes approximately 15 minutes to get to the central structure, during which time a wandering monster may encounter the party.

ROOM 1: CENTRAL STRUCTURE

In the center of the columns are the remains of a massive round structure with a domed roof stretching nearly one hundred feet into the sky. Fully one half of the structure has collapsed in upon itself into a heap of rubble. The arch where the doorway was located is still standing. A small round antechamber is visible to one side. Gisella has entered the temple complex and is aware of the PCs presence. She is making her way down to the lower levels to begin casting her spell.

Once clear of the jumble of columns, a large domed structure can be seen. Much of the structure has long since collapsed but its original appearance can be made out. Here is a massive round building with a domed roof, its apex fifty feet above the ground. An arched doorway faces out and several smaller round rooms or apertures are attached to the main building like pine cones to a tree.

Much of the original structure has collapsed. Nearly half the dome lies in rubble on the ground, having collapsed inside. Several columns have fallen over into the structure causing even more damage. The ravages of wind, rain, snow, frost and time have taken their toll as well. These have obscured and eroded the details of much of the structure. Bushes, trees, vines and grass clumps litter the interior as nature is taking the structure back to the earth from whence it came.

From the map, one can tell the original shape of the structure. There were statues lining the wall at one time but these were all pulled down and crushed when the monastery was attacked. The floor is flagstone and was once colored in elaborate green and blue patterns. This is barely discernible at this point. Three of the vestibules have been destroyed or collapsed and are covered in vegetation.

The interior is very difficult to navigate due to all the rubble and vegetation. By staying on the track that Gisella left, it is easier. If off the track, the PCs movement suffers. They can only move at one-quarter their normal pace. Also, any quick

activities such as melee require the PCs to make a dexterity check or slip and fall. This occurs on each round.

ROOM 2: VESTIBULE

This vestibule is still relatively intact.

This is a small round room with a domed roof. A sarcophagus is in the center of the room. The face and body and name have been obliterated and a portion crushed. Nothing else is left in this in this room except some rubble, brown clumps of dead vegetation and ivies clinging to the walls.

This room was once used to hold reliquaries. The sarcophagus in the center is a likeness of the person to whom the artifacts once belonged. It is not really a sarcophagus. It is one large block of stone carved to look like a sarcophagus.

There is nothing of any value left in the room. If the walls are inspected and the vegetation cleared, there are very faint and only barely discernible paintings on the wall. These are incomplete as time and the elements and vegetation has destroyed most of it. If a druid is present, they can make an intelligence check to reveal the basic meaning of the painting. The painting depicts a famous scene where Toden descends to his followers and gives a gift of longevity to one of his loyal followers.

ROOM 3: VESTIBULE

This room, like all the vestibules was used to hold reliquaries.

This is a small round room with a domed roof with a large gaping hole in the center. A sarcophagus is in the center of the room but it has been moved to one side to reveal a staircase leading down into darkness. The carvings atop the sarcophagus have been destroyed as well as a portion of the sarcophagus itself. Nothing else is left in this in this room except some rubble, brown clumps of dead vegetation and ivies clinging to the walls.

This vestibule housed reliquaries at one time. They have been removed and destroyed. The sarcophagus was likewise defaced though never moved when initially conquered. This happened nearly a century later when a group of priests and others entered the monastery to clear it of beasts which they wrongly believed lived here; that only happened later. Beneath it is a stair leading down. This was a secret entrance to a well chamber and sacred spring. This is where Gisella has gone. A damp, cool and musty air wafts up from below.

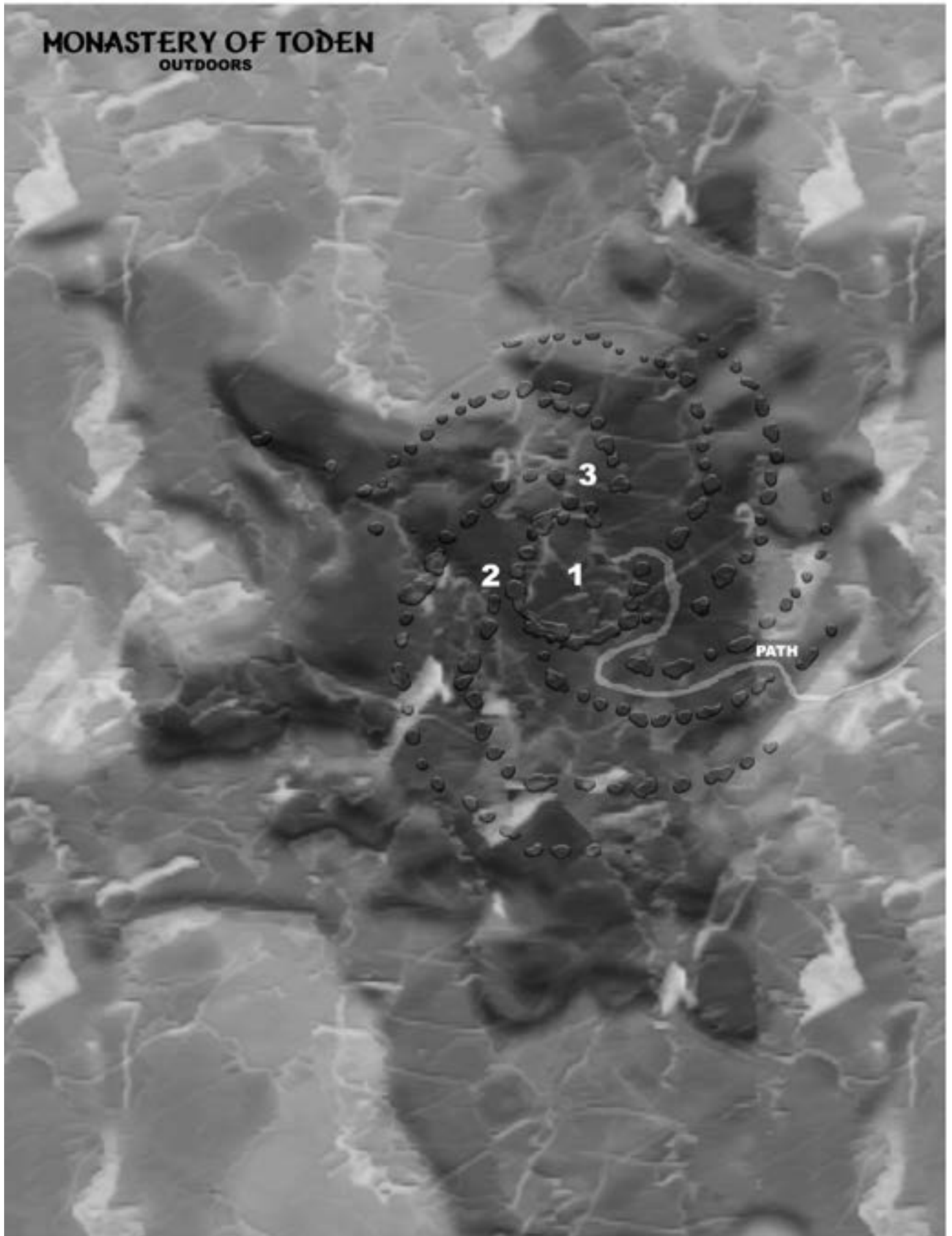
ROOM 4: STAIRCASE

The staircase leading down is very slippery. Years and years of use have worn it smooth. The damp underground and small amounts of oxygen allowed in have encouraged algae to grow on the steps. Care must be taken when descending or ascending. The steps go down into the earth some 50 feet, twisting every 10 feet. The tunnel is only 3 and a half feet wide and 6 feet tall. It is cramped.

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MONASTERY OF TÖDEN

OUTDOORS



The steps are smooth, slick and eerily dark. The tunnel down which you descend is pitch black, tiny and steep.

Any quick movements on the stairs like running or fighting require a CL3 dexterity check or the person slips and falls. A CL3 save versus damage is required. Success indicates nothing except falling prone while failure indicates the person is prone and takes 1-2 points of damage.

ROOM 5

This room contained the remains of the dead. The higher order priests were all immolated and their ashes placed in urns. The urns were stored in this room.

The steps open up onto a long and wide room with a double vaulted ceiling. Two rows of elaborately carved alabaster columns extend the length of the room. For the entire length of the walls there are small niches about eighteen inches high and twelve inches wide. The floor is littered with a lot of broken ceramic and piles and piles of broken jars. Mixed in with this are mounds of fine dust. A door is located on either side of the room and another across the room.

This room contained the remains of the dead. The urns, which were all shattered a century ago, lie in pieces on the floor. The ashes of the dead are mixed and mingled together. There is nothing left in this room of any value.

However, the ashes of the dead can now sense the presence of the PCs. They are unwanted here and will coalesce into 1-4 Ash Wardens (see monster at end of module) if the PCs remain in the room for more than five rounds.

ASH WARDEN, 1-4 *(These neutral undead creature's vital stats are HD 3D6, HP variable and AC special. Their primary attributes are physical. Their special abilities are ash swirl, buffet, improved grab, immunity to weapons, and resistance to magic.)*

ROOM 6

The hallway that leads to this room is long and narrow. The room contains a holy tree that Gisella has used in the past. She neglected to go to it in haste to get to the well room.

At the end of the narrow hall is a wrought iron door. It is open and beyond is a small room. There is what appears to be a tree in the center of the room sitting in a shallow bowl of water. It is a small tree with only 3 leaves on it. The leaves glint and sparkle in the light.

This is a holy tree dedicated to Toden. It grows in the water in the bowl. The tree is only 4 feet tall but appears to be very old and gnarled. Several branches grow from it and at the ends are silvery leaves. Three silvery leaves float in the water. The tree has sat here untouched for a century. The people who ransacked this room did not desecrate the tree for fear of offending gods other than Toden.

The leaves of the tree that are floating in water are magical. When taken by any priest, the leaf can be used to cast any spell

that person could cast just by willing that spell to be cast. No components are necessary to cast the spell. The spell cast must be available to the level of that person holding the leaf. As soon as the spell is cast, the leaf dissipates. The holder of the leaf will know intrinsically what it is for. The leaf has to be used within 72 hours.

The tree produces one leaf a week and drops 1-2 a week. They remain in the water for only one week. Moving the bowl, water or tree kills it. Killing it also causes a curse to be laid upon the person who is responsible for its death. For one full year they suffer a -1 penalty to any and all rolls. There is no fixing this curse as it is from the gods.

ROOM 7

This room was once used for study and prayer. When located, everything in it was piled in the center and burned or dragged outside and burned, thus very little remains. However, years ago a deeneert made his home here and left some treasure when he went off on a hunt. The demon was subsequently killed.

This room is long and wide with a slight vault to the ceiling. There is a row of columns down the center. Much of the plaster that once covered the wall has cracked and fallen revealing brick and stone backing. The central area of the room is covered in piles of stone, sticks limbs and other natural debris that has been brought down or blown down over the years.

A minor demon once resided in here. He gathered some small amounts of treasure and stored it in one of the corners. The deeneert left on a hunt one day and never returned. Nothing has bothered his belongings since then, for good reason.

A small chair, a table, small ceramic lamps and a box are found in a corner. Against the wall is a spear with a rotten haft, a shield and a crumpled up set of armor.

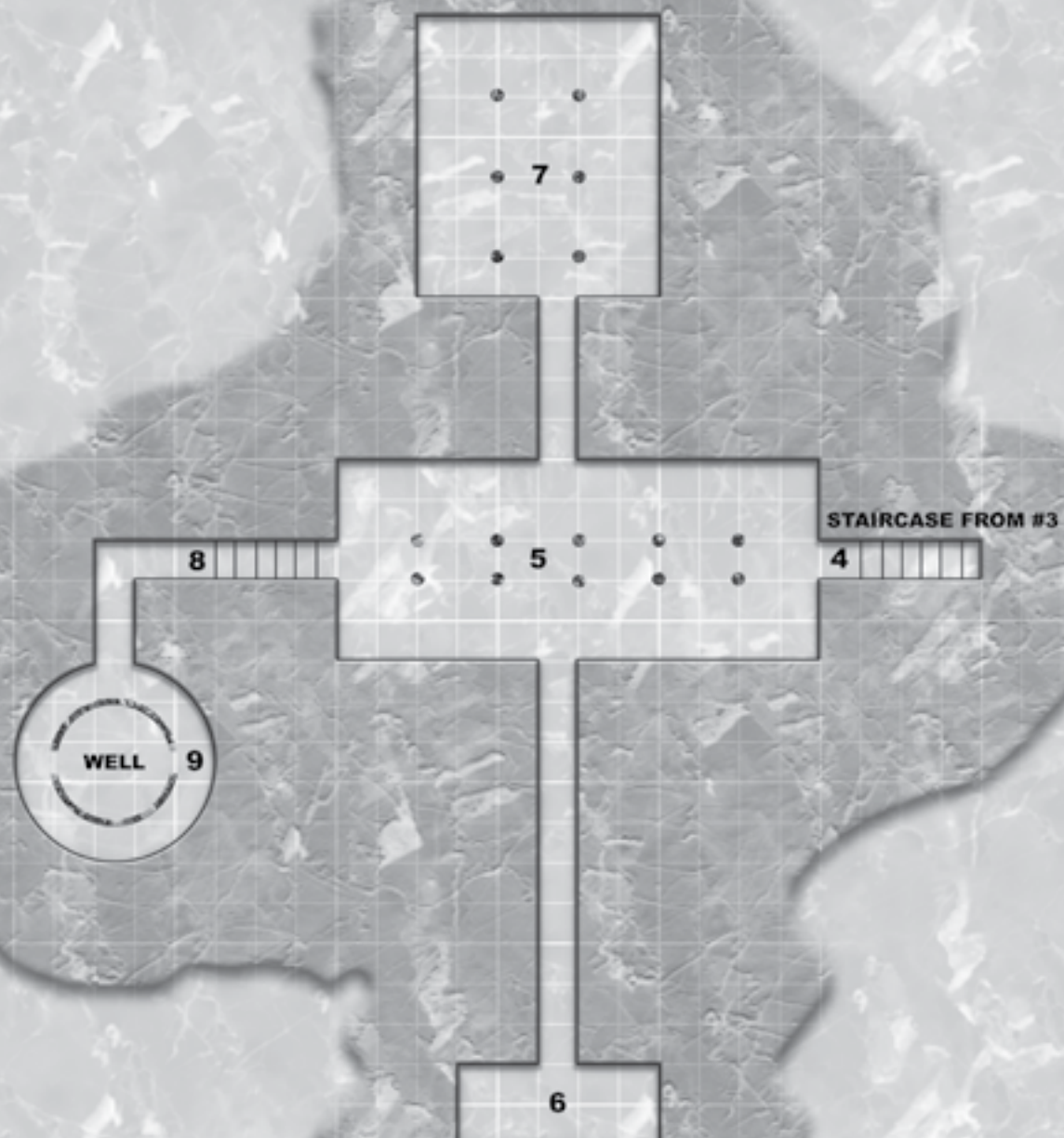
Gisella avoided the place having sensed the demon's lingering odor. If a *detect alignment* spell is cast on the area, the whole corner radiates a small amount of evil. This is little more than demonic residue and a curse the demon left on his prized possession: the silver chalice in the box.

The box contains 200gp in coin, 5 gems set in a necklace (100gp) and a silver chalice (500gp). The chalice has a curse on it. The bearer of the chalice has to make a charisma check every day he carries it with him. If the PC fails the check, there is a 1 in 10 chance that another deeneert will note the PCs presence and that it has taken a valuable item from a fellow deeneert. Thus, the deeneert seeks revenge by summoning a shadow to find the PC and kill them. This happens until the chalice is cast aside or somehow gotten rid of. One shadow a month can be sent after the possessor of the chalice.

The spear against the wall is magical as well. However, the shaft is rotted and will fall apart under stress. The blade of the spear is still useful though and can be placed on a new shaft. It is +1 to hit and causes +3 to damage. The crumpled armor is not magical. This is a set of well made, studded leather armor. The

16 CASTLES & CRUSADES

DUNGEON BENEATH MONASTERY OF TÖDEN



studs are tiny gems (though cheap). The armor has rotted over time and cannot be repaired but the gems are worth 400gp if collected.

ROOM 8

This staircase leads down to Room 9 where Gisella is located. It is identical to the staircase in room 4 and Castle Keepers can read the description of room 4 here.

As soon as the PCs enter the staircase, a countdown begins. Gisella begins casting her spell. It takes 5 rounds for the spell to complete allowing her to jump into the well and be teleported elsewhere. However, one round in and the spell is activated and the well itself works to protect Gisella. It takes 1 round to get down the steps.

ROOM 9

Again, as soon as the PCs enter the tunnel with the steps in it and begin the final descent to the well room, the countdown to Gisella's spell begins. The PCs must act with haste as they can hear her chanting. Going down the steps takes one round if there are no delays.

Before you is a large room in the center of which is well with swirling water in it. It bubbles at the edge. There is a ten foot lip around the well and on the far side is Gisella. She is howling out some sound that mixes both the whirling wind and sloshing water. It is an unearthly and unnerving sound that reverberates between the walls.

Gisella has 4 rounds to finish the spell. During each of those rounds, she can will the water from the well to act in her defense without breaking her concentration. If Gisella's concentration has not been disturbed by round 5, the spell is successful and the portal in the well opens. Gisella then simply dives in and is gone. If any PC dives in after her, they just dive into a pool of water. The *bowl of summoning water elementals* is all that is left.

The following are the spells she can use without breaking her concentration; *spiritual weapon* (like a fist of water), *control water*, *shield of faith* (wall of water), *entangle* (but with water), *wall of wind* (water) and *quench*. It is best left up to the CK to decide which combination of spells is best used.

Gisella may have time to prepare more defenses from her retinue of spells, though she has used up most of her spells before getting to the monastery. Minimally she would have used the *ring of chameleon power* to help conceal her location and placed the *bowl of summoning water elementals* out in case needed.

If the spell is broken, Gisella fights the PCs for a round or two. Unless she is winning, she realizes the futility of the fight and attempts to surrender. This is a genuine surrender. Gisella throws herself at the mercy of the PCs and explains her past and what she was doing in the area. She does not want to be returned to any of the locals for punishment for, Gisella explains, she will certainly be executed. She then offers the PCs the book of potions and whatever else they want except the cloak. She asks that she be able to keep that with the onset of winter.

Further, Gisella briefly explains the history of the worship of Toden in this area to the PCs. Toden is the Lord of the Dead or the Tearful One and resides in the world and gathers the essence of all man whom Heimdel does not call. These are deposited in the Pools of Fate and Woe beneath Mount Nistor. He is called by fire and flame throughout the world. Importantly, here, the son of the man who founded the city, Indroff Fulssinad, died in a most despicable and cowardly manner. Indroff attempted to force the priests of Toden who resided at the monastery to perform a ritual whereby Toden would not take his son, thus forcing Heimdel to take him to the Final Battle. Most disobeyed and refused to even bother. The few who were fearful of reprisal attempted the ritual. The results were that the body would not set aflame. Indroff's son was doomed to wander the world after he died as neither Toden nor Heimdel would accept him.

Indroff, in a spate of anger, hired some mercenaries and laid waste to the monastery and those he found there. The survivors that abandoned the area have yet to return many decades later. Indroff himself and the mercenaries he hired to take part in the raid were cursed in the same manner as his son. However, the lingering fear of reprisal from the sons of those who died in such a manner has prevented the worshipers of Toden from coming back to the region. They are few in number anyway.

If Gisella escapes, there is little the PCs can do to find her unless they have some manner of crossing the portal in time to locate her or find her location some thousand or so miles away. She holds no ill will towards PCs and is only intent on reviving the worship of Toden. It may be that she returns here years in the future or the PCs find her again. No earth-shattering event occurs.

WRAP UP

Depending on how the PCs treated with Gisella and Leon at the tower, the adventure can end in several different ways. What does not change is that the city has been overrun and sacked. Many of its inhabitants have been killed by the end of the day and those that survived are being rounded up, ignored or otherwise beleaguered. The city is being looted. This may offer an opportunity for adventure as the commander of the invading army has lost control of his troops and a drunken revelry is under way.

If Leon survived Part One, he has followed the PCs to the monastery. He arrives on horseback. He is angry but has much greater concerns on his mind than Gisella's theft. Leon explains the situation and asks what happened to Gisella and the book. If offered the book, Leon refuses it as it is of no use to him. He suggests the PCs sell it or put it to some other good use. Leon asks a favor of money and perhaps a night's rest. If the cat survived, it travels with Leon. It creeps off into the night or otherwise disappears shortly after meeting the PCs. Leon eventually goes his own way. The only other option is, should the PCs be disposed, Leon offers his services and the cat may just find a magic user or other party member a useful companion as a younger and more fit recreation of itself as a familiar.

18 CASTLES & CRUSADES

NEW MONSTERS

ASH WARDEN

NO. ENCOUNTERED: 1-8

SIZE: Medium

HD: 3d6

MOVE: 40 feet

AC: See below

ATTACKS: Special

SPECIAL: Ash Swirl, Buffet, Immunity (Weapons), Improved Grab, Resistance (Magic)

SAVES: P

INT: Low

ALIGNMENT: Neutral

TYPE: Undead

TREASURE: 4

XP: 85+3

The Ash Warden is a rare undead creature. When the ashes of the dead are disturbed from a restful slumber it is possible that the ash can act as a vengeful spirit to anything that comes near the area where the ash is located. When disturbed, the ash warden coalesces into an ashen cloud and attempts to kill everything that it can within 100 feet or more of its originating point.

Ash wardens only manifest when the burial chamber or urn or device containing the ash is disturbed and removed from where it was placed after death. The ash must also be in a temple or very close to, or in, holy and sacred ground.

Once disturbed, the ash becomes a guardian of that area attacking all who enter its area. The ash forms in 1-4 rounds and then attacks whoever is nearby.

COMBAT: Once the ash warden forms it will attempt to use its buffet to persuade victims to leave the area. If the buffet isn't successful, the creature attempts to grab a victim and suffocate it with its ash swirl.

ASH SWIRL: One round after a successful improved grab, the victim automatically begins to suffocate as the ash warden's substance is forced through mouth and nostrils. The victim can survive a number of rounds equal to one half its constitution score. Each round, the victim's physical attributes are reduced by a number of points equal to 25% of the original score, rounding down. Victims can be pulled away from the ash warden upon a successful touch attack followed by a successful strength attack from the rescuer.

BUFFET: The ash warden can swirl violently for two rounds. At the end of this time it releases a burst of energy that causes 1-3 points of damage to all targets within 10 feet of the ash warden. All targets then suffer the effects of a *fear* spell as if cast by a 5th-level wizard.

IMMUNITY (WEAPONS): A melee weapon, magical or otherwise, used on an ash warden simply passes through the creature without doing any damage.

IMPROVED GRAB: After successfully attacking twice with this ability on the third attempt the ash warden must make a successful strength attack to hold the victim in place. If the attack is successful the victim begins suffering the effects of the creature's ash swirl. Victims held cannot move, but are permitted a strength check each round to try and break free from the creature's grip.

RESISTANCE (MAGIC): An ash warden is immune to all magic except as follows. Spells or effects which cause fast or violent movement of the air, e.g. *gust of wind* will force the ash warden to dissipate until the spell's effect expires. As with other types of undead, cure spells cast by a cleric will damage the creature as will holy water.

THERAFUND

NO. ENCOUNTERED: 1

SIZE: Large

HD: 5d10

MOVE: 40 feet

AC: 14

ATTACKS: 2 hooves (1-8), bite (4-16)

SPECIAL: Gnaw, Guttural Roar, Sudden Strike, Vulnerability (Magic)

SAVES: none

INT: Low

ALIGNMENT: Neutral

TYPE: Beast

TREASURE: 8

XP: 260+5

The therafund are manifestations of the will of Toden, The Tearful One. These creatures usually only appear to gather the dead who have not been immolated. Priests can call upon them to serve them in times of need but need a fire to do so. Otherwise, if Toden, his servants or a priest are aware of a human who has died, a therafund is sent to consume the corpse. Priests who pay special heed to Toden occasionally have access to the therafund as a servant.

The therafund is a large quadruped with cloven hooves and a broad body covered in thick white and red hair. The red hair, when the therafund enters battle, bristles and sticks up giving it the appearance of being aflame. The head of the therafund is long, broad and scaly. Its mouth opens wide and is made up almost entirely of teeth with which gnaw and chew its targets.

COMBAT: A therafund's only purpose is to consume the corpses of the dead. If attacked it uses its guttural roar to scare away its opponents, then attacks with its claws and its bite.

GNAW: If the therafund rolls an unmodified 1 or unmodified 20 on a successful bite attack it can grab an opponent smaller than itself in its jaws. The opponent is entitled to a dexterity saving throw, which if successful frees it immediately from the therafund's jaws. Otherwise, the opponent is held fast in the therafund's jaws as its teeth tear the opponent apart. The teeth deal 4-16 points of damage automatically each round the opponent remains held in the therafund's jaws. The opponent is

entitled to a strength check each round, with success meaning the victim breaks free. If a therafund is gnawing on an opponent it is vulnerable. The creature cannot attack while gnawing, and all attacks against it have a +5 bonus.

GUTTURAL ROAR: The creature's roar acts as a *fear* spell. It may use this once every five rounds except when gnawing on an opponent.

SUDDEN STRIKE: If the therafund is successfully attacked by a melee weapon it may have the opportunity to immediately strike back. Roll a d20. On an unmodified 20 the creature may immediately make an attack against the opponent who struck it, regardless of whether it has used all its attacks or not. This ability cannot be used if the creature is gnawing on an opponent.

VULNERABILITY (MAGIC): Curative magic cast upon a therafund acts as if the spell has been reversed, causing twice the normal damage to the creature instead of healing it.

MAGIC ITEMS

EYE OF SIGHT: The Eye of Sight is a magically enhanced fake eye. It must be placed inside the eye socket of its user to be of any value. Once inserted, the eye provides perfect 20/20 vision to the wearer. It also provides protection of sight to the wearer. The wearer receives a +2 bonus against any magical or natural occurrence that affects normal vision.

THERAFUND TOTEM: This small totem is carved in the shape of a therafund. It allows the holder to summon one therafund at a time. The therafund appears 25 feet from the totem and is not under the control of the summoner but will not attack the summoner. No more than one therafund can be summoned at a time by any single priest of Toden.

SOCKS OF WARMTH: These wool socks warm the wearer by 20 degrees above the outside temperature.



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