

LAMENTATIONS
of the
FLAME PRINCESS
ADVENTURES



Thulian Echoes
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Introduction

So I thought I should probably write an introduction to this adventure because it functions a bit differently. While it is a location based adventure, it is also a time based adventure. It doesn't involve time travel or anything difficult along those lines, but the passage of time is very important to this adventure being used to its fullest.

The adventure happens in two parts. First is what happens when the players stumble upon, buy, loot or otherwise acquire a book and then read it. I want to stress first and foremost this book is not magical in any way; it is a journal. It is specifically the journal of another band of adventures from over a thousand years ago who went to explore a location based adventure. The players are then handed a batch of pre-generated characters and get to play through the events in the journal. Note they are not the same characters transported into the minds of past denizens or any such thing, this is a pure game mechanic based on the assumption it would be more fun to play through the previous ill-fated expedition than listen to the Referee drone on and on about it. This is also important because the location is a pure death trap dungeon that will mercilessly chew up people in cruel ways they often cannot predict until someone has already been killed. This would make for a terrible game on its own, but this is the point of the journal. The players can see what killed these ancient adventurers and then plan their own expedition with the proper tools to succeed where these past adventurers failed. With the right tools for the job it should be easy! And don't fret if players think they are terribly clever by say, stashing all the treasure in one easy to recover space buried under an X. That is the point, let them be smug, because many of the small actions these other adventurers took a thousand plus years ago have far reaching consequences that will screw up the "easy job" the modern PCs had lined up.

Useful Reading (who are we kidding, useful Wikipedia checking):

- ✧ The Siege of Jerusalem
- ✧ *The Journey to the Center of the Earth*
- ✧ *Vril: The Power of the Coming Race*
- ✧ The Shaver Mysteries
- ✧ "Dagon"
- ✧ *At the Mountains of Madness*



The Book

The book itself has a soft leather cover which is an obvious replacement given the brittle pages within. The book itself dates back to the 2nd century AD. Contained within is the tale of a band of adventurers from that era who were investigating a rumour about a wizard who is considered half folk legend: a Greek who lived in Damascus named Xenophon. Some hundred years prior, before fleeing to far off Thule, the wizard had been involved in a heist of a vast fortune of silver in the ensuing chaos when Titus sacked Jerusalem. Often interpreted as a metaphor for money that “magically” disappeared into the pockets of dishonest legionnaires, these adventurers believed it was a literal truth, and it appears they had tracked down the wizard through the hellish Pict countryside and sailed to the desolate isle he had for some reason departed to. They anticipated the difficult part of their journey was largely done and it was time to load up their boat and return to Byzantium, or maybe even Rome itself. What these people consider Thule appears to be a tiny island to the south of Iceland not currently on any existing maps.

Hooks

The nice thing about this adventure is the hook is easy. The PCs find an old book, or are approached by someone looking to hire treasure hunters to retrieve the valuables described within. It is like a pirate treasure map, if you can't find a way for the characters to find a book, and they aren't interested in even reading about getting treasure, they probably aren't adventurers and you should play something else.

Mechanics

The fact that these alternate adventurers are in the past means there is a bit of a “metagame” element that I personally think you should just be upfront about with your players, and who gives a crap if they find a way to “game” the system. That is the point, have fun with it and enjoy it when the players turn to face the camera after breaking the fourth wall. That is going to happen no matter what with this set up.

It also means you can't bring in new characters after the pre-generated characters die. This can be a game problem when someone dies in the first room and the next two sessions “in the past” involves them sitting there with their thumb up their keister. This is where the concept of “lucky breaks” comes in (and stop groaning as this only occurs in “flashback” mode). Count the number of players at the table, and place this many poker chips in the centre. These are “lucky breaks”.

A player can take one of the tokens from the centre of the table after they die to have a “lucky break” and in fact just be knocked out and ignored for the encounter, waking back up at half hit points with a second wind. If this seems like narrativist bullshit, just remember you are actually playing the story your characters are reading in a book so it might just be narrativist bullshit. Maybe the whole thing is lies written by cultists trying to lure the PCs to their Icelandic murder coven. That is an actual possibility, but don't tell the players.

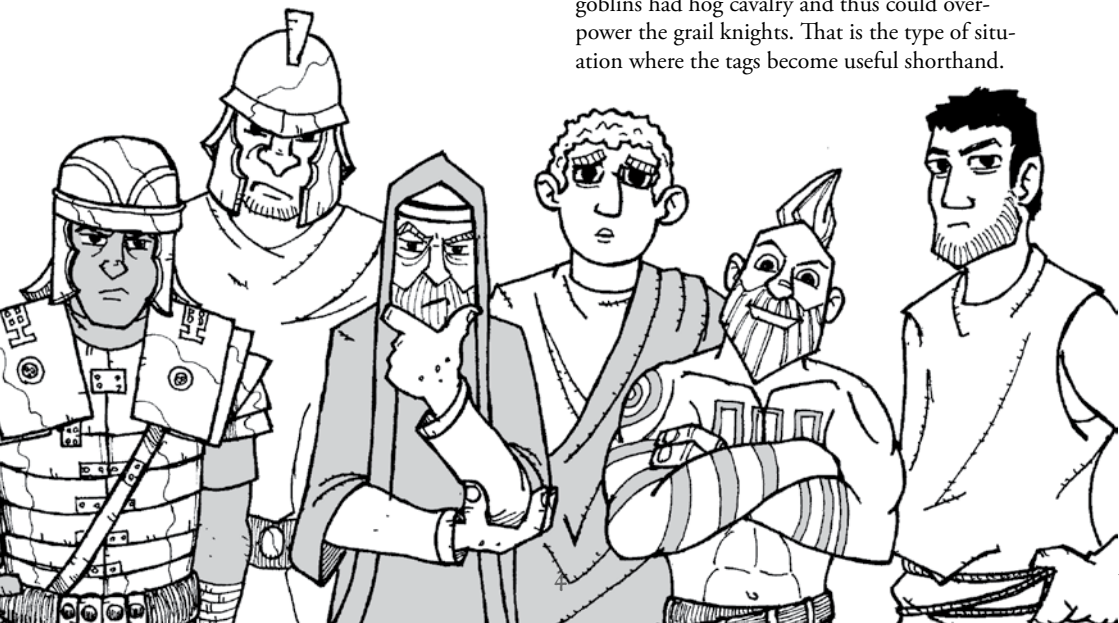
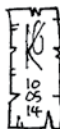


If all the tokens are removed from the centre of the table, the next death by any player character ends the journal entries. The “historical” play stops and we cut back to our modern heroes reading the book in some two-bit tavern.

Likewise if the “historical” party ever loses the book or it is about to be destroyed, the entries automatically cease. If the historical party actually manages through sheer player skill to escape the island with treasure, the journal will describe how as they approached the north end of Scotland, a storm came and they were going to try to take shelter in a secluded inlet. The entries stop, but should the players go to that inlet (there is a map) they will find the untouched sunken ship if they dig around at low tide. They will reap a bounty of treasure as reward for their clever play (unless it is still just the fiction created by a murder coven of course).

Tags or Keywords:

One thing you will notice frequently in the adventure are bolded words that represent ‘tags’ or ‘keywords’. These are just short-hand ways to refer to conditions that are occurring due to the players mucking around with things. For example, if the historical PCs buried goblin eggs on the island, then the adventure might list the **GOBLINS!** Keyword as shorthand to indicate that in the future the island may be infested with goblins. This on its own is neither a time saver nor easier to remember; it is mainly useful when talking about the intersecting influence of multiple ‘tags’. For example, if the island has the **GOBLINS!** Tag and **LOST GRAIL KNIGHTS** tag then there might be a complicated logic path to say that the Lost Grail Knights arrive and clear out the goblins, unless the **FERAL HOGS** tag is also in effect, in which case the goblins had hog cavalry and thus could overpower the grail knights. That is the type of situation where the tags become useful shorthand.



Chapter 1. The Characters (Pre-Gen)

The Ex-Legionnaire – Fighter – Level 3

Mail, shortsword, helmet, 3 javelins, tower shield, rope, dagger, torch.

The Gladiator - Fighter – Level 5

Gladiator helmet, trident, net

The Rabbi - Cleric – Level 3

Staff, leather armour, sling, holy symbol

The Sorcerer – Magic-User – Level 3

Dagger, robes, spellbook (*Magic Missile*, *Spider Climb*, *Knock*), 2 x Greek fire

The Pict – Specialist – Level 4 - (Bushcraft and Sneak Attack)

Longbow, battleaxe, leather armour, rope

The Engineer – Specialist – Level 3 (Architecture and Tinkering)

Sledgehammer, rope, grapnel, saw, 20 x iron spikes, backpack, 2 x Greek fire, torch

One of the characters must hold onto the journal.

The Hirelings

Several hirelings have been brought with the party to aid in their expeditions.

4 x Former Vigiles – Morale 8, Leather Armour, Short Sword, Helmet, Torch. Vigiles were a mixture of firemen and beat cops in the Roman world. These particular ones were hired in Londinium. They will act as guards but will not rush into combat as a first wave nor will they mess with traps nor open doors.

2 x Pictish Fishermen – Morale 6, Dagger. These fishermen from the Orknies were re-

cruited to help row and act as guides. They will not enter any room in the dungeon until it has already been explored and is free from traps and monsters. They will only fight in self defence but will perform manual labour.

1 x Slave – Morale 2, Torch. Originally snatched as a child from the Crimean peninsula, he tends the dogs and the mule. He will enter into dungeons, and as a slave will open doors and mess with traps. His morale is low and if combat ensues he will stay back and will certainly not die for his masters.



Chapter 2. Landing on the shores of Thule

The Set-Up

Play begins with the party having just waded ashore and staring out over the rocky expanse. Their boat is on a sandbar behind them being inspected by their hirelings. Along the shore are huge swarms of nesting birds (gulls, puffins, auks), while to the north is an almost absurdly narrow volcanic peak that seems to cast a long shadow over the tiny island, almost like a sundial. The base of the peak is in the centre of this circular island and is probably four hours away. It is a sunny spring day, the mid-afternoon sun has finally broken a thick fog that had made sailing difficult. Of minor interest appears to be an obelisk semi-submerged fifteen minutes to the south, about 30 feet from shore.

The Boat

The boat itself is a small lembus with just 16 oars, though several remain empty due to losses on the journey. It is light enough to have beached upon a sandbar a few yards away from the pebble beach; a few men can easily push it back into the water with a few minutes time. The boat is full of straw and smells of faeces from the animals it carries: 4 trained rottweilers (2 male, 2 female), a donkey, and several rats hiding from said dogs.

In terms of supplies, the boat carries two 60 gallon barrels of fresh water, two 50lb sacks of grain, a large barrel of apples, twenty flasks of olive oil, 100 feet of thick rope, 30 lbs of smoked fish, and a set of carpentry tools.

Consequences:

1. If the dogs are removed from the boat for several hours (or the boat is abandoned) the island gains RATS.
2. If the apples are eaten on the island, or eaten on the boat and the cores thrown onto the island, the island becomes FORESTED.
3. If the dogs are abandoned on the island and include at least one remaining male and one remaining female, the island gains FERAL DOGS.

The Stony Expanse

Other than a few large, lichen covered boulders, the ground is largely flat and strewn with smooth rounded pebbles and slightly warm mud. Here and there a hearty thorn bush has begun to grow among a tuft of short grass or a patch of dandelions. Other than the birds and a few bumblebees, there do not seem to be any other animals on the island, though there are tens of thousands of birds. If they explore at all, the PCs will find several large hot-springs on the island, which (besides hoping for rain) are the only sources of fresh water. If the PCs are outside as it cools to night, it will become apparent the island is the source of the fog as the ground appears to be heated, remaining above room temperature. This is one of the unique features of the island as it has a tremendous amount of subterranean heat resulting from its near direct route to the Hollow Earth and the half-life of its decaying vril. Originally only a



small rock outcropping (the top of the peak), Xenophon raised this entire island from the depths when he landed here.

The Present Era:

RATS: Unless either **FERAL DOGS** or both the **LAIR IS BREACHED** and **THE GATE IS UNLOCKED**, there are almost no birds left and no rats either as they ran out of food. Damn things ruined the ecosystem. Hope you didn't plan on foraging for meat.

FERAL DOGS: Wild Dogs roam the island. They are very territorial.

FORESTED: The island is covered in a dense forest of short apple trees. Their height is stunted to around 12 feet; any higher and the heat from the island fades in the winter, leaving them vulnerable to the arctic winds. Small bitter crab apples are plentiful and can be stored for the return trip, but visibility when keeping watch for dangers is reduced.

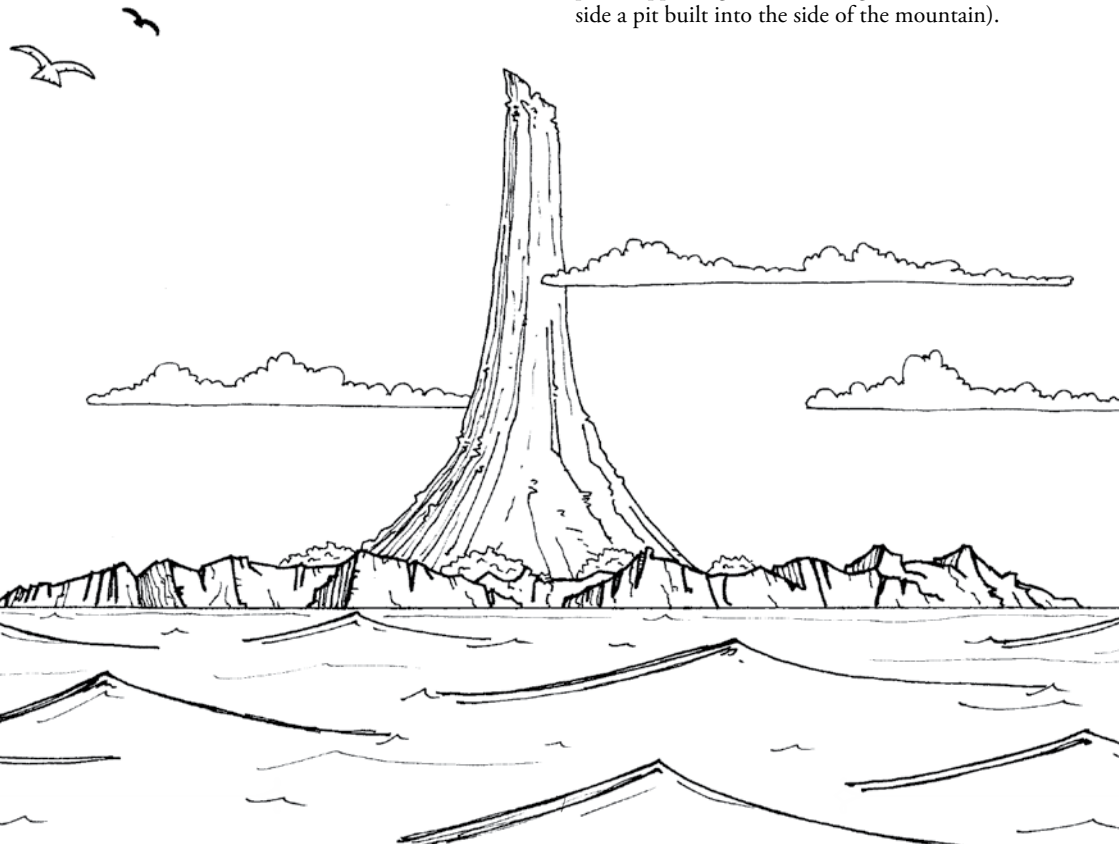
LAIR IS BREACHED: If the tag **THE GATE IS UNLOCKED** is also in effect, then the hot-springs will likely each have a Giant Prehistoric Salamander living in them.

Strange Obelisk (Dagon)

Jutting out into the water is a massive obelisk of red granite carved with undecipherable symbols and a strange stylized carving of a fish-headed humanoid. The Rabbi and the Sorcerer will believe it is a version of the Sumerian god "Dagon".

The Peak

The rocky peak in the centre of the island is unusually narrow and devoid of any soil or plant life beyond small patches of lichen. It is several hundred meters in height. The very top appears to have a coating of ice. If the PCs explore the base they will quickly stumble upon the lair of Xenophon (appearing as a drawbridge on the other side a pit built into the side of the mountain).



Chapter 3. The Lair

Lair Random Encounters (once per turn, or with loud noise). (2d6)

- | | |
|----|---|
| 2 | Five Prehistoric Salamanders migrating to outside (requires THE GATE IS UNLOCKED and LAIR IS BREACHED tags, only available in present era.) |
| 3 | Seven Shadow Satyrs (Unless SHRINE IS SACKED) |
| 4 | Work Detail (Unless MACHINE IS DOWN or previously destroyed) |
| 5 | Three Feral Dogs (require FERAL DOGS and LAIR IS BREACHED, only in present era.) |
| 6 | All is Quiet |
| 7 | All is Quiet |
| 8 | All is Quiet |
| 9 | Prehistoric Salamander (requires THE GATE IS UNLOCKED) |
| 20 | Ten Shadow Satyrs (Unless SHRINE IS SACKED) |
| 11 | Temporal Viking/PC (Requires LIVE AT VALHALLA or TEMPORAL PROBLEM) |
| 12 | Wandering Sub-men (requires GATE IS UNLOCKED) |

A- The Drawbridge

The draw bridge is made from heavy cedar timbers with bronze bindings. The chains are not visible from the exterior and are controlled by a winch on the western side of the interior hall. The pit in front of the drawbridge is 20 feet deep into solid stone, smooth and slick. About two feet of detritus (mud, silt, pebbles, etc.) have accumulated into it under five feet of murky water. The drawbridge is flush against the stone with a slight overhang to protect it from above. There are two fist-sized holes on either side of the drawbridge, currently plugged with perfectly cut bricks secured on the opposing side with a pin. In theory, they could be removed to allow missile fire in the event of a siege. No matter how much noise is made outside, nothing and no one will investigate.

Consequences:

If the Drawbridge is destroyed or smashed open the LAIR IS BREACHED.

B- The Foyer

On the other side of the drawbridge is a small (10') hallway that leads to a now tattered curtain. On the other side of the curtain is an opulent two story foyer dominated by a working marble fountain resembling a fish spitting water. The room is also filled with stone statues that look perfectly lifelike. The statues are all of Greek warriors. Some are fully armoured hoplites, others are nude figures with short swords clutching capes. All have a terrified look upon their face. Obviously you shouldn't tell the players this, but they are not petrified people. They are carved statues animated into golems. Unless



the players actually sit down and start seriously destroying them, they will not currently react. There is a balcony that overlooks the fountain and a large set of wooden double doors along the far wall. The wooden double doors are unlocked, but if the players open them and leave the room (i.e., they don't crawl through the balcony), the statues will begin to activate in the next 5 minutes (much as if the players attempt to physically destroy them). There are 12 statues in the room.

Statue: Armour 18, 3 Hit Dice. 1 attack for 1d6 damage, Morale 12. Only take half damage from weapons which are neither magical nor heavy implements capable of destroying stone (pickaxes, sledgehammers, etc)

Consequences:

If the LAIR IS BREACHED or THE GATE IS UNLOCKED, then eventually sediment and detritus (from bird shit, dead prehistoric Salamanders, or other things) will eventually cause THE PIPES ARE BLOCKED tag, as this is an exit point for the water from the entrance to the laboratory.

Present Era:

FERAL DOGS: If the island has not only the FERAL DOGS tag, but also the LAIR IS BREACHED tag, then a pack of 7 aggressive feral dogs will reside in the foyer and need to be dealt with before exploring further. The only exception to this is if the GATE IS UNLOCKED, in which case a pair of prehistoric Salamanders live in the stagnant pool that was the fountain (regardless of whether or not the LAIR IS BREACHED tag is in effect, as they supersede the FERAL DOGS tag).

C- The Balcony

Looking out over the foyer is a small balcony surrounded by a waist high ornate marble railing. The balcony is separated from the second

story hallways by a purple silk curtain (worth 250sp). A rotting wooden throne sits next to a small golden bowl (worth 200sp) filled with the rotted remains of some long gone foodstuff.

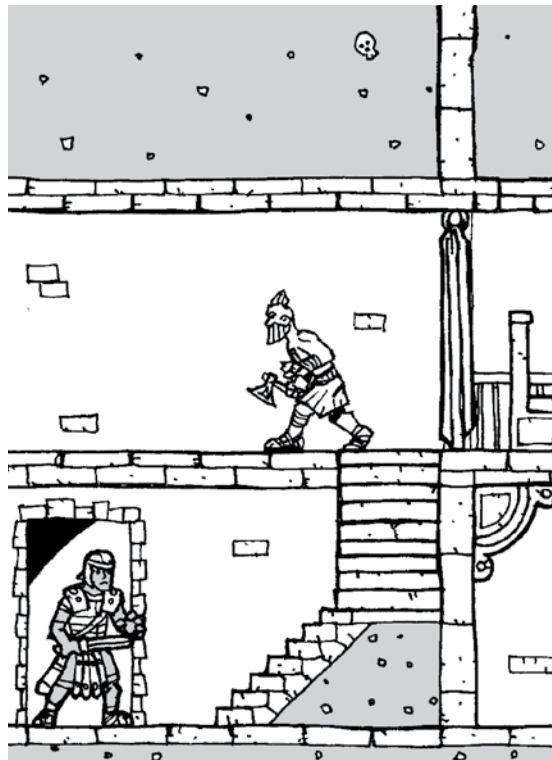
The Present Era:

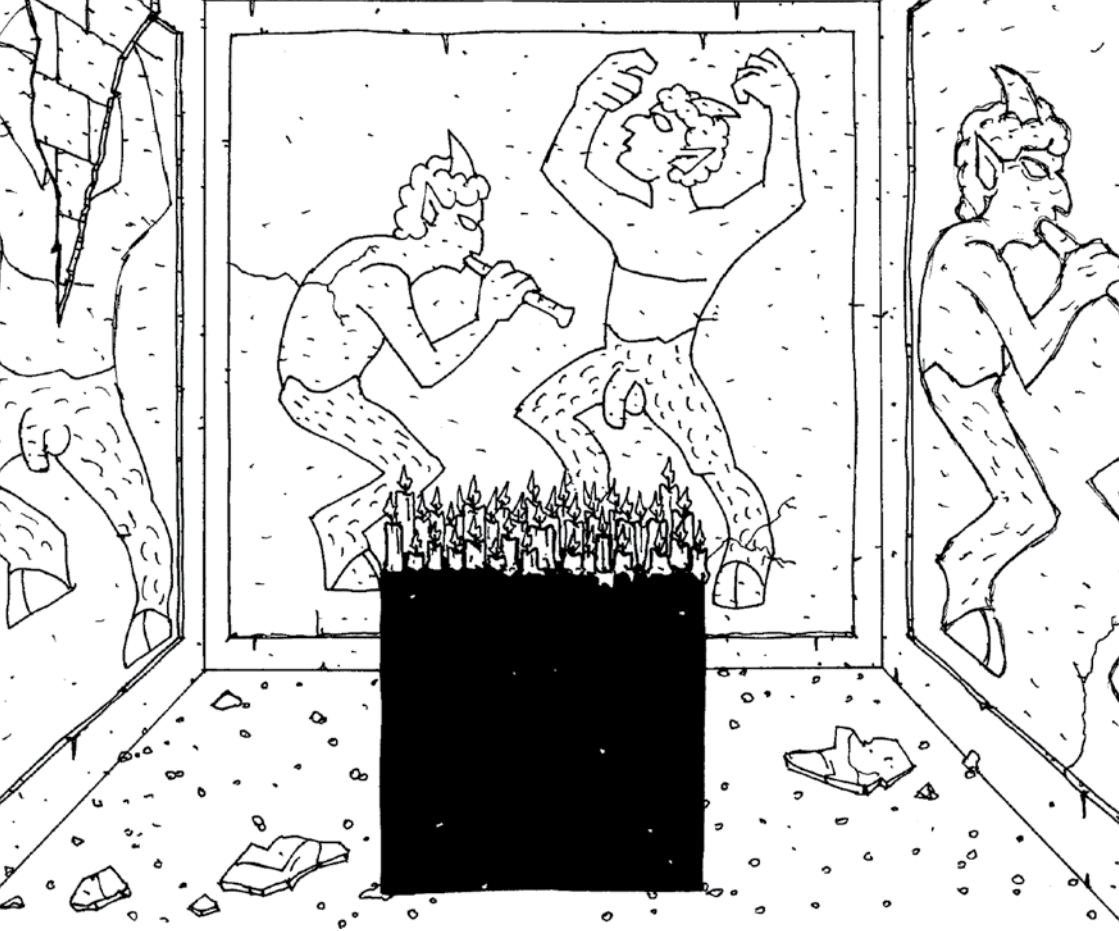
If any of the following tags are in effect the silk curtain will be ruined unless somehow hidden or protected: the LAIR IS BREACHED or the GATE IS UNLOCKED.

D- The Hallways

The hallways throughout the lair are perfectly squared, 10 feet high by 10 feet wide and unnaturally smooth. This is because they were cut by magical energy. The walls are warm to the touch and the air is humid due to currents from the Hollow Earth.

The "Lightning Trap" marked on the map affects the first living thing (including satyrs but not undead or golems) to pass it. It is constructed from two small arcane runes on either side of





the hall. They deal 3d6 damage (save for half) and then are permanently burned out.

E- Maintenance Supplies

This small room contains four large spools of silver wire (each one is worth 600sp) and a chest full of glass prisms and razor thin glass wafers (which could be hastily misconstrued as gemstones).

F- The Abandoned Warehouse

This massive room was once used to house the vast amount of supplies used to keep this

lair operational. Now it is empty save for the remains of broken barrels and torn grain sacks. No one has entered this room in decades.

G- The Shrine

This hollowed out portion of the mountain appears to have been dug with metal tools. The walls are rough to the touch and coated with crumbling plaster depicting shadowy satyrs burning a town to the ground. The floor is a tile mosaic depicting Charon maneuvering his skiff through to the waiting jaws of Cerberus. A black basalt cube, 3 feet high, sits in the centre of the room. Its surface is covered with 37 grey candles burned at a variety of levels. There is

also a ceremonial dagger with a faint blue glow. The Sorcerer and Engineer would both be able to recognize the room as having some corrupted relation to the Orphic Mysteries.

Anyone stepping into the room will automatically cause all of the remaining candles to light at a rate of 1d6 per round, summoning the shadow satyrs into being. Setting the candles aflame (by say Greek fire) will summon all the satyrs instantly.

The dagger is vril-infused, gaining an increasing +1 bonus each time it hits, cooling down a +1 every turn. If you roll under the bonus for damage it becomes unstable (and starts to hum). If it happens again before it cools down to 0 the weapon explodes, for +3d4 damage to the person struck. If the wielder was using the dagger in melee when it exploded (as compared to throwing it), they will not only also suffer the 3d4 additional damage but will have their hand obliterated into a frayed mess of cauterized bone and gristle in the explosion.

Example:

The legionnaire picks up the dagger and uses it to attack a satyr. He hits the first round and the dagger becomes a +1 dagger (dealing additional damage, and gaining a future attack bonus). He rolls a 4 for damage. On the second round he hits again, the dagger is at +2 now, he rolls a 3 for damage. The dagger is still stable. On the third round he misses, nothing happens. Round four he hits again, the bonus is now at +3. He only rolls a 2 for damage. The weapon becomes unstable and starts to hum. The next round he strikes true yet again (the bonus really helps) and the weapon becomes +4. He rolls a 4 for damage and so the weapon doesn't explode. The next round however he strikes a satyr again. The weapon becomes +5 and there was no way he could avoid rolling under the 5 bonus (for the record he rolled a 3). The weapon is already unstable and so it explodes for +3d4 damage, removing the legionnaire's hand in the process.

The satyrs have a matte black skin and eyes like glowing coals, but otherwise seem very similar to common depictions of the creatures. As they move they emanate waves of heat and flake bits of ash behind them (like bits of burnt paper from a bonfire). They have a body temperature of around 90 degrees Celsius and they delight in mayhem and pain. They are each armed with a barbed iron trident. Being in prolonged contact with one deals 1d3 damage per round. Should one be slain it cackles with glee as it crumbles into a pile of ash and embers. Its candle then goes out. The satyr isn't dead, it is merely awaiting the candle to relight. If the candle is on fire (such as if the shrine is engulfed in flame), they will re-appear at the shrine the following round. Holy water does double damage to them, and they can be turned as if undead.

Shadow Satyrs: Armour 14, 1+1 Hit Dice, Attack as weapon (d8), Morale 12.

Consequences:

If the candles are set aflame with oil or removed, THE SHRINE IS SACKED tag comes into effect.

Present Era:

If THE SHRINE IS SACKED, note that shadow satyrs do not appear in the random encounter table in the future.

H- The Caves

An aged but still functional ballista loaded with a round shot sits aimed towards a bronze-work gate bolted into the very walls. Standing upright beside the ballista, motionless, are two withered corpses holding bronze battleaxes. One of them wears a key around its neck on a copper necklace. The gate leads into a natural cave network that seems to emanate hot, humid air. Along the cave walls can be seen the faint glow of weird phosphorescent plants that resemble anemone. These growths are one of the reasons for this lair's location. They leech residual vril from the



cavern walls, allowing the now-undead labourers to harvest it easily. There is a 4 in 6 chance that all the labourers are currently in the caves, otherwise one work detail is in the machine, refuelling it.

The plants are highly poisonous; anyone coming in contact with them will feel a numbing paralysis set in. This results in a -1d4 penalty (-1 with a save) to attack rolls, Armour ratings, movement per round, Dexterity checks and saving throws per dose. This poisoning will fade at a rate of 1 point of penalty per night of sleep.

The work details each consist of 20 withered corpses each wearing a bronze helm and carrying a poison-coated bronze trowel and a bucket of the harvested plants. They spend 7 hours harvesting, and 30 minutes resupplying the machine, constantly. The gate is secured with a length of bronze chain and a lock (the key being around the guard's neck). Any work detail caught inside the caves will be able to break into the lair with a few hours of work. There are two work details remaining.

Work Detail: Armour 12, 1 Hit Die, Attack as weapon (d4+poison with trowel or d10 with axe), Morale 12.

Consequences:

If the gate is destroyed or left open with the guards at the ballista being destroyed as well, THE GATE IS UNLOCKED tag will come into play immediately, but only for the purposes of random encounters within the complex. If the chain is broken, the gate is broken, or the key is lost without the work detail being destroyed then THE GATE IS UNLOCKED tag will come into play for the future whether or not it is currently (in the past) considered open. The work details will eventually break through to continue the shipments. If they have access to the key (such as the PCs are slain and the key looted from them) the work details will lock the gate if possible (assuming it isn't broken open and is merely unlocked). This will "undo"

the tag. Members of the work detail destroyed in the past are not replenished in the future. If they are all destroyed in the past then by the present era THE MACHINE IS DOWN tag will also be in effect.

Present Era:

THE GATE IS UNLOCKED: If THE GATE IS UNLOCKED then monsters from the caverns can spread throughout the complex throughout the centuries. The guards and ballista will be destroyed (in some battle through the centuries) but any remaining work details will continue. More random encounter options will be available on the random encounter table.

THE MACHINE IS DOWN: This will be discussed in the machine section (J).

I- The Corridor of Blades

Large granite slabs fill the corridor at odd angles, barely a foot apart. Stuck into the sides are a staggeringly large number of razor sharp glass wedges that jut out perpendicular. There are also a massive number of silver wires inlaid into the sides in geometric patterns. Unless THE MACHINE IS DOWN tag is in effect, these carry staggeringly high voltage, enough to instantly kill anyone foolish enough to touch them. The glass wedges are not meant to be murderously dangerous, they are insulators. The silver Xenophon stole was not as wealth, it was to use as a conductor, as it is slightly better than copper and he needed every edge for his work.

Smashing this indiscriminately while the machine is in operation (i.e.) the MACHINE IS DOWN tag isn't in effect will cause a massive backlash of energy, dealing 1d100 damage to anyone within 5 feet and 1d6 damage to anyone in the lair as the air becomes supercharged with vril.

One can walk sideways through the granite slabs safely, but only with extreme care and good light. If one was to suddenly have their



light extinguished, they would be sliced to ribbons and then electrocuted as they flinched. If THE MACHINE IS DOWN tag is in effect they will only be sliced to ribbons. This deals 1d10 damage for every 5 feet moved. Drop the die size down one for a face covering helm, another for leather armour, two for chain and three for plate. Someone in plate with a full helm can thus walk right through it (assuming THE MACHINE IS DOWN tag is in effect to kill the power).

The silver in this area (actually a backup control) is worth 850sp if carved out of the granite. That would take several hours. If the MACHINE IS DOWN tag is not in effect, but this corridor of blades is damaged THE MACHINE IS WONKY tag comes into effect immediately.

J- The Machine

Looking at the map it is pretty obvious these tunnels form a pentagram inside a circle with its central point directly underneath the entrance to Xenophon's Laboratory. The air has an acrid smell and is uncomfortably warm. The walls are covered with intricate geometric designs of inlaid silver wire, occasionally studded with a glass prism (that could be mistaken for a gemstone). The silver is electrified and touching it will result in instant death via electrocution, but is worth 10,000sp should one wish to spend a good two dozen hours scraping it out.

The power source is the air itself, which has been infused with vril (and a toxic gas byproduct). Breathing the air forces the inhaler to make a saving throw versus Poison at the end of the turn or suffer 30 points damage as they cough up blood and bits of their lungs. They suffer only 2 damage on a success. This happens at the end of any turn in which they breathe the gas, meaning if they are in the tunnels when they are aware of the need to make a saving throw they will still have to make at least one more when the next turn ends. It is a slow acting toxin. The gas is caused by work details in the cave gathering the vril-infused cave

plants and boiling them on geothermal plates in the machine.

The five points of the pentagram contain gold plated granite slabs placed over geothermal vents that go miles into the earth. These vents are hot enough to boil water and are used to convert the plants into power. The gold plating could be scraped off and would be worth 450sp per slab.

Ceasing the plant shipments for more than a day causes THE MACHINE IS DOWN tag to come into effect, as does breaking the inner chamber. There is a maintenance team of 4 undead in glass armour that patrols and repairs.

Undead Repair Team: Armour 18, 1 Hit Die, armed with glass pliers and crowbars with a glass coated grip. Counts as a medium weapon (d8 damage) with a -1 penalty to attack. The glass armour gives +10 bonus to any saving throws against electricity, but is destroyed after the first attack that misses but still surpasses Armour 12 (modified by shield). Morale 12.

Consequences:

Ceasing the plant shipments for more than a day causes THE MACHINE IS DOWN tag to come into effect as does breaking the inner chamber.

Present Era:

THE MACHINE IS DOWN: If the machine is down, then most places will be without power. For the immediate area (these tunnels) it means that not only are the wires safe to touch but that the toxic gas is no longer present, as it dissipates after a few days and it has been centuries.

K- The Focal Point

All of the following assumes the MACHINE IS DOWN tag is not in effect. If it is, barring an excavation team and a boatload of time, there is no way into the inner chamber. It requires power.



Near the north end of the pentagram's interior, nestled among the geometric designs, is a white outline of a six-fingered hand with little glass discs on the fingertips (and yes I am including the thumb as a finger despite it not being covered by finger insurance). Touching a glass disc causes it to briefly glow (for a half second) and then fade. Once four discs have been touched there is a humming noise and the magic happens.

This puzzle is a game of "Bulls and Cows" with a four digit pass code and the six available digits. Roll four d6s to generate the current pass code.

Pressing four digits causes system to attempt to open the maintenance door to the inner chamber.

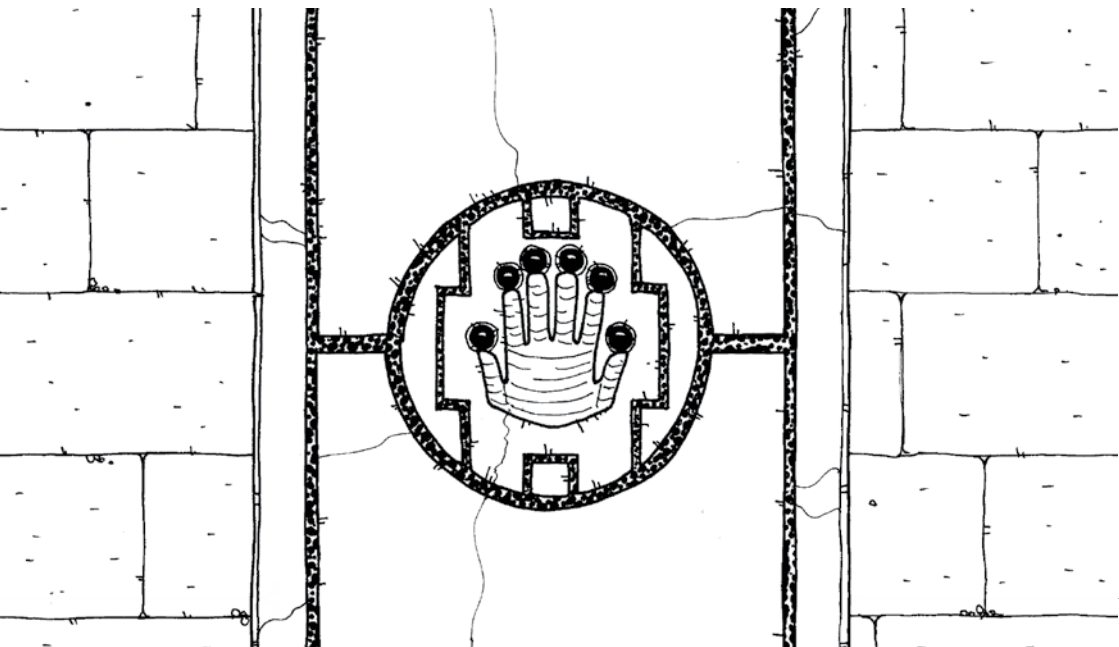
For each correct digit in the correct order one of the four sides of the maintenance hatch glows. For each correct digit in the incorrect order one of the four sides of the maintenance hatch glows briefly then flickers. After a half second of attempting, the glow will stop.

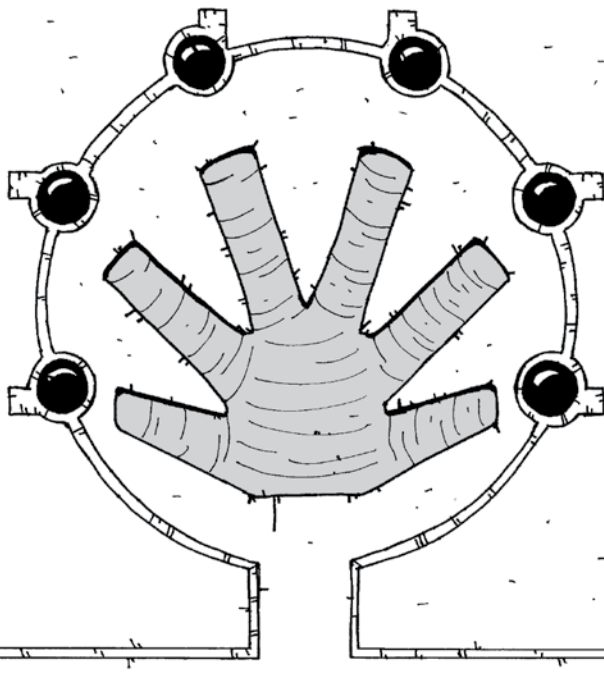
If all four correct digits were used in the correct order, this segment of the wall develops a glowing blue outline and then seems to slowly disappear with all the magical special effects an episode in the first season of Star Trek could muster.

The humming noise grows louder each time an attempt is made.

If the correct code has not been entered after the sixth attempt, a glowing eye will temporarily appear in the centre of the hand as the digits scramble and reset (roll 4d6 to generate a code). Also a blast of energy will deal 1d100 damage to every living thing in the tunnels not wearing intact glass armour.

If the maintenance hatch opens it will remain open until any of the digits are touched again. The inner control is a tangled jungle of silver wiring and suspended glass prisms surrounding a 4 foot tall glass funnel with its exterior covered in gold paint. The wires connect the walls to the funnel, but if one is careful and has good light they can move around without touching the silver wires (and instantly electrocuting themselves). The inner chamber has 75,000sp worth of silver wires amidst the glass baubles and the golden plated glass funnel is worth 1,200sp. To get near the glass plated funnel one would have to be standing in the centre of the room which causes TEMPORAL PROBLEM if THE MACHINE IS WONKY, otherwise it teleports the individual 1d1000 x 2 years into the future.





TEMPORAL PROBLEM causes a version of the individual in the centre of the machine to pop into existence (nude) in the centre of the room 37 minutes later. That version has received a fatal “walking dead” level of radiation. One version will appear for each quantum of time the individual was in the centre of the room, 37 minutes apart. Even a brief walk through will take millions of years to cease (even if you cause THE MACHINE IS DOWN tag to come into effect later, it is too late).

Present Era:

If THE MACHINE IS DOWN then the entire area is powered down. The puzzle mechanism, the electrified wires, the funnel. It is nothing special at this point.

TEMPORAL PROBLEM: Whoever triggered the temporal problem will be a random encounter possibility in the present day (though nude and secretly dying). If THE MACHINE

IS DOWN tag is in effect and the door was left sealed it will break open. The sheer number of them appearing through the centuries eventually forced open the door in an explosion of rotting corpses. If there are neither dogs in the lair (requiring both THE LAIR IS BREACHED and FERAL DOGS tags to be in effect) nor cave beasts (requiring THE GATE IS UNLOCKED to be in effect) then the bodies will simply pile up to the point that has by now filled most of the machine, causing a burning meat smell to emanate out. This is due to the geothermal vents that still providing heat, boiling the bodies that slowly turn to goop and drip through the seams to the bottomless pits below. It is all quite disgusting and hellish. The new instance of the person would constantly appear in the centre of the room and be suffocated in corpses. They aren't a random encounter unless the inner chamber is dug out.

Chapter 4. Journey to the Inner Sun

L- The Hollow Earth

The route to the hollow earth is long and really more of a wilderness trek than a dungeon delve. As such it can be streamlined using the following seed chart. Each roll on the chart represents a certain arbitrary distance measured in "units" towards their destination, representing a half days journey. So each half day of travel roll a single d8, d6 and d4 against the chart below. Note that you should NEVER roll any additional dice, just the one throw of the dice. The results on each die, the sum total of all dice and whether or not that total is odd or even is all important to generating the random encounter. If the players move past the encounter they move closer to their objective; if they double back to avoid it they do not (and just used half a days travel to no advantage).

It requires 20 "units" to reach the Hollow Earth. (Heading generally "down")

It requires 13 "units" to reach Snæfellsjökull, Iceland. (Searching for another route "up" or "out")

Every "2" closer to the Hollow Earth brings the party 1 further away from Snæfellsjökull (but not vice versa)

Example:

The players are choosing to descend into the earth towards the Hollow Earth. Barring anything to increase or decrease their travel speed they will have 10 encounters before they arrive. The Referee rolls the first random encounter.

10
05
14



Cave Random Encounters:

Terrain: The Caves to the Hollow Earth

Travel Speed: 2 Units

Where? (1d8)

1. Crawling Tunnels (-1 move).
2. Walking upright (though sideways) tunnels. Single file only.
3. Wide Cavern, can walk two abreast.
4. Pit, 2xd6 feet deep (flooded on even), d4x3 feet across, otherwise as Wide Cavern.
5. House-sized cavern.
6. Abandoned Sub-men or Elder Thing outpost, a still functional length of transit tunnel gives +4 move.
7. Giant Cavern (+1 move).
8. Bottomless Chasm, dozens of feet across (usually forcing a backtrack).

What? (1d6)

1. 1d4 Albino Tunnel Lampreys
2. Nothing
3. Nothing
4. 1d4 Giant Salamanders
5. Swarms of Ants
6. Sub-men Patrol (1d8+2 Sub-men) if the total die roll is 13+

Weird? (1d4)

1. Trickling freshwater stream.
2. Gas Pocket (even) or Sharp Crystals (Odd).
3. Fungal Forest.
4. Vril droplets (odd).

Triples (in addition to other results)

1. The Albino Land Lamprey has 12 newborn young who need food.
2. The Gas is Flammable.
3. Dinosaur Skeleton.
4. The Prehistoric Salamanders are mutated and have breath weapon (vril).

Doubles (in addition to other results)

5. Human? Skeletons, each wearing diamond studded gold bracelets (4 of them, 120sp each).
6. Triple number of Sub-men, Air Loom in operation.

Maximum Total (in addition to other results)

18. Not Sub-men; Devolved Elder Things instead.



The Referee rolls a d8, d6 and d4 with the results being 5, 5, and 3 respectively.

The Referee then describes how they crawl through the caverns and find an open cavern big enough to comfortably camp for the night. It is as big as a house (5 on the d8) and full of giant mushrooms (3 on d4), but it looks like the place is swarming with ants (5 on the d8), but those ants apparently have a taste for human flesh given the skeletons of the last folks who tried to camp here (double 5s), though there is some treasure the players could get if they will brave the ants.

If they continue through they get 2 closer to the Hollow Earth (18), but one further from Iceland (14). If they don't find a way through they will have to double back (they are no closer to the Hollow Earth). This requires a bit of thinking on the Referee's part for why (though the chart has been built to be fairly logical).

Keeping the players informed:

How to get across to the players that they are leaving the current adventure location without ruining the sense of immersion can often be tricky. You know the map ends there and that it is wilderness, but the players may think this is a small mapped out area full of clues and treasure. I would advocate saying something like "The caves seem to go on for awhile, how deep are you willing to go?" If they say something like "until I see something interesting," or "as deep as it goes," move them into wilderness mode.

Creatures:

Albino Land Lamprey: Armour 12, 1 Hit Die, 1 attack for 1d4 damage, latches on for 1 damage per round, +1d6 damage if an attempt is made to rip it off. Ripping it off requires a Strength roll, and failure still results in extra damage. Baby lampreys have 1 hit point and only deal 1 damage, 1 damage per round, and +1d3 damage if attempting to rip it off (+2 bonus on the attempt against baby lampreys), Morale 7.

Devolved Elder Thing:

"Six feet end to end, three and five-tenths feet central diameter, tapering to one foot at each end. Like a barrel with five bulging ridges in place of staves. Lateral breakages, as of thinnish stalks, are at equator in middle of these ridges. In furrows between ridges are curious growths – combs or wings that fold up and spread out like fans. . . which gives almost seven-foot wing spread. Arrangement reminds one of certain monsters of primal myth, especially fabled Elder Things in the Necronomicon."

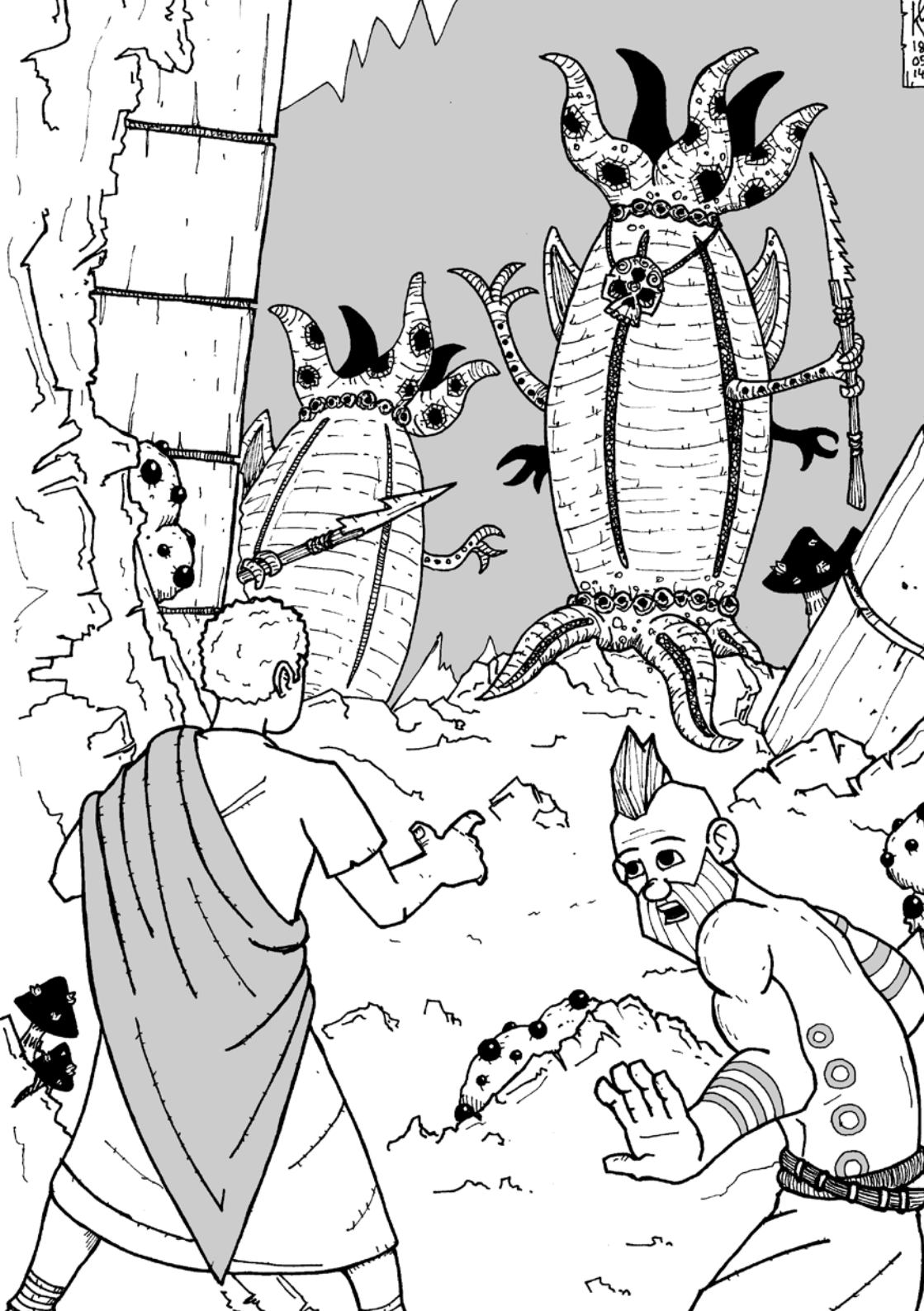
—H.P. Lovecraft, *At the Mountains of Madness*

Once a mighty space faring civilization, the remnants of this once majestic race are primitive barbarians with only the most mythic understanding of their past. Small tribes, the remains of long overrun research outposts in the Hollow Earth, still skulk about the great chasms between the outerworld and the Hollow Earth. They are amphibious, and while they can eat plant matter they prefer meat. Elder things will be armed with crude bone harpoons and a trio of barbed throwing torches. Their bodies, however, are of great value to the machinations of wizards who seek to verify contentious parts of certain dark tomes. Wizards in cities will pay 100sp for the corpse of an Elder Thing, and they are considered to have a laboratory value of 1,000sp should a Magic-User wish to add to their own laboratory.

Devolved Elder Thing: Armour 16, 9 Hit Dice. Attack as weapon +1 or bludgeon for 1d6, Morale 7.

Giant Prehistoric Salamander: Armour 14, 2+2 Hit Dice, 1 attack from fanged maw for 1d8 damage, Morale 5 (8 in water). It is coated in slime much like the vril plants. Contact with a Salamander requires a save versus Poison (-1 penalty on a save, -1d4 otherwise).

Reference: Japanese Giant Salamander only larger.



Mutated Salamanders have a ridge of vril-coated spines growing from their back and can breathe a bolt of pure energy every third round. This gives a +2 attack bonus and deals 1d20 damage.

Sub-men are completely sociopathic and cruel humans with amazing nightvision and technological prowess. Long ago they sought to better their society by removing emotion, theorizing that perfectly logical beings would not resort to war, violence, or depravity. Almost none of their antediluvian society escaped this purge, leaving behind a race of technologically advanced sociopaths who replaced morality with efficiency. The civilization quickly deteriorated into small feuding juntas. If any patrols from one of these fiefdoms are encountered they are armed with long climbing hooks that double as both medium weapons and crowbars. They wear layered cloth garments that are very similar to jumpsuits, which count as leather armour. One out of every full three Sub-men will be a leader armed with a whip and a ring containing a small orb of vril to power it. For every full three leaders, one will be an Enforcer wearing segmented ceramic armour (counts as plate and gives +2 to saving throws versus fire, electricity and energy), and armed with a vril staff in destructive configuration. If there are more than 20 Sub-men, 4 will be lobotomized surface dwellers in ceramic armour, armed with transparent crystalline shields (as strong as heavy wood), and armed with steel hacking blades similar to machetes. They will obey any Enforcer present, but will otherwise sit around idly unless attacked.

One of the more ominous things the Sub-men are involved with is the operation of Air Looms. These devices can be used to cause schizophrenia in a target if care is used. The machines require constant adjustment, especially as they are only truly effective when attuned to a specific individual on a focused area no bigger than perhaps a mile in radius. Field surveillance is often used to gain better results for Air Looms which can operate thousands of miles (or longer with minimal obstructions) away from a target.

Sub-men: 1 Hit Die.

Sub-men Leaders: 1 Hit Die.

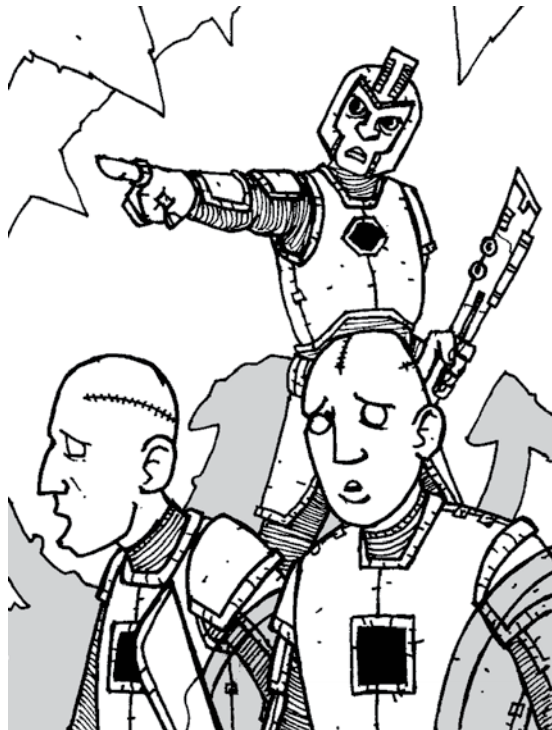
Sub-men Enforcers: 2 Hit Dice.

Sub-men Lobotomized Slaves: 2 Hit Dice.

Items:

Vril Ring: Requires an Intelligence check for non Sub-men to use. Target must make a saving throw versus Paralysis or be frozen in place for 1d4 rounds. Any non Sub-men must then make a Constitution check after using the device, failure deals 1d4 damage to the user. Each ring has enough vril for three uses.

Vril Staff (Destructive configuration): Requires an Intelligence check for non Sub-men to use. Weilder may make an attack dealing 4d8 damage on a successful hit. Any non Sub-men must then make a Constitution check after using the device, failure deals 1d4 damage to the user. Each staff has enough Vril for 1d10 uses.



Chapter 5. The Ultimate Abyss

M- The Laboratory Entry

The ceiling here quickly slopes upward to be two stories tall. The entry to the laboratory is a wheel-cranked solid bronze double door that opens outwards. Inside is a large room lit by a glowing magical portal in the ceiling. In the corners of the room are two story marble statues of Atlas that are holding up the ceiling. On the far wall is a small bubbling font. There is a large spiraling staircase that appears to lead into and through the glowing portal in the ceiling. Two large muscular figures (almost identical to the Atlas statues) stand on either side of the staircase, each with an arm outstretched to form an arch which someone would have to walk through to go up the stairs.

Attempting to go up the stairs causes the golems to attack, as does preemptively attacking them. Should one of the two golems be badly injured (below half hit points) they will move towards a corner and one of the golems holding up the room will walk out to replace him.

If more than two rounds go by without 4 golems holding up the ceiling, it collapses and kills everyone in the room not directly under the portal opening. That person will make it to the other side of the portal as it comes down to meet them. They might, if they are immensely quick and dexterous (requiring a check), be able to grasp onto the back of the stairway and then if they are strong enough (passing a Strength check), pull themselves through its open back. They will often go through the portal but have nothing to stand on and fall into the void of

space. Even if they make it through, they will probably be murdered by Xenophon or failing that, starve to death and/or dehydrate.

Statue: Armour 20, 8 Hit Dice. 1 attack for 2d6 damage, Morale 12. Only take damage from weapons which are magical or heavy implements capable of destroying stone (pickaxes, sledgehammers, etc.).

The Present Era

THE PIPES ARE BLOCKED: the room is FULL of water from the font. The door will be cool to the touch, where as everything else had been warmed from the air. If the door is unlocked by the wheel crank, it will swing open violently (save or 1d10 damage from the door to whomever opened it) and unleash a massive water wave that will short circuit the corridor of blades (causing 1d6 damage to everyone in the lair if it hasn't already been shorted) and extinguishing all light sources, as well as moving the PCs randomly into the corridor of blades (causing them to take damage from the corridors as if moving through them 10 feet).

THE MACHINE IS DOWN: The portal into Xenophon's Palace has ceased functioning and disappeared with no trace beyond the stairs. Unless the tag **THE MACHINE IS WONKY** was also in effect, Xenophon will be in this room instead of in his palace. If **THE PIPES ARE BLOCKED** he will be swept along with the water as well.



1- Xenophon's Palace

The ceiling portal leads to a floating open-concept villa in the void of space, with an artificial atmosphere and gravity powered by the machine. There are no walls, just marble tiles, columns, and ladders connecting platforms and walkways. Xenophon is a level 16 Magic-User taking the form of Armour animated by mist. Magic, magical weapons, or fire are necessary to harm him. A torch deals 1 damage per hit, flaming oil does 1d3 damage per round. He attempted to transfer his mind and will to avoid death and it kind of worked. His intellect and mind were transferred, but not his ambitions or drives. He just quietly exists, though he will slay anything potentially risky to that endeavour (i.e., anyone who stumbles upon him). But his research is abandoned, his drive for power nothing but a dusty memory.

If THE MACHINE IS DOWN, the shields fail and the atmosphere leaves. There is enough emergency power to allow Xenophon to return to the Lab entry before being sucked into the void of space unless the backup control is also broken (THE MACHINE IS WONKY).

In this case the portal ceases to function and Xenophon's palace is floating in the endless void between the stars.

He can call upon the services of 4 undead servants if threatened (preserved corpses that retain their human levels of dexterity). As he has no drive, they normally just stand idle.

Undead Servants:

Armour 12, 1+1 Hit Dice, they attack as unarmed humans but will use available weapons, Morale 12.

Xenophon: Armour 18, 16th level Magic-User, 32 hp, Morale 12. Spells as a 16th level Magic-User.

He has a full complement except for two expended first level spells, one expended second level spell, one expended fourth level spell, and one expended seventh level spell. His spells should be generated randomly, except that one first level spell must be *Bookspeak*. Whatever spells he possesses are also the spells in his spellbook.

Note that any spells used in the past are not re-memorized. Xenophon has no drive to do so.

Treasure

2- Experiment Platform

- ✧ Shelf of chemicals (laboratory value of 1,000sp) 2 elder thing corpses worth 100sp each. They can be considered to have a laboratory value of 1,000sp with the usual penalties for adding to a laboratory.
- ✧ Tyrannosaurus Rex Skull (250sp value or add 1,000sp to the value of a laboratory).



3- Workshop

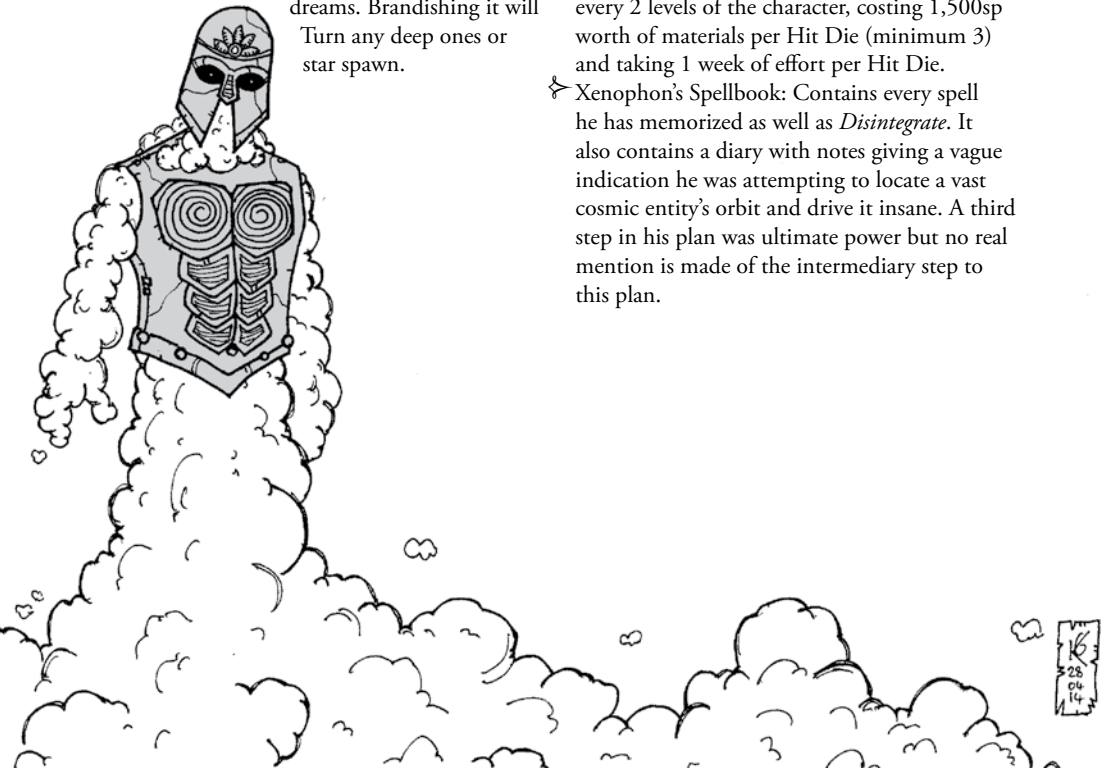
- ✧ Vrill healing staff: A sleek tube of silvery metal (aluminium), 5 feet long, with a conical topper. There are no seams visible. Six (out of a maximum possible ten) doses of vrill liquid are in the staff. Using the staff requires a successful Constitution and Intelligence check to activate the staff; touching someone at this point with the staff expends one dose of vrill liquid and heals 4d8 hp. Failing the Intelligence check causes the staff to deal 1d4 damage instead. Failing the Constitution check deals 1d4 exploding damage (on a roll of 4, add another d4 to the damage) to the wielder of the staff.
- ✧ Elder Sign Amulet: A small circle of green stone about 4 inches in radius and an inch thick with an unusual symbol etched into it. The stone has a gold band cast around it, attached to a thin golden chain. While the chain can easily be broken, the stone itself is unusually durable and strong. It gives a +3 to all saving throws against extraterrestrial or supernatural forces, and a 10% experience point penalty any session it is worn due to disturbing dreams. Brandishing it will Turn any deep ones or star spawn.

4- Observation Deck

- ✧ Replica Antikythera Mechanism worth 1,000sp. It counts as 1,500sp value towards a library and laboratory, but cannot more than double the value of either.

5- Study

- ✧ Array of rock books that at first glance resemble normal rocks. They detail the pre-Sub-men civilization, along with some technical information. It cannot be read unless one has the knowledge of the pre-Sub-men civilization, or magical means, such as the spell *Bookspeak*. If one can read them, the forbidden knowledge has a library value of 10,000s.p. with the usual rules for looting a library.
- ✧ Lost Hekhalot and Merkabah tomes with ancient astronaut connotations, worth 3,000sp with equal value as a library aid and no value loss when added for the first time as they are lost tomes.
- ✧ Hebrew text on golem creation; a Magic-User or Cleric can create golems with 1 Hit Die for every 2 levels of the character, costing 1,500sp worth of materials per Hit Die (minimum 3) and taking 1 week of effort per Hit Die.
- ✧ Xenophon's Spellbook: Contains every spell he has memorized as well as *Disintegrate*. It also contains a diary with notes giving a vague indication he was attempting to locate a vast cosmic entity's orbit and drive it insane. A third step in his plan was ultimate power but no real mention is made of the intermediary step to this plan.



6. Forward Port

✧ A semi-functional Air Loom. It can target an area 1 mile in radius, but will have no effect unless calibrated to a target by keeping detailed notes on their behaviour to deduce their mental state and habits. If the target is well known (through observation or historical records), there is a 1% chance per hour of operation to drive a target into paranoid schizophrenia lasting for several weeks. Constant bombardment for several months will make the condition permanent.

However, because it is in such bad condition, it has a 1 in 6 chance of failing in any given hour and requiring weeks of repair. If the Air Loom fails in such a manner it will emit a wave of static that forces those within 30 feet of the Air Loom to make a saving throw versus Magic. Failure causes seizures for 1d6 rounds unless the roll was a natural 1, in which case the victim goes into a permanent and violent psychosis.

Anyone who has read the rock books in Xenophon's library could attempt to fully repair the Air Loom with the Tinker skill over the course of a few days. Failing this roll will permanently destroy a fragile and irreplaceable component of the Air Loom, rendering it useless.



Chapter 6- Epilogue

Or is it? The Murder Coven Roll d6 on the present-day PCs' arrival to the island:

- 1 Nothing new beyond existing tags, including no NORSE SETTLEMENT even if it should be present.
- 2-3 Nothing new beyond existing tags.
- 4 *Damnable Irish monks*: The lair is bricked up (removing any LAIR IS BREACHED tag). There is a small abandoned stone Celtic Christian church (one room) near a hot spring. Wild goats now roam the island which is choked with raspberry bushes (does not negate the FOR-ESTED tag; they may both be in effect).
- 5 *Previous Adventurers*: Any treasure stashed on the island is gone (i.e., anything the historical party took but did not survive to use, it had to have been already touched with one possible exception). These were careful adventurers, and they didn't trigger anything new in terms of tags but there are signs of their camp near the drawbridge as well as a small shallow grave for a dead henchman. They destroyed all of the statues in the foyer. IF THE MACHINE IS DOWN tag was in effect, but not TEMPORAL PROBLEM, they also destroyed any remaining undead repair teams and took all of the silver from the maintenance room and all of the silver from the outer ring of the machine. They also only came here two weeks before the adventurers got the original book (if that is feasible for them to have had the book before the PCs, otherwise they randomly stumbled on it 35 years ago.).
- 6 Ha Ha! This was all an elaborate lie for a murder coven to lure the present-day PCs to their death. The island is a cold barren rock as originally described in the journal (which just to be clear is in this case a work of fiction). The obelisk is still there but on the shore the PCs will just see a large number of torches light up alongside some chanting. A kraken will attempt to sink the PCs' boat.

Kraken: Armour 14, 20 Hit Dice, 3 attacks a round for 1d6 shp (ship hit points, so multiply the damage by 10 if it hits a PC), Morale 7.

The island has few small huts and 30 cultists armed with torches and daggers. The head cultist is a 2nd level Magic-User with random spells. They have four small skiffs each able to hold 10 people. They are not terribly sea-worthy but could make a journey to Iceland. To be clear, although the island exists it is not supernaturally warm. There is no lair and may not even have ever been a Xenophon. It is all bullshit.

If the historical PCs got off the island and had a shipwreck, there is a small village near the site of the alleged shipwreck, of secret pre-roman pagans looking to secretly sacrifice the PCs in a burning effigy. They will offer to work as labourers for the regular price, but as the whole town is in on it they will attempt to drug the PCs at the inn, or if they are too paranoid for that, they will result to drugging any supplies sold. The town has 120 people in it.



NORSE SETTLEMENT

If the island has the FORESTED tag in effect, but does not have both the GATE IS UNLOCKED tag and the LAIR IS BREACHED tag (i.e., one is OK, but not both conditions) there is/was a NORSE SETTLEMENT. This may have caused a version of the TEMPORAL PROBLEM leading to the LIVE AT VALHALLA tag unless Irish monks had bricked up the lair or either the TEMPORAL PROBLEM tag or THE MACHINE IS DOWN tag was already in effect.

Assuming the Irish Monks did not arrive before them (random chance). The Norse brought with them sheep (who now are wild) and had a small village with 20 houses and a wooden great hall for theirthane. They were pagans and had a small shrine to Odin as well. Then Hans Erikson, notable local hero/raider went into the lair (Level 5 Fighter). He caused (if not previously) THE LAIR IS BREACHED, THE GATE IS UNLOCKED, and THE MACHINE IS WONKY. If TEMPORAL PROBLEM or THE MACHINE IS DOWN tags were already in effect, luck had it that he died and no one ever followed him in. Eventually they abandoned the town due to the arrival of the Giant Salamanders from the lair.

If neither of those two tags were in effect, then he survived and also returned with the following if not hidden by the historical party:

- ✧ The gold bowl from the balcony.
- ✧ The silk curtains.
- ✧ The silver maintenance wire.
- ✧ The gold plated glass funnel.

Upon returning to town, 37 minutes later a naked version of him stumbled into town. There were cries of witchcraft and talk of offending the gods, and of Loki cursing them. Long story short, the Norse abandoned their settlement, but the island is home to a fairly stable population of Hans Eriksons who stumble confused from the lair into an abandoned island (thinking only minutes have passed), full of other dead and dying Hans Eriksons. What hell is this?

Not hell at all! At some point over the years a belief randomly popped into the head of one of the Hanses that he died in the lair and this is Valhalla because he died as a righteous warrior. It is constant battle with the only other person as awesome as him, himself! As Hans thought this up, and everyone else was an exact duplicate of Hans, this seemed completely reasonable to every Hans. It is currently passed from Hans to Hans in oral tradition. Over the years a large number of clubs, Salamander skull helmets and stone throwing axes have been built, currently passed from Hans to Hans through combat. And hey, if someone else shows up they must be in Valhalla too! Finally someone else as awesome as Hans to fight! (Note that Hanses encountered still in the lair don't have this mindset yet.)

If the Irish Monks arrived before the Norse did (see the d6 roll), then the lair was never broken into and eventually the Norse settlement became just another Scandinavian outpost—a small fishing/whaling village of 10 households. The old Celtic Christian church is abandoned still, but there is a small wooden church on the shore with the simple wooden plank houses. Trade is sparse, but rural goods can be bought here in small amounts (no more than 100sp worth in a season unless you are buying fish, whale or sheep products).



What was Xenophon up to? A summary.

99% of the time, this won't matter. But if for some reason the players get into a situation where this information should be available to them, here it is:

Xenophon was a Greek wizard in Damascus when the first Jewish revolt took place. He had grown powerful and mastered both the darkest secrets of sorcery available (which is why the corrupted Orphic shrine and undead are present) and the mechanical secrets of Archimedes' vault.

But in his adventures he found hints at a greater cosmic magic through the looted library of a Jewish mystic. A raid deep into a series of caves in the Arabian desert found an abandoned Sub-men outpost. No machines or tools were recovered, but Xenophon deduced how to read the rock books with simple magics (Bookspeak).

When the revolt took place Xenophon had already learned of the Island's location and its vril deposits. His notes on some of the more ancient denizens of the world would later be found by Arab wizards after the fall of Rome. To make his plan come together he needed vast amounts of silver and additional tomes which were heavily guarded in Jerusalem.

When Titus sacked the city he had his moment. After robbing the city and becoming a wanted criminal, he and his followers sailed out of the Mediterranean, past Londinium and even past the farthest reaches of the known world. The "island" was just a small rocky peak jutting out of the water; he raised it from the depths with a scroll taken from Jerusalem, said to be

penned by Raziel himself. He used his magic to carve the tunnels through the peak in days, and crafted an array of golems to satisfy his vanity and help defend from any rivals. His workers set up the rest of the facility.

He built the machine to power a portal to deep space. The machine was to be powered with vril harvested from the cave plants that leached it from the rock.

Using the knowledge of the Sub-men from the rock books, he was eventually able to capture and then begin repairing an Air Loom. With the Antikythera Mechanism and notes from the Jewish Mystical Tomes he was charting the theoretical orbit of a vast interstellar being best described as a demon or mad god. The portal allowed him to get within Air Loom range and in theory begin to warp its mind. But this was proving difficult and time consuming. He slew his men and turned them into undead servitors to extend his supplies further. Still running out of supplies he concocted a plan to transfer his mind into a body of mist and shadows. He transferred his memories into the body, but nothing more. No drive, no spark. And so it stands there in the workshop, its only real drive being survival.

Perhaps at some point in the aeons to come it might begin to develop some form of true sentience, but not before the sun turns red. And the Obelisk to Dagon carved from red granite? As it has nothing to do with Xenophon I guess you could say its a bit of a red herring, eh? eh? I'll let myself out.



Replacement Terms:

Vril:

Vril is a fictitious material that is the source of the unstoppable power of the underground antediluvian races (at least according to the Victorian crackpots). Your game may already have a similar material in use, and it can easily be substituted in this adventure with warp-stone, lyrium, phazite, or B-Movie Uranium for example. It should be powerful, mineral, and potentially cause mutations.

Sub-Men:

If Sub-men aren't a concept you'd like to use, they can be replaced with any subterranean race of hostile beings. Dark Elves, Evil Dwarves, Morlocks or some sort of Goblin all work. They need be capable of technology, be in decline, and have indecipherable tomes (rock books) and an insanity creation device (Air Loom).

Hollow Earth:

The Hollow Earth is a huge, dinosaur filled jungle heated by a never setting internal sun. Ancient races duel on the back of pterodactyls for ownership of crumbling ruins largely swallowed by either the verdant jungles or lava flows from the many active volcanoes. If this is not what you picture (or have established) is down below, you can easily swap this out for the mythic underworld, or the kingdom of the mole people, or the actual gates of hell, whatever works. Ideally it should be where the prehistoric Salamanders escape from.

Elder Things:

I don't know why you'd avoid using Elder Things, but if you are dead set on hating either clichés, fun, or both, then these too can be easily swapped out. All you really need to do is have some form of pre-human civilization that is now gone. If they ruled after dinosaurs roamed the earth, they are probably too recent. Their civilization should be old. Ridiculously old. Impossibly old. Old as balls.

Tags:

- ☐ FERAL DOGS
- ☐ FORESTED
- ☐ THE GATE IS UNLOCKED
- ☐ LAIR IS BREACHED
- ☐ LIVE AT VALHALLA
- ☐ THE MACHINE IS DOWN
- ☐ THE MACHINE IS WONKY
- ☐ NORSE SETTLEMENT
- ☐ THE PIPES ARE BLOCKED
- ☐ RATS
- ☐ SHRINE IS SACKED
- ☐ TEMPORAL PROBLEM





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