

Grimmgate



An Introductory Adventure for Swords & Wizardry
Characters level 1-3
By Matt Finch

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Grimmsgate

An introductory adventure for the Swords & Wizardry™ fantasy role-playing game, for 4-8 characters level 1-3.

Introduction

If you're already an old hand at using adventure modules, and you don't need any explanation about what's going on here, then feel free to skip forward to the rest of the adventure. On the other hand, if this is your first time reading a published adventure, welcome! You might need a few words of introduction to get you started with your first time as a Referee, but fear not – *Swords & Wizardry* isn't complicated, and neither is running an adventure. Presumably you've taken at least a quick look at the *Swords & Wizardry* rulebook, and you've got the idea of how the game is played. The non-Referee players create characters in a fantasy world, and as the players tell the Referee what their characters are doing, the Referee describes the results. Using dice, a few rules, and this back-and-forth exchange of information, questions, and descriptions, the story of the characters emerges as they explore the world, fight monsters, gain treasure, and become more powerful. Because the Referee is not in control of the characters, and since the players aren't in control of the Referee's world, the epic story that emerges will contain surprises for everyone.

As the Referee, one of your most difficult tasks is preparing the adventures that will confront your players. When everyone sits down at the gaming table, the players are going to be asking you for information about the fantasy world: "What do we see?" "Do we know any rumors?" "Where should we go?" For many Referees, preparing the adventure ahead of time is part of the fun of the game. Other Referees enjoy playing the game, but prefer to use pre-prepared modules like this one. This adventure is a good introduction to running a *Swords & Wizardry* adventure even if you never plan on using a published adventure module again. One tip to start out with, though. If you plan on writing your own adventures, they don't need to be as detailed as what you read here: all you really need are quick notes to jog your memory.

Enjoy!

If you are going to be a player in this adventure, and you are not the Referee, READ NO FURTHER!

Background

The Present Day

Deep in the wooded wilderness, the village of Grimmsgate is an outpost town on a seldom-traveled trail, right at the edge of nowhere. The village's half-ruined temple of Law, dilapidated inn, drunken blacksmith, exiled trader and a few fur-trappers are enough to keep the bloody-minded denizens of the dark forest at bay, but nobody really expects the village to still be there in another ten years. The woods have become too dangerous for the trappers who once caught animals for fur, and merchants no longer travel the poorly-maintained road because of bandits. None of the nearby barons are willing to accept responsibility for the village, because the one and only attempt that was ever made to subdue this part of the wilderness, a patrolling troop of knights and soldiers, completely disappeared in the forest without leaving a trace. When the search parties also failed to return, civilization gave up on Grimmsgate and departed, making no further efforts to stave off the slow advance of Chaos.

Imprisonment of the Demon

The slow deterioration in this area is rooted in events long ago, at a place that is now referred to as the Elder Temple, a partially-collapsed hillside not far from the village of Grimmsgate. In the almost-mythic past, a group of three paladins killed a manifestation of a demon named Vuod the Putrefactor. They burned the body and placed the ashes into a magically-sealed jar made of green glass. The jar was given over to the priests of Law at the Elder Temple, and left under their protection. For as long as the demon's ashes remained within the protective jar, the demon would not be able to manifest itself again in the material plane of existence.

Arumvel's Crime

For centuries the ashes of Vuod were kept safe by the priests of the Temple, until the unforeseen day when one of the priests, the acolyte Arumvel, became so curious about the forbidden jar on the pedestal in the Temple that he decided it could do no harm to at least touch it. The moment Arumvel reached out his hand and made contact with the demon's prison, the ashes of Vuod the Putrefactor exploded outward and coated Arumvel's body, destroying most of his soul and taking complete possession of the too-curious priest. With Arumvel possessed by the demon, the other priests were taken by surprise and either killed or enslaved to Arumvel's will. A few of the Temple servants managed to leave warnings before they died, but the bloody events of the Temple's desecration left no survivors. After the carnage, Vuod the Putrefactor escaped from the material plane, leaving Arumvel behind – still alive, but with his body and soul horribly warped. Slowly, the wilderness has encroached into the area where the Elder Temple once held it at bay.

For over two hundred years after the slaughter at the Elder Temple, Arumvel the Wicked remained quiet, resting and regaining his strength. Now, with his assembled minions and the strength of centuries, he has finally turned his eye upon the lands beyond his lair.

The Rise of Arumvel

Arumvel the Wicked, horribly altered during his possession by the demon Vuod, is dedicated to the cause of Chaos. Unlike many servants of the dark powers, he is only slightly interested in conquest or power; instead, ruin, decline, and decay are his cherished goals. His influence upon the area around the Elder Temple has been subtle but very destructive over time, as trade in the area has been choked off, the Temple in Grimmsgate has become less and less able to protect the village, and monsters have begun to return to the area. These monsters included a band of mogura-jin looking for a base of operations and new sources of human prey; the mogura-jin are a race of cannibalistic mole-men, descended and degenerated from human beings. Seeing an opportunity, Arumvel recruited the mogura-jin to be his followers, supporting their raids and depredations with his own demonic and magical powers. Even worse, Arumvel began to create more of these degenerated beings by capturing and transforming humans into new stock that would increase the numbers of mole-men in his ranks. These cursed humans are only partially transformed into mole-men, but their offspring will be condemned to the same cursed existence as the true mogura-jin.

Referee Notes

Before running this adventure, read all the way through it to get familiarized with the different parts. The first section of the module is about the Village of Grimmsgate, which is where the characters arrive at the start of play. After the map and key for Grimmsgate, the next section is the wilderness map, describing the area in the vicinity of the village, the wandering monsters that may be found while exploring, and various

GRIMMSGATE: THE VILLAGE

interesting locations. The third section is the main adventure area for the module, the forbidding Elder Temple where Arumvel the Wicked makes his lair.

The Elder Temple contains several monsters that take only half damage when hit by non-magical weapons. Spells, magic weapons, and holy water are all ways to inflict damage on demons and undead. Holy water inflicts 1d4 hit points of damage if a bottle is thrown on such creatures. It is worthwhile to remind the players of the properties of holy water, especially if they are new players that might not know holy water can be used as a weapon in this way.

There are several reasons that might bring the characters to the Village of Grimmsgate, and if you choose to give the players some direction you can assign one of these missions to the characters ahead of time. Otherwise, simply tell the players that their characters are in search of treasure and adventure ... then wait and see what they do.

1. The characters have been charged by the priests of Law in another area to discover what has become of the Elder Temple. Unless the party is made up primarily of hero-types, there will likely need to be a financial reward involved if the characters are successful.

2. The characters are hired by a nearby baron to see if a small group of adventurers can do a better job of discovering and rooting out the evil in the area than the (already failed) military approach using knights and men-at-arms.

3. One of the characters has been deeded one of the abandoned houses in Grimmsgate, and the party is traveling to the village to see if it would be a good place as a base of operations for an adventuring career. The character might have won the house in a card game, inherited it, or bought it cheaply from someone who left the village due to the growing sense of hopelessness and defeat there.

Start

After several days of traveling, you and your companions are at last approaching the small village of Grimmsgate. The narrow road that leads for miles through this forest is overgrown with weeds, beginning to blend and disappear entirely back into the wilderness. Indeed, everything you have seen since the last real signs of civilization has had the same feeling of slow retreat and disintegration. More than once, you have passed by strange signs and indications – bones arranged in a circle around a human skull; a small, red-stained wicker basket by the side of the road; an unmarked grave in the dappled shade of the trees.

Finally, though, you see ahead of you the distinctive hill upon which the village of Grimmsgate is built. At the top, there is a small cluster of buildings – you can just barely see the half-collapsed roof of the old Temple of Law that was once said to be the pride of the village. Even at this distance, the place looks run down. Although the village is not fortified, the hill is very steep and only one path leads up to the top.

Do you head toward the village?

The Village of Grimmsgate

The village sits atop a steep hill, with a single pathway leading around the hill's natural curve and up to a gatehouse that protects the buildings at the summit. There are three farmhouse-type buildings along the path, but the rest of the village appears to be located behind the gatehouse, so that any attackers would have to take the gates before they could reach the regular buildings.

Rumor Table

Assuming the players tell you that their characters ask some questions in Grimmsgate, the answers will automatically yield the following two pieces of information about the area:

“Seems like things have been going downhill for years, here in Grimmsgate. Ever since the barons lost a big patrol in the forest, they haven't sent anyone since. Seems like we lost a fur trapper or a farmer every month for a while, and now there aren't enough people to keep things going.”

“There is an old temple out there somewhere nearby. It's called the Elder Temple because it was before we had a temple here in the village. Something bad happened there a long time ago.”

Once this basic information is conveyed to the players, there are a few more rumors that might be floating around in Grimmsgate. You might choose to give the party 1d3+1 of these additional rumors (rolling randomly on a d6 to see which ones they hear), or, if the players themselves are new to the game, you might decide to tell them all these rumors as a way of helping them along a bit. Note that rumors 4 and 5 contradict each other; #4 is technically the truth, but it is not the whole story and is actually a bit misleading.

Roll 1d6 to determine which rumor the characters hear:

- 1 Two nearby farmers, Albraith and Etarra, disappeared from their farmhouse only a couple of days ago.
- 2 To find the Elder Temple, go south downriver from the ford.
- 3 The Elder Temple was a building on a hill, but now all that is left is the catacombs underneath the ruins.
- 4 Someone freed a demon in the Elder Temple, and it killed all the priests before it disappeared.
- 5 Someone freed a demon in the Elder Temple, and the demon is still there to this very day.
- 6 Something must be keeping travelers away from Harkin's Ford up to the northeast, because no one has come to the village from that direction in several days.

Map Key

G-1. Abandoned Farmhouses

Three stone farmhouses were once built beside the pathway that leads up to the top of Grimmsgate Hill, but they appear to be abandoned now. One of them has a wooden shutter that bangs open and closed in the wind. A cat sits in one of the dark windows, watching you as you pass by.

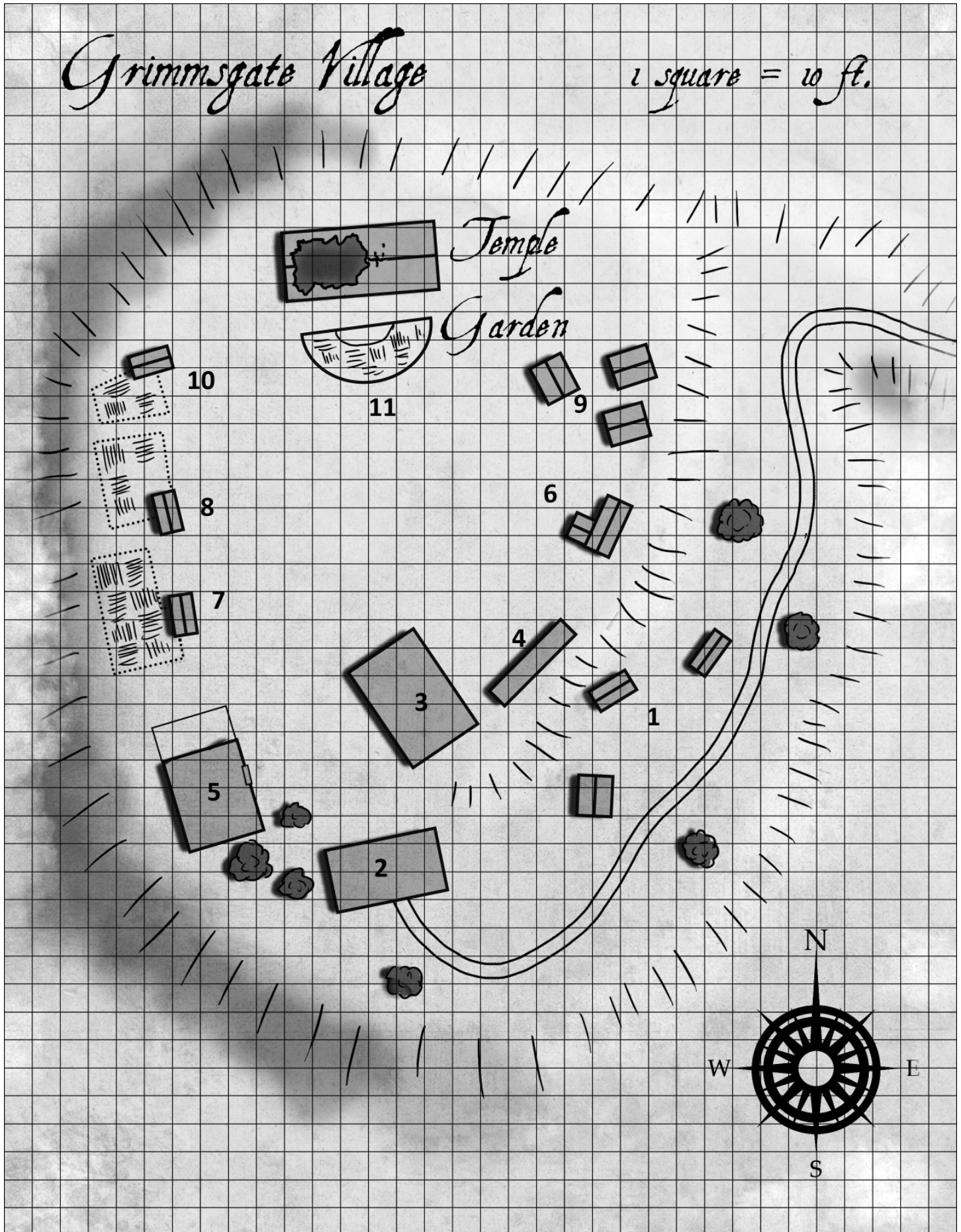
The cat is a regular cat, but it is feral and will run away if anyone tries to approach it.

G-2. Grimm's Gatehouse

The trail up to the hilltop is blocked by a half-ruined gatehouse. The gates have fallen off and have been pushed to the side to keep them from blocking the entrance. However, the rusting iron portcullis has been lowered, and there is a guard standing atop the building with his crossbow leveled at you.

G-3. Silver Dagger Inn

A large building with a wooden sign out front painted to represent a silver dagger. It has recently been painted, and shows other signs of attempted repairs, but this is obviously an old building and the repairs are not expertly done. As you draw nearer to the inn, one of the wooden roof shingles comes loose in the breeze and slides down, falling to the ground in the overgrown grass.



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The Silver Dagger Inn has six rooms for rent upstairs (1gp/night), each of which can sleep as many as three people if two share a bed and the third sleeps on the floor. On the ground floor, there is a common room where meals are served; the common room serves as a tavern for the rest of the village as well, for on most nights there are no guests staying at the Inn at all. The rooms are clean, but all of them have ceilings that leak if it rains, and the floorboards squeak.

The innkeeper of the Silver Dagger is Ralmar Prath, a tall, thin fellow with a shiny, bald head. His wife Miralda and his two sons Ullin and Jark help him with the various tasks of running the inn and the stable.

Ralmar Prath (Ftr5): HD 5d8hp; HP 25; AC 4[15]; Atk 1 longsword (1d8) or longbow (1d6); Move 12; Save 10; AL L; CL/XP 5/240; Special: 5 attacks against opponents with 1HD or less.

Miralda, Ullin and Jark (Normal Humans): HD 1d6hp; HP 6, 4, 5; AC 9[10]; Atk 1 dagger (1d4); Move 12; Save 18; AL L, L, N; CL/XP B/10; Special: None.

Ralmar's room contains a strongbox with 320gp, 426sp, and a small emerald (200gp).

G-4. Stable

This long, stone building has broad double doors and smells of horses and manure. There is no sign on the front, but this is obviously the village's stable. The stones in one corner of the building appear to be coming loose, but as far as you can tell at a glance, the building is still structurally sound.

The stables are owned by the temple, but Ralmar Prath of the Silver Dagger manages them on the temple's behalf. There are three horses and five mules kept here.

G-5. The Emporium (Merchant)

This is a well-tended stone building with a roof of wooden shingles. A sign over the door reads: "The Hilltop Emporium."

The Emporium is a combination of a store and trading post, the headquarters of Pantro Panga's tiny mercantile empire. Pantro is an extremely flamboyant and somewhat manic person with big dreams of becoming a great merchant owning caravans and fleets of ships. Unfortunately, he is in what might be the worst possible location to succeed in such a plan. He owns a mule (in the stables), the small amount of merchandise in his store, and not much else.

The characters can buy any equipment from the standard equipment list here, but quantities will be limited. Pantro has only one suit of plate mail, for example. He will buy anything valuable that the characters bring to him, with the hopes of either selling it here or shipping it by caravan to a town or even a city.

At some point, Pantro can easily become a source of adventures, especially if you decide that he is running out of cash and needs to take all these things he has been buying from the characters into a town for sale. At that point he might hire the characters to guard him and the caravan (he will rent the other mules in the village stable for the journey). He would be expecting to join up with a larger caravan within a day or so, but if the rendezvous fails due to a delay somewhere, he would likely choose to go on alone if he has guards. Guarding a caravan through the wilderness and past the threat of bandits and monsters can make for an excellent adventure.



G-6. "Drunken" Smith

The building has a blacksmith's forge in the front. A sign on the side of the building reads "Blacksmith," but it is so faded that you can barely read it.

The blacksmith of Grimmsgate is nicknamed "Drunken" Smith, and the nickname describes him well. When he is sober, he can shoe horses, repair armor and weapons, and even make swords and daggers. When he is not sober, his creations and repairs tend to be off center, bent, or slightly twisted.

G-7. Stevin's Farmhouse

This building is in excellent repair, and the stone wall around the garden is painted a cheery yellow color.

This farmhouse belongs to Stevin Farmer. Stevin's farm is a half hour walk from the bottom of the hill.

G-8. Farmer Ezrac's House

This half-timbered house leans slightly to one side, and there are some holes in the plaster.

Farmer Ezrac is not friendly to visitors, and generally keeps to himself even with the other villagers.

G-9. Abandoned Houses

Three farmhouses are clustered together here, all of them obviously abandoned.

If the players think of it, their characters could actually rent or buy one of these houses from the Temple (Rhall). The price to rent would be 30gp per month, and the cost to buy would be 600gp (no farmland would come with the purchase or rental of the house, just the building itself).

G-10. Trake Farmhouse

This building is a farmhouse with two cows in the stone-walled enclosure behind the building.

An elderly couple named Yorbin and Melly Trake live here. Their three adult children have all left the area to seek their fortunes elsewhere.

G-11. Temple of Law

This large building is obviously a Temple of Law, but it is in terrible disrepair. Parts of the roof have collapsed into the building, and the garden in front of the temple is choked with weeds.

An old cleric named Rhall is the last remaining priest here, although he has a letter claiming that an acolyte will be sent to him from a larger temple "soon." Rhall has been camping out in the semi-ruin ever since the roof started to fall in. He has been trying to figure out how to restore some kind of spirit to the villagers, but so far he has been unsuccessful at fighting off the sense of defeat that has been eating away at the community for years. He has begun to suspect that there are supernatural forces at work, and it has crossed his mind that the old stories about the Elder Temple might have something to do with the way that Grimmsgate seems to be dying away.

Although Rhall is unable to do any sort of adventuring – he lost an arm several years ago, and his lungs are weak – he can be of invaluable aid to the party as long as they are helping the village. He owns several scrolls of clerical spells, some of which are more powerful than he could cast without the help of the scroll. In one case, the scrolls could literally mean the difference between life and death. The scrolls are: *raise dead* x2, *remove curse*, and *cure blindness*. Rhall will not allow adventurers to take the scrolls with them, but he will use the spells to restore them if they return battered from an expedition to help the village.

Rhall (Clr4): HD 4d6hp; HP 20; AC 4[15]; Atk 1 mace (1d6); Move 12; Save 12; AL L; CL/XP 5/240; Special: Spells (2/1), +2 save vs. paralysis and poison, turn undead. Spells: *Cure light wounds* x2, *Speak with animals*.

The Wilderness

The wilderness map shows the area around the village of Grimmsgate, including the location of the Elder Temple. One square on the map represents a half mile, and it will take the party about a half hour to travel across a square. The terrain here is rough, and this movement rate assumes that the party is also moving slowly and carefully.

Map Key

W-1. Village of Grimmsgate

The village of Grimmsgate is described in its own section. If the module is being placed into an existing campaign, you, as the Referee, could certainly choose to change the name of the village or to create your own.

W-2. The Elder Temple

The Elder Temple is described in its own section.

W-3. Harkin's Ford

Harkin's Ford is a shallow point in the river, where it is possible to cross without a bridge or ferry. An ogre has recently taken up residence near the ford, finding that it is a good place to attack small groups of travelers. The ogre is careful not to attack groups of more than three people, but anyone coming to the ford and looking around will find traces of the ogre's presence: a skull here and there, a mortar and pestle where the ogre grinds bones, and even its pile of sleeping furs if they range far enough around the area. If the party stays long enough, the ogre will lose patience and come out from its hiding place to attack these interlopers. If the party is simply approaching the ford before heading south, following directions to the Elder Temple, they are not likely to be stopped by the ogre.

Ogre of Harkin's Ford: HD 4+1; HP 21; AC 5[14]; Atk 1 weapon (1d10+1); Move 9; Save 13; AL C; CL/XP 4/120; Special: None.

Treasure: The ogre carries a bag that contains two human skulls, a gallon of beer, a haunch of venison, 250gp, a jeweled dagger (100gp), and an ivory drinking horn (100gp).

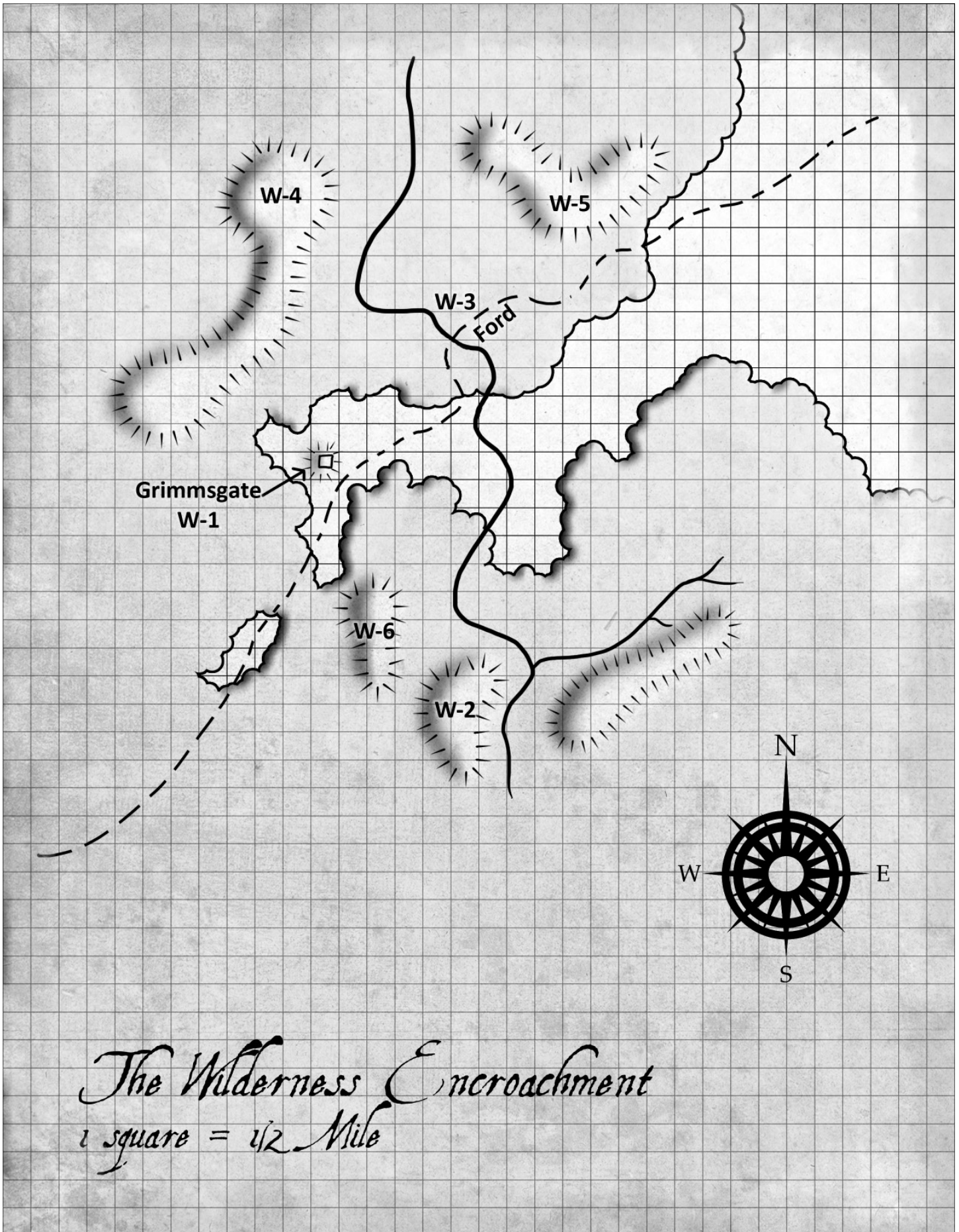
W-4. Young Black Dragon

This is the lair of the young black dragon Iscarax, a recent arrival in the area. Iscarax's lair is a very small cave, and the dragon intends to find a deeper lair or perhaps a swamp in the future. For the time being, though, the young dragon has found itself drawn to this area for some reason it does not understand, and it intends to stay for a while. The reason why Iscarax has been drawn to this area, of course, is due to the influence of Arumvel.

Young Black Dragon (6HD): HD 6 (12hp); AC 2[17]; Atk 2 claws (1d4), 1 bite (3d6); Move 9 (Fly 24); Save 11; AL C; CL/XP 5/240; Special: Spits acid.



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Treasure: As a young dragon, Iscarax has not yet assembled a very impressive hoard of treasure, although it is enough to allow a peasant to retire. The hoard includes 250gp, 337sp, 1,452cp, a golden chalice (100gp), 3 small rubies (100gp each), and a +1 shield.

W-5. Bandit Camp

This area is the camp of a small group of bandits, led by a level 2 fighter named Yarithor Bloodmark.

Yarithor Bloodmark (Ftr2): HD 2; HP 10; AC 4[15]; Atk 1 longsword (1d8) or longbow (1d6); Move 12; Save 13; AL C; CL/XP 2/30; Special: 2 attacks against 1 or fewer than 1HD creatures.

Bandits (4): HD 1; HP 1, 5, 4, 8; AC 7[12]; Atk 1 longsword (1d8) or longbow (1d6); Move 12; Save 17; AL C; CL/XP 1/15; Special: None.

Treasure: In addition to the value of the bandits' armor and weapons, each of the bandits carries a belt pouch with 1d6+1gp. Yarithor has 110gp and a medallion worth 25gp.

W-6. Hill of Statues

Although there is no particular threat on this hilltop, the circle of statues is unusual. There are five statues of hooded figures here, very worn by many seasons of rain and snow. Each wears a holy symbol of Law (the players will not know it, but these are statues of the 5 high priests who ruled the Elder Temple before it was destroyed).

The Elder Temple

Wandering Monsters

Check for wandering monsters once every three turns. There is only a 1 in 10 chance of encountering a wandering monster – on a roll of 1, check the table below to see what has been encountered. A result of “special” means that the monster is determined by which set of caves the characters are in (each cave entrance has its special monster included at the front of the entrance description).

Wandering Monsters (1 in 10 chance)

Die Roll (1d10)	Encounter
1	Manes Demon
2-3	Giant Rats (1d3)
4-6	Mogura-jin (mole-man) (1)
7-8	Cursed humans (1d2)
9-10	Giant Centipedes (small, non-lethal) (1d3)

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

Giant Rats (1d3): HD 1d4hp; AC 7[12]; Atk 1 bite (1d3); Move 12; Save 18; AL N; CL/XP A/5; Special: 5% are diseased.

Mogura-jin (Cannibal Mole-man) (1): HD 2; AC 7[12]; Atk 2 claws (1d4); Move 9 (burrowing); Save 16; AL C; CL/XP 2/30; Special: Blinded by bright light.

Cursed Humans (1d2): HD 1; AC 7[12]; Atk 2 claws (1d4); Move 9; Save 17; AL C; CL/XP 1/15; Special: Blinded by bright light.

Giant Centipedes (small, non-lethal) (1d3): HD 1d2hp; AC 9[10]; Atk 1 bite (0 + poison); Move 13; Save 18; AL N; CL/XP B/10; Special: non-lethal poison bite (+4 save).

Map Key

T-1. Slopes of the Elder Temple

A rocky hill rises steeply beside the trail; a few massive blocks of dark stone at the crown making it clear that this is the site of the Elder Temple. No buildings remain, although several blocks of masonry are scattered here and there on the hillside as if they had been tossed around by an unthinkable powerful force. Two small groves of trees have taken hold near the bottom of the slope, and you can see three cave entrances into the hill itself. The lower two entrances are doorways crafted from carved stone. The highest entrance, near the top of the hill, is quite different. It is very large, wide enough for several people to enter side by side, and it is closed by what appears to be a metal door.

T-2. Servants' Quarter Tunnel Entrance

This cave entrance is built of plain, undecorated stones. Light from the outside shines just far enough into the hallway to show that the entrance passageway makes a “T” junction after twenty feet or so, with passages leading to the left and right. Where the passageway ends, you can see that a face is carved into the stone, but you can't see any more details without entering the tunnel.

For details on the inside of the tunnel, see Location T-4.

T-3. Guards' Entrance

This tunnel entrance is hidden away in a grove of young trees that have probably grown since the time when the tunnel was first excavated. Over the top of the entrance, a shield has been carved into the stone. There is no device upon it, but at the edges of the carving you can see what appear to be flecks of white paint.

This entrance into the underground complex of the Elder Temple was primarily used by the temple's guards. As characters enter tunnels, check to make sure that the party is carrying light sources and that they have established a marching order.

T-4. Entryway

The entrance from the outside leads to an area that is a landing halfway down a broad staircase. The steps go up to the left, and down to the right. In front of you on the wall of the landing, there is a bas-relief carving in the wall, the face of a bearded man.

As characters enter tunnels, check to make sure that the party is carrying light sources and that they have established a marching order. In this entrance, for example, marching order is important because it may determine which character falls into the pit trap at Location T-5.

T-5. Pit Trap

READ THIS DESCRIPTION ONLY IF THE CHARACTERS ARE SPECIFICALLY CHECKING THE CEILING AS THEY GO DOWN THE STEPS!

Your light illuminates a dark spot on the ceiling about the size of a large coin.

The dark spot is a recessed button in the ceiling that will lock the pit trap in place so that the trapdoor will not swing open when weight is placed on it. Since the ceiling is ten feet high over the top of the steps, the adventurers will need to use some sort of tool to press it.

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Unless the characters probe the floor ahead with a staff or pole, press the overhead button, or do something else that would detect it, the covered pit trap here is likely to catch at least one of them. The pit is ten feet deep, and has a hinged covering painted to look like the flagstones of the dungeon floor. Each person who steps onto this concealed trapdoor has a 4 in 6 chance to fall into the pit for 1d6 points of damage.

T-6. Servants' Quarters

When you open the door and peer into this room, you see that there are five skeletons lying on the floor, each one of them surrounded by pieces of rotting wood and cloth.

The skeletons here are all normal skeletons (not animated). These are servants of the Elder Temple that were enslaved by Arumvel the Wicked. The pieces of rotting wood and cloth are all that remains of the beds and other simple furniture that was once in the room – if the characters dig through the bits and pieces, they will find several rusted nails but nothing of value.

T-7. Pantry

This room has several wooden shelves around the walls, but they are badly rotted and most have collapsed. Apparently the room was looted at some time in the past, for there is nothing on the shelves and only some broken glass and pieces of pottery left on the floor. Rather ominously, there is a human skull in one corner of the room.

Searching through the trash on the floor allows the characters to find 2gp and 4cp. Searching takes a full turn, and has a 1 in 6 chance to alert the cursed humans in Location T-8.

T-8. The Cannibals' Kitchen

Note: it is possible for the characters to enter this room through the regular door or through the secret passageway from Location T-18.

This room is obviously a kitchen, with a large fireplace, several wooden counters along the walls, and a table in the middle of the room. Iron cooking pots and other implements are hung by hooks from the ceiling. Six human-like creatures are sitting around the table, eating what looks like raw rat meat. They are skinny and hairless, with snout-like faces and long, claw-like fingernails.

These creatures are cursed humans (see “New Monsters”). They are halfway altered into cannibal mole-men, and their offspring will most certainly be members of that malignant species. These cursed humans are part of the larger group of mole-men and cursed humans that makes its lair in Location T-10.

There is a bundle of bones wrapped in burlap in one corner of the room. The bones are fresh, with scraps of meat still clinging to them, and they are obviously those of a human being.

Cursed Humans (6): HD 1; HP 6, 3, 8, 7, 3, 1; AC 7[12]; Atk 2 claws (1d4); Move 9; Save 17; AL C; CL/XP 1/15; Special: Blinded by bright light.

Treasure: Each of the cursed humans has a belt pouch with 1d10 gold pieces in it. One of the iron cooking pots hanging from the ceiling contains a leather bag that contains 3 gems (25gp each) and 5 gold pieces.

T-9. Empty Room

This room is empty.

There is nothing of interest to the characters in this room.



T-10. Mole-man Lair

This room was evidently used for storage at some time in the past, for there are several large alcoves in the room, each one large enough for a person to stand in, each of them carved with stone shelves. You only have a moment to notice the room's details, though, for there are also several mole-men in the room, moving to the attack. Their leader is a big, fat brute of a mole-man covered with scars and standing over six feet tall. At the back there is also an old-looking cannibal mole-man with tattoos all over his skin and a bone through its nose.

This is the main group of the cannibal mole-men who inhabit the Servants' Quarter area of the Elder Temple. The big mole-man is the war leader and the one with the bone through its nose is Jylagura the Demon-Speaker, a servant of Arumvel the Wicked (see Location T-43). Jylagura has a smear of ash on his forehead like the manes demons of Arumvel's court, but this is ordinary ash, not ashes from Vuod the Putrefactor.

Gobura Scar (Mole-man leader): HD 3; HP 12; AC 5[14]; Atk 2 claws (1d4); Move 9 (burrowing); Save 14; AL C; CL/XP 4/120; Special: Blinded by bright light.

Jylagura the Demon-Speaker (Cannibal mole-man): HD 2; HP 10; AC 6[13]; Atk 2 claws (1d4); Move 9 (burrowing); Save 16; AL C; CL/XP 3/60; Special: Spells (*cause light wounds, hold person, cure light wounds*), blinded by bright light. Jylagura's *cause light wounds* may be cast at a range of 30ft and does not permit a saving throw.

Mogura-Kin (Cannibal mole-men (3)): HD 2; HP 12, 4, 11; AC 7[12]; Atk 2 claws (1d4); Move 9 (burrowing); Save 16; AL C; CL/XP 2/30; Special: Blinded by bright light.

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Treasure: Gobura wears a necklace of gold nuggets (200gp) and has a belt pouch with 12gp and 23sp. Each of the ordinary cannibal mole-men has a belt pouch with 1d10gp. Jylagura the Demon-Speaker has a shoulder bag made of cured human skin, which contains a number of disgusting items used in his demonic rituals, and also contains a gem carved in the shape of a demon's head. This gem is worth 500gp.

Referee Note:

Swords & Wizardry has no rules to tell the Referee how to make monsters like Jylagura. He is a cannibal mole-man tribal spellcaster because that fits well with the whole mystery of the Elder Temple, but there is no rule that such spell casters should have clerical spells, magic user spells, druid spells, or spells that you make up for tribal spell casters. Creating adventures for *Swords & Wizardry* is not a matter of following rules or procedures; it is a matter of putting together interesting, playable adventures!



T-11. Main Temple Entrance

This entrance to the hill is blocked by a closed, metal double door, wide enough for several people to enter side by side. The door is marked with a large circle, one of the symbols of Law, but eight arrows have been roughly gouged into the iron around the circle, transforming it into a Chaos symbol.

The great doors are not locked, but they are not easy to open. It takes at least three characters with a combined strength of 35 to open them. A dwarf might notice that the gouges in the iron door were not made by normal tools, but look almost like claw marks (the claws of the mole-men are strong enough to gouge the metal quite deeply).

As characters enter tunnels, check to make sure that the party is carrying light sources and that they have established a marching order.

T-12. Temple Antechamber

This impressive underground chamber has double doors at both ends. Over the top of the eastern doors there is a mosaic image of a green jar surrounded with light.

The mosaic tiles comprising the “light” around the jar are actually magic, and if there is no light in the chamber they will be seen to glow faintly. If someone is boosted up to touch the mosaic jar, that character will instantly have a very powerful vision sent by the powers of Law. In the vision, the character sees a demon being burned in holy fires by three knights in plate mail, each wearing armor that shines with white light. One of the knights has a helmet bearing the crest of a phoenix, one bears the crest of a horse, and one bears the crest of a golden dragon. The demon's ashes suddenly rise into the air like smoke, and are sucked down into a green jar. The three knights lift the jar (it is about the size of a person) and place it behind a carved wooden screen that bears magical holy symbols. When the jar is placed behind the screen, the symbols on the wooden panels suddenly blaze with light. The knights step back, and the vision fades away. Just as it does so, however, the person seeing the vision will suddenly become convinced that whatever this vision represented, something about it has since gone terribly wrong.

The mosaic of the jar was created here as a warning and a reminder to the priests of Law who once lived in the precincts of the Elder Temple. It depicts the imprisonment of the demon Vuod by the three paladins who killed him, burned the flesh, and placed the ashes in the jar, a magical artifact created for this purpose.

T-13. Fane of the Elder Temple

This chamber is circular, the domed ceiling supported by carved stone pillars. At the center of the room there is a short pedestal, about three feet tall. Broken shards of green glass surround the pedestal. The room has a sense of brooding power in it, but it feels like an echo or a residue rather than an active source of anything magical.

A detect magic spell will reveal that the shards of glass are infused with an extraordinarily powerful enchantment. Anyone touching the shards will be knocked unconscious by the intense power that remains in them even after the jar was shattered. The character will remain unconscious for 1d6 ten-minute turns, and during each turn the character will have dreams resulting from the shock of contacting the remains of the artifact. Some of these dreams may repeat; roll on the table below, once per turn that the character is unconscious, to determine what dreams may come to the character.

Roll 1d8

- 1 The character hears a frightened voice repeating the words “beneath the sun alone for safekeeping.”
- 2 The character repeatedly sees a person wearing the robes of a priest of Law reaching out to touch a jar made of green glass. The man is muttering to himself, but the dream contains no sound. It looks like the man might be saying the word, “dangerous.”
- 3 The character repeatedly hears the words, “It can't be that dangerous.” If a player asks if this is the same frightening voice mentioned in #1, the answer is no – this is the jar's memory of the voice of Arumvel just before he touched the jar and released Vuod from captivity.
- 4 The character sees the same vision as when the mosaic picture of the jar is touched in Location T-12. However, the scene is viewed from the perspective of the jar, so the demon's ashes rise from the fire and seem to jump into the character. After this startling moment, the character will see the three knights placing the wooden screen in place as if they were putting the screen around the character. At this point, the dream ends.
- 5 The character sees a fountain of dark dust, or possibly powder, rise into the air and form the shape of a demon. This viewpoint is very

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strange, because it appears to be seen from several different perspectives at once. (The multiple-viewpoint effect is due to the fact that it is seen from the perspectives of several shattered pieces of the jar, just after the demon shattered it from within).

- 6 The character sees a person's lying on the floor in the middle of several pieces of broken green glass (this can be recognized as the same person – Arumvel – as seen in result #2 who was reaching out to touch the jar). Suddenly a stream of dusty smoke begins to stream into the person's mouth and nose, as if being inhaled.
- 7 The character sees the man (Arumvel) speaking to a small group of squat but disturbingly human-like beings, about 5 feet tall and having pale skin, small beady red eyes, no body hair, and nails overgrown to claws.
- 8 The character sees a human being chained to a wall. Time seems to pass rapidly, and the character sees a nauseating change come over the man as he slowly transforms into a human-like creature with pale skin, small beady red eyes, no body hair, and nails overgrown to claws.

If a character is knocked unconscious as a result of touching the green shards of glass, three giant centipedes will crawl out of unseen holes in the stone pillars, and attack the party. The centipedes are bright green and shiny.

Giant Centipedes (small, lethal) (3): HD 1d2hp; HP 1, 2, 1; AC 9[10]; Atk 1 bite (0 + poison); Move 13; Save 18; AL N; CL/XP 1/15; Special: poison bite (+4 save or die).

T-14. Secret Room

This room is relatively featureless – the only unusual object in it is located in the center of the room, a square pedestal two feet high, with a concavity in the top shaped like a hemisphere. The concavity would contain exactly half of a one foot diameter sphere.

This area was the secret altar room of the priests of Law. The base of the altar is the pedestal, but at one time a sphere floated above the altar, and without the sphere the altar has no unusual properties. As Arumvel, possessed by the demon Vuod, was destroying the temple's aboveground structure, the priest quickly hid the altar sphere away. It can be found in Location T-25. If the sphere is returned to the altar, any Lawful character within 60ft will gain 500 experience points as a divine blessing for restoring the altar to wholeness.

T-15. Flooded Room

Steps lead down the corridor to a dark chamber. You can hear the sound of water dripping into a pool.

The floor of this chamber is flooded in about two inches of water, although on first glance the characters will not be able to tell that it is so shallow. The water is dripping from the ceiling. Anyone walking through the water will have 1d3-1 leeches stick to the character's boots before reaching the other side. The leeches are not dangerous, although they might suggest to novice players that water in dungeons can pose unexpected dangers.

T-16. Guard Room

This room is empty. Dead leaves are scattered on the floor, probably blown into the tunnel during storms.

If the players specifically say that they are looking at the pattern of leaves on the floor (and this must be before the characters traipse into the room and scatter everything all about), they will notice that there is

an area against the back wall of the room where there is much less leaf coverage on the floor than elsewhere in the room. (This is directly in front of the secret door).

T-17. Side Storage Room

Note: If the characters inspect the door to this room, they will discover that something seems to have gnawed away some of the wood at the bottom, leaving a gap about 3 inches high by 6 inches wide.

This room contains several wooden crates, probably ten of them, stacked in a jumbled pile at the back of the room. Two of the crates at the front and top of the pile appear to be in good condition, but the rest of the crates are very old and rotted. Piles of rotted wood lie on the floor around the crates, and it looks as though these have been created by stripping pieces of the rotted wood away from the boxes. There is a very bad smell in the room.

10 giant rats live in the nest they have made in this pile of crates.

Giant Rats (10): HD 1d4hp; HP 4, 2, 1, 3, 1, 3, 2, 2, 1, 4; AC 7[12]; Atk 1 bite (1d3); Move 12; Save 18; AL N; CL/XP A/5; Special: 5% are diseased.

Treasure: Searching the pile of crates will reveal a fair amount of junk that the rats have accumulated, but will also yield some valuable finds. In with the trash, the characters will find 73sp, 89cp, and a silver brooch worth 25gp.

T-18. Guard Barracks

There are several rotted wooden beds in this room, a line of wooden boxes against the wall in the northernmost part of the chamber, and long weapons racks on the walls.

This spacious underground hall was once the barracks of the Elder Temple's guard unit. The weapon racks are empty, and there is no sign of the warriors that once inhabited this barracks. The wooden boxes in the northern part of the room are where the soldiers kept their personal belongings. They have been ransacked, and are empty except for a few scraps of cloth.

T-19. Entrance to the Catacombs

This tunnel entrance is about halfway up the hill. It has definitely been carved from the rock, for the walls of the tunnel are straight and the floor is level. All around the opening, carved into the hillside rock, there are carvings of skulls and skeletons. Ancient runes are carved over the top of the tunnel.

The ancient runes are too old to be understood by the characters without magical aid, but if they cast a read languages spell, they will find that the words read: "Crypts of the Elder Temple."

When the characters enter tunnels, check to make sure that the party is carrying light sources and that they have established a marching order.



T-20. Tomb of the Guardian

Note: the passageway leading into this room may be the first side passage that the party encounters, if they have entered through the cave at T-19. In that case, you may wish to read them the following description when they reach the intersection, and allow them to decide whether to enter the side passage or continue deeper into the complex.

A narrow passage leads off from the main corridor. The image of a human skull has been carved over the top of the entrance to the corridor.

If the party continues down the corridor to the tomb:

Shortly after it turns, the corridor opens into a rectangular chamber that has been excavated from the rock. The walls, ceiling, and floor all have uneven surfaces that still bear marks of the miner's tools. Five stone sarcophagi have been placed here.

Obviously, this chamber is a tomb. However, as the chamber nearest to the entrance/exit of the catacombs, this was also the post of the tomb guardian. If anyone enters the room, setting foot beyond the corridor, a column of white smoke will rise from the floor and coalesce into the shape of a human wearing robes and a medallion of the symbol of Law (whatever this might be in your campaign). The ghostly figure speaks:

"I am the guardian of the Catacombs of the Elder Temple. What is your purpose here?"

From this point on, there may be a conversation with the characters. Based on your judgment as Referee, the party's responses might cause the guardian of the tomb to aid them or to ward against them. Many of the chambers in the tomb area will have different characteristics based on whether the tomb guardian is neutral (hasn't met the party yet), friendly (party has agreed in some way to try and defeat the evil that is now

resident in the temple), or hostile (the party said or did something stupid when talking to the guardian).

The guardian knows that the Elder Temple has been desecrated and overtaken by Arumvel the Wicked. Under these circumstances, it is willing to trade certain of the material possessions in the graves in exchange for the destruction of Arumvel and his minions, and the restoration of the temple to its original state. As you, in your capacity as the Referee, conduct the discussion between the tomb guardian and the player characters, keep all this in mind, and decide at the end of the discussions whether the guardian will elect to be friendly, neutral, or hostile to the party.

The guardian is a being very similar to a ghost; it has an existence in the ethereal plane, but its manifestation in the material plane of existence is incorporeal. It cannot be damaged other than with magical weapons, and if it is attacked it will vanish, leaving various rooms in the catacombs in a state of hostility to the adventurers. It has enough hit points to survive one combat round of anything that a low-level party could conceivably throw at it; even if the Referee is modifying the adventure for higher level characters, it is still suggested that the Guardian be kept as a non-combat encounter.

The sarcophagi in this room all contain normal (not animated) skeletons. If the characters attempt to loot this tomb, under the very eyes of the Tomb Guardian, the guardian will raise its arms and each of the skeletons in the sarcophagi will rise as extremely powerful undead beings:

Guardian Skeletons (5): HD 3; HP 18, 16, 13, 10, 14; AC 7[12]; Atk 1 strike (1d6); Move 12; Save 14; AL N; CL/XP 4/120; Special: Take half damage from non-blunt weapons, immune to sleep, cold, and charm magic.

Treasure: Each of the sarcophagi contains valuable grave goods that were buried along with the skeletons.

Sarcophagus #1: Necklace of blood rubies worth 500gp

Sarcophagus #2: Bracelet of blue stones (150gp)

Sarcophagus #3: Dagger with yellow jewels (cursed: touching the dagger causes the victim to turn into a snake unless the character makes a

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successful saving throw).

Sarcophagus #4: A brooch of protection +1 (affects saving throws but nothing else)

Sarcophagus #5: 100gp in a box encrusted with semi-precious stones worth 50gp.

T-21. Paladins' Tomb

This tomb chamber contains 3 stone sarcophagi. The ceiling is painted with now-faded pictures of three knights, one of them wearing the shield-device of a dragon, one of a horse, and one of a phoenix. The knights are seen fighting against goblins, trolls, and other such evil enemies of humankind.

If the Tomb Guardian is Friendly: Traps on the sarcophagi will not activate.

If the Tomb Guardian is Neutral: Traps on the sarcophagi are as normal.

If the Tomb Guardian is Hostile: Traps on the sarcophagi do +2 normal damage.

Sarcophagus #1: This sarcophagus has an inlaid image of a phoenix on the heavy stone lid. The lid has not been opened as far as the party can tell. It requires 2 people to shift the lid, and when it is moved it will cause a magical shock of power to anyone holding the lid (1d3 hit points). This can only be avoided if the characters are pushing the lid aside using tools of some kind that are longer than 1 foot in length. Because the shock is magical, not electric, it does not matter if the tools would conduct electricity or not. Because this is a magical trap, it cannot be detected by a thief, although a *find traps* spell would certainly locate it.

Inside the sarcophagus is a (normal) skeleton wearing plate mail and holding a longsword. The sword is magical; in the hands of a Lawful character, it has a +1 bonus. In the hands of a Chaotic character it will inflict 1 hit point of damage on the wielder every time it hits an opponent, and cannot be put down without the assistance of a *remove curse* spell.

Sarcophagus #2: This sarcophagus has an inlaid image of a horse. The lid has not been opened as far as the party can tell. There is no trap set upon this sarcophagus, but the lid is unusually heavy and requires three people to slide it to the side. Inside the sarcophagus there is a (normal) skeleton wearing plate mail and carrying a sword. If one of the characters inspects the floor of the sarcophagus very closely (unless there is magical light such as from a *light* spell, this would require being *inside* the coffin to check), a small latch may be found that will open a compartment in the floor of the sarcophagus. The latch is wired to release poison gas if the wire is not spotted and carefully unwound, but the compartment contains a gem worth 250gp.

Sarcophagus #3: This sarcophagus has an inlaid image of a dragon. The lid has not been opened as far as the party can tell. Opening the sarcophagus requires two people, and when the lid opens, if any weight is removed from the bottom of the sarcophagus, a scything blade will slash across the opening to inflict 1d6 points of damage to anyone reaching inside at the time. The sarcophagus contains a (normal) skeleton wearing a necklace worth 100gp.

T-22. Ransacked Tomb

This chamber once contained three stone sarcophagi, but the remains of the heavy coffins are shattered and broken. The walls of the chamber are scorched, and several bones are scattered around. The bones are not scorched.

If the Tomb Guardian is Friendly: No effect.

If the Tomb Guardian is Neutral: No effect.

If the Tomb Guardian is Hostile: No effect.

This chamber has been ransacked by grave robbers who set off a fire trap while doing so (the reason for the scorched walls). The trap no longer

works, so there is no danger for the characters. The bones are those of the initial residents of the sarcophagi. If the characters replace the bones in the sarcophagi, the tomb guardian at Location T-20 will be very favorably disposed toward them.

T-23. Tombs Antechamber

The walls, floor, and ceiling of this chamber are painted yellow, although the paint is now faded and old. The stone walls of the room contain twenty large niches, each of which contains what appears to be a human skeleton. On each side of the southern door is the statue of a dog.

If the Tomb Guardian is Friendly: The dog statues will not animate.

If the Tomb Guardian is Neutral: One of the dog statues will animate.

If the Tomb Guardian is Hostile: Both of the dog statues will animate.

The skeletons in the niches are normal skeletons; they are the remains of priests of Law that were buried here before the temple was taken over and desecrated by Arumvel. The two stone dogs at the exit, however, are guardians of the tombs beyond this chamber, and one or both of them will animate and attack if a character tries to continue south past this room (or if a character starts messing with the skeletons in this room). Only if the characters have already spoken to the tomb guardian in location T-20 will the statues remain inanimate.

Dog Statues (1 or 2): HD 3; AC 2[17]; Atk 1 bite (2d4); Move 9; Save 14; AL N; CL/XP 3/60; Special: Immune to mind control.

T-24. Main Tomb

All around the walls of this room, there are niches containing skeletons, a total of 15. All of them wear rusting chain mail and carry notched swords and riven shields.

If the Tomb Guardian is Friendly: Skeletons will not animate.

If the Tomb Guardian is Neutral: 1d4+1 skeletons will animate per round.

If the Tomb Guardian is Hostile: All skeletons will animate immediately.

As noted above, these skeletons will animate to defend the room unless the tomb guardian in Location T-20 has made an agreement with the characters that they will destroy the evil force that has taken residence in the Elder Temple. If the Tomb Guardian is neutral to the characters, not all of the skeletons will animate immediately; 1d4+1 of them will animate immediately and each round thereafter until they are all slain.

Skeletons (15): HD 1; AC 7[12] with shield; Atk 1 weapon or strike (1d6); Move 12; Save 17; AL N; CL/XP 1/15; Special: Immune to fear and charm. HP: 4, 6, 1, 2, 6, 2, 6, 1, 1, 7, 8, 2, 8, 1, 5.

Treasure: There is no treasure in this room.

T-25. Treasure Room

This room contains a large, strangely-shaped stone chest, five feet long by two feet tall and two feet deep.

The chest has three stone lids, all hinged, next to each other. The leftmost lid is engraved with a picture of a deer, the middle lid is engraved with the picture of a sun, and the right lid is engraved with a picture of a sword.

If the Tomb Guardian is Friendly: A gem worth 100gp sits on top of the "sun" lid.

If the Tomb Guardian is Neutral: No effect.

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If the Tomb Guardian is Hostile: Anyone touching the “sun” lid must make a saving throw or run screaming for 1d4 turns.

The chest contains nothing unless only the middle (sun) lid is open, and the other two lids are closed. If the characters have the lids open and closed in this combination, there will be two things underneath the sun lid: the first is a bag containing a +1 mace and 500gp, and the second is a stone sphere about 1 foot in diameter. This sphere glows if a spell is used to detect whether or not it is magical. This is the missing part of the altar at Location T-14.

T-26. Ransacked Tomb Chamber

This room contains six sarcophagi, but they have been broken open and ransacked.

This room contains nothing of interest to the characters.

T-27. Night Sky Room

The walls of this chamber are painted with an intricate pattern of trees and flowers. The ceiling is painted black with hundreds of small white spots placed at apparently random locations.

The room is empty.

T-28. Sun Room

The ceiling of this room is painted with a yellow sun, and there are four stone spheres on the floor, each one foot in diameter. All four of the spheres are painted blue.

None of these spheres is magical. Each sphere sits in a concave depression in the floor, which keeps them from rolling (unless they are rolled out, which is not difficult). The concavity beneath one of the four spheres is much deeper than the other three – it is a hole ten feet deep. At the bottom of the hole there are four giant centipedes that guard a scroll case.

Giant Centipedes (small, lethal) (4): HD 1d2hp; HP 2, 1, 1, 1; AC 9[10]; Atk 1 bite (0 + poison); Move 13; Save 18; AL N; CL/XP 1/15; Special: poison bite (+4 save or die).

Treasure: The scroll inside the case contains the spells *sleep*, *web*, and *fly*.

T-29. Cloud Room

The ceiling of this room is painted with grey and white swirls and spirals. The walls are painted to resemble vines with grapes growing on them.

The painting is interesting, but there is nothing else in the room.

T-30. Mole-man Lair

There are two rickety wooden cots in this room, each with a leather bag underneath it.

This chamber is the lair of two mogura-jin, the cannibal mole-men who serve Arumvel the Wicked. The bags underneath the cots only contain scraps of cloth and bits of bone; the mole-men carry their valuables with them.



Mogura-jin (2): HD 2; HP 8, 10; AC 7[12]; Atk 2 claws (1d4); Move 9 (burrowing); Save 16; AL C; CL/XP 2/30; Special: Blinded by bright light.

Treasure:

Each of the mogura-jin has a belt pouch containing 1d10gp. Additionally, the larger one has a ring on one of its claws worth 100gp.

T-31. Empty Room

This chamber appears to be empty.

The chamber is, indeed, empty.

T-32. Green Bird Room

The walls of this large room are painted with bright green images of hundreds of birds. One of the paintings is significantly larger than the others, and the word “Aelbos” is written beneath this image.

The “Aelbos” painting is very old, and might even pre-date the Elder Temple. The word has no known meaning, but might refer to a bird-god or bird-spirit of some kind.

T-33. Face Room

The walls of this room are painted with numerous highly-stylized faces. A man-sized statue of a demon blocks a hallway that leads out of the room to the northeast.

This room is the guard post for Arumvel's prison (see Location T-34). The demon "statue" is actually one of Arumvel's manes demons, holding itself perfectly motionless as it stands guard. If the party engages the demon in combat, the prisoners in Location T-34 will hear the battle and start calling for help.

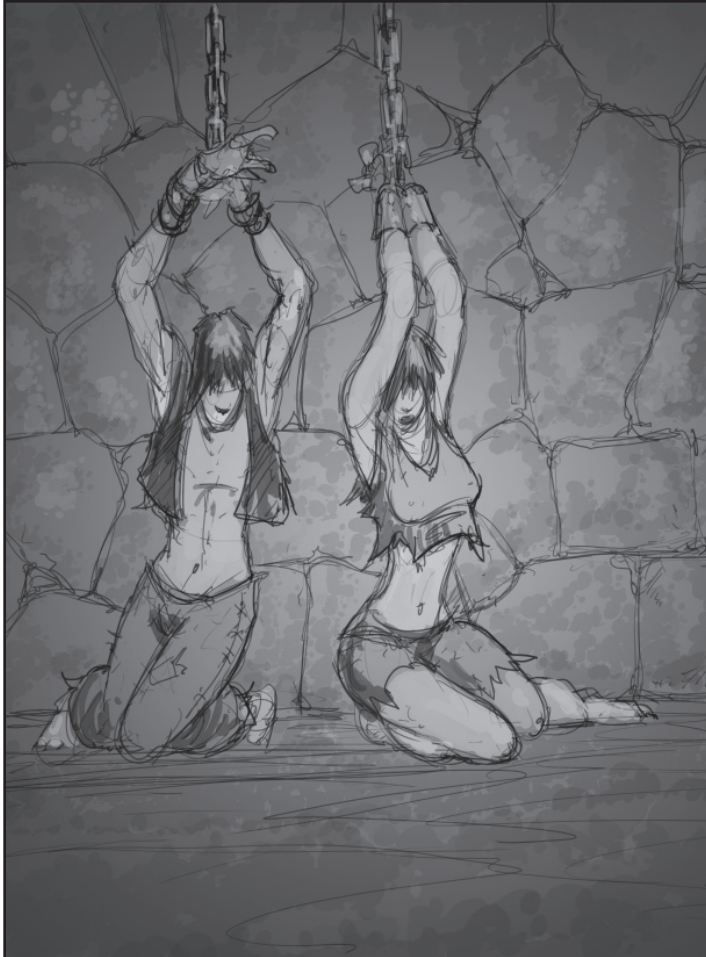
Manes Demon (1): HD 1; HP 6; AC 5[14]; Atk 2 claws (1d2), 1 bite (1d4); Move 5; Save 18; AL C; CL/XP 2/30; Special: Half damage from non-magic weapons.

Treasure: The demon has no treasure.

T-34. Prison Cell

Two humans are chained to the wall in this room, one male and one female. They are thin and haggard from the imprisonment.

These humans are Albraith and Etarra, a married couple that were kidnapped from their farm only a couple of days ago. They are still alive, although they have not been fed and are weak from starvation. Arumvel has appeared once in the prison, saying magic words and feeding them alchemical preparations that would – if repeated enough times – turn the two prisoners into cursed humans with twisted minds, under Arumvel's control. Thus, if they are asked (or if it is clear that the information would be useful) they can describe Arumvel to the characters.



T-35. Trap Chamber

A small demon head, made of bronze, is indented in the wall just before the eastern wall of the corridor opens into a large chamber. The mouth of the demon head is about two inches across, and you can see that it contains several small gears and switches, so small that a needle would be required to move them around with any precision.

This entire room has been rigged as a magical trap to guard the demon-lair on the far side. The only way to disarm the mechanism is to treat it as a lock and successfully pick it (a thief's ability to handle delicate tasks will come in useful here). This will deactivate the trap for a period of 10 turns. If the characters disregard or do not successfully pick the "lock," then the trap will activate whenever a living being tries to walk through the corridor past the room (or into the room). The demons and undead, of course, do not need to bother with the lock.

If anyone walks into the chamber without disabling the trap mechanism, 1d6 darts will fire from holes in the eastern wall of the chamber, "attacking" as 2HD creatures. The darts inflict 1d2 points of damage if they hit.

The room itself is empty – it has been cleared out to maintain a clear field of fire for the darts.

T-36. Demon Lair

The walls of this chamber appear to be stained with blood, and there is a pentacle marked on the floor. Inside the pentacle there is a pair of ordinary dice. Four skeletons stand around the walls, near what appears – for a moment – to be the statue of a demon, until the statue suddenly snarls and moves toward you.

Manes Demon (1): HD 1; HP 7; AC 5[14]; Atk 2 claws (1d2), 1 bite (1d4); Move 5; Save 18; AL C; CL/XP 2/30; Special: Half damage from non-magic weapons.

Skeletons (4): HD 1; HP 7, 2, 7, 6; AC 8[11] or 7[12] with shield; Atk 1 weapon or strike (1d6) or (1d6+1 two-handed); Move 12; Save 17; AL N; CL/XP 1/15; Special: Immune to sleep and charm.

Treasure: The dice in the pentacle are made of a precious stone found only in the lairs of demons. Each of the two dice is worth 250gp.

T-37. Empty Chamber

There appears to be nothing in this room, although a dark powdery substance on the floor might possibly be a smear of dried blood where something was dragged from north to south or south to north.

The room is empty.

T-38. Warning Chamber

There is a treasure chest in the western part of this chamber.

There is a small bronze "lock" attached to the bottom of this chest, and if the chest is moved or opened (without this trap being disabled), a very loud, siren-like noise will begin to shriek from the inside of the chest. The chest itself contains 500 copper pieces worth 1/100 of a gold piece each.

If the characters make the mistake of activating the alarm inside the chest, the mole-men in Location T-39 will ready themselves for combat (cannot be surprised) and the cursed humans from Location T-40 (if they are still alive) will circle around to enter this chamber from Location T-37, hoping to catch the intruders between them, attacking with the mole-men on one side and the cursed humans on the other, to prevent escape.



T-39. Mole-man Lair

This room has a rank smell to it, wafting upward from piles of garbage that rise three feet high against the north and west walls. There are three sleeping furs in here, and a single wooden chest.

This room is the lair of 3 mogura-jin. Combat in this room will draw the cursed humans from location T-40, who will arrive through the secret door in 1d4 rounds.

Mogura-jin (2): HD 2; HP 8, 10; AC 7[12]; Atk 2 claws (1d4); Move 9 (burrowing); Save 16; AL C; CL/XP 2/30; Special: Blinded by bright light, burrowing.

Treasure: The treasure chest is locked; it will have to be broken open (automatic check for wandering monsters) or the lock will need to be picked. The chest contains a necklace of human bones and gold beads (100gp), a +1 short sword, 3 bottles of holy water, 61gp, 232sp, and an intricately carved sandalwood fan (50gp).

T-40. Lair of the Cursed Humans

This room contains five wooden cots, and there is a single padlocked chest against the southern wall.

This room is the lair of 5 cursed humans, not fully transformed into mole-men by Arumvel's sinister magic. Any combat in this room will draw the mogura-jin from location T-39, arriving in 1d4 rounds.

Cursed Humans (5): HD 1; HP 7, 2, 1, 5, 1; AC 7[12]; Atk 2 claws (1d4); Move 9; Save 17; AL C; CL/XP 1/15; Special: Blinded by bright light.

Treasure: To open the chest, either the padlock (or chest) must be broken, or the lock must be picked. Breaking the chest or lock by any violent means will also shatter the two healing potions that are inside. In addition to the healing potions, the chest contains various filthy items of clothing and a bag containing 50gp.

T-41. Mural Room

The walls of this large chamber have apparently been plastered over, and the smooth surface has been painted with murals that circle the whole room. The paintings depict what is obviously the hill of the Elder Temple, beneath which you currently stand, but there is a shining building that stands at the top of the hill itself. Not far below the building you can see the metal door that you have seen from the outside. The lower tunnels were either not built at the time the paintings were made, or they were simply left out of the pictures. As the paintings proceed around the room, you can see pictures of religious ceremonies of Law taking place, and then a procession of three knights carrying a large, green jar to the building. This is the last picture in the sequence: there is still room left for more to be painted on the wall, but the plaster in the blank space is slashed and marked with dark stains that look unpleasantly like blood.

Although this room is fascinating as a historical record, it contains nothing else of interest.

T-42. The Holy Water Font

At the center of this room there is a pool of water, ringed with a border of purple-painted stones. There is a large quantity of shattered glass in the southern part of the room.

If the characters sift through the broken glass, they will be able to find three unbroken bottles. The pool in the room contains holy water, which is the reason why the demons have smashed all of the bottles. There is enough in the pool to fill ten bottles of holy water, and, although it is unlikely to be relevant, the pool produces another bottle's worth of holy water each week.

T-43. Lair of Arumvel the Wicked

As you turn the last curve in the spiral, you see a horrific sight. There is a room in the middle of the corridor's serpentine curve, and the creature in the chamber is obviously the source of the corruption that has overtaken the Elder Temple. A thing stands in the center of the room, once a human but now strangely eroded into a mix of flesh and ashes, as if it had been halfway burned through at some point and yet lived on. A cloud of ash surrounds it, but its eyes glint clearly through the darkness, burning with a red and evil light. There are three man-sized demons in the room as well, their faces marked with a smear of ashes in the shape of eight outward-pointing arrows. Behind this array of supernatural foes, you can see the broken and toppled statue of a bearded man holding a sphere. Where the statue has broken open, you can see the glint of gold and jewels.

This room is the Court of Arumvel the Wicked, the pathetic but extremely powerful remnant of Arumvel's body after it was possessed and then discarded by Vuod the Putrefactor. As the players may have figured out by this point, the fall of the Elder Temple was caused when the novice priest Arumvel became curious and touched the green jar in which the dreaded demon Vuod had been imprisoned by three paladins: the Knight of the White Phoenix, the Knight of the Grey Stallion, and the Knight of the Golden Dragon. When Arumvel touched the jar, it shattered and allowed Vuod to take possession of Arumvel, who, using the demon's powers, first enslaved and later killed all those who had once lived in the precincts of the temple.

Arumvel the Wicked: HD 3; HP 18; AC 4[15]; Atk 1 hand (1d8); Move 9; Save 14; AL C; CL/XP 5/240; Special: Half damage from non-magic weapons, choking ash cloud.

Manes Demons (3): HD 1; HP 6, 7, 4; AC 5[14]; Atk 2 claws (1d2), 1 bite (1d4); Move 5; Save 18; AL C; CL/XP 2/30; Special: Half damage from non-magic weapons.

Treasure: The statue contains 820gp, 2,745sp, 4,309cp, 4 gems worth 25gp each, and a +1 longsword.

Concluding the Adventure

It is probably clear that the "Wilderness Encroachment" around the village of Grimmsgate can be expanded to fill several gaming sessions or even to serve as a permanent "headquarters" for the characters to which they return after their various adventures. If the characters succeed in restoring the altar in the Elder Temple, or at least they manage to destroy Arumvel the Wicked, they will almost certainly be rewarded by the nearby barons with a bit of money and – almost certainly – offers of employment as caravan guards, explorers, mercenaries, spies, or other interesting situations.

New Monsters

ARUMVEL THE WICKED

Demonic Remnant

Hit Dice: 3

Armor Class: 4 [15]

Attack: 1 hand (1d8)

Special: Half damage from non-magical weapons, choking ash cloud

Move: 9

Saving Throw: 14

Alignment: Chaos

Number Encountered: Unique

Challenge Level/XP: 5/240

There might somewhere be other demonic remnants similar to Arumvel, but each of them would have a different story, for the cause of Arumvel's condition was a unique set of circumstances and events. First, the imprisonment of a powerful demon; second, the fateful curiosity of Arumvel the novice priest, who disobeyed the strictest instructions not to touch the green jar in which the demon had been cached. When Arumvel unintentionally set free the demon, Vuod's power literally burned parts of Arumvel's body into ash, although the tortured vessel that had been Arumvel survived, living beyond the time when Vuod the demon abandoned the captured shell and returned to the infinite hells that spawned him.

Arumvel is perpetually surrounded by a cloud of ash that blows from the charred ruin of his own body. In addition to striking with his hand, Arumvel can direct his ash cloud toward any opponent within 50ft of his own body, and the ash cloud attacks as a separate creature. When it hits, the victim must make a saving throw to avoid being choked by the cloud – if the saving throw fails, the victim begins automatically taking 1d4 hit points of damage per round until Arumvel or the victim dies.

CURSED HUMANS OF THE ELDER TEMPLE

Hit Dice: 1

Armor Class: 7 [12]

Attack: 2 claws (1d4)

Special: Blinded by bright light

Move: 9

Saving Throw: 17

Alignment: Chaos

Number Encountered: 2d4 or 1d100

Challenge Level/XP: 1/15

For the last several years, Arumvel has been capturing humans from nearby settlements and villages – never quite enough to cause a major search, for settlements near the wilderness are dangerous, and people do occasionally disappear. Once these victims are in Arumvel's power, he uses a combination of foul alchemy and demonic magic to slowly transform them into mogura-jin, the cannibal mole-men who serve him. The cursed humans are those that have not fully transformed – many of them will never completely change into mole-men, although the curse is carried in the blood, and will take hold in any descendants.

Cursed Human: HD 1; AC 7[12]; Atk 2 claws (1d4); Move 9; Save 17; AL C; CL/XP 1/15; Special: Blinded by bright light.

MOGURA-JIN

Cannibal Mole-men

Hit Dice: 2

Armor Class: 7 [12]

Attack: 2 claws (1d4)

Special: Blinded by bright light

Move: 9 (burrowing)

Saving Throw: 16

Alignment: Chaos

Number Encountered: 2d4 or 1d100

Challenge Level/XP: 2/30

Mogura-Jin are a race of subterranean humanoids, descended from a

GRIMMSGATE: THE ELDER TEMPLE

group of villagers who resorted to cannibalism during a particularly fierce winter and were cursed by the Gods. They are squat beings, between 4 and 5 feet tall with pale skin, small beady red eyes, no body hair, and nails overgrown to claws. Mogura-Jin are always hungry and need to consume human flesh every so often to remain alive. Like their animal namesake (the mole) they are proficient tunnelers and their preferred method of attacking their victims is to tunnel under them and emerge from the ground in a swarm attack to surprise them.

Mogura-Jin can see perfectly well even in total darkness; however their over-sensitive eyes are easily blinded by bright lights.

— *Author: edsan*

Mogura-jin: HD 2; AC 7[12]; Atk 2 claws (1d4); Move 9 (burrowing); Save 16; AL C; CL/XP 2/30; Special: Blinded by bright light.

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Grimmsgate

Deep in the wooded wilderness, the village of Grimmsgate is an outpost town on a seldom-traveled trail, right at the edge of nowhere. The village's half-ruined temple of Law, dilapidated inn, drunken blacksmith, exiled trader and a few fur-trappers are enough to keep the bloody-minded denizens of the dark forest at bay, but nobody really expects the village to still be there in another ten years. The woods have become too dangerous for the trappers who once caught animals for fur, and merchants no longer travel the poorly-maintained road.

What great evil and what fabulous treasures are to be found in these lands? A brave band of adventurers might make their fortunes here. Or perhaps they might never return . . .

Grimmsgate is an introductory adventure for the Swords & Wizardry™ tabletop roleplaying game. The Swords & Wizardry™ rules are needed to play this adventure.



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