

ADVANCED ADVENTURES MODULE #36

Aerie of the Cloud Giant Strategos

by Joseph Browning

AN ADVENTURE FOR CHARACTER LEVELS 9-14



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Aerie of the Cloud Giant Strategos

The hot and smoky badlands of the King of the Fire Giants lies behind the party: his great hall, once a symbol of his power and authority, now only a memorial to his terrible defeat. Within this hold, the party found information leading them onward in their quest to find the fearsome mind behind the recent giant uprising.

Their journey has been long and tiring, but the end of the task lies ahead. A gigantic spire of a mountain rises into the sky. Around the misty peak, an unusual cloud hangs, as if tethered to the stony expanse itself, and upon this strange cloud a mighty brass-roofed castle stands. Perhaps it is here, among the peaks and the mist, that the source of the giants' evil may be found?

STOP! If you plan to participate in this adventure as a player, then stop reading here. Prior knowledge of this module's contents will only spoil your enjoyment of the game.

Module History Note: As should be obvious, this adventure is designed to follow the famous Giant series of modules. Instead of having the players venture into the depth to fight against the dark elves and their spider queen, this adventure provides an alternative ending for the player characters—a path that leads them to a cloud giant castle (named Nephothantos). If you wish to use this adventure in the series, it's recommended that you insert various intimations of the cloud giants exerting the guiding influence and remove the dark elf aspect entirely. As done in the first and second adventures, the easiest solution regarding travel is some form of teleportal that lands the player characters nearby the cloud island called *Sýnnefonísí*.

As an alternative option, this adventure can be inserted between the fire giants and the descent into the earth via a similar small amount of creative rewriting if you think the players would enjoy exploring those deep areas. In this case, the players descending into the deeps will be better equipped than expected, and perhaps even of slightly higher level, so consideration on that front should occur.

Notes for the Game Master: Aerie of the Cloud Giant Strategos is an adventure designed for 6-10 adventurers of 9th-14th level. Aerie of the Cloud Giant Strategos is an exceptionally dangerous module—it is recommended that you read through the adventure at least once (preferably twice) to fully familiarize yourself with the contents and surrounding themes of the encounters.

Although there is a lot of detail in this module that provides information based upon what the characters see and potentially do, you still must put forth your creativity to mesh the information within with the actions of the characters. You will need to make up details as needed, and there may be some actions which seem impossible, but only you should decide if they're permitted or not. As always, you should fold, spindle and mutilate what is contained within to suit your players' preferences. Of particular note, treasures are prime target for this: you should try to make sure the treasures are, in general, more useful to the characters than not.

It is assumed that players who have made it through the prior three modules are seasoned adventurers, tactically prepared for the increase in difficulty the cloud giant castle presents. If this is not the case, if the players of this module have not passed through the tempering fire of the previous three or if they are simply newer players, it is important that you provide them an opportunity to retreat from their first tough encounter. Chalk up their "luck" to the general state of cloud giant indifference to danger at first contact: they are cloud giants in their castle, they are in great number, and they are surely under no real or immediate threat that requires more than minimal effort!

NEPHOTHANTOS CASTLE

Nephothantos (*Death Cloud Castle* in Cloud Giant) castle appears made of herculean, brick-shaped, solid clouds. Within each individual opaque brick form, the moving clouds are considerably iridescent, often flashing like brief rainbows in the light. These bricks are constructed via the craft of Cloudmaster Thoon and his apprentices. The castle is steeply roofed in hammered brass that majestically glows when the sun catches it.

The castle rests upon a solid cloudstuff island several miles in size that the giants call *Sýnnefonísí* (*Isle of Clouds*). Over the centuries, the giants have built up (through the use of slaves, of course) a thick layer of good earth upon which livestock graze and a forest grows. Towards the edges *Sýnnefonísí* slowly transitions into normal, un-solid cloud. The transition zone is about 100 yards wide and then normal clouds continue out for about another 100 yards before tapering away to nothing. The transition zone is indicated by a thick rising fog, as the cloudstuff slowly loses solidity, becoming more and more "spongy" underfoot. 20 yards into the transition zone, the fog rises to about 9 ft. tall and starts to pocket, allowing small objects (such as coins) to fall through completely. This area is the source of the cloud giant saying, "*Fog to the waist, retreat in haste.*" **Note:** The map of *Sýnnefonísí* has a large black outline: this area is the transition zone between solid cloudstuff and clouds.

A strange effect of solid cloudstuff is that it doesn't prevent unintelligent flying creatures from flying through it as if were a normal cloud. This means that a bird can fly through the entire castle, seemingly exiting one wall to enter another.

Nephothantos is currently moored via a gigantic beanstalk to a smoking volcanic peak deep within a rugged and misty mountain range. There are several different animal trails in the area which the characters may follow in a roundabout manner to the peak and to the beanstalk. Barring flight, the only way to the castle is via the beanstalk.

Nephothantos is far from the edge of *Sýnnefonísí*, and the edges themselves are fog shrouded, rendering it impossible to see what's below the cloud when upon it. This weakness has been countered by Cloudmaster Thoon's craft, however, as he has built an "observation tower" that hangs down underneath the cloud at the very bottom of Kardax Tower (AREA 46).

Because of this construction Nephothantos has a commanding view of the land around it. Once the characters enter visual range of the castle, they'll need to travel during the night or during one of the many misty days (75% chance per day) if they wish to remain unobserved. Travel during rougher weather will also conceal the characters. Remaining unobserved is a high priority in this module. Nephothantos is filled with roughly six dozen cloud giants and if these giants are warned of the party's approach, and the serious threat they bring, the character's bones will surely be ground into bread. It is not only the sheer numbers the characters need be wary of, but also that all of these giants are the very intelligent kind that can **levitate** and who cleverly use that ability.

Characters approaching openly have a 50% chance (per mile of the 4 mile trip) of encountering one of the guards from the "observation tower" that's descended to greet them. The giant will demand to know who the characters are and what they're doing, attempt to extort treasure from the party, and attack if not given such. It will flee if reduced to ½ its hp, rising to warn the rest of the castle.

Assuming the characters approach the castle unobserved, they'll find the smoking volcano it is tied to riddled with lava tubes. Almost all of them are too small for cloud giants to enter and would provide hidden refuges between forays into Nephothantos. If the characters are observed during their initial approach (ie. they meet the descending giant and he returns to warn the castle), two cloud giant guards will be guarding the base of the beanstalk. If engaged in combat, they will ascend the beanstalk, resulting in

a running combat if the PCs pursue. If they reach the top of the stalk, the castle is fully alerted and enters a battle-ready state (see The Castle's Response to Attack below).

Throughout the castle certain construction design standards are maintained.

Arrowslits: The arrowslits in the castle are designed so the giants can easily lob thrown rocks out of them. This means they're bigger than normal arrowslits and only provide 75% cover (AC increased by -7) instead of the normal 90%.

Chamberpots: Every room that is a residence contains giant-sized chamber pots made of cloudstuff. These heavy pots are emptied daily by slaves who deposit them in various locations throughout the gardens wherever additional fertilization is deemed necessary.

Doors: The average door in the castle is 8 feet wide, 1 foot thick, and 20 feet tall. It is made of cloudstuff, as tough as granite and weighing about the same. Doors do not lock, although the doors into private chambers typically have a cloudstuff bar nearby that can be used to prevent unwanted entry. Opening a non-barred door requires a successful Open Doors check, albeit with a +1 bonus to the check. Barred doors need to be battered in (good luck with that). Doors into towers are different than normal doors, see below.

Floors: The floors are composed of cloudstuff crudely shaped into a relatively level plane.

Furniture: Unless specifically stated otherwise, all the furniture is made of shaped cloudstuff and valueless outside its utility. Items that are decorated do have value as indicated, but their size makes claiming them rather prohibitive.

Illumination: Nephthantos employs double nozzle open-wick lamps formed from shaped cloudstuff, and they're found in every room. The lamps burn two pints of oil per four hours, illuminating a 40 foot area (as torch). Lamps are left unlit if unneeded to save fuel.

Stairs: The stairs are three times the height of normal stairs. Man-sized creatures traversing them have their speed reduced in ½. This penalty can be removed when descending with a roll under DEX on 2d6 to avoid tripping and falling down for 1d4 damage for every 10 feet descended.

Stories: Each of the 5 stories are 30 feet tall. This provides about 28 feet of ceiling clearance, plenty of club-swinging room for the average cloud giant.

Tower Doors: Tower doors are the same size as the standard door (see above), but they're crafted to slowly swing back into place and automatically lock a round after opening. Unlocking requires pushing up a lever protruding above the door and 22 feet above the floor. Pushing up this lever requires a successful Open Doors check with a +3 bonus on the check. Tower doors can be barred from inside the tower with a nearby sturdy cloudstuff bar.

Windows: Windows in Nephthantos are composed of special mostly-translucent cloudstuff bricks—they look like a brick of thin fog. They are solid, but touching them from the inside of the castle temporarily returns them to the clouds they are composed of, allowing breezes to come through. A single touch of a window lasts for 1d2+1 hours before it turns back into its normal solid state.

THE GREAT BEANSTALK

Nephthantos tethers itself to the ground via a giant magical beanstalk controlled by Cloudmaster Thoon. The beanstalk circles around the solid cloudstuff, providing access to the Sýnnefonisí at many different locations before it's secured to the island proper. Wiley characters would do well to exit the beanstalk prior to its anchor point!

Ascending or descending the beanstalk requires climbing, but the beanstalk assists the climber, making it impossible to fall as long as

the climber is attempting not to fall. It also speeds the ascent and descent so that it takes a climber 20 rounds to ascend or descend regardless the length of the beanstalk. Those wishing to exit the beanstalk early for different parts of Sýnnefonisí can leave as early as round 13. When fully retracted, the beanstalk curls around the walls of Nephthantos like a giant green snake.

SERVANTS/SLAVES

There are close to a thousand servants/slaves on Sýnnefonisí. Most of them live outside of the castle with only a few hundred living within. The term servant/slave is used to represent the blurred distinction between slaves who willingly serve to keep their preferential treatment and status, and slaves who only act to prevent their own torture or execution. The former bear some responsibility for the poor treatment of the latter, but deserve some leniency given that they also face torture and execution for disobedience. There is obvious conflict between the two groups, but both are more united by hatred of the giants than divided by their treatment of each other.

There are no actual servants on Sýnnefonisí – none but giants, associates (such as Blight), and guests are free to leave the cloud island when they wish. Servants/slaves that try to escape via the beanstalk are usually rounded up quickly and put to public torture, execution, and then consumption.

When the PCs interact with servant/slaves, it should be remembered that slaves without status are easy to convince to join an uprising if they believe there's at least a long shot of it being successful. Those considered servants are harder to convince, but still willing if success looks at least possible.

THE CASTLE'S RESPONSE TO ATTACK

There are about six dozen adult cloud giants in Nephthantos, far more than typically encountered "in lair." They are well-fortified and feel comfortable in their castle. They think the Strategos is somewhat over-rigid with his guard demands, but follow him for he's provided the castle with luxury previously unexperienced.

When the castle is first attacked, the giants will be in disarray, regardless their guard routines: what type of insanity is it to attack them! They'll respond to sounds of combat more out of an interest to see some sport at the servants/slaves causing the ruckus instead of with a martial intent. After the first attack the castle will tighten up, and response times will become quicker. Forays will be organized to locate their enemy and bring them to combat. Magic will be used for such purposes as well. As GM, you need to remember to play the giants as the intelligent, cunning, creatures they are. They'll only behave foolishly upon first contact: afterwards they'll be all business. For example: the giants are well-aware of the many places the beanstalk can let a rider off on the island, and they'll use the beanstalk to quickly circumnavigate the island if necessary.

Food Supply: Nephthantos has 60 days of food for all its inhabitants, including servants/slaves. If things appear serious, vegetables and fruits can be harvested for another 5 days of food, and animal stocks can be slaughtered for another 60 days. If things appear even more serious, servants/slaves will be used as food, providing another 30 days.

Water Supply: Nephthantos has 100 days of water for all its inhabitants in its cistern (AREA 104), including servants/slaves. An additional supply of 10 days of water is stored in barrels throughout the castle. If the water supply is befouled or poisoned, the Strategos will command the immediate execution of half of the servants/slaves to extend the 10 barrel-days out to 20, and work with Blight (AREA 97) to flush out the cistern with fresh water from heavy rains. A guard force with at least two spotted lions will be placed at the cistern afterward.

Giant and Non-Giant Resources: There are sixteen named or titled individuals of note in Nephothatos. These individuals will surely be involved in any defense of the castle—even the guests will do such with hopes of increasing their bargaining power when what surely is just but a trifle is settled. Below is a list of these 16 and how they will be utilized in defending the castle. A brief description is included for each as well as where they're typically found.

Akantha: SZ: L; AC 2; MV 150 ft.; HD 11+2-5; HP 69 #AT 1; Dmg 5-30; SA Thrown rock for 2-20; SD Surprised only on a 1, levitate 2/day; AL NE). Head cook, found in AREA 38. Akantha is a surprisingly cheery cloud giant that hides her iron fist in a velvet glove. When the castle is attacked, she more than any other giant is wary of the servants/slaves, believing them to be in league with any attackers. She won't join any defense until the castle is well and truly invaded.

Beastmaster: (SZ: L; AC 1; MV 180 ft.; HD 12+2-7; HP 101; #AT 1; Dmg 4-40; SA Thrown rock for 2-24; SD Fights as a 16 HD creature, surprised only on a 1, +6 to hit and +6 to damage, levitate 2/day; AL NE). Possessions: Bronze breastplate (reduces AC by 1), **maul of the titans**. In his belt pouch is 100 gp, a **cloudstuff gem** (see new magic items), and the key to his trapped coffer and, used as a dagger, **Truefinder**, a **longsword +3** (N; INT 12; COM Semi-empathy; EGO 1; PA detect magic in a 10 ft. radius). The beastmaster is found in AREA 5. The beastmaster is an old giant, tough as boiled leather. Even though he is old and a little stooped at the shoulders, he is the tallest, fastest, strongest, and toughest of all the cloud giants in the aerie. He could have easily become Strategos at any point throughout his long life, but he does not care for command, and prefers the company of his animal charges to that of his fellow giants.

When the castle is attacked, the beastmaster will use his spotted lions to track the attackers if possible. He and a group of 2-7 giants will follow the trail wherever it goes. If forced back by powerful foes, he'll notify the Strategos, and the spotted lions will be stationed throughout the castle as additional watch against invisible foes. If the Strategos and the Hypostrategos are both dead, he will temporarily assume the mantle of Strategos and none will contest him, not even the Katepano.



Blight, Insane Medium Old Male Cloud Dragon: (SZ: L; AC 0 or -3; MV 60 ft., flying 390 ft; HD 13; HP 78; #AT 4; Dmg 1-10, 1-10, 6-36, 3-12; SA Breath weapons, magic use, fear; SD cloud form, magic resistance; AL NE). Blight speaks and knows the following spells, each usable twice a day:

- First: **fog cloud**
- Second: **precipitation**
- Third: **stinking cloud**
- Fourth: **cloudburst**
- Fifth: **call lightning**
- Sixth: **weather summoning**

Blight lairs in AREA 97. The Strategos will not request Blight's assistance except in the most-dire of straights. Although Blight is not disloyal to the Strategos, he's also not loyal. A good enough offer may convince him to be out flying in the clouds at just the right time or even to join with a party were the rewards high enough and the party of the needed strength to provide them. A remove curse cast on Blight will immediately return his alignment to Neutral and he'll be very grateful for such and certainly willing to "look the other way" against an invading force. A heal will cure his insanity, upon which he'll willingly surrender half his treasure hoard.

Cloudmaster Thoon: (SZ: L; AC -2; MV 150 ft.; HD 12+2-7; HP 74; #AT 1; Dmg 6-36; SA Thrown rock for 2-24; stone shape cloudstuff at will; SD Surprised only on a 1, levitate 2/day; AL NE). Possessions: Bronze breastplate (reduces AC by 1), **cloudmaster ring** (see new magic items), a longsword used as a bloodletting dagger for his ring, key to treasury door (AREA 96).

Cloudmaster Thoon is found in AREA 72. He will be integral to any defensive plan considering he can stone shape cloudstuff at will, changing any aspect of the castle as needed to deal with assault. In addition he can create cloudstuff at the rate of 100 cubic feet per day. The Strategos won't let Thoon outside the castle without a significant guard as he is extremely valuable.

Consort Neringa: (SZ: L; AC 2; MV 150 ft.; HD 12+2-7; HP 77; #AT 1; Dmg 6-36; SA Thrown rock for 2-24; SD Surprised only on a 1, levitate 2/day; AL NE). Possessions: keys for the cabinet and chests in AREA 77.

Consort Neringa is found in AREA 77. Neringa will act as the Strategos for all the female giants in the castle. Their first objective will be the security of the young and juvenile giants, and their secondary objective will be policing the servants/slaves. When the castle is under attack she and the other giants won't leave the castle proper, but will certainly take up watches to beef up the guard.

Drest, Fog Giant Chief: (SZ: L; AC -3; MV 150 ft.; HD 14; HP 106; #AT 1; Dmg 5-30; SA Thrown rock for 2-20; SD Fights as a 16 HD creature, surprised only on a 1, surprise 80% of the time; AL CE) Possessions: **White dragon scale mail +4** (renders him immune to cold attacks), **ring of vampiric regeneration**, belt pouch containing the key to the chests in AREA 85.

Drest is found in AREA 89. The Strategos will be adverse to Drest's assistance if an attack seems minor, but will call upon his friendship if things seem more serious. Drest will work closely with the Strategos as well as with Blight, who finds the company of a fog giant less tedious than that of cloud giants.

Greenmaster Agrius: (SZ: L; AC 1; MV 150 ft.; HD 12+2-7; HP 81 #AT 1; Dmg 6-36; SA Thrown rock for 2-24; SD Surprised only on a 1, levitate 2/day; AL NE). Possessions: Bronze breastplate (reduces AC by 1), **whip of the master** (see

new magic items), **longsword +1** used as a knife, a carved golden torc (650 gp), a **potion of vitality**, and key to the chest in AREA 86. Agrius keeps the potion handy should he ever be poisoned by the forest snakes; he does not know its other effects.

Greenmaster Agrius is found in AREA 86. When the castle is attacked, Agrius will first see to the castle mount, the orchard, and the vegetable garden. If things seem serious, he'll harvest whatever vegetative matter that can be immediately harvested, increasing the castle's food stocks by 5 days.

Hypostrategos, Male Cloud Giant: (SZ: L; AC 1; MV 150 ft.; HD 12+2-7; HP 92; #AT 1; Dmg 6-36; SA Thrown rock for 2-24; SD Surprised only on a 1, levitate 2/day; AL NE). Possessions: Bronze breastplate (reduces AC by 1). Second in command of the castle.

The Hypostrategos is found in AREA 50. The second-in-command will take an active role in the castle's defense, working closing with the Strategos to form plans defensive and offensive. The Hypostrategos will take up the night watch, guarding the castle during the times when the Strategos sleeps.

Karfaut the Fierce (Human half-orc fighter/cleric level 8/4; AC 3; HP 70; Dam 1-10+6; S18/54 I9 W14 D14 C17 CH9; AL LE)

Cleric spells typically readied:

First (5): **cure light wounds** (x4), **protection from good**
Second (2): **hold person, silence 15 ft. radius**

Magic items possessed: **Two-handed sword +3** (LE; INT 13; COM Empathy; EGO 3; PA **detect invisible** objects in a 10 ft. radius, **detect elevator/shifting walls/rooms** in a 10 ft. radius, **locate object** in a 120 ft. radius), **chain mail +2, ring of fire resistance**. Other items: unholy symbol, dagger, key to chest in AREA 59

Karfaut the Fierce is found in AREA 59. Karfaut will follow the guidance of Kazimeer the Unseen in all things, doing as he commands. Karfaut will be assigned the role of medic and messenger as his primary duties.

Katepano, Male Cloud Giant: (SZ: L; AC 1; MV 150 ft.; HD 12+2-7; HP 86; #AT 1; Dmg 6-36; SA Thrown rock for 2-24; SD Surprised only on a 1, levitate 2/day; AL NE). Possessions: Bronze breastplate (reduces AC by 1). Third in command of the castle.

The Katepano is found in area AREA 52. The third-in-command of the castle will be first assigned duties regarding the herds and flocks. He and a guard of 2-7 cloud giants will patrol the pastures. If pressed by a strong foe, he'll be in charge of a massive slaughter of animals (increasing the castle's food supply by 60 days: it would be more, but salt is the limiting factor).

Kazimeer the Unseen (Human male illusionist/magic-user level 8/9; AC *2; HP 31; Dam 1-4; S14 I18 W13 D16 C15 CH16; AL NE)

Illusionist spells typically readied:

First (4): **detect invisibility, phantasmal force** (x3)
Second (3): **blindness, improved phantasmal force, invisibility**
Third (2): **Dameon's shadow spell book** (see new spells), **spectral force**
Fourth (1): **improved invisibility**

Magic user spells typically readied:

First (4): **detect magic, magic missile** (x2), **spider climb**
Second (3): **ESP, mirror image, web**
Third (3): **dispel magic, hold person, protection from normal missiles**
Fourth (2): **dimension door, minor globe of invulnerability**
Fifth (1): **conjure elemental**

Magic items possessed: **ring of human influence, ring of free action, wand of fear** (66 charges), **cloak of protection +4**, and ***boots of speed**. Other items: dagger, key to chest in AREA 61

Kazimeer the Unseen is found in AREA 61. Kazimeer's primary role when the castle is under attack is scouting, observation, and potential hit-and-run attacks. His magic items and spell assortment make him formidable in that role. He'll do whatever the Strategos asks, but will always act to save his skin and spin whatever results in a favorable light. Kazimeer has access to any of the spells indicated in his spell books in the treasury (AREA 96).

Kazimeer the Unseen is aware of Kaim's Strussel's spell book as well as the magical scrolls in the library (AREA 88), but has refrained from touching them, believing they may be a test of his loyalty to the Strategos. If the castle is attacked, he will ask permission to access the magic items to defend besieged Nephothanos.

Poliocetes, Male Noble Lamia: (SZ: M; AC 6; MV 90 ft.; HD 10+1; HP 63; #AT 1 (+3 to hit); Dmg 1-6+8; SA Spells, wisdom drain; AL CE) Possessions: **short sword +2, girdle of stone giant strength**. As a 5th-level caster, Poliocetes knows the following magic user spells:

First (4): **detect magic, magic missile** (x2); **shield**
Second (2): **ESP, invisibility**
Third (1): **slow**

Poliocetes is found in AREA 35. As a guest to Nephothantos, Poliocetes will only become involved in the castle's defense when things seem serious. He'll gladly offer his assistance, but will flee whenever presented by real danger: after all, it's not really his concern.

Sedjefakare (Elf male thief level 12; AC 2; HP 41; Dam 1-8 +2; S12 I9 W7 D18* C11 CH11; AL CN). Possessions: **longsword +2** (CN; INT 12; COM Semi-empathy; EGO 1; PA **detect magic** in a 10 ft. radius), **bracers of defense AC 6, *gauntlets of dexterity**, thieves tools. Thief Abilities: PP *130, OL *97, F/RT 80, MS 119, HS102, HN 40, CW 99.2, RL 60

Sedjefakare is found in AREA 34. As the servant of Poliocetes and Sybaris, Sedjefakare will do whatever they command and lay down his life in that service.

Skelmis the Mage (Human male magic-user level 16; AC *2 (**armor, stoneskin, and volley** are always upon him); HP 29 (53 with **armor**); Dam 1-4 -1; S4 I18 W16 D8 C7 CH10; AL NE)

Magic user spells typically readied:

First (5): ***armor, grease, magic missile, shield, unseen servant**
Second (5): **acid arrow, irritation, knock, vocalize, zephyr**
Third (5): **dispel magic** (x2), **material** (x2), **minute meteors**
Fourth (5): **charm monster, confusion, resilient sphere, *stoneskin, ultravision**
Fifth (10): **airy water, cone of cold, conjure elemental, fabricate** (x3), **teleport** (x2), **wall of force** (x2)
Sixth (3): **eyebite, globe of invulnerability, lucubration**
Seventh (2): **power word stun, *volley**
Eight (1): **maze**

Magic items possessed: **ring of protection +6**, **ring of wizardry** (doubles fifth level spells), **wand of lightning bolts** (82 charges), and **boots and cloak of elvenkind**. Other items: dagger, key to chest in AREA 58, miniature chest link to a **secure chest** containing a travelling spell book with the spells **armor**, **magic missile**, **shield**, **dispel magic**, **lightning bolt**, **fireball**, **magic mirror**, **stoneskin**, **globe of invulnerability**, **limited wish**, and **teleport without error**.

Skelmis the Mage is found in AREA 58. Skelmis is the magical powerhouse of the castle, and his many spells will be used to their full effect. Given his age, the Strategos will keep Skelmis close to himself or his most-trusted giants. Skelmis is unwilling to leave the castle to go on the offensive, but he'll willingly act as a stalwart defender and discoverer-of-secrets using his magical abilities.

Strategos Damysos: (SZ: L; AC 0; MV 150 ft.; HD 12+2-7; HP 99; #AT 1; Dmg 7-42; SA Thrown rock for 2-24; SD Fights as a 16 HD creature, surprised only on a 1, +3 to hit and +3 to damage, levitate 2/day; AL NE). Possessions: Iron Breastplate (reduces AC by 2), **great club +3**, belt pouch containing the 6 keys to the chests in the killing hall (AREA 22) as well as a key to the treasury door (AREA 96).

Strategos Damysos is found in AREA 95. The Strategos will head the defense forces of the castle. He will first only be lightly concerned with an attack, but if things turn more serious, he will use all the magical resources at his command and all of the individuals of the castle to see the invaders destroyed. The Strategos is a very clever giant, and he should prove a formidable foe.

Sybaris, Female Noble Lamia: (SZ: M; AC 6; MV 90 ft.; HD 10+1; HP 52; #AT 0; Dmg none; SA Spells, wisdom drain; AL CE) Possessions: **wand of lightning**, keys to the chests in AREA 35. As a 8th-level caster, Sybaris knows the following magic user spells:

First (4): **detect magic**, **magic missile** (x2), **shield**
Second (3): **ESP**, **invisibility**, **mirror image**
Third (3): **slow**, **suggestion**
Fourth (2): **fear**, **wall of fire**

Sybaris is found in AREA 35. Like her companion Poliocetes, Sybaris will only become involved in the castle's defense when things seem serious. She'll also gladly offer her assistance, but will flee whenever presented by real danger: again, it's not really her concern either.

SÝNNEFONISÍ

A. BEANSTALK: The great beanstalk curls around Sýnnefonisí before finally anchoring itself close to Nephothantos. See The Great Beanstalk above for complete information.

B. FORMAL GARDEN: A great formal garden rests beneath the gaze of the great gatehouse of Nephothantos. Whenever off duty and not in the main hall (AREA 33) the cloud giants spend most of their leisure time in the garden engaging in conversation and dining, as well as playing games of chance and skill. At any time a group of 5-10 (1d6+4) **cloud giants** can be found here. If killed, they should be removed from elsewhere within the castle. There is a 50% chance that Karfaut the Fierce (AREA 59) will be in the gardens during the day.

The formal garden contains several gardens of a mixed style: some gardens reveling in curves, spirals and circles, while other areas are rigidly rectangular and square, and still others are functional medicinal and culinary herbals. A large hedge maze occupies the center of the southern boundaries, but it's only a

diversion for giants—man-sized creatures can easily slip through the hedges where they're thin low to the ground.

The formal garden, along with all of the exterior green spaces excluding the forest are watched over by the Greenmaster (AREA 86), who is rarely found in his quarters, spending most of his time outdoors. The Greenmaster ensures that the fish ponds and eel ponds within the formal garden are always in good condition, with the animals properly fed and wisely harvested.

C. CASTLE MOUNT: Nephothantos stands upon a cloudstuff highland about 200 feet above the rest of Sýnnefonisí. Castle mount, as it is called, is delineated by a sheer cliff, and the only way to it is via the switchback road directly in front of the castle itself. The highland is barren of any trees or shrubs, limited to a rich grassland by slaves trimming with scythes, creating feed for the various animals. There are many water catchments on castle mount and the giants use them for Sýnnefonisí's daily water needs.

During the day this area is occupied by a single **cloud giant** and servants/slaves cutting and carrying grass, as well as carrying water. It is barren at night.

Cloud Giant: (SZ: L; AC 2; MV 150 ft.; HD 12+2-7; HP 48; #AT 1; Dmg 6-36; SA Thrown rock for 2-24; SD Surprised only on a 1, levitate 2/day; AL NE).

D. VEGETABLE GARDEN: More than two square miles of Sýnnefonisí is under till as a vegetable garden. The fields are constantly tended from sunrise to sunset and during the night a small workforce perform pest and animal control. Along the edges of the fields long cloudstuff barracks house the servants/slaves, and other structures provide shelter for various trades, such as barrel making, charcoal making, skinning, tanning, weaving, and food preparation such as salting and smoking. The buildings are unguarded, except for the food preparatory area, where a **cloud giant** is always present to dissuade thievery.

Cloud Giant: (SZ: L; AC 2; MV 150 ft.; HD 12+2-7; HP 41; #AT 1; Dmg 6-36; SA Thrown rock for 2-24; SD Surprised only on a 1, levitate 2/day; AL NE).

E. ORCHARD: Almost a square mile of Sýnnefonisí is set aside for the apple and pear trees that compose the majority of the orchard. A small section is planted in grapes, but the giants have had little success with viticulture and the Strategos is close to tearing up all the vines and planting hardier trees.

Like the vegetable garden, there is a row of buildings along the edge of the orchard: housing, an open-walled processing shed, a distillery (the giants do love their cider), and several storage houses used during harvest season.

During the day a lone **cloud giant** guards the area while servants/slaves tend the trees and vines based upon the seasonal needs. The orchard is empty at night.

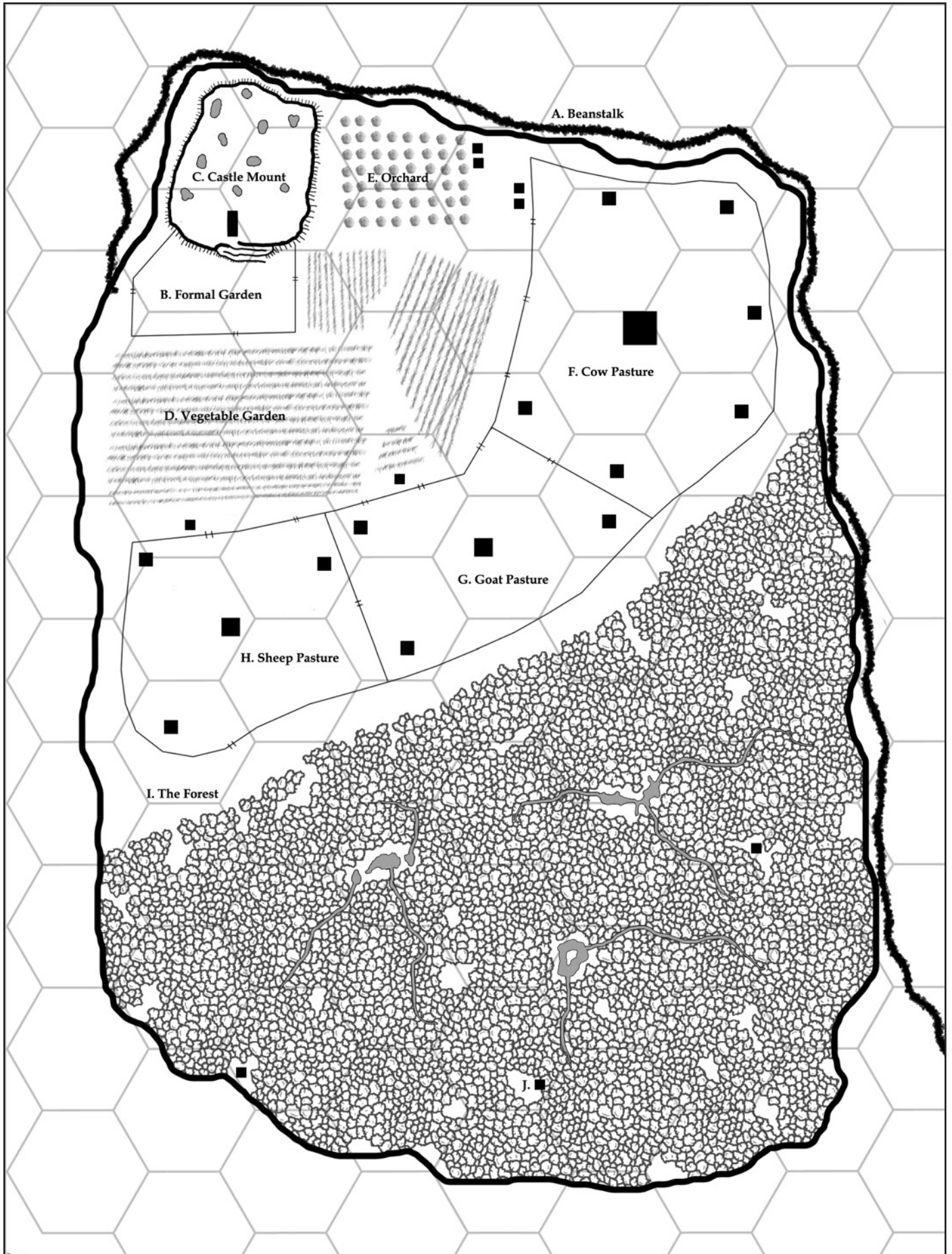
Cloud Giant: (SZ: L; AC 2; MV 150 ft.; HD 12+2-7; HP 52; #AT 1; Dmg 6-36; SA Thrown rock for 2-24; SD Surprised only on a 1, levitate 2/day; AL NE).

F. COW PASTURE: This 2.5 square miles of Sýnnefonisí is separated by an 8-foot-tall, 4-foot-thick cloudstuff wall broken up by many fenced gateways. The two foot wall ensures that none of the cattle within go wandering off to plummet to their doom. A large herd of cattle (roughly 700) freely roams this area, each with about an acre of prime grassland for forage.

A massive barn rests in the center of the pasture, providing shelter to the entire herd in inclement weather. Smaller cloudstuff barns litter the area as well, so no cow is very far from

SÝNNEFONISÍ

EACH HEX EQUALS HALF MILE



cover if a large flying predator wings by. The appearance of such rouses the servants/slaves tending the cattle, and a signal is given to the castle via a massive wooden horn blown by one of the **cloud giants** that take shifts here ensuring that the cattle are always guarded.

Along the interior of the wall are several cloudstuff barracks for the servants/slaves. They spend their days caring after the cattle or transporting milk to the castle or cattle to the slaughter in the vegetable garden compound.

Cloud Giant: (SZ: L; AC 2; MV 150 ft.; HD 12+2-7; HP 57; #AT 1; Dmg 6-36; SA Thrown rock for 2-24; SD Surprised only on a 1, levitate 2/day; AL NE).

Cattle (708): (SZ: L; AC 7; MV 150 ft.; HD 1-4; HP varies; #AT 1; Dmg 1-4; SA Stampede (2d4 cows hit unprotected targets for 1d4 damage)).

- G. GOAT PASTURE: Much like the cow pasture, a little more than 1.5 square miles of Sýnnefonísí is separated by an 8-foot-tall, 4-foot-thick cloudstuff wall broken up by several fenced gateways. Again, like the cow pasture there is a central barn (although not as large since sheep need less area), smaller outlying barns, and a three-shift cloud giant guard with massive wooden warning horn.

Cloud Giant: (SZ: L; AC 2; MV 150 ft.; HD 12+2-7; HP 54; #AT 1; Dmg 6-36; SA Thrown rock for 2-24; SD Surprised only on a 1, levitate 2/day; AL NE).

Goats (1,518): (SZ: M; AC 7; MV 150 ft.; HD 1+2; HP varies; #AT 1; Dmg 1-3; SA Charge (+2 to hit, +1-2 damage)).

- H. SHEEP PASTURE: The third of three pastures, the sheep pasture is similar in size and composition, in occupants and guardians as the other two. Unlike the other two, however, there is a southern gate in the walls leading to the forest, through which the servants/slaves and giants travel to gather wood or hunt boar, although not so much recently (see FOREST below).

Cloud Giant: (SZ: L; AC 2; MV 150 ft.; HD 12+2-7; HP 64; #AT 1; Dmg 6-36; SA Thrown rock for 2-24; SD Surprised only on a 1, levitate 2/day; AL NE).

Sheep (1,086): (SZ: M; AC 7; MV 150 ft.; HD 2; HP varies; #AT 1; Dmg 1-3; SA Charge (+2 to hit, +1-2 damage)).

- I. FOREST: A surprisingly old forest, walled off from the rest of the island by the 8-foot-tall, 4-foot-thick walls of the cow, goat, and sheep pastures, fills much of Sýnnefonísí. The giants used to harvest most of their wood from the forest (passing through the southern gates in the sheep pasture), but have recently started raiding/trading for wood and charcoal as giants and servants/slaves have started dying when entering the forest from an infestation of venomous serpents. Because of their great size and strength the giants fear few creatures: the serpent is one of them. Rumors of "an evil spirit" within the forest have spread as well. The forest is roughly fifteen square miles of the cloud island.

Of more interest to the common cloud giant is the lack of wild boar that used to come from the forest since spotted lion-led hunting packs have ended. They're rather grumbly about his fact. The Strategos plans to clear the forest of whatever this trouble is once his conquest plans have come to fruition: as of now, he's content to wait and deal with the grumblings as they arise, confident that no real threat exists.

All of this difficulty is the result of a druid named **Bodhmal** (see below). She arrived six years ago on Sýnnefonísí, led to the floating isle after having a vision in which the forest grew to cover its entirety. Upon arrival, she claimed the forest as

her domain, and started ensuring that it was unfriendly to the giants. In the past four years she has successfully killed seven giants with a combination of **snare**, **sticks to snakes**, **charm animal**, and **animal growth**. She spaces these kills out to ensure that a coordinated effort against her isn't raised. She's also encouraged the growth of thickets and brambles, making travel into the inner part of the forest (the part farthest from Nephothantos and near where the cloudstuff becomes spongy) difficult and unpleasant.

After first arriving, Bodhmal convinced several different animals to come live in the forest, carrying them up to their new home with her **wings of flying**. In the past two years, she's also convinced a small group of sprites, a group of pixies, and a sylph to call the forest their homes. They're all in agreement with the goal of transforming Sýnnefonísí into a giant flying forest and look towards Bodhmal for leadership.

She's friendly with all the animals in the forest and often engages the service of the skunks (or turns herself into a skunk) to lay down stinking spray that the spotted lions will not brave, ensuring that she is never tracked by them on the rare occasion that some giants form a posse to find the "foul sprite" that lives within the forest. These forays have been met with a mix of confrontation and evasion, ensuring they remain fruitless. She stays aware of these forays through the friendly birds living at the edge of the forest. She's trained several groups who watch for entering giants and fly to her cave to tweet their invasion on such occurrences.

Bodhmal is intimately familiar with the castle layout and inhabitants – she frequently travels there at night in animal form, always remaining unnoticed by the giants, to scout for any information important to her long term plans, to steal a bit of coin and food, to **contaminate water**, and to **cause disease** on a sleeping giant now and then. The only time she was caught (two years ago) proved unfortunate for the giant that did so: he thought swallowing whole the bat he trapped a humorous ending for the small mammal, but when Bodhmal changed into a large black bear within his gut, he split open and died. This giant was Cloudmaster Thoon's planned successor: she took his **cloudstuff staff** (see new magic items) and potions, leaving the caste to ponder just what the hell happened when they found him the next day.

Bodhmal is unconcerned by any of the giants, knowing that she can easily evade or escape them, but she fears Blight (AREA 97) for his mobility and strength, and she retreats before him with all possible haste hoping to avoid his notice at all costs.

Creatures in the Forest: There are several groups of creatures that call the forest home, but have no set location or "home base." These creatures may be encountered by PCs entering the forest.

1. **Sprites** (12): (SZ: S; AC 6 (one has AC 5 from ring); MV 90 ft., 180 ft. flying; HD 1; HP 1, 3, 2 (x2), 4 (x2), 7 (x3), 8 (x3); #AT 1; Dmg 1-4 dagger, sleep bow; SA Sleep darts; SD 75% to be unnoticed; AL N (G)). Treasure: The group possesses 124 gp, 456 ep, 3 100 gp gems, a **potion of healing**, and a **ring of protection +1**.
2. **Pixies** (13): (SZ: S; AC 6; MV 60 ft., 120 ft. flying; HD 1-4 hp; HP 1 (x5), 2 (x4), 3 (x2), 4 (x2); #AT 1; Dmg 1-4 dagger, 2-5 war bow, sleep bow; SA Sleep darts, become visible, **polymorph**, **illusions**, **confusion**, **dispel magic**, **dancing lights**, **ESP**, and 1 pixie can use **irresistible dance**; SD Permanent invisibility; AL N). Treasure: The group possesses 603 pp, 60 gems (25 x 10 gp, 10 x 50 gp, 10 x 100 gp, 5 x 1,000 gp), a **potion of fire giant strength**, a **potion of invulnerability**, a **scroll of protection against magic**, and a 7 doses of **dust of disappearance**.

3. **Silistria, Slyph**: (SZ: M; AC 9; MV 120 ft., 360 ft. flying; HD 3; HP 14; #AT 0; Dmg none; SA Spells 7th-Level ability; SD Invisibility at will, conjure air elemental 1/week ; AL N (G)). Treasure: Silistria possesses 35 gems (20 x10 gp, 5 x 50 gp, 10 x 100 gp), a bag of holding (500 lbs.) and a **potion of plant control**.

Spells typically readied:

First (4): **comprehend languages, dancing lights, magic missile, protection from evil**

Second (3): **detect invisibility, ESP, scare**

Third (2): **phantasmal force, protection from normal missiles**

Fourth (1): **ice storm**

4. **Skunks** (6): (SZ: S; AC 8; MV 120 ft.; HD 1-2 hp; HP 1 (x3), 2 (x3); #AT 1; Dmg 1; SA Squirt musk; SD Squirt musk; AL N.)

5. **Boars** (35): (SZ: S; AC 7; MV 150 ft.; HD 3+3; HP 10, 11 (x3), 12 (x5), 14, 15 (x4), 16 (x2), 17 (x3), 18 (x3), 19 (x3), 20 (x2), 21 (x2), 22 (x2), 24 (x3); #AT 1; Dmg 3-12; AL N.)

J: BODHMAL'S HOME: **Bodhmal** has used her **cloudstuff staff** (see new magic items) to alter the terrain in the forest, allowing her to craft an underground home accessible only through a hole that requires a man-sized creature to squeeze through to enter. Once past the hole, a 20x20 ft. cave opens up in which she's made primitive house: a sleeping pile of dried grass, a food preparation area with a small fire, and a corner where her pet giant weasel **Domar** sleeps. In a depression near the entrance are 358 gp, and 11 gems (5 x10 gp, 4 x 50 gp, 2 x 500 gp).

Bodhmal has also created two back up locations where she could set up house if her current home is discovered. They are currently empty except for piles of dry kindling, and cooking cauldrons and utensils. These areas are indicated by the two black squares on the map.

Bodhmal (Half elf female druid level 10; AC 4; HP 57; Dam 1-4 +2 or +3; S11 I16 W18 D11 C12 CH16)

Spells typically readied:

First (7): **animal friendship, detect magic, entangle, faerie fire, locate animals, speak with animals** (x2)

Second (6): **charm person or mammal** (x2), **cure light wounds** (x2), **obscurement, produce flame**

Third (4): **neutralize poison, snare, summon insects, tree**

Fourth (4): **animal summoning I, cure serious wounds, plant door, quench fire**

Fifth (5): **animal growth, sticks to snakes**

Magic items possessed: **dagger +2, +3 vs. creatures larger than man-sized, bracers of defense AC4, cloudstuff staff** with 19 charges (see new magic items), **wings of flying**, a scroll (**speak with animals, neutralize poison, animal growth**), a **potion of invisibility**, and a **potion of healing**.

Physical description: Bodhmal obviously favors her human parent, as she is tall for a half elf, a few inches under 6 feet, and heavy-set at 165 pounds, with bronzed freckled skin. Her dark hair is pulled back and held by a leather thong. She has eyes so dark green they're nearly brown.

Domar, giant weasel: (SZ: M; AC 6; MV 150 ft.; HD 3+3; HP 24; #AT 1; Dmg 2-12; SA Drain blood; AL N)

CASTLE NEPHOTHANTOS

1. GATE: Two great cloudstuff gates seal Nephothantos off from the rest of Sýnnefonísí. Above the gate is a bretèche (AREAS 15 & 81) allowing the giants to throw stones (2-24 damage) or 10 gallons of hot oil (3-18 damage 1st round, 2-12 damage

2nd round, 1-6 damage 3rd round) down upon intruders. The ballistas on top of the Vine and Garden towers (AREAS 99 & 100) can target all those approaching the castle, including those standing before the gates.

The gate can be barred from the inside with a single cloudstuff stone designed for such purpose. The bar for this gate rests inside AREA 2, ready for quick deployment.

2. ENTRANCE GATEWAY: This 60 foot long passageway is subject to attacks from murder holes above throughout its entirety—10 gallons of boiling oil can be dropped at a moment's notice dealing 3-18 damage the 1st round, 2-12 damage the 2nd, and 1-6 damage on the 3rd. Two heavy portcullises can be dropped to close the way, each barred from above, preventing a lift gates attempt. At the end of the passage is a truly monumental cloudstuff gate mounted on heavy hinges that face the lower courtyard. This gate is three times the thickness of that found in AREA 1 and like it, can be barred with a specifically-made cloudstuff bar.

3. LOWER COURTYARD: The lower courtyard of Nephothantos is a hive of activity. **Servants/slaves** traveling from the fields pile their burdens here, where other servant/slaves take them deeper into the castle. There are always several **cloud giants** here watching over the entire affair.

Along the northern wall a large area is set off with a tall half wall/fence (for a giant, of course, the wall's 12 feet tall) behind which the kennels for the castle's spotted lions are contained. The **Beastmaster** is often found here in the lower courtyard, training the younger **spotted lions** in the adjacent training pen or taking a less-trained lion out on chain leash into the courtyard proper. Occasional maulings of inattentive slaves happen on these occasions, much to the amusement of the giants.

At the base of the ramp leading up to the Beastmaster's Chamber (AREA 13) stands an amazingly life-like statue of a cloud giant, bent over and kneeling, as if fiddling with something low to the ground. This is a pilferous giant who was turned to stone by the Beastmaster's rosewood coffer (see AREA 13). The Beastmaster put it here as a warning to other not to enter his chambers unescorted.

For invaders, the lower courtyard is a killing field: anyone here is subject to attacks from AREAS 14-18, 21, 22, 78, 78, 81, 82, 99, and 100. Characters would do well to avoid getting trapped here at all costs!

Spotted Lions (8): (SZ: L; AC 5 forequarter, 6 hindquarter; MV 120 ft.; HD 6+2; HP 24 (x3), 29 (x2), 35, 36, 38; #AT 3; Dmg 1-4, 1-4, 1-12; SA Rear claws 2-8, 2-8; SD Surprised only on a 1; AL N)

Juvenile Spotted Lion (10): (SZ: L; AC 6; MV 120 ft.; HD 3+1; HP 5, 11, 12, 13, 16 (x2), 18 (x2), 19, 21; #AT 3; Dmg 1-3, 1-3, 1-6; SA Rear claws 1-4, 1-4; SD Surprised only on a 1; AL N)

Male Cloud Giants (4): (SZ: L; AC 2; MV 150 ft.; HD 12+2-7; HP 51, 52, 65 (x2); #AT 1; Dmg 6-36; SA Thrown rock for 2-24; SD Surprised only on a 1, levitate 2/day; AL NE)

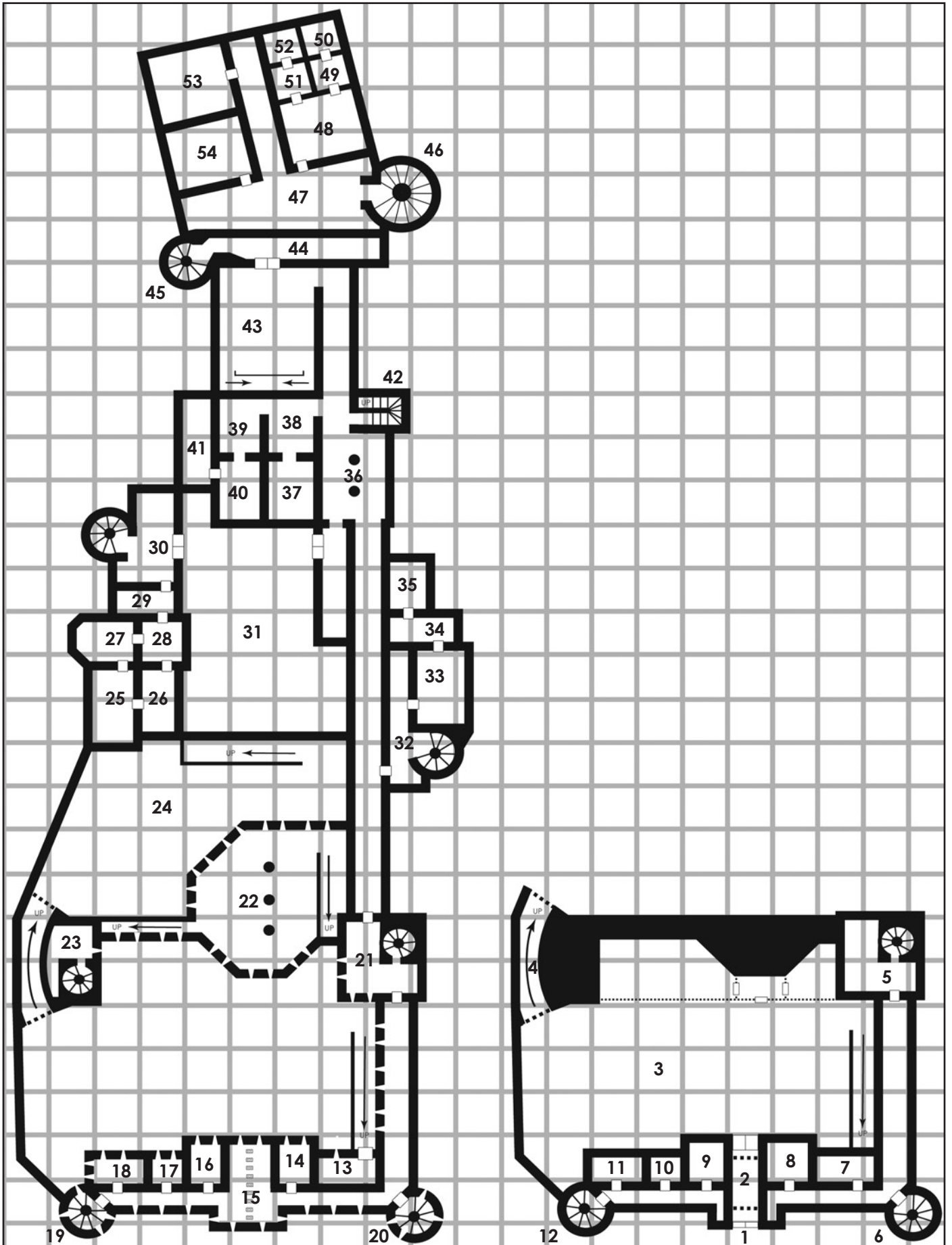
Servant/Slaves (48): (SZ: M; AC 10; MV 120 ft.; HD hp 1-4; HP 1 (x25), 2, (x25), 3 (x25), 4 (x25); #AT 1; D 1-2 or by weapon; AL: Mixed (mostly Neutral)

4. UPPER GATEWAY: A steep, 60 foot long ramp connects the lower courtyard to the upper courtyard (AREA 24). Two heavy portcullises can be dropped to close the way at the exits of the gateway, and each can be barred from above, preventing a lift gates attempt.

As in entrance gateway (AREA 2), the entire passageway is subject to attacks from the murder holes above 10 gallons of

NEPHOTHANTOS - LEVELS TWO AND ONE

EACH SQUARE EQUALS 20 FEET



boiling oil can be dropped at a moment's notice dealing 3-18 damage the 1st round, 2-12 damage the 2nd, and 1-6 damage on the 3rd.

5. **SQUARE TOWER GROUND LEVEL:** This powerful square tower travels from the ground level up to the fourth level via a spiral staircase in the northeast corner. The space in the northwest is occupied by additional storage for the gatehouse complex and a pile of furs for a **guard** to sleep upon. The guard sleeps in this area, and guards the levels above (AREA 21, 79, 82) while awake. Square tower guard duty is considered punishment by the giants of Nephrothantos as the day is spent walking up and down the stairs.

The spiral staircase also travels down to the servant/slaves area. The guard giant does not go down there unless a real ruckus is raised while he's sleeping. During the day, if noises make it up to AREA 21, the guard ignores them, letting the servants/slaves sort themselves out.

Male Cloud Giant: (SZ: L; AC 2; MV 150 ft.; HD 12+2-7; HP 46; #AT 1; Dmg 6-36; SA Thrown rock for 2-24; SD Surprised only on a 1, levitate 2/day; AL NE)

6. **GARDEN TOWER:** This round tower points towards the center of Sýnnefonisí and towards both the formal garden and the vegetable garden. The tower door here is permanently unlocked—the locking mechanism within the door has broken in the "open" position. The giants are unaware of this. If made aware, Cloudmaster Thoon with form a new, fully-functional door within two days.

Six hogsheads weighing 450 lbs. containing 48 gallons of water each are stored in the space under the rise of the stairs as an emergency source of water.

7. **LOWER GARDEN TOWER STORAGE ROOM:** This storage room is stuffed with more than 100 barrels filled with water, salted meat, and wheat.
8. **LOWER GATEHOUSE EAST STORAGE ROOM:** This storage room contains over 100 barrels filled with water, pickled vegetables, and wheat.
9. **LOWER GATEHOUSE WEST STORAGE ROOM:** This storage room holds more than 100 barrels filled with water, salted and dried fruit, and wheat.
10. **OIL STORAGE ROOM:** The giants have (wisely) decided to store their defensive oil separately from all other goods in this room. There are 83 barrels of oil carefully stacked seven high here. Each barrel weighs about 380 lbs. and contains 48 gallons of oil.
11. **LOWER VINE TOWER STORAGE ROOM:** This storage room is filled with barrels of water, food oils, salted smoked fish, and pickled vegetables.
12. **VINE TOWER:** This round tower points towards where the beanstalk permanently joins Sýnnefonisí. Six hogsheads weighing 450 lbs. containing 48 gallons of water each are stored in the space under the rise of the stairs as an emergency source of water.
13. **BEASTMASTER'S CHAMBER:** The **beastmaster** lives in this chamber accessible only via a ramp from the lower courtyard (AREA 3). The beastmaster is an old giant, tough as boiled leather. Even though he is old and a little stooped at the shoulders, he is the tallest, fastest, strongest, and toughest of all the cloud giants in the aerie. He could have easily become Strategos at any point throughout his long life, but he does not care for command, and prefers the company of his animal charges to that of his fellow giants.

The chamber contains a large cot and several different items of furniture: table, chair, bench, chest, cabinet, and a large crate. Upon the table are several wax tablets containing information on the breeding lines of the spotted lions. The tablets are held in an ornately carved cloudstuff letter holder (80 gp) along with a teakwood stylus carved like a feathered serpent (75 gp). The chest contains 1,825 gp, 1,937 sp, a jade box (100 gp) of sandalwood incense (20 gp), a man-sized drinking horn of carved ivory (135 gp), an ebony figurine of a lion (250 gp), a man-sized silver flask adorned with emeralds (2,000 gp), a complete service setting of fine silver (1,450 gp), a spinel-encrusted short sword scabbard made of red dragon hide (550 gp), and a gold statue of a turtle (950 gp). The cabinet contains several changes of clothes, mostly of linen (50 gp), but some of silk (400 gp), three fine leather belts (100 gp each), and a gold-threaded ceremonial toga (600 gp) worn at high worship services.

Resting on the floor of the cabinet is coiled whip and a solid cloudstuff staff used in training the spotted lions. Next to them is a locked ornate rosewood coffer. The coffer is **magically trapped**—those attempting to open the lid without unlocking it with its key (or a successful Pick Locks) are **turned to stone** unless they save against petrification. Within the coffer, covered in a velvet cloth, rests a **poison of gaseous form**, a **protection from elementals scroll**, **2 spider shurikens** (see new magic items), a **gem of identification** (26 charges, see new magic items), and a **ring of attunement, alteration** (see new magic items).

Beastmaster: (SZ: L; AC 1; MV 180 ft.; HD 12+2-7; HP 101; #AT 1; Dmg 4-40; SA Thrown rock for 2-24; SD Fights as a 16 HD creature, surprised only on a 1, +6 to hit and +6 to damage, levitate 2/day; AL NE). Possessions: Bronze breastplate (reduces AC by 1), **maul of the fitans**. In his belt pouch is 100 gp, a **cloudstuff gem** (see new magic items), and the key to his trapped coffer and, used as a dagger, **Truefinder**, a **longsword +3** (N; INT 12; COM Semi-empathy; EGO 1; PA **detect magic** in a 10 ft. radius) that the Beastmaster has surreptitiously used to get the better pieces of any found treasure for a very long time.

14. **GARDEN TOWER GUARD BARRACKS:** **Two giants** barrack here covering the morning-to-night guard duty for the top of the garden tower (AREA 100). Two beds line the eastern wall beneath which are two chests, and two tables and chairs, separated by a shared cabinet, rest along the western wall. In a pile against the center of the norther wall are 10 cloudstuff "rocks" for throwing through the arrowslits.

The northernmost chest contains 136 gp, 457 sp, a carved tigerwood bowl (50 gp) holding a snakeskin, twelve moss agates (10 gp each), six blocks of frankincense (10 gp each) and three blocks of **incense of obsession**. The southern chest contains 175 gp, 341 ep, 290 sp, and a double-sized set of tarot cards of little artistic skill (20 gp). The shared cabinet is filled with linen clothing (100 gp), six leather belts (25 gp each), and two gold-threaded ceremonial togas (200 gp each). A secondary club rests against the back of the cabinet.

Male Cloud Giants (2): (SZ: L; AC 2; MV 150 ft.; HD 12+2-7; HP 58, 67; #AT 1; Dmg 6-36; SA Thrown rock for 2-24; SD Surprised only on a 1, levitate 2/day; AL NE)

15. **MAIN GATEHOUSE:** A long row of murder holes bisect this room. Along the western wall, two large tanks hold 50 gallons of hot oil, always near the boil from the small fires beneath them. Two ten gallon ladles stand nearby, ready to deposit their scalding contents upon any foolish enough to stand before the gate (AREA 1) or within the gateway (AREA 2). A stool stands in the bretèche part of this room, from which the guard watches. Opposite the stool is a large metal gong and mallet ready to send out signal of an attack. There is always one giant guard here, day or night, pulled from AREA 16.

The two portcullises are raised during the day and lowered at night. A cloudstuff bar is used to lock the portcullises when down, reducing the chance of a successful lift gates by 90%.

16. GATEHOUSE GUARD BARRACKS: **Three giants** barrack here, with one standing guard in the gatehouse (AREA 15) at all times. Three narrow giant beds abut the eastern wall, each with a chest beneath them and a matching table and chair opposite against the western wall. A shared cabinet rests the southwestern corner.

Upon the central table rests a copper and silver chess set (600 gp), currently displaying the a stonewall attack by white (silver). In the northern chest is 35 pp, 202 gp, an electrum flask filled with decent whiskey (50 gp), and a rolled up, unframed painting of questionable quality (25 gp). In the central chest is 249 gp, 408 cp, a silver choker (75 gp), a large pewter-bound blank book (50 gp), and a pair of human-sized frilly silk gloves (25 gp). The southern chest contains, 174 gp, 413 sp, a human-sized tabard made of leopard skin (400 gp), a set of leatherworking tools in a foldable leather case (35 gp), and a bag containing two pounds of a salt and pepper mix (30 gp). The shared cabinet contains many sets of linen clothing (150 gp), six leather belts (25 gp each), four gold-threaded ceremonial togas (200 gp each), a fine leather vest (300 gp), a glass talisman filigreed with gold (100 gp), and a marble scroll case containing a **scroll of erase**, and **tongues**.

Male Cloud Giants (3): (SZ: L; AC 2; MV 150 ft.; HD 12+2-7; HP 50, 59 (x2); #AT 1; Dmg 6-36; SA Thrown rock for 2-24; SD Surprised only on a 1, levitate 2/day; AL NE)

17. UPPER VINE TOWER STORAGE ROOM: This room is filled with more than 1,000 cloudstuff "rocks" for throwing through arrowslits. They rest within 10 cloudstuff bins of 100 each along the western, southern, and eastern walls.
18. VINE TOWER GUARD BARRACKS: **Two giants** barrack here covering the morning-to-night guard duty for the top of the vine tower (AREA 99). Two beds line the western wall beneath which are two chests, and two tables and chairs, separated by a shared cabinet, rest along the eastern wall. In a pile against the center of the northern wall are 10 cloudstuff "rocks" for throwing through the arrowslits.

The northernmost chest contains 274 gp, 183 sp, a carved bloodstone statue of an eight-limbed dancer (350 gp) a pair of giant-sized wooden dice with ebony pips (10 gp), and a **potion of invisibility**. The southern chest contains 10 pp, 75 gp, 90 sp, and a small etched brass coffer containing 28 10 gp gems. The shared cabinet is filled with linen clothing (100 gp), six leather belts (25 gp each), and two gold-threaded ceremonial togas (250 gp each).

Male Cloud Giants (2): (SZ: L; AC 2; MV 150 ft.; HD 12+2-7; HP 61, 65; #AT 1; Dmg 6-36; SA Thrown rock for 2-24; SD Surprised only on a 1, levitate 2/day; AL NE)

19. VINE TOWER GUARDIAN: This section of the vine tower is guarded by a trap triggered by a **magic mouth**. If any creature other than a cloud giant passes by, the magic mouth triggers, loudly saying "Woe to you of earth and sea." This causes all the cloudstuff stairs in the area to temporarily turn back into real clouds, dropping any on this level down to the next level (AREA 6), causing 4d6 damage.
20. GARDEN TOWER GUARDIAN: This section of the garden tower is similarly guarded by a trap triggered by a **magic mouth**. If any creature other than a cloud giant passes by, the magic mouth triggers, loudly saying "I saw a beast rising up out of the sea." This causes all the cloudstuff stairs in the area to temporarily turn back into real clouds, dropping any on this level down to the next level (AREA 12), causing 4d6 damage.

21. SQUARE TOWER LEVEL TWO: The giant being punished with square tower duty (see AREA 5) spends 50% of his time here during the day. If not here, he is in AREA 79 or in AREA 82 (25% chance of either). In the southwestern corner are 10 cloudstuff "rocks" for throwing through the arrowslits.

22. THE KILLING HALL: This central bastion is two stories tall, the second story simply composed of a cloudstuff walkway encircling the room. The entrance up a ramp and leading to AREA 79 is always barred and a specific knocking pattern (currently shave and a haircut, two bits) is needed to get one of the giants within to open the door. A ramp in the southwest connects to the upper gatehouse (AREA 78). Along the circumference of the room, both on the walkway and the main floor rest intermittent piles of 10 cloudstuff "rocks" for throwing through the arrowslits: a total of 300 are available. A barrel of water stands next to each pile, along with a barrel of salted meat.

The killing hall has a garrison of **four giants**: during the day three are always present while the fourth does errands elsewhere in the castle. At night a single giant remains on watch. Three bunks and chests rest under the ramp leading to the entrance along with a large shared table, four chairs, and a large shared cabinet. The contents are as follows: chest 1 contains 546 gp, 295 sp, and a small iron box containing teeth from 38 different creatures; chest 2 contains 135 gp, 345 ep, and a silk pouch within which rests a necklace of beautifully carved pearls that tell a story of star-crossed lovers (6,500 gp); chest 3 contains 174 gp, 135 sp, and a bronze spittoon holding a **potion of extra healing**; and the cabinet contains four sets of linen giant clothes and belts (100 each) along with four sets of ceremonial clothing (200 gp each), and a **+2 backscratcher** (25 charges, see new magic items).

The killing hall also functions as the armory of Nephothantos from which Strategos Damysos equips bandits to harass trade routes of the kingdoms he's targeting. Racks of armor and barrels of arms looted in raids or taken from fallen opponents fill the center of the room in orderly rows, along with six large chests. Currently in the chamber are the following:

- 8 suits of man-sized plate mail: one is **plate mail +2**
- 4 suits of dwarf-sized plate mail: one is **plate mail +1**
- 2 suits of elf/½ elf-sized plate mail
- 14 suits of man-sized splint mail: one is **splint mail +3**
- 2 suits of dwarf-sized splint mail
- 36 suits of man-sized chain mail: two are **chain mail +1**
- 5 suits of elf-sized chain mail: one is **chain mail +3**
- 1 suit of **elven chain mail +2**
- 3 suits of halfling/gnome-sized chain mail
- 128 suits of human-sized leather armor: two are **leather armor +1**
- 36 suits of elf/½ elf-sized leather armor: one is **leather armor +1**
- 23 suits of dwarf-sized leather armor
- 14 suits of halfling/gnome leather armor: **leather armor +1**
- 76 large shields: one **shield +1**, one **shield -1**, one **shield +1, +4 vs missiles**
- 111 small shields: one **shield +1**
- 56 small wooden shields
- 136 daggers
- 13 battle axes
- 23 maces
- 54 longswords: one **sword +1**
- 23 short swords
- 135 spears: one **spear +1**
- 45 awl pikes
- 34 long bows
- 45 short bows
- 55 crossbows
- 165 slings
- 2,534 arrows: **35 arrows +1, 12 arrows +2**

- 847 bolts
- 238 sling bullets
- 24 extra cloud-giant-sized clubs
- 6 locked chests (key with the Strategos) containing: 9,356 gp, 12,456 sp, 23, 856 cp

Magical suits of armor, being practically weightless, have been marked with small red "X's" on their chests and are grouped together. The Strategos provides these armors to bandit leaders. The six chests contain coin that the Strategos distributes to solidify his bandits' loyalty.

Male Cloud Giants (4): (SZ: L; AC 2; MV 150 ft.; HD 12+2-7; HP 52, 55, 58, 65; #AT 1; Dmg 6-36; SA Thrown rock for 2-24; SD Surprised only on a 1, levitate 2/day; AL NE)

23. **UPPER GATEHOUSE STORAGE ROOM:** This storage area contains 10 barrels each of water, pickled vegetables, and salted meat. In addition, there are 56 barrels of defensive oil stacked seven high. Each barrel weighs about 380 lbs. and contains 48 gallons of oil.
24. **UPPER COURTYARD:** Unlike the lower courtyard, this area is quiet except for the procession of **servants/slaves** hauling materials from the lower courtyard into the rest of Nephthantos. Only castle servants/slaves are allowed in this section: farm servants/slaves are executed for entering this area except when given a direct order by a giant to do so. One of the games of the more sadistic giants is to order a farm servants/slaves into this area and then deny they gave the order.

Like the lower courtyard, this area is a killing field for attackers: anyone here is subject to attacks from AREAS 22, 78 and the hallways between AREAS 63 & 79 and AREA 82 & 87. A ramp along the northern wall leads up to the greeting hall (AREA 71) and into the castle.

Servant/Slaves (12): (SZ: M; AC 10; MV 120 ft.; HD hp 1-4; HP 1 (x2), 2, (x4), 3 (x4), 4 (x2); #AT 1; D 1-2 or by weapon; AL: Mixed (mostly Neutral))

25. **BEDROOM:** Eight heavily-cushioned bunk beds fill this room, the resting place of sixteen giantesses.
26. **BEDROOM:** Four heavily-cushioned bunks beds fill this room the resting place of eight giantesses.
27. **BATH:** Three giant baths fill this room. Under the tubs are small fire chambers, used to heat the water within. A table near each bath contains various salts, soaps, and perfumes (100 gp total) used while bathing. Four or five cloud giantesses bath here per day. A single **servant/slave** maintains the area, ensuring the water is replaced, the tub cleaned, and the wood supply constantly maintained.

Servant/Slave: (SZ: M; AC 10; MV 120 ft.; HD hp 1-4; HP 3; #AT 1; D 1-2 or by weapon; AL: Mixed (mostly Neutral))

28. **DRESSING ROOM:** The twenty four giantesses that live in the lower level of this wing of the castle collectively dress in this chamber. Each giantess has a shared cloudstuff cabinet containing their clothing, ornamentation, and other personal valuables. The giantesses are assisted in their dressing by the servants/slaves residing in AREA 29.

A large table in the center of the room contains a half dozen golden mirrors (500 gp each), as well as a vast assortment of combs and brushes of various materials such as ivory, silver, and gold (2,000 gp in total) as well as various scented oils, lotions, unguents and make up (1,000 gp in total).

Cabinet 1: Nine sets of linen clothing (100 gp each), a mix of a dozen cloth and rope belts (50 gp each), two sets of silk clothing (400 gp each), two ceremonial robes (600 gp each), and a small cloudstuff cask containing two sets of silver earrings (50 gp each) and a gold necklace with a massive tiger eye (1,150 gp).

Cabinet 2: Seven sets of linen clothing (100 gp each), a half dozen cloth and rope belts (50 gp each), three sets of silk clothing (450 gp each), two ceremonial robes (550 gp, 800 gp) and a carved ivory cask (100 gp) containing a pair of gold earrings (150 gp), a platinum tiara (1,500 gp), and a **philter of beauty**.

Cabinet 3: Eight sets of linen clothing (100 gp each), nine fine cloth belts (100 gp each), two sets of silk clothing (350 gp each), two ceremonial robes (700 gp each), and a cloudstuff cask containing sea shells and an **elixir of life**.

Cabinet 4: Seven sets of linen clothing (150 gp each), a dozen rope and cloth belts of quality (100 gp each), three sets of silk clothing (800 gp each), four ceremonial robes (700 gp each), and a cloudstuff cask containing a platinum necklace (500 gp), four giant-sized electrum rings (100 gp each), and a tourmaline-encrusted brooch (2,500 gp).

Cabinet 5: Six sets of linen clothing (100 gp each), six rope and cloth belts (50 gp each), two sets of silk clothing (400 gp each), two ceremonial robes (450 gp each) and a cloudstuff cask containing an **ivory comb of charisma** (see new magic items).

Cabinet 6: Eight sets of linen clothing (100 gp each), a dozen cloth and rope belts (50 gp each), three sets of silk clothing (500 gp each), three ceremonial robes (500 gp each), and a cloudstuff cask containing eight pairs of earrings (200 gp, 300 gp, 500 gp (x4), 800 gp, and 1,000 gp).

Cabinet 7: Seven sets of linen clothing (100 gp each), nine cloth and rope belts (50 gp each), two sets of silk clothing (300 gp each), two ceremonial robes (400 gp each), and a carved cherry box containing a pearl necklace (500 gp), and a dozen acorns and some pressed flowers.

Cabinet 8: Eight sets of linen clothing (100 gp each), eight finely-crafted rope and cloth belts (100 gp each), one set of silk clothing (300 gp), and two ceremonial robes (400 gp each).

Cabinet 9: Six sets of linen clothing (150 gp each), six rope and cloth belts (50 gp each), two sets of silk clothing (400 gp each), two ceremonial robes (500 gp each), and a cloudstuff cask containing two pounds of incense blocks (400 gp), six loose gems (100 gp x4, 500 gp x 2), and a **pale blue rhomboid ioun stone**.

Cabinet 10: This cabinet is empty. The owners are being punished by Consort Neringa (AREA 77) and until they win back the good favor of the Consort their possessions will remain with her.

Cabinet 11: Seven sets of linen clothing (100 gp each), a dozen cloth and rope belts (50 gp each), two sets of silk clothing (300 gp each), two ceremonial robes (400 gp each), and a carved teak cask (100 gp) containing three sets of silver earrings (50 gp each), two platinum necklaces (600 gp each), and three man-sized gold rings (150 gp each).

Cabinet 12: Ten sets of linen clothing (125 gp each), two dozen cloth and rope belts of fine make (75 gp each), six sets of silk clothing (300 gp x4, 500 gp x2), three ceremonial robes (500 gp, 800 gp, 900 gp) and a cloudstuff cask containing a ruby and silver brooch (2,000 gp), a sapphire and platinum set of earrings (3,000 gp), and an exquisitely detailed silver, gold, and platinum tiara surrounding a stunning emerald (10,000 gp).

29. **SERVANTS/SLAVE QUARTERS:** A **dozen maidservants** to the female giants on this level of the bower reside here, although most are gone during the day, serving their mistresses. There is nothing of value among the bunked beds and cabinets of rough clothes, although a **ring of warmth** is hidden within one mattress: all the servant/slaves know of it, using it whenever one of them becomes sick, and allowing the eldest of them to use it when sleeping if all are healthy.

Servant/Slaves (12): (SZ: M; AC 10; MV 120 ft.: HD hp 1-4; HP 1 (x2), 2, (x4), 3 (x4), 4 (x2); #AT 1; D 1-2 or by weapon; AL: Mixed (mostly Neutral).

30. **DISTAFF ENTRY CHAMBER:** This chamber is brightly lit by three double nozzled open-wick lamps formed from shaped cloudstuff, and they're carefully tended to remain alight. There are several lounging chairs here and the **female giants** often congregate for conversation during the day.

In the northeast corner of this room is giant-sized wooden spinning wheel from which the female giants of Nephothantos take turns spinning a new type of cloudstuff recently discovered by Cloudmaster Thoon: a cloudstuff that can take the form of cloth, yet remain as hard as stone. Currently only small pieces of fabric have been spun and woven, but the Strategos believes that eventually all of the giants will be clad in flowing cloudstuff clothing, which would increase the cloud giant's AC's down to -2 or protect as well as plate mail for other creatures. Near the spinning wheel is a hand-sized weaving loom upon which a small amount of this material, roughly a square yard, rests half-way through creation.

The stairs here lead down to the nursery (AREA 103) where young and juvenile giants reside.

Female Cloud Giants (4): (SZ: L; AC 2; MV 150 ft.; HD 11+2-5; HP 44, 54, 55; 59; #AT 1; Dmg 5-30; SA Thrown rock for 2-20; SD Surprised only on a 1, levitate 2/day; AL NE)

31. **MAIN HALL:** The social center of Nephothantos, the main hall is the second largest room in the castle and a masterwork in engineering. Only a single story tall, it spans more than 130 feet across without columns or arches, demonstrating the power and versatility of cloudstuff construction. This area is always occupied during the day by 1d6+3 **cloud giants** and their required **servants/slaves**, and during the night servants/slaves clean for the next day.

A single large fire pit in the center of the room (typically roasting a cow, two sheep, and four goats per day) is surrounded by lounges upon which the giants rest and converse. Slaves trundle back and forth bringing food and drink from the kitchens.



Over the fire pit an **air elemental** collects all the smoke that rises from the flames. It then rushes up a small chimney (only 6 inches wide) in the ceiling (running up the wall separating AREAS 72 & 73) to release all the smoke outside. It then returns to clean the air again. The elemental is bound to Cloudmaster Thoon, and if Thoon is killed, the elemental will rampage against the giants that imprisoned it.

Air Elemental: (SZ: L; AC 2; MV 360 ft. flying; HD 16; HP 86; #AT 1; Dmg 2-20; SA Whirlwind; SD +2 or better weapon to hit)

32. **LOWER GUEST WING GUARDROOM:** Whenever guests are in chamber (as they currently are) two **cloud giants** take up residence here and stand guard. They also escort guests throughout the castle, and ensure that the guests are not disturbed by non-official business. A shared cot rests in the northern hallway in this chamber, along with a shared table and two chairs.

Male Cloud Giants (2): (SZ: L; AC 2; MV 150 ft.; HD 12+2-7; HP 50, 53; #AT 1; Dmg 6-36; SA Thrown rock for 2-24; SD Surprised only on a 1, levitate 2/day; AL NE)

33. **LOWER GUEST ENTERTAINING ROOM:** This room is designed for lounging, private informal meetings, and entertainment activities. Many cloudstuff table and chairs (of various sizes) fill the room, as well as a goodly selection of musical instruments upon which servants/slaves may play. All total, there are 22 different instruments, each worth 100-200 gp.

34. **LOWER GUEST SERVANT QUARTERS:** This room is designed for non-giant guests. There are two bunk beds, providing quarters for four man-sized servants of the honored guest housed in AREA 35. Currently the area is occupied by four charmed servants for **Sybaris** and **Poliorcetes**. Three are normal humans, but one is a 12th-level thief named Sedjefakare.

Servant (2): (SZ: M; AC 10; MV 120 ft.: HD hp 1-4; HP 3, 4; #AT 1; D 1-4; AL: Mixed (mostly Neutral). Possessions: dagger.

Sedjefakare (Elf male thief level 12: AC 2; HP 41; Dam 1-8 +2; S12 I9 W7 D18* C11 CH11; AL CN). Possessions: **longsword + 2** (CN; INT 12; COM Semi-empathy; EGO 1; PA **detect magic** in a 10 ft. radius), **bracers of defense AC 6**, ***gauntlets of dexterity**, thieves tools. Thief Abilities: PP *130, OL *97, F/RT 80, MS 119, HS102, HN 40, CW 99.2, RL 60

35. **LOWER GUEST CHAMBER:** Honored non-giant guests of Nephothantos are housed in this luxurious chamber. Two ornately-carved, mahogany beds (currently pushed together to form a large single bed, 1,000 gp each), along with two matching writing desks (600 gp each), as well as a large sofa with silken throw pillows (800 gp) and several plush chairs (200 gp each) surround the cave bear skin (100 gp) resting before an impressively carved fireplace.

A large, locked, cloudstuff chest rests in the northwest corner, its key held by Sybaris. Inside the large chest are three locked, portable, strongboxes whose keys are also held by Sybaris. Strongbox 1 contains: 3,000 gp, a pair of giant pearls (5,000 gp each), and a **potion of animal control** (mammal/marsupial). Strongbox 2 contains: 6,000 ep. Strongbox 3 contains: 2,000 gp, 3,000 sp, and **16 arrows +1**.

The chamber is currently occupied by a noble lamia couple, Sybaris and Poliorcetes. These two arrived a few days ago and are beginning negotiations with the Strategos regarding support for his plans in the far desert country of Kemet.

Sybaris, Female Noble Lamia: (SZ: M; AC 6; MV 90 ft.; HD 10+1; HP 52; #AT 0; Dmg none; SA Spells, wisdom drain; AL CE) Possessions: **wand of lightning**, keys to the chests in AREA 35. As a 8th-level caster, Sybaris knows the following magic user spells:

First (4): **detect magic, magic missile (x2), shield**
Second (3): **ESP, invisibility, mirror image**
Third (3): **slow, suggestion**
Fourth (2): **fear, wall of fire**

Polioretetes, Male Noble Lamia: (SZ: M; AC 6; MV 90 ft.; HD 10+1; HP 63; #AT 1 (+3 to hit); Dmg 1-6+8; SA Spells, wisdom drain; AL CE) Possessions: **short sword +2, girdle of stone giant strength.** As a 5th-level caster, Polioretetes knows the following magic user spells:

First (4): **detect magic, magic missile (x2); shield**
Second (2): **ESP, invisibility**
Third (1): **slow**

36. THE TWO PILLARS OF CLOUDMASTER THOON: This room is the "heart" of Nephothantos—the two pillars here travel from this level up through the oratory of hearts (AREA 3) to the roof of the hall of glory (AREA 87). These two pillars were the first structures erected in its construction. Over time they have altered in nature, and are no longer simple pillars of solid cloudstuff: in this area they are now filled with rolling storm that constantly cracks with lightning and crashes with thunder (making normal-volume conversation in this area difficult).

The pillars have several different magical effects on this level:

Any cloud giant can touch the pillars and be healed 2-8 hp of damage, once per day.
Any other type of giant touching the pillars is healed 1-4 hp of damage, once per day.
Any Good creature touching the pillars is shocked for 2-8 hp of damage.
Any Lawful creature touching the pillars is shocked for 1-4 hp of damage.

37. FRYERY: An oily sheen coats this room from the decades of fried foods prepared within. Six large bronze pots are kept full of scalding oil and ingredients constantly go into and out of them throughout the day. Two **giant cooks** are always here, along with a handful of **servants/slaves**.

During harvest this area turns into the preserving room, processing the incoming harvest for the larder (AREA 40) and other storage areas. Four cooks are always present during this busy time.

Female Cloud Giants (2): (SZ: L; AC 2; MV 150 ft.; HD 11+2-5; HP 46, 54; #AT 1; Dmg 5-30; SA Thrown rock for 2-20; SD Surprised only on a 1, levitate 2/day; AL NE)

Servant/Slaves (6): (SZ: M; AC 10; MV 120 ft.; HD hp 1-4; HP 1 (x1), 2, (x2), 3 (x2), 4 (x1); #AT 1; D 1-2 or by weapon; AL: Mixed (mostly Neutral))

38. KITCHEN: All the food roasting over the fire in the main hall (AREA 31) is prepared here, both before and after cooking. Additionally, all of the food that heads to the oven room (AREA 39) or the fryery (AREA 37) is prepared here, as are all non-cooked foods. Two **giant cooks** and their **servants/slaves** are here during the day, as well as **Akantha**, the head cook—a surprisingly cheery cloud giant that hides her iron fist in a velvet glove and who spends her time moving back and forth through the entire kitchen suite (AREAS 37-41).

Akantha: SZ: L; AC 2; MV 150 ft.; HD 11+2-5; HP 69 #AT 1; Dmg 5-30; SA Thrown rock for 2-20; SD Surprised only on a 1, levitate 2/day; AL NE)

Female Cloud Giants (2): (SZ: L; AC 2; MV 150 ft.; HD 11+2-5; HP 37, 58; #AT 1; Dmg 5-30; SA Thrown rock for 2-20; SD Surprised only on a 1, levitate 2/day; AL NE)

Servant/Slaves (6): (SZ: M; AC 10; MV 120 ft.; HD hp 1-4; HP 1 (x1), 2, (x2), 3 (x2), 4 (x1); #AT 1; D 1-2 or by weapon; AL: Mixed (mostly Neutral))

39. OVEN ROOM: A veritable cloud of flour hangs in the air around the 4 ovens kept constantly at work baking the castle's bread, and as expected, loaves include at least a pinch or two of ground bone in them for that "just right" flavor. Two **giant bakers** and their **servants/slaves** are always here during the day.

Female Cloud Giants (2): (SZ: L; AC 2; MV 150 ft.; HD 11+2-5; HP 53, 66; #AT 1; Dmg 5-30; SA Thrown rock for 2-20; SD Surprised only on a 1, levitate 2/day; AL NE)

Servant/Slaves (6): (SZ: M; AC 10; MV 120 ft.; HD hp 1-4; HP 1 (x1), 2, (x2), 3 (x2), 4 (x1); #AT 1; Dmg 1-2 or by weapon; AL: Mixed (mostly Neutral))

40. PANTRY AND LARDER: This room is piled with spices and goods immediately needed to prepare the daily food. There's always a carcass or two being kept cool upon the thrawl, and servant/slaves moving back and forth collecting ingredients as needed.

41. BUTTERY: This room is filled with tuns, butts, hogsheads, and barrels, each containing a different alcoholic beverage, although there is a heavy preference for grain alcohols, ciders, and wines. Only giants are allowed in this room.

42. MIDSTAIRS: This rectangular stairway connects the highest level of Nephothantos with its underground level. It is the busiest of all stairways in the castle due the continual movements of the servants/slaves and it's unlikely to remain empty for more than minute or two. Much of the daily traffic is slaves hauling up foodstuffs from the large larders below ground.

43. THRONE ROOM: The main pageantry room in Nephothantos has a massive arched ceiling 90 feet above the polished cloudstuff floor. Two ramps lead up the southern wall to a platform upon which rest two gigantic cloudstuff chairs, one for the Strategos and one for his Consort. The only decorations in this room are twelve massive purple cloth hangings fixed from where the ceiling arch begins all the way to the floor. Each of these hangings are worth 2,000 gp. This room is rarely used: it is almost always empty and a bit dusty.

44. WARDEN HALL: The hall is covered in ornate bas relief carvings telling the story of the foundation and construction of Nephothantos. The hall is guarded by a cloudstuff **stone golem**, tasked to attack any non-giant that enters the hall without a giant companion. In the center of the golem's head is a **gem of seeing**, allowing it to utilize the abilities of the gem at all times. The stone golem is linked to the stone golem in the kardax hall (AREA 47), and together they distribute any lost hit points between them. This means that if the golem here takes 10 points of damage, the golem in the kardax hall suffers five and this one suffers five. Damage that is not evenly divisible is suffered by the golem upon which it occurs. If the golem is destroyed, the **gem of seeing** is recoverable

Stone Golem: (SZ: L; AC 5; MV 60 ft.; HD 14; HP 60; #AT 1; Dmg 3-24; SA slow; SD +2 or better to hit, magic immunity, true seeing)

45. CIRCLE TOWER: The circle tower connects four levels of Nephothantos, and is the only way to access the oratory of clouds (AREA 98). A **mimic** lurks in circle tower, being paid by the Strategos in servants/slaves. 50% of the time it is between the warden hall (AREA 44) and the misty hall (AREA 62), and 50% of the time it's between the misty hall (AREA 62) and the hall of appreciation (AREA 90). It disguises itself as a door on the outside of the spiral precisely between the two levels and attacks any non-giant that's not escorted by a giant.

The giants generally leave the mimic alone, but it has made a few giant friends who enjoy visiting to play a game where they try to guess what phrase the mimic's thinking of based upon the shapes it takes.

Mimic: (SZ: L; AC 7; MV 30 ft.; HD 7; HP 34; #AT 1; Dmg 3-12; SA Glue; SD Camouflage; AL CE)

46. **KARDAX TOWER:** The kardax tower connects four of the castle's levels and goes down to the servant/slave area. It continues down even farther than that, down to the bottom of Sýnnefonisí. At the very bottom of the kardax tower, down roughly 500 feet, Cloudmaster Thoon has built a hanging observation tower which is always occupied by two **cloud giant guards** who watch the lands underneath the castle. Characters approaching openly have a 50% chance (per mile of the 4 mile trip) of encountering one of the guards from the "observation tower" that descended to greet them. The giant will demand to know who the characters are and what they're doing, attempt to extort treasure from the party, and attack if not given such. It will flee if reduced to ½ its hp, rising to warn the rest of the castle.

The observation tower contains several cloudstuff chairs and a table upon which the guards are currently playing checkers using a giant-sized cloudstuff board and pieces (100 gp, but only to a collector).

Male Cloud Giants (2): (SZ: L; AC 2; MV 150 ft.; HD 12+2-7; HP 66, 70; #AT 1; Dmg 6-36; SA Thrown rock for 2-24; SD Surprised only on a 1, levitate 2/day; AL NE)

47. **KARDAX HALL:** This hall is covered in ornate bas relief carvings telling the story of the creation and expansion of giant-kind across the world. The hall is guarded by a cloudstuff **stone golem**, tasked to attack any non-giant that enters the hall without a giant companion. The stone golem is linked to the stone golem in the warden hall (AREA 44), and together they distribute any lost hit points between them. This means that if the golem here takes 10 points of damage, the golem in the warden hall suffers five and this one suffers five. Damage that is not evenly divisible between the pair is suffered by the golem upon which it occurs.

Stone Golem: (SZ: L; AC 5; MV 60 ft.; HD 14; HP 60; #AT 1; Dmg 3-24; SA slow; SD +2 or better to hit, magic immunity)

48. **BARRACKS:** More-experienced giants reside in this barracks. There are four beds, cloudstuff chests beneath them, and a shared cabinet. The giants occupying this room are only found here during night, spending the day elsewhere.

Chest 1: 201 pp, 546 gp, 324 sp, and a gold necklace (600 gp)

Chest 2: 103 pp, 348 gp, 643 sp, and a silk pouch containing **dust of tracelessness** (20 pinches).

Chest 3: 75 pp, 601 gp, 456 sp, and a set of silver servers (800 gp).

Chest 4: 214 pp, 481 gp, 342 sp, and a mummified stone giant hand wrapped in a **cloak of arachnidia**.

Cabinet: 12 sets of linen clothes (150 gp each), two dozen fine leather belts (100 gp), and 8 sets of ceremonial robes (400 gp each).

49. **HYPOSTRATEGOS'S STUDY:** This small room is occupied only by a cloudstuff writing desk and two chairs. The hypostrategos performs his administrative duties in this room, but it is mostly used to converse privately with individual giants.

50. **HYPOSTRATEGOS'S BEDROOM:** Nephothantos's second-in-command resides here. Cloudstuff furniture, a bed, a chest, and a cabinet, occupy the room. An immaculate hunting

tapestry (2,000 gp) hangs on the western wall. The chest contains 548 pp, 879 gp, 1,256 sp, and a **potion of flying**, a **potion of gaseous form**, and a **potion of healing**. The cabinet contains a cloud giant club, 6 sets of linen clothing (150 gp each), and accompanying leather belts (100 gp each), as well as a ceremonial robe (400 gp).

Hypostrategos, Male Cloud Giant: (SZ: L; AC 1; MV 150 ft.; HD 12+2-7; HP 92; #AT 1; Dmg 6-36; SA Thrown rock for 2-24; SD Surprised only on a 1, levitate 2/day; AL NE). Possessions: Bronze breastplate (reduces AC by 1).

51. **KATEPANO'S STUDY:** This small room is occupied by a cloudstuff writing desk and two chairs. The katepano performs his administrative duties in this room, but it is mostly used to converse privately with individual giants.

52. **KATEPANO'S BEDROOM:** Nephothantos's third-in-command calls this his home. Cloudstuff furniture, a bed, a chest, and a cabinet, occupy the room. The katepano has covered his walls in looted paintings. In total, there are 26 in the room. Subjects are mostly nature-themed, but some are portraits, and others illustrate stories from history or myth. All the paintings are worth 25,000 gp, with the most notable being worth 4,000 gp (a large nature scene painted by the master Quovon).

The chest contains 240 pp, 500 gp, 400 ep, and 600 sp. The cabinet contains 7 sets of linen clothing (150 gp each), a dozen leather belts (50 gp), and two ceremonial robes (400 gp each).

Katepano, Male Cloud Giant: (SZ: L; AC 1; MV 150 ft.; HD 12+2-7; HP 86; #AT 1; Dmg 6-36; SA Thrown rock for 2-24; SD Surprised only on a 1, levitate 2/day; AL NE). Possessions: Bronze breastplate (reduces AC by 1).

53. **BARRACKS:** Fourteen **cloud giants** tightly barrack in this room during the night: Three doubled bunk beds on the northern and southern walls and two regular bunks on the western wall. The center of the room is a large shared table along with 6 chairs. Under each doubled bunk are two chests, under each single bunk a single chest, and 4 cabinets contain clothes for all the barracked giants.

Chest 1: 12 pp, 124 gp, 239 sp, a bag of giant-sized marbles (35 gp), a bottle of alcohol wrapped in silk (40 gp).

Chest 2: 231 gp, 198 sp, a plain hunting scene tapestry (90 gp), and large bottle of quality olive oil wrapped in a dirty rag (60 gp).

Chest 3: 301 gp, 24 ep, 87 sp, and a large cheese (30 gp).

Chest 4: 216 gp, 194 sp, and a belt pouch full of a dozen lead rings washed in gold of the same size and make (1 cp each).

Chest 5: 15 pp, 201 gp, 349 sp.

Chest 6: 325 gp, 10 sp, and a cask of 6 lbs. of salt (6 gp).

Chest 7: 546 sp and in a hidden panel, a **bag of devouring**.

Chest 8: 242 ep, 59 cp, a jade broach (200 gp), and a half-filled coffer of 10 lbs. of dried figs (5 gp).

Chest 9: 320 gp, 145 sp, and a four bottles of truly terrible grain alcohol.

Chest 10: 145 pp, 201 sp, a large chunk of hematite (100 gp), and a dozen acorns.

Chest 11: 167 gp, 246 sp, 234 cp.

Chest 12: 254 gp, 842 sp, and a **silver comb of charisma** (see new magic items).

Chest 13: 198 gp and a small mahogany box filled with dark gray ashes.

Chest 14: 291 gp and a **potion of extra healing**.

Cabinets 1-4 each contain: A giant-sized club, 12 sets of linen clothing (50 gp each), 18 tooled leather belts (25 gp each), and five ceremonial robes (150 gp each). Additionally, cabinet 3 contains an ornate bronze **shield**

+2 etched with silver, gold, and platinum (worth 1,000 gp more than normal).

Male Cloud Giants (14): (SZ: L; AC 2; MV 150 ft.; HD 12+2-7; HP 44, 49, 53, 56 (x2), 60 (x2), 63, 64, 66, 67 (x2), 71, 78; #AT 1; Dmg 6-36; SA Thrown rock for 2-24; SD Surprised only on a 1, levitate 2/day; AL NE)

54. **BARRACKS:** Fourteen more **cloud giants** also tightly barrack in this room during the night: Three doubled bunk beds on the northern and southern walls and two regular bunks on the western wall. The center of the room is a large shared table along with 6 chairs. Under each doubled bunk are two chests, under each single bunk a single chest, and 4 cabinets contain clothes for all the barracked giants.

Chest 1: 19 ep, 265 gp, 221 sp, and a leather case containing a writing set (100 gp).

Chest 2: 821 gp, and a large jug of vinegary wine.

Chest 3: 165 gp, 285 sp, and a platinum bracelet set with 4 topazes (2,000 gp).

Chest 4: 200 gp, 200 sp, 139 cp, and a cask of 12 lbs. of dried, smoked human sausages.

Chest 5: 34 pp, 190 gp.

Chest 6: 92 gp, 258 ep, 121 sp, and a set of bongos.

Chest 7: 12 pp, 27 gp, 103 sp, 230 cp, and two jade earrings (100 gp each).

Chest 8: 52 pp, 264 gp, 109 sp, 273 cp, and a silver necklace set with 6 pink pearls (1,200 gp).

Chest 9: 145 gp, 668 ep, 203 sp, 593 cp, and a carved marble figurine of a lion (400 gp).

Chest 10: 396 gp, 121 ep, 306 sp.

Chest 11: 265 gp, 900 cp, and a **potion of diminution**.

Chest 12: 35 pp, 126 gp, 374 ep, 381 sp.

Chest 13: 205 gp and a wooden box containing dozens of stone arrow points.

Chest 14: 135 gp, 500 sp, and a **potion of levitation**.

Cabinets 1-4 each contain: A giant-sized club, 12 sets of linen clothing (50 gp each), 18 tooled leather belts (25 gp each), and five ceremonial robes (150 gp each). Cabinet 2 contains a **mirror of mental prowess** the giants use as a normal mirror. On the back is an elven poem etched in silver with the Elven word *nólemë* (wisdom) etched in gold. This is the mirror's command word.

Male Cloud Giants (14): (SZ: L; AC 2; MV 150 ft.; HD 12+2-7; HP 48, 51 (x2), 52, 54, 56, 59(x2), 61, 63, 68, 69 (x2), 77; #AT 1; Dmg 6-36; SA Thrown rock for 2-24; SD Surprised only on a 1, levitate 2/day; AL NE)

55. **CLOUDMASTER HALL:** The walls of this hall are carved in high relief, telling the history of the cloudmasters of *Sýnnefonisi* as they raised the isle, expanded it, and created the castle.

56. **CHAMBER OF CLOUD:** Opening the door to this room releases a massive rush of air, dousing any flames and preventing any man-sized creature with less than a 10 Strength from moving forward into the room. The interior of this hot room appears to contain a miniature thunderstorm, dark with rain and rumbling with small cracks of thunder. Visiting cloud giants can make use of the cloudstuff benches along the walls to rest and relax by taking in the sounds of roiling thunderstorm while enjoying a refreshing sauna.

Any metals brought into this room trigger a nasty side effect 1 round after entering—a miniature lightning bolt dealing 2-12 damage lashes out from the miniature thunderstorm. 2-5 rounds are needed to build up charge for another strike.

57. **HONORED GUESTS ANTECHAMBER:** Only honored guests and their visitors enter this lavishly furnished room. Thick rugs (8 rugs,

200 gp each), wall hangings (10 tapestries worth 100 gp each), and plush human-sized sofas (3 worth 500 gp each) and chairs (12 worth 100 gp each) fill the room, along with two sets of giant-sized cloudstuff furniture. Multiple solid-wood tables (4 worth 250 gp each) provide plenty of table space for the lush silver serving sets (3 complete sets for 12 worth 3,000 each) and gold candelabras (8 worth 400 gp each) that light the room.

This room is variously occupied: there is a 30% chance of Skelmis the Mage (AREA 58), a 30% chance of Kazimeer the Unseen (AREA 61), and a 25% chance of Karfaut the Fierce (AREA 59). During the day, a half dozen **servants/slaves** wait upon the guests in this room.

Servant/Slaves (6): (SZ: M; AC 10; MV 120 ft.; HD hp 1-4; HP 1 (x1), 2, (x2), 3 (x2), 4 (x1); #AT 1; Dmg 1-2 or by weapon; AL: Mixed (mostly Neutral)

58. **SKELMIS'S BEDROOM:** **Skelmis the Mage** resides in this rather unimpressive room. His bed, table, and writing chair are all made of cloudstuff, as is the locked chest in the northwest corner of the room containing his clothing and 235 gp. Upon the table is a golden carved holy symbol of Nyx, goddess of the night and mother of all gods (450 gp).

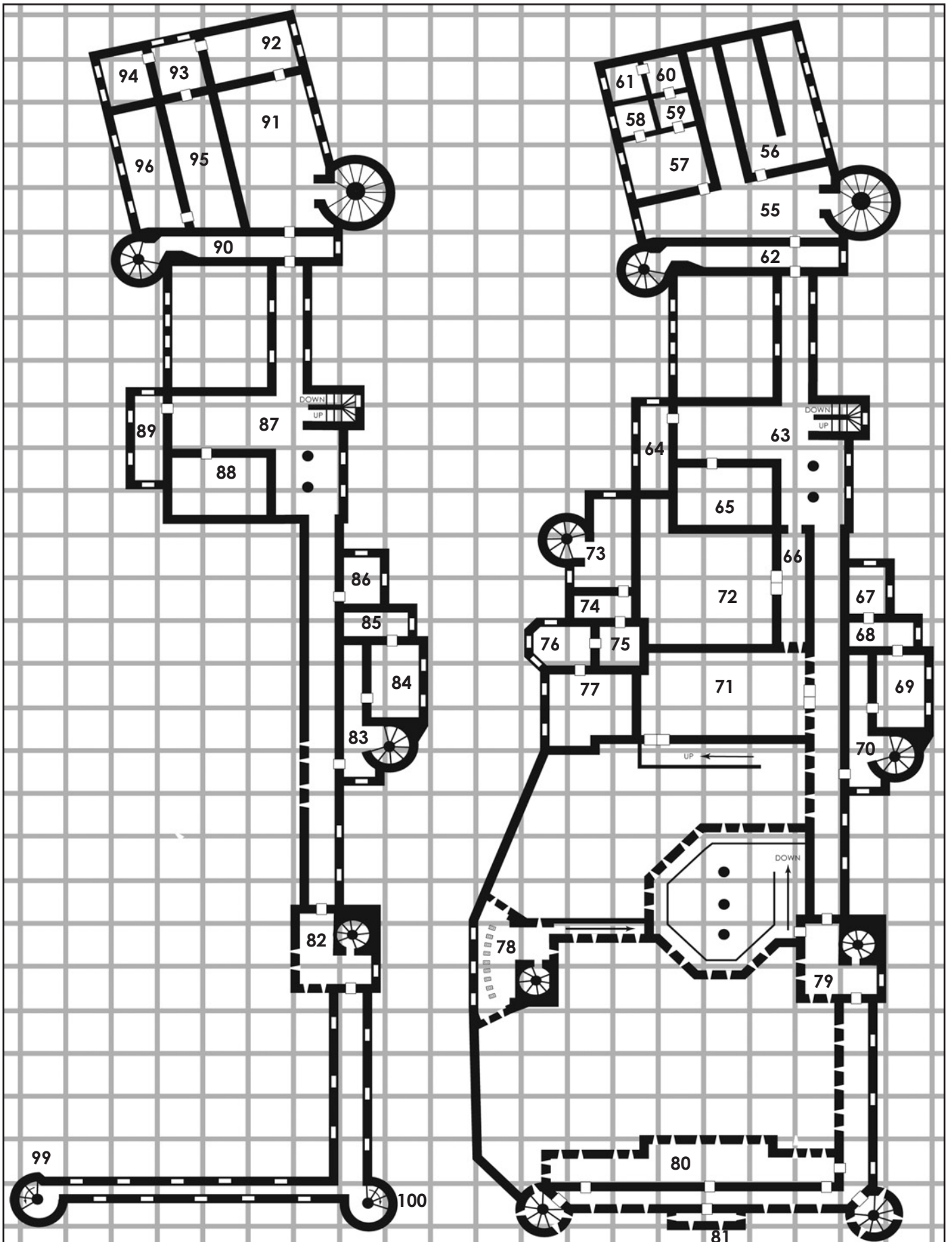
Skelmis is a devout worshipper of Nyx, and the goddess herself has spoken to him directly, instructing him to bring upon the destruction of this world via the return to giant rule. Skelmis has no idea why she wants him to do this task, and it never crossed his mind to ask: when the goddess commands, one obeys. He has been working on his plan for many years and is now an old man, held up only by his strength of will and the occasional use of longevity potions. The Strategos owns his position to Skelmis's scheming and listens kindly upon any requests put towards him.

Skelmis can be found here during the night, as well as for a few hours after waking when he memorizes any needed spells. At



NEPHOTHANTOS - LEVELS FOUR AND THREE

EACH SQUARE EQUALS 20 FEET



other times he's found in his antechamber (AREA 57, 30%), or with Cloudmaster Thoon (40%), or the Strategos (30%).

Skelmis the Mage (Human male magic-user level 16; AC *2 (armor, stonesskin, and volley are always upon him); HP 29 (53 with armor); Dam 1-4-1; S4 I18 W16 D8 C7 CH10; AL NE)

Magic user spells typically readied:

First (5): ***armor, grease, magic missile, shield, unseen servant**

Second (5): **acid arrow, irritation, knock, vocalize, zephyr**

Third (5): **dispel magic (x2), material (x2), minute meteors**

Fourth (5): **charm monster, confusion, resilient sphere, *stonesskin, ultravision**

Fifth (10): **airy water, cone of cold, conjure elemental, fabricate (x3), teleport (x2), wall of force (x2)**

Sixth (3): **eyebite, globe of invulnerability, lucubration**

Seventh (2): **power word stun, volley**

Eight (1): **maze**

Magic items possessed: **ring of protection +6, ring of wizardry** (doubles fifth level spells), **wand of lightning bolts** (82 charges), and **boots and cloak of elvenkind**. Other items: dagger, key to chest in AREA 58, miniature chest link to a **secure chest** containing a travelling spell book with the spells **armor, magic missile, shield, dispel magic, lightning bolt, fireball, magic mirror, stonesskin, globe of invulnerability, limited wish, and teleport without error**. His full spell book is found in the treasury (AREA 96).

59. **KARFAUT'S BEDROOM:** An ornate wooden bed (300 gp) along with a fine writing table and chair (300 gp together) occupy the room. A locked cloudstuff chest in the southeast corner holds Karfaut's clothing and treasure: 145 pp, 453 gp, 20 gems (15 x 50 gp, 5 x 100 gp), and a **potion of longevity**.

Karfaut the Fierce spends about 25% of his time in this room as there is little need for him to guard Kazimeer (AREA 61) while he remains in the castle grounds, and another 25% of his time in the honored guest antechamber (AREA 57). The rest of the time he spends wandering the grounds of Synnefonisi. He particularly enjoys the formal garden, wandering about with a flask of hard alcohol.

Karfaut is intensely evil, yet he is an intensely loyal servant to Kazimeer—he will not hesitate to lay down his life protecting him if needs be.

Karfaut the Fierce (Human half-orc fighter/cleric level 8/4; AC 3; HP 70; Dam 1-10+6; S18/54 I9 W14 D14 C17 CH9; AL LE)

Cleric spells typically readied:

First (5): **cure light wounds (x4), protection from good**

Second (2): **hold person, silence 15 ft. radius**

Magic items possessed: **Two-handed sword +3** (LE; INT 13; COM Empathy; EGO 3; PA **detect invisible** objects in a 10 ft. radius, detect elevator/shifting walls/rooms in a 10 ft. radius, **locate object** in a 120 ft. radius), **chain mail +2, ring of fire resistance**. Other items: unholy symbol, dagger, key to chest in AREA 59

60. **MEDITATION ROOM:** The Strategos has emptied this room of all but a finely woven rug (200 gp) for Kazimeer's (AREA 61) meditations. Kazimeer spends an hour meditating here each day before he retires to sleep.

61. **THE UNSEEN'S BEDROOM:** **Kazimeer the Unseen** spends almost no time in his bedchamber, only sleeping long enough to regain and refresh his power. The room is barren except an ill-crafted human-sized wooden bed and a locked cloudstuff chest in which Kazimeer keeps his rough clothes atop his small treasure: 345 pp, 859 gp, 25 gems (10 x 50 gp, 15 x 100 gp), and a travelling spell book containing the following spells: **Dameon's**

shadow spell book (see new spells), **improved invisibility, magic missile, dimension door, and fireball**. Kazimeer has access to all his spell books in the treasury (AREA 96) via **Dameon's shadow spell book** as long as the book remains secure (ie. the PC's don't steal it).

Kazimeer the Unseen can be found here during the night. At other times he's found in the honored guest antechamber (AREA 57, 30%), or with Cloudmaster Thoon (30%), or the Strategos (40%).

Kazimeer the Unseen (Human male illusionist/magic-user level 8/9; AC *2; HP 31; Dam 1-4; S14 I18 W13 D16 C15 CH16; AL NE)

Illusionist spells typically readied:

First (4): **detect invisibility, phantasmal force (x3)**

Second (3): **blindness, improved phantasmal force, invisibility**

Third (2): **Dameon's shadow spell book** (see new spells), **spectral force**

Fourth (1): **improved invisibility**

Magic user spells typically readied:

First (4): **detect magic, magic missile (x2), spider climb**

Second (3): **ESP, mirror image, web**

Third (3): **dispel magic, hold person, protection from normal missiles**

Fourth (2): **dimension door, minor globe of invulnerability**

Fifth (1): **conjure elemental**

Magic items possessed: **ring of human influence, ring of free action, wand of fear** (66 charges), **cloak of protection +4**, and ***boots of speed**. Other items: dagger, key to chest in AREA 61

62. **MISTY HALL:** A pair of mihstus live in this chamber. They're bound to Cloudmaster Thoon (AREA 72). They immediately attack any non-giant without a giant escort and will travel down to the warden hall (AREA 44) or up to the hall of appreciation (AREA 90) if they hear sounds of combat. Thoon allows them to keep a small pile of trinkets in the eastern section of the hall: an ivory pendent (100 gp), a jade broach (1,300 gp), a silver bracelet set with blue quartz (200 gp), and two beautiful large pearls (1,000 each).

Mihstu (2): (SZ: M; AC -2; MV 60 ft./ 60 ft. flying; HD 8+2; HP 39 (x2); #AT 4; Dmg 2-7, 2-7, 2-7, 2-7; SA Constitution drain; SD +2 weapon to hit, immune to electricity and magic missile, cold only stuns for 2-12 rounds; AL NE)

63. **ORATORY OF HEARTS:** The pillars of Cloudmaster Thoon (AREA 36) pass through this open area the giants use for personal prayer. Here one pillar is filled with a bright blue sky while the other is filled with the darkness of night, sparking stars twinkling within. The pillars have various magical effects on this level:

Any cloud giant touching the day pillar receives a **cure disease**, once per month.

Any other type of giant touching the day pillar must save vs polymorph or be transformed into a cloud giant.

Any cloud giant touching the night pillar is put into a deep sleep, lasting 1-4 months.

Any other type of giant touching the night pillar is **cursed** with a permanent sleep (save vs spells).

Any Neutral or Evil non-giant touching either pillar gains 1 point of Strength (or 10% if exceptional).

Any Good or Lawful non-giant touching either pillar suffers 2-16 points of heat (day) or cold (night) damage.

64. **CELL OF THE STRICKEN:** Four bunks occupy this area, along with a chest full of medical equipment (bandages, unguents, creams, etc.) of the mundane variety. Injured cloud giants, or cloud giants too ill to take care of themselves are taken care of here.

65. CELL OF THE PENITENT: A cloudstuff bar rests outside this room, ready to ensure that those entering cannot leave. A long bench and 3 bunks are in this room. This area serves as a jail for the castle. It is rarely used.

66. STORAGE: Although this room is designed to be a guard room, and there's enough room for a single cloud giant to worm his way to the arrowslits in the southern wall to fulfil this purpose, it's currently being used as overflow storage for Cloudmaster Thoon's workshop (AREA 72). It's filled with barrels filled with charcoal for the forges within the workshop.

67. MIDDLE GUEST CHAMBER: Honored non-giant guests of the castle are housed in this luxurious chamber. Two ornately-carved, mahogany beds (1,000 gp each), along with two matching writing desks (600 gp each), as well as a large sofa with silken throw pillows (800 gp) and several plush chairs (200 gp each) surround a cave bear skin (100 gp) resting before an impressively carved fireplace. This area is currently unoccupied.

68. MIDDLE GUEST SERVANT QUARTERS: This room is designed for non-giant guests. There are two bunk beds, providing quarters for four man-sized servants of the honored guest housed in AREA 67. This area is currently unoccupied.

69. MIDDLE GUEST ENTERTAINING ROOM: This room is designed for lounging, private informal meetings, and entertainment activities. Many cloudstuff table and chairs (of various sizes) fill the room, as well as a goodly selection of musical instruments upon which servants/slaves may play. All total, there are 20 different instruments, each worth 100-200 gp. This area is currently unoccupied.

70. MIDDLE GUEST WING GUARDROOM: Whenever guests are in chamber two giants take up residence here and stand guard. They also escort guests throughout the castle, and ensure that the guests are not disturbed by non-official business. A shared cot rests in the northern hallway in this chamber, along with a shared table and two chairs. As there are no guests in chamber, this area is unoccupied.

71. GREETING HALL: All who enter Nephothantos pass through the greeting hall. It is a purely ceremonial space, bare in wall, floor, and ceiling. The starkness of the hall is both practical (any sieging this far will find nothing useful here) and psychological (the castle is not a friendly place for any but cloud giants).

Traffic is high here, with individuals passing every minute: more in **servants/slaves** than in **cloud giants**. The hall is only completely empty during night, when the exterior and interior gates are both barred.

72. CLOUDMASTER THOON'S WORKSHOP: This large room is filled with vats, forges, and anvils. It is here that cloudstuff is created and shaped into whatever shape is desired. **Cloudmaster Thoon** is here at almost all hours of the day along with a dozen **servants/slaves**. Thoon's **two apprentices** are always here (except during meals and ceremonies) learning the mysteries between sleeping on their bunk beds in the northwest alcove. A **stone golem** stands near the entrance, keeping out any Thoon or his apprentices indicate as unwanted.

Cloudmaster Thoon: (SZ: L; AC -2; MV 150 ft.; HD 12+2-7; HP 74; #AT 1; Dmg 6-36; SA Thrown rock for 2-24; stone shape cloudstuff at will; SD Surprised only on a 1, levitate 2/day; AL NE). Possessions: Bronze breastplate (reduces AC by 1), **cloudmaster ring** (see new magic items), a longsword used as a bloodletting dagger for his ring, key to treasury door (AREA 96).

Male Cloud Giants (2): (SZ: L; AC 2; MV 150 ft.; HD 12+2-7; HP 64, 71; #AT 1; Dmg 6-36; SA Thrown rock for 2-24; SD Surprised only on a 1, levitate 2/day; AL NE)

Stone Golem: (SZ: L; AC 5; MV 60 ft.; HD 14; HP 60; #AT 1; Dmg 3-24; SA slow; SD +2 or better to hit, magic immunity)

Servant/Slaves (12): (SZ: M; AC 10; MV 120 ft.; HD hp 1-4; HP 1 (x2), 2, (x4), 3 (x4), 4 (x2); #AT 1; Dmg 1-2 or by weapon; AL: Mixed (mostly Neutral)

73. UPPER LOUNGE: This chamber is brightly lit by three double nozzleed open-wick lamps formed from shaped cloudstuff, and they're carefully tended to remain alight. There are several lounging chairs here and the **female giants** often congregate for conversation during the day.

Female Cloud Giants (4): (SZ: L; AC 2; MV 150 ft.; HD 11+2-5; HP 51, 52, 55; 62; #AT 1; Dmg 5-30; SA Thrown rock for 2-20; SD Surprised only on a 1, levitate 2/day; AL NE)

74. MAID'S QUARTERS: A dozen maidservants reside here, although most are gone during the day, serving their mistresses. There is nothing of value among the bunked beds and cabinets of rough clothes.

Servant/Slaves (12): (SZ: M; AC 10; MV 120 ft.; HD hp 1-4; HP 1 (x2), 2, (x4), 3 (x4), 4 (x2); #AT 1; D 1-2 or by weapon; AL: Mixed (mostly Neutral).

75. CONSORT NERINGA'S SALON: This private room contains three lounges and tables for private dining. Neringa uses this room for private conversations with individual giants or honored guests.

76. PRIVATE BATH: A single giant bath fills this room. Under the tub is a small fire chambers, used to heat the water within. A nearby table contains various salts, soaps, and perfumes (300 gp total) used while Neringa bathes. Neringa bathes daily before dinner.

77. CONSORT NERINGA'S BEDROOM: Neringa's has a large bedroom and like her Strategos, it is one of bare simplicity, composed only of cloudstuff furniture. In the southeast corner there are four locked cloudstuff chests containing the shared wealth of the giantesses of Nephothantos and a locked cloudstuff cabinet. Only Neringa is allowed to dispense this wealth, and this is the true power of the Consort.

Chest 1: 10,000 sp

Chest 2: 10,000 ep

Chest 3: 6,879 gp and two **potions of extra healing**

Chest 4: 2,493 pp and **Swordswallower** (see new magic items)

Cabinet: The cabinet contains 12 sets of linen clothing (400 gp each), two dozen exquisite cloth and rope belts (200 gp each), 10 silk sets of clothing (500 gp each), and four ceremonial robes (1,000 gp each). A giant-sized bejeweled platinum and gold crown (20,000 gp) rests on a shelf in the cabinet. Folded in a cloudstuff cask are the belongings of the giantesses from AREA 28 who are being disciplined: Seven sets of linen clothing (100 gp each), a dozen cloth and rope belts (50 gp each), two sets of silk clothing (300 gp each), two ceremonial robes (400 gp each), and two sets of gold earrings (250 gp each), and two gold necklaces (400 gp each).

Consort Neringa: (SZ: L; AC 2; MV 150 ft.; HD 12+2-7; HP 77; #AT 1; Dmg 6-36; SA Thrown rock for 2-24; SD Surprised only on a 1, levitate 2/day; AL NE). Possessions: keys for the cabinet and chests in AREA 77.

78. UPPER GATEHOUSE: Along the eastern wall, two large tanks hold 50 gallons of hot oil, always near the boil from the small fires beneath them. Two ten gallon ladles stand nearby, ready to deposit their scalding contents upon any enemies foolish enough to travel through the upper gateway (AREA 4). Like the main gatehouse (AREA 28) the two portcullises here are raised

during the day and lowered at night. A cloudstuff bar is used to lock the portcullises when down, reducing the chance of a successful lift gates by 90%.

A lone **cloud giant** bunks here permanently, although he can be found in the killing hall (AREA 22) 50% of the time. Next to his bunk is a chest, a table and chair, and a cabinet. The chest contains 155 gp, 346 sp, a man-sized chalcedony ring inlaid with platinum (350 gp), a carved chrysoprase statue of a wizard (500 gp), and a **potion of super-heroism**. The cabinet contains several changes of linen clothing (150 gp), four leather belts (25 gp each), and a ceremonial robe (200 gp) for religious affairs.

Male Cloud Giant: (SZ: L; AC 2; MV 150 ft.; HD 12+2-7; HP 55; #AT 1; Dmg 6-36; SA Thrown rock for 2-24; SD Surprised only on a 1, levitate 2/day; AL NE)

79. SQUARE TOWER LEVEL THREE: The door to the killing hall (AREA 22) is always barred from that side, and the guard has a specific knocking pattern (currently shave and a haircut, two bits) to announce that it's the guard knocking and no one else.

80. MURDER ARCADE: This long hallway facing the inner courtyard (AREA 3) is peppered with arrowslits with their associated piles of 10 cloudstuff "rocks." A massive fresco runs the entire south wall, showing deprecation after deprecation the giants have made upon the communities they've raided. The fresco is very old and this dusty chamber is rarely entered by any giant or servant/slave.

One of the looted chests in the fresco is a **kosima**, a piece of magical architecture that, when touched, turns an individual and all his equipment into cloud form (50% magic resistance, immune to non-magic weapons, 360 ft. flying move, unable to attack or cast spells) for up to the next 6 hours. A cloud-form individual can turn back into normal form whenever desired, but if turned back into normal form, cloud-form cannot again be assumed until the next day. The giants have almost forgotten about this **kosima**, this area being in such disuse.

81. UPPER BRETËCHE: This small room is just large enough for a single giant to lob out cloudstuff "rocks" from the nearby pile of 10.



82. SQUARE TOWER LEVEL FOUR: The top level of the square tower guards the castle interior from aerial entrance with its southern door that is spiked upon the outside to prevent forced entry. It leads to the walkway upon which a giant sentry always paces from the vine tower to the square tower. This placement is considered a sign of respect and trust, and the male giants strive to be wallwaker.

Male Cloud Giant: (SZ: L; AC 2; MV 150 ft.; HD 12+2-7; HP 75; #AT 1; Dmg 6-36; SA Thrown rock for 2-24; SD Surprised only on a 1, levitate 2/day; AL NE)

83. UPPER GUEST WING GUARDROOM: Whenever guests are in chamber two **giants** take up residence here and stand guard. They also escort guests throughout the castle, and ensure that the guests are not disturbed by non-official business. A shared cot rests in the northern hallway in this chamber, along with a shared table and two chairs.

Male Cloud Giants (2): (SZ: L; AC 2; MV 150 ft.; HD 12+2-7; HP 41, 63; #AT 1; Dmg 6-36; SA Thrown rock for 2-24; SD Surprised only on a 1, levitate 2/day; AL NE)

84. GIANT GUEST QUARTERS: Three **fog giants** occupy this chamber filled with giant-sized cloudstuff furniture. They are Drest's (AREA 85) guards and one will always be with him wherever he travels.

Fog Giant Guards (3): (SZ: L; AC 1; MV 150 ft.; HD 14; HP 75, 86, 90; #AT 1; Dmg 4-24; SA Thrown rock for 2-20; SD Surprised only on a 1, surprise 80% of the time; AL CE)

85. HONORED GIANT GUEST CHAMBER: Honored giant guests of Nephothantos are housed in this chamber: an ornately-carved, cloudstuff bed, along with a matching writing desks rest in front of an impressively carved fireplace. This room is currently occupied by **Drest**, a fog giant chief who's come to ally with the Strategos. He has brought along a significant gift of treasure, and a promise of more, in exchange for lordship over the misty forested coasts of Woodway. The two neighboring human kingdoms are trying to construct a great highway through his land and he plans to gain the Strategos's assistance in this matter once their relationship is solidified.

A large, locked, cloudstuff chest lies in the northwest corner, its key held by Drest. Inside the chest is a smaller timber and iron chest the fog giants used to carry their tribute. It is locked as well and contains only a remnant of what they brought: 1,250 gp, and 1,000 sp.

Drest, Fog Giant Chief: (SZ: L; AC -3; MV 150 ft.; HD 14; HP 106; #AT 1; Dmg 5-30; SA Thrown rock for 2-20; SD Fights as a 16 HD creature, surprised only on a 1, surprise 80% of the time; AL CE) Possessions: **White dragon scale mail +4** (renders him immune to cold attacks), **ring of vampiric regeneration**, belt pouch containing the key to the chests in AREA 85.

86. GREENMASTER'S ROOM: **Greenmaster Agrius** is found in his room only while sleeping, the rest of the time he is outside of the castle tending to the greenery and chattel. Agrius is a large, boastful giant who is as cruel as he is loud. He has an almost uncanny understanding of gardening and animal husbandry.

A simple cloudstuff bed, chair and table fill this room. An additional table upon which rests three bonsai trees in cloudstuff pots that Agrius has cultivated for more than 45 years. A large locked cloudstuff chest lies in the southwest corner near a similar cabinet. The chest contains 898 pp, 457 gp, 1,256 ep, and 2,638 sp. The cabinet contains 4 changes of clothing (200 gp total), as well as 6 remarkably fine leather belts (200 gp each), and ceremonial robes (300 gp).

Greenmaster Agrius: (SZ: L; AC 1; MV 150 ft.; HD 12+2-7; HP 81 #AT 1; Dmg 6-36; SA Thrown rock for 2-24; SD Surprised only

on a 1, levitate 2/day; AL NE). Possessions: Bronze breastplate (reduces AC by 1), **whip of the master** (see new magic items), **longsword +1** used as a knife, a carved golden torc (650 gp), a **potion of vitality**, and key to the chest in AREA 86. Agrius keeps the potion handy should he ever be poisoned by the forest snakes; he does not know its other effects.

87. HALL OF GLORY: This hall is set aside for the aged giants. The walls are sculpted in high relief, illustrating the various stages of a cloud giant's life, with one side dedicated to males and the other females. In the center of the western walkway four resting triklinion with fine silk reclining cushions provide a lounging area for the elder giants, of which there are currently only two. These two are here 75% of the time, playing a game of chess from their couches.

The pillars of Cloudmaster Thoon reach their pinnacle here. Both pillars appear filled with undulating masses of youthful male and female cloudgiants writhing in sexual embraces. Standing within 20 feet of either pillar, one can sense the strength, passion, and power of youth emanating from them. Unlike the pillars in other locations, these pillars only have one magical effect: any cloud giant touching them is instantly killed and his or her spirit is sent down to feed the fires of Cloudmaster Thoon's forges (AREA 72).

Elderly Cloud Giants(2): (SZ: L; AC 4; MV 120 ft.; HD 10+2-7; HP 34, 43; #AT 1; Dmg 5-30; SA Thrown rock for 2-20; SD Surprised only on a 1, levitate 2/day; AL NE)

88. LIBRARY: This room contains two reading tables with four chairs each. Upon each table are two lamps for reading. There is only a single bookshelf, upon which a little over two hundred texts are shelved. A matching scroll rack contains a similar number of scrolls. All but the below books are of no particular note or value (25 gp each). The scrolls are even less valuable (10 gp each) except for those also listed below.

The Griffon Grimoire by the Monks of Merrin (2 lbs., 500 gp)

The Noble Hippogryph by Scowray Reeker (2 lbs., 300 gp)

The Educated Caster: Illusions by Arch-Mage Olidiuviar (15 lbs., 8,000 gp)

Semi-precious Stones by Brinker Shinestone (20 lbs., 750 gp)

De dwarmani corporis fabrica by Unknown (15 lbs., 750 gp)

Esooteric Alchemy by Zozimos Panopt (15 lbs., 650 gp)

A Stellar Guide by Astre Goave (25 lbs., 325 gp)

Malebolge. Pits of Deception by Unknown (5 lbs., 250 gp)

Fighting Giants in the Dwarven Way by Fighter's Guild of Dwarrow Delf (15 lbs., 250 gp)

The Frost Giants of Farjarik by Logner Snuppe (36 lbs., 175 gp)

The Spell Book of Kaim Strussel by Kaim Strussel (15 lbs., 31,000 gp) – contains the following spells: **burning hands, charm person, erase, friends, magic missile, read magic, sleep, locate object, mirror image, shatter, stinking cloud, web, fireball, hold person, lightning bolt, ice storm, minor globe of invulnerability.**

A scroll of cleric spells: **withdraw, cloudburst, abjure**

A scroll of druid spells: **slow poison, starshine, cure serious wounds**

A scroll of illusionist spells: **ultravision, phantom steed, solid fog**

Locating these valuable tomes and scrolls is a hefty task requiring at least two hours sans **detect magic**, which points out the scrolls immediately, but only points out the spell book among the books.

Kazimeer the Unseen (AREA 61) is aware of Kaim's Strussel's spell book as well as the magical scrolls, but has refrained from touching them, believing they may be a test of his loyalty to

the Strategos. If the castle is attacked, he will ask permission to access the magic items to defend Nephothanos, not knowing if they will be of any use.

89. STORAGE: This storage room contains 100 dusty barrels: half of them contain water, the other half contain salted smoked fish. Occasionally the giant cooks in AREA 38 take bets on the chance of injury on a pair of slaves they send up two flights of stairs to bring down a barrel of fish, but they generally retrieve these stocks themselves.

90. HALL OF APPRECIATION: Bas relief sculptures of giants who performed admirable services line the walls of this hall, filling about 75% of the available area.

91. PRIVATE AUDIENCE HALL: This hall is used for less formal gatherings of the giants and their honored guests. It is filled with cloudstuff furniture of various sizes, all cushioned with luxurious silk cushions (25 gp each).

92. COUNCIL CHAMBER: A single large cloudstuff table surrounded by 8 eight chairs centers this room. This is where the Strategos takes counsel and plans campaigns.

93. STRATEGOS'S STUDY: A cloudstuff chair and desk back up on the northern wall of this room. Upon the walls are maps of all sorts, mostly indicating areas where the giants have been active, where the bandits have been active, and areas where the Strategos would like to foment dissatisfaction. The desk drawers are mostly full of correspondence between the various chiefs, jarls, kings, and bandit lords the Strategos is organizing. In one of the drawers rests a folded **cloak of the land** (see new magic items).

94. STRATEGOS'S GUARDS' QUARTERS: Two **elite guards** reside in this room. They take turns guarding the treasury (AREA 96) standing watch where needed in any of the 5 rooms in this wing (AREAS 91-95). They guards are twin brothers utterly loyal to the Strategos.

This room contains a bunk bed, a chest, and a cabinet, all made of cloudstuff. The chest contains 254 pp, 568 gp, 246 sp, a **potion of rainbow hues**, and a **potion of climbing**. The cabinet contains 6 sets of linen clothing (150 gp each), 9 finely-crafted leather belts (100 gp each), and two ceremonial robes (400 gp each). A small ivory box in the cabinet contains a **figurine of wonderous power** (golden lions): the giant brothers have told no one about their "pet kitties" and have managed to keep their existence secret for almost a decade.

Male Cloud Giants (2): (SZ: L; AC1; MV 150 ft.; HD 12+2-7; HP 85, 93; #AT 1; Dmg 6-36; SA Thrown rock for 2-24; SD Surprised only on a 1, levitate 2/day; AL NE). Possessions: Bronze breastplate (reduces AC by 1),

95. STRATEGOS'S BEDROOM: This large room is strangely absent any luxury and the **Strategos** only occupies this room when sleeping. Only a bed, a chest, and a cabinet fill the space, and these made of simple cloudstuff. The chest is unlocked and contains 100 pp, 200 gp, 300 ep, 400 sp, and a giant-sized bejeweled platinum and gold scepter (20,000 gp) used during high ceremony. The cabinet contains 7 sets of linen clothing (200 gp each), 7 exquisite leather belts (200 gp each), 7 silk sets of clothing (500 gp each), and four ceremonial robes (1,000 gp each). A giant-sized bejeweled platinum and gold crown (20,000 gp) rests on a shelf in the cabinet.

Strategos Damysos: (SZ: L; AC 0; MV 150 ft.; HD 12+2-7; HP 99; #AT 1; Dmg 7-42; SA Thrown rock for 2-24; SD Fights as a 16 HD creature, surprised only on a 1, +3 to hit and +3 to damage, levitate 2/day; AL NE). Possessions: Iron Breastplate (reduces AC by 2), **great club +3**, belt pouch containing the 6 keys to

the chests in the killing hall (AREA 22) as well as a key to the treasury door (AREA 96).

96. **TREASURY:** The door to this room is locked. Only the Strategos and Cloudmaster Thoon have a key. The wealth of Nephrothantos is stored in this room, guarded by a massive **trapper** lying just beyond the entrance that has agreed to guard the treasury by attacking any creatures but the Strategos or Cloudmaster Thoon who enter without those two in their presence.

The windowless walls are covered by an astounding number of paintings and tapestries, all hazily illuminated by a massive pillar of solid gold (30,000 gp) sculpted into an arm holding a giant glowing torch. The torch is topped by a diamond (5,000 gp) that has a **continual light** cast upon it. It is currently covered by a silk cloth so the room is only dimly lit until it is removed. In total there are 148 paintings worth 135,000 gp, ranging in value from only 50 gp all the way up to 6,000 gp (a small portraiture of the Duchess of Minorvia, the last painting of the master Quovon).

Twenty cloudstuff trunks are double-stacked opposite the open area occupied by the trapper just opposite the door. Each of these trunks contains roughly 10,000 sp. These are salary chests used to further the Strategos's plan of destabilization of the civilized lands.

Further along the west wall are 14 more cloudstuff trunks, this time not stacked. The first nine of these trunks contain 10,000 ep while the tenth contains 8,456 ep. The next three contain 10,000 gp each, the 13th contains 4,573 gp, and the final chest contains 8,745 pp. This is the treasure of the castle, gained over generations, but greatly expanded in recent times.

The entire northeastern area of this room is simply a massive pile of copper coins (356,759 cp) mixed with some overlooked silver coins (564 sp).

The single cloudstuff chest alone the eastern wall contains the magical treasures of the tribe. Many of these items are worthless to the cloud giants, so they use them for trading or as particular

attractive bribes/gifts. The exterior of the chest is coated by a powerful contact poison (save at -2) created by Cloudmaster Thoon. The chest contains:

Potions: **clairaudience**, **clairvoyance**, **delusion**, **extra-healing**, **giant control** (fire), **giant strength** (frost), **healing** (x3), **human control** (humans), and **invisibility** (x2), all stored in a wooden container packed with dried hay.

Rods & Staves: **rod of cancellation** (33 charges), **staff of the woodlands** (17 charges)

Wands: **flame extinguishing** (68 charges), **metal & mineral detection** (12 charges)

Miscellaneous Magic: 18 **magic beans** (see new magic items) stored in a small lead cask, **boots of dancing**, **censer of summoning hostile air elements**, **helm of underwater action**, **pipes of the sewers**, **robe of stars**

Weapons: A **longsword +2**, **giant slayer** named **Auric**, (NG; INT 15; COM Speech; EGO 6; PA **detect gems**, kind, and number in a 5 ft. radius, **detect traps** of large size in a 10 ft. radius, **detect precious metals**, kind, and number in a 20 ft. radius, **detect magic** in a 10 ft. radius, locate object in a 120 ft. radius; LANG NG, Gargoyle, Hill Giant). The sword has a trusting and friendly personality. It was a family heirloom that failed to protect the family as they were raided by giants. It feels guilty about this and has hated its confinement for the past year.

Skelmis the Mage's (AREA 58) Spell Book: 1st - **alarm**, **armor**, **burning hands**, **charm person**, **detect magic**, **enlarge**, **erase**, **grease**, **magic missile**, **mending**, **message**, **mount**, **read magic**, **run**, **shield**, **sleep**, **unseen servant**, **wizard mark**, **write**; 2nd - **audible glamer**, **acid arrow**, **bind**, **irritation**, **knock**, **locate object**, **rope trick**, **stinking cloud**, **vocalize**, **whip**, **zephyr**; 3rd - **blink**, **clairaudience**, **clairvoyance**, **dispel magic**, **fireball**, **fly**, **lightning bolt**, **material**, **minute meteors**, **monster summoning I**; 4th - **black tentacles**, **charm monster**, **confusion**, **magic mirror**, **resilient sphere**, **shout**, **stoneskin**, **ultravision**, **wizard eye**; 5th - **airy water**, **cone of cold**, **conjure elemental**, **dismissal**, **dolor**, **fabricate**, **teleport**, **wall of force**, **wall of iron**, **wall of stone**; 6th - **death spell**, **eyebite**, **geas**, **globe of invulnerability**, **lucubration**, **monster summoning IV**, **stone to flesh**; 7th - **banishment**, **cacodemon**, **limited wish**, **power word stun**, **sequester**, **teleport without error**, **torment**, **truename**, **volley**; 8th - **binding**, **demand**, **permanency**, **maze**, **sink**

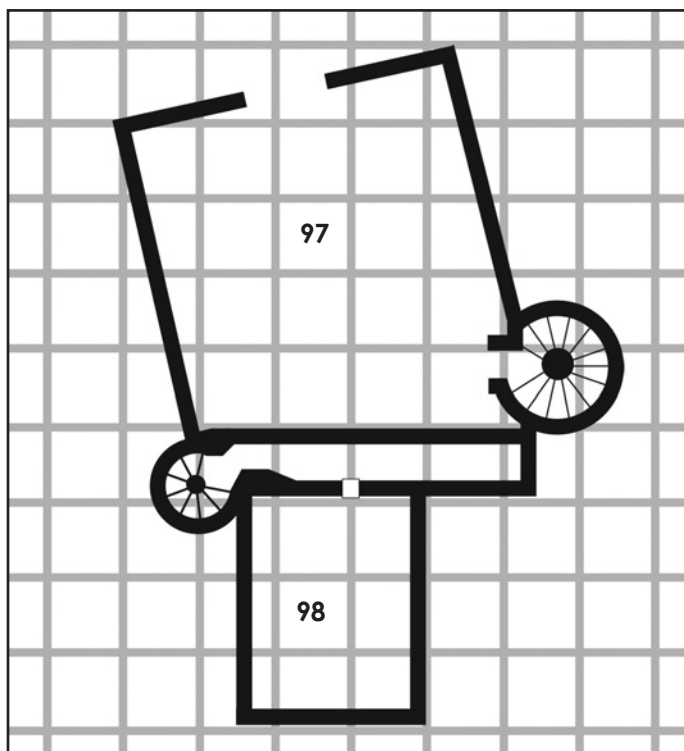
Kazimeer the Unseen's (AREA 61) Illusionist Spell Book: 1st - **change self**, **darkness**, **detect invisibility**, **gaze reflection**, **phantasmal force**, **wall of fog**; 2nd - **alter self**, **blindness**, **blur**, **hypnotic pattern**, **improved phantasmal force**, **invisibility**; 3rd - **continual darkness**, **Dameon's shadow spell book** (see new spells), **fear**, **paralyzation**, **spectral force**; 4th - **confusion**, **improved invisibility**, **phantasmal killer**, **shadow monsters**.

Kazimeer the Unseen's (AREA 61) Magic User Spell Book: 1st - **burning hands**, **detect magic**, **feather fall**, **jump**, **magic missile**, **mending**, **push**, **read magic**, **shield**, **sleep**, **spider climb**, **write**; 2nd - **detect invisibility**, **ESP**, **fools gold**, **invisibility**, **knock**, **levitate**, **mirror image**, **ray of enfeeblement**, **scare**, **web**, **wizard lock**; 3rd - **blink**, **clairaudience**, **dispel magic**, **fireball**, **flame arrow**, **haste**, **hold person**, **lightning bolt**, **protection from normal missiles**, **slow**, **tongues**; 4th - **charm monster**, **dig**, **dimension door**, **fear**, **massmorph**, **minor globe of invulnerability**, **polymorph other**, **polymorph self**, **wizard eye**; 5th - **cloudkill**, **conjure elemental**, **cone of cold**, **hold monster**, **telekinesis**, **wall of iron**.

Trapper: (SZ: L; AC 3; MV 30 ft.; HD 12; HP 82; #AT 4; Dmg 4+AC of victim per round; SA crush; SD half damage from fire; no damage from cold; AL N).

NEPHOTHANTOS - LEVEL FIVE

EACH SQUARE EQUALS 20 FEET



97. **BLIGHT'S LAIR:** This large empty room is the lair of the insane cloud dragon, **Blight**. Blight's story is a sad one. Captured while still in the egg by a band of evil adventurers, the dragon was viciously tortured and experimented upon by the party's magic user until the dragon's brain broke and creeping madness set in. After slaying his captors, he traveled far away, finding an ancient cave to hide within. Unfortunately, the cave contained a cursed idol, which turned Blight's alignment towards evil, resulting in the thoroughly evil and insane dragon who accepted the Strategos' offer to act as a guard among the upper entrances of the sky island.

Blight spends much of his time in cloud form, either blanketing his lair (25% of the time) in a thick fog or flying about the cloud island boundary and mixing with the clouds there (75% of the time). The Strategos has given orders that he never to be disturbed by any but himself, and he only visits once or twice a month, as Blight enjoys his solitude, although he's a talkative dragon once engaged in conversation. Blight uses his **weather summoning** spell to keep the island at the most-temperate climate for each season.

Although Blight is not disloyal to the Strategos, he's also not loyal. A good enough offer may convince him to be out flying in the clouds at just the right time or even to join with a party were the rewards high enough and the party of the needed strength to provide them. A **remove curse** cast on Blight will immediately return his alignment to Neutral and he'll be very grateful for such and certainly willing to "look the other way" against an invading force. A **heal** will cure his insanity, upon which he'll willingly surrender half his treasure hoard.

Blight, Insane Medium Old Male Cloud Dragon: (SZ: L; AC 0 or -3; MV 60 ft., flying 390 ft; HD 13; HP 78; #AT 4; Dmg 1-10, 1-10, 6-36, 3-12; SA Breath weapons, magic use, fear; SD cloud form, magic resistance; AL NE). Blight speaks and knows the following spells, each usable twice a day:

- First: **fog cloud**
- Second: **precipitation**
- Third: **stinking cloud**
- Fourth: **cloudburst**
- Fifth: **call lightning**
- Sixth: **weather summoning**

Treasure or Item	Location
19,217 cp	Loose
96,503 sp	Loose
14,231 ep	Loose
29,137 gp	Loose and 8,000 in 4 chests
17,645 pp	Loose and 12,000 in 8 chests
183 base 10 gp gems	Loose
58 base 50 gp gems	Loose
12 base 100 gp gems	Loose
48 base 250 gp gems	In an elegant platinum and gold container worth 2,500 gp
28 base 500 gp gems	In a gold and crystal casket worth 1,550 gp.
A complete coral and jade chess set worth 3,450 gp	In carved sandlewood box worth 150 gp.
A thick, gold bookmark decorated with rubies worth 4,250 gp	In ebony case worth 500 gp
A collection of platinum and amber toiletry items worth 3,525 gp	In ornate ivory and jade pyxis worth 1,200 gp.

24 platinum service pieces worth 23,500 gp Plain wooden chest

Potion of gaseous form, oil of etherealness, potion of diminution, potion of super heroism In small malachite cask worth 450 gp

Shield +1 Loose

Sword +1 flame tongue Loose

Robe of blending Loose

Gauntlets of dexterity Loose

98. **ORATORY OF CLOUDS:** This bare rooftop surrounded by an intricately carved nine-foot-tall half-wall serves as the ceremonial gathering point for the cloud giants. Giants come here for rites of passage such as births, deaths, marriages, and on the high holy days when *Sýnnefonís* is turned from its normal orientation to bring either the rising or setting sun directly upon the oratory.

Dead giants (excepting those attaining Strategos or Cloudmaster) are laid out at the corners of this rooftop, allowing vultures to clean the corpses. There is a slight grade at the corners, allowing fluid remains to drain away over the edge. Cleaned bones are reclaimed and taken below ground to the mortuary (AREA 105).

One of the carved walls depicts an illustration of a giant touching a large gem, and then turning into a cloud. If the carved gem (another **kosima**, see AREA 80) is touched, an individual and all his equipment turns into cloud form (50% magic resistance, immune to non-magic weapons, 360 ft. flying move, unable to attack or cast spells) for up to the next 6 hours. A cloud-form individual can turn back into normal form whenever desired, but if turned back into normal form, cloud-form cannot again be assumed until the next day.

99. **VINE TOWER TOP LEVEL:** (Labeled on Level Four Map) The giants placed a large ballista in a revolving mount on top of this tower. It can rotate a full 360 degrees, and a cloudstuff barrel nearby holds 24 additional bolts. The ballista can be fired every round by a team of giants, or every other round by a single giant. It does 3-36 damage to a maximum range of 400 yards.

100. **GARDEN TOWER TOP LEVEL:** (Labeled on Level Four Map) The giants placed a large ballista in a revolving mount on top of this tower. It can rotate a full 360 degrees, and a cloudstuff barrel nearby holds 24 additional bolts. The ballista can be fired every round by a team of giants, or every other round by a single giant. It does 3-36 damage to a maximum range of 400 yards.

UNDERGROUND NEPHOTHANTOS

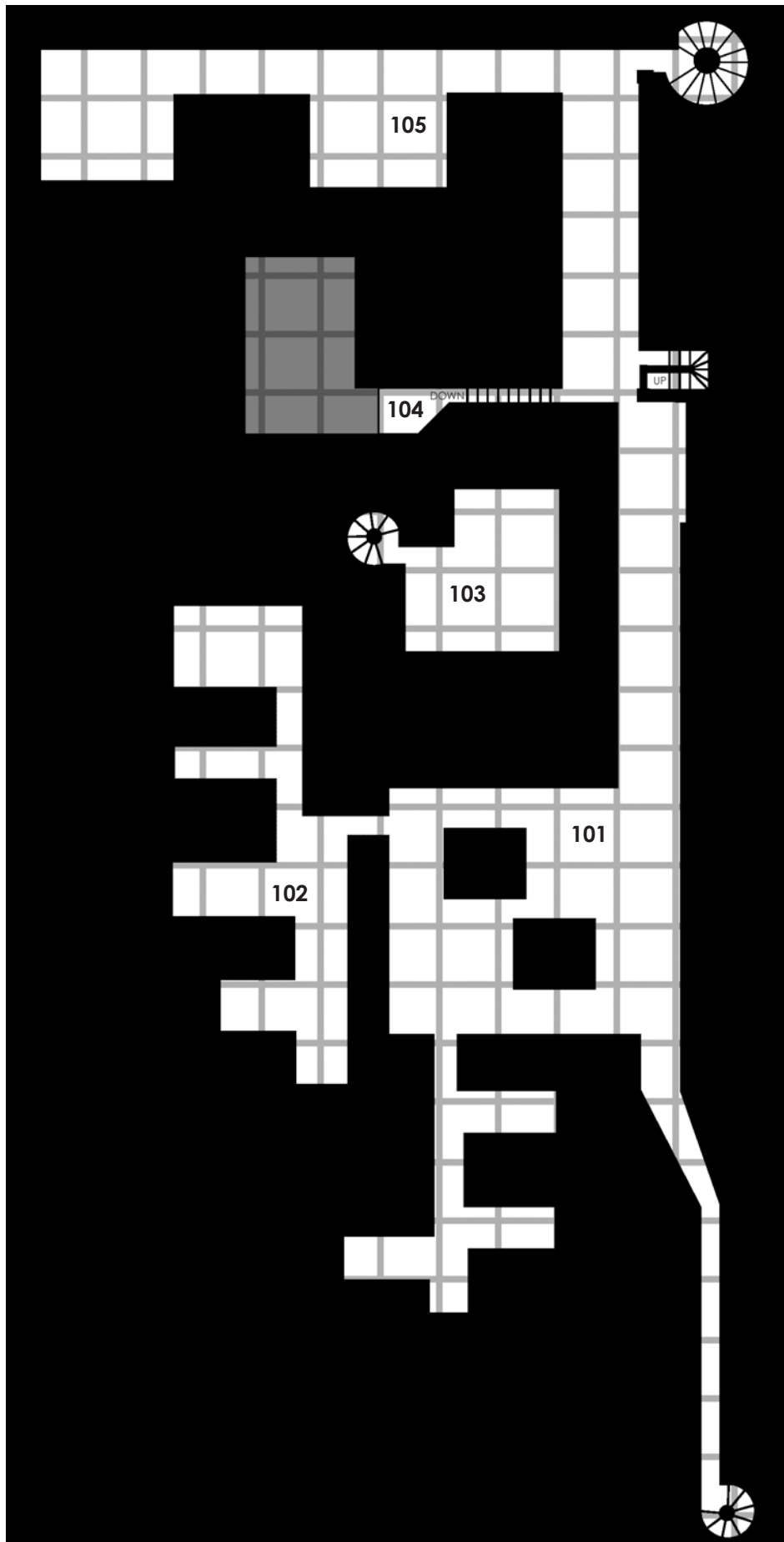
General construction principles are maintained underground, but lighting is significantly reduced (many areas are quite dimly lit) and the ceiling is only 15 feet tall. Any cloud giant fights at a -1 to hit because of this.

101. **SERVANT/SLAVE QUARTERS:** Almost all of the **servants/slaves** of Nephothantos rest in these two large areas, making a bed out of whatever they can (usually dried grass and cloth scraps). In total there are about 300 occupants of these two areas. They are generally unarmed (a few daggers here and there) and unarmored (although some suits of leather armor could be found) and convinced that their lot is only toil until the giants believe they are too old to work and they become food, their bones baked into the giant's bread.

During the day this area is lightly occupied as most servants/slaves are out working; only a few who work during the night are here as well as those with young children.

NEPHOTHANTOS - UNDERGROUND LEVEL

EACH SQUARE EQUALS 20 FEET



Servant/Slaves (315): (SZ: M; AC 10; MV 120 ft.; HD hp 1-4; HP varies; #AT 1; D 1-2 or by weapon; AL: Mixed (mostly Neutral))

102. **MUSHROOM FARM**: This large area is set aside to grow mushrooms. Each separate "lobe" of the large artificial cavern contains a different type of edible mushroom favored by the giants. Dozens of **servants/slaves** will be found here during waking hours.

103. **NURSERY**: Down the stairs from the bowery, this large room is isolated from the rest of the castle and occupied by ten **young cloud giants** and five **juvenile cloud giants**. They spend most of their time here learning appropriate skills. The young cloud giants never leave this area, but the juvenile cloud giants spend several hours a day with various other giants as they go about their daily duties for the Strategos.

The giants bed down in the northern alcove of the room. They have no possessions of note, although the cabinets in this area are filled with the following clothing for each giant: three sets of linen clothes (50 gp), rope belts (5 gp each), and a set of ceremonial robes (100 gp each).

Juvenile Cloud Giant (5): (SZ: L; AC 2; MV 150 ft.; HD 8+2-5; HP 33, 38, 42, 44 (x2); #AT 1; Dmg 4-24; SA Thrown rock for 2-16; SD Surprised only on a 1, levitate 2/day; AL NE)

10 Young Cloud Giant (10): (SZ: M; AC 2; MV 120 ft.; HD 4+2-5; HP 14 (x3), 16 (x2), 18, 21 (x2), 24, 28; #AT 1; Dmg 2-8; SA Thrown rock for 2-5; SD Surprised only on a 1, levitate 1/day; AL NE)

104. **GRAND CISTERN**: Down a long stair, a large cistern caches water from the roof of Nephothantos as well as from the catchments throughout the castle mount. The cistern is home to a **water elemental** that's tasked to attack any non-giant in the area that doesn't prostrate themselves before the water catchment. **Servants/slaves** are constantly entering this area to bring water up to the castle.

Water Elemental: (SZ: L; AC 2; MV 60 ft., 180 ft. swimming; HD 16; HP 72; #AT 1; Dmg 5-30; SD +2 or better weapon to hit)

105. **MORTUARY**: This entire area is littered with cloud giant bones taken from the remains left in the oratory of clouds (AREA 98) after a giant corpse is picked clean. Starting in the northwest corner a series of cloudstuff thrones contain the air-dried mummified remains of prior Strategos and Cloudmasters. There are six empty thrones at the end of the procession awaiting their inhabitants.

The area is guarded by two **ghosts** of the most-recently-deceased Cloudmaster. These powerful spirits are treated as ghosts with modifications as noted in the statistics below. Turning the ghost is done at a -4 penalty given the nature of its charge and location.

Along the southern wall, the Strategos has stacked 30 barrels of salted meat and veg, and another 30 barrels full of water, waiting for Cloudmaster Thoon to start work on a planned underground storage area that will abut the mortuary.

Cloudmaster Ghosts (2): (SZ: 1; AC 0 or 8; MV 90 ft.; HD 12; HP 81, 85; #AT 1; Dmg age 10-40 years; SA aging; SD Surprised only on a 1; AL NE; Note: these ghosts cannot magic jar)

THUS ENDS THE EXPEDITION TO THE FLOATING ISLAND OF THE CLOUD GIANTS

APPENDIX A - NEW MAGIC ITEMS

+2 Backscratcher: Looking like a wand with a hand upon the end, magical backscratchers perform the action they're named after with a simple grunting command of annoyance, magically reaching under the heaviest armor to bring relief. They can also be used as a +2 *mace*.

It is in the hands of a magic user that they show their true power, allowing the casting of the various "Hand" spells at the cost of one charge per level of spell. Backscratchers may have up to 100 charges. **Experience Point Value:** 5,000 **G. P. Value:** 30,000

Cloak of the Land: When thrown upon the ground, this brown cloak's folds make a roughly-accurate topographical map (20 miles square centered on the owner) of the nearby area. The cloak even changes colors to indicate water, trees, etc. A cloak of the land does not work underground. **Experience Point Value:** 2,500 **G. P. Value:** 15,000.

Cloudstuff Gem: At creation a cloudstuff gem has 100 charges that match its facets. This magic jewel allows its bearer to manipulate cloudstuff (like a *stoneshape* spell) by expending one of its charges and the subsequent removal of one of its facets. When down to the last charge, the gem is smoothly spherical, and it crumbles to dust when empty of charges. The gem allows the manipulation of 13 cubic feet +1 cubic feet of cloudstuff per level of its user. **Experience Point Value:** 800 **G. P. Value:** 3,000

Cloudmaster Ring: This ring is made from cloudstuff. It functions as a +3 *ring of protection* and also allows the bearer to sacrifice his blood to summon *fog walls* (as the 2nd-level illusionist spell, *wall of fog*). For every hp of blood spilt and given to the ring, the user can create up to a 60 cubic foot wall of fog. Attuning to this ring to a new master requires the sacrifice of 20+ hp of blood in a single round. **Experience Point Value:** 4,000 **G. P. Value:** 20,000

Cloudstuff Staff: This staff allows the bearer to manipulate cloudstuff as if using a *move earth* with the expense of one charge. Using an additional charges summons an air elemental that will assist in moving cloudstuff as an earth elemental can assist with a *move earth* spell. The air elemental will not assist in any other manner. Finally, a cloudstuff staff can be broken, summoning the air elemental within it to do the full bidding of the breaker for a number of turns equal to charges remaining. **Experience Point Value:** 4,000 **G. P. Value:** 20,000

Comb of Charisma: When used, these combs increase the Charisma of the user for the next 24 hours. There are three types of combs: *ivory* (+1), *silver* (+2), and *gold* (+3). Only a single creature can be affected per day, and a person can only be affected by one comb per day. Rumors of a platinum comb abound, but so far none have been discovered and all attempts at creation have

failed. **Experience Point Value:** 1,000 (ivory); 2,000 (silver); 3,000 (gold) **G. P. Value:** 10,000 (ivory); 20,000 (silver), 30,000 (gold)

Gem of Identification: This gem fully identifies any magic item it is placed upon. Each individual ability of an item drains one charge during identification. Cursed items drain 5 charges. A gem of identification has 20 charges. **Experience Point Value:** 1,000 **G. P. Value:** 5,000

Magic Beans: A day after planting, these six beans grow into a gigantic beanstalk. The top of the beanstalk magically bends space to connect to a cloud castle containing cloud giants. Because of this, any creature found with magic beans is viewed as an enemy by cloud giants. When cloud giants gain magic beans, they are stored in lead containers until 24 beans are acquired. At that time cloud giants can do three things with the beans: eat all 24 at once, gaining 1HD, plant them in the cloudstuff of a cloud castle creating a permanent beanstalk under the control of the Cloudmaster of the castle, or plant them in the ground and create a new solid cloud upon which a new castle can be built, the planter magically gaining the skills of a Cloudmaster. **Experience Point Value:** 1,000 (per six beans) **G. P. Value:** 5,000 (per six beans)

Ring of Attunement: These rings provide a magic-user or illusionist with a +1 on saves vs. a particular type of magic (Alteration, Necromantic, etc.) and causes targets of such spells cast by the owner to save at -1 against the same type of magic. Additionally, it allows the owner to freely cast a known 1st or 2nd level spell of the same type once per day. **Experience Point Value:** 2,000 **G. P. Value:** 10,000

Spider Shurikens: If this +1 shuriken hits its target, it transforms into a large spider that engages only the target in melee. If killed (or after 10 rounds pass), the spider transforms back into a spider shuriken. Nothing happens on a miss. **Experience Point Value:** 200 **G. P. Value:** 1,000

Swordswallower: This +2 large metal shield can swallow swords that hit it. Any sword attack that would have hit if the bearer was not bearing Swordswallower must save versus crushing blow or be swallowed by Swordswallower. A swallowed sword's image is added to the golden embossing along the edges of the shield. **Experience Point Value:** 3,000 **G. P. Value:** 15,000.

Whip of the Master: This +2 whip can lash out up to 40 feet as a double-size, double-durable *rope of entanglement*. When desired, the wielder of a whip of the master can inflict pain instead of damage upon a hit, 1d4+3 points of pain. Each point of pain temporarily subtracts from HP, and if 0 or lower HP is reached, the target must save vs spells with a penalty applied equal to the negative HP amount (ie. -4 HP means a 4 point penalty on the save roll). Failure results in falling to the ground and writing in pain until the pain recedes. HP "lost" by pain are regained at the rate of 3 per round. **Experience Point Value:** 3,000 **G. P. Value:** 30,000

APPENDIX B - NEW SPELLS

Dameon's Shadow Spell Book

Illusion/Phantasm
Level: Illusionist 3
Range: Touch
Duration: 6 turns/level
Area of Effect: Special
Components: V, S
Casting Time: 1 turn
Saving Throw: None

This spell creates a semi-real phantasm of any of the caster's spell books. The phantasm glows with a soft light (equal to three candles) and allows the caster to memorize any spells contained within the real book. The shadow spell book has 1 hp. The illusionist Dameon created this spell after yet another imprisonment.

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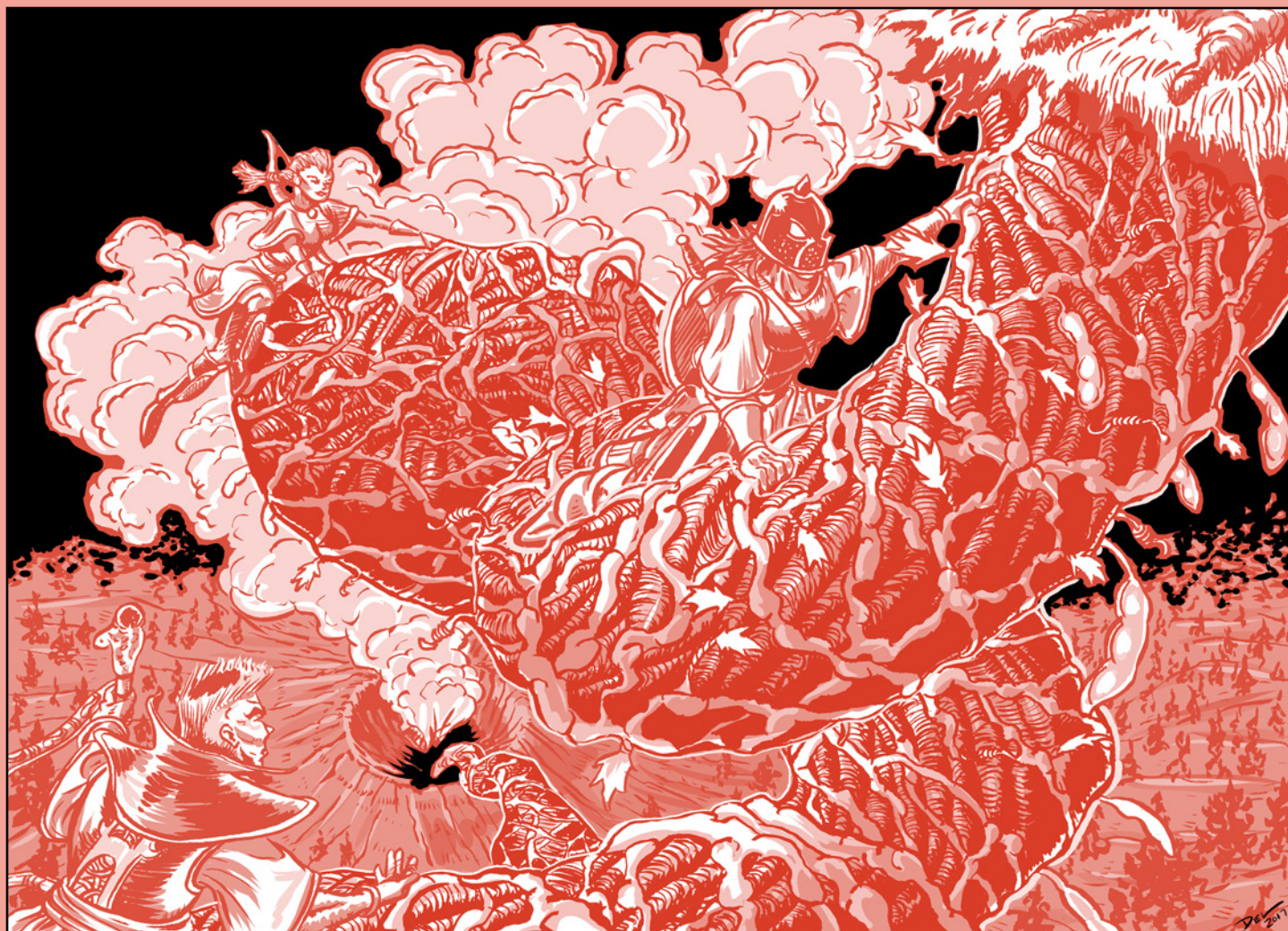
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Aerie of the Cloud Giant Strategos

The hot and smoky badlands of the King of the Fire Giants lies behind the party: his great hall, once a symbol of his power and authority, now only a memorial to his terrible defeat. Within this hold, the party found information leading them onward in their quest to find the fearsome mind behind the recent giant uprising.

Their journey has been long and tiring, but the end of the task lies ahead. A gigantic spire of a mountain rises into the sky. Around the misty peak, an unusual cloud hangs, as if tethered to the stony expanse itself, and upon this strange cloud a mighty brass-roofed castle stands. Perhaps it is here, among the peaks and the mist, that the source of the giants' evil may be found?

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Aerie of the Cloud Giant Strategos

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