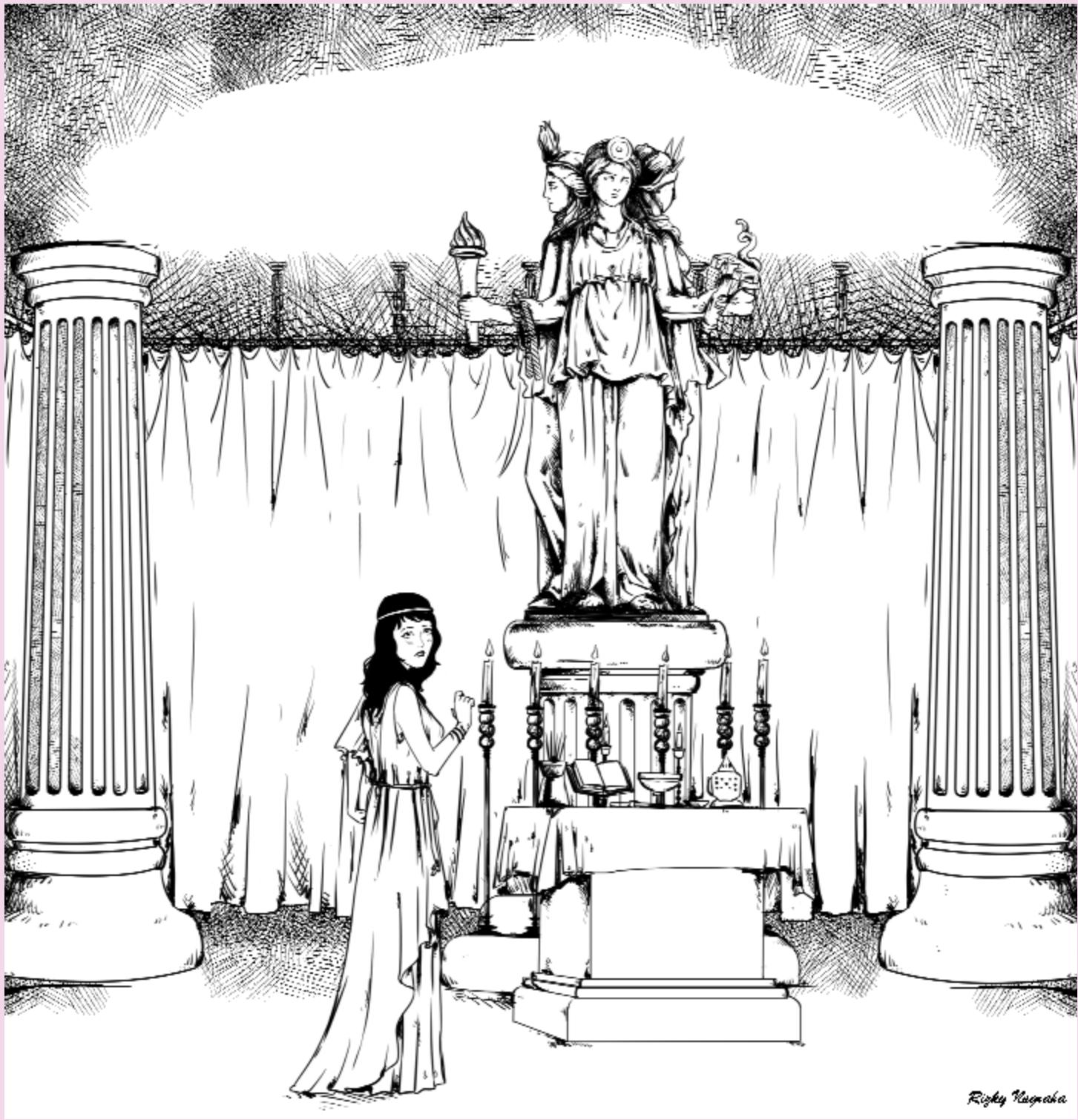


# the shrine of hecate

An OSRIC™ compatible adventure for 3-5 characters of 1<sup>st</sup> to 3<sup>rd</sup> level

By M. W. Poort



An old stone tower, long forgotten by most, stands abandoned in a run-down section of the City. Some say it's the lair of the Axe Gang, a brutal band of cutthroats known throughout the City for extortion and kidnapping. Others say far darker secrets lie beneath the tower, things perhaps better left forgotten. Are you the heroes capable of discovering the truth and bringing the Axe Gang to justice?

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*Ricky Nagata*

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## FOREWORD

The Shrine of Hecate, the first module in the City Adventures series, was first published in Issue #5 of & (AND) Magazine. Typographical errors, errata, poor grammar and other issues with the original text have been resolved, artwork has been added, and the layout certainly is different, but the adventure largely remains the same as the 2013 version.

The module consists of two sections: invasion of the tower and overcoming the Axe Gang, and exploration of the shrine below the tower and thwarting the schemes of the Sect of Hecate. It can be run in a single night or as two short sessions, as time permits, and is structured such that there is potential for a brief bit of respite so injured characters may recuperate between the segments. However, should the characters complete one portion of the adventure and retreat, expecting to return the next day to finish the job, they should be in for a surprise. If the Sect has not been destroyed, they either will have created new allies (zombie brigands) to guard the tower (or perhaps brother Hern and his men have returned: see GM Notes), or they will have disappeared into the night, perhaps to surface again later in the campaign, more potent and with a grudge against the characters. On the other hand, should Hane and Velda remain while the Sect has been destroyed, they too will disappear into the shadowy underworld of the City, taking with them the remaining brigands and all portable wealth and supplies. Such circumstances provide the GM with excellent fodder for recurring nemesis NPCs and future adventures.

The Shrine of Hecate is designed with the fledgling Game Master in mind. Throughout the text there are suggestions on how to run the adventure, how to expand the tower setting to accommodate additional game play, and how to alter the contents to better fit your own game. This module assumes the Game Master has never done that before and would benefit from the tips. For those of you who have played many years already (you lucky dogs) and are fully aware of these tricks of the trade, please regard these suggestions as a helpful guide from which you might have benefited way back when. I know I would have.

Though I have mentioned this on the back cover, I again would like to thank Mark O'Reilly (the original creator and caretaker of *Dragonsfoot*), Steve Yates for his continued purveyance and tireless support of the site, Stuart Marshall, Matthew Finch and the Knights & Knaves Alehouse for everything OSRIC™, and Bryan Fazekas and the rest of the crew of & (AND) Magazine. These people, as well as many others, have spent much time and treasure making it possible for someone like me to realize, at long last, the dream of publishing my adventures.

M. W. Poort

## CREDITS

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## PRINTING

Some people have reported printing issues with the PDF, particularly images with all-grey backgrounds or overlays. This does not occur if you use the Print as Image option when printing the PDF.

## The Ivory Tower



## the shrine of hecate

An OSRIC™ compatible adventure for 3-5 characters of 1<sup>st</sup> to 3<sup>rd</sup> level

An old stone tower, long forgotten by most, stands abandoned in a run-down section of the City. Some say it's the lair of the Axe Gang, a brutal band of cutthroats known throughout the City for extortion and kidnapping. Others say far darker secrets lie beneath the tower, secrets perhaps better left forgotten.

### BACKSTORY

The old stone tower is inhabited, by members of the Axe Gang who operate as a front for the Shrine of Hecate. Illione, the shrine priestess, maintains the silence of her neighbors through a combination of intimidation and monetary reward. Locals who prove too nosy or troublesome frequently disappear, becoming undead slaves (skeletons & zombies) or food for Illione's pit ghouls.

The standard plot hook\* for this module is that the party, for whatever reason, has decided to investigate the old stone tower and thwart the nefarious scheme(s) of its inhabitants. As Game Master (GM) you may make as little or as much of that as you wish. If your players enjoy the challenge of role playing encounters within a city setting, slowly gathering dubious whispers from hooch-sellers in seedy dives and back-alley informants which ultimately lead to investigation of the tower, so be it. On the other hand, if your players just want to "get straight to the action", hand wave the background, supply them with a bit of information and motivation, and begin the scenario at Area 1.

\* More detailed plot hooks are available for the GM on Page 10. Or if you prefer, create your own. It's your game!

### LOCATION

The tower is three stories tall (36' plus roof peak). A chimney rises along the southern wall, another smaller one along the eastern wall, and a single door on the north side allows entry into the first floor. The door, a heavy wooden affair reinforced with bronze bands, is attached to the wall with heavy, well-oiled iron hinges. Above the door on the second floor is a narrow window. Two other windows, on the second and third floors, are set into the southwestern portion of the tower. All of the windows are close-shuttered (locked) and covered on the inside with heavy blankets to prevent light from revealing the gang's inhabitation of the tower.

The area around the tower is surrounded by houses built closely together by chance, not design. Tall wooden fences connect the houses, forming a secure perimeter. In one corner

is a section that can be opened to allow entry; treat this as a secret door. The fences utilize old wood to maintain the abandoned, neglected appearance preferred by the gang. The houses are not closer than 8-10 feet to the tower, a distance perhaps close enough to jump (through a window) but too far to span with a simple wooden plank. The perimeter area is kept free of debris and no guard is present (though if necessary a watchman could be posted in the window above the door).

Beneath the tower is a basement level, extending beyond the tower walls to form a shrine dedicated to the witch-goddess Hecate. The basement level continues into older ruins, not detailed in this scenario, which can be expanded by the Game Master if desired. Likewise, the buildings surrounding the tower are not detailed and may be expanded as necessary.

### LEVEL ONE

#### (01) Front Door

A heavy wooden door, with seemingly rusted but well-oiled hinges, opens into the entry hall. The door is not barred; lack of discipline amongst the gang members has resulted in poor security. Anyone quietly entering the tower can hear the men in the kitchen and are unlikely to be noticed above the racket.

#### (02) Entry Hall

This chamber serves as the entry hall and cloakroom. In the northeast corner several nondescript cloaks hang on wall pegs, along with two light crossbows and two bolt cases (each contains 1d6+6 quarrels). Behind the cloaks, a wooden bar for the door leans in the corner. In the southeast corner is a small wooden table, atop which is a washbasin and pitcher of water. The wooden floor is dirty and covered with tracks from members of the Axe Gang (evidence that several people have been here recently). An opening to the right (west: the perspective is looking into the room from the front door) of the front door leads to a curtained area and a pantry; another in the southern portion of the room leads to a spiral staircase and a heavy wooden door.

#### (03) Spiral Stairs

Light from the kitchen illuminates the area around the staircase. Anyone passing the kitchen entryway can see those in the kitchen and is visible to them as well. The open stairway leads up only; down is blocked by a locked wooden door (only Illione and Lola have keys).

**(04) Privy**

Behind the curtain is a small room containing a chamber pot, toilet and a small bucket of ashes.

**(05) Pantry**

This square room has shelves across the entire west wall, upon which are many baskets, bottles, boxes and other small containers of kitchen goods. The wooden floor here is dirty as well and covered with numerous tracks from members of the Axe Gang. Anyone entering the pantry can see into the kitchen (revealing the source of the noise heard from the front door), and may be visible to anyone there as well.

**(06) Kitchen**

The kitchen is used both to prepare food and as a recreation area for the gang. Hrek (the one with long blonde hair) and three of his thugs are here, eating, drinking, gambling, and otherwise making a good bit of noise. They are unlikely to hear anyone entering the tower, and may not notice a stealthy character creep around the corner and up the stairs.

The gang members lounge around a large wooden table and two benches in the center of the room. Hrek generally is standing against the west wall, tankard in hand, in a position where he can see into the cloakroom and somewhat into the hall by the staircase. The thugs mostly sit at the table, though one may be at the fireplace cauldron or the ale keg drawing sustenance. If anyone unknown to them appears, the thugs will immediately follow Hrek's lead, most likely attacking the intruders unless the odds are overwhelming (in which case they will attempt to flee or surrender depending on the situation).



If possible, Hrek will throw a handaxe at the first intruder he sees before closing to melee with his broadsword. The others will attack with handaxes; if possible (unlikely) one or two of the thugs will attempt to obtain a light crossbow from the cloakroom. Hrek wears studded leather armor and four 100gp hackgold bracelets (a token of his Northern heritage). His +1 Broadsword is obviously a valuable Dwarvish weapon, and his pouch contains 3d6gp & 2d6sp (max 25 coins). His thugs wear leather armor; their pouches contain 1d6gp, 1d6sp & 2d6cp.

Three thugs are gambling upstairs in a nearby room (see Area 7). There is a 33% chance (1-2 on d6) they will hear melee in the kitchen area and respond in 1d3 melee rounds; two will descend to assist their fellows while the third awakens the thugs in Area 8, then ascends to Area 12 to alert the leader (Hane).

**Hrek (F3):** AC 7, HP 22 (3 HD), Move 9, Att 1 (+1 broadsword or handaxe) for 2d4+1 or 1d6, THAC0 = 18, Align LE

**Brigands (3):** AC 8, HP 3-5 (1-1 HD), Move 12, Att 1 (handaxe or crossbow) for 1d6 or 1d4+1, THAC0 = 20, Align NE

**LEVEL TWO****(07) Common Room**

The stairs up from Level One exit into this long room (or continue up to Level Three). A wooden door on the west wall leads to the thugs' barracks; another in the middle of the west wall leads to Hrek's room. Two benches line the east wall, and a narrow window, shuttered (tied shut) and covered by a blanket, is set into the north wall above the door (on Level One). An amphora of cheap red wine sits atop one bench next to a thick pillar candle that fitfully illuminates the corner.

Three thugs squat in the northeast corner of the room, shooting dice for copper coins. One is supposed to be on watch at the window, but discipline in the tower is poor due to lack of oversight by the leaders. If they have not responded to melee on the first floor (or otherwise been disturbed), they can be Surprised at normal chances as they are slightly intoxicated and concentrating on their game. The thugs wear leather armor and have 2d6sp and 3d6cp (max 25 coins) in their purses. The kitty contains an additional 3d6cp.

Note that the three may have responded to melee on the first floor, in which case two of them went downstairs and the third went upstairs to alert Hane and Velda to the intrusion after awakening the thugs in Area 8 (Barracks).

**Brigands (3):** AC 8, HP 3-5 (1-1 HD), Move 12, Att 1 (handaxe) for 1d6, THAC0 = 20, Align NE

## (08) Barracks

Behind the closed, wooden door is a square room containing four sets of bunks and a rack for armor and clothing. A narrow window, shuttered (tied shut) and covered with a blanket, is set into the south wall directly across from the door. The room has a slight smoky scent due to the fireplace directly below. Two thugs, scheduled for night duty, are sleeping here (unless alerted by a thug in Area 7). Neither is armored, but each has a handaxe and his money pouch (2d6sp and 2d6cp) at hand.

Brigands (2): AC 10, HP 3, 4 (1-1 HD), Move 12, Att 1 (handaxe) for 1d6, THAC0 = 20, Align NE

## (09) Hrek's Chamber

This large (for the tower) room is Hrek's private quarters. Hrek doesn't demand much luxury, merely a straw tick thickly padded with a bedroll and quilts atop a simple wooden frame, and a rack upon which to hang his clothing and armor. A small wooden chest at the side of the bed (no lock) contains a few simple personal items (mess kit, comb, whetstone, etc). A half-burned candle in a silver candlestick (2gp) sits atop the flat-top chest; several pools of wax in various spots indicate that this arrangement is typical. A round wooden shield, Northern-styled half-helm, and an 8' boar spear lean in the corner. A fur-lined hooded cloak of brown wool with red trim hangs from the spear. It has been patched and mended a few times but is still worth 25gp.

## LEVEL THREE

### (10) Guard Dogs

The stairs from Level Two end at a small landing outside two locked doors (to Areas 11 & 12). Two mastiffs, pets of Hane, lurk here atop an old bearskin rug stuffed with straw. They are vicious beasts, having once been trained for bear-baiting, and will bark ferociously at anyone except Hane, Hrek or Velda (and attack anyone they do not know). They will chase intruders down the staircase but not pursue them into the basement or out of the tower.

A stout wooden door, reinforced with iron bands and locked with a heavy padlock, is set into the north wall. It leads to the vault where Hane stores the gang's loot. Another stout wooden door, albeit not reinforced, is set into the west wall next to the stairs. This door is barred from inside unless Hane and Velda have responded to the presence of intruders in the tower.

Mastiffs (2): AC 6, HP 12, 13 (2+2 HD), Move 12, Att 1 (bite) for 2d4, THAC0 = 16, Align N

## (11) Vault

A stout wooden door, reinforced with iron bands and locked with a heavy padlock, seals this room. Hane has the key on a leather thong around his neck (or hanging on his clothes rack if he is sleeping in his chamber). The lock is of good quality and the hasp is bolted into the door and frame. Tearing it open requires a pry bar and a successful feat of strength (Bend Bars/Lift Gates) check at +1% per point of STR, i.e., a 14 STR gives the character a 21% chance: 7% + 14%). The door may be forced open, but only with a successful, unmodified feat of strength check and considerable time (2d4 rounds) and noise.

Beyond the wooden door is a small, square room with three locked chests on the floor next to the east wall. All three chests are chained to the wall by a single log chain which runs through multiple iron hasps; the chain is latched with a heavy padlock that uses the same key as the vault door. The hasps are set into the wall or bolted into a chest and can only be torn out with a pry bar or similar object (use the method detailed above for tearing the hasp out of the door).

The chests contain the spoils of the Axe Gang, as noted below:

**Chest One:** 6 small sacks (87gp, 313sp, 165cp), a Potion of Invisibility, and a wooden coffer (10d10 10gp gems)

**Chest Two:** 8 small sacks (46gp, 245sp, 509cp) and a small wooden box (6d6 pieces of junk jewelry (1d4+1gp))

**Chest Three:** Unlocked and apparently empty, its key is attached to the underside. A secret compartment in the interior bottom contains a dozen 2 oz. bottles of fine floral perfume from a high-end local shop: a holiday gift intended for Velda ungiven due to a lover's quarrel (10gp per vial).

Chests One and Two are locked (Hane has the keys on the leather thong mentioned above). Chest Three appears to be an extra container. The built-in locks on Chests One and Two can be picked at normal chances or pried open with a pry bar and successful modified feat of strength check (same method as the hasps above except with a +2% chance per point of STR).

## (12) Hane's Chamber

The wooden door separating this room from the outer chamber (Area 10) is barred unless Hane and Velda are not inside. Hane, the leader of the Axe Gang, resides here along with his girl Velda. As usual they are quarreling and will not notice intruders in the tower until somehow alerted (ie. by a member of the Gang, or the mastiffs' ceaseless barking, or someone attempting to force their door). There is only a 50% chance (1-3 on d6) they will respond to the mastiffs barking, and then only in 1d3+1 rounds.

Unlike the rest of the tower, this room is lavishly decorated with tapestries, rugs, and other expensive goods (1000gp). A well-made oak bed frame, covered with a down mattress and a soft, rabbit-furred blanket (50gp), stands in the middle of the south wall. Next to it a bronze fire brazier on a tripod smokes lazily, ashes glowing. Three torches, two boxes of candles (a dozen in each box), and a small supply of wood for the brazier lie on the floor nearby. A narrow, shuttered (tied shut) window is set into the west wall near the bed, covered with a blanket and decorative tapestry. An oiled rope, coiled and ready for use, lies on the floor beneath the window. Feminine furs and expensive clothing hang from a clothes rack nearby; more masculine garb (of far lesser value) and a leather thong necklace with keys for all the locks except the basement door hang from another next to the bed.

Directly across from the door along the west wall stands a wooden desk and chair. Atop it is a small, unlit, jeweled bronze lamp (100gp, 10' radius light), a stoppered gallon jug of scented lamp oil (1d4 pints remaining), a bronze hand mirror, a tortoise shell comb (10gp) and small, intricately carved rosewood box (25gp). The box contains two vials of fine perfume (10gp each) and a half-dozen pieces of silver & gold jewelry (two rings (silver-20gp & gold-50gp), a bracelet (gold-100gp), a necklace (silver with green gems, 250gp) and two pair of earrings (silver with red gems-25gp & gold-25gp)).

Behind a wall of curtains in the far northeast corner is a heavy, claw-footed copper bathing tub (200gp). A wooden bucket is stowed in the corner behind the tub; it is used to haul water upstairs from the kitchen.

If an alert has been sounded (by other members of the Axe Gang, or the sounds of combat from Hane's dogs), Hane and Velda will hurriedly don their arms and armor and respond.

Velda will prepare an escape route, tying the oiled rope to a rung set into the stone wall and opening the window. Should escape be necessary, she will rapidly gather her most portable and precious goods, then (if possible) drop a lit torch to the ground outside. If pursued out the window, one of them will retrieve the torch and light the rope afire (the oil, as well as providing for a rapid descent, transforms the rope into a rapidly-burning wick).

Hane will open the door to evaluate the situation, engaging in combat for a round or two if pressed to give Velda time to escape before making his way to the rope as well.

Both rogues have studded leather armor. Hane also has a half-helm which he will don if expecting combat. Hane fights with a broadsword, his +1 dagger in reserve in his boot, whereas Velda uses a stiletto dagger and a pair of throwing knives. Both have a coin purse containing 3d6gp & 2d6sp

(max 25 coins each). Hane also wears a gold wedding band (100gp) as a token of his fidelity for Velda. Velda has no such romantic illusions and will abandon Hane to his fate should such be necessary to save her own neck. If hard pressed, or Hane is especially wounded and not likely to survive, she may even light the rope early (causing him to fall for 3d6 damage if he is descending at the time unless he is able to swing into the window in Area 8).

**Hane (T5):** AC 6 (Dex 15), HP 18 (5 HD), Move 9, Att 1 (broadsword) for 2d4, THAC0 = 19, Align LE

**Velda (T1):** AC 7, HP 3 (1 HD), Move 9, Att 1 (stiletto dagger) for 1d4, THAC0 = 20, Align NE

## BASEMENT

### (13) Shrine

A stout wooden door separates the descending section of the spiral staircase from the first floor. Once open, a heavy, sickly-sweet scent of perfumes, smoke, exotic herbs and other, unidentifiable odors fills the air. Dim, flickering light (from candles) casts twisting shadows around the corner of the curving stairwell.



The floor at the base of the stairs contains a pit trap. Anyone stepping there must make a DEX check (roll d20 less than or equal to the character's DEX) or fall into the pit, which drops 10 feet (for 1d6 damage) into a room of ghouls; see Area 19, Ghoul Pit). The lid of the pit is spring-loaded and automatically closes when weight is removed from it. A locking mechanism protrudes from the south wall behind a curtain near the staircase, but it is only locked when both priestesses are away (a rare occasion). If the trap is sprung, the horrific stench of death and decay rolls up from the pit.

The majority of the basement has been consecrated as a shrine to Hecate. Four fluted columns support the ceiling; curtains of purple, red and lavender hang from ceiling to floor between them. In the north-center of the room, an eight foot tall bronze statue of the goddess in triple form stands atop a circular dais. Inscriptions beneath each form identify her aspects: *Apotropaia* (She who protects – the goddess in laurel and braid, clutching her hem in left hand and a key in the right), *Chthonia* (She of the Underworld – the goddess with crescent moon tiara, holding a torch in each hand) and *Propolos* (She who attends – the goddess with three horns holding a serpent in left hand and a knife in her right). Nine black candles circling the statue flicker fitfully, dimly illuminating the room. In front of the statue is a grey marble altar draped with altar cloth, atop which burns floral incense in a bronze container. If unaware of the presence of intruders, lola will be here softly intoning prayers to the goddess. Otherwise she will have fled to Illione's Chamber to warn her mother.

Behind the curtains lurk six shrine guardians, undead skeletons animated by Illione (the shrine priestess). They are instructed to attack anyone that enters the chamber except Illione, lola or the zombies. The skeletons are armed with daggers, but due to their undead nature they cause more damage than normal with these weapons. Skeletons are naturally resistant to damage. Only blunt weapons cause full damage; edged or cutting weapons cause only half-damage and piercing weapons only one point. Anyone attempting to Turn the skeletons receives a -2 on the attempt due to the unholy nature of the shrine. Two of these guardians are stationed to either side of the wooden door on the east wall that leads to the mortuary.

Three servants of the shrine also lurk behind the curtains: zombies also animated by Illione. They generally are used for lifting and other heavy labor, but can be commanded by either Illione or lola to attack intruders (or to other tasks as needed). The zombies are slow and will attack at the end of any round with powerful, flailing fists. Activating them requires a successful Turn attempt by lola (success 1-10 on d20). See OSRIC pp. 123-124 for more information on Turning.

A secret door is set into the wall in the northeastern corner. Nearby, lola has a small straw pallet on the floor along the

eastern wall, atop which are some woolen blankets and comfortable pillows. Next to the pallet is a box of black candles (three remaining), a small, unlit pot lamp (5' light) half-full of oil, a small sack of floral incense, a key to the basement door, and her wooden club (note that lola must retrieve it from here before she can use it).

Depending on the circumstances, Illione and lola may be present to support the shrine guardians with spells (or melee). They prefer to lurk behind the curtains when casting spells. Given time, the shrine priestess will cast *Animate Dead* on fallen skeletons and zombies (or perhaps even fallen party members!) and have them rejoin the fray. Note that Illione will be wearing the *Mask of Argus*, thus can see in the dark and cannot be Surprised.

Illione will retreat to the mortuary if confronted and cast *Snake Charm*, calling the snake from the sewer and commanding it to attack. She will cast *Sanctuary* if cornered (and flee), or *Command (Flee)* if unable to escape (which she hopes will cause her victim to fall into the pit as he leaves the shrine). She will cast *Feign Death* upon herself if she drops to five hit points or less, and reserve one *Cure Light Wounds* spell for after she revives from it. lola also will cast *Sanctuary* if cornered, first looking to support her mother with *Cure Light Wounds* (if she still has the spell available), then fleeing to safety.

lola has the following spells available: *Cause Light Wounds*, *Cure Light Wounds*, *Sanctuary*. Her 13 WIS provides spells beyond the normal amount available to a 2<sup>nd</sup> level cleric. Illione's spells and stats are listed elsewhere (see Area 17).

**lola (C2):** AC 10, HP 8 (2 HD), Move 12, Att 1 (club) for 1d4, THAC0 = 20, Align LE

**Skeletons (6):** AC 7, HP 4-5 (1 HD), Move 12, Att 1 (dagger) for 1d6, THAC0 = 19, Align N

**Zombies (3):** AC 8, HP 8-9 (2 HD), Move 6, Att 1 (fist) for 1d8, THAC0 = 16, Align N

## (14) Mortuary

This square room contains everything necessary for performing necromantic tasks upon corpses. A heavy stone bier (for receiving the dead) stands in the middle of the room. Long wall shelves filled with various instruments and containers of ingredients necessary for animating the dead span the north wall. A large iron vat for boiling flesh from bone sits in the southwest corner, and an iron grate set into the floor along the west wall (which dumps into a large pipe that leads to the City sewer) is situated to receive the slurry. The mortuary is currently empty, but exhibits evidence of recent use (stains on the stone bier, stocks of opened supplies, sharp tools, etc).

A poisonous snake frequents the sewer pipe beneath the grate, drawn by the rats that feed on the scraps of flesh washed down the drain. Illione is aware of its presence and keeps the grate tightly closed (the snake cannot open the grate or pass through it). Anyone investigating the pipe (after opening the grate) may be attacked by the snake. If so, it will Surprise on standard chances, attempt to bite whoever is nearest, then enter the mortuary and continue to attack. The poison of the snake is deadly, but weak (+2 on saves). Those failing the save vs. poison are incapacitated immediately and will die within 1d6+6 turns.

Should the Game Master wish to continue the adventure deeper into the areas beneath the City, it would be easy to expand nearby areas connected to the sewer pipe. Such continuance is beyond the scope of this scenario. See City Adventures: Labyrinth of the Undercity for more details.

**Snake (1):** AC 6, HP 9 (2+1 HD), Move 15, Att 1 (bite) for 1 point + poison, THAC0 = 16, Align N

### (15) Interior Corridor

The short corridor behind the secret door leading from the Shrine ends at two wooden doors, one set into the east wall (leading to the prison) and one adjacent to it on the south wall (leading to Illione's Chamber). Another undead guardian (a zombie) awaits here with instructions to attack any living creature which enters except Illione or Iola, and to pursue it into the shrine if necessary. The zombie is slow, but relentless and will attack until slain or intruders flee past the pit (it will not go that far, thus not fall in). A zombie always attacks last (at the end of the round).

**Zombie (1):** AC 8, HP 11 (2 HD), Move 6, Att 1 (fist) for 1d8, THAC0 = 16, Align N

### (16) Prison

The stout wooden door at the end of the corridor is locked; the key is in a small sack of keys hanging on the wall in Area 17a (the Secret Closet). Beyond the door is a small, square room with thin columns in three of the four corners (all but the northwest where the door opens). Chains and manacles dangle from two of the columns; a third set imprisons a peasant girl (roughly 13 years old) in a tattered dress. The girl (Arla) is the unfortunate survivor of a poor local working family that refused to accommodate Illione's wishes. All were kidnapped; the parents were killed, their flesh removed and fed to the ghouls, and the remains animated into undead skeletons, whereas the brother was suitable for transformation into a zombie and now guards her prison door.

Arla is in a weakened state due to her imprisonment (2 HP), and has no special abilities with which to assist her rescuers against the sect. She knows nothing about the tower or its inhabitants except that the younger woman (Iola) occasionally feeds her, and Illione was present when she was kidnapped and somehow immobilized her father and brother with some sort of sorcery (a Hold Person spell). Arla has no remaining family in the City or anywhere nearby and, if allowed, will attach herself to a female character (or strong, handsome warrior-type of good morals) as a servant.

### (17) Illione's Chamber

This small, square room is separated from the interior corridor by an unlocked wooden door. Inside is a simple sleeping chamber containing a wooden bed frame, atop which is a straw tick and several woolen blankets, a clothing rack from which hangs a dull red & lavender cloak and matching chiton, and another wooden door (which leads to the Sanctum). Less obvious is a secret door set in the east wall that opens to reveal a hidden closet (see Area 17a, Secret Closet).

The room is brightly lit by a small bronze lamp upon which Continual Light has been cast. Illione usually takes the lamp with her, especially when she is working in the mortuary, but will not have it if responding to intruders (it would draw unwanted attention to her) or in the sanctum (another Continual Light spell permanently illuminates that chamber).



Under most circumstances this room will be unoccupied as Illione will be either in the sanctum or in combat with intruders in the shrine. Illione has several keys on a chain on her belt, including one for the staircase door, one for the chest in the Secret Closet, and one for the manacles used in the Prison. Any other keys she might need are in a small sack hanging from a peg in the wall in the Secret Closet. Illione wears a magical Robe of Protection +1 and, if she has time to retrieve it from the Sanctum, the Mask of Argus. If pressed into melee, Illione wields a simple quarterstaff. She also wears a silver bracelet set with moonstones worth 250gp.

Illione has the following spells available: Cause Light Wounds, Command, Cure Light Wounds x 2, Sanctuary, Augury, Hold Person, Silence 15' Radius, Snake Charm, Animate Dead, Feign Death. Her 17 WIS gives her additional spells beyond the normal amount available to a 5<sup>th</sup> level cleric.

Illione (C5): AC 9 (*Robe*), HP 24 (5 HD), Move 12, Att 1 (staff) for 1d6, THAC0 = 18, Align LE

### (17a) Secret Closet

Behind the secret door in Illione's chamber is a small closet. Ceremonial robes for both priestesses hang on pegs driven into one wall, along with a small sack of keys (any key needed in the shrine/tower except for those explicitly listed as being on Illione's belt...see Area 17, Illione's Chamber above). Various items used for worship (boxes of black candles, bags of incense, another altar cloth, extra holy symbols, etc) are stacked in one corner, and a small, locked chest (Illione has the key on a chain on her belt) sits on the floor nearby. The contents of the chest include a small sack (60gp, 37sp), a coin purse (1d6gp, 2d6sp & 2d6cp, max 25 coins), and a ceramic flask (corked and sealed in wax) containing a Potion of Healing.

Should the Game Master wish to continue the adventure deeper into the areas beneath the City, it would be easy to add a secret door to this closet (revealing an entrance to another location to explore when opened). Such continuance is beyond the scope of this scenario. See City Adventures: Labyrinth of the Undercity for more details.

### (18) Sanctum

The wooden door in Illione's chamber leads to a wide room used as a study and laboratory. The door is locked unless Illione is within or circumstances do not allow such (ie., Illione has responded rapidly to intruders); the key is in the sack in the Secret Closet (see Area 17a). It is also sealed with a Glyph of Warding (*Blindness*) that will trigger when opened by anyone except Illione or Iola. When the door is opened, bright light spills into Illione's chamber from a Continual Light spell that

has been cast upon the ceiling. Anyone coming from the sanctum into darker areas of the shrine will suffer from temporary night blindness for 1d3+1 rounds until his eyes become accustomed to the lesser light. Those so affected are easier to Surprise and incur a 1 point penalty on the roll.

The eastern portion of the room contains a sturdy wooden table covered with alchemical glassware. Suspended from the ceiling in the center of the east wall is a human skeleton. Built into the east wall around the skeleton are two sets of shelves containing more equipment and many sealed jars of various alchemical components. The equipment and components are worth 1000gp to the right buyer, but all of the glassware is very fragile and will be difficult to keep intact when moved.

The western portion of the room contains a wooden desk and chair, a bookshelf, and a bronze fire brazier suspended from a tripod (similar to the one in Hane's Chamber on Level Three). Above the fire brazier in the ceiling is a vented shaft that leads up to a narrow chimney on the southeastern side of the tower at a spot near the stairs. The chimney allows smoke to drift up and out, and at times provides fresh air to the room. Hanging from a peg in the wall above the desk is a Greek-styled bronze mask depicting a man with dozens of eyes upon his visage. The Mask of Argus, as it is known, is a unique magical item that enables the wearer to see in 720° simultaneously (in other words, in all directions at the same time instead of the usual roughly 180° vision of a normal human). The wearer cannot be Surprised, and at his command the Mask enables him to see in the dark at 120 feet distance with infravision as well.

The desk has a sheet of smooth glass covering the writing surface, atop which is a rack containing several scroll tubes, a device for holding scrolls flat, several pots of ink of various colors (some dry, but all still usable) and a silver candlestick (2gp) with a mostly burned candle. Most of the scroll tubes contain various amounts of blank vellum (2d4+2 pages each), but one holds eight 100gp pearls (suitable for use with an *Identify* spell). Inside the desk is a tinderbox with flint & steel, several unused quills and a knife for sharpening them, a bronze hand mirror and a tortoise-shell comb (5gp).

The small bookshelf contains 6d6 tomes of anatomical, alchemical or religious nature. Titles include the three volume set *Ars Medico*, *Ars Herbis* and *Ars Corpo* by Claudio Gnaio, three tomes of the eight volume set *De*



*Re Medica* by Cassius Celso, and rare necromantic works by Helitharsis and Pericalcos. Each individual piece is worth at least 100gp to the right buyer; the Claudius Gnaio set is worth 500gp if sold together. Due to the value of these works, it is advisable to have some sort of "accident" involving the bookshelf and the fire brazier occur to reduce their numbers accordingly. Or, if you prefer, reduce the value to fit your campaign, or make it difficult to find a buyer who will pay full value for the works (perhaps finding one will generate a new adventure for the party to undertake).

### (19) Ghoul Pit

Beneath the basement is a large, square room. Originally a remnant from another structure, it has been converted into a pit cage for Illione's most dangerous servitors: three ghouls. They are irregularly fed scraps from necromantic experiments, ill-fortuned street people, and stray animals, so they will attack anyone (including the priestesses) entering their abode with ravenous hunger. Note that the priestesses are both able to control the ghouls through use of the clerical Turning ability. Illione, a Level 5 cleric, automatically Turns skeletons, zombies and ghouls, so these creatures follow any direct command she gives them. Iola, a Level 2 cleric, needs a 16 on d20 in order to turn the ghouls, thus is much more susceptible to them.

Entrance to the Ghoul Pit is through the pit trap at the base of the stairs near the shrine. When the pit is triggered, the unmistakable stench of death and rot roils upwards into the staircase. The pit drops 10 feet (for 1d6 damage) into the northwest corner of the room; if the ghouls are not Surprised they attack immediately with their typical claw/claw/bite routine. Most creatures must save vs. paralysis when hit by a ghoul; those paralyzed suffer automatic hits for standard damage until dead as the ghouls rend, tear and devour hunks of flesh. Paralysis lasts for 3d4 turns, but few characters will survive that long when subjected to continual attacks by a pack of these creatures. Ghouls can be hit by normal weapons, but are immune to Sleep and Charm-based spells.

The ghouls live amongst the foul remains of previous meals, but have nothing of value. Should the Game Master wish to continue the adventure deeper into the areas beneath the City, it would be easy to add to this room a portion of the wall that has been bricked over (revealing an entrance to another location to explore when cleared). Such continuance is beyond the scope of this scenario. See City Adventures: Labyrinth of the Undercity for more details.

**Note:** This encounter has a high potential for killing one or more characters, especially if but a single character faces the ghouls. Ghouls are fragile, but have many attacks and are able to paralyze victims with a successful attack. If the characters are all low level, you may wish to reduce the

number of ghouls in the chamber to one or two, or at least add a bit of dead-end tunnel from which the additional attackers emerge on successive attack rounds (to prevent all three ghouls from overwhelming one or two characters). On the other hand, if your players are particularly foolish and fully deserve such a horrific encounter, feel free to give them their just deserts [sic] and let the dice fall where they may.

**Ghouls (3):** AC 6, HP 9-11 (2 HD), Move 9, Att 3 (claw, claw, bite) for 1d3, 1d3, 1d6, THAC0 = 16, Align CE

### WANDERING MONSTERS

There are no wandering monsters per se in this scenario. The setting is far too small for wandering monsters to be a logical occurrence. However, there is potential for a random encounter. A party lingering on the staircase might encounter one or both of the mastiffs, one or both of the brigands asleep in the barracks might awaken and go to the kitchen for an ale, or Hane might come downstairs after yet another quarrel with Velda. These encounters are left to the DM to employ as needed.

The purpose of wandering monsters is twofold: it is a game device designed to prevent characters from spending too much time during the adventure healing, regaining spells and performing other tasks that allow them to recuperate from the onslaught of the dungeon, and it is a means by which the Game Master adds a sense of plausibility to the game. The challenge of the game involves a significant amount of resource management; characters have a certain amount of hit points, spells, equipment and such that are used (and used up) during play to obtain experience points. If they are allowed to recover these too often, the game becomes too easy and the "fun" diminishes. Furthermore, moving creatures through the setting provides the sense that the setting is living, not static, and helps maintain the pace of the adventure.

### GM NOTES

The Shrine of Hecate is set in a generic large city, but easily can be moved to other locations (such as a toll house in a remote part of the countryside) if desired. For greater challenge and/or to fit the Game Master's needs, he can upgrade opponents as well. For example, perhaps instead of brigands the shrine employs orcs led by Hane and Velda, and perhaps Hrek can be replaced by an ogre (the tower ceilings are roughly 12 ft high). Or perhaps younger brother Hern and seven additional brigands are out in the forest collecting "tolls" from passersby and return later in the scenario (they can "hot bunk" in the barracks for continuity). Furthermore, as noted in the above text, the Game Master can use the Shrine as a stand-alone scenario, or expand it into the beginning of lengthy adventures beneath the City. Only you know what awaits your players...

## EXPERIENCE POINTS AWARDS

### Opponents

Brigand Leaders: 338 (Hane), 171 (Hrek), 43 (Velda)  
Brigands: 10 + 3-5 (depends on hit points) each  
Ghouls: 70 + 18, 20 or 22 (depends on hit points) each  
Mastiffs: 50 + 24 or 26 (depends on hit points) each  
Poisonous Snake: 128  
Shrine Priestesses: 494 (Illione), 81 (Iola)  
Skeletons: 15 + 4-5 (depends on hit points) each  
Zombies: 30 + 8-11 (depends on hit points) each

### Magical Items

+1 Broadsword: 400  
+1 Dagger: 75  
Continual Light Lamp: 50  
Potion of Invisibility: 250  
Potion of Healing: 200  
Robe of Protection +1: 1000  
Mask of Argus: 1500

### Money and Miscellaneous Items

Monetary treasure (coins, gems, jewelry, etc) is worth 1 experience point per gold piece value as long as the treasure is removed from the dungeon to a safe location (i.e., the party's hideout, base camp, etc). Monetary treasure is often heavy (ten coins weigh one pound), and requires containers such as sacks, backpacks, and chests to transport.

## NEW MAGIC ITEMS

### The Mask of Argus

Experience Value: 1500, Gold Value: 10,000 GP

The Mask of Argus is a Greek-styled bronze mask depicting a man with dozens of eyes upon his visage. It enables the wearer to see in 720° simultaneously (in other words, in all directions at the same time instead of the usual roughly 180° vision of a normal human), and at his command the Mask enables him to see in the dark at 120 feet distance with infravision as well. The wearer of the Mask cannot be Surprised by opponents who can

be seen (i.e., not invisible, out-of-phase, etc.) Note that the Mask renders the wearer more susceptible to gaze attacks such as that of a basilisk or medusa; saves are made at -4.

## PLOT HOOKS

**Hometown Heroes:** A gang of thugs is extorting protection money from merchants in whatever city the party is using as their base of operations. After word has spread of the party's exploits, a group of concerned citizens approaches them to put a stop to the violence and free the markets from the threat of further disruption.

**This Old Tower:** Someone connected to the party comes to them with a problem. Recently, a friend and her entire family have gone missing and this person would like the party to find her/them. The person suspects their disappearance has something to do with an old tower near their home.

**Any Port in a Storm:** While traveling through the wilderness the party discovers a trail that leads to an old, apparently abandoned tower. The tower appears foreboding, but a severe thunderstorm is rapidly approaching and no other shelter is within sight. Strong winds and repeated lightning strikes convince the party to enter, if only for the duration of the storm. Unfortunately, the current occupants are not amenable to sharing their living space. (This plot hook assumes the tower has been relocated to a wilderness area and the Axe Gang are forest brigands).



## STAT SHEET

## Hrek and Brigands (Area 6)

<u>AC</u>	<u>#</u>	<u>HP</u>	<u>Description</u>
7	[01]	22	Hrek (F3), Att 1 (+1 broadsword) for 2d4+1, Move 9, THAC0 = 18
8	[01]	4	Brigand (1-1) Att 1 (handaxe) for 1d6, Move 12, THAC0 = 20
8	[02]	5	Brigand (1-1) Att 1 (handaxe) for 1d6, Move 12, THAC0 = 20
8	[03]	3	Brigand (1-1) Att 1 (handaxe) for 1d6, Move 12, THAC0 = 20

## Brigands (Area 7)

<u>AC</u>	<u>#</u>	<u>HP</u>	<u>Description</u>
8	[01]	4	Brigand (1-1) Att 1 (handaxe) for 1d6, Move 12, THAC0 = 20
8	[02]	5	Brigand (1-1) Att 1 (handaxe) for 1d6, Move 12, THAC0 = 20
8	[03]	3	Brigand (1-1) Att 1 (handaxe) for 1d6, Move 12, THAC0 = 20

## Sleeping Brigands (Area 8)

<u>AC</u>	<u>#</u>	<u>HP</u>	<u>Description</u>
10	[01]	4	Brigand (1-1) Att 1 (handaxe) for 1d6, Move 12, THAC0 = 20
10	[02]	4	Brigand (1-1) Att 1 (handaxe) for 1d6, Move 12, THAC0 = 20

## Mastiffs (Area 10)

<u>AC</u>	<u>#</u>	<u>HP</u>	<u>Description</u>
6	[01]	12	War Dog (2+2) Att 1 (bite) for 2d4, Move 12, THAC0 = 16
6	[02]	13	War Dog (2+2) Att 1 (bite) for 2d4, Move 12, THAC0 = 16

## Hane and Velda (Area 12)

<u>AC</u>	<u>#</u>	<u>HP</u>	<u>Description</u>
6	[01]	18	Hane (T5), Att 1 (broadsword) for 2d4, Move 9, THAC0 = 19
7	[01]	3	Velda (T1), Att 1 (dagger) for 1d4, Move 9, THAC0 = 20



## STAT SHEET

## Iola, Skeletons &amp; Zombies (Area 13)

<u>AC</u>	<u>#</u>	<u>HP</u>	<u>Description</u>
10	[01]	8	Iola (C2), Att 1 (club) for 1d4 or spells, Move 12, THAC0 = 20

**Spells:** Cause Light Wounds, Cure Light Wounds, Sanctuary

7	[01]	4	Skeleton (1) Att 1 (dagger) for 1d6, Move 12, THAC0 = 19
7	[02]	5	Skeleton (1) Att 1 (dagger) for 1d6, Move 12, THAC0 = 19
7	[03]	4	Skeleton (1) Att 1 (dagger) for 1d6, Move 12, THAC0 = 19
7	[04]	5	Skeleton (1) Att 1 (dagger) for 1d6, Move 12, THAC0 = 19
7	[05]	4	Skeleton (1) Att 1 (dagger) for 1d6, Move 12, THAC0 = 19
7	[06]	5	Skeleton (1) Att 1 (dagger) for 1d6, Move 12, THAC0 = 19

**Special Defense:** Immune to cold, fear, poison, paralysis, mind-affecting spells; half-damage edged/cutting, 1 point piercing

8	[01]	8	Zombie (2) Att 1 (fist) for 1d8, Move 6, THAC0 = 16
8	[02]	9	Zombie (2) Att 1 (fist) for 1d8, Move 6, THAC0 = 16
8	[03]	8	Zombie (2) Att 1 (fist) for 1d8, Move 6, THAC0 = 16

**Special Defense:** Immune to cold, fear, poison, paralysis, mind-affecting spells; **Initiative:** Attack last, never flee unless Turned

## Poisonous Snake (Area 14)

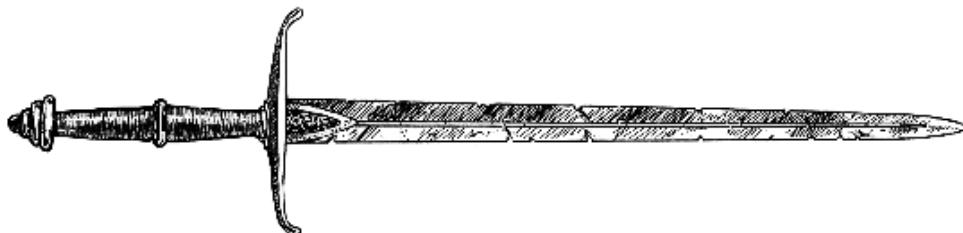
<u>AC</u>	<u>#</u>	<u>HP</u>	<u>Description</u>
6	[01]	9	Snake (2+1) Att 1 (bite) for 1 point + poison, Move 15, THAC0 = 16

**Special Attack:** Poison (save at +2 or unconscious and death in 1d6+6 turns)

## Zombie (Area 15)

<u>AC</u>	<u>#</u>	<u>HP</u>	<u>Description</u>
8	[01]	11	Zombie (2) Att 1 (fist) for 1d8, Move 6, THAC0 = 16

**Special Defense:** Immune to cold, fear, poison, paralysis, mind-affecting spells; **Initiative:** Attack last, never flee unless Turned



## STAT SHEET

## Illione (Area 18)

<u>AC</u>	<u>#</u>	<u>HP</u>	<u>Description</u>
9	[01]	24	Illione (C5), Att 1 (staff) for 1d6 or spells, Move 12, THAC0 = 18

**Spells:** Cause Light Wounds, Command, Cure Light Wounds x2, Sanctuary, Augury, Hold Person, Silence 15' Radius, Snake Charm, Animate Dead, Feign Death

## Ghouls (Area 19)

<u>AC</u>	<u>#</u>	<u>HP</u>	<u>Description</u>
6	[01]	10	Ghoul (2), Att 3 (c/c/b) for 1d3/1d3/1d6, Move 9, THAC0 = 16
6	[02]	9	Ghoul (2), Att 3 (c/c/b) for 1d3/1d3/1d6, Move 9, THAC0 = 16
6	[03]	11	Ghoul (2), Att 3 (c/c/b) for 1d3/1d3/1d6, Move 9, THAC0 = 16

**Special Attacks:** Paralysis (3d4 turns); **Special Defense:** Immune to fear, poison, paralysis, mind-affecting spells

## Reinforcements (DM Notes)

<u>AC</u>	<u>#</u>	<u>HP</u>	<u>Description</u>
7	[01]	13	Hern (F2), Att 1 (broadsword) for 2d4+1, Move 9, THAC0 = 20
8	[01]	4	Brigand (1-1) Att 1 (handaxe) for 1d6, Move 12, THAC0 = 20
8	[02]	5	Brigand (1-1) Att 1 (handaxe) for 1d6, Move 12, THAC0 = 20
8	[03]	4	Brigand (1-1) Att 1 (handaxe) for 1d6, Move 12, THAC0 = 20
8	[04]	3	Brigand (1-1) Att 1 (handaxe) for 1d6, Move 12, THAC0 = 20
8	[05]	4	Brigand (1-1) Att 1 (handaxe) for 1d6, Move 12, THAC0 = 20
8	[06]	5	Brigand (1-1) Att 1 (handaxe) for 1d6, Move 12, THAC0 = 20
8	[07]	3	Brigand (1-1) Att 1 (handaxe) for 1d6, Move 12, THAC0 = 20

## CLERICAL TURNING OF THE UNDEAD

Type of Undead	Example	1	2	3	4	5	A cleric, by calling upon the (un)holy might of his/her deity, has the ability to rebuke or control (evil clerics only) undead creatures. 2d6 creatures are affected for 3d4 rounds, and must move at their maximum speed away from the cleric. Turning requires use of the cleric's (un)holy symbol, presented in-hand with strong intent. See OSRIC pp. 123-124.	
Type 1	Skeleton	10	7	4	T	T		
Type 2	Zombie	13	10	7	T	T		
Type 3	Ghoul	16	13	10	4	T		
Type 4	Shadow	19	16	13	7	4	A paladin is able to Turn as a cleric two levels lower than his level, ex. A 3 <sup>rd</sup> level paladin Turns as a 1 <sup>st</sup> level cleric.	
Type 5	Wight	20	19	16	10	7		

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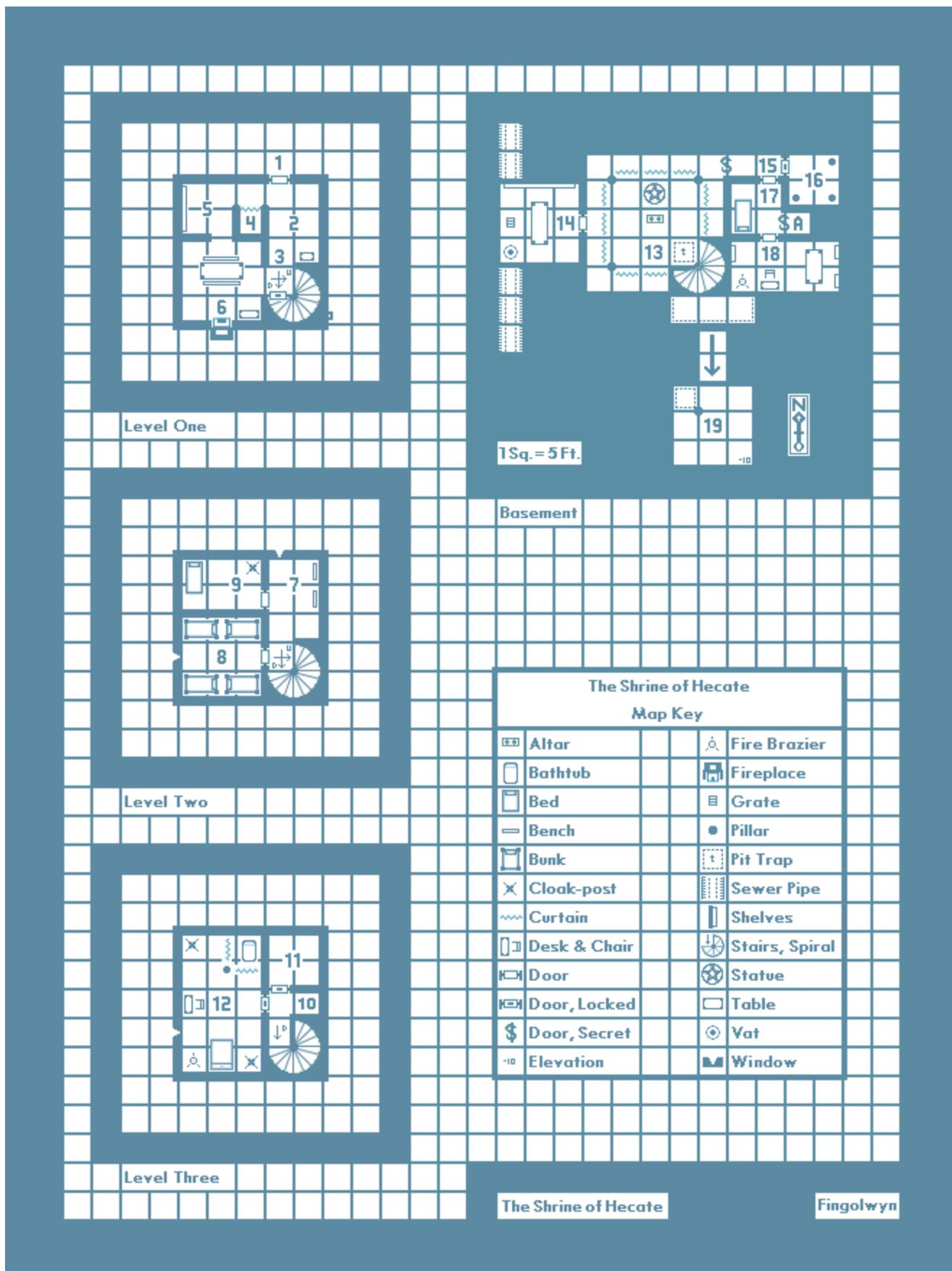
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# the shrine of hecate





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