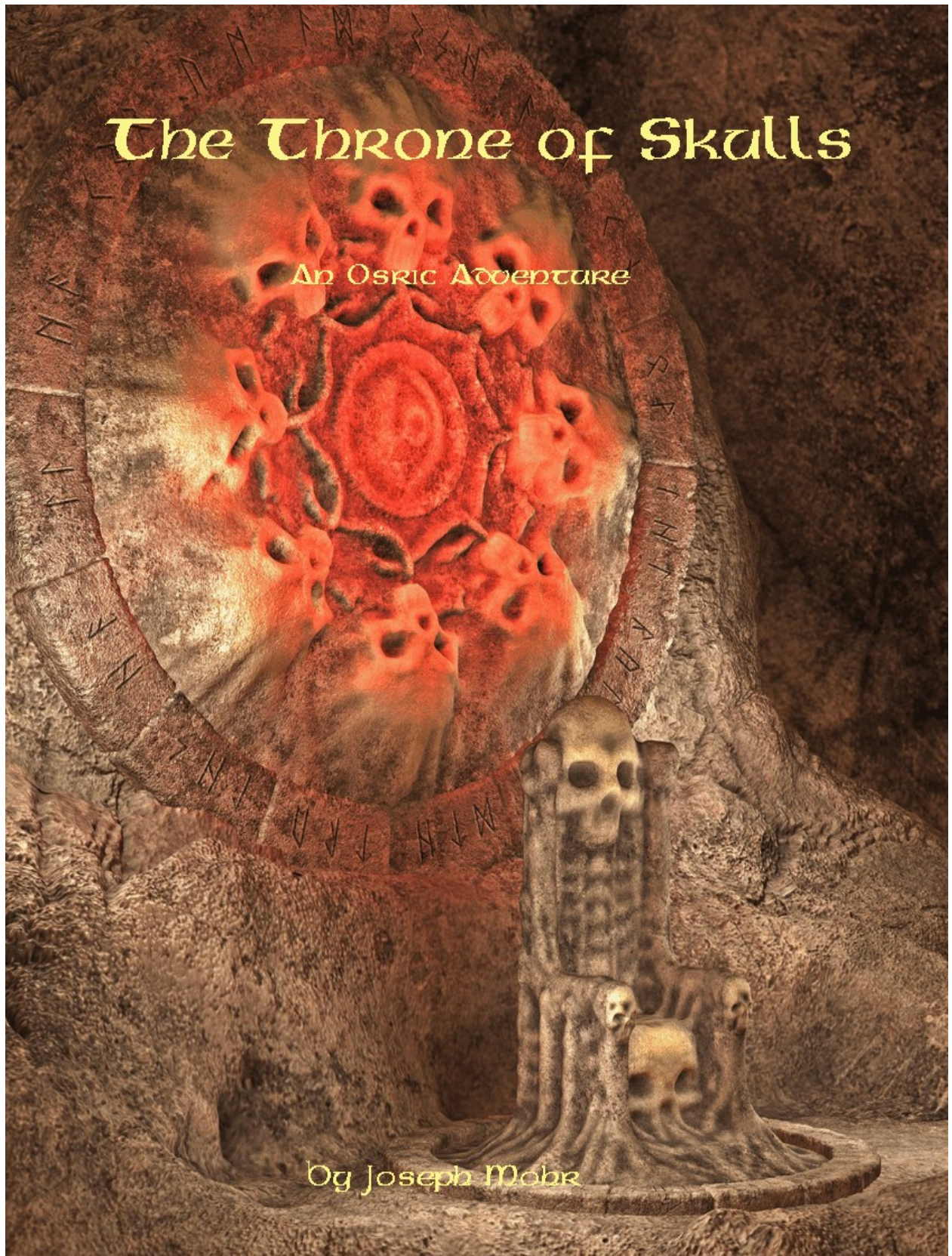


The Throne of Skulls

An Osric Adventure

by Joseph Mohr



The Throne of skulls

*An OSRIC Adventure
for Characters 10th level and up*

By Joseph Mohr

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While exploring the desolate hills far away from town the adventurers stumble upon a secret hideaway with an unusual and terrifying design. It is shaped like a giant skull. Who lives in this structure? And why was it built so far away from civilization? Could it belong to the Grandmaster of Assassins? Could it be the home of the fabled Throne of Skulls?

FOR THE DUNGEON MASTER

This adventure is for characters of 10th level and up. The skull fortress never stays in one place for long. It is capable of teleporting itself to another location and will do so in 1-4 days after arriving in any location. How many days it has already been in it's currently location is up to the Dungeon Master or could be determined randomly (1D3 would be best).

This is a high level adventure with deadly encounters and traps. The fortress is well guarded and the guards are always alert. Areas 3 and 10 always have guards posted and watching for the approach of strangers. These guards will attack anyone who approaches the fortress without bearing the symbol of the Assassin's guild. There is also a significant chance that guards will be observing from areas 2 and 8. Should the approach of strangers be noticed by other posted guards then it will become a certainty that guards will be observing from those windows as well.

RANDOM ENCOUNTERS

Inside of the structure random encounters should be rolled every turn or any time a significant amount of noise is made. Encounters will always be with a guard patrol. Encounters will be indicated on a roll of 1-3 on a D12.

Guard patrols will consist of a three tenth level fighters and a 10th level magic user. They will be accompanied by two hell hounds. There is only one of these patrols in the fortress. Should it be met and killed there will be no more random encounters.

Guard Patrol

Hell Hounds (2): MV 12; AC 4; HD 7; HP 28 each; #AT1; Dmg 1-10; SA breath fire; SD see hidden or invisible creatures 50% of the time; SA surprise on 1-4 out of 6; SD surprised only on a 1; AL LE; MM page 51.

Fighters (4): F10; AC 0; HP 65 each; each carries **plate mail +1, shield +1, long sword +1**; each attacks 3 times every two rounds; AL NE.

Magic User. MU10; AC: 2; HP 25; carries **bracers of defense AC 2** and a wooden staff, AL NE. Spells memorized (and found in their traveling spell book in area 5): **magic missile, shocking grasp, spider climb, feather fall, web, levitate, mirror image, detect invisibility, haste, fireball, hold person, dimension door, confusion, cone of cold, conjure elemental.** He has two gold rings. One has a ruby centerpiece. The other has a sapphire center. Both rings are

worth 2500 gold pieces. He carries a **potion of diminution** and a **potion of levitation**.

In any encounter with a patrol the fighters will rush in to melee while the magic user stands back and fires spells. Should things go badly the magic user may jump out of one of the nearby windows with feather fall to escape. He will then let the Grand Master know of the danger. Or the magic user may use **dimension door** to escape if possible.

KEY TO the SKULL FORTRESS

The fortress rises nearly two hundred feet in the air. It is an intimidating place. The entire structure has been carved out of rock. Stone giants and dwarves were hired to build this structure by the Grandmaster long ago. Those builders were quietly killed to prevent disclosure of any of it's secrets.

At the base of the fortress there are several "teeth" which prevent access to the lower level. Should the guards watching the entry decide to allow access to the fortress they will raise the tooth door at area 1.

Inside of the fortress every room is lit by torches in sconces in the walls. During daylight hours torches may not be needed as there are large open spaces where the eyes and nose of the skull would be.

1. Entrance

A single tooth can be raised here by the guards at area 3. These teeth are made of solid stone and cannot be forced open. They could be bypassed by magical means, however, such as passwall.

Just inside of this entrance is a tall, and very narrow, spiral staircase leading to area 3.

A stable is kept here for horses used by the guild. At any time there will be 3-30 light horses in these stables. The stable keeper is a Giant Two Headed Troll named Skur. Skur does not eat the horses because he greatly fears the Grandmaster. As a troll he can regenerate. This means he can be tortured to death and then have to suffer it all over again.

Skur, Giant Two Headed Troll: MV 12; AC 4; HD 10; HP 68; # AT 4; Dmg 1-6/1-6/1-10/1-10; SD regenerates 1 hit point per round; SD only surprised on a 1; AI CE; FF page 90.

Skur has a few hidden treasures in the hay which include: a small emerald worth 1000 gold pieces, a **potion of extra healing** and a scroll with three spells: **dig, stone shape, move earth**.

Also inside of this area is a stair case leading up to area 2. These stairs are trapped. Anyone who attempts to walk up these stairs without first turning the sconce closest to the stairs clockwise will find that the stairs drop away into a deep pit of spikes which are poisoned. The drop is 50 feet. This will do 5D6 damage from just the fall. The spikes below will do another 2D6 damage.

Someone making this fall will also be poisoned by the spikes (Type D insinuating).

The fall into the pit can be avoided by rolling 4D6. A roll equal to or less than dexterity results in avoidance.

2. Left Eye Hole

Two guards are posted here typically. There is a 50% chance that they will be watching through the eye hole for approaching strangers. A stair case leads downward from here to area 1. Two stair cases lead upward to area 5. A gap between this area and areas 3 and 6 allow the guards to fire down at anyone forcing their way into the fortress from area 1. A walkway leads from here to area 3. The guards have 50% cover against anyone firing at them from outside the fortress (at ground level). This provides a +4 bonus to armor class.

Fighters (2): F10: AC 0/-4; HP 65 each; each carries **plate mail +1, shield +1, long sword +1; long bow +1, 12 arrows +1**; each attacks 3 times every two rounds; AL NE.

This area has a large gong to sound the alarm. The guards will use this at the first opportunity.

3. Nose Hole

The nose hole guards the area directly over the entrance doorway. A pulley system here allows for the door at area 1 to be lifted to allow passage into the fortress. This area is protected by merlons giving the guards standing watch here 75% cover from anyone firing from outside (at ground level). This provides a +7 bonus to armor class.

This area also has a gap which will allow the guards to fire down into area 1 if needed.

Fighters (2): F10: AC 0/-7; HP 65 each; each carries **plate mail +1, shield +1, long sword +1; long bow +1, 12 arrows +1**; each attacks 3 times every two rounds; AL NE.

Illusionist: I11: AC ; HP 27; wears **bracers of defense AC 4**; DEX 18; carries a **wand of illusion with 11 charges** and a **dagger +2/+3 versus lawful creatures**; AL NE; has the following spells memorized (and in the traveling spell book in area 5: **color spray, hypnotism, gaze reflection, detect invisibility, hypnotism, blur, mirror image, improved phantasmal force, misdirection, fear, suggestion, spectral force, confusion, phantasmal killer, minor creation, shadow magic, chaos**. He wears a necklace around his neck with three black opals hanging from it. This is worth 9500 gold pieces. He also carries a scroll with three spells: **veil, summon shadow, astral spell**.

This area has a large gong to sound the alarm. The guards will use this at the first opportunity.

4. Statue of the Grandmaster

In the space between the two stair cases is a large metal statue of a finely dressed man with a scar

across his face. This statue represents Azurious the Grandmaster of Assassins. Azurious has held this dubious title longer than any assassin in memory. Such men are often killed by others who wish to possess the same title. Thus, their lives, tend to be short. This teleporting fortress is the reason for his longevity. A plate at the base of the statue indicates that this is Azurious the greatest assassin of them all.

The statue is actually an Iron Golem but it will only activate in specific circumstances:

- If the Grandmaster is threatened.
- If the alarm has been raised
- If the golem itself is attacked or threatened (any kind of harmful spell)

Iron Golem (1): MV 6; AC 3; HD 18; HP 80; #AT1; Dmg 4-40; SA breathes poison gas every 7 melee rounds; SD struck only by magical weapons of +3 or greater; SD lightning slows the creature for 3 rounds; SD fire heals the golem 1 hit point per hit point of damage inflicted; SD immune to other spells; AL N; MM page 48.

5. Barracks

This is the place where guards and members of the guild sleep. There are bunk beds along the walls and in the center of this room. Stairs lead downward to area 2. One of the bunk beds has a spell book hidden inside of the mattress. This is the traveling spell book of the illusionist. Another spell book is hidden under a tile in the floor which has a bunk bed over it. This is the spell book of the magic user who roams with the guard patrol.

At any time there will be 3-12 guards here. At least 50% of these guards will be asleep at any time. The others will be eating, playing cards or doing other mundane chores. There is a 25% chance that the magic user who patrols with the guards will also be present here. There is also a 25% chance that the hell hounds will also be present. At any time there will also be 2-8 members of the guild here. Select these from the roster at the end of the module.

A weapons rack stands in the center of the room. This rack has a number of weapons that the guards can use if the fortress is under attack. These weapons include:

Two handed sword +2/+5 versus golems

Spear +3/+4 versus dragons

Long bow +2 Elf Slayer (double damage against elves)

Crossbow of speed

Battle axe +2/+4 versus giant classed creatures

A flail of disruption (same properties as the mace of disruption)

In addition to these magical weapons there are several non-magical ones. There is no way to tell which ones are magical and which are not. The guards and guild members know and will use them. The non-magical ones include:

Military fork
Javelin
Mace
Flail
Several spears
Two halberds

Each bunk bed has the weapons and armor of the occupant nearby. Each bunk also has a locked chest at the end of it. There is a 50% chance of each chest being trapped (12 bunk beds and 12 chests). Each chest has 100-1000 gold pieces (50%), 20-200 platinum pieces (25% chance), 100-1000 electrum pieces (75%). If it has no coins at all then it will contain 1-3 misc magic items. For any chest which is trapped use the following table:

1. Poison needle
2. Poison darts
3. Glyph of warding (cast by level 10 magic user)
4. Poison gas

6. Stairway Up

A staircase leads up to area 7. This staircase is trapped in a manner similar to that at area 2. If the torch sconce is turned clockwise the stairs will stay locked in place. If the trap is not disarmed, however, the trap will be triggered. The stairs will flatten creating a slide once weight of more than one hundred pounds steps onto the middle stair. Oil will spray out from hidden vents in the walls to create a very slippery ramp leading back towards the gaping hole between area 6 and area 2. This will result in a fall of 30 feet to area 1. The oil will also be set aflame. The fall causes 3D6. The flaming oil will cause another 2D6 in the first round and 1D6 in the second.

The fall can be avoided by rolling 4D6. A roll equal to or less than dexterity results in avoidance.

7. Training Area

Members of the guild train here day and night to hone their skills. There will always be 2-8 members of the guild here. Select these from the roster at the end of the module. Targets are set up in various corners of the room. Darts are thrown. Arrows are shot. Crossbow bolts are fired. And other weapons are tested. Bloodstains on the floor here demonstrate that training here is not always painless.

If the alarm has been raised the assassins here will be hiding in shadows to protect their master and will spring an ambush.

There are barrels of arrows and crossbow bolts for the members to use. Hanging on the walls are long bows and crossbows. Most of these weapons are normal but a few are special:

Crossbow of distance

Longbow +2 Elvish (see end of module)

Also hanging on the walls are some other special weapons. These include:

Garrote of assassination
Claws of murder

Close inspection of the barrels may reveal that some of the arrows and bolts are also magical. These include:

15 arrows +1
4 arrows +2
11 bolts +2
1 bolt of explosion
1 arrow of slaying (bards)

This area is connected with area 8 and the guards in that area will come join any combat that begins in this area.

A spiral staircase leads upward from here to areas 9 and 10.

8. Right Eye hole

Two guards are posted here typically. There is a 50% chance that they will be watching through the eye hole for approaching strangers. The guards have 50% cover against anyone firing at them from outside the fortress (at ground level). This provides a +4 bonus to armor class.

Fighters (2): F10: AC 0/-4; HP 65 each; each carries **plate mail +1, shield +1, long sword +1; long bow +1, 12 arrows +1**; each attacks 3 times every two rounds; AL NE.

This area has a large gong to sound the alarm. The guards will use this at the first opportunity.

9. The Throne of Skulls

A strange and terrifying sight lies in the north end of this room. A sinister looking throne is in that corner. It has human skulls set into the armrests. There are carved skulls in the headrest and foot rest. Carved into the wall behind the throne is a red circular emblem with skulls carved in several places along the circle. This circle seems to pulse with a life force of it's own. Four large treasure chests are in the corners of the room.

Sitting upon this throne is a man in black leather armor. He has several scars upon his face. This is

Azurious the Grand Master of Assassins. He looks very much like his statue at area 4. To his right is his closest adviser Edobus. This man wears black robes and has a tall black pointed hat. To his left is Terrence Whispers, his second in command, in the guild. This throne is an artifact

known as the **Throne of Skulls**.

Two guards stand on either side of him.

Fighters (4): F10: AC 0; HP 65 each; each carries **plate mail +1, shield +1; long sword +2**; each attacks 3 times every two rounds; AL NE. Each of these fighters wears a helm which is gilded with gold and has a symbol of the guild upon it. These helms are worth 2000 gold pieces each but are not magical.

Terrence Whispers: A13: AC 0; HP 54; **leather armor +2; shield +2; long sword +2** (coated with insinuating poison type C); **crossbow of accuracy +3; 10 bolts +2**; DEX 18; AL CE. He wears golden arm bands with jade centerpieces worth 2500 gold pieces each. He has a jeweled dagger at his side (black opal pommel) worth 6500 gold pieces. He has a **potion of climbing** and a **potion of speed**.

Edobus the Dark: MU16: AC 0; HP 37; **robe of the archmagi; ring of protection +2; staff of the magi** (22 charges); AL NE; DEX 17. Spells memorized (and in his traveling spell book which is hidden within this room): **Magic missile, shield, spider climb, feather fall, burning hands, mirror image, web, strength, invisibility, detect invisibility, fireball, lightning bolt, fly, dispel magic, protection from good 10' radius, dimension door, fear, confusion, wall of fire, polymorph other, teleport, cone of cold, conjure elemental, passwall, feeblemind, death spell, disintegrate, globe of invulnerability, delayed blast fireball, power word stun, bigby's clenched fist**. He has +1 to all saving throws and a 5% resistance to magic while wearing the robe. His traveling spellbook is invisible and hidden on the underside of the spiral stairs leading up from this room. He wears a golden necklace with rubies and sapphires worth 7500 gold pieces. He also wears two rings made of silver studded with blue diamonds worth 5000 gold pieces each.

He carries a **potion of fire resistance** and an **oil of etherealness**.

Azurious, Grandmaster of Assassins, A15: AC -3/-6; HP ;S17 I16 W12 D18 C16 CH10; **leather armor +2; shield +3; ring of protection +2; long sword +4** (coated with type C insinuating poison); **ring of homicide, long bow +3, 10 arrows +3, 2 arrows of slaying** (paladin, cleric); AL CE. See also the Throne of Skulls for additional powers. He wears a platinum chain around his neck which has a gold and ruby studded medallion with the symbol of the assassin's guild worth 12500 gold pieces. He has a ring with the seal of his office made of platinum and studded with diamonds worth 11000 gold pieces. He also carries a **potion of storm giant strength** and a **potion of flying**. If things go badly here he will take the potion of flying and flee up to area 10 to escape.

Jordan Donral (body double of the Grandmaster), F3: AC7; HP 27; leather armor, shield, long sword; he wears fake jewelry and imitation clothing to make himself appear as the grandmaster; AL NE.

TACTICS: If the alarm has been sounded then Jordan will be in the room standing near the throne. Azurious and Terrence will be hiding in the shadows. They will ambush when the

opportunity presents itself.

Treasure Chest #1: trapped with a poison needle (Type D insinuating): contains 10000 gold pieces and 5000 platinum pieces. This chest has a secret compartment in the lid. Inside of this compartment is a scroll with magic user spells: **wish, astral spell, symbol**.

Treasure Chest #2: trapped with poison darts (Type D insinuating): contains 10 emeralds (5000 gp base), 2 fire opals (10000 gp base), 4 diamonds (5000 gp base), 1 blue diamond (10000 gp base), 5 sapphires (5000 gp base), 1 black sapphire (12500 gp base), 7 rubies (5000 gp base). Each gem is carefully wrapped in a fine piece of silk.

Treasure Chest #3: trapped with poison gas (save versus magic or take 1D6 damage per round for 2-5 rounds): a sable cape (4500 gp), a mink coat (5400 gp), a mink cape (2700 gp), an ermine jacket (3600 gp). This chest has a false bottom (secret door check). Inside of the false compartment are three scrolls. Scroll one has illusionist spells: **prismatic spray, alter reality, true sight**. Scroll two has druid spells: **control weather, conjure fire elemental, turn wood, control winds, animate rock**. Scroll three has clerical spells: **resurrection, gate, part water, stone tell**.

Treasure Chest #4: trapped to spray acid in the face of the person opening it (2d6 corrosive damage): five ivory figurines (worth 500 gp each), ten jars of rare spices (100 gp each), ten bolts of the finest silk (100 gp each), six jars of the finest perfume (250 gp each), a golden necklace with opals (1250 gp), a platinum ring with a ruby center (2500 gp), a golden crown with rubies and emeralds (25000 gp) and a silver tiara with amber and amethysts (1500 gp).

10. Observation Deck

Three fighters and two magic users man this deck to prevent assault from flying creatures and to protect the Grand Master's escape route. Spiral stairs lead downward from here to areas 9 and 7. A barrel of 200 normal arrows is kept here in case the guards run out of magical ones.

This platform provides 50% cover from anyone at ground level.

Fighters (3): F10; AC 0/-4; HP 65 each; each carries **plate mail +1, shield +1, long sword +1; long bow +1, 12 arrows +2**; each attacks 3 times every two rounds; AL NE.

Magic User: MU10; AC 4; HP 22; **bracers of defense AC 4; wand of magic missiles** (28 charges). AL NE. He wears a golden twisted armband with a fire opal in the center of it worth 5000 gold pieces. He carries a scroll with 3 spells: **teleport, telekinesis, polymorph any object**. He has the following spells memorized (and in his spell book which is hidden nearby): **magic missile, hold portal, spider climb, charm person, mirror image, pyrotechnics, levitate, detect invisibility, fireball, lightning bolt, haste, charm monster, wizard eye, hold monster, feeblemind**. If things go badly he will cast **spider climb** and climb down the side of the skull to escape.

Magic User: MU10: AC 4; HP 28; **bracers of defense AC 4; wand of lighting** (18 charges). AL CE. He has a wand made of bone which has a ruby tip. It is not magical but is worth 1500 gold pieces. He has a jeweled dagger (made of gold and with silver etching and a sunstone pommel) worth 1250 gold pieces. He has a **potion of gaseous form** and a scroll with 2 spells: **project image, vanish**. He has the following spells memorized (and in his spell book which is hidden nearby): **Protection from good, magic missile, shield, feather fall, mirror image, rope trick, shatter, strength, lightning bolt, flame arrow, slow, confusion, ice storm, distance distortion, cone of cold**. If things go badly he will use his **feather fall** and jump off of the skull to the ground below to escape.

Both spell books are hidden on the base of the skull itself. Both books are invisible and are merely traveling spell books.

This area has a large gong to sound the alarm. The guards will use this at the first opportunity.

members of The ASSASSIN GUILD

Azurious, Grandmaster of Assassins, A15: AC -3/-6; HP ;S17 I16 W12 D18 C16 CH10; **leather armor +2; shield +3; ring of protection +2; long sword +4** (coated with type C insinulative poison); **ring of homicide, long bow +3, 10 arrows +3, 2 arrows of slaying** (paladin, cleric); AL CE. See also the Throne of Skulls for additional powers. He wears a platinum chain around his neck which has a gold and ruby studded medallion with the symbol of the assassin's guild worth 12500 gold pieces. He has a ring with the seal of his office made of platinum and studded with diamonds worth 11000 gold pieces. He also carries a **potion of storm giant strength** and a **potion of flying**.

Terrence Whispers: A13: AC -1; HP 54; **leather armor +2; shield +2; long sword +2** (coated with insinulative poison type C); **crossbow of accuracy +3; 10 bolts +2; S16 I13 W12 D18 C15 CH11; AL CE**. He wears golden arm bands with jade centerpieces worth 2500 gold pieces each. He has a jeweled dagger at his side (black opal pommel) worth 6500 gold pieces. He has a **potion of climbing** and a **potion of speed**.

Pete "Boots" Mulligan: A11: AC 0; ;HP 49; S15 I13 W10 D18 C16 CH8; **leather armor +1; shield +2; short sword +2/+3 versus good aligned creatures; AL NE**. His nickname is "boots" because he once murdered a man for a pair of them. He wears two golden ankle bands with small bloodstones worth 500 gold pieces each. He carries a **potion of invisibility**.

Adriane "Needles" Jones: A10: AC 2; HP 22; S12 I13 W10 D17 C11 CH7; **leather armor +1; shield +1; short sword +1/+4 versus magic using and enchanted creatures** (coated with type C insinulative poison); AL CE. "Needles" has a fondness for setting traps. She particularly loves traps involving poison needles. She always has at least two doses of Type C Insinulative poison with her. She wears a golden locket worth 250 gold pieces and three diamond rings worth 1500

gold pieces each. She has a **light crossbow +1/+3 versus flying creatures**.

Johnny “the Whip” Jameson: A8: AC 2; HP 29; S18 I12 W10 D17 C14 CH8; **leather armor +1; shield +1**; leather whip (does 1-4 damage) coated with type A insinulative poison; **dagger +2/+3 versus manticores**; AL NE. He wears a single golden earring with a blue sapphire in it worth 1750 gold pieces.

Gruul “Slash” Vagrungad, Half Orc: A8: AC 4; HP 43; S18 I12 W9 D16 C16 CH7; **leather armor +2; two handed sword +2/+4 versus elves; javelin of piercing**; AL NE.

Johnny Morgan: A6: AC 3; HP 17 ; S14 I12 W9 D17 C13 CH14; **leather armor +1**; shield; long sword (coated with type A insinulative poison); AL NE.

Norafrock “Tiny” Stormborn, Dwarf: A5: AC 2; HP 16; S12 I11 W10 D18 C10 CH10; leather armor; **shield +1; short sword +1; short bow +1**; 12 arrows; AL CE

Cledbana “Blades” Gakmath, Gnome: A4: AC 4; HP 18; S16 I11 W10 D18 C10 CH8; she carries a **short sword +1** and a **dagger +1**; leather armor; she likes to duel wield (even at a penalty of -2 to hit with the primary and -4 to hit with the secondary); AL NE.

Rhys Clarke: A2 : AC 5; HP 5; S12 I12 W14 D16 C11 CH10; leather armor and shield; long sword; long bow; 12 arrows; AL NE.

Theo Cooke: A2: AC 6; HP 10; S15 I11 W11 D15 C15 CH11; leather armor and shield; short sword; light crossbow; 20 bolts; AL CE.

Vestele “Ears” Iannorin, Elf: A2: AC 6; HP 7; S13 I11 W9 D15 C10 CH15; leather armor and shield; dagger; long bow; **6 arrows +1**; AL NE. She wears an elven necklace made of gold worth 250 gold pieces.

Ehrendil “the pits” Reypetor, Half Elf: A1: AC 7; HP 5; S12 I11 W8 D16 C13 CH11; leather armor; shield; short sword; shovel; 20 metal spikes; two doses type B insinulative poison; AL CE. He likes to make pit traps everywhere he goes. Poisoned spikes are a specialty.

Stella Burns: A1: AC ; HP 3; S13 I11 W16 D14 C13 CH8; leather armor; shield; short sword; 5 darts coated in type A insinulative poison; AL CE.

Elliot Gordon: A1: AC 5; HP 4; S14 I11 W9 D16 C15 CH 9; leather armor; shield; long sword; heavy crossbow; 20 bolts; AL NE.

new magic items

The assassins have a variety of weapons at their disposal. Several magical devices and weapons are presented here which are especially useful to assassins. Some are usable by thieves and fighters as well.

Arrow of Explosion

Upon impact this arrow does no piercing damage to its target. Instead the arrow will explode doing 6D6 damage to the target and to anyone in a 10 foot radius of the target. Those in the 10 foot radius are allowed a saving throw versus dragon's breath to take one half damage from the explosion. The target will always take full damage from the explosion.

Claws of Murder

In the orient the master assassins are members of the group known as Ninjas. Ninjas are often known for their use of claws like these to aid their climbing. Use of this set adds a +5% to the climb walls of any assassin (or thief) choosing to use them. But they are also a very effective weapon for assassination (+1% to an attempt) and in melee (+2 weapon/2-8 damage against small or large opponents).

Garrote of Assassination

This consists of a pair of handles and a razor thin wire between them. When used by an assassin this weapon is capable of efficient silent killing. When used in an assassination attempt the assassin receives a bonus of 2% to their roll. The weapon is not particularly effective for melee combat.

Long Bow +2, Elvish

This bow is made by gray elves and it a powerful weapon in the hands of an elf or half elf. An elf using this bow will find it acts as a +4 weapon. In the hands of a half elf it acts as a +3 weapon. In the hands of any other race it acts only as a +2 weapon.

Ring of Homicide (A)

This assassin only ring provides the wearer with certain bonuses to essential skills of this class. The wearer of this ring can instantly identify any poison by sight with a 75% chance of success. The wearer gains an additional +2% to assassination attempts. The wearer of this ring will gain a +1 bonus to all damage rolls from backstabs.

Throne of Skulls

The throne of skulls is a powerful and evil artifact. Any paladin who lays eyes upon this evil relic will immediately feel compelled to destroy it by any means possible. It is said that this sinister device was created by the demon prince Orcus long ago to cause chaos among men. Anyone who

sits upon this throne for long becomes chaotic evil over time.

According to legend this device makes the person in possession of it nearly invincible. It was thought lost long ago in some ancient war between the gods and demons but scholars and sages disagree. Some feel that it has come into the possession of some man. Or perhaps some man has come into possession of the throne. For it is also said that this throne quickly takes control of anyone who uses it.

Minor Benign Powers

Clairvoyance and Clairaudience when sat upon

Major Benign Powers

Gains a +3 bonus to armor class when throne is sat upon or user stands within 10 feet of the throne (after bonding with the throne)

Minor Malevolent Effects

The touch of the user is poisonous (equivalent to type b insinuation)

Saving throws versus poison are made at -2

Major Malevolent Effects

Use of the prime power of the throne costs the person 50000 gold pieces worth of treasure or magic items. Each time the prime power is used the person must make a system shock roll or die.

Prime Powers

Time stop once a week.

Side Effects

For every day that a person sits upon the throne there is a 1% chance (cumulative) that the user will "bond" with the relic. Bonding means that the user becomes part of the throne and throne becomes part of the user. If the throne is destroyed the bonded user will die immediately. This is not particularly a concern as destruction of the throne is exceedingly difficult. Once a person has bonded with the throne that person will adopt the alignment of it which is chaotic evil. They will also begin to feel compelled to do things that the throne feels is necessary for its safety. Killing former companions might seem perfectly natural to the throne if they are of the "wrong" alignments.

Any creature who is not inherently appalled by its evil nature (any lawful good or paladin) will feel intense envy of the possessor of it. They must make a saving throw versus magic or feel

compelled to attack the person sitting upon it to take it for themselves. Known associates of the person sitting upon the throne have a +5 bonus to this saving throw.

The throne has the power to teleport the entire structure that it resides in once every four days. The throne is now fused with the skull fortress and cannot be moved.

Destruction of the Throne of Skulls

Destruction of the chest is possible but not easy. Only certain forms of attack will damage the throne. The throne has 250 hit points and an armor class of 10. But the only attacks which will damage it are:

- A paladin laying hands will do 2 hit points damage per level of the paladin
- Holy water will do 2-8 damage to it
- Dispel evil will do 50 points of damage to it
- Holy word will do 50 points of damage to it
- A holy avenger sword wielded by a paladin will do one hit point of damage per strike
- A bless spell will do one hit point of damage to it

If the throne is destroyed by using one or more of these methods then it will explode with an effect of 6D6 damage to each person in a 25 foot radius and there is a 25% chance that each person in that area of effect will be sent randomly to another plane of existence.

The chest cannot be removed. It has fused with the skull fortress itself and will not allow itself to be moved.

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