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DUNGEON DWELLERS

REAPER MINIATURES PRESENTS

# THE VANISHING BLACKGUARD

A REAPER DUNGEON DWELLERS ADVENTURE

for 4-6 characters of levels 3 – 5

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Author's Dedication:

To my darling wife Rose, my soulmate, my lobster, my traveling companion, my Rosy Cotton, and so much more. You get me like nobody else ever has.

This adventure uses the Castles & Crusades Siege Engine, published by Troll Lord Games, Inc. For more information on Castles & Crusades, please visit [www.trolllord.com](http://www.trolllord.com)



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Welcome to the first of many adventures, en-route encounters, and locales supporting **Reaper Dungeon Dwellers**. Each of these publications features a character or creature from the **Reaper Dungeon Dwellers** range and is set in the World of Adon, Reaper Miniatures' fantasy campaign setting.

A note about game systems: although this adventure was written using Troll Lord Games' excellent *Castles & Crusades Roleplaying Game*, the content is easily adaptable to any RPG of your choice.

*The Vanishing Blackguard* takes place in the city of Barrowgate in the Duchy of Vestonia in western Adon. Barrowgate straddles the Steed River and is surrounded by rolling plains to the west, the Westbarrow Hills to the east, and the Skyreach Peaks to the south. Founded centuries ago as a trademoot for humans, dwarves, and elves, the city and its residents have prospered. Barrowgate is a beacon of safety, a fastness of stone on the borderland of civilization. Gamemasters are free to relocate the adventure to another corner of Adon or to any campaign setting of their choosing. Gamemasters are likewise free to tinker to fit this adventure into their saga.

This content is for Gamemaster eyes only. Players reading beyond this point will only spoil the surprises and ruin everybody's fun. Don't be that player lest kobolds devour your eyes!

## THE SETUP

Torrential rainstorms have eroded the foundation of a wealthy merchant's home in the prosperous Garden District of Barrowgate. As interior walls sagged and plaster cracked, the manseowners hired engineers to explore the foundation and to make hasty repairs. But in doing so the engineers uncovered a concealed sub-basement and a passageway blocked by a massive slab of granite. After lifting the slab, the engineers were confronted with a flight of steps zigzagging deep into the earth. The engineers and several house servants descended the steps, but their screams and cries for aid were heard minutes later before going silent.

The following morning, the PCs are contacted and convinced to investigate.

## GM'S BACKGROUND

The merchant's manse was constructed on the foundation of what was once the home of a wizard by the name of Halvin Nox who, prior to disappearing some 10 years ago, was well on his way to becoming an ill-tempered recluse.

Nox was a member of a modestly successful and well-respected adventuring company calling themselves the Storm Roarers. The hearty band ranged across Vestonia pursuing their fortunes into the nearby nations. They slew the infamous hydra Thraddbaxx in the Rustling Forest of Breonne, and returned the long lost Crown of Hindl to Thibr Grayhelm, fourth cousin to Doorn Grundrumbler of the Skyreach Peaks.

The Storm Roarers earned fame and fortune, but after decades on the road Nox retired to Barrowgate. He was joined by several other Storm Roarers, but one by one he watched them fade and die. Eventually only Nox and the

aging warrior Sir Eddar Rictus remained. But while Nox was content to quietly conduct his research in his stone tower, Sir Rictus whiled away his days in taverns and taprooms, bragging to anyone who would listen about past glories...usually at Nox's expense. The warrior's stories were embellished in such a way as to make Nox look weak and incompetent with Sir Rictus bravely sweeping in to save the floundering wizard. Nox would often take his dinners in a quiet corner of the Green Griffin Inn, but his meals were frequently interrupted by a drunken Sir Rictus' boasting and cruel jabs.

Nox and Rictus never liked each other. The two had often quarreled, and at one time even pursued the same paramour, a Breonnesse beauty by the name of Avette. Sir Rictus, being the more persuasive and savvy, wooed Avette but discarded her when the jilted Nox retreated and no longer showed interest.

After enduring this treatment for years, Nox had had enough. Nox was getting older and his health was failing (due in part to a chronic case of Tomb Rot contracted while exploring the Besiac Wastes). The wizard was unscrupulous but he was far from a conniving servant of Evil. It was true that Nox engaged in questionable research and his magics took him down many a dark path, but Nox lacked ambition and had no interest in world conquest. With few options to him, Nox decided to extend his life by becoming a lich. He began researching the ritual for lichdom, but he required a suitable tomb to attain immortality. He reanimated a small army of undead to excavate the small cave system beneath his home. When skilled labor was required, he magically charmed dwarven stonemasons and engineers to do his bidding.

Nox gathered the necessary necromantic materials and made preparations to ascend to lichdom as his tomb neared completion. Eventually Sir Rictus caught wind of the strange goings on and the warrior took it upon himself to investigate. Nox needed a guardian for his new underground crypt, so he set into motion a final, spiteful, act of revenge against his former colleague. The wizard left a series of ghastly clues luring Sir Rictus deep beneath his tower and into his tomb. As Nox waited within, Sir Rictus dramatically barged into the crypt only to find himself trapped in a magical circle. Nox took great pleasure in ripping the life from the sputtering knight, binding him body and soul to serve as the tomb's new guardian.

With everything in place, Nox enacted the dark ritual intended to transform himself into an undying lich...and failed utterly. As Nox's body died, writhing and convulsing in agony inside his carefully prepared sarcophagus, he wondered, "Was it the essence of vampire or powdered werewolf bone in the potion that was off?"

As Sir Rictus was transported from the magic circle and began his endless patrol of the tomb, Nox's soul was whisked to some hellpit in the Lower Planes by his imp familiar Bazlabrehaxx. The imp's glee was short-lived, as his reward for delivering Nox's soul never came. The imp was immediately summoned and trapped by Nox's magics.

Nearly a decade later, after the rainstorms uncovered the hidden underground entrance to the tomb, the merchant's servants descended the stairs.



After seeing the skeletons scattered around the Entry, the servants took the one-way door to the north but they alerted Sir Rictus in **Area 4: Chapel** (where he kneels when not massacring interlopers). The Barrow Warden made short work of the trespassers. Two of the defenders managed to flee up the steps back to the one-way door, but failed to open it and were gruesomely dispatched by Sir Rictus.

Nox's corpse lies in his sarcophagus in **Area 14: Nox's Crypt** surrounded by his remaining fortune. Sir Rictus, now a mute Barrow Warden, patrols the tomb and ruthlessly dispatches any trespassers. One of the keys to Nox's crypt (the Diamond Key), which doubled as his lich phylactery, now hangs inside Rictus' ribcage. As part of the magic of the tomb, Sir Rictus is teleported away to a random location inside the tomb when he is vanquished. The teleportation invigorates Rictus' remains and he arrives healed, ensuring any trespassers will be forced to fight Sir Rictus many times and defeat him before they manage to retrieve the Diamond Key. See **Appendix One: Sir Rictus** for more details on Sir Rictus and the Diamond Key.

### INVOLVING THE PLAYER CHARACTERS

Gamemasters are free to employ any methods to convince the PCs to undertake this mission. The most obvious is the PCs need the money, and they're offered a generous sum in exchange for exploring the tomb. As long as they eliminate the threat to the public the PCs are free to keep whatever they may find.

Alternatively, one of the PCs is the manseowners' blood-relative. In exchange for leading the expedition the PC receives monies and a generous mention in the relative's last will and testament. Again, what the PCs find is theirs to keep.

Or, the PCs could be in gaol for starting a brawl at the local tavern, the Green Griffon Inn and are pressed into service by Bailiff Erib Hoskob. By undertaking the mission the PCs will be freed and their role in the brawl at the Green Griffin will be overlooked. Chances are the PCs will be allowed to keep what they recover from the tomb.

### GETTING IN

Nox's Tomb is accessible by way of a sub-basement and narrow staircase 40 feet below the house foundation. The steps dead end before a small vestibule 10 feet on a side, which was blocked by a massive stone slab. The slab has been lifted by block and tackle and supported by straining wooden beams. Beyond the slab, stone steps descend another fifty odd feet to **Area 1: Entry**.

### GENERAL DETAILS OF NOX'S TOMB

- Doors open from corridors into chambers unless otherwise noted.
- Most doors are thick wooden planks affixed with riveted iron bands. All have iron hinges and latches but only locked doors have keyholes.
- Secret doors in rooms are cleverly hidden. Within corridors (such as the secret doors leading to **Area 3: Ruined Workshop**) the mechanism is a simple hanging rope attached to an iron hoop. Pulling the hoop downwards releases the secret door.
- Corridor ceilings are 10 feet high and arched; chamber ceilings are 15 feet high and gently curve inwards. Unless otherwise noted, corridor and chamber walls are uniform stonework lacking carvings, bas relief, etc.
- Narrow corridors from secret doors are just over 7 feet high, again curving inwards.
- Interior walls are approximately 1 ft. thick native granite covered in mortared stonework.
- Staircases are all solid stone throughout unless otherwise noted.
- Air quality is surprisingly good. Cool humid air is drawn in by the underground river in **Area 12: Grotto**.
- Concealed vents in walls and ceilings draw smoke, odors, and gasses away as if a very faint breeze were blowing.
- A thin layer of fine dust covers most surfaces.
- Mundane vermin such as spiders, rats, and other destructive but harmless under-fauna are uncommon throughout the tomb due to Nox's warding enchantments.
- No plants or plant parts such as roots of any kind are found in the tomb therefore spells such as **entangle** automatically fail.
- The tomb has an unsettling and unnatural aura making undead resistant to turning (-1 to turn checks).
- The magics reanimating Sir Rictus prevents him from ascending the steps and leaving Nox's Tomb. If forcibly removed, he will make every effort to return.
- Vandalism or loud noises attract Sir Rictus (who is kneeling in **Area 4: Chapel** when the PCs enter). Sir Rictus is intimately familiar with the tomb layout and he will take the most direct route to the PCs' position at a brisk pace.
- Upon entering several of the rooms, Rictus is alerted by Nox's permanent **alarm** spells. He moves at normal pace to survey trespasser numbers and either picks off stragglers or sets simple but effective ambushes with lures of loot or suspicious noises.

### RANDOM PERIL

In addition to the many dangers awaiting discovery in the chambers of Nox's Tomb, explorers will face a variety of unscripted sights and sounds as well as perilous encounters with wandering monsters. Roll 1d20 every 6 turns (1 hour) of exploration or whenever there's a lull and the PCs need an inspirational goad. Consult the tables below, re-rolling as directed.

Table 1: Random Peril

d20 Roll	Peril
1 - 5	Nothing, re-roll 1d20 after 3 - 6 turns
6 - 10	Roll again on <b>Creepy Sounds</b> table
11 - 15	Roll again on <b>Ominous Visuals</b> table
16 - 20	Roll again on <b>Wandering Monster</b> table



**Table 2: Creepy Sounds**  
(around corners or outside of light sources)

d20 Roll	Peril
1 - 2	Dragging chains
3 - 4	Breathy whispers
5 - 6	Distant whimpers and sobs
7	Shrill cackle (equivalent to CL 2 <b>fear</b> spell)
8 - 9	Grinding stone
10 - 11	Creaking door
12	Dripping water
13	Slamming door
14 - 15	Low growl
16 - 17	Shriek (nearby glass, crystal, or similar materials affected as a <b>shatter</b> spell CL2)
18	Metal grinding on stone or metal
19	Breaking glass
20	Unsettling rumble (if rolled twice in a row there's a cave in. One random PC and anyone within 5 feet must make a Dexterity saving throw (CL 2) to avoid 2d6 damage from falling debris.

**Table 3: Ominous Visuals**

d20 Roll	Peril
1 - 2	Mist from wall or ceiling (equivalent to wall of fog)
3 - 5	Darting shadows
6 - 7	Murky lighting (equivalent to twilight)
8 - 9	Fleeing vermin
10 - 11	Spider feasting on cocooned prey
12 - 14	Creepy elongated shadows
15 - 16	Fat maggots on a vermin carcass
17 - 18	Crumbling stonework overhead
19 - 20	Swirl of dust and cobwebs

**Table 4: Wandering Monster**

d20 Roll	Monster Encountered
1 - 2	Bugbears*
3 - 5	2d4 Skeletons (wandering from Area 10)
6 - 7	2d4 Stirges
8	1d6 Ghouls
9 - 11	Spiders (Roll 1d6 and consult Table 5)
12 - 14	2d4 Troglodytes (wandering from Area 13)*
15 - 16	1d4 + 2 Zombies (Wandering from Area 5)
17	1d6 Shadows*
18	Wraith*
19 - 20	1d2 Ochre Jelly

\*Indicates a unique encounter; once defeated reroll.

**Table 5: Spiders**

d20 Roll	Spiders Encountered
1	1d4 small spiders, 1 medium spider
2 - 3	2d4 small spiders, 1 large spider
4 - 5	1d4 small spiders , 2 medium spiders, 1 large spider
6	1d3 medium spiders, 1d2 large spiders

**BUGBEARS\*** - A band of bugbear marauders led by Blathruq the One-Eared has wandered into the tomb by way of the underground river. These chaotic evil humanoids' vital stats are: HD 3d8, HP 16, 13, 11, 8, AC 15 or 16 with shield. Their primary attributes are physical. Blathruq attacks with a two-handed axe causing 1d12+2 hp; the others wield morning stars or battle axes causing 2d4+1 hp and 1d8+1 hp respectively. All but Blathruq carry small wooden shields. Their weapons are average to poor in quality, and their armor piecemeal and of little value to all but the desperate. They carry several sacks of goods plundered from tombs below the city including 49 gp, 94 sp, 77 sp, three gemstones - a moonstone and tiger eye worth 25 gp each and a cracked bloodstone worth 40 gp. Blathruq carries two expert crafted (+1 to hit) darts.

**STIRGES** - Several thirsts of these aerial pests have pursued vermin from the Grotto. These neutral magical beasts' vital stats are HD 1d6, HP 3, AC 16. Their primary attributes are physical. They attack with touch causing 1d3 hp + 1d4 hp blood drain per round. They possess the following abilities: Attach, Blood Drain, Fly 40 ft., Darkvision 60 ft., and Twilight Vision. They have no treasure.

**GHOULS** - These chaotic evil undeads' vital stats are HD 2d8, HP 8, AC 14. Their primary attributes are physical. They attack with 2 claws (1d3) and a bite (1d6). Any successful attack requires a successful Strength save (CL 2) to avoid paralysis lasting 1d4+1 minutes or **remove curse** or **remove paralysis**. Elves are immune to the paralysis. Ghouls possess Darkvision 60 ft. They have no treasure.

**SPIDERS, SMALL** - These vermin ignore Nox's wards and now set ambushes in search of vermin and larger prey. These neutral animals' vital stats are HD 1d4, HP 3, AC 14. Their primary attributes are physical. They attack with a bite causing 1d2 hp + Poison; they possess Poison, Web, and Twilight Vision. They have no treasure.

**SPIDERS, MEDIUM** - These vermin ignore Nox's wards and now set ambushes in search of vermin and larger prey. These neutral animals' vital stats are HD 3d8, HP 9, AC 15. They attack with a bite causing 1d6 hp + Poison; they possess Poison, Web, and Twilight Vision. They have no treasure.

**SPIDERS, LARGE** - These vermin ignore Nox's wards and now set ambushes in search of vermin and larger prey. These neutral animals' vital stats are HD 5d8, HP 15, AC 16. They attack with a bite causing 1d8 hp + Poison; they possess Poison, Web, and Twilight Vision. They have no treasure.



**SPIDERS, LARGE** - These vermin ignore Nox's wards and now set ambushes in search of vermin and larger prey. These neutral animals' vital stats are HD 5d8, HP 15, AC 16. They attack with a bite causing 1d8 hp + Poison; they possess Poison, Web, and Twilight Vision. They have no treasure.

**SHADOWS\*** - A pack of these vile undead skulk about, lurking in dark alcoves. These chaotic evil undeads' vital stats are HD 3d12, HP 18, AC 13. Their primary attributes are mental. They attack with a touch causing 1d4 hp. Shadows possesses the following abilities: Create Spawn, Strength Drain, Darkvision 60 ft., Incorporeal, Blend, Sunlight Vulnerability. The Shadows are incorporeal and have no treasure.

**WRAITH\*** - This spiteful mute chaotic evil creature's vital stats are HD 5d12, HP 29, AC 15, Its primary attributes are Mental. It attacks with a touch causing 1d6 hp + energy drain. It regains 5 hp per level drained. It possesses the following abilities: Energy Drain, Create Spawn, Incorporeal, Darkvision 60 ft., Unnatural Aura. The wraith is incorporeal and has no treasure.

**OCHRE JELLY** - This creature's vital stats are HD 6d10, HP 36, AC 4. Its primary attributes are physical. It attacks with acid causing 2d4 hp. It possesses the following abilities: Acid, Constrict, Split. It has no treasure.

## LOCATIONS IN THE TOMB

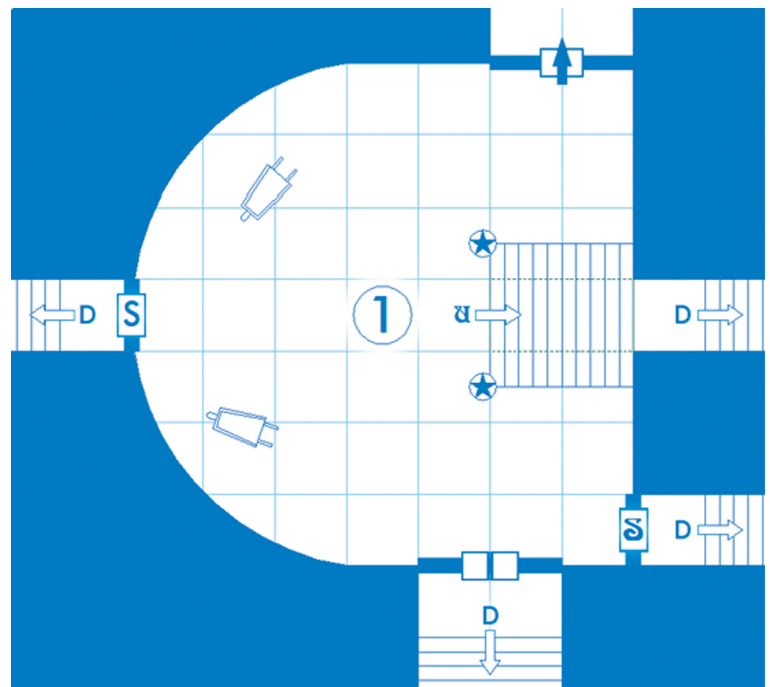
### AREA 1: ENTRY

You descend the wide, evenly cut steps into a gallery of sorts with a 20-foot high domed ceiling. Your footsteps echo ominously around the gloomy chamber. The far wall is covered with unfinished plasterwork. Nearby two wheelbarrows are heaped with hardened plaster. Troughs, tools, and piles of burlap sacks are scattered across the floor, as are the skeletons of what must have been laborers. Five skeletons are present; one is face down in one of the wheelbarrows, encased up to the shoulders in the dried plaster. The remains are wracked as if frozen in agony or look as though they died suddenly, their hands still gripping their tools. This is a tomb.

**NOTE!** Opening any of the doors (secret or otherwise) triggers one of Nox's permanent **alarm** spells alerting Sir Rictus in **Area 4: Chapel**. The Barrow Warden readies shield and sword, employing the secret door on the west wall to observe the PCs. After a few rounds, he gently opens the door and waits inside.

A large carpet is rolled up to the left of the door on the northern wall. It's musty and dusty but the rug is of Hakirian make with a rich umber and cerulean pattern worth 100 gp. The carpet is 15 ft. x 20 ft. and weighs 20 EV.

The five skeletons are harmless. If investigated there's one dwarf, three human, and one gnome skeleton all dressed in coarse stonemasons garb. These stonemasons were hired on the sly from a nearby town and charmed into Nox's service. On the night of the failed lichdom ritual, Nox had to act quickly. Rictus was soon to arrive and time was short so the wizard used his magic to



dispatch the workmen, planning to reanimate them at a later time. The dwarf skeleton has a few gold teeth worth 4 gp; one of the human skeletons has a fancy kerchief given to him by his sweetheart and has their initials in it AJ + BH. The families will reward do-gooders who return the kerchief and reveal the fate of the young man. The gnome skeleton has many belt pouches containing odds and ends including a hidden money belt containing 4 gp and 7 sp.

The piles of burlap sacks contain hardened plaster as do the troughs. The hoes, spades, and trowels are intended for plaster work but can be used as improvised weapons (-2 to hit causing d6-1 or d8-1 hp).

Fresh tracks in the dust - three adult humans and a dwarf - lead to and through the one-way door on the north wall. The door has a hole in it (from Rictus' murderous sword thrust) and a pool of dried blood under it. The corpse of a hapless teenage servant - a boy named Lusten - is slumped against the back of the door. Opening the door requires a Strength check (CL 1). Lusten's corpse still dressed in livery slumps into view. A shattered lantern lies nearby with an hour of oil remaining. A few feet away on the stairs another servant, a footman by the name of Drummy, lies on his back with a deep gash across his chest and surrounded by his severed fingers.

The steps are flanked by plinths capped with green and white marble statues of coiled wyverns in mid-flight. The statues are well crafted and detailed and worth 10 GP each. Beneath each statue is a bronze plaque with a keyhole set into its center. A high quality gemstone is embedded above each of the keyholes.

The northernmost stone is an amethyst (200 gp), and the southernmost a diamond (500 gp). Neither key is present, nor are they interchangeable; the northern key (the Amethyst Key) fits only in the northern lock, and the southern key (the Diamond Key) only fits in the southern lock. Picking the locks is sheer folly due to the mechanical and magical engineering (CL 30). Even a knock spell or similar magic won't defeat the locks. Tampering with the locks or jewels summons Sir Rictus.



The Amethyst Key was thrown down the gullet of the gibbering moulder in **Area 11: Oubliette** after Sir Rictus was reborn. The Diamond Key hangs inside Sir Rictus' ribcage. When both keys are turned, the area of the steps on the map slowly grinds open revealing a narrow flight of steps descending to **Area 14: Nox's Crypt**.

The secret door on the incomplete western wall is easily spotted (CL -1). Stepping on an irregular cobblestone and pushing against the spot on the wall opens the secret door.

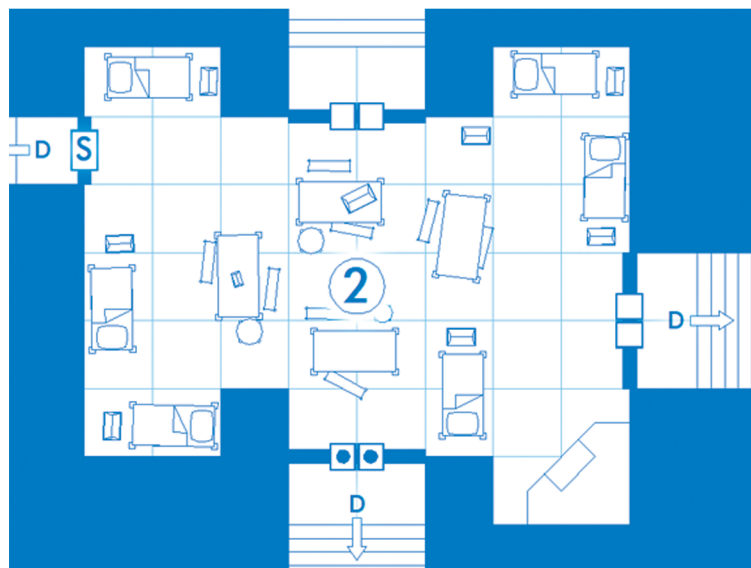
The secret door on the eastern wall is well hidden (CL 3). Those holding a torch or candle while searching notice the flame flickering from a breeze in **Area 9: Garden** receiving a +2 to their check. Pushing an irregular stone above the lintel causes the door to slide back and into the right-hand wall.

**TRIGGERED EVENT!!!** The downpour above has continued, and efforts to prevent water from entering the sub-basement fail suddenly and dramatically when the PCs decide to exit the tomb and return to the surface. Water gushes through the portal and down the steps and pooling onto the floor. Seconds later, the wooden beams shatter and the multi-ton slab crashes down, sealing Nox's Tomb. The slab cannot be moved from the tomb side of the door. The PCs are trapped and must find another exit.

## AREA 2: GUARDROOM

Racks of weapons, armor, and shields line the walls of this room, and banners hang in tattered glory from the raftered ceiling. The chamber reeks of sour grog, mildew, and decay. Men died here, and here they remain. A crude circle of tables stands in the middle of the room. The withered remains of fighting men, heads down and hands clutching flagons and weapons, are seated on wobbly stools and benches. With a sick cracking, one of the corpses jerks its head up leaving withered flesh stuck to the table. The undead warriors rise, sloughing skin and scalps as they push away from their seats and leap over the tables. A wave of nausea hits you.

These were mercenaries, charmed into obedience. With the outcome of Sir Rictus' arrival in question, Nox poisoned their drink then reanimated their remains tasking them to kill any trespassers. When the skeletons reanimate, their wasted flesh sticks to the tables and benches, hideously tearing and sloughing off in chunks as they rise. PCs must roll a Constitution save CL 2 or succumb to nausea (-1 to all attacks, saves, and attribute checks). Tables, benches and other furniture are tossed aside and smashed to flinders as the skeletons (AC 15 or 16 with shield; HD 1d12; HP 8 x 6; Attacks: longsword, spear, or longbow 1d8, battleaxe 1d10, greatsword 2d6; half damage from piercing or slashing attacks) rush the PCs. The archer possesses a quiver of five expert arrows (+1 to damage). Each of the skeletons possesses 2d6 sp in trinkets, good luck charms, and coins. The food on the table was typical mercenary fare: coarse buckwheat pancakes, fatty bean porridge, hard cheese,



dried fish, and salt-pork. Every morsel has long since rotted away and is inedible. The flagons and most of the bottles dried up years ago but two bottles of wine remain drinkable. All are of poor quality, and the sourness masks the bitterness of the poison that Nox placed in the bottles years ago. The Type 3 poison can be detected with a CL 4 Intelligence roll, and if ingested requires a CL4 Constitution save.

Rusty and long-neglected weapons, armor, and shields hang from dusty wall racks. The gamemaster is free to stock the racks with common weapons and protections. PCs with an eye for quality find several expert items among the mundane including a human-sized suit of ringmail, medium wooden shield, and an expert billhook (+1 to hit).

An elaborate rams horn with silver fittings and mouthpiece rests on a table beside a great withered wheel of cheese. The horn has excellent tone and is worth 20 gp and weighs 2 EV. Blowing the horn summons Sir Rictus.

Simple cots with coarse threadbare bedding are positioned about the room; strongboxes sit at the foot of each cot. Each of the five strongboxes contains 1d4 gp, 2d6 sp and 4d6 cp. The strongbox nearest the southern doors is locked (CL4 to pick) and trapped (CL 4 to detect and disable the spring loaded blade trap). Failure to disarm the trap yields 2d4 hp damage and a deep scar on the hand (roll 1d6, 1-4 dominant hand, 5-6 other hand). The wound incurs a -1 to attacks and Attribute checks with that hand and (at the gamemaster's option) may interfere with spellcasting (10% chance spell failure) until the wound is completely healed.

Searching the fireplace CL 3 uncovers a hollow brick with a leather purse containing three white pearls and a golden pearl worth 25 gp and 50 gp each and a thin platinum ring with peridot chips worth 250 gp.

The secret door to the west is opened by pressing a lever inside a slim crack on the left wall (CL 3). The wall pushes inwards and swings to the left. The double doors to the south are locked, (CL 3 to pick) although a thorough search of the skeletons turns up the key around the neck of the greatsword-wielding skeleton.



### AREA 3: RUINED WORKSHOP

This was once a craftsman's workshop but a violent mishap has left the room in shambles. The walls and ceiling are scorched as if the room had been engulfed in flames. Charred frames of tables, shelves, and other furniture are scattered about a 15-foot diameter crater in the center of the room. Shattered glass grinds under your feet. The ceiling directly over the crater is fractured and ragged; debris and gravel cover the floor. Several shelves along the wall are charred, but a few remaining shelves still hold shattered glass jars, crockery, and bundles of desiccated herbs. The room is dimly lit from a soft red glow emanating from a brick and fieldstone kiln on the southwestern wall

One of Nox's experiments became unstable and exploded violently one night. Had the wizard been in the room it's unlikely he would have survived.

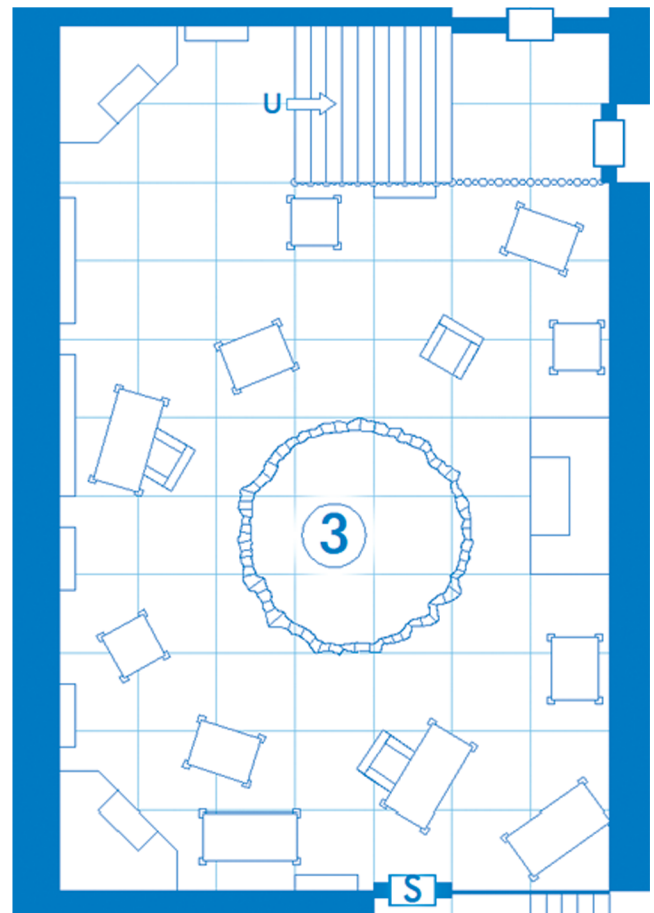
The crater is nearly three feet deep; congealed blobs of metal and glass are found amidst the debris. Miraculously, two alchemical apparatus survived the explosion and not only remain upright and functional but also contain active reagents. When combined by someone schooled in alchemy, the distillates and powders yield two formulations: an **unguent of invisibility** and a **potion of bull strength**. The process takes nearly an hour to complete and requires two CL 4 Intelligence checks.

Searching under the overturned tables uncovers the following: a small pewter salt-box (worth 20 gp) containing three pinches of **dust of dryness**, and an opaque amber glass vial (worth 5 gp) containing an improperly formulated **potion of longevity** (the imbiber ages 2d6 years with no saving throw). Those searching the table closest to the kiln on the southern wall make a grisly discovery: a badly decayed human finger wearing a thick gold band inscribed with alternating flame runes (a **ring of fire resistance**). Both once belonged to Nox; the finger fell off due to tomb-rot.

Charred scraps of parchment covered in Nox's carefully arranged scrawl are scattered about the room like leaves, and alchemical tools lie under years of dust. The value of the supplies and reagents is roughly 2000 gp but recovering the valuables from the room won't be easy.

The soft glow comes from a fire elemental (AC 15; HD 4d8; HP 13; Attacks: Slam (1d4) + 1d2 burn damage; Immunity to Fire, and possesses Regeneration 2, and takes double damage from cold spells and attacks.) bound to the kiln along the southern wall. When the PCs enter, the dormant elemental detects their presence and succumbs to madness from years of servitude. The elemental breaks its bindings and erupts explosively from the kiln's cast iron door. Now freed and insane the fire elemental flows from the kiln burning everything and everyone in its path to cinders. After 6 rounds (1 minute) the elemental grows weary, sputters out, and returns to the Elemental Plane of Fire.

The secret door to the south can be found with a CL 4 Intelligence check. A defaced soapstone bust of an unknown scholar rests on a shelf to the right of the secret door. When the bust is tilted forward, the secret door slides back and to the right.



If the PCs carefully search the floor near the crater, they discover a wide but slim volume bound in basilisk hide with electrum bindings. The book is titled *Rare Droughts: Philtres and Potions* by Tristram Elo. The tome is arranged in three columns throughout and contains advanced alchemical theories and many experimental alchemical formulas. The Tellurian half-elf Tristram was an accomplished alchemist but he was hasty, some might say reckless. Tristram's potions work but have minor quirks for the imbibers (see table below). GMs are encouraged to be creative with other alchemical formulations and quirks, which should be inconvenient but not directly harmful. Quirks last as long as the GM feels they are entertaining.

#### Rare Droughts Quirks

d12	Imbiber Quirk
1	Imbiber's skin becomes translucent revealing muscles and organs for all to see.
2	Imbiber Sweats profusely.
3	Imbiber bloats experiencing terrible gas.
4	Imbiber develops a severe case of hiccups.
5	Subject spews multi-colored bubbles when speaking.
6	Imbiber's skin changes color.
7	Imbiber develops a terrible thirst and is compelled to drink any potable liquid.
8	Imbiber only speaks (but doesn't understand) a foreign language.
9	Imbiber's voice radically changes.
10	Imbiber's appendages (d6: 1-4 hands, 5-6 feet) painfully swell to 150%.
11	Imbiber develops terrible body odor.
12	Imbiber grows a tail (permanent until surgically removed).

## AREA 4: CHAPEL

Dusty steps descend into a gray-and-white tiled marble nave. Three domed alcoves are situated along the north, east, and south walls, each containing a polished stone altar covered in votive goods. A pair of pillars flanks each of the altars; a shallow iron brazier is affixed to each pillar. Elaborate brass lanterns suspended between each of the pillars dimly illuminate the room. After several heartbeats, the lanterns blaze to life casting green, blue, and yellow pools of light about the room. You spot a bare patch in the dust on the floor, as if someone or something had been kneeling in prayer for years.

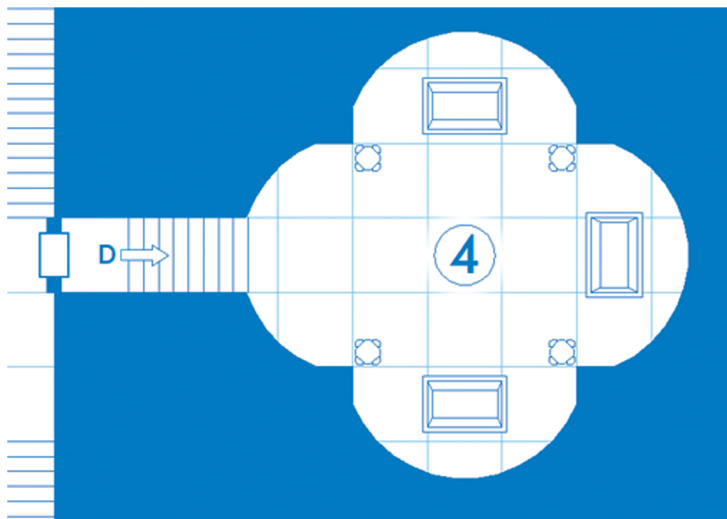
The lanterns are magical and flicker to life 1 round after someone enters the chamber and burn for 1d6 minutes after the room is departed. The lanterns are tied to the enchantments of the tomb; if they are removed from the tomb they lose their magic. The 8 lanterns are worth 10 gp each.

The walls, floors, and ceiling are covered in elaborate geometric Jalahandran tilework. The braziers are stained with ashy remnants of perfumed charcoal. A tin-lined wooden bucket of the charcoal lies against the wall behind the altar to Rakanus.

The altars are solid and dedicated to several deities: north – Bellarian God of Librarians, scripts, and knowledge, east – Eskdathma God of Death, games, luck, and theater and to the South – Rakanus God of Magic, spellcraft, and arcane mysteries. Nox was a spiteful man who abandoned virtue years ago but his faith in the gods never wavered. As for Rictus, for reasons unknown, he always returns to the chapel to kneel before the gods in some subconscious effort to regain their favor and end his curse.

The altars are decorated with beaded banners, ceremonial offering bowls, candleholders, and similar votive materials worth 300 gp and weighing 20 EV.

Sir Rictus will be in this room when the PCs first enter the dungeon in **Area 1: Entry**. It is unlikely that the characters will encounter him in this room on their first visit, but it is possible. See **Appendix One: Sir Rictus** for more information on the Barrow Warden and his appearances in the dungeon.



## AREA 5: OSSUARY

A thin fog swirls about your feet, stirred by a faint breeze. The walls are lined with shallow alcoves packed with skulls and ragged cloth bundles of bones. The floor along the walls is cluttered with moldering skeletal remains. Dusty cobwebs flutter from the walls and ceiling. Nine stone sarcophagi rise from the floor, arranged in three rows of three; the lids are in place and covered in grit. The air reeks of vermin droppings intermingled with mildew and decay.

A pack of hungry ghouls (AC 14; HD 2; HP 10, 9, 7; Attacks: 2 Claws (1d3), Bite (1d6); any successful attack requires a successful Strength save (CL 2) to avoid paralysis lasting 1d4+1 minutes or until **remove curse** or **remove paralysis** is cast; elves are immune to the paralysis) wandered in from **Area 12: Grotto** and now lurk in the alcoves to either side of the door when the PCs enter.

The sarcophagi are cut from granite and imbedded in slots in the floor. Each is three feet high and closed unless otherwise noted. The sarcophagus lids are heavy and require some effort to open (CL 2).

The contents of each sarcophagus are listed below.

**a:** Two withered skeletons (AC 13; HD 1d12; HP 8x2; Attacks: Slam (1d8); any successful slam attack initiates a grapple attack as a 4HD monster) spring out pummeling and choking the nearest creature.

**b:** Vague outline of a body in gravedust and a few crumbling bones. A single copper coin is found under a thick layer of dust. The symbol of Eskdathma is scratched into the corroded surface and is good luck to the bearer provided they are a devout follower of the Grim Keeper. The token may grant a +1 luck bonus to any saving throw. Whenever called upon to make a saving throw, a coin is flipped. On heads Eskdathma's symbol comes up and the bearer receives the +1 luck bonus, on tails the bearer receives a -1 to the saving throw.

**c:** The sarcophagus is trapped. Grave Gas Trap: When the lid is removed or shifted, several bladders hidden inside the sarcophagus are punctured releasing deadly grave gas in a 15ft radius. The fumes burn the eyes and lungs causing 4d4 damage and blindness (per the spell) for 1d10 minutes, half damage and no blindness on a successful CL 4 Strength save. The fumes diffuse in 3 turns (30 minutes). The trap may be detected (CL 3) and disarmed (CL5). An unsuccessful disarm trap roll triggers the trap.

**d:** A child-sized ghoul (AC 14; HD 2; HP 13; Attacks: 2 Claws (1d3), Bite (1d6); any successful attack requires a successful Strength save (CL 2) to avoid paralysis lasting 1d4+1 minutes or until **remove curse** or **remove paralysis** is cast; elves are immune to the paralysis) dressed in faded finery hides attached to the inside lid of the sarcophagus. This was Berdrum, Nox's nephew and erstwhile apprentice. The child was an ill-tempered miscreant sent away by Nox's half-sister who was glad to be rid of the child. When Nox and Rictus disappeared, the family assumed Berdrum accompanied his master.

The conniving child attempted to poison Nox's tea, planning to claim the wizard's fortune with a forged will.



However, the poison failed to do the job. After discovery, Berdrum was rewarded with an untimely death and unwilling participant in a necromantic ritual. The ghoul remembers nothing of his past life. He is unnaturally spry clambering about and shrieking like a deranged spider monkey. The ghoul wears a gold link necklace worth 20 gp, cufflinks and buttons worth 5 gp, and carries a shiny silver slide-whistle worth 10 gp.

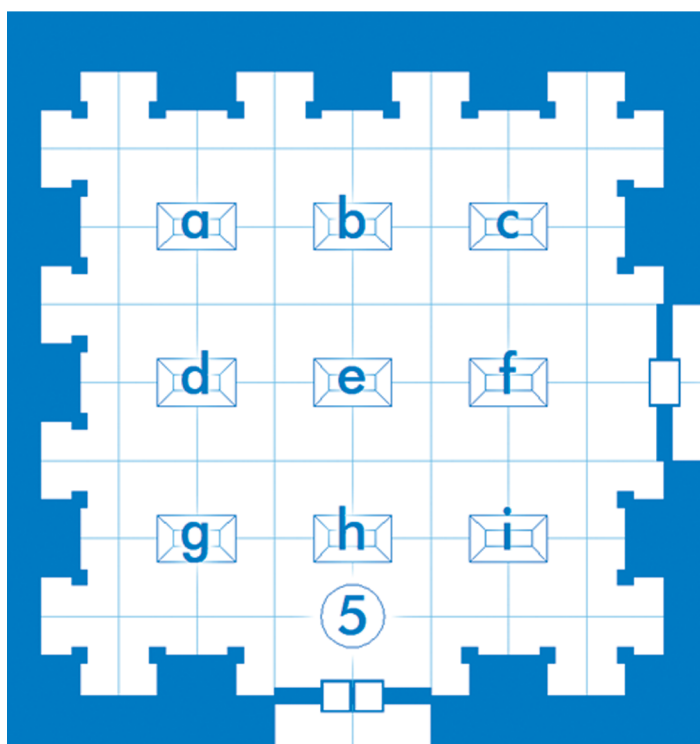
**e:** Empty save for gravedust.

**f:** Lid is slightly ajar, contains a burial shroud and a small green leather purse with 50 gp.

**g:** Contains a perfectly preserved corpse of Channum Dalthor, a middle-aged human professor of architecture and engineering Nox charmed away from his position at the university in Brennan. Nox's experiment to preserve the corpse was wildly successful, as it shows no signs of decay whatsoever. Unfortunately Nox's apprentice Berdrum neglected to keep detailed notes of the process. Nox was less than pleased to discover the child's notes were, in fact, lewd drawings of two local milkmaids, Svedlana and Gilda.

**h:** A devious wight (AC 15; HD 4d12; HP 23; Attacks: Attacks: Slam 1d6 damage + energy drain (successful slam attack causes 1 level energy drain and heals her of 5 hp; Defenses: only affected by physical attacks using magical weapons of +1 or better) lies inside pretending to be a corpse (CL 4 to detect), otherwise she springs out of the sarcophagus with surprise. She's dressed in a revealing gown and 2 electrum bracelets (35 gp each), 2 anklets (25 gp each), a crown (100 gp), 2 rings (15 gp each) and 3 necklaces worth 20 gp each.

**i:** A desiccated rose lies amidst the gravedust. The thorns are very sharp requiring a Dex save (CL 3) to avoid the Type I poison. The rose has 4 rose petals; when consumed a petal neutralizes any disease, poison or venom, and restores 1d6+2 hp.



## AREA 6: STUDY

Depending upon which direction the party approaches the study there are two different descriptions. If the PCs descend the staircase from the south, read or paraphrase the following:

A pair of tall doors with polished brass hinges and latches is open before you. Beyond them a grisly scene has played out, as an elderly woman lies dead on the floor with a deep gash across her throat and chin. She rests on her side, arms outstretched, her fingernails ragged and bloody as if she had clawed her way to the doors. Beneath her, the vibrant cobalt, yellow and green pattern of the carpet is stained red-brown. Her head is turned awkwardly, her teeth are clenched in a bloody grimace, and her cold dead eyes are fixed in your direction.

If the PCs enter the study by any other door read or paraphrase the following:

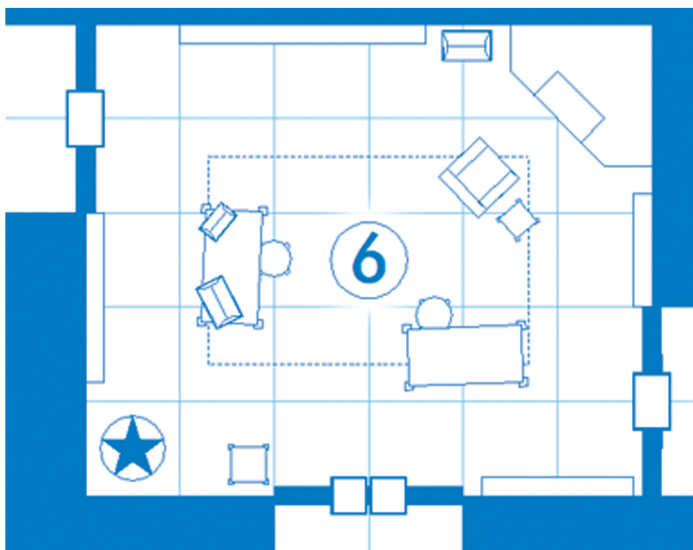
This room appears to be a comfortable study. The dark, wood-paneled walls are covered with trophies, flags, banners, and shelves. Tall shelves that are crammed with slimy specimens in jars, shadow boxes of preserved insects, and small skeletons in lifelike poses under dusty bell-jars. On the walls shiny brass lanterns hang between banners and flags from distant battlefields. An ashy field-stone fireplace is built into the northeastern wall. To the south a pair of double doors have opened into the room, before them an elderly woman lies on a rich blue, yellow, and green carpet. A body of a second victim lies in the threshold of the northern door.

**Note!** Entering this room triggers one of Nox's permanent **alarm** spells alerting Sir Rictus who arrives post-haste.

The elderly woman is Lytha, a spinster housekeeper working for the well-heeled manseowners above. She's dressed in a blood-soaked livery; a snuffed torch lies a few feet away on the singed carpet. Sir Rictus delivered a savage stroke cleaving the poor woman from chin to collarbone nearly severing her head. She has no treasure but a ring of bronze keys opening every lock in the manse is attached to a chatelaine beneath Lytha's apron.

The western door is ajar, but the body of a sturdy dwarf with a trimmed blood-cached yellow beard blocks the threshold. This was Yeld, a footman in service to the manseowners for nearly 20 years. He lies face down, dead from numerous sword wounds. When Rictus barged into the study, Yeld snatched up a fire poker and put up a fight. The valiant dwarf was no match for Rictus and he died well although not quickly. The poker is still in his hand.

Just inside the room to the left of the double doors stands a tall hunchbacked skeleton with long grasping claws and a skull full of nightmare-inducing teeth. The skeleton hangs from a wooden frame, held together with horse glue and wire. Nox spent months futilely trying to strip the flesh from this troll. The flesh grew back quickly frustrating the wizard to no end. Fire destroyed the bones as did most corrosives. Eventually Nox discovered a lye-based solution that inhibited the troll's regeneration abilities but left the bones intact. The process is described in disturbing detail accompanied by diagrams in one of Nox's journals on his desk (see below).



The rich Hakirian carpet is 11 ft x 17 ft. and weighs 30 EV. The bloodstain and torchburn reduces the carpet's value to 500 gp.

A trophy hangs over the fireplace - the preserved head of a young blue dragon. The head is mounted on a plaque with a brass plate reading 'Salhavorak 954 NA'. The trophy weighs 20 EV and is worth 1500 gp. Unfortunately for the PCs, the head is trapped (CL6 to detect) with a **chain lightning** trap. If disturbed, a **lightning bolt** erupts from the dragon's gaping mouth at the closest character, causing 6d6 hp damage. The bolt then jumps to the three next nearest targets for 3d6 damage. A CL 6 Dexterity save reduces the damage to half. Nearby furniture will be lightly scorched but otherwise unharmed (Nox thought ahead and wove minor enchantments on the room and the furnishings).

The trap may be disarmed with a CL4 Remove Traps roll. When disarmed a **wand of chain lightning** can be recovered from the mouth. The wand is constructed of deeply stained ironwood with rows of triangular mother of pearl inlay. There are 3 charges when the PCs first tamper with the trophy. The activation word is 'Ba'r-rarq'.

Two ornate writing desks stand on the carpet in the middle of the room. Stools with a green cushions are pushed under each of the desks. Both desks have many drawers of various sizes containing pewter pots of colored inks, quills, and rolls of parchment. The southern desk has Nox's gold family seal worth 50 gp. This along with the parchments, inks, and examples of Nox's hand are sufficient to manufacture credible documents (see below).

A curled rams horn rests atop a stack of books and journals on the western desk. The horn is fitted with a rune covered mouthpiece - a **horn of blasting** for which the Storm Roarers were known. The names of past Stone Roarers are engraved on the horn. One name have been deliberately scratched off - Nox's.

A faded orange-bound leather journal rests atop the southern desk. When investigated a piece of folded parchment falls to the floor - Nox's last will and testament naming Berdrum as his sole beneficiary. The journal contains a few poorly written notes listing badly spelled alchemical reagents for a few pages before transitioning to lewd drawings of two local milk-maids, Svedlana and Gilda. The last will and testament is a poor fabrication, forged by the hand of Nox's greedy and belligerent nephew-apprentice Berdrum.

Nox's personal journals and backup spellbook are locked in a trapped drawer. Opening the drawer is CL 6 to pick the lock, or CL 3 Strength to brute force it. Tampering with the lock, using brute force, or failing the disarm trap check triggers the trap. Finding and Disarming the trap requires a CL 6 check; failure indicates the character takes 1d2 damage. Worse yet, the PC must make a CL 6 Constitution save. If successful, the PC immediately feels light headed and then it passes. If the save is failed, then two rounds later the PC suddenly and graphically dissolves into purple vapor. The PC's gear is not affected by the transformation. All held and worn objects fall to the floor covered in mauve goo. Treat this as a **gaseous form** spell lasting 6 turns (60 minutes). At the end of the duration, the PC must reunite with the purple goo to regain solid form otherwise the PC takes 2 levels of energy drain. The process of reforming takes 2-3 minutes to complete and is like watching a wax figure melt in reverse.

A dozen or so journals are tucked away inside the drawer. These go back decades, detailing Nox's life on the road prior to retiring to Barrowgate. The particulars of Nox's adventures are beyond the scope of this work; Gamemasters are encouraged to improvise the contents of these journals. One thing that is obvious is Nox's disdain for Sir Rictus. It seems as the years wore on the content of the journals became less about the Stone Roarers' daring adventures and more about cataloging Rictus' mistreatment of Nox. There are a few vague early references to another member of their party, a woman simply referred to as 'A'. This refers to the Breonnese adventuress Avette. She and Rictus were romantically linked until Rictus became bored and she moved on. Pages with any details of 'A' have been torn out of the journal. (Avette still lives. After decades of dodging peril, she found her way into the good graces - as well as the bedchambers - of a notorious Arvenian contessa. She whiles away her days in a villa overlooking the Dragon Spine Sea in Eoan.)

Alongside the journals the following items are found: **dagger +1** (creates pool of cool white light 5 ft radius when the pommel is tapped twice), two potions of **cure light wounds**, and three scrolls: **hold portal**, **charm person**, **mirror image**. All scrolls are scribed at minimum caster level.

One of Nox's old spellbooks is found under one of the short table legs. He scribed this while apprenticed to Thurma Frell. Oddly enough, Nox remembers those years fondly, and his time apprenticed to the doddering miscreant hedgemage is mentioned several times in the journals above. This spellbook is of average size and bound with faded teal pigskin with pewter spine, binding, and edgings. The back cover is severely torn as if the book were held up in defense and some sharp-clawed fiend raked the book. The tome contains the following spells: 0 level - **arcane mark**, **detect magic**, **mending**, **message**, **open/close**; 1st level - **change self**, **charm person**, **floating disk**; 2nd level - **knock**, **see invisibility**, 3rd level - **blink**

A comfortable chair draped with a patchwork quilt stands before a fireplace, flanked by a short end table. A small stack of books rests on the table including: *The Origins and Meaning of Breonnese Heraldry* by Sir Hargol Skiffenbaum, *Ostomull's Directives on Ley Lines*, and *Songbirds of the Lower Nadanga River Valley* by Oortle Thellig. Each of the books contains vivid diagrams and maps and is worth 20-200 gp to the right buyer.



## AREA 7: LABORATORY

Glassware rattles and clinks as you open the door; the sharp odor of alchemical reagents assaults your nostrils. This chamber is a cluttered labyrinthine disaster waiting to happen. Many shelves around the room have been ransacked. All around the room, books, specimens, and reagents have been precariously stacked to the height of a tall man. The maze-like stacks sway in the faint breeze. The many tables about the room are a tangle of alchemical glassware and abandoned experiments. Three cold kilns stand along the northern wall, a fourth kiln squats in the southeastern corner. Numerous doors are set into the southern wall, another portal between two shelves in the north, and another in the eastern wall. Tidy piles of broken glass, dust and other detritus appear to have been swept up but otherwise left alone.

**Note!** Entering this room triggers one of Nox's permanent **alarm** spells alerting Sir Rictus who arrives and cautiously surveys the situation. The Barrow Warden quietly locks the doors and waits on the steps outside ready to slaughter anyone attempting to flee the lab.

Gremlins (AC 14; HD 1d8+2; HP 6 x 6; Attacks: 1 throw (1d6), bite (1d3+1), two claws (1d4+1)) infest the laboratory. The mischievous blighters have created a maze of stacked goods gathered from around the room.

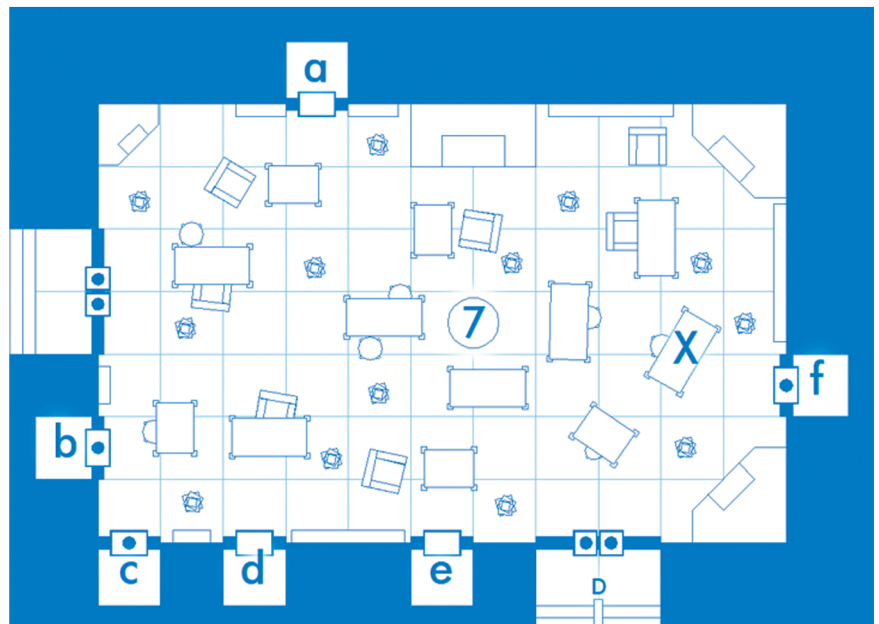
Walking within 5' of any table or piece of furniture requires a Dexterity saving throw (CL 2) to prevent a precariously balanced pile from toppling. A stack of books, specimens, and glassware is not dangerous in and of itself but may (50% chance) provoke a roll on the **Gremlin Mischief** table.

For the first few moments the gremlins observe from the shadows or hold still pretending to be preserved specimens or art. The PCs are free to spread out and explore but after a few minutes, the gremlins grow bored and decide to have a little fun at the PCs' expense. The gremlins use stealth, sticking to the shadows and ducking behind or under furniture. Unseen, the gremlins cause chaos by setting fires with their prestidigitation, throwing glassware, and deliberately toppling stacks. To the gremlins, the PCs are mortal playthings.

The PCs find a grisly experiment on the table marked X. Read or paraphrase the following:

The dessicated corpse of a man is shackled to the table. The corpse is completely bare save for a heavy iron helmet obscuring its head and face. The body has been partially skinned and affixed to the table like an anatomical drawing. A complex glass apparatus with many brass spigots is suspended over the corpse. The glassware is stained with multi-colored residue.

This is what remains of a vampire preserved by alchemy, one of Nox's unfinished experiments intended to extend his own life. The subject was shepherd by the name of Karl Umderokk. Karl caught the eye of a passing vampiress who



abandoned him after a midnight tryst in a barn. Karl awoke the following night and began preying upon local livestock until Nox was summoned and overpowered the vampire with magic. After weeks of starvation and study, the hunger-mad vampire was subjected to necrosection so Nox could observe the creature's regenerative abilities. The overhead device delivered a blood-infused serum to specific portions of Karl's body keeping his various tissues and organs "alive" and preventing the vampire from shapeshifting or turning into mist. The iron helm protected Nox from the fiend's bite and powers of suggestion. Although the corpse is harmless, it may not remain so (see **Further Adventures** for more details).

Two matching journals bound in cracked honey-colored leather contain the details of the experiment carried out on the vampire Karl. This is a deeply disturbing text and would likely raise an eyebrow of any but the most staid academic. To a necromancer, the Pale Reavers, or a major magical university the two journals are worth 3,000 - 5,000 gp provided the seller isn't reported to the authorities.

Searching the nearby tables is dangerous work but can turn up a few valuables including: 1100 gp in reagents, one **pot of marvelous pigments**, a **potion of healing**, 2 **potions of restoration**, and a **scroll of clairvoyance** all brewed or scribed at the minimum level. The surviving curios, books, and journals are worth another 30 - 300 gp. Investigating the closets reveals the following:

**a:** This closet has been trapped by the gremlins. When the door is opened, it triggers a complex assembly of pulleys, ramps, and sluices, that pours a combination of volatile reagents into a bucket on the closet floor which explodes into a blast of green fire. The blast covers a 10' radius area, causing 4d6 hp damage (Dexterity saving throw CL 4 for half damage). PCs may take cover behind nearby furniture for half or no damage. Detecting the trap is challenging (CL 4) but disarming the mechanism is relatively straightforward (CL 3).

**b:** Contains four buckets heaped with broken glassware. Nothing of value or interest here.

**c:** Shelves are packed with jars, bins, small coffers and drawers filled with herbal components. Almost everything is dried up or rotted beyond use but four herbs remain viable.

The first herb is wrapped carefully in thin parchment and appears as though it were just picked. This rare flower was harvested on one of Marna's high holidays. When worn openly the flower protects the bearer from up to 2 levels of energy drain before wilting away. There are two flowers.

The second herb takes the form of dried tea-like leaves in a parchment envelope. When steeped in hot water and drank, the imbiber gains Twilight Vision and all ranges for eyesight are doubled including Darksight. Range penalties for attacks and spells are reduced by 1. The downside is the drinker is light sensitive, -1 to all attacks and Dexterity saving throws in candlelight, -2 in brighter light for the next 2-5 hours. There are two doses.

The third herb is a small clump of dried mushrooms with an unpleasant oily texture and a chalky aftertaste. For the next 2-4 turns (20-40 minutes) the consumer sees the faint auras surrounding magical objects, creatures, and locales within 10 ft. as if under a detect magic spell. After the herb effect lapses, the consumer must make a Constitution save CL 3 or be nauseous (-1 to attacks, saves, and attribute checks) for the next two hours. There is one dose.

The fourth herb is a mass of dried moss. When soaked in luke-warm water for 1 turn (10 minutes) and placed against a wound under a bandage, the wearer's wounds heal at thrice the usual speed. Other wounds heal in half

the usual time. The bandage must be changed daily. There are five doses.

**Note!** In regards to miscibility. Consuming the second and third herb within the same four hour span can be disastrous. The eater is wracked with severe cramps and mild confusion and must make a Constitution save CL 5. The effects are equivalent to Type IV poison.

**d:** The shelves are poorly stocked, as Nox had depleted his stores with his various experiments. A thorough search will turn up 100 gp of common and uncommon alchemical reagents as well as a **potion of delay poison**.

**e:** A heavy trapdoor rests atop a two foot diameter fieldstone well. A block and tackle is fitted to the back wall and attached to the trapdoor. A heavy iron pin and hasp further secures the trapdoor. Nox disposed of his failed experiments by dumping them into the well. The well leads down to a set of natural caverns; Gamemasters looking to keep their narrative fresh might have their wandering monster encounters utilize the well to gain entry to Nox's tomb.

**f:** The door is unlocked but barred from this side by several planks nailed awkwardly across the doorframe. As the PCs approach, an Intelligence check (CL 2) detects a faint rustling and clanking on the other side of the door. When opened a pair of brooms (AC 14; HD 1d10+5; HP 13, 11; Attacks: Slam (1d4)) rush out and begin furiously sweeping the floor and walls. One round later, the brooms function as if under a **confusion** spell treating results 1 and 7-8 as attack nearest creature.

### Gremlin Mischief

1d20 Roll *	Effect
1	<b>Sudden hair growth</b> ; STR save or 2d10 inches of hair grows all over the PC's body.
2 - 3	<b>Weak corrosive</b> ; 1d4 damage, DEX save CL 4. Splash damage is 1d2, 5 ft. radius.
4	<b>Useful potion</b> ; roll a random potion 300 gp or less or <b>potion of cure light wounds</b>
5 - 6	<b>Shrink</b> ; CON save CL 5 or shrink 50% per the Alter Size spell for 1 turn
7 - 8	<b>Sudden hair loss</b> ; CON save CL 4 or lose all hair.
9	<b>Rapid oxidation</b> ; DEX save or the largest concentration of nonmagical metal held or worn instantly crumbles. Magic items have a 90% chance of surviving +1% per plus.
10 - 12	<b>Concentrated corrosive</b> ; 1d8 damage DEX save CL 4. Splash damage is 1d4, 5 ft. radius. Damage continues for 2 rounds.
13 - 14	<b>Skin color change</b> ; CON save CL 4 or skin color changes. The effect wears off after 1d4 weeks.
	<b>d6 Roll*      Color</b>
	1      Red
	2      Yellow
	3      Orange
	4      Green
	5      Blue
	6      Mix two colors as stripes or dots or gamemaster's choice.
15	<b>Useful Potion</b> : roll a random potion (no gp limit) or <b>potion of cure serious wounds</b> .
16 - 17	<b>Explosive</b> ; 2d6 damage, CL 3 DEX save for half. Damage is 1d6 within 5 ft. radius, (50% chance of causing nearby stacks to topple while in <b>Area 7: Laboratory</b> ).
18	<b>Polymorph potion</b> ; Wisdom save CL 4 or transform into a random beast.
	<b>d20 Roll*      Transformation into...</b>
	1 - 5      Badger
	6 - 9      Donkey
	10 - 14      Goose
	15 - 18      Monkey
	19 - 20      Crocodile
19 - 20	<b>Growth</b> ; Constitution save CL 5 or grow +50% per the alter size spell for 1 turn
*Note: Gamemasters are free to forgo the random roll and select a result to his or her liking.	



## AREA 8: LIBRARY

The northern doors are unlocked and easily opened but the southern doors are locked tight (CL 4). As the doors are opened, read or paraphrase the following:

The smell of mildew, ink, and parchment mixed with the acrid odor of vermin droppings greets you as the doors open. Through the doors you spy a comfortable study. Two tables stand atop a scarlet carpet surrounded by six rows of bookshelves. The bookcases are 20 feet tall and cast deep shadows about the room. The shelves once held books, folios, and scrolls in magnificent abundance. Now, after years of decay, moisture, and ravenous vermin, the contents of the shelves lie in scattered, shredded heaps about the floor. A faint breeze stirs a few sheets of thin crumpled parchment which drift about like leaves in an autumn breeze.

As PCs enter the room, read or paraphrase the following:

You hear the fluttering of wings emanating from the shadowy edges of your lightsource. Without warning, several books erupt from the shelves and fly about the room flapping pages as a startled bird flaps its wings. The books flutter about the ceiling in small circles for a moment before landing on nearby bookcases.

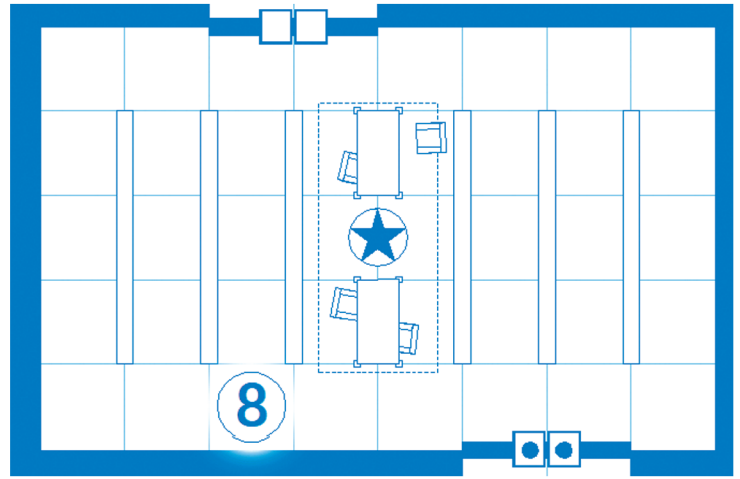
**Note!** Entering this room triggers one of Nox's permanent **alarm** spells alerting Sir Rictus.

The protective enchantments woven on this library failed when Nox met his end. The wizard neglected to reinforce the spells before making his final preparations in his crypt. Rats, large silverfish, moths, and other hungry vermin still creep about feasting on the sad scraps.

A few rare volumes have survived and can be recovered by enterprising (and nimble!) explorers. Four small books (AC 14; HD 1d10; HP 5 x 4; Attack: Slam (1d4)) and one large book (AC 15; HD 3d10, HP 17; Attack: Slam (1d8 hp + grab); on a successful attack against a medium sized or smaller opponent, the book snaps shut and automatically initiates a grapple; the following round it flies to the ceiling and drops the opponent for 2d6 hp damage) flutter around the room.

A few rare volumes have survived and may be recovered by enterprising (and nimble!) explorers. The books are simple constructs content to loiter on bookshelves or flap about (somewhat) awkwardly. The books do fight back if attacked or a PC attempts to restrain them. When reduced to 1 hp, the enchantment is broken and the book weakly drops from the air. If reduced to 0 to -4 hp, the book is severely damaged and worth ½ the listed gp. At -5 or fewer hp, the book is destroyed and now worthless. The books are: *The History of the Skoli Invasion* by the Warrior Poet Allaine of Westcroft (50 gp); *A Field Guide to the Fey Folk of Waspnettle Marsh* by Iskell Greenfeather (80 gp); *Digger McGee's Authoritative Handbook on Dragonkin* (85 gp); *The Winter Kingdoms: Oral Histories of the Heimdall Tribes* by Chronicler Runivard (90 gp); *Advanced Elemental Manipulation: A Treatise on Elemental Magic* by the Archmage Purgholix (260 gp).

Two mahogany tables occupy the center of the library. They are inlaid with a geometric ivory pattern as are the



four matching chairs standing nearby. Scarlet cushions adorn the seats and backs of the chairs. The tables are worth 1000 gp each, and the chairs another 200 gp each. The furniture rests atop a rich Hakirian carpet with a sinister red, charcoal, and bone white pattern. The carpet has resisted the damp and vermin, measures 17 ft. x 7 ft., weighs 34 EV, and is worth 1200 gp.

As the PCs explore the study area read or paraphrase the following:

A tall, emaciated, hunchbacked cadaver lies across the northern table. A rough cloth lies across the corpse's crotch; a tray of dusty (but sharp!) instruments rests on the cloth. Books of various sizes and thicknesses, some open, others stacked haphazardly about, rest on the southern table. A papyrus scroll covered in tidy rows of strange characters and glyphs is partially unrolled across the corpse's chest. A heavy wooden frame similar to that used to hold and display armor stands between the two tables.

Nox dabbled in mummification a year before his decision to pursue lichdom as the means of preserving his life. He spent much of his fortune to acquire materials and ritual scrolls from the long-buried pyramid-tombs of the Besiac Wastes. Using the perverse magic of the Old Age, Nox successfully completed the ritual of mummification and reanimated the troll's corpse.

The ritual was performed in the laboratory but the corpse needed to cure in a cool dark place for several months. The library was the ideal locale. A crumbling wooden casket rests in the northeastern corner of the room. The troll's shriveled vital organs are contained in four translucent orange limestone canopic jars on the nearby shelf.

Nox intended the troll to be his tomb guardian but little of the troll's intellect survived the process. It possessed a glimmer of malevolent intelligence embodied by an intense hatred of the living, but was unable to solve problems or make complex decisions.

The mummified troll (AC 18; HD 6d12; HP 43; Attacks: two withered claws (1d4+1) + mummy rot + rend (1d4+1), bite (2d6); takes double damage from fire-based attacks; destroying the canopic jars deals 2d4 damage with a Con save for half damage) is dormant when the PCs enter and shows no signs of unlife. As soon as the PCs turn their backs, it quietly rises and silently clambers about the bookcases stalking solitary PCs.

## AREA 9: SILENT GARDEN

Dim yellow light filters through dense brambles and sharp-edged leaves that coil about the decorative archway ahead. Beyond the arch lays a grand courtyard with wide tiles in geometric patterns. The chamber is enormous consisting of a large central dome nearly 40 feet high surrounded by three smaller evenly-spaced domes. Years of dry leaf litter scrapes across the courtyard and swirls lazily about in the faint breeze. A decorative marble fountain lies directly below each dome. The fountains are overflowing with aquatic plants, and long viny tendrils extend outwards for many feet. The ground is uneven, time and the endless flow of water has caused the tiles to buckle and separate forming puddles several feet deep and and slow moving rivers flow everywhere. Moss grows on every flat surface and hangs from nearby pillars. On the far side of the courtyard you spy a wheelbarrow. In spite of all the greenery, there is no animal life. No birds sing or flit about, and no mice scurry among the leaves. Other than the echoed endless trickle of water and the rustle of leaves, all is silent.

Dim magical lighting keeps the nearby thorny vines and shrubs growing year round.

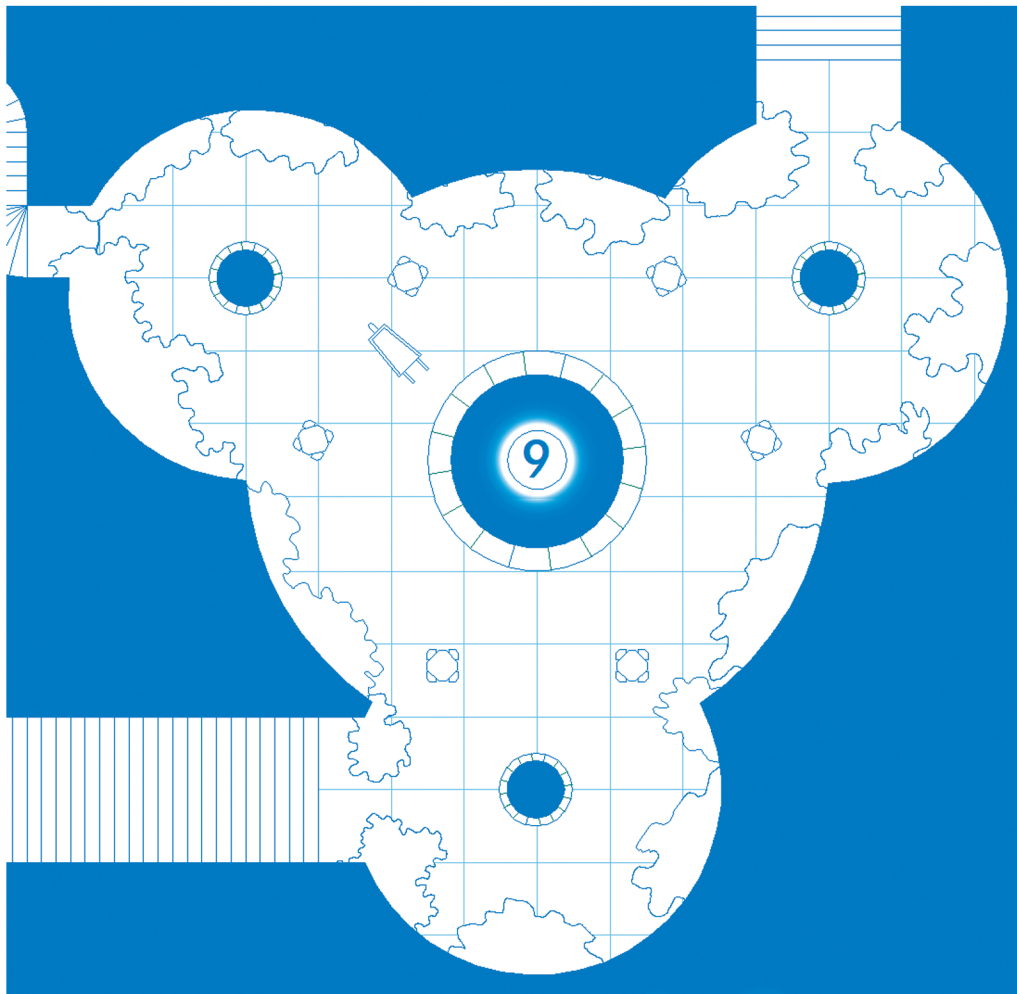
The skeleton of a groundskeeper slumped backwards into his wheelbarrow is visible from the entrances; vines with red leaves grow from the corpse's ribcage. A spade and a rake are on the ground nearby. The groundskeeper,

a half-elf by the name of Wellarp, hadn't been paid his wages for weeks, as Nox was preoccupied with his preparations and schemes. When the insolent groundskeeper threatened to reveal Nox's comings and goings, the wizard laid the half-elf low with a **finger of death** spell. Wellarp's skeleton wears a silver ring on his left hand. The thin band has a blue apatite inlay and is worth 20 gp. The ring has a minor enchantment preventing the water wyrds (see below) from attacking the wearer as if he or she were protected by a **sanctuary** spell (CL 7). A slim leather pouch is tucked in Wellarp's belt containing 1 sp and 4 cp.

The four fountains are fed by an underground freshwater spring. The drains in the floor are choked with sludge and vines causing the fountains to overflow. The entire courtyard is under 3-6 inches of water allowing the wyrds freedom to move about anywhere in the chamber at half their usual speed.

As soon as the PCs enter the high domed garden, they feel as though they're being watched. If they approach within five feet of the small fountains or 10 feet of the large fountain, a water wyrd (AC: 14/15; HD: 3d8/5d8; HP: 20, 14, 12 or 27; Attacks: Slam (1d8/1d10) + grab; half damage from piercing, slashing, and fire) rises up assuming serpentine form and attacks.

A narrow passageway is obscured by thick vines growing up to 15 feet high up the wall in the northwestern lobe of the chamber (Int CL 6 to spot).





## AREA 10: STORAGE

As the PCs descend the flight of steps, read or paraphrase the following:

The floor is covered in a thick layer of gravel, grime, and small shards of rock. The steps and walls are rough cut as if the builder was unconcerned with finishing this portion of the tomb. Two wheelbarrows piled with rocks stand in the corridor. Hand tools, spades, rakes, and picks lean against the wheelbarrows. More tools, folded tarps, buckets, and coils of rope gather dust in four alcoves on the northern and southern walls. A musty odor hangs in the still air and an occasional faint grunt or mutter echoes down the corridor.

Nox needed an army of obedient tireless servants to excavate the tunnels beneath his home. Graveyards from nearby villages provided a ready supply of corpses suitable for reanimation and ceaseless hard labor. The effort took years and in spite of precautions, those living nearby reported faint sounds of scraping and hammering through basement walls.

The wheelbarrows are rickety from use and half of the tools in the alcoves are either broken or in need of repair. Still they can be used as improvised weapons.

The dust on the floor is, for the most part, undisturbed. It's been years since the zombies and skeletons have moved from this room as evidenced by the thinner layer of dust where they stand.

Sharp-eyed PCs making a Tracking check (CL 2) notice fresh tracks in the grime. Whatever made the tracks was not human; several creatures descended the steps and prowled about on all fours investigating the wheelbarrows and alcoves before continuing onto the chamber to the west. They have yet to return to the stairs.

A pack of ghouls skulked up from **Area 12: Grotto**. The devious ghouls (marked G on the map) remain in the room, standing rigid and hidden beside the dormant zombies (marked Z) and skeletons (marked S).

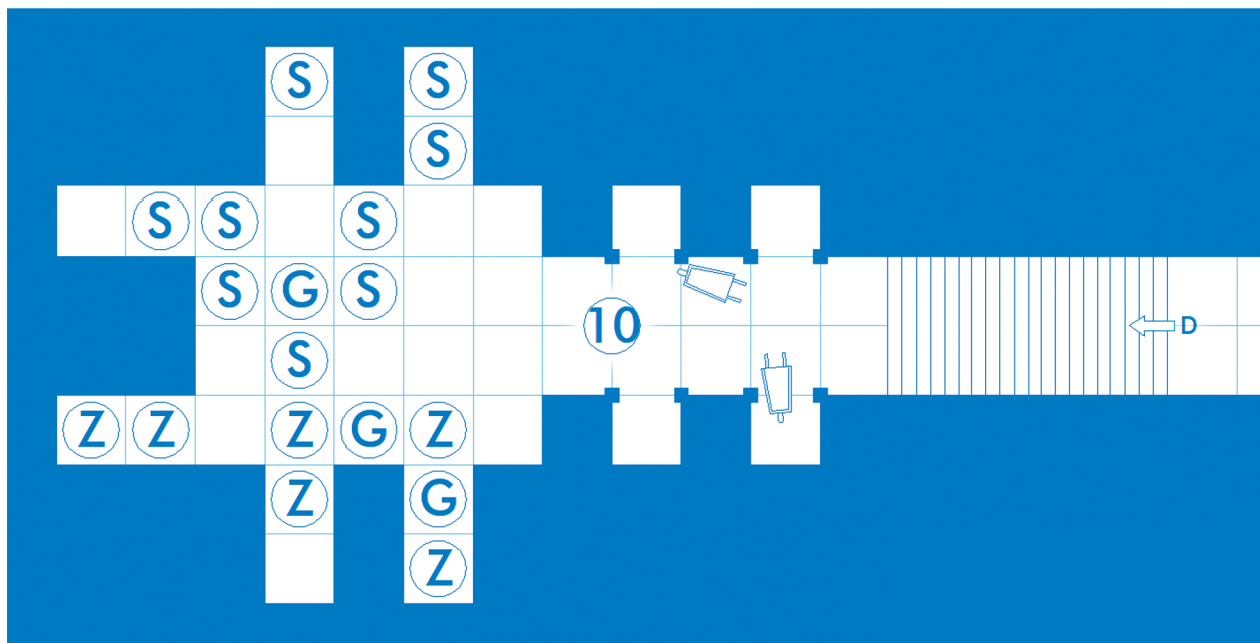
As the PCs pass the alcoves, read or paraphrase the following:

The passage widens into a larger chamber with shadowy alcoves along the walls; you spy still figures on the edge of your lightsource. Most of the figures are human-sized, their skin ashy from filth. They wear shabby tabards while standing in disorderly rows, silent, hooded heads bowed, and still as statues. A lingering odor of mold and decay hangs in the air. You hear a faint moan from the back of the room.

The zombies (AC 12; HD 2d8; HP 7 x 6; Attacks: slam (1d8); always lose initiative) and skeletons (AC 13; HD 1d12; HP 5 x 9; Attacks: spade, hoe, pick (1d6) or slam (1d4); half damage from piercing or slashing attacks) only respond to Nox's commands. They remain dormant unless turned, attacked, or touched at which point the undead give into their spiteful impulses to kill all living things.

On the other hand, the ghouls (AC 14; HD 2; HP 13, 9, 5; Attacks: 2 Claws (1d3), Bite (1d6); any successful attack requires a successful Strength save (CL 2) to avoid paralysis lasting 1d4+1 minutes or until **remove curse** or **remove paralysis** is cast; elves are immune to the paralysis) are hungry. They silently observe the PCs, waiting to pounce. The ghouls wear the same sack burlap tabards blending in amongst the dormant undead. As the PCs approach, the ghouls rip aside their disguises and leap upon the PCs. Two rounds later the skeletons and zombies awake, on the third round the zombies and skeletons attack the PCs.

Prior to the ambush, the ghouls concealed two canvas sacks in the alcove behind the solitary zombie on the southern wall. The sack stinks of the grave and contains scraps of dank moldy hide, joints of rancid meat, gnawed bones, rat skulls, and a few goods taken from tombs: 42 gp, 176 sp, 382 cp, 1 gold ring with two small peridot and 1 large peridot worth 75 gp and 100 gp, an expert morningstar (+1 hit), various brass and bronze rings, arm bands, and bracelets worth 60 gp, and a wood and coral arm band worth 300 gp.



## AREA 11. OUBLIETTE

The next section of the dungeonscape is only accessible by way of the staircase south of **Area 10: Storage**. The limestone steps show significant erosion and become increasingly damp with every step. By the time the PC's reach the landing, there's a slow but constant drizzle of water seeping through cracks in the ceiling.

As PCs approach the landing, read or paraphrase the following:

The steps become increasingly slippery from the steady trickle overhead. By the time you reach the landing the water has collected into shallow pools which overflow and run down the steps; the air is getting heavier, colder, and your breath escapes in soft white plumes. Directly opposite the steps, a shallow arched alcove is carved into the wall. Resting inside the hollow is a grotesque figure cut from mottled blue and bile colored soapstone. The statue is anatomically correct, squats on its haunches and resembles a bloated toad with a face like a star-nosed mole. You see an identical statue occupying an alcove on the northern wall.

The statues are unsettling and vulgar but they could be valuable to the macabre-minded. The statues each weigh 200 lbs and are worth 1200 gp each. The statues themselves are harmless but the landing is potentially deadly: a pair of trapdoors concealed under the stonework dump anything stepping on them into a shaft filled with concentrated acid. The trapdoors are cleverly concealed by the surrounding stonework; discovery requires a CL 5 Detect Traps roll. The mechanism is a counter-balanced lever hidden behind the wall. Any medium-sized creature weighing 50 lbs. or more depresses the lever and falls into the shaft. Disarming the trap is significantly more difficult and even with the right tools and materials is CL 9. Those triggering the trapdoor are allowed a Dexterity save (CL 4) to catch themselves before they fall into the pit. Damage from the acid is 1d6 hp the first and second rounds, and 2d6 each round thereafter with no save. Climbing out is no easy feat; the walls are sheer and after a round of soaking the flesh becomes slippery (CL 4 to climb out). With the exception of most gemstones, precious metals such as gold and platinum, and exotic materials such as adamantite and mithril, most objects are destroyed within 1-2 rounds, per the slam/acid attacks of oozes.

A partially dissolved ghoulish corpse gruesomely clings by its nails to the wall of the southern pit. The ghoulish was carrying a bag of loot scavenged from an aristocrat and his wife's sarcophagus. The bag dissolved but the goods remain on the pool bottom: 5 pp, 39 gp, 21 ep, 180 sp, 111 cp, an amethyst (50 gp), a white agate (10 gp) and a bloodstone (50 gp), his and her jade deathmasks (550 gp each), a filigreed electrum scroll tube (55 gp) containing two ragged pages of vellum covered in neatly arranged stanzas - original works written in the flowing hand of noted Anhurian poet Eggerd Zolkov worth 300 gp each.

Beyond the statues and halfway down the stairs several of the steps have been constructed to appear trapped. The steps depress slightly under a person's weight falsely indicating the steps collapse into a ramp. The ruse is detected on CL 3 Detect Traps roll.

Having navigated the stairs the PCs come within view of the doors leading into the Oubliette. Read or paraphrase the following:

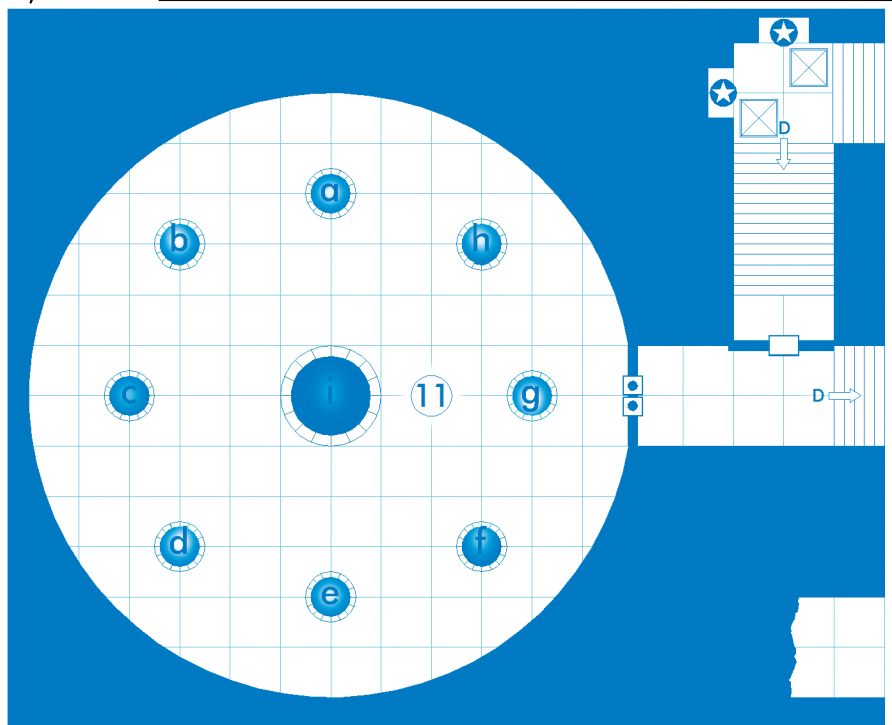
The double doors before you are an imposing sight: each portal is seven feet high and four feet wide. The portals lack a veneer or lacquer, and they are constructed of four-inch planks tightly bound by thick iron bands. Rows of sharpened iron spikes have been driven deep into the planks; obviously the builders intended the doors to keep things out as well as in. There are no obvious knockers, handles, or hinges of any kind.

The double doors are untrapped and yet remain secure in spite of the efforts of the various monsters currently prowling about the tomb. The mechanism for opening the doors is a brass lever hidden behind a cleverly hinged piece of stonework on the southern wall (CL 4 to detect).

Once the lever is depressed, the doors quietly open inwards; read or paraphrase the following:

As the doors swing silently inwards, your light is reflected onto the walls from the many puddles of rippling water. The circular chamber is massive; your light fails to reach the far wall and the ceiling 30 feet above is shrouded in shadow. Grimy water drips from the ceiling and collects in small pools. These pools then form small rivulets that flow across the floor and slip between the bars of the grates disappearing into the gloom below. The chamber has an unhealthy stench to it, as if you were in the presence of a large animal and it's pen hasn't been cleaned in some time.

Nine circular wells are built into the floor of the chamber, each covered with a metal grate; the center well is 10 feet in diameter, while eight wells around the perimeter of the room span five feet. Thick ropes link the metal grates to block & tackles affixed to the walls. These apparatus cast sinister shadows about the room.



This chamber was where Nox kept his enemies as well as the unfortunate products of his experiments. Each well shares several characteristics. Each is circular and fifteen feet deep. A low wall two feet high surrounds the well. The interior walls are carefully fitted flat stone set into the mortar making climbing very difficult (CL 5). An iron grate sits atop each well attached to several hinges driven into the floor. A heavy, high quality lock (CL 6) runs through a hasp preventing the grate from opening. The key opening all the grates is on the ring hanging from Nox's belt. The grates were far too heavy for Nox to easily open so a system of black and tackle links the grates to the wall. The contents of the wells are as follows:

**a:** Filled to a depth of 10 feet with murky water. An oily slick floats on the surface. The well looks sinister but is otherwise harmless.

**b:** Dry, dusty rubble covers the floor to a depth of two feet.

**c:** Thick sulfurous vapors rise from a crack in the floor at the bottom of the well. Several sets of chains hang from the walls.

**d:** Several broken flasks cover the floor, and the walls are deeply scarred by thick claws. The troll from **Area 6: Study** was kept here for a time; the broken flasks on the floor contained a powerful sleep potions. One vial of the powerful formulation – a **potion of deep slumber** survived the fall and can be recovered. The potion instantly vaporizes in air, filling a 10 ft. diameter area (Strength save (CL 7) or lapse into a deep sleep for 10 minutes).

**e:** Three skeletons dressed in faded rags are chained to the walls by the wrists with water up to their thighs. One wears a gold bracelet worth 15 gp. This is all that remains of a trio of brigands who attempted to rob Nox en route back to Barrowgate.

**f:** Empty save for a few scraps of homespun cloth, dust, and an oddly shaped shard of flint. The flint has been fashioned into a crude blade equivalent to a knife (1d3 hp damage)

**g:** A badly decomposed corpse of Thressk – a female troglodyte - lies at the bottom of the well, the victim of a fall shattering her skull. The scaly humanoid was a scout for a tribe of troglodytes living in the caverns hundreds of feet below the city of Barrowgate. She along with her mate Ss'sekk stumbled upon **Area 12: Grotto**. The troglodytes attempted to ambush Nox as he stepped from the Oubliette into the corridor. The male was killed and dumped into **Well i** and fed to the gibbering moulder. The corpse of Thressk still wears a necklace of bones, ivory, and obsidian worth 100 gp, as well as two matching bracelets and two anklets worth 30 gp each.

**h:** The well stinks of wet fur and urine. The floor of the well has been excavated by the previous occupant, an elderly purveyor of alchemical reagents named Thelo Ebrorus. Thelo foolishly sold Nox several bad gallons of aqua regia, and subsequently found his way into Nox's dungeon. The crafty alchemist managed to dig his way to freedom but found himself in the lightless sewers of Barrowgate where he fell victim to swarms of rats. If the PCs listen, they can hear faint squeaking and scurrying. If the well is disturbed, giant rats (AC: 13; HD (1d4); HP 2 x 10; Attacks: Bites (1d2) + disease) swarm up the walls and out of the well, followed by two frothing barrow rats (AC: 13; HD 3d8; HP 16, 13; Attacks: Bites (1d8) + disease). The vermin devour everything in their path.

**i:** One of Nox's semi-successful experiments to create life has survived. It's a hideous amorphous collection of flesh fused together with magic. The beast has multiple brains and is covered in eyes and other less obvious sensory organs. It goes a week at a time without food, it's been alone since Nox died. It only knows pain and isolation and is madness personified. Treat this as a gibbering moulder (AC: 19; HD: 5d8; HP: 31; Attacks: Bites x 6 (1d3) + blood drain; Special Attacks: Engulf, Confusion, Acid Spit). As soon as the creature sees light in the chamber, it goes still and silent. As the PCs approach the well, the beast wrenches the trapdoor aside and rampages. To ensure the creature didn't starve, Nox surgically grafted a **ring of sustenance** to one of the pitiable creature's deformed limbs.

Once the gibbering moulder is defeated, it slowly begins to dissolve as the magic holding it together fails. In the middle of the noxious, multi-hued puddle of rapidly rotting flesh and alchemical fluids, the characters spy a glint of metal. It is the Amethyst Key, which is one of the two keys required to unlock the doors in **Area 1: Entry**. The amethyst in the brass key is worth 1000 gp.



## AREA 12: GROTTO

The doors to this chamber are open; wandering monsters smashed the handles and locks with rocks. As the PCs approach the doors read or paraphrase the following:

The doors before you are severely water damaged. The planks are warped and discolored. A thin layer of mineral growth covers the door in wet patches, and vermin have chewed through the bottom of each door. Any metal is severely corroded. The interior handles and locks have been crudely smashed with rocks. Bits of broken limestone shards and gravel lie on the ground before the doors.

The trickle of water from the stairs behind you flows under your feet onto the muddy gravel floor of the natural cavern beyond the doors. The gurgle of flowing water emanates from across the room and echoes off the walls. Bats flit about high stalactites, clicking and squeaking. A few vermin scuttle away from your lights, disappearing behind stalagmites and stone columns. A path bordered by muddy slopes gradually descends to a decaying bridge spanning a river seven or eight paces across.

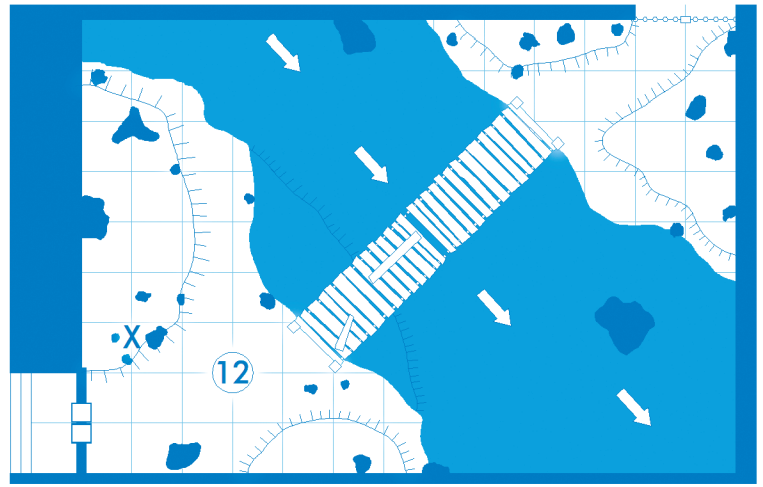
An underground river flows briskly from northwest to southeast. Based upon the lines of clay on the stalagmites and stalactites, the river periodically jumps its bed and floods the chamber. The river is spring-fed, cold, and crystal clear. Close to the shore, the river slopes down to 5 feet deep but quickly drops off to 10 feet. The flow is deceptively strong making Swim checks challenging (CL 3). The narrow beaches on either side of the river are clay and sludgy gravel, littered with all manner of flotsam and jetsam from upriver. What lies upriver and downriver will have to be improvised by the Gamemaster.

A rickety wooden drawbridge spans the river; the years and moisture have not been kind to it. The bridge sways under a man's weight but is surprisingly sturdy. Rotten ropes and pulleys still hang from the ceiling but rip free of the anchors with a slight tug. What remains of the hand crank stands a few feet to the right of the bridge. A hundred feet or so of rope can be recovered; it's water-logged and weighs 50% more than ordinary hemp rope.

A corroded iron portcullis is built into northern wall. The gate is closed but unlocked. The lock was destroyed years ago. The bars are heavily corroded and cached with minerals.

A pack of killer frogs lives along the shoreline of the underground river. They subsist on a steady diet of bats and vermin. They are always hungry and eager for more substantial prey; the ghouls proved unappetizing. Any light alerts the voracious amphibians, they slip into the water and lurk in the shallows.

The frogs attack with surprise leaping from the water. The larger frogs strike with their tongues trying to drag their prey into the water to drown. The PCs may avoid surprise but the crafty predators are difficult to spot (CL 7).



A mineral-encrusted skeleton of a man is entangled amongst the stalagmites marked "X" on the map. This was Rephius Gabot, a Tellurian fighting man known for his insistence on adventuring alone. Gabot met his end exploring the tunnels upriver 20 odd years ago. He was ambushed by kobolds and badly wounded. He fell into the river and was carried by the current to this location. He drowned pinned to the stonework. Blind crustaceans and other vermin made short work of his flesh and years later Gabot's skeleton is partially fossilized. Most of his gear was lost or disintegrated but his **elven chainmail +1** survived as did his **short sword +1**. A squat stoppered glass bottle with a green liquid still hangs from his decaying weapon girdle, a **potion of cure serious wounds**. A dense cluster of silver and gold coins totaling 28 gp and 71 sp lies nearby, the leather bag rotted years ago.

PCs returning to the grotto encounter a band of curious and hungry troglodytes attracted to the light and noise. The passage beyond the portcullis leads down into an extensive complex of wet limestone caverns below Barrowgate. At many points the caverns link to the sewer system. Some of the passages thread their way to the Westbarrow Hills. Detailing these additions are beyond the scope of this work but Gamemasters are encouraged to do so.

**TROGLODYTES** (These chaotic evil humanoids' vital stats are HD 2d8, HP 15, 12, 11, 11, 10, 9, 6, AC 15/16. Their primary attributes are physical. The leader is armed with a +1 expert to hit military fork causing 1d8+2 hp damage, the others fight with spears and shields causing 1d6 hp damage. If unarmed they attack with 2 claws and a bite causing d2 hp and d4+1 hp respectively. They possess a powerful Stench, Constitution save or -1 to hit and damage due to nausea. They have Darkvision 90 ft. The leader has a leather bag containing 7 quartz stones worth 10 gp each, 4 heavy gold rings worth 5 gp each, and a beaten gold and copper torc worth 20 gp.

### AREA 13: SUMMONING CHAMBER

As the PCs approach the landing in the hallway linking Area 2: Guardroom to Area 9: The Silent Garden read or paraphrase the following:

The arched doors before you are intended to impress and intimidate. The doors themselves are deep green with black veins and polished to mirror brightness. The fittings and latches are dark pewter. A grimacing gargoyle face is set into each door, each knocker is mid-snarl with a heavy ring clenched in its tusks.

The double doors are secured with a sophisticated locking mechanism (CL 5 to pick). After 1 minute, the doors swing shut and relock. Since the key is with Nox's corpse, the lock will have to be picked again on the way out.

The backside of the doors, archway, and lintel are inscribed with arcane sigils. Nox didn't want his conjurings to escape, but the efficacy of many of Nox's spells faded when he died. Still, Rictus cannot cross the threshold. This confuses him initially. He will remain outside the pewter-knocked doors for 1-2 rounds attempting futilely to force his way past the wards. He then retreats down one of the corridors waiting for the PCs to exit the vestibule. Once learned, the PCs can retreat here to rest, regain spells and plan the next leg of their exploration.

As the PCs open the doors read or paraphrase the following:

A small vestibule is beyond the ghastly doors, a flight of steps winds up and to the left before cutting back to the right to another landing.

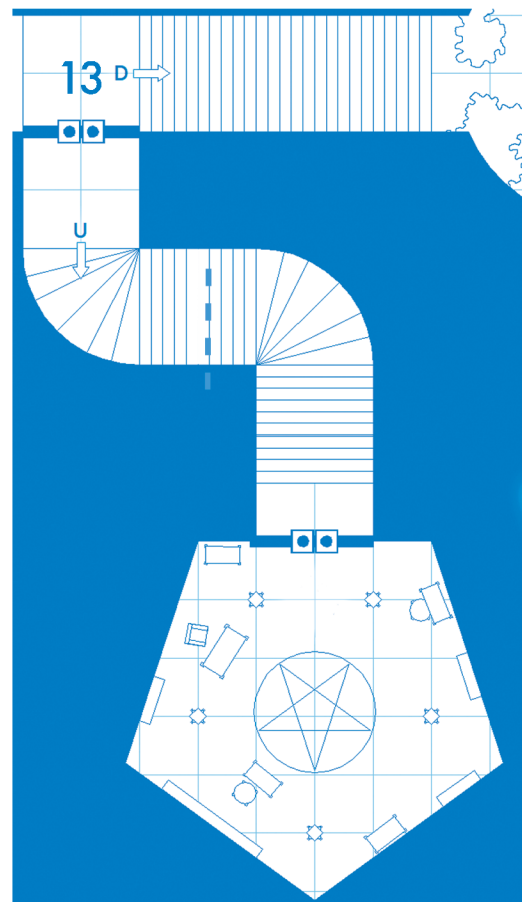
Halfway up the steps the PCs are confronted by a deadly trap denoted by the dotted line on the map. Several steps are pressure plates; when depressed a spinning cylinder covered in blades slices across the stairs.

The trap is automatically deactivated when at least 50 lbs of pressure is placed on the bottom step for 1 minute. A faint audible chime signals that the trap has been disarmed. An identical deactivation mechanism is at the top of the steps. The trap rearms itself after 1 minute. **BLADED SWING TRAP** The trap may be Detected and Disarmed with successful rolls (CL 5 each). If the Disarm Trap check fails or the PCs fail to detect the trap, everyone standing on the 10x10 section of stairs takes 1d4 hits, with each hit causing 1d8+1 hp damage. Those succeeding in a Dexterity save (CL 5) take half damage. After striking, the trap should withdraw back into the ceiling and rearm itself but the aging mechanism fails spectacularly and crashes to the ground where it rolls down the steps to the doors. Anyone caught in the path takes 1-2 hits of 1d6 damage per hit. Those passing a Dexterity save (CL 3) take half damage.

Once the trap has been bypassed and the characters reach the top of the stairs, read the following:

The doors at the top of the final landing are identical to those below. A pair of sconces to either side of the doors suddenly flare to life.

The doors are securely locked with a sophisticated clockwork of vertical metal bars (CL 6 to pick). Once the doors are opened, read or paraphrase the following:



Dark deeds were perpetrated within this chamber; your flesh crawls as you look about. The cloying odor of incense mingles with metallic-tinged sulfur and paraffin. The black and white marble walls are inscribed with thousands of glyphs. Five black-stained wooden pillars support the arched ceiling where brass lamps gently swing from thin chains. Bookcases containing scrolls, books, specimens, and reagents hug the five walls. Bowls containing rare earths, powdered bone, and noxious herbs are neatly arranged on nearby tables. Flasks and decanters of mysterious oils and liquids catch your eye.

The center of the chamber is dominated by a complex arrangement of silver circles and glyphs engraved into the marble floor. A thin wisp of oily black smoke sways inside the circle.

**Note!** Entering this room triggers one of Nox's permanent alarm spells. Entering this room triggers one of Nox's permanent alarm spells but Sir Rictus cannot cross the warded threshold on the landing at the bottom of the stairs. He either hides outside the doors or uses his **ring of spider climb** to climb up the wall and lurk among the shadows ready to ambush the PCs.

The fragrant herbs, powdered bone, and other materials for conjuring and communing are worth 1100 gp to the right buyer.

The silver in the glyphs and summoning circles can, with considerable effort, be dug out and is worth 3500 sp. The summoning circle is surrounded by bowls with burnt offerings, rendered animal fat, noxious herbs, and ground bone. It's clear whatever Nox was consorting with, it wasn't from the Higher Planes.

A heavy iron bound tome (EV 10) with a cracked leather cover rests on a stepped podium overlooking the summoning circle. The book is unlabeled on cover or spine but the first page contains fiendish script reading: *"The 13 Ordeals Along the Path of Shadows Volume 1 by Evgun Shanandroo"*. The book is volume one of a three-volume set detailing denizens, geography, and magics of the Lower Planes; this volume focuses on the Netherhells. The book radiates a strong aura of evil, and any flames within 10 feet of the book burn blue. The book is worth at least 3000 gp but possession of such a dreaded tome will likely lead to conflict with local constables, paladins, and clerics of good deities.

The other shelves on the podium contain an expert cold iron dagger (+1 to hit and damage), a few mundane stimulants, and an electrum holy symbol to Aurellius wrapped securely in oilcloth.

The summoning circle is occupied by Nox's imp familiar Bazlabrehaxx (AC: 15; HD: 1d8; HP: 7; Attacks: Bite (1d4), Sting(1 + poison); SR 3, Invisibility, and Regenerate 1. The diminutive fiend found himself summoned back to the Material Plane by one of Nox's prepared conjurations. The wily wizard was concerned the imp might betray him if the ritual of lichdom failed. The imp did in fact whisk Nox's soul off to Hell but then fell victim to Nox's magic. The imp has been trapped in the circle, seething, ever since.

Bazl is a crafty fiend and he's desperate to return to the Lower Hells. He has been trapped in the circle since Nox met his end. The mystic circle imprisoning the imp is made up of ground martyr's bones. Paraffin candles made from rendered baby fat are placed around the periphery of the circle maintaining the spell of confinement until the magical ward is broken. Disturbing the circle disrupts the ward and frees the imp. Attacking or harming Bazl breaks the ward.

If released Bazl likely disappears, but he could be compelled to grant a favor in exchange for his freedom. But the PCs will have to tread carefully. Bazl is only an imp and has limited powers and influence. He will grant one favor readily if freed. Additional favors can be negotiated by rolling the lower of Charisma or Intelligence (CL 5 for two favors, CL 10 for three, etc.)

Bazl is mostly talk, like most imps, but he is vindictive and he's not above a little mischief and murder. PCs who irritate the half-pint fiend will find themselves stalked by the vengeful imp. He feigns disappearing back to the Lower Planes but he turns invisible and plays pranks and causes hardship until placated or vanquished.

Several stacks of pedestrian tomes on the Lower Planes, denizens, etc. rest on the table near the western wall. One book, *The Principal Masterful Maester's Manifestations and Manipulations of Planar Vortices* by Chumlo Pagrath is a heavy tome of 253 fragile papyrus pages bound in iron, and covered in the ragged hide of a spirit naga. The book provides sufficient instruction that any elemental or fiendish denizen summoned with it gains +1 hp per HD and +1 to attacks. However, due to the complexity of the binding spells, any elemental or fiend summoned has a 10% per minute of breaking free unless restrained by a summoning circle.

## AREA 14: NOX'S CRYPT

When the Amethyst and Diamond keys are fitted into the locks at the base of the wyvern statues in **Area 1: Entry** and turned, the steps on the stairs shift and descend revealing a narrow flight of steps. Read or paraphrase the following:

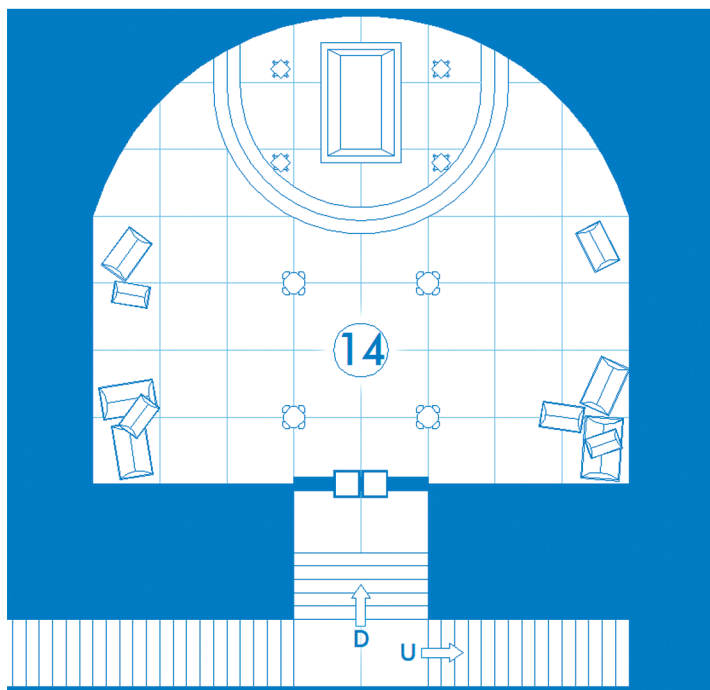
As the two keys are turned in place, the room shudders and the stone steps groan and descend as a staircase drops into view. The corridor disappears behind the wall and leads to a set of steps descending into stygian darkness. Your shuffling stirs up motes of dust, and cobwebs cling to you as you descend. To your left the passage widens and another flight of steps ends at an enormous pair of double doors. Directly opposite you, another flight of steps proceeds upwards; a faint breeze issues from that direction and with it fresh air.

**Note!** With the turning of the two keys, the spells that teleport and heal Sir Rictus are broken. From this point forward, when Rictus is reduced to 0 hp or fewer, he will be finally dead. Once the doors are opened, Sir Rictus will make his way to the crypt via the shortest route. See **Appendix One: Sir Rictus** for details on Sir Rictus' last stand.

The double doors to the Crypt are unlocked and untrapped. Read the following after they are opened.

The chamber beyond the doors lies under a thick layer of dust, as if the room has remained untouched for years. A faint odor of decay drifts about along with years of dust. Four pillars form a gallery of sorts, between them you spy a few burned out candle stubs and an elaborate diagram in chalk. Small chests and coffers have been piled to your left and right, some remain open containing scrolls, books, and sacks of coins.

A dais is on the far side of the room opposite the doors upon which rests a stone sarcophagus. Four iron braziers flank the sarcophagus. Brass Hakirian lanterns hang from the ceiling and walls. The room is very still.





This is where Nox got his revenge and his just desserts. While the newly made barrow warden Sir Rictus began his unceasing patrol of the Tomb, Nox surrounded himself with his most valuable goods, and made his final preparations intended to transform himself into a lich. Incense was burned and mighty spells were woven as the wizard combined the last few ingredients into the potion. He climbed into the sarcophagus and swallowed the bitter contents of the flask in one go. His death was not quick or painless. His body perished and Bazlabrehaxx the imp snatched away Nox's soul.

The granite sarcophagus mixes Adonian and Besiac Wastes artistic elements. Several broken flasks lie on the floor and against the wall, tossed aside during Nox's death spasms.

The braziers contain the ash and rendered fats from the failed ritual of lichdom.

As the PCs approach the sarcophagus, read aloud or paraphrase the following:

Your footsteps echo against the curved wall as you approach the sarcophagus. Ascending the few steps you see a withered corpse wearing fine robes in muted mauve and black. A wizard's cap rests askew on the skull, white brittle hairs cling to the brown waxy skin. The corpse's hands clutch the edges of the sarcophagus and its parched lips are pulled back to reveal the corpse's gritting teeth. One of the corpse's fingers is missing. Clearly the wizard died in agony.

After several heartbeats, a cold wind stirs the corpse's robes and a pair of cruel lips appears on the wall behind the sarcophagus. It speaks in a booming voice, "You have bested my guardian and survived my traps. You have proven yourselves worthy and I salute you. But know this: time will test your fellowship. Everything withers, decays and dies. Look about you and think, decades from now, who will be friend and who will be foe?" The lips laugh cruelly then disappear.

Nox's corpse is harmless and can be searched safely. He wears a **cloak of protection +1**, on his left hand he wears a thick bronze braided ring, a **ring of feather falling**. Tucked in his robes a **wand of suggestion** with 9 charges. A pair of **boots of levitation** are on his feet. A **quarter staff +1** lies beside the wizard and tucked into a sheath on his belt a **dagger +1**. A ring of keys hangs from Nox's belt, these open every lock in the tomb.

The chests along the western and eastern walls contain Nox's remaining fortune amounting to 1151 gp, three **scrolls of charm person**, a bag of 11 gems worth 5 gp each, a bag of 8 gems worth 25 gp, and a bag of 5 gems worth 50 gp each. Alongside these valuables are years worth of maps, journals, and other goods accumulated after four and a half decades of adventuring.

Nox's spellbook is stuck between two chests. This thick and heavy tome is comprised of thin plates of polished volcanic glass as covers and held together with pewter fittings and clasps. The inside consists of 300 pages of coarse papyrus. The interior ink is a rich violet. The book weighs 30 lbs and has an EV of 6.

A weak and simple-minded cousin to the **unseen servant** is bound to the book. When ordered the servant will hold the book within a few feet of the speaker, turn the pages, or tilt the book. The servant can also bear the weight of the book and up to 5 additional lbs. The servant responds to orders in Khemish, the ancient language of the Besiac Wastes.

The spellbook contains the following spells: 0 level – **arcane mark, detect magic, mending, message, open/close**; 1st level – **change self, charm person, floating disk, read magic, identify, shield, magic missile, hold portal**; 2nd level – **knock, see invisibility, detect thoughts, mirror image, scare**; 3rd level – **blink, dispel magic, suggestion**; 4th level – **arcane eye, dimension door, resilient sphere**; 5th level – **animate dead**

The stairs up continue another twenty feet ending at the back side of a secret door identical to the secret doors found throughout Nox's tomb. Once the iron ring is pulled, the stonework slides towards the PCs and splits aside. The PCs find themselves at the bottom of a stone-lined well. The well is a short distance from the rear of the manse. It was crudely capped shortly after the new manseowners took possession of the property. After what the PCs have faced up to now, they will have no difficulty climbing the shaft and tearing aside the cap.

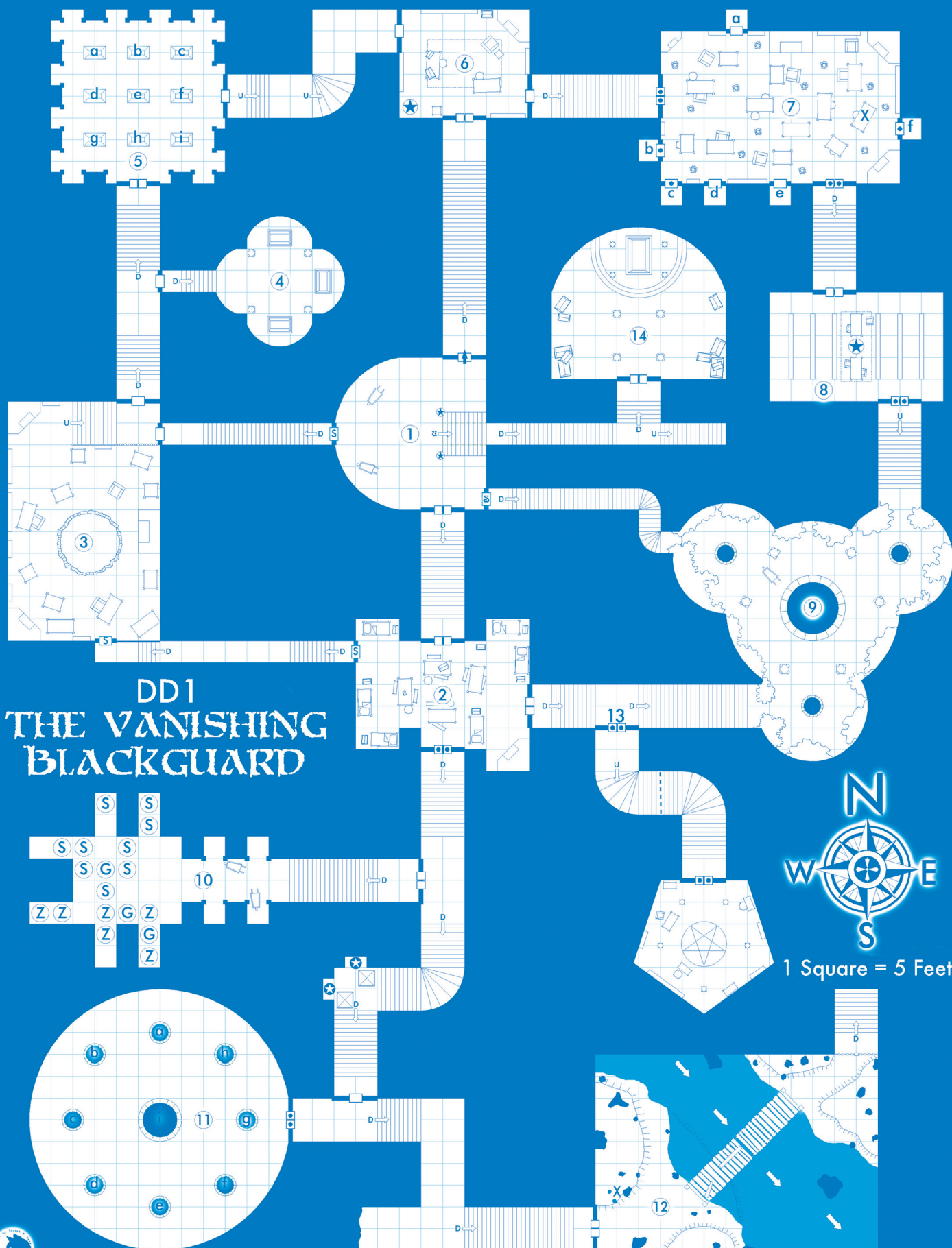
## FURTHER ADVENTURES

✦ Nox could not have constructed his tomb without some assistance. And who provided the rare tomes and reagents for his magic? The source of the Nox's books and magical apparatus points to a prominent merchant family living in Barrowgate.

✦ The PCs discover a crumbling map amongst Nox's journals indicating where the crafty wizard may have hidden away a hoard from past adventures. Other maps and journals describe another exotic locale Nox planned to visit and explore but failed to do so.

✦ During the chaos occurring with the gremlins in the lab, the apparatus delivered sufficient serum to reanimate the vampire thrall once known as Karl. The thrall awakens with a terrible unquenchable thirst, he lurks in the tomb viciously attacking any who cross his path. What's worse, Karl eventually finds his way to the surface where he begins to prey upon the residents of Barrowgate's Garden District.

## REAPER DUNGEON DWELLERS



# DD1 MAP KEY

	Normal Door		Stairs Down
	Secret Door		Stairs Up
	One-Way Door		Well
	Double Door		Wheelbarrow
	Locked Door		Pillar

	Covered Pit		Bed		Fireplace/Kiln
	Foliage		Chest		Bench
	Altar		Table		Chair
	Sarcophagus				
	Bookshelf				

	Stack		Current
	Carpet		Portcullis
	Stalactite/Stalagmite		Bridge
	Elevation		Stool



APPENDIX ONE: SIR RICTUS THE UNDYING

**SIR RICTUS THE UNDYING** (AC 20; HD 5d12; HP 35; Attacks: (attacks as a 6 HD creature) bastard sword +1 (1d10 + 2); ½ damage from piercing and slashing weapons; Turn Resistance +2; Rictus can use each of the following spell-like abilities once per day as if cast by a 5th level caster: **freezing hands** (as **burning hands** only cold damage), **hold portal**, **darkness**, **scare**, and **ray of enfeeblement**. He carries a **bastard sword +1** (glows azure 10 ft. radius upon mental command), wears **platemail +1** along with a **shield +1**, and a **cloak of resistance +1**. The signet ring worn on his left middle finger is a **ring of swimming** (two of his ancestors died by drowning), the thick bronze band on his right hand is a **ring of spider climb** (a gift from a noble lady admirer; very useful for reaching bedrooms in towers). He also carries an expert hand axe (+1 to hit) and an expert short sword (+1 to damage). Sir Rictus dual-wields with half the usual penalty (-1/-2) if denied his shield. A golden key inset with a large diamond hangs inside Sir Rictus' ribcage; this is the Diamond Key. Not only does this key (along with the Amethyst Key in **Area 11: Oubliette**) unlock the doors to Nox's tomb, the Diamond Key was to be Nox's lich phylactery and bound Sir Rictus to the wizard's will.

Destroying Sir Rictus

Sir Rictus should be a challenging foe for PCs. Each time Sir Rictus is reduced to 0 or fewer hp, he is automatically teleported away to a random location in the Tomb (see **Table 6: Rictus Appearances**). After teleporting, Rictus is fully healed but any lost or damaged gear remains that way. The only way to destroy Sir Rictus for good is to acquire the Diamond Key and the Amethyst Key.

Each time (after the first) Rictus is reduced to 0 or fewer hp, he has a 25% chance of the Diamond Key falling from his ribcage. On a successful roll, the Diamond key falls to the ground as Rictus is teleported away. With the Diamond Key in hand, all the PCs have to do is gain the Amethyst Key. The Amethyst Key is located with the gibbering moulder in **Area 11: Oubliette**.

Once both keys are inserted into their respective locks in **Area 1: Entry** and turned, the magic teleportation and healing spells that affect Sir Rictus are broken. From this point on, if Sir Rictus is defeated, he is vanquished forever. Read or paraphrase the following text when Rictus is finally killed:

The skeletal knight staggers, reeling under your onslaught as purple and black lightning erupts around him. He falls to his knees, his bones glowing through his armor as dark energy consumes him from within. Wracked with agony, he lurches forward with fire burning in his empty eyesocket; he clutches for you with bony fingers.

Hellwinds roar about the room, swirling rocks and dust all around you as a dark vortex opens behind the undead knight. From the vortex, unseen voices wail hungrily for the life they no longer possess. The knight's burning bones begin to blacken and turn to ash, the glowing embers ablaze as they are sucked into the vortex. With every passing heartbeat there's less of the undead knight until his armor crashes to the floor. It is as if he'd never been.

Running Sir Rictus

In life Sir Rictus was brash and arrogant. In undeath Sir Rictus is far from an unthinking engine of destruction – he's a dangerous and patient killer. Nox's magic ensured some corrupted fragment of Rictus' mind survived. Sir Rictus is focused, ruthless, and single-minded in the performance of his duties, and has an instinctual hatred of the living.

Nox had no need for another automaton – he needed a spiteful and creative guardian to protect the tomb. Sir Rictus uses ambushes and diversions to expose, run down, single out, and eliminate trespassers. He is without mercy and he's not above wounding and maiming to lure other delvers to their dooms. In all likelihood, the PCs will encounter Sir Rictus many times as they explore Nox's tomb. Each time Rictus is vanquished, the Barrow Warden not only remembers how he was dispatched, he learns from it. He's intimately familiar with the tomb and its many perils. Rictus will use every advantage. Gamemasters are encouraged to have Rictus drive PCs into traps or other hazards. Rictus will release other tomb guardians setting them in the PCs path and while they're preoccupied, the Barrow Warden ambushes from the rear.

Rictus is unaware of how he can be permanently destroyed but he is compelled to protect the Diamond Key (3000 gp). As he's hacked to pieces chances are the key will be exposed. If denied the key, Rictus uses every means at his disposal to reacquire it.

Rictus' many character flaws can be exploited by clever PCs. In spite of Nox's efforts, some of Rictus' personality lives on. The Barrow Warden is voiceless, as his vocal cords rotted away years ago. PCs appealing to Rictus' ego could temporarily distract the him, earning themselves a brief respite sufficient to recover, rally, or retreat. Rictus can also be tricked, waylaid, trapped, and outmaneuvered. Ruses, strategies and appeals won't be easy, depending upon originality (CL 5 at least). The Barrow Warden won't fall for the same trick twice.

Table 6: Rictus Appearances

Die Roll (d12)	Room
1	Area 1: Entry
2	Area 2: Guardroom
3	Area 3: Ruined Workshop
4	Area 4: Chapel
5	Area 5: Ossuary
6	Area 6: Study
7	Area 7: Laboratory
8	Area 8: Library
9	Area 9: Silent Garden
10	Area 10: Storage
11	Area 11: Oubliette
12	Area 12: Grotto

Table 7: Acquiring the Diamond Key

There is a 25% (d100) chance Sir Rictus will drop the Diamond Key after the first encounter.	
1st Encounter	0%
2nd Encounter	25%
3rd Encounter	50%
4th Encounter	75%
5th Encounter	100%

## APPENDIX TWO: NEW MONSTERS

### BARROW RAT

NO. ENCOUNTERED: 2d4

SIZE: M (5' long)

HD: 3 (d8)

MOVE: 40 ft., Climb 20 ft, Swim 20 ft, Burrow 5 ft.

AC: 13

ATTACKS: 1 bite (1d8) + trip + disease

SPECIAL: Trip, Disease, Immunity to Disease, Twilight Vision 120 ft., Darkvision 60 ft., Scent, Tracking 10.

SAVES: P

INT: Low

ALIGNMENT: Neutral Evil

TYPE: Animal

TREASURE: 3

XP: 45 +3

Barrow rats are the bear-sized rodents teeming with disease. Gnarls of cancerous cankers grow close to the skin and their flesh is covered in open sores and overripe pustules. They plague the sewers and catacombs of cities, burrowing into tombs and crypts to feast on corpses. They are indiscriminate scavengers greedily devouring bone, skin, and leather. Many a gravedigger and tombrobber has met his end at the six-inch incisors of these fearless monsters. Barrow rats excavate burrows at a staggering pace. Wood is no harder than packed earth or clay. Given time, barrow rats can even chew through stone, roughly 1 ft. per hour.

Barrow rats are usually (50%) accompanied by 2d6 giant rats. Ghouls often keep barrow rats as guard animals, and sometimes ride larger barrow rats into battle.

**COMBAT:** Barrow rats attack from ambush and are pack hunters. They are highly mobile dropping from ceilings or pouncing from ledges. Some even favor lurking in water with just their snouts and beady eyes above the murky water.

**TRIP:** Those struck by the barrow rat's bite must pass a Dexterity save or be knocked prone and automatically losing initiative the next round.

**DISEASE:** Barrow rats crawl with disease; those bitten must succeed in a Constitution save or contract a random disease see p. 335 of the Castle Keepers Guide.

### BARROW WARDEN

NO. ENCOUNTERED: 1

SIZE: M (6' tall)

HD: 5 (d12)

MOVE: 30 ft

AC: 20

ATTACKS: by weapon usually bastard sword (1d10 +2) or slam (1d6+2)

SPECIAL: Undead, Darkvision 60 ft., Withered Flesh, Spell-Like Abilities, Translocation, Turn Resistance +2

SAVES: P, C

INT: Low to Average

ALIGNMENT: Lawful Evil

TYPE: Corporeal Undead

TREASURE: 6

XP: 300 + 5 per hp

Barrow Wardens are undead guardians tasked with protecting a tomb, crypt or other secure locale. They are

created by powerful necromancers using ancient rites recovered from the Besiac Wastes of southern Adon. The rituals strip the soul from a living subject, and trap it within an expertly crafted object in a manner similar to a lich's phylactery. The soul remains trapped by the weave, subject to the creator's wishes upon completion of the ritual.

Barrow Wardens are tireless hunters retaining a semblance of their pre-death intelligence and cunning. This allows them to observe their quarry in order to learn and exploit weaknesses. Simple ambushes and diversions are their preferred methods for dividing groups. Barrow Wardens possess a handful of supernatural powers used to cause fear, lock doors, and create pools of inky darkness to pick off stragglers. They are silent and remorseless killers; undeath makes them spiteful and they take sadistic pleasure ending life.

**COMBAT:** A Barrow Warden attack as a 6 HD creature using simple but effective strategies to single out and dispatch trespassers. Many retain a few talents from before they were reanimated such as the ability to dual-wield or skill with a specific weapon. Barrow Wardens are always made from experienced warriors of at least 5th level.

**WITHERED FLESH:** Barrow Wardens lack flesh or vital organs, taking half-damage from piercing and slashing attacks. They are immune to stunning, critical hits, polymorph, petrification, sleep spells and effects.

**SPELL-LIKE ABILITIES:** Barrow Wardens may use each of the following spell-like abilities once per day as if cast by a 5th level caster: **freezing hands** (as **burning hands** only cold damage), **hold portal**, **darkness**, **scare**, and **ray of enfeeblement**.

**TRANSLOCATION:** When reduced to 0 or fewer hp, a Barrow Warden is drawn into an extraplanar conduit passing through the Negative Material Plane. The conduit leads to a random location in the tomb or crypt. The Barrow Warden arrives after 1d4 turns (10-40 minutes later), fully restored but any lost or damaged equipment remains lost. A PC grappling with a Barrow Warden is drawn through conduit unless he passes a Dexterity save (CL 4) to leap away at the last second. If the grappling PC chooses to accompany the Barrow Warden, he arrives at the locale sustaining 1 negative level and will have to face the restored and irritated Barrow Warden alone.

### FROG, KILLER

NO. ENCOUNTERED: 1d6

SIZE: S - M (3 ft - 5 ft)

HD: 2-3 (2d8+4 - 3d8+4)

MOVE: 30 ft., Swim 40 ft.

AC: 12 or 13

ATTACKS: 1 bite (1d4+1/1d6+1) and 2 claws (1d3/1d4)

SPECIAL: Ambush, Tongue, Drag, Twilight Vision, Darkvision, Amphibious, Mucus

SAVES: P

INT: Animal

ALIGNMENT: Neutral

TYPE: Animal

TREASURE: 2-3

XP: 30 + 2 or 60 + 3

Killer frogs are only found in wet environments, usually dark swamps or underground grottos. They feed on

anything smaller themselves and even eat their own kind when other prey is unavailable. These fearless creatures will attack anything crossing their path.

**COMBAT:** Killer frogs always attack from ambush, relying upon their coloration to blend in with their surroundings. They usually attack from the water's edge, their eyeballs the only thing breaking the surface. They then use their tongues to grab and drag prey towards their tooth-filled mouths. Unlike giant frogs, the killer frog is equipped with talons which they use to soften up prey before tearing it apart and gulping down large chunks.

**AMBUSH:** Killer frogs attack from ambush, receiving +4 to Hide checks.

**TONGUE:** Killer frogs have tongues 10 ft – 15 ft. in length. The tongue is treated as a ranged touch attack. Those struck are grabbed and pulled off their feet unless a Strength check is successful. The prone target automatically loses initiative the following round.

**DRAG:** The round after being grabbed, the target may attempt a Strength check; if unsuccessful they are pulled towards the frog and automatically bitten.

**MUCUS:** Killer frog skin secretes a thick protective slime, allowing them to take half damage from fire and heat-based attacks and spells. This also makes them very difficult to grapple, giving them a +8 to their opposed roll.

## **GREMLIN**

NO. ENCOUNTERED: 2d4

SIZE: S (less than 3' tall)

HD: 1 (d8+2)

MOVE: 30 ft., Fly 30 ft.

AC: 14

ATTACKS: 1 throw (1d6), 1 bite (1d4+1), or 2 claws (1d3+1)

SPECIAL: Unluck Aura, Stealthy, Spell-like Abilities, Flight, Twilight Vision, Deepvision 120 ft., harmed by iron, magic or +1 or better magic weapons, Church Bell Vulnerability

SAVES: P

INT: Low to Average

ALIGNMENT: Chaotic Evil

TYPE: Fey

TREASURE: 2

XP: 14 + 1

Gremlins are mischievous and cruel fey creatures superficially resembling human children with elongated pointed ears, pot-bellies, and long fingers and toes. Their mouths are wide and perpetually locked in a sharp-toothed grin resembling a beartrap. Their skin is scaled and oily to the touch. A pair of comically small batwings grows from their shoulder blades allowing the gremlin to flutter awkwardly about. Gremlins exist to sow chaos with devious pranks and boobytraps using anything and everything around them. Using their magic, a gremlin will do anything to terrify their victims, such as causing objects to move, items to combust, doors to open or close, etc. Gremlins are instinctively drawn to machines and industry which they take great satisfaction in sabotaging. Gremlins eagerly lurk nearby watching from the shadows for hapless victims to stumble into their multi-step boobytraps. They are cowards at heart but once the fun is done, the gremlins move in to feed.

**COMBAT:** Gremlins are not skilled fighters but when attacked they will defend themselves. They try to keep out of reach, throwing fire, corrosives, or anything about. Gremlins prefer to let their traps do their fighting for them.

**GREMLIN UNLUCK AURA:** Gremlins naturally generate an aura of ill-fortune. If anything can go wrong in a given situation, it probably will. Any creature within a 20 ft radius must make a Charisma save or suffer bad luck as long as they remain in the aura. Those affected must roll two d20s whenever called upon for a d20 roll (attack rolls, skill checks, or saving throws) and must use the lower of the two rolls. A roll of 1 indicates a mishap of some kind such as an attack or spell going wild and striking the wrong target or affecting the attacker. Animals and other gremlins are immune to the aura. Any character benefitting from a luck bonus (such as that granted by a **luckstone** or **divine favor**) is immune to the gremlin's aura.

Gremlin magic targets mechanical devices first. A crossbow might burst into a shower of parts, belt buckles pop and breeches fall to the floor, ax-heads fly off their shafts, etc. The exact effects depend on the situation and the Gamemaster's twisted imagination. In general, the magic should not be deadly but is most definitely malignant and inconvenient.

**STEALTHY:** Gremlins make Move Silently and Hide checks with a +5 bonus.

**SPELL-LIKE ABILITIES:** Gremlins may use the **prestidigitation** spell at will, they are remarkably creative and resourceful when using this ability.

**CHURCH BELL VULNERABILITY:** The chime of a blessed bell upsets the gremlins like nails on a chalkboard, stunning them within 20 ft. unless they make a Wisdom save DC 3. The stun effect lasts 1 round.

## **WATER WEIRD**

NO. ENCOUNTERED: 1-3

SIZE: S - L (4 - 8 ft tall)

HD: 3+3 - 5+3 (3d8+3 - 5d8+3)

MOVE: 40 ft. swim.

AC: 14/15

ATTACKS: 1 slam 1d6/1d8/1d10 + grab

SPECIAL: Elemental Traits, Darkvision, Twilight Vision, Resistances, Improved Grab, Drowning, Reform, Waterbound, Water Elemental Control

SAVES: P

INT Average

ALIGNMENT: Chaotic Evil

TYPE: Elemental

TREASURE: 3-5

XP: 135 + 3, 270 + 4, 550 + 5

The elemental planes are inhabited by many strange denizens, and the water weird is but one of them. These malevolent elemental-kin are the barracuda of the elemental plane of water, swimming invisibly about feeding on the life force of any creature they encounter. Rarely (1%), summoning a water elemental (either by spell or item) will also summon 1d4 water weirds of the same size as the elemental. The water weirds arrive angry, and the unsuspecting spellcaster will have no control over the irate



conjurings. In such cases the summoner had best act quickly to avoid disaster.

On the material plane, water weirds are out of their element, literally. The instinctively hate non-elemental beings, taking great pleasure in killing and feeding on conjurors or those who attempt to control them. They are indiscriminate hunters, killing anything and anyone coming within reach of their pools.

When submerged, water weirds are for all intents and purposes invisible as the spell. When attacking prey on land, a weird takes the form of a sinister serpent with a voice of violently rushing water.

Planar scholars claim there are weirds inhabiting the planes of earth, air, and even fire as well as para-elemental-kin with exotic forms such as magma and ash.

**COMBAT:** Water weirds attack from ambush, using their invisibility to stalk their prey or erupting from the water pummeling and then snatching their victims. The slam attack is followed up by a powerful grasp, pulling the victim under the water where they are held fast. After the victim drowns, their life force feeds the hunger of the weird. Slashing, piercing, and fire-based attacks are less effective against water weirds, even then when reduced to 0 hp the weird reforms.

It takes one round for a water weird to take serpentine form. A water weird's attacks and traits are dependent upon their size (see below).

Size	Height	HD	AC	Attacks	Str	Dmg
Small	4 ft.	3d8+3	13	6 HD	14	1d6 + grab
Medium	6 ft.	4d8+3	14	7 HD	16	1d8 + grab
Large	8-10 ft.	5d8+3	15	8 HD	18	1d10 + grab

**RESISTANCES:** Wyrds take half damage from piercing and slashing weapons and attacks, and fire.

**IMPROVED GRAB:** The victim of a successful slam attack is grabbed if the water weird rolls a Strength check. If successful the victim is held underwater and is subject to drowning (see page 171 of the Castle Keepers Guide). While held the victim cannot move but is allowed a Strength check each round to try to break free.

**DROWNING:** The round following a successful grab, the target begins to drown. The victim can survive for a number of rounds equal to one half its Constitution score. Victims can be pulled from the weird's grasp on a successful touch attack followed by a successful attack by the rescuer.

**TRANSPARENT:** While in water, a water weird is considered **invisible**.

**REFORM:** When reduced to 0 hp the wyrd collapses and reforms fully healed in 1d4+1 rounds.

**VULNERABILITIES:** Cold magics acts as a **slow** spell unless a Constitution save is successful. A **purify water** spell permanently kills the weird unless the elemental makes a successful Constitution saving throw. **Dust of dryness** destroys water weirds unless a Constitution saving throw is successful, even then the wyrd takes 5d6 hp damage.

**WATERBOUND:** Water weirds are clumsy in shallow water (less than 6 inches deep), moving at 20 ft. per round. On dry land water weirds struggle to move, 10 ft. per round and lose 1 HD of hit points per round as their essence loses cohesion and drains away. At 0 hp they are destroyed for good. While on dry land a water weird panics savagely lashing with +1 to hit and +1 to damage rolls.

**WATER ELEMENTAL CONTROL:** A water weird coming into physical contact with a water elemental may take control of it on a successful Intelligence check. A controlled elemental, such as that by a spellcaster, the CL is equal to spellcaster's Intelligence modifier. Control lasts a number of hours equal to the HD of the water weird.

### APPENDIX THREE: MINIATURES

While it's not necessary to play *The Vanishing Blackguard* with miniatures, it makes the game much more enjoyable and makes combat much easier to imagine.

Here's a handy list of all the miniatures you can use when running *The Vanishing Blackguard*. This list is just a suggestion, after all, so GMs should change this list to whatever else he or she prefers. And, as always, all of these miniatures are available at [www.reapermini.com](http://www.reapermini.com)!

#### 07002 SIR RICTUS THE UNDYING



#### AREA 2: GUARDROOM

**Skeletons:** 77237, 77238, 77239, 77240, 77241 Skeleton Guardians



#### AREA 3: RUINED WORKSHOP

**Fire Elemental:** 77083 Medium Fire Elemental



#### AREA 5: OSSUARY

**Ghouls:** 03716 Ghouls



**Skeletal Grapplers:** 03471 Zombies



**Wight:** 02105 Labella Demornay



**Berdrum:** servant from 03126 Ghoul Queen set

#### AREA 7: LABORATORY

**Gremlins:** 77497 Gremlins



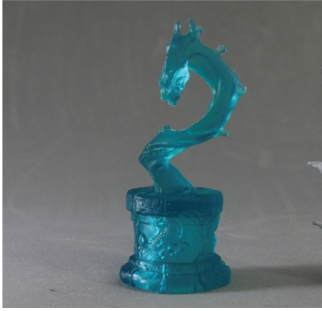
#### AREA 8: LIBRARY

**Mummified Troll:** 02680 Undead Troll



### AREA 9: SILENT GARDEN

**Water Wyrds:** 77310 Water Weird



### AREA 10: STORAGE

**Ghouls:** 03716 Ghouls

**Zombies:** 50317 Zombie Miners



**Skeletons:** 77237, 77238, 77239, 77240, 77241 Skeleton Guardians

### AREA 11. OUBLIETTE

**Giant Rats:** 77016 Giant Rats



**Barrow Rats:** 77198 Barrow Rats



**Gibbering Mouther:** 77521 Gravewailer



### AREA 12: GROTTO

**Killer Frogs:** 02665



**Troglodytes:** 77154, 77155, 77425, 77426 Lizardmen



### AREA 13: SUMMONING CHAMBER

**Bazlabrehaxx the Imp:** 02756 Familiars (far right)



### WANDERING MONSTERS

**Bugbears:** 77015, 77231, 77232, 77233 Bugbears

**Stirges:** 02691 Striges

**Ghouls:** 03716 Ghouls

**Small Spiders:** 77126 Vermin - Spiders

**Medium Spiders:** 59031 Terrantula

**Large Spiders:** 77025 Giant Spider

**Shadows:** 77369 Shadow

**Wraith:** 77097 Wraith

**Ochre Jelly:** 77306 Translucent Slimes

In addition, it can be a lot of fun to use various tables, chairs, benches, coffins, sarcophagi, and other various pieces of terrain to use in combat. You can find lots of dungeon dressing at [www.reapermini.com](http://www.reapermini.com)!



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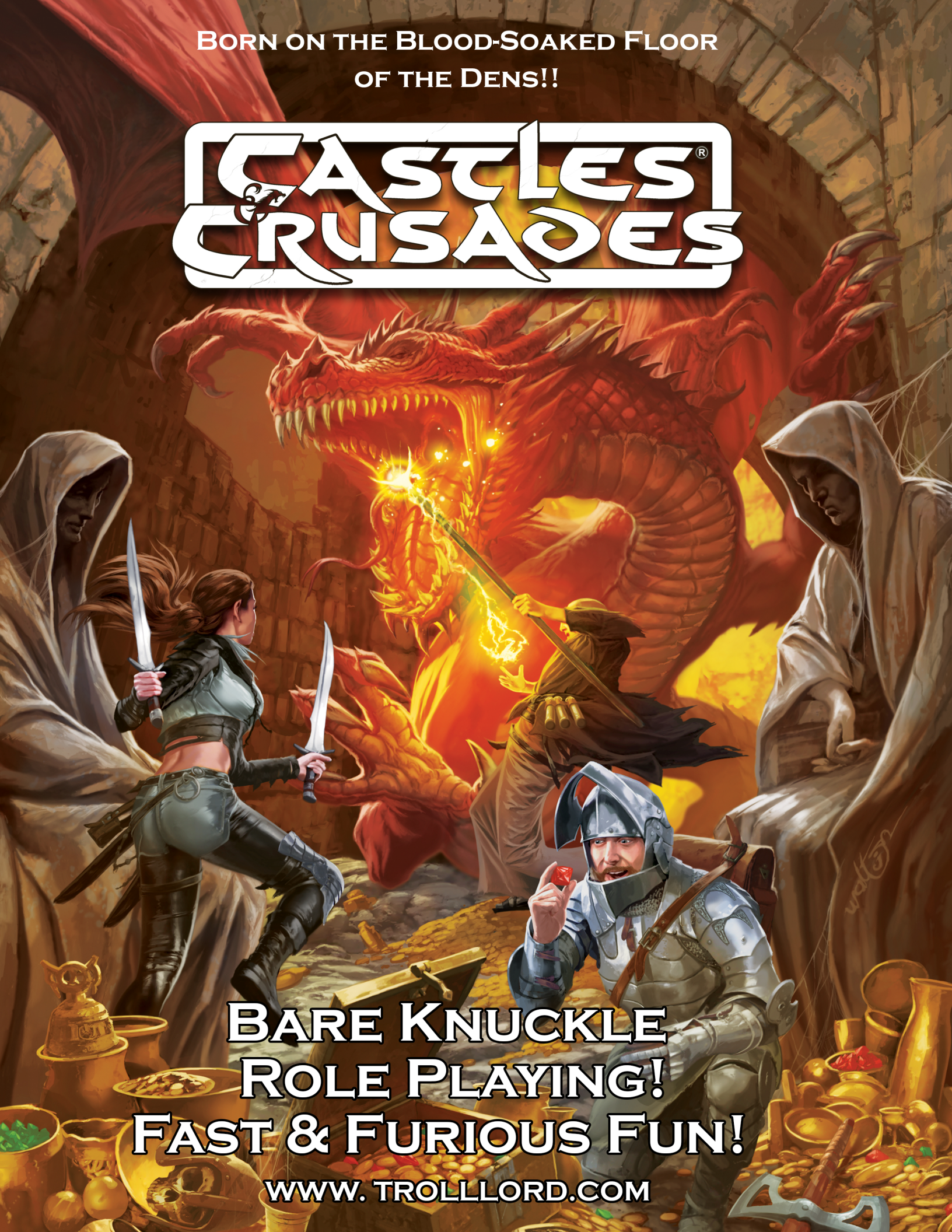
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