

Advanced Dungeons & Dragons®

FORGOTTEN REALMS™

Official Game Adventure

**The Throne of
Bloodstone**

by Douglas Niles and Michael Dobson



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Table of Contents

Introduction	2	Pregenerated 100th-Level Characters	91
Running 100th-Level Characters	6	Mazes	65, 67-69
Prologue	9	Cover Maps for the Palace of Orcus	93, 95
Chapter 1: Citadel of the Witch-King	12	City Maze of Orcusgate	94
Chapter 2: Into the Abyss	30	Battle Arena	96
Chapter 3: Realm of the Undead	46	NPC Capsules	
Chapter 4: The Abyssian Fortress	57	Arctigis	15
Chapter 5: Into the Seven Heavens	78	Zhengyi	19
Epilogue: Return to Bloodstone Pass	82	Klavikus	23
People of Bloodstone Pass	85	Dimwold	50
Pregenerated Player Characters	86	The Dire Whiner	55
		Fyrillicus	58
		Baphomet	64
		Glyphimhor	72
		Orcus	76

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INTRODUCTION

Notes for the Dungeon Master

The four-module Bloodstone Pass campaign series (of which this is part four) explores what is one of the most interesting aspects of the AD&D® game: becoming a ruler.

Although the *Dungeon Masters Guide* provides that a character of sufficient level can build a castle, hire an army, and set himself (or herself) up as a proper medieval ruler, the rules given for accomplishing this are not sufficient to allow ruling and role playing to go together. Instead, high-level characters who become rulers are normally considered to be “retired” from adventuring. Perhaps from time to time these old warhorses in your campaign get trotted out for a particularly tough challenge, leaving their seneschals behind to administer their dominions for a while. But mostly the campaign moves on to younger, newer characters.

More often, players avoid the burdens of rulership altogether, preferring to maintain their high-level characters as freelance adventurers, ready to move on to the next dungeon, carrying their treasure in their backpacks or in the saddlebags of their mounts, or in a convenient magical chest that neatly avoids the issue of encumbrance altogether.

It has been our feeling for a long time that there is a lot more that can be done with characters who become rulers. The Bloodstone Pass saga is our attempt to show that high-level AD&D® game play can be qualitatively, as well as quantitatively, different from low- and medium-level play—and just as exciting.

In this conclusion to the saga, the villain that has been lurking just behind the scenes, Orcus, Prince of the Undead, comes to center stage, as

the player characters must enter the Abyss and defeat Orcus on his own territory in order to secure their kingdom. The authors acknowledge their debt to the spirits of such great traditional dungeon-crawls as the infamous S1, *Tomb of Horror*, and Q1, *Queen of the Demonweb Pits*. Dave Sutherland, co-author of Q1, and currently Chief Mapmaker for TSR, is the designer of the castles of the Witch-King and of Orcus, and his malevolent, sinister imagination is greatly appreciated.

As noted in H3, *The Bloodstone Wars*, this series was integrated into the new FORGOTTEN REALMS™ Fantasy Game Setting from TSR, Inc. The Forgotten Realms is the creation of the incredibly talented Ed “Elminster” Greenwood, whose columns in DRAGON® Magazine have inspired many a campaign. A certain amount of retrofitting had to take place to shoehorn this campaign into the larger world, including melting a large glacier on the original maps from Ed Greenwood’s campaign to make room for the kingdoms of Damara and Vaasa.

Pre-generated characters are provided for those players whose characters are not yet of sufficient levels. Certain situations are built around the specific abilities of these characters, but handling those situations should pose no challenge for the experienced Dungeon Master.

High-level modules are inherently open-ended, because of the vast range of options available to powerful characters. It takes skill and a firm hand to run such an adventure successfully, but we have confidence in your ability to handle the unforeseen in the context of the evolving plot.

This is the first module written for people who run super-high level characters. Although we do not endorse the so-called “Monty Haul” cam-

paign, there’s nothing wrong in sampling what *really* high-level play has to offer!

As usual, the authors will be pleased to answer questions when accompanied by a stamped, self-addressed envelope, mailed to us using the address on the back cover. Good luck, and good adventuring!

What Has Gone Before

Players whose characters have adventured in the first three modules of the H-series should be familiar with the background information that is summarized here. Players who are new to the Bloodstone Pass campaign need to be given the general background; it may also not hurt to refresh the memories of the other players. Certain “deep background” information is for the use of the Dungeon Master only; the player characters will discover the truth soon enough. . . .

This material may be read or shown directly to the players, or it may be revealed in the course of the adventure as the PCs explore the area, conduct research, or ask those whom they encounter.

The Kingdoms of Damara and Vaasa

For generations, the cold northern wastes supported a scant population of hunters, trappers, and poor farmers. These hardy souls scabbled a meager living from the hard, stony soil; they barely endured the long, dark winters.

But that was before the coming of the Witch-King, Zhengyi, who formed the Kingdom of Vaasa and in a single night built an evil castle atop a lonely crag, from which his sinister shadow crept across the land.

Some said that Zhengyi had enlisted the aid of powerful demons, or was a demon himself, and this must have been true, for the Kingdom of Vaasa soon raised a powerful army of human, non-human, and undead warriors—far more than the poor northern lands could possibly support. And with this army, Vaasa became a power to be reckoned with in the Forgotten Realms.

The armies of the Witch-King invaded the peaceful Kingdom of Damara without warning. At first they seemed unstoppable. But the army of Damara was brave and well-trained, and soon the tides of battle turned. For 10 long, bloody years, the forces of Vaasa and Damara fought, neither able to achieve final victory. Many thousands of brave warriors and fell creatures died.

Then, in the summer of 1147, King Virdin faced the Witch-King's cohorts at the Ford of Goliad in what would be the final engagement of the long war. Some say it was the treachery of the King's chief lieutenant, Felix (who was reputed to be secretly a member of the Guild of Assassins, in league with the enemy), that betrayed the young King to his death, and threw his army into utter defeat.

The Witch-King and his secret ally, the Grandfather of Assassins, moved quickly to consolidate the victory. In a single night, the most loyal and powerful nobles of Damara were slain by sword and by poison, leaving the craven, the incompetent, and the disloyal to sue for peace.

Indeed, the Witch-King would make peace, but on his own terms. He took the rich northern provinces for his own, then generously granted "independence" to the southern lords. . . as long as they paid tribute and acknowledged the Witch-King's power. This was a shrewd political move, for each petty baron and duke

conspired against the others for scraps of power and wealth, throwing the entire south into political chaos. A steady stream of refugees moved south, searching for an ever-elusive safety and leaving economic chaos in its wake.

The Barony of Bloodstone

Hardship and poverty had long been no stranger to one small barony. The Barony of Bloodstone, so named for the deep-green chalcedony flecked with red jasper that was mined there, had once been a prosperous, if small, province of Damara, located in a verdant valley in the Galena Mountains. In addition to the gems that were its trademark, the barony gave its name to Bloodstone Pass, the major route through the Galenas to points north and west, including Zhentil Keep and the Moonsea. The valley was home to humans, dwarves, centaurs, and halflings, who farmed the land, mined the mountains, and maintained the trade routes. All gave their loyalty to the Baron, and lived in peace for many generations.

But at approximately the time the Witch-King came to power in the north, the first of a series of disasters befell the Barony of Bloodstone.

First was the loss of the mines. Once, the bloodstone mines produced stones worth well over 100,000 gp annually. Human and dwarven workers toiled side by side beneath the earth, providing a steady stream of wealth. But one day, a duergar discovered a strange pool of mercury within which lurked a nameless evil. The evil awoke, and death stalked the mines. Only a few mine workers returned to tell the tale. Many brave souls tried to enter the mines to discover the truth and defeat the evil, but none returned alive.

Next came the fell winter of 1137, known as the Wolf Winter. A poor

harvest followed by a long and terrible winter caused mass starvation, and dire wolves from the Galenas preyed on whatever they could find. Some of the wolves were infected with lycanthropy, compounding the horror. Many people starved in that long winter, and those who dared to hunt for food themselves became fodder for the dire wolves.

The next disaster struck the following year, when the Witch-King's armies closed the passes through the Galenas, cutting off the Barony of Bloodstone's remaining source of wealth. Many families left for the south that year, and the population of the valley dwindled to a scant fraction of what it had been. The remaining humans gathered close to the village of Bloodstone, abandoning the outlying areas. The dwarves, halflings, and centaurs who shared the valley became clannish and insular, and withdrew to their own communities. Poverty settled in the valley. Bandits and strange creatures began to infest the passes to the south. Escape was no longer possible; the valley of Bloodstone was now completely isolated.

Then the final disaster struck. In 1147, following the defeat at the Ford of Goliad, the Grandfather of Assassins, whose mysterious citadel was long rumored to be hidden in the Galenas, reached out to organize the bandits of the mountains. Soon, a virtual army (allied with Vaasa, of course) had built a camp in the canyon that once held the mining operations. The poor citizens of Bloodstone knew nothing of this, until the army began demanding tribute of gold, food. . . and finally, slaves.

Baron Tranth, 5th Baron of Bloodstone, was discouraged from long years of hardship and defeat. His oath to protect and defend his people had kept him going through each successive disaster. . . even the personal trag-

edy of his wife's death in childbirth. He had counseled that his people give tribute to the bandits—anything, just to keep surviving. But slavery was worse than death, and so he resolved to fight back, even at the risk of losing all.

He needed help—powerful help, but where could he turn? There was no treasure with which to buy mercenaries. He could only beg. Garlen and Garvin, two cousins, were sent south just before the fall harvest to seek the aid of powerful adventurers who might save his people.

The Adventure of Bloodstone Pass

In H1, *Bloodstone Pass*, Garlen and Garvin approached a party of adventurers in the town of Valls, capitol of the Duchy of Arcata. Although they could only afford to offer a fee of five silver pieces per day, the adventurers agreed to help.

Operating under a cloak of secrecy and aided by the powerful magic of the seven heroes, the village prepared for battle. First, a party of tribute collectors was ambushed and wiped out. The villagers, long used to defeat, were elated. Then came a battle on the open field, and a punitive expedition by the bandit army was defeated!

But then came a night of horror, when a Priest of Orcus conjured the dead of the Bloodstone graveyard to unholy life, and corpses shambled the streets. A simultaneous sneak attack by enemy cavalry resulted in much of the village being burned. The people of Bloodstone were sore afraid, but resolved that death was preferable to subjugation and slavery. Thus it was that the first clue of the presence of the Prince of the Undead came to light.

Then came the final battle, as the Grandfather of Assassins himself took the field. The aged, the women, and

the children took up arms, and all the enemy's might could not sway them. The bandit army was broken, and the Grandfather of Assassins retreated by magic to his mountain fastness.

The beautiful daughter and heiress of Baron Tranth, Lady Christine, fell in love with one of the adventurers, a brave paladin, and they planned to wed. It seemed that with the powerful patronage of these adventurers, the Barony of Bloodstone might have a bright future.

Yet even in the moment of victory, the Baron realized that very soon winter would set in. Even now, the cold northern winds were bringing the first frost to the valley. . . .

The Mines of Bloodstone

In H2, *The Mines of Bloodstone*, an early winter set in and the villagers began to fear a repeat of the Wolf Winter. The military success of the past few months had not solved all the problems of Bloodstone, and the adventurers were once again called to action. But as they began to investigate the food situation, a new night of horror descended on the village. At a home near the Abbey of St. Sollars, a peasant family had been foully massacred by worgs, and there was evidence of vampirism. And painted on a wall in the blood of the victims was a goat's head—sigil of Orcus, Prince of the Undead.

All signs in the investigation pointed to the long-closed bloodstone mines, and it was there that the adventurers traveled. The abandoned mine shafts were redolent with evil; at the bottom, demons and succubi eagerly awaited new victims.

On defeating the demons and succubi, the heroes rescued two svirfneblin gnomes, who revealed the existence of a huge cavern city of duergar far beneath the mines. Once, the gnomes said, the city had been

occupied by the svirfneblin, while the duergar led mean and squalid lives outside the cavern network. Over many years, the duergar had preyed on the deep gnomes, but never achieved military victory.

But one night a lone duergar crept into the gnome city to steal food and perhaps murder a few gnomes. Sneaking through an infrequently used tunnel, he found an open mine shaft. Curious, he crawled inside, and found there a pool of mercury, glistening coldly. He felt a calling from it, a sense of implacable evil that thrilled him. He stretched out his hand, touched the mercury, and was instantly transformed into a figure of transcendent horror—an avatar of Orcus, Prince of the Undead.

The spirit of Orcus ravaged the city of the svirfneblin, driving them from their homes and destroying their civilization in a single night of horror. The horror then stalked the mine shafts near the surface to bring death—and worse—to those who worked there. Then the avatar dissipated, leaving the strange pool of mercury gleaming with its eerie blue light.

The duergar were quick to exploit the destruction of the svirfneblin, and took the city for their own. Clerics of the duergar found the glowing pool, and learned its awful secret: it was a *gate* to the lower planes of the Abyss, and through it Orcus would one day be able to enter the Prime Material plane and claim it for his own.

The duergar built a huge Temple of Orcus with the pool of mercury at its center. Guards, wards, and fiendish traps were set about it to keep anyone from penetrating its secrets. The svirfneblin, shattered remnants of their former glory, lurked in small caves outside the city, hoping one day to return.

After hearing this story, the adventurers proceeded down the narrow corridors that led to the great cavern of the duergar city, escaped through the city in a desperate rush, then entered the catacombs outside, finally locating the gnome king.

King Ruggedo of the *svirfneblin* quickly realized that destiny was upon him. He suggested to the adventurers that a military attack by the *svirfneblin* would create a diversion while the heroes penetrated the Temple of Orcus to destroy the evil at its center.

Passing through the eight Tests of Orcus, the adventurers finally reached the Pool of Orcus in the Dark Sanctuary at the very heart of the temple, and there managed to disrupt a ceremony of *summoning* at the last instant before Orcus penetrated the Prime Material plane!

With the rupture of the ceremony, Orcus was forced back into the Abyss. The duergar were routed from the city by the *svirfneblin* army, to flee into the twisted corridors of the great Underdark. The grateful King Ruggedo swore a treaty of eternal friendship, and the mines of Bloodstone were restored.

And it was thus that Baron Tranth offered the hand of his daughter, Lady Christine, in marriage. And as a dowry, Baron Tranth gave the barony itself as a fief to his new son-in-law, retiring to become an adviser to the new baron and baroness.

The Bloodstone Wars

With the evil of the mines destroyed, the dwarves of Bloodstone and the *svirfneblin* of Deepearth were able to reopen the mines and restore them to full production. Within six months, a fortune of nearly one million gold pieces worth of the fabled bloodstones had been mined. Yet gems are worthless unless traded for

goods and gold, and so the adventurers were once again pressed into service to take the gems to the Free City of Heliogabalus.

The overland journey was hazardous, involving border crossings, bribes, and encounters with hostile and suspicious guards from the petty baronies and duchies that lie between Bloodstone and Heliogabalus. But the fabled, sin-ridden city of Heliogabalus was at the end of the journey, and the adventurers sold the gems at good prices, recruiting several units of mercenaries in the process.

One cannot sell a million gold pieces worth of gems without setting off rumors, and the word of the wealth of Bloodstone Pass spread like wildfire. Thousands of refugees in Heliogabalus and neighboring provinces heard the word; so did the petty princes, dukes, and barons of what was once southern Damara. The mysterious Grandfather of Assassins heard the word in his mountain fastness. And, in his evil castle in the far north, the Witch-King of Vaasa heard... but, of course, he had known the truth ever since the defeat of the Priests of Orcus in their temple deep beneath the earth.

Refugees, scoundrels, adventurers, traders, soldiers, farmers, and laborers all headed into the Galena Mountains toward Bloodstone Pass. The new citizens of the valley were put to work, cultivating farmland, building new towns, building fortifications, and drilling as soldiers. For war was inevitable...if not with Vaasa at first, then certainly with the jealous lords of neighboring states.

William the Lazy, eighth Duke of Arcata, in league with the Grandfather of Assassins, was first to strike, by using the Chief Assassin, a man known only as the Fist, in a midnight attack to eliminate the troublesome adventurers. The attack failed, but

war was declared.

The Bloodstone Wars began with an invasion of Bloodstone Pass by the Duchy of Arcata, then a lightning counterattack by the forces of Bloodstone against Valls, capital city of the Duchy. Adding the Duchy of Arcata to their realms, the adventurers next battled the Duchy of Carmathan in a clash of steel.

With the news of war in Arcata and Carmathan, the minor baronies of Ostel, Morov, and Polten united to face the threat to their "independence." Upon their defeat, the southern provinces of the old kingdom of Damara were reunited, owing fealty to the new realm of Bloodstone.

The Witch-King and his ally, the Grandfather of Assassins, decided that enough was enough. Plotting to lure the troublesome heroes into the mountain fastness of the Grandfather of Assassins, they sent one of their number to be captured. Upon interrogation of their prisoner, the adventurers learned the secret location of the Grandfather's fortress. Unable to launch a direct military attack, they used stealth to enter the fortress.

That, of course, was all according to plan. Lured into the fiendishly deadly Assassins' Run, it looked like certain death for the heroes. But through superhuman effort (and perhaps a little bit of luck), they survived even this challenge.

Resuming the military offensive, the Bloodstone Army pushed the Vaasan troops back to the Ford of Goliad, site of the greatest defeat of the Damaran Army. But the forces of the Witch-King held the other bank. Whichever army crossed the river first would be vulnerable to the other, and so a stalemate seemed inevitable.

RUNNING 100th-LEVEL CHARACTERS

A large part of the fun of playing the AD&D® game is the opportunity to do the impossible. Even at low levels, the thrill of entering a strange fantasy world where the laws of magic supersede the laws of science lets you slip loose from one reality and enter another one. But the characters who populate our favorite fantasy novels are much greater than the average characters who inhabit our campaign. Heretofore, we've been encouraging you to moderate your lusts for power and play "ordinary" fantasy characters rather than the great heroes of myth and legend.

There are, of course, quite good reasons for this. First and foremost, game balance is much easier to maintain when the power level of players is kept to reasonable levels. Even an experienced Dungeon Master can be overcome by a party of aggressive, super-powerful player characters.

Another reason is our desire to maintain the illusion of reality—what science fiction writers refer to as the "willing suspension of disbelief." Within our fantasies we maintain strict standards of realism. Ultimately, if you as players and DMs cannot believe in our illusions, we have failed you.

Third, we have been suspicious of the desire to play super-high level characters. We tend to believe that most people who want to play 100th-level characters are motivated primarily by the desire to have unkillable PCs—thereby eliminating the challenge of the game. We believe that unkillable PCs and a never-ending supply of easy wealth may be attractive for a short while, but boredom with the game inevitably sets in, and the campaign eventually collapses.

Therefore, we advocate balanced games, where the rewards are given for heroism, skill, and excellent play. The AD&D game and the role-

playing hobby are best served by people running fun, exciting games that can last a long time.

In spite of these reasons, there are corresponding reasons why people want to play super-high characters legitimately. First, we believe, is the thrill of role playing great fantasy heroes—wizards with a seemingly endless arsenal of powerful spells, great fighters who can cleave an enemy from head to breastbone with a single blow, crafty thieves of ultimate skill and daring. There is also the desire to test the ultimate limits of the game system, to "max-out" a character with everything that the AD&D game can provide. And finally there is the desire to confront in battle those creatures in the various monster manuals that are beyond the reach of ordinary mortals.

The challenge was too great to resist (not that we tried very hard). It turned out to be easier than we thought, once we discovered the three principles of running 100th-level characters: 100th-level characters are not 10 times more powerful than 10th-level characters; apply all the rules strictly; and never give a 100th-level character an even break. Follow these strictures carefully, discuss them with your players, and you, too, can successfully run a super-powerful adventure!

Four sample 100th-level PCs are described on pages 91 and 92.

1. 100th-Level Characters Are Not 10 Times More Powerful Than 10th-Level Characters

The relative power difference between levels tends to lessen dramatically as the levels increase. The cleric, magic-user, and illusionist all reach the limit of the number of spells they can memorize at a time at 29th-level. Above 19th-level for clerics and 21st level for magic-users and illu-

sionists, there is no further decrease in number to hit AC0 (THAC0) or in saving throws. The cleric gets 2 more hp /level and the magic-user or illusionist gets 1 more hp/level and that's all. That means a 100th-level cleric differs from a 29th-level cleric by a theoretical maximum of 142 hit points, and by nothing else. Now, 142 extra hit points is nice, but against the level of opponents a 100th-level cleric is liable to face, it is not a huge protection. Fighters can get huge hit point bonuses, but their lack of spell abilities or other special talents still keep them loosely within the bounds of reason, since their THAC0 and saving throws top out at level 17. Thief ability increases stop at 17th level (23d for thief-acrobat), and the THAC0 and saving throws do not improve past 21st level.

Another way that extremely high-level characters differ from lower-level ones is in the number and power of the magical items they possess. A hundred or so extra hit points may not disrupt your game balance, but a fighter with a *vorpil holy dancing luck blade* +25, Intelligence 17, all primary abilities, extraordinary powers, special purpose powers, plus 29th-level spell use and +50 bonus to wielder's AC may be a little tough to handle. There is a simple solution: restrict characters to the magical items listed in official AD&D rule books, modules, and possibly DRAGON® Magazine, and don't allow them to have artifacts. Even if 100th-level characters load themselves down with one of everything in the *DMG*, there are still limits—a fighter can hardly use more than two swords at a time (well, three if you use a *sword of dancing*), a magic-user cannot wear more than two magical rings at the same time, and all characters must account for the encumbrance of all items carried.

Still, a character can acquire too many magical items even at lower levels, and so a 100th-level character is still not hugely more powerful than, say, a greedy 15th-level character with a too-generous DM.

Finally, characters of very high level will frequently elevate all or at least most of their statistics above 18, using *wishes*, various tomes and manuals, intervention of the gods, artifacts, and other means. Although this gave us pause at first, we realized that if we were going to design an adventure for 100th-level characters, we should assume that people who create 100th-level characters will tend to give them stats above 18. So we consulted *Legends & Lore* to determine the effect of super stats, and found that they were not as disrupting as we had feared.

There is an absolute limit of 25 in each stat. A Strength of 25 only gives a bonus of +7 to hit, +14 to damage, and some bonuses for opening magical doors and bending bars/lifting gates (100%). Dexterity is also easy to handle, giving bonuses to reaction/attack and defense, and some adjustments to thief scores.

Intelligence poses some challenge, because with an Intelligence of 25 a character is effectively immune to all illusion/phantasm spells. To handle this, avoid using illusion/phantasm spells as the basis for traps. You can cover a pit of boiling lava with an illusion of a stone floor and fool normal characters, but with high-level PCs, hollow out stone blocks until they form a thin crust that will collapse under the weight of a normal human, cover the pit with that, and the ability to see through illusions won't help the characters. The illusion/phantasm spell is an easy tool for dungeon designers, but you can avoid it with some effort.

Beings with very high Wisdom scores are immune to most charm-

type spells, psionic abilities, and spell-like effects, as described in *L&L*, pg. 7. Avoid using such spells in your dungeons, or concentrate them against non-clerics.

The effects of high Constitution are most beneficial to fighters, since other classes can't get more than an extra 2 hp/level even with a constitution of 25. The automatic regeneration ability can be troublesome if your dungeon strategy is to wear down the party slowly, but the maximum possible regeneration of 1 hp/turn only results in 144 hp/day. One good 100-HD *fireball* will take care of that neatly.

Charisma bonuses give characters innate *awe* abilities. This may prove very effective against some low-level opponents, but does not affect enemies of high Intelligence or of greater than 12 HD or levels.

Saving throws of some characters will fall below zero because of race/class bonuses, magical items, or high stats. Give your key traps some saving throw penalties to compensate, such as powerful poison that gives a -10 penalty to saving throws.

Overall, although these walking tanks are nobody's pushovers, they are just not that much more powerful than characters of mid-20th-level. It is critical to design adventures that are appropriate to the powers and abilities of these characters, but then it is always appropriate to design any adventure based on the level, skill, and interests of your campaign participants.

2. Apply All the Rules Strictly

The AD&D® game is very carefully balanced. It may sometimes seem to you (and has sometimes seemed to us) that some tiny little rules are unimportant nuisances, but we have discovered that those ostensibly

unimportant rules turn out to be extremely important after all. Especially when running high-level characters, it becomes vital to apply all the rules strictly and precisely. For example, it would be relatively easy to extend the magic-user spell acquisition table past 29th-level, but then a 100th-level character wizard would have an incredible 15 spells each for levels 1-4 and 14 spells each for levels 5-9. If the THAC0 tables for fighters were extended, a 100th-level fighter would hit AC 0 on a -40 on 1d20, plus get 11 attacks every 2 rounds. Strictly following the rules as they are written puts a reasonable brake on PC improvement.

Spell descriptions are also important to follow. Material spell components for certain high-level spells are very difficult and expensive to obtain, thus limiting the ease with which a PC can have multiples of those spells ready for immediate use. Finding material spell components takes time, and some spell components are bulky. Spell memorization times get longer and longer, also putting some limits on magic-users. To memorize the full range of spells of a 29th-level spell-caster takes 70 hours, or slightly less than three days.

The *DMG* provides rules for the maximum number of magical rings that can be worn at a time, and for the effects of drinking multiple potions. Some character classes cannot use certain items; some classes, like the paladin, are restricted as to the number of items they can use. Magic-users must have spell books to recharge spells, which take up bulk.

Don't give an automatic *identify* of new items discovered in the adventure; make players experiment. Maybe you'll get them to take a cursed item or two.

As mentioned earlier, study the strengths and weaknesses of the PCs

in your campaign when creating an adventure, and tailor the monsters, traps and tricks to make them truly challenging. In the adventure in H4, for example, we take the PCs to the Abyss, and strictly apply the rules in *Manual of the Planes*, which will help us keep the characters' powers under control, as you will see.

3. Never Give a 100th-Level Character an Even Break

At low levels, it is often incumbent on the DM to make adjustments on behalf of the PCs—fudging the odd die roll when an unfair “instant death” result would hurt the game. But as characters get more powerful, it is appropriate for you to get stricter in applying the rules.

Let's say that you manage to trap a party in a vat of boiling acid, and they take a mere 100 hp of damage apiece. They shrug it off, perhaps using a few *heal* spells. But then you insist that they make a saving throw for each item in their possession. The magic-user's spell books save at a 10, the cleric's *pearl of wisdom* saves at an 11, all scrolls in the party save at a 14, etc.

Challenging a party of high-level characters is often a matter of attrition. Each individual monster, trap, or trick may do only minor damage, but it all adds up after a while. Work at designing adventures that force characters to move forward, rather than retreating to safety to recharge spells and heal damage. If they stop, attack them to disrupt the rest and recuperation they need. Bleed off their spells by giving them juicy targets.

Run their opponents intelligently; don't give them lots of dumb cannon fodder (unless your goal is simply to drain their magic). Almost any monster in the system, from the wimpy kobold up to Orcus himself, can be

made into a powerful opponent if intelligently handled.

With one player per PC, the PCs are normally much more effectively run than are the monsters, which are all handled by a harried, overworked DM. Consider recruiting one or two assistant DMs to run the monsters. That way, the odds are evened up, since the assistant DMs will run their monsters as effectively as possible.

Select the right monsters for your adventure. It doesn't take a lot of skill as a scenario designer to throw 50 tarasques at a party. It shows much more talent to use a less-powerful creature cleverly. A *ring of spell turning* on a monster of middling power turns the party's magical strength against them. Or just working out details of creature tactics in advance can vastly increase the strength of even a minor monster.

Challenge high-level PCs by taking them to an environment that restricts their power. We've chosen the Abyss; virtually any extra-planar location has its plusses. On the way to the Abyss, we first enter the Astral Plane, where all sorts of fun things can occur. A broken *silver cord*, for example. The *silver cord* of a 100th-level character is no more resistant to being broken than that of a 1st-level character. Magical items and spells that tap into extradimensional space or the Ethereal or inner planes do not function in the Astral. These spells include *Leomund's secret chest*, *deppockets*, *bag of holding*, etc. This has the delightful effect of drastically limiting what party members can carry.

In the Abyss, we have other interesting problems. For example, the *wish*, *limited wish*, and *alter reality* spells are granted by the nearest Power capable of granting such a desire—in this case, Orcus. All weapons, armor, and protection devices are reduced by one plus for each plane

through which they are taken, which means that all +5 swords are now only +3. Clerics turn undead at two levels lower than normal (that ability tops out at 14th, anyway), but can only recover 1st- and 2d-level spells. Remember that evil clerics can turn paladins.

When designing an adventure, it is easy to believe that the fiendish trap you have just designed spells automatic, instant death for your unwary PCs. This reminds us of the story about a scientist who put a chimpanzee in a room with only four ways to escape, to see which of the four the chimp would first discover. The chimp found a fifth way. So will your players.

The very best encounters don't rely on brute strength, but the intelligence and creativity of the player (not his character). All the power in the game is not enough when there is a puzzle to solve instead of a monster to fight. Or just changing the motivation of your monster from “kill the PCs” to something more subtle can make a great difference. Encounters that concentrate on role-playing skill rather than unlimbering the heavy artillery are just as challenging for a 100th-level character as for a 10th.

Fortunately, your objective is not necessarily to kill the PCs, but only to challenge them and make them believe that they *could* die. The looks of horror on your players' faces when a magic-user's spell book catches fire in a pool of boiling lava, or a paladin's *holy sword* disintegrates on a roll of 10, will make running the adventure truly worthwhile for the suitably fiendish DM.

PROLOGUE

Set-Up # 1: For New Players

Use this section if you have not played the earlier modules of this series.

Although this adventure can be integrated into your existing campaign world or played as a stand-alone adventure, it is designed for use with the FORGOTTEN REALMS™ Campaign Setting, which is recommended (but not absolutely essential) for play. The kingdoms of Damara and Vaasa are shown on the maps that come in the basic boxed set.

To set up the adventure, you must first lure your characters to Bloodstone Pass, located in the Galena Mountains that separate Damara and Vaasa. They could easily learn the story of the great war (as told in the Introduction) by a chance conversation in a tavern.

There are lots of potential motivations for PCs to travel to Bloodstone Pass. Plant a rumor or two about the amazing bloodstone mines in the Galena Mountains, and the normal greed of most parties will move them in the desired direction. Or have them learn the history of Damara and realize that there are great opportunities for military command and heroism. Both the winning and losing sides in a war make good employers. If characters in your campaign have a previous history of planar travel or demon-battling, a hint of the involvement of Orcus in the whole matter should get them excited.

If you are starting a new high-level campaign with this adventure, your players can create characters at any mutually agreeable level from 18th through 100th or use the pre-generated characters provided at the back of this book. You might start this high-level campaign with the Obliga-

tory Tavern Scene to bring the party together (You know, "Like, you're all in this tavern, see, and you introduce yourselves, and one of you says, 'Gee, let's find some monsters to kill,' and...."), then give them the background, and have at it. That's pretty basic, however, and we hope you'll be more creative than that. There are many ways to get a new group of characters together, such as the opening of H1, "The Circus of Doctor Trundles." Note that in the Forgotten Realms, most parties tend to have official party names.

To get characters from the southern provinces of Damara to Bloodstone Pass, they must climb the pass through the Galena Mountains. Module H1 has a route map and some pre-set encounters, but you can also use REF3 and REF4, *The Book of Lairs I and II*, and run several of the short adventures therein—they are much more exciting than a series of random encounters. No map is necessary.

When new characters enter the campaign, the DM has two choices: to leave Baron Tranth (see page 85) as Baron of Bloodstone Pass, or to use Gareth Dragonsbane (see page 86) as Baron. Either way, the bloodstone wealth of the barony has allowed the Baron to finance an army that has annexed the smaller baronies and battled the Army of Vaasa to the banks of the Goliad Ford. Lady Christine is unmarried, and may be attracted to one of the PCs, if that provides additional motivation for the party.

The PCs should stay at the Inn of the Clowns on their first night in the Barony. Here Stephan the Innkeeper, a blunt ex-soldier, engages them in conversation. Once satisfied of their ability and honor, he recommends them to the Baron. Stephan is well-respected, and his recommendation is enough to get the party an audience with both the Baron and his chief

counselor, Quillan the Sage. Lady Christine is also present. If the PCs are not already familiar with the story given in the Introduction, they are first briefed on what has happened up to this point. Then the Baron says the following:

"Through consultation of wise men, use of the mystic arts, and the craft of military intelligence, we now know that our opponent is in league with powerful demons. We suspect the Prince of the Undead, Orcus, whose name I shudder to even mention. Zhen-gyi, the Witch-King of Vaasa, is obviously a minion of that fell demon. The Witch-King's army consists largely of undead. We cannot cross the Ford of Goliad without being at a great disadvantage; if they crossed the ford first we could prevail in battle, but they show no signs of such foolishness, more is the pity.

"We have been seeking adventurers both brave and powerful enough to enter the castle of the Witch-King in the north of Vaasa, penetrate its secrets, learn the role of Orcus in this matter, and destroy the source of this evil once and for all.

"There is virtually no limit to the reward we would pay to rid ourselves of this evil, but there is virtually no limit to the dangers you may encounter in the castle. Come, let us discuss this matter together."

The Baron brings out fine brandy, and talks freely about the strategic situation. He and Quillan are pleased to answer any questions to which they know the answer. Although they do not know that the castle of the Witch-King leads to the Abyss, they can pro-

vide general advice on dealing with demons, and the treachery and evil of their opponents. See the next chapter for details.

Set-Up #2: Bloodstone Warriors

If you are continuing play from previous modules in the H-series, use Set-Up #2.

At the conclusion of H3, *The Bloodstone Wars*, the player characters should have conquered the southern duchies of Arcata and Carmathan, and the baronies of Ostel, Morov, and Polten, thereby reuniting southern Damara under the leadership of the Barony of Bloodstone. They should have developed the economy of Bloodstone Pass, absorbed large numbers of immigrants, and fortified the approaches to the valley. They may also have built castles for themselves. In addition, they should have completed the adventure of the Assassin's Run, and broken the power of the Grandfather of Assassins in southern Damara.

As the adventure opens, the main army of Bloodstone is probably encamped on the southern edge of the Ford of Goliad, facing the main army of Vaasa in a stalemate—whichever army crosses the ford first is likely to lose the battle. The characters are faced with the problem of how to break the stalemate and defeat Vaasa once and for all.

Since this is a role-playing game, there are other possibilities. The PCs could have lost one or more of the major engagements, or elected not to go to war in the first place, preferring to maintain the safety of Bloodstone at all costs. Alternatively, the PCs could have lost in a big way, and Bloodstone has fallen into the hands of the enemy. One or more of the PCs could be dead. If any of these event-

alities should occur, the problem is still the might of Vaasa, and the PCs need to defeat the Witch-King anyway. Once the power of the Witch-King is broken, all the other problems are solvable.

If the PCs were fully successful in H3, then Baron Tranth and Quillan the Sage suggested to the party that they declare that a new kingdom has been formed, and that they are monarchs. They have a choice whether to call their realm a united Kingdom of Damara, or to declare a new Kingdom of Bloodstone, or to name it something else (or, of course, not to do it at all). We have a personal preference for calling the new realm the Kingdom of Bloodstone, since the PCs probably don't have blood rights to the throne of Damara. (Of course, a pretender to the Damaran throne could spring up later, if you liked.)

If the PCs declare the kingdom, then they must either choose one of their number as king, or select one of the NPCs to be king (Baron Tranth is a good choice), then set up the operations of their new realm. (The Epilogue to this adventure goes into some detail on running the kingdom.) It is probably unwise for the characters to hold the proclamation and coronation ceremonies until after the Vaasans are finally defeated, especially with the opposing armies setting on the banks. But if they declare the new kingdom to their army, then the army gets a +1 morale bonus for the remainder of the war with Vaasa.

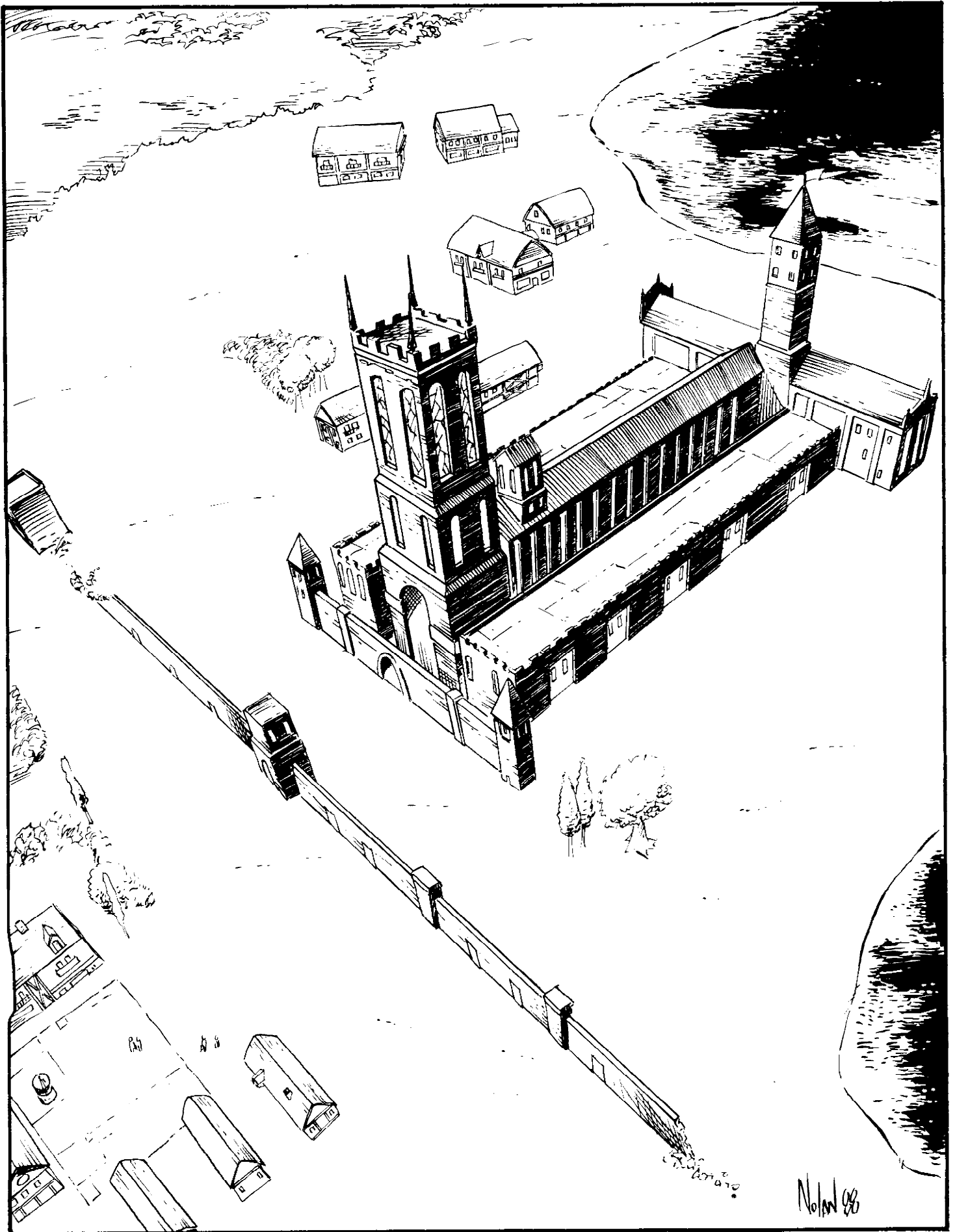
Start the adventure in the tent of the Commanding General of the Bloodstone Army at the Ford of Goliad, at a late-night strategy session with the PCs, Baron Tranth, Lady Christine, Quillan the Sage, and any other NPCs who have been involved in the war, such as the leaders of the dwarf, centaur, halfling, and svirfneblin communities.

The strategic problems are simple: attacking Vaasa head-on is suicidal, the source of Vaasa's power is probably demonic, and the Witch-King is the focus of that power. Therefore, if the Witch-King is neutralized, then the power of the Vaasan army will fade, and military victory is relatively assured. To win the war, save the people of Bloodstone Pass, reunite the entire kingdom, and become great rulers in the Forgotten Realms, the PCs need only enter the Witch-King's castle, find the source of power, destroy it, keep Orcus from ever bothering the Realms again, and escape in one piece.

Because of the role of Orcus in the matter, Quillan the Sage offers advice about the Astral plane and the Abyss, "For we do not know what powers Orcus will bring to bear, and it may be necessary or unavoidable for you to enter his realms."

Both the DM and the players should read *Manual of the Planes*, pp. 60-83 and 101-103. If the players are not already familiar with planar travel, this should be considered to be the briefing and advice they get from Quillan the Sage. Once the PCs have entered the Astral plane, do not allow the players to refer to their copies of *Manual of the Planes* during the adventure. Anything the players don't remember, their characters don't remember either. If your players have questions after reading the sections of *Manual of the Planes*, you may clarify any material given in the book, but don't give them any information not in the book. For *Manual of the Planes* is just the "known" information about the planes—the truth may be a little different...

The PCs should next travel to the castle of the Witch-King, and into their greatest adventure.



CHAPTER 1: CITADEL OF THE WITCH-KING

The first step on the characters' journey to the Abyss is taken at a castle standing in the remote and frozen wastes of Vaasa: the Citadel of the Witch-King Zhengyi. During this part of the adventure, the PCs must break into the fortress, discover the shaft leading into the ground below, and reach the pool of mercury that is the gate to the Abyss.

The Witch-King himself—a lich with the powers of a 30th-level wizard—is a formidable obstacle to this task. Take a few minutes to familiarize yourself with the character of Zhengyi—he will fight the party with his wits as well as his wizardry. And remember that Zhengyi, above all else, is cautious; he will never sacrifice himself in a risky attack, preferring to wait for the deadly ambush.

And the white dragon Arctigis should provide another worthy foe—not so much for his innate abilities, but for his brash confidence and cruel sense of humor. Of course, the *ring of spell-turning* that he wears doesn't hurt, either.

But remember that, overall, the purpose of this adventure is to set the stage for the real challenge that faces the characters when they reach the Abyss. You should do your best to teach them that they are up against foes to be reckoned with, but you shouldn't try to wipe them out at this stage of the game. (Well, maybe one or two of them, but not the whole group....)

The Land Around the Citadel

The manner in which the party approaches the citadel will set the stage for the rest of the mission. If they are observed, their task will be much more difficult. The citadel is guarded by a magical eye, resting

atop the central tower, that will observe them unless they think to take precautions and conceal themselves.

The encounters and challenges that the PCs face during this part of the adventure are designed especially to warn them to prepare for the unexpected. If they are surprised by the dragon, and in particular by his magical protections and abilities, they should learn something valuable about the rest of the adventure. If they don't make the connection themselves, you can provide them with a subtle hint (“Well, that little fight didn't go exactly the way you thought it would, did it?”) or two. If the characters are going to live through this adventure, they will have to play it smart!

The land changes dramatically when the characters reach the hex on the map containing the Witch-King's citadel. As a result of the regularly opened gate to the chaos of the Abyss, both the terrain of the immediate area and the weather are subject to special rules—naturally designed to create difficulty for unwelcome travelers to the place.

The effects on both terrain and weather extend for three miles from the castle in all directions.

The characters can see the castle when they are 10 miles from it, if it is daytime. If they travel at night, the castle will not be visible until they have come within 200 yards—the almost-constant overcast here makes the nights very dark indeed. Of course, the PCs will have had an encounter with one of the castle's denizens before they get that close, unless they have taken pains to conceal themselves.

If they see the castle during daylight, read the following description. If it is dark, they will be able to see the general shape of the structure, but

will not get any of the details.

Rising like a ghostly tree trunk from the surrounding tundra, the Witch-King's citadel is clearly visible for miles. A solid wall circles the base of the fortress, which appears to be a tall cylinder surrounded by several narrow towers. Each of these towers is supported by a frail-looking flying buttress.

The stone of the castle is black, streaked with red. It stands like a garish sentinel over an expanse of barren, lifeless wasteland. Even the rough grass that has grown elsewhere across the tundra has died here. The ground is cracked and broken in the area around the Witch-King's fortress, as if supernatural forces had at one time wracked and twisted it.

The Weather Here

Regardless of the conditions across the rest of Vaasa, the hex containing the Witch-King's citadel is always covered by thick, gray overcast. The temperature will be much warmer here than in the rest of the tundra—it will feel like a muggy spring day right after a heavy rainstorm. The ground, however, is quite dry. In fact, there is no standing or running water in the hex of the castle.

During daylight, the thick clouds reduce the light to a bright twilight. This is one reason why the citadel cannot be seen with normal vision from any adjacent hex, even though it occupies the highest ground in the hex.

At night, of course, the area is virtually pitch black. Walking is treacherous for characters without light or infravision because of the rough nature of the terrain. Characters who cannot see must make Dexterity

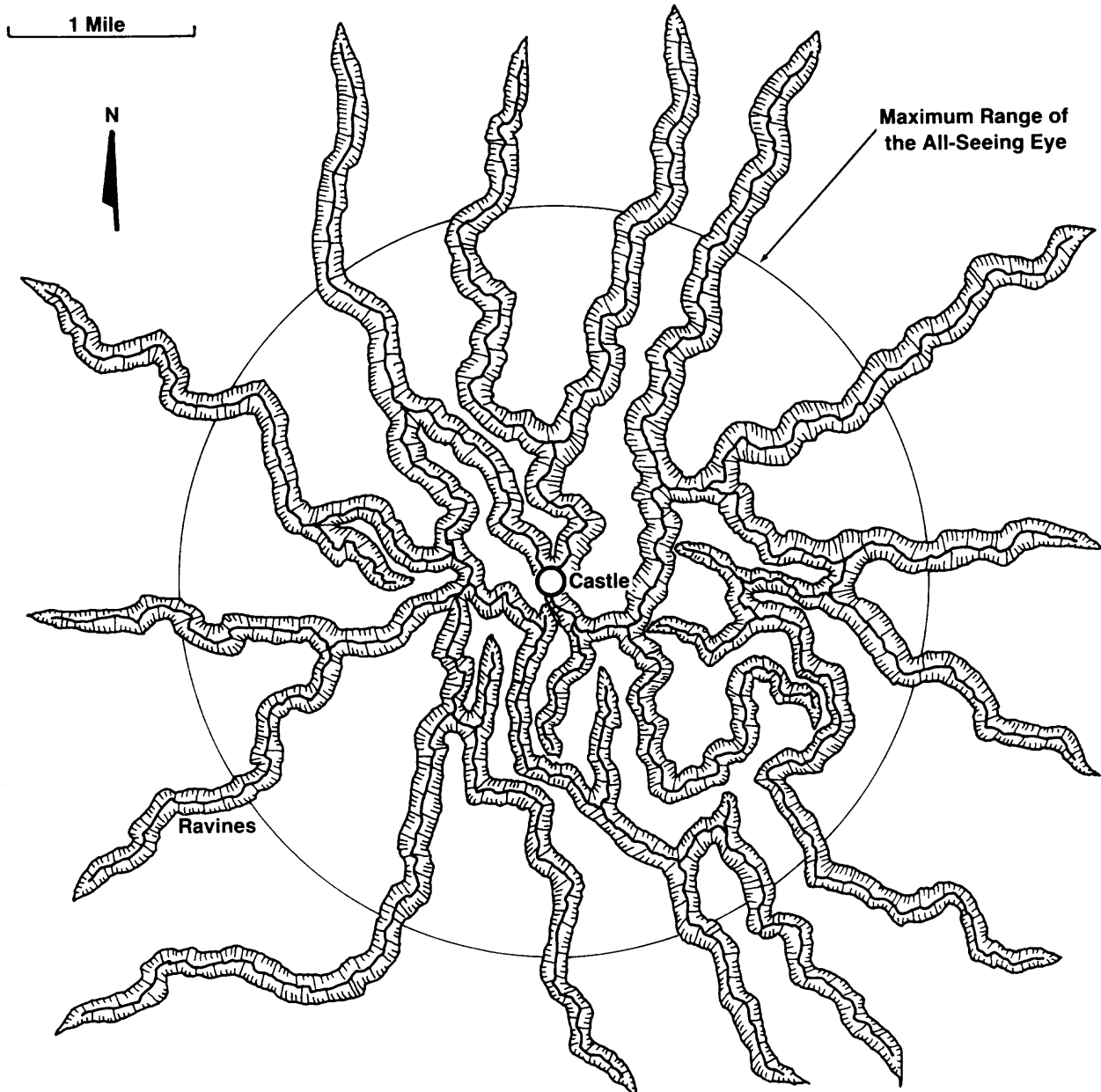
Checks every turn. Failure means a fall that inflicts 1d6 points of damage.

Every six hours (Midnight, 6:00 AM, Noon, and 6:00 PM), a savage hailstorm bursts from the sky, thundering onto the ground throughout the hex. Hailstones the size of small rocks pummel anything exposed to them, inflicting 2d10 points of damage upon characters in any protection flimsier than plate armor. Characters in plate armor suffer 1d6 points of damage. A character can use a small shield to protect himself from 1d4 points of the damage he would other-

wise suffer. A large shield will negate 1d8 points of damage. (The shields will not protect characters totally because of the chaotic nature of the hailstorm—some of the hail comes straight down while other chunks travel almost horizontally.)

After one round, the hailstorm stops, and the hail immediately begins to evaporate. One hour later, it will all be gone. The hail turns directly from ice to water vapor as long as it lies on the ground. If characters pick up the hailstones, or otherwise protect them from the ground, they melt normally.

Any characters flying when the hailstorm strikes will be unable to use shields to protect themselves. In addition, because of their exposed positions, they will suffer double the damage listed. They will also be forced to the ground. If a character is flying with a *fly* spell or through the use of a magical device that the PC actually wears, he can land with no additional ill effects other than those described. If, however, a character is using a *broom of flying*, a *flying carpet*, or other device that requires that he remain balanced upon it, he must make a Dexterity Check with a -4



modifier to his Dexterity score. If he fails, he falls from whatever height he is flying at.

Note that, although the hail occurs at quite regular intervals, the PCs will have a tough time determining the exact hour under the overcast skies. Unless they attempt (verbally) to do some specific calculations, do not feel obligated to give them the exact minute that the storm starts.

Both the cloudy skies and the regular hailstorms vanish if the characters succeed in closing the Witch-King's gate to the Abyss.

Approaching the Castle

The castle has a number of defenses against approach and penetration by hostile forces. These include wandering parties of undead and demons, roaming among the gulleys and hilllocks surrounding the structure, and the All-Seeing Eye, which sits atop the high dome of the castle and surveys the area, seeking intruders.

The ground is divided into rough hills of bare dirt and steep-sided ravines that cut savagely across the area. Characters can elect to travel in the ravines, or along the hilltops, or through any combination of these terrain types. Each pathway, of course, entails risks and problems of a unique nature.

The ground is dry, cracked dirt that crumbles underfoot and slides easily down the slopes of the ravines. The high ground is not smooth, although the overall terrain is fairly level. Movement rates along the soft dirt, either atop the hills or within the ravines, are only 1/2 of a character's normal rates.

Because of the soft dirt lining the walls of the ravines, climbing out of them is not so much a matter of wall-climbing (as in the thief ability) but perseverance and luck. Each of the ravines is 100 feet deep. A character

attempting to climb into or out of a ravine must make a Dexterity Check when he first moves onto the slope, then again at the halfway point, and lastly when he is just about at the top. Failure means that the character slides to the bottom, from wherever the check was failed. This results in no damage if the character fails the check at the bottom. A character falling from the middle of the slope suffers 4d6 points of damage by the time he reaches the bottom. A character falling from the top suffers 8d6 points of damage.

Any character aided by a rope anchored at the top of the slope can climb up or down with no danger.

Because of their better balance and wall-climbing experience, thieves receive a bonus of +2 to their Dexterity when making these Dexterity Checks.

The advantage of staying in the ravines is that the characters will not be observed from the castle as they make their approach. However, the ravines involve taking a much longer route because of their winding nature. In some ways they are like a maze, because characters who have not mapped out a route from a hilltop or higher altitude will have to guess at their route.

Characters crossing the hilltops, however, will almost certainly be seen by the All-Seeing Eye that rests upon the top of the castle's main dome. This eye looks in all directions simultaneously. Darkness has no effect on its ability to detect intruders. It has a range of two miles at all times, but it cannot see into the ravines.

If a character exposes himself, or most of himself, within range of the eye (see the map on page 13) he will certainly be discovered. If a character peers over the top of a ravine, but tries to remain concealed, there is only a 10% chance (per character)

that he will be seen. The eye has no abilities to see *invisible* or magically camouflaged characters.

If the characters are seen, Arctigis, the white dragon, will immediately be notified. The dome at the top of the castle (area 21) will unfold, allowing Arctigis to fly out. The white dragon will fly at full speed to the location where the PCs were seen. He will search in an expanding spiral from that spot outward.

Encounters

When characters are traveling in this region, whether on the hilltops or in the ravines, check once every hour for a random encounter. There is a 50% chance per check that the PCs will encounter some undesirable group of creatures. Roll 1d8 to determine what is encountered.

Castle Area Random Encounter Chart

D8 Roll Encounter

- 1 1d6 Type I Demons: AC 0; MV 12"/18"; HD 8; hp 34 each; #AT 5; Dmg 1d4/1d4/1d8/1d8/1d6; MR 50%; AL CE; Size L; XP 1,600 each
- 2 1d6 Type II Demons: AC -2; MV 6"/12"; HD 9; hp 39 each; #AT 3; 1d3/1d3/4d4; MR 55%; AL CE; Size L; XP 2,450 each
- 3 1d4 Succubi: AC 0; MV 12"/18"; HD 6; hp 28 each; #AT 2; Dmg 1d3/1d3; MR 70%; AL CE; Size M; XP 2,300 each
- 4 1d4 Type III Demons: AC -4; MV 9"; HD 10; hp 47 each; #AT 5; Dmg 2d6/2d6/1d3/1d3/1d4+1; MR 60%; AL CE; Size L; XP 3,000 each
- 5 3d6 Wraiths: AC 4; MV 12"/24"; HD 5+3; hp 26 each; #AT 1; Dmg 1d6 + energy

- drain; AL LE; Size M; XP 720
- 6 1d6 Spectres: AC 2; MV 15"/30"; HD 7+3; hp 34 each; #AT 1; Dmg 1d8 + 2 level energy drain; MR immune to *sleep, charm, cold, hold, poison, and paralysis*; AL LE; Size M; XP 2,000 each
- 7 1 Groaning Spirit (Banshee): AC 0; MV 15"; HD 7; hp 29; #AT 1; Dmg 1d8; SA Wail causes death within 3"; MR 50%, + immune to *sleep, charm, hold, cold, and electricity*; AL CE; Size M; XP 2,750 each
- 8 2d10 Manes: AC 7; MV 3"; HD 1; hp 5 each; #AT 3; Dmg 1d2/1d2/1d4; AL CE; Size S; XP 25 each

Any of these groups of monsters automatically attacks the PCs on sight. The undead fight to the last creature, unless forced away by a cleric's turning ability. In this case, they flee to the castle and, if they make it, inform the Witch-King about the intruders.

The demons fight until at least half of their number have been slain or otherwise removed from the fight. As soon as this occurs, the remaining demons head for the castle by the most expeditious means (*flight, teleportation, or simply hoofing it*) available. Once there, the castle guards are alerted, and Arctigis, the white dragon, is sent to search for the intruders. In addition, the number of random encounter checks around the castle will increase to one check every three turns.

Encounter With Arctigis

Arctigis is a medium adult white dragon. He is described fully in the following NPC Capsule. This encounter occurs only if the PCs are sighted outside of the castle by the

All-Seeing Eye, or by undead or demons who escape an encounter with the characters and return to the castle to sound the alarm.

It will take 2d6 rounds for Arctigis to be protected by the Witch-King, and then the white dragon will fly. The lich protects the dragon by casting a *globe of invulnerability* upon him immediately before Arctigis flies. The spell lasts for 30 rounds.

The white dragon will fly at an altitude of 500 feet above the ground as he races at full speed (30"–300 yards per minute) to the spot where the PCs were seen. He can see into all of the ravines within a quarter mile of his flight path. When he reaches the area, he begins to circle outward in an expanding spiral until he discovers the intruders, or his path returns him to the castle.

When Arctigis reaches the spot where the PCs were seen, he casts his *shield* spell, which lasts for 20 rounds.

This path of flight keeps him at the lower fringes of the cloud cover. In the shadowy overcast, he is very difficult to see. Of course, any players specifically stating that their characters are keeping an eye on the sky will see him—if no one keeps such a watch, you can allow the PCs to make Intelligence Checks—with a -10 modifier to Intelligence scores—in order to determine if they happen to look up and see Arctigis.

If he sees the PCs, he will attack boldly, even going so far as to bellow a cry of challenge before he dives upon them.

Any characters striving to observe the dragon carefully will notice the band of gold upon the claw of his right forepaw. However, characters taking action—fleeing, preparing to cast a spell, or using a weapon—will not be able to look carefully.

Arctigis will enter the encounter with his *ring of spell turning* protect-

ing him, and perhaps the *globe of invulnerability* and the *shield* spell. He will fly past the PCs, using his breath weapon to strike the maximum number of characters possible, until it is expended. He will engage any characters who take to the air in melee. He will only land and fight the party if many of the PCs have been immobilized or badly wounded.

NPC Capsule

Arctigis

Huge, Ancient White Dragon

AC: 3

MV: 12"/30"

Hit Dice: 7 (56 hp)

AT: 3

Dmg: 1d4/1d4/2d8

Special Attack: Frost breath weapon

Alignment: Chaotic Evil

Size: L (24' long)

SPELLS:

Level 1: Magic Missile (two missiles), Shield, Read Magic, Enlarge

Special Equipment:

Ring of spell turning

Scroll containing the following spells: *invisibility, detect invisible, detect magic, and haste*

Arctigis has been a faithful servitor of Zhengyi since the time, centuries earlier, when the lich was actually a living being. Zhengyi, then a wizard, subdued the white dragon when Arctigis was a sub-adult.

Arctigis is a cruel and vicious tormentor of the weak and helpless. He enjoys nothing so much as allowing a doomed captive to feel as if he has a chance to escape, only to meet a slow and lingering death at the claws of the dragon who snatches that hope away

just before it can be realized.

Arctigis has learned to approach high-level enemies with caution, however. If he has the opportunity, he will have Zhengyi cast a *globe of invulnerability* upon him before entering combat. If the castle is penetrated, Arctigis is liable to use an *invisibility* spell from his scroll to conceal himself. He will remain at his post in the top of the castle, awaiting any intruders—he knows that they will have to pass by him in order to reach the gate below the castle.

In a peculiar and reptilian way, Arctigis loves the lich. Should anything untoward happen to Zhengyi, Arctigis will spare no effort to track down and destroy the perpetrators. In this case, his normal wariness of high-level opposition will be forgotten, and he will press in with blood-thirsty rage for the kill.

1. The Castle Wall

A smooth-surfaced high wall runs through an apparently perfect circle around the castle proper. You can see no doors or gates on ground level, although two doors are visible in the wall, some distance above the ground. These doors are spaced about 60 degrees from each other along the circular wall.

The top of the wall is protected by a steep overhang that is crowned by a studded parapet. No signs of life are visible either outside or on top of the wall.

A smooth stone wall runs in a perfect circle around the castle. There is no gate or other passageway entering it at ground level. However, at a height of 30 feet above the ground, six wooden doors are set into the wall, spaced evenly around its circumference.

An overhanging parapet presents a challenge to any thief attempting to climb the sheer surface. He must make a *climb walls* check with a -30 modifier in order to negotiate the obstacle.

The wall itself is 50 feet high. It is made of solid, nonmagical stone. The walkway within the parapet seems to be a smooth stone surface. This is actually a thin shell of stone that will break if it is stepped upon, or even if prodded sharply by a character thrusting a staff or a weapon against it. The top of the wall contains a huge ring of acid, three feet deep. The top of the wall is 30 feet wide, and the trough of acid runs uninterrupted around its entire circumference. Any character stepping into the acid will suffer 6d6 points of damage, and will lose all clothing and magical items carried below the waist. Metal items, such as swords, should be allowed to save vs. acid. A character touching the acid carefully, and not actually jumping or stepping into it, will suffer only 1d6 points of damage.

If the characters manage to reach the castle wall via the ravines, it is quite possible that they have done so unobserved. Each ravine that is marked on the map as adjoining the wall runs right up to the barrier. The wall has been built into the ravines, all the way to the bottom, so the distance to the top from a ravine is a full 150 feet.

Characters emerging from the ravine in the shadow of the wall will not come within sight of the All-Seeing Eye, however—the eye can see nothing closer than 100 feet from the wall.

A curved tunnel runs within the wall, with entrances at the six doors in the outside of the wall. They are all braced securely from the inside—they have no locks to pick, and any attempts to smash them open suffer a

-1 penalty. In addition, characters attempting to open them must have a way to raise themselves along the wall, and then hold themselves steady. A *levitating* character, for example, who smashes at the door will only push himself away from it.

If a character does open the door, read the following description:

The door leads into the side of a long corridor. The passageway curves away to both sides, apparently mimicking the curve of the wall itself. It is strewn with bits of rotted wood and other refuse.

The air smells musty and stale, like topsoil that has just been spaded over.

There are no other entrances or exits from this tunnel. It is just wide enough to hold a massive purple worm. The worm will hear the door open as the characters enter the wall, and will immediately move forward to attack. It will take the worm 1d20 rounds to reach the PCs (it might have to go all the way around the circle, since it cannot turn around in the narrow confines). It always moves clockwise.

When the PCs enter the wall through one of the doors, all of the other doors disappear—they can only leave through the one they entered via. If they enter through magical means and do not use one of the doors, then none of the doors will be there when they are inside.

Purple Worm: AC 6; MV 9"; HD 15; hp 88; #AT 1; Dmg 2d12 + swallow if attack roll exceeds number needed by 4 or better, roll of 20 always means swallow; AL N; Size L (60' long); XP 6,700

There are a few items of treasure that have been excreted by the worm

and now lie scattered throughout the passageway. Allow whichever character is leading the party to check every round to see if something is discovered. A roll of 5 or 6 on 1d6 means that one of the items from the list is discovered. No item can be discovered more than once, and if the characters walk the full circumference of the tunnel they will find all of the items. (You can stop checking randomly if they have killed the worm and declared or displayed an intent to walk the full circle).

D10

Roll Treasure

- 1 12 gems, worth 1000-6000 gp each, scattered along 50 feet of the corridor
- 2 A *medallion of ESP*
- 3 A *wand of fireballs*, with six charges left
- 4 A metal bottle containing four doses of a *potion of gaseous form*
- 5 A *ring of contrariness*
- 6 A *periapt of proof against poison*
- 7 A *long sword +1, luck blade* with two wishes remaining
- 8 A *shield -1, missile attractor*
- 9 A scattering of 10,000 gp, spread along 40 feet of the corridor
- 10 A small glass vial containing *dust of sneezing and choking*

The Castle Exterior

The courtyard within the wall is a moonscape of blasted dirt, barren of even a blade of grass or withered bush of thorns. The castle itself rises, more like a skeleton than a solid edifice, high into the air from the center of this courtyard. Its black stone walls are streaked with red, as if countless gallons of blood have been spilled across them.

Each of the four towers flanking the castle has a slender and unprotected stairway climbing from the tower to the main castle, where it ends in a door. Doorways also lead from the stairways into the small towers.

There is a parapet surrounding the base of the castle's high tower. This is simply a platform of smooth stone—there are no visible doors leading into the castle from the parapet. Below this parapet is another platform. This one supports the bases of the many buttresses that curve upward to support the midsection of the castle. This platform also does not show any signs of doors into the castle.

If the characters can see the southern side of the castle, they will see two huge bronze doors at ground level. These doors stand side by side, and are apparently the only ground-level entrances to the castle.

Show the players the illustration on page 18 to amplify your description of the castle, and to aid in their planning.

The area within the castle wall is apparently devoid of any life. In actuality, it is guarded by four perytons that have been made *permanently invisible* by the magic of the Witch-King. One of these creatures perches atop each of the four towers placed around the periphery of the castle.

The perytons will not venture outside of the castle's outer wall—their assigned task is to attack and kill intruders within the courtyard, or any that fly over the wall into the airspace around the castle.

In the case of flying characters, the perytons will wait and see if they land upon one of the parapets (areas 2). If any characters become stuck there, the perytons will then attack. Alter-

natively, if it looks like the characters will remain in the air, the perytons will attack them there.

Perytons (4): AC 3 (because of *invisibility*); MV 12"/21"; HD 4; hp 17 each; #AT 1; Dmg 4d4; SA +2 to all attack rolls; SD +1 weapon needed to hit; AL CE; Size M; XP 200 each

Once the perytons attack, or get attacked by the PCs, they will fight until they have all been killed.

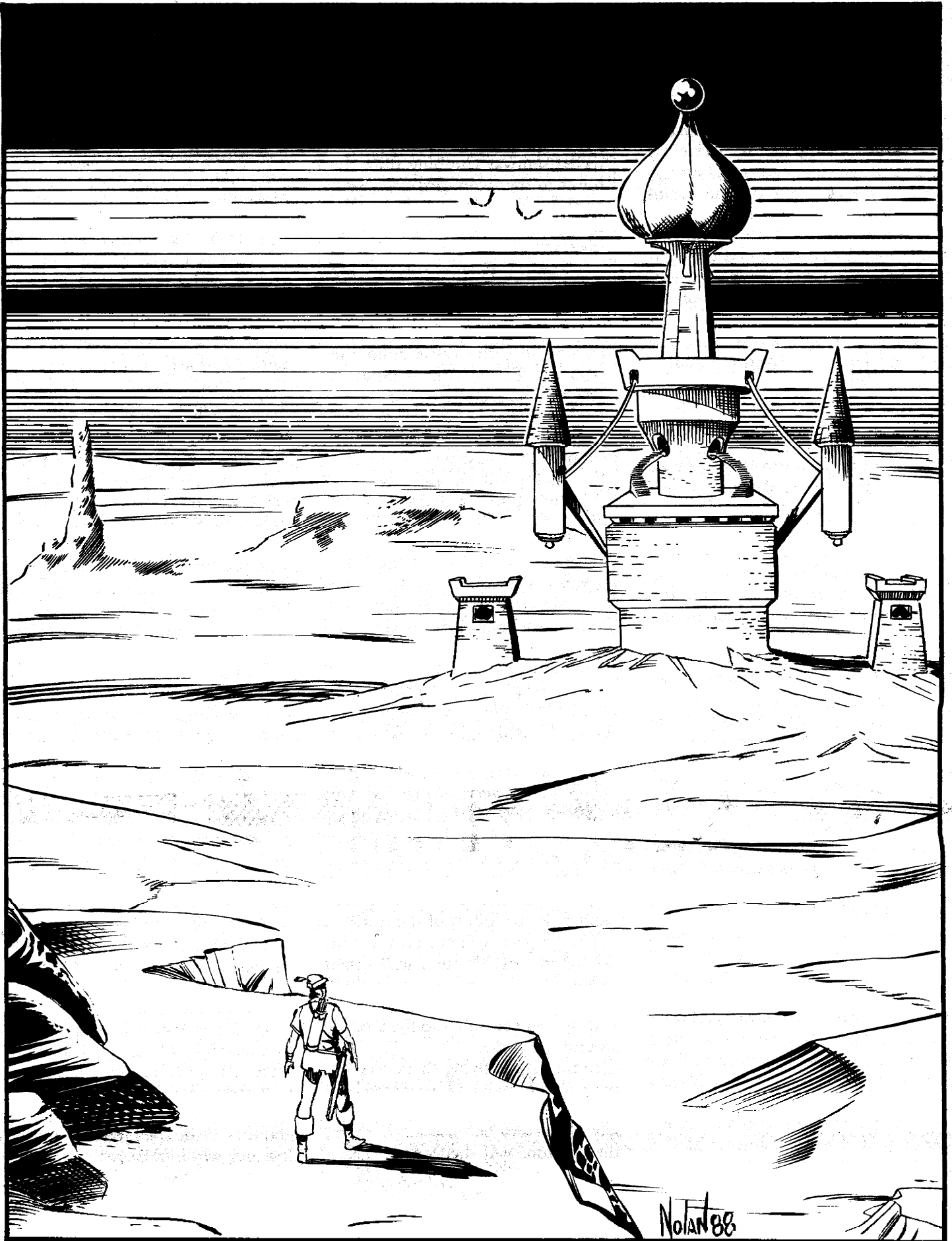
2. The Outer Parapets

These open, flat platforms might look like tempting landing zones for flying characters. They are smooth, and the stone of their surfaces is light brown, rather than the black and red of the rest of the castle's exterior. Any attempts to *detect magic* or *detect invisibility* will show nothing wrong here. A *true seeing* spell will reveal a clear glaze, almost like a thin layer of water or varnish, over the stones.

This glaze is in fact a powerful, albeit nonmagical, adhesive of demonic origin. Anything coming into contact with the adhesive will be stuck fast—it's so powerful that even the tip of a sword or spear used to probe the platform cannot be pulled away. The bond cannot be broken by mortal strength, or magical powers such as *telekinesis*, *levitate*, or *fly*. A character could *teleport* off of it, however. Also, the adhesive can be dissolved by oil.

Any character attempting to fight in melee while stuck to the adhesive suffers -2 penalties to both his Armor Class and his attack rolls.

There are no entrances into the castle from either of these platforms. Pay attention to the thickness of the stone walls if a character attempts a *passwall* spell—in most cases it will take several uses of the spell to reach any hollow area within the castle.



3. Throne Room of the Witch-King

The Witch-King sits eternally upon the throne in this, the heart of his citadel. He is always attended by his two bodyguard guardian daemons. Players who attempt to waltz through the front door and do battle will be in for a rude surprise—perhaps the last surprise of their careers!

First, the Doors

The huge bronze doors leading into the ground level of the castle are fully 20 feet high. Each is 12 feet wide, and together they are engraved to create a picture of a leering and bestial face. Any PC taking the trouble to examine the engraving will, with a successful Intelligence Check, recognize the face of Orcus himself. (The Intelligence Check is not because the PCs are presumed to be stupid, but rather because the quality of the engraving is very bad.)

Each door has a round ring set in the center of the door, about six feet above the ground. Toward the juncture of the two doors, and even with the ring, each door has a large keyhole.

The doors are not locked—the keyholes are only a part of the trap designed to kill unwary thieves. The doors, instead, are magically charged with a tremendous electrical voltage, such that any character touching the doors, or touching a metal object or another character who touches the doors, will suffer 12d6 points of electrical damage. The character's possessions will also have to save as if hit by lightning.

Swords, daggers, and thieves' lock-picking probes will transfer the full damage to their bearer if the object is touched to the doors. If a character holds the wooden shaft of a weapon

such as a spear or a staff, he only suffers 2d6 points of damage. A character who is not in contact with the ground is also protected—if he is more than one foot from the ground, he suffers no damage; at a height of one foot or less, the electricity arcs from him to the ground and he suffers 6d6 points of damage.

If the characters take pains to rig up an insulated device, they can do so. Thick padding of leather, any ceramic protection, or an unusually long and thick piece of wood can be used to hook one of the rings, and easily open the door.

Because this is magical electricity (and also because the characters know a great deal less about electricity than the players do, presumably) the charge in the doors cannot be short-circuited into the ground.

The charge in the doors can be detected with a cleric's *find traps* or *true seeing* spells. The doors can be annihilated by destructive magic such as *disintegrate*.

NPC Capsule

The Witch-King Zhengyi

Lich, former 30th-level magic-user

AC: 0

MV: 6"

Hit Dice: 11 (85 hp)

AT: 1

Dmg: 1d10

Special Attack: Touch causes paralysis

Alignment: Chaotic Evil

Size: M

SPELLS:

Level 1: *charm person*, *detect magic*, *enlarge*, *erase*, *magic missile* (15 missiles), *read magic*, *ventriloquism*

Level 2: *detect good*, *detect invisibility*, *invisibility*, *mirror image*, *ray of enfeeblement*, *shatter*, *web*

Level 3: *clairaudience*, *clairvoyance*, *dispel magic*, *fireball*, *fly*, *lightning bolt*, *slow*

Level 4: *confusion*, *dig*, *dimension door*, *ice storm*, *minor globe of invulnerability*, *polymorph other*, *wall of ice*

Level 5: *animate dead*, *cloudkill*, *conjure elemental*, *magic jar*, *passwall*, *teleport*

Level 6: *anti-magic shell*, *death spell*, *glasse*, *globe of invulnerability*, *spiritwrack*, *stone to flesh*

Level 7: *cacodemon*, *delayed blast fireball*, *limited wish*, *phase door*, *statue*, *vanish*

Level 8: *clone*, *glassteel*, *mass charm*, *permanency*, *power word blind*, *trap the soul*

Level 9: *astral spell*, *gate*, *meteor swarm*, *monster summoning VII*, *shape change*, *time stop*

Special Device:

Talisman of Orcus- this is a potent amulet that Zhengyi wears around his neck. It makes the lich much tougher for a cleric or paladin to turn—all turning attempts against him suffer a -6 penalty on the die roll.

The lich Zhengyi has been dead for nearly four centuries, and it shows. His almost entirely skeletal visage is concealed beneath a deep hood, made from the skull of a dragon. His robes were formerly quite splendid,

but they have rotted almost entirely away. Still, their former elegance is suggested by the remnants of gold thread that still hang about Zhengyi like a frail spiderweb.

The Witch-King has been a devotee of Orcus throughout his death, and also through much of the life that preceded his demise. He is dedicated to the principles of chaos and evil, and he seeks to spread both through the realms.

To this end, he has gathered the army of undead that now faces the armies of Damara across the Ford of Goliad. Although their might is not yet great enough to carry the invasion southward, Zhengyi knows that eventually, aided by the power of his demonlord manifested on the Prime plane, his forces will be ready to sweep the armies of law and justice from the land.

Formerly one of the wizards of Thay, Zhengyi has managed to retain his animation, at least in an undead form, by the force of his evil and powerful magic. His current state has bred within him an irrational hatred of all that is alive, such that he will seek to slay life whenever and wherever he encounters it. This is why he surrounds himself with undead, or with the denizens of the Abyss—they do not remind him of his former, and much more enjoyable, existence. (Well, yes—he was chaotic evil then, too, but that doesn't mean that he didn't know how to have a good time!)

But Zhengyi is a cautious and methodical character—four centuries of undeath will teach one patience, if nothing else! Thus, he will do his best to see that all of the characters meet horrible and untimely deaths during their visit to his citadel, but not if it means that his own reign will come to an end in the process. If a battle in his throne room goes badly, for example,

he will *teleport* away before he gets permanently killed. In this case, he will *teleport* to Arctigis in the upper chamber of the castle, where he will warn the dragon of the imminent threat. Then he will drop down the shaft to the underground cavern, to await the PCs there.

He will fight to the death in order to prevent them from gaining access to the gate to the Abyss, however.

Now, the Room

Whether the characters enter through the front door (foolishly) or use a *passwall* or other magical means to come in from an unexpected direction (much smarter), read them the following description after they have gained access to the throne-room.

This massive room apparently fills the entire area of the castle at ground level. The only light comes from a blazing fire in the middle of the chamber, where orange-red tongues of flame flicker upward from a bubbling pool of lava. The domed ceiling rises nearly 50 feet overhead in the center of the room.

The fire rests upon a raised platform in the center of the room. Beyond that platform rises another, and then a wide flight of stairs leads to a massive throne, made entirely of bone. Stone columns flank the throne, and also stand in a line behind it.

If the PCs enter anywhere in the southern half of the room, they will immediately see the lich and its two guardian daemons. If they come in from the north, Zhengyi will be aware of their presence—he can sense the faintest disruption in this, his chamber for all eternity—but it will be one round before they see the Witch-

King, and another round before the two guardian daemons come into view.

Describe these characters using the boxed text in the NPC capsule for Zhengyi on page 19.

The two areas labeled with the *cone of silence* on the map should be noted. They are fully inside the room, so a spellcaster standing outside of the opened doors will not be affected. However, as soon as he steps inside, he will be unable to cast until he moves out of the cone.

The bubbling lava pool and its fire are an *illusion*, but a very good one, even to the point of appearing to radiate heat. This pool actually serves to conceal the shaft that runs from the dragon's lair on the upper level of the castle to the cavern and *gate* below. The shaft is lined with lead, and will thus defeat any attempts to *passwall*.

If the electrical charge in the door is shorted by a character touching it or otherwise triggering the trap, the Witch-King will immediately sense the potential threat to his castle. He will begin casting spells, anticipating a combat, until the PCs enter, or he has cast all of the following spells (in order): *detect invisible*, *mirror image*, *globe of invulnerability*, *invisibility*, *conjure elemental* (16-HD fire elemental).

If the battle is joined in the throne room, the lich will fight cleverly as long as it looks like he has a chance of winning the fight. If things start to go badly, he will *teleport* out at the first opportunity, resorting to a *dimension door* spell if the *teleport* is interrupted.

The guardian daemons will fight until one side or the other is destroyed, or the PCs flee from the castle. Their primary objective in the fight will be to see that intruding fighters do not have a chance to close with their master—they they will

ignore any other targets in an effort to place themselves between such fighters and the lich.

They, too, are formidable foes:

Guardian Daemons (2): AC 1; MV 9"; HD 8; hp 45 each; #AT 3; Dmg 1d6/1d12/1d12; SA breathe fire in 30'x10' cone for 5d6 points of damage (but not on targets closer than 10'); SD immune to *charm*, *hold*, *sleep*, *polymorph*, and *fear*, +2 or better needed to hit; AL CE; Size L; XP 1,700 each

When and if the characters are free to examine the chamber, they will see that a door stands in the wall of the throne room directly opposite the entry. This door leads to a stairway that spirals upward. No other entrances or exits can be found in the room (except for the front doors).

The stairs spiral upward in a tight circle. The light from the "burning lava" flickers at the base of the stairs, but quickly fades to inky darkness.

4. Landing

The stairs climb through 120 steps, approximately 60 feet upward for those characters who take the trouble to keep track. It is very dark after the first 10 feet—characters without their own light source, or infravision, will be quite blind from here on, except where light sources are specifically mentioned.

The stairway ends at the floor of a still, dark room. A thick layer of dust, grown pasty with condensed moisture, gives the air a moldy smell. The floor of the room does not seem to have been disturbed for years.

The door to this room is jammed solidly shut. If the PCs smash it open

without muffling the blow under some kind of *silence* spell, they will alert Klavikus, the guard demon in room 9. Klavikus will begin *gating* in reinforcements—keep careful track of passing rounds in order to get an accurate number of adversaries ready for the PCs. Read the NPC Capsule on page 23 for more information on the encounter with Klavikus.

Silent movement will be critical for the characters throughout this level of the castle. If they make an untoward amount of noise at any time, you can allow Klavikus an Intelligence Check (call his Intelligence a 17) to see if he hears the intruders. Of course, you can give the check a hefty negative modifier if the PCs are relatively quiet—arguing in whispers, for example.

5. Another Empty Room

(Very Empty)

The door in the hallway between rooms 4 and 5 is stuck, similar to the door to room 4. If the party moves into the corridor beyond it, they will see that the door to room 5 is standing open.

This room is empty, dry, and featureless—except for the stairway that starts in the far corner of the room and spirals upward through the ceiling.

There is no stairway in this room, nor is there anything else here. The door contains a *teleporter*, however, and any characters passing entirely through it are instantly *teleported*. Any characters who start through the door and then decide to change their minds (say, because their companions just blinked into apparent oblivion before them) will find themselves stuck in the *teleporter*. They can move forward any time they want, but they cannot pull any part of their

body back out of the doorway.

If the PCs are fairly close together, you can require those in the second rank to make a Dexterity Check (penalized if they are really close) to see if they can react before they get stuck in the trap.

Oh, yes—the ones who get caught are immediately blinked to the upper of the two parapets described in area 2. Of course, they will be stuck there. At the same time, Arctigis will be warned that the trap has been sprung. He will prepare himself as if the All-Seeing Eye discovered intruders outside the castle—see the Arctigis NPC capsule on page 15.

6. Good Moaning!

The door to this room is closed, but the latch is clean—it does not have the abandoned look of the previous doors encountered on this floor. If anyone so much as attempts to listen at this door, he will certainly hear the tragic sound of a woman crying. She wavers between a low moaning keening and a nearly hysterical wail—obviously, she is heartbroken.

The door opens easily if pushed. Within stands a low couch, very near the door. A frail figure sits, hunched over and buried in a woolen blanket, sobbing into her hands.

Only after the door is opened does she lift her head, and the PCs will see that she is a ghostly creature with a horrid, snarling visage. The creature immediately opens her mouth and screeches a horrible sound—the death cry of a banshee.

Groaning Spirit (Banshee): AC 0; MV 15"; HD 7; hp 38; #AT 1; Dmg 1d8; SA Wail causes death within 3" (save vs magic); SD +1 needed to hit, immune to *charm*, *sleep*, *hold*, cold, electricity; MR 50%; AL CE; Size M; XP 2,800

The banshee will wail every round that the door remains open, unless the characters enter the room. In this case she will shriek forward into melee combat, lashing out viciously until slain. Her room is empty of items of value.

The good news: her wail does not cause Klavikus to begin *gating* in demons. She does it several times a day on the average, and he's used to the noise. In fact, he rather likes it.

7. Lair of the...Vampknight?

A dull flickering light is visible from under the door to this room. It is quite faint, and might not be noticed if the characters are carrying light sources of their own—any character *not* carrying a light can make an Intelligence Check.

The door to this room swings open easily if pushed.

Thirteen candles glow from niches in the wall around the periphery of this room. Each is tall and slender—no wax yet runs from them.

The walls of the room, between the candles, are hung with plush draperies of a deep crimson color. The candlelight gives them the color of/fresh blood. In the center of the room, resting on a raised stone platform, is a long box. Its lid stands open.

Any character who thinks to ask immediately recognizes the box as a coffin. Even as the PCs open the door, a body sits up in the coffin and beckons them inward.

This creature resembles a vampire in every way—it is dressed in a black silk robe, and its face is pasty white. It even has long white fangs. But it is, in actuality, a death knight. It attempts to lure as many of the PCs as it can into the room, and then casts its *wall*

of ice spell across the door.

After this, the death knight attempts to *gate* in a demon every round that it can do so. When and if the characters engage in melee combat, it abandons the use of magical powers in order to fight with its *two-handed sword*, +5 *defender*.

Death Knight: AC 0 (+ effect of sword); MV 12"; HD 9; hp 51; #AT 1; Dmg 2d6+5 (+ effect of sword); SA all *power word* spells; MR 75% (on roll of 11% or lower, spell rebounds on caster); AL CE; Size M; XP 4,500

The death knight will not use its fireball in these close quarters. It will fight soundlessly, and the *wall of ice* will help to soundproof the room, so Klavikus will not be alarmed by this fight—unless the wall of ice is destroyed before the fight is over.

8. Treasure Room (sort of)

The door to this room is stuck and must be opened forcefully. Unless the noise of this is *silenced*, Klavikus will hear it. He will not intervene yet, but he will begin *gating* in his war party if he has not already done so.

There is another door in the right-hand wall of this large room. The near side of the chamber is empty, but many objects are piled on the floor and against the wall on the other side.

Small mountains of gold coins are heaped across the floor. Brilliant gems gleam from these piles. Swords, shields, several long staffs, and shirts of plate armor can be seen—the piles are so high that there is no telling what might lie under the surface.

This room does contain treasure, but not perhaps so much as it might

seem. Gold coins have been scattered across the top of mounds of copper and silver pieces. Many of the "gems" are pieces of cleverly cut glass that, at a distance, will seem to scintillate like the real thing.

Many of the swords and suits of plate mail are indeed magical, while much of the rest has been enchanted only with *Nystul's magic aura*.

The door into room 9 has a large keyhole in it. If the PCs have somehow entered this room undetected, one can peer through the keyhole to see Klavikus, bored, waiting on the other side. (Show the players the picture on page 24.) If the demon has heard them, however, the room beyond will be cloaked in *darkness*.

The purpose of this room is to draw intruders into it, where they can be restrained by one of the two traps in the room and slowly dismembered by Klavikus and his pals. Each of the traps is activated when the door between rooms 8 and 9 is opened.

The first trap is mechanical: an *invisible* net is strung across the ceiling of the room. It will cover the entire floor (and everything on it) when it drops. Note that, even if the characters have a *detect invisible* spell in operation, the character with the spell must state that he is looking at the ceiling—the net is camouflaged so as to be difficult to see, even without the spell. The net can be dropped by the players if they discover it first—they simply have to cut a loop at each corner and in the middle. Or it could be burned, or magically destroyed—it is mundane in every respect.

Characters caught in the net can cut themselves free in 1d6+1 rounds. While trapped, they suffer a +4 penalty to their Armor Class. If they attempt to fight within the net, they are unable to use missile weapons. Attacks with melee weapons suffer a

-4 penalty on all attack rolls. Spellcasting might be possible—a character must make a successful Dexterity Check immediately before casting a spell (during the same round). Failure means that the tugging of the net interfered with the somatic portion of the casting, and the spell does not work.

The second trap is magical, and is also triggered when the door between rooms 8 and 9 is opened. The effect of this trap is to cast a *slow* spell upon every character in the room. The room will radiate magic if a *detect magic* is used; a *dispel magic* will negate the effect of the trap. The slow spell can be dispelled either before or after it goes into effect.

Klavikus will hear any disturbance of the treasure in the room, even if he has not previously discovered the presence of the characters in this part of the castle. He will begin *gating* in his team.

Klavikus will attack the PCs in this room, with as many of his demons as he can muster, as follows:

If he did not hear the party until they reached this room, he will attack when he has *gated* in 12 demons, or when the PCs seem ready to leave the room—whichever comes first. (He will have the first demon *gated* in watching through the keyhole to warn him if the party prepares to leave.)

If he heard the party previously on this floor of the castle, he will attack when he has *gated* in 20 demons. Ten will attack through the hallway, and the other 10 will accompany their master through the door between the rooms. He will hurry his attack if the party seems ready to leave the room, however.

If the PCs take the time to go through the treasure, they will discover the following items: 20,000 gp, 100,000 sp, 500,000 cp, 10,000 fake

gems, 800 gems (1d6x100 gp each), 100 swords (nonmagical), 12 *swords +1* (all types), 50 suits of plate mail (nonmagical), eight *plate +1*, and assorted staves, figurines, sacks, and vials, all nonmagical

9. Lair of Klavikus

The two doors to this room are both locked. If the PCs somehow manage to approach either door without having alarmed Klavikus, then they can peek through one of the keyholes and see something: show them the picture on page 24. If the demon has been alerted, however, the room will be cloaked in darkness.

The locks on the doors were manufactured in the Abyss, and are far sturdier and more complex than most mundane locks. A penalty of -50% applies to all thief attempts to *pick locks*. If the roll fails by more than 20%, the demon hears the clumsy attempt.

The doors are also very sturdy. Any person attempting to bash one of them in suffers a -2 penalty. They have an inherent magical resistance of 66% vs. spells cast against the doors, door frames, or locks.

The number of demons encountered here will vary depending upon the amount of warning Klavikus has had regarding the presence of the PCs. See the NPC capsule on this page to determine the nature of the encounter.

Type III Demons: AC -4; MV 9"; HD 10 (45 hp each); #AT 5; Dmg 2d6/2d6/1d3/1d3/1d4+1; MR 60%; AL CE; SZ L (9 1/2' tall); SA & SD *darkness 10' radius, fear, levitate, polymorph self, pyrotechnics, telekinesis* (4,000 gp weight)

Type IV Demons: AC -1; MV 9"/12"; HD 11 (51 hp each); #AT 3; Dmg 1d4/1d4/2d4; SA +2 to hit; SD +1 or better needed to hit; MR 65%; AL CE; SZ L (10 1/2' tall); SA

& AD *darkness 10' radius, create illusion, cause fear, levitate* (as 12th-level magic-user), *detect magic, read languages, dispel magic, polymorph self, telekinesis* (5,000 gp weight), *project image, symbol of fear, symbol of discord*

The room contains the table and chair shown in the illustration, and thousands of books. Each wall is lined with bookshelves that are filled to bursting. Dozens of stacks of books are scattered around the floor. On the table, carefully marked with a silken bookmark (unless the PCs have surprised Klavikus in this room) is a heavy tome entitled, *The Effects of Drought Upon the Farm Economies of the Eastern Realms*.

NPC Capsule

Klavikus

Type IV Demon Guardian

AC: -6

MV: 6"/15"

Hit Dice: 8+8 (61 hp)

#AT: 1

Damage: 1d12+1

Special Attack: Whip pulls victim into ring of fire for 4d6 points of damage

Special Defense: +1 or better weapon needed to hit

Magic Resistance: 75%

Alignment: Chaotic Evil

Size: Large (12' tall)

Special Abilities (All can be used as often as desired, but only one per round): *darkness* in a 10' radius, *cause fear* (as a wand of fear), *detect magic, read magic, read languages, detect invisible objects, cause pyrotechnics, dispel magic, suggestion, telekinesis* (6,000 gp weight), *symbol of fear, symbol of discord, symbol of stunning, 70% chance to gate in a*



Nolan 88

demon of Type III (80%) or Type IV (20%)

Special Equipment: *ring of protection*, +4 on AC, +2 on saving throws

Klavikus has been ordered to guard the Witch-King's citadel by none other than Orcus himself. The Prince of the Undead detected in Klavikus seeds of ambition that caused Orcus some considerable unease. The solution: assign him to an important guard post on the Prime plane, to serve for 500 years. In that time, Orcus hopes to decide upon a more permanent solution.

Klavikus does indeed aspire to rule in the Abyss, but Orcus tricked him into this pledge of service. He spends his time now (measured in centuries) reading. The thousands of books he has gathered here are only part of his library. Though he cannot leave the citadel, and in fact cannot leave this room except to attack some enemy of the Witch-King (and, hence, enemy of Orcus), he collects new books all the time. He *gates* in weaker demons whenever his supply of unread books begins to drop, and sends them throughout the realms, and indeed the planes, to steal more volumes.

Then, when his room begins to fill with books he has read, he bullies his subordinates into taking many of the tomes to the Abyss to await Klavikus's return. He has 112 years to go.

Klavikus has vowed to stand guard in the citadel of the Witch-King, but nothing more. Of course, he will attack and kill any intruders for the simple amusement of it—other than reading, that's the only fun he gets to have. Knowing this, Orcus didn't bother to make him extend the pledge.

However, Klavikus can possibly be bribed into letting intruders live. The price, of course, will be books. Spell books, map books, whatever—

Klavikus will read anything. An offer of a spell book will always buy passage for a party of characters. A lesser tome will have only a chance of success. Assume a base chance of 50%, modified up or down for the rareness of the tome, the quality of its contents and binding. Increase this chance if the PCs offer several books.

He might even be persuaded to allow a single character to *teleport* off to get some books—but he will make sure to keep other PCs, unarmed, as hostages.

Klavikus does not suggest trading the characters' lives for books—the players have to think of it themselves. If the demons force them to surrender (see Tactics of Klavikus) the party is taken into the room with his books, so they get this clue as to his interests, however.

Tactics of Klavikus

If Klavikus becomes aware of intruders in his part of the citadel, he will attempt to use his *gate* ability every round until he has gathered a force of 20 demons, or is forced into combat. Keep track of the number of each type.

If Klavikus has the chance to assemble all 20 of his demons, he will attack with his full force when the PCs are in room 8, or if they walk past the entrance to room 9.

10. Going Up?

The secret door guarding the entrance to this room looks like a blank section of wall. It can be opened by pushing on one of the stones near the top of the wall, just to the right of the door.

The large, L-shaped room is empty and featureless. There seems to be no dust on the floor, and the air is cool and dry.

The two secret doors in the room work with the same type of mechanism as opens the door to the room itself. The one to the right opens into a circular chamber containing a spiral staircase very much like the one between the throne room and this level of the castle.

The other secret door opens into a small closet. Here, Zhengyi has stored some of his most cherished mementos of his former life as a mage. However, this door is protected by a double trap arrangement. Players must detect the two traps individually, since one is in the ceiling and the other is in the floor.

The areas of effect for the traps are shown as two semi-circles on the map. The inner circle is hit by the ceiling trap: a two-foot-thick slab of stone falls to the floor when the secret door is pushed open (not when the catch is released). Any characters caught under the slab suffer 12d6 points of damage. The trap releases with a loud "clunk," however, so characters standing at the very edge of the area of effect can be given a Dexterity Check to see if they can jump out of the way. That brings us to trap #2:

The second trap affects the floor around the area of effect of the ceiling trap. The floor around this area swings freely downward, depositing any characters standing upon it into a deep pool of acid. Characters falling into the pool suffer 12d6 of damage at first, and another 1d6 per round until they can be pulled out. The pool is 10 feet below the surface of the room. Characters standing at the edge of the pit might be able to make a fingertip grab of the edge of the trap as the floor falls away—give them a Dexterity Check with a -8 modifier. Oh, and don't forget to have them make saving throws for any items that take the plunge. . . .

If any PCs manage to get a look

into the room, however, they might find it worth their while. It contains a large wooden chest that is protected by nothing more than a simple poison needle trap in the lock. Of course, the poison is of Abyssian origin—saving throws suffer a -8 penalty.

The chest contains the following treasures:

- A scroll, with these spells, as cast by a 30th-level wizard: *fireball*, *lightning bolt*, *meteor swarm*

- A scroll, with these spells (also at level 30 ability): *teleport*, *globe of invulnerability*, *mass invisibility*

- A *potion of levitation* (four doses)

- A *ring of vampiric regeneration*, with these special effects: immunity to *charm*, *sleep*, and *hold* spells, immune to poison and paralysis*

- A *robe of eyes*

* Any means of examination used upon this ring will not be able to distinguish it from a normal *ring of regeneration*. However, this *ring of vampiric regeneration* carries certain risks—it was created by Orcus himself and is imbued with the power of undeath. While this is the source of its powers, it also causes a character who wears the ring for a total of seven days to become a vampire. The effects become gradually apparent to the character.

After two days, the character will find sunlight on his body to be very unpleasant. Inform the character wearing the ring, but not the entire party, of this fact—you do not need to tell the player that the effect is caused by the ring, of course.

After four days, the character thirsts for blood, such that if any bloodshed occurs near him, he will (surreptitiously) attempt to consume the stuff. Also, by this time, the character suffers 1 point of damage per hour that he spends in direct sun-

light.

By six days, the character suffers a point of damage per turn spent in sunlight. If given an opportunity, he will draw blood from any available source to drink it. He will not expose his craving to companions, however—at least not a companion that will be alive after the vampiric PC is through with him. Also, the character's canine teeth have begun to grow. This is a subtle effect, noticeable only to a character who specifically looks.

After seven days, the transformation is complete, and the character is a vampire in every respect.

These effects are cumulative, so a character wearing the ring for four days, and then taking it off for a while, will start right in on day 5 if he puts it back on. The effects last after the ring is removed, also—although, an *exorcize* or *wish* spell can remove them.

The character wearing the ring is unable to remove it. He does everything in his power to conceal the changes from his comrades. He hides or flees from his companions in order to retain the ring, and even fights them if necessary.

11. Landing

The stairway enters through: the floor of this small room and ends here. There is a typical door set in the wall of the room—and it's not even locked or stuck. There is also a secret door leading directly to room 15 that allows players to bypass the traps on this level of the castle.

12. Slices, Dices, Makes Julienne Fries!

This long room is empty of visible features, save for the doors at either end. When the door connecting the room to room 13 is opened, the area

marked on the map (inside the dotted lines) becomes a deadly trap.

The floor swings away to either side, separating in the middle, to reveal a nightmarish collection of gears and grinders. Characters standing on the falling floor will drop into the gruesome machinery, although you may allow characters very near to the edge of the trap to make Dexterity Checks with a -8 modifier. Success means that they grabbed the lip of the trap at the last minute.

Those unfortunate characters falling into the grinders will suffer damage. Some characters might slip through cracks in the mechanism and escape relatively unscathed, while others might catch the full brunt of the savagely cutting teeth. To determine the damage suffered by each, roll 1d20. The resulting number is the number of d6 of damage that the character suffers in the trap.

After turning into ground PC, whatever is left of the characters will fall into a holding bin below the machinery. Characters can possibly climb through the machine to safety—there are a lot of handholds. A character will only suffer 1d4 d6s of damage in making this climb, but must either have help from characters outside of the trap, or make a Dexterity Check as he climbs out. Characters failing that check will fall back through the trap.

13. Poison Gas

This room is nearly as featureless as the last one, although, in addition to the two doors, it has a number of small holes in the ceiling. When the door that leads to room 14 is opened, a spray of poison gas rushes from the holes, filling the room instantly. As the gas is of Abyssian origin and exceptionally deadly, saving throws vs. poison are made with a -8 penalty to the die roll.

14. Fly the Fiendly Skies

Once again, here is a room with nothing to offer but a pair of doors. And one of those doors—the one that appears to lead into room 15—is in reality a false door. The facade of a regular door has been mounted on a smooth stone wall in an effort to entice intruders into the room.

The reason: a *teleport* trap that affects everyone in the room is activated when the fake door is pushed or pulled. The trap *teleports* the characters to the upper parapet (area 2) and also notifies Arctigis of the potential victims awaiting him. The white dragon will prepare as if the All-Seeing Eye had spied victims (see the Arctigis NPC capsule on page 15).

15. Ladder

Standing against the curved outer wall of this room is a sturdy wooden ladder. It will radiate magic if a *detect magic* spell is used. However, this is only caused by the effects of *Nystul's magic aura*—it has no effect on characters (other than, perhaps, to make them a little worried.) The ladder climbs 10 feet into the ceiling of the room, and then another 10 feet through a narrow shaft in the stone, before it ends in the floor of the room above.

16. The Round Room

This huge room fills the entire diameter of the castle: It is empty. A round wall seems to mark a smaller circular room in the center of this one. Several doors are visible in the outer wall of the room, and also in the wall of the round room in the center of this one.

There are four doors around the outer wall of the room. Each of these doors lines up with a door in the cen-

ter of the room. There are strange runes carved into the surface of each of the doors.

The runes are intricate, but study will reveal that the runes on a given one of the outer doors will match the runes on one of the inner doors, although the match is always with one of the three doors that does not line up directly with the outer door. The outer doors are locked with typical iron locks, and can probably be picked by a high-level thief. These doors will radiate powerful magic if a *detect magic* spell is used. There is no magical effect to the doors if and when they are opened from inside this room. They will swing shut, however, if a character does not hold or otherwise prop them open.

The magic affects attempts to open these doors from the outside. In short, it can't be done—there are no doors leading from the outside into this room. There are false doors at the top of the stairways leading from the towers. However, pulling or pushing on these does nothing but activate a slide trap on the stairs—and if the door is pulled, it comes off in the character's hand!

The trap, when activated, causes the stairs to flatten into a long slide. Characters sliding down end up in the tower, unless they can make a Dexterity Check with a -10 modifier. Success means that they have hurled themselves off of the slide and will fall 100 feet to the ground below. Failure, or no attempt, will slam the characters into the door to the tower (for 2d20 points of damage) and will then deposit them inside the room. (See the encounters for areas 17-22.)

The inner doors are also locked, but here the lock is magically reinforced—it can never be picked. In addition, the inner doors have a magical resistance of 100%. The only way these doors can be opened is with the

appropriate keys.

The keys to these doors are kept in the towers (areas 17-20) outside of the main keep. The runes on the door leading out of this room indicate which key is kept in the tower out that door.

The keys in towers 17, 18, and 19 open doors that reveal blank stone walls—there are no rooms beyond them. They key in tower area 20 opens the door that actually leads to a spiral stairway going up.

17. Waiting Pool

This room contains a 12-foot-deep pool of water that fills the room from wall to wall. The key to one of the doors lies at the bottom of the pool: a gleaming golden device that can be easily seen if any light is allowed into the room.

The pool also contains an unnatural monster, enchanted with the combined power of Zhengyi and Orcus: a water weird. This monster is far more powerful than normal example of its type.

Water Weird:, AC -4; MV 12"; HD 18+18; hp 104; #AT 3; Dmg drowning; SD sharp weapons cause only 1 point dmg, *cold* spells slow it, immune to fire-based attacks, *purify water* does 3d20 points dmg; AL CE; Size L (20'); XP Value 13,840

If the water weird takes damage equal to its total number of hit points, it is disrupted for two rounds. It will form again at full strength on the third round and be able to attack that round.

This water weird forms three heads, instead of the usual one. Characters struck by the monster must save vs. paralyzation With a -10 penalty to their saving throws or be dragged under water and held there until the monster is killed or the character dies.

A character dragged underwater can survive for 1/3 his Constitution (round up) in rounds if he does not fight. This number is halved (also rounded up) if he attacks the water weird while underwater. In addition, characters underwater suffer -4 penalties on all attack rolls and all damage rolls (minimum damage of 1, though).

Attempts to climb back up the slide are not too difficult—a thief receives a +20 modifier to his *climb sheer surfaces* check. A non-thief character can do it by making a Dexterity Check (-6 penalty) or by climbing a rope dropped by another character. Once the trap has been sprung, however, characters will need a *passwall* or some other means to get back into the room at the top—the door, once closed, really does not exist from this side!

18. Slime Pool

This room is essentially a vat full of green slime colonies. Characters coming through the door will find themselves literally up to their eyeballs in the stuff. The key in the room, naturally, is at the bottom of the pool.

100 Green Slimes: AC 9; MV 0"; HD 2; 8 hit points each; #AT 0; SA turn victims to green slime; SD immune to all attacks except *cure disease*; AL N; Size S; XP 620 each

A single *cure disease* spell will destroy 2d6 of the green slimes here. If 50 of them are killed in the center of the room, a character can reach the key without becoming affected. (Note: this is not the key to the real stairwell, so the PCs are not required to get it in order to continue the adventure).

19. Corrosion Corral

This room contains rust ravenous rust monsters. The poor creatures, cute and cuddly though they are, have been nearly starved by the Witch-King. They will aggressively leap at any metallic objects entering their little chamber, although each of the creatures will stop to feed as soon as it manages to corrode something.

5 Rust Monsters: AC 2; MV 18"; HD 5; 22 hit points each; #AT 2; Dmg Nil; AL N; Size M; XP Value 200 each

The key in the center of this room is made out of hard wood, and is consequently of no value to the rust monsters. Alas, it too opens a door to a false stairway.

20. Salamander Salad Bar

The outside of this tower, including the door, is hot to the touch. That's because inside of it there are 20 salamanders, held here by Orcus's and Zhengyi's trickery. For every intruder that the salamanders slay, one of their number is allowed to return to the plane of Fire. They don't like it here, so they vigorously attempt to fulfill the conditions of their release.

However, the salamanders cannot leave this room. Thus, anytime the trap brings someone sliding into their domain, they will fight fanatically to prevent the victim from leaving the tower before he can be killed.

20 Salamanders: AC 5/3; MV 9"; HD 7+7; 50 hit points each; #AT 2; Dmg 2d6/3d6; SD +1 or better needed to hit; AL CE; Size M; XP Value 1,300 each

In addition, the room itself is maintained at the blazing tempera-

ture of 500 degrees. Any character not protected against the heat (such as by a *ring of fire resistance*) will suffer 2d10 points of damage per round spent in the room. (Double, triple, or quadruple this effect for characters of very high levels, just as if this were a trap.)

A cast-iron key has been built into the spearhead on the spear carried by one of the salamanders. This is the key needed to open the door to the actual stairway leading to area 21.

21. Flight Deck

The stairway spirals upward into this room, circling around the thick column that runs up and down through the center of the castle. It finally ends at the floor of the wide, domed chamber. The shaft continues upward for another 30 feet, ending in a high platform in the very center of the room.

The floor of the room is empty of other features, and the ceiling matches the shape of the roof of the castle. The All-Seeing Eye cannot be seen from inside the room. The ceiling, if a *detect magic* is used, radiates a powerful enchantment.

This is because it is made of magical panels of silver. These panels will open, separating along the lines shown on the map as they fold downward, allowing the white dragon to fly out or in at Arctigis's, or Zhengyi's, command. The effect, if a character sees it, will be not unlike the blooming of a rose, as the petals fold outward. The All-Seeing Eye will remain poised in the air above the castle when the roof opens.

Arctigis, if he's still around when the PCs get here, will be sitting on the platform at the top of the column. Like all of the rest of the surface of this column, the sides of the shaft are lined with lead, and have a magic resistance of 100%.

Arctigis will defend his lair to the best of his ability if he is here. If he has already been defeated by the PCs, the room will be abandoned.

The platform atop the shaft is smooth and flat, except for a round hole, three feet in diameter, in the center. This hole radiates magic. It is pitch dark within it, although any attempts to shed light through it reveal the smooth walls of the shaft, extending straight down. The shaft is nearly as wide as the outer column—characters who take the time to measure will find that the walls of the shaft are only about one foot thick.

This hole is the only way to the gate, far below the castle, that is the connection between Vaasa and the Abyss. It has a *permanent featherfall* spell cast upon it, such that anything passing through the hole will flutter slowly downward.

The shaft plunges nearly half a mile, through the center of the castle, and into the depths of the earth. It terminates in the ceiling of a vast underground chamber—area 22. Its sides are smooth and featureless except at the bottom. Here, about 10 feet above the bottom of the shaft, several metal rungs are anchored sturdily in the wall. Any character floating downward can grab one, if he decides to do so quickly. If not, he flutters through the end of the shaft.

The lower end of the shaft is also enchanted with a *permanenced* spell. This one is a *dispel magic*, however, cast at the 30th level of ability. It will automatically dispel the *featherfall* spell. Characters will find the normal effects of gravity again apply, and will plunge the 200 feet to the bottom of the cavern in a big hurry.

The *dispel magic* has its usual chance of working on any spells cast by the PCs, as well. A safe procedure is for a character to lower himself through the end of the shaft with a

rope tied to one of the rungs, and then to cast a *fly*, *levitate*, *featherfall*, or similar spell. It will negate the effects of potions, but not rings or other miscellaneous magical items.

22. The Gate to Orcus

This huge underground chamber contains the gate to the Abyss. It is guarded by minor demons, and represents the climax of the adventure at the Witch-King's castle.

A huge pool of lava casts flickering tongues of fire, illuminating the whole of the vast cavern in a hellish light. Long stalactites extend down from the ceiling, and their counterpoints—stalagmites—reach greedily up from the broken floor.

A silvery pool of smooth liquid glows at the far end of the chamber. The center of the cavern is split cleanly by the huge and flaring pool of lava, although a frail-looking suspension bridge runs across the pool.

A number of grotesque creatures are moving slowly about the silvery pool in a ritual dance. All of them are gaunt and skeletal, and several have huge, batlike wings.

The silvery pool at the far end of the chamber is the *gate* to the Abyss—it is a pool of mercury that radiates potent magic if anyone bothers to *detect*. Any character jumping into it will emerge at area 1.

However, getting there can be a bit of challenge. The demons on guard here are mostly gathered at the *gate*, but several remain near the mouth of the shaft that descends from the castle. These babau demons cling to stalactites on the ceiling, keeping careful watch. If any intruders emerge, or make any sound near the bottom of the shaft, one babau will *teleport*

immediately to the group at the gate to warn them, while the other two, using their *fly* ability, will attack any characters emerging from the shaft.

Two rounds after the alarm is sounded, all of the demons will *teleport* to the party. The babau will actually *teleport* into the middle of the group of PCs, attacking in melee with their *halberds* +2, while the nabassu stand back, using their *vampiric attack* power first, and then trying to cast *silence* upon an object carried by a spellcaster among the PCs.

To insure a challenge for all levels of PCs in this encounter, double, triple, or quadruple the number of each type of demon just as you would for the damage done by a trap, if the average level of the PCs is above 25.

6 Babau (Minor Demons): AC -3; MV 15"; HD 7+14; 55 hit points each; #AT 1; Dmg 1d10+9; MR 50%; AL CE; Size M (7' tall); XP Value 2,600 each; Specials: Suffer 1/2 damage from cutting and stabbing attacks, *darkness* 5' radius, *levitate*, *fly*, *dispel magic* (as 12th-level magic-user), *polymorph self*, *heat metal*, *ray of enfeeblement gaze* (20' range), *gate* in another babau (25% chance), all thief abilities at 10th level

2 Nabassu (Major Demons): AC -5; MV 15"; HD 5+20; 60 hit points each; #AT 3; Dmg 2d4/2d4/3d4; MR 50%; AL CE; Size M (7' tall); XP Value 4,000; Specials: iron or +1 or better weapons needed to hit, *darkness* 5' radius, *death stealing*, *energy drain*, *etherealness* (twice/day), *paralyzation* 10' radius (once/day), *regenerate* up to 20 hp per day, *silence* 10' radius, *vampiric attack* 20' range (once/day), thief abilities: move silently, hide in shadows, backstab (All at 10th level)

CHAPTER 2: INTO THE ABYSS

Now that it is clear that the pool of mercury is a magical *gate* that allows passage to another plane, the PCs must decide whether to pursue the Witch-Ring into the Abyss. In case they need some more encouragement, a well-timed Divine Intervention is called for.

“Ahem.”

A polite throat-clearing noise from behind you causes you to spin around, weapons and spells at the ready. But instead of another demonic threat, you see a short, stocky little man with huge angel’s wings wearing a white robe. He calmly puffs on a cigar as he looks at you.

“I’m Saint Sollars. Pleased ta meetcha,” he says.

Indeed, this is St. Sollars the Twice-Martyred, patron saint of Bloodstone Pass, whose sigil is the Yellow Rose and the Lone Star. He magically conjures a table with a large pitcher of beer and enough mugs for everybody, and begins to pour.

“I guess you’ve figured out by now that that bad hombre you’ve been fightin’ is Orcus himself, the meanest dude this side o’ the Pecos,” St. Sollars says, taking a deep swallow from his mug. He doesn’t explain what, exactly, the Pecos is. “The big boss, ol’ Bahamut, don’t much like Orcus, and especially don’t want him messin’ round this plane, you unnerstand.

“The only way to corral that there demon an’ git him off’n your backs once and for all is to corral that big skull stick o’ his and bring it to me at my spread out Mercuria way, over in the Seven Heavens, and I’ll tell yuh how to git rid o’ it. Any questions?”

You look at each other, then one of you finally says, “Are you talking about stealing the *Wand of Orcus* from the Abyss and bringing it to the Seven Heavens?”

“Yup,” says St. Sollars, scratching himself. “You got it.”

St. Sollars will answer seven questions asked by the PCs. He grants clerics a full, instant recharge of all spells (warning them that once they travel to the Abyss, they cannot recharge any but first- and second-level spells). He explains that the pool of mercury will take them to Pazunia, top layer of the Abyss, and that they will then have to discover the way to the plane of Orcus. Then he vanishes, taking the beer with him, but the smell of cheap cigar smoke lingers.

The PCs can enter the mercury pool, use another method to traverse the Astral plane and find the Abyss, or give up the adventure at this point. Assuming they enter the mercury pool:

The gleaming surface of the mercury pool ripples like water as you step into it. As you slowly sink into the liquid metal, the feeling of implacable evil surrounds you. Slowly, slowly, your body descends. You look around one last time at the Prime Material plane that surrounds you. It is shimmering, beginning to look indistinct and cloudy, becoming transparent. Finally, after a minute that seems an eternity, you descend all the way into the cold pool.

Then, chaos! Tumbled and turned in a wild vortex, your body feels as if it is being turned inside out! The disorientation is total as you are gripped with nausea and dread. Then suddenly you break

free, to find yourself floating weightless in a bright, well-lit grayness that seems to extend to infinity in all directions. Floating near you are your fellow adventurers, and also nearby is a pool of rippling silver—obviously the portal through which you entered the Astral plane.

Then you feel yourself being dragged helplessly along toward a pool of amethyst. You are sucked in, feel the terrible disorientation and nausea once again, and then feel a wrenching, tearing sensation within you. And suddenly it all stops, and you sit up to look around. Your surroundings have totally changed—it is a barren, dusty place without life or greenery, baking beneath a hell-red sun. The dusty plains are broken by three features: huge holes in the earth, great iron fortresses, and a winding, black river. Welcome to the Abyss.

Since the PCs have traversed the Astral plane by physical means, they have their corporeal bodies and all possessions, and do not have *silver cords*. Remember that the magical bonuses of all weapons and armor are reduced by 2 because of passage through the Astral plane to the Abyss.

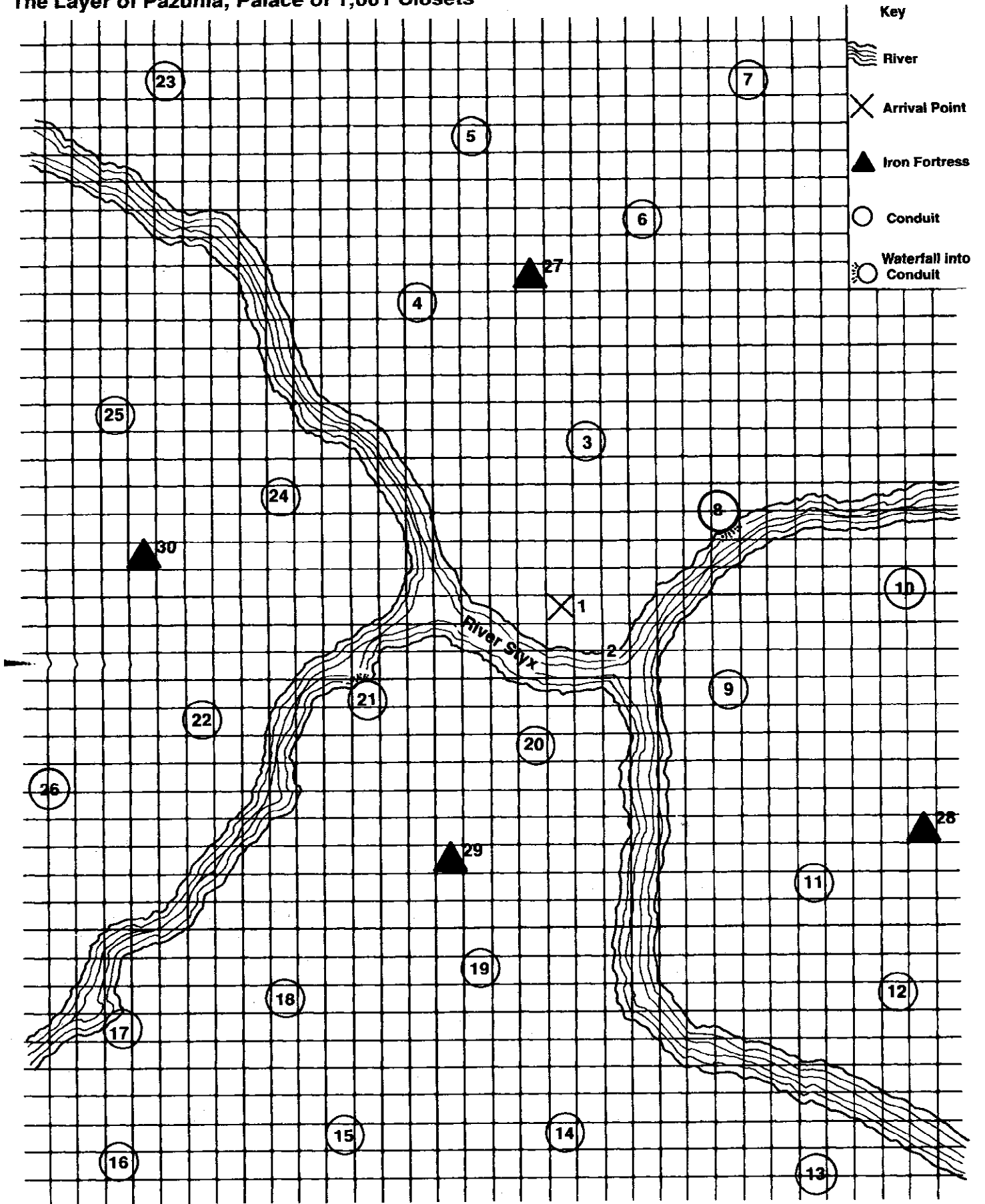
The PCs arrive in area 1 of the map on page 31.

1. Arrival Point

A silver pool of mercury, the one through which you entered this hellish landscape, lies before you. To the south is a dark, swiftly flowing river.

This is the first layer of the Abyss, known as Pazunia, or the Palace of

The Layer of Pazunia, Palace of 1,001 Closets



Scale: 1 Square = 120 Yards

1,001 Closets. Like all the layers of the Abyss, it is infinite in size. A small part of the layer is shown on the map. If the adventurers want to explore further, the landscape is identical: the winding course of the river, the strange holes in the ground, and at random intervals, the iron fortresses.

The river is the Styx. The holes in the ground are conduits to other layers of the Abyss. The PCs will have to discover by trial and error (or appropriate magical spells or items) which conduit leads to the plane of Orcus. The iron fortresses usually house the material bodies of higher-level demons and demon lords when they are traveling astrally. These places are usually guarded by the demon's servants who fight to the death to protect their charge.

There is a chance per turn equal to the party's average character level (but never greater than 75%) of a random encounter according to the following table (roll 1d6):

Random Encounters in Pazunia

D6 Roll Encounter

- 1 1d6 Type III Demons, AC -4, MV 9", HD 10, #AT 5, Dmg 2d6/2d6/1d3/1d3/1d4+1, SA/SD spell-like abilities, MR 60%, AL CE, Size L (MM, pg. 18)
- 2 1d6 Type IV Demons, AC -1, MV 9"/12", HD 11, #AT 3, Dmg 1d4/1d4/2d4, SA/SD bonus of +2 to hit, need +1 or better weapon to hit, plus spell-like abilities, MR 65%. AL CE, Size L (MM, pg. 19)
- 3 1d6, Type V Demons, AC -7, MV 12", HD 7+7, #AT 7, Dmg 2d4 x6; SA/SD spell-like abilities, +1 or better weapon to hit, MR 80%) AL

CE, Size L (MM, pg. 19)

- 4 1-2 Nabassu, AC -5, MV 15"/15", HD 5+20, #AT 3, Dmg 2d4/2d4/3d4, SA/SD spell-like abilities, MR 50%, AL CE, Size M, Level VIII/3,300 + 12/hp (MM2, pg. 40)
- 5 1d6 Chasme, AC -1, MV 6"/21" (MC: D), HD 7+2, #AT 3, Dmg 2d4/2d4/1d4, SA/SD spell-like abilities, MR 40%, AL CE, Size M, Level VIII/ 1275 +10/hp (MM2, pg. 38)
- 6 1 Demon Lord (entering or leaving iron fortress), choose from Fraz-Urb'luu, Lolth, Pazuzu, or Kostchtchie (roll 1d4)

If the characters attempt to fly by any means, magical or not, there is a 10% chance per turn (non-cumulative) that they encounter Pazuzu, Prince of the Lower Aerial Kingdoms.

Pazuzu (Demon Prince), AC -9, MV 12"/36"//24" (MC: A), 155 hp, #AT 1, Dmg 1d8+8 (long sword & strength bonus), SA spell-like abilities, SD +2 or better weapon to hit, MR 90%, AL CE, Size M, Level/XP Value X/65,000 (MM2, pg. 41)

Pazuzu's especial joy is to turn lawful good clerics and paladins from their alignment to his service by offering them the ability to call upon him for aid at any time. He is willing to provide information, direct assistance, the use of his personal staff, or anything else the PC may desire. If the cleric or paladin calls on the aid of Pazuzu, Pazuzu will in turn ask or demand a service in return, ostensibly very innocent in nature, but actually serving the cause of chaos. For example, Pazuzu might ask the party to provide him with a *com-*

mune spell, but he will use it to further his own plots. Compliance with any request or demand of Pazuzu automatically changes the alignment of the character one step in the direction of chaotic evil, with immediate application of all character class changes. Proper sacrifices, an atonement spell, etc., may return the PC to his original alignment.

If attacked, Pazuzu prefers to summon his bodyguard of six Type VI demons, *gate* in 1d4 succubi (75% probability of success) to tempt the characters, plus use his spell-like or psionic powers. If defeated or outwitted by the characters, he is unlikely to bear a grudge.

2. The Banks of the Styx

You are standing on the bank of a deep, swift, unfordable river.

This is the river Styx, which flows through the top layers of each of the seven lower planes, plus various deeper levels of the Abyss. Any character who touches, drinks, or is immersed in the river must make a successful saving throw vs. spell or instantly forget his entire past life, including all spells. If the saving throw is successful, the river affects the character as a *forget* spell cast by a 15th-level wizard (no further saving throw is allowed). A character swept away in the flood has normal chances of drowning, plus a 50% chance of being dragged into another plane or layer of the Abyss (determine at random) before reaching the shore. A small craft stands a 20% chance of capsizing, and a large one 10%. Characters using *water walk* or *fly* to cross the river have a 40% chance of attracting 5d6 hydrodaemons, who attack immediately.

Hydrodaemons: AC 2, MV 6"/6" (MC: D)//24", HD 9+36, hp 80 ea., #AT 3 or 5, Dmg 1d4/1d4/1d8/1d8/1d10, SA Energy Drain, SD various, MR 70% to 1st level spells, AL NE, Size L, Level VIII/3,450 + 14/hp (MM2, pg. 30)

The safest method of crossing the Styx is to summon Charon the Boatman or one of the charonadaemons.

Charon: AC -5, MV18" over all surfaces, hp 140, #AT 1, Dmg 2d4+ paralysis, SA Gaze inspires *fear*, SD Nil, MR 120% to 1st-level spells, AL NE, Size M, Level X/22,000 +35/hp (MM2, pg. 28)

Charonadaemon: AC -1, MV 18", HD 10+20, hp 70, #AT 1, Dmg 2d4, SA Gaze inspires *fear*, SD Nil, MR 80% to 1st-level spells, AL NE, Size M, Level VIII/5,300 + 16/hp (MM2, pg. 29)

Charon may be summoned only on the banks of the Styx, by any of the following spells: *holy* or *unholy* word, *conjure elemental*, summoning an *invisible stalker* or *aerial servant*, or casting a *symbol* of any type. He will appear with a large black skiff that holds up to 10 people, and for a fee will ferry the party to the top layer of any of the lower planes, or to the other bank of the river, as desired. His charge per passenger, which is non-negotiable, is a magical item, a silk bag with 100 pp, or two gems worth at least 500 gp apiece. Transit time to any point, including just across the river, takes 1d100 turns. If attacked, in addition to his normal and special attacks, he can command the river to rise up and attack the party as a 16-HD elemental. Any successful hit has the effect of being immersed in the river. If killed, Charon is restored within a single day.

Alternatively, the PCs may summon charonadaemons by using any conjuration/ summoning spells. Their skiffs hold 1d10 passengers at a time. Their fee per passenger is any of the following: a magical item, a bag of 10 pp, or two gems of 50+ gp value apiece. If someone tries to board without paying, the skiff and the charonadaemon instantly *teleport* away underneath the character, causing him to fall into the Styx. The charonadaemons can pilot their craft through the Astral and Ethereal planes as well as any of the lower planes (there is no branch of the river Styx on the home layer of Orcus). Transit time for a trip by charonadaemons is 1d10 days, with the possibility of random encounters en route. There is a 15% chance that the charonadaemons betray their summoners, either by delivering them to the incorrect plane or place (85%) or leading them into an ambush of other charonadaemons and hydrodaemons (15%). The chance of betrayal can be reduced by paying higher fees. There is also a 10% chance per day that the charonadaemons stop to pick up other passengers (usually higher-level demons who are 75% likely to be hostile to the party).

The Conduits of Pazunia

This general description fits all the conduit holes in the Palace of 1,001 Closets.

You reach the edge of a huge hole, over a hundred yards in diameter. The hole, it seems, goes on forever—a bottomless pit into infinity. You throw a rock into the hole, but it vanishes long before you hear a sound of it striking bottom. The rough rock walls can be climbed, but a slip would spell disaster.

The holes are actually conduits to

other layers in the Abyss. Light or scrying devices or spells cannot sense any bottom to them. The characters can use magic to descend through the hole, or climb down, using the rules in the *DSG*, pp. 14-17, and the *WSG*, pp. 33-39. If a character should fall into the hole from any point during the descent, he takes 20d6 hit points of damage and lands in the destination layer of the Abyss.

Once the characters have descended 100 feet into the hole, the following occurs:

Suddenly you feel a lurching sensation, as if your entire body has just been turned inside out. You look up, only to find that the surface world above you has disappeared. Below you, about a hundred feet away, you see light—your destination!

It is too early to figure out what is below; the characters must descend the rest of the way to find out what they see.

As you leave the conduit, you see it as a tall, rocky column stretching far above you until it vanishes into the dark sky. Then you look around, to see what strange landscape you have entered.

3. The Layer of Desert

The stinging sand particles whip at every patch of exposed skin as you find yourself in the middle of a desert. The hot, black sand forms dunes out to the very limits of your vision. Heat lightning shatters the sky.

This layer of the Abyss is a never-ending desert of black sand with a sandstorm that never stops raging.

The sand penetrates all backpacks, pouches, and armor, spoiling food, water, oil, and anything else that sand can ruin (think of a bad day at the beach). There is a 10% chance per turn that the heat lightning will strike a randomly selected party member for full damage as a *lightning bolt* spell.

If the PCs attempt to explore this layer, they will encounter various demons (Types I-VI), plus giant scorpions, shadow mastiffs, dustdiggers, dun puddings, crypt things, huge purple worms, dune stalkers, groaning spirits, huecuva, medusae, retch-plants, vampires, volts, and other desert wilderness creatures. No demon lords or princes make their homes here; other creatures have only standard treasures.

4. The Glacial Layer

The arctic winds howl as you exit the conduit, and the glare of the bleak white sun on the ice is blinding. The glacier seems to stretch on into infinity.

This layer of the Abyss has effects similar to being trapped on the para-elemental plane of Ice, with an automatic 1d6 points of damage per round for any characters not fully protected against cold. No fire-based spells work here.

In addition to all types of demons, this plane is home to ice demons, ice devils, white dragons, ice para-elementals, ice trolls, remorhaz, coffer corpses, ogre magi, sons of Kyuss, night hags, brain moles, frost giants, and tenebrous worms, none of whom have any more than standard treasures. No demon lords make their homes here.

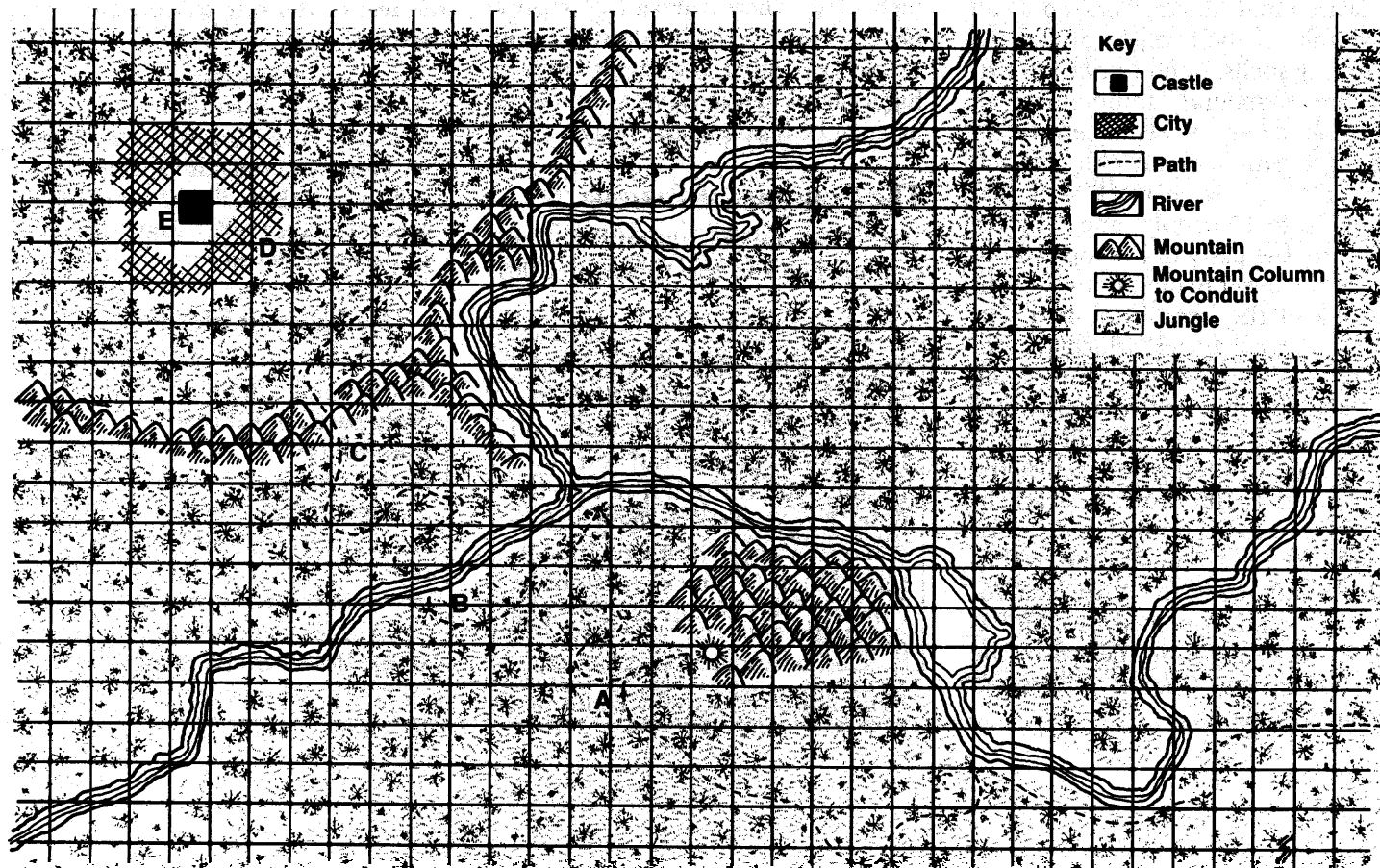
5. The Realm of Demogorgon

The smell of rotting jungle vegetation greets you before you can exit the conduit. You are at the edge of a range of jagged mountains, overlooking jungle that seems to go on forever. There is a river some miles away, and a path leading from the conduit toward it.

This is the home layer of Demogorgon, Prince of Demons. Use the map on this page. Demogorgon and Orcus have been at war for thousands of centuries, and it is possible that once Demogorgon hears of the characters' mission, he will want to help. This may provide alignment problems for some characters. Then there is the possibility that Demogorgon may not be interested in listening to the characters' story, and take appropriate action.

The Realm of Demogorgon

Scale: 1 Square = 6 Miles



In addition to the full range of demonic life (but no undead creatures), the plane of Demogorgon is filled with all types of dinosaurs, wild apes, and birdlike monsters. Creatures of animal intelligence have neutral or neutral(evil) alignments; intelligent creatures are all chaotic evil.

As with all the planes of the Abyss described in this chapter, we behold only the smallest section of these infinite planes. On a future journey to the Abyss, things might look wildly different.

The path leads to the castle of Demogorgon, with various marked encounters en route.

A. Tyrannosaurus Rex: As the party nears this fork in the road, they hear a thundering noise, followed by the sound of snapping wood. The earth begins to shake, and trees fall. Coming toward the party, towering above the trees, are the heads of an uncountable stampede of terrible giant lizards!

25 Tyrannosaurus Rexes: AC 5, MV 15", HD 18, hp 108 ea., #AT 3, 1d6/1d6 5d8; SA swallow man-sized creature whole on natural 18 or better, SD nil, AL N, Size L (50' long, 20' high) (MM, pg. 28)

B. River Crossing: Like most currents through the Abyss, this is a branch of the river Styx. In addition to normal hazards, this part of the river is home to a demon *dinichtys*.

Demon *Dinichtys*: AC -5, MV 6" 1/21", HD 10, hp 70, #AT 1, Dmg 5d4, SA swallow man-sized creature whole on natural 15 or better, *gate* in Type IV demon (50% chance), SD +2 or better weapon to hit; immune to all water-based spells, MR 65%, AL CE, Size L (25' long) (based on MM, pg. 25)

C. Balor: As the path climbs into the mountain, the party beholds a great winged demon standing on a rock before them.

Balor (Type VI Demon): AC -2, MV 6"/15", HD 8+8, hp 45, # AT 1, Dmg. 1d12+1, SA whip & flame for 4d6 plus spell-like abilities, SD +1 or better weapon to hit plus spell-like abilities, MR 75%, AL CE, Size L (12' tall) (MM, pg. 19)

"Do you tire of mortal life so much that you seek to end it at the hands of Prince Demogorgon?" the demon hisses. The PCs can parley, attack, or flee. If they parley, they can explain their mission to steal the *Wand of Orcus*. Balor listens to the story carefully, then tells them that if they dare, he will take them to Demogorgon to plead their case. If they attack, Balor tries to *gate* in other demons. In addition to the stated chances of *gating* type III or type IV demons, there is a 10% chance that Demogorgon himself appears to enter the fray. If the PCs flee back toward the conduit, Balor lets them go; if the PCs try to go around Balor toward the Palace of Demogorgon, Balor attacks them, first trying to *gate* in allies.

D. Demon City: The Palace of Demogorgon rises several miles high in the center of a great city occupied by over 100,000 demons of all types. The demons do not attack. For every six turns (one hour) spent in the city, each PC is drained of one life-level (no saving throw).

E. Palace of Demogorgon: The Palace of Demogorgon is an incredibly ornate palace that stretches several miles up above the city. It is occupied by demons of all sorts, and contains many magical traps and devices. It is impossible to approach the palace without Demogorgon being aware of the approach. Should a party intend

harm to Demogorgon, the demon prince has all the powers of a Lesser Power (*Manual of the Planes*, pp. 124-126) and uses them without mercy. He prefers to capture rather than kill his victims, and tortures them horribly throughout eternity, never letting them die.

Unless the PCs have successfully gotten Balor to escort them to the throne of Demogorgon, the demon prince uses all his powers against them. If the PCs are accompanied by Balor, they are led to the throne of the demon, who has enlarged himself to be over 50 feet tall.

Once convinced that the party is seeking the level of Orcus, he offers to aid them by granting each member of the party a wish. Any party member who accepts the *wish* is automatically moved one alignment step toward chaotic evil. If all the party members refuse the *wish*, Demogorgon angrily waves his hand and expels them all from the layer. The party instantly reappears at area 1 of the Layer of Pazunia.

In the extremely unlikely event that the party manages to fight and kill Demogorgon, all 100,000 demons in the city attack. If the players survive, they should get a major reward indeed.

Demogorgon: AC -8, MV 15", hp 400, #AT 3, Dmg Special, SA/SD spell-like abilities, Lesser Power abilities, +2 or better weapon to hit, MR 100%, AL CE, Size L (54') (MM, pg. 16)

6. The Layer of Space

You hear a rushing of wind as you near the bottom of the column, but as you step out, you find yourself on the very edge of infinite space!

Each character must make a successful Dexterity Check at -5 to Dexterity on 1d20 or be swept into the void. This layer consists of infinite, gravity-less empty space—air exists, but there is no native matter. A huge, rushing wind sweeps anything it catches far away from the conduit, which is out of sight within seconds. Only magic has any chance of finding the conduit and getting back to Pazunia. There is no life native to the plane, but there is a 10% chance of encountering Pazuzu here.

7. The Maelstrom

An insane cacophony resounds in the conduit as you reach the bottom. Outside, you see...total chaos! Boulders, trees, and entire landscapes are swept up in a torrent of water and other murky liq-

uids, buffeted by strong winds. As you look out, you feel alternately heated by free-standing balls of fire and chilled by the remains of huge glaciers. The tug of randomly changing gravity further disorients you.

The maelstrom layer is similar to Limbo, but there are no safe zones here. Characters unwise enough to venture out into this insanity will quickly find themselves alternately baked, frozen, drowning, or trapped in sliding earth and, muck. Some strange versions of life exist here, including gibbering mouthers, ascoids, basidirones, crysmals, froghe-moths, kampfuls, vargouille, and other creatures too bizarre for words.

8. The Abyssian Ocean

This conduit hole is located on the edge of the river Styx, which runs into the hole forming a waterfall into the depths.

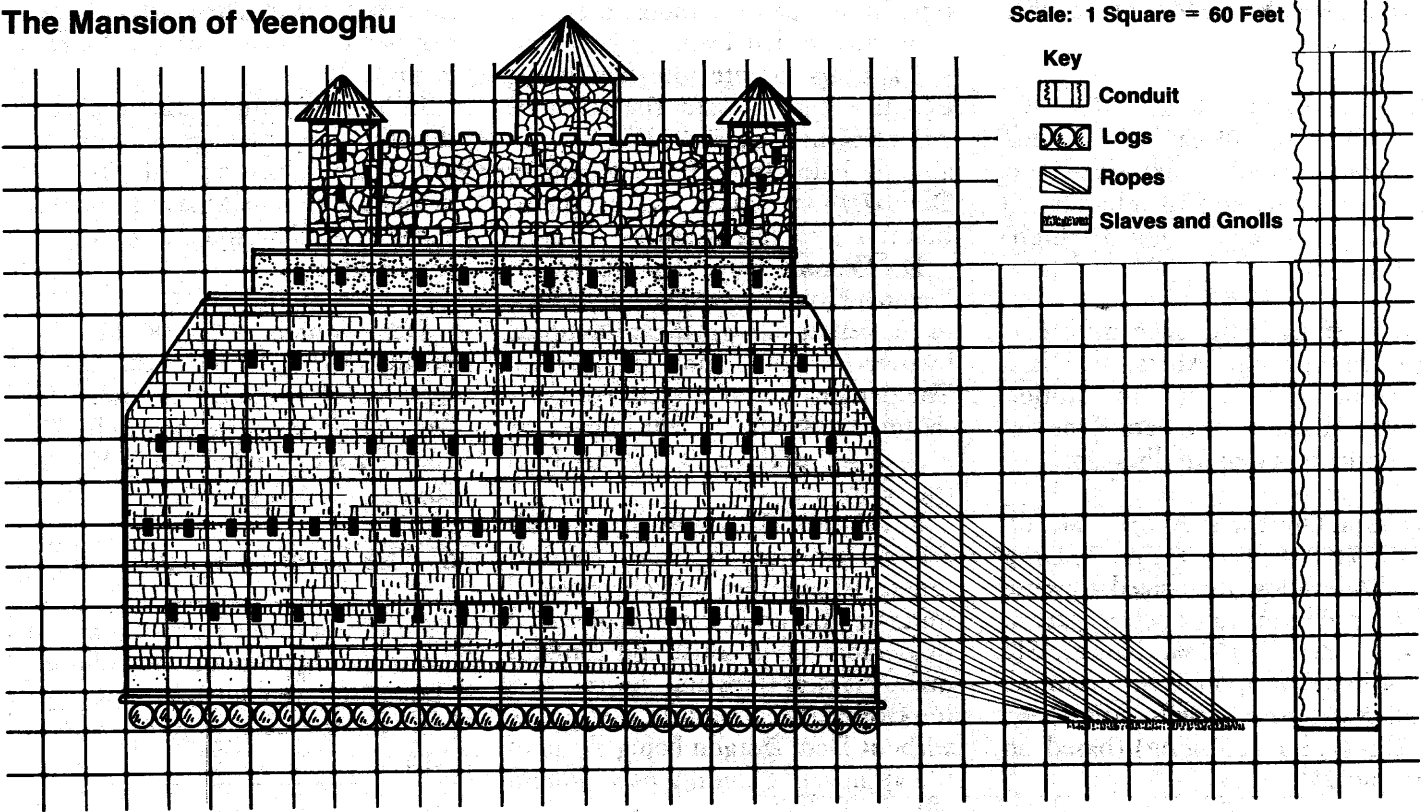
As usual when the Styx is involved, any contact with the water, including spray from the waterfall, causes full memory loss effects.

As characters approach the bottom of the hole:

Below you is a torrent of water that fills the bottom 50 feet or so of the conduit shaft, coming from the waterfall above.

Water from the Styx has filled this entire layer, which has become a deep ocean. The exit from the conduit shaft (which is well underwater) comes out into the bottom of the

The Mansion of Yeenoghu



ocean. Such spells as water breathing still involve contact with the waters of the Styx. If characters who make their saving throws stay in contact with the water (by being in it, say), they must make saving throws each turn.

The Abyssian Ocean is filled with all manner of evil and monstrous underwater creatures, both freshwater and saltwater, including water naga, marine trolls, aquatic ogres, dragon turtles, giant pikes, kopoacincths, lacedons, green slime (giant size), morkoths, sea dragons, throat leeches, giant squids, eyes of the deep, kraken, pisco-daemons, and hydrodaemons.

9. The Mansion of Yeenoghu

A barren salt waste lies before you. But in the distance you see an amazing sight: a mansion the size of a city, being pulled slowly by thousands of slaves. Gnoll overlords whip them ceaselessly to pull their burden.

If the PCs attack the gnolls, they flee, but a flight of 100 Type IV demons swoops down from the giant mansion to repel the attackers.

100 Type IV Demons: AC -1, MV 9"/12", HD 11, hp 55 ea., #AT 3, Dmg 1d4/1d4/2d4, SA bonus to +2 to hit plus spell-like abilities, SD +1 or better weapon to hit, MR 65%, AL CE, Size L (10 1/2') (MM, pg. 19)

If the demons are defeated, a further 100 demons attack, and so forth, until the party is captured, flees, or is killed. If the party flees back into the conduit, the demons do not pursue. If the party surrenders or is captured, they are taken before Yeenoghu.

Yeenoghu: AC -5, MV 18", hp 200, #AT 1 (special), Dmg 3d6 +

special, SA spell-like abilities, SD +1 or better weapon to hit, MR 80%, AL CE, Size L (12') (MM, pg. 19)

Yeenoghu can be goaded into a one-on-one fight with a party member with a wager of freedom for the party, but he uses his Lesser Power abilities to eliminate spells and magical items possessed by that party member—and cheats if he begins to lose. He is not interested in helping against Orcus, and only welcomes having new victims to torture in his dungeons.

10. Queen of the Demonweb Pits

Silence greets you at the bottom of this conduit, as you step out into a dungeon corridor.

This is the Web of Lolth, Demon Queen of Spiders, the 65th Layer of the Abyss. Module Q1, *Queen of the Demonweb Pits*, and GDQ1-7, *Queen of Spiders*, contain details of this deadly layer.

11. Layer of Rock

A deep rumbling greets you as you reach the bottom of the conduit. As you look out into this layer of the Abyss, you see a region of hot lava flows, with volcanoes erupting in the middle distance.

For every hour the PCs remain in this layer, a new volcano erupts. There is a 20% chance that a new volcano erupts right where the PCs are standing, sending a stream of hot lava onto the party for 10d20 hit points of damage.

This layer is home to most types of demons, plus creatures at home in this environment, such as

magmen, lava children, fire elements, salamanders, red dragons, fire giants, galeb duhr, etc.

12. The Realm of Juiblex

The nauseating stench of decaying matter greets you as you near the bottom of this conduit.






The adventurers are entering the layer ruled by Juiblex, the Faceless Lord, as shown on the map on page 38. The realm of Juiblex is filled with all manner of living fungus and rot, with the entire range of deadly slimes, molds, and jellies living off each other's putrid forms.

A. Conduit Exit: All characters must make one saving throw vs. poison at a -5 penalty for every three turns spent in this layer, or suffer the effects of a *stinking cloud* spell. Characters who save are still nauseated enough that they cannot eat and keep their food down. In addition, the innate magic of this layer instantly putrifies all nonmagical food and water carried by the party. Water is changed into gelatinous cube material and food is changed into black pudding, both of which attack the contents of the PCs' backpacks and pouches.

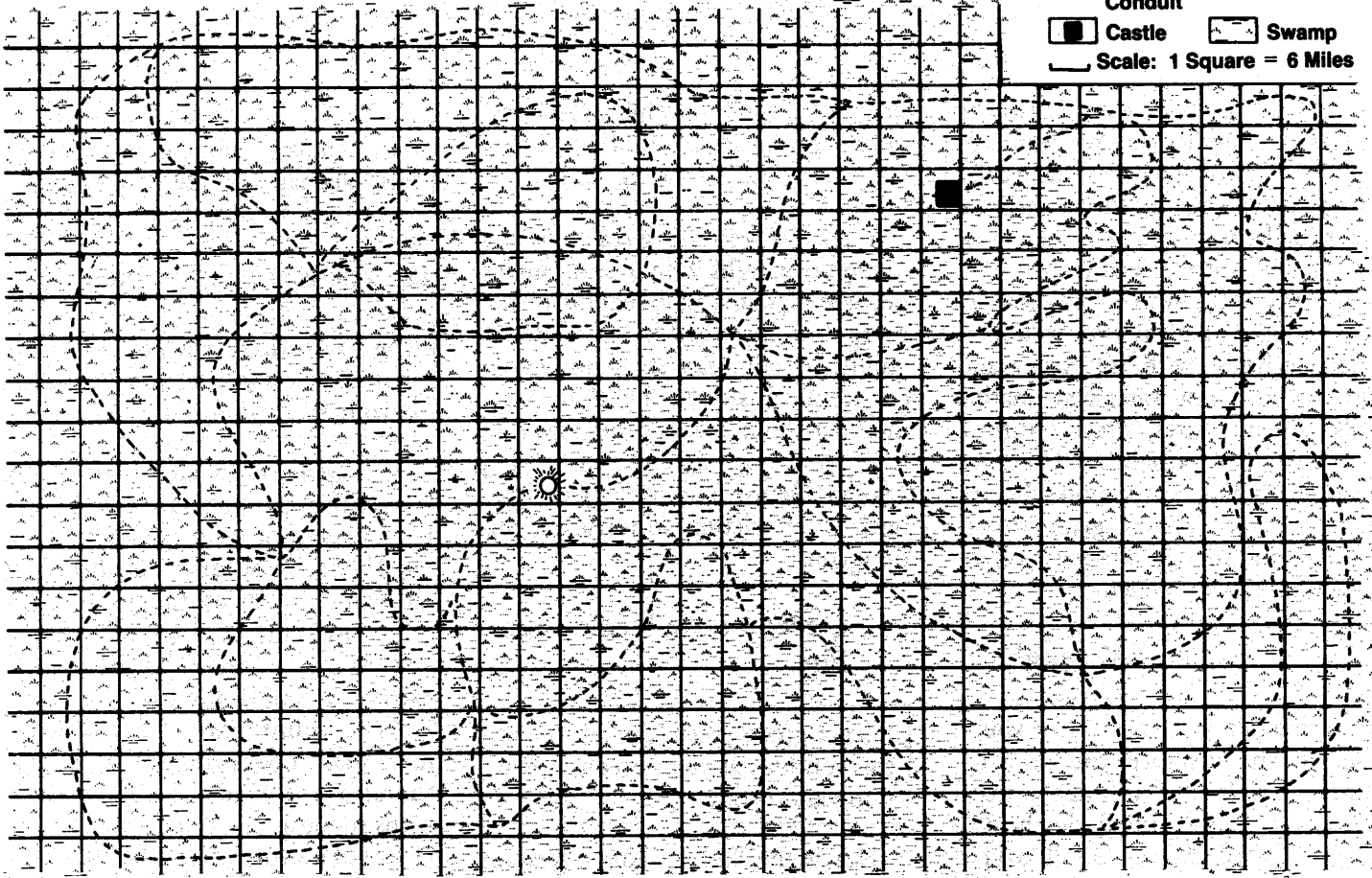
The landscape as far as the eye can see is a putrid swamp filled with unnatural colors, with an odor so strong you can see the fumes rise. A narrow path, wide enough only to allow single-file movement, is the only safe way to proceed. Stepping into the swamp at any point results in the simultaneous effects of a green slime, yellow mold, ochre jelly, and black pudding (turn creature into green slime, kill anyone who fails a saving throw vs. poison, dissolve flesh at 3d4 points/round, corrode metal).

The Realm of Juiblex

Key

-  Mountain
-  Column to Conduit
-  Path
-  Castle
-  Swamp

Scale: 1 Square = 6 Miles



If characters *fly* or *levitate* above the swamp, the swamp spews forth great columns of muck as high as necessary to cover the characters, with the above effects.

B. Random Encounters: There is a chance equal to the party's average character level (but no greater than 75%) each turn of a random encounter from the following table:

Random Encounters: Realm of Juiblex (Roll 1d4)

D4 Roll Encounter

- 1 Giant Obliviax (one per party member): AC 0, MV Nil, HD 10, hp 20 ea., #AT special (memory drain range 60 feet, victim must save vs. spell at -5 or lose all memories from last 24 hours, including all memorized spells), Dmg Nil, SA can cast stolen spells, SD form imitation of memory-

- drained creature, AL NE, Size M (MM2, pg. 96)
- 2 Giant Gelatinous Cube (1, appears to be a clear lake filled with jelly): AC -5, MV 21" HD 100, hp 400, #AT 10, Dmg 10d6, SA paralyzation, surprise on 1d3, SD immune to cold, electricity, fear, holds, paralyzation, polymorph, and sleep attacks, MR 75%, Size L (100' per side) (MM, pg. 43)
- 3 Green Slime Colony (1,000' slimes): AC 9, MV 6", HD 2,000, hp 8,000, #AT 1 pseudopod, Dmg special, SA turns victim into green slime, SD immune to all weapons and spells except *cure disease*, AL N, Size L (MM, Pg. 49)
- 4 Bar-Lgura (20): AC -3, MV 9"@15", HD 6+6, hp 35 ea., #AT 3, Dmg 1d6/1d6/

2d6, SA&SD spell-like abilities, MR 45%, AL CE, Size M (MM2 pg. 37)

C. The Palace of Juiblex: The evil stench of this noxious swamp gets far worse as the characters approach what seems to be the largest heap of decaying garbage in all the planes of existence—the palace of Juiblex itself. The area around the palace is filled with manes, bar-lgura, and type II and IV demons, all of whom prey on each other. Several attack the party as it nears the palace; if the attackers are not instantly repelled by great force, a great mob joins in. Dinner time!

Juiblex is not interested in the visit of normal creatures, regardless of what they have to offer, and attacks full-force anyone with the temerity to enter his lair. If he appears to be losing, he *teleports* away. His palace contains many treasures, including rings

of plant control, an alchemy jug, an amulet of life protection (always worn), a bag of transmuting, a chime of hunger (which he uses in melee), a periapt of foul rotting, pipes of the sewers, a scarab of insanity, and a talisman of ultimate evil.

Juiblex: AC -7, MV 3") hp 176, #AT 1, Dmg 4d10, SA spell-like abilities plus spew slimes, SD +2 or better weapon to hit, MR 100%) AL CE, Size L (MM, pg. 17)

13. The Realm of Urdlen

The exit from this conduit is filled with solid rock.

This entire layer is a solid mass of rock, with some tunnels, corridors and chambers hollowed out. The rock is solid granite. Magical means may allow passage; characters using magic should also figure out how to find their way back to this conduit, or else be lost forever. About 50 feet into the rock is a narrow corridor that leads in a winding, mazelike fashion deep into this layer.

This is the home of the evil gnome-god Urdlen, the Crawler Below, a Lesser God who appears as a huge, dead-white furless mole with claws of steel. He lusts for the blood of any human, humanoid, or demi-human. He smells the fresh blood of the party if they enter any of his corridors, and appears to attack them within 1d10 turns of their arrival.

Urdlen: AC 2, MV 12" (36"), hp 544, #AT 2, Dmg 4d4 +7 (x2), SA Nil, SD permanent *blur* spell, MR 100%, Size L (8 1/2' long), AL CE, powers of 8th-level cleric, 10th-level fighter, 13th-level illusionist, 12th-level assassin, plus all Lesser Power divine abilities in home plane.

A search of the corridors (if Urdlen is defeated) reveals an immense, bulky treasure of tons of jewels and precious metals that have been broken, tarnished and melted in sacrificial ceremonies. The value of the treasure is in the hundreds of millions of gold pieces, but so is the bulk.

14. The Layer of Delusion

Sunshine, bright light, and the sound of children at play greet you at the bottom of this conduit. As you look out, you see an unbelievable sight—you're home again! The village of Bloodstone lies before you, and running toward you is the beautiful Lady Christine!

This indeed appears to be Bloodstone Pass, but it is actually the Layer of Delusion, a sentient being seeking to destroy all who enter by simulating a pleasant environment. Its power is such that it can mask itself against the range of normal *detect* spells, including the innate detect evil ability of paladins.

All the NPCs of Bloodstone Pass are present, welcoming the heroes home. Quillan the Sage shows up to tell the heroes that they have evidently found an interplanar conduit that brought them back to Bloodstone, and that they can return to the Abyss soon, "after you've regained your strength and restored your magic." Quillan tells them he has discovered a new source of magic, and gives each of them what seem to be the magical items of their dreams, *holy swords* +10, *rod of infinite spell casting*, etc. The items all appear to work while in this layer.

Nothing untoward happens until nightfall, after a wonderful, delicious banquet has been offered to the par-

ty. (The food is all poisoned with a -10 penalty to the saving throw, but death only sets in 12 hours after the food is eaten, so it may appear safe.) That night, any characters who have not eaten are visited by those NPCs most dear to them, or by beautiful maidens or anything else their hearts desire—but these are all succubi or type VI demon assassins who seek an unguarded moment to kill their victims.

If at any point the characters try to escape or resist the delusion of this layer, the entire landscape turns violently against them—not only do angry mobs of their friends and loved ones rush to kill them, but even the trees, grass, and buildings are alive and evil.

Be as devious and nasty as you can. This layer should be deadly.

15. Baphomet's Maze

The conduit ends in a dungeon corridor, with exits in four directions.

This is a small part of the maze of Baphomet, Demon Lord of Minotaurs. The walls shift and change, so learning the path on one visit means nothing. The current configuration of this section of the maze is shown on the map on page 40. There is a chance per turn equal to the party's average level (but no greater than 75%) of an encounter with a band of 1d12 minotaurs with special powers:

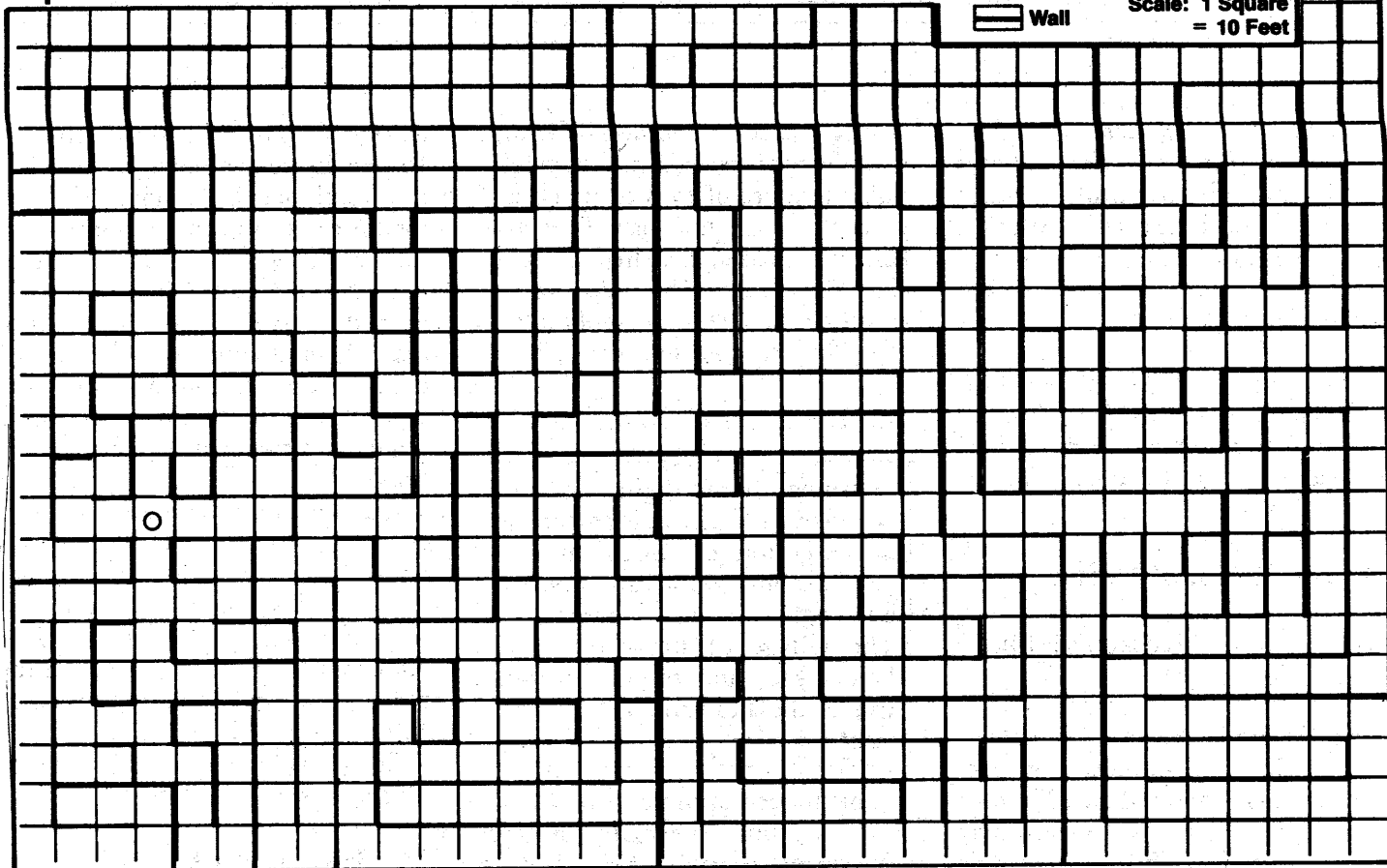
Minotaurs: AC 6, MV 12", HD 6+3, hp 35 ea., #AT, Dmg 2d6 + 4 (*halberd* +4) SA breath weapon or magic (see below), SD surprised only on a 1, MR 50%, AL CE, Size L (MM1, pg. 71)

Baphomet's Maze

Key  Conduit

 Wall

Scale: 1 Square
= 10 Feet



Minotaur Special Powers (roll 1d10)

- 1 Lightning Breath Weapon (as lightning bolt spell)
- 2 Gas Breath Weapon (as repulsion spell)
- 3 Gas Breath Weapon (save vs. poison or die)
- 4 Cold Breath Weapon (as cone of cold spell)
- 5 Flame Breath Weapon (as fireball spell)
- 6 Gas Breath Weapon (save vs. paralyzation or be permanently paralyzed)
- 7 Clerical Spell Use at 10th level
- 8 Magic-User Spell Use at 10th level
- 9 Illusionist Spell Use at 10th level
- 10 Type VI Demon Abilities

Baphomet, demon ruler of minotaurs, has been captured by Orcus

and is currently being held in the dungeons of the Prince of the Undead. (See Baphomet's NPC Capsule on page 64 for details.) Understandably, the minotaurs of Baphomet's Maze are anxious for the return of their lord. If the characters parley with the minotaurs and reveal their destination, 1d6 minotaurs (randomly generated breath abilities) offer to accompany the characters to serve as henchmen until Baphomet can be liberated. Accepting the offer of the minotaurs to accompany the party does not cause an alignment shift; freeing Baphomet, on the other hand, could be considered a chaotic evil act.

16. Lair of the Semi-Demons

This layer of the Abyss looks relatively normal. There is a small town a few miles distant.

This layer of the Abyss appears to be just like a standard Prime Material plane. There are forests, rivers, mountains, and other normal features. Even the ambient light is normal, rather than the strange, eerie illumination common on these layers.

This layer is the home of the semi-demons: cambions (offspring of human females and demons) and alu-demons (offspring of human males and succubi). Feared by their human relatives and despised by their demon relatives, many have moved to this layer of the Abyss. They live in small villages and war on each other constantly. They are sterile, and so there are no children.

If members of the party approach the village, there is a 50% chance they will be attacked immediately by 5d100 soldiers (a mix of cambions and alu-demons). If not attacked, they will parley with the party mem-

bers. They are not interested in the activities of other planes, but might provide assistance to the characters if they help destroy a neighboring village. Of course, helping demons prey on each other changes the alignment of party members one step toward chaotic evil.

17. The Caverns of Zuggtmoy

This conduit hole is located on the edge of the river Styx, which runs into the hole forming a waterfall into the depths.

See encounter area 24 for details. At the bottom of the hole, the characters find themselves in a network of caverns—a small node of the layer inhabited by Zuggtmoy, Demoness Lady of Fungi. In addition to the information presented in this section, it is useful to study Dungeon Level 3

and Appendix B of module T1-4, *The Temple of Elemental Evil*.

The entire floor of this level has been turned to mud by the water from the river Styx. Touching the floor at any point has the same effects as any contact with the river itself.

The caverns are used to grow the various molds and slimes that are known as Zuggtmoy's Beloved: ascomids, basidironds, violet fungi, brown molds, russet molds, yellow molds, ochre jellies, gray ooze, phycoids, black pudding, brown pudding, dun pudding, white pudding, green slime, olive slime, ustilagor, and zygom. All these are found in profusion. If the PCs should destroy any of the fungi, there is a cumulative 10% chance per act of destruction that an angry Zuggtmoy will appear and attack.

Zuggtmoy: AC 0 (body)/ -2 (head), MV 15" (6" on walls or ceil-

ings) or 12" in human form, HD 49 (444 hp), #AT 2 or 4, Dmg 2d6 (x2) or 2d4 (x4), SA spell-like abilities plus all Lesser Power abilities, SD +2 or better weapon to hit, MR 100% AL CE, Size L (M in human form), (T1-4, pg. 123)

18. The Palace of Graz'zt

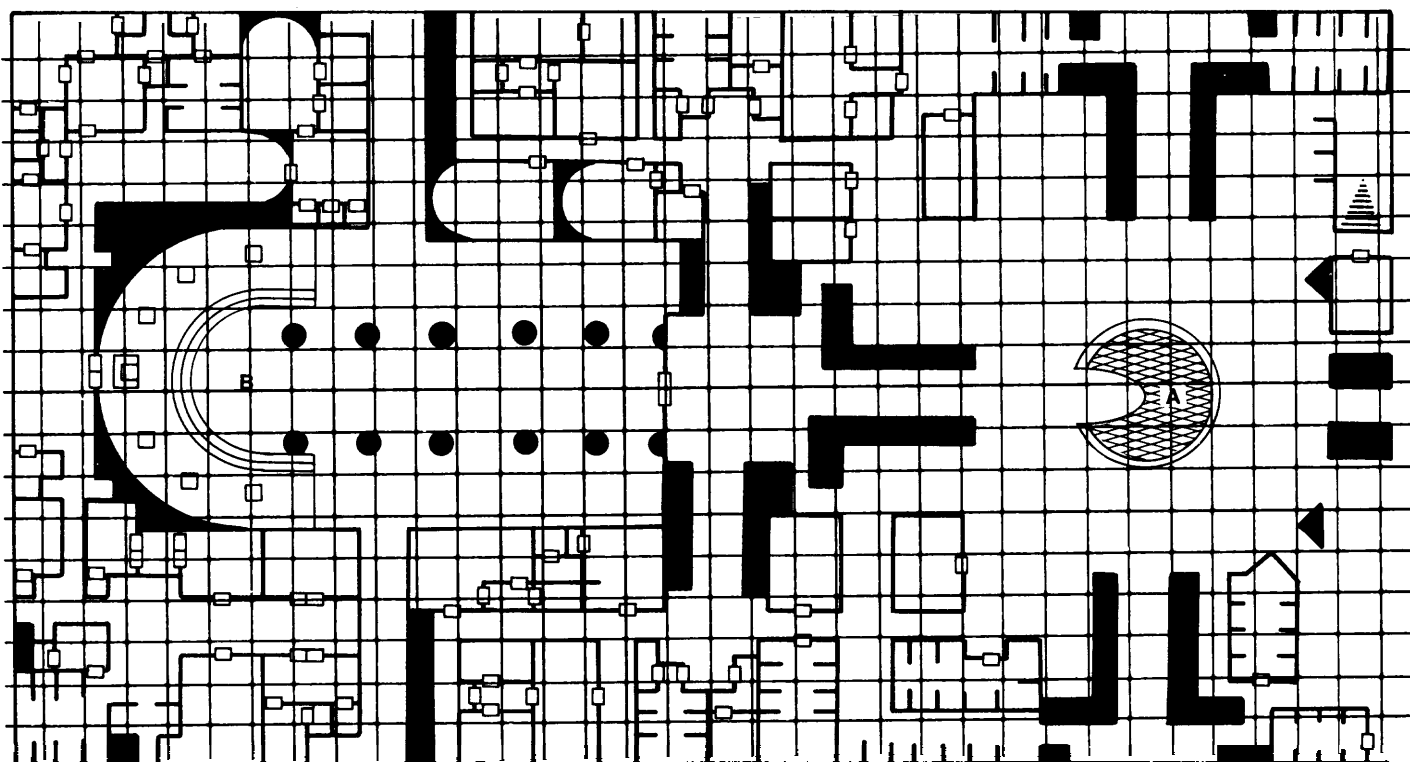
This conduit opens up inside an elaborate fortress, with marching squads of demons carrying pole arms drilling in the halls around the entrance to this layer.

This is the Palace of the Demon Prince Graz'zt, shown on the map on this page. The entire infinite layer is one huge palace, the court of millions of demon soldiers drilling constantly for war against both Demogorgon and Orcus. When the characters appear in the conduit entrance, a

The Palace of Graz'zt

Scale: 1 Square = 30 Feet

Key  Throne  Door  Conduit  Column



guard patrol of 100 Type III demons commanded by a Type V demon, weapons at ready, demands that the characters sheath their weapons and come with the patrol. If the characters battle the demons, a new squad of 100 demons enters the room every two rounds until the characters escape, die, or parley. (Use BATTLE-SYSTEM™ rules to resolve this battle, should it occur.) If the characters parley, the commanding Type V demon offers to escort them to the nearby throne room of Graz'zt himself.

Type III Demons (100): AC -4, MV 9" HD 10, hp 50 ea., #AT 5, Dmg 2d6/2d6/1d3/1d3/1d4+1, SA/SD spell-like abilities, MR 60%, AL CE, Size L (MM, pg. 18)

If the characters are escorted to the throne room (area "B"), Graz'zt, the most handsome of demon rulers, and his court of beautiful lamia, succubi, and demonesses await.

After being captured by a sorcerer from the Prime Material plane at a crucial moment in a battle against the troglodytes, harpies, and bar-Igura, he escaped at the cost of being confined to his own layer for a century.

Graz'zt: AC -9, MV 12", hp 372, #AT 2, Dmg 2d6 +6, SA spell-like abilities, SD +2 or better weapon to hit, MR 100%, AL CE, Size L (MM2, Pg. 39)

3 Lamia: AC 3, MV 24", HD 9, hp 65 ea., #AT 1, Dmg 1d4, SA spell-like abilities, Wisdom drain, SD Nil, AL CE, Size M (MM, pg. 59)

3 Succubi: AC 0, MV 12"/18", HD 6, hp 40 ea., #AT 2, Dmg 1d3/1d3, SA energy drain, SD +1 or better weapon to hit, MR 70% AL CE, Size M (MM, pg. 18)

3 Type V Demons: AC -7, MV 12", #AT 7, Dmg 2d4 (x6), SA spell-like abilities, SD +1 or better weapon to hit, MR 80%, AL CE, Size L (MM pg. 19)

3 Female Type VI Demons: AC -2, MV 6"/15", HD 8+8, hp 50 ea., #AT 1, Dmg 1d12+1, SA whip & flame for 4d6, SD +1 or better weapon to hit, MR 75% AL CE, Size L (MM pg. 19)

If the PCs explain their crusade against Orcus, Graz'zt offers to assign them several Type VI demons as soldiers, and to send his army into the layer of Orcus when the PCs have successfully captured the *wand*. If the PCs agree to this deal, their alignment moves one step closer to chaotic evil. Graz'zt keeps his deal if the PCs accept, and gives them a magical whistle that will summon an army of 10,000 Type III demons to fight Orcus when the PCs are ready. Of course, when the PCs escape the layer of Orcus with the *wand*, Graz'zt attacks them to steal it.

19. Realm of Fraz-Urb'luu

This layer appears to be a totally flat and featureless plane that stretches to infinity.

This is the layer of Fraz-Urb'luu, the Demon Prince of Deception. This layer is totally alive to the wishes of the demon, and shapes itself however its ruler desires. The land also radiates a powerful anti-magic. After six turns in this layer, there is a 90% chance for each magical item other than an artifact or relic to lose its dweomer and become powerless. Charged items may be recharged on leaving the layer; other items are now normal and do not regenerate.

There is a 10% chance per turn that Fraz-Urb'luu becomes aware of the trespassers in his domain and *teleports* in to attack, using his special deception ability to *gate* in another demon prince or princess to attack the party. The terrain alters as necessary to hinder the party and help Fraz-Urb'luu.

Fraz-Urb'luu: AC -2, MV 12"/18" (MC:D), hp 466, #AT 3 and 1, Dmg 13d6 (x2)/3d6 or 1d12, SA spell-like abilities, SD resistances, MR 100%, AL CE, Size L (MM2, pg. 39)

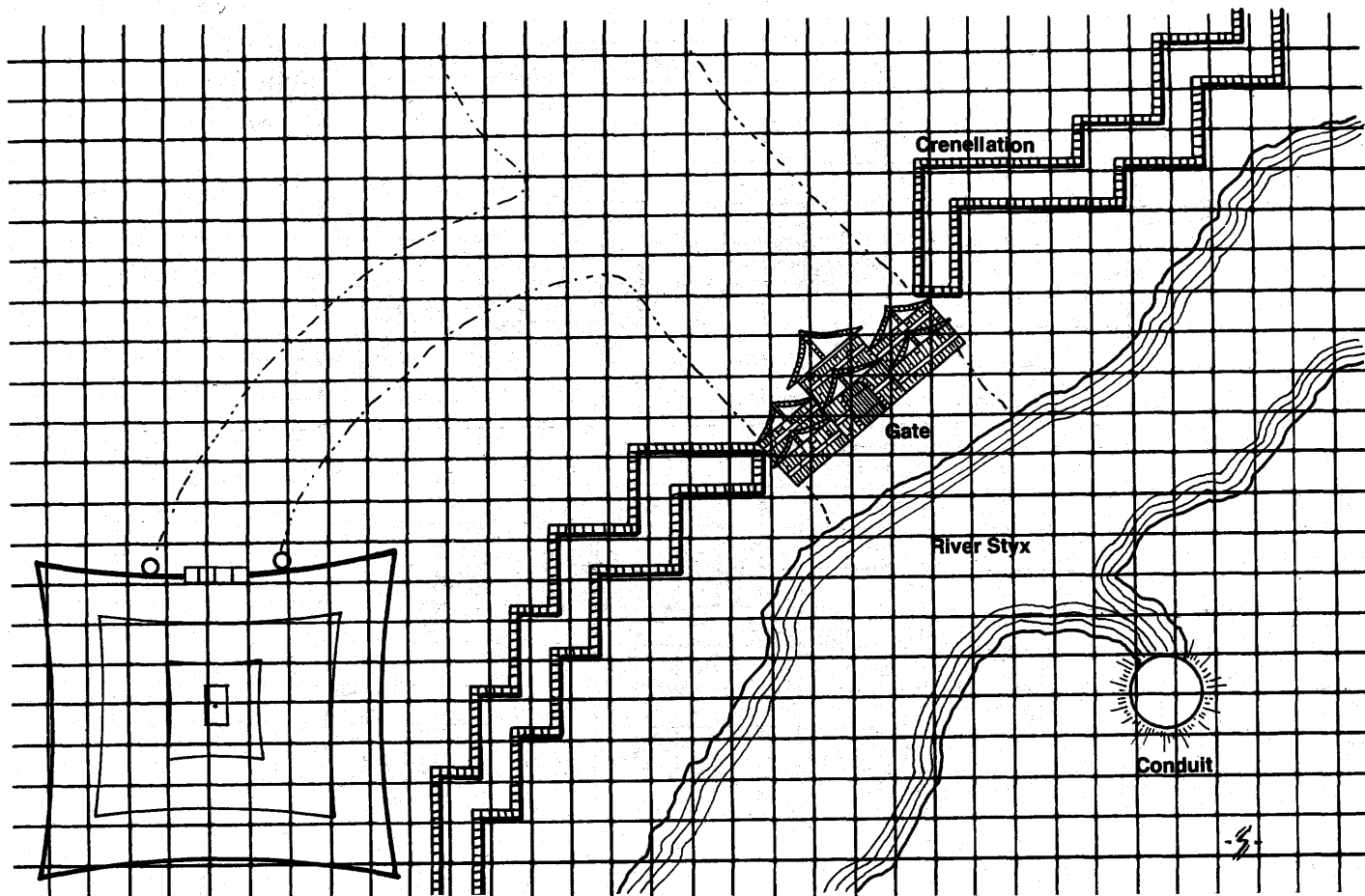
20. Glacier of Kostchtchie

The arctic winds howl as you exit the conduit, and the glare of the bleak sun on the orange ice is blinding. The glacier seems to stretch to infinity.

This glacial layer is the home of the demon Kostchtchie. As in area 4, this plane is so cold that unprotected creatures suffer an automatic 1d6 points of damage per round, and no fire-based spells work.

There is a 10% chance per turn, cumulative, that Kostchtchie senses the intruders and appears, riding his giant white dragon mount and accompanied by a pair of leucrotta. Kostchtchie wields a *hammer* +5 of giant size (18/00 Strength to carry, opponents hit by it must save vs. paralysis or be stunned for two rounds).

In addition, there is a random encounter chance equal to the average party level (but no greater than 75%) of appearances by ice demons, ice devils, ice para-elementals, ice trolls, remorhaz, night hags, or frost giants.



Kostchtchie: AC -3, MV 6", hp 192, #AT 1, Dmg 2d6+10, SA/SD spell-like abilities, MR 100%, AL CE, Size M (MM2, pg. 40)

White Dragon: AC 3, MV 12" / 30", HD 7, hp 56, #AT 3, Dmg 1d4 / 1d4/2d8, SA *cone of cold* breath weapon, 4 1st-level MU spells, AL CE, Size L (MM, pg. 34)

2 Leucrotta: AC 3, MV 18", HD 9, hp 49 ea., #AT 1, D 2d6+6, SD rear kicks (2 for 1d6+1 hp ea.), AL CE, Size L (MM, pg. 60)

21. Realm of Feng-Tu

This conduit hole is located on the banks of the river Styx, which runs into the hole forming a waterfall into the depths.

See area 8 for details. At the bot-

tom of the conduit the water rushes out into another branch of the Styx.

This is the realm of Feng-Tu, home of the Chinese powers Tou Mu, Goddess of the North Star, and Lu Yueh, God of Epidemics. See the map on this page. The realm of Feng-Tu appears as a mighty citadel, Oriental in appearance, that rises up a branch of the Styx called How Nai-ho. Across the river from the conduit is the Gate of the Demons, Kuei-Men-Kuan, which is large enough to permit elephantine behemoths to pass through easily. The gods hold sway over a household of manes and demons of all sorts.

If the PCs cross the river and present themselves at the gate, Type V demon guards demand their business. If the PCs try to fight, the walls around the fortress are instantly filled with Type III demons armed with *crossbows* +3. The gods are not interested in the PCs' conflict with Orcus,

but if the characters want to worship at the temple inside the gates, they may do so, and receive a bless spell from the deities. Characters who accept this *blessing* move one alignment step toward chaotic evil.

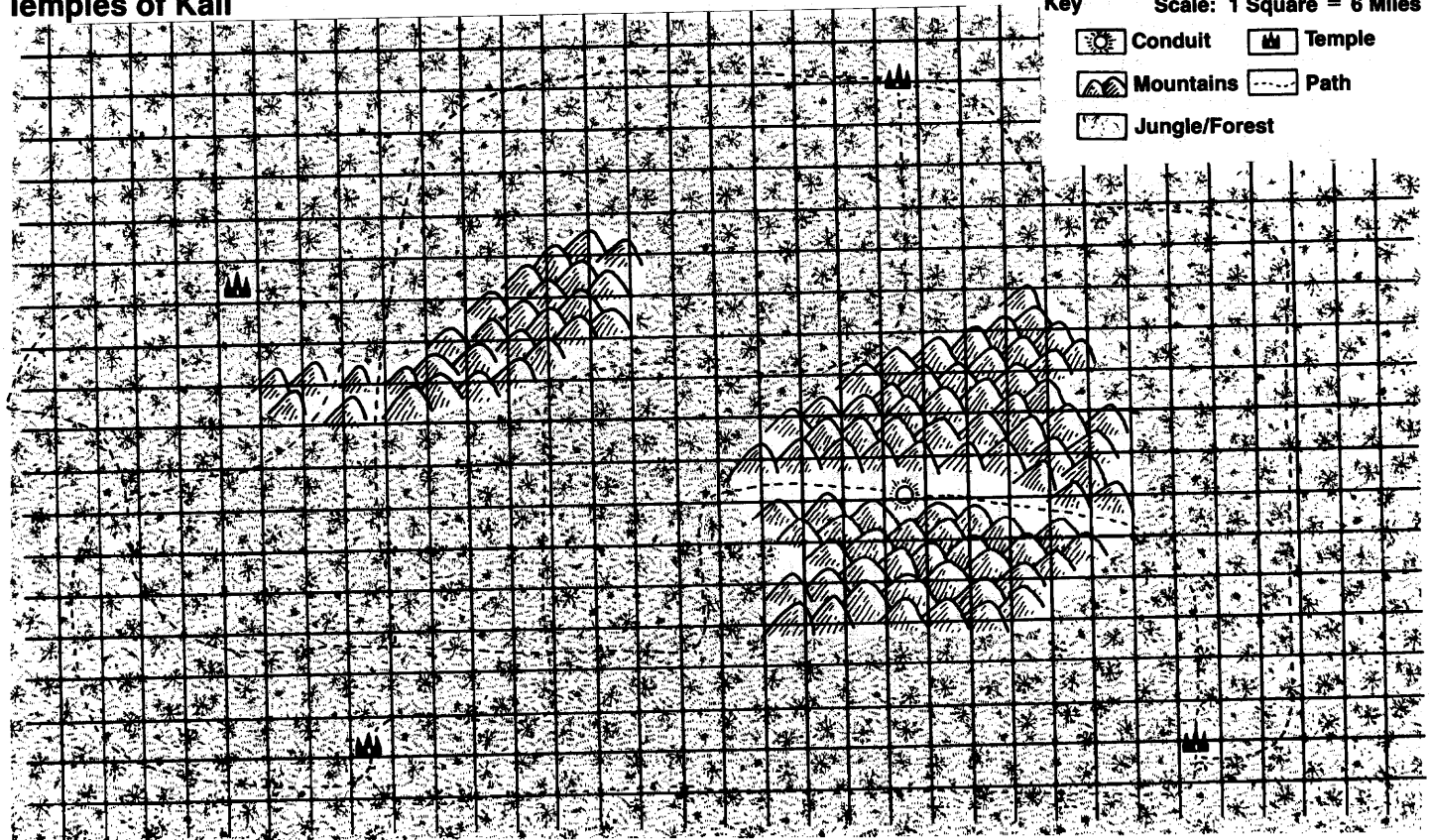
The gods themselves will not appear to the characters.

22. Temples of Kali

This is a realm of jagged peaks and blood-red, tropical vegetation. A narrow path runs from the mountains where the conduit is located down into the deep jungle below.

This is the realm of the goddess Kali, who represents destruction incarnate. See the map on page 44. The winding paths through this layer of the Abyss lead to the goddess's decaying temples, overgrown with scarlet vines and crimson flowers.

Temples of Kali



This level is inhabited by most sorts of demons (especially nabassu), plus giant centipedes, spiders of all types, su-monsters, volts, will-o-wisps, assassin bugs, asian elephants, leucrotta, spirit naga, and various molds and slimes.

Each temple of Kali is occupied by monks. There are three senior monks and 50 junior ones; all appear to be human. They welcome travelers and invite them to worship. (Worshiping Kali results in a movement of one step toward chaotic evil.) Characters who refuse to worship are invited to shelter in the temple, and are then attacked. If the characters have previously killed the Grandfather of Assassins, Kali herself appears and attacks; otherwise, the temple monks are all the characters must contend with.

The three senior monks are all rakshasa; the 50 junior monks are all 7th-level assassins. Each temple contains a treasure of potions of *climbing*, *extra-*

healing, and *invulnerability*, scrolls of *protection from illusions*, *plants*, *poison*, and *traps*, a *book of vile darkness*, *necklace of strangulation*, *scarab of death*, *hat of disguise*, and a *sword +2*, *nine lives stealer*.

Kali: AC -9, MV 27", hp 558, #AT 4, Dmg 4d10 (x4), SA spell-like abilities, 10th-level cleric/druid, 15th-level magic-user/illusionist, 15th-level assassin, 13th-level monk, all Lesser Power abilities, SD fear, MR 100%, Size L, AL CE (LL, pg. 71)

3 Rakshasa: AC -4, MV 15") HD 7, hp 40 ea., #AT 3, Dmg 1d3/1d3/1d4+1, SA *ESP* and *illusion*, MU spells as 5th-level MU, Cleric spells as 1st-level Cleric, SD immune to spells under 8th-level, magical weapons under +3 do half damage, immune to nonmagical weapons, AL LE, Size M (MM pg. 81)

50 7th-level Assassins: AC 8, MV 12", hp 21 ea., #AT 2, Dmg 1d4 + poison, SA assassination table, all thief and assassin skills, SD none, AL CE, Size M

23. Vaprak of the Trolls

The smell of rotting jungle vegetation greets you before you can exit the conduit.

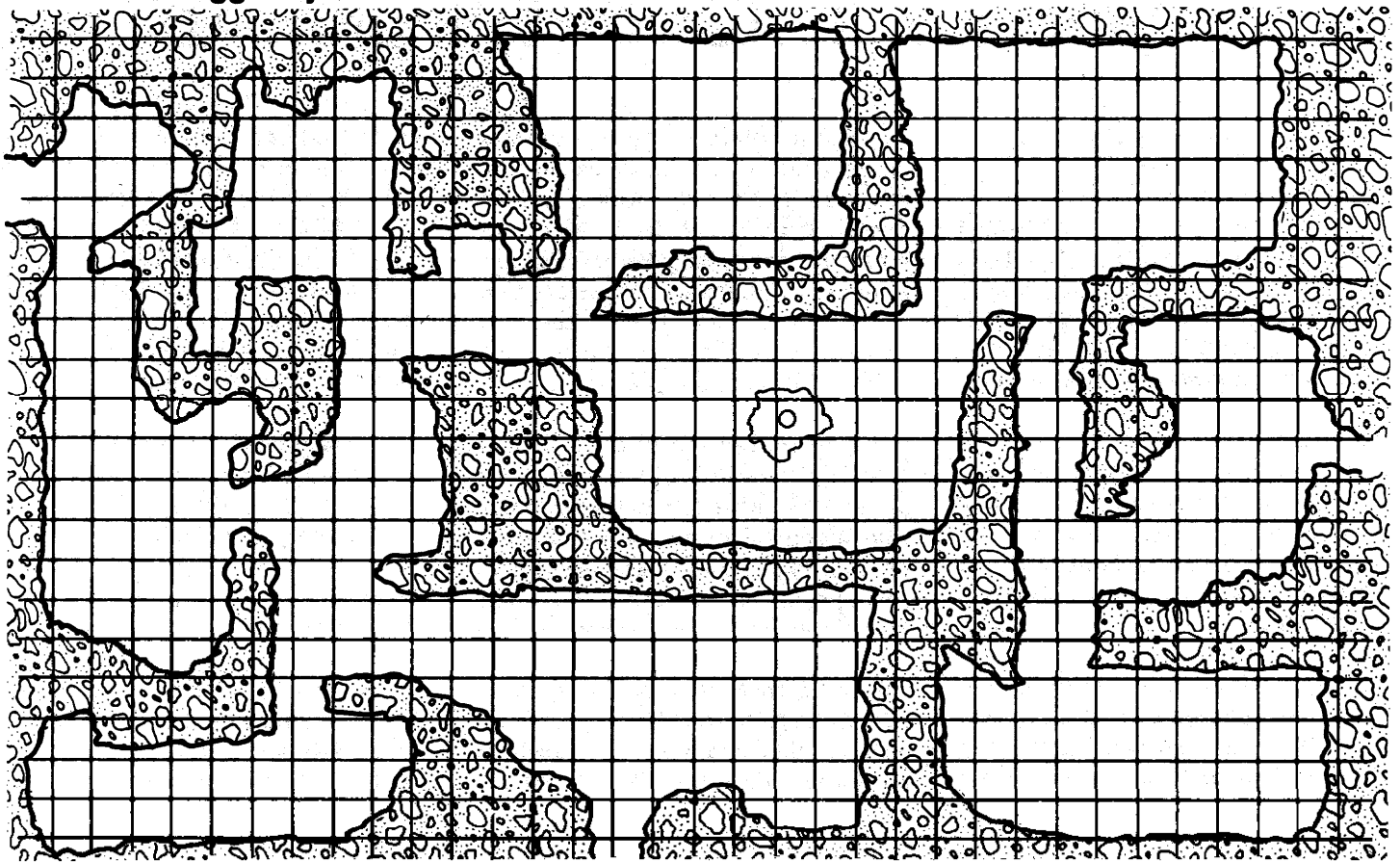
This layer is home to Vaprak, demigod of trolls and ogres. Thousands of both types of creatures live in the swamp. There is a 10% chance per turn of encountering Vaprak.

Vaprak: AC 0, MV 15", hp 296, #AT 3 (as 16+ HD monster), Dmg 2d10/2d10/1d12, SA spells as 10th-level cleric, SD regenerates 7 points/round, +1 or better weapon to hit, MR 100%, Size L, AL CE (LL, pg. 96)

Caverns of Zugtmoy

Scale: 1 Square = 120 Feet

○ Conduit



24. Lair of Laogzed

This is the lair of Laogzed, demigod of the troglodytes. Use the map on this page.

Laogzed is a vile and disgusting creature whose appearance suggests both toad and lizard. His oozing skin is covered with patches of dead flesh. He prowls the caverns looking for prey; there is a cumulative 10% chance per round that Laogzed smells the intruders and rushes to attack.

Laogzed: AC 0, MV 15" hp 374, #AT 1 (as 16+ HD monster), Dmg 6d10, SA *stinking cloud* at will, spell use as 15th-level cleric (harmful spells only), SD skin causes 3d6 points of damage automatic damage if touched, plus victim must save vs. poison at -4 or die. Weapons touching the skin must save vs. acid or be destroyed, MR 100%, Size L, AL CE (LL, pg. 97)

25. Layer of Evil Incarnate

The darkness below radiates even greater evil than that which permeates the rest of the Abyss.

This is the Layer of Evil Incarnate. At the bottom of the conduit, all good-aligned characters must make a saving throw vs. spell; failure means instant death. Mortals of evil alignment are instantly *polymorphed* into bodaks (no saving throw) and vanish into this layer, never to return. Mortals of neutral alignment, and good-aligned characters who make their saving throw, are randomly flung into another layer. Roll 2d12 +1 for each character flung into another layer. Each character goes to the layer represented by that encounter number (3-25; results of 25 become 26).

26. The Realm of Orcus

This conduit leads to the realm of Orcus. Go to Chapter 3.

27-30. Iron Fortresses

Each of the four iron fortresses is inhabited by a major demon: Ahri-manes, Aseroth, Dagon, or Eblis. Their physical bodies are protected here while they are traveling astrally. At the first sign of trouble, they return.

The fortresses are each guarded by 10 Type V demons. These guards warn would-be intruders to go away, and make no aggressive moves. There is no treasure in the fortresses, and nothing to be gained by attacking the demons. If the PCs attack a fortress, the major demon returns and begins to *gate* in as much as possible.

CHAPTER 3: REALM OF THE UNDEAD

The Realm of Orcus

The home layer of Orcus is the 333d layer of the Abyss, and that is where the conduit from encounter area 26 in Chapter Two leads.

The Palace of Orcus lies in a deep valley surrounded by immense mountains honeycombed with narrow passages. Smaller valleys in the mountains contain cities of undead and a variety of other encounters, described in this chapter. The palace itself and its surroundings are described in Chapter Four. See the map on pages 48 and 49 for a description of this area.

The passageways that weave and twist through the mountains are cut deeply into the rock. They are made of solid stone, well worn and quite slippery. The walls on either side are climbable by a thief at normal chances, and extend upward approximately 100 feet. The contour lines shown on Map 10 describe the tops of the walls, not the pathways or valley encounter areas, which are considered to be at 1,000 feet. (The River of Acid, demon cities, and the Palace of Orcus itself are all at 0 altitude.) As is clear from inspection of the contour lines, most sections of the path are steeply canted either up or down, which affects both combat and movement.

Although only a small section of this layer of the Abyss is shown here, note that this mountain completely surrounds the Palace of Orcus, and extends off the map edges for several miles. Most of this layer of the Abyss consists of this labyrinthine mountain, but it is not known by Prime Material plane scholars what other terrain types might occupy this realm.

Characters who try to fly rather than walk encounter hordes of chasme, and also have a cumulative 10% chance per turn of having Pazu-

zu appear. In this layer, Pazuzu is being paid by Orcus to battle any creatures he finds in the sky, and he does so, using his powers to *gate* in as many opponents as possible. Pazuzu is highly intelligent and prefers to flee and summon more help if the PCs seem to be winning. See the previous chapter for statistics on Pazuzu.

Since Orcus is Prince of Undead, all types of undead creatures as well as most types of demons inhabit this plane. It is known that a large population of skeletal monsters, various sorts of zombies, *huecuvae*, shadows, sheet phantoms, vampires, and death knights are found here, as well as other creatures. For each turn spent in this layer, there is a chance equal to the average party level (but not greater than 75%) of a random encounter using the following table:

Random Encounters in the Realm of Orcus (roll 1d8 + 1d12)

Roll Encounter

- 2 Nabassu (1): AC -5, MV 15"/15" (MC:C), HD 5+20, #AT 3, Dmg 2d4/2d4/3d4, SA spell-like abilities, thief abilities, SD harmed only by iron or +1 or better weapons, MR 50%, AL CE, Size M (MM2, pg. 41)
- 3 Demilich (1, encountered as a skull and a few bones in the middle of the path): AC -6 and special, MV special, hp 50 and special, #AT special, SA/SD numerous, MR vulnerable only to specific spells, AL N(E), Size M (MM2, pg. 33)
- 4 Shadow Demons (2d6): AC varies, MV 12"/18", HD 7+3, #AT 3, Dmg 1d8/1d6/1d6, SA leap attack, SD undetectable 90% of time, MR immune to fire, cold,

and lightning, AL CE, Size M (FF, pg. 78)

- 5 Sons of Kyuss (2d6): AC 10, MV 9", HD 4, #AT 1, Dmg 1d8, SA *fear* 30' radius, successful hit has 25% chance of giving advanced leprosy, worms from eyes attack nearby characters & burrow into brain in 1d4 rounds to turn victims into Sons of Kyuss, SD regeneration 2 hp/r, AL CE, Size M (FF, pg. 83)
- 6 Spectres (2d6): AC 2, MV 15"/30", HD 7+3, #AT 1, Dmg 1d8, SA energy drain, SD +1 or better weapon to hit, MR *sleep*, *charm*, *hold* or *cold* - based spells, AL LE, Size M (MM pg. 89)
- 7 Ghouls (4d12): AC 6, MV 9", HD 2, #AT 3, Dmg 1d3/1d3/1d6, SA *paralyzation*, MR immune to *sleep*, *charm*, AL CE, Size M (MM, pg. 43)
- 8 Babau (2d6): AC -3, MV 15", HD 7+14, #AT 1 *bastard sword* +2, Dmg 2d4 +9, SA spell-like abilities, SD cutting and stabbing effects do only half damage but cold iron weapons do +2, MR 50%, AL CE, Size M (MM2, pg. 36)
- 9 Chasme (2d6): AC -1, MV 6"/21" (MC:D), HD 7+2, #AT 3, Dmg 2d4/2d4/1d4, SA/SD spell-like abilities, buzzing causes *sleep*, MR 40%, AL CE, Size M (MM2, Pg. 38)
- 10 Dretch (5d10): AC 2, MV 9", HD 4, #AT 3, Dmg 1d4/1d4/1d4+1, SA/SD spell-like abilities, MR 30%, AL CE, Size S (MM2, pg. 38)
- 11 Rutterkins (5d6): AC 1, MV 12", HD 5+1, #AT 2, Dmg 1d6+1/1d6+1, SA/SD spell-like abilities, MR 40%,

- 12 AL CE, Size M (MM2, pg. 41)
Vrocks (Type I Demon) (4d6): AC 0, MV 12"/18", HD 8, #AT 5, Dmg 1d4/1d4/1d8/1d8/1d6, SA/SD spell-like abilities, MR 50%, AL CE, Size L (MM, pg. 18)
- 13 Hezrou (Type II Demon) (5d4): AC -2, MV 6"/12", HD 9, #AT 3, Dmg 1d3/1d3/4d4, SA/SD spell-like abilities, MR 55%, AL CE, Size L (MM, pg. 18)
- 14 Wights (8d6): AC 5, MV 12", HD 4+3, #AT 1, Dmg 1d4, SA *energy drain*, SD silver or magic weapons to hit, MR immune to *sleep, charm, hold, cold*, AL LE, Size M (MM pg. 100)
- 15 Mummies (5d10): AC 3, MV 6", HD 6+3, #AT 1, Dmg 1d12, SA *fear*, SD magical weapons only, and do half damage, MR immune to *sleep, charm, hold, cold, poison, paralysis*, AL LE, Size M (MM pg. 72)
- 16 Ghosts (2d6): AC 0 (or 8), MV 9") HD 10, #AT 1, Dmg Age 10d4 years, SA *magic jar, panic*, SD cannot be attacked by spells from non-ethereal creatures, AL LE, Size M (MM pg. 43)
- 17 Vampires (2d6): AC 1, MV 12"/18", HD 8+3, #AT 1, Dmg 1d6+4, SA *energy drain*, SD +1 or better weapon to hit, MR various spell immunities, AL CE, Size M (MM pg. 99)
- 18 Huecuva (10d10): AC 3, MV 9", HD 2, #AT 1, Dmg 1d6, SA *disease*, SD hit only by silver and magic weapons, *polymorph self* 3/day, MR immune to all mind-influencing spells, AL CE, Size M (FF, pg. 51)

- 19 Skeleton Warriors (2d6): AC 2, MV 6", HD 9+12, #AT 1 *vorpal sword*, Dmg 1d8+3 plus sever head, SA +3 to hit, SD cannot be turned, MR 90%, AL N(E), Size M (FF, Pg. 79)
- 20 Death Knights (2d6): AC 0, MV 12") HD 9d10, #AT 1 *unholy sword* +5, Dmg 1d8 +8, SA spell-like abilities, rides nightmare, SD cannot be turned, MR 75% plus chance of spell turning, AL CE, Size M (FF, pg. 23)

Throughout the previous chapter and this one, characters have encountered numerous situations that could change their alignment toward chaotic evil. If a character's alignment becomes chaotic evil while in the Abyss, he is instantly transformed into a bodak. Such bodaks turn on the other party members until they are killed. A *wish* spell is required to change a bodak back to its human form—but a *wish* spell in the Abyss must be granted by the nearest Power able to do so—one of the demon lords. And the demon lords prefer to have the bodak. If the bodak is captured by the party and taken with them when they leave the Abyss to another plane, then a *wish* spell can succeed. After that, proper atonement, sacrifices, and quests are needed to have a chance of restoring original alignment. Paladins changed into bodaks can never regain their paladinhood under any circumstances.

Encounter Areas

1. Conduit

A lightning bolt shatters the eerie silence and briefly disturbs the blood-red sky of this plane, revealing

ing a deep bowl-shaped valley about 600 yards in diameter. Sheer cliffs surround you on all sides. Four paths wind steeply up into the mountains.

Facing you is a large winged demon carrying a sword and a cat-o'-nine-tails with barbed ends. He is at the head of a troop of smaller demons that look like goat-horned dogs with four arms.

"Cower in fear, little maggots," the winged demon hisses, "for you have entered your worst nightmare!" He motions, and his forces attack!

This battle can most easily be resolved using BATTLESYSTEM™ rules.

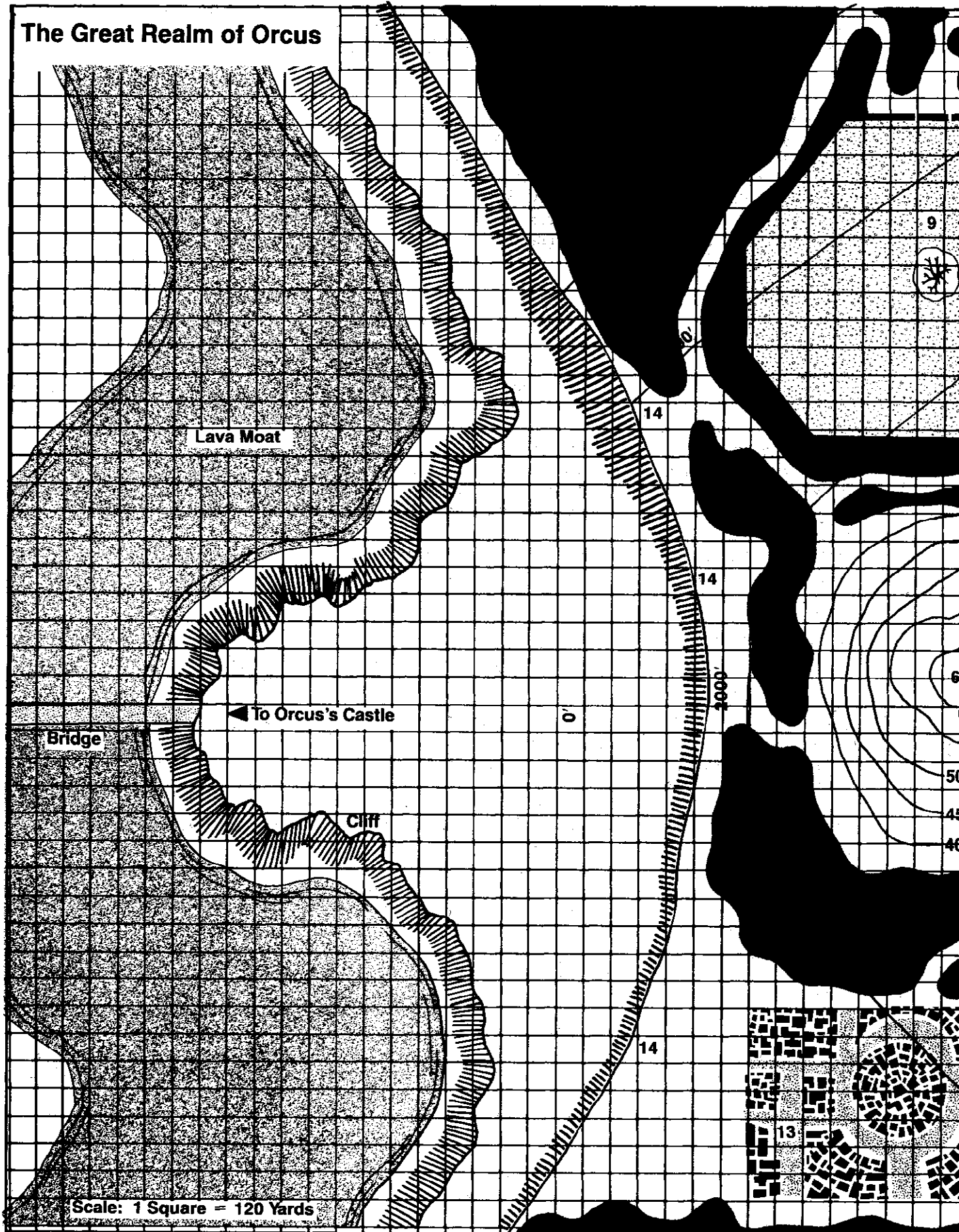
Ter-soth, Brigade Commander (Type VI Demon): AC -2, MV 6"/15", HD 8+8, hp 72, #AT 1, Dmg 1d12+1, SA whip & flame for 4d6, plus spell-like abilities, SD +1 or better weapon to hit, MR 75%, AL CE, CR 12") CB +1, Size L (MM, pg. 19)

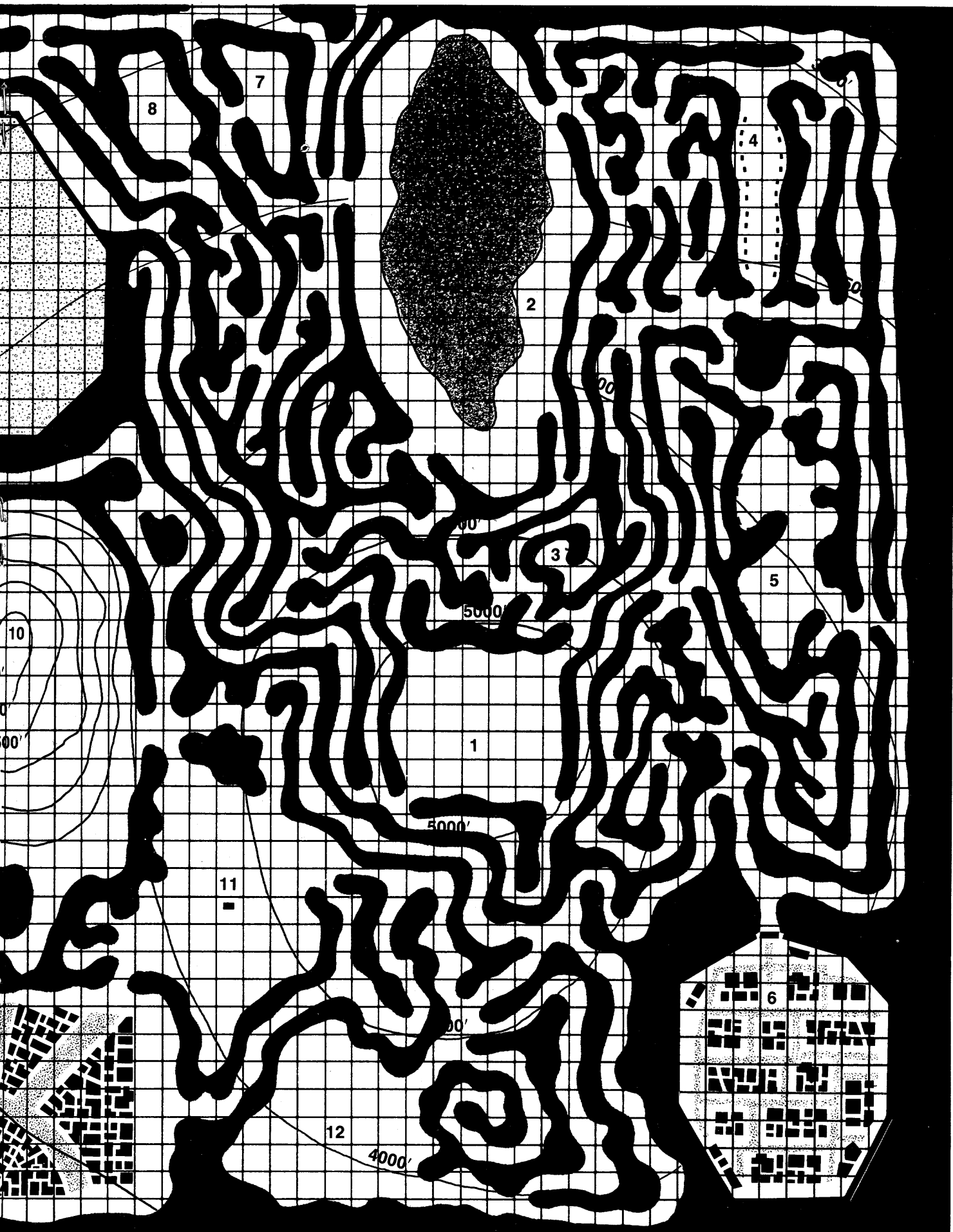
100 Type III Demons: AC -4, MV 9", HD 10, #AT 5, Dmg 2d6/2d6/1d3/1d3/1d4+1, SA spell-like abilities, MR 60%, AL CE, Size L (MM, Pg. 18)

The demons have a command post that guards the conduit. If the battle goes against them, Ter-soth abandons his men and flies away at full speed, trying to get to the Palace of Orcus to warn him of the powerful invaders. If he successfully escapes, the PCs will be unable to get surprise when they enter the palace, and all encounters with variable numbers of creatures will be at maximum numbers.

The guard post contains a mess hall for the demons and private quarters

The Great Realm of Orcus





for Ter-soth. In a chest in Ter-soth's quarters can be found the loot he has taken from visitors to this layer of the Abyss, including gems and jewelry worth 125,000 gp (encumbrance value 250,000 gp), potions of *delusion*, *speed*, and *super-heroism*, rings of *regeneration* and *wizardry*, a *rod of rulership*, *dust of appearance*, *helm of brilliance*, *mirror of life trapping*, and a *robe of powerlessness*.

Unknown to the party unless they happen to use magical means, they are being spied on by a fire mephit named Dimwold, who is further described in area 3.

All four paths from this bowl lead upward.

2. The Lake of Fire

Horrible screams greet you as you look out over a long, narrow lake filled with boiling lava. Demons with pitchforks jab at pitiful screaming people trying to escape the awful pain.

This is a test of alignment. What is actually going on is that the lake is filled with magmen and lava mephits enjoying themselves, with a *permanent illusion* spell making them appear to be human. The screams are created by *magic mouth* spells. The demons are real, but are simply relaxing by a pleasant lake.

Characters who do not penetrate the illusion and who do not attack the demons move one alignment step closer to chaotic evil. Characters who do attack must fight 100 Type III demons (stats as in previous encounters), several of whom try to escape to reveal the characters' presence to Orcus. The mephits and magmen simply ignore what's going on.

Dimwold the fire mephit watches this encounter as well.

3. Dimwold's Lair

This cul-de-sac is the home of a fire mephit named Dimwold, who spies on the party from the moment they enter this layer until either they discover they are being watched or complete encounter 2.

Dimwold's treasure trove consists of 12 platinum pieces, a *dagger +1*, and a *mirror of opposition* he stole from Ter-soth (area 1). He carries all items on his person. The lair consists of filthy bedding, some outrageous clothing (think of every polyester plaid nightmare you've ever seen, all worn together heedless of color), and paper rolled around exceedingly foul-smelling dried vegetation (cheap cigars).

NPC Capsule

Dimwold the Mephit

AC: 5
MV: 12"/24" (MC: B)
HD: 3+1
hp: 20
#AT: 2
Dmg: 1d3/1d3

Special Attacks: *Breath weapon* shoots a jet of flame 15' long and 1' in diameter for 1d8+1 damage (save for half damage) or blanket of flame 5' square immediately in front of mephit for 4 pts. of damage to all in range, no saving throw, 3/day. *Heat metal* and *magic missile* (two missiles), once each per day; 25% chance to *gate* in another mephit (if *gate* succeeds, 25% chance each of fire, lava, smoke, or steam mephit), usable once per hour.

Special Defense: Touching mephit with bare hands causes 1 point of damage

Int: Average (but egotistical)
Size: Medium (5' tall)

Mephits are the evil messengers and errand-runners of the lords of the Abyss. They are connoisseurs of the vulgar and tasteless; they have extraordinarily twisted senses of humor (to a mephit, the sight of a creature writhing in agony is excruciatingly funny). They particularly delight in tormenting the helpless. They normally wear clothes of the most garish design and color possible and are often seen puffing on cheap cigars. They strut and swagger like every cheap hood you've ever seen in a gangster movie. They have shrill, annoying voices. The fire mephit is dull red in color, with thin streaks of black over its body. It is about five feet tall, with functional wings and fangs.

Dimwold is angry with Ter-soth for reporting him to higher demons in the palace for goofing off. The report got Dimwold cashiered, and he's been scrounging in the mountains ever since. No free trips to the Prime Material plane, no wonderful swims in the Lake of Fire, no humans to torment—life just isn't fun anymore.

And besides, Dimwold is a genius among mephits. He really should be a full-fledged demon and boss around some underlings. Yeah, that's the ticket! He could really *be* somebody. Yeah, live in a great palace with lots of servants, and...no, better yet, why not have his own layer of the Abyss, a demonic kingdom all his own, and be married to Morganna the Fair Demon, yeah! That's it!

Dreaming grandiose dreams and scrounging food and coins from minor demons (using a *mirror of opposition* to create warriors to battle his enemies), Dimwold has been waiting for his ship to come in, and now it has. He watched when the par-



ty of humans appeared in the conduit, and watched them fight their way through the demon guards. And then he watched how they dealt with the Lake of Fire. Now he knows just how to use these humans for his own interests. . . .

As soon as the party completes encounter 2, Dimwold approaches them, a funny little character in plaid suit and derby.

Determine Dimwold's motives by the following method: Give the party 3 points if they defeated the demon guards in area 1 easily, 2 points if they fought hard, 1 point if they took casualties, and 0 points if they lost or fled. Also give the party 3 points if they saw through the illusion in area 2, 2 points if they fell for the illusion but didn't attack, 1 point if they attacked, and 0 points if they lost. Roll 1d6 and add it to the total.

On a total of 1-4, Dimwold decides that he can get back in Orcus's good graces by turning these idiots over to the demons. On a total of 5-8, he decides that the liches in area 6 could use these humans to further their own plot. On a 9-12, Dimwold decides that these humans can win against Orcus, and wants to help them in hopes of punishing his enemies and maybe gaining power of his own.

Dimwold can't be trusted, but at least he always acts in his own self-interest, which makes him predictable. He is very knowledgeable about the mountains around the palace, and has a 50% chance of knowing about dangers in the palace itself.

4. Valley of the Crypt Things

This narrow valley is lined with ornate thrones carved from solid rock. On each throne sits a pale, solitary skeletal being wearing a brown, hooded robe.

These are crypt things. There are 24 of them. They sit silently, like statues. When the characters reach the center of the valley, all 24 creatures rise and point bony hands at the party.

24 Crypt Things: AC 3, MV 12", HD 6, hp 48 ea., #AT 1, Dmg 1d8, SA *teleport* victims randomly (80%) or *paralyze* and turn them *invisible* (20%), SD +1 or better weapon to hit, cannot be *turned* by clerics, AL N, Size M (FF pg. 21)

Under the thrones of the crypt things can be found treasure of 21,000 gp, 1,400 pp, and 20 gems worth 11,000 gp, plus the following magical items: *elixir of madness*, *philter of glibness*, *scroll of protection from acid*, *ring of blinking*, *ring of mind shielding*, *rod of security* (10 charges), *wand of force* (30 charges), *quiver of Ehlonna*, *shadow lanthorn*, and a *stone horse* (drestrier). (DM Note: These magical items are all from *Unearthed Arcana*)

5. Death Stealer

This narrow valley is lined with caverns.

This is the lair of 50 immature nabassu (death stealer) demons, not yet ready to enter the Prime plane.

50 Young Nabassu: AC 4, MV 15"/15" (MC: C), HD 5, hp 35 ea., #AT 3, Dmg 2d4/2d4/3d4, SA/SD see below, MR 15%, AL CE, Size M (MM2, pg. 40)

Nabassu are born in the Abyssal planes, but must sojourn in the Prime Material until they drain the life from 18 humans, creating evil undead in the process. This gives them additional hit points and Armor Class benefits until they reach full maturity and can

return to the Abyss to establish domains for themselves.

In addition to claw/bite attacks, nabassu can *cause shadows* (20' radius), *shed darkness* (5' radius), and use their *death stealing gaze*, all once per round. *Death stealing* requires the victim to make a successful saving throw vs. spell or become a ghastr or ghoul controlled by the nabassu. If a nabassu turns someone into a ghastr or ghoul, it gets an automatic bonus of 2 hp and 1/2 AC improvement, plus a free *death gaze* attack on another victim (save vs. spell or become a shadow). Nabassu also have thief abilities to move silently, hide in shadows, hear noise, and backstab as 1st-level thieves. They can be harmed by iron or +1 or better weapons.

They have gathered a treasure of 75,000 gp, gems and jewelry worth 117,000 gp, and the following magical items: *potions of growth*, *human control*, and *poison*, *rings of contrariness*, *air elemental command*, and *weakness*, *bag of devouring*, *cloak of poisonousness*, *crystal hypnosis ball* (tuned to Orcus), and a *deck of many things*.

6. City of the Liches

At the end of this path is a great stone wall with a gate of iron. The rooftops of a city can be seen over the wall, but no sound is heard.

This is a city entirely inhabited by liches. If Dimwold has decided to turn the party over to the liches, he encourages them to pound on the gate ("I got friends in there, yeah, they'll help you out for sure!"). If he is helping the party, he tells them not to go inside. If the party tries to open the gate or tries to contact the inhabitants of the city, the gate slowly creaks open, revealing a silent, dead city, magnificent in architecture but

deathly cold.

The city is inhabited by 100 lichés, 12 demiliches, and 12 death knights.

Lich: AC 0, MV 6", HD 11+, #AT 1, Dmg 1d10, SA spells as magic-user/cleric of 18th-level each, touch *paralyzes* opponents who fail saving throws, SD various spell immunities, +1 or better weapon to hit, AL N(E), Size M (MM, pg. 61)

Demilich: AC -6 and special, MV special, hp 50 and special, #AT special, SA/SD numerous, MR vulnerable only to specific spells, AL N(E), Size M (MM2, pg. 33)

Death Knight: AC 0, MV 12", HD 9d10, #AT 1 *unholy sword* +5, Dmg 1d8+8, SA spell-like abilities, rides nightmare, SD cannot be turned, MR 75% plus chance of spell turning, AL CE, Size M (FF, pg. 23)

These creatures believe themselves to be far superior to the demons who rule this layer. They thus seek to dominate a layer of the Abyss of their very own. Overthrowing Orcus would be very much in accordance with their plans. Therefore, they are quite willing to parley with the PCs and aid them in overthrowing Orcus. If Dimwold believes the PCs to be hapless idiots, he gets the Lich King alone to tell him that. The lichés use their powerful magic (such as *time stop* or a *wish*) to capture a party member, then blackmail the party into working with the lichés to defeat Orcus. They have many magical items and are prepared to loan them to the PCs to help them to victory – with the proviso that if the PCs win, then the lichés will take over the layer.

The lichés are totally untrustworthy, and double-cross the PCs as soon as they are victorious.

If the PCs should decide to fight

the lichés, they are in for a battle royale. The lichés are all able to cast spells of the highest level, and do so in concert. In the unlikely event the PCs manage to defeat the population of the city, then they should find a magical treasure beyond price, including 40-50 miscellaneous magical items and the artifact known as *The Hand of Vecna*.

7. Nest of the Chasme

You hear a loud buzzing noise down this path.

This is a nest of chasme demons.

50 Chasme: AC -1, MV 6"/21" (MC: D), HD 7+2, #AT 3, Dmg 2d4/2d4/1d4, SA/SD spell-like abilities, buzzing causes *sleep*, MR 40% AL CE, Size M (MM2, pg. 38)

Their lair contains a treasure of a *lance* +3, *quarterstaff* +5, *sun blade*, and a "*final word*" *broad sword* (engraved with the name "Lastquip" in runes).

8. The Trapped Solar

The twisting path leads into a box canyon filled with demons dancing around a burning pyre. Bound to a tall stake in the center of the flaming pyre is a tall humanoid with skin the color of molten copper, bronze hair and topaz eyes, with copper-gold wings.

A group of 10 type VI demons has captured this solar and brought him to this corner of the Abyss to torment. The solar is magically bound to the stake. Although the flames cannot kill him, they do cause him great pain, but the stoical solar does not acknowledge his pain to the demons.

Type VI Demon: AC -2, MV 6"/15", HD 8+8, hp 72, #AT 1, Dmg 1d12+1, SA whip & flame for 4d6, plus spell-like abilities, SD +1 or better weapon to hit, MR 75%, AL CE, CR 12", CB +1, Size L (MM, pg. 19)

Solar: AC 9, MV 18"/40"/18", hp 177, #AT 4, Dmg 2d6+5, SA/SD spell-like abilities and immunities, MR 85%, AL LG (MM2, pg. 111)

The magical bonds holding the solar in the flames can only be cut with a magical sword (the solar can communicate this fact to the party by *telepathy*), but cutting the bonds instantly destroys the sword (no saving throw). The solar doesn't know about the sword destruction.

The solar's name is Gabriel, and he serves Bahamut. Once freed, the solar grants a reward to the party members depending on average party level: If 20 or less, he grants the party one *wish*, casts one each (if needed) *regenerate*, *resurrection*, and *restoration* spell, grants clerics a spell recharge of all spells up to 4th level, and summons a ki-rin to assist the party for the rest of this adventure; if 21-50, he casts one each *regenerate*, *resurrection*, and *restoration* spell, recharges clerical spells up to 4th-level, and grants one *wish*; if 50-75, he grants a *wish* and recharges clerical spells up to 4th level; if 76+, he recharges clerical spells up to 4th level. Under no circumstances will the solar stay and help the party.

The solar *teleports* away after granting favors to the party.

Ki-rin: AC -5, MV 24"/48", HD 12, hp 72, #AT 3, Dmg 2d4/2d4/3d6, SA magic use, SD spell-like abilities, MR 90% AL LG, Size L (MM, Pg. 57)

9. Ghost Garden

A tall wall of stone surrounds this area. Through the gate you see a bare space nearly half a mile in diameter. In the center is a dead tree. The ground is littered with gold, jewels, weapons, and what seem to be magical items.

An immense amount of treasure is in this garden, sure temptation for greedy characters. In fact, all the treasure is real, and it does not seem to be guarded. *Invisible* ghosts lurk here, waiting to trap the unwary (that's where all this treasure came from). The ghosts don't attack when the characters first enter the garden.

For each square in area 9 (of the map on pages 48 and 49) that the characters explore, there is a 5% cumulative chance of the ghosts attacking. If ghosts attack, multiply the average party level times the number of times the ghosts have attacked. For example, on square 1, there is a 5% chance of ghosts attacking, and a number of ghosts equal to the average party level attack. On square 10, there is a 50% chance the ghosts attack. If they do attack and this is the third attack, then a number of ghosts equal to three times the average party level attacks.

If there is no ghost attack, or if the characters defeat the ghosts, they can check the square for treasure. First, roll percentile dice. On a roll of 1-60, roll 1d20 and check Table II .A. Monetary Treasure, *DMG*, pg. 120. On a roll of 61-00, roll d100 again and check Table III and subtables, *DMG*, pp. 121-125. You may substitute Table III and subtables from *UA*, pp. 84-89, if you wish.

Ghosts: AC 0, HD 10, #AT 1, Dmg Age 10d4 years, SA *magic jar*, SD only struck by silver (for half damage)

or magical weapons (for full damage), MR can only be attacked by spells from creatures in ethereal state, AL LE, Size M (*MM*, pg. 43)

10. Skeletal Mountain

The floor of this entire area is covered with bones. Filling most of the valley is a huge mountain made entirely of bones, stretching upward nearly 4,000 feet. Mixed in with the bones are some gleaming pieces of metal.

This mountain contains the remains of all skeletons ever destroyed on the Prime Material plane, plus those weapons, armor, treasures, and miscellaneous magical items not taken by adventurers. The entire mountain is alive, and forms into strange skeletal shapes. For every three rounds spent in this valley, there is a percent chance equal to the average party level of the skeletal mountain manifesting 1d4 shapes per party member, all of which attack as 12+ HD monsters, using the table below. Like all skeletons, manifestations of the mountain suffer only half damage from sharp or edged weapons, are immune to *sleep*, *charm*, *hold*, and *cold* - based spells, and take 2d4 points of damage from a vial of *holy water*. They attack until destroyed.

For each turn the party members search, there is a 50% chance per turn of finding treasure or magical items. If treasure or magic is discovered, roll percentile dice. On a roll of 1-60, roll 1d20 and check Table II. A. Monetary Treasure, *DMG*, pg. 120. On a roll of 61-70, roll d100 again and check Table III.C.; 71-80, check on Table III.F.; 81-90, check table III. G.; 91-00, check Table III. H. You may substitute the appropriate subtables from *UA*, pp. 84-89, if you wish.

Skeletal Mountain Manifestations (Roll 1d8 per party member)

Roll Manifestation

- 1 Giant Skeletal Fist (AC 2, MV strikes in 6" range, cannot move, 50 hp, #AT 1, Dmg, effects of *Bigby's clenched fist* spell)
- 2 Skeleton Warrior (AC 2, MV 6", hp 50, #AT 1, Dmg 1d20)
- 3 Giant Mouth (AC 2, MV strikes in 6" range, cannot move, 50 hp, #AT 1, Dmg bites for 10d6 points)
- 4 Skeletal Ettin (AC 2, MV 12", hp 50, #AT 2, Dmg 2d8/3d6)
- 5 Skeletal Tyrannosaurus (AC 2, MV 15", hp 50, #AT 3, Dmg 1d6/1d6/5d8)
- 6 Giant Skeletal Hand (AC 2, MV strikes in 6" range, cannot move, 50 hp, #AT 1, Dmg effects of *Bigby's crushing hand* spell)
- 7 Skeletal Chromatic Dragon (AC 2, MV 6"/18", hp 50, #AT 6, Dmg 2d8/3d6/2d10/3d8/3d10/1d6)
- 8 Skeletal Storm Giant (AC 2, MV 15", hp 50, #AT 1, Dmg 7d6)

11. Lair of the Dire Whiner

The ground underneath you begins to get soggy and swamplike. With each step you take, you hear a sucking sound as your feet pull up out of the muck. In the center of this area is a stone throne on which sits an immensely fat and incredibly ugly hag.

NPC Capsule

The Dire Whiner

(New Monster)

Dire Whiner (Demon)

Frequency: Very Rare

No. Appearing: 1

Armor Class: 0

Move: 6"

Hit Dice: 10

% in Lair: 100%

Treasure Type: F, G

No. of Attacks: 1

Damage/Attack: 6d6

Special Attacks: See below

Special Defenses: See below

Magic Resistance: See below

Intelligence: High

Alignment: Chaotic Evil

Size: L

Level/X.P. Value: VIII/3,600 +
14/hp

The dire whiner is a type of demon that typically appears as a large, ugly woman, smeared with dirt and slime. Dire whiners usually live in caves or swamps in the Abyss and on most Prime Material planes.

The dire whiner obtains food, treasure, and other necessities by using her special abilities to *whine*, *complain*, and *put down*, which are magically powered insults. (Examples: *Whine* – "I waaaant a nice magic ring, like that one you're wearing." *Complain* – "Nobody likes me; I'm just a misunderstood old woman." *Put down* – "You slob! You don't have the brains of a worm!")

The *whine* ability acts as a *suggestion* spell. It is used to force the victims of the dire whiner to bring it food and treasure. The *complain* ability acts as a druidic *feblemind* spell. It is used against any magic-using

creatures that enter her lair. The final ability, *put down*, acts as a verbal *symbol of hopelessness* spell, and is used to break new victims to her will. These abilities can be used one at a time at will. All abilities affect all creatures within earshot.

The dire whiner preys on the demons, mephits, and other creatures of the area. She has accumulated a great store of treasure and magic, and *whines* to get the accumulated treasures of the party. She *complains* at magic-using creatures, and uses a *put-down* to try to force the characters into ultimate submission.

The dire whiner is sitting on a stone throne in the middle of this swamp. A large pile next to her is a mixture of garbage and treasure. In it are 20,000 gp, 10,000 pp, 20 gems worth 500 gp each, 25 pieces of jewelry worth an average of 15,000 gp each, and the following magical items: a flask of *oil of sharpness*, a scroll of *protection from acid*, a ring of *regeneration*, an *anything item*, and a *mantle of Celestian*.

12. Lair of the Tarrasque

A large horned monster sees you and charges in your direction.

This is a tarrasque. It pursues the players until it is killed or one or more of the PCs is dead.

Tarrasque: AC -3, MV 9" (+6" rush), hp 300, #AT 6, Dmg 1d12/1d12/2d12/5d10/1d10/1d10; SA "sharpness" bite, terror, SD immune to bolts and rays (1 in 6 reflect on caster), immune to fire, regenerate 1 hp/round, struck only by +1 or better weapons, killed only by pushing to -30 hp and using a *wish*, immune to psionics, MR standard, AL N, Size L

(50' long) (MM2, pg. 117)

13. City of the Zombies

This is a city of 10,000 zombies, victims of the evil of Orcus and his clerics. They "live" peacefully in this crowded, decaying city, but seek a true death to release them from their terrible half-existence. The PCs only learn this if they attempt to parley with the zombies. If attacked, the shambling zombies fight the characters, but they are heedless of danger and good tactics.

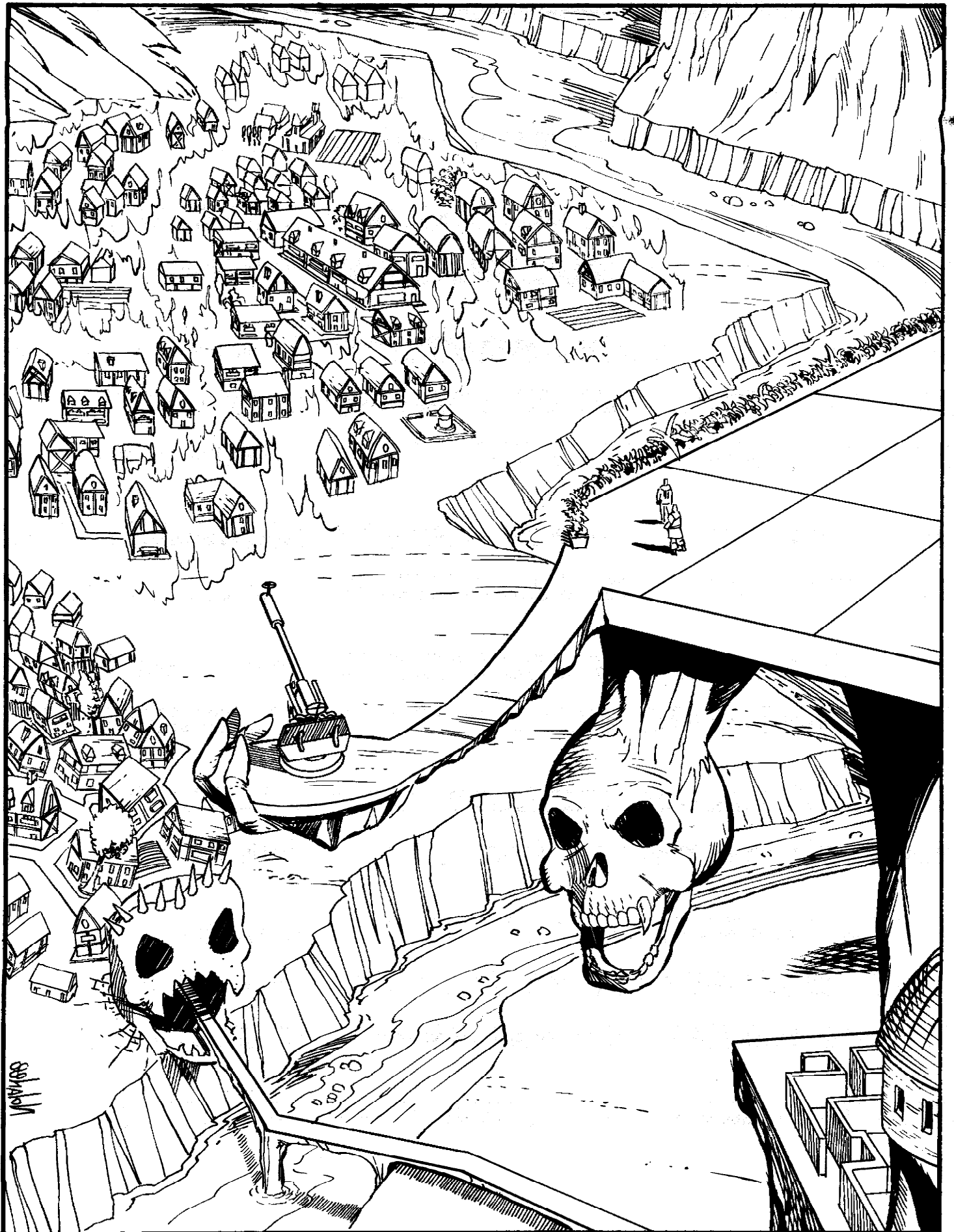
10,000 Zombies: AC 8, MV 6", HD 2, hp 4 ea., #AT 1, Dmg 1d8, SA/SD immune to *sleep*, *charm*, *hold* and *cold*-based spells, *holy water* does 2d4 points of damage per vial, AL N, Size M (MM, pg. 103)

If the PCs try to talk with the zombies, they are escorted to the Zombie King, an ordinary looking zombie who sits on a throne. The king tells them that the zombies wish to leave their undead state. They are willing to assist in an attack on Orcus, either to perish in the attack or to be liberated by the PCs when Orcus is defeated. They are willing to go along with any plan of attack. If asked for his opinion, the Zombie King suggests that his subjects stage a raid on one of the demon cities to create a distraction for the PCs.

14. The Cliff

You are standing at the edge of a high cliff, looking at a swirling river below. In the middle distance are cities filled with demons of all sorts, and in the center of the cities is a huge, evil-looking palace.

Show the players the illustration on page 56.



CHAPTER 4: THE ABYSSIAN FORTRESS

The climax (but not the conclusion!) of the PCs' adventure will occur in the castle of Orcus, deep in the Abyss. Here they will be challenged by adversaries far more mighty than the mortal foes who faced them in their own world. Stealth will be of prime importance, and conservation of magical power can make the difference between success and failure.

Their goal here is to find and steal the *Wand of Orcus* – the most treasured possession of the Prince of the Undead, Orcus himself. They can accomplish this through stealth, if they are skillful, careful, and lucky, or they can try to accomplish it by force. The latter case will probably prove disastrous for all but the most capable of parties – and even those will no doubt suffer some losses in the process.

If the PCs chance to meet up with the Prince of the Undead himself, they will find – regardless of their level – that they have a true fight for survival on their hands. And even if they manage, by force or by trickery, to get hold of the *Wand of Orcus*, their troubles will not be over. In fact, as they become the targets of a chase that spans many of the Outer Planes, they might conclude that their troubles are only beginning!

Magic Resistance in the Fortress

The citadel in the Abyss represents the focal point of Orcus's power. As such, there are many magical effects that apply here and nowhere else in the known planes. Most of these are explained in text as they become necessary.

However, one effect of this concentration of power is that the powers of many of the demon prince's demonic subjects are enhanced. Most signifi-

cant of these is probably magic resistance.

Although the percentage chances of magic resistance given for most demons encountered here are not increased from those listed in the monster tomes, the magic resistance acts differently in the fortress of Orcus and in the cities around the periphery of the fortress.

This is because the magic resistance applies across the board – *it is not modified for the level of the PC spellcaster!* A demon with an MR of 75% has a 75% chance to avoid a specific magical effect. This remains constant, whether the attacking PC is a 17th-level spellcaster, or a 95th-level spellcaster. Of course, this means that these demons are actually weaker against low-level attackers who have somehow made their way to the heart of the Abyss, but Orcus is willing to take that chance!

I. Approaching the Fortress

The chaotic terrain of the Abyss provides many glimpses of the looming bulk of the castle. All of these distant views will show the fortress in a different light – sometimes jagged and black, at other times rounded and crimson, while still other vantage points can cause it to look like a collection of odd angles, cast in a dirty white color.

As the party reaches the last rise before the castle, however, the PCs will get a good look at it. Here you can show them the large map of the fortress – or at least, a censored version tailored for the players' impressionable eyes.

Remove pages 93-96 from the module and place the pages over the central part of the map, as indicated. The pages line up with the area on the

large map, thus preventing the players from seeing the part of the fortress that is inside the walls.

The PCs can observe the castle from the jagged and rocky ridge line of a barren crest. There are many upthrusting crags and sharp-cornered boulders scattered along the ridge to provide good cover.

The slope before them is steep. Although it, too, is covered with broken rock and crooked ravines, several routes appear to offer relatively smooth pathways to the bridge. This bridge is about a mile away from the top of the ridge, although – because of the distortion in distance that occurs around the castle – the bridge sometimes appears to be as much as 10 miles away, and at other times seems no more than 200 yards downhill.

Give the players some time to look at the map. They can make notes (assuming that the PCs have some mapping or writing equipment, of course), and ask for a few additional details about the areas. Give them a limited time, however, before having them encounter Fyrillicus, the Abyssian Dragon. (See the NPC capsule on page 58)

If the average level of the PCs is very high (75 or above), they should get no more than a minute to look at the map. Player Characters under 25th level can have as much as 8 or 10 minutes. Give your party an appropriate amount of time, considering the number of PCs, magical items owned by the group, and so on. (The amount of study you give them with the map can be important toward their success with the mission.)

The Sky and the Horizon

Nowhere is the nightmarish nature of the Abyssian environment more apparent than here, around the fortress of its most powerful ruler.

Lighting is constant, but of widely varying intensities. The sky might flash bright red one moment, and then fade to a dull crimson glow, before a wave of sickly green washes through it.

The effect upon the land is a multi-colored light show, pulsating and evolving to the accompaniment of unnatural wind and roiling clouds.

Places upon the horizon seem to change color quickly. Even more bizarre, however, is that a location that seems to be many miles away might suddenly shift under the changing skies to appear much closer. All distances are constant, but the appearance is of continual movement.

Visual Clues

If the PCs ask for details about any specific areas on the map, they can discern the following things. Detailed descriptions of these locales, including encounters and other game details, are presented later.

1. The Bridge

Two skulls stand guard at the bridge. Their eye sockets gleam, and occasionally the jaw of one will move.

The other then responds, although no sound is audible at this distance.

The bridge spans a moat deeper than any canyon in the realms. Not water, but fiery lava flares and bubbles in the distant depths, although mostly all you see is the orange glow on the dark stone sides of the moat.

2. Darkmists

These areas are impenetrable to sight and magical detections, including *true seeing*. Each of these six areas looks the same when viewed from the outside:

A twisting maelstrom of black smoke rises from the surface of the fortress, suddenly dissipating as the mist moves away from the ground. The smoke seems to move far faster than natural forces would allow, whirling and racing through tortuous patterns before it vanishes.

3. The Great Maze

The walls, stairs, and pathways of this region are a muddy gray color. In some places, the angles of the corners do not seem quite right—or perhaps the stairways seem longer than they should be. Or are they shorter than they should be?

4. The High Cities

In the near periphery of the castle sprawl many cities that teem with life. Few details are visible, but movement can be seen in the streets of the nearer ones. The buildings in many ways appear normal, except for the chaotic bends of walls or roofs, or the illogical twisting of important avenues.

5. The Low Cities

Twisting and winding across the wide plain behind the castle are cities too numerous to count. Each is similar in its teeming chaos, yet each is also unique. One is wrapped in a sheath of hot flame, burning smokelessly in the distance. Another bucks and heaves

upon land that seems to writhe in its own torment. Still another blinks from white, blinding daylight to thick night, all in the space it takes to snap your fingers twice.

NPC Capsule

Fyrillicus, the Abyssian Dragon

Red Dragon, Abyss-bred

AC: -5

MV: 15"/36"

Hit Dice: 25/50/100

hit points: 200/400/800

#AT: 3

Dmg: 2d20/2d20/4d20

Special Attack: Fire breath weapon
(as red dragon)

Magic Resistance: 70%

Alignment: Chaotic Evil

Size: L (100' long)

Spells:

Level 1: *magic missile* (5 missiles),
protection from good, *read magic*, *shield*

Level 2: *darkness* 15' radius, *mirror image*, *stinking cloud*, *web*

Level 3: *dispel magic* (as 40th-level magic-user), *haste*, *lightning bolt* (40d6 dmg)

Level 4: *dimension door*, *ice storm*, *minor globe of invulnerability*, *polymorph self*

The exact size and hit points of this dragon should be determined as a balance to the relative power of the PCs. If the average level is 25 or less, use the smaller Hit Dice/hit point total; if the average level is 26-74, use the medium size; if it is 75 or greater, use the largest size listed.

Fyrillicus, in any event, is far larger

than any dragon living on the Prime plane. He is the spawn of a long line of red dragons that Orcus has subdued and brought to the Abyss. There, the Prince of the Undead has developed his line, certainly adjusting the natural breeding process with his demonic manipulations. The result, to date, is the awesome creature that now patrols the land around his fortress.

The dragon patrols primarily the barren wasteland in the area of the PCs' most likely approach, since the other sides of the castle are protected by vast cities of chaotic evil.

The problem with Fyrillicus is that, in the course of breeding his size, strength, and power to such an extreme, his intelligence suffered rather drastically. Although he is capable of learning the spells listed for him (by dint of no little tutoring) he will never win any scholarships.

His approach to a problem is nearly always that of the frontal assault. He is savage, thorough, and cruel in combat. Thus far, his relative stupidity has not been a tremendous drawback—in fact, he has yet to meet an opponent who could really challenge him.

The Encounter with Fyrillicus

When the PCs have studied the castle for the appropriate amount of time, the dragon will interrupt their contemplations with an attack. The PCs will see him soaring, a mile or so away, and suddenly he will be right above them, diving into the attack. (This is caused by the distance-distorting space around the castle, not by any magical enhancement of the dragon's speed).

Fyrillicus will know the location of the PCs to within 20 feet, but he will not have any magical means of seeing them if they are camouflaged, *poly-*

morphed, or otherwise concealed. He will be able to *detect invisible*, however, so that obvious tactic will not work.

If he cannot see his victims, Fyrillicus will breathe in the general area of the party, two rounds after he arrives overhead. Then, unless he has been badly wounded by the PCs, he will land and fight them in melee combat. (He prefers his killing "up close and personal.")

II. Movement Around the Fortress

This is the heart of Orcus's power. Thus it is subject to some very strange natural effects, as well as the wards and precautions wrought by the Prince of the Undead himself.

Flying Above or Around the Castle

The Prince of the Undead is a powerful and ruthless ruler, but he is not without his enemies—even among the other planes of the Abyss. Consequently, he has taken a number of precautions against intruders approaching and threatening his fortress.

Orcus has forbidden any flying in the vicinity of his fortress. To enforce his will, he has posted numerous flying guards, entrusted with the simple task of destroying any creature with the audacity to ignore the prince's order.

These flying patrols are posted at the various "Observation Towers" marked on the map. These towers have the unique feature of blocking out most of the view, in order to enhance their single purpose.

Any creature standing atop one of the towers can see nothing that is attached to or in contact with the ground. However, it can see unerringly (as if benefiting from a *true seeing*

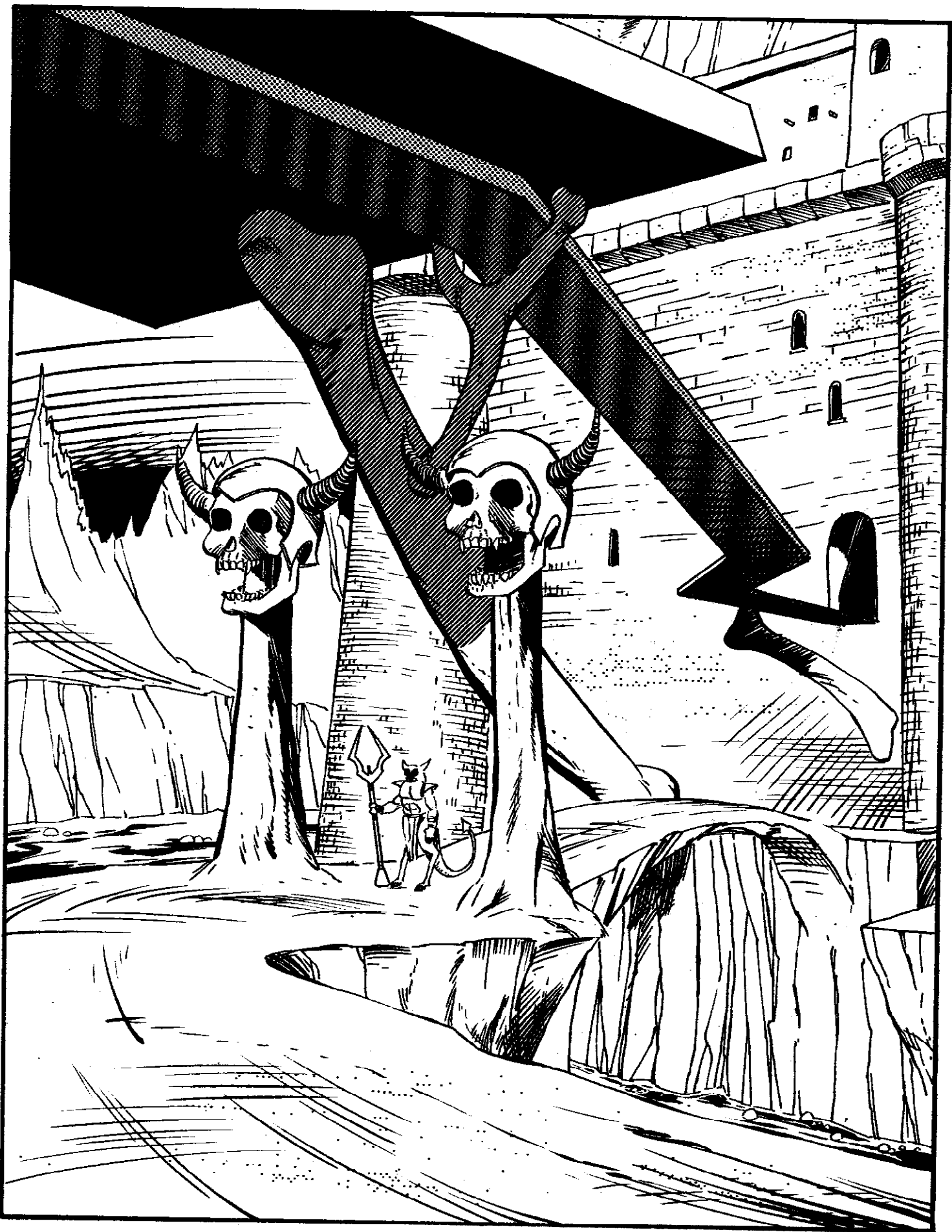
spell) anything in its field of vision that is not in contact with the ground.

Great bounties are offered by Orcus for those of his flying patrols that locate and destroy intruding flying creatures. However, a sense of order has evolved among these Abyssian Air Patrols. The first of the groups to reach a flying intruder is allowed to attack and try to destroy the intruders, while other air patrols stand by. Only if the first group is vanquished can the second move in, and so on. Thus, flying intruders will face a constant battle against these air patrols. Although they will only have to face one group at a time, as soon as one group is destroyed, another is there to continue the attack.

The air patrols will limit their attacks to the airspace over the moat or the fortress proper. They will not bother creatures flying over the cities or the countryside around the castle. However, as soon as a group begins to fly over the moat, they will be attacked by one group of the air patrol. On the round following the slaying of the last member of that group, the intruders are attacked by another group.

If all of the members of an intruding party land, they will have to finish the combat with any group of the air patrol that has already attacked them. However, they will face no further attacks by the air patrol unless a member of the intruding group again takes to the air. In this case, on the round following the character becoming airborne, the air patrol will attack again.

The air patrols include the following types of creatures. Roll 1d6 to determine which group is encountered, and then determine the size of the group.



Orcus's Air Patrols

D6 Roll Type of Patrol

1	1d4+1 Type IV Demons
2	2d6 Type I Demons
3	2d6 Alu-demons
4	1d8+2 Chasme
5	1d4+1 Nabassu
6	1 Abyssian Dragon

The relevant game stats for these creatures are included for your reference:

Type IV Demon: AC -1; MV 9"/12"; HD 11 (51 hp each); #AT 3; Dmg 1d4/1d4/2d4; SA +2 to hit; SD +1 or better needed to hit; MR 65%; AL CE; Size L (10 1/2' tall); Specials: *darkness 10' radius, create illusion, cause fear, levitate* (as 12th-level magic-user), *detect magic, read languages, dispel magic, polymorph self, telekinesis* (5,000 gp weight), *project image, symbol of fear, symbol of discord*

Type I Demons: AC 1; MV 12"/18"; HD 8 (50 hp each); #AT 5; Dmg 1d4/1d4/1d8/1d8/1d6; MR 50%; AL CE; Size L; XP Value 1,700; Specials: *darkness 5' radius, telekinesis* (2,000 gp weight), *detect invisible objects*

Alu-Demons: AC 0 (*plate mail +3*); MV 12"/12"; HD 6+5 (40 hp each); #AT 1; Dmg 1d6+2 (long bows) or 3d4 (two-handed swords); MR 30%; AL CE; Size M; XP Value 4,700; Specials: +1 or better needed to hit, *charm person, ESP, shape change, suggestion, dimension door* (1/day), *energy drain* for 1d8 points, 1/2 of which can be used to restore lost hp

Chasme: AC -1; MV 6"/21"; HD 7+2 (38 hp each); #AT 3; Dmg 2d4/2d4/1d4; MR 40%; AL CE; Size M;

XP Value 1,600; Specials: *darkness 5' radius, teleport, detect good, detect invisible, telekinesis* (1,500 gp weight)

Nabassu (Major Demons); AC -5; MV 15"; HD 5+20 (60 hp each); #AT 3; Dmg 2d4/2d4/3d4; MR 50%; AL CE; Size M (7' tall); XP Value 4,000; Specials: *iron or +1 or better weapons needed to hit, shed darkness 5' radius, death stealing, energy drain, etherealness* (twice/day), *paralyzation 10' radius* (once/day), *regenerate* up to 20 hp per day, *silence 10' radius, vampiric attack 20' range* (once/day), thief abilities: *move silently, hide in shadows, backstab* (all at 10th level)

Red Dragon, Abyss-bred: AC -2; MV 15"/36"; HD 25 (175 hp); #AT 3; Dmg 2620/2d20/4d20; SA Fire breath weapon (as red dragon); MR 70%; AL Chaotic Evil; Size L (100' long)

Bone Guns

These weapons can shoot through the arc before them. They can shoot straight up or shoot down at a 45-degree angle. They cannot pivot to shoot into Orcus's throne room, however.

Each gun can fire once per round, and can be set to achieve any of the following effects (to a range of 45"): *dispel magic, lightning bolt* (12d6), or *magic missile* (20 missiles). The guns hit automatically, but normal saving throws apply.

Each gun is operated by a Type I demon.

Attempts to Ascend or Descend Fortress Walls

The walls around the fortress, including those in the maze, are deceptive to the eye. Characters

attempting to climb these walls will find them to be very different than they appear.

For one thing, the height of these walls is universally 1,000 feet. Even though two levels of the fortress might be connected by a stairway of 15 steps, each only a one-foot drop, the spacial distortion of the Abyssian environment means that a character attempting to climb down the wall next to the stairway will have to descend 1,000 feet.

The walls are easy to climb—they are made of a rough mixture of bone and mortar, with many rough protrusions to provide handholds and footholds. Some of these are actually recognizable as bones—human, monstrous, and otherwise.

The distortion of the walls affects the perception of a climber as follows: If a character is more than 10 feet from the top or the bottom of a wall, it looks like it is 10 feet away. Thus, a character trying to climb a wall sees a surface that looks 10 feet high. As he starts to climb, the ground below him will fall away, until it looks like he is 10 feet from the ground. The top will, of course, still be 10 feet above him. This will be the case for the next 980 feet of climbing, until he moves within 10 feet of the top, at which point he will appear to draw closer to the top at the normal rate.

Note that this distortion also affects characters unfortunate enough to decide to jump from one level to the next. Observers will see the character swiftly drop 10 feet, and then no more, although the falling character will appear to writhe and twist in the air, just as if he was still falling. Then after enjoying the full thrill of a 1,000-foot fall, the character will reach the lower platform (with the full benefit of the momentum of a 1,000-foot fall, of course).

Hazards of Climbing

Although, the old saying—"the walls have ears"—doesn't really apply here, it should be modified to state: "the walls have teeth, claws, and other nasty appendages."

A character climbing here will be attacked by the wall at several points during the climb. Check at the start of each 100 feet of the climb. The percentage chance of an attack is equal to the climbing character's level. For example, a 19th-level character has a 19% chance (rolled 10 different times during the climb) of suffering attacks. Regardless of how high the character's level is, the chance of an attack is never greater than 75%.

Roll 1d6 to determine the nature of the attack. All of these attack forms are actually part of the wall, and will not be able to attack more than one round unless the player hangs around to fight. However, a character who suffers damage from an attack must make a Dexterity Check to retain his hold. Even in the case of above normal Dexterity, a 19 or 20 always fails.

All of these forms attack with a THAC0 of 7.

D6 Roll Attack Form

- 1 Serpentine Head with Poisonous Bite: AC 7; HD 5; hp 25; #AT 1; Dmg 1d10 + poison (save at -10)
- 2 Swiping Claws: AC 5; HD 10; hp 57; #AT 2; Dmg 3d8
- 3 Huge, Gaping Jaws: AC 3; HD 8; hp 40; #AT 1; Dmg 4d10
- 4 Red Dragon Skull, Breathing Fire: AC 0; hp 36; #AT 1; Dmg 88 hp (save for 1/2)
- 5 Bony Crab Claws: AC 0; HD 9; hp 48; #AT 3; Dmg 2d6 per claw (successful hit holds character in place, continues for 2d6/round until grip is

broken)

- 6 Scorpion Tail: AC 4; HD 7; hp 40; #AT 1; Dmg 1d6+ poison (save at -8)

Random Encounters in the Fortress

Naturally, Orcus's citadel is patrolled by many groups of aggressive guards—the meanest, nastiest demonic help he can find. These guards exploit their natural bullying tendencies under the banner of the Prince of the Undead himself. As with the air patrols, however, each of these bands is determined to win glory for itself, so calling for help is not a common tactic among them.

Check for a random encounter every turn, with the average party level being the base percentage chance of an encounter with the castle guard. However, a roll of 76% or greater will not cause an encounter, even if the party has a higher average level than that.

Roll 1d6 to determine what types of demons are in the guard patrol:

D6 Roll Patrol

- 1 2d6 Babau
- 2 2d4 Type III Demons
- 3 3d6 Rutterkin
- 4 4d6 Dretch
- 5 2d6 Bar-Lgura
- 6 3d6 Type I Demons

Babau (Minor Demons): AC -3; MV 15"; HD 7+14; hit points 55 each; #AT 1; Dmg 1d10+9; MR 50%; AL CE; Size M (7' tall); XP Value 2,600; Specials: suffer 1/2 damage from cutting and stabbing attacks, *darkness 5' radius, levitate, fly, dispel magic* (as 12th-level magic-user) *polymorph self, heat metal, ray of enfeeblement gaze* (20' range), *gate* in another babau with 25% chance; All thief abilities at 10th level

Type III Demons: AC -4; MV 9"; HD 10; hp 75 each; #AT 5; Dmg 2d6/2d6/1d3/1d3/1d4+1; MR 60%; AL CE; Size L (9 1/2' tall); XP Value 2,300; Specials: *darkness 10' radius, fear, levitate, polymorph self, cause pyrotechnics, telekinesis* (4,000 gp weight)

Rutterkin (Minor Demons): AC 1; MV 12"; HD 5+1; hp 37 each; #AT 1; Dmg 2d4 + special; MR 40%; AL CE; Size M (6' tall); XP Value 500 each; Specials: After successful hit, polearm continues to inflict 2d8+2 points until victim spends round hitting weapon—success knocks it free, *darkness 5' radius, fear* (by touch), *fly, telekinesis* (1,000 gp weight), *teleport once/day*

Dretch (Minor demons): AC 2; MV 9"; HD 4; hp 30 each; #AT 3; Dmg 1d8/1d8/1d8+1; MR 30%; AL CE; Size S (4' tall); XP Value 300; Specials: *darkness 5' radius, scare, stinking cloud once/day, telekinesis* (500 gp weight), *teleport once/day*

Bar-Lgura (minor demon): AC -3; MV 9"; HD 6+6; hp 50 each; #AT 3; Dmg 2d6/2d6/4d6; MR 45%; AL CE; Size M (5' tall); XP Value 2,200; Specials: can spring 40' / round; At will, once per round: *darkness 10' radius, create water* (as 6th-level cleric), *cause fear* by touch, *detect illusion, detect invisible, dispel magic, entangle, plant growth, telekinesis* (2,500 gp weight), *teleport without error*, Twice per day: *change self, invisibility, spectral force*

Type I Demons (Vrock): AC 0; MV 12"/18"; HD 8; hp 56 each; #AT 1d8/1d8/2d8/2d8/2d6; MR 50%; AL CE; Size L (8 1/2' tall); XP Value 1,285; Specials: *detect invisible objects, telekinesis* (2,000 gp weight)

The Moat

The liquid in the moat is burning lava that spews forth blasts of extremely poisonous gas. Merely touching the surface of the lava means instant and irrevocable death for any creature from the Prime plane.

The moat itself is a steep-walled canyon, nearly 5,000 feet deep. Its sides have many jagged ledges and steep ravines. They do not, inherently, present a great obstacle to the climber—but the sheer height of the walls is generally deterrent enough.

Also, characters within the canyon must save vs. poison each turn, because of the lethal effects of the gas. This saving throw is made normally in the upper reaches of the canyon (the top 1,000 feet). However, for every 1,000 feet of depth in the canyon, the saving throw vs. poison suffers a -2 modifier.

Additionally, characters not resistant to heat suffer 1d6 of damage for every 1,000 feet of depth in the canyon from the intense heat. This damage is calculated every round.

The width of the moat at the top appears to be anywhere from 300 to 500 feet. In actuality, however, the moat is 6,000-10,000 feet wide—just another example of the distance and space distortion so common around the Abyssian Fortress.

III. The Castle of Orcus—Area Keys

1. Bridge

The two skulls mounted to either side of the bridge move to focus upon any characters moving toward them. They will magically identify the strongest fighter in the party—or the one with the best hand-to-hand combat abilities, if no fighters are present. When the characters come

within 30 feet of the bridge, the skulls magically duplicate this fighter, creating a figure who stands between them at the entrance to the bridge.

The duplicated fighter will match the PC in appearance and abilities. He will function in every way as that individual. However, he places no weight upon the bridge—he effectively *levitates* at ground level.

The bridge will collapse if more than one character stands upon it. It will also collapse if a destructive magical spell is cast so that the area of effect includes the bridge or anything on it—including the mirrored fighter. Although it appears to be a mere 200 feet or so across, it is really a full mile long. Characters who have crossed will seem to be only 200 feet away from those who have not—they can even shout back and forth to each other. However, it takes a long time for a character to cover its length (176" game scale), and if two characters are on the span at any time, it falls.

The skulls will warn any who approach with the following phrases: "Let the strongest among you best the champion, ere you may cross!"

"And no cheating, now! This is a contest of strength!"

If one skull is destroyed, the other will continue to speak. If both are destroyed, the apparition of the fighter vanishes. Each skull has an AC of 8, with 6 hp.

The champion will remain on the bridge, very near to the end where the PCs are. He will fight with the mirrored PC's best weapon, except that he will not use a missile weapon. He will fight the PC who matches him, and if that PC alone participates in the combat (even if he uses a missile weapon), the skulls will rule it a fair fight. If any other PC helps, the skulls will declare, loudly:

"Cheater! Cheater!"

If the champion is destroyed in a fair fight, the skulls will say: "Have a care, now—one at a time!"

If the skulls have called cheating, they will not voice this final (and useful) warning. If the bridge has been destroyed, because of magic or too many characters moving onto it, the skulls smile smugly and say nothing.

2. The First Maze

There are five areas marked on the map as containing mazes. When the PCs reach one of these areas, read the following:

The dark and swirling mists seem to rise from the ground before you. But slowly they part, forming a tunnel of black smoke. At the far end, you can see an oddly shaped room.

Because of the shifting space of the castle, a maze that exists in one place can suddenly move somewhere else. Likewise, an area that contained a hexagonal maze the first time the party passes through it might offer a maze of octagons the second time.

Thus, whenever the players reach one of the five mazes, roll 1d4 to determine what they find this time. If the inhabitant of a maze was killed during a previous encounter, no matter—he's there again. In fact, each subsequent encounter with one of these inhabitants entails an increase in 50% of his original hit points. Thus, the second time through, the creature has 150% of his listed hp, the third time, 200%, and so on.

The maze encountered is determined as follows:

D4 Roll	Maze	Page
1	Squares	65
2	Octagons	67
3	Pentagons	68
4	Hexagons	69

3. The Prison of Baphomet

This open platform is the prison cell of a demon lord that Orcus has captured and forced into imprisonment—to wit, Baphomet, demon lord of the minotaurs.

Baphomet is bound to remain in area 3, the stairways adjacent to area 3, and any platforms that are connected by a single stairway to area 3. When he is first encountered, it will always be in the open space labeled on the map, but he will pursue fleeing characters to the limits of his abilities once he begins to fight.

NPC Capsule

Baphomet (Demon Lord)

AC: -4

MV: 24"

Hit Dice: 212 hp

#AT: 3

Dmg/Attack: 4d6/2d4+8/3d8+16

Magic Resistance: 75%

AL: CE

Size: L (12' tall)

XP Value: 45,000

Specials:

+2 or better weapon needed to hit

Use at will, once per round: *darkness 10' radius, detect invisible, detect magic, dispel magic, levitate, teleport, phantasmal force, telekinesis* (75,000 gp weight)

Use three times per day: *maze, passwall, shape change, wall of stone*

Once per day: *bellow*—save vs. spell (-8 modifier) or flee in panic for six rounds

Gate in type III demon (85% success) once per day

Six times per day: breathe a gout of unholy water, 1" range—Good aligned paladins and clerics suffer 16d8 points of damage (save vs. breath weapon with -8 modifier for half damage)

Special Equipment: giant bardiche, inflicts 3d8+16 points of damage, and on a successful hit forces a saving throw from armor (40%) or shield (60%). Failure means armor or shield is destroyed.

Baphomet, a powerful lord of the Abyss in his own right, has been captured by Orcus and forced into exile in the fortress. This is the result of a rare (and no doubt temporary!) alliance between Orcus and Yeenoghu. The former has fulfilled his part by capturing and holding Baphomet, while the demon lord of gnolls has invaded and plundered the plane of the imprisoned lord.

The minotaur-like demon has been forced to guard this single area of Orcus's domain—a demeaning sentence indeed for one who formerly ruled whole planes of the Abyss!

The sentence is open-ended—Baphomet must stay until he fulfills conditions that Orcus has decreed. These include the slaying of various creatures that Orcus sends through here. But also, Baphomet is charged with guarding the area against unauthorized passage from intruders.

The great demon has performed well during his sentence thus far, and has nearly fulfilled the requirements of his release. All that remains is for him to slay a human. Once he does this, the spell of binding will be broken and Baphomet will immediately *teleport* to his home plane.

Tactics of Baphomet

Baphomet waits in the exact center of his assigned prison (area 3). When any creatures move into the area, he studies them curiously, holding his huge bardiche in his mighty paws. When he judges the time ripe for surprise, he *teleports* behind one of the intruders and attempts to make a surprise attack on the next round.

When facing numerous foes, he first uses his *telekinesis* power to lift one or more of the opponents into the air, sending them over the edge of the platform and then releasing them to fall to the next level. (This will also attract the attention of the air patrol, which will immediately dispatch a group to deal with the flying, floating, or falling character.)

Other likely tactics of the enraged demon lord include the use of his *wall of stone* spell to either block the path of some of his enemies, or to form a slab leaning sharply over them. In the latter case, the stone will fall and inflict 10d10 points of damage in a 5" x4" area.

4. The Second Maze

Use the procedure described for area 2, the First Maze, to determine which of the mazes the PCs encounter here.

5. The Third Maze

See area 4.

6. Antechamber

When the characters finally reach the stairway leading to this area, they will at last climb above the maze-like paths that have probably kept them busy for the last few hours.

The stairway leads to a wide platform outside the massive wall of the fortress itself. Across from the stairs stands a huge, golden door—slightly tarnished with streaks of black and brown.

As the last PC reaches the platform, or if any of the characters approach the door, or if any character stands on the platform for more than a couple of rounds, read the following (on page 71):

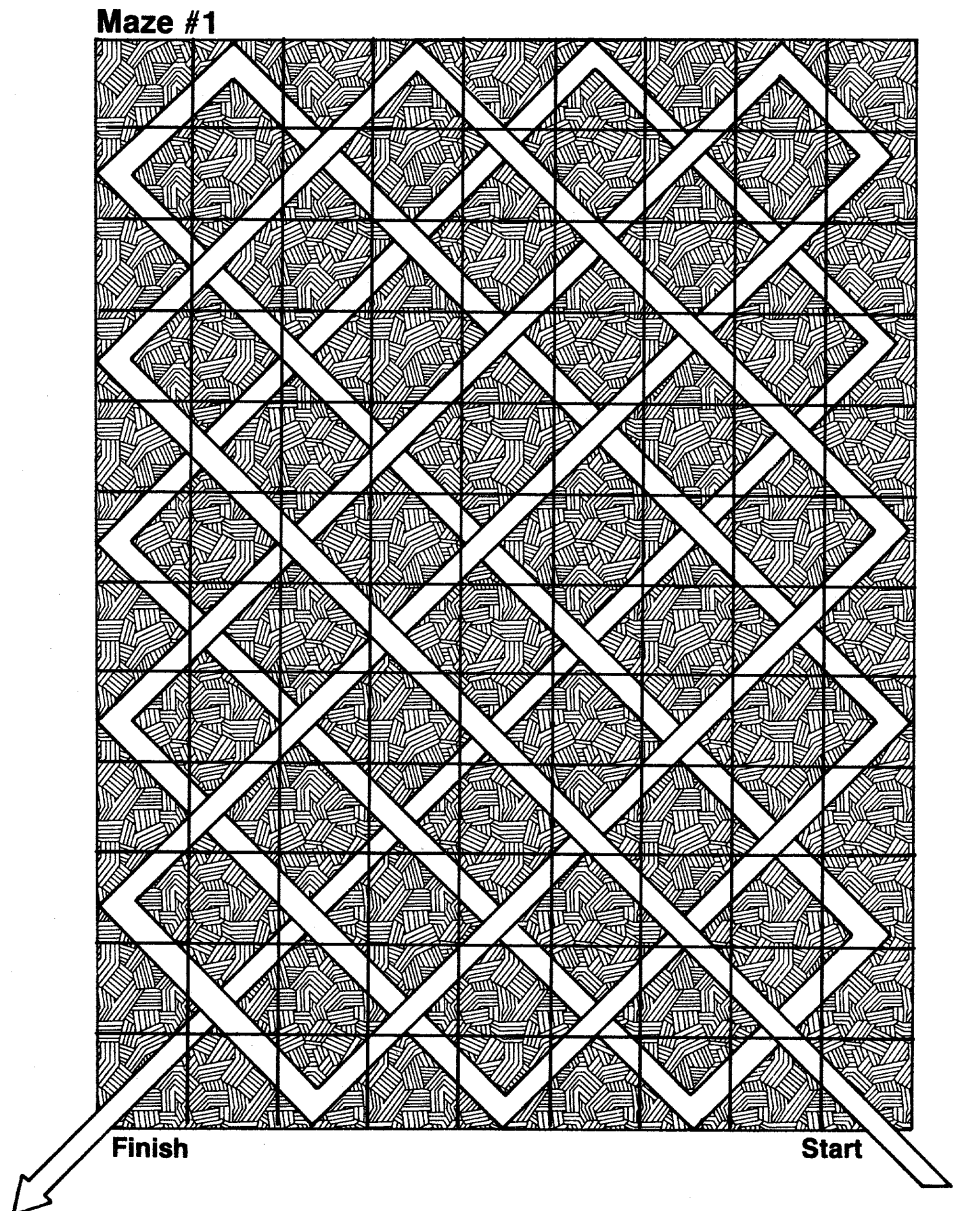
Maze 1: The Square Maze

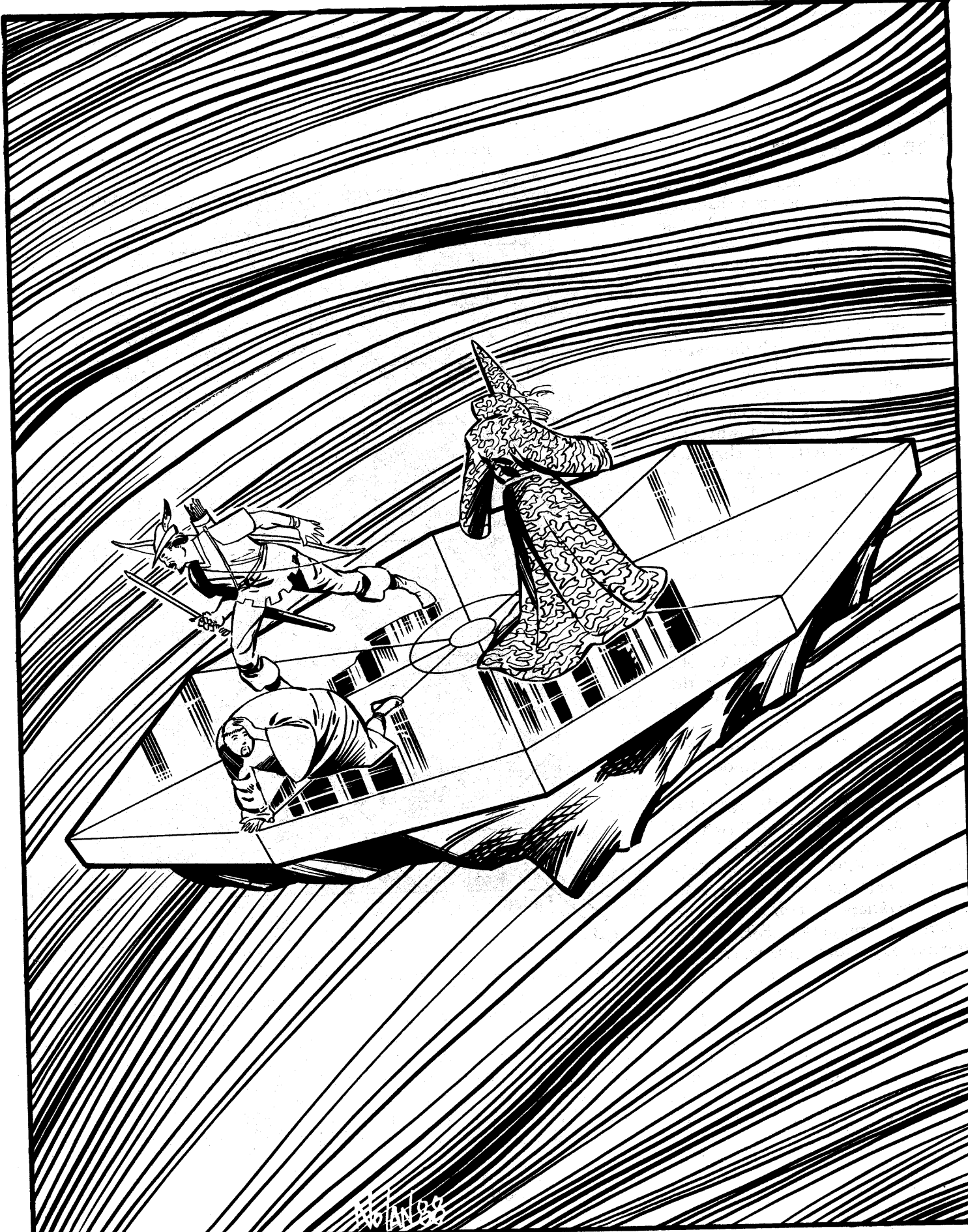
This is a large room. The exit door is clearly visible when the characters enter. The maze is created by the square grid of black lines shown on the diagram. These are *walls of force* with an extra electrical capability that inflicts 2d10 points of damage to any character contacting them.

The safe path through the maze is shown by the gray pathway that runs diagonally across the squares. These paths are *not* visible to the characters, however. At those locations where the gray lines intersect, the characters cannot change course—the pathway runs straight as shown. However, a *disintegrate* or *passwall* spell used at one of these intersections will allow the party to shortcut the maze.

There is a tormentor in here to challenge any wanderers—but also to provide a clue as to how the maze is laid out. This is a succubus, armed with a *wand of magic missiles*. She will *teleport* to various places in the maze and fire her wand. She will have to shoot along the gray pathways, since the *wall of force* grid will block the missiles in all other locations.

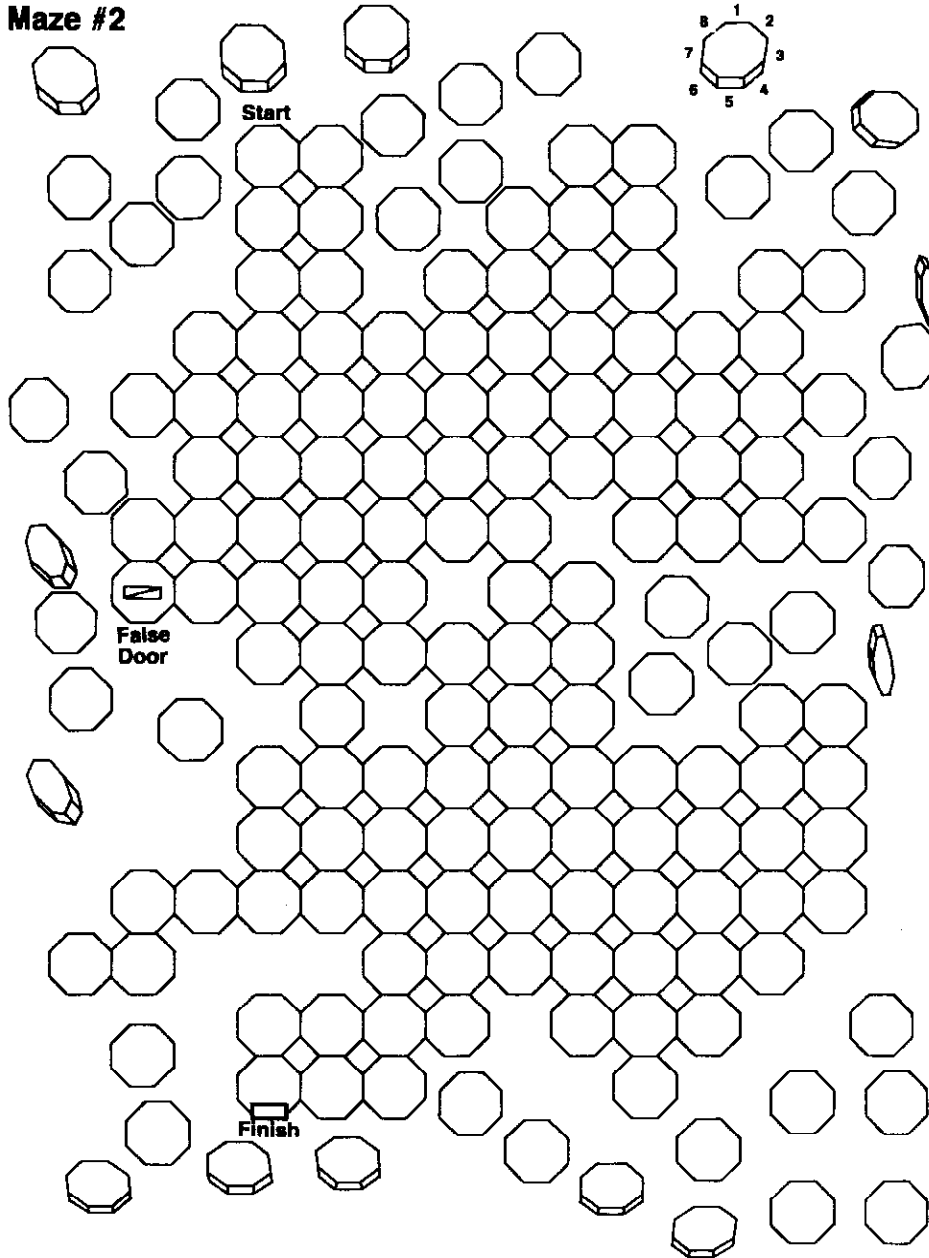
Succubus: AC 0; MV 12"/18"; HD 6; hp 41; #AT 2 or 1 (wand); Dmg 1d3/1d3; MR 70%; AL CE; Size M; XP Value 650 +6/hp; Specials: +1 or better needed to hit, *teleport*, *darkness* 5' radius, *become ethereal*, *charm person*, *ESP*, *clairaudience*, *suggestion*, *shape change*; kiss drains 1 level





1/10/88

Maze #2



Maze 2: The Octagon Maze

The PCs find themselves standing on the octagon marked "Start" when they step through the door into this maze. The door itself will not be visible behind them.

They see the field of octagons floating about in an odd sort of "outer space." There is nothing except a hazy grayness visible above, below, and to all sides of them. The octagons that are not connected to the main body are floating freely, drifting toward or away from the rest.

The PCs can walk upon any octagon, and on any of the white spaces that have four octagons surrounding them. As long as they keep moving in a straight line, they will have no problems. However, all of the sides except those straight in front of the PCs are blocked by magical *walls of force*.

If the PCs stop on an octagon (to talk, map, or whatever), roll 1d8. The resulting number shows the only path off of that octagon that is not blocked by a *wall of force* when the PCs start moving again. If the PCs stop on a white square, it quickly becomes unstable—shaking and shifting one round, and then falling away into space on the next round.

The outer space around the maze is a limitless expanse. It has a breathable atmosphere and normal gravity. Anyone who falls from one of the octagons will keep falling until some magical method is used to recover him, or until he starves, dies of thirst, or disappears from the campaign.

Maze 3: The Hexagon Maze

The PCs must get through this maze by entering rooms 1 through 6 in the correct order. Each room, if entered in sequence (i.e., 1 first, 2 second, etc.) will *teleport* the characters to the location with the corresponding letter: 1 - A; 2 - B; 3 - C; 4 - D; 5 - E; 6 - F.

Note that the number of doors to each room corresponds to its room number—this is the players' primary clue as to the order in which they should be entered.

The *teleportation* effect in a room is activated when all of the doors to that room are closed and at least one character is inside. If the room is entered out of order, occupants are affected as follows:

Room 1 *teleports* to area A.

Room 2, if entered without passing through room 1 first, fills with red dragon breath, inflicting fire damage of 64 points to each character; saves reduce this to half,

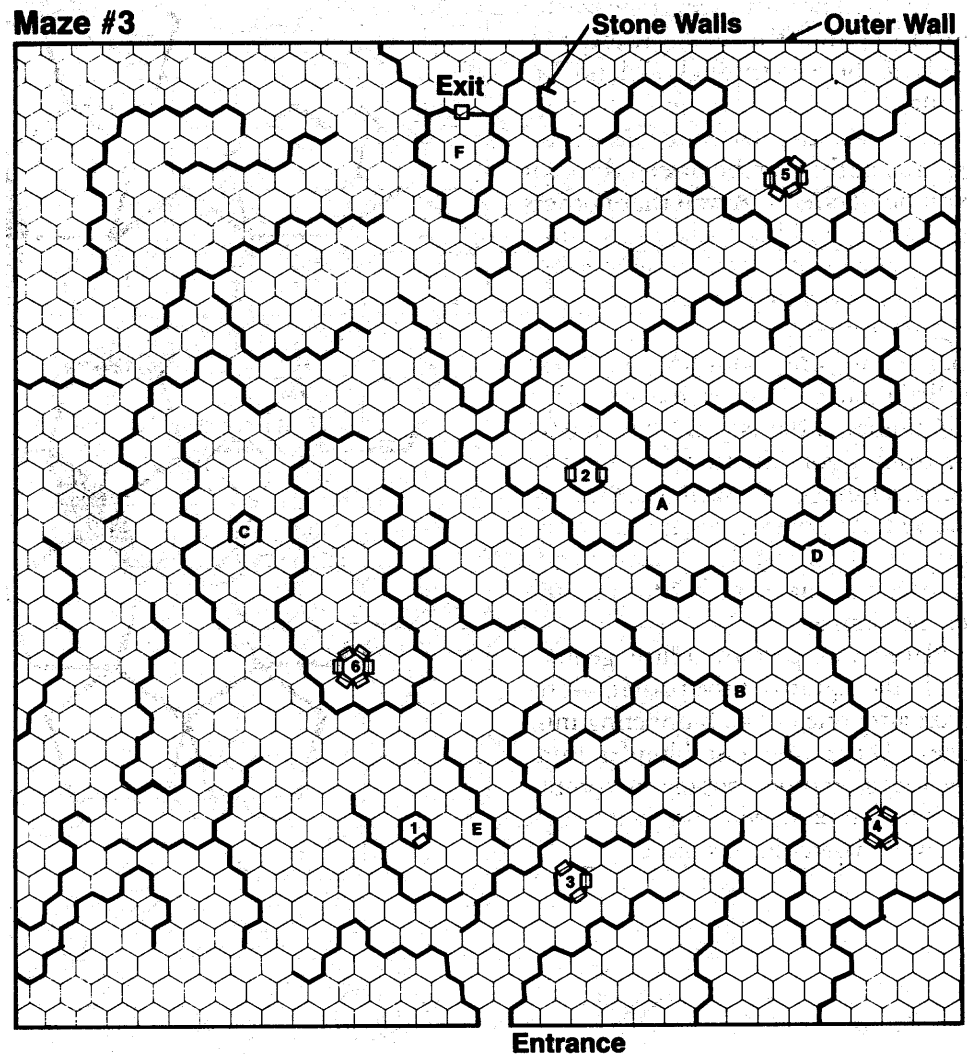
Room 3, if entered out of sequence, fills with black dragon acid breath, inflicting 56 points of damage on each character; saves again cut this in half.

Room 4, if entered out of sequence, blasts white dragon frost breath to the tune of 48 points, or 24 with a successful saving throw.

Room 5, if entered out of sequence, fills with green dragon gas breath, which is fatal to characters who do not save.

Room 6 has no harmful effects.

It is possible to get through the maze by using a *passwall* spell or other means to break through the wall around area F. Characters cannot break out of the maze, except through area F.



Maze 4: The Pentagon Maze

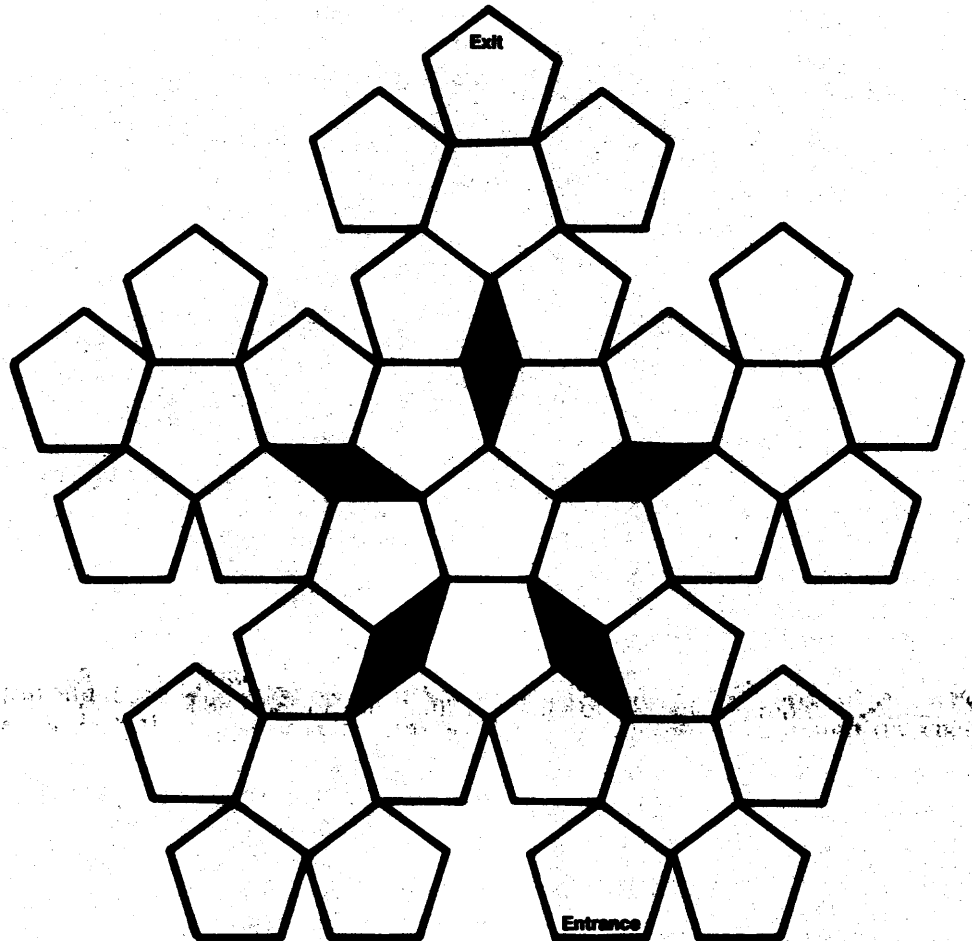
This maze is a pattern of pentagons. Each pentagon is surrounded by walls of impenetrable darkness, impervious to *light* or even *true seeing* spells. The only exceptions are the entrance and the exit—these two walls can be seen through with no difficulty.

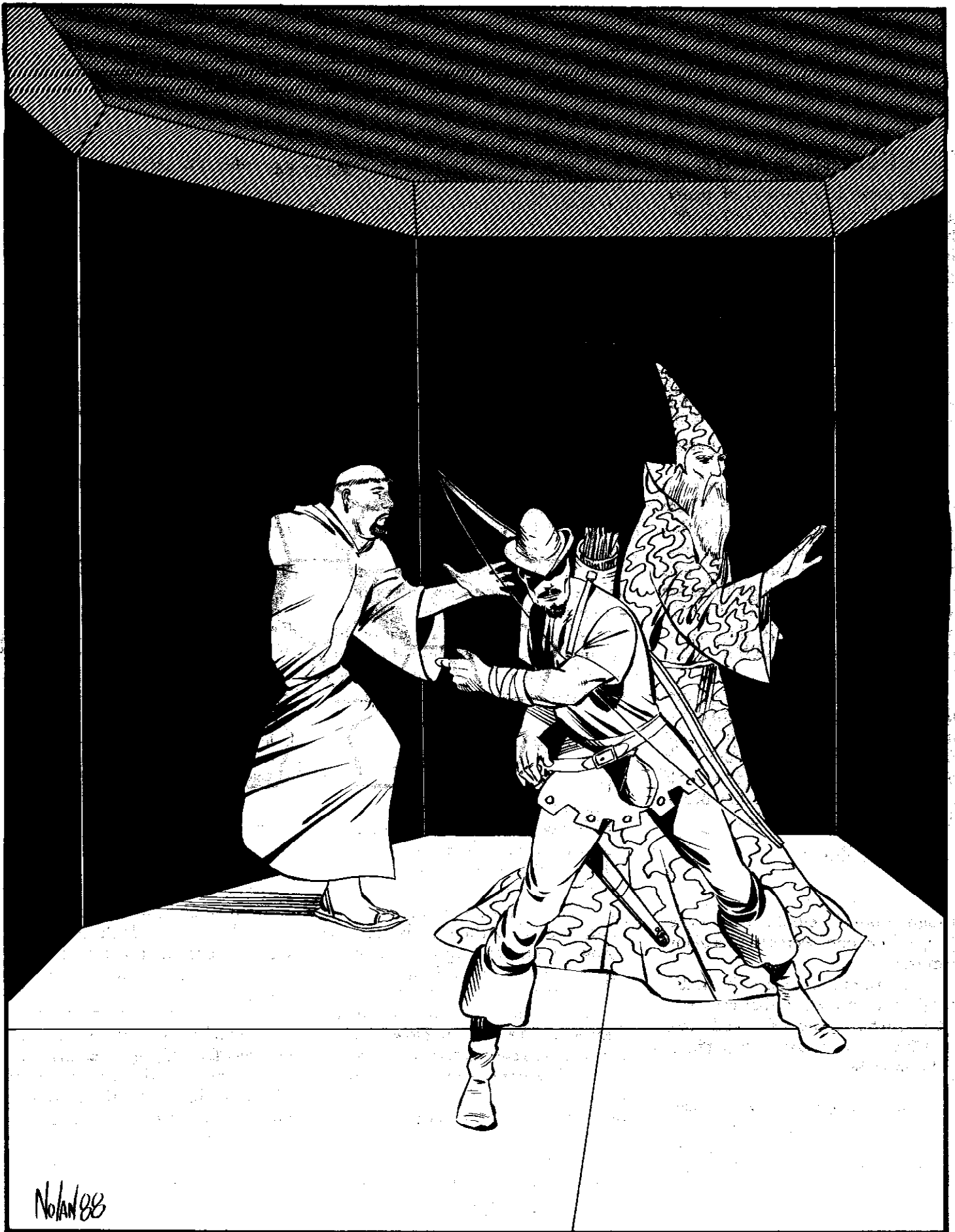
The walls that connect one pentagon to another can be passed through with no ill effects. A wall that borders one of the solid black diamonds within the maze cannot be passed through—it is solid stone.

The danger comes from the walls that border only white space. These walls, if touched by a character, inflict 6d6 points of damage to that character from a combination of heat and electrical shock. No saving throws are allowed. Any object that is touched to one of these walls is destroyed, though the character holding it suffers no damage.

Players who perform a little geometry should figure out the pattern of the maze after one or two blundering mistakes. Those who just blunder from one wall to another, hoping to stumble on the right path, will find their health in severe danger in this maze.

Maze #4





No. 1/88

The door swings silently inward, and a huge, black figure gestures politely for you to enter. The creature moves smoothly, but appears to be made entirely of iron. It holds the door open, patiently waiting for your response.

This is a huge iron golem, built to specifications far beyond the norm for its type, but trained for a very specific mission. Quite simply, it greets visitors to the castle of Orcus, escorting them through the anteroom into the corridor beyond. It does nothing else, unless one of the visitors acts rudely or offensively. In this case, it attacks.

Rude or offensive acts include insults, whether directed at the golem, other PCs, or the fortress in general, as well as gestures such as spitting on the floor, or any spellcasting in the golem's presence.

Iron Golem, Supercharged: AC - 3; MV 9"; HD 35; hp 160; #AT 1; Dmg 4d20; AL N; Size L (15' Tall); XP Value 15,800; Specials: +3 or better weapon needed to hit, immune to magical attacks (except electrical, which slow it for three rounds), fire attacks repair 1 hp per point of fire damage indicated

7. Scrying Room

This vast chamber lies under a high, domed ceiling. The entire top of the room seems to be a giant mirror.

Because of the curve of the walls, light is amplified so that even the few torches around the walls cast brilliant illumination throughout the chamber.

A *detect magic* spell will reveal a strong magical aura to this room. No specifics can be determined, however.

The room is actually an observation

chamber so that Orcus can see all of the guests that enter his fortress. The scrying pool before his throne (area 23) shows him whatever transpires in this room. Colorings in the scrying pool give the demon relative estimates of the strength (hit points) and magical potential of his foes.

Based on this observation, he will assemble a team to meet the enemy (if the intruders are judged to be hostile) on his battle arena (area 12).

8. Library

This room contains many shelves of scrolls and tomes, all assembled by the Prince of the Undead for the entertainment and education of his occasional literate guest. The books have one thing in common: all of them deal with Orcus in some way or another—his conquests, his slaves, his history, his domain, etc. Unfortunately, there is little information of any use here—it has all been doctored in such a fashion that Orcus is always portrayed in a very favorable light.

9. Torture Chamber

This chamber is like the room down the hall, in that its ceiling is a glittering mirror of polished silver. But it differs in the implements that are placed throughout it.

Many of these are recognizable as devices of torture: racks, chains, and wicked barbed tools. Fires glow in braziers; ugly stains are spattered all over the floor.

This room is Orcus's little funhouse. The mirrors allow him to observe whatever is happening here from his throne room—an activity that gives him considerable satisfaction. His favorite "entertainers" are powerful demons he has captured from other planes, or mortals who have attempted to invade his plane

and gotten captured in the process. It is possible that an unfortunate PC might find himself in the latter category, but this is left to the DM's discretion (or lack thereof).

10. Teleportation Room

This room looks like a big empty chamber. It radiates faintly of magic. A narrow hallway exits from the far wall, opposite the door. If any creature leaves the room through the far doorway (which leads into a dead-end hall) everything in the room and in that dead-end hall are *teleported* outside of the castle and moat. They will suddenly find themselves standing before the bridge, looking up at the two skulls described in area 1.

11. Passageway

This empty room looks just like area 10. However, the passage from the far side actually leads to an exit.

12. Battle Arena

The narrow walkway out of the castle leads over the moat and out to a platform poised in the air, beyond the fortress proper. When the PCs reach the level of this platform, read the following description:

The wide, smooth area before you is divided into a series of red and black squares. Each is about 20 feet on a side. On the side closest to the castle, a long, narrow bridge connects the platform to the fortress proper.

A simple expedient prevents intruders from flying onto this platform, bypassing the ground-based defenses of his castle: the platform, and the two bridges connecting it to the rest of the fortress, does not come into existence until Orcus sees a worthy group of opponents pass through

his scrying room.

When this occurs, the demon prince calls upon the power of his *wand* to bring the battle arena into being. It will last until he decrees otherwise—which will be after the fight, or if the intruders turn around and approach the castle via another path.

This is, in effect, the gameboard where Orcus plays out his most fascinating competitions: fights to the death. Here he will meet any unfriendly visitors that have made their way through his scrying room. After evaluating the strength of his opposition, Orcus will assemble a team that he feels can almost certainly prevail over the intruders. He will meet the enemy on this board and fight them. However, a number of things make this an unusual combat environment.

Orcus will bring a number of demon allies to the Battle Arena when he shows up. To determine how many, add up the total levels of the characters in the party, and consult the following list. Note: Orcus is always present—the chart shows what demons will be present in addition to their prince.

Party Total Levels	Orcus's Team
Under 100	3 Type III demons
100-150	4 Type III demons
	1 Type IV demon
151-200	5 Type III demons
	3 Type IV demons
200 or more	6 Type III demons
	6 Type IV demons

All of these demon allies will have game attributes as listed for the demons in area 22. They will be arrayed on the far side of the board when the PCs come onto the scene, one demon per square. The demons will only stand on the red squares, however, leaving the black ones vacant.

Using the Gameboard

Use the diagram on page 96 to mark the positions of the demons and PCs on the Battle Arena. The following special effects occur during the battle:

Dispel Magic: At the start of every 3d round, all magical spells in effect upon the gameboard are automatically *dispelled*.

Vanishing Board: At the end of every round (after the first attack is made), one of the black squares will drop out of the board. To determine which, roll 1d8 to find a vertical row as shown in the diagram on page 96. Then roll 1d4 to find the horizontal position of the square.

For example, on a roll of 8 (on the d8) and 1 (on the d4), the black square in the upper right corner of the arena falls away.

The square will tumble 1,000 feet to crash into the ground before the bridge. Any demons on a square that falls will plummet to their deaths. Any characters can try to save themselves by whatever means come to hand.

If the dice result indicates a square that has already fallen, no square falls on that round.

In addition, if more than two individuals (including characters and demons) stand on a square of any color at the end of a round, it will fall. You can start this effect on the second round of the battle, telling the PCs on the first round that those who are crowded together feel the footing growing shaky underfoot. A demon will always try to avoid this effect, so if two characters jump onto a square with a demon, the demon will try to move to another square.

If Orcus is facing defeat in the arena, he will *teleport* back to his throne, leaving any remaining demons to fight without him. If the PCs are suffering, and flee back the way they

came, Orcus's allies will pursue them, but the prince himself will *teleport* back to his throne room to gloat upon the victory.

13. The City of Orcusgate

This chaotic metropolis guards both of the major land approaches to the fortress of Orcus. It is ruled by Glypimhor, a very tough Type VI demon who is one of Orcus's most powerful lieutenants.

The city is very easy to get into—there are no guards to block the path of any characters, nor are the gates closed.

NPC Capsule

Glypimhor, Demon Lord of Orcusgate

Type VI Demon, Enhanced

AC: -5
MV: 6"/15"
Hit Dice: 16+16 (126 hp)

#AT: 1
Damage: 2d12+2
Special Attack: Whip pulls victim into ring of fire for 8d6 points of damage
Special Defense: +2 or better weapon needed to hit
Magic Resistance: 95%
Alignment: Chaotic Evil
Size: Large (14' tall)

Specials (all can be used as often as desired, but only one per round): *darkness 10' radius, cause fear (as a wand of fear), detect magic, read magic, read languages, detect invisible objects, cause pyrotechnics, dispel magic, suggestion, telekinesis (6,000 gp weight), symbol of fear, symbol of*

discord, symbol of stunning, 70% chance to *gate* in a demon of Type III (80%) or Type IV (20%)

Special Equipment: *sword of cleaving* (causes double damage on a roll of 18-20; requires 18/00 Strength to use)

Glyphimhor is one of Orcus's most powerful lieutenants. As such, he rules over the city of Orcusgate, which lies next to the fortress.

Two long bridges span the fiery moat, connecting the city to the castle. The first of these (the one closest to the foreground in the map) is actually the front entrance to the city. The other bridge is a back entrance to the fortress. On that bridge, slaves, food, and other goods are brought into the castle. The pathway there connects to the vast kitchens and breweries of the fortress, as well as leading into the depths below, where tens of thousands of slaves toil in eternal subjugation.

Glyphimhor is also one of Orcus's most trusted henchmen. However, trust among these demons is a relative term—the prince keeps a close eye upon Glyphimhor, which is one of the reasons he has been posted so close to the castle.

And indeed, the Type VI demon would be delighted to get a chance to overthrow his prince. He is one of the few demons in the Abyss who understands the workings of the *Wand of Orcus*. If he could gain control of that artifact, he feels certain that he could usurp control of Orcus's realm.

To this end, he might try to enlist the aid of the PCs, even offering them the opportunity to escape with the *wand*. Of course, he will betray this bargain at the most advantageous moment—his primary motivation, after all, is to gain control of the *wand* for himself.

He will try to make a deal with the PCs if two things happen: He must see a clear demonstration of their power,

and the PCs must avoid making him mad in the process. Glyphimhor couldn't care less about the wholesale elimination of his demonic troops—there are lots more where they came from. However, he will be angered by destruction of portions of his city, or by attacks that penetrate his magic resistance, or by a *backstab* attack from a thief.

If he is angered, Glyphimhor will do everything in his power to keep the characters within his city until their life energy has been entirely drained. He will only kill them if that seems to be the only way he can avoid having them leave the city. He is far more likely to use his *telekinesis* ability to hold characters against their will.

Other tactics commonly employed by Glyphimhor include the use of his *symbols*—particularly *discord* and *stunning*—to deter attempts by the PCs to leave his domain.

If the player characters manage to create an attack on Orcusgate by an army-sized force (such as the zombies), Glyphimhor will devote his attention and energies to defeating that attack. This is about the only circumstance where the PCs will be able to pass through the city without encountering its demon master.

The layout of the city is shown on page 94. See the notes there for travel in the city.

The walls of the city are rough-hewn and appear to be only about 50 feet tall. In fact, this is the case when a character tries to climb the wall to enter the city. However, if the wall is approached from inside the city, it can be seen at its true height—1,000 feet. Also, it will attack to prevent characters from leaving the city, just as the walls before the fortress will (see "Hazards of Climbing," page 62).

The bridges are deceptively long. Each span stretches for a mile. When

the PCs approach an entrance to the city, read the following passage:

The huge gates stand open, revealing a long and empty street. The roadway passes among looming, dark houses. There are no signs of life in the city—no lights, sounds, or smells. Aside from this, however, its construction and overall appearance are not terribly different from those of any large city in the Forgotten Realms.

The PCs are free to pass through the gates without hindrance. They will see no signs of any inhabitants as they enter the city. If they turn and leave by the gate they entered, nothing will happen, as long as they have not moved more than 100 feet into the city. Once the party has moved into the city more than 100 feet, however, they will be challenged as explained below (when the PCs try to leave Orcusgate).

As they enter, read the following description:

The city sprawls in all directions, a chaotic tangle of streets running here and there with no apparent pattern. There are still no signs of life—though each building has a chimney, no smoke swirls upward anywhere.

The city walls look much, much higher from the inside—they loom hundreds of feet above you, surrounding the entire metropolis. The gates remain open behind you.

The buildings look sturdy, but are constructed with odd angles for corners, roofs, and walls. Some of them seem to lean so far to the side that you are sure they will collapse at any moment. Others are so tall and narrow that they seem more like posts than buildings.

You might allow the PCs to make

Wisdom Checks occasionally—those who succeed will have the feeling that they saw something moving out of the corners of their eyes. Perhaps it was a shadowy figure ducking around a building, or a dark silhouette flashing across a window. If a Wisdom Check succeeds with a roll of 20, that character might actually perceive a smiling face—perhaps a beautiful young woman, or handsome man, with hands outstretched in welcome.

And in fact, the PCs are very welcome here. They have arrived just in time for dinner!

The PCs will not be attacked—physically, at least—as long as they care to poke around in the city. They will get these occasional impressions of spectral creatures, lurking just out of sight, but no harm will be offered them, at least, overtly.

However, the characters' very presence in the city is a danger to them, and sustenance to the minions of the city. For this city drains life levels from living creatures, just as assuredly as does the touch of a wraith or a wight.

The length of time it takes a character to lose a life level of energy (and the corresponding level-related attributes such as hit points, spells, and success rates for thieves) is determined by the might of the character himself. More powerful characters inspire the spectral city to more frenzied feeding, as follows. Figure this loss per individual character, not for the average level of the party.

Characters of these levels:	Lose levels at the rate of:
1-20	1 per 6 hours
21-30	1 per 4 hours
31-40	1 per 2 hours
41-50	1 per hour
51-60	1 per 3 turns
61-70	1 per 2 turns
71 or more	1 per turn

If a character loses enough levels to put him into a lower category on the table, he loses additional levels at the rate established by his current (not original) level.

While it would be too blunt to simply announce to the characters: "OK, everybody loses 1 level now!" you can provide them with some subtle clues. Beginning just before they lose their first level, the characters will start to feel very listless, and tired—but not sleepy. They will want to sit down and rest.

If any spellcasters think of using a spell after they have lost some of their capacities, they will realize this. (But not until they are about to cast a spell!) You can tell them something like "By the way, you realize that you can't quite remember the words to that *wish* spell."

If you allow the characters to keep track of their own hit points in combat, then tell them at the start of a battle what their current totals are.

The Buildings

The characters are free to enter any of the buildings they want. The doors are all unlocked, and the edifices are empty of inhabitants. There is a 25% chance per building that a diligent search will reveal some minor treasure (100 gp value or less) concealed in a closet, beneath a loose floorboard, or in a small chest.

The buildings all seem to be residences, with crude chairs, tables, beds, and other furnishings. They are dusty inside, and there are none of the accoutrements of human habitation—no food, clothing, or decorations.

The one exception is the palace of Glyphimhor, in the center of the city. This imposing edifice sits upon a low hill, with a view of the entire city and the fortress of Orcus as well.

If the characters observe the palace,

they will see occasional signs of movement along the outer walls. These are the demons that the lord-mayor keeps constantly on guard duty. The characters will have no real story motivation to enter this palace. If they decide to do so for reasons of their own, you will have to wing it. Suffice to say that it is a tremendous collection of buildings, decorated in cheap replication of true finery. They will find Glyphimhor and dozens of lesser demons here. If the lord-mayor is given the opportunity to cry for help, there is a 50% chance that he will be able to summon Orcus to his defense.

Although the PCs might find a lot of treasure here, it will generally be of low quality and high bulk—not the kind of stuff they can afford to bog themselves down with.

If the PCs Try to Leave Orcusgate

This is the one thing that the inhabitants of Orcusgate do not want the characters to do. They will take steps—serious steps—to prevent them getting out.

If the characters come within sight of one of the gates of the city, they will see demon guards standing alertly in the portal. These will be Types I, II, and III—about 1d6 of each. However, if the PCs advance to within 100 feet of the gate, Glyphimhor himself will arrive to lead the defenders.

The lord-mayor shows up in a blazing column of fire, as he *teleports* to the street just inside of the gate. He will gather his demon guards around him, but will not attack the PCs unless they try to leave the city.

The three far gates to the city lead to the plains around the fortress and link up to some of the more distant cities (described briefly in the next paragraph). The fourth gate leads to the back entrance to Orcus's fortress. This is where his food and drink are brought into the fortress, as well as

additional slaves to supplement the thousands he has toiling below ground, ever excavating his realm to greater depths.

Some of the Less Fashionable Suburbs

The cities shown on the map fade into the distance beyond the fortress. Though there is no real compelling reason for the PCs to investigate them, who knows what the players will decide to do? Then again, you may wish to use these locations as settings for further adventures. (Perhaps a mission to find out why those characters in that H4 module never came back?)

Again, you will have to flesh out the details of these cities. Each is ruled by a demon lord of great power—although Glyphimhor is perhaps the most powerful.

14. City of Straight Curves

The appearance of this city is tremendously deceptive. Where avenues and buildings seem to be straight, everything actually twists around. Travel in a line will nearly always bring the character back to his point of origin. In addition, the distortion changes constantly, so a path that works one way will not return to the starting point if travel is reversed.

This city is ruled by a powerful lich with a bodyguard of death knights.

15. The Bucking City

The ground beneath this city is constantly in motion, bucking up and down or twisting from side to side. The streets flow along, and the buildings seem to ride them, often disappearing into the ground while other buildings rise up in **other** parts of the city.

This city is ruled by a succubus of great power—reputed to be queen of all succubi.

16. Strobe City

This city resembles Orcusgate in many respects. However, its sky flashes alternately with white light and pitch darkness, changing once per segment. The effect is visible from far away.

The city is ruled by a council of nabassu, all of whom are quite mad.

17 & 18. Cities of Fire and Ice

These parallel cities are ruled by Type VI demons who are dedicated rivals of each other. The architecture of the cities is virtually identical, but in one, the buildings, walls, and ground are constantly aflame, while the streets are made of flowing lava. In the other, glaciers form the avenues, and all other surfaces are covered with coats of ice.

19. The Fourth Maze

Use the procedure detailed under area 2, the First Maze, to determine what the PCs encounter here.

20. The Fifth Maze

See area 19.

21. The Kitchens of Orcus

The vast chambers are used to prepare the meals for the Prince of the Undead—gluttony being one of Orcus's most highly developed vices. The rooms around the periphery of the area are used for growing and storing many foodstuffs, while the central area is used to prepare the food for serving.

Orcus has his agents gather food from all of the planes that offer anything even remotely tempting to the prince's rather indiscriminating palate. Thus there will be a wide assortment of foods and beverages familiar

to the PCs—after all, the Prime plane has the most varied and highest quality food in the multiverse.

All of these rooms are tended by manes and dretch—the true dregs of demonic society. These hapless creatures function as mindless slaves to grow and prepare the food for their prince.

If the PCs intrude into these areas, the slaves will ignore them, certain that they are simply additional tormentors, spies, or informants sent by their hated master. If the characters attack, the slaves will panic and flee, creating a fuss that will draw the Princely Guard from area 22.

The following areas surround the central kitchens:

Fruits—this area includes small groves of fruit trees and gardens of rich loam, as well as vineyards. Every variety of fruit grown in the Forgotten Realms can be found here, and those are only a small percentage of the total number of varieties.

Stockyards—these huge pens store every variety of animal ever to tempt a carnivorous tooth. Orcus keeps a dozen demons busy at all times traveling throughout the planes to bring back huge amounts of grain and other fodder for these creatures.

Grainyards—huge fields of grain stretch into the distance in this area. Wheat, barley, and corn are a few of the most obvious varieties. A pleasant, sunny warmth seems to radiate from the high, domed ceiling.

Breweries—the smell is the first clue to the function of these chambers. Huge vats, in warm and cool rooms, store beer, ales, and meads of a hundred varieties. Smaller sections of this area contain distilleries.

The kitchens contain ovens, fireplaces, fryers, boilers, iceboxes, and every other accoutrement of culinary accomplishment. In the center of the whole place is a vast dumbwaiter.

Food is loaded onto one of the two platforms every few hours, to be hauled upward with an dozen or so serving dretch. These demons will scurry to clear off the dirty dishes from the previous repast, replacing them with the new offerings—generally no less than 200 courses at a time! They will then ride the dumbwaiter back to the kitchen.

The dumbwaiter is controlled by the dretch that ride it, by pulling up or down on a rope and pulley system. There is a heavy counterbalance in a shaft next to the dumbwaiter.

22. Chamber of the Princely Guard

Characters who successfully cross the Battle Arena, or who enter the castle at any of the external doorways below or at the level of this room, will find themselves in a huge chamber. The doors are not locked, but opening them will be definitely noticed by every guard on duty in the room. In addition, each door has a magical screen crossing the opening, so that anything passing through the door is subject to the effects of *dispel magic*, cast at the 100th level of proficiency.

This huge chamber is illuminated by glowing red balls that float near the high ceiling. The room is circular, with thick stone columns lining the outer wall. In the center, four stairways lead up to a vast platform, shaped in a circle concentric to the walls of the room. The the very center of the room, a vast pillar rises from the floor to the ceiling, nearly 200 feet away.

This, the “front door” to Orcus’s castle, is a very tough path for an unwelcome intruder to take. It is the post of duty for the most ornery collection of demons that Orcus has been able to recruit. These Type III

and Type IV demons, the Princely Guard, are charged with capturing (if possible) or killing anyone so bold as to seek to see Orcus without an appointment.

The number of demons present here should be balanced to the power of the PCs, as follows:

Party Total Levels Princely Guard	
Under 100	3 Type III demons 2 Type IV demons
101-150	3 Type III demons 3 Type IV demons
151-200	4 Type III demons 4 Type IV demons
201-300	5 Type III 4 Type IV
301 or more	6 Type III 6 Type IV

Type III Demons: AC -4; MV 9”; HD 10; hp 65; #AT 5; Dmg 2d6/2d6/1d3/1d3/1d4+1; SA & SD *darkness 10’ radius, fear (as wand), cause pyrotechnics, polymorph self, telekinese (4,000 gp weight), and gate in a Type I-III demon (30% chance of success, roll for which type).*

Type IV Demons: AC -1; MV 9” / 12”; HD 11; hp 70; #AT 3; Dmg 1d4/1d4/2d4; MR 65%; AL CE; Size L (10½’ tall); SA & SD +2 to hit, +1 or better weapons needed to hit them, *darkness 10’ radius, create illusion, cause fear, levitate (as a 12th-level magic-user), detect magic, read languages, dispel magic, polymorph self; project image, symbol of fear or discord, telekinese (5,000 gp weight), and gate in a Type I-IV demon (60% chance, roll for type).*

The pillar in the center of the room is actually an elevator to raise and lower characters and demons to and from Orcus’s throne room. It will respond to the commands: “Descend” and “Rise,” spoken in

any language. It will always be raised when the characters enter this chamber. If they call for it to descend, the prince will learn of their presence and take steps to prepare for battle. It takes the elevator a full turn to go up or down all the way.

NPC Capsule

Orcus, Prince of the Undead

(The following description of his capabilities represents Orcus within his fortress and its environs. If he is encountered on other planes, use the description in the *Monster Manual*. If encountered elsewhere on his own plane, modify the MM description as explained in Appendix IV of *Manual of the Planes*, or use this description.)

AC: -6
MV: 9”/18”
Hit Dice: 240 hit points
#Attacks: 2
Dmg/Attack: (2d6 + 12)
4d4 + poison

Magic Resistance: 95%
Intelligence: Supra genius
Alignment: Chaotic Evil
Size: L (20’ tall)

Specials: +3 or better weapon needed to hit
Virulent poison in tail sting, save at -8

Can use at will (all spell abilities function as if cast by a 30th-level magic-user or cleric): *continual darkness, charm person, create illusion (as wand), cause fear (as wand), detect magic, read magic, read languages, detect invisible, ESP, pyrotechnics, dispel magic, clairvoyance, suggest, lightning bolt (30d6), clairaudience,*

polymorph self, wall of fire, telekinese (12,000 gp weight), animate dead as 30th-level MU, command, all cure spells, remove fear, remove curse, remove paralysis, all detect spells, geas, levitate, teleport without error, protection from good, sending, vocalize, tongues, atonement, fly, improved phantasmal force, mislead, quest, improved invisibility, mirror image, regenerate, anti-magic shell, dispel illusion, enthrall, spell immunity, true seeing, globe of invulnerability, dispel good, dispel magic, exorcise, summon

Can use up to six of these per day: *death spell, restoration, wish, heal, gate, resurrection, vision, volley, unholy word*

Can use once per day: *feblemind, project image, polymorph any object, shape change, time stop, any of the symbols*

Possessions:

Evil-Aligned *mace of disruption* causes double listed damage to good clerics and paladins, and good-aligned victims of a blow must save vs. spell or be turned away from Orcus for 2d6 rounds (turned as if undead turned by cleric)

Wand of Orcus causes death if touched. It rests in a socket beside the throne, and is used to power the anti-magic screen over the castle as well as the four bone guns.

If Orcus encounters the PCs in his throne room, his rage will be tremendous. He will fight with every power and ability at his disposal to annihilate the characters. In other settings, he will be deadly, but without this berserk intensity.

Orcus can be drawn out of his

throne room by an effective diversion. He will go to investigate any scene of destruction in his fortress. He will go to Orcusgate to investigate if the zombies attack the city, or if Glyphimhor has been killed. It is quite possible that the characters will think of another effective diversion to get him out of the throne room—if they don't, stealing his *wand* is going to be very difficult indeed.

However, Orcus will not use his *wand* in combat. Instead he will wield his mace if forced into close quarters—but first, he will attempt to slay PCs with his most potent magical attacks—such as the *death* spell. He will also raise his *globe of invulnerability*, and employ as many other of his defensive powers as he has a chance to use before battle is joined.

23. Throne Room of the Demon Prince

This room towers over every other point in sight—including the mountains visible to the farthest horizon. The walls and ceiling are formed by a shimmering green dome—transparent, but somehow appearing solid.

The dominant feature of the room is the dais that towers in the middle, topped by an enormous throne. The throne seems to have been made from the skulls of all types of creatures.

One corner of the room is devoted to massive banquet tables, loaded with plates and dishes of great finery, each of which holds some kind of exotic food.

Along the edge of the platform, opposite the banquet tables, thrives a lush garden of bizarre plants. Many of these are blossoms of exquisite beauty, but others are gap-toothed horrors that seem to

sniff and snap at anything around them.

Before the throne is a wide, silver pool. The liquid in it appears to be water, but it is unnaturally still.

The dome over the throne room is a potent shield of negative force. It is generated by the presence of Orcus's *wand* in the socket beside his throne. The dome will cause any magical spells in effect upon an object or individual passing through the screen to be automatically *dispelled*. Likewise, spells cannot be cast through the screen.

As an even further effect, however, any magical item passing through the screen (including those carried by characters) must make a saving throw vs. fireball (on the saving throws for objects table). Failure means that the object has permanently lost its enchantment. If the save is successful, the object loses all magical powers for 2d6 rounds.

The dome only affects things approaching the platform through the air. Visitors approaching via the elevator or the dumbwaiter are not affected.

The pool before the throne is the scrying pool whereby Orcus, with a command word known only to him, can view any area of his plane. When no area is specified, the pool shows an image of the scrying room (area 7).

If the *Wand of Orcus* is removed from its socket, the dome of protection will immediately cease to function, as will the bone guns and the scrying pool. However, Orcus—wherever he is—will sense this disruption in his magical protections, and he will immediately hasten to his throne room to see what's going on.

CHAPTER 5: INTO THE SEVEN HEAVENS

Flight From the Abyss

A variety of situations are possible once the characters have obtained the *Wand of Orcus* (always assuming, of course, that the characters still live). Orcus or his minions give chase as the characters flee the 333d layer of the Abyss back to the conduit (area 1 on the map on pages 48 and 49). Alternatively, the characters can use other magic to escape this layer of the Abyss. If the characters reach the conduit, it leads back to the Palace of 1,001 closets (Pazunia). From the entrance to Orcus's layer (area 26 on the map on page 31), the characters must make it to the mercury pool from which they originally came (area 1 on the map). They must figure this out on their own, use spells to gain the information, escape otherwise, or confront Orcus and his minions, who will stop at nothing to recover the *wand*.

When the characters dive into the mercury pool, they are once again seized by the disorienting effects of being transported into the Astral plane.

Tumbled and turned in a wild vortex, your body feels as if it is being turned inside out! The disorientation is total as you are gripped with nausea and dread. Then suddenly you break free, to find yourself floating weightless in a bright, well-lit grayness that seems to extend for infinity in all directions. Floating near you are your fellow adventurers, and also nearby is a pool of rippling silver—obviously the portal through which you entered the Astral plane.

Any demons who are following the PCs come through the pool in sec-

onds. Tell the characters they feel too helpless and sick to fight. But suddenly, 20 humanoids with feathered wings and cat-heads appear, firing spells from their fingertips. Screaming, the demons flee. One of the humanoids is hawk-headed rather than cat-headed. He introduces himself.

"I am Terxyx, Tome Archon of Mercuria, and these are my Sword Archons. Our master, St. Sollars the Twice-Martyred, has been expecting you, and ordered us to bring you to him. Will you follow?"

The PCs should accompany the archons, although they can reach the Seven Heavens in other ways if they choose. If they keep the *Wand of Orcus*, each member of the party must make a saving throw vs. spell at a -6 penalty each day, or fall under the evil influence of the *wand*. Characters who become evil as a result of the *Wand of Orcus* stop at nothing to possess the *wand*, then travel to an empty plane of the Abyss, where they attempt to set up a layer under their own rule. They are transformed over a period of 30 days into a demon lord by the power of the *wand*, after which they cannot be returned to human form or good alignment by any method whatsoever, including divine intervention.

If the characters accompany the archons, they are quickly transported across the Astral plane to a gold-colored pool, and enter it. Characters of good alignment feel the following.

You feel yourself sucked into the pool of gold. Instead of the terrible disorientation and nausea that the other color pools have caused, you

feel a warm, happy sensation as you pass through. You feel all the damage you have taken in the Abyss heal itself magically.

Characters of non-good alignments, however, feel this instead.

You feel yourself sucked into the pool of gold. A wrenching, tearing sensation within you fills you with guilt and sadness concerning the evil deeds you have committed over, your years of adventuring, and you relive it all. All the bloodshed, all the destruction reoccurs in your mind, and you feel all the pain you have caused affecting you!

Ask non-good characters if they want to become of good alignment. If they say no, they instantly lose 2d20 hit points and 2 points of Wisdom permanently. If they say yes, they receive the benefits of a *heal* and a *restoration* spell, but have a powerful *quest* spell put on them to perform three quests on behalf of the deities of the Seven Heavens. Their alignment then changes to any good alignment (player's choice). There is no experience penalty for this alignment change, but if the characters should lose their new alignment, they automatically suffer the full level effects of a voluntary alignment change.

Lunia, the Silver Heaven

The color pool exits into the surf of an ocean. Nearby is the shore of a grand mountain island dotted with citadels and redoubts of polished white stone. The ocean is fresh,



clean water. There are distant mountains at the limits of your vision. Other portals to various planes can be seen nearby. The sky is dark but filled with brilliant silvery stars that illuminate the region without moonlight.

The leader of the archons says, "This is the Silver Heaven, known as Lunia." He gestures to his soldiers, and two of them take hold of each of you. Flapping their giant wings, they lift you from the cool ocean surf into the air. Flying over the island, they head toward the distant mountains. The rarified air is heady, like wine. Higher and higher you fly, crossing a border area. The light surrounding you slowly changes from silver into gold. Armies of archons and great warriors marshal on the vast planes. Gold castles dot the landscape. One grows closer as the archons fly toward it. "Our destination," says Terxyx, "the Castle of St. Sollars. We call it Al-Amo, the Fortress of Love."

Castle Al-Amo

St. Sollars the Twice-Martyred is standing in front of Castle Al-Amo, welcoming the PCs to the Seven Heavens. He orders Terxyx to guard the *Wand of Orcus* and invites everyone in for a drink.

"Well, dogies!" St. Sollars says, "I thought fer sure you were gonna be goners in the Abyss, but y'all come through fer me. Thet Orcus'll git him another wand, sure as shootin', but not for a few hundred years. In th' meantime, we got ta' destroy this'un, and make sure Orcus leaves Bloodstone Pass alone once an' fer all."

St. Sollars explains that the breath

of Bahamut, the Platinum Dragon, will destroy the *Wand of Orcus* once and for all. Bahamut, fortunately, lives on this layer of the Seven Heavens, where he is the prime power. St. Sollars and all the other minor powers of Mercuria revere the great dragon. St. Sollars warns the PCs that Bahamut is liable to make demands on them, but that whatever Bahamut wants, they should gladly do. The saint is willing to chat and drink beer for a while, answering questions put to him as a commune spell, but finally tells them to "git goin'," and tells them that Terxyx will take them to the Palace of Bahamut.

Palace of the Platinum Dragon

Terxyx and the archons fly the PCs to an incredibly ornate palace of pure platinum with gold trimmings. A large courtyard is home to five huge ancient gold dragons. In the center of the courtyard is a building with large, intricately engraved platinum and gold doors. Terxyx hails the gold dragons as he approaches, and the platinum doors swing wide. Inside the building is a dais, and on the dais is Bahamut, the Platinum Dragon. Regardless of level, all characters are effected by *awe*.

The deep, sonorous voice of the Platinum Dragon echoes in the huge chamber, "I am Bahamut. What manner of evil accompanies you?"

The dragon listens gravely to their story, and inspects the *Wand of Orcus*. "This foul artifact can only be destroyed one way," he says, "and that is to be steeped in the black and foul blood from the heart of Tiamat, the Queen of Darkness. I cannot do this; only you can. I can transport you there, and, if you are successful, transport you back. But only thus can

you be rid of this evil."

Bahamut warns them that both the *Wand of Orcus* and Tiamat, if killed, will eventually return to existence, for the Great Powers are beyond life and death. Yet they will be removed from the current plane of existence for some centuries. He tells the PCs that once they steep the *wand* in the blood from Tiamat's heart, they are to bring back the heart of the *wand* to him. Bahamut will sense the fate of the PCs, regardless of what happens. Magically, he restores any damage they have suffered so far, and recharges both clerical and magic-user spells to their maximum. When the characters are ready, he transports them to the first plane of the Nine Hells, Tiamat's lair.

Tiamat's Den

Bahamut speaks strange words in an incomprehensible language, then reality twists and you find yourself in a huge, dimly lit cavern. There before you is the Chromatic Dragon, Tiamat, and her consorts—a white, black, green, blue, and red dragon of the largest size. Combat is joined!

The combat arena is a huge empty cavern in which Tiamat and her consorts are resting. Neither side can be surprised; battle is instantly joined with the first initiative roll.

This battle is easiest run with more than one DM; it is meant to be a final, major challenge for players. Since all characters have fully restored spells and hit points, they should have a reasonable chance of success.

Tiamat: AC 0, MV 6"/18", HD 16 (128 hp), #AT 6, Dmg 2d8/3d6/2d10/3d8/3d10/1d6, SA breath weapons, poison and magic use, SD nil, AL LE, Size L (60' long).

Tiamat's heads have one use each of the appropriate breath weapons of the white, black green, blue, and red dragons. She has the following spells: *magic missile, protection from good, stinking cloud, web, fireball, lightning bolt, ice storm, minor globe of invulnerability, cloudkill, magic jar.*

White Dragon: AC 3, MV 12"/30", HD 7, hp 40, #AT 3, Dmg 1d4/1d4/2d8, SA *cone of cold* breath weapon, SD Nil, AL CE, Size L (24' long), Spells: *charm person, friends, magic missile, shield*

Black Dragon: AC 2, MV 12"/24", HD 8, hp 50, #AT 3, Dmg 1d4/1d4/3d6, SA *acid breath* weapon, SD Nil, AL CE, Size L (30' long), Spells: *charm person, enlarge, magic missile (x3), shield (x2), protection from good*

Green Dragon: AC 2, MV 9"/24", HD 9, hp 54, #AT 3, Dmg 1d6/1d6/2d10, SA *chlorine gas* breath weapon, SD Nil, AL LE, Size L (36' long), Spells: *dancing lights, friends, shocking grasp, sleep, detect invisibility, forget, stinking cloud, web*

Blue Dragon: AC 2, MV 9"/24", HD 10, hp 60, #AT 3, Dmg 1d6/1d6/3d8, SA *lightning bolt* breath weapon, SD nil, AL LE, Size L (42' long), Spells: *comprehend languages, protection from good, Tenser's floating disk, ESP, levitate, scare, blink, lightning bolt*

Red Dragon: AC -1, MV 9"/24", HD 11, hp 70, #AT 3, Dmg 1d8/1d8/3d10, SA *fire breath* weapon, SD nil; AL CE, Size L (48' long), Spells: *magic missile, sleep, darkness 15' radius, shatter, dispel magic, fireball, minor globe of invulnerability, wall of fire*

If Tiamat is killed, the remaining dragons fight until they are down to half their original hit points, then they flee.

When the *Wand of Orcus* is immersed in the black blood from the heart of Tiamat, read the following:

Being careful not to touch this most evil artifact, you move the *Wand of Orcus* into the black stinking blood from the heart of Tiamat. It sizzles and bums, then it flares in a tremendous explosion!

Each PC takes 5d20 points of explosion damage (save vs. spell for half damage) from the explosion of the *wand*. Tiamat's blood splashes everywhere, burning anything it touches for 1d20 points of damage. Magical items must make a saving throw vs. acid at a -5 penalty or be *disintegrated*.

When the PCs recover from the explosion, they see a small white gem where the *wand* was. It can be handled without causing death. This is what they must give to Bahamut.

When Tiamat is killed, the PCs can either wait for Bahamut to return them to the Seven Heavens, or search the lair. There is much treasure here.

The lair of Tiamat and her consort dragons contains the following: 30,000 cp, 100,000 sp, 40,000 ep, 60,000 gp, 50,000 pp, 180 gems (average value 500 gp each), 70 pieces of jewelry (average value 7,500 gp each), scrolls of *protection from demons, protection from devils, protection from magic, protection from possession, and protection from undead*, potions of *delusion, ESP, extra-healing, flying, gaseous form, human control, longevity, and poison*, rings of *djinni summoning and wizardry, staff of power, book of vile darkness, cube of force, eyes of the eagle, helm of brilliance, jewel of*

flawlessness, libram of ineffable damnation, necklace of strangulation, robe of the archmagi, plate mail of etherealness, sword +1, luck blade, and a hammer of thunderbolts.

The killers of Tiamat and their descendants will forever be known to and hated by all evil dragons, who will seek to destroy them utterly. Any items of treasure taken from Tiamat's hoard are certain to be recognized by evil dragons, who will stop at nothing to recover them.

Bahamut's Blessing

Bahamut *teleports* the PCs back to his castle, and asks them if they have the heart of the *Wand of Orcus*. If they do not, he castigates them for failing in their mission, and tells them that Bloodstone Pass will soon be overrun with demons—that is, unless they go back and succeed this time. He *teleports* them back to the lair of Tiamat, without letting them recover hit points or spells, to find that all the dragons are fully recovered. The gem from the heart of the *wand* is inside the heart of Tiamat.

If they have succeeded, Bahamut says, "You have succeeded in your mission, and now your realm will be made secure from demonkind. Plant this gem in the courtyard of your castle, and tend the tree that grows from it. For as long as you and your realm align with the cause of Good, this tree will prevent any demons from entering the Kingdom of Bloodstone. But should you, your people, or your descendants turn to Evil, the tree will wither, and the demons take a most powerful revenge."

"Now go in peace," the platinum dragon says, "and rule wisely and well."

EPILOGUE: RETURN TO BLOODSTONE PASS

When the characters finish their audience with Bahamut and receive the tree-gem, the archons fly them back to St. Sollars. The saint performs *resurrection*, *heal*, and *restoration* of all party members who have been hurt in the final battle, and he grants a *wish* to each party member as a reward for their achievement. He answers questions as a commune spell.

The characters can rest in the Seven Heavens for a day, then St. Sollars informs them that it is time to go. The archons fly them back to the color pool, then they make a quick transit back to the Astral plane.

The voyage from Mercuria through the Astral plane is almost routine now. Lost in thoughts of the incredible adventure you have experienced, the time passes quickly. Finally, the archons point toward the silver color pool that leads to your home plane, and as you pass through it, you find yourself in the courtyard of Bloodstone Castle. Home at last!

Lady Christine, Baron Tranth, Quillan the Sage, the other NPCs with whom the characters have interacted come running to greet the returning champions, plaguing them with a hundred questions. At a great feast, they get to share their exploits, which are set to music by the bards in the castle.

At a series of private conferences, Baron Tranth reminds the heroes that there is still the small matter of the Army of Vaasa on the other side of the Ford of Goliad. If you want to play out the final battle of the Bloodstone Wars, use Scenario #5, page 21, from H3, *The Bloodstone Wars*. The zombies, ghouls, and skeletons crumbled into dust at the moment the *Wand of*

Orcus was destroyed. (In the far north, the Castle of the Witch-King also *disintegrated*.) The remaining forces suffer a -2 morale penalty. Play out the battle; give the players the satisfaction of an easy final victory after all they've been through.

If the players would rather not play out a battle with such a predetermined outcome, the battle takes place off-stage with a stunning Bloodstone victory. All the nation of Vaasa shortly falls under the control of Bloodstone.

If the PCs have not yet declared the kingdom or held a coronation, this is the time to do it. The victorious heroes are enormously popular throughout the land, and are acclaimed as rulers wherever they go. Quillan suggests that the planting of the tree-gem be part of the coronation ceremony. Within two weeks after the tree-gem is planted in the castle courtyard, it is already grown into a 10-foot-high white tree with golden leaves.

And so at long last do the heroes come into a kingdom of their own—a land where their dreams have come true.

Further Adventures in Bloodstone Pass

As this epic series draws to a close, what now? You now have characters of surpassing power, of a level at which most adventurers retire. But with a kingdom to call your own, your players now are mighty powers in the FORGOTTEN REALMS™ campaign setting. What of the nations nearby? Zhentil Keep is on the march, and the land of Thar is a source of ancient evil. Threats from nearby nations can be reasons for immense BATTLESYSTEM™ rules scenarios. Perhaps these characters will grow from being kings to being

emperors, and dominate the entirety of the Forgotten Realms.

Here are some suggestions for further adventuring.

1. Revenge of the Demon Prince

Although the *Tree-Gem of Bloodstone* works as “demon repellent,” keeping all demons of all sorts from entering the lands under the Throne of Bloodstone, Orcus never forgets the injury the adventurers have done him, and he vows eternal revenge. Using his evil magic to bring neighboring princes under his sway, Orcus might stir up war against Bloodstone, or recruit assassins and agents to wreak havoc inside the kingdom. Should the heroes venture outside their borders for any reason, such as to lead their armies in battle, powerful demons are likely to attack.

It will take a full century for Orcus to rebuild the *Wand of Orcus*. Until that time the demon's power is lessened. But Orcus has a long memory, and the descendants of the heroes may be the targets of his wrath.

2. Revenge of the Dark Queen

Not only is Orcus the eternal enemy of the adventurers, but the various races of evil dragons are fully aware of what the heroes did to Tiamat. The Queen of Evil Dragons will also regenerate in a century, but her minions will try for a quicker revenge. Unlike demons, dragons are not prevented by the Tree-Gem from attacking the Kingdom of Bloodstone. Perhaps an army of hundreds of evil dragons of all colors from the glaciers beyond Thar will unite and attack Bloodstone in a huge aerial BATTLESYSTEM™ rules engagement. The mysterious Cult of the Dragon, a group of men said to have

devised strange mystical arts that give them mastery over evil dragonkind, may take a hand in this matter.

It is certain that evil dragons will recognize any items taken from Tiamat's hoard. They will do anything in their power to retrieve the items and punish the person who possesses them.

3. The Zhentarim

The nation of Bloodstone is separated by mountains and the Moonsea from the mysterious Zhentil Keep, the base of the Zhentarim, an organization of evil and lawful individuals also known as "the Black Network." To enrich themselves, the Zhentarim are trying to control the trade routes between the established lands of the Sword Coast and the young kingdoms around the Moonsea, including the newest realm, the Kingdom of Bloodstone.

The threat of Zhentil Keep will grow to plague the new rulers of Bloodstone, eventually requiring either military intervention or a secret mission by high-level adventurers (the Over the Hill Gang rides again!). Baron Tranth would be a good choice as Seneschal of Bloodstone when the adventurers are away on other business.

4. To the Sea of Fallen Stars

The issue of trade routes will also bring Bloodstone into dealings with Impiltur, to the south. Most likely, a peaceful accommodation can be reached. The Desertspire Mountains are the home of Lothchas the banditlord, and the Great Dale, where dwells the Nentyarch, a mysterious mage of great power who rules grim men and strange beasts. Uninvited guests who enter the woods simply vanish.

The Sea of Fallen Stars is the great inner sea along which most trade

takes place. A large pirate fleet operates there; it would be highly desirable for the nation of Bloodstone if these pirates no longer preyed on ships.

5. Glaciers and Deserts

It has long been suspected that the Great Glacier and Anauroch, the Great Desert, are not natural. What strange, mysterious power is responsible? Certainly the power needed to create these immense features could only be combatted by the highest-level characters. It is rumored that gods or powerful demons are behind them.

6. The Next Generation

Characters who retire might get married and have children—a new generation of adventurers for your players! Since these new PCs would be trained by their powerful parents, and probably be given some magical items to start their careers, they should probably start at higher than first level, but in no case higher than 5th-9th. Remember, both dragons and demons already hate them, and lurk in readiness whenever the new PCs leave the borders of their home.

This situation leads to an entirely new phase of your campaign. Young adventurers, but with a home, magic, and money, going on missions for the kingdom they will someday inherit. If they get into serious trouble, perhaps their parents, now grey-haired, might buckle on their swords to come rescue them.

7. Bad Harvest

Running a dominion can be a challenging exercise. Although there are not well-developed rules in the AD&D® game system for running a kingdom, the D&D® Companion Set rules are easily adapted for this purpose. Plagues, bad harvests, earth-

quakes, hard winters, and more can challenge even the toughest party. The kingdom's treasury can go bankrupt, the mines dry up, and the crops go bad. What then, o mighty adventurers?

In addition, Bloodstone might be faced with an invasion of frost giants from the Great Glacier, or many other evils.

8. Bahamut's Quest

One or more of the PCs may have become obligated to perform quests on behalf of their alignments. These might begin with being summoned to the Seven Heavens, or by a midnight vision from St. Sollars, and would normally involve extra-dimensional travel. The other realms in *Manual of the Plane* likely to be involved. What if the evil dragons of the multiverse invaded the Seven Heavens to revenge themselves on Bahamut for the death of Tiamat? This is an opportunity for the most fiendish of DMs to construct an adventure even more deadly than this one.

9. Plot of the Red Wizards

The Red Wizards of Thay are evil and powerful, and are devoted to an expansionistic and imperialistic policy of swallowing neighbor states. These haughty and arrogant sorcerers may show up in Bloodstone and demand that the characters swear fealty to them.

The plot of the Red Wizards is to neutralize the adventurers by sorcery—exiling them to another plane of existence, for example, without any magical items, weapons, armor, or way home. What amazing adventures would they encounter in making their way home through the planes of existence, to battle the evil Red Wizards to regain their throne?



PEOPLE OF BLOODSTONE PASS

Baron Tranth of Bloodstone: Gray-haired, tall, heavy-set, brusque, formal. Radiates power and competence. Totally committed to the welfare of his people. Father of Lady Christine. If no PC has become Baron, he is still Baron. STATS: AC 1 (plate and *shield* +1), MV 9", Ftr 7, hp 30, #AT 3/2; Dmg 1d8+1 (*long sword* +1) or 1d4+1 (heavy crossbow). AL LG, St 15, Int 13, Wi 14, Dex 12, Con 14, Ch 15, CR 13", THAC0 14.

Lady Christine, Baroness of Bloodstone: Lovely, fairy-tale princess type, but a bit of a tomboy and druidess by training. Very competent, strong-willed, proud, occasionally haughty. Trained by Quillan the Sage in druidic lore and by her father Baron Tranth in rulership and military affairs. If she fell in love with and married a PC, she is Baroness; otherwise, assists her father in ruling and is heir presumptive. STATS: AC 10/8 (leather), MV 12", Druid 7, hp 26, #AT 1, Dmg 1d4 (dagger or sling), AL N(G), St 10, Int 12, Wi 13, Dex 14, Con 11, Ch 17, THAC0 18.

Quillan the Sage: Age 70, long white hair and beard; sage in legends, folklore, and history. His true love is flora of the region, which he somehow manages to work into every sage answer he gives. Appears doddering and senile, but actually is much smarter than he looks. SPELLS (Druid): 4 1st, 2 2d, 3 3d.

Garlen and Garven: Identical cousins, brown hair and eyes, just turned 22. Young, brave, inexperienced, overly enthusiastic, with a tendency toward unquestioning hero worship. They interrupt each other constantly when talking. STATS (identical): AC 8 (leather), MV 12", Ftr 5, hp 25, #AT 1, Dmg 1d6 (short sword or bow), AL LG, St 14, Int 11, Wi 10,

Dex 13, Con 13, Ch 12, CR 11", THAC0 16.

Racquel and Carlotta: Beautiful and flirtatious barmaids at the Inn of the Clowns, they are highly resistant to customer advances, but have one weakness: musicians. STATS: Ch 18.

Jamison the Fletcher: Makes bows and arrows of good quality. Also raises hunting falcons in the back of his house. Secretly a 6th-level assassin working for the Grandfather of Assassins against Bloodstone, he uses druidically trained falcons to convey messages. If uncovered in H1, H2, or H3, does not exist here; if not, PCs cannot keep military plans secret from the enemy.

Haldan: Greedy, sneaky, ferret-faced little guy with goatee; pathological liar (yeah, that's the ticket!); will sell out anyone for the price of a beer; drinks way too much. Obviously slimy; can be played for laughs. (He also may have been eliminated in H1, H2, or H3).

Olaf the Blacksmith: 5th-level fighter with 18(23) strength, arms like iron bands. Mostly works on horseshoes and plows, but can make swords, repair armor, etc. Has a spreading chestnut tree in front of his shop.

Gabrielle: Oldest daughter of the baker and his wife, has burning desire to become a magic-user and is fond of older men. Would gladly apprentice herself to a master of the mystic arts, learns quickly. Shy, romantic, and chaste; would make a lucky sorcerer a wonderful wife and henchperson. STATS: Int 16, Ch 17. (If already apprenticed, or if Emlyn the Gray is used as a PC, is now a 3d-level MU.)

Aldric the Vampire: Originally Aldric, Abbot of St. Sollars the Twice-Martyred, was turned into a vampire by minions of Orcus, and is now quite insane. If not killed in H2 or H3, he is still lurking around in *gaseous form*, and serves as a continual random encounter. His tactics are hit-and-run. If caught and cured, he would return to his work with new devotion and be eternally friendly, if a bit priggish and overly formal. In the meantime, he should be a particularly nasty opponent. He has several coffins hidden away, so finding a particular coffin does no good. STATS: As vampire in MM.

Clematis, Indanthrene, and Curcumin: Faerie dragons who live in a pixie grove in Bloodstone Valley, along with 100 practical-joking pixies. Not interested in helping humankind unless there's a prank in it. Wandering into the grove unawares can be both dangerous and humiliating. Curcumin, the youngest faerie dragon, might possibly follow a very charismatic and witty character, and become a henchman.

Other Denizens: Many other characters are described in modules H1, H2, and H3. The Random Villager Generation System in H1 and H2 is a handy tool to use in creating other characters as needed.

PREGENERATED PLAYER CHARACTERS

These pregenerated player characters were used in the original playtest campaign of the Bloodstone Pass adventure series. They are made available here for your use. If you have used these characters in previous modules in the "H" series, the characters have grown and changed according to your own campaign, and are not necessarily the same as presented herein. Although these characters are well suited for the adventure, nothing should stand in the way of using your own characters in this series. The various adventure roles (paladin hero who gets the girl, good-hearted drunken friar, ascetic monk, etc.) can be used as a guideline to shape a party of your own characters for the adventure.

The characters are not provided with basic cash and nonmagical items. At 19th-level, assume that they can obtain virtually any nonmagical item with ease. It is also legitimate for you, as Dungeon Master, to provide scrolls, potions, and minor magical items to round out the characters as they embark on their adventure.

In addition to these 16th-19th-level characters, some pre-generated 100th-level characters are provided for those of you who are looking for the ultimate in high-level challenges. Good luck! It's not as easy as it looks.

Very observant and rules-knowledgeable players have noticed that we made some mistakes in applying the weapons specialization system to the pre-generated characters in H2 and H3. Those were our (primarily Dobson's) errors, not official rules interpretations. The following should be correct.

Sir Gareth Dragonsbane

Baron of Bloodstone
19th-level Human Paladin (Cavalier)
Lawful Good

Strength 18/30
Intelligence 13
Wisdom 15
Dexterity 15/26
Constitution 17/12
Charisma 18/15

Armor Class: -4
Movement Rate: 12"
Command Bonus: +3
Command Radius: 22"
Base THAC0: 4 (#AT 3 with lance, long sword, or horseman's flail)
Attack Rating: 19
Hit Points: 96

SAVING THROWS: PPD 1, P/P 2,
RSW 3, BW 2, Sp 4

CLERICAL SPELL USE: 5 1st level, 4
2d level, 3 3d level, 2 4th-level

SPECIAL ABILITIES: All Paladin and Cavalier special abilities from *Players Handbook* and *Unearthed Arcana*. Sword gives 50% MR, *dispel magic* 5' rad., dmg. +10 vs. Chaotic Evil.

PROFICIENCIES: *Weapon*: Lance, long sword, horseman's flail (weapons of choice), broad sword, short sword, horseman's mace, javelin, two-handed sword, dagger, scimitar, bastard sword. *Non-weapon*: Animal noise, blind-fighting, direction sense, endurance, mountaineering, riding, rope use, swimming, sound analysis, boating

HOLY SWORD: *Crusader*, a long sword +5 holy avenger, provides

50% MR in 5' radius, *dispel magic* at 17th level in a 5' radius, +10 dmg. vs. CE opponents. If a Type III or more powerful demon is slain with *Crusader*, sword gains following special powers: *heal* 1/day, *strength* 1/day to fight evil opponents, *charm person* on contact 1/day (make attack roll for 0 damage to use this power). On an attack roll of a natural (unmodified) 20, will *disintegrate* a demon up to Type VI. Ego and Intelligence both 17. *Telepathic* with owner. *Commune* with minor goddess St. Lalibela 1/week. Sword will howl in anguish if wielder runs from a demon. On second instance of cowardice in the face of a demon., sword instantly *teleports* away, never to return.

OTHER MAGICAL ITEMS: *Plate Mail* +3, *Shield* +2, *Silver Horn of Valhalla*.

LANGUAGES: Common, LG, Elf, Dwarf, Halfling

WARHORSE: Glendan, intelligent heavy warhorse (AC 5, HD 5+5, hp 25, #AT 3, Dmg 1d8/1d8/1d3, MV 18").

Sir Gareth has devoted his life to the service of Lawful Good. As a knight of the Order of the Golden Cup, he had a glorious adventuring career. In spite of tithing 50% of his treasure, he became a wealthy man and settled on a large estate. A Brigade Commander in the Vaasan War, he won his battles even though his side lost the war. His home in the north destroyed, his soldiers and followers dead or dispersed, and his wealth lost, he came to Bloodstone Pass, where he fell in love with and married Lady Christine, daughter of Baron Tranth of Bloodstone. At the wedding, Baron Tranth abdicated,

relinquishing his title to his new son-in-law.

Unable to escape the wrath of the Vaasan Empire, the tiny barony was forced into war. Under the splendid generalship of Gareth Dragonsbane, it has now conquered the southern duchies and united them. The conventional wisdom is that Baron Dragonsbane will be the king of the new realm of Bloodstone, once Vaasa is finally defeated.

Sir Olwyn Forest-Friend

19th-level Human Ranger (Fighter)
Lawful Good

Strength 18/24
Intelligence 13
Wisdom 14
Dexterity 17
Constitution 15
Charisma 10

Armor Class: 2/0*
Movement Rate: 24"*
Command Bonus: 0
Command Radius: 17 1/2"
Base THAC0: 4 (2 attacks/round)
Attack Rating: 19
Hit Points: 79

SAVING THROWS: PPD 4, P/P 5,
RSW 6, BW 4, Sp 7

SPELL USE: *Druid*: 4 1st level, 2 2d level, 2 3d level. *Magic-User*: 2 1st level, 2 2d level.

SPECIAL ABILITIES: All Ranger special abilities from *Player's Handbook* and *Unearthed Arcana*. Learned secret of manufacturing *arrows +1* (1/day) and *arrows of slaying* (1/month) from treants.

PROFICIENCIES: *Weapon*: Long bow (Double Specialization, #AT 4/

1, Dmg. +3 hit/dmg., "point blank" range bonus), long sword, crossbow, bastard sword, dagger (throwing), dagger (melee), axe (throwing), axe (melee), quarterstaff, two-handed sword. *Non-weapon*: Bowyer/Fletcher (Triple Proficiency, DEX +5 on d20, plus magical manufacture skills), animal noise, direction sense, rope use, fire-building, weaponsmith, swimming.

SPELL BOOK: 1st level: *affect normal fires*, *detect magic*, *jump*, *magic missile*, *read magic*, *spider climb*. 2d level: *darkness 15' radius*, *invisibility*, *levitate*, *strength*, *Melf's acid arrow*.

MAGICAL ITEMS: *Long bow of the Forest +1*, requires 18/01 or greater Strength to use; user adds Strength bonuses to hit and damage; bow has double normal range. *Arrows of Slaying* vs. demons (10) and vs. giants (2); 12 *arrows +1*, 12 *arrows +2*, 6 *arrows +3*, *cloak of elvenkind*, *boots of speed*, *ring of free action*, *bracers of archery*

LANGUAGES: Common, LG, Elf, Treant

Sir Olwyn spent most of his life in the great forests of the Forgotten Realms, where he saved the race of treants from destruction at the hands of a powerful wizard. His ranger henchmen perished in that terrible battle, and he has never replaced them. The treants of the forest rewarded the ranger by creating a special long bow for him, and taught him the secrets of making magical arrows.

Sir Olwyn moved north into Damara, where he became involved in the quest to save the village of Bloodstone Pass. A hearty, outdoorsy man, Olwyn is a great favorite with the children of the village, and teach-

es archery to them. He has commanded the Huntsmen Skirmishers in battle.

Friar Dugald

Cleric of the Order of St. Dionysus,
Knight of Bloodstone
19th-level Human Cleric
Lawful Good

Strength 15
Intelligence 10
Wisdom 18
Dexterity 9
Constitution 14
Charisma 14

Armor Class: -3
Movement Rate: 9"
Command Bonus: 0
Command Radius: 17"
Base THAC0: 9
Attack Rating: 24
Hit Points: 68

SAVING THROWS: PPD 2, P/P 5,
RSW 6, BW 8, Sp 7

CLERICAL SPELL USE: 11 1st level,
11 2d level, 10 3d level, 8 4th-level, 6
5th-level, 4 6th-level, 2 7th-level

SPECIAL ABILITIES: All Clerical special abilities from *Players Handbook*.

PROFICIENCIES: *Weapon*: Footman's mace, horseman's mace, club, flail, hammer, sap. *Non-weapon*: Drinking (CON +3 on d20), endurance, fishing, mountaineering, swimming, riding, fire-building

MAGICAL ITEMS: *mace of disruption +3*, *chain mail +2*, *shield +5*, *potion of elixir of health*, *ring of truth*, *rod of resurrection* with 10 charges; *scroll with restoration*, *gate*, *true seeing*, *animate object*, *harm*, *blade barrier*, and *flame strike*; *figu-*

rine of wondrous power (marble woolly mammoth).

LANGUAGES: Common, LG, Elf

POSSESSIONS & EQUIPMENT: Otho, a draft horse (AC 7, MV 12", HD 3, hp 12, #AT 1, Dmg 1d3).

Friar Dugald is an immensely fat man who wears monk's robes and has a shaved pate, in the ancient tradition. A jolly man, he loves to drink, eat, and drink. Of lower-class ancestry, Friar Dugald has common tastes. His fellow clerics consider him a little too rough, and look down on his continual barroom brawling and general drunkenness. (Note special drinking proficiency.) However, he is devout in his worship of St. Dionysus, and fights for good. He has found the citizens of Bloodstone Pass very much to his taste, and looks forward to ending his wandering life and ministering to his new flock. He has been knighted for his services, but does not normally use his title.

The good friar always wears an old brown robe with a hood. Underneath his robe, he wears his *chain mail* +3 and carries his mace tucked into his rope belt. Many a powerful enemy has been fooled by his deceptive appearance.

Sir Riordan Parnell

19th-level Half-Elf Bard
(8th-level Fighter/9th-level Thief)
Neutral Good

Strength 15
Intelligence 14
Wisdom 15
Dexterity 16
Constitution 12
Charisma 16

Armor Class: 3
Movement Rate: 12"

Command Bonus: +1
Command Radius: 21"
Base THAC0: 14
(3 attacks/2 rounds)
Attack Rating: 29
Hit Points: 77

SAVING THROWS: PPD 4, P/P 7,
RSW 8, BW 10, Sp 9

DRUIDIC SPELL USE: 7 1st level, 5
2d level, 5 3d level, 4 4th-level, 3 5th
level

SPECIAL ABILITIES: All Bard and
Half-Elf special abilities from *Player's
Handbook* and *Unearthed Arcana*,
including 76% *charm* percentage and
80% *legend lore*. Member, Anstruth
College. Fighter abilities at 8th-level;
thief abilities at 9th-level, including
PP 75%, OL 62%, F/RT 55%, MS
62%, HS 54%, HN 25%, CW 96%,
RL 40%.

PROFICIENCIES: *Weapon*: Long
sword, (Double Specialization, +3
hit/dmg, 5 attacks/2 rounds), dag-
ger, throwing dagger, quarterstaff,
sling, broad sword, javelin, short
sword, dart, spear. *Non-weapon*:
Animal trainer, animal noise, blind
fighting, boating, fire-building,
healing, mountaineering, riding,
rope use, swimming.

MAGICAL ITEMS: *Anstruth Harp*,
ring of protection +3, *long sword*
+1, *dagger* +2, *figurine of won-
drous power (ebony fly)*, *potion of oil
of ethereality* (two doses).

LANGUAGES: Common, NG, Elf,
Gnome, Halfling, Goblin, Hobgob-
lin, Orcish, Gnoll, Kobold, Thieves'
Cant, Ogrish, Hill Giant, Drow Elf,
Demon, Centaur, Druid, Harpy,
Treantish, Dwarf, Hordling,
Duergar.

Handsome, youthful, and with a
ready smile, Riordan Parnell is a bard
as willing to steal a kiss or a song as he
is the Duke's jewels. Riordan normal-
ly travels with his cousin Celedon,
sometimes stealing (but only from
evil rich men), sometimes aiding the
poor and oppressed, but always
adventuring and seeking danger.
Riordan has been rich several times
. . . and flat broke just as often. He is
74 years old, but looks 28. He is 5' 8"
tall and weighs 130 lbs. He was
knighted by the Baron of Bloodstone
and serves as a Brigade Commander
in the Army, where his bardic powers
make him an effective leader.

Sir Celedon Kierney

8th-level Half-Elf Magic-User/22th-
level Thief-Acrobat
Chaotic Good

Strength 11
Intelligence 18
Wisdom 12
Dexterity 18
Constitution 12
Charisma 16

Armor Class: 1
Movement Rate: 12"
Command Bonus: +1
Command Radius: 17"
Base THAC0: 10
Attack Rating: 25
Hit Points: 48

SAVING THROWS: PPD 8, P/P 7,
RSW 4, BW 11, Sp 5

MAGIC-USER SPELLS: 4 1st level, 3
2d level, 3 3d level, 2 4th-level

SPECIAL ABILITIES: All magic-user,
half-elf, and thief acrobat special
abilities from *Player's Handbook* and
Unearthed Arcana. Thief Skills: PP
70%, OL 57%, F/RT 45%, MS
109%, HS 114%, HN 55%, CW

99.7%, RL 80%. Acrobat Skills: Tightrope Walk 120%, Pole Vault 17', High Jump 9', Standing Broad Jump 12', Running Broad Jump 22', Tumbling Attack 28%, Evasion 65%, Falling 80%, 55'. Weight/Encumbrance Limits for Skill Use 670 gp (body associated), 4,000 gp (carried). Backstab for quintuple damage.

PROFICIENCIES: *Weapon:* Long sword, short sword, short bow, dagger, sap, lasso, staff. *Non-weapon:* Animal noise, blind-fighting, direction sense, mountaineering, rope use (Double Proficiency, DEX +3), sound analysis, swimming.

SPELL BOOK: Cantrips: *tie, untie, distract, hide, palm, yawn, bee, bluelight, unlock, whistle, firefinger, present.*

1st level: *dancing lights, feather fall, friends, grease, jump, mount, magic missile, read magic, spider climb.*

2d level: *audible glamer, bind, darkness 15' radius, deppockets, fools gold, knock, mirror image, rope trick, Tasha's uncontrollable hideous laughter.*

3d level: *clairaudience, dispel magic, feign death, fly, item, phantasmal force.*

4th level: *confusion, dimension door, fire charm, Leomund's secure shelter, magic mirror, polymorph self, wizard eye*

MAGICAL ITEMS: *Long sword +1, Luck Blade (0 wishes), ring of protection +3, figurine of wondrous power (ebony fly), potions of oil of ethereality (two doses) and fire breath (1 dose), mirror of mental prowess, rod of alertness, scroll of contingency, forcecage, and volley*

LANGUAGES: Common, NG, Elf,

Gnome, Halfling, Goblin, Hobgoblin, Orcish, Gnoll, Thieves' Cant

Young and good-looking, Celedon is a master thief and magician of great skill. He uses his skills for adventure and romance, and often pulls a caper just for the sheer pleasure of it. He normally steals only from evildoers, and might give away all he has if touched by the right story. Celedon is 65 years old, but appears 27. He is 5' 9" tall and weighs 140 lbs. He normally travels with his cousin, Riordan Parnell. Celedon was knighted by the Baron of Bloodstone and serves as Commander and Chief Scout of the Army of Bloodstone.

Sir Emlyn the Gray

Court Wizard of Bloodstone
19th-level Human Magic-User
Lawful Good

Strength 9
Intelligence 18
Wisdom 12
Dexterity 16
Constitution 10
Charisma 12

Armor Class: 0
Movement Rate: 12"
Command Bonus: 0
Command Radius: 14"
Base THAC0: 13
Attack Rating: 28
Hit Points: 30

SAVING THROWS: PPD 10, P/P 7, RSW 5, BW 9, Sp 6

MAGICAL SPELL USE: 5 1st level, 5 2d level, 5 3d level, 5 4th-level, 5 5th level, 3 6th-level, 3 7th-level, 3 8th level, 1 9th-level

SPECIAL ABILITIES: All magic-user special abilities from *Player's Handbook*. Has sage abilities in magic, leg-

ends and lore, and magical item identification.

PROFICIENCIES: *Weapon:* Dagger (melee), dagger (throwing), dart, quarterstaff. *Non-weapon:* Endurance, healing, slow respiration, sage.

SPELL BOOK: Cantrips: *chill, exterminate, flavor, freshen, gather, salt, shine, stitch, tie, warm, wrap, curdle, hairy, knot, ravel, sour, spill, untie, change, distract, hide, palm, nod, scratch, sneeze, bee, bluelight, firefinger, gnats, smokepuff, spider, unlock, creak, groan, rattle, whistle*

1st level: *alarm, armor, charm person, comprehend languages, detect magic, feather fall, identify, magic missile, mount, protection from evil, read magic, sleep, unseen servant, wizard mark*

2d level: *bind, continual light, darkness 15' radius, deppockets, ESP, forget, invisibility, know alignment, levitate, magic mouth, pyrotechnics, Tasha's uncontrollable hideous laughter, scare, stinking cloud, strength*

3d level: *blink, clairaudience, clairvoyance, detect illusion, dispel magic, fireball, fly, haste, item, material, Melf's minute meteors, phantasmal force, secret page, suggestion*

4th level: *charm monster, dig, dispel illusion, Evard's black tentacles, fear, hallucinatory terrain, Leomund's secure shelter, magic mirror, massmorph, Otiluke's resilient sphere, polymorph other, shout, wizard eye*

5th level: *cloudkill, conjure elemental, dismissal, fabricate, hold monster, magic jar, Leomund's lamentable belabourment, transmute rock to mud, wall of stone*

6th level: *Bigby's forceful hand, chain lightning, contingency, control weather, death spell, ensnarement,*

eyebite, guards and wards, invisible stalker, monster summoning IV, project image, spiritwrack

7th level: *banishment, cacodemon, mass invisibility, power word stun, reverse gravity, torment*

8th level: *binding, mass charm, permanency polymorph any object, Serten's spell immunity*

9th level: *prismatic sphere, shape change, time stop, wish*

MAGICAL ITEMS: *Staff of the Magi* (20 charges), *dagger +1, bracers of defense AC 2, figurines of wondrous power (serpentine owl and a pair of golden lions), scroll of 20 spell levels (player's choice), Zagyg's spell component case, prison of Zagyg, efreeti bottle* (two wishes and 800 days of service remaining), *deck of illusions*.

LANGUAGES: Common, LG, Elf, Dwarf, Halfling, Gold Dragon, Centaur, Ki-rin

Emlyn the Gray is 60 years old, gaunt, with white hair and long white beard, and quite feeble in appearance. An adventurer for many years, Emlyn was obsessed with adding spells to his spell books. As he grew older, he retired, and for many years taught magic in a centaur academy. He learned the languages of the gold dragon and the ki-rin to add to his store of magical lore. But the war with Vaasa destroyed the school, and he was forced to take up his staff and return to the adventuring life—which he hates. He is looking for a new place to settle down, and has taken on Gabrielle, daughter of the baker in the village of Bloodstone, as an apprentice (she has hopes of being more). He is absent-minded, pedantic, and complains constantly.

Kane, Master of Spring

16th-level Human Monk
(Master of Spring)
Lawful Good

Strength 15
Intelligence 15
Wisdom 15
Dexterity 17
Constitution 14
Charisma 8

Armor Class: -2
Movement Rate: 30"
Command Bonus: 0
Command Radius: 12"
Base THAC0: 10
(4 open-hand attacks/round)
Attack Rating: 25
Hit Points: 40

SAVING THROWS: PPD 10, P/P 9,
RSW 8, BW 13, Sp 9

SPECIAL ABILITIES: Master Kane is an old-style (pre- *Oriental Adventures*) monk, and has special abilities as per *Player's Handbook*, including abilities A-K and a 4% chance of being surprised. Thief Skills: OL 99%, F/RT 95%, MS 99%, HS 99%, HN 50%, CW 99.6%

PROFICIENCIES: *Weapon:* bo stick, caltrop, crossbow, dagger, jo stick, lasso, sap, quarterstaff, halberd. *Non-weapon:* Animal trainer, animal noise, blind-fighting, direction sense, endurance, rope use (Triple Proficiency, DEX +4)

MAGICAL ITEMS: *carpet of flying* (smallest size).

As Master of Spring, Kane was the second-highest ranking monk of his order. Although he had long since

acquired the experience needed to challenge the Grand Master of Flowers for the leadership of the order, he refrained from doing so out of respect for his venerated master. Instead, he resigned from the order, and another Master of Spring was appointed to take his place. Kane took a vow of poverty and set out into the world.

Kane meditates at least four hours each day and practices his skills for another four. Whenever he needs food or other items, he takes the most menial jobs he can find, preferably involving hard physical labor. This preserves his sense of connection with the world. He is 60 years old, but looks 20 years younger. He is wiry, muscular, and very thin, and dresses in simple rags, as befits an ascetic.

He remains in Bloodstone for as long as he is needed, but refuses money, titles, magical items, and even a roof over his head.

PREGENERATED 100TH-LEVEL CHARACTERS

We don't really believe that anyone has ever "earned" a 100th-level character, in the sense that the character was started at level 1 and worked his or her way up in a normal (non-Monty Haul) campaign. On the other hand, there's always the temptation to play, just once, a character of ultimate power.

These characters are patterned after great heroes of mythology. Their descriptions herein bear little or no resemblance to their *Legends & Lore* entries. Use them as templates to create special 100th-level characters for this adventure.

The *Legends & Lore* volume describes the effect of character ability scores above 18.

Perseus, Immortal Warrior

100th-level Human Fighter/Paladin
Lawful Good

Strength 25
Intelligence 17
Wisdom 19
Dexterity 18
Constitution 25
Charisma 20

Armor Class Base: 6
(before armor/shield)
Movement Rate: 12"
Command Bonus: +5
Command Radius: 50"
Base THAC0: 4
Attack Rating: 19
Hit Points: 390

Saving Throws: PPD 1, P/P 2 (poison -2) RSW 3, BW 2, SP 4

Clerical Spells: 6 1st, 5 2d, 4 3d, 5 4th

Special Abilities: All paladin and cavalier special abilities from *Player's Handbook* and *Unearthed Arcana*. *Awe* ability based on Charisma rating. Immunity to *cause fear, charm person, command, friends, hypnotism* based on Wisdom. 95% *detect invisible* based on level and intelligence. Automatically regenerate 1 hit point/turn based on Constitution.

Proficiencies: *Weapon:* Proficient in all weapons. Double proficiency in one weapon of player's choice, plus all Cavalier "weapon of choice" benefits. *Non-weapon:* All non-weapon proficiencies from *Dungeoneer's Survival Guide* and *Wilderness Survival Guide* at triple level.

Magical Items: Player's choice of one suit of armor, one shield, four weapons, and four miscellaneous magical items from any listed in *Dungeon Masters Guide*, *Unearthed Arcana*, or any other official source.

Warhorse: Any cavalier steed (UA, pg. 15) with *magical elfin chain mail* +3 barding.

Languages: Any, up to legal maximum based on intelligence.

Miscellaneous Items: Any, at player's choice.

Circe, the Black Sorceress

100th-level Human Magic-User/
Illusionist
Chaotic Good

Strength 15
Intelligence 25
Wisdom 18
Dexterity 23
Constitution 19
Charisma 25

Armor Class Base: 5
(before magical protection)
Movement Rate: 12"
Command Bonus: +10
Command Radius: 50"
Base THAC0: 11
Attack Rating: 25
Hit Points: 177

Saving Throws: PPD 8, P/P 5, RSW 3, BW 7, SP 4

Magic-User Spells: 7 1st, 7 2d, 7 3d, 7 4th, 6 5th, 6 6th, 6 7th, 6 8th, 6 9th

Illusionist Spells: 7 1st, 7 2d, 7 3d, 7 4th, 6 5th, 6 6th, 6 7th

Spell Books: Contain all known official magic spells from *Player's Handbook* and *Unearthed Arcana* for both magic-user and illusionists. Note encumbrance and transportability problems of spell books; portable spell books can be used if desired. Player must choose which spells are in such books.

Special Abilities: *Awe* ability based on Charisma rating. Immunity to all illusion/phantasm spells up to 7th-level based on intelligence. 95% *detect invisible* based on level.

Proficiencies: *Weapon:* Proficient in all legal magic-user weapons. *Non-weapon:* Player's choice of up to 16 non-weapon proficiencies from *Dun-*

geoneer's Survival Guide and *Wilderness Survival Guide*.

Magical Items: Player's choice of up to 25 magical items from any listed in *Dungeon Masters Guide*, *Unearthed Arcana*, or any other official source. Artifacts cannot be chosen.

Languages: Any, up to legal maximum based on Intelligence.

Miscellaneous Possessions: Any non-magical items desired, at player's choice.

Hermes, Ruler of Thieves

100th-level Deep Gnome Thief/
7th-level Illusionist
Neutral Good

Strength 18
Intelligence 20
Wisdom 18
Dexterity 25
Constitution 22
Charisma 21

Armor Class Base: 4
(before armor/shield or magic)
Movement Rate: 12"
Command Bonus: +6
Command Radius: 50"
Base THAC0: 10
Attack Rating: 25
Hit Points: 240

Saving Throws: PPD 5, P/P 4 (5 vs. poison), RSW -5, BW 8, SP 2

Illusionist Spells: 4 1st, 3 2d, 2 3d

Special Abilities: All deep gnome (svirfneblin) special abilities from *Player's Handbook* and *Unearthed Arcana*, including *summon earth elemental*, *blindness*, *blur*, and *change self*, plus automatic *non-detection*. All thief abilities, including PP 170%, OL 154%, F/RT 145%, MS 134%, HS 134%, HN 65%, CW

84.7%, RL 80%. Quintuple damage from backstab attacks. Use scrolls at 25% chance of failure or reverse effect. 95% *detect invisible* based on level.

Proficiencies: *Weapon:* Proficient in all legal weapons for the class. *Non-weapon:* Choice of 27 proficiencies from *Dungeoneer's Survival Guide* and *Wilderness Survival Guide*.

Magical Items: Choice of 12 magical items that are legal for use by thieves or illusionists.

Languages: Any, up to legal maximum based on intelligence.

Miscellaneous Possessions: Any non-magical items desired, at player's choice.

Artemis of the Forest

100th-level Human Cleric/
23d-level Hierophant Druid
Neutral

Strength 21
Intelligence 20
Wisdom 25
Dexterity 20
Constitution 23
Charisma 22

Armor Class Base: 6
(before armor/shield and magical protection)

Movement Rate: 12"
Command Bonus: +10
Command Radius: 50"
Base THAC0: 9
Attack Rating: 24
Hit Points: 245

Saving Throws: PPD 2, P/P 5, RSW 6, BW 8, SP 7

Clerical Spells: 12 1st, 12 2d, 11 3d, 13 4th, 13 5th, 12 6th, 8 7th.

Druidical Spells: 9 1st; 9 2d, 8 3d, 10 4th, 10 5th, 9 6th, 7 7th.

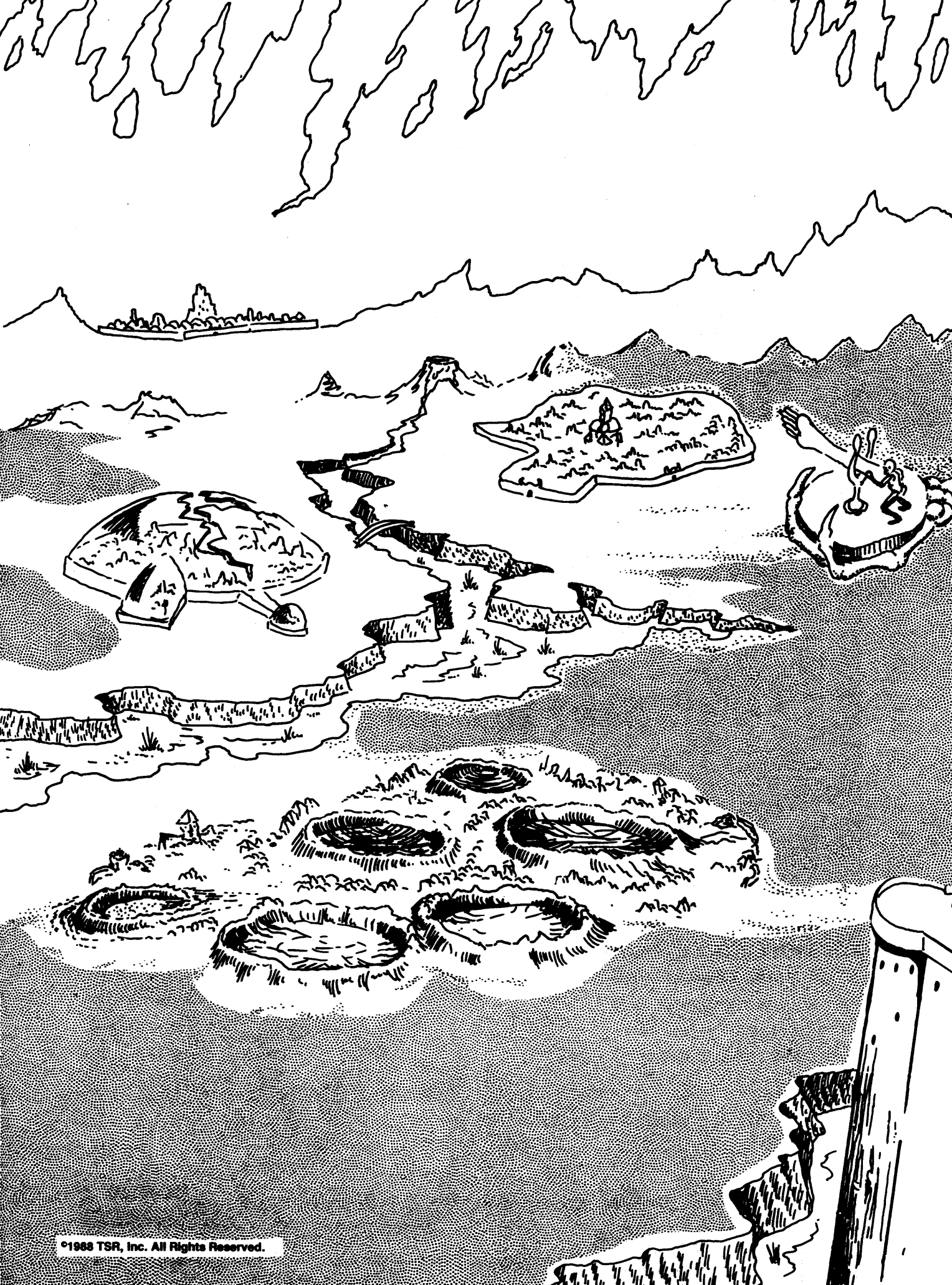
Special Abilities: Clerical *turn undead* abilities. All druid and hierophant druid special abilities, including planar travel, *conjure elemental*, etc. *Awe* ability based on Charisma rating. Immune to all illusion/phantasm spells up to 2d level based on Intelligence. 95% chance to *detect invisible* based on level.

Proficiencies: *Weapon:* Proficient in all legal clerical and druidical weapons. *Nonweapon:* Player's choice of up to 27 nonweapon proficiencies from *Dungeoneer's Survival Guide* and *Wilderness Survival Guide*.

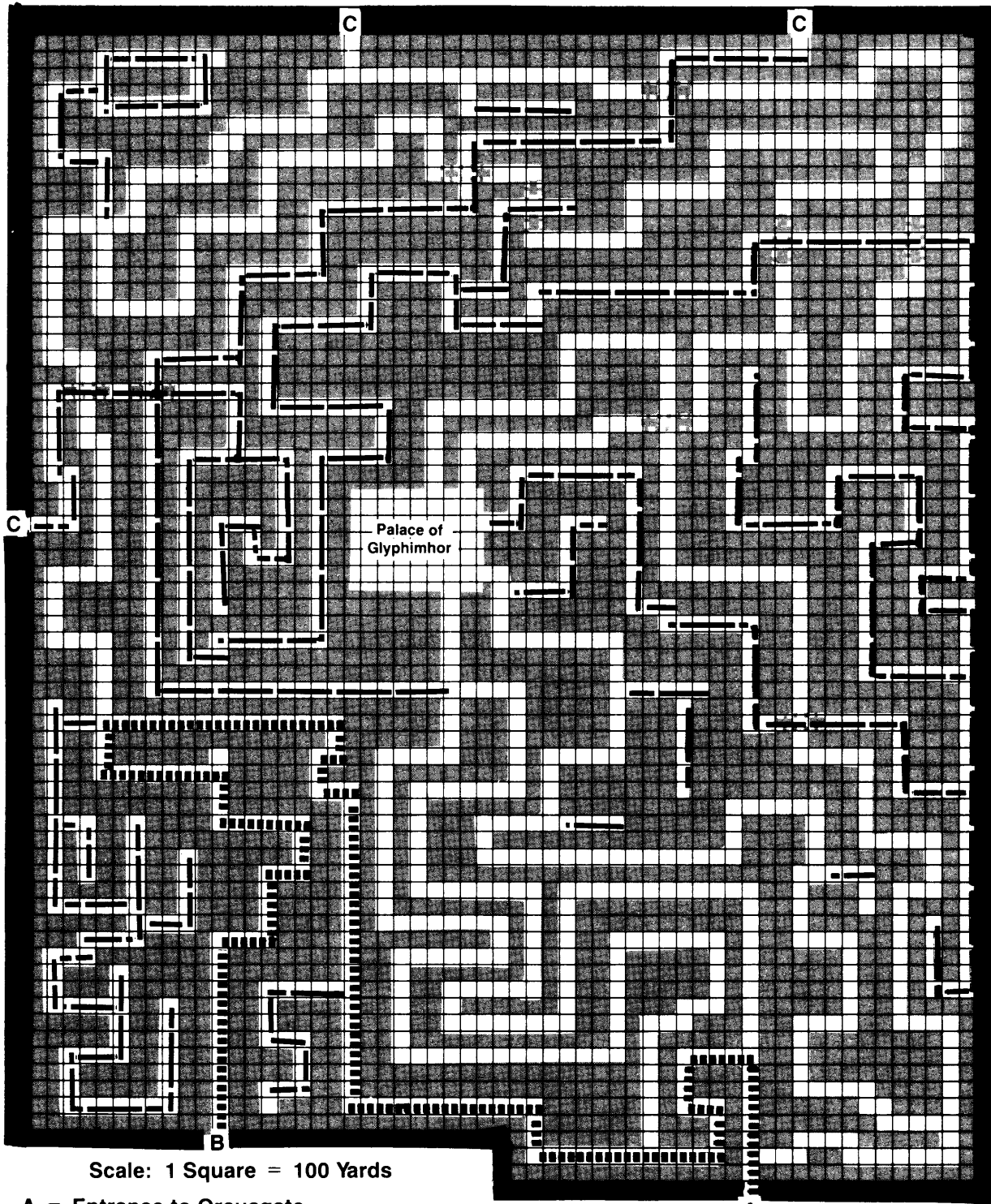
Magical Items: Player's choice of up to 500,000 XP value of magical items legal for use by clerics or druids, from any listed in *Dungeon Masters Guide*, *Unearthed Arcana*, or any other official source. Artifacts cannot be chosen.

Languages: Any, up to legal maximum based on Intelligence.

Miscellaneous Possessions: Any non-magical items desired, at player's choice.

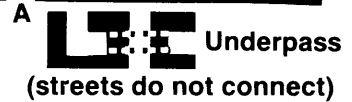


Street Maze for Orcusgate



Scale: 1 Square = 100 Yards

- A = Entrance to Orcusgate
- B = Exit to the Palace
- C = Exit to Other Cities



This is a DM copy of the map of Orcusgate. It highlights the routes through the city; it is for your reference only. Do not show it to the players!

Direct Route 

False Route 

Roundabout Route 



Battle Arena

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	
								1
								1
								2
								2
								3
								3
								4
								4

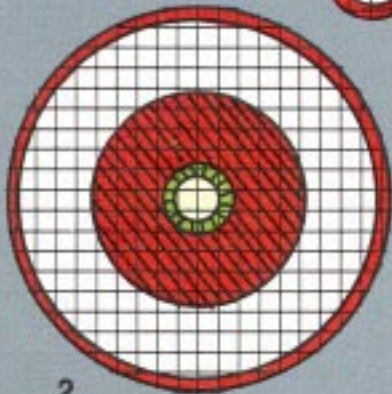
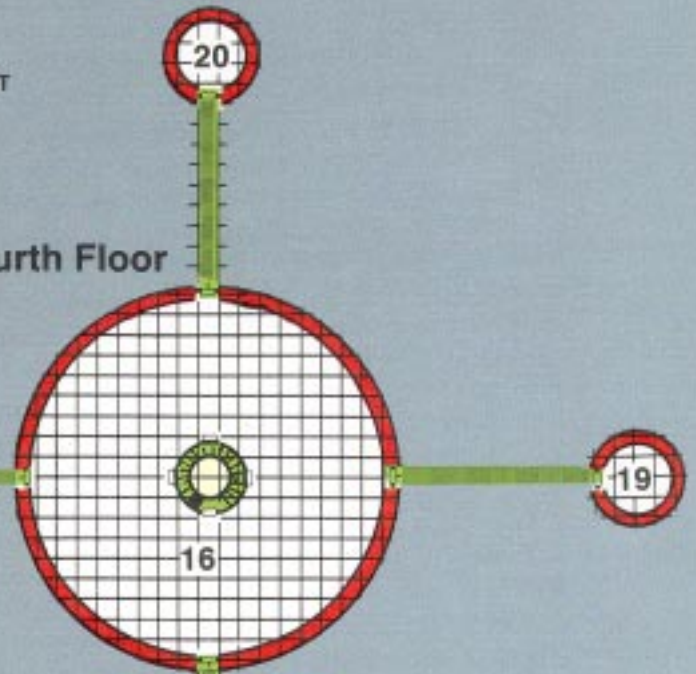
The Citadel of the Witch-King

Flight Deck

SCALE: 1 SQUARE = 10 FEET

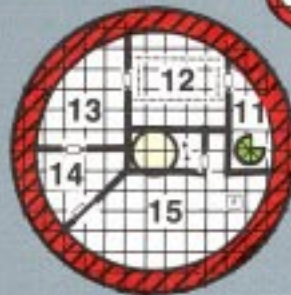


Fourth Floor

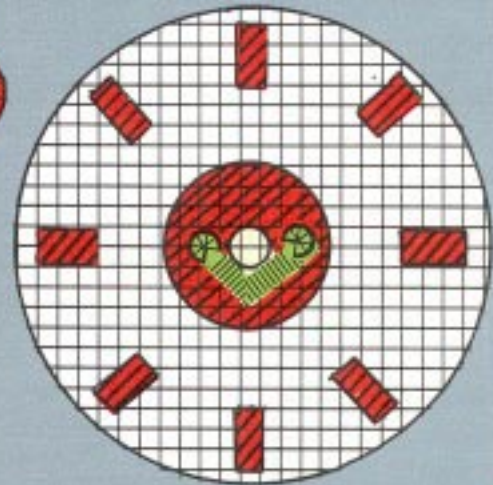


Upper Parapet

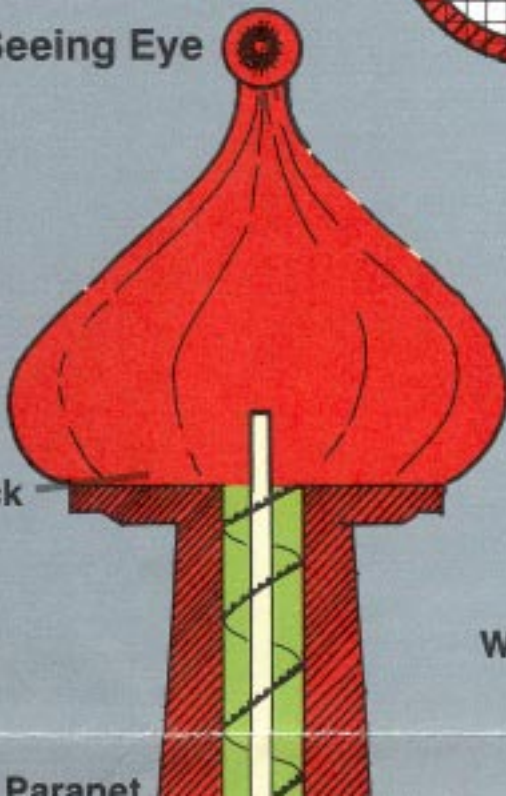
Third Floor



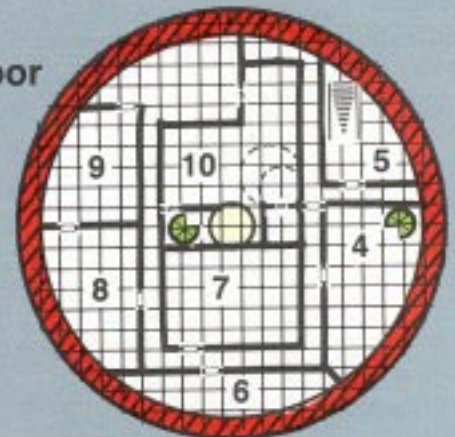
2
Lower Parapet



All-Seeing Eye



Second Floor

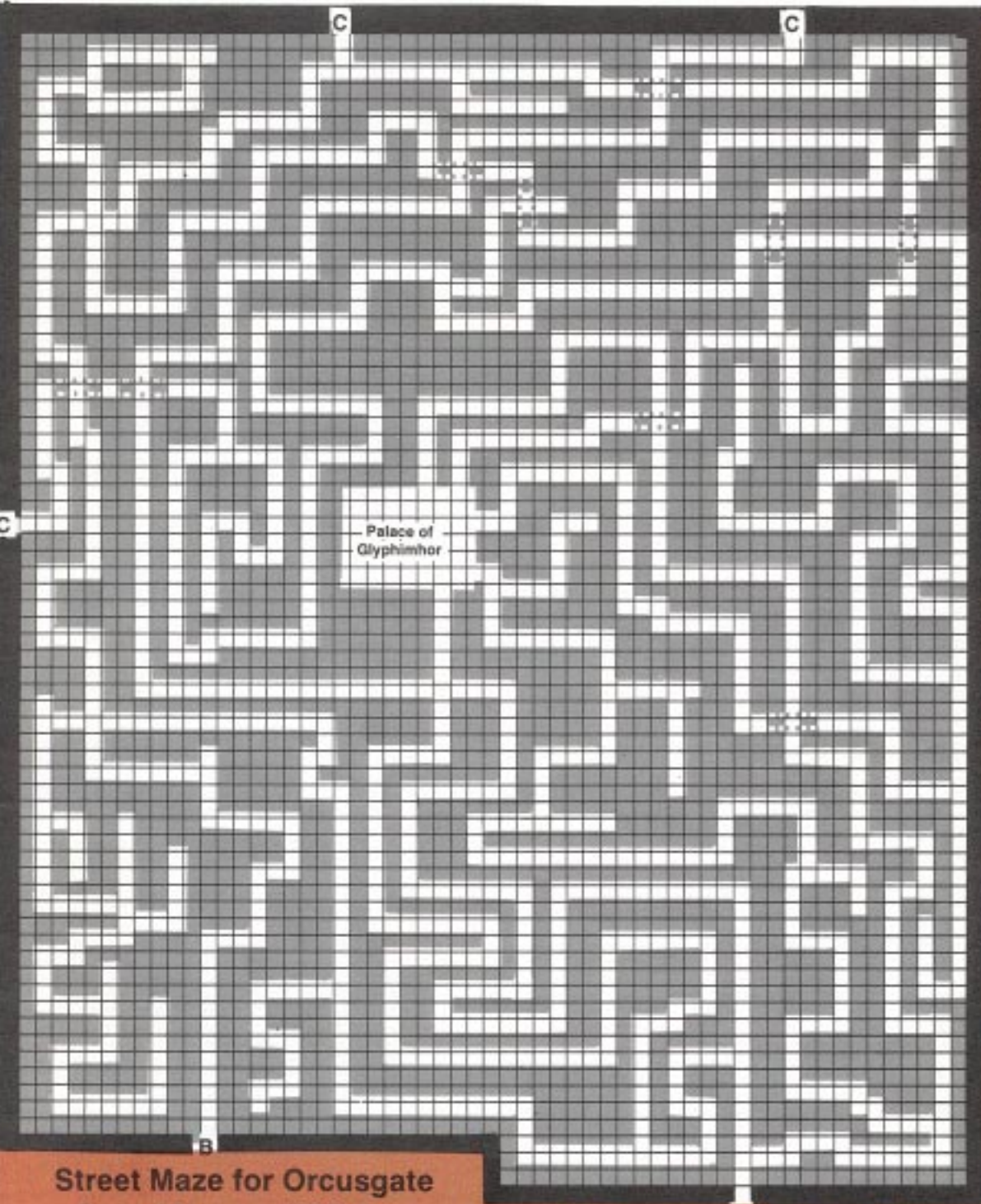


Flight Deck

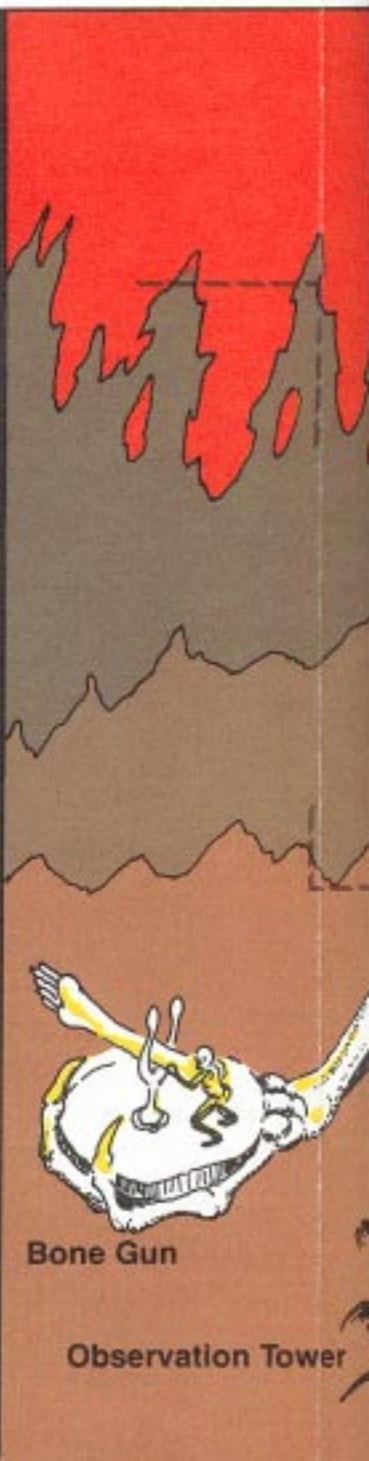
Witch-King's Throne



Upper Parapet



Palace of
Glyphimhor



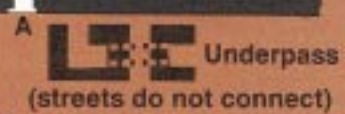
Bone Gun

Observation Tower

Street Maze for Orcusgate

Scale: 1 Square = 100 Yards

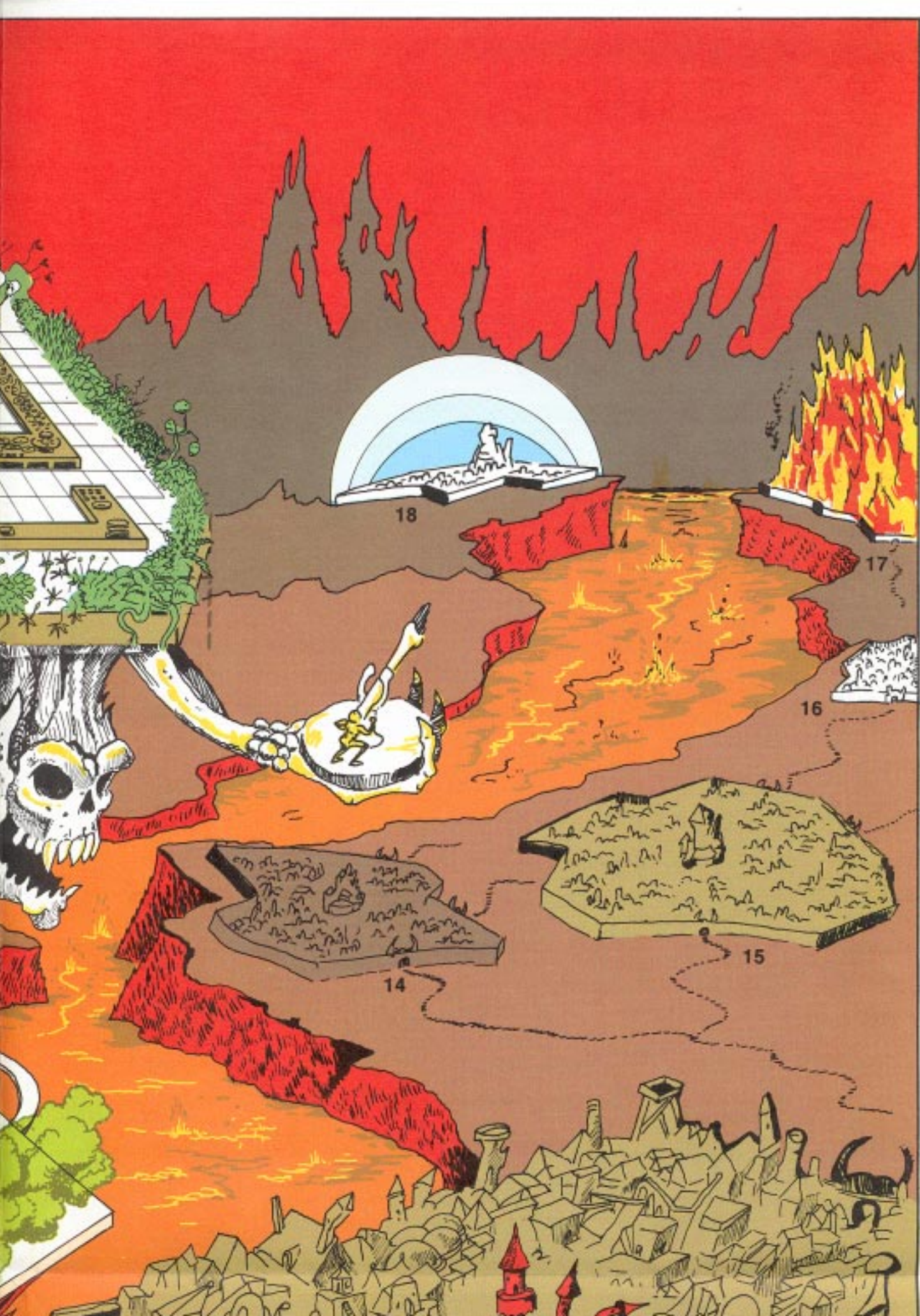
- A = Entrance to Orcusgate
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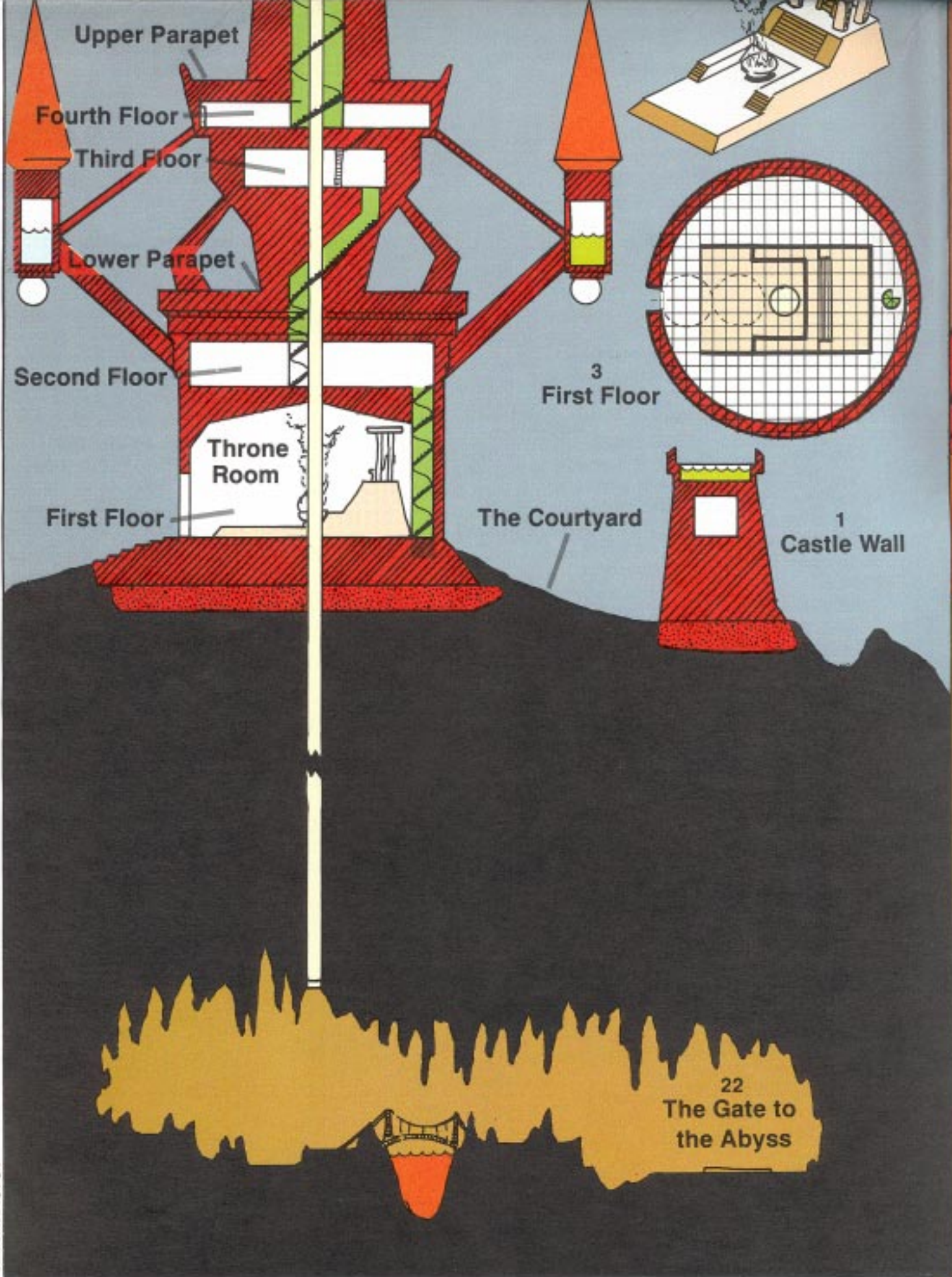


12

The Palace of Orcus







Upper Parapet

Fourth Floor

Third Floor

Lower Parapet

Second Floor

Throne Room

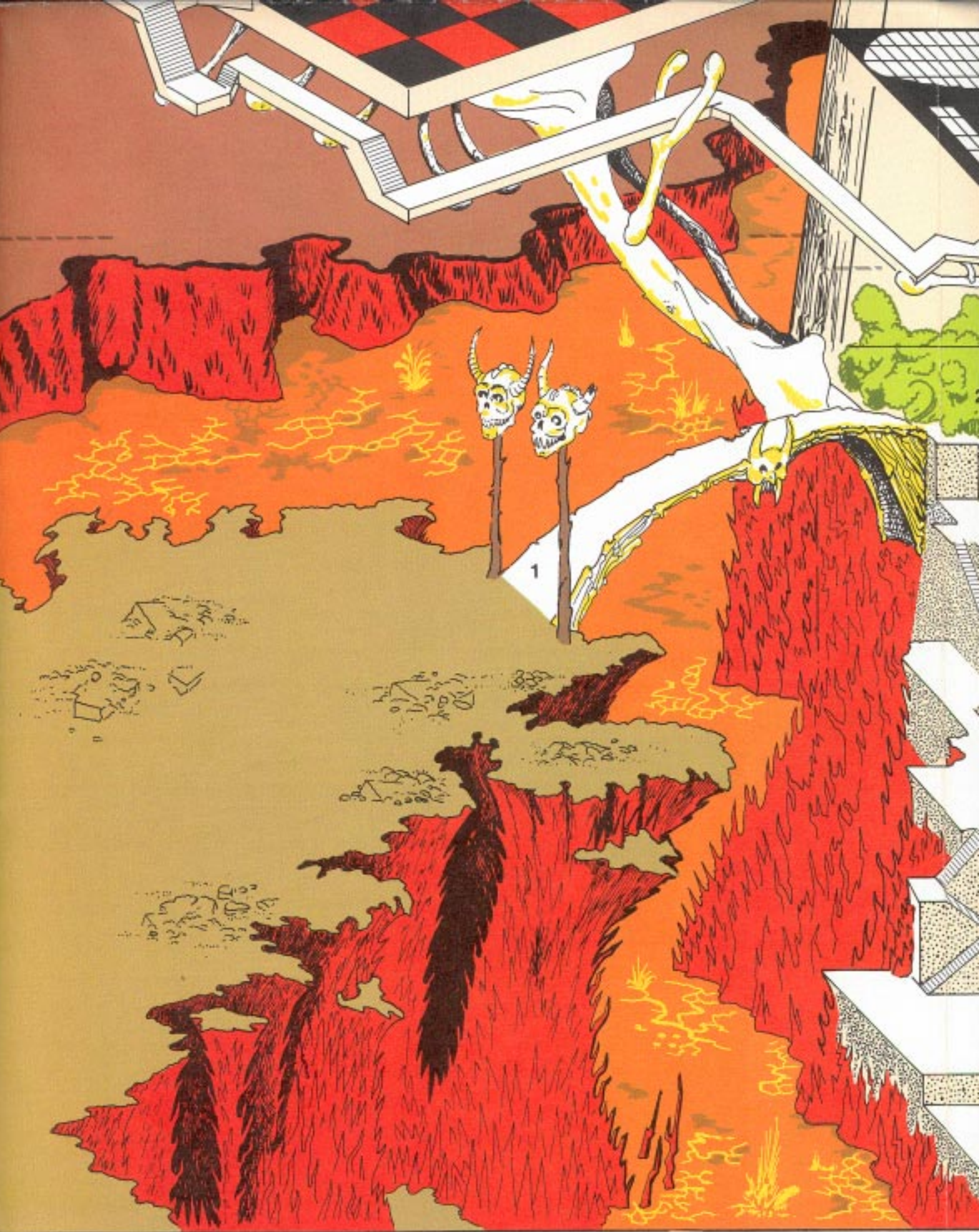
First Floor

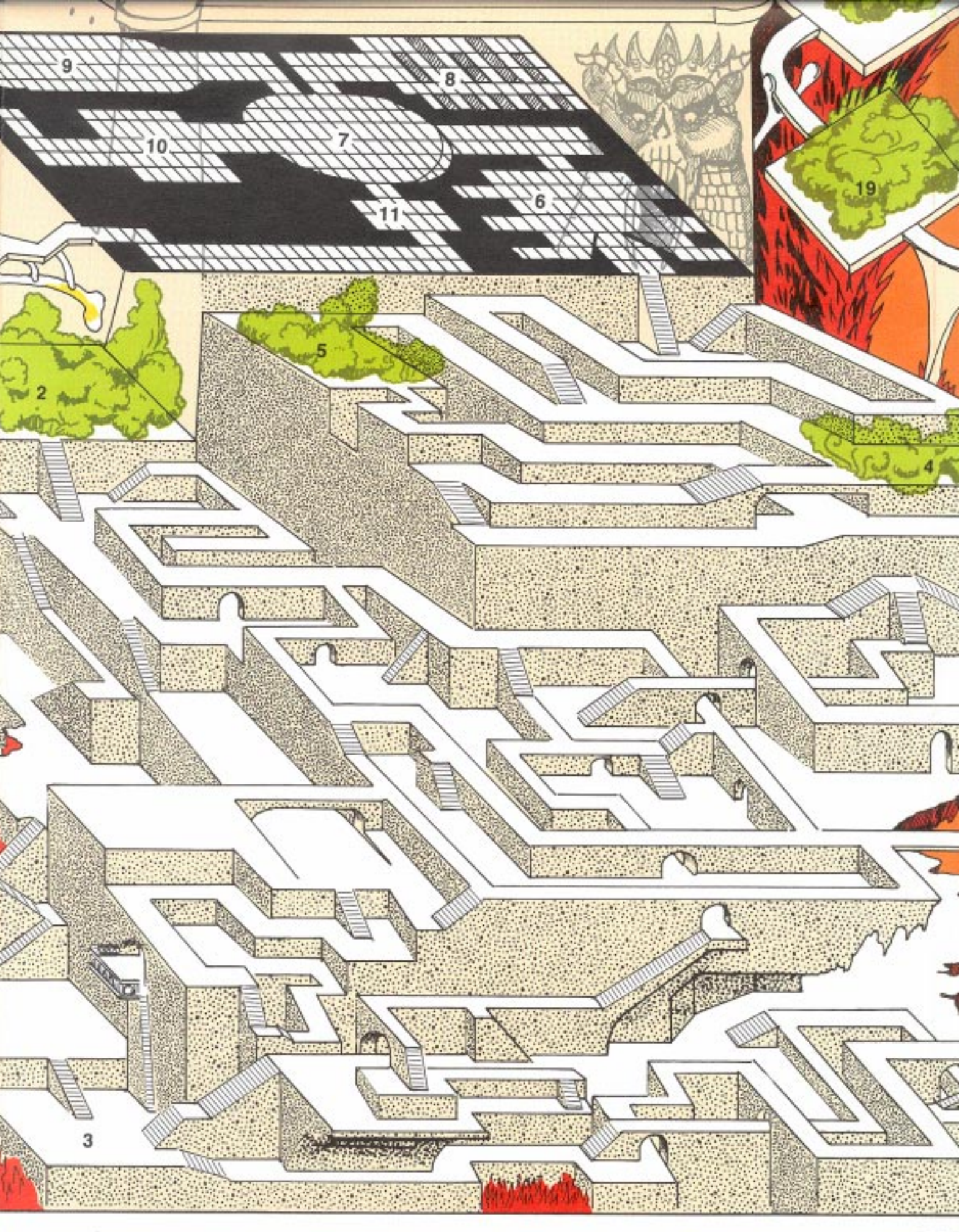
The Courtyard

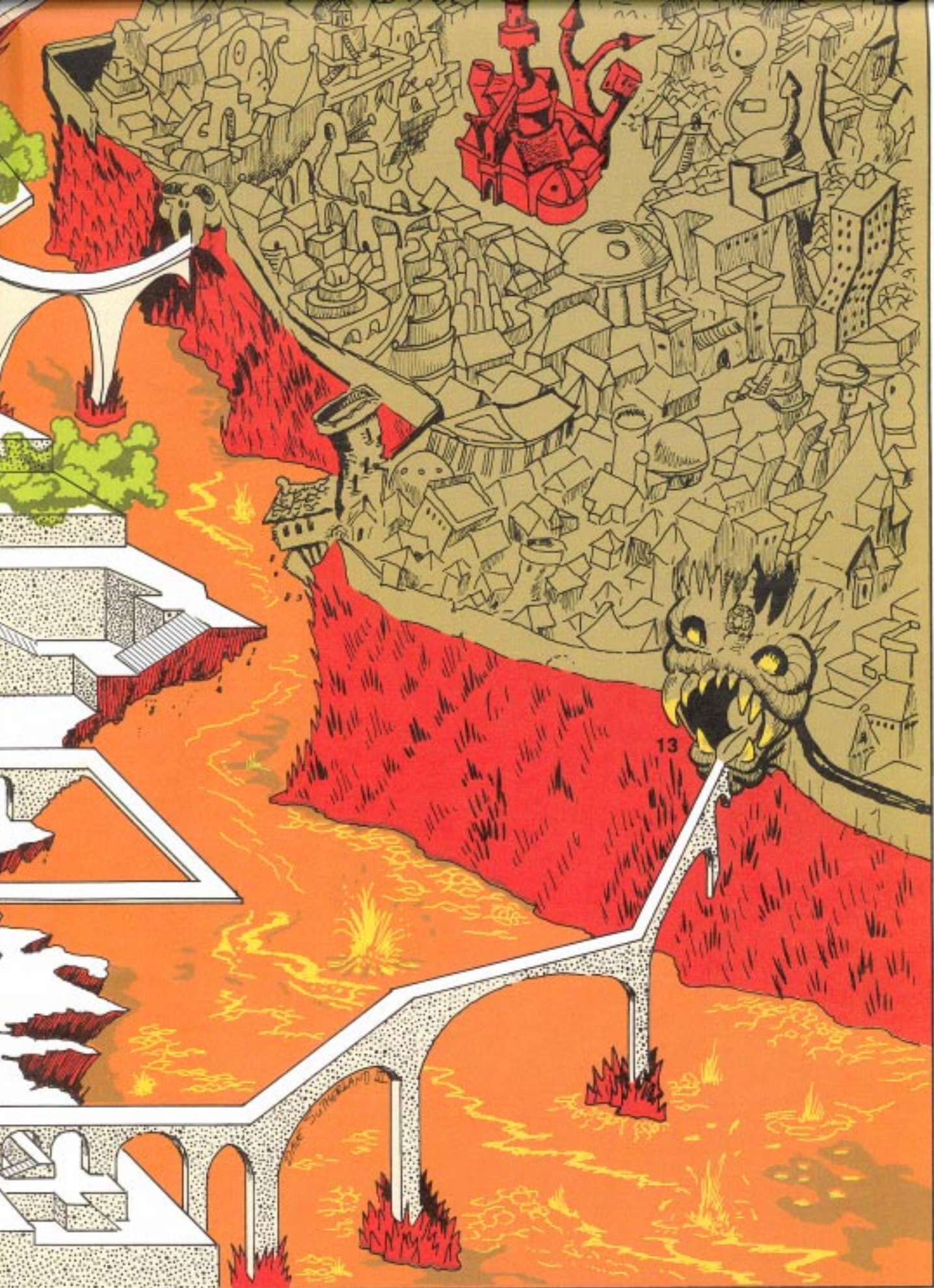
3
First Floor

1
Castle Wall

22
The Gate to
the Abyss







13

The Conclusion of the High-Level Bloodstone Pass Sagal

Advanced Dungeons & Dragons®



Official Game Adventure

The Throne of Bloodstone

by Douglas Niles and Michael Dobson

The battle between the mighty undead army of the Witch-King of Vaasa and the forces of Bloodstone has come to a standstill. As long as the source of the Witch-King's power is at work, his evil forces will never be defeated!

As the rulers of Bloodstone Pass, it is up to you to find and destroy the source of Vaasa's power. All you have to do is journey to the Abyss, confront the mightiest demon of all, steal the *Wand of Orcus*, and take it to the Seven Heavens to be destroyed.

The Throne of Bloodstone is the fourth and final installment in a series of modules specially designed for high-level characters. While it is not necessary to have played any of the three previous modules, *The Throne of Bloodstone* is the climax of an epic struggle for a kingdom against the forces of darkest evil. Recommended for characters of levels 18-100, *The Throne of Bloodstone* is the highest-level adventure ever published by TSR!

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