

Electrum Anniversary Edition

The Oerth Journal

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On the Cover

This issue Jerry Minor depicts Wee Jas, the goddess of death and magic. Jerry is a good friend of mine that goes way back. You can find his artwork at <http://jerantino.tripod.com>

Editor's Chronicle

Well it's been a few months and here we are with another issue of the Oerth Journal. Ironically, this year marks the 10th Anniversary of the Oerth Journal so we're adding a little more content to this "*Special Electrum Edition*."

There have been a few changes in this issue so that a few of our authors and contributors can gather up their forces to do battle once again. Starting in the next issue we continue with Steve Greer's "Trail of Evil" series. Also, a bit of an apology this issue too a bit of extra time to get out to clear up a lot of erroneous errors, many of which have now been handled. =)

I'd like to thank everyone who has contributed their time and effort to making the Oerth Journal what it is, and here's to another ten years of quality Greyhawk content for all.

Cheerz,

Rick "Duicarthan" Miller
Editor-in-Chief

Foreword

"Thirteen long years! That's how long its been since Greyhawk fandom organized itself online and started debating the setting they love. What a long wild ride it has been. □ From a small band of fans, irate at the cancellation of their favorite role-playing setting to people who routinely produce and share their own material online. Here we are, ten years after the first Oerth Journal. It's hard to believe two were produced, never mind eighteen issues! Greyhawk lives as long as its fans keep it alive.

Here's to 18 more Oerth Journals!"

Gary L. Holian

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Gazatteer of the Flanaess

Zelradton – City of Steel

By Creighton Broadhurst with Special Thanks to Paul Looby and Stuart Kerrigan.

Zelradton (Large City): Conventional; AL LE; 40,000 gp limit; Assets 25,800,000 gp; Population 12,900; Mixed (human [OSf] 79%, halfling 9%, elf 5% [sylvan 90%], dwarf 2%, gnome 2%, half-elf 1%, half-orc 1%, orc 1%).

Authority Figures: General Isaiken (LE male human Ftr13); Prince Reydrich of Naelax (NE [LE]) male human Wiz20) archmage and ruler; Tarannis (LE human male Wiz7/Rog6) inquisitor.

Important Figures: Cragden Keephand (LN male dwarf Ftr9), Cronquand (N male human Exp6), Ellreth (LN male human Exp7), Erkann the Antiquary (NE male human Rog13), Gregern (N male human Clr9 - Velnius), Karasin Serrand (NG female human Clr7 - Atroa), Korshareth (CN male half-elf Rog4/Clr7 - Kurell), Patriarch General Llarenden Valender (LE male human Ftr3/Clr12 - Hextor), Peniaden (CN male human Clr5 - Telchur), Quaanser (CG female human Clr5 - Sotillion), Relexann (LE male human Ftr6), Reorxara (CN female human Clr10 - Kurell), Matriarch Schleretha (LN female human Clr17 - Zilchus), Toranna (CG female human Clr6 - Wenta).

Overview

The former capital of South Province and now the administrative hub of the Principality of Ahlissa, the redoubt-

city of Zelradton has long stood in the forefront of Oeridian affairs. Located in the very shadow of the Iron Hills, Zelradton was established to symbolise Aerdi supremacy over the fallen Flan kingdom of Ehlissa and its Suloise allies.

Zelradton was originally little more than the fortress of Ker Redestran and the attendant settlement huddled below its walls. With the founding of cathedrals dedicated to the Blinding Light and the Great Guildmaster across the valley from the redoubt, wealth and trade began to flow into the fledgling city. Near-continual raiding into both the Iron Hills and Hollow Highlands necessitated the construction of truly awe-inspiring defences about the city precincts, which further cemented Zelradton's status as a vital fortress-city well situated to guard the Aerdy heartlands.

Politics, intrigue and subtle machinations swirl thickly through the palaces, temples, marketplaces and alehouses of this great city. The dwarves of Irongate, led by the wily but honourable Cragden Keephand, have established a small presence within the city. Irongate's relations with Ahlissa are strained but a trickle of trade yet flows between the two cities. Many in the city of Zelradton however would like to see this cease. Zelradton also stands at the epicentre of a widening schism among The Great Guildmaster's followers. Matriarch

Schleretha, an outspoken critic of Xavener's ascension to imperial power, still leads Zelradton's Zilchans, and forces opposed to the overking's rule have slowly coalesced about her.

A History of Zelradton

-194 CY: The site of modern-day Zelradton is wrested from the Zelrads, a Suel family allied with the ancient Flan kingdom of Ehliissa. Their rudimentary settlement was destroyed in an orgy of fire and destruction and the survivors assimilated into the fledgling Oeridian state.

Zelradton's foundations are now sunk through the remains of this forgotten town.

-189 CY: The Hill of Nothilann is fortified by Aerdi engineers. The resultant keep fortress is named Malendrenn and is enlarged several times in subsequent centuries.

-124 CY: Cathedrals dedicated to the Blinding Light and the Great Guildmaster are founded.

-94 CY: Much of the city is destroyed by fire. Subsequent rebuilding takes decades.

103 CY: Aerdi expeditionary forces leave Zelradton to found Irongate in peace and cooperation with the dwarves of the Headlands. Skirmishes with Suel hillmen end in eventual Aerdi victory in -46 CY.

124 CY: The city of Irongate is completed and declared a vassal of South Province. Zelradton falls under the rule of the Crandens.

437 – 446 CY: The Turmoil Between Crowns. The Naelax supplant the Rax. Ivid I becomes Overking. Much of South Province, including Irongate, refuses to swear fealty. Damalinor of Naelax is named Herzog of South Province.

446 CY: The Lord Mayor of Irongate comes to Zelradton to air his grievances. His death by torture is the spark that ignites civil war in South Province and the deaths of thousands.

447 CY: Aerdi garrisons and officials are expelled from much of the south. Irongate, Onnwal and Idee form the Iron League after the Imperial defeat at the Battle of a Thousand Banners.

Mid 550's CY: The House of Naelax-Selor rises to power in South Province. The three subsequent herzogs all share the name "Chelor."

578 CY: A great host, 11,000 strong, gathers at Zelradton. Heavy Sunndian resistance to Imperial advances forces Herzog Chelor to winter in the city. Additional forces raise Chelor's strength to 20,000. Petty crime and drunkenness soar throughout the winter months.

579 CY: Vacillating nobles deny Chelor further forces. A series of fierce battles are fought on the northern plains of Idee.

The flower of Ideean chivalry is slain, fatally weakening the nation, although their sacrifice gives the nation a few more years of independence. Several minor Ideean nobles hire vast contingents of mercenaries to guarantee victory and safeguard the northern border.

583 CY: Herzog Chelor condemned to the Endless Death by Overking Ivid V; Reydrich of Naelax pronounced ruler of South Province.

586 CY: Tyrum (NE male human Clr7 – Pyremius/Rog5/Ass7), a Scarlet Brotherhood assassin, slays Graf Reydrich. A coalition of generals and nobles directs Idee's final conquest. Many of the Scarlet Brotherhood leaders flee the carnage, abandoning their jungle warriors in the face of overwhelming military might. Many slaves are taken and interned in work camps.

587 CY: The United Kingdom of Ahlissa is founded, with its capital at Kalstrand. Zelradton declared capital of the Principality of Ahlissa. Reydrich returns from the dead and is named Prince of Ahlissa and Overking Xavener's chief sorcerous advisor.

Rulership and Law

The archmage Reydrich's rule of Zelradton is absolute. A scion of House Naelax, he wields almost unimaginable arcane power and is known to be allied with several powerful fiends. Politically astute, he freely practises nepotism to strengthen his hold over Zelradton, filling

all positions of import with a mixture of cousins and nephews. Few contemplate treason– the consequences being too horrific to imagine.

With Reydrich's return to power, Overking Xavener "helpfully" installed several of his most loyal followers in advisory positions to the archmage. Reydrich is no fool; he knows these advisors are little more than the Overking's spies and that Xavener has undoubtedly hidden more agents within his city.

Several veteran armies protect Zelradton. Little used in the Greyhawk Wars these formations sundered the Scarlet Brotherhood's hold over Idee, carrying out a swift but bloody conquest. Composed mostly of skilled veterans, they now assist the city watch in maintaining law and order in and around the city. Large patrols range throughout the principality, warding the Dirawein road linking Zelradton to Hexpools and the rest of the United Kingdom. Led by General Isaiken these disciplined troops are of proven mettle.

Many followers of the Scarlet Sign are active in Zelradton, but since the drawn-out demise in 589 of the much hated and feared Karnquiza (NE human male Rog15) their influence has been greatly reduced. In the main they attempt to undermine the tenuous "trust" existing between Irongate and Ahlissa and to gain intelligence of Ahlissa's southern and western intentions.

Karnquiza's death also disrupted the activities of Midnight Darkness – a group dedicated to the violent slaying of non-evil powerful or influential

personages. Preceptor Erkann continues to follow his final orders, plotting the death of Cragden Keepehand and as many of the ambassador's aides as possible. Erkann's continuing campaign, waged through a complicated network of hirelings, informers and decoys, has thus far met with only limited success. It is almost a certainty that agents of the Jade Mask are also abroad in Zelradton, working to check the Scarlet Brotherhood's burgeoning influence within the principality.

Thievery is low-key in Zelradton; no formal guild exists, the last being shattered decades ago by the Chelors. Several small groups ply their trade in the seedier portions of the city but are little more than muggers and cutpurses. Several independent and skilled thieves ply their trade amongst the rooftops and sewers of the city. Chief amongst these is Michalann Renereth (CN human male Rog14), a well-traveled and daring rogue.

Religion

The faiths of Hextor and Zilchus dominate Zelradton. The Guildmaster's House is a particularly ornate structure - a true expression of Aerdi Baroque architecture. In stark contrast stands the Abbey of the Champion as it glowers over the Square of the Coin, exuding an almost palpable menace from its high, battlemented walls. The four-winged temple of the Velaeri (the Oeridian agricultural gods), set amid gently landscaped fragrant gardens, bounds the square to the south. Set directly opposite these gardens is the ornate but dilapidated House of the Knave dedicated to Kurell.

No central place of worship of Olidammara exists within the city walls but several alehouses boast small shrines dedicated to the Laughing Rogue. Suel blood still courses through the veins of many Zelradians; Kord is yet worshipped here, as is Wee Jas and even a small, furtive cult of Syrul flourishes among the degenerate patricians of the High City.

Trade and Commerce

The Royal Guild of Merchants of Aerdy tightly controls the merchants and market places of Zelradton. Although almost indivisible from the faith of Zilchus, they do not wield as much power here as in other cities. While allowing them pre-eminent control in matters of trade, Reydrich has stymied their attempts to gain influence over the city council, watch and armed forces.

Zelradton is surrounded by a network of villages and market towns from which trade goods flow into the city. Cloth is a staple product of the craftsmen here, as are corn and wheat. Once a week cattle are driven to the city for market and slaughter.

Little mineral wealth now flows into the city. In the past precious metals were traded with, or stolen from, the dwarves of the surrounding hills. Many adventuring bands were formed in the city with the intent of emptying the many delves of the Hollow Highlands of their wealth. Now, with all such easily found wealth already carried off such expeditions are extremely rare.

Punitive raids against the Iron League states were also often launched

from here, Zelradton being the natural place for war booty to be collected, but with Xavener's ascension all such raids have ceased.

Districts and Locales

Zelradton is composed of two basic parts – the High and Low Cities. The High City rests atop the Nothilann to the south of the city proper. Below lies the Low City, itself split into several distinct wards - Cornburg, Kalinburg and the Hallows.

City laws prevent cattle being driven deep into the city and so marketplaces are arrayed about each of Zelradton's gates. Foodstuffs, live animals and other bulky items are the norm here, as are a smattering of foreign merchants who possess not the coin to establish permanent premises. Shaded arcades surround these marketplaces and it is here that respite from the elements can be had and the most influential and wealthy traders can be found. Trade within the city is regulated by the Royal Guild of Merchants of Aerdy, members of which apportion market pitches and are always on hand to settle any disputes arising from matters of commerce. Tradesmen of many diverse professions can be found throughout the city and are often clustered with others of their own ilk. Some small districts and many streets are named after the principle trade found therein.

Most tradesmen dwell above their place of business, but in between the various business districts can be found swaths of residential buildings. Mainly inhabited by the common folk of the city,

these areas differ radically in type and wealth.

Zelradton's bounds have long been delineated by her walls; by ancient decree building without the city walls for up to a distance of one mile is strictly prohibited. Thus, within the city space is at a premium. Many buildings are up to four stories high and almost all possess at least a rudimentary cellar.

Zelradton is a city of wells; no major rivers flow near or through the city. Thus many cellars, streets and squares feature wells of varying sizes and depths.

Zelradton's undercity is extensive. The Nothilann is honeycombed with chambers, galleries and passages hewn from the living rock. Originally fashioned to store the vast resources needed by Ker Redestran's defenders in event of a siege they are now used for more pedestrian purposes. Some have been converted to hold malcontents while sections under the Twisted Tower have been sealed off on Reydrich's orders. Beneath the city proper, a sewer network of truly Machiavellian proportions funnels away the waste and detritus of Zelradton's inhabitants. In many places these sewers intersect with cellars and other more hidden locations. Rumours place forgotten hideouts of Zelradton's defunct thieves' guild deep within the sewers and tell of slaves forced to battle to the death for the pleasure of their depraved masters in gladiatorial pits deep below the city. Prisoners of war from both the conquest of Idee and previous conflicts also participate (unwillingly) in this slaughter; their existence is an embarrassment for the Overking and most

have lost all hope of regaining their freedom.

The High City

The Nothilann: The Nothilann is the most ancient part of Zelradton. The Aerdi citadel of Ker Redestran crowning this rugged outcrop was built upon even older Suel defences constructed in the decades following the Twin Cataclysms. Heavily fortified, Ker Redestran has never fallen to assault, although infighting amongst Aerdy's celestial houses has often brought the tides of war crashing against its buttressed walls. The thick, but antiquated, walls protect a variety of important buildings including barracks, the Halls of Justice and attendant dungeons. In addition nobles, rich merchants and a small number of skilled craftsmen make their home here above the noise and stench of the Low City.

The roads here are wide and abut Ker Redestran's outer wall. But one major thoroughfare and a handful of minor streets penetrate to the inner defences of the Malendrenn. The eastern end of the Nothilann is particularly well fortified. Set against an almost sheer drop of one hundred feet or more the machicolated walls and tower of the Malendrenn provide a last redoubt should the rest of the city fall. Ker Redestran is replete with extensive barracks thronged with warriors, many of who are veterans of the Ideean campaigns of 586 CY.

The Malendrenn

Built atop the ruins of a Suel fort, this section of the fortifications are the

oldest still existent in the city. Originally a citadel on the front line of the Aerdi's empire, the Malendrenn has undergone several extensive refurbishments. Where once stood a harsh fortress now stands a plush and opulent, but extremely well fortified, palace. Used extensively by the Chelor's during their stewardship of South Province, Reydrich's lackeys now use it as a seat from which to govern the Principality of Ahlissa. A single great gate pierces the walls that protect the inner precincts of the palace. Protected by no less than three portcullises and four ironbound doors, forcing an entry to this place is thought to be all but impossible.

The walls are also of curious design. When the Crandens held Zelradton, they added a bank of earth thirty feet thick and as high as the walls themselves behind the twenty-foot thick outer walls. Buried beneath these colossal earthen banks were all manner of buildings and chambers. Above, they were extensively modelled to feature an incredible array of fauna and flora gathered from throughout the Great Kingdom. With the rise of the Naelax these impressive gardens fell into disrepair but their considerable contribution to the Malendrenn's defences remain.

The Twisted Tower: Perhaps the most sinister building within Ker Redestran's precincts, this slender spire, raised with infernal assistance, rises one-hundred and forty-feet into the air. So named for the adornments that suddenly appeared about the towers the night Reydrich reappeared after his supposed death, this structure has a fell aspect. Individuals getting close to its walls report the carvings seeming to

writhe like serpents about the tower when viewed from the corner of one's eye. Undoubtedly these carvings would make scaling the walls easy. No one however is thought to be that brave (or stupid).

At least eight stories make up the interior. Workshops, laboratories, libraries and a handful of guest chambers can all be found within, as well as Reydrich's personal chambers and treasury. Chambers in the highest portions of the tower are used to summon and control outsiders so that the archmage may exact terrible bargains with powerful fiends.

Few are thought to dwell with the archmage. Chief amongst this favoured cabal however, is Tarrak (NE female human Wiz13), a one-time apprentice and concubine. Although she resides in the grim fortress of Ker Bazainn to the south, she is known to maintain chambers here

The Halls of Justice: Justice has been meted out from within the many-pillared halls of this grand building for centuries. Established to dispense Schandor's enlightened Code of Law, under the Naelax the purpose of this place was warped and corrupted. Extensive dungeons and holding cells beneath the main building have held thousands of unfortunates who have awaited their fate in squalid and overcrowded conditions. Persistent rumours place a secret arena below these dungeons in which criminals, prisoners of war and slaves are forced to fight to the death on days holy to the Champion of Evil's followers.

This building also contains a small, almost forgotten shrine dedicated to the Blinding Light. Originally, an ornate

cathedral dedicated to Pholtus also stood on the Square of the Coin but this was suborned, rededicated and extensively re-fortified by Hextor's followers soon after the Turmoil Between Crowns.

The Halls of Justice have long hosted the apartments and offices of Zelradton's inquisitor and his staff. The current incumbent, Tarannis, is a nephew of Prince Reydrich himself. Fiercely loyal to his uncle, Tarannis maintains a network of two score spies, outcasts and enforcers through which he learns much of import.

The Hallows

The Square of the Coin: The centrepiece of the Hallows, all Zelradton's temples of import cluster about the Square of the Coin. A wide space oft thronged with peddlers, minor merchants, traders and supplicants; statues of local heroes, military leaders and other dignitaries dominate the square.

Abbey of the Champion: A vast structure, the Abbey of the Champion glowers over the square like a menacing giant. Incredibly ornate, the structure is dominated by a great bell tower. Gargoyles and other foul carvings festoon almost every inch of this sinister edifice. Patriarch General Llarenden Valender leads worshippers here. An imposing giant of a man, he is famed for his tactical expertise, merciless demeanour and sentient heavy flail reputed to possess both the shocking burst and unholy abilities. Reydrich has promoted many of Llarenden's chief acolytes to positions of authority within his armies to act as a check to burgeoning

Zilchan influence. Llarenden is known to covet General Isaiken's position as leader of Zelradton's armed forces.

The Guildmaster's House: An equal to the Abbey of the Champion in size and scale, the Guildmaster's House is one of Zelradton's most opulent buildings. Glittering, magically strengthened stained glass windows of breathtaking size and complexity dominate the main ceremonial areas, admitting a riot of coloured light to illuminate the interior. Inside, wealth abounds; the walls are sheathed in gold leaf, the floors are uniformly of highly polished marble and expensive art pieces, many from the early days of Aerdy, adorn the walls.

Within her master's house, Matriarch Schleretha is the undisputed mistress. A fiery, outspoken and intelligent woman, she has come to believe that Overking Xavener's use of the church as little more than an instrument of policy is a tactic designed to totally suborn the Zilchan faith to his will. She views Grand Patriarch Larissen (LN male human Clr19 – Zilchus) as little more than Xavener's creature. Many in the church agree and view Schleretha as the only hope for a truly independent church.

The Royal Guild of Merchants of Aerdy maintains extensive offices within one of the temple's many wings, from which it regulates the trade that courses through Zelradton's precincts. In the main its officials remain loyal to Grand Patriarch Larissen.

Sanctuary of the Seasons: This sprawling, double-storied building is laid out in a

great cross. At its centre rises the Tower of the Elder Breeze. Cunningly designed to collect and funnel the winds gusting over the city into the temple's processions, the tower is sheathed in dazzlingly white marble. Set amid carefully tended gardens, this complex is warded by a low wall pierced by four ornate ceremonial prayer gates, each set at one of the cardinal compass points and named for its divine patron.

The clergy here are composed of a mixture of clerics dedicated to all five of the Oeridian agricultural gods. As befits his status as the Velaeri's leader, clerics of Velnius officiate at all major ceremonies but each of the four subsidiary sects leads worship during their deity's season.

A church council named the Congress of the Wind, drawn from both influential worshippers and priests alike, directs church affairs. In the main politicking within this body is low-key and good humoured, with any serious disputes ultimately being settled by the white-haired Gregarn. Important ecclesiastical members of this council include the venerable Gregern, the good-natured Karasin Serrand, complacent Quaanser, outgoing Toranna and taciturn Peniaden. The wealthy farmers Cronquand and the parsimonious Ellreth wield the most influence among the congress' lay members.

House of the Knave: The condition of this dilapidated building accurately reflects the fortunes of the Bitter Hand's following in Zelradton. Dedicated to Kurell, the number of petitioners has fallen after a disastrous decades-long tenure by Dareken

“The Cold Hearted”, which saw the church aggressively persecuted by the Chelors. Dareken’s death in 592, having been run under the wheels of a poorly driven farmer’s cart, threw the remaining worshippers into confusion. Some believe his death to be no accident and that forces within the Congress of the Wind had finally wreaked their revenge for Kurell’s betrayal of Atroa. Other, cooler heads mark these theories as pure fantasy and so the order wars with itself.

While services are still held in the grand Hall of Vengeance, the two factions have little other peaceful contact with each other. Each has claimed sections of this building as their own and while ancient church law forbids all but ceremonial combat within the House’s precincts, the church’s internal squabbles have spilled out into the streets on occasion.

The wily Korshareth, a stubborn and hateful man, leads the more militant of the factions. Opposed by the more moderate and by no means less resolute Reorxara, Korshareth is slowly gaining the upper hand in the struggle.

Kalinburg

Constructed as a military town, Zelradton’s main thoroughfares are broad and straight so as to expedite troop movements. Away from the main arteries, streets and alleys degenerate into a hopelessly confused maze. Huddled in the shadow of the Nothilann, in the poorer districts that dominate Kalinburg, the houses are packed so close together and the streets are so narrow that sunlight only

penetrates here during the noon hour. In some parts the squalor is truly profound.

Persistent rumours have a small cult dedicated to Ahmon-Ibor flourishing in the fetid back streets surrounding the House of Sighs. In any event, it is in the Kalinburg that crime is most prevalent. Several odious followers of Kurell have their homes here, adding their petty vindictiveness to the misery of the other residents.

House of Sighs: A truly depressing place, this austere, high-walled donjon-like edifice is one of the most-avoided locales in the whole city. Criminals, the insane and the destitute are all eventually brought here to eek out the remainder of their days in an unending drudgery of hard, thankless tasks. Discipline is brutal and many of the guards are sadistic in the extreme. It is possible to win free from the House of Sighs but only on the payment of hefty bribes. Korshareth of Kurell blackmails several of the guards here. Even the warden, Relexann falls under his influence, allowing Korshareth to comb through the inmates in search of likely recruits to bolster his struggle against his nemesis.



Key to the Map

The Hallows

- 1.) The Square of the Coin
- 2.) Abbey of the Champion
- 3.) Guildmasters' House
- 4.) Sanctuary of the Seasons
- 5.) House of the Knave

Kalinburg

- 6.) House of Sighs

Cornburg

- 7.) The Iron Hall

Malendrenn

- 8.) Halls of Justice
- 9.) The Twisted Tower

The Iron Hall:

Home to Cragden Keephand, this refurbished and fortified inn compound has acted as Irongate's mission for almost a decade. Perhaps one of the most spied on buildings in the city, its defences, both

The Cornburg

The mercantile district of Zelradton, the Cornburg hosts both rich and poor districts. The Cornburg's streets are wider than Kalinburg's— in part because of the need for carts to traverse the streets and in part due to local laws drawn up to limit the progress of major fires. Alleyways are few here and violent crime is relatively low.

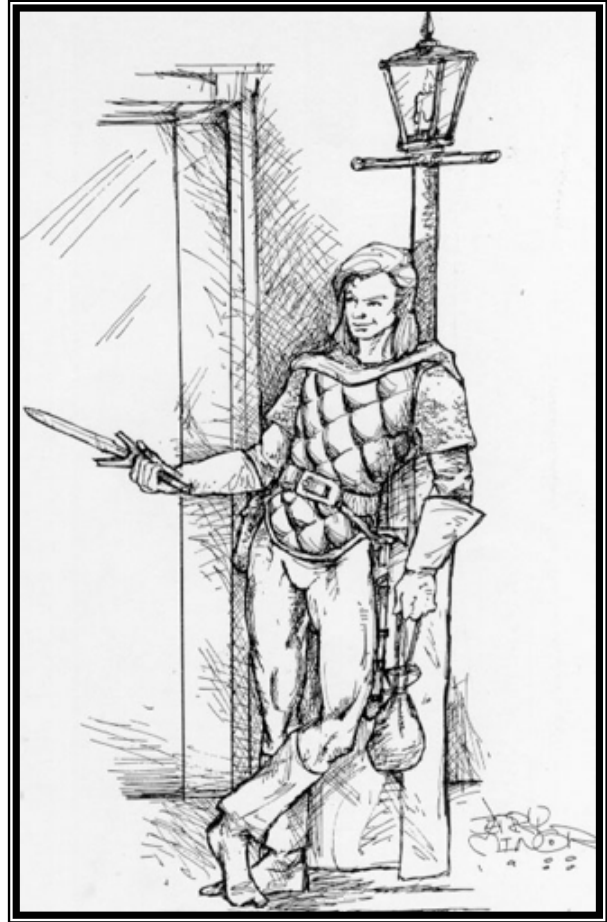
magical and mundane, are impressive. Keephand's staff includes several puissant wizards, skilled warriors and followers of the Hidden Empress. Cragden communicates with Irongate via a crystal ball hidden in a heavily warded chamber in the bowels of the converted inn's cellars. The inn has been the scene of several assassination attempts and one full-scale assault by a veritable army of hired thugs. Keephand remains pragmatic and

the low-key assistance of the Royal Guild of Merchants of Aerdy allows him to maintain Irongate's presence in Zelradton. The identity of his foe however is a continuing mystery, the answer to which Keephand would pay much gold to gain.

Intrigues and Whispers

Several forces move against Irongate's mission here, although Keephand gains some succour from the Royal Guild of Merchants of Aerdy who wish to see trade flourish between Irongate and Ahlissa. Reydrich rules supreme but those opposed to Overking Xavener's rule cluster about Matriarch Schleretha. Reorxara has become aware of Korshareth's hold over several guards in the House of Sighs and seeks to end his influence there.

Negotiations held in secret during the closing months of 593 between Ahlissan representatives and the ambassadors of Onnwal and Sunndi are thought to have centered on the legal status of the Principality of Naerie (formerly the County of Idee and member of the Iron League). The subsequent movement of some of the Overking's finest regiments to the principality has been cause for much discussion.



Denizens of the Flanaess

The Chronals

By Victor Caminha

To His Omnipotence, the Glory of the West, the Sultan of Zeif, Murad, in the 591st common year of the Lady of Our Fate, from your most humble advisor, Alhamazad the Wise.

By the time this report reaches your royal chamber, I freely assume Your Highness already knows the basest facts about the demise of that most feared Uli assassin, Mahmoud Sayf, who mercilessly preyed upon the nobility of all the western states. Although he came close to being arrested several times in the last two years since his first notorious murder, Mahmoud always escaped the wrath of the local authorities, including well-staged ambushes led by many heroes and even my inadequate skills; a self-admonishment for my own past failures. Somehow, without using any spell, device or magical artifact, this rotted villain always disappeared, even while he was gagged and chained by his captors!

However, as vicious as Mahmoud was, I must assure your Highness I was not responsible for his sudden and disturbing death, even though I was present at the scene, weaving incantations (which, I must add, were of an incapacitating nature instead of a destructive one). No, I leave the application of death sentences to the royal court and the executioner's block, even if Mahmoud's capture was a task bestowed to me by Zeif itself. I know it is unseemly to contradict a dozen honored testimonies, but I must humbly point to their lack of perceptiveness when recounting the crucial details relevant to the death of the Uli, and so I beg for your patience and your enlightened attention in regards to this report. As Your Highness shall see, the

assassin's fate merely hinted at the barest thread of the Lady of Our Fate, specifically concerning an enigmatic race deeply interested in mortal affairs.

When I cornered the fleeing Mahmoud in the Alley of Knives, under the watchful elation of the local residents watching the scene, the killer just sneered at me, as he did at our former meeting before escaping. I promptly began to cast a holding spell but feared my frail body hadn't reacted fast enough to contain the assassin. Then, to everyone's surprise (including myself), Mahmoud suddenly gasped and then underwent a most disturbing change: where but a moment before had stood his vigorous shape, there now stood a withered husk showing enough age to compare itself to the Malevolent Old Man of the North. I think he died instantly of shock even before hitting the ground. But again, this wasn't my doing. And while everyone else was stunned at the scene, or repulsed by "my" magic, I quickly tried to spot the culprit (for I did not believe Mahmoud had any suicidal desires), and then, for just an instant, I saw it. On the honor of Al'Akbar, Great Sultan, I swear this is the truth of what I saw! Near the body of Mahmoud approached a gray rat, but it was no ordinary pest. Thanks to a previously-cast incantation of sight I had used to better track Mahmoud, and that was a most fortuitous providence, I could see the creature that hid behind that rodent shell. Instead of a rat there stood the visage of a humanoid unlike anything I have ever seen before. A naked, hairless and sexless man-sized biped creature it was, with green-gray skin, pure white eyes

and oversized pointed teeth that were revealed in a mocking smile. It stood there looking at the body of Mahmoud for only a second, disappearing before I could do anything.

Obviously, such an eventful circumstance (I consider the eastern term "twist of fate" lacking in reverence toward Iustus) drove me to research this mysterious assailant. It was this quest for the truth that is responsible for delaying my report for seven months since Mahmoud's death. However, my research has yielded promising conclusions.

This kind of creature hails from another plane of existence, Your Highness, though I could not ascertain its home. And although my sources related a distinct number of shapes adopted by these beings, I am reasonably sure the description I gave in the last paragraph depicts their true form. Unfortunately, I must claim ignorance when determining the limits of their shapeshifting abilities. Even more fascinating are their powers related to the flow of time, enabling them to stop the hourglass of fate, lock a victim out of its flux and quite possibly exert other wondrous abilities yet still to be unveiled. Fortunately, these creatures were described as showing great reluctance in the using of their powers, preferring to flee instead of fighting. "The reason for this unwillingness was hinted at in a text that suggested "a personal sacrifice is demanded when the chronal warps time and space". This source was the only one to give a proper name to this race instead of some colorful reference.". As this source was the only one to give a proper name to this race instead of some colorful reference. A cloud dragon referred to it as the "Virlymhourach", or "Thief of Fate", while an obscure Tusmit parable described the same creature, naming it "Khaled Ratib", or "The Eternal Arranger". I preferred thus to

adopt the term "chronal" when referring to these beings.

As important as its powers is the behavior of a chronal. Although they are outsiders, they apparently maintain little or no contact with other extraplanar entities. Even the djinn of the Citadel of Ice and Steel have claimed little knowledge of this race. In contrast, the majority of the evidence points to a benefit the chronal derive from their contact with the denizens of Oerth, which invariably ends in a proposal, or rather, a bargain with such denizens. My theory for the chronals' preference for this contact, Great Sultan, rests in a commodity which only mortals can offer, and which chronals always ask as their payment for their favors: measurable lifespan. Even dragons may offer such valuable currency, while an unchanging immortal efreet cannot part with it, thus becoming an unattractive target. In exchange for the shortening of one's life, it seems that a chronal offers the mortal bargainer access to their temporal abilities. If that is so, it certainly explains how Mahmoud Sayf became unstoppable and imperceptible. By leaving the time-stream, he could break into any vault, get past any guarded chamber and escape any prison while no one could discern how! However, some sources have related a bitter and pernicious end for those who have struck such a bargain with the chronal: each time a mortal employed such time-altering ability, his lifespan diminished. I must stress the difference between this effect and unnatural aging. While the latter causes an advance of one's current age, a shortened lifespan means the mortal will die earlier of natural causes. According to past descriptions, if the shortened lifespan reached the current age of the bargainer he would quickly shrivel and die, as he would do if time ran its normal course; as it so happened to Mahmoud.

This is a most insidious and poisoned pact, My Lord, for no one can exactly discern his own final age. Furthermore, how tempting can this bargain be when a mortal won't feel any physical consequences until it's too late? And how many souls would be willing to give away their years of old age, years of creaking bones and sore backs, in exchange for just one use of such miraculous abilities? Mahmoud, with all of the storied tales of his many blasphemous crimes and harrowing escapes, lasted two years, Your Highness. Two years were enough for the youthful Uli assassin to die as a venerable old man.

*Your ever-faithful advisor,
Alhamazad the Wise*



Chronal

Medium Outsider (Chaotic, Extraplanar, Shapechanger)

Hit Dice: 10d8 +20 (65 Hp)

Initiative: +6

Speed: 30 ft (6 squares)

Armor Class: 20 (+2 dexterity + 8 natural), touch 12, flat-footed 18

Base attack/Grapple: +10/+10

Attack: Bite +12 melee (dmg: 1d6) or touch +12 melee

Space/Reach: 5 ft/ 5 ft

Special Attacks: Spell-like-abilities, temporal resonance

Special Qualities: Alternate form, chronal bargain, damage reduction 10/lawful, darkvision 60 ft, immunities, sight of the long future

Saves: Fort +9, Ref +11, Will +10

Abilities: Str 11, Dex 15, Con 14, Int 17, Wis 16, Cha 20

Skills: Appraise +16, bluff +18, concentration +15, diplomacy +18, disguise +21 (+31), knowledge arcana +16, knowledge (the planes) +16, listen +16, sense motive +16, spellcraft +16, spot +16

Feats: Improved initiative, lightning reflexes, skill focus (disguise), weapon finesse

Environment: Any

Organization: Solitary

Challenge Rating: 11

Treasure: Standard

Alignment: Always chaotic neutral

Advancement: -

Contrary to what Alhamazad has proposed, the chronals aren't a race per se. They do not breed, as all chronals were formerly members of other races who

wielded temporal magic with disastrous consequences. When a high-level time-related spell goes awry, it may induce a profound change in a mortal's essence, transforming them into a choral. The Powers of Greyhawk also are not blind to those who dabble in chronomancy, and when someone tries too hard to undo fate there is a chance a concerned god will interfere; sometimes by causing a spell failure, or by cursing the chronomancer's essence with a severe influx of temporal energy that changes them into a choral. On becoming a choral, the victim loses all previous class and racial traits and their memories consist of only tiny fragments of the past, which eventually disappear altogether as the effort to maintain its own existence is all that matters to the choral. In Oerth's history, there are some who may have suffered this fate:

- Yuan-ti who aspired to alter history and avoid their race's decadence, hoping to tip the balance in favor of the scalyfolk.
- Desperate olve from the City of Summer Stars who tried to warn their former selves about the onslaught of the Ur-Flan.
- Suel and Baklunish spellcasters from both empires, who decided to risk time traveling to avoid the horrible cataclysms (possible Powers involved: Istus, Lendor, Wee Jas).
- Ambitious archmages from House Garasteth of the Great Kingdom who formed a time-meddling cabal to study its effects on history

(possible Powers involved: Cyndor).

Regardless of their former race, all such victims are now outsiders native to the Demiplane of Time; being immune to its planar traits while being extremely skilled in the art of temporal manipulation. Occasional visitors to the Prime Plane, chorals usually adopt the form of a mortal race (i.e. anyone who is not of the elemental, fey, outsider, undead or construct types), preferably the same race as the mortal they want to make the choral bargain with (see below). Regardless of the shape assumed, if there is a common trait present in any disguised choral it is its frequent, mocking smile. Some credit this odd behavior to the choral's chaotic nature, but the fact of the matter is that a choral reacts this way because it is able to see the future decrepit appearance of an individual, and cannot avoid considering how pathetic the eventual fate of all mortals truly is. Anyone who employs a *true seeing* spell or convinces a choral to assume its true form will see it for what it is: A 160 lb, six-foot tall humanoid being, without body hair or genitalia, with glossy greenish-gray skin, pure white eyes (without pupil or iris), a thin nose and prominent pointed teeth poorly concealed behind a disturbing smile.

Further setting chorals apart from all other beings is its inverted life cycle. When a choral is "born", it has an equivalent age of two full centuries. From this moment onwards, its lifespan begins to regress (without affecting any physical or mental abilities) and the creature is

fully aware that its link with the multiverse begins to diminish. After two hundred years, the chronal vanishes from reality as if it never existed. Unable to remember its former race and origin, chronals have only one view of their own “birth”: they were conceived by time itself. Acutely aware of their fleeting existence and knowing that each use of their supernatural abilities brings them closer to oblivion, chronals look for any mortal creature that is agreeable enough to cede to the chronal the latter years of their life as part of the chronal pact. When this happens, the mortal’s lost lifespan is added to the age of the chronal, advancing it towards the maximum age of 200 years, in effect extending the chronal’s own lifespan.

Chronals have no native environment, being nomads and drifters by nature. They try to live their existence to its fullest, always seeking to prolong the time they have by securing a chronal bargain with some mortal creature. When not on the Prime Plane, they prefer more chaotic, carefree planar regions, always being prepared to flee in case of trouble. It is important to note that the ageless trait of the Astral Plane does not protect chronals, as the passage of time there still occurs and only halts a chronal’s metabolism (according to DMG 3.5). While chronals always appear first in the Demiplane of Time when they are “born”, that plane doesn’t hold any interest to them. Similarly, they avoid creatures like time elementals, chronotyrins (Fiend Folio 3E) and phanes (Epic Level Handbook).

Chronals speak abyssal, common, celestial, infernal and draconic.

Combat: A chronal has no interest in combat, preferring to flee by using its *plane shift* ability, unless it is important to remain in its current location. If a chronal chooses to remain in a threatening environment, it will prefer to use its morphic and other abilities to escape harm and will only engage in combat with dangerous opponents as a last resort.

Alternate Form (Su): At will, and as a standard action, a chronal may assume any form of large size or smaller, excluding forms with the construct, elemental, fey, outsider or undead type. This ability functions as per the *polymorph* spell (caster level 15th), except that the chronal does not regain hit points when changing form.

Immunities: A chronal is immune to aging effects, disease, poison, polymorph, *sleep*, and any time-related or suspended animation effects (*imprisonment*, *sepia’s snake sigil*, *sequester*, *temporal stasis*, etc). If a *timestop* spell is cast within 30 feet of a chronal it is “carried along” with the caster and may act as normal during the extra rounds granted by the spell.

Spell-like abilities: At will - *discern location* (only to find mortal bargainers); 3/day – *greater plane shift*. Caster level 12th. The save DC is charisma-based.

Temporal Resonance: Any of the following effects can be used at will, but each time

one of them is used a chonal must deduct one year of its lifespan of 200 years, disappearing forever (barring divine intervention) when it reaches zero. The “older” a chonal is, the more willing it will be to employ its temporal resonance abilities.

The caster level for this ability and all its effects is 12th.

- *Timestop (Sp)*: As the spell of the same name.
- *Temporal Stasis (Sp)*: As the spell of the same name, except that its duration is 1 year. A chonal can maintain this effect on a victim annually, deducting one year of its lifespan each time. Fortitude Save DC 23 negates. If the victim is already affected by the *temporal stasis* ability they receive no saving throw.
- *Temporal Rejuvenation (Su)*: This effect heals the chonal’s body as if one real year had passed, restoring all of its hit points and removing ability damage, exhaustion, fatigue, and any non-permanent condition or supernatural effect that was previously affecting the chonal, as if their duration had expired. *Temporal rejuvenation* removes all negative levels, but enforces the chonal to make fortitude saves accordingly to avoid level drain, which does not disappear as they are a permanent condition. Regarding spells, *temporal rejuvenation* only removes a spell’s effects, but not the spell per se (see the next effect below), which still functions and may force the chonal to save again if it is once again exposed to a continuing spell effect. For example, the panic of the *fear* spell may be removed, but if the chonal enters the area of effect again then it will have to save again.
- *Spell abbreviation (Su)*: Any spell or spell-like ability that is cast or is functioning within 30 feet of a chonal, and that the chonal is aware of, may be targeted by this effect. If the chonal succeeds on a

caster’s check (d20 +12), DC 11 + caster level of the spell or spell-like ability, it may deduct one year of the duration of the spell or spell-like ability (which generally ends the spell unless it has a duration of permanent or instantaneous, in which case the spell is unaffected). Note that *spell abbreviation* can affect spells unable to be dispelled by *dispel magic* and similar effects.

Sight Of The Long Future (Su): A chonal sees all visible mortals as if they were of the “venerable” age category (“great wyrm” category for dragons). Creatures with indefinite life spans like most constructs, elementals, fey, outsiders and undead are seen as they are.

Skills: When changing form, a chonal gains a +10 circumstance bonus on disguise checks.

Chonal Bargain: When a chonal travels to the Prime Plane, it assumes a mortal form and creates a likely background story for itself, trying to instill trust in a chosen mortal in order to convince them to give up their future years to the chonal. A chonal offers access to its temporal resonance ability in exchange for the mortal’s lifespan, but it may revoke the pact at will. A chonal cannot have more than three chonal bargains active at any time.

The chonal bargain grants the mortal bargainer full access to all of the effects listed under the Temporal Resonance ability, but each time they are used the mortal’s life expectancy is lowered and the lost years stipulated in the

pact are siphoned back to the choral (up to its maximum of 200; any additional years are “lost”). An interesting point is that the siphoned years of the most long-lived of mortals (elves, dragons, etc) provide the least sustenance for a choral, as it is the actual number of uses of the temporal resonance ability that satiates it, and such long-lived races have much more time to decide on making use of the choral’s abilities.

To estimate how the choral bargain will affect a mortal’s lifespan, the DM must calculate in secret the maximum age the bargainer would normally reach, using the aging table in the *Players’ Handbook*. The bargainer’s total age is divided by 50, rounding up (time doesn’t give concessions to anyone). The final result is the minimum amount of the bargainer’s mortal years needed to add one year to a choral’s current lifespan. This total number of years will be the non-negotiable amount of life years demanded from the bargainer by the choral, applied each time the bargainer employs a Temporal Resonance effect. Thus, each time this payment is made, an equal number of life years are deducted from the maximum age of the bargainer. The mortal will have a shorter total life span instead of aging suddenly; this effect cannot be countered by a *wish* or *miracle* spell, or by longevity potions or any other similar effect whatsoever. When the bargainer’s current age reaches her lessened total life span, she instantly dies and nothing short of divine intervention will be able to restore her to life. At the moment of the bargainer’s death, the pact is dissolved and

the mortal dies with the appearance she would have if her original maximum age had been reached. Until death occurs, the bargainer remains unaware of how close her “natural” death is. It is important to note that the reduced lifespan of the bargainer does not change the number of years sacrificed per use of the ability. This value is fixed according to the original maximum age of the bargainer at the point when the bargain is first made.

Example 1) A 20 year-old half-orc accepts the choral bargain. The DM secretly rolls her maximum age using the table in the *Player’s Handbook* and notes she would normally live 70 years. This value is then divided by 50 and rounded up; the final result being 2. So, her maximum age will diminish by two each time the half-orc uses *timestop*, *temporal stasis*, *temporal rejuvenation*, or *spell abbreviation*. If after 5 years she has used any of these effects a total of ten times, her lifespan will be now 50. The half-orc’s current age would be 25, for it has changed only due to the natural passage of actual time and not through the use of these effects.

Example 2) A 120 year-old elf accepts the choral bargain. The DM rolls her maximum age and notes that it would be 720 years. Dividing by 50 and rounding up, the result is 15. Deciding to continually employ her great power, the elf dies in the same year (with an appearance of 720 years old at the moment of her death) after 40 uses of temporal resonance; with each such usage deducting 15 years from her lifespan.

Note: It is strongly recommended that the DM consider very carefully the consequences of offering a choral bargain to a player character. The character will have on average a total of 40 uses of temporal resonance before dying permanently, and so it is suggested that each encounter that the character uses any temporal resonance effects, the character should be treated as having a +5 level adjustment when calculating experience points.

Gazetteer of the Flanaess

The Vale of the Mage

By Rick Miller

Special Thanks to Sam Weiss and Mike Bridges



The Vale of the Mage (Small Kingdom): Magical Despotism; AL N; Unknown gp limit; Assets Unknown; Population: 25,000 (Human 37% [Baklunish, Flan, Oeridian, Suloise], Elf 25%, Gnome 18%, Halfling 10%, Half-elf 5%, Other 5%);

Authority Figures: His Most Magical Authority, the Exalted Mage of the Valley and Laird of the Domain, Jaran "The Black One" Krimeah (N, human (shade) Wiz20+)

Important Figures: Nyeru Darkspring (NE; Human male Necromancer 12+), Ellerxeris, Commandant of the Valley Elves; (N; Valley Elf male Wizard 3/ Fighter 6/ Arcane Archer 4), Jakar Whitewing (N; Human male Drd18+), Endoble Mistikmore (NG; Rock gnome male Illusionist 11), Simius of the Tree People (CG; Human male Bbn4), Summerstorm Nightwind (CN; Valley Elf male Clr9 of Beory), Tyslin San, First Protector (CN; Drow elf female Wiz15+), Gremas Windspring (N; Rock Gnome male Bard9).

Major Towns: Ebonwood (small city; 5,200+)

Government and Law: The Black One rules with supremacy over the Vale. His two officers are the First Protector and Nyeru. Each community is permitted a

pseudo-autonomy to appoint their own leaders. Each leader reports to The Black One, the First Protector, or Nyeru Darkspring.

Resources: copper, gems, iron, lumber, platinum, silver, rare herbs and spell components.

Languages: Common, Dwarven, Elven, Gnome.

Allies: Unknown (assumed None)

Enemies: Geoff (exiles), Bissel, Gran March, Knights of the Watch, Knights of Dispatch, Keoland (minor), Sterich (minor), most elves.

Overview

The Vale of the Mage has long been an area of mystery and mystique in the Flanaess. Many sages purport that the valley itself sits upon arcane ley-lines that boost the inhabitants' magical abilities or that permit or inhibit the use of certain spells within the valleys confines. Whatever the reason, the Vale of the Mage remains a secluded area within the Flanaess that not even the mightiest of archmages has yet to delve.

For the past several decades the valley has been ruled by The Black One, also known as Jaran Krimeah. The Vale of the Mage is not considered a threat to the surrounding nations for its inhabitants

tend to keep to themselves. However, neighbors of the dim vale remain frightened of the power that is rumored to rest in the hands of its inhabitants and their master, The Black One.

The Vale of the Mage is well defended, with patrols going through many of the areas hourly. The Barrier Peaks also provide a formidable barrier to those trying to traverse them. While the entrance to the valley near the Dim Forest is heavily guarded, with full-time patrols and hourly back-up patrols. Few are brave enough to enter the dread vale; various expeditions have met with threats or have never returned from their endeavors. It is a land; rumored to be teeming with treasures guarded by monstrous inhabitants

A History of the Vale

Prehistory: Roughly 4000-5000 years ago, a force of unknown origins created a minor planar bleed within the Dim forest. Whether this was a conflict among the lizardfolk, the gith or even the illithids cannot be discerned. What is known is that the Dim Forest became an area permeated by the essence of the Plane of Shadow and many of its denizens.

After several lost expeditions, the local grey elven overseers realized that this was more than their meager resources could handle. These overseers sought to contain the evil therein and so tasked the Valley Elves with this responsibility; thereby creating the first Dusk Keepers of the Dim Forest.

After several hundred years of faithful service, the Valley Elven King went to Celene himself to formally demand the court to stop playing faerie mysteries games and do something about this menace. The grey elves of the Fey Court of Celene, disregarded the Valley Elven King, and ordered him back to his “station”. In anger, her Fey Majesty ordered the Valley Elves to cease protecting the Dim Forest and moved on to more pressing matters within her court. Infuriated by this complete lack of regard for a threat bordering their kingdom, the Valley Elf King refused the order and declared war on his elven kin. After several decades of conflict the Valley Elven army was forced to concede outside the Dim Forest, and by the order of Her Fey Majesty was exiled from her Kingdom for starting a war against all elvenkind. Should they attempt to return to the elven lands it would be under pain of death. ⁽¹⁾

Note: It is not known whether the Valley Elves were involved in the conflict between Lolth and Corellon Larethian many ages past. Some attribute the fall of the Valley Elves to this event, or to the fact that they did not take sides in the conflict. Ultimately the choice rests with the DM, whether or not they use the Seldarine in their campaign.

-422 CY: The Twin Cataclysms occur, Slerotin leads the Twelve Houses out to the Sheldomar

-421 CY: While many of their cousins occupied the Sheldomar Valley to the south, various refugees from the Suel ⁽²⁾ lands fled into the Vale.

-420 CY: The Valley Elf King refuses Celene's edicts and seals the borders of the Vale to the queen's emissaries ⁽³⁾.

-413 CY: After many years of rebuilding the Suel and the Valley Elves create a defensible area in which they may live in harmony.

-404 CY: Garwinkle Gwailyar, leader of the gnome clans and Derghant Sledgebreaker of the Barrier Peaks dwarves agree to openly trade with their neighbors the Valley Elves in exchange for rare reagents and lumber.

-400 CY: The large Uli tribe of Paynims first raid into the villages and flocks of the Yorodhi (Oeridian).

-350 CY through -200 CY: The Uli Occupation: Gradually many of the nomadic Uli learned the advantage of settlements, creating a few towns such as Ulakand by Yorodhi example. This stabilization was not to last long however, as the treacherous and impatient Uli instead conquered and occupied all Yorodhi settlements, driving those not enslaved into the hills and perilous Barrier Peaks between the Javan Vale and the Ulakand.

-357 CY: The Empire of Vecna falls as Kas the Bloody-Handed betrays and slays the Whispered One, the Lord of the Spider Throne in an epic battle. Following this conflict the buffer between the Suel lands and the Oeridian lands was opened,

ending the century's long stalemate between both expanding races.

-354 CY: The Oeridian tribes begin to move into the southern valleys. ⁽⁴⁾

-307 CY: The Valley Elf King Dhaeron Eledhwen dies.

-304 CY: Prince Kelendres Eledhwen is appointed as Lord of the Valley Elves.

-198 CY through -187 CY: Javan-Uli Wars: The Uli invade the Vale. ⁽⁵⁾

75 CY: Valley Elf King Kelendres Eledhwen dies of unknown causes.

79 CY: Prince Amhrad Eledhwen is appointed as Lord of the Valley Elves.

199 CY: Using arcane magics never seen before in the Vale, a man simply known as the demiurge arrived in the Vale. Within the year, he had helped the Valley Elves fortify the Vales defenses both magically and strategically.

301 CY: Crossing the Barrier Peaks a large force of Baklunish hailing from the Paynims crossed the perilous Barrier Peaks and infiltrates the agrarian valley. ⁽⁶⁾

349 CY: In a brief skirmish the denizens of the Javan Vale repel the advance of the Knights of the Watch marching under the Keoish banner, into their lands. ⁽⁷⁾

352 CY: The demiurge disappears. ⁽⁸⁾

399 CY: Giants of the Barrier Peaks led by an unknown power invade and destroy much of the southern of the Javan Valley. It is during this battle that the Valley Elf King Amhrad Eledhwen is slain.

403 CY: Prince Ghildor Eledhwen is crowned the new Lord of the Valley Elves.

450 CY: Rumors persist of the Valley Elves aiding Geoff during the Keoland/ Geoff conflict. Acting as scouts and providing intelligence reports on Keoish tactics and supply lines to the grand duke's forces. ⁽⁹⁾

452 CY: An exiled Aerdi wizard named Jaran Krimeah, also called The Black One, first sets foot into the Vale. ⁽¹⁰⁾

453 CY: Laird of the Vale: The denizens of the Vale hail, Jaran Krimeah as the new lord Mage of the Valley.

460 CY: The Druids of Jakar: An exile of the druidic, Hierophants of the Cabal, Jakar and his retinue of loyal druids sought entry into the Vale this year. After a long many tests and divinations to prove their fealty, the druids were permitted to enter the Vale. It is in this time period that Jakar and Jaran work together to create the Collars of the Jakar, which aided in the druids in their attempts to shapechange. In doing so, Jaran and Jakar come to a mutual understanding of the nature of the Vale, and how it should be protected. Jakar vows to protect it from within, while Jaran agrees to protect it from outside intruders.

468 CY: The Witch Queen of the Howling North, Iggwilv's power grows in the Yatils. She conquers Perrenland.

478 CY: A Rival Disposition: Iggwilv seeks a council with The Black One and is permitted into the valley by The Black One himself. The two rivals meet and exchange pleasantries before going over notes on planar travel, mysteries and exchanging various spells. In the same year, the impatient Witch Queen, Iggwilv is overthrown and imprisoned.

481 CY: Repulsion of Iuz: Emissaries of the Land of Iuz are sent to the Vale and are quickly repelled, suffering horrendous losses and angering the demigod. Sent back with the emissaries was a small black-iron chest filled with the possessions of the fallen servants of Iuz and a note, telling the fell lord of the north never to set foot in the Vale again!

483 - 500 CY: Unlocking the Shadow Plane: The Black One goes into deep study into discover the secrets of the Shadow Plane.

501 CY: With Darkness a New Hope: After wandering many years, Tysiln and her raven familiar came upon The Vale of the Mage, and were captured by a Valley Elven patrol. Believing her a spy, she was taken before The Black One. Who was at the time, still building defenses for the valley. The Black One recognized her skills and tested her loyalties over the next few months. Despite their best efforts the two became confidants of the other and in

time, lovers. To this day, the two work together and remain romantically entangled.

502 CY: The Valley Elven King Abdicates:

Marks the year the Valley Elf King and his followers leave the Vale and head to Gorna. The Valley Elven King, Ghildor Eledhwen and his retinue depart for Gorna, leaving behind an oaken chest to the grand duke. The group was observed traveling southward into the Crystalmists, never to be seen again.

498-510 CY: The Hateful Wars: The second major conflict spawned by the collapse of Tavish the Great's empire began when the consort of the Queen of Celene was slain by a band of humanoids from the lands beneath the Lortmils. For centuries the demi-humans had kept them under control at great cost. For perhaps a century the stalwart armies of Keoland had aided them in that task. When they were expelled, first by Celene, later by the Uleks, several gaps in the defenses appeared. This was most extreme in Celene, where the Fey Court of Yolande was more interested in planning festivals than guard schedules. In many ways it was her own culpability in his death that drove Yolande in her rage. The result was the Hateful Wars.

During this time, many of refugees and humanoids tried their escape their fates by entering the Dim Forest or following the Javan river tried to make their way into the safety of the valley. Met with threats, assaults, and worse these invaders were either sent on their way or

killed. During this time, an impudent minor lord of the Gran March was slain while attempting to gain audience with Valley Elven king.

521 CY: Creation of the Elemental Glade:

With the aid of the druid Jakar and the First Protector, The Black One opens gates to the elemental planes in one of the Glades of Ehlonna spread throughout the valley; hoping to revitalize the dying glade and perhaps boost the springs healing qualities. After several days of rigorous attempts the trio declared the area a complete failure and gave up entirely on the project. The end result is the creation of a minor planar bleed of the four base elements of air, earth, fire and water.

550 CY: Consolidation of the Javan: The Black One makes his full claim on the valley and renames the Javan Vale to the Exalted Valley of the Mage. The surrounding nations remembering the despotism of Iggwilv and Vecna, begin to fear this new power in their midst. The Knights of the Watch in the Gran March officially deny any dealings with the "upstart" nation.

554 CY: Formation of the Ring of Five:

The Black One is asked to join the Ring of Five, and accepts.

555 CY: Among the Chosen -

Sindar Sirion a protégé of The Black One is chosen to be The Black One's representative in Castle Greyhawk.

557 CY: Dwarven Contract: The mountain dwarves start construction of Dwarfreach Citadel, after finalizing an alliance pact against the giants with The Black One.

560 CY: The Shadow Sage: Through the guise of curious missives and agents, The Black One sets into play key events that conceal his identity and that of the Vale itself. In these short missives the Shadow Sage, left random clues to various treasures and threats within the Flanaess.

563 CY: Concordance of the Vale: A meeting is held within The Vale of the Mage amongst all the races tribal leaders. At this juncture, all tribal leaders agree to work together and provide free trade to one another within the valley to sustain its evergrowing needs. Each tribal leader pledges a small amount of what they make each year to be traded and what is apportioned as gifts to The Black One and First Protector for their leadership and protection.

568 CY: Drawmij's Disdain: Whether through an actual meeting or word of mouth, the archmage Drawmij officially remarks his disdain for the Valley Elves and their current despotic leader, The Black One, to the court of Celene and to the archmage Mordenkainen of the Obsidian Citadel. ⁽¹¹⁾

571 CY: Invitation of the Scarlet Sign: As the rest of the leaders in the Flanaess received invitations from the Scarlet robed monks from the south, so to did The Vale of the Mage. In this year, the Scarlet-robed

monks appeared at the entrance to The Vale of the Mage promising entreaties of trade and free passage through the valley. These very same envoys of the Scarlet Brotherhood were first warned by the Valley Elves to leave. After several warnings, a conflict arose near the Galeb Duhr Pass where the monks attempting to sneak in were surprised by the elementals living there and with the native Valley Elves defeated the invaders. To this date, no other envoys of the Scarlet Brotherhood have attempted entry into the Valley. This may be due to the fact that the elves threw the bodies of the brotherhood members into the perilous Dim Forest to be consumed there by the shadowy forms dwelling within.

575 CY: Dwarven Stronghold Built: After years of steadfast construction and magical fortifications, The Black One moves into the stronghold while preparing to build another secret stronghold deeper in the valley.

576 CY: Secrets of the Maure: Possessed with his continual search for knowledge and a means to prolong his life, The Black One sends the Shadow Sages through out Flanaess and the planes. In doing so, the Shadow Sage and his henchmen leave mysterious missives and clues to hidden caches of magic, treasures, and weath abounding throughout the Flanaess.

One such missive, written in the hand of The Black One entails secrets long buried by the Cult of Long Shadow under Maure Castle. The scroll details a small area within the castles lower dungeons

that contains a wealth of magic protected and concealed in magics native to the Plane of Shadow.

581 CY: A New Leader: Nyeru: Following the defeat of the Necromancers, Nyeru was captured by the Valley Elves and interrogated by the First Protector. Until at last, it was discerned he was earnest in his motives.

After a year of rigorous tests, divinations, and testing the resolve and motives of Nyeru; The First Protector grants him clemency and allows him to live in the valley, so long as his intentions remain pure. Months later, Nyeru was granted command over the Shadow Sages and tasked with guarding the valley in The Black Ones or First Protectors stead, as they often secluded themselves in research or ventured to the Shadow Plane.

582- 584 CY: The Greyhawk Wars: When the surrounding nations of Geoff and Sterich were plundered by the marauding giants of the Crystalmists and Barrier Peaks, these nations appealed to the Mage of the Valley for aid. To their surprise, they were given allowed an audience with The Black One, or so they believed. When the ambassadors were introduced however, they were met by the recently appointed deputy of the valley, an exiled necromancer, Nyeru of Bissel.

Negotiations continued until the nefarious giants made their way into the valley. As the ambassadors fled, the Mage's forces moved south to head off the invasion. Unbeknownst to the ambassadors, Nyeru had quickly sent a

missive to The Black One for his aid, and within a few days the giants had fled back into the Barrier Peaks where the fighting continued several weeks until the dwarves of the Barrier Peaks had pushed the giants deep into the jagged peaks.

586 CY: The Final Enemy: Under the guise of a Valley Elf, Timetrios Spartakos a one-time apprentice of The Black One attempts to enter the vale to slay his former master. The demented Timetrios, who died nearly a century before had sustained his life force through of an ancient Ur-Flan artifact known as the *Undulation of Souls*, an artifact that allows its wearer to preserve and possess the bodies of recently deceased corpses. Using this device he attempted to get close to The Black One and fulfill his mission to slay his former master, but failed when he was slain by The Black One himself in a magical duel that claimed the life force of Timetrios, forever.

587 CY: Shadows and Dust: The Black One opens a permanent gate to the Shadow Plane to begin his research into becoming a shade.

590 CY: Smoke and Mirrors: The Black One departs for his new stronghold on the Shadow Plane leaving the protection of the valley to Nyeru Darkspring. During which time, he became a shade. ⁽¹²⁾

591 CY: A Race to Arms: Several expeditions sent by the archmages Rary and Mordenkainen attempt to enter The Vale of the Mage to discern the magical

nature and stability of the nation. Both groups meet with heavy casualties but discover the Vale is now under the apparent rule of the exiled Bisselite necromancer, Nyeru Darkspring.

(1) Weakened by this war the forces of Celene (roughly 2500 – 3000 years ago) were no match for the emerging menace of Vecna, the human migrations or the interbreeding and the rest of the high elves in the Silverwood environs; a point which the grey elves of Celene will never forgive the Valley Elves for.

(2) Many lost or displeased members from House Linth, Lizhal, Xuel-Crix, Zelrad and Zolax. Many of which, disagreed with the Rhola and Neheli. Though, none of these held any station. In the following months, the groups quickly began to grow ill and many starved in the quick freezes that covered the valley at infrequent times in Sunsebb.

Though paranoid at first, the King of the Valley Elves allowed these refugees to live on the land, so long as they did not destroy the balance of nature here as they had in the former lands. They taught the Suel refugees various trades such as herbalism, hunting, woodcarving, and carpentry skills that until this point many of the Suel lacked. The small pocket of Suel refugees living in conjunction with the Valley Elves did not sit well in the grey elven courts of Celene.

(3) Due to growing concerns regarding the potentially destructive humans entering the lands of the Vale and the Sheldomar, the court of Celene sends emissaries to the Valley Elf King to persuade him to expel the humans from his lands. The Valley Elf King challenges Her Fey Majesty in open court on her authority to lead. An act, that within the elven lands is punishable by exile. By also, attacking and repelling the official couriers of her court he was in fact committing an act of war against her kingdom. As none of these couriers were purposely killed the Elven Kingdom would not commit to war against

the Valley Elves. It would, however earn them the hatred of all other elves whom she held under her influence. In their eyes, the Valley Elves had betrayed the balancing order of nature by taking in and aiding the Suel refugees.

(4) As the Empire of Vecna crumbled in upon itself, several Oeridian tribes saw their opportunity and moved south, the first of these being the Keogh. While many of their brethren continued south a few tribes entered the vale to avoid the mysterious Dim Forest. These groups encountered several Valley Elves who saw the Oeridian horsemen as strange adversaries. Small skirmishes existed between the two groups for several months until the wise, Valley Elven king Dhaeron Eledhwen met with the Oeridians to conduct a pact of peace. Both groups agreed to end the fighting so long as the Valley Elves did not raid Oeridian villages and the Oeridians would agree to stop their rampant migration through the Vale and settle down within its borders. This settled the Oeridians settled down in the untamed southern end of the valley.

(5) The fierce tribe of Uli, still pressing for complete subjugation of the Yorodhi, learns of a lush and wealthy valley on the other side of the Barrier Peaks. Their current Orakhan, a half-orog named Bhrevan the Twisted Limb had come to power over all the Uli families by mysterious means and with his new found influence, he started an incursion into the mountains to exploit this land. Along with the newly allied ogre and humanoid forces, the already battle-starved Uli press into the Javan Vale leading to a series of skirmishes and conflicts that would not abate for over a decade. After little success and great loss, the Uli could not maintain the raids or lost interest all together, preferring easier attacks on caravans from the north that sought to establish trade routes.

Rumors persist that the influence behind the Uli forces was none other than Tuerny the Merciless, who after leaving the lands of Ahlissa had wandered into the Baklunish West.

The fate of Bhrevan remains a mystery however, as he did not return to the Uli, nor was he reported slain. Many scholars assume that he

fled into the Barrier Peaks to escape the anger of Tuerny, who would have likely made a gruesome example of the half-orog.

This bears significance as the valley, itself is known to have a wealth of materials and spell components available to those who may plunder its depths. Many of which, could have been very important in the construction of the construction of *irons flasks of Tuerny the merciless*, or their lesser versions.

(6) While the Brazen Horde invades the vale, another division of their forces cut a swathe through Ket and all the way to Veluna. Meeting with minor guerilla resistance they managed to make it all the way to present day Ebonwood, where they met with the gathered forces of the valley led by the mysterious Demiurge. During the ensuing battle many of the Bakluni were slain alongside the vales defenders until the Demiurge finally cast a massive charm spell to bend the Bakluni invaders to his will. With their wills defeated and surrounded by expert elven archers, the Bakluni forces surrendered and were offered two choices. Leave the valley and never return or stay and serve the Demiurge until such a time that five generations of their family had served him or until they wanted to leave. Awe-struck by this incredible offer and the Demiurges powers the Bakluni agreed. In the years that followed the Bakluni forces settled throughout the northern part of the valley and founded several small thorps. In the town of Ebonwood, they founded the first human school of elemental magic and geometric studies. To this day, the school still exists and serves to teach aspiring arcane spellcasters the basics of wizardry.

(7) After crossing the Dim Forest and losing several hundred men to the shadowy fanged forest the Knights of the Watch with just a few hundred men at arms at the ready, no supply lines, and their heavy cavalry two-days behind traveling outside the forest arrived at the entrance to the Javan Vale. Their forces were ill-prepared for the hails of arrows and spells hurled forth from the borders of the Javan Vale. After two days of fighting, the Knights of the Watch unable to get their heavy

cavalry into the dense forested area were forced to move north to Ket. Losing a quarter of their ground forces to the vales defenses. Commander Savar was stated as saying, "A band of outcasts that trivial is not worth losing over half your men to!"

(8) For some unknown reason, the Valley Elven king goes to meet with the Demiurge of the Vale only to find that he has disappeared seemingly overnight. As the years pass the Valley Elves still awaited the return of the demiurge while the leadership of the valley defaulted over to the Valley Elven King Amhrad Eledhwen.

(9) Relations between the two persisted until 502 CY, despite the vehement remonstrations by the High Lord of Elvendom at Hocholve.

(10) After earning the trust of the Valley Elves who think he is the demiurge of ages past they accept him with open arms. The Tree People and Gnomes of the Vale though hesitant at first accept him. The Gnomes mostly due to the arcane arts he brings with him. While the humans, were more relieved after monsters that had taken a heavy toll on the human communities were defeated. Within a short time, Jaran magically restrained these beasts and put them to practical use.

In addition, he set about improving communication among the villages, defenses for within the vale, as well as its borders. At this time, he decreed that any and all intruders be repelled and spies of the Great Kingdom be killed on sight.

(11) For whatever his reasons, Drawmij, ally of the court of Celene and sage of chromatic magics, states his disdain for The Black One. Many assume this is due to the influence of Her Fey Majesty of Celene. While others, wonder if the mage himself was foiled by The Black One in an attempt to garner knowledge on the art of chromatic magics, which The Black One has been known to deal in.

What is known is that several expeditions into The Vale of the Mage around this year, resulted in heavy losses. While at the same time, one such group, did manage to leave the valley

with an artifact of immense power, henceforth deemed the timeglass of the mage. The current whereabouts of the artifact are unknown, but it is known that The Black One was quite angered by the intrusion into the valley and the loss of one of his own artifacts. (Forcing him to recreate, said artifact.)

⁽¹²⁾ The Black One and the First Protector go to the Shadow Plane to solidify their forces there. Meanwhile, Nyeru is left in charge of the valley. Currently, The Black One and the First Protector only visit the Shadow Plane on occasion to conduct unstable research projects that they would not otherwise consider within the valley.

Rulership and Law

The Black One is the supreme authority of The Vale of the Mage and is recognized by all of the Valley Elves, gnomes, and tree people living there, as well as by the mountain dwarves of the Barrier Peaks. The Black One demands the respect and obedience of all the vale's residents, but he does not demand direct tribute or lord over the inhabitants with a malign influence. Instead, The Black One allows a pseudo-autonomy, permitting each community to appoint their own leaders. Each leader reports to either The Black One, the First Protector, or Nyeru Darkspring. At which time each party extrapolates on their goals, requirements, discoveries and tribulations. These leaders in turn appoint outstanding members from their communities to the lead patrols within the vale and to set up any defenses. Due to this near-autonomy the residents of the valley have come to admire and respect The Black One and his subordinates. In fact, The Black One typically only intervenes at the request of

the leaders or when the valley is in danger from invading forces.

The Valley Elves, often complimented with gnomes or human denizens, often patrol the borders of the valley in force. The patrols often include one arcane spellcaster and several light infantry. On rare occasions a druid or a cleric may also be encountered, though this is typically only during times of high alert.

Depending on conditions and the size and strength of the party encountered, the elves may either attack directly, through the use of heavy cover, or turn back intruders with a single warning.

Occasionally, these patrols will cross the border to raid the surrounding lands near the Dim Forest. These bandit patrols often acts as spies, and may even contain a recluse member of the Shadow sages. These followers of The Black One that were captured either escape just as quickly as they were captured or simply waste away in their cells until they expire.

Geography

The Exalted Vale of the Mage or Valley of the Mage is almost completely surrounded by the looming Barrier Peaks. The only egress from the valley is a small 30 mile across opening on the southeastern side, a days' ride from the Dim Forest.

The Vale of The mage is surrounded by the neighboring countries of Bissel, the Gran March, and the Duchy of Geoff. The Vale covers roughly 17,500-square-miles, though it longest point is nearly 260 miles. While its' widest is a mere 90 miles.

The Vale of the Mage set within a flat plain, and the elevation of the vale at the entrance across from the Dim Forest is only slightly lower than the elevation at its northern or western boundaries where it intersects the Barrier Peaks. The primary soil type of the area is a heavy fertile clay that dominates the riverbank areas of the Javan River, while there are others further away from the riverbanks

Winding through the Vale is the Javan River, which begins in the Barrier Peaks and meanders through the valley exiting betwixt the Dim Forest. The river acts as a transportation source, provides food and fresh water for the denizens of the valley. The Javan River is also known for its breathtaking falls near where the Barrier Peaks and the valley meet.

There are many streams and canals within the valley, all of which begin or feed from the Javan River. In addition to this, there are half a dozen small lakes close to the base of the Peaks.

Climate

The Vale of the Mage falls into a temperate climate zone. Though, it rarely experiences the harsh extremes in temperature as its surrounding nations. The valley is quite well known for its permeating fogs and for its heavy amount of rainfall during the spring. During the summer the temperature barely reaches over 80 degrees. While the winter months temperatures barely drop below 40 degrees. While snow is infrequent it can occur during the month of Sunsebb on rare occasions.

The Vale is known to set upon a small fault line that occasionally creates small tremors that can be felt throughout the Barrier Peaks all the way to the edges of the Dim Forest. Though, these quakes are quite very rare.

Ecology of the Vale

The Vale of the Mage is a moderately-covered plain with various types of deciduous and coniferous trees. Many of them hardwoods, a few rare species of these trees can reach up to 100-foot-tall, their leaves creating a canopy over sections of the valley. These tall ebonwoods are the hardest, tallest, and most valued trees in the Vale. The wood from these trees is manufactured into furniture, art, and various other tools. The largest fruit-bearing trees are the idani trees, which have a thick, waxy trunk. The branches of the idani begin about 12-feet off the ground and rise in a spiral to the top of the tree. The leaves and fruit of the tree are both edible. The leaves are a thin, long and flat measuring at about 12-inches long. The fruit of the idani tree resembles an elongated pear. When the fruit almost ripe it is a dusty rose color, firm, and tart; when it has fully ripened it turns to a deep violet and is much more pulpy and sweet. The idani trees are not known to grow outside the valley, and Valley Elves and gnomes traveling outside the vale can command good prices or receive fine items and expensive food in trade for the unusual fruit.

Due to the heavy amount of rain the valley receives, much of the ground is

covered in damp carpets of moss from deep-Fall until early-Spring. At which time, thick lush grasses begin to grow on the plains. In heavily-wooded areas, thick vines cover many of the expanses making the terrain very difficult to traverse. Some of these vines have been cultivated to produce a squash-like vegetable favored by the gnomes. Because of the clay-soil, wild vegetation in many regions and the rocky soil near the base of the Barrier Peaks crops are difficult to cultivate. Still, there are places in the Valley Elven and gnomish villages that have tilled crops native to Gran March and Bissel. Once the land has been cleared, the rich soil makes it easy to grow domestic crops.

The variety of animal life is tremendous within the boundaries of the vale. There are many different kinds of apes, including a significant population of bears, bison, several kinds of reptiles, such as small lizards and snakes; while few of the reptiles grow large enough to be considered a threat.

In addition to the natural animals, the valley is rumored to be home to several magical beasts and aberrations. Though many of the creatures are not seen very deep within the valley, it appears that they have been placed at the borders to deter thrill-seekers, fur traders, and adventuring groups. While rumors persist of nearly every type of creature possible, confirmed sightings of the following monster have been made. They include cockatrices, korred, owlbears, psuedodragons, lycanthropes, ogres, trolls, and various giants near the Barrier Peaks borders. The valley also boasts a multitude

of spell-warped and transmuted insects, arachnids, and other natural animals.

One dragon is known to inhabit the land, a very-old male green named, Toxzagairen. Toxzagairen has struck up a bargain with The Black One in recent years. In exchange for him defending the vale and its denizens against any and all intruders (though any who enter his concealed waterfall cave are fair game), The Black One personally delivers him one special magical item or spell each full year to add to his hoard. Toxzagairen's mate and young died many years ago when the giants of the Barrier Peaks invaded. He no longer has any care to mate again or to entertain guests. Guarding his lair are two iron golems given to the dragon by The Black One. His hoard consists of various chests of worked gems, while he lies on a pile of loose coin and rough gems. Among his treasures is a *cube of frost resistance*, an *amulet of proof against detection and location* (worn), two pouches of *dust of disappearance*, a *staff of transmutation* (CL 19, Charges: 17), and several scrolls kept in a locked adamantine trunk. His lair is guarded by two iron golems given to the dragon by The Black One. In addition, the entryway to his lair is trapped with a permanent *mirage arcana* spell. While his sleeping cavern is lit with a *lantern of revealing* and warded with permanent *non-detection* and *false vision spells*.

It is also rumored that a large illithid enclave once existed near the Vale in the Barrier Peaks, though this rumor has not been confirmed.

Resources

The Vale of the Mage is rich in mineral deposits, especially along the base of the Barrier Peaks. The mountain dwarves mine deposits closer to the surface for iron, silver, and platinum along the mountain base, while the gnomes mine tunnel further for iron and silver deeper within the vale.

The dwarves retain much of their mineral wealth, only selling it to those they trust, some of it to merchants and metalsmiths in neighboring countries. The gnomes make high-quality jewelry, objects of art, weapons, and household gadgets and utensils from the metals, offering a small portion in tribute to The Black One.

The Vale is also well-known for rare herbs, spell components, its exquisite lumber, coal, copper, and small quantities of crystals.

Population and Census

While the exact numbers remain unknown, many sages estimate the population of The Vale of the Mage at 10,000. With roughly 37% (Human, mixed Suel/ Baklunish/ Oeridian/ and Flan cultures), 25% (Elf, valley), 18% (Gnome, rock), 10% (Halfling, mixed), 5% (Half-elf, valley), 5% (Other).

The mountain dwarves surrounding the Vale make up less than 10% of the population, and are not included in the valley's census. Though, many do live in three small communities along the base of the Barrier Peaks.

About 1,000 gnomes living in two communities or within the borders of the

Vale are included, while the smaller groups living in the Barrier Peaks are not.

The Valley Elves dwell in three primary communities and four small villages, with a few dozen living scattered near the valley's southeastern border.

The humans, also called the Tree People by visitors to the Vale reside in one primary village (where one third of their number resides) and live in small scattered settlements throughout the valley.

The major languages spoken in the valley are Common, Dwarven, Elven, Gnome, and a corrupt, simple form of common spoken by the tree people (mixing Oeridian of Flan with some minor slang words).

Races of the Vale

The Valley Elves

The strongest proponents of The Black One's leadership of the Vale are these outcast elves. Though often scoffed at or reviled by their Olven brothers, the Valley Elves have proven quite industrious under the scrutiny of The Black One.

The Valley Elves are the prime protection of the Vale of the Mage. Through the use of arcane magic, expert archers, and a trained militia these elves keep outsiders from entering the Vale. It is rumored that many of these elves have been trained to implement their martial prowess with arcane spellcasting. One of the spiritual leaders of the Valley Elves is **Summerstorm Nightwind; CN; Valley Elf male Clr9**, a reverer of the Oerth Mother, Beory who looks over the Vale and

correlates all activity with the resident druids of the area.

Dwarves of the Barrier Peaks

Various clans of hill and mountain dwarves have pledged their allegiance to The Black One, in exchange for protection and military might. The Dwarves of this area act as an early warning for those who seek the Vale of the Mage. At the same time, they mine precious metals traded throughout the area and gather intelligence on the surrounding countries. While not all dwarves agree with The Black One, they cannot fault his character or his methods. They were spared the shame of defeat by the giants that invaded the surrounding countries, so they honor their alliance.

Gnomes of the Vale

Many of the gnomish enclaves in this region have pronounced fealty to The Black One. Gnomes of this region mine and tools gems specific to various divination and illusory spells that conceal the identity the caster to outsiders. These rare refracting gems often no use in common market, yet invaluable to arcane spellcasters. Gnomes of the Vale are disposed to illusion magics and arcane trickery. The individuals often either protect the Vale with illusions or leave with the intent of gathering information and sewing confusion into the minds of those who seek the Shadow Sage. Often, when notes of inflammatory import are left penned by the Shadow Sage, it is one of these gnomes that leave it; while at the

same time, leaving no trace of themselves. They are led by the wily, **Endoble Mistikmore; NG; Rock gnome male Wiz11 (Illusionist)** who is reputed to be a noble leader and clever prankster.

Tree People of the Vale

The Tree People of the Vale are a mixed variety of races, creeds, and religions.

While many nations surrounding the Vale do not take in ex-criminals, outcasts or various hated races. The Vale of the Mage does, though rarely and on a case by case basis. Anyone seeking refuge in the Vale must submit to intense and rigorous divinatory magic and a thorough interrogation. During this time, they are given various tasks and ordered to aid in the protection of their new home. After a year long trial to prove their fealty they are allowed to join the community.

Though typically, many of these individuals, still holding hatred for those who rejected them, often head out into the world again on intelligence missions.

The Tree People are named for their unique homes that are built into the wide branched trees of the Vale. A practice founded by the native Valley Elves.

Over the years the Tree People have become skilled herbalists, carpenters, and have even mastered the craft of making various poisons.

A small school dedicated to arcane crafts has been opened recently in Ebonwood the school has various instructors for all the races represented in

the Vale. Occasionally, Nyeru or Tysiln come to teach classes to the inspiring young wizards.

Within Ebonwood there are also shrines to Ehlonna, Boccob, Wee Jas, Obad-Hai, and Beory. Of significance is a large sect of clerics and traveling bards of Lirr, the goddess of prose, poetry and art.

Towns, Villages, and Hamlets.

Darkglade; elven small town; Conventional; AL LN; 2,000-gp limit; Assets unknown; Population 1,500; Authority Figures: Summerstorm Nightwind*, male Valley Elf Clr11 (Obad-Hai); * Nightwind presides over Darkglade, Vinesong, and Moonhollow.

Vinesong; elven village; Conventional; AL LN; 1,500-gp limit; Assets unknown; Population 1,000; Authority Figures: Summerstorm Nightwind.

Moonhollow; elven village; Conventional; AL LN; 1,000-gp limit; Assets unknown; Population 900; Authority Figures: Summerstorm Nightwind.

Woodsdeep; gnomish village; Conventional; AL LN; 1,000-gp limit; Assets unknown; Population 600; Authority Figures: Endoble Mistikmore, male gnome Ill13.

Mossburgh; gnomish hamlet; Conventional; AL LN; 900-gp limit; Assets unknown; Population 400; Authority Figures: Endoble Mistikmore.

Waylance (Little Bissel); hamlet; Conventional; AL LN; 500-gp limit; Assets unknown; Population 350; Laird Waylance Ftr4/Rog4.

Little Geoff (not mapped); hamlet; Conventional; AL CG; 500-gp limit; Assets unknown; Population 300; Authority Figures: Ivor Langley Ftr9.

Tambor; 200 tree people hamlet; Non-Standard (Chieftain); AL CN; 200-gp limit; Assets unknown; Population 200; Authority Figures: Zurt (chief of the Tree People) Bbn10.

Exalted Citadel of Shadow; fortified dwelling; Conventional; AL N; 250,000gp limit; Assets unknown; Population 163; Authority Figures: Tyslin San (The First Protector) Wiz15.

Dwarfreach Citadel; fortified keep; Conventional; AL N; 250,000gp limit; Assets unknown; Population 361; Authority Figures: Nyeru Darkspring (Lord of the Citadel) Nec12+.

Recognized Thorps

(Gnomish): Fernwalk, Petalrich, Earthwood, Roothome, Rockpath, Burrowville, Badgertown,

(Tree People): Fortune, Swindle, Mooch, Plunder, Seer, Danz, Snaffle, Scamp, Kardz, Vagabond.

(Valley Elves): Daeallen, Hollowreach, Karoneth, Luvalos, Marasket, Shallowspring, Trestwren, Vinereach

Major Personages of the Vale

Nyeru Darkspring; NE; Human male Wiz12+ (Necromancer): Once an exile from Bissel involved with a renegade adventuring troupe, Nyeru has found his niche in the world in the Vale. After several years of loyal service, the First Protector honored him by making him the figurehead of The Black One in the Vale, whilst he is on sabbatical. Nyeru typically heads up the Shadow Sages from his dwarven keep secreted deep within the Vale.

Jakar and the Druids of the Vale: The hierophant druid, **Jakar Whitewing; N; Human male Drd18+**, and various other druids of the Vale of the Mage protect the natural environment of the Vale against harmful outsiders and nations with interest in defiling the Vales natural resources. One a proponent against The Black One, Jakar was swayed to his side through diplomatic means and a common interest to protect the inhabitants and beauty of the Vale itself. Together, they created several chain collars that permit the druids to change forms more frequently. Since then, the druids have worked with the Valley Elves in protecting the Vale and have used their natural divine magic to shield it from outsiders.

Tyslin San, First Protector; CN; Drow elf female Wiz15+: The loyal and fervent First Protector of the Vale has been by the side of her liege and lover, Jaran “The Black One” Krimeah for well over a century

now. Since her appointment she has solidified all means in and out of the Vale, executed edicts on crimes and punishment, and helped organize the Shadow Sages into a multi-tiered informative network aimed at drawing attention away from The Black One, while protecting the best aims and interests of its leader. Tyslin, now leads a more comfortable life with Jaran on the Plane of Shadow extending their influence there. While , Nyeru leads from the Vale, itself.

Jaran Krimeah, the Exalted Mage of the Valley and Laird of the Domain, "The Black One"; N; Human male (Shade) Wiz20+: The founder and progenitor of the Shadow Sages, the man known as Jaran Krimeah was born into House Rax in 406 CY within the city of Rauxes. Being of noble birth, cousin to the king, and of immeasurable wealth, Jaran was schooled in the best magic schools money could buy. He attended the University of Rauxes and even attained a private apprenticeship at the Royal Wizards Academy.

By the age of 17, Jaran Krimeah had already graduated the Royal Wizards Academy and the University of Rauxes. At which time he became the apprentice of the most powerful wizard in Aerdi at the time, a one-time student of Shanadar named Serevar.

At age 19, the brilliant young wizard Jaran becomes the youngest wizard to become a royal court wizard. During this time he quickly learns all about the inter-workings of the politics of the Great Kingdom, and develops a quickened dislike for it. Two years later, he manages

to halt an assassination attempt to the throne while uncovering that the House Naelax lies at the center of the insidious plot. The next day, in a single action, the enraged magi teleports himself to Eastfair and begins systematically eliminating the royals of House Naelax.

Afterward, the King accused Jaran of the murder. Prior to the verdict being passed, however, evidence was produced that the Naelax nobles had conspired against the king himself and Jaran was set free. Following this foul error of justice, and sensing the king's faltering strength, Jaran began preparing for his own coup fearing that the king would merely wallow and hand his kingdom over to the Naelax nobles.

In 435 CY, Jaran Krimeah is proclaimed the Mage of the Great Kingdom at age 29, the youngest archmage ever. Following this the flamboyant archmage engages in his plan for his personal coup. Employing most of the elite army and a small detachment of the Guard Companion he enters the palace, only to be thwarted by the works of the Web and his very own apprentice. Jaran is captured and imprisoned for several months. After these months of torture at the hands of Hextorian clerics, Jaran confesses, under a *zone of truth*, that his coup was to prevent House Naelax from usurping power from the throne and eventually taking over the country.

In 436 CY, Jaran is released from prison by his cousin, the king, who informs him to never return to these lands lest he be slain on sight. In secret however, the king planned on having him pardoned

in his absence and return to fight the House. But due to his poor treatment and torture at the hands of the Hextorian clerics, and the previous indiscretions of the king, Jaran had no reason to ever return, much less to trust his own cousin, who let him suffer so horribly.

Jaran scarred, both mentally and physically then gathered what few possessions he still had left and left the Great Kingdom adopting the name, "The Black One", to disguise his true identity to would-be assassins. From there, "The Black One" traveled the Flanaess and ended up in Nirole Dra to heal himself and further his studies. After leaving Nirole Dra, Jaran began exploring the Flanaess. He found work as a court wizard in the Bandit Kingdoms until he believed agents of the Aerdi crown had pursued him. He began adventuring, in search of defensive spells and refuge from the unending spies. He stayed as far away from anything, place, or anyone associated with the Great Kingdom. Finding his way from the Bandit Kingdoms, the Horned Society, Furyondy, Keoland, the Shield Lands, Veluna, Sterich, and the Yeomanry.

Yet, forever haunted by his past he became obsessed with magical defenses against scrying and defensive spells, often casting an *alarm* spell each night before he slept. Using adopted aliases and magical disguises Jaran concealed his true identity to all but one, Zagig Yragerne. From the multitude of planes and various channels of arcane magics, the name of The Black One had traveled to the Archmage of Greyhawk. As such, Zagig entreated him to join a new underground society devoted

to arcane magic and research. A group known as the Ring of Five. Incredibly honored, though precautious Jaran agreed to join this "Ring of Five", under the name of The Black One, as a wandering wizard of the Flanaess. It was not until years later, around CY 452 that Jaran found himself in a concealed valley, nearly surrounded by the Barrier Peaks. A valley so isolated and defensible, Jaran chose it as his home. In less than a year, The Black One, won the favor of the Valley Elves, gnomes, and scattered humans of the vale. With the assistance of the Valley Elves, dwarves, and gnomes, he quickly set up physical and magical defenses at the entrance to the valley and throughout the Barrier Peaks. Then established watches of every race and even charmed monsters to patrol the valley. Even though all of these races are autonomous, they still claim the Exalted Mage as the Laird of the Vale.

It was during this time that The Black One was introduced to his lover, Tysiln San, an exiled female drow who stumbled into the Vale as he was setting up his defenses. Though it took many years, Tysiln found a way to earn Jaran's trust and find a way to his heart. Jaran and Tysiln have been together several years and have a working, understanding relationship. Both work to keep invaders and outsiders who might ruin their homeland. Jaran himself, though he takes many risks keeps several pieces of skin saved so that Tysiln might be able to clone him should he be slain in battle, and the reverse is also true.

The Black One, though feared outside of the Vale and known by many

names throughout the Flanaess, such as The Exalted One, The Black One, Mage of the Vale, etc. The denizens of The Vale of the Mage, consider him a kind and generous leader.

Jaran Krimeah, using a portal from his mansion or his dwarven keep, often spends weeks on the Plane of Shadow holed up in his research laboratories. When he is not there he is often off in search for any powerful arcane magic. Often placing himself in danger by plane shifting to dangerous planes or by teleporting to the lairs of powerful creatures to garner lost arcana. The denizens of the vale worry about the Exalted One's harrowing trips, fearing that someday he will not return, but they realize their pleas for him to remain in the valley will not prevent him from pursuing such goals.

Appearance: Jaran Krimeah, is 5'9 tall and weighs 150 lbs., in his true form. He has grayish-pale olive and veiled slate grey eyes. He appears around 50 years old, with dark brown hair falling over his shoulders. He is always clean shaven and tends to smirk when plotting something insidious. The Black One dresses in black robes adorned with gold trim, and wears many magical items and apparel at all times. The Mage of the Vale can assume a plethora of disguises using his spells or magic items at will, often favoring a Valley Elven or dryad form.

Tactics: Jaran Krimeah often scrys upon his enemies or uses illusory guises when dealing with outsiders. Should he be

attacked he relies on his spells for combat and defense, avoiding melee at all costs, as he considers it crude and risky. Jaran has mellowed over the years, but underneath his care for the denizens of the vale lies a ruthless spellcaster. Jaran will not allow himself to be killed or taken alive by anyone, he will attack to kill or disable. If in danger of either he will find a means of escape and send his followers to destroy the offenders while assailing them from a distance or in secret, then disappearing into the night. Jaran often uses the epic spell eclipse when he knows the valley is under heavy assault, as he did during the assault of the giants several years ago.

Development: Several years ago, prior to the Greyhawk Wars, Jaran began to frequent the Vale less, and began his search for a way to cheat death. In CY 591, he finished his research and became a shade, so that he might continue his quest for powerful magic items, spells, and knowledge.

In recent years, the First Protector has allowed exiles of other lands who enter the Vale of the Mage as prisoners to be tested and then if proven worthy they are given work and a home in the Vale. Jaran though wary of this, supports, Tysiln's ideas while he toils away within his citadel on the Plane of Shadow. One such exile now resides in the dwarven keep, an exiled Bissel necromancer by the name of Nyeru Darkspring.

Intrigues and Whispers

Once the PC's have entered the Vale and have either been accepted by the First Protector or even if they are on covert operations the following hooks can be used.

Discerning the nature of the Glades of Ehlonna

Throughout the Vale are various magical glades that transport users to other similar glades in the Vale. These glades existed long before The Black One's arrival in the Vale, but have only recently been used by him and the Valley Elves. Many scholars and clerics have pondered the creation and working of these natural wonders. Yet, given the concealed nature of the Vale, few have been permitted to study these wondrous glades.

Border Patrol

From time to time giants in the Barrier Peaks attempt a strong raid into the fertile southern lands of the Vale. These giants see any force in their way as a threat and attack until their leader has fallen.

Return to Terror

Though it's been years since their initial foray the Necromancers who invaded the Vale several years ago still remain close to the borders of the Vale looking for another attempt to re-enter. Even though they suffered the loss of Promiss Reynolds and Red Morgan, Tracy Windstrider and Elock remain vigilant. The duo are been rumored to have allied with the giants of the Barrier Peaks and

are planning to avenge their compatriots deaths. The two brook a deep hatred of their former ally turned traitor, Nyeru Darkspring.

Shadow Planar Gate

Deep within the vaults of the Exalted Citadel is a secret gate to the Plane of Shadow. On the other side, lies a grand citadel identical to the one within the Vale. The Black One maintains this citadel on the Plane of Shadow for research and to recharge certain magic items that functions are linked to the plane.

Galeb Duhr Pass

The Galeb Duhr of this region created and defend this region of the Vale against any invaders. The Galeb Duhr may at will close the pass off. (Doing so is a full-round action.)

The Korred Kingdom

Within a small ten-mile area roughly fifteen-miles south of Moonhollow, a strange bridge crossing the river connects the lands of the two Korred clans, The Exalted and the Extol. These two clans have long been competitive rivals. Should the PC's stumble into this area they may be asked to judge a competition between the two clans to see whom is the best singer/ dancer.

The Korred are not generally combative but they do guard their homes if attacked, and typically have concealed rope traps and wooden spike snares closer to their steadings.

The Elemental Glades

Several years ago The Black One attempted to recreate the effects of one of the Glades of Ehlonna in hopes of extending his life. Instead he created a minor planar bleed in four connected glades of the four elements of air, earth, fire, and water. All of the Valley Elves, dwarves, gnomes and even the Tree People avoid this area. The areas and their effects are as follows.

The Air Glade: In the northeast corner, the air is thin here though it is highly concentrated with oxygen which may make the PC's feel euphoric. Any whom wander in this glade must make a successful Fortitude save or suffer a -2 terrain penalty to all rolls.

The Earth Glade: In the northwest corner is a huge puddle of mud surrounded by jagged stone pillars. The mud-bath here decreases the immersed user in age 1 year per level, but also reduces one other random attribute of the character.

The Water Glade: Located in the southeast corner is a small lake of water some 200ft.-deep. Guarding the lake are two water wierds and a wily old water elemental, who broke free of the water wierds control some years ago.

Stepping into the water and swimming to the bottom transports the user to the Plane of Water. Though the user may choose not to go and may check the lake for any hidden treasures.

The Fire Glade: This glade in the southwest corner is similar to the Water Glade except that in the place of water is flaming oil. The small lake is fueled by a variant decanter of endless water that spews forth oil every so often. The fire itself issues forth from the planar bleed and can only be doused with heavy cloth large enough to cover a 5ft. area. Once the cloth is removed the fire re-ignites a few minutes after.

Notes: The Black One occasionally scryes on the glades here to see if they have been infiltrated. If the area looks heavily disturbed he will immediately send out a patrol to investigate.

Any elemental spell cast within its designated area grants an additional +2 to its save DC and any elementals summoned in its designated region gain +2 HD.

Investigating Dwarfreach Citadel

After pledging allegiance to the Exalted Ones will. Nyeru was granted this keep to watch over the denizens of the vale in the First Protectors stead. Though he is still scryed upon occasionally by the Exalted One, Nyeru has gone to extreme measures to defend the vale and his new home. Unless the PC's are escorted to the keep with a patrol of Valley Elves, the defenses of the keep are at full force.

The DM is encouraged to use any means to defend the keep. A detailed map of the keep and its environs can be found in the WG12 – Vale of the Mage supplement.

Mystery of the Shadow Sage

For decades sages and spellcasters have pondered the identity of the shadowsage; many scrying the very reaches of Oerth to uncover this identity of this mysterious being. Many assumed it was Mordenkainen, The Seer of Urnst, or some other luminary. The truth, however, could not be more shocking.

In truth, the shadowsage, or shadowsages are an organization founded by The Black One to conceal his own identity from would-be pursuers of the old Great Kingdom. The shadowsages have their spies as far as the Bandit Kingdoms to the Vale of the Mage, and stretching further beyond to the Plane of Shadow.

History of the Shadow Sages

The Shadow sages were formed in the 440's CY, while the erstwhile Black One was in the employ of the bandit lords of the Bandit Kingdoms. Fearing capture by the Aerdi crown, The Black One began employing spies and undercover agents to bring him any information on the movement of Aerdi agents and possible bounty-hunters. Soon the facade grew until the agents were even dressing and acting as if they were The Black One, himself.

Shortly after his arrival in the Vale of the Mage in 452CY, The Black One set into play a grand scheme to forever deter would-be pursuers forever. Using magics found in the Vale, and working with the gnomes and Valley Elves. The followers of The Black One also began to assume the identity of their liege in times of danger.

Eventually, the organization reached its ultimate height when Tysiln

San, sought refuge in the Vale, proved her worth and fell in love with Jaran Krimeah. Within a matter of decades, Tyslin rearranged and reorganized the Shadow Sages to its present incarnation.

When surrounding nations fell to the giants, the Vale of the Mage was forewarned due to various shadow sage spies that kept tabs on the area. The sages led by The Black One thwarted the invasion, though with heavy losses.

The Shadow Sages

The Shadow Sages are known to activate within the Vale of the Mage. However, they are also very active in the Bandit Kingdoms, the former Horned Society, Furyondy, Keoland, the Shield Lands, Veluna, Sterich, and the Yeomanry.

Shadow Sages are known for illuminating mysteries without directly intervening. The current incarnation of the shadow sages conceal and portray the image of The Black One or the original Shadow Sage, outside the Vale of the Mage.

In addition, they gather information on rare magical artifacts, spellbooks, and arcane devices, to keep enemies in check, and to protect the Vale of the Mage against any and all intruders.

Various classes and professions have been known to be Shadow Sages. Among them are various rogues, illusionists, bards, even a few druids and rangers seeking to escape the outside world sometimes stay here in exchange for information on the surrounding lands; though they are better known for their rarities such as the Valley Elf Arcane

Archers and Shadowdancers, or gnomish Arcane Tricksters and Gnome Giant-Slayers.

Each member of the loose organization has availability to spells or magic items that prevent scrying, detection, and any breach of thoughts. The most popular rings are *sequester*, *mind shielding*, *chameleon power*, and *non-detection*. Wondrous items like *amulets against detection and location*, boots of teleportation, and scrolls or other magic item that duplicates spells like *false vision*, *non-detection*, *misdirection*, *detect scrying*, and *true seeing*.

Currently, at any given time any of the following individuals could be portraying the shadow sage.

The shadowsages are split in five different tiers, each providing information and concealment for the identity of The Black One in one way or another.

The five tiers are as follows.

- *The Exalted Court* – Jaran Krimeah
- *Inner Citadel* – Tyslin San, Nyeru Darkspring
- *Outer Citadel* – The Shadowfolk of the Planes, Sindar Sirion, Jakar and the druids of the Vale.
- *Inner Ring* – The Valley Elves and other outcast races of the Vale, including the Tree People.
- *Outer Ring* – Various Operatives across the Flanaess, the Gnomes and Dwarves surrounding the Vale.

Recently, The Black One and the First Protector took up residence on the Plane of Shadow, leaving the Vale of the

Mage and the Shadow Sages in the hands of the First Protector and Nyeru. On the Plane of Shadow, The Black One and his followers work to expand on their network, now employing creatures found therein to add to their ranks. Shadows, Shades, and various creatures of shadowy substance now lurk within the halls of The Black One's citadel, many with the ability to emulate human forms.

Within the Vale, Nyeru now leads the Shadow Sages keeping the borders closed to any who seek entry. On rare occasions, those seeking refuge from the outside world are allowed but only after a rigorous trial period and massive divinations to prove their fealty.

Outside of the Vale, various Valley Elf and gnomish spies, many disguised or magically concealed wander the Flanaess in search of treasure, information, and potential enemies. Woe to the one, asking about or in search of The Black One for they may find themselves with a warning dagger planted between the shoulder blades.

Operatives Outside of the Vale

Along his travels The Black One, entreated the company of many less than savory individuals. Many of these individuals hailing from the Bandit Kingdoms all the way to Sterich clamor for riches and prestige. While at the same time, they ask no questions about their inquiry or the motives of said employer. Using this expansive network, the Shadow Sages hire out these individuals for their ground work. Fees vary but the results are staggering on what information is gathered

in various circles of the Flanaess. Among other things these individuals have found a market for their hocked goods. The Shadow Sages ask no question and pay well for any magical items these individuals bring in.

Sindar Sirion; NE; Valley-elf male Wiz12:

Located under the ruins of Castle Greyhawk, Sindar is the prime research and informative operative in this area. Through various charms and suggestions, Sindar sees that the Shadow Sage's identity is concealed, often with unfortunate explorers from the ruins of the Castle. Using these individuals he gathers information on the surrounding area and especially Greyhawk City, where several of the Circle Eight reside. During downtime, Sindar crafts various magical items that facilitate his goals.

Shadowfolk of the Planes: While diplomatic missions and expeditions into the Plane of Shadow have been quite successful. The Black One still has not enlisted many of these denizens to his cause. Those that have allied with him, however, remain the root of the facade behind the Shadow Sage. These beings, capable of taking any human form often pose as the illuminated sage for a time, and then vanish again to the Plane of Shadow.

Exalted Dweomercraft

Many arcane devices and spells have been created within the confines of The Vale of the Mage. Whether the valley itself, emits a natural magical aura

benefiting the creation of such arcane is unknown. However, strange artifacts such as the shadow tome herald the ability of the magi that craft such materials in such a way that eludes the divinations of the best sages in the surrounding lands. Whatever the reason, the dweomercraft of the valley is coveted by many throughout the Flanaess.

Below are a few items crafted by the valley's current inhabitants.

Potion of Black Sight; Drinking this dark colored ichor gives the imbiber to see in the dark as a *darkvision* spell.

Faint Transmutation; Caster Level: 3rd; Prerequisites: Brew Potion, *darkvision*; Market Price: 300gp; Reference: Vale of the Mage.

Potion of Intensity; Quaffing this potion gives the imbiber the Maximize Spell Feat for ten minutes. Afterward the imbiber may not cast any spells using metamagic feats for another ten minutes.

Strong (No School); Caster Level: 3rd; Prerequisites: Brew Potion, creator must have the maximize spell feat; Market Price: 1,400; Reference: Vale of the Mage

The Exalted Spell Component Case; This magical item, which usually appears as a soft leather pouch, acts as a *heward's handy haversack* and is enchanted to keep all spell components inside fresh indefinitely. Further, the container is water-tight and air tight.

Moderate Conjunction; Caster Level: 5th; Prerequisites: Create Wondrous Item, *leomund's secret chest*, *protection from elements*; Market Price: 2,500; Reference: Vale of the Mage.

Gem of Musing; This item is useable by wizards only. By contemplating the gem for one hour, a wizard can recall spells as a *pearl of power* (1st-4th). A *gem of musing* appears to be a flawed emerald or sapphire. The gem radiates faintly if a *detect magic* spell is cast upon it.

Strong Transmutation; Caster Level: 3rd/ 4th/ 6th/ 8th; Prerequisites: Create Wondrous Item, creator must be able to cast spells of the spell level to be recalled; Market Price: (1st) 1,000, (2nd) 4,000, (3rd) 9,000, (4th) 16,000; Reference: Vale of the Mage.

Tome of Recording; A book such as this can be any size, although most are usually thick, bound with leather, and decorated with gold or silver embossing. When a command word is spoken, the book records-in one of several languages of the user's choice-anything spoken within a twenty-foot radius of the book. A second command word causes the book to stop recording. A third command erases the writing on any indicated page.

The books are also prized as spying objects, as carefully placed books can record the conversations of alleged conspirators, rival wizards, or any others.

Each book can record in six languages.

Faint Conjunction, Divination, and Transmutation; Caster Level: 5th;

Prerequisites: Create Wondrous Item, *comprehend languages*, *erase*, *message*, *unseen servant*; Market Price: 4,000; Reference: Vale of the Mage.

Timeglass of the Mage; Appearing to be a 1-foot-tall hourglass, this artifact made its sudden appearance in the hands of an adventurer who had forced his way into The Vale of the Mage. He returned with only the timeglass and the scars of many dangerous encounters. Since then, the timeglass has been sought by many spellcasters because of its reputed powers, which are rumored to be as follows -

1. *Stasis*. Time itself will bypass a 30-foot cubic area for one hour per charge expended. Subjective time does not pass for those within the area, and they simply appear to vanish for the intervening time. They reappear at the end of the duration set by the number of charges expended.

2. *Free-casting*. If the timeglass is held while casting a spell that would normally require the loss of XP, the spell will instead drain one charge from the timeglass for each 500xp the caster would have lost.

3. *Restore youth*. Youth can be restored to the wielder or any creature of his choice upon command. The process drains one charge from the timeglass and one level from the wielder, but will restore twenty years of youth to the subject creature. The level given up cannot be restored, as doing so will cancel the time reversal; the lost level must be earned anew.

4. *Chronomancy*. Once per 24-hour period, the owner can invert the timeglass and command one of the following spell effects to occur: *time stop*, *haste*, *slow*, or *control water*. Each use re-ages the wielder one year, except *time stop*, which ages the wielder two years.

The timeglass has up 50 charges. When the last charge is expended, it shatters into useless fragments. Note: It is rumored that this device is of extra-planar origin and cannot be constructed on the Prime Material Plane.

Strong Transmutation; Caster Level: 20th (artifact); *Weight* 2lb; Reference: Greyhawk Adventures hardback.

The Vale of the Mage



The Barrier Peaks



Gateway to Adventure

Seas of Fallen Summer

By Rick “Duicarthan” Miller

“Seas of Fallen Summer” is a Dungeons & Dragons adventure for 4-6 player characters of 13th level. This adventure is suited to a full party which includes at least one rogue and one wizard. Characters with darkvision or low-light vision will become an asset underground for the entire dungeon is unlit. As will anyone with knowledge or decipher script skills. The adventure can be adjusted for PC’s from 8th to 16th level by using the suggestions provided in the “Scaling the Adventure” sidebar. The PC’s will likely gain one or two levels in this adventure.

This adventure begins in the city of Nirole Dra, Keoland and is continues in the bordering lands of the Hellfurnaces mountain range and the perilous Sea of Dust. However the adventure can be adapted to start in any city and lead to a mountain range bordered by a desert wasteland.

The DM can modify the adventure for characters of levels 8-16 by adjusting the encounters as described in the “Scaling the Adventure” sidebar.

Whether the plot hooks below are used or you make up one of your own, the adventure begins when the PCs arrive in Nirole Dra.

Adventure Background

Concealed deep within the secret great libraries of Nirole Dra, among the tattered, dusty, and moldy tomes lays the account of the fall of the Suel Imperium and Bakluni Empires. Attempting to garner quick wealth, Lashton of Grayhill has sought out ancient artifacts of these great empires as a means to further his own ends. Using divinatory magics Lashton has divined that a recent earthquake within the Sea of Dust has unearthed a previously unknown ruin, known as the Sanctuary of Fallen Seas. It is reputed that this ancient ruin holds many unspoiled artifacts and texts. During one of these divinatory episodes he receives a strange image of a huge black diamond lying upon a carved ivory cradle. During the winter months he pours hours of research to discover that this item is the legendary *diablerem*, reputedly placed in the Sanctuary of Fallen Seas by none other than Slerotin, himself several decades prior to the Twin Cataclysms. He also discovers that the earthquake site appears to be within the same vicinity of this ruin which is a humungous temple built within the side of the Hellfurnaces mountain range.

During this time the agents of the Silent Ones of Keoland, which have been keeping a close eye on Lashton, are informed of his plans to hire an

adventuring party to explore the Sea of Dust. Fearing that some horrible artifact may be uncovered and brought forth into Keoland they begin their own research and divination and discover that Lashton's greed in this case may be a dire threat to Keoland. The Silent Ones send Alundil of the First Born, to intercept the adventurers before they can be tempted by Lashton's offer.

Adventure Synopsis

The PCs are confronted by two high-powered organizations which wish the PC's to explore a ruin within the Sea of Dust/ Hellfurnaces. Both require them to report their findings and both offer great rewards. The PC's will be required to either acquire or destroy this mysterious black diamond. First they must contend with the ancient denizens of the ruins and discover the secrets of an Empire that collapsed over a millennia ago.

Adventure Hooks

Once the adventurers stop in a large city to resupply they will be confronted with both these generous offers. They will receive both offers but what they choose to do with them is of their own accord.

The Silent Ones of Keoland: As the PC's enter the city they get the feeling that they're being watched by unseen eyes, in every tavern, inn, and shop of Niola Dra. Everyone seems to skitter out of the way and conduct business in a hurried fashion. Occasionally a robed figure can be seen moving about through the crowds, dodging into shadows just enough out of

sight to avoid being seen easily. As the characters rounding the next corner they are motioned to a nearby alleyway by one of the said figures. He motions them to follow him without a single word spoken. The robed-figure leads them to a large marble building within the city. An old fountain left unused by the city folk but a common watering hole for adventurers. Here he sits and motions for the characters to sit down on one of the marble benches and wait. Moments later, another robed figure arrives with a small retinue of armed guards. This new robed-man is dressed in all grey and bears the markings of an arcane spellcaster. He motions his hand and the first robed-man bows deeply and leaves. Pulling his hood slightly back so to see any expressions, the grey-robed man views the PC's with scrutiny then speaks. He first apologizes for the unsettling manner in which the PC's have approached. Then further explains that his name is Alundil, a member of an organization called the Silent Ones. The Silent Ones are preservers of the old Suel traditions and magics within Keoland, and he comes as their herald to ask their assistance. He states that the Silent Ones believe that an ancient artifact, a black diamond called the *diablerem*, has been disturbed within the Hellfurnaces/ Sea of Dust border. This terrible device can summon a terrible evil and must be destroyed. To this end, he asks the PC's to accompany Alundil to the Sea of Dust and inspect this recently unearthed ruin bordering the Hellfurnaces mountain range. Alundil then asks the PC's what they require for such a task.

Alundil / Silent Ones are willing to pay 16,000gp upon completion in coin, magic items, or services. In addition, the characters would receive the benefit of the Silent Ones information gathering organization and a useful ally in Alundil, himself. (Alundil of the First Born; male human, N; Wiz13). Once the PC's are ready Alundil will begin casting *teleport* and transport the party to the border of the Hellfurnaces and the Sea of Dust.

Lashton's Offer: While perusing the wares and comforts of the city an envoy named Nathek introduces himself and implores the PC's to visit the warehouse district if they are looking for work. He states that his employer is offering a handsome reward and can be found at the Catsgill Emporium in the warehouse district at midnight. (Nathek of Niole Dra, male human, LN; Rog6)

At the Catsgill Emporium, a gatekeeper meets the PC's and takes them into a small office where Lashton waits. Once they are introduced, (Lashton of Grayhill, male human, LN; Wiz19) will greet the characters. He then reveals that their assignment (should they choose to accept it) is to explore a ruin within the Sea of Dust/ Hellfurnaces area, chronicle their findings and if possible transport this artifact back to Niole Dra through magical means. To this end, they will be provided with transportation and the proper means to gather this artifact. For performing this service for him he makes them the following offers. As well as offering to buy any of their findings they do not wish to keep themselves.

- 5,000gp up front, 25% lowered prices for his services after the adventure, and another 5,000gp for completion.
- 5,000gp up front and a small land grant outside the Dreadwood Forest.
- 16,000gp in magical treasures.

The PC's then have a day to get their affairs in order and return to this very warehouse. In the interim, he is willing to sell them any magical items or alchemical items he has in stock, as well as providing them with any information they may need about the city of Niole Dra or of their mission itself.

Upon returning, Lashton will greet them again warmly and ask them to gather around him. He begins to cast *teleportation circle*.

Environs of the Sea of Dust/ Hellfurnaces border

Season: Summer; Relative Weather: Hot and Calm; Daytime Temperature 189; Night-time Temperature 81; Wind Speed (MPH) 7.

Arrival at the Sea of Dust

Within seconds the PC's arrive at a humongous blackened ash mountain range, bordering a sea of looming grey ash. This in hand, either mage hands an arcane spellcaster a *scroll of greater teleport (CL 19)*, to be used when they are prepared to return. If the PC's are working for Lashton he will also hand them a *scroll of teleport object (CL 19)*.

At the base of the closest mountain is a large chasm that opens into a large

cave, the black ash giving way to ankle deep grey ash.

Entrance to the Cave: Peering past the dust the vague shape of the ruin can be seen, a humongous basalt temple rising forth from the ash. Much of the structure has fallen into ruin with cracks, fractures and smashed bits on rock, all but one structure at the very promontory, which remains in pristine condition. A large set of stone stairs leads to this structure. The cave is 360ft. wide by 500ft. long. The cave entrance is large roughly 30ft. wide allowing the characters enough room to move into the humongous cave. Casters wanting to avoid melee would be wise to use the outer mountain wall as cover.

Creatures (EL 12): As the PC's enter the cave a purple worm ejects from the ground and attacks.

Purple Worm: hp 200; see Monster Manual page 211

Dungeon Features

Unless otherwise noted, the following features are common throughout the dungeon.

Passages/ Corridors: All surfaces are made of smooth stone unless stated otherwise. All ceilings are set 30 ft. high unless stated otherwise. The entire first and second floors are covered with light rubble from the recent earthquake. While on this floor all Balance and Tumble checks must be made with a +2 terrain modifier.

Doors: All doors are made of made of black basalt and typically slide into the walls, unless stated otherwise.

Stone Door: 4 in. thick; Hardness 8; hp 60; Break DC 28.

Door Locks: All locks are the following type, unless stated otherwise.

Antique Mechanical Lock: All locks are located on the right side wall and unless stated otherwise are this type of lock. (*Door Lock:* Search DC 20; Open Lock DC 30.)

Pillars: All pillars are twining and covered with silvery glyphs with dark stone bases.

Secret Doors: Secret doors require a successful Search skill check (DC 30) to locate and open, unless stated otherwise. The doors all slide into the walls and are activated by pushing on them.

Lighting: No area is lit, unless stated otherwise. The inhabitants of the temple have their own sources of light or possess darkvision.

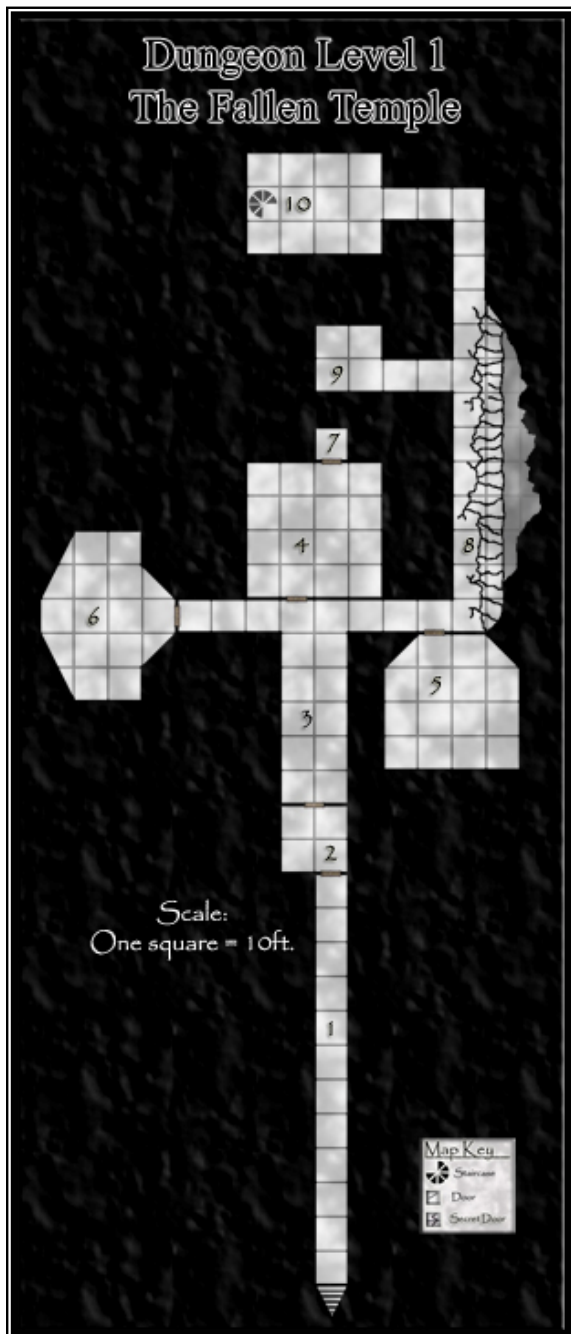
Sounds: At night, ghostly moans can be heard from below the remains of the humongous edifice. These moans are the spectres on Level Two.

Possibility of Cave-Ins or Collapses: The DM should read the Cave-ins and Collapses section in the Dungeon Masters' Guide pages 66-67. This information is needed in several of the areas in this adventure; areas of structural weakness are mentioned in the text.

Language Buffers: All of the written messages scrawled on walls and books that may be found are written in Ancient Suloise. The Ancient Suloise script is much different from common and uses a hieratic form instead of common letters. Characters without this language can either cast *comprehend languages* or make a successful Decipher Script roll DC

30. Speaking with the Ghostly Suel Wizard in Area 28 may be done with the *tongues* spell.

Magical Barriers: The entire temple is protected with a contingent *dimensional lock* spell. The dimensional lock prevents any and all planar travel and teleportation magics. Summoning spells and planar abilities such as the link with incorporeal creatures to the planes is not severed.



Dungeon Level One: The Fallen Temple

1.) **Descending Corridor:** A rough-hewn stone stairwell leads down 100ft. to a large 10ft. wide hallway leading further down 100ft. at a thirty-degree angle. Along the walls of the hall are bas reliefs of a populated fertile valley looming archaic buildings and towers. The hall ends at a large carved circular door is made of solid basalt. The door is locked. Written upon the door in arcane symbols is the following. "Steep thee steps further to the east. Enter not the chambers arcane. What was lost is best left lost, in the colorless rains of time."

2.) **Dry Dock:** This 30ft. by 30ft. room was once a ventilation chamber used to dry off visitors ages ago, but now, in its damaged state, the vent system no longer circulates due to the open air vents being long buried in rubble. Across the room is another locked circular door matching the previous one, minus the inscriptions. Along the right wall is a large rusted iron statue.

Creatures (EL 13): As the door to the outside chamber opens the iron golem within whirs into action and attacks.

Golem, Iron: hp129; see Monster Manual page 136-137.

Trap: Upon entering the room, the door behind slams back into place, sealing the room off and allowing the dry air, volcanic fumes, and stench of rotting animals trapped in the vents to flood into the room at an accelerated rate.

Burnt Othur Vapor Trap: CR 7; mechanical; location trigger; repair reset;

gas; multiple targets (all targets in a 30-ft.-by-30-ft. room); never miss; onset delay (3 rounds); poison (burnt othur fumes, DC 18 Fortitude save resists, 1 Con drain/3d6 Con); Search DC 21; Disable Device DC 21.

3.) Pitfall Corridor: This 20ft. by 60ft. long corridor is littered with dust and debris. However, there appear to be paths through this debris. A successful Survival check (DC 20) by a ranger reveals them as Salamander tracks.

Trap: Thirty-feet down the corridor is a pitfall trap that is triggered by stepping on the marked tiles prior to the pit.

Deeper Pit Trap: CR 1; mechanical; location trigger; manual reset; hidden switch bypass (Search DC 25); DC 15 Reflex save avoids; 20 ft. deep (2d6, fall); multiple targets (first target in each of two adjacent 10-ft. squares); Search DC 20; Disable Device DC 23.

4.) Main Hall: This large 40ft. square pillared hall has a black glassy-looking ceiling cracked in several places. The walls are decorated with bas reliefs of everyday life in the ancient Suloise Empire, of people playing games of wizardry and war, great gladiatorial battles and wondrous arts. A large stone table lays broken in half at the head of the room lying beside one of the large statues along the far left wall.

Trap: Any Attempt to move the table or passing within 5ft. of it will trigger the damaged statue to collapse and fall.

Collapsing Statue: CR 4; mechanical; touch trigger (attached); no

reset; Atk +15 melee (6d6, stone blocks); Search DC 20; Disable Device DC 24

5.) Efreeti Camp: This 30ft. by 50ft. hexagonal vaulted chamber is the lair for several Efreeti. The room is littered with debris, dust and ash. Along the south wall is a large smithing area including a forge, and firepit. Beside the fire pit is a large iron safe box. Along the east wall is a large workbench and anvil. The west wall is covered with chains and smithy tools.

Creatures (EL 12): As the characters enter the room one of the efreeti will ask them kindly to leave unless they wish to do them a favor Diplomacy (DC 20). If they do not wish to help the efreeti and remain or if they attack, the efreeti attack.

Genie, Efreeti (4): hp65 (x4); see Monster Manual page 115-116.

Iron Safebox: This 5ft. by 5ft. box is locked. Open Lock: 30, Hardness 10; hp 30; Break DC 28.

Treasure: *+1 shield, large, steel, +1 full plate armor, +1 sword, short, and a +2 greataxe.*

Development: The efreeti in their natural greed will allow the PC's to rest in this room and even allow them looting rights within the ruins as long as they bring them any metal armor or weapons they find that they cannot use themselves. The efreeti are planning to mold the metal to their use.

6.) Salamander Steading: This 30ft. by 50ft. vaulted decagonal chamber is the den of several salamanders. The room is rather well charred as the salamanders appeared here shortly after the earthquake, released from ages of imprisonment within the

charred and smashed jars that lay upon the floor. At the far end of the room is a stone chest belonging, presently the property of the salamanders. Should it be disturbed, the salamanders attack.

Creatures (EL 13): As the characters prepare to enter the room, the salamanders flank the door. The salamanders will allow the PC's a chance to speak but if attacked the salamanders respond in kind.

Salamander, Noble (x3): hp112; see Monster Manual page 218-219.

Tactics: In combat, on the first round one salamander will cast *wall of fire* in the doorway of the room. While another begins casting *fireball* into the hallway corridor, while the other takes the lead and blocks the doorway to bottleneck the characters into the hall. On the second round should any characters have slipped into the room one of the salamanders then alternate between fireballs and dispel magic spells to weaken the party. The one guarding the door will stay there unless pushed back or heavily damaged, in which case he will switch places with the casting one and he will begin casting *fireball* at point blank range.

Development: Salamanders and Efreeti hate each other. Therefore, it is possible to get the salamanders help the players if they choose to parlay with them first. A successful Diplomacy (DC 20) will change the salamanders to a friendlier disposition. This would allow the characters to interact with them. The leader of the salamanders will ask that you help them vanquish the efreeti, who are camped elsewhere on this level. In exchange, they will lead you to the entrance to the lower levels and let you

carry any treasures you may find on this level for your own.

Stone Chest: This small 3ft. by 5ft. chest is locked. Open Lock: 25, Hardness 8; hp 25; Break DC 28.

Treasure: ivory statuette (20 gp), *scroll of charm person or animal, bless* (CL 6), *scroll of undetectable alignment* (CL 6), scarab, golembane (stone), *ring of counterspells (fireball)*; wand of bear's endurance (CL 10: charges: 21).

7.) Cloakroom/ Storage: This 10ft. square room is covered with cobwebs. The floor is covered with dust, rags, and junk. Hanging on the old stone pegs in this room are rags of old finery.

Treasure: Among the clothing are several gems. Aquamarine (100gp), golden yellow topaz (150gp), carnelian (50gp), peridot (50gp) and a jade worth (100gp).

8.) Collapsed Hallway: 10ft. wide by 130ft. long corridor has begun to collapse. The surfaces of the corridor are cracked and covered with rubble and dust. Worst of all one-hundred-feet of the entire east wall has collapsed down dragging the floor with it. The floor now has a 15-degree descending tilt.

Trap: This corridor is treacherous to pass. Crossing it along the west wall requires either a Balance or Climb check DC 17.

Wide-Mouth Pit Trap: CR 9; natural terrain; within 5ft. of the hole; constant; DC 25 Reflex save avoids; 100 ft. deep (10d6, fall); multiple targets (all targets within a 10-ft.-by-10-ft. area); Search DC 25.

Trap: While traversing the collapsed hallway the PC's must be careful not to create too much noise. Should the PC's create a loud disturbance (I.e. fireball, sonic effect, or force spell) here stones from the ceiling will fall.

Stone Blocks from Ceiling: CR 3; natural terrain; loud sounds; no reset; Atk +10 melee (4d6, stone blocks); Search DC 25; Disable Device DC 20

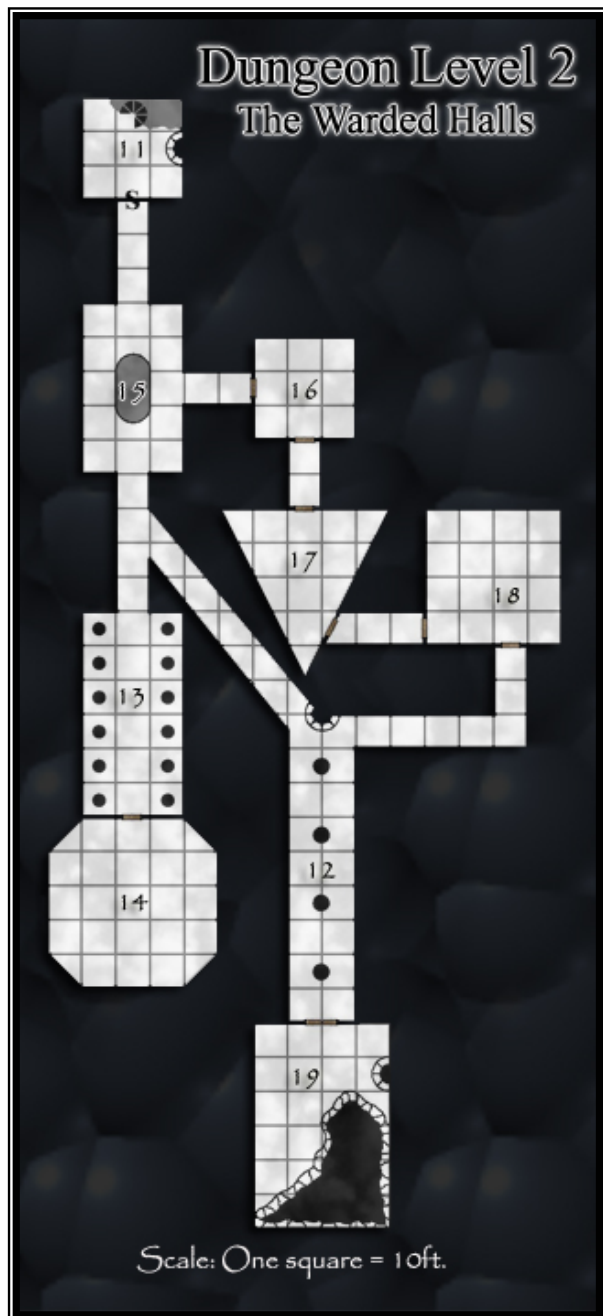
9.) Ancient Shrine: This 20ft. square room was once a small refuge for those of the god of stone, metal, mountains, and guardianship, Fortubo. The room is lined with smashed and tarnished lamps. At the far end of the room is a small altar made of solid black igneous rock and covered with a grey funerary wrapping stained with various colored unguents.

Trap: If the PCs' touch this shrine with their hands or items the shrine will invoke the millennia old anger of the god, Fortubo. (Unless the character worships Fortubo. A successful Knowledge Religion check DC 20, will reveal which deity the altar belongs to.)

Glyph of Warding (Blast): CR 6; spell; spell trigger; no reset; spell effect (*glyph of warding* [blast], 16th-level cleric, 8d8 sonic, DC 14 Reflex save half damage); multiple targets (all targets within 5 ft.); Search DC 28; Disable Device DC 28.

10.) Shattered Stairwell Chamber: This 30ft. by 50ft. chamber houses an age old spiral stair once made of black crystal. The stair is now an unsafe, cracked and shattered ruin of its' former glory. Traversing this stairwell requires a Balance check (DC 19), unless the characters

secure a rope to get down. The lower floor is 30ft. down and completely unlit.



Dungeon Level Two : The Warded Halls

11.) Stairwell Entry: The northeast corner of this 40ft. by 60ft. room houses a ruined stairwell and fallen ceiling. Beside the rubble along the east wall is dried-out water basin. On the southern wall are two overturned braziers with spilt ash beneath them. Built into the west wall are several alcoves with dust-covered benches and corresponding sconces.

12.) Pillared Corridor: This 20ft. by 90ft. long pillared corridor has old torch-brackets every 10ft. along the walls. All of these pillars are covered with silver warding runes. At the end of the corridor, where the corridors branch off is a wall fountain that still spills magically-produced water.

Feature: The pillar runes are a *permanent dimensional lock* spell, preventing any dimensional movement within the ruins. This keeps the horned devil and nightshade from summoning help should they be released (DC 34 to dispel)

13.) Darkened Dual-Pillared Hall: Though most of the ruins seem dark this dual-pillared corridor is darker still. The pillars of this 30ft. by 60ft. long corridor emit an obscuring fog.

Trap: The inscriptions on the pillars of this corridor are a *guards and wards* spell, at the end of the corridor is a hidden large stone door covered with matching magical inscriptions.

Guards and Wards Trap: CR 11; permanent spell; proximity; automatic reset; spell effect (Fog fills this corridor obscuring all sight, including darkvision, beyond 5 feet. A creature within 5 feet has

concealment (attacks have a 20% miss chance). Creatures farther away have total concealment (50% miss chance, and the attacker cannot use sight to locate the target). Saving Throw: None. Spell Resistance: No.

Arcane Locks: The door at the end of the corridor is *arcane locked*. Saving Throw: None. Spell Resistance: No.

Confusion: Where there are choices in direction—such as a corridor intersection or side passage—a minor *confusion*-type effect functions so as to make it 50% probable that intruders believe they are going in the opposite direction from the one they actually chose. This is an enchantment, mind-affecting effect. Saving Throw: None. Spell Resistance: Yes.

Lost Doors: The door at the end of the corridor is covered by a *silent image* to appear as if it were a plain wall. Saving Throw: Will disbelief (if interacted with). Spell Resistance: No.

Any creature who enters or passes within 5 ft. of the door receives the *suggestion* mentally. Will Save DC 24, Spell Resistance: Yes.); spell effects (*guards and wards*, 14th-level wizard with 26 INT, DC 24 Will save negates); multiple targets (all targets in a 30-ft.-by-60-ft. area); Search DC 32; Disable Device DC 32, Dispel Magic DC 32.

14.) Necromantic Laboratory: Long ago a terrifying evil was sealed in this 50ft. by 50ft. octagonal room. In the south-western corner is a black rune-covered crystal tube, now horribly cracked and broken, with a shadowy fog all about it. Lying in front of it is a shattered pile of bones,

metal bits, and cloth. Along the east and west walls are spiral stairs that lead up to an old catwalk that spans the east and west walls. Built into the walls on both levels are several sconces and bookcases filled with jars and books covered with cobwebs and dust. Along the south wall is an empty stone workbench covered with dust. Beside the doorway on the west side is an old tripod with a ruined-unfinished painting and a jar of dried paint beside it. On the other side of the door is a ragged piece of cloth hanging from the wall that was once a tapestry. Shattered on the floor in front of the tapestry is a shattered urn with ashes scattered about it.

Creatures (EL 16): Waiting inside this chamber is the Nightwalker. Prior to anyone opening the door it casts *haste*, followed by *invisibility*. As the door to the outside chamber opens the Nightwalker moves to within 30 feet to make use of gaze attack and strike with *confusion* or *hold monster*, coupled with a quickened *unholy blight*.

Nightshade, Nightwalker: hp178; see Monster Manual page 195-197.

Tactics: After its initial onslaught the Nightwalker attempts to hit a spellcaster with *finger of death* and another quickened *unholy blight*. It then moves up to engage the enemy and attempt to disarm an enemy fighter. Then crushes the disarmed weapon (or use gaze attack if disarm attempt failed). In the next round, it attempts to finish off any spellcasters or unarmed foes with a full attack.

15.) Haunted Refectory: Once a glorious dining hall, this 30ft. by 50ft. black stone

and gold-trimmed room is now covered in cobwebs and dust. In the center of the room is a huge stone table surrounded by old wooden chairs. Hanging above the table is a chandelier covered in cobwebs, tipped sideways and half-shattered. Along the west wall are the remnants of a sideboard flanked by a bench on both sides of the doorway. On the east wall is a web-covered fireplace with mantle surrounded on one side by a pile of dried out firewood. On the other side is a small overturned table and chairs lying next to a dented lamp and broken oil bottle.

Creatures (EL 11): Seated at the end of table in whispered conversation is a small group of spectres. If anyone disturbs the spectres, they attack.

Spectre (4): hp45 (x4); see Monster Manual page 232.

Tactics: The spectres will attempt to split the party up and eliminate them one at a time. Should they be turned they will flee to Area 18 and return with reinforcements once the turning ends.

16.) Kitchen and Pantry: This 30ft. square room contains many stone shelves, cabinets, and tables. Along the east wall is a large stone oven flanked by a cauldron on the northeastern side. The room is covered with ash, debris, and is abnormally cold. Inside the cabinets is a set of broken crockery, dishes, and cups. In the drawers of the tables are several tarnished old utensils, meat hooks, and broken jars.

17.) Baths: This 40ft. vaulted-arched triangular room has many basins in the floor where baths were once drawn. These

basins appear to have fresh water in them as well. Along the walls are sconces filled with old rags, smashed bottles of oils, and ruined bars of soap. In the far corner of the room is a large sapphire set into a cold iron cradle. The sapphire is a 3in. sphere and the cradle sets roughly 4ft. from the floor. Touching the cradle or the gem produces a fiery blue glow from the gem.

Creatures (EL 11): If the characters remove the sapphire from the cradle, the elemental is released from its binding. Once released it immediately attacks.

Elemental, Elder Water: hp 226; see Monster Manual page 100.

Treasure: The sapphire in the cradle is worth 1,000gp.

18.) Old Sleeping Quarters: This 40ft. square room was once a barracks. Nevertheless, those days have long past. The floor of this room is littered with splinters, rust, broken weapons, and dust. The walls of this room are heavily damaged and have notches in them where beds once mounted into the walls.

Creatures (EL 13): Mourning the loss of their lives millennia ago the spectres of this room attack as the characters enter the room.

Spectres (7): hp45 (x7); see Monster Manual page 232.

19.) Entry to the Deep: This 30ft. square room once housed a magical elevator traversed its way down to the caverns below, but now nothing remains but a gaping hole in the ground. The magical lift is no longer functional. In the northeast and northwest corners are defaced statues

of gold (entire state worth 1000gp, 1gp per sliver). The entire west wall is covered with a mess of runny inks which were once a beautiful mosaic of the Hellfurnaces prior to the Twin Cataclysms. Scrawled into the east wall above a wall basin lined with mold is a warning in Ancient Suloise. It reads, "What is below should remain below. Tamper not with cold iron or fiery doom thou whilst know."

Note: Should the Beholder below hear the characters above (Listen check) it will float up to investigate and prepare an assault as they come down, destroying them as they enter its lair.

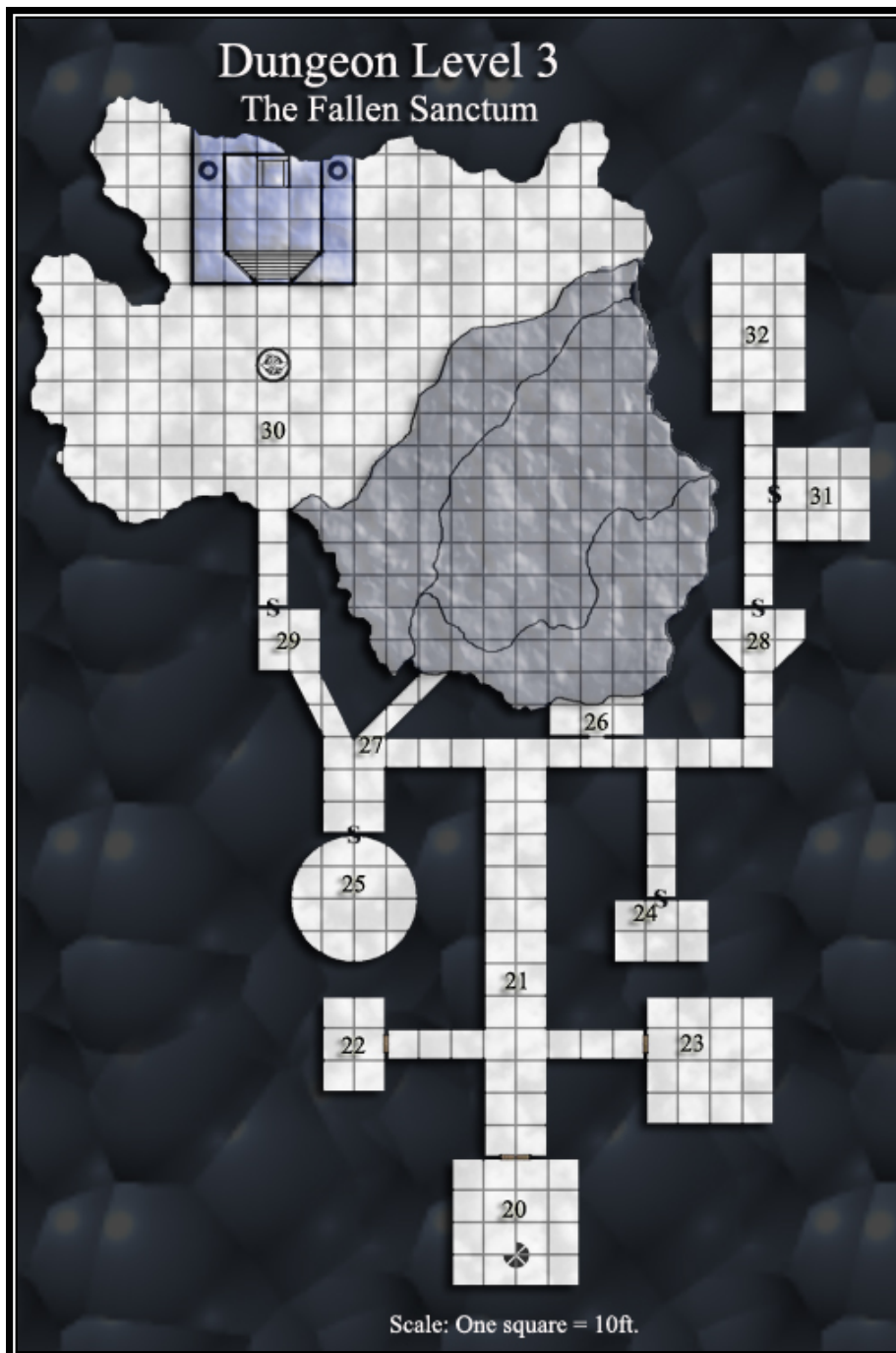
Dungeon Level Three: The Fallen Sanctuary

20.) Beholder's Lair: This 40ft. square room is riddled with blast holes and shattered statues made by the beholder that made its way here a week ago. Across the room is a closed 20ft. wide portcullis.

Creatures (EL 13): The elderly beholder is lost and angry. As the characters enter the room, the beholder bounds forth and attacks.

Beholder: hp 93; see Monster Manual page 26-27.

Tactics: While concealed below, the Beholder in this chamber attacks the first character through with two eye rays disintegrate and charm monster. Should the initial attack succeed the beholder will have its new charmed friend attack his old companions, or ruin their means of escape if they came down on ropes.



Should the initial attack fail, following this, it lurks back into the shadows. As soon as the characters have all entered the room the beholder rushes into the middle of them, keeping its anti-magic eye focused on any arcane spellcasters while attempting to bite them. Against melee classes it uses its eye rays that focus

on Willpower saves, while on casters it uses the eye rays that focus on Fortitude saves.

Should the battle go afoul, the beholder floats through the hole up to Room 19, and destroys the ropes. Using this position to pick off the characters one by one, as they come back up after it.

Portcullis, iron magical, locked: 2 in. thick; Hardness 20; hp 120; Break DC 30/ DC 20 to Lift, Open Lock DC 30; *permanent anti-magic field* spell upon the portcullis.

21.) Long Hallway: This 20ft. by 130ft. long hallway is littered with rock bits, dust and cobwebs. The walls and ceiling are

covered with bas reliefs of an ancient battle between the Suel and Baklunish. Upon closer inspection the battle appears to be based in a mountain range. In the center of the piece is a single spellcaster facing a large devil. The spellcaster holds a large multi-faceted gem which he holds over his head.

22.) Divination Refuge: This 20ft. by 30ft. domed chamber has a large pool in the center of the room. The bottom of the pool is covered in tarnished platinum. It is currently dry but shows sign of once holding water. Along the southern wall are several sconces built into the walls. On the sconces are dry-rotted clothes, tarnished silver and cold iron items. Along the east wall is a shattered mirror with glass covering the floor in front of it. Along the west wall is a wash-basin with several sconces next to it. In the southwest corner is a tipped over crystal case containing seven various-sized crystals used in divination.

Treasure: The gems in the case are worth 50-500gp each based on size. There are seven in all. Fist-sized prism 500gp, Fist-sized crystal sphere 350gp, small crystal prism 200gp, small square-crystal 100gp, small oval crystal 100gp, small crystal sphere 100gp, tiny crystal pyramid 50gp.

23.) Great Library: 40ft. square room is largely intact. By comparison, these walls have very few cracks. The north and east walls have bookshelves built into them. The south wall has several alcoves with stone benches and sconces above them. At the center of the chamber is a large table covered with dust and cobwebs. On the table amidst the cobwebs is an ancient silver candelabrum (100gp worth). Most of the tomes and books of this library have long fallen into ruin and dust.

Treasure: If anyone casts *mending* or *make whole* upon any of the books in this room they will be restored, but still

will still be written in Ancient Suloise. Should any of the books be recovered their knowledge could be invaluable to many scholars. Among the many volumes is a *tome of clear thought +1*.

Development: The DM is encouraged to be creative if the party is faltering or needs a clue. The addition of the following books may give the character a +2 to any knowledge, Spellcraft, or search check dealing with the appropriate subject within the ruins, should the DM feel they may be beneficial to the PC's. The books are processes of binding, infernal anatomy and psychology, illusory craft, an ancient copy of the *Grimoire Arcanamacha* (See *Complete Arcane*), the notations on the creation of the *diablerem*.*

Note: These notations describe the process to destroy the gem, should the devil be loosed.

24.) Laboratory- Illusion and Evocation: The door opens into a lush green valley filled with beautiful trees. Through the center of the valley is a small stream that ends under a wall covered in vines and leaves. The ceiling exhibits a clear blue sky with scattered clouds here and there. The ground is covered with green grass and wild multi-colored flowers.

In reality this 20ft. by 30ft. room is nothing more than a plain stone room with several statues placed against the walls for spellcasters to test their ranged target spells. There are old blast marks on the walls and dust covers many of the old scorch marks along the floor. This room is a trap used by the ancient Suel to passively capture an invader to the arcanum.

Trap: Upon opening the door to this room, anyone within 10ft. of the door is affected by the following spells. Turning the door handle itself triggers the *mind fog*, while the *mirage arcana* and *mass suggestion* (come in and relax) are not activated until the door is opened.

Heightened-Empowered mind fog

Trap. CR 13; magic device; proximity trigger (*alarm*); manual reset; spell effects (empowered-*mind fog*, 17th-level wizard with Spell Focus Enchantment, Illusion, 24 INT, Heighten Spell and Empower Spell feats, DC 25 Will save negates); multiple targets (all targets in a 30-ft.-by-30-ft. area); Search DC 35; Disable Device DC 35.

Mirage arcana with mass suggestion

Trap. CR 13; magic device; proximity trigger (*alarm*); manual reset; spell effects (*mirage arcana*, *mass suggestion*, 17th-level wizard with Spell Focus Enchantment, Illusion, 24 INT, Heighten Spell and Empower Spell feats, DC 25 Will save negates); multiple targets (all targets in a 30-ft.-by-30-ft. area); Search DC 34; Disable Device.

25.) Conjunction Chamber: This 40' circular room is covered in white dust and bits of stone. An indistinguishable odor emits from within. In the center of the room is a large circle of carved runes inlaid into the floor. Along the south wall is a large ovular white marble table covered with ancient magical implements. Along the east wall are several empty rusted cages. On the west wall are several binding tools including several cold iron bars and a set of manacles moored into the wall.

Note: If the players have made allies with either the Efreeti or the Salamanders they can have the cold iron bars forged into any weapon type of their choosing in half the normal time to forge such a weapon. The manacles can be used to rebind the horned devil should the party want to rebind the horned devil it rather than kill it.

Treasure: *cold iron binding manacles*, See Appendix I

26.) Destroyed Study: This 30ft. square room now has barely 20ft. square remaining to it. The entire back wall has collapsed. Buried in rubble is a small silver shrine. A Knowledge Religion check DC 20 reveals the shrine to be devoted to the Suel God, Lendor, Father God of the Suel Pantheon, and God of Time, Tedium, Patience, and Study. Along the remaining walls are a few sconces filled with ruined candles and smashed incense holders.

Creatures (EL 13): As the PC's pass the archway to this chamber; the Xorn leaps forth at the first PC. The lost Xorn was resting in the ruins of this room.

Xorn, Elder: hp130; see Monster Manual page 260-261.

Trap: Any sonic, blast, force spell or even digging within this room will cause the ceiling to collapse as will any heavy impact damage to the walls.

27.) Blocked Hallway: Down about 30ft. into this 10ft. wide corridor the corridor ends in a cave-in. (Traveling down or digging in this area could induce another collapse.)

28.) Antechamber Study: This 20ft. by 30ft. arched hexagonal chamber suffers from many stress cracks riddling it. Broken chairs and rubble litter the floor. Built into each corner of the room are small carved pedestals. Built into the walls of the room are sconces.

Creatures (EL 16): Should the PC's wish to talk to the ghost he parleys with them. If they attack, it retaliates.

Ghostly Suel Wizard CR 16

Male Human (Ghost)

LN Medium Undead (Augmented Humanoid) (Incorporeal)

Init.: +7 Listen +10, Spot +10, darkvision 60ft.

Languages: Common, Draconic, Infernal, Ancient Suloise.

AC 28 touch 25, flatfooted 25

hp 97 (14 HD) incorporeal, undead

Immunities: electricity, paralysis, and *sleep*.

Resistances: undead (incorporeal)

Fort +9, **Ref** +10, **Will** +14

Speed: Fly 40 (Perfect)

Melee: incorporeal touch +9/ +4 (1d4 [1d4+1 vs. ethereal), or +3 *dagger* +12/ +7.

Space: 5ft. **Reach:** 5ft.

Base Atk: +7 **Grapple:** +9

Atk Options: -

Special Actions: corrupting gaze, draining touch, manifestation.

Combat Gear: +3 *dagger* (*ghost touch*), *staff of fire* (charges: 14), *ring of counterspells* (*magic missile*), *rod of cancellation*

Spells Prepared - (Wiz 4/6/6/6/6/4/4/3): 0 - *detect magic*, *open/close*, *read magic*, *resistance*; 1st - *burning hands*, *magic missile* x3, *obscuring mist*, *protection from chaos*; 2nd - *arcane lock*, *darkness*, *flaming sphere*, *locate object*, *mirror image*, *web*; 3rd - *fireball*, *flame arrow* x2, *haste*, *stinking cloud*, *tongues*; 4th - *charm monster* x2, *detect scrying*, *polymorph*, *solid fog*, *wall of fire*; 5th - *cloudkill*, *dismissal*, *stone shape*, *wall of iron*; 6th -- *analyze dweomer*, *greater dispel magic*, *guards and wards*, *mass suggestion*; 7th - *finger of death*, *forcecage*, *reverse gravity*.

Abilities: STR 14, DEX 16, CON -, INT 26, WIS 15, CHA 18.

SQ: incorporeal traits, rejuvenation, +4 turn resistance, undead traits.

Feats: Combat Casting, Craft Staff, Empower Spell, Great Fortitude, Improved Initiative, Scribe Scroll, Spell Focus: Conjunction, Spell Mastery(8), Spell Penetration.

Skills: Alchemy +25, Appraise +10, Concentration +17, Hide +11, Knowledge (Arcana) +25, Knowledge (Engineering) +18, Knowledge (History) +25, Knowledge (The Planes) +18, Listen +10, Scry +25, Search +12, Spellcraft +25, Spot +10.

Possessions: combat gear plus +3 *ring of protection*, +3 *amulet of natural armor*, +5 *bracers of armor*, +3 *cloak of resistance*, +6 *headband of intellect*, spellbook, wizard's, spell component pouch, scholar's outfit.

Spellbook: 0 -- *arcane mark*, *dancing lights*, *daze*, *detect magic*, *detect poison*, *disrupt undead*, *flare*, *ghost sound*, *light*, *mage hand*, *mending*, *open/close*, *prestidigitation*, *ray of frost*, *read magic*, *resistance*; 1st -- *alarm*, *burning hands*,

charm person, chill touch, comprehend languages, detect secret doors, expeditious retreat, identify, mage armor, magic missile, obscuring mist, protection from chaos, spider climb; 2nd -- arcane lock, darkness, flaming sphere, invisibility, levitate, locate object, mirror image, protection from arrows, see invisibility, summon swarm, web; 3rd – dispel magic, fireball, flame arrow, haste, stinking cloud, suggestion, tongues; 4th -- charm monster, detect scrying, minor creation, polymorph, solid fog, wall of fire; 5th -- cloudkill, dismissal, major creation, permanency, stone shape, wall of iron; 6th -- analyze dweomer, greater dispel magic, guards and wards, legend lore, mass suggestion, true seeing; 7th – finger of death, forcecage, reverse gravity, vision.

Ghost abilities: *corrupting gaze, draining touch, manifestation, rejuvenation-* See Monster Manual pg. 117-118

Roleplaying Hooks: If the PC's choose to talk to the ghost he will ask them a favor and in return for this favor he will answer any questions they may have about the ruins. The favor he asks is to remove his remains from the Necromantic Chamber. This can be done by removing his remains from the necromantic chamber to pass on to another existence. His remains are the bones in front of the black crystal tube in Area 14.

If asked about the evil the ghost tells them either that the evil they seek is an ancient devil imprisoned within the Chamber of Sealing. If asked about the gem, he states that it is part of the binding process but

does not remember which part. The Great Library in Area 23 may hold more information. Beyond that, he has no recollection of much else.

29.) Shrine to the Lower Planes: In the center of this 20ft. square black marble chamber is an altar made of congealed blood held in place by mysterious magic. Setting on this altar is a single idol made of jade and formed into a rough humanoid shape. On the north wall is a large gong, set in front of a tapestry depicting a river of blood flooding a small village.

A successful Knowledge Religion check DC 20, will confirm this altar to be one devoted to Pyremius, Suel God of Fire, Murder and Poison. Behind the tapestry is a secret door.

Trap: Should a non-evil character kneel or worship at this altar they be targeted by a *phantasmal killer* spell trap.

Phantasmal Killer Trap: CR 5; magic device; proximity trigger (*alarm* covering the altar area); automatic reset; spell effect (*phantasmal killer*, 17th-level wizard with Spell Focus Enchantment, Illusion, 24 INT, Heighten Spell and Empower Spell feats, DC 22 Will save for disbelief and DC 23 Fort save for partial effect); Search DC 29; Disable Device DC 29.

30.) Azure Cavern: This 120 ft. By 140 ft. lapis lazuli cavern is lit by two thundering braziers, erupting with azure flames. Upon the dais, in between these braziers is a large sapphire throne. The walls of this chamber are radiating, as if lightning exists within them. On the ceiling is a grand mural of a blue dragon fighting a group of

warriors on a glassy desert floor. Half of this room is lost to a cave-in. In the center of the room is a pool of mercury with a dragon fountain in the center. (The ceiling and walls are an illusion created by the *programmed image* spell.)

Creatures: Sitting on the throne is a man wearing dark blue robes, with hair and eyes of the same deep hue.

Azurerazor CR 22

Male Blue Dragon, Ancient

LE Gargantuan Dragon (Earth)
Init.: +0 Listen +40, Spot +40,
darkvision 120ft., low-light vision
Aura: frightful presence: 330-ft. radius,
HD 35 or less, Will DC 33 negates.
Languages: Common, Draconic, Infernal,
Ancient Suloise.

AC 41 touch 6, flatfooted 41 +4
shield bonus when *shield* spell is cast.
hp 522 (36 HD) damage reduction
20/magic
Immunities: electricity, paralysis, and
sleep.
Resistances: spell resistance 29.
Fort 28, Ref 20, Will 25.

Speed: 40, Burrow 20, Fly (Clumsy) 200
Melee: +45 (Bite 4d6+13), +40 (2 Claws
2d8+6), +40 (2 Wings 2d6+6), +40 (Tail
slap 2d8+19), +40 (Crush; 4d6+19), +40
(Tail sweep 2d6+19); or (+2 *dagger*:
+37/32/27/22, 1d4+15).
Space: 20ft. **Reach:** 15ft. (20ft. with bite)
Base Atk: +36 **Grapple:** +61
Atk Options: (*Crush*) - Area 20ft. by 20ft;
Small or smaller opponents take 4d6+19 of
bludgeoning damage, and must succeed on

a DC 33 Reflex save or be pinned; Flyby
Attack, Large and In Charge.

Special Actions: (*Breath Weapon*): 100ft.
line, damage 22d8 electricity, Reflex DC
36 half.

Combat Gear: +2 *dagger*, *ring of
shapechange* (1/day).

Spells Known - (Caster Level 15): Sor
6/8/8/8/7/7/7/5): 0 -- arcane mark, dancing
lights, detect magic, detect poison, ghost
sound, mending, prestidigitation, read
magic, resistance; 1st -- color spray,
comprehend languages, feather fall,
identify, shield; 2nd -- alter self,
invisibility, mirror image, misdirection,
see invisibility; 3rd --
clairaudience/clairvoyance, dispel magic,
displacement, tongues; 4th -- detect
scrying, improved invisibility, rainbow
pattern, scrying; 5th -- dominate person,
dream, false vision, prying eyes; 6th --
greater shadow evocation, legend lore,
programmed image; 7th -- greater scrying,
simulacrum.

Spell-Like Abilities - (Caster Level 15): 3/
day-*ventriloquism*; 1/day - *hallucinatory
terrain*, *veil*.

Abilities: STR 37, DEX 10, CON 27, INT
20, WIS 21, CHA 24.

SQ: *create/destroy water*, sound imitation.

Feats: Clinging Breath, Eschew Materials,
Flyby Attack, Large and In Charge,
Maximize Breath, Quicken Breath,
Quicken Spell-Like Ability, Spell Focus:
Divination, Spell Focus: Illusion,
Wingover.

Skills: Bluff +40, Concentration +47,
Diplomacy +40, Escape Artist +15, Hide
+34, Knowledge (Arcana) +40, Knowledge
(Geography) +15, Knowledge (Geology)

+15, Knowledge (History) +15, Listen +40, Scry +44, Search +40, Spellcraft +40, Spot +40;

Possessions: combat gear plus *ring of sustenance, rod of splendor, crystal ball with telepathy, amulet of proof against detection and location.*

Create/Destroy Water (Sp): 3/day as create water, but can also be used to destroy water. CL15; Will DC 33 negates.

Sound Imitation (Ex): The dragon can mimic any voice or sound it has heard, anytime it likes. Listeners must succeed at a Will save DC 33 to detect the ruse.

Azure razor:

“Yes, it was I who sent the images. These chambers are shielded from all divinatory means. Therefore, the divinations your great arcanists cast were nothing more than bait for my escape.

You see, I was forced to flee here during the Rain of Colorless Fire and was trapped as the land melted beneath me. Hence this sanctuary became my prison. Discouraged and bereft of any means of escape, I laid down to sleep. Recently, however, I was awakened, by a great rumbling within the earth. It was then that I sent the images of a great black diamond to you humans. I knew men would come and I would be freed from this prison. Now I offer you aid should you wish to acquire a trinket for your own. All I require is that I am set free from this chamber. I, unfortunately, do not know the way out, and I know in this miserable (human?) form I would be incapable of

escaping alone. The specters alone would tear this form to pieces. Beyond that my true form would not fit into even the greatest halls of this structure. I barely make due in this chamber. So what say you mortals? Shall we be partners?

- If the characters want payment, Nos'Yaj will offer them all of the treasure in his chamber and anything he cannot use in his true form.
- Should they not agree, he will agree to help them find any other treasures close to his lair and fight alongside them, so long as they keep their bargain to help him escape.
- Should they attack outright, he will retaliate in kind.

31.) Ancient Treasury: This 30ft. square chamber is littered with dust and rubble. At the back wall of this chamber is a statue of a white-haired, bearded, husky, distressed looking old man is staring intensely at the floor. A successful Knowledge Religion check DC 15 will reveal that the statue is of the Suel God, Lendor. Among the rubble on the floor of this chamber are several smashed chests of spilled treasures.

Located beneath the statue of Lendor is a secret compartment. (Search DC 30)

Stone Trunk with mithril lock: This 5ft. long by 5ft. deep box is locked. Open Lock: 30, Hardness 10; hp 90; Break DC 28.

Trap: Attempting to open this trunk without disabling the trap springs the trap.

Prismatic Spray Trap: CR 8; magic device; proximity trigger (*alarm*); automatic reset; spell effect (*prismatic spray*, 13th-level wizard, DC 20 Reflex, Fortitude, or Will save, depending on effect); Search DC 32; Disable Device DC 32

Treasure: Among the litter on the floor is a platinum box (400pp), a black star sapphire (2,500 gp); golden pearl (100 gp); alexandrite (500 gp); black pearl (500 gp); golden yellow topaz (700 gp); violet garnet (500 gp); white opal (1,000 gp); silver chalice with lapis lazuli gems (150 gp); silver dagger with jet jewel in hilt (100 gp); ceremonial electrum dagger with a star ruby in the pommel (1,000 gp) and 1000gp.

Inside the stone trunk, lining are the following: *silver blade of amensthim* (see Appendix I); *+4 mithril shield, large, steel*; *+4 mithril full plate: fortification moderate*; *+3 siangham*; *staff of defense* (charges: 25)

Hidden beneath the lining in a secret compartment (Search DC 20) are the following: *chime of opening*, *manual of bodily health +1*, *wand of darkness* (CL14 - Charges: 17).

32.) The Sealed Chamber: Once at the door to this room a magic mouth pops into existence and says the following in Ancient Suloise, “Any whom open this door, shall dread the shattering of night.”

Magically-Treated Cold Iron Door: 4 in. thick; Hardness 20; hp 120; Break DC

28. Search DC 30; Open Lock DC: 35. Disable Device DC 32; (*arcane lock* DC 32)

Trap: The door to this chamber is etched with many warding runes. The door is locked and made of solid cold iron. If someone attempts to open the lock, the trap is triggered.

Destruction Trap: CR 8; magic device; touch trigger (*alarm*); automatic reset; spell effect (*destruction*, 13th-level cleric, DC 20 Fortitude save for 10d6 damage); Search DC 32; Disable Device DC 32.

Note: A successful Knowledge Arcana DC 25; will confirm that these runes on the surfaces are used to block divinatory spells. After these runes have been analyzed the reader may then attempt to divine what’s inside the room. (*screen, heightened* (on room) and *sequester, heightened* (on creature): Cast by a 20th level wizard, with Spell Focus: Illusion and 30 INT + *false vision* + *contingency* (+2) + materials bonus cold iron (+2) and lead (+2) = (Screen/Sequester: 20+9+1+2+2+2=36 DC on Scry)

Every surface of this 30ft. by 50ft. domed room is made of lead. Etched upon the walls are thousands of etched warding runes that glow deep violet. In the center of this room is a cold-iron cradle holding a 2ft spherical multi-faceted black diamond covered in glowing esoteric runes, layered one over another. Other than this the room is entirely vacant. The gem also called the *diablerem* (see below), is actually the key binding item that holds the horned devil, Nak’ Suith’ Athir.

Trap: *The Diablerem*; This large 2ft. spherical multi-faceted black diamond is covered with thousands of esoteric runes,

layered over one another. These runes are written in three different tongues. The first is written in Ancient Suloise, the second is ancient magical script, the final sealing layer is written in the Ancient Baklunish.

Effects:

- Any whom touch the multi-faceted gem physically are treated as if they had touched a *sphere of annihilation*.
- Should the glyphs upon it read aloud or through a *read magic* spell, the reader must make a successful Fortitude save (DC 19) against a *heightened contagion* spell. Failure to do so will result in being infected with the Mindfire disease. In addition, the gem will glow bright red and Nak' Suith'Athir the horned devil, the will be released from imprisonment. This action renders the gem inert and removes the *sphere of annihilation*.

Destroying the Gem: To destroy the diablerem, the PC's must keep the gem within the cradle. This keeps the horned devil from escaping. Then they must read incantations from the "Notations on the creation of the *Diablerem*". Afterward the following spells must be cast in the following order. (Detailed in the notations on the creation of the *diablerem*) *dispel magic*, *fireball* or *flame strike*, and *shatter*. Then it must be struck with *the silver blade of amensthim* and deal a total of 50 damage to the gem to destroy it; severing the bond between it and the devil permanently.

Creatures (EL 16): If released the horned devil questions the PC's. If attacked the horned devil, retaliates.

Nak' Suith'Athir; Horned Devil: hp 172; see Monster Manual page 55.

This creature, once released, will seek to restore itself to its former glory and destroy the entire Suel race and all who oppose it. The party has only days to find what is needed to destroy this creature and to do so. An artifact must be found within the city itself. The *silver blade of amensthim* is the only weapon capable of killing the creature.

Trap: Once the devil is dead should the gem be removed from the cradle it triggers an earthquake.

Earthquake Trap: CR 8; magic device; proximity trigger (*alarm*); automatic reset; spell effect (*earthquake*, 13th-level cleric, 65-ft. radius, DC 15 or 20 Reflex save, depending on terrain); Search DC 32; Disable Device DC 32.

Concluding the Adventure

Working for Lashton: Although Lashton will be seriously upset that the gem is not what he had been wishing for he will still keep true to his word. He pays the PC's in full and pockets the black diamond (32,000gp worth) for sale to a Suel antiquities dealer whom he knows in Nirole Dra.

Working for the Silent Ones: Exceptionally grateful that the ruins to the Sanctuary of Fallen Stars are again buried within the Hellfurnaces and that the *diablerem* has been destroyed or rendered inert, Alundil pays the PC's and tells them

that he may future uses for them should they be interested. The PC's gain the favor of the Silent Ones within Keoland.

Playing both sides: Should the PC's play both sides there is a chance that one side will find out. Should the PC's give Lashton the gem. This will anger, Alundil and the Silent Ones; the PC's may be in for a heap of trouble. Lashton while infuriated at the PC's arrogance will differ to their clever-workings. Noting their cleverness, Lashton will see to it that he keeps eyes on the PC's while they are within Keoland and beyond, should he have need of them again he will send another lackey to summon them.

Alundil and the Silent Ones, however, will be extremely incensed for having their trust broken and their money taken. Alundil will disregard the PC's claims on their "earnings". If pressed he will offer them 100gp for burying the ruins and nothing more. After this the Silent Ones, extremely displeased with the PC's will watch them intensely and will see to it that they and their money are quickly parted through subtle methods.

Binding the Devils Services: Alternatively the PC's may choose to bind the devil to their services. To do this they may either first employ the *Cold Iron Binding Manacles* to gain control of it or they may simply use ulterior methods. Either way, the devil will be loath at first to be serving mortals. However, if he is paid in some means and released back to the Nine Hells he will begrudgingly assist the PC's anyway he can.

Keeping the gem for themselves: Depending on which side the PC's are working for either faction will be quite incensed at the fact they've been duped out of their bargain. In Lashtons', case he may have the party arrested for larceny and fraud. In the case of Alundil and the Silent Ones, they will be watching the PC's from a distance and will attempt to remove the diamond should they believe it to be a magical threat.

Scaling the Adventure

Although this adventure is designed for 13th level PCs, the module can be modified for higher or lower level parties by increasing or decreasing the number of opponents and modifying the main villains.

Here are a few general suggestions:

8th to 10th level PCs: Run the adventure as written. Although 8th to 10th level PCs will find the adventure more challenging than 13th level PCs. Consider reducing the number of monsters encountered in each area. Drop the elementals down to huge and replace the final horned devil with a barbed or bone devil.

13th level PCs: Run the adventure as written.

14th to 16th level PC's: Run the adventure as written. Although 14th to 16th level PCs will find the adventure slightly less challenging than 13th level PCs. If the PC's are having too easy a time, add a few more monsters per encounter. It may also be recommended to increase the level or advance the monsters hit dice on some encounters.

Appendix I

Cold Iron Binding Manacles: These manacles have the ability to bind a demon or devil into a (hedged prison) as the *binding* spell. Any demon/ devil shackled with these must make a Will save (DC 31) or be bound. (DC = spellcaster INT +10, *heightened binding* spell +9, base save DC +10, material bonus +2. Total = 31)

The Silver Blade of Amensthim; +3 Intelligent Cursed Longsword: Keen, Holy, Bane: Outsider (Evil); AL NG; INT 20, WIS 18, CHA 16; Ego 21; Communication: Telepathy; Languages: Ancient Baklunish, Ancient Suloise, Celestial, Elven, Sylvan; Wielder can *see invisible* at will; Wielder has free use of Evasion; *detect evil* at will; Special Purpose: Defeat/slay devils; Purpose Power: *true resurrection* on wielder, once per decade; Extraordinary Power: *globe of invulnerability* (1 per day). Cursed: Dependant functioning: only functions within 30ft. of any devil.

This silver-adamantine alloy blade was one of the first of its kind created for the Suel Arcanamach named, Amensthim. Amensthim was one of the last great arcanamachs of the Suel Imperium. He

was tasked with protecting potential artifacts that may be of danger to the Imperium. In the days, before the Twin Cataclysms, Amensthim was ordered to guard the greatest wizards of the Suel Imperium as they prepared the Invoked Devastation, what occurred thereafter has been lost to the ages. Now the great blade of the prestigious arcanamach lies buried deep in the Sanctuary of Fallen Seas.

Dungeon Masters' Dilemma

