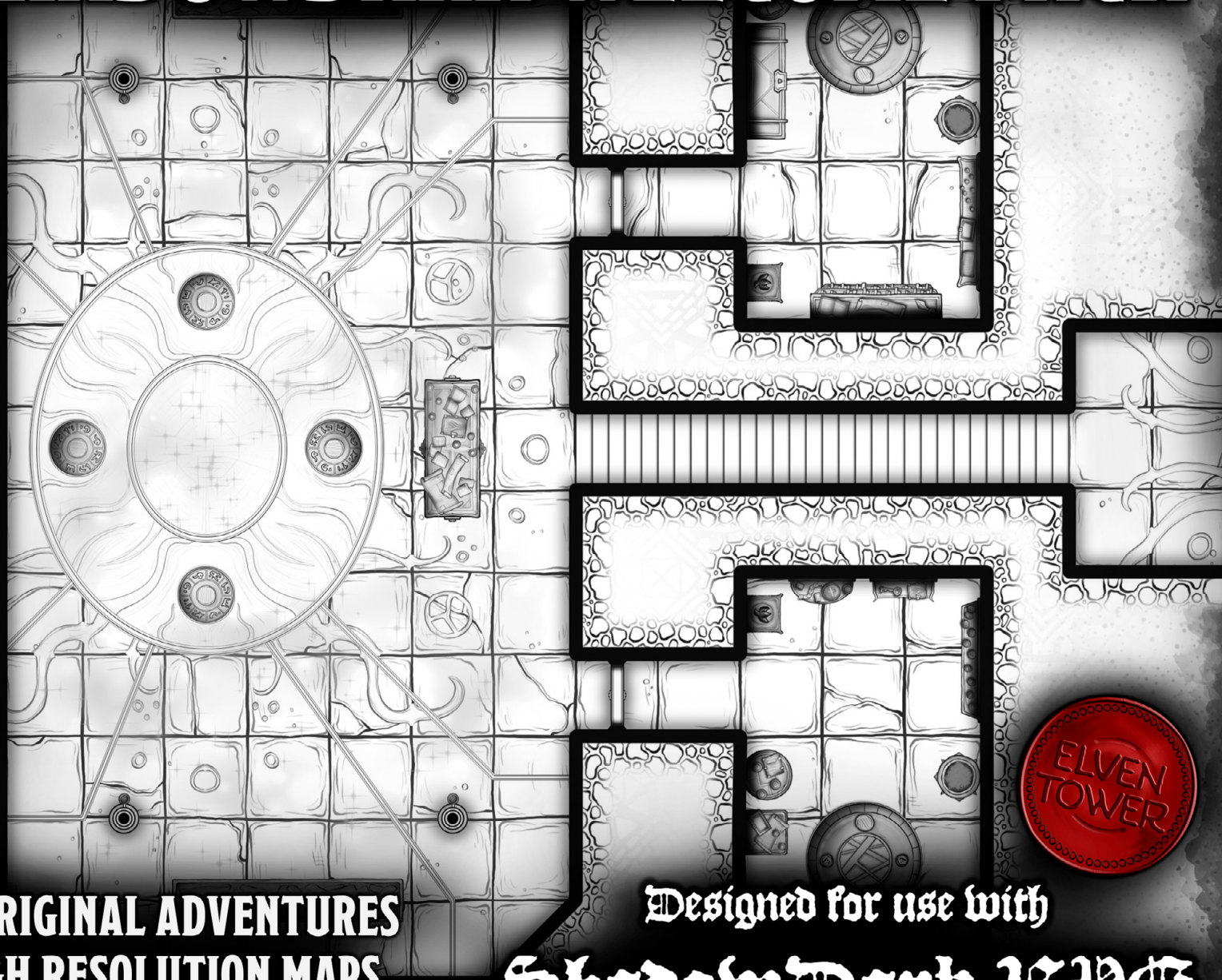


DUNGEON VAULT MAGAZINE



SHADOWDARK WELCOME PACK



5 ORIGINAL ADVENTURES
HIGH RESOLUTION MAPS
VTT - ROLL20 MAPS

Designed for use with

ShadowDark RPG



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WELCOME TO SHADOWDARK RPG

We are Elven Tower, a small team of Mexican creators who illustrate medieval-fantasy maps and write great adventures for each of them. We have been operating for over six years in the TTRPG market and have crafted 600+ cartography pieces and a similar amount of written content for them. We used to do 5e content but we decided to make the shift to **Shadowdark RPG** as of March of 2023.

This supplement is a sample pack for our **Shadowdark RPG** creations. Four low-level, original adventures; each features an original cartography piece. And an extra goodie, a system-neutral, one-page dungeon titled *The Mirrors of Ord*.

We compile our monthly creations into our popular *Dungeon Vault Magazine*. Within, in addition to our in-house creations, we often feature paid guest writers to supply all kinds of additional content: player options, GM material, monsters, etc. Shadowdark 3rd party creators are sure to appear in our magazine soon!

This is a special issue of our monthly magazine, created to promote our work to the Shadowdark RGP audience. It is made free thanks to our awesome supporters on Patreon, DrivethruRPG, and other storefronts. If you like the stuff found herein we would appreciate your [support on Patreon](#). But if subscribe sites are not your cup of tea, you can purchase the magazine directly at [DrivethruRPG](#).



Fresh Shadowdark RPG Content

THE EYE OF THE LOST

Little is known of the two lost deities. Not even their names. Not even their images. But some priests claim their influence still can be sensed in the world...

Annals of the Nine



There were nine gods; that much is certain. But a void in the common knowledge burns brighter the more scholars study it. The fact is that two gods are lost to the ages. Their names purged from all ancestries' memories. Their imagery vandalized, destroyed, or stolen. And yet, some texts from eons ago still mention these gods; though never by name. And some cultures still retain a taboo or a myth that can be tracked down to their existence.

Not men, nor elves, nor dragons can make sense of this lack of information. Why were these gods purged from existence? Is this a punishment? Will they ever be known again? Scholars have wondered about those questions for centuries. Still, they hope that a new text, relic, or ancient location shall soon be unearthed and that it may hold the key to understanding the forgone past.

A band of lowly brigands found such a place a month ago in an uncharted cavern near a large town. In its depths, they found seven limestone, tentacle-like, slithering yet immobile appendages converging on a glowing gemstone. The gem is an ancient device used to commune with one of the two lost deities. The bandits were enraptured by the multi-faceted stone. The Eye of the Lost spoke to them. Threading thoughts into their minds and gifting some of them with the power to manipulate the weave of magic. They became the Cult of The Lost.

Since then, the bandits raid the merchant roads looking for live prisoners to bring to the eye. Some of them are enraptured by it and become new cultists. The rest are slain on the stone and the blood that drips onto The Eye of the Lost is absorbed by the strangely glowing gem.

ADVENTURE HOOKS

Justice. Fifteen people have gone missing. It is enough. The bailiff posts a bounty contract for vanquishing the growing cultist group once and for all (30 gp, 1 XP).

Concerned Father. A nobleman begs the characters to help him. His daughter, Anna, was taken by the cultists 4 days ago. He offers a pearl as a reward (40 gp, 2 XP).

Vincent. He hires the party to investigate the cult as they have used strange magic during their raids. The mage is worried about the implications (20 gp, 1 XP).

RUMORS

d6	Details
1	Prospectors went to the cavern a decade ago and left in a hurry. An underground, insect monster attacked them.
2	Some of the cultists are known brigands and criminals of the region. None of them were overly religious before.
3	Two loggers approached the mine stealthily 2 days ago and claim they saw two lit braziers by the entrance.
4	The bandit leader is wanted for robbing a banker's home and holding two noblemen hostage for ransom.
5	A survivor of a recent incident claims she heard a cultist say: <i>'All for the will of The Lost'</i> , while casting a spell.
6	The cultists attacked a noble caravan 3 days ago.

Level 1 Adventure

► **Danger.** Risky. Check for encounters every 2 crawling rounds and after a battle or loud noises (1-in-6 chance).

► **Light.** Some chambers have braziers with permanent light; the rest are dark. All denizens are dark-adapted.

► **Seismic Activity.** Once per hour, there is a 2-in-6 chance that any of the limestone tendrils moves, causing a quake in the area. Debris falls from the cavern ceilings, dealing 1d6 damage to all creatures (DC 12 DEX check).

► **The Hum.** The hum of cultists chanting in area 7 can be heard from anywhere within the caves. When in close proximity, it is revealed the cultists chant in Primordial. The Eye of the Lost appears to react to this language.

RANDOM EVENTS

d6	Details
1	Two cultists (peasants) approach, drop their arms, and ask for help. They have been pretending to be cultists.
2	A giant bat swoops from the dark ceiling and attacks a random creature. It only wants to find prey.
3	A patrol of 1 cultist and 2 bandits approaches. One of the bandits is Anna, a noble lady (see Adventure Hooks).
4	A vision of a desolate land assails the characters (DC 13 WIS check). Two faceless entities meander aimlessly through a darkened forest. They are The Lost.
5	The Eye of the Lost produces a magical pulse. All light sources in the cave are suddenly extinguished, magical or not. Complete darkness takes over the cavern.
6	A cave creeper approaches from the depths. The stench of blood and rot has brought it to this place.



1. THE SURROUNDINGS

Two large iron braziers burn by the cavern's entrance. The trees within 100 feet of it have all withered.

► **Getting Here.** By now, the cultists' lair location is common knowledge. Anyone can show the characters its location on a map. It is a 1-hour, uneventful trip.

► **The Braziers.** The braziers are filled with unburnt logs. The fire produces no heat. A spellcaster identifies the source of this flame as the *light* spell (DC 9 INT).

► **The Trees.** A strange blight has assailed these trees. A careful observer notices that the trees have sustained greater necrotic damage on the sides facing south.

► **The Patrol.** Each crawling round that the characters remain here, there is a 3-in-6 chance that a patrol of 1 **cultist**, 1 **bandit**, and 2 **peasants** returns from the east. If alerted, one of them goes inside to warn the others.

2. THE MOUND OF BONES

In the darkness of this cavern, there is a mound of countless bones. Most are humanoid, others are not. Some bones appear to move when no one is looking.

The Cult of The Lost has killed numerous people, forest creatures, and animals to their foul gemstone. After such a ritualistic sacrifice, the bodies decay rapidly over the course of hours. The bones are then piled up here.

► **Ghastly Remains.** Inspecting the bone pile for 1 crawling round reveals there are at least 30 different bodies here. The bones belong to humans, elves, horses, and small forest mammals. Inspecting the pile causes two **skeletons** to emerge from the mound and attack.

► **Treasure (1 XP).** Hidden in the bone pile, there is a pouch with 10 gp and a *potion of invisibility*.

3. FUNGAL GROWTHS

Strange clumps of a green-tinted powdery substance freely float in the air of this chamber. The bulking forms of fungal fruiting bodies hug the stone walls.

The characters encounter the effect of the spores when squeezing through the narrow passage (see below). The cultists avoid this cavern because of the fungus.

► **The Spores.** Creatures that breathe the spores take 1d6 damage as they poison the lungs (DC 12 CON check). Repeat the check per each round of exposure.

► **The Fungus (1 XP).** A brave botanist can attempt to hold their breath while taking a sample of the fungus (DC 15 check). It can be used to breed more of it.

4. THE ELEVATED LEDGE

A set of crude steps leads to a seemingly bottomless pit. The other side of the chasm is 20 feet across.

► **The Crossing.** Each character must make a DC 14 STR check to cross over jumping or climbing. Roll with advantage if the party spends 1 crawling round setting up pitons and rope to cross. The chasm is 40 feet deep. Creatures that fall take 2d6 damage (DC 14 DEX/half). The passage leads to a ledge that overlooks area 7.

5. THE BLOOD VESSEL

A curved, tubular, limestone thing traverses this chamber. A golden vase lies by the north wall.

► **The Vase.** Cultists collect some blood from each victim and pour it here. It is a heretic relic that contains a liter of blood. Destroying it awards 1 **luck token**.

► **The Tendril.** The limestone object pierces the wall eastward. If inspected for 1 crawling round, its presence and nature defy explanation especially since dragging marks on the floor suggest it has moved, slithering like a snake. Three **bandits** hide behind the 5-foot-tall tendril.

6. THE CURSED ANTECHAMBER

Two **cultists** converse. Their conversation is barely audible over the humming chant from area 7. There is a 3-in-6 chance that they are not aware of the characters.

► **Lady Anna.** Anna's mind is deluded by the strange visions of The Eye. She refuses any offer of rescue (see **Adventure Hooks**). The characters must find a way to capture her without harming her badly. Lady Anna is not here if she appeared previously in Random Event 3.

7. THE EYE OF THE LOST

A 5-foot-radius, purple gemstone glows and pulses in the center of this chamber. Seven twisting limestone tendrils emerge from the stone walls and converge on the stone from all sides. Many cultists surround it.

► **The Cult.** The **cult leader**, one **cultist**, and two **bandits** chant by the stone. They are aware of the characters if they had fought in area 6. Otherwise, or if they approach from the ledge (area 4) the cultists are unaware. Ten more people are chanting, cultists of lesser resolve. They are cowards who flee or cower by the walls.

► **The Tendrils.** Careful inspection reveals that the shifting monuments have gotten closer to the gem over the course of centuries. Their nature remains obscure and inexplicable. They may be alive, running on a time-frame much slower than any mortal could imagine.

► **The Eye of the Lost.** It is a relic from ages past, connected to The Lost though it refuses to reveal any useful information. It is fused to the stone floor, immovable.

► **Treasure (2 XP).** The cult leader carries a leather pouch with 30 gp, 250 sp, and a *potion of healing*.

CULT LEADER

A cloaked, dark figure with a smoldering drive in his crazed eyes that cannot be from this world.

AC 13 (chainmail), **HP** 13, **ATK** 1 dagger +1 (1d4) or 1 spell +2, **MV** near, **S** +2, **D** -1, **C** +0, **I** +0, **W** +2, **Ch** +1, **AL** C, **LV** 3

Fearless. Immune to morale checks.

Blast (INT Spell). DC 11. Far, one target. 1d8 damage.

DEVELOPMENT

AFTER THE CHARACTERS defeat the cult leader, the power that the gem had over the cultists fades and The Eye of the Lost becomes duller. Those who were brigands run to the hills if able to lay low. The rest, who were forcefully conscripted by the cult, return to their homes in the nearby settlements after thanking the characters.

The Eye of the Lost is a valuable relic that may hold the key to understanding more about the missing deities from the past. But it is also dangerous for it to remain unguarded because of its power to seduce weak minds.

Before leaving, the eye glows once more and the characters experience a strange oneiric vision. They see a faraway forest and two monstrous entities emerging. Their passage flattens sections of the darkened forest. Both beings look at the moon with longing expressions.

The vision eludes explanation. But a pulsing drive now exists within each of the characters. An impulse to go to a forest far away south. Are The Lost hiding there?



CHERRYTOWN

It is good news to see adventurers like you! A criminal faction hides in our lovely town. Perhaps you can speak to the duke about this. Earn some gold...

Concerned Villager



The following supplement contains lore about the settlement of Cherrytown and individual descriptions of its most important areas. Use this town and map after the adventurers finish a dangerous, introductory mission and need a place to rest. Perhaps they require a quiet place to lay low and hide for a while. Maybe, they are common travelers traversing the countryside looking for their next job. Either way, the characters arrive at Cherrytown.

Regardless of the characters' reason for coming, the characters are sure to meet most of the NPCs mentioned below and get involved with the seemingly small, mundane problems of Cherrytown villagers.

CHERRYTOWN

IT WAS LESS than a hundred years ago when the savage wars for the territories ended. Humans settlers did not take long to take over the land and build small villages. "Hamlet Cherry" was the name of this place when it was founded. Some decades after, the Red Keep was built (area 9), its 20-foot-tall walls have not been breached since its construction. Hard-working people live in Cherrytown, which is on its way to becoming a small city.

ADVENTURE HOOKS

CONSIDER THE FOLLOWING to make the characters' involvement in town easier and more organic.

Trouble in Paradise. The characters are contacted via letter. A gray hawk with a parchment on its leg arrives. Duke Joseph Stones needs to get rid of a criminal faction that starts to grow in town. A couple of the few guards available have already perished; they are not skilled enough to deal with this. The duke heard of the characters' exploits and summons them. They are to meet him in The Red Keep (area 9) as soon as possible.

Visiting Friends. The characters have been in town before or perhaps they met one or more of the villagers in the past. One of the NPCs needs help (see area descriptions below) so the heroes come to aid them. However, once they arrive, it does not take long for the other NPCs to seek their help too. Use the characters' **Backgrounds** to determine what NPC they already know.

Level 2 Adventure

► **Smells and Sounds.** A strong cherry smell covers the entire place. This is due to the enormous cherry fields north and south of the town. During the day, the chatter of farmers, and incoming and outgoing merchants accompanies the singing of birds. At night, the lights of the keep are the brightest; a beacon watches over the rest of the town while fireflies hover all around.

► **Ambiance.** The villagers are worried and somewhat jumpy due to the current criminal faction growing within the very ranks of their community. Most people are more than glad to see the heroes arrive in town. They do not hesitate to approach them and ask for their help.

1. SOUTH ROAD

The closer to town, the stronger smell of cherries becomes. The characters may enter the town from here or from the east checkpoint (area 12). They are not required to identify themselves passing through here.

► **Poets Wall.** A grand wooden mural features dozens of parchment pieces and scroll fragments nailed to it. The wall is filled with poems of varied skills. Anyone in Cherrytown is free to come and post their thoughts.

2. HAWKWIND DELIVERY

This is a post office. People in town may pay for a trained hawk to deliver a message or a small package to a specific location. The capital, small towns, and nearby hamlets are the only available destinations. This is the service used to contact the characters for this adventure.

► **Special Delivery.** The man in charge, Damian, requires someone to go to the nearby forests to pick red berries. The task is simple, but the dangers of the forest are often too much for a hawker to endure. He offers 10 gp (1 XP) for two pounds of wild berries (DC 12 WIS check). On a fail, the characters trail too far for too long. A pack of four **wolves** attempts a deadly ambush.

3. SMOKERS COMMONS

This area is well-known for its tobacco shops, spices, and pipe makers. Good-quality tobacco is available here; it is common to see a circle of people chatting, sharing stories, and smoking during the day in front of the shops. This place started as a small commons, hence its name.



Five **bandits** attack the commons while the characters explore the area. If a bandit is captured, the characters may interrogate them to learn they belong to the '*Bloody Knife*' (DC 15 CHA check). This is the criminal faction Duke Stones has been trying to find and get rid of.

4. NINE SHIELDS ARMORY

This establishment features nine steel shields arranged symmetrically. This is one of the new businesses in town. Duke Stones is interested in the town's future and made the smart decision to invest a lot of gold in mining to import metals and ores into town. Tristan is the town's forge master but he is unable to work now (see below).

► **Fire Problem.** The characters arrive at the perfect time to help. The forge does not work because somehow, a mischievous **flame mephit** made its way into the heart of the forge and it won't let anyone work the fire. The elemental speaks Primordial; it is unlikely anyone can reason with it. The characters may strike it down or attempt to persuade it to leave peacefully (DC 18 CHA check). Either solution earns them the villagers' admiration.

5. SUNSWORD BARRACKS

The characters meet some of the on-duty town guards here. If the characters stay for a few minutes to chat or investigate, an armor-clad guard approaches.

► **A Soldier's Resolve.** Gregor (**soldier**) begs the characters to let him help. He wants to find the Bloody Knife's leader and uproot their nefarious faction. He looks forward to earning his captain and the duke's favor.

6. ROYAL SUN THEATRE

The characters may enjoy one of the many plays performed and the local theater. '*Don't Gobble my Goblin*', '*My Inner Orc*', and '*Halflings, a Giants' Tale*' are the town's favorites. If the characters join the crowd to see a play, they are, gently but firmly, asked to surrender their weapons. Unfortunately, the Bloody Knife attacks during one of the theatrical performances (see below).

► **Criminals.** Six **bandits** among the public stand up with crossbows just after the interlude break. They demand that all valuables are put in their sacks.

7. HILLSIDE DISTRICT

The houses in Hillside District are wealthier and they are larger than the farmers' homes in the surrounding fields. Guards, wealthy merchants, and some of the officers live in this better-located Cherrytown area.

8. MERCHANTS MARKET

This place is lively and loud during the day and night alike. Throngs of shoppers crowd the roads and the many establishments. This area has all kinds of shops; food, gear, tools, simple or mundane items, etc. A few popular taverns and bars open their doors at night.

9. THE RED KEEP

This small fortress is protected by a stone wall. A small barracks, a military post, and a gate are the filters to enter the keep. The characters may show the duke's letter to be granted passage and be escorted inside.

Alternatively, news of their exploits in Cherrytown also earns them a private audience with Duke Stones. For this to occur, they must have helped two different NPCs by the time they come here. Otherwise, the characters are seated in a waiting room for six hours before meeting the duke. Impatience or the characters' complaints may be met with a kind invitation to abandon the Red Keep's premises immediately (**Reaction** check).

But if the heroes are eager to investigate and work for the Duke, he shall be glad to compensate for their efforts. See **Development** for details about their reward.

10. ROYAL DISTRICT

A perceptive character notices that, within the dark alleys and quiet spots of this area, well-dressed townsfolk exchange words with suspicious-looking individuals (**DC 13 WIS** check). If approached, the suspicious individuals scatter like roaches as if they had something to hide.

► **Traitors.** If the characters conduct a thorough investigation (**DC 13 CHA** check), they overhear a conversation between two Cherrytown officers. What they say is proof of their involvement with the Bloody Knife. If confronted, the two men (**soldiers**) draw blades and call for help. Three **bandits** arrive at the scene moments later.

11. HAMMERTAPPER TAVERN

The characters may stay as long as they wish here. If the duke's letter is the reason they came to town, they may show it to the keeper to be granted a week's stay for free.

12. EAST GATE

If the characters arrive through this area, they must state their names and business. The duke's letter grants them immediate passage, and two soldiers escort them to the Red Keep. Otherwise, the soldiers recommend the Hammertapper Tavern as a good place to look for work.

DEVELOPMENT

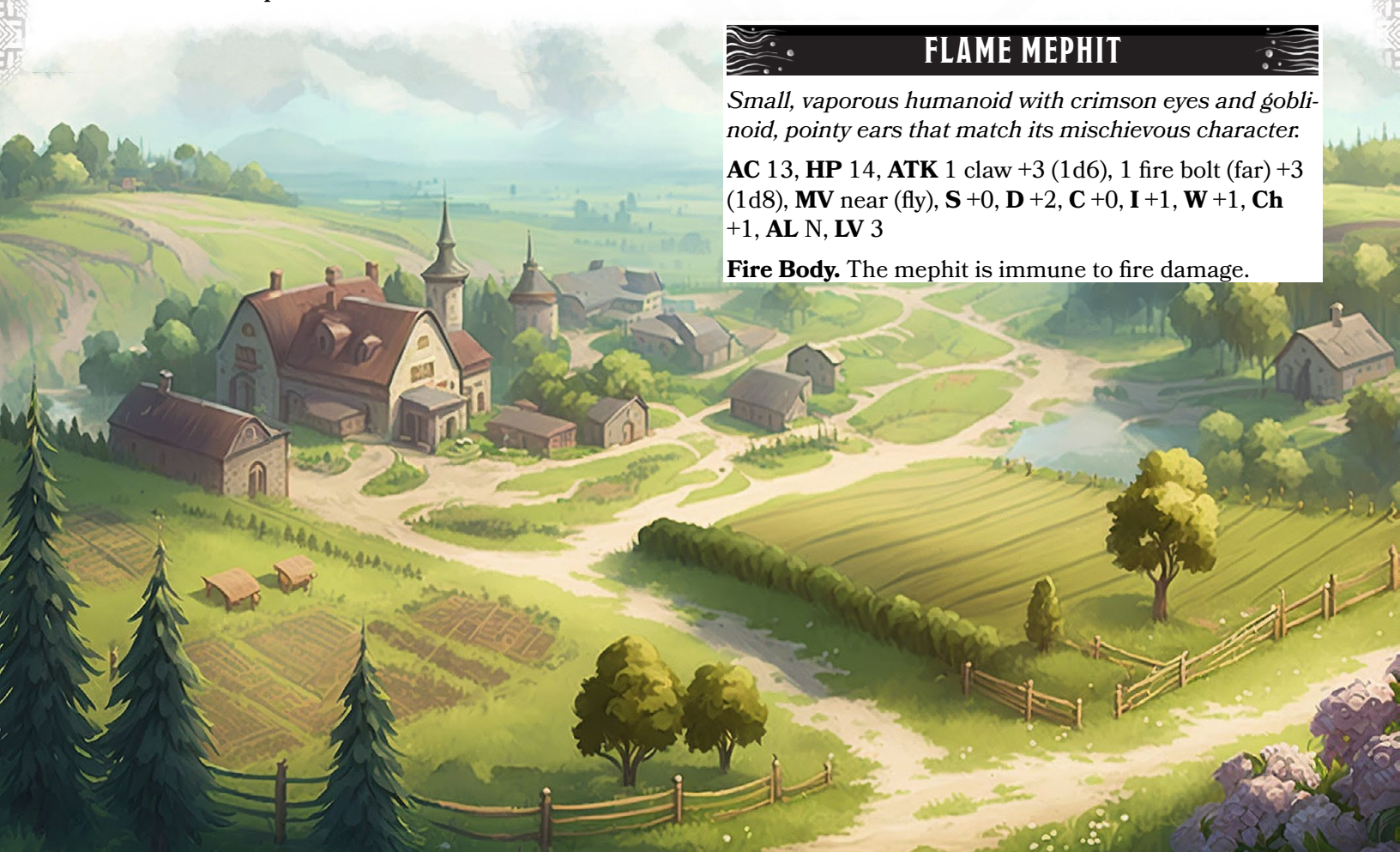
DEFEATING THE BANDITS and their associates in Cherrytown dismantles their foul operation. Upon completion, Duke Stones gladly pays the 80 gp reward (7 XP).

FLAME MEPHIT

Small, vaporous humanoid with crimson eyes and goblinoid, pointy ears that match its mischievous character.

AC 13, **HP** 14, **ATK** 1 claw +3 (1d6), 1 fire bolt (far) +3 (1d8), **MV** near (fly), **S** +0, **D** +2, **C** +0, **I** +1, **W** +1, **Ch** +1, **AL** N, **LV** 3

Fire Body. The mephit is immune to fire damage.



VAL'S UNDERGROUND GARDENS

No one believes it is possible. But I know this creature can be controlled. I just need more time to figure out how to tame its strangely aggressive behavior.

Val, the Misunderstood Botanist

Vn accomplished botanist and mage goes by the name of Val. She is known as a purveyor of natural medicines, herbal infusions, and all manners of exotic plants. Her house, near the city outskirts, is surrounded by gardens and growing beds but the real magic occurs underground in the magical soil, inside an underground compound that she built below her home. Val devised an arcane apparatus that helps grow magical varieties of plants underground. She named these machines the *verdant engines*.

The *verdant engines* power six subterranean gardens. Plants grow larger there and sometimes become mobile. The effect brought forth all manner of enlarged critters that Val loves, despite their dangerous demeanor.

A month ago, an idea crept into the botanist's mind. She gathered all samples she could find of poison ivy and focused all the *verdant engines'* energy on it. The resulting creature is a huge mound of uncontrolled hunger and verdant growth. Val has spent the last few weeks feeding and taming this irrational abomination.

ADVENTURE HOOKS

Urgent Need. Count Galland's daughter has fallen ill. The count hires the characters to retrieve the missing botanist to secure the medicine (50 gp, 6 XP).

Rescue. Val's brother, Adam, knows something wrong is going on. He urges the characters to come help him find the botanist for a small reward (20 gp, 3 XP).

Howling. A whistling, howling sound comes from Val's estate when the moon rises. It scares the livestock. Local farmers offer a reward to solve this (30 gp, 4 XP).

RUMORS

d6	Details
1	Some in the Mages Guild consider Val a heretic for attempting to create sentient plant breeds.
2	Val's infusions have saved numerous people in the city.
3	The secret to Val's success in botany is hidden inside her home. Many believe that nasty traps protect the place.
4	Val is selfish and a narcissist. She cares not for people but helps them to increase her perceived social value.
5	Strange howling sounds have been heard in Val's home.
6	Val bought all poison ivy samples available 1 month ago.

Level 3 Adventure

► **Danger.** Risky. Check for encounters every 2 **crawling rounds** and after a battle or loud noises (1-in-6 chance).

► **Light.** Some areas feature lit braziers. Other areas are in total darkness. All denizens are **dark-adapted**.

► **Locks.** Doors have mid-quality locks. They can be bypassed with enough skill and tools (DC 13 DEX check).

► **Secret Areas.** Close inspection of an area for 1 **crawling round** reveals a hidden button. Pushing it reveals a narrow passage into a hidden area or hallway.

RANDOM ENCOUNTERS

d8	Details
1	1d3 giant leeches emerge looking for an easy meal.
2	1 ochre jelly filters through the ceiling cracks and drops on a random adventurer (DC 13 WIS check to detect).
3	2d6 speaking mice show up. They speak of mundane matters but can mention that her mother is 'below'.
4	A boar accompanied by cubs approaches. If ignored, it leaves. If approached, it becomes extremely aggressive.
5	A swarm of scarabs emerges from cracks in the wall.
6	Lidda (peasant), Val's apprentice, approaches calling for help. She says Val will soon lose control of the plant.
7	Leafy vines grow suddenly and crack through the walls.
8	A fairy named Aluna offers their help. They claim Val is close to losing control of her wild creation in area 12.

1. ENTRANCE HALL

Val's home is abandoned. The basement access doors lead to a 40-foot-long stairway into area 1. Three clay vases lie on stone plinths by the south wall alcoves.

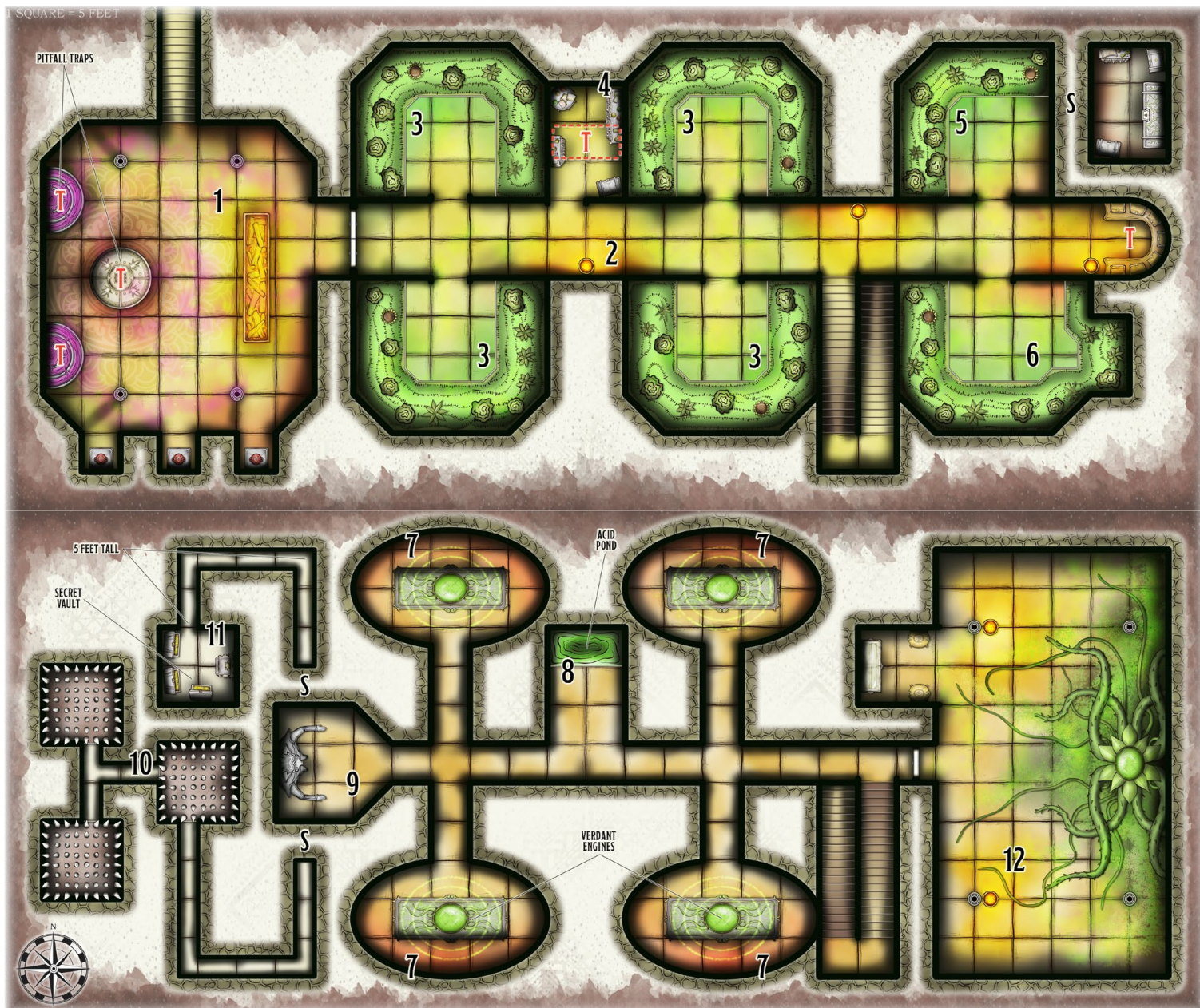
► **Pitfall Traps.** Stepping on the stone circle or in front of the fountains triggers pitfall traps (DC 12 WIS check to notice). Targets take 3d6 damage and fall to area 10.

► **The Vases.** The clay vessels contain a strange fungal concoction. Drinking it awards a **luck token** but incurs the risk of 1d6 poison damage (DC 12 CON check).

2. THE GRAND HALLWAY

This 100-foot-long hallway connects to several adjoining chambers. It features a floral and verdant fragrance.

► **Pitfall Trap.** The marked floor tile at the end of the hall is a pitfall trap (DC 12 WIS check to notice). The target falls to area 12 and onto the **shambling mound!**



3. THE GROW GARDENS

Each chamber contains vibrant vegetation and enlarged flora whose stems and leaves move faintly.

► **Plant Life.** Many plants are magically close to sentience. Many can speak but lack any form or memory. Impaired, half-sentient creations such as these are frowned upon by the Mages Guild (DC 13 INT check).

4. VAL'S STUDY

The small study contains two bookcases and an empty chest. Most books are about botany and nature.

► **Val's Journal.** Updated 4 days ago, the journal reveals Val's findings on the shambling mound about its immunity to fire and how electric energy empowers it.

► **Pitfall Trap.** Stepping on the marked area triggers a pitfall trap (DC 13 WIS check to notice). The targets fall to the pond in area 8 and take 2d6 acid damage.

5. THE COMMON GARDEN

The plants in this garden are not magical. They grow underground thanks to the *verdant engines* but they are too far apart to imbue their magic on the flora here.

► **Fake Vault.** The chests feature poison needle traps (DC 16 WIS to notice). Tampering with the lids causes the target to be poisoned for 1 hour (DC 14 CON check)

6. THE DRYAD'S GARDEN

An androgynous, yellow-hued figure covered in greenery steps from a tree planted in a shallow grow box.

► **Cinnara.** The **dryad** claims she has been Val's captive for years. The dwarf tree is her bonded tree. The dryad is weak because the *verdant engines* siphon her life force.

► **Rescue.** The engines in area 7 must be disabled before moving Cinnara's tree or she perishes. Returning her tree to the woods saves the dryad (1 **luck token** each).

7. THE VERDANT ENGINES

Each chamber contains a coffin-like, glowing, magical device that contains a thick, green substance. A glass lens on its lid shoots a green-hued light ray upward.

► **Disabling.** A *dispel magic* spell renders any engine inert. They can also be hacked to pieces (HP 20, AC 10). It is necessary to disable the *verdant engines* to move Cinara's tree back to the forest (see area 6).

► **Learning.** A wizard may study a verdant engine for 1 *crawling round* to reverse-engineer Val's invention. It requires a captive fey as the engine's fuel source. Capturing the abominate creature in area 12 is a way to do this.

8. THE ACID POND

Creatures that trigger the pitfall trap in area 4 fall into this 10-foot-deep acid pond. Creatures doused in acid take 1d6 acid damage after climbing out unless they spend 1 *crawling round* cleaning their body and gear.

9. ALTAR TO GEDE

The statue of an elvish woman with her hand raised as in prayer overlooks the dead-end chamber. The sigil on the statue's chest is a popular holy symbol.

Any religious person knows this is a Gede's altar, the god of feasts, mirth, and the wilds. This god is commonly worshiped among elvish and halfling communities.

► **The Plead.** The statue's right hand holds a crumbled piece of paper. The paper reads 'Gede, please give me the strength to contain the power of your mighty offspring'.

► **The Offering.** Spending 1 *crawling round* praying to Gede awards a religious character 1 *luck token*.

10. CHAMBERS OF SPIKES

Creatures that trigger the pitfall traps in area 1 fall into these small chambers that contain nothing but 5-foot-tall iron spikes. There is a 2-in-6 chance that a target becomes impaled if they fall. In such a case, they cannot leave the area without help and die in 2d4 rounds.

SHAMBLING MOUND

A radially-growing menage of trunks, vines, leaves. A central, flower-like head exudes green poisonous gas.

AC 14, **HP** 18, **ATK** 2 slam +3 (1d6 + engulf), **MV** near (climb), **S** +3, **D** -3, **C** +2, **I** -4, **W** +0, **Ch** -4, **AL** N, **LV** 4

Electric Conduit. Immune to fire. Healed by electricity.

Engulf. A target hit by both slams in the same round is pulled into the vines. They suffocate in 2d4 rounds. DC 15 STR check on each turn to escape.

Poison Aura. Creature at close distance take 1d4 poison damage per turn (DC 12 CON check to resist).

11. SECRET VAULT

The narrow and shallow passage leads to a vault with three stone chests brimming with treasure.

► **Treasure (10 XP).** The stone chests in the secret vault contain 70 gp, 400 sp, two *potions of healing*, and a small, carved wooden box with a *kytherian cog*.

12. THE VERDANT MONSTER

A slender mage struggles to remain standing while using her magic to soothe an abominate plant whose vines sway to the rhythm of a screeching howl.

The **shambling mound** became overly aggressive 3 days ago. Val has tried, day and night since then, to appease the creature with the spells but without much success.

► **The Rescue.** Val runs out of strength 1d4 rounds after the characters arrive. Unless they defend her, the shambling mound engulfs her. She dies moments later.

► **Binding Ritual.** A wizard that studies the engines in area 7 can attempt to bind the shambling mound to a *verdant engine* with a DC 20 INT check. Failure on this check triggers a roll on the **Wizard Mishap** table.

► **Escape.** If the shambling mound is not destroyed or bound within 48 hours, it escapes to the nearest town.



THE PLANAR GATEWAY

Be mindful of the seemingly impossible promise of the endless planes. Anything can be found in the ether. Including your untimely and unnecessary death.

Annals of the Eternal Planes

The study of the planes is a subject that captivates the minds of mages, scholars, elves, and dragons. The infinite worlds out there and the endless possibilities entice them all albeit for varied reasons. Knowledge, greed, and curiosity are some of the most popular. The journey between worlds is difficult though not impossible; advanced knowledge of magic and/or the construction of arcane devices are required to keep planar gates operational. In this adventure, the characters meet Aaden, an elvish mage, who built a gate in what once was his family's sepulcher, near Respite Cove, a small human settlement.

The gate opened after decades of work. Like-minded individuals soon joined Aaden in his academic pursuit of studying the outer planes. They came and went while the human settlements around the place were born and grew. It all stopped suddenly 15 years ago when the gate's usage attracted a demon. Desperately, Aaden used the machine to trap both the demon and himself in the ether. Thus, thwarting the demon from crossing over.

ADVENTURE HOOKS

The Planes. The characters require access to a planar gate to continue their quest. They learn that the gate near Respite Cove was operational recently.

Earl's Request. In Respite Cove, Earl Baggran offers a bounty for reactivating the planar gate. The earl's goals with this, however, remain obscure (30 gp, 4 XP).

Greed. The closed-off planar gate near Respite Cove is said to be guarded by foul guardians. However, the locals believe a great treasure lies hidden therein.

RUMORS

d6	Details
1	Mages operated the planar gate decades ago until they disappeared. Now the compound is shunned by all.
2	Otherworldly creatures look for the gate sporadically.
3	Some people dared enter the place months ago. They claimed dead creatures drove them off the premises.
4	The gate was built by an elven mage named Aaden.
5	3 years ago, skeletons emerged from the facility. Six people died stopping them. They are remembered as heroes.
6	No one knows why the planar gate was closed off.

Level 3 Adventure

► **Danger.** Risky. Check for encounters every 2 crawling rounds and after a battle or loud noises (1-in-6 chance).

► **Light.** Some chambers have braziers with permanent light; the rest are dark. Denizens are dark-adapted.

► **Doors.** All doors have a 2-in-6 chance of being either stuck or locked (DC 14 DEX or STR check).

► **The Gate.** As the demon tries to overpower the gate's mechanism to cross over, the gate suddenly malfunctions. Sparks fly about and strange sounds come from it.

RANDOM ENCOUNTERS

d8	Details
1	Gate malfunction, 3 skeletons emerge and attack.
2	1d6 peasants approach. They are here to activate the gate and collect the earl's bounty. Half carry weapons.
3	An elf soldier approaches, he claims a distant ancestor is buried in this sepulcher and wishes to pay his respects.
4	Gate malfunction, an explosion shakes the compound. Creatures within 10 feet of the gate take 1d6 damage.
5	Gate malfunction, all light sources in the dungeon, magical or not, are suddenly extinguished indefinitely.
6	A swarm of spiders emerges from cracks in the wall.
7	An elvish wight approaches chanting nonsense.
8	Gate malfunction, Aaden is freed. He appears in area 2 and then attempts to destroy the gate's machinery.

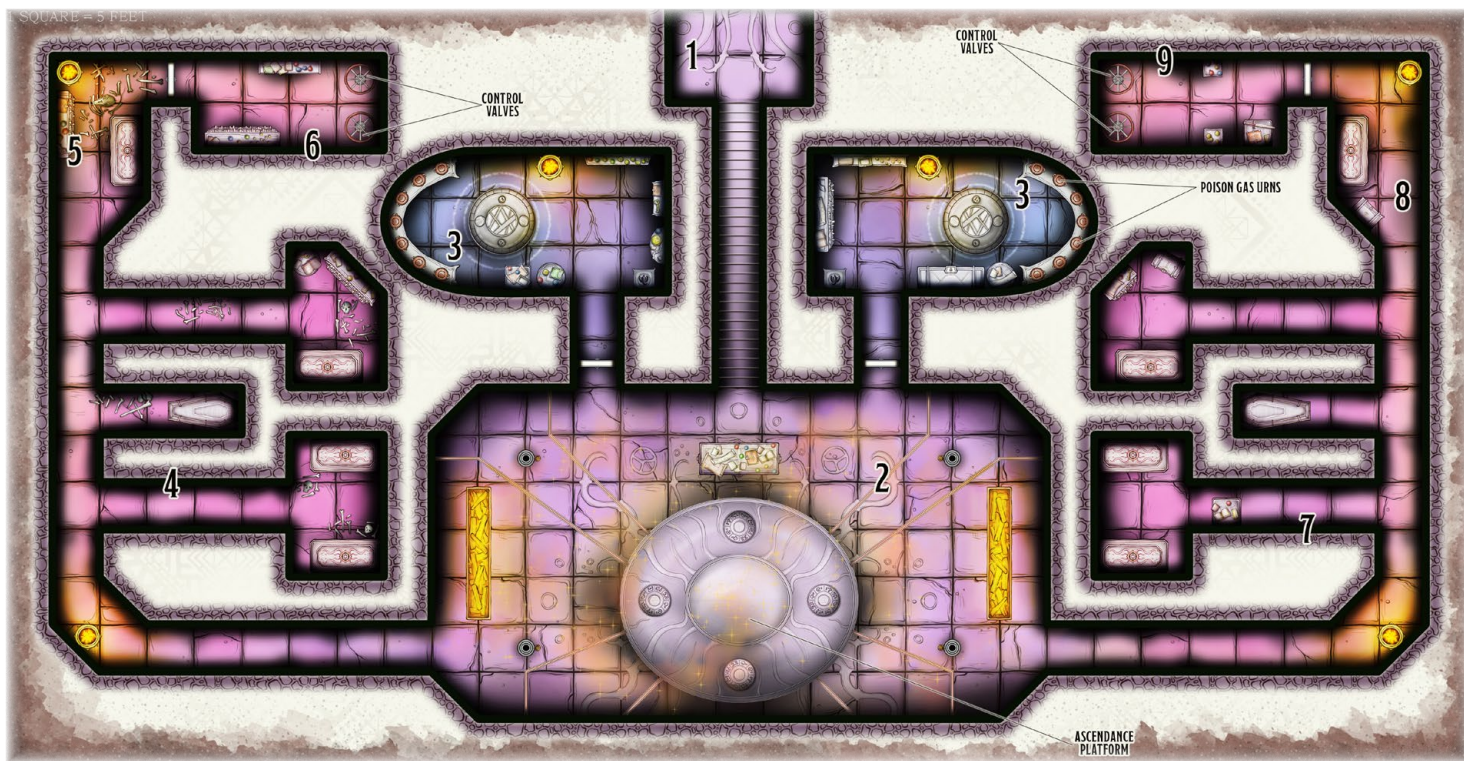
1. ENTRANCE HALL

A stone archway near the forest, inscribed in elvish runes leads to a 40-foot-long stairway and into an entrance chamber decorated with intricate reliefs.

► **Getting Here.** The road from Respite Cove to the elvish burial place by the forest is a 2-hour, uneventful trip.

► **The Runes.** It takes 1 crawling round to decipher the elvish writing, it reads: *'Here lie our ancestors. Loved ones of the Dallerei, Miggganna, and Aarley households.'*

► **The Reliefs.** Careful observers notice that the original reliefs of family sigils were carved over (DC 15 INT check). The new imagery portrays an intricate orrery of spheres orbiting one another. A knowledgeable person knows that the arrangement represents the position and movement of the outer planes (DC 15 INT check).



2. THE PLANAR GATE

An arrangement of concentric 1-foot-tall daises and rune-inscribed platforms dominates the chamber. A stone table features scrolls and tomes in disarray.

The planar gate is currently disabled. A wizard can spend 1 **crawling round** reviewing the documentation on the table to discover that it is necessary to charge the device's arcane batteries in area 3 (DC 12 INT check).

► **Activation.** After charging the batteries, four people must stand on the circles while a wizard conducts the ritual (DC 13 INT check). Failure on this check triggers a roll on the Wizard Mishap table but all successful attempts activate the gate. The portal opens as a window in the air. The elf mage Aaden is thrown out. The **gate demon** steps through a moment later. Aaden (lv-3 wizard) is confused but manages to bellow: *'What have you utter fools done?'* He aids the characters in this fight.

► **Treasure (4 XP).** Defeating the demon opens access to the *planar gate*. Aaden carries a *staff of healing*.

GATE DEMON

A horned being of ether-infused malignity. The semi-corporeal demon is mostly made of otherworldly matter.

AC 14, HP 28, ATK 1 horn +4 (2d6 + impale), MV near (hover), **S +3, D +1, C +3, I +0, W +2, Ch +0, AL C, LV 5**

Incorporeal. In place of attacks, become corporeal or incorporeal.

Impale. DC 14 STR or target takes 1d6 damage.

3. THE ARCANE BATTERIES

Seven clay containers on a stone shelf lie under iron faucet-like tubes that go into the wall. A magic circle glows with faint light in the middle of the chamber.

► **The Batteries.** Each vase is a battery. Operating the valves in areas 6 and 9 causes acid to pour into the clay vessels. A spellcaster must focus their arcane power into magic circle to charge the vases (DC 11 INT).

► **Treasure (1 XP).** The chest in the east area 3 chamber contains 30 gp and a *potion of healing*.

4. WEST SEPULCHER

This area contains three chambers with stone sarcophagi and countless scattered bones. The bones have been reanimated numerous times by the gate's malfunctions.

► **Ambush.** While exploring the area, four **skeletons** rise from the inert remains and attack mercilessly.

► **Treasure (1 XP).** The coffins contain 25 gp, 200 sp, a set of chainmail, and 1 *potion of healing*.

5. AADEN'S ARCHIVE

The bones of a large creature lie scattered between a packed bookcase and a closed sarcophagus.

► **The Bones.** Closer inspection reveals that the bones belonged to a minotaur (DC 12 INT check).

► **The Documents.** If reviewed for 1 **crawling round**, Aaden journals mention he once had a minotaur bodyguard. It is revealed that the scholars chose to ignore the fact that the portal's continued use attracted the attention of demons looking to invade the Material Plane.

6. WEST VALVE ROOM

The sparsely-furnished chamber contains two bookcases and a pair of rotating valves by the far wall.

► **The Valves.** Operating the valves causes acid to flow in area 3 (west) to ready the batteries for charging.

► **Glyph of Fire.** Inspecting the stuff on the bookcases for 1 **crawling round** eventually leads to a character handling a cursed book with an explosive glyph. Upon touching the book, it starts glowing red for a few seconds before blowing up. Creatures within 10 feet of it take 2d6 fire damage unless they get behind cover (DC 14 DEX).

► **Treasure (2 XP).** An obsidian case hidden behind a pile of books contains a *jewel of barbalt*.

7. EAST SEPULCHER

This area contains three chambers with limestone sarcophagi. Unlike area 4, there are no bodily remains scattered across the cracked stone floor.

► **Tomb-Robbers.** The stone lids are shut with mortar. A crowbar or chisel can be used to crack open the enclosures (DC 11 STR check, 1 **crawling round**). Four **skeltons** emerge from the sarcophagi if this happens.

► **Treasure (0 XP).** Collectively, the sarcophagi contain 4 gp, 90 sp, a dagger, and a silver mirror.

8. TOMB OF THE ANCESTOR

A carved sarcophagus stands by the wall. A tarnished bronze plaque under it reads 'Lord Yann Dallerei.'

► **The Pilgrim.** An elvish **soldier** named Yedde Dallerei stands by the enclosure unless the characters have already encountered him from **Random Encounter 3**. Yedde is here to pay his respects to this distant relative. The elf's disposition toward the characters may vary (**Reaction** check), roll with disadvantage if Yedde notices the characters carrying any items stolen from the tombs.

► **Treasure (5 XP).** Lord Yann Dallerei's sarcophagus contains 60 gp and a *sword of the ancients*. However, Yedde is severely insulted if the characters attempt to plunder his ancestor's tomb. The elf fights to avoid this profanation but leaves if defeat is inevitable. One day, Yedde returns to exact his revenge upon the characters.

9. EAST VALVE ROOM

A blade and some vials rest on three stone plinths. A pair of rotating steel valves await by the far wall.

► **The Valves.** One valve is stuck (DC 14 STR check). Operating the valves causes acid to flow in area 3 (east) to ready the arcane batteries for charging.

► **The Trinkets.** The shortsword is rusted and bears an elvish-making rune. The 4 vials contain an acidic substance. There is enough to destroy a single door lock.

DEFEATING THE DEMON awards the characters access to the planar gateway. It is a complex device that may aid them in their adventures. If Aaden survives, he may even help the characters understand this apparatus.

THE PLANAR GATEWAY

The open portal is a rip through the fabric of space and time. It can be used to access the worlds beyond.

Usage. Four sentient beings are required to open the portal. One of them must be a Wizard. The activation ritual is automatic after the first time it is performed.

Benefit. The characters can travel to other planes of existence. The rip between worlds stays open for 1 day.

Demonic Entities. Each time the portal is used, there is a 1-in-20 chance of attracting one **gate demon**.



The Mirrors of Ord

Wizards spend decades of their lives mastering their craft. The fine manipulation of the fabric of reality through the scintillating, rules-bending way of spells and incantations has but one finite goal: to achieve complete control of the physical realm and to harness the complete power of the ethereal forces of the world. Thus, the mightiest of spells was created, its power has been known for millennia. The *wish* spell.

Few mages achieve enough power to aspire to learn this spell. When they do, they recoil from casting it because it incurs dire, unforeseen consequences. It is known that breaking the laws of reality with this magic produces a kick-back effect, an equivalent force that pushes back against the mage's desire. If the wish is stated inaccurately, or the scope of it is too grand, the chance of a catastrophic mishap greatly increases. Mages are aware of this. Thus, they regard the spell with respect and attempt it only as a last resort.

Ord, an archmage, rose to prominence centuries ago. He mastered the fabled *wish* spell but dreaded to use it, afraid of the consequences that would unravel from it. Ord spent the last decades of his life building a device that would contain the power to cast the spell while also aiding the petitioner to foresee the outcome of the spell before casting it. Ord crafted three gold-framed, 10-foot-tall, silver-backed mirrors. The central one can cast the mythical wish spell once per decade. The right one displays the petitioner's deepest desire. When the petitioner states their wish, the left one portrays the results of such utterance, allowing the person to revise the wording before actually casting the *wish* spell. The mirrors were placed in a secure vault. However, after centuries of seismic activity, the vault is now connected to a network of goblin tunnels.

1. Rumor has it that the Mirrors of Ord lie hidden in an underground compound near the Great Forest. The locals know it as Bonemaw Cavern, named after a goblinoid chieftain's name. The trail leads to a cavern on a hillside. The eroded remains of human-made structures surround it.
2. The large chamber features a patches of non-edible mushrooms, dark moss, and animal bones. Goblin cave-paintings portray tribe members standing before tall doorways to faraway places and impossible riches.
3. This chamber contains the gnawed bones of two human prospectors. The few remains of their metal equipment are so rusted they collapsed when touched. Two **rust monsters** emerge from a hole in the ceiling and attack.

4. The goblin cave-paintings here are more recent. They display a pilgrimage from faraway lands to the strange mirrors. A goblin wearing a copper crown stands before the mirrors to create great treasures. The bones are small and goblinoid in nature. Careful inspection of them reveals that the copper crown is fused to a half-buried goblin cranium.
5. Six crudely-carved alcoves contain a single, mortar-shut funerary niche. Each of the niches is marked with the name of an ancient goblin chieftain. If breached, each niche contains a mound of ashes and a circlet encrusted with a large gemstone. Historians know that such jewelry pieces were only awarded to chieftains who managed to unite various goblinoid tribes. Plundering any niche causes six goblin **specters** to materialize and attack.
6. The fungal life-forms in this chamber produce a cloud of poisonous spores that cause retching and lung damage. Few creatures can withstand exposure to them. This chamber became connected to a vault after an earthquake decades ago. The stone chests are empty. Careful inspection reveals a secret lever behind one chest that opens a secret passageway to area 9. It can be used to bypass the encounters in areas 7 and 8.
7. The north tunnels continue for 50 feet before reaching dead-ends caused by seismic activity. The passage east into area 9 appears to be open but an almost-invisible **gelatinous cube** occupies its entire width. Careful inspection reveals a small steel plate floating in its mass almost a foot above the ground, revealing its presence. Otherwise, the first person to pass through the cavern hallway walks right into the gelatinous cube.
8. Six **goblin** scouts patrol this passage. A band of goblins is less than a day away through the east path. They come for this decade's pilgrimage. Their chieftain is expected to retrieve the copper crown and ask a wish from the Mirrors of Ord. The goblins try to communicate that the characters are trespassing on their holy land and commend them to leave the caverns. If the characters do not comply, a battle ensues. If half the goblins are defeated, the rest of them attempt to flee to the east to warn the chieftain that the characters want to usurp their holy relic. Alas, the goblins won't arrive until after 18 hours have passed, even if alerted.
9. The Mirrors of Ord can only be used once per decade; they are now active. Two pressure-sensitive tiles trigger a deadly trap. The goblins know of this and avoid them on each pilgrimage. When the trap is triggered, each of the standing coffins opens, setting free five nefarious, flesh-eating necrophages; better known as **ghouls**. After dealing with the undead, any character can stand before the Mirrors of Ord to witness its desire and future-predicting effects. However, a single wish can be asked of it per decade. Spending the wish is a sure way to earn goblins' enmity. The goblin chieftain shall come for them for robbing him of his deepest wish.



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